

SPRING/SUMMER 2015

VOLUME 20, ISSUE ONE

LAKE LINES

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association
University of Wisconsin-Extension/Burnett County

Rain Gardens Protect Water Quality

University of Wisconsin-Extension Publication GWQ034 Summary

Rain gardens can be your personal contribution to cleaner water, healthier fish and wildlife populations, and a greatly improved environment for your family and community. Each rain garden may seem small, but collectively they produce substantial neighborhood and regional environmental benefits. Rain gardens work for us in several ways:

- Increasing the amount of water filtering into the ground, which recharges groundwater and helps reduce the amount of pollutants washing off to lakes and streams;
- Helping sustain adequate flows in streams during dry spells;
- Providing valuable wildlife habitat;
- Enhancing the beauty of your yard and the neighborhood;
- Helping protect communities from flooding and drainage problems;
- Helping protect streams and lakes from damaging flows and reducing erosion of the of stream banks and lakeshores.

Tips for a Productive Rain Garden

Keep in mind that a rain garden is a “garden” not a prairie. The focus is on flowers, although some grasses can be used.

- When planting the rain garden, ask some friends to help. A few people helping for an hour can be fun for all

and will allow you to get the planting done in a couple of hours.

- In the weeks after planting, you may want to hoe dandelions and other weeds until the mature garden plants crowd them out.
- As the rain garden matures, you will need to thin the population of some plants to allow others to grow.
- Leave the dead or dormant plants standing over the winter. Many of the plants will provide seeds and shelter for birds. In spring cut back or mow the stalks to allow new shoots to emerge.
- Installation of a rain garden is slightly more work than a comparable area of lawn, but maintenance is low once plants mature.

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FREE rain garden and shoreland restoration stories online at: burnettcounty.com/NaturalShoreline



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Message from the President

By Roger Noe, BCLRA

Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association

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The change of seasons in northern Wisconsin is usually an interesting string of events. This year winter to spring happening was especially unique. With very strong, solid ice through February, I was sure we would ice fish through mid-April. Wrong! A quick brief warm up in early March followed by some very strong winds made for ice break up by the end of March. WOW! It went fast.

So that brings us to spring and cabin openings. Already I see docks emerging from open shorelines. In short order the opening of fishing will usher in a new season of lake experiences.

A few things to think about as your thoughts turn to the lake. Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Inc. will host its annual meeting on Saturday, June 27. In conjunction with the annual meeting, BCLRA will host a lake association forum. Four lake associations will discuss the function of their group on their lakes. You should plan to attend.

It is interesting and amazing what some lake associations have done with their group and resources available to them. In one case, a lake association has united with the Wisconsin DNR to undertake a comprehensive long range fish stocking plan. This project is much larger than a one year and done program. It is far reaching with fish management for years. Another example involves a lake association actually purchasing adjoining lake property to protect the lake shore and lake development. Lake plant management is another effort undertaken by a lake association. Analyzing the lake plant structure is critical to manage and protect a lake. The concept of "fish sticks" used for fish habitat is interesting and exciting. Burnett County has at least one lake involved in this project.

Obviously there are numerous lake project happenings in Burnett County. Plan to attend the "Lakes Forum" on Saturday, June 27 at 9:30 am at Forts Folle Avoine. The "Lakes Forum" will follow the business meeting which is scheduled for 9:00am.

See you there. Have a great summer!



"Sitting on the Dock" by Mike Gifford is licensed under CC-BY-NC-SA 2.0

BCLRA in Action

By Mike Kornmann, University of Wisconsin-Extension

Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association has been a leader in protecting Burnett County resources since the early 1990's. The keys to the success over the years have been the work of volunteers, partnerships, and donations. This year we are taking the time to thank those who went the extra mile. We have several lake associations that provided additional donations beyond their annual dues. We also have several individuals who contributed financially to help BCLRA meet its mission. BCLRA's primary funding comes from three sources: lake association dues, sponsors, and a contribution from the County of Burnett through the UW-Extension office. BCLRA thanks all lake associations for their annual dues contributions too. This will be the second year that *LakeLines* will be sent to all lakeshore property owners, reaching over 6,000 dwellings and many more people.

Donations: Our purpose is to promote the environmental protection of Burnett County's lakes, rivers, and its wildlife resources, to share information, projects, and results. If you would like to help BCLRA fulfill its mission, please consider a charitable donation. Any amount is appreciated and helps to provide support to the many projects BCLRA is involved in.

SEND YOUR CHECK TO: 7410 Co Rd K, #107, Siren WI 54872 payable to BCLRA.

A SPECIAL THANKS

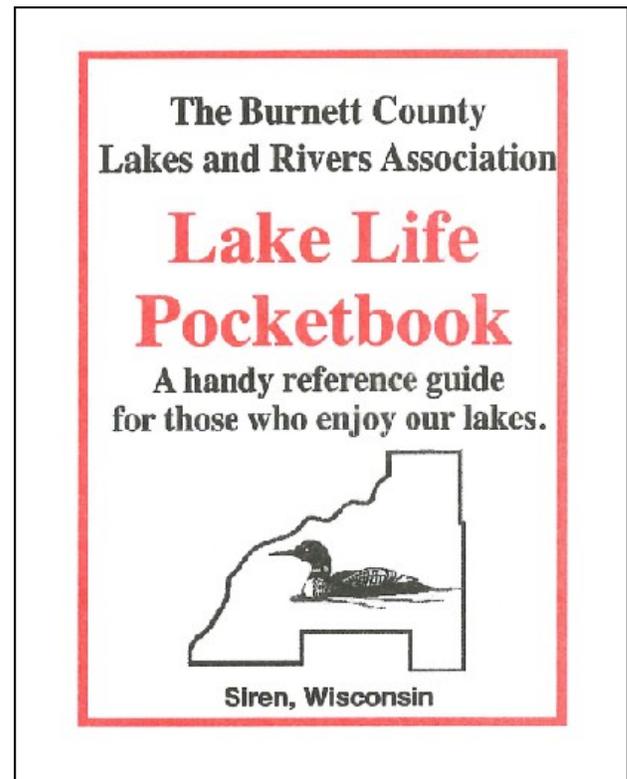
BCLRA is very grateful to the following lake associations and individuals for their donations during 2014 to help BCLRA fulfill its mission of protecting the lakes and rivers of Burnett County:

Lake Associations: Austin, Birch Island, Hayden, Lipsett, Long, Loon, McKenzie, Minnow, Mud Hen, and Rooney. *(These lake associations provided an additional contribution beyond their annual dues.)*

Individuals: Tom Bell, Claudia Kinville, Kathy and Jim McKenzie, Greta Michaels, Diane and Dave Moe, and Jean Thielen.

Annual Meeting: June 27th at Forts Folle Avoine, 9 a.m. After the brief annual meeting, selected lake association leaders will present projects they have participated in and discuss, via a panel, how other lake associations can become engaged in protecting lake resources. Anyone interested is welcome to listen and ask questions.

Lakes Forum: June 27th at Forts Folle Avoine, approximately 9:30 a.m. Lakes Forum with Lake Association presentations and dialogue on: fish sticks, aquatic fish management, land purchases for lake conservation, and long term fish stocking. Public welcome.



BCLRA's free reference guide, *Lake Life Pocketbook*, is available from the Burnett County UW-Extension office and participating *LakeLines* sponsors.



Wisconsin's Lake Courtesy Code "Curbing Conflict"

By University of Wisconsin-Extension Lakes Program

More and more of us are enjoying the water in a wide variety of ways. Some seek peace and quiet and little bit of nature. Some let it all hang out and test their prowess and athletic skills.

- How do we share our small world with the creatures that need to live on and by lakes and the people who prefer to live there too?
- Can there be less stress and more pleasure?
- How will what I want to do affect others?

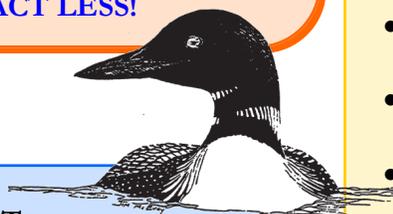
CAN I BE:

Considerate – Respectful – Polite – Understanding?

Think about...

- NOISE** - Silence is golden
- SPEED** - Watch your wake
- LITTER** - Leave nothing but your ripples
- SPACE** - Give critters and your lake neighbors some room

THINK MORE – REACT LESS!



R-E-S-P-E-C-T

- RESPECT:** The rights of others
 - ENVIRONMENT:** Enjoy wildlife from a distance
 - SAFETY:** Heed the boating regulations, go slow
 - PEACE:** Watch your noise, and your wake
 - ENJOY:** Have fun, share the moments with your family and friends
 - CONSIDER:** The other people and creatures on the lake
 - TRASH:** Take your trash home
- Think how much nicer your day would be if everyone showed just a little more respect.

ETIQUETTE

For Boaters, Personal Water Craft Users, and Lake Shore Owners

- As a lakefront property owner or a guest, your actions reflect the nature of your surroundings.
- How the land and water is used affects the well-being of all.
- Be courteous on the water. Remember, anglers fish early and late in the day.
- Know and obey Wisconsin Boating Safety Rules.
- Operate a boat that is the right size and speed for the lake.
- Dispose of all trash, including food, properly.
- Operate motorized boats at slow speeds in shallow water.
- Prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (Eurasian Milfoil and others).
- Stay far enough away from the shoreline to protect ecology and prevent erosion.
- Operate your boat and personal water craft with due regard for swimmers and anglers.
- **BE AWARE** of your **ACTIONS** and **HELP PRESERVE** the **ENVIRONMENT.**

Care and Maintenance of Residential Septic Systems

University of Wisconsin-Extension Publication B3583 Summary

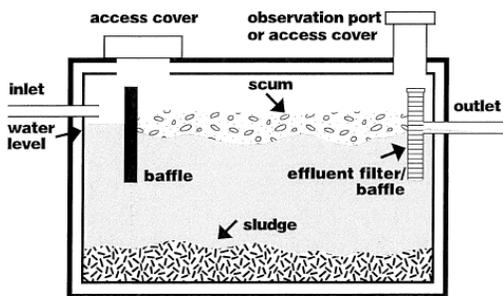
How Septic Systems Work

The diagram below illustrates how a residential septic system works.

Schedule Regular Maintenance and Pumping

Regular maintenance and pumping are good ways to prolong a septic system's proper functioning. Like changing the oil in your

Septic tank



car, consider regular maintenance "insurance" since the cost is likely to be a fraction of the cost of replacing a neglected system.

A rule of thumb is to have your entire septic system inspected every other year. Many counties require an inspection every 3 years. A liquid waste pumper/hauler will check sludge and scum accumulations and remove them if necessary. Baffles, filter, covers, and the soil absorption field should also be checked.

Never go into the septic tank yourself. Sewer gases are extremely hazardous and can quickly kill.

Reduce Sludge and Scum Build-up

Minimizing the amount of solids entering your septic system will reduce sludge and scum build-up. This will extend the time between necessary pumpings and avoid the crisis of dealing with a failed system.

Do not put fats and oils down the drain. Fats and oils can collect inside plumbing pipes and cause hair or other debris to accumulate, decreasing water flow. Fats, oil, and grease are lighter than water and will rapidly increase the scum layer in the septic tank, requiring more frequent pumping.

Keep food waste out of your system.

Compost kitchen waste or put it in the trash rather than using a garbage disposal. Fruit and vegetable peelings ground up in a disposal tend to remain suspended rather than becoming part of the sludge or scum layers. As a result, they move out through the system and clog drainfields more easily.

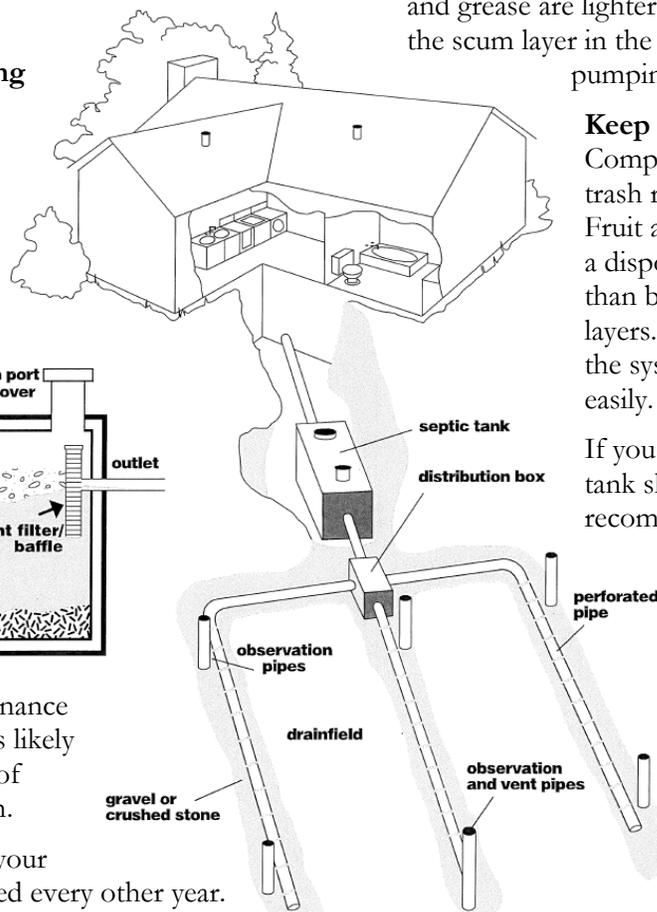
If you use a garbage disposal, your septic tank should be twice as large as otherwise recommended. Some septic tank installers recommend two tanks working in series rather than one larger tank. The extra time the material is in the septic tanks allows more solid material to settle out.

Keep Non-degradable Materials Out

Never flush into a septic tank materials that do not break down easily. Such materials include coffee grounds, bones, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, tampons, condoms, paper napkins, paper towels, and cigarette butts. Pharmaceutical

packaging such as adhesive bandage wrappers, dental floss, pill capsules, tampon applicators, and other packaging material can quickly accumulate and clog a septic tank and drainfield as well. Put a waste basket in the bathroom and use it.

To read the entire publication, visit Burnett County's UW-Extension website at <http://burnett.uwex.edu/files/2010/09/MaintainingSeptics.pdf>.



Residential septic systems include the household plumbing, a septic tank, and a drainfield (in ground, at-grade, mound, or seepage pit).



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Rusty Crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The rusty crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*) comes from streams in the Ohio River Basin states of Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Tennessee. It is suspected that the species was transported via bait bucket by transient anglers who used them as bait while fishing. Today, rusty crayfish are also found in Wisconsin and surrounding states, the northeastern states, New Mexico and many areas in Ontario, Canada. In the areas they inhabit, the rusty crayfish have dominated the native crayfish by taking over their habitat and natural forage at alarming rates.

Identification: This crayfish measures two and one-half inches (not including claws) in length. Look for their large claws with black bands on the tips and dark, rusty spots on each side of their carapace (hard outer body covering). Their claws are grayish-green to reddish-brown and smoother than most other crayfish. The rusty spots may not always be present or well developed on rusty crayfish from some waters.

Other Names for This Animal Include:

- Common name: Rusty Crayfish
- Scientific name: *Orconectes rusticus*

Ecological threat:

Outside their home range, rusty crayfish are likely to displace native crayfish and reduce aquatic plant abundance and diversity. In some northern Wisconsin lakes they have eaten most of the aquatic plants, hurting the quality of the lakes. Aquatic plants provide important habitat for fish and other aquatic animals, as well as prevent erosion. As a result of damaged underwater habitat, fish lose their spawning areas, protective cover, and food. Fish that normally eat crayfish don't like the feisty, aggressive "rusty". Rusty crayfish take over the homes of native crayfish and have been known to eat fish eggs. Rusty crayfish reproduce quickly and females lay from 80-575 eggs!

Control:

- **Mechanical:** Intensive harvest will not eradicate

crayfish, but may help reduce adult populations and minimize some impacts. The best method of control, however, is to prevent their introduction. Educating anglers, crayfish trappers, bait dealers, and teachers about the threats posed by rusty crayfish will help reduce the risk of spreading rusty crayfish to new areas.

- **Chemical:** Although there are chemicals that will kill crayfish, there are no chemicals available to eradicate *only* rusty crayfish.

Prevention Steps

- Inspect and remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from your boat and equipment before leaving the boat launch.
- Drain water from your boat and equipment before leaving the boat launch.
- Throw away unwanted bait in the trash.
- Spray or rinse your boat and equipment with high pressure and/or hot tap water, especially if moored for more than a day, or, dry your boat and equipment completely for at least 5 days.
- Do NOT use crayfish as bait, it is against the law in Wisconsin.

For more information visit: http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/ais/rustycrayfish_invader.



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Northwest Lakes Conference

Friday, June 26, 2015, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Hayward High School, Hayward, Wisconsin

Registration Deadline: June 20, 2015 | Conference Cost: \$40, students free

The 2015 Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference will take place on Friday, June 26, 2015 at the Hayward High School in Hayward, Wisconsin. The Conference coincides with the Hayward Musky Festival, which is June 25-28.

The conference cost of \$40.00 includes admission, program materials, continental breakfast, and lunch. Students attend free of charge.

Register online at <http://www.wisconsinlakes.org/>, by phone at 800-542-5253, fax at 608-661-4314, or mail to Wisconsin Lakes at 4513 Vernon Blvd., Suite 101, Madison, WI, 53705. Checks and credit cards are accepted for payment. The registration deadline is Saturday, June 20, 2015.



Conference Agenda

8:00 am Registration, Continental Breakfast and Exhibits

9:00 am **Welcome, Opening Remarks and Recognition**

9:15 am **Reflections on Lake Protection** - John Gozdziński, DNR Northern Region Secretary's Director

10:15 am Break

10:45 am SESSION I

Life of the Musky - Jeff Kampa, WDNR

Healthy Lakes Grants - Pamela Toshner, WDNR

Lakes Alive! Discover the Mysteries Lurking in Lakes - Emily Stone, Cable Natural History Museum

The Value of Wetlands in Lake Country - Tracy Hames, Wisconsin Wetlands Association

11:45 am Luncheon and Exhibits

12:45 pm SESSION II

What's the Deal with Wisconsin Walleyes and What Are We Doing about It? - Gretchen Hansen, WDNR

Algae 101 - Dr. Mark Edlund, St. Croix Research Station

Life and Ecology of Northern Wisconsin's Furbearers - John Olson, WDNR

Wisconsin Water Megatrends - Lynn Markham, UWEX

1:45 pm Break

2:00 pm SESSION III

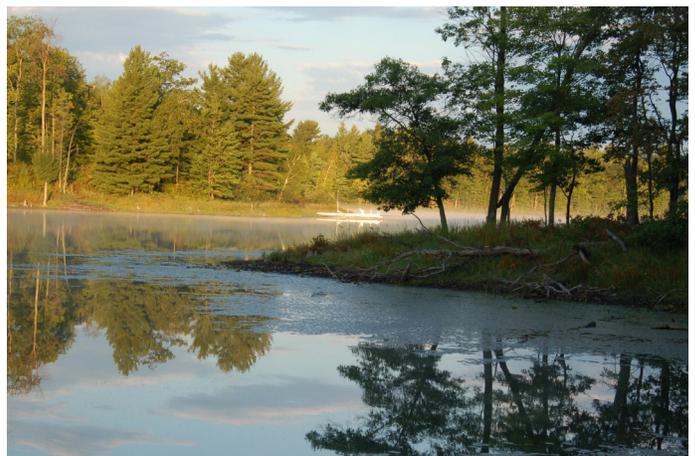
Restore the Call: Translocation of Loon Chicks in Minnesota - Kristin Kovach, Biodiversity Research Institute

History in the Mucking - Paul Garrison, WDNR
Yummy Plants Found Along Lakeshores - Patrick Goggin, UWEX

Lakeshore Restoration: Lessons Learned and Future Challenges - Linda Anderson, Shell Lake and Paul Cook, Burnett County Land & Water Conservation Department

3:00 pm Adjourn

Note: **9 Key Elements Watershed Workshop** is designed for conservation staff, consultants, and watershed planners (max 15) and will run concurrently during sessions I, II, and III.





Burnett County Largemouth Bass - Where We Are

By Craig Roberts - Fisheries, WDNR - Spooner

Largemouth bass are found in almost every lake in Burnett County. They are very common and often the most abundant gamefish in the lake. Bass come into conversation as a reason for walleye declines and it is often wondered why their growth and size structure are below average in some Burnett County waters. Burnett County went to a no minimum size limit for largemouth bass in 2012. Here I will discuss: background on largemouth bass, why we chose this regulation, positives and negatives of the regulation, and how we will continue to monitor the regulation.

Bass come into conversation as a reason for walleye declines and it is often wondered why their growth and size structure are below average in some Burnett County waters.

The largemouth bass is native throughout all of Wisconsin and prefers lakes and slow moving areas of river and streams. They also prefer to live in warm shallow vegetated habitat. However, they are adaptable relating to woody cover, rocks, and other structures when vegetation isn't present. They tend to be more tolerant of environmental impacts (high turbidity, pollution) than fish like walleye or trout. Largemouth bass are excellent parents, creating "nests" on sand/gravel when spawning where the male will protect the eggs and fry. This behavior is different from other area gamefish like northern pike and walleye which broadcast spawn and provide no parental care.

The fact is most lakes in the county provide excellent habitat for bass and their populations do well. Most of the natural lakes in Burnett County are seepage lakes that have habitats favoring abundant bass populations. In 2012, a new regulation was passed for Burnett County that created a no minimum size limit on bass for most waters. The goal of this regulation is to reduce densities of the often abundant largemouth bass and improve growth rates for this species. Many Burnett County lakes have densities so high that bass growth is below average for northern Wisconsin.

The positive impacts of the regulation are hopefully to re-

store good growth in largemouth bass in the county, offer better quality bass fishing, and possibly promote recovery of other gamefish species. For example, lakes that have good forage densities may be able to provide more prey for northern pike or walleye with lowered bass densities.

So what is a negative impact of reducing bass densities? One specific negative impact that may occur is reduced panfish growth in some lakes, specifically bluegill and pumpkinseeds. When bass are in lower abundances, these species often become more abundant leading to slower growth and higher densities. This result

will likely depend on the lake and what other gamefish are present (northern pike, walleye, musky).

As of right now, our data doesn't suggest a significant increase in bass growth on a county wide scale.

However, it is early in the process and the regulation has only been in place three years. Though this seems like a long time, it often takes many years to see results from a regulation change. So be patient and don't be afraid to keep a few bass. We will continue to study the effects of this regulation change using

spring electrofishing sampling. If anyone has questions or comments feel free to contact me via phone 715-635-4095 or email at craig.roberts@wisconsin.gov.



Wisconsin Fishing

Natural Resources Board Approves Three Walleye Bag Limit in Ceded Territory Waters

MADISON, WI -The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board has approved an emergency rule that maintains a three walleye daily bag limit on most lakes and rivers in the Wisconsin Ceded Territory.

The department developed the rule to manage the walleye fishery after listening to citizens and stakeholders eager for more predictable and uniform angling regulations on lakes in the region. The rule replaces the current system of annually adjusting bag limits with equally protective minimum length and slot limits in conjunction with the three walleye daily bag limit; it applies across the Ceded Territory to manage angler harvest of adult walleye at levels that can be supported over time.

While the previous bag limits varied from lake to lake and only applied to lakes that were declared for tribal harvest, the three walleye bag limit covers waters throughout Wisconsin's Ceded Territory, providing greater consistency through a standard set of angling regulations.

Anglers fishing Ceded Territory waters should check signs at boat landings or with local tackle shops or DNR offices to confirm the minimum length restriction for walleye harvest on lakes before going fishing. The DNR will also update its online regulations app to reflect the new regulations.

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Features - Pocket Ranger® provides plenty of other standard features and advanced GPS technology to maximize any backcountry excursion:

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- Potentially life-saving Alert feature that supplies users' GPS coordinates to designated contacts in case of an emergency.



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Important Fishing Dates:

<i>May 2 to March 6, 2016</i>	<i>May 23 to Nov. 30</i>
General inland fishing	Musky - northern zone
Largemouth bass northern zone	<i>May 2 to Dec. 31</i>
Large and smallmouth bass southern zone	Musky - southern zone
Northern pike	<i>Sept. 5 to Sept. 30</i>
Walleye	Lake sturgeon (hook-and-line)
<i>May 2 to June 19</i>	Free fishing weekends
Smallmouth bass northern zone catch and release	June 6-7, 2015 (summer)
<i>June 20 to March 6, 2016</i>	January 16-17, 2016 (winter)
Smallmouth bass northern zone harvest	



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SPRING/SUMMER 2015

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- Largemouth Bass
- Wisconsin Fishing

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