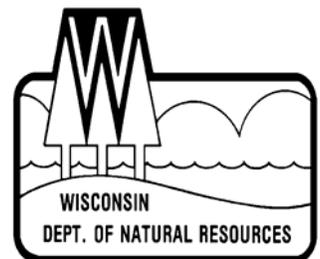


WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
CREEL SURVEY REPORT

**NELSON LAKE**  
SAWYER COUNTY  
**2008-2009**



Treaty Fisheries Publication  
2009



# INTRODUCTION

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regularly conducts netting and electrofishing surveys of area lakes and reservoirs to determine what species of fish are present, how many of each there are, and what is the health of these populations. Information is also needed to determine the impact sport anglers are having on fish populations. To gather this information we conduct creel surveys.

A creel survey is a management tool used to measure the fishing activities of the anglers on a body of water. The key word in the last sentence is **SURVEY**. We can not practically interview every angler (census) who fishes on a lake. Creel surveys are designed to have a creel survey clerk on a lake, working random shifts, forty hours each week throughout the fishing season. Each month these shifts cover a sample of all the daylight hours. A computer program is then used to accurately calculate estimates of all angler activity. This data is summarized by month using information collected by the creel survey clerk.

Creel survey clerks travel around their assigned lakes using a boat or snowmobile to count and interview anglers. Typically only anglers that have completed their fishing trip are interviewed. We prefer not to disturb anglers while they are fishing.

You may have encountered one of the department's clerks on a recent fishing trip and were interviewed. It only takes a moment of your time, but it helps us determine quite a lot about the fishery.

This creel survey report will provide you with four types of estimated information for this body of water:

1. Overall fishing pressure
2. Fishing effort directed at each species
3. Catch and harvest rates
4. Numbers of fish caught and harvested.

Also included in this report are physical information about the lake; discussion of results of the survey; and detailed summaries, by species, of what anglers caught.

Additional copies of this report and those covering other local lakes can be obtained from the Spooner DNR. Written requests should be sent to:

Treaty Fisheries Biologist  
WDNR Spooner Office  
810 West Maple Street  
Spooner WI 54801

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Seasons Surveyed

The creel survey started on opening day (5/3) of the 2008 gamefish season and ran through March 1, 2009. The only period not covered by the survey during this time was November 1 through November 30, due to unsafe ice conditions.

## Harvest Regulations

The following seasons, daily bag limits, and length limits were in place on this lake in 2008-2009:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>	<u>Min. Size</u>
Largemouth Bass	6/21-3/01	5	none
Smallmouth Bass	6/21-3/01	5	none
Musky	5/24-11/30	1	34"
Northern Pike	5/03-3/01	1	32"
Walleye	5/03-3/01	*2	15"
Panfish	all year	10	none

\* The statewide bag limit was 5 walleye, but due to tribal declarations it was reduced on this lake.

## **SPECIES CATCH AND HARVEST INFORMATION**

Angling information is summarized on a single page for each species. If a page for a particular species is not present in this section it is because no one reported they were fishing for that species and/or none were caught. Each species page has up to five graphs covering the following:

### **1. ESTIMATED FISHING EFFORT**

Total calculated number of hours during each month that anglers spent fishing for this species.

### **2. ESTIMATED ANGLER CATCH AND HARVEST RATES**

Calculated number of hours it takes an angler to catch or harvest a fish of the indicated species. Only information from anglers who were specifically targeting this species is reported here.

### **3. ESTIMATED ANGLER CATCH AND HARVEST**

Calculated number of fish of the species indicated caught or harvested by all anglers.

### **4. LENGTH DISTRIBUTION OF HARVESTED FISH MEASURED BY THE CREEL CLERK**

All fish of this species that were measured by the clerk during the entire creel survey season.

### **5. AVERAGE LENGTH AND LARGEST FISH HARVESTED**

Average length and largest fish of this species harvested each month. Only those fish measured by the creel survey clerk are reported here.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

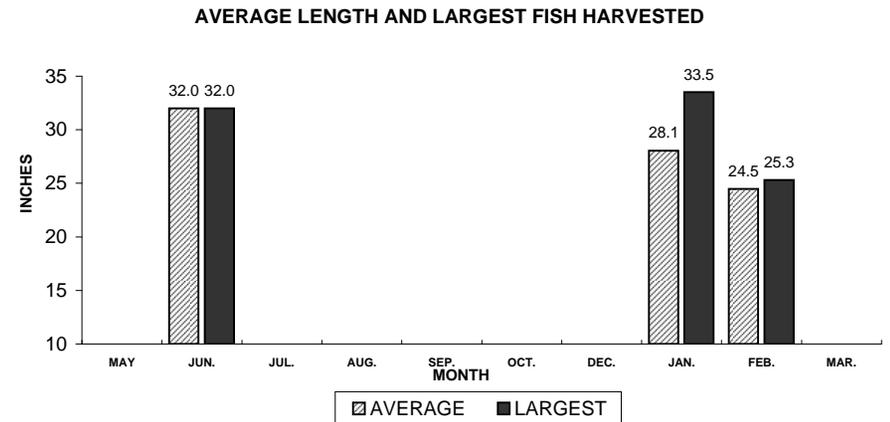
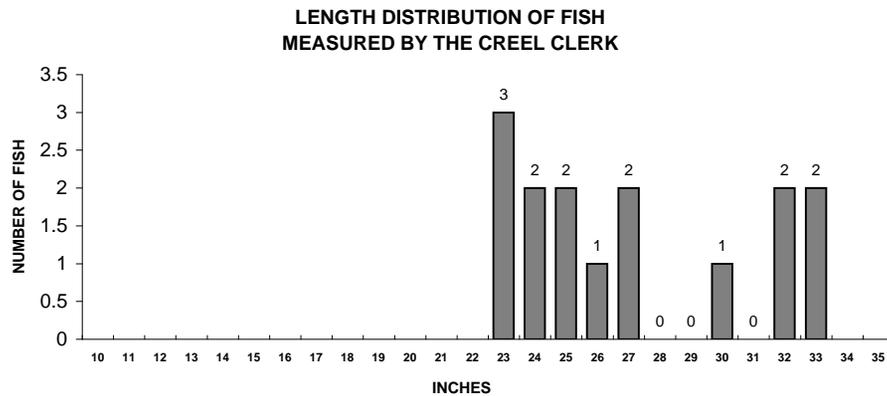
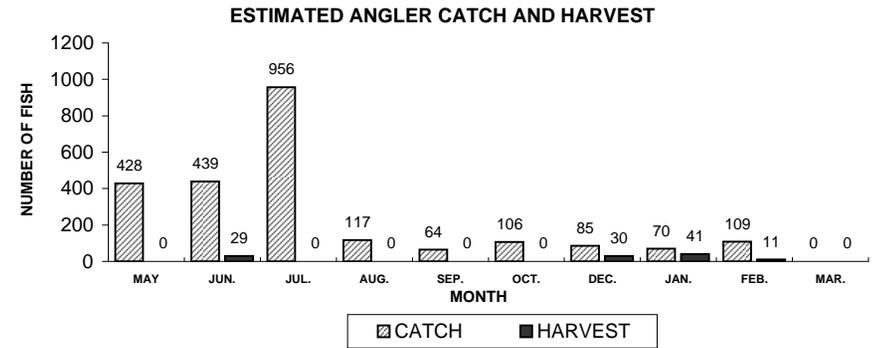
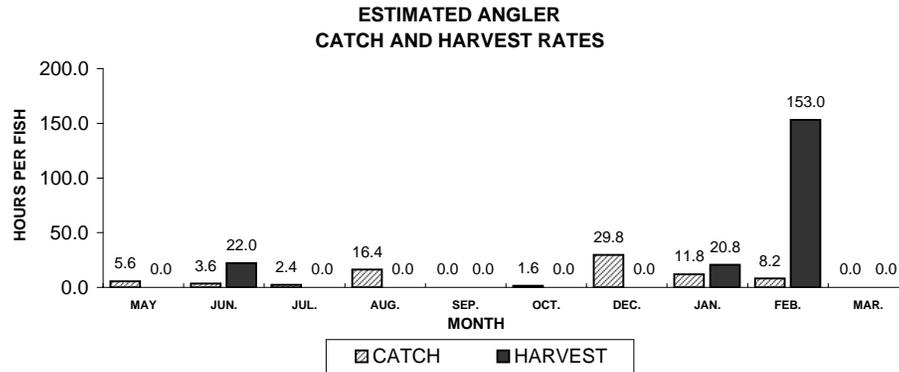
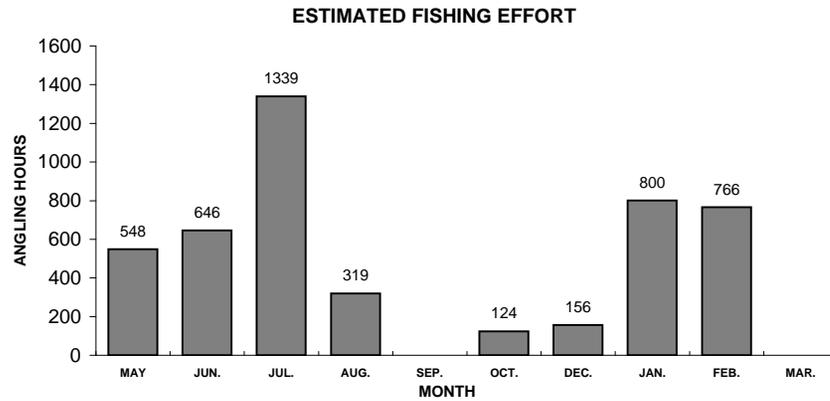
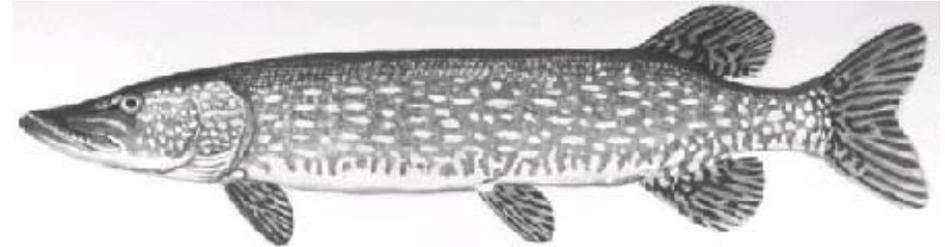
This survey could not have been completed if not for the efforts of the technical staff of the Treaty Fisheries Unit

Marty Kangas was the survey clerk on the lake for the entire survey period. He endured mosquitoes, rain, snow and bitter winter cold to collect the angler interview information that makes this report possible.

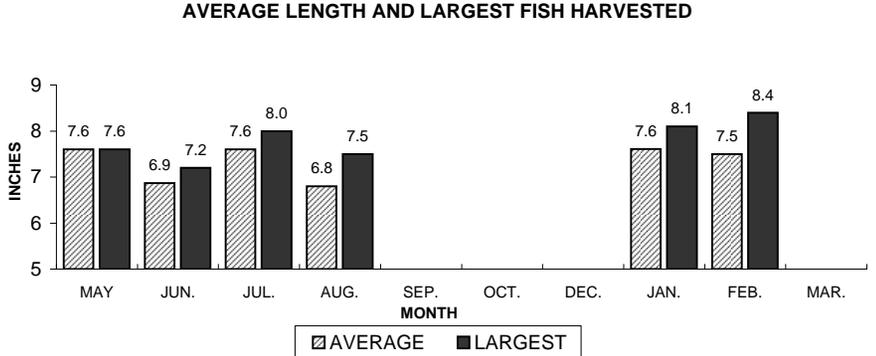
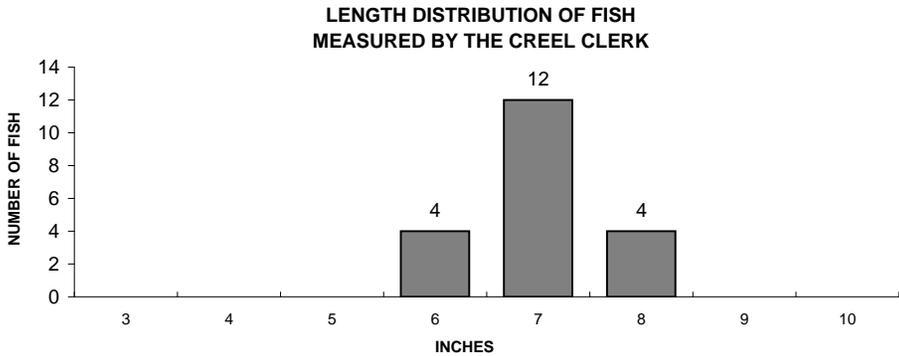
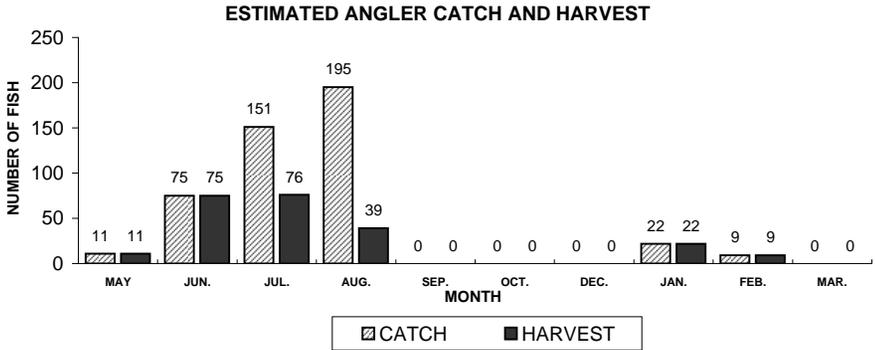
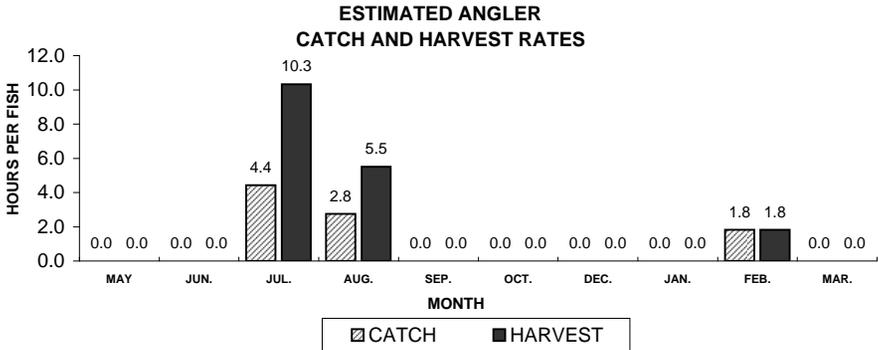
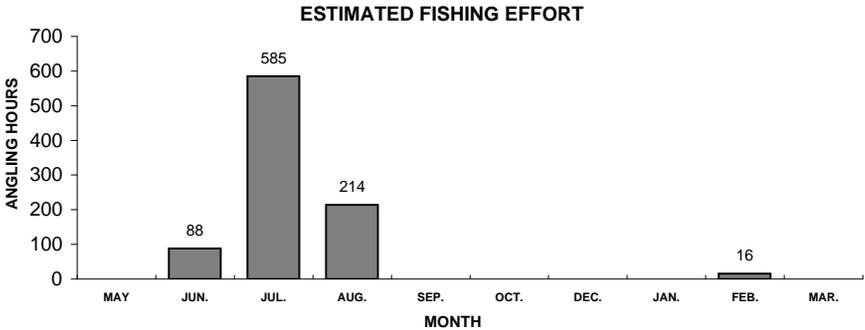
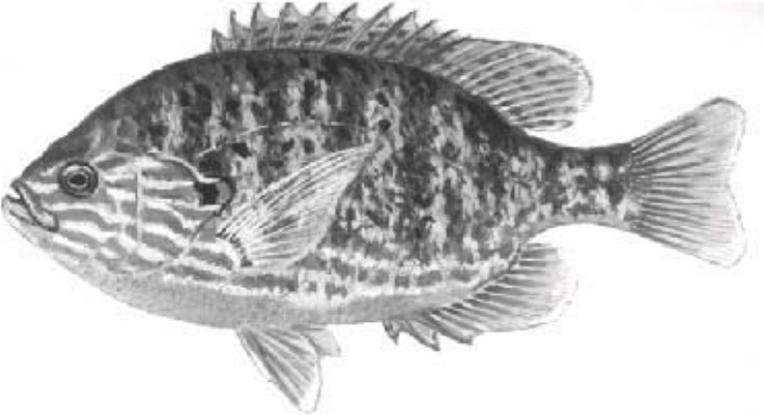
The Department would like to thank the Rod & Rifle Resort. They generously allowed the department to keep a boat and snowmobile at their property during this survey.

We would also like to thank all the anglers who took the time to offer information about their fishing trip to the survey clerk. Without your cooperation this survey would not have been possible.

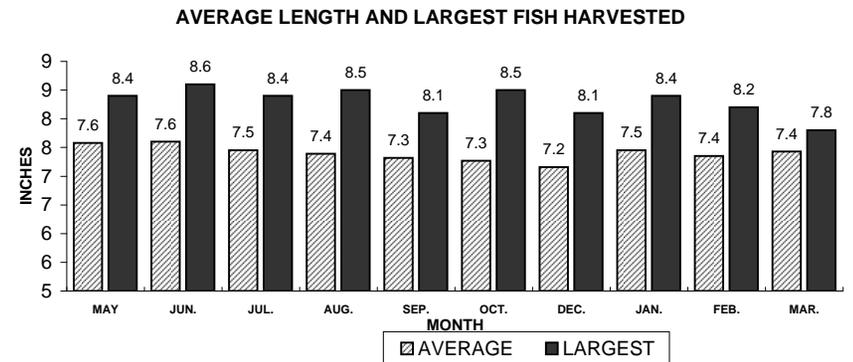
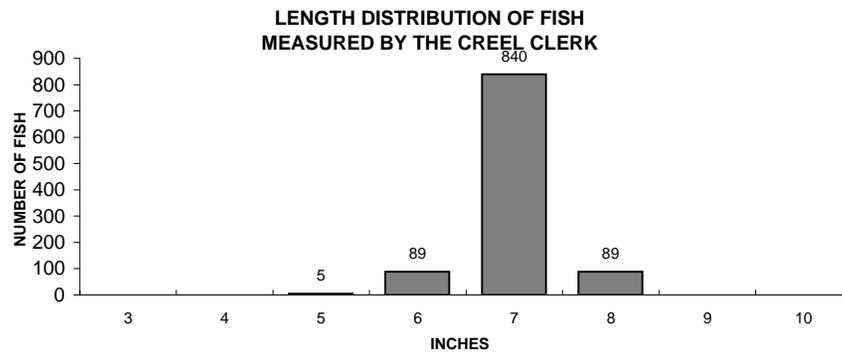
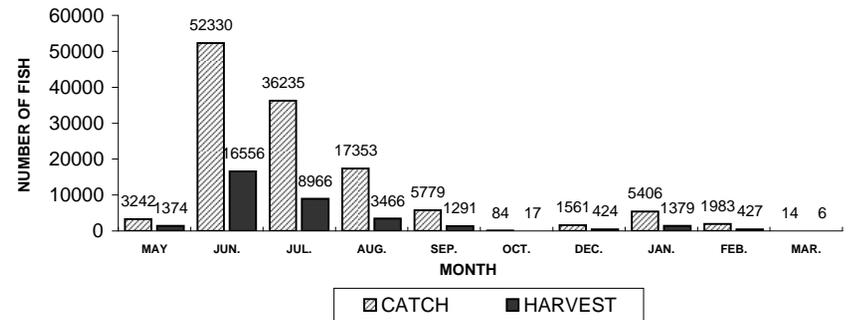
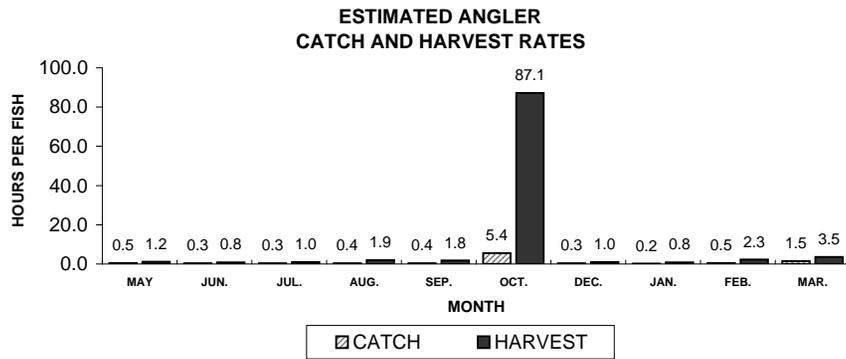
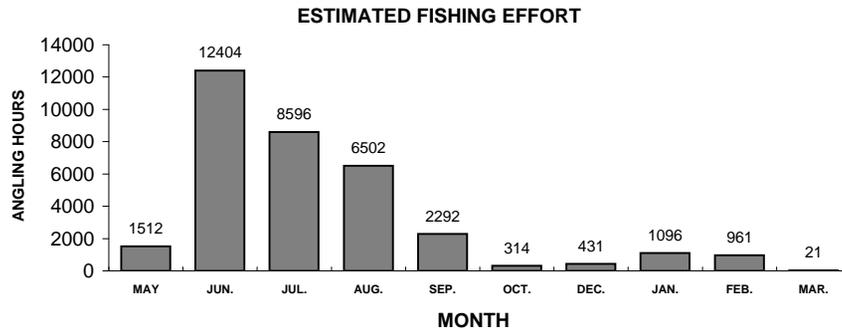
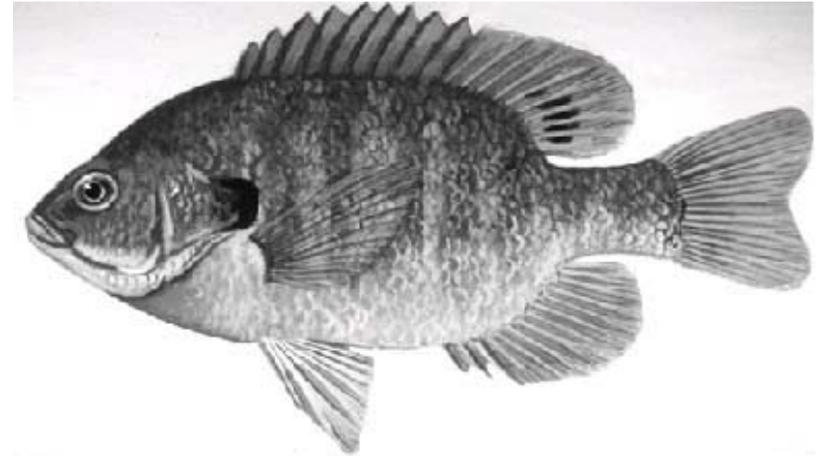
# NORTHERN PIKE



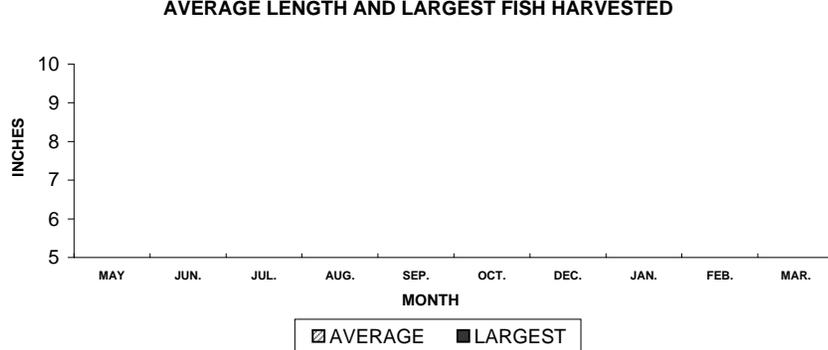
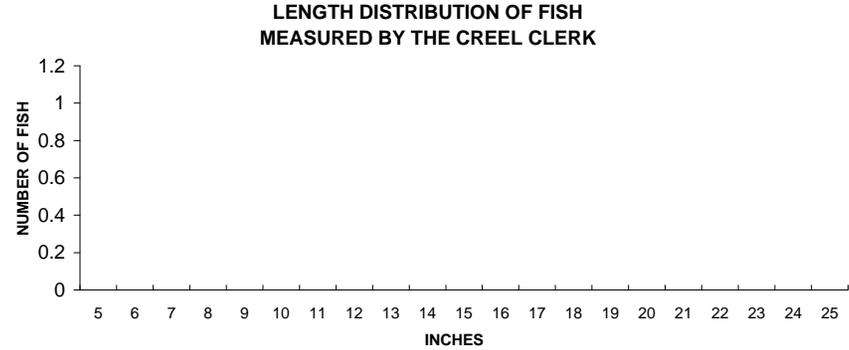
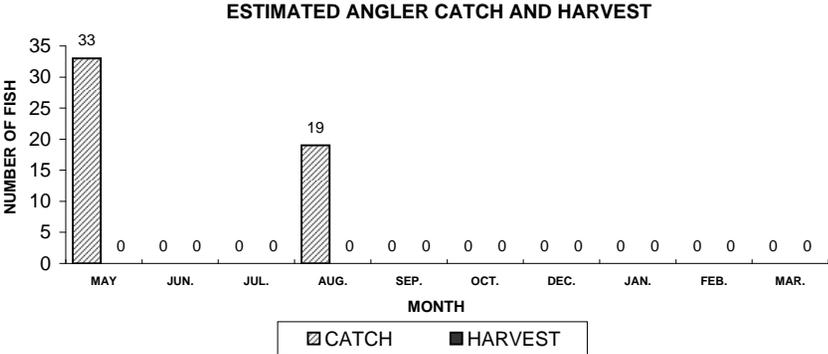
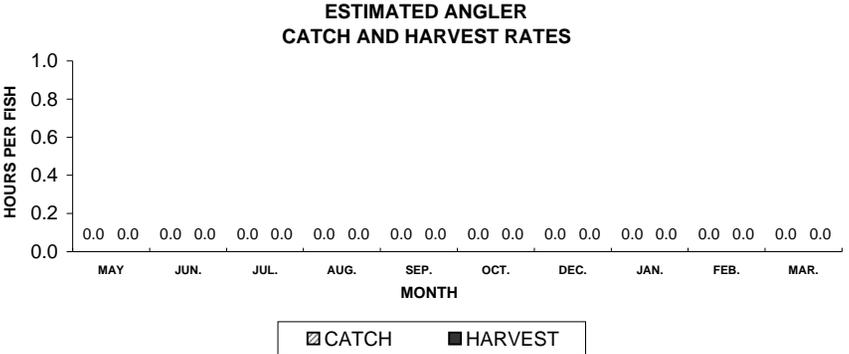
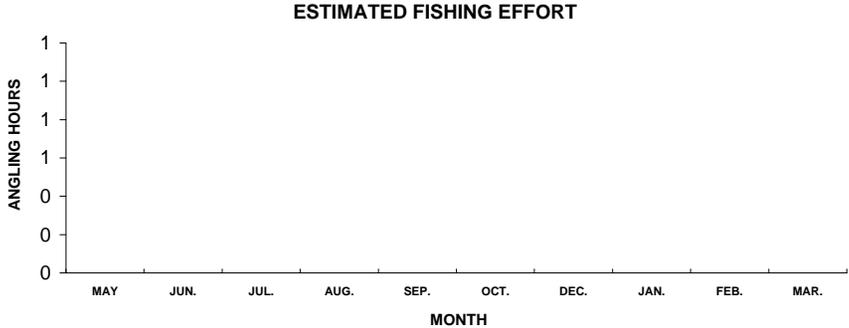
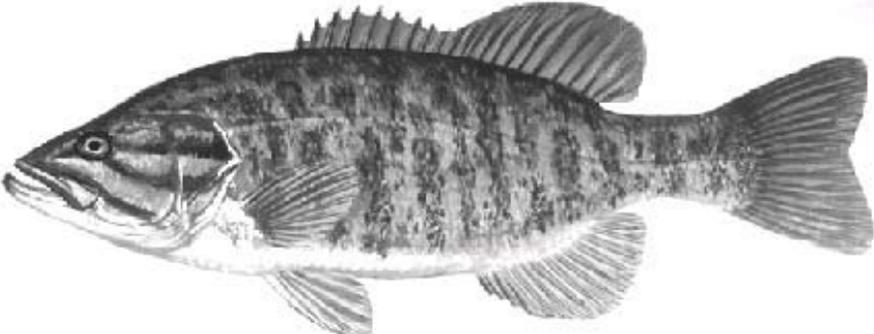
# PUMPKINSEED



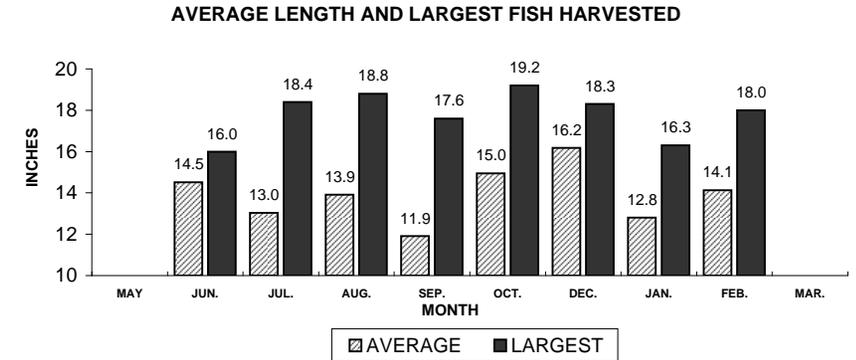
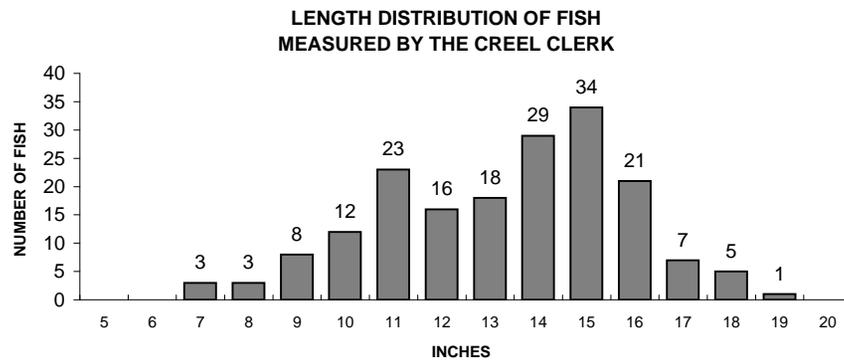
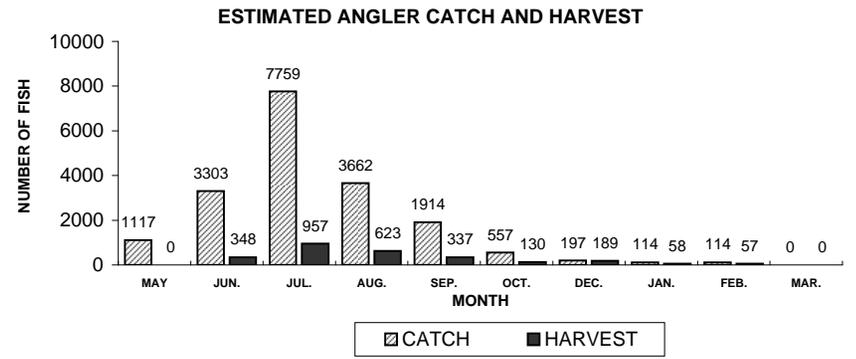
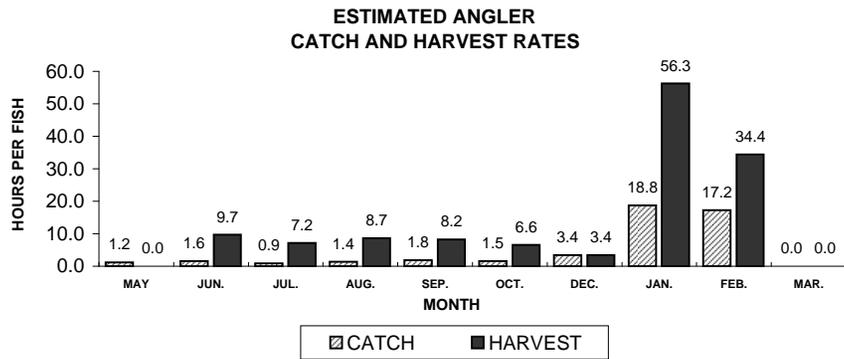
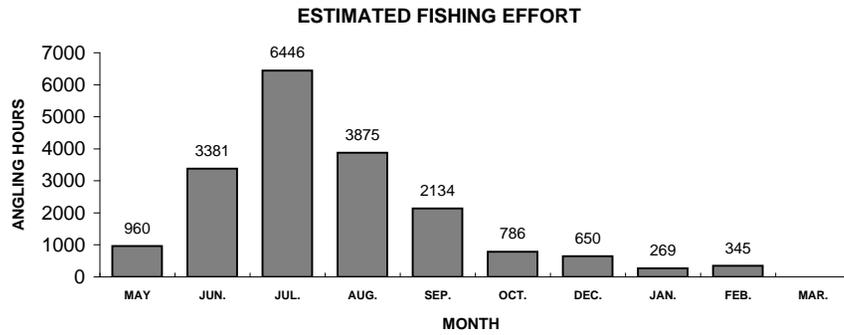
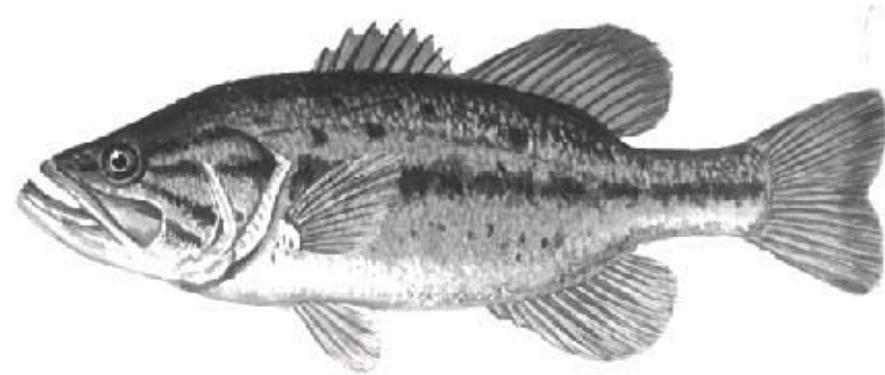
# BLUEGILL



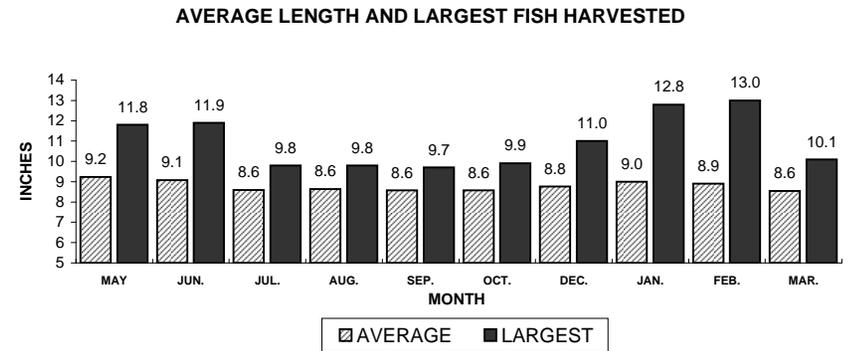
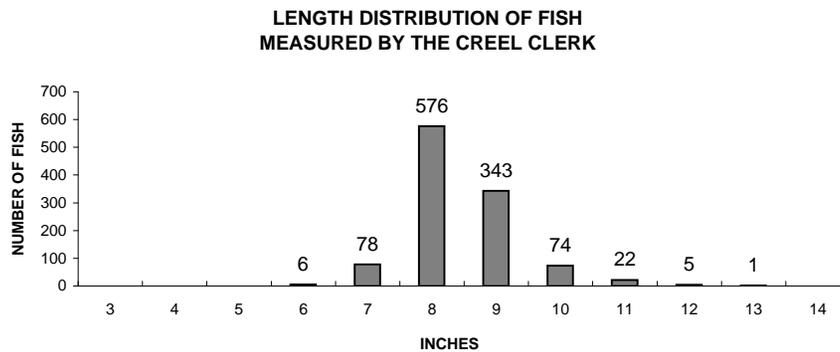
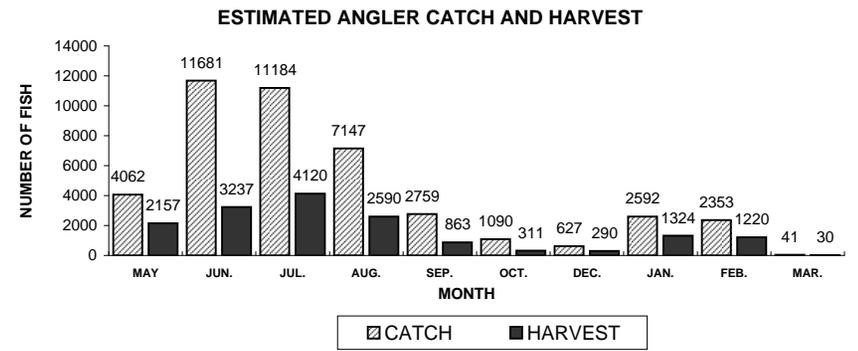
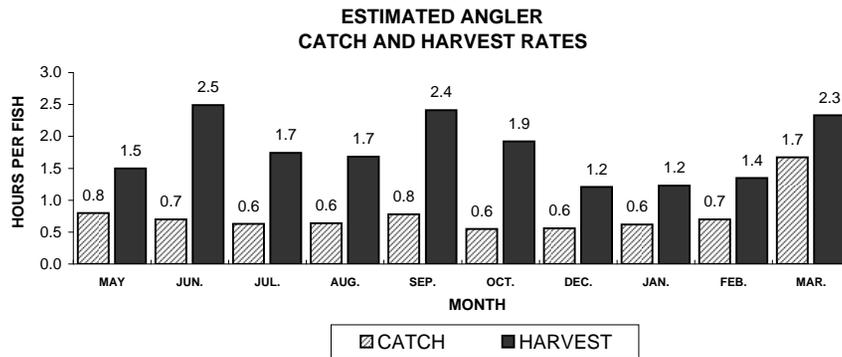
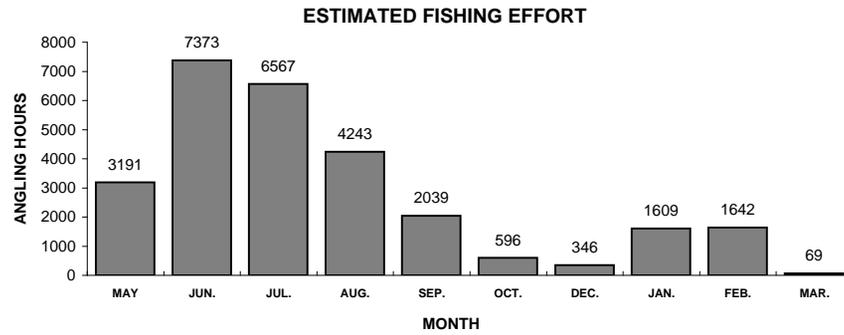
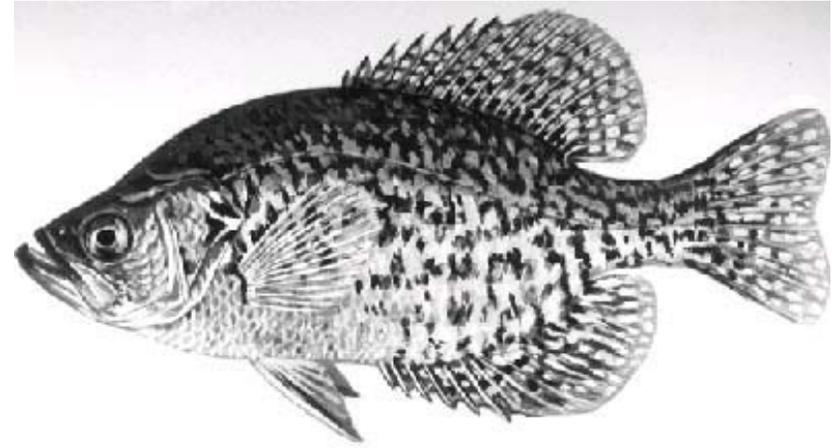
# SMALLMOUTH BASS



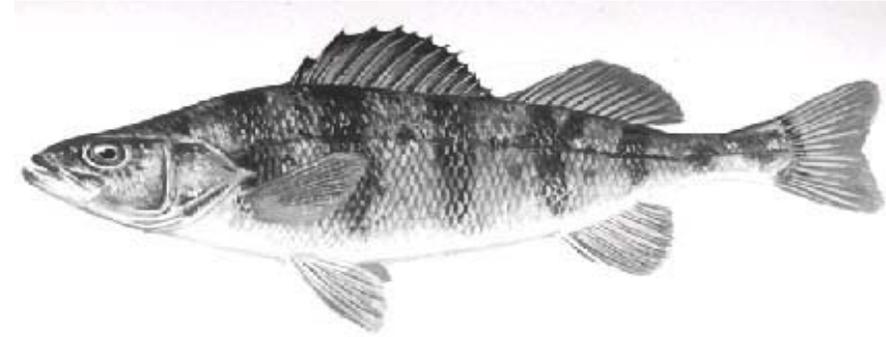
# LARGEMOUTH BASS



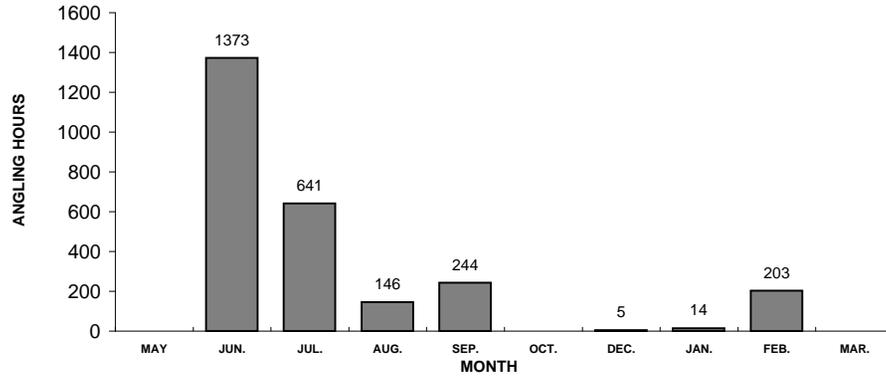
# BLACK CRAPPIE



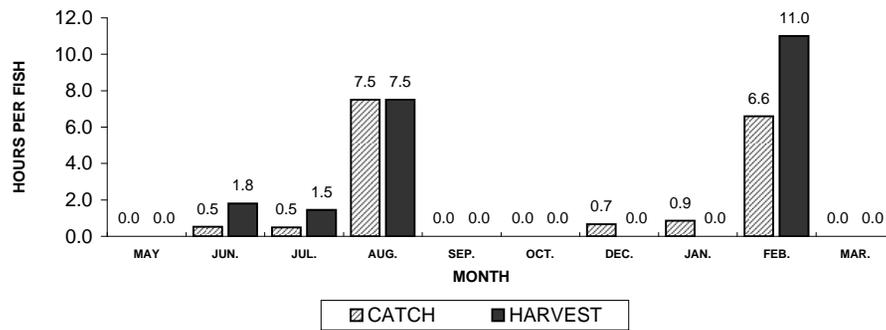
# YELLOW PERCH



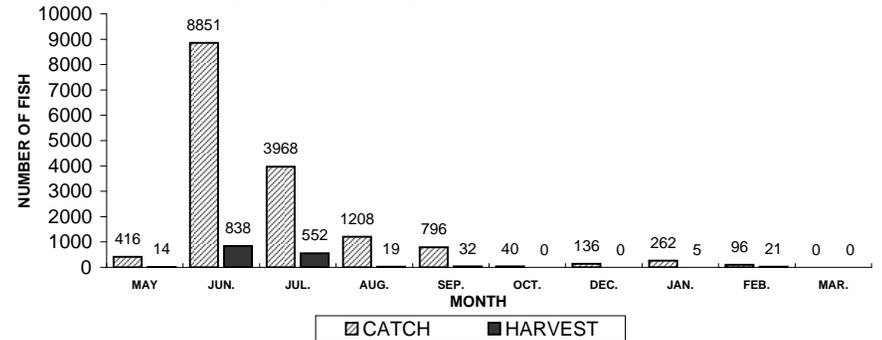
**ESTIMATED FISHING EFFORT**



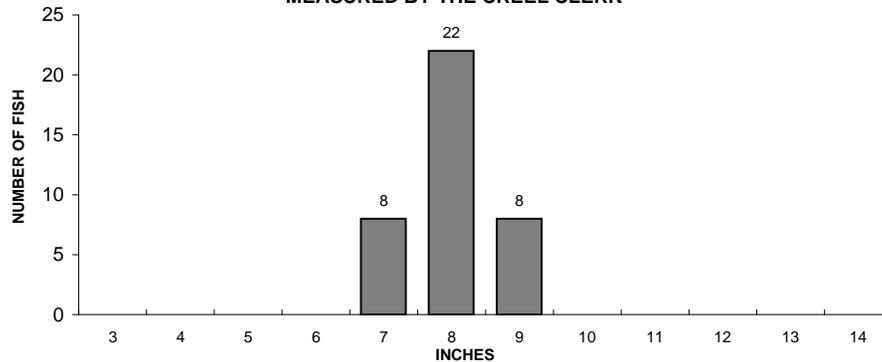
**ESTIMATED ANGLER CATCH AND HARVEST RATES**



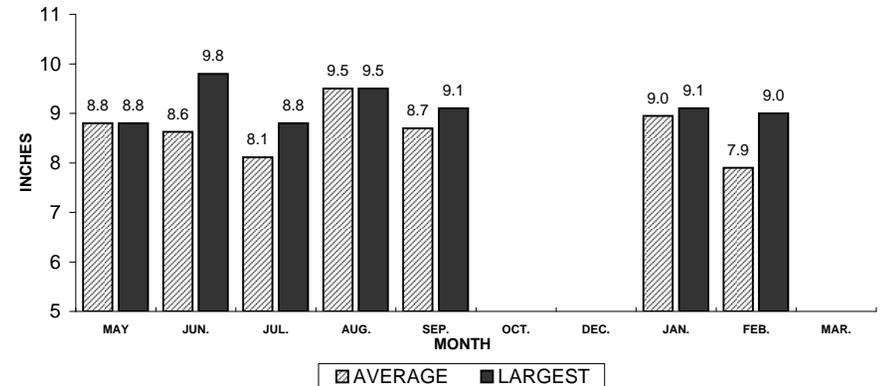
**ESTIMATED ANGLER CATCH AND HARVEST**



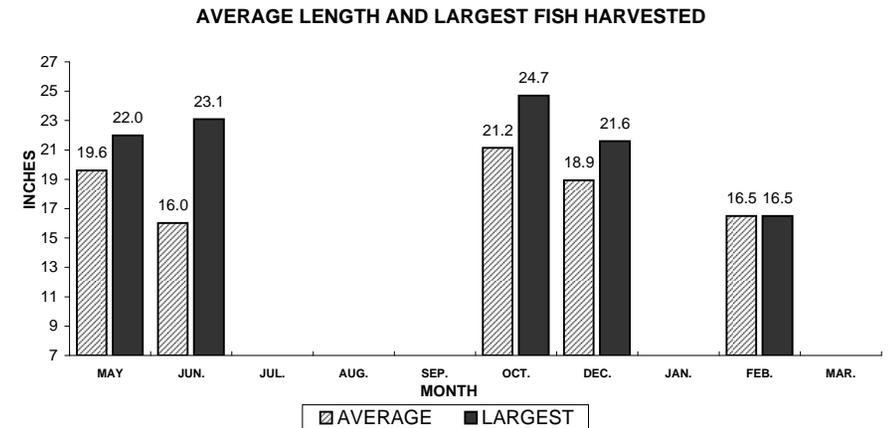
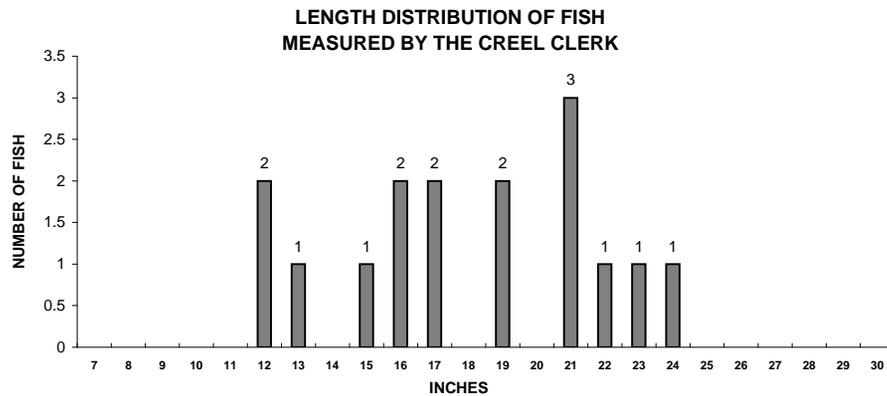
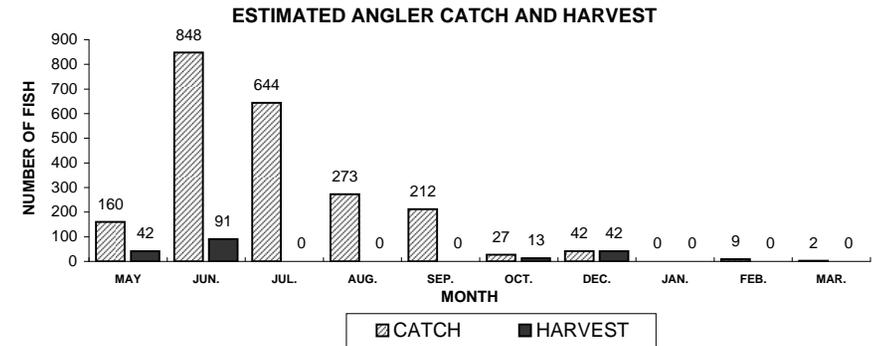
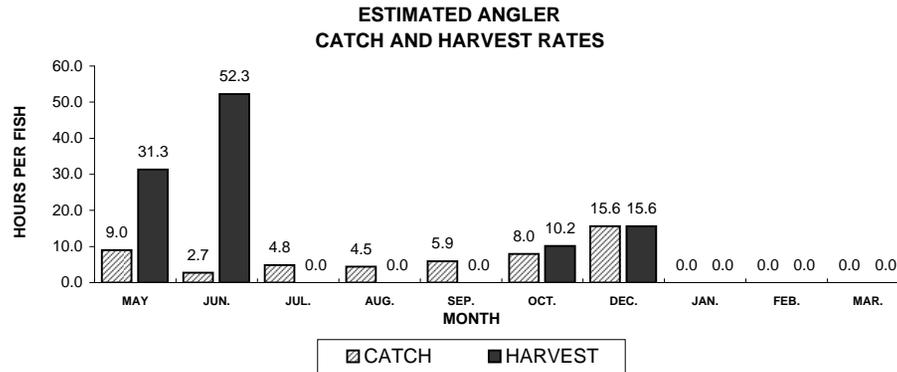
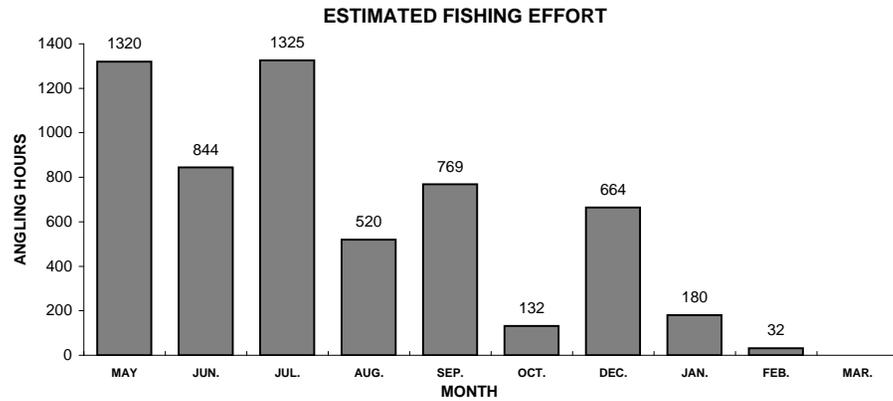
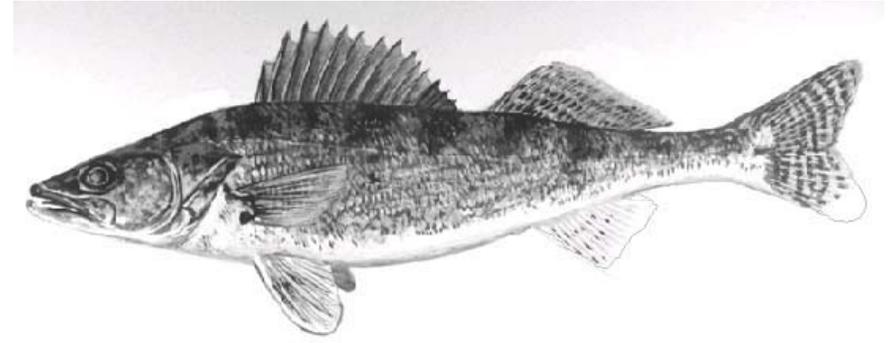
**LENGTH DISTRIBUTION OF FISH MEASURED BY THE CREEL CLERK**



**AVERAGE LENGTH AND LARGEST FISH HARVESTED**



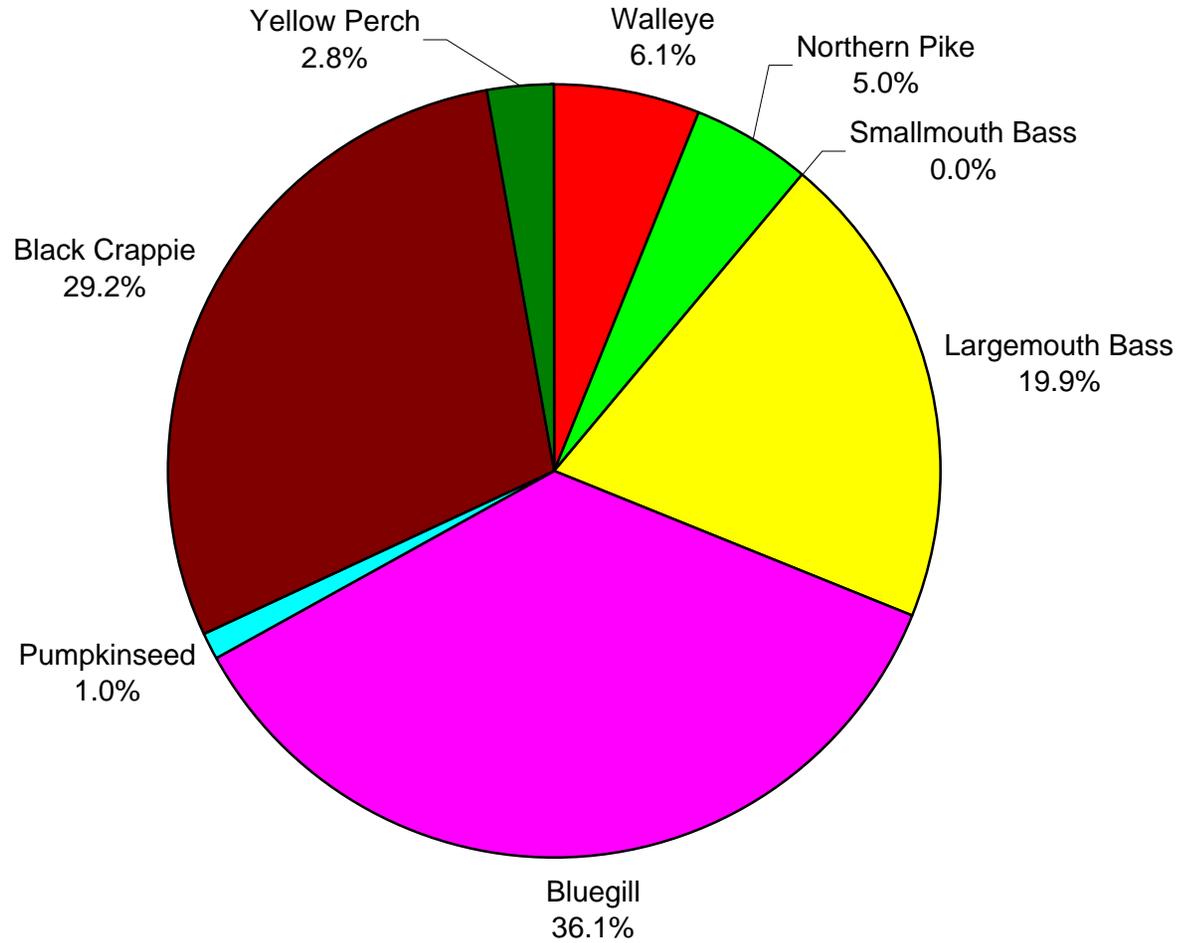
# WALLEYE



# TOTAL ANNUAL ANGLER DIRECTED EFFORT BY SPECIES

## Nelson Lake 2008-09

This graph illustrates the percentage of time that anglers spent fishing for each species during the entire creel survey. The percentages are based on the species of fish anglers told the clerk they were fishing for, not what they actually caught. Species with very little or no angler effort are not included in this graph.



**CREEL SURVEY HISTORY/SYNOPSIS**

NELSON LAKE, SAWYER COUNTY

CREEL YEAR: 2008-09

<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>DIRECTED EFFORT (Hours)</b>	<b>PERCENT OF TOTAL</b>	<b>TOTAL CATCH</b>	<b>SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (Hrs/Fish)</b>	<b>TOTAL HARVEST</b>	<b>SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (Hrs/Fish)</b>	<b>MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH</b>
Walleye	5785	6.1%	2218	5.6	189	50.8	18.5
Northern Pike	4697	5.0%	2373	4.3	111	64.5	27.6
Smallmouth Bass	0	0.0%	52		0		0.0
Largemouth Bass	18847	19.9%	18736	1.3	2700	8.3	13.8
Bluegill	34129	36.1%	123987	0.3	33904	1.0	7.5
Pumpkinseed	903	1.0%	462	4.1	231	8.7	7.4
Black Crappie	27675	29.2%	43536	0.7	16142	1.8	8.9
Yellow Perch	2627	2.8%	15772	0.7	1481	2.1	8.4

CREEL YEAR: 1992-93

<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>DIRECTED EFFORT (Hours)</b>	<b>PERCENT OF TOTAL</b>	<b>TOTAL CATCH</b>	<b>SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (Hrs/Fish)</b>	<b>TOTAL HARVEST</b>	<b>SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (Hrs/Fish)</b>	<b>MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH</b>
Walleye	44246	34.9%	5565	8.3	3145	14.6	16.5
Northern Pike	3438	2.7%	417	36.8	195	58.8	26.7
Smallmouth Bass	0	0.0%	28		0		
Largemouth Bass	16238	12.8%	8877	2.4	676	31.4	13.8
Bluegill	33485	26.4%	91801	0.4	57928	0.6	6.6
Pumpkinseed	410	0.3%	2418	0.6	1300	1.1	6.2
Black Crappie	27781	21.9%	29496	1.1	21789	1.5	9.6
Yellow Perch	1302	1.0%	9768	2.5	2920	2.6	8.3