



2021 GLDT ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 5, 2021

Exploring science-based strategies for
environmental dredging windows in Lake Michigan





Lake Michigan Dredging Windows Symposium (Background)

- Project supported by Great Lakes Fishery Trust along with state and federal partners
- Steering Committee formed in September 2019
- Conference calls/MS Teams meetings held every 4-6 weeks since late 2019
- Symposium (followed by a half-day workshop) were held virtually on April 28-29, 2021



Background (continued)

- Collaboration between GLC, GLDT, state, federal, tribal and regional partners
- Follow up to presentations and discussions held at the 2018 GLDT Annual Meeting
- Symposium designed for state and federal agencies to share up-to-date information on windows and current research on sediment impacts from dredging on the Great Lakes ecosystem
- Geographic scope was Lake Michigan basin



Project Objectives

- Share methodologies, processes, data sources and criteria used to establish windows in the Lake Michigan basin
- Share current scientific research on effects from dredging on water quality, fish spawning habitat, turbidity, and other impacts to the Great Lakes fishery and aquatic habitat
- Facilitate a discussion among the states, federal agencies and other regional interests involved in windows program policy and implementation to explore the potential for a more coordinated, science-based, collaborative approach to establishing environmental windows.



Outcomes from Windows Project

- Full proceedings of the symposium and workshop
- Bibliography of research
- Documentation of state priorities and needs through an informal consultative process with the states
- Findings and next steps from the workshop



Findings from Windows Workshop

- General priorities for environmental windows
- Communication/coordination
- Data and information sharing
- Research development/coordination and technology transfer
- Policy guidelines and best practices development



Next Steps

- Complete final project report for GLFT
- Reconvene project steering committee
- Develop outreach plan to expand participation
- Review policies for approving windows waivers
- Review and summarize best practices
- Explore opportunities with the states and USACE to harmonize windows to improve efficiencies in dredging scheduling and contracting



Questions?

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Link to proceedings:

[https://www.glc.org/wp-content/uploads/
Env-Windows-Symposium-Proceedings-Final-Sept-2021.pdf](https://www.glc.org/wp-content/uploads/Env-Windows-Symposium-Proceedings-Final-Sept-2021.pdf)