

Project WET USA  
2017 Coordinators Conference and Training  
*Our Freshwater Future: Examining Education's Role*

**Information Packet**

Traverse City, Michigan  
October 2 – 6, 2017



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## **1. Welcome to Traverse City, Michigan**

Traverse City is a year-round travel destination in the northwest part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Its scenic surroundings and location on Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay attract tens of thousands of tourists each year. The Traverse City area features natural attractions and recreational activities such as freshwater beaches, vineyards, a National Lakeshore, downhill skiing and numerous forests. TripAdvisor named Traverse City the number-two small town travel destination in the United States, while Boating Magazine named Traverse City one of its "Ten Best Places to Live and Boat."



## **2. Important Dates**

Everyone attending the conference must register in advance. See the conference website at <https://www.projectwetusa.org/conferences/2017-project-wet-usa-coordinator-conference-and-training> for registration details.

July 31 <sup>st</sup>	Early Bird Registration deadline
August 31 <sup>st</sup>	Deadline for cancellation with full refund
September 1 <sup>st</sup>	Final Registration deadline
September 1 <sup>st</sup>	Deadline for special room rates at Park Place Hotel

## **3. Hotel Reservations at the Park Place Hotel**

The Project WET USA Conference and Training will be held at the Park Place Hotel. Located in downtown Traverse City, the Park Place Hotel is within a short walk to restaurants, shopping, bike trails, kayaking and beaches.



The conference opening and closing dinners will be held at the Top of Park rooftop ballroom, which offers spectacular views of Grand Traverse Bay and Traverse City. The hotel also includes a restaurant and

lounge for fine food and a rooftop area for beverages and entertainment. For more information on the Park Place Hotel, visit [www.park-place-hotel.com](http://www.park-place-hotel.com).

The hotel address is:

Park Place Hotel  
300 East State Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684

### *Room Rates*

The hotel has rooms with one king-sized bed or two queen-sized beds at a negotiated rate of \$109.95 per night, plus the applicable state and local taxes (currently 11 percent total) in effect at time of check out. The Saturday rate is \$209.95/night.

The negotiated rates for Project WET are **available only until Friday, September 1, 2017**. Rates and availability are not guaranteed after that date and are only honored on an availability basis. Make your hotel reservations early!



**Please contact the hotel directly to make your own room reservations.** To receive our negotiated room rate of \$109, call (231) 946-5000 and ask for the Project WET rate. *Please note that the 800 number at the hotel does not have access to group room rates.*

### *Cancellation Policy*

Individuals may cancel their reservations without penalty at least 24 hours prior to arrival. Reservations cancelled within 24 hours will be charged for one night's stay at the negotiated rates.

### *Check-in and Check-out Times*

Check-in time is 4:00 p.m. on the day of arrival, and check-out time is 11:00 a.m. on the day of departure. Anyone needing special consideration for a late check-out should inquire at the Front Desk on the day of departure. There is luggage storage available if the early arrival/late departure request cannot be accommodated.

### *Hotel Room*

Hotel Room Features:

- Complimentary high-speed wireless internet throughout the hotel
- In-room voicemail
- Hair dryer, ironing board with iron
- Refrigerator, coffee maker, microwave
- Personal safes available at Front Desk; cribs and rollaway beds available upon request

#### **4. Airport Arrival/Transportation**

The airport in Traverse City (TVC), also known as the Cherry Capital Airport, is a 10-minute drive from the hotel. The Park Place Hotel offers complimentary shuttle service to and from this airport. To take the shuttle, use the direct-connect kiosk in the baggage claim area of the airport. You can reserve your return shuttle to the airport upon check-in at the hotel. On-site car rental companies are available for those wishing to rent a car.



Grand Rapids Gerald R. Ford International Airport (airport code – GRR) is 151 miles or 2 ½ hours from Traverse City. Anyone wishing to fly into Grand Rapids must arrange their own transportation.



#### **5. Conference Culture**

*Traverse City, Michigan Weather: What to wear*

Average high and low temperatures in Traverse City for the week of the conference are 63 °F and 44 °F, respectively.

Conference attire is casual, except for the opening and closing dinners which are generally dressy casual. The opening dinner is on Monday night, and the closing dinner is on Thursday night. Both will be held on the rooftop of the Park Hotel.

Flip-flops are acceptable as casual attire, but if you plan to attend any field experiences, please bring sturdy walking shoes. Bring a jacket for the evenings. Rain is always possible, so raincoats and/or umbrellas are advisable.

#### *Gathering of the Waters*

The Gathering of the Waters is a tradition at Project WET USA conferences. Each person shares an experience or memory of water from their home or favorite water place and pours a small amount of water from this place (literally or symbolically) into a collective pitcher. A small amount of water from the pitcher from the previous years' conference, containing water added since the year 2000, is also added. This unites all participants from conferences past and present. Please bring water (an ounce or two in a travel-size container) from your favorite water place, your home or local tap water as a symbol of your water place.



### *Hospitality Room*

Project WET USA conferences include a “hospitality room” where coordinators can gather to chat, snack and drink in our own private hotel suite. Some snacks will be provided, but please BYOB and any snacks you may want to share. The location of the room and the hours it will be open will be announced upon arrival at the conference.

### **6. New Coordinator Training**

Offered by Project WET and the Instruction and Training WETteam, the New Coordinator Training on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, offers important details about being part of the Project WET USA Network and answers any questions coordinators may have about managing their own networks. The Training follows the hands-on methods and interactive format of workshops that Project WET is known for. You do not have to be new to attend—seasoned coordinators are welcome too!

Before attending the training, please watch the New Coordinator webinar and review the coordinator and facilitator handbooks located on the [www.ProjectWETUSA.org](http://www.ProjectWETUSA.org) website.



## 7. Overall Conference Agenda

	Sunday October 1	Monday October 2	Tuesday October 3	Wednesday October 4	Thursday October 5	Friday October 6
<b>Breakfast</b>	on your own	on your own	included 6:30-7:45am (Courtyard 1&2) <i>(Silent Auction opens)</i>	included 6:30-7:45am (Courtyard 1&2)	included 7:00-8:15am (Courtyard 1&2)	included (4am-8am) Hospitality Suite
<b>Morning</b>		<b>Closed Session:</b> New Coordinator Training 9am-4pm (Courtyard 1&2)	<b>Closed Session:</b> USA Coordinators Network Meeting 8am-12pm The Lakes (Lower Level)	<b>Closed Session:</b> USA Coordinators Network Meeting 8am-12pm	<b>Content Session 2:</b> Early Childhood 8:30am-12:00pm The Lakes (Lower Level)	<b>Optional:</b> Field Experiences (bike tour, kayaking, fish weir)
<b>Lunch</b>		on your own	box lunch <i>(prep for field experience)</i>	included (12pm-1pm) (Courtyard 1&2)	on your own (12pm-1:30pm)	on your own
<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Closed Session:</b> Project WET Coordinator Council Meeting (9-4pm)	<b>Closed Session:</b> New Coordinator Training 9am-4pm (Courtyard 1&2)	<b>Field Experience:</b> Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes 1-6 pm <i>(load bus at 12:45 to leave at 1pm)</i>	<b>Content Session 1:</b> Conference Opening The Lakes (Lower Level)	<b>Content Sessions 3:</b> Advanced Training 1:30pm-3:30pm <i>(Silent Auction closes at 3:00pm)</i> The Lakes (Lower Level)	<b>Optional:</b> Field Experiences
<b>Dinner</b>	on your own	<b>Closed Dinner :</b> Conference Opening for USA Coordinators 6pm-7:30pm Top of the Park	On your own	On your own <i>(food available to purchase at North Peak Brewing Company)</i>	<b>Dinner Session</b> included Conference Closing 6pm-7:30pm Top of the Park	on your own
<b>Evening</b>		Conference Opening	Free Night!	<b>Fun Night!</b> 6pm-8pm North Peak Brewing Company	Conference Closing	

Color Key:	included meals	closed sessions for USA Coordinators only	open sessions for all conference attendees	Field Experiences	on your own
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## **8. Project WET USA Network Meeting Agenda**



### **Tuesday, October 3, 2017**

- 8:00-8:15 Welcome and Announcements  
Welcome to Michigan  
Introduction of Sticky notes/questions for discussion about USA network and Project WET USA
- 8:15-8:45 Project WET USA update:
- Annual Report
  - Funding Status
  - New Store Update
  - Portal Status Update and New Tutorial
- 8:45-9:45 What's new at the Project WET Foundation
- 9:45-10:00 Break
- 10:00-11:00 WETteams overview
- 11:00-12:00 Regional Meetings  
BOX LUNCH
- 12:45 Bus loads for Field Experience to Sleeping Bear Dunes

### **Wednesday, October 4, 2017**

- 8:00-8:30 Guide 2.0 Online Training
- 8:30-9:00 Water, Ag & Food KIDS booklet
- 9:00-9:15 ProjectWETUSA.org website overview
- Resources for Coordinators and Where to Find Them
  - Discussion on Improvement of Website
- 9:15-9:30 Break
- 9:30-11:00 New issues in Project WET USA
- Bundling Activities Discussion
  - Workshop Requirements/Times/What is required to get a guide/Joint workshops
  - Increasing network participation
  - Webinar ideas
  - From sticky note suggestions/comments/questions
- 11:00-11:15 2018 Conference
- Scholarship recipients and info on scholarships for 2018
- 11:15-12:00 WETteam planning

## 9. Content Sessions

\*This is a draft agenda and subject to change

	Wednesday October 4	Thursday October 5	Friday October 6
<b>breakfast</b>	included	included	included
<b>Morning</b>	<b>Closed Session:</b> USA Coordinators Network Meeting <i>(Silent Auction opens at breakfast)</i> <b>The Lakes (Lower Level)</b>	<b>Content Session 2:</b> <b>The Lakes (Lower Level)</b> Moderator: P&P WETteam	<b>Optional: Field Experiences</b> (bike tour, kayaking, hiking)
		<b>8:30-12:00</b> The Power of Wonder: Getting Little Feet WET through Workshops <i>Jo Adang, Julia Beck, Megan Regnerus, Susan Quincy, P&amp;P WETteam</i>	
<b>Lunch</b>	included	12:00-1:30pm on your own	on your own
<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Content Session 1:</b> Conference Opening <b>The Lakes (Lower Level)</b> Moderator:	<b>Content Sessions 3:</b> <b>The Lakes (Lower Level)</b> Moderator: <i>(Silent Auction closes before dinner)</i>	<b>Optional: Field Experiences</b>
	<b>1:00-1:45</b> The Great Lakes <i>Mark Breederland, Michigan Sea Grant</i>	<b>1:30-2:00</b> Who Works for Water, Wildlife and Forestry..... <i>Dennis Clement</i>	
	<b>1:45-2:30</b> Great Lakes Literacy <i>Janet Vail, Dennis Clement</i> <i>Ice Cream Break</i>	<b>Break</b>	
	<b>2:50-3:20</b> Project WET and Earth SySTEM <i>Mike Jabot</i>	<b>2:00-3:30</b> Advanced Training: I&T WETteam	
	<b>3:20-3:50</b> Beyond Waters, There Are Waters - twisting a Chinese Proverb illustrates how voluntary acts exceed requirements <i>Michaela Stickney</i>		
	on your own <i>(food available at North Peak Brewing Company)</i>	included (Conference Closing) <b>Roof of Park Place Hotel</b>	
<b>Dinner</b>	<b>6pm-8pm</b> Fun Night! <b>North Peak Brewing Company</b>	<b>6pm-7:30pm</b> Conference Closing <b>Top of the Park</b>	
<b>Evening</b>			

included meals
closed sessions for USA Coordinators only
open sessions for all conference attendees
Field Experiences
On your own

## **10. Advanced Training Topics**

This year's conference will feature two advanced training sessions—one on the *Getting Little Feet Wet: Project WET Early Childhood Education Guide* and the second on a topic to be determined by the Instruction and Training WETteam, focusing on activities for grades 3-12. Check back for more information.

## **11. Field Experiences**

*Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>: Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes*



Voted the Most Beautiful Place in America by Good Morning America viewers, the **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore** is a breathtaking symphony of water, sky and towering sand dunes on the Lake Michigan shoreline. Part of the national park system since 1970, Sleeping Bear is one of America's most profoundly beautiful landscapes: a 64-mile curve of sweeping vistas, miles of perfect freshwater beaches, forested wilderness islands and miles of hiking trails. The glistening waters of Lake Michigan make a stunning backdrop for the dunes and forests, while abundant wildlife and a diverse ecosystem thrill the nature lover. This trip will begin with a stop at the Philip A. Hart Visitor Center followed by a drive along Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive for exceptional views of Lake Michigan and Glen Lake. There will be an opportunity for a hike down a 100' dune. We will visit the quaint town of Glen Arbor for a look at the importance of cherries to the region. The field experience will conclude with a stop at Sutton's Bay, home of the non-profit Inland Seas Education Association (ISEA) tall ships that serve thousands of students per year. ISEA hosts aquatic science, environmental awareness and sail training experience for learners of all ages.

The field trip will include a 1.5-mile easy to moderate hike. Please wear comfortable shoes for hiking and bring layers for changing weather.

*Friday, August 12<sup>th</sup>: Optional Field Experiences*

*Bike tour, kayaking, hiking*

Consider extending your stay so you have time for biking, kayaking, hiking, taking a winery tour, visiting the Potter Park Zoo, walking on the beach, going out on a tall ship, shopping, visiting Mackinac Island (<https://www.mackinacisland.org/>) or going across the 5-mile Mackinac Bridge to Michigan's Upper Peninsula.



## **12. Silent Auction**

Please bring something to contribute (and your money to bid in the auction!) for the Project WET USA Silent Auction. Proceeds go to providing scholarships for the 2018 Project WET USA Conference—it could be YOU needing a scholarship in 2018! Ideally, we are looking for water and other environmental education-related items (fun and functional). Think about bringing a basket representing the best of your state or clean out the closet by bringing Project WET swag that you aren't using. You can use check, cash or credit card to pay for your items. We have been able to provide scholarships for three Coordinators the last two years—let's aim for four scholarships in 2018!

*Mailing Packages to Hotel:*

If it is necessary to ship materials to the hotel for the silent auction, each item must be properly packaged and marked with Project WET's hotel code ("Banquets/WET") and your first and last name. (See below for a sample mailing label.) Packages should not be scheduled to arrive any earlier than September 27, 2017. Materials should be shipped to:

The Park Place Hotel  
Attn: Banquets/WET (Oct. 2-6, 2017)  
*Your first and last name*  
300 East State Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684

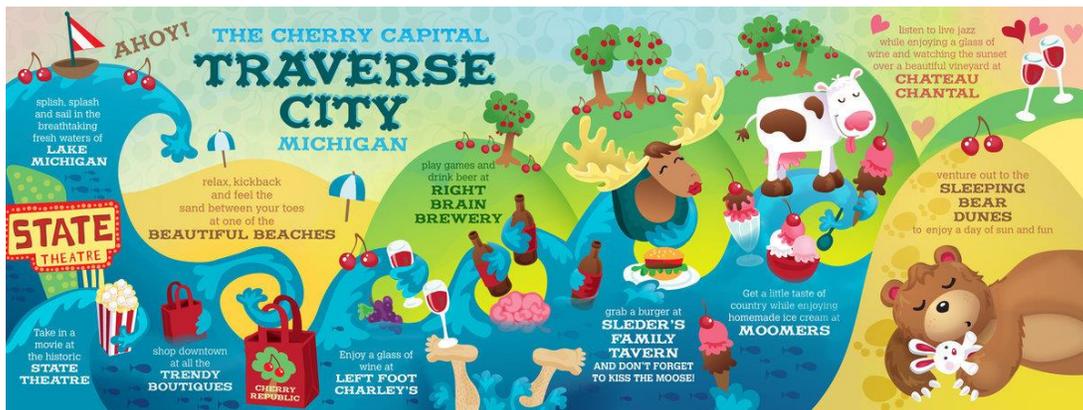
Please keep a record of your packages sent, shipping service and tracking number(s). Once you arrive at the hotel, you may check at the front desk or the Project WET registration desk to retrieve your mailed packages.

*Alternative option for mailing packages:*

Any relatively small items that can be transported by car before September 29 can be mailed to Janet Vail with Michigan Project WET. Mail/FedEx/UPS the items to:

GVSU-AWRI/Project WET  
740 West Shoreline Drive  
Muskegon, MI 49441

### **13. Free Night**



Tuesday night is designated as a “free night” with no formal agenda set. Explore Traverse City with fellow coordinators or enjoy some down time at the hotel. You will receive information about restaurants and activities to do that evening in your welcome packet. For those arriving early or staying on Friday, there will be information about daytime activities in your packet.

### **14. Fun Night**

Did you know that the Traverse City area was once covered by oceans? In fact, it was once a tropical area and home to much marine life include the colonial coral hexagonaria percarinata. This prehistoric coral is now a fossil known as the [Petoskey stone](#). During Fun night, we will discover the secrets of the Petoskey stone and what it tells us about Traverse City’s past. We will polish the stones for use in jewelry or other items.



Fun night will be held at the North Peak Brewing Company, located in a historic building (formerly the Big Daylight Candy Factory) in downtown Traverse City. At the brewery food, beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages are available for purchase while we polish and DIY-craft our Petoskey stones.

We will walk the five-block from the hotel to North Peak Brewing Company. Note that the weather will be cool after dark so please bring layers and dress appropriately for the weather. Taxi services and some cars will be available for those not able or wanting to walk.

### **15. Important Phone Numbers**

Janet Vail, Michigan Project WET: (616) 443-1411; email: [vailj@gvsu.edu](mailto:vailj@gvsu.edu)

Julia Beck: (406) 585-4104; cell (406) 570-5036; email: [julia.beck@projectwet.org](mailto:julia.beck@projectwet.org)

Park Place Hotel: (231) 946-5000

## **16. Featured Reading**

This year's featured book is *The Death and Life of the Great Lakes* by Dan Egan.

*The Great Lakes—Erie, Huron, Michigan, Ontario and Superior—hold 20 percent of the world's supply of surface fresh water and provide sustenance, work and recreation for tens of millions of Americans. But they are under threat as never before, and their problems are spreading across the continent. The Death and Life of the Great Lakes is prize-winning reporter Dan Egan's compulsively readable portrait of an ecological catastrophe happening right before our eyes, blending the epic story of the lakes with an examination of the perils they face and the ways we can restore and preserve them for generations to come.*

[Learn more or buy the book at Amazon.](#)