

Michigan Areas of Concern

Project Highlight: Muskegon Lake



Bear Creek Land Acquisition/Restoration | June 2012-Dec. 2013

Project Type: Restoration/Design
Location: Muskegon County



GLRI Funds: \$452,062
Local Match: \$37,389

Project at a Glance

This project involved the purchase, design and restoration for 46 acres of property at a former celery farm in the City of North Muskegon. The engineering

and design for future restoration will be completed in 2013. The project re-establishes wetlands, connecting them to Bear Creek by removing 500 feet of dike.



The benefits of the approach are twofold: The area serves as habitat for fish and wildlife, and improves water quality. The link between the creek's wetlands and lake increases the system's capacity to filter nutrients and sediments entering Bear Lake, which has suffered from significant eutrophication.

The project marks the restoration of 86 percent of the fish and wildlife habitat in the Muskegon Lake Area of Concern. Similar action in the adjacent acreage would complete fish and wildlife habitat restoration there.

In addition to ecological benefits, the project employed local contractors and provides areas for public use, enhancing the quality of life in Muskegon County.

Local Perspective

"The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has been extremely important to Muskegon County in our community work to clean up and restore natural resources. The Bear Creek project is a great example of how the GLRI can bring together a mix of partners to reach our goals to restore fish and wildlife habitat, improve water quality and to de-list the Muskegon Lake Area of Concern. The program is important for our efforts to develop and sustain a blue water economy in the region."

**-Kenneth Mahoney, Chair
Muskegon County Board of Commissioners**



Former celery farm — proposed area for wetland restoration. Picture is facing north.

Partners:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Doug and Marcia Willbrandt, Cardno JFNew, Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership, West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, City of North Muskegon, Muskegon County, Private Landowners, National Wildlife Federation, Grand Valley State University Annis Water Resources Institute, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

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