



High Court rejects Asian Carp Suit for third time But its time to check Western Lake Erie for Carp eDNA

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Supreme Court on April 28 refused to consider a lawsuit by the state of Michigan that sought the closure of Chicago’s waterway locks to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes.

The *Wall St Journal* reports the state of Michigan had been seeking both temporary and long-term waterway changes to stop the northern migration of silver and bighead carp, aggressive species of Asian carp that can quickly displace native species. The WSJ added the Obama administration said it was concerned about the carp issue, but it opposed Michigan's lawsuit on several grounds. The administration said it was premature to impose the measures Michigan was seeking, and it also said the state should have filed a lawsuit in a federal trial court instead of

attempting to go directly to the Supreme Court.

Michigan and five other Great Lakes states could still file lawsuits over the issue but it was generally acknowledged any such actions would take considerable time and effort with no promise of success or eventual cost.

The U.S. Supreme Court did not take up the lock closure issue in conference on Friday, April 16, as expected, and again delayed a decision on April 23 that could have far-reaching implications for Chicago-area boat and shipping traffic.

Michigan's Attorney General has sued Illinois, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to try and force closure of two shipping locks in Chicago waters in an effort to stop advancement of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. The Supreme Court has twice rejected temporary injunctions that would have automatically shut down the locks until a long-term approach to eradicate the invasive fish could be found.

Meanwhile, it’s time for the States of Michigan and Ohio to check out those western Lake Erie rivers for eDNA evidence. Although there have been no new recent sightings of Asian carp in the area, there is significant concern that these big invasive critters may well be hunkered down in the murky depths of the Maumee and quietly expanding their populations.

A recent report given by University of Notre Dame researchers at the annual Lake Committee meetings noted at least eight tributaries at Lake Erie’s west end may be harboring these critters. Contrary to some Illinois studies where a handful of eDNA samples suggested Asian carp presence in the Chicago Waterway System, and despite six weeks of intensive search and destroy efforts by state and federal fisheries personnel no physical sightings have occurred. While within the last ten years, there have been at least three confirmed sightings in western Lake Erie.

High Court rejects Asian Carp Suite
Continued on page 2

In this issue...

Opposition grow for wind farms.....	2
Nominations for GLSFC officers	2
No carp in Chicago Area Waterway.....	3
NY court upholds tough ballast rules.....	3
WI registers 329,103 deer in 2009.....	3
MI DNRE take walleye eggs	3
Supreme Court strikes down law	4
Fish disinfectant prevents VHS.....	4
2010 Lk Erie fishing outlook good.....	5
Soldier Field Boat & Tackle Market.	6
MI Little Bay de Noc gill net case.....	6
WI 2010 Fishing Report available.....	6
OH wildlife officials suspended	6
NY Free Fishing events	6
HSUS hit by racketeering lawsuit.....	7
Range of ruffe in 2009	7
Wading safety tips	7
Bait farmers sentenced.....	7
34 OH boat ramps repaired	7
MI changes to boost fishing/tourism	8
Reduce nuisance Canada geese.....	8
Firearms excise taxes up 29%.....	8
PA – pheasant chick program.....	9
Peacock world record	9

Senator wants study of potential Asian carp harm

WASHINGTON DC – Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer (NY) wants federal agencies to determine how big a bite Asian carp would take from the regional economy if they invade the Great Lakes.

Schumer said he will request a study in a letter he sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Two species of Asian carp are threatening to enter Lake Michigan from Chicago-area waterways.

State officials, scientists and conservationists say if bighead and silver carp spread across the Great Lakes, they could threaten the \$7 billion fishing industry by starving out competing species and possibly totally upsetting the region’s aquatic ecosystem.

Schumer says a broader analysis is needed that would consider potential damage to other industries such as tourism and shipping — and costs to governments from monitoring and control programs. ♦

Opposition grows for wind farms

What's to like about this un-American energy effort

Proposals to desecrate the history and beauty of Michigan's shorelines in the name of "Green Energy" are meeting with growing opposition, yet politicians and environmental groups are forging ahead with proposals and plans to forever ruin the nation's landscape.

There are many proposals and plans for offshore and onshore wind farms. We oppose all wind farms — offshore and onshore — for many reasons, all the right ones.

Environmentally, esthetically, economically and from a conservation perspective, they are wrong. They create noise, lower residential property values; destroy ranges for wildlife and cattle and compromise pristine wilderness and shorelines. They indiscriminately kill wild birds, endangered birds, all kinds of birds; numerous birds and their habitats. They adversely affect bats, killing millions of them yearly, thus increasing mosquitoes and subsequently requiring more chemical spraying. They have a negative and deadly impact on wildlife and will forever ruin the nation's landscape.

Electricity produced by wind farms costs more than that produced by traditional energy sources, they threaten crop production, dry up and heat regional soils affecting agriculture and exacerbating droughts. Wind farms require massive governmental subsidies. They only produce energy when the wind is blowing.

Environmentalists and other do-gooders scare me because they prefer 'wind mills' to responsibly capitalizing on our own vast oil, coal and shale reserves. The United States will not achieve energy independence unless and until we develop our own vast resources rather than depend on our questionable world energy partners. Forging ahead with any planned wind farms and we forever abandon the beautiful landscape of our nation and

the heritage of our children.

Folks may say they want them, but not in their own back yards. They are not an environmentally friendly power source. The first few may be uniquely "cute;" massive installations are horrifically ugly!

So...what's to like about them?

✧

Nominations open for GLSFC officers, directors

Nominations are open for all officer and director positions of the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council for the '11-'12 term. Nominations will be accepted via e-mail through August 31.

Nominations received to date include:

Officers

President

Vice President Robert Mitchell

Secretary

Treasurer Tom Couston

Directors

Illinois Robert Gaik

Indiana

Michigan Tom Hamilton

Minnesota

New York Thomas Marks

Ohio

Ontario Darryl Choronzey

Pennsylvania

Wisconsin

Voting will again be conducted by First Class mail only. Ballots will be mailed in September, votes counted and results announced in late October or November. Send nominations to: Nominating Committee, staff@great-lakes.org. ✧

High Court rejects Asian Carp Suite

Continued from page 1

That report given at last month's annual lake committee meetings sponsored by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission did not appear to generate any significant interest but Notre Dame research associate Dr. Christopher L. Jerde felt it important enough to include it in the report. ✧



• Established 1972 •

President

Daniel N. Thomas, *Illinois*

Vice President

Robert Mitchell, *Michigan*

Secretary

Michael D. Sanger, *Wisconsin*

Treasurer

Thomas G. Couston, *Illinois*

DIRECTORS

Illinois – Robert Gaik

Indiana – Charles Lentine

Michigan – Tom Hamilton

Minnesota – Dave Koneczny

New York – Thomas Marks

Ohio – Rick Unger

Ontario – Darryl Choronzey

Pennsylvania – Ed Kissell

Wisconsin – Todd Pollesch

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

Robert James, 630/530-7760

© Copyright 2008 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 staff@great-lakes.org.

Field crews sampling results find no carp in Chicago Area Waterway System

CHICAGO — Over the last six weeks, field crews from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intensively sampled throughout the entire Chicago Area Waterway System and no Asian carp were observed or collected. A total of 25 biologists have been involved in the effort that began on February 16, which has included sampling with both electrofishing and nets. A commercial fishing vessel supplemented the netting effort.

A team of fisheries and invasive species experts is currently developing a longer term monitoring plan to outline continued sampling/monitoring efforts over the next three months as part of the larger Asian Carp Control plan that includes both short and long term actions.

“It is critical that we have a better understanding of where Asian carp are in the Chicago Area Waterway System and a better idea of population size so we can better assess the risks to the Great Lakes. That’s why this monitoring effort is so important,” said John Rogner, Asst Director of the Illinois DNR.

“Intensifying our sampling and monitoring efforts in high-risk areas for Asian carp provides us with critical data on population dynamics, potential range expansion and movement of the species,” said

Charlie Wooley, Deputy Regional Director of the Service. “The Service will continue to support monitoring efforts in coordination with Ill. DNR crews to ensure we cover as much area as possible this field season.”

Field crews set approximately 5.6 miles of net and sampled for a total of 60 hours using electrofishing gear in the main channels, barge slips, marinas and other off-channel areas. Species collected in highest abundance were common carp (1,000) and gizzard shad (+1,000). Other species observed or collected included bluntnose minnow, drum, pumpkinseed sunfish, largemouth bass, northern pike, channel catfish, yellow perch, green sunfish and yellow bullhead. All fish collected were returned to the channel.

Early sampling efforts were coordinated around warm water discharge areas in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC), Des Plaines River, Little Calumet River, South Branch Chicago River and Cal Sag Channel. Warm water discharge areas were targeted due to the tendencies of fish to congregate in warm water areas during colder temperatures.

In order to validate the sampling techniques upstream, field crews also sampled in areas far below the electric barrier where Asian carp populations are present. IDNR biologists recovered 36 silver carp and four

bighead carp near Starved Rock Lock and Dam approximately 70 miles downstream from the electric barrier. Field crews expanded the search for Asian carp as ice receded from the waterways and water temperature rose.

The Regional Coordinating Committee is developing a three month monitoring plan to extend sampling efforts through the field season.

The Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee includes representatives from the City of Chicago, Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Great Lakes Fishery Commission and White House Council of Environmental Quality.

These partners are working to address the threat Asian carp pose to the Great Lakes through the development and implementation of the Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework. The Framework, which is guided by the latest scientific research, encompasses over 32 short and long term actions and \$78.5M in investments to combat the spread of Asian carp. For a full copy of the framework go to: www.asiancarp.org.
✧

NY Court upholds New York State's tough ballast water rules

ALBANY, NY (ENS) – A New York State appeals court has dismissed a challenge brought by shipping interests against the state's new ballast water requirements, intended to keep invasive species out of the Great Lakes. In a ruling a three-judge panel upheld the authority of states to adopt ballast water rules that are more protective than federal standards. ✧

WI hunters register 329,103 deer in 2009

MADISON – Hunters registered 329,103 deer for the 2009 deer hunting seasons. This includes a total antlerless harvest of 191,715 and antlered (buck) harvest of 134,156. The grand total includes 3,232 deer recorded as unknown. The total buck harvest for all archery and gun seasons was down 3% compared to 2008. ✧

MI DNRE take walleye eggs at Muskegon River site

The Michigan DNRE was on the Muskegon River earlier this month for about 10 days to take eggs from walleye for its hatchery program. DNRE Fisheries Division personnel had verified spawning walleye in the river. The process was completed by the second week of April. ✧

Supreme Court strikes down law that could criminalize hunting videos

Washington, DC – The U.S. Supreme Court last week, in *United States v. Stevens*, struck down a federal law that could have criminalized the sale of hunting videos. Safari Club International and the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation joined with the National Rifle Association to file an amicus (friend of the Court) brief that explained how the law could apply to many hunting videos. The Court quoted SCI’s brief and relied, in part, on SCI’s arguments to hold the law unconstitutionally overbroad.

Chief Justice John Roberts Jr., writing for the majority in the 8-to-1 decision, said that the law had created “a criminal prohibition of alarming breadth” and that the government’s aggressive defense of the law was “startling and dangerous.” The decision left open the possibility that Congress could enact a narrower law that would pass constitutional muster. But the existing law, Roberts wrote, covered too much speech protected by the First Amendment.

Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. dissented, saying the majority’s analysis was built on “fanciful hypotheticals” and would serve to protect “depraved entertainment.” He

said it was implausible to suggest that Congress meant to ban depictions of hunting or that the practice amounted to animal cruelty. Chief Justice Roberts replied that Justice Alito “contends that hunting depictions must have serious value because hunting has serious value, in a way that dogfights presumably do not. “But, he went on; the 1999 law “addresses the value of the depictions, not of the underlying activity.”

The exchange was unusual, as Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Alito are almost always on the same side. In the last term, the two justices, both appointed by President George W. Bush, agreed 92% of the time, more than any other pair of justices.

Alito said the analogy to child pornography was a strong one. The “activity underlying both kinds of depictions are crimes,” he wrote. Those crimes are difficult to combat without drying up the marketplace for depictions of them and both kinds of depictions contribute at most minimally to public discourse, he added.

The law made the production or sale of a depiction (e.g., video or

picture) of “animal cruelty” punishable by up to five years in prison. The Supreme Court found that Congress wrote the law much too broadly. The law made illegal any depiction of the killing or wounding of a live animal if the act being depicted is itself illegal in the state where the video is sold. As a result, videos of hunting activities that are legal where filmed would violate the law if the videos were sold in a state where that type of hunting activity is illegal. One example from SCI’s brief on which the Court relied was the sharp-tailed grouse, which may be hunted in Idaho, but not in Washington.

The Court also quoted from SCI’s brief to reject the argument that hunting videos would be protected by the law’s exception for videos with serious educational or scientific value. The Court’s opinion stated, “According to Safari Club International and the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, many popular hunting videos ‘have primarily entertainment value’ and are designed to ‘entertain the viewer, market hunting equipment, or increase the hunting community.’” ✧

Fish disinfectant prevents VHS transmission

The disinfection solution iodophor, presently used for salmon eggs, has been found to eliminate active viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) from fertilized walleye and northern pike eggs. Iodophor disinfectant solutions contain iodine formulated for use on fish eggs. USGS and USFWS researchers also found that although some of the disinfection treatments reduced the hatch, iodophor treatment at 90 minutes after fertilization did not alter egg hatch or fry development.

VHS has caused large fish kills in wild fish in the U.S., especially in the Great Lakes region, where thousands of fish have died from the virus over the last few years. The disease causes

internal bleeding in fish, and although in the family of viruses that includes rabies, VHS is not harmful to humans. Thus far, the virus has been found in more than 25 species of fish in Lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie, St. Clair, Superior and Ontario, as well as the Saint Lawrence River and inland lakes in New York, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Effective disinfection methods are critically important to natural resource agencies that collect eggs from wild fish stocks and to private aquaculture because the spread of the virus to a fish hatchery could be devastating, said Mark Gaikowski, the USGS researcher who led the research team. “If VHS virus is introduced into

the aquaculture industry, it could lead to trade restrictions, as well as direct economic losses from the disease,” Gaikowski noted.

Experts fear the disease could potentially spread from the Great Lakes into populations of native fish in the 31 states of the Mississippi River Basin. Regulatory agencies in the U.S. and Canada have already placed restrictions on the movement of fish or fish products that could pose a risk for the spread of VHS virus to regions outside of its known geographic range.

For more information about this subject, as well as recommendations on the disinfection process, see: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2009/3107/>. ✧

2010 Lake Erie sport fishing outlook good

Lake Erie anglers should experience another year of diverse fishing opportunities during 2010, according to biologists with the Ohio DNR.

"We expect fishing to be generally good this year, especially if you are willing to take advantage of the best opportunities," said Roger Knight, Lake Erie program manager. "While fishing success will vary among species and seasons, the lake's populations of walleye, yellow perch, smallmouth bass, white bass and steelhead are in fair to excellent condition."

Lake Erie walleye and yellow perch are managed through an interagency quota system that involves ON, MI, PA, NY and OH jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction regulates their catches to comply with their quotas and minimize the risk of over-fishing these species. Quotas for the upcoming fishing season are determined through consensus agreement by these jurisdictions through the Lake Erie Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and are announced publicly in late March of each year.

Beginning this year, walleye and yellow perch bag limits will be set after the quota announcement, and will go into effect May 1, 2010. The daily bag limit for walleye remains four fish per person during March and April, 2010. As a result of the 2010 quota allocation, the walleye bag limit will be six from May 1, 2010 to February 28, 2011, and four from March 1, 2011 to April 30, 2011. A 15-inch minimum size limit is in effect during the entire season.

The daily bag limit is 25 yellow perch per angler in the waters west of Huron and 30 perch per angler from Huron eastward to the Pennsylvania border through April 30, 2010. As a result of the 2010 quota allocation, the yellow perch bag limit will be 30 perch per angler lakewide from May 1, 2010 to April 30, 2011. There is no minimum size limit on yellow perch. Lake Erie anglers can find walleye

and yellow perch bag limit information at ODNR offices, in special publications at bait and tackle shops, and on the Web at wildohio.com.

Lake Erie anglers have great access to fishing in the Western and Central basins due to the numerous public boat ramps, private marinas and shoreline areas. They also benefit from having the largest charter boat industry in the Great Lakes.

Walleye

Ohio walleye anglers will catch fish mostly from the 2007 and 2003 hatches, with some contributions from the 2001, 2005 and 1999 hatches. Walleye from the moderate 2007 hatch will range from 14-19 inches long and will complement the larger 20- to 28-inch fish from the strong 2003 hatch as the major contributors to the Ohio catch. Fish from the fair 2005 hatch should be in the 19- to 23-inch range. Large walleye from strong hatches in the 1980s and mid-1990s still persist in the population, providing "Fish Ohio" (more than 28 inches) opportunities.

"Fish from the 2007 hatch grew faster than expected last year and showed up prominently in our fishery in 2009 and they should dominate the West Basin catch this summer," said Knight. "The 2003 hatch is still holding strong and will likely carry most of the Central Basin fisheries, particularly as the waters warm up and large fish migrate eastward to cooler waters."

Yellow Perch

Perch anglers should encounter fish ranging from 7- to 13-inches from the 2007, 2008, 2005 and 2003 hatches in this year's fishery. Lake wide, perch numbers should be similar to levels observed in 2009 in the Western and Central basins. Small fish from the weak 2009 hatch may show up in the fishery in the fall.

"Overall, we expect to have good perch fishing in 2010, with the largest fish coming from the eastern part of the Central Basin," said Knight.

Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass fishing in 2010 is expected to be fair. Although bass abundance remains below desired levels, those caught should be of excellent size (15 to 22 inches, weighing 2 to 6 pounds). Bass fishing is best in areas with good bottom structure, which is available across much of the entire Ohio near shore area.

A closed season remains in effect from May 1 through June 25, 2010, during which all black bass (smallmouth and largemouth) must be immediately released. Beginning June 26, 2010, the daily bag limit for bass will remain at five fish, with a 14-inch minimum length limit.

Steelhead

Steelhead anglers should enjoy another year of great fishing in Ohio's Lake Erie tributaries throughout the fall, winter and spring months. Good fishing opportunities will also exist on the open lake when schools of fish can be located. Peak summer steelhead action on Lake Erie can be found offshore from June through August between Vermilion and Conneaut, with catches measuring 17 to 29 inches. Most Lake Erie anglers troll for steelhead in deep waters using spoons with dipsy divers or downriggers. The daily bag limit remains at five fish per person from May 16 to August 31, and two fish per angler between September 1 and May 15, with a 12-inch minimum size limit throughout the year.

White Bass

White bass will continue to provide excellent seasonal fishing opportunities in the Maumee and Sandusky rivers and in the open lake. The catch will be dominated by hatches from 2003 and 2005, which will include many 13- to 16-inch fish. The 2006 and 2007 hatches were moderate and should contribute 10- to 14-inch fish to the fishery. Anglers should focus on major Western Basin

Lake Erie outlook – *continued*

Lake Erie outlook – continued

tributaries during May and June and near shore areas of the open lake during summer months. There is no daily bag or size limit on white bass.

Anglers are also advised of numerous fishing opportunities in the bays and harbors on the Ohio shoreline. These inlets offer excellent fishing for panfish including crappie and bluegill, as well as largemouth bass. In early spring, anglers may also catch an occasional northern pike or muskellunge in vegetated areas.

Anglers are reminded that fishing conditions on Lake Erie can change hourly and adjustments are often necessary to improve success. Anglers should take into account factors such as water temperature, cloud cover, water clarity, boat traffic, wave action, structure and the amount of baitfish in the area. Anglers are also reminded to carefully monitor Lake Erie weather and to seek safe harbor before storms approach.

Updated Lake Erie fishing reports are available online at www.wildohio.com and by calling 1-888-HOOKFISH. ✧

Soldier Field Boat & Tackle Market May 23

Soldier Field in Chicago invites you to the 2nd Annual Boat & Tackle Market on Sunday, May 23rd. The market is open to all to buy, sell or hook a deal on new and used boating, fishing and other outdoor equipment. There will be all kinds of games and activities for kids and adults throughout the day to add a fun festival atmosphere to the day. The event will take place in the South Festival Lot. There is a \$5 entry fee at the entrance (free for kids under 12), but parking in the South Parking Lot is FREE!

Booth space is available to ALL! Booth and display fees begin at \$25 for a 10x10 area (including parking). Click here for a Registration Form. Contact Luca Serra at 312.235.7149 or lserra@soldierfield.net for more info. ✧

MI examining legal options in Little Bay de Noc gill net case

The Michigan DNRE will seek other legal options in the 2009 Little Bay de Noc gill net case.

“In light of the U.S. Attorney’s Office decision to not pursue charges, we are continuing to explore our legal options regarding potential violations of state law outside of the jurisdiction of the 2000 consent decree,” said DNRE Director Rebecca Humphries.

U.S. Attorney Donald A. Davis announced that, because the U.S. District Court lacks jurisdiction, the U.S. Attorney’s Office will not prosecute several members of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians who are suspected of illegally catching and commercially selling walleye from Little Bay de Noc. Their office claims under the terms of the consent decree the Tribes have exclusive jurisdiction to enforce fishing rules against Tribal members who fish in 1836 Treaty waters.

In 2000, the U.S., Michigan, and five separate Native American tribes in Michigan entered into a consent decree that established an agreement between all the parties regarding allocation, management, and regulation of fishing in 1836 Treaty waters. ✧

Wis. 2010 Fishing Report available online

The [2010 Wisconsin Fishing Report](#) is now available online and is loaded with fishing forecasts from waters across the state, helping anglers find the kind of fishing experience they most enjoy. The report is available at DNR service centers and regional offices, and is inserted in the April edition of the Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine, which may be [purchased online](#).

The regular inland season opens May 1; fishing licenses for the 2010-2011 season are now available online, from license sales agents, and from [DNR service centers](#) and regional offices. ✧

Six Ohio wildlife officials suspended following indictments

Six Ohio state wildlife officials have been suspended from their jobs with pay after they were indicted on felony charges that resulted from their not pursuing charges against a North Carolina wildlife officer who reportedly used an Ohio address to avoid paying out-of-state licensing fees.

Suspended after the Brown County indictments were Wildlife Chief David Graham, Assistant Chief Randy Miller, Human Resources Adm. Michele Ward-Tackett, Law Enforcement Adm. James Lehman, District 5 Manager Todd Haines and Wildlife Officer Allan Wright. All six will remain on leave until the cases against them are resolved.

The report found Wright illegally allowed an out-of-state friend to use Wright’s Ohio address to obtain a hunting license, saving \$104 over the cost of an out-of-state license. Wright is charged with two felony counts of tampering with records and a misdemeanor count of falsification. Wright’s superiors are charged with covering up the potential misdemeanor by handling the matter administratively. ✧

NY announces dozens of Free Fishing events

Twenty-six Free Fishing events were announced by the New York DEC. During these specially-designated activities in each DEC region, the agency waives the requirement to purchase a fishing license with the goal of encouraging new interest in fishing and educating the public about NY’s unique natural resources.

Many activities, such as family fishing clinics, also provide equipment to use. Each of DEC’s nine regions can sponsor up to four free fishing events per year. Most free fishing events occur during the period from April through October. For a list of events and info: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27123.html. ✧

HSUS hit by federal racketeering lawsuit

Other animal rights groups named in case

The parent company of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus, Feld Entertainment, Inc., recently filed a federal lawsuit against the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and a group of other animal rights organizations under a law prohibiting racketeering.

The suit, filed on February 16, comes after Feld Entertainment spent close to a decade in litigation with HSUS and others over its treatment of elephants used for circus performances. The original litigation came after a former Ringling employee named Tom Rider began making public appearances alleging abuses of the animals. ✧

Range of ruffe in the Great Lakes through 2009

► Lake Superior: No range expansion was detected in Lake Superior. The ruffe range spans the entire south shore from the Duluth-Superior Harbor on the border of Minnesota/Wisconsin to Whitefish Bay, MI, and along the north shore from the Duluth-Superior Harbor to Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.

► St. Marys River: Ruffe remain undetected in the river.

► Lake Huron: Ruffe were detected in one area of Lake Huron – Thunder Bay area-river and bay. Ruffe have not been captured there since 2003 and have not been captured outside of Thunder Bay.

► Lake Michigan: The ruffe range consists of Green Bay.

► Lakes Erie and Ontario: No ruffe were captured from the Lower Great Lakes.

► Ruffe remain undetected in all inland lakes and streams within the Great Lakes Basin. ✧

River anglers reminded of wading safety tips

With the start of spring fishing opportunities beginning throughout the region, the DNR officials advise anglers to observe important safety tips while wading and boating in pursuit of their favorite game fish.

► Properly dress for the water temperatures instead of the air temperatures to guard against the effect of hypothermia should you unexpectedly fall into the water. Keep available extra clothing on-hand.

► Wear an approved inflatable life vest, life jacket or flotation coat anytime while wading in a river or stream and anytime while on a boat.

► Be especially cautious in areas with high, fast moving waters.

► Do not fish alone; fish with a wading or boating partner. Let friends or family members know of your fishing and boating plans.

► Wear a pair of high-quality chest waders and tighten a cinch belt at the waistline outside the waders to help prevent them from filling with water should a water immersion occur. Water weighs about 8 pounds per gallon and can make walking to the shoreline extremely difficult if waders fill with cold water.

► Never wear waders while fishing from a boat.

► Carry a large walking stick or wading staff to help provide balance while wading in a river. Use a pair of metal crampons or cleats, which fit over the boot portion of waders, to significantly improve traction when wading across slippery rocks and other debris commonly found along river bottoms.

► Avoid alcohol consumption and be aware of local ordinances and state laws that prohibit open displays of alcoholic beverages and public consumption of alcohol.

► Be prepared to handle an emergency situation if it arises and stay informed of current and forecast weather and water conditions. ✧

Bait farmers sentenced for violating federal Lacey Act

Stephen P. Sinnott, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced recently the prosecution of several Wisconsin bait dealers under the federal Lacey Act. They included Hayward Bait and Tackle, Inc., of Hayward; Friesses Minnow Farm, Inc., of Cumberland; Gollon Bait & Fish Farm, of Dodgeville; and Gollon Brothers Wholesale Live Bait, Inc., of Stevens Point.

Sentences by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb ranged from 36 months probation including special conditions for monitoring the defendants' compliance with state and federal law, fines and costs of the additional monitoring during the term of probation. Sentences were meted out under the federal Lacey Act, which makes it unlawful to import, receive, and acquire, in interstate or foreign commerce, any fish transported in violation of any law or regulation of any State.

Wisconsin state law prohibits the importation and transportation of live fish into Wisconsin for use as bait without a valid import permit and health certificate certifying that the fish being imported are free from certain diseases. The Wisconsin law was enacted, in part, to protect Wisconsin resources, while allowing for the future growth of the fish farming industry. ✧

OH - 34 boat ramps to receive needed repairs

The Ohio DNR will provide more than \$376,000 for urgent boat launch facility repairs and maintenance at 34 sites statewide this spring, following recent approval from the State Controlling Board. A total of 34 projects, each ranging in cost from \$381 to \$20,000, will be completed by June 30, including 25 boat launch access sites within Ohio's state parks. For a listing of the sites: <http://ohiodnr.com/Portals/4/pdfs/grants/awards/EBA-awarded.pdf>. ✧

MI license, catch changes aim to boost fishing, tourism

Michigan is angling for more business in the fishing and tourism industries with two new laws that will increase the number of fish anglers can keep.

One establishes a 72-hour fishing license as an option between the 24-hour and the annual one. The other allows anglers to keep an additional two-days' possession of fish.

The extra two-day possession limit will benefit mostly weekend vacationers, said Todd Grischke of the state agency's Fisheries Division. "If they catch their limit in one day, they can freeze those fish, then go out the next day and catch another day's limit and not break the law," he said.

The change addresses the catch limits of many species, including salmon and northern pike, both with a one-day limit of five; whitefish, with a maximum of 12; and rainbow trout, with a limit of 10. But the fish that's got anglers buzzing about the changes is the walleye, Grischke said.

"Most of the possession limits are there to make sure that there's an equitable distribution of natural resources," he said. "Some of the limits are in place to protect the species from over-harvest. In some cases, where walleye are spawning, they get backed up against barriers and they kind of become a nuisance. We do have harvesting seasons to help with that."

Geoff Steinhart, a fisheries professor at Lake Superior State University, said that catch limits are also enforced for biological reasons. "Sometimes catch limits may be adjusted to encourage faster growth," he said. "For example, increasing catch limits should remove more fish, which can decrease competition and increase growth rates of the remaining fish."

The bills were sponsored by Rep. Goeff Hansen, R-Hart and Rep. Dave Hildenbrand, R-Lowell.

The new laws will take effect April 1, 2011. ✧

Reduce nuisance Canada geese, how to

The USFWS has issued regulations that allow for additional control measures, apart from harassment techniques and traditional hunting, to address nuisance goose problems.

The Canada goose is an adaptable bird and can live in a variety of locations, including suburban neighborhood ponds, parks, and other urban areas. As their population increases and they become more common in urban areas so does the increase in nuisance complaints.

Landowners can first try "harassment" techniques, including chemical repellents, mylar balloons, wire/string barriers and noise makers. These methods are proven to help reduce goose problems. However, they do require consistency and are not 100% effective.

In response to these concerns, the FWS issued rules that allow for new control measures, apart from harassment techniques and traditional hunting. One of those regulations is a permit for reducing goose reproduction through nest and egg destruction OR egg addling or oiling which prevent the eggs from hatching.

These permits are easy to attain, and can be useful in certain situations — such as a homeowner that may have geese nesting close to home. It is a way to keep goose numbers down on the property without the population growing too large through years of unchecked reproduction. The permits are available at: www.fws.gov/permits. The website also contains useful information on the methods for addling or oiling the eggs or destroying the nests and when each method may be appropriate.

The nesting season for geese is underway now, and landowners and land managers who have problems with geese (homeowners, golf course managers, city/county managers, etc.), especially during the summer molting season, may be able to act now and reduce their nuisance problems later this year. For more info: www.fws.gov/permits. ✧

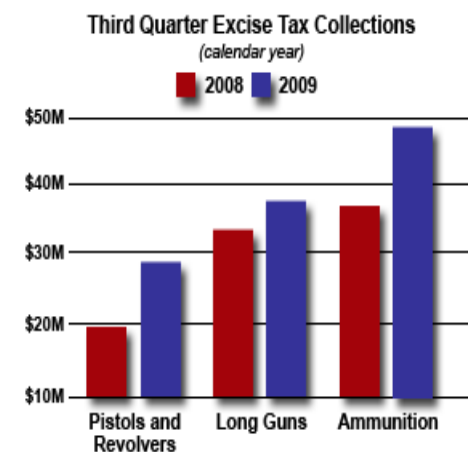
Firearms excise taxes up 29%

According to the most recent [Firearms and Ammunition Excise Tax Collection Report](#), released by the Dept. of the Treasury, firearm and ammunition manufacturers report excise tax obligations to be more than \$115.8 million in the third calendar quarter of 2009, up 29% over the same time period reported in 2008.

The increase follows a 52% increase in excise tax obligations from the previous quarter (2Q, 2009) and more than a year of record-high FBI background checks for firearm purchasers, another strong indicator of firearm sales.

The report, which covers the time period of July 1 through September 30, shows that \$29.85 million was due in taxes for pistols and revolvers, \$37.09 million for long guns and \$48.89 million for ammunition. Compared to the same quarter in 2008, collections were up 50.2% for handguns, 33.4% for ammunition and 11.5% for long guns. **Encourage support for excise tax reform legislation:** It is important that members of the firearms and ammunition industry urge their senators and representatives to support S 632 and HR 510 — pro-conservation, pro-business, bipartisan legislation to bring equity to the excise tax payment schedule.

For more info: [NSSF's Government Relations Web page](#).



PA - Clubs urged to participate in pheasant chick program

HARRISBURG – Sportsmen’s organizations with approved propagation facilities can augment local ring-necked pheasant stockings and increase localized recreational hunting opportunities by raising day-old pheasant chicks supplied free-of-charge by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

“To restore self-sustaining and huntable pheasant populations, the Game Commission is committed to creating Wild Pheasant Recovery Areas, as outlined in our pheasant management plan,” said Calvin W. DuBrock, Game Commission Bureau of Wildlife Management director. “While we strive to create these areas, we continue to urge interested clubs to participate in our pheasant chick and egg programs, which provide wonderful opportunities to get young people involved in raising birds. In addition to learning about the food and habitat requirements of pheasants, they’ll have the chance to see the chicks mature into adult game birds, and to help increase hunting opportunities.”

In 1929, the Game Commission began the propagation of pheasants on an extensive scale with the establishment of two game farms. Over the next six decades, to offset the increasing demand for pheasants from hunters, three other farms were placed into operation, and the day-old pheasant chick program was implemented and made available to sportsmen’s organizations, 4H clubs, farmers, and other cooperators for rearing and releasing on areas open to public hunting.

In 1959, the number of pheasant chicks distributed to cooperators reached 229,685, an all-time high, in addition to the more than 88,500 pheasants raised and released by the agency at its four game farms. Unfortunately, cooperator participation has dwindled significantly over the last few decades. In recent years, only a dozen or so clubs have participated; raising and releasing 3,000-4,000 birds.

Because of budgetary constraints, the Game Commission was forced, in 2005, to reduce its annual pheasant stocking allocation from 200,000 to 100,000. DuBrock said that the agency provides, free of charge, day-old pheasant chicks to clubs entering into an agreement with the Game Commission to raise birds and promote recreational hunting on lands open to public hunting. Gender is not determined as the chicks are boxed for distribution, but are generally at a one-to-one male/female ratio. The number of chicks received depends on the size of the club’s facility. The agency will provide enrolled clubs with plans for a brooder building, covered pen, and guidelines for rearing pheasants.

To be eligible to receive pheasant chicks, a sportsmen’s club is required to have a minimum of 25 square feet of covered pen space available per bird. In addition, 72 square inches of floor space per chick is recommended in the brooder building. All feed and expenses incurred in the work of constructing covered pens and raising pheasants will be the responsibility of the club. All pheasants propagated by organizations must be released on lands open to public hunting.

“Maximum recreational opportunities can be attained by releasing male pheasants as close to the opening of small game season as possible, and no later than the end of the second week of the season.” In addition to the cooperating sportsmen’s club program, the agency also sells surplus day-old hen pheasant chicks and eggs in lots of 100 chicks for \$60, or 300 eggs for \$180.

The pheasant is native to Asia. Recorded attempts to establish pheasants in North America date back to the mid 1700s. These early attempts were unsuccessful; it wasn’t until 1881, in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, that pheasants first became established. During the early 1890s, Pennsylvania citizens purchased pheasants from English gamekeepers

and released them in Lehigh and Northampton counties. For several decades, many other small releases were made across the Commonwealth to establish pheasants for sport hunting. For more info: www.pgc.state.pa.us, ✧

Angler bests Peacock World Record

MANAUS, Brazil – The catch shattered a coveted world record that stood for 16 years. On February 9, 2010, Bill Gassmann of Des Moines, Iowa, fished a clown-colored Luhr Jensen Big Game Woodchopper Slim topwater bait in a tributary of the Rio Negro in northern Brazil. The yellow, red and black spotted lure landed atop a monster speckled peacock bass, which sucked it under with hardly a ripple.

“We were fishing in a wooded area of a little backwater off a main tributary,” said the 44-year-old chief executive officer of BGS Enterprises. “When the lure hit the water, it just disappeared. The fish went straight to the bottom and started spooling line. The guide began jumping up and down and started yelling ‘Grande! Grande!’ Gassmann fought the river monster for approximately 12 minutes, finally bringing the beast to the boat. ✧



Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

The carp plot thickens

In the 1970s, the government funded Asian carp research in our neck of the woods. Carp came to Illinois from Arkansas by the truckload to clean up manure and sewage. An Illinois ecologist says none of the fish escaped. Not everyone is so sure.

New limits on smelting to limit movement of VHS

As the smelt run begins in the Duluth area, people who harvest the silvery forage fish are being told they can be used only for eating, not as bait.

Fishing for truth: Did government agencies help create the Asian carp crisis?

Fish farmers who were importing, cultivating and researching silver and bighead carp are often blamed for allowing their release -- but others might share the blame.

Port authority says bye, bye birdies

Hundreds of double-crested cormorants will have to find a new nesting place when the Hamilton Port Authority turns an artificial island into an underwater shoal next fall. Plans are to make the 30-by-35-metre Farr Island disappear by spreading out the crushed rock...

VHS fish disease found in lake herring from Apostle Islands area

VHS fish disease has been confirmed in lake herring collected in the Apostle Islands in Lake Superior. This most recent finding came from lake herring collected by a commercial fisherman working cooperatively with the Northern Aquaculture Facility in Bayfield and USGS in Ann Arbor.

Wind turbines in Lake Ontario?

The Great Lakes are one of the great wonders of the world with natural beauty second to none. The question is -- would adding as many as 160 windmills in the lake change that?

Evanston looks at putting wind farm in lake

This evening, the Evanston City Council considers the possibility of placing 40 wind turbines in Lake Michigan about 8 miles off the shore of the Northern Suburb

Illinois business leaders: don't close canal locks

Local businesses are fighting calls to close the locks on the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal for the purpose of keeping the Asian carp out of the Great Lakes.

EDITORIAL: Reducing fish kills

Every year, tens of millions of fish, hundreds of millions of fish eggs, and billions of fish larvae are killed by being sucked into the cooling water intakes at FirstEnergy Corp.'s Bay Shore power plant. It's time for a solution, not experiments.

Great Lakes agreement extended

Canada and Ontario have extended the 2007 Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem to March 31, 2011; the Agreement is aimed at protecting and enhancing fisheries habitat and water quality in the Great Lakes.

Time running out to dredge Henderson cut

The Lake Ontario Fisheries Coalition is trying to reach an agreement with the owner of Association Island to dredge the small channel connecting Lake Ontario to Henderson Harbor before fish spawning is in full swing.

Asian carp search-and-destroy mission falls short

An initial six-week mission to catch and kill Asian carp lurking on the Great Lakes' doorstep turned up none of the despised fish, suggesting few if any have eluded an electric barrier designed to block their path to Lake Michigan, officials said

Kingsville residents come out in droves to say no to turbines

Packing a public meeting, about 300 Kingsville residents opened fire on a multibillion-dollar offshore wind project proposed for Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair.

Kahn introduces legislation to ban Asian carp as fishing bait

Michigan State Sen. Roger N. Kahn introduced legislation that would ban the use of Asian carp as fishing bait. The bill would also ban the removal of minnows from known Asian carp infested waters.

[Wind turbines to be built in Lake Erie by 2012, group says](#)

The Lake Erie Energy Development Corp. said it is ready to award a contract to a developer to build the first wind turbines in the Lake as early as 2012.

[Walleye anglers upset over crackdown on Kawkawlin, other Michigan rivers](#)

The Kawkawlin River in Bay County just got a little longer, along with every other river in Michigan, and that's irking anglers. The changes are to protect walleye during spawning season, which began March 15 and continues through the last Saturday in April.