Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries
August 11, 2011

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

August 11, 2011

- Updates
  - Wildlife Division Chief Updates
  - Game & Fish Fund, Game & Fish Trust, Game & Fish Sub-funds
  - Fisheries Division Chief Updates
  - Lower Food Webs of Lakes Michigan and Huron
- Information Only – NRC (Action in August)
  - 3 Fisheries Orders
- NRC Action
  - Waterfowl Regular/Late Season Regulations

Wildlife Division Update

Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
August 11, 2011

Fisheries Division Update

Jim Dexter, Acting Chief
Fisheries Division
August 11, 2011

Fisheries Update and Orders

Public meetings:

- Walleye Management Guidelines for NLMMU
- Lake Huron Chinook Salmon

Fisheries Update and Orders

Fish Orders for information:

- FO- 216: Regulations for the taking of minnows for commercial purposes
- FO- 227: Waters Open and Regulations Governing the Taking of Wigglers and Crayfish for Commercial Purposes
- FO- 231: Catch Reporting Regulations for Commercial Minnow, Wigglers, and Crayfish Catchers

Thank You

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Waterfowl Hunting Regulations

Barbara Avers, Waterfowl Specialist

August 11, 2011

Waterfowl Season Goals

- Maintain Michigan's waterfowl hunting heritage by increasing hunter recruitment and retention.
- Balance regulations simplicity with maximum hunting opportunity.
- Ensure season encompasses maximum waterfowl numbers and abundant species.

Season Considerations

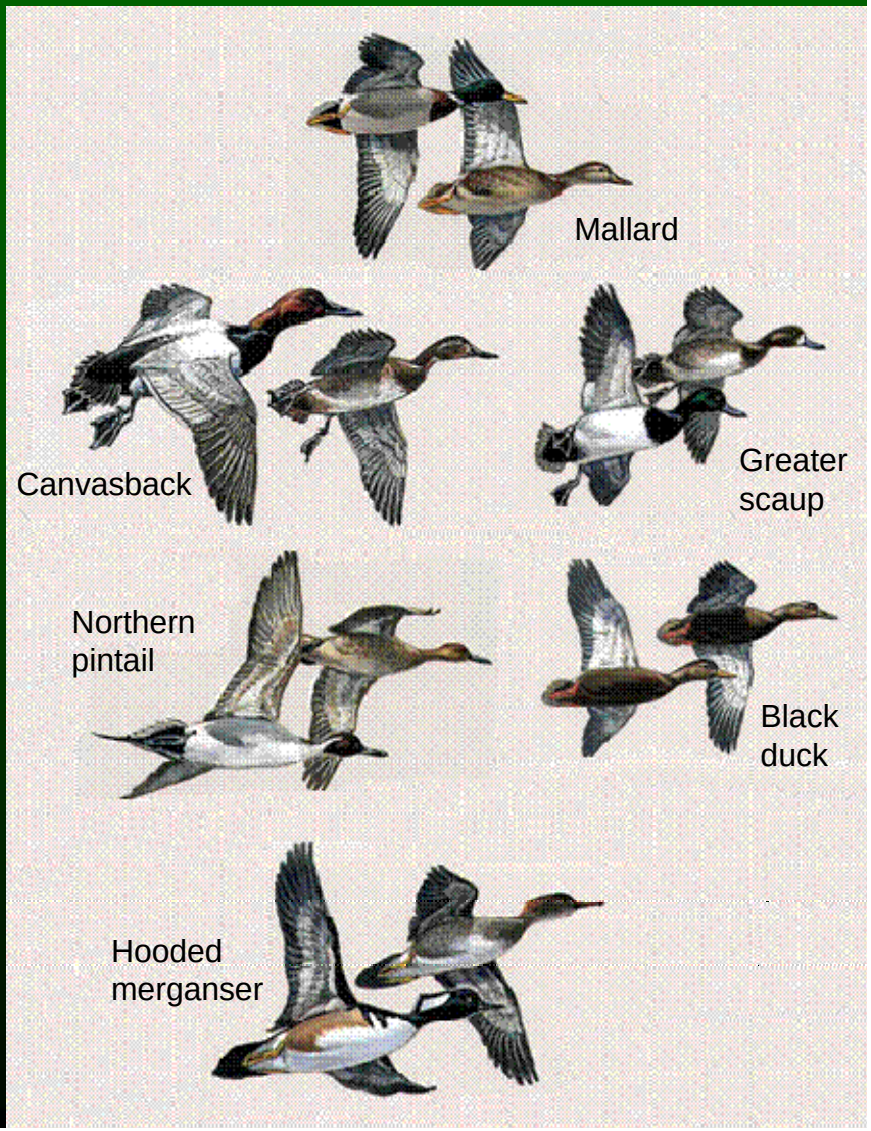
- Federal waterfowl season frameworks
- Waterfowl population status
- Hunter input and success
  - Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee
  - Hunter harvest and opinion surveys
- Migration patterns
  - Diversity and abundance of birds
- Weather trends

2011 Duck Season
Federal Framework

- Liberal season
  - Maximum 60 days
  - Between Saturday nearest Sept. 24 and last Sunday in January
  - Maximum 6 birds per day

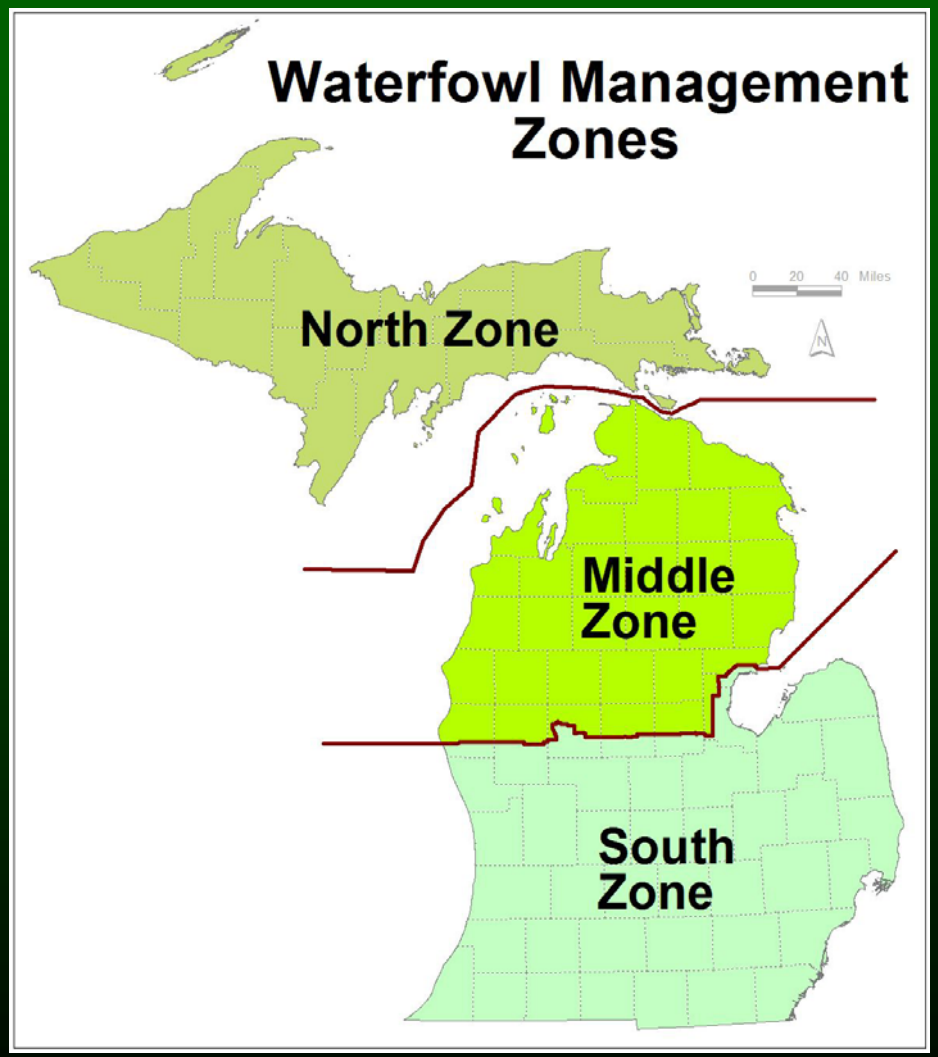
2011 Duck Season
Federal Framework – Daily Limits

- 6 ducks combined
  - Mallard
    - Maximum 4 birds total
    - Maximum 2 hens
  - Wood duck
    - Maximum 3 birds
  - Northern pintail, Redheads, Scaup
    - Maximum 2 birds each
  - American black duck and Canvasback
    - Maximum 1 bird each
  - All other ducks
    - 6 birds
- 5 mergansers combined
  - Maximum 2 hooded mergansers



2011-12 Michigan Duck Season Recommendations

2011 Duck Season Recommendations – Dates



North Zone

Sept. 24 – Nov. 18

Nov. 24 - 27

Middle Zone

Oct. 1 – Nov. 27

Dec. 3 – 4

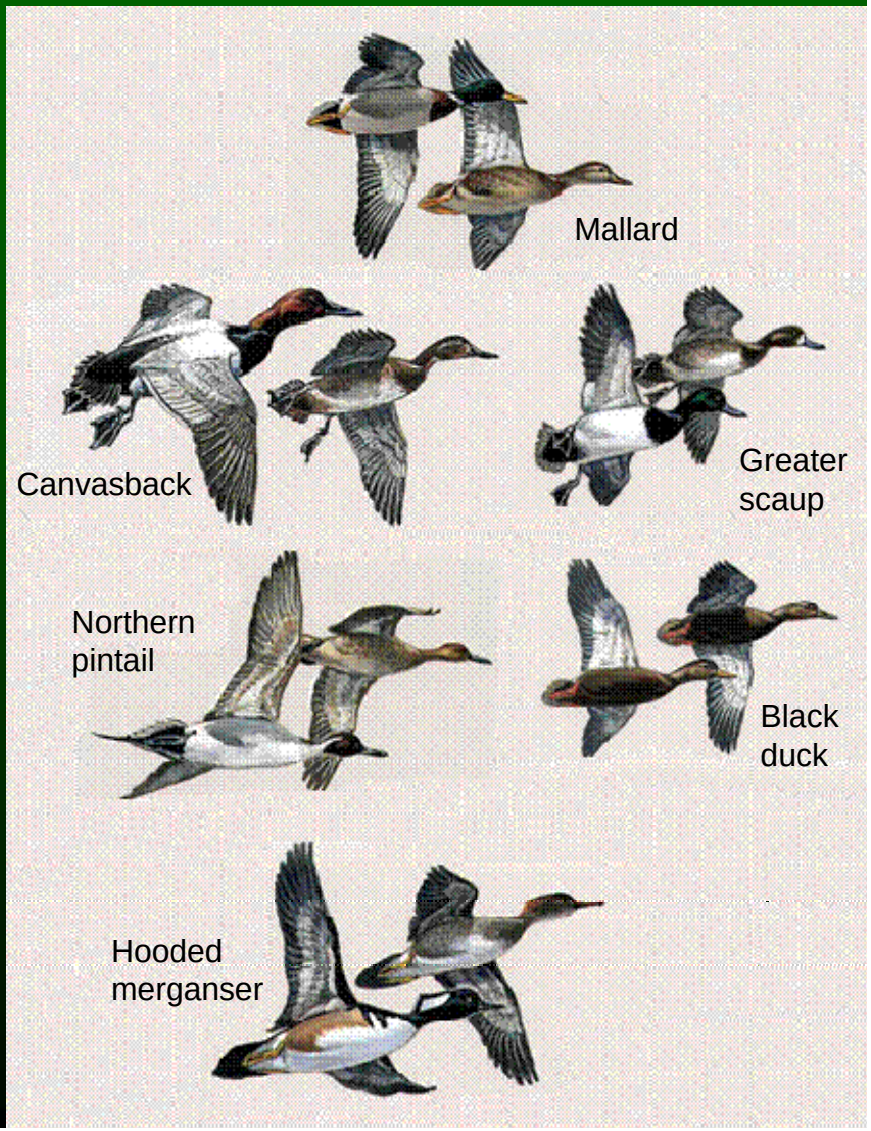
South Zone

Oct. 8 – Dec. 4

Dec. 10 – 11

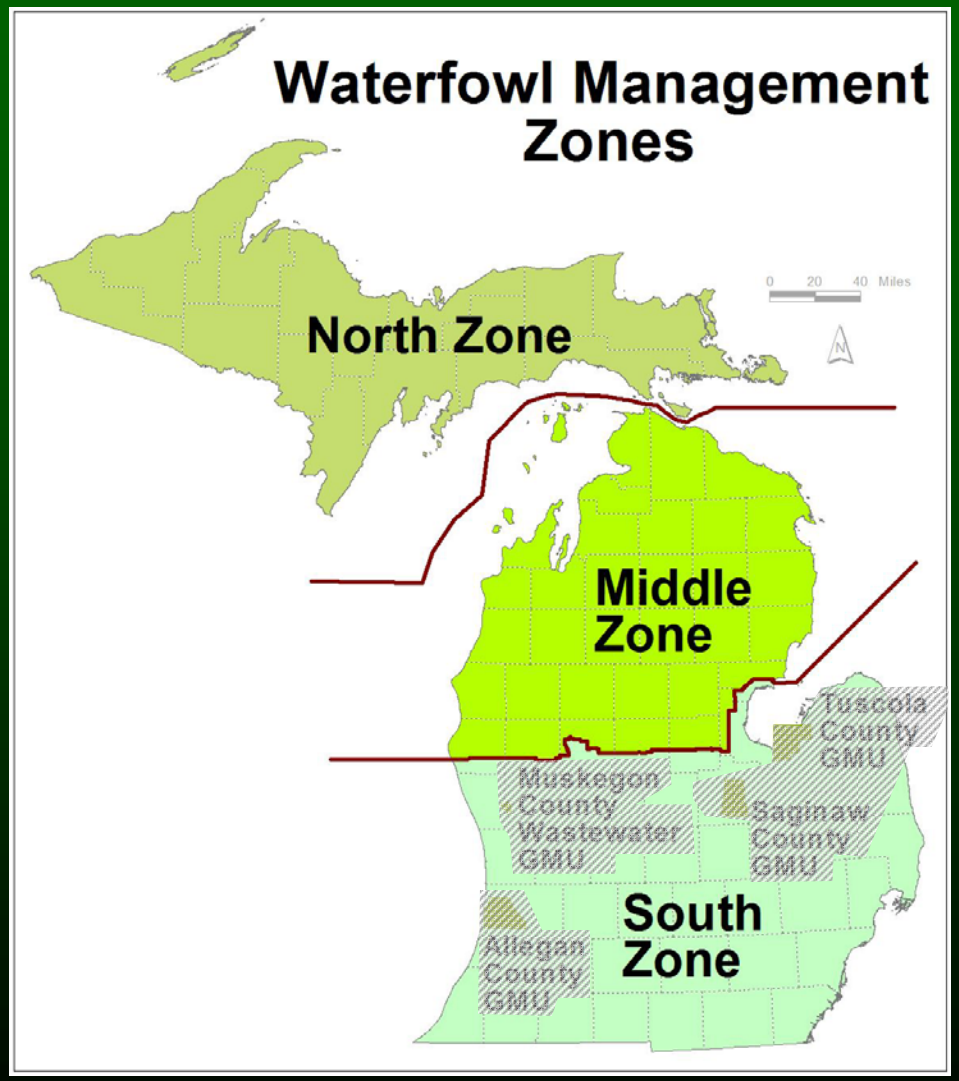
2011 Duck Season Recommendations – Daily Limits

- Maximum allowed under Federal Frameworks
  - Except one female mallard



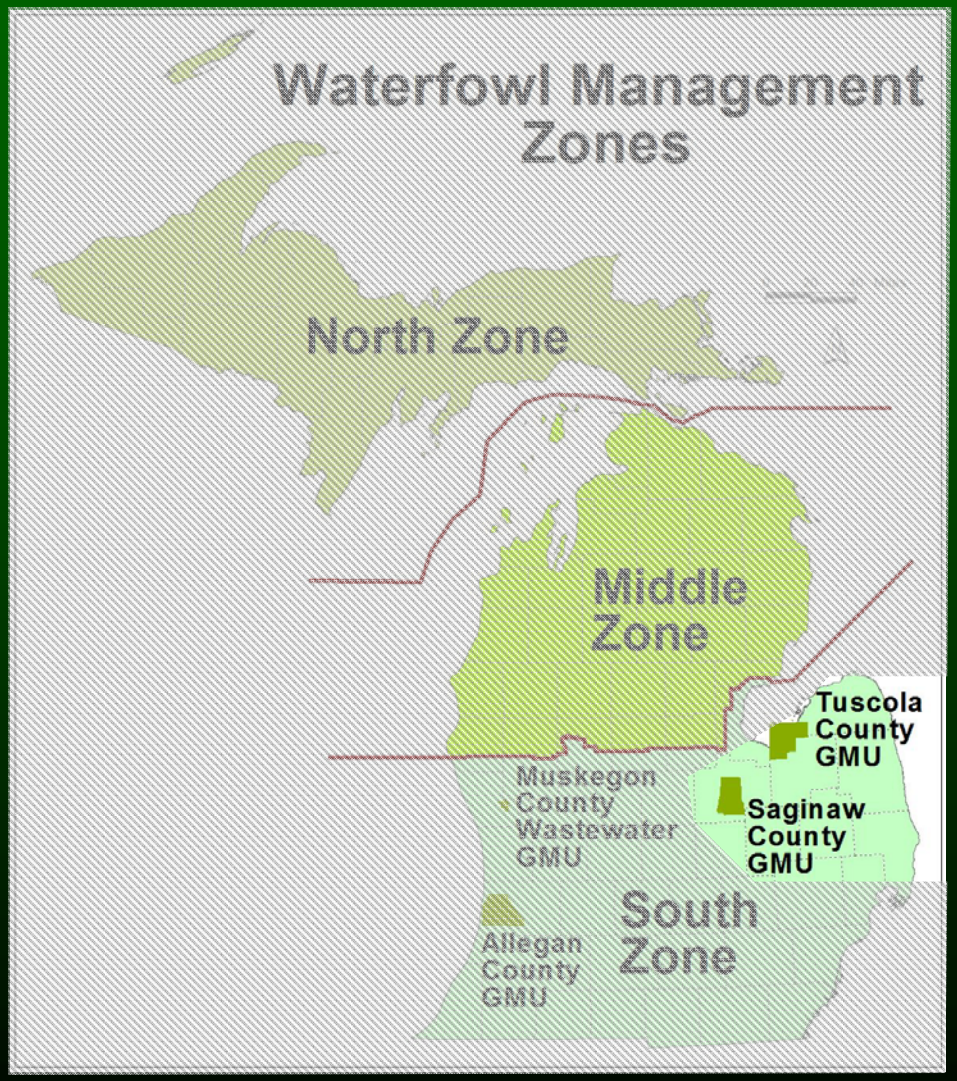
Canada Goose Season
Federal Frameworks

Regular Goose Season Federal Frameworks - except Goose Management Units



- Season length and outside dates
  - Maximum 45 days
  - Between Sept. 16 & Jan. 31
- Daily limits
  - Maximum 2 birds

Regular Goose Season Federal Frameworks - Tuscola and Saginaw County GMUs



- Season length and outside dates
  - 45 days between Sept. 16 & Jan. 31
  - 30 days between Dec. 31 & Feb. 7
- Daily limits
  - Maximum 2 birds

2011 Late Canada Goose Season Federal Frameworks

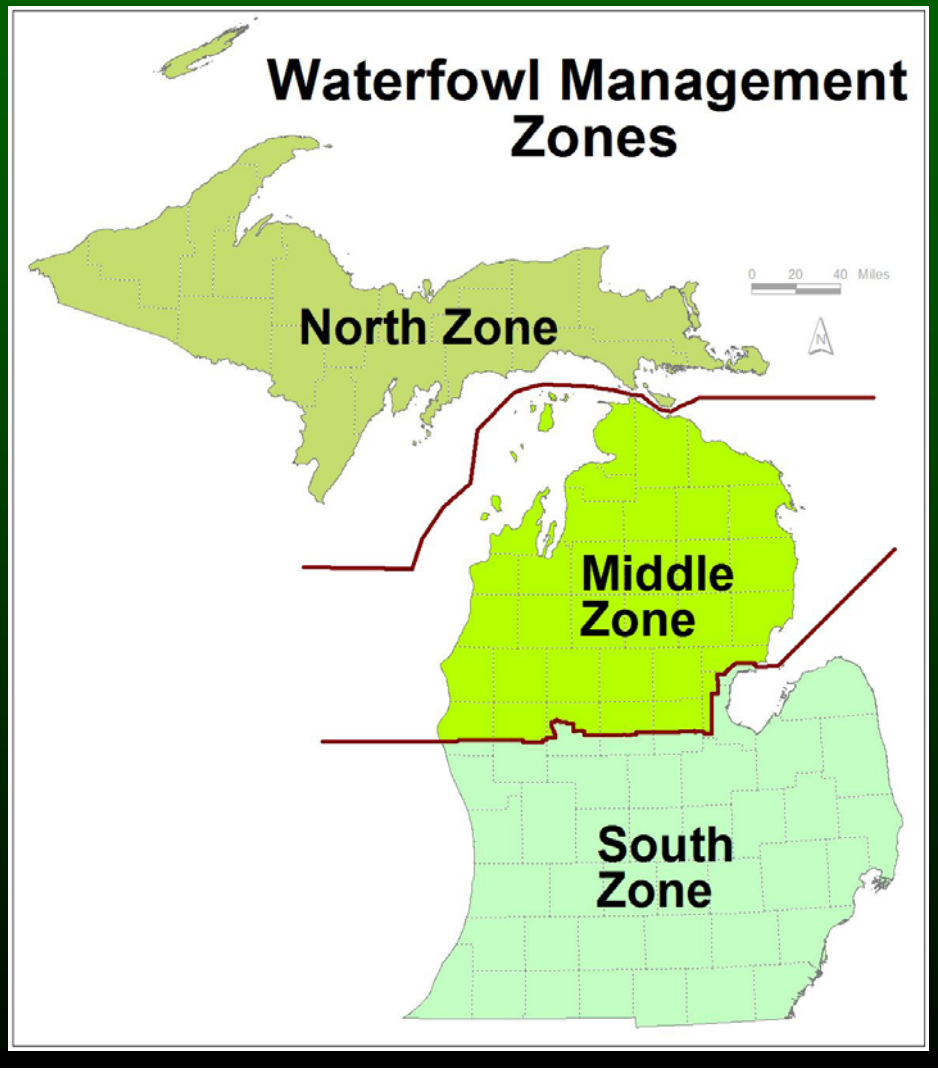
- South Zone
  - Excludes GMUs
  - Maximum 30 days
  - Between Dec. 31 & Feb. 7
- Daily limit
  - Maximum 5 birds

Federal Frameworks for Other Geese

- Snow and Ross:
  - 107 days between Sept. 16 and Mar. 10
  - up to 20-bird daily limit
- White-fronted:
  - 88 days between Sept. 16 and Feb. 13
  - 1-bird daily limit
- Brant:
  - 107 days between Sept. 16 and Jan. 31
  - 1-bird daily limit

2011-12 Michigan Canada Goose Season Recommendations

2011 Goose Season Recommendations – Regular Season Dates

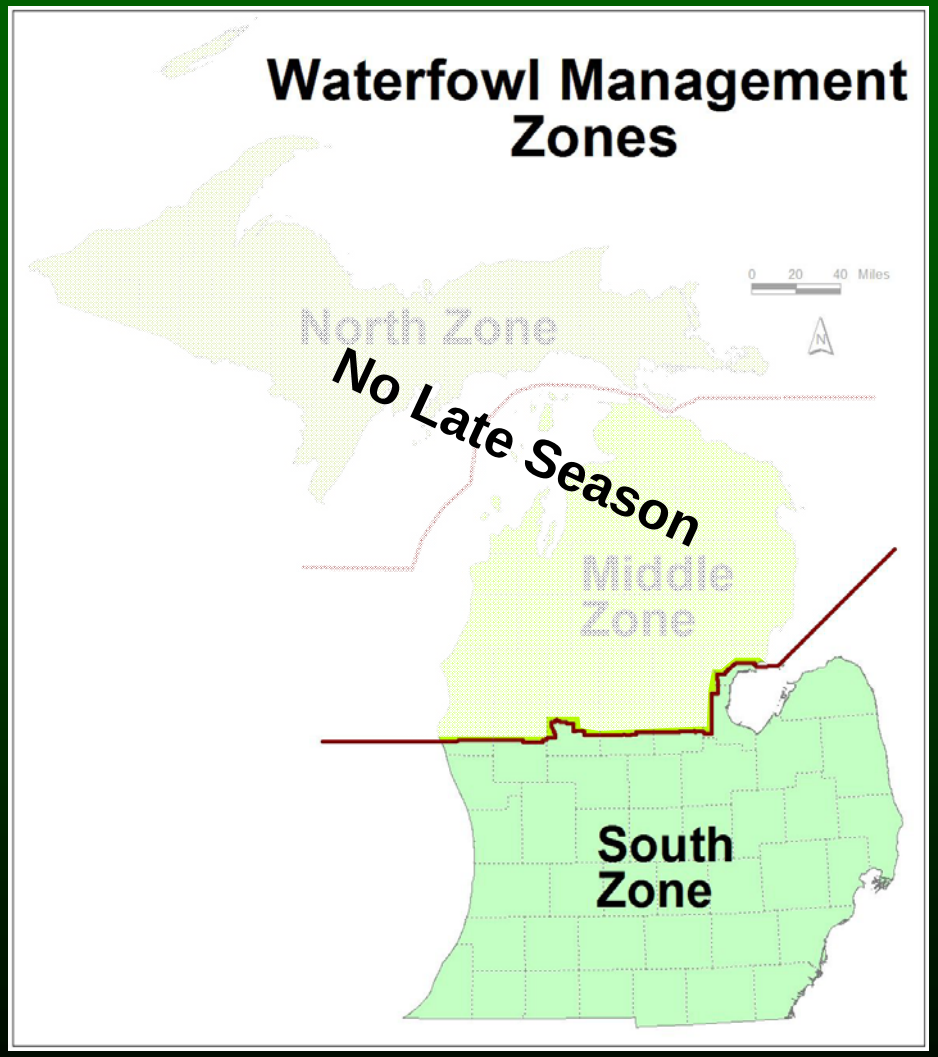


- North Zone
  - Sept. 17 – Oct. 31
- Middle Zone
  - Oct. 1 – Nov. 8
  - Nov. 24 – 27
  - Dec. 3-4
- South Zone
  - Oct. 8 – Nov. 10
  - Nov. 24 – Dec. 4

2011 Goose Season Recommendations–GMU Dates

- Tuscola and Saginaw County GMUs
  - Oct. 8 – Nov. 10
  - Nov. 24 – Dec. 4
  - Dec. 31 – Jan. 29, 2012
- Muskegon County Wastewater GMU
  - Oct. 11 – Nov. 13
  - Dec. 1 – 11
- Allegan County GMU
  - Nov. 12 - 30
  - Dec. 10 – 20
  - Dec. 31 – Jan. 14, 2012

2011 Goose Season Recommendations – Late Season Dates



- South Zone
  Dec. 31 – Jan. 29, 2012

2011 Goose Season Recommendations – Other Geese

- Snow and Ross:
  - Same as regular and late Canada goose season dates in each zone
  - 20-bird daily limit
- White-fronted and Brant:
  - Same as regular and late Canada goose season dates in each zone
  - 1-bird daily limit

2011 Goose Season Recommendations – Daily Limits

- All regular seasons
  - 2 birds per day
- Late season
  - 5 birds per day

Falconry Season Recommendations

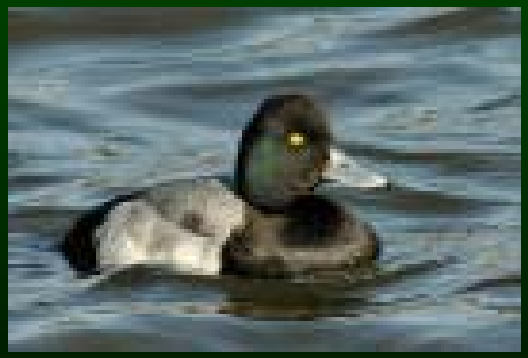
- Same dates as gun hunting
- Additional days for ducks, mergansers, coots, and moorhens:

  Dec. 12 – Jan. 15, 2012

  Mar. 1 – 10, 2012

- No change to daily bag limits

Thank You



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Invasive Species, Foodweb Changes, and their Effects on Recreational Fisheries of Lakes Huron and Michigan

David Clapp and Jim Johnson

Charlevoix and Alpena Fishery Research Stations

Recent Food Web Alterations Lake Huron's Main Basin

Zebra mussels

Round gobies

Quagga mussels

Chinook reproduction

Walleye reproduction

Angler use declines

1990

1995

2000

2005

Diporeia decline begins

Diporeia Collapse

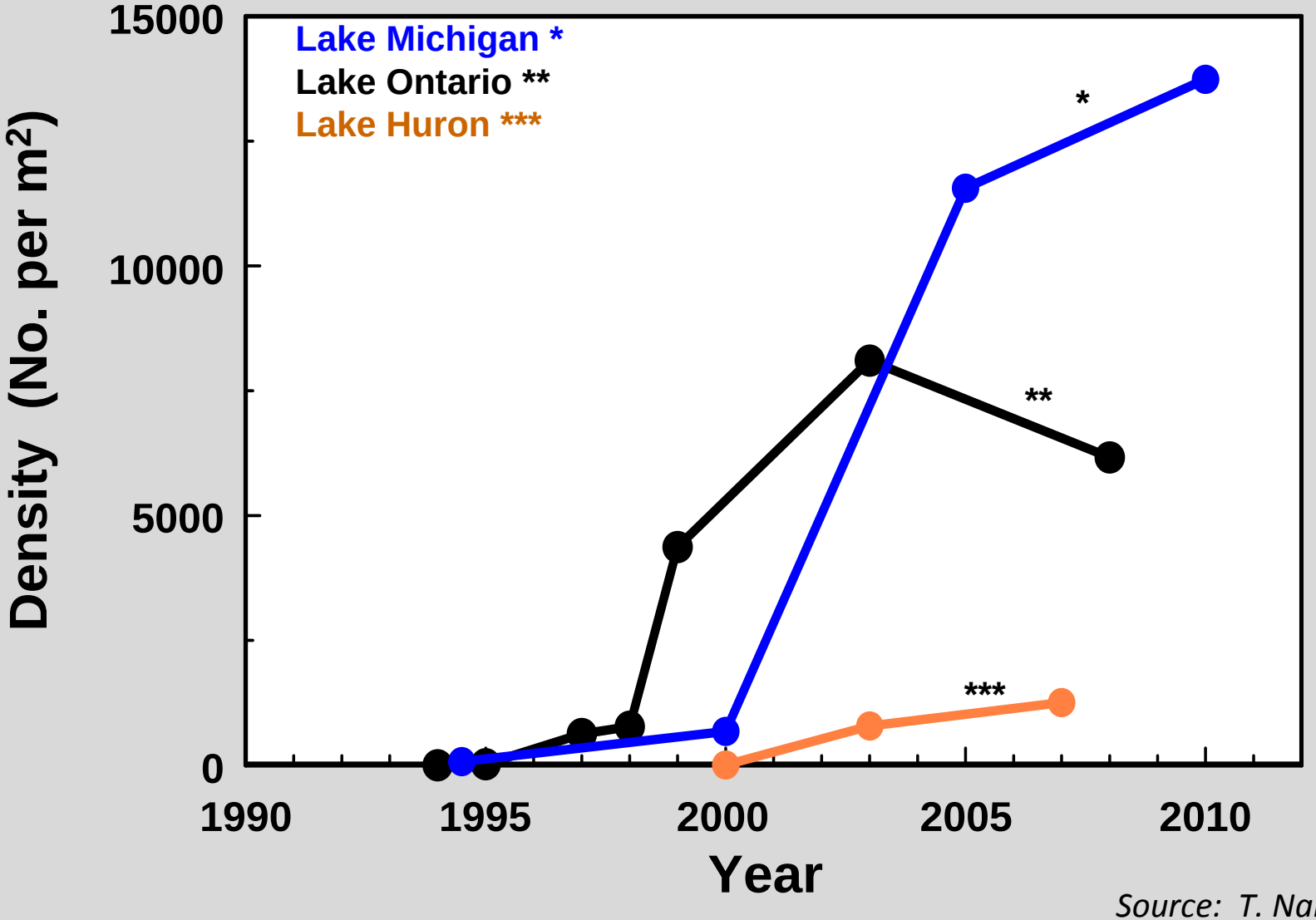
Zooplankton decline

Alewife collapse

Chinook decline

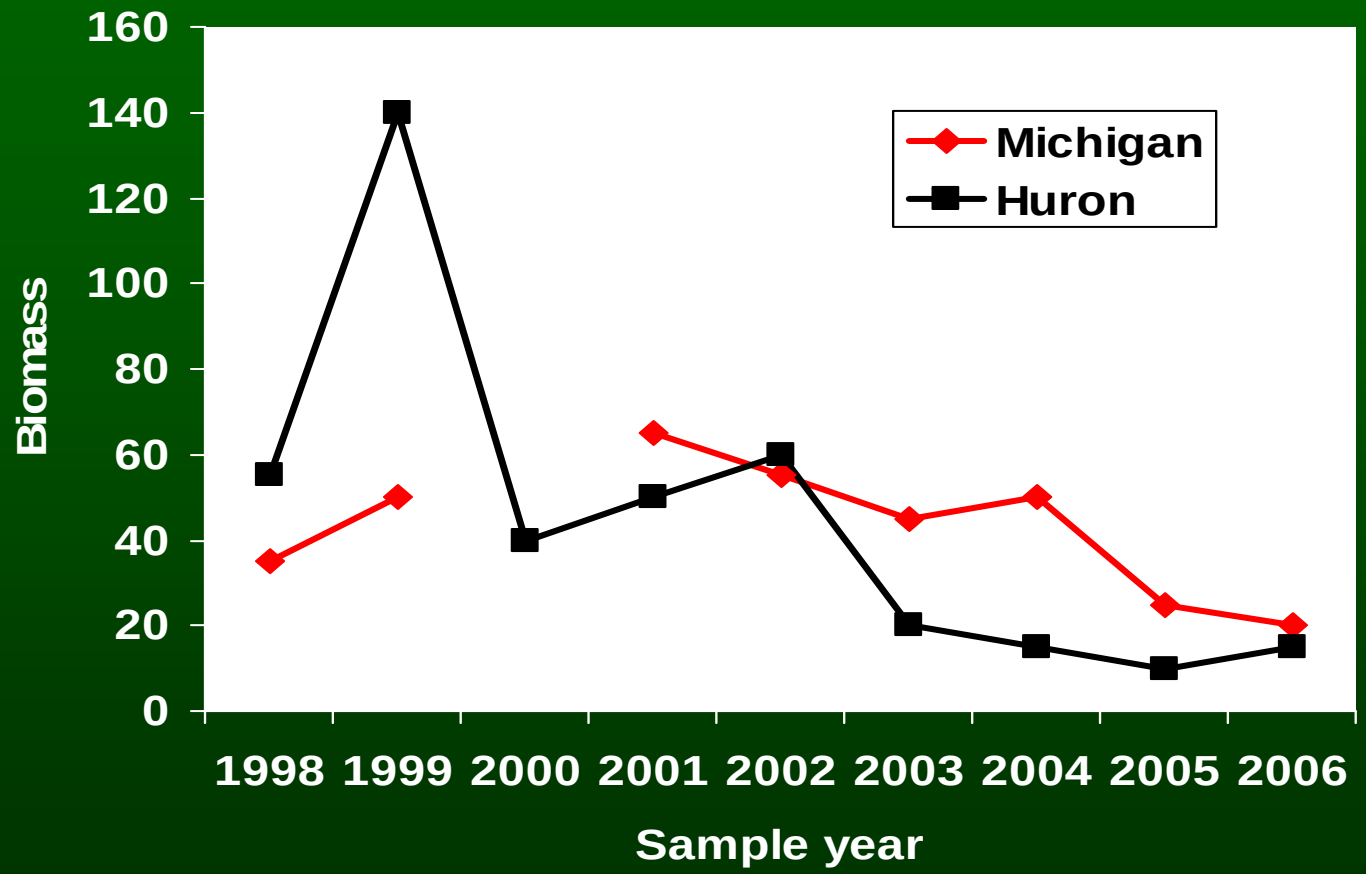
Lake Michigan Trawling
R/V *Steelhead*
Fall 2010

Mean zebra & quagga mussel density, 30-90 m Depth



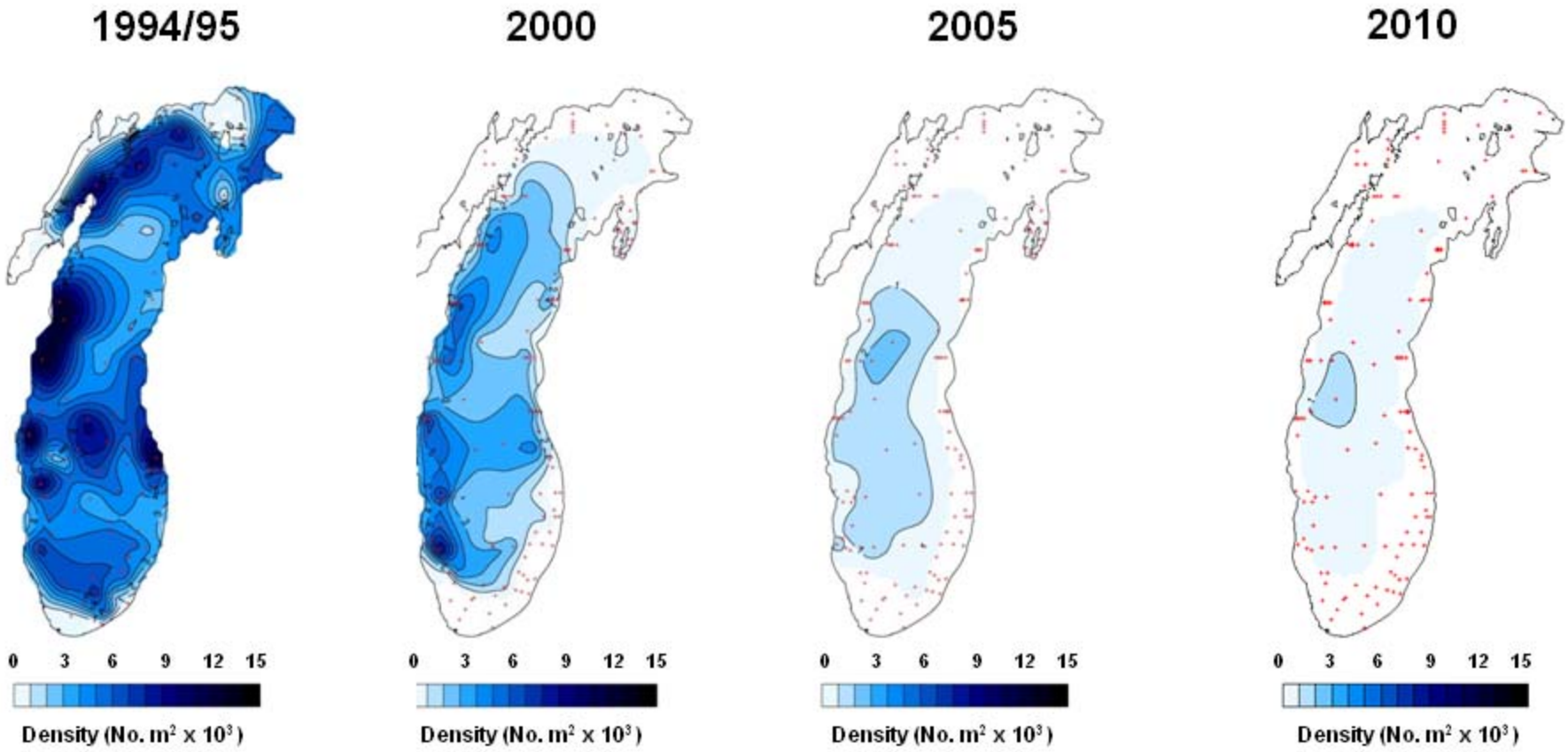
Source: T. Nalepa, NOAA

Zooplankton Abundance



Source: G. Warren, USEPA

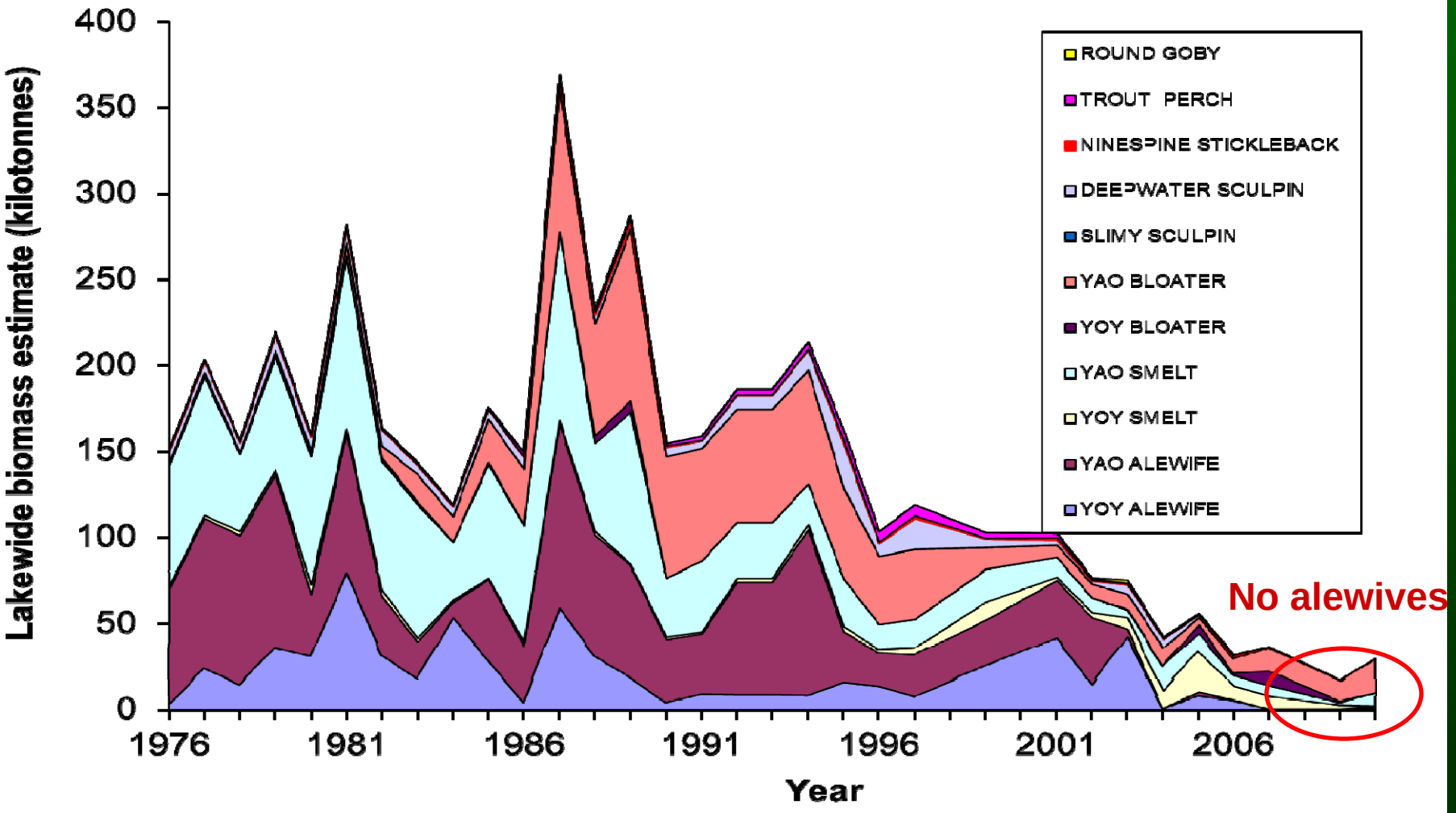
Density of Diporeia Species Through Time



Source: T. Nalepa, NOAA

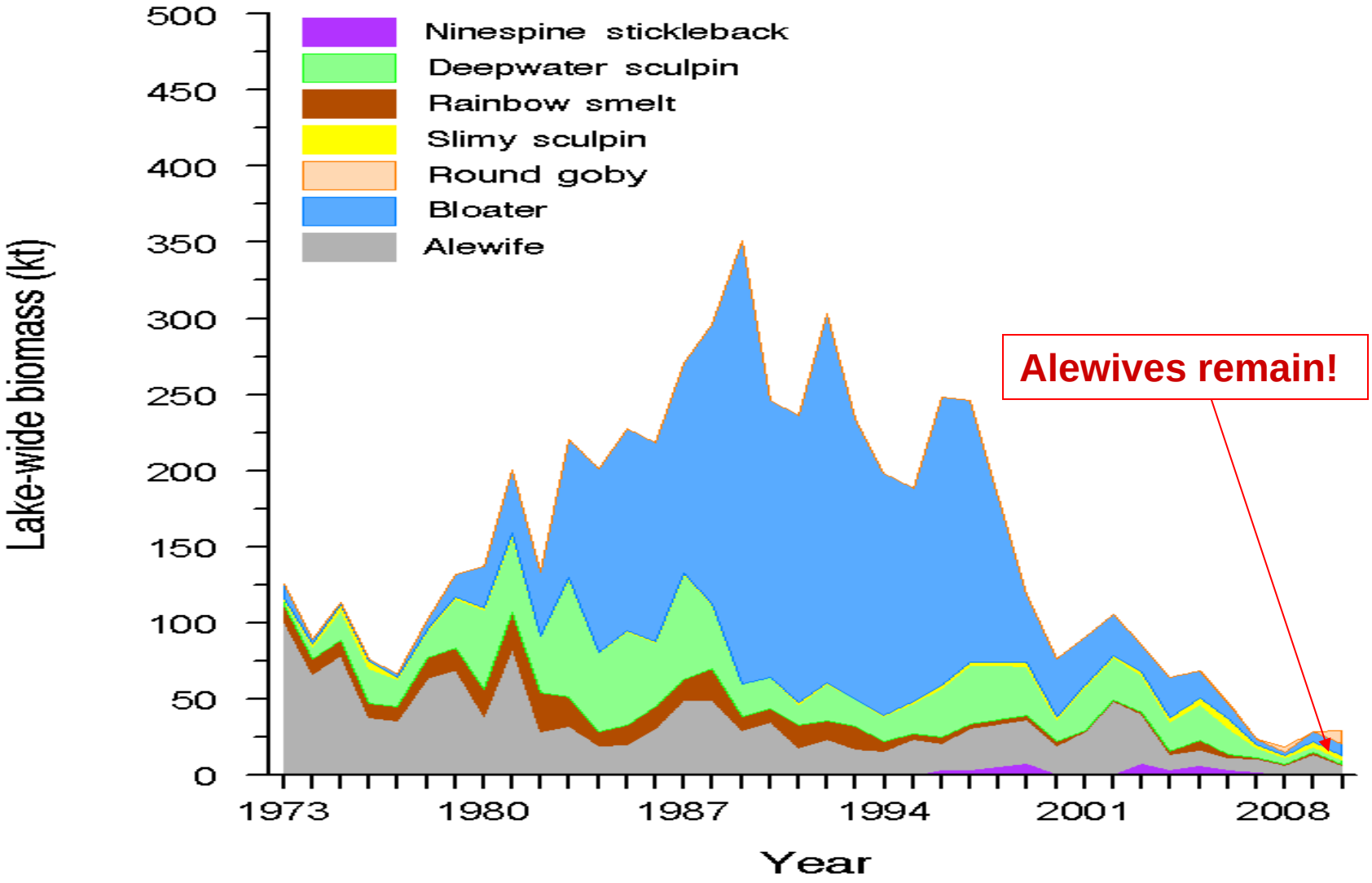
- Public health issues
- Lost fish production

Prey Fish Decline: Lake Huron



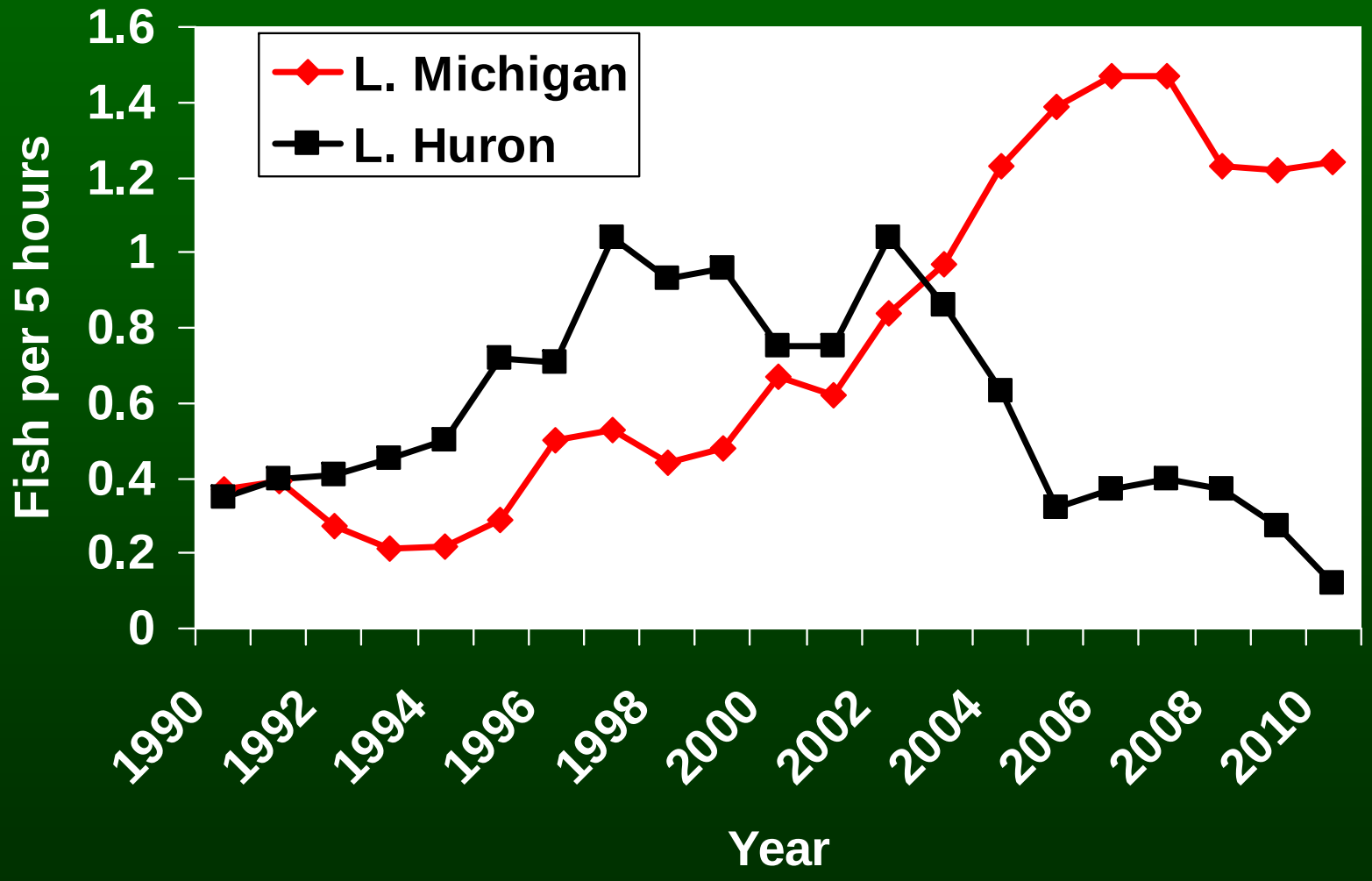
Source: USGS, Great Lakes Science Center

Lake Michigan Prey Fish

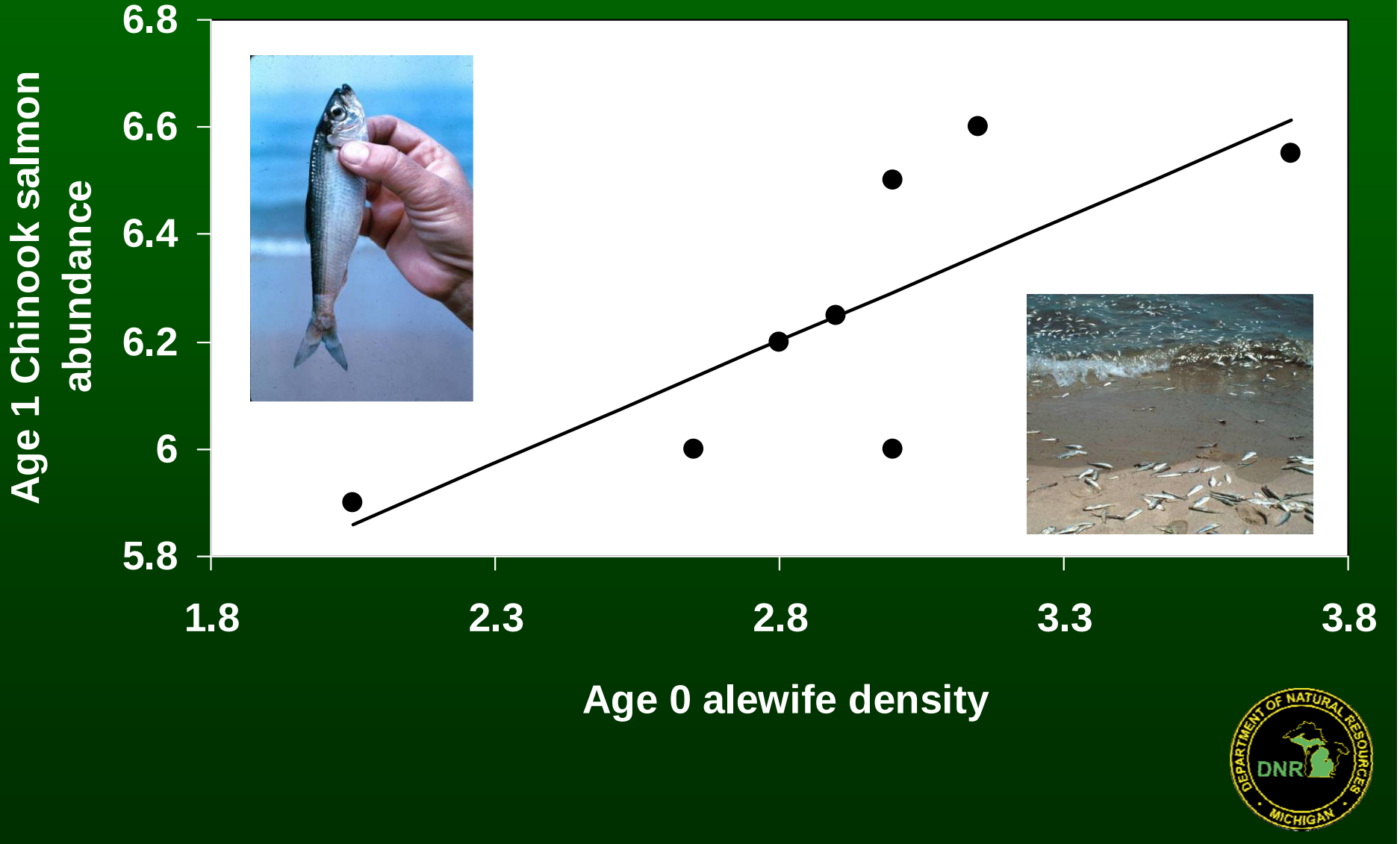


Source: C. Madenjian, USGS

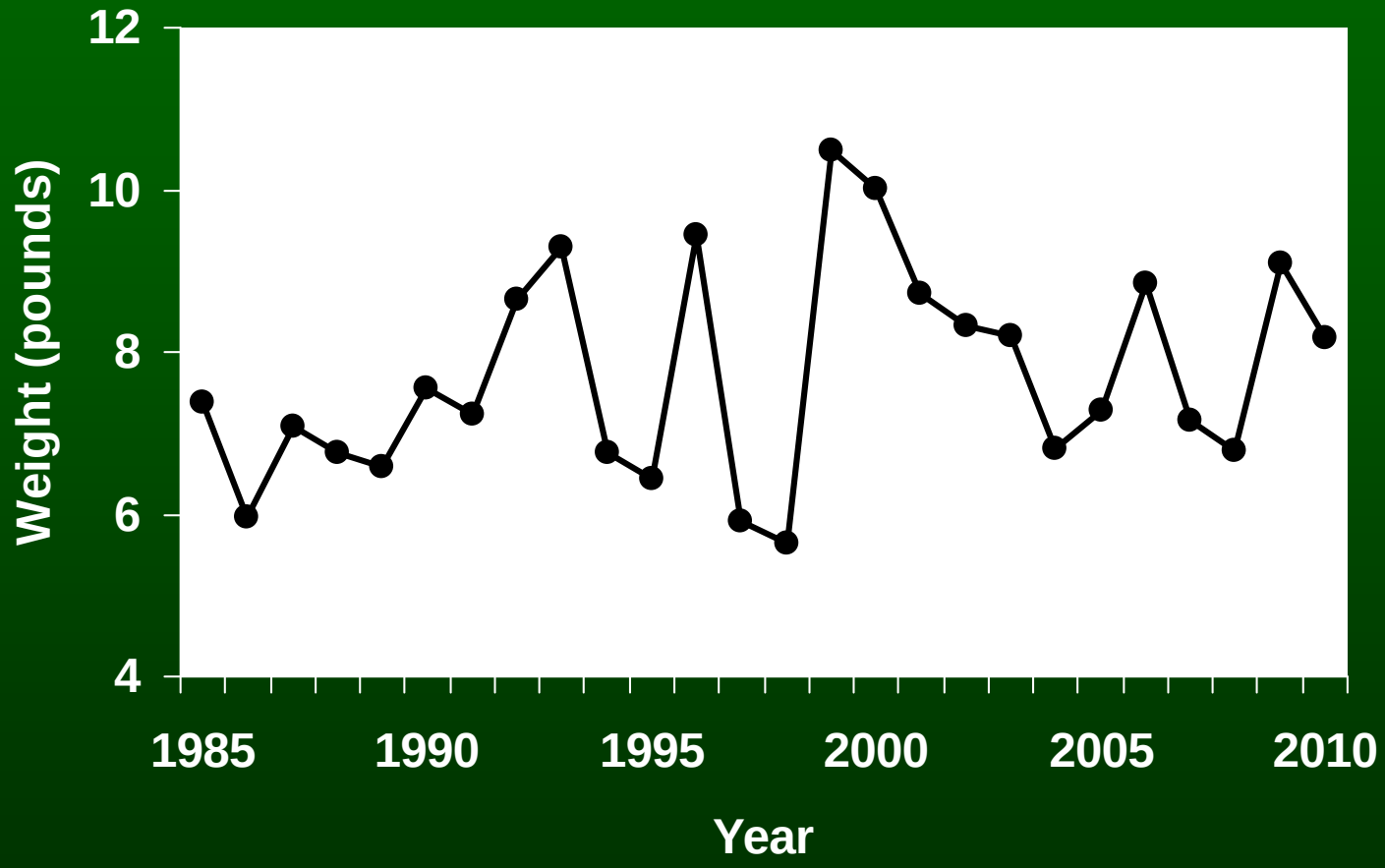
Chinook Salmon Harvest Rates



More alewife = More Chinook salmon (Lake Michigan)



Chinook Salmon Weight at Age 2 (Lake Michigan)



Lake Michigan Management

- More productive; can support alewife (?)
- Fishery has always been more dependent on Chinook salmon
- Managing intensively for Chinook salmon
- Still recognize the importance of maintaining diversity

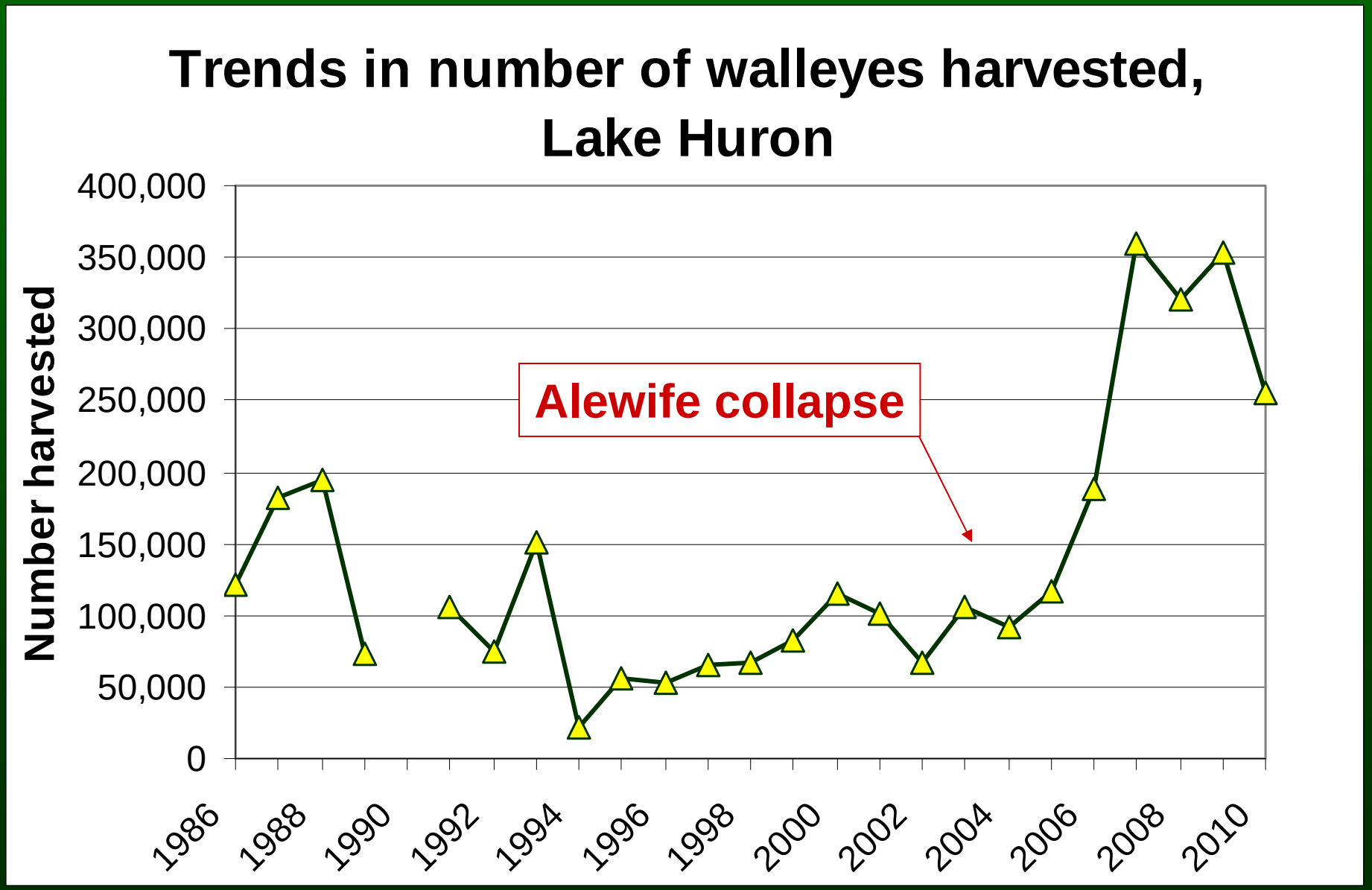
Lake Huron – Effect of alewife collapse on stocked salmon:

- Reduced growth

- Reduced survival

35 Chinook salmon, 7 round goby in an 8 pound lake trout

Response to alewife collapse: Walleye recovery



Lake Huron Management Response

- Select species that do not depend on alewives;
- Predator-avoidance stocking strategies

Conclusions

- Invasive species are a significant threat to Great Lakes fisheries
- Lower foodweb information important for management considerations
- Alewives key for Chinook salmon, however……..
- Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are different

Thank you!