



NSSF condemns USFWS proposal to ban traditional Ammo, Fishing Tackle on new refuge openings

WASHINGTON, D.C. – NSSF, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, condemns the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) [Proposed Rule](#) that would ban the use of traditional lead ammunition and fishing tackle on 48 new distinct hunting opportunities across approximately 3,000 acres of National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs). This is another illustration of the Biden administration’s Department of the Interior (DOI) and USFWS kowtowing to anti-hunting activists by promulgating policies that lack sound scientific data.

“This is the latest example of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service creating rules that punish hunters, threaten conservation funding and advance

special interests without sound scientific evidence that traditional lead ammunition is causing detrimental wildlife population impacts,” said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel. “This administration is ignoring its promise to ‘follow the science.’ In fact, it is ignoring the need for scientific evidence in order to advance an antigun and anti-hunting agenda. The need for Congress to pass the Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act has never been more urgent.”

The USFWS [announced](#) three national wildlife refuges are proposing to expand opportunities for hunting. These refuges are Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama,

Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge in Florida and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota. The proposed rule, appearing in the [Federal Register](#), includes proposals to phase out lead ammunition at eight national wildlife refuges. USFWS claims to follow the best available science yet offers no peer-reviewed site-specific scientific data to demonstrate traditional ammunition is causing detrimental wildlife population impacts.

NSSF urges Congress to quickly pass U.S. Rep. Robert Wittman’s Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act, [H.R. 615](#), which would **NSSF condemns USFWS proposal**

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New Ohio Digital Fishing Resources now available

Ohio announced the launch of four new fishing tools on the DataOhio Portal. Ohioans can now access the [Where to Fish](#), [Sport Fish Report](#), [Angler Survey](#) and [Waterbody Report](#) tools. These resources include interactive maps, graphs, and table surveys that allow users to customize their search based on criteria most important to them. Now anglers can find out where the fish are through the DataOhio Portal that provides data-driven guidance on the best fishing opportunities across the state. The [Where to Fish](#) tool equips anglers with a guide on where they are most likely to find the best fishing opportunity based on their interests

and criteria. Visit the newest [datasets](#) for anglers here.

The full Ohio Division of Wildlife [fishing regulations](#) guide is available at [ohiodnr.gov](#). The vision of the DataOhio Portal is to be the centralized location for State of Ohio data for agencies, their partners, and citizens, helping to inform programming and policy by combining data from across state government. The portal currently features over 300 datasets, dashboards, and visualizations, and recently celebrated a data milestone of over a quarter million dataset downloads. ✧

Legislation introduced to Take Kids Fishing

Alexandria, VA – On June 7, 2023, U.S. Representatives Maria Salazar (R-Fla.) and Sydney Kamlager-Dove (D-Calif.) and Senators Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) introduced the Youth Coastal Fishing Program Act of 2023.

The bill would create a grant program within NOAA for projects that take children fishing in the ocean or Great Lakes, with priority given to projects that serve underserved communities. This legislation is in line with the [American Sportfishing Association's](#) (ASA's) goal of introducing new anglers – particularly young people – to recreational fishing.

“Recreational fishing provides substantial physical and mental health benefits, but unfortunately many young people – particularly in underserved communities – face significant barriers in accessing the outdoors,” said Mike Leonard, the American Sportfishing Association's Vice President of Government Affairs. “The grants provided through this bill will go a long way to remove those barriers and help children develop a love of fishing. We thank Representatives Salazar and Kamlager-Dove and Senators Wicker and Cantwell for their work on the Youth Coastal Fishing Program Act and are excited about the generations of new anglers it will help create.”

“As someone who knows and recognizes the importance of the marine and aquatic environment, it is critical to provide younger generations of Americans across the country, especially minority Americans, the opportunity to learn firsthand about our seas, oceans, lakes, and outdoors, as well as provide them with the tools to enjoy them,” said Rep. Salazar.

“Our nation is home to beautiful rivers, oceans, and lakes. As we prepare to commemorate World Oceans Day, I am proud to continue the legacy of the late Congressman Donald McEachin by reintroducing the Youth Coastal Fishing Program Act with Congresswoman Salazar and Senators Wicker and Cantwell to educate our youth on different marine

environments, as well as vital conservation measures we must take to combat the climate crisis,” Kamlager-Dove said. “It is especially important that historically disadvantaged youth have opportunities to learn about aquatic life and marine sciences to harbor their curiosity in these fields. Ensuring our nation's children have rich, diverse educational experiences allows them to fully embrace their surroundings and thrive as students and individuals.”

“We should be encouraging young Americans to get involved in fishing,” Wicker said. “Our legislation will help remove barriers to accessing the outdoors and ensure that more young anglers, especially those in underserved communities, have the opportunity to enjoy this beloved pastime.”

“Fishing is one of our favorite pastimes in the Pacific Northwest, and our bill will support Washington state organizations that take kids fishing in their local coastal waters, rivers, and bays,” Cantwell said. “This bill will help more kids get the tools, gear, and support they need to experience the outdoors and the benefits that come with it.”

The bill provides \$2 million in grants over each of the next five years for projects that include a recreational fishing experience for youth, offer education about marine science and conservation and provide information on where or how to fish. While other federal land management agencies, such as the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Forest Service, have dedicated programs to connect the public to nature, there is no such recreation program within the NOAA Fisheries, which manages federal marine fisheries.

A handout on the bill can be found [here](#), bill text can be found [here](#) and a letter of support signed by 21 organizations can be found [here](#). ASA encourages its members to visit our [Keep America Fishing action alert](#) to contact their Members of Congress asking them to support the bill. ✧



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Position Statement

Representing a major interest in the aquatic resources of the Great Lakes states and the province of Ontario, the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council is a confederation of organizations and individuals with a concern for the present and future of sport fishing, our natural resources and the ecosystem in which we live. We encourage the wise use of our resources and a search for the truth about the issues confronting us.

Inland Seas Angler

GREAT LAKES BASIN REPORT

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Illinois, feds grapple with pact that would advance billion dollar plan to stop invasive carp

The Army Corps of Engineers is now on the cusp of construction on modification of the Brandon Road Lock in Illinois. The project is now projected to cost \$1.1 billion, but the main sticking point is that it requires Illinois to sign an agreement as the non-federal sponsor that the state has so far refused to sign.

The first efforts to stop the advance of invasive carp to the Great Lakes began in the early 2000s when electrical barriers in the [Chicago Area Waterway System](#) leading to Lake Michigan were thought to be a deterrent.

The fear was that if the voracious carp entered the lake, they could expand their range, wipe out the food supply and eventually devastate the multi-billion dollar Great Lakes fishery. But no one knew if the barriers could be a permanent solution or simply a stopgap.

Fast forward two decades and extensive study of options and lobbying Washington for a permanent fix. The Army Corps of Engineers is now on the cusp of construction on modification of the Brandon Road Lock in the Des Plaines River, 27 miles southwest of Chicago and Lake Michigan. The Brandon Road site is [“the only single location”](#) that could address the carp advance, according to the Army Corps.

But there’s a glitch.

The project, originally estimated to cost \$275 million is now projected to cost \$1.1 billion. But the main sticking point is that it requires Illinois to sign an agreement as the non-federal sponsor that the state has so far refused to sign. The reluctance isn’t about funding. Illinois and Michigan combined have pledged \$114 million, pending legislative approval, and that meets the state funding requirement. The other Great Lakes states have not made a financial commitment to the project to date.

The challenge is securing Illinois’ signature on a complex Project Partnership Agreement with the Army Corps that requires the state to assume responsibility for issues it is reluctant to take responsibility for.

That was the message from Loren Wobig, Illinois DNR’s director of water resources at the recent meeting of the Great Lakes Commission where invasive carp was on the agenda.

Among the issues of concern are a requirement that Illinois assume responsibility for any hazardous waste pollution at the site, which is unknown. And responsibility for the ongoing cost of operating the lock decades into the future. Plus, the project has environmental justice concerns for people who fish at the site for subsistence, Wobig said.

Illinois’ governor and attorney general have said no to taking responsibility for hazardous sites, according to Wobig. Illinois has also expressed concern about the complexity of property acquisition necessary for the project to advance and [indemnification and hold harmless](#) provisions of the agreement.

Army Corps spokesperson Allen Marshall did not address specific barriers to securing a partnership agreement. “As with any kind of negotiation, there are challenges to bringing about shared agreements. With this project, those challenges are increased due to the magnitude and complexity of the project,” Marshall told Great Lakes Now.

The Army Corps is working diligently with Illinois to get a signed partnership agreement, according to Marshall. Illinois’ Wobig said the state is also committed to the Brandon Road project but acknowledged that a time could come when a partnership agreement isn’t possible. Discussion between the Army Corps and Illinois is continuing.

Doubters

In 2009, a team of researchers taking samples in CAWS discovered environmental DNA from invasive carp. While not conclusive proof that invasive carp had breached the electric barrier, it suggested it was possible. The event set off alarm bells and a call to action in the region.

In December 2022, Great Lakes Now asked Davis if, given the success since 2010 in keeping invasive carp out of the Great Lakes, is the Brandon Road project a “must have” for the region, especially given its billion dollar price tag?

Great Lakes Now asked long-time Great Lakes policy expert Dave Dempsey last September if the billion dollar expenditure for the Brandon Road project made sense. Dempsey was a policy adviser during the Obama administration with the International Joint Commission, the U.S. and Canada agency that advises the countries on trans-border water issues.

“It doesn’t make sense,” Dempsey said, pointing out that “a prevention ethic is completely lacking in environmental protection. We don’t want to spend money until there is a problem staring us in the face.”

Dempsey said the invasive carp are likely coming to the Great Lakes and the question is whether they can establish themselves. “But I’d take that billion dollars and spend it on a lot of different things,” Dempsey said.

The Great Lakes Commission did not respond when asked if the Brandon Road project was a “must have” for the region. Army Corps spokesperson Marshall also did not respond to the question about the necessity of the Brandon Road project given the effectiveness of existing preventive measures and the billion dollar expense.

Assuming a timely resolution on the partnership agreement, the Army Corps estimates completion of the Brandon Road project between 2030 and 2032. ✧

DNR seeks public's help to prevent spread of invasive species

The Wisconsin DNR asks the public to take simple precautions to avoid spreading invasive, nonnative plants and animals in our woods, waters and land year-round.

[Invasive species](#) are nonnative plants, animals and diseases that cause great ecological, environmental or economic harm. Some have already been found in Wisconsin, while others pose a large risk of surviving and causing problems if they are introduced and established here.

[The state's invasive species rule](#) makes it illegal to possess, transport, transfer or introduce certain invasive species in Wisconsin without a permit. The regulations designate which species are Restricted or Prohibited based on factors including the degree of harm they may cause to people, the native ecology or the economy.

How You Can Help

To prevent the establishment and spread of invasives, the DNR offers the following tips:

Hikers and campers should clean mud and dirt off their shoes and remove seeds and burs from their clothing before visiting other places. This can prevent moving invasive plants to new areas via seeds that may be on clothing or in the mud or dirt.

- Firewood is a significant pathway for the movement of many invasive insects and pathogens such as emerald ash borer, spongy moth and oak wilt disease. To help protect the state's trees where you live, play or camp, use local firewood to avoid moving pests to new places.

- Anglers and boaters can help protect vulnerable areas from aquatic invasives such as quagga and zebra mussels, Eurasian water-milfoil, New Zealand mudsnails and Asian clams by cleaning recreational equipment and gear after every use. Inspect gear for dirt, mud, seeds and other debris and remove as much as possible.

- Drain all water from gear before leaving a site and wash it with

140-degree water or steam to remove invasives too small to see. Drying gear for five or more days between use also helps destroy invasive organisms. For more information, check the DNR's [aquatic invasive species webpages](#).

- Gardeners are encouraged to plant and promote beautiful native plants that can benefit pollinators, birds and other wildlife or traditional gardening plants that are noninvasive. The [DNR's Plant Native Plants webpage](#) is a great informational resource to help get started.

- Gardeners can also look for and remove potential problem plants, including purple loosestrife, hairy willow herb, butterfly dock, yellow iris, nonnative phragmites (common reed), lesser celandine, water hyacinth, water lettuce and frogbit.

- [Report invasive species](#). Early reports help the DNR respond quickly and control invasives before they spread to new areas. ✧

NOAA Fisheries & USFWS propose revisions to regs implementing endangered species act

During this 50th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act, NOAA Fisheries and the USFWS are proposing revisions to the regulations that guide their implementation of this landmark statute.

These revisions are published as two proposed rules. One proposed rule addresses the listing, delisting, and reclassification of species, as well as the designation of critical habitats. The second proposed rule addresses federal consultations under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

The proposed changes are intended to improve both agencies' ability to fulfill their responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act to protect and recover listed species.

Clarifying Standards for Listing, Delisting, and Reclassifying Species

This rule proposes to reinstate prior language reflecting congressional intent that listing, reclassification, and delisting determinations must be made

“without reference to possible economic or other impacts of such determination.” This language makes clear that any economic impacts stemming from the listing, reclassifying, or delisting of a species cannot be considered when making classification decisions. Additional changes to the implementing regulations would improve the transparency of the listing process and revise some of the criteria for designating critical habitat.

Improving the Interagency Consultation Process

This rule proposes to revise language, definitions, and responsibilities to further clarify and improve the federal interagency consultation processes, including revising the scope of reasonable and prudent measures in an incidental take statement to improve conservation outcomes.

Both agencies are committed to

applying the best available science when implementing the Endangered Species Act. That includes making listing and delisting decisions, designating critical habitat, and consulting on federal actions.

The Act has successfully prevented the extinction of more than 99% of its protected species. This landmark legislation is a powerful and effective tool for conserving species and their habitats. Under the Act, NOAA Fisheries is responsible for the protection, conservation, and recovery [of more than 160 endangered and threatened marine and anadromous species](#) and their habitats.

The proposed rules will be subject to public review and comment, and all comments will be carefully considered before final rules are published. Interested parties are encouraged to submit comments during the public comment period, which will be open through August 21, 2023 ✧

Zebra mussel caught hitching ride

One of the most notorious invasive species may have just found a new way to get around: on fish. During a [recent fisheries assessment study](#) on Lake Témiscouata, in southern Quebec, researchers Anthony Ricciardi of McGill University and Jaclyn M. Hill of Fisheries and Oceans Canada discovered a small zebra mussel attached to the side of a living lake chub (a common member of the minnow family). This finding is the first recorded observation of this behavior by any adult freshwater bivalve in the wild. The discovery could have significant implications for aquatic conservation.

Zebra mussels are one of the most devastating and effective aquatic invasive species in North America, due to their direct impacts and ability to spread.

Until now, however, zebra mussels were not known to use vertebrates as a means of dispersal, though some other mussels do. In their paper, *Passive transport of a zebra mussel attached to a freshwater fish: A novel Dreissena dispersal mechanism?* the authors express concern over the implications of this behavior. Such as the potential to allow invasive mussels to move upstream.

Beyond what might be considered “natural dispersal”, the authors also point out potential implications for the issue of bait bucket dumping. Although illegal to dump the contents of a bait bucket into any water in Ontario (or within 30 meters of it), studies have shown this behavior still occurs within the angling community. Now that live fish are a potential vector for the spread of zebra mussels, the already harmful practice of bait-dumping has even more potential for ecological destruction.

Ultimately, as the authors point out, the significance of this discovery cannot yet be precisely understood. Since it was an isolated incident, but the potential for serious consequences is very real. ✧

NSSF condemns USFWS proposal

Continued from page 1

ensure America’s number one resource of conservation funding remains in place and that hunters, recreational shooters and anglers throughout the nation can continue to enjoy America’s sporting heritage. Excise taxes paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers have contributed over [\\$16 billion since 1937, or \\$25 billion when adjusted for inflation](#), for wildlife and habitat conservation. It is the leading funding source for wildlife restoration. Over \$1.6 billion was apportioned to the states for wildlife conservation projects last year, with [\\$1.19 billion](#) of that sourced to excise taxes paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers. The bill passed the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee on a bipartisan vote earlier this week.

Rep. Wittman’s legislation, along with U.S. Sen. Steve Daines’ (R-Mont.) companion legislation [S. 1185](#) of the same name, would require the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to provide site-specific peer-reviewed scientific data in cooperation with state agencies that demonstrates traditional lead ammunition or fishing tackle is causing detrimental wildlife population impacts before prohibiting their use by hunters and anglers.

The [Final Rule](#) published last year to similarly ban traditional ammunition and fishing tackle while opening hunting and fishing opportunities was part of “sue and settle” litigation between the Center for Biological Diversity and the USFWS and was implemented without scientific evidence or consultation of state agencies.

Requiring the use of [alternative ammunition](#) would put a significant cost barrier to participation in hunting and fishing on lands. Alternative ammunition is, on average, 25 percent more expensive than traditional lead ammunition and less available. That

Boating worth \$6.4 billion in Ohio

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Boating brings big business to Ohio. A new study shows the state’s boating industry produced an economic impact of \$6.4 billion in 2022. According to the study, published by the Ohio DNR, the boating industry also accounted for 45,856 jobs.

“The boating industry lifts up the economy for local communities all across Ohio,” ODNR Director Mary Mertz said. “The boost ripples out from the water and into local business, while supporting jobs all along the shores, from marinas and boat dealers on the coast, to restaurants and hotels further inland.”

The study was conducted through a survey of nearly 10,000 boating households and over 200 marine trade businesses.

Other boating habits revealed through the survey:

- In 2022, people spent 315 million hours boating in Ohio
- Fishing accounts for 33.6% of all boating time
- Women are the primary boat operators of 24.3% of all non-motorized boats and 5.4% of all motorized boats

Economic impact is measured by calculating direct, indirect, and induced effects of spending on boating-related products and activities. Contributions from both recreational boating and the marine trades were calculated in this study. Recreational boating contributed \$3.66 billion and 25,476 jobs, while \$2.75 billion and 20,380 jobs are attributed to the marine trades industry.

✧

barrier would “price out” many hunters and anglers and decrease the [excise tax funding](#) paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers they support.

NSSF urges all outdoorsmen and women to provide comments on the [Proposed Rule](#) voicing their concerns that this threat to conservation funding lacks any sound scientific data and only harms participation in hunting and fishing on public lands. ✧

Lake trout research underway on Lake Ontario

Binational effort aimed at survivability of popular sport fishing species

Oswego, NY, June 7, 2023 – Lake trout research underway on Lake Ontario is part of the U.S.-Canada Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative (CSMI) field year on the lake. Research collecting data on lake trout movement using acoustic telemetry tags is being led by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), New York State DEC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, with outreach assistance from New York Sea Grant (NYSG).

The research team is using specialized tags that communicate with acoustic receivers stationed on the lake bottom. The tags will provide information about the migration patterns and habitats used by adult lake trout. This innovative technology is particularly useful for locating spawning habitats and will help to inform future restoration efforts for potentially degraded spawning sites.

More than 350 lake trout will be tagged in 2023. The tags' battery life allows for the fish to be tracked over the next 10 years. This research has already produced a "first."

"This work in 2023 represents the first time a wild-produced lake trout has ever been tagged in Lake Ontario," said USFWS Fish Biologist Dimitry Gorsky, Ph.D. "Lake trout are a native species that is important to the ecosystem and to the world-class sport fishery on Lake Ontario." Gorsky is based at the USFWS Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, Basom, New York.

This research is funded in part through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Lake Ontario Charter Industry Assisting Research

The local charter fishing industry is assisting the research from ports at Mexico Bay, in eastern Lake Ontario, and Wilson, along the western end of the lake. Captain Casey Prisco and First Mates/Captains Roy Letcher and A.J. Berry of Dirty Goose Sport Fishing Charters, based in Pulaski, New York, were contracted to help the research team catch lake trout for the tagging study.

"In late April and early May, lake trout in the eastern end of Lake Ontario were found in deeper water, making them hard to collect with standard fisheries gear. Charter captains have a wealth of knowledge about the resource and are an efficient way for us to locate and collect the number of lake trout we need to tag," said USGS Fish Research Biologist Alex Gatch of the USGS Tunison Lake Ontario Biological Station, Cortland, New York.

The tagged fish are returned to the water to resume normal behavior to assure quality data.

New York Sea Grant is providing public outreach support to inform angling, fisheries, and general public audiences about the value of this research.

NYSG Great Lakes Fisheries Specialist Stacy Furgal notes, "Tagged fish that are a part of this study are marked with an external orange-colored tag. If anglers catch a tagged lake trout they can choose to return it to the water, or if the fish is harvested, please contact Alex Gatch, agatch@usgs.gov, 607-753-9391 Ext 7540, to return the internal tracking tag."

More Info: Project Partnerships

The USFWS is the only federal agency



The orange-colored external acoustic tag, below the dorsal fin, identifies this fish as tagged in 2023. It is one of the first wild lake trout to be tagged in Lake Ontario.

with the primary responsibility for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the American people. Learn more at <https://www.fws.gov/>.

The U.S. Geological Survey is the science arm of the U.S. Department of the Interior and provides an array of earth, water, biological, and mapping data and expertise in support of decision-making on environmental, resource, and public safety issues. Learn more at <https://www.usgs.gov/>.

The Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative is a binational effort instituted under the Science Annex of the 2012 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to coordinate science and monitoring activities in one of the five Great Lakes each year to generate data and information for environmental management agencies.

For updates on Sea Grant activities: www.nyseagrant.org NYSG offers a free e-list sign up via www.nyseagrant.org/nycoastlines for its flagship publication, NY Coastlines/Currents, which is published quarterly. ✧

ODNR hosts annual Ohio Women's Outdoor Adventures Weekend **Sept 8-10**

The Ohio DNR announced the 9th annual Ohio Women's Outdoor Adventure weekend, which will be held at Salt Fork State Park and Lodge, [September 8-10](#).

Ohio Women's Outdoor Adventure is a weekend program that introduces women to new outdoor skills such as boating, fishing, hunting, and nature programming. It is open to women 16-years-old and older (minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian) and is tailored to beginners.

This event is a great opportunity for women to build their outdoor recreation skills, make new friends, and have fun. The event is hosted by ODNR divisions of Parks and Watercraft, Forestry, Natural Areas and Preserves, and Wildlife.

This year's participants will be able to choose between a variety of outdoor activities and sessions including kayaking, disc golf, standup paddle boarding, fishing, hiking, gun basics, stream monitoring, wild edibles, and more. Participants will stay the weekend at the Salt Fork State Park Lodge and Conference Center, located in Lore City, Ohio, near Cambridge in Guernsey County. The largest state park, Salt Fork offers thousands of land and water acres to explore. Guests will have access to the indoor and outdoor pools, restaurant and lounge, and professional golf course.

The cost is \$385 per person, based on double occupancy, and includes lodging, five meals, a t-shirt, transportation between venues, and evening activities. There are 95 spots open for this year's event. Registration is now open. A complete listing of sessions and registration details can be found [here](#). ✧

Help stop the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species

Every boater and angler has a role to play in protecting Wisconsin's lakes and rivers from invasive species.

Invasive species negatively impact our economy, health, recreation and natural resources, and simple steps can help prevent their spread in our waters:

- Inspect boats, trailers and equipment
- Remove all attached aquatic plants and animals
- Drain all water from boats, vehicles and equipment, including livewells and buckets containing fish
- Never move plants or live fish away from a waterbody
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash
- Buy minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer

Additionally, only use leftover minnows when fishing with them on the same body of water. They can be used on other waters only if no lake or river water or other fish have been added to their container.

[To learn more about invasive species and their impacts on Wisconsin's waters and economy, visit the DNR's invasive species webpage](#) ✧

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship NCO grant applications due **August 1, 2023**

An upcoming application deadline for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Nonprofit Conservation Organization programs are due by **Tuesday, August 1, 2023**. The DNR will consider all complete applications received by this date. Application materials are located on the DNR's website – [Nonprofit conservation organization application process](#) | [Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grants](#) | [Wisconsin DNR](#). If you are considering an August application, please contact your [regional Project Manager](#). ✧

ASA statement on announcement to prohibit traditional tackle

“While we appreciate USFWS's focus on expanding fishing access for the nation's 52 million anglers, it is deeply disappointing to see the continuation of baseless and harmful restrictions on the types of tackle they can use. As we have stated in our industry [position statement](#), restrictions on lead fishing tackle must be based on sound science documenting that lead tackle has an impact on specific wildlife populations and developed in conjunction with state fish and wildlife agencies. We repeatedly sought that evidence from USFWS but have yet to receive it.

It is also concerning that USFWS is coordinating with states and the hunting community on this issue but has not initiated any such consultation with the \$148 billion sportfishing industry. Although we hope USFWS will work with us on a path forward that allows continued access for sportsmen with science as the driving factor for management decisions, this latest action reinforces the need for the [Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act](#) (H.R. 615, S. 1185) to ensure best management practices are followed.” ✧

Crossbows allowed for MN deer and turkey hunters

Crossbows are now allowed for all Minnesota deer and spring turkey hunters with the correct license, following a law change passed in the 2023 legislative session. Deer licenses go on sale Tuesday, Aug. 1. The new law expands the use of crossbows, which previously were allowed for some hunters with a permit, who were 60 or older during archery deer or turkey seasons, or during previous firearms seasons for deer or turkeys. Crossbows were already allowed for all hunters during the fall wild turkey and bear seasons. Rough fish may be taken with a crossbow during the bowfishing season. ✧

\$78 million in NY grant funding available for water quality projects

New York announced the availability of funds for water quality improvement and protection projects. The funding is part of the millions of dollars now available through the Consolidated Funding Application recently for a wide range of programs. This year, at least \$78 million is available through DEC's Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) program of which up to \$3 million is available through DEC's Non-agriculture Nonpoint Source Planning and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Mapping Grant (NPG) program.

"Access to clean water is critical to sustaining the health of our communities, protecting our environment, and supporting local economies," said Commissioner Seggos. "Governor Hochul is committed to protecting New York's water quality and increasing the ability of our communities to withstand future severe storms and flooding, and the latest round of grant funding will help municipalities statewide make necessary investments to help safeguard drinking water supplies, aquatic habitats, and swimming beaches for generations to come."

Applications for these grants are available through the State's [Consolidated Funding Application \(CFA\)](#), open through July 28 at 4 p.m. Eight different project types are available for funding through WQIP, including:

- Wastewater treatment improvement and abatement of combined sewer overflows;
- Non-agricultural nonpoint source pollution abatement and control, including green infrastructure projects;
- Vacuum trucks for municipal separate storm sewer systems;
- Land acquisition for drinking water source water protection;
- Salt storage;
- Dam safety repair/rehabilitation;
- Aquatic connectivity restoration; and
- Marine habitat restoration.

Geographic-specific funding was made available in the [WQIP opportunity for the Long Island Sound watershed](#). DEC and the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) are committing \$2.25 million for projects within the Long Island Sound watershed that will improve the health of the Sound. Eligible projects include implementation of wastewater treatment plant upgrades, nonpoint source abatement and control activities such as green infrastructure practices, and restoring aquatic connectivity. This funding available through the WQIP is the first of five years in anticipated support from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) that will fund state and locally driven water quality improvements. All entities interested in implementing water quality projects within the Long Island Sound watershed should consider reviewing this Round's Request for Applications to learn more about the program. LISS is a cooperative effort involving researchers, regulators, user groups, and other concerned organizations and individuals, and is led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the states of New York and Connecticut.

Municipalities, including Indian Nations, are eligible to apply for all project types. Soil and Water Conservation Districts and not-for-profit organizations are eligible for select project types. Maximum grant awards range from \$100,000 to \$15 million depending on the project type and population served, as identified in the application. NPG funds the production of planning reports that are a major component of any subsequent application for major capital grants for nonpoint source water quality improvement projects. Mapping MS4s may also be funded by NPG. Municipalities and soil and water conservation districts are eligible to apply for this opportunity.

[New York's Commitment to Clean Water](#)

New York continues to increase its investments in clean water

infrastructure. Most recently, the 2023-24 Enacted Budget includes the \$500 million in clean water funding proposed by Governor Hochul in January and brings New York's total clean water infrastructure investment to \$5 billion since 2017. To leverage these investments and ensure ongoing coordination with local governments, the Governor created Community Assistance Teams to provide proactive outreach to small, rural, and disadvantaged communities to help them access financial assistance to address their clean water infrastructure needs. The [initiative was launched earlier this year](#) and outreach meetings are underway. [For more information, go to EFC's website.](#)

In addition, voters approved the \$4.2 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act in November 2022, advancing additional, historic levels of funding to update aging water infrastructure and protect water quality, strengthen communities' ability to withstand severe storms and flooding, reduce air pollution and lower climate-altering emissions, restore habitats, preserve outdoor spaces and local farms, and ensure equity by investing at least 35 percent, with a goal of 40 percent, of resources in disadvantaged communities.

During Earth Week, Governor Hochul announced the first availability of Bond Act funding that, when combined with existing state funding sources, totals \$425 million being made available in state water grant funding. [Applications are due by July 28 and more information can be found at EFC's website.](#) New York State is also hosting statewide and virtual listening sessions to provide an opportunity for the public and potential funding applicants to learn more about the Bond Act, and for the community to weigh in on the draft eligibility guidelines being developed to identify potential projects. [To attend or learn more about the Bond Act](#), go to the Bond Act website. ✧

April 25, 2023 Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee (Updates edited for brevity only)

Welcome and Introductions Krist, Claramunt, DNR Fish Chief and Randy Terrian, Vice-Chair). Randy Claramunt's overview as Lake Huron Basin Coordinator.

Randy Claramunt has left the role as Basin Coordinator for Lake Huron and has accepted the position as Chief of Fisheries Division. Randy Terrian spoke on behalf of the group acknowledging Randy Claramunt and the history of his contributions to the Lake Huron fishery and he was presented with a plaque from the Lake Huron Citizen Fisheries Advisory Committee.

Randy Claramunt expressed his appreciation of the partnership with this Committee and reminded the group that much more can be accomplished by working together and he valued the opportunity to exchange ideas with the Advisors and other participants. By sharing information at this level, many new programs have been established and other directions are being pursued. Advisory Committees are extremely valuable for assisting the DNR in making credible decisions. Randy emphasized the importance of trust which is a two-way street between the managers and the users of the resources.

Randy has the major goal of educating the public, legislature, executive office, and other officials of the importance of the state's Great Lakes and inland fisheries. Michigan has an incredible number of fisheries resources, yet the Fisheries Division's capabilities and staff have been declining steadily for several decades. This has been occurring despite the huge economic potential these resources can bring to the state. Angler fee increases are not working and to be more successful a new method of funding fisheries is needed like many other states have undertaken. Randy asked us all to work with him to accomplish these goals. The Advisors and other participants expressed their disappointment in losing Randy as a Basin Coordinator but are looking forward to working with him as Fisheries Chief.

Brief update on the progress of fish stocking in Lake Huron and status of the fish being stocked. (Ed Eisch Fish Production Program Manager).

Ed Eisch -- Fish stocking for Lake Huron has some challenges to stock at preferred times, mostly due to limited staff, but mainly we are still hitting the acceptable periods. Ed provided a brief update of fish stocking efforts that have been completed from each of the state hatcheries. Those that have not been stocked will be stocked the following week. He also provided an update on spring steelhead egg take and how that evolved with the unexpected challenges caused by the warmer weather and determining the best time to complete the egg harvest. Because of some uncertainty additional eggs were taken. The Musky egg collection will happen in May at Detroit.

A discussion about the possibility of night stocking took place. Concerns from DNR staff included safety of staff driving trucks, having secondary vehicles readily available in the event of a breakdown, and the general lack of benefits compared to daylight stocking. Stocking rates are developed at a level which accounts for some loss due to predation. The obvious benefit of night stocking is the potential reduction of avian predation on stocked fish from sea gulls, terns, cormorants which are very visible preying on stocked fish that hang around near the planting site before moving out into the system. However, since some newly stocked fish are often present several days near the site, stocking day or night would make little difference. What is not evident is most of the stocked fish lost are consumed by fish predators such as walleye and lake trout. Timing is the biggest advantage we have by relying on the smolts' natural inclination to quickly migrate offshore. Currently, there is no significant evidence to support utilizing nighttime stocking. Appreciation was expressed for the hatchery and driving staff for overcoming these many serious challenges and the public volunteers that assist with stocking. Ed emphasized that the fisheries staff (hatchery and field) are very committed to delivering fish efficiently to ensure the best survival

Cormorant status on funding the program

Fish Chief Randy Claramunt stated that this year we were successful in obtaining a cormorant depredation permit for 9050 adults and 2000 nests at the colony level at six designated sites. We do not have the internal funding necessary to implement the complete program, so we have to rely on Wildlife Services. Their most effective control is at the colony level so this will be the focus. This year we are excluding other categories (fish stocking and inland water bodies) because of lack of funding. Unfortunately, if the birds are persistent, they will eventually ignore the bangers. If you reinforce with lethal means, the conditioned birds will leave. We listed sites that have conditioned birds where lethal methods would be more efficient. So, although we have the permit, without funding we do not have the ability to do it. This is the same for high priority inland lakes. Randy estimates that of the allowed number of adult cormorants to be taken, approximately 3000 of those can be handled with the USDA funding.

The Avian Predation Predator Notification Network of volunteers that have assisted at fish stocking sites and help monitor bird predation has been very beneficial. Some of the volunteers are starting to lose interest and commitment which is detrimental to the number of fish that get stocked. If we were to receive funding for supporting the control at the river stocking sites and priority inland locations this program would be a top priority.

The committee asked how much funding is needed for the cormorant program. Previously the funding allowed for \$100,000 worth of work from the USDA but to implement a full cormorant control program under the current requirements it would cost about \$250,000. The USDA funding is not guaranteed each year and cannot be counted on despite DNR having a permit. The USDA must ask for their funding each year and it is not automatically included in the federal budget. Funding is needed for safety equipment, training, background checks, liability protection, etc. USDA could be utilized to do the work because they were previously set up for this but the funding must

Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee - continued

be obtained first. A hunting license and season to control the birds is not possible because the federal law does not allow it. The only allowed cormorant control is through the established permit program.

It was asked with the state working with billions of dollars why cormorant funding was not obtained. Randy stressed that we have undervalued our fishery to the point that our top priorities do not resonate because the perception is that stakeholders are willing to pay \$11 for a license so it must not be that valuable. Several high value fishery projects in the state cannot get funded because the state fisheries are the last of all the low priorities, rock bottom. The time to contact legislators is now but until the legislature and other officials begin to understand the tremendous economic potential of the fisheries, success is not likely. Can the tribes assist? Under the new permit system, the state and tribal nations must follow the same permit system, but the tribes have not figured out how to get through the process. They have asked to be added to our permit but because we do not have enough funding to meet our own needs and we have no room to add their burden to ours.

Angler Scale Sampling Program (one reliable angler per tributary) taking place within the tributaries of the Au Sable River, East Branch of the Au Gres River, and Rifle River. (Randy Terrian, and support from the USFWS).

Randy Terrian – The development of a pilot program through the FWS for use by anglers, was implemented here to establish a scale sampling program for steelhead. The FWS was interested in this program to expand their database on waterbodies that includes the Au Sable, East Branch of Au Gres, and Rifle rivers. FWS streamlined the process to be more effective and allow for the sampling to be done by anglers. If we move away from mass marking of fish, it is important to have a reliable process to show the extent hatchery fish and natural fish contribute to the fishery. This is a separate program from DNR as the Bio-techs from FWS do not have quotas like the DNR creel clerks. The FWS is looking to expand their database. The objective is to be able to identify the hatchery steelhead from the natural recruitment steelhead through scale reading.

Acoustic Telemetry study to follow the movements of Steelhead in the Au Sable River. Mathew Klungle, DNR Fisheries Biologist; Dave Fielder, Research Biologist; and Ed Eisch, and Jeremiah Blaauw Fish Production).

Mathew Klungle introduced a pilot program involving acoustic telemetry in stocked steelhead on the Au Sable River. The purpose of this collaborative pilot project is to try to address the unknowns and concerns of what happens to hatchery fish after stocking. Factors decreasing the survival of stocked fish include avian predation, piscivore predation, water temperatures, food availability, flow rates. Related to this, Dave Fielder has a paper in review that addresses using telemetry in predator fish that evaluates the complexities of their movement to assist in determining optimal stocking windows.

For this small pilot study, the use of special predation electronic tags is used to potentially show the out migration time, movements while within the river and out into the lake near shore. This will gather information on improving survival of stocked fish. These tags are designed with a special polymer plug which dissolves when the smolt is consumed and changes the signal of the telemetry tag which indicates the date and time when the smolt is consumed. Receivers have been deployed at many sites including bridges, near shore, and in the lake near shore. One advantage is this study is utilizing the existing telemetry infrastructure. The size of tags is limited by battery size. Because of the array of receivers in the lake, there is an opportunity to gather a lot of data during the short battery life of the device. Ten fish were used for practice and 15 fish will be used in the study. After implanting the tag, the fish will spend 8 days in captivity for monitoring, and then be released later. There are some inferences with the study including smolts that leave the receiver areas and smolts that get consumed by a bird. If a planted fish is consumed by a fish, the receiver will pick up the changed signal and should transmit useful data.

Moving forward because of the funding cycle, the next phase will be in 2025, with a goal of a significant increase in the number of fish to be tagged. The overall goal is to directly evaluate stocking events and strategies and to improve survivability of newly stocked fish.

Because the mass marking program is our basis for getting information on stocked fish, there is interest in marking all stocked fish in the Great Lakes. At the Great Lakes level, we are working with Senator Stabenow to introduce a bill for mass marking to be funded as a base operation. It is currently funded through GLRI. Chief Claramunt is also working on getting other fish species to be included in mass marking program.

Brief update on the status of the Proposed New Consent Decree that will provide the rules for managing and sharing the Great Lakes Fisheries in the 1836 Treaty Waters of Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron, (Frank Krist and Jim Johnson).

Frank provided a brief overview of the last few years of Consent Decree negotiations and the creation of the Coalition to Protect Michigan Resources, which is an organization representing recreational fishing groups. The Coalition feels very strongly that the resource is not being protected because of a massive expansion of both small and large mesh gill nets throughout the 1836 Treaty Great Lakes Waters. Jim Johnson summarized the Coalition's issues with Fisheries Division breaking from their own tradition of eliminating gillnets. The Proposed Consent Decree also changes lake trout, walleye, and yellow perch from mostly a by-catch species under the 2000 Consent Decree to targeted species. Gillnets are extremely efficient and non-discriminatory killing most fish caught in them. The data suggest that unless there is progress to bring mortality rates down in Lakes Huron and Michigan the fishery will not be sustainable, hurting all users of the resource. Since both lake trout and whitefish live many years and take about 10 years or more to be effective spawners, if there is

Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee - continued

a collapse of either whitefish or lake trout it could take 10-15 years or more to recover. Committee members addressed concerns that the trust is broken, that the DNR is not protecting the resource, and questioned who is accountable when the fishery crashes.

A motion was made for the Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee to oppose the expanded gill net opportunities in the Great Lakes. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the members. Jim and Frank were asked to write a letter representing the committee's stance which will be addressed to the Governor, Attorney General, all State representatives and senators with districts bordering the Lake Huron Treaty Waters and the NRC.

Next step for the Consent Decree negotiations is a hearing open to the public in the Federal Court in Kalamazoo on May 24-25. The Coalition to Protect Michigan Resources brought forward 10 objections that will be debated by all the parties and the Coalition. The Sault Tribe disagreed with all the other parties (Michigan, United States, 4 other Tribes) and is emphasizing that the tribes are entitled to the entire fishery if it is needed to support their members. The Sault Tribe's proposal will also be debated at this hearing.

The meeting was concluded. ✧

Army Corps shuts down Chicago locks

USACE has shut down Brandon Road, Dresden Island, and Marseilles locks for rehab on June 1st. These locks will continue to be closed all summer. ✧

The Endangered Species Act: 50 Years of Conserving Species

Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act this year by learning more about



NOAA's work to conserve endangered species and their habitats. Under the Act, NOAA Fisheries is responsible for the protection, conservation, and recovery of more than 160 endangered and threatened marine and anadromous species. ✧

Lake Erie fish cleaning stations now open

The Ohio DNR's brand-new fish cleaning stations in Marblehead, Huron and Avon Lake are up and running, and so is one constructed by the Cleveland Metroparks at Cleveland Lakefront State Park in Cleveland Harbor. "All three of the new fish cleaning stations are open, and each has two of the state of the art Barracuda grinders that process the fish entrails, heads, bones and skin," said Scott Hale, head of fisheries management for the Ohio Division of Wildlife. ✧

DNR studies blotchy bass syndrome

Blotchy bass syndrome (BBS) is the occurrence of black ink-like spots (hyperpigmentation) on the skin, fins, and/or mouths of freshwater bass.

Researchers once thought that melanosis was caused by sun exposure or stress related to fishing, temperature, or pollution; however, researchers recently discovered that a family of viruses was associated with the black spots in fish that were in poor body condition.

The DNR is partnering with the USGS to collect samples from black bass species to test for BBS and needs your help. DNR encourages anglers to report observations of affected bass



when fishing, so they and USGS can learn more about the effect of this family of viruses.

How to participate:

- Download the MyCatch app from [Angler's Atlas](#).
- Register for the "Blotchy Bass Bonanza."
- Take photos of all the bass you've caught (preferably on a measuring board) while fishing and upload them to the MyCatch app.

The Blotchy Bass Bonanza runs from March 1, 2023 – February 29, 2024. ✧

BOW is celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year! **Sept 8-10**

Save the Date for the 30th Fall BOW NY Workshop! Where: Adirondack Woodcraft Camp, Old Forge, NY

Go back to basics with this women's skills camp in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. 2023 BOW will be the same workshop format you love but with a more rustic camp atmosphere. Registration lottery is open. ✧

Stay Safe This Summer

With the summer solstice officially marking the start of the season, now is a good time to review two important summer safety tips: sunscreen and tick awareness.

Take care to avoid ticks

Wherever your summer adventures take you, it's important to take steps to avoid ticks. Wearing light-colored clothing, walking in the center of trails away from brushy areas and checking for ticks after a hike can all help keep you safe.

Use sunscreen to defend your skin

When it comes to sunshine, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend SPF 30 sunscreen for daily use with "broadband spectrum" protection. This is the only type that protects from the sun's harmful UVA and UVB rays.

Learn more about how to avoid ticks and sunscreen tips in [the summer 2023 issue](#) of [Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine](#). ✧

DEC announces release of 'State of the Ocean 2023'

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently released the [State of the Ocean 2023 \(PDF\)](#) that provides an overview of actions taken to advance the [New York Ocean Action Plan \(OAP\)](#). The report highlights partnerships and achievements from the first five years of the OAP, including enhancing ecological integrity, promoting sustainable growth, adapting to change, and empowering public stewardship.

New York State's ocean environment plays an irreplaceable role in maintaining healthy and diverse marine life, supporting coastal communities and local economies, and building resiliency as we adapt to the reality of climate change impacting our shores.

The OAP is a coordinated and inclusive effort focused on improving the health of our ocean ecosystems and their capacity to provide sustainable benefits to New Yorkers through four interconnected goals. New York strives to achieve these goals to promote healthier ocean ecosystems that will benefit people, communities, and the natural world. Through 61 pointed actions to reach long-term goals, the OAP helps guide State funding, research, management, outreach, and education efforts.

New York Secretary of State Robert J. Rodriguez said, "As a co-author of the Ocean Action Plan, the Department of State is proud of our shared progress in protecting ocean ecosystems and promoting sustainable and ecologically-responsible shoreline development, offshore wind, and community resiliency to sea-level rise and flooding. We are working hard to maintain and expand New York's leadership role in protecting and restoring our precious ocean ecosystems."

The State of the Ocean 2023 summarizes activities that advance the OAP's four interconnected goals: ensuring ecological integrity; promoting sustainable growth; adapting to change; and empowering public stewardship. The next phase of OAP implementation will focus on undertaking long-term actions, continuing to investigate the effects of climate change to ensure effective management, and empowering communities to take proactive approaches toward enhancing resiliency.

Ensuring Ecological Integrity

Three objectives identified to ensure ecological integrity include: protecting and restoring sensitive habitats; improving the management of important species; and evaluating the ecological integrity of the ocean ecosystem. Projects that accomplish this goal include developing a comprehensive ocean-indicators system, funding a research grant program, supporting various monitoring efforts, and proactively managing marine invasive species.

Promoting Sustainable Growth

The second goal of the OAP is to promote economic growth, coastal development, and human use of the ocean in a manner that is sustainable and consistent with maintaining ecosystem integrity. Activities that support this goal include enhancing the [Geographic Information Gateway](#), ensuring New York meets ambitious energy goals responsibly, and creating and advancing the State's Artificial Reef Program.

Adapting to Change

Increasing resilience of ocean resources to impacts associated with climate change is another goal of the OAP and is supported further by the

Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) that commits New York State to an ambitious clean energy and climate agenda. The State of the Ocean summarizes efforts to monitor coastal changes, promote living shorelines, and investigate species-specific responses to the changing climate that support this goal.

Empowering Public Stewardship

Active public stewardship of marine resources is essential to enhancing the health of both the ocean ecosystem and surrounding coastal communities. This goal aims to increase stakeholder participation in resource management and offshore planning, advance ocean outreach and education, and support local and regional stewardship programs. This work is supported through partnerships to develop education and outreach materials and engage and empower the public to practice safe, responsible, and sustainable ocean use.

Many actions in the plan are supported by Ocean and Great Lakes annual appropriations through the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) in enacted State budgets. In the FY 2024 State Budget, Governor Hochul maintained EPF funding at \$400 million, the highest level of funding in the program's history. The EPF also provides funding for critical environmental programs such as land acquisition, farmland protection, invasive species prevention and eradication, enhanced recreational access, water quality improvement, and an aggressive environmental justice agenda. The highlights in this report are brief summaries, and more [information on various projects can be found on DEC's OAP website](#).

✧

Fish kills may be more common during summer heat

With increasing temperatures across Michigan, anglers, boaters and lakefront property owners may discover dead fish or other aquatic animals. While such sights can be startling, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources reminds everyone that it is common—summer heat conditions can cause fish and other creatures such as turtles, frogs, toads and crayfish to die.



“The majority of summer fish kills are due to low oxygen in the water, a natural phenomenon associated with

weather,” said Jeremiah Blaauw, DNR fisheries biologist. “However, some other factors such as chemical treatments of aquatic plants and algae can increase the risk of a fish kill.”

Environmental conditions strongly affect the stress level of fish;

temperature and dissolved oxygen concentrations are key variables. Fish need oxygen just as humans do, but fish absorb dissolved oxygen (oxygen gas that is dissolved in water) directly through their gills into the bloodstream.

During periods of hot, calm weather, dissolved levels of oxygen in nutrient-rich lakes often decline, while the metabolic rate in most fish—the number of calories needed to accomplish basic life-sustaining functions like respiration—increases. That means fish in these systems often are being pinched by both temperature and oxygen at the same time.

“‘Nutrient-rich’ sounds like a good thing, but that isn’t necessarily true when it comes to water quality,” Blaauw said. “Our lakes often have artificially high concentrations of nutrients due to human-connected sources like wastewater or fertilizer runoff. The nutrients support dense growth of plants and algae. While plants and algae produce oxygen during the day through photosynthesis, they consume oxygen at night via their own respiration. This situation can lead to oxygen crashes during warm summer nights.”

Spawning stress is another factor that plays a critical role in many fish mortality events. Due to the wide variations in climate from north to south in Michigan, sunfish can spawn from May through early July. During the last five years, these three months had the highest numbers of fish kill reports through the DNR’s Eyes in the Field system.

Most fish kill events are the culmination of a series of causes. For example, the following scenario occurs every year in southern Michigan. Bluegills are stressed from spawning activity. At the same time, a period of hot weather causes water temperatures to rise rapidly. Herbicide is applied to control algae and invasive plant species. This combination of stressors depresses the immune system, and bacteria already present in the lake infect bluegills and result in an outbreak of columnaris disease.

Learn more about fish kills at Michigan.gov/FishHealth.

The public is welcome to report fish kills using the [Eyes in the Field website](#). ✨

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

[Upstate SUNY students join Great Lakes fish restoration project](#)

Researchers from SUNY Oswego and SUNY Cortland in New York will work with the U.S. Geological Survey and other entities on a conservation and restoration project focused on native fish species in the Great Lakes, funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

[Historic boom in Lake Superior’s herring population could be best in 40 years](#)

Potentially record numbers of lake herring born last spring seem to have survived their first year of life, according to state and federal biologists. The boom will help sustain both the ecosystem and Minnesota’s commercial fishing industry for years to come.

[Erie’s Port Authority won’t provide water taxi service this summer](#)

For the fourth straight year, the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority will not offer its water taxi service that shuttles people across Presque Isle Bay because it was unable to find an operator for the service. The water taxi service started in 2000 as a way for tourists and residents to travel between the city and Presque Isle State Park.

Lake Superior lampreys increase again

Sea lampreys continue to hunt and kill Lake Superior fish above the levels biologists would like to see, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic caused parts of two summer seasons to be lost in the never-ending battle against the eel-like creatures. Lake Superior now has an estimated 108,000 lampreys, a three-year rolling average, far above the goal of 48,000 lampreys set by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

Warm temps, hungry walleye a dynamic duo on Lake Erie

Ohio's Lake Erie fishermen and an invasion of walleye anglers from all over the region have seen a big surge in the walleye fishing this week, thanks to the warm weather. The walleye are biting in many areas right now, making it an excellent time to enjoy the Walleye Capital of the World.

Summer is coming fast. Here's how to stay safe in the Great Lakes

The official start of summer is just two short weeks away. As more Michiganders travel across the state and take to the water, it's important to remember the basics of water safety — especially when it comes to the Great Lakes.

Michigan and Illinois will partner to try to stop invasive carp from advancing into Lake Michigan

Michigan and Illinois plan to spend a combined \$114 million to stop the advancement of invasive carp into Lake Michigan.

NOAA wants public comment on proposed Lake Erie Quadrangle National Marine Sanctuary

NOAA is now in the process of seeking public comment about the proposed Lake Erie Quadrangle National Marine Sanctuary.

End