



# THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN STEELHEAD & SALMON FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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## Commercial Fishing Bills Snag Bottom

By Mark Sak

Some good news and some not-so-good news for recreational anglers throughout Michigan. First, let's try to unravel the three bills put forth to try to place some increased oversight on commercial anglers and limit them from selling game fish in Michigan. House Bills 4567, 4568 and 4569 were passed by the Michigan State House by a larger than 2-1 ratio. (HB 4567 72 yes 32 no), (HB 4568 73 yes 31 no), and (HB 4568 73 yes and 31 no). These bills specifically were drafted to update commercial angler fees and

oversight in Michigan as well as protect game fish, which commercial anglers desperately want to catch and sell. While commercial harvest of game fish in the Great Lakes would certainly put a whole bunch of money in commercial netters pockets, it would also greatly impact the world class angling Michigan offers as well as impacting the billions of dollars brought in by recreational angling in Michigan. Commercial netting of game fish was opposed by MSSFA, TU, MUCC, the Michigan DNR, and dozens of businesses and conservation groups throughout the

state. Many issues arose as problematic with the biggest being adding game-fish to commercial nets as well as commercial anglers not wanting oversight, and they certainly do not want increased oversight. Right now, the State of Michigan pays 1 million dollars for the oversight of commercial fishers in our state, and specifically money raised from excise tax from fishing and hunting equipment as well as license fees pays for this meaning basically recreational anglers are forced

“Fishing Bill”  
Continued on page 8



Rep. Julie Brixie and Gary Howell introduce bipartisan bill to allow kids to be part of the stewardship of the federal fund to invest in Michigan.



Two anglers are all smiles as they show off a large walleye caught in western Lake Erie. Credit: Dianne Miehl.

## Walleye Show High Spawning Site Fidelity in the Great Lakes

### Great Lakes Fish Commission

This article is based on a recent paper, *Spawning site fidelity and apparent annual survival of walleye (Sander vitreus) differ between a Lake Huron and Lake Erie tributary, in Ecology of Freshwater Fish*

Imagine you are a fish in a Great Lake preparing to spawn. Where would you go? How would you

find a mate? If it's your first time spawning in one of these vast lakes, then you might have to pick a spot and hope for the best, or use some other clue to find a spawning location. But if it's your second time and you already know the first place you spawned was a good one, wouldn't you go back to the same place again? New research funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission suggests

walleye do just that. For fish, the habit of returning to the same place year-after-year to spawn is called “spawning site fidelity”. Spawning site fidelity can be a consequence of learning by fish, or the result of imprinting while young on natal, or birth, locations (called natal homing). Either way, return-

“Spawning”  
Continued on page 9

## Luring Spring Steelies

By Jim Bedford

The fall run of steelhead was weak this past autumn, especially in Lake Michigan tributaries. We can hope that their numbers will bounce back this spring. This can happen when many steelhead are just not ready to start their river migration in the fall.

Steelhead are likely to be quite widely scattered

this spring and artificial lures can attract fish from a farther distance than bait so can cover more water looking for them because you can move faster. Lures for steelhead can be grouped into three categories based on the way they are usually presented. High action plugs or crankbaits are usually held against the current; spinners and spoons are cast and retrieved; and

relatively weightless lures or flies are drifted with the current. Of course, these offerings can also be presented in more than one way.

Casting weighted spinners is my favorite steelhead technique. They are a very versatile lure and can be presented at all angles with the current. While they cannot be retrieved directly against the current as they will rise to the surface, you can still back them down by giving line at a rate slower than the current to keep them deep and spinning. Spinners attract steelies both visibly and sonically from a considerably distance so they allow you to cover water fairly quickly. This is likely to be especially helpful in this spring if they are scarce and quite scattered. Take advantage and cover lots of water until you find fish.

While spinners work especially well in moving water, spoons are also good



Joe Burcar with a trophy spring male steelhead.

“Steelies”  
Continued on page 11



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# Negotiations With Michigan's Tribes- Issues Facing Sport Fishers-Allocation

By Steve Schultz

This is the second in the series of updates to let those interested in the sport and commercial fisheries of the Great Lakes know what is happening in the negotiation of a new agreement between the State, the Federal government and the five Michigan tribes holding a Treaty right to fish in the Michigan portion of the Great Lakes. The first update gave you some background on the negotiations. This update addresses the issues facing sport fishers in the sharing of the Great Lakes fisheries with the Tribes.

Since 1985, the arrangement between the Tribes, the State of Michigan and the Federal government to share the fisheries of the Great Lakes has been contained in two agreements that were negotiated by the parties and then put in place by the Federal Court in west Michigan as a "Consent Decree." The first Decree was implemented in 1985. It had a 15-year term. In 2000, a second Decree was put in place by the Court. It had a 20-year term. It expired last year but has been extended by the Court while the parties negotiate a new agreement.

A critical issue to the

past two agreements, and one that will be critical to a new agreement, is the division of the Great Lakes fishery between the Tribes and those fishers who are licensed by the State. The 1985 agreement allocated the Great Lakes fishery among the parties by lake, zones, species, and catch limits. It was premised on a roughly 50-50 allocation of the fishery between the State and the Tribes. The Tribes were principally allocated whitefish stocks and the State was principally allocated salmon stocks. Lake trout stocks were shared with the allocation to each party differing based on the area of the Great Lakes at issue. Generally, the Tribes were allocated more lake trout in areas where they were pursuing whitefish and State licensed fishers were allocated more in traditional sportfishing areas. Overall, however, the fishery resources were generally shared equally. Further, the zones created for State and Tribally licensed fishers reduced gear conflict between commercial nets, particularly gill nets and traditional sport fishing gear.

The agreement reached in 2000 took a slightly different approach while maintaining the roughly

equal division of the fishery between the State and the Tribes. The agreement created Commercial Fishing Zones where Tribal or State licensed commercial fishing was permitted. Within those zones certain areas had gear limitations, such as trap net only areas, closed areas, such as near harbor mouths or near refuges reserved for lake trout rehabilitation, and reserved areas designated for a particular Tribe, such as zone reserved for the Grand Traverse Band in the Grand Traverse Bay area and one reserved for small boat fishers of the Bay Mills Indian Community in the Hammond Bay area of Lake Huron.

Critical to this shared resource was the allocation of lake trout between the State and the Tribes. The lake trout available for catch by commercial or sport fishers in each lake trout management unit within the tribal waters of Lakes Michigan, Huron and Superior was divided and allocated. The table on the right, with a very general indication of where each management unit is located, shows the various allocations.

These allocations generally reserved more lake trout for sport fishing in those areas where Great

MANAGEMENT UNIT	TRIBAL SHARE	STATE SHARE
MH-1 (Lk. Huron north of Rogers City)	88%	12%
MH-2 (South of Rogers City to Alpena area)	5%	95%
MM-1/2/3 (Northern Lake Michigan from Escanaba to Charlevoix)	90%	10%
MM-4 (Grand Traverse Bay)	55%	45%
MM-5 (Leland south to Arcadia)	40%	60%
MM-6/7 (Arcadia south to Grand Haven)	10%	90%
MI-5 (Lk. Superior from Marquette east 20 miles)	5%	95%
MI-6 (Munising Bay area east to Au Sable Point)	50%	50%
MI-7 (Au Sable Point east to Little Lake)	70%	30%

Lakes sport fishing is more prevalent. In terms of the available lake trout stocks, these allocations shared the resource fairly equally.

Since 2000, the Great Lakes fishery has changed. Whitefish generally reserved to the Tribes and salmon reserved to the State are not as prevalent now. For whitefish, the harvest by both State and Tribal fishers in Lake Michigan

is half what it was several years ago. For salmon, both State and Tribal harvests of chinook salmon are one quarter of what they were at its peak just a few years ago. Lake trout have experienced some natural reproduction in recent years but are under duress in some parts of the lakes. Preserving lake trout spawning stocks will be critical to the future of that fishery.

Taken as a whole, the fisheries of the Treaty areas of the Great Lakes are producing far less than a few years ago. These changes present huge difficulties in negotiating a new agreement as there are simply not the stocks that were available a few years ago. Nevertheless, this is a shared resource that requires allocation on a roughly 50-50 basis.


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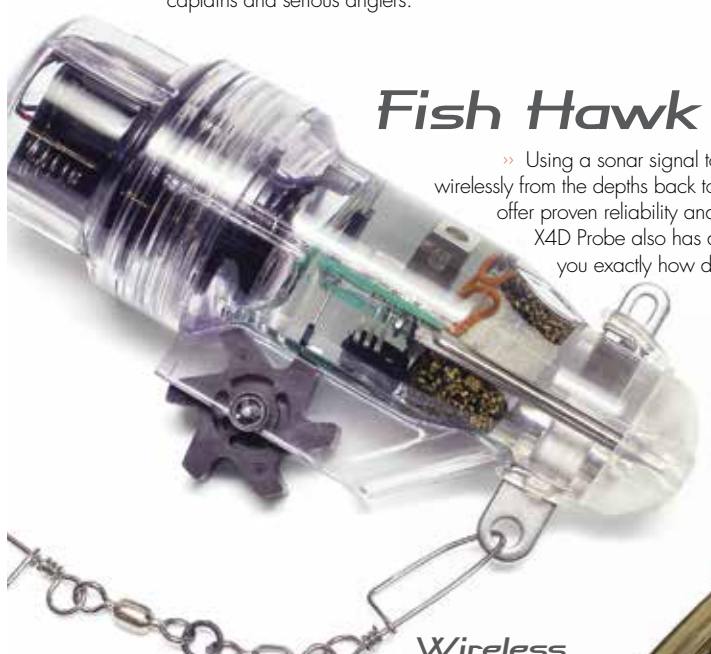


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# Fisheries Fight: Michigan Commercial Fishers Bring Michigan DNR Rules to Court

**By Dave Spratt,**  
*freelance writer and CEO  
of the Institute for Journal-  
ism & Natural Resources.*

It could be weeks before Michigan's commercial fishing outfits can get back to catching whitefish – but even then they're not sure what's left of the season will save their businesses. That's because they're tied up in a legal fight over the rules of their game – rules imposed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in January that limit when and where commercial fishers can operate in the Michigan waters of the Great Lakes. "We're not accepting the new terms," said attorney Michael H. Perry, who represents the Michigan Fish Producers Association. "If the department

the water under the rules that governed 2020. If granted, Perry said, those folks could be fishing as soon as April, which is normally a productive month. The suit alleges that Fisheries Order 234.21 will make commercial fishing unprofitable. It further alleges the order was written to punish commercial fishers for seeking amendments to a House Bill proposed in 2020 and that the DNR deliberately withheld license applications for 2021. Applications normally go out in December but were held until January this year, Perry said. The DNR response to the lawsuit, issued last week, said the lawsuit completely mischaracterizes the DNR's intentions, and that the delay in license applications was due only to un-

cial fishing. The bills were supported by the DNR and sportfishing advocates but opposed by the MFPA. The bills went to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, which held hearings in June and July and heard testimony from stakeholders, including Tribal Nations. The groups were not in agreement, so State Sen. Ed McBroom assembled a work group to try and find common ground. It went badly. His Nov. 5 Commercial Fishing Workgroup Report characterized the discussion as a "turf war" that encompassed "some of the most disturbing and disappointing examples of unwillingness to bargain in good faith or deal honestly as I have seen." The report's recommen-

In past years, the application period was so seamless that commercial fishers received their applications with the permits already enclosed. There were a few places to sign and they

were good to go for another year. This year the applications came without any accompanying documents, permits or otherwise, so they're sending them in with last year's permits at-

tached. They're not exactly sure what they're applying for, but they know they have little intention of fishing under the new restrictions.



Offloading the day's fish from the vessel into the fish house where they are then weighed, processed for sale or boxed for shipping.

does what it says it's going to do, it's going to put our constituents out of business." At issue is Fisheries Order 243.21, which was handed down Jan. 8 after a years-long effort to update state laws around commercial fishing died in a Michigan Senate committee in December. Since the Michigan Legislature is now in a new legislative session, a brand-new bill or bills must be introduced and approved. The new order changes allowable fishing depths from 150 feet to 80 feet or less, and also closes lakes Michigan and Huron for the month of October, which fishers say is one of their most important months. The lakes are already closed for the November whitefish spawning season. The MFPA sued the Michigan DNR in federal court in January and will ask for a preliminary injunction that would allow Michigan's 13 commercial fishing operations back on

certainty around license renewal application fees. The DNR declined to comment on pending litigation but has said that a patchwork of laws and fisheries orders have left enforcement gaps that need to be addressed by the Legislature. The issue has been simmering for more than a year, and 2020 did no favors for the industry: COVID-19 disrupted restaurants and tourism widely, leaving commercial fishers in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Tribal Nations (who operate under treaty rights negotiated in the 1800s and are not subject to DNR laws) and Ontario with nowhere to sell their wares. Michigan's Native and non-Native commercial fishing operations together caught nearly 4 million pounds of whitefish in 2018. Last February, the Michigan House of Representatives passed three tie-barred bills – which must all take effect together or not at all – setting new laws for state-licensed commer-

dations addressed fees, net location, reporting and other accountability measures for commercial fishing, but also brought up the possibility of penalizing sportfishers if their equipment damaged properly placed commercial fishing nets. The DNR opposed the amendments, saying it needed more time to review their implications, and the bills died in committee. "I was disappointed after all the work done during last session, that these bills did not get over the finish line," said State Rep. Jim Lilly, who represents District 89 in West Michigan and co-sponsored all three bills. "I plan to re-engage stakeholders to see if there is middle ground, and it is my intent that any bills introduced this session reflect those talks. I do not see the bills being introduced as they were last session. With that said, I remain committed to balancing the interests of the sport fishing community with that of the commercial fishing industry."

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## MSSFA PRESIDENT Tim Stegeman

2021 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Association (MSSFA). Fifty years is a long time. Long enough to cross a generational line or two and ultimately lose sight of why the MSSFA was founded. If you are unaware, the MSSFA's mission in the past, present and future is to resolve major angler issues in the interest of all Great Lakes anglers and especially, but not limited to, those that enter those bodies of waters from the great state of Michigan. Michigan just happens to be in the center of a majority of the Great Lakes so what better place to be headquartered?

Not only is 2021 a milestone year for the MSSFA as an organization, it is also a milestone for a new and ongoing Consent Decree with the Tribes as well as a final new commercial fishing statute to regulate behavior of irresponsible commercial fishers who fear regulation because it opens the door to better law enforcement by the CO's; requires timely reporting and avoids the opportunity to break the rules.

We are also calling for a more aggressive action plan for dam removals to allow anadromous fish access to miles of streams for natural recruitment and an action that promotes natural stream flow to reduce water temperature during these challenging global climate changing times.

Dam removals notwithstanding, we are also calling for barrier installation to combat Invasive species such as bighead, silver or black carp that threaten not only the region's \$7 billion fishery but also the boating industry which is more than double in value as well as other tourism-based industries, property owners and others dependent on the Great Lakes.

Great Lakes anglers have been blessed for the last 50 years to have access to a very diverse fishery that was unthinkable in the early 1960's. A time when commercial overfishing coupled with the sea lamprey invasion all but destroyed the native fish populations. That situation paved the way for the put and take recreational fishery funded by your license fees that you enjoy today.

Keep that thought! The recreational fishery you enjoy today. Let me say

that again, the recreational fishery you enjoy TODAY. I know many of you reading this are saying I don't need to affiliate with the MSSFA. The fishery is in place, the MSSFA is already vigilant about fishery issues and there is enough information at my finger tips on the internet to teach me about how and where to spend my limited angling hours. I'm just going to do my own thing and not be involved. No argument here because TODAY those thoughts are pretty valid. Well, to be honest, those thoughts were valid up until about June of 2020. We are already in Tomorrowland with everything I alluded to earlier in this article.

You know how the system of government works. You either have a seat at the

table or you find yourself on the menu. Either you can influence the key decision makers to make a positive difference or you cannot influence the decision makers and you will make much less of a difference, if any at all.

2021 marks the greatest challenge the Great Lakes recreational sport fishery has faced yet. Are you in agreement with the MSSFA's positions and want to make a difference? You can try on your own or you can add your name and support to our growing membership roll. Now is the time to influence the decision makers. We can only continue to meet the challenges to our sport if we are united. If the MSSFA doesn't succeed today, who will tomorrow? Nobody.

Tomorrow will be too late.

Join the MSSFA today and also consider donating to the MSSFA's Share the Resource Campaign. Let's assure ourselves and future generations there is still a resource to share in 2022.



Tim Stegeman, President  
Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Association

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**Dennis Eade, Executive Director**  
Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Association

When Pacific salmon were introduced into the Great Lakes in the spring of 1966, it became the genesis of "the world's greatest fresh water sport fishery". The Coho salmon, and later the Chinook salmon, thrived in the new prey enriched waters of the Great Lakes. Amazingly, they adapted quickly to their new environment and began returning to the rivers from which they were released to spawn and in so

doing, the sport fishery we enjoy today took off.

Today the fate of our sport fishery is threaten more than at any time in the last half century. Alewife numbers are down, so salmonids are threatened. The explosion of Quagga and zebra mussel numbers have altered the food chain by greatly reducing phyto- and zoo-plankton levels in the lakes. And now we have a combination of human factors coming togeth-

er that could spell the end to our sport fishery as we know it.

State commercial fishermen refused to acquiesce to the terms of House Bills 4567 - HB 4569 that would have created a new commercial fishing statute. Commercial netters insisted on being able to harvest game fish like walleye and lake trout. The House Bills died in the Senate Natural Resources committee at the end of the 100th Legislature on December 31, 2020.

The 2020 Consent Decree negotiations with the five tribes of Northern Michigan and the state and federal governments have dragged on for two years without a willingness on the

part of the tribes to equally (50-50) share the lake trout resource with sport fishermen.

It is the Consent Decree we should be most worried about. If the tribes continue to hold out for the prerogative of being able to catch whatever fish they want to harvest in any waters covered by the treaty, without designated tribal zones, and with any gear they wish to use, it could be the beginning of the end of the sport fishery. In my opinion, we could see tribal commercial fishermen stringing gill nets and placing trap nets from waters out in front of Grand Haven, MI. to as far northeast as Alpena, MI. Back in late 1966...

"enough feet of nets were lifted from the Great Lakes to reach around the world three times..." according to Dr. Wayne Tody, head of the Michigan DNR's Fish Division at the time. If that practice is allowed to return again to Great Lakes, it will not take long for the resident lake trout to be extirpated and the salmon and trout fishery threatened to the point of making buying a fishing license a questionable proposition.

We have 1.2 million licensed fishers in Michigan and approximately 200,000 out-of-state fishers that come to Michigan to fish its waters. To provide those sportsmen and women the best possible experience we

need to protect the fishery and promote as well as enhance sport fishing. MSSFA fills that role better than the other fishing groups because our tent is bigger and our coalition building efforts have created partnerships with the tourism industry, the environmental community, conservation organizations, and community groups that wish to promote quality of living experiences." But sadly, not enough sport fishermen are members of MSSFA or MUCC, MCBA, or the other associations that advocate for the sport fishery. When an unaffiliated charter captain was recently asked, "What do you think the consequences of the expiration of the consent decree with the tribes will have on the future of the fishery?" His reply was basically that there were some "groups" involved which represented sport anglers and that the 2000 decree would most likely be renewed "as is" in the end because it had worked out so well in the past. He was then asked whether he was a member of any of those groups and he said he "was too busy to be directly involved". Well, if you're not willing to be directly involved then you need to step up and fund the efforts being done on your behalf by the associations that are involved and the attorneys who are at the negotiations table on your behalf.

The tribal representatives have been overheard referring to those who represent the interests of sport fishermen and sit at the table alongside the DNR negotiators, as "sporties"; a term used to parody their disdain for sport fishermen being involved in the negotiations. They know that if the sport fishermen brought the needed financial resources to bear on the consent decree negotiations, there would be less of chance of gaining the concessions they're insisting on in negotiations. You need to get involved if only by joining MSSFA and its "Share the Resource" campaign by going to <http://www.mssfa.org/> and clicking on "Donate Now!"

"The road to hell is paved with good intentions"...don't be one of those anglers who would have given or been involved if only you had known for sure that the fishery was going to suffer such a cruel fate.



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**MSSFA** chapters have membership meetings with guest speakers to learn about all the aspects of sport fishing. **MSSFA** chapters also sponsor fishing clinics, seminars, sport-fishing shows, derbies and tournaments. And are active sponsors for fishing outings for kids, seniors, veterans and our handicapped.

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With a common goal, and a close working partner with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, **MSSFA** helps to enhance the resource and sport fishing in our rivers, streams, inland lakes, and of course the mighty Great Lakes. **MSSFA** is a front-runner at all levels of the legislature and in courtrooms, and has spent countless hours working behind the scenes and attending hearings.

So why join the ***Steelheaders***... Got kids, love fishing.. ***JOIN NOW!*** ...and become a member of he largest organized groups of fishermen in the Midwest. There are chapters throughout the entire state. You too can help protect and preserve this world-class sport fishery for you, your children and generations to come.

## THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS (GLSFN)

The Great Lakes Sport Fishing News is owned and operated by The Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen’s Association.

Better than forty years ago, The Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen’s Association began to publish a magazine called the “Guide to Great Lakes Sport Fishing”. Five years later the magazine became a monthly format called “The Great Lakes Steelheader”. Today the newspaper is called “***The Great Lakes Sport Fishing News***”.

This paper has no paid writers and has a grass roots style. Its writers are the every day fishermen who share their techniques and fishing adventures; and the paper has become well known for it’s **January Special Edition** or “***Show Edition***” that is seen at all the spring expos and sport, boat and fishing shows throughout the Great Lakes.

Information in the paper covers the entire Great Lakes Basin region from Minnesota to New York including all five of the Great Lakes and their tributary streams.

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Issue	Deadline	Print Date
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2	02/12/21	03/03/21
3	04/13/21	05/03/21
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6	10/08/21	10/29/21

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Michigan Historical Library and Museum,  
701 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing, MI  
*(Pending State Authorization)*

**Wednesday, August 18, 2021**

MUCC, 2101 Wood Street, Lansing, MI – 7 PM

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**Wednesday, April 21, 2021**  
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**Wednesday, June 23, 2021**  
MUCC, via ZOOM – 7 PM

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# Memorable Bites

By Bob Jensen

For one reason or another, I’ve been unable to get on the ice for a couple of weeks. I’m guessing that warmer weather will provide the opportunity and encouragement to go ice fishing a few more times, but for now I’m doing a lot of remembering. Mostly I’m remembering past fishing trips. For 40 plus years, I’ve had the privilege of working in the fishing industry. From those 40 plus years, I’ve got lots of really good fishing memories. Some stand out though. Following are some of those memories.

Most of those memories are at least partially and usually mostly memorable because of the people that I was fishing with. I have several memories that took place while I was fishing alone. One of those memories happened while wading a small river near my childhood home. I had just acquired a new style of spinnerbait and was anx-

ious to try it. Traditional in-line spinners had caught lots of smallmouth bass and northern pike for me in the past, but this was a new-to-me style. It was the predecessor to the now-popular, super-productive spinnerbaits that have the spinner directly over the hook. A good example would be Strike-King’s Premier Plus spinnerbait. Conditions were perfect and the pike were biting. They had probably never seen a bait like this before. In a short stretch of river I caught a good bunch of pike in the 5-8 pound range. Not big by some standards, but certainly nice ones for a small river. The lesson learned was that much of the time baits that the fish haven’t seen before or haven’t seen much can be very productive.

Another wonderful memory occurred on a river far north of that pike memory. I was going to be fishing the Rainy River on the Minnesota-Canadian border with fishing pioneer

Ron Lindner. I had fished with Ron a number of times prior to that and was always so impressed by how he could read the water. While having supper the evening before, Ron predicted that we would “catch 100 smallmouth bass tomorrow”. I knew that was an aggressive number, but I also knew that Ron could predict that sort of thing. The next day we got on the water, and within minutes Ron noticed that conditions had changed. He said, “We ain’t gonna’ catch 100 smallmouth bass today”. He was right. We caught 60. I kept track. Ron was an amazing angler and an even more amazing person.

A more recent fishing trip that’s stuck in my head happened on Sturgeon Bay in Wisconsin’s Door County. I was sharing a boat with Bret Alexander, a fishing guide, and Jeff Kolodzinski. Kolo works in the fishing tackle industry. It was mid-summer, the skies were clear, the wind was calm, the bay was flat. Sturgeon Bay has very, very clear water. Those conditions usually create difficult fishing for most

species of fish and certainly for walleyes. We were after walleyes on this day. Bret didn’t seem concerned. He said “We’ll get ‘em to bite”. And we did. We caught a good number of walleyes with a few channel catfish mixed in. They were all larger than most walleyes or catfish that are caught across the Midwest. There was 1 thing that we did that enabled our success. We trolled with in-line Off Shore planer boards. These boards took our night-crawler tipped spinner rigs way off to the side of the boat. The rigs on the outside lines were at least 50 feet away from the boat and probably even farther. By doing so, the walleyes weren’t spooked by the boat and were very willing to eat our baits. Lesson Learned: When the water is clear, avoid spooking fish by getting your bait away from the boat.

I have lots of other fishing memories that I’ll share another time, but now I have to gather my ice fishing gear for an afternoon on the ice.



Commercial Fishing Boat in Fishtown, Leland, MI

## “Fishing Bill” Continued from page 1

to pay for the oversight of commercial anglers.

After the trio of bills cleared the State House of Representatives, it went to the Michigan State Senate and had to start in the Senate Natural Resource committee where it snagged bottom. The Chairman of the Senate Natural Resource committee is Ed McBroom (R Vulcan) and a co-sponsor of a different Bill which was the only pro-netting bill, (Senate Bill 389), sponsored by Kevin Daley (R Lum). That bill basically would have giv-

en netters everything they ever dreamed of, including up to 30% of the total allowable catch of walleyes in Saginaw Bay, and up to 20% of the total allowable catch of other game species like smallmouth bass and crappie. Obviously, the pro recreational bills were now in hostile territory and McBroom immediately amended the pro-recreational bill into what many feel is a pro-commercial netting bill. The three pro-recreation Bills-turned pro netting Bills died in that committee and never got a Senate vote in either form before the final Senate session of the year wrapped up before the New Year. A lot of deeply passionate folks on both sides of this issue never got to see what the Senate vote would bring as virtually all of these Bills are currently dead in the water. A new Bill would now need to be drafted and start over in all committees in both the Michigan House and Senate. That could happen but right now everything is up in the air due to Covid-19. Only time will tell if new bills are drafted. The good news is for right now, Michigan’s game fish are safe from being netted and sold to buyers in Chicago and New York.

On the brighter side of things, a new Bill has been signed by the Governor after clearing both the House and Senate. House Bill 5003 amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow children under age 17 to voluntarily pay a 2-dollar fee for an all-species fishing license. Again, this is completely voluntary and will allow kids to carry a license while making a small contribution to the health of our state’s fisheries and wildlife. This license was quite popular as many parents used it as a teaching tool, and it allowed kids to put something cool in the pocket to take on those fishing trips with Grandpa. This was mistakenly removed by amendments in 2016. This Bill, sponsored by Representative Julie Brixie, (D 69 District), and Gary Howell, (R- North Branch) is an incredibly positive Bi-partisan effort to allow kids in our state to be a part of the stewardship that takes place through the federal Dingell-Johnson Sport Fishing Restorative fund to invest in Michigan. It was signed into Law by the Governor in late December.

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## “Spawning”

Continued from page 1

ing to previous spawning areas is advantageous because fish experience less risk when they spawn; that is, if mates were present last year, mates will likely be present again in future years. Likewise, habitat suitable for spawning one year is likely to be suitable in subsequent years.

In the past, scientists studying walleye spawning site fidelity in the Great Lakes had to infer fish behavior after-the-fact based on data obtained from marking a fish with an external tag, such as a jaw tag, and recapturing the fish months or years later. Although this method was useful for telling scientists when a fish was present at a particular location, the method only provided a snapshot of where the fish had traveled. Scientists did not know when the fish arrived, how long the fish stayed, how many times the fish visited, and where the fish went in between visits to the specific locale.

A research team led by Dr. Todd Hayden and collaborators at Michigan State University, the U.S. Geological Survey, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Carleton University, and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, began tagging walleye with acoustic telemetry tags to fill in those knowledge gaps. Acoustic telemetry allows scientists to track movements of fish in great detail. If older methods like jaw tags provide data akin to photographs, then acoustic telemetry is like a video, providing a detailed history of movements and behaviors through space and time.

Acoustic telemetry works like electronic toll collection systems such as I-Pass or E-ZPass: an internally-tagged fish swims through a network of receivers, like a car passing through a toll-booth. The acoustic tag inside the fish continuously “pings” a unique ID number, which receivers – essentially underwater computers – detect and record, along with the date and time for every tagged fish that swims nearby. By stationing receivers in a wide variety of locations (known migration corridors, presumed spawning locations, and other places where scientists expect fish to be), and later retrieving the receivers to download the data collected, scientists can determine the exact movements of a particular fish.

For the walleye study, Dr. Hayden and collaborators wanted to confirm previous observations of walleye spawning site fidelity with greater certainty than older tagging methods allowed. Additionally, the research team investigated whether spawning site fidelity differed between walleye aggregations in two spawning areas: the Tittabawassee River (a tributary to Saginaw Bay



in Lake Huron) and the Maumee River (a tributary to the western basin of Lake Erie). The researchers chose these sites because of the large number of walleye spawning at each site: the Tittabawassee River supports the largest known spawning aggregation of walleye in Lake Huron, estimated at almost 200,000 fish, and the Maumee River supports a walleye population of approximately 600,000 fish.

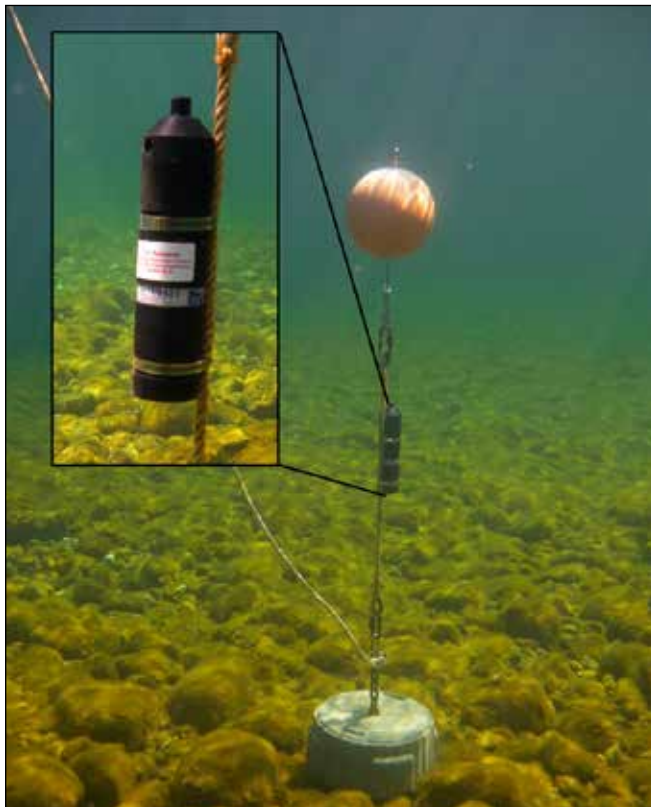
During 2011 and 2012, the research team implanted acoustic telemetry tags in almost 500 walleye, then followed their movements through the 2014 spawning season. More than 300 receivers were used to track the fish, including multiple receivers in both rivers, near the river mouths, across key migration corridors, and along the shorelines of Lake Huron and Lake Erie. In total, 311,180 detections from tagged walleye were recorded on the receiver network. When the research team compiled the detections to create movement paths for the walleye, the results were remarkable.

Walleye in the Tittabawassee River showed strong spawning site fidelity, with a 95% return rate to the river. Walleye in Lake Erie showed less spawning site fidelity, although 70% were still faithful to the Maumee River.

“Greater fidelity of walleye tagged in the Tittabawassee River than in the Maumee may be due to the close proximity of the Maumee River to other spawning sites in Lake Erie,” Dr. Hayden explained. “Multiple spawning sites in close proximity to the Maumee River may increase the likelihood that some individuals will stray, choosing a different spawning location from previous years.”

In contrast, the Tittabawassee River supports the largest known spawning aggregation in all of Lake Huron. Walleye that previously spawned in the Tittabawassee River may return to the river in subsequent years because the probability of encountering other spawning aggregations in Saginaw Bay or Lake Huron is low. Alternatively, high spawning site fidelity for these fish may be due to natal homing, although the potential for homing has not been studied in Lake Huron walleye.

Another notable outcome of this work was documenting lengthy mi-



**Left: Acoustic telemetry tags are surgically implanted into the abdomens of walleyes. Walleye are anesthetized during the procedure and the incision is sutured after the tag is inserted.**

*Credit: Sean Landsman, Carleton University.*

grations of walleye in Lake Huron. Many walleye undertook annual migrations of almost 500 miles round-trip, moving from spawning areas in the Tittabawassee River to feeding grounds in northern Lake Huron. Although these long migrations had been suggested previously based on jaw tag studies, the research team was able to confirm in detail the timing and popular migration pathways of walleye migration in Lake Huron.

Understanding spawning site fidelity has important implications for management of walleye in the Great Lakes. When spawning site fidelity is low or moderate for a fish species in a given lake, those fish can be managed as a single population – essentially, all of the fish in the lake can be considered to be part of

a single group. However, as spawning site fidelity increases, management actions need to increasingly focus on individual populations within lakes. In other words, fish spawning in different locations should be considered different groups, and may need to be managed using different strategies tailored to each group. A good example of this approach is Pacific salmon management on the west coast of North America. Salmon have high spawning site fidelity to individual rivers which flow into the Pacific Ocean. Consequently, in some areas, salmon in different rivers are managed as separate populations, with river-specific harvest rates, seasons, and gear types allowed.

## “Spawning”

Continued on page 20

**Left: The receiver network in the Great Lakes during this study (Bottom Left: each orange dot represents one receiver). More than 300 receivers in Lake Huron and Lake Erie were used to track walleye, including multiple receivers in the Tittabawassee and Maumee rivers, near the river mouths, across key migration corridors, and along the shorelines of Lake Huron and Lake Erie. Source: Great Lakes Acoustic Telemetry Observation System (GLATOS) website.**



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## An Invitation to the Metro-West Steelheaders

The “Metro-West Steelheaders” (MWS) is a 200+ member “Family Fun” oriented fishing club whose mission is to promote sportfishing and the sharing of fishing information to those wanting to learn and educate young people through participation in fishing events throughout the Great Lakes region. The Metro-West Steelheaders is one of twelve Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fisherman’s Association (MSSFA) chapters across the state. MWS has been a member of MSSFA since 1978 and is based out of Livonia Michigan. There is something for everyone with fishing events, socializing, environmental education, community outreach, & fund raising. MWS holds roughly (60) events a year ranging from community outreach at shows to (18) Big Lake events on Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan. The River group holds (10) events on four to five major river systems in Michigan as well as “Steelhead alley” in Ohio. The Kayak & Small Boat groups hold (10) events in four Lake Michigan ports and multiple inland lakes. The Pier-Beach Groups visit three to four major ports annually. MWS also holds their annual Swap Meet in April. By Species MWS holds (20) Salmon, (21) Trout, (7) Walleye and (9) Perch, Bass & Bluegill events annually. MWS participates at three Fishing Shows (Ultimate Fishing Show, Outdoorama & Novi Boat Show). There are three Social events

(Summer Picnic, Kids Fish & Christmas Party) and two funds raisers (Comedy for a Cause & Annual Sportsman’s Banquet). MWS is active representing MSSFA on the MDNR Cold Water Steering committee and participates in Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) Policy Board meetings and serves on the MUCC Fisheries Committee as well as serving on the MDNR Lake Michigan & Lake Erie Citizens Fishery Advisory Committees. MWS also participates with MUCC and other conservation groups in three annual river clean ups on the Clinton and Manistee Rivers MWS sponsors an annual “Kids Fish” at Kensington Metro-Park with 200+ kids and related guardians annually. Each child receives a new pre-rigged fishing rod, bait and instruction by MWS Volunteers throughout the morning. Just before lunch an exotic animal show allows the kids to get up close and interact with all kinds of birds, reptiles and mammals. A group lunch is then held with an awards presentation for Big Fish in several categories. MWS holds (10) General membership meetings per year. These meetings are open to the public w/ expert speakers related to fishing topics as well as MDNR officials, biologists and area Legislators. Starting back in January 2021 the Membership meetings have been held on Zoom and will continue until COVID 19 regulations al-

low group meetings. When able to meet in person each meeting promotes social interaction and the exchange of information through time set aside for social interaction and networking. There are also 50/50 and tackle raffles, event updates and fishing reports. Other fun activities include “Captain & Crewperson of the year” contests as well as River, Kayak, Small Boat, Beach and Pier “Anglers of the Year” contests. There are also “Big Fish” and “Warm Water Challenge” annual fishing contests. MWS Fundraisers annually support sending 20-30 area children to the MUCC Kids Camp, the Annual Kids Fish at Kensington Metro Park, (5) classes in the MDNR “Salmon in the Classroom” program & donations to fisheries related special programs like the “Clinton River Watershed Council” and the Lake Superior State University Atlantic Salmon project. MWS has a monthly newsletter with a circulation of 2,000+ recipients. Content includes monthly event updates, Upcoming event invites, MSSFA & MUCC reports, technical articles and recipes. For more information visit the MWS Website at [www.metroweststeelheaders.org](http://www.metroweststeelheaders.org) or contact Henry Nabors - Membership at [hnnabors@gmail.com](mailto:hnnabors@gmail.com) (258.225.4964)



Allison Platt on the Muskegon River



Toledo Beach Memorial Walleye Tournament



Team Fish Stix: From left to right: Larry Vonwald, Capt. Dave Hutton, Bryan Hutton, Bill Chamberlain

Ludington Brown Trout Tourney



## “Steelies”

Continued from page 1

cast and retrieve lures. Both of these offerings are easy to get down to the correct depth and their flash really turns on the migratory rainbows. Silver is my first choice of finishes when the steelhead are holding deep because it reflects light best. Brass and copper are also effective and I frequently switch to them when the water is low and clear and the day is bright. Adding fluorescent orange, red, or chartreuse tape to the back of the spinner blade or spoon will make your lure even more irritating and thus irresistible to migrating steelhead.

These lures should be retrieved as slowly as possible, just fast enough to keep them spinning or wobbling. If you are casting upstream, you'll have to crank a little faster to keep the lures working properly. Conversely, if you are sweeping spinners or spoons across the current you might not have to turn the reel handle at all. Spinners with broad, flat French type blades are best because they spin well on slow retrieves. Likewise, highly curved spoons like the Little Cleo and BC Steel will wobble at fairly slow retrieve speeds.

Spinners and, to a somewhat lesser extent, spoons have a resistance that you feel when they are retrieved. That means the lure is working properly. A sensitive rod and smooth running reel enhance your ability to feel the lure working. If you don't sense resistance, the lure could be fouled or working improperly. Or, more often than you might think, the reason could also be that a steelhead has softly inhaled the lure. When in doubt, set the hook.

High action, compact plugs or crankbaits are traditionally backed downstream at a rate slower than the current speed. This can be accomplished from an anchored boat or a drift boat that is rowed to keep the craft moving slower than the current. Wading anglers can also drop back plugs when they can wade in above the holding water.

Hotshots, Wiggleworts, Kwickfish, Flatfish, Mag Lips, Hot-n-Tots, and Brad's Wigglers are all favorites for plug pullers. Many other high action bass or walleye crankbaits can also be effective but be sure that the hooks and split rings on them are strong enough. Choose light and bright colors to get the steelhead's attention as you invade their territory. Fluorescent chartreuse, orange, pink, and red are all excellent hues. Metallic finishes and contrasting colors are also great at getting the attention of a big ironhead. Copper has been hot in recent years and rattling plugs help the steelhead zero in when the water is stained or turbid.

You can also cast and retrieve these plugs for



Above: Author Jim Bedford with a spring steelie on a plug.

steelhead. Upstream casts are not very effective because of the difficulty of getting the floating lures down with the current but quartering downstream and then sweeping against the current can be very effective. Casting the plugs can help you get them into tight spots in the cover that would be difficult to reach with a boat.

In recent years, minnow plugs or stick baits have been very successful in catching steelhead. They are also best fished against or quartering against the current. They may be appealing to the feeding instincts of the steelhead but I am guessing the rainbows don't like other fish, even small ones in their space. These plugs seem to become especially effective as spawning time approaches, perhaps because steelhead don't like other fish to be around when they start laying eggs.

Drifted lures such as flies, jigs, beads and light, often buoyant drift “lures” also work well for spring steelhead. With this group we are using the river's current to deliver our offering. While some anglers still stick with traditional bottom bouncing techniques, the vast majority of Great Lakes anglers are now using floats.

Except for jigs, most drift lures are either buoyant or have little weight of their own. Therefore some weight must be added. For bottom bouncing anglers usually employ a two way swivel and attach their mainline to one loop and a leader of two to four pound lighter material in test to the other loop. Leaving a long tag end to the leader now enables you to attach split shot or hollow pencil lead to it. The weight needs to be heavy enough to keep your offering near the bottom but not so heavy as to drag and snag frequently. You are much better off to be a little high in the water column than to be snagging up all the time.

Float anglers also need to add weight unless using a jig. Small split shot spread out in a pattern on the leader are usually employed. Keeping your offering suspended a foot or two above the bottom will be most effective as steelhead look forward and up. If the surface current is not riffled or choppy you can enhance the effectiveness of your offering, especially marabou dressed jigs by jiggling your bobber with your rod.

There are large numbers of commercial drift lures available. You can also tie your own flies, jigs, and

yarn balls. Bright colors continue to be best and two contrasting colors are even better. Don't forget you can also cast flies and other weightless drift lures with conventional fly tackle. Cast your fly a bit upstream from where you suspect the steelhead to lie and allow it to sink. Twitch the fly to make it appear alive as it sweeps through the holding water.

Utilizing a small, black duo-lock snap on the end of your line will allow you to quickly change lures to match the holding water. Cutting and retying takes time and is a bother and you probably won't bother even though you know a different spinner or plug would be better for the situation at hand. If you pre-tie some leaders and floats you can even switch from casting lures to drift fishing.

Remember that steelhead need cover on their river migrations, and while they orient to current, they also need to be able to rest. You can think of cover as anything that keeps the fish hidden from view. The simplest cover is water depth. The clearer the water, the deeper the hole must be to provide protection. A rif-

## “Steelies”

Continued on page 14

# In Memory Of: Vicki Sue Decker

Vicki Sue (Salisbury) Decker was born June 16, 1948 in Midland, to Ralph Wick Salisbury and Myrtle Mahala (Bonner) Salisbury. On February 11, 2021 Vicki rejoined her parents who predeceased her.

After graduating from Midland High School's class of 1967, Vicki became a nurse. She later expanded her education, was hired into Dow Corning and for over twenty years she contributed to areas of the company including DC's steam and electric cogeneration plant (SECO), contact lens business, medical marketing division, regulatory and with the executive team in benchmarking.

As an avid outdoorsman from a young age, Vicki was a camp leader and canoe instructor throughout her teens. She taught outdoor skills to youth and later on to her own children. Vicki's husband Gary, introduced her to the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association. For the last 30 years she served the organization in numerous capacities at both the state and local levels including

MSSFA's State President (first female in their history) and most recently as Representative to the State Board of Directors for the Great Lake's Bay Chapter.

Anyone who knew Vicki, recognized her immense inner strength as she endeavored for more than four decades to control her rheumatoid arthritis. Her family is ever grateful for the support from Vicki's close friends and the members of her medical teams.

Vicki is survived by her husband, Gary; brother Bill Salisbury of Auburn; children, Chris (Douglas) Teugh of Portage; Brett Wilcox of Honor; Jason Decker of Manistee; Jennifer (Vince Miller) Decker of Midland; grandchildren David, Catherine, Samuel, Jacob.

Due to current restrictions, there was a private service for immediate family on Saturday, February 20, 2021 with a celebration of life to take place in summer of 2021. Memorial contributions may be made to the Arthritis Foundation. Arrangements are under the care of the Wilson MILLER Funeral Home.



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# Lure Color Counts

By Bob Jensen

As the ice fishing season starts to wind down and the open water fishing season gets closer, it's good to think about some of the things that can affect our fishing success. There are a good number of those things. We think about where we're going fishing, when we're going fishing, or who we're going fishing with. Then when we get to the chosen fishing location at the chosen time with the chosen person/people, we need to choose a bait to put in the water. Sometimes that's a harder decision than the who/when/where decision. Different lures have different qualities that enter the picture. Some of those qualities are lure size, shape, speed at which it's fished and so on. Another quality is the color of the lure. For many of us that's an important consideration, and for others, it's not that big of a deal. However, many of the most successful anglers agree that there are times, actually quite a few times, when having the lure with the right color on the end of your line can be the difference between catching a few and catching a lot. Keep these color considerations in mind next time you're tying on a lure that you want the fish to eat.

We should always consider color, and we should always be experimenting with color. The best an-

glers that I know change colors often. When the fish aren't hitting the color they're using, they try a different color. When the fish are hitting the color being used, they change colors to see if a particular color will trigger even more fish or bigger fish.

The time-tested rule of thumb that suggests we use natural or subtle colored baits in clear water, and brighter, gaudier colors in stained water is still good advice. But when that time-tested rule of thumb doesn't work, try something else. Most walleye anglers have experienced numerous situations when a bright chartreuse or orange bait in clear water was the most productive.

The best time to switch colors is when you're dealing with conditioned fish. If you're fishing a specific spot, say a small rock hump, and you've been catching the fish good on a black jig, but then the fish-

ing slows, try a different color before you leave. The fish may have become conditioned to the black jig, but if you put a white jig out there, a few more will eat it. And, before you leave the spot, try an entirely different presentation, maybe a slip-bobber rig. I've seen fish get conditioned to a color lots and lots of times. Walleyes, smallmouth bass, and crappies mostly, but largemouth bass also.

Personal experience with color also plays a role in color selection. In the past many number of fishing seasons, I've come to count on a few different presentations. In particular, when I just want to get bit, and that's a lot of the time, I'll tie on a 3/8th ounce jig head and thread a 4 inch action tail onto it. A Rage Grub would be a good example of this type of tail. These baits catch walleyes, smallmouth, largemouth, and pike, and they're easy to fish. You cast them out and slowly reel them in.

Most of the time I'll start with a white tail.

Some lure-makers call their version of white pearl, others call them shad color. If it looks white, I have confidence in it.

However, I've also had outstanding success with a chartreuse tail. That's way at the other end of the color spectrum, but I've seen days when the fish hit white and chartreuse tails with equal enthusiasm. Another go-to color is watermelon, and I'm guessing that other anglers have different go-to colors. The key is, try different colors until the fish show you what they want.

Using different colors, if nothing else, makes us do different things, and that's often what it takes to catch more fish. During the remainder of the ice season and in the coming open water season, be willing to try colors you haven't tried in the past. If you do, you're going to catch more fish.

To see new and old episodes of Fishing the Midwest television, fishing articles and video tips, go to [fishingthemidwest.com](http://fishingthemidwest.com)



This clear water walleye liked the subtle look of a Crystal Shad Pink Belly pattern Lucky Shad.

## "Steelies"

Continued from page 11

fled surface helps hide the fish and allows them to lie in shallower water.

Boulders, submerged logs, and clay or rock shelves or ledges provide both cover and serve to break the current for migrating steelhead. Steelies will usually lie quite close to these obstacles. A billed cap and polarized sunglasses are essential for success, both to see the cover structure and possibly the fish.

If you are not ready to trade in your spawn sacs for something artificial, you can still employ hardware as an aid. Casting spinners or pulling plugs will help you find scattered fish, and once a concentration is located, you can drift the holes with eggs. Conversely, if you are drifting a run with bait that you know holds steelhead but they are not taking, you can use hardware as a change of pace. The flashing lure might also agitate them into changing position and becoming more receptive to your eggs or beads. Finally, adding yarn or a bright drift lure above your hook will make your spawn bag more visible to the fish and may excite them into taking it.

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# Centerpin vs. Spinning Reels for Tributary Steelhead

By Michael Graves

Fishing historians are unsure of where float fishing originated, but one thing is for sure, and that is that float fishing for steelhead trout and salmon works! The idea is to cast your offering (in this case) into a tributary of the Great Lakes. Then let your bait travel downstream in a natural fashion, watching and feeling for an "indication" that a fish has taken your bait. In fact, float fishing is also known as indicator fishing.

## Centerpin reels

Recently, I discovered centerpin reels. In the past, I thought centerpin reels were just fly fishing reels with no ball bearings. But quite to the contrary, centerpin reels fully incorporate ball-bearing technology.

Perhaps the main characteristic that differentiates a spinning reel from a centerpin fishing reel is line location relative to your casts and retrieves.

When we cast a bait into the stream with a spinning reel, the line uncoils or comes off the spool somewhat perpendicular to the stream. That is, the line comes off the reel at about a 60- to 90-degree angle to the stream. On the other hand, a centerpin is more like a waterwheel. Think of a waterwheel rotating in a creek, stream or river. The fishing line on the centerpin, just like a waterwheel, is in line with the stream when it comes off the reel or is retrieved back onto the reel.

This makes for a much better presentation of your bait, because with a centerpin reel, there is less friction or tension on the line caused by the reel itself. Your bait will, therefore, look more natural as it travels downstream.

The drawback to centerpin reels, in my opinion, is that they are hard to cast. It takes some practice to successfully get the hang of casting with a centerpin. The trick is to control the freewheeling of the reel with your rod-hand fingers when you make a cast.

There are several ways to cast with a centerpin reel, but for simplicity, I am going to stick with what is known as side casting. As its name implies, you will hold your rod to the side of your body with the rod tip pointed up at about a 45- to 60-degree angle.

To begin the casting motion, pull about 18 to 24 inches of line off the reel in a downward direction while applying pressure to the reel's spool with your rod finger or fingers, and then pause, with full pressure on the centerpin's spool. Most centerpin anglers rod hand is placed above the reel, towards the rod tip.

Remember to keep your rod-hand finger or fingers of choice on the reel's spool



Photo Credit: fisherreel.com

so that your line doesn't freewheel—just yet! Your rod hand not only holds and casts the bait, but also acts as a brake on the centerpin reel. Hold the rod and reel so the handle side of the reel is tilted slightly up, towards your face.

Now we come to the key point, which is generating and controlling line inertia. With rod, reel and body in position, you need to "take the brakes off"—that is, let the spool be able to freewheel by applying no pressure to it. Then rapidly pull down on the line while you cast.

A good tip is to pull the line down from a bottom rod eyelet.

The centerpin is now going to freewheel, and the line will come off rapidly as you aim for your casting target. If this wasn't enough to do, you now must time the braking of the freewheeling with your reel control finger or fingers, so you cast out the desired amount of line while not letting the reel overspin and tangle up.

Hopefully, your float will hit the water's surface right where you wanted it. Once it has, let the float, tackle and bait "ride" the water's current while you "feather" the spool with your rod hand finger or fingers to keep it freewheeling nicely. You want to let the reel's spool freewheel rate match the flow rate (i.e., current) of the creek, stream or river. Depending on how fast the water flow is, you sometimes need to help the freewheeling advance with your rod-hand fingers or thumb.

If your float goes under or acts irregularly, firmly grasp the spool with your rod-hand finger or fingers (hit the brakes) and set the hook. If you don't remember to grasp the reel's spool, the line will unravel, and you'll have an unwanted outcome on your hands... literally!

## Spinning reels

Spinning reels are often used by steelhead and salmon anglers. These types of reels have a lot going for them. I think they are easier to cast than centerpin reels. With spinning reels, there is no worry about freewheeling of the spool. The line uncoils off the spool when the bail of the reel is open

as you make your cast or drift.

In drift fishing, the bail is usually left open, and the float, split shot, swivel, hook and bait pull the line off the spool as they drift downstream. You sometimes must help the line come off the spool, with the idea being, again, to match the float speed to the stream's current, i.e. flow rate.

One of the best attributes of a spinning reel is that once you close the bail, you instantly have mechan-

ical drag working for you. Compared to a centerpin, where your fingers are the mechanical drag or brake, a spinning reel sort of has it built in. Another great thing about spinning reels is that you can pre-set the drag simply by turning a knob. Furthermore, you can adjust this drag setting while battling a big steelhead or King salmon. Some spin-

ning reels even have what is called a fighting drag, which is an additional lever to the drag knob to set/control the amount of drag you need while battling a fish.

Perhaps the biggest drawback to spincasters is their tendency to create

"Reels"

Continued on page 21



Photo Credit: fisherreel.com

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For questions email: [acctsrecv@mssfafa.org](mailto:acctsrecv@mssfafa.org)

## Opposition to Removal of 63 Trees Delays Construction of Fish Sorting Channel

By Justine Lofton  
[jlofton@mlive.com](mailto:jlofton@mlive.com)

TRAVERSE CITY, MI – The construction of a “globally significant” fish sorting channel and upgrades to an accompanying park are on hold after citizens came out in opposition to the removal of 63 trees, which is part of the construction process.

Work was set to get underway last week, but a judge put a stop to it before it could begin. Citizens opposed to the project believe they should have had a chance to vote on it; the

judge is now charged with determining whether that’s the case.

The \$19.3 million Union Street Dam Fishpass Project in downtown Traverse City is aimed at reconnecting the Boardman/Ottaway River and Grand Traverse Bay to restore the ecosystem - positively impacting at least 30 key species.

One of the groups behind the project, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, is “disappointed with the delay” but remains “excited and optimistic” that it will move forward soon, especially because the op-

position is not directly related to the Fishpass but the parkland surrounding it, spokesman Marc Gaden.

“We stand ready, along with our dedicated local, state, federal and tribal partners, to move forward with this globally significant project once the judicial process is complete,” he said.

Shortly before site preparation, including installing fencing and removing trees, was expected to begin, Judge Thomas Power of the Grand Traverse County 13th Circuit Court ordered a preliminary in-

junction, WPBN/WGTU reports.

“There is to be no earth moving, no tree cutting, no construction on this project pending further order of the court,” Power said.

The project, which is four years in the making, would reconnect the Boardman River to Lake Michigan and is the final piece of an ecosystem restoration project for the river. Plans also include a renovation of the Union Street Dam Park, including new green spaces, a foot bridge overlooking the river, docks, a kayak launch, an amphithe-

ater and steps to the water. Prior to the delay, it was expected to be completed in spring 2023.

The project would leverage the knowledge of fish biologists from around the world to evaluate fish sorting technologies to combat invasive species, such as the sea lamprey, from moving upstream while allowing native species to pass. The innovative approach could be used to reconnect lakes and rivers around the world, thereby restoring ecosystems.

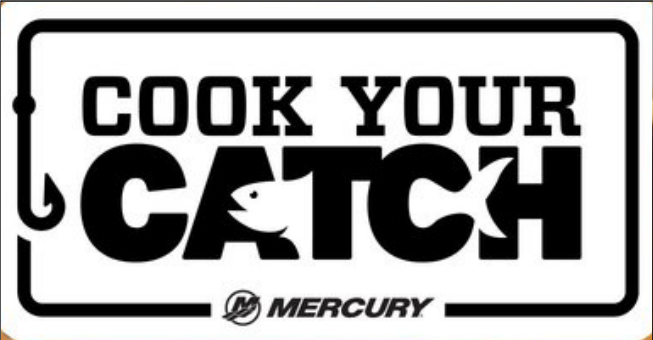
This final phase of the river restoration initiative

is primarily funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and led by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in partnership with Traverse City, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.



A before photo is juxtaposed with a design rendering of Union Street Dam Park after the FishPass Project is complete. The project near downtown Traverse City is expected to be completed in spring 2023; construction began this week. Photo: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers





# A Hearty Fish Stew: The Perfect Meal for a Cold Winter Day

Turn your favorite fish into a world-class comfort food

Recipe from: [www.mercurymarine.com](http://www.mercurymarine.com)  
and noted outdoorsman Blaine Garrett from Mercury: Cook Your Catch

Some days are just made for good, hearty stew – the kind that fills the house with a homey scent and makes your taste buds sit up and take notice.

Start to finish: 30 minutes  
Servings: 6



**Ingredieints:**

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium red onion (about 1 1/2 cups), diced
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup seafood stock
- 1 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup water
- 8 to 10 ounces of potatoes (three to four small red potatoes), cut into cubes
- 2 medium tomatoes, cut into cubes
- Salt and pepper
- 2 pounds fish of choice, cut into 1- to 2-inch chunks
- 2 tablespoons cilantro
- 2 tablespoons chives
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- bread or crackers

In a multicooker set to the sauté setting, add the olive oil and red onions. Sauté the onions for a few minutes.

Add chicken broth and garlic, then sauté for another minute.

Add white wine. Allow it to deglaze for a minute or two.

Add seafood stock, water, potatoes and tomatoes.

Salt and pepper to taste, then stir well

Put the lid on the multicooker, close the vent and change the setting to pressure cook. Cook for 5 minutes at high pressure.

When finished, release steam and remove lid. Change the multicooker back to the sauté setting.

Gently stir in the fish chunks and cook another 5 to 7 minutes. You want the fish to be done, but not so done that it starts to fall apart

Turn off the heat and add cilantro, chives and lemon juice. Stir well.

Add additional seasoning to taste. Serve with choice of bread or crackers.

And there you have it: In a half-hour or so of prep work and cooking you can have a fish stew that will smell and taste like you tended to it all day. Try this recipe with bluegill, crappie, tilapia, walleye or just about any other fish you have in the freezer, and don't be afraid to experiment with a few of your other favorite spices or perhaps a sliced jalapeno.





# Michigan Department of Natural Resources

## DNR Fisheries Managers Hopeful on New Cormorant Control Rule

By Randy Claramunt,  
Lake Huron Basin  
Coordinator

Michigan is often viewed as a leader in double-crested cormorant (DCCO) activity, both in terms of DCCO-fisheries conflicts as well as engaged stakeholders and managers working towards solutions. For those reasons, fisheries managers in Michigan were not surprised with the release of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and publication of their final rule announced late in 2020 with an effective start date of February 12, 2021, as the State has been highly involved throughout the process.

The new ruling is aimed at addressing management conflicts associated with DCCOs, through a new permit system for State and Tribal agencies, that would allow lethal control DCCOs to protect both free-swim-

ming (wild) and stocked fish. In addition to two informational webinars to be held on the new ruling, the USFWS has reached out to State and Tribal Governments in Michigan to begin discussion on the details for implementation of the new permit system.

Given the long history of DCCO-fisheries conflicts in Michigan, fisheries managers and anglers alike are most interested in the bottom line for the new rule: will the State be allowed to control DCCOs, at what areas, and at what level(s)? The State will be allowed to apply for lethal control of DCCO, following the guidance in the ruling, but the specific take levels have yet to be defined for the State. That being said, the State has a long track record documenting DCCO-fisheries conflicts that will serve as a solid basis for requesting adequate take levels to alleviate the most highly impacted areas where DCCOs consumption is in conflict with the fisheries.



In anticipation of the new rule becoming effective, MDNR fisheries managers have built a list of specific sites with justifications for control levels based on the goal of reducing conflicts and balancing DCCO consumption of fish with fisheries management objectives. The new rule provides flexibility to the State for site selection for control activities, noting that Federal lands will be exempt. The take levels for DCCOs have been set at approximately 121,000 nationally, of which approximately 78,000 will be allowed for the Great Lakes region. Once these take levels are allocated to each state, we will prioritize our list of sites and develop a strategy to maximize management activities based on the goal of minimizing DCCO-fisheries conflicts.

As with any new management system, successful implementation will require

“Cormorant”

Continued on page 23

## Women on Ice, Advancing the Sport of Ice Fishing

By Joe Henry  
midwestoutdoors.com

The goal of **Women on Ice** is to inspire and motivate women who want to learn the sport of ice fishing, as well as generate awareness and recognition for women anglers. This movement started seven years ago and has been building. “Awareness of women in the sport of ice fishing has gotten much

better,” explains Carey, a retired police officer from Madison, Wisconsin, and founder of Women on Ice.

Carey and other leaders from Women on Ice were up at Lake of the Woods earlier this ice season. It was mainly a work trip, gaining assets for sponsors—which is another way of saying providing images and videos—as well as getting the word out about the benefits of the product

lines they represent. Make no bones about it—along with the work, there was some fun, which included ice fishing. “Normally at this event, we would invite women who would like to join us to learn more about ice fishing, or simply get to know other women who ice fish. Because of COVID, we had to hold off on that part of the event,” explained Carey.

The Women on Ice

event was based out of River Bend Resort, located at the mouth of the Rainy River that leads into Lake of the Woods. This was home base, where the ladies were staying in cabins overlooking the river and across the ice to Canada.

As a guest at the Women on Ice event, my main role was to stay out of the way! These ladies are proficient with a capital “P!” I rode with Carey on her

ATV. It was set up with a Raymarine GPS, so Carey knew exactly where she was both on land and on the ice. It also allows her to follow her plot line to and from fishing spots on the ice, making sure she didn’t get off course.

For the ladies who didn’t have a unit on their sled or ATV, Carey insisted they use their Navionics app in their smartphone. At one point, just as the sun was rising and everyone was getting ready to hit the ice, Carey pulled one of the group aside and asked her, “Do you have your Navionics on? Do you know how to drop a plot line so you can find your way back if need be?” It was all part of it—teaching, promoting leadership and enabling ladies with the skills and tools to be self-sufficient as ice anglers.

When I rode with Carey, she pulled two collapsible fish houses, one attached to the other. Her K-Drill auger was attached to the front of her ATV. She made sure to take my Vexilar in a bucket and put that in the front rack. “With any electronics, I like to put them on the front rack so they don’t get so beat up, banging around in the fish house.” There weren’t many details missed. Equipment was accounted for and secured.

The Women on Ice group was very good about helping each other out. “Are you topped off with

gas? I have a gas can in the trailer. Let me grab it for you.” This kind of teamwork resonated.

Naturally, some of the ladies had more experience than others, but it didn’t matter. What mattered is making sure everyone was safe, helping to accomplish the mission of the trip and having a good time.

The Women on Ice event was very organized, with safety being of prime importance.

Once on the ice, these ladies, if they weren’t involved in shooting a video or creating some cool-looking still shots of ice fishing products, were after wall-eyes. Once we stopped in an area, augers were cutting ice, collapsible fish houses were being set up and heaters were started. Some of the ladies started fishing in the open, simply to get their lines in the water. All were dressed for the weather.

I have to say, the Women on Ice group needed nobody’s help. In fact, I am confident they could provide some good learning for the majority of ice anglers. If they did, they would be cool about it. These are a group of very good-natured female ice anglers who simply love ice fishing, the camaraderie and being ambassadors in a sport they hold near and dear to their hearts. Women on Ice—advancing the sport of ice fishing.







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# Event Calendar Disclaimer:

*Please visit your chapter website for the latest status on the activities listed. Many events are being postponed or canceled due to state restrictions. Call, text or email any additional questions or need for direction.*

2021 Battle Creek Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Location
March	6	St. Joe River Challenge	Sand Bar
March	20	Kalamazoo River Spring Steelhead	Allegan Dam
May	22	Lake Michigan Spring Tournament	Benton Harbor
Meetings are held every 3rd Tuesday of the month. 6:00 pm Social, 7:00 pm Meeting Meeting Location: Travelers Cafe and Pub, 5225 Portage Rd. Exit 78 off I-94. FOR MORE INFORMATION: River Tournament - Joe Foy at 269-303-1894 / Lake Tournament - Dan Foster at 269-370-3693 battlecreeksteelheaders.com			

2021 Grand Haven Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Contact Info
April	15	Spring Banquet	
May	1	Event TBD	
June	3-6	Grand Haven Offshore Challenge	
July	31	GH / GR Silver Spoon Event	
August	12	Summer Picnic	
December	2	Christmas Party	
Other Events TBD For information on these events and other information on the Grand Haven Steelheaders contact GHS President and State Director Paul Zelenka at pbzfarms@gmail.com www.ghsteelheaders.com			

2021 Grand Rapids Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Information
March	9	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
March	7-13	Spring River Week Long Contest	STC
March	18-21	Ultimat Sports Show	DeVos Place
March	18-20	Ultimate Soprts Show Fishing Contest	DeVos Place
March	29	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
March	31	2020 Year Long Fish Contest Ends	
April	1	2021 Year Long Fish Contet Starts	
April	13	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
April	26	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
May	1	Spring Big Lake	STC
May	11	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
May	24	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
June	5	Steelheaders Free Kids Fishing Derby	STC
June	8	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
June	11-13	Lake Erie 3 Day Walleye Contest	STC
June	28	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
July	12	Chapter Family Picnic	6:00pm at Johnson Park Shelter House **
July	13	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
August	7	Fall Big Lake	STC
August	10	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
August	30	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
September	14	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
September	27	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
October	1	Chapter Sponsored Buck Contest Begins	**
October	12	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
October	24	Fall River Contest	STC
October	25	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
November	6	Fishing Partners Manistee Contest	STC
Novembeer	9	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
November	22	Membership Meeting	Social Hour 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
December	6	Chapter Family Christmas Party	6:00pm - Diamond Hall **
December	14	Board of Directors Meeting	7:00pm STC
STC* = Date subject to change ** = Members and Family Only. (All other events open to the public)			

2021 Great Lakes Bay Region Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Location / Time
March	2	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 6:00
March	20	Big Man / Bear Creek	Daylight – 1:00pm
April	3	Big/Lil Man, Bear, Betsie, P.M.	Daylight – 1:00pm
April	5	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
April	24	Walleye River/Statewide	TBD – 1:00pm
May	1	Linwood Beach Walleye	7:00am – 1:00pm
May	4	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
May	15	Manistee Salmon	7:00am – 1:00pm
May	29	Linwood Beach Walleye	7:00am – 1:00pm
June	1	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
June	12	Sebewaing Walleye Kids Outing	7:00am – 1:00pm
June	26	Augre Walleye	7:00am – 1:00pm
July	6	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
July	10	Manistee Salmon	6:00am – 1:00pm
July	24	Ludington Salmon	6:00am – 1:00pm
August	14-15	Ludington Salmon (2 day)	6:00am – 1:00pm/12:00pm
August	28-29	Manistee Salmon (2 day)	6:00am – 1:00pm/12:00pm
September	7	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
September	11	Frankfort/Manistee TBD	6:00am – 1:00pm
October	5	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
November	6	Big/Lil Man. Bear Creek	Daylight – 1:00pm
November	9	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
December	4	Big Man., Bear, Betsie, P.N.	Daylight – 1:00pm
December	7	Board Meeting	VFW Hall 7:00pm
December	11	Annual Christmas Banquet	Cocktails 5:00pm/Dinner 6:00pm K of C Garfield Rd. Auburn, MI
Membership meetings held at: 3013 Bay City Road, Midland, MI 48642 989-496-3410			
Board meetings begin at 7:00pm Please call the Port Chairman no later than Monday prior to the outing whether you plan on attending or not attending. On the day of the outing, call in on Marine Radio, Channel 72. Weigh-in follows each outing. Picnics follows weigh-in on Saturdays only. Outings: All Steelheader members pay \$5.00. All non-Steelheaders pay \$10.00 to participate. Children 16 and Under are free. Picnic is \$5.00 for everyone.			
If interested in fishing with us please contact: Gary Decker at 989-859-7472 Visit our web page www.steel-headers.com			

2021 Holland Steelheader’s Calendar of Events		
Month	Date	Event
March	1	Board Meeting
March	13	Annual Banquet
April	5	Board Meeting
May	3	Board Meeting
May	11	Tuesday Night Fishing League Starts
May	20	Membership Meeting
May	22	Spring Challenge
June	7	Board Meeting
June	12	All Species Tournament
June	26	Kids and Kings Tournament
July	10	Fishing with Veterans
July	12	Board Meeting
July	22	Membership Meeting
July	24	Summer Challenge
July	30-31	Big Red Classic Fishing Tournament
August	1	Big Red Classic Fishing Tournamennt
August	2	Board Meeting
August	14	Ladies Tournament
September	7	Fishing League Final Night
September	13	Board Meeting
October	4	Board Meeting
November	1	Board Meeting
November	6	River Tournament
December	2	Membership Meeting
December	4	River Tournament
December	6	Board Meeting
Board meetings held at: Turks of Holland, 977 Butternut Dr., Holland MI 49424 7:00 PM General Membership: Bayshore Yacht Club, 1862 Ottawa Beach Rd, Holland MI 49424. Doors open at 6 pm., Dinner at 7 pm, speaker to follow		
For event information, go to hollandsteelheaders.org, or call Jeremy Erdman 616-510-9405, or email Steve Weatherwax at Waxer1221@Yahoo.com		

## “Spawning” Continued from page 9

“Based on these findings, the current paradigm of managing the western Lake Erie walleye stock as a single population may be justified given that approximately 30% of walleye we tagged did not return to the Maumee River but likely spawned at different loca-

tions in Lake Erie or did not spawn every year,” explained Dr. Hayden. “Conversely, due to the high spawning site fidelity of walleye to the Tittabawassee River, managers may need to consider treating that river as its own unique population to conserve adaptations of those walleye to the area.”

“Walleye support the

second largest fishery in the Great Lakes, and the single most valuable fishery in Lake Erie,” said Commissioner Jim McKane, chair of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. “Studies which inform management practices, such as the one conducted by Dr. Hayden and colleagues, are essential to maintaining productive fisheries and protecting

our valuable natural resources in the Great Lakes.”

The movements of four walleye from the Tittabawassee River and three walleye from the Maumee River during 2011-2014, generated by compiling detections of tagged fish on receivers and interpolating movement paths between detections. Receiver locations are denoted by

small, orange, circles; Tittabawassee River walleye are large, red, moving circles; Maumee River walleye are large, blue, moving circles; and the walleye release points are green triangles. Detections on receivers are indicated by light pink (Tittabawassee River) and light blue (Maumee River) shades of the walleye circles, whereas interpolated

locations are indicated by dark red (Tittabawassee River) and dark blue (Maumee River) shades. Credit: Todd Hayden, MSU.

*Project lead, Dr. Todd Hayden of Michigan State University, marks a receiver location on a GPS. Credit: Andrea Miehl, GLFC.*



2021 Metro West - Livonia Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Chair / Location
March	2	General Membership Meeting	Zoom Video Conference
March	11-14	New Boat Show (Cancelled)	Bob Schulz
March	20	MWS Banquet	MWS Board
March	26	Comedy Club Fundraiser (Friday night)	May Be Moved: Karen Westphal
March	27	MI Steelhead Challenge Manistee River/Pier w DS	Adam Trenz/Eric Braden
April	3	New Buffalo Coho Tournament	Dave Hutton/Dennis Cheshure
April	3	Muskegon River Tournament	Phil Bustos
April	6	General Membership Meeting (SWAP Meet)	
April	17	Clinton River Clean Up	Jay Labban
April	24	Detroit River/Lake Erie Walleye	TBD
May	1	Benton Harbor Coho Tournament	Dave Zawacki/Kirk Traver
May	2	Benton Harbor Coho Tournament	Marc & Kirk Traver
May	4	General Membership Meeting	
May	8	MWS Banquet	MWS Board
May	15	Bruin Lake Kayak/Small Boat	Chuck Davis
May	22	Benton Harbor Salmon Tournament Sat	Chris Thompson/Kruszewski
May	23	Benton Harbor Salmon Tournament Sun	Brad Allan/Mark Platt
May	29	Toledo Beach Walleye/Pt Moule’ SM Bass/ Walleye	Bob Schulz & Braden/Childs
June	1	General Membership Meeting	
June	5	Kids Fishing Outing at Kensington Park	Brad Allan
June	5	Lake Erie Brest Bay Walleye Tournament	Len Wood
June	5	Sterling St Park SM Bass & Walleye	Eric Braden
June	12	Grand/South Haven Salmon Pier Event	Eric Braden
June	19	Muskie Tourney at lake Hudson Kayak/SB	Michelle Braden
June	26	Walleye Tournament (Saginaw Bay or L. Erie)	Fabian Sepulveda
June	26	Island/Kent Lakes Kayak	Jason Jones
July	6	Club Summer Picnic	Jim Robertson/Dave Zawacki
July	10	Flint River Kayak	Jason Jones
July	15	Erieau Tournament – Thur. Erieau, Canada	Clyde Schoen
July	17	Erieau Tournament – Sat. Erieau, Canada	Ron Bellemore/Henry Nabors
July	17	Huron River Kayak (Hudson Mills to Dehli)	Catherine Withrow
July	24	Manistee River Cleanup Day @ High Bridge	Roger Hinchcliff
July	29	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Thu	Gale Frazee/Tom Abdelnour
July	30	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Fri	Marc Traver/Dave Hutton
July	31	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Sat	Dave Zawacki
August	1	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Sun	Dennis Kelley
August	3	General Membership Meeting	
August	7	Independence Lake Kayak/Small Boat	Chuck Davis
August	7	Clinton River Cleanup Day	Jay Labban
August	14	Salmon Tournament – Manistee – Sat	Henry Nabors/Dave Hutton
August	15	Salmon Tournament – Manistee – Sun	Marc Traver/Kirk Traver
August	21	Lake Tournament – Frankfort	Robert Grech
August	22	Salmon Tournament – Frankfort	Bill Dodge
September	7	General Membership Meeting	
September	11	Frankfort River/Kayak/SB	Phil Bustos/Keith Childs
September	18	Muskegon Kayak Salmon	Eric Braden
September	18	Manistee River & Pier Tournaments	Jordan Pontoni/Eric Braden
September	20	Captain/Crew/River Angler 2021 Calendar Mtg	Kelley/P. Bustos/Nabors/Zawacki
October	2	Manistee Lake/River (Steelhead) Tournaments	Dodge/Hutton/Sepulveda
October	5	General Membership Meeting	
November	2	General Membership Meeting	
November	6	Manistee River/Pier/Shore Tournaments w DS	Dave Zawacki/Eric Braden/Adam Trenz
November	20	PM River or Betsie River Tournament	Phil Bustos
December	7	CHRISTMAS PARTY - HAPPY HOLIDAYS	
December	11	Huron River Tournament	Hinchcliff/Brown
** ALL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** 7:00 PM at The New Livonia Seniors Center at the Southeast Corner of Farmington Road and Five Mile Road WEB Site: Go to <a href="http://www.metroweststeelheaders.org">www.metroweststeelheaders.org</a> If you have questions, contact Henry Nabors - <a href="mailto:HHNabors@gmail.com">HHNabors@gmail.com</a> or call 248-225 4964.  Contact: <i>President</i> Eric Braden, <a href="mailto:esbraden630@gmail.com">esbraden630@gmail.com</a> , 419-344-2541 <i>Membership Director</i> Henry Nabors 248-225-4964			

“Reels”  
Continued from page 15

loops or kinks in your line, which ultimately lead to tangles. There is no doubt, though, that spincasters give you a (built-in) mechanical advantage over centerpin reels. With a centerpin you, and you alone, are the gears and drag system of the reel.

Spinning reels are very utilitarian, because you can easily switch them from float fishing to casting with your favorite lure.

The appeal for many centerpin anglers is to get more “in-touch” with their quarry, and the whole fish-

ing experience. Regardless of reel type, line change-out/replacement due to kinking, abrasion, stretching and old age is necessary.

With any type of fishing, reel size is relative to the size of the fish you are pursuing. In terms of reel size in a centerpin, you will be better off with a bigger diameter reel for larger steelhead. For tributary steelhead fishing here in the Great Lakes Region, a 4- to 4.5-inch diameter centerpin will mostly likely land you more fish than something smaller.

Spinning reel size for tributary steelhead fishing

should be somewhere in the 2500 to 4000 series range. When you get up to size 6000 and above, the reel might be too heavy for repeated casting. I’ve caught many brown trout in the 3- to 6-pound range fishing Lake Michigan’s shore with a 2000 series spinning reel spooled with 8-pound-test line. However, this was in open water (i.e., no log jams, rocks, or other obstacles), not to mention generally smaller fish than I catch in the tributaries. Hence, a 2000-sized spinning might be a tad on the small size for tributary fishing.

2021 South Haven Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	
March	25	Best Chance Fishing Seminar	South Haven Moose Lodge
March	25	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm - Best Chance Fishing Seminar
April	15	Lake Michigan Fisheries Workshop	South Haven Moose Lodge, Dr. Dan O’Keefe presenting
April	15	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
May	13	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
May	14	South Haven Tournament Captains Meeting	South Haven Moose Lodge
May	15-16	South Haven Pro Am Tournament	
June	12	SHS Ladies Tournament	
June	17	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
July	15	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
August	14	SHS Fish Boil (Blueberry Festival August 12th -15th )	
August	19	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
August	21	SHS Operation Injured Soldier/SH Salute to Veterans	
August	28	SHS Merle Morris Tournament	
September	16	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
October	21	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
November	3	Pro Am Tournament Committee Kick-off meeting	
November	18	Membership Meeting	7:00 pm
November	27	SHS River Tournament Invitational (must be a member to participate)	
December	11	SHS Holiday Party 2021	
December		no regular meeting due to Holiday Party	
Membership Meetings Held at 7 pm at: South Haven Moose Lodge, 1025 East Wells Street, South Haven, MI 49040 For more information email: <a href="mailto:president@southhavensteelheaders.com">president@southhavensteelheaders.com</a>			

2021 Southwest MI Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Information
Due to uncertainty of public meetings as a result of CV19 please check online for the latest information. <a href="http://www.swmisteelheaders.com">www.swmisteelheaders.com</a> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders">www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders</a>			
March	11	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
April	8	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
May	6-8	Summer Challenge Tournament	<a href="http://www.fishthesummerchallenge.com">www.fishthesummerchallenge.com</a>
June	10	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
June	18	Trolling with the Troops	<a href="http://www.trollingwiththetroops.com">www.trollingwiththetroops.com</a>
July	8	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
August	12	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
September	9	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
October	14	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
November	11	Membership Meeting	Check online for latest information (see above)
December	4	Winter Challenge Tournament	St. Joseph River
Membership Meetings Held at: St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Elks 541, 601 Riverview Drive, Benton Harbor MI 49022 <b>Board Meeting 5:30 - 6:30 PM, Social 6:00 - 7:00 PM, Meeting 7:00 - 8:30 PM</b> Contact: Jim Marohn 269-208-2784			

2021 TCAS Steelheader’s Calendar of Events		
Month	Date	Event
All events are TBD		
TCAS meets the first Wednesday of each month except July (Cherry Festival) and December (Christmas Party) Meetings begin at 7 pm at the Traverse City Senior Center, 801 Front St., next door to the Maritime Academy.		

2021 Thumb Chapter Steelheader’s Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Time	Event	Location / Information
March	18	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
April	15	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
May	1	6:00am	Can2Can Fishing Tournament	Harbor Beach Marina - Need Workers!
May	20	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
June	12	6:00am	Veterans Fishing Outing	Harbor Beach Marina - Contact Kevin Ramsey
June	17	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
July	15	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
August	19	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
September	16	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
October	21	7:30pm	Regular Meeting - Election of Board/Officers	Ubly Foxhunters
November			TBD	
December			TBD	
Contact Scott Stanke at 989-553-0972 for inquiries.				

Chapter Calendars are continued on page 23

Join a Chapter, Join the Fun!

For more information,  
contact your Chapter Membership Director  
or [mssfamembership@charter.net](mailto:mssfamembership@charter.net)



mssfa.org  
We'll *HOOK YOU UP* with the latest news!



# What Does It Mean to Become A South Haven Steelheader?

By Rich Chapman

First, some of our history: The Michigan Steelheaders organization was formed in 1967. There were about 50 or so members of this organization who re-

sided in and around South Haven, Michigan. Starting in 1970, this group of men worked together to bring awareness to the new fishery that was developing in Lake Michigan by hosting the 1st local fishing tourna-

ment which was known at the time as the "South Haven Sportfishing Safari".

In 1971, The Michigan Steelheaders organization was incorporated as the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fisherman's Asso-

ciation (MSSFA). The first chapter of the MSSFA was formed in South Haven on January 15, 1974 by those same 50 men. Slight organizational name change or not, these men continued the tradition of hosting the

annual May fishing tournament. Since that time the name has changed to the South Haven Steelheaders Pro Am Tournament and we are gearing up for our 36th annual event to be held May 14th thru 16th, 2021 in South Haven, Michigan. The primary purpose of this event is to obtain fish for our annual Blueberry Festival Fish Boil which is the chapter's primary fundraiser. This fundraiser provides the money we use to donate to organizations, support local and statewide projects and fund our annual scholarships for high school seniors.

From these humble beginnings, the state organization and our chapter has grown and prospered. As always, fishing and water quality issues remain a priority for the chapter. However, the chapter also feels it is necessary to give back to the community. Thru our main fundraiser, the South Haven Chapter has sponsored various area youth teams such as soccer, football, baseball and softball. Other projects that donations have been made to include the South Pier Catwalk Lights, South Haven Public Schools Football Scoreboard, Friends of Ratcliffe Field renovations, We Care Foundation, South Haven Hospice, Al-Van Humane Society, South Haven High School pitching machine, City of South Haven Boat Ramp project, Help with grant to the City of South Haven for fishing projects such as the new Black River Park Fish Cleaning Station opened in 2020, Veteran's Memorial in Bangor, Michigan, Fourth of July Fireworks - Light up The Lake, South Haven Coast Guard Auxiliary, Michigan Maritime Museum, Special Olympics, South Haven Emergency Services - defibrillators, and South Pier Lighthouse Restoration

Fund/Historical Assoc. of South Haven. This list only names a few.

The South Haven Chapter also has been a major player in maintaining and supporting the Offshore Data Buoy project, Buoy #45168. The buoy is located off the coast of South Haven and annually has one of the highest numbers of requests for information in the entire NBDC organization. We coordinate the raising of approximately \$15,000 annually for buoy maintenance. Every year, the buoy is deployed in April and retrieved in October.

In 2017, the South Haven Chapter was instrumental in applying for the Fisheries Trust Fund grant to build the new \$400,000 handicap accessible fish cleaning station at Black River Park in South Haven which opened in 2020. There is room for 8 people to clean fish at one time and the station includes a state of the art grinder to dispose of the waste created.

Finally, and as a chapter we are very proud of the fact the South Haven Steelheaders were named the 2018 Non-Profit Organization of the year by the South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce.

So, what does it mean to become a South Haven Steelheader? You will join an organization the truly cares about the sport-fishery and water quality in South Haven, the State of Michigan and the entire Great Lakes. You will become part of a greater organization whose objectives are educating the general public on improving, preserving and promoting sport fishing in the Great Lakes and their tributary streams and rivers. You will also become part of a brotherhood of fishermen who freely share information, techniques, enjoy the outdoors and support their communities locally and statewide.

We invite you to visit our website southhavensteelheaders.com. It is full of information about fishing in the South Haven area, the history of the South Haven Steelheaders and the sport fishery in South Haven.



**South Haven**

Rich Chapman, President

and State Director

president@southhavensteelheaders.com

Website:

www.southhavensteelheaders.com

facebook.com/South Haven Steelheaders

## SOUTH HAVEN STEELHEADERS

# 2021

## Pro Am

## May 15th & 16th

*Jason Blowers Photography*

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FRATERNAL FINANCIAL

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**\$6,000 1st place PRO**  
(based on 20 entries)

**Guaranteed**  
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(based on 25 entries)

\*\*Over \$30,000 in cash and prizes\*\*

**\*\*Special tournament prize for highest scoring boat where all crew members are Michigan Steelheaders\*\***

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**RULES ALL BOATS:**

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- Weigh 12
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**ENTRY FEES:**

Received before May 9, 2021:	Received May 9, 2021 or after:
Pro: \$500	Pro: \$550
Am: \$250	Am: \$300

**DIVISIONAL:** All Species Big Fish Contest - \$50 entry fee

**RETURNING for 2021:**

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- Friday 5 Challenge
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**Chad Bard**

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## Announcing MSU Distinguished Academic Staff Award Recipient

By Jeffrey W. Dwyer,  
PhD  
Director, MSU Extension

Michigan State University is pleased to announce that Dr. Daniel O'Keefe has been selected to receive 2021 MSU Distinguished Academic Staff Award. The Distinguished Academic Staff Award recognizes the outstanding achievements of those professionals who serve the university in advising, curriculum development, outreach, extension, research and teaching. Up to four MSU Distinguished Academic Staff Awards are given annually to members of the academic staff who are appointed as academic specialists or MSU Extension academic staff. These awards provide university-wide recognition and reward to outstanding individuals with careers demonstrating long-term excellence and exceptional contributions to Michigan State University.

Daniel O'Keefe is a Michigan Sea Grant senior Extension educator and has worked with stakeholders in seven coastal counties to apply science-based knowledge and address Great Lakes and southern Lake Michigan issues. His pro-

gram areas and expertise include recreational and charter fisheries and aquatic nuisance species (ANS), among others. Dan's exceptional work ethic and integrity set a superior standard of excellence in Extension scholarship. He has earned a reputation with stakeholders as a neutral facilitator and purveyor of information. His many strengths include understanding and explaining the complexities of interjurisdictional Great Lakes fishery management, Great Lakes ecology and the intertwined histories of fishery dynamics and exotic invasions. Dan's many accomplishments during his time with MSU Extension / Michigan Sea Grant, including his research, his willingness to try new things and develop new initiatives, his commitment to being an honest broker, and his significant contributions to our Michigan Sea Grant program make him a valued member of our team and most deserving of this prestigious award.

(Editor's Note: Dr. Daniel O'Keefe received the Dr. Howard Tanner Award from MSSFA in 2017 recognizing his contributions to the anadromous fish sport fishery. See photo below)



Dr. O'Keefe also received an award from MSSFA in 2017

### 2021 Thunderbay Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Information
March	6	4:00 pm	Annual Meeting / Dinner
April	5	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
May	3	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
May	15	6:00 am	Alpena tournament
June	12	6:00 am	Presque Isle Tournament
June	25, 26	6:00 am	Tournament location to be determined
July	5	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
August	9	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
August	28	6:00 am	Rogers City Tournament
September	13	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
October	4	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
November	1	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting
December	6	7:00 pm	Monthly Meeting

Contact Dan Bouchard at dan-bouchard@hotmail.com for inquiries.

### 2021 White River Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event information	Location
March	4	7:00pm	Meeting	Phone Tag
April	8	7:00pm	Meeting	Montague VFW

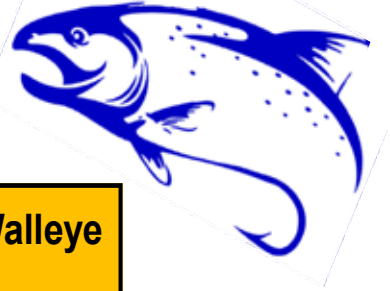
Note: Meeting dates and times are subject to change – Any questions or to verify dates/times please call Clint Pollock at (231) 893-0210 or Terry Clark at (231) 893-6805.

### "Cormorant" Continued from page 18

a new level of commitment and coordination among management agencies and stakeholders. Challenges will arise such as potentially having to providing new evidence of inefficiencies for non-lethal methods as part of the new permit system allowing lethal take, being required to provide assessments of the control activities, or being able to adequately fund the control activities for the State. However, we have a path forward and fisheries managers are hopeful that this is the start of a longstanding management framework for dealing with DCCO-fisheries conflicts moving forward.



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**Kids Fishing Pond**  
**Saturday June 12th from 10am to 4pm**  
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