

January 7, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

While cold weather is starting to produce ice, those wanting to head out would be wise to wait because the first ice of the season is the most dangerous. Warmer temperatures coupled with rain by the end of the week will most likely take out some of the ice in the Lower Peninsula but continued cold over the next couple weeks does look promising as far as ice fishing goes.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Huron River: Anglers are taking some steelhead near Labo Park. Most are boat anglers fishing the deep holes.

Lake St. Clair: Had no safe ice. Skim ice was forming along the shoreline as well as in the canals and marinas. Wind can move the shore ice around and plug up the area around a boat launch very quickly so boating season on the lake is pretty much over. Cold weather over the next few days could make enough ice to allow some fishing however rain and warmer temperatures by the end of the week could ruin those chances.

St. Clair River: Fishing activity has been light. Strong winds have stirred up the south end of Lake Huron and has made the river muddy. There has been little ice formation so Lake Huron and the St. Clair River were pretty much ice free.

Saginaw Bay: There is too much ice for shore fishing but not enough for ice fishing. There is a layer of "shove ice or blow ice" that blew in along the shoreline around the entire bay and extends out anywhere from 200 to 400 yards. Fishing is pretty much confined to sitting on docks in marina basins and perch fishing through the holes in the ice. Marina basins that anglers might want to try include Eagle Bay up near Standish, Gambil's Landing near Pinconning, Linwood, Sunset Bay near Unionville, Sebewaing City Marina on the Sebewaing River, Bay Shore near Bay Port and the basins off the Pigeon River in Caseville.

Kawkawlin River: Was iced over.

Saginaw River: Had boat anglers targeting walleye just downstream from the Independence Bridge however the river and the launches were icing up. Marina basins and boat launches at most locations on the river were not useable. The only exception was the Zilwaukee ramp and the McGillvary Street ramp which is just downstream of the Independence Bridge. Walleye anglers were fishing around the U.S.S. Edson however boat anglers need to be vigilant and watch for large sheets of ice that that could keep them from moving freely around the river. Anyone taking to a boat in these conditions needs to be sure the motor is running properly, wear lots of warm clothes, a life jacket, and be sure to have a cell phone in case they need to call for help.

Tittabawassee River: Was filled with floating ice. The boat ramps at Gordonville Road and Center Road are iced in and not useable.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

No ice fishing as the waters are still wide open. A few small lakes and ponds may start to get ice this week however it will not be safe ice.

St. Joseph River: Has open water and anglers are still catching steelhead.

Kalamazoo River: Open water fishing remains. Anglers are still taking a fair to good number of steelhead.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Continues to produce steelhead and the occasional walleye.

Rogue River: Still has the occasional steelhead hitting on flies or spawn.

Muskegon River: Has open water and anglers are catching steelhead.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice was just beginning to form. A few ponds may be frozen over but there was no safe ice to report. Thin ice was beginning to cover Otsego Lake and Lake Margrethe was about half covered with thin ice. It is still too early to venture out onto any ice in the region.

Au Sable River: Anglers fishing below Foote Dam need to be aware that water flows are fluctuating 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. Click here: <http://www.usgs.gov/water/> 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. Some steelhead and a few perch have been caught in the area.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice was starting to form on many of the smaller lakes however there is no safe ice yet. The big lakes like Charlevoix and Walloon still had open water.

Betsie River: Steelhead fishing has been good despite the cold.

Lake Cadillac: Was starting to make ice however there was still open water.

Lake Mitchell: Had skim ice. No anglers were heading out as it is still too early.

Manistee River: Steelhead fishing has been good on all sections, from the mouth up to Tippy Dam. The rain in December brought good numbers of fish into the river. Anglers are still catching some fresh fish throughout the river system. Try spawn, beads or a jig and wax worm.

Little Manistee River: Closed to fishing on January 1 and will not re-open until April 1.

Pere Marquette River: Steelhead fishing has been good despite the cold. Try fishing the deeper holes.

UPPER PENINSULA

Not much activity up here just yet. Starting to get ice, but still thin in most places. Snow showers the end of the week could dump enough snow to slow the freezing process. Anglers would be wise to wait for another week or two.

Lake Gogebic: Ice anglers were taking some walleye in the shallows when jigging rapalas or using sucker minnows. A few perch were also taken on jigs with wigglers or spikes. Anglers are reminded to use caution especially with snow on the lake which makes it harder to see the bad spots.

Little Bay De Noc: Was making ice north of Gladstone. Ice has formed from the "Narrows" north to the head of the Bay but ice conditions are DANGEROUS especially with two to three inches of snow cover. A couple anglers were walking out near Butler Island but again extreme caution needs to be used. Those looking for perch said the bite was slow.

St. Mary's River: Anglers were fishing Munuscong Bay most likely for perch. Remember, first ice is dangerous ice and extreme caution needs to be used.

January 14, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

There is some ice fishing in the northern half of the Lower Peninsula and in the Upper Peninsula. Those heading out in the northern half of the Lower Peninsula should stay off the deeper lakes. Anglers have caught pike, walleye, perch, crappie and bluegills.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake St. Clair: Is about a week away from having reasonably safe ice at the public access sites. At this point, much of the lake has flow ice and scattered patches of open water. Ice thickness in the canals and marinas is highly variable due to the weekend thaw, recent snow and current. High winds this week will keep the ice unsafe. Anglers are mostly targeting panfish in the shallows. Finding clear water seems to be the key.

Harbor Beach: Had ice in the marina but no safe ice.

Saginaw Bay: Some were ice fishing off the Pinconning Park in about a foot of water. A number of people were fishing inside the Linwood Beach Marina and getting six to seven inch perch. Ice anglers were pretty much confined to Lindy's Marina basin along the Quanicassee River and the Sunset Bay Marina basin south of Fish Point where they were taking small perch. The ice in the Sebewaing Marina and in the river was not good. The wind made ice conditions questionable up around Geiger Road and Rose Island. The ice blew out from Vanderbilt Park to Fish Point and any ice in the river and marinas at Caseville was not safe. No safe ice at Port Austin.

Saginaw River: Boat anglers making their way out of the Rust Avenue launch did find a few walleye before the snow and cold. Orange jig heads tipped with artificial blue and silver minnows worked best from the old Hooters upstream to Rust Avenue. There was so much floating ice from Zilwaukee north to Bay City that fishing was difficult and boating was hazardous. Boat fishing in Bay City is at a standstill.

Tittabawassee River: Water levels were up and muddy after the last rain. Late last week, boat and shore anglers were taking some walleye at various locations from Mapleton upstream to the Dow Dam. Most were launching from the ramp at Gordonville Road and trolling plugs or jigging orange and chartreuse jigs tipped with live or artificial minnows.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

The lakes in this region were just starting to form ice but several inches of snow have also fallen this week. Heavy lake effect snow will create hazardous ice conditions.

St. Joseph River: The cold weather has made steelhead fishing a bit challenging but fish are still in the river and being caught.

Kalamazoo River: Though water temperatures have fallen, steelhead were still hitting and catch rates were fair to good.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Continues to produce steelhead especially up near the 6th Street Dam. Anglers are also picking up a few pike.

Rogue River: Still has the occasional steelhead being caught near the mouth.

Muskegon River: Good steelhead fishing continues even with the cold weather. Those heading out are taking some very nice fish.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Higgins Lake: Has shore ice about 50 yards out but no safe ice. Skim ice was starting to form out further. Still too early for ice fishing but there is plenty of snow for the outdoor enthusiast.

Houghton Lake: Ice fishing is on however anglers still need to use some caution especially on the north end and along the shorelines. Ice in the East Bay was questionable. Strong winds have pretty much cleared the snow but left frozen slush. Anglers have taken a few limit catches of bluegill and crappie but they are drilling a lot of holes to find them. Try the weed beds along the first drop-off with tear drops and wax worms. Red or white spikes were also taking fish. Walleye anglers have managed only a few fish when using vertical jigs with rattles tipped with blues. Pike anglers have done well with golden shiners or sucker minnows.

Lake St. Helen: Anglers are ice fishing however caution needs to be used. Due to natural springs, it is not safe to enter the Second Lake by way of the First Lake or the Third Lake. It is going to take a little longer before ice near the springs will be safe enough to travel over. Most anglers were using tip-ups but some are starting to jig. Minnows of choice were blues, sucker and medium golden shiners. They caught a few walleye, pike, crappie and a couple big perch.

Tawas: A few were ice fishing for perch inside Jerry's Marina but all they caught was small ones. Pier angler's open-water fishing outside the state harbor caught a couple lake trout when using perch rigs with large minnows. There was some ice fishing activity in two feet of water off Palmer Road. Anglers were taking near limit catches of seven to nine inch perch.

Au Gres: The ice was not safe in this area or off the Pine River access site but it could be by the end of this week.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

There are still good numbers of steelhead in the rivers, however with the arctic conditions, few are fishing. Those willing to brave the cold could actually do well.

Lake Cadillac: Anglers should exercise caution, as ice conditions are still not great and snow cover can hide the danger zones. The best ice was along the west shore where anglers were taking a few pike and some crappie.

Lake Mitchell: Has ice however use extreme caution. Anglers are catching pike. Those fishing in the coves were taking a few panfish.

Lake Missaukee: Has ice and anglers are out fishing but remember to use caution.

Manistee River: Steelhead numbers are still good. Anglers continue to see a fair to good number of chrome fish. Those wading caught fish near Suicide Bend.

Pere Marquette River: Is still producing steelhead.

UPPER PENINSULA

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions are improving with the onset of very cold temperatures however conditions remain dangerous throughout the Bay. Ice covers the Bay north of the "Narrows". The southern Bay is still mostly open water with the exception of the Escanaba Yacht Harbor. Most anglers were traveling by foot. A few were taking 4-wheelers out but again this is not recommended. Those entering the middle Masonville access gate should be careful as the parking area by the water is not frozen. It has deep ruts and several vehicles have gotten stuck. Anglers were fishing near Kipling, the Center Reef and the Third Reef. Catch rates for perch were fair to good near Kipling when using minnows in five to 24 feet. A few walleye were caught in 13 to 17 feet off the first yellow gate access when jigging rapalas and minnows. The Second Reef produced fair catches using the same in 24 feet. The better fishing was from dusk to 7 p.m. Some caught walleye on tip-ups with minnows. Very good numbers of pike were reported all through the Kipling area. Spearing has been very good in the shallows. A few anglers reported catching brown trout in the Escanaba Yacht Harbor when using minnows straight out from the launch.

January 21, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

With the deep freeze, most of the state is now ice fishing. Anglers will still need to use caution especially along the west side after all the snow. Reports coming in say the pike are hungry and hitting hard and the panfish action has turned on. Those targeting walleye are also taking some fish. Ice fishing season is finally here!

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake St. Clair: Has ice in some locations but open water in other areas. Windy conditions have prevented the lake from freezing. This results in highly variable ice thickness ranging from open water to maybe six inches in some areas. Anglers need to be extremely careful and check the ice. Those considering using an ATV to get around on the lake need to be extremely careful as the ice thickness can vary dramatically in a very short distance. Anglers fishing Anchor Bay at Fairhaven were getting some perch up to 12 inches but they are sorting through a lot of small ones. The bluegill and crappie fishing has been good. Ice cover is very limited at the Selfridge access site, near the mouth of the Clinton River and the Metro Park.

St. Clair River: Has open water so shore fishing would be an option. Anglers could find some rainbow trout and brown trout.

Lexington: Ice anglers have been targeting brown trout, steelhead and Atlantic salmon.

Saginaw Bay: Had lots of fishing activity off Palmer Road where yellow perch including many small ones were caught in one and a half to six feet of water. The keepers were running seven to nine inches. A couple walleye were also taken at night. A few were fishing off the mouth of the Pine River but most were concentrated off Palmer Road. A good number were fishing off the Pinconning Park in waters up to four feet deep where the occasional limit catch of eight to 10 inch perch were caught. Some were catching small perch inside the Linwood Beach Marina.

Fishing was slow at the Hot Ponds. At Quanicassee, anglers fishing inside Lindy's Marina off the river and caught bluegills and crappie but no perch. Some are starting to venture out from Vanderbilt Park but the perch fishing was spotty. No activity off Thomas Road. From Sebewaing north to Bayshore Marina, most of the activity was off Geiger Road but perch fishing was spotty. A few did well but they had to work hard for eight to 10 fish measuring seven to nine inches. Fishing was slow off Mud Creek with only a few perch and one pike taken. At Caseville, a few lake trout were taken in the river near the pier however the ice was still questionable, especially out near the end of the pier. The ice was still questionable at Port Austin and Grindstone City with just a few shanties appearing at both harbors.

Saginaw River: Was in transition, with too much ice for boat fishing but not enough for ice fishing in most places. A couple anglers were fishing on the basin behind Ojibway Island in Saginaw and a few were slowly heading out from First Street but the ice is not all that thick yet and anglers need to use extreme caution. There might be five or six inches in one spot but only an inch thick a few feet away. There was no fishing activity from Saginaw to the mouth.

Tittabawassee River: Was just not fishable due to colder temperatures making a lot of floating ice.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Anglers are getting out on lakes in the south and central part of the state that received less snow over the weekend. This includes lakes in the counties of Jackson, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Branch, and St. Joseph. Try fishing the small shallow lakes. Bluegills, crappie and pike were being caught.

Kalamazoo River: Steelhead anglers are still getting fish up near the Allegan Dam.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: A few anglers were still targeting steelhead. These diehards are still taking a fair number of some nice fish.

Kent County: Anglers were fishing on Lime Lake, Long Lake, Reeds Lake and Wabasis Lake.

Lake Lansing: Pike anglers reported slow catch rates. Try targeting bluegill and crappie instead.

Muskrat Lake: In Clinton County is producing a few crappie.

Morrison Lake: In Ionia County has ice anglers targeting panfish.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Margrethe: Had ice however still use caution near the deep water.

Higgins Lake: Finally froze over late Monday night however the ice was not safe yet. Continued cold temperatures should shore the ice up soon but for now anglers will have to wait. Snow cover was very light and will not hinder the freezing process.

Houghton Lake: Has ice and is producing fish. Anglers still need to use caution around Long Point and the areas where there are inlets and outlets. Anglers are taking good numbers of pike on tip-ups with minnows. Try blues, golden's or suckers. The walleye have been really picky. They see the bait, they swim toward it and as soon as the anglers start to move it a little bit the fish swim away. Anglers are catching some bluegills and a few crappie.

Tawas: Finally had some ice cover back in the "armpit" of Tawas Bay and up inside Tawas Point. Those heading out from the access road next to Jerry's Marina were getting some perch during the day and a few walleye in the evening in 18 to 20 feet. There was no activity inside the harbor at Tawas.

Au Gres River: Anglers were out and taking a few walleye in the evening.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Deep snow and slush is making travel difficult on the inland lakes. Anglers should avoid the bigger and deeper lakes as they take longer to freeze and with deep snow now covering them, it will slow the freezing process.

Kalkaska County: The inland lakes had ice however the ice may not be uniform. Use extreme caution and watch for areas of soft ice.

Lake Cadillac: Anglers are ice fishing however use caution especially along the east side. Check the ice as you go. Panfish were caught on wax worms, spikes and small minnows. The pike are very active and hitting on tip-ups with minnows.

Lake Mitchell: Ice fishing is on! Anglers can be found in the coves and near the State Park. Pike fishing was good for those using tip-ups with blues. Decent catch rates for bluegills and crappie when using spikes and wax worms. The occasional perch was caught on minnows. Walleye anglers found fish just before dark.

Lake Missaukee: Has ice and anglers are out catching panfish, pike and the occasional walleye.

Manistee River: Those able to brave the cold are taking a fair to good number of steelhead. There was an ice jam along M-37 at Sherman.

UPPER PENINSULA

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions have improved however there was still open water from the Escanaba River to the south. Ice cover was noted from Gladstone to the north. While some are using snowmobiles and 4-wheelers for travel, driving a full size vehicle out on the ice would be very dangerous and is not recommended. Pressure cracks have started to form out from the Terrace Bay Inn and Kipling from the center Masonville gate road leading out to Butler Island. Walleye anglers reported fair to good catches throughout the Bay with the better catches from the Third Reef when jigging raps or using tip-ups with minnows in 13 to 30 feet and at Gladstone in 26 to 30 feet out from the State Police Post. Perch fishing was spotty. Good numbers of small fish were reported near Kipling but few were kept. Northern pike were very active and caught by walleye anglers throughout the Bay. Those spearing did best around Butler Island in five to 10 feet and north of the Day's River in seven to 10 feet. Several whitefish were caught along with walleye in Gladstone.

Munising: **ATTENTION ANGLERS:** Authorities have issued an **ICE WARNING** for Munising Bay. A fishing boat left the bay early Wednesday morning and broke up the ice in the area. There is a lot of snow, slush and now open water a few hundred yards out especially towards Sand Point.

Munuscong Bay: The best fishing has been around Grassy Island, east and north of Barbeau Point and off the Birches where anglers are taking perch and walleye. Be extremely careful when moving around because the ice is not uniform and varies from one spot to the next.

Cedarville and Hessel: Ice conditions have improved significantly. Some perch and a few splake have been caught in Hessel Bay and some perch were taken in Musky Bay. Anglers should still continue to use caution when traveling on the ice.

January 28, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Now that ice fishing is pretty much statewide, angler safety is important. Always wear a flotation device, use the buddy system, let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return, take a cell phone and always check the ice thickness with a spud. Use extreme caution near pressure cracks, inlets and outlets.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake St. Clair: Has more ice on the lake but there is still a lot of open water offshore so anglers need to be aware of wind conditions and the possibility of ice shifting and pressure cracks opening up. Anglers are out fishing the usual places off Fairhaven, Brandenburg, Cotton Road, South River Road, the Metro Park and the Spillway Access Site. Ice thickness is variable at these locations so anglers need to use extreme caution.

Port Austin and Grindstone City: Each had a few ice shanties in the harbor that were close to shore.

Saginaw Bay: Ice conditions did improve around the Bay but it is still “iffy” out there in spots. There are fish to catch without crossing the pressure cracks which is much safer. Palmer Road near Standish was very busy with a lot of anglers on the ice. They caught eight to 10 inch perch in two to three feet of water. Walleye were caught in the evening in eight to 10 feet. White’s Beach had a few anglers targeting perch but the fish were small. Perch were caught at Pinconning and down off Newman Road. Walleye were found three-quarters of a mile off Erickson Road but anglers need to be aware of all the pressure cracks out there and use caution. There are active pressure cracks off Linwood as well. The occasional walleye was caught in eight feet off the Bay City State Recreation Area and from the shipping channel near Spoils Island. A few perch were caught near the range light off the river mouth. Perch fishing was spotty from Sebawaing to Bay Port. Some managed limit catches while others had none. Keep moving until you find an active school of fish. Walleye anglers were in the Slot and around North Island. Caseville was slow.

Saginaw River: Still had patches of open water here and there and anglers are cautioned to stay well away from those areas. Anglers need to beware of thin and treacherous ice along the river especially with temperatures well above freezing by the weekend. Anglers were marking lots of fish however they did not want to bite. That was the rule from Saginaw to the mouth. Walleye were caught but not in large numbers. Most were jigging rapalas tipped with minnow heads. Hot colors were blue and silver, black and gold, purple or perch colors. Fishing activity started near Wickes Park and Ojibway Island. A number of anglers were at the Frist Street turning basin at the north end of Saginaw and strung out north and south of the Zilwaukee Bridge. Be very careful of the ice near any of the bridges. The ice was not good near the Boys & Girls Club in the south end of Bay City. Anglers were fishing downstream of the Independence Bridge near the U.S.S. Edson but catch rates were spotty.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Anglers are ice fishing on the inland lakes however snow and slush may make travel on the ice a little more difficult. Be sure to use caution and watch for soft ice. Anglers are catching panfish, pike and walleye.

Kalamazoo River: Steelhead anglers are taking fish below the Allegan Dam. Try spawn, plugs or a jig and wax worm.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Anglers are still out there and catching steelhead including a fair to good number of chrome colored fish.

Lake Lansing: Had fair to good bluegill action but anglers are sorting out a lot of small ones. Crappie were also caught.

Morrison Lake: Is producing fairly well. Anglers are taking bluegills, perch and some decent size crappie.

Muskegon River: Continues to produce a good number of steelhead especially in the lower sections. Those floating spawn have done well but those fly fishing have also taken fish.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Fletchers Pond: Pike anglers using tip-ups are taking a good number of fish. Those seeking panfish have done well with minnows, wax worms and spikes.

Higgins Lake: Anglers were starting to walk out on the south end where they were catching lake trout in 50 to 60 feet. Rainbow trout were caught in shallow waters three feet deep near the west shore boat ramp. Anglers need to use caution and check the ice ahead of them.

Houghton Lake: Fishing has started to pick up with walleye caught along the drop-offs in deeper water. Look for the weed beds. Fish were caught at sunrise, mid-day and at sunset. Pike anglers are doing well as the fish are everywhere. Bluegills and crappie were caught off the DNR launch on the south end. There was a report of a quad that broke through the ice about 500 yards or more from the Middle Grounds. Anglers should use caution in this area.

Tawas: Most ice fishing activity was still up in the “armpit” off Jerry’s Marina. Perch were caught in 15 to 20 feet and walleye in 20 to 22 feet but success was spotty. A brown trout, a few lake trout and whitefish were caught on a spoon with a minnow. Those fishing inside the state harbor caught a few pike and perch.

Au Gres River: Anglers were taking a few walleye.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Deep snow and slush continue to make travel more difficult on the inland lakes. Anglers should still use caution and be sure to check the ice when heading out. Rivers in this area of the state continue to produce a good number of steelhead.

Traverse City: Any ice on the bays was questionable.

Lake Cadillac: Catch rates were a little slower but should pick up. Anglers are taking panfish. Try a teardrop with a small minnow, wax worm or spike. Pike anglers are spearing or using tip-ups with large minnows.

Lake Mitchell: Ice anglers fishing the coves were catching panfish over the weed beds in 10 to 12 feet. The Big Cove was producing more crappie while the smaller cove was good for bluegills. The occasional perch was also caught. Those using tip-ups are targeting pike and walleye. Those spear fishing have also taken a couple nice pike.

Manistee River: Continues to provide some good steelhead fishing. Fish have been caught throughout the river. Anglers are getting bright colored fish as well as plenty of fresh ones. Those fishing below Tippy Dam have done well with spawn or jigs and wax worms.

UPPER PENINSULA

Lake Gogebic: Had deep slush on the ice which is not ideal for vehicles especially those with wheels. Please do not drive any truck into the Bergland boat launch. The snow pack is soft and too many have gotten stuck. Perch fishing was slow with only a few caught in 22 to 25 feet. Walleye fishing was fair during the day but much better after dark in eight to 12 feet in Bergland Bay. During the day, fish were caught in 15 to 18 feet. Try tip-ups with shiners and suckers or jigging rapalas and assorted spoons tipped with a small minnow.

Menominee: **A WARNING TO ANGLERS:** The U.S. Coast Guard will conduct ice breaking operations in northern Green Bay between Marinette-Menominee and Sturgeon Bay Wisconsin on January 29-31, 2016. On Friday, January 29, a tug and its barge will be escorted from Sturgeon Bay to Marinette. The vessels will travel north and east of Green Island, approaching the Menominee Entrance in the Michigan waters of Green Bay. On Sunday, January 31, the tug and barge will be escorted back to Sturgeon Bay following the same path through northern Green Bay, remaining north and east of Green Island. All ice fishermen should remove their ice shacks and equipment from these areas; especially from the Menominee Entrance Channel and areas near Marinette Marine Corporation. Snowmobile, ATV operators, and other recreational users of the ice should avoid the shipping channels, plan their activities carefully, and use extreme caution in this area.

Menominee River: Had one gate partially open at the Hattie Street Dam and the ice blew out near the dam. The 6th Street Slip was producing some nice walleye.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions improved some from Gladstone north to the head of the Bay but again the ice thickness this year varies greatly in any given area. Anglers need to use caution when traveling on the Bay. Anglers have gone out as far south as the Stonington area but this is not recommended and considered **VERY DANGEROUS** ice. The Bay had very little snow cover. Several large pressure cracks have made travel a bit more difficult so please use extreme caution when traveling all areas. Walleye catches remain fair to good although tapering off a bit. The Gladstone Beach area and out from the State Police Post were best reporting good catches using tip-ups with minnows or jigging rapalas in 20 to 34 feet. Catches were also reported off the Second and Third Reefs when using the same in 17 to 30 feet. Perch anglers reported better catches especially between the Second and Third Reefs with minnows in 13 to 19 feet. Northern pike catches were reported throughout the Bay and anglers spearing northern pike have reported a very good season so far. Whitefish were caught off Gladstone with dead minnows in 27 to 35 feet.

Munuscong Bay: Has ice fishing however the ice east of Roach Point towards the deeper water and the Dumping Grounds is **NOT** safe so avoid this area. Walleye fishing was good off Grassy Island and north of Pine Island. Perch fishing slowed which is usual for this time of year.

Cedarville and Hessel: Both Hessel Bay and Muskie Bay have picked up for perch. Muskie Bay has been very good for pike. Ice thickness is variable so be extremely careful.

February 4, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

With rain and warmer temperatures especially in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula, ice fishing on the inland lakes has become much more dangerous. Anglers would be wise to stay off the deeper lakes and fish in shallow waters only. Don't venture out on lakes that you are not familiar with. It pays to know depths, where drop-offs are and the location of any inlets or outlets. River ice was no longer safe.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Huron River: Steelhead success was marginal at Flat Rock. Those able to access the river by small boat were taking a few fish out of the deeper holes. Those fishing below the Belleville Dam caught a couple walleye.

Detroit River: Ice floes have pretty much put a halt to anglers going out in boats.

Oakland County: Anglers on Cass Lake and Union Lake are advised to use extreme caution especially after the rain and warm temperatures. Ice thickness will vary from one spot to the next and it may be best to stay in shallow waters. Those that had been fishing caught a decent number of panfish on wax worms in six to 12 feet. Those targeting walleye and pike had the best action right before dark when using glow lures and minnows.

Lake St. Clair: Multiple vehicles went through the ice at Fairhaven. With the rain and warm temperatures, all the fishable lake ice is pretty much gone. The canals and marinas will be questionable. Proceed with extreme caution as ice conditions can change dramatically in a short distance. The boat ramps at the Harley Ensign Launch are ice free so anglers could launch a boat.

Saginaw Bay: Most of the ice blew out last week, leaving only shore ice. The only fishable spots left were near Standish and Pinconning; the Pine River/Palmer Road area and off Pinconning Park and Newman Road. **EXTREME CAUTION** must be used and travel by ATV is **not** advised! Anglers did get some perch from those areas however warm temperatures continue to eat away at the ice. There may still be some fishing opportunities for perch off Vanderbilt Park near Quanicassee but strictly in shallow water only.

Saginaw River: The ice was no longer safe but there was still too much in the marinas to launch a boat.

Tittabawassee River: It was possible to launch boats from the ramp at Gordonville Road south of Midland. There is open water upstream to the Dow Dam and downstream as far as Freeland. Boat and shore anglers have been catching walleye on jigs and twister tails or jigs with minnows. A couple steelhead were also caught.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Even though temperatures are dropping at night, warm temperatures during the day coupled with rain are not helping ice conditions. Constant thawing and refreezing are producing honeycomb ice which is not safe. Anglers need to use extreme caution.

St. Joseph River: Anglers are doing well for steelhead downstream of the Berrien Springs Dam. Walleye were caught further upstream.

Kalamazoo River: More anglers were out with the warmer weather. Those fishing spawn, crank baits, or wax worms were taking steelhead below the Allegan Dam.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Anglers will need to pay close attention to fluctuating water levels caused by rain, run-off and moving ice. Steelhead are still being caught up near the 6th Street Dam. Anglers are using spawn bags and crank baits. Look for panfish in the backwaters. Some limit catches were reported in the bayous.

Grand River at Lansing: Was quiet for the most part. A few walleye were caught near the North Lansing Dam. Try shiners under a bobber or tight lining.

Muskegon River: The fish are there and those targeting steelhead are finding fish throughout the river including near Croton. With water levels up a bit, most fish were caught in areas where the water was slower.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Black Lake: The 2016 lake sturgeon fishing and spearing season will begin at 8 a.m. on Saturday, February 6. All anglers must register with the DNR to participate and must also possess a lake sturgeon tag which can be obtained for free at any license vendor.

Grand Lake: Was producing walleye and perch. No large numbers but the fish were good size.

Long Lake: Anglers were catching walleye and perch.

Hubbard Lake: Walleye and perch were starting to bite in 50 to 55 feet. Anglers using tip-ups with blues near the bottom had better success.

Van Etten Lake: Was producing a large number of small perch.

Higgins Lake: Still has ice fishing however anglers should still be careful and drill their way out as ice thickness varies in some areas. Lake trout fishing has been very good in 85 to 110 feet when using greys on tip-ups or jigging. Swedish pimples and big spoons also caught fish. Good perch fishing in 40 to 60 feet. Try the area near the church camp. Trout and pike were caught off the south end.

Houghton Lake: Ice fishing continues. Anglers should avoid the areas near inlets and outlets and use caution near the pressure cracks. Bluegill, crappie and perch have been caught off Saunders Point near the Cut River. Those using tip-ups caught some big pike measuring 30+ inches.

Lake St. Helen: Was producing pike and panfish.

Tawas: Most of the ice blew out leaving only shore ice. The only fishable spots left were the north end of Tawas Bay in the "armpit" and west of Jerry's Marina but again, extreme caution needs to be used.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

River fishing remains consistent, although water levels will be rising due to significant melt and rainfall.

Betsie River: Has steelhead fishing.

Green Lake: Smelt fishing has been poor. Numbers are low and the fish are small.

Lake Cadillac: Has had a good number of anglers fishing mostly for crappies and northern pike. Tip-ups with large minnows or spearing have done well for pike.

Lake Mitchell: Ice anglers continue to do well for crappie and the bluegill bite did pick up some. Anglers are using minnows, spikes and wax worms. No word on walleye. Pike are still being caught.

Portage Lake: Some decent catches of perch and bluegill were reported.

Manistee River: Has steelhead fishing and those heading out have caught some nice fish throughout the river.

Hamlin Lake: Anglers are taking bluegills, perch and some walleyes. Those seeking pike are spearing or using tip-ups with sucker minnows.

UPPER PENINSULA

Lake Gogebic: Had good walleye fishing with some limit catches reported. Some jumbo perch were also caught.

Menominee River: The 6th Street Slip was the hot spot for walleye due in part to the lack of ice by the Hattie Street Dam. Anglers are jigging with a variety of small spoons and jigs tipped with minnows. Those fishing the open water near the dam have caught a few rainbow and brown trout when casting small spoons or rapalas.

Little Bay De Noc: Warmer temperatures were creating a few hazards throughout the Bay especially the southern waters where the ice was not that thick. Anglers reported minor problems crossing Butler Island in a few areas. Anglers were fishing north of Gladstone Bay. Fair walleye catches reported south of the Escanaba River and out from the Power plant in 25 to 35 when jigging raps or sucker minnows on tip-ups. Use caution in this area which is known for dangerous ice conditions. Fair catches reported from the Center Reef south to the Second Reef in 20 to 35 feet when using tip-ups with sucker minnows. The number of perch caught has not been high but the fish are averaging eight to 16 inches. The best areas were between the Second and Third Reefs with minnows or spikes in 17 feet and off the Second reef in 23 to 30 feet. The head of the Bay reported catches in 10 to 20 feet. The Escanaba Yacht Harbor had good catches but many were small. Whitefish anglers started fishing off Sand Point but the ice conditions worsened so no one was fishing. A few whitefish were caught on minnows in Gladstone in 27 to 35 feet. The northern pike action was good off the mouth of the Day's River and the Second and Third Reefs but many were undersize. Most were using tip-ups with sucker minnows in 14 to 30 feet.

Munising: Ice conditions in the bay varied and caution needs to be used. There may also be more open water after the strong winds. Most anglers were targeting whitefish or splake. The whitefish are running small. The keepers were between 12 and 14 inches. Catch rates for splake were slow and most of the fish were sublegal. Most are using a single egg but a few were jigging fatheads in 50 to 60 feet. The ice off Powell Point had areas of open water and was questionable. The area near the city docks is limited due to tugboats that have been operating on a daily basis. Off the Anna River access, anglers were fishing in about 60 feet and reporting fish within one or two feet from the bottom. Most were small whitefish and splake. The area off Sand Point was not safe as there was open water within 100 to 200 feet offshore.

Indian Lake: In Schoolcraft County was slow for perch and walleye but a fair number of brown trout were caught.

Big Manistique Lake: Was producing good catches of walleye and large perch.

Brevoort Lake: Was producing some northern pike and a few walleye. Water depths vary but most were in 12 to 15 feet. Minnows worked best. Anglers still need to use caution.

Munuscong Bay: Was slow for walleye except for the area around Grassy Island. Perch are pretty much scattered throughout. The ice east of Roach Point was still “iffy” so use caution when traveling on the ice.

Cedarville and Hessel: Les Cheneaux and Hessel Bay were good for perch with some nice catches reported. A few splake were also caught. Muskie Bay was slow for perch. Government Bay was very good for pike. Anglers are still encouraged to use caution on the ice.

February 11, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Many areas had little to no ice so anglers are urged to use extreme caution if they're thinking of heading out. Those visiting spots with open water were targeting and catching steelhead while those on ice (northern part of the state) were seeing success looking for walleye, lake trout and perch.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Had no ice. There is one dock in at the Metro Park and a few boats were out trolling husky jerks for walleye.

Detroit River: The water was high and fast and in some areas it was muddy. A few boats were out fishing but anglers will need to pay close attention to wind direction and watch for ice floes coming down.

Oakland County: Shoreline ice was thin but should tighten back up. Anglers on Union and Cass Lakes were targeting panfish when using small plastics and wax worms. Those doing the best were hole hopping to stay on the fish. A few nice size pike were caught or speared in four to 10 feet.

Lake St. Clair: Had no ice fishing at all and while colder weather is coming, it will take at least a week of very cold weather before ice fishing returns.

Saginaw Bay: Ice fishing is very limited and is strictly a nearshore activity as there are just a few locations where shore ice was hanging on. Ice quality is **BAD**, with thickness varying widely within just a few feet. It is **NOT** advisable to try and take a snowmobile or ATV out on any remaining ice. The ice is not good off the Pine River access site. Some ice was still hanging on at Palmer Road, but perch fishing was slow and the water was murky. A few small perch were caught off White's Beach and Pinconning. At Linwood, the marina opened their boat channel and a number of small boats were trolling about five miles out. They caught walleye on crank baits however be sure to watch for ice floes. If anyone launches from Linwood Beach, they should be sure to leave their cell-phone number with the marina, as ice floes can move in and block the channel making it impossible to get back in.

The launch at the mouth of the Saginaw River was not useable because of too much ice. Boats were launching from the Hampton Township ramp at the end of Jones Road and fishing about five miles out. The Quanicassee River is wide open, running high and fast. A few crappie and small perch were caught inside Sunset Bay Marina. Any ice from Sebewaing to Sand Point was not safe. The Sebewaing River and the marina are wide open. The water is running high, fast and muddy.

Saginaw River: Most launch sites were useable but take a bag of sand or salt for traction on the ramp. The water is running high, fast and muddy. The Patterson Road ramp at the mouth of the river was not useable because of too much ice.

Tittabawassee River: Shore anglers were taking a few walleyes just upstream of the Gordonville Road launch and down at Mapleton. Catch rates were spotty as the river was high, fast and muddy. Best baits were an orange ¼ ounce jig head with a white twister tail to increase visibility. Anglers could launch at Gordonville Road and fish upstream to the Dow Dam or downstream to Freeland.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Shoreline ice on the inland lakes deteriorated during the rain and warm spell but should tighten up again with the colder temperatures. Extreme caution should always be used on the ice especially in the counties along the Lake Michigan shoreline which are getting significant snowfall this week.

St. Joseph River: Anglers were still catching some steelhead downstream of the Berrien Springs Dam. Try spawn or wax worms. The occasional walleye was also taken further upstream.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Anglers are catching steelhead near the 6th Street Dam and near the mouth of the Rogue River. Most are using spawn and wax worms.

Grand River at Lansing: A few pike were caught on sucker minnows above the North Lansing Dam. A couple walleye were taken on minnows below the North Lansing Dam and in the Red Cedar River.

Muskegon River: Water levels were still a bit high and fast. A fair number of steelhead were still being caught all the way up to Croton Dam.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Burt Lake: Has ice anglers but use caution until colder temperatures have a chance to shore the ice back up. Some were fishing Maple Bay. With the warm weather this week walking out was the safest bet at this time.

Mullett Lake: Some were out fishing on the south end in Scott Bay but again use caution. Ice thickness was variable and can change quickly from one spot to the next. Walking was the only mode of safe travel at this time.

Higgins Lake: Lake trout fishing has been hot! Fish have been caught in 80 to 110 feet when using greys or jigging Swedish pimples, sand kickers and raps. Perch were caught up by the church camp, B&B Sports, Kelley Beach near Flag Point, and Lincoln Avenue on the south end near the State Park. Anglers may also want to try around the Main Island. Fish were caught in 30 to 60 feet. A few pike are still being caught on tip-ups including one 47 inch fish. No word on whitefish yet.

Houghton Lake: Ice conditions were slick making travel just a little more challenging. Some of the better fishing has been right at first light and last light though walleye were caught along the deeper flats at mid-day. For walleye, anglers were using a slow presentation with a jig and minnow head. Put it right on the bottom and let it sit there then bring it up really slow. Some nice crappies were taken on perch minnows. Bluegills were caught near the Middle Grounds and the south shore weed beds. Perch were caught in the East Bay and the pike were still active.

Lake St. Helen: Was producing some nice pike including one measuring 38 inches. Bluegills and some perch measuring 12 to 13 inches have been caught. Crappie fishing was good in the evening. Walleye catches slowed and many were sub-legal. Ice was in good shape with hard snow cover.

Tawas: There's still some ice up in the "armpit" of Tawas Bay near Jerry's Marina and also inside the state harbor...but it's not good quality ice at all. Anglers near Jerry's caught a few lake trout and brown trout but very few walleye. Smaller perch were also caught. The water was reported as murky after the recent rains. Just a few small perch were caught inside the state harbor.

Tawas River: Was open water. Shore anglers caught a couple steelhead when using spawn.

Au Gres: Did not have much fishing activity due to poor ice or no ice at all.

Au Gres River: Surf anglers fishing at the mouth of Whitney Drain caught several steelhead. Most were floating spawn sacks.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Torch Lake: Has open water.

Traverse City: Both bays had open water.

Crystal Lake: In Benzie County has open water.

Betsie River: Has steelhead fishing.

Green Lake: Was starting to produce some smelt.

Lake Cadillac: Ice anglers are still targeting pike, walleye and panfish. Anglers are marking fish but getting them to bite has not been easy. Pike numbers were still good for those using tip-ups.

Lake Mitchell: Continues to offer up ice fishing as well. Look for the bite to slow with the onset of much colder temperatures by the weekend.

Lake Missaukee: Still had ice fishing. Anglers were taking panfish and pike.

Manistee River: Has steelhead fishing. With colder temperatures in the forecast, check out the deeper holes.

Pere Marquette River: Has steelhead.

UPPER PENINSULA

Lake Gogebic: Had deep slush on the north end in Bergland Bay. Try to stay on the hard pack the snowmobiles made for easier travel but drill your holes away from the hard pack. Travel on the west shore was good however wheeled vehicles should not be on the ice. Walleye fishing slowed and the perch bite has not picked up yet. The walleye bite was sporadic with a few fish taken in 15 to 20 feet. Catch rates for perch were limited. Try wigglers in 20 to 28 feet. The east shore boat launch was slushy. It was not as deep as Bergland Bay but the slush did extend from the boat launch to the south end of the lake.

Keweenaw Bay: Anglers fishing off the pier in L'Anse have picked up a couple of rainbow trout on spinners and Cleo's. Those fishing off Sand Point reported some good catches of coho and a couple splake when casting Cleo's or Swedish pimples. A couple rainbow trout were caught on spawn and spinners in the Falls Rivers.

Menominee River: The hot spot continues to be the 6th Street Slip with walleye being the target species. Anglers are jigging minnows and plastics in 30 feet. Electronics have been very helpful. Some trout were caught in open water by the dam above Hattie Street. Small Cleo's and raps worked well.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions remain good in the northern section from Gladstone Bay to Garth Point. Pressure cracks tightened up over the last week making travel better in several areas. Saunders Point is considered **DANGEROUS** because of open water. Ice in the southern bay improved as far south as Portage Point. A pressure crack at Aronson Island is running several hundred yards south. Anglers are using extreme caution when navigating this area. The best walleye catches were reported south of Aronson Island in 25 to 45 feet when using jig raps with minnows or tip-ups with sucker minnows. Good numbers of large fish were reported. Whitefish were also caught in this area. Fair to good walleye catches in 15 to 20 feet south of the Escanaba River, 25 to 34 feet in Gladstone Bay, 23 to 30 feet near Kipling, and 14 to 24 feet near the Day's River. The better perch fishing was in 17 to 35 feet from the Second Reef north to the Center Reef when using mousies, wigglers or minnows. Good numbers of smaller perch were taken in the Escanaba

Yacht Harbor. Pike were still active and some large fish were taken in 15 to 20 feet just south of the Escanaba River. Try tip-ups with sucker minnows. Those spearing did well in five to 10 feet near Butler Island but the water was stained.

Munising: Still has ice in the bay however areas to avoid because of poor ice and/or the movement of ice are Powell Point, the City Docks, and Sand Point. Strong winds coupled with strong currents have caused the ice to deteriorate especially at Sand Point which was pretty much open water except for broken ice near shore. The fishing tug has moved up shore and has cut a different path towards the channel so this area would not be safe. Those on snowmobiles should **NOT** cross Munising Bay. The better ice was off the Pictured Rocks dock and the Anna River access. Catch rates were mixed with a few splake and whitefish taken on a single egg. Those fishing off the Anna River had poor success.

Munuscong Bay: Was very slow for walleye and perch with the exception of Grassy Island which is where most of the fish were coming from. The ice east of Roach Point was still questionable.

Cedarville and Hessel: Muskie Bay has been producing a few nice catches of perch. Pike spearing is fair to good with plenty of undersized fish. Government Bay is also a very good spot for pike. Hessel Bay has produced some perch.

February 18, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Ice fishing continues in the northern section of the Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula. Anglers in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula will need to be extremely cautious especially with rain and much warmer weather moving in.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Detroit River: A few perch were caught in the cuts, canals and marinas. Fish were reported in the canals around Gibraltar. Fishing is pretty much open water.

Oakland County: Both Union and Cass Lake had a good number of anglers but fishing was slow. A fair to good number of pike were caught on tip-ups or seen through the spearing holes but most were undersize. A handful of bluegills were caught in front of Dodge State Park on Cass Lake. Ice thickness varies from one spot to the next so anglers will need to use extreme caution.

Lake St. Clair: Had ice and fishing once again in areas like Fairhaven and Metro Beach but most of the lake has rather thin ice cover which will most likely be gone by Friday. Wind speed and direction will play a big role in how long the remaining ice sticks around. Anglers will need to use extreme caution and recognize that wind and warm temperatures can result in ice conditions that can change quickly. Moving ice becomes a problem and anglers may find themselves stranded on ice floe. Anglers should avoid fishing where the winds can potentially push the ice away from shore.

Harbor Beach to Caseville: Harbor Beach had open water. There was no fishing activity at Caseville or Port Austin.

Saginaw Bay: Catch rates were poor over the last week. Much warmer weather moving into the state will soften the ice once again. Anyone going out on the ice will need to use **EXTREME CAUTION**. Spud your way out and don't take a quad or snowmobile out. An Argo went through the ice off the Bay City State Park. A fair number of anglers at Palmer Road but catch rates were slow. The water was still murky. Anglers were fishing in three to seven feet from shore ice that was still hanging on. Ice conditions were bad near the mouth of the Pine River. Some were walking out from the Bay City State Park however the ice was not good. The ice near the mouth of the Saginaw River was questionable. Some were walking out from the end of Jones Road and fishing the Hot Ponds but they reported mostly carp in

there right now. Fishing off Vanderbilt Park was not good. A few crappies and bluegills were taken in the Quanicassee River and the Sunset Bay Marina. Some perch were taken off Geiger Road but ice conditions were not consistent. The Sebewaing River and marina froze over again but the ice was not safe.

Saginaw River: Did freeze again however ice safety was questionable. A few anglers were creeping out and fishing close to shore at various locations but again the ice thickness was not consistent.

Tittabawassee River: Was not fishable due to floating ice.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice conditions improved on most lakes other than the ones in Allegan and Van Buren County that received significant snowfall. Anglers still need to use extreme caution and watch the shoreline ice which may be weak in areas. Bluegills and crappie were hitting on jigs and wax worms in 10 to 20 feet. Go with very small jigs or even ice fly's as it seems the normal size teardrops were not working.

St. Joseph River: Steelhead fishing has been good during the warm spells so look for some good action by the weekend.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Catch rates slowed during the arctic chill but should rebound by the end of the week especially with runoff after the rain and melting snow. Try spawn and wax worms up near the 6th Street Dam and near the mouth of the Rogue River.

Grand River at Lansing: Look for the pike and walleye bite to improve with the warm up. Try small sucker minnows or golden shiners.

Muskegon River: Is producing a fair number of steelhead but the number of fish caught should increase by the weekend.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Higgins Lake: Still has good ice. Lake trout have been caught throughout the lake in waters 80 to 120 feet deep. Greys work best if you can find them. Anglers are jigging Swedish pimples, sand kickers and raps. Perch were still being caught along the south end, near the church camp, B&B Sports, Flag Point, the Main Island and the Sunken Island. Water runoff by the weekend should trigger the rainbow trout. Try wigglers near the mouth of the creeks.

Houghton Lake: Ice fishing continues however anglers will need to be careful getting on the ice along the shoreline especially by the weekend. Also, there is a

pressure crack several miles long so use caution near it. With rain in the forecast, be prepared for a slick surface! Walleye are hitting on small raps and Swedish pimples tipped with a minnow head. Hot colors were orange, pink, gold and fire-tiger. A few nice perch were taken on smaller jigs along the north shore. Bluegills were hitting on spikes and wax worms.

Lake St. Helen: Continues to offer up pike, bluegills and perch for those looking to go ice fishing.

Tawas: Anglers were still fishing up in the “armpit” of Tawas Bay. Catch rates for walleye and perch were slow. Pike spearing was also slow. One angler with an underwater camera saw lake trout and whitefish around the artificial reef.

Tawas River: Froze back over and was not fishable.

Au Gres River: The East Branch near Whitney Drain was full of floating ice and not fishable.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Anglers are ice fishing on most of the inland lakes however the bigger and deeper lakes had open water and were not safe.

Torch Lake: Still has open water.

Traverse City: Both bays had open water.

Crystal Lake: In Benzie County has open water.

Betsie River: Should have good steelhead fishing by the weekend.

Lake Cadillac: Cold temperatures slowed the bite however warmer weather should help to improve catch rates. Anglers will be targeting walleye, pike, crappie and bluegills.

Lake Mitchell: Continues to offer ice fishing especially for pike and crappie.

Lake Missaukee: Still has ice fishing. Anglers were taking panfish and pike.

Manistee River: Warmer temperatures and runoff will make for some good steelhead fishing.

UPPER PENINSULA

Little Bay De Noc: Had few anglers and catch rates were down. Anglers are fishing as far south as Portage Point but open water starts around the Breezy Point so use caution if venturing out in these areas. Ice conditions were good in the northern Bay but much thinner near Portage Point. Saunders Point had a large area of open water that just froze over and was considered **DANGEROUS**. Walleye catches were reported throughout the Bay but the southern waters were best. The Escanaba ship docks or just south of the Escanaba River reported fair catches when jigging rapalas or using tip-ups in 18 to 22 feet. Several large pike were also reported in this area. The best catches were between Aronson Island and Portage Point in 25 to 45 feet. Fair walleye catches between the Center and the Second Reef in 20 to 35 feet. Perch catches were down. The best area was between the Second and Third Reefs when using wigglers or mousies in 17 to 28 feet. A few nice catches were reported from the flats off Kipling in 24 feet. A lot of undersize walleye and pike were also reported in this area. The Escanaba Yacht Harbor reported good catches of perch though many were on the small side. Whitefish anglers caught fish near Gladstone when using minnows in 28 to 40 feet and off Sand Point with minnows or spawn in 80 to 90 feet.

Munising: Ice conditions improved with the cold weather. Some areas have “shove ice” which is ice that broke up and has slid under other sheets of ice making it somewhat difficult to drill holes. The ice around Powell Point improved so anglers had access. There is still open water in the main channel west and east of Grand Island. Fishing in general was slow. Most are targeting whitefish and splake with an assortment of eggs, wax worms and minnows. The fish are running small 10 to 12 inches and were found in 50 to 60 feet. Some legal size splake were caught in 70 to 80 feet however anglers were putting in their time to catch them. Those fishing at night were targeting burbot.

Munuscong Bay: Grassy Island was the best for walleye, perch and pike. The ice east of Roach Point was in poor condition. Avoid this area.

Cedarville and Hessel: Perch fishing improved, especially if one moves around. Splake fishing was good in Wilderness Bay. Be aware of thin ice from Middle Island to the south. Smelt are working the best for perch and splake. Muskie Bay is still quite slow for perch but good for pike.

March 3, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Ice fishing continues in the Northern Lower and the Upper Peninsula. The 2016 licenses went on sale March 1. This gives anglers one month to purchase their new license before they are required on April 1. The new guides are also available at all license vendors. The new guide covers fishing regulations for the next two years (2016 & 2017) so be sure to hold on to your copy.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Huron River: A couple steelhead were caught near Flat Rock and a few walleye were taken below the Belleville Dam.

Detroit River: Had no floe ice coming down at this time. Shore anglers caught some perch. A few boats fishing the canals around Gibraltar caught perch. A couple steelhead were caught near the Trenton Power Plant.

Lake St. Clair: Practically all the ice has blown out. There is skim ice on some of the canals but no safe ice. The boat ramps at the Harley Ensign DNR site are ice free, but no boat activity so far. Windy conditions have the lake very muddy.

St. Clair River: Has floe ice drifting down from Lake Huron. The Harsens Island ferry was shut down last weekend due to ice jamming. Shore fishing could be limited by ice floes. Boat anglers should pay close attention to changes in wind direction that could cause ice to block access to the boat launches.

Caseville: The Pigeon River at Caseville is breaking up and there's no fishing activity. The ice out by the breakwall has broken up.

Saginaw Bay: Did not have much ice left and what was there was not good ice. Nothing to report on the west side of the bay as the ice was either gone or no good. Boats going out from the mouth of the Saginaw River and trolling out by the Range Light did well for walleye when using husky jerks. Those fishing the Hot Ponds caught pike and carp. The Quanicassee River was wide open. There was no fishing from Sebewaing to Wildfowl Bay as the ice was either bad or actually breaking up. A few were ice fishing off Mud Creek. If you find a school of perch you can limit out but most anglers were only getting four or five fish or getting skunked.

Saginaw River: Had pretty good walleye fishing especially during the warm spell. Boat anglers were somewhat hampered by the high winds. Fish were caught near the Independence Bridge, the Cass Avenue Launch, Zilwaukee, and Ojibway Island. Some walleye were also taken at the confluence where the Shiawassee and the Tittabawassee join and form the Saginaw. Vertical jigging with fire-tiger jigs and twister tails was productive or try jigs and minnows.

Tittabawassee River: Was somewhat slower. Those fishing near Center Road had little success. Up at Gordonville Road, boat anglers did pretty well up at the Dow Dam when casting fire-tiger rapalas.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

There is no safe ice and with much warmer weather moving in next week, ice fishing season is over in this part of the state. With heavy snow and freezing rain the boat ramps will be tricky until the next warm-up. The rivers are higher than normal and the steelhead are not only biting, but becoming more aggressive.

St. Joseph River: Should have good steelhead action especially as the temperatures start to rise.

Kalamazoo River: Should also have good steelhead action. Try spawn, flies, small spoons or even a wax worm in the deeper holes until it warms up.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Steelhead activity has been increasing at both the Sixth Street Dam and along the shoreline. Those using spawn have had some success. Walleye fishing was productive as well.

Grand River at Lansing: The occasional steelhead has been caught at the Webber Dam and downstream. Try spawn and jigs. Pike and walleye catches were sporadic below the dams. Staff will be opening the fish ladders next week weather permitting.

Muskegon River: The number of steelhead caught did increase with the warmer weather. Some walleye were also caught by those using husky jerks.

White River: Anglers are starting to get steelhead.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Grand Lake: Has sporadically continued to produce a decent number of walleye and jumbo perch. Walleye sizes vary from 17 to 21 inches.

Fletchers Pond: Catch rates slowed for bluegill and pike.

McCormick Lake: Is slowly producing few brown trout.

Higgins Lake: Still has ice this week but conditions will change quickly next week as temperatures inch up into the 50's. Lake trout were still being caught in 80 to 120 feet along the north end and the south end. Use blues and golden shiners on tip-ups set five to 10 feet off the bottom. Some were jigging Swedish pimples, Do-jiggers or jigging raps. Perch were caught in 30 to 60 feet near the Main Island, Sunken Island, off Big Creek, the North State Park, Garrish Park, Pt. Detroit and a half mile out from the west launch. Anglers need to use extreme caution near Pt. Detroit because of natural springs. A couple quads went through the ice in about three feet of water.

Houghton Lake: This may very well be the last weekend of ice fishing especially with the warm weather and rain moving in next week. Watch the shore ice and be careful around the large pressure crack. There has been a morning bite however the afternoon was better for walleye and perch. Anglers did well with pink or fire-tiger jigging raps and Do-jiggers tipped with a minnow head. Bluegills were hitting on wax worms. Some nice crappies have been caught. The pike are still active. Those using tip-ups with golden shiners caught more fish but those using sucker minnows caught bigger fish.

Lake St. Helen: Catch rates slowed with the onset of colder temperatures and strong winds. The bite should pick-up by the weekend and into the beginning of next week but no one knows how long the ice will last.

Tawas: Still had some ice fishing in the "armpit" northwest of Jerry's Marina, but the action was spotty. Perch and walleye fishing were slow but a couple lake trout were caught. The ice is gone in front of the Pine River and there was not much left at Palmer Road.

Tawas River: Had open water. Steelhead anglers caught a few fish on spawn.

Au Gres River: Down at the Singing Bridge, the river was open and a fair number of steelhead were caught. The river ice at Au Gres was not safe.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Charlevoix: Anglers were catching some walleye.

Lake Skegemog: In Kalkaska County was producing perch however anglers were sorting through dozens of smaller fish for a few keepers. Most were using minnows and plastics.

Green Lake: Smelt fishing was fair. The size of fish being caught has been an improvement from the last couple of years.

Lake Cadillac: Continues to offer ice fishing at least through the weekend. Much warmer temperatures and rain next week will start the melting process.

Lake Mitchell: Crappies are being highly sought after on Mitchell and other smaller lakes in the area.

Manistee Lake: The ice was holding with some soft spots so spud as you go. Good numbers of perch were caught near Penny Park when working the north shoreline with minnows and wigglers. Pike were caught on minnows and tip-ups. The Arthur Street launch was open and ice free.

Big Manistee River: Most anglers are catching steelhead and brown trout. Those fishing up near Tippy Dam were catching more browns.

Pentwater River: A few anglers caught steelhead.

UPPER PENINSULA

Lake Gogebic: The walleye action has slowed but some jumbo perch were caught.

Menominee River: Had open water fishing on the walkway below the Hattie Street Bridge. Anglers were targeting walleye and trout.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions in the northern Bay remain good although pressure cracks have created some problems. Anglers should use caution if taking vehicles on the ice. Saunders Point is open water so avoid the area. The majority of anglers have fished from the Escanaba River north because of ice conditions in the southern Bay. Walleye anglers reported catches in Gladstone Bay when using minnows with tip-ups in 25 to 35 feet. The head of the Bay was best using tip-ups with sucker minnows in eight to 25 feet. Perch anglers reported the best catches north of Butler Island with minnows or wigglers in eight to 24 feet. Overall catches were down but a little better than last week. The late ice should be good but use extreme caution as conditions will change much faster this year because the ice is not as thick.

Munising: Catch rates were slow. A few splake measuring up to 19 inches were caught. The whitefish action was slow. Anglers were ice fishing off the Anna River and Sand Point. A few tried fishing the west channel and off the green can near Christmas for lake trout but it was slow. Most are using a single egg or minnows. Ice conditions in the channel were not safe due to pack ice. Stay away from this area. No reports of any coho or smelt activity.

Munuscong Bay: Is about the same with Grass Island remaining good for perch, pike and walleye. Good fishing was also reported west of Pine Island.

Cedarville and Hessel: Perch fishing in Hessel Bay remains fair to good. Splake fishing is good especially in Wilderness Bay along the north shore. Use extreme caution and do not go out any farther than a quarter mile. Be very careful wherever you go on the ice. Perch fishing improved in Muskie Bay and pike fishing is always good.

March 10, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

It is time to put away the ice fishing gear and get the open water tackle ready to go! Any remaining ice by the weekend will be extremely soft and dangerous. Anglers are reminded that walleye, pike and muskellunge season on the Upper Peninsula Great Lakes, inland waters, St. Mary's River and all the Lower Peninsula inland waters will close at midnight on Tuesday, March 15. Walleye and pike season is open all year on the Lower Peninsula Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair, St. Clair River and the Detroit River.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Shore anglers were catching perch near the Metro Park.

Huron River: Anglers have caught a couple trout and walleye.

Detroit River: Water temperatures were still on the cold side so walleye fishing was slow. Perch fishing was starting to pick up.

Lake St. Clair: Still had floe ice and some shore ice in a few places but nothing fishable. It should all be gone by the end of the week and boats could be launching from the DNR ramps. The skid piers are in at the Harley Ensign and the Selfridge access sites. The piers should be in at Fairhaven sometime next week. The Clinton River Cut-Off site has (1) pier in the water. Anglers will have to pay close attention to wind direction and speed as floe ice may be moving down from Lake Huron. The access sites and shore fishing locations can change quickly if the wind shifts and pushes the ice towards shore.

St. Clair River: Floe ice has been coming down from Lake Huron and limiting access at times. Anglers should call ahead to local bait shops to check on day-to-day conditions. Early spring weather should get the spring salmon and trout fishery going.

Saginaw Bay: While the bay had some ice, there is no longer any safe ice. It is time for open water fishing. A few anglers walking out to the Hot Pond caught mainly pike and carp. Most anglers are fishing the rivers right now. Steelhead can be found in the Tawas, East Branch of the Au Gres, the Rifle, Tittabawassee and the Chippewa River. Water levels will be elevated and the currents will be strong.

Saginaw River: Anglers are reminded that walleye fishing on the inland waters and that includes the Saginaw River will close at midnight on March 15 and not re-open until April 30 this year. The river had a lot of anglers and it seems everyone was getting a few fish but no limits. Most were vertical jigging a ¾ ounce chartreuse jig head with a twister tail and live minnow in the deepest part of the shipping channel. You need a heavy jig to get to the bottom in the strong current. With the snow melt and run-off this week, the water is going to get faster and dirtier. About a dozen boats were fishing around the U.S.S. Edson. Just about all the boat ramps are open and useable with the exception of the Patterson Road ramp at the mouth which was still iced in.

Tittabawassee River: Has had a large number of boat anglers targeting walleye. The better action was up at the Dow Dam and right below it but anglers were working hard to catch them. Most were casting pink or chartreuse jigs and twister tails tipped with minnows. There was not much success downstream of Gordonville Road.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Use caution when walking near the riverbanks as they will be unstable after the snowmelt. Water levels will be up and the currents will be strong.

St. Joseph: Pier anglers have caught some steelhead and brown trout.

St. Joseph River: The steelhead run is picking up so anglers should do well. Try spawn, beads, jigs and wax worms. All the fish ladders are open and steelhead were reported at Berrien Springs. The online Fish Cam is currently not available however staff is hopeful that it will be back in service soon.

Kalamazoo River: Look for steelhead below the Allegan Dam.

Grand Haven: The piers are open and those out fishing have caught some steelhead and brown trout.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: All the fish ladders are open. Anglers should find good numbers of steelhead. Try spawn, flies, beads, jigs and wax worms.

Grand River near Lansing: All the fish ladders are open. A steelhead was caught below the Webber Dam. Some decent pike and walleye were caught on minnows near the North Lansing Dam.

Muskegon River: Water levels were up and spring fish were moving in. Anglers caught winter fish and some nice chrome ones. They are using spawn, beads, jigs and wax worms or fly fishing with sculpins and nymphs.

White River: Also has some fresh steelhead moving up into the river.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice of the inland lakes is deteriorating daily. Anglers were still heading out on a few shallow lakes only. With the snowmelt and rain this week, those fishing the rivers will need to use caution when walking near the riverbanks. Water levels will be up and the currents will be strong.

Higgins Lake: Ice fishing is done. There is open water out in front of Big Creek and the shoreline ice is deteriorating. With the rain and warm temperatures, the ice is rapidly becoming unsafe. Time to get ready for open water fishing!

Houghton Lake: Still had some ice fishing however there is open water in the East Bay in front of Denton Creek so avoid this area. Anglers heading out on the west end are catching crappie, bluegills and a few nice walleye. Some pike are still hitting on tip-ups. This will most likely be the last of ice fishing.

Tawas River: Anglers should find some steelhead. The higher water levels will bring fish in but will also make fishing a bit more challenging. Try spawn, beads, jigs and wax worms.

Au Gres River: Should also have a fair to good number of steelhead especially down near the Singing Bridge.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Charlevoix: The ice was thinning and will only get worse as the week goes on. There is open water near the Ironston launch where a bubbler was going near some boats. Most are now preparing for open water fishing.

Betsie River: Should see the steelhead fishing improve with fresh fish coming in.

Manistee: Brown trout trolling could get started by the weekend. No reports yet but boat anglers should start seeking them out if the weather holds up.

Manistee Lake: The Arthur Street boat launch is open with ice covering 50 percent of the lake on the east side. Ice was still present but considered unsafe for fishing.

Big Manistee River: Anglers fishing near Tippy Dam reported slow catch rates for steelhead and brown trout. Those caught were hitting on spawn, flies, wax worms and minnows. With the recent snowmelt and rain, water levels are up and more rain is expected. Fresh steelhead were reported in the lower end of Bear Creek. They were hitting on spawn or Hot-n-Tots.

Ludington: Should have anglers out targeting brown trout if the weather holds.

Pere Marquette River: Should also have good steelhead fishing by the end of the week as rain and warmer temperatures get the fish moving.

UPPER PENINSULA

Keweenaw Bay: In the last two weeks, the Bay has gone from ice covered to breaking up, crushed ice floating in open water to refreezing and now thawing once again because of the sun, the south winds and the warm temperatures. Conditions are deteriorating quickly. Staying off the ice and waiting for open water fishing is recommended at this time.

Lake Gogebic: Fishing was good for walleye and the perch bite was getting better however ice conditions will change rapidly by the end of the week. Anglers were using sucker minnows on tip-ups for walleye. Perch were hitting on red, brown and white or pink and white jigs tipped with a wiggler or frosty spoons.

Menominee River: Trout and a few walleye were caught in open water near the Hattie Street Dam. Rapala's, jigs, and zip lures are being fished from both sides of the river and off the fishermen's walkway.

Little Bay De Noc: Ice conditions concerned anglers and for good reason especially with the rain and much warmer temperatures this week. Most of ice shanties have been removed. Several vehicles have gone through the ice around Butler Island and along the shorelines. Anyone planning a fishing trip should call ahead to check on ice conditions. Catch rates for walleye were fair around Gladstone, Kipling, the Second and the Center Reefs. Catch rates for perch were up some in both shallow waters and deeper. Though the number of fish is down the size was up considerably.

Marquette: Anglers caught some coho near the bubblers in the harbor in the early morning when jigging cut bait. Most of the ice in the Carp River is gone and the steelhead are starting to move in. Those fishing the holes were taking fish on spawn or pink and white crank baits.

AuTrain: The ramp at the boat launch is not in and the area had not been plowed.

Munising: Had ice however rain and gusty winds this week will no doubt cause the ice to shift and move especially around Sand Point and the Grand Island access. Ice conditions have deteriorated and will only continue to get worse. The shoreline areas are marginal at best. There is a lot of water on the remaining ice so it is extremely slippery. Water levels are rising on the Anna River. Anglers were casting spawn and artificial lures at the mouth but had no luck.

Munuscong Bay: Still had ice but for how long no one knows. Perch, pike and walleye were caught near Grassy Island and Barbeau Point. Be aware of a few nasty pressure cracks. The ice north and east of Roach Point was much thinner.

Cedarville and Hessel: Hessel Bay was still improving for perch. Splake were caught in Hessel Bay and Wilderness Bay. Muskie Bay was fair for perch and good for pike. Anglers need to use extreme caution with the rain and warmer weather.

March 17, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Anglers are reminded that walleye, pike and muskellunge season on the Upper Peninsula Great Lakes, the inland waters, St. Mary's River and all the Lower Peninsula inland waters including the Saginaw River closed at midnight on March 15.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: A few walleye have been caught in Brest Bay but nothing consistent yet.

Detroit River: Anglers were getting a few walleye in the lower Trenton Channel. Some good size perch were caught on the east side of Grosse Isle. Perch were also caught in the canals however they are sorting out the small ones. Pike were caught in the lower river. Anglers are using spoons or bobber fishing with suckers.

Lake St. Clair: Boat anglers were out but water temperatures are still cold and catch rates were extremely slow. Typically, when water temperatures are cold in the spring, anglers will find more fish activity in the warm water areas like canals and marina's, shallow waters near shore or at the mouths of tributary streams and rivers. Fishing near warm water discharges near power plants can also be productive. Anglers are reminded that cold water and warm air can result in very foggy conditions on calm days. Keep safety in mind. A working GPS and a signal horn are critical in foggy conditions.

St. Clair River: Boat anglers are heading out but no word on catch rates yet.

Saginaw Bay: The ice is gone at the Pine River mouth and Palmer Road. One or two anglers have tried shore fishing in the Pine River for perch but had little to show for it. Linwood Beach Marina is open and launching boats but you have to go in and pay first. The launch at the mouth of the Saginaw River is open and those trolling or jigging for walleye out on the bay did pretty good at various locations such as north of Spoils Island and the Spark Plug when using crank baits, Hot-n-Tots, Husky Jerks and Bombers. Boats out on the bay will have to navigate through floating ice fields. The area off Oakhurst was 2/3 floating ice and 1/3 open water.

Boats up to 16 feet were launching from the end of Jones Road and walleye fishing off the mouth of the Hot Pond and south of Spoils Island had fair results. Those

wading and fishing the mouth of the Hot Pond caught mostly carp and pike. Some are launching from the access site on the lower Quanicassee River and trolling out on the bay. A few were starting to fish the cuts for perch but had no luck as it is still a bit early. The Sebewaing River is high, fast and muddy. Boats could not get out of Sebewaing or Caseville because of the ice.

Saginaw River: Walleye season on the river including the section from the mouth up to the Center Street Bridge is closed on March 15 and will not re-open until April 30. The daily possession limit for yellow perch from the mouth up to the Center Street Bridge is 25 fish. Be sure to check the Exceptions to General Regulations by County in the fishing guide for gear restrictions pertaining to the Saginaw River.

Tittabawassee River: Walleye season on the river closed after March 15 and will not re-open until April 30. Be sure to check the Exceptions to General Regulations by County in the fishing guide for gear restrictions pertaining to the river.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

St. Joseph: Anglers starting to venture out onto Lake Michigan reported good catches of coho with a few brown trout mixed in.

St. Joseph River: The spring steelhead runs have started. Water temperatures are in the low 50s.

Kalamazoo River: The spring steelhead run has started. Flows are above average but still well below flood stage.

Grand Haven: When the weather allows, boat anglers are heading out and trolling along the shoreline for brown trout.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: The spring steelhead runs are underway. Flows were above average forecast to exceed bankfull. Flood advisories were issued for Ionia and Kent County.

Grand River near Lansing: Those fishing near the North Lansing Dam have caught some rock bass and the occasional smallmouth bass.

Muskegon River: Water levels were up and that is bringing more steelhead in. Most are using spawn, wax worms or egg patterns. Stoneflies were starting to hatch.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Au Sable River: Water levels are high which will bring more fish in but will also make fishing a bit more of a challenge. Steelhead were caught from the dam to the mouth. Most are using spawn bags. Lake trout were caught on spoons and minnows at the mouth.

Higgins Lake: The shoreline ice is rapidly breaking up and there is some open water. The remaining ice is not safe. Boat anglers will be waiting another week or so before they can start launching.

Houghton Lake: Ice fishing season is done. The shoreline ice has opened up about 10 feet out and the remaining ice is very soft and no longer safe. There is some open water and strong winds could open up the rest of the lake.

Tawas: Pier anglers fishing off the state dock were catching quite a few lake trout outside the wall. Those still-fishing with large shiners did best however those casting spoons and body baits also caught fish. Boat anglers trolling spoons and body baits in Tawas Bay were taking a good number of lake trout along with the occasional steelhead, brown trout or chinook salmon. The docks are in at the boat launch.

Tawas River: Is running high, fast, and muddy. Not much to report except for the occasional sucker caught.

Au Gres: Did not have much in the way of fishing yet. The docks are in at the launch ramp. A few boats were out trolling for walleye but had no luck.

Au Gres River: Down at the Singing Bridge, the river was high, fast and muddy so the steelhead anglers were not doing well. Those surfcasting did manage to take a couple steelhead when floating spawn bags near the mouth of Whitney Drain.

Rifle River: The sucker run had not started yet so no activity at Omer but given the weather, the run should be underway sometime within the next week. Water levels were predicted to rise above flood levels then fall below flood stage by Friday.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Ice fishing in this area is pretty much done. Some of the lakes still have ice so boat anglers are not able to get out yet. Most of the rivers are high which is bringing in fresh steelhead. The rivers are fishable and conditions should only improve now that most of the snow is gone.

Torch Lake: Boat anglers were heading out for Atlantic salmon and lake trout.

Traverse City: Boats are heading out for whitefish and lake trout. In the East Bay, some whitefish were caught off Deepwater Point. Try jigs with a single egg just off the bottom.

Frankfort: Pier anglers caught steelhead, brown trout and menominee whitefish.

Betsie River: Steelhead fishing is picking up. Try spawn, beads or wax worms.

Lakes Cadillac and Mitchell: Both lakes still have ice however there is no safe ice.

Manistee: Pier fishing has begun and anglers are catching steelhead, brown trout and menominee whitefish. Anglers are hooking fish on both spawn and by casting spoons. Three docks have been installed and boats are out trolling for steelhead, brown trout and lake trout.

Manistee Lake: The ice is completely gone and the boat ramp is clear. Those jigging and trolling have caught some fresh steelhead. Coho were also caught on wax worms and spawn.

Big Manistee River: Tippy Dam to High Bridge had plenty of activity with mixed results. The number of fish caught was low but the run was just getting started. Fish were hitting on spawn, beads, wax worms, wobble glows or Hot-n-Tots. Several chrome fish were seen between Bear Creek and Manistee Lake but the water was dirty after the rain and the bite was slow. As a reminder, the Little Manistee River remains closed to all fishing until April 1.

Ludington: Pier anglers are catching steelhead, brown trout and menominee whitefish when floating spawn or casting spoons.

Pere Marquette River: Steelhead fishing is picking up and will continue to get better.

UPPER PENINSULA

Keweenaw Bay: Ice fishing is done. Boat anglers trolling the head of the bay and northward just past the Pump House along Bay Shore Road in L'Anse caught coho, lake trout and brown trout on a variety of spoons in 40 to 70 feet. Shore anglers fishing off the Rock Dock near the L'Anse Marina caught a few coho and rainbow trout when using spawn and crawlers. The Falls River opened up and those fishing did well for rainbow trout when using spawn and yarn flies. Those in small boats near the Falls River had no success when trolling or still-fishing.

Menominee River: Fishing activity has switched over to mostly open water with the majority of anglers fishing up near the Hattie Street Dam. A few trout and the occasional walleye were caught on a jig with a twister tail, small spoons or rapalas. Water temperatures are still in the low 30's.

Little Bay De Noc: The remaining ice is no longer safe. The Bay is now unfishable. The Day's River and parts of the Escanaba and Ford River are open but the flow is fast. Boat anglers should be out soon.

Marquette: The harbors are ice free however conditions outside the harbor are unknown. The docks are not in yet at the boat launches. Anglers did well for coho at the bubblers when jigging cut bait. Hot colors were green, pink or white. Splake are starting to move into the Lower Harbor and around the breakwall. Anglers caught them on artificial or natural baits. Steelhead are moving into the Carp River and those using spawn bags have caught them.

AuTrain: The parking lot was still covered with snow but the launch is open. Fishing has been slow but a couple coho and steelhead were caught near the mouth of the river. Conditions were too windy for jigging in the bay so most were trolling but had little luck.

Munising: Heavy rain is taking the ice out quickly. Ice fishing season here is over. Anglers should not venture out onto any remaining ice. At Christmas, the ice is gone and Sand Point is all open water. The Anna River boat access is free of ice and snow so boat anglers could start launching but watch the ice about 100 feet from the entrance of the river. Shore fishing is possible from the Anna River dock. Most are using a single egg or spawn. Those trying minnows or crawlers had no luck. A few splake and steelhead were caught but catch rates for whitefish were poor. The city launch and docks are still iced in but the ice is thinning. The Grand Island access site is open water but there is floating ice in the area.

Munuscong Bay: Perch and walleye activity were slow. Conditions are deteriorating and a few machines have gone through the ice.

Cedarville and Hessel: Perch and walleye activity was relatively slow.

March 24, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Anglers are invited to attend "Conversations & Coffee" with the DNR Fisheries Division. The public will have a chance to meet with managers and fisheries biologist to discuss local and statewide fisheries management activities and concerns as well as get specific questions answered. For meeting dates, times and locations click here: <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364-378850--,00.html>

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Boat anglers trolling in Brest Bay were catching some nice walleye.

Detroit River: Boat anglers have been out searching for walleye, but so far the fishing has been slow. Perch anglers were finding fish in the cuts and canals but many were small.

Lake St. Clair: Did not have much fishing activity. Some very good panfish reports were coming from the canals and marina basins.

St. Clair River: Had some good walleye reports from the Port Huron area for those jigging near the Black River. Reports from Marine City and Algonac areas were slow fishing for walleye, trout or salmon.

Harbor Beach: Has one dock in but there was no fishing activity.

Grindstone City: Had no docks in yet.

Port Austin: Had one dock in but no fishing activity.

Saginaw Bay: Some fair to good catches of perch were taken from the Palmer Road Cut and out of Eagle Bay Marina on the right days. The fish move in and out, so it pays to move around and keep looking for them. There was a fair amount of trolling for walleye off Linwood where most boats did pretty well in 18 to 22 feet with Husky Jerks and Flicker Shad. Perch fishing was good in the cut at the end of Finn Road, the lower Quanicassee River, and the cuts at Sebewaing and Bay Port before the cold weather returned.

There was no perch action at Caseville however pier anglers still-fishing with minnows or casting rapalas did manage to catch a few lake trout and one whitefish. Perch fishing was slow in Mud Creek.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

St. Joseph River: Water flow was back within normal range and water temperatures dropped back into the 40's. A good number of steelhead were moving through the Berrien Springs fish ladder but the cold weather will likely decrease the influx of new fish once again.

Kalamazoo River: Had a good number of steelhead. Some of the better fishing was reported up near the Allegan Dam.

Grand Haven: When they can get out, boat anglers are targeting steelhead and brown trout near the pier and along the shoreline.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Had a fresh run of steelhead just before the storm. Fish were jumping near the 6th Street Dam. Those fishing the bayous have caught some crappie but the bite was still hit-or-miss.

Rogue River: Was also producing some nice chrome steelhead. Some of the fish were bedding while others were still tight.

Muskegon Lake: Anglers were picking up a few yellow perch near the Bear Lake Channel. White perch were caught near the Sand Docks.

Muskegon River: Steelhead numbers were increasing before the storm. Water levels will likely increase and water clarity will decline with the rain and run-off.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Au Sable River: Water levels came down. Steelhead fishing has been good from the dam to the mouth for those using spawn, wax worms or wigglers. A few lake trout were caught near the mouth.

Higgins Lake: Still has ice that blew up along the shoreline. The boat launches on the west side of the lake were still iced in.

Houghton Lake: Is now open water. Not much in the way of boat activity except for a couple small boats fishing the canals for crappie. Catch rates have been slow as water temperatures are still cold.

Tawas: Had quite a few boats out trolling in Tawas Bay where they were taking a good number of lake trout including some limit catches. A couple brown trout were also taken.

Pier anglers casting or still-fishing large minnows from the state harbor have also caught lake trout. A good number of minnows were present inside the harbor but the perch have not shown up in any numbers yet. Small boats trolling off the mouth of the Tawas River caught some walleye on crank baits.

Tawas River: A few suckers are being taken in the lower river.

Au Gres: Had some boats going out. They managed to catch a few walleye when trolling crank baits. Shore anglers casting near the mouth of the river picked up a few walleye and lake trout.

Au Gres River: The water has been pretty muddy in Whitney Drain and the steelhead fishing has been slow. It should pick up as the water comes down and clears up.

Rifle River: The sucker run was starting to get underway. Dip-netting for suckers and other non-game species on the river is now open.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Torch Lake: Boat anglers were still heading out and trolling for Atlantic salmon and lake trout.

Frankfort: Cooler temperatures and windy conditions have kept anglers from fishing.

Betsie River: Steelhead fishing remains decent however the bite will slow with the colder weather. Try fishing the deeper holes until it warms back up.

Lakes Cadillac and Mitchell: The lakes are open water but fishing has been slow as water temperatures are still cold. Most were shore fishing.

Manistee: When conditions allow, pier anglers should still find some steelhead and brown trout. Try floating spawn under a bobber or casting spoons.

Manistee Lake: Boat anglers are picking up a few perch near Penny Park. The fish were hitting minnows and wax worms. Those trolling have caught steelhead and a couple coho on body baits or Hot-n-Tots.

Big Manistee River: Anglers up near Tippy Dam were reporting fresh steelhead but catch rates were hit-or-miss. The better catches were coming between High Bridge and Tippy Dam. White and redhorse suckers were hitting on crawlers in the Bear Creek area.

Pere Marquette River: Had more steelhead showing up but the bite will slow with colder temperatures. Try fishing the deeper holes until it warms back up.

UPPER PENINSULA

Keweenaw Bay: Anglers trolling for salmon picked up a few coho and browns. Those launching from the L'Anse Marina had ice free water for trolling as the wind blew most of the ice to the head of the bay but there was no dock in at the ramp. Anglers caught coho and brown trout 15 to 40 feet down in 30 to 60 feet. Most were using orange, green and silver body baits. Those interested in trolling might want to call one of the local sport shops to find out if the bay is iced over before making the journey. In the Falls River, anglers have picked up a few rainbow trout.

Menominee River: All the landings except the 6th Street Slip were open. Water temperatures were approaching 38 degrees. Shore anglers from the Hattie Street Dam to Stephenson Island caught an increasing number of walleye right along with the occasional brown trout when casting zip lures, jigs with plastic and stick baits. Boat anglers trolling for walleye and browns have also taken some fish.

Little Bay De Noc: Is in between seasons. It has been cold enough to make skim ice at night. Ice lingers at most of the boat launches with the exception of the Ford River which opened recently. The Kipling area was still ice covered but no safe ice. The Day's River, Rapid River, Tacoosh River and the Ford River are open and flowing strong. Anglers were fishing for steelhead in the Day's River but no reports as of yet. The Ford River did not have the dock in yet but you can launch a boat there and shore anglers could try their luck.

Marquette: The docks were put in at both harbors this week. The beach access is now blocked off and anglers are to use the boat launches. Cold weather will slow fishing in the harbors and local streams. Those jigging for coho at the bubblers in the morning have done well. Those trolling did manage to catch lake trout, splake and brown trout on spoons near the breakwall and the mouth of the Carp River. Steelhead fishing has been very good in the Carp River. Fish up to 11 pounds have been caught on spawn bags, crawlers and dry flies.

Au Train: The dock was not in at the boat launch yet and the wind here makes it hard to launch without help. The wind was also making it hard for those jigging so many are trolling instead. Shore anglers caught steelhead on spawn near the mouth of the Au Train River. Coho, splake and brown trout were caught by boat anglers further out from the mouth.

Munising: Approximately 50% of the bay was open water. Shoreline fishing opportunities are limited to the mouth of the Anna River, Sand Point, and Christmas. Much of the ice is shifting into shore and out into the bay on a daily basis. Anglers have caught coho, lake whitefish, menominee and steelhead.

Grand Marais: The harbor is open water and the public launch is ice free, so boat launching is possible. The pier was still ice covered.

Shore ice has been shifting back and forth, however anglers have been able to get out fishing mainly outside the breakwall and towards the mouth of the Sucker River. They caught coho and steelhead when trolling or jigging. The Sucker River was producing a couple steelhead however the action was hit-or-miss.

Munuscong Bay: Had fair ice west of Dan's Resort. Some perch were caught but not very far out.

Cedarville and Hessel: Ice fishing is done as there is now open water.

March 31, 2016

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division

RECREATIONAL FISHING REPORT

Anglers are reminded that on Friday, April 1, all anglers 17 years of age and older will be required to have a 2016 fishing license. Be sure to pick up a copy of the 2016-2017 Fishing Guide when you purchase your license. River fishing has been good but the inland lakes especially to the north are still too cold.

SOUTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Lake Erie: Those out trolling are still taking some walleye from Brest Bay.

Huron River: Still had some decent steelhead fishing for those using spawn up near the Flat Rock Dam.

Detroit River: Boat anglers fishing near the Trenton Power Plant were catching a fair to good number of walleye when using jigs with minnows. Most of the fish caught were smaller, good eating size. Perch fishing slowed and smaller fish were moving in. Those willing to put in the time and do lots of sorting might get a few keepers.

Oakland County: Surface water temperatures were about 46 degrees in most areas on Cass Lake and Union Lake. Anglers were targeting panfish in the shallow bays and canals. The crappie bite was slow but will improve as water temperatures warm. Bass anglers had limited success with the catch and immediate release season when using husky jerks in two to four feet along the breakwalls and shorelines.

Lake St. Clair: All the DNR boat access sites are open for launching. Heavy rain and high winds have kept the lake turbid. Good perch and sunfish reports continue to come from the canals and marinas.

St. Clair River: The recent heavy rainfall and high winds have resulted in muddy conditions. The North Channel and the Marine City access sites will have the docks in and be open for launching on Friday, April 1.

Saginaw Bay: All area rivers were high, fast and muddy. Steelhead, sucker and perch fishing in the rivers and cuts at least in the lower ends was pretty much unproductive if not impossible. Shore anglers at Eagle Bay Marina were taking a large number of small perch. Fish over seven inches were almost non-existent.

On the east side of the bay, success was pretty limited. A few small perch were caught in the Sebewaing River. At Mud Creek, the catch rate for keeper perch was one fish per angler hour. Walleye fishing out in the bay was pretty slow as the water was muddy.

SOUTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

St. Joseph River: Water temperatures were up into the low 50's which should have produced some good steelhead fishing especially up near the Berrien Springs Dam.

Kalamazoo River: Water levels were about normal and steelhead fishing was good. Suckers were also being caught.

Grand Haven: Boat and shore anglers continue to target steelhead and brown trout.

Grand River at Grand Rapids: Water temperatures were up near the low 50's. Steelhead were still being caught. Those targeting suckers have done well using worms below 6th Street.

Rogue River: Continues to produce some nice steelhead in the lower river.

Grand River at Lansing: A couple steelhead were caught at the point where the Grand meets the Red Cedar. Anglers were using spawn, a jig and wax worm or spinners. Steelhead were also caught near the Portland Dam, the Webber Dam and in Prairie Creek near Ionia.

Muskegon Lake: Is producing a fair to good number of white perch.

Muskegon River: Water clarity was low and will continue to be with all the run-off and more rain on the way the bite will be slow.

NORTHEAST LOWER PENINSULA

Ocqueoc River: Had a good number of steelhead.

Thunder Bay River: Had a fair number of steelhead.

Au Sable River: Water levels were high and muddy which usually slows the bite however some fish were still being caught up near the dam.

Higgins Lake: It appears the lake has finally opened up. Water temperatures are still pretty cold so no boats were out yet.

Houghton Lake: Is really in-between seasons and the last snow storm did not help. Even those fishing the canals were not getting anything. It could be another couple weeks before water temperatures start to warm up.

Tawas River: A few suckers were still being caught in the lower river.

Au Gres: Trolling for walleye was really slow, probably held back by very cold and muddy water. A couple of lake trout and walleye were taken by shore anglers casting at the end of the breakwall.

Au Gres River: Steelhead fishing was very slow at the Singing Bridge. The water was high, fast and muddy.

Rifle River: Dip-netting for suckers was still in full swing.

NORTHWEST LOWER PENINSULA

Torch Lake: Is open and being used by those seeking out salmon and trout.

Traverse City: A few boats have been out in both the East Bay and the West Bay. Those jigging have caught cisco and lake trout.

Boardman River: Was producing some steelhead.

Betsie River: Steelhead fishing picked up with the warm weather.

Lakes Cadillac and Mitchell: Have had very little to report. Water temperatures are still very cold.

Manistee: Trollers and pier anglers have been catching some steelhead and brown trout when the weather permits.

Big Manistee River: Steelhead fishing continues.

Ludington: When they can get out, boat anglers caught steelhead and brown trout. Pier anglers were also taking some fish.

Pere Marquette River: Has steelhead. Cooler weather and rain will once again slow the bite.

UPPER PENINSULA

The inland lakes still had some ice cover which was not safe. Some of the backroads were inaccessible due to heavy snow. Smelt action is still three to four weeks away at least.

Keweenaw Bay: Salmon were caught in the southern bay off the Falls River and Sand Point Beach. Steelhead action was still on the light side in the Falls River and the Silver River.

Menominee River: Walleye are being caught from the Hattie Street Bridge to Stephenson Island by shore anglers using zip lures, stick baits, jigs and plastics. The best action was early morning or evening. Walleye and brown trout were caught by those trolling and jigging especially in the Turn Basin. The 6th Street launch was still iced in but all the other launches were open.

Little Bay De Noc: Had a couple ice anglers at Kipling and the Escanaba Yacht Harbor, the only two places with ice however conditions were extremely dangerous! The only boat launch that could be used at this time was the Rapid River launch although the dock isn't in yet and there was a 12 inch heave where the asphalt meets the pad. The Ford River and the Gladstone launches could be open by the end of this week. Those fishing the Day's River, Tacoosh and the Whitefish River caught steelhead. The Ford River is open for shore anglers with the possibility of catching a trout or smallmouth bass.

Marquette: Both harbors have full access with the docks in. Cooler temperatures and rain have slowed fishing. Jigging with cut bait at the bubblers is still providing anglers with coho during the mid-morning and early afternoon. Those trolling artificial baits have caught fish. Pier anglers using artificial and cut bait in the Lower Harbor caught splake and whitefish. Those fishing the Carp River were still catching steelhead up to nine pounds even though the water levels were high and muddy.

Au Train: The dock at the boat launch was still not in and depending on wind direction, loading and unloading a boat may be difficult for those fishing alone. Catch rates slowed but anglers were still getting some coho, brown trout and steelhead when trolling artificial baits near the Rock River. A few brown trout were caught on worms near the Rock River.

Munising: About 90% of the bay was ice free except for 100 to 200 feet of shoreline ice. Boat use is limited however if southerly winds prevail, the public launch may be open by the weekend. A few boats were able to launch from the Anna River and Sand Point. Catch rates for splake, coho and whitefish were hit-or-miss. Early morning was best for salmon. Most were using spawn, Swedish pimples and jigs tipped with cut bait.

Grand Marais: Boat anglers caught two or three fish per trip, mainly coho and steelhead just outside the breakwall and inside the harbor. Pier fishing was possible on the first section only as ice was still present on the rocks and the end of the pier.