



## New York DEC Studying Ongoing Salmon River Steelhead Disorder Nutritional Deficiency Strongly Implicated in Increased Steelhead Mortality

Adult steelhead returning from Lake Ontario to the Salmon River in Oswego County are exhibiting signs of stress and elevated mortality rates due to an apparent thiamine (vitamin B) deficiency, New York DEC Commissioner Joe Martens announced.

DEC scientists enlisted the help of fish health experts in other agencies and academia to determine the cause of this disorder. DEC staff submitted moribund Salmon River steelhead to the Cornell University Aquatic Animal Health Program for testing. Results indicate that fish pathogens are not responsible for the abnormal behavior and mortality. DEC also sent steelhead samples to the U.S. Geological Survey's Northern Appalachian Research Laboratory for further lab testing. Results strongly indicate a severe

thiamine (vitamin B) deficiency, which means it is likely contributing to the steelhead mortality.

In mid-November, DEC fisheries staff began to receive reports of steelhead swimming erratically in the Salmon River and higher mortality of the species. More recent reports indicate similar behavior in steelhead in other Lake Ontario tributaries.

Steelhead are an important component of Lake Ontario's sport fishery, which a Cornell University study valued at over \$112 million in angler expenditures in New York annually.

Great Lakes fish predators (including salmon and steelhead) that feed primarily on alewife are prone to thiamine deficiency. Alewife, an invasive bait fish in the Great Lakes, are known to contain thiaminase, an enzyme that degrades thiamine. A thiamine deficiency can impact egg quality and the survival of eggs and newly hatched fish, and, in severe cases, can cause the death of adult fish.

DEC is taking steps to meet its

spring 2015 steelhead egg-take targets at Salmon River Hatchery, and will work with Great Lakes agency partners to provide assistance in meeting egg take quotas, if needed. Staff from DEC's Rome Fish Disease Control Unit and Salmon River Hatchery are injecting adult steelhead returning to the hatchery with thiamine. Thiamine-injected fish will be held in outdoor raceways at the hatchery and fed a diet fortified with vitamin B to improve the likelihood of successful steelhead egg collections in 2015.

However, little can be done to alleviate the mortality of adult steelhead that are unable to ascend the river and reach the hatchery's holding facilities. Although moderate thiamine deficiencies are not uncommon in top predator fish such as salmon, lake trout and steelhead in Lake Ontario and other waters, this year's acute deficiency is atypical in its severity. DEC staff will continue to collaborate with experts to further understand the circumstances leading to this year's mortality. ✧

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## November carp monitoring summary

Monitoring occurred in the CAWS (Chicago Area Waterway System) and upper Illinois Waterway downstream of the Electric Dispersal Barrier in May. No bighead carp or silver carp were any found in new locations downstream of the Electric Dispersal Barrier.

► Crews from IDNR, USFWS, and USACE completed 29 electrofishing runs at fixed locations (7.25 hours total) and 58 runs at randomly selected locations (14.5 hours total) in the Lockport, Brandon Road, Dresden

Island, and Marseilles pools downstream of the Barrier during the weeks of November 5 and November 24.

► Crews collected 4,704 fish of 44 species during electrofishing.

► No bighead or silver carp were reported captured or seen during electrofishing in the Lockport, Brandon Road, and Dresden Island pools. 4 silver carp were collected during sampling at fixed and random sites in the Marseilles Pool. ✧

## DNR cautions about ice dams, sudden changes in river flow

The Michigan DNR is urging anglers to use caution when planning trips on rivers and streams this winter. Winter fishing for trout and steelhead can be challenging and rewarding, but cold air temperatures can cause sudden and significant changes in flows in rivers and streams.

Temperature effects are most pronounced at times of very cold air temperatures, particularly below 10 degrees Fahrenheit, especially if areas with extreme nighttime cold temperatures alternate with warmer days. When nights are very cold and clear, rivers can see extensive freezing and often ice dams form," Kruger said. "These dams cause water to back up the streams, reducing flow downstream, and can be quickly released if temperatures rise above freezing during the daytime hours. This can cause unpredictable and often sudden flow changes.

Biologists say this phenomenon is noticeable on the middle to lower Au Sable River in Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula. The middle Au Sable River is particularly susceptible to the influences of cold weather, more so than some of the state's other winter steelhead streams.

Extensive ice damming and anchor ice formation can occur below Mio Dam, particularly in the area around McKinley, during periods when air temperatures are below 10 degrees. Typically, these ice-damming events cause unusually low flows to be seen below Foote Dam.

DNR fisheries staff strongly recommends when planning for a winter fishing trip to one of the state's streams, anglers should check on river conditions and weather forecasts locally. Air temperatures below 10 to 15 degrees Fahrenheit are likely to create conditions for more difficult fishing, particularly from a boat.

There also are many weather-related websites that can provide forecasts for anticipated air temperatures that can help you better plan for expected conditions. ✧

## Christmas Lake treated for zebra mussels

In an effort to eliminate any remaining zebra mussels from Christmas Lake in Shorewood, the Minnesota DNR has undertaken an experimental treatment that has been used only twice before in the U.S.

On Dec. 19, a contractor injected 1,000 lbs. of potassium chloride under the ice near the public boat access on the northwest corner of Christmas Lake. The chemical—also referred to as potash—kills zebra mussels by interfering with their ability to breathe, but it does not affect fish.

The potash application is the third treatment at the lake, where a small number of zebra mussels were found in August. Because the mussels were found early and were confined to a small area, DNR staff thought it feasible that treatment might eliminate them. The DNR and the district have subsequently treated the affected portion of the lake with Zequanox, a substance made up of dead bacteria, and later with a copper-based chemical.

This treatment is only the third time that potash has been used for zebra mussel control in the United States. Because the chemical is not a federally registered pesticide, the DNR first needed to obtain authorization from the U.S. EPA under an emergency exemption. Potash then needed to be registered as a pesticide with the Minn. Dept. of Agriculture. The Minn. Pollution Control Agency also reviewed the potash treatment plan and did not find immediate water quality concerns with the proposal.

If successful, the efforts at Christmas Lake could provide valuable information on treatment options when the invasive pests are discovered early.

A potash treatment may also be tried next spring on Lake Independence where zebra mussels were found in October. Both lakes will continue to be monitored to determine if the treatments were successful. ✧



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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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## Lawmakers introduce act to protect Great Lakes from Asian carp

Asian carp remain one of the greatest threats to the Great Lakes, and lawmakers recently introduced bills in both the US Senate and House to further safeguard the region from the invasive fish. Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Representatives Dave Camp (R-MI) and Louise Slaughter (D-NY) introduced the Guarding Our Great Lakes Act late last December, which will direct the efforts of federal agencies towards vulnerable waterways in Illinois.

“The Great Lakes are part of our way of life and fuel our economy,” said Senator Stabenow in a [joint press release](#). “We must stop them from being destroyed by Asian carp and other invasive species. This is an emergency, and the time has come for decisive action before it’s too late. This bill will call on the Army Corps [of Engineers] to begin work on projects that will help prevent the spread of Asian carp and require the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force to move us closer toward a long-term, permanent solution that will keep Asian carp out of our Lakes for good.”

The bills call for the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, which is made up of 11 federal agencies, to work with state and local departments to find a permanent solution to keeping Asian carp out of the Great Lakes. The bill also focuses specifically on the Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois. The dam is only five miles downstream from the electric barriers keeping carp out of the canal and is one of the most vulnerable spots in the region. Experts also view it as a vital choke point to prevent the carp from entering the Great Lakes. The bill will reinforce the site, which may include additional electric barriers or a new type of lock to treat water for carp eggs.

“After years of study, we must begin making tangible progress to safeguard the Great Lakes ecosystem and the \$7 billion economy it supports — and that is exactly what this bill would do,” said Representative Camp. “The Guarding Our Great Lakes Act would take the next necessary actions to prevent the

spread of Asian carp. Focusing control efforts at Brandon Road Lock and Dam and beginning to improve the Chicago Area Waterway System are vital steps that need to be taken as we continue working to find a permanent solution.”

Since the first Asian carp escaped aquaculture farms in the early 1970s, the fish has spread widely across the Mississippi River and now are close to entering the Great Lakes. Earlier this year, the US Army Corps of Engineers proposed a number of methods to prevent the fish from entering the lake system, with some options costing as much as **\$18 billion over a span of 25 years**.

“The federal government’s response to invasive species over the years has largely been reactive, not proactive, and we have paid a dear price,” said Representative Slaughter. “We have to take this problem head on, which is why I’m proud to introduce with my colleagues the *Guarding Our Great Lakes Act* — to stop Asian Carp before they destroy the native ecosystems of our beloved Great Lakes.” ✧

## DNR surveillance efforts detect VHS virus in wild coho used for egg collection Two batches of eggs destroyed as a precaution, but no impact expected on spring 2016 stocking

Ongoing surveillance efforts detected VHS virus in wild coho salmon processed this fall for egg collection at the Root River Steelhead Facility operated by the Wisconsin DNR.

The fish virus was detected in ovarian fluid samples taken from coho salmon used to produce eggs for DNR’s ongoing Lake Michigan stocking program. After receiving test results indicating the presence of VHS in females donating to two batches of eggs, these eggs and others that lacked complete data were destroyed as a precaution.

Ron Bruch, DNR fisheries chief, said no impact is expected on spring 2016 stocking plans. This year’s successful spawning run resulted in the collection of 25% more coho eggs than anticipated and this volume should cover the number of eggs that were destroyed, providing for the

2016 stocking of 400,000 yearlings.

The Root River facility serves as one of the state’s two sources of wild steelhead eggs and also serves as a collection point for coho eggs. VHS, which has been found in the Great Lakes since 2003 and, since 2007, in the Wisconsin waters of Lake Michigan, Superior and Winnebago. The virus can kill fish by weakening their blood vessels, although no large scale die-offs of game fish have been observed.

As part of the fall egg collection procedures at Root River, as well as at Strawberry Creek Chinook Facility in Sturgeon Bay and the C.D. “Buzz” Besadny Anadromous Fish Facility near Kewaunee, ovarian fluid samples are sent to the La Crosse Fish Health Center for analysis. The lab uses cell culture testing to detect VHS, a process that takes 30 days to complete

and the only process recognized by the USDA for confirmation of the presence or absence of the virus in a sample.

DNR has been in communication with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection regarding the VHS detection and preventive actions. DATCP is responsible for regulating the health of fish that are found on private fish farms and DNR hatcheries while USDA has oversight on trade restrictions involving VHS.

“The DNR is very thorough in its efforts to ensure fish health beyond state and federal requirements and we are working with the department’s fisheries management team to ensure the health of fish being raised in Wisconsin,” said state Agriculture Secretary Ben Brancel. ✧

## Fishing in Michigan

Just because cold weather has arrived in Michigan doesn't mean you have to put your fishing activities on hold. Many anglers and families look forward to the opportunities ice fishing provides them during this time of year, with some claiming this the best time to go fishing!

The appeal stems from the fact anglers can get just about anywhere on a lake during ice fishing season and virtually every fish that's available in the summer can also be caught through the ice. In fact, some are even caught more frequently in the winter.

New to ice fishing? Don't be intimidated by the idea of heading out! Learn about the kind of equipment you need and the safety precautions you should take in our [Ice Fishing, the Coolest Sport Around](#) article.

Do you already go ice fishing? Consider taking on a new challenge by targeting a different species. Popular winter species include bluegill, crappie, smelt, walleyes and yellow perch (among others). Anglers use a variety of ice fishing techniques to target these species, including hook-and-line, tip-ups and spearing.

Learn about these fishes and the techniques needed to catch them in the winter by checking out the "[Michigan Fish and How to Catch Them](#)" section of the DNR's website.

Need additional incentive to drop a line this winter? Try it for free as part of the 2015 Winter Free Fishing Weekend, coming Saturday, February 14, and Sunday, February 15. This annual weekend provides two days where no fishing license is required for residents or non-residents—although all fishing regulations still apply.

While many will flock to their favorite fishing hole as part of this weekend, others will join official events coordinated throughout the state that will provide a hands-on ice fishing experience. An official 2015 Winter Free Fishing Weekend event list is available at [www.michigan.gov/freefishing](http://www.michigan.gov/freefishing) and will be updated continuously before the weekend arrives. ✧

## Changes to Master Angler program for 2015

The Michigan DNR announced effective January 1, 2015 multiple changes have been made to Michigan's Master Angler program, which allows anglers to submit large fish they have caught for recognition. The program has been in place since 1973.

The Master Angler program recognizes two categories of catches: catch-and-keep and catch-and-immediate-release. Previously, the catch-and-keep category was determined by the weight of the fish caught, but that requirement has been removed and replaced with a length requirement. Now recognition in both categories will be awarded based on an established minimum length for each recognized species. Verified entries will receive the Master Angler patch. Only one patch will be awarded for both entries. No more than one patch per species will be awarded to each angler per year.

"Eliminating the weight requirement for part of the Master Angler program really helps to streamline both the application and the verification process, especially as anglers will no longer have to find a certified scale to have their catch weighed," explained Lynne Thoma, the program's coordinator. "We hope this change will make it even easier for anglers to have their large fish recognized."

In addition to the change to the category criteria, some changes were made to the submission procedures. A witness signature is no longer required and each application must have a color photo submitted with it. Anglers can now submit their applications in hard-copy or electronic formats.

Please note, state-record fish still are recognized by weight and still require identification by a DNR fisheries biologist.

The 2015 Master Angler entry application is available online at [www.michigan.gov/masterangler](http://www.michigan.gov/masterangler). ✧

## Black Lake sturgeon season begins Feb. 7

The Michigan DNR announced that the 2015 sturgeon fishing season on Black Lake (Cheboygan County) will begin at 8 a.m. February 7. All anglers must register to participate in the lake sturgeon season.

The 2015 total harvest limit for Black Lake is five lake sturgeon. However, to reduce the chance of exceeding the harvest limit, officials will close the season when one of two scenarios occurs:

- 1) Once the fifth fish is harvested, or
- 2) If four fish have been harvested at the end of any fishing day.

Fishing hours are 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day of the season. The season will end either at 2 p.m. February 11, or when one of the above scenarios is met, at which point anglers will be notified on the ice by DNR personnel that they must immediately stop fishing for sturgeon. All anglers must possess a lake sturgeon tag, available for free from all license vendors.

The 2015 angler registration process will be similar to what was enacted in 2014. Anglers need to register only once for the entire season. An early registration will be held at the DNR Onaway Field Station from 2 to 7 p.m. February 6. This station is located approximately 5 miles north of Onaway on Route 211. Anglers can pick up their fishing identification flags at this time and learn more about season logistics and sturgeon populations from the DNR.

Anglers unable to participate in the Friday registration may register only at the registration trailer at Zolner Road ending on Black Lake. Morning registration begins at 7 a.m. each day of the season. Anglers are encouraged to register, February 6.

Anglers who harvest a lake sturgeon must immediately tag the fish and contact an on-ice DNR employee and register the fish at the Zolner Road trailer registration site on Black Lake.

For more info: 989-732-3541 or visit [www.michigan.gov/sturgeon](http://www.michigan.gov/sturgeon). ✧

# Lake Ontario St. Lawrence River Plan 2014

[Lake Ontario St. Lawrence River Plan 2014](#) is a report to the Governments of Canada and the United States that presents the conclusions of the International Joint Commission (IJC) investigation regarding needed changes to the 1952 and 1956 [Orders of Approval](#) for the St. Lawrence River Power Project.

After years of intensive analysis and extensive consultation with governments, experts, Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River interests, and the public, the IJC concludes that a new approach to regulating the flows and levels of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario, Plan 2014, should be implemented. The IJC concludes that Plan 2014 will provide the best possible balance between the multiple—and sometimes conflicting—uses and interests, including domestic and sanitary use, navigation, hydropower, and coastal development, while addressing environmental harm caused by past regulation and enhancing recreational boating opportunities in most years. The IJC has found widespread support for Plan 2014 from people around the basin, as well as strong opposition concentrated in Lake Ontario south shoreline property owners in New York. The IJC acknowledges the domestic efforts to address coastal hazard risks and offers its support to these efforts as requested.

Plan 2014 should be implemented as soon as possible. In the near term, Plan 2014 will provide benefits to coastal ecosystems around Lake Ontario. Its more natural variation in levels and generally higher fall-through-spring water elevations will benefit wetlands, birds, fish, mammals, and amphibians. In most years, Plan 2014 will extend the boating season on Lake Ontario. Plan 2014 will slightly increase the production of hydropower. Overall, navigation will be held whole. Shippers will benefit from more consistent available drafts at different sections on the route from Montreal to Lake Ontario that will occur with Plan 2014, though tonnage

transported per ship between Lake Ontario ports will be reduced in the driest years. Important opportunities to restore coastal wetlands arise with low and high water supply conditions that historically have occurred every few decades. If such an opportunity to expand meadow marsh is lost due to delayed implementation of Plan 2014, then the next opportunity may not arise for decades.

After thoroughly reviewing and considering thousands of comments from people throughout the Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River watershed, the IJC believes that Plan 2014 is the best plan to maintain and improve Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River water levels and flows for all uses and interests.

A summary description of Plan 2014 is included in the main body of this report, with further technical details provided in the annexes.

Plan 2014 will respect the order of precedence of uses specified in the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, while protecting interests that may be harmed by regulation. Some of the benefits now enjoyed by domestic water users, commercial navigation, hydropower producers and riparians on the St. Lawrence River are the result of ad hoc, discretionary decisions by the International St. Lawrence River Board of Control. Plan 2014 will make these benefits more assured and predictable, by removing the discretionary aspect of many of these decisions and formally making them part of the Plan's regulation rules.

The IJC finds Plan 2014 provides the best response to the range of issues that must be considered in regulating the water levels and flows of the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River system. Plan 2014 will mitigate much of the harm done by the existing regulation regime to the shoreline environment, while striving to maintain the benefits to other interests and users throughout the system. The IJC has reached these conclusions in consideration of the results from 14 years of study and

extensive open public consultations with all interested parties. See more at: <http://www.ijc.org/en/Plan2014/Summary#sthash.7wdksyBc.dpuf>. ✧

## Successful fall fish stocking season creates additional angling opportunities

The Michigan DNR recently announced the totals from its fall fish-stocking efforts. The DNR stocked six different species, totaling more than 483,250 fish that weighed more than 8.8 tons. Fish were stocked at more than 120 sites throughout the state.

“It was another outstanding fall fish stocking season that will provide enhanced angling opportunities throughout Michigan,” said DNR acting Fish Production Manager Ed Eisch. “When added to our successful spring and summer stocking efforts, that brings the total for 2014 to more than 22 million fish put into Michigan’s waters.”

The number and type of fish stocked varies by hatchery, as each facility’s ability to rear fish differs because of water supplies and temperature. In Michigan, there are six state and three 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. Most fish in Michigan are stocked in the spring.

Fall fish stockings consisted of brook trout, lake trout, rainbow trout, steelhead, Atlantic salmon, walleye and muskellunge.

In general, fish are reared in Michigan’s state fish hatcheries anywhere from one month to one and a half years before they are stocked.

For more information, visit [www.michigan.gov/hatcheries](http://www.michigan.gov/hatcheries). To find out if any fish were stocked in your favorite fishing spot, visit the DNR’s fish stocking database at [www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/](http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/). ✧

## KY to help Wis boost its elk herd

Kentucky will help Wisconsin boost its elk herd by providing 150 elk cows, calves and yearling male elk over the next 3-5 years.

Wisconsin officials announced the finalized agreement between the two states and said they were looking forward to re-establishing their elk population.

Wisconsin will pay the cost of the translocation program. Wisconsin will also assist Kentucky financially in the development of forest habitat projects in eastern Kentucky that will benefit wildlife, with a special emphasis placed on ruffed grouse. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, which was instrumental in the establishment of Kentucky's elk herd, will supply additional support.

Elk trappers in the coming weeks will focus on areas with the highest number of complaints about nuisance elk. Only cows, calves and yearling male elk will be relocated. Elk will be held in quarantine in Kentucky for disease testing before being transported to Wisconsin for the calving season. Wisconsin DNR employees will assist with the trapping, disease testing and elk caretaking while the animals remain in Kentucky. ✧

## DNR, Red Lake Nation renew Red lakes fishery agreement

The Minnesota DNR, Red Lake Nation and Bureau of Indian Affairs signed a new five-year memorandum of understanding that outlines continued cooperative management of the walleye population in the Upper and Lower Red lakes. The new MOU closely parallels previous 1999-2014 agreements that facilitated restoration of high-quality walleye fishing to Minnesota's largest inland body of water. The agreement states that each entity will support the Red Lakes Fisheries Technical Committee, a joint panel of experts that recommends policies and practices to maintain a healthy fishery. ✧

## Boating access grants on Ohio waterways

The Ohio DNR awarded nearly \$2.9 million in grants for boating access facility projects to improve public access to Ohio waterways. Additionally, \$364,689 in grants were awarded to 34 community boating safety education programs. Sixteen boating facility design and construction projects will be funded through the Cooperative Boating Facility Grant Program. Six projects will provide enhanced recreational opportunities for users of motorized watercraft. Ten projects will help support the state's fastest growing boating opportunities by improving waterway access for non-motorized boats, such as kayaks and canoes.

A grant recipients and project descriptions list can be found online: [watercraft.ohiodnr.gov/grants](http://watercraft.ohiodnr.gov/grants). ✧

## Spearing allowed on SD/MN border lakes

Spearing of northern pike and catfish is now allowed on all South Dakota/Minnesota border water lakes for anglers possessing a valid South Dakota fishing license and a game fish spearing and archery permit.

Spearing is not allowed on the Bois de Sioux River downstream of White Rock Dam to the North Dakota border. Daily limits are the same as, and in combination with, hook and line limits.

The annual season open for northern pike and catfish spearing on South Dakota/Minnesota border lakes runs from November 15 to the last Sunday in February. Northern pike and catfish may be taken with legal spears from sunrise to sunset. Only one catfish over 24" is allowed daily. Spearers are encouraged to mark holes left in the ice and ice blocks left on top of the ice with natural materials such as tree branches to notify other anglers of the possible hazards.

For more, check out the 2015 Fishing Handbook, available online at: <http://gfp.sd.gov/fishing-boating/rules-regs.aspx>. ✧

## \$2.8 million in grants to improve OH outdoor recreation

The Ohio DNR approved more than \$2.8 million in NatureWorks state grants to assist communities across Ohio develop and improve public access to outdoor recreation facilities.

"These grants will allow communities to increase green space, update playground equipment and picnic areas, which helps improve the quality of life for everyone that calls our great state home," said ODNR Director James Zehringer.

In 2015, the grant program will provide funding for 80 community-based projects to create and renovate parks and outdoor recreation areas. The grants will support the acquisition of more than 23 acres of green space, the development of 21 playgrounds, 12 shelters and gazebos, seven park restrooms, two spray-splash pads, a skate park and dozens of other local improvement projects that will help make Ohio's park infrastructure more enjoyable for all.

<http://ohiodnr.gov/portals/parks/pdfs/about/grants/natureworks/Nature-Works-Awards-2014.pdf> for more into about the grant projects. ✧

## Salamonie Lake, IN hosts Senior Luncheon, Feb. 2

People 50 and older are invited to the monthly Senior Monday Carry-in Luncheon, February 2, at Salamonie Interpretive Center, Lost Bridge West State Recreation Area, Andrews. The luncheon is at noon. Participants will learn how to "Slash the Trash" with Jen Rankin, executive director of Wabash County Solid Waste Management District. He will share ways to minimize trash and discuss efforts to keep the Wabash River clean. Attendees should bring their table service, a prepared dish to share and a \$1 donation to help defray costs of the provided main dish. To register or for more info: 260-468-2127, 3691 S. New Holland Road, Andrews. [dnr.IN.gov/uwis](http://dnr.IN.gov/uwis). ✧

## 2014 elk hunting season just completed

Michigan's 2014 elk hunting season just ended with multiple successes. Hunters experienced a one-of-a-kind hunt and filled the freezer with local meat, while also helping to accomplish valuable elk management on both public and private land.

The elk season had two hunt periods—the early season, August 26-29, September 12-15 and September 26-29, and the late season, December 6-14. Fewer than 30,000 eligible Michigan hunters applied for 100 elk licenses. Both the early and late season had quotas of 15 any-elk or bull licenses and 35 antlerless licenses. Hunters during the early season harvested 37 elk—13 bulls, 23 cows and 1 calf, while late-season hunters harvested 41 elk—14 bulls and 27 cows. There will not be a January hunt this year because the first two seasons achieved management objectives. To learn more about Michigan's elk, visit [www.michigan.gov/elk](http://www.michigan.gov/elk). ✧

## Maine and the outcry over banning soft lures

Thanks in large part to stiff opposition from anglers and industry, Maine decided not to ban soft plastic lures in 2014. Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife studied the issue and concluded that a ban on soft plastic lures wasn't warranted which was adopted by the state's legislature.

Despite this significant achievement, it is anticipated that legislative proposals to restrict or ban soft plastic lures will reemerge in 2015. In 2015, ASA is preparing to engage with the Maine legislature to stop any bills from moving forward that would unnecessarily restrict anglers' ability to fish with soft plastic lures. KeepAmericaFishing is launching a proactive campaign to educate anglers on proper disposal of unused or unwanted soft plastic lures. ✧

## Feds announces funding for Climate Change Studies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced on December 18 that the Department of the Interior's regional Climate Science Centers and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center are awarding nearly \$6 million to universities and other partners for 50 new research projects to better prepare communities for impacts of climate change.

*As part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan*, the 50 scientific studies announced today will focus on how climate change is affecting natural and cultural resources and tribal communities, as well as inform management actions that can be taken to help offset those impacts. The research can help guide managers of parks, refuges and other cultural and natural resources to plan how to help species, ecosystems, tribes and other communities adapt to climate change. The studies, most of which will occur over multiple years, will be conducted with fiscal year 2014 funding. A full list of the projects is available [here](#).

The studies will be undertaken by teams of scientists—including researchers from the universities that comprise each region's CSC—from Interior's U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and from other partners such as the states, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, USDA Forest Service, tribes, and the LCCs in each region.

"These are boots-on-the-ground practical projects to help answer the kinds of questions resource managers are asking about how to respond effectively to, and plan for, climate change," said Suzette Kimball, Acting Director of USGS. "The selected projects will use the best science to help managers understand changes occurring now and in the future, as well as shed light on what management actions are most sensible to take." ✧

## A landmark vision for saltwater recreational fishing

Congress is currently revising the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, the law that governs marine resources.

In early 2014, the Commission on Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Management, co-chaired by Bass Pro Shops founder and CEO John Morris and Maverick Boats President Scott Deal, released "[A Vision for Managing America's Saltwater Recreational Fisheries](#)." This landmark report identifies six key policies that would conserve marine fishing resources while producing the full range of saltwater recreational fishing's economic, social and conservation benefits.

The commission's priorities are supported by members of Congress and are included in draft Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization bills. In addition, NOAA Fisheries committed to achieving the Commission's first recommendation, to develop a national recreational fishing policy, which is expected to be released in early 2015. ✧

## Winter trout fishing for first time on 24 lakes

Anglers for the first time will be able to fish for trout in the winter on two dozen north-central Minnesota lakes, many of them within the Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area. Trout fishing on these lakes, which contain stream trout, will be open from January 17 - March 31. Stream trout are rainbow, brook and brown trout, and a hybrid of lake trout and brook trout called splake.

These lakes are not the only places to fish for trout in the winter. There are many trout lakes in northeastern Minnesota outside and inside the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. And anglers can fish for stream trout in streams in eight southeastern Minnesota counties. Details on all the seasons are at [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn/trout](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn/trout). ✧

## Study reveals spread of invasive species

Researchers from Grand Valley State University's Annis Water Resources Institute, along with researchers from nine other universities working in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, have found invasive faucet snails in many new locations throughout the Great Lakes basin over a three-year period. The snails carry parasites that are deadly to native waterfowl, including ducks and coots.

The new locations where the faucet snails have been found show that they have invaded many more areas along the Great Lakes coastline than experts realized.

Researchers said the spread of the small European snails is bad news for waterfowl, as they are known to carry intestinal flukes that kill ducks and coots.

"Our finding highlights the importance of ecological monitoring, especially at a large spatial scale, and making those results publicly available so decision makers have good information when implementing management strategies," said Carl Ruetz, a professor at the Annis Water Resources Institute and collaborator on the Great Lakes coastal wetlands monitoring project.

The small snail, 12-15 mm (approximately 0.5 inch) in height at full size, is brown to black in color with a distinctive whorl of concentric circles on the shell opening cover that looks like tree rings. The tiny size of young snails means they are easily transported and spread, and they are difficult to kill.

According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the faucet snail carries three intestinal trematodes that cause mortality in ducks and coots. When waterfowl consume the infected snails, the adult trematodes attack the internal organs, causing lesions and hemorrhage. Infected birds appear lethargic and have difficulty diving and flying before eventually dying.

Although the primary purpose of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

is to assess how Great Lakes coastal wetlands are faring, detecting invasive species and their spread is one of the secondary benefits. The scientific team expects to report soon on the spread of non-native fish, and has helped to locate and combat invasive aquatic plants.

"Coastal wetlands provide numerous ecosystem services, yet are critically threatened," said Alan Steinman, director of the Annis Water Resources Institute, and a collaborator on the project. "This is another example of how our natural systems are constantly at risk, and why it is so important to remain vigilant."

For more information, contact the Annis Water Resources Institute at [gvsu.edu/wri](http://gvsu.edu/wri). ✧

## Our Atlantic striped bass fishery

In a move overwhelmingly supported by the recreational fishing industry, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission approved implementing a 25% striped bass harvest reduction for coastal states for both the commercial and recreational fishing sectors within one year. The Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions' reduction percentage is set at 20.5%.

ASA and KeepAmericaFishing strongly advocated for this harvest reduction. The reduction will help to safeguard this fishery from overfishing which could trigger drastic restrictions on recreational fishing. ✧

## IL Camping Reservations

Make your reservations now for campsites and shelters for many Illinois state parks and other IDNR sites for 2015. Reservations can be made online through the ReserveAmerica website at [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com) using a Visa or MasterCard. For more info: <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/Landmgmt/Programs/Camping/>. ✧

## Kipling Boating Access Site remains open to vehicles

The Kipling Boating Access Site in Delta County, MI remains open for vehicle access this winter, but the site's newly-improved boat ramp is closed for the winter season to prevent frost heave damage.

However, an alternate access point has been provided to accommodate the high volume of winter traffic experienced at the site. The alternate vehicle access point is located at the Kipling site southwest of the boat ramp and is marked with signage.

In July 2014, the Kipling Boating Access Site received extensive improvements—including a new boat ramp—to address damage suffered from frost heave, erosion, washout from power loading of boats and extensive winter use of the ramp. ✧

## The Pacific Marine Monument

Last September, President Obama signed a proclamation expanding the existing Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument to six times its current size, creating the largest marine reserve in the world.

Although the proclamation bans commercial fishing, deep-sea mining and other commercial extraction methods, *recreational fishing is allowed*. Acknowledging that recreational fishing is a sustainable use of a public resource is a distinction for which the recreational fishing community has been advocating for many years. ✧

## MUI Lecture Series: Asian Carp and AIS

The Michigan Maritime Museum winter lecture series kicks off with Dan O'Keefe of Michigan Sea Grant presenting on Asian carp and other invaders. The program is free and open to the public; no registration required. Saturday, Jan. 31, 2 - 4 p.m. Michigan Maritime Museum, South Haven, MI 49090 ✧

## Ohio hunters asked to attend deer summits

Ohio hunters interested in the state's deer management programs have the opportunity to provide feedback about hunting regulations and season structures on January 24.

The first part of each summit will offer updates from Wildlife staff, including Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance efforts and results, long-term trends in deer herd condition, and the transition from counties to deer management units. The second portion will give attendees the opportunity to provide comment regarding deer hunting in Ohio.

Hunters who wish to attend the summit should preregister by Friday, January 23, as seating is limited. Summits will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the following locations:

- Columbus: Wildlife District One Headquarters, 1500 Dublin Rd, Columbus, 43215. Call 614-644-3925 to preregister.

- Findlay: Wildlife District Two Headquarters, 952 Lima Ave., Findlay, 45480. Call 419-424-5000 to preregister.

- Akron: Wildlife District Three Headquarters, 912 Portage Lakes Drive, Akron, 44319. Call 330-644-2293 to preregister.

- Athens: Wildlife District Four Headquarters, 360 East State Street, Athens, 45701. Call 740-589-9930 to preregister.

- Waynesville: USACE Caesar Creek Lake Learning Center, 4020 N. Clarksville Rd, Waynesville, 45068. Call 937-372-9261 to preregister. ✧

## New Asian Carp Canada Website makes a splash

The Invasive Species Centre has officially launched *Asian Carp Canada*. This new comprehensive website provides information on all aspects of Asian carps, serving as a gateway to reports, facts, webinars, maps and educational materials in an easily accessible way. For more info: 705-541-5790 or [www.asiancarp.ca](http://www.asiancarp.ca) □

## No fishing license required in Michigan Feb. 14-15

Michigan's annual Winter Free Fishing Weekend is scheduled for February 14, and 15. That weekend, everyone—residents and non-residents alike—can fish Michigan waters without a license, though all other fishing regulations still apply. A full list of these events can be found online

at [www.michigan.gov/freefishing](http://www.michigan.gov/freefishing). ✧

## Cabela's plans for two new stores Locations to open in Virginia and Ontario, Canada

► Gainesville – Cabela's anticipates a spring 2017 opening at the intersection of Linton-Hall Road and Lee Highway and will be adjacent to the Virginia Gateway Center.

► Ottawa –Plans are to open the store in the spring of 2016, located near the intersection of Palladium Drive and Highway 417. It will anchor the newly planned Kanata West Centr. ✧ □

## Spring Turkey hunting license through Feb. 1

Spring Michigan turkey hunting applications are on sale through February 1. The 2015 spring turkey season runs April 20 - May 31, with several different hunt periods to choose from.

Hunters looking for the greatest flexibility may wish to purchase a Hunt 234 license. You can buy this license starting March 16, no application required, and it's valid from May 4-31. It's valid for all open areas of the state except the public lands of southern Michigan.

The application is \$5 and may be purchased anywhere hunting licenses are sold or online: [www.mdnr-licence.com](http://www.mdnr-licence.com). Information about spring turkey hunting can be found at [www.michigan.gov/turkey](http://www.michigan.gov/turkey). ✧

## Ruling makes killing wolves illegal

Effective immediately, wolves in Minnesota can only be killed in defense of human life. Only agents of the government are authorized to take wolves if pets or livestock are threatened, attacked or killed. A federal judge's decision to immediately reinstate Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan place the animals under protection of the USFWS. Wolves now revert to the federal protection status they had prior to being removed from the endangered species list in the Great Lakes region in January 2012. That means wolves now are federally classified as threatened in Minnesota and endangered elsewhere in the Great Lakes region. ✧

## Deer population goal-setting meetings begin Feb. 2

Opportunities for the public to participate in deer population goal setting for large portions of northeastern, north-central and east-central Minnesota begin Monday, February 2, in Monticello. Nine other meetings will follow throughout the state

Each meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. After a short presentation on deer populations and management, meeting participants may comment verbally, ask DNR staff questions and complete a written questionnaire.

Deer population goals will be set for 40 of Minnesota's 128 deer permit areas in 2015. People can view a map of the goal-setting areas at [www.mndnr.gov/deer](http://www.mndnr.gov/deer). They should attend a meeting for the goal-setting block that contains the deer permit areas in which they are interested.

For those unable to attend a meeting, details on how to submit written or online comments will be available soon at [www.mndnr.gov/deer](http://www.mndnr.gov/deer). ✧

## Reservations due soon for seasonal and monthly camping

Those who want to stay longer than a week or two at a Minnesota state park should act now to nab one of the few campsites available for longer stays. At a limited number of state park campsites, visitors can stay for a whole month or even a full season. Reservations for these opportunities in 2015 are due by Saturday, January 31. For pricing and other park-specific information, or to submit a request to reserve a site, prospective visitors can check the DNR website at [www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks/extended\\_stay.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/extended_stay.html). ✧

## 2015 Illinois licenses now available

Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsman's combination licenses and usage stamps for 2015 are now available from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov), or by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). The automated license system is available 24 hours a day. The 2015 licenses and usage stamps purchased beginning January 19 will be valid through March 31, 2016 unless otherwise noted. ✧

## Nissan Marine will stop producing outboards

Tohatsu America Corp, said that Nissan Marine Co. Ltd. of Japan will discontinue certain segments of its marine business, including the production of the Nissan Marine brand of outboard engines. Sales of new Nissan Marine outboards will end once the existing inventory is depleted, but Tohatsu will continue to provide service and support for all remaining Nissan Marine engines in the marketplace. ✧

## Registration open for Lunch with Nature at Paynetown SRA

Register now for the first four programs in 2015 in the popular Lunch with Nature series at Indiana's Monroe Lake, at Paynetown State Recreation Area. Participants can bring a sack lunch to eat during the indoor presentation. Afterward, the naturalist leads a short hike that follows up on the program's theme. Each program is free, but attendance is limited to 12 people. Advance registration is required. Programs begin at 11 a.m. and last about 90 minutes.

Details and registration for each program are at the following links:

- Jan. 26: Science of Snow; [bit.ly/lwnjan2015](http://bit.ly/lwnjan2015); register by Jan. 21.
  - Feb. 23: Owls in Love; [bit.ly/lwnfeb2015](http://bit.ly/lwnfeb2015); register by Feb. 19.
  - March 30: Spring Migration; [bit.ly/lwnmar2015](http://bit.ly/lwnmar2015); register by Mar 26.
  - April 27: Nature's Architects; [bit.ly/lwnapr2015](http://bit.ly/lwnapr2015); register by Apr 23.
- Entrance to Paynetown is free January through March. Entrance starting in April is \$5 per in-state vehicle or \$7 per out-of-state vehicle. Paynetown SRA on Monroe Lake ([stateparks.IN.gov/2954.htm](http://stateparks.IN.gov/2954.htm)) is at 4850 South State Road 446, Bloomington, 47401. ✧

## Candlelight cross-country ski night

Metamora-Hadley Recreation Area will hold a candlelight cross-country ski event January 31 from 6-8 p.m. (depending upon weather). The candlelit trail will begin at the Red Activity Barn. A warming fire and refreshments also will be available.

For more info: call 810-797-4439 or: [www.michigan.gov/metamorahadley](http://www.michigan.gov/metamorahadley). Metamora-Hadley Recreation Area is located at 3871 Herd Road, in Metamora, Michigan. The candlelight ski is free to attend; however, a Recreation Passport is required for all vehicles entering the state park. ✧

## Only 1 of 500 Mississippi River samples test positive for invasive carp

Water samples from southeastern Minnesota pools of the Mississippi River that were collected in August and analyzed in December indicate only a small presence of bighead carp eDNA. The USFWS, in consultation with the DNR, conducted the environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling and analyzing for invasive carp.

A total of 500 samples were tested for both bighead and silver carp DNA in Pool 5a near Winona, Pool 6 in Winona and pools 8 and 9 near the Iowa border. One sample in Pool 8 tested positive for bighead carp, while none of the samples tested positive for silver carp. Results can be viewed: [www.fws.gov/midwest/fisheries/eDNA.html](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/fisheries/eDNA.html).

Environmental DNA is a surveillance tool used to monitor for the genetic presence of an aquatic species. The presence of eDNA does not provide physical proof of the presence of live or dead carp, but indicates the presence of genetic material in the water body. This genetic material may be the result of live carp, or transport of only the genetic material via boats or other means.

This is the first time samples were collected in the southeastern Minnesota pools. Given the low population size at this time, the DNR and USFWS sampled these pools to help guide future traditional sampling efforts and establish a baseline to begin a time series that will help detect population changes. The plan is to collect samples at these and potentially other pools farther north each year.

The USFWS and the DNR will review eDNA results and advancements along with other 2014 monitoring results in planning 2015 sampling. ✧

## EPA takes action to protect public from harmful lead exposure

The USEPA announced 62 enforcement actions that require renovation contractors and training providers to protect people from harmful exposure to lead dust and debris, as required by EPA's Lead-based Paint Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) standards.

The enforcement actions include 55 settlements and six complaints issued between February and October 2014 for renovations performed on pre-1978 homes and child-care facilities.

All of the settlements require that the alleged violators certify their compliance with RRP standards and, in most cases, pay civil penalties. In two of the settlements, the violators agreed to fund voluntary lead abatement supplemental environmental projects, which require the removal of lead-based paint and post-construction testing to ensure that no hazardous conditions remain. The settlements led to \$213,171 in civil penalties and the violators coming into compliance with federal law. These recent actions are in addition to EPA's settlement with Lowe's Home Improvement in April 2014, which included a \$500,000 civil penalty as well as implementation of a corporate-wide RRP compliance program.

"Children are most vulnerable to the dangers of lead paint exposure, especially those in predominantly minority and low-income communities, where housing is more likely to contain lead-based paint," said Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. "These cases to enforce the RRP rule are vitally important to improving compliance among companies that handle lead-based paint. This leads to safer communities, healthier children and a level playing field for companies that follow the law."

Lead dust and debris from improper renovation activities on properties built prior to 1978 is a major source of lead exposure that

can cause lead poisoning. Although using lead-based paint in dwellings was prohibited after 1978, it is still present in more than 30 million homes across the nation, in all types of communities. The RRP Rule provides important protections for children and others vulnerable to lead exposure. Even low levels of lead in the blood of children can result in behavior and learning problems, lower IQ and hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems and anemia. In rare cases, ingestion of lead can cause seizures, coma and even death.

The RRP Rule, which is part of the federal Toxic Substances Control Act, is intended to ensure that owners and occupants of pre-1978 "target housing" and "child-occupied facilities" receive information on lead-based paint hazards before renovations begin, that individuals performing such renovations are properly trained and certified, and that renovators and workers follow specific lead-safe work practices during renovations to reduce the potential for exposure to lead.

The penalties in the settlements address the cited violations. Enforcement penalties also help deter violations by others in the regulated industry, and level the playing field for complying companies, since the fines help eliminate the financial advantage a violator may derive from non-compliance which, otherwise, would allow the violator to underbid its complying competitors.

Contractors that are certified under EPA's RRP standards are encouraged to display EPA's "Lead-Safe" logo on worker's uniforms, signs, websites, and other material, as appropriate. Consumers can protect themselves by looking for the logo before hiring a home contractor, and by being generally aware of whether a renovator is following lead-safe work practices when working on their property. Those practices, such as what a renovator must do to minimize lead dust dispersion, are outlined in EPA's *Renovate Right* lead hazard

information pamphlet, available at <http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/renovaterightbrochure.pdf>.

Renovators are required to give the pamphlet to property owners and occupants within 60 days before starting any renovation.

EPA entered into expedited settlement agreements with 22 companies. These agreements allow violators to quickly resolve certain minor lead-based paint offenses (not including work practice violations) with a reduced penalty, typically \$2,000 or less. More information about these actions is available at <http://www2.epa.gov/enforcement/lead-renovation-repair-and-painting-rule-december-2014>.

More information about the RRP Rule and how contractors can get certified is available at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead). ✧

## Congress steps up to protect traditional fishing tackle

A provision to prohibit federal funds from being used to regulate lead fishing tackle and ammunition under the Toxic Substance Control Act was included in the end-of-year omnibus federal spending bill. On multiple occasions, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been petitioned by anti-fishing organizations to federally ban fishing tackle containing lead based on its impact on wildlife, a position that is not based on sound science.

While the EPA has consistently rejected these petitions, ASA has advocated for a permanent fix to prevent an unnecessary ban from being approved. The temporary legislative fix provided in the federal spending bill supports and reinforces the EPA's previous decisions and will aid ASA in its efforts toward a permanent solution, possibly through inclusion in a Sportsmen's Package bill in the 114th Congress. ✧

## Fisheries and Oceans Minister proposes critical invasive species regulations

**Ann Arbor, MI** – The Great Lakes Fishery Commission recently congratulated Fisheries and Oceans Minister Gail Shea for proposing new regulations to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful invasive species. The regulations would prohibit the importation, possession, transportation, and release of more than 100 species like Asian carp, zebra mussels, round goby, and sea lamprey, all of which are known to cause considerable economic and ecological harm to ecosystems they invade. The regulations, which also bolster law enforcement authority, bring Canada and the United States closer together in harmonizing the approach to the trade of live organisms and attacking the problem from a North American perspective.

“The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is deeply concerned about the impact of invasive species on aquatic ecosystems,” said Robert Lambe, the Commission’s executive secretary. “Invasive species cost us

billions of dollars each year and inflict unquantifiable, permanent damage to ecosystems they invade. Each new invader hurts the livelihoods of those who depend on the fishery for food and income and degrades the resource, depriving ourselves and future generations of what we enjoy today. The trade of live fish—like Asian carp, snakeheads, and many others—is a major way in which harmful organisms can be introduced into new ecosystems. The new regulations are badly needed to stop such trade.”

Lambe continued: “Invasive species are difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate once they make a new ecosystem home. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is extremely pleased with Minister Shea’s announcement to enhance significantly Canada’s efforts to prevent the introduction of harmful species and to thwart their spread.”

Lambe added: “Minister Shea’s actions also acknowledge the key role

law enforcement plays in addressing the invasive species problem. The new regulations will allow officers to enforce the ban on the movement of harmful species. Given enforcement officers are on the front lines of this battle, and given their proven track record of spotting harmful species and arresting lawbreakers, it is gratifying to see added powers in the regulations for this important component of invasive species management.”

Lambe concluded: “We know all too well how adept invasive species are at spreading. An introduction in one part of the continent will eventually lead to the spread to other parts of the continent. Canada, the United States, provinces, states, and tribes have been working for years to stop the movement of harmful species and to harmonize their laws. Minister Shea’s proposed regulations are a major step forward in instituting a North America-wide approach to the problem.” ✧

## Court rules against EPA in lead bullet case

A Federal Court of Appeals has ruled the EPA has no statutory authority to regulate the lead content of ammunition under the Toxic Substances Control Act.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled December 23, 2014 that the EPA lacks the authority to regulate the materials used in the manufacture of firearms cartridges, upsetting more than 100 environmental groups that had goaded the agency into litigating the issue.

The decision has more to do with the letter of the law than its spirit, as [this passage](#) from the court’s decision illustrates:

In this case, 101 environmental groups, invoking section 21 of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), which allows “any person” to petition the Environmental Protection Agency for a rulemaking proceeding to regulate “chemical

substances” that “present an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment,” filed a petition with EPA asking it to regulate spent lead bullets and shot. EPA rejected the petition as “not . . . cognizable” under section 21 on the grounds that it largely duplicated an earlier petition that two of the 101 groups had filed. EPA went on to explain that, even were it to consider the petition, it would deny it on the merits because another provision of TSCA, section 3(2)(B)(v), exempts cartridges and shells from the definition of “chemical substance.” The district court held that EPA had authority to classify the petition as non-cognizable under TSCA and dismissed the complaint. Although we disagree with the district court—nothing in section 21 allowed EPA to dismiss this petition as non-cognizable—we nonetheless affirm because the environmental groups have suggested

no way in which EPA could regulate spent lead bullets and shot without also regulating cartridges and shells—precisely what section 3(2)(B)(v) prohibits.

It’s evident the EPA knew it never had a case, but was obligated to seek an opinion. The fact that the agency can’t make a distinction between the content of an unspent cartridge and the content of its component parts, the separated bullet and shell casing, is a matter that could be resolved through an amendment to the law—if Congress leans farther left in the future.

Until then, the ruling has no bearing on state legislatures issuing their own regulations on lead in cartridges. Democratic California Gov. Jerry Brown signed just such a ban into effect late last year, making the state the first in the U.S. to outlaw the use of lead in ammunition for hunting. ✧

**Other Breaking News Items:**

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

**[Asian carp eDNA found above barrier, feared to be in Great Lakes waters](#)**

Several recent water samples came back positive for silver carp eDNA above an electrical barrier system near Chicago and environmentalists are concerned the species of Asian carp may have reached the Great Lakes

**[Salmon catch limit remains five in 2015, but is that a good thing?](#)**

Anglers will be able to catch five salmon a day once the 2015 fishing season opens, but is that good news or bad? State fisheries officials say they are looking at new ways to determine what the daily limit should be

**[NY steelhead trout need their vitamins, says DEC](#)**

Steelheads are dying off in droves as they make their way from Lake Ontario to the Salmon River, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation says it all has to do with an inexplicable vitamin B deficiency.

**[Michigan DNR attempting to improve Atlantic salmon survival](#)**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is working to improve the survival of the Atlantic salmon it stocks in Lake Huron.

**[New York continues to study problem of dead steelhead in Salmon River and other Lake Ontario tribs](#)**

The N.Y. Department of Environmental Conservation today said it is continuing to study reports of dead and erratic-acting steelhead in the Salmon River and other Lake Ontario tributaries, noting a "nutritional deficiency" is most likely the cause.

**[EDITORIAL: Don't federalize all water](#)**

The Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency want to redefine "waters of the United States" subject to regulation and virtually no body of water, no matter how small, would be out of reach.

**[Fish virus detected in coho salmon eggs](#)**

Coho salmon eggs were destroyed at two Wisconsin hatcheries this month after testing revealed donor fish had an invasive virus. Viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHSv) was detected in ovarian fluid taken from female cohos this fall on the Root River in Racine.

**[Agents investigate Great Lakes Fish-trafficking Case](#)**

An award-winning Door County business that processes Great Lakes fish products for sale worldwide has been caught up in a multistate, two-year undercover investigation into the illegal trafficking of lake trout, lake sturgeon, whitefish and walleye from the upper Great Lakes.

End