



Advancing Equitable GI Implementation

Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange to Lead Great Lakes-Based *Network of Climate Resilience-Focused Communities*

Management of Network Supported by the Great Lakes Protection Fund Shifts in Its Fourth Year

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Starting October 6, 2023, the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange (the Exchange) will lead the Great Lakes-based *Resilient Infrastructure & Sustainable Communities* (RISC).

The Exchange is a fiscally-sponsored project of the Global Philanthropy Partnership that seeks to activate local governments and water agencies in the U.S. and Canada to implement green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) equitably.

Resilient Infrastructure & Sustainable Communities (RISC) is a cluster of public and private sector professionals focused on climate resiliency via delivery and finance of market-based green stormwater infrastructure across the Great Lakes region. Comprised of municipal, state, nonprofit, and federal climate resilience leaders, the cluster leverages its common network and shared experience to offer a framework that leads to projects that improve water quality, climate resiliency, and positive socio-economic impacts.

At the time of its creation in 2020, RISC set out the following key objectives:

- Build a lasting network of public and private sector leaders from across the Great Lakes.
- Quantify climate risk and opportunities across the Great Lakes.
- Identify priority regions where the need and readiness for investment is high.
- Reduce costs of large-scale sustainable storm water infrastructure development.
- Share and establish best practices for policy development, project delivery, financing, program, and asset management.
- Help execute multiple large investments that lead to improved water quality and more green neighborhoods across the region.

“RISC members are leaders in implementing innovative stormwater management solutions across the Great Lakes region,” said Steve Cole, vice president of programs at the Great Lakes Protection Fund, which supported the cluster’s development. “With leadership from the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange, we expect they will continue to support and learn from each other, benefiting their communities and the Great Lakes ecosystem.”

With support from the Great Lakes Protection Fund, RISC was founded in February 2020 by Sanjiv K. Sinha, Ph.D., CEO of Corvias Infrastructure Solutions, LLC (CIS). Its partners included collaborators from across the country, including Florida-based Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. (ECT), California-based HIP Partners, New York based climate-action nonprofit CDP, Chicago-based community-expert Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), and think/action-tank The Delta Institute, and Ann Arbor area based American Society of Adaptation Professionals (ASAP).

“RISC was designed to evolve as a networking platform to bring Great Lakes community visionaries in the same room, to advance the development and use of new models for infrastructure delivery, investment, financing, and asset management,” said Sinha, “Over the past three years, the Cluster has grown to nearly thirty active members across the Great Lakes states, and is credited with many state-of-the-art reports and two initiatives that have resulted in well over \$100 Million of impact investments in the region. At this stage, it needs leadership from a leading social innovation network like the Exchange, and I am really delighted to assist with the process”.

“With calls for regionalization of water systems and watershed scale planning for stormwater management, it makes sense for the Exchange to add a regional focus to its work”, said Barbara Hopkins, Executive Director of the Exchange, “It is our fervent hope to grow and strengthen the RISC network, making it a model that can be replicated regionally across North America”.

“The focus on climate change, equity and holistic urban resilience in cities and communities is essential, and RISC has played a wonderful role in connecting dots, both ideas as well as relationships,” said Ron Harris, urban resilience ambassador, and Regional Lead, North America for *Resilient Cities Network*, and member of the leadership cluster for RISC. “Building on the successes and learning from the challenges of one community to the next are key to improved effectiveness and overall success in cities. I believe working under a national umbrella will facilitate and amplify these vital connections.”

Further details on RISC’s work can be accessed at www.risc.solutions.

The **Great Lakes Protection Fund** is a permanent, private, not-for-profit corporation that launches innovative solutions to improve the health of the Great Lakes. Since 1989, the Fund has awarded more than \$90 million in support to catalyze the continuous development of new technologies and practical regional actions to improve the health of the Great Lakes. Learn more about the Fund: <http://glpf.org/>.

Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange (Exchange) is a social innovation network and community of practice that activates local governments and water agencies in the U.S. and Canada to implement green stormwater infrastructure equitably.

Corvias Infrastructure Solutions, LLC (CIS), is a national leader in the development and implementation of public infrastructure solutions, focusing on improving the environmental, economic, and social condition of the nation's infrastructure through solutions that drive local economic inclusion and equity, reduction of public risk, and increased community investment and buy-in. CIS also offers related advisory expertise and services on topics including nature-based solutions, climate resilience, disaster prevention, environmental equity/justice, green stormwater infrastructure, environmental finance, water affordability, and public trust.