



# FISHING TALES



## Michigan anglers can help with Steelhead

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (D.N.R.) is asking anglers to assist them with a new study evaluating the contribution of stocked Steelhead to our lake and river fisheries. Anglers are being asked to keep the heads of Steelhead caught in Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, or any Michigan river that have a clipped adipose fin only and no other clips.

Any Steelhead caught may contain a coded wire "microtag" which can provide researchers with important information on fish movement patterns, growth and survival for use in future Steelhead management. The marked fish have been, and will be, released in Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and the St. Joseph, Muskegon, Manistee, Manistique, Sturgeon and Au Sable Rivers.

Each year from 1996 through 1999, microtags will be placed in 450,000 Steelhead that are to be planted in those waters.

Anglers who catch Steelhead with a clipped adipose fin and no other fin clips or maxillary (jaw) clips are asked to save and freeze the fish head and record this information:

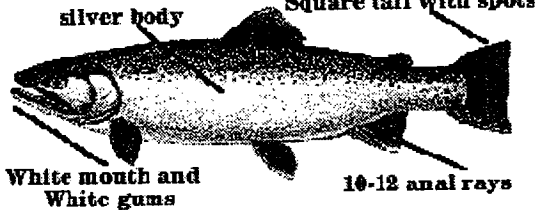
- Name and mailing address of the person who caught the fish.
- Fish length and weight.
- Exact location (as specific as possible) where the fish was caught, and the date of the catch.

Anglers are requested to bring their fish heads to any D.N.R. office or local drop-off site. A list of D.N.R. offices can be found on Page 4 of the *1997 Michigan Fishing Guide* which you received when you purchased your 1997 fishing license. For a list of additional drop-off sites, please call the Charlevoix Great Lakes Research Station at (616) 547-2914, or you can visit the Fisheries Division section of the **MIDNR** Internet Home Page for the drop-off site list.

This study is one of several ongoing fisheries studies being conducted by the D.N.R. Microtags may also be found in the heads of any Salmon or Lake Trout with a clipped adipose fin and no other clips. The D.N.R. would also appreciate receiving heads collected from any of these fish.

If researchers find a microtag in the head of

### Steelhead



an adipose fin-clipped Salmon or Trout, the angler turning in the head will receive a letter detailing the location where that fish was stocked, and the age of the fish. Anglers who turn in micro-tagged heads from Steelhead or Chinook Salmon will also be rewarded with a fishing lure for each head they turn in.

Anglers returning the fish heads with the required information will become important

partners in D.N.R. efforts to evaluate our fisheries. If needed, personnel at the Charlevoix Great Lakes Research Station will supply angling groups and clubs with bags and information forms to be used for the collection and storage of heads taken from fish which may be microtagged.

In addition, any groups and individuals with an interest in providing scale samples from Steelhead which they have caught are asked to contact the Charlevoix Great Lakes Research Station at the telephone number listed elsewhere in this article. Collection envelopes and details on approved scale collection techniques will be provided.

From *Weekly News* of the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council, week of June 9, 1997.

## The fishing was great at Port Sanilac!



1st PLACE: "THE KIDD" with Paul Colone, Dave Dobts and Mark Bradley (not pictured).  
More Port Sanilac photos on Page Three.

# For Your Information . . .

## MORE LOGS ARE DUMPED INTO LAKE MICHIGAN

Last year's nightmare for northern Lake Michigan boaters will continue to haunt them this summer. Another barge has lost a load of pulp logs, in about the same place that thousands went overboard last spring, off Point Betsie. The rest of the scenario also echoes last year's: officials claim most were recovered.

Again this spring, the logs dumped into the lake came from Woodland Harvesting's storage yard in Elberta. The barge from which the logs were lost on April 21 is owned by Marine Management of Illinois. Last year's spill, on May 22, was off a barge owned by Selvick Marine Towing of Wisconsin.

Last summer, dozens of boats were damaged – but no one reported injured – by the floating and barely submerged logs that were, like this year's, about eight feet long and up to one foot or more in diameter. Those logs, en route to an Escanaba mill from Elberta, were still showing up as late as September. The logs were reported as far west as Wisconsin and on beaches in the Upper Peninsula.

D.N.R. biologist Jerry Rakoczy, at the state's Great Lake Fishery Station on the beach at Charlevoix, reports he hasn't seen any wash ashore since late September. They may all have sunk, or washed ashore. An offshore Steelhead and Salmon troller, Rakoczy snarled, "Why doesn't somebody regulate those S.O.B.'s?" when told another load had been lost.

Even in good light, the floating logs are difficult to see from the helm of a boat. In poor light or at night, they are almost impossible to spot. By the time boating activity picks up, many will be waterlogged enough to just under the water's surface. Boating safety specialists say the logs are an incentive for all boaters to wear life jackets. Striking one of the logs at any speed could result in disaster.

Boaters spotting logs should punch the coordinates into their GPS or LORAN units, and notify the Coast Guard and other area boaters by radio. If they do not have GPS or LORAN, a radio alert to area boaters is suggested.

Coast Guard officials claim most of the nearly 2,000 logs lost this year were retrieved by Marine Management, but at least 600 remain.

East Lansing attorney Jack Cote has filed a federal lawsuit for several dozen people whose boats were damaged by logs last year. Damage claims range from \$1,500 to \$5,000, most involving damage to props and drive units. Woodlands Harvesting of Alpena, and Selvick Towing each blames the other for last year's spill and resulting damage to boats.

From the *North Woods Call*, May 7, 1997

## PROPOSED STEELHEAD RULE IS CALLED BIASED

Stream Steelhead fishermen are influencing regulations that are biased against Great Lake Steelhead fishermen and without biological justification, according to some experts.

Responding to complaints that big lake trollers have been taking excessive numbers of Steelhead in recent years, fisheries executive Doug Jester proposes that minimum size limits on Steelhead caught in lakes be raised from 10 inches to 25 inches. Under the proposed new rule, the limit for Steelhead caught in rivers would only increase to 15 inches.

Size limits on Chinook Salmon and other Trout would also be 25 inches and 15 inches in lakes and rivers, respectively. Minimum Coho Salmon size would be 15 inches everywhere.

Jester's rationale is that a Steelhead, Lake or Brown Trout, or Chinook Salmon under 25 inches caught in a lake may grow to be caught again. In contrast, a 15-incher caught in a river is unlikely to survive spawning he asserts.

About half of Steelhead caught in open water would have to be released, based on Great Lakes creel census data. About 45 percent are planted by Wisconsin, Indiana and Illinois, only some of which run Michigan rivers.

One critic wails "The SOB's just raised our licenses (fees) – and I don't mind that – but now they want to take our fish away from us."

A biologist who is critical of the proposal laments "It doesn't consider the occasional fisherman and kids. Hey if they catch a 20-inch, or even 18-inch, Trout or Salmon, whether it's from a pier or a small boat, that's a trophy to them. And what about those people we want to recruit into Salmon and Trout fishing? The first time they have to throw back a 20-inch fish – the biggest they've ever seen – they're gonna say to hell with fishing."

"No! The whole idea is nuts."  
"Twenty-five-inch Lake Trout?" a disenchanted fisherman complained. "Hell, even the state says they're unsafe to eat. Now some jerk biologist wants to tell us they're all we can take home. What kinda nutcake is this?"

A biologist questions the justification for releasing Chinook Salmon and then having to harvest them at a weir. The objective, he said, should be to maximize the catch. "That's why we raise and plant them," he explained.  
From the *North Woods Call*, May 21, 1997

## FORAGE FISH DOWN IN LAKE HURON IN 1996

Estimated biomass of alewives decreased in 1996 to about 23,000 tons, compared to 30,100 tons in 1995, and young-of-the-year alewives made up about 15,200 tons of the total biomass. This indicates another potentially strong year class in 1996, in addition to those observed in 1994 and 1995.

Although there was a rather sharp decline in the abundance of adult alewives, good reproduction in 1994, 1995 and 1996 should mitigate further declines and Biological Resources Division (BRD) researchers expect alewife abundance to increase.

The bloater biomass was down substantially in 1996, to 19,317 tons, compared to 31,900 tons in 1995, primarily because of poor recruitment observed since the large 1989 year class. The decline in bloater abundance has been moderated by low fishing pressure and the strength of the 1988 and 1989 year classes. BRD estimates the bloater stock will likely continue to decline without the production of stronger year classes.

Total Rainbow smelt biomass was 13,400 tons in 1996, compared to 18,500 tons in 1995. Adult smelt biomass declined from 15,600 tons in 1995 to 8,500 tons in 1996, but young-of-the-year biomass increased from 2,830 tons to 4,900, and this should provide adequate recruitment. The smelt population continues to be dominated by younger fish.

# Coming Events

### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

*Last Tuesday each month at 7:30 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Road, Royal Oak*

**JUNE 24, 1997** • **JULY 29, 1997** • **AUGUST 26, 1997**

### BOAT TROLLING TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

DATE	EVENT	PORT CAPTAIN
June 28	OSCODA (Ladies Day)	Doug Karakas, (810) 545-1181
July TBA	ERIEAU, ONTARIO (Walleye Outing)	Steve Hamilton, (313) 881-3871
August 2	LUDINGTON	Bob Mitchell, (810) 828-8034
August 23	MANISTEE	Daniel Dima, (313) 996-2503
Sept. 6	HARBOR BEACH II	Stan Bilek, (810) 828-4159

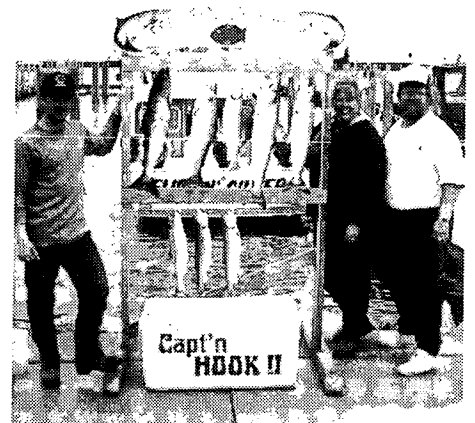
# TOP PORT SANILAC TOURNAMENT FINISHERS



2nd Place: "MY DREAM" with Jimmy Hardrick.



3rd Place: "LUCKY FALCON" with Robert Golaszewski, Lee Locklear, and Larry Walter.



4th Place: "CAPT'N HOOK II" with Jeff Lawless, Mary Karakas and Doug Karakas.



5th Place: "TAIL WALKER" with Fred Kaul, Fred Kaul Jr. and David Slivik.



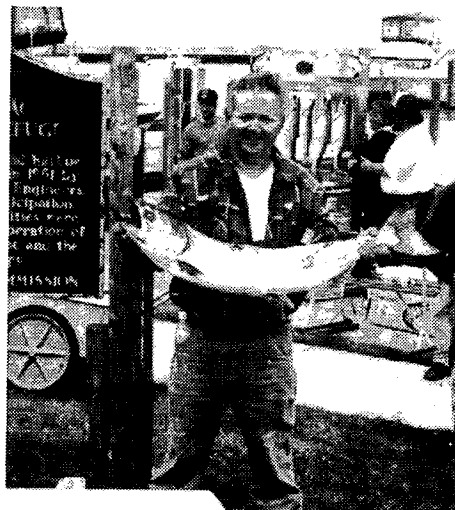
6th Place: "TOMORROW'S DREAM" with Mark Stosiak, Jeff Stosiak and Tracey Stosiak.



7th Place: "JACK IN THE BOX" with Ed Morris and Mike Morris.



9th Place: "MARY K" with Ken Kuhar, Scott Oborzanic and Steve Lange.



10th Place: "GOLDEN OLDIE" with Howard York and Ivan Wren (not pictured).

## St. Joseph River has record 1996 harvest

Record numbers of Steelhead Trout and Chinook Salmon were harvested from the St. Joseph River during 1996, according to Indiana Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologists.

A joint Michigan-Indiana study project covering a 63-mile area of the river revealed that more than 19,000 Steelhead Trout and 5,700 Chinook Salmon were caught by fishermen. Anglers fishing Indiana's portion of the river harvested 8,889 Steelhead, while 10,489 Steelhead were taken in Michigan.

It is estimated that Trout and Salmon fishing brings \$2.75 million to the local economy of the area.

## PLANNED SEA LAMPREY CONTROLS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE FISH STOCKS

If planned St. Mary's River sea lamprey controls take place, lake whitefish and other fish stocks in Lake Huron may improve, offering better harvest prospects.

Of ten species of corregonids once found in Lake Huron, only four remain in substantial numbers (lake whitefish, round whitefish, lake herring, and deepwater chub, or bloater), making up the bulk of the Lake Huron corregonid community. Unconfirmed small numbers of shortnose cisco and kiyi are still thought to exist. The other four species were harvested to extinction.

Prior to 1955, lake herring made up the majority of the corregonine harvest, often exceeding 8 million pounds. Together with lake whitefish, these two species made up over 85% of the corregonine harvest. This trend continued until the mid-1940's when the lake whitefish fishery began to increase and the lake herring began to disappear. By 1959, lake herring harvest made up less than 2% of the total harvest.

## CREWS Hot Line

### NEED A CREW?

Looking for crew members to fish with you in Detroit Area Steelheader Boat Trolling Tournaments?



### WANT TO CREW?

Want to fish in Detroit Area Steelheader Boat Trolling Tournaments but don't have a boat?

Call the Crews Hot Line to match up with a Skipper looking for crew members, or to get crew members for your boat during the 1996 season. Contact:

LARRY BOYER: (313) 495-1342

DOUG KARAKAS: (810) 545-1181

LEON VAN EDEN: (810) 293-1261

### The DEADLINE

for the  
July issue  
of

FISHIN' TALES

is

June 24, 1997

# Great Lakes fishery plan signed

Agencies with fishery management authority on the Great Lakes gathered in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada on June 10 to officially endorse an updated version of *Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries*. The landmark plan under which the Great Lakes fishery is collectively managed as an ecosystem has been hailed as one of the world's best examples of co-operative fishery management.

Major changes incorporated into the revised Plan include:

- An expanded commitment by fish managers to work together to influence all management activities which affect fish.
- Stronger links with environmental management agencies.
- Establishment of a Council of Great Lakes Fisheries Agencies.
- A revised mechanism to resolve inter-jurisdictional disputes.

Developed in 1980 by natural resource agencies with responsibility for fisheries management on the Great Lakes. The plan, in its various forms over the years, has been the blueprint by which fishery management agencies in both Canada and United States work cooperatively to achieve common objectives.

"The Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries is the indispensable mechanism by which all management agencies work together on the Great Lakes," says Doug Jester of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. "The Plan not only reminds us that the Great Lakes resources are shared by many jurisdictions, but it also puts into place mechanisms that ensure that the resource is managed as an ecosystem. Without the Plan, agencies would probably duplicate efforts, would likely work at cross purposes, and would be apt to lose sight of the fact that our natural resources do not observe political boundaries," he noted.

Bob Beecher of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources added: "The revised Plan is the culmination of a rigorous review process that investigated any and all ways in which agencies can work together more effectively. The revised Plan strengthens an already superb working arrangement among agencies in the United States and Canada, and reaffirms the strong commitment by all agencies to work together toward a true ecosystem approach to management on the Great Lakes."

The signing ceremony took place during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's annual meeting at the Ottawa Sheraton Hotel on June 10, with representatives of the following agencies signing the revised plan:

- Chippewa-Ottawa Treaty Fishery Management Authority
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Illinois Department of Environmental Conservation
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- New York Department of Environmental Conservation
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

From *Weekly News* of the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council, week of June 9, 1997.

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Address Correction Requested



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STEELHEADERS

MEETING NOTICE — PLEASE DO NOT DELAY!