



Lake Erie Yellow Perch Hatch Survey for 2021

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Results from the 2021 Lake Erie yellow perch hatch survey show below average to poor results in the central basin, but a good hatch in the western basin, according to the Ohio DNR.

The agency’s yellow perch surveys completed during August in Lake Erie’s west zone resulted in an index of 380 perch per hectare, a standard measure of catch per area. This is the 11th-highest value on record and just below the 34-year average of 398 perch per hectare. Catches of 1-year-old yellow perch ranked 14th on

record, with an index of 24 perch per hectare. Lake Erie anglers can look forward to these fish reaching keeper size as early as 2022.

Surveys in Lake Erie’s central basin, which is split into two management zones, were much different than those completed in the west. Results showed below average hatches of yellow perch recorded during November surveys. The central basin is divided into two zones: the central zone extends from Huron to Fairport Harbor, and the east zone continues from Fairport Harbor to Conneaut.

The central zone survey resulted in an index of 11 perch per hectare, below the average of 39 per hectare. Similar results were found in the east zone, with an index of two per hectare. Survey results of 1-year-old perch were also below average with 18 per hectare in the central zone and five per hectare in the east zone. Historic averages for these areas are 33 and 29 per hectare, respectively.

Despite a good hatch west of Huron in the west zone, conditions did not favor **Lake Erie Perch Hatch Survey**

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***Merry Christmas and best wishes
for a prosperous New Year***



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Asian Carp Monitoring and Response Workgroup Monthly Activities

2021 August Summary

Bottom Line: A set of safety protocols developed during the COVID pandemic to ensure safe operations and were carried over into the start of the 2021 field sampling. A large number of small (<6”) Grass Carp, and Silver Carp are being collected in the Peoria Reach on down.

NO LIVE BIGHEAD CARP, BLACK CARP, GRASS CARP, or SILVER CARP were found or observed in any new locations immediately downstream or upstream of the Electric Dispersal Barrier.

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Walleye stocked in northern Indiana

Almost 43,000 fall fingerling walleyes were stocked at eight locations in northern Indiana in early October. An additional 26,738 fall fingerlings were stocked at five more locations in late October to mid-November. The fish stocked in the second round were grown at Fawn River State Fish Hatchery to supplement the earlier stockings that were purchased from a private commercial fish supplier. The stocked walleye are primarily 5- to 7-inch fingerlings. A few fish are larger. They will typically reach 14 inches after two years of growth and 16 inches by age 3.

The target stocking rate for these larger fall walleye fingerlings is 10 fish per acre, a figure DNR fisheries biologists say provides the best balance for fishing potential, growth, and fisheries balance.

Lakes and (county) stocked include:

- Bass Lake (Starke)
- Crooked Lake (Steuben)
- Clear Lake (Steuben)
- George (Steuben)
- Pine/Stone Lakes (LaPorte)
- Pretty Lake (LaGrange)
- St. Joseph River (St. Joseph)
- Sylvan Lake (Noble)
- Shriner Lake (Whitley)
- Wall Lake (LaGrange)
- Winona Lake (Kosciusko)
- Wolf Lake (Lake)

Most of these locations are stocked with fall fingerlings each year to sustain the walleye population. A few locations are stocked on alternate years to improve walleye fishing in additional areas. The lakes are continually evaluated by biologists for fish survival and angling use.

Multiple other lakes are stocked with walleyes by privately funded lake associations. A stocking permit that is evaluated and approved by the local DNR fisheries biologist is needed before any stocking can take place.

Lake Vermilion creel survey begins

Ice anglers fishing Lake Vermilion this winter may be asked to participate in the lake's first winter creel survey since 1984. Creel clerks from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will be traveling the lake on foot or on snowmobile to interview ice anglers about their harvest through February 27.

During the interviews, the creel clerks will ask anglers a few questions about their fishing trip for that day and record information on the fish species caught. Creel clerks may ask to record measurements of fish that anglers keep. Additionally, DNR pilots and a local contractor will conduct aerial ice house counts to obtain information on angling effort.

Fisheries managers rely on creel surveys to collect information on fishing pressure, catch, harvest and size distribution of several important fish species in Lake Vermilion. This information, when combined with scientific data collected during standard fisheries population assessments, is used to make informed fisheries management decisions.

Angler participation is an essential part of this study, so the DNR is asking anglers to be patient with the creel clerks and provide information that is as accurate as possible. Since 1984, 13 creel surveys have been conducted on Lake Vermilion, all during the open water season.

For additional information or questions, contact Matt Hennen at the DNR Tower area fisheries office: 218-300- 7810 or matthew.hennen@state.mn.us. ✧

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The young fish are often found in vegetation or large rocky habitat. Anglers should handle young walleye they catch gently because they are the future of the fishery.

Learn more about Indiana walleye fisheries: wildlife.IN.gov/fishing/walleye-fishing. ✧



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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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Great Lakes governors, lawmakers push for invasive carp project funds

LANSING, MI – Midwest governors and Congressional delegates are advocating for funding to speed along the fortification of a chokepoint lock and dam near Chicago that would become the last line of defense against invasive carp reaching the Great Lakes when completed.

On December 10, the governors of Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, New York, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota and Pennsylvania sent a [letter](#) asking Congress to put roughly \$10 million toward the Brandon Road Lock & Dam reconstruction in the 2022 Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

Democratic Sens. Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow of Michigan issued a similar [letter](#) to President Joe Biden last week urging engineering and design work for the project be included among federal projects implemented through the recent [\\$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill](#).

The estimated \$858 million project has been in [planning stages for years](#). Advance design and engineering work took a leap forward this year when \$3.8 million for it was [included](#)

in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers fiscal 2021 work plan.

Pre-construction is expected to cost \$29 million. About 35 percent of that has already been provided. Michigan previously pledged \$8 million and Illinois \$10.5 million.

The work is expected to last three-to-four years.

“However, the balance of project cost for design, construction, operation and maintenance is beyond the capacity of the Great Lakes States to match. Therefore, we request that United States federal government address this project consistent with how other large-scale projects have been funded that similarly have a strong bearing on the regional and national economy,” the eight governors wrote last week.

The gauntlet-style fortification project is located on the Des Plaines River near Joliet, Ill. It would reconfigure the Brandon Road lock with fortifications to hamper invasive silver and bighead carp from moving upstream, such as an electric barrier, bubble barrier, acoustic deterrents and flushing lock. The upgrades are

meant to reduce the chances fish could slip through while still allowing barge traffic to pass.

Conflicting interests of barge operators and the Great Lakes fishing and boating industries have been at the heart of disagreements over how to address the invasive fish species as they advance through Illinois waters. The population bulk is about 50 miles from Lake Michigan, although genetic material and individual fish have been found much closer.

Conservation groups say the fish could have a major [disruptive impact](#) on sport fishing and recreational boating in the Great Lakes. Silver carp could injure people by leaping from the water when disturbed and both species would likely compete with native fish for food and habitat.

The Great Lakes fishing industry is valued at \$7 billion.

[This summer](#), government agencies and councils coordinating efforts to battle the invasive fish said they would stop applying the long-used label “Asian carp” to invasive silver, bighead, grass and black carps out of concern it could cast Asian culture in a negative light. ✧

This muskie is officially a Minnesota state record



An angler caught a muskellunge weighing 55 pounds, 14 ounces, from Mille Lacs Lake that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has certified as a weight-based state record. The previous record was a 54-pound muskie caught from Lake Winnibigoshish in 1957. Although

news of the fish has spread quickly in the news and social media, a record is not official until the certification process is complete.

Nolan Sprengeler caught the muskie on November 22, with friends Kevin Kray and Zack Skoglund. Their plan was to fish the afternoon until after moonrise, which was about 8 p.m. After some delay due to low water and frozen water at accesses, they eventually broke some ice to get Sprengeler’s boat in the water after sunset.

“On our last spot of the evening at about 9 p.m., I felt a tap on the end of my line. I fought the fish to the boat and Kevin Kray netted it for me. The

fish measured 57.75 inches by 29 inches,” Sprengeler said. “After trying to revive the fish for about an hour we realized she wasn’t going to make it. We made the decision to bring the fish in to get weighed on a certified scale.”

Sprengeler brought the fish to be weighed on a certified scale with witnesses the next morning, had it identified at a DNR Fisheries office, and then dropped off his catch with a taxidermist.

The DNR announces new state records in news releases, on social media and on the DNR website. Find current records and guidelines for each type of state record at mndnr.gov/recordfish. ✧



Lake Erie Perch Hatch Survey

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strong yellow perch hatches in the waters east of Huron during 2021, similar to last year. Variability in regional hatch success is expected on Lake Erie because of the size of the lake, differences in characteristics among basins, and prevailing weather conditions.

Hatch success is largely determined by the timing and availability of favorable conditions for spawning and survival of newly hatched yellow perch in the spring and summer; therefore, successful lakewide hatches are rare. It is common to observe poor hatches east of Huron during years when those in the west are good, which has been recorded for several consecutive years. When conditions change and favor the central basin, the pattern is anticipated to reverse. Long-term data collections from trawl and net surveys 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, the Division of Wildlife’s Lake Erie fisheries program administrator. “The Division of Wildlife uses these boundaries to monitor perch hatches and make recommendations to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission on safe harvest

levels by comparing results to previous years.”

During the upcoming months, Ohio’s results will be combined with results from the other Lake Erie Committee agencies to determine the 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.

Consistent hatches in the western basin will maintain a stable yellow perch population from Toledo to Huron, as well as continue to support excellent yellow perch fishing when conditions are right. Successful hatches are needed to aid in the recovery of yellow perch populations in the central basin. After a successful hatch, yellow perch usually reach harvestable sizes in two to three years.

For more information Lake Erie research and management programs and to find fishing reports, maps, and more fishing resources, visit wildohio.gov. Download the HuntFish OH mobile app for fishing information on the go. ✧

Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine now available

Our winter issue of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine is now available in print and [online](#). In this issue, you’ll find:

- Tips to beating the winter blues
- A look at how a collective of birding and nature enthusiasts are creating a more inclusive outdoors
- Wisconsin winter day trips to cure cabin fever
- Meet the Wisconsinites catching waves on Lake Michigan wintry waters
- A Rainbow Trout chowder recipe from a James Beard award-winning chef

There are even some new surprises inside to keep both kids and adults entertained through the winter.

Interested in a copy for yourself or a fellow nature lover? Grab four print issues for \$8.97 by calling 1-800-678-9472 or get yours today at wnrmag.com. ✧



*To those we love and see each day, and other loved ones far away,
To all good friends whose friendship means so much,
And those with whom we're somehow out of touch ...
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

Fishing in the cold

The air is cold and winter is near, but open-water fishing season isn't quite over. Fish move slowly in cold water, but they will bite because they still need to eat.

An occasional twitch of a jerkbait or a sinking, fluttering crankbait or spoon can imitate dying baitfish and can trigger strikes. If those lures are not working, cast smaller lures with light line and reel in slowly. Try [small jigs](#) with hair, feathers, tiny spider-like legs, or a soft plastic tail. Live bait on small hooks under small bobbers can also result in success. Mid- to late afternoon is the best time to fish in winter; stop at a city park lake for a few minutes after work or make a few casts at the neighborhood pond when you get home. Dress warmly, keep your toes and fingers dry, and be patient. Enjoy the day's last rays of sunshine and the fresh crisp air. Getting outside is good for the body and the mind. ✧

Sauger fishing on the Ohio River

A reliable winter fish, sauger readily bite in water temperatures below 40 degrees. As water temperatures fall, sauger congregate where streams meet and move to the tail waters below dams for the winter. On the Ohio River, good sauger fishing starts in December and lasts through the spawn in late March.

From a boat, fish vertically with ¼- to ¾-ounce jigs tipped with curly tail grubs. Bring a variety of colors to see what gets bites. Sauger like to hug the bottom, so use the lightest jig that's heavy enough to reach the bottom in the current.

From shore, fish using a similar setup while casting over seams in the current and water breaks. If fishing is slow, adding a live minnow might get the bite going.

When fishing in tail waters, remain alert of changing river conditions. Avoid restricted zones near the dam and beware of traffic near the lock chambers. Find public access sites on Ohio River using our [Where to Fish interactive map](#) ✧

Ice fishing basics: gear up

Ever try ice fishing? While we likely won't see ice on our waters that is [safe to walk on](#) for weeks, this is a good time to think about the gear you'll need to go ice fishing, especially with the holidays approaching. Here are some basic items you will need to get started:

- **Rod & reel:** Like open water fishing tackle, ice fishing rods and reels can range widely in price. Start with an inexpensive combo (rod and reel sold together)—you can always upgrade later. The rods are usually 2-3 feet in length and have an open-face reel with 2-pound line. If the rod doesn't come with a strike indicator at the tip of the rod (a small device that indicates strikes on your line), purchase one separately for just a few dollars—these work better than bobbers floating in the slush of the hole.

- **Lures and bait:** Get an assortment of tiny jigs, hooks, and soft plastics. Store them in a small tackle box. Bee moth larvae work well too, but don't let them freeze.

- **Auger:** You'll need an auger to drill a hole through the ice. Augers are powered manually, by battery, or with gas.

- **Slush scoop** or deep ladle to keep the hole clear of ice and slush.

- **Five-gallon bucket** to keep tackle and tools contained, provide a place to sit, and to carry any harvested fish.

- **Winter gear:** Coveralls or snowmobile suit, layers of clothing, scarf, hat, waterproof and insulated boots, and waterproof or water-resistant gloves. Ice cleat attachments on your boots aren't necessary but will keep you from slipping on the ice.

- **Life jacket:** Wearing a life jacket can provide an extra layer of warmth and could save your life if you fall through the ice.

- **Ice safety picks** are plastic handles with metal spikes that are connected by a cord or rope. You can wear these around your neck, and they will help you pull yourself out if you break through the ice.

Continued bottom next column

How to store your fishing equipment for winter weather

If you don't plan to fish again until spring, here are some tackle storage tips to keep your gear ready to go until next year.

- If your [fishing line](#) is in good condition, you can use it again next year. Monofilament line can be removed from the reel and wrapped up like an extension cord to keep it from coiling. Keeping it out of direct sunlight and extreme heat lengthens the line's life. Keep other types of line right on the reel.
- If the line has rough spots or feels weak, you should replace the line now or before you use it again in the spring.
- Clean the [reel](#) inside and out with mild soapy water and an old, clean toothbrush. Make sure to dry the reel completely. Lubricate parts with [fishing reel oil and grease](#). Loosen the drag to ease the pressure of the gears inside.
- Check the [rod's](#) line guides for rough spots. Replace damaged guides yourself or take the rod to a local fishing retailer.
- Wipe down all parts of the rod and store it away from critters that might chew on soft parts. Store vertically or horizontally using a rod rack to keep it straight.
- Remove and inventory everything from the [tackle box](#) and clean it out. Clean and lubricate the pliers. All metal parts should be stored dry and kept dry. Try [organizing the tackle box](#) in different ways.

If you have multiple fishing rods, leave one out just in case. If our lakes and ponds get enough ice this winter, [ice fishing](#) is a fun option! ✧



- Optional: **Plastic sled** to pull the bucket, drinks, snacks, and other gear. Plan to check out the January and February editions of Wild Bulletin for our upcoming articles on ice fishing safety and techniques. ✧

Public comments welcome on proposed changes

The Indiana Natural Resources Commission (NRC) has given preliminary adoption to the following rule changes governing fishing tournament licenses/permits, trapping wild animals, and registering to be an organ donor through the DNR's license system. The deadline for submitting comments is **Friday, January 7**. For more information about the proposed changes, visit [our website](#).

Public comments can be [submitted online](#) to the NRC. Click on "Comment on this Rule" next to the Property Rule Amendments.

Mail comments to: Natural Resources Commission, Indiana Govt Center North, 100 N Senate Ave, Room N103, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2200

The virtual public hearing has been scheduled for **Thursday, January 6, at 5 p.m. ET**.

Individuals may join the public hearing in two ways:

- To join by phone using only audio, please dial 1-415-655-0001. When prompted, enter access code 23144512102##.
- To join using video, go to [this website address](#), enter the meeting number (2314 451 2102) and password (WriZ4ddmM82). **Please note:** If you have never used WebEx, we suggest that you begin the process at least 10 minutes early because you will be prompted to download WebEx before joining the meeting. ✧



Away in a Manger

"Away in a Manger" is a Christmas carol first published in the late nineteenth century and used widely throughout the English-speaking world. Although it was long claimed to be the work of German religious reformer Martin Luther, the carol is now thought to be wholly American in origin.

*Away in a manger
No crib for a bed
the little Lord Jesus
laid down His sweet head.*

*The stars in the sky
looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus,
asleep on the hay*

*The cattle are lowing,
the Baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus
no crying He makes*



*I love You, Lord Jesus,
Look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle
'til morning is nigh.*

*Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask You to stay
close by me forever
and love me I pray.*

*Bless all the dear children
in Your tender care,
and fit us for heaven
to live with You there.*

Reminder for Crappie & Sunfish Anglers

DEC reminds sunfish and crappie anglers that it is accepting comments on proposed regulation changes for these species through **December 26, 2021**.

The proposals include:

- Reducing the sunfish statewide daily harvest limit from 50 to 25.
- Increasing the crappie statewide minimum size limit from 9 to 10 inches.
- Implementing an 8-inch minimum size limit and a daily harvest limit of 15 for sunfish in the following waters:
Blydenburgh Lake (DEC Region 1), Lake Welch (Region 3), Canadarago Lake and Goodyear Lake (Region 4), Saratoga Lake (Region 5), Sixtown Pond and Red Lake (Region 6), Cazenovia Lake and Otisco Lake (Region 7), Honeoye Lake (Region 8), and Silver Lake (Region 9).

Visit DEC's [website](#) for more information on sunfish and crappie management in New York.

These proposals are available for review and comment ([sunfish and crappie regulation proposals](#)). Submit comments on the proposals via e-mail to regulations.fish@dec.ny.gov or via mail to the Inland Fisheries Section, NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4753; subject line "Sunfish and Crappie Regulations." ✧



DNR seeking public input on proposed lake whitefish and electronic reporting rule

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will hold a public hearing and comment period on [proposed permanent rule FH-02-20](#) relating to lake whitefish commercial harvest in Lake Michigan and Green Bay, and electronic harvest reporting for all Lake Michigan and Lake Superior commercial fishers. The virtual hearing will take place **January 4** at 6 p.m. [via Zoom](#).

This rule revises the total allowable commercial harvest for Green Bay and Lake Michigan to reflect lake whitefish population abundance and distribution. It also establishes how the harvest for Green Bay and Lake Michigan will be

divided between the three zones of Lake Michigan, and implements a system for Zone 2 to prevent overharvest in either Green Bay or Lake Michigan while still allowing commercial fishing throughout the zone.

The rule also creates a new restricted area for trap nets set for whitefish in southern Green Bay. In addition, it would require commercial fishers in Lake Michigan and Green Bay to report the location and name of trap nets set for whitefish.

This rule requires daily electronic harvest reporting for all Lake Michigan and Lake Superior commercial fishers, with an option for fishers to record the information on a

paper form before submitting it electronically by the end of the day.

[View the public hearing notice here.](#)

[View the full text of the draft rule here.](#)

[View the economic impact analysis here.](#)

The public is encouraged to submit written comments on proposed permanent rule FH-02-20 by email or regular mail. Submit comments by January 4, 2022 to:

Department of Natural Resources,
C/O Meredith Penthorn, Program &
Policy Analyst,

101 S Webster St. P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

Email:

Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov ✧

DEC 2022 exam dates for Licensed Guides Program, to be held online

The State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced that examinations are scheduled for individuals seeking to become licensed guides in New York State. The exams being offered are for guiding in the following categories: camping; fishing; hiking; hunting; whitewater; rock climbing; ice climbing; and certified skilled with boats and canoes.

A guide is a person at least 18 years of age who offers services for hire, part or all of which include directing, instructing, or aiding another individual in fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, whitewater rafting/canoeing/kayaking, or rock and ice climbing.

DEC's Special Licenses Unit administers licensing of outdoor guides. Applicants need not be a resident of New York State to receive a guide's license.

To provide enhanced access to examinations for applicants, DEC is offering licensed guide examinations online in 2022. Exam dates and application deadlines are:

- Feb. 4, 2022 – 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Registration must be received by Jan. 28, 2022)
- March 5, 2022 – New York State Outdoor Guides Association (NYSOGA) meeting only (Registration received by Feb. 26)
- In addition, in-person examinations will be offered at the NYSOGA winter rendezvous on Mar. 5, 2022.
- April 8, 2022 – 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Registration received by April 1)
- May 13, 2022 – 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Registration received by May 6)
- June 17, 2022 – 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Registration received by June 10)
- Sept. 16, 2022 – 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Registration received by Sept. 9)
- Oct. 14, 2022 – 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Registration received by Oct. 7)

The registration deadline for exams is seven days before the examination. Instructions and registration information about the exams can be found on [DEC's Licensed Guide Program webpage](#).

To register, visit the [2022 Licensed Guide Exams Registration website](#) and follow the directions. Applicants will receive an email acknowledging registration, and an additional one-time link for use to access the website on the date of the exam. Upon successful completion of the exam(s), applicants will receive information on applying for the appropriate guide license, including an application form. Please do not send applications or fees prior to passing the examination(s).

An outline of exam content and a study guide can be found on the [DEC Licensed Guide Program webpage](#). The Field book, a reference book published by the Boy Scouts of America, is also recommended and can be found at a local library or bookstore. A list of current [New York State Licensed Guides](#) is available online.

For questions or assistance, contact the Special Licenses Unit at NYS DEC Special Licenses Unit, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4752; Phone: 518-402-8985, Fax: 518-402-8925; Email: SpecialLicenses@dec.ny.gov. ✧

Fishing Regulation Clean-up Proposal

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) proposes amending sportfishing regulations that includes a multitude of changes to clarify, simplify and clean-up fisheries regulations based on public feedback and Fisheries Managers review of the rules associated with the management of the State's fisheries. The proposed rulemaking also includes a limited number of waterbody specific regulation changes for improved management.

Highlights of the proposal

Highlights of the proposal include:

Trout

Establish new rules for trout management in ponded waters, which consolidates 143 waterbody and 33 county-wide special regulations into a new statewide regulation that permits anglers to harvest five fish per day, only two of which can be greater than 12" in length. The proposal seeks to better align regulations with intended outcomes. Most inland ponds and lakes stocked with brown trout and rainbow trout are managed for put-and-take or put-grow-and-take fisheries. Waters managed for these species and purpose are proposed to be open all year, while brook trout ponds, which are largely managed for self-sustaining wild populations, will be closed to fishing between October 16 and March 31. This rule will also increase the longevity of stocked brook trout that are highly vulnerable to ice fishing.

Read [Proposed deletions of trout regulations \(PDF\)](#) for a list of waters and counties where trout regulations are proposed to be deleted.

Lake Trout and Atlantic Salmon

Remove the statewide closed season restriction on lake trout and Atlantic salmon. Keeping the season open year-round consolidates 24 lake trout and 33 Atlantic salmon waterbody special regulations into statewide regulations that are consistent with current management practices, as over the years a greater number of these waters have been open all year under special regulations. An additional 6 lake trout

and 5 Atlantic salmon regulations are also proposed to be eliminated because they are no longer necessary.

Read [Proposed deletions of lake trout and Atlantic salmon regulations \(PDF\)](#) for a list of waters where those regulations are proposed to be deleted.

Ice Fishing

Allow ice fishing unless specifically prohibited in New York, except for Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Warren, and Washington counties, where the existing "ice fishing is prohibited unless specifically permitted in waters inhabited by trout" regulation will still apply. Trout fishing in ponds is currently allowed in most other waters, so allowing it statewide with the 9 county exception will reduce the number of special regulations needed overall.

Season Dates

Provide consistency in how the State represents opening and closing fishing season dates for sport fish. DEC currently uses a mixed approach for season dates. Some species seasons begin on a hard calendar year date while others start on a designated Saturday. Based on [results of an angler poll \(PDF\)](#) conducted in 2021, all sportfish seasons will begin and end on hard dates. Specific changes include changing the statewide opening date to:

- May 1 for Walleye, Northern Pike, Pickerel and Tiger Muskellunge;
- June 1 for Muskellunge; and
- June 15 for Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass

Special regulations for these species will be aligned with new season dates.

Other proposed regulation changes include:

- Eliminating the current 3 fish per day daily limit for walleye in Oneida Lake and reverting to the statewide 5 fish per day creel limit due to the [abundant adult walleye population \(PDF\)](#).
- Correcting a previous rule change omission by changing the daily limit for steelhead on the Lower Niagara from 3 fish per day to 2 fish per day.

- Establishing a no limit, all year season and 12" minimum length-restriction for walleye on Skaneateles Lake to suppress this introduced species, which has the potential to negatively impact the lake's high-quality trout and salmon fishery.

- Banning snatching and spearing in select waters.

The full text of the proposed regulations are available below.

Supporting documents

The following documents provide additional information on the proposed regulation changes:

- [Text of Proposed Regulation \(PDF\)](#): contains the full text of changes proposed to NYCRR.
- [Text Summary with Rationale \(PDF\)](#): contains a summary of the "Text of Proposed Regulation" and a short rationale for summarized items.
- [Proposed deletions of Trout Regulations \(PDF\)](#): contains a list of waters and counties where trout special regulations are proposed to be deleted.
- [Proposed deletions of Lake Trout and Atlantic Salmon Regulations \(PDF\)](#): contains a list of waters where Lake Trout and Atlantic Salmon special regs are proposed to be deleted.
- [Sportfish Season Opening Dates Angler Survey \(PDF\)](#): Bureau of Fisheries Technical Brief on the results on a web-based survey conducted to better understand opening date preferences of anglers.
- [Angler Opinion Survey on the Oneida Lake Walleye Daily Limit \(PDF\)](#): Bureau of Fisheries Technical brief on the results of a web-based survey of angler opinions of the Oneida Lake walleye daily limit.

Commenting on the Fishing Regulation Clean-up Proposals

Comments on the proposals should be [submitted](#) to regulations.fish@dec.ny.gov or via mail to the Inland Fisheries Section, NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4753, with the subject line "Fishing Regulations Proposal Comments." Comments will be accepted through February 6, 2022.

✧

Asian Carp Monitoring Workgroup

Monthly Activities

2021 August Summary

Bottom Line:*See page 1 bottom***Overall Summary**

Pool specific results through August 2021 from all effort within the Upper Illinois Waterway. The same time period in 2019 and 2020 for comparison. Additional effort may not be reported due to data processing and true effort and catch could be higher. Check 2021 interim summary, published at the end of the year, for complete results

Lockport Pool

	2019	2020	2021
Yards of Net Fished	45,000	34,000	59,200
Miles of Net Fished	25.6	19.3	33.6
Hoop Net Nights	91.7	80.3	83
Mini Fyke Net Nights	13.3	11.2	11.3
Electrofishing Runs	37	46	83
Electrofishing Time (hrs)	9.3	11.5	20.8
Dozer Trawl Runs	0	0	87
Dozer Trawl (hrs)	0.0	0.0	7.3
Total Asian Carp (AC)	0	0	0
Tons of AC Harvested	0	0	0

Brandon Road Pool

	2019	2020	2021
Yards of Net Fished	34,800	36,200	65,000
Miles of Net Fished	19.8	20.6	36.9
Hoop Net Nights	89.0	80.1	109
Mini Fyke Net Nights	26.0	13.7	15.3
Electrofishing Runs	31	40	106
Electrofishing Time (hrs)	7.8	10.0	0.0
Dozer Trawl Runs	0.0	0.0	82
Dozer Trawl (hrs)	0	0	6.8
Total Asian Carp (AC)	0	0	0
Tons of AC Harvested	0	0	0

Dresden Island Pool (Including Rock Run Rookery)

	2019	2020	2021
Yards of Net Fished	96,600	57,600	111,700
Miles of Net Fished	54.9	32.7	63.5
Hoop Net Nights	62.1	81.6	108.8
Mini Fyke Net Nights	21.0	39.5	98.3
Pound net night	0	0	3
Electrofishing Runs	48	55	222
Electrofishing Time (hrs)	12.0	13.8	8.1
Dozer Trawl Runs	0	0	143.0
Dozer Trawl (hrs)	0.0	0.0	11.9
Bighead Carp	29	7	18

Grass Carp	2	1	3
Silver Carp	124	114	83
Total AC	155	122	104
Asian Carp (AC) from Rock Run Rookery Lake RR)	28	10	27
AC upstream I-55 (not in RR)	3	2*	5
AC downstream I-55	124	110	72
Tons of AC Harvested	1.3	0.8	0.7
AC/1000 yds of gill net	1.6	2.1	0.9

*indicates Grass Carp

	2019	2020	2021
Yards of Net Fished	153,000	147,270	120,850
Miles of Nets Fished	86.9	83.7	68.7
Pound Net nights	26	0	0
Hoop Net nights	99.7	105.2	82
Mini Fyke Net Nights	44.3	45.0	45.0
Electrofishing Runs	62	53	43
Electrofishing Time (hrs)	15.5	13.3	10.8
Bighead Carp	859	1,294	1,823
Grass Carp	40	20	37
Silver Carp	30,247	28,001	14,050
Total Asian Carp	31,146	29,315	15,910
Tons of AC Harvested	173.5	158.6	101.5
AC/1000 yds of gill net	200.6	198.9	131.6

Starved Rock Pool

	2019	2020	2021
Yards of Net Fished	233,945	140,780	168,050
Miles of Nets Fished	132.9	80.0	95.5
Pound Net nights	0	0	0
Hoop Net nights	104.3	112.5	70.0
Mini Fyke Net Nights	42.2	46.3	48.0
Electrofishing Runs	71	57	62
Electrofishing Time (hrs)	17.8	14.3	15.5
Bighead Carp	1,885	2,076	649
Grass Carp	2,304	318	623
Silver Carp	112,281	59,660	82,268
Total Asian Carp	116,470	62,054	83,540
Tons of AC Harvested	411.7	179.9	230.6
AC/1000 yds of gill net	495.2	432.1	383.3

Contracted Fishing Below the Electric Dispersal Barrier

- Contracted fishing took place in Lockport, Brandon Road, and Dresden Island Pools of the Illinois River Waterway
- Contracted fishers set and pulled 59,600 yards of gill/trammel net
- 5,914 fish representing 15 species were captured during contracted commercial netting
- 275 Bighead Carp, 4 Grass Carp, and 3,701 Silver Carp were removed
- 37,595 pounds of Bighead, Grass and Silver Carp were removed

Below is a summary of all Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) contracted fishing activities through August 2021. For comparison purposes, data from the same time period in 2019 and 2020 are included.

	2019	2020	2021
Number of Days Fished	103	69	76
Number of Net Crew Days	459	370	412

Yards of Net Fished	563,345	415,250	524,800
Miles of Nets Fished	320.1	235.9	298.2
Number of Pound Net Nights	26	0	3
Number of Hoop Net Nights	0.0	0	0.0
Number of Bighead Carp	2,769	3,377	2,489
Number of Grass Carp	2,330	327	655
Number of Silver Carp	142,009	87,436	96,172
Number of Carp	147,108	91,140	99,316
Tons of AC Harvested	586.5	339.4	332.8
AC/1000 yds of gill net	260.6	219.5	189.2

Enhanced Contract Fishing

To date, a total of 5,672,595 pounds of Asian carp have been removed from the Peoria Pool under the Enhanced Contract Fishing Program. This program was initiated in September of 2019 and offers Illinois-licensed commercial fishermen \$.10 per pound for Asian carp caught in this pool and sold to fish processors or other buyers for at least \$.07 per pound. A total of 30 fishermen are currently under contract to catch Asian carp from the Peoria Pool. From inception through the remainder of calendar year 2019, 518,132 pounds of Asian carp were caught in the Peoria Pool, during full calendar year 2020 a total of 2,882,724 pounds were caught, and to date in 2021 an additional 2,271,739 pounds have been caught for a total of 5,672,595 pounds. Of these total catches, 6.23% are Bighead, 70.20% are Silver and 23.67% are Grass carp. **No Black carp have been reported.**

Table 1. Table of Enhanced Contract Fishing – Peoria Pool from inception, September 2019 through August 2021. By receipt date, not catch date

YEAR	Total lbs.	Bighead	Silver	Grass
2019 *	518,132	24,813	310,297	183,022
2020	2,882,724	176,195	1,980,175	726,355
2021 (Jan thru Aug)	2,271,739	154,934	1,684,419	432,387
GRAND TOTALS	5,672,595	355,941	3,974,890	1,341,764

Monitoring of Asian carp Reproductive Productivity

INHS collected ichthyoplankton samples at 7 main channel sites located from the Brandon Road to LaGrange navigation pools during the weeks of August 9 and August 23. A minimum of four larval fish samples were collected at each site. Additional samples were collected in Illinois River tributaries to evaluate the potential for Asian carp spawning in these rivers. As the period when Asian carp are most likely to spawn has passed, sampling will be conducted every two weeks until October, unless any change in environmental conditions that might trigger Asian carp spawning (i.e. substantial increase in discharge) occurs. Quantitative PCR (qPCR) screening of ichthyoplankton samples will also not occur for the remainder of the year unless conditions indicate that it may be necessary to rapidly identify samples that may contain Asian carp eggs or larvae.

Illinois Waterway water temperatures were above 26°C during the entire month of August, well above the threshold that allows for Asian carp spawning. Water levels in the upper Illinois Waterway were low and stable throughout August. In the lower Illinois River, water levels continuously declined until August 8, underwent a gradual rise through August 15, and then fell again. Initial inspection of samples collected in August did not indicate the occurrence of any mass spawning events, but accurate assessment of any Asian carp reproductive output will require full processing of all samples. Sample processing and identification of larval fish and eggs is ongoing. Any additional occurrences of Asian carp eggs or larvae, particularly upstream of Starved Rock L&D, will be reported as soon as this information is available.

Zooplankton as Dynamic Assessment Targets for Asian carp Removal

INHS collected zooplankton and water chemistry samples at 11 main channel and backwater sites located in the Brandon Road to LaGrange navigation pools during the weeks of August 9 and August 23. The collected data will be combined with historical and recent data on Illinois Waterway zooplankton communities to inform management agencies of the ecosystem responses to Asian carp removals and develop dynamic targets for diminishing the ecological impacts of Asian carp.

Monitoring Bigheaded Carp Movement and Density in the Illinois River

Hydroacoustic sampling was conducted in Dresden Island Pool to assess spatial distributions of silver and bighead carp for informing removal efforts. Gillnetting also occurred in Alton, LaGrange, and Peoria pools to sample fish communities for informing analyses of fall hydroacoustic data.

Hydroacoustic Fish Surveys at the Electric Fish Dispersal Barrier System, Romeoville, IL

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted one mobile hydroacoustic fish survey this month at the Electric Dispersal Barrier System (EDBS) on August 30, 2021. An earlier survey scheduled for August 16, 2021 was cancelled due to gear failure. The survey was conducted to monitor for the presence and distribution of fishes greater than 12" (30.5 cm) total length in the vicinity of the EDBS to aide in assessing the risk of large fish—and potentially Bighead or Silver Carp—passing through the EDBS during barrier operational changes and/or maintenance. However, it is important to note that hydroacoustic technology does not distinguish or identify fish species, and therefore fish detected should not be assumed to be a particular species. Hydroacoustic surveys covered the area between Hanson Material Services Corporation docking slip, approximately 1.3 km below the Romeo Road Bridge, to the upstream side of the Demonstration Barrier (0.6 km above Romeo Road Bridge). For reporting purposes, Romeo Road Bridge is treated as the dividing line between the areas referred to as “within the EDBS” and “downstream of the EDBS.”

Preliminary Results:

August 30, 2021: Two large fish ≥ -28.7 dB were detected within the EDBS on August 30, 2021, one between Barrier I and the Demonstration Barrier during Replicate Survey #1, and one between Barrier IIB and Barrier I during Replicate Survey #2. Seven large fish ≥ -28.7 dB were detected downstream of the EDBS. Five fish were detected during Replicate Survey #2, and two fish were detected during Replicate Survey #3. Anecdotally, several large schools of YOY gizzard shad (~2-3") were physically and acoustically observed trapped within the EDBS.

Hydroacoustic Fish Surveys of the upper Illinois Waterway: Dresden Island, Brandon Road, and Lockport Pools

Invasive Bigheaded Carp Early Detection Monitoring Surveys in the Upper Illinois Waterway: Lockport, Brandon Road, and Dresden Island Pools, and the Lower Kankakee River

(USFWS conducted invasive bigheaded carp (Bighead Carp, *Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*; Silver Carp, *H. molitrix*) early detection monitoring (EDM) surveys in Lockport Pool, Brandon Road Pool, Dresden Island Pool, and the lower Kankakee River during August 2021. These surveys were designed to monitor for the presence of invasive bigheaded carp in novel areas of the upper Illinois Waterway below the Electric Dispersal Barrier System (EDBS). The Lockport Pool surveys were completed on 26 August 2021 and covered the area between the EDBS and Lockport Lock and Dam; a distance of about 5 river miles. The Brandon Road Pool surveys were completed on 20 August 2021 and covered the area between Lockport Lock and Dam and Brandon Road Lock and Dam; a distance of about 4.25 river miles. The Dresden Island Pool surveys were completed on 6 August 2021 and covered the area between Brandon Road Lock and Dam and Dresden Island Lock and Dam; a distance of about 13.5 river miles.

The Kankakee River surveys were completed on 9 August 2021 and covered the area between the Kankakee Conservation Area Boat Launch and the Kankakee's confluence with the Illinois Waterway; a distance of about 4.25 river miles. Where possible, EDM surveys consisted of traditional boat electrofishing, electrified dozer trawling, and mini-fyke net sets in a combination of main-channel, side-channel, and backwater habitats. Electrofishing was performed in 15-minute sampling periods consisting of repeated passes perpendicular to and toward shore, with one crewmate collecting fishes with a handheld dip net. Dozer trawling was conducted in 5-minute sampling periods consisting of s-shaped passes parallel to shore, and with fishes collected by a net supported by a rigid frame at the boat's bow. Wisconsin-type mini-fyke nets with 24' leads and 1/8" mesh were staked against the shoreline and fished overnight.

Highlighted results:

- No small-bodied (< 350 mm total length; TL) bigheaded carp were captured by USFWS in August 2021.
- No large-bodied (≥ 350 mm TL) bigheaded carp were captured outside their known range by USFWS in August 2021.

Table 2. Summary of USFWS bighead carp early detection monitoring results from August 2021

Location is the section of river sampled. Electrofishing effort reports completed hours of two-person traditional boat electrofishing and n_e is the number of surveys completed. Dozer effort reports completed hours of electrified dozer trawling and n_d is the number of surveys completed. Mini-fyke effort reports the number of overnight net sets completed and n_n is net nights. Small carp captured is the number of bigheaded carp with total length (TL) < 350 mm captured. Large carp captured is the number of bigheaded carp with total length \geq 350 mm captured. Total fish captured is the total number (N) of individual fishes (all species) captured. Species richness is the count of species captured. Most abundant species is the common name of the fish species that was the largest proportion of total fish captured and n_i is the number of individuals of that species captured.

Location	Electrofishing Effort (h; n_e)	Dozer Effort (h; n_d)	Mini-fyke Effort (n_n)	Small carp captured	Large carp captured	Total fish captured (N)	Species richness	Most abundant species
Lockport	6 h; $n_e = 24$	0 h; $n_d = 0$	0	0	0	1367	20	Gizzard shad ($n_i = 1040$)
Brandon Road	5.25 h; $n_e = 21$	0 h; $n_d = 0$	0	0	0	811	21	Gizzard shad ($n_i = 651$)
Dresden Island	7.5 h; $n_e = 30$	0 h; $n_d = 0$	$n_n = 21$	0	0	8015	46	Bluntnose minnow ($n_i = 2587$)
Kankakee	5.75 h; $n_e = 24$	0.37 h; $n_d = 5$	$n_n = 20$	0	0	1918	48	Gizzard shad ($n_i = 547$)

Telemetry

United States Geological Services (USGS)

Telemetry

USACE

Telemetry Support for the Spatially Explicit Asian Carp Population Model (SEACarP)

Wilmington Fish and Wildlife Service crew conducted a total of two days, August 2-3, of effort for the SEACarP telemetry project in the Peoria Pool. Efforts focused on maintaining and downloading data from stationary telemetry equipment. All receivers were recovered, downloaded, and redeployed in the same locations.

Table 3. Detections of fish at each receiver location in the Peoria Pool. Receiver = serial number, Station name = combination of river mile (RM) and geographic/visual location information, # Fish = number of unique tagged individuals, # Detections = number of recorded detections by a receiver.

Receiver	Station Name	# Fish	# Detections
VR2W-129785	RM166.6 Peoria Lake Narrows	21	198
VR2W-129781	RM182.4 US Chilli Bridge_Peninsula	14	413
VR2W-129779	RM188.1 DS Lacon_MC Sawyer Slough	22	4093
VR2W-129787	RM194.8 US Upper Henry Island	26	11407
VR2W-137063	RM202.7 Lower Twin Sisters Island	33	1818
VR2W-137065	RM216 US of Clark Island	33	1954
Totals		62	19883

Barrier Operational and Maintenance Status

Traditional Monitoring – During the month of August, USACE biologists conducted twenty-seven 15-minute electrofishing runs downstream of the barrier. In Lockport Pool, there were 16 sites, and the remaining 11 sites were in Brandon Road Pool. Within the Lockport Pool, 1050 individuals were captured across 19 species. The five most abundant species captured were gizzard shad over 6 inches (37.4%), gizzard shad under 6 inches (32.3%), emerald shiner (16.1%), bluntnose minnow (9.6%), and common carp (1.1%). Within the Brandon Road Pool, 904 individuals were captured across 22 species. The five most abundant species found were gizzard shad under 6 inches (68.9%), gizzard shad over 6 inches (14.3%), emerald shiner (5.9%), smallmouth bass (2.4%), and common carp (1.9%). No Asian Carp were captured or observed during the month of August.

Barrier Maintenance – In the month of August, Barrier IIB was off for cooling system upgrades and periodic outages were experienced at the barriers, but at no time was there not at least one barrier providing power to the water.

When barriers were operational, they were operating at the following parameters

IIA – Narrow (34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 1800 V = 1.7 V/in) & wide (34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 800 V = ~1.0 V/in) arrays operational

IIB – Not operational, cooling system upgrade

Barrier 1 Demo (ID) – Full water (5 Hz, 4 ms, 400 V = 1.0 V/in) & benthic (5 Hz, 4 ms, 100V) operational

Barrier 1 North (1N) – Operational (34 Hz, 2.3 ms, 1700 V = 2.3 V/in)

August 11 – Barrier 1N and 1D experienced a loss of power at 09:44 with power returning at 09:58 and 10:03 respectively. This was likely due to a thunderstorm experienced locally. Barrier 2A did not lose power in the water during this period.

August 25 – Barrier 1N experienced a loss of power between 18:45 and 20:25. Barriers 1D and 2A were both operational at this time.

Alternate Pathway Surveillance in Illinois – Law Enforcement

ISU and District 4 Conservation Police Officers are investigating the illegal dumping of approximately \$4500 worth of eels, turtles, goldfish, and frogs into the Chicago River in what is believed to be a merit release ceremony. A video of the act has been obtained and potential suspects have been identified. The store where the aquatic life was purchased has also been identified. The investigation is ongoing. ISU inspected an aquaculture facility in Springfield that is raising tilapia, a non-approved, species. ISU investigated a complaint of an out of state fish hauler illegally importing and stocking fish into Illinois waters. Evidence of the illegal activity was gathered, and the suspect was interviewed in Indiana. The case is ongoing. ISU inspected a fish truck in St. Clair County. The Missouri resident was legally transporting Hybrid Stripped bass purchased from an Illinois aquaculture facility into Missouri. The “fish truck” consisted of a Jeep truck with a large plastic container in the bed that had an oxygen tank strapped to it. ISU issued a warning to a Chicago food distribution company for illegally importing red swamp crayfish into Illinois. Purchase invoices received from the company identified the Louisiana seafood dealer who was shipping the crayfish to a food distribution company. ISU answered questions from a Lake county boat dealer on regulations related selling and transporting boats with zebra mussels attached. ISU participated in a surveillance operation on an aquatic life dealer suspected of illegally importing live injurious species into the State.



Photograph of a “fish truck” stopped by a Conservation Officer in St. Clair County

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

[Great Lakes governors, lawmakers push for invasive carp project funds](#)

Midwest governors and Congressional delegates are advocating for funding to speed along the fortification of a chokepoint lock and dam near Chicago that would become the last line of defense against invasive carp reaching the Great Lakes when

[For the first time, “rock snot” nuisance algal blooms found in Lower Peninsula trout stream](#)

For the first time in Michigan’s Lower Peninsula, biologists have found a nuisance algae called “rock snot,” or didymo.

[Fishing fun in Michigan, attention anglers please help with tagged fish](#)

Michigan anglers should be on the lookout for trout or salmon with an adipose fin-clip. It could contain a tag with information on the movement of steelhead, Chinook salmon, Atlantic salmon, brown trout, and lake trout.

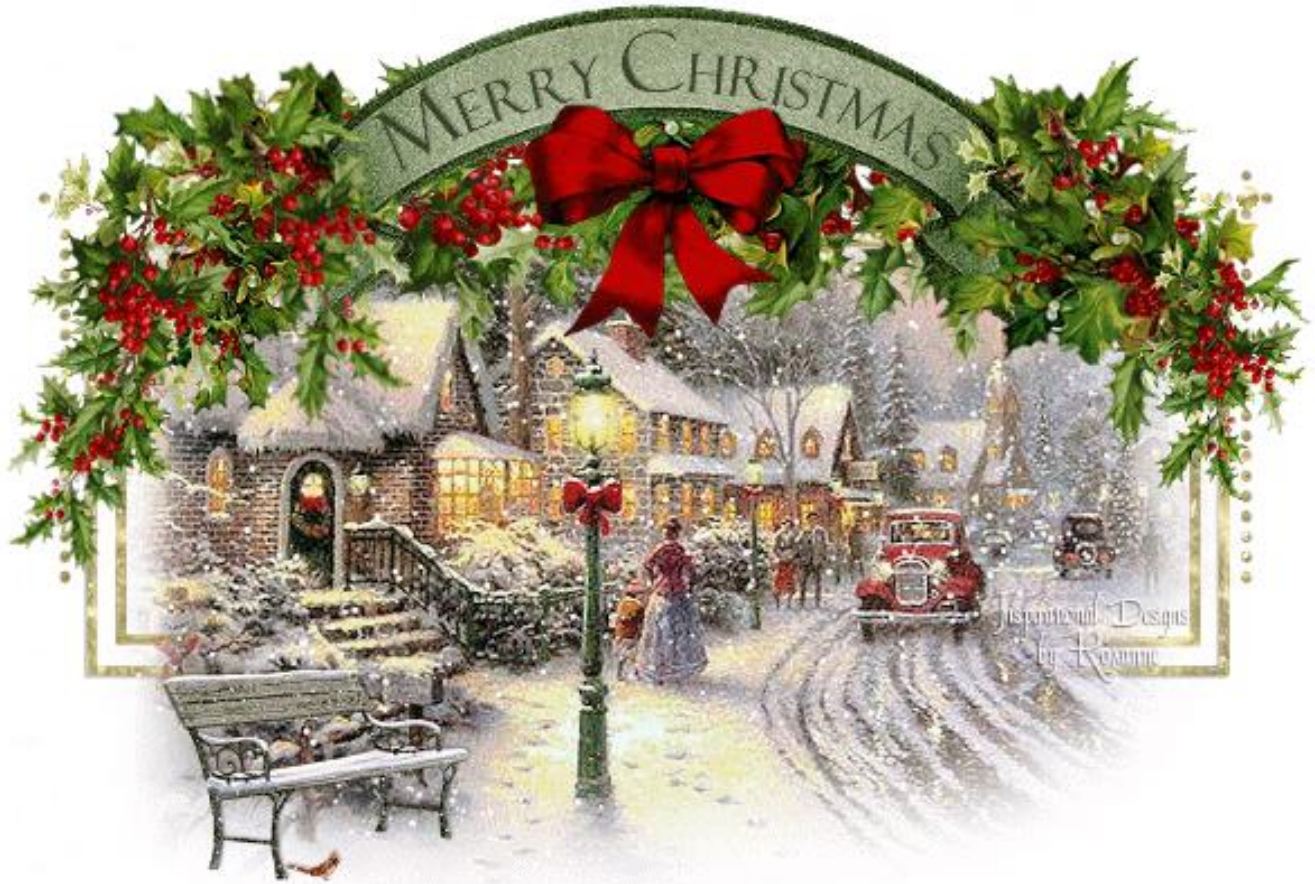
[Dingell introduces bipartisan bill to support fish, wildlife restoration in Great Lakes](#)

Four members of Congress believe that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should continue to play a role in protecting fish and wildlife in the Great Lakes region and have introduced bipartisan legislation in support of this idea.

[Line 5 shutdown case will remain in federal court, judge rules](#)

U.S. Circuit Court Judge Janet Neff issued a long-awaited written ruling late Tuesday, agreeing with Enbridge that its dispute with Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer’s administration involves “substantial federal issues” and thus will remain in federal court.

End



As we reflect on our soldiers on active duty around the world, country-wide first responders, our own safety, health, family and all we have to be grateful for...our best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and wonderful 2022.

"...behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour..." Luke 2:10-11

Merry Christmas
and
best wishes for a healthy and
Happy New Year