

DRAFT  
LAKE MICHIGAN COMMERCIAL FISHING BOARD  
MEETING  
June 18, 2024

Hybrid Meeting of in-person and video

1. Organizational Matters:
2. Call to Order:

Chairman Charlie Henriksen called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Charlie mentioned that we were going to take several items out of order on the agenda.

Members Present: Charlie Henriksen, Mark Maricque, Mike LeClair, Todd Stuth, Dan Pawlitzke.

Member Absent: Brett Schwarz, Rick Johnson.

DNR Staff Present: Brad Eggold, Nick Leger, Ryan Propson, Robert Stroess, Scott Hansen, Jacob Steckmesser, Al Blizel (retired DNR).

Anonymous Attendee: none

Other Attendees Present: Will Henriksen, Dennis Hickey, Jay Virlee, Jack Tong, Bob Wincek Great Lakes Sportfishing Clubs, Dan Dombrowski, Paul Smith, Chris Peterson,

3. Approval of the Agenda; Dan Pawlitzke seconded by Mark Maricque, all aye.
4. Approval of minutes of March 14, 2024; Motion made by Mark Maricque, seconded by Charlie Henriksen, All Aye.
5. Discussion Items:
  - A. Lake Michigan Lake Whitefish Trawling Update: Nick Legler, DNR presented to the LMCFB 6 points pertaining to Trawling of Lake Whitefish gathered from the public meeting held at Lakeshore Technical College on May 29, 2024:

Pawlitzke made a motion to support the May 29<sup>th</sup> public meeting presented by the DNR, seconded by Mark Maricque. All members present voted Aye. Charlie Henriksen asked that we withdraw the Motion and discuss and act upon all 6 points which were presented at the public meeting. Dan made a Motion to retract both his motions and agreed upon by Mark.

#### LeClair Requests

1. Lake Whitefish harvest from trawling gear should not be subjected to the 10% bycatch rule.
2. Camera monitoring system
  - Option 1 - remove requirement to have camera system onboard and monitoring of bycatch
  - Option 2 - keep camera system but If camera system stops working, no restrictions on fishing. Parts and repair could take 3 to 4 weeks. Mike LeClair indicated that he could purchase the duplicate camera, however, he is concerned about the camera being obsolete.
3. Trawling for Lake Whitefish in Green Bay should be considered - trawling has been done in Green Bay for smelt. Mike LeClair has withdrawn this request at this time.
4. Trawling for Lake Whitefish should be permitted in August and September without restrictions - we stop fishing when not economical and possible changes in lake trout regulations.

5. Trawl drag time should be when trawl doors hit the water and then leave the water - extend time from one hour to possibly 70 min to account for time spent putting trawl to the bottom and out again.
6. Trawl dimensions should be up to the fisher. The only part that needs regulation is the cod end at 4.5 inches. Mesh size in the rest of the net would not be smaller but may be larger to make the net pull easier. Wings size could go to 10/12 inch mesh and behind fishing circle to 4-inch mesh to cod end. These might already be legal based on current code.

Discussion and Action by LMCFB:

1. Eliminate the 10% bycatch rule due to the small number of Lake Trout caught verses the Lake Michigan Lake Whitefish actually caught. LeClair Abstained. By consensus the remaining members of the LMCFB agreed with this request.
2. LeClair will agree to keep an extra camera on hand (estimated cost of \$7,000) in case of the other cameras are not working.
3. LeClair agreed to withdraw the request to trawl, at this time, in the Bay of Green Bay.
4. Trawling should be permitted without restrictions in months of August and September. LeClair mentioned that if they are catching too many bycatch, the Commercial Fisher would move to another location, this process would not apply to the 10% bycatch rule. LeClair mentioned that the Trawl does not encounter Lake Sturgeon like traps net do.
5. LeClair requested to have the drag time be increased from 60 minutes to 70 minutes as it takes about 5 minutes for the weighted doors to sink to the bottom of Lake Michigan, plus another 5 minutes to lift the doors and net. It appears there is no desire, at this time, to extend the trawling time, however that could change in the future.
6. The Trawl dimensions should be up the Commercial Fisher. The only part of the net that needs to be regulated is the mesh cod end 4 ½". Mesh sizes in the rest of the net would not be smaller but may be larger in order to make the net easier to pull. Brad Eggold mentioned that all this gear is allowable. Brad Eggold will check on the dates of the Scope Statement for future planning of the timing and adoption of the Trawling rule

CalendarYear	Zone	Location	GearName	SpeciesName	Weighed (Lbs)
2023	1	GB	Gill Net - Bottom	Lake Whitefish	48,259
2023	1	GB	Gill Net (Day Set)	Lake Whitefish	85,414
2023	1	GB	Trap Net	Lake Whitefish	423,347
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>557,020</b>
2023	2	GB	Gill Net - Bottom	Lake Whitefish	19,964
2023	2	GB	Trap Net	Lake Whitefish	124,578
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>144,542</b>
2023	2	LM	Gill Net - Bottom	Lake Whitefish	19,730
2023	2	LM	Gill Net - Floated	Lake Whitefish	1,563
2023	2	LM	Gill Net (Day Set)	Lake Whitefish	1,242
2023	2	LM	Trap Net	Lake Whitefish	32,094
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54,629</b>
2023	3	LM	Trap Net	Lake Whitefish	6,866
2023	3	LM	Trawl	Lake Whitefish	156,087
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>162,953</b>
				<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>919,144</b>

B. Lake Trout Scope Statement: Brad Eggold said the updated Lake Trout Scope Statement will be evaluated by the DNR Lake Trout Technical Committee and Working Group, according to the rules governing the process for the creation of Scope Statements. In order to proceed with the Lake Trout matter, the DNR believes that they need additional new information:

- This Scope Statement process was outlined in the LMCFB Minutes of March 14, 2024.
- Obtain more survey information from all Fishers from Sheboygan to Kenosha.
- The Lake Trout Working Group indicates there needs to be more work on the surveying from other areas. Additional survey data from Creel Survey, Mass Market of Age-related information plus additional Commercial Fishers by-catch data. Obtain more information through Creel Surveys & earoliths of Lake Trout.
- Lake Trout bycatch information on total number of Lake Trout caught in commercial fishing gear along with mortality count of Lake Trout thereafter released.
- Brad mentioned that there needs to be an allocation of Lake Trout for this study. A 30,000# amount was mentioned by Charlie plus that the NRB is in favor of the Lake Trout Scope Statement.
- Brad had mentioned that there is no current method or mechanics to study Lake Trout.
- Brad also mentioned that the Great Lakes Lake Trout Working Group wants to get a number of Lake Trout however, there is no current mechanism to evaluate Lake Trout. Currently, commercial fishers are mandatory required to report Bycatch, such as Lake Trout for statical purposes.
- According to Brad, the DNR WILL NOT talk or discuss the Lake Trout Scope Statement prior to sending the DNR version to the NRB. Everyone will receive this Scope Statement at the same time.

C. Login Changes to Electronic Fish Harvest Reporting System (EFHRS): EFHRS was on the LMCFB Priority List. The Department of Administration (DOA) will be in charge of all software procurement and analysis for the other State Agencies such as the DNR. As such, the DOA will incorporate the EFHRS & web Access Management System (WAMS) into the State-of-Art My Wisconsin I.D. System.

- DOA indicated the EFHRS consolidation is slated to change January to February 2025.
- All Commercial Fishers will need new access credentials to login their catch data.
- DOA indicated there will be a 2-factor identification system
- Brad again reported that the DNR Fisheries Department is in severe financial crisis. The previous announcement of this financial crisis was reported in the March 14, 2024 LMCFB minutes.
- Pawlitzke commented that there might be a need for commercial fishers to login and logout several times during the day, as needed, to report catches which comply with the DNR reporting requirements, which might be in conflict with the DOA login requirements. Essentially the 3 interested parties of DOA, DNR and Commercial Fishing Customers should work together to create a seamless EFHRS reporting system.

Commercial Zone Quota Calculations - 2024

		Zone 2	GB Portion	LM Portion	TOTAL
GB TAC	1,142,534				
LM TAC	874,385	888,785	365,887	522,898	888,785
Zone 1	776,647				
Quota					
Zone 2	888,785				
TAC Quota					
(GB and					
LM)					
Zone 2	365,887				
Quota (GB)					
= X					
Zone 2	522,898				
Quota					
(LM) = Y					
Zone 3	351,487				
Quota					

6. Old Business: Dan Dembrowski from UWSP mentioned that Lake Whitefish telemetry would go from Green Bay to Lake Michigan in less than 100 feet of water.

- 60 receivers will be placed in the northern part of the Bay and the Lake.
- The 27 receivers are equally divided between the following locations:
  - 9 would be placed between Two Rivers and Cleveland.
  - 9 placed around Sheboygan.
  - 9 placed around Port Washington.
- Dombrowski also mentioned that 200 tags would be available for the 2 following years of 50 in the Spring and 50 in the Fall, essentially 100 per year.

7. Board Members Concerns: The CARES Act Advertising Campaign results were sought to see if the Billboard locations created additional traffic to restaurants. Further, questions have arisen pertaining to the Lake Michigan Perch Quota was eliminated from the EFHRS system, even though the Lake Michigan Perch season was closed and their Quota was not currently in use. Mr. Legler will check into the records of Perch Quota numbers.

8. Comments and Announcements: Nothing to report.

9. Adjournment: Motion - Moved by Todd Stuth, seconded by Mark Marique. Motion passed unanimously at 7:51 P.M.

There was no next meeting scheduled.