



Great Lakes Protection Fund

1560 Sherman Avenue, Suite 1370, Evanston, Illinois 60201

Tel 847-425-8150 Fax 847-424-9832 [glpf.org](http://glpf.org)

### Funded Project

# Advancing Systematic and Fundamental Changes in Agricultural Water Resources Management

---

Project No.	1112
Timeline	2016 – Active
Award Amount	\$1,135,000
Team Leader	Kieser & Associates, LLC

---

A team led by Kieser & Associates will reshape traditional agricultural operations by demonstrating approaches that merge drainage management authority objectives with conservation services that follow circular economy principles. The project aims to improve water quality, rebuild soil health and increase crop resiliency, while benefiting farm economics and creating new business opportunities throughout the region.

Agricultural landowners in legal drainage districts must pay assessments to maintain and improve the public drainage systems that serve them. These assessments are generally based purely on acreage and/or linear extent of the adjacent drainage. This project will test new methods for calculating drain assessments that reward farmers who implement land management practices that improve soil and water quality. This adaptive drain fee assessment model presents the opportunity to test market-based approaches that work in support of the model.

In addition to a new drainage fee assessment that will be tested in Van Buren County, Michigan and in the St. Joseph River Basin in Indiana, the team will test two other treatment approaches – an innovative phosphorus filter technology and a new compost application. These pilots will yield information on both water quality benefits and economic opportunities associated with phosphorus capture. The project will create and propel a community of practice that includes drainage district authorities, conservation managers, agricultural retailers, commodity buyers, farmers, and food waste generators that will extend this work beyond the initial Great Lakes pilot locations.