June 2016 Inland Fisheries Monthly Report

Stock Assessment

Herrington Manor Lake experienced a severe drawdown due to private contractors conducting water release structure repairs. The lake level was drawn down to a point where only the stream channel contained water. Inland Fisheries and Park Service staff conducted fish rescues in the stilling basin downstream of the dam. They collected about 25 largemouth bass, 100+ bluegills, green sunfish, pumpkinseed, chain pickerel, adult golden shiners, and yellow bullhead. All individuals were placed back into the lake. Staff will conduct a fish reproduction survey in July to determine the re-stocking needs of the lake. The lake is currently re-filling.

Herrington Manor State Park staff member with trophy largemouth bass rescued from the stilling basin and placed back into the lake.

North Branch Potomac River Macroinvertebrate Collections – Staff collected aquatic macroinvertebrate samples from the North Branch Potomac River downstream of Jennings Randolph Lake. The samples were taken from the Upper Catch-and-Return, Lower Catch-and-Return, Westernport Put-and-Take, and Zero Creel Trout Fishing Areas to monitor the health of the river.

Casselman River Watershed Brook Trout Restoration Project - Little Laurel Run, a tributary of the South Branch Casselman River, was surveyed for fish populations within the riparian restoration zone that was conducted earlier this spring. Vegetative growth along the fenced stream has been phenomenal, and the planted trees are showing excellent growth and survival. Multiple year-classes of brook trout were collected from young-of-year (YOY) to adults measuring up to 9 inches. Other species included abundant populations of mottled sculpin, creek chub, blacknose dace, and fantail darters. A temperature monitor was placed in the stream to document maximum summer temperatures. Our hope is that brook trout will dominate the fish community as temperatures in the stream become colder.

Western I staff surveying Little Laurel Run, and adult brook trout collected during survey.

Tagged Brook Trout – Staff conducted a radio telemetry search on June 10, 17 and 22 for 15 radio-tagged brook trout in the upper Gunpowder River above Prettyboy Reservoir. On June 10, staff tracked from the confluence of the Gunpowder River with Prettyboy Reservoir upstream to above River Valley Ranch above Grave Run Road 5.8 km (3.6 miles) as well as up Silver Run .5 km (.3 mile) and Walker Run .25 km (.16 mile). Ten tagged brook trout were found in the Gunpowder River mainstem including two that had moved downstream to a large pool above the confluence of Walker Run. On June 17, staff tracked from the location above Grave Run Road upstream to York Road No. 1, a distance of 2.2 km (1.4 miles). Three tagged brook trout were found including one from June 10 that had moved upstream a short distance to a pool at the confluence of the Alesia tributary. Another brook trout had moved upstream from a location above Kern Road to a large pool at the mouth of an unnamed tributary at York Road No.1. On June 22, staff tracked a short distance above Baker School House Road on Walker Run, Muddy Creek along Shaffer Mill Road and below Shaffer Mill Road, an unnamed tributary to the Gunpowder River in Lineboro and access points to the South Branch Gunpowder River and tributaries along Alesia-Lineboro Road and York Road No. 1. The tagged trout found at the mouth of the unnamed tributary at York Road No. 1 on June 17 was the only brook trout found on June 22 and was at the same location. Currently, tagged trout #790 from the Gunpowder Road area hasn't been found since March 25, #741 from the Kern Road area hasn't been found since April 8 and #891 that moved from the Gunpowder Road bridge to the Grave Run Road bridge has not been found since May 15.

Electrofishing Surveys - Conducted single-pass electrofishing surveys in the North Branch Patapsco River and Board Run, a tributary to the North Branch Patapsco River (Carroll Co.). Two YOY brown trout and one adult brown trout were collected in the North Branch Patapsco River but the survey effort was limited with backpack electrofishing units due to the depth of the river. A multiple pass survey will be conducted with the barge electrofisher to better assess the brown trout population in the North Branch Patapsco River. No trout were found in Board Run. Multiple pass electrofishing surveys were conducted in the West Branch, a tributary to the North Branch Patapsco River and in an unnamed tributary to Liberty Reservoir at Hollingsworth Road (Carroll Co.). The West Branch site had an excellent brown trout

adult standing crop of 30 kg/ha with 161 YOY/hectare. The Hollingsworth Road tributary had multiple year classes of brown trout as well with an adult standing crop of 16 kg/hectare and a YOY brown trout density of 45 YOY/hectare. Inland Fisheries has known of these brown trout populations since the 1990's, however; the streams remain Class I (West Branch, Hollingsworth trib.) and Class IV-P (North Branch Patapsco River) despite efforts to redesignate the streams.

14", 1-lb brown trout, West Branch

Upcoming electrofishing surveys will be conducted in the Left and Right Forks of Jabez Branch, the only self-sustaining brook trout stream in Maryland's coastal plain (Anne Arundel Co.). Onset temperature loggers will also be deployed in both forks.

Conowingo Reservoir - Conducted the annual summer electrofishing survey at Conowingo Reservoir. Fish were sampled at 10 stations in the Maryland portion of the reservoir. Conowingo Reservoir supports a diverse sportfish community that includes largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, bluegill, green sunfish, rock bass, yellow perch, channel catfish, and flathead catfish. Centrarchid species dominated the total sample with bluegill being the most abundant species captured, followed by green sunfish and smallmouth bass. Smallmouth bass of all size classes were abundant. Many yearling smallmouth bass (3-6 inches) were captured (31% of sample), as well as those ranging from 12- 20 inches (28% of sample). The abundance of largemouth bass adults was low. Based on the large number of young smallmouth bass observed during this survey, anglers should have tremendous bass fishing opportunities for years to come. A good number of large bluegill, green sunfish, and rock bass were also encountered, and can provide good recreational angling opportunities for these species.

F*isheries technician David Fletcher with a nice Conowingo smallmouth*

Conowingo's quality bluegills

Pond Survey - Surveyed a small community pond at Scientists Cliffs, Calvert County, MD in response to a group of concerned citizens citing a lack of fish in the pond. Several pumpkinseed were collected, and there was an abundance of tadpoles/frogs. Water quality appeared good. A stocking strategy to introduce golden shiner, and then predators such as largemouth bass was discussed.

Habitat and Water Quality

Environmental Review - Provided comments to the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE), Integrated Policy and Review Unit (IPR), Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) or other agencies regarding:

- Culvert structures replacement along Rt. 38 near Kitzmiller. Field visits showed the drainages were rather small, low flow drainages into the Three Forks Run Watershed. The structure replacements posed no additional aquatic resource concerns in the watershed.
- Savage River State Forest ID Team regarding the following proposed study projects: Allegany Woodrat Population Study; Red-backed Salamander Study; and the American Chestnut Tree Blight Resistance Study. There are no aquatic resource concerns associated with these research proposals.
- SHA project to replace a US 50 bridge over an unnamed tributary to the Youghiogheny River in Garrett County. There are brook trout populations remaining in the upper Yough watershed, so the Use III restrictions will apply to any in-stream construction associated with the bridge replacement project.
- SHA regarding a possible fish passage restoration project on the South Branch of Bear Creek caused by Rt. 219 concrete culverts.
- SHA regarding possible boating access along the North Branch of Jennings Run in Allegany County. Although the stream is too small to support boating recreation, the location is within the Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Area and there is opportunity for angler parking improvements.
- Mid-Atlantic Chapter of Trout Unlimited regarding the Muddy Creek Restoration Project in Garrett County. A cooperative effort between Youghiogheny Chapter of TU, MD DNR Inland Fisheries Division, and Garrett College Natural Resource and Wildlife Technology Program began in 1999 to assess water quality and fish populations in Muddy Creek, a tributary to the Youghiogheny River. A Garrett College student assists with the project by conducting water quality studies and fish population surveys with a generous grant from the Yough Chapter of TU each year.
- Collected aquatic macroinvertebrate from Christiana River within Fair Hill NRMA. The work is part of a larger environmental review of a proposed natural gas line that will run adjacent to the stream.
- SHA regarding Winteron Run/295, Chaptico Run Bridge
- Central Region approved two scientific collection permits and two Bluegill in the Classroom release sites in Baltimore and Harford Counties.
- West II approved two scientific collection permits and one stocking permit.
- SHA regarding mitigation sites for the ongoing I270 Innovative Congestion Management Study. Central Region identified road/culvert repair in a stocked section of Seneca Creek to address erosion, sedimentation, and access issues.
- SHA regarding stream stabilization and stormwater outfall repair at I270 Montrose Road interchange.

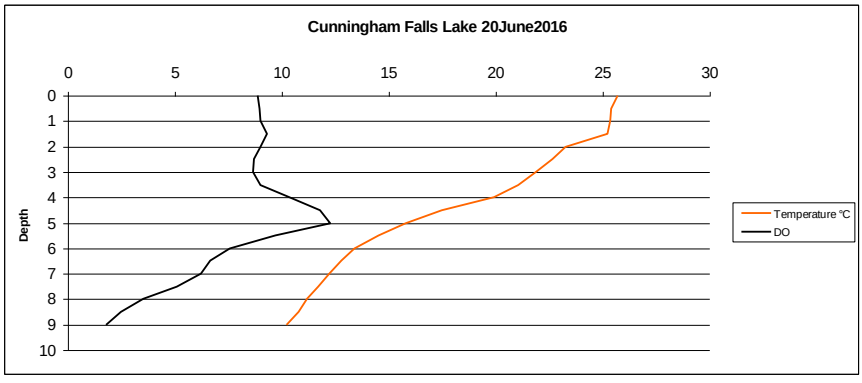
Lands Reclamation Committee (LRC) - Participated in the June meeting of the MDE Lands Reclamation Committee. Staff approved bond release for four reclaimed strip

mines totaling thirty-nine acres, while denying bond release for two strip mines totaling 21 acres because they did not meet re-vegetation standards.

Youghiogheny River Temperature Control - Temperature recorders were deployed at eleven sites in the Youghiogheny River from Swallow Falls to Sang Run to monitor the coldwater releases from the Deep Creek Lake Hydro-electric Station. Through a cooperative agreement with the Brookfield Power Company and MD DNR, the coldwater releases are made during the critical summer-time period. This partnership has resulted in a high quality catch and release trout fishery in the Youghiogheny River between Hoyes and Sang Run.

Casselman River Watershed - Western Region 1 Manager and MD DNR Forester Gary Aronhalt conducted a tour of the Casselman River Watershed to identify potential stream restoration projects. They prioritized streams that still contain brook trout in reaches of the streams, and would like to expand their population through riparian zone plantings and cattle exclusion fencing. They then met with representatives of GreenVest and the Canaan Valley Institute that will use SHA mitigation funding to initiate these restoration projects.

Cunningham Falls Reservoir - Staff deployed fish habitat structures using discarded Christmas trees. Cement forms were used to provide weight at the base of the trunk to allow the trees to remain upright on the lake bottom. The structures were placed in Cunningham Falls Reservoir to provide habitat, protect forage fish, and attract fish for fishermen. GPS coordinates and a limnological profile will be available on the newly developed Inland Fisheries webpage.



Potomac River Algae Study - Staff conducted seasonal biweekly Potomac River algae sampling with Hood College professors and students. Concrete cinder blocks were lifted from the river bottom where attached Solid Phase Adsorption Toxin Tracking (SPATT) samplers and 2"x2" tiles were extracted for analysis. SPATT samplers are used to detect microcystins, toxins produced by cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). Inland Fisheries has partnered with Hood College in addressing toxicity from cyanobacteria blooms in the upper river. Previous data have indicated impacts to aquatic life and microcystin toxin production from this newly defined species of cyanobacteria (*Planktothrix isothrix*). Very little research has been done on the implications that benthic cyanobacteria may have on both human and aquatic health. Results will be disseminated to water intake plants, local governments, and USGS fish pathologists.

Temperature Loggers - Deployed HOBO temperature loggers in several Washington and Frederick County streams. Seasonal temperature data will determine thermal maximums in waters with existing wild trout populations and thermal changes as a result of restoration efforts.

Smoots Bay - Staff measured depth soundings at ten meter intervals in Smoots Bay, National Harbor, MD to develop a bathymetric map. The map will be used to fine-tune the placement of artificial reefs during fall 2016 that will be added to augment the natural fish habitat in the area.

Fish Health

During the summer of 2015, USGS researchers conducting a study on the impact of groundwater upwellings on brook trout populations in Catoctin Mountain National Park discovered a small percentage (4 – 6.5%) of blue ridge sculpin in Distillery Run (tributary to Big Hunting Creek) infected with Dermocystidium spp. This dermal parasite has been linked directly to the decline of aquatic species including trout and salmon. Western II staff joined USGS Aquatic Ecologists and Fish Pathologists in electrofishing on "Blue Blazes," a first order tributary to Big Hunting Creek to examine Cottus spp and brown trout for the presence of disease. Preliminary results revealed 27 out of the 142 collected (19%) cottus spp. exhibited visual signs of Dermocystidium spp. **Official determinations are pending histological examination.** None of the trout collected showed any visible signs of infection. Inland Fisheries staff will continue to work with the USGS to evaluate the spatial distribution and potential impacts of this discovery.

Infected blue ridge sculpin

Outreach

Broadford Elementary School in Mountain Lake Park participated in the Trout in the Classroom Project. The students traveled to the nearby Little Youghiogheny River to release their rather large fingerling rainbow trout to grow to catchable size trout!

Mrs. Amy Warnick's Broadford Elementary 5th Grade Class releasing rainbow trout fingerlings into the Little Youghiogheny River.

CPR/First Aid Training - Provided a CPR/Standard First Aid certification class for Green Ridge State Forest and Wildlife staff members. This course has been offered "in-house" since 2008, providing training to multiple agencies within the Department.

Tagged Muskie - Provided muskie tagging/fishing information details to anglers who caught and reported tagged muskie in the upper Potomac River. Tag reports typically increase with increasing water temperatures as muskellunge seek out thermal refugia making them more vulnerable to capture. Information about proper handling, the voluntary angler diary program, and thermal stresses is provided to anglers.
The volunteer angler diary program, established in 2009, monitors angler effort, catch, harvest, and provides a larger size distribution data set. Data from angled muskellunge are proving to be a much more efficient means of obtaining population data (relative abundance, size distribution, mortality). Volunteers will be entered into a random prize drawing to encourage participation.

Upper Gunpowder - Staff attended the Upper Gunpowder Brook Trout Partnership meeting in Towson, Baltimore County. Staff discussed collaborative stream temperature monitoring, culvert and fish passage reviews in the watershed with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Inland Fisheries brook trout radio tag tracking study.

Trout Presentation - Central Region Manager presented a talk on trout management in Central Maryland to the Potomac/Patuxent Chapter of Trout Unlimited in Silver Spring, Montgomery County.

Pond Assessments - Responded to three pond assessment requests. Residents from Howard and Harford Counties were concerned about stocking fish into local stormwater management ponds and were hoping to limit mosquitos in their neighborhoods. A resident from Baltimore County was interested in best management practices for controlling excessive algae in his community pond.

Fishing Rodeo - Participated in the Kent County fishing rodeo. Staff manned a display featuring native and invasive species, answered questions, and assisted kids with fishing rod set up.

Master Naturalist - Staff taught an Aquatic Ecosystems/Fish class for the Maryland Naturalist Program. The class was instructed on the different aquatic ecosystems in Maryland, the threats (intersex, invasive species, thermal pollution, etc) to the systems, and was given a power point presentation on the Fishes of Maryland. Students were then able to practice identifying fish using taxonomic keys; samples from most of the 23 families of fishes were available.

Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) - Staff conducted a BOW Family Day at Gambrill State Park, Families participated in fishing and archery classes with an outdoor cooking demonstration for lunch.


Angler Access

Fisheries Management Areas - Conducted land maintenance, grass mowing, and litter pick-up at the North Branch Potomac River FMAs' McCoole, Black Oak, and Evitts Creek Ponds. Treated nuisance vegetation in several small impoundments in Frederick County.

Beaver Creek - Removed regulation signage and access information from a public parking area on Beaver Creek's Fly-fishing only section in Washington County. Unfortunately, the designated property parcel was sold and the new landowners did not

wish to continue allowing public access. Anglers must park at the upper boundary of this regulation area to access the stream. No changes were made to the fishable portion of the stream.

Stocking and Population Management

Trout Fingerlings - The Youghiogheny River Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Area was stocked with 21,000 Kamloops strain rainbow trout fingerlings (30/lb) from the Albert Powell Hatchery.

Striped Bass - The Department of Juvenile Services cooperative striped bass/hybrid striped bass stocking project in Broadford Lake is really becoming a success! Attached are a couple of pictures recently received from anglers fishing in Broadford Lake, Garrett County.

Broadford Lake hybrid striped bass and striped bass – 2016.

Brown Trout - Western II staff stocked adult brown trout, reared by AP Hatchery, into Owens Creek as part of the Put-and-Take/Catch-and-Return regulation. Owens Creek in northern Frederick County becomes catch-and-return from June 1 – the last day of February. This unique regulation provides anglers with the opportunity to fish for salmonid species throughout the summer and fall.

Largemouth Bass - Stocked largemouth bass into Unicorn Lake, a Queen Anne's County Parks pond in Centerville (Whitemarsh Park), and Urieville Lake. The bass were raised at the Unicorn Hatchery. A total of 40,000 fry and 41,000 fingerling largemouth bass were stocked in the Potomac River. Additionally, 30,000 fry were stocked in the Patuxent River. The fish are used to augment natural reproduction and support popular black bass fisheries in these rivers.

Hybrid Sunfish - Stocked hybrid sunfish into ponds at Blackwater Wildlife Refuge, Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge, Ocean Pines, and Salisbury Community Park for fishing rodeo events.

Striped Bass - Staff stocked 10,000 striped bass fingerlings in Triadelphia and Rocky Gorge reservoirs, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties, MD. The fish will contribute to the very popular Striped Bass fisheries in these reservoirs, maintained through cooperative stocking efforts between MD DNR and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

Bluegill Sunfish - Collected adult bluegill sunfish from the Potomac River. These fish will be used as brood stock at Manning Hatchery.

Invasive Species

Flathead Catfish - Collected flathead catfish in the upper Potomac River to augment the existing data set on length, weight, sex, diet, and length at age data. Lapillus otoliths are extracted and used to estimate ages of flathead catfish. Length at age data will be used to develop catch curves and obtain mortality estimates.

Grass Carp - Following a report that a pond on Izaak Walton League property in Harford County contained grass carp, Central Region Inland Fisheries staff observed the pond for grass carp and accessibility to launch small electrofishing boats for capture and removal. Conditions were not the best to observe for fish due to excessive rippling of the pond surface by wind but staff did observe two large fish of at least 36 inches that did have the body shape of a grass carp but could not be positively identified as grass carp. An attempt to remove the fish is scheduled for June 30 weather permitting.

Blue Catfish - Continued work collecting blue catfish from the Patuxent River. There is concern that the invasive fish will negatively affect native and naturalized fishes in the river, so life history and other data are being collected. Stomach contents were examined and otoliths were removed for diet and aging studies.

Reviewed the blue catfish tagging section of a manuscript that the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) is compiling that resulted from MD DNR's participation in a tagging and tracking blue catfish study that ended during 2015. MD DNR's responsibility in the MOU was to provide the tagging and tracking aspect of the study and to help craft a final report of the findings. Comments summarizing the findings will be posted in future monthly reports after the manuscript reaches publication.

Gear Workshop - Represented Inland Fisheries at the Fisheries Gear Workgroup Meeting that took place in Annapolis, MD. The focus of the meeting was to clarify gear types and restrictions with regards to, primarily, invasive species. With the Department's push towards removing invasive species from our waters, anglers and managers wish to provide alternatives to traditional hook and line capture of unwanted fishes. This means that regulations and restrictions need to be as clear as possible in order to avoid harming non-target species. The Gear Workgroup is working towards this goal.

Brook Trout Program

Brook Trout Fishing Clinic - Organized and hosted the 1st (annual) youth brook trout fishing clinic at Big Run State Park on Saturday, June 4. Twenty-six young anglers attended the event, which was focused on helping them learn about a variety of things with the intent to make them better brook trout anglers (and anglers in general). Topics covered included: what brook trout eat, knot tying, catch and release techniques, and casting lessons for spin fishing and fly fishing. Volunteers from Bill's Outdoor Center, Early Rise Fly Shop, and the Nemacolin Chapter of Trout Unlimited were on hand to assist in making the day a success. Inland Fisheries staff volunteers handled instruction at the stations and helped to prepare food, register kids, and answer any questions asked. Overall the day was a resounding success, with numerous kids coming back after the event to thank us and share stories of the fish they caught that afternoon, several saying they had just caught their first brook trout ever!

DNR Assistant Secretary David Goshorn welcoming youth and family to the event.

Josh Henesy providing instruction to youth anglers on how to tie fishing knots.

Alan Heft and summer volunteer Garrett Bird instructing youth anglers on casting techniques for Brook Trout fishing in streams.

The Brook Trout Program would like to welcome our volunteer intern, Garrett Bird, to our program for the summer. Garrett is a junior at Allegany High School in Cumberland and has aspirations to work in the fisheries management field someday. He is a dedicated trout angler and a great reminder of the passion and enthusiasm for angling and management that inspired so many of us to make this field our career!

Garrett Bird, volunteer Brook Trout Program summer intern 2016.

Savage River - Began our annual Savage River monitoring work and so far the population numbers look good. We are seeing excellent numbers of YOY brook trout,

and lots of adult trout. We have already collected several trout over 11", and spoke with an angler we encountered during a survey who had hooked and lost a brook trout he estimated at 16"!

Met with researchers and students from Hood College to complete the field component of their electrofishing training. Training began in early spring with a short seminar on how/why electrofishing works and culminated in learning to use the gear in the field. Proper setup of the gear, safety, and fish collection/handling were all discussed. Each person was given the opportunity to electrofish a section of stream under the supervision of program staff. This was done as a requisite for the collecting permit application. The training also included surveying an actual brook trout monitoring site in Monroe Run with staff, a big help to getting this summers monitoring work completed!

Met with Seth Moessinger from Frostburg State University to discuss his masters degree graduate project. Seth will be surveying and categorizing stream blockages on brook trout stream with the intent of developing a prioritization tool for retrofitting and/or removal to benefit brook trout conservation. Staff will be accompanying him on visits to blockages this summer and will continue to provide assistance to help make the project a success.

Data entry of the written responses for the statewide *Wild Trout Angler Preference Survey* was completed with assistance from Western I and II regional staff and management leadership staff. We are presently organizing the data for analysis, and plans are to present preliminary results at the upcoming SFAC meeting in July.

Tidal Bass Program

Attended black bass tournaments held in Southern Maryland and the upper Chesapeake Bay. Biologists routinely attend black bass tournaments held throughout the state, largely in tidal waters, where release boats are used. Conditions of the release tanks are monitored to ensure fish recover in well-oxygenated, quality water. One tournament biologists attended was the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) Capital Clash held at Smallwood State Park. The event pairs injured veterans with a boater for an enjoyable day of fishing. This year's event featured 45 teams and there was a tie for first place, with two teams weighing in a 5-fish limit of 14.57 lbs. Survival for fish caught was 100% and 93.7% for the two day tournament.

Coordinated with the PVA Capital Clash event organizers to use caught fish for a project aimed at determining residence time of tournament fish at release locations and catch-and-release mortality. Fish caught by anglers at the event were marked, and the release area was electrofished for five days afterwards to determine how many fish left the area, and to search for tournament mortalities. No dead, marked fish were observed during the study period and only several marked fish were collected on the final day of the study.

Transferred 5,000 juvenile largemouth bass to Wheelabrator for a collaborative grow-out program; fish will be stocked to the Gunpowder River region in fall.

Submitted the 2015 Update for the Tidal Bass Fishery Management Plan; the update will be provided to the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission and be available on-line in July.

Drafted and disseminated agenda and briefing documents for the first Black Bass Advisory Subcommittee, a meeting to be held on July 6 in C-1 of Tawes between 6 pm and 8:30 pm.

Deployed a long-term water quality monitoring device at Anchor Marina in partnership with the owners to record levels of dissolved oxygen and water temperature at the weigh-in site during July and August.

"Stop the Snakehead" - Co-organized a snakehead fishing derby at Pennyfield Lock on the C&O canal (Montgomery Co) with U.S. Fish and Wildlife and National Park Service to raise awareness of the invasive species, encourage harvest, and answer questions in order to promote conservation of largemouth bass. The watered portion of the C&O Canal in Montgomery County is allowing snakeheads to bypass Great Falls and colonize areas upstream (i.e., upper Potomac River). The two most caught species during the tournament were largemouth bass and bluegill. One snakehead was caught and harvested, though others were seen. The snakehead fish prints were a big hit with anglers of all ages.

L-Snakehead fish prints; R - John Mullican assisting a young angler.

Snakehead caught at Pennyfield Lock during tournament!

Fielded numerous calls from anglers reporting tagged Largemouth Bass from the tidal Potomac River. This is part of an ongoing study to estimate population size and catch-and-release mortality for Largemouth Bass in the Potomac River. Anglers reporting their catches receive a 'Largemouth Bass Conservation' pin, a certificate of appreciation, and a letter with detailed information on their catch.

Staff coordinated with and provided a fiberglass fish tank and other materials to Anchor Marina, North East, MD to improve infrastructure for black bass tournaments. The equipment will be used as a recovery station to allow tournament-caught bass to recover prior to release. The use of the station will allow future black bass tournaments to comply with new tournament requirements.

Staff coordinated the loan of a water quality meter to Smallwood State Park, Marbury, MD for use at their black bass tournament weigh-in station. The meter will allow tournament organizers to monitor water temperatures and dissolved oxygen concentrations in fish recovery tanks and release locations. This is one example of MD DNR's efforts to improve infrastructure at popular tournament locations to ensure a healthy, sustainable black bass fishery.

Other

GIFS - An issue with GIFS (i.e., database management system for Inland Fisheries) occurred and data were corrected by replacing a bad Species Code. Another issue was found in which a new SiteID could not be created and is currently being corrected.

Fulfilled a request for data by querying all fish species observed during Tidal Black Bass surveys on the Potomac River since 2013.

Welcome aboard Austin Evans as a part-time Fisheries assistant to the Western Region I staff. Austin will work through a grant received from the Maryland Environmental Trust's *Keep Maryland Beautiful* program to continue brook trout restoration work in the Casselman River Watershed. Austin is the Maryland State Champion Gold Medalist for the Triple Jump as well as a Silver Medalist for two hurdle events. We expect Austin to jump across most streams in a single bound.

Western Region II welcomed aboard AFS Intern Kenny Yerardi. AFS offers an 8 week paid summer mentoring program to qualified and selected high school students. The purpose of this program (Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program) is to educate and inspire young minorities about fisheries science and management. Kenny will work closely with Western II staff over the next 8 weeks, engaging in a variety of fisheries management techniques.

We bid farewell Eastern Region Biologist Michael Porta, who is leaving State service on July 15 for a new job opportunity in Oklahoma. He will be missed.