



## 2019 Lake Erie fishing outlook is once again great news for anglers Ohio announces walleye and yellow perch bag limits

COLUMBUS, OH – Lake Erie anglers have the chance to experience excellent fishing opportunities on Lake Erie in 2019, according to Ohio DNR. Walleye angler harvest rates set records in 2018, and numerous large hatches point to a bright future for the Walleye Capital of the World.

Ohio’s Lake Erie daily bag limit for walleye is four fish per angler and the yellow perch daily bag limit is 30 fish per angler through April 30, 2019. The daily bag limit will be six walleye per angler from May 1 through Feb. 29, 2020. A 15-inch minimum size limit is in effect during the entire season for walleye. The yellow perch daily limit will remain at 30 in all of Ohio’s Lake Erie waters through April of 2020, with no minimum size limit.

Lake Erie walleye and yellow perch fisheries are managed through an interagency quota system. Each jurisdiction regulates its catches to comply with annually determined safe harvest levels that minimize the risk of over-fishing. Bag limits are based on the quota allocations determined by the interagency group.

### Walleye

Anglers can expect excellent walleye fishing to continue thanks to strong hatches during the last 5 years. Recruitment was well above average in 2018, with trawl catches near or above record highs in some months, indicating strong recruitment to the fishery in coming years. Walleye anglers will mostly catch abundant 4- to 5-year-old fish that will average 19 to 21 inches and could be as large as 26 inches. Abundant young fish from the 2017 and 2018 hatches will show up in anglers’ catches ranging from 9 to 14 inches. Anglers are encouraged to release these sub-legal fish with as little handling as possible, so they can contribute to the fishery in the future.

### Yellow Perch

Anglers can expect good perch fishing in the western basin in 2019 as fish from the large 2014 hatch are approaching sizes up to 13 inches. Hatches from 2015 through 2017 will also provide some smaller 7- to 9-inch fish. The 2018 year class is projected to be larger than the 2014 year class and will provide increased numbers of fish in upcoming years.

Central basin anglers should expect the best fishing to be in eastern waters from Fairport Harbor to Conneaut, where the 2012 and 2014 year classes will provide numerous large fish. Central basin populations have declined from the record levels set over 10 years ago and are lacking large hatches that were more common in the past. Hatches in the area from Huron to Fairport Harbor have been consistently below average recently. Anglers’ catches in this region will mostly come from the 2014 and 2015 year classes and will average 9 inches long.

### Lake Erie fishing outlook

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## Annual Lake Erie Committee report coming soon Great News for Anglers

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indicating strong recruitment to the fishery in coming years. Angler harvest increased from 1.3 million in 2017 to 2.0 million fish in 2018.

Western basin anglers can expect good perch fishing thanks to recent years of recruitment. Hatches continue to be near or above average in the western basin, signaling consistent fishing opportunities across multiple year classes.

Look for it in the next few days

## Free fishing day **April 20**

Indiana residents do not need a fishing license or a trout/salmon stamp to fish the state's public waters on [Free Fishing Days](#). Parks across the state will be hosting fishing events on this special day. Check out the [DNR Calendar](#) for an event near you. ✧

## Bay City State Park – Saginaw Bay Walleye Clinic, **May 7, 8**

This two-day course includes a tips and techniques session led by Walleye Trail World Champion, Captain Mark Martin and Captain Brandon Stanton of Team Gunsmoke Sportfishing and Guide Service and hands-on, one-on-one time with Martin's pro-staff fishing Saginaw Bay. Cost is \$250. Lunch both days and charter boat trips will be provided. Participants are encouraged to bring the gear they already have on the second day. Limited to 21 participants (seven charter boats participating). Time: Tuesday, **May 7**, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, **May 8**, 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Register for the Saginaw Bay Walleye Clinic.](#)

For more information, contact [Jonathan Massung](#) at 989-667-0717 or [Laurie Seibert](#) at 989-205-3763. ✧

## Bay City State Park – Women 'n Waders Fly Fishing Class **May 18**

Geared toward the beginner, but all women anglers welcome! Basic skill-building activities such as knot-tying, setting up equipment, angler etiquette, casting, fly-tying and access points for trout fishing will be covered. **Cost is \$20.** This includes lunch and a free one-year membership to Trout Unlimited (\$35 value) for participants who have never belonged to Trout Unlimited. For more information, contact [Jonathan Massung](#) at 989-667-0717 or [Laurie Seibert](#) at 989-205-3763. ✧

## 2019 Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops

You are invited to join and participate this spring in the upcoming 2019 Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops offering current research and information relating to the status of our Lake Huron fishery. [Click here to register today.](#)

Michigan Sea Grant and partners will host three regional workshops locally along Lake Huron's coastline. These annual spring Lake Huron fisheries workshops bring communities together with fisheries research and management partners to discuss research findings, management updates, and fishing trends.

Three evening workshops, hosted across the state, are open to the public and will offer valuable information for anglers, charter captains, resource professionals and other community members interested in the Lake Huron fishery.

Workshop dates and locations:

### Bay City (Saginaw Bay)

Tuesday, **April 16** (6:00–9:00 p.m.)  
The Canteen Hall, Bay County Fairgrounds  
800 Livingston St., Bay City, MI 48708

### Alpena

Thursday, **April 25** (6:00–9:00 p.m.)  
NOAA Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center  
500 W. Fletcher St., Alpena, MI 49707

### Cedarville

Tuesday, **April 30** (6:00–9:00 p.m.)  
Clark Township Community Center  
133 E. M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719

Workshops are open to the public at no cost; however, pre-registration is requested. Register online at: <http://events.anr.msu.edu/2019LakeHuronFisheries/>

Visit [Michigan Sea Grant online](#) for latest details and updates on fisheries workshops around the state. Contact Brandon Schroeder, Michigan Sea Grant (989-354-9885 or [schroe45@msu.edu](mailto:schroe45@msu.edu)) with questions. ✧



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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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## Stream trout fishing opens **April 13**

Minnesota's popular warm weather stream trout season opens Saturday, **April 13**, with quality fishing opportunities in every region of the state. Brook trout and splake fishing also open on Lake Superior and its tributary streams that have no posted boundaries.

Minnesota has roughly 3,800 miles of designated trout streams. Its four cold water hatcheries produce more than 1.7 million fingerlings and yearlings for stocking each year. Anglers fishing on designated trout waters must have a trout validation in addition to an angling license.

### Trout fishing elsewhere in Minnesota

Trout fishing excitement can be found in many other areas of the state, including in Lake Superior. Cory Goldsworthy, Lake Superior area fisheries supervisor, notes that people can fish from boats, break walls, and shore on Lake Superior, as well as in tributaries to the big lake.

Another spring rite of passage on the North Shore is steelhead fishing. And Kamloops trout can also be caught in the French and Lester rivers, as well as at their confluences with the big lake.

For Twin Cities anglers looking to stay close, Dakota County's Vermillion River offers the opportunity to catch lunker brown trout at a number of publicly accessible spots along the stream. New for this year, there are 10 additional miles of easements, mostly in the Lanesboro area, that allow access exclusively for anglers and landowners, 66 feet from the centerline of the streams.

Fishing easements and stream accesses can be found online in maps on the DNR's trout fishing page. Complete trout season details are available at [mndnr.gov/fishing](http://mndnr.gov/fishing). Information trout fishing, including a calendar of upcoming events, and how to access trout streams is online at [mndnr.gov/fishing/trout\\_streams](http://mndnr.gov/fishing/trout_streams). ✧

## Winter fish kills may be common as ice retreats

The Ohio DNR reminds anglers that small numbers of dead fish may be common in ponds and small lakes this spring. Winter die-offs of fish that result from long periods of heavy ice and snow cover on small waters are referred to as "winterkills." Winterkills may occur in some Ohio waters this year as ice and snow from the past few months give way to spring.

"Minor fish kills do not significantly impact fish populations or sport fishing opportunities in lakes and reservoirs," said Kendra Wecker, chief of the ODNR Division of Wildlife. "Fish kills are fairly common in Ohio, particularly right after ice-out, from late April through mid-June, and during prolonged periods of hot summer weather."

Winterkills are caused when persistent ice forms a surface barrier between water and air that prevents circulation of oxygen and blocks sunlight. If these conditions continue long enough, the oxygen fish need to survive may be depleted and result in some or all of them suffocating.

Winterkills are most common in shallow ponds and become obvious when dead fish are seen along the shore. Ohio's northern counties are more susceptible to winterkill because of colder temperatures and more frequent snows. However, winterkills are possible in any part of the state during winters of persistent cold weather and snow cover.

Fish die-offs are possible in Ohio's larger lakes as well, but for different reasons. Some fish, such as gizzard shad, are less tolerant of long, cold winters and are commonly seen along the shorelines of reservoirs and Lake Erie during moderate winters. However, in larger waters, species that commonly die off following winter are resilient and return in great numbers following a single spawning season.

Concerned citizens should not attempt to rescue stressed or dead fish. Handling stressed fish significantly reduces their chance of

## Michigan: Boaters urged to get safety-certified

With warmer weather on the way, the DNR encourages Michigan boaters to prepare now for the coming season by making sure they're boater safety-certified.

The reminder is in line with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. Many states require completion of a NASBLA-verified course to rent or operate a powerboat. In Michigan, boaters born after June 30, 1996, must have a boating safety certificate to operate a boat, and boaters born after December 31, 1978, need the certificate to operate a personal watercraft.

"If you're on the water operating a boat, or even a canoe or kayak, it's your responsibility to do so safely," said Lt. Tom Wanless, DNR Law Enforcement Division. "We strongly encourage new boaters to take a boater safety course, so they are aware of the do's and don'ts of the water. Even if you have been on the water for years, it's important to refresh yourself on the latest regulations."

According to the U.S. Coast Guard, in 2017 there were 4,291 recreational boating-related accidents that resulted in 658 deaths, 2,629 injuries and approximately \$46 million dollars in property damage. Operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, machinery failure and alcohol use rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents, the Coast Guard said.

The DNR offers boating safety education as a self-paced, online course and as a traditional classroom experience. Learn more or register for a class at the [DNR boating safety certificate webpage](http://DNR boating safety certificate webpage). Questions? [Lt. Tom Wanless](mailto:Lt. Tom Wanless) 517-284-6026. ✧

survival. Go to [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov) for more information about fish and preventing winterkills. Large numbers of dead fish should be reported by calling 800-WILDLIFE (945-3543). ✧

## NY requests help with coho head collection

The NYSDEC and Ontario request your help with recovering heads from coho salmon caught in Lake Ontario again. Each year, DEC stocks coho salmon as fall fingerlings at six sites along the New York shoreline and as spring yearlings at the Salmon River; and Metro East Anglers in cooperation with OMNRF, stock coho fall fingerlings at the Credit River. As part of a continuing effort to evaluate the effectiveness of stocking, we are comparing coho salmon stocking strategies by mass marking and/or tagging all stocked coho salmon in 2016-2018. Tags are 1 mm long pieces of coded wire inserted into the snouts of fish prior to stocking. Tags are invisible to the naked eye, and undetectable without specialized equipment; therefore we need to collect the heads to retrieve the tags.

Some portion of the coho caught in Lake Ontario may also come from natural reproduction instead of hatcheries. Although the contribution of wild and hatchery coho salmon is unknown. Anglers can help by noting whether their coho is clipped or not and include that data with the head along with noting collection date, location, and fish length on a label.

We are asking volunteers to collect heads and data from coho harvested in Lake Ontario and tributaries and place them in freezers located at sites from the Niagara River to Oswego. Bags will be available at freezer locations, and instructions for collections are provided below. Be on the lookout for coho salmon when fishing. For all harvested coho salmon, please cut off its head, toss it in a bag, label, and put it in a freezer. If you are willing to collect coho salmon heads and store them in your personal freezer, we will happily come pick them up. Arrangements can be made by emailing [fwfishlo@dec.ny.gov](mailto:fwfishlo@dec.ny.gov).

### Freezer Locations for Depositing Coho Heads-

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/112942.html> ✧

## Register for pairs beginner fly-fishing weekend, **April 26-28**

A youth paired with an adult can join other youth-adult pairs to learn the basics of fly fishing from experienced instructors over the course of a spring weekend from **April 26** to April 28, near Lanesboro.

To participate, youth must be 11 to 17 years old as of April 26, and both the adult and the youth must each have less than five hours of fly-fishing experience.

“Youth and adults in these classes are both beginners so they can help each other learn a new skill,” said Linda Radimecky, a DNR naturalist. “When they’ve finished the weekend, they’ll be prepared for hours of fun fishing adventures.”

Participants will learn how to tie knots used for fishing, how to use and care for their equipment, what fish need to survive and how to help protect fishing for future generations.

The registration fee is \$130 per person and includes meals, lodging, guiding services, equipment and additional materials. Sponsorships to offset registration fees may be available from angling and conservation organizations. This event is limited to 20 youth-adult pairs. For more info, or application: Linda Radimecky at [linda.radimecky@state.mn.us](mailto:linda.radimecky@state.mn.us) or 651-231-6968. ✧

## Lake Michigan Workshop **April 18**

This annual workshop is hosted by South Haven Steelheaders and Michigan Sea Grant. This year's event will feature talks on forage fish monitoring (USGS), salmon and trout tag returns (USFWS), stocking levels and other management issues (DNR).

This workshop is open to the public free of charge. No registration is required. [AGENDA](#)

The workshop is located at the Moose Lodge, 1025 Wells St., South Haven, MI 49090, 7:00-9:10 p.m., Thursday, **April 18**. ✧

## Striped bass fishing season starts

Striped bass recreational fishing has begun in the tidal Hudson River.



These fish spend most of their time in coastal waters but return to the fresh water of the Hudson each spring to spawn. The Hudson River acts as a nursery for the newly hatched young-of-year bass.

Striped bass commonly reach lengths of more than three feet and weights exceeding 30 pounds. For people who fish the Hudson for sport, the striper is a favorite catch. Before you head out, enroll in the annual non-fee [Recreational Marine Fishing Registry](#), and read a summary of [Tidal Hudson River Regulations](#).

Striped bass are managed along the Atlantic coast by the [Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission](#). Along with other states, New York has required regulatory measures that include [monitoring programs](#), recreational and commercial minimum size limits, recreational creel limits, and commercial quotas to manage the condition of the stock.

DEC's monitoring program began in 1985. From April to June, Hudson River fisheries crew use a 500-foot haul seine, as well as an electrofishing boat to catch spawning striped bass. Biologists measure, weigh, and collect scale samples from the fish for aging before [tagging](#) and returning them to the river.

In 2015, New York was required to reduce harvest due to a decline in the coastal spawning stock. In the Hudson River, DEC implemented a slot limit to protect most female fish, while allowing anglers the opportunity to harvest a trophy fish. These regulations ensure that striped bass will be plentiful for years to come. ✧

## Welcome fish back to Michigan creek after dam removal

As part of restoring the Kalamazoo River watershed from hazardous waste contamination, the Alcott Dam was removed from Portage Creek in Michigan, reopening the creek to fish and other wildlife. The project also provides increased flood protection to surrounding communities. The natural resource Trustees working on the larger Kalamazoo River hazardous waste site—NOAA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and multiple agencies in the State of Michigan—provided \$2 million for a number of activities. These include assessment of the pollution impacts, developing restoration plans, and implementation of restoration projects.

Along with the dam removal, the project also restored habitat in and

along Portage Creek. Roughly 3,000 feet of the creek upstream of the former dam was enhanced with new rocky shallow areas and native plants along the banks and surrounding [wetland areas](#). Fifty thousand cubic yards, or more than 15 Olympic-sized swimming pools of material, were also removed from the area to help contain stormwater in the event of heavy rains and flooding.

Why does the area need to be restored? It needs restoration because of impacts of hazardous waste pollution from old paper mills in the 1950s–1970s. The pollution included toxic PCBs, industrial chemicals banned in 1979. They contaminated the water, sediments, and soils along almost 80 miles of the Kalamazoo

River and its tributaries, including 3 miles of Portage Creek.

The pollutants got into aquatic invertebrates and fish and moved up the food chain through bald eagles and other wildlife that eat them. Fish consumption advisories are still in effect in the area as several species are unsafe for humans to eat.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality contributed more than \$3 million toward the dam removal project, the habitat restoration, and other activities like properly disposing of contaminated sediments from the site. The removal of the dam was a high priority project in the Trustees' restoration plan for Portage Creek. ✧

## Walleye harvest will be allowed in May on Mille Lacs Lake

Anglers on Mille Lacs Lake will be able to keep walleye during open water fishing for the first time since 2015. An improving walleye population has been protected by conservative fishing regulations in recent years. Mille Lacs anglers will be able to keep one walleye between 21 and 23 inches or one walleye over 28 inches from Saturday, May 11, through Friday, May 31.

Similar to recent years, a night closure for the 2019 walleye fishing season will be in effect on Mille Lacs from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. beginning Monday, May 13. The night walleye closure will remain in effect throughout the entire open-water season, which ends November 30.

Catch-and-release fishing for walleye begins Saturday, June 1, and other than the night closure, there are no planned closures for walleye fishing this season.

The Mille Lacs walleye population has undergone many changes over the past two decades that have coincided with significant aquatic system changes including increased water clarity and decreased walleye productivity; the introduction

of zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil and spiny water fleas; a changing zooplankton community that may be altering the aquatic food web; and declines in certain forage species, including tullibee.

### Bass fishing

The lake is nationally recognized as one of the nation's top smallmouth bass and muskellunge fisheries. In 2017, Bassmaster Magazine named Mille Lacs the number one bass fishing lake in the nation. The lake hosted the Toyota Bassmaster Angler of the Year Championship in 2016 and 2017.

Minnesota's bass season opens Saturday, May 11, and is catch-and-release only in most of the state, including Mille Lacs, through Friday, May 24. Beginning on Saturday, May 25, Mille Lacs' daily bag and possession limit will be three bass per angler. All smallmouth and largemouth bass between 17 and 21 inches must be immediately released. Anglers may keep only one bass over 21 inches. In a change this year, smallmouth bass are catch-and-release only on Mille Lacs from

Monday, Sept. 9, through Feb. 23, 2020, to be consistent with statewide regulations.

### Northern pike

Mille Lacs Lake has special regulations that exempt it from the new statewide northern pike zone regulations. From May 11 through November 30, anglers may keep up to five fish. Only one northern pike over 40 inches may be included in the bag limit of five, and anglers must release all pike between 30 and 40 inches.

### Special night fishing opportunities

For muskellunge, the season opens on Saturday, June 1, with the statewide rules of a one fish bag and a minimum length of 54 inches. Beginning June 1, anglers may fish for muskellunge and northern pike at night on Mille Lacs, but may only possess and use artificial lures or sucker minnows longer than 8 inches.

More information about fishing on Mille Lacs Lake, ongoing DNR management and research, and Mille Lacs area recreation opportunities is available on the DNR website at [mndnr.gov/millelacslake](http://mndnr.gov/millelacslake). ✧

## Women's Learn to Fish April 20

Women age 18 and older will learn fish biology and basic fishing skills during this three hour workshop at St. Patrick's County Park, South Bend, IN. After assembling fishing poles, attendees will try hand at fishing. No fishing license is required for Indiana residents because **April 20** is a free fishing day. The park is also waiving the entrance fee. Equipment is provided, but pre-registration is necessary. Info: Shelley Chaffee, [schaffee@sjcparks.org](mailto:schaffee@sjcparks.org), (574) 674-9765; or Larry Koza with the DNR at (260) 829-6241 or [lkoza@dnr.in.gov](mailto:lkoza@dnr.in.gov). Registration ends **April 15**, or when 15 spots have been filled. To register, click on the red icon below. ✧



## Mitchell State Park – April 27 Bass Clinic

The Outdoor Skills Academy pro-staff will present various strategies and techniques for chasing bass. Feel free to bring your own gear. This clinic will cover a wide range of techniques for pursuing both smallmouth and largemouth bass, but will focus on the use of various plastic presentations, including Texas and Carolina rigging, tube jigs, etc. **Cost is \$25**, Limited to 50 students. **Register online.** Edward Shaw, 231-779-1321, [shawe@michigan.gov](mailto:shawe@michigan.gov). ✧

## Indiana trout stocking season

Indiana fish hatchery personnel are currently stocking rainbow trout for the 2019 season. Lake stockings began in mid-March and should be completed by mid-April. Streams throughout the state will be stocked later this month in preparation for the opener of the stream trout season on **April 27**. In order to protect these fish prior to the opener, certain streams are closed to all fishing from April 15 until opening day. Please see the [fishing guide](#) for more details. A fishing license and a trout and salmon stamp are required to fish for trout. ✧

## Thumb-area women's turkey hunt workshop May 17-18

The Michigan DNR Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program is offering a turkey hunt workshop for women in Tuscola County.

The program, **May 17-18**, is for women with no previous turkey hunting experience or for those who would like to expand on their skills and abilities.



This free Beyond BOW event will be held in Cass City. Shotguns, ammunition and lunch all will be provided. However, overnight lodging will be the responsibility of the participants.

This workshop is open to any properly licensed female hunter at least 10 years old. Proper safety and hunting techniques will be taught and followed.

On Friday, participants will gain knowledge of turkey biology, general turkey hunting techniques, calls and calling, hunting ethics, firearm safety, and shooting. Participants then will be paired with hunting mentors and set afield to hunt.

On Saturday, participants and mentors will meet at the Cass City DNR Field Office for a light breakfast before heading out for an early-morning hunt. Following lunch, the attendees will have an opportunity to participate in bird cleaning prior to workshop wrap-up.

To attend this event, participants must have a Michigan base hunting license, which is available as an apprentice option for those who have not yet completed a hunter safety course, and a turkey license for Hunt Unit ZB, Hunt Number 0118, purchased prior to attending the workshop.

Enrollment is limited to 18. The

## Women's Hunting 101 Workshop - May 4-5

This Beyond BOW event is an **All Women's Hunting Workshop for women ages 18+** who do not yet have their Hunter Education Certification.

*\* You must complete the required homework prior to the workshop, attend all sessions of the weekend, demonstrate proper attitude and safety, and pass a final written exam to receive your Hunter Education Certificate of Qualification, which is required for purchasing a first-time hunting license in New York State. This workshop does not include bowhunter education certification.*

**Location:** Amahami Girl Scout Camp, Deposit, NY  
Western Catskills, Broome County

### Workshop Times:

Saturday, **May 4th** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
and

Sunday, **May 5th** 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

*You must attend both days.*

- Learn firearm safety, cleaning, and techniques
- Handle and shoot shotguns, rifles and crossbows
- Discuss hunting gear and use tree stands
- Track a blood trail and field dress a game animal
- Game meat preparation

**Registration Fee: \$110** Includes lunch & dinner on Saturday, lodging Saturday night, breakfast and lunch on Sunday, snacks, drinks, program materials, equipment and supplies.

See the [attached flyer \(PDF\)](#) for more information.

Please register using the [attached Registration Form \(PDF\)](#).

For more information, contact: [Katrina.talbot@dec.ny.gov](mailto:Katrina.talbot@dec.ny.gov)  
518-402-8963 ✧

**deadline for registration is May 1.**

For class info and registration: [Michigan.gov/BOW](http://Michigan.gov/BOW). This event will take place rain or shine. For More info: Michelle Zellar at 906-293-5131, ext. 4004, or Ron Sting at 989-872-5300 or email [DNRBOW@michigan.gov](mailto:DNRBOW@michigan.gov) ✧

## Lake Erie fishing outlook

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### Additional opportunities

Smallmouth bass and largemouth bass fishing in 2019 should provide both good catch rates and trophy size opportunities. Please note that new regulations were implemented for largemouth and smallmouth bass for the 2019 fishing season. The previously closed spring season now allows the harvest of one black bass per day, with a minimum size limit of 18 inches from May 1 until the fourth Saturday of June (June 22), and the daily bag limit will continue to be five black bass per day with a 14-inch minimum size limit the remainder of the season through April 30, 2020.

For Lake Erie fishing reports: [www.wildohio.gov](http://www.wildohio.gov) or by calling 888-HOOKFISH (888-466-5347). ✦

## Little Manistee River steelhead egg take set

Since 1968, the Little Manistee River weir, located in Stronach Township, Manistee County, has served as the sole source of winter-run steelhead eggs for fish hatcheries in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. These hatcheries help keep the steelhead population stocked and healthy, which is great news for anglers.

Operations begin by lowering the weir gates by mid-March, stopping the upstream migration in the river and diverting the fish into holding ponds. Usually during April, the fish ripen (meaning they are ready to release eggs or milt) and egg-take operations begin, continuing until the established egg quota is reached. The weir gates then are removed, and all remaining fish are allowed to migrate upstream.

During egg-take operations, unripe or "green" steelhead are held in maturation ponds or counted and passed upstream to sustain the river's wild steelhead run. Steelhead that are spawned during operations also are passed upstream and many eventually return to Lake Michigan.

Questions? Contact [Joe Mickevich](mailto:Joe.Mickevich@dnr.state.mi.us), 231-389-2551 or [Elvise Walter](mailto:Elvise.Walter@dnr.state.mi.us), 517-284-5839. ✦

## Acting Sec'y Bernhardt Signs Order to Prioritize Implementation of Public Lands Bill

WASHINGTON – U.S. Acting Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt recently signed a secretarial order to establish a Departmental task force to facilitate and prioritize the implementation of S. 47, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Dingell Act). The bill was made up of more than 100 individual bills that were introduced by 50 Senators and several House members. The Interior Department had advocated for in concept or worked with Members of Congress on many of the individual provisions that made up the package.

[Secretarial Order 3374, Implementation of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act](#) establishes a task force to ensure the timely and coordinated implementation of the Dingell Act and consistency among all offices and Bureaus within the Department of the Interior.

“Passage of John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (S.47), which included provisions of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act (21CSC), provides an opportunity to demonstrate a renewed commitment to a wide variety of conservation and recreation priorities for this Administration, including the engagement of youth, young adults, and veterans. We are pleased to see the establishment of a departmental task force to facilitate implementation of S.47. Our network stands ready to work with the task force and help make 21CSC a part of Interior's conservation legacy,” said the Corps Network President and CEO and Partnership for the 21CSC Co-Chair Mary Ellen Sprengel. ✦

## Lanesboro hatchery upgrades help ensure trout opportunities

A \$5 million construction project now underway at Minnesota's flagship state-owned trout hatchery in Lanesboro will ensure a regular supply of trout can be stocked each year in streams and lakes throughout the state.

“Our 15 state hatcheries and the fish they produce play an important and irreplaceable role in our fisheries management work,” said Brad Parsons, fisheries chief for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. “Lanesboro is our primary concern because of the severity of failing structural support and the hatchery's crucial role in producing and stocking rainbow and brown trout.”

Funding received last year from the Legislature allowed work to begin April 1 replacing the Lanesboro hatchery office and nursery building.

Construction is expected to be substantially complete by November 1, allowing egg hatching and fish production to continue on schedule for future trout stocking.

The DNR has identified \$30 million in specific repairs and improvements that hatcheries need.

Those improvements include:

- Remedying biosecurity issues that jeopardize fish health.
- Infrastructure and maintenance improvements.
- Energy efficiency upgrades.
- Equipment replacement and upgrades.
- Pond, raceway and road repairs and maintenance.

“Stocking these hatchery-raised fish in a scientifically sound manner significantly enhances fishing in Minnesota and provides angling opportunities that wouldn't be there without stocking,” Parsons said. For more information about state fish hatcheries, visit the DNR website at [mndnr.gov/hatcheries](http://mndnr.gov/hatcheries) ✦

## Scientists advance new technology to protect drinking water from Lake Erie algal toxins

Before the 2014 Toledo Water Crisis left half a million residents without safe drinking water for three days, Dr. Jason Huntley's research at The University of Toledo focused on bacteria that cause pneumonia. After the harmful algal bloom prompted the city of Toledo's "Do Not Drink" advisory, the microbiologist expanded his research projects to target microcystin.

"I live here, and I have a young son," said Huntley, associate professor in the UT Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology in the College of Medicine and Life Sciences. "I don't want toxins in the water, and I am committed to helping the water treatment plant protect the public."

Huntley's research lab recently made major progress in his mission to create a biofilter that uses naturally occurring Lake Erie bacteria to remove microcystin released by

harmful algal blooms from drinking water, reducing or eliminating the use of chlorine and other chemicals.

"We've identified groups of bacteria in Lake Erie that can be used to naturally purify water. These bacteria have not been previously used to fight harmful algal blooms in other parts of the world," Huntley said. The microbiologists successfully isolated bacteria from Lake Erie that degrade the microcystin toxin known as MC-LR – the most toxic, most common and most closely linked to liver cancer and other diseases – at a daily rate of up to 19 parts per billion.

The research is published in the February issue of the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*.

The lab used multiple approaches to confirm the microcystin degradation results, including mass spectrometry and the ELISA test, which is the standard method water treatment plant operators use to

measure microcystin concentration during algal bloom season.

His lab is now in the process of identifying the enzymatic pathways the bacteria use to break down microcystin.

Currently, municipal water treatment plants remove or degrade microcystin using methods such as chlorination, ozonation, activated carbon adsorption and flocculation.

Huntley's team is developing and testing biofilters—water filters containing the specialized bacteria that degrade microcystin toxins from lake water as it flows through the filter. Huntley holds a provisional patent on this technology. The research was supported by grants from Ohio through the state's Harmful Algal Bloom Research Initiative, which consists of 54 science teams at universities across the state seeking solutions to address toxic algae in Lake Erie. ✧

## Greenpeace founding member: 'The whole Climate Crisis is not only Fake News, it's Fake Science'

Patrick Moore, a founding member of Greenpeace, slammed climate alarmists for promoting a fake emergency. President Trump tweeted shortly after he made them.

"In fact, the whole climate crisis as they call it is not only fake news, it's fake science. There is no climate crisis," Moore, author of the book [\*Confessions of a Greenpeace Drop-Out: The Making of a Sensible Environmentalist\*](#), told Fox News.

"There is weather and climate all around the world. In fact, carbon dioxide is the main building block of all life," Moore said. "That's where the carbon comes from in carbon-based life, which is all life on land and in the sea. A little bit of warming would not be a bad thing for myself being a Canadian and Russia wouldn't mind it either"

The Greenpeace founder did not deny that climate change is real, but insisted that it is not a crisis. "Yes, of

course, climate change is real. It's been happening since the beginning of time. But it's not dangerous and it's not made by people."

What is climate change, if it's not a man-made imminent crisis? "Climate change is a perfectly natural phenomenon and this modern warm period actually began about 300 years ago when Little Ice Age began to come to an end," he explained. "There is nothing to be afraid of." As for the alarmists, "that's all they are doing is instilling fear. Most of the scientists who are saying it's a crisis are on perpetual government grants."

Yet there is a fundamental contradiction between their claims, Moore insisted. "On one hand they say the science is settled and people like myself should just shut up because they know what's right. On the other hand, they seem to keep studying it forever and if there is something new to find out. And those

two things are completely contradictory," he said.

Moore even argued that "carbon dioxide is actually a benefit to the world." He promoted the CO2 Coalition, which believes "that carbon dioxide is entirely beneficial to the environment, agriculture and forestry and to the climate of the Earth."

If Patrick Moore believes in carbon dioxide as a benefit to the climate, how could he have helped found Greenpeace? He argued that it was the organization that changed from its original mission, not him. "I was one of the Founders doing a Ph.D. in the 60s & 70s in ecology. I was radicalized by the Cold War and the threat of all-out nuclear war and the emerging consciousness of the environment and we did a lot of good things," he recalled. "We saved the whales. And we stopped a lot of toxic waste being put into the ocean. And the air." ✧



## Upper Red Lake walleye changes

While anglers fishing Upper Red Lake this spring will again be able to keep 4 walleye, a change in the size regulation will allow them to take one fish over 20", making keepers out of more of the walleye population.

Since May 2017, the regulation allowed anglers to keep four fish with only one over 17 inches. Adjusting the one-over size to 20 inches will put more mature females within the allowed four-fish bag limit during the open water season that begins Saturday, **May 11**. Under the new regulation, anglers will be able to keep four walleye under 20 inches, or a combination of three walleye under 20 inches and one over 20 inches.

"We're using the new regulation to let anglers remove surplus spawning stock, which hasn't happened previously," said Gary Barnard, DNR Bemidji area fisheries supervisor. "The DNR will likely adjust the regulation following the 2019 season."

The previous regulation resulted in harvest of 234,000 lbs. for the 2018 harvest year. While this harvest level was a record high for any year since reopening the lake to walleye fishing in 2006, it was still short of the target harvest range for the lake's surplus spawning stock condition. That level of harvest has not been effective in reducing spawning stock toward the desired optimal condition of 2.5-4.5 lbs. per acre.

Red Lake's walleye harvest is managed under a joint harvest plan, revised in 2015 by the Red Lakes Committee. An Upper Red Lake Citizen Advisory Committee reviews harvest totals and regulation options and makes recommendations for walleye regulation adjustments for the state waters of Upper Red Lake.

"The revised harvest plan recommends an aggressive approach when walleye spawning stock is in surplus, as it is currently," Barnard said. "Anglers can expect a return to more restrictive size or bag limits in future seasons once spawning stock is managed to more desirable levels." [mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing](http://mndnr.gov/regulations/fishing). ✧

## Smith & Wesson moves to Missouri

[Smith & Wesson](#) has a rich heritage in the [Springfield, Massachusetts](#) area with all of the time their company has spent there. That door on the company's history will soon be coming to a close just like the doors of their distribution center. [American Outdoor Brands Corporation \(AOBC\)](#), which is the parent company to [Smith & Wesson](#), is shutting down operations at the Springfield distribution center as they break ground for a new \$75 million warehouse in Columbia, Missouri.

With the opening of the new Columbia, Missouri distribution center [Smith & Wesson](#) will cease operations at other much smaller distribution centers around the country. [AOBC](#) has publicly stated that their reasoning for this move was to create more efficient pathways for distribution and that in the end there would be significant cost savings by housing everything in one location. The new facility will be approximately 600,000 square feet in size.

The new Missouri warehouse facility will not only house [Smith & Wesson](#) and [Thompson Center firearms](#), but also their other lines of products like knives, tools, and outdoor equipment. The transition from the older distribution centers into the new one is expected to take the full calendar year of 2019. There already is one distribution center in Missouri and that older one will work in tandem with the newer facility they are opening up. The older Missouri facility employs 175 employees while the newer one is expected to hire 154 in 2019 with a total of 328 in the years to come. Smith & Wesson's other prominent brand, [Crimson Trace](#), will join the new Missouri facility sometime next year.

It will be interesting to see if in the coming years as AOBC becomes more streamlined and efficient if those savings trickle down hill to the consumer in the form of cheaper goods. Only time will tell, but for now one can hope. ✧

## DNR reports moose survey results

After this winter's moose survey, biologists said the western Upper Peninsula moose population is growing at a long-term average of about 2% yearly, with an estimated 509 animals living in that part of the state. Michigan Wildlife Division Chief Russ Mason recently reported the survey results to the Natural Resources Commission at a recent NRC meeting.

"The growth rate for this moose population is low, but remains positive," Mason said. "Moose are continuing to maintain a foothold in the western Upper Peninsula, continuing to further extend the lineage of a population airlifted to the area from Canada in the mid-1980s."

The western U.P. moose range covers about 1,400 square miles in parts of Marquette, Baraga, and Iron counties. The eastern U.P. population of moose is not surveyed but is estimated to be fewer than 100 moose. This population includes animals living within the Seney National Wildlife Refuge and Tahquamenon Falls State Park.

The aerial survey was completed in early February. Moose surveys are conducted every other winter by the DNR, with gray wolf surveys taking place during the interim winters.

"Overall, flying conditions were difficult, with flights cancelled on 23 days, primarily because of snow and high winds," said Brad Johnson, a DNR wildlife technician who coordinates the survey. "On the days we could fly, conditions were good; snow covered most of the stumps and down logs and we had some snow on the conifers for most of the survey, all of which aided our efforts."

With the Moose Hunting Advisory Council's recommendation to only allow hunting if a growth rate of greater 3 percent is maintained, the DNR is not recommending implementing a harvest at this time.

The same was true over the past several years.

For more info: [www.Michigan.gov/Moose](http://www.Michigan.gov/Moose) ✧

## New MI boating and fishing laws

Beginning March 21, watercraft users in Michigan are required to take steps to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Also, anyone fishing with live or cut bait or practicing catch-and-release fishing will need to take precautions to limit the movement of invasive species and fish diseases.

For boaters, amendments to [Sec. 41325 of NREPA \(Act 451 of 1994\)](#), finalized near the close of the 2018 legislative session, affect both motorized and nonmotorized watercraft, trailers and other



conveyances used to move watercraft. In addition to the existing law requiring all aquatic plants be removed from boats and trailers before launching, the changes require the following, prior to transporting any watercraft over land:

- Removing all drain plugs from bilges, ballast tanks, and live wells.
- Draining all water from any live wells and bilges.
- Ensuring the watercraft, trailer, and any conveyance used to transport the watercraft or trailer are free of aquatic organisms, including plants.

This means after trailering boats, and before getting on the road, boaters must pull plugs, drain water and remove plants and debris from all watercraft, trailers and other conveyances. A [short video](#) from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality shows the steps boaters can take to comply with the new law.

### What anglers need to know

For anglers, NREPA amendments codify the Michigan DNR's Fisheries Order 245 regarding the release of

baitfish, collection and use of baitfish and cut bait, and release of captured fish, specifically:

- A person shall not release baitfish in any waters of this state. A person who collects fish shall not use the fish as bait or cut bait except in the inland lake, stream, or Great Lake where the fish was caught, or in a connecting waterway of the inland lake, stream, or Great Lake where the fish was caught if the fish could freely move between the original location of capture and the location of release.
- A person, who catches fish other than baitfish in a lake, stream, Great Lake, or connecting waterway shall only release the fish in the lake, stream, or Great Lake where the fish was caught, or in a connecting waterway of the lake, stream, or Great Lake where the fish was caught if the fish could freely move between the original location of capture and the location of release.

Whether purchased or collected, unused baitfish should be disposed of on land or in the trash – never in the water. Any baitfish an angler collects may be used only in the waters where it was originally collected.

“It is important to clarify that anglers are allowed to catch and release fish,” said Set Herbst, the DNR's aquatic species and regulatory affairs manager. “Anglers who are catching and releasing fish should only release the fish back into the same water or in a connecting body of water the fish could have reached on its own.”

### Why it matters

Many invasive species move from one location to another with the help of human transportation.

Draining boats and cleaning trailers can limit the spread of zebra and quagga mussels, which are common in some inland lakes. A more recent invader, the tiny New Zealand mudsnail, can hitchhike from

river to river when mud or debris is left on kayaks, canoes and gear.

Moving fish from one body of water to another can spread fish diseases, like heterosporis (a parasite of yellow perch) and viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus (VHSv), a serious disease that can affect many fish species. Fish diseases also can be spread to new locations when water carrying parasites or infection is transferred via bilges, live wells or ballast tanks.

### What you should do

Here are some simple rules of thumb to help boaters and anglers navigate these laws:

- **CLEAN** boats, trailers and equipment.
- **DRAIN** live wells, bilges and all water – pull all drain plugs.
- **DRY** boats and equipment.
- **DISPOSE** of unwanted bait in the trash.

And remember when practicing catch-and-release fishing, return the fish to the water where it was caught.

For more information on the [new boating and fishing laws](#), visit the Laws section at [Michigan.gov/invasives](http://Michigan.gov/invasives). ✧

## Weatherby: Setting up shop in Wyoming

Weatherby, Inc. is nearing the final steps in the move to Sheridan, Wyo., from Paso Robles, Calif., having established residency in the new Sheridan facility March 1, 2019. When you see the words ‘Sheridan, WY’ stamped in the side of a Mark V action, it just looks right. We are excited to see the beginning of our manufacturing in Sheridan, Wyoming,” said Adam Weatherby. Weatherby is congratulated for moving to a gun-friendly, business-friendly state rather than contributing to the economy of a state that seems to want to regulate gun manufacturers out of existence. ✧

## Canada's study on risk of grass carp to Great Lakes

The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of protecting the biodiversity and quality of Canada's waters, including the Great Lakes. We are preserving and protecting the Great Lakes and their considerable social, economic and spiritual benefits from the harmful impacts of invasive species.

Grass carp, one of four species of Asian carp, has the potential to disrupt the Great Lakes ecosystem and economy unless their spread is stopped, according to a report released today by Fisheries and Oceans Canada with support from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. The socio-economic study concludes that, in addition to the significant ecological threat that is posed by the presence of grass carp in the Great Lakes, there would also be economic, social and cultural ripple effects.

The report – *Socio-Economic Risk Assessment of the Presence of Grass Carp in the Great Lakes Basin* – found the total economic value of activities in or around the Great Lakes is estimated to generate \$13 billion annually. This includes commercial and recreational fishing, hunting, recreational boating, beaches and wildlife viewing. The economic values for these sectors could be at risk if grass carp become established in the Great Lakes basin.

The management of aquatic invasive species is a shared responsibility of federal, provincial and territorial governments. To protect our ecosystems and prevent economic loss, the Government of Canada, through Budget 2017, allocated \$43.8 million over five years to help prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species, respond rapidly to the detection of new species, and manage the spread of already established aquatic invasive species. Of this, we invested up to \$20 million over five years in the Asian Carp Program to ensure Canada's Great Lakes are well-

protected from harmful impacts of Asian carp; we also made this an ongoing program. The Canadian Asian Carp Program is actively, and successfully, preventing the spread of grass carp into the Canadian waters of the Great Lakes. Since 2012, the Asian Carp program, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, has caught 28 grass carp in the Great Lakes. Of those 28 fish, the majority were triploid – meaning, they had been sterilized through genetic modification.

While the finding of grass carp in Canadian waters is cause for concern, there is no evidence that they have reproduced in Canadian waters or of an established population. Fisheries and Oceans Canada continues to work with domestic and US partners to prevent the migration of Asian carp from southern waters.

Researchers are hopeful both studies will provide decision-makers with information for future options to stop the spread of grass carp into the Great Lakes. The Government of Canada has invested heavily in research to find innovative and effective ways to address the current situation and we continue to use existing and emerging science to inform policy decisions. The report released today will be invaluable to inform our future protection and management measures. Through active collaboration with the different levels of government, conservation groups and international partners, we continue to work together to protect our waterways.

### Quotes

“We know that preventing the spread of Grass Carp in the Great Lakes basin is vitally important. The Great Lakes is home to diverse species and also an important corridor for economic activity – helping to move \$19.8 billion worth of goods each year, supports 237,868 jobs and \$45.4 billion in economic activity. This invasive species poses a significant risk to both the local economy and environment. Our government is

committed to working with our provincial colleagues, environmental groups and international partners to guard against this threat”.

*Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard, the Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson*

### Quick Facts

- Grass carp pose an extreme ecological risk to most areas of the basin due to their capability to destroy aquatic habitats on which other fishes and animals rely.
- Budget 2017 allocated \$43.8 million over five years, starting in 2017–18, to help prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species, respond rapidly to the detection of new species, and manage the spread of already established aquatic invasive species.
- Of that amount, up to \$20 million over five years, and ongoing, was earmarked for DFO's Asian Carp Program to ensure Canada's Great Lakes are well protected from the establishment and potential significant impacts of Asian carp.
- The Asian Carp Program conducts early detection surveillance at over 40 locations in the Canadian waters of the Great Lakes, responds to sightings of Asian carps, assists our Great Lakes basin partners, and conducts outreach activities.

### Associated Links

- [Socio-Economic Risk Assessment Of The Presence Of Grass Carp In The Great Lakes Basin](#)
- [Binational Ecological Risk Assessment of Grass Carp for the Great Lakes Basin](#) ✦

## Director, divisions set department priorities for 2019

Most people go into a new year setting goals and priorities, knowing that doing so is more likely to produce successful results. The Michigan DNR is no different. Recently, DNR Director Dan Eichinger and the chiefs of each DNR division laid out their priorities for 2019 during a series of employee meetings across the state.

“Our employee meetings are held every other year,” Eichinger said. “The sessions give the director, division chiefs and staffers a unique opportunity to hear from each other, face-to-face, as we celebrate accomplishments, mark employee career milestones and blaze our path forward.”



In addition, the meetings bring everyone in the DNR to the table, to start conversations and to help cultivate collaboration across divisions. Each division and staff member possesses a key ingredient to the department’s success.

As a backdrop to this effort, the DNR has five overarching goals that remain paramount, no matter the year or the season. They include protecting natural and cultural resources, ensuring sustainable recreation use and enjoyment, enabling strong natural resource-based economies, fostering effective business practices and good governance, and building and improving strong relationships and partnerships inside, and outside, the department.

These overall goals are much in line with the DNR’s mission statement, which says that the department “is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state’s natural and cultural

resources for current and future generations.” In turn, Eichinger’s specific set of priorities support the DNR mission statement and the evergreen goals. They are focused on fish and wildlife disease, invasive species, natural and cultural resource user engagement, infrastructure and public lands.

Eichinger plans for the DNR to promote healthy populations of fish and wildlife by reducing occurrences of disease – such as chronic wasting disease in deer and viral hemorrhagic septicemia in fish – where possible and to understand the dynamics of diseases for better species management in the future.

He also intends to concentrate agency efforts on preventing the introduction of invasive species, promoting early detection of these non-native plants and animals, managing them where they exist and restoring areas where damage has occurred. Additionally, Eichinger has prioritized addressing the DNR’s changing user base, including a declining number of hunters and anglers, while expanding the diversity of natural and cultural resource users and broadening the diversity of the DNR’s workforce.

Other areas he plans to focus on are tackling legacy DNR infrastructure needs and managing Michigan’s public lands for optimal recreation, forestry, wildlife and fisheries outcomes.

Each DNR division works to further the director’s and department’s priorities while aiming to accomplish a set of division-specific goals. Among its priorities, the Finance and Operations Division is working on streamlining and updating software applications and policies and procedures to enhance effectiveness as well as implementing the DNR’s public land strategy.

Focus areas for the Fisheries Division include invasive species and fish diseases, which Fisheries Division Chief Jim Dexter said are “at the top of our priority list.” As are a

unique partnership with the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians to reintroduce a historic Michigan fish species through the Arctic Graying Initiative and completely revising the 90-year-old state-licensed commercial fishing statute.

“Most people don’t think much about commercial fish like whitefish, but it is still a public trust resource – it’s no different than our sport fish, it’s no different than our game animals, it’s no different than timber, oil, gas, minerals,” Dexter said. “It is our job and our responsibility to manage that, and we need to have a statute that’s appropriate to work with.”

Among the DNR Forest Resources Division’s goals are inventory and assessment of more than 13,000 miles of roads and their infrastructure on 4 million acres of state forest land the division manages, as well as investing in roads and bridges. Other division priorities include enhancing timber sales as part of the Good Neighbor Authority – which allows the DNR to do forestry work on federally managed lands – and developing a bat habitat conservation plan.

Forest Resources Division Chief Deb Begalle said that income from Good Neighbor Authority timber sales can be used for other projects on national forests, such as fish and wildlife habitat improvements. “It’s a great, great partnership that I think is going to grow, and it also helps put timber on the market for mills, many that support rural communities,” Begalle said.

“We also are working on a tri-state habitat conservation plan for the northern long-eared bat, along with three other species, working with Minnesota and Wisconsin. This has huge impacts – in case the bat is listed as endangered, we’re going to have this plan in place where we can continue to do forest management in a habitat-friendly way.”

Law Enforcement Division Chief Gary Hagler said that the division’s

goals include improving equipment and technology so conservation officers “can be there more quickly and be more successful in what we’re doing, whether it’s protecting fish and wildlife, the forests, everything we hold true here, or the citizens of our state. Over the last several years we’ve been very fortunate to have saved 30 lives.”

Among the other Law Enforcement goals are staffing and outreach to the communities the DNR serves. “We went from 172 officers to 252 officers from 2012 to today. We made 450,000 contacts last year with our outdoor recreating public,” Hagler said. “Only about 2 percent of those contacts resulted in an enforcement action, because we like to go out there and help people do things the right way and then be coaches and mentors to them to be more successful as an entire agency.”

Some of the DNR Marketing and Outreach Division’s priorities are increasing participation in outdoor recreation and boosting stewardship of, and support and advocacy for, Michigan’s natural and cultural resources. The Michigan History Center aims to transform exhibits in its museums and historic sites throughout the state, revamp its websites and implement a plan to improve diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility, along with other goals.

“In essence what we are are the storytellers of Michigan, the authentic

storytellers,” Michigan History Center Director Sandra Clark said. “We have learned in the last few years that, though we tell a tremendous number of stories, we have not begun to really scratch the surface of ALL of Michigan’s stories. Our priority this year is to create a strategy that will help us do a better job of implementing diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility.”

Goals for the Office of Minerals Management include engaging more with customers and educating the public and other DNR employees about how the office manages 6 million acres of state-owned minerals in a manner that protects and enhances the lands for current and future generations.

The Parks and Recreation Division’s priorities include building and improving infrastructure for parks, waterways and trails, increasing funding for nonmotorized trails like biking and water trails, and helping to prevent the spread of invasive species. Parks and Recreation Division Chief Ron Olson talked about educating the public on invasive species through efforts aimed at outdoor recreationists. “We partner now with 250 lake owners’ associations, and it’s important to them to collaborate with the DNR to enhance our collective efforts to educate boaters to do their part to prevent transporting aquatic weeds,” Olson said.

He added that other efforts

include enlightening campers regarding the need to avoid transporting firewood to curtail the spread of invasive insects and diseases that can damage, destroy or infect trees. Olson said that the division is striving to gain relevance by offering more opportunities to participate in activities growing in popularity, such as fat-tire biking.

Like several other divisions, the Wildlife Division will focus on the fight against invasive species, and also on endangered species conservation, wildlife disease surveillance and response, how to increase use of and access to division-administered lands such as state game areas and private-land habitat management.

“We know that 80 percent of our hunters hunt exclusively on private land and that 85 percent of the bucks shot in the state are shot on private land. But traditionally we have been public land managers,” Wildlife Division Chief Russ Mason said. “It’s becoming increasingly clear that if we’re going to be relevant in the 21st century, we are going to have to be working with private landowners at the same time, trying to help them meet their goals, whether it’s for hunted species or unhunted species or for some aesthetic purpose that they prefer.”

Find out more here about the specific priorities of the DNR and its divisions. ✧

### **Other Breaking News Items:** **(Click on title or URL to read full article)**

#### [Walleye population boom on Lake Erie has little impact on river runs](#)

Lake Erie experienced a walleye hatch of historic proportion in 2018, one that anglers and biologists are expecting will further strengthen the phenomenal fishery for the decade to come. But the wealth of fish produced in the lake,

#### [Two of Wisconsin’s most polluted sites on the Great Lakes mark milestones](#)

The Lower Menominee River that runs along the border of Wisconsin and Michigan is set to become the first site in the state to be delisted as one of the most contaminated areas on the Great Lakes

#### [Red swamp crayfish could be next Great Lakes invasive](#)

Scientists are concerned about the impacts of the red swamp crayfish on Great Lakes ecosystems and are mapping out possible areas at risk of species invasion in order to focus efforts on reducing species introductions

#### [In a reversal, Trump backs Great Lakes funding](#)

President Trump pledged full funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative at a campaign rally in Grand Rapids, Michigan, after previously proposing a 90% reduction in the program

[Gov. Whitmer halts Great Lakes pipeline tunnel project](#)

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer ordered all state agencies to cease operations for building a pipeline tunnel under the Mackinaw Straits after a legal opinion by the Michigan Attorney General found the project to be unconstitutional

[Grass carp larvae found in Maumee River](#)

An Erie County, Ohio, fish scientist recently discovered newly hatched grass carp in the Maumee River. Grass carp are a potentially harmful invasive species, however recent efforts to limit their spread has been mostly successful.

[Deadly fish virus returns to northern Michigan hatchery](#)

A deadly fish virus thought long gone from the Great Lakes has reemerged in a northern Michigan lake trout hatchery.

[Bills would say how much of Lake Michigan's beaches are public — and what you can do there](#)

How much of Lake Michigan's beaches are public — and what you can do on them — is the subject of two bills currently making their way through the Indiana statehouse

[The story of how salmon got to the Great Lakes, told by the man who made it happen](#)

Today's thriving salmon-fishing industry in the Great Lakes did not happen naturally, but was the work of Howard Tanner, the chief of the Michigan Department of Conservation's Fish Division in 1964.

End