



# THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS

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

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Todd Brill hauled in this whopping 17.62 lb. Steelhead.

## South West Michigan Steelheaders' Winter Challenge

The 32nd Annual Chapter Challenge is in the books! Fifty-six fish were weighed in with the largest topping the scales at a whopping 17.62 lbs. Congratulations to Todd Brill and his team of Brian Klimczak, Missy Klimczak and Lauren Brill for taking home the biggest fish award as well as the coveted Walt Tober Memorial Award for the biggest fish caught by a Southwest Member.

All 56 fish weighed took home a prize. The side bet for the largest three steelhead was won by Steve Miller and his team with a combined weight of 29.1 lbs. A big thank you to Steve for donating his winnings which totaled \$330 back to the club!

The Chapter Challenge was won by the Southwest Chapter with a three fish

combined weight of 39.67 lbs. The top three fish for the SW Chapter were caught by Todd Brill (17.62 lbs.), Sterling Bailey (11.03 lbs.) and Joel Devries (11.02 lbs.). These were also the top three fish caught in the tournament. The South Haven Chapter took second place weighing three fish for 25.54 lbs. followed by the Battle Creek Chapter weighing 22.96 lbs.

A big thank you to Ryan McCartney, Bob Lausman and Joe Montella for organizing and running the tournament. Special thanks to Tackle Haven and the Fish-in' Hole who donated prizes for the event.



(Photo, Right): Brian Klimczak congratulates Todd Brill on the remarkable catch.

## Speaking With One Voice

Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter was asked at the Michigan Charter Boat Association (MCBA) Business Conference in Bay City, MI recently, "What will be the most challenging issue facing organizations like MCBA (and MSSFA) during the next decade?" His response was enlightening.

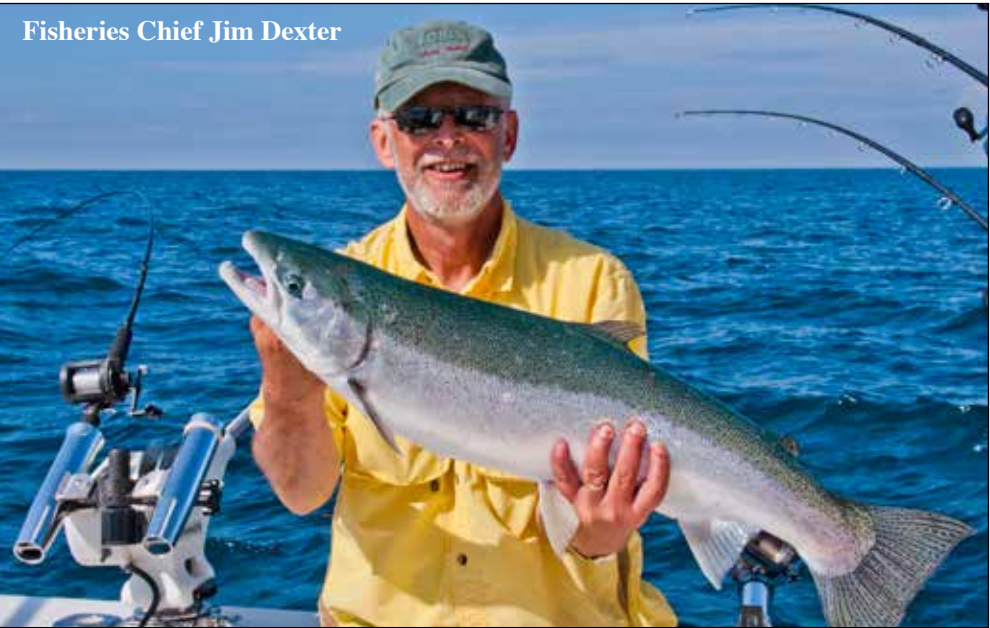
"To me its recruitment for the organization. Organizations who have representation for issues means a hell of a lot. It means a lot to us as (fish) managers and it means a lot to the legislature.

As an individual you can come in and be part of the story but when an organization can speak with one

voice it can be very, very powerful."

"In my thirty-five-year career with the department, organizations have had difficulty with recruitment and it is really rare when an organization can create a new chapter or an entirely new

**"MCBA"**  
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Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter



Asian carp control in Illinois  
A July 19, 2016 photo of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service electrofishing for silver carp in the Fox River in Illinois.

## Great Lakes Governors, and Lawmakers Push for Invasive Carp Project Funds

By Garret Ellison  
gellison@mlive.com


LANSING, MI — Midwest governors and Congressional delegates are advocating for funding to speed along the fortification of a chokepoint lock and dam near Chicago that would become the last line of defense against invasive carp reaching the Great Lakes when completed.

On Dec. 10, the governors of Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, New York, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota and Pennsylvania sent a letter asking Congress to put roughly \$10 million toward the Brandon Road Lock & Dam reconstruction in the 2022 Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

Democratic Sens. Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow

now of Michigan issued a similar letter to President Joe Biden last week urging engineering and design

**"Invasive"**  
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**“Invasive”**  
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work for the project be included among federal projects implemented through the recent \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill.

The estimated \$858 million project has been in planning stages for years. Advance design and engineering work took a leap forward this year when \$3.8

Pre-construction is expected to cost \$29 million. About 35 percent of that has already been provided. Michigan previously pledged \$8 million and Illinois \$10.5 million.

The work is expected to last three-to-four years.

“However, the balance of project cost for design, construction, operation and maintenance is beyond the capacity of the Great Lakes

tent with how other large-scale projects have been funded that similarly have a strong bearing on the regional and national economy,” the eight governors wrote last week.

The gauntlet-style fortification project is located on the Des Plaines River near Joliet, Ill. It would reconfigure the Brandon Road lock with fortifications to hamper invasive silver and bighead carp from moving upstream, such as an electric barrier, bubble barrier, acoustic deterrents and flushing lock. The upgrades are meant to reduce the chances fish could slip through while still allowing barge traffic to pass.

Conflicting interests of barge operators and the Great Lakes fishing and boating industries have been at the heart of disagreements over how to address the invasive fish species as they advance through Illinois waters. The population bulk is about 50 miles from Lake Michigan, although genetic material and individual fish have



**A Feb. 23, 2018 photo of USGS biologists netting invasive silver and bighead carp at Creve Coeur Lake in Maryland Heights, Missouri. Photo Credit: USGS**



**A tug-and-barge operation hauls sand through the Starved Rock Lock & Dam on the Illinois River on Monday, Nov. 4, 2019. Photo Credit: Garret Ellison / MLive**

million for it was included in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers fiscal 2021 work plan.

States to match. Therefore, we request that United States federal government address this project consist-

been found much closer.

Conservation groups say the fish could have a major disruptive impact on sport fishing and recreational boating in the Great Lakes. Silver carp could injure people by leaping from the water when disturbed

and both species would likely compete with native fish for food and habitat.

The Great Lakes fishing industry is valued at \$7 billion.

This summer, government agencies and councils coordinating efforts

to battle the invasive fish said they would stop applying the long-used label “Asian carp” to invasive silver, bighead, grass and black carps out of concern it could cast Asian culture in a negative light.

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**“MCBA”**  
**Continued from page 1**

organization. I can count all the new ones I’ve seen in my career on one hand. There are also organizations that are disappearing and that is not good for having the voice of the angling community heard by those of us who are managing the resources. Get some young folks into your organization and expand. MCBA represents about a third to a half of the charter captains (MSSFA about 10% of the salmon and steelhead fishers). There is some band width there to attract some more members.”

Chief Dexter is right on in his assessment of the most critical issue facing associations trying to provide sportsmen and women the best possible experience. We have 2.1 million licensed fishers in Michigan and approximately 200,000 out of state fishers that come into Michigan to fish its waters. A minuscule number belong to associations that promote sport fishing. Not only do we have a responsibility to protect the fishery, we need to promote and enhance the fishery which requires a collective voice in Lansing. We need more of those fishers to join our ranks and provide the voice we need. This holiday why not give a fisher in your circle of family and friends a membership to MSSFA. Your nephew, brother-in-law, or neighbor will be pleased you thought of them and the fate of our sport fishery as well.







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

An order to extend the Great Lakes Fishing Consent Decree through June 30, 2022 was granted on November 29th. The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, and the State of Michigan joined in this motion. While the Sault Ste. Marie

tribe of Chippewa Indians' counsel originally indicated that his clients opposed an extension of the Decree, they have reconsidered, and they did not oppose the motion to extend the Decree. The Bay Mills Indian Community did not take a position on this motion.

In 1979, the Court affirmed the existence of an off-reservation fishing right

in the portions of the great Lakes ceded to the United States in the 1836 Treaty of Washington. (From approximately Alpena, MI around the top of the lower peninsula to Grand Haven, MI.) For the past 20 years, the 2000 great lakes Fishing Decree has provided the governing framework for fishing in the 1836 Treaty waters. But the Decree is set to expire on August 8, 2020, and when it expires, there will be no governing framework in place to protect the rights of the parties.

The parties originally began negotiating the terms of the successor decree in September 2019. Due to the difficulty of negotiating during the COVID-19 pandemic, negotiations proceeded slowly. Consequently, the Court extended the expiration date of the Decree to December 31, 2020. When the negotiations still did not result in a successor decree, the Court extended the Decree twice more. The Decree is now set to expire on June 30, 2022.

MSSFA has been involved in protecting sport fishing since the very beginning of the first Consent Decree in 1985. We continue advocating for the sport fisherman today by participating as a principal member of the Citizens to Protect Michigan's Resources (CPMR) whose attorneys are present at the negotia-

tion's table as amicus curiae representatives (friend of the court). Our opinions on the terms being discussed are solicited by the state and the federal representatives when terms which impact sport fishing are being considered. We continue to advocate for the tribes to exercise restraint and preserve regulations that share the resource of lake trout equally with sport fishers, limit gear used to trap nets and retain the fishing zones that have guaranteed each tribe exclusive access to their territorial waters.

The Natural Resources Commission meeting on the December 9th resulted in the passage of two amendments (to the Fishery Order; FO 200.22) which would add exceptions for establishing a daily possession limit of one (1) rainbow trout during the spawning period of March 15 through May 15th on several rivers.

The amendment has a sunset provision and we will continue to monitor the effects of this action on fishing opportunity. A second amendment sponsored by Commissioner Cozad will allow for harvest of Walleye during the typically closed season in the spring on the Lower Saginaw River and will also remove the current gear restrictions for that same stretch of river. The effective date for this amendment was amended during the NRC meeting and will be Jan. 1, 2023 so it will not influence fishing/harvest opportunities this upcoming spring.

Please support the upcoming Steelhead Spectacular Event at D&R Sports Center in Kalamazoo, MI on February 19th. We have some great speakers lined up and the door prizes and raffles are truly extraordinary so don't miss out.

## MSSFA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Dennis Eade



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*THE QUALITY OF FISHING REFLECTS THE QUALITY OF LIVING!*

*MSSFA* was organized in 1971 by a handful of individuals who knew that Michigan's newly formed trout and salmon fishery was something worth working to protect. They were a small group who wanted to not only protect their fishery, but learn how to catch their elusive prey and tell fishing stories.

*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.

For those who love to fish but have no means, *MSSFA* chapters sponsor a "Crews" program that allows a sign up as a crew member for a day of fishing.

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.

Chapter members receive the paper as part of their membership. And because of the diversity of fishing in the Great Lakes, the information covers everything from river fishing, big lake fishing to inland lake fishing. The paper also offers a direct route for all new products and techniques on the market offered by our advertisers.

### Executive Director

Dennis Eade  
616-298-8842  
deneade@charter.net

### Membership

Deb Shephard  
269-655-4704  
mssfamembership@charter.net

### Battle Creek

Jeff Root, President  
269-370-8515  
jeffroot81@gmail.com

Dave Middleton, State Director  
269-744-7270  
dbm386steelhead@gmail.com

battlecreeksteelheaders.com

### Grand Haven

Paul Zelenka, President  
and State Director  
616-638-3273  
pzbzfarms@gmail.com

Website: www.ghsteelheaders.com

### Grand Rapids

Mike Mckian, President  
616-644-4864  
michaelgmckian@gmail.com

Rebecca Goettl, State Representative  
231-349-3679  
Rgoettlcm@gmail.com

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### Great Lakes Bay Region

Mark Trudell, President  
989-839-4920  
kathy@steel-headers.com

John Letts, State Director  
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facebook.com/Great Lakes Bay Region  
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Website: http://steel-headers.com

### Holland

Steve Weatherwax, President  
616-836-3809  
Waxer1221@yahoo.com

Alex Fergus, State Director  
616-610-2410  
afergus63@gmail.com

Website: www.hollandsteelheaders.org  
facebook.com/Holland Steelheaders

### Metro-West - Livonia

Eric Braden, President  
419-344-2541  
esbraden630@gmail.com

Robert Schulz, State Director  
248-915-0043  
bobschulz7@gmail.com

Website:  
www.metroweststeelheaders.org  
facebook.com/Metro West Steelheaders

### South Haven

Rich Chapman, President  
and State Director  
president@southhavensteelheaders.com

Website:  
www.southhavensteelheaders.com  
facebook.com/South Haven Steelheaders

### Southwest Michigan

Jim Marohn, President  
269-983-7298  
jim.marohn@doubledayoffice.com

Joe Montella, Director  
616-283-4296  
joe-monte@comcast.net

Website: www.swmisteelheaders.com  
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### Thunder Bay

Dan Bouchard, President  
989-255-7350 Cell  
dan-bouchard@hotmail.com

Gerry Sickon, Director  
734-624-4490  
gsickon@ford.com

### Thumb Chapter

Kevin Ramsey, President  
989-550-9227  
kevinramsey83@gmail.com

Dr. Ken Merckel, State Director

Scott Stanke, Alt. Director  
989-553-0972  
scottystanke@gmail.com

Website: thumbsteelheaders.org  
facebook.com/Thumb Chapter Michigan Steelheaders

### White River

Clint Pollock, President  
231-893-0210  
aftereyes2@gmail.com

Terry Clark, Director  
231-730-6628  
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2022 Tentative Print Schedule		
Issue	Deadline	Print Date
1	12/09/21	01/03/22
2	02/11/22	03/02/22
3	04/15/22	05/04/22
4	06/15/22	07/06/22
5	08/15/22	09/01/22
6	10/07/22	10/31/22

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MSSFA, *Publisher*

Stafford Printing, *Printing*  
Greenville, MI

Bonnie Eade, *Accountant*  
Tel: 616-298-8842  
Cell: 616-928-8970  
bonnie.glsfn@charter.net

Dennis Eade, *Managing Editor*  
Tel: 616-298-8842  
Cel: 616-836-0037  
deneade@charter.net

Laura Kleinheksel, *Layout*  
laura.glsfn@charter.net

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MICHIGAN STEELHEAD AND SALMON FISHERMEN’S ASSOCIATION

Business Office  
P.O. Box 8034  
Holland, MI 49422  
Tel: 616-298-8842  
e-mail: michigansteelheaders.org

Tim Stegeman, *President*  
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The *Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen’s Association (MSSFA)* is a multi-state, non-profit organization dedicated to educating the general public on improving, preserving and promoting sport fishing, the Great Lakes and their tributary streams and rivers. Commonly referred to as *The Michigan Steelheaders*, or simply *Steelheaders*. *MSSFA* represents sport fishing families in the Great Lakes region. *MSSFA* encourages the strictest observances of sport fishing laws and ethical fishing practices. *www.MSSFA.org*

MSSFA State Board of Directors, Officers and Committee Chairs

Tim Stegeman	President	tstegg@yahoo.com
Dennis Eade	Executive Director Lake Michigan Citizens Advisory Fishery Committee	deneade@charter.net
Don Remington	Vice President	donremington99@yahoo.com
Gerry Sickon	Secretary Lake Erie Citizens Advisory Fishery Committee	gsickon@ford.com
Alex Fergus	Treasurer	afergus63@gmail.com
Kenneth Merckel	Lake Huron Citizens Advisory Fishery Committee	kenmerckel@yahoo.com
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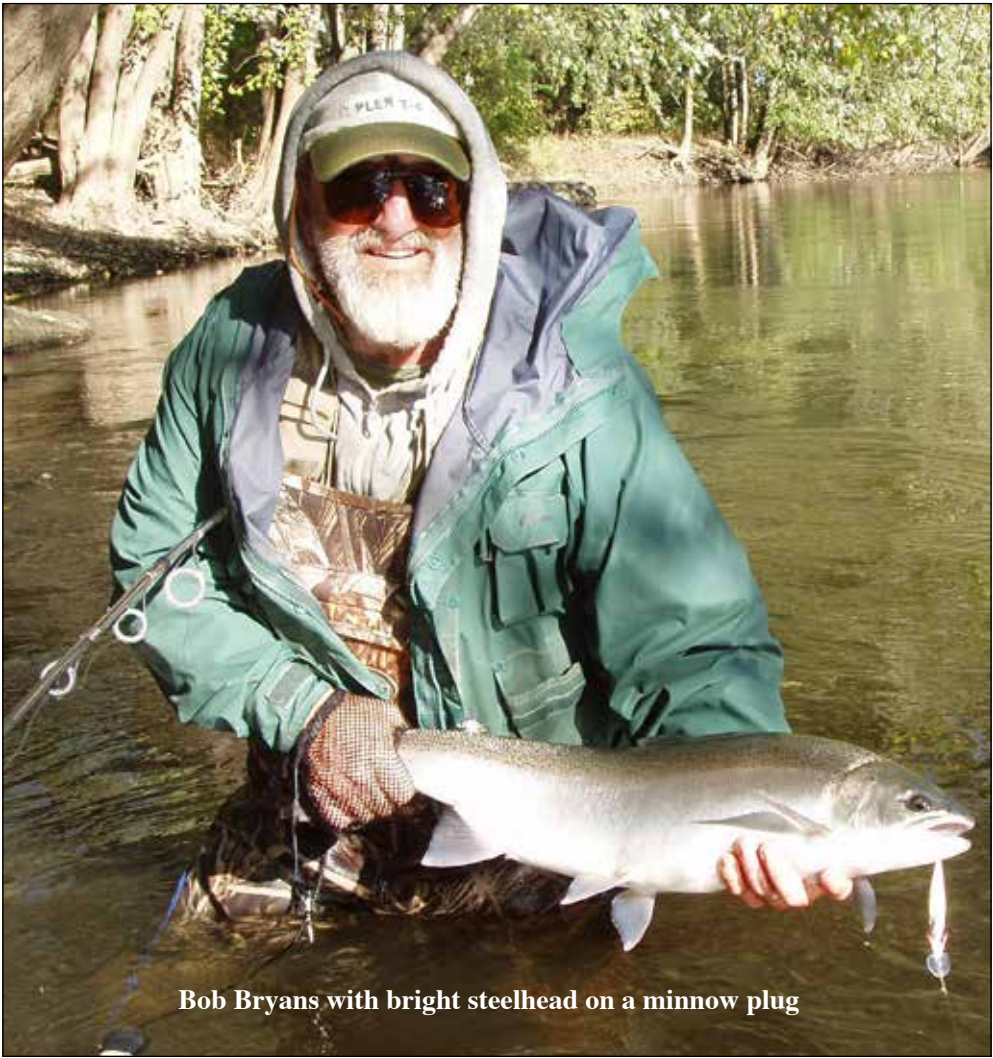
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32	Beebe Oil Co (aka Kamp Oil)	4999 22 Mile Rd	Utica	MI	48317	Citgo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.50/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
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Bob Bryans with bright steelhead on a minnow plug

# Why Throw Lures for Steelhead

By Jim Bedford

I felt a strange tap as my spinner swept by the huge submerged boulder but was about ready to dismiss it as the blade bumping the rock when a steelie tried to take the rod out of my hand. Obviously the fish had made a pass at the shiny lure, then got it in its sights again and really crushed the irritating silver object. Instantly the steelhead ripped off a long run straight down stream over a coffer dam and I knew right away I needed to get to shore to get around and below the low head dam. But by the time I cleared the coffer dam there was almost no line on my reel. Slowly line was put back on the spool but mostly because I was wading toward the fish.

Every time I tried to pressure the fish upstream it would jump and tear away in the opposite direction. Soon the next coffer dam loomed and I defi-

nitely didn't want the fish to go over it as well. The steelie got its way however and I was now scrambling to shore again, the opposite one from the side I circumvented the first coffer. Made it again without getting spooled and finally got below the fish and corralled it in my net. I was pretty sure I was more tired than the steelhead was after the half mile chase in downtown Grand Rapids.

As a group, steelhead-ers who cast and retrieve spoons and weighted spinners make up a tiny minority of those that chase these magnificent fish. Drift fishing in its many forms is far and way the most popular method and I am certain there are also more plug pullers and fly anglers fishing for steelhead. One reason drift fishing is at the top of the list is that it is so effective.

The ultimate Steelhead-er is a very versatile and applies different methods

at different times and conditions. This writer is the epitome of the NON versatile angler in that well over 99% of the steelies I've landed have had a weighted spinner or a minnow plug in their mouth. .

In this article I am going to try to relate why I think tossing lures is such a fun way to catch steelhead. It also becomes pretty effective once you get the hang of the subtleties. Comparisons will be made to the other techniques and a few thoughts on how to make one more successful with all methods will be sprinkled in as we go. At times it may seem like I'm putting down another method when comparing facets but that is not the intent. I'm just trying to emphasize the special positives of throwing lures. The vast majority of my experience has been with spinners and plugs rather than spoons because they work better in the slower flows of the Great Lakes tributaries. In the stronger flows of the Northwest, especially in the winter, spoons are often the first choice. Everything I say about spinners in this article also applies to spoons.

One of my favorite things about hardware tossing is that it is such a "hands on", active way to fish. You are always in the process of casting and retrieving and then guiding and feeling your spinner through the holding water. Drift fishing is similar except that the current is presenting the offering and you rarely cover as much ground. When side drifting in a boat the oars man or motor operator is doing all the fishing and the angler is just manning the rod. The same is true for plug pulling from a boat. Because you are not completely at the mercy of the current when you are casting and retrieving you can fish lots of snaggy holding water and other nooks and crannies that the drift angler can't.

It follows that casting accuracy is very important in lure tossing and luckily compact weighted spinners and spoons are the easiest to learn to cast to the spot. There is no "helicoptering" of the bait or lure and the sinker like there is when drift fishing. Once you add a float the casting gets even more difficult for the drift angler, especially when you are employing a center pin reel. Flipping spinners into tight places is lots of fun and helps you show your lure to more fish. This is important since most of the time steelhead would rather pick up eggs than hit a flashy lure if given the choice.

One of the neatest parts of steelhead fishing is the take and the subsequent response of the fish when you set the hook. It is often said

"Lures"

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Hole-hopper Steve Weisman keeps on the move later in the fishing season until he finds the fish. Once he finds them, he tries different presentations until the fish show him what they want.

# TROLL FOR FISHING ACTION ON THE ICE

By Bob Jensen

Open water trolling is a technique that many anglers employ. Instead of dropping an anchor and fishing from a stationary position, they keep the outboard or electric motor in gear and slowly keep moving. Trolling on the ice may sound like an unusual or even impossible task, but it's a technique that many ice-anglers have become familiar with. Once you put the concept into action, trolling on the ice will become a big part of your ice-fishing arsenal. Trolling on the ice is an effective way to chase walleyes, perch, crappies, and pretty much any other fish that swims under the ice. It seems to be most productive after the ice has been on the lake for a few weeks. Early in the season when the ice is thin, clear, and probably not covered with much snow, it usually works better to keep movement and noise to a minimum to prevent spooking the fish. When the ice thickens and gets some snow on it, that's when we'll start trolling. Wherever you fish, much of the time most of the fish will be gathered in

fairly small areas. Trolling will speed up the fish finding process, and that will enable you to put a bait in front of more fish more often. The more fish that see your bait, usually the more fish you'll catch. Sonar and GPS/mapping will enable an angler to troll on the ice most effectively. The GPS/mapping is helpful and will get you started in the right area faster, but the sonar is a must-have piece of equipment. Sonar will reveal the depth also, and by drilling several holes and then employing the sonar, you can learn about the structure below. Most important though, the sonar will show if fish are in the area. To get started, locate the area where you think there should be some fish. Next, drill holes. This can be a good two person task. One person drill, the other person clean the hole out and check the depth. Try to cover different depths in the drilling process. Now we start trolling. Select a hole to start at, put the transducer for your sonar in the hole, drop a bait to the bottom, and watch for fish life. If you don't see some-

thing within a few minutes, reel up and troll to the next hole. Some anglers will give a hole a couple of minutes, others are more patient and maybe give a hole five minutes. Many of these hole-hopping anglers aren't real patient when it comes to waiting for a fish to show up on the sonar. They would rather go looking for a hole with fish underneath instead of waiting for the fish to come to the hole that they're fishing. Many ice anglers have a shelter for trolling on the ice. These shelters are the ice fishing version of a boat. They're portable and make it easy to troll from hole to hole. Clam has been creating shelters for ice fishing for about 40 years and are the pioneers in portable ice shelters. They provide protection from the elements, they're comfortable to fish from, and they also serve well when moving from hole to hole. An angler can put a sonar unit, auger, rods and tackle in the shelter and simply pull it, or troll, to the next hole in the ice. Ice fishing gear is getting lighter all time, and this makes trolling on the ice even easier. Vexilar has

a new unit, the FLX-30BB, that uses a lithium battery. The battery is much lighter and lasts much longer than the batteries that we're accustomed to. K-Drill au-

giers get their power from an electric drill, so they're lighter in weight and there's no gas and oil to mix. This lighter weight equipment makes it much easier to

move from hole to hole. If you want to catch more fish this winter, try trolling on ice. Once you do, you'll see why this approach is so effective.

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“Lures”  
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that feeling the throbbing head shakes of a newly hooked steelhead through a sensitive graphite rod is at least the second greatest feeling a steelheader can experience. When you combine that with a savage strike like that described at the beginning of this article, it is no wonder we are obsessed with this wonderful fish. Lure tossers do get more than their share of hard strikes but the subtle hits are also intriguing and keep you on your toes. Often the light tap described above is followed by a slight, but weighty drag. Time to set hook for sure!

“Lures”  
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# An Invitation to the METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS

The “Metro-West Steelheaders” (MWS) is a 150+ 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 eleven 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, and fund raising. MWS holds roughly sixty events a year ranging from community outreach at shows to (19) Big Lake events on Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan. The River group holds (7) events on four to five major Michigan river systems. The Kayak & Small Boat group hold

(9) events in four Lake Michigan and Lake Erie ports and multiple inland rivers and 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 (17) Salmon, (11) Trout, (9) Walleye, (8) Perch, Bass & Bluegill and (1) Muskie 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 fund 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 Fishing Outing” 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. 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” con-



Kirk Traver with a 28.5lb King




Catherine Withrow with a 23lb King (her first!)


tests. 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 Fishing Outing 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 circulates info to the membership via E-Mail on a weekly basis. 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 [hhnabors@gmail.com](mailto:hhnabors@gmail.com) (248.225.4964)

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# Spring Fever for Steelhead

By Roger Hinchcliff

If you were to ask me what my favorite seasons are? I would undoubtedly say Fall and Winter. But after the lonely Dead feeling of a long cold Winter comes a time of new. Springtime arrives and gives birth to a new world of beauty and new life.

For many anglers, Springtime means spring fishing for Steelhead. These fish enter their spawning streams starting in Late September to early May. However, many of these early Fall run fish will winter over, waiting for Spring. Usually, the early fish will begin spawning in March, followed by more Spring run fish in April, and is generally over by May.

Most of these fish will reach sexual maturity in 2 to 3 years while in the Big Lake before returning to the river to spawn. So, Springtime means big fun with screaming drags and bent rods for the Mighty Steelhead. Let's talk about some tips to make you more successful this Spring.

## Finding Fish

Finding and catching Spring Steelhead isn't too difficult this time of year. Most fish are holding in gravel areas with faster flows. If it's still early yet, look for pools near the spawning gravel. They should be there waiting. Some tips on fish locations within the river system depend on the Spring weather.

When we have cold Springs, the larger adult females tend to hold and hang down low in the system near gravel. If the cold weather stays many times, they will stop at the closet gravel, spawn and leave. Another tip is on a frigid Spring year, look for huge pushes of fish to show up in May instead of April. In warm spring years, look in the mid and upper portions of the river for the largest concentrations of fish. Photo light periods affect their movements but so do water temps and rains.

## Float Control

When you arrive at a run to fish, you must slow your roll and take a look at what's going on at that spot today. Sometimes the fish will give away their locations as they are constantly jockeying around the hole or running for a good position. Once that seam, bubble line, piece of cover, or broken water has been located. The angler must methodically pick that run apart and fish it well.

The beauty of fishing a float; the offering can be put right in the zone. How this works is through depth and controlling the float. That rod is a tool not only to help set the hook, tire the fish out and help you land the fish. But it is the steering wheel for the float. Moving the rod left or right

or up or down enables you to guide the float and bait offering to its desired location. In cold water temps where fishing is a game of inches, accurate float control catches more fish.

When delivering the presentation, you must have a laser focus on that float. Concentrating on the float and learning to look for subtle strikes, and understanding a bite or a rock is crucial. Sometimes a strike looks like you snagged the bottom of the fish mouth the bait. Always set the hook, or you could be sorry. I'm speaking from experience, trust me.

## Baits to Try

This time of year, it's hard to beat a spawn bag or Bead. My favorite Spawn bag colors in the Spring would be various shades of pink, chartreuse, peach, orange, and white.

I love to fish beads with a small light wire hook. Find yourself some microbeads in sizes 4 or 5 mm in natural colors that can also be deadly. Think translucent colors. This technique can be dirty good in the Spring! You're matching the hatch, so to speak, with all those Small Steelhead eggs floating in the river.

A small pink worm cut down to 2-1/2 inches can also be dynamite on Steelhead. For whatever reason, most fishermen in the Great Lakes Region don't use too many rubber

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Spinners, minnow plugs and spoons have a feel to them as they move through the water. It is very important to use a sensitive rod and get attuned to that subtle resistance to the flow. Sometimes the steelhead will just inhale the spinner and swim with it so that all you feel is slightly less resistance. As western writer Bill Herzog has eloquently described several times in his articles, these fish also can actually grab and come toward you with the lure—the slack line take.

More and more drift anglers and fly fishermen are using floats and strike indicators when fishing for steelhead. Now you only need your eyes to detect the strike. The floats provide a superior presentation in most cases and you will certainly be hung up less. I think many traditional drift anglers keep presenting their bait or lure without a float because they are good at it and really enjoy the satisfaction of detecting the delicate pick up of a steelhead. Float anglers

have shown that keeping their offering a foot or two off the gravel is frequently more effective and conventional drifters can increase their success and decrease their downtime re-rigging after hang-ups by using less weight and drifting higher.

Another plus for fishing spoons, plugs and spinners for steelhead is that they tend to catch larger fish. A case can be made for the possibility that larger steelhead are more territorial. They were that way as they grew into smolts in the river, enabling them to be a bit larger before they headed for the ocean or Great Lake. They then used their larger size for a better start in the big water. Another reason for the larger average size on spoons & spinners may be that small steelhead, especially half pounders/skippers, are more likely to feed on their migration and thus eggs are especially effective for them. I know for sure that I can't compete with egg fishermen in the early fall for skippers in Michigan.

A better fight, on average, seems to be another positive about invading a



Mature male steelhead caught on a spinner bait.

steelhead's territory with shiny metal or a gaudy plug. In response to the hard hook set the steelhead seems to say, "Okay if you want to play rough, we'll play rough". The dangling lure from their jaw seems to be quite irritating causing them to go airborne a lot and really pull hard. It may be that stronger force applied by the stiffer rod and heavier line panics them a bit. Fishing on a winter day recently, a steelhead softly took my spinner in 32.5 degree water. I set the hook hard and the dark fish immediately put three

feet of air between it and the river surface. It raced downstream and duplicated the first jump when I tried to slow it down. A spinner definitely brought the best out of a dark, egg laden hen that had probably been in the river for three months.

The final reason I love to lure fish is the simplicity. No leaders, swivels, sinkers, bait, yarn, or floats, I just hang a lure on my snap and start casting. Your only challenge is to pick a size and blade finish that gets the steelhead's attention and aggravates it into striking instead of being ignored because they don't see it or spooked because it is too large and bright for conditions.

When drift fishing that "never fail" run doesn't produce try clipping off your terminal rig and tying on a spinner and fluttering it through the holding water. Better yet, use a duolock snap on the end of your mainline to your drift rig and eliminate any cutting and retying. Be careful though, lure tossing can be addictive.

Close-up of winter steelhead on a minnow plug.



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# COLOR FOR OPEN WATER AND ICE

By Bob Jensen

The color of a lure for fishing is one of the most popular topics of conversation among anglers who fish through the ice or in open water. To some anglers, lure color isn't that important. To other anglers, color is very important. To the most successful anglers, lure color is one of several considerations. In a good number of situations, whether it be open-water or ice-fishing, the color of your lure can affect how many fish you catch.

It's especially obvious while ice-fishing that color is important. When we're on the ice, we keep a very close eye on the screen of our depth-finder. It will show you everything that is going on directly below that hole. If a fish comes in and looks at your bait but doesn't eat it, you see it. If they look several times but don't eat, something needs to be changed. One of the things that should be considered for change is color. There are times when fish are very color conscious. Following are some ideas on color that apply to open water and ice-fishing.

The general rule-of-thumb that many successful anglers use when selecting a lure is to go with a bright bait when there is only a foot or two of clarity in the water. Orange or chartreuse lures are popular. And you can't go wrong by starting with a glow color in stained water.

When you can see more than a couple of feet in the water, life-like colors are sometimes better. Not always, but sometimes. Some anglers like a bait that resembles the primary forage fish in the body of water being fished. Other anglers reach for a lure

doesn't resemble anything that's ever been alive in that body of water. They think that if the predator fish are seeing and eating the same thing all the time, something that looks completely different will be more appealing. Give them something different and they're more likely to eat

they want. Color can be especially important in ice-fishing. Fish can really study a bait when you're ice-fishing. The bait is only going up and down, and usually pretty slowly. In open water, if you're casting or trolling, the bait is moving, and often pretty fast. The fish in



Iowa Great Lakes fishing guide Laef Lundbeck knows that at times color can be a factor in fishing success. Laef picked the right color to fool this crappie on a January day.

it. Several decades of fishing experience has taught me that sometimes in clear water fish like natural looking baits and sometimes they like baits that don't look natural. Keep trying different colors until the fish show you what color

open water need to respond quickly. Under the ice, they can take their time, and if that bait isn't exactly what they want, they don't eat it. Lure action and size certainly make a difference, but so does color. When it comes to figur-



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ing out what color to start with, there isn't really a right or wrong way to go about it. Some anglers start with what worked for them most recently. Others use the water clarity concept: Clear water, natural colors. Stained water, bright colors. Drop Jigs have become a go-to for many ice anglers. They're made of tungsten so they're tiny. Because they're so small,

some anglers like to go with a bright color regardless of water clarity. They feel that because of the tiny size of the jig, the brighter color will help the fish find the bait easier. I don't know if that's the way it really works, but I do know that many of the anglers who go with that theory catch a lot of fish. Some folks believe that the only reason baits are of-

fered in different colors is so the lure-makers can sell more lures. The truth is, if that color doesn't catch fish, it won't be around very long. Next time you go fishing and aren't getting bit as often as you would like, try a different color. Sometimes color will be the difference between catching a few and catching a bunch.



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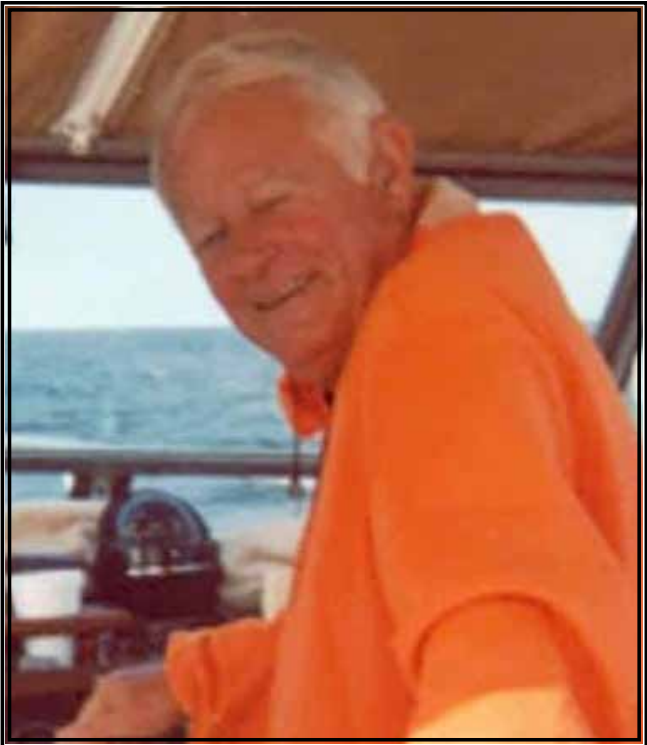
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## IN MEMORY



William “Captain Bill” Maclean

Holland, Michigan - On December 7, 2021 William (Captain Bill) Maclean passed suddenly to be with his Lord and Savior at the age of 83.

He was born and raised in Sault Ste Marie, Michigan.

He joined the Navy in 1955 and became a Navy Seal traveling the world for seven tours of duty protecting our country. He retired from the Navy after a lifetime of service in 1975 and continued on as a Navy recruiter in Holland, Michigan.

Bill also worked for Bell and Howell as a Director. He owned his own print shop and later his print brokerage business. His greatest love was his Charter Captain business, which he enjoyed in the summer months. He served on the board for the Big Red Classic fishing tournaments and for the Holland Steelheaders fishing tournaments.

Bill was preceded in death by his father and mother, Bruce and Alice (Proulx) Maclean and his two sisters, Marge (Earnie) Gugin and Madelon (Jack) Weir and his nephew, John R Weir and niece, Carol (Gugin) Powell.

Bill has 5 surviving nieces: Diane (Gugin) Langton (Fred), Sandy (Gugin) Smith (Clyde),

Marge (Weir) Johnston (Ray), Nancy (Weir) Romzek (Steve), Patty (Weir Coleman (Bill), and 15 great nieces and nephews.

Bill was well respected and loved by so many in his community. Rest in Peace our dear friend Bill! Memorial contributions may be given to the Boys and Girls Club of America – [www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org).

Bill served on the board of directors of the Big Red Classic Fishing Tournament which supports the Boys & Girls Club of Holland, MI and was a long time member of the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen’s Association’s Holland Chapter.



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# Will the Ludington Offshore Classic See Another Record Breaker?

Annual Tournament Returns to Ludington Harbor July 11-17

In 2021, the Port of Ludington became a Great Lakes record breaker when a first-time fisherman, Luis, reeled in a 47-pound King Salmon aboard an Ice-breaker Charters vessel. Ludington was already on the map as a fishing destination -- but this monster brought a lot of attention to the freshwater harbor town.

Fishing off the coast of Ludington has long been a pursued pastime among anglers, and 2022 will be no exception. The Ludington Offshore Classic Fishing Tournament will return to the acclaimed salmon and trout port on July 11-17, and tournament organizers are already planning another stellar event at Waterfront Park.

Make plans now to gather your crew and sign up when registration opens on April 1.

### 2021 Recap

Last year's Ludington Offshore Classic saw over \$86,000 in cash and prizes awarded among the top fishermen. While Thursday's Ruboy Classic event was cancelled due to inclement weather, the remainder

of the tournament went off without a hitch, starting with the Big Boys event on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Elsie K was the big winner, taking home a nice check for \$23,800. On Day 1, the crew brought in 11 fish for a total of 95 pounds, while Day 2 was even better with 12 fish for a total of 134.5 pounds.

"It was definitely a good payout for sure," said Elsie K captain, Gabe Graham. "This was our third win this summer with one coming in Wilson, New York at the Wilson Harbor Invitational on Lake Ontario and another in Manistee at the Budweiser Pro/Am. It is definitely a rush to win against some of the best captains on the lake. Ludington is a great place to fish and a great town. It's a very well-run tournament and great payouts."

Blue Fairways, a well-known name at the Ludington harbor, was the top boat in the Offshore Classic Pro Division, which earned it a \$10,000 prize. This crew reeled in an impressive 12 fish on Day 1 for a 159.9-pound box, and 12 fish on Day 2 for a 188.55-pound box.

"Leading up to the tournament, Blue Fairways had fished several places the prior week, and by the time the Big Boys started, we had decided to fish south of Ludington," said Greg Magee of the Blue Fairways crew. "We were blessed that each and every day, fishing was better than the prior day."

On Day 1, they had caught several nice mature kings, one which weighed 30 pounds (taking second-place Big Fish). After bagging some trout and another good-sized king, Blue Fairways was in third place at the end of the day.

"Day 2 left us no option but to go back south," Magee added. "After an hour of fishing, we had one small king and one small trout - and then bang - we hit a double then a triple and another double boating all seven fish, most of the mature variety."

"To win a tournament one needs to fish great but also have some luck. The team put an amazing program together, and we continued to hit fish all day - having one of those epic second days all tournament fishermen dream of."

This win was extra special, since Blue Fairways had previously won the women's tournament, youth tournament, Ruboy Thursday and Big Boys,

but had only finished in 2nd place three times in the Offshore Classic before their 2021 win.

"We felt very fortunate and blessed to win against

the strongest field of fishermen on Lake Michigan," said Magee.

"Ludington"  
Continued on page 15



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## LUDINGTON OFFSHORE CLASSIC

JULY 11-17, 2022



LUDINGTONTOURNAMENT.COM



# 2022 Saugatuck Fishing Tournament

“RAZE Eyewear Big Lake Classic”

The 2022 Saugatuck RAZE Eyewear Big Lake Classic will be held on Friday, August 5th – Sunday, August 7th. Boats will be allowed to stay and leave each day from any of the following Ports: Saugatuck, South Haven and Holland. Please call early and reserve your slip.

The Saugatuck Sport Fishing Association committee would like to thank all of the people for making the 2021 Salmon in The Classroom project and the 2021 RAZE Eyewear Tournament happen. Many Business and private citizens in the area helped make these two projects a huge success in 2021.

Tournament Participation for the 2021 tournament was 51 boats, 19 Pro boats, 27 Am boats and 5 boats fished the Big Fish Tournament only. Salmon were very scarce throughout the lake and only a few limit catches were caught both days of the tournament. Payouts to the fishing teams was at a return of 180% of entry fees paid. The Pro division paid out 7 places and the Amateur division paid 15 places. Big Fish paid 15 places.

The changes made in the 2021; Am teams could Catch 15 weigh the biggest 5 fish. Another change to 2021 was in the Pro Division – Observers were placed on the 3 top boats returning from 2020 Tournament and the second day the 3 Observers were placed on the top 3 boats from the day 1 Tournament. This will be the same plan for the 2022 Tournament. So Pro Boats will not have to provide an observer for the 2022 Tournament.

**Details for the One Day “Spectators Pretournament Shootout”:** Friday August 5th – Set lines at 6 AM, DNR Rules. Weigh in will be at Spectators Restaurant on Blue Star Highway just north of Saugatuck, Bring your 5 biggest fish. Must be in line by 2 PM. Entry fee \$100 per boat. 100% payback for this event. Check the box on the Entry form or contact a Committee member by 6 AM Friday August 5th.

2022: Dual Port Tournament- South Haven and Saugatuck – Overall scores from both Tournaments will be combined and a winner will be crowned the Dual Port Tournament Champion! Daily Prizes for both Tournaments will be awarded each day to participating teams. Both Pro boats and AM boats will be eligible to enter this Dual event. Watch for more information on both South Haven and Saugatuck Websites for this event soon.

## Saugatuck 2022 Tournament:

New for Saugatuck 2022 “Pro Division – Observers will be provided by

tournament committee”

SAME FOR Saugatuck 2022 - Pro division “9 Trout Max”

SAME: FOR Saugatuck Am Division 2022 – catch 15/ weigh 5 fish

**5th Annual “DENNY ALLEN MEMORIAL”** big fish contest will have a guaranteed first place payout of \$2,000 if that boat is entered in the Tournament in either the Pro or Am division. If just in the Big Fish Tournament, first place will be \$1,000. This Big Fish event is Sponsored by Jet’s Pizza of Holland, Mi. All boats can enter this special event in which any and all boats can try for that ONE big fish over the two-day tournament, one fish may be weighed per day. \$50 entry and 15 places will be paid. A boat may enter this contest without participating in the Pro or Amateur division if they so desire.

**2022 RAZE Eyewear Tournament** is planned for Saturday, August 6th and Sunday, August 7th, with the captains meeting Friday, August 5th in downtown Saugatuck. Boats will be able to dock and leave and return to their docks in Saugatuck, Holland and South Haven. Available slips in Saugatuck fill up fast. Please contact the dockmasters at Tower Marine, Seargents Marine or contact committee members for assistance in getting your slip for the 2022 Tournament.

Downtown Saugatuck and riverfront offer opportunities to shop, dine and relax, within walking distance from most docking locations in Saugatuck. Come and join in the food, fun and fishing in Saugatuck August 5th – 7th and visit many of our local sponsors.

The Saugatuck tournament is put on by Sportsmen for Sportsmen and is a non-profit organized event. Monies raised for the tournament from sponsors and entries are put toward the payout to tournament. Other beneficiaries from the tournament are: Salmon in The Classroom, we are now supporting Classrooms in the Saugatuck/Douglas, Hamilton and Holland Schools and the Net Pen Projects.

Contact the 2022 Tournament Director John Watson with questions regarding the 2022 RAZE Eyewear Big Lake Classic at 616-218- 6686 or at HYPERLINK “mailto:1137watson@gmail.com” 1137watson@gmail.com .

Thank you,  
2022 Saugatuck Sport Fishing Association  
Tournament Committee

## SAUGATUCK/ SOUTH HAVEN DUAL PORT CHALLENGE



### BIG LAKE CLASSIC

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5th Annual “Denny Allen Memorial” Big Fish Tournament

**1st Place \$2000 provided you are in the Tournament**

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**FRIDAY AUGUST 5TH-PRE-TOURNAMENT SHOOTOUT**

## THE TOURNAMENT

### DENNY ALLEN MEMORIAL

Sponsored by

**Saugatuck Sport Fishing Association**

- ★ Entry Fee: \$50
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For entry or pre-tournament shootout go to

[www.saugatucksportsfishing.com](http://www.saugatucksportsfishing.com)

### To contact us:

John Watson at 1137watson@gmail.com

Or Call Tournament Director

at 616-218-6686

### For Dock Space contact:

Tower Marine at 269-857-2151

Sergeant Marina at 269-857-2873

- ★ \$10,000 First Prize Pro Division - based on 20 entries
- ★ \$4,000 First Prize Am Division - based on 35 entries
- ★ Reserve your slip early

**Location of Captains Meeting, Weight In, and Awards:**  
**Coral Cables in downtown Saugatuck**

- ★ August 5th - Free Pig Roast at Captains Meeting
- ★ August 6th - 7th Free Hamburgers and Hot Dogs at Weigh-in and Awards Ceremony

All Provided by Coral Gables Restaurant



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### 2021 Pro Division Top 5

*In U Endo* – Jeremy Barbor– ST Joe  
*Best Chance too* – Dave Engel - Saugatuck  
*E-Z Limits* – Josh Ezinga - Holland  
*Best Chance* – Hunter Engel- Saugatuck  
*Fin Scout* – Joel DeVries – St Joe

### 2021 Am Division Top 5

*Offline* – Brad Stephenson – Holland  
*The Foundation* – Jeff Frankhouser – South Haven  
*Reel Property* - Bill Sikkell – Holland  
*The One* – Don Bale - Holland  
*Grimm Reaper* – David Grimm – South Haven

### 2021 The Big One – Big Fish Top 5

*Reel Property* - Bill Sikkell – Holland  
*The Foundation* – Jeff Frankhouser – South Haven  
*Titan* – Ryan McCarty – St Joe  
*Best Chance* – Hunter Engel - Saugatuck  
*Offline* – Brad Stephenson – Holland

### 2021 S&S Dual Port

*Silver King* – Eric Schippa – South Haven  
*EZ Limits* – Josh Ezinga – Holland  
*Best Chance* – Hunter Engel – Saugatuck  
*Hook Up* – Cory Burrows – South Haven  
*Wynn and Angel* – Wynn Wolfe – St Joe

### “Spring Fever”

Continued from page 9

worms? The action of the tail on those worms drives Steelies nuts some days. The ones that have discovered how good the pink rubber worm can be don't talk about it much. Also, try a nightcrawler sometimes; it will outfish any other spring bait. Lots of crawlers are being washed into the river this time of year.

A small salad shrimp can be deadly on fresh fish in the Spring, especially if the fish are Spawmed out and dropping back to the Lake. Also, crawfish and minnows can be dynamite on Steelhead in the Spring.

### Why some are more successful

Have you ever noticed that some anglers catch more fish with ease, while others may fish hard, do all the “right things,” but still not catch as many fish? Equipment, rigging, and timing could be the reasons why? But most of these examples can easily be fixed,

remedied, or learned.

An angler can learn these things Via the internet, going to a seminar, reading an article, or spending the day with a guide. For some, they have done all the above and still struggle. Nothing is better than time on the water. The more days you fish, the more you learn.

In my opinion, reading water and finding the fish is the biggest reason why. It can take many years on the river to master this skill. The Steelhead aren't called the fish of a thousand casts because they are easy to catch.

Steelhead fishing has lots of competition regarding things to do in the Spring. This competition includes Walleye Jigging, Mushroom Hunting, Turkey Hunting, and others. But make no mistake about it you will be glad you did.

Get out there this Spring catch that Steelhead Fever.

It's a RUSH!



“Ludington”  
Continued from page 13

**2022 Events**  
The Ludington Offshore Classic will return for the 19th year with events for pros, amateurs, ladies and

youth in 2022. This year’s tournament week kicks off Tuesday, July 12, with two days of fishing in the Big Boys competition. Big fish and big payouts are the name of the game during this high-stakes contest.

The Ruboy Thursday Shoot-out will be held Thursday, July 14. Boats at least 18’ long are welcome to join in the fun and weigh their five best fish for the day. The Ruboy Thursday has an anticipated payout of \$5,700 and first place could

walk away with \$3,000 (based on number boats). The ladies and kids will have their fun on Friday, July 15. The youth tournament welcomes kids 17 and younger to participate and weigh their largest fish for prizes. Cash awards and a

trophy are up for grabs in the Ladies Pro/Am Tournament. Ladies will weigh their five best fish, with no more than three of any one species being weighed. The Ladies Big Fish will pay out \$500 in each division. Pro/Am anglers will take to the lake on Saturday and Sunday, July 16-17. A prize of \$10,000 will go to the top pro boat again this year (with a minimum of 30 boats participating). Ludington offers a great backdrop to fun during the week of tournaments, as well as great hospitality to fishermen and their families. The tournament headquarters are flanked by two beautiful marinas, just blocks away from

award-winning beaches and downtown Ludington. There is something for everyone. “We invite fishermen and their families back to Ludington every year,” said Brandy Miller, president/CEO of the Ludington & Scottville Area Chamber of Commerce. “We think it’s a wonderful place for making memories not only on the lake, but also at our beaches, parks, museums and restaurants. This tournament is second to none on the Lake Michigan coastline.” Register for the Ludington Offshore Classic at LudingtonTournament.com. Find visitor information at PureLudington.com.

# South Haven Steelheaders

## 2022 Pro Am

### May 14th & 15th

**Guaranteed \$7,000 1st place PRO**  
(based on 20 entries)

**Guaranteed \$3,000 1st place AM**  
(based on 25 entries)

**ENTRY FEES:**

**Received before May 6, 2022:**  
PRO: \$550  
AM: \$250

**Received May 6, 2022 or after:**  
PRO: \$600  
AM: \$300

**Additional Contests:**

- All Species Big Fish Contest
- Star of the Lake Friday 5 Challenge
- South Haven & Saugatuck Dual Port Challenge

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269-214-6934

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Photos above and below are from Metro West Steelheaders, 2021.





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## **TOURNAMENT TRAIL**



### Manistee Events 2022



Manistee County Sport  
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#### **Manistee Tri-Port Pro/Am**

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June 22-26, 2022

Friday: Ladies Classic

Sat - Sun: Pro/Am/333

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Get Full Event Info Online At:

[www.TournamentTrail.net](http://www.TournamentTrail.net)



# Salmon Trout Steelheader

## 105-Pound River's Inlet King

By JD Richey

[www.salmontroutsteelheader.com](http://www.salmontroutsteelheader.com)

History was made off the British Columbia coast last August, when a lady angler landed what is perhaps the largest Chinook salmon ever hooked on sport gear—a fish in the mythical 100-plus-pound class!

Gayle Gordon and her husband John were fishing near Dawson's Landing in the fabled River's Inlet area (in their own boat which they had dragged and ferried from their home Duncan, B.C.) when the monster struck.

As you can imagine, there aren't a whole lot of fiberglass replica blanks of 105-pound kings laying around, so they had to make a custom mold for Gayle's fish.

"It was my turn to run the rods while John ran the boat," says Gordon. "We were mooching cut-plug herring down about 25 feet, and when the fish bit, the head-shakes were so violent, so strong. Up there because of the water color, you can't see the fish until they break the surface but I knew that this was something unbelievable!"

And the Gordons know a thing or two about hooking big kings. They started fishing together 35 years ago on their first date and have been hard at it every year since then. They've caught and released 13 Chinook over 50 pounds at River's Inlet, including three in the 60's, two in the 70's, an 82.43 pounder and one just under 85 pounds!

Gayle says that the fish she hooked in August was in an entirely different class than any of their previous giants. She fought the fish on her Temple Fork rod and Islander MR2 "knuckle buster" mooching reel for 45 minutes before getting a look at it. During that time, a crowd of boats gathered around to watch the action.

"The people up there are so awesome and very courteous," she says. "Basically, the whole fleet saw us catch it. They made a circle around us and watched—and when we got it, they went nuts."

Gayle says she still doesn't have words to describe what she was feeling when the behemoth finally came to the net.

"He was brilliant

chrome and not a mark on him," she says. "What an amazing, amazing fish!"

The Gordons scrambled to get some measurements on the fish—and they did so three times just to make sure they got it right and then posed for a couple quick photos which were taken by boats floating around them. In short order, the estimated 7-year-old monster was back in the water and swimming free.

Now, here's where things get really interesting. The king taped out at a whopping 55 inches (an inch longer than the bottom width on my first drift boat) and had a mind blowing 38-inch girth! Because they let the fish go, the Gordons don't have an official weight on their salmon but they put it into the ol' tried and true 750 weight formula ( $\text{Weight} = \text{Length} \times \text{Girth} / 750$ ) and it came out to 105.9 pounds!

Now, obviously weight formulas have some wiggle room as far as results go because fish come in all different shapes and sizes, so I decided to run it through some other ones just for fun.

The first one I tried was the Steelhead/Salmon Weight Calculator on [www.piscatorialpursuits.com](http://www.piscatorialpursuits.com). I'm not sure what the formula is that they use, but when I punched the measurements in, the big king came out at 102.4 pounds. On the Ally McGowan Formula, used for Atlantic salmon (found on [www.wherewisemenfish.com](http://www.wherewisemenfish.com)), 55x38 gets you 120.5 pounds! I also found a calculator at <http://www.cs-gnetwork.com/> (not sure of their formula) but the king came out to 122.1 pounds.

Sometimes, folks also use the 800 formula (which is the same as above, just divided by 800 instead of 750) but I think that one is designed more for fish like trout and steelhead and doesn't really well represent the girth of Gayle's king. Even underestimated with this method, her fish comes out at an incredible 99.28 pounds.

Okay, so now let's take a look at how Gayle's Chinook measures up to fish with known weights. Les Anderson's IGFA All-Tackle World Record king from the Kenai River in Alaska weighed 97 pounds, 4



ounces and measured 58.5 inches with a girth of 37 inches. Her fish was a bit shorter and a tad bigger around than Anderson's. The thing with the Kenai fish is Anderson threw it in the bottom of the boat on a hot day and fished for several hours—and then it rode around in the back of his truck for quite a while. It was never iced and the photos of it show the fish is very dehydrated. I think it's easy to assume that king probably weighed 100 plus pounds when it was initially caught.

In August of 2001, a massive king was caught and released on the Skeena River in B.C. by clients fishing out of Kermode Bear Fishing Lodge in Terrace, BC. That leviathan measured 53.5 x 38.5, which comes out to 105.7 pounds on the 750 formula above (and 99 and change using the 800 formula).

Obviously, we'll never know the precise weight of Gayle's fish but it's safe to say that it was clearly over 100 pounds, which just boggles the mind. A pound here or there in either direction really doesn't matter—

the real story is she caught a fish that would, almost certainly, be the new all-tackle world record, but she decided to forgo the glory and release it instead! In this day and age of declining Chinook stocks—especially the true giants—it was truly a selfless act.

"The culture is changing up there at River's Inlet," she says. "Lots and lots of boats are measuring and releasing their big fish now which is great. Really the only way to get IGFA to recognize our fish as a true record was to kill it and I didn't want to do that. I'm just so humbled to have been able to catch him. It was so cool!"

Sadly, doing a hero shot on board is a tall order with a fish of that size when you're not keeping it, so the Gordons don't have any good photos of their amazing catch. There are several shots taken from other boats, but they don't do much justice to this king of kings. What does do it plenty of justice, however, is the fabulous mount that Advanced Taxidermy made of it. As you can imagine, there aren't a whole lot of



Gayle and John are no strangers to trophy kings. Here John Gordon is about to release a huge king salmon caught at River's Inlet.

fiberglass replica blanks of 105-pound kings laying around, so they had to make a custom mold for Gayle's fish.

"It's absolutely amazing.... Advanced really nailed it," she says. "I feel so blessed—we were obviously fishing for big fish up there but I never dreamed of getting one that size! I caught the fish, but it really was a team effort with my husband John. After that, I gave him the next three chances on the rods in a

row."

The Gordons obviously didn't need any more inspiration to return to River's Inlet next year, but just to remind them that there are potentially even bigger kings to be caught, owners Rob and Nola Bachen dusted off and showed them the mount of a 126-pound king they had in storage. The enormous king was caught by a commercial boat back in the 1960's "It was truly an honor to see that fish," she says.

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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 COVID restrictions.  
Call, text or email any additional questions or need for direction.

2022 Battle Creek Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Location
February	26	ST.JOE RIVER TROUT QUEST	I-94 BOAT RAMP
March	5	ST.JOE CHAPTER CHALLENGE	SAND BAR
March	19	KALAMAZOO RIVER SPRING STEELHEAD	ALLEGAN DAM
May	21	LAKE MICHIGAN SPRING TOURNAMENT	BENTON HARBOR/SH
June	3-4	CONNIE McGOWEN INVITATIONAL	LAKE ERIE DBBC
July	16	ORTAGE LAKE PANFISH/FAMILY PICNIC	PORTAGE LAKE
August	6	LAKE MICHIGAN MEMORIAL	SOUTH HAVEN
August	20	VETERANS OUTING	SOUTH HAVEN
October	29	KALAMAZOO RIVER SALMON SLAM	ALLEGAN DAM
November	12	KALAMAZOO TROUT QUEST	ALLEGAN DAM
November	19	KALAMAZOO RIVER MEMORIAL	ALLEGAN DAM
November	26	ST.JOE RIVER FALL STEELHEAD	I-94 BOAT RAMP
December	3	ST.JOE RIVER CHAPTER CHALLENGE	BABES LOUNGE
December	10	CHRISTMAS PARTY	KALAMAZOO EAGLES
<p>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</p>			

2022 Grand Haven Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Contact Info
April	TBD	Members Meeting	
June	2	Bill Rogers Memorial Tournament	
June	3-5	Grand Haven Offshore Challenge	
July 29 - Aug 11		Weeklong Plus Tournament	
August	6	Chapter Challenge Tournament	
August	11	Chapter Picnic	
September	9	Sportsman For Youth Day	
December	1	Christmas Party	
<p>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</p>			

2022 Grand Rapids Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Information
January	10	Board Meeting	
January	24 or 31	Membership Meeting	
February	7	Board Meeting	
February	19	Steelhead Spectacular	at D & R Sports, Kalamazoo
February	28	Membership Meeting	
March	7	Board Meeting	
March	10-13	Ultimate Sports Show	at DeVos Place
March	19	Club Spring Outing	
March	29	Membership Meeting	
April	4	Board Meeting	
April	25	Membership Meeting	
May	2	Board Meeting	
May	23	Membership Meeting	
June	6	Board Meeting	
June	27	Membership Meeting	
July	11	Board Meeting	
July	**	Membership Picnic	at Millennium Park
August	1	Board Meeting	
August	6	GR/GH Chapter Challenge	
August	29	Membership Meeting	
September	12	Board Meeting	
September	26	Membership Meeting	
October	3	Board Meeting	
October	31	Membership Meeting	
November	5	Chapter Fall Fishing Event	
November	7	Board Meeting	
November	28	Membership Meeting	
December	5	Board Meeting	
December	**	Christmas Party	
<p>STC* = Date subject to change. Please watch newsletter or facebook page.  ** = Members and Family Only. (All other events open to the public).  Speakers will be listed in the monthly newsletter, and on facebook.</p>			

If you would like to become a chapter member,  
email [mssfamembership@charter.net](mailto:mssfamembership@charter.net)

2022 Great Lakes Bay Region Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Location / Time
ALL EVENTS - TO BE DETERMINED			
<p>Membership meetings held at:  3013 Bay City Road, Midland, MI 48642  989-496-3410</p> <p>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.</p> <p>If interested in fishing with us please contact: Gary Decker at 989-859-7472  Visit our web page <a href="http://www.steel-headers.com">www.steel-headers.com</a></p>			

2022 Holland Steelheader’s Calendar of Events		
Month	Date	Event
January	3	Board Meeting
January	23	Ice Fishing Tourney
February	7	Board Meeting
February	19	Ice Fishing Tourney
March	7	Board Meeting
March	26	Annual Banquet
April	4	Board Meeting
May	2	Board Meeting
May	17	Tuesday Night Fishing League Begins
May	19	Membership Meeting
May	21	Spring Challenge
June	6	Board Meeting
June	11	All Species Tourney
June	25	Kids n Kings
July	9	Fishing with Veterans
July	11	Board Meeting
July	21	Membership Meeting
July	23	Summer Challenge
July	29-31	Big Red Classic
August	1	Board Meeting
August	13	Ladies Tournament
August	23	Tuesday Night Fishing League Final Night
September	12	Board Meeting
October	3	Board Meeting
November	5	River Tournament
November	7	Board Meeting
December	1	Membership Meeting
December	3	River Tournament
December	5	Board Meeting
<p>Board meetings held at: TBD Locations  General Membership: Bayshore Yacht Club at the Yacht Basin Marina  Doors open at 6 pm., Dinner at 7 pm, speaker to follow</p> <p>For event information, go to <a href="http://hollandsteelheaders.org">hollandsteelheaders.org</a>, or call Jeremy Erdman 616-510-9405, or email Steve Weatherwax at <a href="mailto:Waxer1221@yahoo.com">Waxer1221@yahoo.com</a></p>		

2022 Metro West - Livonia Steelheader’s Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Chair / Location
January	4	General Membership Meeting	
January	6-9	Ultimate Sports Fishing Show Showplace	Novi - Marc Traver/Chris Christoph
January	22	Lake St Clair Ice Fishing Outing	Adam Trenz
January	29	Comedy Club Fundraiser	aren Westphal
February	1	General Membership Meeting	
February	4-6	Manistee River/Ice Fishing	Adam Trenz
February	24-27	OUTDOOR- RAMA Showplace	Novi - Robert Grech/Chris Christoph
March	1	General Membership Meeting	
March	10-13	Novi Boat Show	Bob Schulz
March	19	MWS Sports Banquet	MWS Board
March	26	I Steelhead Challenge Manistee River/Pier w DS	Adam Trenz/Eric Braden
April	5	General Membership Meeting	
April	9	New Buffalo Coho Tournament	Bob Schulz
April	9	Clinton River Clean Up	Jay Labban
April	23	Detroit River/Lake Erie Walleye	Robert Grech/Chris Christoph
April	30	Benton Harbor Coho Tournament	Dave Zawacki/Kirk Traver
May	1	Benton Harbor Coho Tournament	Marc/Kirk Traver
May	3	General Membership Meeting	
May	14	Toledo Beach Walleye	Bob Schulz
May	14	Bruin Lake Kayak/Small Boat	Chuck Davis
May	21	Benton Harbor Salmon Tournament Sat	Chris Thompson/Kruszewski
May	22	Benton Harbor Salmon Tournament Sun	Brad Allan/Mark Platt
May	28	Pt Moulle’ SM Bass/Walleye	Keith Childs
June	4	Kids Fishing Outing at Kensington Park	Brad Allan
June	4	Lake Erie Brest Bay Walleye Tournament	Len Wood
June	4	Sterling St Park SM Bass & Walleye	Eric Braden
June	7	General Membership Meeting	
June	11	Sterling SP Walleye Tournament	Fabian Sepulveda
June	11	Grand/South Haven Salmon Pier Event	Eric Braden



## 2022 Metro West - Livonia ...continued

Month	Date	Event	Chair
June	18	Muskie Tourney at lake Hudson Kayak/SB	Michelle Braden
June	25	Silver Lake Kayak/SB	Keith Childs
July	5	Club Summer Picnic	Jim Robertson/Dave Zawacki
July	9	Tippy Dam Back Water Kayak/SM	Eric Braden
July	14	Erieau Tournament – Thur. Erieau, Canada	Clyde Schoen
July	16	Erieau Tournament – Sat. Erieau, Canada	Henry Nabors
July	16	Huron River Kayak (Hudson Mills to Dehli)	Keith Childs
July	16	Manistee River Cleanup Day @ High Bridge	Roger Hinchcliff
July	28	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Thu	Gale Frazee/Tom Abdelnour
July	29	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Fri	Marc Traver/Dave Hutton
July	30	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Sat	Dave & Kim Zawacki
July	31	Ludington Salmon Tournament – Sun	Marc/Kirk Traver
August	2	General Membership Meeting	
August	6	Independence Lake Kayak/Small Boat	Chuck Davis
August	13	Salmon Tournament – Manistee – Sat	Henry Nabors/Dave Hutton
August	14	Salmon Tournament – Manistee – Sun	Marc/Kirk Traver
August	20	Lake Tournament – Frankfort	Robert Grech/C Christoph
August	21	Salmon Tournament – Frankfort	Bill Dodge/C Christoph
September	6	General Membership Meeting	
September	10	Manistee River & Pier Tournaments	Adam Trenz River Chair/Eric Braden
September	17	Muskegon Kayak/SB Salmon	Eric Braden
September	19	Captain/Crew/River Angler 2023 Calendar Mtg	Kelley/Adam T/ River Chair/Nabors/ Zawacki
September	24	Manistee River Tournaments	Fabian Sepulveda
October	4	General Membership Meeting	
November	1	General Membership Meeting	
November	5	Manistee River/Pier/Shore Tournaments w DS	Dave Zawacki/Eric Braden/Adam Trenz
November	19	PM River Tournament	Marc Traver/Adam Trenz
December	6	CHRISTMAS PARTY - HAPPY HOLIDAYS	
December	10	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 [www.metroweststeelheaders.org](http://www.metroweststeelheaders.org)  
 If you have questions, contact Henry Nabors - [HHNabors@gmail.com](mailto:HHNabors@gmail.com) or call 248-225 4964.

Contact: *President* Eric Braden, esbraden630@gmail.com, 419-344-2541  
*Membership Director* Henry Nabors 248-225-4964

## 2022 South Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event
January		No Membership Meeting
February	TBD	Russ Pomeroy Memorial Ice Fishing Tourney      Date/Location based on ice conditions
February	17	Membership Meeting, Guest speaker – TBD
February	26	Tacklepalooza Swap Meet      South Haven Moose Lodge
March	17	Best Chance Fishing Seminar      South Haven Moose Lodge
March	17	Membership Meeting
April	21	Lake Michigan Fisheries Workshop      South Haven Moose Lodge
April	21	Southern Lake Michigan Fisheries Workshop - Dr. Dan O'Keefe presenting
May	12	*prior to SHS Pro/Am – Membership meeting and set up for Captain's Meeting
May	13	South Haven Pro Am Tournament Captains Meeting - South Haven Moose Lodge
May	14-15	South Haven Pro Am Tournament
May	28	erle Morris Tournament & So. Haven Chapter Picnic - River Bend Boat Club
June	11	South Haven Steelheaders Ladies Tournament
June	16	Membership Meeting
July	21	Membership Meeting
August	11	Membership Meeting *Prior to the Annual Fish Boil
August	13	SHS Fish Boil (Blueberry Festival - August 12-14th)
August	20	SHS Operation Injured Soldâier/SH Salute to Veterans
September	15	Membership Meeting
October	20	Membership Meeting - and Board meeting to finalize next year's events and set calendar
November	2	2023 Pro Am Tournament Committee Kick-off meeting
November	17	Membership Meeting - and Board Meeting to finalize budget and calendar
November	26	SHS River Tournament Invitational ( <i>must be a member to participate</i> )
December		No membership meeting in lieu of Holiday Party
Dec	10	South Haven Steelheaders Holiday Party 2022

Membership Meetings Held at 7 pm at: South Haven Moose Lodge, 1025 East Wells Street, South Haven, MI 490  
For more information email: [president@southhavensteelheaders.com](mailto:president@southhavensteelheaders.com)

## 2022 Southwest MI Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Information
Membership meetings and board meeting are held the second Thursday of each month but we are still determining our schedule for 2022 due to the lingering effects of covid. Please check online for the latest information. www.swmsteelheaders.com www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders			
January	13	Annual Meeting and Big Fish Awards (7:00 PM at Benton Harbor Elks Club)	
May	5-7	Schu's Summer Challenge Tournament	
June	17-18	Trolling with the Troops	
Decemberr	3	33rd Annual Winter Challenge Tournament	

Membership Meetings Held at:  
St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Elks 541, 601 Riverview Drive, Benton Harbor MI 49022  
**Board Meeting 5:30 - 6:30 PM, Social 6:00 - 7:00 PM, Meeting 7:00 - 8:30 PM**  
Contact: Jim Marohn 269-208-2784

## 2022 TCAS Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event
All events are TBD		
<p>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.</p>		

## 2022 Thumb Chapter Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location / Information
January				
February				
March	17	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
April	21	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
May	7	6:00AM	Can2Can Fishing Tournament Need Workers!	Harbor Beach Marina
May	19	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
June	11			
June	16	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
July	21	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
August	18	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
August	TBD	2:00	Pig Roast	Harbor Beach VFW Hall
September	15	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Ubly Foxhunters
October	20	7:30pm	Regular Meeting, Election of Board/Officers - Ubly Foxhunters	
Novmber				
December				

**Contact Scott Stanke at 989-553-0972 for inquiries.**

## 2022 Thunderbay Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Information
January	3	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
February	7	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
March	5	4:00pm	Annual Meeting/Dinner
April	4	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
May	2	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
May	14	6:00am	Alpena Tournament
June	11	6:00am	Presque Isle tournament
June	25-26	6:00am	Presque Isle tournament
July	11	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
August	8	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
August	27		Rogers City Tournament
September	5	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
October	3	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
November	7	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
December	5	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting

**Contact Dan Bouchard at [dan-bouchard@hotmail.com](mailto:dan-bouchard@hotmail.com) for inquiries.**

## 2022 White River Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event information	Location
Note: All meetings will be held at 6:30 pm at the VFW, any changes in location will be decided a couple of days before the meeting. – Any questions or to verify dates/times please call Clint Pollock at (231) 893-0210 or Terry Clark at (231) 893-6805.				
January	6	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
February	3	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
March	3	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
April	7	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
May	5	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
June	2	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
July	7	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
August	4	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
September	8	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
October	6	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
November	3	6:30	Member meeting	VFW
December	1	6:30	Member meeting	VFW

## Join a Chapter, Join the Fun!

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



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