

# Freshwater and the Great Lakes Economic Future - The Economic Benefits of Restoring the Great Lakes

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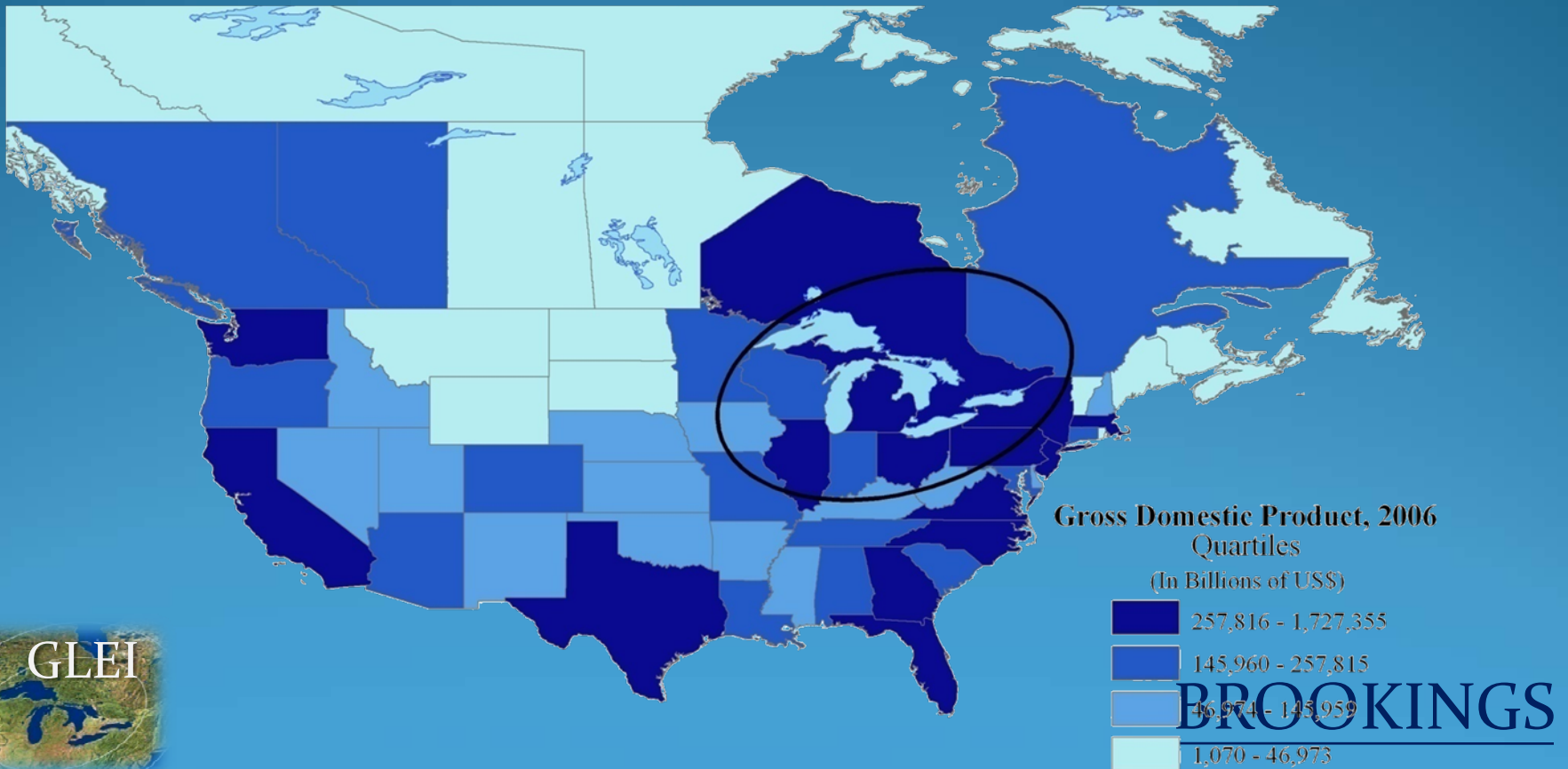




# Water as Resource



# 'Coasts' have supported population and economic growth

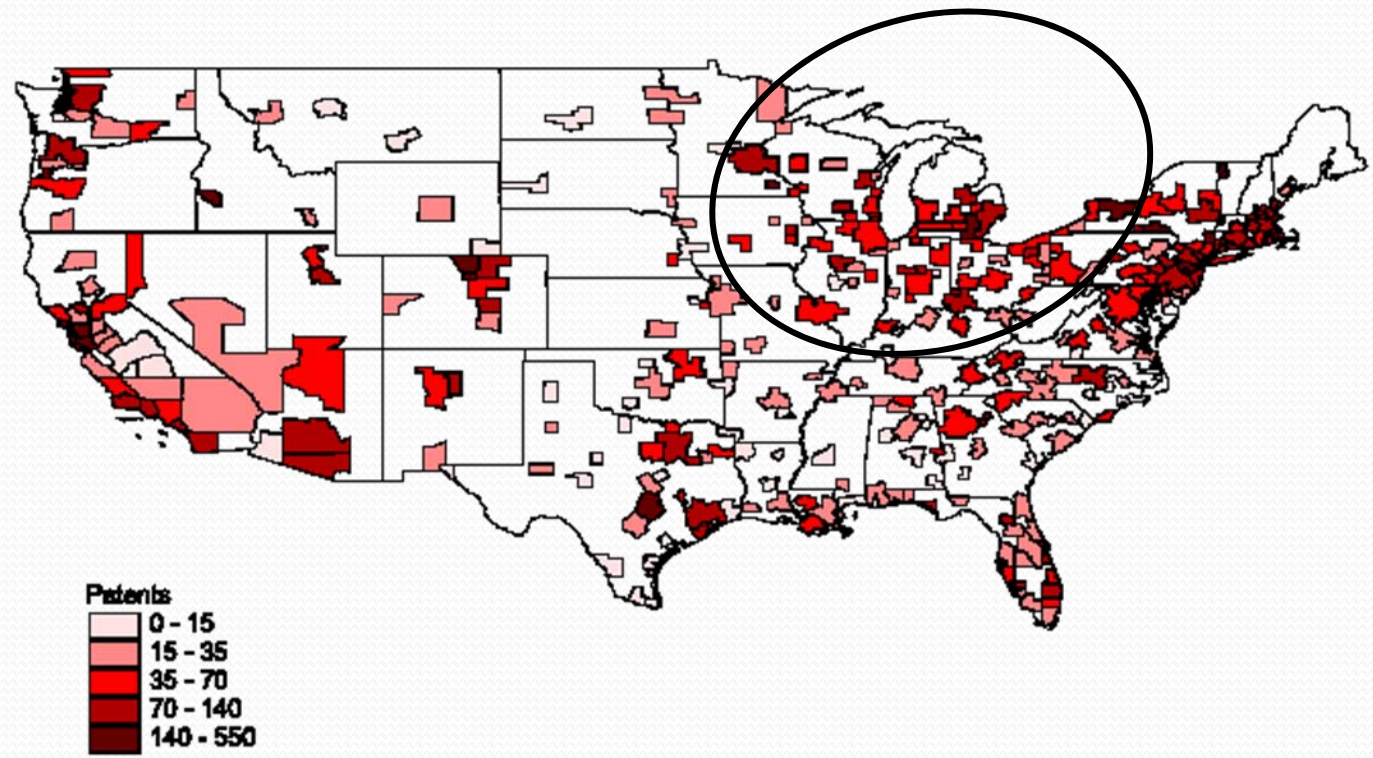




# Today, innovation trumps natural resource location

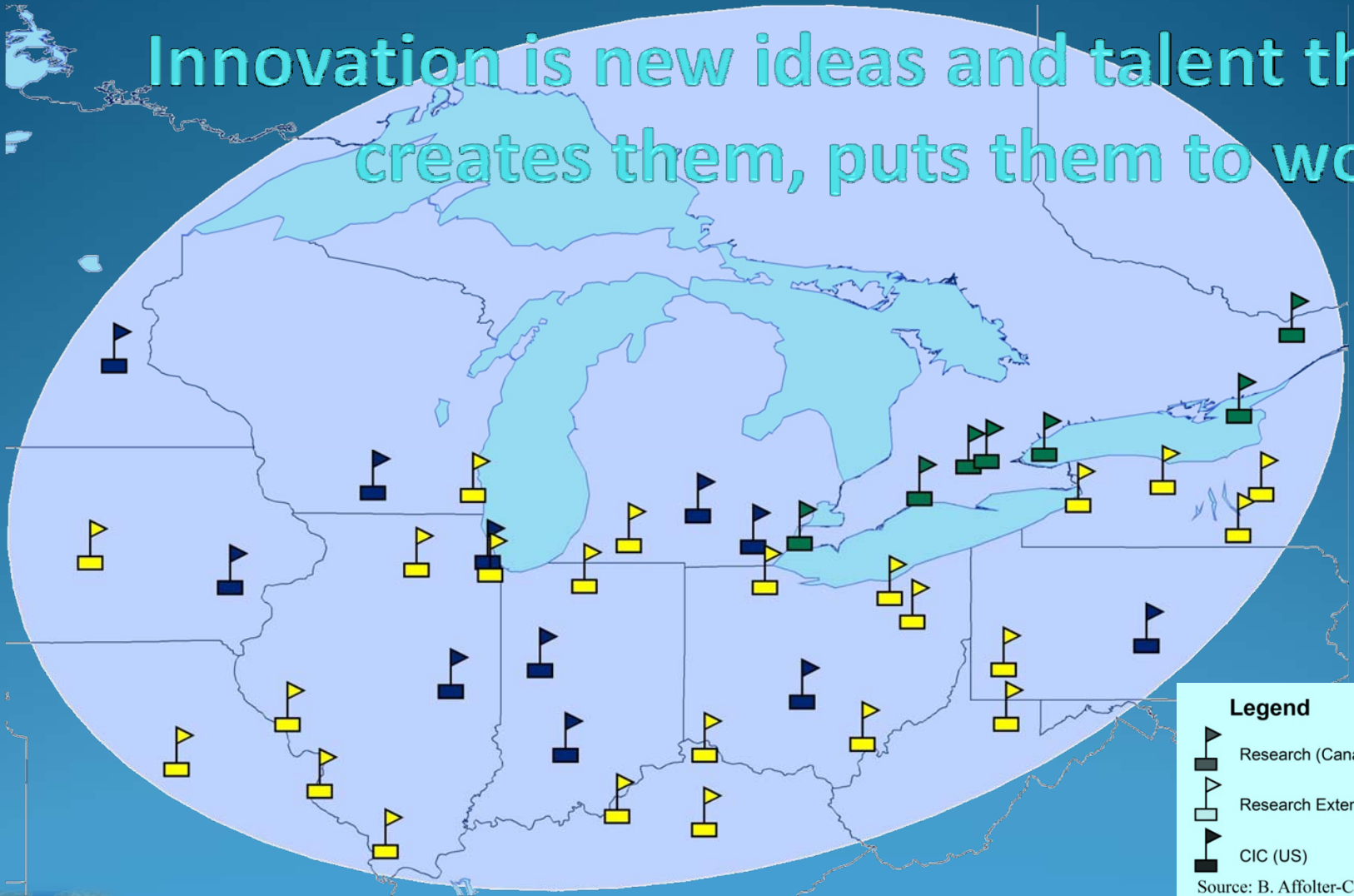
Patents per  
100,000 Jobs,  
1999

Source: A. Reamer, L. Icerman and J. Youtie,  
*Technology Transfer and Commercialization:  
Their Role in Economic  
Development, 2003*





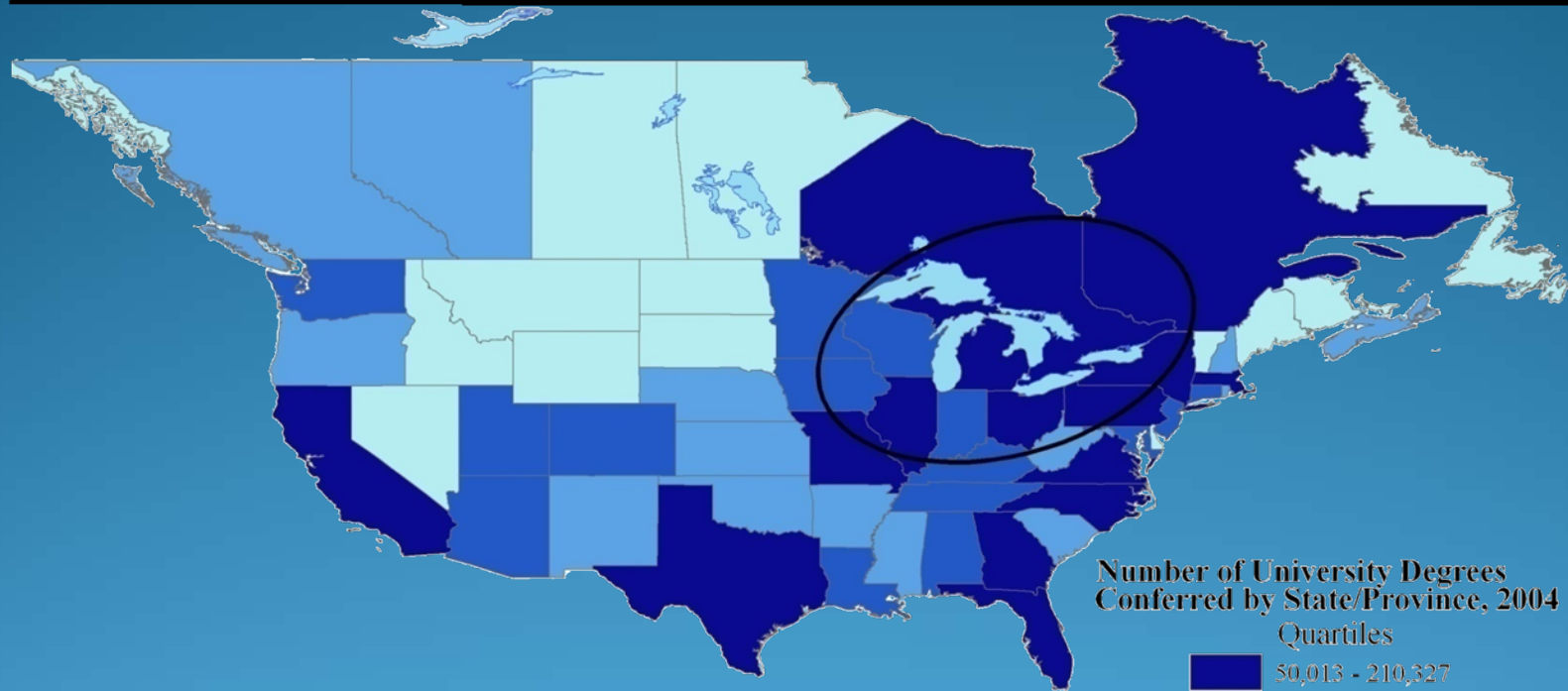
Innovation is new ideas and talent that creates them, puts them to work



Source: B. Affolter-Caine, 2007

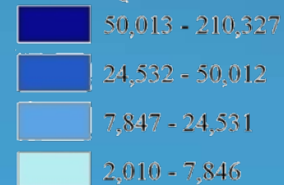


# Learning institutions produce new ideas, talent, and local culture



Number of University Degrees Conferred by State/Province, 2004

Quartiles



Source: Authors' analysis of data from CANISM 2004; National Digest of Education Statistics, 2004



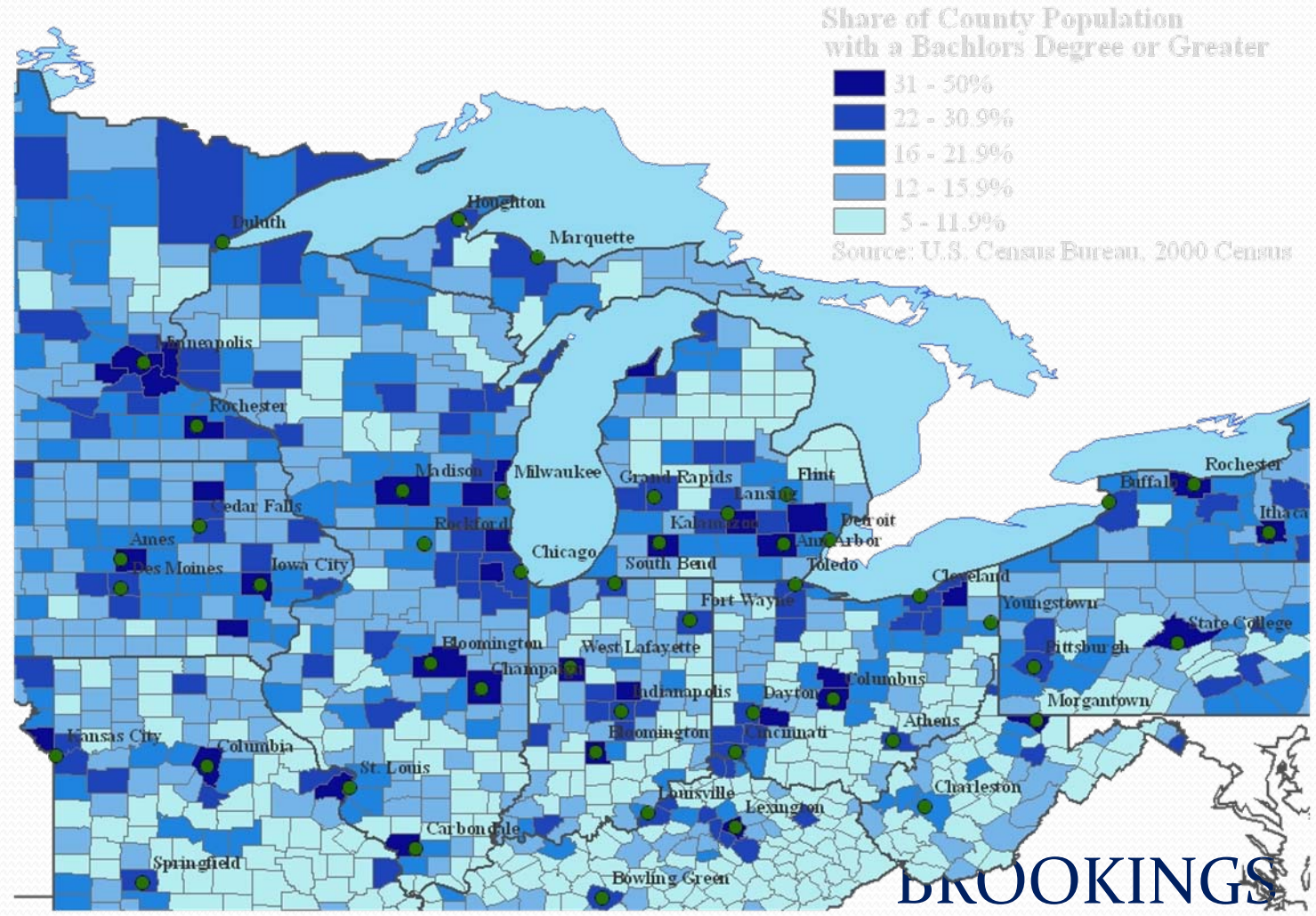
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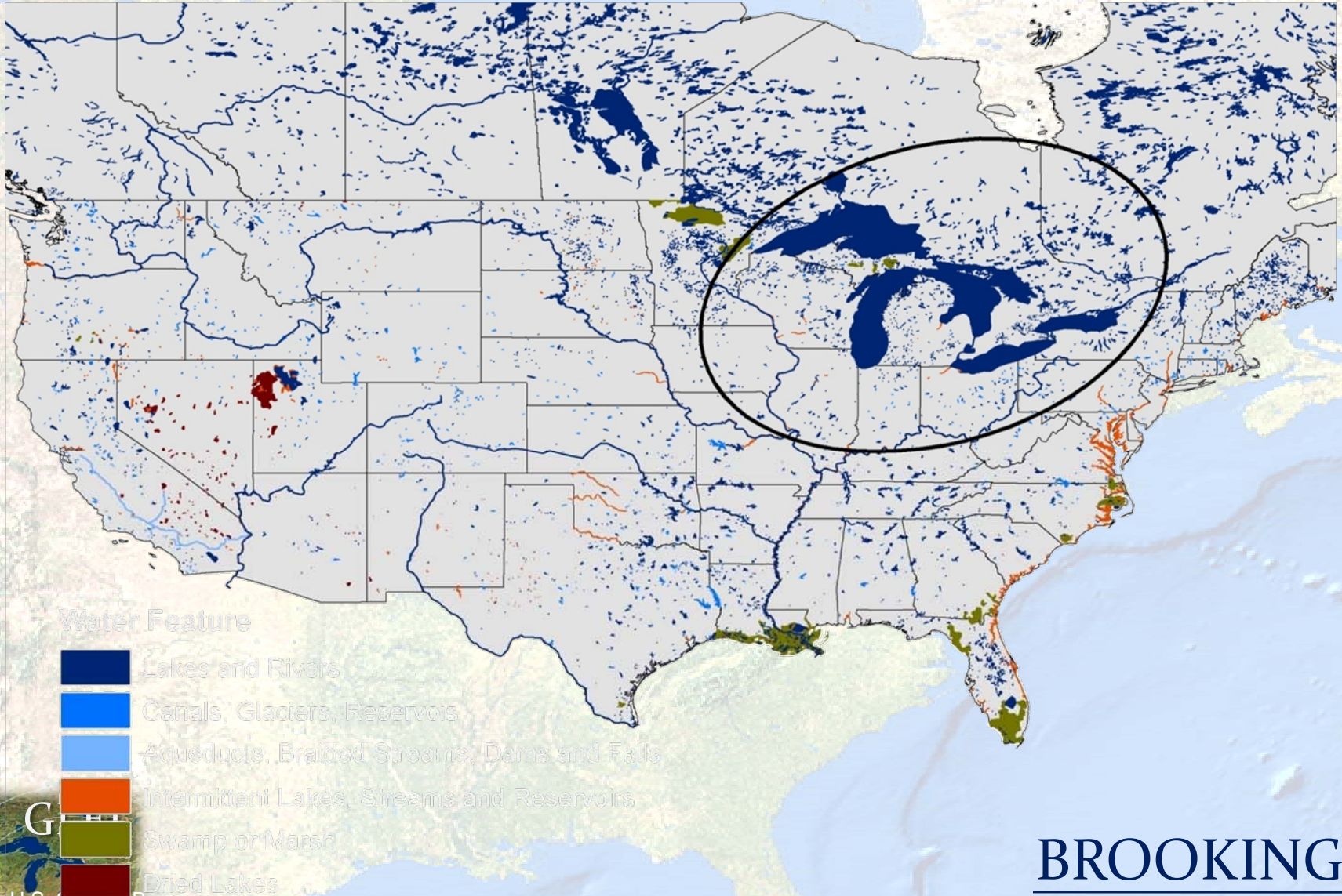


# New economy means bigger metros, talent centers, and places with unique place quality...thrive

Share of County Population with a Bachelors' Degree or Greater, 2000



# Water matters powerfully in new and different ways



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# Water becomes new economy infrastructure

An aerial photograph of a river valley. The river is a prominent blue line winding through a landscape of green and brown hills. The terrain appears to be a mix of forested areas and open land. The lighting suggests a bright day, with some shadows cast by the hills.

**Available to support sustainable population growth**

**Adds “magic” to other tangible amenities = special place**

**Recreation/Tourism**

**Water-Based Development**

**Freshwater ‘resourcefulness’ as economic good -- research, education, stewardship tools and technologies**



# *Part of new economy backdrop*

- Waterfronts
- Transit/Transport
- Historic Buildings
- Urban Streets
- Civic and Cultural Institutions
- Medical, education institutions
- Design, finance, market, engineering, media work



If it is not toxic, noxious, or on fire

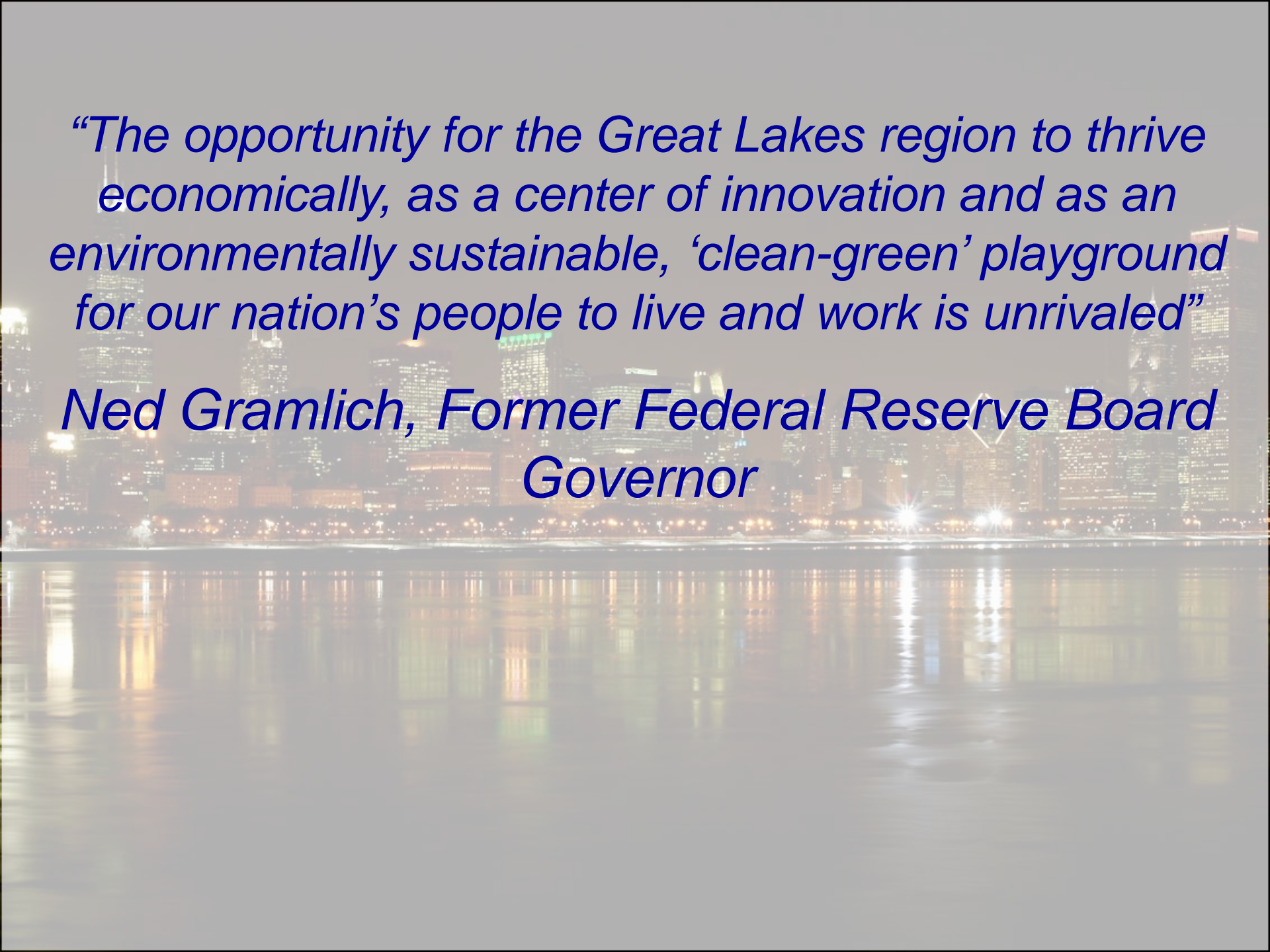




Rust Belt can become “Freshwater Coast”



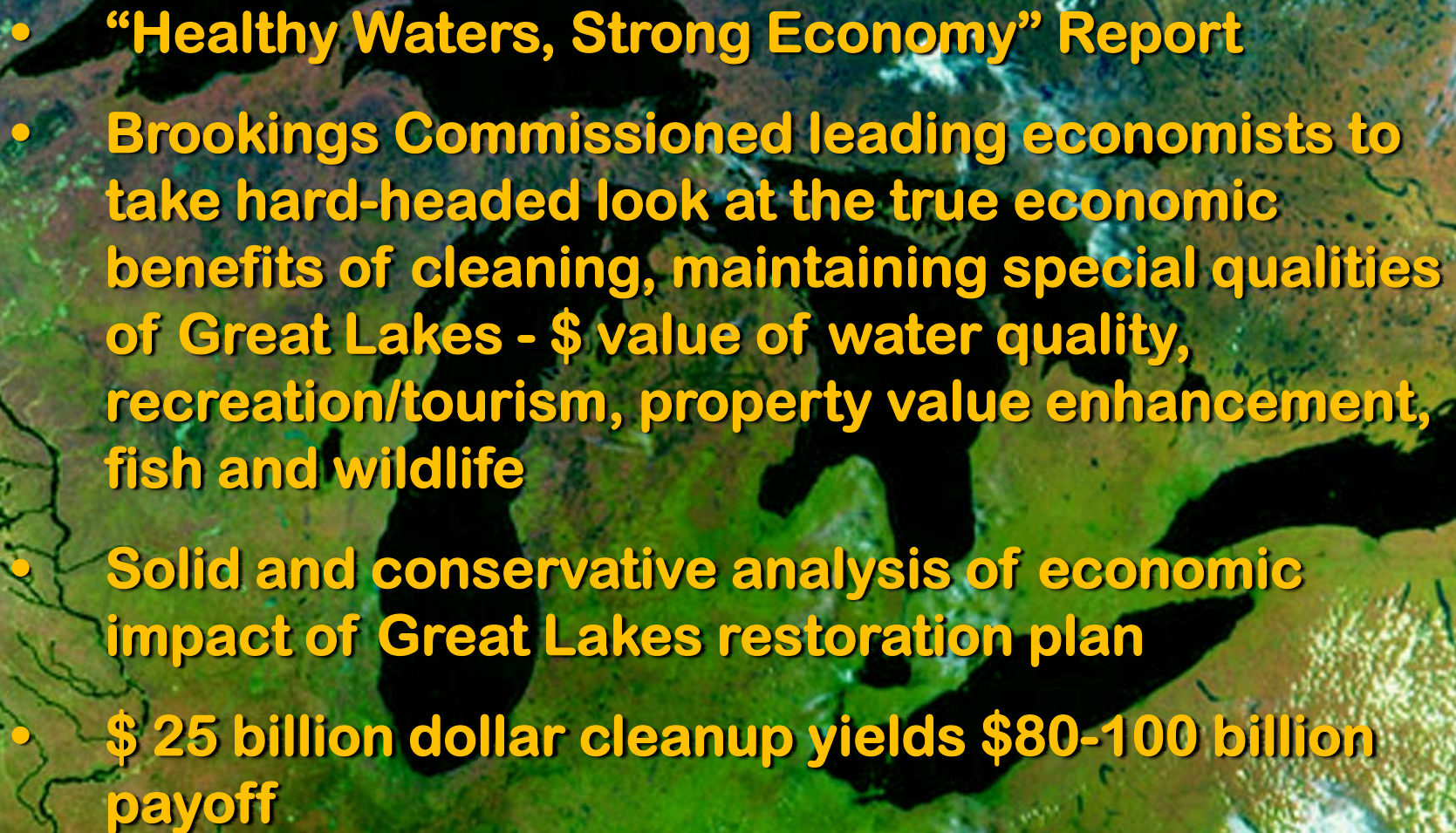


A nighttime photograph of a city skyline, likely Chicago, with numerous skyscrapers illuminated and their lights reflecting on a body of water in the foreground. The scene is dimly lit, with the city lights providing the primary illumination.

*“The opportunity for the Great Lakes region to thrive economically, as a center of innovation and as an environmentally sustainable, ‘clean-green’ playground for our nation’s people to live and work is unrivaled”*

*Ned Gramlich, Former Federal Reserve Board  
Governor*

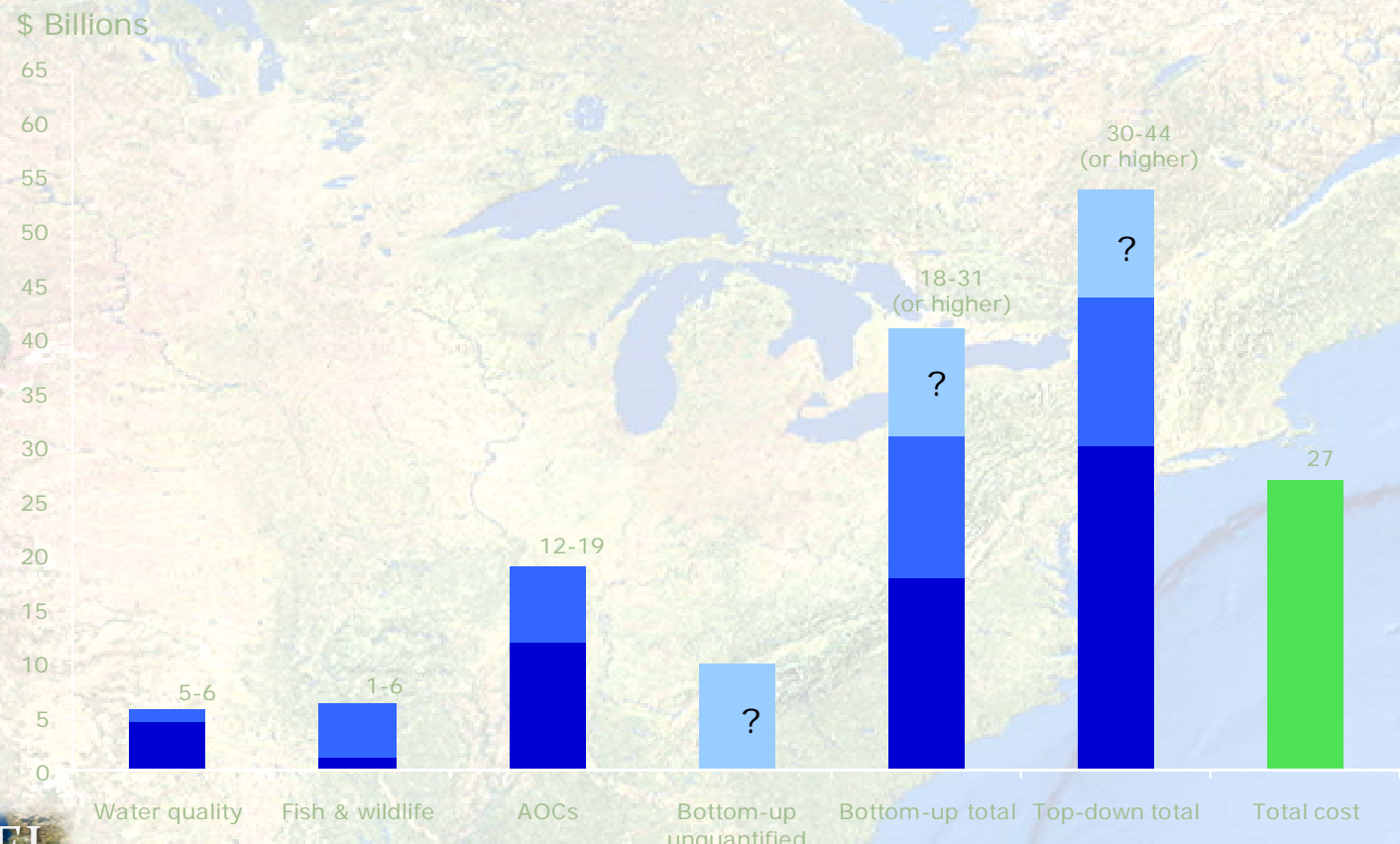


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- An aerial photograph of the Great Lakes basin in North America, showing the five large lakes (Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario) and the surrounding land. A black silhouette of the Great Lakes basin is overlaid on the image. The text is presented as a bulleted list in yellow font.
- **“Healthy Waters, Strong Economy” Report**
  - **Brookings Commissioned leading economists to take hard-headed look at the true economic benefits of cleaning, maintaining special qualities of Great Lakes - \$ value of water quality, recreation/tourism, property value enhancement, fish and wildlife**
  - **Solid and conservative analysis of economic impact of Great Lakes restoration plan**
  - **\$ 25 billion dollar cleanup yields \$80-100 billion payoff**





# \$ 80-100 Billion Economic Benefits for \$26 Billion Cost





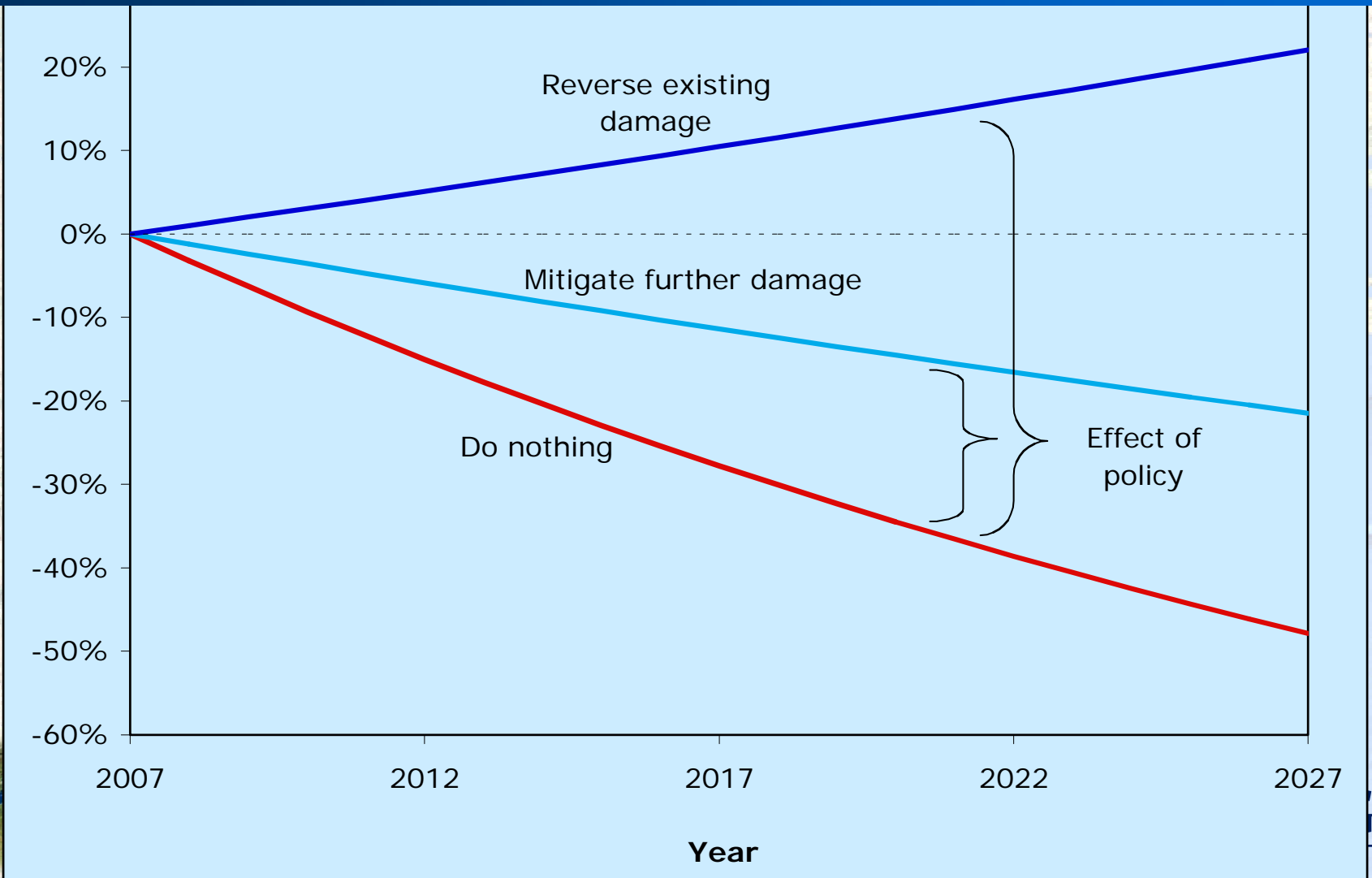
## **Additional non-quantifiable, but real benefits**

- **Lower fish contamination levels - species health & survival**
- **Avoided invasive costs**
- **Fewer algae blooms**
- **Human health, less sickness, life-spans**
- **Avoided engineering costs, sediment dredging, removal, & disposal**
- **Less erosion and less severe flooding**
- **Enhanced groundwater supply**
- **Freshwater technology jobs and business development**
- **Quality of life enhancement value**
- **Nonuse Values**





# Benefits flow from reversing damage, enhancing assets







*Including billions for  
major Metropolitan  
Areas in Great Lakes*

Cleveland



Milwaukee



Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program

[www.brookings.edu/metro](http://www.brookings.edu/metro)

# The Great Lakes Economic Initiative

[www.brookings.edu/projects/great-lakes.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/projects/great-lakes.aspx)



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