

Smelt Potentially Spreading in Florence County

Smelt are not native to Wisconsin and can have negative impacts on fish populations.

Maureen Ferry, Invasive Species Program Manager, Florence County Land Conservation Department - Oct. 7, 2009

Maureen Ferry, Invasive Species Program Manager, Florence County Land Conservation Department, reports the following:

I recently received a report that smelt may have been caught in Sea Lion Lake. Since Sea Lion Lake is connected to Keyes Lake and smelt are present in Keyes Lake, it is highly likely that they are also present not only in Sea Lion Lake, but nearby Loon Lake as well. In order to confirm the presence of smelt in these waters, a specimen or picture is needed.

The Land Conservation Department will work with the DNR to monitor for smelt in these waters next summer, but it is possible that they could be observed this fall or winter. Smelt are silver and 7 to 9 inches long and could possibly be confused with golden shiners. The following website is a useful aid for identifying fish species: <http://www.wiscfish.org/fishid/>. If you believe you have observed smelt, please bring a specimen (in water or on ice) or photograph to the Land Conservation Department in the Florence County Courthouse at 501 Lake Avenue or to the Wild Rivers Interpretive Center at Hwy 70 and US 2.

Smelt are not native to Wisconsin and can have negative impacts on fish populations. For more information on effects of smelt invasion visit:

http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/fact/rainbow_smelt.htm.

To prevent accidentally transporting aquatic invasive species:

- **INSPECT** your boat, trailer and equipment and **REMOVE** visible aquatic plants, animals and mud before leaving the water access area.
- **DRAIN** water from live wells, bilge, motor, bait buckets and transom wells before leaving the access area.
- **EMPTY** bait buckets into the trash.
- **DRY** the boat and equipment for at least five days before transferring to a new lake.
- If drying isn't possible, **RINSE** boat, tackle, downriggers and trailers with hot (above 104 degrees F) and/or **SPRAY** with high-pressure water.
- Learn what invasive organisms look like and **REPORT** questionable species; preserved specimens are needed to confirm sightings.

Thank you,
Maureen