

Tackling two major environmental challenges facing the next generation in our region – climate change and threats to the Great Lakes and drinking water

ENVIRONMENT

Climate change is the biggest intergenerational threat to our communities and our planet, and failure to address it will disrupt progress across the economy and our society.

The Joyce Foundation supports policies to mitigate the impact of climate change and accelerate the transition to clean energy systems – while also pursuing strategies specifically designed to remedy energy-related economic and equity issues.

Joyce also continues its decades-long leadership on policies to protect and restore the Great Lakes, adding a new focus on making sure everyone in the region has access to safe, clean, affordable drinking water.

In both focus areas, we look for opportunities to draw diverse voices and perspectives into environmental policy making. Residents of communities directly affected by climate change and inadequate access to safe, clean water must be directly involved in creating solutions.

FOCUS AREAS

Climate Solutions

Avoiding the worst impacts of climate change will require deep reductions in global warming pollution between now and 2050, and especially between now and 2030. The goal of our climate solutions work is to make the Great Lakes region a leader in fighting climate change by accelerating the transition to carbon-free energy systems. We support research, policy development, advocacy, and engagement focused on two strategic initiatives:

- Accelerate adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy through state utility policies, making sure they equitably serve low-income customers.
- Develop and advance local and state policies to capture the benefits of advanced transportation technologies, including reductions in carbon emissions and local air pollutants.

The energy system is undergoing major transitions, including how we generate electricity, how the power grid is managed, and the rise of electric vehicles. The Midwest can take advantage of this moment with smart energy policies to create jobs, improve health through cleaner air, and save people money.

Great Lakes

Public and private decisions made in the next decade will determine whether the Great Lakes will be healthy enough to provide for the next generation as they have provided for previous generations. Because clean, abundant drinking water is one of the Great Lakes' fundamental benefits, we've broadened our mission to help ensure that the next generation in our region will have clean water from lake to tap.

Joyce is investing in research, policy development, advocacy, and engagement focused on three strategic Great Lakes initiatives:

- Address three major threats to the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the Great Lakes: polluted runoff from cities and farms, aquatic invasive species, and surface water diversions.
- Advance state and federal policies that restore the Great Lakes and improve the region's water infrastructure systems.
- Ensure that everyone has access to safe, clean, affordable drinking water.

With our growing number of complex, water-related challenges in the region, the need for thoughtful water policy has never been greater. We encourage leaders to develop and deploy innovative policies that simultaneously address the safety and affordability of our drinking water, the reliability of our water infrastructure, and the health of the Great Lakes.

Through our strategic investments and our ability to bring people and organizations together, Joyce's Environment Program is exploring new issues and bringing new voices to policy making.