

Senator Pavlov offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 174.

A resolution to recognize Clay Township as the sturgeon angling capital of Michigan.

Whereas, By far, more sturgeon angling occurs in the North and Middle Channels of the St. Clair River within the political boundaries of Clay Township than anywhere else in Michigan. Though other areas of the state are open to catch and immediate release for sturgeon fishing, populations are too small to make sturgeon a viable target species in most watersheds. In a few other areas where some harvest is allowed, regulations severely restrict the seasons. Most sturgeon fishing in the St. Clair River occurs in the North Channel, which is almost entirely within the boundaries of Clay Township; and

Whereas, The waters of the St. Clair River within Clay Township have the longest and most active harvest seasons for lake sturgeon in Michigan for nonstocked waters with natural reproduction. The harvest season in the waters of the St. Clair River in Clay Township runs from July 16 until the end of September. Catch and immediate release angling continues until the end of November; and

Whereas, More sturgeon fishing permits are issued to anglers in the Greater Detroit Metro Area, including Wayne, Macomb, St. Clair, and Oakland Counties, with the vast majority issued in Macomb and St. Clair Counties. Those anglers fish almost exclusively within the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River; and

Whereas, The waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River within the boundaries of Clay Township support the only commercial charter boat fishery for lake sturgeon in the state of Michigan; and

Whereas, More tagged sturgeon are reported to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and more Lake Sturgeon Management Cooperator patches are issued to anglers fishing the Clay Township waters of the St. Clair River than to anglers fishing anywhere else in the state of Michigan; and

Whereas, A vast majority of lake sturgeon recorded in the Michigan DNR Master Angler Program are taken from Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River. A search of the records for the last five years shows that 63 of 67 entries came from the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair; and

Whereas, Michigan's only sturgeon and most unique fishing tournament, the North Channel Sturgeon Classic, is held fully within the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River. There were more than 33 fish caught by anglers during the tournament in 2015; and

Whereas, National Geographic television filmed a sturgeon angling segment on the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair which aired in 2009 and several times thereafter as part of the "Monster Fish" series. Michigan Out of Doors television has done several sturgeon angling segments over the last several years for the television show. All of these trips have taken place in the Clay Township waters of the North Channel of the St. Clair River; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we encourage and express support for the recognition of Clay Township as the sturgeon angling capital of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to Clay Township, St. Clair County, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, organizers of the North Channel Sturgeon Classic, and the Michigan United Conservation Clubs.