



Fort Sheridan Ravine and Coastal GLFER Project

Project Description

The project is part of the northeastern Illinois coastline of Lake Michigan; bounded by Lake Michigan to the east and Sheridan Road to the west. The southern limits include the Schenck Ravine watershed, while the northern limits include the McCormick Ravine watershed. The restoration project is located east of Sheridan Road within the City of Lake Forest, Town of Ft. Sheridan and City of Highland Park, and unincorporated Lake County, Illinois.

The Phase 1 portion of the Fort Sheridan Ravine and Coastal Section 506 Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration (GLFER) project includes restoring 75 acres within four main ravines (McCormick, Hutchinson, Schenk, and Scott), 40 acres of bluff and 12 acres of dune along the coastline, and about 60 acres of riparian woodland. The goal is to bring resilience and connectivity to coastal natural habitats and restore historical native plant communities along 1.5 miles of Lake Michigan. The five-year construction contract for Phase 1 will be complete in fall 2020. The nonfederal partners for Phase 1 are the Lake County Forest Preserve District, Openlands, City of Lake Forest, and Lake Forest Open Lands Association.

In September 2019, Phase 2 was initiated by issuing a separate contract to the Architectural Consulting Group of Chicago for the installation of underwater reefs in Lake Michigan. These native stone and large woody debris reefs would be placed nearshore along the Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve land of the Lake County Forest Preserve District, north and south of Cliff Road. The intent of the reefs is to provide structural and hydrodynamic habitat for fishes, mudpuppy salamander, and migratory water birds by mimicking the natural reefs found on Chicago's coastline. The nonfederal sponsor for Phase 2 is the Lake County Forest Preserve District.

Benefits

Ravine Stream habitat restoration via dam removal, riffle and pool reestablishment, amphibian and reptile stone cascade structures, promotion of natural riverine sediment transport and substrate sorting, and native plantings. Ravine plant community restoration via invasive plant species eradication, reestablishing native canopy cover and structure, and planting native seeds and plugs of local ravine genetic ecotypes. Coastal Bluff restoration via invasive plant species eradication, planting native seeds and plugs of local bluff genetic ecotypes. Dune and beach restoration via eradication of invasive plant species and planting native seeds and plugs of local genetic ecotypes. Lake littoral zone restoration via fish and mudpuppy habitat structures created out of indicative Niagara Escarpment dolomitic limestone slabs, glacial boulders, and cobble and large woody debris.

Types of Activities Expected

- The contractor will be using a crane to place limestone blocks, glacial boulders and cobbles, and large woody debris into Lake Michigan from a barge (July 2020 to October 2020).
- Public access will be restricted within the work limits for the duration of heavy construction (July 2020 to October 2020).

The Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Program (GLFER)

The GLFER program authorizes the Corps to plan, design, and construct ecosystem restoration projects that support the restoration of fisheries, ecosystems, and beneficial uses of the Great Lakes. GLFER projects require the nonfederal sponsor to cost share the project, 65% federal and 35% nonfederal. Chicago District has 14 GLFER projects constructed or under construction for a total of 1105 acres. Most of the projects are in urban areas and these projects are important resources for providing benefits to wildlife and people.