

**Warmwater Resources Steering Committee**  
**Jay's Sporting Goods, Clare, MI**  
**Meeting Notes 5/2/2016**

Meeting attendees: Linn Duling, Todd Grischke, Patrick Hanchin (phone), Dan Kimmel (phone), Nick Popoff, Jim Felgenauer, Will Schultz, Bryan Darland (guest), Ed Szymanski (phone), Mike Holmes (phone), Bill Zeigler (phone), Randy VanDam, Kevin Wehrly, Dennis Eade, Tom Goniea, Jim Dexter, Bruce Yinger, Dave Peterson.

*Agenda Items*

Climate Effects on Michigan's Fisheries  
Fishing Tournament Information System  
Hatchery Upgrades  
Upper Peninsula Sportsman's Alliance Northern Pike Proposal  
Fishing Regulations Cycle  
Baitfish Regulation Changes

Update: The committee's role was discussed. Moving forward there will not be an option to conference in via phone unless the meeting is scheduled as a webinar or a conference call. The committee is scheduled to meet biannually, several agenda items from this meeting and past meetings have been updates and do not require meetings. The meeting schedule may vary in frequency moving forward depending on the issues.

*Climate Effects on Michigan's Fisheries*

Dr. Kevin Wehrly provided a presentation related to his work on climate effects on Michigan's fisheries. Kevin showed how plant hardiness zones have shifted over the last 25 years and that Michigan's climate will look more like Missouri's current climate in 50 years. Potential effects on fish from a shifting climate include: habitat suitability, increases in warmwater fishes, spawning timing, ice cover declines, and fish stocking strategies.

*Fishing Tournament Information System*

Tom Goniea provided an update on the revamped tournament information system that is now required to use for registering bass fishing tournaments. This requirement was enacted in 2015 for bass tournament anglers organizing tournaments beginning in 2016. This system will be expanded to other fish species in 2018.

The Fisheries Division invested \$140k to upgrade this system and it appears to be much friendlier than the previous application. So far, about 1,500 tournaments have been registered in 2016. The SW portion of the state seems to have the most registered tournaments. The plan is to produce an annual report summarizing fishing tournament activity in Michigan.

*Hatchery Upgrades*

Chief Dexter provided an update on the capital outlay request to improve steelhead and warmwater fish production. If the money is authorized, improvements are planned for the Little Manistee Weir and at Thompson State Fish Hatchery. Warmwater production

would be increased by enhancing infrastructure and constructing 8 new rearing ponds for muskellunge and walleye.

#### *Upper Peninsula Sportsman's Alliance Northern Pike Proposal*

The UPSA has petitioned the DNR Natural Resources Commission to consider a U.P. wide regulation change for northern pike. Their proposal requests that the general northern pike regulation for the U.P. should be changed to a 20 inch minimum size limit with a 5 fish bag limit from a 24 inch minimum size limit, two fish bag limit. Fish Division, with assistance from the WRSC and interested public developed a suite of regulation options during the development of Michigan's Northern Pike Management Plan. Fish Division staff do not recommend that the NRC consider the UPSA request because it is extremely similar to a regulation option currently implemented, the no minimum size limit with one over 24 inches and a 5 fish daily bag limit. However, fisheries staff understand that the northern pike regulations could be more liberal in the U.P.

**ACTION** – MDNR will have internal discussions and engage members of the UPSA to better understand the issue and to consider additional lakes which lakes could be considered for the no minimum size limit regulation.

#### *Fishing Regulations Cycle*

Nick Popoff reminded the WRSC that this is the first year of a two year regulation cycle and that substantive changes will not occur this year unless an emergency arises or as directed by the NRC. The current fishing guide will be active until 2018. Several units are considering changes to northern pike and walleye for 2018.

#### *Baitfish Regulation Changes*

Tom Goniea briefed the committee on some recent changes to the fish disease control order which governs baitfish collection. It was noted that all personally collected baitfish shall only be used in the water it was collected. There was some discussion on what this means in the U.P. where lots of bait is personally collected due to limited baitfish supply. This rule was put in place to minimize the movement of invasive species.

#### *Future Meeting*

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for the fall. Please send your agenda items or ideas to Nick Popoff for consideration. If agenda items are limited in scope then the fall meeting may be cancelled. A meeting date will be set soon.