

## Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund Grants Funded Archive

### 2014 Grants Funded

1. Sustainable Harbors Management Process  
Amount: \$15,000  
End Date: December 31, 2015  
Grantee: The Regents of the University of Michigan  
Project Lead: Dr. Catherine Riseng

Project Description: The grant provided funding to the Regents of the University of Michigan–Michigan Sea Grant to conduct an integrated assessment in collaboration with Lawrence Technological University (LTU) to develop a [Sustainable Small Harbor Management Strategy](#) for Michigan’s coastal communities. This strategy will provide communities with knowledge, tools, and processes to integrate the harbor as a strategic asset into community and economic development plans. The project was initiated to help address the increasing complex issues associated with living on Michigan’s coast, including water level fluctuation and increasing economic constraints. Implementation of this project helped to address the ten-year-long trend of lower water levels combined with the increasing economic constraints that have devastated local economies.

As part of the integrated assessment, LTU conducted community engagement charrette processes in four communities (New Baltimore, Pentwater, Au Gres, and Ontonagon) to assist communities in the development of a shared vision for the harbor and implementation of strategies to realize the vision. The integrated assessment process and case study analysis informed the development of a toolkit and planning resources to guide public harbors in the pursuit of financial sustainability and overall economic, environmental, and social well-being.

### 2016 Grants Funded

1. Sustainable Small Harbors Proof of Concept Community Engagement  
Amount: \$25,000  
End Date: February 28, 2017  
Grantee: Lawrence Technological University  
Project Lead: Dr. Don Carpenter

Project Description: The grant provided funding to the Lawrence Technological University to conduct two proof of concept community visioning sessions (Rogers City and St. Ignace) as part of an integrated assessment in collaboration with Michigan Sea Grant to develop a [Sustainable Small Harbor Management Strategy](#) for Michigan’s coastal communities. This strategy provides communities with knowledge, tools, and processes to integrate the harbor as a strategic asset into community and economic development plans.

This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan’s Water Strategy](#). Implementation of this project helped address the variability of water levels combined with the increasing

economic constraints that have devastated local economies in small harbor towns. The integrated assessment process and proof of concept analysis led to further refinement of a community toolkit and planning resources as well as the development of a financial model to guide public harbors in the pursuit of financial sustainability and overall economic, environmental, and social well-being.

2. Great Lakes Unbridged Island Communities Project

Amount: \$30,000

End Date: September 30, 2017

Grantee: Island Institute

Project Lead: Kate Tagai

Project Description: This grant supported staff from the Island Institute of Maine to collaborate with OGL staff and Great Lakes islands communities to understand the unique challenges of unbridged, year-round islands and develop solutions to support vibrant, resilient coastal communities. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan's Water Strategy](#).

Institute staff participated in multiple knowledge exchange trips with several Great Lakes islands to present convening strategies that have worked in Maine, including the Maine Islands Coalition, fellows programs, and Island Institute's publication about island issues and management strategies. The Island Institute assisted in exploring the creation of a collaborative network of Great Lakes islands communities and was instrumental to the ultimate decision to establish the Great Lakes Islands Alliance.

## 2017 Grants Funded

1. Measuring the Socioeconomic Impacts of Water Restoration Projects: Contributions to Community Vibrancy

Amount: \$122,269

End Date: May 31, 2019

Grantee: Michigan State University

Principal Investigators: Dr. Michelle Rutty and Dr. Lissy Goralnik

Project Description: This research project was part of a two-part effort to develop standard, easily transferable metrics for measuring the effect of water restoration projects on community vibrancy. The metrics will serve two purposes: 1) to measure the ways a community changes after a project has been implemented and 2) to assess the 'readiness' of a community to implement a project before the project is begun or an investment is made. The readiness indicators will demonstrate to the office whether a community has the capacity to implement a water resource project, or whether more targeted investment is needed to increase capacity before a water resource project can begin. In this part of the project, two researchers from Michigan State University conducted case studies in four communities around the state where water resource projects had already been successfully implemented in order to identify common characteristics and capacities. In each community (Alpena, Manistee, Port Huron, and Sault Ste. Marie), the research team conducted interviews, focus groups, and a

community forum. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan's Water Strategy](#).

2. Socioeconomic Indicators of Community Vitality: Research and Case Studies of Coastal Communities in Michigan

Amount: \$100,000

End Date: May 31, 2019

Grantee: Michigan State University

Principal Investigators: Jeremiah Asher and Dr. Mike Thomas

Project Description: This research project was the second part of a two-part effort to develop standard, easily transferable metrics for measuring the effect of water restoration projects on community vibrancy. The metrics will serve two purposes: 1) to measure the ways a community changes after a project has been implemented and 2) to assess the 'readiness' of a community to implement a project before the project is begun or an investment is made. The readiness indicators will demonstrate to the office whether a community has the capacity to implement a water resource project, or whether more targeted investment is needed to increase capacity before a water resource project can begin. In this part, a second team of researchers from Michigan State University used the findings from the first part of the project to develop a suite of easily collected and broadly transferable metrics for measuring community vibrancy and project readiness. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan's Water Strategy](#).

## 2018 Grants Funded

1. Great Lakes Islands Initiative

Amount: \$25,000

End Date: December 31, 2019

Grantee: Islands Institute

Project Lead: Kate Tagai

Project Description: This project built upon earlier efforts to develop a regional network of Great Lakes island communities. The Island Institute of Maine was instrumental in spurring the creation of this network from 2015 to 2017. As the network moved from concept into operation mode, Island Institute staff served as technical advisors to the full network as well as individual member communities. This included advising on the development of the network coordination and communications structure; tactically developing and implementing shared initiatives; supporting the creation of media articles, blogs, or interviews; and serving as facilitators at the annual Islands Summit meetings. This effort led directly to the formation of the [Great Lakes Islands Alliance](#), an organization dedicated to bringing island communities together to encourage relationship building, foster information exchange, and leverage resources to address shared challenges and embrace opportunities to benefit islands. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan's Water Strategy](#).

2. Smart Ships Coalition and Marine Autonomy Research Site Development

Amount: \$50,000

End Date: May 31, 2020

Grantee: Michigan Technological University

Principal Investigators: Dr. Guy Meadows and Travis White

Project Description: This grant provides funding to Michigan Technological University to support formation and development of the [Smart Ships Coalition](#), establishment of an autonomous vehicle testbed facility, the Maritime Autonomy Research Site (MARS), designation of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Region as a hub for advancing autonomous marine technologies. The SSC will provide a network and organizational structure to facilitate autonomous marine vehicle adoption, operations, and technology advancement through information exchange, demonstration, and training, with the MARS test area open to companies, research institutions, government agencies, and others wishing to test and demonstrate autonomous surface and sub-surface vehicles and related technologies. This effort reflects the goals identified in the [Strategy for the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Maritime Transportation](#). The Strategy, which was developed in 2016 by the [Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers](#), identifies autonomous vessels as an important avenue of technological development for the long-term competitiveness of the Maritime Transportation System. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan's Water Strategy](#).

3. Twin Cities Sustainable Harbor Strategy

Amount: \$169,760

End Date: January 31, 2020

Grantee: The Regents of the University of Michigan

Project Lead: Dr. Don Carpenter

Project Description: The grant supported a collaborative effort by Regents of the University of Michigan–Michigan Sea Grant, Drummond Carpenter LLC, the Office of the Great Lakes, St. Joseph Charter Township, the cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, and the Harbor Conservancy to apply the [Small Harbors Sustainability Process](#) and best practices to assist the communities in development of a shared vision, implementation strategy, and governance structure for the Twin Cities Harbor. The project completed a Twin Cities Harbor Visioning Charrette process aimed to bring the three communities together to develop a 20-year shared vision for the harbor. The project was necessary to collect stakeholder opinions, ensure that all voices in the community are heard and incorporated, and generate a preferred alternative for the waterfront based on community engagement, design meetings, and consensus building. In addition, the project supported a facilitated process to assist the communities in development of harbor governance strategies to revitalize the harbor. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan's Water Strategy](#).

## 2019 Grants Funded

1. From Students to Stewards: Fostering Great Lakes Literacy to Improve School Performance

Amount: \$50,000

End Date: August 31, 2021

Grantee: Grand Valley State University

Project Lead: Natalie Lowell

Project Description: The “[From Students to Stewards](#)” pilot project initiative is a collaborative effort involving EGLE’s Office of the Great Lakes, Michigan Department of Education, and the MiStem Network to improve school performance by integrating place-based Great Lakes literacy principles into school curriculum through continuous school improvement plans. “From Students to Stewards” will make progress toward closing the water literacy gap in Michigan and growing the next generation of water stewards, leaders, skilled workers, and decision-makers needed to solve complex water issues in a changing world. Simultaneously, the project will demonstrate how using Great Lakes-focused, place-based, authentic educational opportunities grounded in the whole child model can improve student performance, boost teacher morale, strengthen schools’ continuous improvement processes, and increase student exposure to water resource related careers. GVSU will conduct a competitive process for schools to support field testing of this concept for the 2020-2021 school year for a minimum of five schools. This project is part of the implementation of [Michigan’s Water Strategy](#).