



New proposals on Lake Michigan proposed stocking cuts

Since the Lake Michigan Committee (LMC) proposal to reduce Chinook salmon stocking by 62%, each agency has received consistent feedback from stakeholders that we should consider lake trout stocking reductions along with our proposal and not reduce the full 62% of Chinook salmon. We also heard of angler interest to increase harvest opportunity for lake trout. Below are proposals that the LMC has agreed to:

Regulations

- Wisconsin, Indiana and Illinois will pursue an increased lake trout bag limit from 2 fish per day to 3 fish per day. This will align with Michigan’s regulations of 3 fish per day in MM6-8.
- Michigan will pursue a possession season of “open all year” for MM6-8 to align with Wisconsin, Indiana, and Illinois.
- Michigan will also pursue opening drowned river mouth lakes that currently have a closed season.

Chinook Stocking Reduction Alternative

- A new proposal for a Chinook salmon stocking reduction is to only reduce stocking by 50% of current levels. The new proposal is described in the table below. Under this alternative proposal, Michigan’s Chinook

stocking would go from 560,000 to 300,000, which would be a reduction of 46% from current levels.

State	Current stocking	First Proposed	%	New proposal	%
WIS	810,000	355,000	56%	425,000	47%
MI	560,000	200,000	64%	300,000	46%
ILL	230,000	90,000	61%	120,000	48%
IND	200,000	45,000	78%	60,000	70%
Total	1,800,000	690,000	61.5%	905,000	50%

Lake Trout Stocking Reduction

The total lake trout stocking in yearling equivalents averaged about 3,190,000 in recent years. The proposal would reduce stocking to 2,540,000, which is about a 21% reduction in lake trout lake-wide. All reductions will be outside the 1836 Consent Decree waters until a plan for further lake trout reductions can be reviewed and approved by the consent decree Technical Fisheries Committee.

The lake trout reduction includes discontinuation of 550,000 fall fingerling (220,000 yearling equivalents) lake trout stocking that was approved by the LMC in 2015 and implemented in 2016.

Lake Michigan proposed stocking cuts

Continued on page 10

In this issue...

Wis Forum meeting Aug 29.....	2
Speakers for angler & hunter summit	3
High-tech survey of prey fish.....	3
New virus found	4
Fall workshop for Minn women.....	4
DNR remote control unit	5
Anglers surpass Mille Lacs quota.....	5
MN Twins offer discounts with DRN.	6
IL youth Waterfowl Hunting opps	6
Grant Program sees reauthorization bill	6
NY Fishing/Hunting/Wildlife app.....	6
DEC reopens Dunkirk Fishing Pier...6	6
IL Becoming an Outdoors Woman ...6	6
MN DNR to stock muskie	7
Bids sought to operate marina	7
Women encouraged to register	7
Hunting safety courses.....	7
NY hunting & trapping ed courses....	8
DEC seeks participants for survey ...8	8
PA to protect wild trout fishery.....	9
Ripe wild rice harvesting season.....	9
Grants aim to increase anglers	10
33 million fish = opportunity.....	11

OH to hold Dock Lottery for 2017 Boating Season Dock rentals available across the state

The Ohio DNR will hold a lottery for boat owners to rent public docks during the 2017 boating season. Six marinas located throughout the state will offer space for boat storage.

Interested boaters can submit an application either in person or by mailing the application to the individual marina. Lottery applicants are required to show proof of boat ownership or lease and a photo ID, and lottery applicants may not submit more than one application per boat.

Boat owners have until August 31 to submit their applications to the respective state parks. The drawings will be held in September. Winning applicants do not need to be present at the time of the drawing, and the winners will be notified by the park. Lottery winners have the opportunity to renew the dock space for up to five years.

Participating state parks are Middle Bass Island in northwest Ohio; West Branch and Lake Milton in northeast Ohio; and Paint Creek, Rocky Fork and Caesar Creek in southwest Ohio. For more information on dock amenities, rental fees, boat sizes and other application inquiries, contact the individual state park offices.

- Caesar Creek State Park – 937-382-1096
- Middle Bass Island State Park – 419-836-7758
- Lake Milton State Park/West Branch State Park – 330-654-4989
- Paint Creek State Park/Rocky Fork State Park – 937-393-4284

Other state parks, such as Alum Creek and Buck Creek, will hold local lotteries in late 2016 or early 2017.

More info: Brooke Betit, 614-265-6860 ♦

Wis to provide update on Lake Michigan management options at Forum meeting Aug 29

CLEVELAND, Wis. – High-priority management actions for the Lake Michigan fishery identified by charter captains, anglers and other stakeholders will be shared by leaders from the Wisconsin DNR at the August 29 meeting of the Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum.

The public meeting runs from 6 to 9 p.m. at Lakeshore Technical College, 1290 North Ave., Cleveland, Wis., in Centennial Hall West.

The meeting is a follow-up to the [three public Lake Michigan salmon and trout management meetings](#) that were convened in late June to gather stakeholder input on potential Lake Michigan management strategies. Brad Eggold, DNR Great Lakes fisheries supervisor, said the department received numerous suggestions and good input at the meetings as well as more than 60 emailed comments from stakeholders during the public comment period on management of the multi-million dollar fishery.

"The department is thankful for the diverse stakeholder interest and participation in discussing and developing management strategies for Lake Michigan salmon and trout," Eggold said. "The Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum meeting will provide an opportunity for discussion of management options and strategies that acknowledge the diverse biological, social and economic feedback we've received."

The upcoming Forum meeting will include a presentation by the department followed by a facilitated discussion. Management options and actions will be presented and will cover topics including:

- Lake trout stocking numbers and consideration of increased bag limits as well as expanded access to lake trout;
- A potential increase in the number of ports that use net pens to optimize the release of Chinook with the potential for reduced predation;

- Efforts to fully meet stocking quotas for steelhead to ensure diverse fishing opportunities;
- The latest biological data and Chinook salmon stocking options; and
- Discussion of an implementation timeline and next steps to assure optimal stakeholder engagement in future management strategies.

DNR continues to work with regional clubs, recreational anglers, fishing tournament participants and charter captains to monitor their experiences with this year's catch and gather additional data.

"Throughout the summer, we've seen significant success among anglers with some of the largest Chinook salmon in the last several years being harvested," Eggold said. "Fishing for salmon and trout in Wisconsin waters of Lake Michigan has been outstanding for most of the summer with anglers also catching significant numbers of coho salmon and rainbow trout."

Background information including a copy of the presentation to stakeholders from DNR's June 27 meeting in Cleveland, Wis., can be found by visiting the DNR website, dnr.wi.gov and searching "[Lake Michigan salmon and trout meetings](#)."

The [Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum](#) offers opportunities for citizens and stakeholders to hear the latest research findings, management news and trends affecting the lake. The forum is facilitated by the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute with support from DNR.

Representatives from major sport fishing clubs on Lake Michigan and Green Bay, commercial fishers, the Conservation Congress and the University of Wisconsin System are formal members of the forum. ✧



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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

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DNR announces speakers for angler and hunter summit

Declining participation in fishing and hunting has led the Minnesota DNR to plan a two-day conference Friday and Saturday, August 26- 27, that will focus on recruiting and retaining hunters and anglers.

“We are excited to share that several experts will be participating in the summit, including presentations from national experts, reflections from local organizations, and breakout sessions to address opportunities and common challenges to recruiting anglers and hunters,” said Jeff Ledermann, angler recruitment, retention and education supervisor.

Keynote speakers include:

- **Matt Dunfee** is the programs manager for the Wildlife Management Institute, a 101-year-old, nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to science-based, professional wildlife management. He has developed recruitment, retention and re-engagement strategies; developed related programs, evaluations and best practices; and

conducted multi-day training and information workshops on the topic for state and federal wildlife agency staff and administrators.

- **Ron Hustvedt, Jr.** is the founder of WriteOutdoors.com. His writing appears regularly in numerous regional and national publications and frequently includes experiences of teaching his own young children to fish and hunt. He is a middle school social studies teacher and received the 2014 National Teacher of the Year from the Magnet Schools of America.

- **Col. Scott St. Sauver** is the post commander of Camp Ripley. He is a leader of hunting programs and “Trolling for Troops,” where pro anglers accompany disabled veterans, current service members and recently deployed soldiers on a fishing excursion for the day. He will share stories how these programs have impacted the lives of participants and insights on what we can learn from them.

The conference will allow for

information sharing on best practices to design and deliver recruitment and retention programs. Breakout sessions to address common challenges are also scheduled and include topics to increase participation of women, youth and other new audiences; recruiting the right volunteers; funding opportunities and designing effective field days.

Additionally, the DNR will provide a free toolkit with templates for new programs, strategies to enhance existing programs, evaluation tools, and checklists to help program planning and management.

The August 26-27 conference will be at Earle Brown Heritage Center, 6155 Earle Brown Drive, Brooklyn Center. Volunteers and staff of organizations or agencies and members of the public involved or interested in preserving Minnesota’s outdoor heritage are encouraged to attend. There are no fees for registration or meals. Register online at www.mndnr.gov/r3. ✧

High-tech survey of Lake Michigan's prey fish helps with future decisions

The Michigan DNR is preparing to conduct its annual hydro-acoustic (sonar) and mid-water trawl survey of alewives and other prey fishes in Lake Michigan this month to determine the status of these key components of the Lake Michigan ecosystem.

The survey is conducted on board the DNR’s Survey Vessel (S/V) *Steelhead*, based out of Charlevoix, in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Survey’s (USGS) Great Lakes Science Center’s R/V *Arcticus*. The survey is done at night starting in mid-August and usually takes about three weeks to complete.

Once completed, estimates of total prey fish abundance are used by fisheries managers in balancing [predator-prey dynamics](#). Managers adjust fish-stocking rates to keep alewife abundance in balance with lake productivity levels.

Biologists can estimate the

number or biomass (total weight) of alewives in Lake Michigan in just a few weeks thanks to technological advances in fisheries surveys that have occurred in the last 10 years and the DNR’s partnership with USGS.

“In a given night of sampling we can trawl up to 5 miles at depths ranging from 30 to 250 feet and collect up to 100 miles of acoustic data,” said Randy Claramunt, DNR fisheries research biologist. “All information is recorded digitally and immediately available for analysis.”

While the S/V *Steelhead* is surveying Michigan’s waters of Lake Michigan, the USGS Great Lakes Science Center’s R/V *Arcticus* will be surveying the western shoreline using the same methods.

“Cooperation with the DNR makes this survey possible,” said Dave Warner, USGS Great Lakes Science Center research biologist. “If we did not have the ability to use two

vessels, then our uncertainty in estimates of prey fish would be much higher because we would not be able to cover an adequate amount of the lake at the same time.”

Lake Michigan prey fish abundance and distribution can vary greatly from year to year. For example, alewife biomass averages around 38,500 tons (more than 86 million lbs.). But the maximum change observed from one year to another because of the DNR/USGS survey can be even more than that—up to 40,000 tons (100 million lbs.).

Information collected this August will be useful as fisheries managers continue to evaluate next steps for Lake Michigan’s fish populations—including rebalancing stocking efforts to better align with prey availability.

For more information on [Lake Michigan’s salmon issues](#), visit www.michigan.gov/fishing. ✧

New virus found during investigation into largemouth bass fish kill

A new virus has been identified in association with a die-off of largemouth bass in Pine Lake in Wisconsin's Forest County. The previously unknown virus was isolated at the USFWS La Crosse Fish Health Center from dead fish collected by the Wisconsin DNR during an investigation into a May 2015 fish kill in the northeastern Wisconsin lake.

The virus's genome was sequenced at a "virus hunting laboratory" operated by Tony Goldberg in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Veterinary Medicine. With the genome in hand, Goldberg and his colleagues scoured genetic databases to see if the virus was known or something novel.

The pathogen, according to Goldberg, was indeed new to science and has been dubbed largemouth bass reovirus. It has yet to be directly linked to fish mortality, explains Goldberg. However, the virus is a distant relative of other viruses associated with disease in other fish species, making it a key suspect in the Pine Lake fish kill.

"We can't say if it is directly responsible for fish mortality yet," says Goldberg. "But these kinds of viruses are known pathogens of fish, so we would be prudent to be concerned about it."

The new virus is described in the online version of the *Journal of General Virology* in a research report authored by Goldberg and colleagues from the Fish and Wildlife Service and the DNR. Its discovery comes against the backdrop of a deadly fish pathogen, viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus, which was found in 2006 in Lake Winnebago. Viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus has since been found in lakes Michigan and Superior and, should it spread, poses a threat to Wisconsin's inland fisheries, including iconic species such as musky, pike, bass, panfish and trout.

This virus is different from largemouth bass virus (described as a 'ranavirus') that's been in the Great Lakes since 2000.

"Largemouth bass reovirus is only the second representative of its group of viruses," notes Goldberg, an epidemiologist, world expert on emerging infectious disease, and associate director of research at the UW-Madison Global Health Institute. "This family of viruses is an emerging pathogen that infects all sorts of animals. They cause kills in marine and freshwater fisheries, including in wild and farmed populations."

Although the virus was discovered in association with a fish kill, more work is needed to understand if it is the primary culprit, Goldberg says. However, large fish kills involving a single species of fish such as largemouth bass have not been previously recorded at Pine Lake, making the virus a suspicious finding.

Should the virus be directly implicated in fish mortality, it will pose a new challenge in the control of fish disease in Wisconsin. Anglers spend roughly \$2.1 billion annually in the state, according to the DNR, and the state has an aquaculture industry with an estimated \$21 million annual economic impact. The Great Lakes together have a commercial fishery valued at \$23 million annually.

"This is a classic example of how science is essential for managing our natural resources and the economic benefits they bring to Wisconsin," says Goldberg. "Without strong science, Wisconsin cannot hope to respond effectively to these types of emerging problems."

Identifying the new virus was made possible by "next generation sequencing" technologies. These methods enable biologists to sequence millions of molecules of genetic material in a sample and then use powerful computers to decipher the results. As the technology becomes more accessible, Goldberg expects other fish viruses to be found.

"The take-home message is that you don't have to fly to the ends of the Earth to find examples of unknown, emerging diseases," says Goldberg. "We can find them right here in Wisconsin." There is no evidence that the new virus poses a risk to human health. ✧

Fall workshop provides fishing and shooting lessons for Minnesota women

A fall workshop will let women expand their outdoor experience as they go fly fishing, practice archery and turkey calling, tour a cave, canoe, bicycle and more in Lanesboro.

"We focus on a variety of activities at these workshops so participants can gain a broad appreciation of the outdoors," said Linda Bylander, outreach program coordinator with the DNR. "The idea behind this wide view is to give participants plenty of ways to get outdoors after they leave our classes."

Registration is open for the workshop that will be Friday, Sept. 16, to Sunday, Sept. 18, at Eagle Bluff Learning Center, as part of the Becoming an Outdoors Woman program of the DNR. Also included will be a presentation from the DNR's Carol Henderson on loons and lead.

For both new and repeat participants of a similar workshop in the winter, the program was supportive and fun.

"I love being around women who have the same interests," wrote one past participant. "I think it's very important to have women mentors to help pave the path. Many activities outdoors are male-dominated and it can be intimidating to learn new interests. I love that BOW has women who are in the field and talk and share their experience and knowledge."

The registration fee of \$190 includes lodging, meals and snacks. To register, or for more information: www.mndnr.gov/bow. ✧

DNR remote control unit learns more about Lake Huron fish populations

This month the Michigan DNR will begin assessing Lake Huron fisheries with the latest addition to its Great Lakes large vessel fleet – the [R/V Tanner](#).

In addition to the standard complement of nets and trawls the DNR uses with its other research vessels, the R/V *Tanner* is equipped with some new and unique technology to help assess the status of fish populations and habitat.

“The R/V *Tanner* is outfitted with state-of-the-art sampling technology, including a remotely operated vehicle that can carry a range of cameras and sensors, side-scan sonar and a scientific echosounder system,” said Todd Willis, DNR area research manager. “This equipment greatly expands our ability to assess the status of, and trends in, fisheries resources throughout Lake Huron.”

The remotely operated vehicle (ROV) is a small submarine operated from the R/V *Tanner* by a remote control. The ROV, which is equipped with lights and forward- and rear-facing cameras, is tethered to a cable

and is rated for depths up to 1,000 feet. It has the ability to hold its cruising altitude at any depth, and can save images and video to a digital recorder housed on the vessel. In the future, it can be upgraded with a range of remote sensors.

“We will be examining how the ROV can help us determine the abundance of fish species, like the non-native round goby, that are a component of the rapidly changing Lake Huron food web but cannot be assessed with traditional sampling gear,” said David Fielder, DNR fisheries research biologist. “The camera system on the ROV is well-suited for these types of surveys. Also, the ROV will provide a fish’s eye view of habitat that we have never been able to fully explore.”

The R/V *Tanner* is equipped with a fixed-mount side-scan sonar system in its onboard navigational electronics, and with a deployable torpedo-like device called a towfish that is pulled behind the vessel to generate a high-resolution picture of the lake bottom.

The R/V *Tanner*’s scientific

echosounder also uses sound waves to assess habitat as well as fish abundance. Similar to how a traditional fish finder uses sound to “see” what is underneath an angler’s boat, a nearly 1-foot-diameter electronic device called a transducer emits pulses of sound beneath the hull of the R/V *Tanner* to determine water depth, bottom hardness and the abundance of fish species in its view. This information is recorded by a laptop computer on the vessel, and then processed and analyzed later.

“Having an understanding of the habitats where we deploy our traditional sampling gear, such as nets, can help us design surveys that do a better job of assessing fish populations,” said Ji He, DNR fisheries research biologist. “Data from the echosounder, when paired with our new mid-water trawl, can also help us determine the abundance of small prey fish and young game fish scattered throughout the water column, which is something we were unable to do before.” For more info: Todd Willis, willst@michigan.gov 586-465-4771 x22. ✧

Anglers surpass Mille Lacs Lake walleye quota, but season to remain open

The most recent Mille Lacs Lake walleye harvest estimate indicates that anglers have surpassed the state’s 2016 walleye quota. The state, however, will not close the catch-and-release walleye season at this time, the Minnesota DNR announced.

According to DNR fisheries chief Don Pereira, analysis of summer creel survey data has shown that the catch-and-release-only regulations on Mille Lacs are conserving the lake’s future spawning population of walleye.

“Based on the data we’ve seen so far this year, keeping the season open will have minimal additional impact on the walleye population,” Pereira said. “The primary goal of the catch-and-release restriction is protecting young walleye, especially the robust 2013 year class. Current data show that only 1 percent of the 2013 fish have been impacted by hooking mortality, which is remarkably low.”

Conserving the 2013 year class of juvenile walleye until the fish reach spawning age is a critical component of recovering the Mille Lacs walleye population. At the end of June, state-licensed angler harvest was estimated at only 6,950 lbs. But due to increased angler activity, warm water temperatures and high catch rates, the estimated harvest increased rapidly in July, putting the most recent creel estimate at 37,922 lbs.

Despite the catch-and-release season, hooking mortality—an estimate of the number of fish that die after being released—is measured to estimate total harvest. This year’s walleye harvest allocation was established in January at 40,000 pounds—28,600 for state-licensed anglers and 11,400 for tribal fishing.

In 2016, the bands with Mille Lacs Lake treaty fishing rights modified their harvest methods to

help conserve young walleye, and to date have not taken their entire allocation. The state also adjusted walleye regulations by implementing the catch-and-release restriction for the open-water season.

The DNR had not previously managed Mille Lacs walleye with a season-long catch-and-release regulation. Fisheries researchers have been analyzing the 2016 creel data to better understand the impact of conservative fishing regulations on the lake’s walleye population.

Biologists will continue to monitor creel surveys and water temperatures on Mille Lacs through the remainder of the open-water season to ensure conservation of the lake’s population of walleye.

For more info: www.mndnr.gov/millelacslake. This year’s fishing regulations: www.mndnr.gov/fishmn ✧

MN Twins offer discounts, free hat in partnership with DNR

Anyone with a 2016 Minnesota hunting or fishing license can receive a free camouflage and blaze orange Twins logo baseball cap through a special Minnesota Twins ticket offer online at www.mndnr.gov/twins.

The offer is good for these games:

- Saturday, Sept. 3, game vs. Chicago White Sox.
- Saturday, Sept. 24, game vs. Seattle Mariners.

Tickets prices vary by game and seat locations are either in the field box or home run porch.

All ticket holders under this partnership will pick up their cap at the game. Instructions for purchasing tickets are at www.mndnr.gov/twins. Buy fishing and hunting licenses at any Minnesota Department of Natural Resources license agent, online with a mobile or desktop device at www.mndnr.gov/buylicense, or by phone at 888-665-4236. Mobile buyers receive a text or email that serves as proof of a valid fish or game license to state conservation officers. ✧

MN fall duck and goose seasons

Minnesota's regular waterfowl season will open on Saturday, September 24, with similar bag limits and season dates that were in place last year. For more info: [Full Story](#) and [waterfowl page](#). For hunting and trapping info: [Hunting](#). ✧

DEC 2016-2017 Waterfowl Season Dates

New York [final season dates and regulations are available](#) and, for the first time, they are included in the [annual hunting and trapping guide](#). [Waterfowl hunting zone descriptions and boundaries are available](#). Also: [New Deer and Bear Hunting Regulations](#). ✧

IL youth Waterfowl Hunting opportunities

Duck hunting seasons begin with designated "youth waterfowl hunts" in each zone of the state. These youth hunts are great opportunities for junior hunters (12 to 15 years of age) to be accompanied by a licensed adult hunter (including those with current Harvest Information Program registration and duck stamp) and learn the skills necessary to become a successful waterfowl hunter. The adult should not possess a firearm while accompanying a youth who is hunting ducks on any of these days. The daily bag limits during the youth hunts is the same as during the regular season. The youth hunts are held weekends in each zone, as follows:

- Northeastern Zone – Sept. 17-18
- Lake Champlain Zone – Sept. 24-25
- Southeastern Zone – Sept. 17-18
- Western Zone – Oct. 1-2
- Long Island Zone – Nov. 12-13 ✧

Great Lakes F&W Grant Program sees reauthorization bill

On July 13, Great Lakes House Members introduced a bill to reauthorize the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (GLFWRA) of 2016. GLFWRA was first passed in 1990 but hasn't been reauthorized since 2006. It authorizes the USFWS to provide assistance to Great Lakes fish and wildlife agencies to encourage cooperative conservation, restoration, and management of the fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. Projects are selected through a competitive review process from proposals submitted by states, tribes, and other interested entities at a 25% non-federal match.

[H.R. 5765](#) extends the program through 2021, reduces the authorization from \$16 million to \$8 million, and makes changes to the matching rules. Since 1998, GLFWRA has provided more than \$22.8 million in federal funding to 148 research and restoration projects. ASA is supporting this bill. ✧

NY Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife App

Download the New York Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife App on the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play store](#), or by going to the [Pocket Ranger website](#). This FREE, cutting-edge mobile app gives outdoorsmen essential info. The app will provide up-to-date info on fishing, hunting and wildlife watching and serve as an interactive outdoor app. Using the app's advanced GPS features, users will be able identify and locate New York's many hunting, fishing and wildlife watching sites. ✧

DEC reopens Dunkirk Fishing Pier

Accessibility and repairs to the Dunkirk Fishing Pier are now complete. Enhancements now offer improved access to one of Lake Erie's most popular fishing sites.

Improvements to the pier include:

- An upgraded design to create greater accessibility for all users
- Repair work to ensure the pier's structural stability
- Reconstruction of the existing wooden fishing pier above the existing steel substructure
- Replacement of a portion of a concrete sidewalk to improve accessibility
- Installation of accessible railings and benches
- Aesthetic improvements ✧

IL Becoming an Outdoors Woman

A few spots are still available for the "Becoming an Outdoors Woman" (BOW) workshop at the Touch of Nature Environmental Center/Giant City State Park on September 16-18. The workshop fee is \$230, which includes meals, lodging, class instruction, use of class equipment/supplies, transportation during the workshop, and lots of fun. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. For more info and registration materials: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/BOW/Pages/default.aspx>. ✧

MN DNR to stock muskie in Gull, Fairmont chains

Muskie will be released this fall in the Gull Lake chain of lakes near Brainerd and the Fairmont chain of lakes in southern Minnesota as part of an effort to establish new muskie angling opportunities throughout the state. The public input process and local discussions also prompted the DNR to decide not to stock Big Marine Lake in Washington County and to withdraw the proposal to stock the Franklin, Lizzie or Loon lakes in Otter Tail County.

Stocking muskie is part of an effort to respond to a growing interest in muskie fishing. Estimates suggest that a significant proportion of the state's anglers either already target muskies or want to try muskie fishing.

Several years ago, the DNR prepared a long-range plan designed to balance interest in expanded muskie fishing opportunities with those opposing muskie management and continued stocking. The compromise reached in this plan called for eight new waters to be stocked with muskie by 2020. Three of those lakes—Roosevelt, Pokegema and the Sauk River Chain—already have been stocked.

Last year, the DNR proposed several new waters for stocking and began asking the public for comments and meeting with angling groups, local governments, lake associations, property owners associations and others. This input was taken into account along with data from angler surveys and biological assessments.

For more info: [muskie management page](#). ✧

Illinois Safety Courses

The 2016-17 hunting seasons in Illinois are not far away. Check the schedule of IDNR Hunter Safety Education courses, many of which are scheduled in advance of the fall season. Classes fill up quickly, so check the IDNR website for scheduled classes. The web link is www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety. ✧

Bids sought to operate North East Marina

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is accepting bids for the management and operation of its North East Marina and Access Area, located at 11950 East Lake Road, North East Township, on the shores of Lake Erie. It is 20 miles east of the city of Erie.

The 13-acre property contains a building that offers office space, a restaurant, a retail shop, public restrooms with showers and two service bays. Parking for 500 vehicles and trailers is provided on the property. A fenced area provides secure dry summer storage for boats and trailers. A boat storage building contains racks for winter storage of up to 120 boats and an additional 30 boats can be stored on the floor on trailers or boat stands.

Boat launching is available on four concrete boat ramps, free. A concrete seawall surrounds the marina basin and contains four floating docks with 220 wet slips. A permanent fuel dock and sewage pumpout facility are located in the basin.

The PFBC first contracted with a concessionaire for the operation of the marina and related services in 1999. That concession agreement terminates December 31, 2016. The PFBC wants to have a new concession agreement in place by January 1, 2017.

Bids must be submitted to the PFBC by no later than 2 p.m. on September 7, 2016. Also, all bidders must attend a pre-bid site visit, scheduled for August 29 at 2 p.m.

Additional information and bid packages may be obtained from the PFBC's [website](#).

National Hunting and Fishing Day Sept. 24

National Hunting and Fishing Day is a day set aside to celebrate all that sportsmen and women do to support conservation whether it is building habitat for dwindling quail populations or teaching the next generation. For more info: www.nhfd.org. ✧

Women encouraged to register for DNR hunting class

Women are invited to enroll in a how to hunt deer with firearms program being offered this fall through the Department of Natural Resources.

There will be educational sessions that lead up to a one-on-one mentored hunt during the weekend of October 14 at Itasca State Park. The session dates are Saturdays, August 27, September 24, and October 8.

Sessions will include deer biology, habits, habitat, regulations, equipment, scouting, how to find hunting land, rifle practice and more. Lodging for the weekend hunt is included at Itasca State Park, and the registration fee is \$100 plus minimal range fees for practice shooting.

"I learned what I needed to know in order to teach my 10-year-old son to hunt soon (my goal) and hope this becomes a life-long family tradition for us," said Bobbie Danielson, who attended the class last year.

Women will need access to a legal firearm in good working condition, a deer license and must possess firearm safety certification prior to the mentored hunt. The class is limited to 10 women. More information is available at www.mndnr.gov/bow or by contacting Linda Bylander, 218-203-4347, linda.bylander@state.mn.us. ✧

Hunting Safety

NY Commissioner Seggos reminds hunters to follow simple safety guidelines and to use good judgment when choosing a time and place to hunt. Being considerate of other people enjoying the outdoors or who live nearby can help avoid potential conflicts and ensure a safe and enjoyable season. Hunters should be considerate and look to minimize disturbance of local residents whenever possible. More information about [avoiding conflicts between waterfowl hunters and waterfront property owners](#) is available. ✧

NY hunting & trapping education courses beginning

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) reminded all new hunters and trappers planning to go afield this upcoming hunting and trapping season that they must first complete a mandatory hunter, bowhunter or trapper education course before they can obtain the appropriate sporting license or hunting privilege.

DEC works closely with thousands of dedicated DEC-certified instructors statewide to provide these training courses free of charge. Courses are offered for Hunter Education, Bowhunter Education, Trapper Education and Waterfowl Identification. However, courses fill up quickly, so those interested should sign up for a course soon to be sure they complete it before going afield this fall.

With the DEC on-line registration system, viewing a list of all available hunter and trapper education courses with the student's proximity to course locations can be easily done. Students can register from any device—smartphone, tablet

or computer—24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Education courses are added continuously throughout the year, so be sure to check the on-line system frequently to find a course near you. To locate a nearby hunter or trapper education course, visit DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html or contact a local DEC office for assistance.

New course homework requirements instituted this year

All hunter education and trapper education courses now require students to review course materials and complete a homework sheet prior to attending the classroom and field sessions. The new homework portion of the course provides an introduction to the subject and enhances the students' understanding of the course material. Proof of the completed homework is required in order to attend the classroom and field portions of the course.

Access to the homework materials and online homework options can be found on DEC's

website at: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7860.html. Actual course manuals and homework sheets are always available from DEC wildlife offices and sportsman education instructors.

Education courses produce results in hunter safety

New York's hunter education courses are highly effective in fostering safe hunters. Approximately 500,000 licensed hunters spend an estimated 10 to 15 million days afield each year. Reports on the number of hunting-related shooting incidents indicate that 2015 had the third lowest number on record in New York. The 2015 hunting season yielded the first year without a hunting-related shooting fatality since the 1950s.

These low numbers are achieved through training and the regulations governing hunting activities in New York State. DEC's Sportsman Education Program is designed to teach and promote safe and effective hunting principles, practices and strategies. The program has been extremely successful over its 66 years of existence. ✧

DEC seeks participants for summer turkey survey

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Commissioner Basil Seggos are encouraging New Yorkers to participate in a survey for wild turkeys this summer.

"Citizen science" efforts such as this provide wildlife managers with invaluable data and give people the opportunity to partner with DEC to help monitor New York's wildlife resources. Participants can record observations of turkeys while exploring the forests and fields around their home or driving through the State's beautiful landscapes this summer.

"Having up-to-date population data is essential to ensuring effective management decisions and have a better understanding of how wild turkey populations fluctuate in New

York," Commissioner Seggos said. "DEC encourages all New Yorkers to participate in this valuable survey and help collect this vital information on turkey populations and survival rates."

Since 1996, DEC has conducted the Summer Wild Turkey Sighting Survey to estimate the number of wild turkey poults (young of the year) per hen statewide. Weather, predation, and habitat conditions during the breeding and brood-rearing seasons can all significantly impact nest success, hen survival, and poult survival. This index allows us to gauge reproductive success and predict fall harvest potential.

During the month of August, survey participants record the sex and age composition of all flocks of wild turkeys observed during normal

travel. If you would like to participate, you can download a Summer Wild Turkey Sighting Survey form from the DEC website. Detailed instructions can be found with the data sheet. Survey cards can also be obtained by contacting your regional DEC office, by calling (518) 402-8886, or by e-mailing wildlife@dec.ny.gov (please type "Turkey Survey" in the subject line). You can also submit your observations on-line.

On the DEC website:
 Summer Wild Turkey Sighting Survey: www.dec.ny.gov/animals/48732.html
 Citizen Science Initiatives: www.dec.ny.gov/animals/1155.html
 DEC Regional Office Contact Info: www.dec.ny.gov/about/50230.html ✧

PA to protect wild trout fishery in Penns Creek in Bald Eagle State Forest

HARRISBURG, Pa. – Moving to protect wild trout beset by high water temperatures and low stream levels, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) officials temporarily have posted two sections of Penns Creek to prevent fishing and disturbance of massed fish by passersby.

“The prolonged combination of little rainfall and steadily climbing water temperatures has left wild trout massing at two locations in Bald Eagle State Forest where mountain streams are supplying needed oxygen and cooler water,” said State Forester Dan Devlin. “The goal is to prevent additional stress by limiting angling pressure and the chances of others needlessly spooking them.”

Both located in Mifflin County, not far from the Union-Centre County line, the posted areas affording trout

thermal protection are along Penns Creek at the mouths of the Panther Run and Swift Run tributaries. As temperatures soared and stream levels dropped, trout have increasingly sought out these tributaries’ cooler waters.

“In an effort to gain support and protect this valuable resource we sought cooperation from the PFBC, and its bureaus of law enforcement and fisheries responded rapidly,” Devlin said, “clearing the way for a joint effort that will limit disturbance to fish in these areas. This limited and temporary closure is based solely on the need to provide areas of thermal refuge.”

This is not the first time the premier trout stream, harboring a unique, wild trout fishery that draws anglers from around the world, has been taxed by severe weather conditions. In 1999, trout were forced to congregate by the hundreds in

coldwater tributary mouths along Penns Creek, and reports of harassment surfaced.

The Mifflin County postings, to be enforced by DCNR Rangers and PFBC Waterways Conservation Officers, will remain in effect until Penns Creek water conditions improve—and that may take some time. The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) early this week issued a drought-watch declaration for 34 Pennsylvania counties, including Mifflin, Union and Centre counties. All are reporting low stream flows, declining groundwater levels and below-normal precipitation. Rainfall deficits of as much as 6.0 inches have been noted over the past 90 days.

More details and updates can be obtained by contacting the Bald Eagle State Forest District, 18865 Old Turnpike Road, Milmont. Tel.: 570-922-3344. ✧

Ripe wild rice harvesting season opens in late August

Wild rice harvesting season opens annually between August 15 and September 30. Harvesters must first make sure the rice is ripe before launching their canoes because it is illegal to harvest “green” or unripe rice.

MN wildlife managers indicate it’s shaping up to be a challenging season for harvesting. Severe storms in July hurt many wild rice lakes.

More than 1,200 lakes and rivers in 54 counties contain wild rice, with concentrations of rice being the highest in Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, Itasca and St. Louis counties.

“Many wild rice waters took a hit during the recent July storms,” said Ann Geisen, DNR wildlife lakes specialist. “On some lakes, the crop was largely destroyed because most of the rice was uprooted or overtopped with water. However, on the lakes missed by the storms, the rice is looking pretty good.”

Peak harvesting dates are estimated to be in late August to early September as long as weather remains

mild. Like other forms of gathering, finding a mentor who is willing to share their skills and knowledge can greatly improve success.

Minnesota’s green rice law does not allow the harvesting of unripe rice. So even though rice beds may look like they are maturing well, ricers are responsible for making sure the grain is ripe before attempting to harvest it.

Because of the grain’s importance, harvesting wild rice is regulated in Minnesota. Harvesters are reminded:

- Harvest takes place from a nonmotorized canoe, 18 feet or less in length, using only a push pole or paddles for power.
- Rice is collected by using two sticks, or flails, to knock mature seeds into the canoe. Flails can be no longer than 30 inches, and must weigh less than one pound each.
- Harvesting licenses cost \$25 per season, or \$15 per day, per person for Minnesota residents.

- There is no limit to the number of pounds for harvest with a permit.

- Additional processing is necessary to finish the rice into its final food product.

- The gathering process is labor-intensive, and accessing some lakes can be difficult.

For more info: www.mndnr.gov/shallowlakes.

The 1854 Treaty Authority website at www.1854treatyauthority.org/wildrice provides updates from ground and aerial surveys on some lakes within the 1854 ceded territory in northeastern Minnesota.

Those interested in harvesting wild rice are reminded that it is unlawful to take wild rice grain from any of the waters within the original boundaries at the White Earth, Leech Lake, Nett Lake, Vermilion Lake, Grand Portage, Fond du Lac and Mille Lacs reservations except for American Indians or residents of the reservations listed. ✧

Lake Michigan proposed stocking cuts

Continued from page 1

The Mid-Lake Reef Complex (Sheboygan, Northeast, and Milwaukee reefs) will be reduced by 300,000 or 50%.

Second priority lake trout stocking sites outside consent decree waters will be reduced 100%. This includes Grand Haven (20,000), Holland (40,000), New Buffalo (20,000), Michigan City (40,000), Sturgeon Bay (80,000), Kewaunee (20,000), and Wind Point (50,000).

Future lake trout stocking changes will depend on negotiations with the 1836 Tribal Nations. We will propose to reduce all second priority

stocking sites from Grand Haven to the north including Ludington, Manistee, Pointe Betsie, Good Harbor, Old Mission, Grand Traverse Bay Shoal, Torch Lake and Elk Rapids. If that plan is approved, we could redistribute some lake trout to areas that were reduced 100% to maintain nearshore fisheries.

The Michigan Marquette State Fish Hatchery raises about 49,500 lake trout for Grand Haven, Holland, and New Buffalo. We will continue to stock those fish with New Buffalo receiving 12,500 and Grand Haven and Holland each receiving 18,500.

The Lake Michigan Committee will more formally include lake trout management in future stocking

decisions to help achieve predator and prey balance in Lake Michigan and also meet rehabilitation goals.

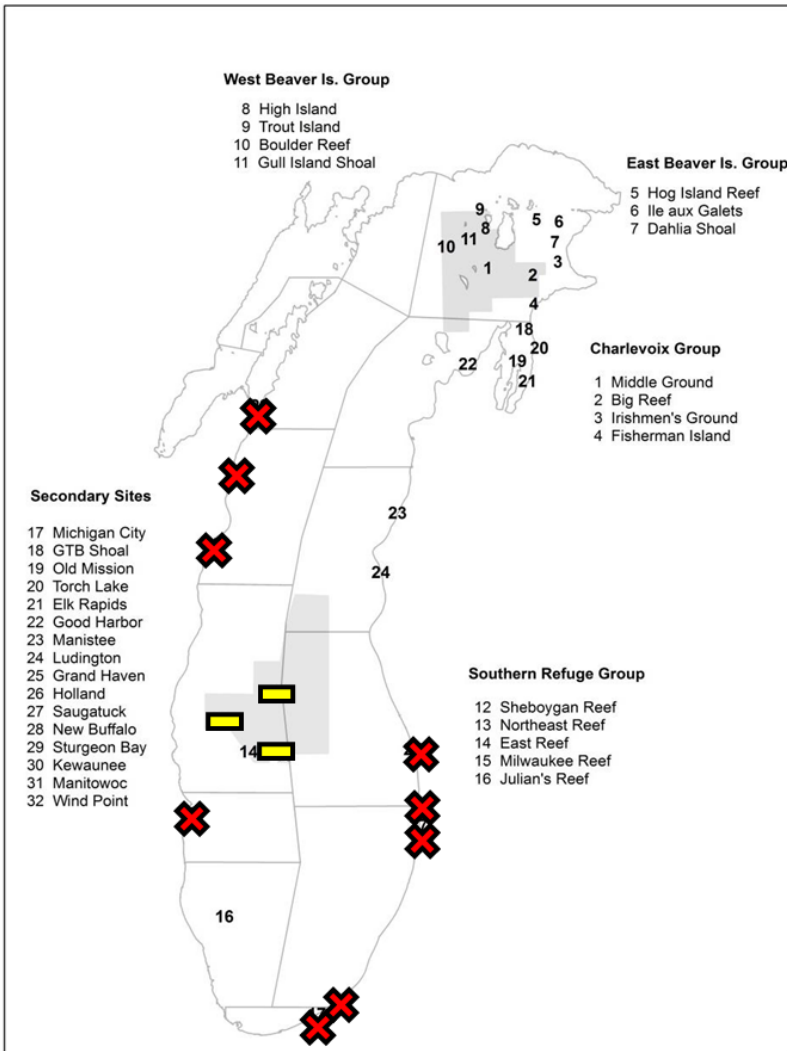
The Chinook salmon and lake trout proposals will be further discussed at Michigan public meetings:

September 7th
Ludington City Hall
Community Room
400 S. Harrison St
Ludington, MI 49431

September 13th
South Haven Moose Lodge
1025 Wells Street
South Haven, MI 49090

Both meetings will start at 6:30 PM ✧

Map of the citizens committee preferred recommendation for lake trout cuts. Red X's indicate total cut to the site, yellow minus bar is cuts to the Mid Lake Refuge.



Grants aim to help increase number of MN hunters, anglers

A dozen organizations are receiving funding to help increase how many people hunt or fish—or support those who already do—through a new MN DNR grant program. The Angler and Hunter Recruitment and Retention Grant Program began this year and [award winners are posted](#). The program was very competitive with 35 applicants in round one.

The application for round two of the grant program can be found at the [same webpage](#). Organizations interested in applying for the grant program must apply by October 13.

Grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$50,000, and require a dollar-for-dollar match of the state grant award amount, or else a match of the value of labor, materials or services of the state award. The DNR expects to have over \$100,000 to distribute in round two.

Eligible projects have a purpose that supports angler or hunter recruitment and retention. Types of activities could include fishing and hunting educational programs, clinics, workshops and camps, and funding for fishing and hunting equipment and transportation. Second-round projects must be completed in Minnesota and be finished by June 30, 2018. ✧

More than 33 million fish stocked = plenty of angling opportunity

The Michigan DNR released the final totals from its spring and summer fish-stocking efforts. The DNR stocked a total of 33,308,068 fish that weighed more than 343 tons and consisted of nine different species and one hybrid.

To complete this task, it took more than 400 stocking trips to more than 750 stocking sites, with travel totaling more than 105,000 miles over the course of 2,624 hours using 17 specialized stocking trucks.

"We experienced outstanding spring and summer stocking seasons that will bring significant benefits and fishing opportunities to Michigan anglers," said DNR Fish Production Manager Ed Eisch.

The number and type of fish stocked throughout the year varies by hatchery, as each location's ability to rear fish varies because of the source and temperature of the rearing water. In Michigan there are six state and two cooperative hatcheries that work together to produce the species, strain and size of fish needed by fisheries managers. These fish must then be delivered at a specific time and location for stocking to ensure their success.

Hatchery stocking this spring:

- [Marquette State Fish Hatchery](#) stocked 624,695 yearling lake trout, brook trout and splake weighing 67,476 lbs. This hatchery stocked a total of 113 sites.
- [Thompson State Fish Hatchery](#) stocked 1,045,079 fish that included

yearling steelhead and spring fingerling Chinook salmon. These fish weighed 118,826 lbs. in total. This hatchery stocked 68 sites.

- [Oden State Fish Hatchery](#) stocked 626,317 yearling brown trout and rainbow trout, weighing 102,273 lbs. This hatchery stocked 182 sites.

- [Harrietta State Fish Hatchery](#) stocked 1,122,827 yearling brown trout and rainbow trout, weighing 98,089 lbs., stocking 275 sites.

- [Platte River State Fish Hatchery](#) stocked 2,550,355 fish that included yearling Atlantic salmon and coho salmon and spring fingerling Chinook salmon weighing 168,246 lbs. This hatchery stocked 19 sites.

- [Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery](#) stocked 986,089 fish that included yearling steelhead and spring fingerling Chinook salmon that weighed 124,113 lbs. This hatchery stocked 54 sites.

- A cooperative teaching hatchery at Lake Superior State University stocked 36,790 Atlantic salmon weighing 4,847 lbs. into the St. Marys River.

Included in this year's total of fish stocked were walleye spring fingerlings and fry to the tune of 26 million. These fish are reared in ponds by the DNR and tribal partners with extensive support provided by local sportsmen's organizations. These fish were stocked at 55 inland lakes and rivers and two Great Lakes.

"We had an exceptionally good year for walleye production. Hatch and early survival was fantastic, which resulted in many more fry than we can rear to fingerling size," said Eisch. "Fortunately, a newly funded project included in the 2017 budget should allow us to put in additional rearing ponds at Thompson State Fish Hatchery. Expansion of Michigan's coolwater program would get us even closer to being able to reach all of our walleye and muskellunge rearing targets."

Fish stocking is a critical activity of the DNR. As a frame of reference, 2015 stocking efforts totaled nearly 25 million fish.

Fish are reared in Michigan's state fish hatcheries anywhere from one month to one-and-a-half years before they are stocked.

It should be noted that some hatcheries will provide fish for a few additional stockings to be made this fall consisting of brook trout, Atlantic salmon, lake sturgeon and muskellunge. The lake sturgeon will come from the DNR's other cooperative hatchery in Tower that is operated with Michigan State University.

More info: Michigan.gov/hatcheries.

The DNR maintains a public database of fish stocking records which can be reviewed at michigandnr.com/fishstock. ✧

Upland Game Permits

Hunters may apply through August 31 for the Illinois 2016 Free Upland Game Hunt Permit program. Applications must be made online, and successful applicants will receive a confirmation by mail. <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/uplandgame/Pages/OnlinePermitApplication.aspx>.

For more info: [IDNR Waterfowl Season Dates](#) ✧

MI Off-Road Vehicle Workgroup Sept. 14

The Michigan DNR Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup meeting originally scheduled for August 10 has been rescheduled to September 14. The meeting will take place in the Michigan Room of the Ramada Lansing Hotel, 7501 W. Saginaw Highway, in Lansing, MI. The schedule of meetings will be posted at: [Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup](#). The meeting agenda also will be posted to the website closer to the meeting date. ✧

Non-Resident Archery Deer Permits

Illinois Non-Resident Archery Deer combination permits are available over-the-counter (OTC) from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, by phone at 1-888-673-7648 (1-888-6PERMIT), or online through August 31. Permits will be available OTC only beginning September 1 through the end of season. The Illinois Archery Deer Season is October 1, 2016 through January 15, 2017. ✧

Resident Archery Deer Permits

Resident combination and antlerless-only archery deer permits are available over-the-counter (OTC) from DNR Direct license and permit vendors. Find a vendor link here: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/LPR/Pages/LicensePermitVendors.aspx>. ✧

IL Fall Wild Turkey Shotgun Season

Hunters may apply through August 22 for the second lottery for 2016 Illinois Fall Wild Turkey Shotgun Season permits. Season dates are October 22-30, 2016. Apply online: www.dnr.illinois.gov/online. ✧

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

[More marine sanctuaries coming to Great Lakes](#)

For the first time in 20 years, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is expanding its national marine sanctuary program. For Oswego, N.Y., and other communities on the Great Lakes, that designation would bring federal funding and a boost to tourism

[Ohio Department of Natural Resources settles on damages on Lake Erie properties](#)

Years after the Ohio Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the rule that privately owned land stopped at the water's edge of the high-water mark, a \$6-million settlement has been reached over damages and legal fees.

[Underwater robot getting info on Lake Michigan food chains](#)

Scientists are retrieving data from an underwater robot for the first time since it was deployed to gather information about the Lake Michigan fish food supply

[Alligator gar not effective weapon against Asian carp, says biologist](#)

A spate of recent news articles has suggested that reintroducing a mammoth fish called the alligator gar into Illinois waterways may help protect Lake Michigan from the invasive Asian carp, but the chief of Illinois fisheries says that's not the case.

[International Wildlife Refuge grows with land donation](#)

Founded in 2001, the Detroit River International Refuge remains the only land conservation project of its kind in North America. Thanks to a donation from the Port of Monroe, the refuge will grow by an additional 35 acres.

[Cormorants causing concern among residents](#)

According to Environment Canada, double-breasted cormorants had been nesting in the Lake of the Woods area for hundreds of years, with the earliest recorded sighting dating back to 1798. But cormorants didn't establish themselves in the Great Lakes until about 1913, when they started

[Older septic systems may be leaking, report suggests ways to monitor](#)

The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council has just completed a report for Charlevoix County focusing on issues facing aging septic systems in the county.

[Area anglers encouraged to be on the lookout for tagged fish](#)

In Ontario, Manitoulin's anglers are asked to be on the lookout for tagged fish in Lake Huron, Georgian Bay and the North Channel

End