



Lake Erie Walleye, Yellow Perch 2022 Hatch Results

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Results from 2022 Lake Erie hatch surveys showed western basin walleye, central basin walleye, and western basin yellow perch hatches were above average, while central basin yellow perch hatches continue to be well below average, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife.

These results are consistent with the recent trend of highly successful hatches for both yellow perch and walleye in Lake Erie’s shallowest and warmest basin, and strengthen the extremely positive long-term outlook for anglers.

Western basin walleye

Division of Wildlife survey results are combined with the Ontario Ministry

of Natural Resources and Forestry surveys to configure a basin-wide hatch index. The 2022 western basin walleye hatch was 83 fish per hectare (a hectare is 2.47 times larger than an acre), the ninth largest in the survey’s 35-year history and well above the average of 55.

“Lake Erie walleye anglers will continue to benefit from terrific walleye populations,” said Division of Wildlife Chief Kendra Wecker. “This year’s hatch will grow to catchable sizes in two or three years, when it will contribute to decades of excellent fishing in the Walleye Capital of the World.”

Western basin yellow perch

The western basin yellow perch hatch this year was also above average. The

survey index was 572 young-of-year yellow perch per hectare, above the average of 461 and the seventh highest on record. Western basin yellow perch surveys are also combined with the Ontario MNR and Forestry to determine a hatch index.

Mid-summer and late fall yellow perch fishing in the western basin provided some of the best harvest rates observed in years, along with excellent size.

Central basin walleye

In the central basin, walleye production continued a trend of above average hatches with survey results of 14 young-of-year walleye per hectare, well above the average of 6 per hectare. This was the seventh highest of 33 survey years.

Lake Erie Hatch Results

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Walleye season change on Saginaw River in Bay started Jan. 1

Effective January 1, 2023, the possession season for walleye opened year-round on the [lower Saginaw River in Bay and Saginaw counties from the mouth of the river, upstream to West Center Street \(Douglas G. Schenk\) Bridge.](#)

The same regulation is in effect on the Lake Huron waters of MH-4 (see page 20 of the [2022 fishing guide](#)) including Saginaw Bay. The daily possession limit for walleye remains at eight walleye with a 13-inch minimum size limit on these same waters.

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission approved this regulation December 9, 2021, to increase fishing and harvest opportunities on the Saginaw Bay walleye population.

Prior to this new regulation, the season used to close March 16 and reopen the last Saturday in April.

For current regulations, anglers are encouraged to view and refer to the digital version of the fishing guide at [Michigan.gov/DNRDigests](#). The fishing guide and other helpful resources also are available by downloading the new [Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app](#).

The DNR manages Michigan’s fisheries resources for current and future generations by making scientific, research-based decisions and regulatory recommendations. Regulations are one tool the DNR uses to implement management strategies to protect, conserve and improve Michigan’s fisheries. Learn more about these efforts at [Michigan.gov/Fishing](#). ✧

DEC announces third year of ice fishing creel survey on Lake Champlain

Surveys to be conducted January through March 2023

New York announced the annual ice fishing creel survey will resume for its third year on the New York waters of Lake Champlain from January through March 2023. "Anglers are important partners when it comes to the management of the Lake Champlain fishery," said Commissioner Seggos. "By participating in programs like the ice fishing creel survey, anglers provide us with information that ultimately benefits both our environment and the future of quality fishing in New York State."

This survey is part of an annual effort to survey both ice and open water anglers. Data gathered during these surveys will help DEC fisheries biologists better understand angler use and expectations, while also informing management actions on Lake Champlain.

The 2023 ice fishing survey will take place at four access points: King's Bay (Point au Fer Road); Willsboro Bay Boat Launch; Bulwagga Bay Campground; and South Bay Boat Launch. Anglers coming off the ice will be asked to participate in the creel survey by providing information about their day of fishing. They will be asked to allow the DEC creel agent to collect biological data on their catch. Collected data will include target species, number caught, and size. Voluntary participation in the survey gives anglers the opportunity to contribute to future Lake Champlain management decisions.

A [copy of the Lake Champlain Ice Fishing Creel Survey](#) plan can be found on DEC's website. Previous years' reports can be found on the [Adirondack/Lake Champlain Reports](#) webpage. The 2023 ice fishing survey report will be made available later next year.

Anglers are reminded to always follow best practices for [ice safety](#) and to [Love Our New York Lands](#) and Leave No Trace™. ✧

Help prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species this winter

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin DNR and UW-Extension are asking anglers to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Wisconsin's lakes and rivers while ice fishing this winter. Aquatic invasive species have made their way into Wisconsin's waterways. Still, anglers can reduce the transmission of these invasives even in the winter by checking for and removing any mud or plant material clinging to their gear, including sleds used to haul supplies, before leaving fishing spots.

Invasive species are non-native plants, animals and diseases that cause great ecological, environmental or economic harm. Aquatic invasive species can crowd out native plants and animals and threaten the quality of boating and fishing in Wisconsin waters.

Curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil are two aquatic invasive species that remain hardy in the winter under the ice, giving them an advantage over our native aquatic plants. The plant-like algae starry stonewort dies back for winter, but its tiny, star-shaped bulbils can be present on plants yanked up through the ice or in the mud that can come up if the bottom is disturbed by augers. Disease and the larvae of invasive snails and mussels can also be present in the water and mud in winter.

Because of the possible spread of diseases like [Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia \(VHS\)](#) that can threaten fish populations, it is important to only buy minnows from a licensed Wisconsin bait dealer. Up to two gallons of water may be kept for minnows provided they will be used on the same waterbody or if no lake or river water from the fishing site(s) has been added. Dead bait must be preserved in ways that do not require freezing or refrigeration. Visit the DNR's [webpage on bait preservation](#) to learn more. Find more rules regarding bait in [the current fishing regulations](#). ✧



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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

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DNR warns that slush weighs down ice, increases risk

Slush adds weight to the ice and its effects can be unpredictable. In some areas, slushy conditions are impacting travel on the ice, while in others — especially where ice was in the early stages of forming — the conditions are not adequate to support ice shelters and vehicles, resulting in breakthroughs.

When on the ice, people should check the thickness for themselves and not rely on tracks in the snow or what they've heard second hand. When measuring the thickness of slush-covered ice, measure only the clear ice, not the slush or snow on top of it. While forecasted cold weather this week could help strengthen ice, it's vital to check ice thickness regularly. The DNR recommends at least 5 to 7" of ice for snowmobiles, 7 to 8" for side-by-side all-terrain vehicles, and at least 20" for heavy-duty trucks pulling wheelhouses.

"The final week of December has become the unofficial kickoff to the 'wheelhouse season,' but just because you had your wheelhouse out during that week last year doesn't necessarily mean it'll be safe this year," said Col. Rodmen Smith, director of the DNR Enforcement Division. "There are many tools to help you determine whether the ice is safe — augers, drills, spud bars and tape measures — but the calendar isn't one of them."

General ice safety guidelines

No ice can ever be considered "safe ice," but following [these guidelines](http://mndnr.gov/safety/ice/thickness.html) (mndnr.gov/safety/ice/thickness.html) can help minimize the risk:

- Always wear a life jacket or float coat on the ice (except when in a vehicle).
- Carry ice picks, rope, an ice chisel and tape measure.
- Check ice thickness often; conditions can change quickly.
- Bring a cell phone or personal locator beacon.

- Don't go out alone; let someone know about trip plans and expected return time.
- Before heading out, inquire about conditions and known hazards with local experts.

The minimum ice thickness guidelines for new, clear ice are:

- 4+ inches for ice fishing or other activities on foot.
- 5-7 inches for a snowmobile or a small ATV.
- 7-8 inches for a side-by-side ATV
- 9-12 inches for a car.
- 13-17 inches for a truck.
- 20+ inches for a large truck with a wheelhouse shelter.
- Double these minimums for white or snow-covered ice.

For more information, visit the DNR's [ice safety](http://mndnr.gov/icesafety) (mndnr.gov/icesafety) or [boating safety](http://mndnr.gov/boatingsafety) pages (mndnr.gov/boatingsafety). ✧

Snowmobile safety

Continued from pg 3, column 3

"This is important because many public snowmobile trails are connected by portions of private property, but only because the property owners have granted that access," said Lt. Tom Wanless, DNR Law Enforcement Division. "Frustration with overly loud snowmobiles is one of the primary reasons they rescind permission, which means all snowmobilers lose access routes to certain trails."

A snowmobile safety certificate is required for operators under the age of 16 who will be riding on the trails unsupervised or when crossing roadways. Everyone is encouraged to [earn a recreational safety certificate](#), which can be completed online.

There has been one reported [snowmobile fatality](#) this season.

Read more about safety, find places to ride and purchase your trail permit at Michigan.gov/Snowmobiling. ✧

DNR urges snowmobile safety amid winter storm

"Many people will be jumping on their snowmobiles for the first time this season," said Cpl. Mike Hearn, snowmobile and off-road vehicle specialist, DNR Law Enforcement Division. "The forecast, combined with the excitement of the holidays, is creating a scenario in which conservation officers often see avoidable accidents. People are excited, riding fast, hitting drifts and often riding outside of their capabilities. We want to remind everyone to ride sober, at a safe speed, especially near curves, and to ride within your and your machine's capabilities."

Additional "Ride Right" snowmobile safety tips include:

- Riding on the right side of the trail or road.
- Riding with your machine's lights on.
- Watching for and yielding to trail groomers.
- Ensuring your machine is in good working condition before you ride.
- Leaving a ride plan, including details about where you're going and when you'll return, with someone who is staying home.
- Riding at a safe distance behind the person in front of you; snowmobiles may have a delayed stop time due to sliding on ice or snow. This is particularly important for riders operating in low visibility caused by snow.

Trails permits are required for snowmobiles operating on the trail system and may be purchased online. Conservation officers encourage operators to carry a proof of purchase until the permit that needs to be affixed to the snowmobile arrives in the mail. Additionally, snowmobile exhaust sound emissions should be 88 decibels or under.

Snowmobile safety

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2023 Black Lake sturgeon season begins Feb. 4

The 2023 lake sturgeon fishing season on Black Lake in Cheboygan County, Michigan, will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 4. All anglers must register online to participate in the fishing season, and those age 17 or older must have a valid Michigan fishing license.

The harvest limit for the 2023 season on Black Lake is six lake sturgeon. Officials will close the season when one of two scenarios occurs:

1. The sixth fish is harvested.
2. Five fish have been harvested at the end of any fishing day.

Fishing hours are 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day of the season. The season will end either at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, or when one of the above scenarios is met, at which point anglers will be notified via text message and on the ice by DNR personnel that they must immediately stop fishing for lake sturgeon.

Anyone who wants to participate this year must register online by

February 3. Get more registration and season information at Michigan.gov/Sturgeon.

Participating anglers must bring their own bright red flag (1-foot diameter or larger) to hang on their fishing shanty so that DNR personnel can identify those who are sturgeon fishing. Anglers are asked to hang one or more flags in highly visible locations on their shanty.

Anyone harvesting a lake sturgeon must immediately contact DNR personnel on the ice. Official registration of each harvested fish will take place at a DNR trailer located on the ice at the end of Zollner Road in the northwest part of Black Lake. Harvest registration may include an examination of the fish's internal organs and removal of a piece of fin tissue for DNA analysis or aging.

Lake sturgeon rehabilitation efforts in Black Lake over the last two decades have been a successful collaboration between the Michigan DNR, Sturgeon for Tomorrow, tribal



agencies, Michigan State University and Tower-Kleber Limited Partnership. This population has increased in the past 20 years due to rearing and stocking efforts, research and protection of spawning adults, and this trend is expected to continue.

Anglers should be aware of marginal ice conditions on regional lakes so far this year and use extreme caution when fishing. Visit Michigan.gov/IceSafety for tips to stay safe on the ice. ✧

Angling could become a dying activity

NOAA Fisheries - EFTTA ([European Fishing Tackle Trade Association](https://EuropeanFishingTackleTradeAssociation.org)) Board member Gerard Bakkenes is under no illusions as to the importance of lobbying for the future of recreational fishing.

EFTTA, which is based in Brussels and represents the industry at the highest echelons of the EU, has reiterated its resolve to fight for the sport. And EFTTA Board member Gerard Bakkenes has told *Angling International*: “Without lobbying angling could become a dying activity. It is crucial to the survival of the sport.

“We feel it is strange that there are still companies or brands – large and small – within the fishing tackle industry that do not value the need for lobbying or advocacy. Maybe they are unaware of its importance. Next to promoting angling as a fun and healthy activity with a high economical value and which supports a great deal of jobs, lobbying is crucial.

“The sport of fishing needs to be defended. You simply have to look around you to see the increased focus on animals, objects being thrown into the water and behavior towards nature in general. I feel the industry 100% underestimates the threats that fishing might be under.”

Bakkenes added that EFTTA already has a loud voice for the industry at EU level, but that it should become the true and pro-active lobbying body for the fishing industry. “We have the right people and bodies on board with EFTTA CEO Olivier Portrat, our lobbyist Jan Kappel, our partners at the European Anglers Association and advocacy group Alienor. They are all very capable in representing the benefits of the sport, but they need more and more support not just from manufacturers, but other groups within the industry—boating, electronics, tourism and event organizers. They should all become

members of EFTTA to show their support for the greater good.

“Just as an example to the industry, without EFTTA monofilament could have been classified as a Single Use Plastic. This would have resulted in a ban on the use of the line and serious consequences for manufacturers and suppliers.”

Bakkenes, who joined the EFTTA Board at the beginning of last year, has been with Shimano Europe for over 22 years and is currently Senior Business Planner. He says he would also like to see the setting up of a clear pan-European strategy that includes collaboration with local regional trade associations like French representative body GIFAP. “It is key for the future of fishing. It is something that EFTTA has been involved in at a local level and makes sense because united we are stronger. The louder the voice we have the more funds for lobbying we can collect.” ✧

Ballast water management is reducing the flow of invasive species into the Great Lakes

By Anthony Ricciardi, Prof of Biology, Redpath Museum & Bieler School of Environment, McGill University

Over the past two centuries, established populations of nearly 190 non-native species of invertebrates, fishes, plants and microbes have been discovered in the Great Lakes basin. They were introduced through several sources and pathways including canals, pet release, bait bucket dumping, aquaculture escapes and — most notably — ballast water discharge from transoceanic ships.

From 1959 to 2006, one new invader was discovered established in the Great Lakes basin every six to seven months, on average. Nearly two-thirds of these species were delivered in ballast water. They include invaders that have reduced native biodiversity, impaired fisheries and caused other ecological and socioeconomic impacts in the Great Lakes.

In 1993, Canada and the United States attempted to control ballast-

water invasions by requiring inbound ships to exchange their freshwater ballast with saltwater before entering the Great Lakes. The logic behind this regulation was that freshwater organisms in the ballast tanks would either be purged or killed by exposure to saltwater, and any marine organisms taken up haphazardly during the process would be unable to reproduce in the Great Lakes. The regulation's effectiveness was undermined by inbound vessels that were not required to undergo ballast water exchange because they declared they had no pumpable ballast on board, although there was residual water in their "empty" tanks. In fact, such vessels, which comprised the majority of ships entering the seaway, carried an average 47 tons of residual water and 15 tons of sediment in their ballast tanks and contained diverse living freshwater invertebrates.

perch hatches are rare. It is common to observe poor hatches in the central and east zones when those in the west zone are good, which is what has been observed for several years. When conditions favor the central basin, the pattern reverses. Long-term data support these observations.

"Lake Erie yellow perch are surveyed and managed as regional populations within management zones. Our surveys during the past few years have shown a marked difference in the yellow perch hatch when comparing the west, central, and east zones," said Travis Hartman, DNR Lake Erie Fisheries Administrator. "The Division of Wildlife uses these zones to monitor perch hatches and, by comparing results to previous years, determine safe harvest levels." ✧

Lake Erie hatch surveys

The Division of Wildlife completes western basin surveys in August. Those results are combined with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry survey results.

After visiting a Great Lakes port to offload their cargo, these unregulated ships would pump in water to replace the lost weight. Then they would visit another port to take on new cargo and discharge the water, now contaminated with organisms. Several invaders were introduced to the Great Lakes by this pathway.

To address this issue, a procedure called saltwater flushing was developed. Ship-board experiments showed that flushing ballast tanks with seawater to the point where tank salinities reached oceanic concentrations substantially reduced the abundance and diversity of organisms in the tanks. Since 2008, new invasions recorded in the Great Lakes basin declined by 85 per cent. The frequency of invasion is now at the lowest rate ever recorded in the basin. ✧

Additionally, central basin trawls completed by the Division of Wildlife from Lorain to Ashtabula in September and October are used in population models for characterizing regional yellow perch hatches.

Survey results are used in conjunction with results from the other Lake Erie Committee agencies to determine hatch success in each management zone. This information allows biologists to better estimate how many young fish will enter the catchable population two years later, which is one factor used to determine safe harvest levels each year.

For more info on Lake Erie fisheries and to find more resources, visit wildohio.gov. Download the [HuntFish OH](#) mobile app for fishing information on the go.

The mission of the Division of Wildlife is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all. Visit wildohio.gov to find out more. ✧

Lake Erie Hatch Results

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Central basin yellow perch

For yellow perch, the central basin is split into two zones, the central zone (Huron to Fairport Harbor) and the east zone (Fairport Harbor to Conneaut). Results showed below average hatches in each, with an index of 3 young-of-year perch per hectare in the central zone, below the average of 39. Similar results were found in the east zone, with an index of 3 per hectare, below the average of 38.

Conditions did not favor the survival of newly hatched yellow perch in the central basin during 2022. Variability in regional hatch success is expected on Lake Erie because of the size of the lake, differences among basins, and prevailing weather conditions. Hatch success is largely determined by the timing and availability of favorable conditions for both spawning and survival of newly hatched yellow perch in the spring and summer. Strong lake-wide yellow

DNR collecting cisco in collaboration with USGS

During winter, cooling water temperatures signal the migration of cisco, a cold-water species native to Indiana's inland glacial lakes. These slender, silver-colored fish spend most of the year 75 feet below the surface but during December migrate to their traditional spawning areas, the shallow waters of Crooked Lake in Noble County.

For the second consecutive year, Indiana DNR fisheries biologists collected cisco on Crooked Lake in partnership with researchers from the United States Geological Survey (USGS). This is part of a collaborative project to compare the cisco's tolerance of its habitat's temperature to that of more northern populations elsewhere in the Midwest. This project will provide a better understanding of possible differences in temperature tolerances between populations, information that will help managers select appropriate source populations for future restoration efforts.

Cisco (*Coregonus artedii*) is the only native fish from the salmon family found in Indiana waters outside of Lake Michigan. It is a coldwater species that inhabits waters as far north as Canada and as far south as the upper Midwestern United States. Cisco are small and slender, silver-colored fish. They feed primarily on zooplankton, a diverse group of microscopic animals

that live in aquatic environments. In Indiana, cisco grow to 7 inches by age 2, 12 inches by age 4, 15 inches by age 6, and they have been known to reach 19 inches at around 10 years of age.

The glacial lakes of northern Indiana represent the southernmost extent of cisco's range in North America. Glacial lakes are lakes formed by receding glaciers and water from melting glaciers. Only about 24% of Indiana lakes, primarily in the northern glacial lakes region, provide late-summer coldwater habitat ($\leq 68^{\circ}\text{F}$ and ≥ 3.0 mg/L dissolved oxygen) suitable for cisco.

The number of lakes supporting cisco populations in Indiana has declined precipitously since 1955 as a result of coldwater habitat loss at many lakes. Failing Lake (Steuben County), Indiana Lake (Elkhart County), North Twin and South Twin lakes (LaGrange County), Lake Gage (Steuben County), Eve Lake (LaGrange County), and Crooked Lake (Noble/Whitley counties) are the only remaining Indiana lakes containing cisco.

The Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) has taken several steps to conserve cisco populations over the last half century. The DFW has attempted to reintroduce cisco at two coldwater lakes, including Gilbert

Lake (Noble County) in 1979 and Green Lake (Steuben County) in the early 1990s. Both of these attempts to reintroduce cisco failed to establish self-sustaining populations.

Gill netting during the fall (Nov.-Dec.) for cisco was once the preferred method anglers used to capture cisco. Early gill netting regulations required anglers to purchase a cisco license and

restricted gill net mesh sizes. The harvest of cisco using gill nets was discontinued in the late 1970s to protect declining cisco populations.

Cisco are listed as a state endangered species (effective December 17, 2020) and anglers should be advised that under IC 14-22-34-12 it is unlawful to take or possess state endangered species. The 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) used the lake catchments of known cisco populations to define six Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) in northern Indiana to focus the conservation community's efforts on coldwater habitat protection and restoration. The long-term protection of Indiana's remaining cisco populations will rely largely on collaborative efforts to preserve coldwater habitat through the application of best management practices (BMPs) that reduce the quantity of nutrients entering Indiana's waterways. ✧

Ottawa aims to reduce size of salmon fishing industry by buying licenses

The federal government of Canada is offering to buy Pacific salmon commercial fishing licenses from those looking to get out of the declining industry as it tries to protect the fish that remain. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has earmarked \$123 million for the voluntary retirement program and two future initiatives that will dispose of derelict vessels and allow indigenous communal commercial license holders to switch to another species.

The funding is part of a nearly \$650-million Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative announced last year. Jeff Grout, a salmon resource manager with Fisheries, says about 1,300 licenses are eligible for the program, which will buy them at market rate and take them out of circulation. Jeff Grout, a salmon resource manager with Fisheries, says about 1,300 licenses are eligible for the program, which will buy them at market rate and take them out of circulation.

Neil Davis, regional director of fisheries management, says there is no way to know how many license holders will take the government up on its offer, but the goal is to end up with a "substantial reduction" in fleet size. Fisheries and Oceans has said many salmon stocks are declining to "historic lows" due to the effects of climate change, habitat loss and other threats ✧

MI Parks and trails to share \$1.9 million in Recreation Passport grant funding

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan awarded 14 communities a total of \$1,906,100 in Recreation Passport grants for projects including beach volleyball courts at a park in Alpena County, a splashpad in Kent County, a new park welcome center in Newaygo County, and park development in Berrien and Delta counties. The recreation passport program started 12 years ago to boost visitors and funding for Michigan state parks, and over a decade later it is also delivering more funding to improve local and community parks and trails across the state. On average, every \$1 invested in land conservation leads to \$4 in economic benefit for the local community through job growth and tourism.

“Recreation Passports help more Michiganders explore Pure Michigan and secure critical resources to improve state, local, and community parks,” said Governor Whitmer. “Michigan has always been a four-season recreation destination, and the enhancements made possible through Recreation Passport grants help ensure residents and visitors of all abilities can enjoy a rich variety of activities and experiences every day of the year.”

Since the introduction of the Recreation Passport in 2010, support for it has steadily grown. The Recreation Passport grant program—which has awarded just over \$16.5 million statewide since its inception—is funded from 10% of the passport revenues, with the remaining funding supporting operations, infrastructure and historic and cultural assets in the state parks and recreation system.

Counties where funded grant projects have been approved include Allegan, Alpena, Baraga, Benzie, Berrien, Delta, Eaton, Gladwin, Kent, Newaygo, Sanilac, St. Clair and Wayne counties.

Selected projects were scored and selected from a field of 35 grant applications seeking \$4.4 million in

local funding. Successful applicants clearly demonstrated projects designed to broaden public access to quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

“Every resident who purchases the Recreation Passport is getting amazing value and access to outdoor recreation for themselves, while at the same time helping to improve public outdoor recreation statewide,” said DNR Director Dan Eichinger. “Ten percent of Recreation Passport sales goes to local communities via grants, supporting each community’s vision for what it can bring to residents. It’s about making outdoor recreation more accessible to more people. Whether birding with friends at a neighborhood park, playing with your kids in a new splashpad or enjoying a good book beneath the shade of park pavilion, having these places available is incredibly important.”

The application period for the next round of Recreation Passport grant funding opens in early 2023, with applications due April 1. Learn more about the program at Michigan.gov/DNRGrants.

Funding

Funding for this program is derived from sales of Michigan’s [Recreation Passport](#), required for vehicle entry into Michigan’s 103 state parks, 140 state forest campgrounds, hundreds of miles of state trails, historic sites, hundreds of boating access sites and other outdoor spaces.

Approximately 97% of state parks funding for operations and maintenance is generated by user fees and royalty revenues. This includes:

- 51% from camping and lodging reservation fees.
- 26% from Recreation Passport sales.
- 15% from state-owned, oil, gas and mineral royalty revenues, which feed the Michigan State Parks Endowment Fund.

- 5% from concessions, shelter reservations, and miscellaneous sources.

Economic Benefits of Parks

Parks and recreation facilities are a big part of Michigan’s economy, generating value for surrounding communities, creating jobs and helping sustain small businesses. Michigan’s outdoor recreation industry supports billions in state Gross Domestic Product and sustains 126,000 jobs and over \$4.7 billion in wages and salaries in the state.

On average, every \$1 invested in land conservation leads to \$4 in economic benefit, meaning the Building Michigan Together Plan’s \$250 million investment in state parks will yield \$1 billion in economic benefits for families, small businesses, and local communities. ✧

Bring the kids to one of seven Milwaukee County ponds to learn to ice fish **Feb 11**

Ice fishing instruction will be provided by Milwaukee area fishing club members.

Who: Kids ages 15 and under. All children must be accompanied by an adult

What: Milwaukee area fishing club members will be at the ready to teach ice safety and ice fishing skills.

When: **Saturday, Feb. 11, 2023, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Clinics start on the hour with the last clinic starting at 2 p.m.

Where: These Milwaukee County Parks:

- Brown Deer
- Dineen
- Greenfield
- McCarty
- McGovern
- Scout Lake
- Kosciuszko

Cost: Free ✧

Trudeau gives \$800M for indigenous-led conservation issues

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced \$800 million in funding for indigenous-led conservation projects covering almost a million square kilometers of land. He made the announcement in Montréal, which is hosting the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, also known as COP15. The four projects in Ontario, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia that will be funded starting next year are meant to conserve land and protect coastal and inland waterways.

Trudeau said the initiative will help Canada reach its target of conserving 25% of Canada's land and waters by 2025, rising to 30% by 2030. The project is being funded with the help of Project Finance for Permanence, PFP, a funding model that channels contributions from indigenous communities, all levels of government and the philanthropic community to provide long-term protection for land and water. In the Great Bear Sea on B.C.'s coast, the initiative will support a group representing 17 First Nations working to protect the Northern Shelf Bioregion, which includes many islands, rocky shorelines and deep fjords. In the NW Territories, funding will be directed to a partnership of 30 indigenous groups working to protect boreal forests, rivers and other lands.

In Ontario's far north, the initiative will fund conservation and protection activities. ✧

Teaching youth to fish worldwide

In 2018, the International Game Fish Association set an ambitious goal of teaching 100,000 youth around the world how to fish ethically. In June 2022, the 100,000th child was taught during our IGFA Day celebrations. Although the initiative is complete, the work will continue around the world to establish future generations of ethical anglers. ✧

Wisconsin sturgeon spearing season is almost here!

The Wisconsin DNR has published the [2023 Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing Regulations](#). The 2023 sturgeon spearing season will open on **Saturday, Feb. 11**, and will run for 16 days or until any of the pre-determined harvest caps are met. If harvest caps are met early, a closure notice will be posted to [the DNR's Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing webpage](#).

- Registration stations have been moved back to their pre-pandemic locations. All registration will once again be in-person with some locations offering a drive-thru option.

- The maximum width of a spear head is restricted to 18 inches or less and tines can only be arranged in a single straight line.

- Spearing of any species of fish other than sturgeon from the Winnebago system is prohibited during the sturgeon spearing season, except that a licensed sturgeon spearer with a valid unused sturgeon carcass tag and valid fishing license may retain or dispose of any carp taken incidentally while sturgeon spearing. Any carp incidentally speared must be removed from the water, bank or shore and properly disposed of.

As a reminder, all harvested sturgeon must be registered at an official DNR registration station by 2 p.m. on the day it was speared. Any sturgeon harvested from Lake Winnebago must be registered at one of the registration stations on Lake Winnebago. Likewise, any sturgeon harvested from lakes Poygan, Butte des Morts or Winneconne must be registered at one of the Upriver Lakes registration stations.

Continue to place harvested sturgeon on a tailgate or in an easily accessible location to aid in the registration process, and allow staff to collect important biological data, such as size, sex and tagging history. This information will help the DNR to properly manage the sturgeon population. [View the 2023 registration station locations in the new regulations here.](#) ✧

Funding opportunity open for Chesapeake Bay fisheries research

The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office within the Office of Habitat Conservation intends to award up to \$1.5 million for research exploring how changing climate affects Chesapeake Bay fisheries species and for developing innovative approaches to evaluating the success of habitat restoration. Deadline for applications is April 17, 2023. Contact: Bruce Vogt.

[Up to \\$1.5 million in grant funds are available](#) to support research into how key Chesapeake Bay fisheries species change their behavior to deal with changing habitat and climate. Applications are due April 17, 2023.

This [grant program](#) funds research on topics that resource managers want and need to know more about. The results of this research help inform science-based management decisions that are part of protecting and restoring important habitat.

[Climate change](#) is already affecting the Chesapeake Bay—and the wildlife that lives there. We need to better understand how [Chesapeake Bay fish species](#) will be affected as climate change affects the habitats they need. Resource managers can then include that science in their decision-making process. Projects funded through this grant will help us gain that knowledge.

Funded projects will also develop ways to evaluate how successful nearshore habitat restoration supports fish species and communities in the face of climate change.

Scientists who have not been funded through this program will receive preference for funding. Projects that would employ and educate undergraduate or graduate students from groups underrepresented in marine science careers, including minorities, will also receive preference.

We invite potential applicants to learn more about the application process by joining us online for a [webinar on January 20, 2023, at 10 a.m. EST.](#) ✧

NOAA announces historic funding for fish habitats across U.S

NOAA Fisheries announced nearly \$105 million in funding for [36 new fish passage projects](#) under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, including significant funding to implement fish passage projects that meet tribal priorities and build tribal organizational capacity to support their role as stewards of tribal resources. This historic level of funding will reopen migratory pathways and restore access to habitat for fish and other species across the country.

Through this funding, NOAA prioritized projects that demonstrate a broad base of stakeholder and community support and were developed with inclusive practices to engage a diverse range of community groups. Selected projects will span the full range of fish passage types, including dam removals, fish ladders, culvert improvements and in-stream fish passage improvements.

“The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to enhance our investment in our nation’s fisheries, protected resources and coastal communities—and ensure that tribes and underserved communities see the results,” said Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. “Not only will these projects assist in supporting sustainable fisheries and recovering endangered fish species, they will also provide community and economic benefits, such as jobs, recreational opportunities and climate resilience.”

Fifteen of the projects—encompassing more than \$26.3 million in funding—will be led by tribal applicants for fish passage. Many of the remaining projects are aligned with tribal priorities, with tribes playing key roles in decision-making, building capacity to help recover tribally-important migratory fish and providing community and economic benefits such as jobs and training opportunities.

“Investments in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to support fish passage and sustainable commercial, recreational and tribal fisheries are critical to building a Climate-Ready Nation,” said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. “The projects supported by this funding will help communities adapt to a changing climate by supporting healthy ecosystems and infrastructure that works for people and fish.”

At this point in the selection process, the application approval and obligation of funds are not final. Each application is being “recommended” for funding. This announcement is not an authorization to start the project and is not a guarantee of funding.

“From Alaska to North Carolina, this unprecedented investment will create new opportunities for migratory fish to thrive, bringing a host of benefits to tribes and communities across the nation,” said Janet Coit, assistant administrator for NOAA Fisheries, acting assistant secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere, and deputy NOAA administrator. “I can’t say enough about the quality and importance of these fish passage projects. NOAA staff are rolling up their sleeves and continuing to work with a broad spectrum of partners to see these federal funds put into action.”

Fish passage is about improving access for fish to the habitat(s) they need or reconnecting access to historic habitat blocked by humans. Migratory fish like salmon require access to high quality rearing and spawning habitats, and unimpeded migratory corridors, to be successful and resilient. When fish cannot access their habitat, they cannot rear, reproduce and grow their populations, resulting in population declines. NOAA works to [reopen these migratory pathways](#), restoring access to healthy habitat for fish. For many tribes, fish passage and access remains a major limiting factor towards rebuilding fish populations.

This funding will help reopen migratory pathways and reconnect fish with their historic habitat, which is a critical step towards rebuilding fisheries back to healthy levels.

NOAA’s Office of Habitat Conservation has a long history of conducting habitat restoration efforts, including fish passage, by executing large-scale competitive funding opportunities and providing expert technical assistance through NOAA’s Community-based Restoration Program. ✧

DNR hosting Lake Michigan Fisheries Management Meeting [Jan. 23](#)

The Wisconsin DNR is hosting a public meeting to present information and gather feedback on the future management of salmon and trout on Lake Michigan.

The meeting will start at [6 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 23, 2023](#), at Lakeshore Technical College’s Centennial Hall West in Cleveland, Wisconsin. The meeting will be in person, but a [Zoom](#) option will also be available.

DNR staff will present the latest Lake Michigan survey and stocking information, and stakeholders can share ideas and input on future fisheries management initiatives. “We have been working very closely with critical stakeholders over the last 11 years to respond to the science and social preferences that drive this excellent fishery,” said Bradley Eggold, DNR Great Lakes District Fisheries Supervisor. “At this meeting, we will gather input and comments that will ultimately culminate in a plan for 2023 and beyond.”

More information on this meeting is available at: [Lake Michigan Fisheries](#) webpage. ✧

Scientists lead project to deter carp with sound

How do you stop an army of carp from invading the Great Lakes? Two Virginia Tech researchers are joining an effort to put up a defensive barrier made of sound waves.

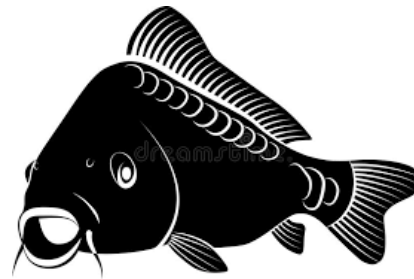
[John Palmore](#), assistant professor in the [Department of Mechanical Engineering](#), has received \$340,000 from the Army Corps of Engineers' Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) to create new tools using sound waves to control the movement of invasive species of Asian carp. The center's mission is to deliver vital engineering solutions to secure the nation, energize the U.S. economy, and reduce disaster risk. One of its [principal responsibilities is managing the nation's commercial waterway navigation infrastructure, including locks and dams.](#)

A relatively new threat to those waterways comes from the presence of several [invasive species of carp](#). Four species, known collectively as Asian carp, were introduced into targeted waterways in the 1970s to control harmful agents on aquatic farms. However, in the past 50 years, these large fish have moved beyond aquatic farms and now threaten the balance of aquatic life in lakes and rivers throughout the United States, gobbling up food and resources needed by other species. This threatens not only the fish that are going without, but also the fishing industries that depend on their health and wellness.

Carp's travel related to human activity on lakes and rivers can be both direct and indirect. When fishermen travel between two bodies of water, they often transport live bait as they go. Although adult carp are quite large, young carp may be the same size as smaller species used for fishing. As a result, transported young carp may be dumped into the water, grow to maturity, and breed in areas where they don't belong.

Carp also take advantage of the movement of boats and water where lakes and rivers meet. Those intersections are usually controlled with dams and locks. Dams control the amount of water, and locks control the movement of boats between bodies of water.

In the case of a [lock](#), engineers construct a small waterway – large enough to accommodate a boat – between two more substantial waterways. When a boat enters, both sides of the lock are closed. Often, one waterway is higher than the other, so the lock will either be flooded so the boat can travel “uphill,” or drained so a boat can travel “downhill.” During that water movement, nearby carp enter the lock and make a new home in the waterway.



Palmore's research efforts with ERDC benefit the [Brandon Road Interbasin Project](#), a multiyear, multimillion dollar project aimed at lowering the spread of carp, specifically from the Illinois Waterway into the Great Lakes, through lock movement. Because the carp move most easily through the lock transition, the idea is to keep them away from that area.

Considerable effort has been put into stopping the spread already, particularly to safeguard the \$7 billion yearly Great Lakes fishing industry. Protective measures include a [combination of existing nonlethal barriers](#) at locks and dams to deter the fish, including underwater [electrical barriers](#), columns of bubbles, and

sounds played through the water. Palmore's team is diving into the efficacy of sound barriers when used in the locks.

“Out of all those technologies, acoustic deterrents are potentially the best in the sense that they are the most customizable,” said Palmore. “All fish are affected by bubble currents. Electric fences contain fish based on size but not species. For acoustic deterrents, each species hears within a different range. You have a selective mechanism to annoy specific species of fish.”

[To keep fish at bay with sound](#), researchers combine different noises, such as predatorial sounds (like a dolphin), boat noises, and other irritants. The ERDC team has created the racket and tested its effect on the fish, while Palmore's team investigates the way sound travels in water to create computational models and improved applications. The team at Virginia Tech is working with a group of ERDC's Ph.D.-holding engineers, including Christa Woodley, David Smith, and Marcela Politano, to develop and test the tools being built.

“The goal is to generate a model that can be applied widely to rivers and dams,” said Palmore. “Information such as the shape of the riverbed and the lock, how often barges enter, and how long it takes to fill the lock are important to our study.”

In addition to the connection to the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, Palmore's work also is part of the [Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit](#), one of 17 such organizations across the United States that support sustainability science by providing research, technical assistance, and education to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies and their partners. ✧

Wisconsin NRB Meeting Jan. 25

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board will meet in-person for the January board meeting to consider several proposed rulemaking documents, fish and wildlife matters, and donations. The meeting will begin at **8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 25**, originating from public meeting room G09, State Natural Resources Building (GEF2), 101 S. Webster Street, Madison, Wisconsin. [The Board will act on items 1-4 and 7-8 as listed on the agenda.](#)

The public is encouraged to watch the January board meeting on [the DNR's YouTube channel](#).

The deadline to register for public appearance requests and to submit written comments is 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2022. Remote testimony from the public via Zoom may be accepted. In-person public appearances are also welcome.

During the January meeting, several items the Board will be considering include:

- Approval of recommendations for the Fisheries Management 2023 spring fish and wildlife hearing agenda.
- Approval of recommendations for the Wildlife Management 2023 spring fish and wildlife hearing agenda.
- Approval of Land Donation - Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest.

[The complete January NRB meeting agenda is available on the DNR website.](#) ✧

DNR announces grant to build fishing community

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin DNR is accepting applications for the Angler Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (Angler R3) grant program. Funding from the program is used to help grow the number of anglers in Wisconsin and expand angling activities. Cost-sharing funds can be awarded to individuals or community-based organizations, Wisconsin tribes, universities and schools.

“The goal of this grant is to help people connect with their fisheries and to build a relationship with the lakes and streams close to home,” said Theresa Stabo, DNR Angler Outreach Program Specialist

Past grant recipient projects include:

- High schools partnering with elementary schools to share fishing experiences
- Veterans’ groups focused on using the healing powers of flowing water
- Neighborhood centers where residents are underrepresented in the fishing community
- Organizations providing fishing experiences for people with physical limitations
- Nature centers that include fishing in their programming

The deadline to submit grant applications is February 15, 2023.

To review the application and guidelines, visit the [Angler R3 grant program](#) webpage and click on the “applying” tab. ✧

Enroll in a Learn To Hunt or Learn To Fish program

Dropping temperatures and snow in the air mean winter has settled in, bringing exciting winter hunting and fishing opportunities in Wisconsin. If you're interested but not sure how to get started, consider participating in DNR [Learn to Hunt](#) and [Learn to Fish](#) programs. These programs are intended for novice audiences and are family friendly. Parents are encouraged to participate with the kids so future outings become a family affair.

The DNR also tailors some programs exclusively for under-represented participants, including adult-only events.

All the programs provide a unique outdoor experience, fresh air and exercise, and the opportunity to feed your family and friends.

Hunting program registration is available [online](#). Programs available:

- Learn to Butcher & Process Deer
- Learn to Hunt Rabbits with Beagles
- Learn to Hunt Squirrel
- How to Cook Wild Game

Additionally, don't forget about [Wisconsin's Free Fishing weekend](#) on January 21-22.

The current [Learn to Hunt](#) and [Learn to Fish](#) program offerings, along with enrollment instructions, can be found on the DNR Events Calendar. The calendar will be updated as more programs become available. ✧

2022 status of U.S. Marine and Great Lakes Ecosystems released

NOAA has released its 2022 update of the National Marine Ecosystem Status [website](#), which provides easy access to NOAA's wide range of important coastal and marine ecosystem data. The website provides a holistic view of important ecosystem data and has been newly expanded to the Great Lakes in 2022. New indicators such as the number of days an ecosystem experiences a marine heatwave and changes in the distribution of species have also been added. For the first

time, the National Marine Ecosystem Status website includes indicators for each of the Great Lakes as well as the [Great Lakes Region](#) as a whole. Each lake has distinctive basin features, circulation, and ecology. In total, 13 ecosystem indicators are available for the Great Lakes, including lake ice cover and coastal population.

The indicators show that the Great Lakes ecosystems are stable with the exception of increasing intensity of

marine heatwaves, frequency of billion-dollar disasters, and value of the coastal tourism sector. The indicators were developed in partnership with the [Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory](#), and the data used on the website comes from a collection of NOAA, state-level, and international resources. ✧

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

Feds dole out \$18 million for harbor repairs

The federal government is spending millions of dollars to repair damage to the West Arrowhead Breakwater in Oswego Harbor, New York. The breakwater runs 2,700 feet out to the historic West Pierhead Lighthouse and protects the deep draft, commercial harbor

Electric barrier to keep silver, bighead carp from Great Lakes allows in other invaders, study says

The Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant organization learned in a scientific study, that other sorts of invaders may not be affected by the electric barrier technology. That means risk for damage to the Great Lakes food web remains from other aquatic invertebrates, such as mussels, crayfish, snails, zooplankton and more.

Congress approves federally-funded environmental projects for Michigan and Great Lakes

The \$1.7 trillion dollar spending plan recently passed by Congress includes money for a number of environmental issues in Michigan and the Great Lakes region, including the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Feds set aside \$2.4 million to study Great Lakes coastal resiliency

The federal government will spend \$2.4 million to continue developing a long-term strategy to better manage and protect the coastlines of the Great Lakes, including Lake Ontario.

Ancient tool could help new tech protect Great Lakes waters from sea lamprey

Researchers at the Great Lakes Fishery Commission believe they have found a tool to help provide spawning habitat access to native fish, without allowing access to invasive species: combining new technology with an ancient tool, the Archimedes screw

Agency study fails to support turbines in Great Lakes

A feasibility study by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority released late last week does not support the placement of turbines in the Great Lakes of Erie and Ontario

Major fund for Great Lakes programs expected to fare well in new budget

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is to be funded at \$368 million, which is \$20 million more than the current funding level, for the next fiscal year if the federal \$1.7 trillion budget being presented to Congress on December 22 is approved.

Berlin's giant AquaDom hotel aquarium containing 1,500 fish explodes

A giant aquarium containing a million liters of water in the lobby of the Radisson Blu in Berlin has burst, flooding the hotel and nearby streets. The "AquaDom" – home to 1,500 fish – is 15.85m high (52 ft.) and was described as the largest free-

Lake Erie algae mucks up fishing trips

Toxic algal blooms in western Lake Erie have begun to affect not only aquatic life but human economics. A Michigan State University study estimates that up to \$5.9 million annually in economic activity is lost in Michigan's small portion of Lake Erie because of canceled angling trips due to harmful algal blooms

US Senate passes defense bill, authorizing more funds to build new Soo Lock

The annual National Defense Authorization Act that now goes to President Joe Biden for his signature includes an authorization for the Corps to spend as much as \$3.2 billion on the new Soo Lock under construction at Sault Ste. Marie

Tribal and state Great Lakes fishing deal sent to federal judge for review

A major agreement on how to divvy up fishing rights in parts of the Upper Great Lakes was finalized among four Indigenous Tribes and both state and federal fishery regulators and now awaits approval by a federal judge.

End