



NOAA posts Draft Mgmt Plan for Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary Also posts Notice of Public Availability and Meetings

In accordance with section 304(e) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, NOAA is soliciting public comment on the draft management plan and draft environmental assessment for Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Comments on the draft management plan and draft environmental assessment will be considered if received on or before April 10, 2009. For a copy of the draft management plan and draft environmental assessment, contact the Management Plan Review Coordinator, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, 500 W. Fletcher Street, Alpena, MI 49707. Copies can also be downloaded from the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (TBNMS) website at <http://www.thunderbay.noaa.gov>.

Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

1. In writing to the Thunder Bay NMS Management Plan Review Coordinator (see to obtain a copy section above);
2. By e-mail to TBMPR@noaa.gov or
3. By providing comments (oral or written) at one of the public meetings (see public meetings section below).

All comments received are a part of the public record and will be generally posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise

sensitive or protected information. NOAA will accept anonymous comments (enter N/A in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

For more info: http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090227_thunderbay.html and Tera Panknin at (989) 356-8805 ext. 38, TBMPR@noaa.gov.

On October 7, 2000, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) designated TBNMS as the nation's thirteenth national marine sanctuary. At that time, NOAA prepared and released a management plan for the new sanctuary. TBNMS
Thunder Bay Draft Mgmt Plan

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Illinois High Schools hold nation's first high school fishing tournament

On April 24, the Illinois High School Association will hold the sectionals leading into the nation's first statewide high school fishing tournament on May 8-9.

The state action will unfold on Carlyle Lake, the largest manmade lake in Illinois. Carlyle Lake spans more than 26,000 acres of water and 11,000 acres of land, while its 3,260 lbs. of fish per water-acre makes it one of the most productive fishing areas in the state. "We had three other strong bids in the running for this event, but in the end Carlyle clearly separated itself from the others," said IHSA Bass Fishing administrator Dave Gannaway. "They have their entire community involved and we look forward to conducting a first-

class championship event during our first year."

The Illinois High School Association's Board of Directors had approved a recommendation from the Executive Director to add a bass fishing tournament as an IHSA activity beginning in the spring of 2009, provided that adequate sponsorships are secured in advance for the tournament. The IHSA became the first high school state association in the country to sponsor a bass fishing tournament.

The IHSA recently announced that Plano Molding, a fishing supply company located in Plano, Ill., will join Country Insurance as a bass fishing title sponsor. ✧

IL Free Fishing Days

Mark your calendars for Illinois Free Fishing Days, scheduled this year for June 5-8. Free Fishing Days allows anyone to fish without the need for a fishing license, inland trout stamp, or salmon stamp during the four-day event each June. For more info: Terry Beard – 217-785-5822 or terry.beard2@Illinois.gov. ✧

MI DNR COs seek charges for illegal commercial operation

Michigan DNR conservation officers are seeking multiple charges against six Delta County men in connection with an illegal commercial fishing operation on Little Bay De Noc. Charges will be sought in both state and tribal court systems.

During a records review, a DNR CO noted an abnormally high number of walleye were being sold in the wholesale commercial market during the winter months over the past several years. COs from the state Commercial Fish Enforcement Units, as well as COs stationed in Delta County, developed further information while operating surveillance on Little Bay De Noc and surrounding areas.

Gary Hagler, chief of the DNR Law Enforcement Division said that officers believe more than 20,000 lbs. of walleye may have been taken from area waters through the illegal operation just in the last two months. On February 26, DNR conservation officers seized 256 lbs. of walleye that were harvested from nets in Little Bay De Noc the previous day. Officers returned to the bay with Sault Tribal police officers and seized 1,200 ft. of illegally set gill net.

"This is a complex case that took some time to develop," Hagler noted. "Also, the public provided critical information by alerting us to illegally set nets on Little Bay De Noc. This type of public involvement is crucial to protecting our natural resources." ✧

Congressmen to advocate animal rights agenda

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) couldn't be happier with the formation of a new group of Congressmen that will promote its agenda.

On February 18, U.S. Representatives Jim Moran (D-VA) and Elton Gallegly (R-CA) announced the formation of a new Congressional Animal Protection Caucus. The goal of the group is to get like-minded members of Congress together and promote animal rights policy in Washington, D.C. through forums and briefings.

According to the Humane Society Legislative Fund (HSLF), the legislative wing of the HSUS, the new caucus will "take lawmaking for the animals to the next level." HSLF went on to gush in its blog, "we could not be more excited about their leadership of this new organization of humane lawmakers."

HSUS President and CEO, Wayne Pacelle was also prominently quoted in Rep. Moran's press release announcing the caucus' formation. Pacelle stated, "The newly constituted Congressional Animal Protection Caucus will help better align our federal policies with public opinion, and we are excited to work closely with its leaders and with the entire Congress to combat cruelty and abuse."

As of press time, a full list of other U.S. Representatives joining the caucus was not available. However, the USSA will let sportsmen know as the names become available. Each member of the caucus should be contacted by constituents in their districts.

Representatives should be made aware of HSUS' radical anti-hunting agenda. They also need to be aware that sportsmen expect their representatives not to kow tow to that agenda. ✧



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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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\$740 million goes to states for fish and wildlife projects

Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced earlier this month more than \$740.9 million will be distributed to the fish and wildlife agencies of the 50 states, commonwealths, the District of Columbia, and territories to fund fish and wildlife conservation, boater access to public waters, and hunter and aquatic education.

These Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program funds come from excise taxes and import duties on sporting firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, sportfishing equipment, electric outboard motors, and fuel taxes attributable to motorboats and small engines.

The Wildlife Restoration apportionment for 2009 totals nearly \$336 million, with more than \$64.7 million marked for hunter education and firearm and archery range programs. The Sport Fish Restoration apportionment for 2009 totals more than \$404 million.

Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act funding is available to states, commonwealths, and territories through a formula based on land area, including inland waters and the number of paid hunting license holders in each state, commonwealth, and territory. State, commonwealth, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies use the money to manage wildlife populations, conduct habitat research, acquire wildlife lands and public access, carry out surveys and inventories, administer hunter education, and construct and maintain shooting ranges.

Sport Fish Restoration is funded by the collection of excise taxes and import duties on sport fishing equipment, motorboat and small engine fuels, and pleasure boats. Sport Fish Restoration funds are apportioned to the states based on a formula that includes the land and water area, inland waters and the Great Lakes and marine coastal areas where applicable, and the number of paid fishing license holders. States, the District of Columbia,

commonwealths, and territories use the funds to pay for stocking fish; acquiring and improving sport fish habitat; providing aquatic resource education opportunities; conducting fisheries research; maintaining public access, and the construction at boat ramps, fishing piers, and other facilities for recreational boating access.

More than 62% of Wildlife Restoration funds are used to buy, develop, maintain, and operate wildlife management areas. Since the program began, state, commonwealth, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies have acquired 68 million acres through fee simple, leases, or easements, and operated and maintained more than 390 million acres for hunting since the program began. In addition, agencies certified over 9 million participants in hunter education.

“This source of conservation funding is important not only measured by its dollar amount, but also by legislative safeguards preventing its diversion away from state fish and wildlife agencies,” said Rowan Gould, acting Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “For states working to ensure a future for fish and wildlife – and opportunities for people to enjoy them – precious few programs offer this level of support and reliability.”

Numerous species including the wild turkey, white-tailed deer, pronghorn antelope, American elk, and black bears have increased in population due to improved research and habitat management funded by Wildlife Restoration. In the program's history, fish and wildlife agencies have assisted more than 9.2 million landowners on fish and wildlife management.

States, commonwealth, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies have improved more than 35 million acres of habitat and developed more than 44,000 acres of waterfowl impoundments.

Since the inception of the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act, states, commonwealth, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies have acquired 360,000 acres through fee simple, leases, or easements. They have operated and maintained more than 1.5 million acres annually and they stocked over 6.8 billion fish and restored more than 1.7 billion fish throughout the country; renovated or improved 6,400-boat access sites; and had over 11.9 million participants in the aquatic resource education program.

Go to the program web site at <http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/> for state, commonwealth, and territory funding allocations. ✧

State tournament to showcase archery in school programs

48 schools to participate, nearly 850 students will compete

The third annual Ohio National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) State Tournament was held March 6 at the Ohio Expo Center's Lausche Building. The tournament was held in conjunction with the Arnold Classic Sports Festival in Columbus.

Ohio launched the NASP program to a pilot group of 12 schools in 2004. Five years later, there are 307 schools in Ohio with teachers certified to instruct target archery through the NASP program; a program which is rapidly growing and gaining popularity among students and educators.

The NASP program teaches target archery to elementary, middle and high school students in the school gym. Curriculum covers archery, safety, equipment, technique, concentration skills and self improvement. For more info, go to: www.ohionasp.com and www.arnoldsportsfestival.com. ✧

EPA chief reconsidering ship ballast permit

The new head of the USEPA says the administration will reconsider rules that critics say do too little to prevent cargo ships from dumping invasive species into the nation's waterways.

The EPA in December released a general permit for cargo vessels entering the Great Lakes or other U.S. waters from overseas that includes rules for 26 types of discharges, such as ballast, oily bilge water and "gray water" from showers and sinks.

Breaking with the Bush administration, EPA head Lisa Jackson said on February 24 the permit "doesn't begin to address some of the concerns that are out there." "I don't have an answer for you today but I want to you know that's very much on my radar screen," she said during a meeting of the Great Lakes Commission in Washington, D.C.

Ballast, which keeps vessels stable in rough seas, is a leading pathway for aquatic invaders, which have overwhelmed native species and cost billions in economic damage.

The EPA permit requires vessels heading for U.S. ports with full ballast

to exchange water at least 200 miles from shore. Ships with empty tanks must rinse them with salt water to kill freshwater organisms lurking in residual puddles or sediment. But Canada and the U.S. Coast Guard already had required those measures, and critics say they still could let some invasives get through.

Several environmental groups sued EPA last month, saying the permit did not meet requirements of the Clean Water Act. They want shippers to install systems for sterilizing tanks, which the maritime industry says are being developed but remain unavailable.

Jackson also told officials and activists from the region the administration would honor President Barack Obama's campaign pledge to pump more federal money into Great Lakes restoration, despite the staggering budget deficit.

As a candidate, Obama proposed a \$5 billion "down payment" toward implementation of a \$20 billion restoration plan released by the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration in

2005. It includes drinking water and sewage system upgrades, toxic site cleanups, improvements to wetlands and wildlife habitat and continued efforts to keep foreign species out of the lakes.

Jackson said she was optimistic about prospects for progress toward those goals. "I don't think there's any reason to question the president's continued commitment to the Great Lakes," she said.

Officials expect the region to get nearly \$2 billion for wastewater and drinking water systems under the recent stimulus package. Jackson acknowledged more was needed. "Investment in water infrastructure has big payoffs" in improved water quality and job creation, she said. Jackson also promised to seek more money for removing toxic sediments from highly polluted harbors and rivers across the region.

The House authorized boosting the program's budget from \$54 million to \$150 million last fall. But the bill died in the Senate after EPA turned against it. ✧

MI DNR search for MSU range manager

The Michigan DNR is leading a job search for a shooting range manager. The manager will oversee the Demmer Shooting Sports, Education and Training Center, now under construction on the Michigan State University campus. The manager will oversee financial, technical, personnel and operational functions. The manger will also develop and implement operational policies and procedures, create a marketing plan for the center and manage other staff, including a Firearms Director and Archery Director.

The \$3.5 million Demmer Shooting Sports, Education and Training Center is under construction on the Michigan State University campus. The facility will include a 30-meter, 12-lane indoor archery range and a 15-meter, 16-lane indoor

firearms range, which can also be used for archery. The project also includes the first outdoor archery park in Michigan.



The Michigan DNR partnered with MSU in 2006 to develop the center, with a large contribution provided by the Demmer family. Archery became a viable part of the facility through contributions from the ATA and

Easton Sports Development Foundation. In 2008, the ATA provided its first \$100,000 installment toward its \$500,000 pledge to support the center and its outdoor Humphries Archery Park. The ATA recently contributed another \$100,000 installment for 2009.

Michigan currently has 315 schools participating in the National Archery in Schools (NASP) program, reaching an estimated 60,000 students. At least 20 schools have joined NASP in the Lansing area, and at least four communities near the facility offered archery recreation programs last summer. ATA provided \$50,000 to infuse archery into schools and recreation programs in the area. The ATA also provided \$80,000 the past three years to the DNR to help fund shooting sports coordinators. ✧

IL Gov reopens state parks

Gov. Pat Quinn last month announced the reopening of seven Illinois state parks closed last year by Blagojevich. The move is another sign pointing toward the state's renewed focus on natural resources and recreational opportunities for its citizens especially in tough economic times.

The announcement officially starts the process of reopening Castle Rock State Park and Lowden State Park in Oregon, Illini State Park in Marseilles, Hidden Springs State Forest in Strasburg, Moraine View State Park in Leroy, Weldon Springs State Park in Clinton, and Wolf Creek State Park in Windsor. IDNR will immediately begin the process of re-staffing the sites as quickly as possible.

An estimated 44 million people visit Illinois state parks and other state sites annually, spending an estimated \$500 million in local economies each year. That spending results in an estimated \$790 million in overall economic impact supporting nearly 8,500 jobs throughout the state. ✧

Help Wanted: DNR hiring for summer positions at state parks and visitor centers

The Michigan DNR is now hiring to fill many interesting and educational jobs at state parks, visitor centers and fish hatcheries.

Anyone interested in working for the DNR Interpretive Services may apply by filling out an employment application at one of 10 major interpretive sites and Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery located in Mattawan.

For the State Park Explorer Program, a list of 41 Explorer Guide sites is listed on the DNR Web site under the Education and Outreach menu. For more information on the State Park Explorer Program, please contact Karen Gourlay at 248-349-3858. ✧

Ice rescue shows need to have a plan

A recent ice rescue on Hubbard Lake by Michigan COs highlights the importance of knowing what to do if you find yourself in an emergency situation while enjoying Michigan's winter recreation opportunities.

In the early morning hours of Feb. 19, a concerned mother called the DNR 24-hour law enforcement hotline, to report that her son had not returned home from ice fishing on Hubbard Lake. The man had planned on being home by 7:30 p.m., she said.

Brian Engelhard and Warren MacNeill both responded to the call. Conditions on the lake were severe — temperatures below 10 degrees and blowing snow with visibility of less than 40'. The officers proceeded to perform a grid search on the lake.

At 4:45 a.m., the officers located the man in his pickup truck, cold but alive. The truck had become stuck and the man made the decision to stay inside the vehicle. Eventually the truck ran out of gas, but he remained in the truck, using a small portable propane heater from his shanty until it ran out of fuel. The man then piled articles on top of himself to conserve body heat.

As the officers were searching the lake, the man's family retrieved GPS coordinates of the location where the man was previously fishing with a friend. This information was invaluable in this situation, said Lt. Creig Grey, DNR law enforcement supervisor in Roscommon.

"This situation easily could have ended in a tragedy, but this man and his family knew the importance of being safe when going out on the ice," Grey said. "His family knew when to expect him home, they knew approximately where he was going to fish, he made the decision to stay in his vehicle to try to stay warm, and the family knew that with recent warmer weather and the current weather conditions they needed to contact authorities for help. These are all important reminders for anyone venturing out on the ice this winter." ✧

Sea Grant holds Lake Huron workshops – 4/2, 4/18 & 5/2

Workshops will provide updates on creel, forage, law, food web and other subjects. Focus will be on the changing food web and the ongoing revision of the Management Plan for the Lake. There will be an opportunity for the audience to provide feedback. Registration is \$15.00 in advance, \$20.00 at the door and includes lunch.

Workshop dates/registration forms:

► April 4, Franklin Inn, 1060 E Huron Ave., Bad Axe, MI 48413

[Bad Axe, MI Sea Grant Workshop Flyer & Registration form](#)

► April 18, Eagles Hall, 1960 M-32 W, Alpena, MI 49707

[Alpena, MI Sea Grant Workshop Flyer & Registration Form](#)

► May 2, Little Bear Community Ctr, 275 Marquette St, St Ignace, MI 49781

[St. Ignace, MI Sea Grant Workshop Flyer & Registration Form](#) ✧

DNR to collect walleye eggs at Croton Dam

Michigan DNR personnel will be electro-fishing for walleye in the Muskegon River near Newaygo during the next couple of weeks to collect eggs for hatchery use. Staffers will be on the river in late March and a couple in early April, explained Unit Supervisor Jay Wesley. Most of the activity will occur upstream of Newaygo, below Croton Dam. The Muskegon River is the DNR's only collection area for Lower Peninsula walleye since the DNR temporarily suspended taking eggs from Tittabawassee River fish following the discovery of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia in the Michigan waters of Lake Huron. The DNR plans to collect some 13 million walleye eggs this year. For the most part, the walleyes will be electro-shocked, netted, stripped of their milt and eggs and then released back into the river, though some will be kept to be examined as part of on-going research projects. ✧

Soldier Field 2009 Boat & Tackle Market May 9

Chicago Park District hosting one day Free event

Soldier Field is hosting a unique (annual) free event in Chicago that appeals to the outdoor (land and water-sport) community, specifically to boating and fishing enthusiasts. The goal is to host a large size one-day event in Soldier Field's South Parking Lot that provides an arena to buy, sell and showcase new and old boats as well as boating and fishing equipment and accessories in a festive environment on Chicago's lakefront.

When: Saturday, May 9th (9-3 PM) in Soldier Field's South Parking Lot

► Individuals, companies, marinas, etc. will be able to rent display space

to create a boat/outdoor accessories "market." Everything from cruisers, fishing boats, canoes, jet skis, boat accessories as well as new and used fishing tackle will be sold. Prices will depend on variables such as size of area, individual vs. company, activity (sell product vs. sponsor display).

► Display participants will sell or swap items from their area; sponsors will have preferred locations.

► There will also be an area for items on consignment sold by the event staff if someone doesn't want a table/booth of their own.

► Event is free and open to the public

EXHIBIT & MARKET AREAS:

► New Boats & Boating Equipment / Sponsor Area

► New Equipment / Sponsor Area

► Used Boats & Boating Equipment

► Used Fishing Equipment Area

► Sponsor Display Areas

► Interactive Festival Activities for kids & adults - Fishing Contest, Picnic Area, Climbing Wall, etc.

► Food, Beverage & Music

► Contests/competitions – Equipment Prizes (trips, sailing/boating lessons,)

► Adult: Fishing contest, sponsor activation areas, etc.

► Kids: Remote control boat regattas, fishing contest, climbing wall, etc. ✧

Michigan Inland Lakes monitoring report available

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Geological Survey has released a summary report of ambient water quality characteristics of Michigan's inland lakes with public access.

The "State and Regional Water-Quality Characteristics and Trophic Conditions of Michigan's Inland Lakes, 2001-2005" report was prepared by the USGS, Michigan Water Science Center, in cooperation with the DEQ.

The report summarizes the results of the first five years of Michigan's Lake Water Quality Assessment monitoring project conducted by the DEQ and the USGS under a joint funding agreement supported with Clean Michigan Initiative funding. The ten-year LWQA monitoring project, which will be completed in 2011, is a component of the DEQ's surface water monitoring strategy.

During 2001-2005, 433 lake basins from 364 inland lakes with public access were monitored for baseline water quality conditions and trophic status, an indicator of primary biological productivity. Trophic evaluations based on the data collected for these lakes indicate nearly three-quarters are either

Mesotrophic or Oligotrophic, which are typically perceived as very good to high quality lakes, and 22% are Eutrophic.

Only 4% of the lakes were classified as hypereutrophic, which is perceived as lower quality by most lake users.

Although the distribution of lakes in Michigan is not uniform, the highest percentage of Oligotrophic lakes is in the Northern Lakes and Forests or North Central Hardwoods Omernik Level III Ecoregions located in northern Michigan.

The report is available online at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2008/5188/> or contact Lori Fuller: lmfuller@usgs.gov or 517-887-8911. The DEQ contact for the LWQA monitoring project, Ralph Bednarz, can be reached at bednarzr@michigan.gov, 517-335-4211. More info on Michigan's inland lakes monitoring programs can be found at <http://www.michigan.gov/deq>.

Additional information about other USGS, Michigan Water Science Center, reports, water quality data, and Michigan projects is available on the USGS Web site at <http://mi.water.usgs.gov/>. ✧

Early catch-&-release trout season for Wis.

The March 7 opening day of the early catch and release trout season was the latest date it can be by law — and that may well benefit Wisconsin anglers. The early February warm-up erased what had been record snow accumulations in some parts of the state.

The season opened March 7 and runs until midnight April 26, when there is a week "rest" before the regular season. The season is catch-and-release, and only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used while fishing for any species of fish on trout streams. Most trout streams are open to early fishing with the exception of most Lake Superior tributaries and most streams in northeast Wisconsin; check the 2008-2009 Trout Fishing Regulations pamphlet for specific waters.

Tips for fishing techniques during the early season and information on the fish populations in some popular early season waters are available on the early trout season page of the Wisconsin Fishing pages of the DNR Web site. ✧

Lake Mille Lacs safe harvest levels set

Safe fish harvest levels have been set at Lake Mille Lacs, Minnesota for the 2009 fishing season. The safe harvest of walleye has been set at 541,000 pounds, up from 430,000 pounds last fishing season. The state's allocation is 414,500 pounds, up from 307,500 pounds last year.

Indian bands that signed the 1837 Treaty will be allocated 126,500 lbs. of walleye this fishing season, up from 122,500 lbs. last year. The state's 2009 walleye harvest may include an overage allowance of up to 5%. The yellow perch and northern pike safe harvest levels are the same as last year. The yellow perch level is 270,000 lbs.; the northern pike level is 25,000 lbs. The state's allocation is 135,000 lbs. of yellow perch and 12,500 lbs. of northern pike.

Due to low abundance and low incidental harvest in both the tribal and angling fisheries, quotas will not be set for tullibee and burbot. Instead, these species will be monitored, and safe harvest levels will be discussed in the future if abundance, harvest, and fishing interest increase.

Every year fisheries experts from the Minnesota DNR and the eight Chippewa bands meet in January to share information and determine safe harvest levels. "Now that we know what the State's walleye quota is for 2009, we can evaluate where the winter fishery stands and can evaluate if our current regulation will keep us within our allocation," said Ron Payer, DNR fish chief. "And once we have done that, we will meet with the Mille Lacs Fisheries Input Group."

The current Mille Lacs regulation allows anglers to keep four walleye up to 18", which may include one trophy over 28". Anglers are required to release all walleye 18 to 28". Total walleye angling harvest was 76,000 lbs. in 2008. The safe harvest level was increased from last year due to low total harvest in 2008. ✧

Winnebago sturgeon spearkers 2-day total harvest 874

OSHKOSH, WI – Perfect weather and a near record-breaking fish were the stories on day two of the 2009 lake sturgeon spearing season on Lake Winnebago and its Upriver Lakes. Sub-freezing temperatures with lots of sunshine is what Amy Van Beek of Menasha saw when she caught an 80.8", 168.8 lb. female sturgeon out of her shack on Lake Poygan. Ms. Van Beek's fish was the 4th heaviest and the 6th longest fish ever recorded in the history of the Winnebago spear fishery.

Sturgeon anglers speared 506 on opening day. Ron Bruch, Wisconsin DNR sturgeon biologist, said 43 sturgeons heavier than 100 lbs. had been taken in the sturgeon-spearing season that ended Tuesday after only four days.

The largest this season to date is the 172 lb. sturgeon speared by Ed Blatz of Fond du Lac, WI. It was the third largest ever, topped only by the sturgeon of 188 lb. (David Piechowski, Redgranite, Wis., 2004) and of 180 lbs. (Elroy Schroeder, Appleton, Wis., 1953).

The heaviest fish is the current record of 188 lbs., speared by Dave Piechowski of Redgranite, WI in 2004. That fish was 79.5" long. The longest fish was a 90" monster harvested in 1951, which weighed only 118 lbs. Fish biologists say it was likely a female that had spawned the previous spring.

DNR sturgeon biologist Ron Bruch reported 290 fish were speared Sunday on Lake Winnebago including 178 female sturgeon (56 juvenile females and 122 adult females) and 112 males. On the Upriver Lakes, Sunday's take was 78 including 40 females (26 juvenile and 14 adult females) and 38 males. And one of those females was the 80.8" 168.8 pounder speared by Van Beek.

The 2009 season ran from February 14 through March 1. This is the third year of the lottery fishery on the Upriver Lakes, which is a season

MI - Black Lake sturgeon season harvest results

DNR fisheries officials announced Michigan's 2008 Black Lake sturgeon harvest season ended early on Feb. 10 with the quota of five fish having been harvested from the lake located in Cheboygan County. The fishing season, which includes spearing or hook and line fishing, was scheduled to run from Feb. 7-15, or until the total allowable catch of five fish had been reached.

Two-hundred twenty-five anglers were scheduled to participate in the fishing event this year, said Tim Cwalinski, DNR fisheries biologist. But fewer anglers actually participated as a result of the quota being reached earlier in the week. "These numbers also do not include the many friends and family members who made the trip to Black Lake to join in the experience" he said.

Harvested lake sturgeon this year ranged from 53 to 71" in length, with weights between 35 and 89 lbs. "Water clarity was excellent this year compared to last year, when poor visibility in the water resulted in no fish being harvested," Cwalinski said.

According to Cwalinski, sturgeon were moving more during this year's season which eventually led to the quicker harvest. Other fish caught or harvested during the period included walleye, muskellunge, yellow perch and northern pike.

The Black Lake sturgeon population appears to be slowly rebuilding. The DNR, Michigan State U and advocacy groups have worked diligently over the past 10 years to improve the lake's sturgeon numbers and know it will be decades more before the population is rebuilt to what it once was. ✧

format proposed by the spearkers themselves in an effort to help control spearing effort on the small upper lakes. ✧

DNR seeks comments on 15 lake mgmt plans

The Minnesota DNR is seeking comments on individual fisheries lake management plans for 15 lakes in St. Louis and Lake counties. Fisheries managers use the plans to describe the past, present, and future conditions of the lake. The plans identify goals and objectives for the fish community and identify specific management activities planned for the lake in the next 5 to 10 years.

The management plans available for review are for Bass (Echo Trial), Bear Island, Cedar (southwest of Aurora), Crooked, Deep (south of Gilbert), Fenske, Garden Lake Reservoir (includes Garden, Farm and South Farm lakes), Little Long, Loon, Maskenode (alternate name Four-Mile, near Mountain Iron) Newton, Pine (east of Hoyt Lakes), Shagawa, Tofto, and White Iron lakes.

These draft plans are available for review and comment at the Tower Area Fisheries Office at 650 Highway 169, Tower, MN 55790, 218-753-2580, ext. 222. The comment period will be open through Mar. 25, 2009. ✧

OH Spring trout releases provide fishing opportunities

Public fishing opportunities will be enhanced this spring when more than 80,000 rainbow trout, each measuring 10-13" long, are released into 45 Ohio lakes and ponds, according to the Ohio DNR. The releases will take place between mid-March and mid-May; anglers are reminded that the daily catch limit for inland lakes is five trout.

Some locations will feature special, youth-only angler events on the day of the scheduled releases. Once the youth-only events have concluded, all other anglers may fish.

For more info: 1-800-WILDLIFE, or at district offices in Akron, Athens, Columbus, Findlay, and Xenia. ✧

ODNR ups HP limit for Burr Oak Lake for more fishing access Motors greater than 10 horsepower can operate at "no wake" speed

In order to allow greater fishing access without altering the quiet recreational nature of Burr Oak Lake in Morgan County, the Ohio DNR has modified the lake's horsepower regulation. Boat motors greater than 10 hp are now allowed to operate on the lake, but only at "no wake" speeds. Previously, only motors less than 10 hp were permitted on Burr Oak Lake. The use of personal watercraft such as Jet Skis continue to be prohibited.

The horsepower modification pilot study at Burr Oak Lake will be evaluated during the 2009 and 2010 boating seasons. Burr Oak Lake was selected for the pilot study because of its size – 664 acres – and ability to accommodate boats with larger motors. ✧

Minn. holds 19th annual Roundtable

About 350 of Minnesota's conservation leaders – about 100 more than last year – gathered Jan. 9 and 10, in Brooklyn Center for the DNR's 19th annual Roundtable, an invitation-only event focused on fisheries, wildlife and ecological issues.

The gathering provided anglers, hunters and conservation leaders the opportunity to share insights with DNR staff and hear updates on the latest trends and research, with thought-provoking speakers on the future of conservation. DNR Commissioner Mark Holsten said this generation must rise to the challenge of proving that constitutionally dedicated funding for clean water, forests, prairies, and fish and wildlife habitat is a revolutionary, visionary and a worthy thing to support. This will take courage, he said, because status quo will need to change. ✧

WI – 8th Annual Muskie School March 21

The Capital City Chapter of Muskies, Inc. will hold their eighth annual Muskie School at Waunakee High School in Waunakee, WI on March 21, 2009. The school features the latest tips and techniques as well as pointers on muskie fishing in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Admission: Adults – \$29 (\$39 if you register after March 15) Kids (18 and under) – \$5. Enjoy lure demonstrations, hands-on workshops, "How to" classes, panel discussions, more. www.capitalcitymuskiesinc.org, crandall@msbnrg.com, or call 608-831-6020 (evenings). ✧

State sues Caterpillar for recent spill

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Will County State's Attorney James Glasgow on February 23 announced a lawsuit against Caterpillar, Inc. after a waste treatment tank at its Joliet facility overflowed earlier this month and spilled a reported 65,000 gallons of oily wastewater onto the ground and approximately 6,500 gallons of the spill flowed downhill into the adjacent Des Plaines River.

Officials at Caterpillar discovered the incident at 2200 Channahon Road the morning of February 8, 2009, and notified the IL EPA, who referred the case to Madigan's office. Caterpillar officials believe the spill was caused when a malfunctioning switch allowed an oil-water separator at the facility's wastewater treatment plant to overflow. State and federal environmental officials have indicated that any damage to fish or wildlife was minimal.

Madigan and Glasgow filed the seven-count complaint against Caterpillar alleging violations that include endangering the environment, public health and welfare, water pollution, violations of water quality and effluent standards and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit violations. ✧

Commission expands Crossbow Hunting opportunities

New crossbow regulations approved March 11 by the Michigan Natural Resources Commission are designed to expand hunting opportunities, retain existing hunters and recruit new hunters, and offer a way for some hunters to continue hunting when facing physical limitations.

Under the new regulations, crossbows may be used:

- ▶ by anyone 50 years of age or older during the Oct. 1-Nov. 14 bow hunting deer season statewide

- ▶ by any hunter age 12 and older during any hunting season in Zone 3 (southern Michigan), including the bow hunting season.

- ▶ during any season, in which a firearm may be used, for both big and small game statewide

Under the new regulations, youth hunters must be at least 12 to use a

crossbow. A crossbow stamp will be required in addition to hunting licenses for those using crossbows. Stamps will be available at all license retailers starting March 15. The stamp, which is free, will help the DNR monitor and survey crossbow hunters over the next three years.

Crossbow hunters are required by state law to wear hunter orange while hunting. The DNR will pursue legislative changes to modify the hunter orange law for crossbow hunters. Included in the regulations are limits on the velocity of the crossbow. Crossbows used for hunting are restricted to no more than 350 feet per second.

The regulations have a three-year sunset. Crossbow hunters will be surveyed over the next three years and regulations will then be re-evaluated

by the DNR and the NRC. Data will be collected that analyzes impact on the resource and the crossbow's potential to recruit or retain hunters. The data also will be analyzed to determine if crossbow use should be expanded further in the future.

The crossbow changes do not affect hunters with disabilities who are currently hunting under the authority of a DNR-issued crossbow permit.

The new regulations are designed to increase hunting opportunities in Michigan, especially in Zone 3, where the white-tailed deer population remains well above the DNR's desired population goal. The new regulations also will provide hunters with more choices to continue hunting if they have been injured, have a disability or other physical limitation that affects their ability to hunt. ✧

State awards NWTF with first-ever elk tag for auction

Under a new law, Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe announced that he had selected the National Wild Turkey Federation to auction off a special antlered elk license at its national convention in Nashville, Tennessee Feb. 19-22.

As part of its live auction, National Wild Turkey Federation put up for bid the antlered elk license, which would be good for use in any management zone open for Pennsylvania's upcoming elk hunt, Nov. 2-7.

The winner from Pennsylvania with a winning bid of \$28,500 was awarded the license, but is also required to purchase the required resident or nonresident general hunting license. The winning bidder also will be provided all of the information normally given to those who receive an elk license through the agency's annual public drawing, including a listing of permitted guides available should they choose to use a guide.

In September, the agency will conduct its annual public drawing to award 59 elk licenses to those who submit an application, along with a \$10 nonrefundable fee.

The exact breakdown of antlered and antlerless elk licenses, as well as the elk management zones each license will be assigned to, will be announced later. The application period will open in May.

In 2001, a recommendation to provide one special elk license for wildlife conservation organizations to auction was originally included in the Game Commission Elk Hunt Advisory Committee Report as one of the concepts for promoting elk hunting. However, the recommendation was set aside at that time because it was determined that legislative authority was necessary to do so.

The new law sunsets on July 1, 2013, and would require the General Assembly to re-authorize the authority to allow for the auction of one antlered elk license per license year. ✧

Anglers, hunters give big boost to economy

A report by the Congressional Sportsman's Foundation says if the \$76 billion sportsmen spend nationally on hunting and fishing were the gross domestic product of a country, sportsmen as a nation would rank 57 out of 181 countries. Clearly, the economic impact of sportsmen is a force to be reckoned with.

In many states, sportsmen spend more money, support more jobs and pay more taxes than most industries in the state. In Illinois annual spending by 1.1 million hunters and anglers (\$1.2 billion) is more than one and half times the combined revenues of the Chicago Bears, Bulls, Cubs, and White Sox (\$728 million).

That spending results in some \$709 million paid in wages, \$170 million in federal taxes, and \$138 million in state/local taxes. The ripple effect is calculated at \$2.1 billion. (See: *Congressional Sportsman's Foundation report "Hunting and Fishing: Bright Stars of the American Economy ~ A force as big as all outdoors."* www.sportsmenslink.org)

Thunder Bay Draft Mgmt Plan

Continued from page 1

is jointly managed by NOAA and the State of Michigan. The sanctuary's mission is to preserve nationally significant shipwrecks and regional maritime landscape through resource protection, education, and research. The sanctuary also promotes appreciation and responsible use of Thunder Bay, the Great Lakes, and the oceans.

NOAA is now undergoing the first review of the 1999 TBNMS management plan pursuant to section 304(e) of the NMSA. The draft revised management plan (2009) was prepared by NOAA and the State of Michigan's Department of History, Arts and Libraries in cooperation with the Thunder Bay Sanctuary Advisory Council and with input from the public, local governments, State and Federal agencies, and other stakeholders. The draft revised plan is comprised of four action plans (resource protection, education and outreach, research, and operations). It sets priorities to guide sanctuary programs and operations and provides the public with a better understanding of the sanctuary's strategies to protect Thunder Bay's resources.

The draft environmental assessment analyzes the environmental impacts of the revised management plan pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. In doing so, it analyzes two alternatives: the status quo (no change to the 1999 management plan) and the preferred alternative (revising the 1999 management plan).

Public meetings:

March 18, 6:30 PM

Rogers City, MI

Presque Isle District Library

181 East Erie St

Rogers City, MI 49779

March 19, 6:30 PM

Harrisville, MI

Harrisville Courthouse

106 North 5th St

Harrisville, MI 48740

March 20, 2 PM

Lansing, MI

Michigan Historical Center

Ohio Lake Erie Commission wants photos from shutterbugs

Camera buffs who want to capture the essence of Lake Erie life on film — or on memory card in this digital age — and share the wonders of the lake can enter the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) 2009 photo contest. Winning images will be displayed as part of a traveling exhibit and in an online photo gallery.

The 2009 "Life on Lake Erie" photo contest is an opportunity for amateur photographers, age 18 and older, to reveal their passion for one of Ohio's most valuable and dynamic natural features, Lake Erie. Photographs taken between July 9, 2008 and July 12, 2009 in and around the Lake Erie watershed can be submitted to the OLEC through July 16, 2009.

Submissions must be the original work of the photographer and can portray sustainable use, development or protection of Ohio's Lake Erie coastal resources. They can incorporate shoreline landscapes, wildlife, plants or even people enjoying various coastal activities. Black and white and color photographs will be accepted. Digitally altered photos will not be accepted. All submissions become the property of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission.

To enter, send a 5 x 7" print and a completed entry form, available at www.lakeerie.ohio.gov, to the Ohio Lake Erie Commission, One Maritime Plaza, Fourth Floor, Toledo, OH 43604. No more than five entries will be accepted from one household. Individuals can win up to two times. ✧

702 W Kalamazoo St
Lansing, MI 48909.

March 24, 6:30 PM

Alpena, MI

Great Lakes Maritime Heritage

Center

500 W Fletcher St

Alpena, MI 49707 ✧

Fish Ohio program inducted into national Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Fish Ohio program was inducted into the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame for 2009. The Fish Ohio program is the only honoree for 2009 and joins a prestigious group of 36 past award winners in the Organizational/Corporate or Government Entity category.

The Fish Ohio program was designed to honor anglers for noteworthy catches of Ohio's fish. Since its inception in 1976, more than 400,000 anglers have been recognized for catches of fish of qualifying length in one of 19 species categories.

Each angler with a qualifying catch receives a certificate and lapel pin. Each year's pin depicts a different species along with the year. There is also a Master Angler category for anglers who catch four Fish Ohio qualifying fish in a single year. The Master Angler pin is the same as the Fish Ohio pin, except it is gold in color.

The first pins were issued in 1979 and displayed largemouth bass. ODNR Division of Wildlife began to administer the program in 1980 and developed the first Master Angler pins in 1982. These pins featured the black crappie.

Anyone interested in participating in the Fish Ohio program can fill out the online application after catching a qualifying fish. The application is available at www.fishohio.org.

The Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame, www.freshwater-fishing.org, is an international, non-profit museum and educational organization located in Hayward, Wisconsin.

The Hall of Fame conducts and maintains a program for the recognition of persons, organizations and institutions that have made significant and lasting contributions to the sport and heritage of freshwater fishing. ✧

IN Fish, wildlife rules suggestions still wanted

The Indiana Natural Resources Commission has received nearly 800 suggestions from the public as part of an ongoing comprehensive review and enhancement of fish and wildlife rules for the DNR. Substantive rule change suggestions are the third stage of a four-stage process recommended last year by a steering committee. Suggestions can be made until April 1 by going to www.IN.gov/nrc/ and clicking on the "Submit a Suggestion."

An advisory group will review the suggestions and conduct public hearings to determine the merit of suggestions received. The group will report its findings and recommendations to the NRC in late 2009. Actual proposals will be presented to the NRC in 2010.

The Stage 2 goal is to provide clarity and consistency of interpretation, and to improve enforceability with only minor amendments to the rules in three segments. The NRC has granted preliminary adoption to the first segment of amendments on deer hunting and hunter education rules. Additional segments will address rules associated with wild animals (except deer), mammals and game birds (March 17), and rules associated with reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates, commercial licenses and permits (May 2009). Stage 2 will be completed and approved by November.

The fourth stage provides an option to work with the state legislature to enact necessary amendments to existing statutes. ✧

Last year was Earth's coolest since 2000

NEW YORK – Climatologists at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York City said on February 25 that 2008 was the planet's coolest year since 2000. ✧

DU donates Illinois River property to DNR

Ducks Unlimited donated 370 acres along the Illinois River to the Illinois DNR during its annual state convention in East Peoria. The property, Wightman Lake, is 20 miles north of Peoria near Sparland. Over the past three years, DU has invested more than \$400,000 in habitat improvements to turn Wightman Lake into a wetland conservation showcase. Designed for use by both waterfowl and people, the project is the result of a new era of cooperation between DU and the DNR.

Sensitive to budget issues the DNR currently faces, DU has agreed to continue managing the property during a three-year transition period. This will provide time for restored habitats to become fully established and to phase in public access. ✧

New fishing/recreation guides available

The 2009 Indiana DNR Fishing Guide is now available, free, at most DNR properties, various sporting goods stores, fishing license vendors and other locations around the state. The 2009 Recreation Guide is at many of the same places or will be shortly.

In addition to providing fishing rules and regulations, the new Fishing Guide includes articles on Indiana's fisheries program, fishing for walleye, and research on catfish done on the Wabash River.

The 50-page Recreation Guide includes everything you want to know about DNR properties, state parks, lakes, state forests, state park inns, fish and wildlife areas, state museum and historic sites and nature preserves, plus articles on mountain biking, exploring the outdoors with kids, camping for beginners, and more.

You can also obtain a copy by e-mailing DNRGuideRequests@dnr.IN.gov. Both guides also can be viewed in their entirety at www.dnr.IN.gov by clicking on the appropriate link. ✧

Natural Resources Board officers elected

The seven-member Wisconsin Natural Resources Board reelected its officers at its January 28 meeting in Madison. Dr. Christine Thomas was reelected chair. Thomas is the Dean and a professor of resource management at the U. of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources. She was appointed to the Board by Gov. Jim Doyle in March, 2004. Her term expires May 1, 2009.

Madison conservationist Jonathan P. Ela was reelected vice-chair. Ela is retired from the Sierra Club. He was first appointed to the Board by Doyle on January 22, 2003. His term expires May 1, 2011.

Attorney John W. Welter, Eau Claire, was reappointed secretary. He was first appointed to the Board by Doyle on May 5, 2004, and was reappointed by Doyle on May 1, 2005. His term expires May 1, 2011.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board sets policy for the Department of Natural Resources and exercises authority and responsibility in accordance with governing statutory provisions. Chapter 15 of the Wisconsin Statutes delineates the formal duties of the seven-member board. Board members are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the state senate. Three members each must be selected from the northern and southern portions of the state and one member serves at large. Terms expire on May 1. ✧

\$4.6 million to improve boating access

Communities across Ohio have until April 1 to apply for a share of \$4.6 million available for recreational boating access facility projects on the state's waterways, according to the Ohio DNR. The Cooperative Boating Access Facilities grant program is provided through the Ohio Waterways Safety Fund, which is comprised of watercraft registration and titling fees, a portion of the state motor fuels tax and funding from the U.S. Coast Guard. Call 614-265-6443. ✧

Fishery Council votes to close Arctic to commercials

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has voted to prohibit any commercial fishing activity within all of the U.S. waters north of the Bering Straits and east to the Canadian border. The entire region closed is approximately 150,000 square nautical miles.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council, using the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Act, has already closed over 527,113 square nautical miles off Alaska. In total, the area closed to protect habitat covers an area more than five times larger than the entire National Park System for the U.S.

The Marine Conservation Alliance (MCA), an association of fishermen, processors and communities involved in groundfish and crab fisheries off Alaska, said it fully supports action by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) to close all commercial fishing in waters north of the Bering Strait until a management plan is fully developed.

The NPFMC action concluded a nearly two-year process to take action while a management plan is developed for the waters north of Bering Strait. The precautionary approach closes roughly 150,000 square nautical miles to commercial fishing, and is intended to provide an opportunity to assess the impacts of climate change on Arctic ecosystems before any commercial fishing is allowed.

A Senate resolution passed last year (S. J. Res. 17) supported a halt to commercial fishing in the Arctic until agreement is reached on managing migratory, transboundary and straddling stocks among all nations bordering the Arctic including the United States, Canada, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Russia, and the European Union.

In addition to supporting the precautionary closure of the Arctic, the MCA has taken other actions to support healthy oceans and sustainable fisheries:

▶ Successfully pushed to extend science-based fishery management across the nation during reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA).

▶ Supported NPFMC action to protect Essential Fish Habitat in the Gulf of Alaska, Aleutian Islands and Northern Bering Sea; habitat area closed to bottom trawling now totals over 530,000 square miles, almost as large as the land mass of Alaska itself.

▶ Promotes the use of ecosystem-based fishery management practices by building on existing management actions and science programs, and through applied scientific research to find practical solutions to conservation issues.

▶ Published wheelhouse guides to help fishermen and other mariners avoid conflicts with northern Right whales, Short Tailed Albatrosses, and other seabirds.

▶ Coordinates cooperative research efforts between fishermen and scientists such as the effort that developed a successful prototype halibut excluder that reduced halibut bycatch by cod trawlers by over 50%.

▶ Coordinates marine debris cleanup efforts throughout Alaska, including the Southeast panhandle, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands, and Norton Sound that has removed over one million pounds of mostly plastic debris from Alaska's shoreline and earned NOAA's Sustainable Fisheries Leadership Award for coastal habitat restoration in 2008.

The Juneau-based Marine Conservation Alliance is a coalition of seafood processors, harvesters, support industries and coastal communities that are active in Alaska fisheries. The MCA represents approximately 75 percent of the participants in Alaska shellfish and groundfish fisheries and promotes science based conservation measures to ensure sustainable fisheries in Alaska. For more information, click <http://www.marineconservationalliance.org/>. ✧

Bass Youth programs team with USSAF Fishing Education and Fun to Trailblazer Adventure Program

BASS Youth and the United States Sportsmen's Alliance, in conjunction with Trailblazer Adventure Program, have formalized a relationship to further outdoor education among youth at Boy Scout Camps and other organizations nationwide.

BASS Federation members and local Federation clubs will set up education stations at the camps, including BASS CastingKids casting techniques, baiting and lure selection, fish ID, game and fish regulations, sportsmanship, boating safety, conservation and outdoor ethics.

The Trailblazer Adventure Program is the largest scale outdoor program of its kind, having brought the thrill of outdoor sports to more than 700,000 youth and families since 2001. In 2008, the Trailblazer Adventure Program hosted 75 events in 34 states and hosted more than 179,000 participants.

Since 1983, BASS has provided programs through the BASS Federation Nation for children to learn about conservation, natural resources, fishing and competition through the Junior Bassmasters, including the introduction of CastingKids in 1991.

For more info: (407) 566-2208 or visit www.Bassmaster.com. Visit www.espnoutdoorsmedia.com for BASS/ESPN Outdoors' latest releases, photos and more. ✧

Commercials plead guilty to overfishing striped bass

Five St. Mary's County, Maryland, commercial fishermen pleaded guilty Friday, February 20, to illegally overfishing striped bass also known as rockfish. According to authorities, the five took an excess of fish with a market value of approximately \$2,150,000. ✧

World running out of weapons to fight superbugs

People are dying from "superbugs" because our antibiotic arsenal has run dry, leaving the world without sufficient weapons to fight the ever-changing bacteria, warn infectious disease researchers at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston.

In the current issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine*, doctors Barbara Murray and Cesar Arias evaluate the past, present and future response to preventing and treating "superbugs," organisms that are resistant to antibiotics.

Superbugs can evade antibiotics by producing an enzyme that destroys the drug or creates a barrier to it. Superbugs can pump out any antibiotic that reaches the bacterial cell or modify the target of the antibiotic so the drug cannot bind to it.

Most of the public has heard of MRSA [methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*] because it produces the most cases each year," said Murray, co-author and director of Division of Infectious Diseases at the UT Medical School. "However, they have not heard of other superbugs that can be far worse."

"The Gram-negative bacteria are the most antibiotic-resistant with fewer treatment options in life-threatening diseases, such as pneumonia, bloodstream infections, gastroenteritis and even meningitis," said Murray. Gram-negative bacteria can release toxins created by their cell walls into the bloodstream, where it is harder to treat them, she said.

MRSA appears to be claiming more lives in the U.S. than HIV/AIDS. According to an October 2007 report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 94,360 U.S. patients developed an invasive infection from MRSA in 2005 and nearly 20%, or 18,650 of them, died. In the same year, 17,011 people died from HIV/AIDS.

Genomics is the study of an organism's genomes to chart its DNA sequencing. It was once viewed as a possible avenue to better weapons against superbugs, but Murray and

Arias say that has not happened. "We have run out of options. The promise of genomics has not panned out. Gene sequencing has not helped us find a better way to fight these bugs."

According to a 2004 report, "Bad Bugs, No Drugs," by the Infectious Diseases Society of America, none of the 89 new drugs approved by the U.S. FDA were antibiotics. The report found that research on new antibiotics is drying up, due to the expense of bringing a new drug to market.

"Academics can't do it all. Drug companies can't do it all. Everyone needs to work together to address this potential worldwide public health crisis," said Arias, co-author of the article and professor in infectious diseases at the school. Murray and Arias say people not following their prescriptions as directed allow the antibiotics to be exposed to a wide-range of bacteria in the body, both good and bad, giving the bugs an opportunity to find ways to beat the antibiotic weapons.

"This overuse threatens the effectiveness of these precious drugs," says Dr. Cindy Friedman, associate medical director of the Centers for Disease Control. "Doctors and patients are both part of the problem. Studies show if a doctor believes a patient wants an antibiotic, he is much more likely to prescribe one, even if the patient doesn't really need one."

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs — bacteria and viruses. Antibiotics work against infections caused by bacteria, like a strep throat. Antibiotics do not work against viruses like the common cold, the flu and the majority of sore throats and runny noses. Delay in diagnosis is also an issue. Murray said even with advancements, it takes about 48 hours or more from the time a culture is taken to determine what a person may have contracted and to determine what antibiotics are effective.

"It may not sound like a lot of time, but with some of these bugs you have to move quickly to save a patient. You don't want the bacteria to

spread," Murray said. "Research needs to include finding new testing methods."

"MRSA and other antibiotic-resistant bugs are one of the greatest threats facing health care today," said Stephen Prescott, M.D. president of the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, where researchers in November published the first visual evidence of a key piece in the puzzle of how superbugs spread antibiotic resistance in hospitals and throughout the general population.

"These infections are easily transmitted — they make their way into the body through breaks in the skin, even microscopic ones, and through nasal passages. They resist treatment with standard antibiotics, which makes them dangerous," said Prescott. "And they are particularly threatening in hospitals, because they attack patients whose immune systems may already be compromised."

The Division of Infectious Diseases at the UT Medical School is working toward solutions. It has now established the Laboratory for Antimicrobial Research, headed by Arias, within the Center for the Study of Emerging and Re-Emerging Pathogens, headed by Murray.

Supported with funding from the National Institutes of Health, the lab aims to investigate the clinical and molecular aspects of antibiotic resistance, attempting to understand the complex mechanisms by which bugs become resistant to antibiotics and then designing new strategies to combat them.

"We are struggling, really struggling, to treat patients around the world. If something isn't done soon, more and more bugs are going to gain the upper-hand. There are simply not enough new drugs to keep pace with antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections," Murray said. "We are sounding the alarm, and hopefully the world will hear it."

Click [here](#) for basic information on MRSA from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ✧

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[Slip-up by the Minnesota DNR allowed fish virus into state](#)

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[Lake Michigan forage, stocking plan concern anglers](#)

MILWAUKEE – If change truly is the only constant, then proof is at our doorstep. In the last century, Lake Michigan has seen its native fish stocks depleted, an onslaught of exotic species and the rise and fall and tenuous rise again of a world-class trout and salmon fishery. Now, with the forage base at a record low and a tentative plan by a lake-wide committee to increase lake trout stocking, many in the sportfishing community feel ...

[National fish hatchery received more than \\$2 million in stimulus money](#)

Federal stimulus money is making its way to northern Michigan. The Jordan River Fish Hatchery in Antrim County will receive more than \$2.5 million, where officials breed lake trout to stock in the Great Lakes, primarily lakes Michigan and Huron.

[Lamprey barrier on reduced schedule](#)

CUSTER – The controversial Pere Marquette River electrical lamprey barrier will go back to its original operating schedule this year, shaving two months off its season. Its future beyond this year is not yet decided.

WI - [Keep DNR secretary in Cabinet, Doyle now urges](#)

In a reversal of his former position, Gov. Jim Doyle said in a letter to state conservationists this week that he no longer favors removing the position of Department of Natural Resources secretary from his Cabinet. The change comes at a time when the state Legislature may be closer than...

[FirstEnergy under fire for Lake Erie fish kills](#)

FirstEnergy Corp.'s Bay Shore Power Plant near Toledo is under fire from environmentalists for killing Lake Erie fish. In a teleconference, the Akron-based utility was slammed for annually killing as many as 46 million fish, 14 million juvenile fish, and 2 billion larval fish.

[The sturgeon success story](#)

One of Michigan's most intriguing fish species success stories is the population of lake sturgeon in both the St. Clair River system and Black Lake in Cheboygan County. This month, the Black Lake sturgeon harvest reached its quota of five fish harvested in the first four days.

[Choppy waters on a great lake](#)

In the last century, Lake Michigan has seen its native fish stocks depleted, an onslaught of exotic species, and the rise and fall and tenuous rise again of a world-class trout and salmon fishery.

[Patchwork ballast rules emerging to battle invaders](#)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recently released a proposed set of ballast water discharge rules for oceangoing vessels that is far stricter than anything that has been adopted by any other Great Lakes state except New York.

[Attempt to move Forest Service could spark turf war](#)

In what eventually could become a major bureaucratic turf war, there have been stirrings on Capitol Hill about moving the U.S. Forest Service from the Agriculture to the Interior Department.

[Healthy fish, insects show Cuyahoga River also much healthier](#)

Anglers today routinely yank shiny, bulging steelhead trout from the rippling waters of the Cuyahoga River, just downstream from the Brecksville dam. Kayakers carve through bubbling waters near Kent and Cuyahoga Falls as the river tumbles downstream toward Cleveland.

[Muskegon-based GVSU scientist discovers Great Lake 'sinkholes'](#)

A scientist at Grand Valley State University's Annis Water Resources Institute in Muskegon has discovered biologically-rich sinkholes on the bottom of Lake Huron that are similar to deep sea vents on ocean bottoms. The sinkholes, formed by salty groundwater seeping into the lake and dissolving...

[Michigan DNR officials expect best perch fishing season in more than a decade](#)

Anglers on Lake Michigan this summer are likely to enjoy the best perch fishing in more than a decade, state officials reported this week. "There is a heck of a lot of evidence that we have a lot of perch out there," said Dave Clapp, head of...

[U. S. Supreme Court delivers blow to tribal casinos](#)

Justices bar land trust tactic

The U.S. Supreme Court delivered a crippling setback yesterday to the Mashpee Wampanoag in Massachusetts and many other tribes across the nation that are seeking to build casinos, ruling that the federal government cannot place land into trust for newly recognized tribes. The ruling instantly cast doubt on the Mashpee Wampanoags' quest to build a \$1 billion casino in Middleborough, disappointing tribal officials who had hoped to get 539 acres put into federal trust as soon as this spring.

[Gobies up, alewives down in Lake Michigan](#)

At a meeting of the Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum in Cleveland, Wis., the data presented showed a continuation of recent trends and gave no new hope to Lake Michigan anglers.

[EPA chief reconsidering ship ballast permit](#)

TRAVERSE CITY— The Obama administration will reconsider a federal permit for oceangoing ships that critics say fails to prevent invasive species from entering the Great Lakes, the new chief of the Environmental Protection Agency said today.

[Ohio - Fremont man finds huge grass carp in backyard](#)

Most fishermen seek big fish but for Ron Davenport of Fremont, a whopper came to him — a 49½", 53 lb. white amur to be exact, right into his backyard.

[EPA aims to buoy fish numbers](#)

Rules halted in 2007 would affect power plants near water. Fish lure billions of dollars from humans in the Great Lakes region: The Ohio DNR estimates that the widely popular rod-and-reel sportfishing industry alone has an \$800 million impact on the Buckeye State's economy. Add to that the money that sportsmen bring to the seven other Great Lakes states, plus the commercial netting business that's especially big in Canada. But are power plants one of the obstacles in that plan?

Report warns of flooding risk from lock failures in Illinois

LOCKPORT LOCK AND DAM – Water levels rise or sink the equivalent of a four-story building each time the lock channel here lifts or lowers mammoth barges laden with coal or other cargo through this tricky stretch of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

Lockmaster Dave Nolen knows every turn and every ripple along this 2.6-mile section of waterway flanked by canal walls built in the 1890s. That makes him a very worried man. "We have 39 feet of water that we are holding off **Joliet**," Nolen said, pointing downstream to downtown Joliet as he stood Thursday on a deck overlooking the watertight gates at one end of the lock. "People in Joliet probably wouldn't be able to sleep at night if they knew how devastating the flooding would be because of a breach," ...

Quagga mussels are clogging Hoover Dam, colonizing lakes, rivers

Lake Mead, Nev. – It took some of America's best engineers, thousands of laborers and two years of around-the-clock concrete pouring to build the 726-foot-high Hoover Dam back in the 1930s. It took less time than that for the tiny, brainless quagga mussel to bring operators of this modern wonder of the world to their knees. While federal lawmakers continue to squabble over how to stop overseas ships from dumping unwanted organisms into the world's largest freshwater system, the Great Lakes' most vexing invasive-species problem has gone national.

WI - Unwanted fish may be advancing

OSHKOSH – Exotic, prolific, potentially dangerous silver carp were found in Wisconsin waters for the first time in 2008 — in the Mississippi River. Where in the state will they appear this year, next year and the years' after? "We need to make sure we have our eyes on the back door as well as the front door," said Robin McLennan, northeast region supervisor for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. While national attention has riveted on preventing silver carp from migrating up the Chicago shipping canal into Lake Michigan, fisheries biologists in central Wisconsin are concerned the exotic fish is ready to move into the Lower Wisconsin River.

Lake levels in Michigan continue to rise

According to the Corp of Engineers' statistics for January Lake Superior is 2" higher than last year; the Lake Michigan/Huron system is a foot above last year; Lake St. Clair is up one foot from last year; Lake Erie is up 4" from last year and Lake Ontario is up 8" from last year.

Extension granted to install fish-friendly turbine at Cohoes Falls

Brookfield Renewable Power was granted a two-year extension for the installation of a fish-friendly turbine and new generator at their poser plant near the Cohoes Falls, said officials with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The Green Island Power Authority, however, is worried about the extension.

No-wake bill expected to protect shorelines, make lakes safer

MADISON – Legislation that would restrict motor boats to no-wake speeds within 100 feet of lake shorelines would make lakes safer and healthier, State Sen. Robert Jauch, D-Poplar, told the Senate Environment Committee on Wednesday. Under current law motor boats are limited to slow, no-wake operation within 100 feet of piers, or buoyed restricted areas...

Slip-up by the Minnesota DNR allowed fish virus into state

The Minnesota DNR allowed 2,000 trout to be imported from Wisconsin to stock a rural Cloquet man's private pond. But the source hatchery had a contagious fish virus not found in Minnesota. The DNR had made a potentially devastating error.