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Newsletter February 2006

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- Third Annual IRBA Isle Royale Trout Fishing Tournament Results
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A newsletter to inform the members of ongoing activities within the Isle Royale Boater's Association, promote discussion among its members on various IRBA issues and share members' experiences related to boating, sport fishing, hiking, canoeing, and kayaking.

IRBA COMMENTS DRAFT WILDERNESS BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN/EIS - ISLE ROYALE by ED GLOWACKI

An amazing thing happened this past October; the NPS finally released their DWBMP/EIS (Draft Wilderness Backcountry Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement) for Isle Royale. You may recall this is the same plan that was actually released in December of 2004 including a notice in the Federal Register, but for some mysterious reason the NPS felt it was not ready for prime time and denied that they actually released it...go figure! Unlike a fine wine, this "new" release has not improved with age.

Recall that these plans require several alternatives and with the release of the draft document the NPS offers their preferred alternative. Some of the highlights...if you can call them that are a reservation system and carrying capacity.

The NPS's preferred alternative includes a reservation system. This system requires that all reservations be issued at a new mainland-based central permitting office - no island-based

office would exist. You would have to reserve your docks and campgrounds in advance. The cost of this office would be paid for...you guessed it...by the visitor! The description of one of the reservation alternatives was very confusing. When we asked the NPS to clarify this alternative, what they told us was not what was written! This is a significant error by the NPS and we believe a second Draft WBMP will need to be released.

The NPS has finally defined the carrying capacity of Isle Royale. It is based solely on campground and dock capacity. From June 16th thru September 15th 100% of the campgrounds and docks can be used. Capacity is reduced to 20% of the campground and dock capacity from April 16th thru June 15th. From September 16th to October 30th capacity is based on existing ferry schedules and their capacities. The truly amazing thing about the capacity the NPS has set is how much of your island they are basing this capacity on. A quick quiz to test your knowledge of how much of the island is considered for your use in this plan: a) 100% b) 75% c) 50% d) 25% e) 0.1%. If you picked "e" you are correct! That's right folks; the NPS

defined the capacity of Isle Royale only considering 0.1% of the land! Another way to look at it is we get 125 acres of our 131,925-acre Island! The 99.9% of the island not considered is defined in the GMP as the Pristine Zone. By not considering the Pristine Zone in the WBMP, when in fact the NPS included the zone in the scope of the WBMP, they are violating the National Environmental Policy Act.

IRBA submitted 7 pages of comments on the Draft WBMP, but we feel these two issues; reservation and capacities are the most significant. The next step of the process is for the NPS to consider comments and either release a new Draft or the Final plan. We will continue to monitor the NPS and keep our members informed.

Once we have thoroughly analyzed the WBMP/EIS we will send members our assessment. The plan should soon be available at the NPS's Isle Royale website www.nps.gov/isro/planform.htm (as of 1/4/2005 it had not been posted). Also by calling Isle Royale offices at 906-482-0986 you can request a plan be sent to you.

There is a 60 day comment period on this draft plan.

IRBA SCHEDULED EVENTS

IRBA Mtg. - Tuesday, February 28, 2006
7 PM Range Snowmobile Club,
South Range, MI

IRBA Mtg. - Tuesday, March 28, 2006
7 PM Range Snowmobile Club,
South Range, MI

West Fund raiser Thursday, June 15, Cocktail hour begins at 5:30 PM, more details to be announced later.

IRBA Annual Island Meeting - Saturday, July 22, 2006, 3 PM Rock Harbor Lodge, Isle Royale, MI, more details to be announced later.

IRBA WEST END NEWS by DWANE "BEAR" FALCONER

This spring is gearing up to be quite busy. Even before the thaw, we have been preparing for the Duluth Boat Show at the DECC, February 15th-19th. We will again share a booth with the National Park Service (NPS) throughout the week and are looking forward to the opportunities the show presents.

The West End has begun planning for our annual banquet and fundraiser at the Lakeview Castle, to be held in June. The success of the banquets has helped our goal of building a pavilion in Windigo come to fruition.

The materials needed for construction have been purchased and delivered to the NPS in Houghton, MI. Construction on the project is scheduled for May and June this year. We'll be looking for volunteers to help complete this venture. Many thanks to Halvor Lines for help in transporting our building materials and Tommy Thornton (Superior Sand & Gravel) for his donation of site preparation materials. We would also like to thank all of you who have supported this effort through your attendance at the annual banquets and private donations.

Just a reminder: The western members meet the first Monday of every month, at the Lakeview Castle. Everyone is welcome!

We are looking forward to the annual meeting on Isle Royale and are hoping for greater representation in the fishing contest. We'll bring our poles this time. Hope to see you there.

THIRD ANNUAL IRBA ISLE ROYALE TROUT FISHING TOURNAMENT RESULTS by DAVE HAND

The Third Annual IRBA Isle Royale Trout Fishing Tournament was held at Snug Harbor on Saturday, July 16, 2005. The weather was near perfect with sunny skies, temperatures in the middle 80's and calm winds.

The rules of the tournament were each boat entered in the tournament would provide the highest total weight of three fish caught between sunrise and 2PM with weigh-in at Snug Harbor. The fish caught were donated to the IRBA fish fry at Rock Harbor Lodge. A plaque and the bragging rights were given to the boat with the highest total weight. Plaques were given to second and third place winners, and the largest fish taken. A trophy was also given for the three largest fish taken by trolling. IRBA member, John Evans (Lanse, MI) donated plaques for the event for the third year. Thanks Again John!

This year was special as Upper Michigan's famous outdoor sports enthusiast, Buck Levasseur, was here to catch all the action. Again this year, most of the fishermen headed to the east end of the island and fished between North Government Island and Passage Island with some going out to the famed Gull Rock fishing grounds including the humps. The pressure was on the fishermen of the Miss Laurie (2003 winner) and the Miss Conduct (2004 winner) as they were going head to head to win the rubber match and try to claim the prize as the repeat IRBA champions. This year the bragging rights and first place prize went to the "Miss Laurie" and Crew [John Evans (Captain), Mike LeClaire and John Messer Jr.] with their three largest fish weighing a total of 46 lb 11 oz. (bobbing). The "Miss Conduct" and crew [Jim Markham (Captain), Rodney Markham, Joe Asiala, and Scott Hyrkas] came in second place with the three largest fish caught weighing a

total of 43 lb 11 oz. (bobbing). The first and second place teams were separated by only 3 lbs. The "Mishin Fishing" crew [Paul Peterson, Ship Lavold, Bob Annala and Jim Sellman] placed third with the three largest fish weighing a total of 26 lbs 10 oz (trolling). The trolling trophy also went to "Mishin Fishing". The "Miss Laurie" retained the trophy for the largest fish as Mike "Odie" LeClair caught a 21 lb 13 oz monster.

In addition to plaques, cash prizes of \$ 100 (first place), \$ 70 (second place), \$ 50 (third place), \$ 100 (biggest fish), \$ 100 (trolling trophy) were awarded.

This year we need to recognize other successful fishermen who participated in the tournament as the difference between the third, fourth and fifth places were only 15 ounces. Fourth place went to "Trout Tamer" and crew [Dennis Roy, Louis Roy and Don Lambert with a total weight of 26 lb 4 oz. (bobbing). Fifth place went to "Waterwitch" and crew [Bill and Pat Siler] with a total weight of 25 lb 11 oz. (trolling). It should also be mentioned that the "Creative Touch" and crew [Mickey Litwin Dave Durland, Gary Ayers and Jeff Rossi] had a total weight of 19 lb 13 oz. (trolling). The "Mistake" and crew [Bob Forsman Mark Kinnunen (Captain) and son Noah, Paul Takhtinin and son and Todd Kinnunen] had a total weight of 18 lb 10 oz. (bobbing), and the "Spare Time" and crew [Don and Tammy Beauchamp] had a total weight of 14 lb 1 oz. (trolling). Don and Tammy also caught a 4 lb king salmon.



John Kappler awarding the first place trophy to the Crew of the Miss Laurie, John Evans (second left) Mike LeClaire (middle), and John Messer (right).



John Kappler (right) awarding the second place plaque and prize money to the Miss Conduct Joe Rodney Markham (second right), Asiala (second left), Captain Jim Markham (middle).

Overall, the tournament was a great success with a lot of participation from IRBA members. About \$ 200 in tournament proceeds were raised for the IRBA general fund. IBRA thanks the fishermen for their participation. The tournament is in the planning stages for fourth annual tourney and suggestions are welcome. ----

I.R.B.A. RECEIVES TV COVERAGE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING - Don Hannula

This past summer Upper Peninsular Sports Writer and television host Buck LeVassuer traveled to Isle Royale with IRBA member Don Hannula (Skipper) and his son Craig. During the five day stay Buck shot over 400 feet of camera footage ranging from 5:00 o'clock sunrises, scenic shots, fishing action, interviews with IRBA members, and great coverage of IRBA functions. Buck mixed well with IRBA member for the five days asking questions and learning about Isle Royale issues. After taking in the annual meeting at Rock Harbor and fish fry after the meeting Buck put away the camera. Buck returned to Marquette Sunday afternoon and worked his magic with his film. By air time on Monday 7:30pm he put together a great half hour show.

He started out by showing the sunrise shot from Middle Island Passage Lighthouse. (Never thought I'd have to get up that early on the Island and haul that much camera gear to the lighthouse). He covered some of our fishing and the cooking of fresh fish by Jim Drew at Caribou Island. While at Edison Fishery had an interview with longtime Island fisherman Les Matson. Les was gracious enough to give us the key to the tower for the outside scenic shots of Middle Island Passage. Buck show footage of how our small group enjoys the Island by meeting at Caribou Island for great meals and fellowship. Footage on air shows the cooking of the traditional BBQ rib dinner. This year 35 showed for the rib feast. It should be noted that the footage of Caribou Dock showed many boats docked there (Thirteen to be exact). In no way should this be construed as overcrowding, for everyone who was there WANTED to be there! Even a moose showed up one evening a Caribou which Buck got on tape and showed on air. So much for the thought that 30+ people are harmful to the wildlife!

As described above, we had great weather for the annual fishing derby which Skipper instead of fishing played camera boat. Buck aired live fishing shots as well as several boats showing their catch. This year 16 boats entered in the derby and Buck aired the weigh-in on his program. Also aired several shots from the free to the public fish fry that followed in which IRBA members fed 138 people. Buck aired great interviews with longtime IRBA members FRED BEITI and DR. DAVID GILBERT (RET). Buck closed out his show by thanking those involved and by showing more beautiful scenery of Isle Royale.

UPDATE: Right after the New Year came in Buck was advertising on TV that his first program of the year would be a repeat of his favorite show for 2005 and guess what? Yep, that right! Buck rated his coverage of your IRBA as his NUMBER ONE show for 2005. Of all the shows he does in a year's time that makes me awful proud of our IRBA.



Buck Levassuer filming during the annual IRBA meeting.

The annual fish fry was another huge success as we served over 125 people at the event. ---

Articles for Newsletter consideration are welcome. ----

*Please support your IRBA
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