



Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lake Sturgeon Guided Tour planned for May 7th

On Thursday, May 7, from 1-3pm, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and Sturgeon for Tomorrow will host a Lake Sturgeon Viewing Guided Tour on the Upper Black River near Onaway. Staff from the Watershed Council and Sturgeon for Tomorrow will be on hand to talk about lake sturgeon, poaching enforcement, netting and tagging, recent Black Lake Watershed research, and restoration work to improve sturgeon habitat.

Each spring, the famed lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) head up select rivers to spawn along the rocky riverbanks, almost oblivious to nearby human activity, making these rare fish susceptible to illegal harvest. The lake sturgeon is a threatened species in Michigan and a rare species throughout the United States. That's why a committed group of conservation officers, volunteer off-duty national guards, and other volunteer groups concentrate in these areas 24-hours a day during spawning season to safeguard these fish from poaching. "This guided tour will provide a unique opportunity to potentially observe this fascinating fish while they spawn, as well as learn more about lake sturgeon biology, ecology and current protection efforts." The tour will also provide an opportunity for visiting the innovative streamside lake sturgeon rearing facility at the Kleber Dam on the Black River.

The Watershed Council and Sturgeon for Tomorrow are two of several partner organizations that collaborate on projects to improve lake sturgeon habitat and water quality within the Black Lake Watershed. A suggested donation of \$10.00 per person is appreciated to help support lake sturgeon and watershed protection. Participants are asked to pre-register by calling Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council at (231) 347-1181. Tours are limited to the first 30 participants. Meeting arrangements will be made upon registration. If you would like to learn more, please contact Valerie Olinik-Damstra, Watershed Coordinator at (231) 347-1181 or visit www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org.

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About Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council: *Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council speaks for our members including full-time and seasonal residents, lake associations, and businesses. We work to maintain the environmental integrity and economic and aesthetic values of lakes, streams, wetlands, and ground water in Northern Michigan, as well as statewide and throughout the Great Lakes Basin. As the lead organization for water resources protection in Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, and Emmet Counties, the Watershed Council is working to preserve the heritage of Northern Michigan – a tradition built around our magnificent waters.*