SUPPORTING MICHIGAN’S COASTAL COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES

Michigan Sea Grant and Michigan State University Extension

Michigan Sea Grant Extension educators and specialists apply their complementary expertise to issues unique to Michigan’s 41 coastal counties. Sea Grant Extension work focuses on areas of specific needs and priorities identified by stakeholders in each coastal region of Michigan.

OUTREACH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Michigan Sea Grant Extension educators provide outreach and technology transfer in partnership with Sea Grant researchers and other professionals. Extension educators distill complex information and facilitate the development of decision-making tools to increase knowledge and solve problems.

This might include:

- The development of new information through original applied research, gathering existing information for user needs, and transmitting information and skills through publications;
- Facilitating online or face-to-face courses, workshops, lectures and meetings;
- Providing technical reviews of research and policies; and
- Stimulating new research to meet the needs of stakeholders.

Areas of Sea Grant Extension expertise include specific fields, such as sport and commercial fisheries, aquaculture, water quality, coastal habitat, aquatic invasive species, economic sustainability of coastal communities and business and Great Lakes science literacy in formal and informal learning environments.

Interpreting scientific knowledge, Sea Grant Extension educators work with decision-makers, public officials, community leaders, the media and the public. Focusing on unbiased science-based information that is relevant to coastal constituents is key.

With long-standing community relationships, Sea Grant Extension educators collaborate with researchers to connect with key stakeholders. Sea Grant research teams regularly engage decision-makers and stakeholders throughout the project to ensure that current needs and feasible solutions are addressed.
RESPONSIVE AND UNBIASED

Sea Grant constituents affirmed that Sea Grant was responsive, accessible, unbiased, institutionally connected, proactive, targeted and committed (Michigan Sea Grant Constituent Survey, 2011).

When asked how constituents have benefitted from interaction with Sea Grant:

- 91% indicated increased awareness of coastal issues
- 66% indicated enhanced networking
- 46% indicated they experienced knowledge change

ECONOMIC BENEFIT

The estimated economic benefit (businesses created or retained, and jobs created or retained) derived from Sea Grant activities in 2011 was $1.3 million. Programs and initiatives supported by Sea Grant Extension and targeted for businesses, industries and others include:

- Michigan Clean Marina Program
  www.michigancleanmarina.org
- Educational camps, cruises and curriculum
  www.miseagrant.umich.edu/education
- Water safety
  www.dangerouscurrents.org
- Restoring coastal ecosystems
  www.miseagrant.umich.edu/explore/restoration

Michigan State University Extension: With a presence in every Michigan county, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension brings the knowledge resources of MSU directly to individuals, businesses and communities to improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

Michigan Sea Grant College Program: Michigan Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the University of Michigan and Michigan State University. As part of the National Sea Grant College Program—administered through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—Michigan Sea Grant is one of 32 university-based Sea Grant programs in coastal states across the country. To carry out the program’s research, education and outreach, federal funds are matched with funds from state, tribal, business and other non-federal sources.

Contact a Michigan Sea Grant Extension Educator, see www.miseagrant.umich.edu/contact