

"LANCE VALENTINES' TALK ON GPS"



Garmin GPS Map 172 unit

At the **May 19, 2003 West Michigan Walleye Club meeting**, **Lance Valentine** gave a **presentation** titled: **"GPS: The Basics and Beyond"**. Last year Lance gave an excellent program at one of our meetings about Sonar, and this one was as good or better. He felt that **after his sonar, his GPS unit was the most important aid to his fishing success**. He does **a lot of "pre-fishing" at his dining room table** going **over maps and GPS coordinates** to plan for the next days fishing or tournament. Coordinates from **productive structures** on previous trips, **new structures** to check out, and **spots where friends have caught fish** are **all put in** his unit to refer to the next day. This planning ahead **saves** considerable **time on the water**.

Lance recommends that if we are purchasing a unit, we **get one with a 12-channel satellite receiver and WAAS (Wide Area Augmentation System)** capability for greatest accuracy. Most units sold in the last year are WAAS capable. DGPS units offer good accuracy to 15-25 feet. **WAAS capable units are accurate down to 3-10 feet**. DGPS units need a 3-4 foot antenna, whereas WAAS units have a very tiny antenna built into the unit. **All GPS units are more accurate on water than land**.

It was emphasized that even though one has a GPS unit, **it is important to be knowledgeable in navigation on the water**. Carry **extra sets of batteries** for hand held units **and a compass**. At times, the **transmissions from the satellites will stop**. **Pencil, paper, map, and latitude-longitude ruler** are **critical tools** Lance uses to record **information**. He recommends that **information be recorded each time a waypoint is entered**. If he fishes a body of water several days in a row, **he can often plot the progress of groups of walleye and even predict where they will be the next day**. GPS is the **most accurate** way to get **ground speed for trolling**, especially **if the unit is put on a 5 second update rate**. When **running fast, the update rate should be more frequent**.

Lance Valentines' talk was **clear and concise** in down-to-earth terms. He explains a difficult subject very well and is animated in his presentation. **From the perspective of one who does not own a GPS unit yet, he made a very convincing argument!**

Chase Klinesteker

(Update—2014)—I now own one and love it, using it mostly to pinpoint structures on specific Michigan lakes that I fish. My unit has **downloaded Michigan lake contour maps** so **waypoints are saved on the contour map in the unit.** Electronic aids such as the GPS **can be helpful and save time,** yet we need to remember that Buck Perry talked about fishing tools, and that their main function is to help us control depth and speed in our lure presentation. **Aids such as GPS units and sonar can be helpful also, especially with location, mapping, and interpretation of structure.)**