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April 26, 2023

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Moonshot Missions Awarded $1.2 Million to Improve Wastewater Treatment in The Great Lakes

Utilities in the Great Lakes Region will develop pathways for transformative change achieving environmental compliance and delivering cleaner waterways

BETHESDA, MD | Moonshot Missions was recently awarded a $1,215,000 contract by the Great Lakes Protection Fund to help improve the management of stormwater and sewage in the Great Lakes Region. Moonshot will work in partnership with utility leaders in Great Lakes communities to identify, plan and implement state-of-the-art treatment technologies and management approaches to reduce wastewater impacts in the Great Lakes.

Water systems are aging throughout the Great Lakes region and across the U.S. These vulnerable systems are even more at risk in a changing climate. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides over $50 billion a year for water infrastructure, a majority through the State Revolving Funds (SRFs). This funding presents a generational opportunity for the Great Lakes communities to upgrade their systems. However, it presents a challenge: understaffed and underfunded utilities rarely have the time, expertise, or funding to gain access to federal and state loans or grants.

Moonshot has identified six key stakeholder communities, Toledo, Akron, Lima, and Defiance in Ohio; Gary in Indiana and a pending sixth community in Michigan to pilot a replicable transformation process to both improve their operating procedures as well as invest in innovative practices to increase efficiency and lower costs. Moonshot’s Method involves the assessment, identification, selection, and development of technically and financially sound projects that transform struggling utilities.

George Hawkins, President and Founder of Moonshot Missions, states, “Our work in this project will inform the development of Moonshot modules to standardize key improvements that are relevant to most utilities and help each utility gain access to financing opportunities available through State Revolving Funds, as well as other federal funding mechanisms”.
This pilot program will be expanded to 25 communities through a “community of practice” engagement network. Moonshot Managing Director Andy Kricun says, “Through a peer-to-peer network, the community of practice will enable utility leaders to broadly adopt and apply the Moonshot model practices implemented in each of the six stakeholder communities to their own utilities”.

A decrease in wastewater pollution will have significant positive effects on the water quality in the Great Lakes. Key insights and lessons from this project will be disseminated across the region through Moonshot’s Great Lakes Clean Water Community of Practice Network, ensuring positive environmental outcomes are achieved throughout the Great Lakes ecosystem.

“Moonshot expects to share the water systems’ successes in launching themselves on a path to achieving the following goals: becoming exemplary community anchors, delivering cleaner waterways, inspiring a new and diverse workforce, supporting new businesses, providing resilient wastewater services, and delivering these outcomes in the most affordable manner possible,” says George Hawkins.

**Moonshot Missions**

Moonshot Missions Inc. (Moonshot) is a 501c3 non-profit founded in 2018 based on the core principle that all people have a right to safe, accessible, and affordable drinking water and clean waterways. Moonshot delivers on this by working collaboratively with disadvantaged communities of any size to bridge their lack of resources. Moonshot serves as trusted peer advisors to underserved communities to assess, identify, select, and develop technically and financially sound projects that transform struggling utilities.