

Ocean Drones Launched in Lake Superior to Support \$7B Great Lakes Fishery

Collecting data to improve fish counts, monitor environmental health, and help to protect native fish species.

ASHLAND, WISCONSIN, USA, August 10, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Saildrone has launched two Saildrone Explorer uncrewed surface vehicles (USVs) on a large-scale, multi-partner [mission in Lake Superior](#) supporting the sustainable management of the \$7 billion per year Great Lakes fishery. Led by the US Geological Survey (USGS), the 25-day mission brings together state, federal, tribal, Canadian provincial, private, and non-profit partners using [advanced fishery research](#) approaches to enhance fishery assessment methods.



SD 1064 deployed from Ashland, WI, into Chequamegon Bay, on the southwestern shore of Lake Superior. Photo: Don Jaskowiak.

The Great Lakes are one of the most ecologically diverse ecosystems on Earth, home to nearly 139 native species of fish. Commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries support more than 75,000 jobs. Estimation of prey fish abundances in the Great Lakes is a central part of the USGS Great Lakes Science Center (GLSC)'s annual commitments to fisheries managers throughout the Great Lakes.

“

Sustainable fisheries management is imperative not only for the long-term health of the fisheries but for the Great Lakes ecosystem as a whole.”

*Matt Womble, Saildrone
director of ocean data
programs*

The 23-foot Saildrone Explorer carries sensors to measure fish distribution and density data around the clock. The saildrones, which have a zero operational carbon footprint and operate virtually silently, will enable USGS scientists to better understand the effects of large vessel engine noise

on fish sampling and catchability. They will also provide supplemental data on the abundance of rainbow smelt, an invasive prey fish species that has become thoroughly integrated into Great Lakes food webs.

“The USGS strives to continuously enhance the quality of our science by integrating cutting-edge technologies into our research,” said Peter Esselman, a USGS biologist and the project lead. “The data collected during this Lake Superior mission will help Great Lakes fishery managers make the most informed decisions possible to sustain the fishery.”

The Sairdrone Explorer is a proven platform for acoustic fisheries surveys, having performed numerous fish stock assessments in the Arctic, along the US West Coast, and the North Sea. Powered by wind for propulsion and solar energy to run onboard instruments, Sairdrone USVs have demonstrated their capabilities around the world, from lakes to the treacherous Southern Ocean to the eye of Atlantic hurricanes.

“Sairdrone uncrewed surface vehicles (USVs) have already sailed 800,000 nautical miles and spent 18,000 days at sea—and counting—collecting data to serve a wide range of research objectives, from seafloor mapping and maritime security to climate science and sustainable fisheries management. Sustainable fisheries management is imperative not only for the long-term health of the fisheries but for the Great Lakes ecosystem as a whole,” said Matt Womble, Sairdrone director of ocean data programs.

This is the [second year](#) of a multi-year mission in the Great Lakes. In Summer 2021, two Sairdrone USVs were deployed from Holland, MI. The vehicles sailed up Lake Michigan to the Straits of Mackinac and then down Lake Huron before being recovered in Port Huron.

Susan Ryan

Sairdrone, Inc.

+1 314-914-5008

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Other](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/585352177>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2022 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.