

## DFW Compiles Bass Tournament Statistics — Most tournament Anglers Catch Few Fish

Anglers who participate in bass fishing tournaments at Indiana natural lakes do not catch and kill large numbers of fish during contest events, according to a recent survey conducted by the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW).

Based on data gathered at 11 bass tournaments at 8 lakes this summer, tournament anglers typically brought only 53 legal-size largemouth bass to weigh-in sites. Nearly all of the fish were released alive after the events.

The DFW conducted the survey in an effort to obtain more data on the impact of bass fishing tournaments. Tournament opponents are concerned contest participants catch too many bass, handle them poorly during weigh-ins, and harm bass populations.

The number of daily participants in DFW-monitored tournaments varied from 15 anglers at a small club tournament at Winona Lake in Warsaw to 168 at a major event sponsored by the Indiana Bass Chapter



Federation at Wawasee. Open tournaments where anglers fished for cash prizes typically drew fewer than 50 participants.

Based on observations by DFW biologists, only one or two bass typically died from handling during tournaments. Although some bass may have died later from handling, they appeared to be in good condition at the time of release.

In addition to Maxinkuckee, Wawasee, and Winona, other lakes included in the survey were Barbee,

George, James, Manitou, and Tippecanoe. So which lake produced the best bass tournament fishing?

Winona yielded the highest catch rate. Fifteen members of the Warsaw BassMasters in June brought an average of 3.3 bass to the weigh-in. They caught bass at a rate of one per 2-1/2 hours of fishing.

In contrast, 90 anglers who fished 720 hours in a June tournament at Wawasee caught only 15 fish. The lake was experiencing an algae bloom at the time.

The effects of fishing tournaments on Indiana lakes have been a concern of lake citizens and users for some time. While a survey of only 11 tournaments is not statistically significant (Monroe Reservoir alone has as many as 33 fishing tournaments per year), the survey results offer insight to concerns raised until a more detailed survey is conducted. (Compiled, in part, from a Division of Fish & Wildlife News Release.)



## The Law and Lakes

*Most lakes have no common easement*

There is no common easement around most northeast Indiana natural lakes and residents who want to prevent neighborhood kids and other individuals from walking along their lakefront property can probably do so, according to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Lt. Ralph Taylor, DNR conservation officer who oversees lake activities in northeast Indiana, says his officers receive complaints each year from lake residents who want to stop people from trespassing on their property.

"Usually the problem involves kids fishing or frog hunting along the water's edge," says Taylor. "Lake residents are pretty touchy about their property rights and a lot of them get upset when someone walks across their yard."

"Many lake residents are under the impression that a 5- to 10-foot easement exists around all natural lakes and that the easements are open for public use," says Taylor. "In most cases, that's not true. There is no law that sets aside a portion of lakefront property for public easements."

"There are, however, many easements that exist perpendicular to lakes," says Taylor. "These are site-specific and someone would have to go back through deeds to look at how the lots were platted. They usually grant certain rights to only landowners who have some legal claim or interest in the tract and are not open to the public."

Other lakes have "common" areas where certain residents within

### Wil Webb – Long Lake

**The Indiana Clean Lakes Program staff fondly remembers Wil Webb from Long Lake in Porter County who died recently. Wil volunteered his time with the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, measuring Secchi disk transparency on Long Lake in 1999 until illness laid him up.**

a particular development may share common rights of usage.

"These are also usually recorded somewhere in the deed records," says Taylor. "Anyone who thinks they have a right to walk across their neighbor's yard or thinks they can stop someone else from doing so ought to check the records first."

As a side note, Taylor says lake residents can prevent others from using their pier but cannot prevent others from using the lake.

"Piers are considered to be lawful extensions of private property and can therefore be controlled from public use," says Taylor. "However, people swimming, boating or otherwise using the area around a pier cannot be disturbed from their use." (Division of Fish & Wildlife News Release)

## Fall Lawn Fertilizing Tips

Lawn care specialists remind us that the most important time to fertilize grass is in the fall. If you have a lawn that you plan to fertilize, here is some information that can help prevent the enrichment of nearby lakes and streams with your fertilizer.

Former Indiana Volunteer Lake Monitoring Coordinator, Steve Lundt, now the Water Quality Specialist at Lake Oswego, Oregon, recently wrote about his efforts to

improve the fertilizer habits of the Lake Oswego residents in the Summer 2001 issue of *LakeLine*, the quarterly magazine of the North American Lake Management Society.

Many homeowners have misconceptions about lawn fertilization. For example, here are two big ones!

1. *If a little is good then a lot is better*—Many people tend to over-fertilize by applying too often and not following recommended directions. Fertilizer applied in excess of the lawn's needs washes away during rain events. Runoff water carries the fertilizer into nearby storm sewers, streams, and lakes where it contributes to algae and rooted plant growth.
2. *Phosphorus makes lawns green*—It is the nitrogen in lawn fertilizer that greens up the grass. Lawns need very little phosphorus. In fact, most established lawns have plenty of phosphorus already. Because phosphorus moves very poorly through the soil, when it is applied on the lawn surface, phosphorus may move only one-half inch deep. This is above the root zone of grass so the phosphorus doesn't even get to the roots in many cases.



## What can you do?

1. *Get your soil tested*—When Steve had 63 of the 723-lakefront properties on Lake Oswego randomly tested, all had high levels of phosphorus. They did not need any more phosphorus. Soil testing is not difficult or expensive. Simple test kits are available explaining how to sample your soil and where to send it. For information about a soil test for your property, contact your county Natural Resources Conservation Service (under USDA-Soil Conservation in the telephone book) or your county Soil and Water Conservation District (under County government in the telephone book).
2. *Use phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer*—Because most lawns do not need more phosphorus and because phosphorus is the major nutrient contaminant in lakes, doesn't it make sense to reduce our use of this nutrient on lawns? However, phosphorus-free fertilizers may be difficult to find locally. In Lake Oswego, a local manufacturer agreed to formulate a phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer for the lake residents. The product is 60% slow release with no phosphorus (formula = 20:0:18). The program is so successful that the city of Lake Oswego is using it in their parks and a local garden and nursery chain carries the product throughout the Portland area.

**Lake Associations**—If you are looking for a project to help your lake and raise awareness of your association, why not address lawn fertilization—around your lake and in its watershed? You could get information about soil testing from the NRCS and contact local lawn and garden businesses about phosphorus-free lawn fertilizers. Provide the information to your local newspaper, your newsletter, and flyers.

## ILMS Takes Lake Management to the Indiana State Fair

This year ILMS teamed up with The Future Farmers of America to pass out information to fair goers at this year's Indiana State Fair. The ILMS booth was set up in the FFA building on the north side of the fair. This joint effort was established with the work of Board Members Mark Mongin and George Edwards. ILMS' focus at the fair was to educate fair visitors on the organization and on lake management as well.



*Mark Mongin with the ILMS booth.*

## Vermont Gets Tough on Invasive Aquatic Species

A media campaign entitled "No More Free Rides" is in full operation this summer in Vermont. The campaign, designed to raise awareness of Vermont's aquatic nuisance species transport law, consists of pre-recorded broadcast public service announcements,

posters, rack cards, and news stories. Under the law, boaters may be fined \$150 for transporting aquatic nuisances like Zebra mussels, Eurasian Watermilfoil, and Water Chestnut. These species are known to attach to trailers and boats.

While Indiana does not have such a law, Indiana boaters can voluntarily help prevent the spread of invasive aquatic nuisance species by cleaning off and properly disposing plants and other debris from their boats and trailers every time they take them out of the water.

## Upcoming Events

### Fall Lake Management Workshops Announced

Dredging, fishery management, exotic weed control, funding?? Are any of these topics an issue on your lake? Learn how other lakes are tackling these problems at the upcoming ILMS sponsored workshops.

#### Saturday October 6, 2001

Heritage Lake, Coatesville, IN  
Featured Topics include Dredging, fishery management, and exotic weed control.

#### Saturday October 13, 2001

Lakes of the Four Seasons, Valparaiso, IN  
Featured Topics include dredging, dredging alternatives, lake restoration techniques, and funding private lake projects.

Both workshops are from 9 am to 3 pm

Cost is \$10 per person (includes lunch)

For more information and reservations, please contact: Tina Hissong, 219-842-3686, [lmec@culcom.net](mailto:lmec@culcom.net)



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**Have you checked out the  
Indiana Clean Lakes Program Web page lately?**

**Take a look at:  
<<http://www.spea.indiana.edu/clp/>>  
and see what's new and happening with the Program  
and with Indiana lakes!**

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