



Southeast Michigan Fisheries

Jim Francis

Lake Erie Basin Coordinator

August 8, 2024

SCDRS – St Clair Detroit River System

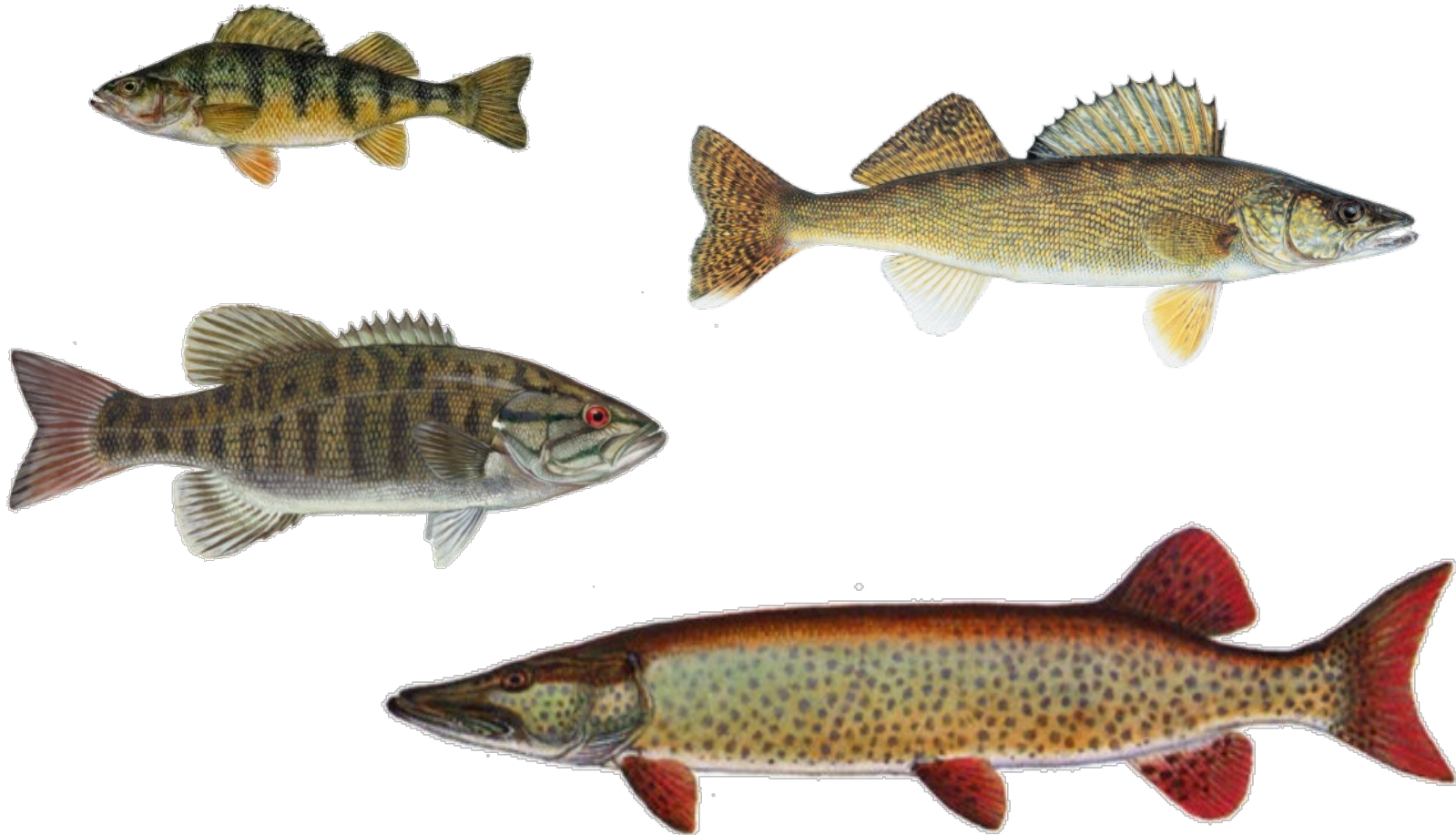


SCDRS Fish Community



- Mixture of warm, cool, and cold water species
- High diversity with over 100 fish species found in the SCDRS
- More than 45 fish species use the SCDRS for spawning/nursery habitat

The Big Four – Lake St Clair



Yellow Perch



- The most sought after species in Lake St. Clair
- Open water and winter ice fishery
- Half of the total annual fishing effort
- Michigan anglers harvest ~750,000 each year

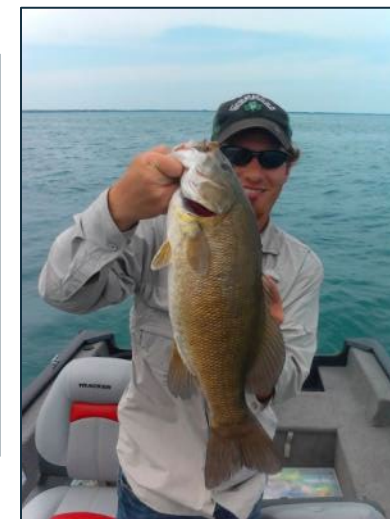


Walleye



- Walleye fishing ~ 30% of the boat fishery
- 80% of legal-sized walleye caught are harvested
- ~45,000 legal walleye are harvested annually in Lake St. Clair by Michigan anglers
- ~300,000 walleye caught in 2022 Detroit Rv. Creel survey

Smallmouth Bass



- ~20% of the boat fishery effort
- >100,000 legal-sized smallmouth bass caught annually from Michigan waters of Lake St. Clair and in Detroit Rv.
- >90% of legal-size smallmouth bass are released
- Fishery attracts out-of-state anglers, tournaments

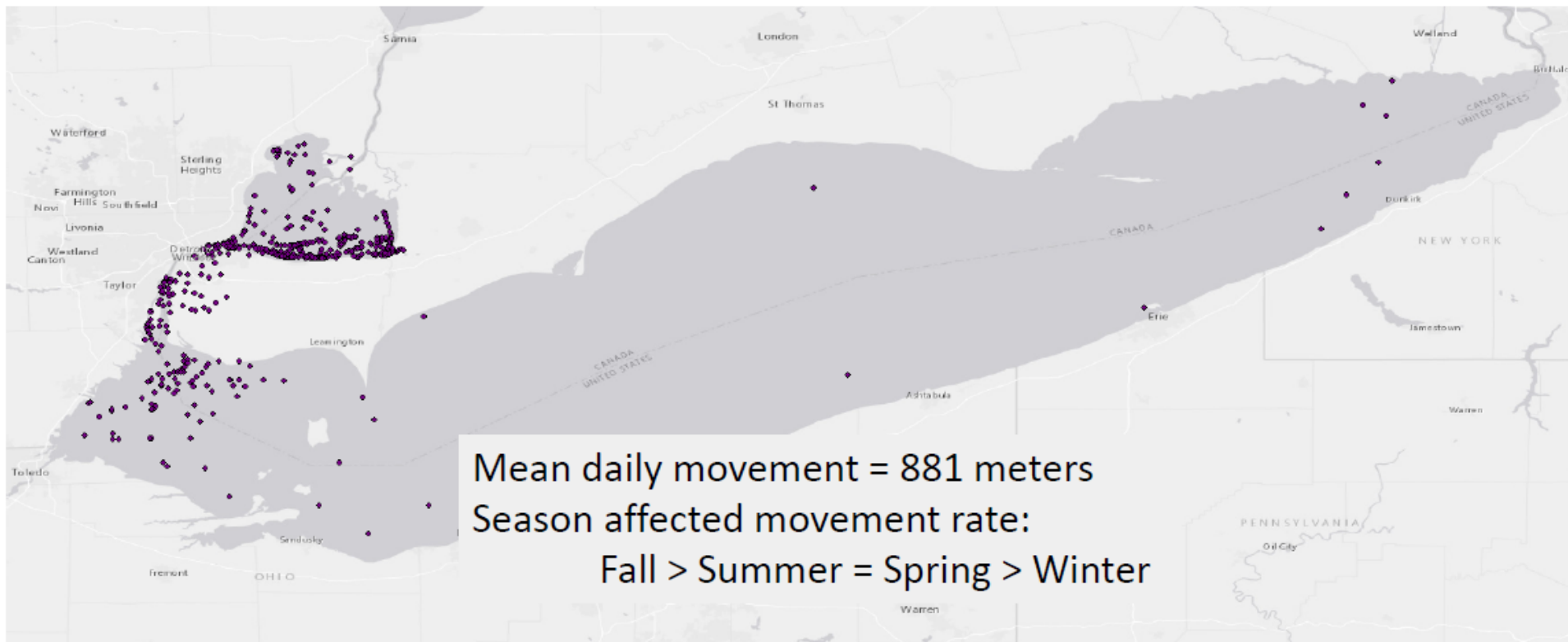
Muskellunge



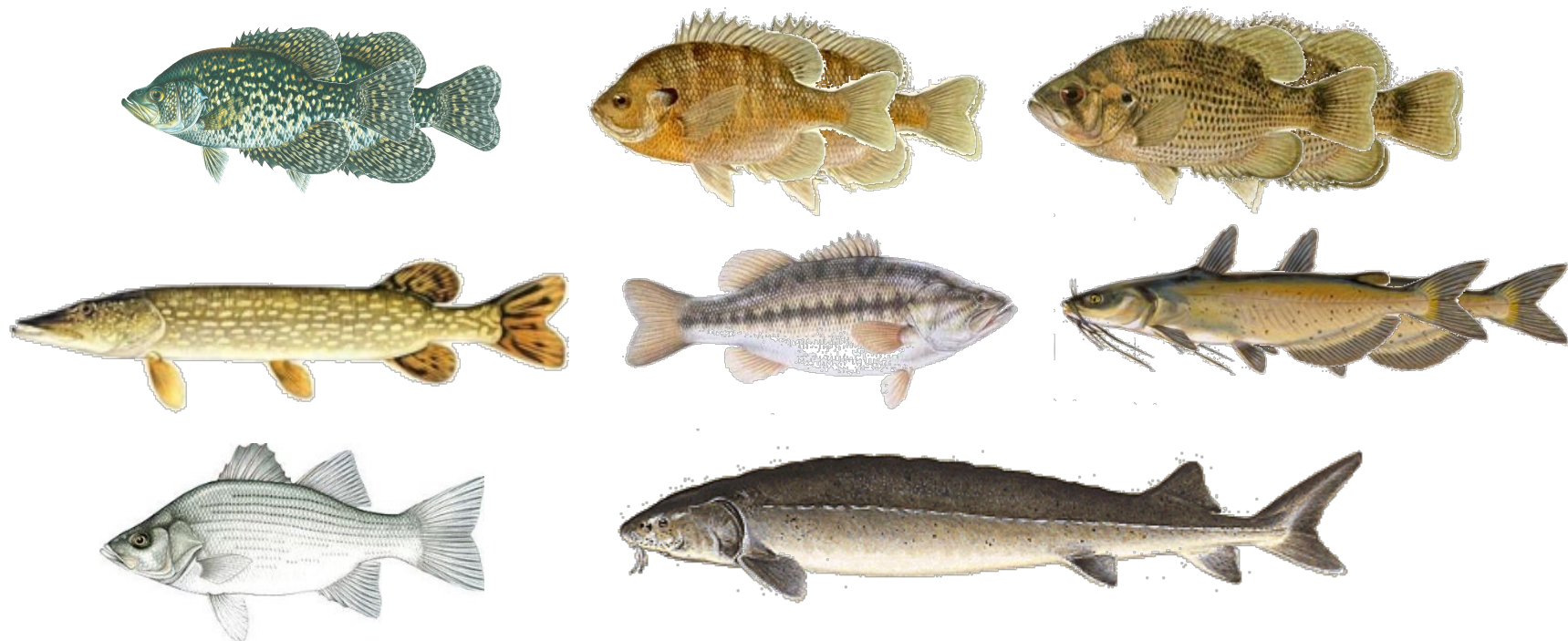
- Legendary fishery known for high catch rates and increasing numbers of large fish
- ~30% of all Lake St. Clair charter fishing trips target muskie
- ~99% of all muskies caught on LSC are released

Muskie Movement Patterns

2. Muskellunge

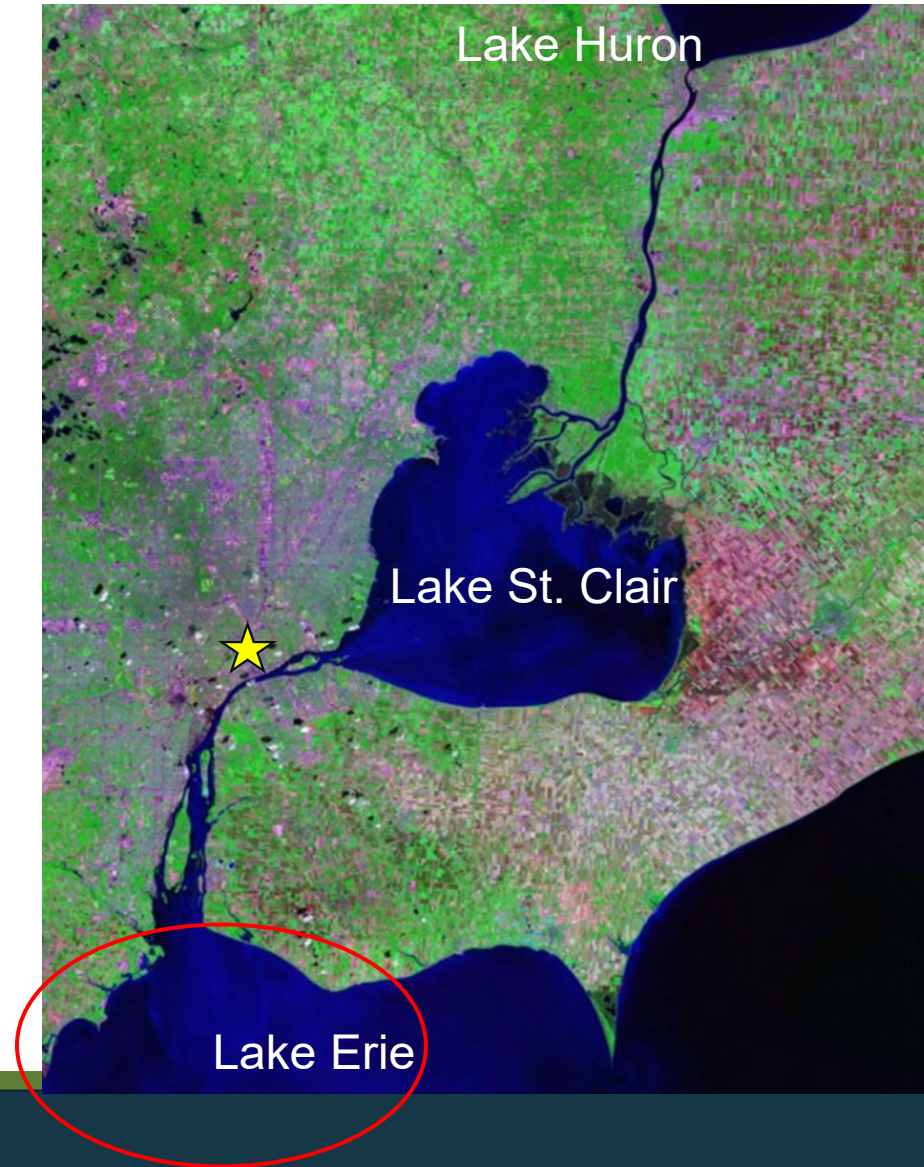


And There's More...



- Abundant populations of other species that provide even more diversity for the fishery
- Includes unique fishing opportunities for lake sturgeon

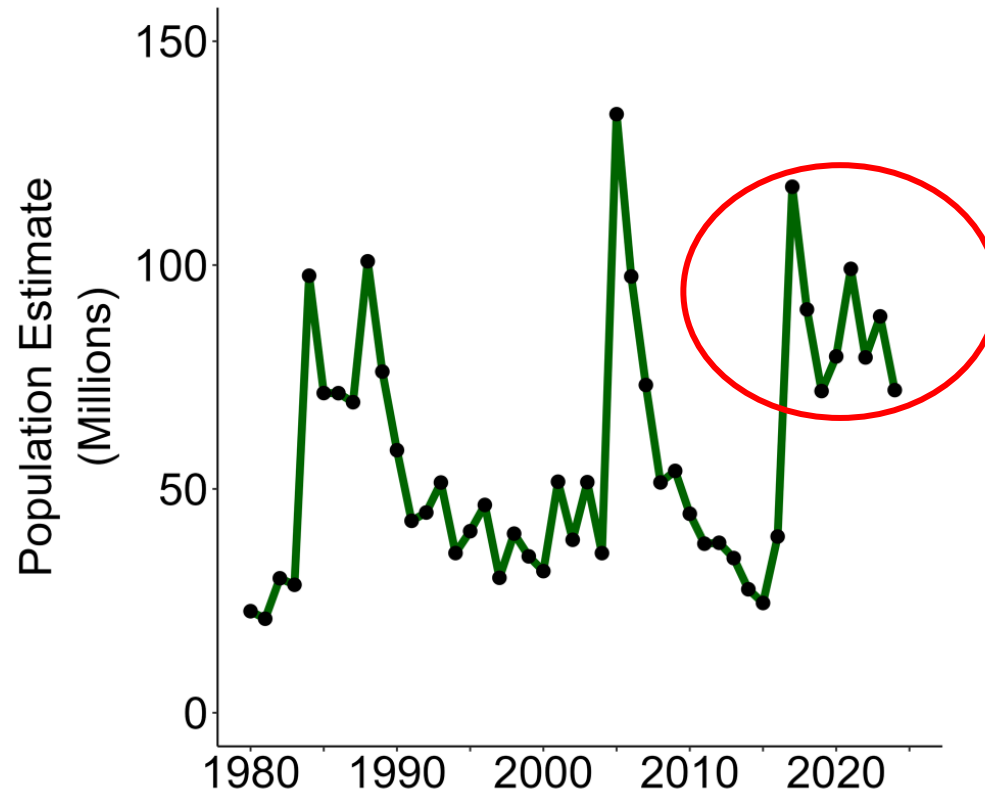
SCDRS – St Clair Detroit River System



Walleye Abundance



Walleye Abundance Estimate



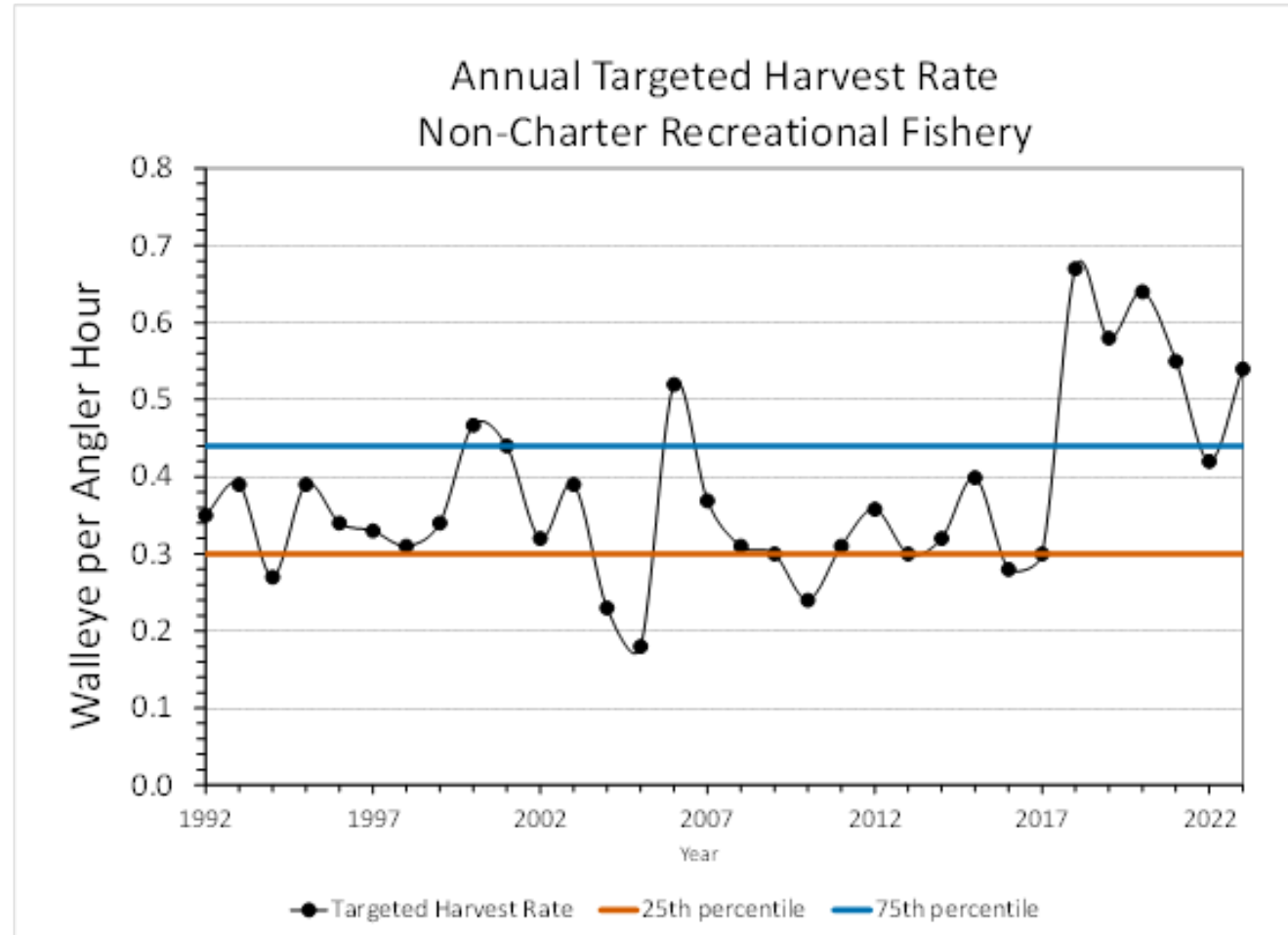
2023 estimate

- 88.536 million age-2+ fish

2024 projection

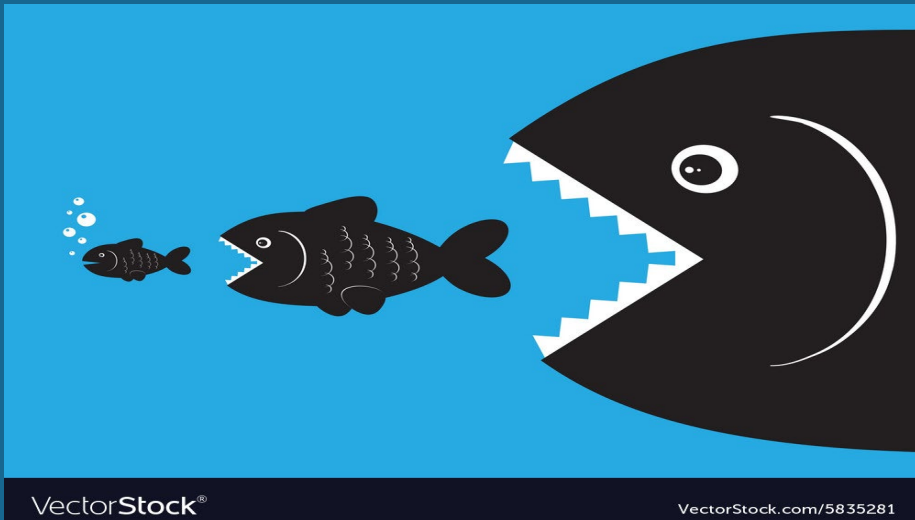
- 72.078 million age-2+ fish

Michigan – Walleye Harvest

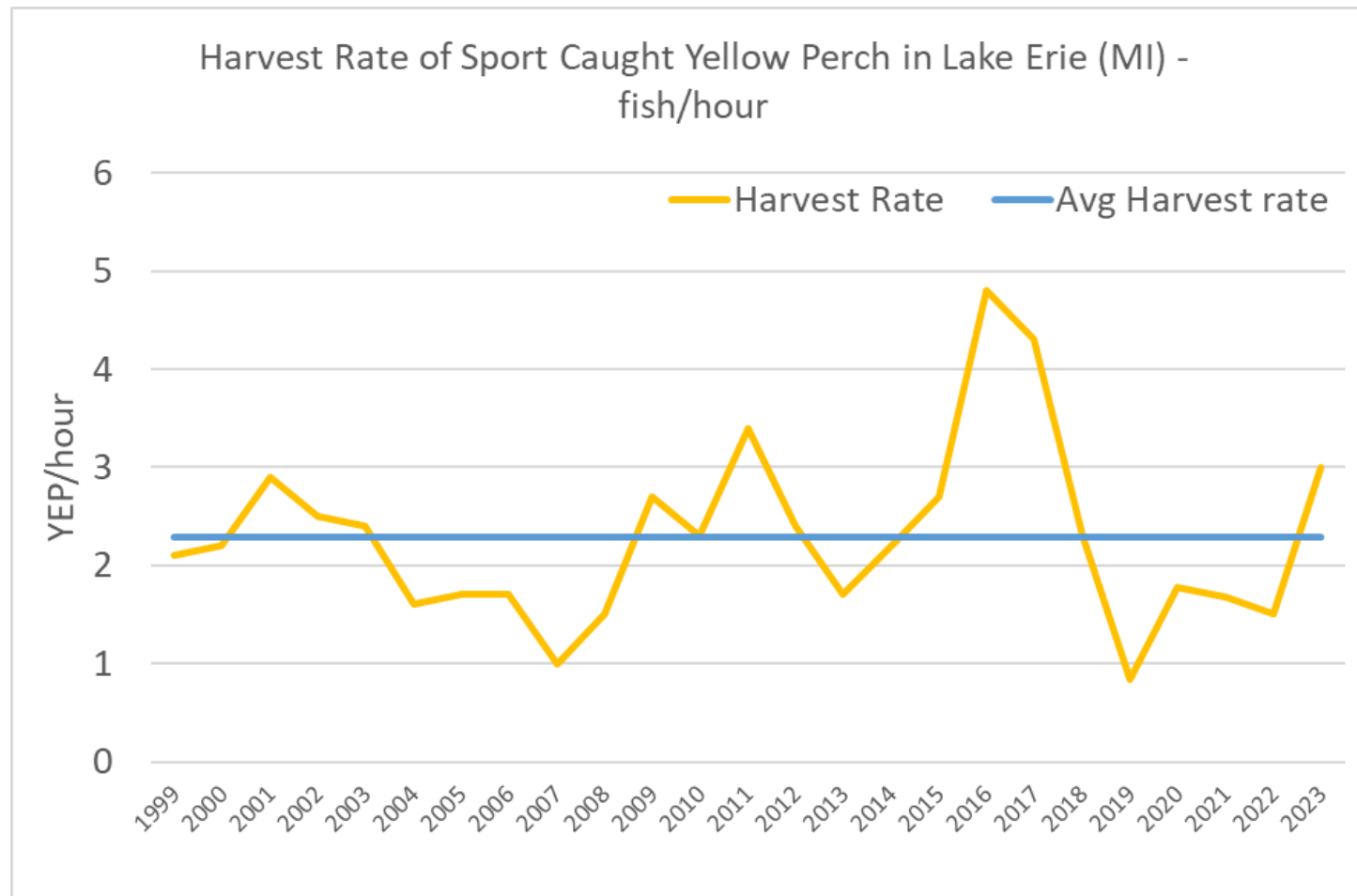


Too much of a good thing . . .

- Walleye growth rates are still good
- Continue to evaluate walleye diets
 - Yellow perch are <10% of walleye diets in summer
 - Yellow perch rarely in diet in fall
- Forage is abundant

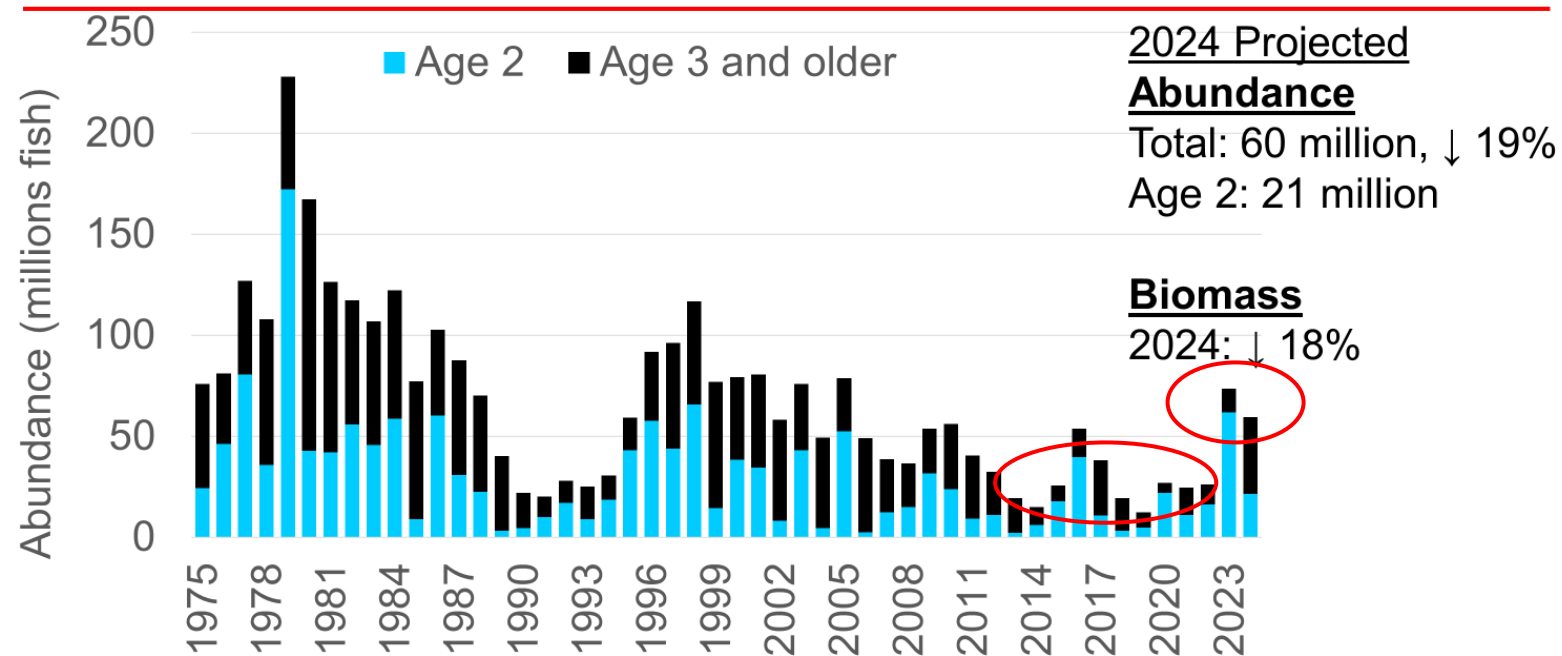


Michigan – Yellow Perch



West Basin – Yellow Perch

Age-2+ Abundance Estimates MU1



Lake Erie Fishery



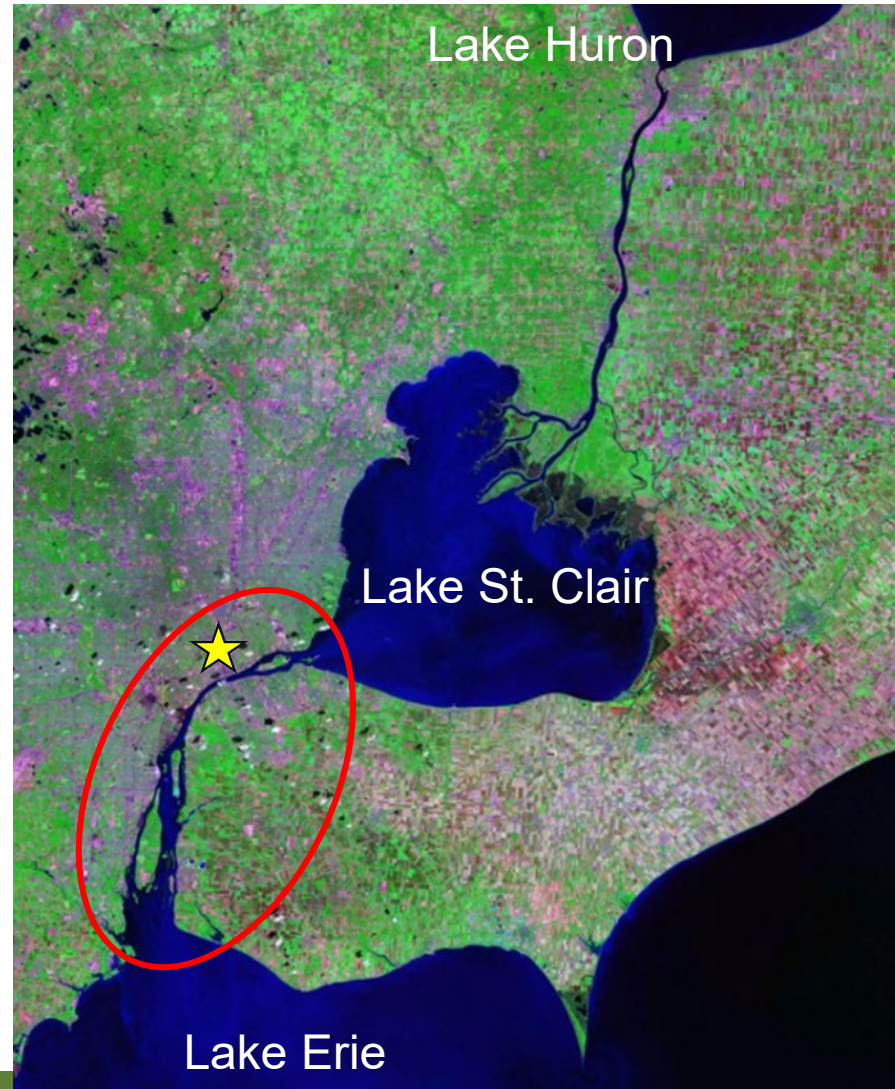
NO STOCKING!



- Good water quality, diverse habitat
- Abundant submerged aquatic vegetation
- Plentiful food resources for small fish
- Sound fisheries management protects spawning populations



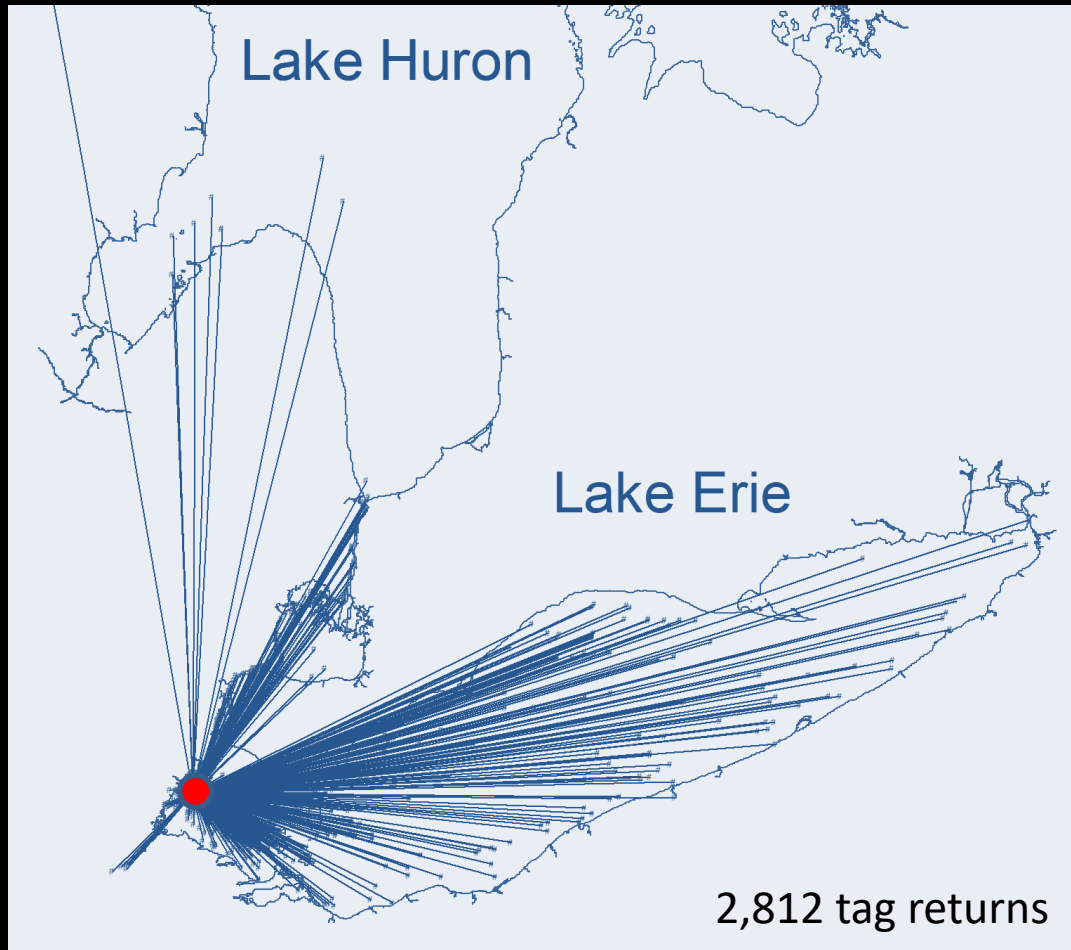
SCDRS – St Clair Detroit River System



Detroit River Walleye

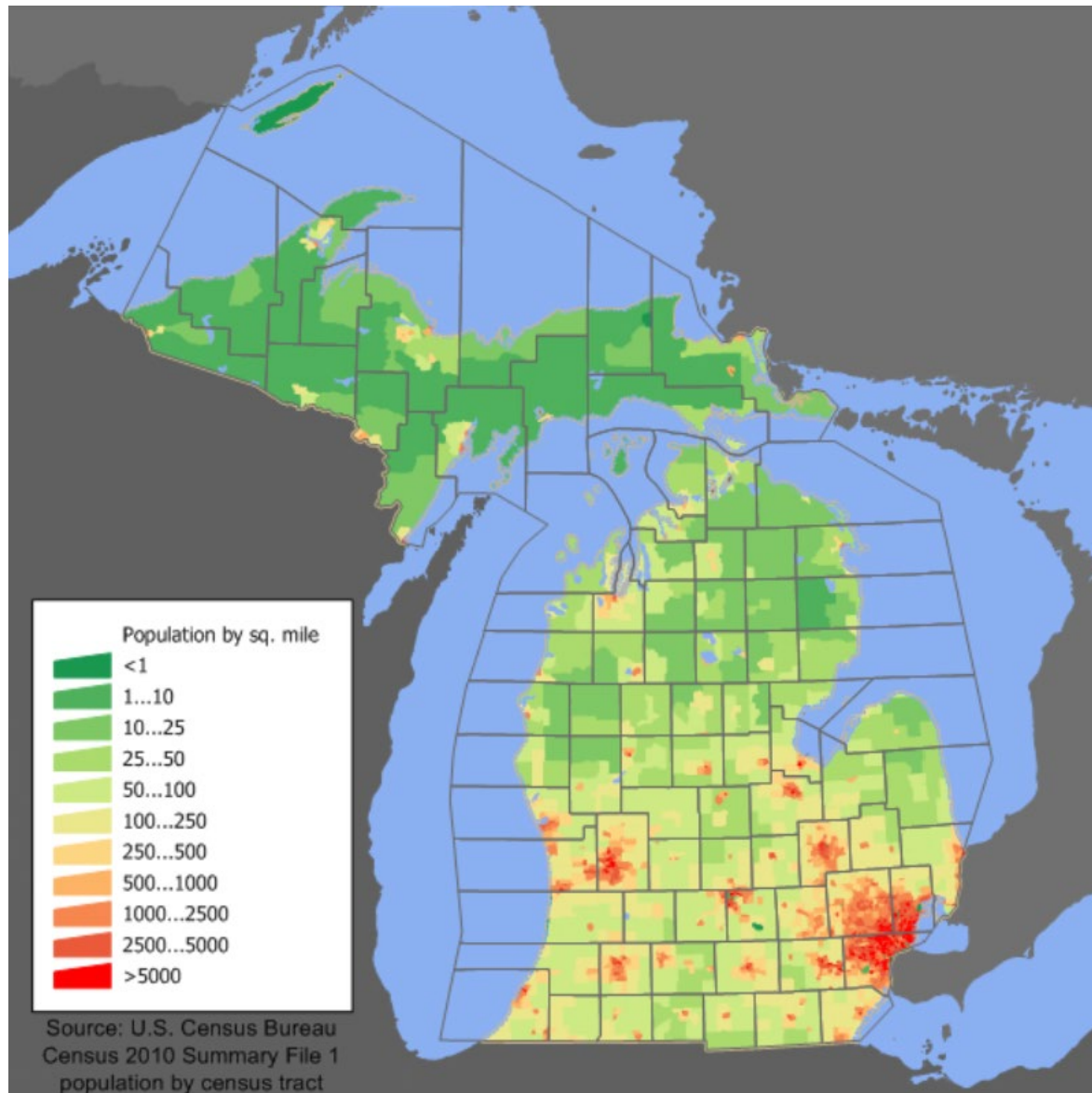


Do Walleye Move Beyond the SCDRS?



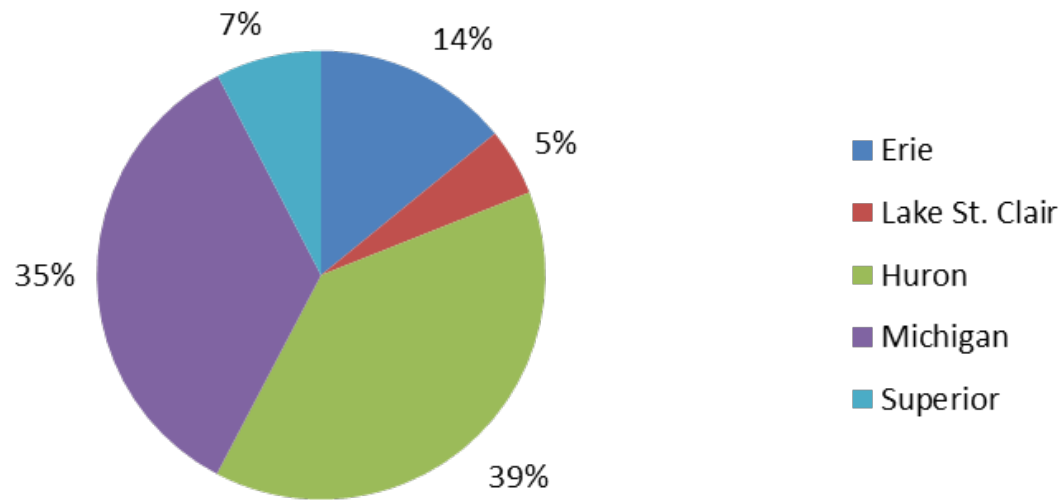
MDNR
VT. C. 48045 R16284
REWARD \$100



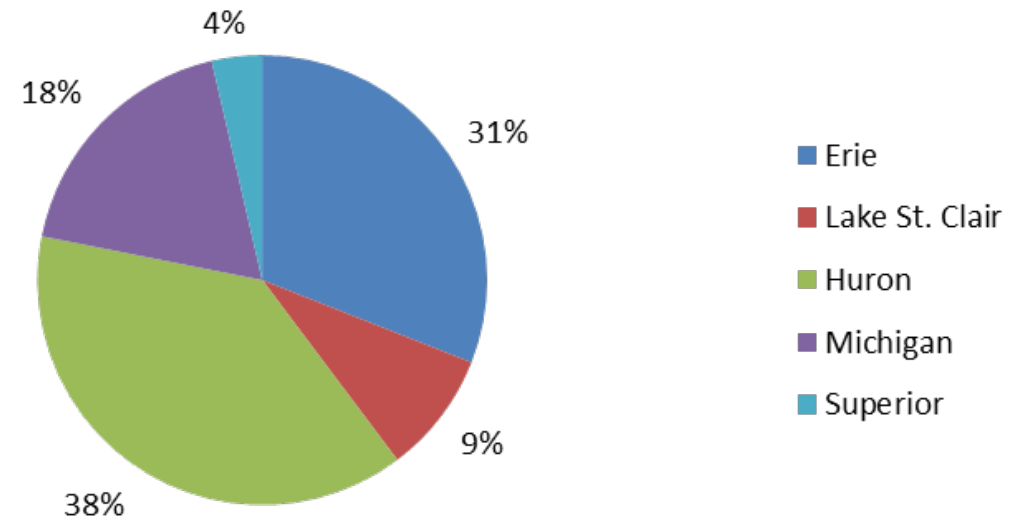


Great Lakes Creel

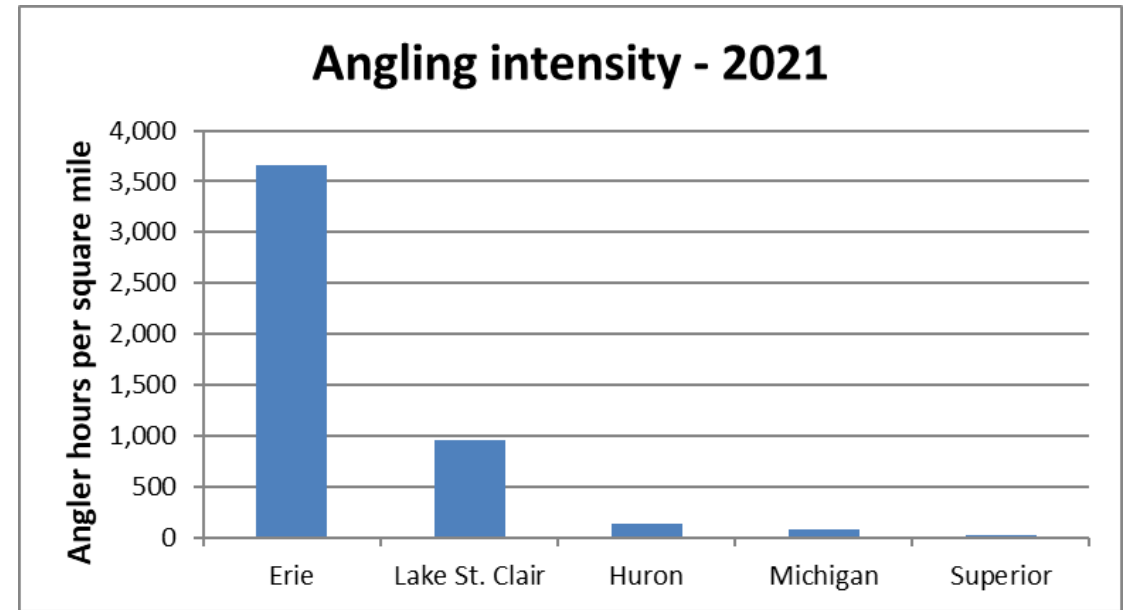
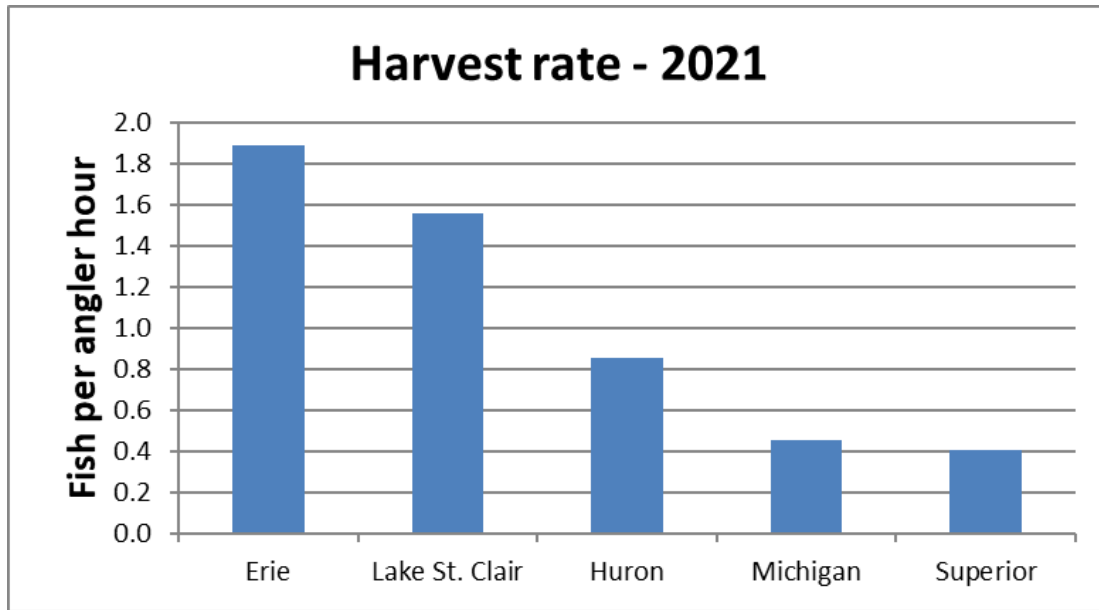
Percent of total angler effort - 2021



Percent of total harvest - 2021



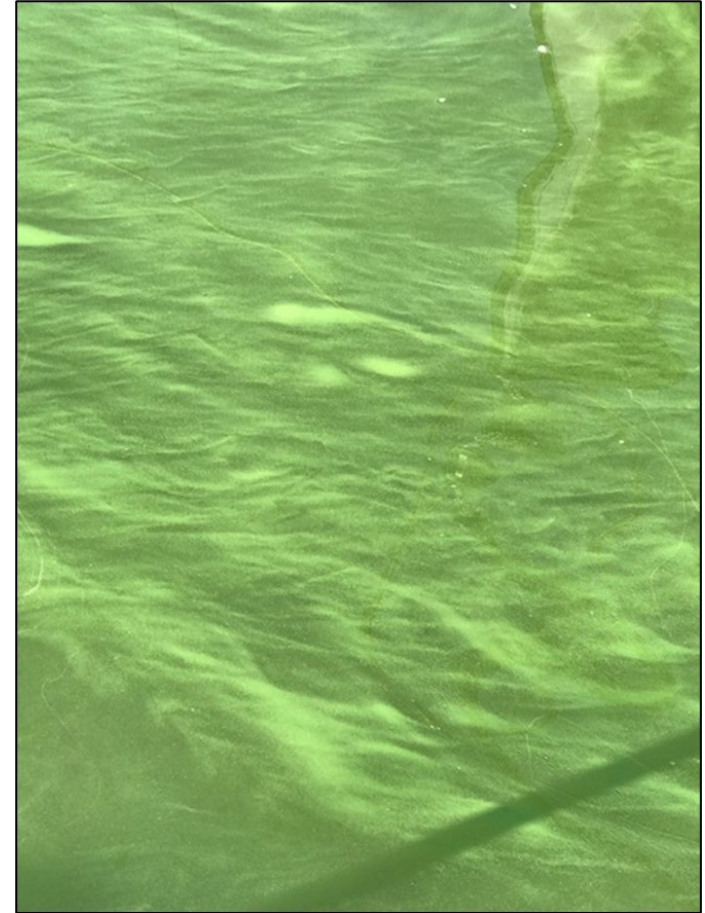
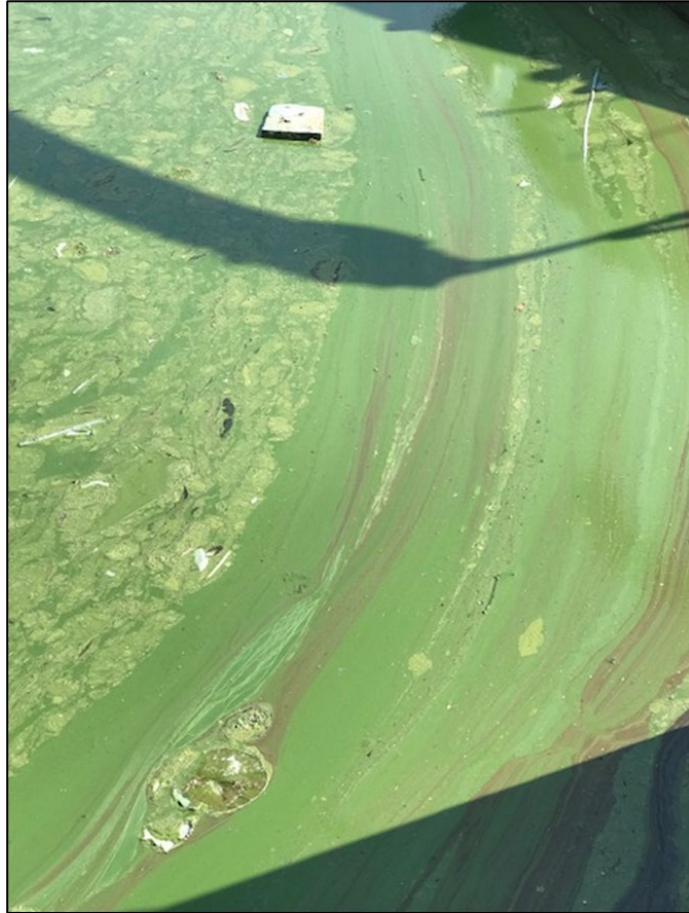
Great Lakes Creel



Limited Access



Harmful Algal Blooms



Harmful Algal Blooms



Great Partnerships



Questions?

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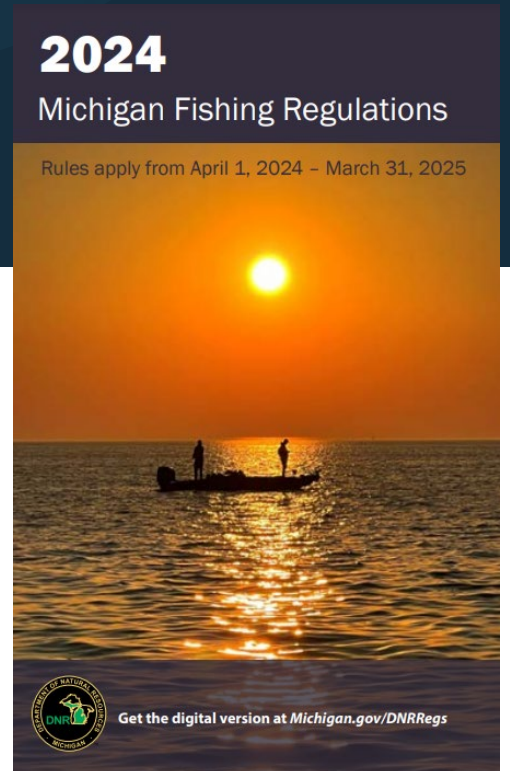
Fisheries Order Recommendations

Lucas Nathan, Ph.D.

Fisheries Division

Aquatic Species and Regulatory Affairs Unit Manager

August 8, 2024



Fisheries Order Proposal Process



(Internal or external)



Local Fisheries Division review



Proposal form developed



Fisheries Division Basin Team Review



Stakeholder/Angler input; Advisory Committee feedback ; Social surveys



Update Proposal form



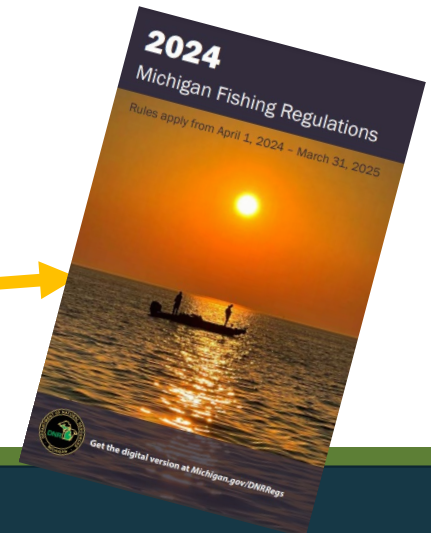
Multi-division Fisheries Regulation Review Committee



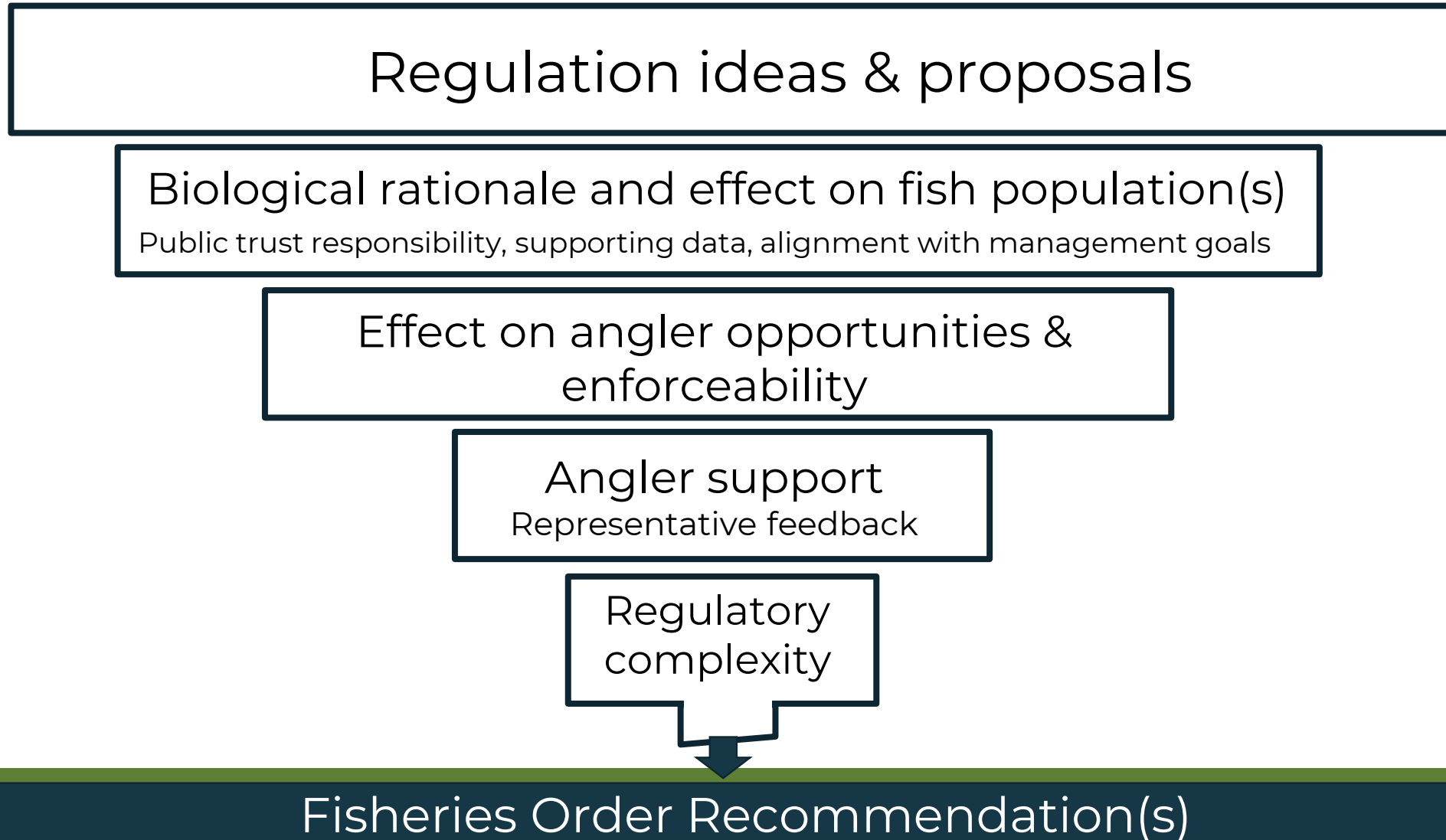
Fisheries Chief approval



NRC



Fisheries Order “Screening” Considerations



Overview of Fisheries Orders Recommendations

August (today)

- FO-200: Inland Rivers and Streams - Trout and Salmon Regulations
- FO-210: Designated Trout Streams
- FO-224: Regulations on the Take of Reptiles and Amphibians
- FO-254: Inland Lakes - Trout and Salmon Regulations

September

- FO-202: Special Hook Size Fishing Regulations
- FO-205: Michigan-Wisconsin Boundary Waters
- FO-206: Special Fishing Regulations for Warmwater Species on Select Waters
- FO-219: Bow, Spear, and Crossbow Fishing Regulations
- FO-240: Sturgeon Regulations

Recommendation Format

- **Waterbody[s]** (county)
- **Problem:** “what is the issue”
- **Objectives:** “some of the most influential factors”

Recommendations

Maps
and
supporting information

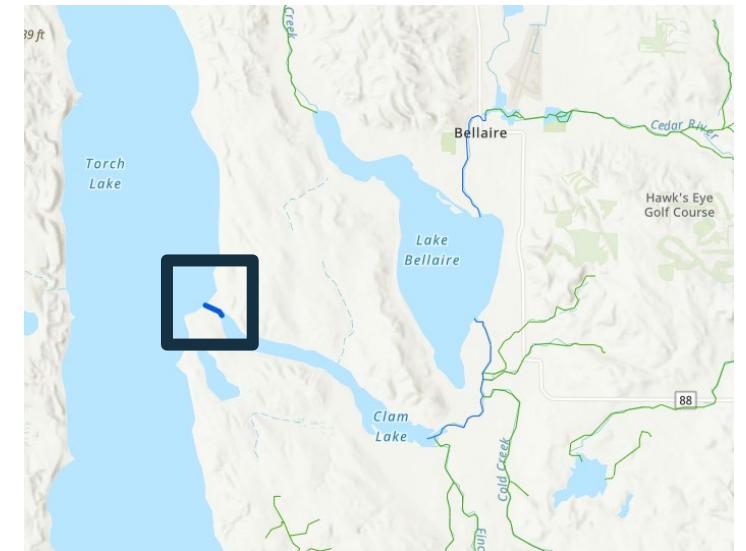
Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

- **Grass/Clam River** (Antrim)
- **Problem:** Angler confusion about Type 4 boundary
- **Objectives:**
 - Minimize angler confusion
 - Maximize protection of natural reproduction

Recommendations

- Modify “from Lake Bellaire downstream to Clam Lake”
- Add “from Clam Lake downstream to the end of the dock at the confluence with Torch Lake”



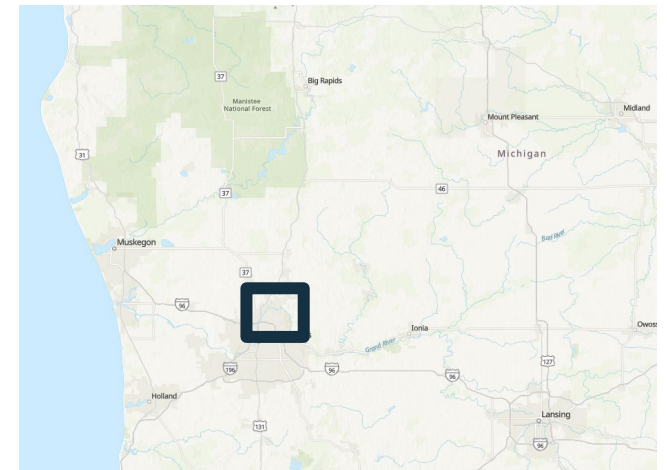
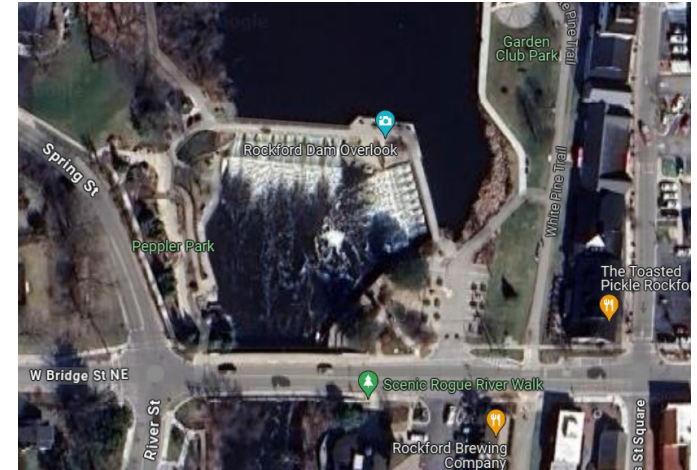
Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

- **Rogue River** (Kent)
- **Problem:** Angler confusion about boundary
- **Objective:**
 - Minimize angler confusion
 - Align regulation with Steelhead amendment

Recommendation

- Remove “at East Road Bridge Street”



Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

- **Multiple Rivers (11 unique, 13 locations)**
- **Problem:**
 - Confusion about the Steelhead amendment (20" MSL)
 - Currently implemented as addition to Type 3 and 4 regulations
 - I.e., five fish limit, 10" MSL, no more than three over 15" **and one 20"+**
 - Allows harvest of Eagle Lake stocked fish and "skippers"
 - Point of confusion for anglers (see unauthorized posting)

Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

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Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

- **Objectives:**

- Clarify Steelhead amendment intent and align with “Type” regs
 - Maximize diverse fishing opportunities (i.e., Eagle Lake fish)
 - Minimize regulatory complexity
-
- Harvest not perceived as high risk by Fisheries Division
 - Eight alternative options discussed with NRC Fisheries Committee and Fisheries Division Staff

Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

Alternative Options	Restricts harvest to 1 fish $\geq 20''$	Angler opportunities for harvest of fish $< 20''$	Complexity
1 (current, cleaned up)	Yes	All (13)	Moderate
2	Yes	Muskegon and Rogue (2)	High
3	Yes	Muskegon, Rogue, and Manistee (3)	High
4	Yes	All but Bear Creek, Prairie Creek, and Little Manistee (10)	High
5	Yes	None (0)	Moderate
6	Yes	Muskegon and Rogue (2)	High
7	Yes	All, only one fish (13)	Moderate
8	Yes	All (13), only one fish in 11 locations	Moderate

Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

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7	Yes	All, only one fish (13)	Moderate
8	Yes	All (13), only one fish in 11 locations	Moderate

Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

- For all rivers in amendment*:
 - 5 fish Daily Possession Limit (multispecies)
- Size Limits*
 - 10" MSL for RBT (varies for other species and types)
 - No more than 3 fish $\geq 15"$
- Fishing and possession season for RBT open all year
- *Pere Marquette exemption

Option	Rogue and Muskegon	All other rivers in amendment
6	Up to 5 total RBT, only one $\geq 20"$	One RBT $\geq 20"$
7	One RBT $\geq 10"$	One RBT $\geq 10"$
8	Up to 5 total RBT, only one $\geq 20"$	One RBT $\geq 10"$

Fisheries Order-200.25

for information

- Partial support for “Option 8” from Fisheries Division and NRC Fisheries Committee
 - Maintain status quo on Rogue and Muskegon to allow harvest of stocked Eagle Lake (resident) Rainbow Trout
 - On others, remove 20” MSL and replace with one fish RBT limit (≥ 10 ”)
 - Updated language included in FO-200.25
- **Recommendation**
 - No additional modifications

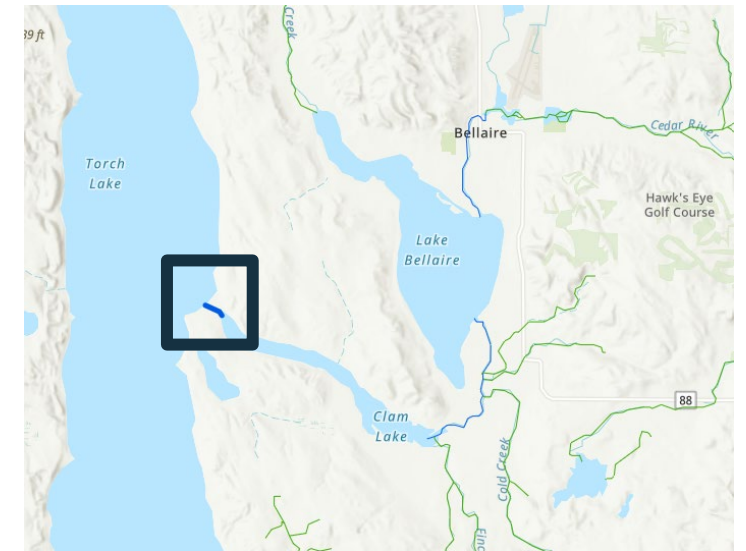
Fisheries Order-210.25

for information

- **Clam River** (Antrim)
- **Problem:** Angler confusion about boundary (as in FO-200)
- **Objectives:**
 - Minimize angler confusion
 - Maximize protection of natural reproduction

Recommendation

- Add “Clam River from end of the dock at the confluence with Torch Lake”



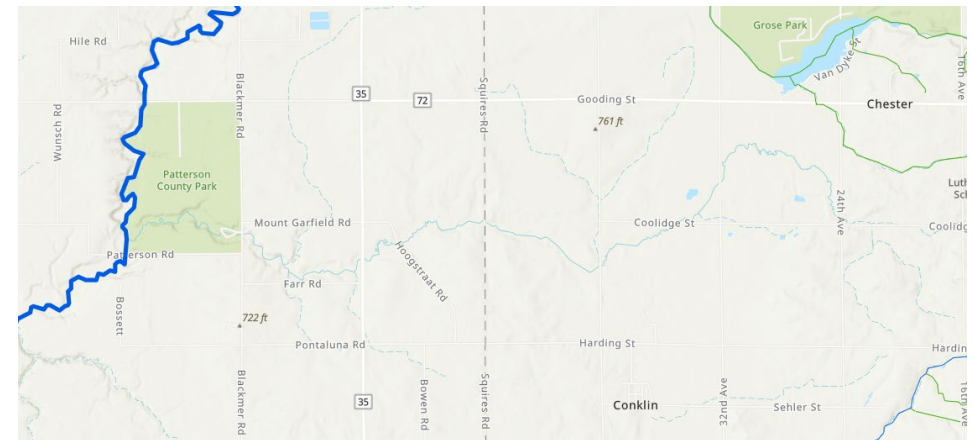
Fisheries Order-210.25

for information

- **Rio Grande Creek** (Muskegon)
- **Problem:** Creek managed as Brown Trout fishery, but is not Designation Trout Stream
- **Objectives:**
 - Maximize protection of natural reproduction
 - Maximize angler awareness

Recommendation

- Add as Designation Trout Stream, managed with Type-1 trout regulations



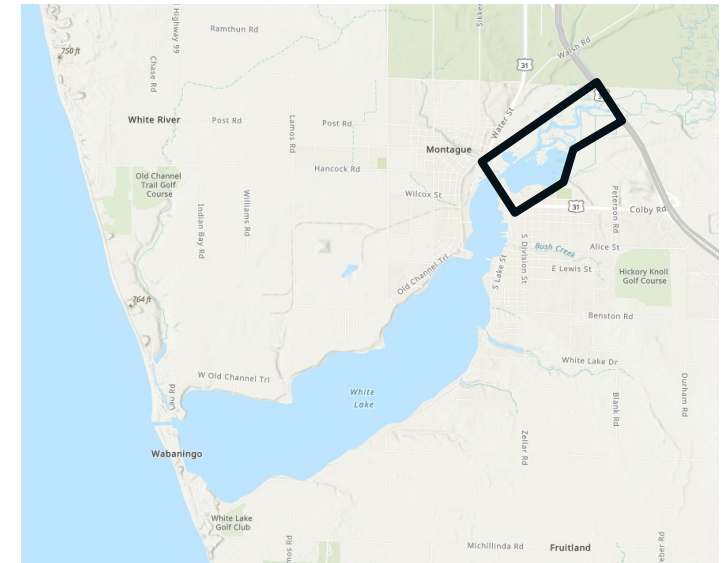
Fisheries Order-210.25

for information

- **White River** (Muskegon)
- **Problem:** Mismatch in habitat and regulations
- **Objectives:**
 - Maximize diverse fishing opportunities (bowfishing, per LED input)

Recommendation

- Move the downstream boundary of the Designation Trout Stream from Business US-31 to north bound US-31.



Fisheries Order-224.25

for information

- **Statewide**
- **Problem:** Inefficient process for temporary possession/relocation of reptiles and amphibians
- **Objectives:**
 - Minimize administration cost
 - Maximize protection of reptiles and amphibians

Recommendation

- Add language to allow for temporary possession/relocation on private property



Fisheries Order-224.25

for information

- **Statewide**
- **Problem:** Order list out of date
- **Objectives:**
 - Align FO designation list with the 2023 Threatened and Endangered list

Recommendation

- Move the following species from “Group 1” to “Group 2” (T/E)
 - Eastern massasauga rattlesnake
 - Wood turtle
 - Eastern box turtle



Fisheries Order-224.25

for information

- **Statewide**
- **Problem:** Angler confusion about gear (blowguns)
- **Objectives:**
 - Minimize angler confusion
 - Maximize protection of reptiles and amphibians

Recommendation

- Add blowgun to list of unlawful gears



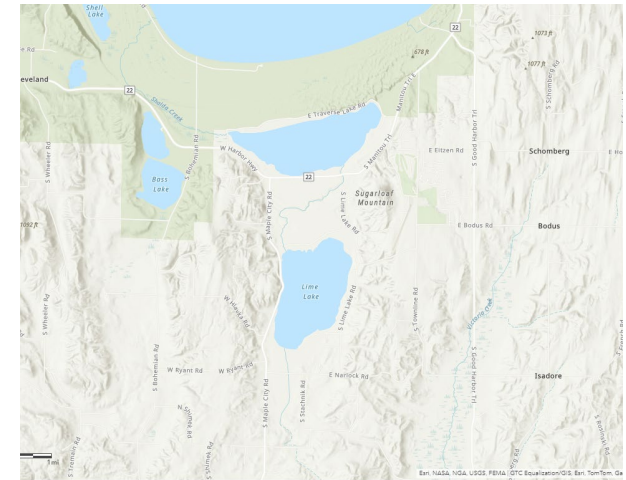
Fisheries Order-254.25

for information

- **Lime Lake** (Leelanau)
- **Problem:**
 - Past stocking efforts ineffective
 - Mismatch in habitat/fish community and regulations
- **Objectives:**
 - Minimize angler confusion
 - Maximize diverse fishing opportunities

Recommendation

- Remove Type C regulations
- *Immediate effect following decision*





Questions?



Lucas Nathan, Ph.D.

Fisheries Division

nathanl@michigan.gov

Mentored Hunting Program



Chad Fedewa, Deer, Elk, and Moose Management Specialist, Acting, WLD
Sergeant Michael Mshar, LED
Department of Natural Resources
August 8, 2024





History of Mentored Youth Hunting Program

- Established in 2011 via Legislation
- Limited to youth under 10
- Accompanied by a mentor at least 21 years of age, no more than an arm's length away
- Excluded individuals over 10, even those who are unable to complete training in hunter safety



Public Act 96 of 2024

- Expands opportunity to include:
 - a minor child who has a developmental disability and is unable to obtain certification of completion of training in hunter safety; and
 - an adult who has a developmental disability and has a guardian appointed under chapter 6 of the mental health code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1600 to 330.1644, and is unable to obtain certification of completion of training in hunter safety.
 - Free for qualifying hunters with developmental disabilities



Wildlife Conservation Order No. 8 of 2024

- Align with 96 PA 2024
- Program name change from “Mentored Youth Hunting Program” to “Mentored Hunting Program”
- Creates Inclusive Mentored License
- Points to Mental Health Code definition of “developmental disability.”





Thank You

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