



P. O. Box 358 • Manistee, Michigan 49660-0358 • [www.manisteemi.gov](http://www.manisteemi.gov)

**CITY HALL**  
70 Maple Street

**CITY MANAGER**  
231.398.2801

**CITY ASSESSOR**  
231.398.2802

**BUILDING INSPECTOR**  
231.398.2806

**PLANNING, ZONING &  
COMMUNITY DEV.**  
231.398.2805

**CITY CLERK**  
231.398.2803

**CITY TREASURER**  
231.398.2804

**WATER BILLING**  
231.723.2559

**ADMINISTRATION**  
FAX 231.723.1546

**CLERK/TREASURER**  
FAX 231.723.5410

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
70 Maple Street  
231.723.2533  
FAX 231.398.2012

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
281 First Street  
231.723.1549  
FAX 231.723.3519

**PUBLIC WORKS**  
280 Washington St.  
231.723.7132  
FAX 231.723.1803

**PARKS DEPARTMENT**  
231.723.4051

**WATER MAINTENANCE**  
231.723.3641

**WASTEWATER PLANT**  
50 Ninth St.  
231.723.1553

June 4, 2014

Jonathon Beard  
Grant Manager  
Great Lakes Fishery Trust  
230 N. Washington Sq. Suite 300  
Lansing, MI 48933

RE: GLFT Project Number - #2011.1220

Dear Mr. Beard:

Enclosed please find the close out documentation for the City of Manistee Fish Cleaning Station. I want to thank you for all of your assistance with this project. If there is any additional information needed, please call me at 231.398.2805.

Sincerely,

CITY OF MANISTEE

Denise J. Blakeslee  
Planning & Zoning Administrator



**Great Lakes Fishery Trust Final Project Report  
CITY OF MANISTEE - PROJECT PROFILE**

**BACKGROUND**

In the late 1960's Michigan began exploring the concept of planting West Coast salmon into the Great Lakes. Northern Michigan and more specifically Manistee County/City of Manistee became the epicenter of this experiment that brought fishermen from around the Midwest to seek both Coho and King Salmon.

Today Manistee is synonymous with Great Lakes Salmon fishery, with thousands of Michiganders and those outside Michigan traveling to the beautiful community along the shores of Lake Michigan where the Big Manistee River bisects the City.

In the mid 1980's the City constructed a fish cleaning station directly adjacent to the First St. Boat Launch to allow Great Lakes fishermen to clean their catch before they head back to their destination. This fish cleaning station served the community and fishermen admirably for over three decades but lacked the infrastructure of a modern fish cleaning station, including barrier free cleaning tables, cooler cleanouts, useable lighting and a freezer to eliminate the odor from leaving fish remains in dumpsters during warmer months.

Thus, in the early 2000's staff started discussion on replacing the fish cleaning station with City Engineers and local charter fishermen. These discussions resulted in the GLFT application and construction of a new fish cleaning station that was completed and opened in the fall of 2013.

**SYNOPSIS**

- Project Title:** Manistee Fish Cleaning Station
- Grantee Organization:** City of Manistee
- Project Team:** Mitch Deisch, City Manager, Jeff Mikula, DPW Director, Jon Rose, Community Development Director, Amy Cook, Abonmarche Designer, Manistee County Sports Fishing Association, Alliance for Economic Success (AES) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fishery Division.
- Project Contact Person:** Jeff Mikula, City of Manistee DPW Director
- Grant Amount:** \$75,000
- Time Frame:** January 23, 2012 - August 31, 2013
- Focus Areas:** Access (Improved fish cleaning access directly adjacent to the First Street Boat Launch along with universally acceptable amenities).

**BRIEF PROJECT SUMMARY**

For the past 10+ years the City of Manistee has been planning on upgrading the fish cleaning station at First Street with a new facility that meets the needs of today's fishermen. In 2011 the City along with AES drafted a grant application to the GLFT for 50% of the costs to construct a new facility.

In 2011/2012 bids were let. Bids came in high, thus the project was rebid with another project to obtain better pricing. Bids were awarded in early spring 2013 and construction was completed by August 31, 2013.

## **PROJECT IN CONTEXT**

Northern Michigan is a world class fishery for Pacific Salmon species. Nowhere is this more important to a local economy than in Manistee. Whereas salmon fishing occurs all summer out of the Manistee Port, it escalates to incredible proportions during the last summer/early fall when King salmon draw closer to the Manistee River Channel, which allows them to migrate up both the Little Manistee and Big Manistee River. This economic boost is a vital component to the greater Manistee area community.

There are many stakeholders in the replacement of this new state of the art fish cleaning station that includes thousands of in state and out of state anglers that flock to Manistee each year. Besides the anglers the stakeholders also include the State of Michigan who receives revenue from the fishing licenses, City of Manistee who receives revenue through boat launch fees, Charter boats who use the facility and area businesses that benefit from the increase of sales during this prime time. This is what Pure Michigan is all about for salmon fishermen.

## **GOALS FOR THE EFFORT**

The primary goal was to replace an older fish cleaning station with a state of the art fish cleaning station that included six cleaning tables (two are universally accessible), composite fish cleaning boards, splash guards to minimize overspray from washing off fish, freezers to minimize odor complaints, large cooler cleanout station and superior LED lighting that allow anglers to clean their fish in the dark once they come off the Lake. In addition a universally accessible restroom is also built into the facility.

## **RESULTS**

Overall the results of the project have been very positive including the comments from those who use the facility. The total cost for the project was significantly higher than originally anticipated based upon original engineer estimates, which once the design began the initial concept of a smaller facility became much larger once stakeholder input was taken into consideration. The materials used in the construction of this facility were initially selected to endure the harsh winter months along Lake Michigan.

Accepting that the cost was higher than initially anticipated, the new facility is a model for new fish cleaning stations around the Great Lakes and will serve the community and anglers for decades to come.

## **PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES**

The Manistee News Advocate covered upgrades to the facility and the dedication of the facility. Information about the facility is currently available on line – Explore the Shores [http://www.exploretheshores.org/destinations/view/first street beach fish cleaning station](http://www.exploretheshores.org/destinations/view/first_street_beach_fish_cleaning_station)

## **CITY OF MANISTEE - FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

### **BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW**

(1) Like all projects your initial expectations of the project rarely hold true all the way to completion of the project. For the most part the City of Manistee goal was to build a first rate fish cleaning station that went along with the world class fishery. This expectation was realized.

The initial project scope of work changed significantly when we created a committee to review the needs of the fish cleaning station. Based upon the committee input the size and scope of the project changed, which also changed the total cost to construct the facility. Originally we had anticipated that the cost to build the fish cleaning station would be approx. \$150,000, which under the GLFT guidelines would be a 50/50 split for the total project cost. The project was bid out twice and the final project cost exceeded \$220,000, thus the City had to contribute significantly more funds to make the project happen.

To this end our preliminary engineering figures were not sufficient to construct the type of fish cleaning station that was needed for this location.

### **OUTCOMES**

(2) We followed a significant planning process with input from anglers, Charter Boat Association, Manistee Sports Fishing Association and the MDNR Fishery Division when designing the facility. The vast majorities of their suggestions made it into the final plans and were incorporated into the construction.

(3) Our audience for this project was anglers from Manistee County, State of Michigan and surrounding states. The goal of reaching these anglers was achieved. Feedback was received from numerous anglers during the construction phase and some suggestions resulted in changes being made to the facility.

(4) The City has strengthened this relationship with anglers who view Manistee as a world class fishery. In addition our relationship with Manistee County's Explore the Shore program also provides universal access opportunities for everyone.

(5) Five plus years ago Council adopted the First St. Beach Conceptual Plan that was then incorporated into the City Strategic Plan. Included in both was the removal and replacement of the Fish Cleaning Station, in recognition of the importance of the economic impact of the fishing industry in the City. Adopting a plan and steadily working toward accomplishing this goal is the most important benefit. Plans are easy to create, but are often very difficult to implement.

### **SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

(6) The fish cleaning station includes six cleaning tables (two of which meet barrier free standards), cooler cleanout station, freezer for fish remains and restrooms. The fish cleaning station is located in the First St. Beach main parking lot directly adjacent to the First Street Boat Launch in Douglas Park, City of Manistee.

(7.a) Access to the facility is through the Douglas Park parking lot directly across from the First Street Boat Launch.

(7.b) Amenities at the fish cleaning station include six stainless steel fish cleaning tables, water to assist in cleaning of fish, larger cooler cleanout, LED lighting to allow for evening use and restrooms. Both the restrooms and two out of six cleaning tables are barrier free.

(7.c) Explore the Shores educational signs showing anglers how to clean salmon will be included.

(7.d, e, f) N/A. (The site is not a fishing access site).

(7.g) There are two campgrounds and ten hotels/motels within eight miles of the facility.

(7.h) N/A.

(7.i) The objectives of the project were met with the re-building of a state of the art fish cleaning station located in the world class fishing destination of Manistee.

## PICTURES

### (8) Project Photos



Open to Public



Dedication



Winterized for season



GLFT Dedication Plaque



Informational signs that are located next to the GLFT Dedication Plaque.  
(Individual sign photos are attachments)

## RELATED EFFORTS

(10) Project had broad support from the City, AES, State of Michigan Fishery Department and the greater Manistee angling community.

(11) N/A.

## REFLECTIONS

(12) State of the art fish cleaning stations are destination locations within fishing communities. Amenities to support this destination need to be incorporated into these designs.

(13) Planning and realistic construction costs/timelines are the key to a successful project.

Explore the Shores  
**Welcome to the  
 Manistee Fish  
 Cleaning Station!**



*Where Life Meets Water*

A booklet called "Where to Fish" in Manistee County, published in 1939, noted that:

"The beautiful little city of Manistee, famed in the days of the lumber baron, is the western gateway to the vast federal forest project. Situated as the city is on Lake Michigan and Manistee Lake, into which empty the well-known Big and Little Manistee rivers, the city was once the mecca of thousands of ardent anglers in the days of the now extinct grayling."

Just as we honor the past in remembering Manistee's recreational fishery so do we proudly lay claim to the present as one of the most successful ports for recreational angling within the entire Great Lakes. We are blessed by rivers and tributaries that host natural reproduction of salmon and trout and waters that suit a wide variety of fish species ranging from walleye and northern pike to large and smallmouth bass to all forms of panfish and much more.

The following is intended to help you identify the fish that you may harvest from our Port and surrounding waters.

**Common Fish Species Found  
 in These Waters**



Learn about Explore the Shores locations by going to [www.exploretoshores.com](#)

# Cleaning and Preparing Your Catch



## Step 1 - Opening the Fish

Insert your knife just in front of the vent (anus) of the fish. Don't cut into the vent because the intestine may contain matter that affects the taste of the meat. Cut along the centerline of the belly towards the head. Take care to not cut into the internal organs. Keep cutting to where the two gill covers meet.

## Step 2 - Preparing to Fillet

With your fish on its side, start cutting behind the head on the top of the fish. Cut down until you hit the backbone and extend the cut down the side of the fish behind the pectoral fin. Turn your fish over and make a similar cut in the opposite direction. If you wish, you can treat your catch at this point by cutting downward through the fish backbone in 1 to 2 inch increments. To package your steaks, skip to Step 7.

## Step 3 - Fillet

Lay your fish on its side and start the fillet cut at the back of the head of the fish, just above the backbone. Cut along the backbone to the tail. You now have a large fillet. Remove the fillet from the other side in a similar fashion. You should now have two large filets.

## Step 4 - Removing the Rib Bones

Insert the point of your knife into the meat at the first rib's mid-point, just beneath the rib. With a slow, gentle sawing motion, carefully cut towards the bottom of the fillet while keeping the sharp part of the blade angled slightly upwards to avoid getting too deeply into the meat. Your knife should be cutting right along the ribs.

## Step 5 - Removing the Belly Meat

It's recommended that you remove the bottom-most portion of belly meat on the fish. This meat tends to be oilier, tougher, and more strongly flavored. Because fat can also accumulate chemicals, you will also reduce chemicals in the fillet by removing belly meat.

You now have a large fillet. The belly bones remaining are pin bones that were cut off when you cut the fillet from the backbone. You can feel these in the meat and may remove them with needle-nose pliers or leave them in the meat. When cooked or smoked, the meat shrinks and the bones become very apparent and are much easier to remove.

## Step 6 - Skinning the Fillet

Many anglers skin the fillet. To do this, insert the knife between the meat of the fillet and the skin at the tail of the fillet and run the knife slowly up the fillet between the meat and the skin. Go slowly to preserve the meat and uniformly remove the skin.

## Step 7 - Packaging and Storing

There are a number of ways to package and store your filets. If you will be dining soon, you can simply put your fillet in a zip lock bag, put them on ice in a cooler until you reach a refrigerator.


If you are packaging your fish to freeze and enjoy later, you may wish to:

1. Purchase and use a vacuum sealer to remove as much air as possible before freezing your catch. Salmon and Trout meat have high fat levels and freezer burn will happen if the meat is exposed to the air in a frozen state, creating a pronounced off-taste. Remember to keep your packaged filets on ice until you reach a refrigerator or freezer.
2. Pack the filets in a zip lock bag and fill the bag with water to remove air from around the fillet. Be sure to zip the bag tightly so water does not leak from the bag.
3. Push as much air as you can out of the zip lock bag with filets before closing the bag. It's impossible to remove all air using this method so consuming your filets as soon as possible is recommended with this option.

## Step 8 - Clean Up

All fish waste must be placed in the bucket at your cleaning station and deposited in the cold storage area where it will be picked up by a company that recycles fish wastes into marketable products. Please use plenty of water to wash down your cleaning area to remove odor and make the cleaning spruce ready for the next angler. At times, this facility experiences very high use. Your patience and proper use of this facility will be greatly appreciated by all anglers that follow you with their catch of salmon and trout.





## DNR Fisheries Division

# Supporting Angler Success

Michigan's Great Lakes sport fishery has been monitored with a statewide contact creel survey program since 1983. The objective of the program is to obtain a continuous record of sport catch, catch rates, and catch composition for the Great Lakes and other important fisheries. At the Manistee Fish Cleaning Station, you may often see a DNR Fisheries Creel Census Clerk. They are not interested in your fishing license but they are very interested in knowing about your time on the water and what you caught. The important information gathered by creel clerks is the raw data used for analyses that help focus and develop Michigan's fisheries programs. Creel clerks will ask you when you began and ended your fishing trip and what you caught. They may also ask to weigh your catch and collect some scale samples used to determine age and growth. If a fish has certain fin clips, the clerk may ask for the snout of the fish to recover a very small implanted tag used to track migratory patterns and growth. The more information you supply, the more you are able to support the future of our fisheries!

And don't be afraid to ask the clerk about where, when and how fish are being caught based on the survey results. The clerk may be your best source of accurate information that can really boost your angling results.

**DNR Fisheries Division can also be contacted by calling the Cadillac Service Center 231-775-9727 or email: [DNR-Fisheries@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-Fisheries@michigan.gov)**


Funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust and the City of Manistee, the Manistee Fish Cleaning facility was built in 2013 to provide thousands of anglers with an outstanding place to properly clean their catch to enjoy our recreational fishery to its fullest. The following information is provided as a guide to help you safely and properly clean and prepare your catch for the table.

**FILLET KNIVES ARE SHARP!** Always use caution when using a fillet knife. Use common sense guidelines whenever you handle a knife:

- **Cut away from yourself**, not towards yourself.
- **Take your time.** Attempting to clean your fish quickly can cause carelessness and injury.
- **Your knife isn't the only thing that is sharp.** Many scratches, cuts, and puncture wounds come from the fish's teeth, bones, or gill rakers. Use caution!

**Parts of a Salmon or Trout**

It's helpful to know the names of some of the parts of a salmon or trout:



**To report an accident or misuse of this facility, please call 911!**