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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Eight Historic Lighthouses to Receive Aid  
from "Save Our Lights" License Plate Fund**

Michigan State Housing Development Authority executive director Keith Molin and State Historic Preservation Officer Brian Conway announced more than \$200,000 in lighthouse preservation grants to eight organizations for 2010.

The Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program is funded by proceeds from the sale of the "Save our Lights" license plate. Lighthouse grants are given to state and local governments or nonprofit organizations that are maintaining or rehabilitating a lighthouse. Recipients must provide 50 percent of the grant award as matching funds. The State Historic Preservation Office administers the program.

"Michigan has more lighthouses than any other state and these beacons have become symbols of the Great Lake State," noted Molin. "We have funds to contribute to the rehabilitation of these important structures due to the people who understand the significance of lighthouses and who are willing to pay an extra fee for a Save our Lights license plate."

Conway added, "Since 2000 the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program has awarded nearly \$1.5 million in grants to rehabilitate lighthouses along our shorelines and in remote offshore locations. Each one is unique and represents Michigan's rich maritime past."

The Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program was established to assist in the preservation, rehabilitation, and protection of lighthouses in Michigan. The program arose from a concern about the disposal of over 70 lighthouses in Michigan by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Fiscal Year 2010 Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (MLAP) grant recipients include the following projects.

- **\$30,000 – Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association – Cheboygan River Front Range Lighthouse**

The GLLKA will repair and rehabilitate the foundation and porch piers of the lighthouse as recommended in an engineering study that was also funded with a previous MLAP grant. This is part of an ongoing rehabilitation of the Cheboygan River Front Range Lighthouse.

- **\$40,000 – Port Huron Museum of Arts & History – Fort Gratiot Light Station**

The U. S. Coast Guard continues to own the Fort Gratiot Light Station, which is in the process of being transferred to St. Clair County. The Port Huron Museum of Arts and History will replace roofing on the Fog Signal building and the Single Keeper's Building. It will also repair the roof of the Keeper's Duplex, repair the chimney of the Equipment Building, and repair lintels and windows of the Single Keeper's Building.

- **\$5,000 – Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum – Grand Traverse Lighthouse**

A previous grant funded new windows in the lighthouse and fog signal building. This grant will assist with funds for new doors for the lighthouse and fog signal building.

- **\$20,000 – Gull Rock Lightkeepers – Gull Rock Lighthouse**

The Gull Rock Lightkeepers are rehabilitating the interior of the lighthouse. A previous grant funded the preparation of plans and specifications for the rehabilitation project.

- **\$40,000 – Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment – Little Sable Point Light Station**

The DNRE will hire a consultant to prepare a historic structures report for the Little Sable Light Station. This report will guide future maintenance and/or rehabilitation of the structure and site.

- **\$26,666 – Peninsula Township - Old Mission Lighthouse**

Peninsula Township will hire a consultant to prepare a historic structures report for the Old Mission Point Light Station. This report will guide future maintenance and/or rehabilitation of the structure.

- **\$16,000 – Huron County – Pointe Aux Barques Lighthouse**

The county will restore the original third order Fresnel lens for the Pointe Aux Barques Lighthouse, which is now a museum.

- **\$40,000 – Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society – Whitefish Point Lighthouse**

The GLSHS will hire a contractor to professionally rehabilitate the light tower below the lantern room and strip and paint all surfaces. A previous MLAP grant rehabilitated the top of the light tower.

You can support the preservation of Michigan's lighthouses by purchasing a "Save Our Lights" license plate through the Secretary of State.

The Michigan Lighthouse Alliance will host the 2010 Great Lakes Lighthouse Preservation Conference June 14-17 at the Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City. Go to [www.michiganlighthousealliance.org](http://www.michiganlighthousealliance.org) for details.

The State Historic Preservation Office is part of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority is dedicated to building a thriving and vibrant future for Michigan. MSHDA provides tools and resources to improve people's lives through programs across the state. These programs assist with housing, build strong neighborhoods, and help create places where people want to live and work. MSHDA's programs work in four areas: affordable rental housing; supporting homeownership; ending homelessness; and creating vibrant cities and neighborhoods. For further information on this or other MSHDA programs, go to [www.michigan.gov/mshda](http://www.michigan.gov/mshda).\*

\*MSHDA's loan and operating expenses are financed through the sale of tax-exempt and taxable bonds as well as notes to private investors, not from state tax revenues. Proceeds are loaned at below-market interest rates to developers of rental housing, and help fund mortgages and home improvement loans. MSHDA also administers several federal housing programs.

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