



## Lake Erie Sport Fishing Outlook Once Again Good News Walleye and yellow perch bag limits announced

**COLUMBUS, OH** – Lake Erie anglers should experience another year of diverse fishing opportunities in 2016. Lake Erie walleye and yellow perch fisheries are managed through an interagency quota system that involves Ontario, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio. Each jurisdiction regulates its catches to comply with quotas and minimize the risk of over-fishing these species. Quotas for the upcoming fishing season are determined through consensus agreement by these jurisdictions through the Lake Erie Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, which were just recently announced for 2016.

As a result of the 2016 quota allocation, the walleye daily bag limit is four, and the yellow perch daily bag limit is 30 per angler in Ohio waters of Lake Erie until April 30.

The daily bag limit will be six walleye from May 1 through February 28, 2017. From March 1, 2017 through April 30, 2017, the daily walleye bag limit will be four. A 15-inch minimum size limit is in effect during the entire season for walleye. The yellow perch daily bag limit will be 30 from May 1 through April 30, 2017, with no minimum size limit. Lake Erie anglers can find walleye and yellow perch bag limit information at ODNR offices, in special publications at bait and tackle shops and at [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov).

### Walleye

Ohio walleye anglers will catch fish mostly from the 2014 and 2013 hatches, with some fish from the 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2009 year classes. Additional fish from 2007 and 2003 will also be harvested by anglers. Walleye from the average

2014 hatch will range 15-18", while walleye from the 2013 hatch will be between 16-20 inches. Fish from the 2003 and 2007 hatches are likely to carry most of the Central Basin fisheries, and a good number of these walleye will be over the 26-inch range. Large walleye from strong hatch in 2003 will continue to provide "Fish Ohio" opportunities (greater than 28"), with this year class nearing the size that may give Ohio a new state record walleye. Additionally, in 2016, anglers should see a number of smaller (less than 15 inches) fish from the excellent 2015 hatch. Anglers are reminded of the 15-inch minimum size limit and encouraged to release these fish with as little handling as possible so they can contribute to the fisheries in future years.

### Lake Erie Sport Fishing Outlook

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### Indiana to stock yearling coho salmon in St. Joseph River

State fisheries biologists hope to improve coho salmon fishing in Indiana by stocking larger cohos into the St. Joseph River this spring.

The DNR has been stocking trout and salmon into Lake Michigan and its tributaries since the 1970s. But all previous coho salmon stockings were fingerlings released in the fall. The purpose of stocking yearlings in the spring is to help the stocked cohos avoid predation and other environmental hazards as they migrate out of the St. Joseph River and into Lake Michigan.

Approximately 60,000 fish that are 16 months old and fish 7.5 to 9" long were released from the Bodine State Fish Hatchery into the St. Joseph River during the last week of March. Once reaching Lake Michigan, they will feed and grow rapidly, with a small portion reaching early maturity as 2-year-old fish.

These early maturing "jacks" will make their spawning run up the St. Joseph River this fall. The fish that do not mature and spawn in 2016 will continue growing in the lake, and will contribute to the southern Lake Michigan open-water fishery in 2017.

Since these fish will be stocked in waters heavily fished in the spring, anglers are encouraged to handle the recently stocked fish carefully and release them unharmed, to maximize the chances that fishing remains good in the future. These coho salmon are missing their adipose fin, which will allow biologists to evaluate the success of this new stocking strategy over the next three years.

Biologists and hatchery staff believe this production change will bolster the fall salmon returns on the St. Joseph River, while also benefiting Indiana's spring coho fishery on Lake Michigan. ✧

## 2016 Spring Regional Fisheries Workshops

### Current research and info on lakes Erie, Huron, Michigan and St. Clair fisheries

You are invited to join and participate this spring in the upcoming 2016 Regional Fisheries workshops offering current research and information on our fishery.

Michigan Sea Grant will host regional workshops locally along Michigan's Great Lakes coastlines. These annual spring workshops bring communities together with fisheries research and management partners to discuss research findings, management updates, and fishing trends. [Click here to read more](#)

Seven evening workshops, hosted across the state, are open to the public and will offer valuable information for anglers, charter captains, resource professionals and other community members interested in the fishery.

Workshops are open to the public at no cost; however, pre-registration is requested.

#### Lake St. Clair Workshop

April 14th (6:00 - 9:00 p.m.)  
Sportsmen's Direct 38989 Jefferson Ave,  
Harrison Charter Twnshp, MI 48045  
To register and details: [Details](#)

#### Lake Huron Workshop Bay City

April 19, 2016 (6:00 - 9:00 p.m.)  
Knights of Columbus (KC) Hall  
360 S. River Rd. (M-13), Bay City,  
MI 48708  
(Directly north of James Clements  
Airport on M-13 River Rd.)  
[Online Registration](#) | [Details](#)

#### Lake Erie Workshop Taylor

April 21, 2016 (6:00 - 9:00 p.m.)  
American Legion Post #200,  
11800 Michael St., Taylor, MI 48180  
[Online Registration](#) | [Details](#)

#### Lake Michigan Workshop South Haven

April 21, 2016 (7:00 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.)  
South Haven Moose Lodge  
1025 Wells St., South Haven, 49090  
No registration necessary

#### Lake Huron Workshop Uby/Bad Axe

April 21, 2016 (6:00 - 9:00 p.m.)  
Uby Fox Hunter's Club  
2153 Uby Rd, Uby, MI 48475  
[Online Registration](#) | [Details](#)

#### Lake Huron Workshop Cedarville

April 26, 2016 (6:00 - 9:00 p.m.)  
Clark Township Community Center  
133 E. M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719  
[Online Registration](#) | [Details](#)

#### Lake Huron Workshop Alpena

April 27, 2015 (6:00 - 9:00 p.m.)  
NOAA Great Lakes Maritime  
Heritage Center  
500 W. Fletcher St., Alpena, 49707  
[Online Registration](#) | [Details](#)

Visit [Michigan Sea Grant online](#) for latest details and updates on fisheries workshops around the state. ✧

## State of Lake Erie Meeting – April 14th

This year's program will take place on Thursday, April 14th. Thanks to Southtowns Walleye for again offering their meeting room for this informational meeting. We appreciate the ongoing support of Assemblyman Sean Ryan and his staff. This year's program is quite strong and my appreciation goes out to the speakers from NYSDEC, USFWS and the U at Buffalo. The meeting will cover new information on a variety of interesting topics. April 14, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Southtowns Walleye Assn Club House, 5895 Southwestern Blvd, Hamburg. ✧



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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.

#### Inland Seas Angler GREAT LAKES BASIN REPORT

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## Steelhead setting up for spring run in Bois Brule, other Lake Superior tributaries

SUPERIOR, Wis. – Anglers can look forward to the possibility of a good bite and a fair fight as the spring steelhead run approaches on the Bois Brule and other Lake Superior tributaries.

Among the reasons to look forward to the upcoming season? Wisconsin DNR biologists reported an increase in steelhead numbers during the fall 2015 count and anticipate better access to the water as much of the snow has melted, said Paul Piszczek, a DNR biologist in Superior.



"The fall 2015 run was the highest fall return since 2010," Piszczek said. "For nearly nine consecutive weeks starting in September, steelhead exhibited movements of 400 or more fish past the Brule fishway. This is a marked improvement over the past three of four fall seasons, when steelhead counts exceeded 400 fish for only two or three weeks."

From July 1 through December 31, 2015, 5,660 steelhead passed through the fishway monitoring site, up from 3,036 the previous year. The steelhead significantly outnumbered the 3,930 brown trout and 1,680 coho salmon observed then.

More than 60 percent of the steelhead counted ranged from 20 to 25 inches long. Another 25 percent exceeded 26 inches, the legal minimum length to keep a fish.

Steelhead trout are members of the family Salmonidae, which includes coho and Chinook salmon. Unlike salmon, however, steelhead typically live six to eight years and may spawn more than once in their lifetime. They mature in three to five

years and after gaining size while feeding in the open waters of the Great Lakes, they return to their natal streams to spawn.

Steelhead are a lake-run form of rainbow trout that undergo a physiological conversion process to prepare for living in the lake. Once in Lake Superior, steelhead gain access to more space and forage than the trout that remain in the Brule River. As a result, steelhead attain larger sizes than the resident rainbow trout that spend their entire lives in the river.

Piszczek said the Bois Brule River sports a two-season run of steelhead each year from Lake Superior. Some fish return in late fall to overwinter in the lower reaches of the river, while others begin returning in late March. Spawning typically occurs in April.

Although steelhead are not native to Lake Superior—they were introduced in the mid-1890s by state and federal agencies concerned about declining populations of native brook trout—they now reproduce naturally and have established a self-sustaining population. With the legal-size fish often exceeding eight lbs., this world class fishery generates some 33,000 angler visits per year, Piszczek said. As a result, the prized fishery bears close watching by DNR biologists who in recent years have focused efforts on restoring spawning habitat, increasing in-stream living space for the fish and conducting fish surveys.

DNR monitors the adult steelhead run by operating a video recording system at the Brule River sea lamprey barrier and fishway. Fish are counted during the fall and spring. The barrier was installed in 1986 to keep lamprey from spawning in preferred areas upstream from the barrier.

In addition to the headcount, DNR is planning an angler creel survey in fall 2016 to document fishing pressure and fish harvest. Given the higher fish count and other factors, Piszczek said he anticipates a

good showing by anglers this year. "The higher fall steelhead count combined with the size of fish we are seeing has many anglers anticipating some of the better steelhead fishing we've seen in several years," Piszczek said.

To learn more about the Lake Superior fishery, visit [DNR.wi.gov](http://DNR.wi.gov) and search "Fishing Lake Superior." Visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakesuperior/> to find the video monitoring summary reports. ✧

## New Michigan regs now in effect

The Department of Natural Resources annually adjusts fishing regulations to ensure Michigan's fisheries resources are managed properly and provide the best benefits to anglers and the public. For the 2016-2017 angling year, which started Friday, April 1, the DNR would like anglers to be aware of the following new or changed fishing regulations:

- Lake Michigan – Lake trout and splake are now covered by the same regulations in MM 1-8.
- Michigan-Wisconsin Boundary Waters – The Menominee River lake sturgeon protection zone was expanded and now encompasses the Grand Rapids Dam downstream to the end of the breakwalls in Green Bay.
- Anglers fishing for trout on inland waters should double-check the regulations for where they plan to fish as regulations for several waters were changed.
- Regulation changes effective last fall (November 2015) are highlighted in red text in the 2016-2017 Michigan Fishing Guide.

Anglers should note that this year's fishing guide covers a two-year cycle, 2016 and 2017. A new guide *will not* be produced in 2017. The guide is available at all major retailers and at [michigan.gov/fishingguide](http://michigan.gov/fishingguide). ✧

## Bowfishing Workshop June 18, Free

A bowfishing workshop will be held on June 18, 2016 at Hardy Lake Office. The goal of this event is to engage participants in a quality hands-on event while promoting a unique and growing sport and raise awareness for aquatic invasive species spread and control. The workshop is a joint effort between Ind. Fish and Wildlife staff, and various non-profits. Bows, arrows, and other equipment will be provided. This event is open to all participants 12 and over, both children and parents are encouraged to attend.

The event will begin at 7:00 p.m. local time with a quick presentation on aquatic invasive and nuisance species, tips and techniques for bowfishing, and safety out on the water. The workshop should wrap up around midnight after a one-on-one experience with a professional bowfishing guide and hands-on training out on a boat.

Advance registration is required and is limited to 30 participants. Register by June 1<sup>st</sup> at [Hovey Lake Fish & Wildlife Area \(View Map\)](#), 15010 State Road 69 South, Mt. Vernon, IN, Rebecca Pawlak, (812) 789-2724, [rpawlak@dnr.in.gov](mailto:rpawlak@dnr.in.gov). ✧

## Indiana fishing opportunities

Want to take your family fishing but don't know how or where to start? Family Learn to Fish workshops can help.

Another option is Crew Captain workshops that teach adult educators and youth leaders about fish biology, aquatic resources, angler ethics, and angling skills. [Find out more](#). Also, April 16 is the first of four [Free Fishing Days](#) in Indiana. A handful of Family Learn to Fish workshops are [scheduled](#) that day. ✧

## Steelhead egg collection to occur on Little Manistee River this spring

The Michigan DNR soon will be collecting steelhead eggs at the [Little Manistee River weir](#) in Stronach (Manistee County).

Since 1968, the Little Manistee River weir has served as the sole source of winter-run steelhead eggs for fish hatcheries in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. Yearling steelhead produced through hatchery operations are stocked in select tributaries of all the Great Lakes. To provide a backup egg-take source in case of emergencies, another broodstock steelhead population is being developed on the Platte River in Benzie County.

[Steelhead](#) provide one of Michigan's premier sport fishing opportunities for both Great Lakes open water and tributary stream fishing. Egg-take operations begin by lowering the weir grates in mid-March. This stops the upstream steelhead migration in the Little Manistee River and diverts the fish into holding ponds. Usually during the first two weeks of April the fish ripen and egg-take operations begin. Egg-take operations continue daily until the established egg quota has been reached.

During egg-take operations, unripe or "green" steelhead are counted and passed upstream to sustain the wild Little Manistee River steelhead run. Steelhead that are spawned during operations also are passed upstream, and many eventually return to Lake Michigan as this species is capable of spawning multiple times. Once the quota of eggs is reached, the weir grates are removed and all remaining fish are allowed to migrate upstream.

Egg-take scheduling information is available from the Little Manistee weir hotline at 231-775-9727, ext. 6072. The facility is open to the public for up-close viewing during egg-take operations. Fish also can be observed in the river below the weir at any time. ✧

## Boating Safety Council seeks members for vacancies

The U.S. Coast Guard is seeking applications for membership to fill vacancies on the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC), which advises the Coast Guard on recreational boating safety regulations and other boating safety matters.

Each member serves for three years. Members may be considered to serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms. All members serve at their own expense and receive no salary or other compensation, with some exceptions for NBSAC meetings.

Applications will be considered for vacancies December 31, 2016:

- Two representatives of state officials responsible for state boating safety programs.
- Three representatives of recreational boat and associated equipment manufacturers.
- Two representatives of recreational boating organizations or the general public.

Applications will also be considered for one vacancy in the national recreation boating organizations of the general public membership category that was caused by the inability of a person appointed in 2016 to accept their appointment. This position will serve a term that expires December 31, 2018. Applications must reach the Coast Guard on or before May 23, 2016.

Applicants are considered for membership on the basis of their particular expertise, knowledge and experience in recreational boating safety. Individuals who have applied in any prior years are asked to resubmit a complete application if the individual wishes to apply for any of these vacancies.

The NBSAC is a federal advisory committee that operates under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Title 5 U.S.C., Appendix. For more info: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/03/22/2016-06427/national-boating-safety-advisory-council-vacancies>. ✧

## Large trout stocked in Clinton and Huron rivers

### Create fishing opportunities

The Michigan DNR recently stocked adult trout in the Clinton River at Riverside Park, Huron River at Proud Lake Recreation Area, and Spring Mill Pond at Island Lake Recreation Area.

The Clinton River was stocked with just over 900 brown trout 11 to 15" and 150 rainbow trout ranging 20 to 22". The Huron River was stocked with 1,800 brown trout 11 to 21" and nearly 1,200 rainbow trout 15 to 21". Spring Mill Pond was stocked with nearly 350 brown trout 11 to 21" and nearly 600 rainbow trout 15 to 21".

This annual stocking activity uses unneeded brown and rainbow trout broodstock from Michigan's state fish hatcheries. Every year there are some surplus adult trout in the hatchery, which are stocked in special areas.

Huron River at [Proud Lake Recreation Area](#) is closed to fishing October 1 through March 31. April 1 through April 29, anglers are limited to flies-only, catch-and-release fishing. Youth under 12 may keep one fish between 8 and 12". Beginning April 30, all baits are allowed and anglers may keep up to five trout over 8", but only three over 15".

Spring Mill Pond is closed to fishing March 15 through March 31. April 1 through April 29, anglers are limited to artificial lures only, catch-and-release fishing. Youth under 12 may keep one fish between 8 and 12". Beginning April 30, all baits are allowed and anglers may keep up to five fish over 8", but only three fish over 15".

The Clinton River upstream of [Dequindre Road](#) is not classified as a trout stream. Therefore, trout fishing is open year-round with an 8" minimum size limit and a five-fish daily possession limit, no more than three of which may be 15" or greater.

For more information contact the DNR offices at Proud Lake (248-685-2433) or Island Lake (810-229-7067) or the DNR's Waterford Fisheries Office (248-666-7445). ✧

## 3-walleye limit on Upper Red Lake continues from winter

Less restrictive walleye regulations put in place on Upper Red Lake this past winter will continue this year. The daily bag and possession limit will be three walleye, with one fish longer than 17 inches allowed.

Walleye harvest on Upper Red Lake is managed on an annual basis by a harvest plan, which was updated before the most recent winter fishing season. Creel survey information suggests the regulation is also meeting the DNR management objective of distributing the harvest over a broader size range and removing some spawning-sized fish from the population. Future harvest adjustments could include increasing the bag limit this summer.

Total harvest for the 2015-16 winter season was about 113,000 pounds, which fell below the 140,000 pounds harvested during winter 2014-15, even though less restrictive harvest regulations were in place for the 2015-16 winter season.

One likely reason harvest declined was that fishing pressure shifted to later in the season due to poor early season ice conditions. Catch rates are typically lower later in the season. Still, this was the third highest winter harvest in the past 10 years since the walleye fishery reopened in 2006.

The DNR has not made a decision regarding the early season fishing closure on the Tamarac River. This decision will be made in late April when biologists are able to assess the status of the walleye spawning run. The DNR closes the spawning locations to fishing only where habitat is limited and fish are very concentrated in one location.

The DNR and the Red Lake Band of Chippewa developed a joint harvest plan that governs walleye harvest, and harvest restrictions are necessary to comply with the harvest plan agreement. Upper Red Lake fishing regulations are available at [www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing](http://www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing).

✧

## Lake trout recovery a highlight of Lake Superior plan

A healthy recovery staged by wild lake trout in Lake Superior means these fish no longer need to be stocked in the lake, according to an updated management plan that covers the Minnesota waters of Lake Superior.

Three public open houses to gather input and answer questions:

- Tues., April 19, 6-8 p.m., Cook County Community Center, 317 5th Ave. W., Grand Marais.
- Wed., April 20, 6-8 p.m., Lake Superior College, 2101 Trinity Road, Duluth.
- Thurs., April 21, 6-8 p.m., DNR headquarters, 500 Lafayette Rd., St. Paul.

Comments can be submitted until May 8, at [www.mndnr.gov/lakesuperior](http://www.mndnr.gov/lakesuperior) or by contacting Goldsworthy at 218-302-3268 or [cory.goldsworthy@state.mn.us](mailto:cory.goldsworthy@state.mn.us).

Management actions recommended:

- Discontinue lake trout stocking in Lake Superior near Duluth because wild fish populations have reached rehabilitation criteria recommended in the Lake Trout Restoration Plan.
- Expand the zone where steelhead are maintained solely through natural reproduction and evaluate catch rates in the absence of supplemental stocking.
- Reconfigure kamloops stocking methods to employ direct stocking upstream in the Lester River.
- Increase commercial fishing opportunities for lake trout.

The advisory group included representatives from interested groups, commercial harvesters, tribal and watershed interests, and others.

The plan, which will be finalized this summer, includes history and background on lake trout stocking and other items and is available at [www.mndnr.gov/areas/fisheries/lakesuperior/index.html](http://www.mndnr.gov/areas/fisheries/lakesuperior/index.html) or electronically by emailing [cory.goldsworthy@state.mn.us](mailto:cory.goldsworthy@state.mn.us). ✧

## DNR seeks comments on International Falls area lake management plans

Fisheries management plans for 10 lakes and two streams in northern St. Louis and Koochiching counties are under review by the Minnesota DNR, and the public is invited to review and comment on the plans.

Every year DNR fisheries staff prepares or revises individual lake and stream management plans for several waters in each management area. In the International Falls area, plans for the following lakes and two streams will be reviewed, and public input on the plans will be taken under consideration by DNR fisheries staff during the review.

Copies of the draft plans are available at the International Falls area fisheries office located at 392 Highway 11 E., International Falls, MN 56649, or call the office at 218-286-5220 to request a copy or email [kevin.peterson@state.mn.us](mailto:kevin.peterson@state.mn.us).

Those wishing to comment on any of the plans may do so by contacting the DNR area fisheries office by any of the methods outlined above. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Public

comments on lake and stream management plans will be taken through Monday, April 18.

Comments, questions and suggestions for management of any of the other lakes and streams in the International Falls area are welcome at any time, and will be considered when those plans are due for review.

### Minnesota fishing facts

#### Anglers and waters

- There are about 1.4 million licensed anglers in Minnesota.
- About 500,000 people are expected to fish on Minnesota's opening day of the walleye and northern pike season, May 14.
- Minnesota has 11,842 lakes, 5,400 of which are considered fishing lakes. There are over 18,000 miles of fishable rivers and streams, including 3,800 miles of trout streams.
- Annual expenditure per angler in Minnesota is about \$1,500.
- 162 species of fish can be found in Minnesota waters.

#### Participation and the economy

- Fishing contributes \$2.4 billion to the state's economy, ranking Minnesota third in the nation for angler expenditures.
- Fishing supports nearly 35,500 Minnesota jobs.
- Minnesota ranks second in resident fishing participation at 32%, second only to Alaska.

#### Who goes fishing?

- Most resident anglers are from urban areas. However, a higher percentage of rural people fish compared to the percentage of urban people.
- Males account for 65% of fishing license holders; females for 35%.

#### Fishing habits

- More time is spent fishing on lakes than on rivers and streams.
- The average Minnesota angler spends 15 days fishing annually.
- Walleye are the most sought-after fish, followed by pike and muskie combined, then panfish, bass, crappie and trout. ✧

## DNR recruiting applicants to serve on NRC Youth Conservation Council

The Michigan DNR is accepting applications from youth ages 14 to 18 who are interested in a position on the Natural Resources Commission Youth Conservation Council. Applications will be accepted through April 30.

The council's academy-like structure offers young people interested in nature and who care about Michigan's great outdoors an opportunity to gain leadership experience and participate in activities under the guidance of the DNR.

The appointment is for two years, and members will be expected to participate in four meetings each year. At least two of the meetings will be offered as weekend training sessions at a conference facility; other meetings will be shorter with possible attendance through teleconferencing and/or Web-based applications.

Members will be partnered with local department personnel to enhance their learning experience. The council is continuing to explore how to use social media to engage youth, and already has developed a Facebook page and established a youth blog. Several council members also have been involved in preparing YouTube videos to promote outdoor activities and an Instagram photo-sharing site (#yccoutdoors) for youth to share their favorite outdoor photos.

During the meetings, members participate in discussions, conduct research and brainstorm ideas about ways to protect, promote and enhance outdoor recreation and the use of Michigan's natural resources. The council will present recommendations to both the NRC and the DNR about policy, program and legislative changes that members believe will boost young residents' interest and involvement in the outdoors.

In addition, members will be expected to complete the following:

- Attend a Natural Resources Commission meeting.
- Write three articles on outdoor activities for the Youth Conservation Council blog.
- Help develop and participate in local events to encourage kids to get outdoors.

Applications are available on the DNR website, along with a roster of frequently asked questions that offers more detail about the Youth Conservation Council. Visit [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr), choose Education and Outreach. Information for the Youth Conservation Council is located on this page.

Applications must be postmarked by April 30, 2016, and mailed to: NRC Youth Conservation Council, ATTN: Raymond Rustem, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909 ✧

## DNR seeks public reports on lake sturgeon sightings

The Michigan DNR is seeking the public's assistance in gathering information on the state's most historically and culturally significant fish species, the lake sturgeon.

Those who have seen a lake sturgeon in the wild can provide details on their sighting via the [Lake Sturgeon DNR Reporting Page](#) found at [michigan.gov/sturgeon](http://michigan.gov/sturgeon). These reports allow the DNR to learn more about populations of lake sturgeon that exist throughout the state, especially those smaller populations about which the department may have little information.

Lake sturgeon are Michigan's largest fish species and are one of the most awe-inspiring species found in the Great Lakes and select inland waters. Once abundant, lake sturgeon populations were decimated by over-fishing and habitat destruction in the late 1800s. These fish were largely forgotten until recent decades when a renewed interest and desire for rehabilitation began to occur. These fish can grow to weigh more than 200 pounds and measure 7 feet long. Their typical life span is 55 years for males and 70 to 100 years for females.

Michigan has strong populations of lake sturgeon in limited areas, such as the Sturgeon and Menominee rivers in the Upper Peninsula, Black Lake (Cheboygan County), the St. Clair River and the Detroit River. There also are smaller, recovering populations in other areas, including the St. Marys, Manistee, Muskegon, Grand and Kalamazoo rivers, as well as Burt and Mullett lakes (Cheboygan County).

Lake sturgeon rehabilitation in Michigan is a collaborative effort. State, federal and tribal agencies have partnered with each other and many citizen-led interest groups to help improve habitat, provide protection through regulations, and provide funding for research and hatchery production of juvenile sturgeon for stocking. ✧

## DNR names Leach as Fish and Wildlife director

Jim Leach, a veteran natural resources manager with deep ties to the state's conservation community, will be the next director of Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Division.

For the past 16 years, Leach has been the wildlife refuge supervisor for Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in that agency's Midwest regional office in Bloomington, Minn. He has been with the Fish and Wildlife Service for 35 years and has forged strong relationships with hunting and fishing organizations, tribal authorities and other conservation groups.

Leach, 62, will oversee a \$139 million annual budget and a staff of 575 employees. The division, which includes the sections of wildlife, fisheries, outreach and administration, is charged with managing, protecting and regulating the state's fish and wildlife resources. The division establishes fishing, hunting and other wildlife-related regulations; carries out census, survey and research projects; and promotes habitat protection and development on public and private lands.

In 1977, Leach began his fish and wildlife career as a laborer at the Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge in South Dakota. He started his career as a Minnesota field biologist with the USFWS in the late 1970s working at Tamarac and Agassiz national wildlife refuges. In those capacities he worked with local governments and state agencies to restore and manage wetlands on public lands.

Leach, a native Minnesotan, has a master's degree in zoology from the University of South Dakota and did his graduate research on trumpeter swans. He obtained a bachelor's degree in biology, with a wildlife emphasis, from St. Cloud State University. Jim and his wife, Patty, have four children. He is a lifelong hunter and angler and has passed that passion on to his son and daughters.

Leach starts his new DNR job on April 18. ✧

## DNR seeks volunteers to build fish habitat at Sullivan Lake

The DNR is seeking volunteers to assemble fish habitat structures for Sullivan Lake on April 30 as part of the new Reservoir Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Program (RAHEP).

RAHEP builds fish habitat in reservoirs where natural structure is lacking. Sullivan Lake, a 451-acre reservoir in Sullivan, is the first project lake for the program. Over winter, staff from the Sullivan County Parks Department and inmates from the Sullivan County Jail cut lumber and prepared for the volunteer day.

Volunteers will help assemble wooden crib structures and "Georgia cubes" (a PVC cube with corrugated pipe wound inside). The goal is to have more than 100 structures by the day's end, according to Sandy Clark-Kolaks, DNR southern fisheries research biologist.

Maps will be created and made available to the public showing the GPS coordinates, depth and type of structure. The work day will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the restroom area and handicap boat ramp area in Campground G. Volunteers should dress for working outside and bring snacks and water, protective eyewear, gloves and cordless drills. Volunteers can come and go as they need.

Even if people can only help out for an hour, come out anyway.

**Contact Information:** Sandy Clark-Kolaks, (812) 287-8300, [sclark-kolaks@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:sclark-kolaks@dnr.IN.gov). ✧

## Women's Wellness Weekend, April 30 - May 1

This weekend offers jewelry making, fairy gardens, yoga, archery, wine tasting, and almost everything in between. All while enjoying the food and accommodations of [Turkey Run Inn](#) and beautiful Turkey Run State Park on its 100th birthday. Bring your girlfriends and spend a weekend you won't forget. There are a few spots left. [Register now](#) before they are gone. ✧

## Lake Huron Chinook salmon fishery unlikely to recover

### University of Michigan School of Natural Resources-led computer-modeling study

Lake Huron's Chinook salmon fishery will likely never return to its glory days because the lake can no longer support the predatory fish's main food source, alewife, according to a new Univ. of Michigan study.

The study's results suggest that Lake Huron managers should focus on restoration of native species such as lake trout, walleye, whitefish and herring. The findings also suggest that if current trends continue, Lake Michigan will likely experience an alewife collapse similar to Lake Huron's, followed by the crash of its Chinook salmon fishery there.

"These results serve as a reality check for those who continue to pressure the managers to stock Chinook salmon in Lake Huron," said study co-author Sara Adlerstein-Gonzalez, a fishery scientist at U-M's School of Natural Resources. "The findings are also good news for native fish species and for the restoration of the entire Lake Huron ecosystem. Maybe we should celebrate the improvements in the native fish populations and try to adapt to this new situation."

A paper summarizing the findings was published in the journal *Ecosystems* on March 14. The paper's first author is Yu-Chun Kao, who conducted the work for his doctoral dissertation at U-M under Adlerstein-Gonzalez. He is now a postdoctoral researcher at Michigan State University and works at the U.S. Geological Survey's Great Lakes Science Center in Ann Arbor.

The other author of the paper is Ed Rutherford of NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory in Ann Arbor.

Pacific salmon were introduced into the Great Lakes 50 years ago to establish a new recreational fishery and to help control alewives, a non-native species that entered the lakes in the late 1940s. Alewives soon became the main prey species for Chinook salmon and lake trout, which are staples of a fishery valued at more than \$4 billion per year.

Lake Huron's alewife population collapsed in 2003, and a sharp Chinook salmon decline soon followed. Michigan and the province of Ontario stopped stocking Chinook salmon in southern Lake Huron in 2014 but continue to stock in the northern part of the lake. In Lake Michigan, where populations of both alewives and salmon are declining, stocking of Chinooks continues at significantly reduced levels.

The new study is the first attempt to use a food-web modeling approach to assess the various factors behind the 2003 collapse of Lake Huron alewives and the implications for future fish populations there. The total weight or "biomass" of alewives in Lake Huron plunged by more than 90% between 2002 and 2003, and the exact causes of the collapse are still debated by anglers and biologists.

Some researchers say the alewife collapse was mainly due to too much predation by Chinook salmon and native lake trout. Others say it likely resulted from a drop in food availability tied to the explosive spread of zebra and quagga mussels in the late 1980s.

The computer simulations in the new study show that the collapse was caused by a combination of predation and food limitation—and that predation alone would not have caused the crash. The spread of the non-native mussels, coupled with declining levels of the nutrient phosphorus entering the lake from rivers and streams, were essential factors, according to the new study.

The Lake Huron dominoes fell sequentially, according to the report. First came increased predation of alewives, due initially to heavier stocking of Chinook salmon and later the result of increased natural reproduction of salmon and a drop in sea-lamprey mortality. Predation of Lake Huron alewives likely peaked in the mid-1980s and then remained roughly constant until the alewife collapse, according to the new simulations.

Beginning in the 1990s, quagga mussels spread quickly at a time when the level of phosphorus flowing into the lake from rivers and streams was dropping in response to nutrient abatement programs initiated in the 1970s. Mussels in Lake Huron's Saginaw Bay compounded the problem by sucking up and storing nutrients near the shore, preventing them from making it into Lake Huron's main basin.

The loss of essential nutrients in the main basin reduced the amount of algae at the base of the Lake Huron food web, and zooplankton suffered.

At the time, alewives and rainbow smelt were the two most important prey species for Chinook salmon in Lake Huron. The new computer simulations show that rainbow smelt suffered significant declines before alewives did, dropping 78% by 2002. Deprived of a favorite food, Chinook salmon began to rely more heavily on alewives, and this increased predation hastened the alewife population collapse, according to the study. This sequence of events can be used to assess the likelihood of an alewife and Chinook salmon collapse in lakes Michigan and Ontario, the researchers said.

"We are seeing all the same warning signs in lakes Michigan and Ontario," Kao said. "We're seeing decreasing nutrient loads, a decrease in soft-bodied, bottom-dwelling invertebrates due to the mussels, a decrease in rainbow smelt and, as a result, Chinook salmon feeding almost solely on alewives."

With researchers from Michigan State and the USGS, Kao is working on a follow-up modeling study that focuses specifically on the Lake Michigan food web.

Funding for the Lake Huron study was provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and by NOAA's Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research.

✧



## Learn to camp, paddle, rock climb and mountain bike

Registration is now open for the Minnesota 2016 I Can! programs



Spend the night in a tent at Interstate State Park for the first time on June 4, paddle the St. Croix River for the first time on June 12, go rock climbing on the North Shore for the first time on June 25, or sign up for one of many other unforgettable first-time experiences offered by Minnesota state parks and trails through its popular I Can! series of outdoor skill-building programs.

Reservations are now being taken for the following beginner-level programs, which start in June and continue through the end of August:

- **I Can Camp!** – Develop (or brush up on) fire-starting and camp cooking skills, and sleep on air mattresses in tents large enough to accommodate two adults and up to three children (\$60 for one-night programs or \$85 for two-night programs).
- **I Can Paddle!** – Get out on the water for a guided canoeing, kayaking or sea kayaking adventure (prices vary).
- **I Can Climb!** – Experience the thrill of rock climbing with instruction provided by trained professionals from Vertical Endeavors Guided Adventures (\$10/child, \$20/adult).
- **I Can Mountain Bike!** – Learn riding techniques and explore mountain bike trails with guides from the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Club (\$15/child, \$25/adult).

The Minnesota state parks and trails I Can! series also includes I Can Fish! and Archery in the Parks programs, which are both free and don't require reservations. No experience is necessary for any of these programs. Instruction and essential equipment will be provided. For more information about any of the programs—including program dates, times, locations, and minimum

## DNR creel clerks collecting angler information on inland water bodies

As the spring fishing season approaches, the Michigan DNR reminds anglers that staff will be interviewing them about their fishing trips on several inland lakes throughout the state.

Locations include Mullett Lake (Cheboygan Cty.), Cass and Union lakes (Oakland Cty.), Big Manistee River including a component on Manistee Lake (Manistee Cty.), Deer Lake Basin (Marquette Cty.) and Lake Gogebic (Gogebic Cty.). At each of these water bodies a DNR creel clerk will ask anglers how long they fished, what species they targeted, what they caught and where they live. In some instances, the clerks will ask to measure or weigh fish and take scale samples to gather key biological information.

These efforts are part of the DNR's Statewide Angler Survey Program, a monitoring program designed to track recreational fisheries across Michigan waters of the Great Lakes and select inland waters. Fisheries managers use the data to determine future management actions that include developing appropriate regulations, addressing habitat improvements and identifying fish stocking needs.

Inland creel efforts will begin on various dates this spring and extend, in some cases, into 2017. Anglers are asked to cooperate with the DNR creel clerks during the study. To see [past creel results](#), visit [michigan.gov/fishing](http://michigan.gov/fishing) and click on [Fishing in Michigan in the left toolbar](#). ✧

age requirements—visit [www.mndnr.gov/ican](http://www.mndnr.gov/ican) or contact the DNR Information Center at [info.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:info.dnr@state.mn.us) or 651-296-6157 or 888-646-6367 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday. To register: [www.mndnr.gov/reservations](http://www.mndnr.gov/reservations) or call 866-857-2757 (8 a.m.–8 p.m. daily, except holidays). ✧

## DNR updates online system for registering bass tournaments

The Michigan DNR has updated the Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System (MFTIS) – a useful tool for individuals and organizations coordinating bass tournaments in the state. Since January 1, 2016, bass tournaments are required to be registered and results



reported via the MFTIS.

This requirement is for bass tournaments only and includes all access sites, including both DNR and non-DNR boat launches.

For the past six months, the DNR together with the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget has been working on a complete overhaul of the information system to meet the requirements of Fisheries Order 215. The updated system was released March 25 on the DNR's website.

“This is an important step in implementing the NRC order and gaining a better understanding of what tournament fishing means to angling, fisheries conservation and Michigan's economy,” said Thomas Goniea, a fisheries biologist and the DNR's fishing tournament liaison.

The new order is already beginning to have a desirable result. In 2015, only 284 tournaments were voluntarily registered, and so far in 2016, more than 1,170 tournaments have been registered.

To register, tournament directors must go to the DNR's Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System, which can be found online at [mcgi.state.mi.us/fishingtournaments](http://mcgi.state.mi.us/fishingtournaments) or [Michigan.gov/fishing](http://Michigan.gov/fishing). ✧

## Lake Erie Sport Fishing Outlook

*Continued from page 1*

### Yellow Perch

Expect good perch fishing in 2016, with improving numbers of fish in the Western Basin and the largest fish in the eastern areas of the Central Basin. Perch anglers should encounter fish ranging from 7 to 13 inches from the 2014 through 2008 hatches this year, with major contributions from the 2014, 2011 and 2008 year classes. Fish from the average-to-better hatches in 2007 will contribute fish in the 10-plus inch range. "In 2015, yellow perch fisheries flourished in the eastern portions of Ohio's Lake Erie, and we expect this trend to continue into 2016," said Jeff Tyson, Lake Erie fisheries program manager for the ODNR.

### Black Bass

Smallmouth bass fishing in 2016 is expected to be fair but improving. Smallmouth bass catch rates decreased in 2015, when compared to 2014, but are still the highest observed since the mid-1990s. Smallmouth bass should be an excellent size (14 to 22 inches and weighing up to six pounds). The best fishing for smallmouth bass will continue to be in areas with good bottom structure, which is the available habitat across much of the entire Ohio nearshore and islands. Continuing the trend from previous years, largemouth bass fishing should be excellent in 2016. This emerging fishery is producing high catch rates and some large fish in nearshore areas and harbors across Ohio's Lake Erie. All black bass (smallmouth and largemouth) must be immediately released from May 1 through June 24. Beginning June 25, the daily bag limit for bass will be five, with a 14-inch minimum length limit.

### Steelhead

Steelhead anglers should enjoy another year of great fishing in 2016 in Ohio's Lake Erie open waters and in tributaries. Peak summer steelhead action on Lake Erie can be found offshore from June through August between Vermilion and Conneaut, with catches measuring 17 to 29 inches. Most Lake Erie anglers troll

for steelhead in deep waters using spoons with divers or downriggers until fish move close to shore in the fall. The daily bag limit remains at five fish per angler from May 16 through August 31, and two fish per angler between September 1 and May 15, 2017. A 12-inch minimum size limit is in effect throughout the year.

### White Bass

White bass continue to provide excellent seasonal fishing opportunities in the Maumee and Sandusky rivers and in the open lake. The 2016 catch will be dominated by fish from the 2012 and 2010 year classes. A few fish from the 2007 hatch could be as large as 16 inches. Anglers should focus on major Western Basin tributaries during May and June and nearshore areas of the open lake during the summer. There is no white bass daily bag limit or size limit.

### Other Species

Bays, harbors and main lake shorelines offer excellent fishing for panfish, as well as occasional northern pike and muskie in vegetated areas. Anglers are reminded that fishing conditions on Lake Erie can change hourly, and adjustments are often necessary to improve success. Anglers should take into account factors such as water temperature, cloud cover, water clarity, boat traffic, wave action, structure, currents and the amount of baitfish in the area. Anglers are also reminded to carefully monitor Lake Erie weather and to seek safe harbor before storms approach.

Updated Lake Erie fishing reports are available at [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov) or by calling 888-HOOKFISH (888-466-5347). Information is available from ODNR staff from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays at the Fairport Harbor station (440-352-4199) for the Central Basin and at Sandusky Station (419-625-8062) for the Western Basin.

Information on the Lake Erie research and management programs, fisheries resources, fishing reports, maps and links to other Lake Erie web resources are available at [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov). ✧

## Temporary, seasonal fishing closures

To protect fish spawning areas, the Minnesota DNR has begun to close certain portions of some waters to fishing. The closings are routine and based on local conditions. Closings occur each year as ice-out begins and waters begin to warm. The DNR closes the spawning locations to fishing only where habitat is limited and fish are very concentrated in one location, such as a river or the bay of a lake where fish are congregated during spawning. Areas closed: [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn). Portions of waters closed to fishing also are posted at access sites. ✧

## DNR launches new quarterly e-newsletter

Welcome! The Michigan DNR has launched a quarterly Michigan Boating e-newsletter. The new digital newsletter will highlight need-to-know information and feature stories, and help connect boaters to Michigan's waterways.

Click here to register: [www.michigan.org/boating/](http://www.michigan.org/boating/) or [MIDNR@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov](mailto:MIDNR@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov). ✧

## Register for beginner fly-fishing weekend for youth-adult pairs

A youth paired with an adult can join other youth-adult pairs to learn the basics of fly-fishing from experienced instructors from Friday evening, May 13, to Sunday afternoon, May 15, near Lanesboro. To participate, youth must be 11 to 17 years old as of May 13, and each youth-adult pair must have less than 10 hours of fly-fishing experience between them. The registration fee is \$130 per pair and includes meals, lodging, guiding services, equipment and additional materials. Sponsorships to offset registration fees may be available from angling and conservation organizations. This event is limited to 20 youth-adult pairs. ✧

## Muskegon River walleye egg collection to occur this spring

Michigan DNR fisheries personnel will be taking walleye eggs below Croton Dam this spring.

The DNR plans to collect approximately 67 million walleye eggs from the Muskegon River in 2016, resulting in 16.8 million fry for transfer to rearing ponds and direct fry plants throughout the Lower Peninsula. Walleye fry transferred to ponds will be raised to fingerling size (approximately 1.5 to 2.5 inches) and stocked in late spring or early summer in lakes and rivers throughout the state.

"The adult population consists of mostly stocked fish," said Rich O'Neal, fisheries biologist for the DNR's Central Lake Michigan Management Unit. "The Muskegon River has the largest run of walleye in the Lake Michigan watershed south of

Green Bay."

Sampling using electrofishing usually begins each day at Croton Dam at about 8:30 a.m. and proceeds downstream to the Pine Street Access Site. If more eggs are needed, additional collections may occur downstream to the Thornapple Street Access Site.

Egg collection and fertilizing is



conducted at the Pine Street public access site, about 2 miles downstream of Croton Dam. This process generally begins between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. The public is welcome to observe how the eggs are removed from the fish and fertilized before they are packed and shipped to [Wolf Lake and Platte River state fish hatcheries](#).

Anglers who wish to avoid the walleye collection activities should fish downstream of the areas previously noted. The DNR asks anglers to exhibit caution when fishing near the electro-fishing boats. Wading anglers will be asked to exit the water when the boat approaches, to ensure anglers' safety during the electro-fishing work. The DNR appreciates angler cooperation during this critical egg-take operation. ✧

## Panfish regulations change on 93 lakes April 1

In an effort to improve panfish size on 93 Wisconsin lakes with the potential for bigger fish, new regulations took effect on April 1.

The Wisconsin DNR is putting the experimental regulations in place following a process that involved more than 3,500 survey responses, more than 30 public meetings, multiple questions on two spring hearing questionnaires before the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and approval by the Natural Resources Board. Max Wolter, DNR senior fisheries biologist and panfish team leader, said the rules are part of a 10-year management plan that also focuses on habitat improvement and predator management to boost panfish on specific lakes across Wisconsin.

There is no change to bag limits on most general inland waters, which will still have the statewide bag limit that provides for a harvest of 25 fish per day for species including bluegill, pumpkinseed, sunfish, crappie and yellow perch.

"Panfish are the target of more anglers in Wisconsin than any other group of fish and through our

fisheries survey work, we've identified key lakes where panfish size has declined over time," Wolter said. "We appreciate the support we've received from anglers throughout this process and we believe the new regulations will produce positive results on the lakes we've identified together."

With panfish, fewer, larger fish can produce significantly more fillet meat than many smaller fish. In fact, just four 8" bluegills produce more fillet meat than 25 bluegills measuring 5 to 6". It takes panfish about six or seven years to reach that 8 inch size, at which point their rate of growth slows. In Wisconsin, bluegills 9 to 10" (which are often male) can be as old as 14 to 16 years. Heavy harvesting on some lakes and chains of lakes currently prevents most panfish from surviving beyond age 4 (when they measure 5").

Three different experimental bag limits are being applied to 93 lakes to determine which is most efficient at improving panfish size. The new rules will be evaluated in five years and again in 10 years to determine

whether they are improving panfish size as well as whether anglers continue to support the changes.

The daily limits on the high potential lakes will take one of the following forms:

- **25/10.** Under this rule, a total of 25 panfish may be kept per day but no more than 10 of any one species.
- **Spawning season 15/5.** Under this rule, a total of 25 panfish may be kept per day except during May and June when a total of 15 panfish may be kept but no more than five of any one species.

"A good way for anglers to think about it is to look for the new regulations in the 2016-17 [Guide to Wisconsin Hook and Line Fishing Regulations](#) when they get their new licenses," Wolter said.

For a complete list of lakes, check out the [factsheet](#). To learn more about the plan, search the DNR website, [dnr.wi.gov](#) for "[panfish plan](#)." ✧

## Study: Consumer knowledge of ethanol blends lacking

Awareness and knowledge of how to use high ethanol fuel blends remains relatively unchanged among consumers over the last few years, according to a recent national poll conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). According to poll results, price continues to drive decisions at the pump and consumers do not pay much attention to pump warning labels. OPEI conducted similar research in 2013 and 2015.

The 2016 poll results show that 64% of American adults age 18+ who own outdoor power equipment say they either are not sure (42%) or do not pay any attention (22%) to what type of fuel they are using. In 2015, almost half (45%) were not sure what type of fuel they used and one in five (20%) did not pay any attention to the type of fuel used.

Gasoline containing greater than 10% ethanol (E10) can damage or destroy outdoor power equipment, including lawn mowers, chain saws, generators, utility vehicles and other small engine equipment such as snowmobile and boat engines.

The poll, conducted in March of this year, shows 66% of Americans will use the least expensive grade of gasoline whenever possible, versus 63% in 2015 and 71% in 2013. In addition, 60% of Americans assume that any gas that is sold at a gas station must be safe for all of their vehicles or power equipment versus 57% in 2015 and 64% in 2013. By Federal law, it is illegal to use those higher ethanol fuel blends in outdoor power equipment.

“The research continues to prove that Americans are still unaware of the damage that can occur to their outdoor power equipment as a result of misfueling,” said Kris Kiser, president and CEO of OPEI. “There are 100 million legacy outdoor power equipment products in homeowners’ garages, maintenance sheds and facilities across America. The scope of this issue is massive and shows that much more education is needed.”

### Attention at the pump

According to the poll, while 85% of Americans understand gasoline contains ethanol, price is the overriding priority for the gasoline-consuming public. Among those who drive and buy from a filling station, the vast majority (92%) notices the price, but far fewer look at anything else, including ethanol content (24%), octane rating (56%), and even warning labels (50%). Nearly 57%, an increase of 6 percentage points over last year, confess that they typically only pay attention to labels on fuel pumps if they read “Warning” or “Do Not Use In...” And 51% demonstrate that they don’t give it much thought as they tend to fill up their portable gas tank with the same fuel used to fill their vehicle.

“We hope the Environmental Protection Agency will engage in more education as additional blended fuels are introduced in the marketplace. Otherwise, we could continue to see confusion among consumers,” said Kiser. “The outdoor power equipment industry has supported consumer education through our ‘Look Before You Pump’ campaign since 2013. But it’s clear our government needs to do more.”

### Methodology

The March survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll via its Quick Query omnibus product on behalf of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute from March 11-15, 2016, among 2,023 adults ages 18 and older. The 2015 survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of Outdoor Power Equipment Institute from April 23-27, 2015, among 2,015 U.S. adults age 18 or older. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, contact: [ami@fourleafpr.com](mailto:ami@fourleafpr.com). ✧

## Firearm/Muzzleloader Deer Permits

Resident Illinois deer hunters can apply through April 30 for the first lottery drawings for 2016 Illinois Firearm and Muzzleloader-only Deer Season permits. Hunters can apply online through the IDNR website [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov). Application forms in PDF format are also available online at this link: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/ApplyForDeerOrTurkeyPermit.aspx>. ✧

## Youth Hunting License

A change in Illinois law for 2016 allows any resident youth hunter age 18 and under (formerly 16 and under) to purchase a Youth Hunting License, which does not require the hunter to have a Hunter Education Card. A youth hunter with this license may hunt only while supervised by a parent, grandparent, or guardian who is 21 or older and has a valid Illinois hunting license. The youth hunter shall not hunt nor carry a hunting device unless the youth is accompanied by and under close personal supervision of these individuals. 2016 Illinois licenses are available online or from IDNR license and permit vendors. ✧

## Fishing Information Booklet

The 2016 *Illinois Fishing Information* guide is available in PDF format through the DNR website in both English and Spanish versions at: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/fishing/Pages/FishingInformation.aspx>. ✧

## Get Your New License

The new license year in Illinois has begun. Get your license for any regional state here: [Regional licenses](#). Illinois 2016 licenses and stamps are valid through March 31, 2017, unless otherwise noted. ✧

## CAWS weekly sampling schedule

The following is a representative AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) weekly schedule of the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS). These folks are dedicated to protecting our resources against AIS. **Project Support** Kevin Irons, Duane Chapman, Matt O'Hara

April 4 – April 8

- SIU and USFWS will be conducting hydroacoustics in West Pit to determine Asian Carp abundance post Unified Fishing Method.
- INHS will be collecting plankton samples post Unified Fishing Method.

### Fixed Site Monitoring Downstream of the Electric Dispersal Barrier Fixed Sites Downstream of the Dispersal Barrier

Lockport Pool – Lockport Lock and Dam to Electric Barrier

Brandon Road Pool – Brandon Road Lock and Dam to Lockport Lock and Dam

Dresden Island Pool – I-55 Bridge to Brandon Road Lock and Dam  
Marseilles Pool – Rt. 47 Bridge (Morris) to Dresden Lock and Dam

### Commercial Netting Schedule

(Point of contact Brennan Caputo

Tuesday – 8:00am to 2:30pm

**Boat 1 – Lockport Pool** – 4 fixed sites /200 yards at each site & Targeted Sampling

**Boat 2 – Brandon Pool** – 4 fixed sites /200 yards at each site & Targeted Sampling

**Boat 3 – Dresden Pool** – 4 fixed sites /200 yards at each site & Targeted Sampling upstream of I55 Bridge

Wednesday – 8:00am to 2:30pm

**Boat 1 – Dresden Pool** – Targeted Sampling

**Boat 2 – Lockport Pool** – Targeted Sampling

**Boat 3 – Brandon Pool** – Targeted Sampling

Thursday – 8:00am to 2:30pm

**Boat 1 – Brandon Pool** – Targeted Sampling

**Boat 2 – Dresden Pool** – Targeted Sampling

**Boat 3 – Lockport Pool** – Targeted Sampling

Friday – Rock Run Rookery – 7:00am to 11:00pm

**Boat 1, 2 & 3** – Targeted Sampling

### Distribution and Movement of Small Asian Carp in the Illinois

Waterway-USFWS (Point of

Contact: Kjetil Henderson

Mon-Wed April 4-6 Electrofishing – Starved Rock Pool

Mon, Wed, & Fri April 4, 6, 8

Electrofishing – Marseilles Pool

### Hydroacoustic Survey in the HM West Pit Post-Unified Method

Contact: Jeremiah Davis – Tuesday, April 5 0800-1500

### Identifying Movement Bottlenecks and Changes in Population

Characteristics of Asian Carp in Illinois River (Point of Contact:

Justin Seibert

4-4: Post-Hydroacoustic survey in the West pit of HMS pits. We will start survey between 11am and 1pm and will last ~4 to 5 hrs.

4-5: Hydroacoustic survey in Dresden Pool.

4-6: Hydroacoustic survey in Dresden Pool. Install two receivers in Dresden Pool, and downloading receivers in Starved Rock or Marseilles pool.

4-7: Download receivers in Marseilles/Starved Rock/Peoria pools.

4-8: Tag fish at Rock Run Rookery with IDNR and commercial fisherman.

### Joliet #9 2016 Entrainment Characterization Study

EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc., PBC has been contracted by Midwest Generation to conduct an entrainment characterization study for Joliet Station #9 for 2016. Entrainment sampling will be performed from a boat anchored or moored in front of the cooling water intake structure during separate day, dusk, night, and

dawn sampling events. Sampling will consist of deploying a paired set of plankton nets at various depths in the water column until a specific volume of water has been sampled.

The boat is a 20-ft AAD Welding Semi-V 2072 jon boat, non-painted aluminum, with an electrofishing rail on the bow and a gray Yamaha outboard on the stern. I will be the crew leader during the day and dusk sampling efforts and can be reached via cell phone at **847-997-7231**. The crew leader during the night and dawn sampling efforts will be Katie Jackson and she can be reached via cell phone at **847-404-1099**. Provided below is our schedule for the week of April 4<sup>th</sup>:

April 5<sup>th</sup>: Travel to and collect the day (~12:00-14:00) and dusk (~17:30-19:30) samples. Return to the boat ramp and change crews; the second crew will then collect the night (~00:00-02:00) and dawn (~04:30-06:30) samples. ✧

## Penn. FBC celebrates 150th Anniversary

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission celebrated its 150th anniversary as one of the nation's oldest conservation agencies on March 30<sup>th</sup>, during last month's quarterly business meeting and at a special public event at the State Museum in Harrisburg

In 1866, a convention held in Harrisburg to investigate pollution, bad conditions existing in mountain lakes and streams, and the stopping of spring shad runs by dams resulted in Governor Andrew G. Curtin signing the law, Act of March 30, 1866 (P.L. 370, No. 336), that named James Worrall as Pennsylvania's first Commissioner of Fisheries. This created what would become the Board of Fishery Commissioners, then the Pennsylvania Fish Commission and now is the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. ✧

## Commission, Business and Conservation Leaders in call for \$1.3 Billion Annual Investment for States

A group of energy, business and conservation leaders released their recommendations on how to avert the growing endangered species crisis in this country.

The *Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources* determined that utilizing a portion of revenues from energy and mineral development on federal lands and waters to fund state-based conservation could address conservation needs for thousands of species. An annual investment of \$1.3 billion from these development revenues into the currently unfunded Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program would allow state fish and wildlife agencies to proactively manage these species reducing taxpayer costs and the regulatory red tape that comes when species are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The number of species petitioned for listing under the Act has increased by 1,000 percent in less than a decade.

"A lot is at stake if we don't act soon. For every species that is thriving in our country, hundreds of species are in decline. These recommendations offer a new funding approach that will help ensure all fish and wildlife are conserved for future generations," said former Wyoming governor, David Freudenthal, co-chair of the Blue Ribbon Panel. "We need to start down a new path where we invest proactively in conservation rather than reactively."

The panel was co-chaired by Freudenthal and John L. Morris, noted conservationist and founder of Bass Pro Shops.

"Conservation means balancing the sustainability of fish and wildlife resources with the many needs of humans for clean air and water, land, food and fiber, dependable energy, economic development, and recreation. It is our responsibility to lead the way so our state fish and wildlife agencies have the resources they need to conserve species and manage our natural resources—the

future of our industry and the outdoor sports we love depend on this investment," noted Morris. "Redirecting revenues from energy and mineral development to state-based conservation is a simple, logical solution, and it is now up to our leaders in Congress to move this concept forward."

State fish and wildlife agencies have primary responsibility for managing species within their borders, as well as conserving important habitats and providing outdoor recreation opportunities. Traditionally, agencies have been funded by sportsmen through license fees and excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment and motorboat fuels—most agencies receive very limited funding through general taxpayer dollars. Agencies have not been able to keep pace with the growing challenge as habitat is lost and species decline and hunter and angler participation has declined. States have developed state wildlife action plans identifying 12,000 species in greatest need for conservation efforts. However, limited funding requires prioritization of the species facing the highest risk of endangerment leaving thousands of other species and their habitats hanging in the balance.

"The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is the state agency charged by the Pennsylvania General Assembly with protecting, conserving, and managing fish, reptiles, amphibians, and all other aquatic organisms in the Commonwealth, but the agency does not receive any direct state general appropriation to assist with this effort," said PFBC Executive Director John Arway.

"The USFWS provides some funding to states through the State Wildlife Grant Program to develop and implement Wildlife Action Plans, but the funding is limited to an annual appropriation and the states must appeal to Congress every year for funding to continue," he added. "The

Pennsylvania plan, for example, has identified 664 species including 90 birds, 19 mammals, 18 amphibians, 22 reptiles, 65 fishes and 450 invertebrates that require our attention."

"Historically, Pennsylvania has a proud heritage of being a leader in natural resource protection," Arway said. "But it's imperative that we secure alternative funding sources and reinvest in conservation programs so that we can meet our Constitutional duty as trustee of our public natural resources. The new funding proposal can help us meet these needs and we fully support it."

Proactive conservation saves taxpayer dollars by addressing species needs early so that costly "emergency room" interventions are avoided. Preventing threatened and endangered species listings helps business by averting project delays and losses from forfeited opportunities due to land use regulations. In addition, investing in conservation is vital to sustaining our natural infrastructure that supports numerous indispensable benefits such as pollination, water purification, erosion control, flood control, recreation, food production and cultural amenities.

"The cost of business to protect, conserve and manage our nation's fish and wildlife resources can no longer fall solely on the backs of anglers and hunters," Arway added. "Society as a whole continues to benefit from the actions that we take to improve habitat for our fish and wildlife resources. Whether it is building wetlands for waterfowl and herptiles that store floodwaters and improve water quality, to protecting streambanks to provide overhead cover for fish and reduce soil erosion, to creating more outdoor recreational opportunities that improve public health—whatever action benefits our fish and wildlife also benefits society. The Blue Ribbon Panel's proposed funding solution is a necessary step forward for the future of fish and wildlife conservation." ♡

**Other Breaking News Items:**

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**[Minnesota DNR releases updated Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan](#)**

Minnesota's Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan, released Monday by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, is now out for public review and comment.

**[Coast Guard plans seasonal closings at some rescue stations](#)**

The U.S. Coast Guard says it's planning seasonal closings at some of its Great Lakes stations including in the Lake Michigan communities of Frankfort, Ludington and Muskegon in Michigan

**[A half century of salmon](#)**

It has been 50 years since Pacific-run salmon — first coho, then chinook — were planted in Lake Michigan, a move which is credited with netting \$32 billion for Michigan's natural resources economy

**[Island residents firm in protesting proposal to divert Great Lakes water](#)**

With the timeline for the Waukesha, Wis., water diversion application winding up, the comments appear to be overwhelmingly against the proposal, from both sides of the border, with Ontario also expressing concerns through its technical review of the process, found online.

**[Michigan king salmon stocking may become a thing of the past](#)**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is considering another reduction in the number of chinook salmon being stocked in Lake Michigan and fishery managers say the practice may be eliminated altogether if the population of the fish continues to decline

**[Ottawa to invest \\$10.6-million to upgrade Ste-Anne Canal](#)**

The canal, a national historic site next to Ste-Anne's iconic boardwalk, will undergo remedial work on the lock and footbridges, while a second project calls for repairs to visitor facilities, like paths, lighting and points of service

**[Michigan Coast Guard station gets cool helicopter with 'throwback' design](#)**

A life-saving piece of history touched down in Northern Michigan on Friday when the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City took delivery of its new MH-65D helicopter.

**[Giant sturgeon poised to spawn again](#)**

A major effort to re-establish powerful, ancient lake sturgeon in the Maumee River will begin this fall if the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Toledo Zoo, and the University of Toledo get federal grant money to set up what officials call a "streamside rearing facility."

**[Double-crested cormorants finally find a friend](#)**

It may be that double-crested cormorants got blamed for eating all the game fish a decade ago, when what was really happening was the beginning of the alewife crash that stood the entire Lake Huron fishery on its head.

**[Critique opposes U.S. community's request to draw water from Great Lakes watershed](#)**

Ontario says a precedent-setting plan that could see a small Wisconsin city draw water from Lake Michigan has some "key deficiencies" that should disqualify the proposal.

**[Lock closure creates dead end for boaters](#)**

In September, a Wisconsin lock was closed indefinitely to prevent round gobies from reaching the Lake Winnebago System. The lock will remain closed for the start of the 2016 boating season, if not for the entire season and beyond.

**[Lowest catch of trout and salmon since at least 1990](#)**

State and federal fisheries personnel provided an update on the status of Lake Michigan's fishery during a meeting at Lakeshore Technical Institute in Wis. The leading indicators for trout and salmon – forage base, angler harvest and fish condition – are all pointed down.

**[Federal government to help pay for dam removal](#)**

The federal government has agreed to help cover the bulk of the costs associated with removing a 57-foot-high dam along the Cuyahoga River in northeast Ohio, state regulators said last week. Bill Zawiski of the Ohio EPA announced about 65% of the \$70 million cost to

**[Expert: Lake Michigan salmon face dire future](#)**

Lake Huron's glory days as a salmon fishery are likely gone forever, according to a study whose lead researcher says Lake Michigan is following a similar pattern. Lake Huron's population of the alewife, the herring-like fish that are the Chinook salmon's main food source,

**[COMMENTARY: Fukushima: Can it happen here?](#)**

Could a Fukushima-like meltdown occur at one of the 30 nuclear reactors perched on the shores of the Great Lakes?

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