



Great Lakes/Coastal: Great Lakes nearshore

Description

The area of the Great Lakes that range from 3 to 30 meters in depth. This area includes both submergent and emergent aquatic vegetation, but not marshes. Great Lakes are considered to be the Michigan waters of Lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and the connecting waterways of the St. Mary's, St. Clair, and Detroit rivers and Lake St. Clair.

General Condition of Feature

Much of the Great Lakes nearshore area in the Western Upper Peninsula is considered to be of fair, good, or excellent condition. However, some areas are degraded.

Associated Natural Communities

N/A – No defined natural communities

Associated Species of Greatest Conservation Need

BIRDS

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)
Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

BIRDS cont.

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

Associated Threats

HABITAT CONVERSION

- Industrial, residential, and recreational development: Marina and boat dock development may impact this area.

CONSUMPTIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE USE

- Removal of wildlife: Unattended and derelict fishing nets may impact species composition and habitat quality.

NON-CONSUMPTIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE USE

- Non-consumptive recreation: Boating may impact this area.

Conservation Actions Needed [Threats addressed]

LAND, WATER, & SPECIES MANAGEMENT

- Collect and remove derelict fishing nets. [Removal of wildlife]

LAW & POLICY

- Work with municipalities to promote planning and zoning insuring adequate protection for wetlands and shorelines on the Great Lakes. [Industrial, residential, and recreational development]
- Develop and enforce regulations to curtail recreational activities that cause significant damage. [Non-consumptive recreation]

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Provide education to users of fishing nets about the impacts on wildlife of derelict nets. [Removal of wildlife]

RECREATION

- Promote responsible ATV and ORV use. [Non-consumptive recreation]

Research and Survey Needs

- Examine the impacts of dredging, deposition of dredge spoil, recreational use, and commercial fishing on the value of these systems to wildlife.
- Identify invasive species that may degrade the value of nearshore systems for wildlife. Develop techniques to control invasive species. Common invasive species include zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*).
- Assess the impacts of contaminants on the wildlife habitat quality of nearshore systems.
- Inventory current and historic avian staging areas. Identify important bird areas (IBAs) and delineate the characteristics that indicate potential IBAs.

Monitoring

- Track coastal emergent wetland acreage and distribution across the landscape.
- Identify and track floristic composition and diversity.
- Track water level and flow fluctuations and its impacts on vegetation and wildlife.
- Track water chemistry and quality trends.