



Michigan Wetlands Association Conference 2026

October 6-8

The H Hotel – Midland, Michigan

Conference Agenda

Tuesday, October 6 - Morning

8:30a	Registration Opens and Light Continental Breakfast – Academy Lounge Lobby and Indigo Foyer
9:30a	Opening Plenary – Partnerships for Wetland Protection Indigo Ballroom Welcome – Michael Pennington, President, Michigan Wetlands Association Midland Welcome – Maureen Donker, Mayor, City of Midland
10:00a	Keynote Speakers Partnering for Clean Water Protections For Everyone – Kristine Oblock, Campaign Director, Clean Water for All
10:40a	Michigan’s Vernal Pool Partnership: Building a Pathway for Successful Partnerships – Yu Man Lee, Conservation Scientist, Michigan Natural Features Inventory
11:20a	Making Wetlands Visible – Steve Jessmore, Photographer, Birds Doing Stuff
12:00p	Lunch – Indigo Ballroom

Tuesday, October 6 - Afternoon

	Track I: Current Topics in Wetland Science Platinum Room	Track II: Protecting Michigan's Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Sponsored by EGLE Academy Dining Room	Track III: Wetland Restoration and Stewardship Academy Classroom
1:30p	Concurrent Sessions A		
	Vernal Pool Science and Conservation: The Michigan Vernal Pool Partnership Moderator – Bryana Guevara, Marx Wetlands LLC	What's New with Michigan's Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Program Part 1 Moderator – Jacob Riley, EGLE	Voluntary Wetland Restoration: Partnerships at the State, Federal, and Local Level Moderator – Nathan Ring, Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc
	Michigan's Vernal Pool Partnership: Celebrating Successes and Identifying Next Steps Yu Man Lee, Michigan Natural Features Inventory	Over 40 Years of Wetland Protection: Michigan's Section 404 Program Anne Garwood, EGLE	Partnering in the State of Michigan's Voluntary Wetland Restoration Program Barb Avers, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Donna Cervelli, EGLE
	Partnership Coordination & Communication: Lessons Learned Abby Pointer, Michigan Nature Association	Federal Review and Coordination of Michigan Permit Applications Melanie Burdick, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Wetland Restoration Success Through Partnerships at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge Eric Dunton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
	Vernal Pools: Community Science and Volunteer Monitoring Courtney Oberlander, Michigan Natural Features Inventory	Wetland Mitigation and Stream Mitigation Updates Michael Pennington and Bethany Matousek, EGLE	Partnering with Locals: Michigan's Areas of Concern Program Melanie Foose, EGLE
3:00p	Break – Indigo Foyer		
3:30p	Concurrent Sessions B		
	Innovations in Mapping and Technology Moderator – Matt Carmer, Consumers Energy	What's New with Michigan's Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Program Part 2 Moderator – Kyle Alexander, EGLE	Wetlands Protection as Part of Local and Regional Planning Moderator – Seth Gibson, Spicer Group, Inc.
	What's New with GIS at EGLE Chad Fizzell, EGLE	Wetlands Program Updates Kathryn Kirkpatrick, EGLE	Michigan's Coastal Leadership Academy Melissa Letosky, EGLE
	Aerial Interpretation for Wetland Site Analysis Jeremy Jones, EGLE	Inland Lakes and Streams Program Updates Bethany Matousek and Eric Calabro, EGLE	Tools for Protecting Wetlands, Lakes, and Streams at the Local Level Jennifer McKay, Grand Valley Metropolitan Council and Kathryn Kirkpatrick, EGLE

	Delineating Critical Dunes and Associated Wetlands: Recommendations for Updates to Michigan's Atlas of Critical Dunes Zachary Chamberlin, EGLE and Brian Majka, GEI Consultants of Michigan	Program Panel and Q&A Amy Lounds, Anne Garwood, Kathryn Kirkpatrick, Michael Pennington, Bethany Matousek, and Eric Calabro, EGLE	Southeast Michigan GREEN Dashboard: A Tool for Wetland Planning and Conservation Tyler Klifman, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
5:00p	Adjourn		
6:00p – 9:00p	Wetlands Under the Lights Reception at the Dow Diamond (additional registration fee)		

Wednesday, October 7 - Morning

8:00a	Breakfast – Indigo Foyer		
	Track I: Current Topics in Wetland Science Platinum Room	Track II: Protecting Michigan's Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Sponsored by EGLE Academy Dining Room	Track III: Wetland Restoration and Stewardship Academy Classroom
8:30a	Concurrent Sessions C		
	Improving the Integration of Stream and Wetland Projects Moderator – Jason DeMoss, Merjent	The Importance of Tribal Perspectives in Wetland Protection Moderator – Riley Walsh, EGLE	Engaging the Public and Others in Wetlands Protection Moderator – Christine DeVries, Land & Resource Engineering
	Hyporheic Restoration of Riparian Wetlands Rob Myllyoja, Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc	Tribal Sovereignty and Environmental Regulation Riyaz Kanji and Chris Miller, Kanji & Katzen PLLC	The Changing the Narrative Wetlands Campaign Portia Osborne, National Association of Wetland Managers
	Improving Stream, Floodplain, and Riparian Wetland Function John Saltanovitz, EGLE	Why Early Tribal Coordination and Consultation for Wetland Permits Matters Lakota Hobia, Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi	From Science to Stewardship: Podcast Storytelling as a Tool for Wetland Engagement, Resilience, and Public Action Lorene Carpentier, Zeuxo Productions
	Restoring Wetlands as Part of Natural Channel Design: Portage Creek, City of Kalamazoo Todd Losee, Niswander Environmental	Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Wetlands Program: Strengthening Tribal Sovereignty Through Wetland Stewardship Destine Alvarado-Seymour, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community	Engaging the Public in Species and Habitat Conservation Martha Holzheuer, Nature Niche LLC
10:00a	Break – Indigo Foyer		

10:30a	Concurrent Sessions D		
	Monitoring and Assessment of Michigan's Wetlands Moderator – Jeff Richardson, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi	Considering Archaeological Resources in Project Planning Moderator – Thomas Makled, EGLE	Herpetofauna Species and Habitat Conservation Moderator – Randall Phillips, Barr Engineering
	Assessing the Condition of Michigan's Wetlands: EGLE's Statewide Wetland Monitoring Program Kathleen Fairchild, EGLE	EGLE Permitting and Consideration of Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources Anne Garwood, EGLE	Planning to Protection: Navigating the Third Edition of Michigan's Amphibian & Reptile Best Management Practices Manual Melissa Sano, Herpetological Resource and Management, LLC
	Status and Trends: 15 Years of the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program Bridget Wheelock, Central Michigan University	Cultural Resources and Project Planning Stacy Tchorzynski, Michigan History Center	The Role and Importance of Biomonitors and Wildlife Clearance Associated with Construction Projects to Reduce Mortality Events for Amphibians and Reptiles David A. Mifsud, Herpetological Resource and Management, LLC
	Using the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program Decision Support Tool Matthew Cooper, Grand Valley State University	Designating the Straits of Mackinac as a Traditional Cultural Property Mae Wright, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians	The Importance of Habitat Connectivity in Blanding's Turtles and Snapping Turtles Jeanette McGuire, Michigan State University
12:00p	Lunch - Indigo Foyer and Indigo Ballroom		

Wednesday, October 7 - Afternoon

1:30p	Concurrent Sessions E		
	Track I: Current Topics in Wetland Science Platinum Room	Track II: Protecting Michigan's Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Sponsored by EGLE Academy Dining Room	Track III: Wetland Restoration and Stewardship Academy Classroom
	Advancing our Understanding of Climate Change Impacts Moderator – Tonya Hunter, ITC Holdings	Tips for Navigating EGLE's Permitting Process Moderator – Jeff Pierce, EGLE	Nearshore Habitat Protection and Restoration Moderator – Alexis DeGabriele, The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
	Climate vulnerability of wetland communities and wetland species in Michigan Chris Hoving, Michigan Department of Natural Resources	Utilizing the Wetland Identification Program Effectively Keto Gyekis, EGLE	Mapping and Restoring Littoral Wetlands on Inland Lakes Erick Elgin, Michigan State University

	Are We Building Climate-Ready Wetlands? Assessing Adaptation in Midwest Restoration Practice Angela Burrow, Michigan State University	Screening for Rare Species and Communities Kathryn Kirkpatrick, EGLE	Planning, Prioritizing, and Funding Wetland Conservation for Inland Lakes Joe Nohner, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
	The effects of wet meadow plant community change on wetland functions, invertebrate communities, and anuran diets Hannah Bey, Michigan State University	Best Practices for Complex Projects Riley Walsh, EGLE	Regulations and Considerations Surrounding Inland Lake Littoral Zones and Wetlands Eric Calabro, EGLE
3:00p	Break – Indigo Foyer		
3:30p	Concurrent Sessions F		
	Legal Science: Natural Resources and Jurisprudence - Moderator – Echo Aloe, Michigan Department of Attorney General	Advancing Stream Restoration and Mitigation Moderator – Dianne Martin, ASTI Environmental	Preserving Michigan's Rare and Imperiled Wetlands Moderator – Jeremie Wilson, Michigan Department of Transportation
	The Public Trust Doctrine: From Ancient Rome to Line 5 Dan Bock, Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes	Michigan Stream Quantification Tool 2.1 Bethany Matousek, EGLE and Cidney Jones, Ecosystem Planning & Restoration	Protecting What Can't Be Recreated: Preservation as Wetland Mitigation Michael Pennington, EGLE
	Michigan's Case Law Relating to Wetlands Protection Rebecca Smith, Michigan Department of Attorney General	Michigan's Updated Regional Reference Curves for Streams Mike Geenen, Green Watershed Restoration	Preservation Highlight: Sawmill Creek and Bear Creek Tyler Smith and Nicole Stewart, Niswander Environmental
		Facilitating Permitting of Dam Removal Projects Luke Trumble, EGLE	Preservation Highlight: Grand River Fen Preserve Kim Steinberger, The Nature Conservancy
5:00p	Adjourn		
6:00p – 9:00p	Reception at H Hotel Join us for food and drinks and poster session in the exhibit and conference area (included in conference registration)		

Thursday, October 8 - Morning

8:00a	Breakfast – Indigo Foyer
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	Track I: Current Topics in Wetland Science Platinum Room	Track II: Protecting Michigan’s Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Sponsored by EGLE Academy Dining Room	Track III: Wetland Restoration and Stewardship Academy Classroom
8:30a	Concurrent Sessions G		
	Current Topics in Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Research Moderator – Jeremy Hartsock, Michigan State University	Sediment Testing and Disposal for Dredging Projects Moderator – Maddie Orler, EGLE	Invasive Species Management Moderator – Sherry Slocum, Holland Engineering
	Integration of Acoustical Telemetry and the GLATOS System to Assess Northern Mudpuppy Habitat Use in the Detroit River David A. Mifsud and Kotaro Seguchi, Herpetological Resource and Management, LLC	EGLE Sediment Testing and Disposal for Dredging Projects Matt Smar, EGLE	Progress Toward New Treatment Options for Invasive Phragmites and European Frog-bit Kurt Kowalski, U.S. Geological Survey - Great Lakes Science Center
	The Impact of Winter on Zooplankton and Macroinvertebrate Communities in Lake Huron Coastal and Riverine Wetlands Taylor Dick, Central Michigan University	Sediment Characterization Requirements for Dredging Projects Sam Noffke, EGLE	Synthesizing 15 years of large-scale hybrid cattail wetland restoration research and on-site invasive feedstock biochar production in the Great Lakes Region Brian Ohsowski, Loyola University
	Assessing Aquatic Vegetation Across Michigan Inland Lake Littoral Zones: Lessons Learned After Five Years Jeremy Hartsock, Michigan State University	State of Michigan Disposal Guidelines Abhi Muduganti, EGLE	NotMISpecies Outreach and Decontamination Christina Baugher, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
10:00a	Break – Indigo Foyer		
10:30a	Closing Plenary – The Future of Wetland Conservation, Science, and Stewardship - Indigo Ballroom Moderator – Anne Garwood, EGLE The Path Forward for Michigan’s Wetland Protection Program – Jerrod Sanders, Division Director, Water Resources Division, EGLE The Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program: Over 25 Years of Collaboration – Don Uzarski, Ph.D., Institute for Great Lakes Research, Central Michigan University Rooted in Resilience – Conan Smith, President and CEO, Michigan Environmental Council		
Thursday, October 8 – Afternoon <i>(additional registration fee)</i>			
12:00p	Pre-Ordered Box Lunches Afternoon Field Trips – Meet at Registration Area at 12:30		

12:30p	Four Lakes Dam Disaster and Rebuild Tour	Mosses with Jeremy	Exploring Michigan's Rare Wetlands - Floodplain Forests	Bats in the Bark: Finding Potential Bat Roost Trees
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