Thompson, T.A., <u>Johnston, J.W.</u>, and Baedke, S.J., 2000, **The Geologic Framework of Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands**, *Society of Wetland Scientists 21st Annual Conference, Millennium Wetland Event*, August 6-12, Quebec City, Quebec, Program and Abstracts, p. 306.

Wetlands of the Great Lakes coastal system commonly owe their existence to long-term interactions between fluvial and coastal processes, climate, water-level fluctuations, and vertical ground movement. Three broad types of coastal wetlands occur throughout the Great Lakes: open coast, protected, and drowned river-mouth/flooded delta platform wetlands. A continuum exists between these end members, and throughout their existence many wetlands have systematically or episodically migrated between end members. Most wetlands were established following a rise from extreme early Holocene low-water levels that occurred in all the Great Lakes basins. The rising water surfaces flooded drainages and low-relief areas, producing numerous embayed coastlines that housed the precursors of modern-day wetlands. Littoral systems were established that captured embayed areas, protecting them from nearshore processes, or created new areas where wetlands could be established. Recent studies of late Holocene lake levels in the Lakes Superior and Michigan/Huron basins are providing a more detailed understanding of the role of wetlands in Great Lakes coastal evolution.