

# Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum Meeting August 2016



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# Common Goal

- **Sustainable fishery for current and future generations**
- Wisconsin has 178,000 Great Lakes anglers
- \$114.3 million in annual retail expenditures by Great Lakes sport anglers
- \$12.5 million in state and local tax revenue

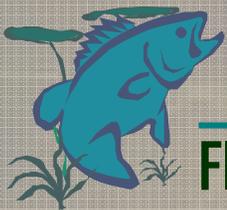


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# Common Approach

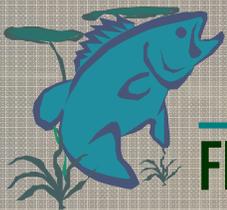
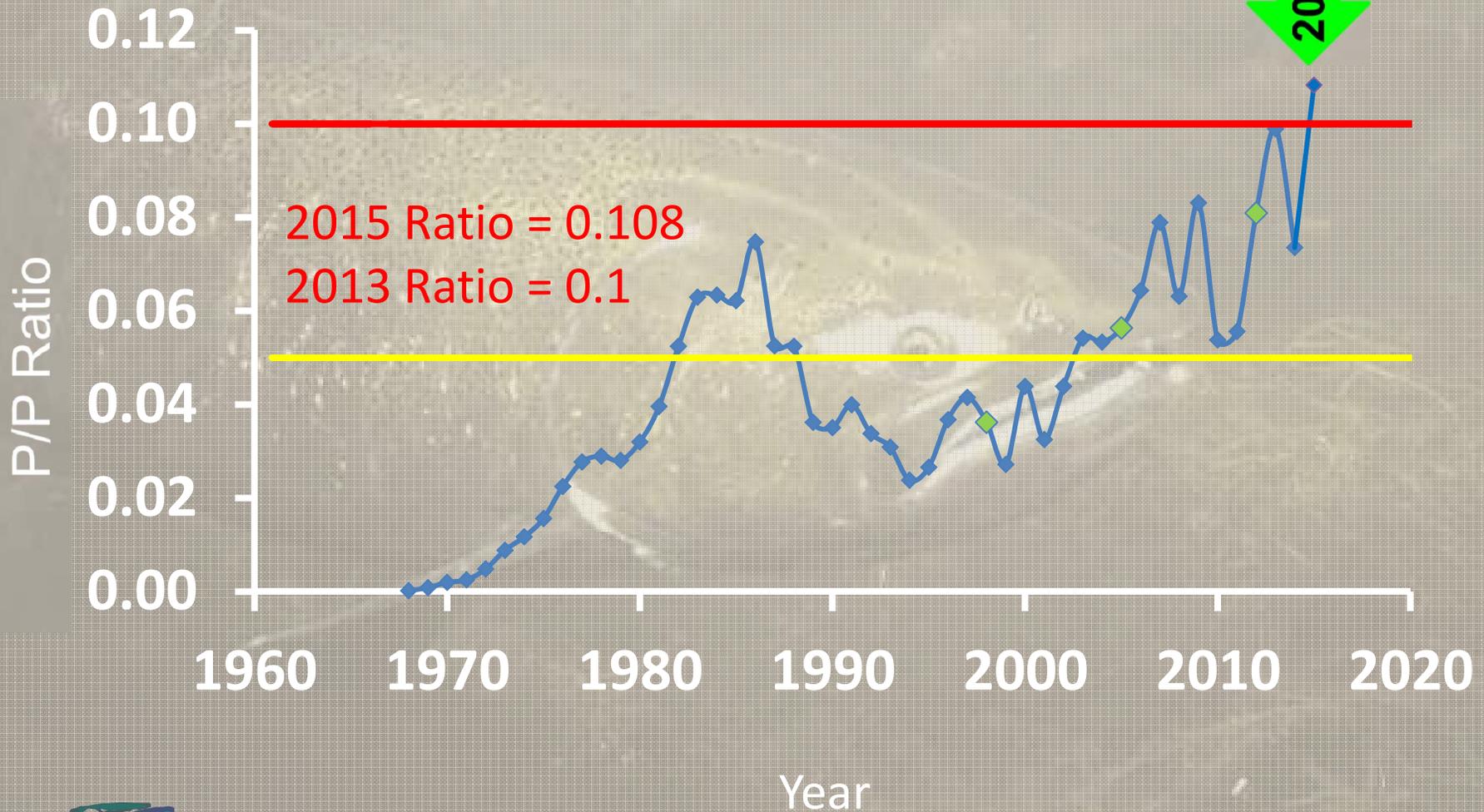
- **Management strategy that encourages and acknowledges diverse experiences, expertise, and points of view**
  - Biological
  - Economic
  - Social



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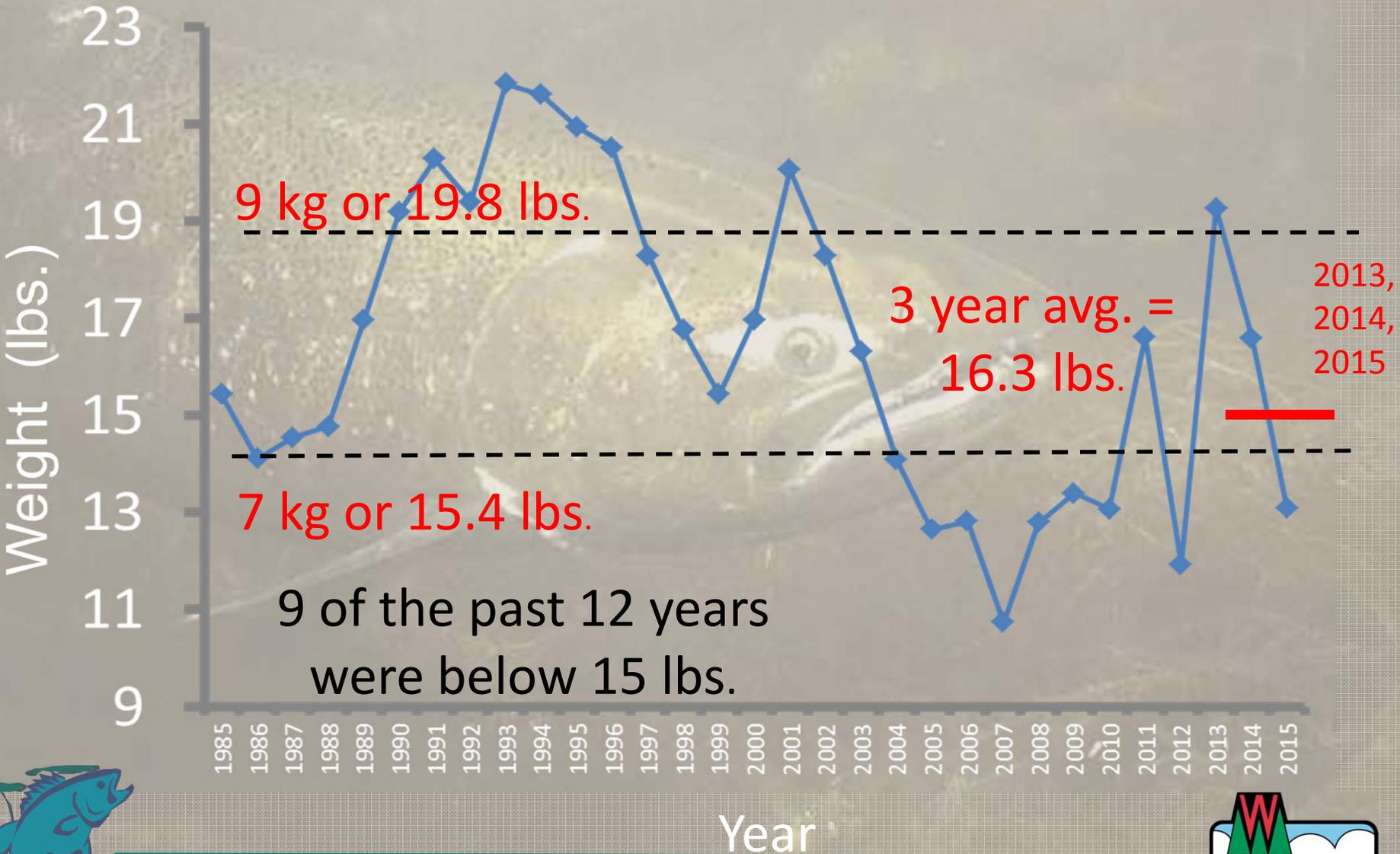
# Surveys and Analysis



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# Surveys and Analysis



9 kg or 19.8 lbs.

3 year avg. =  
16.3 lbs.

2013,  
2014,  
2015

7 kg or 15.4 lbs.

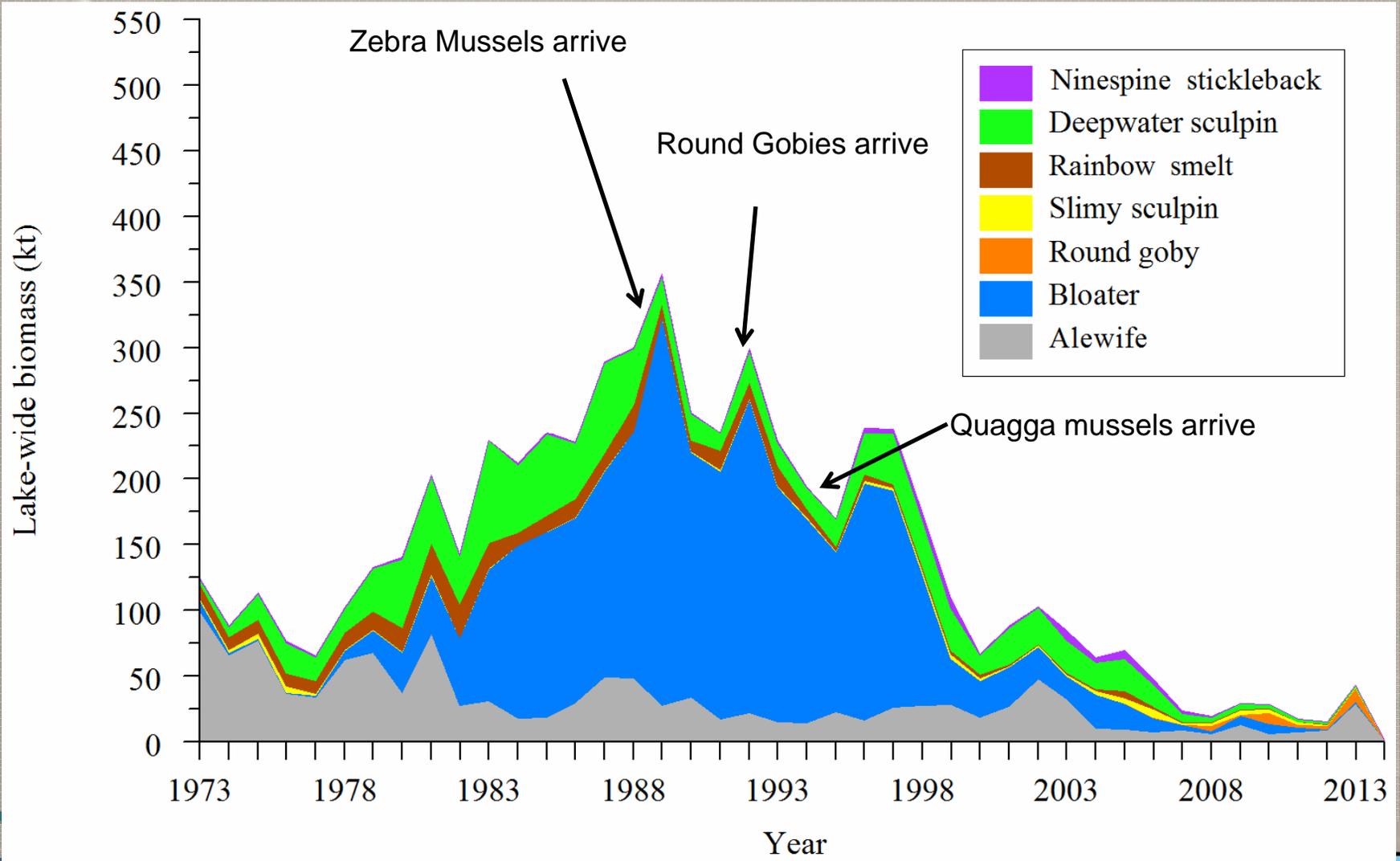
9 of the past 12 years  
were below 15 lbs.



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# Lake Michigan Prey Abundance



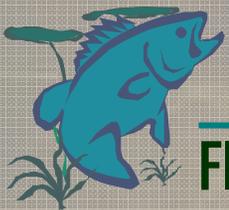
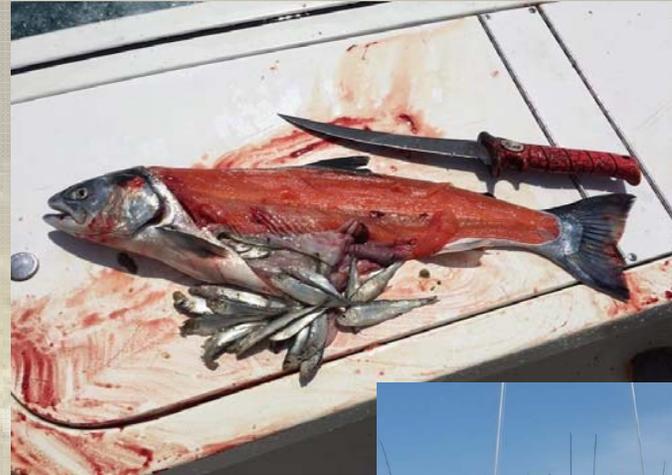
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Slide adapted from Bo Bunnell's 2015 presentation to GLFC

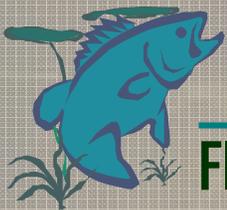
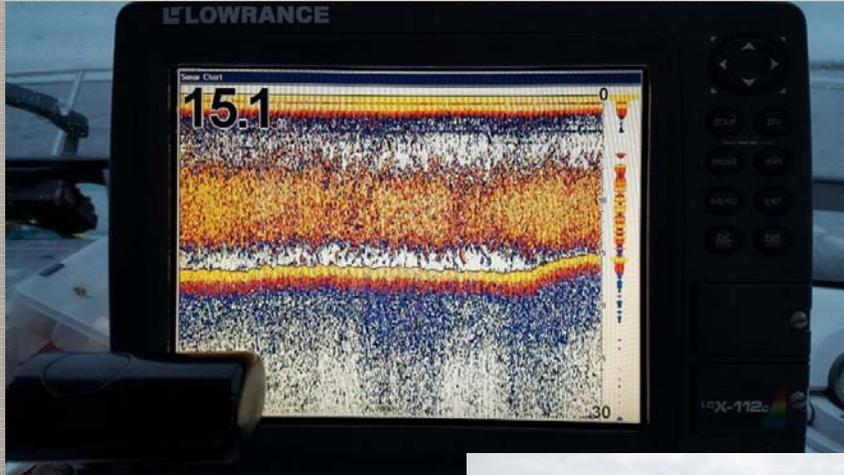
# Angler Reports



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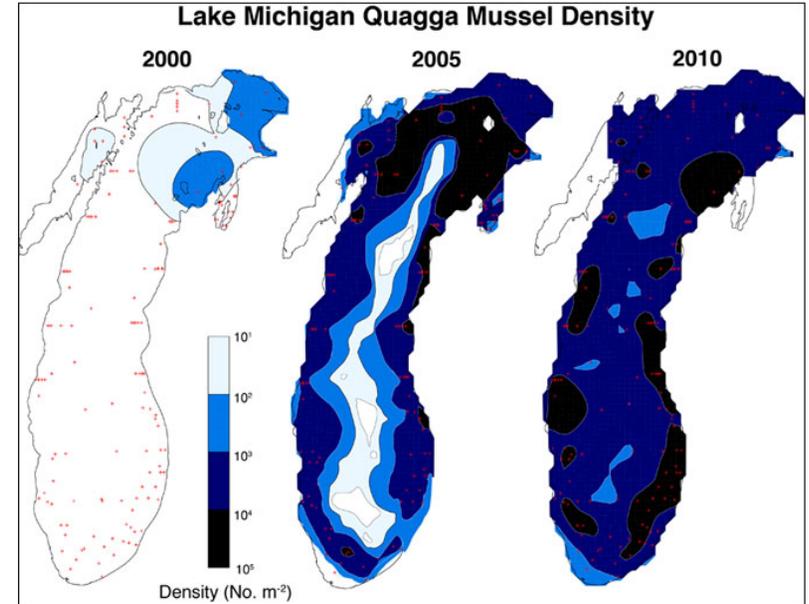
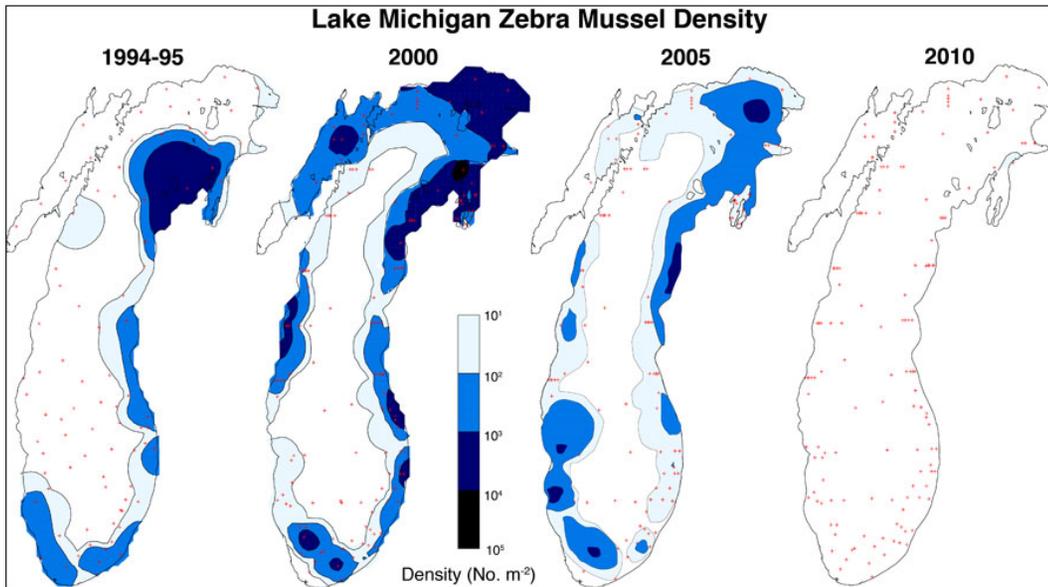
# Angler Reports



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# Surveys and Analysis

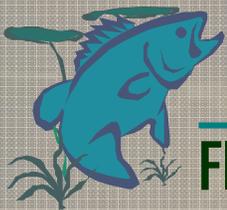


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# Common Purpose

- **Effective collaboration to meet shared goals**
- Effective collaboration is a commitment
- We will not get there if we are divided
- Diverse points of view and experiences are a strength
- Beginning of more effective partnerships



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The charge of the Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum is to review and provide input into the fishery goals, objectives and management plans for Lake Michigan.

Members will assist Fisheries Management in charting the future course of fisheries management by advising the Lake Michigan Fisheries Team (DNR).

- Treat everyone with respect
- Respect other stakeholder's opinions
- Everyone will get a chance to be heard
- Everyone's comments are important.  
We have diverse opinions

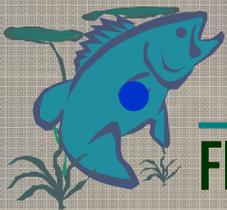
- Question cards
- Comment cards
- Facilitated discussion

# Timeline

- Fisheries Meetings week of June 27
  - Monday, June 27, Technical College, Centennial Hall West, 1290 North Ave., Cleveland, WI 53015
  - Wednesday, June 29, Brown County Library, Auditorium, 515 Pine St. , Green Bay, WI 54301
  - Thursday, June 30, UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences, Ballroom, 600 E. Greenfield Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53204
- Comment period until July 31 – email comments to [DNRLAKEMICHIGANPLAN@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRLAKEMICHIGANPLAN@wisconsin.gov)
- Create final draft recommendations
- Present draft recommendations to Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum – August 2016
- Comments on draft recommendations until September 16

Finalize plans by October 1

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# Agenda

- 6:00 – 6:15 p.m. – Introduction
- 6:15 – 6:45 p.m. – Fisheries Management Draft Plans
- 6:45 – 7:00 p.m. – Break
- 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. – Question/Answer session
- 7:30 – 8:45 p.m. – Facilitated Discussion
- 8:45 p.m. – Wrap up



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# Stakeholder Communication and Information sharing

**June** – Initial stakeholder meeting

**November** – meeting with Lake Michigan Technical Committee

**Jan – March** – various sport group meetings

**April** – LMFF

**August** – Kewaunee/Door angler meeting

**October** - LMFF

**March** – Charter Captains meeting

**April** - LMFF

**October** - LMFF

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

**January** – meeting with Lake Michigan Technical Committee

**April** – Lakewide meeting

**May** – Wisconsin stakeholder meeting

**August** – Wisconsin stakeholder meeting

**December** – Initial LMFF meeting

**Jan – March** – various sport group meetings

**April** – LMFF

**April** – Charter captain meeting

**September** – LMFF

**October** – Charter captains meetings

**March** – Charter Captain meeting

**April** – LMFF

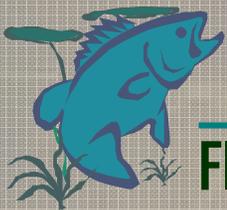
**June** – Salmon and trout meetings

**August** – 9<sup>th</sup>

Press releases  
 GOV delivery  
 Individual club meetings  
 Web pages  
 E-mail address for comments  
 Conservation Congress



# Enhanced outreach, education and marketing of the fishery



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Work with stakeholders to develop a plan for marketing the fishery.

This plan would entail press releases at designated times with designated topics to make sure we are providing story lines throughout the entire year. Example dates, time lines and topics below.

June – CWT story, coho salmon, pending start to chinook fishery

July – Chinook salmon fishery, derbies

August –

September – start of spawning runs, weir operations

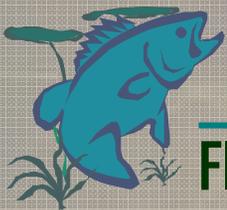
October – egg collections, Open Houses

November – seeforellen collections, hatchery egg development

Charter fishing spotlight

Commercial fishing spotlight

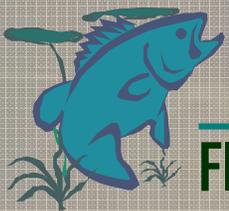
Other LM fisheries – SMB, Walleye, Perch



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# Hatchery Production



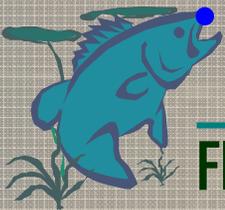
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# Hatchery Production

- **Brule Rearing station**
  - 125,000 yearling wild rose brown trout
  - 100,000 fingerling wild rose brown trout
  - 75,000 yearling coho salmon
- **Thunder River Rearing station**

# Maxed Out

- 550,000 fingerling chinook salmon
- **Kettle Moraine**
  - 270,000 yearling steelhead
  - 150,000 fingerling chinook salmon
- **Lake Mills Hatchery**
  - 120,000 yearling rainbow trout

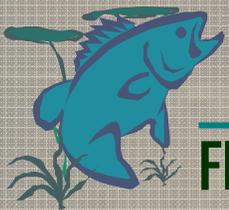


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# Hatchery Production

- Exploring options to raise additional steelhead and coho salmon



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# Net pen usage



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# Net pen usage

- Allow other ports to obtain permits and cooperative agreements to rear chinook salmon for two weeks
- Allow pens to be used to stock other salmon and trout for night release
  - Create google calendar to manage stocking dates
  - Designated club contact
  - Hatcheries would enter stocking information onto calendar, revise as necessary
  - Club contact would be responsible for monitoring calendar, getting net pens set up in designated areas.
  - If pen is not ready to go when truck rolls up to site, fish get stocked in regular designated areas



# Stocking at dusk/night

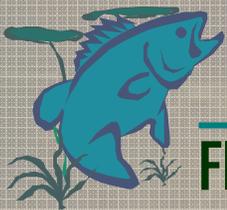


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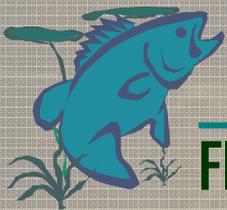
# Stocking at dusk/night

- Request to stock at dusk/night has been brought up numerous times over the years
- Logistics may be an issue
  - Safety
  - Workload
  - Cost (overtime)
- Fish behavior
  - Low dispersal rates as fish stay for days at stocking location
  - Bird predation may be a minor source of overall mortality
- Trial period or study to determine usefulness?



# Stocking at dusk/night

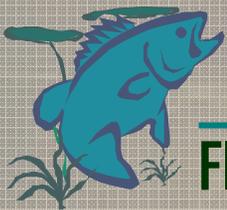
- Department would not initiate this program at this time
- In order to reduce bird predation, the following will occur
  - Department will review all Lake Michigan and Green Bay Stocking locations by December 1, 2016
  - List of locations by species will be sent to corresponding clubs for discussion
  - With feedback from local groups, a final list of stocking sites will be set and communicated to propagation by February 1, 2017
- If clubs are interested in stocking at night, they should use their net pen projects for that purpose



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# Species Mix



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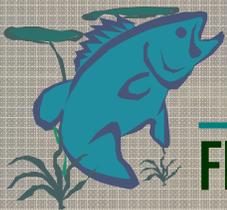


# Species Mix

- Currently stocked by WDNR
  - Chinook and Coho salmon
  - Steelhead (Chambers Creek, Ganaraska)
  - Rainbow trout (Arlee)
  - Brown trout (Wild Rose, Seeforellen)
- Currently stocked by USFWS
  - Lake trout



# Chinook salmon and Lake Trout stocking plans



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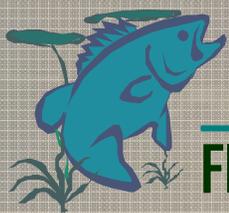
# Management Options

- Maintain, or increase, all salmon and trout stocking numbers in WI, except lake trout.
- Maintain status quo until we have another year of data to inform stocking/management strategies.
- Maintain 2016 (or very similar) Chinook salmon stocking numbers in WI waters, and account for the Chinook numbers by using equivalent stocking reductions for lake trout and potentially brown trout.
- LMC Recommendation - Reduce Chinook salmon lakewide by 50%, which would be about a 47% reduction in WI waters



# Maintain or increase all salmon and trout stocking

- This option is concerning to the other states and tribes that border Lake Michigan as well as the scientists and agencies that contribute expertise to inform management strategies such as the USGS, USFWS, and various levels of academia.
- This option has received support from some stakeholders stating that any further Chinook reductions will negatively impact the fishery and economy that it generates.
- 2017 lake trout reductions and beyond will be pursued.



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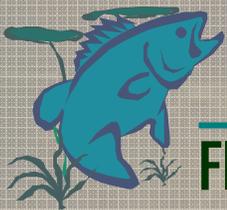
# Maintain status quo

- Collect enough Chinook eggs to potentially stock 810,000 in the spring of 2017
- Wait for information from 2016 surveys
- Reaction by some stakeholders is that this may not be preferred because of business related decisions based on the stocking/management decision, and the sooner a decision is made, the better
- Fish that are reared throughout the winter may not be stocked depending on the final decision
- 2017 lake trout reductions and beyond will be pursued.



Maintain 2016 (or very similar) Chinook salmon stocking numbers in WI waters

- Use Chinook salmon equivalents for lake trout, steelhead, brown trout and coho salmon to increase chinook salmon numbers
- 2017 lake trout reductions and beyond will be pursued.



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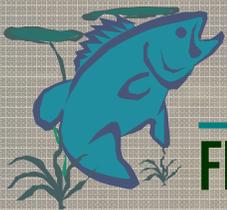


# Reduce Chinook salmon lakewide by 50%

- Reduce stocking based on this table

State	Current	Proposed	Percent Reduction from 2013 levels	New Proposal	Percent Reduction from 2013 levels
<b>Wisconsin</b>	810,000	355,000	56%	425,000	47%
<b>Michigan</b>	560,000	200,000	64%	300,000	46%
<b>Illinois</b>	230,000	90,000	61%	120,000	48%
<b>Indiana</b>	200,000	45,000	78%	60,000	70%
<b>Total</b>	1,800,000	690,000	61.5%	905,000	50%

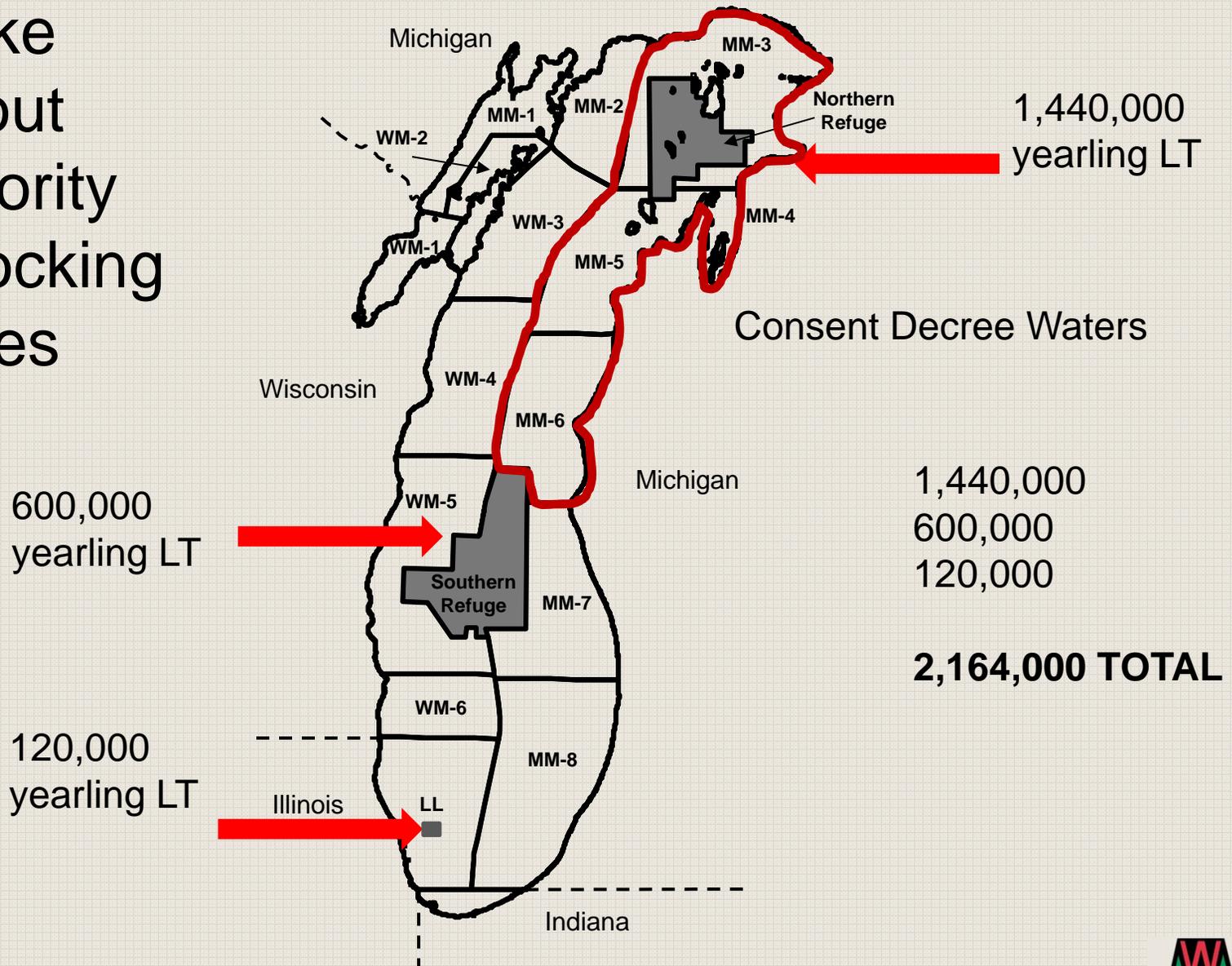
- 2017 lake trout reductions and beyond will be pursued.
- Stakeholder concerns



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# Lake Trout Priority Stocking Sites

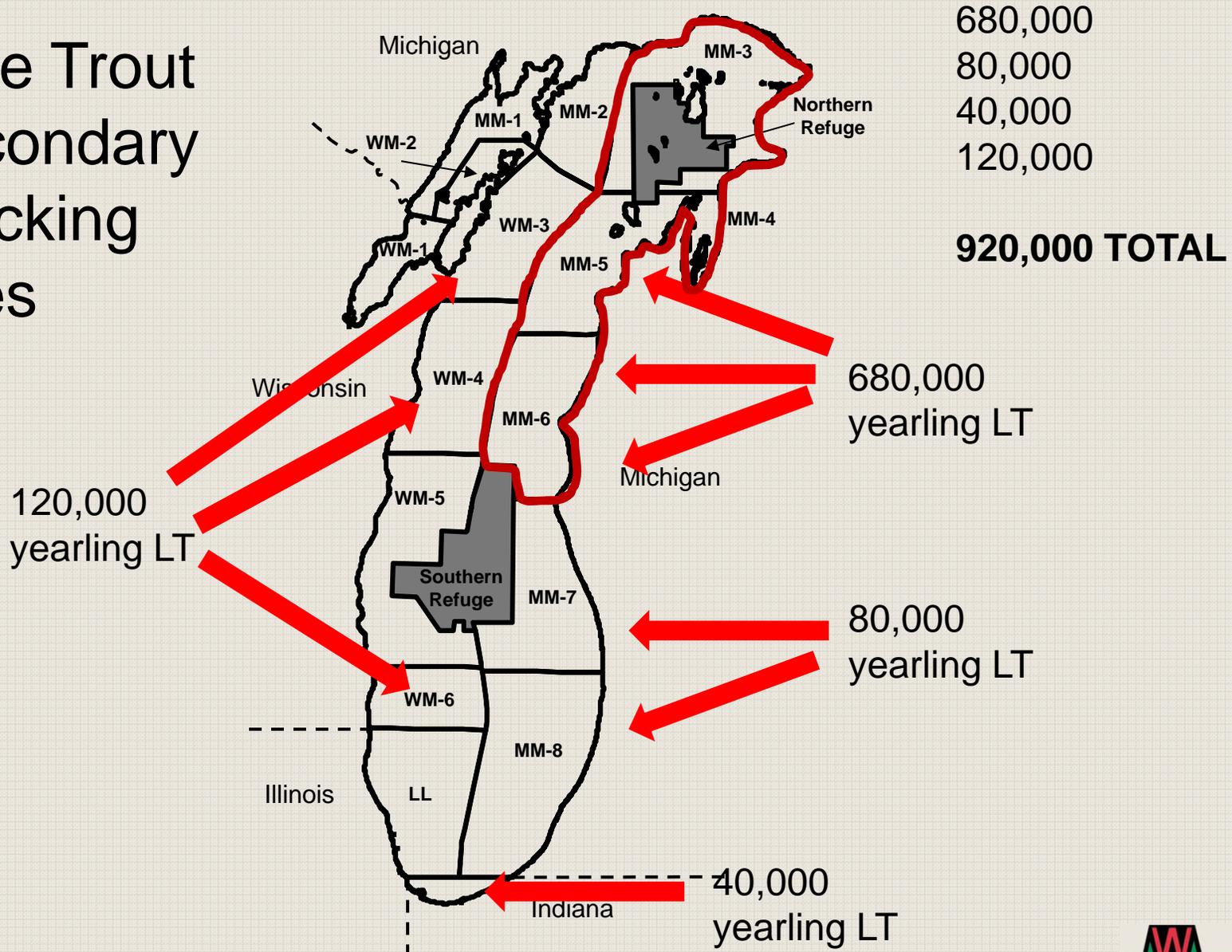


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# Lake Trout Secondary Stocking Sites

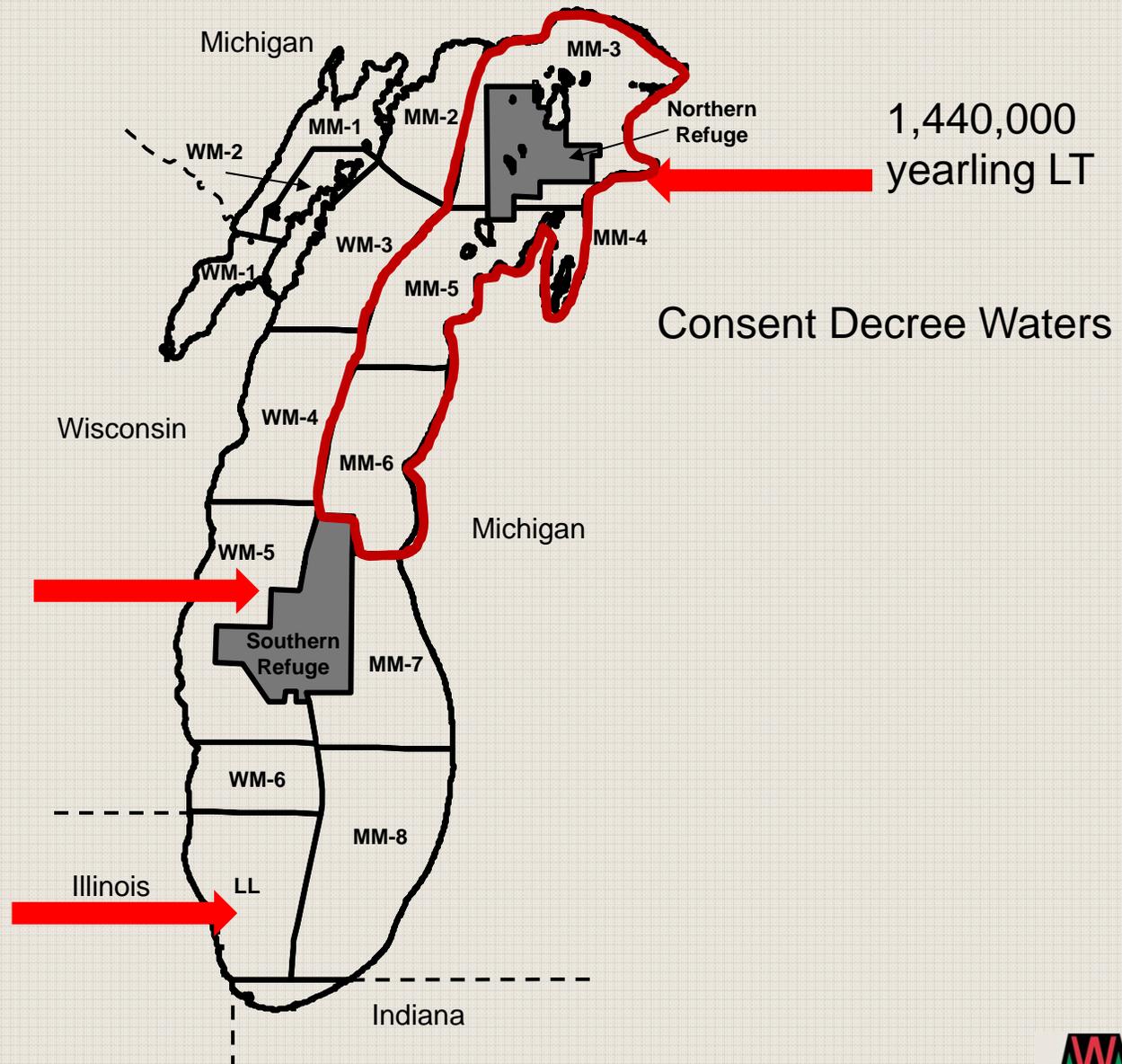
## Consent Decree Waters



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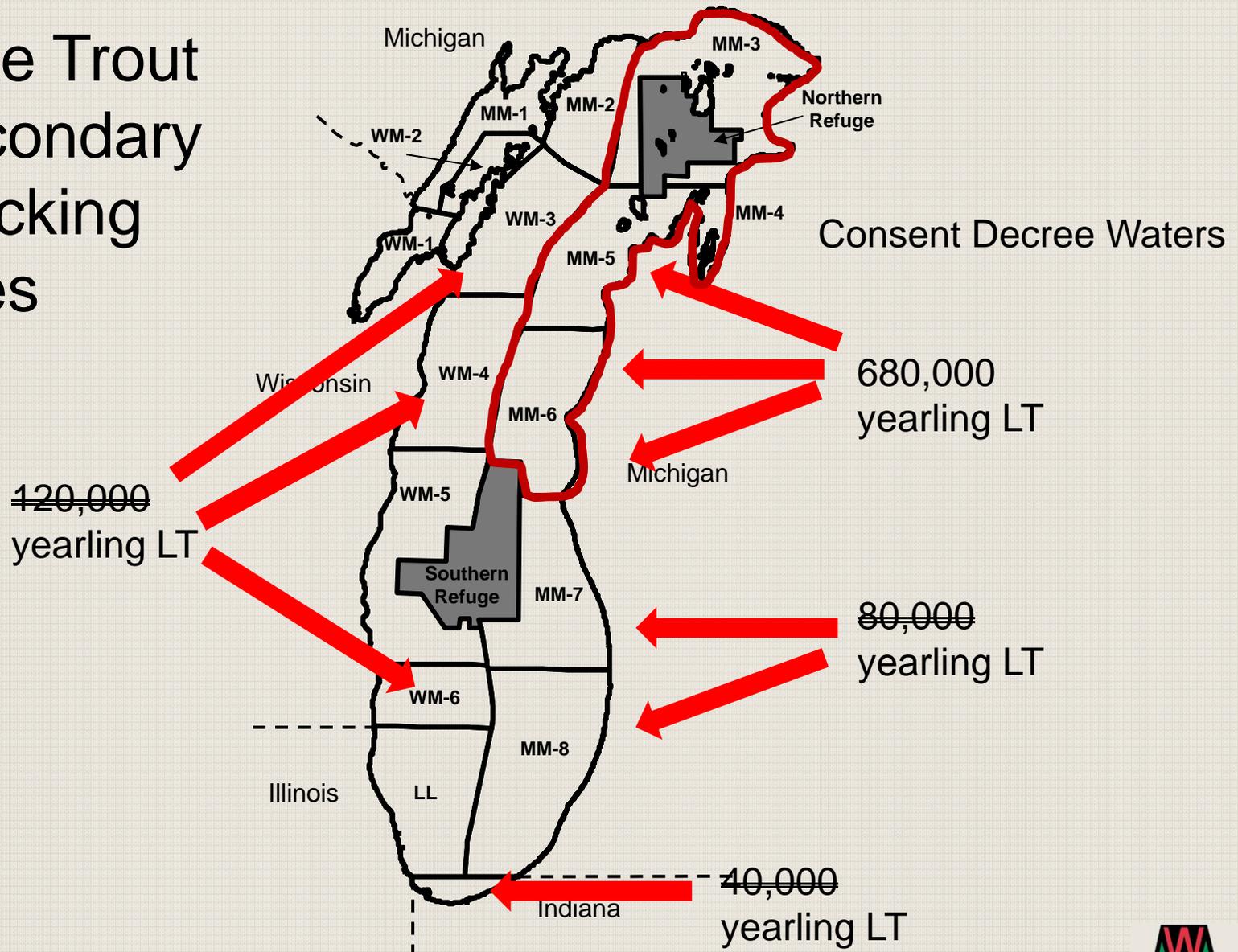
# Lake Trout Priority Stocking Sites



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# Lake Trout Secondary Stocking Sites



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## LAKE TROUT

State	Current Stocking (from table)	Proposed	Number Reduced	Percent Reduced
Wisconsin	750,000	300,000	450,000	60%
Michigan- Consent Decree	2,120,000	2,120,000	0	0%
Michigan-Non- Consent Decree	80,000	0	80,000	100%
Illinois	120,000	120,000	0	0%
Indiana	40,000	0	40,000	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,110,000</b>	<b>2,540,000</b>	<b>570,000</b>	<b>18%</b>



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# Lake Trout season and bag limits



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# Lake Trout season and bag limits

- Lake trout scoping statement
  - Increase open season to year round
  - Increase bag limit
    - Pros and cons of 3 vs. 5
  - Open Mid-Lake Reef to fishing
- Get Emergency rule in place by March 1, 2017
- Extend in once during the season
- Make it permanent for 2018



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# Other management options

- Predator bird hazing
- Support for enhanced research capacity
- Habitat improvement opportunities
- Stocking other species
- More actively involving stakeholders in data collections
- Incorporating another economic factor in our Chinook salmon stocking strategy



# Questions/Answer Session?



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# Agenda

- 6:00 – 6:15 p.m. – Introduction
- 6:15 – 6:45 p.m. – Fisheries Management Draft Plans
- 6:45 – 7:00 p.m. – Break
- 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. – Question/Answer session
- 7:30 – 8:45 p.m. – Facilitated Discussion
- 8:45 p.m. – Wrap up



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# Decision Point: Should DNR engage angler groups to develop a marketing strategy?

## Decision Ramifications:

### ***If Yes***

- Create sub-group of LMFF to work on this issue
- Develop a charge and work objectives
- Would need significant input from stakeholders
- Press releases and documents would highlight the fishery throughout the year

### ***If No***

- DNR will continue to create news releases highlighting the fishery



# Decision Point: Should we allow other net pen operations to be initiated?

## Decision Ramifications:

### ***If Yes***

- Net pen operations would likely increase by 1 to 3 ports
- Increase the risk of chinook salmon mortality in the net pens
- Increased coordination between DNR and angler groups will be needed
- Potential decrease in predation from fish and birds
- Potential increase in homing and decrease in staying from net pen stocked fish

### ***If No***

- Wait until current net pen operations are evaluated before allowing more (Kewaunee and Root River).
- Stocking of other species into net pens for night release would be limited



# Decision Point: Should we stock at night? If No, should we use short term net pens without feeding to release fish at night?

## Decision Ramifications:

### ***If Yes***

Logistics may be an issue

Safety

Workload

Cost (overtime)

Fish behavior

Low dispersal rates as fish stay for days at stocking location

Bird predation may be a minor source of overall mortality

### ***If No***

- Department will review all Lake Michigan and Green Bay Stocking locations by December 1, 2016
- List of locations by species will be sent to corresponding clubs for discussion
- With feedback from local groups, a final list of stocking sites will be set and communicated to propagation by February 1, 2017
- If clubs are interested in stocking at night, they should use their net pen projects for that purpose



# Decision Point: How many Chinook salmon should be stocked by Wisconsin in 2017?

## ***Maintain or Increase***

Maintain, or increase, all salmon and trout stocking numbers in WI, except lake trout.

## ***Status Quo***

Maintain status quo until we have another year of data to inform stocking/management strategies.

## ***Use Chinook salmon equivalents***

Maintain 2016 (or very similar) Chinook salmon stocking numbers in WI waters, and account for the Chinook numbers by using equivalent stocking reductions for lake trout and potentially brown trout.

## ***LMC recommendation***

Reduce Chinook salmon lakewide by 50%, which would be about a 47% reduction in WI waters.



# Decision Point: Should we use lake trout and brown trout reductions, non-production of steelhead and coho salmon to stock more Chinook salmon?

## Decision Ramifications:

### ***If Yes***

- Minimize Chinook salmon stocking reduction
- Reduces nearshore stocking of lake trout to zero
- If and when coho, brown and steelhead production increase, Chinook salmon numbers would go down
- Opens the door for other agencies to do the same (e.g. Michigan coho salmon)

### ***If No***

- Chinook salmon stocking numbers would have to be decreased by a larger amount
- Need to lower predation pressure by some other species.



# Decision Point: Should we proceed with changes to our Lake trout fishing regulations?

## Decision Ramifications:

### ***If Yes***

- Lake trout scoping document would proceed
- If approved and emergency regulation changed approved, likely to have different lake trout regulations in place by March 2017
- Harvest on Lake trout will increase
- Reduce predation pressure on alewives

### ***If No***

- Lake trout regulations would remain the same.
- Opportunities to harvest lake trout would remain the same
- Predation pressure on alewives would not be decreased



# Wrap-up and next steps

## Wrap-up

- Comments until September 16
- [DNRLAKEMICHIGANPLAN@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRLAKEMICHIGANPLAN@wisconsin.gov)
- Finalize plans by October 1

## Next Steps

- Use the Fisheries Forum to actively engage stakeholders in developing, implementing and assessing these new initiatives

