

Regional Partnerships to Assess Adaptive Responses to Grand Traverse Bay Corridor Water Level Variations

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Our proposed project encompasses over 150 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline: from Elk Rapids, Michigan to the North and East to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore to the South and West. This stretch of shoreline is home to numerous public and private marinas/harbors, several miles of public beach, several hotels and motels, numerous coastal wetlands, a historic working waterfront, a National Park, and 10's of miles of private land ownership. This region sees multiple impacts from fluctuations in Great Lakes water levels.

Funding for a planning grant is requested to convene and engage partners in the Grand Traverse corridor in surveys, interviews and a series of three town hall type stakeholder meetings with invited expert speakers and panelists from science, advocacy, development, education and commerce to discuss Great Lakes water level influences, drivers and impacts. These stakeholder meetings would occur in geographically centered locations serviced by our partners including East Grand Traverse Bay (Acme/Elk Rapids), West Grand Traverse Bay (Traverse City) and the Lake Michigan shoreline (Leland).

The Great Lakes Water Studies Institute at Northwestern Michigan College will lead this effort and will also call upon students in our Freshwater Studies and Marine Technology degree programs. These students will support the development and deployment of a survey, engage in focus group discussions and assist in dissemination of information in support of town hall stakeholder conversations.