Cleveland Metroparks Fish Donation Program

By Mike Durkalec, Aquatic Biologist, Cleveland Metroparks

Cleveland Metroparks regionally surveys indicate that 19% of citizens in our greater Cuyahoga county service area enjoy fishing. Therefore, fishing is considered to be an important outdoor recreational venture in our park district and we offer a robust fisheries program to reflect that. The park has 13 major fishing areas, including miles of the Rocky, Chagrin, and Cuyahoga rivers, as well as substantial access to Lake Erie in for form of miles of shoreline access and four free boat launch facilities. But our smaller inland lakes and ponds require the most intensive fisheries management. The combined demands of hundreds of thousands of anglers annually on smaller waters dictates that stocking fish is an important part of this program in order to offer a quality fishing experience for visitors. This facet of the program includes the purchasing rainbow trout (12,000 lbs annually) and channel catfish (3,600 lbs annually)- but our stocking does not end there. We have a number of non-fishing ponds- such as those at our golf courses, nature centers, and Zoo- where we routinely collect and transfer native warmwater gamefish, such as largemouth bass and sunfish, to our public fishing areas.

Along this vein one of our more novel program has developed and grown. Cleveland Metroparks has worked with a variety of private lake and pond owners to harvest fish from their waters. These have included private golf courses and country clubs, universities, residential landowners, and lakes being drained for dam repair or restoration by partners such as ODOT and Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. Fish are collected using electrofishing,

![Figure 1: Fish sampling transfer program.](image-url)
President’s Column
Craig Smith, WMAO 2018-2019 President

I recently attended an Environmental Professionals Network breakfast at The Ohio State University – the topic related to collaboration by local governments – and something one of the panelists said as encouragement to the students in attendance reminded me of one of WMAO’s functions: “Networking is the key to successful collaboration.” The networking opportunities our events provide are what make WMAO a special organization.

Networking sometimes gets a bad rap. I get why - networking for the sake of meeting people and handing out business cards, or adding someone as a contact in LinkedIn to ‘grow’ your network, doesn’t building the lasting professional relationships we need for effective collaboration. But when we get together at WMAO/Ohio Water Resources Center luncheons, the OFMA and OSWA conferences, the Fall Conference and non-WMAO events like the EPN breakfasts, we use our time to share information, learn about activities affecting Ohio’s water resources and explore opportunities for collaboration on projects. We build real networks of people able to provide us with the information, guidance and advice we need to do our jobs. We facilitate meaningful networking.

The importance of information sharing will play an important role as I navigate the next two years as President. When Past-President Alex Covert initiated our strategic planning process last year, we asked you how to improve the value of WMAO membership. You want WMAO to build on the information sharing that our events provide, and you want us to make better use of technology and social media platforms. The Board of Directors heard you. Making this happen is a priority. After all, WMAO’s mission is to support Ohio’s water resource professionals with essential information, education and networking opportunities.

I want to thank Kim Schaffer of the United States Geologic Survey for our most recent networking event – the 2017 WMAO Fall Conference. Kim did a great job herding the cats that make up the Conference Committee. Kim and the Committee put together an event full of great sessions with plenty of opportunities for us to meet and discuss the issues at the intersections of our fields of interest.

One last thing, and it’s about my network. On behalf of WMAO, I want to thank Alex Covert for his service as President of WMAO. Alex’s commitment to our mission and his vision of what WMAO can be has led to the growth of our organization and the development of a strategic plan that will prepare WMAO for the future. The continued success of WMAO is a direct result of his dedication and leadership. Thanks Alex!

“...(we) support Ohio’s water resource professionals with essential information, education, and networking...”

Figure 2: Fish are collected using electrofishing, tallied by species/size category, and transferred to public fishing areas.
tallied by species/size category, and transferred to public fishing areas, as deemed appropriate, in large aerated tanks. Tallying fish by size allows for easy estimation of value based on going rates at Ohio aquaculture producers, and subsequent option for tax credit or write-off by the donor pond owner. Such activities are primarily conducted in spring and fall when water temperatures are lower and therefore less stressful to fish being relocated. The target release sites for the fish are based on where there is deemed to be a need based on routine fish population assessments at all inland public fishing waters and corresponding Management Plans. As examples, if a lake has few bass over 12 inches in length as a result of heavy harvest over that size limit, larger bass may be released at such a location to complement the population. And if a small pond receives heavy family fishing pressure, larger sunfish may be released there. Of course fish are only released if free of overt signs of disease and have a healthy overall appearance, in general.

This program reflects a “win-win-win” proposition for all involved, with the landowner receiving documentation necessary for a tax credit/write-off, Cleveland Metroparks obtaining valuable fish at minimal cost of time and equipment and local anglers are offered enhanced fishing opportunities. Since the inception of this program in May 2008, Cleveland Metroparks has acquired just under 32k quality sportfish valued at $141.8k in this manner, which complement those fish purchased annually for angler enjoyment. Interested parties can check out the weekly Metroparks Fishing Report Blog (https://clevelandmetroparks.com/parks/learn/blogs/fishing-report), updated every Thursday, for the latest Park District fishing as well as fish stocking information. If you know a pond owner potentially interested in partnering with us for this program I may be reached at (440) 331-8017 or md@clevelandmetroparks.com.

**Figure 3:** Fish are harvested from private lakes or ponds such as at golf courses, country clubs, private residences, and universities.

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**In Memoriam**

**Shawn Matthew Spence**

October 22, 1974 - January 10, 2018

Shawn was a regular at WMAO events, fondly remembered among our Board members. He was an employee since 1999 at AquaDoc, most recently as Columbus Regional Manager. He will be greatly missed as a colleague and comrade. We graciously send our condolences to his beloved family and friends.
Ohio once contained a diverse and abundant array of wetland ecosystems including marshes, swamps, fens, and bogs. Peat bog ecosystems in Ohio are of significant conservation concern, as only 2% of Ohio’s peat bogs remain intact, the rest having been lost to land-use conversion. Remaining sites have been impacted by drainage, disturbance and nutrient inputs from surrounding agriculture. Additionally, we currently have little evidence on the status, history or condition of those bogs that do remain. Understanding the status of these ecosystems is vitally important as their unique combination of species, including many at the southern limits of the range in North America, and unusual soil and hydrological conditions, means that they can’t be recreated once lost. The drainage, agricultural use, and mining of peatlands has led to significant trade-offs between commercial exploitation and other ecosystem services that bogs provide, such as regulation of hydrological regimes and water quality, carbon sequestration and the provision of wildlife habitat.

To answer these challenges, Ohio Water Resources Center funded Professors Davies’ and Bohrers’ group at the Ohio State University to collate detailed data on the current and historic spatial distribution of peat bogs in Ohio and combine these data with ground survey to assess the relationship between land-use and site ecological condition. I was fortunate enough to accompany two of the researchers to one of their sites, Cranberry Bog State Nature Preserve.

The trip to the bog started with a short canoe ride across the stretch of lake separating the island from the shore. Cranberry bog was previously at the bottom of Buckeye Lake, but a chunk of the sponge-like peat broke off and rose to the surface. Once we arrived at the bog, it became so apparent how different the plants looked from the other side of the lake. Dr. Davies’ students, Julie and Yuchen, quickly identified some of the more prominent species. Different mosses, including the characteristic Sphagnum moss, carnivorous pitcher plants, and cranberry, of course, sprawled across the landscape. They also made sure to show me what the poison sumac looked like, and I quickly learned it was nearly impossible to evade (but still somehow managed to avoid a rash).

Yuchen and Julie sample from the well. Earlier in the season, there would have been more flowers including orchids. Yuchen was able to find one more cranberry still on the

"Peat bog ecosystems in Ohio are of significant conservation concern, as only 2% of Ohio’s peat bogs remain intact, the rest having been lost to land-use conversion."

Photo 1: Following Julie and Yuchen out to the wells.

Photo 2: A cranberry from the bog.
shrubs. Its flavor was more bitter than expected, but this made sense since the bog’s unique flora and ecosystem is a result from the acidic conditions. It’s not so much that these plants thrive there, it’s that other plants cannot grow and outcompete them. Many plants also have developed other measures for sustenance – the insect consuming pitcher plants are great evidence of that.

We made our way to the well, a small pvc pipe, about 3 inches from the ground. They took a few samples and measured the pH, which was about 3.2 – about the same acidity as orange juice. The other important parameters sampled were electrical conductivity which indicates the presence of ions. This information will help the researchers to develop better management tools and practices for existing bogs and will also help them learn how to better protect culturally important sites, like Cranberry Bog, and the habitat they provide for rare plants and wildlife.

Visits to Cranberry Bog can be organized through the Buckeye Lake Historical Society, but there are also other bogs in Ohio, such as Brown’s Lake Bog, that can offer a view of the unique landscape.
WMAO Spring Meeting
In Partnership with the Environmental Professional Network
March 6, 2018, 7:30 - noon * OSU 4-H Center

Flooding – A National, State, and Local Issue
We Are All Part of the Solution

From the near failure of the Oroville Dam, California, to the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey, Houston, to flooding impacts within Ohio communities, our country faces challenges in dealing with land use planning for flood risk reduction. National flood laws, such as the National Flood Insurance Act and Water Resources Development Act, are used as a tool in protecting U.S. citizens. Every state has a unique combination of factors that it must consider to manage flood risks. Ohio communities are responsible for adopting appropriate implementation strategies to position themselves to manage future flood risks. These flood management activities must be compatible with state and local authorities, as well as with the local political culture and natural floodplain functions and resources. Meanwhile, conversations on climate change and the potential to mitigate the effects of natural disasters caused by extreme weather events continues to grow.

To register, click here.
Division Updates
By Stephen Moore, OFMA President

Another year has come and gone I hope it was a prosperous and full of accomplishment for everyone. Now it is time to look ahead to the opportunities and challenges the new year will bring. I look forward to working with the OFMA Board to continue providing our members with the information, networking and training needed to make your jobs in floodplain management easier. We will also keep you updated on issues that will have an effect on our communities and how we do our jobs in the future.

Save the Date –

2019 ASFPM Annual Conference- Cleveland, Ohio, May 19-24. OFMA is the host chapter for this conference. If you would like to volunteer to serve on the conference committee or just help at the conference please contact Alicia Silverio at alicia.silverio@dnr.state.oh.us or Shawn Arden at sarden@emht.com . Thank you in advance for your willingness to serve.

Membership – Please remember when filling out your 2018 WMAO membership application to check OFMA as your primary Division Affiliation. By designating OFMA it will help us provide better service, information and training to those who are interested in floodplain issues across the State of Ohio.

Committees –

OFMA has established standing committees to address areas of greatest concern to OFMA and to perform many of the functions of the organization. There are currently six standing committees:

- Legislative/Policy
- Education-Outreach/Website
- OFMA Conference Planning
- Awards/Scholarships
- Education-Training/Events
- Finance–
- Membership/Nominations

Participation in OFMA Committees is not limited to WMAO Members. If you are interested in participating in an OFMA Committee, please contact Stephen Moore at smoore@groveport.org.
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN
U.S. SMART WATER CONFERENCE 2018

The U.S. Smart Water Conference will take place May 30 - June 1, 2018 at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio.

The conference will cover smart water and the systems, technologies, data and innovations that form the present and future of water utilities, watershed management and water treatment.

We will also deal with toxins including HABs, algal toxins, DBPs, pharmaceuticals and other issues in water treatment and will feature updates and presentations from the U.S. and Ohio EPA, utilities, water engineering firms and consultants, operators, scientists and innovators from across the world.

Early bird registration is now open through January 31, 2018! https://www.agwaevent.net/register
Ohio’s mineral resources produced more than $1.6 billion worth of geologic commodities in 2016, according to a newly released report from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). The total value of all nonfuel industrial minerals exceeded $1 billion for the third straight year.

Compiled by the ODNR Division of Geological Survey, the 2016 Report on Ohio Mineral Industries: An Annual Summary of the State’s Economic Geology provides information regarding the production, value and employment totals of Ohio’s various mineral industries. Some highlights include:

- Total value of all nonfuel industrial minerals increased for the fourth straight year.
- Mineral industries produced $145 worth of resources per Ohioan.
- Production increased for sand and gravel, sandstone, clay and shale.
- Sand and gravel production exceeded 34 million tons in 2016—an increase of more than 10 percent from 2015 production values.
- Sandstone and shale sales each increased more than 10 percent from 2016.

New to the release of the annual report is the availability of downloadable appendices listing company information for each of the operators who reported industrial-mineral sales and/or production in 2016.

A dedicated staff of inspectors, geologists and support staff helps ODNR regulate the responsible extraction of Ohio’s natural resources, including oil and natural gas, limestone, coal, salt and more. Part of ODNR’s regulatory responsibility is to catalog annually Ohio’s extractive industries.

Published yearly, the Report on Ohio Mineral Industries offers basic information about individual mines and groups of mines, as well as detailed geologic information about coal and industrial minerals, along with extensive references. The report is a useful tool for researching mineral extraction activities throughout the state. This year’s report is released alongside a web article highlighting the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones, in industrial mineral mines and quarries.

The electronic version of the report, appendices and accompanying web article are available from the Ohio DNR Division of Geologic Survey.
Save the Date!
WMAO 47th Annual Conference in Cincinnati
October 31, 2018 in conjunction with NALMS / OLMS......

38th International Symposium of the North American Lake Management Society

Now Trending: Innovations in Lake Management

The Ohio Lake Management and Indiana Lakes Management societies are excited to welcome NALMS to the Midwest’s “Queen City,” Cincinnati, Ohio. On the shores of the mighty Ohio, the river was impounded to serve modern navigation; those impoundments now function like a series of lakes. Cincinnati is also home to a burgeoning craft-brewery industry that is certain to be one focus for conference outings. With Thomas More College’s field station, active urban reservoir projects, and a couple Environmental Protection Agency research facilities nearby, we’ll find plenty to see, do, learn. Our region is also bordered by the Great Lakes to the north, and our conference theme is well served by recent cutting-edge efforts to understand and mitigate western Lake Erie’s press-grabbing eutrophication issues.

Join us at one of the nation’s most opulent masterpieces of art-deco architecture, the award-winning Hilton Netherland Plaza, a short walk from sessions at the convention center.


Propose a session or topic! Call for papers will be available at nalms.org in January 2018

For sponsorship or general information, contact NALMS: nalms.org or 608-233-2836

For other details, contact conference co-chairs David Culver (culver.3@osu.edu), Eugene Braig (braig.1@osu.edu), or Sara Peel (speel@arionconsultants.com)
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The Water Management Association of Ohio (WMAO) is the one organization dedicated to all of Ohio’s water resources.

**VISION:** To be recognized statewide as the go-to community for people who manage and safeguard Ohio’s water resources.

**MISSION:** To support Ohio’s water resource professionals with essential information, education, and networking opportunities.

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**WATER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF OHIO**

8584 E. Washington St., #206
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023

330-466-5631, admin@wmao.org

*Dana Oleskiewicz, Administrative Director*

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**www.wmao.org**

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