

FISHERIES DIVISION

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES

# Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit



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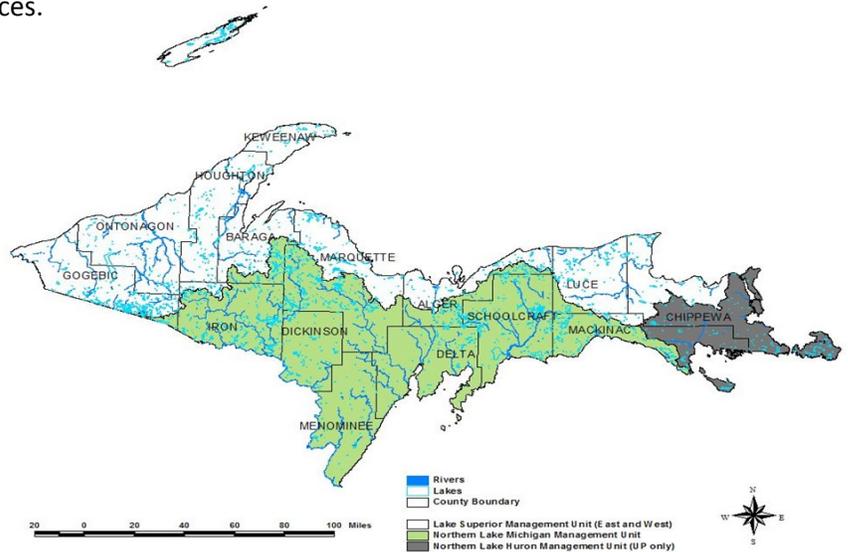
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## What is the NLMMU?

The Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit (NLMMU) - shown shaded in green- encompasses all of the waters that drain into the northern portion of Lake Michigan. Our work area includes all or portions of the following counties: Gogebic, Iron, Baraga, Dickinson, Marquette, Menominee, Delta, Alger, Schoolcraft, Luce, and Mackinac. The NLMMU covers a diverse array of inland waters and nearshore Lake Michigan ports out of the Escanaba and Crystal Falls Field Offices.



## Partnership Spotlight— Chicagon Lake

The NLMMU worked with volunteers to place wood habitat structures in Chicagon Lake (Iron County) on Sunday, March 2, to provide additional spawning habitat for muskellunge.

Chicagon Lake is a popular and economically important body of water in the Upper Menominee River Watershed. The DNR actively manages this 1,100-acre water body for several cool water species, including muskellunge. Muskellunge were first stocked into Chicagon Lake in 1965. Subsequent surveys documented evidence of natural reproduction, indicating Chicagon Lake provided some suitable spawning habitat; however, muskellunge natural recruitment has remained inadequate to sustain the population. (continued on page 2)

# Partnership Spotlight Continued

Wood structures were proposed based on success with this type of habitat enhancement in Wisconsin waters. Wood is thought to keep muskellunge eggs from sinking into the sediment and being smothered, provides a better habitat for egg development, and is the preferred spawning habitat for this species. In addition, the installation of wood habitat will benefit many other fish by providing seasonal refuge and cover. By encouraging natural reproduction of muskellunge, the DNR will move toward the overall goal of promoting self-sustaining fisheries and, in turn, provide additional opportunities for muskellunge anglers.

This project is possible thanks to \$10,000 from the **We Energies' Mitigation and Enhancement Fund**. This fund was established as part of the Wilderness Shores Settlement Agreement to enhance aquatic habitat in the area of influence of We Energies' hydroelectric projects.

Volunteers assisting the DNR and its project partners include: **Boundary Waters Musky Club, Iron County Watershed Coalition, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance, Wildlife Unlimited of Iron County** and other local entities.



## Michigamme Reservoir Fish Cribs Project:

This video from WLUC TV6's Discovering program highlights Wildlife Unlimited of Iron County's ongoing fish crib project on the Michigamme Reservoir. *Video provided by Brian Whitens, Media Productions.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tvnx9nKNkMY#t=49>

# Fisheries Division Strategic Plan

*The NLMMU is interested in how we can be a partner to local groups, specific to Goals 2 and 3.*

*Please contact us for more information or ideas on how we can help.*

The Department of Natural Resources' Fisheries Division has created a five-year strategic plan that will guide decisions and actions that affect the health of Michigan's aquatic resources, and touch the interests of anglers and other groups invested in fisheries.

Five goals have been developed to focus the work of Fisheries Division. For each, various objectives and strategies are detailed to help move the Division toward these goals by 2017. All of the goals, objectives and strategies provided in this plan are critical to meeting Fisheries Division's mission and are in no particular order of priority. For more information, or to read the plan in its entirety, please visit [http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364\\_52259-297509--00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364_52259-297509--00.html).

## Goal 2 - Diverse Fishing Opportunities

- Promote diverse fishing opportunities statewide by providing targeted information and updates to specific regions, demographics, interest groups, and the media.
- Work with local tourism and economic development organizations to demonstrate and market the connections between Michigan's diverse fishing opportunities and quality of life, both economic and non-economic.
- Instill awareness and appreciation of Michigan's fish, fishing heritage, and fishing opportunities into the culture, education, and consciousness of all Michigan citizens.
- Identify and catalog areas where fishing access is needed, prioritize locations, and work with partners to address these needs.
- Increase education and outreach through programs and partners, both existing and new.

## Goal 3 - Strategic Resource Partnerships

- Increase the proportion of Michigan's annual fish production that is reared through cooperative arrangements and methods (e.g., net pens, walleye ponds, and streamside sturgeon facilities).
- Work toward a program whereby most habitat enhancement projects are achieved through partnership collaborations.
- Develop and maintain a list of partners along with their specialized skills and equipment.
- Support, enhance, and foster the growth of existing programs (e.g., Salmon in the Classroom) to assist in teaching Michigan's youth about stewardship principles and aquatic resources.
- Increase the number of people visiting interpretive centers at State fish hatcheries.
- Partner with local chambers of commerce or other economic development groups to promote aquatic resource stewardship and to develop region-specific quality-of-life messages disseminated through multimedia outlets. Develop web-based tools and information to help individuals or groups practice good shoreline and streamside resource stewardship.
- Facilitate watershed management by developing collaborative partnerships with organized watershed groups.
- Partner with angler groups and sport retailers to increase angler recruitment and retention.

# Education Spotlight

- ◆ During 2013, live fish were captured and transferred to Bewabic State Park where Fisheries Division personnel entertained anglers young and old. Participants had the opportunity to touch and see live fish while asking questions and exploring our most commonly found fish. *Do fish sleep? What do they eat? Where do they live?* These are just a few of the fascinating questions and fun facts explored. And, by the way, fish do not actually sleep but instead enter a hypnotic resting state.
- ◆ Classroom presentations were given at West Iron County High School to educate the students on fish related topics. Topics included walleye rearing, the role of Fisheries Division- including how lakes and streams are surveyed- and information on our local fisheries.
- ◆ Fishing classes for both winter and summer fishing were held as part of the Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) program in Big Bay. During the summer, women interested in open water fishing spent the day on Hoist Basin learning how to catch walleye, northern pike and smallmouth bass. Hardy ice fishing women took to the ice on Lake Independence to learn techniques used to fish area waters in the winter months. For more information or the chance to participate check out the website at <http://www.michigan.gov/bow>.



This young woman above braved the  $-25^{\circ}\text{F}$  temperatures to learn how to ice fish. We are always amazed to see what folks will do to pursue fishing in our area! You can't see the smile on her face, but we guarantee you it is there.

# NLMMU Staff Retirements

Fisheries technicians **Brian Mulzer** and **Dick Harrison** retired in February 2014 after spending their careers in public service with the DNR for a combined total of 70 years. Both worked for Fisheries Division out of the Escanaba Field Office for many years and take with them tremendous knowledge and field experience that will be hard to replace.

Each had extensive field experience in the Upper Peninsula and around the state including lake and stream surveys, walleye egg take operations on Little Bay de Noc, raising and stocking walleye fingerlings, statewide fish stocking, maintaining facilities and equipment, aquatic habitat rehabilitation and enhancement projects, and education and outreach efforts with constituents. This is just a short list as they were involved with many, many other projects and duties too numerous to mention here.

We sincerely appreciate their hard work and dedication while working with their colleagues to fulfill the mission and goals of Fisheries Division. Their retirement leaves the NLMMU with a large hole to fill, and they will be deeply missed.

**Congratulations Brian and Dick!**



# Walleye Rearing Summary 2013

In 2013, the NLMMU managed five rearing ponds with unit staff. In addition through cooperative partnerships, walleye were raised and stocked in Upper Peninsula waters by several other volunteer groups: the Indian Lake Rearing Pond was managed by **Indian Lake Property Owner's Association**; Peterson Pond was managed by the **Bays de Noc Great Lakes Sport Fishermen, Inc.**; and the Beer Lake Pond was managed by the **Straits Area Sportsman's Club**. These great organizations helped with both excellent workers and financial assistance. **Wildlife Unlimited of Delta County** and the **Copper County Walleye Association** also provided financial assistance to cover operating costs. We wish to thank these partners for all of their hard work and dedication!

Overall, the NLMMU and cooperators raised over 567,000 spring fingerling walleyes for stocking. The NLMMU also operated a fall fingerling walleye program and stocked 2,687 in Lake Mary (Iron County) and 1,740 in Big Bay de Noc (Delta County). Additionally, the NLMMU partnered with the **Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority** to stock 1,325,00 walleye fry in Big Bay de Noc.

## 2013 NLMMU Walleye Pond Production

| Pond Name                | Number of Spring Fingerlings Harvested |
|--------------------------|--|
| Beer Lake Pond           | 13,320                                 |
| Grasshopper Gulch        | 40,896                                 |
| Indian Lake Rearing Pond | 4,600                                  |
| Landfill Pond            | 128,517                                |
| Moss Lake Pond           | 90,503                                 |
| Peterson Pond            | 135,719                                |
| Square Lake Pond         | 39,417                                 |
| Warren Pond              | 114,466                                |

## 2013 NLMMU Spring Fingerling Walleye Stocking Results

| Water                 | County      | Number Stocked |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Bass Lake (East)      | Marquette   | 8,000          |
| Brevoort Lake         | Mackinac    | 38,335         |
| Big Bay de Noc        | Delta       | 128,863        |
| Boot Lake             | Schoolcraft | 2,100          |
| Camp Seven Lake       | Delta       | 1,671          |
| Clear Lake            | Schoolcraft | 2,898          |
| Corner Lake           | Delta       | 4,224          |
| Goose Lake            | Marquette   | 22,000         |
| Gooseneck Lake        | Delta       | 5,775          |
| Indian Lake           | Schoolcraft | 26,491         |
| Iron Lake             | Iron        | 8,524          |
| Lake Antoine          | Dickinson   | 37,570         |
| Lake Emily            | Iron        | 16,313         |
| Lake Ottawa           | Iron        | 13,775         |
| Lake Stella           | Alger       | 12,111         |
| Little Lake           | Marquette   | 12,000         |
| Mehl Lake             | Marquette   | 2,000          |
| Millecoquins Lake     | Mackinac    | 63,713         |
| North Manistique Lake | Luce        | 46,677         |
| Petes Lake            | Schoolcraft | 5,324          |
| Pike Lake             | Marquette   | 2,624          |
| Sand Lake             | Schoolcraft | 2,052          |
| Sawyer Lake           | Dickinson   | 10,400         |
| Skeels Lake           | Alger       | 3,548          |
| Triangle Lake         | Schoolcraft | 9,041          |

**The NLMMU works closely with our hatcheries to stock fish in the nearshore waters of Lake Michigan and inland lakes and streams of the Upper Peninsula. To find out where we stock fish, go to our online Fish Stocking Database: <http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock>**

# Surveys Completed in 2013

During the spring, summer, and early fall of 2013, the NLMMU completed surveys on a number of waters. These fisheries surveys included population estimates, community assessments, and recruitment evaluations using a combination of netting and electrofishing. The following waters were surveyed, including waters within other units where the NLMMU provided assistance.

| Water                | County    |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Alberta Pond         | Baraga    |
| Escanaba River       | Delta     |
| Lake Antoine         | Dickinson |
| Castle Lake          | Gogebic   |
| Two Mile Creek       | Gogebic   |
| Elm River            | Houghton  |
| Estes Lake           | Houghton  |
| Stucer Lake          | Houghton  |
| Fire Lake            | Iron      |
| Indian Lake          | Iron      |
| Lake Emily           | Iron      |
| Lake Ottawa          | Iron      |
| Lake Sainte Katheryn | Iron      |
| Runkle Lake          | Iron      |
| Winslow Lake         | Iron      |
| Deer Lake            | Keweenaw  |
| Lake Independence    | Marquette |
| Witch Lake           | Marquette |



# Statewide Angler Survey Program 2013



Fishing effort, catch, and harvest information collected from creel clerks helps the NLMMU make informed fisheries management decisions, including regulation and stocking changes. In 2013, our creel clerks conducted both summer and winter surveys throughout the management unit.

The summer surveys were focused on data collection from Lake Michigan nearshore fisheries, which included Big and Little Bays de Noc, the Cedar River, and the Menominee River. In addition to these surveys, a special creel survey was implemented on the Two Mile and Bryan's Creeks. This summer survey was conducted to provide supplemental data for the evaluation of brook trout bag limits on area streams.

The focal point of the winter surveys was collection of ice fishing data on inland lakes within the NLMMU that receive higher levels of fishing pressure. These included surveys on the Groveland Mine Ponds, Lake Antoine, Iron Lake, Chicagon Lake, and Lac Vieux Desert (Western Lake Superior Management Unit). A Great Lakes winter survey was also conducted on Little Bay de Noc.

The information and data our creel clerks collect is an important tool used by NLMMU biologists in managing the vast array of fisheries in our area. If you are approached by one of our clerks, please take the time to answer a few short questions about your fishing experience and catch. You can play a vital role in the management and improvement of fisheries in our watershed through cooperation with our clerks in the field.



Two of the NLMMU Creel Clerks, Kathy Walters and Greg Sanville, participate in a winter training exercise.

# Free Fishing Weekend

On June 8, kids between the ages of 4 and 14 filled Gladstone's Van Cleve Park for the Thomas A. Vietzke Memorial Children's Fishing Derby sponsored by Gladstone Masonic Lodge 396 and Delta Masonic Lodge 195. The event was attended by representatives from Gladstone Public Safety, Search & Rescue, and DNR staff attended the event.





## Great Lakes, Great Times, Great Outdoors

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## NLMMU

## Family Friendly Fishing Waters

### Alger County

[Moccasin Lake](#)

### Delta County

[Camp 7 Lake](#)  
[Rapid River Boat Launch](#)  
[Skeels Lake](#)

### Dickinson County

[Gene's Pond](#)  
[Lake Antoine](#)

### Iron County

[Lake Ottawa](#)  
[Peavy Pond](#)

### Menominee County

[Cedar River](#)  
[Shakey Lakes \(Resort, Long, Baker, Bass, East\)](#)  
[Waters of Green Bay](#)

### Schoolcraft County

[Pete's Lake](#)  
[Quarry Lake](#)  
[Thunder Lake](#)

For more information on Family Friendly Fishing Waters, visit <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364-299046--,00.html>