

THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS

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



Volume 96

March/April 2026

No. 2



Chinook Salmon Nearly Vanished in Great Lakes. Here's How They Rebounded

By Keith Matheny
Detroit Free Press

There's a reason why Chinook salmon are also known as king salmon.

"They put up an incredible fight," said Dennis Eade, a tournament fisher for decades up and down

Lake Michigan from his home in Holland.

"It's so intense that even the last 20 yards behind the boat is the most precarious time to land them. They are notorious for jumping and spitting that lure right behind the boat. It's extremely exciting, and you are totally

worn out. It takes typically 20 minutes to fight a salmon of over 15 pounds and get it into the boat. They provide a phenomenal experience."

Eade is the executive director of the nonprofit Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association, an anglers group

that works with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the state Legislature on issues protecting and promoting a thriving Great Lakes fishery.

A recent study commissioned by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission found sportfishing contributes \$5.1 billion in economic impact to the Great Lakes region. Eade estimated that "at least a third to a half" of that amount is driven by salmon and steelhead fishing.

It's a fishery that's seen hard times in the not-too-distant past. In 2015, at a time of record-low Great Lakes water levels, Chinook salmon populations fell off a cliff, down 75% from their highs of just three years earlier. A drop in populations of the Chinook's primary prey fish, alewives, was a big contributor. Low water levels and high water temperatures in the streams the salmon use to spawn were factors as

well.

But with their primary predator in decline, as lake levels improved, alewives bounced back. And that once again abundant food brought the Chinook's numbers back as well. The number of recently hatched, age-0 young Chinook, known as smolt in 2023 was at 12.8 million on Lake Michigan, up 125% from five years before.

The predator-prey tug-of-war between Chinook and alewives is constantly in play, especially on Lake Michigan. And the DNR works to tweak it as needed to keep the economically vital sport fish thriving. Though reproduction in the wild is the primary population driver, the DNR also stocks Chinook throughout the Great Lakes. Eggs are harvested at weirs on spawning streams and rivers in the fall, the eggs hatched and smolt raised, until fingerling Chinook are planted in late April or May.

"We have to monitor alewife recruitment, monitor Chinook salmon, that reproduction, as well as all the other predators in the system to try to adjust our stocking levels accordingly," said Randall Claramunt, chief of the Michigan DNR's Fisheries Division.

The DNR relies heavily on anglers' catch reports for its information on Chinook populations - the number of fish caught, their size, whether they had a clipped fin showing they were a stocked fish or a wild one. The alewife count comes through annual trawling net surveys conducted in conjunction with federal agencies such as U.S. Geological Survey's Great Lakes Science Center and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as tribal fisheries agencies, Claramunt said, and inspections of salmon stomachs to see what they have been eating.

"Vanished"

Continued on page 9

The former Holland Coast Guard station is located at 2280 Ottawa Beach Road. It is on Lake Macatawa and near Holland State Park. The \$1.4 million purchase will transform the property on Lake Macatawa to house the fire department's marine division by this summer. Photo: Park Township Fire Department



Park Township Buys Former Coast Guard Station For Water Rescue Facility

By Kayla Tucker
www.mlive.com

A lakeshore community has completed its purchase of a vacated Coast Guard station.

Park Township now owns the property at 2280 Ottawa Beach Road.

The township plans to

renovate the building into a new water rescue operations facility. It will house the Park Township Fire Department's marine division and will become its Station 3.

The facility will continue to function as the home base for the Ottawa County Marine Division and the

Department of Natural Resources patrol.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house are planned for April.

"We look forward to providing a new service to the community - water

"Rescue"

Continued on page 8

Congresswoman Debbie Dingell Receives Tanner Award

"Debbie" Dingell, U.S. Representative for Michigan's 6th congressional district, is the winner of this year's Dr. Howard A. Tanner Award for dedication and leadership in making outstanding contributions to Michigan's anadromous sport fishery. The announcement was made at MSSFA's board of directors meeting on February 24, 2026. The presentation is planned for April 25, 2026 at the association's annual Presidents' Meeting in Lansing, MI.

She was born into a prominent Detroit, Michigan family, the daughter of Howard Fisher of the Fisher Brothers, owners of Fisher Body, a part of General Motors. She has served as president of the General Motors Foundation and as executive director of Global Community Relations and Government Relations at GM. She married Representative John Dingell



U.S. Representative
Debbie Dingell

in 1981. She had grown up as a Republican, but became a Democrat soon after marrying Dingell. Their marriage lasted 38 years until her husband's death on February 7, 2019, at the age of 92.

In 2014 Dingell indicated that she planned to run for her husband's congressional seat after he announced his retirement. On August 5, she won the Democratic primary, winning 77.7% of the vote. She went on to win the general election with 65.0% of the

vote.

Dingell is active in several organizations in Michigan and Washington, D.C., and serves on a number of boards. She is a founder and past chair of the National Women's Health

"Award"

Continued on page 8



Search groups for MSSFA

The Quality of Fishing Reflects the Quality of Living!

If the walleyes or bass don't want to bite, an angler can usually find some panfish that are willing to get caught.



Mid-Winter Fishing Thoughts

By Bob Jensen

A glance out the window of my central Iowa home reminds me that this isn't open water fishing season. The wind and snow limit visibility so travel isn't recommended, and it's too cold to leave the house anyway. It's times like this that I daydream about fishing in warm weather. Following are some fishing things that have my attention.

The more time that I spend on the water, the more I realize that the water has changed. In quite a few places, the water is clearer and the vegetation is deeper. Invasive species like zebra mussels have found homes in lakes where they didn't used to live.

These little mollusks filter sediment out of the water, which makes the water clearer and allows sunlight to penetrate deeper.

More sunlight reaching deeper water encourages vegetation growth. The water entering the lakes from shoreline homes and buildings is also cleaner, which usually means clearer lake water. Clearer water usually changes the way we fish. When the water is clear, the fish often are deeper. Where we used to fish the weedline in eight or ten feet of water, the weedline is now in fifteen or eighteen feet of water. If we want to get bit, we need to fish deeper, especially during mid-day. Early and late in the day when the light is lower will often be when the fish are most likely to bite.

The lures that we use in our attempts to get a fish to bite have changed significantly. Live bait is still the go-to for many, especially when the bite is tough. But more and more, anglers are learning that artificial baits can increase our fish catches.

We're also learning that just because a particular bait was productive on our last fishing trip last doesn't mean that it will be productive today. Sometimes new bait types, baits that the fish haven't seen, will out-produce the old standbys. A good

example is a bladed jig type of bait. A bladed jig is kind of a jig/crankbait combination. A Thunder Cricket is a good example of a bladed jig. Thunder Crickets were designed mostly with largemouth bass in mind, but anglers who have used these baits will attest that walleyes and northern pike are very willing to eat them. Anglers should be willing to try new things when it comes to fishing, and these midwinter days are a good time to be researching new baits and ideas. Anglers often develop a fondness for a certain species of fish.

If you truly prefer a particular species of fish, go for it. Fishing is something that is a very individual thing and we should fish the way we want to fish. But many anglers have learned that variety is a good thing

and can make our fishing even more enjoyable. When your favorite species doesn't want to get caught, go after something else. In most bodies of water, there will be a type of fish that is more willing to provide action than our target species. If the walleyes don't cooperate, tie on a bass bait, a panfish bait, or a northern pike bait and see what happens. Often you'll find someone willing to bite. And, if you're committed to catching a particular species, try a different presentation. If the bass won't eat your crankbait, try a jigworm. A different look will often be what it takes to get them to bite. I just looked out the window again. It's still cold and windy, but the snow has stopped. Visibility is good. I think I'll go ice fishing.



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The Southwest Michigan Steelheaders

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Alan Douville, President
Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Association

MSSFA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Alan Douville



management, conservation work, and advocacy — much of it supported and influenced by organizations like MSSFA. When we talk about the fruits of our labor, we are talking about healthy fisheries, continued access, and the ability to share this sport with family, friends, and future generations.

will once again offer a full slate of tournaments, educational programs, youth and outreach events, and opportunities to simply enjoy time on the water together. Whether you fish offshore, in rivers, or along the shoreline; whether you are a seasoned tournament angler or someone still learning — MSSFA has a place for you.

that this organization remains strong and effective — today and well into the future. Here's to a safe, successful, and enjoyable 2026 season across all of Michigan's Great Lakes and wa-

ters. May it be filled with tight lines, good company, and the satisfaction of knowing that we are protecting a resource worth fighting for.

— Alan

As we move through the heart of winter and look ahead to another season on the water, I am proud of the momentum and engagement we have seen across the Michigan Salmon and Steelhead Fishermen's Association. The past month has been a powerful reminder that MSSFA is not just an organization — it is a statewide community of anglers who care deeply about our fisheries and are willing to stand up for them.

across Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Superior, Lake Erie, and Lake St. Clair, as well as the rivers and tributaries that feed them.

The opportunities we enjoy on the water are the result of years of fisheries

A Year for Participation and Enjoyment

MSSFA's mission has always gone beyond the fish themselves. It is about education, sportsmanship, conservation, and enjoyment of the sport.

In 2026, our chapters

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Looking Ahead to the Great Lakes Season

As anglers, we understand that winter is a season of preparation. It's when we reflect, plan, and look forward to what lies ahead. With the 2026 fishing season approaching, there is good reason for optimism

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

HB 5093, the bill that would address the funding concerns of the Fisheries Division received a hearing in the Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee in the House on January 21st. Rep. Curt VanderWall (R) Ludington, MI sponsored the bill and introduced it to the committee members. He was questioned vigorously by members who clearly weren't acquainted with the serious need for funding facing the department because of inflationary impacts on hatchery costs, inability to backfill field biologist openings or replace antiquated infrastructure or equipment.

Rep. VanderWall covered the benefits of the bill, outlining that the license increase and the expansion of the youth license would generate additional Dingell Johnson Federal Excise

Tax benefits which would come back to the state in qualifying grant money and revenue from the sale of fishing tackle and equipment taxed specifically for that purpose. He answered questions on the need for a hatchery stamp to supplement the cost of raising steelhead, trout and walleye for Great Lakes anglers and the gradual increase in senior license fees that is proposed in the bill. (There was no push back from members on the ability for trolling anglers to run additional rods as proposed in the bill.) He assured members that he and his co-sponsors are more than willing to listen and work with members to address specific concerns with aspects of the legislation.

In addition to the testimony MSSFA provided to the members in support of the bill, charter Captain Mark Williams testified

MSSFA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dennis Eade



to the immense support anglers have for the bill given the lack of funding that has existed since the last increase back in 2014. Michigan Trout Unlimited executive director, Bryan Burroughs answered the more technical questions members had especially as related to inland fishing.

Negotiations will take place behind the scenes to gather consensus and support for the bill. Rep. VanderWall has nine of the seventeen committee members in his caucus so we are cautiously optimistic that between the Republican majority on the committee and the Democrats who showed interest in the benefits of the legislation, that the bill should pass out of committee and be sent to the House floor. How long that will take is anyone's guess.

At the federal level, S.2878 - Great Lakes Fishery Research Reauthorization Act- passed. The bi-partisan bill, sponsored by Sen. Gary Peters, secures extended critical financial support for the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Great Lakes Science Center through fiscal year 2030. The bill ensures GLSC's can conduct essential research on native and invasive fish species, habitat conditions, and biological assessments vital to the sound fisheries management and conservation efforts across the Great Lakes Basin.

Consumers Energy's proposed sale of 13 hydropower dams to limited liability subsidiaries of Hull Street Energy and then buy back the power for the express purpose of avoiding liability for future decommissioning costs, is being scrutinized by the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC). Testimony was given in the case last week by seven expert witnesses who expressed the incorrectness of the operational projections provided by Confluence Hydro, questioned the limited assets to cover any catastrophic costs associated with dam failure and

exposed the water quality issues and the inaccuracy of the dam removal estimated costs.

The MDNR representatives who testified made a strong argument against selling to a limited liability corporation (LLC) based on its experience with such sales in the past. The Attorney General's office representatives expressed the need for thirteen conditions needing to be met before it could support the sale which begs the question why support the sale at all given the need for so many

conditions?

The MPSC will take rebuttal testimony in early March and then conduct a hearing on March 22nd and 23rd. MPSC will consider five factors in making its decision. Those factors are: Impact on Rate Payers, Safe Reliable Electric Service, Extent to which Rate Payers are subsidizing the Utility, Ability of the Utility to Raise Capital and Impact on the Public Interest.

Fishing for salmon and steelhead this year is expected to be even better than last year. Lake Huron

Prey Fish Survey showed a lot of young lake trout; ten different species in the nets and young of year smelt. There are more alewife this year than in previous years in Lake Huron. There is still concern for overall alewife abundance in the Great Lakes, but those three-year-olds we were catching last year will be four-year-olds this year and expected to be bigger than ever. Let's look forward to a great year on the water in 2026!

2026 Tentative Print Schedule

Issue	Deadline	Print/Online Date
1	12/19/25	01/05/26
2	02/13/26	03/02/26
3	04/10/26	05/04/26
4	06/19/26	07/06/26
5	08/14/26	08/28/26
6	10/16/26	11/02/26

GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS

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The Great Lakes Sport Fishing News (GLSFN) is the official publication of the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association (MSSFA). Subscription to th GLSFN is through membership in MSSFA. The GLSFN publishes six issues per year. Permission for reprint from this publication is normally permitted, unless otherwise stipulated by the article, and proper credit is given to the author and the publication. The GLSFN or MSSFA does not necessarily agree or support the contents of articles within this publication. The views expressed are those of the author(s) of the articles.

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

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Michigan ‘Nurdle’ Spill Underscores A Chronic Great Lakes Threat

Garret Ellison
www.mlive.com

SAUGATUCK, MI — The white plastic pellets that spilled into the Kalamazoo River are small enough to fit several on a fingernail.

They’re also part of a much larger problem. The “nurdles” that scattered along I-196 and into the river after a Jan. 27 semi-truck crash are the same industrial pellets that researchers have been finding for years on Great Lakes beaches from Benton Harbor to the northern shore of Lake Superior. The pellets are microplastic and they don’t do wildlife any favors. “They certainly have the potential to be consumed by any kind of benthic feeding fish,” said Alan Steinman, a Grand Valley State University freshwater scientist.

“Even if they’re not contaminated with biofilm that would absorb contaminants like we’ve seen elsewhere, just the physical obstruction in the gut of these animals is going to be problematic because they’re not nutritious,” Steinman said. Unfortunately, there’s



A plastic pellet spill is being investigated on a Michigan interstate.

plastic more in the water now following a crash last month that state agencies disclosed on Feb. 25 after pollution investigators say they were notified on Feb. 19.

According to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), “several thousand pounds” of polystyrene pellets came out of a semi-trailer that crashed

during a blizzard and left a large pile on the side of the interstate a stone’s throw from the river.

The crash remains under investigation. “The call came in once

the scope of the spill became clear after there was some snowmelt,” said Josef Stephens, EGLE spokesman.

The pellets are polystyrene feedstock used in manufacturing plastic products. They are about the size of a grain of cooked rice.

The Michigan Department of Transportation closed part of northbound I-196 on Thursday night, Feb. 26, to perform a clean-up.

It’s not clear exactly how much plastic entered the river, but nurdle pellets were visible in small clusters on the riverbed Thursday afternoon. The spill site is less than four miles upriver from Lake Michigan.

The pellets don’t just sit there harmlessly.

Steinman said such “virgin” feedstock likely wouldn’t have absorbed pollutants in the water yet, but once the pellets sink into the sediment, retrieval becomes unlikely.

If large quantities settle in spawning areas, Steinman said, they can clog substrate and interfere with fish reproduction.

“Not uncommon” to have highway spills

First responders say highway plastic spills aren’t unheard of.

Saugatuck Township Fire Chief Greg Janik said he has handled “two or three” similar plastic pellet incidents on the highway during his career. The trucks typically carry dry plastic feedstock in bulk tankers that unload through chutes, he said.

“We’ve had those spills before on the highway — not uncommon,” Janik said. “They bring in like skid steers and loaders to haul the stuff away.”

In this case, Janik said heavy wreckers worked for hours Jan. 27 to extricate the truck from a damaged guardrail above the river and loaders were brought in to scoop pellets mixed with snow from the crash

site, which is roughly 80 feet from the water.

The nurdle pile is now partially surrounded by black silt fencing, but the pellets trail down the shoulder embankment through a stand of phragmites and into the water.

The bridge deck over the river remains littered with white piles that motorists passing at high speed would easily mistake for dirty ice and snow. State investigators say they found pellets along four miles of northbound I-196 from the crash site to the Exit 41 off-ramp.

The truck driver was not injured, Janik said.

Michigan State Police Lt. DuWayne Robinson said the crash involved a 2024 Freightliner from Quest Liner Inc of Iowa. The agency did not have information about an origin or destination for the plastic pellets.

Quest Liner is part of the McCoy Group and the company website advertises transportation of plastics, petroleum and chemicals. The company participates in Operation Clean Sweep, a voluntary program designed to prevent plastic pellet loss along the supply chain.

The crash happened just before 3 p.m. on a treacherous day with multiple crashes in whiteout conditions, including a 17-vehicle pileup that closed the highway near South Haven.

The highway crosses the Kalamazoo River between Tyler’s Bayou and Wade’s Bayou before the waterway expands into Kalamazoo Lake on the Saugatuck and Douglas waterfront. The crash site is roughly 3.5 miles upstream from the river mouth at Lake Michigan.

Once in Great Lakes waters, floating pellets can travel long distances. After a 2008 Canadian train

“Nurdles”

Continued on page 11

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Private Equity, Limited Liability and Consumers Energy Hydro Dams: A Very Bad Deal for Michigan

OPINION:

By Robb Smith, MHRC

Consumers Energy, a regulated Michigan utility, is attempting to sell its 13 aging hydropower dams for \$1 each to Confluence Hydro, a subsidiary of Hull Street Energy, an out-of-state private equity firm from Maryland. The dams are located on lower Michigan's greatest rivers, the AuSable, Manistee, Muskegon, Grand and Kalamazoo. Consumers has stated that the sale "allows Consumers Energy to transfer substantial future operational and environmental liabilities and risk to Confluence."

According to Confluence, each dam will be owned by a separate limited liability corporation, and funded by a power purchase agreement (PPA) requiring Consumers to buy back power from the dams at twice the regular market rate. The proposed sale and PPA must be approved by the Michigan

Public Service Commission (MPSC). The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission must approve the license transfers. A decision by the MPSC is scheduled for September, 2026.

This sale is opposed by the Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and several other groups including: ABATE (Association of Businesses Advocating for Tariff Equity), Anglers of the Au Sable, Michigan Trout Unlimited, Great Lakes Fly Fishers International, and the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association.

The public, electric ratepayers, taxpayers and those concerned with the future of Michigan's great rivers need to understand what would happen if the sale is approved. It is a story of failure of corporate stewardship, avarice and short-sightedness. This sale will transfer the risks of dam safety, natural resource and private property damage, and environmental harm

from Consumers to Confluence. It will result in higher electrical rates, safety and environmental concerns, and long-term taxpayer exposure.

It is important to understand some basic differences between Consumers and Confluence. Consumers is a well-established public utility, located in and dedicated to Michigan. It is heavily regulated and its rates are controlled by the MPSC. The key point is that when Consumers needs to invest in the safe operation in the dams, it gets reimbursed for its investment through customers' electricity rates/bills. Consumers knows that its hydro dams are reaching the end of their useful lives while costs are increasing. The dams only produce about 0.5% of Consumers total output at a much higher generation cost than other energy sources. Potential future liabilities include more maintenance, bigger repairs, capital investments, dealing with the ultimate disposition of

the dams, and hundreds of millions of dollars for environmental and property damage if something goes catastrophically wrong. Consumers Energy now wants to shift that liability to someone else.

Confluence, a private equity firm based in Maryland, doing business for the first time ever, may not be well regulated. As noted, Confluence is owned by Hull Street Energy. Hull Street once owned 47 dams in the eastern U.S. All but one of these dams were sold within five years of purchase. Confluence's primary motive is to maximize profits for its investors in the short term. And, it will not be eligible to seek reimbursement for investments in the dams when the need arises.

A major problem is the corporate structure and business model of Confluence Hydro. It is a private equity firm. The general approach of these firms is "buy, strip and flip", in other words, to organize as an LLC, buy a business, strip

and sell surplus assets for profit, load the company with debt, exploit the workforce, neglect required safety and maintenance upgrades, and, in the end, either sell what's left of the business or, as in many cases, go bankrupt. They can then walk away, protected from liability by our limited liability corporation laws and the bankruptcy code.

One study showed that private equity firms are 10 times more likely to declare bankruptcy than other business models.

The Consumers/Confluence proposal is a case in point. Consumers intends to sell each of the 13 dams for \$1 each and including all lands within the FERC boundaries. The deal includes a power purchase agreement requiring Consumers to pay Confluence twice the going rate for hydro power. In return, Consumers does not get paid in the usual way. Its compensation is total freedom from its obligations to the people of Michigan for the proper operation, maintenance, and disposition of these aging relics of the past, and elimination of liability for future catastrophic events.

Stated below are some of the other major issues presented by this sale to Confluence:

- The Consumers sale includes an estimated 312,000 acres of land and 160 miles of impoundment shoreline within the FERC established hydropower project boundaries. And this potential bonanza will be transferred to Confluence. In time, Confluence may be free to strip and sell some of these lands for profit including riverfront properties and parks, which are now enjoyed by the public.

- Confluence's revenues will otherwise be limited to the PPA, which may not be sufficient to cover the increasing costs which Consumers now wants to escape.

- There doesn't seem to be an adequate contingency fund proposed for capital upgrades, major repairs or catastrophic events without more evidence of adequate insurance or other reserves; Confluence would need to borrow funds, which may not be repaid, or declare bankruptcy.

- There do not appear to be any plans to rectify the water quality violations which now exist at six of the dams. Not even lip service has been given to protecting the rivers and other affected natural resources as part of a long-term strategy.

- There are no plans for the ultimate disposition of the dams or restoration of the rivers. They plan to relicense the dams a second time in the 2080s and believe that with the right

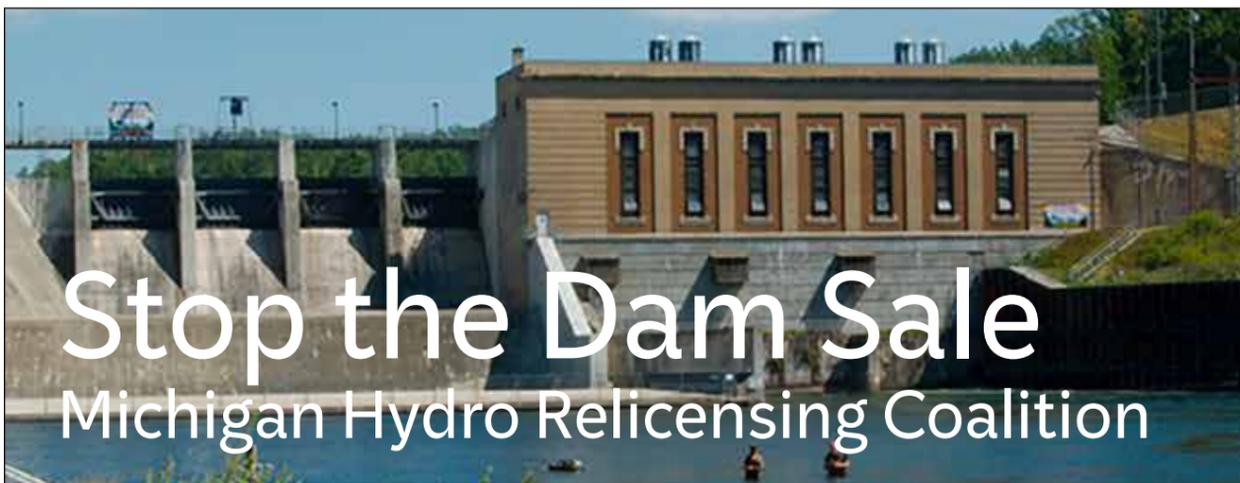
upgrades the dams can run in perpetuity, which is ridiculous.

- There is no provision for financial assurances to be available to governmental organizations to pay for environmental damage, catastrophic repairs, long term O&M, or decommissioning and restoration if and when Confluence fails to meet the responsibilities and obligations of owning and operating hydro-power projects on public trust rivers. These obligations should be secured by financial assurances to those government agencies with regulatory authority (FERC, EGLE) such as cash escrows, bonding, environmental surety, letters of credit, guarantees by Hull Street or similar types of security to assure they are completed.

Michigan has experiences from which to learn. The catastrophic breaches of the Sanford and Edenville Dams caused hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage, clean-up costs, and dam replacements and the lawsuits are ongoing. Many of these costs are being borne by taxpayers, local communities and property owners. The dam owner, Boyce Hydro LLC, was overwhelmed by the cost of FERC mandated repairs and eventually declared bankruptcy. A more recent example is the Au Train River Dam, built in 1910 in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and owned by Renewable World Energies and its subsidiary UP Hydro LLC, a private entrepreneur, which has also filed for bankruptcy. In both situations, private owners walked away from their obligations because they could not afford, or did not want to pay for, required safety updates due to financial shortfalls.

Consumers' option to abandon these legacy facilities and leave others, ultimately the taxpayer, with safety risks and the ultimate disposition of the facilities is wrong. Consumers has profited from these dams for many decades and it has a responsibility to fulfill its stewardship obligation as a corporate citizen.

Consumers owes the people of Michigan a better outcome!



Stop the Dam Sale. Protect Michigan's rivers, communities, and taxpayers.

Overview of the Proposed Sale

Consumers Energy plans to sell its 13 aging hydroelectric dams to Confluence Hydro LLC, a Maryland-based subsidiary of private-equity firm Hull Street Energy, by placing each dam into its own LLC and selling them for \$1 apiece. As part of the deal, Consumers is offering Confluence a 30-year power purchase agreement at more than twice the current market rate. The proposed sale—covering a hydro fleet that produces just 50 MW, less than 1% of Consumers' total generation—requires approval from both the Michigan Public Service Commission and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, with a decision expected by September 2026.

Reasons for the Coalition's Opposition to the Sale

- Long-term Cost Burdens on Ratepayers and Taxpayers
- Dam Safety Risks and Lack of Investment Incentives
- Transfer of Liability, Not Responsibility
- Hull Street Energy's Track Record of "Flipping" Dams
- Water Quality and Relicensing Challenges
- Risk of Land Sell-Off by Confluence Energy



Explore additional information at our website: stopthedamsale.org.





THE MICHIGAN STEELHEAD & SALMON FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

THE QUALITY OF FISHING REFLECTS THE QUALITY OF LIVING!

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

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

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

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

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

THE GREAT LAKES SPORT FISHING NEWS (GLSFN)

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

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

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

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

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

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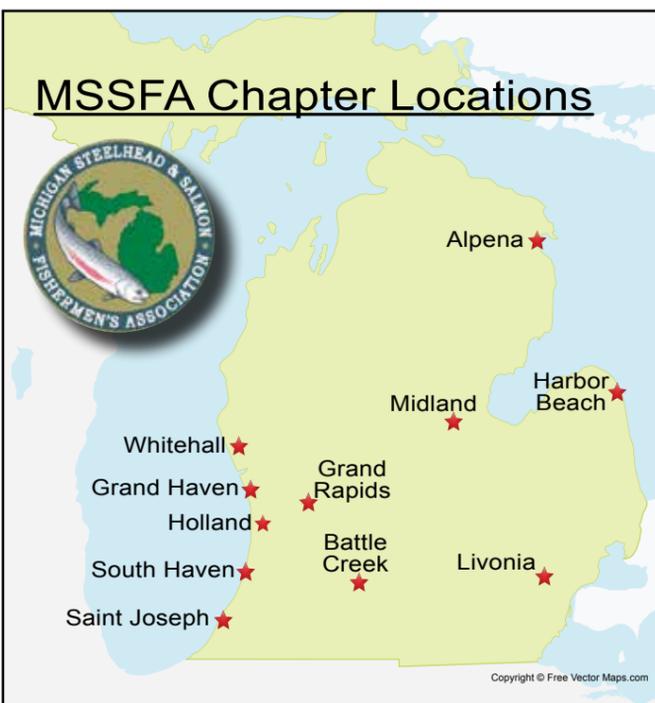
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Both former Congressmen Fred Upton and Congresswoman Debbie Dingell share the distinction of being selected as Tanner Award recipients, though ten years apart. Both have worked across the aisle in Congress to protect the Great Lakes.”

“Award”

Continued from page 1

Resource Center and the Children’s Inn at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). She is also a member of the board of directors for Vital Voices Global Partnership. She is a 1975 graduate of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

Debbie has distinguished herself as a strong advocate for protecting and enhancing natural resources and the environment. In 2010 (before running for Congress) she established the GLRI (Great Lakes Restoration Initiative), a critical program in cleaning up the Great Lakes and waterways and addressing problems that directly impact public health, safety, the environment and the ecology of the Great Lakes. The initiative has provided more than \$4.1 billion to fund 8000 projects throughout the Great Lakes Region. She continues to champion robust funding requests each fiscal year for GLRI through the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, and

helped secure \$1 billion in funding.

She has Co-Chaired the House Great Lakes Task Force which advocates for policies and programs that enhance the Great Lakes and the Endangered Species Act Caucus. She serves on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the House Committee on Natural Resources where she is an instrumental voice on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries.

Debbie has championed initiatives to support conservation efforts like the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act which provides \$1.4 billion per year to address critical species recovery, boldly tackles pressing conservation needs, and prevents the need for more costly interventions in the future. She was out in front of gaining the necessary funding for the Soo Locks and Brandon Road Lock and Dam Projects supporting the Great Lakes.

Recently she was successful in reintroducing Bipartisan Forage Fish Conservation Act to protect marine ecosystems as well

as other recreationally and commercially important species such as tuna, salmon and cod.

And right before the Thanksgiving Holiday in 2025, Rep. Debbie Dingell introduced HR 6053 – the Save Great Lakes Fish Act 2025. This bipartisan legislation proposes to amend the Great Lakes Fishery Act 1956 in a way that empowers the US Section of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to develop a comprehensive plan, including to establish a research program, to combat invasive mussels which are having a devastating impact on anadromous sport fish in the Great Lakes.

Representative Dingell’s record speaks for itself. She has been, and continues to be, a dedicated leader in making outstanding contributions to Michigan’s anadromous sport fishery and a tireless advocate for protecting and preserving our Great Lakes ecosystem for future generations. Representative Dingell is a distinguished and deserving recipient of MSSFA’s 2026 Howard A. Tanner Award.

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“Rescue”

Continued from page 1

safety and water security for our residents, neighbors and visitors,” said Scott Gamby, fire chief, in a press release.

The property is on Lake Macatawa and near Holland State Park.

The department took to the waters last year on personal watercraft and rescued people in distress in the waters of Lake Macatawa, the channel and Lake Michigan.

It cost the township \$1.4 million to purchase the property from the U.S. Coast Guard.

The state of Michigan allocated \$600,000 in the current budget for the purchase of the building, and \$800,000 in ARPA funds completed the purchase.

Renovations are expected to begin around March and the station will be operating by summer.

A 2022 consolidation with the U.S. Coast Guard station in Grand Haven resulted in the recent closure of the Holland station. Prior to its closure, the station was staffed between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year.

The building, built in

1992, is 1,750 square feet on the first floor with an 837-square-foot second floor.

Plans call for a clean-up of the building, repairs done to an exterior stairway and possible restroom improvements.

The fire department’s marine division is responsible for 18 miles of shoreline, including six miles along Lake Michigan.

The marine division also has mutual and automatic aid agreements that extend to the waters around Windmill Island and reach as far east as the Black River.

The station intends to utilize a full-time EMS unit, allowing for a docking location to stage emergency water rescues and reduce response times in the summer.

Two full-time firefighters will staff the station, with additional paid, on-call firefighters staffing as needed.

The township owns two “specially equipped personal watercrafts” and is working on a proposal to purchase a rescue boat in the near future as the township budget allows, according to a press release.

The fire department also plans to have firefighters teach boater safety classes to all 8th-grade students enrolled in the West Ottawa School District.



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“Vanished”
Continued from page 1

Invited Guests from the Pacific Ocean Turbo-Charge Great Lakes Fishery

Native to the north Pacific Ocean, Chinook salmon are an invited Great Lakes transplant. The largest of the Pacific salmon, have been stocked in the Great Lakes since the 1870s, but it wasn't until Michigan planted them in 1967 that they became established, according to the DNR. With a large alewife population in the Great Lakes, conditions were right for Chinooks to prosper, and they became the dominant species in the Great Lakes salmon fishery, helping drive the multi-billion dollar sport fishery.

Great Lakes chinook grow to lengths of 30 to 40 inches, and weights of between 14 and 30 pounds, with big trophy fish sometimes topping 40 pounds.

Chinook return to a preferred river or stream typically in their fourth year to spawn and die. It's at one of those spawning sites, on the Little Manistee River in Manistee County, at which the DNR uses a weir to collect the salmon and harvest millions of fertilized eggs to raise young Chinook in hatcheries for spring stocking.

The Great Lakes Chinook population faced challenges with a bacterial kidney disease outbreak in the late 1980s but recovered to booming numbers by around 2010. But as invasive zebra and quagga mussels spread and flourished, disrupting the food web, and alewife populations dropped, the Chinook numbers soon dived as well by 2015.

Eade said he remembered it well. “The biggest impact was on Lake Huron, which experienced a true crash,” he said.

“The predator-prey relationship got seriously out of balance, and the alewives were pretty much extirpated from Lake Huron.”

It had an economic impact on the towns up and down the Lake Huron shoreline, Eade said. “Motels, hotels, restaurants all suffered as a result of a lack of fishermen targeting salmon and steelhead in Lake Huron.”

But then an unexpected thing happened. The lack of alewives and Chinook in Lake Huron allowed young walleye to begin to thrive. Soon there was a teeming walleye fishery in the Saginaw Bay area.

“It was a marvelous act of Mother Nature,” Eade said. “Now we have one of the strongest and best walleye fisheries in the country in Saginaw Bay and Lake Erie. It's just an awesome turnaround.”

With that walleye fishery in mind, the DNR stocks less Chinook on the Huron side, preferring Coho salmon that have a more diverse feeding behavior that doesn't out-

compete the walleye, Claramunt said.

As the Lake Michigan side Chinook populations struggled around that 2015 time period, Michigan and other states moved to reduce their salmon stocking, trying to bolster the alewife part of the balance.

“Advocates like our organization had to carry the message to our members and fishermen all over the state that we needed to cut the number of planted salmon,” Eade said. “We began a three-year period of cutting, clamping back. It was not the most popular thing; in fact, it was very unpopular. But we were able to convince our fishermen that it was in their best interest so that we did not crash on Lake Michigan like had happened on Lake Huron.”

Signs of Another Shift Coming on Lake Michigan

Though the population numbers of wild and stocked Chinook salmon have been climbing, there are some early signs that the predator-prey balance is beginning to shift again.

The average weight of caught Chinook salmon is declining - more than a 2-pound drop from last year at one Wisconsin weir. That's an indication of declining available prey, Claramunt said.

He said the DNR will share the information they have with stakeholder fishing groups and other Lake Michigan states to decide coordinated next steps.

“We will work with the other states to get on the same page so that if we need to do something we are not trying to coordinate this in August,” Claramunt said. “We need to have decided before we take eggs next fall what our strategy is.”

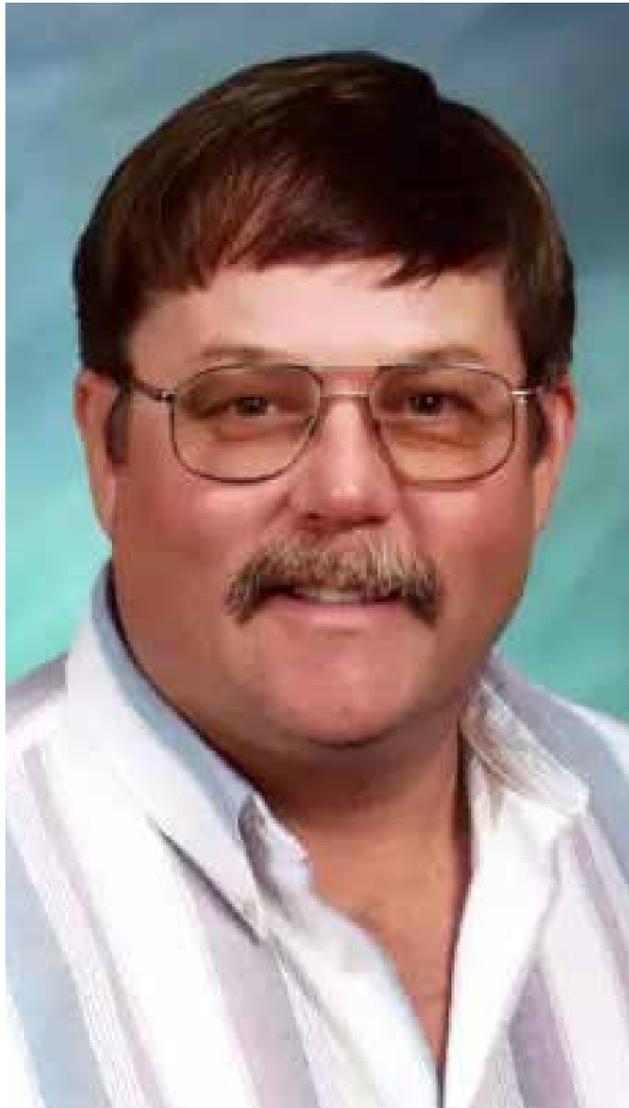
“We have had growing pains in the past where it has been difficult to get anglers on board, to get fishing groups on board, to get the other jurisdictions to coordinate in a way that we are all pulling in the same direction. But we have improved that considerably.”

And if it's ultimately decided that state fisheries managers should once again scale back the amount of Chinook they are stocking into Lake Michigan, Eade said “we would support it and we would do everything we could to communicate that to the fishermen across the state.”

“It worked before,” he said. “It saved our Lake Michigan fishery. We did not crash, and it's because we were sensitive to that imbalance and made sure that we didn't overpopulate the salmon.”



In Memoriam ~ David Rummel



On February 20, 2026, surrounded by his loving family, David Rummel passed away peacefully while under doctors' care attempting to mitigate his injury at MyMichigan Medical Center.

He sustained a serious head injury as a result of an accident while driving his four-wheeler and doing what he enjoyed so much, ice fishing on Saginaw Bay. He was born in Pigeon on November 5, 1952, to Erma (Kilgus) and Carl Rummel.

David was a devoted fisherman and held several offices in the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association as a board member as well as his local chapter, the Great Lakes Bay Region Steelheaders. He served as president of the chapter as well as treasurer and raffle chairman.

He could always be counted on to take on projects to promote sport fishing, educate anglers, and protect the fishery. He and his wife Sue championed the Salmon in the Classroom program to educate middle schoolers on the life cycle of salmon and the importance replenishing the fishery. They facilitated as many as four different school classrooms providing funds for equipment and instruction for the middle school teachers. It was the hallmark of his service to the chapter. He was also an avid duck hunter, rarely ever missing an opening day.

David is survived by his wife, Susan Rummel; brothers, Dan (Jerri) Rummel and Derek (Lynn) Rummel; sister Amy (Jim) Wojciechowski; as well as many nieces, nephews, great, and great-great nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Erma and Carl Rummel.

Memorial services were held on Friday, March 6, 2026, at Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church. Interment took place shortly thereafter.

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Great Lakes Fishing: Michigan, Huron & Erie 2026

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There's hardly a better freshwater fishery in the world than the Great Lakes. Not only is this the biggest group of lakes on the planet, but they all also offer some of the greatest angling action in the US and beyond. With a total surface of over 90,000 square miles, these inland seas are the playground of all the most coveted freshwater species you can think of. The Great Lakes fishing scene will not disappoint, whether you're a beginner or a seasoned angler.

The largest of the "Big 5" is Lake Superior, followed by Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, and finally Lake Ontario. Four out of five lakes straddle the border between the US and the Canadian province of Ontario and, wherever you cast a line, you're in for a treat.

If you've never fished one of these watersheds before, deciding where to go and when might seem a bit intimidating. But don't worry, we can help. Here's what you need to know about fishing in the Great Lakes, including top catches, seasons, and regulations you need to be aware of.

Lake Huron

With over 3,000 islands and the longest shoreline of all the Great Lakes, Lake Huron is an unmissable fishing destination. Split



Lake Huron

joy the best of what this lake has to offer.

What can I catch in Lake Huron?

Trout. Lake Huron's Lake Trout have had a rough couple of decades. Their numbers have dwindled due to overfishing but now they're making a comeback and there's a healthy population living in these clear waters. The best time to go after Lake Trout is in spring because they prefer cooler water temperatures. Don't forget about feisty and delicious Steelhead, which are available from fall through spring in all their glory.

Walleye. We already mentioned that Walleye is

summer for the best bite. You could easily hook into a trophy Walleye. Even in the depths of winter, their always-hungry nature could put you on fantastic action.

Northern Pike. If you're looking to catch some of the biggest Pike you've ever seen, Lake Huron is the place! These toothy beasts thrive here and they can reach impressive sizes. The best time to target them is in fall and winter. Pike are beloved by ice anglers, but you can find them in the shallows when the weather becomes cooler.

Salmon. While they aren't as numerous in Lake Huron, Salmon are still among the favorite catches here. Chinook, Coho, and Pink Salmon are all up for grabs from May through September. They're at their most active in the warmest parts of the year, so July and August are your best bet.

Along with Pike, Walleye, and all the Salmonids on the list, Lake Huron can also put you on Yellow Perch, Whitefish, Sunfish, and Bass. You can target them from shore or hire a local with a boat to show you around. You're going to have a great time either way.

Lake Michigan

The only Great Lake located entirely on US soil, Lake Michigan is famous

almost perfectly down the middle by the border between Michigan and Ontario, this impressive watershed is a dream come true for all passionate freshwater anglers. All the A-listers of the Great Lakes are here, and then some more.

Lake Huron Fishing Seasons

Just like all the other Greats, Lake Huron has something biting whenever you decide to visit. The high fishing season lasts from spring to fall when you've got the chance to chase all the Lake Trout, Perch, Pike, and Walleye you want.

The ice fishing season is also solid, with plenty of big Walleye and Lakers still biting despite the cold,

Lake Huron Trout



especially in the northern reaches of the lake.

Bear in mind that Lake Huron is a popular place for weekend anglers, so

the waters can get crowded during the summer. If possible, book a fishing trip during the week and you'll have plenty of room to en-

the star of the Great Lakes, and Lake Huron is no exception. These fish are up for grabs any time of the year but hop on a boat in

"Great Lakes" Continued on page 14

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20	Electro - Metro 25	19200 Middlebelt	Livonia	MI	48152	\$20 off on \$200 or more on service www.metro25institute.com
21	Fish with Jim Outfitters	http://www.fishwithjimoutfitters.com/	348-252-1277			Discount \$50.00 off the total trip price.
22	Gracer Corporation	1021 Fuller St.	Santa Ana	CA	92701	Aquarium Chiltons for "business in classroom" 9625 + 80 (949) = \$668 Discount 50% OFF 1 year subscription, members only! Use code MSSFA
23	Great Lakes Angler Magazine		www.glaangler.com			
24	Homestead Resort on Ilietais River	2369 Dam Rd	Marquette	MI	49868	10% In Season, 25% Off Season (homestead@crystal-rentals.com)
25	Kata-Launch Campground	20 Park Ave	Marquette	MI	49860	Member Discount
26	Insurance Shop/Frontier Ins.	824 Water St	East Jordan	MI	49727	10% Discount off insurance for MSSFA Group Members
27	Jim Weston Pontiac, Truck, GMC	1144 S. Stone Rd	Dowling	MI	48423	Contact Nick Hunter for Sales. 10% off all parts not to exceed \$150.00
28	J Smith Custom Tackle	1126 E. Hughes Lake Road	Rose City	MI	48654	15% - 20% off depending on rod. Customrodsbyjasmith.com 989-685-2819
29	K & M Marine	14990 Telegraph Rd	Pacford	MI	48239	10% off merchandise except sale items. (www.kandmmarine.com)
30	Kamp Oil Inc	6467 Marquette St	Proctor	MI	49733	Cargo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.99/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
31	Kamp Oil Inc	3650 Eastern Ave SE	Grand Rapids	MI	49508	Cargo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.99/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
32	Keebe Oil Co (aka Kamp Oil)	4889 32 Mile Rd	Utica	MI	48317	Cargo Sea & Snow 4-1 gal case 13.99/gal = 54/case, other disc avail.
33	Lapsar Boat Service	2526 Fort Knox Dr	Lapsar	MI	48446	10% off parts and labor (616-245-6033)
34	Liberty Tax Service	544 E. 8th St	Holland	MI	49423	\$20.00 Discount on tax service
35	Logan's Fun Muskegon River Cottage Rental	1648 Gardner St	Newaygo	MI	49337	10% Discount www.logansfun.us 616-485-4501
36	Mark's Sport Shop	11530 Mason Dr	Grant	MI	49327	Member Discount
37	MUKG	2101 Wood Street	Lansing	MI	48912	\$15.00 Membership Dues
38	Patrick Custom Fishing Rods	15919 6th Ave.	Gables	MI	48665	10% Discount 269-428-5227
39	Richfield RV	Statewide				10% Discount
40	River Pointe Marina & Campground	2502 E. Elm Avenue	Monroe	MI	48161	Buy 1 gal 1 free - call 313-575-4367 (www.riverpointemarina.com)
41	FOX Optical	Statewide				Plan 303
42	Salmon Trout Steelheader		www.salmontroutsteelheaders.com			Discount 50% OFF 1 year subscription, members only! Use code MSSFA
43	Sea Coast Marine	1172 88th Street	South Haven	MI		Member discount
44	The Angling Outpost	2480 Duck Lane Rd	Whitehall	MI	49881	www.anglingoutpost.com 5% Use coupon "steelheader" for online purchases
45	Trootech Corp	14754 N Oakley	Chestering	MI		269-645-5569 10%
46	Wain's Sport Center	1805 Alpine Ave.	Walker	MI	49544	10% Discount
47	Warrior Lures	2816 Loran La	Traverse City	MI	49684	10% Discount on all product ordered (www.warriorlures.com)
48	West Marine		Bay City	MI		10%
49	West Michigan Propeller	347 Ionia Ave. NW	Grand Rapids	MI	49503	10% Discount
50	* Your Business Here!					



A plastic pellet spill is being investigated on a Michigan interstate.

**“Nurdles”
Continued from page 5**

derailment spilled polyethylene pellets into Lake Superior’s Nipigon Bay, residents reported pellets washing ashore for years afterward. In 2018, University of Western Ontario researchers examined 66 beaches in each Great Lakes state and Ontario, and they found nurdle pellets in a variety of colors on 42 of them, at an average of 19 pellets per square meter.

The Saugatuck spill lands as Michigan is ramping up efforts to understand the broader problem of microplastic contamination.

Last year, EGLE began sampling 200 rivers and streams for microplastics, using a one-time \$2 million appropriation. Early results show the material is widespread in Michigan waters.

Researchers globally are seeing similar patterns.

A 2025 study published in Environmental Monitoring and Assessment analyzed 1,089 coastal surveys from 39 countries and nearly 59,000 pieces of plastic collected by volunteers. Pre-production nurdle pellets were the most common type recorded. White pellets dominated the dataset.

In the water, nurdles can act like a sponge — absorbing contaminants in the water column and potentially serving as a vector for chemical exposure if eaten by game fish or birds.

In Lansing, a package of Senate bills heard last fall would require EGLE to establish baseline concentrations of microplastics in surface waters and public drinking systems, develop a long-term monitoring plan and recommend potential toxicity thresholds.

The legislation is opposed by the chemical industry.

On the federal front, a pair of bipartisan microplastics bills would direct the federal government to study the health impacts of microplastics in food and water and expand research into plastics effect on human health. The proposed Plastic Pellet Free Waters Act would push the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to adopt rules specifically prohibiting the

discharge of plastic pellets into waterways.

Steinman said requiring plastic manufacturers to take responsibility for plastic waste is the “ultimate solution.”

“The kind of stuff that we do with our cleanups around the Great Lakes,

we’re not making a big dent at all in the amount of material out there,” Steinman said. “The actual stoppage of this problem has to happen at the producer level.”

MSSFA Chapter Locations

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For more information, contact your Chapter Membership Director or email mssfamembership@charter.net

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2026 Battle Creek Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Location	
March	7	STJOE RIVER CHAPTER CHALLENGE TBA	TBA	
March	21	KALAMAZOO RIVER SPRING STEELHEAD	ALLEGAN DAM	
May	16	LK MICHIGAN SPRING TOURNAMENT	BENTON HARBOR/ SOUTH HAVEN	
May	30	CONNIE MCGOWEN INVITATIONAL	LAKE ERIE/DBBC	
July	11	PORTAGE LK PANFISH/FAMILY PICNIC	PORTAGE LK	
August	15	VETERANS OUTING	SOUTH HAVEN	
October	24	KALAMAZOO RIVER SALMON SLA	ALLEGAN DAM	
November	7	KALAMAZOO RIVER TROUT QUEST	ALLEGAN DAM	
November	14	KALAMAZOO RIVER MEMORIAL	ALLEGAN DAM	
November	28	ST.JOE FALL STEELHEAD	I-94	
December	5	CHAPTER CHALLENGE	TBA	
December	12	CHRISTMAS PARTY	KALAMAZOO EAGLES	
<p>Meetings are held every 3rd Tuesday of the month. 6:00 pm Social, 7:00 pm Meeting Meeting Location: (In process of finding a new location) FOR MORE INFORMATION: Joe Foy at 269-303-1894 / Dan Foster at 269-370-3693 battlecreeksteelheaders.com</p>				

2026 Holland Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Contact	
March	9	Board Meeting		
April	13	Board Meeting		
April	16	Membership Meeting		
May	1-3	Michigan City Tournament		
May	7-9	St. Joseph Tournament		
May	11	Board Meeting		
May	15-17	South Haven Tournament		
May	16	Spring Challenge		
May	19	League Start		
May	28-31	Grand Haven Tournament		
June	8	Board Meeting		
June	26-28	Manistee Tri-Port Tournament		
June	27	Kids & Kings		
July	11	Fishing With Veterans		
July	13	Board Meeting		
July	13-19	Ludington Tournament		
July	23-26	Muskegon Tournament		
July	25	Summer Challenge		
July 30 - August 2		Holland BRC Tournament		
August	7-9	Saugatuck BLC Tournament		
August	10	Board Meeting		
August	14-16	Manistee Monster Tournament		
August	15	Ladies Tournament		
August	25	League End		
August	27-30	Frankfurt Tournament		
September	8	League Dinner		
September	14	Board Meeting		
October	12	Board Meeting		
November	9	Board Meeting		
December	3	Membership Meeting		
December	14	Board Meeting		
<p>Board meetings held at: TBD Locations General Membership: Bayshore Yacht Club at the Yacht Basin Marina Doors open at 6 pm., Dinner at 7 pm, speaker to follow</p> <p>For event information, go to hollandsteelheaders.org, or call Jimmy Van Brocklin 616-240-7017 or email Brad Stephenson at brad.stephenson32@gmail.com</p>				

2026 Grand Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Contact	
April	23	Spring Meeting		
May	28-31	GH Offshore Challenge		
July 31 - August 13		Week Long +		
August	13	Picnic		
September	12	Sportsman for Youth		
December	10	Christmas Party		
<p>Other Events TBD For information on these events and other information on the Grand Haven Steelheaders contact GHS President and State Director Paul Zelenka at pbzfarm@gmail.com www.ghsteelheaders.com</p>				

2026 Grand Rapids Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Contact	
March	2	Board Meeting		
March	12-15	Outdoor Sports Show DeVos Place/GR		
March	TBD	Spring River Outing*		
March	30	Membership Meeting, No speaker; recap Outdoor Show		
April	6	Board Meeting		
April	27	Membership Meeting - MEMBERSHIP DUES DUE		
May	4	Board Meeting		
May	TBD	Big Lake Outing*		
May	18	Membership Meeting, Year Long Fishing Awards		
June	4-6	Lake Erie Walleye Outing*		
June	TBD	Wabasis Fish Outing*		
June	29	Membership Meeting		
July	13	Chapter Picnic @ 6pm, Johnson Park Shelter House**		
August	1	GR/GH Chapter Challenge & Double D Tournament*		
August	31	Membership Meeting		
September	14	Board Meeting		
September	28	Membership Meeting		
October	5	Board Meeting		
October	24	Fall Outing / Buck Contest**		
October	26	Membership Meeting		
November	2	Board Meeting		
November	7	Fishing Partners*		
November	30	Membership Meeting		
December	7	Chapter Christmas Party**		
<p>* - Times/Events subject to change, watch facebook & email blasts ** - Members and Member's family only event.</p> <p>NEW MEETING LOCATION: Jackson Street Hall, Polish National Aid Society 921 Jackson Street NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504 616-774-9011</p> <p>Events open to the public Meeting Location - Elks #48, 917 Bridge St NW, Grand Rapids Time: 6:00pm-7pm Social Hour with food and beverage followed by Speaker Board Meetings will take place after the regular Member Meeting Email Grand Rapids Steelheaders: fishgrsteelhead@gmail.com Dates with **** are for members and family only</p>				

2026 Metro West - Livonia Steelheader's Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Contact	
April	7	General Membership - Swap Meet/Awards		
April	11	Ludington Brown Trout Tour. & Kayak/SB		
April	18	Walleye Tour. Det R/Erie		
April	18	Clinton River Clean Up		
April	21	Kensington Kayak/SB Monthly Tue Outings		
April	25	Lexington/Sanilac Kayak/Small Boat		
April	25	Lexington Huron Lake Tournament		
May	3	Carp Fishing Event		
May	5	General Membership Meeting		
May	9	Lake Erie Walleye Tournament		
May	16	Pt Mouille' Kayak/SB SM Bass/Walleye		
May	16	Howard Tanner Salmon Tour. Benton Harbor Sat		
May	17	Howard Tanner Salmon Tour. Benton Harbor Sun		
May	19	Kensington Kayak/SB Monthly Tue Outings		
May	23	Bruin Lake Kayak/Small Boat		
May	23	Sterling SP Walleye Tournament		
May	30	Lake Erie Walleye Tournament		
June	2	General Membership Meeting		
June	6	Kids Fishing Outing at Kensington Park		
June	13	Halloway Reservoir Kayak/SB		
June	16	Kensington Kayak/SB Monthly Tue Outings		
June	20	Lake Erie Walleye Tournament		
June	27	SW MI River Kayak Catfish/Pier Scrams		
July	7	Club Summer Picnic		
July	11	Manistee River Cleanup @ High Bridge		
July	11	Saginaw River Catfish Kayak/SB		
July	21	Kensington Kayak/SB Monthly Tue Outings		
July	23	Ludington Salmon Tournament - Thu		
July	25	Ludington Member Memorial Tour - Sat		
July	26	Ludington Salmon Tournament - Sun		
August	1	Erieau Tournament - Sat. Erieau, Canada		
August	4	General Membership Meeting		
August	8	Salmon Tournament - Manistee - Sat		
August	9	Salmon Tournament - Manistee - Sun		
August	15	Salmon Tournament - Ludington		
August	16	Salmon Tournament - Ludington		
August	18	Kensington Kayak/SB Monthly Tue Outings		
August	22	PM Lake Kayak/Small Boat		
September	1	General Membership Meeting		
September	5	Manistee Kayak/SB & Pier Tournaments		
September	15	Kensington Kayak/SB Monthly Tue Outings		
September	26	Manistee River Tournaments		
September	26	Revisit PM Lake Salmon Kayak/SB		
October	3	Harrisville Area kayak/SB/shore		
October	6	General Membership Meeting		
October	10	Lake Erie Perch Outing		
October	14	Captain/Crew/River Angler '26 Cal. Mtg		
October	17	Ludington Pier/Beach Event		
November	3	General Membership Meeting 2nd Tue.		
November	7	Manistee River/Pier/Shore Tour. w DS		
November	14	Ohio Walleye Tournament		
December	1	CHRISTMAS PARTY - HAPPY HOLIDAYS		
December	5	PM & other NW Mi Rivers Tournament		
December	19	Huron River Tournament		

2026 Great Lakes Bay Region Calendar of Events				
Month	Date	Event	Contact	
March	3	Meeting		
April	7	Meeting		
April	11	Manistee		
April	25	Season Opener (Anywhere)		
May	2	Linwood		
May	5	Meeting		
May	16	Linwood		
May	30	Sebewaing		
June	9	Meeting		
June	13	Sebewaing		
June	27	Linwood		
July	7	Meeting		
July	11	Manistee		
July	25	Ludington		
August	8	Frankfort		
August	22	Manistee (2-Day)		
September	1	Meeting		
September	12	Linwood		
October	6	Meeting		
November	3	Meeting		
December	1	Meeting		
December	12	Banquet at VFW 5pm*		
<p>Contact Port Chairman no later than Monday prior when attending outings Pull lines at 1:00pm on Saturdays, 12:00pm on Sundays (2-Day Outings). Port chairman will call the end of the outing on Channel 72 all Boats must check in. Board/Membership meetings at VFW Hall in Midland at 7:00 pm (No Meeting in August) On the day of the outing, port chairman will call the outing start on Marine Radio, Channel 72, All Boats must confirm they are fishing. Weigh-in follows each outing. Picnics follows weigh-in on Saturdays only. New Rule: Weight in is at 2:00pm "Sharp" No Exceptions Outings: All Steelheaders members pay \$5.00. All non-Steelheaders pay \$10.00 to participate. Children 16 and under are free. Banquet: Drinks at 5:00pm Dinner at 6:00pm (Potluck Style)</p>				

2026 South Haven Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event
Note: SH Steelheaders (SHS) Chapter Events in BOLD * = Not Confirmed		
MAR	12-15	Ultimate Sport Show – DeVos Place, Grand Rapids
MAR	19	Fishing Seminar – Speaker TBD - South Haven American Legion Post 49*
APR	16	Lake Michigan Fisheries Workshop – South Haven American Legion Post 49
MAY	2-3	Horizon Bank Quake Coho Classic - Michigan City, IN
MAY	8-9	St. Joe Tourney/SW Chapter
MAY	15	(New) South Haven Steelheaders' Harbor Light Brewery Ladies and Youth Tournament
MAY	15	The Lodge SH Steelheaders Pro Am Tournament Captains Registration – The Lodge
MAY	16-17	South Haven Pro Am Tournament – South Side City Marina
MAY	23	Merle Morris Tournament – River Bend Boat Club
JUN	6-7	Free Fishing Weekend
JUN	12-14	South Haven Harborfest
AUG	8	SHS Fish Boil (Blueberry Festival - August 6th- 9th)
AUG	15	SHS Operation Injured Soldier/SH Salute to Veterans
SEP	5	Labor Day Weekend
NOV	9	2027 Pro Am Tournament Committee Kick-off meeting
NOV	28	South Haven Steelheaders River Tournament

2026 South Haven Steelheaders Membership & Board Meeting Dates

Note: All Board and membership meetings are generally held the third Thursday of each month except for special circumstances such as Pro Am Captain's Meeting set up in May, Fish Boil organizational meeting in August and prior to Deer Season in November.

Meeting Location: South Haven American Legion Post 49, 129 Michigan Avenue, South Haven, MI 49090
Board Meetings start at 5:45pm and membership meetings at 7:00pm.
For more information email: rachapman1@comcast.net

January – No membership meeting

FEB 19th – 3rd Thursday

MAR 19th – 3rd Thursday (week after GR Ultimate Sports Show, 3/13-3/16) – Fishing Seminar

APRIL 16th - 3rd Thursday – Southern Lake Michigan Fisheries Workshop – Dr. Dan O'Keefe presenting

*MAY 14th – 2nd Thursday *prior to SHS Pro/Am – Membership meeting/Ladies and Youth Tournament.

Registration at American Legion.

JUNE 18th - 3rd Thursday

JULY 16th - 3rd Thursday

AUG 20th – 3rd Thursday

SEP 17th - 3rd Thursday – Regular & Board meeting to prioritize & set next year's events. ID event chairs.

OCT 15th - 3rd Thursday – Regular and Board meeting to finalize next year's events and set calendar, nominations for Board of Directors.

November/December – No membership meetings

2026 Thunderbay Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Information
March	7	6:00pm	Annual Meeting/Dinner
April	6	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
May	16	5:30am	Alpena Tournament
June	13	5:30am	Presque Isle Tournament
June	27-28	5:30am	Presque Isle Tournament (5:30am both mornings)
July	6	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
August	22		Rogers City Tournament
September	14	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
October	5	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting
December	14	7:00pm	Monthly Meeting

2026 White River Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event information
Note: All meetings will be held at 6:30 pm at the VFW, any changes in location will be decided a couple of days before the meeting. Any questions or to verify dates/times please call Clint Pollock at (231) 893-0210 or Terry Clark at (231) 893-6805.			
March	5	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW
April	2	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW
May	7	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW
June	4	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague Boat Launch
July			No meeting
August	6	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague Boat Launch
September	3	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW
October	1	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW
November	5	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW
December	3	6:30 pm	Meeting - Montague VFW

2026 Southwest MI Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Event	Information
Membership meetings and board meeting are held the second Thursday of each month but please confirm online for the most updated information. www.swmisteelheaders.com www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders			
MARCH	12	(Club Meeting) Spring Thaw - Happy Hour	The Buck & Brew, St. Joseph MI Discussion
MAY	8-9	The Shootouts Spectacular	West Basin Marina, St. Joseph MI
JUNE	4	(Club Meeting) Charter Captain's Roundtable	Elks Lodge, Benton Harbor MI
JUNE	19-20	Trolling with the Troops	Legion Post 568, Stevensville MI
SEPTEMBER	10	(Club Meeting) Fall Wrap-Up - Happy Hour	The Buck & Brew, St. Joseph MI Discussion
DECEMBER	5	Winter Challenge River Tournament #1	The Sandbar, St. Joseph MI

Meeting Location: Elks Lodge, 601 Riverview Drive, Benton Harbor MI 49022

2026 Thumb Chapter Steelheader's Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event	Location / Information
April	17	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Harbor Beach American Legion
May	3	6:00am	Can2Can Fishing Tournament	Harbor Beach Marina - - NEED WORKERS!
June	14	6:00am	Veterans Fishing Outing	Harbor Beach Marina - Contact Kevin Ramsey for details
June	19	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Harbor Beach American Legion
August	21	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Harbor Beach American Legion
October	16	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Harbor Beach American Legion - Election of Board/Officers

Contact Luke Gehring at 989-550-3121 for inquiries.



Photo from MDNR facebook page

Michigan Department of Natural Resources



The 2026 fishing license is now available. While 2026 regulations don't go into effect until April 1, 2026, you can still get your license and get to fishing right away. What species are you most excit-

ed to target this year?

Get your license at participating retailers, DNR customer service centers, online at Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses or through the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app.

Whether you're fishing for a Master Angler patch, or just trying to fill that pan with panfish, we hope to see some great catches.

Holland

July 30 - Aug. 2
2026

PRO
AM
333

Thursday Prelim:
**Tulip City
Tri-Port**

BRC Women's
Save The Ta-Ta's
Friday Tournament

bigredclassic.com

MSSFA Board of Directors Meetings 2026

April 25th
MMLM - 10:00am
Lansing, MI

June 24th
Via TEAMS - 6:00pm

August 19th
Via TEAMS - 6:00pm

October 21st
Via TEAMS - 6:00pm

December 16th
Via TEAMS 6:00pm

Illustration from pngtree.com

**“Great Lakes”
Continued from page 10**

for its stunning beaches and even better fishing. Whether you want to cast a line from Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, or Indiana, there’s plenty for you to target. The lake has all the makings of a premier freshwater fishery and, as such, it will set high standards whenever you decide to explore it.

**Lake Michigan
Fishing Seasons**

On all the Great Lakes, fishing seasons last year-round, and it’s the same for Lake Michigan.

Come spring, you can go after Trout, Perch, Walleye, and even Coho Salmon. This is a good time to target Salmon from the shore before they hide out in the deeper sections of the lake.

As the water gets warmer so does the action, and so summer boasts first-class fishing opportunities. If you’ve got your eye on a Chinook or Coho Salmon, this is your time. Trout aficionados won’t be disappointed either, and the same goes for the rest of the freshwater game fish. Fall fishing is especially productive for Trout and Bass.

Lake Michigan resembles a wonderland in the winter. That’s why ice fishermen from all the surrounding states love to spend some time here, targeting Perch, Trout, and Walleye.

**What can I catch
in Lake Michigan?**

Salmon. Out of all the fish on offer in Lake Michigan, Salmon are the most coveted. Chinook and Coho roam these waters in summer and fall, and anglers follow religiously. Chinook are the bigger of the two and can grow to over 30 pounds. Late summer is the optimal time to get one of these bad boys. Meanwhile, Cohos have two runs – in spring and fall – and these are the most productive times to go after them.

Bass. Lake Michigan might just have the largest population of Largemouth

Lake Michigan Dunes



and Smallmouth Bass out of all the Great Lakes. Find a rocky shore, and you’ll find these fellas prowling nearby. You have a good chance of getting both species on your line year-round, but Smallies are particularly hungry in late summer and fall. Great fighters and even better table fare, what more do you need?

Trout. While Lakers are in the spotlight in the majority of the Great Lakes, in Lake Michigan, Rainbow Trout reign supreme. Because of the lake’s many tributaries, ‘Bows come here to feed and spawn every year. Add Lake and

**Lake Michigan
King Salmon**



If you’re fishing Lake Michigan and prefer variety along with all the top catches, you can also come face-to-gills with Walleye, Carp, Northern Pike, and Sauger, to name a few. Pick a local guide and they’ll let take you to the prime fishing action to find what’s biting.

Lake Erie

Even though it’s the second smallest of the Great Lakes, Lake Erie has a stellar fishing reputation. It acts as a border between the US and Canada and, on the US side, it’s shared between Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and New York. The lake has the title of the “Walleye Capital of the World,” which already paints a picture of its fishing qualities. But there’s a lot more to target here. All you have to do is pick a time and head out.

yet to heat up.

Summer is the time to experience Lake Erie’s fantastic potential. If you feel like testing the “Walleye Capital” title, hit the water in the summer and you’ll find out why it’s well-earned. Trout are very active this time of year, too, as well as any other freshwater fish you can think of.

Casting a line in early fall can still put you on Walleye and Trout, as well as Chinook and Coho **Salmon**. As the weather gets colder and more unpredictable, the action slows down, until the coldest days of winter, when ice fishing on Lake Erie becomes a favorite pastime. Popular species during this time are Yellow Perch, Walleye, Pike, and an occasional Lake Trout.

**What can I catch
in Lake Erie?**

Walleye. To no surprise, Walleye are the primary target of Lake Erie anglers. This has to do with the fact they’re so abundant and can grow to be over 10 pounds in these rich waters. Wallies are strong and hungry fighters, so reeling them in will be a workout. They move around a lot, so finding them requires skills only local guides can provide. Oh, and did we mention they’re delicious?

Trout. Trout fishing on Lake Erie is so good that there’s a whole section of the watershed dedicated to it – the “Steelhead Alley.” As you’ve guessed from the name, Steelhead are the main stars, because they grow to be huge and their fighting prowess is incredible. Brown and Lake Trout are also around in strong numbers, so you get to choose your opponent.

Yellow Perch. Even though they’re smaller than many other species in the lake, Yellow Perch are more numerous than any other fish. Up for grabs pretty much year-round, these crowd-pleasers aren’t picky about what they eat, so it’s easier to get them to bite. What makes them especially good is their white flaky meat, which is absolutely delectable.

Bass. When a body of water is named “Big Bass” waters, you know you’re in for an adventure. Both Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass roam Lake Erie and they grow big here. Smallies (aka Bronzebacks) can reach well over 5 pounds – and the same goes for Largies. There are Bass tournaments on the lake, which speaks of the fishery’s quality.

The list of top catches in Lake Erie goes on, with Chinook and Coho Salmon out there for the taking, only in smaller numbers than in other Great Lakes. There are also good numbers of Panfish and Muskellunge if you’d like to mix things up. Not sure where to start? Get in touch with a local charter captain and they’ll help you figure out all the details.

**Great Lakes Fishing:
The Greatest Freshwater
Adventure in the World**

To explore all the angling potential of the Great Lakes, you’d have to live a very long time. With their immense beauty and countless productive fishing spots, it’s impossible to encompass their magnitude and significance. Here, it doesn’t matter if you’re a beginner angler or an experienced pro, the Great Lakes will always have something to teach you.



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Pollution and Lake Erie

By Peter Krouse
Cleveland.com

Shut off all the water flowing into Lake Erie and it would take about 2.6 years for it to run dry.

Turn the spigots back on and dam the Niagara River so nothing flows out, and it would take the same amount of time for Lake Erie to fill back up.

That's one way to wrap your head around the lake's "hydraulic residence time," or as some like to say, the average time it takes for a drop of water to go from one end to the other.

Now, consider this hypothetical.

If we could prevent any more pollution from entering Lake Erie, would the natural flushing of the lake remove all its contaminants within 2.6 years?

No, experts say, it would not. But it would happen a lot faster in Lake Erie than with the other four Great Lakes, which have longer residence times.

Each of the lakes would need more than its residence time to come clean. And even then, it would be just what's floating in the water column that's removed. The stuff buried in the sediment could remain there indefinitely, including a lot of the microplastics that have become increasingly worrisome in recent years.

Bucket Test

Ed Verhamme, senior engineer with LimnoTech, a water research and environmental engineering firm based in Michigan, uses a classroom experiment to explain how long pollutants can remain in Lake Erie. It requires two five-gallon buckets.

Fill up one of the buckets with water and add red dye, he said. You will then have to pour three more buckets of clean water into the first bucket before the vast majority of dye splashes out.

Extrapolate that to Lake Erie and it would take much

longer than 2.6 years - closer to eight to 10 years - to rid the shallowest of the Great Lakes of its pollution. And that's only if all the water coming into it is clean, which it is not.

Still, that timeline is far shorter than in other, deeper lakes, where water — and what it carries — can linger for far longer.

Part Of A Chain

Lake Erie is one link in a continuously flowing chain of lakes and rivers that begins at the western edge of Lake Superior and ends when the St. Lawrence River empties into the Atlantic Ocean.

All the other Great Lakes have much longer hydraulic residence times - calculated by dividing the volume of each lake by its flow rate - largely because they hold significantly more water.

Lake Superior has a residence time of 191 years, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Lake Michigan's is 99 years, followed by Lake Huron at 22 years and Lake Ontario at 6 years.

Triple those time periods and that's theoretically how long it would take for each lake to drain or refill.

Those differences mean Lake Erie would be better positioned than the other lakes to shed pollutants from the water column once sources are reduced, even though the process would still unfold slowly.

Different Journeys

Lake Erie gets most of its inflow from the Detroit River, which is part of the waterway that drains Lake Huron. But a molecule of water that enters Lake Erie does not actually take 2.6 years to reach Niagara Falls. It could, but that would be sheer happenstance, because after entering the lake, water takes a variety of pathways dictated mostly by wind but also by temperature. Some molecules will cross the lake much faster than 2.6 years.

Others will take a lot longer.

For example, surface water driven by wind can reach the eastern end of Lake Erie in a matter of days or months, while water closer to the bottom might take decades to reach Niagara Falls, according to Eric Anderson, associate professor in the civil and environmental engineering department at Colorado School of Mines.

Water can also move up and down on the journey east, and sometimes reverse itself. In April, after ice cover has melted, the lake is the same temperature throughout -- about 39 degrees Fahrenheit. As summer takes over, the surface water warms. But then it cools in the fall and begins to sink. That allows for the upwelling of warmer, often oxygen-depleted water from below, explains Sherri Mason director of Project NePTWNE, a water quality research initiative at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

So, water that was once on the fast track to Niagara Falls is now in the slow lane far below, and vice versa.

Water Contaminants

As for contaminants in the lake, they can float, sink, get dumped onto a beach somewhere or buried in the lake bottom. Large numbers can get caught up in circulating currents called gyres.

Unlike the permanent gyres found in the oceans, the ones in Lake Erie are seasonal, Mason said. For example, a prevailing current in summer flows along the southern shore of Lake Erie and then spirals out into the lake toward Canada, Mason said.

As a result, sections in the eastern part of the lake tend to be hotspots for microplastics on the surface.

"They will kind of congregate there until the current patterns change," she said.

Not all microplastics in Lake Erie float along the surface, however. Most of



them are bits of polyethylene, which is found in plastic bags and bottles, and polypropylene, used to make food packaging and other products. Both tend to be light and buoyant, Mason said. But they may also attract microorganisms that feed on the plastic, creating a biofilm that increases density and causes them to sink.

Polyester, which is prominent in many textiles,

is denser than other plastics and without a lot of movement on the lake, specks of such material tend to sink on their own, Mason said.

Let Them Sink

As it is, Mason believes there are more microplastics in the sediment of Lake Erie than there are floating on its surface, and that they can remain there for a long, long time.

But whether they are in the water column or on the

bottom, Mason and other experts believe it's futile to try and remove microplastics from the lake. The best thing is to let what's there sink to the bottom and get buried, and for people to stop using so much plastic, so less of the waste gets released into the environment.

"And then Mother Nature takes care of herself quite well," she said.

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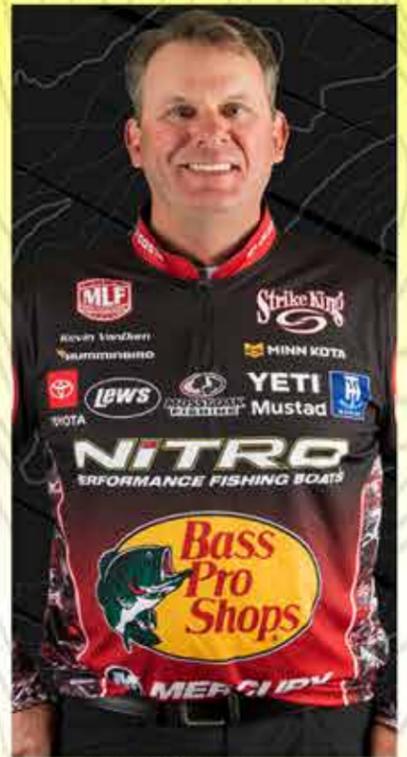
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