



Agencies adjust lakewide stocking to preserve Lake Michigan predator-prey balance

Seek to sustain diverse salmon and trout fishing opportunities into the future

Ann Arbor, MI – In response to persistent and comprehensive evidence of declining pelagic prey fish abundance, the Lake Michigan Committee has week proposed stocking reductions to better balance trout and salmon predators with their pelagic prey for 2017, while also sustaining Lake Michigan’s diverse trout and salmon fishery. The five-member Lake Michigan Committee comprises all state management agencies that border Lake Michigan and the Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority. Recommendations from the committee represent the consensus of its members.

The stocking adjustments, which would commence in spring 2017,

underscore the committee’s shared commitment to sustain Lake Michigan’s prized salmon and trout fishery as the lake’s ecosystem shifts. Extensive changes to the lake’s food web, driven primarily by invasive species such as quagga and zebra mussels, have reduced the amount of food available for pelagic prey fish like alewife and rainbow smelt. Other ecosystem changes include enhanced natural reproduction of key predators, especially Chinook salmon, and increasingly lake trout, which intensifies the pressure on a declining pelagic prey fish community. Ongoing research by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state partners indicate that natural

reproduction currently accounts for more than 60 percent of all Chinook salmon in Lake Michigan.

After engaging with respective governments, recreational anglers, charter fishers, partner agencies, community leaders and others, Lake Michigan Committee members will relieve pressure on prey fish by reducing salmon and trout stocking by the predator equivalent of more than 800,000 Chinook during 2017 and the predator equivalent of more than 900,000 Chinook in 2018 to provide sustainable and diverse fishing opportunities throughout the lake.

Agencies adjust lakewide stocking

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Boat Pumpout Money available for Marinas, Boat Clubs, Nonprofits

Grant application period ends soon

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Marinas, boat clubs or fuel docks with a working pumpout provide a vital service to recreational boaters. Installing a pump, however, and the annual costs to maintain one, can be high. That’s where a program funded by the taxes and fees paid by boaters can help.

This fall, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s Clean Vessel Act program aims to give out about \$12 million for the construction, renovation, operation and maintenance of public boat pumpouts. However, the deadline to apply for the 2017 grant cycle will soon draw to a close. Anyone interested is urged to apply now by contacting their state’s [grant coordinator](#).

The nationally competitive, federal grant program, which is administered by individual states,

pays up to 75 percent of the project costs and requires 25 percent matching funds. Some select states also contribute funds, which could essentially cover up to 100 percent of the costs. Any public or private boating facility or nonprofit organization is eligible to apply. In addition to stationary locations on docks or shore, funds may pay for pumpout vessels, floating restrooms used by boaters, educational efforts on environmental pollution or for other boat sewage-related measures.

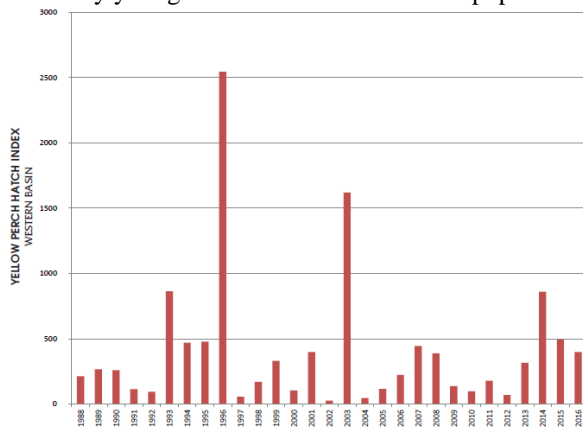
Since its inception, the grant program has funded more than 6,000 pumpouts and dump stations and provided funds to help operate and maintain more than 3,700 systems.

List of Individual Clean Vessel Act coordinators http://www.sobaus.org/pdf/CVA_Coordinator_ListMAS TER.pdf. ✧

ODNR says 2016 Lake Erie Walleye hatch down, Yellow Perch hatch up

COLUMBUS, OH – Early data gathered by wildlife agencies in the western basin of Lake Erie indicate that the yellow perch hatch was near its annual average while the walleye hatch was below average, according to the Ohio DNR.

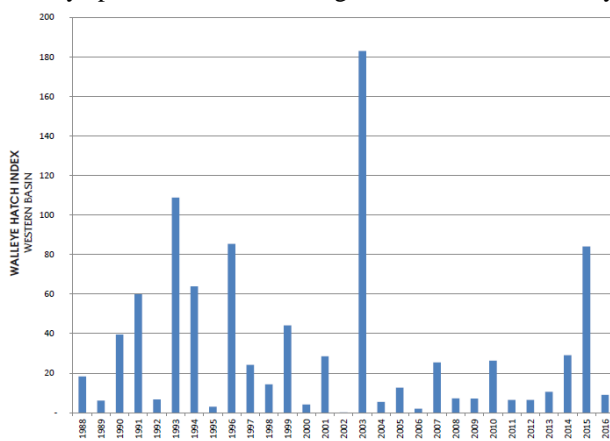
Each year in August, wildlife agencies from around the western basin of Lake Erie sample the waters using bottom trawls in search of young of the year walleye and yellow perch. Data from these bottom trawls are combined into a basin-wide index, and biologists compare the figures to previous years to estimate the success of the walleye and yellow perch hatches. Biologists from the ODNR Division of Wildlife conducted bottom trawling surveys at nearly 40 sampling locations across Ohio waters of the western basin. This data provides biologists with an estimate on how many young fish will enter the fishable population two years later.



Based upon results from the August trawl surveys the 2016 yellow perch hatch appears to have been successful in both Ohio and Ontario waters of the western basin. Initial results from the combined basin-wide hatch of yellow perch found 398 yellow perch per hectare compared to the long-term average of 406 yellow perch per

hectare. Four good yellow perch hatches in a row should help the perch population in the western basin rebuild and lead to quality yellow perch fishing over the next several years.

The 2016 walleye hatch was below average but is strong enough to help support the fishery. Last year's hatch was the fourth highest on record, and those fish are still plentiful in the lake. Average to excellent hatches from four of the past 10 years have resulted in a broad range of walleye ages and sizes that make up the current Lake Erie walleye population. Results from Ohio's surveys found 6.7 walleye per hectare. The average since 1988 is 27 walleye per hectare.



is 9 young-of-the-year walleye per hectare compared to the long-term average of 32 young-of-the-year walleye per hectare.

Information on the ODNR Lake Erie research and management programs, fisheries resources, fishing reports, and maps and links to other Lake Erie web resources are available at www.wildohio.gov. ✧



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Position Statement

Representing a major interest in the aquatic resources of the Great Lakes states and the province of Ontario, the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council is a confederation of organizations and individuals with a concern for the present and future of sport fishing, our natural resources and the ecosystem in which we live. We encourage the wise use of our resources and a search for the truth about the issues confronting us.

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Wisconsin breaks from Committee to maintain Lake Michigan Chinook stocking at current levels

Will reduce stocking levels of other species

[See also note below](#)

MADISON – Following a series of public meetings and review of comments submitted by stakeholders, the Wisconsin DNR will preserve Lake Michigan Chinook salmon stocking at current levels while maintaining a diverse and robust fishery. This will be accomplished by reducing stocking levels of other species.

DNR Sec. Cathy Stepp said the decision highlights the importance of Lake Michigan's world class fishery to communities throughout the region and Wisconsin's economy as a whole. Each year, Wisconsin's Great Lakes anglers including those on Lake Michigan contribute \$114.3 million to the economy through direct retail expenditures while generating more than \$12.5 million in state and local taxes.

"We listened closely to our stakeholders and applied the best science available to develop a balanced stocking approach that will maintain exceptional Lake Michigan fishing," Stepp said. "Sustainable angling opportunities work hand in hand with tourism and long-term economic development. We believe this decision represents another step forward to ensure accountability in our decision making and support for great local jobs."

Todd Kalish, bureau deputy director, said the department put extensive effort into using input from stakeholders to develop an innovative and balanced plan that maintains the recreational, economic and biological benefits of the Chinook fishery. The overall plan also includes stakeholder supported collaborative efforts such as increased use of net pens to boost survival; enhanced marketing of the Lake Michigan fishery; and more involvement of stakeholders in data collection.

"We appreciate the public's engagement in the process and for 2017, we intend to again stock some 812,000 Chinook in the Wisconsin waters of Lake Michigan," Kalish said. "In the years ahead, we look forward to putting a variety of groundbreaking initiatives in place that build on the input we received."

In addition to maintaining current stocking levels of Chinook, for 2017 the department will increase hatchery space for steelhead production but reduce stocking of other species such as lake trout and brown trout.

For 2017, Wisconsin's Lake Michigan waters will see the stocking of: 812,270 Chinook (same as 2016); 452,867 coho (same as 2016); 300,000 lake trout (712,377 actual in 2016); 340,000 steelhead trout (269,512 in 2016); and 362,000 brown trout (727,014 in 2016). Stakeholders who track the numbers closely should be advised that the actual yield from hatchery production may vary from year to year by approximately 10 percent.

The department's decision fits within the parameters agreed on by the Lake Michigan Committee, a group composed of fisheries managers from states and tribes bordering the lake, said Brad Eggold, DNR Great Lakes fisheries supervisor. Wisconsin's brown trout stocking cuts will be made in areas where stocked fish are not contributing to good fishing while increased steelhead stocking should enhance diverse Lake Michigan and river fishing experiences.

In addition to preserving Chinook stocking at near current levels, numerous stakeholders expressed a strong desire to reduce lake trout stocking. As reflected in Wisconsin's final stocking plans, Lake Michigan Committee members have asked the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service to eliminate stocking of yearling lake trout at secondary priority sites in southern Lake Michigan and reduce stocking on Wisconsin's portion of the mid-lake reef to 300,000 for 2017. The result is that about 412,000 fewer lake trout will be stocked in Wisconsin waters starting in 2017.

Meanwhile, a Lake Michigan Technical Committee working group has been tasked to review lake wide lake trout stocking as it relates to individual jurisdictional and multi-jurisdictional management goals.

As part of efforts to address lake wide changes in the food web, since 2011 Wisconsin DNR has held more than 40 meetings, public input opportunities and attended sport and commercial meetings to work with anglers toward a shared vision for management of the prized Lake Michigan fishery. For more information including recent presentations on Lake Michigan management topics, visit dnr.wi.gov and search "[Lake Michigan salmon and trout meetings](#)." ✧



[Note from the Michigan DNR: The Wisconsin news release was a surprise to the Lake Michigan Committee and did not reflect our committee agreement. We have spent much time trying to figure out how Wisconsin will achieve the appropriate number of predator reductions while maintaining their current Chinook salmon stocking. It is a work in progress at the moment, and we hope that we can get it resolved soon. Our goal lake-wide is to achieve a reduction in 900,000 Chinook salmon predator equivalents.](#)

Stocking adjustments for Michigan waters of Lake Michigan

Following recommendations of the Lake Michigan Committee, the Department of Natural Resources will adjust Chinook salmon and lake trout stocking in 2017 and 2018 to relieve predation pressure on prey (alewives) in Lake Michigan.

This will be the fourth significant stocking adjustment to predator levels since 1999. The five-member Lake Michigan Committee is made up from all state management agencies that border Lake Michigan and the Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority. Recommendations from the committee represent the consensus of its members.

The committee worked throughout the summer with interested anglers and constituents to amend a proposal that had substantially targeted only a Chinook salmon reduction to this current recommendation to reduce a mix of species to achieve the same reduction in predation pressure in Lake Michigan while recognizing the importance of Chinook.

“We received a considerable number of comments from our advisory committee, sporting groups, anglers and the general public on how to address the predation issue,” said Jay Wesley, DNR Lake Michigan Basin coordinator. “The one common goal we all shared through the review process was to maintain our diverse fishery in Lake Michigan with Chinook salmon as an important component of our multi-billion dollar sport fishery.”

While most of the stocking adjustments will occur in other states, Michigan will stock 300,000 Chinook salmon in 2017 (down 46 percent from 2016) and will discontinue federally stocked lake trout in Grand Haven, Holland and New Buffalo in 2018. Lake Michigan’s Chinook fishery is supported by 60 percent wild fish that are mostly produced in Michigan’s rivers and streams. Michigan will also continue to stock 1.57 million coho salmon, 580,000 steelhead and 550,000 brown trout to maintain a diverse fishery.

In the near future, Michigan will eliminate its own stocking of lake trout in Lake Michigan (50,000) and replace these fish with steelhead.

“We appreciate the robust engagement Michigan citizens brought to this issue,” said DNR Fisheries Division Chief Jim Dexter. “They learned more about the difficulty managing Lake Michigan, and we learned more about their fishing preferences. In the end, we will still meet our biological goal to reduce predation pressure and continue to provide a world-class fishery.”

Michigan will continue to work with our anglers, state, tribal and federal partners to collect and evaluate wild fish recruitment, charter boat and creel success rates, prey fish and predator abundance to determine when salmon stocking might be increased.

“Data on predator and prey numbers, salmon weight and salmon condition (health) are considered annually to determine when it is safe to increase stocking in the future,” said Wesley. ✧

St. Lawrence River smallmouth bass ties 1995 record

Germantown, N.Y. resident Patrick Hildenbrand caught an 8 lb. 4 oz. smallmouth bass from the St.



Lawrence River on August 28 during a fishing tournament in the Thousand Islands Region.

The impressive catch ties the state record for a smallmouth bass caught from Lake Erie in 1995.

“New York’s Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River region is a premier destination for both resident and non-resident anglers seeking a memorable fishing experience,” said DEC Commissioner Seggos.

New York’s Great Lakes and tributaries have provided 12 of the 45 current state records. The St. Lawrence River/Thousand Islands area is particularly well known for its outstanding smallmouth bass fishery and is the site of numerous recent national bass tournaments. Smallmouth bass are among the

most exciting freshwater fish to catch, often making impressive leaps out of the water when hooked and putting on a prolonged strong battle.

A listing of all fishing records can be found on [New York State Freshwater Fishing Records](#) web page on DEC’s website. For more information about the Angler Achievement Awards Program, including a downloadable application form, go to DEC’s website. Program details and an official entry form can also be found in DEC’s current Freshwater Fishing Regulations Guide. For additional information on the Angler Achievement Awards Program call (518) 402-8891 or email fwfish@dec.ny.gov. ✧

USFWS expands hunting and fishing opportunities on refuges

USFWS recently announced the agency will expand fishing and hunting opportunities on 13 refuges throughout the Service's [National Wildlife Refuge System](#). The final rule also modifies existing refuge-specific regulations on more than 70 other refuges and wetland management districts. This includes migratory bird, upland game and big game hunting, and sport fishing.

The final rule also includes opening sport fishing of state-regulated species for the first time at Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge in South Dakota, and expanding areas available for sport fishing at Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge in Indiana.

The Service is responsible for managing more than 850 million acres in the Refuge System, including five marine national monuments, 565 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management districts. The agency manages hunting and fishing programs to ensure sustainable wildlife populations, and other forms of wildlife-dependent recreation on refuges. In addition, the Service's [Urban Wildlife Conservation Program](#), launched in 2013, offers opportunities for residents of America's cities to learn about and

take part in wildlife conservation. There is a national wildlife refuge within an hour's drive from most major metropolitan areas.

Hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities contributed more than \$144.7 billion in economic activity across the United States according to the Service's [National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation](#), published every five years. More than 90 million Americans, or 41% of the United States' population age 16 and older, pursue wildlife-related recreation. The Service's report [Banking on Nature](#) shows refuges pump \$2.4 billion into the economy and support more than 35,000 jobs. More than 48 million visits are made to refuges every year.

The Service's final rule opens the following refuge to sport fishing for the first time:

Indiana

➤ [Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge](#) and Management Area: Expand migratory game bird hunting, upland game hunting, big game hunting and sport fishing. The refuge is already open to migratory game bird hunting, upland game hunting, big game hunting and sport fishing.

Michigan

➤ [Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge](#): Expand migratory game bird hunting, upland game hunting and big game hunting. The refuge is already open to migratory game bird hunting, upland game hunting and big game hunting.

New York

➤ [Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge](#): Expand migratory game bird hunting and big game hunting. The refuge is already open to migratory game bird hunting, big game hunting and sport fishing.

To view a complete list of all hunting and sport fishing opportunities on refuges, click [here](#). The final rule became effective upon publication in the *Federal Register* on October 4, 2016.

Under the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, the USFWS permits hunting and fishing along with four other types of wildlife-dependent recreation, including wildlife photography, environmental education, wildlife observation and interpretation, when they are compatible with a refuge's purpose and mission. [Hunting](#), within specified limits, is now permitted on 337 wildlife refuges; [Fishing](#) on 276 wildlife refuges. ✧

ILL stocks Alligator Gar as part of Reintroduction Program

Ancient species stocked at Powerton, Sanganois, Lower Kaskaskia and Horseshoe Lake

The Illinois DNR recently stocked 1,600 alligator gar (each 12 to 14 inches in length) into four waters in the state as part of a DNR Alligator Gar Reintroduction Program.

The alligator gar, raised from fry, were stocked at:

- ❖ Powerton Lake, a land-locked lake south of Pekin at Powerton Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (Tazewell Co.);
- ❖ Sanganois State Fish and Wildlife Area, a backwater of the Illinois River south of Beardstown (Cass Co.);
- ❖ Horseshoe Lake at Horseshoe Lake State Park (Madison Co.), an old oxbow lake of the Mississippi River in the Metro East;
- ❖ A backwater lake of the Lower Kaskaskia River near the Kaskaskia River Fish and Wildlife Area (St. Clair Co.)

Prior to stocking, the fish received electronic tags that will allow biologists to track and monitor them.



Alligator gar, a fish native to Illinois, are being reintroduced in an attempt to restore this very large predator to waters of Illinois where it once thrived. Prior to the start of the Illinois reintroduction program, the last known catch of alligator gar in Illinois was

in the Cache River basin in southern Illinois in 1966.

Alligator gar can grow up to 8 feet in length and weigh more than 300 pounds. If the project is successful, alligator gar will make for a very strong sportfish, and more importantly, they will add to the biodiversity of the ecosystems in which they are found. ✧

Lake Superior lake trout recovery efforts meetings **Oct 25 & 27**

ASHLAND, Wis. – Two public meetings to discuss next steps in aiding recovery of lake trout populations in Lake Superior will be held by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on **October 25 at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland and October 27 at Saxon Community Center.**

The public meetings will cover regulation options developed by DNR fisheries biologists to help lake trout numbers recover and improve the long-term sustainability of the fishery. Terry Margenau, DNR Lake Superior fisheries supervisor, said population assessments over the last six to eight years indicate that the decline in lake trout abundance is largely due to harvest. The current emergency rule expired September 30 and recent surveys by the fisheries team show lake trout numbers remain well below historical averages.

Lake trout often live more than 40 years and do not reach sexual maturity until they are eight to 10 years old. As a result, the lake trout stock must be carefully managed to address the needs of many stakeholders including commercial fishers, sport anglers and a host of associated businesses that all depend on a strong lake trout fishery in the Wisconsin waters of Lake Superior.

"We appreciate the continued engagement of our stakeholders and their strong interest in Lake Superior lake trout," Margenau said. "The upcoming public meetings will offer opportunities to discuss a new round of options and provide fisheries managers with information needed to move forward."

Feedback from stakeholders will help inform development of another emergency rule covering the recreational lake trout open season that runs from December 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

The upcoming meetings will run from 6 to 8 p.m. The October 25 meeting will be at the Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center, 29270 Highway G in Ashland. The October 27 meeting will be at the Saxon Community Center, 2 Church St., Saxon.

In addition to welcoming comments at the meetings, DNR will gather input through an online survey that will be announced with a deadline of November 10. Citizens also may provide feedback by mailing Terry L. Margenau, Lake Superior fisheries supervisor, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 589, 141 S. Third Street Bayfield, WI 54814; or emailing terry.margenau@wisconsin.gov.

For more information, search the DNR website, DNR.wi.gov, and search for "[Lake Superior fisheries management](#)." For more information about the Lake Superior fishery, search "[fishing Lake Superior](#)." ✧

Whitefish-tullibee sport-netting to open on northern lakes

Recreational netting for whitefish-tullibee opened on **Friday, Oct. 14**, on designated lakes that are less susceptible to sudden changes that impact water temperature.

These lakes, known as Schedule II lakes, offer recreational netting on the following schedule:

- Schedule II A lakes open Friday, Oct. 14, and close Sunday, Dec. 4.
- Schedule II B lakes open Friday, Nov. 4, and close Sunday, Dec. 11.
- Schedule II C lakes open Friday, Nov. 11, and close Sunday, Dec. 11.

Schedule I Lakes, which are more susceptible to factors that impact water temperatures, will be opened and closed on a 48-hour notice posted at lake accesses, other public places, and the DNR website.

The DNR recommends drying nets for 10 days or freezing for two days before moving a net to a new lake, or netting only one lake in a season. Netting in infested waters

may be restricted or closed to sport netting of whitefish and tullibee. See fishing regulations for list of infested waters or online at the infested waters page.

A complete list of all Schedule I and II lakes, status of the seasonal openings and closures, as well as detailed netting regulations are available online on the [fishing regulations page](#) or by calling the DNR Information Center at 651-296 6157 in the Twin Cities or 888-646-6367 in greater Minnesota.

As the water temperature cools, game fish head to deeper water and whitefish-tullibee come to shallow water for fall spawning. Netting is allowed when there is little chance that game fish populations would be negatively impacted by recreational netting in shallow water.

Minnesota law restricts the size of the net and its openings; requires that netting be done in water not deeper than 6 feet unless specifically

authorized; stipulates that netted fish cannot be sold; and requires that any game fish caught must be immediately returned to the lake. State law also limits net size to 100 feet long and 3 feet deep; allows one person to use no more than one net; and forbids recreational netters from possessing angling equipment when netting whitefish-tullibee. Whitefish and tullibee harvested during the sport gillnetting season cannot be used for bait. ✧

IL fall Trout Season opened Oct. 15 at 53 ponds, lakes, and streams

The Illinois DNR stocks more than 80,000 rainbow trout each year in water where trout fishing is permitted during the fall season. [For more information click here](#) ✧

Apply for advisory committee on natural heritage

Citizens who have a strong interest in the state's native prairies, forests, and wetlands and the plants and animals in them are invited to apply to be part of a key advisory board with the Minnesota DNR.

The DNR is seeking people to fill four vacancies on the commissioner's advisory committee on natural heritage. Appointees will be responsible for advising the DNR on issues related to sustaining the state's natural heritage and biological diversity.

Any Minnesota resident with interest or expertise in sustaining our state's natural heritage may apply online until **Friday, November 18** at www.dnr.state.mn.us/cac.html.

Applicants should have knowledge, demonstrated dedication or experience related to natural area systems, conservation biology, ecology, geology, environmental education, natural resource management, protection of Minnesota's rare species, or marketing, communication or promotions focused on natural resources. ✧

\$441,091 in grants to protect Hudson River

A total of \$441,091 in grants will go to 10 projects to help communities in the Hudson River Estuary watershed protect water quality and habitats, conserve open space, and increase storm resiliency. These grants support planning for local stewardship of the river environment to help achieve the goals of the 2015-2020 Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda. The awards also align with Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) strategies, including supporting land conservation and park projects that link town centers with open space, cultural, and heritage sites, and protecting clean water and ecological resources that are buffers to public parks. To view the awarded grants: [Hudson River Grants](#) ✧

Comment period for changes to freshwater fishing regulations extended thru Nov 11

New York DEC announced that the time period the DEC will accept comments on proposed changes to freshwater fishing regulations has been extended through **November 11, 2016**.

The proposed regulations were first provided for informal public review on the DEC website in February 2016. The early feedback helped DEC determine which regulation changes to advance or eliminate. [A summary and the full text of the proposed regulations can be found on DEC's website.](#)

Comments on the proposed regulations should be sent by email to regulations.fish@dec.ny.gov or mailed to Gregory Kozlowski, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Bureau of Fisheries, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4753. ✧

Winter Minn trout fishing opportunities

Winter is a great time to experience trout fishing in streams in southeastern Minnesota. Catch-and-release trout fishing is open **Sunday, Jan. 1, to Friday, April 14, 2017** on streams in the southeastern Minnesota counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Wabasha and Winona.

For even more fishing, anglers who want to trout fish all year long can do so in streams in Beaver Creek Valley, Forestville and Whitewater state parks, whether through a catch-and-release or harvest season depending on the time of year.

Anglers fishing on designated trout waters must have a trout stamp in addition to an angling license. For maps showing trout fishing locations in southern Minnesota, as well as other trout fishing info: www.mndnr.gov/fishing/trout_streams. ✧

Ontario's Invasive Species Act becomes law November 2016

On **November 3, 2016**, the Ontario Invasive Species Act, 2015, comes into effect. This statute provides Ontario with the power to make regulations prescribing priority invasive species and classifying them as either prohibited or restricted. This standalone piece of legislation was developed with the intent of holistically preventing and managing the introduction and spread of invasive species throughout Ontario and is the first of its kind in Canada.

Though species covered by this Act only represent a small fraction of the total number of invasive species that have already been introduced or have even become established in Ontario, by proposing the priority species for regulation, Ontario is taking a significant step in ongoing efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of these and other invasives in the province. Additionally, the Ontario Government's objective in this regard is to continue to work with new and existing partners to fulfill the actions set out in the [2012 Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan](#), including the ongoing programs being developed and delivered by the Invasive Species Centre, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Invading Species Awareness Program and the Ontario Invasive Plant Council. ✧

Willow Slough Shooting Range open

The improved shooting range at Willow Slough Fish & Wildlife Area (Indiana) is now open to the public. The modern range features moveable targets, more shooting lanes, improved safety, restroom facilities and on-site sale of ammunition, targets and other range items. Range hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. (CDT) Wednesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (CDT) Saturday and Sunday. ✧

Lake sturgeon released into the Genesee River

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) was joined by federal and local partners to release 500 fingerling lake sturgeon into the Genesee River as part of an effort to restore a healthy population of this native fish species. This event, in its sixth year of stocking, will increase the opportunity for lake sturgeon population to re-establish and thrive in the river.

DEC's partners in this effort include research ecologist Dr. Dawn Dittman of the USGS Great Lakes Science Center; Scott Schlueter, Fish and Wildlife Biologist of the USFWS; and Dr. Jeff Wyatt, Director of Wildlife Health & Conservation-Seneca Park Zoo.

Lake sturgeon is a native fish species that has been designated a species of concern across the Great Lakes Region. Historically abundant in Lake Ontario, this unique primitive fish has virtually disappeared due to overfishing and habitat degradation. Activities being undertaken to eventually remove lake sturgeon from the New York threatened species list include: protection from fishing harvest, habitat improvements, stocking of fingerlings, and evaluations of the success these direct efforts.

DEC and federal partners are implementing a restoration plan that includes a minimum of ten years of fingerling stocking in selected tributaries of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River to facilitate re-establishing lake sturgeon populations in those waters. The Genesee River had a substantial lake sturgeon presence into the early 1900s that included "monster" sturgeon. The river has been the focus of recent restoration activities that included habitat evaluation, stocking of 1,900 fingerlings in 2003 and 2004, stocking of 3,000 fingerlings from 2013 to 2015, and an evaluation of the success of those fish. Results indicate that a number

State & federal sites to be open for youth waterfowl seasons

A number of Illinois state parks, fish and wildlife areas, conservation areas and recreation areas will be open to youth waterfowl hunting during the 2016 North Zone Youth Waterfowl Hunt, Central Zone Youth Waterfowl Hunt, South Central Zone Youth Waterfowl Hunt and South Zone Youth Waterfowl Hunt.

As part of the Youth Hunt, hunters age 17 or younger may hunt ducks, geese, coots and mergansers as long as they are accompanied by an adult at least 18 years of age. The accompanying adult cannot hunt these species, but may participate in other open seasons.

Special youth hunts taking place through the [Youth Waterfowl Hunting Permit](#), or other youth only hunts at IDNR sites, are only open to youth hunters age 10–15. These special hunts include: Donnelly/DePue SFWA (Oct. 29 and Nov. 13), Spring Lake SFWA – Spring Lake Bottoms Unit (Nov. 13), and the Southern Illinois youth waterfowl hunt – Union County and Horseshoe Lake SFWA (Dec. 28). All other youth hunts are open to those age 17 and younger.

For information on IDNR's Youth Waterfowl Hunting Permit special hunts go to:

<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Documents/YouthWaterfowlHuntingPermitForm.pdf>

For a complete list of state and federal sites to be open during the Youth Waterfowl Hunts in the North, Central, South Central and South zones: [IDNR Youth Waterfowl Hunting Seasons](#) ✧

of those released sturgeon are residing in the Genesee River and nearby Lake Ontario and growing well, with weights ranging from 17 to 27 pounds and lengths up to 47 inches. ✧

Water conservation measures to maintain Salmon River flows

Ongoing drought conditions in the Salmon River watershed have forced Brookfield Renewable in collaboration with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to reduce the amount of water released to the Salmon River Reservoir starting Sept. 29.

In addition, DEC will close the Lower Fly Fishing Area on the Salmon River in conjunction with the reduced flows. This closure applies only to the Lower Fly Area, and the remainder of the 13-plus miles of the river accessible to the public will remain open.

A 2007 study estimated the value of these fisheries to New York State's economy at \$12.9 million. DEC is concerned that unintentional fishing mortality of Pacific Salmon could impact egg take operations if too much water is released.

The ¼-mile section of the Salmon River that comprises the Lower Fly Fishing Area is located immediately downstream of the Salmon River Hatchery and upstream of the County Rt. 52 Bridge in Altmar. The upper boundary of the area is just downstream from Beaverdam Brook. This location is a staging area for various species of fish, including Chinook and coho salmon, as they prepare to enter the hatchery via Beaverdam Brook. The closure will remain in effect as long as flow reductions are necessary.

Flows will be increased as soon as rainfall patterns change and reservoir water levels necessary to maintain these flows are restored. The Lower Fly Area will be reopened when flows permit and Salmon River Hatchery egg-take operations are completed.

Should salmon returns to the hatchery be inadequate, DEC has developed a contingency plan to secure additional salmon eggs from other Lake Ontario tributaries. Further information on these actions

New rules improve northern pike fishing

Comment period for new rules now open

New regulations for those who want to help manage northern pike in Minnesota will get another look by the public over the next month. This follows several years of public outreach that has returned broad support for the proposed changes.

Those interested in the proposal can comment on it **from October 3, through November 7**. The comment period is a formal step as part of a rulemaking process, and follows a public outreach process that included in-person meetings, online comments and very positive hearings at the Legislature and meetings with stakeholder groups.

The proposed regulations would divide the state into three zones, each with a set of regulations tailored for the zone. The changes could go into effect in the spring of 2017. "The zone proposal is meant to address a serious problem in a number of lakes in the central and north-central part of the state plagued with small or 'hammer-handle' pike," Pereira said.

In the northeastern part of the state, regulations will serve to maintain the potential for pike to grow large in many of the Arrowhead region's waters. In the south, where pike abundance is often low but growth is fast, regulations will allow pike to reach an acceptable size before harvest.

More info: www.mndnr.gov/pike. People can view details on the proposed rule and how to submit comments or request a formal hearing: www.mndnr.gov/input/rules/rulemaking.html.

Written comments can be submitted directly to Al Stevens, Minnesota DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155 or al.stevens@state.mn.us by **Nov. 7**. ✧

can be obtained by contacting the DEC Fisheries Unit in Cortland at fwfish7@dec.ny.gov or by phone at (607) 753-3095. ✧

Susquehanna River, smallmouth bass benefit from first S.O.S. project

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) recently showcased its inaugural "S.O.S. - Save our Susquehanna!" project, a series of habitat improvements on Limestone Run in rural Montour and Northumberland counties designed to aid the Susquehanna River and smallmouth bass by reducing erosion and sediment loading in tributaries.

In all, the project will make improvements to five farm properties. So far, two properties have been completed. Improvements included placing in-stream stabilization structures in the two stream sections and creating a cattle crossing in one.

"Reducing sediment and nutrient run-off helps to control nuisance algae blooms that produce low oxygen levels and high pH conditions that are harmful to young bass," he said.

Partners in the Limestone Run project include Montour County Conservation District; Northumberland County Conservation District; Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy; Susquehanna University; state Department of Environmental Protection; and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

As an added benefit to the project, the PFBC also released approximately 150 wild brook trout into the stream. The release is designed to establish a reproducing population of Pennsylvania's state fish in a stream where habitat degradation resulted in unsuitable conditions for trout.

The PFBC launched the S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna campaign in June 2015. To date, concerned individuals have contributed more than \$60,000 to the campaign. In turn, the PFBC pledged \$50,000 in matching funds.

"It is critical that we focus our collective efforts on protecting the

Dam Management Grant Program now accepting proposals

The Michigan DNR has announced its Dam Management Grant Program is now open for proposals. It will provide \$3.35 million in Fiscal Year 2017 to address Michigan's failing dam infrastructure through the funding of dam removals and critical repair/maintenance.

The Dam Management Grant Program is focused on the growing issue of abandoned, unused or hazardous dams in Michigan. The purpose of the program is to provide funding and technical assistance to local and state units of government, nonprofit groups and individuals to manage dam removals or repair/major maintenance projects that will enhance aquatic resources and fishing opportunities, as well as reduce infrastructure costs and improve public safety in Michigan.

There were six recipients in the program's first year, when \$2.35 million was granted; three recipients the second year, when \$350,000 was available; four recipients the third year, when \$350,000 was available; and two recipients during its fourth year, when \$350,000 was available.

Again this year there will be an online application process for prospective applicants. Interested parties will have to register with MiRecGrants and then complete and submit their application once their registration has been approved by DNR Grants Management. MiRecGrants can be accessed at Michigan.gov/dnr-grants.

Information can be found at Michigan.gov/dnr-grants. Applications can be submitted through MiRecGrants **until 3 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11**, to be considered for this year's funding cycle. ✧

Susquehanna River," added Arway. "The donations we've received demonstrate that people are concerned and want to conserve this valuable natural resource, for this generation and future ones." ✧

DNR to sell 40 northern Minnesota land parcels

The Minnesota DNR will sell 40 northern Minnesota parcels in three public oral bid auctions in October and November.

► Tuesday, **Oct. 25** – Nine northwestern Minnesota parcels will be auctioned at the County Administration Building in Bemidji.

► Thursday, **Oct. 27** – 27 northeastern Minnesota parcels will be auctioned at the Lake County Courthouse in Two Harbors.

► Thursday, **Nov. 3** – Four parcels in north-central Minnesota will be auctioned at DNR Brainerd area office.

The properties include unimproved recreational land and residential lakeshore parcels in Aitkin, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Lake, and St. Louis counties. There is a wide range of sizes and land uses in this selection of sales, from a small 0.80 acre former water access site on Pine Lake in Clearwater County to a 200-acre recreational parcel in Breitung Township in northeastern St. Louis County.

Bidders are advised to obtain and view the property data sheet, be familiar with the property, minimum bid price, and terms of sale prior to attending the auction. To obtain a property data sheet or terms and conditions of sale call 651-259-5432, or 888-646-6367 or email landsale@dnr.state.mn.us. The property data sheets are also available online at www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/landsale/. ✧

Free fishing on Veteran's Day (NY)

Veteran's Day has been designated as New York's newest free fishing day. The requirement for a license and enrolling in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry has been waived for **November 11, 2016**. [Learn more about free fishing days.](#)

✧

DEC alerts boaters to low water levels at many launches

Due to the ongoing drought conditions in New York, many waters are significantly below average water levels for this time of year. While many DEC boat launches are still useable by shallow draft boats, boaters desiring to launch larger, deeper draft boats may have difficulties on many waters. Of particular concern are DEC boat launches on Oneida Lake, Lake Champlain, Great Sacandaga Lake and Chautauqua Lake.

On Great Sacandaga Lake, boaters desiring to launch larger vessels should use the Northville ramp which currently provides 4 ft. of water depth at the end of the ramp. On Lake Champlain, which is a foot below normal water level elevations for this time of year, most launches currently provide 3 ft. of water depth. Exceptions are the Ticonderoga Launch which is currently below this level at 2 ft.

Water levels at the Lake Ronkonkoma Boat Launch in Suffolk County, the Redfield Island Boat Launch on the Salmon River Reservoir in Oneida County and many Susquehanna River launches in DEC Region 7 are currently below the concrete launch ramp. Boaters, particularly those desiring to launch larger, deeper draft boats, are encouraged to contact the DEC regional office covering the water they desire to launch their boat onto for updated information. ✧

Steelhead fishing in Trail Creek

October is one of your best chances to catch 3- to 4-pound coho and 7- to 10-pound steelhead in the tributaries of Lake Michigan. Learn what you need and how to fish for these species with our CookIN Gone Wild: Field to Table video on Steelhead Fishing on Trail Creek. [Click here to use the interactive 'Where to Fish' map.](#) ✧

Serve on DNR fish work groups

Volunteers can apply to join one of five citizen-agency work groups that will discuss how the Minnesota DNR manages fish. There will be individual work groups for bass, catfish, panfish and walleye, and one that will focus on both northern pike and muskellunge.

"Fisheries work groups help improve discussion between citizens and the DNR. Group members can talk about angler points of view and fisheries issues in detail, and these are valuable discussions," said Don Pereira, DNR fisheries chief.

Volunteers can apply to one of the five groups **from Monday, Oct. 3, to Sunday, Nov. 6**. Each group of about 15 people will include volunteers and DNR staff who meet two or three times per year to discuss new research, population, harvest trends and fisheries management. Meetings average three to four hours, not including travel time.

Participants will be selected by the DNR and can serve a term of either two or three years. The groups are advisory and do not make decisions on policy or fish management. For more info or an application form: www.mndnr.gov/fishgroups or 651-259-5182. ✧

Lyons Dam removed from Grand River

Lyons Dam in Ionia County, Michigan, a high-hazard structure located on the Grand River, was removed this summer, restoring natural river functions and allowing unimpeded fish movement. Lyons Dam, owned by the village of Lyons, was an 8' high, concrete-covered, rock-crib structure. In the dam's place is now a "Newberry riffle" – which looks and functions like natural rapids. The design includes a low-flow channel to allow for passage of canoes, kayaks and fish. During normal flow it also will allow for the passage of small boats

✧

Agencies adjust lakewide stocking

Continued from page 1

Lakewide stocking of 1.32 million Chinook salmon will occur in 2017 — a Chinook reduction of 27 percent — recognizing that naturally produced Chinook salmon sustain much of the existing Chinook salmon fishery.

Lakewide lake trout stocking will be 2.74 million in 2017, a 12 percent reduction. In 2018, 2.54 million lake trout will be stocked. Under this consensus, each jurisdiction will have the ability to adjust stocking levels of certain species using “Chinook salmon equivalents” within its waters to meet the lakewide commitment to better balance predators with their prey. This approach to balancing the predatory demand on alewives and other pelagic prey fish will assist the Lake Michigan Committee with its goal to sustain a diverse salmon and trout fishery while simultaneously supporting its ongoing commitment to lake trout rehabilitation.

“We know from past experiences that these steps will enable us to follow through on our commitment to meet Fish Community Objectives for a multi-species salmon and trout fishery,” said Lake Michigan Committee Chair Jay Wesley, of the Michigan DNR. “Carrying out these shared objectives has proven extremely challenging for our member management agencies. However, we believe this consensus stocking strategy, in conjunction with the growing contribution from natural reproduction of Chinook salmon and lake trout, will maintain a more stable predator-prey balance, and support diverse and sustainable fishing opportunities in Lake Michigan.”

Wesley said each state will implement the Lake Michigan Committee guidance with its own strategy in a spirit of collaboration consistent with the committee’s recommended framework.

To monitor effects of the stocking adjustments during 2017

and 2018, and to allow fishery managers to respond to changing conditions in the lake, the Lake Michigan Committee and partner entities will annually conduct comprehensive research and monitoring to evaluate the lake’s predator balance with its prey. These assessment efforts will produce a suite of biological indicators composed of long-term and short-term data collected and analyzed by state, federal, tribal and academic experts throughout the Lake Michigan basin. This collaborative process represents the best available science to promote sustainable and diverse fisheries for Lake Michigan.

The Lake Michigan Committee comprises fishery managers from the Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. The Lake Michigan Committee’s work is facilitated by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, a Canadian and U.S. agency on the Great Lakes. The committee meets regularly to share information and develop shared fishery management plans, objectives and policies. More info: www.glfsc.org/lakecom/lmc/lmchome.php. ✧

Comment period open for fishing regs

DEC is accepting comments on its proposed freshwater sportfishing regulations **through November 11, 2016**. The regulations are developed after careful assessment of existing regulations and the desires of New York anglers. [Review proposed regulations or make a comment](#) ✧

Gander Mountain opened new Lansing store October 7

Gander Mountain opened a new store in Lansing, MI on October 7. The building is located at the corner of S Broadbent Road and Delta Market Drive in Delta Township, just a few blocks from its previous location which opened in 2000. www.GanderMountain.com. ✧

Public Meeting Oct 25 on Lake Vermilion walleye change

The Minnesota DNR is considering a walleye regulation change on Lake Vermilion for 2017. The current regulation, an 18- 26” protected slot limit with one walleye larger than 26” and a four fish bag limit has been in place since 2012. Results of the DNR Fisheries lake survey and estimates of harvest from angler creel surveys indicate that there is room to harvest more fish while continuing to maintain the quality fishery. A regulation change will also address some anglers’ concerns that there are few fish of a size they can keep on the west end.

DNR will host an open public meeting followed by a 10 day public comment period. The Lake Vermilion **meeting is scheduled for 6-8 pm, Oct. 25** at the Tower Civic Center, 402 Pine St. Questions may be directed to the Tower Area Fisheries Office, 650 Highway 169, Tower, MN 55790 218-752-2580. ✧

Free “Steelheading Basics” seminar

A free seminar featuring basic steelhead fishing in northeast Ohio’s tributaries will be **offered on Thursday, Nov. 17, 2016** according to the Ohio DNR.

Phil Hillman from the ODNR Division of Wildlife will cover Ohio’s steelhead program and discuss basic steelhead fishing techniques from 7pm-9pm. The location of the seminar is Wildlife District Three headquarters, 912 Portage Lakes Drive, Akron. (Visitors should note: the building cannot be viewed from Portage Lakes Drive. After turning into the parking lot from Portage Lakes Drive, continue through the lot, past the gate, and on up the hill to the main office building. Follow the asphalt drive as far as it will go.)

While the seminar is free, pre-registration is required as spaces are limited. Call Joe Ferrara at (330) 644-2293 to pre-register. ✧

VOTE NOVEMBER 8



Our Nation is at a critical junction in our history and our Bill of Rights is under attack as never before.

Issues of importance:

- Supreme Court judges
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech
- Right to keep and bear arms

Your Vote Counts

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

[Benefits of eating mercury contaminated fish may outweigh risks](#)

A new study suggests eating Great Lakes fish that contain mercury may threaten your health, but the nutritional benefits may outweigh the risks.

[Lake Erie: Southwestern Ontario's border lake is deteriorating, the only of the Great Lakes doing so, scientists warn](#)

Scientists, environmentalists, and policy makers from both the U.S. and Canada gathered in Toronto at the Great Lakes Public Forum to discuss a range of Great Lakes issues, including the health of Lake Erie.

[Jellyfish spotted in Sheg Bay](#)

Craspedacusta sowerbyi, an invasive jellyfish, was spotted for the first time in Sheguiandah Bay on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron, adding to the many locations across Ontario the invasive has spread

[DNR announces open house for Chinook run](#)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources fisheries staff will be on hand in Door County, Wisconsin, to collect salmon eggs and milt needed for the next generation of fish for Lake Michigan stocking.

[Researchers watching a new chemical turning up in wildlife](#)

Across the Great Lakes, researchers have found a chemical called PFPIA in cormorants, northern pike, and bottlenose dolphins.

[Leamington fisherman fined \\$20K for commercial fishing violations](#)

A Leamington, Ontario, fishing boat captain was ordered to pay \$20,000 after he pleaded guilty to 24 commercial fishing violations

End