



Muskies stocked across Ohio provide outstanding fishing

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio DNR is stocking nearly 20,000 muskellunge, or muskies, in nine inland lakes across the state in 2024. Muskies can grow to more than 50 inches in length and are a popular sport fish for anglers.



Muskies longer than 40" have been caught in all of Ohio's stocked lakes, and some muskies reach 50 inches or more.

The Division of Wildlife raises muskellunge at the Kincaid and London state fish hatcheries. The

hatcheries stock 10- to 12-inch muskies in nine lakes each fall. Muskies are a predatory sport fish that grow quickly and create trophy fishing opportunities in Alum Creek Lake, C. J. Brown Reservoir, Caesar Creek Lake, Clearfork Reservoir, Lake Milton, Leesville Lake, Piedmont Lake, Salt Fork Lake, and West Branch Reservoir. In addition to reservoirs where they are stocked, muskellunge are caught in many of Ohio's river systems.



Muskies are stocked by the Division of Wildlife at nine locations statewide.

Trophy muskellunge have been documented across the nine stocking locations. The DNR created the [Muskie Angler Log](#) to gather public reports of muskie catches and use that information to better manage the fishery. Muskies longer than 40 inches have been recorded in each of the nine stocked lakes, and seven of those lakes have hosted muskies longer than 50 inches. Ohio's state record muskie, weighing 55.1 pounds and measuring 50.25 inches long, was caught in Piedmont Lake in 1972. Ohio record fish, tracked by the [Outdoor Writers of Ohio](#), are determined based on weight only.

Anglers who catch a muskellunge measuring 40 inches or longer are eligible to receive a [Fish Ohio](#) award. The Fish Ohio program annually recognizes thousands of anglers who catch one of 25 species of sport fish of a qualifying length. Since 1976, the program has awarded a Fish Ohio pin to any angler who qualifies.

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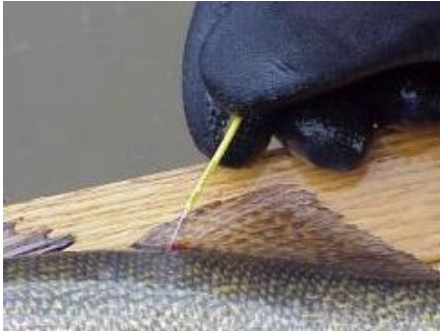
VanVleet replaces retiring GLSFC Ohio director Unger

With the advent of Capt. Rick Unger retiring and relocating to Florida, Capt. Peg VanVleet has agreed to replace him as Ohio director of the GLSFC.

Captain Peg VanVleet, is an award-winning Lake Erie Charter Captain and third generation angler. She now serves as Vice President for Environmental Issues for the Lake Erie Charter Boat Association and was appointed to the Ohio Waterways Safety Council in 2024. She was a 2024 inductee into the Ohio DNR Hall of Fame for her lifetime of work preserving Lake Erie. She is also the 2023 Lake Erie Shores & Islands Ambassador winner.

In 2015 she was awarded Charter Captain of the year by the Lake Erie Charter Boat Association. Susie McLaughlin and Captain Peg publish the Lake Erie Charter Boat Association quarterly newsletter "The Hook." VanVleet can be reached at: 937-414-6742, pegvanvleet@gmail.com ✧

Great Lakes Walleye Tagging



The **walleye tagging** process is essential to sustaining a viable **Great Lakes walleye** population. Biologists perform mild surgery while on the water to install tracking devices into select walleyes. Each fish is fitted with a metal jaw tag stamped with an identification number and a phone number to report when and where the fish was caught and whether it was harvested or released.



The walleye long tag is attached to the fin

DNR fisheries biologists track fish for research purposes. There are various ways DNR marks fish which are part of these research studies:

- a tag is attached to the fish, or
- a radio transmitter is implanted, as noted by a [wire antenna](#), or
- a code wire tag is implanted, as identified by a [missing adipose fin](#)

It is illegal to tag fish unless given a permit by the DNR.

Should you catch a DNR-tagged fish, it is very important to report promptly. The information provided by the angler helps DNR to determine fish population estimates, and harvest and exploitation rates. Your cooperation and participation are greatly appreciated.

If you release the fish, please do not remove the tags.

One common type of tag looks like a 2-inch piece of spaghetti and is located near the base of the dorsal fin (i.e., the fin along the top of the back). The tag can be of several colors. For example, on the Winnebago system, it will either be orange or yellow. Look carefully, as the tag may be covered with algae and look like a piece of a weed. Another type is a metal tag found on the dorsal fin of the fish. Each tag has a unique serial number stamped on it that identifies that fish. It may also have an address to send the tag to.

Should you catch a tagged fish, it is very important to report it promptly. The information that DNR fish biologists request is fairly simple:

- The species of fish caught.
- The date the fish was caught.
- The specific location where it was caught.
- Whether it was kept or not.
- Most importantly, the tag (i.e., serial) number.

You may also include the fish's length and weight if you know it.

If you release the fish:

- Do **not** remove the tag.
- Record the information requested above and send it in promptly to DNR or other agencies listed below.

If you keep the fish:

- Remove the tag.
- Don't scrape off any algae, because you may also remove the lettering on the tag.
- Tape the tag to a card and send it in promptly to the DNR.

Most all states use a tagging system, in many inland lakes for various study purposes. Other species commonly tagged include most all salmon, Lake Trout, Steelhead, and Brown trout and in some states Black bass. ✧



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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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PFBC now accepting applications for boating facility grant program

HARRISBURG, Pa.— As a growing number of communities realize the positive social and economic impacts of having convenient boating access along their local waterways, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is excited to offer the next round of Boating Facility Grants to help communities capitalize on the surge in new boating activity.

The [Boating Facility Grant program](#) provides grants for planning, acquisition, development, expansion, and rehabilitation of public boating facilities located on the waters of the Commonwealth.

The PFBC encourages townships, boroughs, and municipal and county governments to apply. Nonprofit groups (501c3) including land trusts, conservancies, and watershed associations are also eligible to apply.

Private businesses and service clubs are not eligible for direct funding but are encouraged to partner with their local county or municipality.

“Across Pennsylvania, momentum continues to grow around outdoor recreation as a whole, and the enthusiasm we’re seeing for recreational boating is incredible,” said Tim Schaeffer, PFBC Executive Director. “Participation in paddle sports, especially kayaking, has surged, and many communities are eager to accommodate families and individuals by adding or improving safe and convenient public access to the water. Funds awarded through this grant program can help communities develop projects, particularly projects that are accessible for all, to improve existing access areas or develop something new to serve local residents and attract recreational boaters to their communities.”

Applicants can seek grants for site acquisition, development, expansion, prevention of the spread of aquatic invasive species, and rehabilitation of recreational boat access facilities. Eligible construction projects may include, boat ramps, courtesy floats, restrooms, access roads, parking areas and signs. Funds may also be used to enhance the facility’s ADA compliance or by adding adaptive elements to the access site. Applicants are encouraged to keep accessibility for all in mind when developing their applications.

Funding requests require a 50% match. For the 2025 round of grants, the PFBC will accept applications from anywhere in the Commonwealth.

For more information about the Boating Facility Grant Program and application form, visit the [PFBC website](#). ✧

Trustees release Final Restoration Plan to implement shoreline and wetland restoration projects at Metal Bank Site

On September 13, 2024, the Trustee Council for the [Metal Bank](#) Superfund Site in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania released the [Final Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment](#) (PDF, 49 pages) to restore habitat and natural resources injured as a result of contaminants being released at the site.

The Trustees will implement the Kensington & Tacony Trail (K&T Trail) Living Shoreline and Tacony Boat Ramp Project, which includes shoreline and riparian habitat restoration, and nearshore improvements. This project will transform an eroding shoreline and industrial bulkhead into a naturalized and living shoreline through riparian plantings, located about ¼ mile south of the Metal Bank site. This project will repair and stabilize 1,150 linear feet of living shoreline at the Tacony Boat Launch and a wharf that is directly south along the K&T Trail. Using living shoreline techniques, the shoreline will be restored to create a freshwater tidal wetland, protecting

and enhancing aquatic vegetation such as Spatterdock (*Nuphar advena*), which provides crucial foraging and nursery habitats for both adult and juvenile fish. The Trustees will also create an access path to the shoreline for maintenance, stewardship, and educational activities, while enhancing accessibility to these habitats for passive recreation. The Trustees expect to start this project in late 2024/early 2025.

Funds for these restoration efforts were acquired as part of the 2021 [Natural Resource Damage Assessment \(NRDA\) settlement](#) between Metal Bank and the Trustees. Trustee Council members for this case include NOAA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, acting through the EPA, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Fish and Boat Commission.

Background on the site

From 1962 to 1985, the site was used

for scrap metal storage. For approximately five years, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, electrical transformer salvage operations were performed at the site. Some of the salvaged transformers contained oil-bearing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which were released to soils and groundwater at the site, eventually seeping into the Delaware River and contaminating river surface water and sediment. These releases caused injury to natural resources, including fish, benthic organisms, and benthic habitat. In 1983, EPA designated the Metal Bank property a Superfund site. From 2008 to 2013 the EPA led contaminant removal and clean up efforts to reduce the threat to the river environment and enhance recovery of habitat.

In 2021, Metal Bank and the Trustees resolved Metal Bank’s liability for injuries to natural resources stemming from hazardous waste pollution at the site which provided the funds for these restoration efforts. ✧

Walleyes, camaraderie & healing highlight veterans event on Lake of the Woods

Pay It Forward (Walleye Master – Charity Event) is an all-expense-paid 3 night/2 day fishing extravaganza bringing 70+ veterans to Lake of the Woods. The purpose of the event is to honor, recognize and celebrate all veterans, leading to healing and happiness.

Lake of the Woods Tourism represents tourism and the lodging community throughout Lake of the Woods County. They are a partner organization behind the Pay It Forward event and believe our veterans and our freedoms as a result of their efforts and sacrifices deserve to be recognized.

As an outdoor hunting and fishing community, we have a lot to be thankful for. We live in an area of bountiful outdoor experiences, which include world class walleye fishing, excellent big game and waterfowl hunting. Also, this is the birth place of one of our favorite winter recreations, snowmobiling. We are fortunate to live in a four season outdoor paradise. Our community invites you to participate in our event to say thank you to the disabled service members and their families who have served and fought on our behalf

to protect the freedom that allows each and every one of us to pursue our dreams. Their sacrifices should be paid forward as a debt of gratitude and we welcome them to be guests in our community without any financial strain.

www.payitforwardlow.org is a fishing extravaganza, August 25 – August 28, 2025 honoring U.S. Veterans. For questions, contact Lake of the Woods Executive Director Joe Henry at 320-260-7727 or joe.henry@lakeofthewoodsmn.com.

Pay It Forward is part of the 501(c)(3) called Walleye Master Charity Events. This program is possible due to generosity and donations of lodging, charter boats, meals, time and of course, monetary donations. More info at www.PayitForwardLOW.org

2025-pay-it-forward-sign-up-application [Microsoft Word - 2025 Pay It Forward sign up application \(payitforwardlow.org\)](#). Mail your donations to: Walleye Master Charity Events | PO Box 42 | Baudette, MN 56623 ✧

Checking in on young walleye: DNR began fall surveys in September



If you're on the water in late September to early October, be on the lookout for Michigan DNR personnel conducting nighttime walleye recruitment surveys. Fisheries managers use these surveys to determine whether walleye that hatched in the spring (known as young-of-year) were born in the wild or were stocked, as well as how many are present in an area. This information about the status of young walleye in lakes helps the DNR make well-informed management decisions.

Using electrofishing boats at night, crews will survey shallow areas near

the shoreline of lakes with the goal of capturing juvenile walleye. Walleye prefer cooler, deeper areas of lakes during the day but move into shallow, nearshore areas at night, making nighttime surveys more efficient. On larger lakes, two or more electrofishing crews using separate boats may operate at the same time to cover more area. The crews will work on a subsample of Michigan lakes that have been stocked with walleye, as well as lakes that have not.

Biologists also collect and keep a sample of young-of-year walleye from stocked lakes to determine whether the fish are primarily reproducing naturally or if young-of-year are from stocking. All other walleye will be released unharmed. Walleye that are stocked in these lakes are marked with oxytetracycline, a chemical marker that can be observed within captured fish by using a microscope with an ultraviolet light source in a laboratory setting.

Some surveys will be conducted collaboratively with tribal agencies; tribal natural resource departments also will conduct surveys independently of the DNR. In the Upper Peninsula, the U.S. Forest Service will also be collaborating on surveys and conducting independent surveys in the Hiawatha National Forest as part of an effort to create long-term datasets for a number of inland lakes managed for walleye.

Everyone is urged to use caution when fishing or on the water near electrofishing boats, and anyone wading will be asked to exit the water when a survey boat approaches and during electrofishing work. Crews will be using bright lights to illuminate the water around the boat and running a generator on board, which may make it difficult to hear and speak with anyone on shore, such as anglers and lake residents.

[Learn more about how the DNR manages Michigan's fisheries](#) ✧

Boat Dock Lottery for 17 Ohio State Parks opened October 1

Apply online to secure your spot at popular boating destinations!

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Boaters, here’s your chance to secure a public boat dock slip for the 2025 season at some of Ohio’s most sought-after boating destinations. Beginning Tuesday, Oct. 1, the Ohio DNR opened the online application for its boat dock lottery, offering spots at 17 scenic state parks. The lottery application period closes at 11:59 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 31.

“Our state parks offer some of the best boating opportunities in Ohio, and the boat dock lottery gives more people the chance to enjoy these beautiful waters,” said ODNR Director Mary Mertz. “We’re excited to offer this convenient online application process, making it easier than ever for boaters to access the outdoor adventures waiting for them next season.”

Boating enthusiasts can apply for available docks at the following state parks: Alum Creek, Buck Creek, Buckeye Lake, Burr Oak, Caesar Creek, Delaware, Dillon, Guilford Lake, Indian Lake, Lake Milton, Mary Jane Thurston, Mosquito Lake, Paint Creek, Rocky Fork, Salt Fork, Shawnee, and West Branch.

To participate, applicants must submit proof of watercraft ownership (title) and current registration. While you may apply for multiple parks, only one application per household per park is permitted. Those selected will have the opportunity to renew their dock rental annually each spring for up to five years.

Don’t miss your chance to enjoy Ohio’s beautiful waterways in 2025! For more information and to apply, visit ohiodnr.gov/docklottery. To learn more about dock options at each park, please contact the local park office(s) at:

Continued in column 2

Nominate outstanding individuals for a Great Lakes Fishery Commission Award

Each year, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission honors individuals or groups who have made outstanding contributions to Great Lakes science, policy, and management. The Commission is pleased to announce that it is now accepting nominations for three annual awards:

- [The Jack Christie/Ken Loftus Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions toward Understanding Healthy Great Lakes Ecosystems](#)
- [The Buzz Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships](#)
- [The Vern Applegate Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control](#)

The Commission welcomes your nominations for these awards, which will be presented during the Commission’s annual meeting in May, 2025. The form for submitting a nomination is available online and is designed to be convenient. Please feel free to forward this announcement to your colleagues.

Nominations are due by November 1, 2024. Nominations submitted in the previous three years will be considered and do not need to be resubmitted. For info: www.glfc.org/about.php#awards ✧

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Alum Creek: (740) 548-4631
 Buck Creek: (937) 322-5284
 Buckeye Lake: (740) 527-4218
 Burr Oak: (740) 767-3570
 Caesar Creek: (513) 897-3055
 Delaware: (740) 363-4561
 Dillon: (740) 453-4377
 Guilford Lake: (330) 222-1712
 Indian Lake: (937) 843-2717
 Lake Milton and West Branch: (330) 235-0030
 Mary Jane Thurston: (419) 832-7662
 Mosquito Lake: (330) 637-2856
 Paint Creek and Rocky Fork: (937) 393-4284
 Salt Fork: (740) 432-1508
 Shawnee: (740) 858-6681 ✧

Sea Grant and NOAA announce 2024 Joint Fellowship Program awardees

Sea Grant and NOAA Fisheries announced the 2024 National Marine Fisheries Service-Sea Grant Joint Fellowship recipients. This year, seven population dynamics fellows and three marine resource economics fellows will embark on critical fisheries research with support through this national program.

Since 1999, this fellowship program has trained the next generation of fisheries scientists, addressing the need for expertise in stock assessments and fisheries management. Fellows in population dynamics focus on modeling and managing marine ecosystems, assessing fish stocks, invertebrates, mammals and other targeted and protected species. Marine resource economics fellows address the economic dimensions of conserving and managing living marine resources. More info: [Sea Grant and NOAA Fisheries Announce 2024 Joint Fellowship Recipients](#) ✧

NOAA Fisheries releases National Seafood Strategy Implementation Plan

NOAA Fisheries released its [National Seafood Strategy Implementation Plan](#) (PDF, 14 pages). Our [National Seafood Strategy](#), released in 2023, outlines our direction for supporting the U.S. seafood economy and enhancing the resilience of the seafood sector, including wild-capture and aquaculture. This plan outlines actions we are currently implementing as well as those we can take to support the strategy.

“The Implementation Plan is where the rubber meets the road,” said NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator Janet Coit. “It outlines the specific actions to achieve the goals we laid out in the strategy to support our nation’s seafood sector and the benefits it provides.” ✧

Ice Fishing Championship set for Grand Rapids, Michigan

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – On February 11-16, 2025 USAngling will host the World Ice Fishing championship (WIFC) in the Grand Rapids area on Lake Tamarack. The city is expecting to host teams from 12 different countries including Kazakhstan, Latvia, and Finland to name a few.

In 2024 the WIFC was held in Mongolia where Team USA won the silver medal with a Day Two comeback win for the first time on foreign ice. Captain Myron Gilbert who previously won a gold medal in 2010 and a bronze in 2013 stated, “I’m excited to be fishing close to home for the first time since 2013. Several of our team anglers are from Michigan, so it’ll be nice to compete on home ice against the best in the world. We are very excited to bring catch and release angling to the ice fishing World Championships. Conservation is important to all sportfisherman.”

Current Team USA members include local Michigan natives, Chad Schaub and Team Director, Steph Sissell from the Grand Rapids area who will be able to fish near their hometown. “Michigan is a great place to hold the 2025 WIFC since MI has some of the best ice fisherman in the country,” says Steph Sissell. Additionally, coach Myron Gilbert who is from Brooklyn, MI and Keith Kniffen from the Lansing area will be returning to compete in their home state.

The tournament includes three days of pre fishing followed by two days of tournament competition for gold, silver, and bronze medals. The anglers will target two fish species, crappie and bluegill through the winter ice. For the first time in the history of WIFC this will be a no kill fishing event as well. USAngling, in cooperation with USA Ice Team, has developed a system to catch, weigh and release the fish that has been effective in several of the USA trails. Mike McNett, the USAngling Freshwater Fishing Director and former ice angler team

member said, “Developing a system to weigh and release the fish with a low mortality rate is critical if we want the Olympic Committee to consider our sport for the Olympics again.” In the spirit of the recent Olympics, anglers across the globe are striving for fishing as an Olympic sport. In the 1900 Paris Olympic Summer Games over 600 anglers competed.

“We are very proud to have such a prestigious fishing organization such as USAngling select Grand Rapids for the World Ice Fishing Championship,” said Mike Guswiler, President of the West Michigan Sports Commission. “They could have chosen many places within the United States, but they chose our destination and we’re looking forward to hosting our first international fishing tournament.”

If you’d like to get involved in the event please contact Katy Tigchelaar at ktigchelaar@westmisports.com

About USAngling

USAngling is a 501c3 charitable organization that provides leadership for our U.S.A. National Fishing Teams as they compete worldwide, shares our love of Competitive Angling by engaging America’s youth, supports Conservation actions, and empowers local Community angling groups.

About the West Michigan Sports Commission

The non-profit West Michigan Sports Commission (WMSC) identifies, secures and hosts youth and amateur sporting events to positively impact the economy and quality of life in the region. Since its inception in 2007, the WMSC has booked 882 events attracting more than 1.4 million athletes and visitors, generating over \$410 million in direct visitor spending. Visit westmisports.com, [Facebook.com/WestMichiganSportsCommission](https://www.facebook.com/WestMichiganSportsCommission) and [@westmisports](https://www.instagram.com/westmisports) on Twitter and Instagram for more information. ✧

Muskies stocked across Ohio

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The top 10 waters in which anglers caught Fish Ohio muskies in 2023 were:

- West Branch Reservoir (102 Fish Ohio entries)
- Leesville Lake (48)
- Piedmont Lake (42)
- Alum Creek Lake (24)
- Salt Fork Lake (18)
- Caesar Creek Lake (17)
- Mahoning River (17)
- Clearfork Reservoir (11)
- Lake Milton (11)
- Pymatuning Lake (8)

The DNR operates six state fish hatcheries to manage fish populations and increase public fishing opportunities. Eleven fish species are stocked statewide, and the agency put more than 40 million fish into public waters in 2023.

Sales of fishing licenses along with the federal [Sport Fish Restoration](#) program support the operation of Division of Wildlife fish hatcheries. Since 1950, the Sport Fish Restoration program has dedicated permanent funding to fishery conservation through federal excise taxes on sport fishing equipment, import duties on fishing tackle and pleasure boats, and the portion of the gasoline fuel tax attributable to small engines and motorboats. The USFWS annually apportions these funds that the Division of Wildlife uses to acquire habitat, produce and stock fish, conduct research and assessment surveys, provide aquatic education, and secure fishing access.

Anglers ages 16 and older are required to have an Ohio fishing license to fish in state public waters. An annual license is \$25 and is valid for one year after purchase. A one-day fishing license costs \$14 and may be redeemed for credit toward the purchase of a one-year fishing license. Licenses and permits can be purchased online at wildohio.gov, through the [HuntFish OH app](#), and at participating license sales agents. ✧

Sea lamprey? Quagga mussels? Zebra mussels? Meet the worst invasive species in the Great Lakes

Because of invasive species, "The Great Lakes of today are practically unrecognizable compared to the Great Lakes of the 17th century.

One hundred eighty-eight. That's the number of aquatic non-native species that have made their way into the Great Lakes as of 2023—at least the ones that scientists have identified.

About one-third of the species have transformed the lakes for the worse. Those invasive species have destroyed ecosystems, messed up food webs, almost driven other species to extinction, and threatened recreation and economic activity.

Invasive species contribute to the most pollution in the Great Lakes

Yes, it's not industrial discharges, municipal sewage or chemical rain polluting the Great Lakes, according to [Sea Grant New York](#). It's the non-native plant and animal species that have changed its ecosystem.

These plants and animals earned their name as an 'invasive species' due to their ability to spread through an ecosystem and limit food and habitat for species already native to the Great Lakes, essentially displacing them and polluting the environment. Most often, these invasive species that have reproduced in this new environment were transported by humans, both intentionally and unintentionally.

Due to the advent of canals, some of these species have been around the Great Lakes as early as the 1800s. Ocean-going ships in the 1950s carried millions of gallons of freshwater ballast water that contained many of the invasive species living in the Great Lakes today. The species arrived in the Great Lakes when ships emptied their ballast tanks.

These are the non-native invasive species found in Lake Erie and Lake Ontario:

- **Zebra mussels:** Mollusks introduced via ballast water
- **Quagga mussels:** Mollusks introduced via ballast water
- **Spiny waterflea:** Crustaceans introduced via ballast water
- **Fishhook waterflea:** Crustaceans introduced via ballast water
- **Sea lamprey:** Fish that came through canals
- **Alewife:** Fish that came through canals
- **Common carp:** Fish introduced via ballast water
- **Round goby:** Fish introduced via ballast water
- **Purple loosestrife:** plant that was intentionally introduced
- **Water chestnut:** Plant that was intentionally introduced
- **Eurasian watermilfoil:** Plant that was intentionally introduced

The species jeopardizing areas of Lake Erie the most is the zebra mussel. They are a great threat to the Great Lakes and their threat should not be minimized due to the loss of the native habitat of the lakes.

In a new study, scientists created a top 10 list of the worst invasive species in the Great Lakes. The team of scientists from Michigan Sea Grant, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and two Michigan state agencies ranked the invaders based on how they impact the environment and society

Here are the top ten invasive species in all the Great Lakes:

1. **Zebra mussels:** Mollusks introduced via ballast water
2. **Quagga mussels:** Mollusks introduced via ballast water
3. **Alewives:** Fish that came through canals
4. **Sea lamprey:** Fish that came through canals
5. **Japanese stiltgrass:** Plant introduced in shipment packing material

6. **Grass carp:** Fish introduced for aquaculture
7. **Water chestnut:** Plant that was intentionally introduced
8. **Common reed:** Plant introduced in shipment packing material and solid ballast
9. **Round goby:** Fish introduced via ballast water
10. **White perch:** Fish that came through canals

"The Great Lakes of today are practically unrecognizable if you compare them to the Great Lakes of the 17th century," said El Lower, a communications specialist through the [Great Lakes Aquatic Nonindigenous Species Information System](#) and Michigan Sea Grant.

Rankings based on environmental impact included the extent the invasive species have affected the ecosystem, such as outcompeting native species, changing native species' genetics or destroying water quality.

According to the study, zebra and quagga mussels have had the biggest environmental impact, followed by grass carp and the common reed, which received the same ranking. ✧

ODNR urges caution during wildfire season

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio DNR Division of Forestry is urging Ohioans to follow the state's outdoor burning regulations and to take precautions if they plan to burn debris this fall. [Ohio law dictates](#) that most outdoor burning is prohibited in unincorporated areas from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. during October and November. "Wildfires occur every fall in Ohio due to the careless burning of trash and debris," said ODNR Division of Forestry Assistant Chief Greg Guess. "This can be avoided by using safe burning practices and adhering to existing regulations." ✧

St. Croix fish passage projects may create largest alewife run in North America

An international partnership led by the Passamaquoddy Tribe will improve access to 600 miles and 60,000 acres of habitat to alewives and other sea-run fish. The work could result in the return of 80 million adult spawning alewives.

An 1874 map hanging in the Calais, Maine, library depicts the St. Croix, or Skutik, River flowing past the town. A spot on the river called Salmon Falls marks the location of a tribal fishing village. In 1881, the Milltown Dam was built across the river near the same site. The village—and the sea-run fish that sustained members of the Passamaquoddy People for thousands of years—disappeared. The Passamaquoddy now compose the tribal communities Sipayik and Indian Township in Maine and Skutik in New Brunswick.

This year, a major cross-border collaboration championed by the Passamaquoddy People resulted in the [dismantling of the Milltown Dam](#), the lowermost dam on the river. It had existed for more than 140 years. Following removal of the Milltown Dam, hundreds of thousands of alewives, a keystone species in river and ocean ecosystems, surged upriver during their annual spring migration. With further fish passage restoration, the Skutik could host North America's largest run of alewives.

Now, the [Passamaquoddy Tribe](#) at Sipayik and the [Maine Department of Marine Resources](#) are focused on the next major barriers to fish passage on the river: the Woodland and Grand Falls dams. Existing 1960s-era fishways on both dams are inadequate. With \$35.6 million from [NOAA's Office of Habitat Conservation](#) through the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act](#), the partners will develop state-of-the-art fishways to carry six species of migratory fish over the dams.

The project includes:

- Conducting studies to determine best designs for upstream American eel passage and downstream passage for alewives and eels at both dams
- Designing and building multiple upstream and downstream fish passage solutions at the Woodland Dam, including a fish ladder and a fish lift
- Designing multiple upstream and downstream fish passage solutions for the Grand Falls Dam
- Expanding the ability of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik to participate in restoration through workforce development and job support
- Helping the local economy by creating jobs and supporting fisheries for alewives and American eels

When complete, the restoration work will improve access to 600 miles of habitat for migratory fish and 60,000 acres of spawning habitat in lakes for alewife. A [restoration plan](#) produced by the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Skutik estimates that the river might support a run of more than 80 million adult alewives. They could produce billions of juveniles each year. This tremendous influx of biomass will supply energy and nutrients to all links of the food chain touched by their migration.

“Where there’s a big run of alewives, the river gets black with fish,” says Sean Ledwin, director of the Bureau of Sea Run Fisheries and Habitat for the



Maine Department of Marine Resources. “All kinds of inland fish and wildlife like ospreys and minks eat alewives. Nearshore, they feed hake, striped bass, seals, puffins, and whales. When you have a project of this scale, you could have a big meaningful impact on bringing cod, pollock, and other species that tribes and other people fished for historically.”

Woodland Dam

The restoration of the Skutik/St Croix River will not only benefit the ecosystem. It will also boost the economy of Washington County, Maine, the most economically depressed region in New England. Alewives are used as bait in the Maine lobster industry, which brought in about \$464 million in 2023. Restoration would support the \$20 million juvenile American eel (elver) fishery, in which the Passamaquoddy have a large interest. The project will also create construction jobs and related work in the nearby communities.

The Passamaquoddy People have relied on the river for sustenance since time immemorial. Archeological evidence from the region shows the presence of alewife bones from an ancient hearth dating back 4,000 years.

“This river is central to who we are and what we’re about,” says Ralph Dana, a Passamaquoddy Tribal member overseeing the restoration work for the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik. “It was a source of sustenance, travel corridors, cultural practices, and medicinal gathering for thousands of years. Our namesake, Peskotomuhkati, means ‘the people who spear pollock.’ That profound connection speaks to who we are. We’re fishers. Pollock used to be abundant here in the Passamaquoddy Bay, but it’s been depleted.”

St. Croix fish passage projects

Continued on page 9

St. Croix fish passage projects

Continued from page 8

Over the last 400 years, the Passamaquoddy were forced off their traditional homeland. Dams, water pollution, and other development decimated the river's fish populations. As early as 1821, the Passamaquoddy petitioned the State of Maine to stop the destruction of the watershed, but their proposal failed. Nevertheless, they continued to advocate for the restoration of sea-run fish.

In 1995, the State of Maine passed a law blocking fish passage on the Woodland and Grand Falls dams due to concerns alewife might harm introduced smallmouth bass populations. By 2002, the alewife run dwindled to about 900 individuals. The Passamaquoddy People led the repeal of the law in 2013, and the run has since rebounded to more than 600,000 fish.

However, with 99 percent of alewife habitat on the river upstream of the three major dams, the Passamaquoddy

continued to act. "The tribes took a big lead," says Ledwin. "They developed the Skutik River Restoration Plan in 2019, did a project prioritization, and identified the projects [on the Milltown, Woodland, and Grand Falls dams] as the highest priority."

The [International St. Croix River Watershed Board](#) brought together the Passamaquoddy People, U.S. and Canadian federal governments, state and provincial governments, nonprofits and other interested parties to study the best options for fish passage at the dams. Canadian partner New Brunswick Power began the removal of the Milltown Dam in 2023. NOAA Fisheries has worked with the Passamaquoddy Tribe for more than 20 years. In 2023, we awarded the Tribe and the Maine Department of Marine Fisheries funds to design and build fishways over the Woodland Dam, and design fish passage solutions at Grand Falls.

After years of conflict, the effective collaboration behind these projects—which includes support from dam

owners—represents a model for large-scale restoration. "It makes sense that we all try to join forces on this one," says Dana. "And I think that's where we've experienced some really exciting results."

"This incredible work on the St. Croix is only possible through the collaboration of so many partners," says Carrie Robinson, Director of NOAA's Office of Habitat Conservation. "I'm grateful in particular to the Passamaquoddy Tribe for their long-term advocacy for this restoration effort."

NOAA is funding the design and construction of a large modern fish lift on the Woodland Dam, where the old fishway exists. Studies revealed that fish were gathering at another location on the dam, so we will fund a second pool-and-chute style fishway. Construction will begin in 2025. NOAA is also providing funding and technical assistance for the design of a nature-like fishway and a pool-and-chute fishway over the Grand Falls Dam. Project partners still need additional funds for construction at Grand Falls. ✧

\$4.2 Million recommended for Great Lakes Habitat Restoration

Funding for three ongoing cooperative agreements will support habitat restoration efforts that strengthen Great Lakes fisheries, ecosystems, and communities

NOAA Fisheries is recommending \$4.2 million in [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#) funding to continue ongoing work restoring important habitat in the Great Lakes. Through this funding, partners will implement projects that support fisheries, habitats, and communities in Great Lakes ecosystems.

We're recommending funding to continue the work of three ongoing cooperative agreements:

- [Ducks Unlimited](#) will develop plans to restore wetland habitat at Camp Sabroske in Ohio, contributing toward restoring the Maumee Area of Concern.

(\$752,000)

- The [Great Lakes Commission](#) will implement several high priority habitat restoration projects in the Great Lakes region, including in the Maumee Area of Concern in Ohio and the Niagara River Area of Concern in New York. (\$3.1 million)
- [Genesee County](#), Michigan, will contribute to the removal of the Hamilton Dam on the Flint River, opening nearly 25 miles to fish passage. (\$341,000)

As the largest freshwater system on earth, the Great Lakes are one of the most important natural resources in the world. They support valuable commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries, as well as industry, transportation, and tourism. This funding will help sustain the many benefits the Great Lakes provide to the

environment and communities by:

- Supporting valuable fisheries and coastal resources
- Improving the quality of our water by restoring coastal wetlands
- Providing recreational opportunities for people to use and enjoy
- Increasing the resilience of Great Lakes communities

The [Office of Habitat Conservation's NOAA Restoration Center](#) works in the Great Lakes to support the ecosystems and economies that rely on these valuable international resources. Since 2010, we have supported 98 projects through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. These projects have restored more than 5,100 acres of habitat for fish and wildlife and opened up more than 520 miles of rivers and streams to fish migration. ✧

Ohio native wins third Federal Duck Stamp Contest

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Adam Grimm, a native of Elyria, Ohio and current South Dakota resident, won his third Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. His acrylic painting of a pair of spectacled eiders, large ducks known for their brightly colored bills and white spectacle-like eye patches, won from a group of 239 entries. Grimm first won the Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest in 1999 at 21 years of age and is still the youngest person to ever win the prestigious competition. He was a student at the Columbus College of Art and Design at the time.

Grimm has also won the Ohio Wetland Habitat Stamp Contest three times (2005, 2014, and 2021). His artwork is found on the cover of the 2023-24 hunting and trapping regulations (A Forgotten Day to Remember) and the 2003-04 hunting and trapping regulations (Bountiful Heritage).



Adam Grimm's artwork was featured on the 2023-24 (L) and 2003-04 hunting and trapping regulations.

In addition, Grimm donated some of the artwork featured on the Ohio sportsmen's vehicle license plate series. A wetland was restored and dedicated in his honor by the Ohio DNR.

Those hunting waterfowl in Ohio are required to purchase both the current Federal Duck Stamp and Ohio Wetland Habitat before hunting. Proceeds from the sales of both stamps are used to acquire, restore, and protect wetland habitat. ✧

MNR name returns

Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) name has reverted back to the name most anglers and hunters know best — the **Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)**. This was prompted by changes made to the Executive Council of Ontario in June, which created several new ministries and adjustments to ministry portfolios. The MNR will continue to be led by Minister Graydon Smith and will continue to fulfill its mandate. Forestry remains in the MNR portfolio but is led by the new Associate Minister of Forestry Nolan Quinn, Member of Provincial Parliament for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry ✧

Financing finally in place for Asian carp measures

Financing is in place for a variety of measures to keep Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River system. The **Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal** is a stretch of water that artificially joins Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River system. With invasive Asian carp plentiful in the Mississippi River system, the fear is the canal will be the gateway for this invasive into the Great Lakes.

The **US Army Corps of Engineers** completed a study in 2016, to identify measures to stop Asian carp from getting closer to Lake Michigan. These include sound barriers, bubble barriers, and an enhanced electric barrier. In 2020, the US Congress authorized the measures. Of the \$1.15 billion cost, \$400 million has been approved. Washington is paying the largest share at \$274 million, with \$64 million from Michigan and \$50 million from Illinois.

Eric Brown of the **Great Lakes Commission** said tendering will begin and construction could start in 2025. It's expected to take six to eight years to complete the entire project. ✧

Great Lakes whitefish in decline

Whitefish numbers are down in some parts of the Great Lakes, and it is believed zebra and quagga mussels are to blame. Fish populations fluctuate with water quality, food web changes, and introduction of new species, MNR spokesperson Mike Fenn said. "Factors vary, but the arrival of zebra and quagga mussels during the 1980s played a big part, as they contributed to increased water clarity in some lakes, affecting growth of aquatic plants, the food web dynamic, and in turn, the fish community," he said. "Zebra mussels can change the movement of nutrients in Great Lakes fish communities and potentially reduce fish production. Water clarity has also been observed to increase because of the filtering activity of zebra mussels. This can lead to negative shifts in the fish community."

Whitefish populations across the Great Lakes have been affected differently. In Lake Huron, over the last 20 years, whitefish have declined in varying degrees. Numbers have also slid in Lake Ontario, and remain at a low, but stable, level. Whitefish are still commercially harvested in eastern Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte.

In Lake Superior, whitefish are stable except in Nipigon Bay and eastern Lake Superior. Invasive mussels were recently found in Nipigon, but their impact is not known. Lake Erie has also seen a whitefish decline in recent years. Commercial harvest of the species there ceased in 2013. ✧

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Never allow someone to be your priority, while allowing yourself to be their option.

Mark Twain

Wisconsin NRB Meeting Oct. 23

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board (NRB) will meet in-person for the October meeting to consider proposed rulemaking documents. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, [Oct. 23, 2024](#), in public meeting room G09, State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 South Webster Street, Madison, Wisconsin. [The Board will act on items 1-4 and 7 as listed on the agenda.](#)

[The public is encouraged to watch the October meeting on the DNR's YouTube channel.](#) The deadline to register for public appearance requests and to submit written comments is 11 a.m. on Wednesday, [Oct. 16, 2024](#). Remote testimony from the public via Zoom may be accepted. In-person public appearances are also welcome.

During the October meeting, the Board will be considering:

- Request that the Board adopt WM-18-23, proposed rules affecting chapter NR 10 related to the deer management assistance program (DMAP).
- Request adoption of Emergency Board Order FH-16-24(E), proposed rules affecting chapters NR 20 and 25 related to Lake Superior cisco and lake trout regulations.
- Request that the Board approve the Statement of Scope for Board Order FH-10-24, and conditionally approve the public hearing notice for Board Order number FH-10-24 and notice of submittal of proposed rules to the Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse for proposed rules affecting chapters NR 19-26 related to changes to fishing regulations on inland, outlying and boundary waters (the 2025 Fisheries Management Spring Hearings rule).

[The complete October NRB meeting agenda is available on the DNR website.](#) In addition to being encouraged to watch the upcoming meeting, there are opportunities for the

Statewide youth deer season returns Oct. 17-20

Minnesota's youth deer season will take place statewide Thursday, Oct. 17, through Sunday, Oct. 20. The season coincides with statewide teacher workshops, so many Minnesota students don't have school during the youth season.

To participate, youth must be 10-17 years old and have a deer license. Participant numbers are not limited and there is no special permit, so parents should obtain a regular deer hunting license for each youth who will be hunting. Youth may not tag antlerless deer or legal bucks taken by another individual. An adult parent, guardian or mentor must accompany youth ages 10-13.

All hunters and mentors, regardless of whether they are participating in youth deer season, must follow blaze orange/pink clothing requirements. Fabric or synthetic ground blinds on public land must have a blaze orange safety covering on top of the blind that is visible from all directions, or a patch made of blaze orange that is at least 144 square inches (12x12 inches) on each side of the blind.

Adults may not hunt, unless they are in an area open during the early antlerless season and have a valid license. Complete youth season details are available on the [Minnesota DNR youth deer season webpage](#) (mndnr.gov/hunting/deer/youth.html).

Hunters can check the chronic wasting disease sampling options and carcass movement restrictions for the deer permit areas where they hunt on the [Minnesota DNR website](#) (mndnr.gov/deerhunt). **Contact:** [Barb Keller](#), DNR big game program leader, 651-259-5198. ✧

Continued from column 1 public to testify and to submit written comments about issues that come before the NRB. [More information regarding public participation at Board meetings is available on the DNR website.](#) ✧

Feedback sought on possible mandatory PFDs

Transport Canada is seeking feedback about the possibility of making personal flotation devices (PFDs) or lifejackets mandatory for recreational boaters. Not using a PFD or lifejacket is the leading cause of death among recreational boaters, accounting for 89% of fatalities, officials [stated in a Let's talk Transportation bulletin](#). Canada averages 111 recreational boating deaths annually.

Research projects re-examining mandatory PFDs/lifejackets were launched in 2018 by Transport Canada and safety partners. It found most people who died in boating mishaps weren't wearing a PFD or lifejacket, were adults, and were aboard powerboats.

The most common incident that led to a death was a capsized vessel, followed by a person falling or being thrown overboard, officials stated.

PFDs criteria created

This research helped develop criteria to consider when developing options for mandatory wear requirements of PFDs/lifejackets in certain circumstances when boating recreationally. They are based on three categories: age requirements, vessel length, and vessel type.

“Any potential requirements would only apply while a vessel is moving, so as not to impact other activities like anchoring the boat and swimming,” officials stated. “Given the complexity of this issue, we may consider a combination of different criteria, based on data and public feedback.”

For more background, or to complete the survey, visit: <https://letstalktransportation.ca/lets-talk-making-personal-flotation-devices-lifejackets-mandatory-for-recreational-boaters>. ✧

Other Breaking News Items:**(Click on title or URL to read full article)**[How do you catch steelhead in Lake Erie tributaries](#)

With steelhead starting to swim into the tributaries of Lake Erie, an expert fisherman and fly creator points out that fishing doesn't have to be complicated.

[Sea lamprey control contributes to decreased sea lamprey population](#)

The Sea Lamprey Control Program is doing its part to decrease the population of sea lamprey, an invasive species that once jeopardized the Great Lakes fishing economy.

[More than 110 stream sections and lakes to soon receive trout across Pennsylvania](#)

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission announced Friday it will be stocking 116,500 trout in 118 stream sections and lakes from October through mid-December

[Volunteers and MSU students turn Lake Erie's plastic pollution into art](#)

Michigan State University students along with volunteers recently gathered at Sterling State Park in Monroe, Michigan, to remove plastic pollution from Lake Erie. The plastic collected will be used in a student eco-art workshop.

[U.S. approves billions in aid to restart Michigan nuclear plant](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy said on Monday that it had finalized a \$1.52 billion loan guarantee to help a company restart the Palisades nuclear plant, which is located on the shore of Lake Michigan in Michigan.

[Michigan DNR urges anglers to keep an eye out for marked splakes](#)

Michigan's fall fishing season for splake—a hybrid cross between lake and brook trout—is approaching. And the state's environmental officials are asking anglers for help as they track the fish

[Maritime time: Coho fever](#)

In September of 1967, anglers poured out onto Lake Michigan in search of a new fish: salmon from the Pacific Ocean. Many people abandoned common sense in their pursuit of the fish, and some lost their lives.

[Record 1,800 sturgeon released into St. Louis River](#)

On Tuesday, community members helped release nearly 1,800 young lake sturgeon into the St. Louis River near Brookston, Minnesota. The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa invited the community to help with the stocking event as part of a continuing effort to reestablish the species where it

[Does hot weather have an impact on Michigan's seasonal salmon run? DNR fisheries expert weighs in](#)

In Michigan, Chinook and Coho salmon pick up on decreasing day length and cooler temperatures as signals to migrate into river systems to spawn. Warmer temperatures don't always bode well for fishermen looking to land salmon as they make their fall run, though decreasing daylight will allow water

[Court asked to lift protections for gray wolves, allowing hunting in Great Lakes region](#)

The Biden administration on Friday asked an appeals court to revive a Trump-era rule that lifted remaining Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves in the U.S

[Fish on! Platte River coho salmon run begins at Sleeping Bear Dunes](#)

The Michigan DNR is busy passing coho salmon through the lower weir on the Platte River at the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore with the onset of the annual fall migratory

[Riverboat touring company officially halts operations at Tahquamenon Falls](#)

After a long search for a new owner, the Tahquamenon Falls Train and Riverboat Tours company in McMillan Township, Michigan, has officially shut their doors for good.

[Wildlife Wednesday: Michigan's salmon make their annual run](#)

Every September, Michigan's rivers and streams burst with life as tens of thousands of salmon make their annual migration from the Great Lakes. This natural event, rooted in decades of deliberate fishery management, provides a significant economic and ecological impact in the state

[Sheboygan County hatchery supports Lake Michigan's fish population](#)

At Kettle Moraine Springs Hatchery in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, hundreds of thousands of salmon and trout are raised each year, playing a critical role in sustaining the fish population in Lake Michigan. The hatchery raises 340,000 steelhead for Lake Michigan, stocking 25 different tributaries to the lake.

[Eastern Lake Ontario is now a National Marine Sanctuary](#)

Lake Ontario from Cape Vincent to Pultneyville, New York, has been declared a National Marine Sanctuary. The federal designation by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is the 16th so-called "underwater park" in the country and the first in New York waters. It protects more than 1,700

[PFBC temporarily reduces steelhead stocking, explains why anglers are finding heavier fish](#)

Steelhead experts in Erie, Pennsylvania, believe anglers should expect to see large, heavy fish this fall and winter as the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) works on a plan to get back to stocking 1 million fish each year. This year, the PFBC reduced its annual stocking by about 20% as it works on a

[Gov. Kathy Hochul celebrates Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary designation](#)

New York Governor Kathy Hochul celebrated the NOAA's designation of the Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary—the first to be designated off New York State's coast. The sanctuary will cover over 1,700 sq. miles of state waters in eastern Lake Ontario and protect 43 known shipwrecks and one

[Enbridge agrees to redo key permit for Line 5 tunnel project](#)

Canadian pipeline company Enbridge recently agreed it would not act on a 2021 permit from the Michigan Dept. of Environment, approving its Line 5 tunnel project. The Bay Mills Indian Community led a challenge to the permit, prompting a review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that delayed the

[DNR releases final environmental impact statement on pipeline project](#)

Wisconsin DNR officials released a final environmental impact statement on the Canadian energy firm Enbridge's plans to reroute an oil and gas pipeline around the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa's reservation. The 898-page document released Friday relied on 10,000 pages of materials that