



## Environmental groups sue EPA over lead in tackle & ammo

Unhappy with petition denial, claim lead in ammo and fishing tackle kills 10-20 million birds & animals annually

WASHINGTON (AP) – Three environmental groups sued the Environmental Protection Agency on November 23 to force it to prevent lead poisoning of wildlife from spent ammunition and lost fishing tackle. The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court by the Center for Biological Diversity, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility and the hunters group Project Gutpile. It comes after the EPA denied their petition to ban lead ammunition and lead fishing tackle, which the groups say kills 10 million to 20 million birds and other animals a year by lead poisoning.

"The EPA has the ability to protect America's wildlife from ongoing preventable lead poisoning, but continues to shirk its responsibility," said Jeff Miller, conservation advocate with the Center for Biological Diversity.

The lawsuit asks a judge to order the EPA to develop rules to prevent wildlife poisoning from spent lead ammunition and fishing tackle.

In August, the EPA denied the ammunition part of the petition, saying it didn't have authority under the Toxic Substances Control Act. A few weeks ago, it rejected the fishing tackle portion, saying the petition didn't demonstrate a ban was necessary to protect against unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment, as required by the law.

In the lawsuit, the groups say that EPA erred when it said it didn't have the authority to ban lead ammunition. They argued that the legislative history of the Toxic Substances

Control Act makes it clear that components of ammunition — shots and bullets — may be regulated as chemical substances.

The groups' original petition cited nearly 500 peer-reviewed scientific articles that they said document the toxic effects of lead on wildlife, and the lawsuit argues that large amounts of lead continue to be deposited into the environment. According to the lawsuit, animals often mistake lead shotgun pellets and fishing tackle for food, grit or bone fragments, and avian scavengers are particularly vulnerable to lead in carcasses, gut piles and wounded prey species.

### Environmental groups sue EPA

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♪ Joy to the world...and heaven and nature sing ♪



## NSSF intervenes in suit challenging EPA on traditional ammo

NEWTOWN, Conn. – In response to a lawsuit filed last month challenging the USEPA's denial of a petition to ban traditional ammunition containing lead core components, the National Shooting Sports Foundation will file a motion to intervene. This action allows NSSF to protect industry's interests in the case and ensure that the will of Congress is adhered to.

The suit was brought by the Center for Biological Diversity, which earlier this year had petitioned EPA to

ban traditional ammunition as well as fishing tackle containing lead. CBD claims wild birds are being harmed through the ingestion of spent ammunition fragments, though NSSF contends that no scientific evidence shows that wildlife populations are being affected.

In August after considering the CBD's petition, EPA denied the request, saying it did not have the

### NSSF intervenes in EPA suit

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## “Discovery Weekend” designed for women Jan. 28-30

To explore ice fishing,  
snowshoeing and more

Michigan DNR is offering a “Winter Discovery Weekend” January 28-30 at the MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon. The event is part of the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) program and is designed for women to try a variety of outdoor skills in a fun, safe and non-competitive environment. Classes are geared toward beginners.

Participants choose two classes from among nine topics offered, including ice fishing, self-defense basics, wilderness survival and first aid, snowshoeing, nature painting, butterflies and bugs, walking sticks, cross-country skiing or basic pistol shooting.

Guests should plan to arrive Friday evening between 4 and 9 p.m. On Saturday, guests participate in morning and afternoon classes (three hours each) with breakfast, lunch and dinner provided as part of the paid package. Experienced instructors who enjoy the outdoors and have a true desire to share it with others teach all sessions. A variety of “on-your-own” activities are planned for Saturday evening. Breakfast is provided on Sunday, and the weekend wraps up with a special presentation by the Michigan Hawking Club.

Registration deadline is January 21. For registration forms and information on this and other BOW programs, visit [www.michigan.gov/bow](http://www.michigan.gov/bow), call 517-241-2225 or email [dnr-outdoors-woman@michigan.gov](mailto:dnr-outdoors-woman@michigan.gov). ✧



## Winter BOW Program set for U.P. Feb. 25-27

Women seeking the opportunity to improve their outdoor skills are invited to register for the 11th annual Becoming an Outdoors Woman winter program, set for Feb. 25-27 in Big Bay, 30 miles north of Marquette.

The program will be held at Bay Cliff Health Camp located in a picturesque wooded setting overlooking Lake Superior.

Sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment, this program offers instruction in more than a dozen kinds of activities, including cross-country skiing, dog sledding, ice fishing, fly tying, wilderness first aid and wood burning. Instructors provide instruction that is tailored to the participant's individual ability.

The \$175 registration fee includes all food and lodging, as well as most equipment and supplies (except as noted in the registration materials). Participants will be housed in a dorm-style facility with many amenities, including a sauna and hiking trails with access to Lake Superior.

Becoming an Outdoors Woman workshops are for women, 18 and older, who wish to learn outdoor skills in a relaxed, noncompetitive atmosphere. The U.P. BOW program also includes special evening programs during the weekend event.

Registration deadline is Feb. 4, but early registration is recommended as space is limited and the program fills quickly each year. Class information and registration materials are available online at [www.michigan.gov/bow](http://www.michigan.gov/bow). For more info, contact Sharon Pitz at the DNRE office in Marquette at 906-228-6561 or e-mail [pitzs@michigan.gov](mailto:pitzs@michigan.gov).

Many other outdoors programs for women are scheduled across Michigan. To learn more about these additional opportunities, check the BOW website or contact Sue Tabor at (517) 241-2225 or [DNR-Outdoors-Woman@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-Outdoors-Woman@michigan.gov). ✧



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### Position Statement

Representing a major interest in the aquatic resources of the Great Lakes states and the province of Ontario, the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council is a confederation of organizations and individuals with a concern for the present and future of sport fishing, our natural resources and the ecosystem in which we live. We encourage the wise use of our resources and a search for the truth about the issues confronting us.

## Inland Seas Angler GREAT LAKES BASIN REPORT

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## Judge rules Chicago locks will stay open despite risk States did not present enough evidence that harm was likely or imminent

CHICAGO (AP) – A federal judge, on December 2, turned down a plea from five states to order the immediate closure of shipping locks on Chicago-area waterways to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes, where scientists fear they could disrupt the food chain and starve out other fish.

U.S. District Judge Robert Dow said the states had failed to show that closing the locks immediately was essential to block the Asian carp's path to Lake Michigan. Dow acknowledged in his 61-page opinion that a carp invasion might do great harm to the lakes but said the states had not shown it was likely or imminent.

In fact, he said, the evidence suggests that flooding and economic damage to barge operators and businesses that rely on them would "outweigh the more remote harm associated with the possibility that Asian carp will breach the electronic barriers in significant numbers, swim through the sluice gates and locks, and establish a sustainable population in Lake Michigan." Chicago business groups urged Michigan and the other states to drop the lawsuit, saying there was little chance it would prevail.

The decision does not end a lawsuit filed by Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin that seeks lock closure and other measures to keep the unwanted invaders out of the lakes. But Dow's refusal to issue a preliminary injunction appears to settle the lock issue for the foreseeable future.

The ruling stated in part "Plaintiffs have not established that Asian carp are positioned to establish a breeding population above the electric barrier. Nor have Plaintiffs shown that the fish is anywhere near, much less on the verge of, establishing a population in Lake Michigan. In short, as Mr. Chapman concluded, there is "no evidence as yet that [Asian carps have entered the

Great Lakes in sufficient numbers to establish a successful breeding population]" or that they are close to doing so."

"No one puts the probability of Asian carp establishing in the Lake at zero. Most, if not all, of the experts involved in the USFWS Risk Assessment answered in the affirmative to a "yes" or "no" question concerning whether there was an imminent threat that Asian carp would establish a self-sustaining population in Lake Michigan. However, "imminent" was not defined, and the evidence before the Court at this time does not demonstrate the likelihood of irreparable injury that would be required for a mandatory preliminary injunction to issue. The Court concurs in Mr. Chapman's (USGS scientist) credible assessment that while the potential for damage to the Great Lakes is high, the level of certainty that any damage will occur is low."

"Because the level of certainty of harm is low based on the evidence adduced to date, it cannot be said that irreparable injury is "likely," as must be the case to justify the entry of any preliminary injunction. And here, the showing of irreparable harm would have to be higher still under the sliding scale, given the less than compelling showing on the merits of both of Plaintiffs' substantive claims and the judicial restraint principles that come into play where, as here, multiple federal and state agencies are expending significant effort carrying out their statutory and regulatory duties to maintain and operate the CAWS (Chicago Area Waterway System), study and address the threat of Asian carp, and take whatever emergency measures they deem appropriate to prevent Asian carp from dispersing into the Great Lakes."

Officials in Michigan and Wisconsin said they were disappointed and would discuss with the other states whether to appeal the

ruling or continue the legal battle. A hearing on the status of the suit is scheduled for January 7. In the meantime, Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox called on President Barack Obama to overrule the Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the lock system and has declined to shut it down.

Bighead and silver carp, both Asian species, have migrated up the Mississippi River and its tributaries for decades after escaping from sewage treatment plants and aquaculture ponds in the Deep South. They have advanced to within about 25 miles of Lake Michigan, and DNA evidence suggests at least some may have evaded an electronic barrier on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, part of a network of waterways eventually linking the lakes and the Mississippi.

Biologists disagree on what would happen if they established a breeding population in Lake Michigan. But a worst-case scenario envisions them spreading across most or all of the lakes and decimating their fishing industry, valued at more than \$7 billion.

The Obama administration in February released a \$78.5 million strategy for battling the carp. It calls for strengthening the fish barrier system, netting and poisoning carp in selected areas of the Chicago waterways and developing biological controls such as methods to disrupt their spawning.

In their July 19 suit, the states called for closing the two locks and placing screens, nets and other devices at selected points as temporary measures. They requested an order that the corps speed up a promised study of ways to permanently separate the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds. The suit contends the corps' position on the locks is arbitrary and accuses the agency of operating a nuisance. ✧

## Cold weather kicks off ice fishing season

MADISON – Cold weekend weather helped firm up ice in many parts of Wisconsin to kick off what is often some of the best fishing of the hard water season, state fish biologists say.

"Early ice fishing can be some of the best fishing for walleye, bigger game fish, for a lot of species," says Steve Avelallemant, fisheries supervisor for northern Wisconsin. "Especially on those lakes that are shallow and weedy. The fish seem to be accessible and biting more early in the hard water season, any time before Christmas."

Fishing pressure nearly triples in December in Wisconsin after lakes freeze over, based on results from a 2006-7 statewide mail survey of anglers. Fully one-third of the state's 1.4 million licensed anglers reported ice fishing, and they spent about 1,589,000 hours in December alone, up from 624,000 hours in November of that year, according to Brian Weigel, the DNR fisheries researcher who analyzed the survey results.

Across the entire ice-fishing season, anglers caught 14 million fish in the survey year and released more than half of them during the survey year.

Avelallemant advises that ice anglers who want to maximize their chances of catching fish go to a lake with a good northern pike population. "Northern pike, when you look at their distribution worldwide, you'll find them all the way up into the Arctic Circle. They prefer cold water. Pike tend to get cranked up when it gets cold."

He advises that anglers check in with local bait shops to find out what the walleye are hitting on, and fish that. "A pike will take whatever you throw down," he says. ✧



## Take steps to prevent going through the ice

Early ice can also be treacherous ice, so it's important to take a few basic safety precautions.



Ice claws: nail heads are ground off to a point and then covered with corks to prevent injury. The cord, made to the correct length, can be worn inside the jacket with each claw inside a sleeve. Or they can be draped over the shoulder and inside the coat. The wooden dowels and nylon cord will float, so they are accessible in an emergency.

Check in with local bait shops so you know ice conditions before you go. Tell someone where you're going and when you'll be back, and then go prepared with some basic equipment to help yourself or others should something happen, like wearing a float coat or carrying picks and a rope. ✧

## No carp DNA found in St. Joseph River

Notre Dame U. Carp eDNA researchers report no carp evidence was found from any samples taken on September 15 from the St. Joseph, MI River. The eDNA surveillance group collected 57 samples near and downstream (12.1 km) of the Berrien Springs Hydro Dam. All samples collected were screened for bighead and silver carp DNA. **All samples were negative for bighead and silver carp DNA.**

They also have collected, but not screened, samples from the lower St. Joseph River, the Paw Paw River, and the Galien River. The researchers anticipate screening for these samples to begin in early 2011. This project is funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. ✧

## Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

USEPA says 270 finalists have been selected to receive \$160 million in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding. The GLRI is expected to be a five-year program but needs annual approval. The \$475 million was appropriated in 2010. The 2011 budget of \$300 million awaits action, although Congress has passed a continuing resolution. ✧

## MI DNRE 2011 budget

The DNRE has taken a 6% decrease in the general fund. The DNRE requested a \$2 million appropriation to upgrade the Retail Sales System (RSS) — as funding is available from oil and gas leases that occurred in August 2010. Discussion was held on the current vs. future system. Commissioner Richardson mentioned that permitting process slowdown is a problem.

DNRE budget details: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/DNRE\\_Summary\\_final\\_for\\_NRC\\_334483\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/DNRE_Summary_final_for_NRC_334483_7.pdf) ✧

## Carp Czar: three years for plan to surface

Asian Carp was the topic at a summit at Michigan State University last month, and participants learned from Carp Czar John Goss that it will take three years to come up with the plan to contain the invasive species in the Mississippi river basin and protect the Great Lakes.

Goss said the carp are a threat, but only one of many. "In terms of invasive species, this is probably in the top three or four," Goss said.

Michigan Fish Chief Kelly Smith said the fact that carp DNA and at least one fish has been found beyond the current barriers makes this an urgent matter. "How many are actually above the barrier, no one knows. But there is evidence there are at least some above the barrier, and that's the concern," Smith said. ✧

# How to ice fish for panfish, pike and walleye

Panfish, northern pike and walleye are most frequently caught in the winter, with 11.7 million, 866,000, and 750,000, respectively, based on the mail survey results. Four northern Wisconsin fish biologists who are avid ice fishermen share their secrets for success in targeting the big three:

## Panfish

"Panfish are creatures of habit and habitat. They tend to be in the same general areas every winter. Don't waste a lot of time looking for that secret honey hole away from the crowds. You're probably just moving away from the fish. Instead, getting out there at the crack of dawn may put you on a hot bite before ever-increasing crowd activity puts the fish off. Most any tackle works when panfish are in a biting mood but most of time they will be in a neutral or negative mood.

Light tackle is a big advantage to tease out a bite from reluctant fish. Quality 2- or 3-pound test mono with a limber rod to absorb any sudden shocks will handle most panfish situations. The line should stay soft and supple in the cold. If your tear drop can't pull the kinks out you're not even going to detect bites that could have been a fish in the bucket. Bobbers are still popular bite detectors but the smallest one possible that barely holds the bait up is best. Even then bites won't always take the bobber down. It takes some experience to learn when to set a hook on a bobber wiggle.

Wire or spring steel bite detectors on the end of the rod are the most sensitive. They also let you detect bites while you raise or lower your bait. Slowly pulling your bait up and away from a fish you spot on your fish finder often triggers a strike. On good bite days, fish are actively milling around and you can sit in one spot and wait for the fish. On slow days, the fish are pretty stationary. If you drop a bait right down on a resting school you'll often get one or two to bite right away and then nothing bites

even if you can still see fish on your finder. Since fish aren't moving, you have to move from hole to hole picking up a few here and there for a meal." – *Larry Damman, fisheries biologist, Spooner*

## Northern Pike

"When pike are active during early ice there is really no best time to fish. That's one of the reasons pike are so popular during winter — morning, mid-day, or afternoon can all be excellent times to catch pike. My advice? Keep it simple. Don't out-think your opponent. Pike are low on the evolutionary scale and supposedly have a brain that is 1/1305 of its body weight (Becker 1983). No need to get too fancy. Also, split the difference. Many anglers when setting tip-ups place their bait a certain distance off the bottom. For example, say water depth is 12 feet. Find bottom and set your bait one or two feet off bottom.

If you are fishing in vegetation, my general rule is to think in halves. Twelve feet of water – put your bait at six feet. This serves two purposes. First, vegetation is still occupying a fair portion of the water column at early ice. If you place your bait based on x feet from the bottom there is a good chance it's in the vegetation. No sight – no bite. Second, predators like northern pike cruise the water column. Even if they are near the bottom they can find prey above them. The opposite is less likely to be true." – *Terry Margenau, fisheries supervisor, Spooner*

## Walleye

"Our surveys show that this is the best time all winter to put a walleye on the ice. Caution should be used at this time of year as ice thickness can vary greatly even on the same body of water.

Walleye will be on the feed during this time period and frequenting the same places they were looking for a meal in late summer and fall. Deep weed flats and outside edges are the key sites to look for.

Once ice and snow are on a lake, finding these sites on your favorite lake may be difficult. Open water scouting and a GPS make finding these spots much easier and save a lot of hole drilling. Walk softly on the ice and set up and wait away from your tip ups. Too much commotion on only a few inches of clear ice will spook fish.

Most anglers use tip ups, though jigging can also be very effective, baited with small sucker or medium golden shiners. Set some tip ups with each because on some lakes walleye sometimes show a preference for one over the other. Use light monofilament or fluorocarbon leaders (6- to 10-pound test) that are 2-plus feet long. Also try to use smaller sharp #10 or #8 (even #12) treble hooks because this makes the bait look more natural." – *Steve Gilbert, fisheries biologist, Woodruff*

"My trick for walleye fishing . . . just go fishing a lot! Actually, the key for me is that I mostly fish at prime time (the hour before dark), and I concentrate on break lines and substrate edges in 8 feet to 12 feet of water. As for bait, I mostly use medium-size suckers and fish them 4 inches to 6 inches off the bottom with my tip-ups." *Skip Sommerfeldt, fisheries biologist, Park Falls*

Check out his predictions for ice fishing in 2010-11 and the [daily diary](#) [Skip Sommerfeldt kept last hard water season](#), when he fished 68 days in a row. And learn [how to make ice fishing fun for kids](#) and the adults who bring them. ✧



## NY ballast regulation a victory over Great Lakes invasive species

Seaway officials from Thunder Bay to Kingston oppose DEC ballast water regs

Great Lakes anglers won a sizable victory in the war against invasive species last month. In short, New York courts upheld a new rule that requires all ocean-going ships passing through the state's waters meet tough ballast water standards, meaning less introduction of foreign species.

A New York appellate court dismissed a challenge brought by shipping interests against the state's tough new ballast water requirements, which are designed to limit the introduction of more invasive species into the Great Lakes. This is the second time that the state successfully defended the ballast water restrictions in court. Legal experts hail the win as a huge victory for states in the region that have taken an aggressive stand to limit dumping of water containing biological pollution from ocean going vessels.

The Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court, Third Judicial Department, rejected shipping industry arguments that the New York ballast water regulations were illegal because they were stricter than the U.S. EPA's nationwide discharge permit. The new state regulation mandates that starting January 1, 2012 these ships must have ballast cleansing systems that meet some of the strictest standards in the world. Treatment systems must discharge water almost completely free of invasive species.

The New York court's ruling that states have authority to adopt ballast water rules that are more protective than federal standards is consistent with the decision last year in a lower state court as well as the federal appeals court in Cincinnati to uphold Michigan's ballast water rules against a similar shipping industry challenge.

Shipping interests had fought the new standard in court and called it unconstitutional, likely because it's stricter than the Environmental Protection Agency's nationwide Clean Water Act ballast discharge permit. The case was eventually appealed all

the way to the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, which just last month refused to overturn the ballast standards. That decision means the rule stays and the appeals are finished.

State regulations to increase the treatment of ballast water in international ships and Canadian lakers could cripple business at the Port of Oswego the port's top official said. "We are not 100 percent dependent on our marine component, but we would see a significant drop-off of business," port Executive Director Jonathan Daniels said.

Ballast water from ocean-going ships has carried more than 186 invasive species into the Great Lakes, according to current scientific data, and new invasive species arrive at the rate of one every six months.

The New York regulation will protect all of the Great Lakes even though it's only a state law. New York took a leap ahead of federal efforts to create similar enforcement. It did so by adding the clause that this rule applies even to ships just passing through New York waters. Since the Erie Canal and Chicago canals are too small for most ocean-going ships, these vessels must enter the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence River and a series of locks in New York. Thus, they're all affected by this new standard.

National efforts from the Coast Guard, EPA, and Congress to create such ballast regulations have been less than lackluster to date, and Congress presently has nothing in the hopper that comes close to a definitive federal ballast bill.

Anglers have tried for years to get adequate ballast water regulations in place to protect our Great Lakes and coastal waters from invasive species. And as long as states like New York, Michigan and others continue to lead the way by establishing their own protective standards, there is still hope for protecting our precious resources.

The Great Lakes are a unique ecosystem representing 1/5 of the Earth's surface fresh water, but the vitality of the ecosystem has been threatened by alien species that have wreaked havoc on native fish and plants. Over 186 invasive species have been identified in the Great Lakes; since the St. Lawrence Seaway opened in 1959, 65% of invasive species introductions have been attributed to ballast water. Alien species have already cost the Great Lakes economy billions of dollars.

The entire Lake Michigan ecosystem has been changed by invasive species. The filtering of invasive mussels has, for the first time ever, allowed the lake floor to be carpeted with algae. These conditions have helped the invasive round goby become the most numerous fish in the lake, while all but eliminating many of the native species. In the 80's, high profile invasions by the zebra mussel and sea lamprey decimated local drinking water infrastructure and fishing industries. ✧

## Washington State considers lead fishing tackle on lakes with loons

OLYMPIA – The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission is considering restrictions on the use of lead fishing tackle at 13 lakes with nesting loons. The commission met December 2-4 but no decisions have been announced yet.

The commission held a public hearing on the issue in October, when it reviewed the findings of a WDFW advisory group established to assess scientific studies on risks posed to loons that ingest lead fishing tackle and recommend ways to minimize those risks. Additional info on loons and lead tackle: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/loons/>. ✧

## Regional Fishery Workshop, Jan 8, 2011 Ludington Ramada Inn & Convention Center

Michigan Sea Grant invites you to attend the annual Ludington Regional Fishery Workshop to be held on Saturday, January 8, 2011. Topics presented will cover current research on issues that affect Lake Michigan fisheries. A hot lunch buffet will be included in the conference registration fee of \$20. Advanced registration is requested to assure an accurate count for food service.

Questions, call 616-994-4580. The conference will be held at the Ramada Inn and Conference Center located at 4079 West U. S. 10, on the southeast corner of the US-31/US-10 intersection. For more info, Mark Breederland, [breederl@msu.edu](mailto:breederl@msu.edu). ✧

## Enbridge Energy agrees to cleanup for Kalamazoo River oil spill

Michigan DNRE has entered into a settlement with Enbridge Energy for the cleanup of the Kalamazoo River oil spill. Enbridge Energy is the owner and operator of Line 6B, the pipeline from which over 800,000 gallons of heavy crude oil was released to Talmadge Creek and the Kalamazoo River in late July.

The DNRE-Enbridge order requires Enbridge to develop and implement plans to comply with Michigan law, including assessing the extent of oil remaining in the affected areas, ensuring that contaminant levels are returned to safe levels under state criteria, and restoring impacted natural resources.

The State reserves the right to take other needed enforcement action in the future, including any fines and penalties that may be appropriate under the law. The order also preserves the right of the State to seek compensation for injuries and damages to natural resources arising from the spill. ✧

## NSSF intervenes in EPA suit

*Continued from page 1*

legal authority to regulate the production and distribution of traditional ammunition under the Toxic Substance Control Act of 1976. Congress expressly exempted ammunition from being regulated by this law. Some weeks after the agency's decision on traditional ammunition, EPA also denied the other half of CBD's request to ban fishing tackle. This one-two punch prompted CBD to file its lawsuit.

"We knew this fight was far from over even after we gained that early victory," said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF senior vice president and general counsel. "The CBD petition and now this lawsuit are clearly attacks on the right of hunters to choose the ammunition that best suits their hunting and target shooting needs, and they are attacks on hunting as well."

Launching a grassroots campaign in response to the CBD petition, NSSF mobilized the sporting and gun-owning community to make its support for traditional ammunition clear to the EPA and its administrator, Lisa Jackson, via e-mailed comments and by contacting their lawmakers.

NSSF continues to stress the following in the debate over traditional ammunition:

- There is no scientific evidence that the use of traditional ammunition is having an adverse impact on wildlife populations.
- Wildlife management is the proper jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the 50 state wildlife agencies.
- A 2008 study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on blood lead levels of North Dakota hunters confirmed that consuming game harvested with traditional ammunition does not pose a human health risk.
- A ban on traditional ammunition would have a negative impact on wildlife conservation. The federal excise tax that manufacturers pay on the sale of the ammunition (11 percent) is a primary source of wild-

## Hatcheries plead guilty to Lacey Act violation

HAMMOND, Ind. – On November 17, Keystone Hatcheries (KSH) pleaded guilty to one count of violating the Lacey Act in the U.S. District Court, Northern Indiana, for illegally transporting fish into Indiana after a documented outbreak of Whirling Disease at their facility. Based in Richmond, Ill., KSH is the hatchery division of Robinson Wholesale, Inc. of Genoa City, Wis.

In addition to the guilty plea, KSH has agreed to pay \$75,000 for the Lacey Act violation.

Whirling Disease (WD) is a chronic, parasitic infection of hatchery-raised and wild salmonids (salmon and trout) that was accidentally introduced into the United States around 1955 through brown trout, and is currently found in 25 states. WD is caused by a microscopic parasite causing nerve and cartilage damage, which results in the outward signs of whirling disease. It is common for fish carrying the disease to be symptom-free, but severe whirling disease infections can kill salmonid fish.

WD is an extremely devastating parasite and controlling its spread is important in the protection of rainbow trout and other native salmonids. For more info about Whirling Disease: <http://whirlingdisease.montana.edu>. ✧

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life conservation funding.

- The bald eagle's recovery, considered to be a great conservation success story, was made possible and funded by hunters using traditional ammunition — the very ammunition organizations like the CBD are now demonizing.
- Recent statistics from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service show that from 1981 to 2006 the number of breeding pairs of bald eagles in the United States increased 724 %. And much like the bald eagle, raptor populations throughout the United States are soaring. ✧

## Chicagoland, America's Outdoor Show, Jan 26-30, 2011

Women in the world of the outdoors will take high priority when the longest running outdoors show in Chicagoland, America's Outdoor Show, returns to the Stephens Expo Center in Rosemont, January 26-30, 2011.

Show promoter, Jim Sugarman, relates, "One thing that has been requested of the show is more information and activities for women who enjoy hunting, fishing and other outdoor sports. We have definitely filled that demand."

A partial list of show speakers includes:

**Tiffany Lakosky** – Minnesota's Tiffany is the co-host of "The Crush," one of the Outdoor Channel's most popular shows. Tiffany will be on America's Outdoors Show main stage to share her methods for harvesting giant whitetail deer.

**Kristen Monroe** – An all-around outdoorswoman from Outdoor News Publications, Kristen has interviewed women from one end of the spectrum to the other. From "anti-hunters" to women who where "born hunters" she has talked to them all. She says, "Knowing why women hunt is half the battle to actually getting them to hunt."

**Michelle Leqve** – "The Extreme Bowhuntriss" has harvested 15 Pope & Young Class animals in just over 10 years. She is a fixture on national outdoors programming. She's taken nine big game species including polar bear, caribou, elk and black bear, from all over North America.

**Sigrid Pilgrim** – Past president of the Illinois Paddling Council, Sigrid is one of the most recognized names in the world of paddling sports. She'll be at America's Outdoor Show to get people interested in the sport and give the information needed to participate in it safely. Attendees will actually be able to Kayak & Canoe in 100,000-gallon America's Lake.

## MI – Offshore wind legislation introduced

Michigan legislation was introduced last week to identify offshore wind sites and streamline the regulatory process.

Introducing the legislation, State Senator Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp.) said, "I am asking my colleagues to support this common-sense, bipartisan plan to make Michigan the top spot in the nation for offshore wind energy and put thousands of our workers back on the job." The legislation is based on recommendations by the Michigan Great Lakes Wind Council calling for permitting guidelines, leasing methods and payment structures, and a proposed process for public input on offshore wind development projects.

Representative Dan Scripps (D-Leland) announced his introduction of the bill in the House: <http://101.housedems.com/news/article/shoreline-legislators-unveil-plan-to-spur-wind-energy-development/bipartisan-legislation-will-provide-public-input-on-offshore-wind-projects/>.

The legislation calls upon the Michigan DNRE to nominate parcels for leasing within 180 days of enactment. The careful deliberations of the 29-member GLOW Council produced a clear path to responsible offshore wind development. When signed, the new law will make Michigan the first state in the nation to comprehensively address the issues and opportunities presented by offshore wind development. ✧

Sugarman says, "We are making sure that our vendors have plenty of product tailored especially for women. There are too many women in the outdoors today for them to have to borrow or buy equipment designed for men. We'll have clothing cut for women and equipment styled for a woman's tastes. Women are definitely not left out at America's Outdoor Show." ✧

## A right to bear arms & knives

### Arizona creates model for other states

PHOENIX – Arizona used to be a knife carrier's nightmare, with a patchwork of local laws that forced those inclined to carry knives to tread carefully as they moved from Phoenix (no knives except pocketknives) to Tempe (no knives at all) to Tucson (no knives on library grounds).

But that changed earlier this year when Arizona made its Legislature the sole arbiter of knife regulations. Arizona is now a place where knives can be carried statewide. In combination with Arizona's recently enacted constitutional concealed carry law, knife owners in Arizona will enjoy the most accommodating knife laws in the country.

The passage of Arizona's Knife Preemption Law is precedent setting for knife owner rights. Arizona is the first state to establish specific preemption for knife laws and this represents the successful kick-off of Knife Rights' National Knife Law Preemption Campaign, a key component of Knife Rights' national legislative agenda to protect and enhance knife owners' rights.

Knife Rights anticipates that the Arizona preemption law will serve as a model for preemption efforts in other states whose citizens are subject to a similar patchwork of restrictive local knife laws with attendant civil rights issues. We have already been approached by a number of legislators and citizens who want to initiate knife law preemption for their states. Knife Rights will aggressively pursue these opportunities.

Knife advocates are hoping that, just as Arizona's immigration law has led to a national debate on that topic, its move to end knife restrictions will lead more states to take up the cause. ✧

 Merry  
Christmas!

# Lake Ontario Fishing Boat Survey 1985 – 2010

## Preliminary Summary for May - September 2010

Since 1985, NYSDEC surveyed boats operating in New York waters of Lake Ontario's main basin from April through September. The data collected from counts and interviews of fishing boats are used to manage Lake Ontario's multimillion-dollar trout and salmon fishery and provide valuable data on other fish species. Results indicate Lake Ontario anglers experienced the 2nd consecutive year of the best total trout and salmon fishing (i.e. 8th consecutive year of highest Chinook salmon catch rates, 2nd consecutive year of highest rainbow trout catch rates, the 3rd and 5th best years for coho salmon and brown trout fishing, and the highest lake trout catch rate since 2004).

### Fishing Effort

Estimated fishing effort (seasonal total=59,423 boat trips) was a 17.3% decrease compared to the previous 5-year average (**Fig. 1**). Boats targeting trout and salmon accounted for 47,450 boat trips (79.9% of all fishing trips), which was comparable to the previous 5-year average.

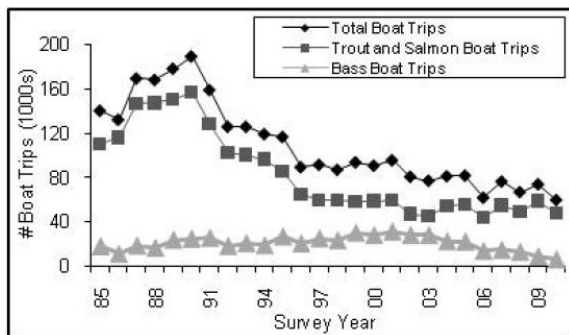


Fig 1 Seasonal estimates of total fishing effort, trout, salmon and smallmouth bass effort

Smallmouth bass fishing effort continued the downward trend that was observed in recent years. Estimated smallmouth bass effort remained low during the pre-season catch and release period. For seven consecutive years smallmouth bass fishing effort and quality during the traditional open season have steadily declined and have reached the lowest levels observed. Boats targeting smallmouth bass accounted for 5,855 boats trips (9.9% of the total trips), the lowest June-September estimate for bass anglers and a 59.1% decrease compared to the 2005-09 average (**Fig. 1**). Monthly bass effort estimates during the traditional open season were among the lowest observed.

Trout and Salmon Catch, Harvest and Fishing Quality (158,584 fish) and harvest (83,136 fish) were comparable to previous 5-year averages and were 33.6% and 19.4% increases compared to previous 10-year averages, respectively (**Fig. 2**). Chinook salmon dominated salmonine catch (61,787 fish, 39.0% of total catch) and harvest (31,503 fish, 37.9% of total harvest). Rainbow trout was the second most commonly caught salmonine species in 2010

(45,380 fish, 28.6% of total catch). The remaining total trout and salmon catch consisted of 17.1% brown trout, 7.2% coho salmon, 7.1% lake trout, and 1.0% Atlantic salmon.

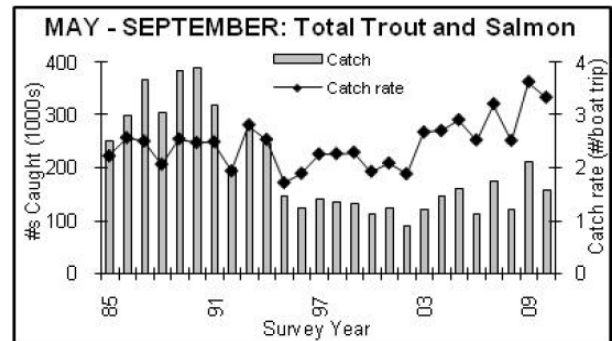


Fig 2 Total trout and salmon catch and catch rate. 1985-2010

Trout and salmon fishing quality as measured by catch rate (3.3 fish per boat trip), was the second highest observed and was 12.7% above the previous 5-year average (**Fig. 2**). High catch rates for Chinook salmon, coho salmon, brown trout, and rainbow trout (record high) resulted in excellent fishing quality in 2010. Monthly salmonine catch rates were above their respective 2005-09 averages.

### Chinook Salmon

Chinook salmon catch rates have been at or near record levels for eight consecutive years. Fishing quality was excellent in June (2.6 Chinooks per boat trip, and the highest June catch rate) and July (1.8 Chinooks per boat trip, and the 4th highest July catch rate). Catch rates during August and September were good (**Fig 3**).

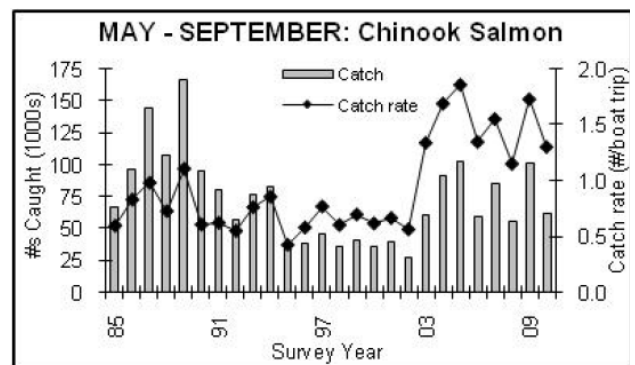


Fig 3 Chinook salmon catch and catch rate, 1985-2010

### Coho Salmon

The coho salmon catch rate (0.24 fish per boat trip) and harvest rate (0.17 fish per boat trip) were each the third highest observed. Monthly coho catch rates and harvest rates were average in May and September, but were among the highest for June, July, and August.

Rainbow Trout

For the third consecutive year, the rainbow trout catch rate (0.96 fish per boat trip; 76.9% above the previous 5-year average) exceeded record high levels. June and August monthly catch rates were the highest recorded, and the July catch rate was the second highest observed.

Brown Trout

The brown trout catch rate (0.6 fish per boat trip) was the fifth highest observed, representing a 16.3% increase compared to the previous 5-year average, and 37.4% higher than the long-term average (1985-2009). Typically, the best quality brown trout fishing occurs April through early June on the eastern half of the lake. Fishing quality was excellent in August (second highest August in the data series) and remained above average in September.

Lake Trout

Lake trout catch rate (0.24 fish per boat trip) and harvest rate (0.11 fish per boat trip) were well above previous 5-year averages (+56.9% and +76.8%, respectively; Fig. 4). Record low catch rates observed in recent years are likely due to excellent fishing for other salmonines coinciding with low lake trout abundance.

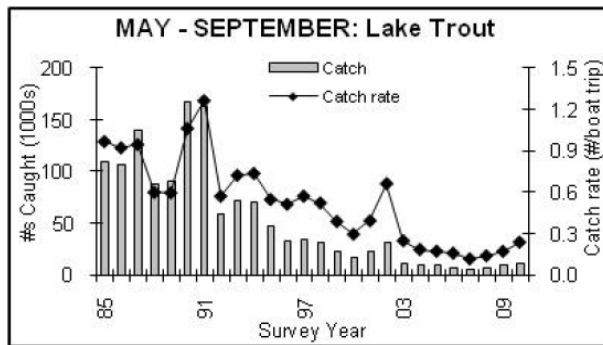


Fig 4 Lake Trout catch and catch rate, 1985-2010

Atlantic Salmon

Catch and harvest of Atlantic salmon in the boat fishery are rare, and estimates from 1995-2008 were the lowest observed in the 26-year survey. For the second consecutive year, Atlantic salmon catch was the highest observed since 1994 (2009 = 1,072 fish; 2010 = 1,553 fish).

Smallmouth Bass Catch, Harvest and Fishing Quality

Smallmouth fishing quality in 2010 (in areas excluding the Eastern Basin) remained well below average. Seasonal estimates of catch (17,913 bass), harvest (4,893 bass) and catch rate (1.9 bass per bass boat trip) were the lowest estimated in the 26-year data series (Fig. 5). The decline in bass catch rates coincide with increased angler catches of round goby, which is a contributing factor to reduced bass fishing quality.

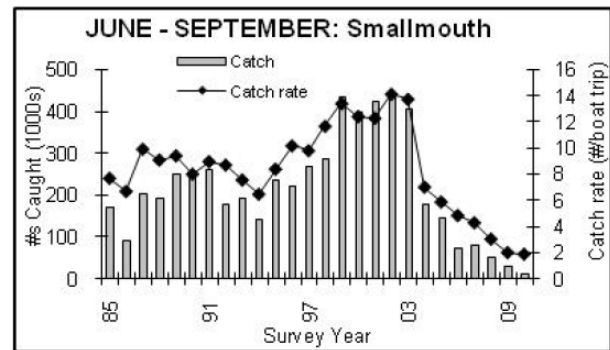


Fig 5 Smallmouth Bass catch and catch rate, 1985-2010

Yellow Perch Harvest

Estimated catch of yellow perch (59,853 fish in 2010) has remained at or near record high levels since 2007. Yellow perch harvest (17,207 fish) declined 66.7% from the record high observed in 2009. Few boats target yellow perch, catch and harvest is highly variable, and the probability of interviewing them is low. ✧

# PA Conservation Officer killed during traffic stop

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania Game Commission Wildlife Conservation Officer (WCO) David L. Grove was shot and killed in the line of duty while on patrol around 10:30 p.m., on November 11, along Shrivvers Road in Freedom Township, Adams County. Grove, age 31, of Fairfield, was investigating reports of ongoing nighttime shooting and possible poaching activity in the area.

The Pennsylvania State Police, leading the investigation, moved swiftly to resolve the killing of the



Conservation Officer. Christopher Lynn Johnson, a twice-convicted felon, has been apprehended, and is a person of interest in the shooting, police said. Troopers who found Johnson, 27, in Franklin Township, had previously issued a warning that Johnson was to be considered armed

and dangerous, possibly injured and in need of medical treatment.

Prior to this incident, the last Game Commission Officer to have been shot and killed in the line of duty was Game Protector Joseph McHugh in Weatherly, Carbon County, on November 7, 1915.

A graduate of the 27th Class of the Game Commission's School of Conservation, Grove was commissioned a full-time Wildlife Conservation Officer on March 8, 2008, and assigned to the southern district of Adams County.

Our condolences and prayers go out to Officer Grove's family and friends. ✧

## Largemouth Bass Virus resurfaces in Virginia and W. Virginia

PA biologists have also found infected young of year smallmouth in Susquehanna River.

ANNAPOLIS – Recent fish kills at Kerr Reservoir and Briery Lake in Virginia have been linked to largemouth bass virus (LMBV) by Virginia Department of Game Fisheries biologists. LMBV has not been implicated in fish kills nationally for nearly a decade. However, the Virginia incidents are a reminder that the organism may still pose risk to bass populations in Virginia rivers in the region.

"The health of Maryland's largemouth bass populations continues to be excellent," said Don Cosden, DNR's Inland Fisheries Director. "Angler catch rates from monitored tournaments on the tidal Potomac were some of the highest we've seen over the last decade and individual fish condition is excellent. We have blue ribbon fishing opportunities in the Potomac River, Nanticoke River System, and the Upper Bay tributaries including the Susquehanna Flats. We encourage everyone to enjoy the fishing while being vigilant in avoiding transporting fish, debris, bait, and potential problems from one place to another."

Virginia and West Virginia researchers have identified the virus in their waters as well. In Maryland, bass have tested positive in the Nanticoke, Choptank and Patuxent Rivers, and Triadelphia Reservoir. The virus has not been identified in Upper Chesapeake Bay bass. However Pennsylvania fisheries biologists have found infected young of year smallmouth bass in the Susquehanna River.

LMBV spreads by fish to fish contact, through the water or by fish eating infected prey. Fish biologists believe that LMBV was responsible for largemouth bass losses in the late 1990s in a number of southern and mid-western states. Impacted bass populations typically take three to four years to recover from a major LMBV event.

[Guidelines to reduce the spread of this and other disruptive invasive](#)

[or pathogenic organisms such as zebra mussels:](#)

- \* Never transfer live fish from one body of water to another.
- \* Never discard fish parts or unused bait in any body of water.
- \* Drain water from live wells, bilges, engines, bait buckets, and hoses and pumps before leaving the launch area and clear mud, vegetation and debris from trailers.
- \* Disinfect live wells daily and particularly when moving between bodies of water.
- \* Spray or wipe all surfaces with a chlorine (bleach) solution, let sit for 5 minutes, then rinse with clean water and flush through lines and pumps.

Bleach is very toxic to aquatic organisms. An effective chlorine solution can be prepared by placing three tablespoons of household bleach in one gallon of water. Use the chlorine solution to clean trailers and other parts of the boat — just be sure to rinse well with clean water.

LMBV may reduce a fish's tolerance to stress. [Anglers can increase the chances of survival of fish intended for release by following these guidelines:](#)

- \* Handle bass gently and return to the water as soon as possible, especially when the water is over 80°.
- \* Maintain good livewell water quality; keep aerated and recirculated at 3 to 5 degrees cooler than the ambient water.
- \* Add non-iodized salt to livewells at a rate of one tablespoon per 10 gallons of water, or use one of the commercially available products for maintaining fish.
- \* Do not overcrowd bass; 1 lb. of fish per gallon of livewell water is a good maximum ratio.
- \* Stage tournaments during cool water months.
- \* Report dying or dead bass, or bass that are swimming poorly in circles near the surface of the water.

For more info about LMBV in Virginia: [www.dgif.virginia.gov/news/release.asp?id=269](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/news/release.asp?id=269) ✧

### Environmental groups sue EPA

*Continued from page 1*

Gordon Robertson, vice president of the American Sportfishing Association, said the EPA got the decision right the first time. "We fundamentally think this is the jurisdiction of state fish and wildlife agencies to address these types of problems where they may exist," he said. "The data shows this is not a population problem as it relates to the use of lead in fishing gear."

The EPA did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Only three of the original five groups that filed the petition in August joined Tuesday's lawsuit. Not participating were the Association of Avian Veterinarians and the American Bird Conservancy. The veterinarians group said it didn't have enough time to get a consensus from its members before the suit was filed. The bird conservancy said that it decided to approach the problem "from a different angle," said spokesman Robert Johns.

The petition, filed three months ago, stoked alarm among outdoorsmen, and prompted members of the House and Senate to introduce bills aimed at preventing the EPA from regulating ammunition or fishing tackle. In 1994, under President Bill Clinton and EPA administrator Carol Browner, now the White House energy adviser, the EPA proposed banning lead and zinc in certain smaller-size fishing sinkers. In a statement at the time, the agency said: "The ingestion of even one small fishing sinker containing lead or zinc can result in the death of a water bird."

The proposal sparked a backlash in Congress. Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, introduced the "Common Sense in Fishing Regulations Act" in 1995 that would have blocked the EPA from implementing it. The agency eventually abandoned the proposal. ✧

## Quit your carping

*Chicago Tribune.com editorial December 9, 2010*

It's official: The dreaded Asian carp aren't an imminent threat to the Great Lakes, despite the hallucinatory anxieties of Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

A federal judge refused last week to slam Chicago's shipping locks closed, saying the five states that sought an emergency order haven't shown the fish are "anywhere near, much less on the verge of, establishing a population in Lake Michigan."

We hope this latest ruling — on the heels of two rejections from the U.S. Supreme Court — will persuade our Midwestern neighbors to abandon their money-wasting, finger-pointing lawsuit. It isn't helping anything.

Led by Michigan Attorney General Michael Cox, the five states sued the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

The states are afraid the carp, which have been making their way north from Arkansas for 15 years, will take over Lake Michigan and eventually the Great Lakes, jeopardizing a \$7.5 billion fishing and boating industry. The carp are voracious eaters, prolific breeders and impressive jumpers, known to leap from the water when frightened by outboard motors.

"The thought that somebody could be skiing on an inland lake and get knocked over by a 30-pound fish ... that strikes right at the heart of our tourism experience," Steve Yencich, CEO of the Michigan Lodging and Tourism Association, told the *Detroit News*.

Some biologists think the worries are overstated and not just the part about getting whacked by a flying fish. It's possible the carp are happy where they are. The lake waters might be too cold and too still for them to spawn successfully. There might not be enough plankton to keep them fed.

Maybe that's why the fish haven't already invaded. Or maybe it's because the underwater electric barrier installed to keep them away from the locks is working, as U.S. District Judge Robert M. Dow observed in his ruling.

Yes, at least one fish has made it past the zapper, he noted, but "the documented evidence strongly suggests the electric barrier is working to effectively deter Asian carp."

The consequences of closing the locks, meanwhile, would be devastating and immediate. More than \$29 billion in goods move through the locks each year on barges. Tour boats and recreational boaters also pass through on their way to and from the lake. There's also the threat of flooding after heavy rains if the locks can't be opened to allow runoff into the lake.

Too bad, the five states say. So far they've refused to rule out an appeal, and Cox has called on President Barack Obama to order the Corps of Engineers to shut the locks. This despite the administration's \$78.5 million plan to battle the carp, including more barriers coupled with netting, poisoning and biological controls.

Here's what's lost in all the hyperbolic doomsaying: Nobody on this side of the locks wants the carp to get into Lake Michigan, either. Illinois has spent more than \$13 million to keep them out, not counting the resources wasted on this ridiculous legal fight. We're all in the same boat, neighbors. Drop that suit. ✧

## \$5.2 million Fox River/Green Bay PCB cleanup agreement

MADISON – The U.S. Department of Justice, WI DNR and two tribal nations filed an agreement reached with the City of Green Bay, Brown County and the Army Corps of Engineers totaling \$5.2 million covering further clean-up of PCB contaminants dredged from the Fox River.

The agreement is associated with cleanup of PCBs contaminating the Fox River and lower Green Bay and addresses damages to natural resources resulting from redepositing PCB-laden sediments, dredged from the navigation channel, into Green Bay waters. The sediments were deposited in locations designated as confined disposal facilities (CDFs). The Bayport CDF has since been improved and the Renard Island CDF is no longer used.

The dredging was done by the Army Corps of Engineers prior to this practice being banned by Wisconsin state law.

Under the proposed Consent Decree, Brown County and the City of Green Bay would each pay \$350,000 and the United States Government would pay \$4.5 million. Most of the payment (\$4,350,000) is directed to natural resources damages (NRD) with \$850,000 directed to past and future response costs. The payment shares, say officials, reflect the roles of the Corps, the County and the City in the resulting damages to natural resources. ✧



## **Other Breaking News Items:**

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

### **[Corps changes aim from prevention to 'reduce risk'](#)**

More than three years after Congress directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to explore ways to separate the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins in order to "prevent the spread" of nuisance species like Asian carp between the two grand water systems, the Army Corps is now embarking on what it says likely will be a four-year study.

### **[EDITORIAL: Quit your carping](#)**

It's official: The dreaded Asian carp aren't an imminent threat to the Great Lakes, despite the hallucinatory anxieties of Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

### **[New scientists give IJC more teeth](#)**

By almost doubling its staff of scientists in Windsor, the International Joint Commission says it can be a more effective watchdog on water issues

### **[Lake Michigan: home to almost 900 trillion quagga mussels](#)**

Asian carp get all the headlines lately, but another invader, present in the trillions, is already devastating the ecosystem in Lake Michigan: the quagga mussel.

### **[Offshore wind would boost Ontario economy: report](#)**

Ontario could create new industries, reinvigorate old ones, and generate thousands of new jobs over the next 15 years by building a vibrant offshore wind market around the Great Lakes, according to a report prepared by the Conference Board of Canada.

### **[Tiny invasives & sooper yoooper](#)**

A new study in the journal Ecology Letters finds there are more invasions by microbes... and very little is being done about them

### **[Buoy to test wind energy six miles off Muskegon, MI](#)**

The first floating buoy to test offshore wind energy in Lake Michigan is planned for six miles off the Muskegon shoreline next spring. A federal grant helped fund the \$3.7 million project spearheaded by Grand Valley State University's Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center in Muskegon

### **[Good news blows into Michigan: State lands 1st large wind turbine assembly plant](#)**

In a major boost for Michigan's emerging wind-energy industry, Gov. Jennifer Granholm plans to announce today that the state has attracted its first large wind turbine assembly plant.

### **[COMMENTARY: Lake Erie wind turbines costly, inefficient](#)**

Green energy is all the rage, and Ohio is jumping on the bandwagon with little regard for financial considerations. The proposed offshore wind turbine project in Lake Erie is an example of wasteful spending in the name of going green and creating jobs.

### **[Wind farm issue threatens to discredit green movement](#)**

Large-scale wind energy developments like the ones proposed for Bow Lake and Goulais River will actually increase our carbon footprint, says John Laforet, president of Wind Concerns Ontario.

### **[Invasions demand leadership, action](#)**

Over a half-century ago, the Great Lakes collapsed in the manner many now fear. Crippled in the 1940s by decades of overfishing and a century's worth of wanton pollution, the lakes suffered a knockout blow when sea lamprey slithered their way in from the Atlantic Ocean via man-made shipping canals

### **[Salmon's demise in Lake Huron a boon for walleye](#)**

DNR officials suspect the disappearance of alewives is a big reason for the change; those little invaders feasted on juvenile native species while providing a miserable diet for native predators like lake trout.

### **[Anti-carp bill awaits president's signature](#)**

Legislation to help stop the spread of Asian carp to the Great Lakes crossed a final legislative hurdle Wednesday, passing the House. It awaits only President Barack Obama's signature.

### **[Snyder shakes up cabinet roles, adds corporate structure](#)**

Under Michigan Gov.-elect Snyder's plan, he'll split up the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality, which were combined by Gov. Jennifer Granholm in January.

### [Offshore wind debated, but statewide rules will have to wait](#)

Testimony was taken for the first time Tuesday on comprehensive offshore wind turbine legislation, which seems destined to remain in committee as the Michigan Legislature ends its term this week.

### [National Park Service holds meetings on Isle Royale long-term plan](#)

The National Park Service will hold four meetings to get input on its long-range plans for Isle Royale National Park in Lake Superior. A big focus will be on what to do about long-term private leases on the island that are nearing expiration

### [Ohio working to keep number of cormorants under control](#)

The birds' populations are so massive in some areas that biologists say they are harming ecosystems and pushing other animals and plants out. This has prompted Ohio and Ontario to send sharpshooters to thin out the populations on Lake Erie

### [Wind farm opponents in Oxford are ready to make their case](#)

WOODSTOCK – Opponents of wind turbines say there are lots of misconceptions about wind farms. The first mistake is calling them wind farms.

### [Cost-saving IL law endangers growth of wind industry](#)

Illinois has ample farmland well suited for wind farms, and a law mandating that the state get at least 18 percent of its electricity from wind power by 2025. But the byzantine process by which an obscure state agency decides where that wind power comes from has stalled development of new wind farms.

### [EDITORIAL: Canada and the Asian carp issue](#)

Canada's jump into the Asian carp issue is good news. The Great Lakes states need international allies in the fight to keep Asian carp out of the lakes and at-risk rivers, tributaries and watershed.

### [Senate action against Asian carp lauded as vital for fight](#)

Tons of poisons, organized trapping efforts, the mighty current of the Mississippi River, and one of North America's largest electrical barriers haven't kept the highly destructive Asian carp from encroaching upon the Great Lakes region's \$7 billion fishery.

### [Federal government gives \\$2.5 million to revive wetlands near Erie, Mich.](#)

The federal government is providing \$2.5 million to help the Nature Conservancy revive 258 acres of coastal Lake Erie wetlands near Erie, Mich., the largest of nine Great Lakes grants announced recently by the federal government's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

### [Doing right by the Great Lakes](#)

Few people realize how dependent this zone is on the 130 freighters, tugs and barges that ply the waters of the Great Lakes. Take them away and the economy in this part of the world would grind to a halt

### [US Senate OKs Levin's bill against Asian carp](#)

The U.S. Senate has approved legislation that sponsors say aims to fight the spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes

### [West Michigan Environmental Action Council kicks off wind energy forum series](#)

Sooner or later, wind turbines will be in Lake Michigan, but a development measured in the billions of dollars will take years to become a reality

### [Illinois tries to market the flying fish](#)

As Michigan fights to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, a push is underway in Illinois to make the fish more popular to eat.

### [Michigan wind council proposes offshore wind farm rules](#)

A bipartisan group of state legislators hopes to adopt a bill regulating offshore wind farms in Michigan before the end of the year.

### [Critics waiting for details of massive wind turbine project in Windsor and Essex County](#)

A \$7-billion energy deal announced by the Ontario government was supposed to send about \$750 million of wind turbine construction to Essex County, and maybe a manufacturing plant or two. But 10 months after the deal was announced, energy experts and critics are still looking for a clear plan.

### [5 area shipwrecks may get protected status](#)

Starting next summer archaeologists will survey and document the S.S. Milwaukee and four other Lake Michigan shipwrecks in Wisconsin waters through a federal grant awarded this month to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

### [EDITORIAL: Great Lakes bill can't wait](#)

The lame-duck Congress that returns to Washington must pass crucial Great Lakes restoration legislation to ensure the health of the planet's largest freshwater ecosystem.

**[EDITORIAL: Rising water could affect life on lake](#)**

If the average water level of Lake Huron rose by 4 inches, what would it mean for cottage owners, boaters and other interests? What if the lake rose 20 inches? What might it mean in a gale with 20-foot waves crashing ashore?

**[Lake trout to be tracked in Niagara River](#)**

Fisheries personnel with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Lower Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office in Amherst have begun a project to monitor adult lake trout movement in the Niagara River and around the Niagara Bar in Lake Ontario.

**[EPA rejects ban on lead sinkers, ammo; most Great Lakes states educate not regulate](#)**

A call for a ban on lead fishing tackle and ammunition was recently rejected by the Environmental Protection Agency, which said there was no proof that it would protect the environment.

**[Invasive plant research to aid Detroit River wildlife refuge](#)**

Researchers from Eastern Michigan University are stepping up their efforts to study and help contain the spread of invasive species at the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

**[Tip of the week: It's a great time to fish steelhead](#)**

This may be the best time of the year to fish for steelhead, which are starting to move into Michigan rivers in big numbers largely because the water in most rivers has been unusually low and warm.

**[DNR wants to extend trout fishing season](#)**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is proposing to adopt regulations that would extend the Lake Superior lake trout season. The DNR is seeking comments on the proposed regulation change.

**[Officials find signs of Asian carp above the electric barrier](#)**

The Army Corps of Engineers has found new signs of Asian carp beyond the electric barrier in Illinois that was built to hold the big fish back. On its website, the Corps noted that it found signs of bighead and silver carp at several spots beyond the barriers in testing Oct. 13.

**[Winds of change](#)**

Michigan is poised to be a top-tier wind energy producer in the United States. But standing in its way is a “vocal minority” who are concerned about how commercial wind farms look, sound and affect wildlife.

**[Official: killing more cormorants key to studying the birds](#)**

The federal government is hoping to decide this month whether to kill up to double the number of cormorants next season.

**[EDITORIAL: Blocking Asian carp](#)**

The suggestion that a dam be used to stop the Asian carp from continuing its marathon swim to Lake Michigan deserves serious consideration. It may not be the answer, but it should at least be debated and not dismissed, as some critics would prefer.

**[Ghostly views of the Edmund Fitzgerald shipwreck](#)**

The bluish-green beads look like pearls scattered across the floor of Lake Superior. But this is Great Lakes treasure – iron ore pellets, discolored by water and age since they went down with the SS Edmund Fitzgerald 35 years ago.

End