



cannonball

G A Z E T T E



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN CHARTER BOAT ASSOCIATION • WINTER 2020

COVID-19 Impacts on Michigan's Charter Fleet

Sea Grant surveys document COVID-19 impacts on Michigan's charter fishing industry

Dan O'Keefe; Michigan Sea Grant;
okeefed@msu.edu

This year has been a hard one for many small businesses, and Michigan's charter fishing industry is no exception. In addition to dealing with high water levels and the usual ups and downs of weather patterns and fish populations, charter captains had to contend with COVID-19, the infectious disease caused by novel coronavirus, and related restrictions. Michigan Sea Grant conducted a series of surveys on Michigan's charter fleet during 2020, and preliminary results reveal the impact of the pandemic.



During the early part of the 2020 season, the fishery was effectively shut down. Some of the captains who were hit the hardest were those who focused on spring fisheries for walleye and steelhead. Due to the timing of the stay at home order and restriction on motorized boating, captains who focused only on spring fishing lost their entire season.

By the end of June, 32% of captains had not taken a single charter fishing trip during 2020. On average, captains were down a total of 15 trips during the early part of the 2020 season. When restrictions were relaxed later in the season, many captains expressed concern regarding guidance that left captains and customers unsure of the legality and safety of operating a charter fishing business. Charter fishing provisions from Michigan DNR were updated in August to clarify that charter boats could legally operate even if social distancing was not possible onboard, so long as masks are worn.

With clarified and relaxed restrictions later in the fishing season, many captains saw their trip numbers recover to some extent. Captains who responded to our October survey reported 5.3 fewer trips



during the late season (July-October) in 2020 vs. 2019. However, we also found that captains who were hard hit during the early part of the season were less likely to take our October survey. When accounting for this we estimated that the average captain lost 6.7 trips during the late season in addition to losing 14.8 trips during the early season (March-June).

Due to declining trip numbers, revenues from charter fees also declined substantially. The average captain lost \$10,711 in revenue during the 2020 season, which means that Michigan's charter fishing industry as a whole lost \$6.05 million in charter fees this year. Due to ripple effects and economic multipliers this has a much greater impact on coastal communities, but the old equations don't necessarily hold up in 2020 because other businesses like hotels and restaurants were often impacted by different restrictions than the charter industry.

Although this was a very challenging year, survey results also speak to the resilience of the industry. When asked about their five-year plans, only 8% of captains planned to sell their current boat. Thirteen percent planned to quit the business altogether. Alt-

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From the Helm . . .



COVID-19 and the Tribal Consent Decree were the big stories this year. Sadly, I've lost some good friends and relatives who contacted the virus. 2020 is coming to a close; hopefully by next spring when we begin the 2021 fishing season the Covid crises will be mostly behind us, and we will see a bit of a return to normal.

The Tribal Decree remains a very big and difficult problem. It is proving to be very complicated and difficult. The Covid issue has made the negotiations even more complicated and costly since it is not possible for the negotiators to meet in person. Negotiations are very frustrating at times. Meeting on a Zoom call with 30 to 50 people with different opinions on how to divide a shared resource is about as complicated as it gets. After a year of negotiations accomplishments have been hard to come by. Hopefully, we may be able to move forward more quickly in 2021.

Some possible changes may be hard for us all to have to accept when the new agreement is finally reached. We now know that Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are only producing about only one third of the bio-mass the lakes were producing 20 years ago. The invasives are robbing the lakes of the nutrients and plankton that were present in that time. Also, the white fish population has been crashing in both lakes.

Because of all of the above and more, our negotiations funds are being stretched to the max. The longer it goes on, and the harder it is to reach an agreement, the more difficult it becomes to cover the cost of belonging to the coalition. Please consider making a contribution to the MCBA Tribal Negotiation Fund. We need to see this through as part of the Coalition to Protect Michigan Resources. Steve Schultz and Chris Patterson, are



by far the most skilled legal team we could hope to have to get us to a successful conclusion. We must continue to have them represent us via the Coalition.

The Commercial Fishing bills we had hoped to pass have been torn apart by Senator McBroom and the Commercial Fishing industry. Lake trout, Walleye and Perch are their targets. Senator McBroom has wrote 143 amendments to these bills. There isn't one amendment that is friendly to the sport fishing community even though sport fishermen pay the bills with our licenses, taxes and fees. They would have us provide a 'sort of corporate welfare' to an industry that doesn't put any money or fish into the system. For decades, sport fish have rightfully been protected from commercial harvest. We cannot allow that to change now.

Sadly, many people who fish the lakes don't know these issues are threatening their fishery. What would happen if our fishery would be over-harvested by commercial fisherman? Would our charter businesses be destroyed?

These are all difficult issues, and things seem kind of gloomy just now, but here's the good news: every day there is a group of dedicated people who are representing you, and working as hard as possible to protect the fishery we all so value. Seven days a week, Saturday and Sundays included, and in every possible way, commonly including lots and lots of Zoom meetings.

Hopefully we work our way through this, with a good outcome for all.

Happy Holidays

Please be safe

Captain Bill Winowiecki

President

Michigan Charter Boat Association 

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hough this may sound like a high number, previous surveys from 2002 and 2011 found that 18 to 21% of captains plan to quit during "normal" years. Even so, our October survey revealed that most captains are cautious about expanding their operations any time soon. For example, previous surveys found 14% of captains planning to buy a bigger boat and this declined to 4% in 2020.

Uncertainty has been the one constant in 2020, and while there is some cause for optimism in 2021 there is still much uncertainty. Some captains were seeing increased bookings toward the end of the year, with 4% of captains reporting that bookings for next season were 25-50% above what they expected at this time of year. However, 34% reported a 25-75% decline and 14% reported a 100% decline in

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(Continued from page 2) **Charter Fleet**

bookings. The remaining 48% reported that bookings for 2021 are about what they would expect.

As captains are wondering what next year will bring and dealing with revenue shortfalls from 2020, it is worth mentioning that \$300 million in federal funding from the CARES Act was specifically dedicated to assistance for marine fisheries participants, including charter boat operators. Under Section 12005, many states and territories were allocated from \$1 million to \$50 million, but Michigan was left out because Great Lakes fishery assistance was not included. As Congress is currently debating a second round of stimulus funding, it is possible that future funding might help to alleviate some of the financial woes experienced by Michigan charter operators.

More results from Michigan Sea Grant surveys were discussed on a December 5 virtual meeting with MCBA. Members who couldn't join in person can view the recording (<https://bit.ly/3ncGcsy>).

Michigan Sea Grant helps to foster economic growth and protect Michigan's coastal, Great Lakes resources through education, research, and outreach. A collaborative effort of the University of Michigan and Michigan State University and its MSU Extension, Michigan Sea Grant is part of the NOAA-National Sea Grant network of 34 university-based programs. This report was prepared by Michigan Sea Grant under award NA180AR4170102 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce through the Regents of the University of Michigan. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Commerce, or the Regents of the University of Michigan. 

2020 Consent Decree Update A Continuing Resolution

The Decree is currently set to expire on December 31, 2020. The parties began negotiations regarding a successor agreement in September 2019. The negotiations were unexpectedly upended by the coronavirus pandemic in March of 2020, and the process advanced slower than hoped. To help the process, the parties stipulat-




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ed to the appointment of a mediator: former Michigan State Supreme Court Justice Michael F. Cavanaugh (ECF No. 1876). With the assistance of Justice Cavanaugh, the parties have resolved some of the outstanding issues. The Court recognizes the difficulty of assembling seven parties and fostering an agreement in the best of times, and the current situation is certainly less than the best of times. The Court is impressed with the parties' continued resolution of the complicated issues involved in creating a successor Decree. The Court commends the efforts of both the parties and Justice Cavanaugh.

Hearing no objection to the motion to extend, it will be granted. Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the 2000 Great Lakes Fishing Decree is hereby amended: the final sentence of § XXII(A) shall now read "The Decree shall expire on June 30, 2021."

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Joint Motion to Extend the Decree (ECF No. 1901) is GRANTED.

IT IS SO ORDERED. Date: December 8, 2020
/s/ Paul L. Maloney Paul L. Maloney
United States District Judge 



Lake Erie & St. Clair
by Captain Henry Walters
MCBA Director

Hello Everyone,

Here are a few things I have to pass on after attending the Lake Erie/Lake St. Clair Citizens Advisory Committee zoom meeting.

A couple of the things discussed were improved boating access to the upper Detroit River. The Gray Haven site is on the radar for now.

Fish cleaning station needed for Lake St. Clair. Renovation of Clinton River cut off site June, 2021 (tentative date) construction will begin. This is probably the site where the fish cleaning station will be. Estimated cost is between \$110,000 - \$130,000 to install the station.

The Harley Ensign site upgrade is on hold due to the water levels.



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SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Captain John Giszczak



It's time to renew your membership application in before it expires on Dec. 31, 2020. Once the deadline is missed, you may be required to pay to be re-instated in the drug program. We have had a number of cap-

tains not bother to check their internet listing until November and found either they were not listed or not listed improperly. There is nothing we can do at this late date to remedy the problem. It's your responsibility to check your website listing

Things to keep in mind when filling out your MCBA membership application:

- Your application is a legal document i.e. your signature at the bottom verifies the information stated above is true. This pertains mainly to the first section (member information).
- Your application is stored on an annual basis in compliance with USCG regulations.
- The information in the first section is required by the USGC for MIS (drug) reporting.
- Black or Blue ink only, no crayons or markers accepted.
- Mail in Standard #10 envelope, applications mailed in thank you envelopes will be returned,

- Please print your application legibly.
- Do not tape or staple your check to application.
- Don't use your initials: Print your name completely and legibly, spelling it correctly.
- Website information is not required but encouraged for promoting your business.
- Any items left blank on your application will be

assumed to be intentional and will not be included in your ad on the MCBA website.

- Do not send your application if your license is expired or missing from your application, be careful to use your Reference #: NOT your USA #. Be very careful here.

NOTICE

Verify you're listing on the MCBA website towards the end of February. MCBA is not responsible for omissions or misspellings. Any alterations, additions or corrections "Must Be Made" through the MCBA website form.

- Please do not call the 800# and ask if you have paid your membership, check your checkbook or credit card statement if you paid on line. You should also retain a printed record of your application for your tax file.

- Verify you're listing on the MCBA website towards the end of February, we are not responsible for omissions or misspellings. Any alterations, additions or corrections "must be made" through the MCBA website form.

If you need help or have questions, please call 800-622-2971. 📞



*Merry
Christmas*



Visit MCBA Industry News & Events: MCBAmembers.com

Improving access to ice at Selfridge site on the outside wall.

The few trawls surveys that were done on Lake Erie this year because of the pandemic:

* Young of the year Walleye catch rates were very high in 2018 and 2019, 2020 catch rates were down slightly but still in the top three.

* Young of the year Yellow Perch catch rates in 2020 higher than 2014 – 2017 but slightly lower than 2018 – 2019.

* Young of the year Small Mouth Bass catch rates were much higher than they have ever seen in the recent past.


Per the survey, all fish are looking good for the upcoming years.

MSU is looking for anglers from the St. Clair Shores area to participate in a survey. The following is info that Alaina Bur from Michigan State University would like to be shared:

I am reaching out to you today to ask you to participate in a research St. Clair Shores' relationship with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) run by a research team at Michigan State University.

The study includes (1) a 15-minute online survey that you can take today https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2f4UwfHhWAtRPTL and (2) an online focus group. If you participate in both elements of this study, the research team is offering a \$50 incentive to thank you for your time. The survey is voluntary, but you must complete it to be involved in the focus group discussion.

Please feel free to contact the researcher, Alaina Bur, via email at buralain@msu.edu if you have concerns or questions about the study.

Have a great Holiday and be safe. 



Northern Lake Huron

By Captain Rick Konecke - MCBA Director

Here is an article from a Canada new paper on how they view the line-5 issue. The legal battle between the State of Michigan and Enbridge Inc. over the controversial Line-5 pipeline has escalated further.

Tuesday, the Calgary-based company announced it's seeking an injunction to stop the State from taking steps to shut down the line that runs between Superior, Wisconsin and Sarnia.

The action followed Governor Gretchen Whitmer's announcement on November 13 that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources would revoke the 67-year-old easement allowing the pipeline to operate under the Straits of Mackinac.

Enbridge wants the complaint filed by the State to be moved to Federal Court, arguing it violates federal law and the U.S. Constitution.

"A federal agency, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), is Enbridge's safety regulator, not the State of Michigan," said Enbridge in a news release. "In fact, only three months ago the safety of the dual pipelines was reviewed by our regulator and the pipelines were found to be fit for service. The State's attempt to assume the role of safety regulator through its notice purporting to terminate and revoke the easement is improper and unlawful."

The State claims Enbridge has repeatedly violated the terms of the 1953 easement by failing to ensure erosion doesn't cause lengthy, unsupported spans above the lakebed that could cause buckling and breakage. The State also cites incidents last summer and in 2018 where vessel anchors damaged the line.

Governor Whitmer has demanded the line be closed within 180 days to avert a potentially cata-

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God bless America and our troops

"CANNONBALL GAZETTE"

EDITOR: Larry Lienczewski · published by the
MICHIGAN CHARTER BOAT ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 80162 · Lansing, MI 48908-0323
800-622-2971

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: BILL WINOWIECKI · (231) 228-7417
3700 SCHOMBERG RD · CEDAR, MI 49621

VICE PRESIDENT: Rich Haslett · (248) 542-1563
292 S. Zimmerman Rd. · Beulah, MI 49617

SECRETARY: John Giszczak · (734) 787-0030
9760 Judd Road · Willis, MI 48191

TREASURER: Larry Lienczewski (989) 684-7943
3396 Anna Drive · Bay City, MI 48706

DIRECTORS

NORTHERN LAKE MICHIGAN

Tony Radjenovich · (231) 866-0053
1785 N. Eagle Hwy · Lake Leelanau, MI 49653

CENTRAL LAKE MICHIGAN

George Freeman · (231) 845-1779
6888 Illinois Rd. · Ludington, MI 49431

SOUTHERN LAKE MICHIGAN

CJ Anastos · (616) 402-3059
12363 Taft St. · Nunica, MI 49448

UPPER PENINSULA

Dick Stafford · (906) 789-0110
7262 US 2 & 41-M35 · Gladstone, MI 49837

SOUTHERN LAKE HURON

Ken Deaton · (989) 542-0426
2905 Parkview Drive · Port Hope, MI 48486

NORTHERN LAKE HURON

Rick Konecke · (989) 255-4524
916 Ford Ave. · Alpena, MI 48707

LAKES ST. CLAIR AND ERIE

Henry Walters · (586) 725-3678
7103 St. Clair Ave · Fair Haven, MI 48023




strophic oil spill.

Line-5 carries oil and natural gas liquids used in propane to industries in Sarnia and elsewhere in the province and Quebec.

Enbridge said a disruption of Line 5 would create a propane shortage, higher energy prices, and cause a daily shortage of over 14 million gallons of gasoline and other transportation fuels, impacting the entire region.

The company has said it's seeking permit approval to build a 6.4-kilometre tunnel to replace the existing dual lines running beneath the straits.

Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley has stated he supports Enbridge's plan for a new tunnel, and local elected officials have written to Governor Whitmer urging the State to keep the line open. 



Central Lake Michigan


By Captain George Freeman - MCBA Director

The Annual Fall MCBA Business Conference was canceled this fall due to the COVID-19 virus. Article 8 section 1 of MCBA's bylaws state that an annual meeting must be held. A Zoom meeting set up by Michigan Sea Grant was held on Saturday December 5, fulfilling that requirement. President Bill Winowiecki opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with a welcome and introductions. At approximately 10:15 a.m. Dr. Dan O'Keefe presented the results from Sea Grant's charter surveys. I found it to be a very good informative presentation. Next a short business meeting and elections were held. There were no nominations from the floor so the current slate of officers was reelected for 2021. Thank you to Dr. Dan O'Keefe and his crew for doing an excellent job hosting the meeting.

At this time it looks like the annual Sea Grant meeting held in Ludington won't be held due to Covid-19.

A tribal fisherman has set a trap net targeting Whitefish south of Ludington. A layout of the net and its coordinates are listed on the Ludington Char-

ter Boat Association website and Facebook page.

I am interested in reporting news of interest to the readers of the Cannonball from Captains or Clubs in the Central Lake Michigan region. (From Muskegon thru Ludington) If you would like to provide news for the Cannonball from your part of our region, please give me a call (877-456-3474). Wishing you and yours a safe and happy holiday season. George Freeman, MCBA Director, Central Lake Michigan. 



Northern Lake Michigan

By Captain Tony Radjenovich - MCBA Director

Captains, the holiday season is upon us and allow me to wish you all a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a blessed New Year. As we delight in this time of year take the time and let your family and friends know how thankful you are for them, especially this year as we are all struggling with Covid-19 and the many ways it impacts our lives. I wish you and yours all good health now and through the new year.

2020 has been a year of challenges that I am sure we will not forget for some time. On the topic of sport fishing and charter fishing we have also had our challenges. The year started with many user groups realizing that the abundance of fish has change dramatically in the Great Lakes over the recent decade or two. MCBA was highly active advocating for new State commercial fishing legislation to protect sport fish. Also, MCBA members were on the Coalition to Protect Michigan Resources negotiating committee working with the seven governments towards a successor agreement to the 2000 Consent Decree which was set to expire on August 8th, 2020. We all thought that our plate was full for 2020 then Covid-19 became a reality that had many captains not knowing if they were going to have a fishing season. MCBA got busy and started working with the MDNR and sport fishing organizations to find out if and how to get our captains on the water. We were successful and the State and MDNR gave charter boat operators the ability to start fishing on May 7th, 2020. Although this was good news for most of our captains our Detroit River captains lost their Spring walleye fishery. MCBA worked with other associations to help captains access Federal relief monies. Unfortunately, very few received any funds. Though Covid-19 put more responsibilities on our plate, MCBA kept advocating to protect sport fish with the commercial fishing bills and attending zoom

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The next issue of the Cannonball Gazette will be published in March. Submissions **must** be in by **February 28, 2021**

Send photos and news items to:
larry@saginawbay.com

meetings for the 2020 Consent Decree negotiations.

It appears at the time of my writing that not much has changed as we near the end of 2020. We are all dealing with the worse of the Covid-19 pandemic, the commercial fishing bills which passed the state House of Representative are stalled in the Senate Natural Resources Committee. If they do not get moved out of committee, we will have to start all over again in the future. The 2020 Consent Decree negotiations have not yet resulted in a new agreement; however, the judge granted an extension through June 30, 2021. As we look to the new year, I and the MCBA Board will continue to advocate for charter fishing captains and charter operators to keep their business going during these uncertain times. My wish for 2021 is that by this time next year we will have these issues behind us, and we have all survived the worst of the pandemic. Please make sure you get your MCBA 2021 membership applications in prior to December 31st, 2020 and let those who are not current members know we welcome them and wish to serve their interest as well as yours. 🐟



Upper Peninsula

By Captain Dick Stafford - MCBA Director
Past MCBA President

Greetings all and Happy Holidays

As another season has come to an end, this was indeed a season of change. The pandemic certainly affected most charters in the state and routines were altered somewhat. In the Upper Peninsula, tourism seemed to be up along the Lake Superior shoreline as was the case along the tourist's spots along Lake Michigan. The Upper Peninsula Covid-19 numbers were down so many tourists ventured to the Great North Country above "The Bridge". Fish were playing weird games as they were showing up in places they had not been seen in a few years but captains tuned into these places. Lake Trout and salmon were still abundant along Lake Superior.

Whitefish Point had a tremendous fishery close to shore. St. Mary's River still produces many walleye, Little Bay de Noc enjoyed mixed catches of walleye, brown trout, steelhead, salmon, bass, and northern pike. It was good to see these numbers coming back.

There were a few changes. In Little Bay de Noc there is a slot limit on walleye. An angler can only have in possession one walleye 23 inches or larger. The line originally went from the tip of Peninsula Point off Stonington to the mouth of the Ford

River. This has been changed to the following: THE TIP OF PENINSULA POINT TO THE MOUTH OF THE

BARK RIVER: This was changed to protect the fragile walleye numbers. This is especially true during the fall and into cooler months. This fishery needed to be protected better. Kudos go out to the MDNR. Officers worked many late night hours watching for fishermen fishing these extended boundaries taking limit after limit of slot walleye. Many tickets were issued for over slot limits. Many were from out-of-state. Great job!

The St. Mary's River has really taken off for producing nice walleye and Atlantic salmon. Atlantic salmon are raised at Sault St. Marie in conjunction with Lake Superior State College. Fish are released from the hatchery directly into the river. This is going to be a tremendous fishery.

In conclusion, the State of Michigan is still open and ready to be enjoyed but let us all continue to be sensible and considerate to each other. Our fisheries are fragile and need to be protected by all. It is not just for the 'other guy' to do. May your Holidays be rich in laughter and love and may we all enjoy a safe, healthy, and happy tomorrow. Happy Holidays from the Upper Peninsula. 🐟



A View from over the Transom

By Captain Jim Fenner

No question about it, we didn't see the large number of fish being caught this year that we were some years ago, but mixed in with the fewer Kings was a pretty good and steady catch of Lake Trout. As far as fishing goes, that saved the season. But looming over everything else was the issue of the Covid crisis. As the year began. Covid shut down fishing altogether. After some initial confusion, chartering was allowed to begin under special conditions. In view of the possible danger, some chose to stand aside for the whole season, others made changes to accommodate the new rules. By and large after that things seemed to go pretty well, but while some saw increases in business, many did not, and the season wound down with Covid still threatening all of us.

Based on early conversations, an increase in the number of kings planted next year will be increased.. The issue is: how many more? Everyone would like to see the number of kings in the catch increase, but past experience has led many to be cautious. If the increase is too large, perhaps we could overdo it again, which could lead to another

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(Continued from page 7) ...*Over the Transom*

downturn in bait, which in turn, could lead to smaller fish again, and even possibly, a reverse in the fishery. It seems pretty clear that it's difficult to find the 'just right' balance. Let's all hope that we can continue toward having a quality mixed bag fishery long into the future.

As if poor to fair fishing was the case for Lakes Michigan and Huron wasn't enough the Covid issue loomed over us all during the whole season, and other issues remained. First and foremost: the ongoing consent decree negotiations, which are crucial to our future. Follow the negotiations as closely as possible and encourage our leaders, our lawyers and DNR personnel as they deal with this most difficult issue. We will likely have to live with the agreement for up to 20 years into the future. Other continuing problems too, such as the exploding cormorant population remain. And some are just out there as potential catastrophes, especially line 5 under the straits of Mackinac. Enbridge, the owners of line 5 has been ordered to close it down in the spring they are appealing the order, but if the order survives, our lakes will be much safer. A failure of line 5 would damage the great lakes in ways we can hardly imagine. We must not let our guard down. We need to focus strongly on these issues or face severe consequences in the future.

A year ago, none of us could imagine the problems caused to us all and to our lives and businesses by something called Covid-19. We know it now. Here's hoping the new vaccine being rolled out even as you read this will be the beginning of the end of this killer scourge.

If you are planning to become a retiree soon, and if you want keep up with the constantly changing status of fishing in Michigan, I encourage you to continue your MCBA membership in the retired Captain category. It is easy to do. Go to the MCBA website member section and look for the membership section. You can easily join online from there. And BTW, you can also donate to either (or both) the scholarship fund and/or the Coalition Negotiations fund, if you wish to do so.

Being a retired member will keep you 'in the loop'. I have always look forward to seeing many of my CB friends, active and/or retired, at the annual MCBA fall meetings. That didn't happen this year, but hopefully it will next year. Thank goodness for the website and the Cannonball. Even in these most difficult times, the Association is still able to communicate with us, its members. 🐟

SHOW TIME



Show Chairman

Captain Rich Haslett - Vice President
Past President
248-542-1563
taloncharters@gmail.com

Due to the COVID-19 virus we were only able to do three out of four shows this past year, with Grand Rapids being cancelled. These shows were still able to bring in \$2,952.00 for our scholarship fund. As of this time the 2021 shows are up in the air since there are still high numbers of the COVID-19 patients being recorded. We've been notified by ShowSpan that their January show has been cancelled and rescheduled for March. With ShowSpan having the shows scheduled and the virus not under control, I don't see how the shows will be able to go as planned. With that being said, we have decided not to participate for the 2021 shows. Our booth is hands on and there is no way to self-distance or to keep everyone safe. I therefore cannot ask people to help or to risk their health and ours during this pandemic. Even though we won't be doing the 2021 shows we are still asking for charter donations and workers for the 2022 season. You can contact me at 248-542-1563 or e-mail me at taloncharters@gmail, if you want me to add you to the list. 🐟

MCBA Cookbooks

As of this writing we have been able to sell 50 more cookbooks. To date we've sold 656 books for a total of: \$9,535.00. There are still some books that need to be sold. 🐟



SEA K'S LICENSING LORE



Maritime Licensing Specialist

Lt. Commander USCG (retired)
Charles "Chuck" Kakuska

As the virus continues to disrupt our lives, the Coast Guard maritime licensing program is suffering a similar fate. A normal renewal is taking in excess of two months to complete with more extensive delays in the forecast. To that end, the National Mari-

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time Center published Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) 08-20, Change 4, dated September 30, 2020. Of primary interest to our members, if your current MMC expires between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, the expiration has been extended until the EARLIER of June 30, 2021 or one year after the initial expiration date printed in your credential. If you fall into this category, you must carry a copy of the MSIB with your expired MMC. As I mentioned in the previous Cannonball, this extension DOES NOT pertain to your medical certificate so please double check the expiration date to make sure you are legal when the season starts. Several other extensions are included in the latest MSIB. If you have an approval to test letter or a course completion certificate that expires between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, they are extended until October 1, 2021. Also, if you received a letter from the Coast Guard requesting additional information that expires between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, they have been extended until March 31, 2021. Several members have contacted the NMC regarding paperwork submission and were told the CG will only accept electronic application packages which is FALSE. We can continue to submit paper application packages and the CG will still accept check or money order in lieu of on-line payments. I continue to deliver paperwork to the REC every week. I realize this is a lot of information to absorb so if you have questions or need clarification please do not hesitate to contact me. Hope you all have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! 🐾



Charter Lakes Marine Insurance

Many Thanks

David Graham

Director Sales and Marketing

Gallagher Charter Lakes

Marine Insurance Specialists

E: david_graham@ajg.com

W: (616) 975-0657

CharterLakes.com 🐾

2021 MCBA Board Meetings:

- Jan 24 Zoom Meeting 10:00 am.
- April 18 in Clare, MI - Doherty Hotel 10:00 am.
- Sept 26 in Clare, MI - Doherty Hotel 10:00 am.
- Oct. 17, in Bay City City, MI
DoubleTree by Hilton 10:30 am. 🐾

Get Involved:

All board meetings are open to all MCBA members who would like to attend. Please let us know in advance if you plan on attending so we have enough materials on hand to pass out. Contact any board member or call: 800-MCBA-971 🐾

News Bites

U.S. House authorizes a project to help block Asian carp from Great Lakes

The U.S. House voted Tuesday to authorize construction of the long-studied waterway project that lawmakers hope will halt the progress of Asian carp toward the Great Lakes and it's expected to be taken up shortly by the Senate after being negotiated by bicameral and bipartisan committee leaders. Lawmakers from both parties hailed the first-time authorization as a major milestone for the project to fortify the Brandon Road Lock and Dam near Joliet, Illinois, which engineers have identified as a choke point to halt the spread of the invasive carp species.

The estimated cost of the project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is \$778 million for construction, though that figure could change as the agency does more engineering and design work

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A little holiday message to all the members.

Missed seeing everyone at the annual meeting.

2020 was, for lack of better words... unbelievable.

Gallagher Charter Lakes would like to share this little message.

The more things have changed this year, the more we're reminded of what stays the same: It's our connection to one another that lights up our lives. And that will never change.

To you and all the people who light up your life, we wish you all the best this holiday season.

May 2021 be the best year so far!



on the technology. The project is not expected to be completed for years, depending on whether construction is expedited or done incrementally. 🐟

DNR will meet Great Lakes fish stocking quotas

The Wisconsin DNR will meet the stocking goals for Lake Michigan and Lake Superior 2020-2022 stocking quotas, which includes the annual stocking of approximately: LAKE MICHIGAN: 50,000 brook trout, 450,000 brown trout, 1.2 million chinook salmon, 500,000 Coho salmon 460,000 steelhead LAKE SUPERIOR: 175,000 brown trout, 80,000 lake trout, 60,000 splake. 🐟



Big Walleye Population, Ohio DNR says it may be attributed to higher water.

Ohio DNR recently completed its walleye hatch surveys in the waters of western Lake Erie and concluded the 2020 is the eight highest in series. The 2020 August walleye hatch index was 48 per hectare, a standard measure of catch per area. This is the eighth-highest value on record for Ohio's waters of the western basin and well above the rapidly increasing prior 20-year index average of 32 per hectare. While the yoy walleye hatch in 2020 was lower than the previous two in 2017 and 2019 it is still considered a productive hatch. The DNR said together the recent hatches are leading to the highest population estimates ever for Lake Erie in 2020. Enormous walleye hatches were found in 2015, 2018, 2019 and 2020. While Lake Erie's record high water levels in recent years have plagued some communities along the coast, with frequent flooding. High waters are expected through 2021, it also appears to be one of the most significant contributing factors to the booming walleye production.

"It's becoming clear to me that high water is very helpful in producing walleye," Travis Hartman, a biologist with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Wildlife said. "If you look at the '80s, we had very high water. If you look right now, we're in that same type of high water scenario, actually higher. "Lake Erie high water level expected to continue in 2021. 🐟

Grants available for fisheries, conservation, and dam removal

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Habitat Grant program is offering an expected \$1.85 million in funding for a variety of

activities, including fish habitat conservation, dam removal and repair, resource assessment studies, and providing access to recreation. Grants will be distributed through three themes -- aquatic habitat conservation, dam management, and aquatic habitat and recreation in the Au Sable, Manistee and Muskegon river watersheds -- funding is available through an open, competitive process to local, state, federal and tribal governments and nonprofit groups for single- and multiple-year projects. Grant applicants may apply for and receive funding from all three themes with one application, if eligible for each.

Funding is derived from:

- An expected \$1,250,000 from the Game and Fish Protection Fund, supporting the aquatic habitat conservation theme.
- An expected \$350,000 from the state's General Fund, supporting the dam management theme.
- \$251,083 from a hydropower license and settlement agreement between Consumers Energy and several entities including the DNR, supporting aquatic habitat and recreation in the Au Sable, Manistee and Muskegon river watersheds

Grant amounts will start at a minimum of \$25,000 and have the potential to be as large as the total amount of funding available in all theme areas for

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard



which a project is eligible. 🐟

MUST MY VESSEL BE DOCUMENTED?

Vessels of five net tons or more used in fishing activities on navigable waters of the U.S. or in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), or used in coastwise trade must be documented unless the vessel is exempt from documentation. Coastwise trade is generally defined as the transportation of merchandise or passengers between points in the U.S. or the EEZ. In addition, towboats operating between points in the U.S. or the EEZ or between the EEZ and points in the U.S. and dredges operating in the U.S. or the EEZ must be documented.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY VESSEL MEASURES FIVE NET TONS?

(Continued from page 10) . . . **Documentation**

Net tonnage is a measure of a vessel's useful capacity, expressed as a volume (gross tonnage minus deductible spaces). It should not be confused with the vessel's weight or total cargo carrying capacity, which may also be expressed in tons. Vessels of more than 25 feet are likely to measure five net tons or more under the Simplified Measurement System, although, they may measure less than five net tons if formally measured. For information about how tonnages are determined, including the Adobe Acrobat simplified measurement form that calculates tonnages, visit the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Center's web site at the Marine Safety Center's Tonnage Page.


WHAT VESSELS ARE EXEMPT?

Vessels that do not operate on the navigable waters of the U.S. or in the fisheries in the EEZ, are exempt from the requirement to be documented. Also exempt are Coastwise qualified, non-self-propelled vessels used in coastwise trade within a harbor, on the rivers or lakes (except the Great Lakes) of the U.S. or the internal waters or canal of any state.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION?


Yes. A Certificate of Documentation may be endorsed for fishery, coastwise, registry, or recreation. Any documented vessel may be used for recreational purposes, regardless of its endorsement, but a vessel documented with a recreational endorsement only may not be used for any other purpose. Regis-



try endorsements are generally used for foreign trade. 

The 2021 MCBA Annual Conference and Business Meeting will be held the weekend of October 15, 16 and 17, 2021 at The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bay City -



Riverfront. \$109.00 a night, for reservations:
(989) 891-6000 

Support The Companies That Support Your Association

These companies have donated many prizes towards the MCBA Scholarship Raffle held annual at the fall conference over the years.

- Advanced Tackle Company
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- Gallagher/Charter Lakes Marine Insurance
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- Linwood Beach Marina & Campgrounds
- M & P Sports Products
- Moonshine Lures
- Off Shore Tackle Company
- O'Keefe's Reef, Inc.
- Ray Troll Web Store
- Silver Horde, Inc.
- Sonny's Fishing Center & RV Supplies
- The Fish Hook
- True Blue Charters - Denny Blue
- Wolverine Tackle Company

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USCG LICENSE RENEWAL HELP:

Lt. Commander, USCG (retired) Charles "Chuck" Kakuska a Maritime Licensing Specialist, has been assisting our members for the past 20+ years. We recommend him and appreciate his continued services to our association. Give him a call at (734)


847-1723 - SEAKsLic@aol.com for help with your
USCG renewal. 

Did You Know:

The Merchant Mariner Certificate Suitable for Fram-
ing is presently available at:

homeport.uscg.mil/missions/merchant-mariners/merchant-mariner-certificate

Mariners who hold or have held a valid Merchant
Mariner Credential (MMC) can download, save, print
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Users are reminded that the certificate, which is
to be used for display purposes only, is not author-
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