



Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee

Established by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, to improve and maintain fishery resources through better communication and partnership.

Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting
Friday, October 19, 2018
Tuscarora Township Hall
Indian River MI
Approved

Attendees: Jason Grondin, Irvin Dedow, Virgil Smith, David Bock, Ron Dulak, Rick Colonna, Roger Selvig, Bob Miller, David George, Randy Claramunt, Tom Goniea, Nick Arend, Brad Kessel, Nick Johnson, Tim Cwalinski (DNR Facilitator), Dave Edwards, Brenda Archambo, Gina Burke, Jim Burke, Marty Jones, Rick Johnson, Pat Mousseau, Steven Roznowski, Ken Kreichelt, Tom Ludwig, Paul Borg, Dennis Fauver, John Walters, Gil Archambo, Bill Parsons, Mike Beurle, Erin McLean, Neal Godby (Note Taker), Roy Tassava, Dale Landies, JP Van Ostenborg, Frank Krist (Chair), Gary Bolyard, Greg Bastian, Theresa Krist, Wayne Blomberg, David Kolar, John Kolar, Dave Borgeson

Welcome and introductions

Attendees introduced themselves. Frank and Tim reminded the attendees about the purpose of the Committee, and briefly went over the history around the formation of the Committee. The Committee was formed on November 23, 2009 to bring together anglers, Lake Associations, Tribal representatives, News Media, DNR, other agencies, universities, businesses and anyone interested in the fisheries in the Inland Waterway. Since that time, Grand and Long Lakes near Alpena have become Members. The goal of the Committee is for the Members to assist Fisheries Division in charting the future course of fisheries management by providing voice to and for the diversity of citizens' interests. Members will also act as a conduit for information exchange to the public from the DNR, Tribes and other various managing agencies. Attached are the minutes from the first meeting.

The Inland Waterway sterile male sea lamprey experiment: findings from 2018 (Nick Johnson, USGS)

Nick gave an update on the ongoing sterile male sea lamprey experiment in the Inland Waterway. This is year 2 of a 3-year experiment, and it seems to be working. No larvae have been found in the Maple and Sturgeon rivers, and only a few have been found in the Pigeon River. The future of the project is uncertain, however, due to funding issues. Nick talked about the life cycle of the sea lamprey, and how population control is usually done at the larval stage using chemicals (lampricide). The objective of this project is trying to reduce lamprey reproduction as an alternative to chemicals. Chemicals are expensive, may hurt sensitive species (sturgeon, mayflies), and lamprey may develop a resistance to the chemicals. The goal of the project is to delay or eliminate the need to chemically treat the upper Cheboygan River watershed.

Before the sterile male release, we knew the abundance of adult sea lamprey in the watershed was very low (<200 during 2013-2017), and some of the adult sea lamprey completed their life cycle upstream of the Cheboygan Dam. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) still required treatment however, because of the high number of larval lamprey found in the Pigeon, Sturgeon, and Maple rivers in 2016. The survey showed that just a few adults can produce large numbers of larvae due to great reproductive capabilities.

The Maple, Sturgeon, and Pigeon rivers were successfully treated in 2016 at a cost of about \$400,000. Sterile male lamprey were released starting in 2017 because sterile males will mate with viable females, both will die, and there will be no offspring. This is less expensive than chemical treatment if successful. A total of about 3,600 sterile males have been released into the Pigeon, Sturgeon, and Maple Rivers.

To see if the sterile male release is working, USGS is trapping adult sea lamprey, doing nest surveys, and monitoring for larval sea lamprey. During the trapping efforts, less than 50 wild lamprey have been caught but 3,500 sterile lamprey were captured showing that the chances of successful lamprey reproduction is low. The surveys located sea lamprey nests and sterile males were observed in the Pigeon, Sturgeon, and Maple rivers. Embryos were also recovered in all three rivers, but all of the embryos recovered were dead. Larval surveys were also conducted in the Maple, Sturgeon, and Pigeon rivers, and larvae were found only in the Pigeon River.

The future of sea lamprey control in the Cheboygan River watershed is uncertain. If more larvae are discovered next year, a 2020 treatment may be needed. If the 2020 treatment is delayed, there is no guarantee that the sterile male release program would be used in the future due to lack of funding. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) and USFWS will decide whether to keep the sterile male facility operational. Future lock refurbishment at Cheboygan could close the door to future lamprey from Lake Huron. Possible future scenarios include: 1) revert to lampricide with enhanced effort due to dam removals; 2) continue sterile male release indefinitely and monitor the recovery of native lampreys, insects, and sturgeon; or 3) block sea lamprey from passing through the lock and attempt eradication using lampricide and sterile males over the course of 10 years.

Please share your input/ideas with the USFWS <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/marquette/programs.html> or GLFC <http://www.glfc.org/staff-directory.php>. You can assist the program by providing information on sea lamprey that are collected and fish that have wounds, see below.

Upper Cheboygan River Sea Lamprey Observation Program

<p>Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usual length to 24 inches • Two dorsal fins distinctly separate • Coloring typically blue-black, dark olive, bronze, or orange • Body and first dorsal fin marbled or blotched with dark brown to black patches 	<p>Questions or Collections?</p> <p><i>Please contact:</i></p> <p>Nick Johnson USGS - Hammond Bay (989) 734-4768 x128 njohnson@usgs.gov</p> <p>Tim Cwalinski DNR - Gaylord (989) 732-3541 cwalinski@michigan.gov</p>
<p>Silver lamprey (<i>Ichthyomyzon unicuspis</i>)</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usual length to 13 inches • First and second dorsal fins joined, cleft between not deep • Coloring typically light tan or silvery tan 	

Catch a fish with a sea lamprey attached?

1. Remove lamprey and place lamprey in ziploc bag.
2. Fill out the Sea Lamprey Observation Tag below.
3. Place tag in the ziploc bag, seal, and freeze the bag (keep bag cool until frozen).
4. Call the phone numbers above to report collection.

Catch a fish with a lamprey wound?

1. Take picture(s) of the fish and wound. Use the ruler on this form to provide a scale in the wound photos.
2. Fill out the Sea Lamprey Observation Tag below.
3. Call the phone numbers above to report the wound or email photos.

Sea Lamprey Observation Tag

Date _____

Location _____
(lake, stream, GPS coordinates, nearest road crossing, etc.)

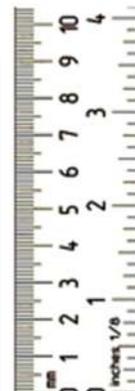
Host species _____

Host size _____
(length and/or weight, please include units)

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____



NILCAC member Marin Jones' presentation to Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society regarding the 2017 DNR survey of Mullett Lake (Martin Jones, MAPS)

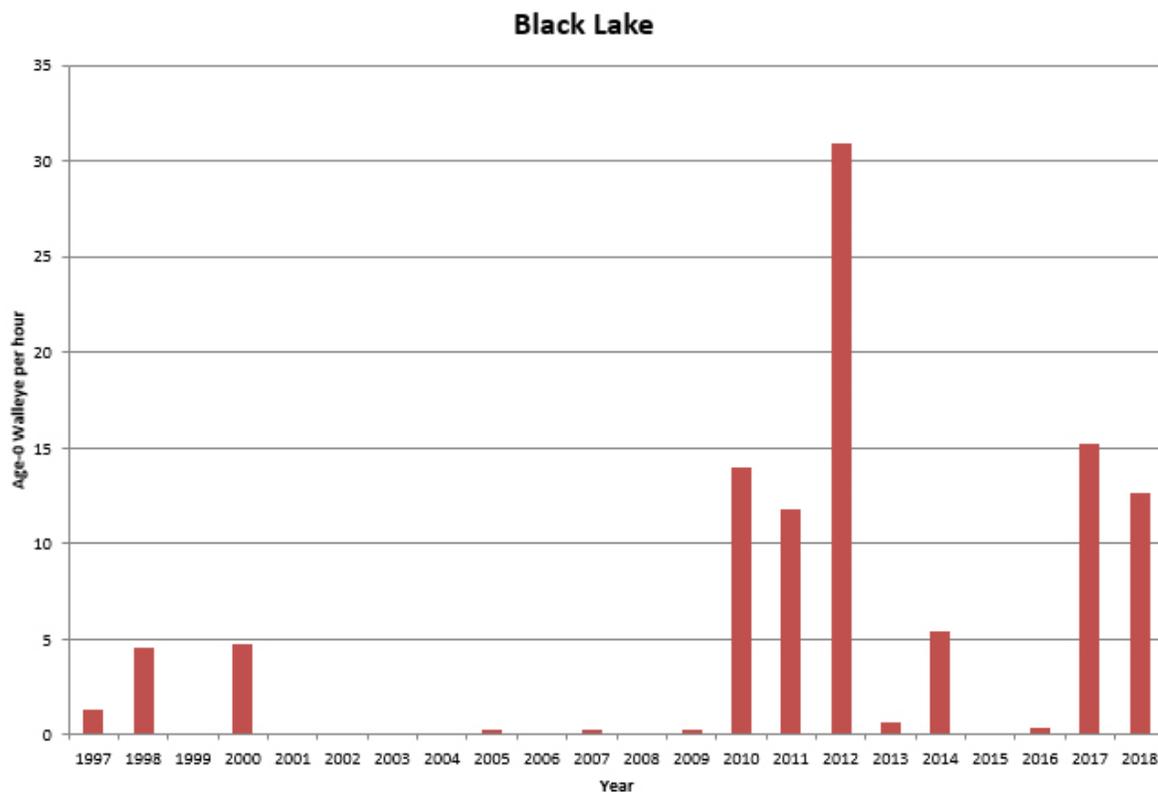
Martin presented the Mullett Lake Status and Trends Survey presentation to the Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society, a presentation which had previously been given at a Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee meeting. Martin said that Tim Cwalinski met with him, went over the presentation and gave some additional background data. The presentation was well received by the group.

Remember that all presentations given at the Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee are saved and available for members to present to their own organizations.

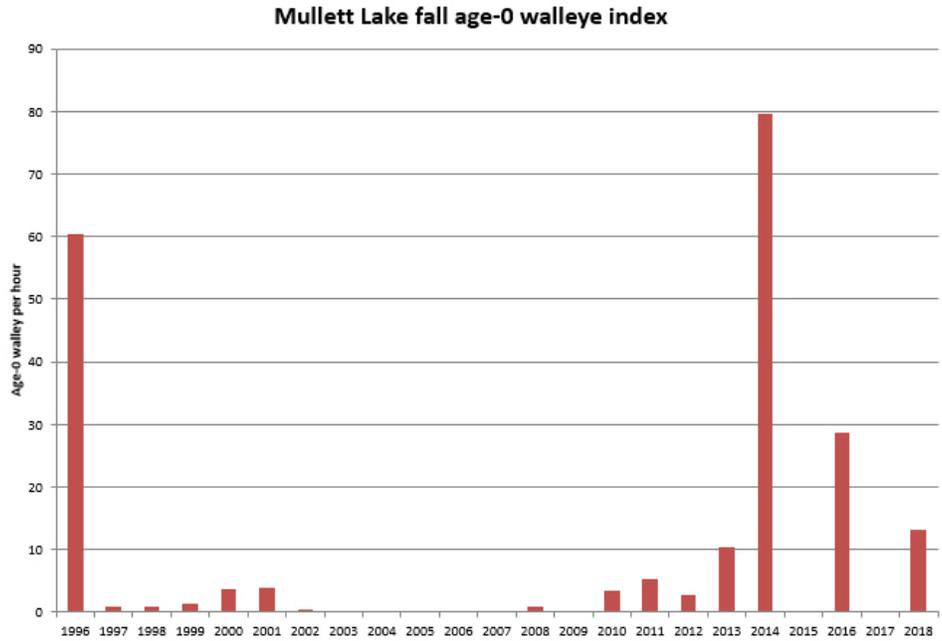
Fall juvenile walleye survey results for Black Lake, Burt Lake, and Mullett Lake, and a summary of walleye stocking at Black Lake in 2018 (Tim Cwalinski and Neal Godby, MDNR).

Tim and Neal gave an update on fall walleye surveys in Black, Mullett, and Burt lakes, similar to talks given in the past but with 2018 data included. These surveys are done at night using electrofishing gear and evaluate the number of juvenile walleye at the end of the growing season. Remember that it is only an index and useful when comparing multiple years. There can be a lot of variation in results.

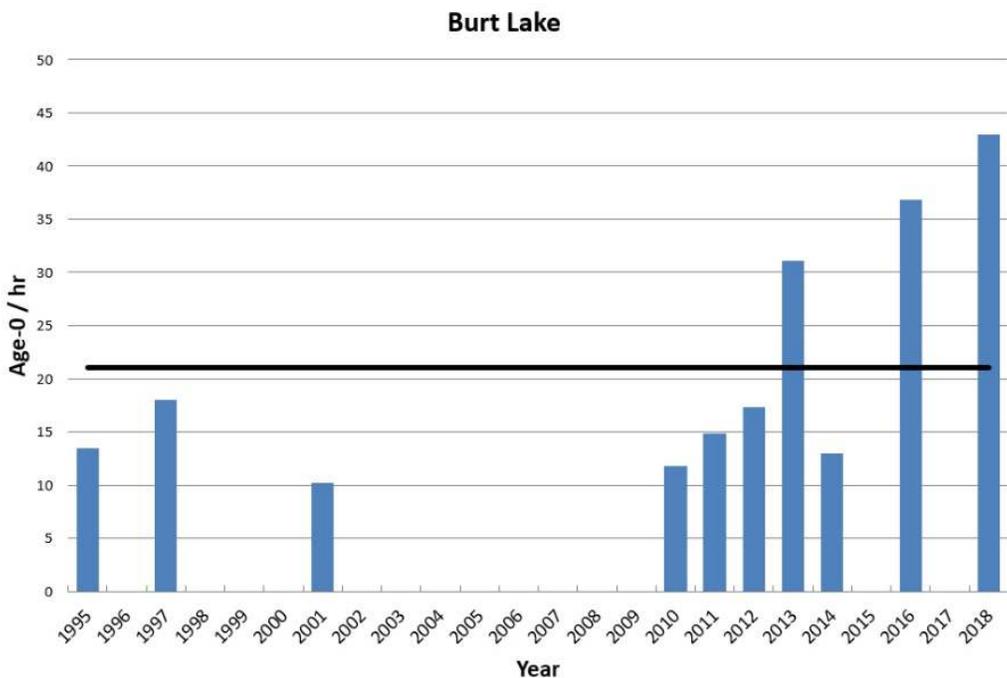
Black Lake has been stocked with fingerlings in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2018. In 2018, there were surplus spring fingerlings available from tribal ponds (that were OTC marked) which were stocked in Black Lake. A total of 241,399 walleye were stocked in Black Lake in 2018 (24/acre). The catch rate per hour of age-0 walleye in Black Lake in 2018 was good, consistent with previous stocking years, although growth of the age-0 fish was slow in 2018. This lake is currently primarily supported by stocking. The years with no bars in the chart below were not surveyed.



Mullett Lake was stocked from 2010-2013, with marginal returns each year (except for 2013). Strong reproduction was observed from 2014 through 2016. As the chart below shows, there was no fall survey during 2015 but many walleyes from that year class were caught during the 2017 Status and Trends Fishery Survey. The 2017-year class is unknown since it wasn't surveyed, but natural reproduction for the 2018-year class was found acceptable during the survey this fall. This lake is primarily supported by natural reproduction.



Burt Lake is supported by natural reproduction. Recently, both 2016 and 2018 have had strong year classes. We did not survey in 2017, so the strength of that year class is unknown. Natural reproduction remains strong, as the 2018 survey had the highest catch rates for age-0 walleye observed over the survey series (since 1995).



DNR summaries of bass fishing tournaments in Michigan in 2016 and 2017 and for our large North East Lower Peninsula lakes (Tom Goniea, MDNR)

Tom gave a summary on bass fishing tournaments statewide, as well as more detailed information on some large lakes in the Inland Waterway and northeast Lower Peninsula. Data were gathered through the Fishing Tournament Information System. This registration system for bass fishing tournaments was developed following the 2015 regulations review when the DNR was asked to open Michigan waters to year-round catch and delayed release bass fishing to accommodate spring tournaments. The DNR realized they did not have tournament information such as how many tournaments are held, where they are held, how many anglers participate, etc. Fisheries Order 215 was written which required online registration and online reporting for bass fishing tournaments, starting in 2016. Statewide, there were 2,096 tournaments on 270 waterbodies in 2016; 2,277 tournaments on 272 waterbodies in 2017; and 2,291 tournaments to date in 2018.

Looking specifically at *Mullett Lake, Burt Lake, and Crooked Lake* in the Inland Waterway, a total of 12 tournaments were registered in 2016, 18 tournaments in 2017, and 21 tournaments in 2018. Compared to other Michigan waters, this is not a high level of activity. Burt Lake ranks 43rd statewide in terms of tournament activity, Mullett Lake ranks 110th, and Crooked Lake ranks 216th. The tournament activity in all three waters combined ranks 25th statewide. Considering that the average size of the top 50 inland lakes for tournaments is 1421 acres (and the 3 lakes in the Inland Waterway total 36,880 acres), this is not a high level of activity compared to the rest of Michigan's inland public lakes with tournaments.

Table 1. Bass fishing tournament results for 2016 and 2017 combined. The lake-specific number is listed with the statewide average in parentheses for the 2 years combined.

	Statewide Average	Mullett Lake	Burt Lake	Crooked Lake
Tournaments		8	20	2
Boats	(13.7)	7.0	13.6	10
Anglers	(25.7)	11.7	25.6	15.5
Fish	(40)	36.3	40	54.5

Conclusion: the average number of boats and the average number of anglers in Inland Waterway tournaments are lower than the statewide average. The average number of bass handled, weighed, and released per event on the Waterway is slightly higher than on other public waters with tournaments. Given its size, the Waterway has significantly less activity than most other inland tournament lakes in Michigan, and the Waterway bass tournaments have a significantly lower impacts to the fishery than nearly all other inland tournament lakes from a fishing pressure perspective.

Black Lake, Long Lake, and Grand Lake were also discussed. The following is information for tournaments on these lakes.

Table 2. Bass fishing tournament results for 2016 and 2017 combined. The lake-specific number is listed with the statewide average in parentheses for the 2 years combined.

	Statewide Average	Black Lake	Grand Lake	Long Lake
Tournaments		6	17	16
Boats	(13.7)	8.75	13.9	10.7
Anglers	(25.7)	13	25.2	17.3
Fish	(40)	37	36.1	67.4

Conclusion: This is not high tournament angling pressure for lakes of this size.

Tom reminded us that public boat launches are first come first serve, and tournament anglers and the public have the same right to access and use the resource. Tournament fishing occurs within the seasons, with size and possession limits established by law.

The question was raised about whether other boat activity was included in these estimates, things like spotter boats and tournament officials. These numbers likely only include the anglers and their boats, but it was pointed out that the vast majority of tournaments are smaller events and don't have spotter boats, camera boats, etc.

Another question raised was whether tournament registration would be required for other species (e.g., walleye, muskies, and pike). Walleye and muskie tournaments will likely be required to register in the future, but tournaments for other species would be more difficult to track and probably will not require registration.

The suggestion was made to track the overall number of fish caught/kept during the tournament (walleye tournaments too), not just the ones that are weighed-in.

Discussion on bass fishing regulations in Michigan (Dave Borgeson, MDNR and group)

This discussion was prompted by a number of issues raised by the public, including concerns about fishing before the harvest season, live bass brought to weigh in at sites (do they make it back to catch location, how might that affect spawning), does it impact walleye, and concern over lures getting caught on docks.

Dave mentioned the history of bass minimum size limits, from a 10-inch minimum size limit (MSL) instituted in the early 1930s, 12 inch MSL in 1976, to the 14-inch MSL in 1993 which continues today. In 2002, a DNR committee was formed to evaluate the potential expansion of the catch and release season. In 2006, a Catch and Immediate Release season was established, and in 2012 the DNR completed a 5-year evaluation of the Catch and Immediate Release season and found no catastrophic effects. In 2013, Michigan BASS Nation proposed year-round Catch and Immediate Release, which was instituted. Another workgroup was established in 2013, which reviewed bass regulations and fishing effort, survey data and angler harvest data, and synthesized recent research on the effects of fishing over spawning bass. Uncertainty remains regarding the effects of angling on bass populations, and most states have year-round fishing for bass. Concerns over a year-round catch and release season include: law enforcement concerns that expanding the Catch and Immediate Release season will legalize fishing for bass during season closures for other species; not enough time has passed since previous change to measure population-level effects (if any) of Catch and Immediate Release on bass populations; the social issue of increased tournament activity statewide; and the fact that DNR staff did not reach consensus on proposed season changes. Potential benefits include expanded fishing opportunities; boost to local and regional economies; and greater appreciation and stewardship with expanded fishing opportunities.

Dave pointed out that regulations must balance risks and benefits. Risks of a longer season include more nest failure and reduced reproduction success, and more hooking mortality. Factors that increase general risk would be the growing popularity of bass fishing, bass viruses, exotic species, possible genetic effects of Catch and Delayed Release with displacement during weigh-ins at tournaments, and an increased spring season. Benefits include angler use, enjoyment, and stewardship. Factors decreasing general risk include the growing popularity of catch & release, the 14" length limit, and a reduced harvest season.

Concerns were raised on predation on bass eggs when fish are removed from the nest, if a bass can find its way back to its nest when displaced, and the redistribution of bass populations from the capture location to the weigh-in/release location. There is undoubtedly predation by gobies and other species on unguarded nests, that has been well documented. Bass can move long distances, but may not return to their nest immediately, if at all. The point was made that catch and release can have an impact on individual nests/nest success, but population-level effects are uncertain given the high reproductive capacity of bass.

It was suggested that bass tournaments would be a good place to raise awareness for invasive species and potentially requiring boat washes, inspections, etc. While a good idea, it would be difficult to enforce. Many of the larger tournaments already put an emphasis on invasive species control and strongly promote it since many of their anglers often travel long distances between tournaments.

DNR surveys will monitor bass populations over time. This is a long-term process and the Status and Trends surveys will look at size structure of the populations and catch per unit effort.

The question was raised as to why we are seeing more bass tournaments up north, when they used to be primarily held in the south. It is likely due to the increasing popularity of bass fishing, fishing can be better in the north, we have clean water and strong bass populations. It was pointed out that approximately 10% of tournament directors are from out of state. The question was raised as to whether the bass tournament groups do research. Some of the larger groups do fund research projects. Someone mentioned that more bass tournaments have helped the economy, especially since the number of salmon tournaments has declined.

DNR/Black Lake Association discussion summary for walleye regulations at the mouth of the Rainy River (Erin McLean, Black Lake Association).

Erin indicated there has been concern by the Black Lake Association and others that there may be excessive harvest of walleye at the mouth of the Rainy River in the spring between the last Saturday in April and May 14. Currently, the Rainy River is closed to fishing from April 1-May 14. The walleye season in Black Lake opens the last Saturday in April. There is a moderate-depth pool at the mouth of the Rainy River (picture below) where some walleye congregate and can be vulnerable to anglers. This pool is in the lake, and open to fishing, when the river itself may be closed. Concerned anglers requested that the closure extend out into the lake to include the hole. After further discussion with DNR Fisheries and Law Enforcement, it was decided that the option would be too complex and difficult to enforce. Law enforcement increased their patrols of this area recently, and several undercover operations resulted in tickets issued. The DNR is asking for the assistance of anglers and Lake Association members to report when they see illegal activity (over limits, multiple trips/limits in a day, etc.). The Black Lake Association plans to work with the judge to increase the amount of the fines for violations as a further deterrent, and they will continue working directly with the Law Enforcement Division in the spring.

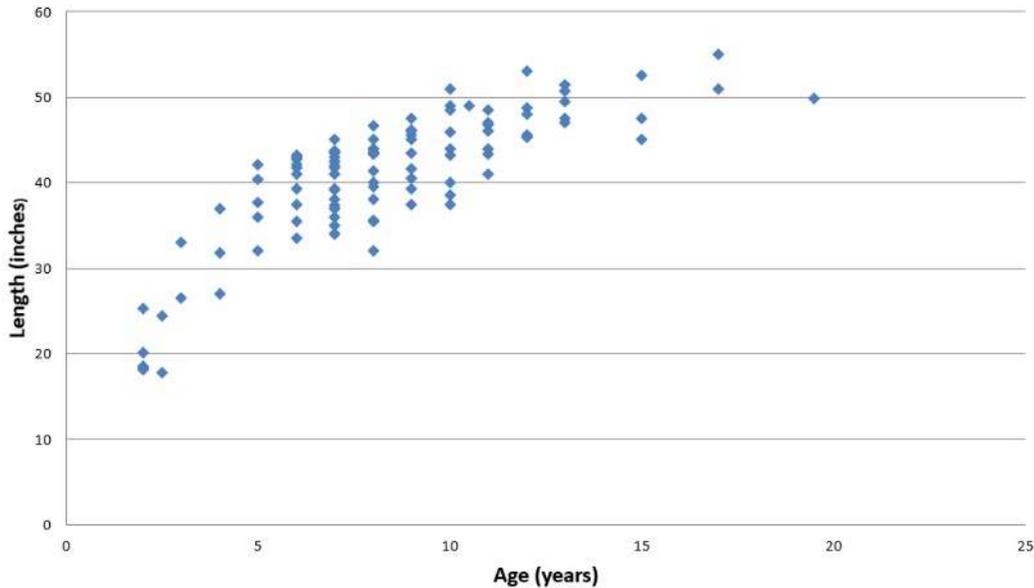


Figure 1. Google Earth satellite image of the Rainy River mouth and Black Lake.

Year three of tagging muskellunge in the Inland Waterway, pitfalls and progress in 2018 (Tim Cwalinski, MDNR)

Tim gave a brief overview of the effort to gather information on the muskie population in the Inland Waterway to gain better insight into the following parameters of the Waterway populations: growth, age structure, density, spawning locations/habitat, exploitation, angler use, movement, and gender. This is a multi-year project. The chart below was presented showing some length at age for muskies surveyed in the Inland Waterway. The question was

Length at Age of Black Lake and Inland Waterway Muskellunge using hard bony structures



asked if an angler would get in trouble if they kept a fish until it could be tagged. Tim replied that conditions must be right: large holding tank/live well, water temperature, Tim's availability to get there to tag the fish, etc. Some of the anglers he works with have a scientific collector's permit. Tim plans to continue this project in the future as survey crews are available and time allows. Nearly 38 muskellunge have been tagged when time permitted, and we already have seen recaptured (tagged) fish during our own survey netting. We have heard of at least one tagged fish being caught and released. Our ability to continue this project will be based on available time and budgets moving forward.

Cormorant control program update (Randy Claramunt DNR Lake Huron Basin Coordinator and Frank Krist)

Frank gave some background on cormorant control, which was halted after a lawsuit during May 2016 that challenged the Depredation Order that the state and federal agencies had been operating under. Randy reported on a meeting he attended during August in East Lansing organized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and attended by fisheries and wildlife representatives from the Michigan DNR, Tribes and other states. The USFWS outlined the process they had in mind, that is, first asking stakeholders if they thought there was a problem. This wasn't our view of how this should be rolled out. The DNR wanted to start much further down the path. It was a long day. The DNR stated that there is a need to develop management options and be able to set population targets. The DNR's view is that we have the data to begin, so let's get going. Why can't the USFWS set population number targets for cormorants for various locations? Randy believes the USFWS understands where we are coming from and hopes for more productive actions in the future. Randy said we want a technical group to sit down with the USFWS and develop cormorant management targets with them. In response to a question Randy said we don't need to develop a website to dump data into that gets used by the USFWS on their timeframe. The

goal is to develop targets for the spring of 2019 and be permitted to take at least some cormorants. A new depredation order likely won't be ready for 2019. Congressman Bergman's bill was beneficial in that it elevated the issue and forced the USFWS to start addressing the problem. The public meetings and calls to congressional representatives have put pressure on US Fish and Wildlife Service to move forward.

One issue that needs to be addressed is the Canadian population of cormorants, which serve as a reservoir that will move to US waters if there is an opening here. A suggestion was made that the negative economic impact of cormorants to the local economy should be considered.

New Fishery Regulation Updates

The *Mullett Lake walleye regulation changes* are going into effect in April: the season opener will go back to the statewide season opener (last Saturday in April). The season opener will remain May 15 for the Black (below Alverno Dam) and Cheboygan rivers. The daily possession limit for walleye is going from 3 fish per day to the statewide limit of 5 fish per day.

Yellow Perch daily bag limit. The statewide regulation change for yellow perch bag limits is going into effect in April if approved by the Natural Resource Commission. This will change the daily possession limit for yellow perch from 50 to 25, with 2 exceptions: Lake Erie since it is based on a lake-wide quota system and Lake Gogebic with no more than 5 fish over 12 inches permitted.

Roundtable

Dave Borgeson: One technician is retiring, and Dave is not optimistic that we will be able to replace him. We are going to try to continue to provide services, but it's getting more difficult due to staffing shortages.

Frank Krist: Under the current license fee system with increases often many years apart, managers are faced with reducing services annually because of increased costs. As staff are retiring, many positions cannot be replaced. This is impacting the need to conduct surveys and other needed work required to manage the fisheries. A sustainable funding system is critical with additional funds from the general fund. Fishing and hunting provide a major economic boost to the State and like any successful business, continued investment and maintenance is needed. Frank will put funding options on a future agenda.

Randy Claramunt: Fisheries Division funding structure is changing. We need to recognize that our activities benefit non-license buyers such as providing clean water. The Recovering Americas Wildlife Act (RAWA) take revenue from federal oil and gas taxes and sends that money back to the states. If passed, this would be an additional and significant statewide funding supplement.

Mullett Lake

Steve Philip: Tim read a report from Steve. Lots of small walleye down to 8 inches. Seems to be fewer smallmouth. The goby population is still down. The average goby length is shorter. The perch catch was way up but the fish were smaller. There were fewer perch larger than 10 inches.

Doug Dingy: Doug did well on north end of Mullett Lake this year walleye fishing.

Brad Kessel: Walleye fishing was good over the summer. Yellow perch fishing was good in the late summer and fall.

Dave Kolar: Good walleye fishing, with lots of smaller/undersize fish. Dave feels the big stocking a few years ago hit a critical mass for spawning. Bass tournaments are great. Thought that the reported numbers didn't include amateurs. The economic impact of tournaments and effort, including pre-fishing, increased the money to the

economy. The FLW tournament on Mullett in June was on the free fishing weekend. Dave is frustrated with the funding issue.

Black Lake

Erin McLean: Erin caught a few fish this fall, but the weather was bad.

Ron Dulak: Good fishing this year. Can get a lot of volunteers to help with projects. The Black Lake Association appreciates what the DNR has done. The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council with support from the Black Lake Association conducted a survey of the shorelines. Huron Pines conducted an Aquatic Invasive Species survey. Ron cannot understand why there's no natural recruitment of walleye. Ron asked about the status of the land acquisition of Black Lake Marina. According to recent conversations with Rich Hill, it is a slow process and the transaction is still in Real Estate Division. There is a purchase agreement pending the environmental study. Once the purchase is complete, there will be public input on services that will be provided there.

Irv Dedow: The walleye opener should be May 15 for the northern Lower Michigan. Ice-out and spawning have been late.

Brenda Archambo: The program putting sturgeon fingerlings in the classrooms has been successful, kids love it. Approximately 10 museums around the State have sturgeon. We are looking to start programs in the Upper Peninsula. The Sturgeon Shivaree is February 1 and 2, with the season to follow. There is going to be a Boy Scout Camp for Sturgeon Guarding. They are looking for program help/suggestions and if your organization wants to participate please let Brenda know. This year was the largest sturgeon larval drift year yet with more than 100,000 larvae.

Long Lake

Tom Ludwig: There was good fishing for all species. Anglers are using the 54 fish shelters that were installed in water less than 10 feet. The structures are staying intact. There were 18 structures installed this year with 2 located at each site. The last trip out Tom caught 9 walleye and 3 were keepers. At the fishing derby, approximately 100 fish were brought in, with lots of 12" perch, 20" walleye, etc.

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

Dave Edwards: Jennifer Buchanan is seeking funding to improve fish habitat in inland lakes and grant funds might be available. If your lake association is interested in possibly participating, contact Jennifer for the details. <https://www.watershedcouncil.org/staff.html>.

Grand Lake

Dennis Fauver: The spring and early summer fishing was really good. It shut down with the warmer temperatures, but during early fall it started to pick back up again. The boat launch on the north end of Grand Lake will be dredged this fall.

Paul Borg: Paul was disappointed with the DNR boat launch upgrade completed on the south end of Grand Lake. He thought the DNR would do a better job and widen the launch. The dock was just moved to the side, so instead of the two original ramps there is only one. There is also a drop off on the edge of the last plank. Another plank is needed. He did acknowledge extreme low water levels this year at Grand Lake. Frank suggested that we consider having Rich Hill or Keith Cheli come to our spring meeting to discuss boat launch improvements and concerns.

Burt Lake

Jim Burke: Burt Lake has a healthy, thriving fishery. Jim thanked Nick for the sea lamprey work and presentation.

Rick Johnson: Fishing hasn't been great. He is only catching small walleye and lots of perch. The other end of the lake has been doing better.

Tim Cwalinski: Tim caught fewer fish on Burt this year. Tim had a good day and bad day for walleye on Mullett Lake, and a good day this fall on Black Lake.

Gina Burke: Gina thanked Brenda Archambo for her work on sturgeon and sturgeon guarding. She spoke about the important work of the US Coast Guard monitoring for sturgeon poaching in the area. The eggs are very valuable, and poaching has become a major problem around the country. There is an article on this subject in the latest Burt Lake Preservation Association newsletter <https://www.blpa.org/newsletters> .

Pat Mousseau: Fishing has been good with many 13-25 inch walleye, but you just have to sort in these lakes

JP Van Ostenborg: Michigan Muskie Alliance is advocating for stocking of surplus spring fingerling muskies. They are looking for a better definition of restoration waters versus natural reproduction/self-sustaining waters. If the issue is transportation costs of stocking, MMA would cover that.

David George: David fly fishes Crooked and Pickerel Lakes. He sees quite a few good-sized smallmouth bass and is seeing lots of longnose gar. He fishes the Sturgeon River and saw good numbers of steelhead.

Meeting adjourned 3:35 pm

Notes: Neal Godby, MDNR

Meeting dates for 2019

Friday April 12, 2019

Friday October 11, 2019

Meeting will be held at Tuscarora Township Hall in downtown Indian River from 11 am until 3:30 pm