



Another Record Michigan Brown Trout caught in Manistee River A State Record, but could be new World Record

MANISTEE, MI – An angler has landed the heaviest brown trout on record in Michigan. Brian Mulherin, journalist for the *Ludington Daily News* says Tom Healy of Rockford caught the 41 lb. 7¼ oz. trout September 9 from a boat in the Manistee River.

The fish took a black-and-silver Rapala Shad Rap crankbait that Healy cast from fishing guide Tim Roller's boat. The 66-year-old angler used a Cabela's XML spinning rod and Cabela's Prodigy reel loaded with 30 lb. braided line. Michigan DNR fisheries biologists Mark Tonello and Todd Kalish weighed the fish after leveling the certified scales and determined the weight. It is the new record hold for Michigan. Upon the second weighing with the scales leveled, the weight was determined to be 1 lb., .75 oz. heavier than originally determined. The fish was 43.75" long.

The fish is 1 lb., 3.25 oz. heavier than the reigning

world record German brown trout, a 40 lb., 4 oz. fish caught in Arkansas in 1992 by Howard "Rip" Collins who used an ultralight rod and 4 lb. test line. Healy will have to apply for certification with the National Freshwater Fishing Hall of

Fame and the International Game Fish Association to be declared the world record holder. The previous state record for brown trout was a 36 lb., 13 oz. specimen caught in Frankfort in 2007.

The previous state record German brown trout weighed 36.81 lbs. and was caught in Lake Michigan in Benzie County in 2007. The next three places in the state record books were held by Lake Michigan browns caught in Manistee. ✧



In this issue...

VHS in Baseline Lake & Lake St. Clair .. 2
Tribe loses Lake Erie fishing rights 2
Wild Atlantic salmon in NY's Salmon Riv.3
MDNR reminds about bait restrictions ... 3
\$142,000 for Saginaw dam removal..... 3
Wildlife Council proposes regs changes 4
NY to close Hudson River shad fishery.. 4
Sportsmen's Caucus for governors..... 4
USGS Predator Diet Study..... 5
Boat wakes..... 5
Effects of increasing salmon bag limits .. 6
Hoosier Outdoor Experience..... 6
BOW offers UP rock climbing workshop 6
Catch and Release tip..... 7
White R fish kill caused by algae bloom. 7
Becoming and Outdoors Family event... 7
Celebs tout hunting, fishing..... 8
State responds to fish kill on Black R..... 8
Favorite plastic worm color? 8
Boating fatalities increased in 2008 8
Eastern UP Citizens Council meets 9
Zebra mussels spreading in Texas 9
WI sturgeon season now open..... 9
Customs backs off of new knife rules..... 9
Small dams among most dangerous.... 10
A father-son fishing epic..... 10
World record largemouth bass? 10

Coast Guard proposes new ballast water rules — again Wants limits on invasive species released by ships in US Ports

WASHINGTON – The Coast Guard on August 27 again, for the seventh time, proposed national standards for regulating the release in port of ships' ballast water, which can introduce new, sometimes detrimental species to U.S. ecosystems.

The plan would establish a limit on the number of invasive organisms that can be released along with a vessel's ballast water while the ship is in port. That limit would initially follow a formula used by the International Maritime Commission — a standard adopted by some states, but considered weak by many environmentalists.

There currently is no federal requirement to treat ballast water in order to kill living organisms. Oceangoing vessels must exchange

their ballast or flush out their tanks in the open seas before entering a U.S. port, but the tanks might still contain species from distant waters.

After their announcement on August 27, the U.S. Coast Guard then posted their proposal for new ballast rules in the August 28, 2009 Federal Register. **Sadly, their proposed implementation date for Phase One is 2012, with Phase Two for 2016, with some situations delayed as long as five years after that date; and with built-in opportunities for even further delays. In reality there are no commitment dates for final implementation.**

Their public comment period allows for variations, modifications
Ballast water rules

Continued on page 11

MI DNR confirms VHS virus in Baseline Lake and Lake St. Clair

The Michigan DNR announced it has confirmed the presence of VHSV in samples of fish collected in Baseline Lake in Washtenaw County and in Lake St. Clair. Baseline Lake becomes the second inland lake in Michigan in which VHSV is present.

After VHSV was first detected in Michigan, the DNR began a surveillance program to collect fish from a range of waters for testing each year. This program has been funded in part by grants from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA-APHIS). Through June, VHSV surveillance efforts have been conducted on 45 water bodies throughout Michigan.

"There was no reported fish kill in Baseline Lake associated with these findings. These fish were simply collected as part of a routine survey program to look for VHSV around the state," said Steve Hewett, Lake Erie Basin coordinator for DNR's Fisheries Division. "The future threat of this virus in Baseline Lake is not known, but we will be more closely monitoring fish for signs of VHSV in both the lake and adjacent waters to determine any effects of the virus."

"Detection of VHSV in bullheads in Baseline Lake means anglers and boaters must continue to be vigilant and work with us to prevent the spread of this virus to other waters. It is our opinion that their efforts to date have helped significantly to reduce the rate of spread of this virus, and we thank them for their efforts to date," Hewett said.

The virus was also detected in smallmouth bass and muskellunge from Lake St. Clair, which has been positive for VHSV since at least 2003. The smallmouth bass were sampled during a fish kill in early June in Lake St. Clair, Whelan said.

"It is highly likely that VHSV played a part in the fish kill and allowed a bacterial infection to become a disease agent by lowering the immune system's ability to

Tribe loses claim to Lake Erie fishing rights 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rules unanimously

The Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma lost a big one on August 18, when the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled unanimously the tribe did not retain the right to fish in Lake Erie, and held no occupancy to any lands in Ohio.

The tribe claimed a series of treaties reserved its right to fish on Lake Erie. The tribe also said it owned part of Bass Island. But the 6th Circuit said the tribe gave up its rights when it was forced to leave Ohio. "We hold that, because the tribe, under these treaties, retained at most a right of occupancy to the lands in Ohio, and this right was extinguished upon abandonment, any related fishing rights it may have reserved were similarly extinguished when the Tribe removed west of the Mississippi," the decision stated.

The three-judge panel unanimously said the Tribe, through a series of treaties executed during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, was displaced from northern Ohio to Kansas and then later to Oklahoma, where its members currently reside. Some options remaining to the tribe include an appeal to the full Circuit or the U.S. Supreme Court; and the tribe had made no decision on either yet.

Complete 6th Circuit Decision: www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/09a0294p-06.pdf. ✧

respond to the bacteria," explained Whelan.

The muskellunge were sampled in mid-May during their spawning period as part of the surveillance effort for Lake St. Clair. No mortality of muskellunge was observed this spring, and the last significant mortality of muskellunge attributed to VHSV was in 2006. "This result is not surprising and means that muskellunge in Lake St. Clair are still carrying VHSV," Whelan noted. ✧



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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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Wild Atlantic salmon found in New York's Salmon River First in more than a century...

Scientists recently discovered wild young Atlantic salmon in New York's Salmon River. This is the first time in more than a century that salmon produced naturally in the wild have been found in New York's premier salmon stream. Forty-one wild Atlantics were collected in June. All were under one year old.

"This discovery suggests that, after many years of reproductive failure, restoration is starting to work for this species," said Jim Johnson, Station Chief for the USGS Lab in Cortland, NY. "This finding should provide real excitement and impetus for biologists and sport groups interested in bringing this species back to the area."

Lake Ontario once supported the largest freshwater population of Atlantic salmon in the world and the Salmon River, one of the lake's tributaries, helped supply the lake

with it namesake species. But by the late 1800s, Atlantic salmon had vanished from the lake due to damming of tributaries, overfishing, deforestation, and pollution.

Salmon have not reproduced naturally, in part due to low levels of thiamine in their bodies. One of the salmon's primary prey is the alewife. Alewives contain thiaminase, an enzyme that destroys thiamine. When lake trout or salmon eat alewife, they take in this enzyme, which reduces thiamine in adult salmon and their eggs and causes early death of newly hatched fish. Recent reductions in alewife populations in Lake Ontario, coinciding with an increase in native preyfish, may be having some effects on Atlantic salmon populations.

"This provides some hope that we can get natural reproduction of Atlantic salmon despite the thiaminase issue," said Dan Bishop,

fishery manager for the New York Region 7 Fisheries Unit. "Our thinking was that the reproductive impairment would be very difficult to overcome."

State, federal and Canadian natural resource agencies have a keen interest in the potential for Atlantic salmon restoration in Lake Ontario. The NYSDEC currently stocks 30,000 yearling Atlantic salmon in the Salmon River and was pleased to hear of the discovery of the wild salmon.

Identifying and overcoming obstacles to the restoration of Atlantic salmon in Lake Ontario is a high priority and NYSDEC and USGS scientists will continue to monitor tributaries to track populations of this important native fish. In addition, the implementation of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative may help facilitate these restoration efforts and contribute to the broader goal of a healthier Great Lakes ecosystem. ✧

MI DNR reminds anglers about bait restrictions

As salmon begin making their way up the state's rivers from the Great Lakes, the Michigan DNR is reminding anglers that the use of salmon eggs and minnows for bait is restricted in some waters as part of a strategy to slow the spread of VHS.

VHS, a disease that causes fish to die from internal bleeding, has caused mortalities among a number of species of fish in Michigan in both the Great Lakes and inland waters. VHS has been found in Lake Michigan, but not in Michigan's waters. Inland, it has been found in Budd Lake in Clare County and in Baseline Line Lake in Washtenaw County. VHS has not been found in Lake Superior.

"Basically, if you don't take any spawn out of the watershed it came from and you fish below the first upstream barrier from the Great Lakes, you are legal," said DNR fisheries biologist Gary Whelan. "But you can not use it upstream from the first dam

or in another body of water."

Anglers who purchase spawn for bait should look for certified VHS-disinfected spawn as this bait can be used anywhere in the state. Certified VHS-free spawn and minnows are widely available and can be used up to 14 days after purchase.

Anglers who purchase bait must retain their receipt to prove it is disease-free. Uncertified bait may only be used in waters that have tested positive for VHS, as listed in Fisheries Order 245 available at: www.michigan.gov/vhs, and uncertified bait can be used for only three days after purchase. "There is no known treatment for VHS," Whelan said. "Our best defense against it is trying to prevent its spread."

Anglers and boaters can help prevent the spread of VHS – as well as other invasive species – by taking a few simple precautions. Do not move fish from one body of water to another, do

not empty bait buckets into the water, drain live wells and bilges when leaving the water, and disinfect boats between uses. For more info on VHS, and fishing regs specific to VHS: www.michigan.gov/vhs. ✧

\$142,000 for Saginaw dam removal

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced that Alpena National Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office in Michigan will receive \$142,000 in funding for the removal of the Chesaning Dam in Saginaw County, Michigan. It will restore fish passage to 37 miles of upstream habitat historically available to aquatic species in the Saginaw River Watershed. Restoration of fish passage will be accomplished by removal of the dam and construction of a low slope rock ramp with boulder arch weirs. ✧

Wildlife Council proposes fishing regs changes

The Ohio Wildlife Council is considering proposals that will affect Lake Erie walleye and yellow perch, crappies in 44 inland lakes, and Ohio River catfish. A statewide hearing on all the proposed rules was held on September 10 at the wildlife division's District One Office in Columbus.

A proposed change to the timing of when bag limits are set for Lake Erie walleye and yellow perch was discussed. This proposal would make new bag limits effective on May 1 instead of March 1. Changing this effective date allows for the walleye and yellow perch quotas set by the Lake Erie Committee to be considered prior to setting the bag limits.

Each year the committee sets the total allowable catch for walleye and yellow perch from Lake Erie. From the total allowable catch for the lake, individual state quotas are calculated.

A proposal to add 38 lakes to the current list of six lakes that have 9" minimum size limits on crappies is being considered. The proposal will include setting a bag limit of 30 for crappies on all lakes with 9" size limits.

Alum Creek, Caesar Creek, Deer Creek, Seneca, and Tappan Lakes have had the 9" minimum regulations since 2001, with Delaware Reservoir having the limit since 1997. Catches from these lakes indicate the numbers of large crappies have increased and both black and white crappies have maintained good growth rates.

A 2008 on-line angler survey indicates 81 percent of crappie anglers favor the 9" length limits. An on-the-water creel survey from the spring of 2009 lends solid support for daily crappie limits, with 80 percent of the anglers favoring a daily

bag restriction.

An extension of the statewide catfish regulations to the Ohio River is being proposed. Ohio River anglers would be allowed only one channel catfish 28" or longer with no limit for channel catfish under 28". In addition, only one flathead and one blue catfish 35" or longer may be possessed with no limit for flathead and blue catfish under 35".

Open houses were held at the same day and time in Akron, Athens, Columbus, Findlay, Port Clinton and Xenia on August 29, 2009. Information recorded at these open houses has been forwarded to the division's central office in Columbus, where proposed rule changes to the Ohio Administrative Code will be considered and voted on during its October 7 meeting. ✧

NY plans to close Hudson River shad fishery

Closure designed to protect dwindling stock

With the American shad population in the Hudson River at historic lows, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) plans to propose closing recreational and commercial fishing for American shad in the Hudson and prohibit commercial landings in marine waters.

DEC held three public meetings on Sept. 14, 15, and 16 to outline steps to be taken to save this historically important species.

In 2007, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission conducted a coast-wide assessment of American shad stocks, with New York biologists playing a lead role. The assessment concluded that the Hudson River shad stock has declined substantially since the 1990s and now is at historic lows. Juvenile production dropped to a historically low level in 2002 and has not rebounded. Hudson River recreational and commercial fisheries were

at it would trigger some improvement in production of young American shad. Because no change occurred, the DEC plans to pursue fishery closures.

At the same time, DEC will implement a Hudson River American Shad Recovery Plan to help rebuild the stock. The recovery plan is available on the DEC website at www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/shadrecoveryplan.pdf. The plan outlines current and future studies to investigate the suspected causes of the stock's decline. Over-fishing, habitat loss, increased populations of predatory species and competition for food sources are among the many factors to be evaluated. At the public meetings, DEC staff will also discuss and explain the measures of the shad population status that would enable a reopening of the recreational and commercial fisheries. Renee Goodbee, rrgoodbe@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

Sportsmen's Caucus formed for governors

The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation announced the formation of a bi-partisan caucus of governors that will work to protect the interest of America's hunters and anglers, and advance sound wildlife management policy. Guided by a bi-partisan leadership team of governors and staffed through the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus will complement and enhance both the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses. Gov. Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Gov. Mike Rounds (R-SD) have been selected as the inaugural co-chairmen. Gov. Haley Barbour (R-MS) and Gov. Dave Freudenthal (D-WY) will serve as the inaugural vice-chairmen. Sixteen governors from across the country have joined the caucus as inaugural members. ✧

USGS Predator Diet Study- update and first observations

We have over 1000 samples so far. We want to see how and when predators respond as the young of the year fish hatched become large enough to be eaten. We can then compare those results with our trawl data to determine if predators prefer certain prey species over others.

We have processed over 500 stomachs so far, and the pace has picked up. Normally, when doing a study like this you wait until all data are in before releasing any results. The reason is that your first impression can be dead wrong, and you really don't know until you have seen all fish what trends are present. But, people are anxious for some results and we decided to share some very preliminary observations with the caveat that we are less than 1/3 of the way through the stomachs we have collected to date, more stomachs are coming in every week, and diets will change through the season.

Round gobies are the most common fish species eaten by far, and

they will likely dominate lake trout diets if their prevalence continues. A few alewives have been observed, but are sparse in diets and were only seen in Chinooks taken near Rogers City.

We sampled a tournament that occurred several days after a lake trout stocking. The most common prey of large lake trout was, you guessed it, recently stocked lake trout. Not every adult lake trout had cannibalized the juveniles, but there was little else in the diets.

Saginaw Bay walleyes diets include yellow perch, shiners, and round gobies, but they are also eating invertebrates. We found several that had eaten midges and mayfly nymphs. These were from the spring samples. The mayfly observation was interesting because mayflies have not returned to the Bay the way they have in Lake Erie, and many people wonder why. In fact, it is difficult to find any mayfly nymphs in the bay at all. Yet walleyes found some.

We also found whole worms in

walleye stomachs. These were undoubtedly stolen from anglers, but the fish did not quit when they were ahead and were subsequently caught later that day.

We found that some lake trout collected this spring near Rogers City had eaten large numbers of terrestrial insects. Some stomachs contained over 1,000 insects. We actually looked at the individuals, and found beetles, flies, wasps, and leafhoppers. You would expect this type of diet in a steelhead, but not a lake trout. This has gotten us thinking about terrestrial insects as an energy source that may have been underestimated ... it also makes us believe that lake trout were foraging at the surface similar to the way steelhead behave in scum lines. Go figure

So we learned all this via the May and June collections, think of what we may learn if we can keep this going for the entire season! Keep up the good work!

Jeff Schaeffer, USGS,
Jeff.Schaeffer@usgs.gov ✧

Boat wakes make people angry – and can injure

ALEXANDRIA, VA (BoatUS) – Boat wakes trailing from the stern of a powerboat as it slices through the water have a sinister side. When other vessels encounter them, they can hurt people. They can make people angry, and they can bring the wrath of law enforcement, for good reason.

BoatUS recently looked into the issue of boat wakes by combing through the insurance claims case files, where swampings, broken teeth, and back injuries are found. "You avoid being the recipient of gestures from other skippers by using a little common sense and courtesy," says BoatU.S. Director of Damage Avoidance Bob Adriance. "This means coming completely off plane when you enter a no wake zone or *anywhere* your wake could compromise the safety of other boats," he adds.

Here are some tips to help prevent boat wake injuries to you and other boaters:

Slow early: Boat wakes travel distances, so slow down before you reach a slow-speed zone, not as you pass the marker.

Just a little slowing down isn't good enough: Upon entering a no wake zone, some boaters react by only slowing the vessel slightly, and then plow through with the bow way up and stern dug down, actually *increasing* the wake. Come *completely* off plane.

Make her level: Without using trim tabs, a slowed vessel should be level in the water. With some smaller boats, shifting passengers around can help, as too much weight aft increases wake size.

Watch the shallows: Shallow water increases wake size.

Small boats aren't innocent: Wakes are not just a big boat issue – small

vessels in the stern-down position can throw surprisingly large wakes.

When approaching a wake, slow down but don't stop: Motorboats are more stable when underway, so stopping could make things worse. Avoid taking a wake on the beam or head on. The best approach is at a slight angle.

Take care of older crew: The BoatU.S. insurance claim files show that persons over the age of 50 have the most personal injuries, mostly as a result of being seated near the bow when the boat slams into a wake. It's best to seat passengers – especially older passengers – amidships.

Warn the crew: A simple "Hold-on. Boat wake" should do the trick, just as long as you shout the warning well before the wake arrives.

Effects of increasing Chinook salmon bag limits on alewife abundance

Implications for Lake Michigan Management Goals

<http://afs-journals.org/doi/abs/10.1577/M08-129.1>

To predict effects of modifying the daily bag limit (DBL) on management of Chinook salmon and alewives, we analyzed harvest and effort data collected from both charter and noncharter anglers during 1997–2005 in Michigan waters of Lake Michigan.

Overall, the percent of anglers who caught the DBL of three Chinook salmon was low for charter (10.2%) and noncharter (3.3%) angler groups. However, during 1997–2005, the percent of anglers that caught their DBL increased from 3.3% to 26.5% for charter anglers and from 0.5% to 7.8% for noncharter anglers. To predict harvest under a higher DBL, we fit a discrete negative binomial distribution to the observed daily harvest distribution under the current DBL of three fish. We then used the fitted negative binomial to predict the daily harvest distribution under a DBL of five fish. Using this approach, the potential increase in the number of fish harvested with the higher DBL was minimal, but the additional harvest showed an increasing 1997–2005 trend from 315 to 7,301 fish for charter anglers and from 450 to 18,151 fish for noncharter anglers.

There was a positive linear relationship between proportion of anglers harvesting the current DBL and harvest rates, which indicates that angler success is a function of Chinook salmon abundance. Using an age-structured deterministic population model and the production-conversion efficiency method, we estimated potential reduction in annual lakewide consumption of alewives by Chinook salmon resulting from a higher DBL. The reduction in consumption averaged 313 metric tons and increased from 28 (1997) to 935 metric tons (2005). We conclude that higher DBLs would have

Try fly fishing at the Hoosier Outdoor Experience, Sept 26-27

Or mountain biking, hiking, canoeing – or come and learn how to ...

If fly fishing looks like fun but you don't know where to begin learning the sport, here's your chance. Fly-fishing will be one of more than 50 events you can try at the Hoosier Outdoor Experience, September 26-27 at Fort Harrison State Park.

Instructors from Reel Women-Reel Men, Indy Flycasters and Indiana Bass Federation will be on hand at the Hoosier Outdoor Experience to guide participants through the basics of fly fishing, including casting, equipment, and fly tying. Plus you'll have the chance to catch a fish.

The Hoosier Outdoor Experience is a family friendly event that is the first of its kind in Indiana. Unlike traditional trade shows, visitors will be able to enjoy hands-on experiences in a wide range of outdoor activities, such as fly fishing, target shooting, archery, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, camping and much more.

The Hoosier Outdoor Experience is presented by the Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation, with sponsorship support from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Ball Brothers Foundation, WXIN-Fox 59, Indianapolis, and numerous other sponsors.

Parking, admission, activities, demonstrations and seminars are free to the public, but online registration is required. To register, go to www.hoosieroutdoorexperience.IN.gov and click on the yellow registration icon. Event updates can be found at www.hoosieroutdoorexperience.IN.gov. ✧

a relatively minor impact on lakewide forage fish abundance but would be more consistent with current management objectives. ✧

B.O.W. offers U.P. Rock Climbing Workshop Sept. 25-27

Women interested in improving their rock climbing skills can sign up now for a rock climbing workshop in the Upper Peninsula, September 25-27. The workshop, sponsored by the DNR's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) program, is a "Beyond BOW" event, designed for women with some previous rock climbing experience, although beginners are also welcome.

Participants will receive classroom instruction in rock climbing techniques Friday, with hands-on climbing experience Saturday and Sunday at various climbing sites located in Big Bay, Marquette and Negaunee. Cost per participant is \$175, which includes instruction and gear, lodging at the historic Thunder Bay Inn in Big Bay, and breakfast and lunch on Saturday and Sunday. Enrollment is limited to nine.

Topics to be covered during the rock climbing workshop include safety, tying into a harness, belaying, rappelling, rock climbing knots, basic anchoring and gear selection. Instructors will provide all necessary gear, but participants with their own helmets and harnesses may bring them for a safety inspection.

For more information on this event, contact Sharon Pitz at 906-228-6561. For registration and info: www.michigan.gov/bow. ✧

IL holds special "Free Fishing Day" Sept 19

The Illinois DNR wants to encourage families and children to wet a line this month. IDNR Director Marc Miller is declaring September 19, 2009 as a "Free Fishing Day" at state parks throughout Illinois. The "Free Fishing Day" on September 19 applies to both Illinois residents and non-residents. Free fishing on that day will only be allowed within the boundaries of Illinois state parks, natural areas and wildlife areas where public fishing opportunities are available. ✧

New Wis campground at Harrington Beach State Park

Easy access to mile long Lake Michigan shoreline

BELGIUM, WI – The first new campground built in the Wisconsin State Park System in more than 20 years is open for business. All of the sites at Harrington Beach State Park are available on a first come, first serve basis. There are 31 electric sites, 33 non-electric sites, five walk-in sites, a group campsite, and a kayak site. The campground provides easy access to the one-mile long Lake Michigan shoreline.

Each campsite has a gravel driveway, a fire ring, and picnic table. Visitors will find new amenities such as a shower building and restroom facilities. Reserve America, the campground reservation system, is accepting camping reservations. Call toll free (888) (WI PARKS) or www.reserveamerica.com. For more info, call the park office at (262) 285-3015. ✧

Michigan plans drawing for multi-species hunt

LANSING, MI – Three hunters will get a rare opportunity to pursue four species of game animal next year under a new program called the Pure Michigan Hunt. The winners will be allowed to hunt elk, bear, spring and fall wild turkeys and antlerless deer. They'll get their choice of hunting sites at managed waterfowl areas.

So far 4,000 applications have been purchased by 2,000 individuals. One hundred fifty have bought 5 applications and a few individuals have purchased 30. Hunters can apply as many times as they like. Each application costs \$4 and can be purchased at license retailers through December. Three winners will be selected during a random computer drawing in January. They'll still have to buy licenses for each game animal they pursue. ✧

Catch and Release tip

What does an angler do if a fish swallows a hook and he does not want to kill the fish? Answer: Cut the line; leave the hook in the fish before you release it. A much higher percentage of fish hooked deeply survive when the hook is left in and the line cut compared to those where a deep hook is removed. Scientific studies where the fate of hooks that were left in fish released by anglers were tracked, hooks were eventually shed by the fish or surrounded by new tissue.

One study found that rainbow trout shed hooks in about 40 days. In the study of 200 hundred trout released without removal of hooks 66% survived; of the 200 where the hook was removed 11.5% survived.

In a 1989 smallmouth bass study, mortality ranged between 32.5 and 47.3% (depending upon hook size) for hooks that were immediately removed, whereas mortality for hooks that were not removed was 4.2 %. In the case of juvenile smallmouth bass, the study found that upon dissection, some hooks were lodged in internal organs but that new tissue surrounded the hooks. The study further noted that dissected hooks exhibited minimal corrosion after 20 days.

You are wise to cut the line and leave the hook in; the fish will likely survive to be caught another day. ✧

White River fish kill was caused by algae bloom

A fish kill in the White River near Rocky Ripple in Marion County, IN appears to be the result of an excessive algae bloom. Both DNR and IDEM dispatched investigators on July 24, after several reports from concerned citizens. Neither agency found evidence of a spill, but instead found brownish water and scummy algae on the water's surface. Lenore Tedesco, director of IUPUI's Center for Earth and Environmental Science, collected water samples in the area on July 24 and 27 and documented a diatom algae bloom. ✧

WI - Last casts for inland trout season

MADISON – Kicking yourself that you haven't yet wet a line after trout? Don't despair! There are still a couple of weeks left until the season ends on September 30. With lower, cleaner water, trout can be a little easier to find, pattern, and catch. This is a great time to learn more about your favorite water too – where that mid-channel rock really is or how the current sweeps that willow root.

And don't be afraid to take a fish home along with the pictures. A wonderful fall meal of fresh trout, sweet corn, red potatoes and your favorite beverage is the reward for taking that day. Enjoy. Find [fishing regulations](#) and [places to fish](#) on the DNR Web site. ✧

MI DNR plans first 'Becoming an Outdoors Family' event Sept. 21-22

Families who want to learn more about how to hunt deer are invited to participate in a two-day workshop September 21-22 hosted by the DNR at Omega Farms in Williamston. Omega Farms is located at 4900 M-52 in Williamston, just east of Lansing. This is the first in a planned series of workshops to provide families with the opportunity to learn outdoors skills, modeled on the DNR's popular "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman" program.

Sessions include firearm and field safety, shooting skills, clean harvest and caring for your game after the harvest. The program is designed for families – fathers, sons, mothers and daughters – who want to learn new outdoor skills they can engage in together. Cost is \$20 for each adult and \$5 for each child ages 12-17. Costs include all instruction and materials. Light snacks and beverages will be available; no evening meals will be provided. Pre-registration is required, go to: www.michigan.gov/bow. ✧

Country music celebs tout hunting, fishing

National Hunting & Fishing Day Sept 26

SPRINGFIELD, MO – In the 37 years since Congress formalized National Hunting and Fishing Day, a variety of celebrities have volunteered to serve as honorary chairman, lending their fame to help build public support for sporting traditions. Sports pros, actors and other personalities have served (see list below). But history shows that country music/entertainment has produced the most flag-bearers for the hunting, fishing and conservation community.

Luke Bryan, the country sensation proudly presiding over the September 26, 2009 celebration of NHF Day, is a case in point. Bryan's hunting and fishing passions helped shape him as an artist, and continue to influence his path to stardom. "Hunting, fishing and the outdoors make up who I am as an artist and a person. I'm proud of my love for the outdoors and my true fans will appreciate that about me" Bryan said.

MI - Hayes State Park hosts Charity Derby

Sept. 19

Hayes State Park and Midwest Sportsman are hosting a Charity Fishing Tournament on Wampplers Lake, September 19, 8AM-3PM. This is the second year Midwest Sportsman has organized the tournament to benefit the Michigan National Guard Family Fund Program.

Everyone is eligible; cost of the fishing tournament is \$80 for each 2-person team, with \$10 going into a "Big Bass Pot." Prizes will be awarded for various categories. Once event costs are covered, the balance of the registration fees will go to the Michigan National Guard Family Fund to help the men and women who are serving our country.

For more info and registration, contact Rick Pulver, 517-788-3804. ✧

State responds to fish kill on Black River

Michigan agencies have responded to a significant fish kill along a 12-mile stretch of the Black River in Sanilac and St. Clair counties, officials announced.

The DEQ is conducting an investigation into the cause of the fish kill, including reviewing an apparent discharge of manure from an agricultural field adjacent to Seymour Creek upstream from the Black River.

DNR Fisheries Division biologists responded to count and categorize the fish killed. High numbers of various game fish species were killed, including smallmouth bass, northern pike, channel catfish, and rock bass, along with greater redhorse, a rather rare species, especially in southeast Michigan. It is not yet known how the incident will impact the mussel population in the river.

"Many of the fish lost in this incident were larger, older fish," said DNR Director Rebecca Humphries. "This is a significant loss of a very diverse fishery in the Black River." In 2007, a DNR survey of the river noted there were at least 25 different species of fish in the river. The Black River in this area is noted for its strong fish habitat, consisting of cobble, boulders, gravel and sand. ✧

What's your favorite plastic worm color?

TULSA, OK – Watermelon Red leads Green Pumpkin and June Bug in online polling by Snap Tail Lures. Bringing up the rear are Watermelon Seed, Watermelon Candy, Black Neon, Red Shad, White, Bubble Gum and Tomato Orange. Snap Tail Lures' Robb Line said the national vote percentages help his company decide on new product colors and also help tackle stores know which items to order and put on shelves. Vote at www.snaptailures.com. ✧

Boating fatalities increased in 2008

The fatality rate, a measure of the number of deaths against the number of registered recreational boats, increased from 5.3 in 2007 to 5.6 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational boats in 2008. During this time, the Coast Guard recorded 709 deaths, 3,331 injuries and about \$54 million in damage to property, stemming from 4,789 recreational boating accidents.

Operator inattention, careless or reckless operation, no proper lookout, operator inexperience and passenger or skier behavior, rank as the top five contributing factors to recreational boating accidents. Alcohol consumption continues to be of major concern in fatal boating accidents and is listed as the leading contributing factor in 17 percent of the deaths. In addition, two-thirds of all fatal boating accident victims drowned and, of those, 90 percent were not wearing a life jacket. ✧

Two new dog training caution areas identified

PARK FALLS, WI – Wildlife authorities have identified two new hunting dog training caution areas after confirming the killing of two hunting dogs by wolves in Burnett County on August 6 and in Ashland County on August 7.

The dogs killed were a 6-year-old male Bluetick hound in the Town of Rusk in Burnett County and a 3-year-old male Walker in the Town of Chippewa in Ashland County. Citizens should exercise caution and avoid training dogs in areas of recently confirmed wolf depredations on dogs. Hunters should be familiar with caution area maps on the DNR wolf web site. All packs involved with dog incidents likely produced pups this spring. ✧

Eastern UP Citizens Council meets Sep. 17

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council for the Michigan DNR will meet Thursday, September 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the Hiawatha Sportsman's Club Activity Bldg, N7535 Millecoquins Lake Dr. in Engadine.

Topics for discussion include:

► Proposed changes to Lake Superior lake trout bag limit, ► March two-week walleye season, ► Public input process on State Forest Campground closures, ► Wildlife food plots, ► Creation of a State Wolf Forum, ► Deer Management Plan update and Forestry Coalition update.

For more info or membership, go to: www.michigan.gov/dnr, click on Commissions, Boards & Committees. Then click on Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Councils to find the nomination form. Or call U.P. Field Deputy Stacy Welling, 906-228-6561.

Florida continues collection of Burmese pythons

A 17' Burmese python was caught and destroyed on private property in Okeechobee County, Florida on July 30. The male snake weighed 207 lbs., and measured 26" in diameter. Its stomach contents were examined, but nothing identifiable was found inside. Officers with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) scanned the python but did not find a microchip. As a Reptile of Concern, Burmese pythons must be licensed by FWC's Captive Wildlife Section and implanted with a microchip to be kept as a pet. ✧

Zebra mussels spreading in Texas

Invasive zebra mussels have been confirmed to have spread from Lake Texoma into the headwaters of Lake Lavon, and experts fear they could eventually spread throughout the Red River and Trinity River watersheds. ✧

WI sturgeon season now open

MADISON – The statewide hook and line lake sturgeon season opened on Saturday, September 5 on those waters open for the season, and closes September 30, providing anglers with an opportunity to land the state's largest and longest lived fish. The 2009 season marks the third year that the minimum length for harvesting sturgeon is set at 60", with a one-fish limit per season. There is catch and release only fishing on a stretch of the Menominee River in northeastern Wisconsin, downstream from the Hattie Street dam to Green Bay.

Lake sturgeon are slow-growing, late maturing fish, with females spawning for the first time when they are 20 to 25 years old and then only every three to five years thereafter. Because females are larger than males, they are often targeted by anglers, and their overharvest can cause population declines that may take years to recover. So to protect these vulnerable fish, the state's sturgeon management program seeks to limit harvest to 5 percent of the adults in a particular population. On some waters, harvest rates were significantly exceeding that rate.

The state NRB adopted the permanent rules shortening the season length and setting the minimum length limit at 60 inches in 2008 to reduce the sturgeon harvest on several popular fisheries to provide additional protection to spawning females. The same season structure was in place in 2007 under emergency rules, according to Karl Scheidegger, who leads the DNR sturgeon management team.

"Increasing angler pressure and harvest trends prompted the rule change" Scheidegger says. "The reduced harvest totals in 2007 and 2008 showed that the rule is working: interested anglers got the chance to participate in the season while many vulnerable, reproductive females were protected."

Statewide, the total harvest of lake sturgeon for 2008 was 39 fish.

Customs backs off of new knife rules

Customs and Border Protection has officially backed off their proposed revocations and rulemaking in recognition of the Amendment that was passed by the Senate, which would add a new exception to the Switchblade Act covering assisted and one-hand opening knives. In a letter to Representative Kurt Schrader (D-OR) Homeland Security informed him the agency had added a new exception to the Switchblade Act covering assisted and one-hand opening knives, at least until the Homeland Security Appropriations Bill is acted upon in Conference Committee.

You [can read the letter here](#), but the key paragraph reads, "**The amendment would effectively obviate the need for CBP's proposed revocations and render the current issue moot. Additionally, due to the numerous comments received in response to the proposed revocation, it is unlikely that CBP will take any further action prior to passage of the Appropriations Act.**"

This is about as close to a victory as we can come at this time. It may not be over until the fat lady sings, and we actually get the Amendment through Conference Committee, but for all practical purposes, we shouldn't have to worry about Customs reaching into your pockets for your pocketknives anytime soon. ✧

The state's more protective regulations, dedicated funding, and robust research are helping restore lake sturgeon to more of their native range in Wisconsin, with the ultimate goal of increasing the chance that anglers and other Wisconsinites will get a chance to see or land one of the state's largest, longest-lived fish, Scheidegger says. Read more about these efforts and the angling trends in "[A Strong Base for a Broad Recovery.](#)" ✧

Small dams among most dangerous

Frankfort, KY – A recent drowning at Great Crossings Dam on North Elkhorn Creek in Scott County underscores the dangers of smaller dams with water flowing over them – what are known as low-head dams. The flow over these dams creates dangerous currents that can trap swimmers underwater or sink a boat.

Low-head dams make an artificial waterfall in the stream. They look innocuous and the beauty of water flowing over them draws people. Old postcards featured low-head dams and the great central Kentucky artist, Paul Sawyier, painted images of the ones on the Elkhorn Creek system. The fishing below low-head dams is usually productive as well.

"Low-head dams draw people like moths to light," said Sgt. John Anderson, education coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' law enforcement division. "It is so easy to be misled by their calm appearance. From the upper side, they look so innocent and non-threatening. There is no current, they are calm and seem safe." However, they may be the single most dangerous place on any water body. They are often referred to as "drowning machines."

"There are over 13,000 miles of streams in Kentucky," Anderson explained, "with lots of low-head dams. They are leftovers from the past and serve no purpose in most cases. Low-head dams are not built as commonly now."

Their semblance of innocence is what makes them so dangerous. "A drop of a few feet creates a heavy downward thrust just below the dam," Anderson explained. "It creates a hydraulic that holds a person underwater. You have tremendous downward pressure on your body. You may be a strong swimmer and able to lift several hundred pounds, but the human body is not designed for that situation."

A hundred gallons of water striking the body creates 835 lbs. of

force. "The more water, the more force," Anderson said. "Even with a life jacket on, if you fall below a low-head dam, you will be dragged down and held down. If you get extremely lucky, the life jacket may help you pop out of the current."

If you ever study a low-head dam, you'll notice that logs, basketballs, pop bottles or other junk gets hung below them. The debris spins and goes under, but doesn't float downstream. That can happen to you.

Canoeists, kayakers and others must know if any low-head dams exist on the section they plan to float. Your eyes can fail to detect a low-head dam as you float towards it. If you are close enough to cast to the dam from the upstream side, the current probably already has you.

If you hear the roar of water as you near the end of a slack water pool, get over to the bank immediately. Look for a smooth line against the horizon that signals a low-head dam. Also, look for any concrete, stone or brick abutments along both sides of the bank.

Carry your boat around a low-head dam and launch it well downstream to avoid the reverse current caused by water falling over the dam. The reverse current is difficult to see on the surface, but you'll detect it quickly if your boat is stuck in it. It is scary. You can paddle as hard as you want, yet it is all for naught as your boat creeps closer and closer to the dam face.

Wading anglers should realize another danger of low-head dams. "In high water situations, the tremendous force scours a deep hole beneath the dam," Anderson said. "You can be several feet away from the dam in low water and go from knee deep water to over your head with one step."

Be careful around low-head dams. Don't let anyone try to walk or float over one and don't wade near them. They may be pretty, but are incredibly dangerous. ✧

A father-son fishing epic

Jeff Turner and his college-bound son Taylor, 17, have completed their epic Father-Son Adventure, returning home to Warrenton, Virginia after fishing 50 trophy waters in all 50 states in 50 days. Turner said he hoped their expedition, sponsored by Wrangler Rugged Wear, would encourage others to rediscover their desire for adventure and "rekindle the most important things in life – your relationships." ✧

USFWS online help for hunters

Will help you find a place to hunt

Where is the closest National Wildlife Refuge that offers turkey hunting for people with disabilities? You don't need to guess or start phoning names on a long list. A new National Wildlife Refuge System interactive Web site, *Your Guide to Hunting on National Wildlife Refuges*,

(<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/hunting>) provides hunters with an easy search mechanism to find a refuge by special interest, such as game species (i.e. deer, waterfowl, big game), zip code, youth or special needs (universally accessible), or using any combination of topics. Go to: www.fws.gov/refuges/mediatipsheet/August_2009/05.html. ✧

World record largemouth bass?

A Japanese angler, Manabu Kurita, caught a largemouth bass in Japan that if certified could tie the world record of 22 lb. 5 oz., the weight of the bass caught by Georgian George Perry 77 years ago. However, the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) reports that the catch has not yet been submitted for world record status. ✧

Ballast water rules*Continued from page 1*

and built-in opportunities for logistical and administrative delays; everything except a guarantee of adequate ballast control. The Guard is "proposing to require a practicability review, to be published three years prior to the first implementation date for the phase-two BWDS (Ballast Water Discharge Standard), in order to determine whether the technology to achieve and verify compliance with the phase-two performance standard can practicably be implemented, in whole or in part, by the applicable compliance date.

The Guard and industry officials acknowledge it is not clear whether it would be technologically possible to meet the stricter standards. The regulations include feasibility studies and the chance to revise the standards.

Conservationists are disappointed in the Coast Guard's timetable. Ships would have to meet Phase 1 requirements between 2014 and 2016, depending on a vessel's size, and might not be subject to Phase 2 standards for another five years. But Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Christopher O'Neil said the need to develop not only ballast treatment technology but also systems to test that technology is a slow process. "Currently, there isn't enough capacity in labs to determine that discharged ballast water would meet those stringent Phase 2 standards," he said. "You're developing a lot of moving pieces at the same time."

The Coast Guard has set the comment period at 90 days and will have 4 public meetings nationwide to facilitate additional public input. The meetings will be held in Seattle, WA, Chicago, IL, New Orleans, LA and Washington, D.C. Exact dates have not been finalized yet but will be announced in the Federal Register and updated as arrangements are completed.

Ballast water helps keep ships stable while they take on or unload cargo. Vessels can acquire ballast water in home ports or elsewhere, taking in microorganisms and fish along with it and carrying them to new places. Efforts to fix environmental damage caused by organisms that travel along

with ballast water can prove quite costly — an estimated \$200 million a year for the Great Lakes alone.

For years conservationists, particularly anglers and boaters in the Great Lakes region, battled for tougher restrictions. They increasingly relied on individual states to adopt standards of their own, a complicating factor for shippers and less effective in fighting off unwanted species.

Federal legislation that would impose a national ballast water standard 100 times stronger than the international standard has been repeatedly blocked by the shipping industry. A GOP-sponsored bill currently in a House committee has gone nowhere. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., did not include the provision in a measure he had previously sponsored, after environmentalists asked him to drop it.

A federal court ruled during the Bush administration that EPA is empowered under the Clean Water Act to establish ballast standards. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson directed staff earlier this year to review the issue. I guess they're still reviewing it, although they have had the document since it was approved 37 years ago, and were defendants a few short years ago in a federal suit they lost on the very same subject. The *Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council* was a participating plaintiff in that suit.

Some senators wrote the Obama administration last month urging the EPA and the Coast Guard to work together to develop a single, strict standard. EPA's position is if the Coast Guard and EPA propose different standards, the stronger one would be followed.

The proposal, which was published August 28, 2009 in the Federal Register, is followed by a 90-day public comment period.

Comments and related material must either be submitted to the online docket via <http://www.regulations.gov> on or before November 27, 2009 or reach the Docket Management Facility by that date.

You may submit comments identified by Coast Guard docket

number USCG-2001-10486 to the Docket Management Facility at the U.S. Department of Transportation. To avoid duplication, please use only one of the following methods:

(1) Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

(2) Mail: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. DOT, West Building Ground Floor, Rm W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Ave, SE. Washington, DC 20590-0001.

(3) Hand delivery: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Ave SE. Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

(4) Fax: 202-493-2251.

If you submit a comment, the Coast Guard is asking you include the docket number for this rulemaking (USCG-2001-10486),

To submit your comment online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and click on the "submit a comment" box, which will then become highlighted in blue. Insert "USCG-2001-10486" in the Keyword box, click "Search," and then click on the balloon shape in the Actions column.

The full 44-page document is available at: <http://fdsys.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2009-08-28/pdf/E9-20312.pdf>. ✧

Gun Rights Policy Workshop Sept. 25-27

The 24th annual Gun Rights Policy Conference, sponsored by the Second Amendment Foundation (SAF), will take place September 25, 26 & 27, at the Airport Renaissance in St. Louis, MO. More than 50 speakers, including representatives from NSSF, NRA, SAF, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, and other individuals will address attendees. Learn more and register online: <http://www.saf.org/>. ✧

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

WI - A new invader

State authorities have discovered a destructive Gulf Coast crayfish that's caused environmental damage in other states where it's showed up. The DNR said the crayfish are larger than native crayfish, and those that have been caught by the DNR have been up to 8 inches long.

Part 1 Alewives: Should Great Lakes managers kill 'em or keep 'em?

Fishery managers have made little progress in restoring lake trout, the Great Lakes' dominant predator until the species collapsed in the 1940s and 1950s. Most of them agree that alewives, a non-native fish, are a big part of the problem. Alewives eat young lake trout and disrupt chemical processes ...

Part 2 Alewives: The trouble they cause and the salmon that love them

Pacific salmon, the big money species in the multi-billion dollar Great Lakes fishery, need a feast of alewives to thrive. But alewives are an invasive species that harm lake trout, a native fish that biologists have been trying and failing to re-establish for decades. Alewives keep lake trout down in two ways...

Part 3 Great Lakes fish in the balance; biologists have little control

Managing invasive alewives in the Great Lakes is like walking a tightrope. Too many stymie native lake trout reproduction. Too few cripple the profitable salmon fishery. And some biologists say it is an impossible task. But the state agencies that manage Lake Michigan are giving it a shot.

Lake Superior rockets up in August

The level of Lake Superior shot up three inches in August, a month in which the big lake usually remains stable before starting its annual autumn decline.

Proposal would change Lake Erie fishing season

When the Ohio Wildlife Council held an open house at the Erie Shores and Islands Welcome Center to gather public input from anglers on proposed changes to fishing regulations, anglers from around the region showed up to learn more and have their opinions considered.

The wildlife council is considering a proposal to change the date when new bag limits are effective, to May 1 instead of March 1

Lake Erie water snake bounces back

Carolyn Caldwell, administrator of wildlife management and research with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, said the snake population has exceeded expectations. "The population estimate currently exceeds 10,000," Caldwell said.

\$1 billion proposed in 2010 for Great Lakes restoration

Washington – Congress is poised to nearly double its funding commitment to the Great Lakes, adding up to \$475 million for restoration that would deter invasive species, clean up polluted sites and create jobs in Michigan and the region.