

# Project Portfolio



## Let's ALL Fish Lake Michigan – Disability Fishing Recruitment Project

Grant Source: Great Lakes Fishery Trust

### BACKGROUND

In Michigan, the number of people with disabilities is on the rise. According to the United States Census (2000), there are over 1.7 million individuals with disabilities in Michigan with almost 19% of all Michigan residents reporting one or more disabilities. These numbers clearly indicate the need for services for people with disabilities in Michigan. The project will target this population of people with disabilities. The benefits of leisure and outdoor recreation for people with disabilities have been documented in several studies. One study, which followed participation of people with and without disabilities in an outdoor adventure program, reported positive change in relationship development, recreation skills, and quality of life (“Creating positive change through an integrated outdoor adventure program” – Therapeutic Recreation Journal, 1997). Another concluded that there were substantial indications that recreation and leisure can assist individuals in improving and maintaining physical and psychological health and well being (“A classification scheme for therapeutic recreation research grounded in the rehabilitation sciences” – Therapeutic Recreation Journal, 1996).

### LOCATION

Michigan

### ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED

The project will be conducted over a three-year period and will consist of 30 events (10 per year) conducted at barrier-free, shore based, public fishing areas on Lake Michigan. Each event will serve up to 25 children and other people with disabilities and their families, pairing the disabled individuals with able-bodied partners. Each participant will be provided instruction and equipment for the event. Participants can keep the equipment and each participant and their families or guardians will be encouraged to continue to develop this therapeutic outdoor activity. The children will receive a membership to JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge,

Ethics, and Sportsmanship) and will receive a year's subscription to JAKES Magazine. The membership and quarterly outdoor magazines and the fishing equipment provided free of charge to the participants will encourage additional fishing outings and interest in outdoor activities.

### OBJECTIVES

The overall project goal is to increase the number of people with disabilities that utilize the barrier-free, shore based, public fishing access areas on Lake Michigan, including those areas funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust. Through hands-on education and instruction at the events and by providing ownership of fishing equipment at no charge to the participants, the project will help develop long-term advocates for the wise stewardship of the Great Lakes fishery.

### PARTNERS

NWTF  
Michigan Project F.I.S. H.  
Great Lakes Fishery Trust

### FUTURE PLANS

Participants at each event will be recorded and included in the project evaluation. Annual reports showing the names of the individuals at each event will be maintained. A mailed survey will be conducted near the end of the project to determine the number of participants that have continued to pursue fishing in the Great Lakes and use of the equipment and public access points. The Great Lakes Fishery Trust will be provided with the results of this survey.

### TIMEFRAME

Project Start Date: August 2006  
Project End Date: July 2009