

For Immediate Release:

OSHKOSH, WI.....The 1980 sturgeon spearing season on Lake Winnebago is just over the horizon, and many veteran spearers are already getting their gear in order. This year the season opens February 9 and continues through March 1. It appears that spearers will be greeted by conditions that are almost the exact opposite of the 1979 opener.

On the opening day of the season, February 10, 1979, more spearing shanties were still sitting along the shoreline than were to be found on the lake. Heavy snowfalls in December and January blanketed the lake, making travel almost impossible. To complicate matters, the pressure from the snow caused the water to be pushed upward through cracks and spearing holes, flooding the ice. Most of the 700 opening day spearing shanties had to be positioned by snowmobile.

When the 20-day season was over, 2,973 spearers had taken 421 fish - a good harvest in lieu of horrendous travel conditions. The average length of the fish harvested was 56 inches, with an average weight of 48 pounds. Five of the trophies topped the 100 pound mark, the largest being a 74 inch, 109 pounder, taken by Charles Wilz of Menasha, Wisconsin.

There is no spearing season on Lakes Poygan, Winneconne and Butte des Morts in 1980.

Spearers trying their luck on Lake Winnebago this year, are once again reminded that the minimum size limit on sturgeon is 45 inches. It is an opportunity to harvest a trophy fish and if there is the slightest doubt as to whether or not a fish is of legal length -- do not throw the spear!

All spearers must have a \$5.50 sturgeon spearing license and be at least 14 years of age. Spearers 14 and 15 years old are not required to have a hook and line fishing license in order to obtain a spearing license, but everyone else must have a current fishing license along with a sturgeon spearing license. Persons under 14 years of age are not authorized to spear sturgeon. The license must be carried by the person at all times while fishing for sturgeon by means

of a spear. A sturgeon tag is furnished with each license and must be immediately locked to the tail of the fish after it is speared.

A major change in the regulations this year is that which provides that no sturgeon spearing license may be purchased after the season opens. Licenses may be obtained prior to the season by mail by those persons not able to get to one of the numerous license depots found around the lake. License application forms are available at DNR offices in Oshkosh or Madison. Any person losing their license may obtain a duplicate from the county clerks or Department of Natural Resources for \$1.00.

GET YOUR LICENSE EARLY - NO LICENSES WILL BE SOLD AFTER THE SEASON OPENS ON FEBRUARY 9.

On the same day a sturgeon is speared, it shall be registered at an official DNR registration station by not later than 6:00 p.m. At the station, a registration tag will be attached to the fish and both that tag and the fisherman's own sturgeon tag shall remain attached until the fish is consumed.

Lake Winnebago contains a number of sturgeon that have DNR tags affixed to their dorsal fins. It is very important that anyone spearing a tagged fish bring it to the attention of the registration station. The information gathered from these tags will be of considerable value in the management of the Lake Winnebago sturgeon population. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Spearers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the pamphlet, "Wisconsin Spearing and Netting Regulations for 1980" -- as all regulations will be strictly enforced. Should you have any questions, contact your local conservation Warden.

Registration Stations
Lake Winnebago

Hours: 10:30 - 6:00 p.m.

East Shore

Wundrow's Tavern..... Fairy Springs Road - Hilbert
Phone: (414) 989-1393

Fishtale Inn..... Calumet County Park Road
Phone: (414) 439-1565

Dick Parson's Harbor Bar Stockbridge
Phone: (414) 439-1450

Fisherman's Inn..... Brothertown (at crossroads leading to the lake)
Phone: (414) 849-2760

Calumet Harbor..... State Fisheries Office, Manned by Department of Natural
Resources personnel
Phone: (414) 795-4211

Charles (Chuck) Lisowe's
Tap..... Quinney at the lake
Phone: (414) 439-1341

South Shore

Clarence's Harbor..... On Hwy 55-151 - one mile east of Fond du Lac
Phone: (414) 921-8349

West Shore

Wendt's Bar and Harbor.. On Hwy 45 - eight miles north of Fond du Lac at Winnebago-
Fond du Lac County Line
Phone: (414) 688-2601

Mac & Pack-Its Tavern... On Hwy 45 - 2 miles north of Fond du Lac (4501 Lake Shore Drive
Phone: (414) 923-9973

Jerry's Tavern..... 1210 Ceape Avenue, Oshkosh
Phone: (414) 231-7380

Payne's Point Resort.... On Winnebago County Trunk "A" about 3 miles south of Neenah
Phone: (414) 725-9722

North Shore

High Cliff State Park... Maintenance Shop above the Hill off Hwy "55"
Phone: (414) 989-1106

Waverly Beach Resport... Jct. of U.S. 10 and State 114 on the lake
Phone: (414) 733-9721

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Dan Folz, Area Fish Manager - Oshkosh
Phone: (414) 424-3059