



## USFWS issues progress report on Great Lakes Fish Mass Marking Program for 2014

### Introduction

Fishery managers in the Great Lakes, along with the USFWS annually stock over 20 million salmonines to diversify sport fisheries, restore native fish populations, and control invasive fishes. However, more needs to be known about how well these fish survive, contribute to fisheries, and levels of natural reproduction by naturalized non-native salmonines. To this end, the Council of Lake Committees (CLC), a basin-wide group of fishery managers that operates under the auspices of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, agreed in 2005 to develop a basin-wide program to mark all stocked salmonines. This marking effort would provide greater insight into survival of stocked fish, the contribution of stocked fish to

restoration of native fishes, the ability to manage harvest away from wild fish, and the opportunity to evaluate and improve hatchery operations.

The CLC requested the USFWS to deliver a mass marking program based on its successful delivery of the basin-wide sea lamprey control (U.S. agent) and lake trout restoration programs. To address this request, the Great Lakes Fish Tag & Recovery



Lab was established at the Green Bay Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office in New Franken, WI. Pilot tagging and

marking operations began in 2010 and recovery of tagged fish began in 2012.

In 2014, the Lab staff consisted of four AutoFish trailer operators, a data analyst/statistician, and one

supervisory biologist. In addition, eleven seasonal technicians were hired to assist with recovery of fish with coded wire tags from sport fisheries on lakes Michigan and Huron and two were hired to assist New York Department of Environmental Conservation with recoveries from their program on Lake Ontario. The program's tagging trailer fleet consists of four automated trailers and one manual tagging and marking trailer. In 2014, the lab staff used these trailers to adipose fin clip and coded wire tag 9,520,008 lake trout, Chinook salmon, and Atlantic salmon at state and federal hatcheries. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, managed by the USEPA, provided annual operational funding of \$1.5 million through a request made by the USFWS, Region 3

### Mass Marking Progress Report

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## USFWS releases first annual report to manage Asian carp

### Water Resources Reform and Development Act

Congress the first annual report of summary activities and expenditures to manage the threat of Asian carp in the Upper Mississippi and Ohio River basins. The report was released pursuant to the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014.

The report includes:

- Observed changes in the Asian carp population ranges from 2012 to 2014
- A summary of federal agency efforts to control the spread of Asian carp
- Research that could improve the ability to control the spread of Asian carp
- Quantitative measures that could

be used to document progress in controlling the spread of Asian carp

- A cross-cut accounting of federal and non-federal expenditures to control the spread of Asian carp

A two year retrospective, the report will help guide future management actions and facilitate the ongoing transfer of knowledge between federal and state partners.

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act (2014) represents a significant milestone for Asian carp management outside of the Great Lakes. The legislation authorizes federally supported assessment and management actions in the Upper Mississippi River and Ohio River basins. The report can be accessed here: [Midwest Asian Carp](#). ✧

## Federal judge finds ban on interstate gun transfers unconstitutional

On February 11, federal Judge Reed O'Connor overturned a longstanding ban on handgun transfers between individuals living in separate states, declaring the ban unconstitutional.

Reed, judge for the U.S. Court for the Northern District of Texas, issued a [28-page decision](#) in the case, which pitted a trio of individuals with support from the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms against U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and ATF Director B. Todd Jones.

The plaintiffs argued the ban not only violates the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, but also “limits their choices as consumers, harms competition in the market and raises prices.” Holder and Jones had motioned for the case to be dismissed. Instead, O'Connor agreed fully with the plaintiffs, finding the interstate ban on handgun transfers violates both the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment and the due process clause of the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Here's what O'Connor had to say about the latter (some legal references have been omitted for readability but can be found in the [original](#)):

Plaintiffs contend that, because the laws discriminate based on residence, Defendants' enforcement of the federal interstate handgun transfer ban violates Plaintiffs' right to equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause. The Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment provides, in relevant part: “No person shall... be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” The Supreme Court has consistently held that the Due Process Clause contains an equal protection component, which prohibits the United States from discriminating between individuals or groups.

“Equal protection analysis requires strict scrutiny of a legislative classification only when the classification impermissibly interferes with the exercise of a fundamental

right or operates to the peculiar disadvantage of a suspect class.” *Mass. Bd. of Ret. v. Murgia*, 427 U.S. 307, 312 (1976). Here, the federal interstate handgun transfer ban interferes with the exercise of a fundamental right. The Supreme Court has also held that strict scrutiny is required where the challenged classification impinges on residency. The Supreme Court applied strict scrutiny in situations where state laws discriminated against non-residents, and those cases involved benefits offered by the state, not constitutional rights. ...Based on the strict scrutiny analysis above, the Court finds that the federal interstate handgun transfer ban also violates the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

O'Connor also rejected the defendants' arguments that the ban is intended to bolster public safety, writing that it “is not substantially related to address safety concerns. Thus, even under intermediate scrutiny, the federal interstate handgun transfer ban is unconstitutional on its face.”

Alan Gura, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment attorney who helped the plaintiffs argue and win the case, said the ban, from its inception, was a “bizarre and irrational” application of burdensome restrictions on interstate commerce—one that doesn't pass the smell test when applied to other legal goods.

“It is bizarre and irrational to destroy the national market for an item that Americans have a fundamental right to purchase,” Gura said.

“Americans would never tolerate a ban on the interstate sale of books or contraceptives. And Americans are free to buy rifles and shotguns outside their state of residence, so long as the dealers respect the laws of the buyer's home state. We're gratified that the Court agreed that handguns should be treated no differently.” ✧



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### Position Statement

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

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## Top Fishing Equipment Brands for 2014

FERNANDINA BEACH, FL. — Southwick Associates' AnglerSurvey.com announced the brands and products anglers purchased most frequently in 2014. This list has been compiled from the 15,685 internet-based surveys completed in 2014 by AnglerSurvey.com panelists. In 2014, sportfishing's most frequently purchased brands included:

- Top rod brand: Shakespeare Ugly Stik, Sturdy Stik, etc.
- Top reel brand: Shimano
- Top combo brand: Shakespeare
- Top fishing line brand: PowerPro
- Top hard bait brand: Rapala
- Top spinner bait brand: Strike King
- Top jig brand: Strike King
- Top sinker brand: Eagle Claw
- Top swivel brand: Eagle Claw
- Top leader brand: Seaguar
- Top fly line brand: Rio
- Top fly leader brand: Rio
- Top tippetts brand: Rio
- Top ice reel brand: Abu Garcia
- Top ice rod brand: HT
- Top ice combo brand: Frabill
- Top ice tip ups: Frabill
- Top wader brand: Orvis
- Top clothing brand: Columbia
- Top raingear brand: Frogg Toggs
- Top landing net brand: Frabill
- Top bait bucket/aerator brand: Frabill
- Top fishing knife brand: Rapala
- Top fish scale brand: Berkley
- Top trolling motor brand: Minn Kota

The list above is only a portion of all fishing categories tracked by Southwick Associates. Other information tracked includes percentage of sales occurring at different types of retailers, total spending per category, average prices, and demographics for anglers buying specific products. Additional information tracked includes total days spent fishing, type of fishing (fresh, salt and more), preferred species and where they fish. ✧

## Two WI state fish hatcheries to get key upgrades

The Art Oehmcke Hatchery in Oneida County and Gov. Tommy G. Thompson Hatchery in Washburn County will receive important upgrades under plans approved by the state building commission. The fish hatcheries, operated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, raise muskies, walleye and suckers.

Dave Giehtbrock, fisheries culture section chief, said the \$4.6 million in improvements at the Art Oehmcke facility will include equipment to disinfect the Madeline Lake and Clear Lake building water supply. The project will modify the Clear Lake pump station, filter the Clear Lake building supply, renovate the Madeline Lake intake screen and replace the Madeline Lake micro screen filtration systems.

Fish rearing operations there also will benefit from an egg disinfection room and new rearing ponds.

The \$2.5 million worth of improvements at the Tommy Thompson facility will include a new automatic intake screen cleaning system, a new filtration system for all incoming water and a new disinfection system for incoming water in the building. The money also will repair levees and settled pond areas and add a new bio-secure egg disinfection room in the hatchery building. A truck and equipment disinfection station will be built in an existing storage building.

Giehtbrock said the investment represents an important step forward for the hatcheries, which help sustain \$1.5 billion in direct state angler expenditures each year, according to the American Sportfishing Association. Following a bidding process, work on the projects is expected to begin in May with completion of the new ponds at Art Oehmcke by mid-summer.

To learn more about Wisconsin's fish hatchery operations, search the DNR website, [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov), for "[hatcheries and rearing stations](#)." ✧

## Killer shrimp may be next invasive species to hit Great Lakes

A species of shrimp native to Eastern Europe is now a cause for concern for the Great Lakes. Its scientific name is *Dikerogammarus villosus*, but experts know this voracious crustacean simply as the killer shrimp. The shrimp itself is only about an inch long, but its large mandibles make it an aggressive predator and it is notable for its tendency to kill even when not hungry. Already a nuisance in Western European waters, researchers at McGill U. said that the killer shrimp could pose a problem for the Great Lakes before 2063.

In 50 years, the Great Lakes would be populated with many new invaders, most of which may come from waterways where Europe and Asia meet—the region around the Black Sea, stated the university. This region is the source of some of the most disruptive invaders in the Great Lakes today, such as the zebra mussel, and still has many species at a high risk of invading the North American lakes and rivers, such as the killer shrimp or the monkey goby.

Researchers said that the danger these invasive species pose to North American waterways depends upon what kind of legislation is in place to protect against them. More than 180 non-native species moved into the Great Lakes over the past 200 years, but recent safeguards—such as rules on how ships can use ballast water—have dramatically lowered the chance for new species to get in.

No new species have been recorded since 2006. We may have closed the door on ballast water-mediated invasions. That remains to be seen. But other doors are still open.

They have a really big mouth and claws, and they literally shred their prey. They are very aggressive in any of the systems that they get into.

Killer shrimp are highly adaptable and are known to establish colonies in a number of environments, pushing native species—some vital to local food chains—out. ✧

## New MN fishing regs, more opportunities for anglers

Anglers will have more opportunities to fish for bass, sturgeon and trout this year thanks to changes in Minnesota's fishing regulations.

"This will be a great year to expand your fishing horizons in Minnesota," said Al Stevens, fisheries program consultant with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. "There will be a new catch-and-release bass season and additional opportunities to fish for sturgeon and stream trout. Muskellunge will get greater protection, giving anglers more chances to catch one of our state's most prized trophies."

Fishing regulation changes are summarized on page six of the 2015 Minnesota Fishing Regulations booklet, which is available at any license agent or online at [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn) and [www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing](http://www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing).

### Bass fishing expands

Beginning May 9, anglers in most of the state can catch and release bass until the regular harvest season opens May 23. Meanwhile, anglers in northeast Minnesota can continue to catch and keep bass during these two weeks. Northeast Minnesota is defined as essentially north and east of U.S. Highway 53.

"This new catch-and-release bass season means anglers statewide can fish for bass starting on the May 9 walleye and northern pike opener," Stevens said. "Anglers have long asked for more chances to fish for bass in the early part of the season."

In past years, anglers could not fish for bass until Memorial Day weekend outside northeastern Minnesota. But in the new two-week catch-and-release season, anglers can fish for largemouth and smallmouth bass. All bass caught during this two-week period must immediately be released.

In another bass season change, the fall closure on harvest of smallmouth bass has been lifted in the northeast.

"We've heard from anglers in the northeast who have long wanted more

opportunities to harvest fish for meals, especially in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area," Stevens said. "Smallmouth bass populations in the northeast have grown in recent years, and increased harvest of these fish should have minimal impact on bass populations."

Interested in doing more bass fishing in Minnesota this year? Learn more at [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn/bass](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn/bass).

### Sturgeon fishing opportunities expand

Anglers will have more opportunities to fish for lake sturgeon starting March 1. However, season dates differ depending on location.

On inland waters and Minnesota waters bordering North Dakota, South Dakota and Iowa, a new catch-and-release season will allow anglers to fish for lake sturgeon from June 16 until April 14, a season lasting nearly 10 months. Anglers here cannot fish for lake sturgeon from April 15 to June 15, a closure intended to protect the fish during their spawning season.

On Minnesota waters bordering Canada there are harvest, catch-and-release and closed seasons for lake sturgeon. On waters bordering Wisconsin, there is a lake sturgeon harvest season in the St. Croix River south of Taylors Falls including Lake St. Croix, but otherwise all waters have catch-and-release lake sturgeon seasons that differ depending on date and location. Season details can be found in the border waters section of the fishing regulations at [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn) or on page 43 of the 2015 Fishing Regulations booklet, which is available online at [www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing](http://www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing).

Comebacks staged by lake sturgeon in recent years are making new fishing opportunities possible. Sturgeon numbers grew because of improved water quality, dam removals and restorative stocking efforts, according to Stevens. Yet, despite success stories, lake sturgeon populations remain in recovery mode.

"While it is a positive step to have populations healthy enough for catch-and-release sturgeon angling,

the DNR will continue to carefully monitor sturgeon population numbers to make sure they stay healthy," Stevens said.

Anglers also will find new regulations for shovelnose sturgeon, a species found mostly in the Minnesota River and the Mississippi River below St. Anthony Falls.

### Muskie minimum length increased

This year, the minimum length limit to keep a muskie is 54 inches. The previous limit was 48 inches. Various muskie angling organizations supported the change.

"This change will help maintain Minnesota's place as a nationally recognized destination for trophy muskie angling," Stevens said.

Exceptions to the new 54-inch minimum length limit apply for muskie-northern pike hybrids, also called tiger muskie, in the seven-county metro area, where the minimum length limit remains 40 inches on certain lakes.

### 2015 Fishing regulation booklet

Anglers are encouraged to read the 2015 fishing regulations to review these and other changes, including:

- Expanded seasons for stream trout, both in streams and winter fishing in lakes.
- New limits and seasons on Minnesota waters bordering Canada, including a new size restriction for walleye that becomes effective March 1 (only one walleye will be allowed in possession over 20 inches, where previously there was no size restriction).
- The flathead catfish season will close in winter.

Anglers are also reminded to check online at [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn) and [www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing](http://www.mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing) for the latest additions or corrections. In addition, changes to special or experimental regulations may be in effect, and are listed by lake online and in the special regulations section of the printed booklet. ✧

## Tests find Asian carp eDNA in sections of Ohio River

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has confirmed that eDNA from the invasive Asian Silver Carp and Bighead Carp has been found in six water samples collected from the Ohio River last year. Sampling has been performed in response to the documented spread of Asian carp in the Ohio River.

Biologists from the PFBC, and the USFWS collected 595 water samples from the Ohio River basin in July 2014. The tests found one positive result for Silver Carp eDNA in each of the Montgomery and New Cumberland pools of the Ohio River's systems. Each pool also showed two positive results for Bighead Carp eDNA. A total of 92 water samples were taken from each pool.

Researchers use eDNA analysis as a tool for the early detection of Asian carp. The findings indicate the presence of genetic material left behind by the species, such as scales, excrement or mucus. But eDNA does not provide physical proof of the presence of live or dead Asian carp. No Asian carp, alive or dead, have been reported from Pennsylvania's portion of the Ohio River.

"Unfortunately, the 2014 test results provide a little more evidence that this invasive species could be in the upper Ohio River," said PFBC Executive Director John Arway. "This is an early warning sign, since we don't know for certain the origin of the genetic material. We don't know if the eDNA came from live or dead fish or if it was transported from other sources."

None of the 175 water samples from the Ohio River's Dashfields and Emsworth pools, Beaver River, Little Beaver Creek, Raccoon Creek, Chartiers Creek, Monongahela River and Allegheny River tested positive for Silver or Bighead carp eDNA.

This marks the second year that eDNA was found. In 2013, the USFWS tested 184 water samples collected from the upper Ohio River between Wheeling, W.V., and Pittsburgh and found eDNA in one sample from the Montgomery Pool near Aliquippa, Beaver County, and one sample from the backchannel of Babbs Island near East Liverpool, OH. For more info: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/fisheries/eDNA/Results-ohioriver.html>.

More information about the effort by the Ohio River Basin states to try to stop the spread of Asian carp at: [http://fishandboat.com/ais/ORFMT\\_Asian\\_Carp\\_Strategy.pdf](http://fishandboat.com/ais/ORFMT_Asian_Carp_Strategy.pdf).

Asian carp are an invasive species which pose a serious threat because of their voracious appetite and ability to quickly reproduce. Once in a waterway, they devour much of the microscopic algae and animals that other species rely on for food, effectively decimating other species and disrupting the aquatic ecosystem. This, in turn, can harm local economies.

Anglers and boaters should thoroughly clean gear and boats before entering new waters and learn how to identify Asian carp. A video teaching people how to identify Bighead and Silver carp is available from the USFWS on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/B49OWrCRs38>.

Anglers and boaters are urged to contact the PFBC if they suspect the presence of Asian carp. Information can be easily submitted through the PFBC website at: <http://fishandboat.com/ais-reporting.htm> ✧

## Michigan 2015 Black Lake sturgeon season harvest results

Michigan DNR said the 2015 Black Lake sturgeon harvest season ended after less than six hours February 7, with five fish being harvested. The fishing season, which included spearing or hook-and-line fishing, was scheduled to run February 7-11 or until the harvest quota of five fish was reached.

There were 303 registered anglers on the ice Saturday, up from 228 the year before. Most anglers registered at the preregistration held February 6, which allowed for a much more streamlined process. Anglers of all ages and genders participated.

The first sturgeon was harvested around 9 a.m. It was a 67-inch female that weighed 75 pounds. Fish number two was taken at 9:33 a.m. and was a 58-inch male weighing 45 pounds.

Fish three was a 69-inch female that weighed 80 pounds, taken at 12:35 p.m. Fish four was the day's largest, a 71-inch female that weighed in at 87 pounds and was taken at 12:50 p.m. The fifth and final fish was harvested at 1:27 p.m. and was a 50-inch female that weighed 31 pounds.

Four of the five fish taken had been captured several times before by Michigan State University and DNR sturgeon researchers during spring spawning runs.

The sturgeon fishing hotline was updated at 1:27 p.m., which officially closed the season. In addition, signal cannons and sirens were used within minutes of the final fish being harvested to indicate the season's end. DNR law enforcement officials and other department personnel were

embedded in the on-ice fishing communities and were able to quickly report harvested fish this year, as well as to quickly contact all lake sturgeon anglers on the ice and close the season.

"The unlimited entry fishery paired with a significant on-ice presence of DNR personnel allows for greater participation by anglers while protecting the population of lake sturgeon in Black Lake from overharvest," said Cwalinski. "It was deemed a very successful season for angler participation, fish harvest, quick response times, and from a safety perspective."

For more information on sturgeon in Michigan, visit [Michigan.gov/sturgeon](http://Michigan.gov/sturgeon). ✧

## DNR frog survey marks 20th year

The Michigan DNR announced that its 20th annual Frog and Toad Survey begins this spring.

Declining populations of frogs, toads and other amphibians have been documented worldwide since the 1980s. Studies suggest amphibians are disappearing due to habitat loss, pollution, disease and collection. Volunteer observers conduct the surveys along a statewide system of permanent survey routes, each consisting of 10 wetland sites. Observers visit these sites three times during spring, when frogs and toads are actively breeding, listening for calling frogs and toads at each site, identifying the species present and making an estimate of abundance.

Interested in volunteering: Lori Sargent [SargentL@michigan.gov](mailto:SargentL@michigan.gov) or 517-284-6216. For more info: [Frog and Toad Survey](#) and other projects: [www.michigan.gov/wildlife](http://www.michigan.gov/wildlife). ✧

## DEC applications for American eel weir permits until April 1

Based on formal changes to the Interstate [Fisheries Management](#) Plan (FMP), the New York DEC will limit the number of American eel weir permits for the Delaware River and its tributaries to nine weirs in 2015. Under federal law, New York is required to implement the FMP changes that were adopted in 2014, which established the permit limit in order to protect New York's [silver](#) eel weir fishery in the Delaware River.

Applications for eel weir licenses are due April 1, 2015, and will be issued May 15 and are valid until November 30, 2015. The initial distribution of licenses will be limited to permitted participants who fished and reported harvest of one pound or [more](#) from 2010 to 2013. To obtain an application and obtain complete details about [license distributions](#) visit DEC's website or [contact](#) DEC at (845) 256-3009.

[www.asmfc.org/species/american-eel](http://www.asmfc.org/species/american-eel).

## IN stocked nearly 32 million fish in 2014

When it comes to stocking fish in Indiana waters, 2014 was a banner year.

The DNR stocked 31.9 million fish in 70 counties in 2014. In a typical year, stocking numbers are between 22 and 24 million fish.

The increase was primarily due to a near-record number of walleye eggs collected at Brookville Lake for hatchery production. Those eggs also had a higher-than-normal survival rate. As a result, biologists stocked 10 million more walleye fry than normal.

Other species stocked throughout Indiana were bluegill, brown trout, crappie, channel catfish, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, grass carp, hybrid striped bass, hybrid sunfish, largemouth bass, muskie, pike, rainbow trout, redear sunfish, saugeye, steelhead, striped bass and yellow perch.

“Fish stockings not only add value to the fishery but also give a boost to the local economy by bringing additional anglers to the area,” said Brian Schoenung, DNR fish chief. Biologists evaluate fish populations to determine the best sites for stocking. A list of locations stocked in 2014 can be found at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/5457.htm>.

For questions about stocking at a specific location, contact your district fisheries biologist. A map of districts and their biologists is at [fishing.IN.gov/3590.htm](http://fishing.IN.gov/3590.htm).

The fish are produced at the state's seven hatcheries and one trout rearing station. For info on hatcheries is at [fishing.IN.gov/3077.htm](http://fishing.IN.gov/3077.htm).

Fish were raised and stocked with the help of anglers through fishing license sales and the Sport Fish Restoration Fund, which collects excise tax paid by the manufacturer on qualifying fishing equipment. ✧

## Michigan DNR appeals federal court's wolf decision

The Michigan DNR filed an appeal of a December 2014 federal district court ruling that returned wolves in Michigan and Wisconsin to the federal endangered species list and wolves in Minnesota to federal threatened species status.

The appeal asks the court to uphold the USFWS's December 2011 decision that removed the Great Lakes Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of wolves from the federal endangered species list.

Wolves in Michigan are 15 years past the population recovery goals set by the federal government. The DNR will argue against the federal district court's ruling that wolves must recover across their historic range—which includes the lower 48 states and Mexico—before Michigan's wolf population can be removed from the federal endangered species list.

In addition, the state will argue against the district court's conclusion that the USFWS failed to demonstrate that Michigan's laws and regulations adequately protect the wolf population within Michigan.

“Wolves in Michigan and the other western Great Lakes states are fully recovered from endangered species status, which is a great success story,” said DNR Wildlife Division Chief Russ Mason. “Continuing to use the Endangered Species Act to protect a recovered species not only undermines the integrity of the Act, it leaves farmers and others with no immediate recourse when their animals are being attacked and killed by wolves.”

The federal district court's decision came in response to a lawsuit filed by the Humane Society of the United States.

Michigan joins the USFWS and a number of hunting and conservation organizations in appealing the ruling.

For more information about Michigan's wolf population and management plan, visit [www.michigan.gov/wolves](http://www.michigan.gov/wolves). ✧

## IL Spring Trout Fishing Season just around the corner

**Trout Season opens April 4; Catch-and-Release Fly Fishing-Only opens March 21**

The 2015 Illinois spring trout fishing season opens April 4 at 46 ponds, lakes and streams throughout the state. In addition to the bodies of water that have been stocked in the past for spring trout fishing, three additional areas will be open to rainbow trout fishing for the spring of 2015, and three additional locations will be available for catch-and-release fly fishing prior to the opening of the spring trout season.

The new locations for spring trout fishing are Morgan Lake (Nichols Park) in Jacksonville, Kings Park Pond in Pittsfield, and Willow Lake at Peabody River King State Fish and Wildlife Area in St. Clair Co. The new catch-and-release fly fishing locations for this spring are Morgan Lake, Willow Lake, and Rock Creek in Kankakee River State Park.

The new spring catch-and-release fly fishing-only season will be available at nine sites beginning on March 21. IDNR first offered the catch-and-release fly fishing-only season at a number of trout locations last fall. Fly fishing anglers can use fly fishing gear to catch and release trout beginning March 21 at the nine select sites designated in the list below. No trout may be kept during the fly fishing-only period, but anglers can keep trout after the opening of the regular season beginning April 4.

No trout may be taken from any of the stocked sites from March 15 until the spring trout season opens at 5 a.m. on April 4. Anyone attempting to take (harvest) trout before the legal harvest season opening will be issued citations. Not all sites open at 5 a.m. on opening day. Anglers are reminded to check the opening time of their favorite trout fishing location prior to the season.

For more info on trout seasons and other Illinois fishing: [www.ifishillinois.org](http://www.ifishillinois.org). ✧

## Ohio rainbow trout releases began March 6

COLUMBUS, OH – Ohio's annual release of rainbow trout began March 6. [More](#) than 98,000 rainbow trout will be released into 63 public lakes and ponds through May.

Several locations will hold special angler events during the scheduled releases, including youth only fishing. [Contact](#) the nearest wildlife district office for specific times and locations. More information about trout releases can be found at [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov) or 800-945-3543.

The trout are raised at state fish hatcheries and released at suitable locations to provide additional opportunities for anglers. They measure 10-13 inches before they are released by the ODNR Division of Wildlife. The daily catch limit for inland lakes is five trout.

Anglers age 16 and older must have a current Ohio fishing license to fish in state public waters. The 2015-2016 fishing license can be purchased online at [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov) or at participating retail outlets. A full list of retailers is provided online.

Ohio residents age 66 and older are eligible to purchase a reduced-cost resident senior license for \$10.

Sales of fishing licenses along with the Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) program continue to fund the operation of the ODNR Division of Wildlife's fish hatcheries. No state [tax](#) dollars are used for this activity. This is a user-pay, user-benefit program.

The SFR is a partnership between federal and state government, industry, and anglers and boaters. When anglers purchase rods, reels, fishing tackle, fish finders and motor boat fuel, they pay an excise tax. The federal government collects these taxes, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers and disburses these funds to state fish and wildlife agencies. These funds are used to acquire habitat, produce and stock fish, conduct research and surveys, provide aquatic education to youth, and secure and develop boat accesses. ✧

## Changes to striped bass regs March 1

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is alerting anglers to several changes to striped bass regulations in the Delaware River and Delaware Estuary which took effect March 1 in order to meet requirements of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The changes apply only to the Pennsylvania side of the river and estuary. The Delaware River in Pennsylvania, for the purposes of striped [bass management](#), is divided into two sections known as the Estuary and the Delaware River.

Beginning March 1, the creel limit for striped bass in the Estuary—defined as the Pennsylvania/Delaware state line upstream to the Calhoun Street Bridge—will be reduced to one fish January 1 - March 31 and June 1 - December 31. The creel limit is currently set at two. Fish must be at least 28 inches.

From April 1 - May 31, the slot length limit will be changed to 21-25 inches. The current slot limit is 20-26 inches. During this two-month period, the creel limit will remain at two fish per day.

In the Delaware River upstream of the Estuary the creel limit for striped bass will be reduced to one. The river is open year-round with a minimum size of 28 inches.

“This action is being taken to meet the requirements of ASMFC's [management plan](#) for striped bass, which calls for management actions when the coast-wide spawning stock biomass (SSB) or fishing mortality rates reach thresholds set within the plan,” said Leroy Young, PFBC Director of the Bureau of Fisheries.

Young explained that the SSB threshold is 127 million pounds, and the current SSB is just above this at 128 million pounds. At the current fishing mortality rates, there is concern that the SSB will fall below the threshold in the [near future](#). In addition to these concerns, recruitment of young fish has been relatively low in many of the years since 2004. ✧

## MI Fisheries management activities of lakes Erie, Huron & Michigan

### ► Central Lake Michigan Management Unit

This unit encompasses all the waters that make up the watersheds that drain into the central portion of Lake Michigan. The activities highlighted in their newsletter include the steelhead egg-take at the Little Manistee Weir, Boardman Weir salmon harvest, Manton Mill Pond dam removal, survey on Crystal Lake, efforts of their summer workers, Bigelow Creek survey, survey on Cedar Lake, and much more. [Read more](#)

### ► Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit

This unit encompasses all of the waters that drain into the northern portion of Lake Michigan. The activities highlighted in their newsletter include their partnership with the Department of Environmental Quality's Water Resources Division to conduct aquatic invasive species monitoring, walleye rearing pond summary, staffing updates, efforts of local creel clerks, locations where fish are stocked, and much more. [Read more](#)

### ► Southern Lake Michigan Management Unit

This unit encompasses all of the water that makes up the watersheds that drain into the southern portion of Lake Michigan. The activities highlighted in their newsletter include walleye rearing and stocking, universal access at Lake Interstate (courtesy of an Eagle Scout project), the Morgan Dam removal, Kalamazoo River spawning-habitat project, survey on Coldwater Lake, and much more. [Read more](#)

### ► Northern Lake Huron Management Unit

This unit encompasses all of the waters that make up the watersheds that drain into the northern portion of Lake Huron, from Sault Ste. Marie south to Oscoda. The activities highlighted in their newsletter include stream temperature monitoring, walleye stocking, inland trout stocking, trivia about fisheries and the northeast Lower Peninsula, habitat enhancement on the Pigeon River, angler-submitted photos, aquatic invasive species training, the schedule for 2015 field surveys, and much more. [Read more](#) ✧

### ► Southern Lake Huron Management Unit

This unit encompasses the southern Michigan shores of Lake Huron, including Saginaw Bay and all the waters that make up the watersheds that drain into the southern portion of Lake Huron. The activities highlighted in their newsletter include a profile on Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron fishing, dam projects on various rivers, walleye and northern pike production, Chesaning rock ramp, spotlight on fyke nets, and much more. [Read more](#)

### ► Lake Erie Management Unit

This unit covers all of the waters that lie within watersheds draining into the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, Detroit River and Lake Erie. The activities highlighted in their newsletter include their fish aging process, Great Lakes muskellunge egg-take efforts, Mill Creek cooperative trout management, endangered species monitoring, training to prevent the introduction and/or spread of aquatic invasive species, how acoustic telemetry works, waters on Belle Isle, and much more. [Read more](#)

## IDNR to hold 32 Wingshooting Clinics

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois DNR will be holding 32 wingshooting clinics at sites throughout Illinois from March through early November this year. Most clinics are conducted on weekends.

Youth/Women's Wingshooting Clinics are about learning to safely shoot a shotgun at a moving target with reasonable reliability. Girls and boys typically in the 10-15 age group—and women of all ages—are eligible to participate. Each youth/women's clinic starts with a morning shotgun safety presentation, followed by a brief small group hands-on shotgun orientation session with each group's wingshooting instructor. After a lunch break, students spend the afternoon in the

field shooting flying clay targets on presentations designed for beginning and novice shooters. Not only do the students learn to safely handle and fire a shotgun, but they learn that being skilled at shooting clay targets is a lot of fun. Most youth/women's clinics are provided at no cost to participants. A few have a nominal—typically \$10—registration fee. Shotguns, shot shells, and clay targets are provided for shooting students, as is lunch at many clinic sites.

The clinics are designed primarily to improve the wingshooting skills of hunters. However, these wingshooting clinics are not limited to hunters. Anyone from 16 years of age on up with beginning to advanced wingshooting

skills who wants to improve their shotgun shooting skills can attend. The fee to participate is either \$30 or \$35 per participant, depending on the clinic.

Clinics are taught by instructors certified by the IDNR. Many clinic instructors also have a National Sporting Clays Association (NSCA) instructor certification. The participant-to-instructor ratio is usually four to one. Participants are typically grouped with other shooters with similar shooting ability.

To view the 2015 IDNR Wingshooting Clinic schedule, and register for a clinic, check the IDNR website at this link: <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/wingshooting/WingshootingDates.htm>. ✧



## MI Ludington Workshop focus on Lake Michigan

The 2015 Ludington Regional Fisheries Workshop featured in-depth presentations on food web changes, mass marking of trout and salmon, development of a Predator/Prey Ratio, and cisco rehabilitation. Four presentations from the workshop are now available on the [Michigan Sea Grant YouTube Channel](#).

The Workshop is an [annual event](#) hosted by [Michigan Sea Grant](#), [Michigan State U](#) and other partner organizations each January. Videos of select presentations are now available at [Michigan Sea Grant](#).

This year's Ludington workshop began with a presentation by [Steve Pothoven](#), who works out of the NOAA-GLERL [Lake Michigan Field Station](#) in Muskegon. Steve's [research](#) involves the lower food web including plankton, shrimp, scuds and other tiny creatures that provide food for forage fish like alewife. The diet and condition of alewife has changed dramatically in recent years due to food web changes and Steve's presentation dug into the specifics.

[Chuck Bronte](#), mass marking program coordinator for USFWS, presented some results that anglers will find interesting. Beginning 17:35 into the video, Chuck went through a

series of slides about [Lake Michigan](#) ports. Each slide demonstrated how stockings at different locations contribute to Chinook salmon fisheries at a given port. You might be surprised to know which stockings contribute the most to your favorite port.

With all of the concern surrounding [Chinook salmon](#) and alewife in Lake Michigan, it is important for fishery managers to use the best possible information when making decisions. Randy Claramunt of Michigan DNR discussed development of a predator/prey ratio that takes both Chinook salmon and alewife into account. While the previous Red Flags Analysis used a variety of indicators, this new ratio is a single number that reflects the balance between predator and prey. Although the calculations are complex, the basic idea of using everything we know about salmon and alewife to produce a ratio is quite simple. When predator biomass approaches 10 percent of prey biomass (predator/prey ratio of 0.10) it is a recipe for trouble.

The final video posted from the 2015 Ludington workshop is a presentation on cisco rehabilitation by

Kevin Donner, Great Lakes Fishery Biologist featuring [Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians](#). Kevin provides a fascinating historical overview of Lake Michigan's fish [community](#) before discussing the tribe's success with rearing and stocking ciscoes in 2014. Also known as lake herring, the [cisco](#) was one of seven closely related types of fish that originally filled the niche now occupied by alewife in Lake Michigan. Today only two remain.

If you are interested in learning more, videos from last year's workshop cover additional topics. Presentations on sea lamprey control ([Ludington 2014: Jeff Slade](#)), creel survey results ([Ludington 2014: Tracy Kolb](#)), and the recent resurgence of naturally reproducing lake trout in Lake Michigan ([Ludington 2014: Dale Hanson](#)) can be found on the Michigan Sea Grant YouTube Channel along with all of the Ludington 2015 videos mentioned above.

For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To have a digest of information delivered straight to your email inbox, visit <http://bit.ly/MSUENews>. See: [Summary of Ludington workshop](#) ✧

## Legislation prevents migration of Asian carp and other invasive species

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission lauded Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI) and Representative Candice Miller (MI) for the introduction of bicameral, bi-partisan legislation aimed at preventing the migration of invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds through canals in the Chicago area. The bill, entitled "Defending Our Great Lakes Act," is motivated by the relentless movement of Asian carp toward the Great Lakes region, but it would also address many other species that threaten the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The bill directs the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work with other authorities to take immediate steps at the Brandon Road Lock and

Dam—a suitable location for invasive species control—while continuing to drive toward long-term, permanent solutions to the waterway as a vector.

Last year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released the "Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study" (GLMRIS), which outlined options to prevent the movement of species between the two basins through the Chicago Area Waterway System, or "CAWS." In 2012, the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative produced a plan ("Restoring the Natural Divide") which also contained options for the canal. The Brandon Road Lock and Dam, which is downstream of the current electrical barrier system, is widely seen as an

appropriate point to install some of the technologies envisioned in GLMRIS and other reports.

"Stabenow's and Miller's bill recognizes that action consistent with GLMRIS and Restoring the Natural Divide can and must occur immediately, while there is still time to prevent an Asian carp invasion," said Michigan State University professor William Taylor, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's U.S. Section Chair. "Consensus is growing that immediate steps at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam is not only possible, it is also essential if the movement of harmful invasive species like the Asian carp and snakehead are to be stopped." ✧

# Scientific Fraud infests USFWS top ranks

## Whistleblower Hearing traces corruption and retaliation to Director's door

Washington, DC – An explosive whistleblower hearing transcript paints a vivid picture of rampant scientific misconduct, callous reprisal and systemic mendacity within the upper echelons of the USFWS, according to Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) which posted the full texts today. The transcript also illustrates how a highly-touted agency Scientific Integrity Policy has become a tool for just the opposite.

This whistleblower case is striking because it involves a high-level manager rather than a field biologist; Gary Mowad is a 28-year FWS veteran and former Deputy Director for law enforcement. For the past few years, Mowad had been the FWS Texas Administrator for the Ecological Services Division, handling a parade of thorny endangered species and natural resource issues arising out of the Lone Star State.

The hearing took place because Mowad challenged being placed on an open-ended “detail” causing him to leave Austin for Albuquerque for a position with no apparent duties. The reassignment followed his reporting a number of scientific integrity concerns, including what he termed a blatantly political decision by the FWS hierarchy to reverse the staff recommendation that the dune sagebrush lizard, with habitat in the heart of Texas oil country, be listed under the Endangered Species Act

In an August 18, 2014 hearing before the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, testimony indicated:

- Widespread scientific fraud, such as using models to classify paved parking lots as endangered species habitat, is facilitated by top FWS officials to accommodate a network of politically connected consultants called the “Texas mafia;”
- Within hours after Mowad’s disclosure to the FWS Scientific Integrity Officer, it was relayed to top headquarters officials, and he was ordered to vacate his office. An arrangement to end Mowad’s exile was personally quashed by FWS Director Dan Ashe; and
- The Whistleblower Ombudsman for Interior’s Office of Inspector General testified that “Months of pointed discussions and stern warnings...have not resulted in any formal and permanent action” to discipline managers guilty of misconduct or protect whistleblowers from further retaliation.

Mowad’s case quickly settled after MSPB Judge Mary Ann Garvey summarized what she had heard by saying “it appears that the history of the Fish and Wildlife, and specifically ...Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle, [Deputy Director Rowan] Gould, and Ashe is that whistleblowing retaliation is tolerated or even condoned. Apparently someone got promoted or something

good happened to them after they retaliated.”

“Political skewing of science in today’s Fish & Wildlife Service is just as rife and blatant as it was during the darkest days of the Bush years,” stated PEER Executive Director Jeff Ruch, whose organization represented other FWS scientists working in the Southwest Region under Tuggle. “The Service’s entrenched culture of corruption persists with the full knowledge and blessing of Director Dan Ashe.”

Currently, PEER is in federal district court trying to pry records out of FWS detailing the role Ashe and his top deputies played in derailing scientific misconduct cases. Ashe’s office maintains that no records exist documenting what others have testified about his actions. Adding injury to insult, the Interior Department, FWS’ parent agency, weakened its Scientific Integrity Policy, just before Christmas to make it even harder to discipline managers who override science in pursuit of agency agendas.

“After reading this transcript, it is hard to dispute that emerging safeguards against politicized science are stillborn,” added Ruch. “Until these agencies admit the problem exists, there will be no progress. The first meaningful step toward reform would be removing Dan Ashe as Director.” [See PEER lawsuit on FWS Director’s role in fraud cases](#)

✧

## Applications for turkey, pheasant and waterfowl stamp funding due April 10

Conservation organizations and units of government have until April 10, 2015 to apply for funds for developing, managing, preserving or restoring habitat for wild turkey, pheasant and waterfowl in Wisconsin.

[Read Article](#) ✧

## Wis. group planting 25K Chinooks

In March and/or April of 2015 the KSFCA club in Kenosha is receiving 25K Chinooks. This will be 33% of their quota. What they are doing this year is pumping Pike River water into the pond along with well water so they will have a successful imprinting of the Chinooks for a high return rate in 3 and 4 years back into Kenosha and the Pike River.

With the additional pumps and electricity use this project will cost \$3,000- \$3,500 and their club alone cannot finance this project. **They are asking all fishing clubs and businesses to help meet their financial goal** for the project to be successful. Thanks in-advance for your help. <http://www.kenoshasportfishing.com/info@kenoshasportfishing.com>. Send to:

Jim Zondlak, KSFCA, 5903 Pershing Blvd, Kenosha, WI 53144

Attn: rearing pond ✧

## Mass Marking Progress Report

Continued from page 1

### Summary of 2014 Chinook Tagging

This was the fourth year that all Chinook salmon stocked into Lake Michigan and the U.S. waters of Lake Huron received a coded wire tag and an adipose fin clip (ADCWT). Using two automated trailers, the lab tagged and clipped about 2.5 million Chinook salmon. Additionally, about 400,000 fish were adipose fin clipped only (AD only) and stocked into Lake Superior. These efforts required coordination and cooperation with seven state-administered hatcheries in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Illinois.

**Table 1- Total Chinook salmon tagged and completion dates by hatchery in 2014**

Hatchery	Agency	Number tagged	Date completed
Jake Wolf	Ill DNR	265,547	3/16/2014
Mixsawbah	IN DNR	202,713	3/22/2014
Kettle Moraine	WI DNR	102,657	4/2/2014
Wild Rose	WI DNR	721,454	4/17/2014
Wolf Lake	MI DNR	236,178	4/2/2014
Platte River	MI DNR	978,800	4/30/2014
Thompson (ADCWT)	MI DNR	46,797	4/24/2014
Thompson (AD only)	MI DNR	399,668	4/29/2014
Total tagged:		2,953,814	

### Chinook salmon tagging comparison 2010-14

This year had continued high performance in efficiency and throughput that is attributable to consistent operator experience, and hardware and software improvements. Average throughput has remained constant at over 8,700 fish/hour for the last two years and has risen from 6,800 fish/hour in 2010 (Table 2).

**Table 2- Total Chinook salmon processed and average throughput for 2010 - 2014 tagging at all hatcheries**

Year	# fish processed	# of machine run hours	Average fish/hour
2010	1,104,166	162.0	6,794
2011	4,689,947	667.4	7,241
2012	4,320,884	518.9	8,460
2013	2,856,038	319.0	8,749
2014	2,953,814	321.6	8,736

### Summary of 2014 Lake Trout Tagging

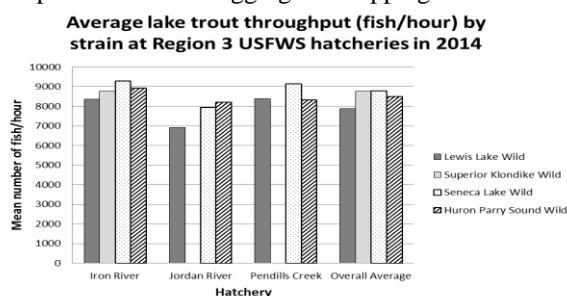
This was the fifth year that all lake trout (2010-2014) were coded wire tagged and adipose fin clipped at FWS hatcheries in Region 3. In 2014, 5,017,887 fish were processed at the three Region 3 FWS hatcheries. The Great Lakes Fish Tag & Recovery Lab also tagged and clipped all lake trout stocked into lakes Erie and Ontario raised by Region 5 of the USFWS. In 2014, using an automated trailer on loan from New York State DEC 1,169,119 fish were tagged and clipped at the Allegheny National Fish Hatchery, Warren, PA. An additional 225,000 lake trout were tagged and clipped at the Michigan DNR Marquette State Fish Hatchery (Table 3).

**Table 3. Total lake trout tagged by hatchery in 2013**

Hatchery	Agency	# tagged	Date completed
Marquette State	Mich DNR	225,000	7/20/2014
Jordan River	FWS-Reg 3	2,509,771	9/23/2014
Pendill's Creek	FWS-Reg 3	1,151,631	8/25/2014
Iron River	FWS-Reg 3	1,356,485	10/1/2014
Allegheny	FWS-Reg 5	1,169,119	9/12/2014
Total tagged:		6,412,006	

### Lake Trout Strain Comparison

Region 3 hatcheries raised four strains of lake trout for stocking into lakes Michigan and Huron: Seneca Lake Wild, Lewis Lake Wild, Superior Klondike Wild, and Huron Parry Sound Wild. Trailer efficiency is similar among strains with the exception of the Lewis Lake Wild strain that has lower average throughputs than the other strains (Fig 1). The lower throughputs for the Lewis Lake Wild strain are likely due to morphological and behavioral differences that cause complications when tagging and clipping.



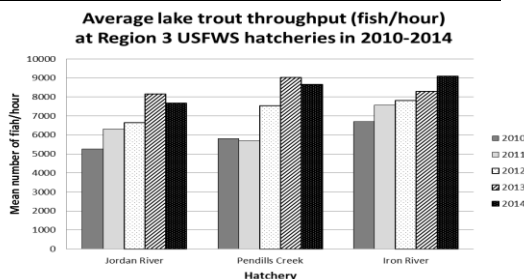
**Figure 1. average fish/hour for the four strains tagged and marked at Region 3 FWS hatcheries**

### Lake trout tagging comparison 2010 - 2014

The 2014 lake trout tagging season showed an overall increase in efficiency attributable to increased operator experience, and hardware and software improvements (Table 4, Fig 2). Average throughput has increased to 8,304 fish/hour in 2014 from under 6,000 fish/hour in 2010.

**Table 4- Total lake trout processed 2010-14, for all hatcheries combined**

Year	# processed	# machine run hours	Average (fish/hour)
2010	4,584,509	837.5	5,934
2011	5,077,425	796.6	6,532
2012	6,094,302	856.7	7,296
2013	5,660,034	697.3	8,100
2014	6,412,006	791.1	8,304



**Fig 2- average processed for all lake trout at FWS hatcheries for 2010 - 2014**

### Summary of 2014 Atlantic salmon tagging operations

During August 5 - 9, a small Atlantic salmon (ATS) tagging and marking project was conducted at the Michigan DNR Platte River State Fish Hatchery. Over four days and 20.7 machine processing hours, 91,653 ATS were adipose fin clipped and coded wire tagged and 62,535 were adipose fin clipped only (AD only). The average throughput was 6,919 fish/hour for ADCWT and 8,685 fish per hour for AD only, which is lower than that of lake trout and Chinook salmon, but a significant improvement over the throughput attained during previous years. In 2012 and 2013, the ATS projects took place in late October after the lake trout tagging season, when the fish were much larger; the average length in 2014 was 85 mm compared to 118 mm in 2012 and 107 mm in 2013. The increased throughput and efficiency in 2014 demonstrated the need to schedule future ATS tagging projects at a time when the fish are 80-90 mm T.L.

Prior to the 2012 pilot project, ATS had never been clipped and tagged using the automated tagging system and it was unknown how they would behave. This project provided insight on how the physical and behavioral differences exhibited by ATS affect the performance of the marking and tagging equipment compared to lake trout and Pacific salmon.

### Tag recovery from fish captured in Lakes Michigan and Huron

During April 17 – October 18, eleven FWS technicians worked with Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana DNRs sampling sport-caught salmon and trout on lakes Michigan and Huron. Anglers were engaged at various ports and boat landings, with the technicians concentrating their collections at fish cleaning stations and fishing tournaments. Almost 22,000 fish were sampled throughout the season for biological data as well as collecting snouts from 4,782 fish that contained coded wire tags (**Table 5**). Biological data collected included length, weight, fin clip lamprey wounding, sex, and aging structures. Field examination for fin clips determined whether field teams should scan for a CWT (i.e., CWT may be present if only an adipose fin is clipped) (**Table 5**). All hatchery reared lake trout and all 2011 – 2014 year class hatchery reared Chinook salmon have been fin clipped, therefore, any lake trout and any age 3 or younger Chinook salmon lacking a fin clip is presumed to be naturally reproduced (wild). The percent of wild Chinook salmon and lake trout (without a fin clip) was determined for each jurisdiction (**Table 6**). The oldest cohort of Chinook salmon (Age 4) was not all tagged, so the percent wild Chinook salmon values may be inflated. Fish snouts containing coded wire tags were sent to the Great Lakes Fish Tag and Recovery Laboratory for tag extraction and reading.

*Table 5- Number of fish by species examined by USFWS for CWTs from Lakes Michigan and Huron - 2014. Percentages for AD-clip, other-clip, and no-clip fish are based on the number of fish examined for fin clips; lack of fin clips indicates that the fish is of wild origin.*

State	Chinook Salmon	Lake Trout	Steelhead/Rainbow	Coho Salmon	Atlantic Salmon	Brown Trout	Total
Wisconsin	5,004	1,242	2,223	779	0	583	9,831
Michigan – L. Huron	277	621	94	6	31	1	1,034
Michigan – L. Mich.	5,051	1,535	93	42	1	35	6,757
Illinois	937	41	3	2	0	1	984
Indiana	1,178	963	414	584	0	37	3,176
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,447</b>	<b>4,402</b>	<b>2,827</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>21,782</b>
<b>% of total examined for fin clip</b>	11,837 (95.1%)	4,385 (99.6%)	2,292 (81.1%)	1,387 (98.2%)	32 (100%)	654 (99.5%)	20,587 (94.5%)
<b>Number of AD only clips</b>	4,726 (39.9%)	507 (11.6%)	179 (7.8%)	3 (0.2%)	1 (3.1%)	11 (1.7%)	5,427 (26.4%)
<b>Number of fish with no clip (wild)</b>	7,097 (60.0%)	903 (20.6%)	1,914 (83.5%)	1,381 (99.6%)	29 (90.6%)	598 (91.4%)	11,922 (57.9%)
<b>Number of other clips</b>	14 (0.1%)	2,975 (67.8%)	199 (8.7%)	3 (0.2%)	2 (6.3%)	45 (6.9%)	3,238 (15.7%)
<b>Number with CWT</b>	4,244 (35.9%)	424 (9.7%)	110 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.1%)	3 (0.5%)	4,782 (23.2%)

Table 6- Number of snouts processed 2014

Source agency	# heads collected	# tags lost	% lost tags	# no tag found	% no tag found
Grand Traverse Band	61	1	1.6	4	6.6
Indiana DNR/ USFWS	489	19	3.9	26	5.3
Intertribal Fisheries	390	17	4.4	7	1.8
Little River Band	145	1	0.7	10	6.9
Little Traverse Bay Band	692	23	3.3	23	3.3
Michigan DNR/ USFWS	6,099	104	1.7	258	4.2
New York DEC/ USFWS	3,963	105	2.6	75	1.9
Ontario MNR	118	5	4.2	12	10.2
USFWS	93	2	2.2	9	9.7
Wisconsin DNR/ USFWS	6,532	163	2.5	332	5.1
Notre Dame U.	13	0	0	1	7.7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>18,595</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>4.1</b>

## Appendix I

Total fish processed for all tagging and marking projects 2010-2014

Hatchery	Agency	Species	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jake Wolf	Illinois DNR	Chinook salmon	0	261,660	270,541	252,839	265,547
Mixsawbah	Indiana DNR	Chinook salmon	0	229,743	227,314	170,016	202,713
Kettle Moraine	Wisconsin DNR	Chinook salmon	0	239,237	283,007	118,295	102,657
Wolf Lake	Michigan DNR	Chinook salmon	0	937,835	785,689	232,625	236,178
Wild Rose	Wisconsin DNR	Chinook salmon	362,063	717,203	714,043	696,265	721,454
Thompson (ADCWT)	Michigan DNR	Chinook salmon	0	0	0	47,537	46,797
Thompson (AD only)	Michigan DNR	Chinook salmon	0	0	389,678	359,823	399,668
Platte River	Michigan DNR	Chinook salmon	742,103	2,050,744	1,471,953	978,638	978,800
Les Voight	Wisconsin DNR	Chinook salmon	0	253,525	178,659	0	0
Marquette	Michigan DNR	Lake trout	0	288,472	307,977	216,860	225,000
Pendills Creek	USFWS	Lake trout	986,367	1,237,450	1,043,453	1,141,112	1,151,631
Jordan River	USFWS	Lake trout	2,025,204	2,077,421	2,250,964	2,159,149	2,509,771
Iron River	USFWS	Lake trout	1,572,938	1,762,554	1,593,193	1,593,863	1,356,485
Allegheny	USFWS	Lake trout	0	0	898,715	549,050	1,169,119
White River	USFWS	Lake trout		413,279	0	0	0
Platte River (ADCWT)	Michigan DNR	Atlantic salmon	0	0	0	87,404	91,653
Platte River (AD only)	Michigan DNR	Atlantic salmon	0	0	97,804	46,302	62,535

◇

## Cabela's opening Sun Prairie, WI store April 30

Cabela's plans to celebrate the grand opening of its new Sun Prairie, Wis., store on April 30, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by a weekend-long celebration and fun-filled activities. Doors will open for business at 10 a.m. A complete schedule of events will be available on [www.cabelas.com/sunprairie](http://www.cabelas.com/sunprairie) when finalized. The 90,000 sq. ft. store is located in the Prairie Lakes Shopping Center at 1350 Cabela Dr. near Highway 151 and Grand Avenue. ✧

## Improvements planned for Torch River boating access site

The Michigan DNR announced upcoming improvements to the Torch River boating access site on Aarwood Trail in Kalkaska County.

The DNR will add approximately 15 vehicle/trailer parking spaces, as well as other traffic-control measures to improve visitor access to the site and help with the site's high user demand.

The two-phase project is planned for spring 2015. Phase-one work to clear trees for the additional parking began last month. The site will remain open to the public during this first phase. Information on the second phase, including the start date, estimated time of closure and alternative area launch sites, will be announced in early spring.

Funding for this project is provided by the Michigan State Waterways Fund, a restricted fund derived from boat registration fees and the state's marine fuel tax. This fund is designated for the construction, operation and maintenance of public recreational boating facilities. ✧

## DNR Master Angler program sees another successful year

The Michigan DNR announced the results from its 2014 Master Angler program—a program that has been in place since 1973 to recognize large fish caught by recreational anglers.

This past year, 987 anglers representing 19 states and Canada submitted catches that were recognized as Master Angler fish. That is a decrease from the 1,208 fish recognized in 2013. Of the entries accepted, 327 were categorized as "catch and keep" and 660 were categorized as "catch and release."

The most popular 2014 Master Angler entries by species include:

- 84 smallmouth bass
- 76 bluegill
- 60 crappie
- 57 channel catfish
- 56 rainbow trout
- 54 rock bass
- 37 walleye

Master Angler entries for 2014 included five state records, including flathead catfish (52.0 pounds, caught on Barron Lake by Dale Blakley of Niles); white perch (1.93 pounds, caught on Muskegon Lake by Aaron Slagh of Holland); brown bullhead (3.77 pounds, caught on Alcona Pond by Jared Gusler of Fairview); black buffalo (41.25 pounds, caught on Bear Lake by Joshua Teunis of Grand Haven); and quillback carpsucker (8.25 pounds, caught on Hardy Dam Pond by Benjamin Frey of Grand Rapids).

Submissions for the 2015 Master Angler program are being accepted now through January 10, 2016. To download an application, visit [www.michigan.gov/masterangler](http://www.michigan.gov/masterangler). Anglers are encouraged to submit their applications as fish are caught, rather than holding submissions until the end of the year.

The DNR reminds anglers that it is now even easier to participate in the Master Angler program, since the weight requirement has been removed for catch-and-keep entries. Anglers will no longer need to find a commercial scale to weigh their fish, as both the catch-and-keep and catch-and-release categories will now be based only on length. However, anglers should keep in mind that state-record fish still will be determined by weight.

Want the scoop on catching Master Angler-sized yellow perch? Check out this article online: [Click here](#) ✧

## Proposed MN rule change would protect fish from viral disease

The public has until 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 27, to send written comments on simplifying rules designed to control a contagious [fish disease](#). The rule change would also better protect fish spawning beds and fish preserves.

Part of the rule change proposed by the [Minnesota](#) Department of Natural Resources is about control and prevention of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS). Currently, only Lake Superior is designated as being positive for VHS. Much of the rule content [deals](#) with commercial bait use, harvest, possession and transportation. Proposed changes would simplify the regulations.

The other part of the rule change would add other [water](#) bodies to the list of designated spawning beds and fish preserves and make technical changes in the legal descriptions of water bodies already listed. Spawning fish can be vulnerable to harvest and human disturbance when in these areas.

Details about the rule change are [online](#). A [free copy](#) of the rules can be made available by calling the DNR at 651-259-5589. ✧

## OH to renovate shooting ranges

The Ohio DNR will be renovating firearms and archery shooting ranges across the state. These improvement efforts have already started at the Delaware Shooting Range located in the Delaware Wildlife Area east of U.S. Route 23. This Class A public range will receive much needed renovations, improvements and additions. The improvements will include 90 shooting positions, a significant increase from the existing range's 16 positions. New construction will begin this spring, and the reconstructed range is expected to be open by summer 2016.

ODNR's long-term goal is to renovate all five of the Class A ranges in the state. ✧

## MN DNR offers outdoor skills programs for women and families

Women and families wanting to learn how to hunt, fish and develop skills in other outdoor recreational activities can find a wide range of hands-on learning opportunities in the 2015 Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) catalog.

"Both women and families can take part in our programs," said Linda Bylander, BOW coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. "We focus on learning by doing in a friendly and supportive atmosphere."

Program offerings this year include a sturgeon fishing trip, grouse and pheasant hunts, kayaking and canoeing.

For more information about upcoming classes, visit [www.mndnr.gov/bow](http://www.mndnr.gov/bow) or call the DNR Information Center at 651-296-6157 or 888-646-6367 and request a copy of the BOW 2015 spring, summer and fall catalog of events. ✧

### Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

#### [Stabenow introduces legislation to stop spread of Asian carp](#)

The Defending Our Great Lakes Act would give federal agencies broad authority to take immediate actions to stop the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species.

#### [Court upholds Minnesota tribal fishing rights](#)

The federal government can't prosecute members of a Chippewa tribe who gill-netted fish on a Minnesota reservation and sold their catch off-reservation, an appeals court has ruled.

#### [Wisconsin marine sanctuary Proposal](#)

Proposed 875-square-mile area National Marine Sanctuary would run along the 60-mile stretch from Port Washington to Two Rivers

#### [Bills would drop wolf protections](#)

Gray wolves in Great Lakes states would lose court-ordered protection under legislation proposed in Congress, the latest offensive in a 12-year battle over whether the predator species is secure enough to allow hunting and trapping or should retain its federal shield.

#### [Report shows ballast water regulations working to rid Great Lakes of invasive species](#)

Regulations that prevent international ships from dumping their ballast water into North American waterways are helping to keep invasive species out of the Great Lakes, according to an annual report by the Great Lakes Seaway Ballast Water Working Group

#### [Lake Michigan and Lake Huron expected to be significantly higher than last summer](#)

Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are expected to continue to rise into this coming summer. The current forecast has the lake levels significantly higher this summer as compared to last summer.

#### [Trees diminishing along Lake Huron shoreline](#)

The amount of tree cover has been reduced considerably over the last few years by development and agriculture to the point that we're losing a valuable tool in improving water quality and reducing erosion.

#### [Ballast water monitoring on Great Lakes curbs invasive species population](#)

The risk of new aquatic invasive species being introduced into the Great Lakes via ballast water from ships is extremely low, according to the federal group Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

#### [Emergency trout rule takes effect in Lake Superior](#)

The emergency rule protects the trout population of the Apostle Islands region of Lake Superior, according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It's the first time the trout quota has been reduced for sport angler

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