



ACCESS TO THE FISHERY FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Synopsis

- **Project Title:** Elmwood Township Fish Cleaning Station
- **Grantee Organization:** Charter Township of Elmwood
- **Project Team** Jeff Shaw, Township Supervisor, Sara Kopriva, Township Planner, Elmwood Marina Committee members
- **Contact Person** Sara Kopriva, Township Planner, planner@elmwoodtownship.net, (231)946-0921
- **Grant Amount:** \$99,600
- **Time Frame:** Construction July 2020-October 2020
- **Focus Area:** Access to Fishery
- **Brief Project Summary** The area's first fish cleaning station was constructed as phase 1 of the Elmwood Township Redevelopment Project. 4 cleaning tables, with a restroom, are provided under a pavilion near the boat launch at the Elmwood Marina. This fish cleaning station is open to the public at no cost with nearby parking.

Project in Context

Since 2011, the redevelopment of the Elmwood Marina and commercial corridor have been included in various township plans. Members of the public and fishing groups from the area expressed the desire to have a fish cleaning station located at the Elmwood Marina when it was redeveloped.

With all the fishing opportunities in the greater Traverse City area, there is not a public fish cleaning station nearby. The closest fish cleaning station is located in approximately 40 miles away in Frankfort, with other fish cleaning stations being South of our area. Locating a fish cleaning station at the Elmwood Marina allows for individuals fishing in both West and East Grand Traverse Bay, inland lakes such as Lake Leelanau and Cedar Lake, as well as river, streams and creeks such as Boardman River and Brewery Creek, an appropriate facility to clean their fish.

The marina provides direct access to West Grand Traverse Bay but also allows for parking by the fish cleaning station so individuals that fish nearby can use the facility to clean their fish. This facility will be available to the public at no cost. In addition, it provides a learning opportunity for children and adults as anglers bring back their catch and exposing others to fish and fishing opportunities.

Goals of the Effort

The Goal was to provide a safe, clean space for individuals to be able to clean their locally caught fish. Having a central location, allows for the fish remains to be properly disposed of instead of being left in trash containers or on the side of the road. In addition to providing a location to clean fish, it also allows for individuals who have not been fishing to be able to gather and see the fish and watch, maybe participate, in the cleaning of the fish.

Results

Because of the timing of the completion of this project, as soon as it was completed, it was winterized for the winter season due to having outdoor plumbing. We are all prepared for the fish cleaning station to be open and operational as soon as the weather stays above freezing. At that time, we will have an official grand opening of the fish cleaning station and will let the local paper know as well as let the public know via the Township website.

Products and Resources

The Township website was used to provide information to the public and provide link for donations for the project. leelanau.gov/elmwoodtwp.asp.

In addition, copies of the plans and updates about the project were provided in the Harbormaster building prior to and during construction. Updates were also provided verbally during the Township Board meetings.

The local paper, Leelanau Enterprise, has reported multiple times over the years about this project. This is a link to their most recent picture taken during construction and talking about donations.

<https://www.leelanaunews.com/articles/photo-789/>

<https://www.leelanaunews.com/articles/elmwood-township-to-proceed-with-fish-cleaning-station/>

<https://www.leelanaunews.com/articles/marina-project-underway/>

The Chair of the Elmwood Township Marina Committee provided a editorial to another local paper, the Record-Eagle. https://www.record-eagle.com/news/go/ryan-matuzak-fish-cleaning-station-at-elmwood-marina-will-be-ready-soon/article_de2f2d18-41f7-11ea-98c0-f34030c952f7.html

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/marina-project-to-break-ground/article_3b1aed62-51bb-5d52-8045-996488cce80d.html

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Background/Overview

1. Was the project completed as originally intended? If not, indicate how the final outcome(s) differed from what was anticipated. Does your experience suggest that original expectations were realistic? What factors hindered or helped progress?

While it did take longer to complete this project than originally projected, it was completed as originally intended. The only change was to the type of disposal for fish remains from public sewer to a cooler system. The future intent is to connect to sewer once the City of Traverse City will authorize the connection.

Outcomes

2. What activities were pursued in relationship to intended outcomes, and to what extent did you achieve the following intended outcomes listed in your proposal?

As presented in the application, the Township's goal was to construct fish cleaning station for the area. This has been accomplished with a pavilion, restroom, cooler, and fish cleaning tables.

3. What audience(s) were you particularly hopeful of reaching? To what extent did you reach them? Did you receive any feedback?

We were looking to reach the fishing audience with the new fish cleaning station. Unfortunately due to the COVID pandemic, we were unable to complete the project so that it could be used during this year's fishing season. The fish cleaning station has been winterized for the winter (water drained to prevent freezing) and we look forward to anglers using it next year. At this time, no feedback about the use has been received. The only feedback is that there are many individuals who are excited to use it next year.

4. What relationships or opportunities were developed or strengthened through the work?

Due to the change from a grinder to a cooler, the Township is now working with a local man that takes the fish remains and uses them to create fertilizer and cat food instead of placing the remains in the landfill.

5. Whether they were intended or unintended, what do you consider the most important benefits or outcomes of this access project?

The most important benefit of this project is the opportunity for individuals to be able to clean their fish nearby and dispose of their fish remains properly. We anticipate that people will gather at this fish cleaning station and compare notes and fish while providing individuals that may not be able to fish or other access to fish, the opportunity to learn about the fish species from local anglers.

Site-specific Information

For each question below be as descriptive as possible. The GLFT uses this information for internal evaluation purposes as well as directing the public to the access site (via the Pier Michigan website: www.piermichigan.org). For projects that only conducted feasibility studies or engineering and design, respond to the questions with the anticipated benefits that occur if/when construction is completed.

6. Describe the access structure (i.e., length, width, location, design, etc.).

The fish cleaning station is a 20 ft by 26 ft pavilion with a handicap accessible restroom and cooler. There are 4 cleaning tables with individual water faucets. The tables are stainless steel with a poly cutting board secured with hinges to allow for easy cleaning. Also included with the structure is a cooler cleaning location and hooks to hang and take pictures of the catch. The fish cleaning station is located by the boat launch ramps in our marina and has parking immediately adjacent.

7. Answer the following questions:

- a. How do visitors access the structure (e.g., driving directions to the parking lot, how far is the structure from the parking lot, what connects the parking lot to the structure, etc.)?

The structure is located at the Elmwood Township Marina on M-22 in Greilickville, located at 13051 S West Bay Shore Dr, Traverse City, MI 49684. The fish cleaning station is the first structure that you encounter when accessing the site from the north driveway and the location that all boat trailer traffic must enter the site. The pavilion is located immediately adjacent to the parking lot, near the boat launch ramps. The fish cleaning station is an open pavilion, open to the public at all times that the marina is open.

- b. What amenities are offered at the access site (e.g., restrooms, benches, barrier-free access, handicapped parking, lighting, etc.)?

Barrier free access, restrooms, handicap accessible fish cleaning table, parking, lighting

- c. What educational opportunities (e.g., interpretative signs) are offered at the site, if any?

Signage is still being developed for the fish cleaning station. Ideally we are working on creating a native species sign that would include raised/depressed drawing of the fish so that they could be felt. This would be in addition to being able to be present while individuals are fileting their fish.

- d. What species of fish are commonly caught at the site? During what months of the year is fishing best for each species?

May through November- Lake Trout, Steelhead, Brown Trout, King Salmon, Coho Salmon, Cisco, Whitefish, Perch and Bass.

- e. Does the DNR regularly stock any fish species at or near the site? If so, what species, at what time of year, and how often?

Yes, the DNR stocks salmon in the spring yearly in the Boardman.

- f. What tactics do you recommend for catching these species (e.g., small bags, bottom casting, minnows, wobbling plugs, Hot 'n Tots, etc.)?

Trolling for salmon, steelhead, browns and lake trout, jigging (vertical fishing) for lake trout, whitefish and Cisco, live bait for perch and bass

- g. Where can anglers stay overnight near the access site (e.g., campgrounds, motels, hotels, B&Bs)?

There are many hotels and campgrounds located in the greater Grand Traverse/Leelanau County areas, as well as many short term rentals that can be found on AirBNB or Homeaway.

- h. Is there anything else you would want to share with a potential visitor to the access site?

For any assistance while on site, staff is available May through November in the Harbormaster building, located next to the boat launch ramp.

- i. Were any project objectives met? Why or why not?

Yes the objectives were met. We were looking to provide a location for individuals to clean the fish that are caught locally, throughout the region, we have built this structure.

Pictures

8. Provide at least three photos of the completed project.

















9. The Great Lakes Fishery Trust requires each project it funds to have suitable permanent public acknowledgement of GLFT assistance. The GLFT has provided this sign (via mail) and requires photo verification of the posting of the sign before it will process your final reimbursement request.



Related Efforts

10. Was this project a standalone effort or was there a broader effort beyond the part funded by the GLFT? Have other funders been involved either during the time of your GLFT grant or subsequently?

The project was completed as a part of a larger 3 phase marina redevelopment project. The fish cleaning station was a portion of phase 1. To date, phase 1 and 2 have been completed and we are currently looking for grant funding for phase 3. Additional funders, besides the Township, have been the Michigan DNR Waterways Grant and private donations.

11. Has there been any spinoff work or follow-up work related to this project?

Not at this time.

Reflections

12. Please describe any unanticipated benefits, challenges, surprises, and/or important lessons learned over the course of the project.

The greatest challenge was pivoting from a grinder system to a cooler system for the fish remains. When the Township initially asked the city about hooking up to the sewer, the operator told the Township that it would not be an issue but once the Township got to the design stage, players changed and we were not authorized to discard the fish carcasses into the sewer. This delayed the project as we attempted to work through the issued to still connect the sewer. In the end, it was determined that the Township should move forward with a cooler system and continue to work with the city once constructed to provide data that would allow for the fish cleaning station to eventually be connected to the sewer system.

13. What recommendations (if any) would you make to other project directors working on similar efforts or to the GLFT?

GLFT has been a great resource and very easy to work with.