

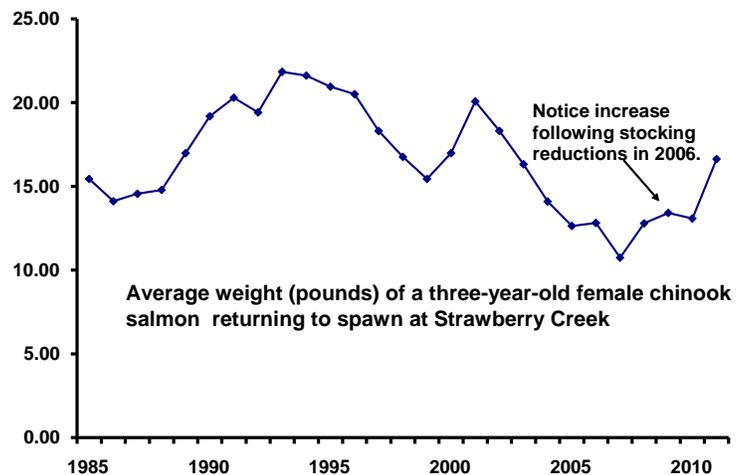


## GREAT LAKES FISHERIES NEWS – December 2011.

If you have questions or comments about issues related to Great Lakes fisheries, contact Bill Horns by phone (608-266-8782), FAX (608-266-2244) or e-mail (william.horns@wisconsin.gov). We also maintain Lake Michigan and Lake Superior web pages where you can find many reports:

Lake Michigan – <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/lakemich/> Lake Superior – <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/lakesup>

**Are we stocking the right number of salmon? That was then:** Five years ago the four states on Lake Michigan agreed to cut lakewide chinook stocking by 25%. Most of that reduction was in Michigan, but the cut in Wisconsin was also substantial – 21% starting in 2006. We believe the lakewide reduction was successful in its intended purpose of assuring the stability of the salmon forage base, especially alewives. This is in contrast with Lake Huron, where naturally reproduced chinooks flooded the system in the early years of this decade and depleted the alewife population. Today, while the chinook fishery of Lake Huron has collapsed, ours remains strong. We are especially pleased to note that chinook and coho salmon taken by Wisconsin anglers in 2011 were large and robust (see chart<sup>1</sup>). **This is now:** Along with fisheries managers and the interested public in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, we have initiated a formal process of reviewing salmon and trout stocking policy in Lake Michigan. We welcome your participation. Contact Bill Horns for detailed information about this process or visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/lakemich/managementreports.htm>. Briefly, we are holding a series of technical workshops through the winter, to be followed by a stocking conference next summer. Stocking decisions for 2013 and beyond will be based on the data presented and discussed in this process, and on the expressed views of participants.



**Salmon stamp expenditure report.** We recently completed a summary of expenditures of Salmon Stamp revenues for the fiscal years 2006 through 2011. Total expenditures for the salmon and trout program were a little over \$3M each year, with about half of that coming from Salmon Stamp revenues. Call to request a copy or find the report on line at [http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/lakemich/Salmon\\_stamp\\_report\\_2006-2011.pdf](http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/lakemich/Salmon_stamp_report_2006-2011.pdf).

**Whitefish season extension?** A public hearing is scheduled regarding FH-25-11, a rule proposal to extend the commercial whitefish season by six days. Under this rule proposal the season will close October 31 instead of October 25. The hearing will be held at the DNR Sturgeon Bay Service Center (110 S. Neenah Avenue) at 5 pm, Tuesday, January 17, 2012.

**Electronic reporting of commercial catches.** Starting January 1, 2012, daily catch reports will be submitted electronically by Lake Superior commercial fishers using laptop computers. The electronic reporting system will be in place later in the year on Lake Michigan. The electronically-submitted data will be available immediately to Department biologists and wardens, so the Department will always have current information about harvests from both Lakes. The daily electronic reports will replace bi-weekly reports submitted on paper forms.

<sup>1</sup> The value shown for 2011 is preliminary.

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The RV Coregonus has replaced the RV Barney Devine as the Department's Lake Michigan research and assessment vessel.