

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant (IISG) is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources. We are funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the University of Illinois, and Purdue University, but IISG also works with key organizations, institutions, and agencies in the Great Lakes region to multiply opportunities for success.

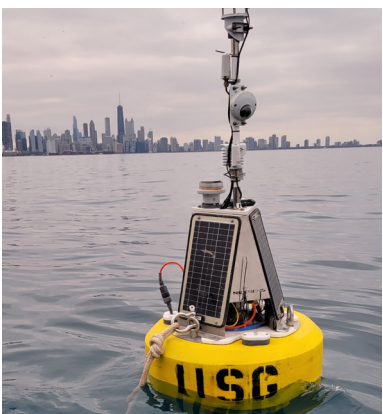
Through research, outreach, and education, we bring together scientists, educators, policy makers, community decision makers, residents, and others to work toward a healthy environment and economy in the southern Lake Michigan region.

### Understanding the impact of lake levels



Recent record high and low Lake Michigan water levels reveal that high variability is a concern going forward. IISG provides resources for coastal communities to connect with regional experts and consider successful management strategies. We are co-funding lake-wide research to assess the impact of water levels, waves, large storms, and human interventions on beaches and communities. And with new funding we will develop a visualization tool to help communities make informed decisions about protecting their shorelines.

### Enabling safer recreation with buoy data



Lake Michigan has the highest rate of drownings in the Great Lakes due to dangerous currents and swift waves. Our water safety work includes reaching boaters and swimmers with information and resources and collaborating with water safety programs around the lake. Add to that, our buoys provide real-time information on water conditions, enabling the National Weather Service to make more accurate forecasts, especially along Chicago's busy lakefront with our new buoy near Navy Pier.

## By the Numbers



**\$519.5 million**  
in economic benefits  
from an \$87 million  
federal investment in  
Sea Grant in 2020



More than  
**\$2.5 million**  
supporting research



**at 18 institutions**  
in Illinois and Indiana  
since 2018



**1,027**  
teachers trained in  
Great Lakes Literacy



helping to reach  
**58,325**  
K-12 students in 2017-22



**315,000**  
pounds of medicine  
collected since 2008



**990,000**  
gallons of rainwater  
diverted to rain gardens  
in 2022

### **Helping communities address water affordability**

From 2008 to 2018, the average residential water rate in the Chicago region almost doubled while household income generally remained stagnant. As water rates continue to rise, a growing number of residents will find their water bills unaffordable. Using data resources and other support from IISG and key partners, the cities of Chicago and Evanston have enacted ordinances to help ensure that all residents have access to affordable, high-quality drinking water.



### **Stopping the spread of invasive species**

The biggest threat to Lake Michigan's food web is aquatic invasive species (AIS), especially quagga mussels, which have made the Great Lakes home. IISG's AIS team has been working with and developing outreach for anglers, boaters, and other relevant audiences for over 25 years. Our Be A Hero message is the official invasive species outreach campaign for the State of Illinois. IISG has over 70 products and programs and has partnered with over 100 organizations in these efforts.



### **Expanding aquaculture opportunities**

Midwest aquaculture producers compete for customers with suppliers of low-cost imported seafood. IISG is working with other Great Lakes Sea Grant programs to support environmentally responsible, competitive, and sustainable aquaculture. Locally, through food safety and processing training, we helped fish farmers expand their markets to restaurants and groceries. Our guidance helps producers improve fish health and survival. And we support hands-on aquaculture experiences to improve STEM education at several underserved high schools.

