



New federal bill, S787, would control all water Great Lakes, all wetlands, marshes & mud puddles would fall under federal jurisdiction

If Congress has its way, new legislation will put ALL surface waters in the United States under Congressional jurisdiction.

U.S. Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) has introduced a bill, S787, which was sponsored by 23 other members (all Democrats). S787 is entitled, "To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify the jurisdiction of the United States over waters of the United States." Its chief author in the House is Minnesota Congressman James Oberstar (D).

The first concern changes the definition of what is under Congressional jurisdiction. Ever since the Commerce Clause of the Constitution and several test cases in the Supreme Court, Congress has had jurisdiction over navigable waters. The meaning of that word has

been argued, but according to precedent and legal definition, navigable includes anything you can get a canoe down, or anything that is connected by water to the same.

However, under S787, also known as the Clean Water Restoration Act, the word navigable is stricken, which means now ALL surface water is under Congressional jurisdiction. And in case there's any question of state's rights, the bill also states that this applies to interstate and intrastate waters. That means there is no state sovereignty over waters within that state's boundaries.

And, if you have any doubt as to what the Congressional definition of "waters" is, they spell that out, too. It

includes, "all waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tide, the territorial seas, and all interstate and intrastate waters and their tributaries, including lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, natural ponds, and all impoundments of the foregoing, to the fullest extent that these waters, or activities affecting these waters, are subject to the legislative power of Congress under the Constitution."

The bill, assigned to the Senate Environment & Public Work Com, & chaired by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), may be called for a vote June 10. ✧

MI DNR proposes changes to trout regulations

Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials are seeking comments on proposed changes to state trout fishing regulations on inland lakes and streams that are designed to further simplify the rules.

The current regulations, which were adopted in 2000, were designed to simplify and standardize trout regulations by stream type, matching regulations to resource potential and allowing for diverse recreational opportunity. Analysis of creel surveys showed that some of the regulations have not produced the desired results.

The proposal calls for elimination of Type 2 stream regulations, which were designed to produce larger fish. "It hasn't worked," said Division Fish Chief Kelley Smith.

Type 2 streams would now be reclassified into other types. Also, the proposal calls for standard minimum size limits of 7" for brook trout and 8" for brown trout statewide. Previously, size limits for both

species differed by peninsula.

Meanwhile, the proposal recommends combining all Type 5, 6 and 7 streams, as well as some research streams, into one Gear Restricted Waters category. For the most part, the regulations on those streams will remain the same as the current regulations, but combining the streams into one category will allow for more flexibility in regulations moving forward.

The proposal also calls for a 24" minimum size limit on splake, which will make the regulation the same as it is for lake trout. "Our stakeholders have consistently asked us to simplify regulations," Smith said. "We feel this proposal does that while still allowing us to manage for maximum recreational potential."

To read the proposal: www.michigan.gov/dnrfishing. Send comments on proposals to: DNR-InlandTrout@michigan.gov. ✧

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Ohio wants anglers to participate in study

The Ohio DNR invites anglers to visit www.ohiodnr.com/creel to take a new online angler survey. The online survey consists of 19 questions asking anglers to provide feedback on a variety of topics, including where they fish and the methods they use; what species they fish for; effects the economy is having on fishing habits; and length and rod limit regulations. Anglers will also be given the opportunity to provide general comments about fishing in Ohio.

The online survey is now available and will run through Sept. 30, 2009. Responses to the survey are confidential. Information provided by anglers through the surveys is vital to the successful management of Ohio's fisheries and the Division encourages all anglers to participate.

Biologists use survey data in combination with biological data from fish populations to identify ways of improving fishing on Ohio's inland reservoirs, lakes, rivers and Lake Erie. ✧

Getting back into the U.S. now tougher

Boaters and anglers visiting Canada or the Caribbean will now have a tougher time getting back into the U.S. without proper I.D. papers. U.S. citizens returning from those nations by land or sea after June 1st will now need passports or other secure ID unless travelers are youngsters. The new law, Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative was passed in January 2007 and has been enacted in stages. This is the final phase.

Homeland Security says Customs and Border Protection agents will verify citizenship of people without proper documentation by using government databases and other tools. Joanne Ferreira, a spokeswoman for the agency, said those without proper paperwork will be given "non-compliance notices"—a written warning without consequences—before they are allowed into the country. ✧

New Wisconsin fishing tournament rules now in effect

New Wisconsin fishing tournament rules went into effect May 1, 2009. The new rules aim to reduce user conflicts and complaints about crowding by spreading out tournaments that exceed size limits, according to Mike Staggs, Wisconsin's fisheries director. The rule will also help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia VHS disease.

Fishing tournaments with more than 20 boats or 100 participants will need a permit under the new rule. Those tournament organizers needing a permit would have to pay an application fee to cover some of the cost of the fishing tournament program.

"For those tournaments that actually need a permit, we've kept the fee affordable," Staggs says. "The vast majority of tournaments that need to get a permit will pay a \$25 fee, and tournaments aimed at providing fishing opportunities for kids and disabled people are free." "We don't expect many events to be affected by the size limits, and if they are, we're confident we can find agreeable solutions to most scheduling conflicts," Staggs says. "And in the coming years, we'll be evaluating the effect of the rule and how it may influence tournament activity."

Tournament organizers who already have their permits for future tournaments or those who applied before the May 1 deadline were not affected by the new tournament rule. Organizers can now easily plan and apply for a [fishing tournament permit](#) online. A new, searchable calendar is available that allows organizers, participants, anglers, and all water users to see which waters already have fishing tournaments scheduled.

For more details on the new rule, visit the DNR [fishing tournament](#) Web site. ✧



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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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Traveler's Health Alert Notice

Risk of Swine Flu associated with travel to affected areas

Public health officials within the U.S. and throughout the world are investigating outbreaks of swine influenza (swine flu).

Swine flu is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by a type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza among pigs. Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans; however, human infections with swine flu do occur. Public health officials have determined that this strain of swine flu virus spreads from human to human and can cause illness.

The outbreak is ongoing and additional cases are expected. For more info, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>. For specific info on travel precautions and updates: www.cdc.gov/travel.

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu in humans and may include:

- Fever (greater than 100°F or 37.8°C)
- Sore throat

- Cough
- Stuffy nose
- Chills
- Headache and body aches
- Fatigue

Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. Severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

People entering the U.S. who are experiencing symptoms consistent with swine flu and have traveled to an affected area (see <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm> for affected areas), or have been exposed to someone possibly infected with swine flu, during the last 7 days should report their illnesses to their health care provider immediately and inform them of their recent travel.

People traveling from the United States to affected areas should be aware of the risk of illness with swine flu and take precautions.

To prevent the spread of swine flu:

- Avoid contact with ill persons
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve (if you do not have a tissue)
- Throw used tissues in a trash can
- After you cough or sneeze, wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand gel
- If you think you are ill with flu, avoid close contact with others as much as possible

Stay at home or in your hotel room. Seek medical care if you are severely ill (such as having trouble breathing). There are antiviral medications for prevention and treatment of swine flu that a doctor can prescribe. Do not go to work, school, or travel while ill.

Swine Flu Travel Health Alert Notice

For more information:

- Contact your local or state health department
- Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>
- Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day
- 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)
- TTY: (888) 232-6348
- cdcinfo@cdc.gov ✧

WI Board approves new rule on invasive species

MADISON – The state Natural Resources Board approved a new framework for classifying invasive species and providing preventive measures to control their spread in the state at its recent meeting in West Bend. Invasives are able to out-compete native plants and wildlife and can significantly affect the economy and outdoor traditions.

Wisconsin is the first state in the nation to develop a comprehensive rule of this kind. Drafted over a period of four years with extensive input from stakeholders, the Wisconsin Council on Invasive Species and the public, the new rule establishes a science-based classification system for legally listing invasive species.

The classification system groups known invasive species into two formal categories: prohibited and restricted, and two informal categories, caution listed and non-restricted. The classifications are based on potential impacts, present distribution and abundance, potential for establishment and spread, control potential and both positive and negative socio-economic impacts. Preventive measures, primarily aimed at aquatic invasive species, include the removal of aquatic plants and animals from all equipment after exiting a waterbody.

The rule does not seek new authority but gives the department the ability, under existing authority, to

prevent the importation, sale and release of known invasive species. The rule prohibits or restricts the transportation, importation, possession, transfer or introduction of invasive species classified as either prohibited or restricted and gives the department authority to order or implement control measures if necessary for prohibited species. Inspection and enforcement authority in the rule is intended to deal mainly with knowledgeable and willful introduction of listed invasive species. There are also provisions allowing transport, transfer, possession and introduction of prohibited and restricted invasive species under certain circumstances. ✧

Wisconsin walleye bag limits adjusted for Ceded Territory lakes

Daily walleye bag limits have been revised on 418 lakes in the Wisconsin Ceded Territory in response to harvest declarations made by six bands of Chippewa Indians in Wisconsin, the state DNR announced. Revised bag limits are effective between May 1, 2009 and March 7, 2010, inclusive.

There will be a three walleye bag limit for sport anglers on 87 lakes, a two-fish daily bag limit on 324 lakes, and seven lakes will have a daily bag limit of one walleye.

Most Chippewa tribal harvest takes place during the spring spear fishing season. An administrative rule passed by the state Natural Resources Board in 1998 allows the department to adjust initial bag limits annually to reflect actual spring spearing harvest and projected summer harvests. Following the spring spear fishing season, DNR will review tribal harvest and where possible revise bag limits upwards on lakes lightly or not speared. The number of lakes speared annually is typically in the range of 150 to 170.

Lakes declared by the Lac du Flambeau Band have a daily bag limit of three walleye for sport anglers. The DNR and the Lac du Flambeau Band have an agreement giving the Band authority to sell fishing licenses in return for making declarations at a level that allows a three walleye per day recreational angler bag limit.

The [adjusted bag limits](#) are available in portable document format on the regulations page of the DNR Fishing Wisconsin Web site and are being published as an insert to the 2009-2010 Guide to Wisconsin Hook and Line Fishing Regulations.

Lakes not listed are subject to the regulations printed in the regulations pamphlet. The statewide daily bag limit for walleyes on many Wisconsin lakes remains at five fish per day, but anglers should check the regulations for special size and bag limits that are in effect on specific waters. ✧

ILL High School Assn hosts world's first statewide high school bass-fishing derby

The Illinois High School Association hosted the world's first statewide high school bass-fishing tournament at Carlyle Lake on May 8-9. Sectionals to determine advancing teams were held at 18 locations April 24. Some 199 state high schools were officially entered in the 2008-09 IHSA Bass Fishing State-wide Tournament.

A school could enter one or two boats for the State Bass Fishing Tournament. Rules allowed the boat to go back to the dock and exchange one student for another anytime during the tournament fishing hours.

Each school was responsible to provide the boat and one adult driver (coach) for that boat. No student was allowed to operate the outboard motor on the boat. The adult was responsible for operating the outboard motor and could not exceed a speed limit of 25 MPH or the lake limit if the speed limit was below 25 MPH. Either a student or the coach/adult could operate the trolling motor. ✧

NMMA pares down boat show schedule Schaumburg, IL Show gone

The National Marine Manufacturers Association has discontinued three of its shows — San Diego, Schaumburg, and the Virginia In-Water Boat Expo & Sailfest. "In an industry with fewer dealers and fewer manufacturers, there will be fewer boat shows," said NMMA president Thom Dammrich. "This decision allows NMMA to streamline its show business and focus on providing dynamic shows in markets that are not over-served, which will ultimately deliver stronger shows for the industry in the long run."

The 4th annual Schaumburg Boat & Sportshow had been scheduled to take place Feb. 18-21 at the Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel & Convention Center. ✧

Public input sought on Chicago Sanitary/Ship Canal navigation zone U.S. Coast Guard seeks public comment on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

CLEVELAND – The U.S. Coast Guard is seeking public comment on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking establishing a regulated navigation area and safety zone on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, near Romeoville, Ill.

Comments must be submitted on or before July 27, 2009.

The proposed regulated navigation area and safety zone places navigational and operational restrictions on all vessels transiting the navigable waters located adjacent to and over the Army Corps of Engineers electrical dispersal fish barrier system.

That fish barrier is presently operating at one volt per inch until further tests are completed.

[CLICK HERE](#) to obtain the complete NPR, which was published in the *Federal Register* on May 26, 2009, or go to: http://www.piersystem.com/posted/443/74_FR_24722_May_26_2009_NPR_M_RNA_SZ_Fish_Barrier_Romeoville_IL.276747.pdf

Submit your comments by one of these methods to the Coast Guard docket # USCG-2008-1247:

► Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

► Fax: (202) 493-2251

► Mail: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. DOT, West Bldg Ground Floor, Rm W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Ave, SE, Washington, D.C. 20590-0001.

Comments and related material must be submitted to our online docket on or before July 27, 2009 or reach the Docket Management Facility by that date. Questions? Call Lt. Ann Henkelman, Waterways Mgmt Branch, Ninth Coast Guard District, 216-902-6288. Questions on viewing or submitting material, call Renee V. Wright, Program Mgr, Docket Operations, 202-366-9826. ✧

Northern WI zone musky season now open

It may be hard to top last year's record haul of trophy muskies, but anglers wanting to try should target some of Wisconsin's largest musky waters in 2009. Last year's parade of monsters reaffirms that if you want to catch a big fish, you should fish big waters, says Tim Simonson, the fish biologist who leads the Department of Natural Resources' musky team.

"We know that the ultimate size of fish – how big they grow – is higher in larger lakes," Simonson says. Anglers who chose to register their 2008 catch with Muskies, Inc. reported catching a record-high 89 fish 48" or greater from Wisconsin waters, with 29 of them 50" or larger. That's up from 58 total fish 48" or greater registered in the previous year.

Nearly one-third of the 2008 fish reported to the Musky Inc. registry came from the big waters Green Bay, the Fox River, or Lake Michigan. Another big water is the Chippewa River. The Chippewa Flowage, an unnamed Vilas County lake, the Wisconsin River, the Holcombe Flowage in Chippewa County and

Green Bay rank among the top 50 waters in the number of 50" and greater fish registered with Muskies Inc. since 1970.

Lake size explains nearly 70% of the observed variability in the ultimate length musky reach, Simonson says. This relationship predicts that lakes larger than 2,000 acres typically support populations more likely to produce fish that will, on average, reach or exceed 50", he says.



The big fish are there for the catching. DNR fish technician Greg Matzke displays the 50.7" musky he captured and released during spring surveys on Sherman Lake in Iron County. (WDNR Photo)

This relationship also predicts that lakes down to 100 acres (and lower) are capable, biologically, of producing 40 inch or larger fish, Simonson says. They may give up trophy fish on rare occasions, as DNR fish crews found earlier this month when they captured a 50.7-inch fish on Sherman Lake, a 123-acre walk-in-access only lake in Iron County.

Lists of [musky lakes and rivers in Wisconsin](#), including their size and classification as trophy waters or action waters, can be found on the DNR Web site.

The daily limit is one, the minimum length limit is 50 inches, and the season closes Nov. 30. The Lake Michigan season for musky south of Waldo Boulevard in Manitowoc is already open. It runs May 2 through Dec. 31 and the daily limit is one. There is a minimum length limit of 50". ♦

NY - License fee increases effective Oct 1

The partial fee schedule below takes effect October 1, 2009. Notably, the rates do not increase fees for the new Junior Big-Game Hunting license or junior trapping license signed into law by Governor Paterson last year, or the fishing license for those 70 and older. Also, the legislature calls for dropping the price of a one-day fishing license from \$15 to \$5.

Passed by the state legislature, the last comprehensive license fee adjustments occurred in 2002.

New License Fee Schedule

Resident Licenses

License/ Permit Type	Current Fee	New Fee
Conservation Legacy	\$76	\$96
Super Sportsman	\$68	\$88
Sportsman	\$37	\$47
Sportsman (Sr. 70+)	\$5	\$10
Small and Big Game	\$19	\$29

Fishing	\$19	\$29
Fishing (Sr. - 70+)	\$5	\$10
Fishing (Blind)	\$0	\$0
Deer Mgmt Permit	\$0	\$10
Military Disability	\$5	\$5
Bow Hunting	\$16	\$21
Bow Hunting (Sr. 70+)	\$0	\$5
Bow Hunting (Jr.)	\$9	\$9
Muzzleloading	\$16	\$21
Muzzleloading (Sr. 70+)	\$0	\$5
Small Game	\$16	\$26
Junior Hunting	\$5	\$5
Turkey Permit	\$5	\$10
Trapping	\$16	\$21
Trapping (Sr. 70+)	\$0	\$5
Trapping (Jr.)	\$6	\$6
7-day Fishing	\$12	\$15
1-day Fishing	\$15	\$5

Lifetime Licenses

License/ Permit Type	Current Fee	New Fee
Sportsman (age 0- 4)	\$300	\$380
Sportsman (age 5-11)	\$420	\$535
Sportsman (age 12-69)	\$600	\$765

Sportsman (age 70+)	\$50	\$65
Small and Big Game	\$350	\$535
Fishing (age 0-69)	\$300	\$460
Fishing 70+	\$50	\$65
Trapping	\$300	\$395
Bow Hunting	\$180	\$235
Muzzleloading	\$180	\$235

Non-Resident Licenses

License/ Permit Type	Current Fee	New Fee
Super Sportsman	\$250	\$280
Big Game	\$110	\$140
Bow Hunting	\$110	\$140
Bow Hunting (Jr.)	\$9	\$9
Muzzleloading	\$110	\$140
Bear	\$30	\$50
Small Game	\$55	\$85
Junior Hunting	\$5	\$5
Turkey	\$30	\$50
Trapping	\$255	\$310
Fishing	\$40	\$70
7-Day Fishing	\$25	\$35
1-Day Fishing	\$15	\$15
Conservation Patron	\$12	\$12 ♦

IJC invites public to comment on draft report Impacts on Upper Great Lakes water levels: the St. Clair River

For the past two years, more than 100 Canadian and U.S. scientists and engineers have worked together to address important questions, posed by the International Joint Commission regarding the St. Clair River system that connects Lake Michigan-Huron to Lake Erie: Has the conveyance or water-carrying capacity of the St. Clair River changed, and if so, why? What effect could an altered flow have on water levels in the upper Great Lakes? What other factors may be affecting the change in the water levels? What actions, if any, should be taken by governments to remedy concerns about low water levels?

Using web-conferencing technology, a series of public meetings (see schedule below) will be held to provide information about the results and to receive comments regarding Study recommendations. Each series of meetings will connect sites throughout the basin to allow upstream and downstream interests to participate and benefit from each other's knowledge and experience.

This report is the first output of the Study, which will continue to examine whether the regulation plan for outflows from Lake Superior through the compensating works and power dams on the St. Marys River at Sault Ste. Marie might be improved to take into consideration changing interests and changing climate. The final report is expected early in 2012.

For More Information or to Comment

To review the draft of the full report, go to the International Upper Great Lakes Study website: www.iugls.org. Submit comments on the draft report via email to the Study Board at comments@iugls.org.

Remaining Meeting dates:

June 9, 2009 [7-9pm EDT]

Annis Water Resource Institute
740 W. Shoreline Drive
Muskegon, MI 49441

Charles W. Stockey Center, Theatre
Two Bay St.
Parry Sound, ON P2A 1S3

Algoma University
Great West Life Amphitheatre
1520 Queen St
East Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2G4

June 11, 2009 [7-9pm EDT; 6-8pm CDT]

North Simcoe Sports/Rec Centre
Community Hall A
527 Len Self Boulevard
Midland, ON L4R 5N6

Northwestern Michigan College
Oleson Ctr 112, 1701 East Front St
Traverse City, MI 49686

Wis. Indianhead Technical College
Superior Conference Center
600 North 21 St, Superior, WI 54880

Delta College Planetarium
Space Explorer Hall
100 Center Ave. Bay City, MI 48708

July 8, More info TBD

Mequon, WI & Goderich, ON

July 9, More info TBD

Sturgeon Bay, WI ✧

Michigan DNR asks anglers for assistance with Salmon Studies Agency needs info on Lake Michigan and Lake Huron fish

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is asking anglers to be on the lookout for coded-wire tagged (CWT) Chinook salmon and steelhead. These fish can be identified by having only the adipose fin removed or "clipped." Fish with only the adipose fin removed carry a tiny internal wire tag that is injected into the snout of the fingerling at the hatchery prior to stocking; the tag contains information on the date and location of stocking. Information concerning angler harvest of these tagged fish is needed as part of several ongoing research projects.

"Since 1990, more than 15 million trout and salmon have been marked with adipose fin clips and coded-wire tags, and anglers have helped us recover more than 75,000 of these tags," said Dave Clapp,

manager of the Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station. "Angler cooperation is an essential component of fish marking programs, and the result of these cooperative efforts is more abundant and healthier fish for the sport fishery."

Anglers catching a CWT trout or salmon should remove the head or the portion of the snout where the CWT should be located by cutting from behind the eyes to the back corner of the mouth. Place the snout in a plastic bag and freeze. Along with the snout, also record the following data; date and closest port or location where fish was caught, measured length, and weight (if possible), along with angler contact information. A printable CWT data form is available online at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/cod_wire_tag_form-PR8550_35853_7.pdf.

A letter telling where and when their fish was released and the age of the fish at the time it was harvested will be sent to every angler who includes their name and address along with the catch data. The data form should be put in a separate plastic bag and placed inside a larger plastic bag along with snout/head. This will assure that the data will stay dry and be legible when the snout is processed later in the lab.

Take the head/snout to one of our CWT head drop sites. A list of these can be found on the DNR Web site at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/coded-wire-tag-drop-sites-July-2006_165267_7.pdf, or by calling the Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station office at 231-547-2914.

Coded-Wire Tag Program info: <http://www.michigan.gov/taggedfish>. ✧

VHS waters extended as two Wis. dams fail to stop fish

Hundreds of thousands of anglers can help protect their fishing future by taking steps to avoid accidentally spreading VHS fish disease and aquatic invasive species.

“It’s important to take steps to prevent VHS from spreading every time you’re on the water, but particularly now when the disease is most active with the cold water temperatures,” says Karl Scheidegger, the DNR fish biologist who leads DNR’s fisheries outreach efforts. “Anglers did a great job last year in taking precautions, and with your help again this year, we think we can continue to contain the disease.”

VHS fish disease is not a human health threat but can kill 37 different species of fish, including trout, musky, bass and bluegill, and it caused large fish kills in some Great Lakes waters in 2005 and 2006. The disease was first detected in Wisconsin in 2007 in fish from the Lake Winnebago system and the Lake Michigan system; tests since then suggest the disease hasn’t spread beyond those waters.

Anglers inadvertently moving infected live bait are a main way that VHS fish disease can spread to new waters; and with more than 400,000 fishing licenses sold by mid-week, the risk of spreading the disease is real, Scheidegger says.

Anglers leaving boat launches with Eurasian water-milfoil and other plants attached to their boats or trailers, or juvenile zebra mussels in bilge water and live wells, also are at risk of spreading these and other invasive species to new waters. These and other invaders can take a toll on fish and fishing.

Many of the same steps that will prevent the spread of VHS also prevent the spread of these invaders.

Those steps are:

- Inspect boats, trailers and equipment and remove visible aquatic plants, animals and mud before leaving the water access.
- Drain water from your boat, motor, bilge, live wells and bait containers before leaving the water access.

- Don’t move live fish away from a waterbody. Buy minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer and use leftover minnows on another water only if you have not added to the bait container fish or lake or river water.

VHS rules and more information on the fish disease is found online at <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/vhs>; lists and maps showing which waters have zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species are found online at <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/ais/>.

Longer stretches of the East Twin River and its tributaries in Manitowoc and Kewaunee counties, and Clark Lake, Logan Creek and Lost Lake in Door County are now considered to have VHS fish disease present and, therefore, have restrictions on bait harvest.

The extension of VHS-positive status to these waters reflects only a determination that low head dams on these waters are not preventing fish from Lake Michigan from reaching them. Fish from these waters have not so far tested positive for VHS.

DNR fish crews netting Clark Lake in Door County earlier this spring found fresh run steelhead, indicating that the low head dam on that lake is not an effective barrier for steelhead. And Logan Creek and Lost Lake are upstream from Clark Lake.

In Manitowoc County, DNR staff witnessed steelhead jumping over the dam at Mishicot on the East Twin River. There are no other dams upstream from Mishicot and as a result, the entire East Twin River and all of its tributaries in Manitowoc and Kewaunee counties are now considered to be VHS positive.

VHS rules consider VHS-positive waters to include all waters testing positive for VHS and all tributaries flowing into those waters upstream to the first dam capable of blocking upstream fish movement. Fish from Lake Michigan were found to have VHS in 2007 and 2008. VHS affected waters are closed to all minnow harvesting. The only exception is that

suckers can be taken but may not be transported away alive.

The revised Lake Michigan drainage map is online at http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/documents/vhs_la_kemichigandrainage.pdf.

VHS rules are found online at <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/vhs>. ✧

Wildfire prevention stressed as fire activity picks up in Michigan

Wildfire season has been building recently. Recent warm days and a dry April and May, which has lacked widespread spring showers, are keeping firefighters busy responding to numerous blazes, according to the Department of Natural Resources.

It is extremely important that people exercise caution when burning yard or household debris.

► Always obtain a burn permit before lighting any rakings or brush piles. Northern Michigan residents can easily obtain a permit by going to www.michigan.gov/burnpermit, or calling 866-922-2876 to get the latest fire danger and permit information. Southern Michigan burning information can be obtained from your local fire official or government office. When burn permits are not being issued, it’s due to outdoor burning being prohibited by law or high fire danger makes it unsafe to burn, which has been the case in many locations already this year.

► Always have garden tools available to scrape away combustible vegetation and never leave a fire unattended even for a minute. Be sure all fires are completely out before you do leave. Keep a good water supply on hand and use plenty to douse any remaining embers; covering a fire with soil can insulate the heat allowing coals to smolder for days.

For more information on wildfire prevention, go online at www.michigan.gov/dnr-fire. ✧

Pike Lake, Indiana attracting anglers

A recent Indiana DNR fisheries survey report shows angler numbers are up Pike Lake. The report summarizes the results of an angler creel survey conducted last summer by DNR fisheries biologists.

Pike Lake is a 228-acre natural lake located in the City of Warsaw. A city park on the south shoreline of the south basin provides a handicap accessible boat ramp, swimming beach, restrooms and campground. The accessibility the park provides makes Pike Lake a popular fishing destination for both boat and shore anglers.

==Angler creel surveys provide the IDNR with detailed information about the fishery and how it's being utilized, and they are essential in evaluating the success of management decisions. From April through September anglers fished for an estimated total of 21,691 hours and harvested an estimated 10,434 fish.

Bluegills were the most commonly targeted and harvested species. Bluegills averaged 7" in length, and included several fish more than 9" long. Walleye also were found to be popular with Pike Lake anglers and could be one reason why more anglers are visiting the lake. ✧

21-year-old youngest ever to win FLW Tour Event

Twenty-one-year-old Team Berkley pro Stetson Blaylock of Benton, Arkansas, caught a final-round total of 10 bass weighing 23 lbs., 15 oz. to win \$200,000 in the \$1.1 million Wal-Mart FLW Tour National Guard Open on Lake Norman. Blaylock topped his closest rival, Andy Morgan of Dayton, Tennessee, by one pound to earn the win and 200 points toward qualifying for the \$2 million Forrest Wood Cup presented by Castrol and BP, which will be held July 30-August 2 on the Three Rivers in Pittsburgh, PA. ✧

EPIRB owners urged to re-check ID codes

Cobham Life Support, ACR Products, the world's leader in safety and survival technologies, is urging all EPIRB and PLB owners to double check their 15-character identification code registration.

According to a recent Marine Board of Investigation inquiry, which is looking into the sinking of the scallop boat *Lady Mary* on March 24th, there was a discrepancy in the EPIRB's ID number, marked on a decal that the boat's owner had received from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration after he registered the EPIRB.

In the case of the *Lady Mary*, the emergency signal initially received by authorities was regarded as unregistered which may have led to delays in response time while emergency center controllers waited for additional satellite passes to fix a location. Had the controllers been able to pull the *Lady Mary's* registration data, they could have contacted emergency contacts to confirm the status of the boat and its general location prior to a satellite fix.

Despite the requirement to register all EPIRBs and PLBs, some reports show that up to 40% of EPIRB activations are from unregistered beacons, a possible deadly mistake when minutes can make the difference between life and death.

In an emergency, the EPIRBs and PLBs transmit on 406 MHz via the Cospas-Sarsat satellite system with the sender's unique, registered, digitally coded distress signal. The code allows emergency officials monitoring the system to tell who is sending the signal (thanks to the coding and registration data). Once the emergency is confirmed and location data is received from the satellites, a search can be authorized.

Proper registration is vital in the early minutes of an emergency so rescue center officials can obtain critical data about a boat's owner, home port, emergency contacts and

Anglers should reap the rewards from Wis. trout stream restoration projects

MADISON – For great trout fishing this summer, anglers will want to check out a recently released report detailing new trout habitat improvement projects on more than 100 miles of streams in 35 counties, Wisconsin fish biologists say. Such habitat projects often lead to eye-popping increases in fish populations at the habitat improvement sites, particularly a few years after work has been completed.

A recently released [report on inland trout stamp revenue expenditures from 2004 – 07](#) details how \$5,222,564 in trout stamp funds were spent, where habitat work was done, and summarizes projects that took place in 35 counties.

Since 1978, anglers have had to purchase a trout stamp (now \$10) to fish inland waters, with the funds going to restoring and improving trout habitat. Overall, the DNR fisheries program has restored more than 750 miles of trout stream, and each year, maintains many miles of previous habitat work and keeps more than 750 miles free of beaver dams in northern Wisconsin.

There is also a significant amount of revenue from general fishing license fee sales that supports inland trout habitat work. During 2004 to 2007, nearly an additional \$1 million was spent on improving Wisconsin's inland trout streams.

Angler looking for more information on where the habitat work was completed can purchase a private book: Todd Hansen's 2008 "Map Guide to Improved Trout Waters of Wisconsin."

For more info: Larry Claggett, fisheries biologist, (608) 267-9658. ✧

other information to begin a search even before a satellite gets a fix on a beacon's location. ✧

Report highlights Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway system ballast inspection process

Summary of Improvements by Great Lakes Seaway Ballast Water Working Group

Washington, D.C. – A new U.S. government report released March 13 shows a notable increase in the number of ballast tank inspections of oceangoing commercial ships entering the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System from outside U.S. or Canadian waters. Ship operators also improved their compliance with ballast water requirements in 2008 compared with 2007, the report says.

The 2008 Summary of Great Lakes Seaway Ballast Water Working Group released by the U.S. Coast Guard examined the U.S.-Canada Great Lakes Seaway System ballast water ship inspection program. The report finds that 99 percent of all oceangoing ships bound for the Great Lakes Seaway System ports from outside U.S. or Canadian waters in 2008 received a ballast tank exam, compared with 74 percent in 2007. Moreover, the report found that 98.6 percent of all ships were in compliance with ballast water management requirements, compared with 95 percent in 2007.

The report was prepared by the Great Lakes Seaway Ballast Water Working Group (BWWG), which includes representatives of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC), the U.S. Coast Guard Ninth District, Transport Canada, and the Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation. The group coordinates U.S. and Canadian enforcement and compliance efforts to reduce the introduction of aquatic invasive species in the Great Lakes via ships' ballast water.

In 2008, the SLSDC implemented regulations requiring all oceangoing ships with no ballast in their tanks to conduct saltwater flushing of their empty ballast water tanks before arriving in the Seaway.

"The new Seaway regulations, along with those of Transport Canada and the U.S. Coast Guard and best management practices, strengthen

environmental oversight of oceangoing ships prior to entering the Seaway," said U.S. SLSDC Administrator Collister Johnson, Jr. "This collective inspection regime is critical to preventing the further introduction of invasive species into the Great Lakes."

In 2008, 96 percent of all ballast tanks (6,704 of 6,983) were sampled, compared with 78 percent in 2007. In addition, all reporting forms for each ship were examined to assess ballast water history, compliance, voyage information, and proposed discharge location. Ships with non-compliant ballast tanks were required to take one of several options: (1) retain the ballast water and residuals on board, (2) treat the ballast water in an environmentally sound and approved manner, or (3) conduct a ballast water exchange at sea.

In reviewing the findings, Richard Corfe, President and CEO of the Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation emphasized that, "sustainability is a priority governing all of our actions and initiatives and to be sustainable, we have to eliminate the further introduction of aquatic nuisance species into the Great Lakes. This report highlights the very tangible progress that we are making toward this goal."

The BWWG expects high compliance rates for ships to continue in 2009, noting in the report that "... ballast water management requirements in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway System are among the most stringent in the world." A copy of the report can be found at www.greatlakes-seaway.com.

To read the full report: <http://www.d9publicaffairs.com/posted/443/Document.261306.pdf>.

Highlights from the report include a marked improvement over the prior year's inspection program statistics in a number of areas, including ship compliance rates.

Some of those highlights are:

- * 99% of ships bound for the Great Lakes Seaway received a ballast tank exam
- * 6704 ballast tanks, onboard 364 ships, were sampled and had a 98.6% compliance rate
- * All ballast reporting forms were screened for ballast history, compliance, voyage info and planned discharge location.

The BWWG anticipates continued high ship compliance rates for the 2009 navigation season. ✧

Waterfowl hunting's contribution to U.S. economy

Waterfowl hunters spent \$900 million on a variety of goods and services from food, transportation, guns and decoys to hunting dogs, clothing and other incidental expenses in 2006, according to a new report issued by the USFWS. These trip and equipment-related expenditures generated more than \$2.3 billion in total economic output for 2006, which resulted in \$157 million in federal and state tax revenues, supported more than 27,000 jobs, and generated more than \$8.5 million in employment income.

The report, "The Economic Impact of Waterfowl Hunting in the United States," is an addendum to the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. The report shows more than 1.3 million people, 16 years of age and older, hunted waterfowl in 2006. Waterfowl hunters represented 10% of all hunters, 7% of all hunting trip-related expenditures, and 6 percent of all equipment expenditures.

According to the report, waterfowl hunters tend to be younger, have higher educational achievements, and are more affluent compared to all hunters. The majority (74%) of waterfowl hunters live in the South and the Midwest. ✧

Sale of Ohio sport-caught fish nets multiple criminal convictions

COLUMBUS – Two Columbus-area residents were recently convicted of buying and selling sport-caught fish, following an investigation by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife. Under state wildlife laws, only commercially caught fish may be sold in Ohio.

David E. Crockett, 63, of Columbus, and Naser Saleh, 43, of Upper Arlington were convicted in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas and the Franklin County Municipal Court of a variety of misdemeanors and felonies involving the trafficking of sport-caught white bass. Saleh is the owner of Frebis Food Center, located on the south end of Columbus.

The investigation began in 2005 when an anonymous source revealed that a local grocery store was selling native Ohio sport-caught fish. Undercover wildlife investigators,

with assistance from the Ohio Bureau of Investigation, entered the store and purchased white bass, crappie and bluegill from May 2005 until May 2007. Saleh had been purchasing the sport-caught fish from David E. Crockett and then illegally selling them to retail customers.

Crockett was found guilty of catching white bass from Ohio waters, mostly the Sandusky River, during their spawning run each spring. His catches numbered as many as 3,000 fish a year. A search warrant was executed at his residence in Columbus and his fish-hauling trailer along with fishing poles, fishing tackle, and fish were seized.

In Ohio, the sale of sport-caught fish can range from a fourth-degree misdemeanor to a fifth-degree felony, depending on the amount of fish sold.

Crockett was charged in the Franklin County Court of Common

Pleas with a total of two fifth-degree felony charges for selling white bass, one fourth-degree felony for carrying a concealed weapon, and one third-degree felony for tampering with evidence. Saleh was charged in the Franklin County Municipal Court with three fourth-degree misdemeanors for selling white bass. Both men entered guilty pleas to all charges.

The defendants were sentenced to pay a total of \$22,041 in fines, court costs and restitution. They were also levied five years and nine months in jail, with the jail time suspended for a five-year probationary period. Community service and loss of fishing privileges were also included in the sentences.

The City of Columbus Board of Health assisted the DNR in the investigation. ✧

International Falls Fisheries field activities for 2009

Current and accurate information about fish populations, fish habitat, and angler use forms the foundation of all Minnesota DNR fisheries activities, from stocking fish to experimental regulations. Lake and stream surveys, fish population assessments, lake samplings and angler creel surveys are some of the tools used to monitor the health of fish in Minnesota's lakes and streams.

The DNR in International Falls has many of these activities planned for this season. The area includes 135 lakes, 105 rivers/streams, and 12 trout streams in Koochiching and northern St. Louis counties.

Activities scheduled for the following lakes include:

► Lake survey or fish population assessments — Fishmouth, Little Loon, Spring, Teufer, Winchester, Clear, Dark, Echo, Elephant, Moose (near Littlefork), Namakan, Rat Root, Sand Point, Little Trout, Crane Stream; surveys or stream assessments — Gilmore Creek, Trout Brook, Kinmount Creek.

► Large lake sampling: Rainy Lake, including spring trap netting, spring bass electrofishing, shoreline seining, water sampling, fall gill netting, and fall electrofishing for juvenile walleye; and Kabetogama Lake, including spring bass electrofishing, shoreline seining, water sampling, fall gill-net assessment, and fall electrofishing for juvenile walleye.

► Fish stocking - lake trout in Spring and Winchester Lakes; walleye in Kjostad, Ash and Myrtle Lakes.

Additional fish stocking could occur in Bartlett, Cameron, and Pine Lakes if winterkill occurred and fish are available. Trout Brook and Lost River could receive brook trout if fish are available from state hatcheries. Other unique activities scheduled include a radio-telemetry study of lake sturgeon in Namakan Reservoir in collaboration with Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Voyageurs National Park, a muskie assessment on Crane Lake, and a walleye fry mark-recapture study on Kabetogama Lake. ✧

New WI online boating safety course

MADISON – A new online boating safety course can help young boaters meet state requirements to legally drive a boat — and can help boaters of all ages stay safe on the water this summer, Wisconsin recreation safety officials say.

The DNR offers three convenient options — two online courses and hands-on classroom instruction.

Wisconsin law requires anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1989 to pass a boating safety course to operate a motorboat on Wisconsin waters.

The new boater safety course is called BoaterExam.com and features many eye-catching animations and the ability for students to choose to hear the material as well as read it on the screen, making this course a good choice for younger students.

All three options cover the same material. For more info: Todd Schaller (608) 267-2774. ✧

Ind. fish surveys set for the summer

Indiana DNR biologists are scheduled to conduct fish population surveys at 19 natural lakes this summer. Biologists use these surveys to monitor populations over time and to help identify fish management problems. The surveys provide biologists with information on the diversity of fish present, as well their abundance, size, and rate of growth.

Lakes to be surveyed include Everett, Allen County; Terry, DeKalb County; Dewart, Kosciusko County; Adams, Appleman, Cedar, and Wall, LaGrange County; Koontz, Marshall County; Big, Crane, Crooked, and Loon, Noble County; Long, Porter County; Loon and West Otter, Steuben County; and Goose, Larwill, New, and Old in Whitley County.

During the surveys, biologists will use electro-fishing boats, gill nets and trap nets to collect fish. Each fish will be counted and measured, and representative scale samples will be taken to determine the age and growth of abundant game species. ✧

Fewer anglers plan out-of-state trips

Fewer anglers are planning out-of-state trips in 2009 than in 2008, according to a recent survey. In a February 2009 survey from AnglerSurvey.com, only 54% of anglers reported planning fishing trips outside their home states this year. This is a drop from 2008 when, in a similar survey, more than 59% of anglers reported they were planning out-of-state trips. The ongoing economic recession may be putting a crimp in anglers' travel plans.

By participating in the surveys, you will be automatically entered to win a monthly drawing for a \$100 gift certificate at your favorite fishing tackle retailer. Better yet, you will also be automatically entered in the annual drawing for a \$1,000 fishing tackle shopping spree! To get started, go to www.AnglerSurvey.com and click Take the Survey. ✧

FDA investigates benefits, dangers of eating fish

"Consumers should not be scared away from health benefits of fish"

Washington, DC – Despite ongoing concern about the presence of small levels of methylmercury in seafood, the FDA's draft Risk and Benefit Assessment concluded that cardiovascular and neuro-developmental benefits of eating most fish species outweigh any potential harms.

"Although the FDA's periodic advisories on fish consumption have emphasized the remote risk of mercury exposure, the overwhelming weight of scientific evidence suggests that consumption of most commercial fish species provides substantial net health benefits," said Competitive Enterprise Institute Senior Fellow Gregory Conko. "The American Heart Association and American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have been urging consumers—especially pregnant women—to eat more fish, not less. So, it's refreshing that the agency has finally begun to provide balanced and scientifically-validated information."

A 2006 report from the National Academies of Science's Institute of Medicine urged the FDA to find a better way "to characterize the risks combined with the benefits" derived from eating commercial fish species, because consumers may be put at greater risk from reducing fish consumption than from consuming seafood that contains methylmercury at the levels currently found in most commercial fish species.

"Critics have characterized the report as an effort to mislead consumers about mercury in fish," said Conko. "But, public health policy should never be based on a systematic failure to consider both sides of the risk equation. Giving consumers only half the relevant information is misguided and puts them at heightened risk." ✧

Tippy Dam Rec Area Tackle Swap Meet June 13-14

The Michigan DNR is presenting an opportunity to "GO-Get Outdoors" at Tippy Dam Recreation Area on June 13 and 14 for a fishing tackle swap meet in conjunction with the DNR's Free Fishing Weekend. Free Fishing Weekend is June 13-14 in Michigan, when a fishing license is not required. All other fishing regulations do apply.

From 10 AM – 4 PM, visitors are invited to purchase, sell and swap old or new fishing tackle. Tippy Dam Recreation Area is located at 1500 Dillings Rd. in Brethren. For more information about this event: 231-848-4880. ✧

Boy Scouts & Coast Guard Auxiliary Agreement Signed Agreement will provide additional boating and water safety outreach

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Boy Scouts of America announced the two organizations have signed a Memorandum of Agreement to collaborate on projects that support recreational boating safety and promote citizenship training and character development, including public education programs, water safety educational outreach, and volunteer support.

The agreement calls on the two organizations to work together in educating members in a wide variety of boating and nautical subjects and promoting citizenship training and character development.

The Auxiliary is working with Boy Scouts in recreational boating safety areas such as National Scout Jamboree, boating safety classes, providing vessel safety checks for Scout boats, and holding "Safety at Sea" training events for Sea Scouts. Future plans include programs to develop safe boaters, promote boating safety, and collaborate on water quality initiatives. ✧

Largemouth bass vulnerability to being caught by anglers a heritable trait

In an experiment spanning over 20 years, researchers at the U. of Illinois have found that vulnerability to being caught by anglers is a heritable trait in largemouth bass.

The study began in 1975 with the resident population of bass in Ridge Lake, an experimental study lake in Fox Ridge State Park in Charleston. The fishing was controlled. For example, anglers had to reserve times, and every fish that was caught was put into a live well on the boat. The fish were measured and tagged to keep track of how many times each fish had been caught. All fish were then released.

"We kept track over four years of all of the angling that went on, and we have a total record – there were thousands of captures," said David Philipp, ecology and conservation researcher at U of I. "Many fish were caught more than once. One fish was caught three times in the first two days, and another was caught 16 times in one year." After four years, the pond was drained, and more than 1,700 fish were collected. "Interestingly, about 200 of those fish had never been caught, even though they had been in the lake the entire four years," Philipp said.

Males and females from the group that had never been caught were designated Low Vulnerability (LV) parents. To produce a line of LV offspring, these parents were allowed to spawn with each other in university research ponds. Similarly, males and females that had been caught four or more times in the study were designated High Vulnerability (HV) parents that were spawned in different ponds to produce a line of HV offspring. The two lines were then marked and raised in common ponds until they were big enough to be fished.

"Controlled fishing experiments clearly showed that the HV offspring were more vulnerable to angling than the LV offspring," said Philipp. This selection process was repeated for several generations over the course of the 20-year experiment.

"As we had predicted, vulnerability was a heritable trait," he said. Philipp

went on to explain that with each generation, the difference between lines in angling vulnerability grew even larger. "Most of the selection is occurring on the LV fish — that is, for the most part, the process is making that line of fish less vulnerable to angling. We actually saw only a small increase in angling vulnerability in the HV line," Philipp said.

Male bass are the sole caregiver for the offspring. Females lay eggs and leave. The male guards the nest against brood predators for about three to four days before the eggs hatch and another eight to 10 days after they hatch, before they become free-swimming. Even after the baby bass start to swim, the dads stay with them for another three weeks while they feed and grow, protecting them from predators.

Philipp explained that the experiment sped up what's actually happening in nature. "In the wild, the more vulnerable fish are being preferentially harvested, and as a result the bass population is being directionally selected to become less vulnerable. We selected over three generations, but in the wild the selection is occurring in every generation.

"We've known for 50 years that commercial fishing exerts selection on wild populations," he said. "We take the biggest fish, and that has changed life histories and growth patterns in many populations of commercially harvested species. Because there is no commercial fishing for bass, we were assessing the evolutionary impacts of recreational fishing."

Philipp explained that the perception among anglers is that catch-and-release has no negative impact on the population. During the spawning season, however, if bass are angled and held off of their nests for more than a few minutes, when they are returned to the lake, it's too late; other fish have found the nest and are quickly eating the babies.

Philipp recommends that to preserve bass populations across North America, management agencies need to protect the nesting males during the

spawning season. "There should be no harvesting bass during the reproductive period. That makes sense for all wildlife populations. You don't remove the adults during reproduction.

"One of the big issues for concern is the explosion of tournaments. Lots of bass tournaments are held during the springtime because there are lots of big fish available. In tournaments you put fish into live wells, and yes, they're released, but they could be held for up to 8 hours first. They're brought back to the dock, miles from their nest. So, basically, if a fish is caught in a tournament and brought into the boat and put into a live well, his nest is destroyed."

Philipp recommended that if fishing tournaments were held during the spawning season, then regulations should require that there be immediate catch-and-release, eliminating the use of tournament weigh-ins.

Philipp urges management agencies to go even further and suggests that a portion of each lake could be set aside as a bass spawning sanctuary, where all fishing would be prohibited until after bass reproduction is complete. In the rest of the lake, mandatory catch-and-release regulations could be put into place during that same reproductive period. In Illinois, the bass reproduction period is from about April 1 through June 15. Philipp said that in that way, anglers could help protect the long-term future of the resource without completely restricting fishing.

"The potential for angling to have long-term evolutionary impacts on bass populations is real. If we truly want to protect this valuable resource into the future, then we need to understand that and adjust our management strategies," Philipp said. ✧

Other Breaking News Items:

(Click on title or URL to read full article)

[West Frankfort wins High School Bass title](#)

One day after rainstorms drenched anglers in the Illinois bass fishing state tournament, Gardner fell out of his bass boat into Carlyle Lake. Despite wet clothes and perhaps thanks to a ruling that made life jackets mandatory, Gardner was all smiles by day's end. So were most participants in the nation's first sanctioned high school fishing championship.

[Government too slow to control Asian carp](#)

Give the Corps some credit. It took them a mere seven years to build a system that a private engineering firm would have come up with in one. And we'll overlook that fact that it didn't work properly when they turned it on in 2006 and still isn't working right today. Carp have proliferated to the point that they are the dominant species by far in some rivers including the Illinois system that is connected by tributaries and canals to the Great Lakes.

[Some surprising salmon findings](#)

If the first month of the Lake Michigan salmon season is any indication, this summer should see about as many fish caught as last year, and even bigger ones. That success so far may help biologists explain a seeming contradiction — one method of measuring prey abundance shows prey fish like alewives at record low levels, while another shows them at a record high.

[Charter trips down 18 percent in Ludington](#)

Charterboat fishing from Ludington was some of the best in the state in 2008, but fewer people took trips last year than any year since 1999. Overall, Lake Michigan charters out of state ports were down 11 percent last year. Jim Fenner, president of the Ludington Area Charterboat Association, attributed the drop to high gas prices.

[COMMENTARY: Asian carp pose threat to our waters](#)

A young man was riding a new personal watercraft on the Illinois River on Tuesday when an airborne Asian carp knocked him overboard. Illinois officials are pretty sure it is the first time firefighters had to rescue someone after a collision with a flying carp.

[Groups press to see report on lake level](#)

Pressure is mounting to stop the clock on a public comment period for a controversial study into mysterious water losses from Lakes Michigan and Huron. The reason: Conservationists, landowners and sportsmen say they can't comment on what they are not allowed to see.

[Cormorant control to ramp up this year](#)

Cormorant control will continue this year at the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant. Last year's culling of 400 birds reduced the colony's adult population and this year's would take about 800 birds, which equates to 75 percent of the remaining birds.

[EDITORIAL: Cost of the cull](#)

Damage that Parks Canada claims cormorants are doing to the trees and vegetation on Middle Island can't possibly compare to the damage that the cull of the birds is doing to taxpayers' wallets.

[Georgian Bay Association disputes Great Lakes study findings](#)

The Georgian Bay Association Foundation (GBA) is planning a study carried out by a binational research board that blames natural causes for the falling water levels in Lake Michigan, Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

[WI - DNR Tests More Lakes for VHS Fish Virus](#)

Two years ago, VHS virus, was first discovered in fish in Lake Michigan and the Lake Winnebago system. Because Lake Superior and the Mississippi River are both connected to Lake Michigan, the deadly fish virus is also suspected in those ...

[Study of lake level wasn't reviewed](#)

A study absolving the Army Corps of Engineers for an alleged massive — and ongoing — water level drop in Lakes Michigan and Huron has not been independently peer-reviewed, despite claims to the contrary last week by the study's co-chairman.

St. Clair study won't end dispute

The findings of a two-year international study, which says there is no need for man-made changes in the St. Clair River, probably won't end the controversy.

Lake-level study ignites opposition

A new study led by an Army Corps of Engineers employee says it has gotten to the bottom of the thorny question of whether a botched Army Corps dredging project can be blamed for permanent and growing water losses on Lakes Michigan and Huron.

Duluth - Some anglers say cormorants prevent steelhead recovery

Anglers were catching a few fish in the 38-degree water. But Gary Siverson of Duluth thought they should be catching a lot more steelhead on their way upstream to spawn. The problem, Siverson and some other steelheaders contend, is cormorants.