

Federal fiscal year 2013 (September 30, 2012 to October 21, 2013) was fraught with challenges, including: the President's Campaign to Cut Waste, Sequestration, the Federal Government shutdown (furlough), and the uncertainty surrounding streamgage funding. The USGS met targeted reductions and staff worked diligently to recover from the extended government furlough. We are also hopeful an increase in funding for the National Streamflow Information Program will help stabilize streamgage funding in the future – stay tuned. This quarter's newsletter will focus on some important science that we're doing in the Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and St. Lawrence Seaway watersheds as part of President's [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#) (GLRI).

In 2009 President Obama proposed and Congress supported implementation of a GLRI. It includes a concerted and coordinated effort by numerous Federal, States, and local agencies as well as Tribes, and universities. The most significant issues are identified in [the action plan](#) and are grouped into five focus areas, including: (1) cleaning up toxics and areas of concern (AOCs); (2) combating invasive species; (3) promoting nearshore health by protecting watersheds from polluted runoff; (4) restoring wetlands and other habitats; and (5) tracking progress, implementing education and outreach programs, and working with strategic partners. Lots of great information about the GLRI program and its accomplishments can be found on-line at <http://greatlakesrestoration.us/> and <http://cida.usgs.gov/glri/>.

The New York Water Science Center--*together with our GLRI partners*--are providing the science to promote nearshore health, assess ecosystem health and recovery in relation to established criteria, and protect watersheds from polluted runoff. Specifically, we're involved with a number of projects that include:

- [Development of an innovative statistical method, which provides beach managers with a quick and easy way to determine if their beach is safe for swimming](#);
- Evaluation of how cleanup efforts have improved the health of benthic and phytoplankton communities in the [St. Lawrence/Massena, Rochester Embayment](#), Eighteenmile Creek, and Niagara River, and;
- Water-quality sampling and monitoring at locations along the Genesee, Oswego, and Cattaraugus rivers --constituents analyzed for include nutrients, emerging contaminants, and viruses..

Please visit the project summary pages or the New York Water Science Center website (ny.water.usgs.gov) for more information about these, or any of our other ongoing scientific projects. And, don't hesitate to email me or my staff for more information.