



Lake Erie Metropark Habitat Restoration Project

The **Lake Erie Metropark** habitat restoration project will improve habitat for fish and wildlife by naturalizing the Lake Erie shoreline, installing in-water fish habitat, and improving water access to coastal marsh.



Project location along western shoreline of Detroit River

Project Highlights

Restore 1,183 linear feet of hardened shoreline

Restore 1.7 acres of Lake Erie coastal marsh by creating a network of shallow pools and channels

Create habitat for native fish species

Pre and post restoration monitoring activities will take place

Funding is provided by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Great Lakes Commission (GLC)

Huron-Clinton Metroparks is implementing this project

Environmental Benefits

- Enhanced fish and wildlife habitat
- Improved hydrological connectivity

Economic Benefits

- Improved sport fishing
- Tourism
- Recreation

Community Benefits

- Improved shoreline access
- Improved water quality and ecosystem health
- Improved fishing and fish spawning

Background of Lake Erie Metropark



Hardened shoreline before restoration
(Photo by Jill Estrada / GLC)

Located in Brownstown, MI along the western shoreline of Lake Erie, this 1,607-acre Metropark contains 3 miles of shoreline. Coastal wetlands were once extensive at this site, but shoreline armoring and erosion have severely degraded both their extent and quality.

This project will restore and naturalize shoreline by removing rip-rap, establishing vegetation to improve aquatic habitat, and creating low-velocity areas protected from direct wave action adjacent to the restored shoreline. Fish spawning and nursery habitat will be created by developing shallow pools and channels within the park's existing coastal marshes. Historic site conditions will be emulated to address the loss of coastal wetland and shoreline habitat at multiple locations using an ecosystem-based approach with design and vegetation representative of native habitats but also constructed with an eye on anticipated future climate conditions and fluctuation water levels.

These projects will create functional habitats for native fish species use for migration, reproduction, growth, and seasonal refuge by improving a degraded coastal marsh and Lake Erie shoreline. Lake Erie Metropark is permanently protected as an important lake

access point and amenity for multiple nearby communities. The project will help achieve coastal wetland restoration and softening shoreline priority objectives set by the St. Clair-Detroit River System Initiative (www.scdrs.org) by improving the habitat for native species of bird, fish and other wildlife in Michigan's portion of the Western Lake Erie Basin.

Project Progress

Construction for this project began in summer 2022 and is being managed locally by Huron-Clinton Metroparks with project manager GEI. Marsh dredging was completed by Mid-American Group Inc. in October 2022. Shoreline restoration is anticipated to take place from late fall 2022 to spring 2023 followed by post-restoration monitoring occurring in spring 2023.

Funding and Partners

Approximately \$2 million is available for this project through the GLRI, a regional program that is supporting implementation of a comprehensive restoration plan for the Great Lakes. The project funding comes from NOAA through a Regional Partnership with GLC.

For More Information

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