

LAKE HURON Fishing Club



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Past President

Al Wilkins • fisheye@bmts.com

LHFC General Meeting

Please join us for our upcoming general meeting. Dave Hackney, from the OPP Marine Unit, will be our guest speaker, which will take place at Underwood for 7:30pm.



Adopt a Road Spring Cleanup

Our annual spring Adopt a Road cleanup will take place around the end of April. Volunteers are needed and welcome. The contact person for the Kincardine (TBD) area is Al Wilkins fisheye@bmts.com and for the Port Elgin area (May 31st) is Mike Hahn mhahn@tri-mach.com.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is slowly making an appearance... some days are still cool, and there is still lots of ice on the lake, but most of the snow is gone. Thankfully, with relatively little flooding.

Some of you may not be aware that Bob Greason has had to have surgery and has been in hospital for awhile. I hope you will join with us in wishing

Bob well, on his road to recovery. One of the many things Bob does to serve the Club is that of Executive Secretary. During

Bob's absence Janet Hilliard is temporarily filling the position. I want to thank you Janet for stepping up when needed.

Speaking of 'stepping up' and accepting responsibility...one of the other jobs Bob was involved in was making sure the Boat and Trailer Package the Club runs a Draw on would be taken to various places and events to be on display, allowing ticket sales. In Bob's absence, we are desperately in need of an individual(s) to take over this project, as ticket sales on the Boat and Trailer Draw are vital to the financial well being of the Club. So please give some serious thought to helping out, even if you can only manage one event to sell tickets at.

Following in the same train of thought, various projects are coming up, such as...releasing rainbows, egg collection, manning weigh stations during the Derby, etc. So please, if you want to be involved, and you are not sure where to start, call or email someone on the Executive, watch for

emails from Project Leaders, or attend General Meetings and ask where you can help. A lot of the guys who are currently getting the

jobs done are getting older and needing to pass the torch to some of the younger members. I don't know how much more plainly I can put it...the Club's very existence may rest on the willingness of the younger members becoming more involved and learning how to carry on the initiatives of the founders that started the Club more than 30 years ago.

Mark your calendars for the next General meeting on May 8, 7:30 at Underwood. A member of the OPP Marine Unit will be the guest speaker.

Respectfully,

Brian Garnet, LHFC President

"the Club's very existence may rest on the willingness of the younger members becoming more involved..."

JUNE 14 FISH FRY

Last year 140 people had a wonderful feast of Walleye and Fries. Dinner will be served at 6 pm. Location is the Quonset Hut at the Baie Du Ore Launch at the bottom of Bruce Concession #8. All are welcome. The cost is \$10.00 per person and \$15.00 per person who is not a member of the LHFC or our sister clubs

Pot Luck: Last names A-M please provide a salad and last names N-Z please provide a dessert

KINCARDINE AREA SPONSOR VOLUNTEER

The Chantry Chinook Classic Salmon Derby is in desperate need of a volunteer sponsorship canvasser. We have included information in the last two derby updates, to no avail. This will be the last plea for help; if no one comes forth we will have to look for other options, whatever they may be.

The Chantry Chinook Classic has had excellent support for sponsorships in the Kincardine area for the last number of years. We were fortunate to have Sandra Florence canvass the Kincardine area for sponsors. As a non angler, community minded citizen she did an extremely good job and had a lot of great sponsorships, Due to other commitments; she is unable

to do it this year.

At present we do not have anyone to take over that role

As in previous years she has developed lists of sponsors. There is a successful practice and support system already in place, with other committee members. There is a previous list of sponsors, sponsorship promotional packages developed and printed and business cards printed for your easy usage.

All the money raised for the Derby goes back into the Lake Huron Fishing Club for their work in operating fish hatcheries, restocking program, stream enhancements, school mini hatchery program and other environmental programs.

There is a serious immediate need of a volunteer sponsorship canvasser for the Kincardine area, to assist the Chantry Chinook Classic Salmon Derby and the Lake Huron Fishing Club,

Anyone able to assist and able to perform this role and wishing to join or assist the committee in any way call the Derby Chairman Brian Lang at 519 353 8818, contact us by email info@chantrychinook.com

Your consideration and assistance would be welcomed and greatly appreciated.

Bert Kuntz

2014 LAKE COMMITTEE MEETING

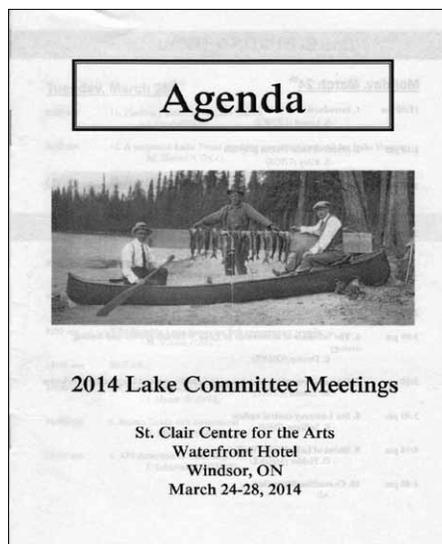
I recently attended the Great Lakes Fishery Commission Annual Meetings in Windsor Ontario. This is a yearly update on the state of each of the Great Lakes from an ecological point of view. I only stayed for the portion on Lake Huron. Using my notes, I have listed below some of the information that was presented.

Al Wilkins

Prey Fish Biomass:

Prey fish consists of alewife, bloater, rainbow smelt, sculpins, round goby, emerald shiners and a few minor contributors such as troutperch and stickleback. These species are assessed by acoustic surveys, midwater trawls, and bottom trawls. Surveys were conducted all around the lake, US and Canadian waters including Georgian Bay, in the same spots as previous years from September to November of 2013.

Biomass of alewife and rainbow smelt remain at historic lows all around the lake. There was a slight increase in the number of "young of the year" (fish less than 1 year old) in these 2 species but there was no increase in "year and older" fish. This would indicate that the alewives and smelt that are being produced are being consumed or dying before they reach their first birthday. Numbers of round goby showed a decrease from the 2012 peak.



Researchers admitted that surveys for round goby may not be very accurate. Emerald shiners showed a slight increase from numbers in 2012.

In 2013 the overall biomass of prey fish decreased from the slight improvement seen in 2011 and 2012. The average prey-fish biomass was estimated to be 6.1 kg/Ha in 2013. In 1998 the preyfish biomass was estimated at 20 kg/Ha.

Nutrient Shifts

For many recent years scientists had a theory called "Nearshore Shunt". According to this hypothesis zebra mussels were

filtering food and energy from the open waters of Lake Huron and concentrating it via their biomass and excrements in the shallow shoreline areas of the lake. This was making the shallow areas of the lake more productive at the cost of the open waters. To prove this theory extensive sampling was done in 2013 comparing plankton communities nearshore to plankton communities offshore. There was no real difference in the results. There was, however, a higher concentration of life in the mid-depth regions. This is the area 30 to 60 metres in depth. This was also the area with the highest concentrations of zebra mussels, possibly because of the harder substrate that mussels could attach to. The densities of zebra and quagga mussels are still increasing in Lake Huron.

The proliferation of cladophora algae is suspected of having a major influence on the growth and survival of many species of fish. Cladophora algae grows quickly in the spring removing phosphorus from the water. This reduces the early season algae bloom that is necessary for the first feeding of most fish species larvae. As a result growth rates of newly hatched fish is severely impaired. In late summer and early fall the cladophora dies and releases those nutrients back into the water, but it is too late then to have a positive effect on fish as they are mostly past the plankton feeding stage.

Whitefish

Zebra and quagga mussels are having a detrimental effect on whitefish growth. Whitefish are shifting to feeding closer inshore. There has been a major decline in whitefish numbers, size, and biomass in both the main basin of Lake Huron and in Georgian Bay. It is predicted that whitefish numbers and condition will continue to decline. There is some new analysis that whitefish populations in Lake Huron are returning to their historic longterm average. It is possible that the Fish Community Objectives, set for Lake Huron whitefish, are unrealistic and were set at a time when the whitefish population was at an unsustainable high. It was also mentioned that sampling shows that VHS is very high in spring whitefish, but that as the water warms up the disease disappears. Gobies are now a major component of whitefish diets.

Sea Lamprey

The number of sea lamprey in Lake Huron continues to be above targets set by the G.L.F.C. Lake trout marking rates targets were set at 5/100 fish. Actual numbers for

2013 were 13 fish/100. The target population of lamprey in Lake Huron is 76,000 sub-adults. Actual estimated numbers are 126,421 in 2013 which was down from 270,000 in 2012. In 2013 there were 28 tributaries and 3 lentic areas treated with lampricide around Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

Work was supposed to have begun on a rehabilitation of the lamprey barrier at Denny's Dam on the Saugeen River in 2013. This work was halted before it began because of failed negotiations with local First Nations. If the Denny's Dam barrier is allowed to fail and sea lamprey are allowed to infest the waters of the Saugeen River between Southampton and Walkerton it would take hundreds of thousands of dollars in treatments to try and control them. In addition the waters of the Saugeen in this stretch have a native strain of the Northern Brook Lamprey which is a federal "Species of Special Concern". Treating this river section with lampricide to control a breeding sea lamprey infestation would kill the estimated 500,000 Northern Brook lamprey.

Walleye

Walleye are doing very well in Saginaw Bay and are predicted to continue doing so as long as alewife numbers are low. All stocking of hatchery raised walleyes have stopped in Lake Huron. There is an estimated 2 ½ million walleye, 2 years of age or older, in Saginaw Bay. Some of these walleye journey outside of Saginaw Bay and travel up and down the Lake Huron coast. Assessments have started to try and determine if these migrations are permanent, cyclical or bi-directional.

Lake Trout

Natural lake trout reproduction is occurring all around the main basin of Lake Huron. There is good evidence that there is no survival of newly stocked lake trout because of predation by adult lake trout. Lake trout are now the major consumer of alewife and smelt in Lake Huron with walleye a distant 2nd place and chinook a minor predator. Several committees have recommended the halt of lake trout stocking in Lake Huron. The Lake Huron Technical Committee is preparing to start discussions about lake trout stocking cessation.

ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS (EBR)

The Ontario Government has made public consultation a part of any project that is deemed to "Environmental". The work that the LHFC and most of her sister Club's fall into that category with our Fish Stocking Program. Below is link that in a nutshell tells of the MNR's plans to stock Natural fish into Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. In short, this means that Salmon, as well as Brown and Rainbow Trout will be eliminated from the stocking plan – as they are introduced and Naturalized species.

This is a mockery of common sense and if every member of our Club posted comments (found on the right hand side of the website link below) as to how both Angling Opportunity and

Economic Benefits would be lost if the Clubs were no longer allowed to stock these species – something we have been doing for over 30 years – we may have a chance to overcome this completely unjust (and in my opinion idiotic) stocking plan.

The future of fishing these wonderful species is at risk here folks. It will only take a few minutes to comment, and it may in fact save a wonderful fishery. Click the link below. And please remember – we only have strength in numbers.

<http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/displaynoticecontent.do?noticeId=MTlwODEx&statusId=MTgwODU4&language=en>

TROUT HATCHERY UPDATE

Careful - the ink on this is still wet. This morning we did the last release of our rainbow trout from the Trout Hatchery. There are now 67,000 additional healthy rainbow trout swimming in the Saugeen River. On Friday the 12,000 rainbows from the Port Elgin Chinook Hatchery were let go by the great guys from the Ontario Steelheaders. On Saturday 52,000 rainbows were released from the Kincardine Trout Hatchery and this morning the last 3,000 rainbows were let go. Altogether this was over 6.5 thousand pounds of fish netted, transported and released. Many thanks go out to the members of the Ontario Steelheaders who gave up their yearly Spring Fishing Derby to help transport the fish from our Kincardine Hatchery. Thank you also to the LHFC members who gave up their Saturday to load and release fish in the rain.

We also have our 100,000 rainbow trout eggs incubating in our hatching troughs due to the hard work of Grant McAlpine and his

crew at Denny's Dam. These eggs should start to hatch around the middle of June.

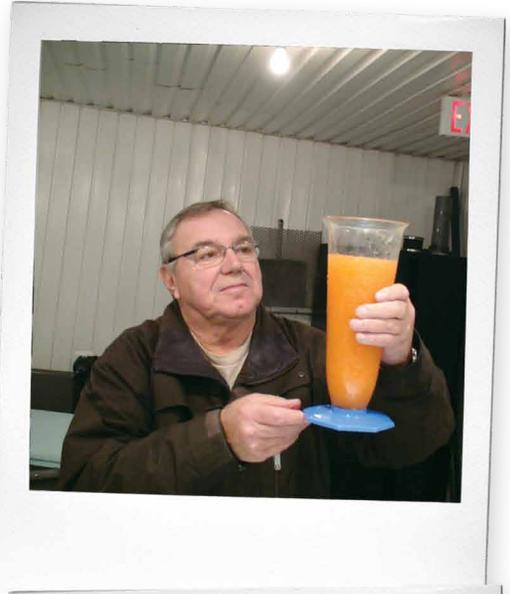
The brown trout are doing fine and growing rapidly.

We have been extremely busy over the past week conducting tours for the children that have been releasing their school hatchery fish behind the hatchery. This past week we have had over 200 children and one high school Environmental Class tour our hatchery.

Now that the big fish are gone we have a lot of cleanup work to do to get the tanks ready for more fish. We also still have a couple of crews that need extra helpers to cover during vacations and next winter. There are several maintenance jobs to be done over the summer and we still need someone for settling pond cleaning. If anyone wants to help, please get hold of me.

Al Wilkins

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Executive Meeting Dates:

~~January 16, 2014~~

~~February 20, 2014~~

~~March 13, 2014~~

~~April 17, 2014~~

May 15, 2014

June 19, 2014

July 17, 2014

August 21, 2014

September 18, 2014

General Meetings:

January 9, 2014: Bill Blackwell *President of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters*

March 13, 2014: Craig Todd of the MNR will be present

May 8, 2014: Dave Hackney, from the OPP Marine Unit, will be present

July 10: Guest Speaker TBA

September 11, 2014: Guest Speaker TBA

Special Events :

~~December 12, 2013: Christmas Party~~

June 14, 2014: Spring Fish Fry

September 6, 2014: Pig Roast

August 9, 2014: Derby Fish Fry

July 11, 2014: Derby Media Day & Sponsor Appreciation

July 26 – August 10, 2014: Derby

August 10, 2014: Derby Awards

Special Projects:

Docks In – Last weekend of April 2014

Docks Out - September 26 – 27, 2014

Chinook egg collection - last week of September 2014

Rainbow egg collection - TBA

Chinook release - TBA

Rainbow releases

Brown Trout releases

Road Clean-up – April 13th

Baie Dore Docks

2014 Conservation Projects - TBA