



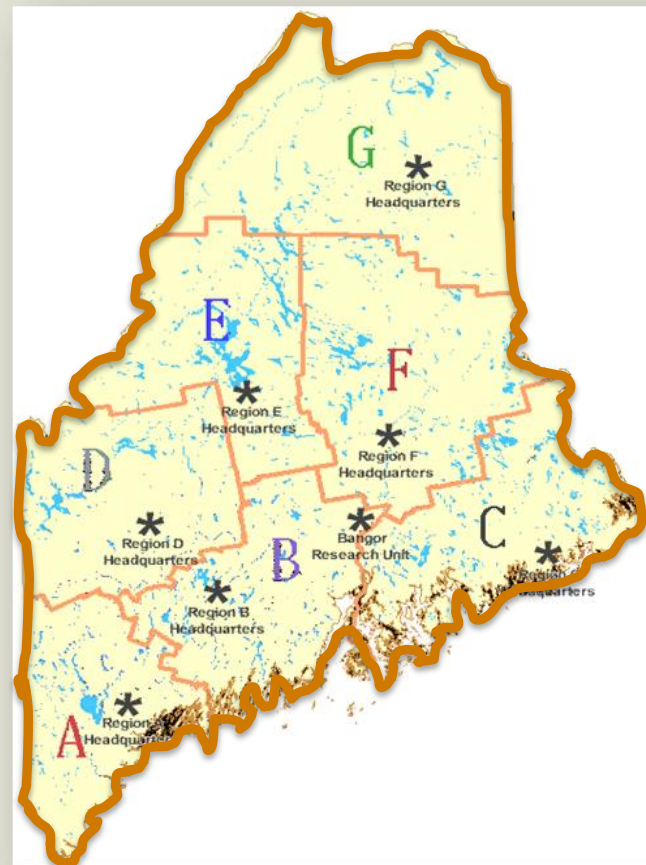
Invasive Fishes Update

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Challenges – Old and New



- IFW busy dealing with invasives on many fronts.
- Challenges and affected resources vary statewide.
- Spread of invasives continues despite our best efforts.
- Better habitat connectivity = invasive spread.
- Invasive issues dealing with some familiar species and some relatively new ones.



What Does “Invasive” Really Mean?



- Any species that is not native to a water can be invasive.
- Fish that are native to Maine can be invasive if moved.
- Invasive fish that are new to Maine are considered “exotic”.
- All invasives impact our native fish.



Why Are Invasives So Bad?



- Generally have no predators.
- Usually very adaptable.
- Prolific – a lot of fish!
- Compete with native species for food and habitat.
- Usually impossible to eliminate.



Northern Pike



- Continued spread of northern pike.
- Robust populations in:
 - St. George River.
 - Kennebec River.
 - Androscoggin River.
 - Sebasticook River.
- Unconfirmed (but likely) in:
 - Chickawaukie Pond (Rockport)
 - Unity Pond (Unity)
- Pike have caused irreparable damage to Maine waters.
 - Loss of salmon fishery in Belgrade Lakes.



http://www.luckylures.net/sox_lucius_record.php



Black Crappie



- Black crappie are everywhere!
- New populations:
 - Great Pond (Franklin)
 - Medunkeunk Lake (Millinocket Area)
 - Roxbury (Ellis) Pond (Roxbury)
 - Lower Sheepscot River watershed
 - Oxford County – several lakes
- Impacts
 - Native sunfish species
 - Overall lake productivity
 - Largemouth bass?
- Very popular with anglers.



Bass



- Both species in southern and central Maine since the late 1800's.
- Maine's second most sought sportfish.
- Adaptable, prolific.
- Voracious predators.
- Can compete/prey upon native species.
- State "split" in terms of management.
 - South zone – sportfish
 - North zone – no management



Smallmouth Bass



Largemouth Bass

Bluegill



- Popular sportfish in many states.
- Hybridize with native pumpkinseed sunfish.
 - Pumpkinseeds may become rare/extirpated
- Bluegill confirmed in the Sheepscot River watershed.
- Spreading throughout York County



White Catfish



- Found in lower Kennebec River since 1990's.
- Dam removals and fish passage have allowed expanded range.
- New introductions:
 - Sebasticook River
 - Penobscot River
 - Swan Lake
 - Nequasset Lake
- Voracious, opportunistic predator.



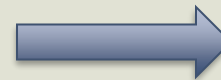
Yellow Bullhead



- Confirmed in the Sheepscot River - 2021.
- Unknown origin.
- Well established – numerous.
- Likely in ponds and lakes in the watershed.
- Atlantic salmon restoration concerns?
- Likely compete with native brown bullhead.



Yellow Bullhead



Other Invasive Fishes



Muskellunge



White Perch



Green Sunfish



Rock Bass

Questions?

