



## Fisheries propose Lake Michigan Chinook stocking reduction

*Changes in ecosystem and historic lows in forage abundances, suggest needed shift in fishery policies*

Following extensive consultation with angler groups and other stakeholders, and more than three years of research and monitoring, the Lake Michigan Committee on June 13 proposed a lake-wide reduction of 62% in Chinook salmon stocking into Lake Michigan in 2017.

The stocking reduction represents a commitment by fishery managers to maintain a quality and diversified Lake Michigan salmon and trout fishery in the face of a changing ecosystem and record low abundances of prey fish populations, including alewives. The Lake Michigan Committee comprises all state management agencies that border Lake Michigan and Michigan's Tribal Governments signatory to the 1836 Treaty of Washington. Recommendations from the committee represent the consensus of all of its members.

The proposed 2017 stocking reduction comes four years after managers implemented a 50% lake-wide reduction in Chinook salmon stocking in 2013. Fisheries management agencies met several times with constituents in 2012 to decide on changes to the salmon management strategy which were then instituted in 2013. Increases in natural reproduction of Chinook, and declines in the abundance of alewives and overall productivity of the system have led to recent stocking changes to maintain the predator-prey balance in the lake.

Research by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state partners indicates that natural reproduction currently accounts for more than 60% of all Chinook in Lake Michigan. With alewife (the key prey fish for Chinook salmon) populations at or near historic lows, the Lake Michigan

Committee's proposed strategy is intended to preserve important salmon and trout angling opportunities in each state. Changes to the lake's food web, including the prevalence of invasive mussels, have complicated the equation by diminishing the amount of food available for alewives, which has contributed to the greatly diminished abundances of this key prey fish. Given the massive numbers of quagga mussels in Lake Michigan, prey fish are not expected to rebound any time soon to numbers that would support current stocking levels.

For 2017, Lake Michigan managers propose a total lake-wide stocking of 690,000 Chinook salmon, down from the current 1,800,000. The proposed reduction follows the 2013 stocking cuts, when state natural

### **Chinook stocking reduction**

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## Industry advocates back Senate fisheries bill

*Will safeguard fisheries from NPS closures*

Marine and fishing industry advocates are praising a bill introduced in the Senate, saying it would safeguard the role of states in fisheries management.

S.2807 would help prevent unwarranted fishing closures such as what recently occurred at Biscayne National Park, according to a coalition of groups that include the National Marine Manufacturers Association, the Coastal Conservation Association, the American Sportfishing Association, the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, BoatUS, the Center for Coastal Conservation and the International Game Fish Association.

Led by Sens. Bill Cassidy, R-La., chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on

National Parks, and Marco Rubio, R-Fla., the Preserving Public Access to Public Waters Act would require the National Park Service to have approval from state fish and wildlife agencies before closing state marine or Great Lakes waters to recreational or commercial fishing.

"Given the significant economic, social and conservation benefits that recreational fishing provides to the nation, any decision to close or restrict public access should be based on sound science and strong management principles," [American Sportfishing Association president and CEO Mike Nussman said in a statement.](#)

### **Advocates back Senate bill**

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## DNR seeks feedback on Lake Michigan management

### Informational meetings for Wisconsin anglers slated for June 27, 29 & 30

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will convene three public meetings in late June to discuss management strategies and opportunities for Lake Michigan in light of continued challenges facing salmon populations and the alewives they feed on.

The meetings will focus on a variety of potential management actions to ensure continued diverse opportunities for sport anglers. Topics for discussion will include finding the right species mix, use of net pens, hatchery production, habitat restoration and the potential to increase focus on species with the greatest chances of thriving given the record low levels of open water forage fish such as alewives and rainbow smelt.

The initiative represents part of an ongoing effort by DNR to ensure anglers' voices are heard as ecological changes continue to alter Lake Michigan's food web. The meetings follow announcement of a proposal by the Lake Michigan Committee charged with managing the Lake Michigan fishery, to reduce lake-wide stocking of Chinook salmon by 61.5%, beginning in 2017.

Economic hardships caused by collapse of the salmon fishery in Lake Huron starting in 2003-04 offer a cautionary tale for Wisconsin given the more than \$114.3 million in annual retail expenditures by Great Lakes sport anglers here. By working to preserve Lake Michigan's salmon fishery, DNR and its partners in surrounding states aim to navigate through the current predator-prey challenges to preserve and protect this economically important fishery.

If this proposal is implemented, Wisconsin fishery managers would continue efforts to ensure a fall salmon run in Lake Michigan Rivers and streams in 10 counties. Anglers attending the upcoming meetings will be asked to provide feedback on Wisconsin's plans to distribute Chinook salmon at locations including Strawberry Creek Rearing Facility, Green Bay and Lake

Michigan tributaries or ports in Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Kewaunee, Door, Oconto and Marinette counties.

Brad Eggold, DNR southern Lake Michigan fisheries supervisor, said that while Chinook salmon would remain an essential part of the diverse Lake Michigan fishery, going forward, species that show more adaptability in their feeding preferences may play a larger role. In addition to Chinook, each year DNR stocks hundreds of thousands of coho salmon, brown trout and rainbow trout at more than 40 locations along the Lake Michigan coast. The Wisconsin waters of Lake Michigan also receive about 800,000 lake trout produced by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Working with anglers, we intend to use a variety of techniques to optimize survival of stocked trout and salmon," Eggold said. "At the same time, we will continue to work with stakeholders on projects to enhance the salmon and trout fishery on Lake Michigan. We also intend to review our management practices to ensure we are able to respond quickly as new information becomes available."

The three meetings are set for 6 to 8 p.m.:

- Monday, June 27, Lakeshore Technical College, Centennial Hall West, 1290 North Ave., Cleveland, WI 53015
- Wednesday, June 29, Brown County Library, Auditorium, 515 Pine St., Green Bay, WI 54301
- Thursday, June 30, UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences, Ballroom, 600 E. Greenfield Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204

To learn more about [Lake Michigan fisheries management](#) including [historic stocking trends](#) visit [DNR.wi.gov](http://DNR.wi.gov) and search "[Fishing Lake Michigan](#)." More info about the meetings: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/lakemichigan/LakeMichiganSalmonandTroutMeetings.html> ✧



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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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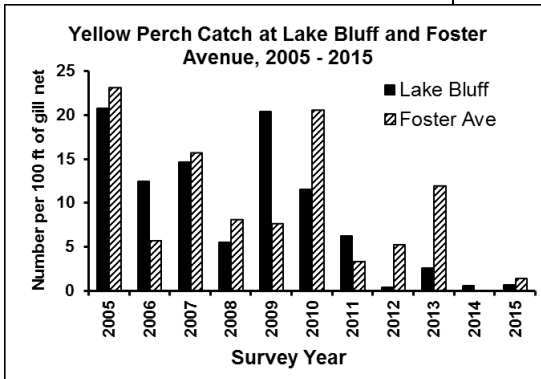
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## More Lake Michigan issues

### Adult Yellow Perch abundance low, yet early indicators suggest strong 2015 year class produced

Yellow perch seining in 2015 yielded the highest number of young-of-the-



year (YOY) perch we have seen since sampling began in 1978. Most fish management agencies around the lake also reported similar high catches of YOY yellow perch in 2015. This is a significant change from the relatively poor recruitment of yellow perch over the past 4 years. The abundance of YOY perch in 2015 is encouraging; however, those fish will need to survive and grow over the next few years before reaching sizes that anglers prefer. YOY catches in 2010 were strong (previous record high) but have contributed very little to angler harvest so far. Catches of adult yellow perch increased at our two annual sampling sites from record low catches in 2014 (total catch = 33 perch) but the increase was not reflected in the angler catch, which continued to decline. The 2012 and 2010 year classes made up 94% of yellow perch that were sampled. In general, healthy yellow perch populations are composed of multiple year classes and also contain older individuals that that may be more reproductively successful. ■

### Fewer coho salmon likely to be stocked in 2016

The 2015 fall salmon runs at Michigan weirs did not produce

enough fish for us to obtain all of the eggs necessary to stock our full complement of fish. We did receive additional Chinook salmon eggs from Wisconsin to reach our stocking target of 235,000 fish; however, we anticipate that coho salmon stocking will be less than our target of 300,000 fish. Due to the late season run and overall poor returns of adults, all of our coho salmon came from Wisconsin this year. An initial collection of eggs was transferred to Jake Wolf Memorial Hatchery in late October. The final group of fry was acquired in January. The hatchery projects stocking between 250,000 and 300,000 coho salmon, assuming good survival in the

hatchery for the next two months. These salmon also will be smaller than usual because of the late start. Brown trout and rainbow trout will be stocked at the usual numbers (110,000 each). In 2015, we experimented with using a tube to stock fish below the surface of the water. The fish appeared less disoriented and remained deeper and away from predatory gulls. With a few modifications for 2016, we think this change in stocking method will improve survival of the newly stocked fish. ■

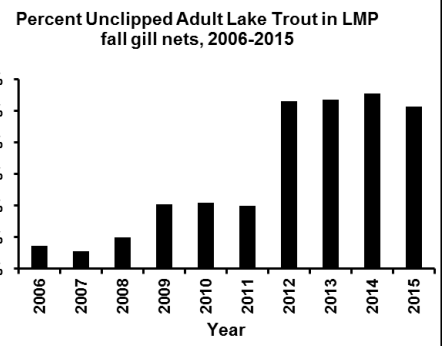
### Forage fish abundance continues to decline in Lake Michigan

Forage fish assessments by the US Geological Survey indicate that the lakewide abundance of all forage fish continues to decline. These fish species are the primary food of Lake Michigan salmon, trout, and other sport fish. Alewife biomass (total weight) is at its lowest level since the bottom trawl survey began in 1973. The decline in forage fishes is corroborated by the USGS acoustic survey that also tracks newly hatched fish. Alewife and other forage fish may be found in high numbers in Illinois waters in spring, as reported

by anglers and measured by DNR surveys, but the overall lower lakewide abundance of these fish has been causing them to be very patchy throughout the lake and often dispersed by mid-summer. Anglers should be concerned because low forage fish abundance doesn't bode well for future Chinook and coho salmon harvests. The Lake Michigan Committee (Great Lakes Fishery Commission) adopted a new Salmonid Strategy in 2013 that reduced the number of Chinook salmon stocked in the lake by 50% in an effort to bring the number of predators more in line with the available forage. In light of the continuing decline in forage, further changes to the stocking strategy may be required. In addition, the Lake Michigan Committee has formed a Native Planktivore Task Group to investigate rehabilitation strategies for native prey fishes such as cisco (lake herring) that are better adapted to the lake than alewife. ■

### Lake Trout natural recruitment evident in Lake Michigan, highest in Illinois waters

Lake Trout without a fin clip are being caught more frequently in Illinois waters. All lake trout stocked in lakes Michigan and Huron receive



a fin clip to designate them as hatchery-origin fish. The largest proportion of fish without a fin clip are found in Illinois waters (>50% of fish in LMP fall gill net surveys). Smaller percentages of unclipped fish

*Continued*

**More issues - continued**

are being caught as you move north through the lake (~20% Midlake Refuge; 4% Northern Refuge).

USFWS headhunters along with INHS staff have been collecting data on the sport harvest of lake trout at launch ramps during the summer. Around 30% of the lake trout harvested during the summer at North Point Marina and Waukegan were natural fish. It also appears that these fish are from multiple age classes. This may be the first indication of sustained natural reproduction in Lake Michigan and it is likely occurring in Illinois waters. Again, thanks to those that contributed to data collection. ■

### **Coded-wire tag study helps document Chinook salmon movements and natural reproduction**

Chinook salmon natural recruitment and movements throughout Lake

Michigan are being documented by use of coded-wire tags. The tags are implanted in juvenile Chinook salmon by the USFWS at state hatcheries. The study also includes tagged Chinook from Lake Huron, which anglers catch in our waters, so that immigration rates can be estimated. Initial indications are that the Chinook salmon that Illinois anglers catch during the spring and summer are fish that were stocked at various spots all around the lake as well as natural fish. Late season fish tend to be from the areas where they were stocked. Natural reproduction appears to be holding steady and about 50% of the Chinook salmon swimming around in Lake Michigan are natural fish. Thanks to all of the anglers, charter captains, and Salmon Unlimited of Illinois members that have been instrumental in the collection of biological data and tags to make this study a success. ■

### **ILL DNR meeting for Lake Michigan anglers slated for June 23**

The IDNR will hold an informational public meeting to discuss the Chinook stocking reduction and salmon and trout management in Lake Michigan. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 23, 2016, and will be held at the CMS Suburban North Regional Office Facility, 9511 W. Harrison Street, Des Plaines, IL 60016. Attendees are asked to please use the south parking lot and enter through the building's south doors.

The agenda will include presentations on recent changes in the lake ecosystem, Chinook salmon and prey fish population abundances, coded-wire tag returns, Illinois salmon and trout harvest, and tools used to inform trout and salmon management decisions. Time will be reserved for questions discussion of mutual matters of concern. ✧

## **Lake Trout shatters previous state record**

Indiana's youngest charter boat captain shattered the state lake trout record by "accidentally" catching a fish that was older than he is. Tyler Kreighbaum, 25, owner of Tightline Fishing Charters in Michigan City, caught the fish in Lake Michigan on Saturday, June 11. It measured 44" long and weighed 37.55 lbs., beating the previous state record by about 8 pounds.

"I caught it by accident," Kreighbaum said. "I thought I was hooked on bottom. I was trying to break the line off." Kreighbaum, his wife and first mate Britney, and five clients were trolling with downriggers near the Michigan state line. Kreighbaum said the trout came up easily, which was another reason he thought he had hooked debris, and not a fish.

Even after landing the fish, Kreighbaum didn't immediately recognize its significance. "I wasn't really thinking," he said. "I had no clue it was a record. It was a big fish.

But I didn't know it was that big."

Biologists estimate the fish was born in the late 1970s because of a clipped fin. In the 1970s, four rounds of lake trout stockings took place in southern Lake Michigan, and all those fish had that fin clipped. The average lake trout caught in southern Lake Michigan is 8 to 10 years old and weighs 7.5 to 8 lbs., according to Ben Dickinson, assistant Lake Michigan fisheries biologist for the DNR. "I was really excited to see a fish that big," Dickinson said. "It blew me away. I hope that this gets more people interested in Lake Michigan. People will see there is a potential to catch such large fish."

Lake trout are native to Lake Michigan. The previous state record was a 29 lb., 4 oz. fish caught by Harold Rodriguez in Lake Michigan in 1993. The USFWS stocks lake trout in southern Lake Michigan every year. Kreighbaum said he planned on having a taxidermist make two replicas of the fish for display.

Most lake trout are harvested instead of being caught and released. The reason is most don't live after they are caught. Catching fish in deep, cold water and pulling them to surface stresses them out.

Kreighbaum is a full-time diesel mechanic who operates a charter boat on weekends. He is the son of long-time charter captain Steve Kreighbaum. Tyler Kreighbaum's charter website is [www.tightlinefish.com](http://www.tightlinefish.com).

Lake Michigan fisheries biologist Brian Breidert said the current weather pattern of south winds has resulted in colder water temperatures and good fishing near shore. When winds blow from the south, it pushes warm water farther into the lake and allows cold water to fill in. That means conditions are conducive to fishing for salmon, steelhead trout and lake trout near shore.

Anglers can monitor water temperatures at different depths at [www.greatlakesbuoys.org](http://www.greatlakesbuoys.org). ✧

## Long-term changes in fish community from Asian carp in Mississippi River and other large floodplain rivers

The Upper Mississippi River System, including the Illinois River, has been invaded by a number of nonnative species including silver carp and bighead carp. Silver carp densities in the Illinois River have increased dramatically and now represent some of the highest densities of wild silver carp worldwide.

Asian carps have the potential to alter ecosystems by consuming planktonic resources and, therefore, could have the ability to alter existing fish communities as most fishes are dependent on planktonic resources during early development. However, identifying the relationship of fish community structure to the establishment of Asian carps has yet to be thoroughly investigated. Using data collected by the Upper Mississippi River Restoration's Long Term Resource Monitoring element, we investigate changes in fish community structure pre- and post-establishment of Asian carps.

Significant differences in the pre- and post-establishment communities were observed for the majority of gears and habitats. Species contributing to changes between establishment periods included most sportfish species and catostomids, which were less abundant post-establishment of Asian carps, while shortnose gar, grass carp, and emerald shiner were more abundant. While our analyses show Asian carps are likely contributing to major differences in fish community structure, future research and long-term monitoring should investigate the mechanisms and interactions responsible for community changes.

For the full 13 page report:



Solomon et al. Bio  
Inv 2016 Impacts of / ✧

## Anglers reminded to check regs for specific Bass Species

Anglers planning to pursue striped bass, white bass and hybrid-striped bass are reminded to check the 2016-2017 Ohio Fishing regulations before dropping their line in the water. For all Ohio waters, except Lake Erie and areas immediately upstream in its tributaries as specified in the regulations book, the bag limit is 30 fish per day, with no more than four of those fish being larger than 15" according to the Ohio DNR.

White bass and hybrid-striped bass congregate in large schools throughout the year and can easily be caught in larger numbers, making them vulnerable to overharvest. At small sizes, these three species are difficult to tell apart so the same regulations have been set to protect all of them.

White bass are a popular sport fish that can be caught in large numbers, especially during the spring when they migrate into tributaries of larger water bodies to spawn. These fish are typically 10 to 14 inches long and usually weigh about 1 pound, but can grow to 21 inches and reach a weight of 4 pounds.

Striped bass were previously stocked into Seneca and Kiser reservoirs to provide brood-stock for hybrid-striped bass production, and they are still available for anglers to catch.

Hybrid-striped bass are stocked into 10 reservoirs throughout Ohio, the Muskingum River and the Ohio River to provide trophy fishing opportunities. A hybrid-striped bass is a cross between a striped bass and a white bass. This sport fish is typically 12 to 22 inches long and weighs 1 to 5 pounds, but a hybrid-striped bass can reach more than 30 inches and 18 pounds.

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

## Larger muskies stocked in Lake Webster

Responding to a decline in muskie fishing at Lake Webster, the DNR is modifying its muskie stocking program at the popular lake in northern Indiana. On May 19, biologists released 1,500 muskies into Lake Webster that were 12-14" long.

The 1,500 fish were held at the Fawn River State Hatchery in Orland over winter and fed minnows.

"We've seen a big drop in muskie fishing at Webster during the past 10 years," said Jed Pearson, DNR biologist. "Holding half of the muskies we stock each year for a longer period in the hatchery should help reverse the trend."

Each fingerling was tagged with a transponder before release. A similar group of 1,500 smaller muskies scheduled to be stocked this fall also will be tagged.

"The tags will allow us to test which group survives better," Pearson said. "If the spring-stocked muskies win out, we'll probably switch the stockings entirely to the spring."

Pearson said studies in Iowa proved spring-stocked muskies survive better than muskies stocked in the fall. Larger fingerlings can also avoid more predators.

To improve stocking efficiency, the length of time muskie fingerlings were fed minnows before release was shortened to 30 days. Additionally, weed control altered muskie habitat and reduced the amount of cover where fingerlings could hide.

Because of these changes, survival of stocked fingerlings took a nosedive. Eventually the number of adult muskies dropped too.

In 2005, anglers caught 2,200 muskies. Last year, they caught 560. Fishing efforts directed at muskies dropped by 50% over the same period. "We estimate there are now fewer than 500 muskies in the lake," Pearson said. "That's a huge decline from the 5,000 we had 10 years ago. We're hoping the switch to a spring-stocking program will get the number back up somewhere in the middle."

Muskie anglers hope so too. ✧

## SCOTUS rules against Army Corps of Engineers rulings in waters

In a win for local governments, the Supreme Court concluded that jurisdictional determinations issued by the Army Corps of Engineers under the Clean Water Act can be reviewed in court immediately. In some instances, this ruling will allow local governments to avoid the permitting process, which is time-consuming and costly.

The Supreme Court does not (yet) have the issue of whether the new regulations defining “waters of the U.S.” exceed the EPA authority. In the meantime, in [\*United States Army Corp of Engineers v. Hawkes\*](#) the Court ruled unanimously that an approved jurisdictional determination that property contains “waters of the United States” may be immediately reviewed in court.

This case involves three companies that wanted to mine peat from wetland property in Minnesota. The Corp issued an approved JD that the property contained WOTUS because its wetlands had a “significant nexus” to a river located about 120 miles away. Per the Administrative Procedures Act,

judicial review may be sought only from final agency actions. Per *Bennett v. Spear* (1997), agency action is final when it marks the consummation of the agency’s decision making process and when legal consequences flow from the action.

The Court, in an opinion written by Justice Chief Roberts, concluded that an approved JD is a final agency action subject to court review because it meets both conditions laid out in *Bennett*. The Corp didn’t argue that an approved JD is tentative; its regulations describe approved JDs as “final agency action” valid for five years. Approved JDs give rise to “direct and appreciable legal consequences,” the Court reasoned, because the Corp is bound by them for five years. And a “longstanding memorandum of agreement” between the Corp and EPA binds the EPA. So, per an approved JD, the two agencies authorized to bring civil enforcement proceedings under the Clean Water Act, practically speaking, grant or deny a property owner a five-year safe harbor from such proceedings.

The SLLC [amicus brief](#) pointed

out states and local governments (as landowners and partners with the business community responsible for economic development and capital infrastructure) would be negatively affected if judicial review of JDs were not possible. The Court agreed that neither alternative to judicial review is adequate. Proceeding without a permit could lead to civil penalties of up to \$37,500 a day; seeking a permit can be “arduous, expensive, and long.”

Interestingly, in three separate concurrences (each about a page long), Justices Kennedy, Thomas, Alito, Kagan, and Ginsburg debate whether an approved JD really is binding on EPA and whether it matters. Justice Kennedy warns that if it isn’t, “the Act’s ominous reach would again be unchecked by the limited relief the Court allows today.” In light of this discussion, the Corp and EPA are likely to clarify the nature of their agreement.

Read the opinion here: [http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/15pdf/15-290\\_6k37.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/15pdf/15-290_6k37.pdf) ✧

## Moving barges have potential to transport invasive fish

When a moving barge encounters small fish in the Illinois Waterway there is a possibility that the fish will become trapped in the gap between barges, according to a new study by the USFWS and the USGS.

Results of the study indicate the potential for small fish to be transported through the electric dispersal barrier, which was built to keep invasive species such as Asian carp from passing between the Mississippi River and Great Lakes Basin. However, there is no evidence to date that Asian carp have crossed the Electric Barrier System in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

The study was conducted in 2015 to examine the potential for upstream transport of invasive Asian carp. Barges, which are flat-bottomed boats that carry freight, regularly move

from locations where Asian carp are abundant to areas where Asian carp are not yet established. Once trapped, fish may be transported upstream over long distances, upwards of nine miles, and through navigational locks and the Electric Dispersal Barrier System on the Illinois Waterway.

Results show that as a barge tow moves upstream, the three feet of water surrounding the barge and the water included in the gap between barges is also dragged upstream. The speed of the water surrounding the barge can be fast enough to overcome the swimming ability of small fish, allowing fish to be drawn into and trapped in the gap between barges. To assess the number of fish that move upstream with a barge tow scientists marked free-swimming fish and released them in front of the barge or

in the gap between barges. Scientists later recaptured the fish upstream using nets cast in the gap space. The study used golden shiners, a fish native to the Illinois Waterway and similar in size and swimming ability to small Asian carp.

“Measuring the flow around a barge as it travels allows us to better understand the forces these fish are subject to as a barge passes by,” said Ryan Jackson, a USGS hydrologist and co-author of the study.

The FWS and the USGS plan to continue investigating barge tow operations to reduce the likelihood of trapping and transporting fish in the gap between barges. Future studies will also test the trapping of small fish in parts of the Illinois Waterway with abundant Asian carp populations. ✧

## Walleye stockings continue at Kokomo Reservoir

The Indiana DNR stocked another 25,000 walleye fingerlings in Kokomo Reservoir in May, marking the 20th year that walleyes have been released into the 484-acre Howard County impoundment. The walleyes averaged 1.5" long and were produced at the Cikana State Fish Hatchery near Martinsville.

Walleyes are stocked in Kokomo Reservoir to provide walleye fishing opportunities in central Indiana. Sampling by DNR fisheries biologists has shown that walleye survival is good at Kokomo Reservoir. Last fall, biologists captured 46 walleyes during three hours of nighttime electrofishing. Sixteen walleyes were from the 2015 stocking, and 23 walleyes were from the 2014 stocking. Seven older walleyes up to 20 inches long also were captured.

For stockings to be deemed successful, electrofishing catch rates must exceed seven per hour for newly stocked fingerlings and four per hour of 1-year-old walleyes. Although the catch rate of newly stocked walleyes at Kokomo was below standard last year, the catch rate of 1-year-old walleyes was double the standard.

"We keep regular tabs on walleye stockings to make sure they meet our success criteria," said Tyler Delauder, assistant DNR biologist. "Although Kokomo is not one of our best walleye lakes, it is good enough to continue stocking." Delauder says walleyes can be found throughout the reservoir but tend to congregate more in areas with rock habitat. Delauder also reminds anglers that any walleye taken from Kokomo Reservoir and most other public waters north of State Road 26 must be at least 16 inches long. The daily bag limit is six walleyes.

For more information on the Kokomo Reservoir walleye stocking program, anglers can contact Delauder at [tdelauder@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:tdelauder@dnr.IN.gov) or biologist Jed Pearson at [jpearson@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:jpearson@dnr.IN.gov). ✧

## NY Black Sea Bass season opens June 27

New York is opening the recreational black sea bass fishing season on June 27 and reducing daily limits from eight fish to three during the summer to meet the 23% harvest reduction required by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The proposed changes will ensure New York's fishery is consistent with federal coast-wide fisheries management plans for black sea bass.

"The federal government must fundamentally change its management of the popular and economically important black sea bass fishery," said DEC Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos. "In spite of abundant populations, DEC is being forced to alter the commercial and recreational fishing seasons in order to meet federal quotas. By allowing for an earlier June opening, we're trying to strike the best possible arrangement for the recreational fishing community."

The proposed rule will include a number of changes from 2015:

- Increases the minimum size by 1 inch from 14 to 15 inches for the entire season;
- Reduces the daily possession limit from eight fish to three fish;
- Opens the season 19 days earlier on June 27 with the three fish possession limit through August 31; and
- The eight fish possession limit from September-October and the 10 fish possession limit from November-December will not change.

Strong, anecdotal evidence suggests the black sea bass population is abundant. However, weaknesses in the federal government's current population assessment caused federal scientists to exercise extreme caution when determining annual harvest limits for black sea bass. A new federal stock assessment is scheduled to be completed in late 2016 and should provide important data to expand harvest opportunities in 2017.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7894.html>. ✧

## Anglers can help with studies underway on Mille Lacs Lake

Anglers fishing Mille Lacs Lake can help the Minnesota DNR collect essential data needed for improving walleye fishing in the near future.

Anglers can lend a hand by participating in the annual creel survey that is done to monitor the walleye harvest.

The data provided by anglers is essential to helping the DNR estimate total fishing effort and walleye survival rates. Additionally, DNR creel clerks this year will ask Mille Lacs anglers how their fish were caught and whether they used artificial or live bait. That information will inform a new two-year project looking at how many walleye do not survive after being caught and released, referred to as hooking mortality.

The hooking mortality study is a cutting-edge project to catch and release 1,500 walleye of specific sizes throughout the fishing season and under a variety of environmental conditions and fishing methods. Other such studies have been done in Minnesota and across the country, but none have been as intensive as the Mille Lacs study, which includes a focus on bait types and additional detail on angling methods.

Anglers on the water might actually see aspects of the hooking mortality study. It will be done from boats designated with special flags or on special launches. When a walleye is caught, the boat will signal a nearby DNR shuttle boat via marine radio or air horn blast. Walleye will be immediately transferred to the shuttle boat so the DNR can take the fish to a nearby net pen.

Walleye will be kept in net pens for five days to determine how many survive after being caught; surviving fish will then be released. Data about each fish and how it was caught will be recorded. Next year, the DNR will repeat the catching and data collection with 1,500 more walleye.

For more information: [www.mndnr.gov/millelacslake](http://www.mndnr.gov/millelacslake). ✧

## Women can learn how to catch walleye from a pro Aug 5 & 6

Women can learn how to fish for walleye from pro angler Mandy Uhrich and participate in a four-hour guided fishing trip on Leech Lake—a destination well known for outstanding walleye fishing.

“In this weekend event based out of Walker at Chase on the Lake Resort, Mandy will cover the basics of how to fish for walleye, touching on equipment selection, habitat, and tips on where and when to fish,” said



Linda Bylander, coordinator of the Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) program at the Minnesota DNR. “The next day, women will fish with fishing guides. Equipment, bait and instruction is provided.”

The weekend event begins 7 p.m. August 5, and runs through August 6, in the afternoon. Required registration is \$285 which includes one night of lodging, breakfast, lunch, four-hour guided fishing and fishing seminar with Uhrich. To register or more information about the weekend, call Bylander at 218-203-4347. Visit [www.mndnr.gov/bow](http://www.mndnr.gov/bow) for more info on the BOW program. ✧

## Ford Hoosier Outdoor Experience moved to June 2017

The next Ford Hoosier Outdoor Experience, an event that has been held every September since its inception in 2009, will take place on June 10-11, 2017. The 2017 event, as previous events, will be held at Fort Harrison State Park in Indianapolis. The Ford Hoosier Outdoor Experience is being postponed this year because of the extensive activities across the state to celebrate the centennial of Indiana State Parks. ✧

## DNR’s BOW program offers mom-daughter workshop July 30

The Michigan DNR Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) program is offering a Mother/Daughter workshop in the city of Marquette. Scheduled for July 30, at the campground at Tourist Park, this program is for mothers and their daughters (between the ages of 10-17) who would like to learn some kayaking, backpacking and hiking skills.

The workshop goes from 9:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Lunch will be provided as well as all equipment. Each class will be two hours long and will be held round-robin-style. The cost is \$20 for each mother/daughter group and it is limited to 10 groups. Deadline for registration is July 22nd. Class info and registration: [www.michigan.gov/bow](http://www.michigan.gov/bow); Sharon Pitz, 906-228-6561 [pitzs@michigan.gov](mailto:pitzs@michigan.gov) ✧

## Lake Superior Chinook dominated by wild fish

Michigan’s Lake Superior Chinook salmon fishery is being fueled almost entirely from natural reproduction. More than 99% of the Lake Superior Chinook salmon caught are wild.

All 1.5 million Chinook salmon stocked in Lake Superior since 2012 have received adipose fin clips via the USFWS’s mass marking program, making it easy to distinguish which fish are wild or of hatchery origin.

An average of around 3,000 Chinook salmon is caught yearly by sport anglers in Lake Superior. This ranks this species as the third highest to be sustained by natural reproduction in this water body, following lake trout and coho salmon.

Assessments like this are important when evaluating stocking effectiveness and provide information needed to make proper management decisions. The DNR will continue to monitor Chinook salmon catch data to help ensure the long-term viability of this important species in the Lake Superior fishery. For more information: [Michigan.gov/taggedfish](http://Michigan.gov/taggedfish). ✧

## Great Lakes Protection Fund looking for ideas, and stakeholder participation

The Great Lakes Protection Fund is looking for new ideas, new projects and new cohorts of people to catalyze a transition to a new era of water systems. The Fund has already invested in teams working to pilot strategies to drive changes in our existing water systems. The fund wants to expand that portfolio, adding efforts that, for example:

- test new solutions to urban storm water and rural drainage,
- integrate water management,
- test watershed approaches,
- prototype new ways to manage coastal processes, and
- demonstrate other strategies to create the building blocks for the next generation of water systems.

The Fund is interested in your best ideas, even if they may not be pre-proposal ready. The cutoff date for pre-proposals is July 25, 2016. For more information: <http://glpf.org/get-funding/projects-wanted/reimagining-great-lakes-water-systems-rfp/>. ✧

## Free Fishing Clinics in New York

At free clinics, participants can fish for free; no freshwater fishing license or enrollment in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry is required.

In addition to fishing, participants can learn about fish identification, fishing equipment and techniques, fisheries management, angling ethics and aquatic ecology. It’s the perfect opportunity to try fishing for the first time or bring the family for a great experience. Visit our Free Fishing Clinics webpage for more on upcoming clinics. [Click Here](#)

Free Fishing Days June 25-26, is Free Fishing Weekend in New York, and November 11, 2016 has also been designated as a Free Fishing Day. During these days, anyone can fish the waters of New York and no license is required! It’s the perfect opportunity to introduce someone to the sport of fishing. ✧



## NY season for smallmouth and largemouth bass opens June 18

Anglers are reminded that the regular (harvest) season for black bass (largemouth and smallmouth bass) opens on Saturday, June 18. Anglers are permitted to keep 5 fish with a minimum size limit of 12 inches. The regular season continues through November 30. Exceptions to the regular season exist on Long Island and elsewhere, so anglers should check the [Freshwater Fishing Regulations](#) to make sure they are aware of the regulations on the water they are fishing. Anglers can also download the [2016-17 Freshwater Fishing Regulations Guide](#) as an 8.7 MB PDF file or view the guide through an [interactive viewer](#). ✧

## Chinook stocking reduction

*Continued from page 1*

resource managers agreed to a decrease from previous levels of 3.3 million Chinook stocked each year.

Each Lake Michigan Committee member agency must still approve and implement the committee's recommendations. Each state agency will now work to discuss and implement changes in a manner most appropriate to their jurisdiction, and will collaborate with other Lake Michigan Committee members to assure a consistent Lake Michigan wide effort is implemented to balance predators and prey and sustain a quality salmon and trout fishery.

Under agreement among the agencies, Illinois would now stock 90,000 fish each year, Indiana would stock 45,000 fish, Michigan 200,000 and Wisconsin 355,000. The proposed 2017 stocking plan reflects past stocking performance and spring/summer angler success in catching Chinook from various stocking locations around the lake. In addition, the plan should include enough fish to ensure fall spawning runs at egg collection weirs and for stream, harbor and nearshore anglers in each state. ✧

## IL State Parks Guide

The 2016-17 *Illinois State Parks* guide is available in print and online. The booklet is a useful guide to an eventful day in a state park picnic area, a weekend at a state park lodge or campground, a hike in a state forest, a ride on a state trail, or hunting and fishing trips to a state fish and wildlife area. The guide is posted online at: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications/documents/00000715.pdf>. Copies of the State Parks guide can be ordered through the IDNR online publications page: <https://dnr.state.il.us/teachkids/orderype.asp> ✧

## Advocates back Senate bill

*Continued from page 1*

“While closed areas have a role in fisheries management, they should only come after legitimate consideration of all possible options and agreement among management agencies,” Nussman said. “This bill, which is strongly supported by the recreational fishing industry, will ensure that the voice of state fisheries agencies is not lost.”

Legislation similar to S.2807 has passed the House of Representatives as part of the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement, or SHARE Act. The original House bill, H.R. 3310, is led by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., Mario Diaz-Balart, R-Fla., Carlos Curbelo, R-Fla., and 35 other sponsors.

“State fish and wildlife agencies have a strong track record of sustainable fisheries management that provides for ample fishing opportunities,” said Patrick Murray, president of the Coastal Conservation Association. “This legislation will ensure that the states' authority to manage state fishery resources is maintained and will provide a backstop against poorly developed fishing closures that deter fishing.”

A decision by the National Park Service in 2015 to implement a 10,000-acre marine reserve in one of the nation's most popular urban fishing areas just outside Miami sparked significant opposition from the recreational fishing and boating community. ✧

## New Arctic grayling initiative could bring historical species back to Michigan's waters

The Michigan DNR has announced a proposed initiative that aims to bring back an extirpated species to the state—Arctic grayling. The initiative will seek to establish self-sustaining populations of Arctic grayling throughout its historical range.

The Arctic grayling is a native and iconic fish species in Michigan. Slate blue in color, they have a sail-like dorsal fin and were virtually the only native stream salmonid in the Lower Peninsula. In the lower 48 states they are native only to Michigan and Montana.

Michigan's grayling population died off nearly a century ago due to statewide logging efforts of the 1800s, over-fishing and general habitat destruction. Reintroduction efforts have occurred with the most recent one coming 30 years ago. While unsuccessful at that time, lessons were learned and strides made to establish a better strategy to move this initiative forward.

“For this Arctic grayling initiative to work, we will seek to rely heavily on partnerships and collaboration from across the state,” said DNR Fisheries Division Chief Jim Dexter. “Over the next several years we will be taking methodical steps to move toward reintroduction of this historically and culturally significant species.”

The DNR will work closely with partners as the proposed Arctic grayling initiative moves forward.

“This is going to be ‘Michigan's Arctic Grayling Initiative,’” said Dexter. “Collaboration and partnerships will be crucial to its success.” This effort also will lean heavily on recent scientific research in Michigan, as well as the successes Montana has achieved in re-establishing stable Arctic grayling populations.

For more info on the history of Arctic grayling in Michigan, visit [Michigan.gov/fishid](http://Michigan.gov/fishid). ✧

## Record no. watercraft inspectors on Minnesota lakes

The 2016 Minnesota boating season will be another record-breaker, with more than 800 watercraft inspectors helping to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota. Counties employ and supervise the vast majority of the inspectors, all trained by the DNR.

More watercraft inspectors mean more eyes in the field and more education on how boaters can prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. In addition to inspections, watercraft inspectors stationed at public water accesses around the state focus on teaching boaters to:

- Clean their watercraft.
- Drain all water by removing drain plugs, and keep drain plugs out while transporting watercraft.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.

Questions? Send to [wip.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:wip.dnr@state.mn.us) so a DNR staff person can respond. ✧

## Anglers asked to complete online muskie survey

The Michigan DNR is investigating the muskie fisheries of the state by distributing an online angler survey. Anglers will be assisting fisheries managers in their evaluations, assessments and trend monitoring of Michigan's muskellunge fisheries. Information collected includes fishing location, method used, catch preferences, catch-and-release data, and frequency of muskellunge fishing outings.

Anglers must obtain a muskellunge harvest tag when deciding to harvest a fish. These tags are obtained when purchasing a Michigan fishing license or any date thereafter as long as the angler has a fishing license and a valid driver's license. Those interested in registering a harvested muskellunge (optional) can visit [Michigan.gov/muskie](http://Michigan.gov/muskie). ✧

## New Ohio state record Yellow Perch certified

A new Ohio record yellow perch has been certified by the Outdoor Writers of Ohio State Record Fish Committee. The new record yellow perch, weighing 2.86 lbs., was caught by David Berg of Mentor, Ohio in Lake Erie. Berg caught the yellow perch April 18, 2016, using a minnow for bait, on a St. Croix spinning rod with 8 lb. test braided line. Berg's yellow perch is 15.75 inches long and 13.75 inches in girth.

His catch replaces the previous state record yellow perch which was caught in Lake Erie by Charles Thomas on April 17, 1984 weighing 2.75 pounds and measuring 14.5 inches long. Ohio's record fish are determined on the basis of weight only. Ohio's state record fish are certified by the Outdoor Writers of Ohio State Record Fish Committee with assistance from fisheries biologists with the Ohio DNR. ✧

## Additional comments sought to aid in Whitefish rule

The Wisconsin DNR continues to seek public comments to aid in development of commercial whitefish rules for Lake Michigan.

The comment period will remain open until June 30 for those unable to attend the meeting or provide written feedback to date. Send comments to: David Boyarski, [David.Boyarski@wisconsin.gov](mailto:David.Boyarski@wisconsin.gov) or call (920) 746-2865.

To provide stakeholders with additional information, DNR has posted proceedings and supporting materials from an initial public meeting held May 23 to the department's website at [DNR.wi.gov](http://DNR.wi.gov), search "[Lake Michigan commercial whitefish](#)." DNR is in the process of potentially developing a specific rule that better protects spawning whitefish in northern Lake Michigan and may potentially modify commercial fishing zone whitefish allocation or zone structure to better reflect current whitefish abundance and distribution. ✧

## Anglers encouraged to monitor bait to spot juvenile (Asian) carp

The Michigan DNR reminds anglers to monitor their live bait purchases to look for juvenile invasive (Asian) carp.

The DNR is doing many things to prevent adult invasive carp (bighead and silver) from entering the Great Lakes, but many people don't realize juvenile invasive carp pose a threat to the state's waters as well. Juvenile invasive carp can be confused with common baitfish, such as gizzard shad, emerald shiner, spottail shiner or golden shiner. Because bait often is transported across state lines, including from areas with breeding populations of invasive carp, it is possible for juvenile invasive carp to make their way into the bait supply.

[A video is available online](#) to assist anglers and the public in identifying juvenile invasive carp. It shows five characteristics viewers should familiarize themselves with to distinguish between juvenile invasive carp (bighead and silver) and common baitfish. These characteristics include body color; scale pattern, shape and size; eye size and location on the head; mouth shape and location, and the presence or absence of keels on the bottom side of the fish.

The video can be viewed on Michigan's invasive species website at [Michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://Michigan.gov/invasivespecies). The video also describes what to do if an angler thinks he has a juvenile invasive carp in his bait bucket, or any odd-looking fish for that matter. Anglers are encouraged to keep the questionable fish alive or freeze the fish and contact the DNR to correctly identify the fish in question. The DNR does not want questionable fish to be used as bait. Once anglers are done fishing, remaining baitfish should be disposed of in the trash.

This video is one of several items the DNR has developed to educate the public about invasive carp. For more information on this issue, visit [Michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://Michigan.gov/invasivespecies). ✧

## DNR offers summer-run steelhead clinic in Cadillac June 25

The DNR Outdoor Skills Academy in Cadillac, Michigan, will offer opportunities for Michigan anglers to improve their fishing skills, with steelhead clinics in June.

This steelhead class, starting at 10 a.m., will cover strategies and techniques for chasing Michigan's "chrome torpedoes." Feel free to bring your own gear, if possible, or for those who are new to steelheading, some equipment is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The "hands-on" portion of the clinic will be at the Carl T. Johnson Hunting and Fishing Center, and then Sunday morning the class will hit the water, where the Outdoor Skills Academy pro-staff will show students how to fish and what to look for on the beautiful Manistee River. The cost is \$40.

[Registration](#) is available at [Michigan.gov/estore](http://Michigan.gov/estore). The clinic will be located in Mitchell State Park at 6087 E. M-115 in Cadillac. For more info: Ed Shawt, [shawe@michigan.gov](mailto:shawe@michigan.gov), or call the Carl T. Johnson Center at 231-779-1321. ✧

## Anglers can keep 4 walleye on Upper Red Lake now

Anglers on Upper Red Lake in NW Minnesota will now be allowed to keep an additional walleye in their daily bag limit.

The current three-fish bag limit will be increased to four fish. The existing size regulation allowing one walleye longer than 17 inches in the daily bag will remain in effect.

High catch rates the first few weeks after opener are fairly predictable, as are declining catch rates as the season progresses. Since fishing pressure declines along with the catch rate, more harvest opportunity can be offered later in the season with minimal effect on total walleye harvest. For more info: [www.mndnr.gov/fishing](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishing). ✧

## New angler access lot complete at Cobleskill Reservoir

New York recently completed construction of a new angler access parking lot at the Cobleskill reservoir system in the town of Cobleskill.

DEC signed a cooperative agreement with the village of Cobleskill to memorialize the continued use of its three reservoirs for public fishing. The new 15-car gravel parking area includes a locked gate, which will keep vehicles away from the waterbodies, thereby protecting the reservoirs from potential contamination.

DEC stocks the reservoirs with trout each spring with the assistance of the Schoharie County Conservation Association. SUNY Cobleskill also stocked the reservoirs with additional trout on May 25. Fish species found in the reservoir system include bass, bluegill, perch, walleye, brown bullhead, brown trout, brook trout, tiger trout and rainbow trout. ✧

## DEC announces Angler Outreach Event

An upcoming free seminar to update the public about the status of the Lake Erie and Upper Niagara River Fisheries is Tuesday, June 21 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., at Woodlawn Beach State Park's Lodge, Blasdell.

The free seminar include poster exhibits and a series of presentations on Lake Erie and the Upper Niagara River fisheries topics, including an opportunity for angler input on a variety of fisheries management activities. The meeting will conclude with questions and an open discussion.

Key members of Lake Erie and Niagara River's fisheries management and research community will present on Lake Erie fisheries management and assessment activities for steelhead, walleye, muskellunge, research initiatives, and habitat improvement projects. Anyone interested is welcome to attend this free event and registration is not required. ✧

## NY Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Workshop Sept 16-18

Our next Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) workshop is September 16-18 at Greek Peak Mountain Resort near Cortland, NY. Registration began June 14. BOW workshops usually fill very quickly so you will want to complete the registration form and get it in the mail as soon as possible for the best chance of getting in the workshop and getting the classes you want.

The registration fee for this workshop is \$345 per person. That includes 2 nights double occupancy lodging, seven meals (lunch Friday through lunch Sunday), almost all equipment needed for the classes, transportation to off-site class locations and class materials. There will be an additional fee if you are planning on taking the Aerial Challenge or Taxidermy classes. We can only accept personal checks, bank checks or money orders.

Two new classes are offered at this workshop: Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP), Wildlife Photography, Caught on Camera (trail cameras), Car Confidence (how to change a tire, jump start a car and other skills and tips for the woman who wants to feel confident traveling on her own) and Aerial Challenge which is a cool, confidence building course that involves ropes, bridges, zip lines and more. And, YEAH, the Taxidermy class will be offered again this year! You can also earn your Hunter Education or Trapping Education Certification at this workshop! Questions? Email [kelly.stang@dec.ny.gov](mailto:kelly.stang@dec.ny.gov). ✧

## 2015 MI Fisheries Annual Report

The 2015 Fisheries 16 page Annual Report shines a spotlight on the management of Michigan's fisheries from October 2014 through September 2015. To review the entire report click here: [View it as a Web page](#). ✧

## Meetings set for Lake Superior cisco plan

The Wisconsin DNR will host two public meetings on June 22 in Bayfield and June 23 in Ashland to discuss potential adoption of a Lake Superior cisco management plan.

Cisco hold significant commercial value and also represent a key link in the Lake Superior food chain, eating zooplankton and serving as prey for lake trout. Also, cisco eggs serve as a primary food source for whitefish—another valuable commercial and recreational species.

Cisco—also known as lake herring—may be sold fresh or smoked but their roe holds the greatest value and is sold in Scandinavian countries as "bluefin caviar."

The annual harvest from 2008 to 2014 averaged nearly 1.4 million pounds, a level more than three times the average annual harvest from 2000 to 2007. The cisco harvest from Wisconsin waters now accounts for two-thirds of the total Lake Superior harvest and there is concern among Wisconsin fisheries managers as well as those from neighboring states and Canada about survey data that shows declining abundance of the fish.

Cisco are vulnerable to over-harvest because they are most valuable and also easiest to catch during fall spawning when they congregate in easily accessible spawning grounds. Wisconsin DNR is seeking stakeholder input to develop a management plan that recognizes the economic importance of the present-day catch while ensuring the resource will sustain future commercial activity and the related lake trout and whitefish fisheries.

The meetings will start at 6 p.m.:

- June 22, Bayfield - Bayfield Heritage Association Museum, 30 N. Broad St.
- June 23, Ashland - Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, 29270 Hwy G.

[Lake Superior fisheries management.](#) ✧

## RBFF 2016 Top 100 Family-Friendly Places to Fish and Boat

In observance of National Fishing and Boating Week, the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation has released their listing of the Top 100 Family-Friendly places to fish and boat in the United States. If you have the opportunity to do either, take someone along and introduce them to the outdoors.

Top 10 Places to Drop a Line in 2016:

1. Everglades National Park, Fla.
2. Bahia Honda State Park, Atlantic Ocean, Fla.
3. Blue Springs State Park, St. Johns River, Fla.
4. Kissimmee State Park, Lake Kissimmee, Fla.
5. Clear Lake State Park, Clear Lake, Calif.
6. Brannon Island State Park, Sacramento River, Calif.
7. Dockweiler State Beach, Santa Monica Bay, Calif.
8. Hanging Rock State Park, Hanging Rock Park Lake, N.C.
9. Guntersville State Park, Guntersville Lake, Ala.
10. Lake James State Park, Lake James, Ala.

And for the entire listing of the top 100 [click here.](#) ✧

## Wingshooting Clinics

Wingshooting clinics will be conducted this spring, summer and fall in Illinois at IDNR sites, cooperating gun clubs and hunting preserves. Most clinics are conducted on weekends. Wingshooting clinics for youth (age 10-15) and women provide instruction on safely firing a shotgun at a moving target with reasonable reliability. Hunter wingshooting clinics are hands-on, and include extensive live fire at a variety of clay target presentations on sporting clays courses specifically designed for teaching typical hunting situations. For more info and schedule: <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/wingshooting/WingshootingDates.htm>. ✧

## Free Fishing Days 2016

Most states will offer free fishing days for everyone to fish on public bodies of water without a fishing license. These days are the perfect opportunity for beginners to try fishing for the first time. For details on National Fishing and Boating Week, including your state's Free Fishing Days, visit [www.TakeMeFishing.org](http://www.TakeMeFishing.org). ✧

## Reminder

Illinois Free Fishing Days are June 17-20. For more information on fishing in Illinois: [www.ifishillinois.org](http://www.ifishillinois.org). ✧

## ILL Camping Reservations

Summer is a great time for camping in Illinois. Make campsite and shelter reservations for many IDNR sites online through the Reserve America website at [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com) using a credit card. For more information, check the IDNR website at <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/camping/campsvp.htm>. ✧

## Apply now for Non-Resident Archery Deer Permits

The online lottery application period is open through June 30 for Non-Resident Illinois Archery Combination Deer permits for the 2016 season. For the online application, go to: [www.dnr.state.il.us/hunting/deer/Pages/Non-ResidentArcheryDeerHunting.aspx](http://www.dnr.state.il.us/hunting/deer/Pages/Non-ResidentArcheryDeerHunting.aspx). Non-residents may apply for one combination archery permit per season. The upcoming Illinois Archery Deer season is Oct. 1, 2016 – Jan. 15, 2017 (except closed in firearm deer counties on Nov. 18-20 and Dec. 1-4, 2016). ✧

# How do you introduce a kid to fishing?

Being part of the excitement when kids catch fish can form memories that last a lifetime. But taking kids fishing can present some unique challenges.

Jeff Ledermann knows all about the joys and challenges of taking kids fishing. He was able to start his own daughters fishing when they were just over the age of two. When they were older he helped form a girls' fishing club after hearing one daughter say after school that "Girls don't fish."

Now, Ledermann works with educational programs that help teach kids and others about fishing. As the angler recruitment, retention and education supervisor for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, he's glad to share some wisdom on how to connect kids with the outdoors through fishing.

## What can adults do to make fishing fun for kids?

For the first times out with kids, focus on short and successful outings. Do some research to find a place where fish populations are high and other opportunities exist when kids get bored, such as playground equipment, rock hunting and climbing, or chasing bugs. It's even better if there are bathrooms close by. Don't forget to bring snacks and a camera to capture the excitement of that first fish.

## How important are those first few times a kid goes fishing?

The first few times are critical. If a child has a really bad experience, it may take a lot of effort to overcome those memories and anxieties. Make it fun and keep outings short. Don't be afraid to call it a day if they start to get bored, the bugs are bad or the weather is not good.

## What are some of the biggest mistakes parents and others make when taking kids fishing?

The biggest mistake I see is that parents lose focus on the kids. As much as we all relish the opportunity to wet a line, fishing with young kids means you may have to give up some of your own fishing time.

## What fishing skills do kids need the most help with?

New anglers of all ages need lots of help figuring out how to use fishing equipment. Be sure to demonstrate to them how rods and reels work and give them lots of opportunity to practice. Casting in the yard at hula hoops or other targets is a great way to get kids excited about fishing. The biggest mistake that young anglers make is not keeping a tight line while playing a fish. Teach them to keep their rod tip up. You can make it easier for kids by giving them a rod that is the right size for them. A rod that has a lighter action or more flex also provides more room for error and kids will be less likely to break off. Also be sure to check the drag on the reel so they can manage a larger fish if they catch one.

## What safety pointers should people remember?

Safety should be your highest priority. Be mindful of the dangers of being on or near the water. Wearing a lifejacket is the law for kids under age 10 and a really good practice for everyone when in a boat. The other big safety concern while fishing is hooks. That risk multiplies when lots of people are casting. If I have lots of kids in a boat, I minimize casting by having them fish right off the side of the boat or slowly troll the weed edges with small spinners and jigs. For older kids, spinnerbaits are great for casting as the hook is less exposed. I would avoid any casting with treble hooks until kids have more experience.

## Any tips for what kinds of fish to try for and what gear to use?

Catching bluegills or bullheads is a great way to start fishing with kids. In many lakes these fish are very abundant, but also very small. If you use light line and small hooks with live bait, you will have a good chance at success.

## How do you choose where to fish with a kid?

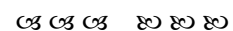
Ask at bait stores, surf the many fishing blogs on the web or ask other anglers where they would recommend taking kids fishing. In the Twin Cities, the DNR's Fishing in the Neighborhood program manages and stocks several lakes and ponds to increase fishing opportunities. Check out [www.mndnr.gov/fin](http://www.mndnr.gov/fin) for details.

## What should you pack to bring a kid fishing?

Bring enough items so that you're prepared for all kinds of weather, and distractions if fishing gets tough or kids get bored. We want kids to eat healthy, but I'm not against making the outing special by bringing a favorite treat or stopping by the ice cream shop on the way home. Bring what you think will help make the outing fun. A positive attitude is probably the most important. Your enthusiasm for fishing will rub off on them!

## Where can people learn more?

Adults who want to learn more before taking a kid fishing can find answers to common fishing questions, download a beginner's guide to fishing, and find a place to fish at [www.mndnr.gov/fishmn](http://www.mndnr.gov/fishmn). Resources for educators can be found at [www.mndnr.gov/minnaqua](http://www.mndnr.gov/minnaqua). ✧



## Firearm Deer Permit Applications

Resident and non-resident deer hunters can apply for the second lottery drawing for 2016 Illinois Firearm Deer and Muzzleloader-only Deer permits. The deadline to apply for the second lottery is June 30. For more information on deer hunting, check the website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer). ✧

## Crime Stoppers and Great Lakes Fishery Commission take steps to stop illegal sturgeon trade

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the Ontario Association of Crime Stoppers, and Crime Stoppers USA will be unveiling their co-venture on Saturday, June 4th, 2016.

The official announcement will be made simultaneously at the Blue Water Sturgeon Festival in Port Huron, Michigan, and at the Annual Ontario Crime Stoppers Training Conference in Sudbury, Ontario. This initiative is aimed at educating and encouraging individuals to help put an end to this shocking crime. It is a fact that the trafficking of wildlife is comparable at a global scale with the illegal trade in guns, drugs, and people.

Lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) are often referred to as living fossils because they belong to a prehistoric family of fish that has survived for more than 60 million years. They can grow quite large (up to 185 kg/400 lbs) and are also one of the longest living fish in existence. One lake sturgeon was determined to be 154 years old!

The largest proportion of the global population lies in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River basin areas where numerous management and recovery plans are in place among and between states and provinces sharing boundary waters. Commercial harvest of lake sturgeon is prohibited in all U.S. waters and strictly managed in Canadian waters with closed seasons, size limits and gear restrictions. Well-regulated sport fisheries occur throughout the northern part of their range in the U.S. and Canada.

Several species of sturgeon around the world, including lake sturgeon, have become a species at risk due to the destruction of their natural habitat and to intensive illegal trade, locally and internationally, of their meat, caviar and other products derived from the species. According to experts the number of sturgeon

caught illegally is equal to or exceeds the number caught legally.

To protect lake sturgeon from extinction, many countries have joined the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), which has identified lake sturgeon as a species prone to extinction if illegal harvest, transport and trade is not controlled. To help control trade, lake sturgeon are considered a species at risk in Ontario and are listed as threatened or endangered in certain jurisdictions of the United States. These designations, and the regulations that come with them, are designed to protect lake sturgeon from over-fishing and the illegal commercialization of their highly prized caviar and meat.

"The illegal trade of wildlife is the fourth most lucrative criminal activity world-wide, only exceeded by the trade of narcotics, counterfeiting and human trafficking", says David Forster, President of the Ontario Association of Crime Stoppers and the elected Canadian Representative to Crime Stoppers International. "Crime Stopper programs throughout Ontario, Canada and the world are assisting law enforcement by engaging the community to anonymously report these illegal activities to Crime Stoppers."

"The Great Lakes Fishery Commission knows that sustainable fisheries are impossible without vigorous law enforcement," said Robert Hecky, chair of the Commission. "Nothing illustrates that connection better than the dire situation we find ourselves in with lake sturgeon. Today, we are at a crossroads and decisions that people make to break the chain of illegal activities will decide the fate of this species. I believe people, given the information, will do the right thing."

The Ontario Association of Crime Stoppers, Crime Stoppers USA and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, encourage people to get involved and help prevent lake

sturgeon poaching and illegal trade. You can help by:

1. Knowing where products are coming from and asking questions, such as being aware of where your caviar and meat came from to ensure it was legally captured and harvested.
2. Reporting illegal activity. If you suspect poaching or illegal selling of wildlife, call Crime Stoppers toll-free any time anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or call the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry tip line at 1-877-847-7667 or any local natural resources tip line in your area.
3. Spreading the word. Many people don't realize that in general taking animals from the wild and selling them is illegal.
4. Watching for suspicious activity in fishing areas, including lake sturgeon capture, killing, caviar harvesting and transporting.

Jill Wingfield, Communications Program Manager, Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and David Forster, President of the Ontario Association of Crime Stoppers and the elected Canadian Representative to Crime Stoppers International, will be presenting this co-venture at the respective locations to support the advertising campaign, which focuses on the illegal harvest and trade of lake sturgeon. ✧

### Fall Turkey Applications

Resident Illinois hunters can apply online for permits for the Illinois Fall Shotgun Turkey season (Oct. 22-30) at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov). The first lottery application deadline is July 4. ✧

### Did you know...?

We have American gun owners 100,000,000 strong. In Illinois, the newest (and last addition) Conceal Carry state, we have 2,400,993 FOID Card holders and 169,778 CCL's. ✧

**Other Breaking News Items:**

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

**[EDITORIAL: Ruling on cormorant control threatens balance](#)**

Wildlife experts worked for the past decade to control—not eradicate—cormorants in 24 states. But the cormorant population likely won't remain in check for long as the legal system tips the balance in their favor.

**[Quebec fishermen catch first Asian carp found in St. Lawrence River](#)**

Two fishermen in Quebec's Lanaudière region have caught an invasive grass carp, raising concerns about the presence of the invasive fish in the St. Lawrence River.

**[Invasive Asian carp found spawning in Great Lakes tributary](#)**

Scientists say there's proof that one type of invasive Asian carp is spawning in a Great Lakes tributary. A graduate student at the University of Toledo in Ohio discovered grass carp eggs last summer in the Sandusky River, which flows into Lake Erie.

**[Agencies draft new plan of attack for Asian carp](#)**

**Michigan Radio (5/31)**

The Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee—a coalition of federal and state agencies working to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes—just came out with its carp plan for this year.

End