

Protecting the Midwest's Wild & Natural Places



**ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
& POLICY CENTER**

The Midwest is full of rich beauty and natural resources, from the Great Lakes to the Great Plains. When these special places are threatened by logging, mining, pollution, and sprawl, ELPC works with local partners to protect our wild resources for people and the planet.

GREAT LAKES

As the largest surface freshwater system on earth, the Great Lakes provide drinking water to 42 million people and support a vibrant economy, but these mighty lakes are also facing threats from all sides. ELPC is a watchdog for the Great Lakes, keeping an eye on major polluting facilities, and holding states and U.S. EPA accountable for enforcement. We are fighting to stop toxic algae in Lake Erie by addressing agricultural runoff in upstream Ohio. We are working to protect the lakes from oil spills, secure funding for local conservation efforts, and build climate-resilient shoreline communities.



“Every dollar spent on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative will produce at least \$3.35 of additional economic activity in the Great Lakes Region”

— Binalational Great Lakes Commission Study, 2018



MICHIGAN WILDERNESS

Working with local communities and wildlife professionals, ELPC has identified four areas that meet federal standards for wilderness designation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Adding onto the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness Area would create a contiguous area of almost 17,000 acres, while the three new areas identified would protect nearly 50,000 acres. Wilderness designation will ensure these precious resources are protected for generations to come.





DRIFTLESS AREA

The Driftless Area spans four states along the Mississippi River, with rolling hills, karst geology, and a diverse economy built on family agriculture and outdoor recreation. ELPC is working with local organizations to protect and restore the largest contiguous area of fish and wildlife habitat remaining in the central United States. We are fighting an unnecessary 17-story transmission line from plowing through the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, and we are rebuilding the Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative to reduce erosion, restore streams, and help farmers invest in regenerative practices.

MIDWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie's 18,225 acres of native plants and wildlife are frequently threatened by development. Despite resistance from the local farming community, Will County, Illinois is often floated as the location for future highways, logistics facilities, and even an airport. ELPC has been fighting these boondoggles for years to protect this unique prairie ecosystem.

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**“The Upper Mississippi
Refuge protects
important habitat and
stop-over grounds for
migratory birds.
Erecting a high-voltage
transmission line that
cuts through this
migratory path would
be detrimental to
these birds.”**

— George Meyer,
Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

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**“Bottom line is we do
not want or see a need
for a new highway...
there are better and
less costly options.”**

— Mark Nowotarski,
Indiana resident on protecting the
Hoosier National Forest

NORTHWOODS WISCONSIN

Protecting more than 1.5 million acres of Wisconsin's Northwoods, the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is home to rich biodiversity, including threatened and endangered species. Increased logging threatens to disturb maturing forest habitats, degrade recreation, and harm struggling species. ELPC works with scientists and local partners to monitor timber sales and litigate to stop particularly destructive projects.

HOOSIER NATIONAL FOREST

The proposed Mid-States Corridor highway project threatens to cut a wide swath of destruction through the forests of southwest Indiana, despite evidence that traffic has declined in the area. ELPC is working with the Hoosier Environmental Council and local leaders to encourage upgrades to existing transportation infrastructure instead.