

Fishing Northwest Indiana's Lake Michigan Shoreline and Tributaries



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This packet is a summary of fishing opportunities along Northwest Indiana's shoreline of Lake Michigan and tributaries. Fish species such as coho salmon, Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, brown trout, lake trout, yellow perch, catfish, freshwater drum, lake whitefish, smallmouth bass, walleye and various sunfish all contribute to the catch. Fishing opportunities are available to all types of anglers including boat, shore and stream.

HISTORY

Lake Michigan is the third largest of the Great Lakes and the sixth largest lake in the world (Beeton 1984). It is the only Great Lake entirely within the United States, but because of fish movement between Lakes Michigan and Huron and its discharge to Huron, the lake is important internationally (Eshenroder, et. al. 1995). Lake Michigan, with a surface area of 57,750 km², is divided into:

- 1) a southern basin, relatively smooth in contour, with a maximum depth of 558ft., and
- 2) an irregularly shaped northern basin with a maximum depth of 922ft.

Native stocks of lake trout once comprised a great resource in Lake Michigan. However, predation by the parasitic sea lamprey, coupled with intense commercial fishing in the 1940s and 1950s nearly eliminated the lake trout. Sea lampreys, native to the Atlantic Ocean, entered the Great Lakes system in the 1800s through manmade locks and shipping canals. The first observation of the lamprey occurred in Lake Ontario in the 1830's. Through the Welland Canal, a navigational canal connecting Lakes Ontario and Erie, sea lampreys moved into Lake Erie. After spreading throughout Erie, sea lampreys moved to the other Great Lakes, appearing in Lake Michigan in 1936 (Charlebois 1996). By the late 1940's, populations of sea lampreys exploded in all of the upper Great Lakes resulting in the drastic population decline of lake trout. With the Great Lakes top predator in decline, came the next invader, the alewife. Alewives, unintentionally introduced into Lake Michigan in 1949 from the Atlantic Ocean, depleted food sources for themselves and other native fishes. Their high numbers and ability to out-compete fish with similar diets led to depletions and local extinctions of native species. These disruptions in the native fish community and food web, coupled with habitat alterations and degradation, contributed to the decline of important commercial and sport fisheries.

Rehabilitation of the Lake Michigan fish community began in 1960 with the extension of the

sea lamprey control program to Lake Michigan, plantings of lake trout and the introduction of coho salmon, Chinook salmon, brown trout and steelhead trout. Lake trout planting began in 1965 and coho salmon and Chinook salmon were introduced from the Pacific Northwest in 1966 and 1967 (Eshenroder et. al. 1995).

Rainbow trout, or steelhead, and brown trout were also extensively planted. Of the five major salmonids stocked, only lake trout was released with the main objective being rehabilitation (i.e. to re-establish reproducing populations). The others were stocked to provide angling opportunities and to utilize the overabundance of nonnative alewives, which became a nuisance when vast numbers died and washed up on local beaches.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife has been stocking salmon and trout along northwest Indiana's shoreline since the late 1960's. The area stocked extends from Michigan City to Whiting, Indiana and includes sites along the St. Joseph River, Trail Creek and the East Branch of the Little Calumet River. The number of trout and salmon stocked in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan from 1987 through 2010 can be found on page 17.

Brown trout stocking in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan began in 2002 through a cooperative trade agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IL DNR). Indiana trades Indiana-born skamania steelhead for the Illinois brown trout. Due to hatchery constraints, Indiana last stocked brown trout into Indiana waters of Lake Michigan in the early 1980s. The continuation of the brown trout stocking program is reliant upon future availability of fish from the IL DNR.

Overall, trout and salmon have adapted well to the Great Lakes and are now an important part of the overall fish community.



WHERE TO FISH

Indiana's share of Lake Michigan is the smallest of the four states bordering the Lake (approximately 1% of Lake Michigan area), encompassing approximately 43 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline (224 square miles). Most of the area is highly developed and heavily industrialized, with the exception of the Dunes National Lakeshore and the Indiana Dunes State Park.

LAKE* There are various sites providing shoreline access and boat launching ramps along the Indiana shoreline of Lake Michigan (see the enclosed map of the Indiana shoreline of Lake Michigan).

The Michigan City pier, basin, and adjoining ramp (owned by City of Michigan City), provide access for both shore and boat anglers. Another municipal ramp is located upstream on Trail Creek (Trail Creek Marina). In addition, a public fishing site for shoreline anglers exists adjacent to the Michigan City DNR building (handicap accessible).

A public fishing site for shoreline anglers (handicap accessible) is available at the Port of Indiana. Various private marinas along Burns Waterway (State Road 249; Burns Ditch) provide boat launching facilities.

November 2008 marked the opening of the Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk Development within the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. The 57-acre site was a former industrial property of National Steel located at the northwest corner of the mouth of Burns Waterway. This site offers parking for 125 vehicles, a handicap accessible fishing pier, a riverwalk along Burns Waterway, a rehabilitated breakwater, various hike/bike trails, beach access and a 3,500-foot pavilion. The park is accessed by S.R. 249 and the bridge over U.S. 12 to U.S. Steel and PreCoat Metals in Portage, Indiana. At the stop sign at the north end of the bridge, visitors will turn left over Burns Waterway and then right at the sign for Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk

Additionally, East Chicago, Lake County Parks and Recreation Whihala Beach County Park (Whiting), and Hammond provide launching facilities in addition to access for shoreline anglers (all are handicap accessible).

*{*All previously listed boat ramps from Michigan City west, to Hammond, charge a launch and/or entrance fee. All previously listed shore access sites, with the exception of the DNR public access site, the Port of Indiana public access site, and Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk, may charge a parking fee.}*

STREAM Trail Creek has ten public fishing sites, two are handicap accessible. Public fishing sites include: the access site adjacent to the DNR building; Hansen Park (E Street); Winding Creek Cove (8th/Dickson Streets); Fire Station #2 (2005 E. U.S. Hwy 12); Robert Peo Public Access (Liberty Trail); Karwick Nature Park (Karwick Road); U.S. 35 (Chapala Parkway); Trail Creek Forks (U.S. 20); Johnson Road (Johnson/Wozniak Roads) and Creek Ridge Park (7943 W. 400 North). The DNR public access site and Creek Ridge Park are both handicap accessible.

The East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Salt Creek also provide public access for fishing opportunities. Salt Creek runs through Imagination Glenn County Park and Haven Hollow Park, both offering angler-access. Two State-managed public fishing sites are also located on Salt Creek, the Chustak Public Fishing Area and the Salt Creek Public Fishing Area, both located near Valparaiso, Indiana. Deer Creek Path, a new public access site at Ameriplex Woods (S.R. 249/Ameriplex Drive) and Burns Harbor Public Access (S.R. 149/Navaho Drive) both offer fishing opportunities on the East arm of the Little Calumet River. Additionally, portions of the East Branch of the Little Calumet River flow through the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore property, which the public can utilize. For more information regarding fishing opportunities on the Dunes National Lakeshore property, contact them directly at (219) 926-7561

or visit:

<http://www.nps.gov/indu/planyourvisit/maps.htm>.

Since the majority of the Lake Michigan tributaries run through private property; **permission** from the landowner to fish is **required** on these private lands.

DISCHARGES Limited access to warm-water discharges is provided by industrial plants located on the shoreline. Due to recent economic downturns and increased security, many areas have either been closed or public access is not being granted. Stateline Energy/Division Dominion Energy (located on the Indiana/Illinois State Line), BP Oil Company in Whiting, and the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) generating station in Michigan City provide fishing opportunities for brown trout, coho, and steelhead in the winter/spring. Yellow perch, bass and various trout/salmon can be found during the summer.

All discharges previously listed are **privately owned** and can close these sites at their discretion at any time, i.e., limiting access during adverse weather conditions due to dangers associated with high winds and/or icy conditions or closure based upon the National Threat Advisory issued through the United States Department of Homeland Security.



WINTER

During the months of January, February and March, fishing activity is limited to the streams and warmwater discharges along the shoreline. All the discharges originate from shoreline property owned by private industry. Three warmwater discharges are available to shore anglers for access.

Dominion Stateline Energy, set on the Indiana-Illinois state line is open to the public on a limited daily basis for angling opportunities. It is located off 103rd Street in Hammond, Indiana. BP Whiting Refinery allows day and night fishing at their discharge, located off of Indianapolis Blvd./119th Street in Whiting (near the eastern edge of Whiting Park). Lastly, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) Michigan City generating

station, located just west of the Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Office (100 West Water Street; Michigan City), is open to angling from sunrise to sunset. The prior areas have all been closed during times when the lake is too treacherous or the National Threat Advisory has been elevated.

This type of warm-water discharge fishing can produce catches of brown trout, with steelhead, coho, and an occasional Chinook also contributing. Drum, smallmouth bass, catfish, gizzard shad, and walleye can also be found at these discharges. Suggested equipment for fishing discharges in the winter includes (not limited to): proper insulated clothing for Northern Indiana's harsh winters; two to three rods for both casting and bait-fishing; 6-10 pound test line rated for fishing in sub-zero to 45 degree temperatures; long-handled net of 8-12 feet (most fishing areas by the discharges are much higher than the water). Best lures/baits include small alewives (frozen, 1½ to 2½ inches); nightcrawlers; spawn bags; shrimp (size 30-40/lb.); small spoons (2/5 to 3/4 oz., such as little cleos; ko-wobblers). Body baits (rapalas-size 7 and 9) and spinners work on occasion. Suggested colors for prior listed lures: silver/green, chrome/green, chrome/orange, chartreuse w/red or black dots; fluorescent orange lures, etc. Always take along a wide variety of lures/baits as fish will show various preferences daily.



SPRING

Trout and Salmon

Boat-fishing season along the southern shoreline of Lake Michigan usually begins with the departure of ice around mid-February to April. Between March and mid-May, most of the fishing activity occurs within a two-mile band along the shoreline with coho salmon contributing close to 90% of the catch. Most coho salmon stocked in the lake by Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana will stage in southern Lake Michigan in the spring, due to annual migration patterns. The 2 and 3-year-old coho gain weight rapidly,

weighing approximately 2 pounds in March and up to 4 pounds in May when they begin moving offshore. Steelhead, brown trout, Chinook salmon, and some larger coho are also taken during this period.

Trolling with thin-fins, rapalas, thunder-sticks (and various other body-baits and spoons), spinners, or dodgers and flies are the fishing methods most frequently used by boat anglers. Casting into warmwater plumes in early spring when the lake temperature is still in the high 30's or low 40's has had some success. Suggested color combinations include blue/white; bright red w/black; solid chartreuse, solid hot pink, solid orange w/silver, chrome or gold.

Shore anglers have found the months of March (and as early as mid-February) through April to be the best for catching coho in the spring. They cast using the same types of artificials as the boat anglers or fish with bait (nightcrawlers, spawn, waxworms, squid and shrimp, suspending bait off bottom or from 4-6 feet below the surface). Various piers provide fishing access along Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline.

Rainbow Smelt

Rainbow smelt may be taken by single seine or net from March 1 through May 30 along Indiana's shoreline of Lake Michigan. The smelt run usually takes place beginning in April to the first half of May. However, the times of the runs and number of fish available are directly dependent upon several environmental variables (e.g. water temperatures). Smelt are caught by using nets or seines after dusk. Please refer to the Indiana Recreation/Fishing Guide for specific requirements.

Sunfish Family

The sunfish family can be divided into three groups:

- 1) smallmouth and largemouth bass (black bass)
- 2) the crappies
- 3) the true sunfish and rock bass

In Lake Michigan, these fish inhabit mostly breakwaters and other areas that are protected from wave action (marina basins). All are spring spawners, with spawning for some extending into the summer months.

Smallmouth Bass. Smallmouth bass are confined to reefs and shoal water areas. Prior to development of Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline, the nearshore waters were relatively shallow, with a consistent sand bottom and little to no structure. Shoreline development (i.e., rip-rap shoreline and breakwaters) has resulted in the creation of suitable smallmouth bass habitat. Smallmouth bass numbers have responded positively to this increase in habitat. Wave energy has a direct influence on smallmouth distribution.

Protected areas, such as the land side of breakwaters are areas that produce the best action. Angling methods for bass include bait casting and the use of common live baits (crawlers; minnows). Smallmouth are particularly vulnerable to fishing after dark.

Panfish (bluegill, rock bass, pumpkinseed) These species are commonly found at all of the shore fishing sites, especially at the marinas (Hammond; Pastrick; Washington Park). Most are sedentary, remaining much of the time near submerged cover or hovering quietly in the shade of an overhanging object. Insects, crustaceans, and small fish are the most important food sources. Feeding occurs at the surface, as well as on the bottom. When fishing for these species, pay particular attention to the marina fishing rules and regulations. Most marinas do not allow fishing inside the marina itself, unless a special area has been opened to marina fishing.

Rock Bass This fish favors clear, cool to warm waters over a rocky/gravel bottom with some vegetation. They are also found at most of the marina shore access sites, near breakwaters/stone-armored shorelines. Rock bass utilize a variety of foods, including crayfish, small fish

and insects. Adults feed mostly in the evening and morning hours.



SUMMER

Trout and Salmon

The water temperature close to shore increases rapidly in late spring, driving coho and most other salmonids into the deep, cooler offshore waters. Between May and the end of July, boat anglers in pursuit of trout and salmon normally fish at depths ranging between 70 and 200 feet of water. This entails traveling a distance of 6-to-20 miles from shore, depending upon the point of departure (these water depths require traveling offshore to Illinois or Michigan waters. If fishing IL or MI waters, a fishing license from the appropriate state is also necessary). Downriggers are used to get the lure down to the temperature zone sought by trout and salmon. Lake trout, coho, Chinook, steelhead, and to a lesser extent, brown trout, all contribute to the catch.

Yellow Perch

Yellow perch move closer to the shoreline during these months and are available on a limited basis to shore and boat anglers. Minnows, crayfish tails, frozen shrimp and crab fished at depths less than forty feet May through September have produced the best catches. Shore fishing opportunities also exist throughout the summer months at most of the shoreline fishing sites.

Skamania Steelhead

By mid to late June, depending on water temperatures and water levels in the tributaries, the summer-run Skamania will return to Indiana's tributaries where they were planted as fingerlings or yearlings. The tributaries the Division of Fish and Wildlife stocks include the St. Joseph River, the East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Trail Creek.

Most Skamania will "stage" nearshore in Lake Michigan, with fish rushing upstream—especially after a heavy rainfall to begin the "run". By mid-

August (dependent upon tributary temperatures and water levels), good numbers of Skamania have entered their home tributary streams; however, Skamania will continue to enter the area tributaries throughout the fall and winter months (through March). Skamania spawning activities begin around early February through mid-March, with the peak occurring in February. The majority of spawning fish are three to four years of age. The spent steelhead will return to Lake Michigan throughout March and into April.

A steelhead may spawn several times during its life, although most likely only spawn once or twice.

Sunfish family

See page 6 under the "Spring Opportunities" section.



FALL

The fall sport fishery is a direct product of Indiana's and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) stocking program:

Skamania and Winter-run Steelhead - Adult steelhead (Skamania summer-run strain and Michigan or winter-run strain) return to the streams where they were stocked as fingerlings or yearlings.

Lake Trout - Lake trout display a spawning pattern close to the Port of Indiana, with a run of lake trout that develops along the shoreline between mid-October and mid-November.

Chinook and Coho Salmon - Chinook and coho salmon return to streams and spawn from late August to early November. Chinook and coho salmon die after spawning.

(The table on page 13 provides a summary of peak angling periods on Lake Michigan).

For stream anglers, the best time of year to fish the trout and salmon is summarized by the following:

Chinook and Coho salmon:

September through mid-November

Skamania strain (summer) Steelhead:

Mid-July to mid-October; winter months (i.e. January through March; success, however, is strongly dependent upon environmental/stream conditions, particularly stream water levels)

Michigan strain (winter) Steelhead:

Mid-November to mid-March

Summer-run Skamania steelhead return to area streams from July (sometimes as early as mid-June) through the winter months and spawn from mid-February to March; winter-run steelhead return beginning in mid-late October, with the bulk of the return in February and March. Winter-run steelhead spawn from March to mid-April. All species of salmonids (coho, Chinook, steelhead trout, and brown trout) are available to sport anglers during the fall spawning runs (boat and pier anglers as trout and salmon return to their stocking site; stream anglers when trout and salmon move into/upstream the tributaries). Brown trout return to stocking sites in the autumn to spawn.



**SUGGESTED
EQUIPMENT FOR
TROUT/SALMON FISHING**

To fish the trout and salmon, most anglers use a heavy rod with 10-12 pound test line. Medium spoons (cleos/kowobblers), plugs, spinners, and body-baits (rapalas/shadlings) are used for Chinook. Smaller spoons and spinners are used for coho. Small spinners or rooster tails work well for steelhead. Nightcrawlers, shrimp and waxworms are successful at times, especially in summer. Spawn sacks (small clumps of trout or salmon eggs wrapped in mesh bags) are used throughout the year

and provide good year-round action. Typical color patterns for trout and salmon include fluorescent orange, chartreuse, red, green/black, and blue or any combination of the prior listed colors with silver/chrome.

Anglers report good success with black or brown stonefly patterns, chartreuse flies, green and orange woollyworms, egg sucking leeches, and many others depending upon the time of year and the presentation of the flies to the fish.



**EXOTIC
SPECIES and THEIR
IMPACTS**

Since the early 1800s, more than 180 non-native species have been introduced into the Great Lakes ecosystem from around the world, causing both severe ecological and economic impacts. Unintentional releases from bait buckets, home aquaria, and ships (ballast water) account for 1/3 of these species introductions (Charlebois 1996). Over half of the exotic/introduced species came from Eurasia, with many native to the Atlantic Ocean. Many of these exotic species have had negative impacts to the Lake Michigan ecosystem, including but not limited to: sea lamprey, rainbow smelt, alewife, zebra mussels, quagga mussels, round goby, and spiny water flea.

Successful invaders, such as the prior species, usually have detrimental effects on native species, their habitats, and human activities dependent upon water resources. Once exotic species establish themselves, eradication becomes impossible without further damaging the environment. Not all aquatic species introduced to the Great Lakes have been successful invaders. Species that succeed have characteristics that make them successful, including: hardiness, aggressiveness, prolific breeding, and rapid dispersal.

The zebra mussel, introduced to the Great Lakes in 1986, is an excellent example of an exotic species harmful potential. Zebra mussels threaten the entire food web by filtering vast amounts of basic food from the ecosystem. In turn, less food is available to sustain the native species that are dependent on the same food resources. Economic and social consequences have also occurred, with raw water intakes for industry and public drinking water being fouled.

What can anglers do?

Anglers play an important role in management strategies for preventing the introduction and spread of nonindigenous species (plants, animals and fish diseases). Tips for reducing the spread of non-native species includes:

- 1) Dumping bait buckets only in areas where they were filled.
- 2) Anglers should not take unusual species home to put in aquariums [*while there may be the temptation to take species for a home aquarium or home fish pond; anglers should know the law about possession of non-native species such as round gobies (Indiana law prohibits the possession of live gobies)*].
- 3) Dispose unwanted bait on land. Do not release live bait into any water body.
- 4) Drain water from your boat, livewell and bilge before leaving a water access.
- 5) Do not dump live fish from one body of water into another. Do not move fish or fish parts from one body of water to another.
- 6) Never dip your bait bucket into a lake or river if it has water in it from another.
- 7) Weeds that have been removed from fishing hooks and left in the boat or weeds tangled in propellers should be removed and left at the lake where they were collected.

8) Clean boats, trailers, and other equipment thoroughly between fishing trips to keep from transporting undesirable fish pathogens and organisms, from one water body to another with special care to clean fishing equipment when you are done fishing known locations with non-native species and fish diseases. A light bleach solution is a good disinfectant for cleaning equipment.

9) After cleaning allow boats, trailers, and other equipment to fully dry for 4 to 6 hours in the sun.

10) Handle fish as gently as possible if you intend to release them and release them as quickly as possible.

11) Refrain from hauling the fish for long periods in live wells if you intend to release them.

12) Learn to identify exotic species and educate other anglers about measures they can take to prevent the spread of fish diseases and other aquatic nuisance species. Information on how to identify aquatic nuisance species is available on the internet, check out Illinois/Indiana Sea Grant web page at:

http://www.iisgcp.org/topic_ais.html

Release of aquarium pets, catches from other waters or live bait into lake and rivers is considered “biological littering” and pollutes our waters, just like dumping chemicals.

Additionally, ***it is illegal to stock any fish in public waters without the proper permit.***



VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC SEPTICEMIA (VHS)

VHS is a serious disease of freshwater and marine fish that recently has been found widely throughout the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada. As of January 2010, VHS has been documented in all of the Great Lakes in the U.S., the St. Lawrence River, and a number of inland lakes (in Michigan, New York, Wisconsin and Ohio).

VHS is not a threat to human health.

To date, VHS has not been detected within Indiana waters of Lake Michigan or its tributaries. Indiana DNR will continue surveillance efforts for VHS within Lake Michigan and inland waters, and will continue to test all species raised at Indiana State Fish Hatcheries (plus all brood/production fish).

Since the VHS virus can be spread by infected fish, contaminated water sources (e.g., ballast water, bilge water, live wells), or contaminated objects (e.g., footwear, buckets, nets), prevention is the best measure to ensure the virus does not spread to additional locations. Since the VHS virus was isolated from round gobies collected from Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 2008, anglers should follow the tips listed under "*What Can Anglers Do?*" to reduce the chance of potentially transferring the VHS virus.

To learn more about Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia, visit: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/healthyfish.com>



FISH

CONSUMPTION ADVISORY

Indiana's fish consumption advisory is similar to the health advice you hear or read about every day regarding diet, exercise or safety. How you use this information to protect your health and enjoy life is a matter of choice. The purpose of this advisory is to make sure you have the proper information to make those choices.

One common misunderstanding about the advisory is the difference between no consumption and restricted consumption of fish. The advisory is not a ban on eating fish from lakes and streams as some people believe. The fish consumption advisory will help you make the right choice about how much fish to eat and what type of fish to eat. If you follow the advisory, you will minimize the risk from eating fish and maximize your health benefits by using fish as a valuable source of protein.

You should use the advisory to make informed decisions about where to fish, which fish to eat and how much to eat. The advisory should not discourage you from going fishing or eating the fish you catch. The advisory is a source of information that allows you to enjoy your fishing trip and protect your health at the same time.

A statewide fish tissue monitoring program provides data for Indiana's fish consumption advisory. New tissue data is collected every year from new areas or sites previously sampled to keep health information updated. This long term commitment to human health protection also serves as a constant monitor for changes in the environment.

The Indiana Fish Consumption Advisory is issued by the Indiana State Department of Health. Consult the complete advisory for specific information on the body of water you plan to fish.

For a complete copy of the fish consumption advisory or if you have questions concerning the advisory contact the Indiana State Department of Health at:

Indiana State Department of Health
Environmental Epidemiology Section
2 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
(317) 233-7162

or visit the Indiana State Department of Health web site: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/23650.htm>



SPECIAL NOTICE to ANGLERS

Port of Indiana

Recent changes in the law have resulted in the following notice to anglers that the Port of Indiana is CLOSED to all recreational watercraft including fishing from a boat. The area is posted. The following is a summary of the Indiana Administrative Code for this law:

130 IAC 4-1-11 Fishing; swimming; boat launching

Authority: IC 8-10-1-7; IC 8-10-1-9

Affected: IC 8-10-1

Sec. 11 (a) No person shall fish in the port area between sunset and sunrise. Fishing is allowed only within the designated fishing area that is maintained and is under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources and the commission.

(b) No person shall launch a boat or fish from a boat in the port area.

(c) Swimming is prohibited in the port area. *(Ports of Indiana; 130 IAC 4-1-11; filed Jun 6, 2002, 11:22 a.m.: 25 IR 3710; re-adopted filed Nov 7, 2008, 1:50 p.m.: 20081203-IR-130080612RFA)*

Reciprocal sportfishing agreement for Calumet Harbor area of Lake Michigan

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources created a new reciprocal sportfishing agreement for the Calumet Harbor area of Lake Michigan that allows for resident anglers of each state - as well as individuals holding non-resident fishing licenses from either state to fish in the reciprocal area.

The new agreement replaces the one established in 1989. While the two states have had a reciprocal agreement for many years, there had been ongoing confusion by anglers as to what was included. The new agreement provides clarification. The agreement means Illinoisans holding both a resident Illinois license and a nonresident Indiana license can fish in the reciprocal area, taking the daily limit for whichever state they choose, but NOT for both states. The place from which an angler launches a boat does not impact his or her rights under the agreement. The boundaries for the reciprocal area are as follows:

– The east-west portion of the breakwater system which extends lakeward from the Lake Michigan shoreline at about 85th Street in Chicago on the north (the area north of the breakwater is not included).

– On the east, the reciprocal area extends from the far east end of the northern boundary, southeast to the southern boundary.

– On the south, the area extends from the southern tip of the breakwater system, southwest to the east side of the pier at the south edge of the Calumet Park beach.

– The western boundary is the existing Lake Michigan shoreline from Taylor Pier on the south edge of Calumet Park beach to the far western point of the northern boundary.

The reciprocal waters also include the main channel of the Calumet River from Lake Michigan downstream to the Ewing Avenue bridge, anglers fishing from the Illinois shoreline of Lake Michigan in Calumet Park and from the Calumet Harbor breakwater system and from any other publically accessible areas in the reciprocal zone.

The reciprocal agreement DOES NOT APPLY to the channel waters of the North Slip on the northwest corner of Calumet Harbor and the South Slip off the Calumet River northeast of the Ewing Avenue Bridge. The agreement also does not include privately-owned shorelines, including both shorelines of the Calumet River and the Ewing Avenue Bridge.

Fishing access from the Lake Michigan shoreline in Calumet Park is allowed only at areas and hours allowed by the Chicago Park District.

Illinois and Indiana residents who are exempt from sportfishing license requirements in their home state are also exempt from sportfishing license requirements in the reciprocal fishing area. Individuals can take only one daily limit of fish per day, so anglers from either state with both an Illinois and an Indiana license must choose which state's regulations they intend to follow – they cannot take both an Illinois and an Indiana limit of fish.

A map of the reciprocal sportfishing boundaries can be obtained by calling (219) 874-6824.

Literature Cited



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| Type of Fish | How to Fish | Best Time of Year | Average Fish Size |
|---|-------------------|--|----------------------------|
| <u>Coho Salmon</u> | pier boat | mid February/ March to May | 2 - 3 lbs. |
| | stream | Sept./Oct. | 3 - 4 lbs. |
| <u>Chinook Salmon</u> | some pier boat | May; mid-July to September | 7 - 12 lbs. |
| | stream | Sept./Oct. | 7 - 12 lbs. |
| <u>Steelhead</u> (Skamania) | pier boat | mid-June to mid-Aug. | 7 - 10 lbs. |
| | stream | July-February | 7 - 10 lbs. |
| <u>Steelhead</u> (Michigan or Winter-run) | pier stream | late October- to March | 7-10 lbs. |
| <u>Lake Trout</u> | boat | mid June to August; mid-Oct. to Nov. | 8 - 12 lbs. |
| <u>Yellow Perch</u> | pier boat | June to mid-September | 8.0 - 10.0 inches |
| <u>Smallmouth</u> and other <u>Sunfish</u> species | pier boat | June to September | 10-16 inches 6-8 inches |

All peak angling opportunities listed are dependent upon environmental variables such as temperature, and may vary (due to local weather conditions).



NOTE

Fishing in offshore areas requires standard and various safety equipment such as life jackets, ship-to-shore radio, a properly compensated compass etc. An auxiliary motor and ship-to-shore radio should be included at all times, especially in emergency situations. Never underestimate the potential for sudden weather changes, possibly severe, on Lake Michigan! Please refer to the pamphlet "Indiana Boating Laws" for a complete listing of boating rules (Indiana boating laws can be accessed through the Department of Natural Resources Division of Law Enforcement web page at:

<http://www.boat-ed.com/in/handbook/index.htm>

Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats can be found at:

<http://www.uscgboating.org/>



Rules to Remember

Lake Michigan is divided into state waters owned by Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana [Michigan DNRE <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr>; Wisconsin DNR <http://dnr.wi.gov/index.asp> and Illinois DNR <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/Pages/default.aspx>].

Each state requires that sport anglers possess the required license and/or stamp (Indiana requires a trout and salmon fishing stamp in addition to a fishing license when targeting trout/salmon on Lake Michigan and/or its tributaries, <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/2347.htm>).

Trout and salmon (Indiana waters):

- * A 5-2 daily bag limit for the sport harvest of trout and salmon on Lake Michigan and tributaries (5 fish trout and salmon aggregate bag limit, of which no more than 2 may be lake trout) with a 14" minimum size limit.
- * You cannot possess more than 5 trout or salmon (no more than 2 may be lake trout) while fishing on Indiana's portion of Lake Michigan, even if you have a fishing license from a neighboring state.
- * You can take sucker, carp, gar, bowfin, buffalo and shad from Lake Michigan with a bow and arrow.
- * You cannot use a trot line (power line), set line or throw line to take fish from Lake Michigan.
- * Fishing is NOT allowed within 100 feet above or below the Praxair Dam the East Branch of the Little Calumet River.

While there is no closed season for taking trout and salmon from Lake Michigan, certain tributary streams are closed to all fishing from April 1 through June 15. These streams are stocked annually with trout and salmon. The closed fishing period allows these small, vulnerable fish to migrate safely downstream to Lake Michigan. The closed season applies to:

- * The East Branch of the Little Calumet River in Porter County from U.S. 12 upstream to U.S. 20.
- * Trail Creek in LaPorte County from the Franklin Street Bridge in Michigan City upstream to U.S. 35.

Indiana Yellow Perch (Indiana waters):

Results of the 2010 field research on yellow perch in Indiana waters of Lake Michigan were similar to periods dating back to the early 1990s and did not provide any evidence the yellow perch population abundance is changing. The current yellow perch population is supported mainly by the 2003 and 2005 year classes (age-5 and age-7 fish).

Fish from the 1998 year class (age-12) were still present; albeit in low numbers.

Given the best and most current data available describing the status of the Lake Michigan yellow perch fishery, Indiana yellow perch harvest regulations will remain:

- * The current daily bag limit for the sport harvest of yellow perch on Lake Michigan remains at 15. There is no size limit or closed season on yellow perch.
- * Commercial fishing for yellow perch will remain closed in 2011.
- * You cannot possess more than 15 yellow perch while fishing on Indiana's portion of Lake Michigan, even if you have a fishing license from a neighboring state.

Black Bass (black bass includes largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass; Indiana waters):

- * Daily bag limit of 3 singly or in aggregate; with a 14" minimum size limit.

Hook Restrictions

In the waters including Lake Michigan tributaries, the St. Joseph River and its tributary streams from the Twin Branch Dam downstream to the Michigan state line (St. Joseph County), you:

- * May not fish with more than one single hook per line or one artificial bait or harness for use with live bait.
- * Single hooks, including those on artificial baits, cannot exceed ½ inch from point to shank.
- * Double and treble hooks are only allowed on artificial baits and shall not exceed 3/8 inch from point to shank.
- * Any fish taken from Indiana waters must be hooked in the mouth. Foul-hooked fish must be returned to the water.
- * Snagging is strictly prohibited.



Please refer to the Indiana Recreation/Fishing Guide for a summary of Indiana fishing regulations:

<http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/2347.htm>

The fishing guide is designed as a service to anglers and is not intended to be a complete digest of all fishing regulations. Most regulations are subject to change by administrative rule. For a listing of administrative rules, visit: <http://www.state.in.us/legislative/iac/title312.html>

INDIANA Lake Michigan FISHING HOTLINES



Lake Michigan Fishing Hotline (219) 874-0009

(updated March thru December)

Lake Michigan web page: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/3625.htm>

St. Joseph River Hotline (574) 257-TIPS

(updated weekly, March to April; mid-June to mid-Dec.)

The St. Joseph River access guide available by request from the Lake Michigan Fisheries Research Station office and Bodine State Fish Hatchery, (574) 255-4199.

Internet Fishing Report for Lake Michigan

and the St. Joseph River can be found on

the Division of Fish and Wildlife's

web site: http://www.in.gov/apps/dnr/fishing/dnr_fishingreport

INDIANA Lake Michigan HATCHERIES

Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery (Lake Michigan) (219) 369-9591

Bodine State Fish Hatchery (St. Joseph River) (574) 255-4199

INDIANA DIVISION of LAW ENFORCEMENT

District 10 Headquarters (219) 879-5710
(Lake/Porter/LaPorte Counties)

North Region Headquarters (765) 473-9722

Turn-in Poachers/Polluters Hotline (TIP) 1-800-TIP-IDNR (847-4367)

Tips may also be left on the law enforcement web site: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/lawenfor/2745.htm>

Additional Numbers / Web-sites of Interest:

LAPORETE County Visitor Bureau

(219) 872-0031 or 1-800-634-2650

<http://www.michigancitylaporte.com/>

PORTER County Visitor Bureau

(219) 926-2255 or 1-800-283-8687

<http://www.indianadunes.com/>

LAKE County Visitor Bureau

(219) 989-7770 or 1-800-255-5253

<http://www.southshorecva.com/>

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

(219) 926-7561, ext. 225

<http://www.nps.gov/indu/>

Indiana Dunes STATE PARK

(219) 926-1952

<http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2980.htm>

Great Lakes Fisheries Commission

<http://www.glfc.org/>

Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council

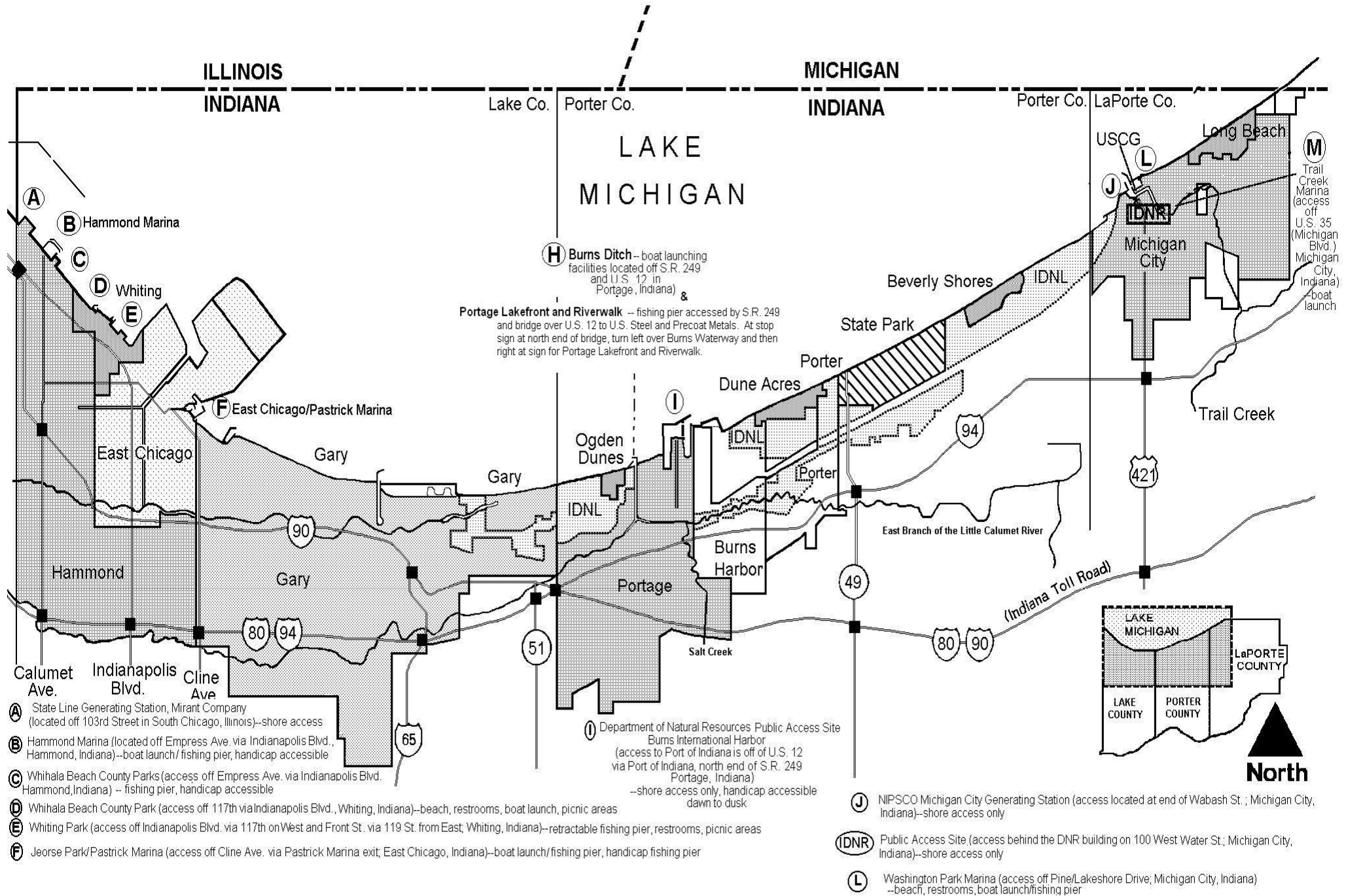
<http://www.great-lakes.org/>

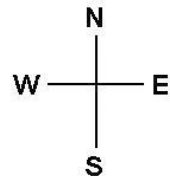
TROUT AND SALMON STOCKING RECORDS

Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife

| Lake Michigan | | | | | St. Joseph River | | |
|---------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------------|------------------|--------|-----------|
| Year | Chinook | Coho | Steelhead | Brown Trout | Chinook | Coho | Steelhead |
| '87 | 310,745 | 161,787 | 286,275 | 0 | 258,474 | 0 | 224,881 |
| '88 | 502,311 | 160,374 | 243,184 | 0 | 377,528 | 0 | 226,145 |
| '89 | 530,561 | 40,720 | 289,429 | 0 | 186,858 | 0 | 214,068 |
| '90 | 476,646 | 114,153 | 317,346 | 0 | 153,590 | 0 | 221,422 |
| '91 | 546,084 | 99,980 | 271,608 | 0 | 148,267 | 0 | 221,598 |
| '92 | 330,453 | 130,518 | 315,332 | 0 | 173,778 | 0 | 230,253 |
| '93 | 292,464 | 12,316 | 295,837 | 0 | 166,142 | 0 | 180,512 |
| '94 | 368,026 | 84,397 | 378,522 | 0 | 168,938 | 0 | 172,975 |
| '95 | 364,182 | 165,809 | 301,052 | 0 | 190,819 | 0 | 188,842 |
| '96 | 362,162 | 266,549 | 312,776 | 0 | 209,407 | 75,980 | 254,135 |
| '97 | 279,297 | 80,817 | 340,010 | 0 | 143,262 | 0 | 287,174 |
| '98 | 386,525 | 148,320 | 183,715 | 0 | 206,987 | 0 | 299,869 |
| '99 | 264,608 | 146,882 | 319,082 | 0 | 150,811 | 0 | 252,491 |
| '00 | 267,865 | 157,208 | 174,136 | 0 | 149,911 | 0 | 220,439 |
| '01 | 297,195 | 157,048 | 297,971 | 0 | 153,520 | 0 | 293,475 |
| '02 | 253,000 | 224,797 | 298,884 | 35,000 | 0 | 0 | 306,297 |
| '03 | 232,395 | 233,248 | 309,134 | 40,400 | 0 | 0 | 282,857 |
| '04 | 237,052 | 236,026 | 334,968 | 46,238 | 0 | 0 | 278,109 |
| '05* | 251,281 | 237,009 | 645,576 | 36,371 | 0 | 0 | 287,471 |
| '06* | 225,000 | 79,018 | 257,206 | 42,900 | 0 | 0 | 234,211 |
| '07* | 217,389 | 231,342 | 349,497 | 41,110 | 0 | 0 | 279,255 |
| '08 | 215,770 | 248,667 | 295,489 | 22,446 | 0 | 0 | 276,511 |
| '09 | 206,714 | 239,846 | 314,177 | 23,039 | 0 | 0 | 288,268 |
| '10 | 232,789 | 243,296 | 305,163 | 35,053 | 0 | 8,890 | 261,007 |

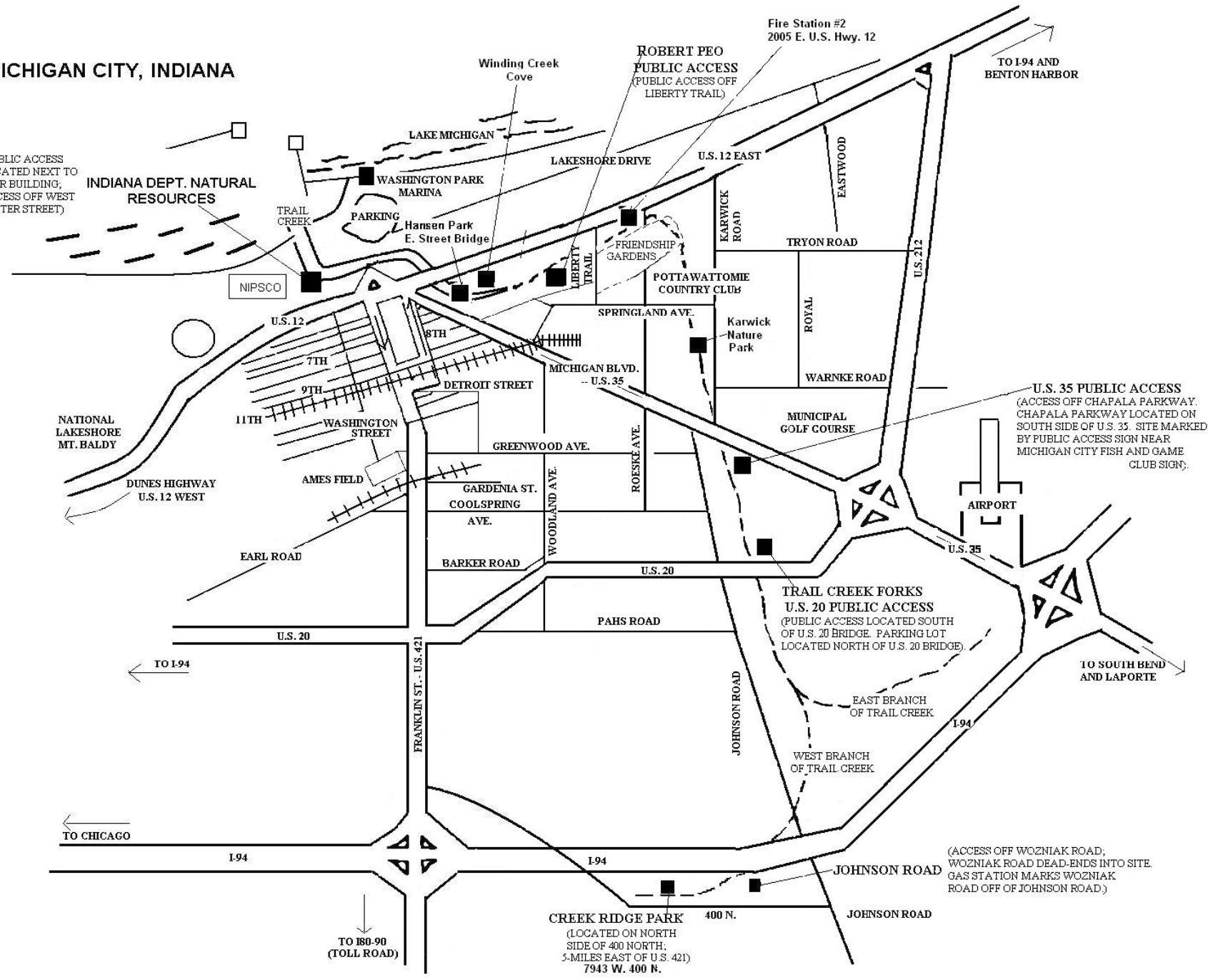
* Due to the shut-down and rehabilitation of Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery in 2006, the coho salmon plantings were reduced by 60%; the spring release skamania steelhead were stocked in the fall of 2005 as fingerlings; Michigan steelhead (winter-run) were stocked 2007 as yearlings instead of December 2006 as fingerlings; and the St. Joseph River fall steelhead plantings were reduced by approximately 40,000 fish to offset changes to the Trail Creek and Little Calumet steelhead stockings. Additionally, 2007 spring release steelhead were stocked in the fall of 2006 as fingerlings.





MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA

(PUBLIC ACCESS LOCATED NEXT TO IDNR BUILDING; ACCESS OFF WEST WATER STREET)

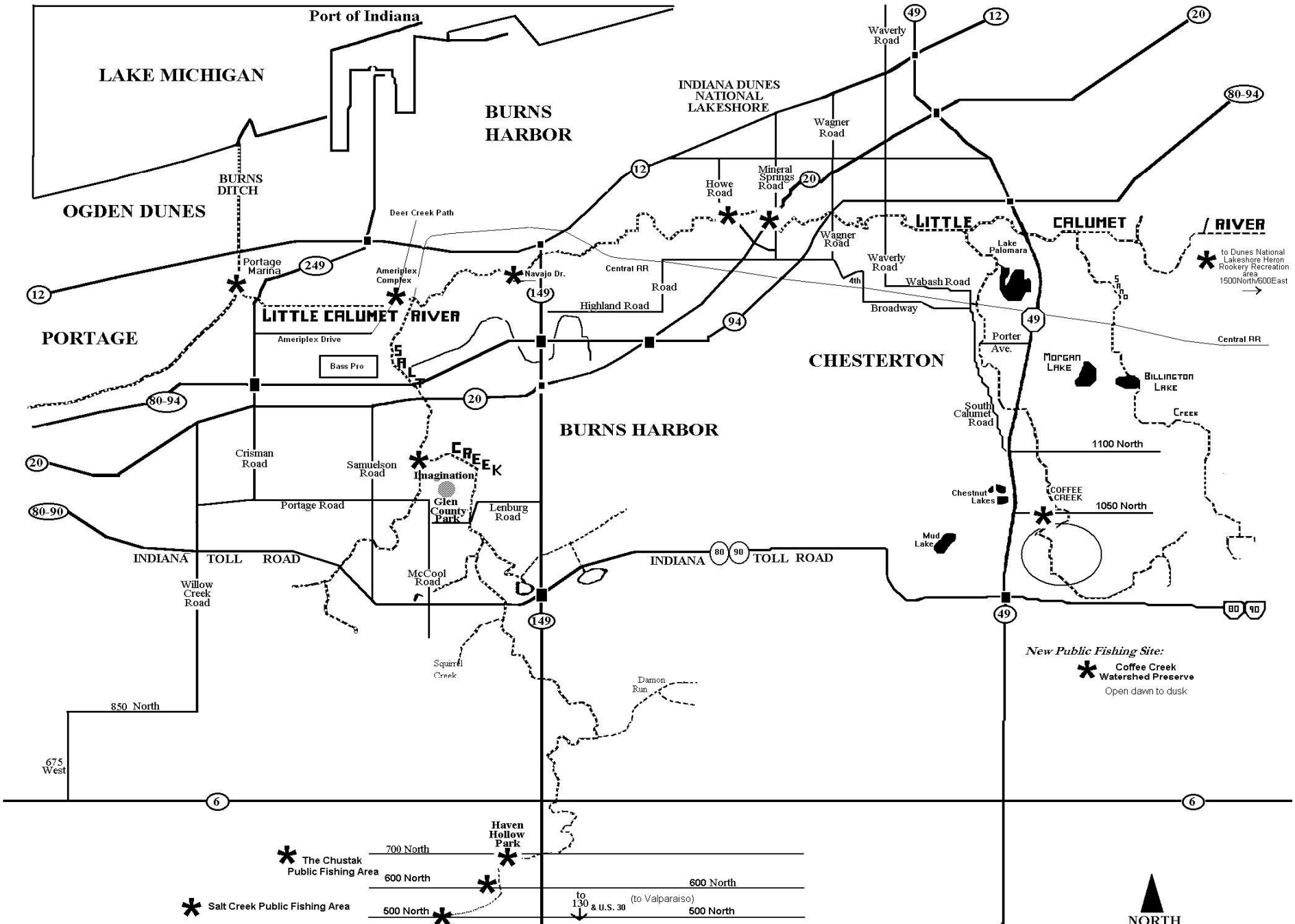


(ACCESS OFF WOZNIAK ROAD; WOZNIAK ROAD DEAD-ENDS INTO SITE. GAS STATION MARKS WOZNIAK ROAD OFF OF JOHNSON ROAD.)

LITTLE CALUMET RIVER/SALT CREEK

Sites along Little Calumet River and Salt Creek are mostly private; therefore, take care when selecting where to fish. Permission of the landowner is required on private lands. Most suggested areas include county parks and Dunes National Lakeshore property. (For more information regarding Dunes National Lakeshore please call (219) 926-7561

*** Fishing Sites**





ANGLER CREEL SURVEYS

A creel survey is one of the most valuable tools available to the fisheries manager, since it provides:

- (1) angler characteristics and
- (2) a measure of anglers' catch of fish (both harvest and release).

Thus, careful analysis and evaluation of creel data indicate the relative successes of fisheries management activities and fish stocking efforts. Creel surveys, conducted by trained clerks, are designed to provide a great variety of information on fish caught by anglers such as: number of fish caught, catch rate, and length/weight characteristics of fish caught. In addition, angler characteristics such as length of fishing trip, county of residence and fish species sought are determined from the creel interview. The Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife conducts a number of creel surveys on different lakes and rivers each year. Anglers encountering creel clerks are asked to make every effort to cooperate and provide information requested by the creel clerk.



<http://www.facebook.com/INfishandwildlife>



<http://twitter.com/INdnrnews>