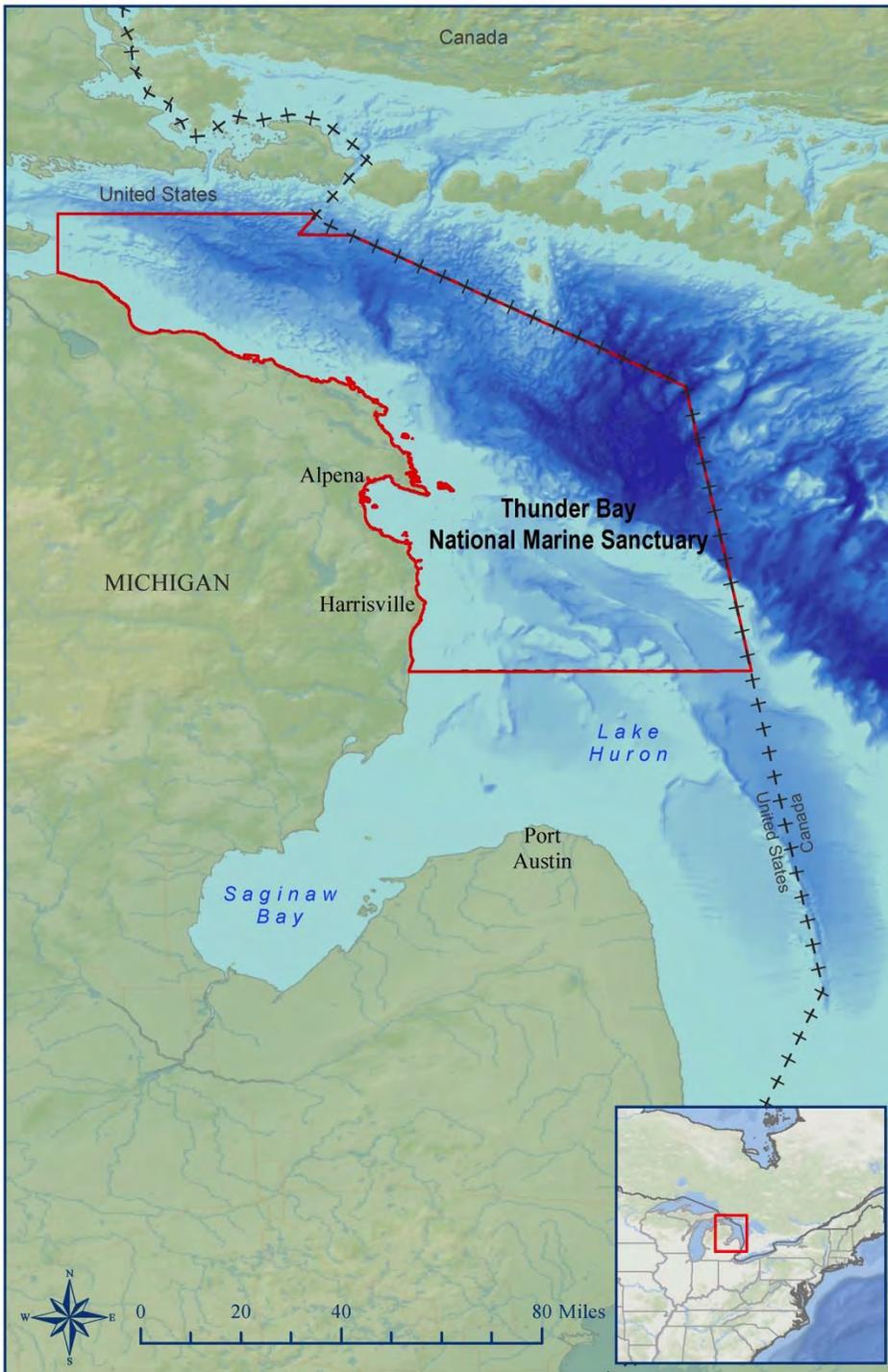


## THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

### FY17 Accomplishments



### BACKGROUND

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary was established in 2000 to protect one of America's best-preserved and nationally significant collections of shipwrecks. Unpredictable weather, murky fog banks, sudden gales and rocky shoals earned the area the name "Shipwreck Alley." Fire, ice, collisions and storms have claimed over 200 vessels in and around Thunder Bay.

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary is part of the National Marine Sanctuary System, which is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. National marine sanctuaries are managed for the conservation of their natural and cultural resources, while supporting sustainable recreation, tourism and compatible commercial activities. The network includes a system of 13 national marine sanctuaries and **Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll** marine national monuments.



Photo: David Ruck/NOAA

The sanctuary's historic shipwrecks are open to snorkeling, diving, boating, and other recreational activities.



Photo: NOAA

Professors from Michigan Technological University discuss sonar imagery with sanctuary archaeologists.



Photo: NOAA

A representative from private sector company Fathom Drone deploys a prototype underwater drone in the sanctuary's testing tank.

### Sanctuary embraces "Get into Your Sanctuary" campaign to increase tourism

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary partnered with the Friends of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary to implement the "Get into Your Sanctuary" campaign and raise awareness about recreation in the sanctuary. With funding from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, the campaign expanded the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' annual weekend event to an integral part of outreach efforts to increase sustainable tourism and strengthen public engagement. This regional awareness effort enhances the successful community branding initiative, which celebrates Alpena as the "Sanctuary of the Great Lakes."

### Two shipwrecks discovered in expanded boundaries of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Two historic shipwrecks were discovered by Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and its partners, funded by a NOAA Ocean Exploration and Research grant. Sanctuary archaeologists identified the shipwrecks as the 202-foot wooden steamer *Ohio* (1873-1894), and the 267-foot steel-hulled steamer *Choctaw* (1892-1915). Preserved by Lake Huron's cold, freshwater, the shipwrecks are in pristine condition. The sanctuary is planning future expeditions to better understand, manage and interpret the wrecks, and the sites will be nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### Sanctuary becomes regional hub for applied marine technology

Building upon a partnership with Alpena Community College's Program in Marine Technology, the sanctuary created a "maritime makerspace" and marine technology testing – a hub for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. This technology workspace is utilized by teachers and students (K-12 schools), university partners, private companies and international science organizations.

### Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary Looking Ahead to FY18

- During WWII, Tuskegee and Free French fighter pilots conducted training missions over Lake Huron. In 2018, the sanctuary will conduct investigations to locate military aircrafts lost over sanctuary waters.
- Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary will host the annual Great Lakes Regional Marine Advanced Technology Education Remotely Operated Vehicle competition at the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center's marine technology testing tank.
- In 2018, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary will have nearly 50 permanent mooring buoy systems installed to provide access to historic shipwreck sites.