



Great Lakes Protection Fund

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Funded Project

Piloting a Paradigm for Adaptive Management of Great Lakes Watersheds

Project No.	946
Timeline	2010 – 2015
Award Amount	\$400,000
Team Leader	Alex Mayer, Michigan Technical University, asmayer@mtu.edu
Project Website	http://glvirtualwater.net/



This team was the first to look at the impact of “virtual water” on the Great Lakes watershed. Virtual water is water embedded in products during the production of goods for export. This team developed a new scientific methodology relating economic production, watershed flow depletion and ecosystem services; piloted this methodology in the Kalamazoo River watershed; worked with an advisory board and basin stakeholders to determine the relationships for water and economic development policy; and investigated how the findings could be further developed to inform Great Lakes water policy, including future revisions to the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact. This was the first comprehensive study

of its kind mapping the hydro-economy of a region in significant detail.