2016-2017 Turtle-Flambeau Flowage & Trude Lake Fishing Regulations*

FISH SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT**	LENGTH RESTRICTIONS
WALLEYE	May 7 - March 5	3	None
MUSKELLUNGE	May 28- Nov. 30	1	40" minimum length
NORTHERN PIKE	May 7 - March 5	5	None
LARGEMOUTH BASS	May 7 - March 5	5	Only fish < 14", except 1 > 18"
SMALLMOUTH BASS	May 7 - June 17	0 (Catch and Release Only)	
SMALLMOUTH BASS	June 18 - March 5	5	Only fish < 14", except 1 > 18"
PANFISH (Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, Crappie, Perch)	Open All Year	10 in total	10" for Crappie
	*No size limit for bluegill, perch, pumpkinseed		
ROCK BASS	Open All Year	None	None
BULLHEADS AND ROUGH FISH	Open All Year	None	None
LAKE STURGEON	No Open Season	0	

*This is an abbreviated summary of seasons, size and bag limits. For complete fishing regulations please refer to the official Fishing Regulations Booklet.

**No person may be in possession of, or have under their control, more than the daily bag limit for the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage while fishing on the Flowage.

Throughout the 2016-2017 fishing season the WDNR will be conducting fish population and creel surveys. These surveys are critical for understanding the status of the entire fish community as well as angler harvest on fish populations. The creel survey only takes a few moments to complete; we greatly appreciate angler cooperation. Effort put forth by all involved will ultimately allow the WDNR to better manage the fantastic fisheries of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake, and ensure their sustainability for the future.

B B

CHIPPEWA INDIAN HARVEST

A 1983 federal court decision reaffirmed the rights of Chippewa Indians to hunt, fish and gather wild foods within the ceded territory of northern Wisconsin. The Flowage has supported a walleye spear fishing harvest since 1984. Safe harvest levels are determined annually so that the combined harvest of anglers and spear fishers does not endanger the future of the walleye population.

INFORMATION

For more information about the fishery and fishing regulations on the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage please contact:

Mercer Ranger Station
Department of Natural Resources
5291N Statehouse Circle
Mercer, WI 54547
(715)-476-7847
http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/turtleflambeau/

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WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

SPORT FISH RESTORATION

The Fishery in the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage:

➢ Fish Population Status

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Management stocking 5 month old sturgeon into the Turtle Flambeau Flowage during October of 2015

➢ Turtle-Flambeau Flowage & Trude Lake Fishing Regulations

2016

Proof # 1

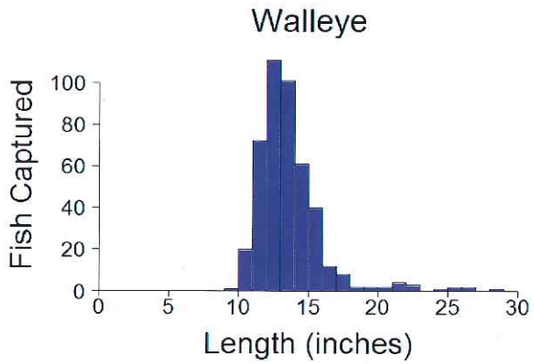
The Turtle-Flambeau Flowage Fishery:

The Turtle-Flambeau Flowage is one of northern Wisconsin's gems; endless angling possibilities with second-to-none scenery. The TFF fish community is highly diverse and has something to offer every angler. Although perhaps most famous for a high density walleye fishery, the Flowage is also home to a world-class smallmouth bass fishery. Panfish are present in low-moderate densities, but all species (bluegill, black crappie, and yellow perch) are available in above-average sizes. The musky fishery has a history of producing world-class specimens and although are found in low-moderate numbers, most are quality size. The TFF offers all of these fishing opportunities to anglers while also providing an unparalleled wilderness experience.

TFF Fish Population Status:

Walleye

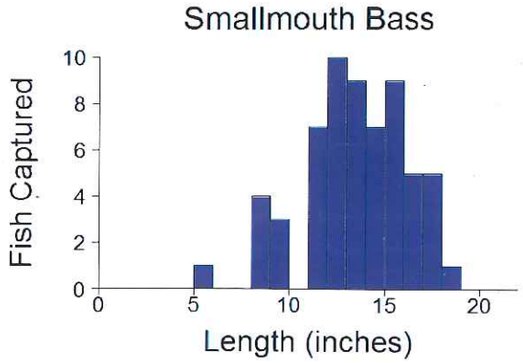
The Turtle-Flambeau Flowage contains a self-sustaining walleye population, where no stocking is needed to assist the population and/or fishery. Above average natural reproduction results in an abundance of catchable size fish in the population, providing anglers with a good opportunity for a successful walleye outing. During a recent 2015 early-spring netting survey, the walleye population size structure was as follows:



18% of adult walleye were ≥ 15 inches in length. Survey data shows that although most of the individuals in the population fall within the 12"-16" range, there are also a few trophy specimens lurking in the TFF waters. These survey results provide anglers with a good representation of what they can expect to find in the near-shore areas during the late-spring and early-summer months.

Smallmouth Bass

The TFF boasts an outstanding smallmouth bass fishery. The population has strong numbers of quality sized individuals. A recent, late-spring electrofishing survey conducted in 2014 documented the following smallmouth bass size distribution in the Flowage:



61 smallmouth bass captured during the survey ranged from 5.7"-18.7". While 45% were ≥ 14", only 10% were also ≥ 17". New for the 2016 fishing season is a bass regulation change on TFF and Trude. The regulation aims to focus harvest on individuals < 14" in length to slightly reduce recruitment and improve growth rates. Increased recruitment in recent years has led to densities slightly above management goals. With this regulation, we hope to make the currently outstanding bass fishery even better by balancing numbers with trophy potential.

Panfish

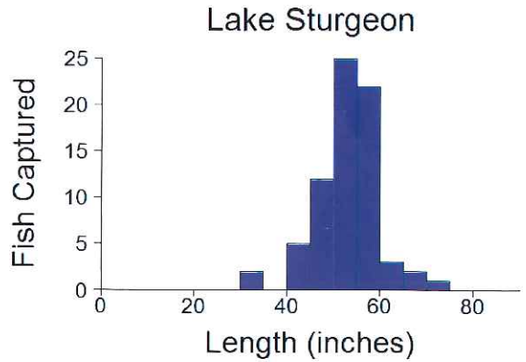
Although anglers should not expect to catch large numbers of panfish in the Flowage, the ones that are caught should be of exceptional size. During a 2014 late-spring electrofishing survey, 96% of the bluegill were ≥ 6" in length, and 17% were ≥ 8" in length. From the same survey, 46% of the black crappie sampled were ≥ 8" in length, and 11% were ≥ 10" in length. These year classes are getting older and larger, and as numbers continue to improve, anglers can expect quality catches for the 2016 – 2017 fishing season.

Musky

Some large musky occupy Flowage waters. A recent study halted stocking efforts after 2012 to assess natural reproduction. This study showed that currently, very low natural reproduction is occurring. Therefore, the musky fishery is primarily sustained through stocking. However, the habitat and vast size of the Flowage allows muskies to grow old and attain great size, providing a fishery capable of producing true trophies.

Lake Sturgeon

It is important to note that this fishery is closed; it is illegal to target lake sturgeon in the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage or the Manitowish River at any time of the year. We are currently in the middle of a population rehabilitation project. Since 2004 we have protected the adult population (through season closure), completed periodic stocking efforts (every 5 years), and conducted annual monitoring to assess the population. Results from 2015 netting efforts show that population restoration efforts are working; the population now has a well-balanced size structure with many young fish recruiting to the adult population.



Although the project has improved the overall health of the population, the end goal is to re-establish natural reproduction, which has not yet been definitively documented.

You may be lucky enough to see one of these giant fish leap into the air (most common during July and August). And, while scientists aren't exactly sure why these creatures jump, it sure is impressive to see!

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For questions contact Gail Vandersteen - 920-617-0055 ext 110

P.O. 1372

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