



## Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee

Established by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to improve and maintain fishery resources of Lake Huron through better communication and partnership.

### **Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting Jay's Sporting Goods, Inc., Clare, Michigan Wednesday April 25, 2018 Approved**

**Attendees:** Tim Cwalinski, Gary Whelan, Todd Wills, Dana Serafin, Jerry Serafin, Lee Martin, Leo Mrozinski, Gary Boersen, Mike Feagan, David Shaw, Rich Kretzschmar, Ed Retherford, Tom Hamilton, Dave Borgeson, Judy Ogden, Julie Shafto, Steve Shafto, Thomas Heritier, Gene Kirvan, Jim Baker, Randy Claramunt, Ken Merckel, Jim De Clerck, Randy Terrian, Eric Andersen, Doreen Campbell, Lance Campbell, Frank Krist, Aaron Switzer, Brandon Schroeder, Tom Keerl, Scott Lutz, Tod Williams, Tess Nelkie, Craig Milkowski, Nick Torsky, Alan Seiferlein, Lowell Kiester, Fred Sterns, Tom Frontjes, Bob Reider, Ralph Zimmermann, Jerry Brown, Kynzie House, Simone Valle de Souza, Laura Ogar, Bob Kettner, Christian LeSage, Patrick Hanchin, Jan VanAmberg, Mark Lentz, Ron Beaulieu, Chris Klein, Dennis Bidigare, Eric Morrow, Bryan Darland.

### **Welcome and Introductions (Frank Krist and Randy Claramunt, DNR Lake Huron Basin Coordinator).**

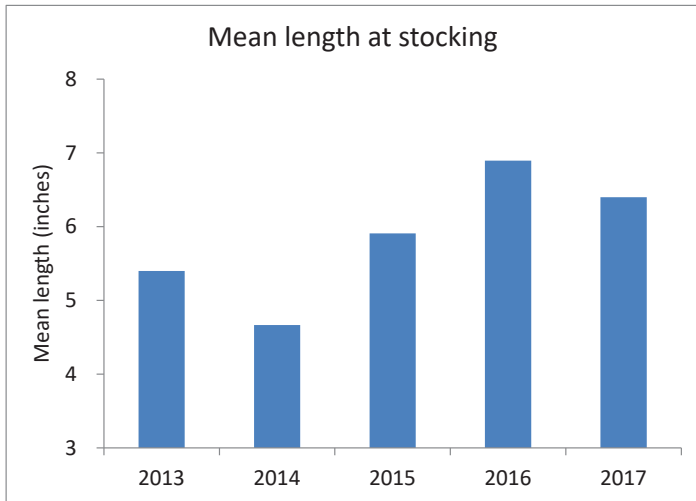
Attendees introduced themselves. Frank introduced Tom Hamilton and offered his thanks for Tom returning to the group, considering the magnitude of the automobile accident he was involved in when traveling home from the last meeting. Randy discussed the name tags and the name tents that identify Committee members and asked that the materials be used to help identify members during the meeting.

Randy also mentioned the progress made on the *Roadmap to Fishing Lake Huron*, which helps guide anglers to port-specific fishing opportunities. Members of this Committee have helped craft the document. Electronic versions of the document will be sent out to the Committee and others on the email mailing list.

### **The progress of the Atlantic Salmon Program and the next steps (Aaron Switzer, Manager Platte River, Oden and Harrietta State Fish Hatcheries, Tim Cwalinski DNR Fisheries Biologist, and Randy Claramunt).**

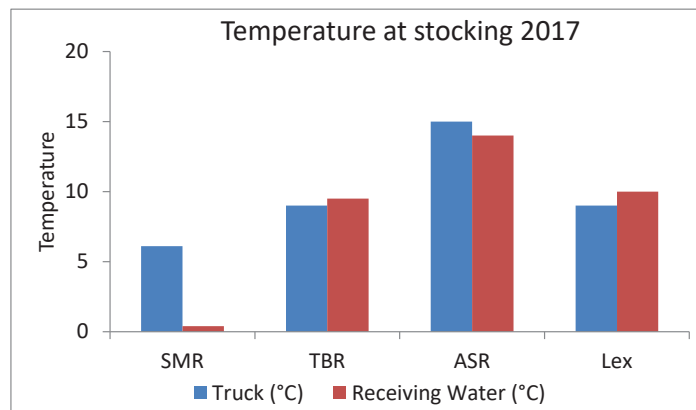
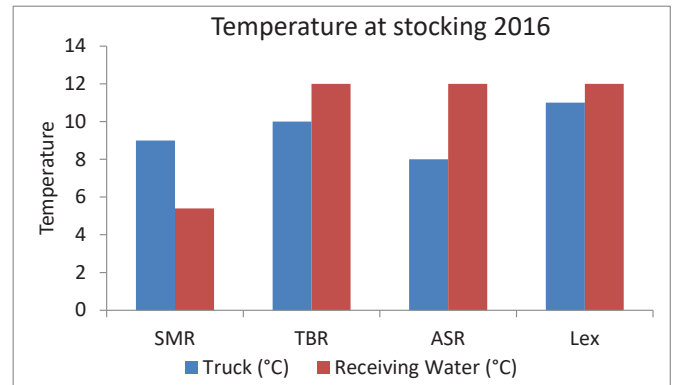
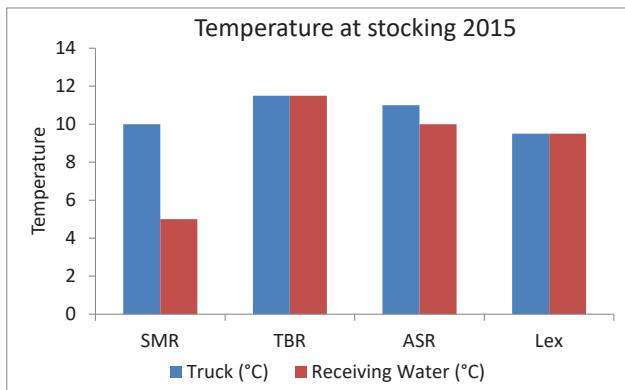
Randy showed the stocking record for Atlantics in recent years for the 4 stocking sites. Survival after stocking is always a concern, and size at stocking is seen as a large contributing factor. The water temperature at stocking has also been viewed as an important issue; with a goal of stocking the fish when the receiving water temperatures are near 50°F (10°C). Randy provided charts of the recent size at stocking and temperature information, which are shown below.

In 2016, Lexington fish showed up in the fishery much better than other stocking sites. In 2017, Lexington and St. Mary's River fish are both showing up better than the Au Sable and Thunder Bay Rivers. Coded wire tag returns from the Thunder Bay River have been good in 2017. The pie charts below show the proportion of the DNR stocked Coded Wire Tagged (CWT) Atlantic Salmon returns originating from the various stocking sites and the maps below show where the Coded Wire Tagged fish were caught.

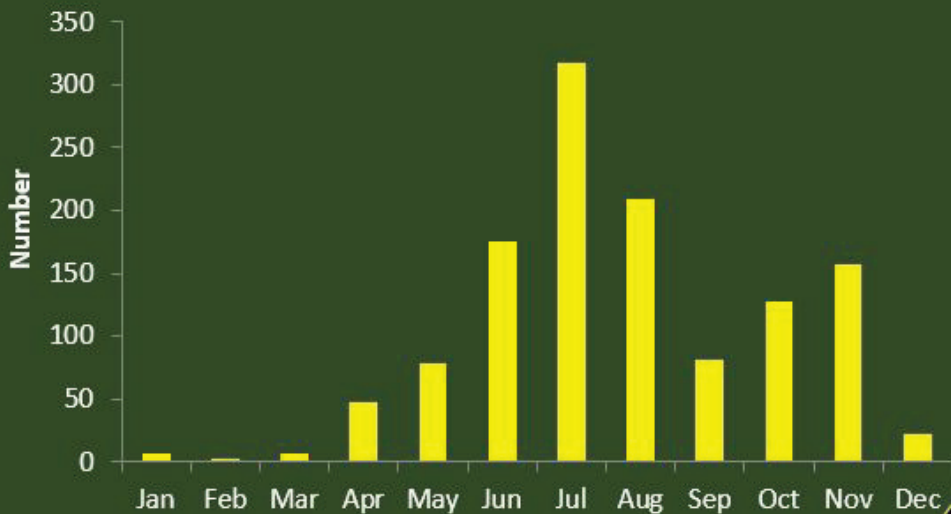


Year	Date	Number	Length (inches)
2013	04/03/2013	100,865	5.40
2014	05/13/2014	131,387	4.67
2015	04/22/2015	160,472	5.91
2016	05/03/2016	160,073	6.89
2017	04/23/2017	110,816	6.40

Total number stocked by the DNR and LSSU



# Monthly Reports by All Sources in 2017



N=1,233



## Measuring Atlantic Salmon Returns

Stocked 2015



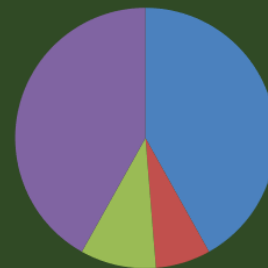
■ St. Marys ■ Au Sable  
■ Thunder Bay R. ■ Lexington

CWT reported 2016



■ St. Marys ■ Au Sable  
■ Thunder Bay R. ■ Lexington

CWT reported 2017



■ St. Marys ■ Au Sable  
■ Thunder Bay R. ■ Lexington

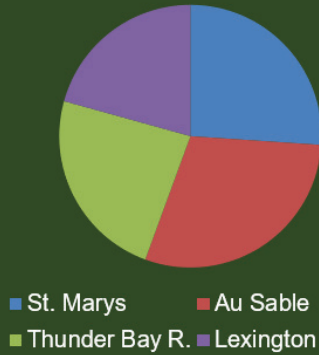
CWT Returns of 2015 stocking based on reports through winter 2017

2017 return proportions are significantly different Chi square  $df=3$ ;  $P<0.001$ ,  $N=117$   
 2016 return proportions are significantly different Chi square  $df=3$ ;  $P=0.014$ ,  $N=228$   
 CWT = Coded Wire Tag

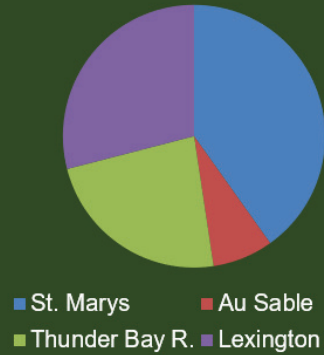


# Measuring Atlantic Salmon Returns

Stocked 2016

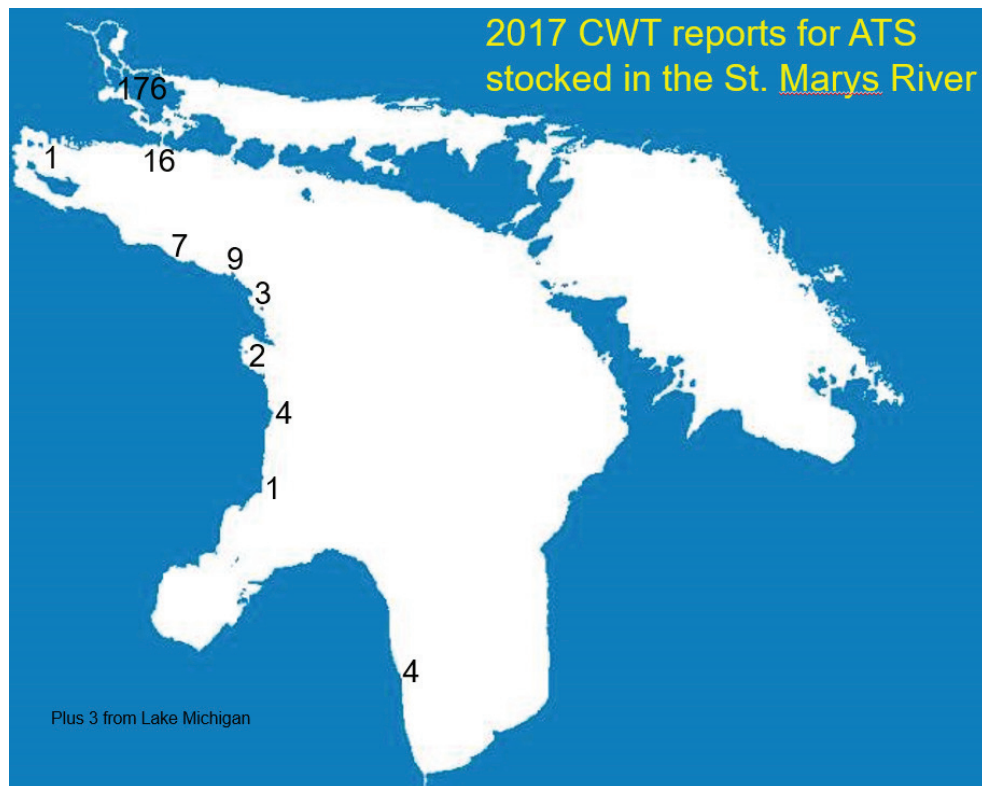


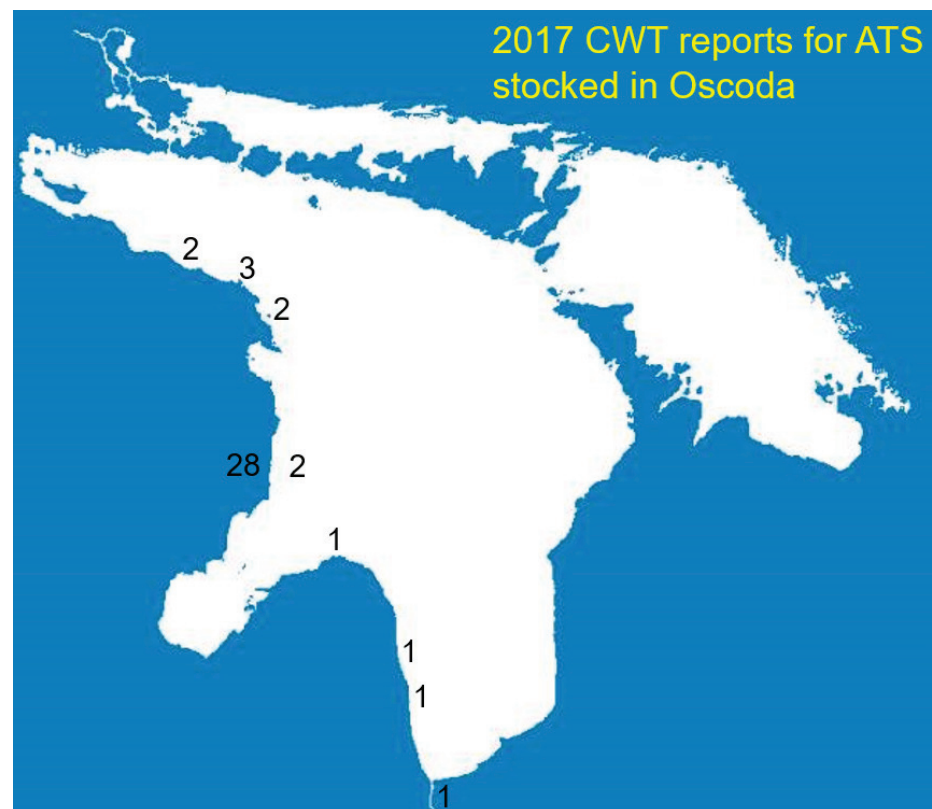
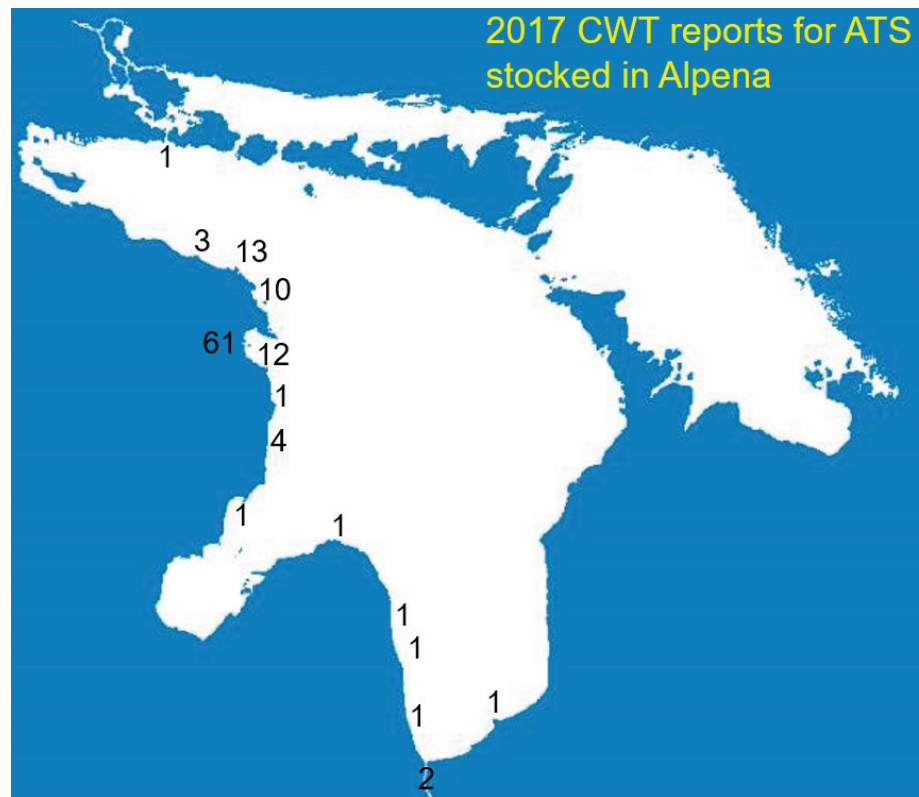
CWT reported 2017

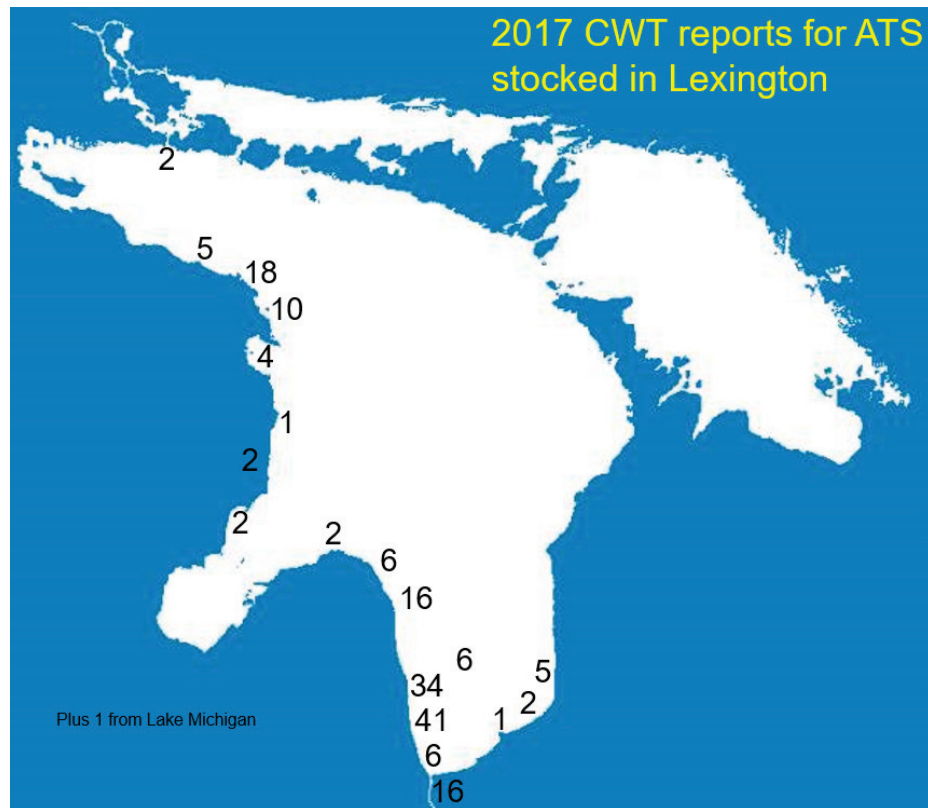


## CWT Returns of 2016 stocking based on reports through winter 2017

2016 return proportions in 2017 are significantly different Chi square  $df=3$ ;  $P<0.001$ ,  $N=441$   
CWT = Coded Wire Tag







Randy mentioned the various sources of information used to determine the estimated number of Atlantic salmon caught by anglers which are outlined below:

#### *Measuring Atlantic Salmon returns*

- **Creel Program:** This program is limited to certain ports and it does not capture the charter results. Several important fall fisheries were not sampled. Ice fishing is not monitored. Released fish do not count in the harvest numbers, and river fish have not been included in the reporting. Straying fish are often not quantified. 2017 Estimate = 2,233
- **General Information from Anglers:** This effort includes emails, photos and phone calls. 2017 Estimate = 1298.
- **Coded Wire Tag (CWT) Information:** This information differentiates the returns from the DNR and LSSU, where the fish were stocked and the date the fish were planted. These returns depend heavily on volunteers. 2017 results = 573.
- **2017 creel estimate above is 2,233**

To better account for the actual number of fish caught during 2017 the following adjustments were made:

#### *Added adjustments to the Atlantic Salmon creel returns and a more realistic estimate*

- **Released fish** not quantified +900
- **River fisheries** excluded +1,500
- **No charter reporting** +1,000
- **Winter fishery** not quantified +500
- **Straying fish** not quantified +100

- **Adjustment total = 4,000**
- **Grand total = 2,233 creel + 4,000 added adjustments= 6,233**
- **This increases the return rate to over 5%**

Over time the return results will become more accurate as individual year classes move through the fishery and the hatchery improvements have an impact. Since 2010, the average creel return rate for the DNR stocked fish is about 0.82% but by including the additional catch data shown above, the actual return rate is closer to 5% in 2017

**Goals for 2018 below:**

- Continue stocking the 4 Index Sites
  - Lexington – Harbor
  - Oscoda – Au Sable River
  - Alpena – Thunder Bay River
  - Sault Ste. Marie – St. Marys River
- Adjust the creel at Oscoda to incorporate the river mouth to Foote Dam in the spring and fall
- Add a November creel survey during 2018 at Oscoda and Alpena

Aaron Switzer said their stocking plan is to hold the course on the proportion of Atlantic Salmon stocked at each location. Currently, 118,000 Atlantics are in the hatchery, and stocking is to commence soon. He mentioned that the 180,000 goal is a tough one to meet, and not likely achievable at Platte Hatchery. This winter and spring have been cool, so fish are only around 5.5 inches long and smaller than normal because of the cold surface water used for rearing at Platte Hatchery. Aaron said the fish look good with few disease issues to date. Hopefully, the size will not present a survival issue and Aaron reminded attendees that the first good returns were from relatively small stocked fish.

An attendee asked whether there is a natural population. DNR representatives and Roger Greil said that to date there is not a significant amount of natural reproduction occurring for Atlantics, but it could happen in the future. Aaron was asked about how our program differs from Maine's. He said Maine often stocks fall fingerlings. Aaron said when he visited their facilities, they had a much different operation than ours. Judy brought up merganser predation issues they have seen in previous years. It was mentioned that mergansers are protected birds and cannot be harassed.

Roger Greil said when they had small fish, they had sick fish. The larger fish were healthier, and return rates increased. LSSU cannot easily raise fish in water temperatures past 50 F degrees, since disease issues tend to begin at that point.

Randy said we have to evaluate the return information over time, since the Atlantic Salmon can return as 1, 2, 3, and 4 year old adults.

Tim Cwalinski mentioned the logistic problems involved with stocking fish including: weather, water temperatures, hatchery logistical issues; walleye, cormorant and other predators, etc. Aaron described the issues the hatcheries deal with, including water temperatures, disease, and density problems as the fish increase in size.

Tim talked about improvements made in the Atlantic program including hatchery personnel getting better at rearing them and the stream temperature timing adjustments that appear to be improving survival. He then emphasized our need for better evaluation of the returns of Atlantics. Tim outlined the importance of looking at the fishing opportunities generated by Atlantics when they return to the streams and harbors. Randy Terrian mentioned the initial difficulty in getting people to cooperate in the evaluation effort. He is seeing improvement recently.

Tim mentioned that the Atlantics seem to be homing well to the stocking locations. They move widely after stocking but nearly all the fish return to spawn at their stocking location. The only way to know the stocking location of a fish in Lake Huron is to obtain the heads from adipose clipped Atlantics and have the Coded Wire

Tag analyzed. Gary Whelan agreed that the year class analysis is a good way to proceed but said that other survey options would likely be expensive, since the overall density of Atlantics in Lake Huron is too low for most fishery independent surveys.

Lance Campbell noted that most anglers release their fish, so getting heads from the stream fish is more difficult. He was assured that these fish in the river are most likely returning to their stocking location to spawn, so the need of taking the heads from fish in the river is lower. Taking a photo of each side of the fish and sending the results to Tim are important but releasing these fish which allows them to be caught again is valuable to the fishery.

Randy continued the conversation regarding the desired prescribed 180,000 Atlantics and the ability of DNR's Fish Production section to achieve that number. Some discussion ensued regarding utilizing different facilities to fulfill the Atlantic prescriptions. Attendees said the Great Lakes brown trout fishery has struggled recently in Lake Michigan and prescriptions for those have been reduced. Jan VanAmberg mentioned that the improvements at Thompson Hatchery are to increase the size of about 200,000 steelhead fingerlings to yearling size. It was mentioned by Frank that possibly it might be worth investigating switching from raising some steelhead to Atlantic Salmon at the Thompson Hatchery.

Lee Martin asked, "Why not do a better job marketing the fisheries created in Au Sable and Thunder Bay rivers?" Randy agreed, and also stated that the fishery is no longer an experiment and it should be identified as an ongoing program. Tim said that we have done many efforts to promote the fishery but could do more.

### **The Goby Project to determine more effective survey methods to better estimate the abundance of round gobies in the Great Lakes. (Todd Wills, Lake Huron and Lake Erie/Lake St. Clair DNR Station Manager).**

Todd Wills showed some of Frank's photos of lake trout stomachs containing many gobies. Todd said their traditional bottom trawl sampling efforts do not appear to give a reliable estimate of goby abundance. Goby prefer rocky substrates, which tend to be rough on traditional sampling gear. Gobies also change locations seasonally; and the question has been, "Are sampling efforts being conducted in the right place at the right time?"

## **2017 Achievements**

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- Tested image acquisition methods:
  - Two remote operated vehicles (ROVs)
  - Autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV)
  - Stationary cameras
  - Drop cameras
- Field & lab data used to train computers to ID gobies from images
- Acquiring AUV (top right)



# Predator consumption of gobies is increasing

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Photo credit: F Krist



Photo credit: F Krist



The current initiative is to develop and test new technologies for accurately measuring goby abundance. In 2017, testing of imaging methodologies with cameras, computer software and other techniques were initiated. The methods are still being refined and they are expected to be completed in 2019. We are looking to use all available tools to better quantify gobies. Do gobies prefer hard substances? Do the gobies migrate to deeper water in the winter? In Lake Ontario, goby move to very deep water in October and near shore in the spring. We sampled 3 different substrates in mid-August. Trawls and cameras were used to try to learn more about the gobies. About 5,000 gobies were caught and over 4,900 were juvenile age 0. Catch rates were highly variable. Fewer gobies were caught on soft and hard substrates, and more in the intermediate substrate. Todd still wonders if they are just more difficult to sample when over hard substrates.

No gobies were caught in the April bottom trawl but eDNA sampling indicated with high confidence that gobies were present but missed. More work is planned on trying to find where gobies are moving seasonally. Gobies can sometimes be found in predator diets studies but less frequently in sampling gear in the same area. Often, predators are more effective in finding prey fish than sampling gear. The predator diet studies should be integrated into other efforts to better understand goby abundance.

Goby mortality is likely very high, but gobies seem to be able to withstand this predation rate. Goby have survival traits that help withstand heavy predation. These traits include large eggs, nest protection by the males and spawning several times each year. This is a unique species, different from other prey species in the Great Lakes. They usually spawn near shore but they can also spawn in fairly deep water.

Frank indicated that more effort is needed by volunteers and organization to collect predator stomachs for the diet study. Many more samples are needed, and the results will assist in developing fishery management directions for Lake Huron. Frank indicated that he would be sending attached to an email the information needed to collect the stomachs.

Todd encouraged attendees to contact Katie Kierczynski for more information on the **Predator Diet Study** ([kierczy2@msu.edu](mailto:kierczy2@msu.edu)). Katie is a Michigan State University graduate student leading the efforts to collect and analyze the stomach samples. Katie has a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Huron-Michigan-Predator-Diet->

[Study-593235801067783/](https://www.instagram.com/greatlakespredatordiet/) and is also posting information on an Instagram page <https://www.instagram.com/greatlakespredatordiet/>. There are a large number of photos and other information at these sites. Julie Shafto mentioned that she has a few kits with her today.

Judy asked about the nutritional value of gobies in a predator's diet. Randy mentioned that goby have good caloric value and there is not a thiaminase issue for predators. It is a very important prey fish in Lake Huron.

### **Review of the Saginaw Bay walleye and yellow perch regulations for 2018 (Jim Baker DNR Southern Lake Huron Unit Manager, and Randy Claramunt DNR Lake Huron Basin Coordinator).**

Jim said regulations for yellow perch and walleye will remain the same this year. Before decisions are made, we review the most recent creel information for walleye, which all appear to have been fairly strong for the summer, winter and pre-spawn fishery. Along with the creel results, all the survey data are analyzed and reviewed with the DNR Basin Team, and recommendations are presented to the public. The DNR will then make a decision on potential adjustments in time to ensure the regulations will be in the 2019 Fishing Guide. Having the changes in the Guide will make enforcement easier, especially if the changes are more conservative. Jim said regulations likely will not be more liberal.

Jim De Clerk asked about the previous walleye collapse, and if it was attributable to the overpopulation of walleyes. Jim Baker discussed the reasons for the collapse around the World War II era, which included pollution, overfishing, and the smelt and alewife invasions. He was asked if the walleye population is growing, stable, or declining? Jim indicated the fishery is constantly being assessed to determine the trends in the population. Currently, the walleye fishery is doing well.

Jim was then asked what the DNR is doing to increase the yellow perch population, since the population has declined so much. Jim said our changed walleye regulations, and yellow perch bag limit changes, were in part implemented to help the yellow perch population to recover.

Randy mentioned that recently the Committee members voted not to change the walleye regulations for 2018 and most members wanted to review more data before a decision is made on potential regulation changes for 2019. Since the DNR is going to publish the Fishing Guide every year, changes can be made annually if needed.

Frank mentioned that we should not close the door on more liberal regulations, if the science indicates that the walleye population could sustain it. One of the main goals of the regulation changes in Saginaw Bay was to increase yellow perch and forage fish abundance by bringing the walleye population in balance with the food supply. Jim De Clerk agreed that the data should guide our management directions. Fewer people than expected have taken advantage of the 8 fish bag limit and perhaps moving to 10 fish bag limit would be ok for one year.

One angler stated that the average age of anglers is getting older, and yellow perch provides a great entry fishery for young anglers so management of yellow perch should be a priority. Another angler said it is a deeper societal problem when talking about young angler recruitment. Jim and Randy mentioned that we tend to err on the side of being conservative on fish populations and they do not want to put the fishery at risk. Dana mentioned a lot of walleye are leaving the bay, impacting the larger lake. Rick Kretzschmar said we should let the data be analyzed, and then make the decision. He asked when the data will be compiled, and will it be analyzed in time to make a decision for a regulation change for 2019? Randy said we've changed the date for the next advisor's meeting to Tuesday August 7 and the Lake Huron Basin Team should be addressing the issue this June, so the timing should be fine. Christian Lesage, who works on regulations and Fishing Guide issues, agreed that there is enough time.

Frank and Randy Terrian asked about the potential to open the Saginaw River to year-round fishing. Jim Baker was not supportive of this suggestion, stating that a large portion of the adult walleye population is in the river, and he believes overharvest could easily happen. A large amount of enforcement effort is needed currently, and even more would be needed to enforce this fishery. Jim then provided some United States Army Corps of Engineer's data on the Saginaw River, comparing the Saginaw River to the Detroit River, which is much larger.

Judy compared the St. Clair River to the Saginaw, emphasizing that the smaller Saginaw River could be more vulnerable to overharvest.

### **The benefits of changing statewide to a 25 yellow perch daily bag limit (Randy Claramunt).**

Anglers have been frequently asking the DNR to reduce the daily yellow perch bag limit, so the DNR is proposing a statewide 25 fish daily bag limit. Randy gave a short history of previous bag limits. The current 50 perch per day limit was established in 1979 when perch populations were higher. Randy mentioned the Lake Gogebic regulations are a 25 daily limit with only 5 over 12 inches. There is a tendency of adding exceptions across the State. These exceptions make law enforcement more difficult and often confuse anglers. There is the potential, however, to have an exception to this statewide proposal for a 25 fish bag limit in Lake Erie because they already have a mechanism to change their regulations as needed.

Randy talked about the biological and social aspects of a bag limit. In most cases, the daily bag limit is a social issue, but the growing number of exceptions indicates that there is biological concern in sensitive areas. Depending on effort, the relative importance of social and biological factors can vary greatly.

How many anglers catch over 25 fish, and how much of the harvest can be attributed to catching over 25 perch? On average only about 4% of the anglers catch over 25 yellow perch per day. Wisconsin found that generally more conservative panfish regulations resulted in a better “quality” fishery by increasing the average length of the panfish. Some other states have gone to more restrictive panfish regulations. Much work has been undertaken including a DNR scientific review of the proposal, comments have been provided by internal and external fishery committees and an electronic angler survey was conducted.

The results of the electronic survey to date are 55% were in favor of a 25 fish limit, 10% were in favor of lowering the limit even further to possibly 10 fish, 25% were in favor of keeping the limit at 50, and 10% had no opinion. Dana asked if the charter fishery could keep a higher limit, wondering who would charter a boat for only 25 perch. Randy said this would go counter to past practice. Changes in possession limits would be impacted by the regulation change and Randy mentioned that if the yellow perch bag limit is lowered to 25, the possession would be lowered proportionally. For example, once a person processes the fish, the person can legally have 150 yellow perch in the freezer currently but if the bag limit is lowered to 25 then the number of yellow perch each angler can have in possession would be 75.

### **Progress Report of the Subcommittee of Advisors, DNR Biologists, and Managers to develop a draft Lake Huron salmon and trout management plan (Randy Claramunt and Frank Krist).**

Frank mentioned that he is enthusiastic about the prospects for completing this plan. Two Subcommittee meetings have been held. Randy talked about the progress. The group started with a blank page, framing the problem, the mission, and goals. Each species of salmon and trout will be reviewed to determine survival rates, adaptation to the food web, hatchery production logistics and the amount of fishing opportunity produced. Members of the Subcommittee include: Todd Wills, Jan VanAmberg, Dave Borgeson, Randy Claramunt, Todd Williams, Randy Terrian, Glen Buehner, Jim De Clerk, Ed Retherford, Frank Krist, Jim Johnson, Gary Smith, Ken Pletcher, and Terry Walsh.

Ed Retherford and Todd Williams hope to see progress, although getting started seems to be a bit slow. Randy Terrian is encouraged at the prospect. Tim Cwalinski wondered, “How can we develop a plan that is adaptable?” Randy said the goal is to build on assessment adaptability so that changes in the fish community can be incorporated into the process. Frank agreed that continued production and review of the data along with adaptive management are the key to a successful plan.

## Cormorant management update (Randy Claramunt)

Randy explained legislative efforts, namely the Cormorant Control Act sponsored by US Representative Jack Bergman <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4429/text?r=53>. Randy testified in behalf of Congressman Bergman's bill in Washington D.C. The bill would direct the US Fish and Wildlife Service to reissue depredation orders and complete the Environmental Assessment to protect free swimming fish. There has been an attempt to enable some lethal control and possibly a quota of cormorants will be allowed. It is unsure where these activities will occur, perhaps to protect endangered species, or perhaps to protect stocked fish. This would not help sites where ongoing control efforts have been occurring to protect wild fish populations, such as Thunder Bay or Saginaw Bay. Frank urged attendees to continue to keep this issue in front of the US legislators. People can also contact US Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird representatives such as Tom Cooper <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/midwestbird/contact.html> and Rachel Pierce <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/midwestbird/rachelpierce.html>, and ask them what progress is being made on completing the needed Environmental Assessment. Judy mentioned that the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) Advisors have a resolution in draft regarding the impacts of cormorants on the fishery. Randy said at the GLFC Council of Lakes Committee meeting last year, the cormorant issue could not make the list of Washington DC worthy priority issues.

Frank asked if anyone had other comments on this topic and someone asked what are we going to do about them? Frank reemphasized the need for people to contact their federal legislators, and the USFWS migratory bird folks. The USFWS has stalled in producing the needed Environmental Assessment and perhaps pressure on federal legislators can in turn help provide an impetus to the USFWS to complete the needed Environmental Assessment. Perhaps asking the USFWS what their cormorant population goals are would be appropriate. The federal judge had said the USFWS should redo the Assessment, but this has not happened.

## DNR Manager and Law Enforcement Updates

*Lt David Shaw, Lt. Michael Feagan, Corp. Nick Torsky, and Craig Milkowski* were present from Law Enforcement Division (LED). Lt. Feagan stated that LED has hired several officers including boat captains in Escanaba, Leelanau, and the Sault Ste. Marie. Nick Torsky is an investigator in the Northern Lower Peninsula, and an Upper Peninsula investigator has been hired as well. These new officers should allow for much more enforcement to be undertaken on Great Lakes and allow more opportunities to work with the commercial fishery.

*Gary Whelan*, DNR Research Section leader, said that the vessels are not out on the water yet, but anglers should keep an eye out for their buoys in coming months. Things are barely getting going due to the cold spring. The walleye egg take in Muskegon is completed and the steelhead egg take just got started. There was a small VHS disease event this year in Lake Saint Clair impacting mostly gizzard shad. The outbreak was localized with about a few hundred to a few thousand fish being impacted. Last year's event was much larger.

*Patrick Hanchin*, DNR Tribal Coordination Unit, said that the State did not agree with the tribes on a lake trout harvest limit for Lake Huron. He said the State feels it has good rationale for its proposal. However, combining MH-1 and MH-2 for harvest purposes requires opening up the Consent Decree and if opened, the tribes have indicated that they may have other items that they would like to change. There is a May 24th Executive Council Meeting that will try to address this issue with the State, US and the five 1836 Treaty Tribes.

*Christian Lesage* said hatchery assignments are set, and regulation packages for the 2019 Fishing Guide are being put together.

*Jan VanAmberg*, supervisor of UP hatcheries, said all hatcheries are behind the stocking schedule as much as 2 weeks. They are taking steelhead eggs this week for instate purposes. This could be the latest Bay de Noc walleye egg take ever. Jan detailed the capital outlay projects planned including deep warm water wells for Thompson Hatchery, upgrading Little Manistee weir, developing a cool water facility with 6 ponds and an incubation facility. They hope to be moving earth next year on this last item.

**Todd Wills**, Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron station supervisor, said they are running behind on vessel work, including the spring lake trout survey. Darren Verenocke, a former lead tech from Alpena USFWS, has been hired by the Alpena Station as a technician.

**Roger Greil**, Lake Superior State University Aquatics Laboratory Hatchery Manager said that LSSU is looking to remodeling their hatchery. A new discovery center is being planned. The Atlantics are doing well. Over 600 Atlantics were handled last year during the spawning run, with over 40% of them being State of Michigan fish. Roger is hoping that there will not be any lapse in the Atlantic production during the remodeling project. The facility upgrade may potentially increase the hatchery capacity by 10-20%.

**Dr. Simone Valle de Souza**, is a fisheries economist from MSU and was previously working with the prawn industry in Australia. She looks at cost and benefits of tradeoffs in the fisheries. She attended the meeting to learn about our issues, goals, and needs. Values are sometimes difficult to assess, but nonetheless exist, and that is where she may be able to help.

**Dave Borgeson** Northern Lake Huron Unit Manager said his crew is trying to get their walleye ponds going, but the late spring is making this problematic. Volunteer hazing efforts are ongoing at some fish stocking locations, and Dave thanked those volunteers (Ed Retherford and Randy Terrian).

**Jim Baker, Southern Lake Huron Supervisor** said walleye fry went in some ponds, others will be put in this Friday. One pump at Kawkawlin is not working. Walleye tagging went well, although the run was drawn out. They tried disc tags on walleye last year and they did not see many returns of that type, so their use will be discontinued. Their crew was assisting the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the rock ramp in Frankenmuth to assess fish movement from below the ramp to above. There was some movement occurring but overall the rate was slow. The Sanford pike marsh is in operation for inland lake stocking. Commercial fishery sampling is yet to come. He has a crew sampling in Little Long Lake currently. Bird hazers are working hard protecting stocking efforts.

**Eric Morrow** and **Lee Martin** are conducting creel surveys at Harrisville, Black River and Oscoda. Lee will be covering Thunder Bay and Au Sable Rivers into November. Kinzie House will be working in Northern Lake Huron. Julie Shafto said this was the worst weather conditions this spring for fishing in her 19 years. Many harbors are still iced up. In Alpena, some folks are catching Atlantics and lake trout.

**Lee Martin**, in his first two days, said steelhead fishing was good in the Au Sable River. Lots of Atlantic heads have been collected, often from the pier. Harrisville Harbor is ice free, but walleye have not arrived yet. Some steelhead are being caught off the walls in Harrisville. Atlantics are still being caught in the Au Sable River as far up as Whirlpool.

**Randy Claramunt** mentioned that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is on track to stock almost a million cisco in Saginaw Bay. Because of cold water the fish grew slowly and will be stocked this fall instead of during the spring.

**Coming meeting dates of the Committee for 2018:**

**Tuesday August 7, 2018 (Moved from Thursday June 14)**  
**Wednesday October 10, 2018**