

Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum
Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, WI
Wells Fargo Room
6 to 9 PM
September 27, 2018

NOTES

6:00-6:15 Welcome and introduction

6:15-7:00 Valuing the Economic Benefits of Lake Michigan Sport fishing – Dan Phaneuf (UW-Madison)

- What is value now and how might that change in the future?
- Value: market economy or non-market economy. Two ways to look at it.
 - Market # is the 7.2 billion value GL.
 - This project - nonmarket value. - “willingness to pay” for a trip. This is demand side of fishery economics.
- Ask questions about different options with different costs. Not necessarily realistic prices, but getting at what they value the options. 500 surveys to salmon stamp holders and licensed anglers in coastal counties.
 - Attribute levels - have different options.
 - Three types of anglers: salmon, trout, warm water.
- Results - Conditions of fishery options current, better, best.
 - Highest value for chinook and walleye.
 - If you have a chinook trip in hand, what would make them change to a trout or walleye fish? Would need to pay angler to go on trout trip, unless it improves to best trout fishery. But will switch to walleye and pay.
- What if chinook is gone? 63% would fish native and would shift to trout if trout improves or fish walleye. 37% would not fish Lake Michigan anymore.
- Total value \$90.1 million with most value (willingness to pay) in chinook and walleye. This is based on extrapolating to the whole Wisconsin Lake Michigan creel.
- What if chinook crashes? Total value declines by about 20%.
- Short term and long term trade off to different options.
- New Study underway looking at economics of all Great Lakes fisheries in Canadian waters.
- Can potentially look at areas that might produce information about how specific areas or investments might be successful/valued. Maybe a MSc project?

7:00-7:20 Menomonee River (Milwaukee County) habitat rehabilitation - Laura Schmidt (WDNR)

- Area of Concern (AOC) area and expanded 2008 AOC area for contaminated sediment and habitat. This project is in expanded area.

- In Menomonee River near Miller Park, channelization created a velocity barrier for fish passage. This effort would create fish passage by removing concert and creating riffle/pools.
- Historic passage of multiple species.
- Partner with Milwaukee Municipal Sewage District. Concrete removed and pools/riffles created.
- Monitoring plan to see how the removal helped passage.
 - Marking fish downstream of barrier in 2017. Had issues with recapture because of high flow events.
- 2018 tagged fish with passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags and used PIT tag reader in stream.
 - Larger PIT tag so it had a larger detection range. 525 fish tagged, mostly white sucker, but also some other species too, including redhorse, rainbow trout, northern pike, smallmouth bass, walleye, etc.
 - Had 91 detections moving upstream. Most movement at night or early AM.
- Movement corresponded to higher stream flows.

7:20-7:30 Break

7:30-8:00 Update on UWSP Research Activities on Green Bay - Dan Isermann (USGS and UWSP)

- 1st study (WI sea grant funded). Diets of yellow perch, walleye, and lake whitefish.
 - Getting target number of fish from different zones but seeing a fair number of empty stomachs. Using genetics to identify some of the unknown fish in stomachs.
 - Can use data to estimate the potential population of perch and whitefish. What role does walleye play in food web as predator?
 - Currently in the middle of the sampling and processing. Some zones having some issues getting walleye and yellow perch in study area 2 because not much walleye or perch fishing.
 - Seeing a lot of gobies and alewife in walleye diets. Some perch and whitefish in walleye diets as well. Alewife seems more important seasonally.
 - Lake whitefish diets in spring in Fox during walleye spawning. Some lake whitefish eating walleye eggs, full of amphipods, etc.
- 2nd study - walleye telemetry and mixed stock assessment.
 - Have a current conceptual model of movement. Movement data will test the current assumptions of the movement model.
 - Transmitter has a 4 year life and also a 1 year temp logger (temperature every 4 hours). \$100 reward tag because need to get the temperature data downloaded and can reuse acoustic tag.
 - Big receiver array listening for the tags. Almost 200 receivers. Several directional arrays near Chambers and also some in LM. In most major tribs too.
 - <https://glatos.glos.us/home/project/GBWAE>
- 3rd study - Acoustic tags in Lake Whitefish from different stocks.
 - Where do different stocks move to and from. Fish tagged mainly from Bay De Noc, north/moonlight bay, Fox and Menominee rivers but some in Peshtigo River as well.
 - Did trials of surgery at Menominee dam fish transfer area to see how well they survive. They did well.

- Some results. Big bay de Noc movement out of bay and some inside bay. North/moonlight not really moving into GB. Staying outside. Menominee R moved around a lot. Fox not much movement, exited but didn't really show up in GB suggesting they stay south of Chambers Island.
- <https://glatos.glos.us/home/project/GBLWF>
- 4th study - muskellunge movement and habitat use.
 - Mainly in southern GB and Area of Concern (AOC). Destination fishery but not much natural recruitment.
 - Where do they spawn, do they return, are larvae produced, do they survive? Confirm spawning with egg pump.
 - Look for larval fish and young of the year later in season.
 - Larval seems to be bottleneck (either not there or not catching them).
 - <https://glatos.glos.us/home/project/GBFRM>

8:00-8:15 Lake Michigan Commercial Fishing Board update - Charlie Henriksen (LMCFB Chair)

- Zone 3 trawl study. What next? Final report, DNR review, then MOU or perm rule?
- Lake whitefish tagging by fishers. Funded by fishers, more tagging this fall. Dennis Hickey putting trap net in Fox to get fish there to tag instead of DNR electroshocking (gentler on fish).
- Catch composition study in zone 1/Green Bay. Quota limitations and zone boundaries. What are the options? This will help inform management by better understanding the zone 1 trap net fishery. Monitoring current gears that are used (trap nets and gill nets).
- Discussion on expanding drop net use (currently can be used for yellow perch) but would like to try for whitefish. Current rule that can't fish drop nets before June 1. Is rule valid for current fishery?
- Gill net study in zone 3 is still on priority list. Still under discussion
- Other issues: extending ice fishing season - study? Law enforcement doesn't think that study is necessary. If ice is good, keep fishing but with enhanced rules. Bring shanty to shore at night, breaker strings to not lose nets.
- Request Sept 15 to May 15 to fish trap nets south of whitefish bay line to zone 2 border.
- Lake trout questions - how many are there. Defer to next year and new numbers from FWS. Can commercial get some harvest of LT? Questions on how that might work.
- Green Bay trawl proposal. 4-2 vote to put it on the list. Early stages of planning but would look at bycatch with whitefish trawling.

8:15-8:30 WDNR updates – Cheryl Masterson (WDNR)

- Stocking numbers 2018 and 2019.
- Stocking allocation (worked through LMFF) between ports and that has been working well.
- Kettle Moraine - On track to get done. Expecting 95% build plans by late September. Then to bid, starting construction in 2019? New Hatchery should be able to raise 350K per year but with only two modules can only raise two strains at once (currently 3 strains).
- Private hatchery is growing 50,000 steelhead. More expensive to grow at private than DNR hatchery plus some added costs/complications to clip and transport.
- Lake Whitefish work with several partners.

- LM gill net - discussions but couldn't agree on study design.
- Retirements Steve Hewitt and Tim Kroeff.
- Willie left for cowboy country.
- Laura Schmidt, Jason Meacham tech Milwaukee and Derek Apps tech in Sturgeon Bay.
- Mass Marking - ongoing.
- Fleet rates have change. State vehicles for trucks dropped but cars/van went up. Cost increase for transportation. Creel Clerks drive 125,000 miles = 23750 additional cost.
- Work planning is starting! Budget is flat or declining with no changes in license or stamps.

8:30-8:45 Discussion, questions, and next Steps

Attendance

Dale Maas
 Dennis Hickey
 Charlie Henriksen
 John Kennedy
 John Janssen
 Keith Waloway
 Lee Haasch
 Chris Strege
 John Hanson
 Scott Habermann
 Richard Jones
 Steve Stackhouse
 John Rennpford
 Dan Isermann
 Dan Phaneuf

WI DNR

Cheryl Masterson
 Laura Schmidt
 Steve Hogler

WI Sea Grant

Titus Seilheimer