

Lake Michigan Chinook Salmon Proposed Stocking Numbers by Site

Following recommendations by the Lake Michigan Committee, Michigan DNR will stock 330,000 Chinook salmon starting in 2017. The Lake Michigan Basin Team (LMBT), which is made up of DNR fisheries managers, biologists, and technicians from field, hatchery and research sections, developed criteria for site selection and numbers of fish per site as shown below:

Criteria for Stocking Site Selection

1. Maintain egg take operations.
2. Not near known natural reproducing river system.
3. Known to contribute to lake-wide fishery based on tagging studies.
4. Potential for a return fall fishery to a popular port, river with good public access or river with good connectivity (i.e. no dam or has fish ladders).
5. Important imprinting net pen partnerships.

Criteria for Stocking Number

1. Maintain egg take operations.
2. Overcome predator threshold to increase survival.
3. Efficiency and effectiveness of net pen operation.
4. Maximize the number of sites while considering the site selection criteria.

The LMBT developed options that ranged from only stocking the Little Manistee Weir for egg take operations to continuing some level of stocking at most of our existing stocking sites. These options were presented to the Lake Michigan Citizen's Fishery Advisory Committee. Most members preferred an option that would ensure a sufficient egg take and provide the greatest opportunity for a lake and fall return fishery to popular ports and rivers. Members were asked to provide feedback from their organizations to Fisheries Division. The LMBT reviewed all comments from the advisor organizations and agreed to the following stocking proposal using the site criteria and stocking a minimum of 33,000 per site to increase survival potential. The every other year stocking strategy will provide stocking to more sites while maintaining fisheries as Chinook salmon typically return between ages 2 and 4. Stocking reviews will be conducted annually.

Port	2016 Stocking	2017 Stocking	2018 Stocking	Site Selection Criteria Number Achieved
Escanaba	12,000			
Manistique	34,000		33,334	2, 4, 5
Medusa	72,000	50,000		
Boardman	60,000		50,000	2, 4, 5
Manistee River	22,000			
Little Manistee River	150,000	180,000	180,000	1, 4, 5,
Big Sable River	38,000			
Muskegon River	18,000			
Grand Haven	59,000	50,000		2, 3, 4, 5
Holland	15,000			
Black River	15,000		33,333	2, 3, 4, 5
Saugatuck	16,000		33,333	2, 3, 4, 5
St. Joseph	48,000	50,000		2, 3, 4, 5
Total	559,000	330,000	330,000	