

# PORT HURON NORTH FACT SHEET

## ST. CLAIR RIVER AREA OF CONCERN

### FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

GLRI Funds: \$944,500

City of Port Huron Match: \$140,000

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Before the growth of Port Huron in the mid-1800's, the banks of the St. Clair River were covered in vegetation that led down to a rocky shoreline with naturally shallow water and a rocky river bottom. For fish and wildlife, this was an ideal home. As Port Huron's landscape changed over time, so did the St. Clair River. The naturally shallow waters along the shoreline disappeared with the construction of metal seawalls. The rocky-river bottom became flat and barren with channelization. Important habitat for fish, migratory birds, and other wildlife was lost. The City of Port Huron saw an opportunity to make "home improvements" at its Pine Grove Park overlook site that would benefit fish, wildlife, and the entire community.

In the fall of 2011, with funding from the EPA through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, project partners removed 5,200 cubic yards of shoreline debris and rubble and restored and stabilized 322 linear feet of riverbank. The bank was reshaped using reinforced dirt and riprap. The shoreline was topped with cobblestone and riprap that filters runoff, absorbs wave action, and provides fish habitat in the rapidly flowing water. The top of the embankment is vegetated with native plants which offers habitat to wildlife while providing erosion control and runoff uptake. The restoration allows for the community to enjoy a spectacular view of the St. Clair River and wildlife above and below the water in its natural habitat. In addition to the nearshore improvements, the City and its partners added 8,800 square feet of various sized rock to the middle of the river for deep water bottom fish habitat.

"The St. Clair River Binational Public Advisory Council is so pleased that the City of Port Huron chose to undertake this project to restore fish habitat, protect the shoreline, and enhance aesthetics. Steel seawalls in the St. Clair River have severely limited the availability of shallow-water, nearshore habitat. These areas are necessary for several fish species for spawning and nursery habitat, as well as foraging areas for waterfowl. The successful completion of this project brings us a step closer to removal of the Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Beneficial Use Impairment on the St. Clair River."

*-Patty Troy, U.S. Co-Chair, Binational Public Advisory Council*



### BEFORE

Eroding eyesore of a bank allowing dirt and debris to smother invaluable fish and aquatic insect habitat and decrease water quality.



### AFTER

Restoration of shallow water cobble and upland vegetation provides habitat for fish and other wildlife while filtering runoff and preventing erosion.