

**Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan – Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 7, 2017, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (CDT)**  
**WITC – Ashland, WI**

**Panel Members Present**

Organization

Advisor to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission  
Advisor to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission  
Apostle Islands Sportfishing Association  
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa  
Bad River Watershed Association  
Bodin Fisheries  
Brule River Sportsmen's Club  
Charter Captain  
Chequamegon Food Cooperative  
Clean Wisconsin  
GLIFWC  
Isaak Walton League/Duluth Chapter (W.J. McCabe Chapter)  
Lake Superior Commercial Fishing Board  
Lake Superior Steelhead Association  
Northland College  
Office of Great Waters  
Western Lake Superior Trollers Association  
Wild Rivers Chapter Trout Unlimited  
Wisconsin Sea Grant

Participant

Al House  
Bruce Prentice  
Rob Jones  
Lorrie Salawater  
Tony Janisch  
Beta Bodin  
Ken Lundberg  
Darryl Fenner  
Steve Sandstrom  
Susan Hedman  
Bill Mattes, Ben Michaels  
John Carr, Dave Zentner  
Craig Hoopman  
Mike Pitan  
Randy Lehr  
Michele Wheeler  
Jim VanLandschoot  
Luke Kavajecz  
Titus Seilheimer

**Panel Members Absent**

Organization

Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce  
Bayfield County Land and Water Conservation Department  
Douglas County Land and Water Conservation Department  
Douglas County Fish & Game League  
Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve  
NW Rod and Gun  
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Participant

Mary McPhedridge  
Ben Dufford  
Christine Ostern  
Tom Johnson  
Shon Schooler  
Dave Sorenson  
Chad Abel

**DNR Fisheries Management Staff Present**

Name

Brad Eggold  
Willie Fetzer  
Terry Margenau  
Paul Piszczek  
Brad Ray

Title

Great Lakes Supervisor  
Great Lakes Fisheries Specialist  
Lake Superior Fisheries Supervisor  
Lake Superior Tributaries Biologist  
Lake Superior Biologist

**Purpose:** Introduce Advisory Board members to each other and to the Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan (Plan) development process; develop initial visions for the management plan.

### **Summary**

Terry Margenau introduced the Wisconsin DNR Management Plan Team members, and Willie Fetzer explained the management planning process. Brad Ray facilitated the open dialogue among Board members toward a list of initial visions.

Darryl Fenner began the conversation with comments regarding the Plan's format. He reviewed the Minnesota Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan, Wisconsin Lake Michigan Fisheries Management Plan, Wisconsin Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan, and other plans provided prior to the meeting and found the Minnesota plan to be most clear; the Wisconsin Lake Michigan Plan was difficult to read. Brad Ray responded that one of the tasks for the Board is to determine the structure of the Plan, and Al House suggested using the health of the lake as the over-arching premise. Dave Zentner complimented the Minnesota planning process, as it allowed for open communication among groups and participants felt they were heard. However, tensions existed between the sport and non-sport interests, and equally sharing the floor was sometimes difficult. Dave added that the big concern in the Minnesota process was the lake's insufficient prey base. In contrast, Jim Vanlandschoot noted that the Minnesota plan fell a little short and seemed imbalanced toward Steelhead. The Wisconsin process should aim for a better balance, particularly through open listening. Jim also asked whether a plan exists in the State of Michigan, and Bill Mattes noted that GLIFWC follows the Great Lakes Commission's Lake Superior Fish Community Objectives. **Following this discussion, Brad Ray reiterated that the Board will work toward a balanced plan.**

Michele Wheeler mentioned the extant Lake Superior Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, which uses ecosystem types as its framework and is consistent with the previously mentioned "health of the lake" premise. Steve Sandstrom commented that the Plan could be structured in a way that everything is connected and to avoid silos. It is important to keep our ears wide open and not come to the table with preconceived notions about what is "right." The Board should be open to objectively determining what is actually "right." Al House noted that a "by-species" structure can lead to sub-conscious choices about an appropriate direction for the Plan. He added that the number one consideration is to decide what is healthy for the lake, thereby providing context for all species. Tony Janisch commented that water quality threats must be considered, since it affects fisheries. **Brad Ray observed that perhaps "habitat types" is a theme of this discussion.**

The discussion continued when Bill Mattes acknowledged the Great Lakes Fish Commission's "State of the Lake" report and perhaps the Plan could borrow elements from it. Tony Janisch noted the potential for a hybrid structure, where a habitat-based framework could encompass a fish species sub-framework. Bruce Prentice stated that the plan needs to be able to act in real-time, and Al House suggested writing into the plan any adaptive or newly discovered issues as the Plan is implemented and to make allowances for change/alteration. Tony Janisch concurred and paraphrased the same concept. **Brad Eggold mentioned the Plan can incorporate longer-term objectives or consider only the short-term.**

Randy Lehr commented that lots of different values should be written down and considered to ensure solid understanding of the values expressed around the table. Al House concurred, as this would help achieve consensus. Craig Hoopman expressed interest as to what will come out of this at the end of the process, particularly since the Lake Superior Fisheries Agreement is still not signed and species numbers are currently in place. Would this Plan change these numbers? He added that reporting and scientific data should be brought into the planning process. **Brad Ray replied that the goal is to document what stakeholders think of where the resource should be, and Willie Fetzer noted that the Plan can help lay out how fish will be harvested.** Darryl Fenner cautioned creating an overly broad plan, and Brad Eggold noted that specifics can be expressed as Tactics in the Plan.

Dave Zentner recalled the Minnesota planning process and noted that process participants spoke according to passions about particular species. As the Wisconsin Plan is being developed, the Board and other stakeholders need not give up the passions, but just hear everyone else's passion. Jim Vanlandschoot concurred that the Minnesota process was good in this way, despite the differences.

Willie Fetzer acknowledged the various themes that have emerged from the conversation, where general agreement seems to direct to toward a habitat structure. Randy Lehr commented that data availability will help tell the story about what is known. **Brad Ray cited the primary themes,** as recorded by Willie Fetzer on the dry-erase board:

- **Diversity of habitat**
- **Connectivity – ecological, social**
- **Multi-species – [diversity of opportunity (Ken Lundberg)]**
- **Adaptive/responsive (updatable throughout the life of the plan)**

The conversation shifted toward economics when Bruce Prentice cautioned not to create “artificial sustainability” and avoid “boom and bust” economic outcomes. Willie Fetzer noted that this can be addressed through the Plan’s “Tactics” development. Ken Lundberg stated that any stocking would need some understanding of cost to return. Darryl Fenner observed Lake Superior as under-utilized relative to recreational opportunities, which can influence economics. Luke Kavajecz related this to awareness of the resource, particularly given the lake’s current label as in “good” condition label. Steve Sandstrom suggested that data on the real economic benefit to the community is important to know, and Ken Lundberg felt that data likely exists based on his completion of surveys in the past. Brad Ray added that “dockside” market value only is computed. Willie Fetzer noted that economics might not be related to only one thing (e.g., optimum sustained harvest might not bring optimum economic return). Jim Vanlandschoot stated that economics is not necessarily a goal, but something to be considered elsewhere.

Michele Wheeler commented on where we are going with the Plan. She liked the idea of expressing passions, yet need to balance passions with data and sound science. Rob Jones noted that as DNR progresses through this process, more cohesive relations should develop between commercial and sport fishers relative to data review and availability. Science-based answers should answer: What do we know? What do we think we know? Perhaps future meetings should be structured according to our

current knowledge. Furnish a copy of the Lake Superior Lakewide Action and Management Plan (LAMP) and provide current literature about the lake, including climate. The Fisheries Management Plan must account for long-term trend in climate warming.

Al House asked about the current status of this evening's meeting and the plans for the next meeting. **Brad Ray replied that the LAMP will be distributed and the Board members need to return to their organizations to ask what's important, what are the concerns.** This will help determine what we need to discuss at future meetings. He will provide the requested information and compile a summary of concerns. He also mentioned that meeting notes, Plan comments, and agendas will be published on the Plan website. Regarding future meetings, Steve Sandstrom suggested looking into using additional WITC campuses to have an interactive meeting without having to drive to Ashland.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Notes by Paul Piszczek