

January 9, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Fishing was pretty much a bust with the extremely cold weather. Conditions should start to improve by the end of the week. Even though there is ice in most places, anglers still need to use caution as deep snow will conceal areas that could be dangerous.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Those fishing in the Metro Park Marina and the Banana Dike caught perch on red spikes. No big numbers yet but some nice fish were caught.

Huron River: Try the deeper holes for steelhead until it warms back up.

Detroit River: Has a good amount of chunk ice which makes fishing rather difficult. There was a report of ice backed up near Horse Island.

Washtenaw County: Lake Independence was producing bluegill and pike.

Livingston County: Lake Chemung was fair to good for bluegill. Thompson Lake was producing pike.

Lake St. Clair: Has ice. Perch fishing has been fair to good, but varying a lot from day to day and from place to place. The better reports came from Geno's and the Metro Beach area. Perch spearing is legal through the end of February. Pike spearing is now open and runs through March 15th. Muskie spearing is prohibited.

St. Clair River: Shore anglers at Port Huron are catching steelhead, brown trout and some whitefish however ice flows can affect this fishery from day to day. Conditions are best when there is a west wind pushing the ice away from the shoreline.

Saginaw Bay: Those fishing about four miles off Palmer Road have caught walleye. Perch fishing near shore was hit-or-miss and the fish were small. Walleye were caught in 20 feet of water off Linwood and near the Bay City State Park in the old shipping channel.

Along the east side, walleye were caught in the Slot, two miles off Sunset Bay and in 14 feet of water off Thomas Road. Most of the activity at Sebewaing is concentrated in the marina with a couple spearing shacks. Some are spearing pike at Mud Creek but success was hit-or-miss. At Caseville, there are ice shanties in the marina basins and near the mouth. Anglers have taken a few walleye and lake trout near the mouth of the river. Not much activity north of Caseville. The state harbor at Port Austin is still closed so access is limited.

Saginaw River: Has all kinds of fishing activity all the way from Wickes Park in Saginaw to the mouth. They're catching walleye from one end to the other, but down in Saginaw a lot of the fish were sub-legal. More legal size fish were caught at the Middle Grounds at the south end of town and near the M-25 Bridge near Veterans Park. Near the Independence Bridge, anglers were fishing around the destroyer and catching a few keepers. Few anglers were fishing near the mouth because of snowmobilers. Those trying for perch in the marina basins did not have much luck.

Tittabawassee River: Had no fishing activity because it is frozen over, but the ice is too thin for fishing.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Most of the inland lakes have ice and are now fishable. With all the snow, anglers should continue to use caution because the snow has covered open water associated with inlets and outlets. Bluegills are hitting on spikes, wax worms and mousies in the morning and evening.

St. Joseph River: Has shelf ice and slush which makes steelhead fishing much more difficult.

Kalamazoo River: Steelhead were caught below the Allegan Dam however shelf ice is making it difficult.

Ingham County: Those fishing the inland lakes were catching some panfish.

Jackson County: The inland lakes are providing some great ice fishing opportunities.

Clinton County: There is ice on most lakes across the county but fishing seems to be slow with only a few crappie and bluegill reported.

Muskegon Lake: Some were perch fishing near the Sand Docks but the fish were scattered and the bite was slow.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Most lakes are ice covered, though due to large snowfalls the ice is honeycombed and anglers need to use caution.

VanEttan Lake: Has ice and good access at Ratliff Park and the campground off F-41. Anglers caught perch, bluegills, brown trout and steelhead.

Au Sable River: With the cold temperature, most of the river has ice making it difficult to fish. There are steelhead from the mouth to the dam. Most of the fish are lying in the deeper holes which are on the bends and layered with ice however it is possible to drift bait under the ice. Access to the river was limited after all the snow and the only sites that were cleared to launch boats were the River Store and the Whirlpool.

Higgins Lake: Has ice however not all the ice is safe. Some areas still have thin ice. Deep snow is covering some of those areas up along with a large pressure crack. Anglers need to use extreme caution.

Houghton Lake: Ice continues to build thanks to arctic temperatures in the region. Strong winds were blowing the snow around. Before the cold spell, anglers were catching pike and perch. Walleye action was fair to good along the south shore in 6 to 8 feet of water. The better fishing was after 6pm. Anglers still need to use caution and watch for snow drifts and pressure cracks.

Lake Margrethe: Is producing some walleye.

Tawas: Had some walleye activity inside the harbor and over at Jerry's Marina but catch rates were sporadic. Pike spearing has been hit-or-miss. Perch are running small; anglers report seeing bigger fish however they would not bite.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Most lakes are ice covered but heavy snow has made for some honeycomb ice in some areas. Anglers will still need to use caution.

Green Lake: In Grand Traverse County is producing some smelt. The better fishing is at night when using a jig.

Crystal Lake: Anglers are starting to fish for smelt however extreme caution needs to be used. This is a very deep lake and takes much longer to freeze.

Lake Cadillac: Is producing crappie for those using small jigs with a minnow or spike in 10 to 12 feet. Walleye are being caught by those jigging rapalas or using tip-ups but the fish are running small. Pike are being taken on tip-ups and by those spearing.

Lake Mitchell: Is also producing a fair number of crappie especially off the State Park. Pike action was good for those using tip-ups or spearing.

Lake Missaukee: Is producing some panfish.

Manistee River: Steelhead fishing slowed with the cold temperatures and shelf ice.

Pere Marquette River: Steelhead and brown trout fishing slowed with the extremely cold temperatures. Fish the deeper holes until it warms back up.

UPPER PENINSULA

Menominee: The bay was slow because of rough ice.

Menominee River: Had anglers targeting panfish at the Mennekeane slough. They caught mainly perch and bluegills when jigging wax worms. Some are targeting pike off the Mystery Ship landing by setting up tip-ups with large minnows but catch rates were slow. Those near the Hattie Street Dam caught walleye on the Wisconsin side when jigging wax worms or minnows through the ice. Anglers fishing on the Michigan side had open water so they are casting rapalas for trout and walleye. A few brown trout and steelhead were also caught.

Little Bay De Noc: Has plenty of ice. Catch rates were good for perch and walleye in the northern parts of the bay before the extreme cold so they should return once it warms back up. The better walleye fishing was along the flats at Kipling and south near Gladstone when jigging rapalas in 25 to 28 feet. A few walleye were caught south of Aronson Island as well and a 21 inch splake was taken. Perch were caught near Kipling but the bite did slow. Try minnows and spikes in 10 to 23 feet. Some were fishing near the Escanaba Power Plant.

Munising: Ice fishing is on for whitefish and splake in the bay.

Manistique Lake: Has good ice on both lakes. Anglers caught perch and pike but the walleye bite was slow.

St. Mary's River: Is producing a few whitefish in the upper river.

Munuscong: Has ice fishing but catch rates for perch and walleye were slow.

Cedarville and Hessel: Pike and perch fishing were slow in Musky Bay and Hessel Bay. Anglers still need to use caution and remember to carry a flotation device.

January 16, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

With ice fishing in full swing, anglers are reminded that safety is a must so be sure to check the ice ahead of you, use the buddy system, let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return, take a cell phone, and remember a life jacket could save your life.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Perch fishing was steady late in the day when using small jigs tipped with a minnow or red spike at the Metro Park Marina. Some did well with mousies. Perch and the occasional walleye were caught in 19 feet off the Banana Dike. Walleye were caught in Brest Bay in the morning and evening. Anglers are jigging rapalas or a spoon with a shiner minnow.

Huron River: Shelf ice is limiting access and fishing.

Detroit River: Has a lot of ice coming down the river. Airport Bay was producing some jumbo perch and those fishing up near the Ecorse River caught perch off the seawall at Bellanger Park.

Lake St. Clair: Still has ice. Water clarity has been very good for spearing. Catch rates for perch were spotty with lots of small ones caught.

Saginaw Bay: Rain left the ice covered with anywhere from six to 12 inches of slush and standing water which made travel difficult. Linwood had a lot of anglers. They are going three to four miles out and getting walleye near and beyond the first pressure crack. Walleye are being caught in the old shipping channel off the Bay City State Park. Open-water anglers fishing at the mouth of the Hot Pond are taking some walleye and pike when casting any lure with a chrome or silver finish. Over at Quanicassee, those spearing off Vanderbilt Park are getting a few pike. Anglers off Thomas Road are going to the middle of the Slot and taking walleye in 15 feet. The only activity at Sebewaing is pike spearing. At Mud Creek, persistent perch anglers are getting an average of 10 keepers per trip and those pike spearing are taking a few fish. Perch were caught at Caseville.

Saginaw River: A few limit catches of walleye were taken near Wickes Park by those using a white jig with minnows or a blue and silver rapala in 10 feet of water. There was a lot of fishing activity in front of the St. Mary's Health Building on Washington Avenue. Walleye were caught on a chartreuse jig with minnows in 25 feet of water in the mid-channel. Walleye caught between the Zilwaukee Bridge and Bay City were smaller. There was a lot of fishing pressure downstream of the Independence Bridge. Walleye were caught but anglers had to sort out the small ones. Perch were taken on perch rigs. Some decent catches were taken near the railroad bridge down by Essexville and the mouth.

Tittabawassee River: Anglers are being warned to stay off because of increase flow with all the rain. The ice is not safe anywhere.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

The ice is holding in this region but there was a lot of slush which should firm back up with colder temperatures. Anglers are still doing well for bluegills on most lakes with the better fishing in the evening and at day break. Wax worms were the ticket. A few northern pike have been taken near the inlets by those using tip-ups and minnows.

St. Joseph River: Is producing some steelhead however the bite is slow which is typical for time of year.

Kalamazoo River: Steelhead were caught below the Allegan Dam. Try small plugs or a jig and wax worm.

Gull Lake: In Kalamazoo County has some nice pike for those using tip-ups.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Water levels are up and steelhead are still being caught. Try a jig and wax worm, wobble glows or spinners.

Lake Lansing: Was producing a few crappie. Try tip-ups for pike.

Round Lake: Was producing some nice bluegills but catch rates were spotty.

Muskegon River: Water levels are up and the steelhead fishing improved with the warmer weather.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Au Sable River: Even with the drastic change in weather, anglers will be able to access the river at most of the access sites. The launch on Rea Road is open but iced up after the thaw and refreeze. A limited number of vehicles can park there but anglers will need 4-wheel drive to launch from there. Foote Dam is still open for vehicles although the snow was still pretty deep in some areas. Most of the fishing platform was accessible and some trails were broken along the edge of the river.

High Banks has open parking but watch the stairs as they are very icy. A two track was broken to the Boy Scout Camp but the hard snow makes it difficult to get to. The Whirlpool is open but the access road and the launch were very icy. Steelhead are in the river. Check out the deeper holes along the bends.

Higgins Lake: Had water on the ice but it is going down. Lake trout are being caught in 100 feet of water by those jigging Swedish Pimples or using tip-ups just off the bottom. A few pike were taken in 30 feet off Sam-O-Set which is off the southern part of the north end. Perch were caught off Big Creek in 40 feet. Try minnows or wax worms. Pike were also caught by those jigging a spoon that resembles smelt. Rainbow trout could be found in shallow water near the Conference Center and Big Creek. Anglers are setting up for smelt as they begin to move their shanties off the west launch.

Houghton Lake: Has good ice covered with slush. Pike and perch have been caught along the weed beds. Fair to good walleye action reported in the East Bay.

Tawas: Snow and slush is making for difficult travel on the bay. They're getting some small perch in 15 feet and walleye in 20 feet off Jerry's Marina. Those not able to get out on the bay have also caught perch and walleye inside the State Harbor.

Au Gres: Anglers have caught some walleye three to four miles off Santiago Road in 20 feet of water. Some are heading south and going off the end of Hale Road.

Au Gres River: Is mainly producing sub-legal walleye with a few keepers.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice fishing is going strong on the inland lakes.

Green Lake: In Grand Traverse County is producing some smelt. The better fishing is at night when using a jig.

Lake Cadillac: Has been good for pike, panfish and the occasional walleye. For panfish, try small jigs with minnows or spikes and for walleye try jigging rapalas or using tip-ups. Pike are being taken by those using tip-ups and by those spearing.

Lake Mitchell: Is good for pike and panfish. For bluegill, try the coves on the west side of the lake with teardrops and wax worms. Crappie are good off the State Park.

Lake Missaukee: Is producing bluegill, crappie and the occasional perch. The better fishing is usually along the weed beds on the west side of the lake.

Portage Lake: Is producing bluegill, crappie and some pike.

Manistee River: Still had some shelf ice in the lower river however the upper section had open water and was producing some steelhead.

UPPER PENINSULA

Menominee: A few whitefish were caught in front of Hennes Park however the ice is very rough which makes for difficult travel.

Menominee River: Anglers had fair to good catch rates when jigging for panfish at the Menekaunee landing area and off the Foundry parking lot. They are using wax worms and minnows. In front of the Mystery Ship Marina and boat launch, anglers were targeting pike and walleye but the bite was slow. Steelhead were caught in the open water near Stephenson Island when casting spoons and rapalas or drifting spawn. Open water on the Michigan side near the Hattie Street Dam was also producing some steelhead. Anglers are fly fishing, casting rapalas or drifting spawn and wax worms. Some nice walleye were caught through the ice on the Wisconsin side. Anglers are jigging minnows or wax worms and the bite improved after dark.

Little Bay De Noc: Still has ice but the warm weather caused the pressure cracks to open up and getting across them is causing some issues especially for those taking motorized vehicles out. Anglers still need to use CAUTION especially in the southern part of bay where the ice varied more than the northern end. Walleye catches were fair to good between Aronson Island and Portage Point for those jigging rapalas or using tip-ups with a minnow in 25 to 35 feet. Fish were also caught near the mouth of the Escanaba River in 20 to 35 feet. The perch were active but most caught only small fish. Try out from Brach's Cabins in 15 to 24 feet with wigglers or minnows or out from the Day's River in eight to 26 feet. Good catches of whitefish were taken at Gladstone in 30 to 40 feet with minnows or spawn.

Munising: Anglers are catching splake and whitefish in the bay.

Manistique Lake: Is producing some yellow perch and pike. Walleye were slow, but a few have been caught.

Munuscong: Has more snow on the ice than Cedarville and Hessel. Perch fishing was fair but the walleye were spotty for those fishing tip-ups with minnows in three feet of water near Grassy Island.

Cedarville and Hessel: Musky Bay and Hessel Bay are slow. Anglers are seeing fish and trying a variety of baits but catch rates were slow.

January 23, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

As frigid temperatures blanket the state once again, fewer anglers are out fishing. Those braving the cold are catching fish but the bite has slowed. River anglers are dealing with ice in many locations.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Still had some anglers taking a few perch in the Metro Park Marina. Catch rates at the Banana Dike were fair however the cold spell will more than likely slow the bite. Some were fishing at the marina near the mouth of the Huron River. Walleye anglers are fishing Brest Bay. Try 14 to 17 feet with orange and silver spoons tipped with a shiner.

Detroit River: Airport Bay was producing some perch. Most are heading off Groh Road and taking Frenchman's Creek out to the bay. Some are fishing the border waters however extreme caution needs to be used. Those fishing off Bellenger Park caught some perch on minnows.

Lake St. Clair: Perch fishing has been hit-or-miss. The water is clear and those using spears had good success. While there is ice and plenty in some areas, there is still some open water because of the currents. Anglers still need to be very careful about venturing too far from shore.

Port Sanilac: Had some anglers out but all they caught were small fish. There is dredging equipment in the southeast corner and that is where anglers usually fish.

Saginaw Bay: Strong winds last weekend have opened up an active pressure crack three to four miles offshore. The crack runs from Linwood south to an area off the Bay City State Park. It opened to a width of 3 to 4 feet and a lot of people ran into it causing damage to their ATV's and snowmobiles. Anglers need to use caution. On the east side of the bay, those heading off Thomas Road were fishing near the shipping channel. Perch fishing was poor off Vanderbilt Park. Those pike spearing were still having trouble with turbid water at Sebewaing and Mud Creek.

Walleye anglers were heading out from Geiger Road. Perch are still being caught off Mud Creek and the marina basins at Caseville. Anglers fishing out near the end of the breakwall with a camera reported walleye, whitefish and lake trout but they would not bite.

Saginaw River: The best perch was in the lower river. Walleye were caught off Wickes Park in 14 feet. Fishing is slow through most of downtown Saginaw, but improves downstream of the Zilwaukee Bridge and north to the south end of Bay City. Anglers are catching a lot of sub-legal walleye for every keeper. They are using chartreuse, orange or clown-colored jigs with minnows or jigging rapalas with the head of a minnow on the center of the hook. Fishing was slow at Cass Avenue and the Middle Grounds. Those fishing downtown Bay City did catch a few keepers off Veteran's Park during the first and last two hours of daylight. Walleye and perch were caught downstream from the old Navy destroyer. They are using jigs, perch rigs and jigging rapalas.

Tittabawassee River: There's no fishing at the present time. There is too much ice for boats but not enough to stand on yet.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

St. Joseph River: Steelhead fishing has once again slowed with the cold weather. Those heading out will want to try Hot-n-Tots, spinners or a jig and wax worm.

Kalamazoo River: Has steelhead for those willing to try. Walleye may also be found up near the Allegan Dam.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Steelhead are still being caught but the bite did slow. Try the deeper holes with spinners, wobble glows, yarn, flies or wax worms. Try the backwaters for panfish.

Lake Lansing: For bluegills, try the weedy areas in deeper water along the northwest and south end. Those pike spearing have taken a few fish.

Muskrat Lake: Anglers caught a few crappie and bluegill but the bite was slow.

Lake Ovid: Anglers are out fishing but few reports have come in.

Jackson County: The inland lakes are producing panfish and even some limit catches for those willing to spend time on the lake.

Muskegon River: Continues to provide fair to good steelhead action. Anglers are floating spawn or fly fishing. Some have also caught brown trout.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Burt Lake: Was producing a fair number of walleye and perch.

Hubbard Lake: Was producing some limit catches of walleye.

Au Sable River: Anglers fishing below Foote Dam need to be aware that water flows are fluctuating widely at this time because of ice damming issues above Alcona. Anglers should check the USGS river flow gauges for the most up-to-date conditions. Severe cold causes the river above the Alcona Impoundment to turn to slush, creates anchor ice, and forms ice dams that create large changes in downstream flows. Thus, conditions may be very difficult for fishing or floating below Foote Dam. Those fishing for steelhead had success all along the river with wax worms and spoons. Most points are accessible however the banks, parking lots and fishing platforms are icy. The best launch for small boats would be Whirlpool. The store launch was clear and Rea Road is open, but icy and parking is limited. High Banks and Foote Dam have limited parking and the stairs were icy. If using the snowmobile trails to access parts of the river, watch for traffic as most are not expecting to see people on the trail.

Higgins Lake: The entire lake is frozen and ice shanties are starting to show up. Lake trout were caught out deep by those using greys on tip-ups or jigging Swedish pimples and sand kickers. Rainbow trout including one 27 inch fish were caught on wigglers near the Conference Center and Big Creek. Whitefish have been caught just off the bottom in 85 to 120 feet by those chumming. Perch were caught near Big Creek, Treasure Island, or B & B Marina. On the south end of the lake, perch were caught off Sunken Island. A few pike were taken on tip-ups and large minnows. Those spearing were seeing smaller pike.

Houghton Lake: Has good ice and lots of activity. Anglers are catching walleye and pike however the bite may slow with all the traffic on the lake.

Tawas: Those heading out should stay on the well-traveled trails in order to avoid getting stuck in snow-drifts. There's quite a bit of fishing activity off Jerry's Marina where anglers have caught some nice perch and walleye in 15 feet. Those spearing pike have taken a few nice fish. Anglers heading out to 20 feet of water near the tip of Tawas Point caught walleye at dusk.

Au Gres: Most walleye anglers were going off the end of Santiago Road and Booth Road and fishing a mile or two out. At Palmer Road, anglers reported slow walleye and perch fishing. They can see fish but they will not bite.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

The bigger inland lakes are now being fished. Steelhead are in the rivers but ice and brutal weather are keeping most from trying.

Green Lake: Is still producing some smelt. Anglers do best at night when using a jig. Try off the Music Camp with small minnows. Anglers have also caught bluegill, perch and pike.

Skegemog Lake: Had good yellow perch fishing.

Lake Cadillac: Panfish anglers were doing well off Kenwood Park which is on the northwest side of the lake. They caught bluegill, crappie and a few perch in waters 10 to 12 feet deep. Try minnows and red spikes. Pike have been caught along the weed beds by those using tip-ups.

Lake Mitchell: Usually produces more pike than Lake Cadillac. Anglers are using tip-ups with large minnows. For bluegill, try the coves on the west side of the lake with teardrops and wax worms. Crappie can be found off the State Park.

Lake Missaukee: Is producing bluegill, crappie and the occasional perch. The better fishing is usually along the weed beds on the west side of the lake with a tear-drop and minnow or spike.

Manistee River: Still has steelhead though the bite will slow once again with the cooler temperatures. Fish the deeper holes with eggs or spawn.

UPPER PENINSULA

Menominee: Bay anglers are heading out near Red Arrow Park on the Wisconsin side or Hennes Park on the Michigan side. Most are targeting whitefish and catch rates were fair to good with a jig and wax worm.

Menominee River: Walleye can still be found on the Wisconsin side near the Hattie Street Dam. Try jigging minnows and wax worms. Pike are showing up on camera near the Mystery Ship landing however they would not bite. Try tip-ups with large minnows. Those jigging near the lighthouse caught bluegill and crappie.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions remain good although travel has not been easy due to deep and drifting snow. The weight of the snow has opened up some pressure cracks. Extreme caution needs to be used when crossing them. Walleye catches were best in the southern bay between Aronson Island and Portage Point when jigging rapalas with or without a minnow in 40 to 50 feet. Some were fishing in 25 to 35 feet near the Escanaba River however this area is DANGEROUS. Whitefish anglers did well at Gladstone when using minnows or spawn in 45 feet and off Sand Point in 75 to 85 feet. Perch anglers reported small fish near Kipling and Garth Point. A few jumbo perch were caught near Gladstone and the "Narrows." Try minnows or wigglers in 18 to 35 feet. Pike have been speared at Kipling and northeast of Butler Island in 10 feet.

Munuscong: Has ice and a good amount of slush. Though the perch and walleye action has slowed, persistent anglers are fishing with tip-ups and minnows.

Cedarville and Hessel: Musky Bay and Hessel Bay are slow with very few perch being caught. Slushy conditions make travel a little more difficult.

January 30, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Ice fishing is the game statewide. Anglers still need to use caution and watch for snow drifts and pressure cracks.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Anglers are still taking some perch in the Metro Park Marina. The key is to switch up your bait and use minnows, wax worms or spikes. Brest Bay is the hot spot for walleye anglers when using small spoons tipped with a minnow. A few pike were taken on tip-ups with sucker minnows.

Detroit River: Airport Bay continues to produce perch. Anglers are using small minnows, spikes and wax worms. Perch were caught off Bellenger Park which is up near River Rouge.

Lake St. Clair: Has a good amount of ice however there is still some open water and areas with very thin ice. Those taking motorized vehicles out need to be extra careful. Perch fishing was spotty.

Harbor Beach: Ice anglers caught a few lake and brown trout near the Edison Cut.

Saginaw Bay: Up near Pinconning, anglers are getting a few perch in 5 feet of water off Newman Road. Many walleye anglers are going four miles off Linwood or off the Bay City State Park and fishing in 17 feet. On the east side, those going off Thomas Road and Sunset Bay caught walleye in the middle of the Slot in 14 feet. Drifting snow along the east side is making access and travel difficult. At Mud Creek, local perch anglers were averaging 12 to 15 fish per trip. Most fish were 8 to 9 inches long. Pike spearing was slow.

Saginaw River: Fishing was slow at Wickes Park but the occasional keeper was caught downtown off the St. Mary's Health building. Catch rates were slow between the Zilwaukee Bridge and Bay City. Anglers did manage to catch a couple fish near the Middle Grounds and Cass Avenue or downstream of the Veteran's Bridge. A few perch were caught off Smith Park at Essexville. Fishing at the mouth was slow.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Steelhead were in the deeper holes and hitting on jig and wax worm. A few walleye were caught below the dam. Try rapalas, bucktail jigs or a 3-inch white twister tail.

Grand River at Lansing: Those heading out the end of this week will want to target pike and walleye below the dams.

Morrison Lake: Some were crappie fishing but catch rates were hit-or-miss. Pike anglers are using tip-ups or spearing.

Reeds Lake: Anglers have caught bluegill, crappie, a few perch and some pike.

Muskegon River: Continues to produce steelhead especially for those fishing the really deep holes with small spoons, spinners or wax worms or anything that looks like a goby. Watch for ice coming down the river.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Black Lake: The 2014 lake sturgeon fishing and spearing season will begin at 8 a.m. on February 1st. All anglers must register with the DNR to participate. They must also possess a lake sturgeon tag, which can be obtained for free at any license vendor.

Fletchers Pond: Was producing a few crappie for those using minnows, wax worms or spikes. A few pike were taken on tip-ups.

Au Sable River: Fishing pressure was down. Access to the river is good since there hasn't been a lot of snow accumulation. If walking the snowmobile trails be sure to watch for sleds as they may not be looking for you. The Rea Road launch is usable but you will need 4-wheel drive and check the ramp for ice as you may not be able to get back up into the parking lot. Parking is limited and there is not a lot of room to maneuver. Whirlpool was the best launch for now as it was plowed, sanded and salted from River Road to the launch. The River Store is plowed with parking, but with the cold, ice flows may stop anglers from launching. The Boy Scout Camp and other spots along the river are not accessible as the two tracks are snowed in.

Higgins Lake: Lake trout and whitefish are just off the bottom out deep. Perch were caught off Treasure Island and Big Creek.

Houghton Lake: Fishing has been steady. Walleye have been caught in 8 to 10 feet of water. Try tip-ups or jigs with minnows. Pike have also been caught. Anglers will need to use caution and watch for pressure cracks and deep snow drifts.

Tawas: Was producing some perch in 15 feet off Jerry's Marina. Anglers were taking about 15 fish per trip but the keepers were only 7 or 8 inches. A few walleye were caught in 20 feet. There were reports of a whitefish and one brown trout caught. Inside the harbor, anglers caught a few perch and a couple pike.

Au Gres: Walleye anglers going off Santiago Road were heading south and fishing in 20 feet of water. No activity at the mouth of the Pine River; the road into the access site was drifted shut.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Green Lake: Is the lake for winter smelt. Most anglers set their ice shanties up near the Betsie River and off the Music Camp. For pike, try off the State Park.

Long Lake: In Grand Traverse County can be a good spot for yellow perch and the occasional walleye.

Fife Lake: Is producing some perch. Most are fishing off the access site in 10 to 30 feet of water.

Lake Cadillac: Anglers were few and far between but those braving the elements have caught pike along the weed beds when using tip-ups with large minnows or spearing. Panfish were slow.

Lake Mitchell: Is also producing pike. The bluegill and crappie bite were hit-or-miss but should pick back up by the weekend. Try teardrops with small minnows, wax worms or spikes.

Lake Missaukee: Is producing a few perch and crappie. The better fishing is usually along the weed beds on the west side of the lake with a minnow or spike.

Manistee River: Those brave enough to fish in arctic temperatures are taking steelhead. The trick is to fish the very deep holes.

Pere Marquette Lake: The U.S. Coast Guard is warning anglers and other recreational users to use extreme caution due to ice breaking operations. They will be making two trips and stopping at Ludington's Occidental Chemical Facility. Officials say ice fishermen should remove their ice shanties and equipment from these areas. Recreational users should plan their activities carefully and avoid the shipping channels.

UPPER PENINSULA

Menominee: Anglers caught whitefish off Henes Park or Red Arrow Park out of Marinette. They are jigging minnows in 20 to 30 feet of water.

Menominee River: On the Wisconsin side near the Hattie St. Dam, they are still marking walleye through the ice and some fish were caught near dark. Most are jigging minnows, wax worms and rapalas. Those seeking northern pike are marking fish but only a few were caught at the Mystery Ship launch. They are jigging rapalas or using tip-ups with minnows.

Little Bay De Noc: Very cold temperatures, snow and high winds means fewer anglers and travel on the ice has been difficult. The pressure cracks are expanding and caution is a must when trying to cross them. Walleye catches were spotty throughout however the southern bay was still the most productive. Anglers out from Aronson Island reported fair catches when jigging rapalas with minnows 35 to 45 feet down along the break and 30 to 40 feet down near the Escanaba River. Whitefish action was fair to good when jigging minnows or spawn in 35 to 40 feet of water at Gladstone or 75 to 85 feet at Sand Point. For perch, anglers were taking good numbers of small fish but few keepers. The best spot for jumbo perch was out by the green buoy just north of the "Narrows". Try minnows or wigglers in 23 to 30 feet.

Munuscong: Walleye fishing has improved. Fish were caught by those jigging or using tip-ups with minnows in 20 to 27 feet north of Pine Island and Steamboat Island.

Cedarville and Hessel: Anglers are out fishing despite the cold and snow. Perch fishing was fair in 8 to 10 feet near Rice Point and up along the west shoreline. Wigglers were the bait of choice. Some bigger perch were caught in 10 to 14 feet in Hessel Bay however there is a lot of snow on the ice so use caution.

February 6, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

The 2013 Annual Report for the Fisheries Division is now available online. This report provides a way for citizens to learn about the state's fisheries and the work our staff completed during the Fiscal Year 2013. Click here to view the report:

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364_52259_53381-320837--,00.html

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Many are fishing out of Bolles Harbor however they are not catching very many fish. Perch were caught in the Metro Park Marina however be ready to sort out the small ones. Walleye have been caught in Brest Bay by those using small spoons tipped with a minnow.

Detroit River: Airport Bay was good for perch during the cold spell but then catch rates slowed.

Lake St. Clair: Has lots of ice however due to currents and pressure cracks, there is still some areas with open water and a couple machines have gone through the ice over the last week. Again, anglers are reminded to use extreme caution. Perch fishing seems to have slowed and the average size was down.

Harbor Beach: A few perch were caught inside the city harbor.

Saginaw Bay: Walleye were caught in 16 to 20 feet off Linwood and the Bay City State Park. On the east side of the bay, walleye anglers are fishing from Sunset Bay and off Thomas Road are heading out 8 to 11 miles. Perch anglers fishing in 5 to 6 feet off Vanderbilt Park near Quanicassee have caught some nice fish during the first half hour of daylight but then the bite quits after the sun come up. Only a few pike and small perch were taken at Sebewaing. Some are accessing the bay at Rose Island and Geiger Road and fishing out in the Slot for walleye. Fishing at Caseville, Port Austin and Grindstone City was slow.

Saginaw River: Pressure was generally light from Wickes Park and Rust Avenue north through downtown Saginaw. Anglers picked up the occasional keeper when using green jig-heads baited with a minnow in 9 to 15 feet. Walleye were caught near the Zilwaukee Bridge and downstream of the Veteran's Bridge on the east side. A few perch were also caught. Fishing around the Independence Bridge was generally slow but a few anglers did well when using silver and blue jiggling rapalas. Further down at Smith Park, the Cement Plant and the mouth, catch rates were slow and spotty.

Lake Chemung: In Livingston County is producing a small number of panfish.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Pretty much all the inland lakes have ice. Bluegills have been hit-or-miss because of the numerous weather fronts. The best bite was in the morning or evening.

St. Joseph River: Has shelf ice and the ramps are extremely icy. There are steelhead in the river if anglers can get to them.

Branch County: Marble Lake was producing some good size bluegill and crappie. Pike and perch were also caught. Bluegill and perch were caught on Matteson Lake. Those fishing Randall Lake caught good numbers of small panfish and pike including two fish over 30 inches.

Duck Lake: In Calhoun County was producing some pike for those spearing.

Kalamazoo River: Also has steelhead but like most of the rivers in southwest Michigan, shelf ice and icy ramps are preventing access.

Gull Lake: Is producing some smelt, perch and the occasional lake trout.

Gun Lake: Is producing walleye, perch and bluegills. For walleye, try east of Murphy's Point or Robbins Bay.

Grand River at Lansing: Anglers are still finding some leftover steelhead below the dams. At the North Lansing Dam and the Portland Dam, fish were caught when floating a golden shiner.

Lake Lansing: Is producing the occasional big crappie. Some are using wax worms instead of minnows.

Round Lake: Was producing a few pike for those spearing.

Muskrat Lake: Catch rates were fair for bluegill but the crappie were slow.

Muskegon River: Has good steelhead fishing with most fish being caught in the deeper holes.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Panfish activity is sporadic on the smaller inland lakes. Deep snow is making access a little more difficult for anglers.

Au Sable River: The few anglers making their way onto the river had good success because of the good number of steelhead in the river. Most are fishing the dam, Rea Road Launch, the Gas Line and the Whirlpool. Other areas of the river may be holding fish, but may not be accessible. Foote Dam and Whirlpool are open to 4-wheel drives. Wax worms, small spinners or spawn were best.

Higgins Lake: Lake trout are being caught on greys. Perch anglers were starting to catch a few bigger ones in 8 to 12 feet of water on the east side of the lake off Maple Hurst Road and Flag Point. Perch were caught south of the Sunken Island by those using minnows, wigglers and wax worms. Rainbow trout can be found in the shallows off Big Creek and the Conference Center. Most are using wigglers.

Houghton Lake: Anglers are catching a fair number of walleye. Most are fishing along the weeds in 8 to 10 feet. Catch rates for panfish were sporadic.

Tawas: Most fishing activity is now outside the harbor rather than inside. Perch fishing was fair to good in 15 feet of water off Jerry's Marina. Anglers are seeing a lot of perch down the holes but they do not want to bite. Further out near the ice that has broken up and re-froze, walleye were caught in 20 feet and a few pike were speared including one 20 pounder.

Au Gres: Most of the fishing activity is off the end of Booth Road in 15 feet of water where they're picking up some walleyes and perch. Catch rates were fair. Off Palmer Road, walleye anglers were going out 4 to 4 ½ miles and fishing in 16 to 18 feet. Perch anglers closer to shore are seeing fish but few were caught.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Torch Lake: Has ice. Anglers are catching whitefish and herring on the north end near Eastport.

Green Lake: Continues to produce smelt for those hook and line fishing at night near the Betsie River or the Music Camp. Deep snow and slush make travel difficult.

Crystal Lake: In Benzie County has excellent smelt fishing at night in 45 to 50 feet of water. Use Hali jigs with wax worms. Look for perch along the weeds in 25 to 35 feet of water. Try tear drops tipped with a minnow or wiggler.

Lake Cadillac: Is producing some panfish and pike. Lots of snow and slush in some areas is making travel on the ice difficult.

Lake Mitchell: Is producing the occasional pike and crappie.

Lake Missaukee: Is producing a few perch and crappie. The better fishing is usually along the weed beds on the west side of the lake with a minnow or spike.

Manistee River: Steelhead are in the river however not many anglers are pursuing them.

UPPER PENINSULA

Anglers are actively ice fishing the inland lakes as well as the Great Lakes.

Menominee: Ice anglers were targeting whitefish. Catch rates were fair to good in 30 to 40 feet of water when jigging minnows or wax worms. Access was found from Henes Park in Menominee or Red Arrow Park in Marinette.

Menominee River: Anglers are still marking walleye through the ice on the Wisconsin side near the Hattie Street Dam. A few fish are still being caught but catch rates have slowed. Some are still targeting pike near the Mystery Ship launch when jigging artificial bait or using tip-ups with minnows. Catch rates were slow. Those seeking panfish are jigging wax worms at the Mennikaunee Launch or behind K-Mart however no fish were caught as the water was low and cloudy.

Little Bay De Noc: Travel has been limited because of snow. The deep snow makes moving shanties very difficult and some have been unable to reach them because of drifting snow. There was a large pressure crack and no vehicles are traveling over it. Anglers are venturing as far south as the No See-um Creek area. The best walleye catches were reported near Portage Point when jigging rapalas or using tip-ups with minnows 40 to 50 feet down along the break. A few walleye were caught near Gladstone in 30 to 40 feet. As for whitefish, fair to good reports came from Sand Point when jigging minnows or spawn in 75 to 85 feet or off Gladstone when fishing off the bottom. Perch anglers have struggled as catch rates were down. A few jumbo perch were caught near Saunders Point but only small fish were caught near Butler Island.

Munuscong: Those fishing east of Roach Point in waters 25 to 27 feet reported fair catch rates. Only a handful of perch were caught in 4 feet of water.

Cedarville and Hessel: There is a lot of snow on the ice and the plowed trail was blown shut. Perch fishing in Musky Bay and Cedarville Bay was poor with very few fish caught. Anglers were using wigglers or minnows in 10 to 13 feet. Hessel Bay was a little better with a few bigger fish taken. Try minnows in 10 to 14 feet. Hessel Bay did not have as much snow but travel on the ice was still difficult.

February 13, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Michigan's annual "Winter Free Fishing Weekend" will be held this Saturday February 15th and Sunday February 16th. No fishing license is required however all regulations still apply. There will be events statewide to highlight the weekend. A list of registered events can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364_52261_50497-317730--,00.html

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Is producing walleye in Brest Bay. Try 12 to 20 feet of water with Swedish pimples, small Cleo's or jigging rapalas tipped with a big minnow. Those fishing off the Metro Park Marina caught perch and bluegills.

Detroit River: Perch have been caught in the canals around Gibraltar. Try shiners, spikes or wax worms. Those heading out to Airport Bay are getting perch. Anglers will have to park at Groh Road and then take the half mile walk down Frenchmen's Creek to get out to the Bay.

Lake St. Clair: Still has a lot of snow on the ice and that makes travel more difficult. Despite the cold temperatures, there are still some areas with open water so anglers need to use caution. Perch fishing was spotty with mainly small fish caught.

Harbor Beach: Had a few anglers fishing in the boat channel off the Edison Plant and some off the discharge channel. There were rumors of perch being caught but the only fish recorded was a brown trout.

Saginaw Bay: A few walleye were caught in 20 feet of water off Linwood and the Bay City State Park. A couple perch were caught in 6 feet off Newman Road. Those wading at the Hot Pond caught a few pike. Those heading off the end of Callahan Road caught some nice walleye about 8 miles out. Near Quanicassee, perch anglers did well off and on at Vanderbilt Park. They were fishing out near the first pressure crack. Walleye anglers continue to fish about 10 miles off Sunset Bay Marina and Thomas Road. Catch rates were hit-or-miss.

Attention Anglers: The Village of Sebewaing is planning to use dynamite to break up some of the river ice to prevent flooding. This action will take place on or about February 20th. There are signs posted to alert the public. For now, anglers are fishing off the VFW, Rose Island and Geiger Road. Most are likely fishing the Slot or crossing the Bar to deeper water. Perch were spotty at Mud Creek.

Saginaw River: Walleye fishing was slow at Wickes Park, Middle Grounds, Cass Avenue, Veterans Park and Smith Park. A few fish were taken south of the Zilwaukee Bridge near the grain silos in 23 feet or downstream of the Liberty Bridge and out to the channel in 23 feet. Some five and six pounders were taken between I-675 and First Street but those fishing near the mouth off Patterson Road caught many sub-legal fish.

Tittabawassee River: A couple walleye were caught through the ice downstream of the Center Road Bridge. This area is close to open water so anglers use caution.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

St. Joseph River: Has shelf ice and the ramps are extremely icy. Anglers have caught a couple steelhead on the warmer days.

Kalamazoo River: Is still iced up with shelf ice. Look for steelhead fishing to improve as the temperatures warm up.

Gull Lake: Anglers have caught a few smelt, northern pike and some lake trout on the north end of the lake.

Gun Lake: Was producing bluegill, black crappie, walleye and perch.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Has shelf ice along the banks. The better steelhead fishing will be down near the dam. Walleye can usually be found near the dam or under the bridges.

Lake Lansing: Some bluegills were caught in 15 feet of water. Try a tear drop with a wax worm or spike.

Muskegon River: Catch rates should increase as temperatures rise by the end of the week.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Au Sable River: Has steelhead in good numbers. Anyone making the effort to get to the open areas on the river should be successful when using spawn, wax worms or small spinners. There is ice built up along the banks but open water areas up river between the Whirlpool and the dam. Parking is at a minimum in most places. You may be able to launch at Whirlpool and Rea Road, but launches have ice built up so you may have to break through to launch a boat. The snowmobile trails have been very active so use caution if walking on the trails.

Higgins Lake: Some are taking smelt at night. Those heading out are catching lake trout in deep water. Try greys just off the bottom. For perch, try near the Sunken Island, Detroit Point or Flag Point. For rainbow trout, try up near the Conference Center and Big Creek.

Houghton Lake: Catch rates for bluegill were slow but should improve as the weather warms. Try along the weed beds in 10 feet or more for walleye.

Lake St. Helen: Catch rates were slow but fish have been caught. For pike, try tip-ups with large minnows. Anglers will find crappie in waters 8 feet or deeper. They were hitting on small minnows and wax worms. The lake is producing a few perch ranging 10 to 12 inches but no big numbers. Most anglers are fishing First Lake especially the north and northwest side as well as off the boat launch.

Tawas: Perch were caught off Jerry's Marina and inside the harbor. Most fish were 6 to 8 inches but a few were up near the 10 inch range. Walleye fishing was active out near the edge of the safe ice but catch rates were slow. Pike spearing was also slow.

Au Gres: Most of the fishing activity was down near Pointe Au Gres off Booth Road. Perch were taken at the edge of the drop-off in 8 feet and some walleye were taken out further. Down off Palmer Road, walleye anglers are getting a few fish from the Catfish Hole at dusk. Catch rates for perch about a mile offshore were spotty in 6 feet of water.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Grand Traverse Bay: Has fishable ice so anglers are heading out for whitefish.

Green Lake: Continues to produce smelt for those fishing near the Betsie River or the Music Camp at night. Try a teardrop or hali jig with a wax worm.

Crystal Lake: In Benzie County has decent smelt fishing at night in 45 to 50 feet of water. Use hali jigs with wax worms. Some have caught lake trout just off the bottom. Look for perch along the weeds in 25 to 35 feet of water. Try tear drops tipped with a minnow or wiggler.

Lake Cadillac: Anglers are catching pike and crappie.

Lake Mitchell: Is another good lake for pike, crappie and bluegill.

Lake Missaukee: Is producing a fair to good number of panfish for those using minnows and spikes.

Manistee River: Steelhead can be found up near Tippy Dam. Below High Bridge the river is iced up and not fishable.

Pere Marquette River: Has steelhead. Those wading have caught steelhead and the occasional brown trout.

UPPER PENINSULA

Marquette: Anglers are ice fishing however caution needs to be used because ice thickness varies from one area to the next. A few ice anglers were targeting menominee and splake out from the Lower Harbor but catch rates were poor. Some are fishing near the bubblers however few fish were caught.

Chocolay River: The wayside on M-28 is plowed. The river is frozen however ice thickness is not uniform because of the current. Anglers typically fish for steelhead and brown trout this time of year.

Au Train: A couple anglers were targeting coho and steelhead out from the Rock River however few bites were reported as ice fishing was slow. No activity to report from the Brownstone Launch or the Au Train River. All areas are iced in and the launch areas are not plowed.

Munising: Ice in the bay is very thick and may be a challenge for those without a power auger. Anglers are targeting whitefish however catch rates were slow. For splake, catch rates were slow and the vast majority of fish were sub-legal. Those fishing in Trout Bay caught coho along with the occasional lake trout and steelhead. Small perch were caught at Sand Point.

Menominee: Anglers are still targeting whitefish off Henes Park and Red Arrow Park. They are using a jig with a small piece of minnow or wax worm in 30 to 40 feet. Catch rates were fair.

Menominee River: Those targeting panfish are jigging wax worms off the Menikaunee launch or behind K-Mart. Catch rates were still a bit slow however some bluegills were caught. Pike are still being marked off the Mystery Ship launch but few were caught. Anglers are jigging rapalas or using tip-ups with large minnows. For walleye, anglers are fishing through the ice on the Wisconsin side near the Hattie Street Dam. Catch rates were fair to good with the occasional whitefish also caught. Most are jigging a piece of minnow or wax worm. Some are targeting trout in the open water on the Michigan side but no fish were caught.

Little Bay De Noc: Angler participation was down as deep snow is making travel difficult. Catch rates for walleye were fair with Portage Point and Second Reef the hot spots. Anglers used tip-ups with minnows or were jigging rapalas in 24 feet on the Second Reef and 40 to 50 feet near Portage Point. Some fish were suspended 10 to 12 feet from the bottom. Sand Point was producing a fair number of whitefish in 75 to 90 feet and off the Terrace Bay Inn in Gladstone in 30 to 45 feet. Minnows and spawn work best. Perch fishing was slow but a few fish were taken in 14 to 17 feet near Kipling. A few jumbo perch were caught in the Kipling Flats in 23 to 30 feet.

February 20, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Anglers are reminded that ice shanties on Lake St. Clair must be removed by sunset on Sunday, Feb. 23rd. Inland lakes around the state are covered in deep snow and slush. Travel is extremely difficult.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Perch have been caught off the Metro Park Marina however anglers will need to sort out the small ones. Bluegills were hitting off Sterling State Park.

Detroit River: Pike anglers were concentrating around Grosse Isle. For perch, check out the canals around Gibraltar when using minnows, wax worms or spikes.

Lake St. Clair: Catch rates were not good as the fish were scarce or very small. Thick ice and deep snow are not helping. Anglers are hopeful that warmer weather this week will reduce the snow cover and have the fish feeding again.

Lexington: Had ice anglers targeting steelhead and brown trout. Catch rates were hit-or-miss. A couple pike were caught.

Port Sanilac: Also had anglers out targeting steelhead and brown trout.

Harbor Beach: Had a couple anglers spearing pike in the marina.

Saginaw Bay: Walleye were hit-or-miss but still being caught 5 to 6 miles off Pinconning Park, 15 feet of water off Linwood and 17 feet off Parish Road. Perch anglers were getting a few in 7 feet off the end of Newman Road and Townline Road, near Pinconning. Perch were also caught in 5 feet off Vanderbilt Park and Hidden Harbor off King Road. Walleye anglers accessing the bay at Thomas Road were going across the Slot, across the Bar, and on out to either Buoy #12 or Buoy #1. The distance to either buoy is miles offshore. At Sebewaing, anglers fishing inside the marina caught bluegill, crappie and perch. Ice anglers at Sebewaing are reminded that on Thursday February 20th, dynamite will be used to break up some of the river ice. It would be best to find someplace else to fish for a few days.

Saginaw River: Fishing was generally slow at all locations from one end of the river to the other however some anglers did very well. There has been a lot of snowmobile traffic which may play a factor in the slower fishing. Walleye were caught near the Zilwaukee Bridge and in 20 feet or more in the Ship Channel. Try fire-tiger jiggging rapalas or gold jiggging spoons tipped with minnow heads.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Inland lakes continue to produce some bluegills in the morning and evening. Yellow perch action picked up on sunny days. Northern pike are becoming more active as it gets closer to spring.

St. Joseph River: Steelhead activity should pick up with the brief warm up. Those fishing near the Berrien Springs Dam have caught fish.

Kalamazoo River: Has shelf ice but those fishing up near the Allegan Dam have caught the occasional steelhead and walleye.

Gull Lake: Was producing a better number of smelt for those fishing in deeper water at night. The better perch and pike fishing are usually around Island Park.

Gun Lake: Has bluegill, crappie, perch and walleye.

Duck Lake: In Calhoun County was producing some pike for those spearing.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Has a good number of steelhead. Anglers are using a jig and wax worm, spawn bags or Hot-n-Tots. Walleye can be found from the dam all the way down. They are hitting on white bucktail jigs and 3 inch twister tails. There was no ice coming down the river at this time.

Reeds Lake: Was good for perch, bluegill, crappie and pike.

Muskegon River: Is full of steelhead. Anglers have taken limit catches right along with the occasional brown trout.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Fishing activity has increased with the warmer temperatures. Inland lakes are beginning to produce better catches of perch and some walleye. Many smaller lakes are reported as snowed in with no access.

Cedar Lake: About five miles north of Oscoda is providing a fair to good number of perch, bluegill, crappie and walleye.

Van Etten Lake: Is also producing panfish, walleye and pike. The better fishing is usually along the west end of the lake and off the YMCA Camp.

Au Sable River: Rea Road and Whirlpool were open enough to launch however you will need four-wheel drive. Steelhead are in the holes but ice on the banks will make it difficult to get to them. The gas line was productive for those using small spoons, wax worms, spikes or spawn. Be sure to watch for snowmobile traffic on the trails. Many are out riding because conditions are excellent.

Higgins Lake: Some are taking smelt at night. Those jigging off the bottom or using tip-ups have caught lake trout. Look for the perch bite to pick up with the warmer weather. Rainbow trout were hitting on spawn near the Conference Center.

Houghton Lake: Catch rates for bluegill should pick up with the warmer weather. Walleye anglers were doing well.

Tawas: Perch were caught inside the harbor and off Jerry's Marina. A few walleye were caught in 20 feet out near the tip of Tawas Point. Those spearing managed to take a couple pike.

Au Gres: Perch action was spotty in 6 to 8 feet off Palmer Road. Those targeting walleye were going out five miles or more.

Au Gres River: Walleye anglers were catching mostly sub-legal fish.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Grand Traverse Bay: The West Bay was producing good catches of lake trout. Whitefish were caught in both bays.

Lake Leelanau: Those using tip-ups have caught some nice pike.

Lake Cadillac: Crappie anglers are fishing off Kenwood Park. Those targeting walleye have actually caught some nice crappie on tip-ups. For pike and perch, try the southeast side of the lake.

Lake Mitchell: Is finally producing some bluegills. The better fishing was at the mouth of Big Cove.

Manistee River: Steelhead can be found in the pockets and pools. Most anglers are now using minnow patterns. Below High Bridge the river is iced up and not fishable.

Pere Marquette River: Is producing steelhead and some brown trout. Look for the fast water and try to get away from the shelf ice.

UPPER PENINSULA

Keweenaw Bay: Is producing some smelt for those fishing at night with a teardrop and wax worm between Baraga and Bucks Marina. The bite was slow for coho and lake herring. Catch rates for lake trout were hit-or-miss.

Anglers are fishing out from the Whirl-I-Gig and Pequaming or on Newton's, Farmers and the Big Reef. They are using ¾ to 1 ½ ounce jigs with smelt or cut bait.

Marquette: Ice anglers fishing the Upper Harbor have reported incidental catches of diving ducks when using tip-ups with minnows under the ice. Anglers are advised to fish as far away from open water where waterfowl have congregated. This will help to minimize the chance that foraging birds will get caught on a hook or tangled in fishing line. If a bird is caught, the best course of action is to reel it in, remove the hook/line and then release the bird. Retrieving the bird through the ice is preferable to simply cutting the line. If a bird is badly injured, anglers are encouraged to contact a local wildlife rehabilitator for assistance. Licensed rehabilitators are listed online at www.michigandnr.com/dlr/.

Munising: Trout Bay was producing some limit catches of coho, lake trout and a few herring. A few small whitefish and splake were caught off Munising.

Menominee: Few anglers were on the bay however some were targeting panfish near the pilings by the lighthouse.

Menominee River: Anglers are being warned that an "ice breaker" is scheduled to come in soon. It will come in from the bay and move upstream to the Marinette Marine to help a ship with its departure. The local paper has advised anglers to stay clear of the bay and the river in that area. A couple bluegills were caught near the Menikaunee launch and behind K-Mart. Pike and walleye were targeted near the Mystery Ship launch. Those fishing the open water on the Michigan side caught a couple steelhead when drifting flies, spawn and yarn or casting small spoons and rapalas. Walleye fishing through the ice on the Wisconsin side was slow but a few were caught in the late evening when jigging a piece of minnow or wax worm.

Little Bay De Noc: Still has good ice however travel conditions were not good. Those taking motorized vehicles out were getting stuck in deep drifts. Some have removed their ice shanties because of the conditions. Catch rates were fair for whitefish in 75 to 85 feet of water off Sand Point. Perch fishing was fair off Kipling. They are using wigglers in 10 to 23 feet but many were small so they were released. Most of the walleye caught near the Second Reef or Gladstone were sub-legal. Ice shanties near the Escanaba Power Plant have been removed because of ice breakers opening the shipping lanes.

Indian Lake: In Schoolcraft County was producing some perch and walleye.

Munuscong: Catch rates were fair along the shipping channel in waters 20 to 27 feet deep. Anglers can see fish but the bite was slow.

Cedarville and Hessel: Have lots of ice. Anglers say the best travel method is by snowmobile. Perch fishing in Cedarville, Musky Bay and Hessel Bay was fair for those using wigglers in water 10 feet or deeper.

February 27, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Once again, frigid temperatures will slow anglers and catch rates. Ice is not an issue this year however mounting snowfall, blowing snow and bitterly cold wind chills are not making it easy for anglers.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Had decent perch fishing off the Metro Park Marina. Those fishing Brest Bay are taking some walleye.

Detroit River: Does have some ice coming down the river. Catch rates slowed for perch however some were still heading out to Grosse Ile and fishing Airport Bay.

Lake St. Clair: The ice is holding but there are thin spots and patches of open water because of currents. Anglers should not venture too far away from the normal fishing locations. The snow pack melted quite a bit so travel was much easier. Perch fishing was slow to fair however catch rates will improve when it starts to thaw and the perch start moving into shallow waters to spawn.

Saginaw Bay: Catch rates are slow and hanging on a bit longer than normal this year, most likely due to the bitter cold temperatures. Underwater cameras are showing walleye and perch but the bite is not there. Some were lucky enough to catch a few perch in 10 feet of water off White's Beach and walleye in 15 feet before the first pressure crack off the State Park, and out near Spoils Island. Perch fishing off Vanderbilt Park was non-existent. Walleye anglers going off Thomas Road found a few fish in the middle of the Slot. They did better than the guys crossing the Bar and going to the Slot. Bluegill, crappie and the odd pike were caught out from the marina at Sebewaing.

Saginaw River: Catch rates were slow but some caught the occasional walleye on a blue and silver jigging rapala with a treble hook and minnow head. A couple perch were caught off the cement plant at Essexville. Anglers are seeing a lot of fish on their cameras but the fish are ignoring the bait. Water clarity was back to normal.

Tittabawassee River: Had a little bit of open water up near Gordonville Road where anglers were casting for walleye. None were caught. With the return of cold air, there is too much shore ice again.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Anglers are still ice fishing. The rain did help reduce some of the snow cover making for easier travel. Shallow and weedy lakes are starting to show signs of poor dissolved oxygen. Fish are becoming lethargic and suspending higher in the water column. Try fishing just a few feet under the ice on these types of lakes.

St. Joseph River: Those fishing up near the Berrien Springs Dam have caught steelhead. Boat launches may still be iced in.

Kalamazoo River: Had less ice but the boat launches will still be tricky. Anglers are catching steelhead and some walleye up near the Allegan Dam. Minnows and crank baits were the ticket.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Continues to produce steelhead for those using spawn, wax worms, small spoons or Hot-n-Tot's. Fair to good walleye fishing for those using bucktail jigs with 3 inch twister tails or a jig and minnow.

Grand River at Lansing: Those looking for pike will want to try a jig and twister tail or a shiner under a bobber below the dams.

Lake Lansing: Was producing some crappie.

Muskrat Lake: Was producing some crappie.

Park Lake: Anglers caught bluegill but had to sort out the small ones.

Morrison Lake: Is producing some crappie.

Muskegon Lake: Has decent ice fishing. Perch anglers had fair catches. The trick is to keep moving to find the schools of fish. Most are using a teardrop or small spoon with a minnow head.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Van Etten Lake: Ice conditions remain good. Access sites at the park and Air Force Beach are clear of snow. Perch, bluegill and crappie were caught in good numbers.

Au Sable River: Fishing is good in the area's that are accessible. Steelhead were caught on spawn, wax worms or small spoons. Rea Road, Foot Dam, High Banks, and Whirlpool were in good condition. The snow has been cleared but ice still remains and there is ice along the banks. The snowmobile trail is the easiest to travel however watch for snowmobile traffic as they may not be watching for you.

Lake Margrethe: Is producing some muskie for those spearing.

Higgins Lake: Lake trout were caught on grays in 85 to 100 feet. Those chumming have done the best for whitefish. Catch rates for northern pike have slowed. A decent number of perch were caught in 20 to 70 feet by those using minnows, wigglers and wax worms.

Houghton Lake: Some are catching the occasional walleye along the weed beds.

Tawas: Overall fishing was slow. A few small perch were caught inside the harbor and off Jerry's Marina. Few pike have been speared and walleye fishing near the tip of Tawas Point was slow.

Au Gres: Also had slow fishing with only a couple anglers sighted off Booth Road. At Palmer Road, walleye anglers had mixed results at the Catfish Hole. Perch fishing there was very slow.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice fishing continues on all the inland lakes. Anglers are catching crappie, walleye, pike and bluegills.

Traverse City: Both bays are producing a few whitefish and lake trout.

Lake Cadillac: Was producing a good number of crappie for those fishing in water 12 feet or deeper. The fish can be along the bottom or just under the ice.

Lake Mitchell: Gave up some crappie and bluegills though the bluegill bite was not as strong. No word on pike spearing.

Portage Lake: Ice anglers are catching perch and pike. The better perch fishing is usually in 6 to 18 feet of water along the south end between the two camps.

Manistee River: Is pretty much locked up with ice from High Bridge down. A couple steelhead were caught at Tippy Dam.

Hamlin Lake: Was producing some bluegills, crappie and walleye. Early morning or late evening was best. Try 10 to 18 feet along the weed beds with Hali jigs and small spoons with wax worms or cut bait such as the head of a minnow.

UPPER PENINSULA

Keweenaw Bay: The lake herring, coho and perch bite has been slow. Smelt were caught between Baraga and Bucks Marina by those using teardrops with wax worms at night. Lake trout were found in 130 to 310 feet of water off the Whirl-I-Gig, Pequaming, Mud Bank, Koskie Flats or Farmer's and Big Reef. The bite was good one day but non-existent the next.

Munising: Angler activity has been light especially for those without a permanent shanty or a power auger to get through the thick ice. Walking conditions improved. Those targeting whitefish will want to try bouncing a single egg off the bottom. Most of the fish caught were small. Those targeting splake caught few fish and many were small. The best chance for bigger fish was off Sand Point. Several anglers were marking smelt but there were no reports of fish caught. Trout Bay was still producing the occasional steelhead or lake trout.

Menominee River: Had an ice breaker that came in all the way up to the Marinette Marina. The only activity was up near the Dam. Some were targeting walleye through the ice on the Marinette side. Catch rates were fair for those jigging parts of a minnow. Some caught the occasional lake whitefish. On the Menominee side, anglers are targeting trout in the open water. Most are drifting flies, spawn and yarn or casting spoons.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions continue to hold however no anglers were out near the Escanaba Power Plant due to ice breakers keeping the shipping lanes open. A few perch and sub-legal walleye were caught in 28 to 35 feet along the Narrows. The better perch fishing was in 24 to 30 feet along the Kipling flats. Try minnows or wigglers. The better walleye fishing was at the head of the bay. Try tip-ups with sucker minnows in 8 to 20 feet. Whitefish action was fair off Sand Point when using minnows, wigglers or spawn in 85 to 90 feet.

Munuscong: Ice conditions remain good but catch rates were slow in Raber Bay.

Cedarville and Hessel: Catch rates were poor on Musky Bay and Hessel Bay. Anglers caught smaller perch ranging 7 and 8 inches.

March 6, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

The 2014 Fishing Licenses went on sale March 1st. This gives anglers one month to purchase their new license before they are required on April 1st. The 2014 Fishing Guides will be available at all license vendors so be sure to ask for your copy!

Ice fishing activity is down. It seems many are getting tired of the extreme cold, deep snow, difficult travel conditions, and trying to drill holes through excessive ice.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Anglers caught a few big perch in the Metro Park Marina. Catch rates for walleye improved some in Brest Bay. Try early morning and late evening.

Huron River: Those fishing the couple spots with open water caught steelhead. Try Labo Park or up near the dam at Flat Rock.

Wayne County: Panfish anglers are experiencing varying levels of success because of the changing weather. Most are using teardrops with wax worms or mousies.

Washtenaw County: Inland lakes are producing a light number of pike and panfish.

Detroit River: Those fishing Grosse Ile are still taking some perch in Airport Bay. A slight warm-up by the end of the week may push some bigger fish up into the canals.

Lake St. Clair: Overall perch fishing was spotty. Small perch seem abundant however bigger fish were seen but they would not bite.

St. Clair River: Has ice flows coming down. No word on fishing conditions.

Saginaw Bay: Morning fishing was slow for walleye but the evening bite was pretty good. Anglers can see the fish in the morning but they would not bite. Catch rates picked up considerably between late afternoon and dark especially in 18 to 20 feet near the Black Hole, 15 to 23 feet off Linwood and 3.5 miles north of Spoils Island.

A couple perch were caught near the first pressure crack off the Bay City State Park. The Hot Pond and Vanderbilt Park were slow. Walleye were caught in 20 feet of water off the end of Callahan Road but that is a long way out! Those fishing off Thomas Road caught a few walleye from the Slot. Bluegills and crappie were caught in the marina at Sebewaing. Those fishing the river and marina at Caseville caught a few small perch.

Saginaw River: Fishing was generally slow from Wickes Park north through Saginaw, around the Zilwaukee Bridge, and the Middle Grounds at the south end of Bay City. Anglers say the fish are there but they are not biting. A couple walleye were caught after dark at the Middle Grounds, below the Independence Bridge and downstream of the U.S.S. Edson. Some perch were caught off the cement plant at Essexville. Try perch rigs and minnows.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice fishing activity has been slow on the inland lakes. Some have caught panfish and pike but overall catch rates were down. Many lakes are running low on dissolved oxygen so fish have moved higher up in water column.

St. Joseph River: Is giving up some steelhead. Try a jig and wax worm or spawn.

Kalamazoo River: Those fishing up near the Allegan Dam caught steelhead and the occasional walleye. They are using spawn or a jig and wax worm.

Calhoun County: Catch rates were slow on the inland lakes. A few panfish were caught in Warner Lake.

Lake Macatawa: Was giving up limit catches of yellow perch. Catch rates for bluegill were slow.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Has steelhead but no big push yet, still too cold. Those targeting walleye reported seeing more fish. Most are fishing up near the dam. Ice flows were not a problem.

Grand River at Lansing: Anglers will want to target pike at the North Lansing Dam and Moore's Park. One steelhead was caught near the dam at Moore's Park.

Jackson County: Fishing activity was slow.

Reeds Lake: Was producing a few more pike.

Muskegon River: Is producing some steelhead with incredible color. Most anglers are using flies or artificial bait in the deeper holes. Fish movement should improve with warmer temperatures the next couple days.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice fishing was slow with limited angler effort due in part to deep snow which makes travel difficult. Those able to get out had limited success for pike, walleye and perch.

Clear Lake: In Montmorency County is producing splake though most are sub-legal.

Au Sable River: Has yet again unstable river flow below Foote Dam. Extremely cold weather causes the river above the Alcona Impoundment to turn to slush, create anchor ice and finally ice dams that create large changes in downstream flows. These conditions can make it very difficult for fishing or floating below Foote Dam.

Lake Margrethe: Produced a couple large muskie for those spearing.

Higgins Lake: Lake trout continue to hit grays in 80 to 100 feet. A decent number of perch have been caught in 20 to 50 feet or more near the main island and the Sunken Island. Rainbow trout were caught on wigglers near the Conference Center. Look for the bite to improve with any warm-up.

Houghton Lake: The walleye and pike action was steady. Bluegills were caught behind Faustus Resort.

Tawas: Fishing was slow on the bay. Perch anglers inside the harbor are getting a few. Walleye anglers were marking and seeing fish but they would not bite.

Au Gres: Had slow fishing. At Palmer Road, walleye anglers were going out about four miles and fishing in the evening. Fishing pressure was light as most were heading down to Linwood.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Torch Lake: Is producing a limited number of whitefish. Atlantic salmon and lake trout have also been caught.

Traverse City: The East Bay is producing lake trout. The numbers are good but the fish were on the small side. Anglers are jigging glow pimples in 120 to 140 feet. Yuba was producing some good catches. In the West Bay, good numbers of some nice lake trout and burbot were caught. Some reported 10 pound lake trout and burbot over 8 pounds caught near Lee's Point in 135 to 165 feet of water when jigging glows.

Skegemog Lake: Was producing some large pike.

Crystal Lake: In Benzie County was producing some large smelt.

Lake Cadillac: A couple nice crappie were caught however this was the exception, and not the rule. A fair to good number of walleye have been caught by those using tip-ups with minnows for pike.

Lake Mitchell: Continues to produce some walleye, pike and crappie. Catch rates for bluegill and perch were hit-or-miss. The better fishing seems to be early evening and night. Try Big Cove for pike, crappie and bluegills.

UPPER PENINSULA

Inland lakes in Delta, Alger and Schoolcraft Counties have been slow with thick ice and deep snow deterring most anglers from even trying. Au Train Lake was producing a few perch and pike.

Keweenaw Bay: Bitter cold temperatures are keeping most anglers at home. Those brave enough to head out said the bite was very slow.

Munising: A hard top crust in the bay makes for easier walking. Anglers are targeting splake, whitefish and coho. Try 60 to 70 feet when bouncing an egg off the bottom. Many were small but keepers were reported. The bigger splake and a couple 15 inch coho were caught off Sand Point. Smelt are being marked but none were caught. Catch rates were spotty in Trout Bay however anglers did manage to catch coho, lake trout and steelhead.

Menominee River: Still has unsafe ice from where the ice breaker went upstream to Marinette. Those fishing at the Menikaunee launch caught small yellow perch when jigging wax worms. The bite was still slow for northern pike. Anglers can see them with cameras but the bite is not there. Those jigging for walleye through the ice at the dam caught a few fish. They are using a piece of minnow or wax worms.

Little Bay De Noc: Many anglers have installed extensions on their augers because the ice is so thick. Travel conditions improved and more anglers were targeting walleye. Catch rates were fair between Gladstone and Garth Point. At the head of the bay, most used tip-ups with sucker minnows in 8 to 20 feet. Those fishing the Second and Third Reefs were jigging rapalas or using tip-ups in 18 to 30 feet and those at Gladstone were jigging rapalas in 28 to 32 feet. Catch rates were best at dusk. For whitefish, catch rates were fair in 30 to 35 feet at Gladstone or 75 to 85 feet at Sand Point. Perch reports were down but a few were taken on minnows and wigglers in 19 to 30 feet along the Second Reef.

Munuscong: Has excellent ice however catch rates remain slow in Raber Bay.

Cedarville and Hessel: Those fishing Government Bay at Cedarville or Wilderness Bay at Hessel are seeing perch but very few bites.

March 13, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Anglers caught a few big perch in the Metro Park Marina. Catch rates for walleye improved some in Brest Bay. Try early morning and late evening.

Huron River: Those fishing the couple spots with open water caught steelhead. Try Labo Park or up near the dam at Flat Rock.

Wayne County: Panfish anglers are experiencing varying levels of success because of the changing weather. Most are using teardrops with wax worms or mousies.

Washtenaw County: Inland lakes are producing a light number of pike and panfish.

Detroit River: Those fishing Grosse Ile are still taking some perch in Airport Bay. A slight warm-up by the end of the week may push some bigger fish up into the canals.

Lake St. Clair: Overall perch fishing was spotty. Small perch seem abundant however bigger fish were seen but they would not bite.

St. Clair River: Has ice flows coming down. No word on fishing conditions.

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in the marina at Sebawaing. Those fishing the river and marina at Caseville caught a few small perch.

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Ice fishing activity has been slow on the inland lakes. Some have caught panfish and pike but overall catch rates were down. Many lakes are running low on dissolved oxygen so fish have moved higher up in water column.

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Traverse City: The East Bay is producing lake trout. The numbers are good but the fish were on the small side. Anglers are jigging glow pimples in 120 to 140 feet. Yuba was producing some good catches. In the West Bay, good numbers of some nice lake trout and burbot were caught. Some reported 10 pound lake trout and burbot over 8 pounds caught near Lee's Point in 135 to 165 feet of water when jigging glows.

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Crystal Lake: In Benzie County was producing some large smelt.

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Lake Mitchell: Continues to produce some walleye, pike and crappie. Catch rates for bluegill and perch were hit-or-miss. The better fishing seems to be early evening and night. Try Big Cove for pike, crappie and bluegills.

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Munising: A hard top crust in the bay makes for easier walking. Anglers are targeting splake, whitefish and coho. Try 60 to 70 feet when bouncing an egg off the bottom. Many were small but keepers were reported. The bigger splake and a couple 15 inch coho were caught off Sand Point. Smelt are being marked but none were caught. Catch rates were spotty in Trout Bay however anglers did manage to catch coho, lake trout and steelhead.

Menominee River: Still has unsafe ice from where the ice breaker went upstream to Marinette. Those fishing at the Menikaunee launch caught small yellow perch when jigging wax worms. The bite was still slow for northern pike. Anglers can see them with cameras but the bite is not there. Those jigging for walleye through the ice at the dam caught a few fish. They are using a piece of minnow or wax worms.

Little Bay De Noc: Has exceptional ice this year but travel has been difficult. Many have added extensions to their augers because the ice is so thick. More anglers are out as the walleye action was good. Fish were caught by those jigging rapalas with or without a minnow in 25 to 40 feet between the Escanaba River and Gladstone. Fair walleye action was noted along the "Narrows" in 30 to 40 feet and off the Second and Third Reefs in 20 to 35 feet at night. The head of the bay had mixed results with some fish caught in 8 to 35 feet by those using tip-ups with large sucker minnows.

Perch anglers had good catches in the "Narrows" when using minnows or wigglers in 33 to 41 feet. Good numbers of jumbo perch reported from this area. Near Kipling, lots of small perch along with some jumbos were taken in 28 feet or in 14 to 30 feet near the Day's River.

Whitefish anglers off Sand Point reported slow catch rates in 75 to 85 feet.

Anglers fishing walleye at the head of the Bay also reported several large northern pike caught using tip-ups w/minnows in and around 20' of water. Good Luck! Greg

Many anglers have installed extensions on their augers because the ice is so thick. Travel conditions improved and more anglers were targeting walleye. Catch rates were fair between Gladstone and Garth Point. At the head of the bay, most used tip-ups with sucker minnows in 8 to 20 feet. Those fishing the Second and Third Reefs were jigging rapalas or using tip-ups in 18 to 30 feet and those at Gladstone were jigging rapalas in 28 to 32 feet. Catch rates were best at dusk. For whitefish, catch rates were fair in 30 to 35 feet at Gladstone or 75 to 85 feet at Sand Point. Perch

reports were down but a few were taken on minnows and wigglers in 19 to 30 feet along the Second Reef.

Munuscong: Has excellent ice however catch rates remain slow in Raber Bay.

Cedarville and Hessel: Those fishing Government Bay at Cedarville or Wilderness Bay at Hessel are seeing perch but very few bites.

March 20, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

It may be hard to believe but anglers are actually getting tired of ice fishing! Many have put the ice fishing gear away and are now getting the spring and summer gear ready to go. The 2013-2014 ice fishing season may be one for the record books.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Brest Bay is still giving up a few walleye. Perch and bluegills were caught in the Metro Park Marina. Those fishing the middle lagoon at Sterling State Park caught bluegill and crappie. Some bluegills were on the small side but some of the crappie were 9 to 11 inches.

Detroit River: Had some flow ice coming down. Anglers were still ice fishing for perch in Airport Bay. The canals around Gibraltar were starting to open up.

Lake St. Clair: Still has ice however with rain in the forecast and warmer temperatures this week, the shoreline may start to get soft by the weekend. Perch fishing was on the slow side with mostly smaller fish caught.

Oakland County: Warm weather had the bluegills biting on the inland lakes.

Saginaw Bay: Walleye season is open year round. Fish were caught at several locations like White's Beach, the Black Hole in 20 feet, Linwood in 17 feet, the first pressure crack off the Bay City State Park, five to six miles north of Callahan Road, or the Slot off Thomas Road and Sunset Bay Marina. Fish were also caught off the north end of Spoils Island however anglers need to use caution around the south end because snowmobiles have gone through the ice near the sand bar. Some perch were caught off Killarney Beach but Vanderbilt Park was slow. Bluegills and some nice crappie 9 to 12 inches were caught in the marina at Sebewaing. At Mud Creek, anglers are seeing a lot of nice perch but they would not bite. The smaller ones were hitting on a regular basis. We look forward to reporting on the steelhead and sucker runs but with all the ice, it's going to be awhile.

Saginaw River: Walleye season is closed and will re-open on Saturday, April 26th.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

The inland lakes still have ice. Most had mixed catch reports. Some limit catches of crappie were reported.

St. Joseph River: Rising water levels will slow the steelhead bite however fish were caught downstream of the Berrien Springs Dam.

Kalamazoo River: Steelhead have been caught below the Allegan Dam.

Grand River in Grand Rapids: Anglers are still getting some nice steelhead below the Sixth Street Dam.

Ingham County: Fishing has slowed on the area lakes and rivers.

Clinton County: The lakes still have ice but few anglers. Those heading out have caught a couple bluegills here and there.

Jackson County: Some anglers were out but few fish were caught.

Calhoun County: Area lakes have become fairly quiet and some had no anglers at all. Goguac Lake and Duck Lake were producing a few panfish.

Muskegon River: Anglers report good steelhead fishing below Croton Dam. Brown trout have also been caught. Most are fly fishing.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Burt Lake: Is producing a few perch.

Au Sable River: Steelhead fishing was good however the access sites including the ramps, steps and walkways were icy. Anglers need to use caution in these areas. Boats being retrieved are dripping water on the extremely cold surfaces which adds more ice each time.

Higgins Lake: Still has ice but fewer anglers heading out. Some are still targeting lake trout. Perch fishing was very slow and there has been no word on smelt.

Houghton Lake: Still has a few anglers going out for bluegills however few fish were caught. There is no longer any snow on the lake which means those heading out will want to bring cleats for traction.

Tawas: Fishing in the bay was slow. A few small perch were caught inside the harbor. Pike spearing is closed but hook and line fishing is still open on the Great Lakes. Walleye anglers were mainly fishing at dusk.

Au Gres: Had a lot of anglers walleye fishing off Palmer Road. Most were fishing in 7 to 10 and some limit catches were reported. Some perch ranging 6 to 8 inches were also caught but anglers were sorting through the small ones. We have reports of a truck going through the ice at Palmer Road so anglers need to use caution.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice fishing is still going on the inland lakes. At this rate, anglers could be ice fishing well into April. Warmer weather should help with the panfish bite.

Lake Charlevoix: Was producing fair catches of perch.

Torch Lake: Was producing decent catches of whitefish and trout.

Traverse City: The East Bay continues to produce some lake trout and large burbot. Most are fishing in 120 to 150 feet off Deep Water Point and Yuba. Try jigs that glow. Lake trout have been caught in West Bay as well. Try 135 to 180 feet with sand kickers and pimples with or without a minnow. Perch anglers could not get the fish to bite. Warmer temperatures are starting to produce some pressure cracks so anglers need to be careful.

Green Lake: Still had ice. Those fishing at night have caught smelt.

Lake Cadillac: Those still heading out are now targeting panfish. Crappie could be found just off the bottom or just under the ice. Try minnows, wigglers or wax worms.

Lake Mitchell: Still has a few anglers heading out for bluegill and crappie.

Manistee River: Has some steelhead but the spring run has not yet started. Ice still covers some large areas of the river.

Pere Marquette River: Also has steelhead and more anglers out targeting them. Large sections of the river still had ice.

UPPER PENINSULA

Marquette: The Lower Harbor had no anglers but the ice remains solid. Strong winds in the Upper Harbor are shifting the ice while cold temperatures were making new ice. Only a few anglers were out but no fish were caught.

Carp River: Winds have shifted some of the ice and other areas froze over because of temperatures below zero. Some of the river is open slightly between the bridge and the discharge area below Highway-41. A few anglers tried fishing but had no success.

Au Train: Had only a handful of anglers fishing and they had no success. Some areas took the entire length of the auger to get through the ice and slush. The mouth of the Rock River and the Au Train River were still iced in.

Munising: Had more anglers out fishing but catch rates remain slow. Solid ice remains but fresh snow may make travel difficult. For whitefish, try bouncing eggs off the bottom in 60 to 70 feet. Some reported a fairly steady bite between 6 and 8pm. The fish ranged 8 to 13 inches. Splake were caught however many were small. For bigger fish, try off the City Pier or Sand Point. Coho anglers could be found off Sand Point but catch rates slowed. Those fishing near the mouth of the rivers caught herring, menominee and steelhead. Fishing in Trout Bay has declined with only the occasional coho, lake trout or steelhead caught.

Menominee River: Warmer weather followed by extreme cold turned the parking lots, walkways and the river into ice rinks. Some were fishing the open water on the Michigan side for steelhead and brown trout. They are drifting spawn, yarn and flies near the rocks or casting lures off the Cat Walk. Catch rates were slow.

Little Bay De Noc: The last week of walleye season was one that anglers have not seen in years. Many were not able to reach the water without an extension on their auger because of the ice thickness. Anglers caught jumbo perch along the "Narrows" in 40 to 50 feet and off Vagabond Resort in 24 to 30 feet when using minnows or wigglers. Those fishing Butler Island reported a lot of small fish along with a few keepers. The next several weeks should bring some very good perch fishing opportunities if it warms up.

Munuscong: Anglers caught perch off Grassy Island. Catch rates should pick up soon off Dan's Resort and near Grassy Island.

Cedarville and Hessel: Perch anglers are taking fish off the west end of Musky Bay and towards Duck Bay in 7 to 10 feet. Fish were also caught from the east end of Hessel Bay and Government Bay.

April 2, 2014

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

517-284-5830

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

On Tuesday, April 1st, all anglers 17 years of age and older will be required to have a 2014 fishing license. Be sure to pick up a copy of the 2014 Fishing Guide when you purchase your license.

New Crayfish Regulations go into effect on April 1st. Crayfish species not native to Michigan waters, which include (but are not limited to) red swamp crayfish and rusty crayfish, may not be possessed or used for bait, whether alive or dead, on any waters of this state whether those waters are public or private.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Perch are still being caught in the Metro Park Marina. The launch is now open and boats are heading out. Be sure to watch for ice coming down the river. Perch and walleye were caught near the Banana Dike.

River Raisin: Was not fishable. Ice jams down near the mouth were causing water levels to rise over the banks.

Huron River: Water levels were up some. Anglers fishing near Labo Park are catching steelhead.

Lake St. Clair: Still has a lot of ice however the lake is beginning to open up especially where there is a current. Be careful near the river mouths, creeks and ditches where warm water enters the lake. Pressure cracks are also starting to thaw so there is a possibility of the ice shifting. Anglers will need to use caution so they don't find themselves taking a ride on a sheet of ice.

Clinton River: The cut-off channel (Macomb County) from the spillway weir to the Harper Road Bridge is under new fishing regulations beginning April 1, 2014. Please note the printed version of the guide on page 36 did not specify "*from the spillway weir to the Harper Road Bridge*" as it should have. The online version will be updated with the change soon.

Saginaw Bay: Ice angling continues with lots of people out fishing. Cold nights continue to sustain the ice but driving trucks out there is not a good idea. The snow cover is gone, so bring your cleats. Rivers have yet to open up so steelhead and sucker fishing are pretty much on hold. On the west side, only a couple walleye were caught because of dirty water. The occasional perch and walleye were taken in 6 to 8 feet off Townline Road and Newman Road. Those fishing off the Bay City State Park caught walleye in 15 to 17 feet. Fish were also taken in 9 feet off Parish Road, 14 feet off Killarney Beach, and 4 to 10 feet off the trailer park near the mouth of the Saginaw River. Most are heading out about 6pm and fish until after dark. On the East side, fish were caught in 14 feet off Thomas Road and Sunset Bay Marina. At Sebawaing and Caseville, the water is getting dirty and the river ice is getting bad as runoff starts to erode it.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice on the inland lakes was holding but the problem may be getting on the lake as the shoreline ice becomes soft. Watch for honeycomb ice which can be very weak.

St. Joseph River: Steelhead fishing has been good below the Berrien Springs Dam. Water levels continue to rise which makes wading difficult. Many are floating wax worms and wigglers but some did well with spinners.

Kalamazoo River: Catch rates for steelhead were good below the Allegan Dam. Those wading will want to keep a close eye on water levels.

Grand River in Grand Rapids: Anglers are catching steelhead below the Sixth Street Dam.

Grand River in Lansing: No word on steelhead however rain and warmer temperatures should start to push some fish up this way.

Looking Glass River: Water levels are up.

Maple River: At Maple Rapids has high water levels.

Muskegon River: Has good steelhead fishing. Anglers are concentrating on the deeper holes until the weather warms up.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Au Sable River: Is open and accessible for shore and boat anglers. The launch at Rea Road was the most open as ice was still built up at the Whirlpool. Steelhead were caught near the gas line and the mouth. Try spawn, wax worms, small spoons, body baits or flies.

Higgins Lake: Ice anglers are still getting some perch along the north end near Evergreen Park, the church camp and Sunken Island. For rainbow trout, try wigglers near the Conference Center. The lake trout bite has slowed and no word on smelt.

Houghton Lake: Is still locked up tight with ice and those heading out are catching bluegills, perch and crappie. The bluegills were caught in 5 feet of water.

Tawas: A few nice perch were caught in 18 feet off Jerry's Marina however anglers were throwing back a lot of small ones. Quite a few were fishing inside the harbor but the fish were small. A few walleye were caught out past the end of Tawas Point in water at least 20 feet deep.

Au Gres: There were lots of anglers fishing off Palmer Road. They're getting both walleye and perch from 6 to 8 feet of water. No limits but some nice fish were caught.

Au Gres River: Steelhead anglers hoping to fish the East Branch will have to wait a bit longer because Whitney Drain near the Singing Bridge is still iced in.

Rifle River: Dip net season opened on March 20th however anglers will be waiting a while as the river was still iced in.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

The area has more snow and continued frigid temperatures which is making ice, not melting it! Ice fishing continues like it has for the last four months.

Traverse City: Those fishing the East Bay have caught lake trout in 80 to 150 feet off Deepwater Point. Most are jigging sand kickers or white Swedish pimples. The West Bay had slower catch rates but lake trout, cisco and whitefish were caught in 96 feet near the pressure crack which is out from the boat launch on M-22.

Boardman River: Anglers are starting to see some steelhead.

Lake Cadillac: Cold temperatures and more snow are not the signs of spring that most anglers are looking for. Very few have been out and trying for panfish. The ice is still thick. Anglers are using extensions on their augers or looking for pre-drilled holes.

Manistee River: Has steelhead but we are still waiting for that big push that comes in the spring. Anglers caught fish on spawn, wax worms and wobble glows.

Pere Marquette River: Steelhead fishing is viable for those hardy enough to endure the January like conditions. The spring push has not yet started but fresh fish are starting to trickle in.

UPPER PENINSULA

Keweenaw Bay: Overall fishing was slow but some lake trout were caught a few miles north of Pequaming. A couple lake trout were caught in the bay. There is a lot of slush near Sand Point and to the south.

Menominee: The U.S. Coast Guard will be conducting ice breaking operations in Green Bay between the Marinette/ Menominee harbor breakwall and the Rock Island Passage to allow access to commercial vessels coming into the harbor. These operations will likely occur on Saturday the 29th and Sunday the 30th of March and will continue throughout the remainder of the 2014 shipping season. Anglers should remove ice shanties and equipment from the area and all recreational users on the ice should stay clear of the shipping channels.

Menominee River: At the Hattie Street Dam, anglers are trout fishing in the open water on the Michigan side. Rainbow trout and brown trout were caught by those drifting spawn, flies and yarn near the rocks or casting off the Catwalk.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions remain the same. If you have an extension for your auger you might want to bring it. Perch anglers had mixed results. A majority of fish were caught from the Second Reef in Kipling to just south of the "Narrows". Deep water 30 to 40 feet is best for jumbo perch. Those fishing in 10 feet of water on the east side of Butler Island caught lots of small fish. Whitefish were caught in 35 to 40 feet off Gladstone however the better catches were off Sand Point in 75 to 85 feet.

Munising: Angler numbers and catch rates were down. The thick ice is almost impossible for those without a power auger. A couple salmon were caught between Sand Point and the Anna River. Try jigging spoons 20 to 30 feet down. Some say the bigger whitefish were moving towards shallow water. Anglers will want to try bouncing eggs off the bottom. Splake action was slow. Try minnows off Sand Point and the City Pier for bigger fish. Anglers are marking smelt but catch rates were poor. Catch rates for burbot have increased. Herring were caught near the river mouths. In Trout Bay, catch rates were spotty.

Munuscong: Some perch were caught near Grassy Island and west of Dan's Resort.

Cedarville and Hessel: The perch harvest has been slow. It looks like catch rates will not pick up until spring not only arrives, but stays.