INVITATION TO DREDGEFEST

DredgeFest Great Lakes is an event about the human manipulation of sediments in the Great Lakes basin. It will take place in Duluth and Minneapolis, Minnesota over the week of August 14-21, 2015. It will consist of a symposium, field tours, and speculative design workshops, which collectively bring together government agencies, scientists, designers, theorists, academics, corporate practitioners, industry experts, students, and the public. We are looking for workshop leaders and symposium presenters.

DredgeFest begins with dredging, the linear industrial activity of uplifting sediments and transporting them to new locations. But DredgeFest is about much more than dredging. We believe that dredging is a key component of a much wider cycle of human practices that accelerate, decelerate, transport, and materially alter sediments. We are interested in how the full range of technologies, practices, and organizations operating within that wider cycle collectively alters sedimentary balances, both eroding and generating landscapes. DredgeFest Great Lakes is our third regional conference examining these issues.
DredgeFest Great Lakes

The Great Lakes basin is the largest source of surface freshwater in North America. Despite the size of this resource, it is by no means stable. Author William Ashworth uses the term "Late" to describe the lakes, as they are, geologically speaking, very young. At once landlocked and international, the basin’s lakes and landscapes have been extensively modified by human settlement and use. In the past two centuries of industrialization, the lakes’ edge conditions, bathymetry, ecosystems and water quality have all been significantly altered. Our ability (or inability) to recognize and respond to these shifting baselines mediates our understanding of the Great Lakes themselves. These emergent and transitional conditions have profound implications for the design, planning and management of the regional landscapes of the basin, from industrial ports to wildlife areas.

In addition to the DredgeFest symposium and tours, we will be running 5-day workshops aimed at architecture and landscape architecture students (professionals and the general public will be encouraged to participate but we expect that the bulk of participants will be students). We are seeking leaders to work with us in designing and delivering these workshops.

The format of the workshops is highly malleable but should assume:

1. Design research as general methodology.
2. That participants will produce substantive “portfolio ready” pieces.
3. The integration of disciplinary expertise from a range of fields not limited to design.
4. That the projects are the products of the application of a specific innovative methodology to the topic of the movement of sediments in the Great Lakes Basin.

Past workshops have explored ecological and social potential of rethinking a specific form resulting from conventional dredging practices, or combining physical and digital modeling to study the effect of tidal action on alternative coastal wetland restoration proposals.

The DRC will work closely with you to support development of your ideas and to connect you with local resources and facilities. Proposals utilizing the workshop as as an entry point to further investigation in a fall (2015) studio (at participant’s own institution) will be assessed favorably.
Submission Requirements:

**Workshop Title and Leader(s) Names**

**Description:** A 400-word max. description of the proposed workshop, highlighting the specifics of the topic to be explored and the design research methodology to be applied

**Schedule:** A 1-page max. proposed schedule for the workshop

**Products:** A brief description of the proposed products of the workshop and how they will created/documented in a publication-ready fashion

**Materials:** A list of required equipment and materials (for studio spaces and/or participants). Computers and the basic suite of representational and modeling software will be available.

**Budget:** Proposed travel funding / stipend required by leaders

**Bios:** A 100-word max. workshop leader bio (for each leader, if multiple).

**Links:** Any associated links that help support the proposal.

Please submit the preceding as an attachment in PDF format to drc@dredgeresearchcollaborative.org by April 1st 2015.

Schedule

The dates of the three-part event are August 14-21, 2015. The current schedule is:

- **F 14** Symposium (Minneapolis)
- **S 15** Symposium (Minneapolis)
- **S 16** Public field tours (Duluth)
- **M 17** Workshop field tours (at workshop discretion)
- **T 18** Workshops (Minneapolis)
- **W 19** Workshops (Minneapolis)
- **T 20** Workshops (Minneapolis)
- **F 21** Presentation and discussion of Workshop results, Event Exhibition

While the workshops specifically will run for five days from Monday August 17 through Friday August 21, we expect that though most if not all workshop participants will attend the full event, including symposium and field tours. The symposium discussion has many purposes; one of those is to prepare workshop participants for the topics they will grapple with in the workshops.
Workshop Format and Leader Responsibility

Each workshop should assume a range of students from 5-15. As we get closer, we will have a good idea of the exact number and composition of the participants. We imagine that the workshops will run on the studio charette model. Participants will be expecting an intensive and immersive experience, ranging from data collection and idea generation to testing and production. As workshop leader you would have the latitude to set expectations, workflows and format as you like, though we would be happy to help in the planning and will be present throughout the workshops.

We are asking workshop leaders to:

1. Develop the problem statement or design research question and a methodology for their workshop in relation to the five themes of DFGL, as outlined above.
2. Help define the participants for their workshop. If you have students from your university that you would like to bring along we encourage that. We expect to have a pool of interested and talented student participants from university programs within the Great Lakes Basin. (If you have any interest in using the workshop as an entry point to further investigation in a studio at your own institution, we would be very supportive.) We will also open up a general call for participants in spring 2015. If you are able and intend to bring along some of your own students, we ask that you keep us informed of that as we organize workshop groups and plan logistics for the different groups.
3. Plan and lead the workshops between 17-21 August 2015.
4. Collaborate with the Dredge Research Collaborative in the documentation of workshop products.

Venues

Studio space for workshops will be provided by the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Access can be arranged for the standard suite of digital design/fabrication tools. If you have a specific need and would like to speak with us about software, fabrication abilities, or field equipment we would be happy to work with you to try and get the necessary equipment.

Themes

DredgeFest Great Lakes investigates the shifting baselines of the region across the following five themes. While it is not necessary to align your workshop with any one particular theme, they should be understood as the foundational subject matter of DredgeFest and some combination of them should directly inform your proposal.
1. Freshwater Basin
The sustainability of North America's largest source of freshwater is in question. The quality and quantity of water moving through the Great Lakes has changed significantly over the past century due to commercial shipping, legacy industrial land use, and agricultural production.

This theme is about how the Great Lakes region can respond to the challenges of its industrial legacies and coming changes to the ecosystem and climate.

Key questions include:
- How have nutrient loads and industrial toxins spawned new environmental baselines, and how should these be managed, prevented, or utilized?
- How will altered water levels and accelerated climate change affect the basin?
- How will changes in the shipping industry or shifting demographic trends shape the basin and its ecosystems?
- How will a multitude of international stakeholders deal with these challenges, via policy or other actions?

2. Choreographing Sediments
Sediments are constantly in motion in the basin. In some places, there is too much sediment, which requires removal through industrial operations like dredging. In others, sediment is lacking, and it must be acquired through mining operations. This fluctuating regional network of surpluses and deficits is tightly linked to both industrial operations, including the use of the Great Lakes as a regional transportation system for bulk shipping, and to geomorphological processes, such as deposition and erosion.

This theme is about the circulation of sediments at a regional scale, and the opportunities available for managing or leveraging that circulation for new purposes.

Key questions include:
- How might this regional and anthropogenic cycle of earth moving be better choreographed?
- How might sediment sources and sinks be anticipated, altered and used through new landscape strategies?
- Where and how might surpluses of dredged material be best used?
- What dynamic modeling techniques and representational concepts might be deployed to articulate these anthro-geologic cycles?
3. Landscapes of Dredge
These large-scale manipulations driven by industrial, economic and geological processes have produced a great excess of clean and contaminated sediment around the shores of the basin. The result is a set of landscapes within the Great Lakes whose terrain—both above water and below—is fundamentally shaped by dredging and the disposal of dredged material. Focusing on these actual places provides an opportunity to explore questions that are technological and environmental, but also about cultural identity and history.

This theme is about local sites at the muddy edges of water and land, considered across a broad range of characteristics, including material cycling, ecological performance, aesthetics, and cultural significance.

Key questions include:

* How are legacy dredge disposal landscapes presently being addressed?
* As we shift from a paradigm of disposal or confinement of dredge material to one of beneficial reuse, what are the optimal strategies and techniques for designing dredge landscapes?
* What are the performative criteria and capacity of these landscapes?

4. New Economies
Novel environmental conditions and the social reactions and responses to those conditions present opportunities to recalibrate local and regional economies.

This theme is about understanding the role of new kinds of commerce and industry, transforming in the face of a local and global economic context, and considering how those might grow out of past practices.

Key questions include:

* How might new economic frameworks emerge from the oversights and environmental oversimplifications of the first wave of industrialization?
* What is the role of brownfields and other former industrial sites in emerging economies of the Basin?
* How can current waste streams, sediment regimes, and environmental excesses be leveraged to create new economic opportunities and connections?
5. Participation
A multitude of players are implicated in both the process and results of sediment movement, including varying populations, civic actors, private industry, and governmental organizations.

This theme is about the relationships between these actors who play a role in determining the future of the landscapes of the Great Lakes region, tactics for negotiating between conflicting interests, and strategies for grappling with wicked problems.

Key questions include:

- How might the breadth of participants in these landscapes be expanded, particularly in relationship to various publics?
- And what are the potential benefits and drawbacks of this additional level of participation?
- What are the roles and relationships of policy, governance, public voices and industry in shaping the future of the basin?
- What new instruments and modes of operation might beneficially affect participatory roles and opportunities?
- What are the existing possibilities and future potentials for citizen science, action and recreation in dredge landscapes?