



New York Trout Fishing Season opened April 1

DEC says this year's trout fishing season in New York opens on Sunday, April 1. Supporting the State's growing sport fishing industry with an estimated \$1.8 billion in economic activity each year, DEC will stock 2.26 million catchable-size trout in 315 lakes and ponds and roughly 2,845 miles of streams across the state. Anglers should visit [DEC's website](#) for a list of stocked waters and the [2018 Coldwater Fishing Forecast](#) for recommended trout and salmon fishing locations.

DEC's spring stockings will include 1.72 million brown trout, 377,500 rainbow trout, and 158,500 brook trout. Approximately 97,000 two-year-old brown trout 13 to 14 inches in length will also be stocked into lakes and streams across the state. These fish will provide

enhanced angling experiences for the estimated 647,000 anglers that fish for trout in New York.

Although fishing conditions can be less than optimal during the early season, conditions will improve as the weather warms. As always, the best early season fishing can be found on Long Island, the lower Hudson Valley, and Western New York, which tend to warm up earlier than other portions of the state.

New York also provides some of the finest backwoods brook trout fishing in the northeast. These opportunities are most abundant in the Adirondacks, where more than 500 waters are managed for brook trout. Fish in these waters can weigh more than three pounds. In 2018, more than 310,000 brook trout fingerlings will be stocked in 345 lakes and ponds in

the Adirondacks during the spring and fall to restore or enhance brook trout populations. Anglers new to brook trout fishing should look to the [Guide to Brook Trout Fishing in Adirondack Ponds](#) for assistance.

As part of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's NY Open for Fishing and Hunting Initiative, which is aimed at increasing outdoor recreational opportunities in New York, the State is making significant improvements to DEC's fish hatchery system and waterway access facilities. Since 2014, \$14 million in NY Works funding has been budgeted for hatchery improvements. Under the 2018-19 Executive Budget Proposal, New York's Open for Fishing and Hunting Initiative provides \$19.5 million for state land access projects **NY Trout Fishing Season**

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State of Lake Erie Meeting, April 12

In partnership with the New York State DEC, the 25th annual State of Lake Erie Meeting will feature an update from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Lake Erie Management Unit.

Presentations include

• *Lake Erie Fisheries Management in Ontario*

Update from the OMNRF Lake Erie Management Unit

Tom MacDougall, Rehabilitation Ecologist, OMNRF

• *Status of the Cold Water Fish Communities*

Jim Markham, NYSDEC Aquatic Biologist

• *Status of the Warm Water Fish Communities*

Dr. Jason Robinson, NYSDEC Aquatic Biologist

• *Yellow Perch Harvest, Catch-and-Release, and Barotrauma*

Dr. Jesse Lepak, GL Fisheries & Ecosystem Health Specialist, NYSG

For more information or directions, contact: Helen Domske, New York Sea Grant - UB at (716) 645-3610, email hmd4@cornell.edu

Thursday, **April 12**, 2018
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Southtowns Walleye Association
Club House
5895 Southwestern Boulevard,
Hamburg ♦

Minnesota to stock steelhead in Lake Superior

Genetically screened steelhead will replace Kamloops to bolster fishing opportunities and protect steelhead

To protect Lake Superior's naturalized rainbow trout population, genetically screened steelhead-strain fish, originating from wild runs in the big lake itself, will replace the hatchery-raised Kamloops trout strain the Minnesota DNR now stocks to bolster fishing opportunities near Duluth.

New advances in genetic testing confirm Kamloops interbreed with wild rainbow trout. When that happens, fewer young survive and the overall steelhead population is reduced. The change from Kamloops to stocking wild-sourced steelhead lets fisheries managers improve fishing opportunities on area streams while continuing the rehabilitation of the wild fish population.

"We have worked hard to develop a solution that respects what our diverse group of rainbow trout anglers have told us is important to them—harvest opportunities in both the stream and the boat fishery, as well as high quality catch-and-release opportunities for wild steelhead," said Cory Goldsworthy, the DNR's Lake Superior area fisheries supervisor.

Since 1976, the DNR has stocked the Kamloops strain of rainbow trout in Lake Superior's waters near Duluth. Stocking increased angler opportunity and reduced harvest pressure on wild steelhead. The action helped Lake Superior's wild rainbow trout recover from the detrimental effects of invasive sea lampreys and overfishing.

Despite only localized stocking, the stocked Kamloops genetics have shown up in samples taken from many North Shore streams, the Wisconsin Bois Brule River and Michigan waters of Lake Superior.

"These discoveries confirm that interbreeding is widespread well beyond Minnesota waters," Goldsworthy said. "It would be irresponsible for the Minnesota DNR to keep stocking these fish that research has shown negatively impact Lake Superior's steelhead population."

Numerous genetic studies on the North Shore all point toward the negative impacts of interbreeding on wild steelhead populations, but DNR researchers were never able to confirm genetic interbreeding in the wild even with genetics work done as recently as the 1990s.

"With new tools, we now know without question that we can't have a goal to rehabilitate wild steelhead populations while at the same time stock the Kamloops strain for harvest," Goldsworthy said.

The steelhead the DNR stocks will have an adipose fin clipped off, just like Kamloops did. That process, which doesn't harm the fish, allows anglers to easily determine what can be harvested. Unclipped, wild steelhead will continue to remain catch-and-release only—as they have been since 1997. Because of this, the stocking change means anglers will see the same harvest regulations.

The 1995, 2006 and recently revised 2016 fisheries management plans for the Minnesota waters of Lake Superior all discuss the need for continued monitoring for interbreeding between Kamloops and wild steelhead as well as re-evaluation of using the Kamloops strain should interbreeding be confirmed. More information about the Lake Superior fishery: mndnr.gov/areas/fisheries/lakesuperior. ✧



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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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Gov awards \$500,000 to Carp Tank innovation challenge winners

Edem Tsikata of Boston, Mass accepts the grand prize at the Carp Tank from Gov. Rick Snyder

DETROIT, Mich. – Governor Rick Snyder announced the grand prize winner of the Great Lakes Invasive Carp Challenge. The solution proposed by Edem Tsikata, a software consultant at Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts, received the top award at the Carp Tank competition held at the Port Authority in Detroit.

Tsikata's "Cavitation Barrier to Deter Asian Carp" would utilize a row of specially designed propellers to generate a wall of cavitation bubbles that implode and emit high-speed jets of water. The painful sensation of the bubbles along with the noise of the propellers would repel fish and prevent their passage beyond the bubble barrier.

"I applaud the innovative solutions these finalists presented, and congratulate Edem Tsikata for winning the challenge," Snyder said. "Blocking Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes is critical, and Michigan can't afford to wait any longer. I'm confident that the solutions presented today will help take us one step closer to ensuring our waters remain free of this dangerous and harmful invasive species."

Tsikata was selected from four finalists who presented their ideas to a panel of judges and a live audience of invasive carp researchers, fisheries managers and venture capitalists. Tsikata plans to use his \$200,000 award to invest in other projects and future challenges.

"It was thrilling to be associated with a project benefitting Michigan and the Great Lakes," Tsikata said. "It's gratifying to be able to contribute ideas that benefit the economy and ecology of this region even though I live in Boston."

The Carp Tank competition is the culmination of the Great Lakes Invasive Carp Challenge, which invited innovators from around the world to develop methods to prevent invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes. Gov. Snyder announced the challenge in February 2017 and

solutions were accepted through crowdsourcing leader [InnoCentive's](#) Challenge Center from August through October 2017.

Gov. Snyder was joined at the judge's table by Dr. Denise Shaw, Senior Innovation Advisor for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Research and Development; Jeff DeBoer, Vice President and Chief Innovation Officer at Sundberg-Ferar, Inc. and chairman of the Michigan Design Council; and Dr. David Lodge, an international expert on invasive species and Director of Cornell University's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future.

Judges assessed each proposal based on its potential effectiveness, feasibility, environmental and human impacts, and level of innovation. A second-place award of \$125,000 was given to David Hamilton, Senior Policy Director for The Nature Conservancy in Lansing, Michigan. Hamilton's "AIS Lock Treatment System" is designed to function in a lock system. After vessels are moored in a gated chamber, a carefully measured amount of chlorine – which is lethal to a wide range of aquatic organisms, including invasive carp – would be injected and mixed into the chamber's waters. Following treatment, sodium bisulfate would be used to detoxify the water before it is released into the river.

Michael Scurlock, a hydraulic engineer with RiverRestoration in Carbondale, Colorado, garnered third place and \$100,000 for adjustable physical velocity barriers designed to concentrate water flow in a lock system after vessels are moored, creating a current that fish cannot swim against and essentially flushing the system before the lock gates are closed.

Dr. D.J. Lee of Smart Vision Works International in Orem, Utah, also a professor and director of the Robotics Vision Laboratory at Brigham Young University, took fourth place with his Recognition and

Removal of Invasive Fish. Lee received the fourth-place award of \$75,000. His solution is designed to prevent invasive carp from moving past the installation point by directing all fish through an automated imaging and sorting system that uses unique recognition software to divert invasive carp to a holding area for harvest. To learn more about Michigan's efforts to Block Asian carp, visit www.BlockAsianCarp.org. ✧

Free Fishing Days, April 21, May 19, June 2-3

No licenses are required on Free Fishing Days: April 21, May 19, and June 2-3. Indiana residents do not need a fishing license to fish on these four days. Kids 17 and younger can fish every day without a license. ✧

Youth & family fishing derby, Salamonie Lake April 21

Kids can fish with provided equipment and make a fish craft at Salamonie Lake on April 21. The program runs from 1 to 3 p.m. at the interpretive center and coincides with a statewide Free Fishing Day. On Free Fishing Days, Indiana residents 18 and older can fish public waters without needing a fishing license or a trout stamp. The program also serves as Salamonie Interpretive Center's "Second Saturday" event for April, even though it takes place on the third Saturday of that month. Second Saturday is a monthly educational series of programs at Salamonie Lake. Scouts can fulfill requirements for Bear Scout – A Bear Goes Fishing. There will be indoor and outdoor activities. Advance registration is required: call Teresa Rody, 260-468-2127. trody@dnr.in.gov
Location: Upper Wabash Interpretive Services dnr.IN.gov/uwis is at 3691 S. New Holland Rd, Andrews, 46702. [\(View Map\)](#) ✧

Hoosier anglers try muskie fishing

As the spring fishing season approaches, the DNR encourages Hoosier anglers to give Indiana muskie fishing a try. "Indiana has some of the best muskie fishing in the Midwest," said Jed Pearson, a DNR fisheries biologist who manages the state's muskie program. "Lake Webster, the Barbee lakes and Lake Tippecanoe in Indiana's Kosciusko County are especially good."

Local fishing guides are available for anglers who do not have a boat or who want expert help to get started. The lakes in Indiana's muskie program cover 2,700 surface acres, and many have been stocked each year for more than 20 years. Pearson says it's common for anglers to hook a muskie on every fishing trip.

Long thought to be elusive, muskies bite on a variety of lures, many of which are typically used by bass anglers. Casting large plugs or trolling spoonbaits along submerged weed beds are the most productive methods. Muskies have sharp teeth that easily cut regular fishing line. So, attach your lures to a steel leader to keep the fish from breaking away. A large landing net is handy to lift the fish and safely handle it. The minimum size limit to keep a muskie in Indiana is 36", but muskies taken at Lake Webster and the adjacent Backwater Area must be a minimum of 44" to keep. Even so, most muskie anglers release the fish they catch.

For first-time muskie fishing, Pearson suggests heading to Webster. It has the highest density of muskies. Other muskie lakes in northeast Indiana include Everett in Allen County, Loon in Whitley County, and Skinner in Noble County.

Muskie fishing is also available in southern and central Indiana, including Brookville Lake northwest of Cincinnati and Bass Lake near Sullivan. Eagle Creek Reservoir in Indianapolis is also stocked with muskies, as are two pits southeast of Indianapolis and two near Evansville. Use the fish stocking database at www.wildlife.IN.gov/5457.htm to search for muskie waters near you. ✧

DEC to host St. Lawrence County Youth Turkey Hunt April 20 - 21

Free program for youth ages 12 to 15

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Environmental Conservation Officers (ECOs) in St. Lawrence County are partnering with the Massena Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation to offer youth ages 12 to 15 the opportunity to hunt turkey this spring.

The hunt is a two-day event that starts with an educational portion at the Massena Rod and Gun Club at 5 p.m. **Friday, April 20**, followed by a hunt day on **Saturday, April 21**.

St. Lawrence County Youth Turkey Hunt, Free Program for Youth 12 - 15, Massena Rod and Gun Club, 155 Patterson Rd, Massena, NY 13662. Educational day: Friday, April 20, 5:00 p.m., Hunting day: Saturday, April 21, time TBD. Interested youth hunters must possess a New York State small game license and valid turkey tags. The event is free to the participants, and equipment will be provided if necessary.

The event is hosted by the Massena Rod and Gun Club and sponsored by the National Wild Turkey Federation and the New York Conservation Officers Association. Signup sheets are available at St. Lawrence Archery in Massena. For more information on the event please contact ECO Troy Basford at (315) 265-2757. ✧

Hunter and Boating Safety Education Courses

Register now for Hunter Safety Education and Boating Safety Education courses from the IL DNR. Check their website for class dates and [locations:](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety/Pages/VolunteerServiceCoordinators.aspx) www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety/Pages/VolunteerServiceCoordinators.aspx ✧

Anglers now enjoy a year-round season and five-bag limit for Lake Michigan lake trout

MADISON – The lake trout fishing season on Lake Michigan is now open year-round and the bag limit is five fish per day under rules effective March 17, 2018.



The five-bag limit and continuous open season make regulations for lake trout consistent with season structure and bag limits for other Lake Michigan trout and salmon, according to Brad Eggold, Great Lakes district fisheries supervisor with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The rules, adopted February 28 by the state Natural Resources Board and effective upon publication March 17, seek to allow increased sport harvest opportunities for lake trout and maintain a sustainable population while pursuing restoration goals.

The increased bag limit reflects enhanced lake trout populations in certain areas of Lake Michigan and responds to anglers' repeated requests to allow increased fishing opportunities for lake trout.

The rule establishes a sunset clause in 2021 reverting the season framework back to a two-fish bag limit with fishing allowed from March 1 through October 31. However, that sunset provision will be repealed through additional rulemaking if harvest information continues to show that a sustainable fishery can be maintained with the five fish bag limit. For more info: dnr.wi.gov, and "[fishing Lake Michigan](http://www.fishing Lake Michigan.com)." ✧

Michigan's 2018 fishing license season kicks off **April 1**

For those interested in going fishing in Michigan, a new license is required starting Sunday, **April 1**. That day was the kickoff to the state's 2018 fishing license season, as well as the new fishing regulation cycle. All 2018 fishing licenses are good through March 31, 2019.

Anglers have eight options to choose from when making their purchase. All fishing licenses are good for all species.

- Resident annual - \$26
- Nonresident annual - \$76
- Senior annual (for residents age 65 or older) - \$11
- 24-hour (resident or nonresident) - \$10
- 72-hour (resident or nonresident) - \$30
- Resident combo hunt/fish (base, annual fishing, two deer) - \$76
- Senior resident combo hunt/fish (base, annual fishing, two deer) - \$43
- Nonresident combo hunt/fish (base, annual fishing, two deer) - \$266

There are several regulation

changes this year, creating many new fishing opportunities for anglers. The new regulations go into effect on **April 1, 2018**, including the following:

- Muskellunge harvest season has changed statewide to the first Saturday in June and includes a new catch-and-immediate release season open all year.

- A new suite of waters has been added where anglers may retain an additional five brook trout in their daily possession limit of trout (10 brook trout possession waters).

Additionally, a new registration system has been put into place for anglers who harvest a lake sturgeon or muskie. The lake sturgeon fishing permit and harvest tag and the muskie harvest tags are no longer required or available. An angler who harvests a lake sturgeon or muskie is now required to report the harvest within 24 hours, online at michigan.gov/registerfish, by calling the toll-free number 844-345-FISH

(3474) or in person at any [DNR Customer Service Center](#) during normal state business hours with advance notice of arrival. Please note that fish registrations won't be accepted at any state fish hatcheries or DNR field offices, only at DNR Customer Service Centers.

For more information on Michigan fishing licenses and regulation changes, check out the 2018 Michigan Fishing Guide – available at license retailers or online at www.michigan.gov/dnr/digests. The online version is always up to date and available to download.

Don't forget, there are two simple ways to buy a fishing license in Michigan:

- Visit a local license retailer or DNR Customer Service Center and make a purchase in person.
- Use the E-License system to buy a license online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Just visit mdnr-eligence.com on your computer, smartphone or tablet to get started. ✧

RBFF secures funding for another five years

Thanks to the strong support of our industry and state agency stakeholders, RBFF's mission to increase fishing and boating participation will be funded through March 2023. In an announcement on February 23, 2018, the U.S. Department of the Interior and Secretary Ryan Zinke outlined their \$60 million cooperative agreement with RBFF to continue to recruit, retain and reactivate (R3) anglers and boaters. Also announced: \$14 million in Boating Infrastructure Grants (BIG), which support water-related outdoor recreation and tourism by improving facilities for large transient recreational boats across the country.

“Outdoor recreation is a key part of our American heritage, and boating and fishing in particular are how many Americans enjoy

our public waters,” said Secretary Zinke. “The new cooperative agreement with RBFF is going to make sure we are reaching new anglers and boaters from all ages to get out on the water. The BIG grants help ensure that those new recreationists, as well as those who have enjoyed these activities for years, experience improved access to fishing opportunities with safer and more user-friendly recreational boating facilities.”

“These funds will allow us to work with our partners at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in our effort to increase angler and boater participation, ultimately reaching our 60 in 60 goal,” said Frank Peterson, RBFF President & CEO. “The work we do helps provide our state and federal agencies with critical dollars to carry out conservation programs, ensuring safe, clean

and productive waterways for generations to come.”

RBFF will continue to utilize the funds to push forward toward the 60 in 60 goal, utilizing its national Take Me Fishing™ campaign to engage families and outdoor enthusiasts in fishing and boating. Additionally, RBFF works with state agencies and industry partners to keep fishing and boating as top-of-mind activities among consumers. And all of this work is having an impact. Over the last 10 years, fishing participation has increased by nearly 20%, with current participation rates the highest they've been since 1991. Fishing license sales are also up, increasing 4.26% since 2005, and just last year boat registrations saw their first increase since 2009. ✧

DEC asks for comment on Draft Salmon River Fisheries Mgmt Plan Accepting Public Comments on Draft Plan until [April 23, 2018](#)

DEC announced the release of the Draft Salmon River Fisheries Management Plan to guide the agency's continuing efforts to sustain and improve one of New York's premier sportfishing destinations.

"The Salmon River is renowned for its world class trout and salmon fishing," DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos said. "Anglers from across North America and beyond come to the Salmon River for the opportunity to land trophy-size fish. This plan will enhance the Salmon River's status as New York's premier, year-round angling destination for lake-run trout and salmon."

DEC's goal is to manage the Salmon River and its tributaries as a year-round sport fishery that provides anglers with the opportunity to catch an array of trophy-sized salmonids. DEC proposes a variety of strategies to achieve this goal, including improvements to its Salmon River Fish Hatchery, improved and increased angler access, efforts to promote ethical angling, protection and enhancement of critical fish habitats, and utilizing science and adaptive management to measure and achieve success.

DEC is encouraging the public to comment on the plan, which covers the period from 2018 to 2033 and focuses on lake-run trout and salmon (salmonids) in the 17-mile Salmon River corridor and the river's major tributaries below the Lighthouse Hill Reservoir in the town of Orwell.

The [Salmon River Fisheries Management Plan](#) is available on DEC's website.

DEC will accept comments on the draft plan until [April 23, 2018](#). To comment, send an email with the subject line "Salmon River Plan" to fwfish7@dec.ny.gov or send written comments via U.S. Mail to: David Lemon, Regional Fisheries Mgr., NYSDEC Region 7, 1285 Fisher Rd, Cortland, New York 13045 ✧

Ind seeks help for crappie research

People who fish Hardy Lake near Scottsburg can help the Indiana DNR learn more about crappie harvest. The DNR tagged more than 350 black and white crappie at the lake.

Here is how anglers can help:

- Inspect all crappie caught for a tag. Fish are tagged with a yellow "spaghetti tag" near the dorsal fin with a four- or five-digit #. The tag may appear brown or black, and some crappie may be double tagged.
- Remove the tag(s) with a knife or scissors.
- Report the capture of a tagged fish to the DNR. Tag return envelopes are at Hardy Lake boat ramps and gate houses, the Hardy Lake property office and the DNR Bloomington field office.
- Fill out the tag return envelope and drop the tag(s) into the envelope. Envelopes can be returned to where you obtained the envelope. Only include tag(s) from one fish per envelope.
- If you do not have a tag return envelope, you can return the tag(s) with the following info to DNR Bloomington Field Office, 5596 E. State Rd. 46, Bloomington, IN 47401:
 - Capture date.
 - If you released the fish or brought it home.
 - Your name and address.

For more info, contact research biologist Andrew Bueltmann at 812-287-8300 ext. 8302 or abueltmann@dnr.IN.gov. ✧

Big winners in the \$1.3 trillion spending bill - fishing and cranberry researchers

Republicans and Democrats sparred over which party emerged victorious from the \$1.3 trillion spending bill fight, but the real winners are thousands of interest groups; including wealthy foreign investors, striped bass fishing enthusiasts and cranberry researchers, to whom the bill doles out some serious assistance. ✧

Walleye egg collection on Muskegon River begin this month

Muskegon River anglers should be on the lookout this spring for Michigan DNR personnel collecting walleye eggs below Croton Dam.

Walleye collection with electro-fishing boats started as early as the week of [March 26](#) and will conclude by April 13. Anglers should use caution when fishing near the electro-fishing boats. To ensure their safety, wading anglers will be asked to exit the water when the boat approaches. Those who wish to avoid the walleye collection activities should fish downstream.

The DNR plans to collect approximately 47 million walleye eggs from the Muskegon River this year that will result in 15 million fry for transfer to rearing ponds and direct fry plants throughout the Lower Peninsula. Walleye fry transferred to ponds will be raised to fingerling size (1.5 to 2.5 inches) and stocked in lakes and rivers throughout the state in late spring or early summer.

The size of the walleye spawning run in the Muskegon River is presently about 40,000 to 50,000 fish each year. DNR crews will strip milt (sperm) and eggs from approximately 500 adult fish, which will be returned to the river – except for 60 which will be sent to Michigan State University for fish health testing.

"This adult population consists of mostly stocked fish," said Ed Pearce, 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."

Sampling using electro-fishing usually begins at about 8:30 a.m. at Croton Dam and proceeds downstream to the Pine Street Access Site.

Egg collection and fertilizing is conducted at the Pine Street Public Access Site, about two miles downstream of Croton Dam. This process generally begins between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. ✧

2018-2020 Lake Michigan strategies highlight partnerships to enhance salmon fishing

MADISON – Fish stocking trucks are starting to deliver the first trout and salmon for Lake Michigan under a new stocking plan that seeks to sustain diverse fishing opportunities and expand partnerships to make sure more stocked fish survive to catchable size and wind up on Wisconsin anglers' lines.

The plan, developed over more than two years of discussion and input from more than 500 anglers, business owners and other stakeholders, calls for stocking skamania steelhead for the first time in a decade, stocking larger salmon and trout that survive better, and expanding efforts with fishing clubs to place stocked fish in pens in Lake Michigan to get acclimatized and grow bigger before they're released.

The plan also calls for DNR to contract with private fish farms to help meet stocking needs, and enhance data sharing with sport and charter anglers to continue improving the information DNR uses to make proactive and innovative management decisions.

"Our Wisconsin waters of Lake Michigan not only have world class fisheries, they have world class anglers, businesses, stakeholder groups, and communities committed to keeping the Lake Michigan fishery strong," says DNR Secretary Dan Meyer.

"With their input, expertise, and discussion, we've created a collaborative plan that embraces partnerships to enhance fishing opportunities and success for all anglers, while sustaining a healthy Lake Michigan fisheries community."

DNR's 2018-2020 plan calls for stocking levels similar to 2017's and remains within the guidance recommended by the Lake Michigan Committee, which is composed of state and tribal agencies on Lake Michigan, says Brad Eggold, DNR Great Lakes District fisheries supervisor.

"We're cognizant of the complex interaction within the prey base," Eggold said. "Our plan stays within Lake Michigan Committee guidelines but also maximizes the bang we get for our investment. We include innovative approaches and partnerships to make sure we are maximizing the survivability of the fish stocked and anglers' success in catching them."

- Chinook salmon stocking numbers remain consistent at about 810,000 fish total a year, recognizing the popularity of this fish and that angler catch rates are highest for Chinook. Eight Lake Michigan stocking sites will get more fish (1,800 to 4,200 fish per year) under a reallocation of 25,000 fish from Marinette and Strawberry Creek. Marinette will get 20,000 more brown trout per year, to offset the Chinook reallocation.

- The annual lake-wide brown trout stocking target will increase from 356,000 to 376,000 and coho salmon stocking will focus on larger yearlings versus smaller fingerlings for stocking. The number of yearling fish stocked is targeted to increase over previous years, with a target of 400,000 yearlings stocked annually. Wisconsin research indicates that coho stocked as yearlings are nearly twice as likely to be caught by anglers as coho stocked as fingerlings.

- Steelhead stocking targets will increase from 300,000 to 350,000, and lake trout targets will continue to be evaluated, but will remain 300,000 per year for now. DNR partnered with Indiana to bring skamania steelhead to Wisconsin hatcheries, which will be stocked into Lake Michigan in 2018, and the additional steelhead stocking is expected to occur under a new collaboration with the private aquaculture industry. DNR is developing a Request for Proposals to solicit private aquaculture interests to raise steelhead to supplement DNR stocking into Lake Michigan beginning in 2019.

In addition, the DNR fisheries bureau is: expanding the salmon and trout net pen projects to maximize survivability of stocked fish; committing to working with Sea Grant in collecting additional information from charter and commercial fishers to better inform future management strategies; enhancing outreach and communication by more actively engaging stakeholders in communication initiatives; and exploring enhanced electronic reporting options that will increase the efficiency and accuracy of fishing report data.

Eggold says that DNR staff greatly appreciate the continued involvement, expertise, and collaborative efforts of all Lake Michigan stakeholders. "We will continue to seek creative, constructive, and diverse input to inform management strategies to maintain diverse and sustainable fishing opportunities for current and future sport, commercial and charter anglers."

For more information, contact a Lake Michigan fisheries biologist or search the DNR website, dnr.wi.gov, for "[Lake Michigan fisheries](#)." ✧

VHS found in gizzard shad in Port Washington Harbor fish kill

MADISON – Test results have confirmed that VHS as well as one other pathogen was found associated with a late January fish kill of gizzard shad in Port Washington Harbor, according to state fish health experts. DNR officials have also looked into a report of gizzard shad mortalities in the Menomonee River (Milwaukee). Samples were collected and sent for testing. The testing period takes approximately 28 days. We will have further updates once test results have been received for the Menomonee River fish. ✧

NY Trout Fishing Season

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and an additional \$4 million for fish and wildlife infrastructure.

NY Open for Fishing and Hunting hatchery improvement projects completed in 2017 include:

- Well rehab projects at Bath and Adirondack Hatcheries, improving water quality for rearing fish;
- Reconfiguration of the hatchery water outfall at Caledonia Hatchery;
- Installation of secure hydrogen peroxide storage at multiple hatcheries as required by the Department of Homeland Security;
- Purchase of six trucks to aid in cleaning hatchery ponds;
- Rehabilitation of the feed storage building at Rome Hatchery; and
- Extensive improvements to the visitor center and grounds at the Salmon River Hatchery.

From stream habitat protection to the maintenance of public access infrastructure, a variety of management strategies are required to protect and enhance the diverse selection of trout and salmon fishing opportunities in NY. Guided by recent studies on angler behavior and input from trout stream anglers in 16 public meetings, DEC is revisiting inland trout stream management to identify strategies to support an assortment of trout stream angling experiences. Visit the DEC's [Trout Stream Management in New York](#) web page for more information.

DEC also provides [maps](#) of its public fishing rights easements. Anglers are reminded to observe special trout regulations on waters noted in the [current fishing guide](#).

For beginning or youth anglers, ponds are easiest to fish, particularly during the early season. Information about where and how to fish, including a new highly effective technique for early season trout, can be found on the [DEC's website](#).

Fishing License Required

Anyone 16 and older must have a current State fishing license to fish in New York. Fishing licenses are now valid for 365 days from the date of purchase. More information on

purchasing a fishing license can be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6091.html>.

License purchasers are reminded that every dollar spent on a fishing license helps fund fish stocking and other programs conducted by DEC. Also consider buying a Habitat Stamp which helps fund important access and habitat improvement projects. For more info: www.dec.ny.gov/permits/47452.html. ✧

Family Learn to Fish Workshop, **April 21**

Do you want to take your family fishing, but don't know how or where to start? Start by attending a free family fishing workshop at various locations around the state. The first one is **April 21** at Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge. At a DNR Go FishIN Family Learn to Fish workshop, parents and children age 6 and older will learn a little fish biology, gain some basic fishing skills, and get to go fishing. All times are 9am to noon. Equipment is provided, but pre-registration is necessary. Location: Muscatatuck NWR – Seymour, IN. For registration, call Donna Stanley, 812-522-4352 x 12, donna.stanley@fws.gov. ✧

Becoming an Outdoors Woman

Registration is open for the IDNR 'Becoming an Outdoors Woman' Workshop on **June 8-10** at the Lorado Taft Field Campus in Oregon, Illinois. 'Becoming an Outdoors Woman' workshops are designed to provide introductory instruction and experiences in many outdoor-related activities and skills. The cost is \$240, which includes meals, lodging, four instructional classes, use of class materials/supplies, transportation during the workshop, and more. For registration materials: www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/BOW. Register soon, as only a few reservations are left (there is a limit of 90 participants). ✧

Ill Spring Trout Fishing Season opens **April 7** Spring Catch-and-Release Fly Fishing Season opened March 24 at select sites

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The 2018 Illinois Spring Trout Fishing Season is just a few weeks away. Anglers will need both a fishing license and an Inland Trout Stamp to participate, unless they are under the age of 16, blind, disabled, or are an Illinois resident on leave from active duty in the Armed Forces.

Licenses and trout stamps are available for purchase on the IDNR website and at DNR Direct license and permit locations, including many bait shops, sporting goods stores and other retail outlets.

The Spring Catch-and-Release Fly Fishing season opened at nine sites on March 24. Anglers can use fly fishing gear to catch trout at that time, but they cannot keep the fish. All trout must be released until after the opening of the regular spring trout season, which begins at 5 a.m. on **April 7**. Anyone attempting to take trout before the legal harvest season opening will be issued citations.

The IDNR stocks more than 80,000 rainbow trout each year, with 54 ponds, lakes and streams throughout the state being stocked for the spring season, and an additional 80,000 trout stocked for the fall season. No trout may be taken from any of the stocked sites from March 15 until the spring trout season opens at 5 a.m. on April 7.

For more information on trout seasons and other Illinois fishing opportunities, check the website at www.ifishillinois.org.

For more information about all site regulations, anglers should contact individual sites that will be stocked with catchable-size trout. Not all sites open at 5 a.m. on opening day. Anglers are reminded to check the opening time of their favorite sites prior to the opening date.

The 54 locations that will be open for spring trout season are listed here: [Illinois Spring Trout Fishing-Season Locations](#) ✧

Share comments with DNR at April meetings

The Michigan DNR is providing Michigan citizens opportunities to share input and ideas on policy decisions, programs and other aspects of natural resource management and outdoor recreation opportunities. One important avenue for this input is the public bodies that advise the DNR and, in some cases, also set policies for natural resource management.

The following boards, commissions, committees and councils will hold public meetings in April 2018. The public is encouraged to attend. The links below will take you to the web page for each body, where you will find specific meeting locations and, when finalized, meeting agendas.

Please check these pages frequently, as meeting details and agendas may change and sometimes meetings are canceled.

- [Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee](#) - April 19, 9 to 11 a.m., Belle Isle Nature Zoo, Belle Isle, Detroit
- [Coldwater Resources Steering Committee](#) - April 26, 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Jay's Sporting Goods, Gaylord
- [Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizens Advisory Council](#) - April 19, 6 p.m., LMAS Health Department, Newberry
- [Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee](#) - April 25, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Jay's Sporting Goods, Clare
- [Lake Michigan Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee](#) - April 17, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Cabela's, Grandville
- [Michigan Historical Commission](#) - April 18, 10 a.m., Michigan Library and History Center, Lansing
- [Michigan Iron Industry Museum Advisory Board](#) - April 17, 3 p.m., Michigan Iron Industry Museum, Negaunee
- [Michigan Wildlife Council](#) - April 17, 1 to 4:30 p.m., Northwest Activities Center, Detroit
- [Natural Resources Commission](#) - April 12, 9 a.m., MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Lansing

- [Natural Resources Trust Fund Board](#) - April 11, 9 a.m., Michigan Wildlife Conservancy, Bath
- [Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee](#) - April 13, 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Tuscarora Township Hall, Indian River
- [Pigeon River County Advisory Council](#) - April 20, 5 p.m., Pigeon River Country Headquarters, Vanderbilt
- [State Parks Advisory Committee](#) - April 12, 9 to 11:30 a.m., MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Lansing
- [Timber Advisory Council](#) - April 6, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., conference call (dial 888-557-8511, access code 8718230)
- [Trails Advisory Council](#) - April 10, 10 a.m., Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, Roscommon
- [Waterways Commission](#) - April 25, 9 a.m. to noon, DNR customer service center, Lansing ✧

NY Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife App - Free

Download the New York Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife App on the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play store](#), or by going to the [Pocket Ranger website](#).

This FREE, cutting-edge mobile app gives both novice and seasoned outdoorsmen and women essential information in the palm of their hands. Powered by Pocket Ranger® technology, this official app for DEC will provide up-to-date information on fishing, hunting and wildlife watching and serve as an interactive outdoor app using today's leading mobile devices. Using the app's advanced GPS features, users will be able to identify and locate New York's many hunting, fishing and wildlife watching sites. They will also gain immediate access to species profiles, rules and regulations, and important permits and licensing details.

The app provides plenty of additional features to maximize any outdoor adventure. ✧

2018 Lake Huron Fisheries Workshops

Michigan Sea Grant, in partnership with fisheries agencies and stakeholder organizations, hosts public information workshops annually. The workshops focus on current research and information related to the regional status of Great Lakes fisheries. These workshops are open to the public and provide valuable information for anglers, charter captains, resource professionals and other interested stakeholders.

Standish

Tuesday, **April 10**, 6–9 p.m., Saganing Tribal Center, 5447 Sturman Rd., Standish, MI 48658

- [Register Online](#) | [Agenda \(PDF\)](#) | [Additional details\(PDF\)](#)

Harrison Charter Township

Thursday, **April 12**, 6–8:30 p.m. Sportsmen's Direct, 38989 Jefferson Ave, Harrison Charter Township, MI 48045

- [Additional details \(PDF\)](#)

Ubyl/Bad Axe

Thursday, **April 19**, 6–9 p.m. Ubyl Fox Hunter's Club, 2351 Ubyl Rd., Bad Axe, MI 48413

- [Register Online](#) | [Agenda \(PDF\)](#) | [Additional details\(PDF\)](#)

South Haven

Thursday, **April 19**, 2018 7-9:20 p.m. Moose Lodge, 1025 Wells Street, South Haven, MI 49090

- [Additional details \(PDF\)](#)

Rogers City

Tuesday, **April 24**, 6–9 p.m. Rogers City Area Seniors and Community Center, 131 Superior St., Rogers City, MI 49779

- [Register Online](#) | [Agenda \(PDF\)](#) | [Additional details\(PDF\)](#)

Houghton

Monday, **April 30**, 6–9 p.m. Great Lakes Research Center, 100 Phoenix Drive, Houghton, MI 49931

- [Register Online](#) | [Additional details \(PDF\)](#)

Cedarville

Thursday, **May 3**, 6–9 p.m. Clark Township Community Center, 133 E. M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719

- [Register Online](#) | [Agenda \(PDF\)](#) | [Additional details\(PDF\)](#) ✧

Spring MI turkey season

Michigan's Spring turkey season opens on **April 23** (except Hunt 234), so now is the time to pattern your shotgun for a successful hunt. The DNR shooting ranges are here to help you get ready. [Printable turkey target](#). Remaining spring turkey hunting licenses are available anywhere DNR licenses are sold or online at [eLicense](#). Anyone can hunt turkeys in Michigan – no application is needed for Hunt 234, also known as the late season. You can buy the Hunt 234 license, which gives you 25 days of turkey hunting in May, from now through the end of turkey season. For more info: [Michigan.gov/turkey](#) or watch our [spring turkey hunting regulations video](#). ✧

Turkey Hunting Workshop and Patterning Day

The [Pontiac Lake shooting range](#) will hold its annual [Wild Turkey Shotgun Hunting Workshop and Patterning Day](#) at the hand trap range on Saturday, **April 14**. Shotgun patterning can start as early as 10 a.m. The whole trap field will be set only for patterning. There will be 24-inch by 24-inch ground target boards set at 25, 35 and 40 yards. Patterning a shotgun for wild turkey is similar to sighting in a rifle, except the shooter checks the density of the shot pattern as it hits the target. ✧

Wis to waive fall turkey drawing; licenses on sale now

Fall turkey hunters will no longer be required to apply in a drawing for fall turkey harvest authorizations. Instead, one fall turkey harvest authorization will be issued at no additional cost with the purchase of a fall turkey or conservation patron license. Customers will need to specify their zone of choice when purchasing their license. For more info: [dnr.wi.gov](#) and search keyword "[turkey](#)." ✧

Women and girls shooting clinics

The May 12th Women and Girls Instructional Rifle and Pistol Shooting Clinic is full, so two more clinics have been added. Both are in Dutchess County.

Saturday, **June 2**, 2018 from 9 am – 5 pm at the Washington Hollow Rod and Gun Club in Pleasant Valley.

Saturday, **July 21**, 2018 from 9 am – 4 pm at the Hudson Valley Sportsmen's Association in Poughkeepsie.

For more information, contact Jackie Emslie at 914-475-4901 or jslie@earthlink.net

For questions or comments, please contact:

Kelly Stang, NYSDEC
625 Broadway,
Albany, NY 12233
518-402-8862

Kelly.stang@dec.ny.gov
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/68.html> ✧

DNR to hold public comment period, public hearing on Foxconn air permits

MADISON – The Wisconsin DNR is seeking public comment on air permit drafts for the Foxconn liquid crystal display manufacturing facility proposed for construction in Racine County. The department made available for public comment the applications, draft permits and analysis documents for four air pollution control permits covering the Foxconn facility. To view the documents search the DNR website, [dnr.wi.gov](#), for keyword [Foxconn](#). The DNR will accept public comments through **April 16, 2018**. Written comments may be sent to jonathan.wright@wisconsin.gov or to Wisconsin DNR, Northeast Region Air Program, Oshkosh Service Center, Attn.: Jonathan Wright, 625 E. County Rd Y, Suite 700, Oshkosh, WI 54901-9731. ✧

Ohio Fish & Game Public Hearing **Apr 23**,

The Ohio DNR has announced an update to the upcoming Statewide Fish and Game Public Hearings. The date for the Statewide Public Hearings has been moved to Monday, **April 23**, at 2:30 p.m. The hearings will be held at the ODNR's District One office. The office is located at 1500 Dublin Road in Columbus. Copies of the public hearing notices are available at [registerofohio.state.oh.us](#).

Submit comments by common courier or delivery to the ODNR at 2045 Morse Road, Columbus, Ohio 43229, Building G, Attention: Chief, or email wildlife.council@dnr.state.oh.us by 5 p.m. on April 23, 2018. The public may also appear in person to provide positions, arguments or contentions at the Statewide Fish and Game Public Hearings. All oral testimony is required to be three minutes or less. ✧

Register for "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman"

The annual Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshop **May 4-6** at Ross Camp in West Lafayette, has 25 spots left. The workshop is open to women ages 18 and older. Courses range from shotgun shooting to fly-fishing. Whether you've never stepped foot in the woods or you're a seasoned outdoor enthusiast, you'll have a wild time at Indiana's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshop. The program is designed to learn outdoor skills in a relaxed, low-pressure environment. Shoot clay targets, paddle a canoe, catch a trophy bass, become a campfire gourmet cook, make a fur hat, spot rare wild birds, or learn to track deer...it's up to you. Design your own outdoor experience to match your interests! Register online: [BOW register](#). ✧

2018 Pure Michigan Hunt winners take home winnings

Kevin Ornatowski of Tawas City, Don Rademacher of Lake Odessa and Jim Tilton of Alma, the latest winners of the Pure Michigan Hunt drawing, received all their winnings at the recent Natural Resources Commission meeting in Grand Rapids.

Each Pure Michigan Hunt winner received a 2018 elk, bear, antlerless deer, and spring and fall turkey hunting licenses. They also get first choice at a managed waterfowl hunt area on opening morning.

Winners each went home with a hunting prize package valued at more than \$4,000. Representatives of many businesses and organizations were present to meet the winners and donate their prizes.

Winners received the following prizes donated by Michigan companies and organizations:

- Engraved Henry Golden Boy .22 long rifle – Dick Williams Gun Shop of Saginaw
- 12-gauge shotgun – Michigan Ducks Unlimited
- Annual subscription, camouflage hat, current copies of publication and Outdoor Print of the Year – Michigan Outdoor News
- Camouflage pop-up blind – Ameristep of Clio
- Jet Sleds and Yeti accessories – St. Clair Flats Waterfowlers, Inc.
- Quiver accessories – Kwiikee Kwiiver of Williamsburg
- Hunting accessories – Harmon Scents of Williamsburg
- Custom waterfowl mount – The Trophy Room of Clare
- Traps, DVDs, calls and more – Michigan Trappers and Predator Callers Association
- Turkey hunting gear – Michigan Chapter of National Wild Turkey Federation
- Deer/habitat management package – Michigan Chapter of Quality Deer Management Association
- \$100 Cabela's gift card – Saginaw Field and Stream Club

- Shotgun case and hat – Ruffed Grouse Society
 - Eberlestock team elk pack – Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
 - Two-day/two-night guided hunt (winner's choice between guided turkey, deer or bear hunt), including lodging and food – Wild Game Dynasty of Essexville
 - Custom shooting earplugs and hat – Michigan Hearing
 - Half-day, fully guided, five-bird pheasant hunt – Bear Creek Hunt Club of Clayton
 - \$50 gas card and magazine subscription – Michigan United Conservation Clubs of Lansing
 - Duck decoys and Zink calls – Waterfowl USA of Erie
 - Soft bow cases and sling – Bohning Archery of Lake City
 - Personalized Pure Michigan Hunt hat and engraved knife – Michigan Planners of Garfield Township
 - Framed and matted Michigan duck stamp print – Michigan Duck Hunters Association
 - Five-year Commemorative Bucks of Michigan membership, including one free trophy mount – Commemorative Bucks of Michigan
 - Scent Web deer scent and Dual Grunter camouflage deer call – Away Hunting Products of Beaverton
 - Buck Bait lures, cover scents, odor elimination and the official coffee of deer camp – Buck Baits of Sterling Heights
 - DOEnation T-shirts and baseball caps – DOEnation of Monroe
- In 2017, 12,708 individuals purchased 35,214 applications, generating more than \$176,000 to help fund wildlife habitat restoration and improvements in Michigan. Applications for the next Pure Michigan Hunt drawing are now available. To purchase and learn more, visit www.mi.gov/pmh. ✧

First managed elk hunt in Wisconsin in 22 years by DNR

Following more than 22 years of elk management and reintroduction efforts, 2018 will mark Wisconsin's first managed elk hunt in state history. "This is an incredible conservation success story for Wisconsin," said DNR Secretary Dan Meyer. "Thanks to the efforts of so many great organizations and individuals, the northern elk herd has continued to grow to the point where we can offer this very special and long-awaited hunting opportunity."

The area of the planned hunt is within the Clam Lake elk range of Sawyer, Bayfield, Ashland, and Price counties in far north-central Wisconsin. Original restoration efforts occurred within this range with the release of 25 elk from Michigan in 1995. This northern herd is projected to reach a population level of over 200 animals this year, including a high proportion of bulls.

Ten tags will be made available for a bull-only hunt in Fall 2018. Four tags will be awarded to Wisconsin residents through a random drawing. One additional tag will be awarded to a Wisconsin resident through a raffle conducted by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Consistent with federal court rulings, the elk harvest quota is being shared equitably with the six Wisconsin Chippewa tribes.

Interested hunters can apply, however, only Wisconsin residents are eligible to purchase an elk tag. The application fee is \$10 and applications will be available starting May 1 through the Go WILD system at GoWild.wi.gov. Prior to receiving their carcass tag, all drawing winners will be required to complete an elk hunter education course prior to the start of the season," Wallenfang says. "Revenue from the elk tag application process will provide important funds to support elk habitat management, research and monitoring in Wisconsin as the herd continues to grow." ✧

Bass fishing changes, transport of CWD positive deer among questions at Spring Rules Hearings

MADISON – A continuous season for bass fishing – with harvest only allowed during the current open season, restriction on moving deer that test positive for chronic wasting disease, opening the inland trout season the first Saturday in April, and a new fee to use state wildlife, fisheries and natural areas are among the questions the public can vote on at the 2018 Spring Fish and Wildlife Public Hearing and annual Conservation Congress county meetings.

On Monday, **April 9**, there will be [72 public hearings \[PDF\]](#), one in each Wisconsin county starting at 7 p.m. where people interested in natural resources management have an opportunity to provide their input by non-binding vote and testimony to the DNR and Conservation Congress on proposed natural resources advisory question that may lead to future rule changes.

Among the fisheries management advisory questions are two of statewide interest related to bass fishing. One seeks input on the idea of a statewide, continuous open season for bass fishing. Harvest of bass would only be allowed during the current traditional season. The other proposes establishing alternate size and bag limits for participants in permitted, catch-and-release, bass fishing tournaments.

Local fisheries management advisory questions include:

- Whether the DNR should initiate a review of longstanding panfish and gamefish size and bag limit regulations on the Mississippi River;
- Walleye harvest regulations affecting Koshkonong Lake in Jefferson/Rock counties and the Lake Winnebago system; and
- Lake Superior sturgeon size limit and bank pole fishing regulations on the Winnebago system.

Wildlife management advisory questions include one asking whether deer harvested in a CWD-affected county could only be transported within that county or to an adjacent

CWD-affected county to minimize the risk of moving CWD prions along with carcasses to areas of the state that have not had CWD-positive test results.

Other wildlife management questions include:

- A proposal to change the closing time of certain wildlife refuges to the end of the waterfowl season to allow recreational users earlier access to the refuges; and
- Moving the close of pheasant season daily shooting hours on public properties stocked with pheasants from 2 p.m. to noon on weekdays from the third day of the pheasant season through November 3 to give wildlife staff more time and flexibility to stock while removing hunting pressure on the birds until the next morning.

The results of voting on the DNR proposed questions will be used by the department in the development of future policies and rule proposals. The department will hold hearings on any rule change proposals that advance at the 2019 spring hearings.

This year the Conservation Congress will seek public input on 36 advisory questions on a range of topics, including:

- opening the inland trout season on the first Saturday in April;
- returning to a three-zone mink and muskrat season framework;
- allowing the unrestricted harvest of white perch on Lake Superior;
- changing the requirements for obtaining a Wisconsin Guide License.

"Conservation Congress advisory questions generally originate from citizens' ideas," said Larry Bonde, Chairman of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. "If resolutions presented at the county level meetings are supported, the resolution is advanced to one of the congress' advisory committees and the District Leadership Council for consideration. If the proposal advances through the committees and council, it is forwarded to the DNR

and Natural Resources Board for consideration as a future rule change.

"Each year, there are over 200 resolutions submitted locally. Not all pass, but the ones that do have the potential to become a rule, policy or legislative change in the subsequent years," Bonde said. "It is a true grassroots process that empowers the citizens of this state to shape natural resources policy."

The State Natural Resources Board is also seeking input on a number of advisory questions, including a proposal for a \$5 annual fee for all users between the ages of 16 and 64 of state fishery, wildlife, natural areas and leased public hunting grounds and dedicating that money to directly support fish and wildlife habitat management and infrastructure on those properties.

Other board questions include:

- eliminating the group deer hunting law so that the only person who can fill a tag is the hunter that had been issued the deer harvest authorization; and
- adjusting the length of the crossbow season, for those who are not disabled or elderly.

To view the [2018 spring wildlife and fisheries questionnaire package \[PDF\]](#) or for information about the process search the DNR website, dnr.wi.gov, for "[spring hearings](#)."

County Conservation Congress elections

During the Conservation Congress county meetings, county residents have the option to run for a seat on the Conservation Congress and to elect delegates from their county to represent their views regarding natural resources issues on the Conservation Congress, the citizen advisory body to the Natural Resources Board and DNR. Also, individuals have the opportunity to bring forth new conservation issues of a statewide nature to the attention of the Conservation Congress through the citizen resolution process. ✧

Catch-and-release summer walleye season for Lake Mille Lacs

Walleye fishing expected to be open all year; bait restrictions only apply to night walleye closure
2018 season regulations part of strategic effort to protect Mille Lacs' walleye population

The Minnesota DNR says plans for the 2018 walleye fishing season on Lake Mille Lacs that seek to maximize fishing opportunities for anglers while protecting the health and sustainability of Mille Lacs' improving walleye population. When anglers hit the water on Mille Lacs for the fishing opener on Saturday, **May 12**, catch-and-release only regulations will again be in effect. The lake's spawning walleye population has improved from last year, so no mid-season closures are planned.

Similar to prior years, night closure for the 2018 walleye fishing season will be in effect on Mille Lacs from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. beginning Monday, **May 14**. The night walleye closure remains in effect throughout the entire open-water season, which ends November 30. The catch-and-release summer season and night walleye closure are part of the DNR's continued strategic efforts to understand and improve the walleye population in Lake Mille Lacs.

The population has undergone a decline over the past two decades that has coincided with significant aquatic system changes including increased water clarity and decreased walleye productivity; the introduction of zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil and spiny water fleas; a changing zooplankton community that may be altering the aquatic food web; and declines in certain forage species, including tullibee.

"Improving the walleye population on Mille Lacs is a top priority for the DNR," said Tom Landwehr, DNR commissioner. "We want to see as much walleye fishing on Mille Lacs as possible this year. Anglers have had a very good winter walleye season on the lake and we will be able to continue that trend into the open-water season with no mid-season closure planned."

DNR Fisheries Chief Don Pereira said DNR analyses as well as external review indicate that the walleye spawning stock has increased

significantly in Mille Lacs and the lake can support a larger safe harvest level of walleye in 2018, as long as a catch-and-release rule is in place.

"Implementing a catch-and-release policy this season is important not only for the sustainable growth of Mille Lacs' walleye population, but for area anglers, businesses, and Mille Lacs area communities," Pereira said. "We want anglers to get out and enjoy the abundant fishing opportunities on Mille Lacs."

Pereira added that a catch-and-release season should also allow the state to account for a portion of the excess walleye kill in 2016 and 2017. With catch-and-release measures in place this summer, some of the fish caught and returned to the water may die, a condition known as hooking mortality. The likelihood of fish suffering hooking mortality increases as water temperatures warm. Fish that die as a result of hooking mortality are counted against the state's harvest allocation.

State and tribal allocations

Minnesota and Chippewa bands that cooperatively manage Lake Mille Lacs have yet to set the safe harvest level for 2018 and discussions are ongoing. These discussions follow the process outlined in protocols arising from the U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1999 to uphold the bands' treaty rights.

Seeking new solutions to improve and sustain a healthy walleye fishery

In June 2017, the DNR announced that a new external review team of scientists would take a fresh look at Lake Mille Lacs walleye fishery. Led by walleye expert Dr. Chris Vandergoot of the U.S. Geological Survey, this review showed that the DNR's survey methods met or exceeded accepted best practices, and that interpretations of changes in the lake are correct. A summary of the team's conclusions and recommendations will be available later this year. DNR staff are currently exploring the

feasibility of implementing some of these recommendations.

Bass, northern, and muskellunge regulations

In addition to walleye, the DNR encourages all Minnesotans to visit Lake Mille Lacs to fish the other abundant species that the lake has to offer. The lake is nationally recognized as one of the nation's top smallmouth bass and muskellunge fisheries. In 2017, Mille Lacs was named the number one bass fishing lake in the nation by Bassmaster Magazine. The lake hosted the Toyota Bassmaster Angler of the Year Championship in 2016 and 2017.

Bass season opens **Saturday, May 12**, but is catch-and-release only through **Friday, May 25**. Beginning May 26, Mille Lacs' bag limit will be four bass per angler. All smallmouth and largemouth bass between 17 and 21" must be released. Anglers may keep only one bass over 21".

Lake Mille Lacs has special regulations that exempt it from the new statewide northern pike zone regulations. The northern pike season opens **May 12** and anglers may keep up to five fish. All pike between 30 and 40" must be released. Only one northern over 40" may be included in the bag limit of five.

For muskie, the season opens on **Saturday, June 2**, with the statewide rules of a one fish bag and a minimum length of 54".

Beginning June 2, anglers may fish for muskellunge and northern pike at night, but may only possess and use artificial lures or sucker minnows longer than 8". Bowfishing for rough fish also is allowed at night but possession of angling equipment is not allowed and only rough fish may be in possession.

More information about fishing on Lake Mille Lacs, ongoing DNR management and research, and Mille Lacs area recreation opportunities is available on the DNR website at mndnr.gov/millelacslake. ✧

Many Minnesota outdoor recreational facilities, buildings in disrepair Gov. asks Legislature for \$130 million in natural resources asset preservation support for DNR

Visitors to Jay Cooke State Park are awed by the scenic views of the St. Louis River and the historic swinging bridge. But one thing they won't find at this iconic park is water for drinking or flushing toilets. That is because the park's main water line failed this winter, forcing the park to shut down the water supply and close all of its bathrooms with flush toilets.

The broken water line is among the growing list of repairs needed throughout the state to hundreds of roofs, dilapidated bridges, washed out roads and culverts, substandard electrical service, and failing mechanical and utility systems. As part of his [2018 Public Works bill](#), Gov. Mark Dayton is asking the Legislature to invest \$130 million in urgently needed improvements to DNR's buildings and other infrastructure. The DNR needs to make these fixes in order to provide recreation and natural resources services. These repairs also create hundreds of construction jobs.

"My Public Works bill would invest \$130 million to maintain and restore recreational buildings, access roads, campgrounds, boat launches, fishing piers, and other infrastructure across Minnesota," Dayton said. These projects are essential for protecting our environment and improving recreational opportunities for Minnesotans. I urge the Legislature to preserve these treasures for future generations by passing a robust Public Works bill that invests in our natural resources."

DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr said the list of repairs needed at DNR facilities across the state grows longer each year. "These are facilities owned by the citizens of Minnesota and managed by the DNR," said Landwehr. "Many of these needs are becoming urgent and require immediate funding to slow or stop their decline."

According to the DNR's most recently completed facility assessment, the agency has more than \$35 million of building components

in need of immediate repair or replacement. The DNR also has hundreds of millions of dollars of other investments needed over the next decade to prevent asset failures like the broken water line at Jay Cooke State Park. Repair costs increase about 8 percent annually, so addressing these problems now saves Minnesota money over the long term.

The 10-year capital needs report shows 192 of the agency's inventory of 2,700 buildings are in crisis or unacceptable condition, and 520 are in poor condition. Some DNR forest road or trail bridges are weight restricted due to structural deterioration over time – meaning logging trucks and grooming vehicles can't use them.

Many facilities have hidden infrastructure that is essential to outdoor recreationalists. In addition to Jay Cooke State Park, Blue Mounds State Park has been without potable water for several years because of well contamination. Aging waste water treatment systems at other state parks, such as Itasca and Myre Big Island, also need replacement.

"Some basic services for people—access to clean drinking water and functional bathrooms—are now not being met at DNR facilities," said Landwehr. "That is just simply unacceptable for a state whose \$13 billion tourism economy is based on high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities."

Fixing trails, hatcheries, state buildings, and water control structures

Other types of infrastructure needed to support DNR recreation programs also require repair. The DNR needs to make critical repairs to its fish hatcheries, including one near Lanesboro that supplies thousands of trout for anglers. Many water control structures—used at wildlife management areas to maintain water levels for waterfowl—are more than four decades old and need to be fixed.

More than 100 miles of state trails are in need of repairs. The

agency is hoping to secure bonding funds for resurfacing, culvert and bridge replacements, erosion control, and accessibility improvements for the Sakatah, Root River, Gateway, Willard Munger, and Blufflands state trails.

Additionally, many buildings used by agency staff and the public require new roofs, heating and air conditioning systems, and modifications to ensure accessibility.

"Our natural resources-related facilities have been used hard and loved well," Landwehr said. "Investments are needed now to ensure we leave the next generation with the same quality facilities and natural resources our own generation has been enjoying." ✧

Panfish filleting workshop, Bloomington [April 14](#)

A panfish filleting workshop will be held on Saturday, [April 14](#), 2018 at Bloomington DNR Field Office. The goal is to provide a quality introductory experience for anglers who have the desire to try filleting a fish. The event will be conducted by Fish and Wildlife staff. All participants should have general knowledge of fishing. Fillet knives, cutting boards and other equipment will be provided. The event will begin at 10 a.m. with a quick presentation on basic panfish biology, angling tips and techniques, and then a hands-on training on panfish filleting. The workshop should wrap up around noon with a fish fry.

Advance registration is required and is limited to 15 participants. Participants must be at least 11 years old. Register with Sandy Clark-Kolaks by Thursday April 5th. Location Information: Bloomington DNR Field Office, 5596 East State Rd 46, Bloomington, IN 47401 Name: Sandy Clark-Kolaks, 812-287-8300, sclark-kolaks@dnr.in.gov. ✧

Free Fishing Clinics

Free Sport Fishing Events are family fishing clinics where participants can fish for free; no freshwater fishing license or enrollment in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry is required. In addition to fishing, participants can learn about fish identification, fishing equipment and techniques, fisheries management, angling ethics and aquatic ecology. In addition to the Free Sport Fishing Events, June 23-24, 2018 is [Free Fishing Weekend](#) in NY. November 11, 2018 has also been newly designated as Free Fishing Days. During these days, anyone can fish the fresh waters of NY and no license is required!

Region/County	Event Name	Location	Date	Time	Contact
4 Albany	Stocking and Fishing Clinic	6 Mile Waterworks (Rensselaer Lake), Albany	April 3	10 -2 M	Joelle Ernst 518-402-8891
1 Suffolk	Belmont Lake Festival	Belmont Lake State Park	April 7	10-4 PM	Walter Burak 631-444-0283
4 Delaware	Free Clinic Margaretville	Binnekil Stream BetwEEen Main St. & E. Branch Stream, Margaretville	April 21 or April 28	11-3 PM	Carol O'Beirne 845-586-3300
2 Kings	Earth Day, Prospect Park	Prospect Park Audubon Center Brooklyn	April 22	1- 4 PM	Melissa Cohen 718-482-4022
4 Delaware	Walton Sportsman's Expo	Delaware County Fairgrounds (West Branch Delaware R Walton	May 5	10-3 PM	Chris VanMaaren 607-652-2620
5 Saratoga	Learn to Fish Day Clifton Park	Barney Rd Pond (east shoreline), Clifton Park	May 5	9-1 PM	Jennifer Viggiani 518-371-6054



[Other Breaking News Items:](#) [\(Click on title or URL to read full article\)](#)

[Illinois officials say Asian carp 93 percent eliminated](#)

Illinois officials touted their successes in curbing the Asian carp population amid the ongoing debate in Washington, D.C., over whether Illinois river traffic should be blocked before it gets to Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes

[Developer wants action on stalled Lake Erie wind farm](#)

In Ohio, a Cleveland company trying to build a set of wind turbines on Lake Erie filed another set of reports in the hopes of moving the process forward.

[Plan to fight Lake Erie's algae would force changes on farms](#)

Voluntary steps farmers have taken to scale back the fertilizers feeding Lake Erie's massive algae blooms aren't working fast enough, Ohio Gov. John Kasich's administration said Friday while announcing a set of new proposals.

[Ohio EPA calls western Lake Erie 'impaired'](#)

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency has decided to include Western Lake Erie in a list of impaired waters, due to the harmful algae blooms that plague the region every year

[Michigan to begin oil refinery cleanup on Muskegon Lake](#)

The effort aims to remove 44,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil and sediments from Muskegon Lake and nearby wetlands

[Stakeholders applaud Lake Michigan stocking plan](#)

The Wisconsin DNR's just-released 3-year fish stocking plan calls for increases in steelhead and brown trout, maintaining salmon quotas, stocking larger fish that survive better, contracting private fish farms to help meet stocking needs, and

[A new study preparing to measure the level of plastic in Lake Huron](#)

Fifteen people from Sarnia, Ontario, are assisting with a pilot project to determine just how much plastic is polluting the water of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay

[Holcomb signs bill to replenish eroded NW Indiana beaches](#)

A new Indiana law will require companies that dredge sand along the state's Lake Michigan shoreline to use it to replenish eroded beaches.

[Manitowoc marine sanctuary protesters show at Gov's visit at Lincoln Day Dinner](#)

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker was met by dozens of residents demonstrating their support for the former proposed Lake Michigan National Marine Sanctuary when he showed up to the Lighthouse Inn as a guest to the Lincoln Day Dinner for

[After interbreeding, DNR changing how it stocks Lake Superior Lake trout](#)

Two species of trout in Lake Superior have been interbreeding – now that's threatening previous efforts to help the wild rainbow trout population recover. The DNR's latest genetics study revealed that when the two varieties mix, fewer young

[DNR to end Kamloops rainbow trout stocking in Lake Superior](#)

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources announced it will cease stocking the popular strain of rainbow trout that has provided a shore fishery for more than four decades

[Good walleye season predicted](#)

Steven McNevin, operations supervisor for the Lake Ontario Management Unit said the prediction that Belleville and the Bay of Quinte, Ontario will retain its title of "walleye capital" is based on extensive research over many months.

[Huge schools of baitfish indicate healthy Lake Huron](#)

"Like many of our native fish species, emerald shiners experienced a resurgence in numbers after the collapse of alewives back in 2003," said Jim Baker, fisheries unit manager for the Michigan's Department of Natural Resources

[Even with \\$1 billion upgrade, Deep Tunnel swamped by winter storm as streets and basements flooded](#)

Despite a new \$1 billion flood-control reservoir in Chicago more than 20 times bigger than Soldier Field, rain and melting snow swamped the largest section of the Deep Tunnel project in less than a day last month.

[Hundreds comment on proposed plan to tap Lake Michigan](#)

Diverting 7 million gallons of water per day from Lake Michigan to Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin, chiefly to serve Foxconn's future manufacturing facility, violates the multi-state Great Lakes Compact, according to those who spoke against it at a state public hearing Wednesday.

End