

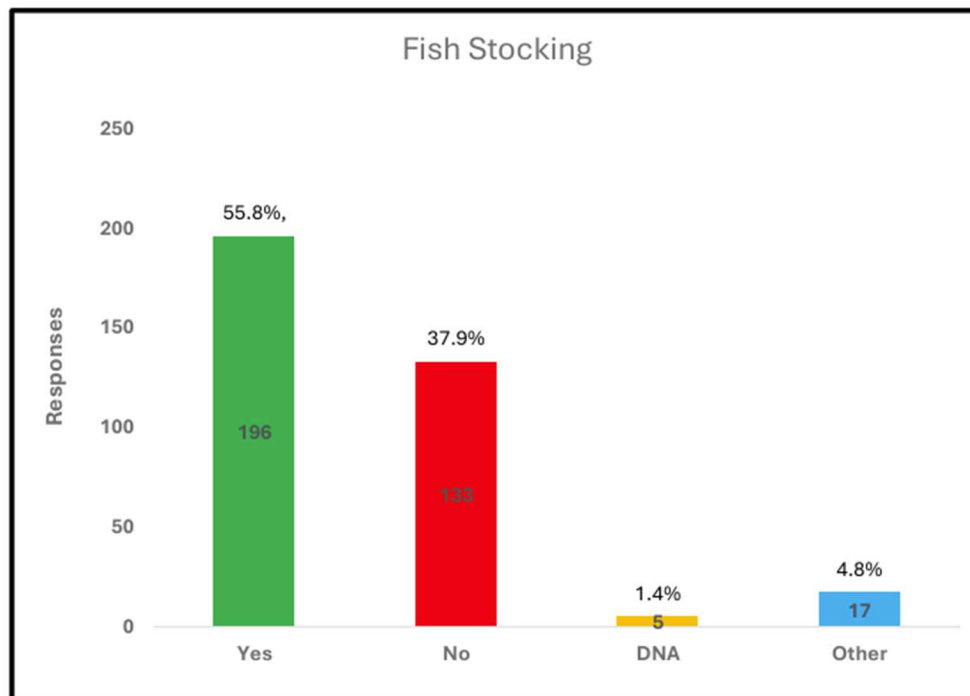
## RLMC Survey Results – Fall 2024

### Fish Stocking: Member Feedback and Recommendations

#### Question #4

*For the past 20+ years, RLMC has provided some level of fish stocking to Big Rainbow Lake. Do you consider fish stocking a valuable expense that should remain as part of the annual budget?*

- 196 Yes
- 133 No
- 5 Did not answer (DNA)
- 17 Left comment but did not directly answer question
- 20% 71 of the 351 respondents left a comment



## **Summary of Comments on Fish Stocking**

Respondents are closely split on fish stocking vs. other questions on the survey which had a significant majority response.

**Fish Habitat:** The majority of comments received identified the lake's fish habitat or lack thereof. ~20 of the 71 comments note wake boats as a possible cause of habitat deterioration as well as farm run off and lowering of lake levels. These comments begged more questions of why stock at all when the fish may not have a thriving habitat.

**Cost Transparency:** Additional comments inquired how much we pay for fish stocking, and suggestions for changing the timing of stocking from every year to every other year.

**Species:** Suggestions to re-evaluate the types of fish being introduced.

In summary, when reviewing the comments given by YES voters, there are still questions and alternative ideas for what type of fish and the timing of the stocking. Addressing the lakes' habitat could be a key factor in fish stocking discussions. As with other questions from the survey – comments regarding transparency of current financials and expenditures were given.

## **Fish Stocking: Member Feedback and Recommendations**

### ***Raw data as submitted by members***

1. No - we have bass, crappie, catfish and panfish and we don't stock any of those. i think a disproportionate amount of money is spent for the number of people benefitting
2. Yes, As long as we can stock the right species. Walleye is not it. Pike or muskie would be better to help control shad over abundance.
3. No, The fishing is at an all-time low. The State of Michigan (DNR) should be helping with this issue.
4. Cut the sticking in half
5. Yes,certain Species not all, need fish that will eat the shad.
6. I believe that should be an as needed expense
7. No,Unless you stock BOTH lakes
8. Not knowing the cost effects the decision it is important but is fish stocking paying off
9. Let it go back to bass and bluegills like it was.
10. There doesn't seem to be an overall effect on type of fish quality

11. Maybe on a every other year expense
12. No,I see the lake mostly being used as an all-sports lake, not fishing as it was 15 years ago.
13. alternative Only if wake boards are forbidden. They tear up the bottom and decrease food supply for fish
14. No,By adding another carnivorous fish (Walleye) to an already dimishing pan fishing lake, (just for the sport of it), will deplete what's left. Panfishing hasn't been very good for years now, it takes away an awful lot of family fishing time. Pan fish and perch are a favorite of walleye.
15. alternative stock IF government assistance
16. No - take the lake down to winter's limits; with no exceptions
17. Yes,I would love to see the return on fish stocking. I believe with no vegetation in the lake for fry to seek shelter in and to complete the nitrogen cycle it is pointless to continue until the vegetation is back.
18. Yes,Reasonable budget
19. Yes - if all fishermen are owners of rl
20. I do not fish, but this seems to me to be one of the primary reasons to live here so I consider it important but don't feel qualified to vote a yes
21. No,Agricultural run off has always been a big concern. More the farmers tile, the worse it becomes.
22. No,The water quality is not safe enough to regularly eat fish out of the lake in my opinion.
23. No,Evidence that stocking is working?
24. No,We do not fish, however, some do enjoy this activity.
25. Yes,Are grants available
26. Yes - Gizzard shad seem to be overpopulated
27. Not sure ? Please keep working on water quality!!!
28. Yes,Again what is the cost?
29. No - Could move to every other year
30. Yes - if you can do it correctly. 10k or whatever on walleye without proper research was a waste

31. Walleye stocking is not worth the cost. I would support a fish survey to determine if other species like bass & crappie would provide reasonable benefit
32. No - perhaps the fishermen can support cost of stocking as they did in the late 1970's and 80's
33. No, There used to be a much larger bluegill, crappie population before all the money was spent on "stocking" the lake with walleye. Interfering with the lake dynamic has worsened the fishing for smaller species, and has diminished the lake biodiversity.
34. No, Fishing hasn't been good in years.
35. No, They definitely are not making the lake any cleaner. I hate to see it go, but if it means drastically increasing dues, then it should go.
36. Yes, Could we get bluegill. I believe they would multiply. I rarely catch a bluegill.
37. To a point I support this, but I am more concerned about why the fish do not naturally replenish themselves. I just don't know, is the problem weed killing, or farm runoff that poisons the fish. I'm on the fence, but clearly there should be fish in the lake.
38. No, The lake has been stocked long enough it should have an eco system that lets its reproduce and maintain the population on its own.
39. No, In favor of stocking, but first must thoroughly understand the ecosystem, or just wasting money/fish
40. Yes, Unless dues are increased, this expense should be cut so other expenses and a larger emergency fund created for future emergencies/ expenses.
41. unable to give my vote. What is the cost for us.
42. No, While I do like the idea of stocking the lake, we are allowing the lake to be destroyed by wake boats. In the long run they will kill off vegetation and the lake will not be able to support the fish. We can save money now if we aren't going to care for our lake overall.
43. No, honestly, can't fish a lot in this lake anymore with the huge boats that are allowed on the lake just disrupts the fishing, if this expense continues then need to set times just for fishing.
44. Yes, but we need to do a better job of it.
45. Yes - absolutely, fishing has been very bad the last few years, more fish!
46. No - not until the lake is ok again. The lake bottom is rapidly deteriorating at an alarming timeline, why put new fish in the lake so they can die!!

47. Yes, Need improved regulations or enforcement of recreational watercraft. Many are not respectful to members that are fishing.
48. No, I think we could get by doing in every 3-4 years
49. fish stocking should be by donation to those who fish the lake
50. No - fishing is really bad on lake Lowering Raising lake make bad fishing and no weed in lake for fish Surfing boats wreck fish habitat
51. No. Need more information . What is considered " some level?" How often, how much is the cost and how many times. How many fish? How is this monitored to know it's effectiveness
52. No, A far better investment would actually be the effort to improve fish habitat and water quality within the lake. These efforts provide long-term stable benefit as opposed to the impermanent transient benefit of fish stocking. The fact that stocking is necessary to sustain some level of a fishery suggests that the lake is impaired to begin with.
53. No, Let the fishermen pay for stocking
54. No, Not as an annual budget. Possibly semi annual or every three years.
55. No adequate fish stocks of natural species are adequate. Rainbow Lake is not heavily sport fished. The lake is capable of maintaining a natural population of a variety of species on its own. If additional species are stocked in the lake and they decline and require restocking on a regular basis, then it's unnecessarily taxing the ecosystem. There is a very good natural population of a variety of species. Avid sport fishermen who want lake trout, walleye, or coho know where they have to find them.
56. how much of an expense is it?
57. no - seems ineffective ie; didn't see more fish being caught except by cormorants
58. Yes, I think a handicap fishing ramp is a bad idea. How many people will use it? I would rather see walleye stocked in the lake again.
59. Yes, Everyone likes fishing sometimes.
60. alternative When was the last time it was stocked. What is the expense?
61. NO the big speedboats have destroyed the lake
62. No - because the large boat tear up the fish beds
63. No - fish come through the creek and so do pollutants
64. No, I'm not sure what results are being received.
65. No not many fish out here and you out of line

66. Yes,Comments below

67. alternative We are neutral on thi. I suppose it depends on the type of fish eing introduced and whether introducing a particular species will have a detrimental affect on other species and marine life

68. No,I thoroughly enjoy fishing on our lake, but if we need to be financially responsible right now, that is one thing we can easily cut to improve our finances!

69. No,wake boating is destroying lake bottom and therefor ruining fish habitat,why stock lake if just continuing to destroy their home?

70. Yes,Where are the fish? When was it last stocked??

71. Yes - we moved here 20+ years ago for fishing \* peacefulness. Now no fish and the high powered boats has arroaded our shore line. No fish and no quiet. We've lost over 2 feet of short line