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## **\$300,000 in Grants Boost Fish Creek Sediment Reduction Project**

Northland College's Burke Center Nears Key Restoration Milestones

**Ashland, Wis., January 23, 2025** – The Mary Griggs Burke Center for Freshwater Innovation at Northland College has announced a significant milestone in its efforts to protect the North Fish Creek watershed. With an additional \$300,000 in funding secured from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), the center's ambitious sediment reduction project moves closer to achieving its long-term goals. The new grant funding, secured by Matt Hudson, the Burke Center's Associate Director-Great Lakes, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, builds on \$500,000 in GLRI funding received last year. The \$800,000 total investment will fully fund implementation of two Phase 3 restoration projects.

The ongoing work on North Fish Creek, a vital tributary to Lake Superior's Chequamegon Bay, has been transformative. In September 2024, the center completed construction of the first of two new restoration sites planned for Phase 3 of the project. This effort restored 2,375 feet of stream channel, which is expected to prevent an estimated 1,500 tons of sediment from eroding into the stream annually. The restoration also enhances habitat for fish and other aquatic life, strengthening the ecological health of the region.

Looking ahead, the second part of Phase 3 is set to begin in the summer of 2025. Once completed, the combined work from this phase and previous phases will achieve approximately two-thirds of the Burke Center's sediment reduction target for the Fish Creek watershed. This ambitious project underscores the center's commitment to protecting and improving freshwater ecosystems for future generations.

"The North Fish Creek Sediment Reduction Project is a testament to the power of collaboration and commitment," said Matt Hudson. "This additional funding allows us to continue making tangible, lasting improvements to the watershed and the broader Chequamegon Bay region."

An integral part of the Burke Center's efforts is the integration of student learning into its conservation initiatives. Northland College students play an active role in the North Fish Creek Sediment Reduction Project, participating in fieldwork, data collection, and monitoring efforts alongside faculty and researchers. These hands-on opportunities not only deepen students' understanding of environmental science but also equip them with practical skills that prepare them for careers in conservation, policy, and research. From observing restoration processes in real time, to analyzing sediment samples in the lab, students gain invaluable experience that bridges classroom learning with real-world impact.

By reducing excess sedimentation, the project supports cleaner water, healthier habitats, and better recreational and economic opportunities for the local community. The Burke Center's

work also highlights the importance of sustained investment in freshwater conservation, offering a model for how regional efforts can contribute to the overall health of the Great Lakes.

The Mary Griggs Burke Center for Freshwater Innovation invites the community to follow the project's progress and learn more about its impact.

Visit [northland.edu/centers/mgbc](http://northland.edu/centers/mgbc) for updates and additional information.

The Northland College Mary Griggs Burke Center for Freshwater Innovation focuses on scientific research, communication, and thought leadership on water issues in the Great Lakes region and beyond. Aiming to increase water literacy, the center houses a robust student research program and conducts research studies and public outreach. The Burke Center also offers a professional lab and many other services for external partners.

Northland College is a private environmental liberal arts college located just blocks away from Lake Superior in Ashland, Wisconsin. Founded in 1892, the College adopted a bold new mission and made history in 1974 as the first college in the country to fully integrate an environmental focus with its liberal arts curriculum. Today, Northland College is a powerful and intimate learning community of about three hundred students from across the United States and beyond.

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