



Lake Erie continues Historic Run of Excellent Fishing

“This article from the Ohio DNR has to do with individual quotas by state agency. *Editor*”

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Lake Erie anglers can expect the 2023 fishing season to provide more world-class fishing and lasting memories, according to the Ohio DNR Division of Wildlife. After another year of strong walleye hatches, Lake Erie maintains its title as the Walleye Capital of the World. Additionally, a stable yellow perch population in Lake Erie’s west zone will provide good fishing in 2023, while low catch rates are expected to continue in the central and east zones.

“Lake Erie is known worldwide as a top fishing destination,” said Travis Hartman, Lake Erie Fisheries Program Administrator for the Division of Wildlife. “With many species to

pursue, Lake Erie is again a high-performing destination thanks to science-based management which guides regulations to ensure long-term angling opportunities.”

Lake Erie walleye and yellow perch fisheries are managed through an interagency quota system. Each jurisdiction regulates its catches to comply with annually determined safe harvest levels that ensure sustainability. The most recent quotas were [announced on Thursday, March 30](#).

Walleye

The walleye daily limit on Lake Erie is six fish per angler with a 15-inch minimum length requirement. Walleye hatch success has been

exceptional for seven of the past nine years. Anglers will mostly catch abundant 2- to 5-year-old-fish ranging from 15 to 24 inches. Larger fish from 2015 and earlier hatches will provide chances to reel in a [Fish Ohio qualifying walleye](#) (minimum 28 inches).

Abundant young fish will show up in the catch and range from 9 to 14 inches, with an increasing number of 2-year-olds reaching 15 inches as the season progresses. Anglers are encouraged to release these sub-legal fish with as little handling as possible so they can contribute to the future fishery.

Lake Erie Excellent Fishing

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Lake Erie Record Smallmouth Bass Was 16 Years Old

The 10.15 lb. smallmouth bass caught in the Ontario, Canada waters of Lake Erie in November 2022 was a 16-year-old female, according to the Ohio DNR. The record fish is the only known 10 lb. smallmouth bass caught in a Great Lakes state or province. On November 3, 2022, Gregg Gallagher of Fremont, Ohio, caught the 10.15lb smallmouth bass while fishing in Ontario provincial waters of Lake Erie. That fish was larger than the

previous Ontario record, a 9.84 lb. bass caught in 1984, and larger than Ohio’s current smallmouth bass record, a 9.5 lb. fish. The new Ontario record was weighed soon after the catch on a certified scale in Port Clinton.

The fish was transferred to the Sandusky Fisheries Research Station for species identification validation and measurements. The fish was measured as 23¾” in length and 19⅜” in girth. The DNR recently sampled the record bass and determined it to be a 16-year-old female that was hatched in 2006. The fish was aged by analyzing its otoliths, inner-ear structures that develop annuli much like the rings on a tree. It is rare for a smallmouth bass to exceed 14 years of age. ✧





Walleye fishing scheduled to be open all summer on Mille Lacs Lake

No July closure or live bait ban planned; harvest adjustments possible if conditions warrant

State-licensed anglers will have the opportunity to harvest a walleye 21-23" in length or greater than 28 throughout the 2023 open water season on Mille Lacs Lake. A lower walleye harvest this winter and an improving walleye population are combining to allow this year's more liberal regulations. "We are pleased to see improvements in both the growth of adult walleye and survival of young walleye in Mille Lacs," said Brad Parsons, fisheries section manager for the Minnesota DNR. "Those factors create the opportunity for anglers to have a continuous harvest season in 2023."

Walleye regulations will apply from the walleye opener on Saturday, **May 13**, until the end of the open-water season on Thursday, Nov. 30. Unlike recent years, there is no planned closure to walleye fishing or ban on using live bait during the first two weeks in July. On opening weekend, fishing will be allowed 24 hours a day. Beginning Monday, May 15, the night fishing closure takes effect, and fishing hours on Mille Lacs Lake will be 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. for all species. From Saturday, June 3, through Thursday, Nov. 30, muskellunge and northern pike anglers using artificial lures or sucker minnows longer than 8 inches are exempt from the night fishing closure. Starting Friday, **Sept. 1**, the night fishing closure is relaxed, with angling hours being 6 a.m. to midnight.

"As always, we will monitor the factors that determine the state's walleye take throughout the open water season," Parsons said. "If conditions warrant, we will adjust regulations, either to allow additional opportunity if harvest is especially low like it was in 2022 or tighten regulations if harvest exceeds our projections." The DNR and the eight Ojibwe bands that have treaty fishing rights under the 1837 treaty agreed Mille Lacs could sustain a state harvest

of up to 100,300 pounds of walleye this year, an increase of 20,000 pounds from 2022. Adult walleye grew well in 2022, and year classes of younger walleye in the lake have the potential to contribute to the fishery in the future. Harvest levels are set annually, and may be lower or higher in subsequent years.

"The lake has been in a state of change since the 1990s. As the water started to clear, we began seeing warmer water temperatures. Change continues with the introduction of invasive species such as zebra mussel and spiny water flea," Parsons said. "We will continue to monitor the lake to see how ongoing changes will influence the fishery."

This year's winter walleye harvest was 4,300 lbs. Lower catch rates for anglers due to abundant forage in the lake combined with poor ice conditions in the early season were responsible for this winter's lower harvest. That drop in walleye take gave the DNR more flexibility to implement open water harvest opportunities this coming season.

The northern pike population in Mille Lacs is healthy, and harvest of fish under 30" is encouraged for anglers looking for another option to bring home a meal of fish. Mille Lacs is also home to a smallmouth bass population that opens to catch and release angling on May 13, with harvest of fish less than 17" allowed starting on Saturday, May 27.

"Our goal with regulations for all species is to offer fishing opportunities while also keeping in mind the long-term sustainability of the lake," Parsons said. More information about fishing regulations on Mille Lacs Lake, ongoing DNR management and research, citizen engagement and Mille Lacs area recreation opportunities is available on the [DNR website \(mndnr.gov/millelacslake\)](http://mndnr.gov/millelacslake).



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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.

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Lake Erie Committee sets Yellow Perch and Walleye Total Allowable Catches for 2023

“This article from the Lake Erie Committee has to do with total allowable catches by agency, Editor.”

Hamilton, ON – The binational Lake Erie Committee (LEC)—composed of fishery managers from Michigan, New York, Ohio, Ontario, and Pennsylvania, the five jurisdictions that manage the Lake Erie fishery—set total allowable catches (TACs) for 2023 of 6.573 million pounds of yellow perch and 13.526 million walleye. Yellow perch are allocated in pounds and walleye are allocated by number of fish. These TACs represent a decrease for yellow perch from 7.185 million pounds of fish last year and a decrease in walleye from 14.533 million fish. Specific allocations of both species are presented below by jurisdiction.

TAC decisions are made by consensus of the LEC after extensive, lakewide biological assessments, analyses, discussions, and consultations with stakeholders. Scientists and field biologists from all jurisdictions meet annually and on an ongoing basis to analyze fisheries and agency data to estimate population levels and recommend the annual TAC. These decisions are reflective of the status of Lake Erie’s fish populations and consider the goal of maintaining sustainable harvest each year. The individual state and provincial governments implement the TAC in their jurisdiction in accordance with their respective regulations and management objectives.

YELLOW PERCH: Yellow perch TAC decisions are the result of deliberations among scientists, managers, and consultation with stakeholders through the Lake Erie Percid Management Advisory Group (LEPMAG). Based on science and LEPMAG input, the LEC set a 2023 combined TAC of 6.573 million pounds of yellow perch, a 9% decrease from the 2022 TAC.

The yellow perch fishery is divided into four management units,

which generally correspond to the eastern, east-central, west-central and western basins of Lake Erie. Poor recruitment of yellow perch in the central basin (management units 2 and 3) continues to be a challenge. Despite this, the LEC continues to strive to maintain sustainable harvest while responding to changing population trajectories and other changing environmental factors. The five jurisdictions on the lake share Lake Erie’s yellow perch under an area-based formula. Pursuant to the 2023 TAC, Ontario will receive 3.155 million pounds, Ohio 2.480 million pounds, Michigan 0.221 million pounds, New York 0.181 million pounds, and Pennsylvania 0.536 million pounds. As with walleye, each Lake Erie jurisdiction is responsible for allocating its portion of the TAC.

WALLEYE: Guided by the Walleye Management Plan, the LEC set a 2023 lakewide walleye TAC of 13.526 million fish, a 7% decrease from the 2022 TAC of 14.533 million fish. Overall, though the LEC believes that walleye populations have increased compared to last year’s abundance, the average size of fish is smaller, resulting in a lower population biomass. The Province of Ontario and the states of Ohio and Michigan share the TAC based on a formula of walleye habitat within each jurisdiction in the western and central basins of the lake. Ohio will be entitled to 6.913 million fish, Ontario 5.824 million fish, and Michigan 0.789 million fish. Jurisdictions in eastern Lake Erie are outside of the TAC area, but harvest limits are set consistent with lakewide objectives.

THE LAKE ERIE PERCID MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP (LEPMAG):

The LEPMAG has served as the primary method to incorporate stakeholder needs and objectives

through formal advice that is considered during the LEC decision making process since 2010. The LEPMAG consists of senior representatives from all provincial and state jurisdictions on the lake, recreational fishers, commercial fishers, and other interested organizations. Fishery managers and stakeholders, through their participation in the LEPMAG, work together to identify the harvest policies for Lake Erie yellow perch and walleye that meet the needs of all stakeholders while maintaining stability in the fishery. Michigan State University’s Quantitative Fisheries Center facilitates the LEPMAG process. Both walleye and yellow perch are managed through management plans, which were adopted by the LEC in 2015 and 2020, respectively. The LEC intends to evaluate both plans before their expiration at the end of 2024. The LEPMAG played a major role in developing the management plans, and is expected to provide additional insight to the LEC during plan reviews.

THE LAKE ERIE COMMITTEE (LEC) AND TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES (TACs):

The LEC’s work is facilitated by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, a Canada and U.S. treaty organization. Each year the committee reaches consensus on TAC decisions for walleye and yellow perch. The TAC represents what the committee considers to be a sustainable level of harvest, as guided by recommendations from the Yellow Perch and Walleye task groups. The individual agencies allocate the TAC through setting commercial fishing quotas and recreational fishing daily limits intended to maintain annual harvest levels within the TAC.

Perch and Walleye TACs

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Commercial fishers capture 30 invasive carp in the Mississippi River

A commercial fishing business contracted by the Minnesota DNR captured 30 invasive carp Monday, March 20, in Pool 6 of the Mississippi River, near Winona. While invasive carp have been previously captured in Pool 6 and upstream as far as the Twin Cities metro, this is the largest number captured at one time this far upstream.

The DNR is working with the USFWS, the Wisconsin DNR and other partners to respond to this capture, which consisted primarily of silver carp. Along with removing the captured carp from the river, additional commercial fishing was being conducted this week in Pool 6. A previously scheduled netting and capture operation using the Modified Unified Method (MUM) in Pools 5A, 6 and 8 will begin April 24. MUM is an adaptive process using boats or sound to herd carp into nets for removal. The DNR also continues to work with partners to assess other potential prevention and management tools, including experimental invasive carp deterrents now being tested for effectiveness.

“While there is currently no ‘silver bullet’ to prevent or eliminate invasive carp, we will continue to use a combination of proven methods and the best available information to minimize risk by targeting and removing as many fish as possible,” said DNR Invasive Fish Coordinator Grace Loppnow. “As demonstrated by this catch, the expertise of our contracted commercial fishers is one of many important tools.”

Invasive carp have been progressing upstream since escaping into the Mississippi River in Arkansas in the 1970s. These fish compete with native species and pose a threat to both rivers and lakes. Individual invasive carp have been caught as far upstream as Pool 2 of the Mississippi in the Twin Cities metro (bighead, grass and silver), the King Power Plant on the St. Croix River by Oak Park Heights (bighead and silver), and just

downstream of Granite Falls in the Minnesota River (bighead).

The DNR is actively using a wide range of efforts to manage invasive carp:

- The DNR leads a program to monitor for all life stages of invasive carp in the Minnesota pools of the Mississippi River, the St. Croix River, the Minnesota River and the Missouri River watershed. This program includes fisheries sampling, tagging and tracking, and partnering with USFWS and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) on eDNA surveys. This work helps us understand the invasive carp population in Minnesota, target areas for removal efforts, and determine whether reproduction is occurring.
- The DNR leads MUM operations to capture and remove invasive carp, in partnership with the USGS, Wisconsin DNR, USFWS, National Park Service, and Wild Rivers Conservancy. The DNR has conducted MUM events each spring and fall, largely focused around Pool 8. We continue to adapt this method to enhance the ability to catch invasive carp.
- The DNR leads a program to remove invasive carp through contracted commercial fishing, DNR-led netting and electrofishing, and innovative new techniques such as fish attractants.
- In partnership with the DNR, the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center at the University of Minnesota is testing and evaluating carp deterrents in Mississippi River locks and dams.
- The agency is working closely with stakeholders to update the [Minnesota Invasive Carp Action Plan](#), including evaluation of potential carp barriers, deterrents and other management tools in the

Mississippi River. The DNR expects to have recommendations for additional actions available by the end of 2023. The DNR recently published a request for proposals for a consultant to assist in this effort.

In addition:

- The DNR is also an active partner in the Upper Mississippi River Invasive Carp Workgroup. The group includes representatives from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and several federal agencies and serves to provide regional coordination on invasive carp management.
- Similarly, the DNR is also a member of the Missouri River Invasive Carp Team, Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, Brandon Road States and Provinces Forum, National Invasive Carp Framework, Black Carp Working Group and other regional, national and binational invasive carp groups.

State and Federal funding sources, including the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Outdoor Heritage Fund, have provided key funding for the DNR invasive carp detection and response program.

Invasive carp captures in Minnesota must be reported to the DNR immediately by calling 651-587-2781 or emailing invasivecarp.dnr@state.mn.us. People capturing an invasive carp may not release it. People are asked to take a photo and transport the carp to the nearest DNR fisheries office or make arrangements for it to be picked up by a DNR official. A [permit can be requested](#) to keep captured invasive carp for consumption or disposal.

More information about invasive carp is available on the [DNR website](#). ✦

DNR collecting walleye eggs on Muskegon River this spring

Muskegon River anglers should be on the lookout this spring for Michigan DNR personnel collecting walleye eggs below Croton Dam, which is in Newaygo County. Electrofishing boat crews started collecting walleye as early as the week of March 27 and concluding by April 14. The date these collections begin will depend on water temperatures, the presence of ripe fish and other factors. Most work likely will be completed from the last week of March through the first week of April. Five days of electrofishing are planned, with four of those being egg-take days.

"This adult population consists of mostly stocked fish," said Ed Pearce, DNR fisheries technician supervisor who coordinates the egg take. "The Muskegon River has the largest run of walleye in the Lake Michigan watershed south of Green Bay."

Electrofishing sampling usually begins at Croton Dam each day at

about 8:30 a.m. and proceeds downstream to the Pine Street access site. If more eggs are needed, additional collections may occur downstream to the Thornapple Street access site.

Anglers who wish to avoid the walleye collection activities should fish downstream of the Pine Street access site. The DNR asks everyone to use caution when fishing near the electrofishing boats, and anyone wading will be asked to exit the water when a boat approaches and during electrofishing work.

The DNR plans to collect approximately 32 million walleye eggs from the Muskegon River this year, which will result in fry (fish that have just hatched) for transfer to rearing ponds and direct fry plants throughout the Lower Peninsula. Walleye fry transferred to ponds will be raised to fingerling size (approximately 1.5 to 2.5 inches) and stocked in late spring

or early summer in lakes and rivers throughout the Lower Peninsula. Lake Michigan and many inland lake walleye populations in the Lower Peninsula depend on the fingerlings produced from Muskegon River eggs.

The size of the walleye spawning run in the Muskegon River is about 40,000 to 50,000 fish each year. DNR crews will strip milt (sperm) and eggs from approximately 545 adult fish, which will be returned to the river—except for 60, which will be sent to Michigan State University for fish health testing. Learn more about how the DNR manages Michigan's fisheries at Michigan.gov/Fishing. ✧



DNR's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program offers a turkey hunt workshop in Tuscola County

The Michigan DNR's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program is offering a Beyond BOW Turkey hunt workshop for women and girls.

The **May 12-13** weekend program is for those who would like to learn new skills or improve upon their abilities. This free workshop is open to any properly licensed woman hunter, age 10 or older. No experience is required, proper safety and hunting techniques will be taught and followed. This Beyond BOW event will be held in Cass City and is sponsored by The National Wild Turkey Federation, Cabela's and Ben's Great Outdoors.

"We are so appreciative to these sponsors for their continued support for this program," said Michelle Douglas, BOW coordinator. "Ammo, shotguns and lunch will all be provided. However, overnight lodging will be the responsibility of the participants." On Friday, May 12,



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

On Saturday, May 13, participants and mentors will meet early in the morning at the DNR's Cass City field office for a light breakfast and head out for the morning hunt. After lunch, the participants will have the opportunity

to clean their turkeys prior to wrap up of the event. To participate in this event, attendees must have a Michigan Base hunting license and turkey hunting license, which is available as an apprentice option and purchased prior to attending the workshop for **Hunt Unit ZB, Hunt Number 0117**.

Enrollment is limited to 14 and to first-time BOW turkey workshop participants only. The deadline for registration is **May 1, 2023**. Class information and registration materials are available online at Michigan.gov/BOW. This will be a rain or shine event. For further information, call Michelle Douglas at 517-582-3854 or Ron Sting 989-872-5300 or email Douglas at DNRBOW@michigan.gov For more info on the BOW program, including how to sign-up for program email updates, visit Michigan.gov/BOW. ✧

Spring's the perfect time to pick up some new outdoor skills

• Mitchell State Park – April 15-16, Steelhead Clinic

The Outdoor Skills Academy pro-staff will present various strategies and techniques for chasing Michigan's "chrome torpedoes." Feel free to bring your own gear, if possible, or if you're new to steelheading, some equipment is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The classroom portion of the clinic will be at the Hunting and Fishing Center, then Sunday morning we will hit the water and show you how to fish and what to look for on the beautiful Manistee River. The Sunday session will be broken in half into an 8-10 a.m. session and a 10 a.m.-noon session. Session times will be assigned Saturday. **Cost for this class is \$30, which includes lunch on Saturday.** To register for this class, go to Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses and click on the "Purchase a license" button. Sign in (using either a username and password or your ID and birthdate), and find the class under the Outdoor Skills Academy tab. ShawE@Michigan.gov, [231-779-1321](tel:231-779-1321)

• Mitchell State Park – April 16, Walleye Clinic

Pro walleye tournament angler Dan Miller and others will go through the A to Z of walleye fishing and how they spend their day chasing trophy walleye. This class will cover seasonal activities, how to set up your boat and more. DNR staff will be on hand to cover any rules and regulations questions you may have. Plus, we'll include tips from a master taxidermist on how to care for your trophy fish when you catch it and want to have it mounted. **Cost for the class is \$45, which includes lunch and instruction.** In addition, onX maps now offers a discount for each Outdoor Skills Academy student, and if you decide to keep the app after your free trial, onX will donate a portion of the proceeds to conservation education. A promotional code will be sent via email prior to the class. To register for this class, go to

Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses and click on the "Purchase a license" button. Sign in (using either a username and password or your ID and birthdate), and find the class under the Outdoor Skills Academy tab.

For more information contact Edward Shaw at 231-779-1321 or ShawE@Michigan.gov.

• Bay City State Park – May 02-03, Saginaw Bay Walleye Clinic

This two-day course will begin with a tips and techniques session led by Walleye Trail World Champion Captain Mark Martin and Captain Brandon Stanton of Team Gunsmoke Sportfishing and Guide Service, covering the equipment and techniques needed to catch Saginaw Bay walleye. The first day, the class will take the novice angler through rod and reel selection, rigging and presentation techniques, and natural history tips about Saginaw Bay walleye. Time also will be set aside for a trip to Frank's Great Outdoors to go through equipment and purchase needed gear to take back and prep for fishing.

The second day will give participants an opportunity to experience hands-on, one-on-one time with Martin's pro-staff as participants board charter boats and fish Saginaw Bay and River. **Cost is \$375.** Lunch will be provided both days, with morning snacks. Charter boat trips will be provided. Participants are encouraged to bring the gear they already have on the second day. Limited to 21 participants (seven charter boats participating).

To register for this class, go to Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses and click on the "Purchase a license" button. Sign in (using either a username and password or your ID and birthdate), and find the class under the Outdoor Skills Academy tab. **Please note:** Cancellations must be made by **April 14** in order to guarantee a full refund. For more info: Jonathan.Massung@Michigan.gov, park interpreter, at 989-667-0717.

• Mitchell State Park – May 27-28, Fly Fishing Clinic

In this class for beginners, the Outdoor Skills Academy pro-staff will cover the basics of fly fishing, including demonstrations and instruction for various fly casts and instruction in fly selection based on target species. It will begin with a classroom session and then will move outside to the canal for the hands-on portion of the class. Sunday's session will be on the Manistee River below Tippy Dam. Weather conditions will dictate all outdoor activities, which may be moved indoors. **Cost for the class is \$40.** Now onX maps offers a discount for each Outdoor Skills Academy student, and if you decide to keep the app after your free trial, onX will donate a portion of the proceeds to conservation education. A promotional code will be sent via email prior to the class.

To register for this class, go to Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses and click on the "Purchase a license" button. Sign in (using either a username and password or your ID and birthdate), and find the class under the Outdoor Skills Academy tab. For more info: Edward Shaw, 231-779-1321 or ShawE@Michigan.gov. ✧

Great Lakes Commission releases report on usage of Great Lakes waters

According to a new GLC report, 37.5 billion gallons of water per day were withdrawn from the Great Lakes basin in 2021, about a 1% decrease from 2020 withdrawals. Only 5% of the total reported water withdrawn was consumed or otherwise lost from the basin. Considering both consumptive use and diversions, the Great Lakes basin gained a total of 156 million gallons of water per day in 2021. ✧

Habitat Restoration in the Great Lakes: By the Numbers

NOAA's habitat restoration work in the Great Lakes strengthens healthy fisheries and ecosystems, benefits local economies, and supports resilient communities. The Great Lakes are some of our nation's most important natural, recreational, and economic resources. But they face many threats, including habitat degradation, pollution, overfishing, and the spread of invasive species. NOAA and our partners work to restore habitat in the Great Lakes region to support the fish, ecosystems, and communities that rely on them.

Here are a few key numbers that help illustrate the scope of habitat restoration work in the region through the [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#).

13 years: NOAA has worked through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative since 2010 to restore habitat across the Great Lakes region. Our [story map](#) highlights the first decade of NOAA and partners' work through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

92 projects: NOAA has supported 92 high-priority habitat restoration projects through the Great

Lakes Restoration Initiative. Our efforts have helped strengthen valuable Great Lakes fisheries and restore coastal wetlands that improve water quality. We recently supported habitat restoration in places like the [Detroit River](#) in Michigan and the [Buffalo River](#) in New York.

4,700 acres: The projects we've supported have restored more than 4,700 acres of habitat for fish and wildlife. This restoration work has [improved fish passage](#), [cleaned up debris](#), [restored coastal wetlands](#), and managed invasive species.

6 states: NOAA has supported habitat restoration projects in six Great Lakes states: Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin. You can explore projects we've supported in these states through the [NOAA Restoration Atlas](#), our interactive project mapping tool.

17 Areas of Concern: Our habitat restoration work in the Great Lakes has helped improve conditions in 17 [Great Lakes Areas of Concern](#). These are areas where a waterway's poor conditions are affecting the

environment, human health, and the local economy. NOAA and partners work to address the most pressing threats facing these waterways, so that they can be removed from the list of Areas of Concern. In the 1980s, there were originally 43 Areas of Concern identified: 26 in the United States, 17 in Canada, and five locations shared between the two countries. Our restoration work in places like Michigan's [Muskegon Lake](#) and [Manistique River](#) is helping make progress toward delisting these Areas of Concern.

As the largest freshwater system on earth, the Great Lakes are one of the most important natural resources in the world. They serve as important economic resources, supporting industry, transportation, commercial and recreational fishing, and tourism. NOAA's habitat restoration work helps strengthen valuable fisheries and coastal resources and restore coastal wetlands that improve the quality of our water. It also provides recreational opportunities and supports the resilience of Great Lake communities. ✧

Great Lakes fisheries concerns raised in Bellaire, Michigan

The proposed Great Lakes Consent Decree was among many issues brought forward at the Michigan Natural Resource Commission's meeting last month. The agreement over fishing between tribal nations and state and federal officials has been living on borrowed time.

The Great Lakes Consent Decree expired in 2020 and negotiations took almost three years before a new agreement was drafted. Critics of that agreement were among those to testify in front of the state's Natural Resources Commission at a recent meeting. The consent decree regulates fishing rights, especially as they apply to tribes that ceded territory in the 1836 Treaty of Washington. Its purpose is to prevent over-harvesting and maintain a sustainable fishery, while still ensuring tribal members can continue to practice their right to fish

the Great Lakes. The consent decree achieves this through regulations on catch limits and types of equipment.

A draft of a new round of regulations agreement is now on the table, as the 2020 Great Lakes Consent Decree is before a federal judge for final approval. But a group of sport fishers and conservationists is asking that judge not to approve this agreement. The Coalition to Protect Michigan Resources (CPMR) wants the state, feds and tribes to go back to the drawing board. "The Michigan DNR has been the embodiment of science-based stewardship," said Jim Johnson. Johnson worked for the state as a fisheries biologist for 25 years, and now serves as an advisor to the CPMR.

"Unfortunately, the proposed consent decree ... represent(s) a 180 degree turn away from science and

stewardship," Johnson said. The coalition's objection to the new decree stems primarily from the expanded use of gill nets. The group says gill nets kill indiscriminately, and are lethal for much more than just a targeted species of fish. The state and federal governments as well as four tribal nations filed a response to the CPMR in court last week.

The parties wrote that the coalition's effort to block the new consent decree is "setting the stage for potentially years of contentious and wasteful litigation ahead." The court filing goes on to accuse the coalition of couching its objections in threats to the fisheries resource, while actually concerned with "its members' narrow interests." Members of the coalition denied those claims and told IPR they want sound biology to be at the forefront of the consent decree. ✧

Wisconsin Conservation Congress and DNR to host open houses in all 72 counties

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) and DNR are hosting this year's online open house questionnaire. It will be open for input from [April 10 at noon through April 13](#) at noon via the [Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearing webpage](#).

DNR staff and WCC delegates will be on hand at these open houses to discuss local issues of importance, answer questions from the public, and open a dialogue between the public, the DNR and the WCC about areas of interest and concern. The WCC will also hold their delegates' elections at each open house. Two of the five WCC seats will be up for election in each county.

The open houses precede the annual WCC/DNR Spring Hearings. In addition to the opportunity to engage with DNR staff and WCC delegates at these open houses, the public is also invited to participate in the annual spring hearings the following week that focus on natural resource-related advisory questions and proposed rule changes. The Spring Hearings will again be held in a virtual format, as has been done since 2020.

The [Wisconsin Conservation Congress](#) is the only statutory body in the state where the public elects delegates to advise the Natural Resources Board and the DNR on responsibly managing Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations. The Congress accomplishes this through open, impartial, broad-ranged actions. Learn more about the WCC and how to become involved in resource management decisions on: [Wisconsin Conservation webpage](#). ✧

PFBC Board gives preliminary approval to fee adjustments to deliver quality fishing/boating

HARRISBURG, Pa. – During a special meeting held March 1, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Board of Commissioners gave preliminary approval to a list of proposed fee adjustments for various fishing licenses and permits for the 2024 license year.

"Through these modest fee adjustments, we are keeping pace with the rising costs associated with maintaining vital infrastructure, services, and programs that anglers and boaters deserve and have come to expect," said Robert BJ Small, PFBC President and District 6 Commissioner. "Our goal is to keep the prices of fishing licenses and permits as low as possible, while still being able to upgrade and invest in equipment, staff, programs, and facilities, such as our fish hatcheries and hundreds of public access areas that deliver quality recreation throughout the Commonwealth. Adjusting fees to match our business needs, when necessary, will ensure that Pennsylvania remains a destination for fishing and boating for a very long time."

Under the proposal, the price of the most common fishing license and permits, a Resident Annual Fishing License, Trout Permit, and Combination Trout/Lake Erie Permit, would increase by \$2.50 each in 2024. Separate increases would be applied to other license and permit categories for non-residents, seniors, and tourists. If approved, revenues from these fee increases are expected to generate an estimated \$2.9 million annually for the PFBC's Fish Fund to support fishing related programs.

In accordance with [Act 56 of 2020](#), which provided the PFBC with the authorization to set fees, the proposed fee adjustments must be given preliminary approval by the Board, be presented during a public hearing, and given final approval by

Celebrate spring with the latest issue of *Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine*

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin DNR announced the Spring issue of *Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine* is now available in print and [online](#).

The latest issue features a variety of stories to help everyone settle into a spring state of mind, including a deep dig into the importance of mud, tips for planning the perfect picnic and the sweet magic behind tapping maple syrup. Those ready to enjoy the warmer weather will find suggestions for beautiful Wisconsin state parks to explore for a quiet outing, plus spring safety tips for boating and staying safe when lightning strikes. For the little ones, this issue's Kid's Corner shows how to make a rain gauge to help mini-weather forecasters monitor rainfall amounts this spring. Spring showers bring wildflowers and native pollinators to life; learn more about growing a native wildflower garden to help our small but mighty pollinators. Spring weather also sparks mating season for many wild animals, including wild turkeys. Read about how the wild turkey recovery effort led to our thriving population in Wisconsin, where they're now scratching in the forests and strutting through suburbs.

Find these stories and so much more in the Spring issue of *Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine*. Subscribe now to receive four issues of the *Wisconsin Natural Resources* print edition for \$8.97. Call 800-678-9472 or sign up online at [wnrmag.com](#). ✧

PFBC fee adjustments *continued*
the Board. Also, in accordance with Act 56, after final Board approval, the fee adjustments will be shared with the Pennsylvania House and Senate Game and Fisheries Committees for their review.

The date for the public hearing has yet to be established and is expected to be announced in the coming weeks. ✧

Don't ruffle feathers this spring: helpful tips for managing Canada geese

Have you seen a Canada goose displaying aggressive behavior? Most goose conflicts occur during the nesting season from March to June when they defend their nests. If you see a goose head pumping, hissing, honking, or flapping its wings, calmly leave the area.

Managing Canada goose eggs and nests can limit the number of Canada geese produced after nesting. If a Canada goose nest does not have eggs or birds in it, it can be destroyed at any time without a federal permit. Keep in mind that once eggs have been laid, you must first [register with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) before taking action.

Remember, do not offer supplemental foods such as bread or birdseed to Canada geese. It's best to use preventive techniques before a Canada goose problem starts in your area. See our website for common goose conflicts and permit information.

Lake Erie Excellent Fishing

Continued from page 1

“Our staff were pleasantly surprised to see the results of the 2022 walleye hatch index,” said Travis Hartman, Lake Erie Fisheries Program Administrator. “After another year of above-average results, we expect walleye anglers to find more high-performing fishing across the lake.”

Yellow perch

Yellow perch abundance in the west zone from Toledo to Huron is increasing as a large year class of 2-year-old fish will join the population in 2023. The best success is anticipated during July through mid-August when the water temperature is above 76 degrees, and again from mid-October through November as adult perch move to shallower water to feed at water temperatures below 60 degrees. These two time periods provided a majority of angler yellow perch harvest in 2022. Abundant young perch from 7 to 9” will dominate the

Common Goose Conflicts

Typically, developers and landowners unknowingly facilitate human-geese conflicts by creating ideal goose habitat. Geese feed extensively on fresh, short, green grass. Manicured lawns and turf grass with nearby waterbodies such as retention ponds, lakes, and golf course water hazards create habitat for geese to set up residence, multiply, and concentrate. Geese, including their young, also have a strong tendency to return to the same area annually. Congregating geese can cause damage to landscape. Large amounts of excrement, turf destruction, and aggressive behavior create potential conflicts.

Geese are particularly aggressive during breeding and nesting seasons as both males and females defend their nests. Their behavior can cause problems around businesses and other infrastructures when geese attack workers, residents, and customers.

Recognizing aggressive behavior in geese may help people avoid

catch, with jumbo 12” and larger fish from older year classes also contributing to the catch.

Lake Erie's central zone from Huron to Fairport Harbor continues to experience low yellow perch abundance, primarily driven by poor to moderate hatches during the past decade. While catch rates are expected to remain low, late season fishing in 2022 provided some limit opportunities from Vermilion to Avon and off of Cleveland.

In the east zone, from Fairport Harbor to Conneaut, the population has declined below the prior 20-year average, but a moderate 2019 hatch has kept abundance above the central zone. Catch rates are expected to remain low during the 2023 season, except for times such as late fall when adult perch congregate in larger schools near harbors.

The Lake Erie Committee sets conservative quotas each year to ensure sustainable spawning stocks that will allow the best opportunity for population recovery. Yellow perch

conflicts with geese. If defensive behaviors are observed, people should slowly walk away and give the goose space. Most injuries occur due to tripping and falling while trying to run from geese. Defensive postures include head pumping, an open bill, hissing, honking, and wing flapping. Many breeding pairs begin scouting for nesting locations in late February and most problems occur March through June during the nesting season. Egg-laying begins soon after nest construction is complete. Female Canada geese lay one egg every 1.5 days and the average clutch size is 5. Incubation of eggs begins after the last egg is laid and lasts about 28 days.

Helpful Links

- [Canada Goose Biology](#)
- [Egg and Nest Destruction Brochure](#)
- [Hunting Information](#)
- [USFWS Permit](#)
- [Wildlife Biologists](#)
- [Waterfowl Control Operators](#) ✧

daily limits remain as described in the 2023-24 fishing regulations through April 30, 2024, with a daily limit of 30 perch in the west zone, 10 in the central zone, and 30 in the east zone.

Bass

Smallmouth bass and largemouth bass fishing in 2023 will remain good with the opportunity for trophy catches. The daily limit is five bass per day, with a 14-inch minimum size requirement until Sunday, April 30, 2023, and again from June 24, 2023, to April 30, 2024. During the spawning season, from May 1 to June 23, 2023, anglers may harvest one bass per day with a minimum size requirement of 18”.

Lake Erie fishing reports, information on Lake Erie research and management programs, fisheries resources, maps, and links to other Lake Erie web resources are available at [wildohio.gov](#). The current fishing regulations can be found on the [HuntFish OH app](#), at [wildohio.gov](#), or locations where fishing licenses are sold. ✧

Rainbow trout released in a lake near you in 2023

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio DNR released 84,000 rainbow trout in 88 lakes and ponds beginning March 16, 2023. Trout releases are designed for high angler success and harvest. Find a complete list of release dates and locations at ohiodnr.gov/troutstockings. Fishing techniques can be found on wildohio.gov. Rainbow trout are raised at Ohio's state fish hatcheries and measure between 10-13 inches when they are released. Rainbow trout are coldwater species and are stocked primarily near metropolitan areas and where they are likely to be caught within two weeks of release. Trout are sensitive to warm temperatures and typically do not survive through late spring. ✧

Perch and Walleye TACs

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The table below reflects the distribution of the 2023 yellow perch TAC within each management unit for each agency. Units are expressed in millions of pounds.

Mgmt Unit	Agency	'23 TAC
1	Ontario	0.987
	Michigan	0.221
	Ohio	1.222
	Total	2.430
2	Ontario	0.218
	Ohio	0.259
	Total	0.477
3	Ontario	1.612
	Ohio	0.998
	Pennsylvania	0.472
	Total	3.082
4	Ontario	0.339
	Pennsylvania	0.064
	New York	0.181
	Total	0.584
	Lakewide	6.573

✧

Illinois spring trout fishing season opened April 1 at 58 locations statewide

SPRINGFIELD – The 2023 Illinois spring trout fishing season opened **April 1**, at 58 ponds, lakes, and streams throughout the state.

The Illinois DNR stocks more than 80,000 rainbow trout each year in bodies of water where trout fishing is permitted during the spring season. An additional 80,000 trout will be stocked for the fall trout fishing season, which begins in October. The Illinois Catchable Trout Program receives funding support from those who use the program through the sale of Inland Trout Stamps. All anglers must have a fishing license and an Inland Trout Stamp unless they are under the age of 16, blind or disabled, or are an Illinois resident on leave from active duty in the Armed Forces. The daily harvest limit for each angler is five trout. For more information on trout seasons and other Illinois fishing opportunities, check the website at www.ifishillinois.org. ✧

Sportfishing industry highlights importance of fishing access and conservation

The American Sportfishing Association's (ASA) Southeast Fisheries Policy Director, Martha Guyas, testified on the importance of sound fisheries policy before the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. Guyas began by showcasing the various ways that fishing benefits conservation, jobs and the U.S. economy. In 2021, 52.4 million people went fishing in the U.S., supporting 826,000 jobs and contributing \$129 billion to the economy. Through fishing license purchases, excise taxes and direct donations, the recreational fishing community contributes approximately \$1.7 billion toward aquatic resource conservation each year. ✧

10th annual channel catfish stocking in urban lakes

The Indiana Urban Fishing Program celebrates 10 years of annually stocking channel catfish in urban lakes in order to bring quality fishing opportunities closer to Hoosiers' backyards. The DNR recently stocked a total of 1,875 channel catfish ranging in size from 10 to 14" (average 12"). These lakes are stocked three times from mid-March to the first week of June with catchable-size channel catfish.

The catfish daily bag limit per angler is 10, and there are no size restrictions. Anglers age 18 and older must have a valid Indiana fishing license to fish at these locations. A license can be purchased at on.IN.gov/INhuntfish. ✧

New York's trout harvest opened April 1 Nearly 1.9 Million catchable Trout stocked statewide

New York announced the April 1 start of the spring trout fishing season, which provides excellent angling opportunities thanks to DEC's extensive stocking program and wild trout fisheries. DEC stocks nearly 1.9 million trout in waters statewide, beginning in March and lasting until early June.

DEC trout stocking is in full swing with 1,884,756 catchable brook, brown, and rainbow trout stocked in ponds and streams across the state. 'Stocked-Extended' streams, listed in the Inland Trout Streams Regulations section of the freshwater fishing regulations guide, will receive fish every other week for two months to enhance season-long opportunities for angler success. Most streams will also receive a seeding of larger stocked trout. [Spring trout stocking lists, including the week of stocking for trout streams](#), can be found at DEC's website. ✧

Report by feds, anglers cites many impacts from wind power projects on fish

A joint study by two federal government scientific agencies and the commercial fishing industry documents numerous impacts that offshore wind power projects have on fish and marine mammals, including noise, vibration, electromagnetic fields and heat transfer that could alter the marine environment.

It comes as the offshore wind industry is poised to grow rapidly on the U.S. East Coast, where it is facing growing opposition from those who blame it for killing whales—something numerous scientific agencies say is not true. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance issued their report after a 2½-year-long study of the impacts existing offshore wind projects have on fish and marine mammals.

The goal was to solidify existing knowledge of the impacts and call for further research in many areas. NOAA and BOEM are among agencies that say there is no link between offshore wind preparation and whale deaths. Their co-authorship of a report detailing potential negative impacts on fish and marine mammals may intensify an already highly politicized controversy.

Asked Friday about the likelihood of this happening, NOAA spokesperson Lauren Gaches reiterated the agency's position that offshore wind is not causing the whale deaths, which remain under investigation. "We will also continue to explore how sound, vessel, and other human activities in the marine environment impact whales and other marine mammals," she said. The fishing industry is concerned that fish near construction sites may be killed or chased away for prolonged periods even after the turbines are built, according to the report.

"Physical changes associated with (offshore wind) developments will

affect the marine environment—and, subsequently, the species that live there—to varying degrees," the report read. "These include construction and operation noise and vibration, electromagnetic fields, and thermal radiation from cables, as well as secondary gear entanglement. In an interview, Fiona Hogan, research director for the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance, said: "We wanted to document what was known and not known. As far as we know, this is the first cooperatively developed report that cites all aspects of the potential interactions between fisheries and offshore wind."

The alliance is a fishing industry group trying to improve the compatibility of offshore wind with fishing operations. The American Clean Power Association, an offshore wind industry group, said it was still studying the 388-page report.

Andy Lipsky, who oversees the wind energy team at NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center, is a co-author of the report. He said it helps the agencies define the type of monitoring required for long-term study of offshore wind's effects and points out "needed research on how offshore wind energy changes marine habitats and fisheries." Several concerns raised in the report mirror many of those raised by opponents of offshore wind, including those who blame preparation for offshore wind farms for killing whales along the East Coast. Since December, 30 whales have washed ashore there.

The report said offshore wind turbines can attract fish and marine life, but also repel them. The large underwater platforms are rapidly colonized by smaller marine life which in turn attracts larger predators to the area. Water cloudiness from turbine operations, noise, vibrations and electromagnetic fields could also make them leave the area. ✧

Basic Contributions of Recreational Fishing

New report reveals true size of fishing in the USA

Invaluable data for the recreational fishing industry is contained in a new report just released by the American Sportfishing Association. Findings include the fact that 52.4 million anglers contribute \$148 billion in economic output and support 945,500 jobs across the country, as well as contributing \$1.8 billion to conservation.

Jobs supported include not just those in the manufacture and sale of fishing tackle, but also those in other industries like hotel accommodation, restaurants, charter trips and more. "As Congress debates future legislation that affects our industry, it is important that members of Congress have data to make the best available decisions," said ASA Vice President of Government Affairs Mike Leonard.

"This study will help show them that recreational fishing is an economic driver and job creator in their state or district. We hope that this information drives home the tremendous value sportfishing has to the nation and, therefore, the importance of supporting fisheries conservation and public access."

The data was compiled in partnership with research firm Southwick Associates, whose President, Rob Southwick, added: "While sport-fishing provides millions of days of escape and fun across the country, many people do not realize its significant economic contributions. Sportfishing is an economic engine needs the same care and consideration as other critical industries."

Headline statistics from the report include the top five states in economic output—Florida \$13.9bn, Texas \$7.7b, California \$6.2b, Minnesota \$4.2b and Michigan \$3.9b.

The state with the highest percentage of anglers against population is Alaska with an amazing 64%, followed by Wyoming 58%, South Dakota 48%, Rhode Island 39% and Oklahoma 37%. ✧

[The full report can be found here](#)

Other Breaking News Items:**(Click on title or URL to read full article)****[Artificial reefs bring wild lake trout to Lake Huron](#)**

The ecological success of artificial reefs in Lake Huron's Thunder Bay could teach people how to restore fish populations across the world. Researchers observed that the number of trout eggs found indicated the fish used the constructed reefs just as much as the natural reefs

[Great Lakes invasive carp barrier system scaled down to be more cost efficient, but cost rises](#)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers found more efficient ways to construct a barrier near Chicago to keep invasive carp in the Mississippi River system out of the Great Lakes. But the cost is nearly 13 percent higher than a 2019 estimate.

[14 Michigan harbors would be dredged under Biden's proposed budget](#)

Fourteen Michigan harbors would be dredged under President Joe Biden's proposed budget that allocates more than \$157 million for Great Lakes operations and maintenance, officials said

[Why fish consumption advisories in Great Lakes states like Wisconsin carry their own risks](#)

A recent study highlighting the potential dangers of "forever chemicals" in the Great Lakes has raised questions about the impacts of people consuming fish exposed to the chemicals. Indigenous nations such as the Red Cliff Band are worried that the Lake Superior advisories are misleading and branding all fish as unsafe to consume.

[\\$159M in Great Lakes projects included in Biden's proposed budget](#)

More than \$159 million in Great Lakes projects is included in President Joe Biden's proposed budget, including a study that would identify coastal areas vulnerable to flooding and find ways to shore them up

[What you should know about proposed Lake Ontario national marine sanctuary](#)

Eastern Lake Ontario, with 43 known shipwrecks and one aircraft, is on the verge of becoming a national marine sanctuary. The years-long effort has been supported by local governments, including Cayuga County, and the State of New York. If the sanctuary is established, the state will co-manage it with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[US lawmakers want Canada to provide more financial support for Great Lakes](#)

A bipartisan group of Great Lakes lawmakers wrote to President Joe Biden ahead of his official visit to Ottawa this month, urging him to press Canadian leaders on boosting their financial support for restoring and protecting the Great Lakes. The nine U.S. lawmakers stressed that "sustained investments" from partnerships between the U.S. and Canada are needed to clean up toxic Areas of Concern in the freshwater lakes, combat invasive species, restore habitats and reduce algae blooms

[Water crisis in West has prompted desperate ideas: Drain the Great Lakes, desalinate ocean water](#)

As western water woes continue, some experts and authorities say a national-level problem like this requires an innovative solution. Some are suggesting diverting Great Lakes water and desalination

[Canada looks to tighten ballast water regulations](#)

The Canadian government has invited stakeholders to apply for a new US\$9.2M Ballast Water Innovation Programme (BWIP). Vessels need to use a ballast water management system to comply with the regulations and reduce the risk of introducing and spreading aquatic invasive species in Canada

[Public gets last chance to comment on national marine sanctuary in Lake Ontario](#)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is holding a series of public meetings to provide information and get public input on the designation of part of Lake Ontario as a national marine sanctuary.