

## Grants Awarded for Great Lake Research

The New York Great Lakes Research Consortium announced today that five projects were selected to receive grants of up to \$10,000 each from the New York Great Lakes Protection Fund to support academic institutions, government and non-profit organizations in research and activities that protect, promote and enhance the Great Lakes and their tributaries.

Projects cover a broad range of issues facing the Great Lakes and its tributaries including collecting data that will aid in delisting of an AOC, researching the occurrence of harmful chemicals, studying the sources of bacterial contamination of beaches, examining genetic variability of an economically important sportfish, and conducting an angler survey regarding a fish consumption advisory.

**Michael Twiss** and his team at the Great Rivers Center at Clarkson University, in collaboration with the Massena Area of Concern (AOC) Remedial Action committee, will use advanced instrumentation capable of collecting high resolution relevant data to study the phytoplankton population status in the Massena AOC. The study will provide information needed to advance the AOC towards delisting, and advance limnological research on the St. Lawrence River with the ultimate goal of establishing a node of the NOAA GLOS.

A team of researchers from Clarkson University, led by **Philip Hopke**, with help from the University of Rochester Medical Center, will measure dry deposition and high resolution speciated ambient mercury (Hg) concentrations in Rochester, New York. This project will include the evaluation of new sophisticated source apportionment tools to determine the major sources contributing to ambient mercury concentrations. In addition, meteorological modeling will be used to determine how these data can be used to determine the relative importance of local mercury emissions versus regional emissions versus global transport. These data will be used to develop a more comprehensive proposal on determining the sources and importance of dry deposition of Hg to the Great Lakes.

**Theodore Lee**, from SUNY Fredonia, in collaboration with the Chautauqua Co. Health Department, will identify the sources of *E. coli* in two Lake Erie beaches in Dunkirk, New York. The bacteria will be isolated from beach water, streams that empty into the Lake near the beaches, and fecal samples from different organisms. The study results will indicate what organisms are most responsible for the *E. coli* present in beach waters. This information can then be used by the County Health Department to develop a plan for reduction of the bacteria.

Another team from SUNY Fredonia, led by **Timothy Strakosh**, with help from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, will study Lake Erie Smallmouth Bass Tributary Stocks to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the genetics of this population. The project will investigate the genetic variability among sites and what the

contribution of each site is to the local adult population, to help in fishery management of this sportfish that is of such economic value to local areas.

**Victor DiGiacomo Jr.**, of the Niagara county Soil and Water Conservation District, will be funded to conduct a survey of angler awareness of the eighteenmile creek area of concern fish consumption advisory. The creek has been polluted by past industrial and municipal discharges, the disposal of waste and the use of pesticides. Over the years, numerous contaminants have been identified in creek sediments and fish flesh. A fish consumption advisory of, “Eat no amount of any species at any time,” exists because of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxins found in fish flesh.

Due to the severity of the advisory and the popularity of Eighteenmile Creek’s Fisherman’s Park as a sport fishing destination, there has been concern at the federal (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) and State (New York State Department of Health) level with regards to consumption advisory awareness of anglers and the need for advisory signage. The survey will analyze angler awareness of the Eighteenmile Creek fish consumption advisory, assess the need for fish consumption advisory signage, and identify better pathways of communicating consumption advisories.

The New York Great Lakes Protection Fund small grants program is administered by the New York Great Lakes Research Consortium, in cooperation with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York Great Lakes Basin Advisory Council, with earnings that accrue from New York State’s investment in the regional Great Lakes Protection Fund. The small grants program provides “seed” money for new, cooperative approaches to researching and protecting the environmental quality of the Great Lakes.