

# Lake Association Coalition on Fishing Tournaments

Big Rideau Lake Association (BRLA)  
Mississippi Lakes Association (MLA)  
Newboro Lake  
White Lake

# Goal

- ▶ Advocate for a balance in frequency and intensity of fishing tournament events on our lakes
  - Reducing stress on fish populations
  - Improving lake safety
  - Reducing boat noise
  - Reducing social tensions between anglers and lakefront property owners
- ▶ Collaboratively work to find solutions

# History

- ▶ 2016 - BRLA discussed concerns with Parks Canada & Tournament reps
- ▶ 2017-2019 - BRLA/Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation, RVCA & OFAH Zone F provided financial support to Professor Cooke's Bass Telemetry study.
- ▶ 2020 - MLA contacted BRLA to discuss concerns. Created list of concerned lakes, including Newboro and White Lakes.
- ▶ 2021 - Developed list of key concerns & met with Prof. Cooke to distill list
- ▶ 2022 - Several mtgs between Professor Cooke & Coalition to develop goals & potential approach

# Bass Telemetry Study - Big Rideau

## ► Objectives

- Assess post-tournament dispersal of large & smallmouth bass across seasons
- Determine success of return to site of capture

## ► Results

- Stockpiling at Tournament Release Site
  - All detected fish left release site, however, short-term stockpiling did occur / Dispersal rates were variable among species (small, large mouth bass) & season
- Return to Capture Site
  - All fish returned >1.5 years post-tournament
  - Largemouth bass tended to return to capture site in range of >3.5 months (early season) to >7.8 months (mid-season)
  - Smallmouth bass returned >1 month (early & mid season) to >3 months following late-season tournament
- Mortality
  - Only 1 mortality of a largemouth bass (late season) in study

# 2021 Tournament Schedules

	Big Rideau	Mississippi	White	Newboro	Dog-Whitefish-Cranberry
Renegade Bass Tournament	1			1	
RJnBirdees Big Bass Megabucks	2				
Shoot Out Fishing League	3	2	1	2	2
Bass Anglers Association	4	1	1		1
Kingston Avid Anglers	1			1	1
Ottawa Valley South Bass Masters	1	1			

# List of Concerns Brainstorm

- ▶ Each Lake Association asked to create a list of concerns.
- ▶ Concerns categorized into 3 groups:
  - Biological (e.g, fish displacement, increased transmission of invasive species, etc.)
  - Social (e.g., boat concentration in specific areas)
  - Safety (e.g., decibel levels, boat speed, event frequency)

# Meeting - November 8, 2021

- ▶ Dr. Stephen Cooke, Alice Abrams (PhD Candidate) - Carleton University
- ▶ Lake Coalition - Steve Nichol & Philip Albert (BRLA), Doreen Donald (MLA), Dave Overholt (White Lake)
- ▶ Review of the issues with Dr. Cooke's commentary resulted in distillation of the 'asks'

# The Possible “Asks”

## ▶ Catch-Weigh-Release

- Eliminates need for centralized weigh-in points - reduces boat traffic/concentration, boat speed & noise levels
- Reduces: retention time of fish before release; fish displacement, stacking, mortality
- Potential reduction in number of fish eligible for weigh-in

## ▶ Enhanced Communication Between Tournament Organizers & Lake Associations

- Annual meetings
- Tournaments becoming members of Lake Associations
- Sharing of annual tournament schedules

## ▶ Other Tournament Changes

- Creating an ‘acceptable fishing distance to shore’ etiquette
- Having identifying ‘bibs” for anglers



# Next Steps

- ▶ Find additional lakes that have bass fishing tournaments
- ▶ Reach out to [vp@mlakes.org](mailto:vp@mlakes.org)