

## “GRAND FINALE”



Dave with a 40 inch, 35 pound flathead catfish

It was **December 12, 2015** and likely the last fishing trip of the year for me. **Usually** by this time of year in Michigan, it is **snowing and ice** is beginning to form on the water, so Dave Cramer and I decided we had better get out and do some fishing. The **Grand River** was selected because previous trips on the river had produced, and we hoped to make this one memorable. The weather was **50 degrees, cloudy, foggy, and misting with no wind**---very comfortable for this time of year. **Water color was 3 feet**, quite good. We started out trolling crankbaits and

casting spinners for steelhead, but after a couple of hours and no hits, **decided to anchor and cast jump lures** on some previously mapped structures. This proved to be the **correct depth and speed control** needed at that time. One of the boats' occupants was accused of exhibiting a memory lapse in the art of timekeeping and the other for starting a "fish call war", so the chatter remained back and forth all day.

**13 fish were caught** on this trip from **5 anchoring positions**. Despite the fact that the fish were mostly **scattered and slow**, every spot produced at least one fish. Fish caught included 2 walleye to 15 inches, 1 small pike, and 5 smallmouth bass to 15 inches. The **most fun**, however was on one spot where **big flathead catfish were schooled up**. The smallest was 20 inches, the next 33 inches and 16 pounds, the next 35 inches and 21 pounds, the next 37 inches and 24 pounds, and the **biggest was 40 inches and 35 pounds**. That was the largest fish ever netted in my boat, and what a fight it put up! Note the **big increase in weight** of these catfish **with just a few extra inches** in length. All the fish were released, and it was **a great day for the years' final trip on the Grand!**

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37 inch, 24 pound flathead catfish