Public and Private Fish Stocking: When, Where, and Why?
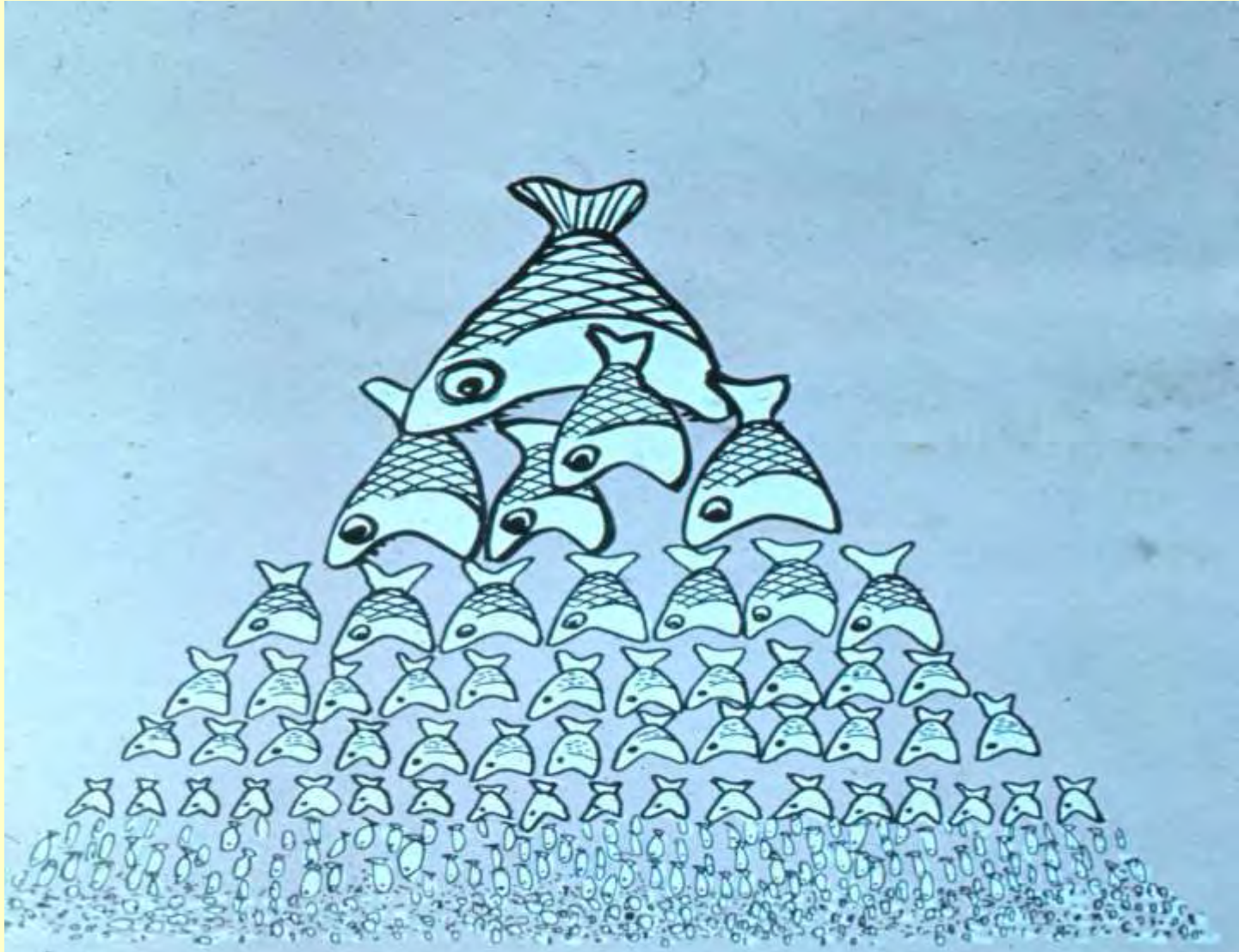
Michigan Inland Lakes Convention
May 2nd, 2014
Jay Wesley
MDNR-Fisheries Division

Presentation Outline

- Fish Community Balance
- Basic Fisheries Management
- Lake Stocking: When and Why
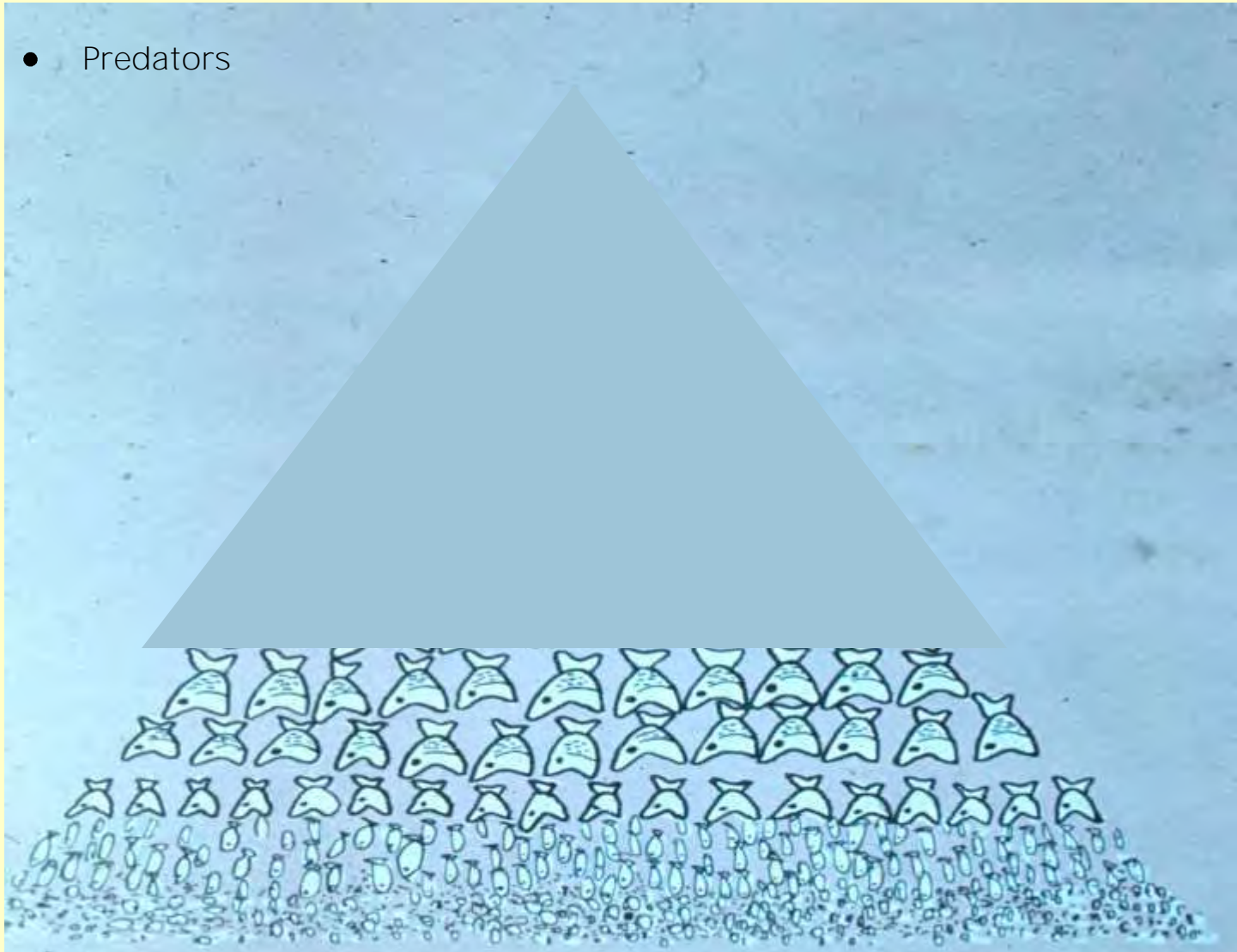- DNR Stocking in Lakes
- Private Fish Stocking

Fish Community Balance

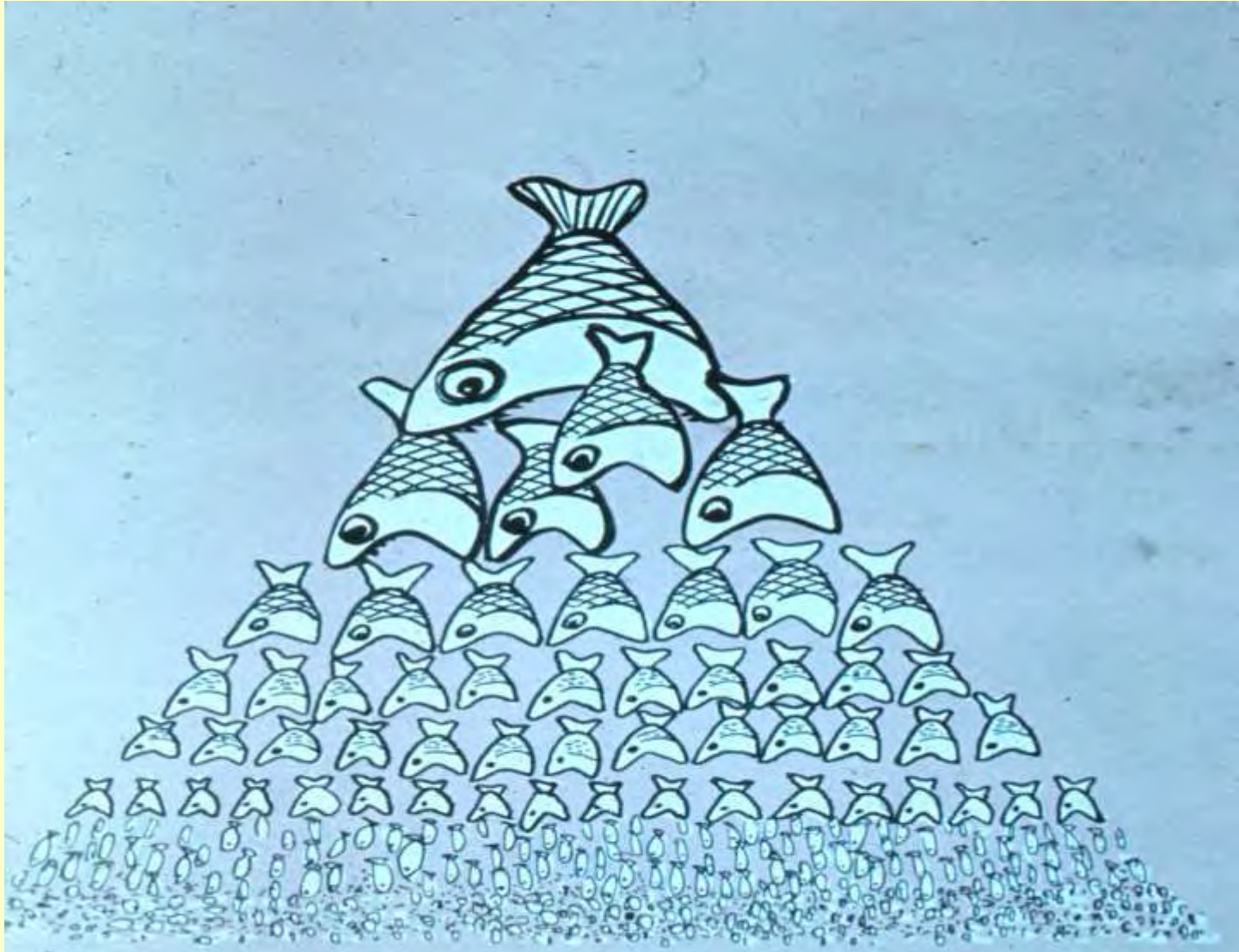# Fish Community Balance

- Predators

Fish Community Balance

- Too many predators
- Habitat Limitations

Fish Community Balance

Fisheries Management

- Return or Maintain Balance
- Management Techniques
  - Inventory/Survey
  - Regulations (MSL, Seasons, Bag)
  - Habitat Improvement
    - Wetland/Stream Connectivity
    - Natural Shoreline
    - Lake Vegetation
  - Stocking

Lake Stocking: When and Why

- Return Balance
  - Stock a predator (Stunting or Shad)
- Create Fishing Opportunity
- Restore Rare Species

- Not always the answer
  - **"We want more and bigger bluegills and yellow perch".**

DNR Stocking in Lakes

DNR Stocking in Lakes

DNR Stocking in Lakes

- History
  - 1930 through 1949 (poor habitat/WQ)
    - Trout, Bluegills, Bass, and Walleye
  - 1950 through 1964
    - Trout, Northern Pike, Muskellunge, and Walleye – some Bluegill and Bass
  - 1964 to Present (Community Balance)
    - Trout, Walleye, Muskellunge, and Channel Catfish – some Northern Pike and Lake Sturgeon.
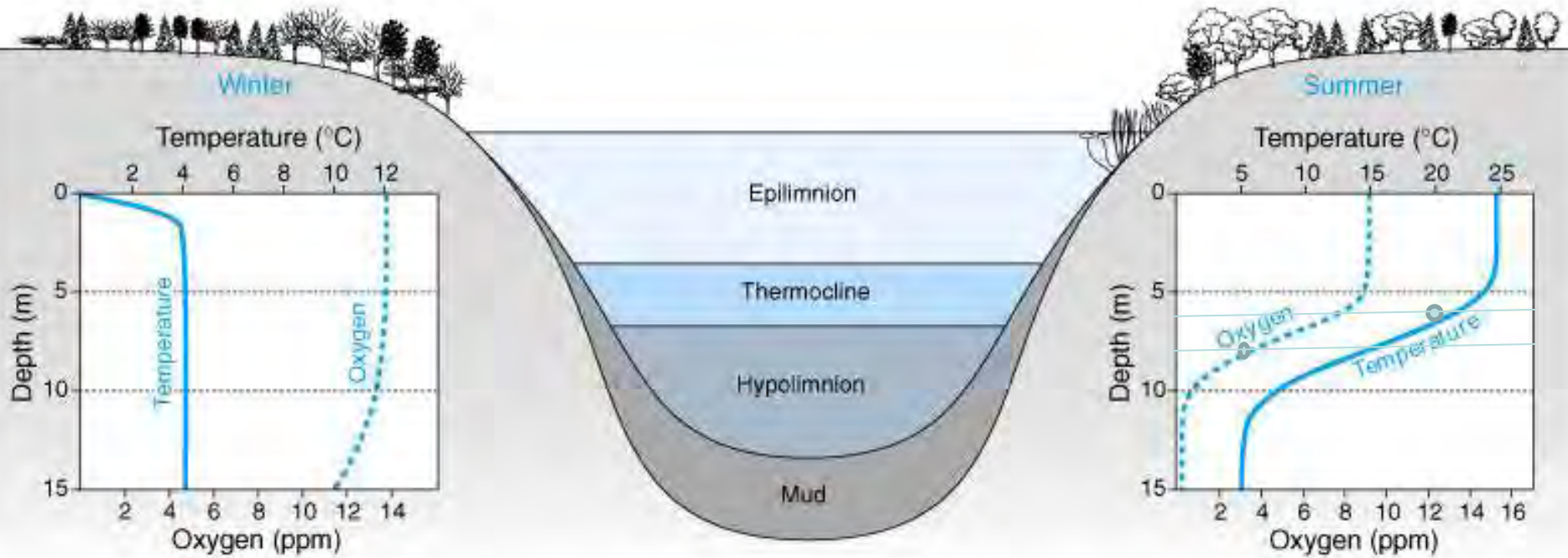
DNR Stocking in Lakes

- Trout
  - Create Unique Fishery
  - Brook trout, rainbow trout, brown trout, and lake trout.
  - Stocked as yearlings (5 to 7 inches)
  - Habitat limited
    - Cold Temperature Lakes
    - Two Story Lakes

DNR Stocking in Lakes

DNR Stocking in Lakes

- Walleye
  - Predator Balance/Create Fishery
  - Eggs Collected (Muskegon/Bay de Noc)
  - Pond Raised
  - Spring Fingerlings (N. MI)
  - Fall Fingerlings
    - S. MI

DNR Stocking in Lakes

- Muskellunge
  - Predator Balance/Create Fishery
  - Eggs Collected (Detroit River)
  - Pond Raised
  - Fall Fingerlings

DNR Stocking in Lakes

- For More Information

  – Contact Local Fishery Manager:

  http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/fmd_MU_internal_378278_7.html

  – DNR Fish Stocking Database:

  http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/

  – DNR Fish Stocking Guidelines

  http://michiganlakes.msue.msu.edu/uploads/files/Dexter%20et%20al.%202004.pdf

Private Fish Stocking

- Private Ponds and Lakes
  - Owners Expense
  - Private Hatchery
- Private Stocking of Public Waters
  - Individual or Association Expense
  - Private Hatchery
    - http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mda/mda_aquaculture_192478_7.pdf

Private Fish Stocking

FACILITY NAME			FACILITY ADDRESS		PHONE	EXPIRATION DATE	
Calhoun							
JACK'S FISH FARM		☑ PLANTING STOCK	14630 12 MILE ROAD		(616) 846-5844	9/30/2013	**FACILITY SPECIES**
JACK	PELTON	☐ DRESSED FISH	CERESCO	MICHIGAN			largemouth bass
		☐ FEE FISHING		49033			smallmouth bass
							bluegill
							hybrid bluegill
							channel catfish
							crayfish
							goldfish
							fathead minnow
							yellow perch
							northern pike
							pumpkinseed
							emerald shiner
							golden shiner
							green sunfish
							redear sunfish
							brook trout
							brown trout
							rainbow trout
							walleye
							black crappie

Private Fish Stocking

- Public Waters Stocking Permit (Free)
  - **"Public Water"**
    - Public Access (state or local/Rd Ending)
    - Connection to Public Waters
  - Biologist Review
    - Proper Species/Stocking Rates
    - Conflicting Management
    - Disease Free Source (LMBv, VHSv)

Private Fish Stocking

Private Fish Stocking

- Common Species
  - Walleye, Channel Catfish, Trout
- Species Approved – Not Recommended
  - Bluegill, Hybrid Bluegill, Yellow Perch, Bass, Northern Pike, Fathead Minnow
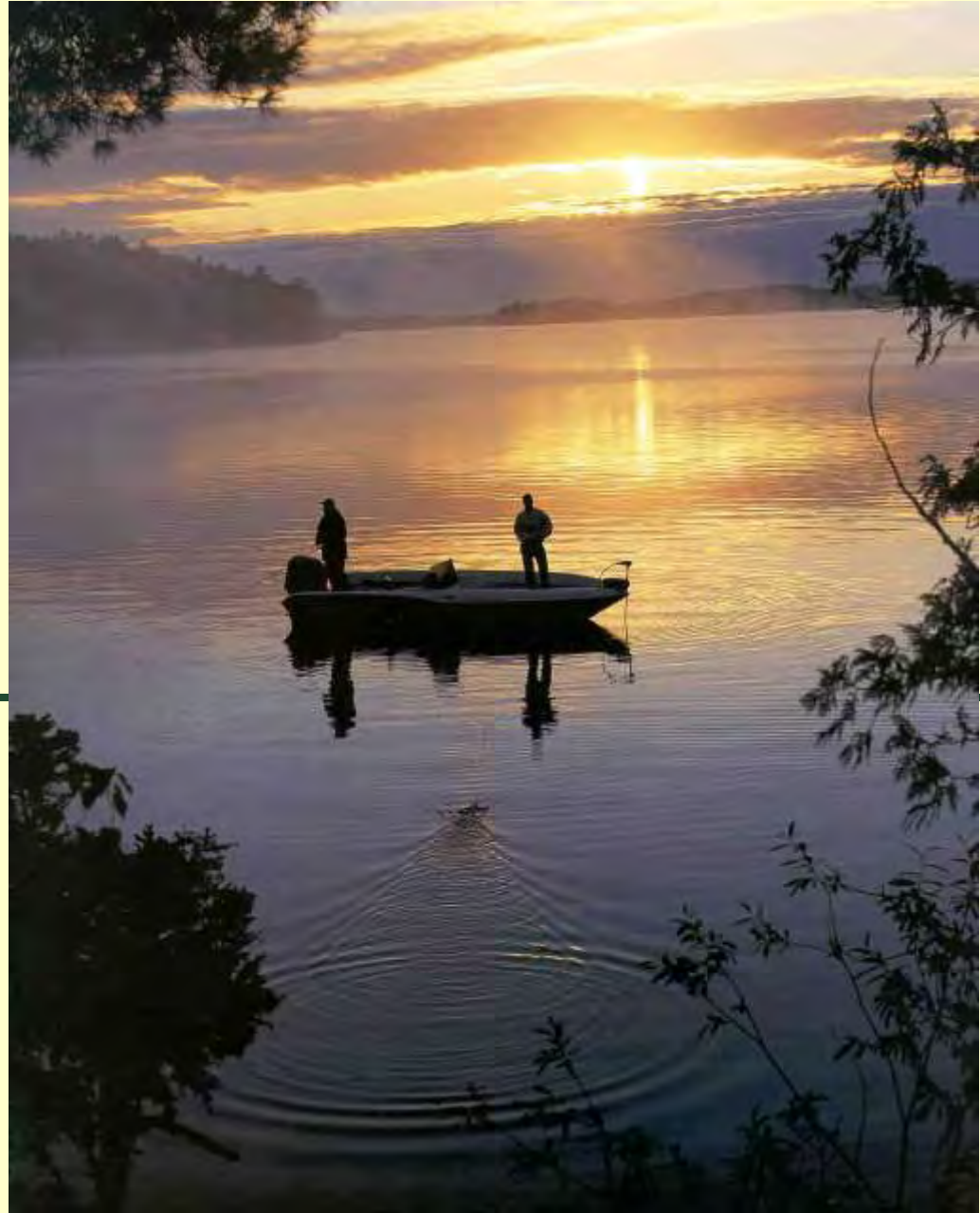
Private Fish Stocking

- Species Not Approved
  - Prohibited Species List
  - Most Non-Native Fish
  - Diseased or Uncertified Fish

Conclusion

- Remember Balance
- DNR Stocking (Walleye, Muskellunge, Channel Catfish, and Trout)
- Private Stocking Might Require a Permit
- Healthy Fish Community

Questions?