



## Lake Superior Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee

A citizen-based committee charged to review and provide input and advice relative to fishery goals, objectives and management plans for Lake Superior. Members assist Fisheries Division in charting the future course of fisheries management by providing voice to and for the diversity of citizens' interests in the Lake Superior basin.

### Lake Superior Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting Marquette DNR Operations Service Center

April 9, 2014

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Mylan Koski, Chair

Alger County  
Fish & Game Alliance

Bay Mills Indian Community

Black River Harbor Boating  
Club

Central Upper Peninsula  
Sport Fishing Association

Copper Country Trout  
Unlimited

DNR Fisheries Division

DNR Law Enforcement  
Division

Fisher Price Charters

Fred Waara Chapter Trout  
Unlimited

Indian Country Sports

Keweenaw Splake Anglers

Lake Superior Advisor

Lake Superior State  
University Aquatic  
Research Laboratory

Michigan Sea Grant

Michigan United  
Conservation Clubs

Office of the Great Lakes

Ottawa Sportsmen's Club

South Shore Fishing  
Association

Thill's Fish House, Inc.

Upper Peninsula  
Sportsmen's Alliance

### Committee meeting attendees: (Attachment 1)

### Agenda: (Attachment 2)

### Minutes

Meeting minutes were recorded by George Madison. The minutes of each LSCFAC are posted on the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website ([http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-39002\\_61625---.00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-39002_61625---.00.html))

### Intro:

Mylan Koski is the current Chair of this committee and he started the meeting with welcoming remarks. Phil Schneeberger provided handouts of the meeting agenda. The agenda and other documents associated with the agenda, along with the 2013 meeting minutes, had been distributed prior to the meeting to all committee members and associates.

### Meeting agenda:

- Committee business:  
Approval of April 2013 meeting minutes:  
There were no objections to the April 2013 meeting minutes therefore the minutes were approved by all.
- Terms of Reference:  
Potential changes to the committee's official Terms of Reference document were presented and discussed. Specific matters discussed included: a) tweaking the language to be consistent with Citizen Fishery Advisory Committees from the other lakes; b) soliciting opinions about the appropriateness of including business representatives on the committee; and c) considering whether language stipulating meeting attendance requirements for committee members

should be inserted. Items a) and c) were accepted via committee vote and will be reflected in an updated version of the Terms of Reference posted on the web ([http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/TermsofReferenceLSCFAC\\_400197\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/TermsofReferenceLSCFAC_400197_7.pdf)). Item b) will be discussed further at future meetings if warranted.

- Fish Stocking Prescriptions:

A handout was distributed that detailed all of the 2014 prescribed fish stocking allocations for the DNR Lake Superior Basin Unit waters. An explanation was given for age codes within the handout and a notice for possible variability in actual walleye stocking numbers based on spring 2014 rearing pond production.

There were questions with respect to Lake Superior's Keweenaw Bay with how many splake may get stocked during the 2014 season. It was reminded to all, from the discussion we had with this proposal in 2013, that Keweenaw Bay would receive splake only when the production numbers in the hatchery exceed the stocking level designations for Munising, Marquette, and Copper Harbor. Winter 2014 catch reports from Keweenaw Bay indicate that 14"-16" inch splake have been caught. Committee members wondered if these could be products of the spring 2013 stocking of these fish. While the splake are not fin clipped, it cannot be truly determined if the Keweenaw Bay splake are from the local stocking effort or if they are strays from the Copper Harbor allocation. There was discussion and comments of support for continued splake programs in both Keweenaw Bay and Munising.

Additional discussion of fish stocking continued with a request for steelhead stocking in the Huron Bay tributaries of the Silver and Ravine Rivers (answer, Huron Bay did receive steelhead in 2013 and will again get a stocking in 2014). There was discussion about whether there was a commercial fishing operation located within Keweenaw Bay (answer, there are no large commercial operations just a small-boat fishery and a subsistence fishery). There was a reminder for stakeholders to be on the lookout for adipose-clipped Chinook salmon in Lake Superior because fin clipping was initiated in 2012, and now as 2-year olds, these Chinook may start showing up in the sport fishery.

- Michigan BASS Nation proposal to change catch and release regulations for bass:

The Michigan chapter of the sportfishing group known as BASS Nation would like to see a change in sportfishing regulations to provide additional bass angling opportunities by expanding the season for Catch-and-Immediate-Release bass fishing and also to make adjustments to bass harvest opener dates. This proposal and variations are being reviewed internally and by the Warmwater Resources Steering Committee. More information will be coming out for public comment and input this summer.

One comment from a LSCFAC committee member is for consideration to be given to a regulation for barbless hooks during the bass catch and release season.

- Proposed new brook trout regulation changes and coaster brook trout rehabilitation initiative:

Fisheries Division research biologist, Dr. Troy Zorn, presented a sport fishing regulation proposal slated for the lower portions of eight northern Marquette/Baraga County streams. This regulation proposal would protect coaster brook trout that could migrate into these coastal

streams from Lake Superior. As lake-residing brook trout in shoreline areas of Minnesota and Canada have shown tendencies to migrate into coastal streams, this same migration tendency is very likely to occur in Michigan waters. When this happens in Michigan waters, these fish would migrate into lower stream reaches that have a 7- or 8-inch brook trout sport fishing regulation. Lake-run coaster brook trout, also known as adfluvial brook trout, migrate into coastal streams sometimes as early as mid-July. Their aggressive feeding tendencies make them vulnerable to harvest. Dr. Zorn, using a Power Point presentation, showed how sport fishing regulations (20- 22- inch minimum size limit, 1 fish possession limit) used in Minnesota and Canada have helped improve the survival of native stock brook trout in these regions. The proposal for the eight Michigan streams, of a 20 inch minimum size and a 1-fish possession limit would be put into effect on short lower reach stretches of the following waters; Pilgrim, Silver, Slate, Ravine, Big Huron, Little Huron, Iron, and Garlic. This 10-year experimental regulation will be evaluated through fall electrofishing surveys and angler diaries.

Some of the committee members spoke about their past fishing experiences with catches of large brook trout within Huron Bay and the coastal streams of Huron Bay, and also within the Huron River. There was support from both the Fred Waara Chapter of Trout Unlimited, as reported by Jerry Maynard. No non-supporting comments from the committee members were voiced at the meeting.

- Law Division Update:

Michigan DNR Law Division's Commercial Fish Enforcement Unit officer, Corporal Shannon VanPatten gave an overview of the Unit's 2013 activities. Since last year, the Commercial Fish Enforcement Unit has been renamed as the Great Lakes Enforcement Unit (GLEU) to more properly reflect the duties that this law enforcement section oversees.

A few of the statistics of GLEU for 2014: there were 93 thousand angler contacts with approximately 2 thousand tickets written (very low percentage of official ticket citations per contact), 3 thousand warnings, and 2,100 complaints. The GLEU staffing for the entirety of all of the Michigan Great Lakes waters consists of 1 Unit Supervisor, 3 boat captains, and 1 investigator, while vacancies exist for 4 boat captains (Leland, Cedar River, Rogers City, Charlevoix). The Unit patrols and assists with security at numerous maritime events, fireworks events, bridge walks, ship launches, and also assisted with side-scan sonar to review ponds and water sites at the Belle Isle State Park. Cpl. VanPatten discussed existing issues such as unlicensed trap net removal needs at Ludington, an existing case regarding a Bay de Noc Sault Tribe subsistence fisher marketing his catch to a tribal retailer, a 10,000 foot abandoned net retrieval east of the Garden Peninsula, Invasive Species training and enforcement, inspection of commercial bait hauling vehicles, and a bait industry review initiative that includes a review of harvest and import programs.

- Fisheries Division Update:

- Fishing Guide and Regulations:

Michigan DNR Fisheries will be moving to a 2-year regulation and Guide Book cycle beginning in 2015. We can work on regulation changes during 2015 and 2016 for implementation in April 2017.

- Fisheries Division's Strategic Plan:

Fisheries Division's Strategic Plan was approved in 2013 and we are now working on the associated Tactical Plan to allow us to implement the elements and goals of the Strategic Plan.

- Lake Michigan Salmon Regulations:

(Note: This agenda topic was discussed at the meeting but some of the information presented verbally was incomplete or inaccurate. The following clarifying text (paraphrased) was provided as a next-day follow up to meeting attendees and reflects what was intended to be conveyed on this topic.

Information from the Lake Michigan fishery is charted each year and compared to benchmark levels to determine what the salmon bag should be for the following year. Specifically, the two types of information considered are: 1) the percent of charter anglers who catch three Chinook salmon per day; and 2) the catch rate (catch per hour) for Chinook salmon. Under the procedure, our current salmon regulations should stay the same unless both of these two factors fall below their benchmark levels.

Any change under this current procedure would not affect the overall five-salmon bag. Anglers could still keep five in combination. A change would only mean anglers could not have a bag of either five Chinook or five coho.

Salmon regulations apply uniformly across all the Great Lakes, so if a change were to occur in Lake Michigan it would also affect Lake Superior and the other lakes.

Importantly, there is no intention to reduce the salmon bag in 2014 and that the whole procedure of making the determination from the Lake Michigan benchmarks is slated to be thoroughly reviewed this summer with involvement from all the Citizen Fishery Advisory committees. All opinions on this subject will be heard and put toward coming up with an improved procedure for the future.

- Grants:

Two grant programs were highlighted: the Dam Management Grant Program and the Aquatic Habitat Grant Program. These grants will be annually funded programs with the application period open from mid fall through January of each year. There was discussion about the types of projects considered eligible for these programs, monies available, and timelines.

- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS):

Citizens will see more emphasis on state AIS programs with more time, money, and people focusing on invasive species education and data collection. The Governor's office will be promoting an AIS initiative this summer.

- Budget:

It is anticipated that the new fishing license fee structure will provide more monies for Fisheries Division. However, the division is already halfway into the existing fiscal year and the new licenses just went on sale April 1, so there's a lag between any new money coming in and the division's fiscal year 2014 activities. In addition, the state's federal funding appropriation continues to be affected by the sequester and other factors. As a

result, we're hoping the public will have some patience as we strive to implement some of our new initiatives.

- Submerged Log Removal Update:

Removal of submerged logs from Great Lakes bottom lands was legislated in 2000 for Michigan waters. Since the passage of this legislation, there has been no active retrieval projects underway, though twelve log removal licenses currently exist. Recently, there has been interest from a new applicant wishing to purchase some of these licenses, but they hope to see changes license costs, the length of license ownership, and the specified methods of mitigating for log removal. The Division is working with the Michigan Legislature and with the applicant to find common ground for this program.

- Graymont Mine Update:

Graymont, Inc. is a limestone mining company who has developed a proposal to acquire approximately 10,000 acres of public-owned land in the Upper Peninsula's Mackinac County. DNR staff are currently reviewing this proposal and will make recommendations to the Director.

- Other:

Dr. Troy Zorn (Chairman of Fisheries Division's Trout Committee and the Coldwater Resources Steering Committee), announced that a simplification change is being considered for Type-4 regulation trout streams whereby the brook trout minimum size limit regulation would change from 8 inches to 7 inches to match the regulation currently in place for Type-1 streams.

Phil announced that Fisheries Division remains hopeful about obtaining funds for a new research vessel at the Alpena Fisheries Research Station. The current vessel there is over 60-years old. The new vessel is to be modeled after the Marquette Research Station's Lake Char vessel.

- Cormorant Update:

Cormorant control is regulated through the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2004 the Fish and Wildlife Service passed a depredation order authorizing the States and Tribes to control cormorants under terms of a permit within their jurisdictional waters. The Michigan DNR has been working with the federal Department of Wildlife Services with a depredation ceiling of 15,500 birds. The Michigan Department of Wildlife Services receives federal money to control cormorants in Michigan through the oiling of eggs and culling adults through shooting programs. Steve Scott is program manager overseeing Fisheries Division's role in cormorant recommendations and control. Steve passed out a handout that summarized the past 10-years of this program with respect to cormorant control. Control efforts are successfully working and was depicted within the handout summary by showing locations of major colonies, harassment program locations, Great Lake fish stocking ports where cormorant hazing is coordinated with the stocking event, trend summary of nest counts (2004-2013), percent reduction at specific sites since management began, and total by year cormorant depredation and harassment count.

- 2013 Creel Survey Results:

A handout was provided showing creel harvest and effort estimates for salmon, lake trout, rainbow trout, and splake from the period of 2004-2013 for the following eight Lake Superior ports; AuTrain/Shelter Bay, Black River Harbor, Grand Marais, Keweenaw Bay, Marquette, Munising, Ontonagon, and Traverse Bay. While the data showed varying catch rates from port to port and from year to year, one of the most interesting aspects of this 10-year data set was the pronounced increase of coho and Chinook salmon in between 2012 and 2013 at most ports.

- 10 Brook Trout Bag Evaluation:

2013 was the first year of a 5-year study to evaluate a 10 brook trout daily possession regulation on the following five Upper Peninsula rivers: E. Br. Ontonagon, E. Br. Huron, Upper Dead, Driggs, and E. Br. Tahquamenon. With the cold and snow-blocked trout season opener conditions of 2013, there were not many anglers out on area streams, therefore the evaluation captured only a limited number of angler surveys. A handout was provided to committee members showing the angler attitude survey results whereby most of the anglers chose where to fish because they knew the river rather than because it had a 10-brook trout bag limit. When asked “*Which brook trout bag limit do you personally prefer for all Upper Peninsula rivers?*” the results were that 57% of the anglers preferred the 5-fish bag limit while 43% of the anglers preferred the 10-fish bag limit. Most anglers (55%) felt that the 10-fish bag limit would negatively affect a river’s brook trout population, though 9% said the effect would be positive and 37% thought it would have no effect.

Staff will conduct additional creel surveys and stream fisheries surveys in 2014. However, it appears that the Upper Peninsula streams will be at flood conditions with snow blocked roads again for this season’s April 26<sup>th</sup> opener. Creel survey clerks will be hired for this 2014 season for Bryan Creek, Two Mile Creek (Dickinson County), E. Br. Tahquamenon, and the upper Tahquamenon. By the fall of 2014, staff in consultation with the brook trout review stakeholder groups will decide on three more rivers to add in the spring of 2015 for this 10-fish bag limit experimental regulation.

- Commercial Fisheries (harvest) Update:

A summary of state-licensed commercial fish harvest was provided, with summaries available by Lake Superior management units. These summaries detailed the reports from 2008 to 2013.

- Information from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission meetings:

A noteworthy item from the 2014 meetings was that forage stocks are still very low across Lake Superior. Resource agencies will continue to assess forage stocks in their spring/summer sampling programs.

- Roundtable Discussion:

The roundtable discussion is an opportunity for all committee members to summarize highlights or issues of importance to them and the stakeholders they represent. Comments were made for the following member groups; South Shore Fishing Association, Central Upper Peninsula Sport Fishing Association, Fred Waara Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Keweenaw Splake Anglers, UP

Sportsmen's Alliance, Black River Boating Club, representative for Sen. Tom Casperson, Alger County Fish & Game Alliance, Ottawa Sportsmen's Club, and Michigan Sea Grant.

Mr. Doug Moyle, who represents the Keweenaw Splake Anglers announced that their organization will donate \$1,000 to the Marquette State Fish Hatchery for fish food for splake, from monies earned during a winter 2014 Lake Fanny Hooe fishing derby. DNR staff thanked Doug Moyle and the Keweenaw Splake Anglers for this donation.

Doug Moyle also asked that the meeting minutes reflect a request to explore developing access points to Copper Harbor located at the ends of the public street easements within the town. A follow-up on this request after the meeting resulted in the following correspondence with DNR Parks Division:

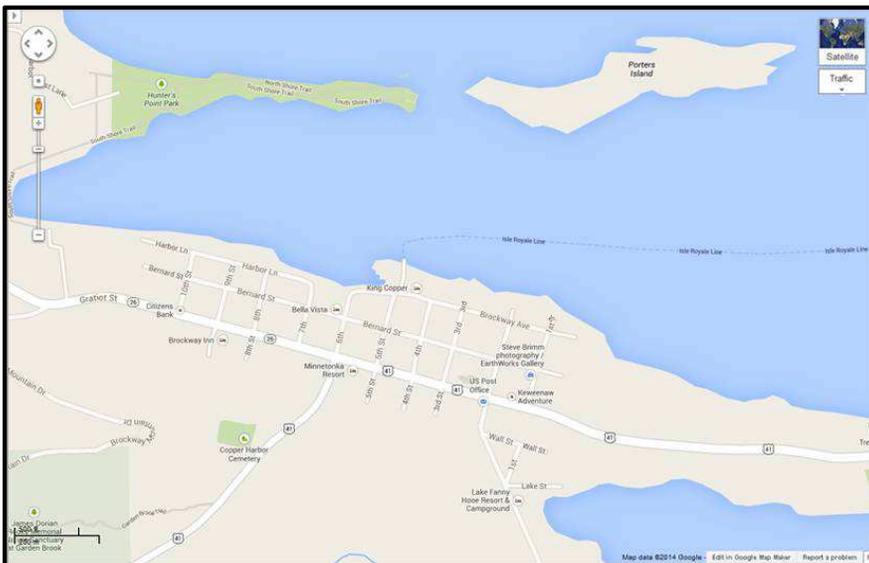
From George Madison to Bill Doan Western Upper Peninsula District Supervisor MDNR, Parks and Recreation Division

Mr. Doug Moyle, who has recently attended a DNR Fisheries Great Lake Fishery Commission subcommittee citizen advisory meeting asked to have docks (skid piers) placed at the lake contact point of each public north/south street easement to Copper Harbor. The township has maintained legal public easements to the harbor from the end of each of these streets to the water's edge, but currently these street ends are mostly undeveloped brush/grass riparian areas.

Reply from Bill Doan:

If the township is in favor of this concept and want more information about possible grants/partnerships they should contact the following park manager with this request

Robert Strittmatter, Unit Supervisor  
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park  
15223 U.S. Hwy. 41, P.O. Box 71  
Copper Harbor, MI 49918  
(906) 289-4215  
[strittmatter@michigan.gov](mailto:strittmatter@michigan.gov)



Russ Weisinger asked that the meeting minutes reflect the Ottawa Sportsmen's Club desire to have the East Branch Presque Isle River be considered as one of the additional 10-brook trout bag limit streams for implementation into the brook trout experimental regulation program for 2015. In response, it was noted that E. Br. Presque Isle River is already on the list for consideration.

The roundtable discussion continued with open conversation regarding fishing, fishing regulations, ballast water management from ocean bound vessels, bait industry, and requests for improved access to all water bodies particularly the boulder blocked off access sites within the National Forest lands.

Brief summaries of roundtable input:

South Shore Fishing Association (~80 members) – involved with Big Brothers / Big Sisters programs; successful Chinook salmon net penning operations; helping with hazing of bird predators at stocking locations; new signage at fish cleaning station; planning a veteran's day event; sponsoring a river clean up project.

Central Upper Peninsula Sport Fishing Association (~200 members) – working to get public access at Lake Angeline; involved with Deer Lake; helping with shore/bank clean ups; doing youth promotions; volunteer to supply manpower for DNR projects; would like to see additional small boat access; proponent(s) of 10-brook trout bag limit.

Fred Waara Chapter of Trout Unlimited (~300 members) – Reminder of their April 19th fundraiser (last year raised ~\$15K to support cold water fisheries); involved with seven school programs (salmon in the classroom); Fifth year into Escanabo watershed project; pursuing grants for stream crossings.

Keweenaw Splake Anglers (~12 members) – Promoting Lake Fanny Hooe; encouraging kids fishing; contributing \$1000 to the hatchery for splake food.

Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance (47 organizations) – Group tries to represent everyone; would like more organizations to join.

Black River Boating Club (~50 members) – successful Chinook salmon net penning operations; seeing cormorant control results; want brown trout program to continue.

Alger County Fish & Game Alliance (# members) – wants to rebuild Anna River fishing pier and kayak launch and get dredging at the mouth; notes that the period when walleye stocking ceased caused difficulties; supports replacement of US Forest Service Fisheries Biologists.

Ottawa Sportsmen's Club / GLFC (~360 members) – put in another plug to have E. Branch Presque Isle included for 10-brook trout bag limit regulation.

Michigan Sea Grant – supplied "Invaders of the Great Lakes" publication; working on establishing BMPs for walleye tournaments; increasing biosecurity with bait industry.

- Wrap-up:

With the retirement of Mr. Ron Laitinen as a member of the Lake Superior Citizens Fisheries Advisory Committee, fellow members recognized him for his great history with this organization and for his founding involvement. In 1995 Ron worked with the DNR Upper Peninsula Fisheries Division supervisor, Bernard Ylkanen, to establish the original group of Citizen Fisheries Advisory Committee members. Phil Schneeberger presented Ron with a recognition plaque that acknowledged the honorary status of Mr. Ron Laitinen and his contributions to this committee. Fellow committee members applauded Ron for his achievements. Mr. Larry Argall will take Ron's place on the committee representing the Central Upper Peninsula Sport Fishing Association.



Ron Laitinen

- Next meetings:

- October 8, 2014 (if emerging issues warrant having a meeting)
- April 8, 2015

Attachment 1: Committee meeting attendees

<u>Name</u>		<u>Representing</u>
Mr. Larry	Argall	Central Upper Peninsula Sport Fishing Association
Dr. Ed	Baker	MDNR Fisheries Division
Mr. Dave	Cromell	Alger County Fish & Game Alliance
Mr. Reid	DeRosie	South Shore Fishing Association
Dr. Ron	Kinnunen	Michigan Sea Grant
Mr. Mylan	Koski	South Shore Fishing Association
Mr. Cory	Kovacs	MDNR Fisheries Division
Mr. Ronald	Laitinen	Central Upper Peninsula Sport Fishing Association
Mr. George	Madison	MDNR Fisheries Division
Mr. Jerry	Maynard	Fred Waara Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Mr. Dale	McNamee	Senator Tom Casperson
Mr. Doug	Moyle	Keweenaw Splake Anglers
Mr. Doug	Scheuneman	Alger County Fish & Game Alliance
Mr. Phil	Schneeberger	MDNR Fisheries Division
Mr. Steve	Scott	MDNR Fisheries Division
Mr. Dan	Talkowski	Black River Harbor Boating Club
Mr. Jan	VanAmberg	MDNR Fisheries Division
Cpl. Shannon	VanPatten	MDNR Law Enforcement Division
Mr. Russell	Weisinger	Ottawa Sportsmen's Club / GLFC
Mr. Charles	Westerberg	Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance
Dr. Troy	Zorn	MDNR Fisheries Division

## Attachment 2: Meeting agenda



### Lake Superior Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee

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Association

Thill's Fish House, Inc.

Upper Peninsula  
Sportsman Alliance

Lake Superior Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee spring meeting,  
April 9, 2014, Marquette Operations Service Center, 10am-3pm

#### Meeting agenda (associated materials attached for asterisked items):

- Committee Business
  - Corrections, additions, approval of April 2013 meeting minutes\*
  - Discussion of potential changes in the committee's Terms of Reference\*
- 2014 Fish stocking prescriptions\*
- Bass Nation proposal to change catch and release regulations\*
- Proposed new brook trout regulation changes and coaster brook trout rehabilitation initiative
- Updates from or regarding:
  - Law Enforcement Division
  - Fisheries Division
  - Cormorant control
  - 2013 creel survey results\*
  - 10 brook trout bag initiative\*
  - Commercial fisheries\*
- Highlights / information from the Lake Superior presentations at the March 2014 Great Lakes Fishery Commission meetings
- Roundtable: opportunity for all committee members to summarize the past year from their perspective and bring up any questions, issues, or areas of interest