



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***\$1,000,000 Included in 2025 State of Michigan Budget To Support the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's FishPass Project***

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) will receive \$1,000,000 from the State of Michigan in the fiscal year 2025 budget. Funds will support the construction of FishPass in Traverse City, MI.

“We are thrilled to receive this investment,” said Dr. Marc Gaden, Executive Secretary of the GLFC. “While FishPass is in Traverse City, it is a project for everyone – having a positive impact all over the Great Lakes and beyond – and we are honored to accept this support from the State of Michigan. The Commission and its partners are particularly grateful to State Senator John Damoose for his leadership in securing these funds, and for his commitment to the Great Lakes.”

FishPass is the capstone of a more than 20-year restoration project on the Boardman/Ottaway River to reconnect the river with the Great Lakes. The project broke ground in May, and it will replace the failing Union Street Dam with a new, complete barrier to all fish with the capability to sort and selectively pass desirable fishes (lake sturgeon, lake trout) while blocking harmful invaders like sea lamprey.

State Senator John Damoose (MI-37) was the lead advocate for the inclusion of FishPass in the State budget. “I was happy to champion this exciting Great Lakes restoration and protection project,” said Senator Damoose. “FishPass will replace an aging piece of infrastructure, and put Northern Michigan at the center of leading-edge freshwater research that will have positive impacts for generations.”

State funds will help to support the final phases of construction, which include most of the upland public amenities and universally accessible design features.

“FishPass will be great for the health of the river,” said Traverse City Manager Liz Vogel, “but it will also be great for the people of our region. This investment will help make possible a safe, green, accessible public space in the heart of our downtown.”

Earlier this year, the City of Traverse City received an EGLE Dam Risk Reduction Grant for FishPass. Construction of critical in-stream, or "wet" project elements, including dam replacement and the fish passage channel, is underway and expected to finish in 2026. Simultaneously, efforts to finalize costs and funding for "dry" elements such as an educational facility, landscaping enhancements and naturalized river channel

elements are underway. This phased approach ensures that all project elements will be completed effectively and on schedule – with the total project targeted for completion in 2027.

FishPass addresses public safety as the Union Street Dam was rated in fair-to-poor condition according to a 2021 MDEQ Dam Safety Unit inspection. The new, robust barrier, will reduce the risk of dam failure and enhance flood control, ensuring the safety of residents and infrastructure.

To learn more about FishPass, visit: <https://www.glf.org/fishpass.php>

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