



Great Lakes Protection Fund

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## Funded Project

# Expanding Ag Retailer Roles in Resource Management

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Project No.	1066
Timeline	2015 – 2018
Award Amount	\$759,000
Team Leader	IPM Institute of North America
Project Website	<a href="http://partnershipfarm.org/">http://partnershipfarm.org/</a>

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This project built upon the team's successes in a [prior-supported project](#) where they tested an ambitious idea of disrupting the agricultural (ag) retailer business model in the Great Lakes region. They developed new revenue-generating conservation products and successfully activated a network of agricultural retailers in the Sandusky River watershed to sell those products and to eliminate over 18,000 pounds of dissolved reactive phosphorus runoff in one year. In this project, IPM Institute set out to prove that retailers can make a profit selling products and services that improve water quality; and that they no longer have to be tied to a business model that relies on inefficient practices that degrade waters and lead to diminishing financial returns. At the time, this team was one of

the first to consider ag retailers as a valuable ally in the fight to reduce nutrient pollution in the Great Lakes.

Leading a team of ag retailers and crop advisors, farmers, watershed organizations, non-profits, and academics, the team expanded their work across the Great Lakes, keeping nearly 2 million pounds of dissolved reactive phosphorus and over seven million pounds of total phosphorus out of the Great Lakes through the sales of products and services over the duration of the grant.

This effort was the most extensive of its kind in the Great Lakes to work directly with ag retailers.

To better reach retailers, the team created the Partnership for Ag Resource Management (or PARM) that is a brand, website, educational resource and a membership service all in one. The team used, and improved upon, the innovative tools they developed in the prior project that included: a popular [Phosphorus Loss Reduction Handbook](#); phosphorus loss [wallet cards](#); "sell sheets" to improve retailer effectiveness in marketing key conservation products; phosphorus vulnerability maps for the Maumee, Lower Fox and Saginaw Bay watersheds; and a unique nutrient calculator that allows retailers to estimate site-specific nutrient loss reduction and profit estimates for specific products and services at field level.