

2012

WISCONSIN Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing Regulations & Information



Where it all begins and began.....Dan Folz, Winnebago Sturgeon Biologist up to his retirement in 1989, nets a spawning lake sturgeon on the Wolf River near New London, April 1964. Lake sturgeon disperse fertilized eggs on rip rap spawning sites on the Wolf and upper Fox Rivers each April. By the end of the year each female will have produced an average of 12 fish out of the 445,000 eggs she laid 8 months earlier, Eight years later when these fish are legal spear fishing size, 36 inches, 8 fish will have survived to enter the fishery. Adult females spawn for the first time at age 21 to 33 and then only spawn once every 3-5 years. (DNR photo)

Sturgeon Hotline
920-303-5444

To get on the Winnebago Sturgeon e-mail List to receive daily spearing reports please e-mail ronald.bruch@wisconsin.gov

Dear Winnebago Sturgeon Spearer,

Another year has flown by since the last spearing season. This year, 2012, will be my 23rd season as the Winnebago Sturgeon Biologist. We've seen a lot of changes in the last 23 years. We have a great program going that we (DNR and sturgeon spearkers) built together. We have excellent data and public involvement for managing the sturgeon fishery, which began with the great foundation laid by my predecessor Dan Folz. Dan has been retired since 1989 but still helps out with our winter and spring sturgeon assessments. During sturgeon spearing this year stop in and say hi to Dan at our registration station at Quinney where he works through the entire season.

Last year, the 2011 season was another one for the books.....a full 16 days on Lake Winnebago (10 days on the Upriver Lakes), a nice total harvest of 1426 fish, and lots of big fish. 2011 was the 4th 16 day season since the harvest cap system began in 1999. Since we initiated the 6 hour spearing day in 2005 our average season length is 11 days.

For this year, 2012, the only change in the season is an increase in the juvenile female and adult female harvest caps. Our Winnebago lake sturgeon population is quite robust and is still slowly increasing allowing us to increase the system-wide caps for juvenile females from 395 to 400 (+1.3%) and for adult females from 790 to 828 (+4.8%). We kept the male harvest cap at 1200 since we never harvest enough males to even come close to their cap.

We are working on changing the daily spearing hours to start and end a half hour later and have submitted a rule proposal through Department channels. Spearkers can expect to discuss this proposal during the Conservation Congress hearings in April 2013.

So....as we all anxiously wait and hope for cold weather to make good ice and for the right conditions to make and keep the water clear, we spend time getting our gear ready, making our plans, going to Sturgeon for Tomorrow banquets, and riding the wave of great anticipation that comes every January throughout all Winnebago-land.

Looking forward to the 2012 season,

Ron Bruch

Winnebago Sturgeon Biologist



***Dan Folz
registering a
sturgeon at
Quinney during
the 2010 season
(DNR photo)***

Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing Regulations and Information

CONTENTS

2012 Sturgeon Spearing Regulations	page 3
Sturgeon Registration Stations	page 6
Winnebago Lake Sturgeon Length at Age.....	page 8
Summary of the 2011 Sturgeon Spearing Season...	page 9
Winnebago Citizens Sturgeon Advisory Committee...	page 11
Sturgeon Guard Volunteers Needed.....	page 11
Sturgeon for Tomorrow.....	page 12



Kids check out a sturgeon registered at Waverly Beach Registration Station (Pat Durkin photo)

WINNEBAGO SYSTEM STURGEON SPEARING REGULATIONS

Please take a few minutes to carefully read through this regulation pamphlet.

To report violations call: 1-800-TIP-WDNR (1-800-847-9367) or cell #367

2012 OPEN SEASON – Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing

Lake Winnebago

February 11, 2012 through February 26, 2012 on Lake Winnebago **or until the pre-set harvest cap for Lake Winnebago is reached, OR the pre-set Winnebago System-wide harvest cap is reached, whichever comes first** (as per trigger closure rules).

Upriver Lakes

February 11, 2012 through February 26, 2012 on the Upriver Lakes (Lakes Butte des Morts, Winneconne and Poygan) **or until the pre-set harvest cap for the Upriver Lakes is reached, OR the pre-set Winnebago System-wide harvest cap is reached, whichever comes first** (as per trigger closure rules).

An annual lottery sturgeon spear fishery began on the Upriver Lakes in 2007. Spearers need to apply for an Upriver Lakes sturgeon lottery tag by August 1 and are notified by October 1 if they were successful in receiving authorization to purchase an Upriver Lakes sturgeon spearing license. Group lottery applications of up to four persons are accepted. Group applications must be submitted on-line at https://jc.activeoutdoorsolutions.com/wi_public/goHome.do Spearers that applied for but not authorized to purchase an Upriver Lakes license receive a preference point, and can still purchase a license for Lake Winnebago, but must do so by the October 31 license sales deadline (spearers can only buy one tag or the other, not both). Sales for both Lake Winnebago and Upriver Lakes sturgeon spearing licenses end October 31. The Upriver Lakes sturgeon lottery fishery limits participation to 500 tags in 2012 (numbers of tags in future seasons may vary) and will have a small sub-allocation of the overall sturgeon harvest cap (see below).

Total harvest of sturgeon will be limited through pre-set harvest caps. Harvest

caps for the 2012 Winnebago System spearing season are 400 for juvenile females, 828 for adult females and 1200 for males. Portions of the system-wide harvest caps have been allocated to the fisheries on Lake Winnebago and the Upriver Lakes:

	<i>Juvenile Females</i>	<i>Adult Females</i>	<i>Males</i>
<i>Lake Winnebago</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>745</i>	<i>960</i>
<i><u>Upriver Lakes</u></i>	<i><u>80</u></i>	<i><u>83</u></i>	<i><u>240</u></i>
<i>Winnebago System</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>828</i>	<i>1200</i>

The Department will close the sturgeon spearing season on Lake Winnebago when the first of one of the two following conditions occurs:

- At the end of the fishing day in which 100% of any one of the three Lake Winnebago harvest caps is reached or exceeded, or*
- 24 hours from the end of the fishing day within which a harvest of 90% to 99% of any one of the three Lake Winnebago harvest caps is reached.*

The Department will close the sturgeon spearing season on the Upriver Lakes when the first of one of the two following conditions occurs:

- At the end of the fishing day in which 100% of any one of the three Upriver Lakes harvest caps is reached or exceeded, or*
- 24 hours from the end of the fishing day within which a harvest of 90% to 99% of any one of the three Upriver Lakes harvest caps is reached.*

The Department will close the sturgeon spearing season on all waters of the Winnebago System when the first of one of the two following conditions occurs:

- At the end of the fishing day in which 100% of any one of the three Winnebago System-wide harvest caps is reached or exceeded, or*
- 24 hours from the end of the fishing day within which a harvest of 90% to 99% of any one of the three Winnebago System-wide harvest caps is reached.*

BAG LIMIT: One lake sturgeon per licensee

MINIMUM LENGTH LIMIT: 36 inches

LICENSE REQUIREMENT: To spear sturgeon, residents must purchase a

sturgeon spearing license and tag for \$20.00 and nonresidents must purchase a sturgeon spearing license and tag for \$65.00

Only persons 14 years of age and older are eligible to spear sturgeon. No sturgeon spearing license may be issued or purchased after October 31, 2011 except for Wisconsin residents that turn 14 between November 1, 2011 and the last day of the 2012 spearing season, and for Wisconsin residents serving in the Armed Forces home on leave during the 2012 spearing season.

The sturgeon spearing license and tag must be carried by the licensee at all times while fishing for sturgeon with a spear.

A sturgeon spearing license and tag is nontransferable. No person may use or carry the tag or license of another.

No person may possess a validated sturgeon carcass tag unless attached to a legal sturgeon.

SPEARING HOURS: 6:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

LIGHTS, UNDERWATER CAMERAS, DEPTH LOCATORS

No artificial lights of any kind can be utilized while spearing. Underwater cameras may be used, but any lights on the camera must be disabled (turned off, taped over, or non-illuminating). Depth Locators can be used.

POSSESSION AND USE OF A SPEAR

No person may have under his or her control any spear or similar device in any enclosure on the ice or waters of the Winnebago System except when authorized during established sturgeon spearing seasons.

No person may take, capture, kill or attempt to kill sturgeon on the Winnebago System by any means other than spearing with a spear thrown by hand from inside a fishing shelter placed on the ice during the open spearing season.

ICE HOLE RESTRICTIONS

No person may cut, use, or maintain an ice hole larger than 12 inches in diameter or square for the taking of fish in any manner through the ice except spearing sturgeon on the Winnebago System during the open season. The total area of a sturgeon spearing hole or combination of holes in an individual spearing shelter may not exceed a total of 48 square feet. Ice holes larger than 12 inches cut, used, or maintained may not be covered by a shelter, shanty, or similar device, except during the period from 48 hours before and continuing through the open

season for sturgeon spearing season.

ICE HOLE MARKING

Sturgeon spearing ice holes must be marked with at least 2 strips of wood that extend at least 3 feet above the ice. The wood strips must not exceed 1.5 inches in width and .25 inches in thickness (wood lathe meets the requirement). When you first set your shanty, cut a hole and freeze the lathe into the ice for better marking of sturgeon holes. Lathe markers stuck in snow banks are not adequate because of snow melt during warm weather conditions.



SPEARING OF ROUGH FISH

Spearing of any species of fish other than sturgeon from the Winnebago System is prohibited during the sturgeon spearing season.

TAGGING REQUIREMENT

A spearer with an unused and valid sturgeon license and tag who spears a lake sturgeon must immediately validate and attach their carcass tag to the sturgeon (just forward of the tail). Any sturgeon speared must be registered the same day it was speared by 1:30 PM.

It is illegal for any person to possess any sturgeon or part thereof without the carcass tag validated and attached.

GROUP BAGGING is not legal and occurs whenever the person who tags the sturgeon is different from the person who speared the sturgeon.

TRANSPORTATION

It is unlawful for any person to transport any unregistered sturgeon in or on any motor driven vehicle unless the sturgeon is carried openly exposed and placed so the carcass tag cannot be handled by anyone. "*Openly exposed*" means *open to view by a person in a passing vehicle*.

To transport a legally harvested and tagged sturgeon the fish must be accompanied by the spearer until registered

It is illegal to possess an unregistered sturgeon speared from Lake Winnebago outside the highway boundary area delineated as follows: *From the intersection of highways 10 and 114 in Menasha, east on highway 114 to highway 55; south on highway 55 to U.S. highway 151; south on U.S. highway 151 to Winnebago drive; Winnebago drive to west Scott street in Fond du Lac; west on Scott street to highway 45; north on highway 45 to Main street in Oshkosh; north on Main street to Waugoo avenue; east on Waugoo avenue to Bowen street; north on Bowen street to North Shore drive; north on North Shore drive to county highway A; north on county highway A to highway 114 in Neenah; east on highway 114 to the intersection of highways 10 and 114 in Menasha.*

It is illegal to possess an unregistered sturgeon speared from Lakes Butte des Mort, Winneconne or Poygan outside the highway boundary area delineated as follows: *From the intersection of highways 41 and 21 in Oshkosh west on highway 21 to highway 116; north on highway 116 to county highway B; west on county highway B to county highway D; west on county highway D to highway 49; north on highway 49 to highway 110; east on highway 110 to county highway II; south on county highway II to county highway M; south on county highway M to highway 116; east on highway 116 to highway 45; south on highway 45 to highway 41; south on highway 41 to highway 21.*

REGISTRATION

A person who spears a sturgeon must accompany and exhibit the tagged sturgeon at an official sturgeon registration station (see map page 6) no later than

1:30 p.m. on the day speared. *To avoid the "end of the day" rush please bring your fish in as soon as possible after spearing it. You must be at the registration station and in-line to register your fish by 1:30 PM.*

Any fish harvested from Lake Winnebago must be registered at one of the sturgeon registration stations on Lake Winnebago. Any fish harvested from Lakes Butte des Mort, Winneconne or Poygan (the Upriver Lakes) must be registered at one of the sturgeon registration stations on the Upriver Lakes.

Department Fisheries staff at the registration stations will collect biological information on the size, sex and age of your fish, and will attach a metal sturgeon registration tag.

Both the sturgeon carcass tag and registration tag must be retained until the carcass is consumed.

STURGEON REGISTRATION STATIONS

Operated daily throughout the season by DNR Fisheries staff (Some stations may be closed before the end of the season depending upon spearing activity and volume of sturgeon registrations). Any necessary early closures will be posted at registration stations)

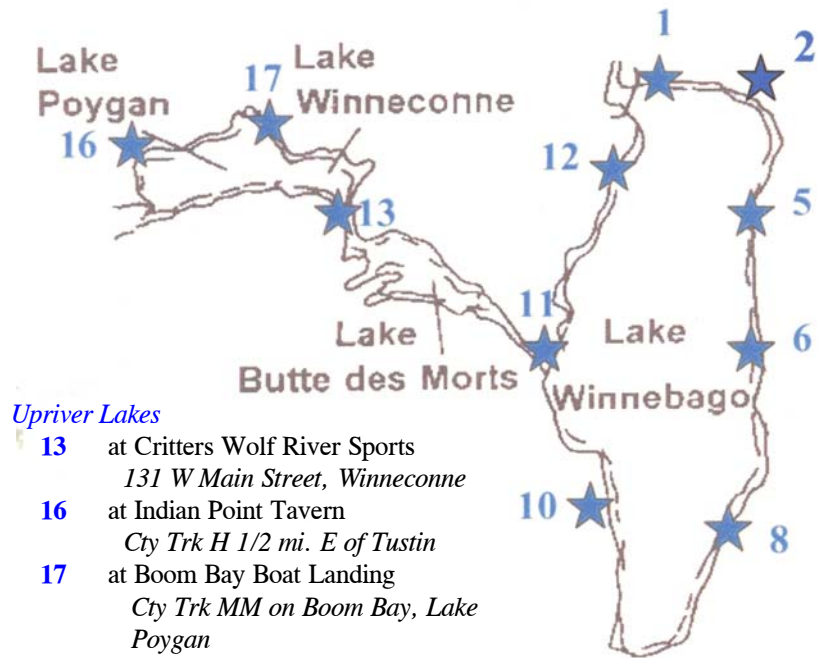
Winnebago System Sturgeon Registration Stations:

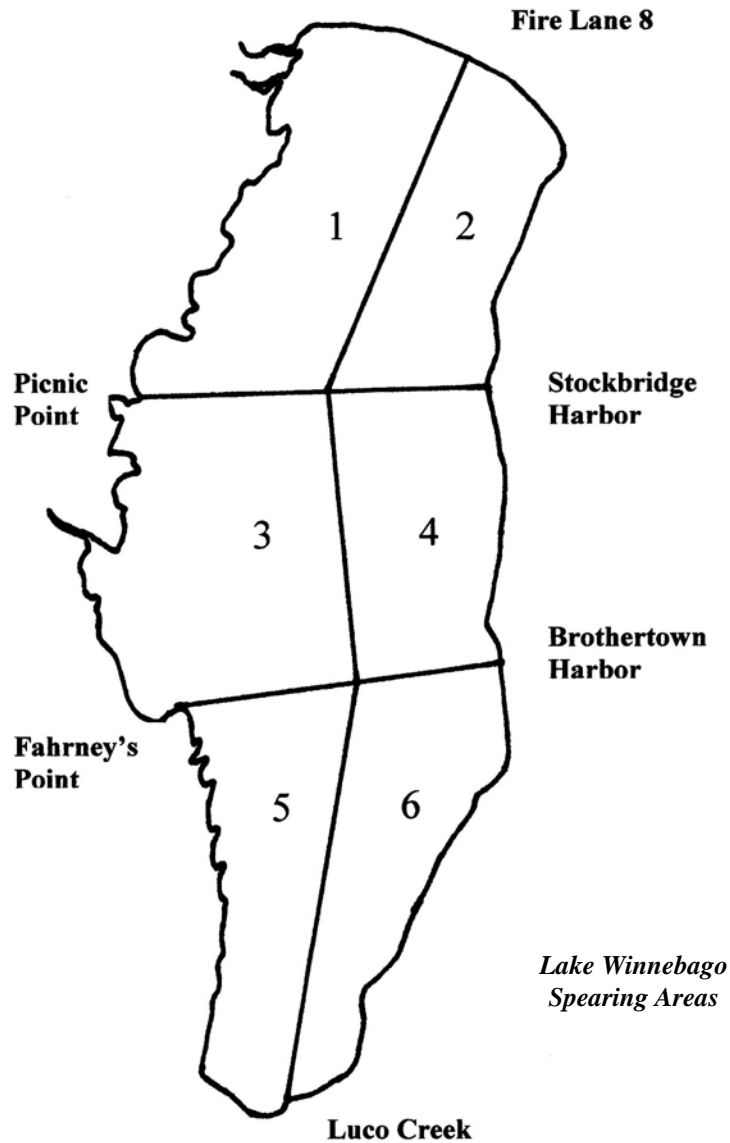
Station No. Station Location

Lake Winnebago

- 1** at Waverly Beach Resort
 Junction of U.S. Hwys 10 & 114
- 2** behind Harrison Town Hall
 Junction of U.S. Hwys 114 and State Park Rd
- 5** at Harbor Bar
 Stockbridge on the lake
- 6** at the Quinney Quencher
 Quinney on the lake
- 8** at the DNR Calumet Harbor Station
 Pipe on the lake
- 10** at Wendt's Bar & Harbor
 Hwy 45, 8 mi. N of Fond du Lac
- 11** at Jerry's Tavern
 1210 Ceape St., Oshkosh
- 12** at Payne's Point Tavern, Cty Trk A 3 mi. S of Neenah

Note - Some station numbers are missing, (i.e.: 3, 4, etc) due to changes in the number and location of stations over the years.





LITTER

It is illegal to place or deposit any materials (including biodegradable fish or fish parts) on the lake bed that can not be retrieved. Any material used in a sturgeon spearing hole must be removed by the sturgeon spearer when the hole is abandoned, or if requested by a warden.

Any material that is left on or frozen in the ice or waters is the responsibility of the person who left the material (including tar paper, wood, cardboard or any other litter used adjacent to shanties).

FISHING EQUIPMENT OR GEAR

It is unlawful to possess a fishing pole, hook and line, angling equipment or other similar devices that could be used to catch fish in an ice fishing tent, shanty, or other ice fishing enclosure with ice holes larger than 12 inches in diameter or square.

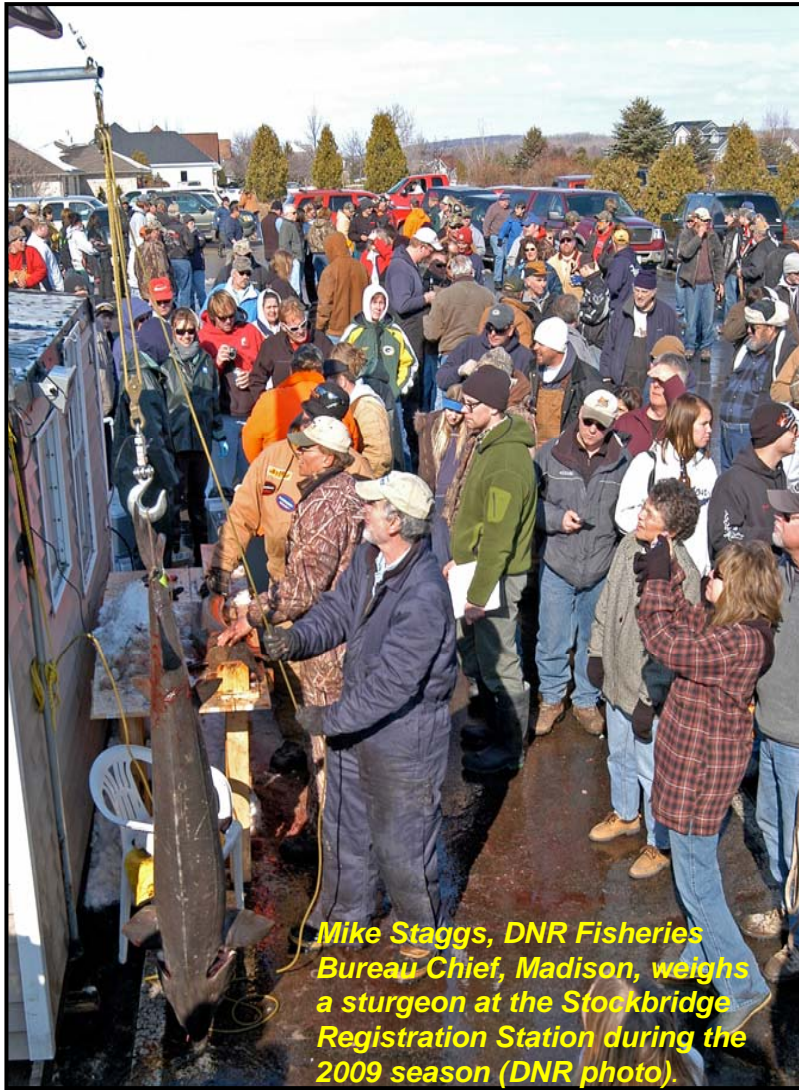
ICE SHANTIES AND SHELTERS

The door of any occupied shanty/shelter shall be such that the door can be readily opened from the outside.

All shanties/shelters must have the name and residential address of the person owning or using the shanty. The name and address must be painted or permanently affixed on the outside with a minimum of 1" lettering.

All shanties/shelters must be removed from the ice (for all inland waters south of Hwy 64) by the first Sunday following March 1 (March 6, 2011).





Lake Sturgeon Ave Length at Age – Winnebago System

Total Length (in)	Male Estimated Age (yrs)	Female Estimated Age (yrs)
36	9	9
38	10	10
40	12	12
42	14	13
44	15	15
46	17	17
48	20	19
50	22	21
52	24	23
54	27	26
56	30	29
58	33	31
60	36	34
62	40	37
64	43	41
66	47	44
68	51	48
70	55	51
72	60	55
74		60
76		64
78		69
80		73
82		78
84		83

2011 Sturgeon Spearing Season Summary (by Ron Bruch)

The 2011 season went into the books as the 4th 16 day season since we began the harvest cap system in 1999. The others were 2002, 2006, and 2007. Under current rule the season lasts until we hit one of the harvest cap closure triggers or 16 days, whichever comes first. The average season length under the harvest cap system since we went to the 6 hour spearing day (6:30 AM to 12:30 PM) in 2005 is 11 days. The shortest season since 2005 was a 4 day season in 2008.

Our total harvest of 1426 was close to the average annual harvest of 1405 since initiating the harvest cap system in 1999.

Effort as measured by total spearing license sales was definitely up in 2011 at 12,423 from 10,860 in 2010. Spearers are excited in general about the success of the fishery, and the lure of the increased number of trophies in the harvest also brings some additional people into the fishery. There may also be some demographic changes occurring as the next generation of spearers may be entering the fishery. I'll know more about these trends after we examine the license and harvest data and complete our analysis.

Lake Area (2011 Season)	Regular License Sales	14 year old (after Oct 31)	Armed Forces	Non Resident	Total Sales
Winnebago	11714	1	0	218	11933
Upriver Lakes	483	0	0	7	490
Total	12197	1	0	225	12423

Effort as measured by shanty counts on the lake told the real story of the 2011 season. We started the season on opening day with counts of 4321 on Lake Winnebago and 372 on the Upriver Lakes. Warm weather, snow melt, and deteriorating travel conditions on the ice of the lakes the first week of season forced a majority of spearers to pull their shacks off the lakes dropping the shanty count by the second Saturday of the season 59% on Lake Winnebago and 81% on the Upriver Lakes. The Upriver Lakes normally drops off anyways since, as a lottery fishery, once tags begin to be filled, spearers often pull their shacks off the lakes.

Shanty Counts Opening Day	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Area 1	537	424	670	849	493
Area 2	735	427	603	1134	1186
Area 3	325	397	639	285	319
Area 4	643	607	1504	938	701
Area 5	642	897	1672	345	927
Area 6	599	419	870	458	695
Butte des Morts	26	31	24	42	51
Winneconne	46	58	23	57	16
Poygan	465	423	490	370	305
Total	4018	3683	6495	4478	4693

The biggest change we have seen over the last ten years is the percentage of large fish in the harvest. This year the percentage of fish 100 lbs or larger in the harvest was 7.5% on Lake Winnebago and 3.6% on the Upriver Lakes. The percentage of these century mark fish has been steadily increasing over the last 15 years. Spearers ask two questions related to this phenomenon: 1) "Why?", and 2) "Are we taking too many 100 lbers?".

"Why?" - When we started down the path of updating regulations to better control the harvest and stabilize the adult spawning stock of sturgeon in the Winnebago System our colloquial goal was "We want to grow more old ladies". In other words, we saw that our adult female stock was being overharvested primarily due to a high size limit (45") along with the lack of a safe harvest cap system, and that we needed to reduce that harvest and increase survival of females. All of the new regulations and laws (22 in total) that were implemented since 1993 appear to have done their job quite well. The other part of the success equation was luck – sometimes you just have to get lucky. The timing of implementation of the new regulations and laws could not have been better. As the new regulations began to have an impact on the sturgeon harvest, the size and age structure of the Winnebago sturgeon population was poised to include more older and larger fish with each passing year. This phenomenon was due to the fact that by the mid 1990s we finally were on the back side of a hole in the sturgeon population that had been created by excessive legal and illegal overharvest during the 1930s-1950s. The sturgeon population in

numbers and age composition had finally grown past the impact of this overharvest that occurred 50 to 70 years ago.

“Are we taking too many 100 lbers?” – At this point the percentage of 100 pound plus fish in the harvest appears to be truly reflective of what is actually in the population. We have been watching the trend of more trophy size fish growing not only in our harvest, but also in the spawning stock – both females and males – for over 15 years now. I will be looking into this further to see if there is any significant differences in exploitation rate of fish by size, but I will surprised if I find any. Stay tuned. Also – remember 5-6 years ago when our sturgeon were so skinny? In the 2004-2006 time period sturgeon food resources were at a low point. Lakefly larvae were at the lowest point we had ever measured going back to the 1960s, and the gizzard shad hatches in the early 2000s were low as well. Sturgeon depend on these two food resources for 86% of their nutrition. Since 2006 both of these food resources have bounced back to high levels and the condition of the sturgeon also bounced back to the fish “with shoulders” that we see have been seeing the last few years.

Other 2011 sturgeon spearing season statistics:

Harvest by sex and station, 2011	Juvenile Female	Adult Female	Male	Totals
Waverly	4	28	19	51
Harrison	10	20	22	52
Stockbridge	58	166	142	366
Quinney	20	44	23	87
Cal Har / Jim & Linda's	12	29	29	70
Wendts	30	73	105	208
Jerry's	7	48	33	88
Payne's Point	16	87	68	171
Winneconne	27	30	84	141
Indian Point	23	25	83	131
Boom Bay	2	15	44	61
Totals	209	565	652	1426

2011 Harvested Sturgeon Average Lengths & Weights, and % of Harvest, Lake Winnebago

	Juv Fem	Ad Fem	Male	All
Length (in)	48.3	64.1	54.5	58.0
Weight (lbs)	27.6	75.9	42.2	55.4
Number	157	494	440	1091
% of Harvest	14%	45%	40%	

2011 Harvested Sturgeon Average Lengths & Weights, and % of Harvest, Upriver Lakes

	Juv Fem	Ad Fem	Male	All
Length (in)	47.0	63.7	52.9	54.3
Weight (lbs)	23.7	74.5	39.0	44.1
Number	52	71	212	335
% of Harvest	16%	21%	63%	

Winnebago System Sturgeon Harvest – Residency of Successful Spearers, 2011.		
County	No. Registered	% of all Registered
Winnebago	357	25.0%
Calumet	278	19.5%
Fond du Lac	237	16.6%
Outagamie	166	11.6%
Waupaca	55	3.9%
Manitowoc	45	3.2%
Green Lake	40	2.8%
Waushara	27	1.9%
Brown	24	1.7%
Washington	22	1.5%
Other WI Co.'s (38)	162	11.4%
Out of State (7)	13	0.9%

Winnebago Citizens Sturgeon Advisory Committee Members, 2012:

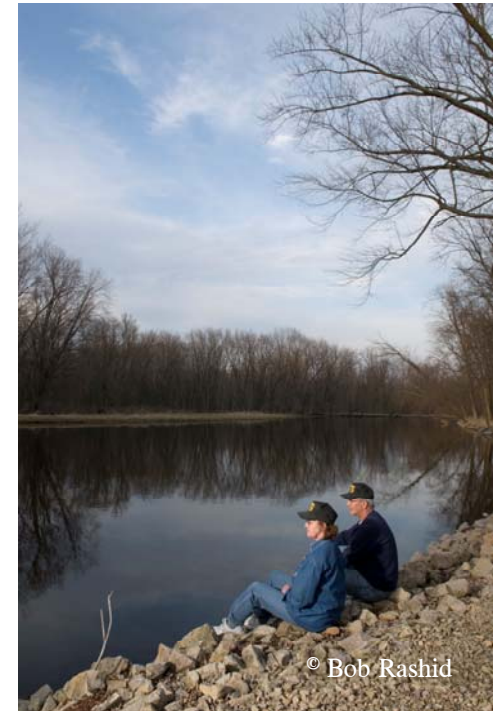
Mike Arrowood, WinnebagoLand Conservation Alliance.
Randy Bauman, Lower Cliff Fishing Club
Jeff Birschbach, Riverside Hunting & Fishing Club
Dick Braasch, West-Central Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Pat Braasch, West-Central Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Ben Burg, Stockbridge Fishing Club
Bill Casper, Main Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Bob Doepker, Lake Park Fishing Club
Bruce Fischer, Brickyard Fishing Club
Chuck Freund, Brothertown Fishing Club
Jim Gehrke, Payne's Point Hook & Spear Fishing Club
Ron Goldapske, West Shore Fishing Club
Pat Gorshals, Poygan Sportsman's Club
Dan Groeschel, Main Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Wayne Hoelzel, Northern-Half Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Bill Jenkins, Pipe Fishing Club
John Jenkins, Pipe Fishing Club
Al Jolin, Southwest Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Harry Kachur, Montgomery Beach Sportsman's Club
Dick Koerner, Twin City Rod & Gun Club, WI Conservation Congress
Bill Marcks, Shadows on the Wolf
Bill McAloon, Otter St. Fishing Club
Dick Mengel, Fishermen's Road Fishing Club
Don Mielke, Lower Cliff Fishing Club
Stuart Muche, West Shore Fishing Club
Gary Olson, Berlin Conservation Club
Bob Parsons, Stockbridge Fishing Club
Mike Pfankuch, WI Conservation Congress
Jim Propson, Brickyard Fishing Club
Jonathan Pyatskowitz, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin
Don Reiter, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin
Dan Rudebeck, Poygan Sportman's Club
Rich Scheffler, Quinney Fishing Club
Andy Seibel, East Shore Conservation Club
Wally Seibel, Dotyville Hunting & Fishing Club
John Thull, Poygan Conservation Club
Dave Vogds, Main Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Mike Will, Upper Lakes Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Marvin Woelfel, Quinney Fishing Club
Matt Woods, Upper Lakes Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow
Lance Ziemer, Southwest Chapter, Sturgeon for Tomorrow

The Winnebago Citizens Sturgeon Advisory Committee was formed in 1992 and since has worked closely with Ron Bruch and the DNR to review Winnebago sturgeon harvest and population data and recommend new rules and management activities when needed.

Sturgeon Guard Volunteers Needed In Spring

Each Spring hundreds of volunteers have an opportunity to guard sturgeon at their spawning sites on the Wolf River and protect the fish from poaching. When the sturgeon are spawning along the rocky shorelines of the Wolf they are very susceptible to illegal harvest. The volunteers of the "Sturgeon Patrol" guard the spawning fish 24 hours a day throughout the spawning season.

Volunteers are scheduled and coordinated by DNR Fisheries, Oshkosh, and the program is directed in the field by DNR Law Enforcement staff. Sturgeon for Tomorrow and sturgeon spearing license fees fund the guard program.



When spawning begins, pairs of sturgeon guards are assigned to the sites for twelve hour shifts. Prior to assignment, guards check in at "Sturgeon Camp", just north of Shiocton, where they receive a good meal, a generous sack lunch, a cell phone, an identification hat (that they keep), and a map that directs them to their site. At the end of their shift, guards return to camp for another hearty home cooked meal before they make their way home.

Guards are scheduled from April 15th through May 5th. Spawning generally occurs over a 5 to 10 day period within that time window. We do our best to get all scheduled guards out on the riverbank to see fish, although we must cancel some scheduled shifts if the fish are simply not active. We try in those cases to re-schedule guards into an active period.

If you would like to sign up, contact the DNR sturgeon guard coordinator Rebecca Pawlak at the DNR Oshkosh Service Center at dnrsturgeonguard@wisconsin.gov or call 920-303-5444. Your call will be returned to schedule a day or night next spring that is convenient for you. If possible, make it a family outing by bringing a son or daughter or your spouse. For many it has become a family tradition.

Sturgeon for Tomorrow

In 1977 a group of sturgeon enthusiasts from Lake Winnebago founded Sturgeon for Tomorrow to help preserve, protect and enhance the sturgeon resource of the lake system. That group quickly grew into the largest citizen advocacy group for sturgeon in the world, currently made up of five chapters and over 3,000 members. Through tremendous dedication and hard work Sturgeon for Tomorrow (SFT) has



raised and donated to date over \$750,000 for sturgeon research and management since its inception. SFT has funded a wide variety of projects over the years including the sturgeon guard program, the Sturgeon History Project, purchase of sampling equipment, spawning and nursery site construction, sturgeon population assessments, sturgeon propagation and the Upper Fox River sturgeon rehabilitation project. SFT also provided the support necessary to ensure the enactment of the \$1,500 fine for possession of an illegal sturgeon, and actively participates in Winnebago and statewide sturgeon management advisory committees.

If you are interested in further information about Sturgeon for Tomorrow or are interested in attending one of their five fund raising banquets held

each year, please call:

Jim Patt	SFT Southwest Chapter President (Fond du Lac) Banquet January 14, 2012 in Fond du Lac	920-922-7136
David Vogds	SFT Main Chapter President (East Shore) Banquet January 28, 2012 in Kiel	920-921-3701
Wayne Hoelzel	SFT Northern Half Chapter President (North Shore) Banquet February 4, 2012 in Darboy	920-725-1206
Dick Braasch	SFT West Central Chapter President (Oshkosh-West Shore) Banquet March 17, 2012 in Oshkosh	920-231-4708
Matt Woods	SFT Upper Lakes Chapter President Banquet September 15, 2012 in Orihula	920-582-0113

Call now to get your Sturgeon for Tomorrow banquet tickets!



Sherwood Lions Sturgeon Derby

Sturgeon for Tomorrow and various Lion's Club Charities such as the Wisconsin Lions Camp in Rosholt also benefit from the Sherwood Lions Club Annual Sturgeon Derby. The Rosholt Lions camp is dedicated to providing a quality camping experience free-of-charge to eligible Wisconsin residents who are Blind or visually impaired, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, youth with mild cognitive disabilities and youth with diabetes