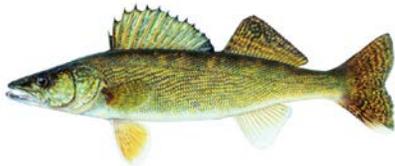




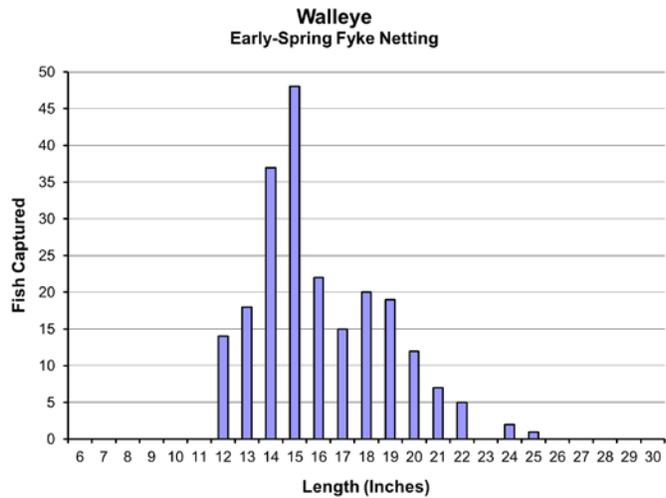
Early-Spring Fyke Netting Survey Summary Lac Courte Oreilles, Sawyer County, 2012

The Hayward DNR Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on Lac Courte Oreilles during April 10-11 as part of our baseline monitoring program. Eight nets were set overnight for two nights, resulting in 16 net-nights of effort. Primary target species were walleye, northern pike, and muskellunge. Quality, preferred, and memorable sizes referenced in this summary are based on standard proportions of world record lengths developed for each species by the American Fisheries Society.

Walleye



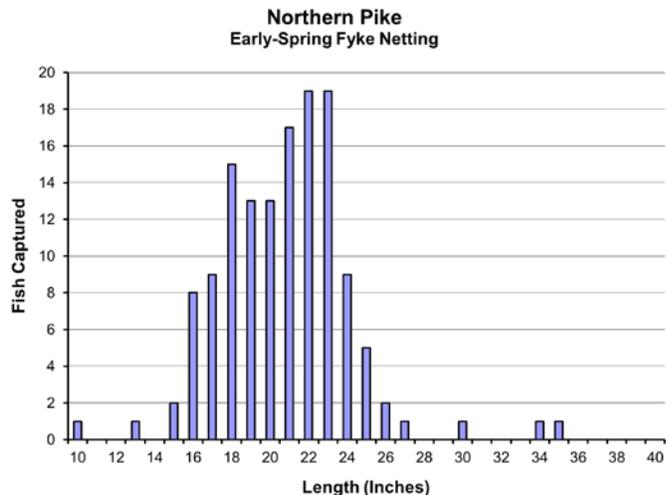
Captured 14 per net-night $\geq 10''$	
Quality Size $\geq 15''$	69%
Preferred Size $\geq 20''$	12%



Northern Pike



Captured 8 per net-night $\geq 14''$	
Quality Size $\geq 21''$	56%
Preferred Size $\geq 28''$	2%



Summary of Results

Water temperature at the time of this survey was between 46 and 51°F, making this survey well timed to provide a representative sample of walleye and northern pike. Muskellunge spawning was erratic in Lac Courte Oreilles during the spring of 2012; and we were unable to obtain a representative sample worthy of presentation here.

Walleye were captured at a moderate rate of 14 per net-night. A full population estimate was not calculated for walleye in 2012, so it is unclear whether current abundance falls within the target range of 3-5 adult walleye per acre (2007 Fishery Management Plan). However, the relative abundance of walleye (14 per net-night) is higher than average for the area. The proportions of 15- and 20-inch fish in comparison to the total catch meet or exceed target ranges of 50-70% for 15-inch fish and 5-10% for 20 inch fish. Growth and resulting size structure of Lac Courte Oreilles walleye remains excellent, and many “keeper” size fish are present in the lake.

Northern pike were first observed in Lac Courte Oreilles in the 1950's. Since that time the population has grown and pike are now an abundant predator that provide a fishing opportunity but also pose challenges to managing other species, particularly muskellunge. The goal for pike in Lac Courte Oreilles is a low-density population with a fishable population of large fish. Our 2012 survey suggests this goal is not being met. A population estimate was not made, but relative abundance based on average fyke net capture rate (8 per net-night) indicates a population that is greater than desired. Further, objectives for size structure (15-25% over 28 inches) are not being met (currently only 2% over 28 inches). Thinning this population will be key to achieving size and density objectives for pike and facilitating survival of juvenile muskellunge fingerlings, which are stocked once every three years. Anglers are encouraged to harvest small pike up to their daily bag limit of five. Pike longer than 24 inches might be released voluntarily in order to increase future odds of catching a desired proportion of preferred-size fish over 28 inches long.

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