

## FishPass Monthly Update



Dear partners and stakeholders:

On behalf of the FishPass team, I am pleased to provide the July/August 2021 update. Please distribute the update as you see fit.

### *Engineering Design / Construction:*

- While on-site work remains on hold pending results of the ongoing legal process, the prime contractor, Spence Brothers Construction, has continued to prepare and submit contract submittals for review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and AECOM (Designer of Record).

### *Research*

- July – The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and numerous other agency staff conducted maintenance on the acoustic telemetry array in Grand Traverse Bay. In addition, USGS and other agency staff expanded the array out into Lake Michigan proper (Figure 1).
- August – Additional water samples were collected from the Boardman/Ottaway and two adjacent watersheds in support of the *Energy and Nutrient Dynamics Project* and delivered to the appropriate laboratories for nutrient and isotope analysis (Figure 2).

### *Assessment:*

- August – GLFC intern and soon to be Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) Freshwater Studies graduate, Robbie Dezelski, completed his FishPass internship. Robbie plans to pursue a career in environmental law enforcement upon completion of his degree. The GLFC thanks Robbie for his time and effort.
- The GLFC is excited to continue its internship program with NMC in an effort to provide field-based educational opportunities for young environmental professionals in the region. Abby Ayoub was recently hired to serve as the new FishPass intern. Abby is entering her second year of the Freshwater Studies program and will assist staff in support of FishPass assessment.
- 14 July – An electrofishing survey was completed at the Forks long-term monitoring site to collect assessment data on fish populations (Figure 3; Table 1).
- 26 July – Staff from the Grand Traverse Band of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians (GTB) and GLFC completed a quarterly electrofishing index survey in the lower Boardman/Ottaway River (below Union St. Dam) to understand the seasonal diversity and abundance of the fishery in this section of river. Results can be found in Table 2.

**Table 1.** Average length and number of fish (n) sampled during electrofishing at the Forks long-term monitoring site in Boardman/Ottaway River on 14 July 2021.

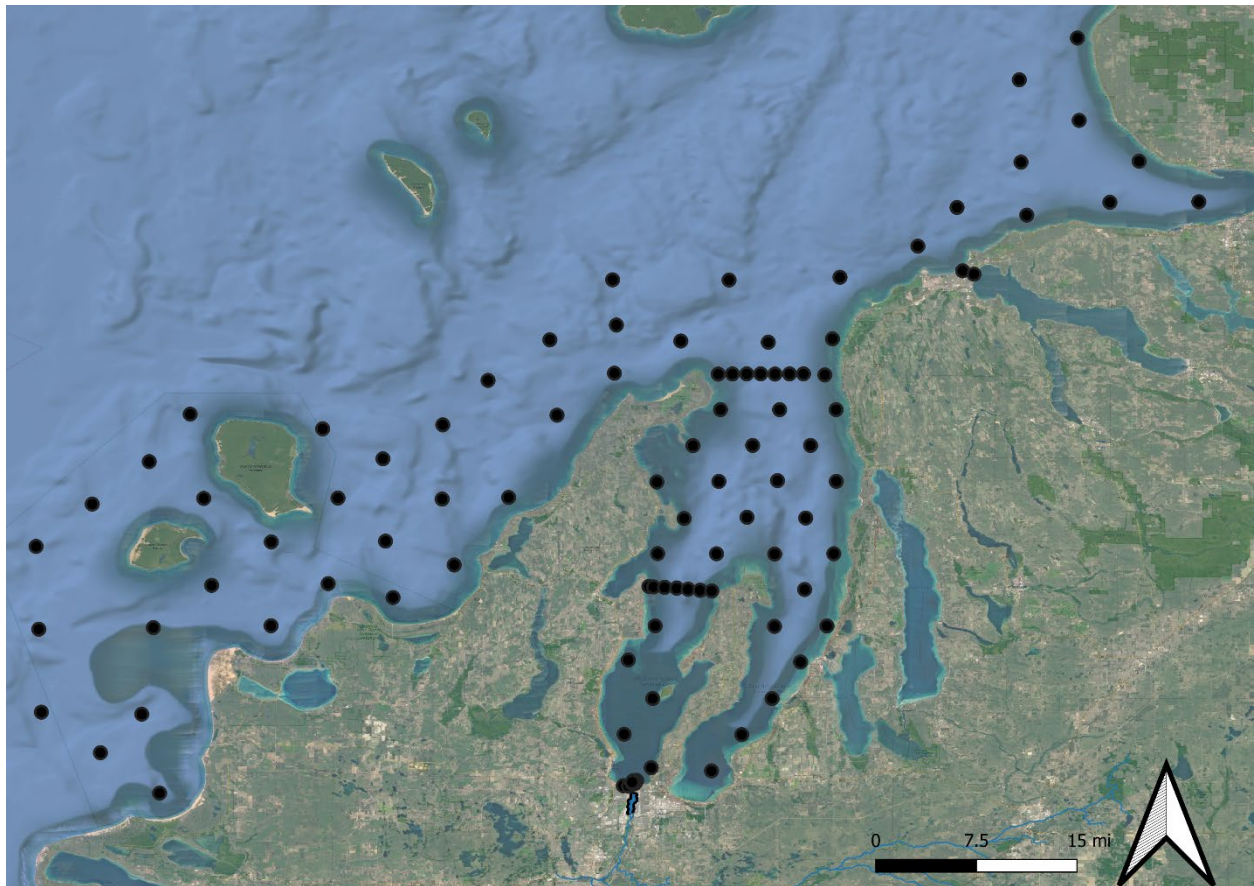
<b>Species</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Ave. Length (in)</b>
brook trout	12	4.1
brown trout	28	5.6
Central mud minnow	3	2.5
creek chub	2	4.9
Eastern blacknose dace	1	2.4*
green sunfish	1	2.0*
Northern brook lamprey	20	NA
sculpin (mixed species)	34	2.3

\* Denotes sample size of 1

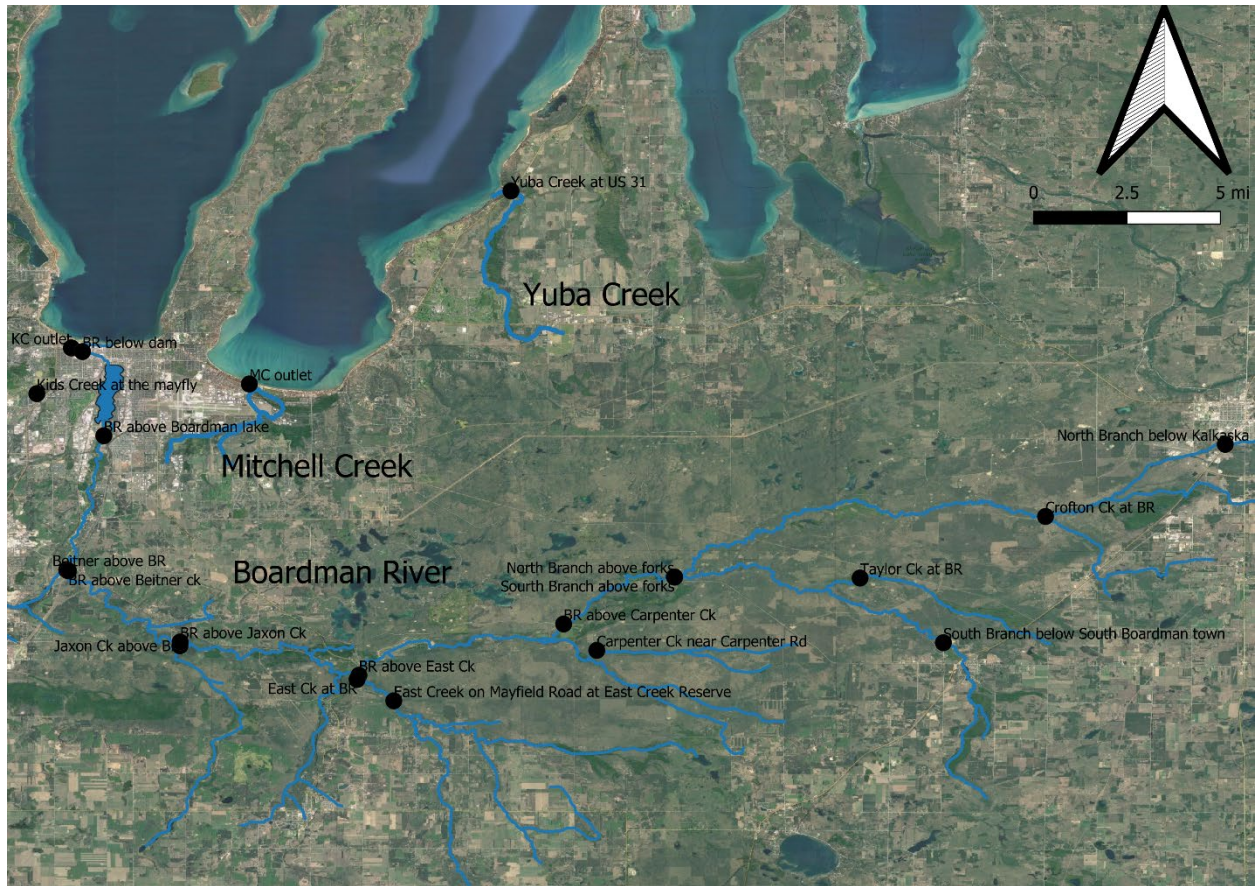
**Table 2.** Average length and number of fish (n) sampled during electrofishing in the lower Boardman/Ottaway River on 26 July 2021.

<b>Species</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Ave. Length (in)</b>
bluegill sunfish	1	5.5*
brown trout	1	23.9*
common carp	1	29.9*
common white sucker	5	16.5
golden redhorse	1	20.8*
rainbow trout	3	21.9
rock bass	5	6.7
smallmouth bass	4	10.8

\* Denotes sample size of 1



**Figure 1.** Map of acoustic telemetry receivers (black dots) supporting ongoing research aimed at understanding patterns of movement and behavior of the region's fishes.



**Figure 2.** Water sample collection sites (black dots) for ongoing research aimed at understanding background availability of resources for fish (i.e., stable isotopes of N, P, and S).



**Figure 3.** GLFC staff on the bank of the Boardman/Ottaway River at the Forks long term monitoring site. From left to right Nick Boucher, Reid Swanson, Dan Zielinski, Carrie Baker, Andrew Muir, and Robbie Dezelski.

*Outreach:*

- August – FishPass partners hosted a paddle down the Boardman/Ottaway River to experience the impact of the River Restoration Initiative and build fellowship and understanding for the critical role FishPass will play in completing restoration of the river. Partners and local leaders enjoyed an afternoon on the river learning about the restoration project.

*Upcoming:*

- An additional electrofishing survey will be conducted in the lower Boardman/Ottaway River in September 2021 to further identify changes in fisheries diversity and abundance in this section of the river.
- An additional electrofishing survey will be conducted below the former Sabin Dam as part of the ongoing long-term monitoring of upstream fisheries communities.
- The MDNR weir will begin operation on 7 September 2021.

*In the News:*

- FishPass stays off November ballot, will be decided in appeals court (Interlochen Public Radio, 31 August 2021): <https://www.interlochenpublicradio.org/2021-08-31/fishpass-stays-off-november-ballot-will-be-decided-in-appeals-court>
- Expedited Appeal Rejected In FishPass Lawsuit; Court Case Will Proceed On Normal Timeline (The Ticker, 20 July 2021): <https://www.traverseticker.com/news/expedited-appeal-rejected-in-fishpass-lawsuit-court-case-will-proceed-on-normal-timeline/>
- Report: Fix or replace Union St. Dam (Record Eagle, 13 July 2021): [https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local\\_news/report-fix-or-replace-union-st-dam/article\\_a383f60e-e36c-11eb-9355-2b75a5bc4c27.html](https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/report-fix-or-replace-union-st-dam/article_a383f60e-e36c-11eb-9355-2b75a5bc4c27.html)



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