



THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS

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



Dam removal brings new life to Pigeon River

For nearly a century, the Pigeon River in the northeast Lower Peninsula has been a beautiful, blue-ribbon trout stream scarred with a flaw sometimes fatal to fish – a dam situated about 15 miles downstream from the river's source.

Now, after a collaborative effort and litigation involving the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the dam – located near Vanderbilt in Otsego County – has been removed from the landscape, an important accomplishment that has been a long time coming.

The river was first dammed in the late 1800s by a timber company to help transport logs downstream. Later, the earthen dam was rebuilt by a group of sportsmen known as "The Lansing Club," with the waters behind the dam maintained as a fishing pond.

In 1957, a heavy rain washed out the dam, killing

You're building what? For lake sturgeon? Heavy machinery working in Kalamazoo River on sturgeon riffle installation

Recently an excavator was moving rock out into the middle of the Kalamazoo River in southwest Michigan. An interested angler stopped to ask the crew what was going on.

"I told him we're building a spawning riffle for lake sturgeon," said Jay Wesley, Lake Michigan Basin Coordinator for the DNR. "That's a place where adult lake sturgeon can deposit their eggs. The eggs fall into the crevices of the rock and protect them against predators and turbulent flows."

The Kalamazoo River sturgeon riffle is approximately 26 miles upstream from Lake Michigan and 800 feet downstream of Allegan Dam. It is made of four to 24-inch field stone that is placed across the river. The overall size of the riffle is 22,400 square feet – about half the size of a foot-



Fabian Sepulveda, of the Metro-West Steelheaders took 1st Place with a 16.45 lb King during their Manistee River Salmon Tournament!

Fishin Michigan and Metro-West Steelheaders held the annual salmon outing.

trout for miles downstream and covering valuable aquatic habitat with silt from the impoundment. Sadly, this would not be the only time the dam would prove disastrous to the river's trout.

The dam was rebuilt with concrete. Detroit-area entrepreneur J. Oliver Black purchased the property in

the 1970s and founded Golden Lotus/Song of the Morning as a yoga retreat. The dam generated electric power for the property.

By 1984, an inspection showed the dam was in need of repair and the DNR issued a permit to allow the water in the impoundment to be drawn down and the necessary repairs made.

Unfortunately, the dam was drained improperly. The repair crew drained the pool too quickly, washing sediment downstream, killing fish and again covering fish spawning habitat.

DNR fisheries biologists estimated 53 percent of trout in the river – located within the first few miles downstream of the dam –

were killed, while about 30 percent died farther downstream. In all, the DNR estimated more than 33,000 trout were killed over a 21-mile stretch of the Pigeon River.

The DNR sought redress in court, and a judge ruled that if it happened again he "Dam removal"

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FISHERY AGENCIES IDENTIFY MULTI-SPECIES PREDATOR STOCKING REDUCTION TARGETS FOR LAKE MICHIGAN

The Lake Michigan Committee (LMC) has identified specific predator reductions for each Lake Michigan jurisdiction following its recently announced goal to reduce lakewide predator demand by the equivalent of 900,000 Chi-

nook salmon by 2018. The five-member Lake Michigan Committee comprises all state management agencies that border Lake Michigan and the Chipewa-Ottawa Resource Authority. Recommendations from the committee

represent the consensus of its members.

In working toward the 2018 goal, after much analysis and discussion, the Lake Michigan Committee has agreed to reduce stock-

"Reduction"
Cont'd on page 3

INVASIVE GRASS CARP SPAWNING IN SANDUSKY RIVER

Courtesy of Great Lakes Connection-Kevin Bunch

During a research trip over the summer of 2015, a University of Toledo graduate student discovered grass carp – an invasive species of Asian carp – spawning viable eggs in the Sandusky River.

Fortunately, the grass carp is not the worst of the Asian carp species: the invasive bighead and silver carp that now dominate the Mississippi River and its tributaries will directly out-

compete native fish for food, including popular fishing targets and prey fish like yellow perch.

Holly Embke's discovery of eggs around Fremont, Ohio, was not the first indication that grass carp were breeding in the waterway, as juvenile fish were discovered there in 2012. It does stand as the first confirmation of spawning in the Great Lakes basin, however.

Embke explained that it is legal in some Great Lakes

states to buy sterile grass carp for vegetation control, as they are voracious herbivores. When the fish escape they can find their way into the Great Lakes, where they have been found in all but Lake Superior. Those purchased were all thought to be "triploid" and sterile, and

"Invasive"
Cont'd on page 6



tribution from Consumers Energy and a \$190,000 Great Lakes Tribal Coastal Grant provided to the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (also known as the Gun Lake Tribe). The project features numerous partners; including the DNR's

(provided design) and Grand Valley State University (providing monitoring).

There are only about 20 to 30 adult lake sturgeon that make the marathon swim (26-miles) up from Lake Michigan in April to "lake sturgeon"
Cont'd on page 3



Lake Erie: Southwestern Ontario's border lake deteriorating

Forty years after it was declared "dead," only to be resurrected, Lake Erie is again like a patient in the critical care unit.

Southwestern Ontario is the only of the five Great Lakes that American and Canadian researchers deem to be in poor condition- and deteriorating, according to a summit on lakes water quality.

"I wouldn't say the patient is on life-support. I would say the patient is struggling but moving in the right direction," said Tim Eder, executive director of the Great Lakes Commission, a high-level group of policymakers on both sides of the border meeting in Toronto this week.

"We cleaned up Lake Erie once so we know we can do it (again)," Eder said.

"Now, the problems are "Lake Erie"
Cont'd on page 14

Looking for steelhead? There's no need to leave southeast Michigan

Many people agree that steelhead are one of the country's top sport fish. The bulk of anglers take advantage of their spring spawning runs in March, April and May, but some rivers also have a fall run of steelhead when fish come into the rivers well before their normal spawning period and then hang out all winter. This means the next fishing opportunity is just around the corner.

Most parts of the state offer great waters to target

steelhead and southeast Michigan is no different! Primarily you'll find fall steelhead runs in the Huron and Clinton rivers, which both have lots of public access points along the stream.

"Huron River's fall steelhead run can be comparable to many of the rivers up north and it's excellent, probably because it's not as well known," said Jeff Braunscheidel, a fisheries biologist based in Waterford.

"The timing of the fall run is usually late - typically start-

ing around early to mid-November."

There is also a good spring spawning run in March and April.

Once the run begins on the Huron there's no shortage of access points- including a small boat launch in Flatrock (also a destination on the department's Trout Trails application) and a boat launch at Riverfront Park on Jefferson Avenue at the mouth of the river.

Braunscheidel explains that by using a small boat,

anglers can fish the deep holes located on the bends of the river - it's not ideal for wading.

For those without a boat, shore fishing can be accomplished at Huroc Park in Flatrock (just below the Fla-

throughout the year. They include northern pike, largemouth bass and walleye.

As mentioned previously, not too far away, the Clinton River provides additional options for targeting steelhead in southeast Michigan

great spot (and also featured on the Trout Trails application).

Northern pike, bass, suckers and walleye (in the spring) can also be found here and the fall run steelhead tend to arrive a little



trock Dam) and at Labo Park (just downstream of I-75, off South Huron River Drive).

"The fish are hungry so they are actively feeding," he said. "Good baits in the fall are spawn or lures - such as spinners or crankbaits."

The Huron River is a Type 4 stream which means it has a 10-inch minimum size limit and a five fish daily possession limit (but no more than three fish can be 15-inches or greater).

"Additionally we stock on average 60,000 fish there every spring," said Braunscheidel. "It's the heaviest stocked tributary in southeast Michigan."

On top of steelhead, many other species can be targeted on the Huron River

during the autumn months. According to Clevo Harris - another fisheries biologist based out of Waterford - this river gets a lot of fishing pressure but with plenty of good reason.

"The river is very wadeable and in some spots - like at Yates Park - it gets shoulder-to-shoulder," he explained. "But there are a lot of trails along the river so that affords anglers the opportunity to spread out."

Also a Type 4 stream, the Clinton River is popular with fly anglers and is stocked with about 27,000 steelhead each year. While many people fish immediately below Yates Dam, River Bend Park is located just a short distance downstream and is a

earlier than they do in the Huron River - even as soon as early October.

Two other rivers to turn people on to for steelhead in southeastern Michigan are Mill Creek and the Belle River, both located in St. Clair County. These streams see a decent spring steelhead return and are not as crowded with anglers. They receive 7,500-10,000 steelhead during stocking each spring.

Don't miss your chance to experience Michigan's wonderful fall fishing - for more information about opportunities in the southeast corner of the state, visit Michigan.gov/fishing or call the Waterford Fisheries Office.







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"lake sturgeon"
Cont'd from page 1

spawn. Adults may skip several years in between spawning. Currently, the spawning takes place immediately below the Consumers Energy Calkins Hydro-Facility, known locally as the Allegan Dam. The fish that make the trip seek out rocky habitat to deposit their eggs and most of the rock habitat previously available is immediately below the hydro-electric turbines. Unfortunately, the turbulent flow is too much for the eggs and many are washed downstream or become damaged in the high flows.

This project aims to entice the lake sturgeon to use the new riffle and all of its rocky characteristics - the ultimate goal is to keep

the eggs healthy and prevent them from being damaged.

"There will be lots of little nooks and crannies for the eggs to fall into," explained Wesley. "When that happens predators - such as crayfish and round gobies - would have a hard time getting to them."

The riffle will also be useful for walleye, darters, smallmouth bass, suckers, steelhead, Chinook salmon and coho salmon which also like to spawn in that area.

The DNR has been working for nearly eight years to help the Kalamazoo River's population of lake sturgeon. This work includes understanding how many lake sturgeon are part of the overall population, which is estimated at

about 180 adults. It also involves a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Gun Lake Tribe and Kalamazoo River Sturgeon for Tomorrow to operate a streamside rearing facility on the river.

"We really hope the lake sturgeon use this riffle to increase their natural reproduction and to assist our efforts to collect more fertilized eggs and larvae for the streamside rearing hatchery," said Wesley.

In the future a student will evaluate the use of the new riffle by fish in the river. If the project is successful, the DNR and partners will consider constructing similar riffles in other areas on the Kalamazoo River.

"Reduction"
Cont'd from page 1

ing levels of a mix of predator species by 1.77 million. This number represents a 17% reduction from the 2013-2015 average lakewide stocking based on each jurisdiction's targets. Consistent with these lakewide goals, plans released by the individual jurisdictions are shown in article on page 12 that.

During the next year, the LMC will continue to evaluate lakewide data and discuss implementation options that will reduce the equivalent of an additional 50,000 Chinook salmon to meet the overall predator reduction target of 900,000 Chinook salmon-equivalents by 2018. Each jurisdiction has agreed in good faith to meet the intent of the two-year stocking reduction target.

"Since fish populations regularly migrate throughout Lake Michigan, it's essential to achieve collaborative lake-wide management recommendations that can inform management plans for each cooperating jurisdiction to contribute to the common goal of sustaining our diverse fishery now and into the future. Real predator reductions are necessary to address the current predator and prey imbalance," said Keith Creagh, Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. "Each management agency must do their part for collaborative management to be successful in the Great Lakes."

"The Lake Michigan Committee has made great progress in a very short period of time to identify specific reductions of Chinook salmon, brown trout, and lake trout to achieve its common goal of reducing predators in the lake", said Jay Wesley, Chair of the LMC. "I am confident that the LMC members will work productively to ensure achievement of our overall predator reduction goal by 2018."

Reducing predators underscores the committee's shared commitment to sustain Lake Michigan's highly valuable salmon and trout fishery as the lake's ecosystem shifts. Extensive changes to the lake's food web, driven primarily by

invasive species such as quagga mussels, have reduced the amount of food available for pelagic prey fish like alewife and rainbow smelt. Other ecosystem changes include enhanced natural reproduction of key predators, especially Chinook salmon, and increasingly lake trout, which also increase the pressure on a declining pelagic prey fish community.

Captain Denny Grinold, sport fishing advisor (of Michigan) and chair of the bi-national Committee of Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, emphasized the importance of the collaborative management process. "Jurisdictions must work together to manage this lake cooperatively, as a whole. Decisions made must be based on science. The one thing we do know is the fishery will suffer tremendously if each agency does its own thing." Al House, citizen advisor (of Wisconsin) and vice-chair of the Committee

of Advisors added: "The diverse fishery is an important economic component to not only Wisconsin businesses but to anglers and businesses throughout Lake Michigan. Agencies need to respond quickly with meaningful cooperative action to sustain this vital resource now and for generations to come."

The Lake Michigan Committee comprises fishery managers from the Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. The Lake Michigan Committee's work is facilitated by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, a Canadian and U.S. agency on the Great Lakes. The committee meets regularly to share information and develop shared fishery management plans, objectives and policies.

For more information, visit the Lake Michigan Committee online at www.glfsc.org/lakecom/lmc/lmchome.php.

2017 Tentative Print Schedule

Issue	Deadline	Print Date
1	12/30/2016	1/6/2017
2	2/17/2017	2/24/2017
3	4/21/2017	4/28/2017
4	6/23/2017	6/30/2017
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6	10/20/2017	10/27/2017

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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 in 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 observations of sport fishing laws and ethical fishing practices.

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MSSFA President Dr. Ken Merckel

The October 12, 2016 Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting was very informative. The meeting began with the introduction of the new Lake Huron Basin Coordinator Randy Claremont. He has an interesting background first working for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, next a tribal biologist and research biologist for the MDNR. Randy presented his vision for Lake Huron and protocol to implement his goals. It is encouraging to see such commitment to improve the Lake Huron Fishery.

The first topic of discussion was the status and potential management options for Lake Huron Chinook Program. This topic will be dis-

cussed over the next year. The good news is that a large number of Chinook in northern Lake Huron have adapted to foraging on gobies. Stomach samples confirmed this. It took 10 years for Chinook to naturally reproduce in fresh water and only 13 years to convert to a new forage. One common thought in the discussion is that any cuts in Chinook will be replaced with another species doing well in Lake Huron.

Once again the weir at Swan River on northern Lake Huron had to be used to collect Chinook eggs, as the Lake Michigan weir had a poor Chinook return. A million eggs were collected at the Swan River weir.

Just a thought on my

part; some Chinook in Lake Huron are converting to gobies, these eggs and the resulting fingerlings should be kept separate from Lake Michigan sample and planted back into northern Lake Huron as well as Lake Michigan.

The status of the cormorant management was reviewed by representatives from the US Department of Agriculture and USFWS. The bottom line is there was no management because a Federal Judge ruled to end the deposition order. A group of employees, USFWS people called PEER (Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility) said the research that established the order was flawed. The original research personnel

have retired and there is no personnel willing to conduct the research needed. Bird and nest counts at all control sites have increased in 2016 and if this continues we will be back where we started. Harassing at planting sites is still acceptable.

Lake trout stocking on Lake Huron will end in 2018. Lake trout natural reproduction has reached a level that will sustain the Lake Huron trout fishery. The only zones that will be planted will be MH1 and MH2 which are in the 1836 treaty waters. Research suggests that stocked hatchery fish are suppressing natural reproduction. For those of you that fish lake trout in Lake Huron, please keep a log in 2017 of the number

of adipose fin clipped fish and non-clipped fish you catch, along with the date caught. This may prove useful in the future.

I am working with the Great Lakes Science Center, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and Basin Coordinator from the MDNR to secure names and phone numbers of individuals that will be available to present programs at your upcoming chapter membership meetings in 2017 covering all aspects of their work.

For those of you interested in Atlantic salmon, the harbor at Lexington in southern Lake Huron is full of fish. On October 17, 2016 the MDNR electroshocked the harbor and found fifty four Atlantics

from 24" to 29" in length and up to 10 pounds. The fish are from the 2014 and 2015 plants. The best fishing is in the afternoon and evening according to local fishermen. This is the only harbor plant of Atlantic salmon. The plant at the AuSable River at Oscoda and Thunder Bay River at Alpena have not produced any Atlantics so far. CWT returns for Atlantics in Lake Huron are the LLSU and Lexington planted fish. This will be the last issue of GLSN for 2016 and I'm wishing you all a very Joyous Holiday Season.



Michigan's Free Fishing Weekends: An annual tradition

Two days twice a year, families and friends can enjoy one of Michigan's premiere outdoor activities, Michigan Fishing, for FREE!

The 2017 Free Fishing Weekends are scheduled for this winter: **February 18 & 19** and this summer: **June 10 & 11**.

All fishing license fees will be waived for two days. Residents and out-of-state visitors may enjoy fishing on both inland and Great Lakes' waters for all species of fish. All fishing regulations will still apply.

For many, the annual Free Fishing Weekend has become a tradition - a time to get together and have some fishing fun. While some may find time to reflect while fishing, there are no limits to variations on a great theme! Experienced anglers who offer a child or young adult the chance to take their first fishing trip can provide a rewarding experience for all. People who fish tend to understand the natural aquatic network of plants and animals that help to sustain fish as well as the regulations that govern fishing in Michigan.

Research shows that young people today do not have access to fishing opportunities that were enjoyed by generations before them. Some of the reasons: living in urban or suburban areas where fishing access is not readily available, competition for time by an ever-increasing schedule of special activities, and too little time for unstructured leisure.

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**Dennis Eade, Executive Director
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As the fishing season winds down on the Great Lakes and the rivers come alive with salmon and steelhead returning to spawn, we Steelheaders have much to be grateful for and more to do to protect and enhance our sport fishery. We may not all agree on how best to manage the Chinook fishery but we are united in our commitment to preserve it. The results of MSSFA's statewide survey on the Chinook Stocking Proposal demonstrated that a majority of Steelheaders understand the science behind the proposal and support the reductions in lake trout and Chinook salmon. Now we need to focus on preserving the alewife in the system so that they are able to mature into "spawners" and begin to rebalance the predator/prey ratio in favor of a sustain-

able salmon fishery. The political landscape is about to change with the upcoming election and we need to guard against any movement by the "lame duck" legislature to bring the Pro-Net Pen Aquaculture bills to a vote at the eleventh hour. To accomplish the task, we are inviting key members of the house and senate to accompany members of our coalition on a tour of the Indian Brook Trout Farm, an inland aquaculture operation that raises rainbow trout utilizing artesian spring water and an environmentally sensitive flow through aquaculture system that removes waste and phosphorus before the reclaimed water leaves a designated wetland area to flow into Sandstone Creek in Jackson County. Of the existing aquaculture facili-

MSSFA Executive Director Dennis Eade



ties in Michigan, Indian Brook Trout Farm is the most successful and a representation of environmental responsibility. We will be telling members of the legislature that we support recirculating systems and closed systems but oppose net-pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes.

To further support the importance of sustainability of the Great Lakes, I attended the Great Lakes Science

in Action Symposium at CMU in Mt. Pleasant, MI on October 14th. U.S. Senator Gary Peters was the keynote presenter and he pledged his full support for "the sustainability of the Great Lakes over any economic business interest". That bodes well for our ability to call upon him as a member of the committee that oversees NOAA to make certain Great Lakes aquaculture interest does not trump our

ability to protect the Great Lakes from pathogens and pollution from net pen aquaculture.

MSSFA will hold officer elections at its board meeting rescheduled for Nov. 9th at MUCC in Lansing, MI. Greg Gumbrecht has retired as Membership Coordinator for MSSFA as of November 1st and Renee Davis from the Grand Rapids chapter has accepted the position effective on the same date.

Greg has done an excellent job in the eight years he has served and we wish him all the best going forward. If you have questions regarding membership matters please contact Renee at mssfamembership@gmail.com.

Deb Shephard and I are preparing for the annual Show Edition of GLSFN as we move into the holiday season. We wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving and joyous holiday season.

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“Invasive”

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did not directly compete with any native species.

When she found the juveniles in 2012, however, they were “diploid,” or capable of reproducing. Embke went on the Sandusky River one to three times a week between June and August 2015 with bongo nets to try and scoop up eggs – reasoning that water temperatures seemed to be warm enough that the fish would try to spawn — while also setting light traps to try and catch juvenile carp.

“In the Sandusky we thought they would spawn in this one area of the river close to Fremont, Ohio, because it fit the characteristic spawning sites that they would use in their native area, where it’s shallow and rocky,” Embke

said.

While they failed to catch any juvenile carp, Embke said they caught seven eggs in nets and one, randomly, in a light trap downriver. All the eggs were fertilized and in varying stages of development, she added.

Embke already has a second round of surveying underway in the Sandusky this year and hopes to narrow down the spawning location to better determine where juvenile carp might be located and caught.

Managing the carp is important, especially if they are reproducing in the basin. Embke said that the grass carp appetite for aquatic plants coupled with larger numbers of fish would negatively impact habitat for waterfowl, insects and other nearshore fish, as well as increase soil

erosion and reduce overall water quality due to plant removal.

Jeff Tyson, Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ Lake Erie Fisheries Program administrator, said that response and emergency action plans are in the preliminary stages but the state should have something together by 2017 or 2018 to contend with grass carp. At the moment, he said, the DNR simply doesn’t have enough information about the species in the river and where it spawns to form a meaningful response. Even though they have reported sightings going back to the early 1980s, it wasn’t until around 2011 that Ohio started documenting fish sightings. In the mean-time, the DNR is trying to determine exactly where grass carp are found in the Sandusky and

where they spawn.

The Ohio researchers are working with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to tag carp and use that information for sampling data. Tyson said the state also is interested in any grass carp specimens caught by anglers for research purposes. You can report a catch or sighting at ohiodnr.gov/reportais.

A solitary adult grass carp also was caught by a commercial fisherman in the St. Lawrence River in May 2016, sparking concerns that the invasive species had made its way into the waterway. Jacques Nadeau, communications director for the Quebec Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks, said that single 20-25 year-old fish seems to be an isolated case, and didn’t appear to have a chance to lay eggs. The province

has budgeted \$1.7 million until 2018 to continue surveying the waterway and prepare an emergency response if additional grass carp are found.

The IJC supports an ecological separation of the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River to prevent the spread of invasive Asian carp to the basin. This includes using barriers to keep the fish from reaching the lakes.

I totally disagree that their risk to the environment is “minimal.” First off, Jordan’s experience with grass carp in Ohio is with triploid fish (meaning they are sterile and cannot reproduce). That means that the population can be controlled and maintained at low levels through stocking. But like any invasive species, once fertile fish begin to reproduce in the

environment – all bets are off. There is plenty of research that shows the importance of marshes and wetlands to fish production. These areas provide critical spawning or nursery habitat to many species in the lake. And if you look at the history of wetland habitat in Lake Erie, because of filling and draining over time, about 90% of that habitat has been lost – putting additional significance on those that remain. And these are the very types of habitat that would be affected/degraded by this species. These are big fish that can eat a lot of vegetation—one of the recent catches by our Lake Erie commercial fishermen was 62 pounds! It is not a great photo because they were doing surgery on the fish – but you can see how deep the fish is and it runs the entire length of the truck tailgate. Our Michigan commercial fisherman have caught 13 grass carp just this year and they have averaged around 30 pounds. So far the grass carp we have tested, about 80% are diploid – meaning they are capable of reproducing.

We are collaborating with Holly and the U of Toledo and did the same larval testing for grass carp last year on the River Raisin. Fortunately, all our results came back negative. That work continues and has expanded some this year.

In addition, we are doing some cutting edge research to get more information on this species. Cleyo, out of our office, has been implanting grass carp caught by commercial fishermen with acoustic transmitters (last year and this year). This is using the same receiver system that Chris Vandergoot talked to MWS a meeting or two back. We are getting really good movement information and the hopes are that if we can get detailed information on the timing and location of movements, then we can begin to design a control effort. The grass carp that are being recovered that are recovered are dead – we are getting stomach content data, genetic samples, and otolith samples. A researcher at CMU is looking at the genetic samples to determine the number of spawners and from that generate a population estimate. And the otoliths are being analyzed to look for chemical signatures that may provide a clue to where the fish are spawning and being produced.

So you can see we are taking this threat very seriously and are contributing a significant effort, in collaboration with university researchers and our partner Lake Erie management agencies, to get more information. And because they have the same life history, any information learned about grass carp will put us in a better position should we ever have to deal with silver or bighead carp.



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**“Dam removal”
Cont’d from page 1**

could order the dam removed. In 2008, a mechanical

n’t come without a fight. A lawsuit was filed against Golden Lotus/Song of the Morning by the DNR

Pigeon River Country Association, a group that has long sought the dam’s removal, agreed that during



failure of the flood gates again caused a massive discharge of sediment. The resulting fish kill was perhaps the biggest yet. Some estimates put mortality at more than 400,000 trout.

But even without the fish kills, the dam was a

and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, joined by Trout Unlimited.

Ultimately, the parties agreed the dam would be dismantled.

“Admittedly, everyone at Song of the Morning

the litigation phase, the parties moved from being adversaries to being partners.

“While the evolution of the Pigeon River is well under way, it’ll be years and possibly decades before the process is complete,” Jarecki



blemish on an otherwise pristine river – one of the best brook trout fisheries in the state.

“The dam produced quantifiable fish kills, but that doesn’t mean it didn’t kill fish routinely,” said Tim Cwalinski, the DNR fisheries biologist who oversees the Pigeon River. “They operated it as a peaking facility, running peak flows when they were operating the turbines. The river went through multiple ups and downs daily. That’s not good for a river. There’s no stability for the invertebrates, for the (fish) eggs, for everything.”

Removal of the dam will greatly improve the aquatic habitat, allow fish passage upstream and produce better water temperature conditions downstream from the old dam site.

“Not having peaking operations is going to have a positive impact on the downstream invertebrate habitat,” Cwalinski said. “That river has very few issues. The water temperature is good from upstream to downstream – it’s probably 3 to 5 degrees lower now downstream from where that impoundment was. So it provides more trout habitat in summer.”

Removing the dam did-

dearly loved the lake that for decades served as a reminder of the silent stillness of meditation that is our tradition,” Linda Gabby, board chairwoman of Golden Lotus, Inc., said. “However, when the opportunity arose to heal both the river and our relationships with neighbors, the promise of good will and a restored river outweighed the loss. I haven’t looked back.”

Gabby said those who ultimately became partners in the project will recall meeting one memorable evening in spring 2012 at the Pigeon River Forest headquarters to share stories of their personal connections with the river and to explore the possibility of forging agreements that would focus on common purpose.

“To me, this was the turning point in our years of negotiations prior to dam removal,” Gabby said. “The ability to walk away from discord and personal self-interest and to restore good will has been, for me, the great teaching of this experience, this and the discovery that our river has a voice. What a joy it is to hear the sound of the Pigeon as it flows through our retreat center.”

Joe Jarecki, treasurer of

“This has been a great project,” Jensen said. “So many partners made this come together.”

Bryan Burroughs, executive director of Trout Unlimited in Michigan, said his group was “deeply satisfied” with the outcome.

“It’s what our board set out for,” Burroughs said. “We were very resolute that the dam be removed. It’s been a long ride with a lot of twists, but we’re here.”

But we’re not there. That’ll take time.

“There’s still the sand

trap that needs maintenance, but it is working and everything’s progressing very well,” Burroughs said. “We want to make the Pigeon River all that it can be.”

What it can be is 46 miles of free-flowing, blue-ribbon trout stream with a mixture of cobble, gravel and sand that provides ideal trout habitat.

The river has established a new channel through the old impoundment. Steep, clay walls, though unnatural, line the

banks just upstream of the old dam site. Those walls will eventually break down.

“The river will chew at those walls over time,” Cwalinski said. “We’re only a year into this. The river’s healing and it takes time.”

“The real story here was working together and communicating – us, them, Trout Unlimited, Huron Pines, everyone. The true story was breaking down those barriers.”

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Almost Mainstream Steelhead

Unusual techniques and tackle to resolve common problems.

By Dave Mull

Necessity being the mother of invention has led to many advances in the world of steelhead fishing. Here are some tricks and tools breaking on the steelhead scene that answer common dilemmas.

My favorite rivers are low and I can't get my plugs far enough behind the boat without constantly grinding bottom and snagging. What should I do?

It has a slightly befuddling name, but the Church Stern Planer is basically a

St. Joseph River where fish often hold in water six feet deep or less.

"You set them to where the boat doesn't spook the fish," says Lausman. "And our fish like high-action lures such as Hot-N-Tots and Worden's 3.5-inch Mag Lip. With the Stern Planer, you just let out 20 to 30 feet of line, clip the thing on and let it 150 or 200 feet behind the boat. This keeps the deep-diving plugs in what I call the 'steelhead eye zone,' above the fish."

He noted that having

want spawn or I run out of it?

Spawn skeins and loose spawn tied into bags are proven fish-getters throughout the steelhead landscape, but when salmon or other steelhead aren't actively spawning and providing fresh natural eggs, steelhead often spurn hooks baited with them.

On the Pacific Coast, anglers switch to baits that steelhead naturally find in the ocean, such as coon shrimp and prawns. In the Great Lakes, anglers Andy Peterson and his father Steve, who charter and run Starboard Choice Marine (574-257-7827); www.stbcm.com in Mishawaka, Indiana, often bait up with alewife fillets from the natural forge that steelhead find in Lake Michigan before entering the river. They use chunks of fillets brined in salt or tie the meat into spawn bags.

"Steelhead have a keen sense of smell and readily take what they've been eating all summer," says Steve Peterson.

Oregon steelhead veteran Dave Eng, says egg-imitating hard beads have become hugely popular on the West Coast and are making inroads onto Great Lakes tribs, too.

"Steelhead actively feeding on spawn will suck a glass bead under a float and drifting with the current so

readily that they often get hooked deep in their throats," says Eng. "You have to put the hook an inch or two below the bead, which you can peg with a toothpick or loop your leader around to keep in place. That way, when you set the hook, the bead slips out of the fish's mouth and the hook gets the fish near the lips, where it's easy to remove and release the fish."

What if they're eating sculpin and you're tired of spending 30 minutes tying a complicated imitator that often gets snagged and broken off within five minutes?

That's exactly the situation that led Craig Lewis to try a lure far more common for bass. Proprietor of Erie Outfitters (440-949-8934; erieoutfitters.com) and steelhead guide on the Lake Erie tributaries known as "Steelhead Alley" near his base in Sheffield Lake, Ohio, Lewis employs soft plastic goby imitators, notably the 4-inch Goby and 3.5-inch Goby Jr. from Poor Boys Baits (574-267-465; poorboysbaits.com).

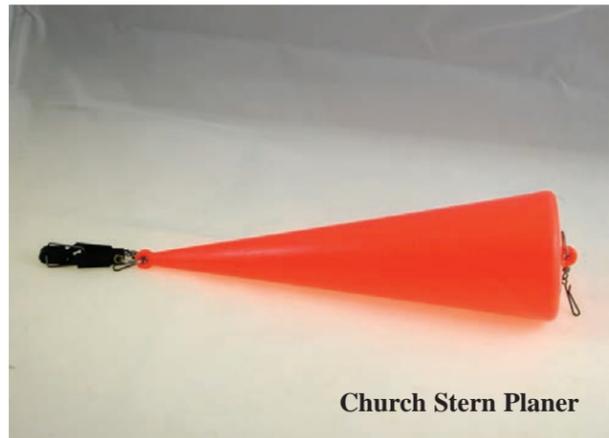


for bass," says David Rose who runs Wild Fishing Guide Service (231-276-9874; wildfishing.com) in Grawn, Michigan. Rose takes the 18-foot aluminum boat he uses for a wide variety of inland and Great Lakes species to Northern Michigan rivers such as the Betsie and Big Manistee, drops his bowmount trolling motor and casts. "A lot of steelhead guys get in a mindset that the only ways to catch them are traditional drop-back methods through deep holes," Rose says. "Casting allows you to probe shoreline blowdowns and other cover

other end and eat salmon eggs. A fast-moving plug or a 5-inch plastic grub on a jighead coming fast downstream sort of shocks them into striking."

Favorite crankbaits for the technique include deep-diving versions of Rapala Husky Jerks and Smithwick Rogues. A 5-inch K-Grub from Custom Jigs 'n' Spins in the orange-tailed Firetiger pattern is another go-to bait when Rose hopes to get reaction strikes from steelhead.

Wicked Lures (360-460-6078) wickedlures.com, developed on the West Coast gaining



Church Stern Planer

cone of hollow plastic designed to clip to your fishing line ahead of the lure, and then take that lure well behind your boat.

Capt. Bob Lausman of Sawyer, Michigan, (Coho Bob's Sport Fishing Charters, 269-470-0720) almost always has two of them deployed behind his Carolina Skiff when forward trolling the heavily stocked

this cone with its flat end close to the lure helps hook the striking steelhead too by providing instant resistance when the fish strikes. Plus, especially with no-stretch braided line, the wiggling of the lure is still transmitted to the rod tips, which lets the angler know if the plug picks up any debris that kills its action.

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"I just nose-hook one on a No. 2 or No. 1 Gamakatsu Octopus-style hook or a 1/32-or or 1/16-ounce jighead like you'd hook a live minnow. The lure goes through the water belly-down that way, looking natural," says Lewis. "I add some split shot and fish this with a center-pin rod below a 6- to 11-gram float, just letting the environment add some action."

"Sculpin are a threat to steelhead eggs and the steelhead not only eat them for nutrition, but I think also attack them out of protective instinct when they're on the redds."

Lewis said plastic gobies have proven effective beyond his local streams, producing in the Niagara River as well as in Michigan flowages.

"Guys who have tried it really believe in it and do it, but it seems like that's just a few steelheaders around the country," Lewis says.

All I have is bass boat—don't I need a lot of specialized gear and rigging to catch steelhead?

"You can fish for steelhead—and do pretty well a lot of times—just chunking and winding like you would

where steelhead hold and almost never see any kind of bait or lure. It also lets you present lures to fish holding in more traditional spots in ways they don't

fans wherever steelhead run are particularly suitable for casting in rivers. A combination spinner blade and "hootchie" squid ahead of a single hook, they are



combination spinner blade and hootchie squid

usually see lures."

He explains that drop-back methods of plug fishing moves hardbodies or bait slowly downstream into the face of steelies. By quartering casts upstream and cranking fast enough to make crankbaits wobble, the angler brings lures into the fishes' faces fast, provoking reaction strikes.

"The downstream sections where holes tail out are great steelhead holding places," Rose says, "especially if salmon are spawning at the upper end of the hole. Steelhead lay in the

designed to be fished on a leader 2 to 4 feet behind the weight—sort of a Carolina rig that isn't dragged on the bottom.

"Just use a bass casting sinker, usually from ? to ? ounces ahead of a barrel swivel," says inventor James Beasley of Port Angeles, Washington. "The weight placement lets you find bottom and feel other structure like logs before you hit it with the spinner itself and get snagged. You're in the strike zone longer and can cover way more water."



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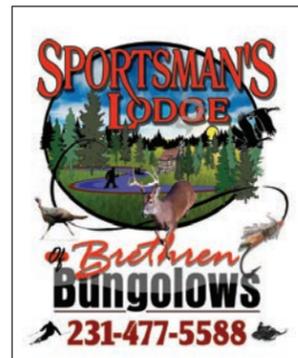


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Revised: 10-26-16 djs

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4	Alpine Rent-All & Sales	1452 Alpine Ave NW	Grand Rapids	MI	49504	10% on Stihl & Toro Parts. www.alpinerent-all.com info@alpinerent-all.com
5	Ann's Custom Canvas	4414 Remembrance Rd	Walker	MI	49544	10% Discount, not valid on specials. Mention steelheaders before ordering
6	ARMS, Inc - Radon Remediation & Testing	43443 - 27th St	Mattawan	MI	49071	Member Rates www.e-armsinc.com 1-888-447-2366
7	Art Van Furniture	Statewide				Friends and Family Sales only (need special coupon)
8	Auto Owners Insurance	303 E. Monroe	Durand	MI	48429	Rowe Agent Group #486
9	Batteries Plus	2061 N-139 Suite B	Benton Harbor	MI	49022	10% & Member Discount 269-925-7374 www.batteriesplus.com
10	Batteries Plus	386 Bay Park Dr, Suite B	Holland	MI	49424	10% & Member Discount 616-396-9914 www.batteriesplus.com
11	Batteries Plus	5228 S. Westnedge Ave	Kalamazoo	MI	49002	10% & Member Discount 269-553-2355 www.batteriesplus.com
12	Batteries Plus	3031 28th Street SE	Kentwood	MI	49512	10% & Member Discount 616-575-0500 www.batteriesplus.com
13	Batteries Plus	5839 Hrvy Street, Suite 6	Norton Shores	MI	49444	10% & Member Discount 231-747-9168 www.batteriesplus.com
14	Berkfield & Co LTD	2625 Pontiac Lake Road	Waterford	MI	48328	5% Great Lake Sportsmens Program on personal Insurance, on home/auto.
15	Big Lake Outfitters of Saugatuck	640 Water St	Saugatuck	MI	49453	10% on fishing tackle (retail store) with membership card 269-857-4762
16	Big Papa Sportfishing	50642 Oregon Ave.	Novi	MI	48374	10% except on equipment
17	Black Dog Outfitters	4444 14 Mile Rd	Rockford	MI	49341	10% Discount on fly tying materials, hooks & lines. www.blackdog-outfitters.com
18	BoatU.S.					\$15 Annual Membership Dues - Use Membership # GA83723B
19	Bob's Outdoors	Statewide	www.bobsoutdoors.com			10% Discount (www.bobsoutdoors.com)
20	Dayton, Rick R, DDS	169 Louis Campau Promenade Ste 2A	Grand Rapids	MI	49503	20% off all services (616)458-2545
21	Cascade Capital Funding	4251 Cascade Rd. SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49546	Free appraisal up to \$300.00
22	Dockside Marine, Inc	4320 State Rd	Glennie	MI	48737	15% Off Parts & Accessories (Excludes Electronics)
23	Dunham's Sports	Statewide				10% Discount # 50050/3
24	Firestone - Metro 25	19268 Middlebelt	Livonia	MI	48152	\$20 off on \$200 or more on service www.metro25firestone.com
25	Fish with Jim Outfitters	http://www.fishwithjimoutfitters.com/	248-252-1277			Discount \$50.00 off the total trip price.
26	Glacier Corporation	1021 Fuller St.	Santa Ana	CA	92701	Aquarium Chillers for "salmon in classroom" \$625 + 60 (s&h) = \$685
27	Gold Coast Outfitters LLC	6755 Butternut Dr	Port Sheldon	MI	49460	10% Discount www.goldcoastoutfitters.com
28	Great Lakes Angler Magazine	www.glangler.com				Use promo code MCLUB10 1yr/\$13, 2yr/\$25, 3yr/\$36
29	Health First Chiropractic Clinic	2526 Woodmeadow Dr SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49546	First Visit Free
30	Homestead Resort on Betsie River	2399 Dam Rd	Benzonia	MI	49616	10% In Season, 25% Off Season (homestead@crystal-rentals.com)
31	Insta-Launch Campground	20 Park Ave	Manistee	MI	49660	Member Discount
32	Insurance Shop/Fremont Ins.	824 Water St.	East Jordan	MI	49727	10% Discount off insurance for MSSFA Group Members
33	Jim Waldron Pontiac, Buick, GMC	1146 S. State Rd	Davison	MI	48423	Contact Nick Russol for Sales. 10% off all parts not to exceed \$100.00
34	J Smith Custom Tackle	1136 E Hughes Lake Road	Rose City	MI	48654	15% - 20% off depending on rod. Customrodsbyjsmith.com 989-685-2819
35	K & M Marine	14990 Telegraph Rd	Redford	MI	48239	10% off merchandise except sale items (www.kandmmarine.com)
36	Kamp Oil Inc	6467 Manistee St	Fredric	MI	49733	Citgo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.50/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
37	Kamp Oil Inc	3650 Eastern Ave SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49508	Citgo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.50/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
38	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.
39	Lapeer Boat Service	3556 Fort Knox Dr	Lapeer	MI	48446	10% off parts and labor (810-245-6038)
40	Liberty Tax Service	544 E. 8th St.	Holland	MI	49423	\$20.00 Discount on tax service
41	Life Family Chiropractic Centres	5795 Balsam Dr	Hudsonville	MI	49426	Complimentary 1st visit (excludes medicare) 50% off 1st massage
42	Linwood Beach Marina & Campground	135 S. Linwood Beach	Linwood	MI	48634	10% off service work
43	Logan's Run Muskegon River Cottage Rental	1648 Gardner St.	Newaygo	MI	49337	10% Discount www.logansrun.us 616-485-4501
44	Mark's Sport Shop	11530 Mason Dr	Grant	MI	49327	Member Discount
45	MC Sports	Major Locations				Member Rates with MC Sports Card
46	MUCC	2101 Wood Street	Lansing	MI	48912	\$18.00 Membership Dues
47	Racks Taxidermy	13662 Cleveland	Nunica	MI	49448	10% Discount 616-844-4495
48	Ramada Lighthouse Inn	1555 Phoenix Rd.	South Haven	MI	49090	20% Discount 269-639-9900
49	Red Sky Outfitters	5234 Plainfield Ave NE	Grand Rapids	MI	49525	10% www.redskyoutfitters.com 616-719-3074
50	Richfield RV	Statewide				10% Discount
51	River Raisin Marina & Campground	2502 E. Elm Avenue	Monroe	MI	48161	Buy 1 get 1 free - call 313-575-4367 (www.riverraisinmarina.com)
52	RX Optical	Statewide				Plan 308
53	Slamco	Internet Sales	www.slammertipup.com			10% Discount
54	Sun Coast Marine	1172 68th Street	South Haven	MI		Member discount
55	The Angling Outpost	2480 Duck Lane Rd	Whitehall	MI	49461	www.anglingoutpost.com 5% use coupon "steelheader" for online purchases
56	Tuffy Muffler	435 N. Beacon	Grand Rapids	MI	49417	10% off parts and labor
57	Tuffy Muffler	4384 Kalamazoo SE	Grand Rapids	MI	48512	10% off parts and labor
58	Tuffy Muffler	610 28th St SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49507	10% off parts and labor
59	Tuffy Muffler	4315 Clyde Park SW	Wyoming	MI	49509	10% off parts and labor
60	Van's Sport Center	1855 Alpine Ave.	Walker	MI	49544	10% Discount
61	Warrior Lures	5915 Lillian La	Traverse City	MI	49684	10% Discount on all product ordered (www.warriorlures.com)
62	West Michigan Propeller	847 Ionia Ave. NW	Grand Rapids	MI	49503	10% Discount
63	WG Grinders	5769 28th St. SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49512	10% Discount dine in/carry out (catering discounts available)

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Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Little impact for Michigan anglers expected from new Lake Michigan fish-stocking levels

tributed to the stocking reduction to varying degrees to achieve the desired result across the lake.

Michigan anglers are not expected to see a significant impact from the new stocking levels. Over 70 percent of Chinook salmon harvested by Michigan anglers are wild and hatched in Michigan rivers. Of the stocked fish caught by Michigan anglers, the majority come from neighboring Wisconsin, which will maintain its Chinook salmon stocking at current levels.

Compared with other Lake Michigan Committee member states, Michigan made the smallest reduction in its overall stocking.

--Michigan will reduce lake trout by 270,000 fish, Chinook salmon by 230,000 fish and Coho salmon by 96,000 fish. These reductions represent 11 percent of all salmon and trout stocked by the DNR in Lake Michigan. In response to angler concerns about salmon stocking in particular, Michigan opted to cut fewer Chinook salmon than initially planned. The state originally had proposed cutting 360,000 Chinook only.

--Illinois will reduce 76,000 Chinook salmon and 4,000 lake trout (15

percent of all Illinois stocking).

--Indiana will reduce 123,000 Chinook salmon and 120,000 lake trout (21 percent of all Indiana stocking).

--Wisconsin will reduce its entire fish-stocking allocation by 25 percent, including a minimum of 517,000 lake trout and 350,000 brown trout. Wisconsin will continue to work with its stakeholders to refine its final reduction strategy.

"Fish don't know borders or boundaries, so it is critical that we work together as states toward a lakewide solution," said Jay Wesley, Lake Michigan Basin coordinator for the Michigan DNR and chair of the LMC. "The science solidly points to the need for change. These changes will help us achieve the important goal of a better balance of predator and prey. We will continue to annually monitor fish populations in the lake. The Lake Michigan Committee reviews this information annually and would recommend increasing stocking levels in the future if conditions are favorable."

Implementing this plan will take two years. Anglers may begin to see full effects of these actions in three to four years.

"The strategy now being

deployed recognizes angler concerns throughout the basin, while seeking to maintain a vital fishery," said Michigan DNR Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter. "The Michigan DNR would not support a strategy that knowingly and substantially increases the risk of the fishery collapsing."

Dexter said that reducing salmon and trout stocking levels illustrates a shared commitment to protection of Lake Michigan's valuable fishery, even as the lake's ecosystem continues to shift quickly. Reduced food availability for prey fish, driven primarily by invasive mussels, has contributed to extensive shifts throughout the entire food web.

"Michigan citizens attach significant value to our Great Lakes and want to keep them strong and diverse," said Dexter. "We at the DNR are committed to making sure there are abundant fish for this generation and for the next."

Learn more about the changing ecology of Lake Michigan and its impact on salmon by watching a video on YouTube.

For additional information, visit the DNR's salmon web page, under Managing Michigan's Fisheries on the DNR website www.michigan.gov/fishing.

Fishing regulation changes made at NRC meeting

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission approved several fishing regulation changes at its meeting Thursday, Oct. 13, in Lansing. Those changes, regarding commercial bait, bow and spear fishing, and reptile and amphibian possession, are now in effect. The regulations are part of multiple Fisheries Orders, which the Department of Natural Resources uses to protect Michigan's aquatic resources. The Fisheries Orders include 201, 216, 219 and 224.

--Fisheries Order 201 sets fishing regulations on waters within the Big Island Lake Complex in Schoolcraft County. The approved change added several lakes that inadvertently were admitted to the list of waters covered under this order. These changes will help clarify coverage of the special regulations.

--Fisheries Order 216 details regulations for taking minnows, wigglers and crayfish for commercial purposes and lists waters closed to personal take of minnows. The approved change consoli-

dated several Fisheries Orders (203, 227 and 231 – all related to bait) under 216 to simplify the regulations.

--Fisheries Order 219 covers regulations for anglers using a bow, spear or crossbow to fish in Michigan. The approved changes included removing Big Bear Lake (Otsego County) and Caribou Lake (Chippewa County) from the list of waters closed to northern pike and muskellunge spearing, removing Tower Dam Pond (Cheboygan County) from the order, and changing the order's title from "Spearing Regulations – Statewide" to "Bow, Spear and Crossbow Fishing Regulations."

--Fisheries Order 224 establishes regulations for Michigan's reptiles and amphibians.

The approved change added five species – including the mudpuppy, Fowler's toad, pickerel frog, Butler's garter snake and smooth green snake – to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory's list of "Species of Special Concern."



2016

Membership Drive

There are thousands of fishermen, women and children who need to join in taking care of the Great Lakes and its fishery!

Let's get them to join!

Here's how it works!

- You (current member) are the sponsor.
- Have the new member fill out the application.
- On the bottom of the application, put your name in "Sponsored By" section.
- For each member signed up by you, you get a ticket.
- Your ticket(s) are put into a pot for a drawing.
- At the January President's meeting, the drawings are held.
- There are between 6 & 10 drawings.
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This is a year-long contest.
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For new membership sign-up only!

Tackle Packs

For more information and to obtain tickets contact your Chapter Membership Director or membership@michigansteelheaders.org

Dam Management Grant Program now accepting proposals

The Michigan DNR has announced its Dam Management Grant Program is now open for proposals. It will provide \$3.35 million in Fiscal Year 2017 to address Michigan's failing dam infrastructure through the funding of dam removals and critical repair/maintenance. The Dam Management Grant Program is focused on the growing issue of abandoned, unused or hazardous dams in Michigan. The purpose of the program is to provide funding and technical assistance to local and state units of government, nonprofit groups and individuals to manage dam removals or repair major maintenance projects that will enhance aquatic resources and fishing opportunities, as well as reduce infrastructure costs and improve public safety in Michigan. There were six recipients in the program's first year, when \$2.35 million was granted; three recipients the second year, when \$350,000 was available; four recipients the third year, when \$350,000 was available; and two recipients during its fourth year, when \$350,000 was available. Again this year there will be an online application process for prospective applicants. Interested parties will have to register with MiRecGrants and then complete and submit their application once their registration has been approved by DNR Grants Management. MiRecGrants can be accessed at: Michigan.gov/dnr-grants. Information can be found at Michigan.gov/dnr-grants. Applications can be submitted through MiRecGrants until 3 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11, to be considered for this year's funding cycle.



BETSIE RIVER TOURNAMENT REPORT

Submitted by River Chair-family: Mike, Karen, and Anthony Cortis

It was a great weekend for the tournament and the 1st of the Metro-West Steelheaders fall river tournament schedule. We planned the tournament early in the season based on some fishing success in August of 2015 on the Betsie River. We had a nice group of people attend the tournament approximately 30 people for the BBQ, 12 that fished of which 6 were Metro-West Steelheader Club Members. We invited the Dad's Club from Detroit Catholic Central in Novi to participate in the outing as well. An opportunity for a "Father & Son" outing and an opportunity for young people and their parents and families to experience what Metro West Steelheaders is about. We billed it as Father & Son but the invite was extended to all in their family. Those that attended truly enjoyed the event. The tournament included the Betsie River and any rivers north of the Betsie giving tournament participants options. We didn't include the Manistee as most of the tournaments seem to take place there already.



Team "Cortis", the tournament chairpersons headed up in Steelhead One aka "The Trump Mobile" Friday afternoon after seemingly endless day of school for Anthony. Loaded down with center pin's, fly rods, spinning rods and enough skeen and salmon eggs to supply the DNR for next season..... General chatter for the river from trusted sources was that the fish were in the river and heading up to spawn so expectations were high for a great day of tournament fishing.



It rained on the way up to Benzonia, Mi which is about 8 miles south of Frankfort, fueling the anticipation of more fish being pushed up the river for the early Saturday morning tournament start.

We arrived at The Rustic Resort the tournament HQ and dropped the boys we had brought up at the Homestead Dam. They had started getting ready and hour before our arrival. When we reached the parking area they jumped out like paratroopers ready to hit the river for some late night fishing. Then "Tangleina" (Karen's fishing nick name lol) and I checked in at the campsite we had reserved just a few hundred yards from the river and enjoyed the bonfire and settled in for the night. The boys were joined by others in the tournament and had a great few hours of fishing before returning to get some rest.



Early the next morning the shotgun sounded and the tournament was on. It was overcast, raining and drizzly all morning and cleared that afternoon just in time for the weigh-in and BBQ dinner. Everyone who attended had a great time. Lots of fish on but difficult to land them as fighting mad and fresh from the lake is what I'm told. When all is said and done one of the visiting non-member tournament participants emerged triumphant, Codi Robinson of Benzonia, Mi who fished that day with his Grandpa landing 3 fish that day and winning the tournament and the big fish award with the only fish caught on tournament day.



The next day the "Crew" went out fishing and many caught fish. Go figure, maybe that's why they call it fishing.....

The sun finally came out and the crew of 30 or so folks enjoyed the BBQ feast of smoked ribs, chicken and pulled pork and all the fixins. A big thank you to Tangleina for all the help in putting the BBQ together and preparation of the delicious food.

Plans are already under way for next years 2nd Annual Betsie River Tournament. Will probably look at moving the date as we identified some conflicts with this years event. We are also looking at sponsoring some additional river events for next season as well.

Thank you to all the participants and the Bustos Brothers for all their help and support with this event!!!! It is greatly appreciated.

PS: If your looking for a nice place to stay check out the Rustic Resort, 2399 Dam Road Benzonia, Michigan 49616 231-882-9950



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Seasonal lake sturgeon releases put nearly 8,000 fish into Michigan waters

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and several partners released more than 7,800 juvenile lake sturgeon into various public waters across the state this summer and fall in an effort to rehabilitate this culturally significant fish species.

The juvenile fish were collected from the wild last spring and reared in stream-side facilities until they reached at least seven inches or larger in size. Most fish were tagged prior to being released into their respective rivers to allow future evaluations of stocked fish.

"Many of these stocking efforts were public events that shined a spotlight on

how important lake sturgeon are to Michigan," said DNR Fisheries Division Chief Jim Dexter. "Our state has a long history with lake sturgeon, and working with our partners helps us protect the species for future generations."

These annual stocking efforts are critical to restoring the state's lake sturgeon population. It takes the work of many partners to secure funding and resources to make the restoration possible. These partners include: the DNR, Black Lake Chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow, Kalamazoo River Chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Little Traverse Bay Band of

Odawa Indians, Match-Be-Nash-She-Wish band of Pottawatomi Indians, Gun Lake Tribe, Keweenaw Bay



Indian Community, Michigan State University, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service.

The table below shows which agencies stocked fish, how many were stocked, and the date and location of each stocking effort.

Agencies	Number of Fish Stocked	Date Stocked	Location Stocked
Michigan DNR	434	June 20 & Sept. 15	Otsego Lake (Otsego County)
Michigan DNR & Michigan State University	500	Aug. 20 & Sept. 15	Black Lake (Cheboygan County)
Michigan DNR & Michigan State University	2,635	June 4-28	Lower Black River (Cheboygan County)
Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians	239	Sept. 8	Burt Lake/Sturgeon River (Cheboygan County)
Michigan DNR & Michigan State University	497	Sept. 15-22	Mullet Lake (Cheboygan County)
Michigan DNR	997	Aug. 23	Cedar River (Menominee County)
Michigan DNR, USFWS & Gun Lake Tribe	38	Aug. 29	Kalamazoo River (Allegan County)
Michigan DNR & Michigan State University	765	May 8 - Sept. 27	Upper Black River (Cheboygan County)
Michigan DNR	1,325	Sept. 12-20	Whitefish River (Delta County)
Michigan DNR & USFWS	519	Oct. 5	Ontonagon River (Ontonagon County)
Total Lake Sturgeon Stocked: 7,864			

"Lake Erie" Cont'd from page 1 can do it (again)," Eder said.

"Now, the problems are a little more complex but it can be done."

The commission meeting is part of a larger Great Lakes Public Forum - a triennial gathering for scientists, environmentalists and policymakers to dive into a range of lakes issues: wetlands, drinking-water quality, climate change, economic development, invasive species, international collaboration and over-all ecosystem health.

The event included a new report on the health of the five lakes, based on the work of hundreds of scientists from more than 30 agencies and organizations.

On average, the lakes' health isn't changing much - it's not good, but not poor either, said Nancy Stadler-Salt, Great Lakes program co-ordinator with Environment Canada and Climate Change.

The lone exception: Lake Erie.

With its perennial algae blooms - one a few years ago grew to the size of Canada's smallest province, Prince Edward Island - and periodic dead zones, capable of harming aquatic and human life, Erie is listed as "poor and deteriorating."

Its problem, broadly, is similar to that of the 1960s when phosphorus mostly from industrial and consumer detergents created a huge, oxygen-starved dead zone in the lake. That led to detergent restrictions and improved wastewater treatment, as well as the 1972 water quality agreement between Canada and the U.S. - and a recovered Erie that became a global success story.

Now, phosphorus entering the lakes comes largely from urban sewage outflows and manure and fertilizer running off farms into creeks and rivers, including from Southwestern Ontario's vast farm belt. Every rainfall seeds more of these contaminants into the shallow lake, which in summer months grow into toxic algae in Erie's western basin and larger dead zones in the lake's central basin.

When the stuff dies and decomposes, it sucks oxygen out of the lake.

One hope for Erie's turnaround is an agreement by Ontario and Ohio, which borders the lake on its southern shore, to reduce phosphorus entering the lake by 40 per cent by 2025. They pledge to have a comprehensive plan in place by early 2018.

That would mean the annual spring phosphorus load into Erie would have to drop by 3,500 metric tonnes, including 200 metric tonnes from the Ontario side and the rest from the Ohio side.

The toxic algae that phosphorus fuels fouls beaches and harbours and, at times, has been so thick it has choked boat motors.

Two summers ago, algae toxins became a public health hazard for 500,000 people in Toledo, Ohio, and Pelee Island when systems supplying then with drinking water from Erie had to be shut down.

The next year, the monster algae bloom was even larger, even though farther offshore.

But it's far from the only complex problem facing the lakes and the 40 million people who depend on them for drinking, fishing, swimming, transport and eco-

nomic development.

The lake-by-lake assessment, with more complete data expected to be published next year, shows beach quality is in fair-to-good shape; invasive species are over-populous and expanding; toxic substances-including mercury, PCBs and banned pesticides-have dropped by more than 90 per cent; and nutrient/algae loading is fair to poor, and deteriorating.

The Great Lakes collectively represents 20 per cent of the world's fresh water.

The commission is advocating for more federal, state and provincial money to replace and upgrade aging water pipelines and sewage treatment facilities - a cost the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates at \$91 billion in the U.S. now, or almost \$200 billion if deferred for 20 years.

That's a big, but not impossible ask, Eder said.

"We're not poor countries and we do have resources and it is a question of (allocating) resources and (setting) priorities."

He noted it's an important time for such discussions, particularly with the U.S. election campaign ramping up.

And he said the Great Lakes is an important economic tool, not so much as an industrial resource, as it once was, but for its parks and other amenities.

Delegates from both the Democrats and Republicans attended a Great Lakes lobbying session last month in Sandusky, Ohio, and offered their support for a healthier Great Lakes, Eder said.

"We are making progress. We are cleaning up the Great Lakes."

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Widespread Plastic pollution found in Great Lakes Tributaries



Tiny pieces of harmful plastic, called microplastics, are prevalent in many rivers that flow into the Great Lakes, according to a study published Sept 16 in the journal Environmental Science & Technology. Results are also illustrated on a new USGS microplastics website.

Microplastics fall off decomposing bottles and bags, wear off of synthetic clothing and are manufactured into some toothpastes and lotions. Scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey and State University of New York at Fredonia studied 107 water samples collected from 29 Great Lakes tributaries in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and New York, and found microplastics in all samples. Together, these 29 tributaries account for approximately 22% of the total river water that flows into the Great Lakes.

“These microplastics, which are harmful to animal and possibly human health, will continue to accumulate in the Great Lakes well into the future,” said Austin Baldwin, a USGS scientist and the lead author of the report. “Our findings can help water managers better understand the types and sources of microplastics in rivers, and which rivers are the most polluted with microplastics.”

Baldwin noted that the study underestimates the actual microplastic concentrations in the rivers because the scientists sampled large microplastics greater than 0.33 millimeters (mm). The

majority of microplastics are smaller than 0.1 mm.

Key findings from the study include:

**The highest concentration of microplastics was detected in the Huron River at Ann Arbor, MI, at 32 particles per cubic meter, or p/m3;

**High levels of microplastics were also detected in the Buffalo River at Buffalo, NY (31 p/m3), the Ashtabula River near Ashtabula, Ohio (23 p/m3), and the Clinton River near Mt. Clemens, Michigan (21 p/m3);

**The median concentration of microplastics in all samples was 1.9 p/m3;

**Urban watersheds had the highest concentrations of microplastics; and:

**Microplastics were also present in streams in forested and agricultural areas.

The scientists found various forms of microplastics in the river samples: fibers, fragments, films, foams, and pellets or beads. Plastic fibers, which come from items such as synthetic clothes, diapers and cigarette butts, were the most common type detected, at 71 percent of the total particles. The least common form found in the river water was microbeads, which are the only form banned by the United States Congress. This ban has not yet taken effect.

“We were surprised by the small number of plastic beads and high number of fibers found in the samples,” Baldwin said. “These unexpected findings demonstrate how studies like ours are critical to better understanding the many forms and fates of microplastics in the environment.”

Ingested microplastics can cause digestive and reproductive problems, as well as death, in fish, birds and other animals. Unhealthy additives in the plastic, including flame retardants and antimicrobials, have been associated with cancer and endocrine disruption in humans. Also, pollutants such as pesticides, trace metals and even pathogens can accumulate at high concentrations on microplastic particles.

Scientists have found microplastics nearly everywhere. Aside from rivers, microplastics are also common in lakes and oceans, in freshwater and marine fish, oysters and mussels, and in sediment. They are deposited onto land and water surfaces from the atmosphere.

2016 Battle Creek Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
October	8	Kalamazoo River Salmon Slam	Allegan Dam	Miller's Time Out 13260 Helmer Rd S Battle Creek, MI 49015
	22	Kalamazoo River Memorial	Allegan Dam	
	29	Kalamazoo River Trout Quest	Allegan Dam	
November	26	St. Joe River Chapter Challenge	Berrien Hills Golf Club	Social hour 6 PM Meeting 7 PM
December	10	Christmas Party	VFW Portage	Meetings are 3rd Tuesday of each month.

**BRING A FRIEND!
All Membership Meetings
Are Open to the Public**

2016 Grand Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events			
Month	Date	Event	Comments
September	10	Sportsmen for Youth Day	www.sportsmenforyouth.com/
	17	Grand Haven Salmon Festival, Kid Zone Activity area	
	17	Grand Haven Steelheaders-Salmon Festival Big King Fishing Contest	www.ghsalmonfest.com
December	TBD	Annual Dinner & Fund Raiser	

Grand Haven Steelheaders: www.ghsteelheaders.com

2016 Grand Rapids Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
September	14	Board of Directors Meeting		Diamond Hall 435 Diamond Avenue Grand Rapids, MI 4-9503 BRING A FRIEND! All Membership Meetings Are Open to the Public
	28	Membership Meeting	7:30 pm / Social Hour 6:30 pm	
October	1	Chapter Buck Contest Begins**		7:30 pm / Social Hour 6:30 pm
	3	Board of Directors Meeting		
	24	Membership Meeting		
November	5	Fall River Contest-Grand & Muskegon Rivers & their Tributaries STC*		7:30 pm / Social Hour 6:30 pm
	7	Board of Directors Meeting		
	12	Fishing Partners Manistee Outing STC*		
	28	Membership Meeting	7:30 pm / Social Hour 6:30 pm	
	30	2015 Chapter Fish Contest Ends**		
December	1	2016 Chapter Fish Contest Begins**		6:00 pm - Diamond Hall**
	5	Board of Directors Meeting		
	12	Chapter Family Christmas Party		

STC* - DATE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
**** - MEMBERS AND FAMILY ONLY - ALL OTHER EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

2016 Great Lakes Bay Region Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
September	10	Frankfort City Marina	Salmon outing 6:30 am - 1:00 pm	Midland VFW Hall 3013 Bay City Rd Midland, MI 48642 989-496-3410
December	17	Christmas/Awards Banquet	Cocktails 5:00 pm, Dinner 6:00 pm K of C Hall Auburn, MI. 48611	

For more information email:
kathy@steel-headers.com or check
web page www.steel-headers.com

Board Meeting starts: 6:00 pm
Membership Meeting starts: 7:00 pm
All Board/ Membership Meetings are held first Tuesday of each month with Exception of May, June, July and August. A raffle is held following all Membership Meetings

**BRING A FRIEND!
All Membership Meetings
Are Open to the Public**

Register via Marine Radio
channel 72
At beginning of all events.
Weigh in's and Picnics follow
at 2:00 pm.

2016 Holland Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
September	6	Final Night for Tuesday Night Fishing League		Bayshore Yacht Club 1862 Ottawa Beach Road Holland, MI 49424
	12	Board Meeting		
	13	Fishing League Dinner		
October	3	Board Meeting		Turk's INN 977 Butternut Drive Holland, MI 49424
November	7	Board Meeting		
December	1	General Membership Meeting (Bay Shore Yacht Club)		BRING A FRIEND! All Membership Meetings Are Open to the Public
	3	Cold Steel River Fishing Tourney		
	5	Board Meeting		

For more information:
www.hollandsteelheaders.org
http://michigansteelheaders.org

Board Meetings begin at 7:00 pm
Membership Meetings begin at 7:00 pm
Social Hour begins at 6:00 pm

2016 Huron Valley Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
October	8	Huron/Vermillion w/MW	Walleye	Board Meeting Southgate Veterans Memorial Library 14680 Dix-Toledo Rd. Southgate, MI 48195 1st Thursday of the Month
			For more information go to: michigansteelheaders.org http://huronvalleyesc.org	

The American Legion
11800 Michael Street
Taylor, MI 48180
**BRING A FRIEND!
All Membership Meetings
Are Open to the Public**
Meetings are 3rd Thursday of month

2016 Metro-West Steelheader's Calendar of Events					
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Chair/Contact	Membership Meetings Held at:
September	6	General Membership Meeting			The New Livonia Seniors Center 15218 Farmington Road Livonia, Michigan 48154
	10	Salmon Tournament - Frankfort w/TCAS		Mike Hartrick	
	17	Manistee River Tournament w/TCAS		Mark & Laurie Lewallen	
October	1	Ohio Steelhead Alley (include Elk Creek P.A.)		Phil Bustos	Director's Meeting begins at 7:00 pm Membership Meeting begins at 7:00 pm
	4	General Membership Meeting		Jim Robertson	
	8	Huron Walleye Tournament w/HVS		Bob Thomas	
	15	Muskegon River Tournament			
November	1	General Membership Meeting		Mark Platt	www.metroweststeelheaders.org Contact: Henry Nabors 248-258-5502 E-mail: HHNabors@Ameritech.net
	3	Captain/Crew/River Angler 2017 Calendar Meeting		Mark Platt	
	5	River Tournament Manistee w/Det. S		Phil Bustos	
	19	Pere Marquette River (Flies Only Section) w TCAS			
December	6	CHRISTMAS PARTY - HAPPY HOLIDAYS			BRING A FRIEND! All Membership Meetings Are Open to the Public

2016 South Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
September	15	Board & Membership Meetings		Moose Lodge 1025 E. Wells St South Haven, MI 49090
October	20	Board & Membership Meetings		
November	17	Board & Membership Meetings		
	26	River Tournament		BRING A FRIEND! All Membership Meetings Are Open to the Public
December	10	Holiday Party		

Committee Dates
Pro/Am Tournament Committee: 1st
Wednesday every month Nov thru June
Local Tournament Committee: annually the
1st Thursday of December

For information on any South Haven Steelheader events go to:
http://southhavensteelheaders.com/events/

2016 Southwest Michigan Steelheaders Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Membership Meetings Held at:
September	8	General Membership & Board Meeting		Berrien Hills Golf Club 690 W. Napier Ave Benton Harbor 49022
October	13	General Membership & Board Meeting		
November	10	General Membership & Board Meeting		
December	3	Winter Chapter Challenge Tournament		Board Meeting 5:30 PM Social hour 6:00 PM Meeting 7:00 PM
	9	Christmas Party		

**BRING A FRIEND!
All Membership Meetings
Are Open to the Public**

2016 Thumb Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Meetings Held At:
October	20	Last Regular Meeting for the Year. Tackle Swap Meet and Sharing Fish Tales @ 7:30 PM		Ubyly Fox Hunters Club M19 South of M142 Bad Axe, MI 48413 Membership Meetings @ 7:30 pm Board of Directors Meeting @ 6:30 pm BRING A FRIEND! All Membership Meetings Are Open to the Public

2016 Traverse City Area Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Comments	Meetings Held At:
September	7	TCAS General Membership Meeting		Traverse City Seniors Center 801 E. Front Street Traverse City, MI 49686 7:00 pm
	TBD	Chrystal Lake Tournament		
	10	Frankfort Salmon Tournament w/MWS		
	17	Manistee River Tournament w/MWS		
	18	Senior Center Fish Fry		
	19	Grand Traverse Bay Tournament (Elk Rapids)		All Membership Meetings are Open to the Public WEB Site: traversecityareasteelheaders.org
October	5	TCAS General Membership Meeting		
November	2	TCAS General Membership Meeting		
	19	Pere Marquette River Tournament w MWS		
December	7	TCAS General Membership Meeting		

If you have questions contact:
Henry Nabors
HNNabors@Ameritech.net or call
248-225-4964

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