

MDNR Fisheries Planting - by Bob Kren

You probably know where the plantings are in your locale, but if you want to fish new water, you go to <http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/> for information. Let's say you want to find trout plantings in the Rifle River. On the DNR website, you choose "Ogemaw" County, that particular stream "Rifle River" (or, if you're adventurous, choose "All"), a species "brown trout" (or again, you can hit "All") (there's even a choice of a particular strain of brown trout, but "All" works for me, 'cuz I ain't too particular when it comes to a brown trout's heritage), and a date range (I chose January 2008 – December 2015). There are too many other choices you could have made, but hit "submit." Up comes the data, which looks like this:

Fish Stocking Database								
County	Water Body	Species	Strain	Date	Number	Avg. Lengt	Operation	Fin Clips, Marks, Tags
Ogemaw	Rifle River - PAS	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	4/6/2009 6:00:00 PM	3500	4.34	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	4/6/2009 6:00:00 PM	3500	4.34	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - PAS	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	4/6/2009 6:00:00 PM	3500	4.34	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	4/6/2009 6:00:00 PM	3500	4.34	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	4/6/2009 6:00:00 PM	3500	4.34	State Plant	none

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You'll notice that there were 37 total plantings during that time period, and you can zap the arrows at the bottom of the chart to see more. If you hover your cursor over one "Water Body," the second entry down, say, the display changes to this:

County	Water Body	Species	Strain	Date	Number	Avg. Lengt	Operation	Fin Clips, Marks, Tags
Ogemaw	Rifle River - PAS	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE RIVER (23N 03E 34)	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none
Ogemaw	Rifle River - RIFLE	Brown trout	Gilchrist C	5/5/2008 5:06:00 PM	3000	4.66	State Plant	none

Thus far, we know that on May 5, 2008, at 1706 hrs, 3000 Gilchrist strain brown trout, average length 4.66 inches, were dumped into the river at 23N 03E 34. What in the bleep! does THAT mean?

If you have an ancient set of county maps, you'd know. I gave mine away long ago. What follows is a guide to how we turn these PLSS (Public Land Survey System) coordinates into planting locales. These coordinates cover LARGE tracts of land, so look for places where roads intersect the Rifle, and you'll be fine.

Open both Google Earth and your browser (I use Chrome, but I imagine that Edge or Explorer or Firefox will work, too). Paste <http://www.metzgerwillard.us/plss/plss.pdf> into a browser window address bar, and hit "enter." When the window opens, in the top row you'll see the link <http://www.metzgerwillard.us/plss/>, which click. You'll get another window, with a link PLSGE near the top. Click. Your Google Earth window will change appearance. Under "Overlays" click "Township," then navigate around. When you change locations, it's about five seconds for the screen to refresh. Read the text in the original .pdf for instructions. Bon appetit