



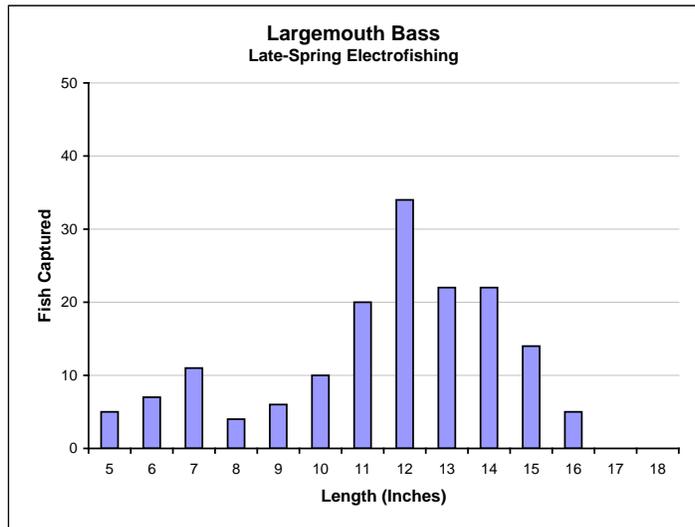
## Late-Spring Electrofishing Survey Summary Tiger Cat Chain, Sawyer County, 2011

The Hayward DNR Fisheries Management Team conducted an electrofishing survey on the Tiger Cat Chain during June 6-13, 2011 as part of our baseline monitoring program. A total of eight miles of shoreline was sampled (two miles sub-sampled for panfish), and effort was spread among all portions of this chain of lakes. Primary target species were largemouth bass and bluegill. A fyke netting survey conducted by our team in May documented the status of the muskellunge population. Those results are presented in a separate survey summary. 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.

### Largemouth Bass



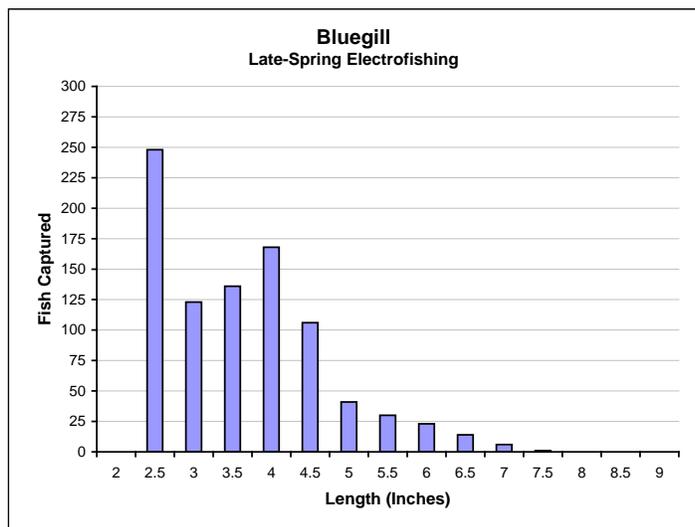
Captured 23 per mile $\geq 8''$	
Quality Size $\geq 12''$	71%
Preferred Size $\geq 15''$	14%



### Bluegill



Captured 324 per mile $\geq 3''$	
"Keeper" Size $\geq 7''$	1%
Preferred Size $\geq 8''$	0%



## Summary of Results

Special effort was made by our crew to ensure that the timing of these surveys was appropriate to sample the populations of bluegill and largemouth bass in major waters of the Tiger Cat Chain (including Placid, Upper Twin, and Lower Twin lakes). Several cold fronts occurred in proximity to sampling, but the team selected nights with consistent weather to conduct these surveys; and we believe this resulted in a very representative sample of the bass-bluegill populations in this system.

Largemouth bass were captured with moderate frequency (23 per mile). Many quality-size fish and some preferred-size fish were present in the sample. However, memorable-size fish were rare, as no fish over 18 inches were captured. The Tiger Cat Chain has abundant shallow-water vegetation and wood that serve as habitat for bass of all sizes. As a result, we expect largemouth bass to continue to be the dominant predator in this system even if walleye are stocked. Walleye in the Tiger Cat Chain should be considered a “bonus species.” Privately stocked (with DNR approval) 6- to 8-inch walleye fingerlings face significant challenges avoiding predation and competing with largemouth bass for food in such shallow, clear waters. The shallows are too clear and warm, and the depths are devoid of dissolved oxygen in mid summer, placing walleyes in a “pinch” for habitat with suitable light and temperature conditions. A few of the privately stocked walleye fingerlings may survive to adulthood, but anglers should not expect more than a low number of larger walleye. Walleyes hatching from natural reproduction are not likely to survive to their first birthday.

Bluegills were captured with relatively high frequency (324 per mile). Size structure was observed to be very poor (only 1% of “keeper-size”), further indicating an over-population of bluegills and excessive competition for food. Predation may not be adequate to thin the high numbers of bluegill (allowing good growth rates) with only a moderate density largemouth bass population and very few walleyes in the system. Muskellunge and northern pike rarely eat enough bluegills to help regulate their numbers.

Black crappie, northern pike, rock bass, pumpkinseed, and four species of shiner were also observed during this survey.

Report by Max Wolter – Fisheries Biologist, Sawyer County

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Approved for Web Posting by Steve Avelallemant, Northern District Supervisor 10/18/13