



## Fishing Industry testifies before U.S. House on economic impact of recreational fishing

*The growing outdoor industry needs adequate infrastructure to continue its upward economic climb*

“Without clean waters and abundant fish populations, the recreational fishing industry simply cannot survive,” said President and CEO [American Sportfishing Association](#) Frank-Paul King. “No one wants to fish in dirty, polluted waters where fish populations have been depleted. Critical to small businesses in this segment of the outdoor recreation industry is that anglers can enjoy healthy aquatic systems with abundant fisheries.”

The U.S. House Committee Hearing on Small Business focused on how the growing outdoor recreational industry, which includes sportfishing, contributes to economic growth, jobs and conservation. To maintain economic growth for this industry, it's critical to have adequate

infrastructure for anglers to have access to healthy fisheries.

Despite contributing 2.2% of gross domestic product, recreational fishing is often thought of in terms of ‘fun,’ but not ‘business.’ King’s testimony October 30 helped reinforce the need for conservation policies and adequate infrastructure, which will help spur economic growth in the sportfishing industry and the outdoor recreation economy as a whole.”

Nearly \$50 billion is spent each year by anglers, which supports more than 800,000 jobs with an overall economic impact of nearly \$125 billion. The outdoor industry’s infrastructure has been neglected for decades but with proper

Congressional action to pass infrastructure funding it will help to create more access for fish and spur economic growth.

In addition, the purchases of sportfishing equipment contribute to a federal conservation fund known as the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (SFRBTF) by an excise tax placed on these sales. The SFRBTF helps to contribute more than \$650 million in federal funding to state wildlife agencies that spearhead conservation, maintenance and access efforts. Because of this commitment to conservation, anglers are helping to maintain a healthy environment at the same time to help create opportunities for the industry to grow. ✧

### In this issue...

- Ohio approves 3<sup>rd</sup> Line for Lake Erie..... 2
- PFBC proposes no license display..... 2
- More than 60,000 boats return to water .. 3
- Registration open for BOW in U.P..... 3
- Lake Michigan whitefish hearing Nov 20. 3
- Zebra mussel larvae in Lake of Woods ... 4
- Avian cholera cause of cormorant..... 4
- Mexicans flying to Canada to cross..... 5
- Justice Dept rolls out new program ..... 5
- DEC invites commentson 2020 regs ..... 6
- Non-native Asian clams found ..... 6
- L Mich to get nearly 30% more Chinook.. 6
- West Nile virus in ruffed grouse ..... 7
- More than 21 million fish stocked in 20197 New Records ..... 8
- Mepps Squirrel Tail Recycling Program .. 8
- Mich pledges \$8M to Asian carp barrier .. 9
- Mille Lacs Lake winter limit one walleye.. 9
- Snowshoe building workshops Dec 7&1410 Minocqua Chain walleye catch & release10
- No Bighead or Silver carp in CAWS..... 10
- Public Hunting Areas Report..... 10
- Channel catfish stocked across Indiana 10
- Brook trout limit at 10 for select streams10
- Ill DNR reminds about tree stand safety 11
- ANSTF Report to Congress ..... 11
- School shootings are preventable ..... 11
- Asian carp research in Minnesota ..... 12
- Changes to NY endangered species list 13

## Congress: Pass the Recovering America's Wildlife Act

State-level conservation work would be eligible for \$1.4 billion in annual funding under the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act — and with your help we just could land a win for fish and wildlife.

“Why not be more proactive than reactive? Recovering America’s Wildlife Act is highly, highly innovative and effective,” said Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), who introduced RAWA last summer along with Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI). “It’s the single most exciting policy development to come through Congress in decades. It protects ecosystems, protects communities and enhances our outdoor recreation economy.”

The bipartisan [Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](#) (H.R. 3742) would dedicate \$1.4 billion annually to facilitate state-led wildlife conservation restoration programs

that provide state agencies, tribal nations and communities with collaborative tools to prevent habitat degradation and economic uncertainty for wildlife managers. States would receive vital funding to implement wildlife action plans, which are designed to keep at-risk fish and wildlife populations off the federal list of threatened or endangered species.

While not all at-risk species are game species, they do share the same habitat with valued game animals like mallards, mule deer, pronghorn and wild trout. Improving habitat for one species benefits entire ecosystems.

Recently, House members convened a hearing on RAWA, and the House Natural Resources Committee must vote to advance the bill before it can be considered on the House floor and receive consideration by the Senate. ✧

## Ohio approves 3rd Line for Lake Erie, Ohio River

Anglers may use a maximum of three fishing lines on Ohio's portion of Lake Erie and the Ohio River starting on **January 1, 2020**, following new regulations passed by the Ohio Wildlife Council. The council approved the use of three lines per person while fishing on Ohio's portion of Lake Erie, including areas immediately upstream in creeks, rivers and tributaries, as well as the western and eastern units of Ohio River. Regulations allow a person to fish with up to two lines in the remainder of the state.

"This new regulation makes it easier for Ohioans to enjoy fishing on the two most iconic bodies of water in the Buckeye State," said Division of Wildlife Chief Kendra Wecker. "Providing additional options increases the opportunities to have a great day on these wonderful resources."

The council also approved moving Ohio's free fishing dates to June 20-21, 2020. In the future, Ohio's free fishing dates will be scheduled for the weekend that includes the third Sunday in June. Free fishing dates are open to Ohio residents. During those dates, a license is not required to experience fishing at Ohio's public lakes, rivers, and reservoirs, including Lake Erie.

On the Ohio River, the council approved reducing the combined daily bag limit of sauger, saugeye and walleye to six fish. The sauger, saugeye and walleye length limit was set at 14 inches in the western fishing unit (from South Point west to the Indiana state line). These changes are designed to align Ohio River fishing regulations with bordering states. The bag limit changes take effect January 1, 2020.

The Ohio Wildlife Council passed these regulations proposals at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 9.

Additional regulations approved by the Ohio Wildlife Council:

- Establishing existing fishing regulations on Jesse Owens State Park and Wildlife Area.

- Hunting and trapping access to Eagle Creek Wildlife Area in Brown County is by special permit only from September 1 through May 31 annually. Eagle Creek is maintained as an area where beginning hunters may participate in mentored hunts through a drawing system.
- Sloan's crayfish was removed from Ohio's list of threatened species. A strong population of Sloan's crayfish has been documented within its native Ohio range.

A complete list of approved proposals is available at [wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov). ✧

## PFBC proposes removal of fishing license display requirement

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission took steps to replace a long-standing regulation that requires anglers to display their fishing license on an outer garment while fishing. Under a proposed amendment to Section 63.2 (PA Title 58), the current display requirement would be replaced with a possession requirement, which would require only that an angler carry the license on their person while fishing and present the license to a PFBC law enforcement officer upon request. Under this proposal, anglers who still wish to display their fishing license on an outer garment may continue to do so. The Commission acted to approve the publication of proposed rulemaking containing the amendments to the fishing license display regulation and following publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* the proposal will be considered for final rulemaking at a future meeting of the Commission. ✧



• Established 1972 •

### President

Daniel N. Thomas, *Illinois*

### Vice President

*Open*

### Secretary

Michael D. Sanger, *Wisconsin*

### Treasurer

Thomas G. Couston, *Illinois*

### DIRECTORS

*Illinois* – Robert Gaik

*Indiana* – Mike Schoonveld

*Michigan* – Tom Hamilton

*Minnesota* - Dave Koneczny

*New York* – Thomas Marks

*Ohio* – Rick Unger

*Ontario* – Darryl Choronzey

*Pennsylvania* - Ed Kissell

*Wisconsin* – Robert Winckel

### 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

#### GREAT LAKES BASIN REPORT

### Publisher

Dan Thomas, 630/941-1351

### Editor

Jeanette Thomas

### Webmaster

Chad Lapa

© Copyright 2019 by Great Lakes Basin Publications, the *INLAND SEAS ANGLERS-GREAT LAKES BASIN REPORT* is the newsletter of the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council, a federally recognized not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and recognized for tax-deductible giving by the federal government.

Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of GLSFC, its officers or staff. Reproduction of any material by paid-up members is encouraged, but appropriate credit must be given. Reproduction by others without written permission is prohibited.

### Address Change:

Send six weeks in advance with old mailing label to GREAT LAKES BASIN REPORT, P.O. Box 297, Elmhurst, IL 60126, (630) 941-1351 or [glslc444@gmail.com](mailto:glslc444@gmail.com).

## More than 60,000 boats return to the water thanks to RBFF

*Letters were sent to owners of boats with lapsed registrations in 19 states*

ALEXANDRIA, VA – The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) announced that its Boat Registration Reactivation Program brought a record number of boats back to the water. The program, which delivered letters to owners of boats with lapsed registrations in 19 states, resulted in more than 60,000 re-registrations.

The 2019 program saw an overall drop in total letters mailed but brought an increase of nearly 34,000 registrations over the 2018 program. In all, 60,810 boats were re-registered as a result of the program, reeling in more than \$2.23 million in gross program registration fees.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has participated in RBFF's Boat Registration Reactivation Program since the beginning of the program in 2012 and since that time, tens of thousands of boaters in Florida have reactivated their vessel registration.

The Boat Registration Reactivation Program is entirely funded by RBFF, requiring nothing more than state agency staff time to carry out. Throughout the life of the program, nearly \$14 million in registration fees has been generated from 382,482 boats being re-registered. Response rate for the 2019 program was 10.25%, a 1.5% increase over 2018 and well above the direct mail benchmark of 3%.

Following the same proven strategy in years past, the program delivered letters to owners of boats with lapsed registrations, encouraging them to get back on the water. By cross-referencing the list of registrations with that of fishing licenses, customized letters are delivered to anglers with information about their state's best fishing opportunities. To find out how you can participate, [contact Joanne Martonik](#). ✧

## Registration open for winter's Becoming an Outdoors Woman program in the U.P.

Registration is now under way for this winter's "Becoming an Outdoors Woman" program, which is set for [February 21-23, 2020](#), in Marquette County.

This winter will mark the 19th annual winter BOW gathering for women, 18 and older, who are seeking an opportunity to improve their outdoor skills in a relaxed atmosphere.

The BOW program offers instruction in two dozen different types of indoor and outdoor activities, including cross-country skiing, archery, winter camping and shelter building, ice fishing, fly tying, winter biking, wilderness first aid, wood burning, snowshoeing along with several new features, such as resource roadkill and apps in the outdoors.

Instructors provide basic and advanced teaching tailored to each participant's individual ability. The program also includes special evening programs during the weekend.

Participants stay and take their classes at the Bay Cliff Health Camp, a universally accessible facility overlooking Lake Superior, which is situated about 30 miles north of Marquette near Big Bay. Participants will be housed in a dorm-style facility with amenities including a sauna and hiking trails, with access to northern hardwood forests and Lake Superior.

The \$225 registration fee includes all food and lodging, as well as most equipment and supplies, except as noted in the registration materials. Scholarships are also available on a limited basis. Class information, registration materials and scholarship applications are available online to print at [Michigan.gov/BOW](#). Payment and registration materials should be sent to the address on the registration paperwork in Newberry.

For more info: Michelle Zellar, 906-293-5131, ext. 4004, or [DNRBOW@Michigan.gov](mailto:DNRBOW@Michigan.gov). ✧

## Lake Michigan whitefish hearing [Nov. 20](#)

The Wisconsin DNR will hold a public hearing on a permanent rule regulating bottom trawling for lake whitefish on Lake Michigan. The hearing will take place on [November 20](#) at 6 p.m. at the Lakeshore Technical College (Lake Michigan room) in Cleveland.

Written comments on the rule and its potential impacts will be accepted through [November 23](#), and you may send comments to [Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov). For hearing information and details on the [proposed permanent rules](#) visit the [DNR website](#).

Trawling for lake whitefish has occurred since 2015 in an area of Lake Michigan near Two Rivers as part of a cooperative study between the department, Sea Grant and a commercial fishing company. Under this proposed rule, commercial fishers could elect to bottom trawl in this area as an alternative to using nets to fill their lake whitefish quotas.

"The trawl study was created, designed and implemented to determine the feasibility of using a bottom trawl to harvest lake whitefish in this specific area of Lake Michigan," said DNR Great Lakes fisheries supervisor Brad Eggold. "Statistically sound data and science from the study provided the basis for the development of the rule, which provides for the sustainability of lake whitefish harvests using bottom trawls and protects important game species. This rule will create consistent regulations for all commercial fishers that choose to bottom trawl while minimizing incidental catch of important game fish such as lake trout."

This rule would standardize gear, monitoring and reporting requirements for trawling for lake whitefish. Limits on the area open to trawling, number of licenses, trawl dimensions, trawling season, time per trawl drag and the overall whitefish quota will prevent overharvest of lake whitefish and minimize incidental catch.

More info: [DNR website](#) and search "[Lake Michigan fisheries](#)." ✧

## Zebra mussel larvae in Lake of the Woods

The Minnesota DNR has confirmed zebra mussel larvae in water samples taken from one of three sites in Lake of the Woods on the northern Minnesota border. While no adult or juvenile zebra mussels have been reported, the number of larvae is substantial.

The Minnesota portion of Lake of the Woods will be added to the infested waters list for zebra mussels, so that people who harvest bait, fish commercially or use water from the lake take necessary precautions. Other lake users should follow the same "Clean, Drain, Dispose" steps that are always legally required on all Minnesota water bodies.

Recent DNR analysis of large lake zooplankton monitoring samples showed from four to 186 zebra mussel larvae, (veligers -VEL-uh-jers). "We don't know if the lake's water chemistry is conducive to zebra mussel survival," said DNR research scientist Gary Montz. "It is possible that calcium levels or other factors might prevent propagation."

The DNR and other agencies will continue to monitor the lake, in part to learn more about how the lake's water chemistry affects zebra mussels. The invasive species spiny water flea was confirmed in Lake of the Woods and connected waters in 2007. Invasive species are sometimes introduced in a lake from connected waters or tributaries rather than human transport directly into the lake.

Most of Lake of the Woods is in the Canadian Province of Ontario, and a portion extends into the Province of Manitoba.

Lake property owners should carefully check boats and trailers, docks and lifts, and all other water-related equipment for invasive species when removing equipment for seasonal storage. It is especially important to follow Minnesota's law and keep docks and boat lifts out of the water for at least 21 days before putting them into another body of water.

Anyone transporting a dock or lift from a shoreline property to

another location for storage or repair may need a [permit](#) to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

The DNR recommends these steps for lake property owners:

- Look on the posts, wheels and underwater support bars of docks and lifts, as well as any parts of boats, pontoons and rafts that may have been submerged in water for an extended period.
- Hire [DNR-permitted lake service provider businesses](#) to install or remove boats, docks, lifts and other water-related equipment. These businesses have attended training on Minnesota's aquatic invasive species laws and many have experience identifying and removing invasive species.

People should [contact an area DNR aquatic invasive species specialist](#) if they think they have found zebra mussels or any other invasive species.

Whether or not a lake is listed as infested, Minnesota law requires boaters and anglers to:

- **Clean** watercraft and trailers of aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species,
- **Drain** all water by removing drain plugs and keeping them out during transport, and
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.

Some invasive species are small and difficult to see at the access. To remove or kill them, take one or more of the following precautions before moving to another waterbody:

- Spray with high-pressure water.
- Rinse with very hot water (120 degrees for at least two minutes or 140 degrees for at least 10 seconds).
- Dry for at least five days.

Zebra mussels can compete with native species for food and habitat, cut the feet of swimmers, reduce the performance of boat motors and cause expensive damage to water intake pipes. More information is available at [mndnr.gov/ais](http://mndnr.gov/ais). ✧

## Avian cholera identified as cause of cormorant mortalities near Green Bay

GREEN BAY, Wis. – The bacterial disease avian cholera has been identified as the source of cormorants dying in Green Bay. In late September, avian cholera was confirmed in double-crested cormorants submitted for necropsy to the USGS-National Wildlife Health Center in Madison. These cormorants were collected from the Cat Island causeway in Green Bay.

Avian cholera is a common waterfowl disease that most frequently affects waterfowl and coots. Scavenger bird species and other water birds can also be affected. It is seen annually in western states in snow geese and Ross's geese.

Avian cholera is caused by the bacterium *Pasteurella multocida* and is highly contagious among birds, swiftly spreading through large congregations of waterfowl. Transmission of the bacteria can occur through bird-to-bird contact or from contact with infected carcasses, water, soil, boots and equipment. The bacteria are easily killed with most disinfectants, including 10% bleach.

Avian cholera has not been detected outside of Green Bay at this time; however, the mortality event is ongoing, and bird movements associated with fall migration increase the risk of the bacteria being moved to a new location.

Wisconsin has not had an outbreak of avian cholera in wild birds since 1980, though reports of this disease in domestic backyard birds occur more regularly in the state. The bacterial strain that affects birds does not generally affect people, and the human disease known as cholera is not the same as avian cholera.

To report dead waterfowl, please contact a [county wildlife biologist](#). Please be prepared to identify the specific location where the carcasses were seen and their approximate numbers. ✧

## Growing numbers of Mexicans flying to Canada and sneaking across the northern border (NY)

CHAMPLAIN, New York – Mexican citizens are increasingly being arrested for illegally entering the United States from Canada and the majority are going through a specific part of Vermont and northeastern New York, according to federal law enforcement officials. In the area, known as the Swanton Sector, 822 people were stopped while traversing fields and forests between official crossing points, more than the total, 758, arrested for crossing in all seven other regions on the Canadian border. Mexicans and Romanians make up 565 of the 822 known illegal entrants.

Norm Lague oversees operations at Champlain Station, the busiest of Swanton Sector's eight offices. During a tour of the region, Lague said his station's intelligence unit had concluded more than half of Mexicans and Romanians they arrested had flown into Canada by way of its Electronic Travel Authorization program. The three-year-old program allows citizens from certain countries to enter without first obtaining a visa. People from those two nations are not allowed to enter the U.S. without a visa, but they are legally entering Canada and sneaking across the border from there.

"A majority of the people who we're apprehending from these countries have leveraged this program," said Lague. "It's a pathway that we discovered years ago was starting to shift as far as people being smuggled from the southern border to Canada and then coming south. And I think that trend, once it gets well known ... I can see that trend continuing, most definitely."

No wall or fence exists on the northern border — only the occasional barbed wire or short stone wall separates the countries. "They're figuring maybe it's cheaper to fly into Montreal and just get smuggled in," Lague, patrol agent in charge of the Champlain Station, said. The distance between California and Texas is half

the length of Washington to Maine, and thousands fewer Border Patrol are stationed there.

In November 2016, Canada rescinded its requirement that Mexicans obtain a visa before flying in and instead only required an online precheck be completed. Five months later, it expanded the program to Romania and others. More than 50 countries are included in the program now, though only these two countries are among those seeing dramatic increases in illegal crossings.

A total 4,408 people were arrested by Border Patrol agents in fiscal 2019 across the eight regions it divides the northern border into, less than 1% of the southern border's total arrests the same year. While the greatest number of arrests took place in its Detroit region, the majority of them were not stopped while illegally crossing from Canada—they overstayed visas, came through the southern border, or had unlawfully resided long term in the U.S.

Mexican arrests at the northern border as a whole topped 7,000 in the early 2000s, then dropped to 1,169 in 2016. In upstate New York, illegal crossings of Mexican citizens has begun increasing since late 2016, from 65 in fiscal 2017 to 173 in 2018 and 336 in 2019.

The number of Romanians arrested anywhere on the northern border had remained at or under 30 total each year for 20 years. In 2018, the Border Patrol arrested 196. In 2019, that number jumped again to 259, and 88% of those arrests were in Swanton.

Lague said he thinks the increases in crossings by Mexicans and Romanians will continue to increase in the next year due to Mexican and American efforts to block migrants from arriving at the southern border. Arrests across the southern border dropped from 132,000 in May to 40,000 in September due to a decline in

attempted crossings. He said that will prompt some to look for other parts of the continental U.S. to breach.

"Any enforcement standard that is adhered to on the southern border is going to have a direct correlation on the numbers up here," Lague said. "If you're gonna charge 5, 6, 8, \$10,000 to move a group through [the southern border], I'm sure [smugglers] can negotiate the plane tickets [to Canada] in there, too." ✧

### Justice Dept. rolls out new program to combat gun violence

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) – Attorney General William Barr announced a new initiative Wednesday that would better enforce the U.S. gun background check system, coordinate state and federal gun cases and ensure prosecutors quickly update databases to show when a defendant can't possess a firearm because of mental health issues.

The push, known as Project Guardian, was unveiled at a news conference in Memphis, Tennessee, alongside officials from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, on the same day public impeachment hearings against President Donald Trump began in Washington.

As part of the program, U.S. prosecutors will coordinate with state and local law enforcement officials to consider potential federal charges when a suspect is arrested for weapons possession, is believed to have used a gun to commit a violent crime or drug-trafficking offense or is suspected of being a violent gang member.

"Gun crime remains a pervasive problem in too many communities across America," Barr said in a statement. ✧

## DEC invites public comments on proposed 2020 Great Lakes fishing regs

### *Anglers Encouraged to Comment on Proposed Regulations and Help DEC Improve Great Lakes Fisheries*

New York DEC announced the agency is seeking angler feedback on proposed fishing regulation changes for New York's Great Lakes. The proposed changes are designed to safeguard and expand certain fish populations while enhancing anglers' continued enjoyment of these world-class fisheries. The majority of the proposals are a direct result of DEC's work with anglers during the past several years to identify desired outcomes for Lake Ontario sport fishery management.

Potential regulation changes include:

- extending the open season for lake trout on Lake Ontario and the Lower Niagara River;
- decreasing the daily creel limit for rainbow trout/steelhead on Lake Ontario;
- decreasing the brown trout daily creel limit and increasing the minimum size limit for rainbow trout/steelhead on Lake Ontario tributaries; and
- eliminating a special Lake Erie tributary regulation now deemed unnecessary in an ongoing effort to simplify New York fishing regulations.

Following a review of public comments received and further evaluation this winter, DEC may advance these proposals for formal adoption in 2020. DEC welcomes and encourages feedback on the proposed regulation changes currently under consideration.

To [view these proposals and provide input](#), visit DEC's website. Comments will be accepted through December 14, 2019. Comments and questions can also be directed to Steve LaPan, Great Lakes Fisheries Section Head, at: New York State DEC, P.O. Box 292, Cape Vincent, NY 13618. ✧

## Non-native Asian clams found at several places in the nearshore zone of Lake Michigan

Non-native Asian clams have been found at several places in the nearshore zone of Lake Michigan. However, they are not yet widespread, probably due to low survival during winter. Non-native Asian clams *Corbicula fluminea* have low tolerance for cold winter water temperatures, but may be able to find refuge in warmwater discharges from power plants and other industrial facilities. A survey by Smith et al. found Asian clams in several nearshore areas of Lake Michigan; however, they are not widespread and are relatively rare.

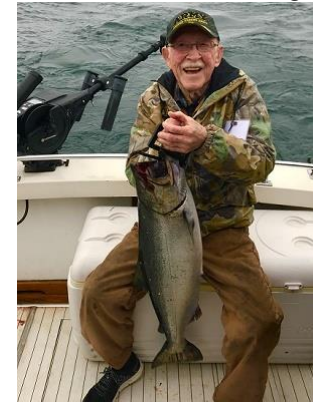
Biologists stated in the Journal of Great Lakes Research, the Asian clam *Corbicula fluminea* is among the most prolific aquatic invaders in the world; but in colder mid-latitude areas, like the Laurentian Great Lakes, their population expansion has likely been limited by poor overwinter survival. In these areas, Asian clams are typically found in thermal [refugia](#) like warmwater discharges from industrial facilities. We sought to identify the current extent of Asian clam populations in Lake Michigan and waters immediately adjacent to it, specifically at locations most likely to harbor [overwintering](#) populations—industrial warmwater discharges.

During April–May 2017, we surveyed 17 locations around Lake Michigan. Evidence of Asian clam populations was found at four sites, though live [specimens](#) (n=3) were only found at the Indiana Harbor Ship Canal in East Chicago, IN. Shells or fragments of shells were found at Green Bay, WI, Waukegan, IL, and Port Sheldon, MI. Our findings indicate that although Asian clams are present in Lake Michigan, they are relatively rare, and remain isolated to a few small pockets of over-wintering habitat. ✧

## Lake Michigan to get nearly 30% more Chinook salmon in 2020

Starting next year, Michigan plans to increase Chinook salmon stocking by 150,000, increasing the total statewide stocking from 504,000 to 654,000 fish. This move is in response to a recent recommendation of the Lake Michigan Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee to boost lakewide stocking levels.

“The Lake Michigan predator and prey balance has improved in recent years,” said Jay Wesley, the DNR's Lake Michigan Basin



coordinator. “The size of the salmon has also improved, with hundreds weighing more than 30 pounds caught at

multiple ports.”

This marks the first salmon-stocking increase in Lake Michigan since 1999. The committee has worked continuously with stakeholders and resource agencies around the lake to bring balance to its ecosystem.

“Although some anglers would prefer a larger stocking increase, biologists are still concerned with the uncertainty of alewife year-class strength and how much wild reproduction of salmon to expect,” Wesley said. “Alewife are the main diet of Chinook salmon.”

The [Lake Michigan Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee](#) and the DNR will continue to monitor Lake Michigan conditions and adjust stocking accordingly to sustain a healthy, diverse salmon and trout fishery. Visit [Michigan.gov/Fishing](#) to learn more about [how the DNR manages the state's fisheries](#). ✧

## West Nile virus in ruffed grouse

Test results are in from the first year of a multi-state study on West Nile virus in ruffed grouse in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin. These first-year results are showing that, while the virus is present in the region, exposed grouse can survive.

In 273 samples from grouse that hunters harvested in Minnesota during 2018, 34 samples (12.5 percent) had antibodies consistent with West Nile virus exposure that were either confirmed in 10 samples (3.7 percent) or likely in 24 samples (8.8 percent). The tests did not find the presence of virus in any of the ruffed grouse hearts, meaning the birds were not sick when harvested.

In Wisconsin, West Nile virus exposure was detected in 68 of 235 (29 percent) ruffed grouse blood samples with exposure to the virus either confirmed in 44 (19 percent) or likely in 24 (10 percent), and two grouse had virus present in their hearts. In Michigan, West Nile virus exposure was detected in 28 of 213 (13 percent) ruffed grouse blood samples with exposure to the virus either confirmed in nine (4 percent) or likely in 19 (9 percent), with four having virus present in their hearts.

Research in other states points to good grouse habitat as one factor that can produce birds in better condition and better able to survive stressors like West Nile virus.

The DNR had asked grouse hunters to collect two types of samples to help determine if the birds were exposed to the virus: a blood sample to determine if the grouse had developed an immune response to the virus, and the heart to look for traces of viral genetic material. As in humans, ruffed grouse can build up antibodies in an immune response to viruses they encounter. Even when the body fights off an illness, these antibodies are left behind in the blood.

### Hunter participation

Hunters who submitted samples in 2018 will be mailed a letter this fall

notifying them of the test results of the birds they submitted.

“Thank you to all hunters who contributed samples last year, as well as hunters who are submitting samples this season,” Roy said.

Sample collection is continuing during the 2019 grouse hunting season. Ruffed grouse hunters can voluntarily submit samples if they are willing to collect blood on filter paper strips within 30 minutes of harvest, hearts, and a few feathers for sex and age determination, and are willing to provide harvest location information.

Sample collection kits have been available for pickup at DNR [area wildlife offices](#) within the ruffed grouse range since Labor Day on a first-come first-serve basis. Due to strong interest by hunters, many offices are already out of kits, so hunters should call ahead before stopping.

This year, the Ruffed Grouse Society is offering a shotgun and Pineridge Grouse Camp is offering a guided hunt as prizes in a drawing for participating hunters who submit samples correctly.

### About West Nile virus

West Nile virus has been present in Minnesota since the early 2000s, but interest in effects on ruffed grouse increased following a study in Pennsylvania documenting relationships between habitat quality, populations and virus exposure. Some bird species recover quickly and become tolerant to the virus while others, such as blue jays and crows, suffer higher rates of mortality.

West Nile virus is carried by infected mosquitoes. Not all people or animals bitten by an infected mosquito will contract West Nile virus. There have been no documented cases of people contracting West Nile virus from consuming properly cooked meat.

More information about ruffed grouse hunting and sampling is available on the DNR [grouse hunting page](#). ✧

## More than 21 million fish stocked in 2019

Brown trout, coho salmon, steelhead, walleye and nine other species and one hybrid were among the 21,281,411 fish stocked in Michigan's public waters so far this year. DNR staff made 449 stocking trips to 857 stocking sites.

[Michigan has six state fish hatcheries](#) (SFH) and two cooperative hatcheries that together produce the species, strain and size of fish requested by fisheries managers.

Each hatchery stocked the following fish ([details on weight and sites are available on the DNR's website](#)):

- Harrietta SFH stocked 916,630 brown and rainbow trout.
- Marquette SFH stocked 377,076 yearling lake trout, brook trout and splake (a hybrid of lake trout and brook trout).
- Oden SFH stocked 647,699 brown and rainbow trout.
- Platte River SFH stocked 3,090,753 fish that included yearling Atlantic and coho salmon, spring fingerling Chinook salmon and walleye fry.
- Thompson SFH stocked 6,944,722 fish that included yearling steelhead, spring fingerling Chinook salmon and walleye fry.
- Wolf Lake SFH stocked 6,233,314 fish that included yearling steelhead, spring fingerling Chinook salmon, Great Lakes strain muskellunge, walleye fry and channel catfish obtained from the Ohio DNR.

The total includes more than 3 million walleye spring fingerlings. These fish are reared in ponds by the DNR and tribal partners, with extensive support provided by local sporting organizations. Also included are 14,544 lake sturgeon fingerlings reared at stream-side hatcheries and released in various inland and Great Lake tributary streams. Learn more at [MichiganDNR.com/FishStock](#), contact [Jan VanAmberg](#), 906-341-5587, ext. 202 or 906-249-1611, ext. 306 or [Elyse Walter](#), 517-284-5839. ✧

## New Records

### Illinois State Record Smallmouth Bass caught downtown Chicago

The Illinois State Record Bass has been broken! A 7-pound-3-ounce smallmouth bass was caught by Joe Capaulupo in downtown Chicago. Joe, an avid urban angler, was throwing his tried and true set up – The Ned Rig – at around 10:30 pm on October 14th. Alongside his two fishing buddies, Joe was fishing near one of Chicago's busiest tourist attractions, Buckingham Fountain.



Most parks close at 11 pm sharp in the city of Chicago, so, Joe and the gang didn't have much time to spare. The guys wanted to cover as much water as possible so spread out fishing individually. Not long after

wetting his line, Joe hooked into something massive. Right away he knew if this was a smallmouth bass, it was going to be huge.

Lake Michigan is an ultra-clear lake which gives anglers the opportunity to see fish swimming in depths up to 20 feet. But not at night; Joe was doing this all in darkness. The inability to identify species and the size of the fish always makes the battle a little more nerve-wracking. I can't imagine what he was feeling.

After a short fight, Joe landed a behemoth of a fish (all on his own) and instantly knew this smallmouth bass was different. Estimating a fish's weight is never easy but Joe was pretty sure his catch was big enough to break the 6 lbs, 7 oz record catch from an Illinois quarry in 1987. Joe's goal was to bring his fish alive to Henry's in the morning, get his name in the record books, and then release the monster back into the lake. It was getting close to 11 pm. And all he had to do was to keep this monster alive until Henry's Sports & Marine reopened early the next morning.

Once at Henry's an official was brought in to certify the fish. The official measurements came out to

22½" and a weight of 7 lbs 3 oz. Papers were signed, hands got shook, and pictures were taken. It was official; Joe Capilupo was the new Illinois state smallmouth record holder. ✧

### DNR certifies new catch-and-release state record muskie

An angler on Lake Vermilion, Corey Kitzmann of Davenport, Iowa, caught



and released Minnesota's new state record muskellunge, a 57¼" fish that he called a "true giant."

The Minnesota DNR certified the state catch-and-release record fish on October 11. The 57¼ inch fish had a 25½ inch girth with an estimated weight of about 47 lbs. The previous record was a 56¾ inch fish caught on Pelican Lake in Otter Tail County in 2016. ✧

## Mepps Squirrel Tail Recycling Program

Antigo, WI – Mepps continues to ask hunters to save their squirrel tails. Mepps needs squirrel tails to create hand-tied, dressed hooks for their world-famous, fish-catching lures. They've been recycling squirrel tails for over half a century.

Squirrels are good eating and Mepps can reuse their tails for making the world's #1 lure. "Over the years Mepps has tried hundreds of other natural and synthetic materials, such as bear hair, fox, coyote, badger, skunk, deer, even Angus cow, but nothing works as well as squirrel tail hair,"

explains Mepps Communications Director, Nik Kolbeck."



"Consider harvesting squirrels for the 2018 hunting season." Mepps will pay up to 26 cents each for tails,

depending on quality and quantity. Plus, the cash value is doubled if the tails are traded for Mepps lures.

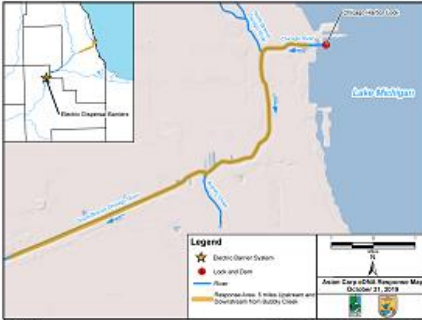
Kolbeck reminds everyone, "We do not advocate harvesting of squirrels solely for their tails." For details on the Squirrel Tail Program, either visit the web site [www.mepps.com/squirrels](http://www.mepps.com/squirrels) or call 800-713-3474. For more info contact: Nik

Kolbeck, [nkolbeck@mepps.com](mailto:nkolbeck@mepps.com), 800-237-9877 ✧



## Michigan pledges \$8M to Asian carp barrier at Lock and Dam in Illinois

Michigan DNR confirmed the commitment of \$8 million in state funds for the preconstruction, engineering and design phase of a



multifaceted barrier system to prevent invasive Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes. In a November 4, 2019 [letter to Lieutenant General Todd Semonite](#), chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Eichinger explained that the funds were appropriated as non-federal match for design of a system of structural and non-structural control measures at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam (photo right) in the Chicago Area Waterway System near Joliet, Illinois.

Brandon Road is a critical pinch point for keeping bighead, silver and black carp—the Asian carp species of greatest concern—out of the Great Lakes.

Taking action at Brandon Road took on added urgency with the November 1 announcement that 76 of 414 water samples from waters connected to Lake Michigan—and well beyond Brandon Road Lock and Dam—tested positive for eDNA for invasive carp. Forty-nine of the water samples from the South Fork of the Chicago River, also known as Bubbly Creek, were positive for silver carp eDNA, while



27 were positive for bighead carp eDNA.

Although no live invasive carp were found in the recent sampling, the results showed far more invasive carp eDNA than had previously been discovered in these waters, prompting the Illinois DNR along with partner agencies to undertake additional surveillance for the presence of invasive carp.

The Brandon Road project, currently awaiting congressional approval, would install additional technologies—including an electric barrier, underwater sound, an air bubble curtain and a flushing lock—in a newly engineered channel designed to prevent invasive carp

movement while allowing shipping into and out of the Great Lakes. Supporting Illinois' role as non-federal sponsor of the Brandon Road project, Eichinger's letter expresses Michigan's willingness to seek collaboration from other Great Lakes states and aid communications with these partners throughout the

project. ✧

## Mille Lacs Lake winter limit one walleye starting **Dec. 1**

Winter anglers on Mille Lacs Lake will enjoy a walleye harvest this winter for the fourth season in a row. Similar to last season, anglers will be allowed to keep walleye on Mille Lacs starting **Sunday, Dec. 1**, with a limit of one walleye between 21-23", or one fish over 28".

Anglers are expected to make Mille Lacs a destination this coming winter. Under very similar regulations, anglers spent about 2 million hours fishing on Mille Lacs each of the last three winters.

Harvest from the winter of 2019-20 will be counted toward the state's annual share of walleye from Mille Lacs under the 1837 treaty. State anglers share the safe harvest level with eight Chippewa tribes that have fishing rights under the treaty. The state's allowable harvest for the

coming year will be set in early 2020 through discussions between the state and the tribes.

Winter regulations are set after completion of the DNR's annual fall netting assessment of the lake. The DNR's 2019 assessment found that the walleye population has remained relatively stable over the past three years, having rebounded from population lows seen from 2012 – 2016.

While encouraged by the rebound in walleye abundance, the DNR continues to take a cautious approach to managing the fishery. Survival of walleye to age 3 and older has been inconsistent in recent years. The fish hatched six years ago – referred to as the 2013 year class – are now 17-21" and continue to dominate the population, accounting for about 40

percent of the fish caught in fall test netting. Year classes formed since 2013 show mixed results.

Numbers of walleye from the 2014 and 2015 year classes remain below the 15-year average. The 2016 year class appears close to average, while the 2017 year class, now between 12 and 14 inches in length, is above average in abundance. The size of the 2017 year class is significant because since 2008, only the 2013 year class had been average-or-above. Limited forage usually results in a good walleye bite because there is less food available for fish to eat, making an angler's bait all the more attractive.

Complete winter fishing regs for Mille Lacs Lake: [mndnr.gov/millelacslake](http://mndnr.gov/millelacslake). ✧

## Snowshoe building workshops at Tahquamenon State Park, **Dec 7 & 14**

Here's your chance to weave your own pair of traditional wood-framed snowshoes, with a workshop that will take you through the process step by step. The [DNR Outdoor Skills Academy](#) will offer a snowshoe building workshop at [Tahquamenon Falls State Park](#) **Saturday, Dec. 7, and Saturday, Dec. 14**, 9-5 p.m. Cost is \$200 per person, and includes one pair of wood frames, tubular nylon lacing, boot bindings and personalized instruction. Two styles of snowshoe kits will be offered. Refreshments and snacks will be provided. Registration deadline is **November 16**. For more info: [Theresa Neal](#) at 906-492-3415. ✧

## Minocqua Chain walleye catch and release extension proposal wants input

Walleyes on the Minocqua Chain of Lakes in Oneida County have experienced a substantial decline that state and tribal fisheries biologists attribute to poor natural reproduction and low recruitment of young fish into the population. A walleye rehab plan for Minocqua Chain identified steps including five years of no walleye harvest, no tribal walleye spearing and catch and release for anglers followed by five years of reduced walleye harvest by both anglers and spearers. The current catch-and-release regulation has been in place since 2015 and will expire in 2020. *To allow the walleye population to continue to increase in abundance more quickly, it has been recommended that the coordinated harvest closure for all parties should be extended for one more year, through April of 2021.* We would like to get your input on the catch and release extension proposal. Please complete this [short survey](#) and let us know what you think. ✧

## NO Bighead or Silver carp caught in CAWS

After one week of intensive sampling and monitoring, there have been NO Bighead or Silver carp caught in the Chicago Area Waterway System. This includes an area 5 miles above and below Bubbly Creek. Due to adverse weather conditions next week which will pose an unacceptable health and safety issue for the field crews, operations are suspended but will resume on November 18<sup>th</sup>. While folks may speculate the presence of eDNA indicates live Asian Carp, it is important to note that the location where these positive hits were found contained NO fish of any kind were present due to extremely poor water quality.

EPA committee representative Bill Bolen also commented: "Finally, and most importantly, I want to recognize the response crews who were out on the water every day this week in very adverse conditions. Job well done! Their dedication, professionalism, and mission-focus cannot be emphasized enough. I spent the day with them on the water...so I feel qualified to make this statement." ✧

## Public Hunting Areas Report

The latest edition of the IDNR *Illinois Public Hunting Areas Report*—with details on public lands hunting effort and harvest—is available online on the IDNR website at this link: <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/PublicHuntingAreas.aspx>. ✧

## Santa Claus at the Old State Capitol

With seasonal decorations in place for the holidays, families are invited to visit the Old State Capitol State Historic Site in Springfield for photos with Santa Claus and holiday games for children. Santa will be at the Old State Capitol each Saturday from Nov. 30 – Dec. 21, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m., and each Wednesday from Dec. 4-18, 5:00 - 8:00 pm. ✧

## Channel catfish to be stocked across Indiana this fall

DNR will stock over 80,000 channel catfish across Indiana this fall. Stocked catfish will be 8-10" in length. District fisheries biologists determine the number of fish to be stocked by the size of the lake and management strategy. These stockings occur annually or every other year based on expected harvest rates. Channel catfish have strong senses of smell and taste. Common methods of targeting them include cut bait, stink bait, and worms. Channel catfish can also occasionally be caught on artificial lures and minnows. Need to find a place to fish for catfish? Check the Where to Fish map at [wildlife.IN.gov/3591.htm](http://wildlife.IN.gov/3591.htm). You can also find channel catfish regulations at [eregulations.com/indiana/fishing/fishing-regulations/](http://eregulations.com/indiana/fishing/fishing-regulations/). For fish stocking locations, see [wildlife.IN.gov/5457.htm](http://wildlife.IN.gov/5457.htm). ✧

## Brook trout daily possession limit still at 10 fish for select U.P. streams

An experimental regulation that allows for 33 streams in the Upper Peninsula to have a 10-fish daily possession limit for brook trout has been extended. This regulation expired October 1, but was reauthorized by the Michigan Natural Resources Commission November 7 in Lansing. DNR biologists recommended against reinstating the 10 brook trout daily possession limit on the select streams because of concerns based on biological and social science. Select Type 1 streams, which are designated trout streams, in the U.P. have this regulation. They represent about 8% of the total mileage for Type 1 streams in the U.P. The regulation was put into effect by the NRC to create additional fishing opportunities. The 2019 season on Type 1 trout streams closed after September 30. The 2020 season will open on **April 25**. ✧

## Upcoming 2020 Winter BOW Workshop, **Feb 7-9**

At Allegany State Park, NY. Courses may include: Snowshoeing, Cross Country Skiing, Fat Tire Biking, Winter Survival, Ice Fishing, and more! Registration will open in late November. Questions? 518-402-8963, or [e-mail us](#). ✧

## Learn to hunt this fall, **Nov 23**

Are you an Indiana outdoorswoman interested in hunting? Consider joining us for an upcoming workshop: **November 23 – Women’s Pheasant Hunt, Atterbury Fish & Wildlife Area**. ✧

## Illinois DNR reminds hunters about tree stand safety

The Illinois DNR is promoting hunting safety this season with a reminder that the most common safety issues do not involve firearms. As hunting season begins in Illinois, the most common cause of hunting accidents in Illinois involves tree stands. Last year, 19 hunting accidents were reported in all hunting seasons in Illinois. Fourteen of those involved tree stands. Just because a tree stand was secure last season doesn’t mean it is secure now. Make sure you check that before you go out. Hunters who use tree stands should use a fall arrest system. ✧

## DEC camping gift cards/electronic gift certificates available online

New York DEC announced that DEC Camping Gift Cards and electronic gift certificates for stays and services at all DEC Campgrounds are now available for purchase online. Gift Cards and electronic Gift Certificates can be purchased online [here](#). ✧



## Ponder with Thankfulness:

Happiness and moral duty are inseparably connected.

**George Washington**

“From the day of the Declaration...they [the American people] were bound by the laws of God, which they all, and by the laws of The Gospel, which they nearly all, acknowledge as the rules of their conduct.”

**John Quincy Adams**, Sixth President of the United States of America

"A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have."

**Thomas Jefferson**

“The democracy (Republic) will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not.”

**Thomas Jefferson**



## ANSTF Report to Congress

The 2016-2017 Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Report is on its way to Capitol Hill, but you can review the 22 page report here [Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force](#). ✧

## Secret Service finds school shootings are preventable, shooters show warning signs

The US Secret Service has studied school shooters and found that almost none of them “just snapped.” To the contrary, virtually every one of them exhibited warning signs and, as such, the murders they committed could have been prevented. Probably the most egregious of all of these was the Parkland massacre, committed by a student who put up more red flags than a May Day parade at Lenin’s tomb. The study was conducted by the Secret Service’s National Threat Assessment Center and concluded, in part, that “schools may need to think differently about school discipline.” To which anyone who’s been paying any attention would reply...duh. The problem comes when the “different approach” to take is something along the lines of what’s being advocated by wooly-headed social justice advocates like Elizabeth Warren who thinks the solution is to remove all armed security personnel from the nation’s schools. ✧

## Spring Turkey Applications

Resident hunters can apply now for the first lottery for 2020 Illinois Spring Wild Turkey Season permits online. Go to the IDNR website for more information: <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/TurkeyHunting.aspx>. The application deadline for the first lottery for 2020 resident spring turkey permits is **December 1, 2019**. ✧

## Asian carp research in Minnesota

### Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC)

Current Asian carp research at MAISRC primarily focuses on preventing their introduction using enhanced bubble curtains and modifications to locks and dams. A big win, MAISRC researchers installed the first acoustic deterrent system for carp in a lock and dam in the U.S. Researchers also provided recommendations to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for adjusting spillway gate operation in ways that should reduce carp passage while still meeting their standards.

Updates were made to a fish passage model to better incorporate field data. This model will help block invasive Asian carp from moving up the Mississippi River by utilizing locks and dams, while still allowing native fish to swim upstream. It will create an updated version of Computational Fluid Dynamics Agent-Based (CFD-AB) fish passage model using new field data that can better help stop invasive carp while allowing native fish to pass through Mississippi River locks and dams.

#### Updating an invasive fish and native fish passage model for locks and dams

This project will develop a novel aquatic eDNA collection and concentration technology for more efficient, reliable and cost-effective screening for not only invasive aquatic organisms and pathogens but also native and endangered species. The technology would significantly improve aquatic ecosystem survey and management programs in Minnesota.

The new field data is being generated by an ongoing field study of fish behavior and passage at Lock and Dam 2. Parameters on fish behavior will then be updated in the CFD-AB fish passage model developed earlier to improve it. We will use this updated CFD-AB model to predict fish passage for invasive carp (silver carp, common carp) and two native fishes (channel catfish, lake sturgeon) at two model lock and

dams (2 and 8). The updated CFD-AB model will allow us to determine optimum spillway gate positions to stop invasive carps at these sites. We will share these new data with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Minnesota DNR.

As of January 2019, the code development and validation of the Computational Fluid Dynamics - Agent Based model is complete. The accuracy of the fish swimming calculation was improved. Numerous simulations with common carp, which were trying to pass through Lock and Dam 2, have been performed and provided excellent comparisons between the model and the experimental field data.

Specifically, this project will develop an eDNA nanofilter that specifically and rapidly captures DNA and RNA from water. Development of the eDNA filter is underway as of January 2019. It will also develop a housing system for the nanofilter to allow field deployment and continuous sampling of large water volumes or large areas. It verifies increased eDNA sampling efficiency of the new device in field settings.

#### Carp-killing virus discovered in Minnesota for first time

After thousands of dead common carp were reported in Lake Elysian (Waseca County) last month, MAISRC researchers went to work collecting and analyzing samples. [It was determined that koi herpesvirus \(KHV\) caused the massive die-off; the first such documented case in wild fish in Minnesota.](#)

“It’s been suspected that KHV is present in Minnesota waters,” said Dr. Nick Phelps, lead researcher on the project. “But this is the first time it’s been confirmed. This disease has moved around the world since the 1990s through the koi trade. It’s likely that this fish kill was caused by the release of a pet koi or goldfish that carried the virus. Although highly contagious to common carp, and their

color variant koi, KHV does not affect humans and is not known to be lethal to other fish species.”

The bad news: This outbreak highlights the risk of introducing invasive pathogens to Minnesota waters and the possible consequences. “It isn’t just the plants and animals we need to worry about, it is the also the pathogens they carry,” added Phelps. “There are several invasive pathogens on our doorstep that could kill thousands of important sportfish next time.”

The good news: This outbreak highlights the possibility of harnessing a species-specific pathogen to be used as a biocontrol agent for AIS. To that end, MAISRC researchers have been working to identify potential pathogenic biocontrols for invasive carp, zebra mussels and Eurasian watermilfoil. For example, Australia plans to intentionally release KHV next year to control common carp populations.

“There is a lot of research and risk assessment that needs to be done before we know if KHV is a viable biocontrol candidate to safely use in Minnesota. However, from this outbreak, we have learned that KHV is in Minnesota waters and that the associated die-off was not only lethal to invasive carp, but species-specific,” Phelps added. “We thank the folks living on that lake who reported the mortality event so we could learn from it. If you see more fish kills, native or invasive, [please report them to our online database.](#)”

✧

## Archery Deer and Fall Turkey Permits

Illinois Archery Deer and Archery Fall Turkey seasons are open through January 19, 2020. Permits are available over-the-counter at DNR Direct license and permit vendors. Find a vendor near you: <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/LPR/Pages/LicensePermitVendors.aspx>. ✧

# DEC seeks comments on changes to New York's list of endangered/threatened species

## *As Several Species Exceed Recovery Expectations, Others Demonstrate Need for Increased State Protections*

New York State DEC announced changes are being considered to amend state regulations and designations for protecting endangered and threatened species across the state. The two proposals recognize the state's progress in restoring populations of several species, such as the bald eagle and peregrine falcon, and the need to protect other vulnerable species to prevent additional population loss, such as the eastern hellbender.

When a species is listed as threatened or endangered under New York State's Endangered Species Law, the species becomes a priority for DEC monitoring and management programs and is protected through a permit requirement for projects likely to cause harm to these species. DEC is proposing draft changes consistent with the [New York State Wildlife Action Plan](#) and is encouraging the public to review assessments and help DEC identify any new sources of information that can help improve the decision-making process for [High Priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need](#). This preproposal is intended to solicit public and expert comments on the need for list changes from the [existing 90 endangered and threatened designations](#) to ensure upcoming formally proposed list changes reflect the latest science that accurately accounts for the species most in need of additional legal protections.

DEC's preproposal would remove 19 species from the state's endangered and threatened species list. Several species like the bald eagle, northern harrier, peregrine falcon, and humpback whale have experienced significant growth in their numbers and range, with some populations now 10 times the state's initial recovery goals.

For instance, through the work of New York's [bald eagle](#) management program and those in other states and

Canada, the magnificent bird that symbolizes our nation has come back from the brink of extinction. There are now more than 390 pairs of breeding eagles in New York nesting within every region, which is why DEC is considering removing the bald eagle from the threatened species list. By comparison, there was only one breeding pair remaining in New York State when they were listed as Endangered in 1973. Higher population levels and successful reproduction mean the bald eagle is on much firmer footing today than it has been for well over half a century. Restoration efforts across the state and region have been so successful that the bald eagle was removed from the federal endangered species list in 2007, though the species remains protected under the Federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Other species would be removed from the state's endangered or threatened lists because they have been found to no longer include New York within their range, such as the silver chub, or because they have gone extinct like the eastern cougar and Eskimo curlew. Even if a species is removed from the list, DEC would continue to monitor their populations and make management changes as necessary to address any new concerns that may arise.

### **Vulnerable Species Needing Additional Protection from Extinction**

While some species like the eagle have demonstrated a strong resurgence, DEC would propose to list 18 other species as threatened or endangered and enable the additional protections under state law that the listing provides. Several species of freshwater mussels and the common nighthawk would be listed as threatened, and the freshwater bloater would be listed as endangered, among others.

The [eastern hellbender](#), a type of salamander currently listed as a species of special concern, is proposed to be listed as threatened because its known range has been reduced to only 17 locations in six counties mostly within the Allegheny and Susquehanna river drainages. DEC has been working with partners including the Buffalo Zoo, Seneca Nation, Wildlife Conservation Society and SUNY-ESF to help increase the population and look for signs of the species in places where they were historically known to inhabit but additional steps, including designating it as threatened, are necessary.

The [full list of draft changes to the state endangered and threatened species](#) listing can be found in the DEC pre-proposal on the DEC's website (see "New York Environmental Conservation Law, Article 11-0535"). Public input is encouraged on the draft list changes before a formal proposal to revise the list is developed. Input that provides recent information that is not included within the Species Status Assessments is particularly welcome. Comments can be submitted until December 24, 2019, by email to: [wildliferegs@dec.ny.gov](mailto:wildliferegs@dec.ny.gov) with "Endangered Species List" in the subject line or by mail to: Joe Racette, NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4754.

### **Clarifications to Existing Regulations to Help Protected Species**

DEC is also proposing a formal rulemaking to the existing endangered species regulations to help clarify and improve the administration of the state's stringent regulations for endangered and threatened species while also helping to prevent potential project delays when the species are present in a project area. Identifying and addressing potential impacts to

endangered and threatened species and their habitats early in the planning process has proven to be the most successful way to avoid harmful impacts from construction and other new development. The proposed changes will help prevent project

delays and speed up the application process by better clarifying the criteria needed by DEC to make endangered and threatened species determinations, and also enhances DEC's ability to carry out protected species restoration efforts with

cooperating landowners, among other changes.

[Documents regarding this proposed regulation amendment](#) are available on the DEC's website (see "6 NYCRR Part 182"). ✧

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

#### [Asian Carp detected in Chicago](#)

Environmental DNA tests last week were positive for Asian Carp in the Chicago River. Experts say additional research is needed but the DNA could be coming from a fish market

#### [Asian carp: Turning a nuisance into a commodity for the Great Lakes](#)

As states spend millions of dollars to prevent invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes, some seek to use the nuisance fish into a commodity

#### [Divide: Federal agencies, advocates differ on Asian carp strategy](#)

Great Lakes environmental advocates are calling for more action to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes.

#### [Great Lakes water levels have swung from record lows to record highs. Here's why.](#)

Great Lakes water levels broke record highs over the summer, but hit record lows in 2013. It's important to examine the drivers behind the fluctuating water levels and how the warming climate fits in

#### [UWM receives \\$10 million donation for new Great Lakes research vessel](#)

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has received a \$10 million donation toward construction of a new research vessel intended to help advance the scientific understanding of water and the Great Lakes

#### [Siege: Asian carp at the gates of the Great Lakes](#)

Culling Asian carp from the Chicago waterways system is a never-ending task according to a research fish biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. It's not unusual to remove over 200,000 pounds of carp from a waterway and have the area repopulate in a few

#### [Fish guts show changes on the Lake Huron menu](#)

Alewives were once an important food source for top predators and popular game fish such as salmon and lake trout, but Great Lakes populations of the small fish started to decline in the early 1980s and crashed during the 2000s.

#### [Gary Peters secures Senate approval for \\$9M Great Lakes funding increase](#)

A U.S. federal government appropriations bill to increase Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to \$310 million passed in the Senate on Thursday.

#### [Grass carp population control victory announced at state of Lake Huron conference](#)

U.S. Rep. Dan Kildee (MI) announced U.S. federal funding of \$1 million to begin a grass carp population management program in the Great Lakes.

#### [Michigan, Indiana announce salmon stocking increases](#)

Michigan and Indiana announced they will add 150,000 more Chinook salmon into Lake Michigan in 2020

#### [Gov. Whitmer leads bipartisan coalition of Great Lakes governors to protect America's wildlife](#)

Six Great Lakes governors sent a letter to the chairman and ranking member of the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources voicing their support for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act

#### [Wisconsin vendors scramble as fresh Great Lakes perch supply shrinks](#)

Great Lakes perch catch is down dramatically, likely because of overfishing, pollution, and invasion of sea lamprey and other species

#### [State sues International Joint Commission over handling of Lake Ontario flooding](#)

The New York State Department of Conservation has filed a lawsuit against the International Joint Commission regarding the handling of flooding on Lake Ontario in 2017 and

#### [Bill to ban catching perch for profit has Saginaw Bay fishing company worried](#)

A trio of bills in the state House would, in part, stop commercial fishing of yellow perch and impose stricter regulations on commercial fishing

End