

Section 106 Success Story

Historic Fishtown Stabilization & Repairs

LELAND | LEELANAU COUNTY

Fishtown is Michigan's last traditional commercial fishing village. In addition to its working waterfront, the village has become a popular tourist destination, both for the fresh fish and the authentic ambience. Comprised of wooden docks and shanties built out over the water, the historic fabric of Fishtown was exposed over several years of record high water levels. Water poured into shanties and threatened to sweep away the docks and fishing economy of the region.

Non-profit Fishtown Preservation Society has been dedicated to promoting and preserving the historical and fishing heritage of Fishtown. Their close relationship with local partners helped them spring into action to combat the high water danger. Starting in 2020, three shanties were carefully lifted off their crumbling wooden piles, set on land while new piles were driven, and then lifted back into place. Work on other buildings includes the rehabilitation of foundations, sills, siding, windows, and docks.

Included among these preservation projects was the Carlson's Fisheries dock and pilings reconstruction. In order to save the fishery and lift to a higher elevation, a part of the structure had to be demolished, which was an Adverse Effect. The Fishtown Preservation Society worked closely with the permitting agency, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to mitigate the adverse effects. Mitigation included practical measures, such as updating the National Register nomination form for the district, benefiting all of Fishtown in future planning; and an interpretive display on site so visitors could learn about the fishery and preservation efforts.

LOCATION

Leland, MI

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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FEDERAL AGENCY

United States Army Corps of Engineers

PROJECT DATE

2020-2021

MICHIGAN SHPO STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE