



## CALL FOR PAPERS

*Journal of Great Lakes Research* special section titled “Assigning agency: how communities, individuals, and organizations engage in environmental cleanup and revitalization”

Open for submission

July 1–September 30, 2021

Topic and description

### **Social and organizational dimensions of community revitalization through environmental remediation and restoration**

This special section of the *Journal of Great Lakes Research* will explore one of the understudied dimensions of the Great Lakes remediation, restoration, and similar environmental programs - the role of community in the environmental cleanup process. This is important because environmental cleanup programs often measure success in terms of ecological, and increasingly economic, metrics. Although it has been hypothesized or romanticized that including “the public” is an important component of these programs, we know little of how the community or other partners are actually engaged or contribute in practice. Through this special section we will explore the social, community, and organizational dimensions of environmental remediation, habitat restoration, and community revitalization that are unfolding throughout the region.

Emerging research suggests that remediation, restoration, and community revitalization are processes that are intensely local and cooperative. Moreover, lessons from ecosystem and integrated water resources management case studies indicate that effective local groups and governments are necessary for the effective delivery of ecosystem-scale management and services. Understanding how local communities and groups engage with and contribute to environmental management, or benefit from environmental remediation and habitat restoration, are questions that can be addressed by social science and organizational theory.

The timing of this special section is critical because the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is a potentially historic catalyst for more intense and effective engagement of communities with their water resources, as the century-level shift from the “rust belt” to next economic/social phase is occurring. It is important to recognize that the remediation and restoration work is not separate from the society that implements it. Societal benefits run through and wrap around environmental activities in the form of economically and socially revitalized communities, enhanced sense of identity, and improved community well-being. We argue that the federal investment in the region's nearshore health sets the stage for transformational ripple effects on the quality of life of Great Lakes coastal communities.

Early research and practical knowledge building efforts in the region highlights the critical linkages between local community engagement and restoration progress. In this special section we bring together recent scholarship that: (1) delves further into the roles of local actors and organizations in the ongoing restoration; and (2) highlights the transformational opportunities that the restoration investment brings to community revitalization and well-being.



### Specific research topics for the special section

- 1) Roles of local actors and organizations in delivering and maintaining restoration
  - a) Maximizing effectiveness of local AOC advisory councils
  - b) Municipalities contributing to restoration vision and progress
  - c) Non-profits as core network supporting and maintaining restoration
  - d) Anchor institutions critical to restoration progress
  - e) Business and industry as critical restoration partners
  
- 2) Leveraging the restoration investment opportunity towards transformational community revitalization and well-being
  - a) Understanding community vitality and well-being
  - b) Municipal planning leveraging restoration opportunities
  - c) Non-profits as core networks driving revitalization and well-being
  - d) Anchor institutions as catalysts for revitalization
  - e) Business and industry as good citizens
  - f) Attention to equity in revitalization

### Article types

- *Full length articles* represent original research results.
- *Reviews* are in depth reviews of a particular topic or field.
- *Short communications* are short articles that report on brief but complete projects, significant observations, or are preliminary findings of continuing projects that warrant rapid publication.
- *Comments*, in the form of letters or essays, are informational or opinion papers relevant to large lakes research, or reflections on previously published papers. For commentaries on published papers, the original author will be allowed to reply. Review of commentaries will be at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.

### Contact

Please direct any questions about this special section to Katie Williams ([williams.kathleen@epa.gov](mailto:williams.kathleen@epa.gov)), Paul Seelbach ([seelbach@umich.edu](mailto:seelbach@umich.edu)), or Megan Baumann ([megan.baumann@psu.edu](mailto:megan.baumann@psu.edu)).