

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
CREEL SURVEY REPORT**

METONGA LAKE

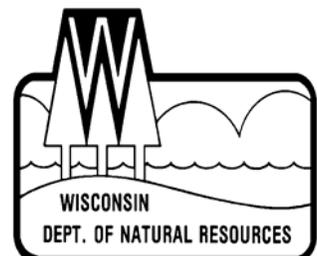
FOREST COUNTY

2010-11



Treaty Fisheries Publication

**Compiled by Tim Tobias
Treaty Fisheries Technician**



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Cover Art: Steve Hilt, Minocqua, WI

Fish Graphics: Virgil Beck, Stevens Point, WI

INTRODUCTION

Fish populations can fluctuate due to natural forces (weather, predation, competition), management actions (stocking, regulations, habitat improvement), inappropriate development (habitat degradation), and harvest impacts. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources fisheries crews regularly conduct fishery surveys on area lakes and reservoirs to gather the information needed to monitor changes, identify concerns, evaluate past management actions, and to prescribe good fishery management strategies. Netting and electrofishing surveys are used to gather data on the status of fish populations and communities (species composition, population size, reproductive success, size/age distribution, and growth rates). But the other key component of the fishery that we often need to measure is the harvest.

On many lakes in the Ceded Territory of northern Wisconsin, harvest of fish is divided between sport anglers and the six Chippewa tribes who harvest fish under rights granted by federal treaties. The tribes harvest fish mostly using a highly efficient method, spearing, during a relatively short time period in the spring. Every fish in the spear harvest is counted – a complete “census” of the harvest.

We also measure the sport harvest to assess its impact on the fishery. But because it would be highly impractical and very costly to conduct a complete census of every angler who fishes on a lake, we conduct creel surveys.

A creel survey is an assessment tool used to sample the fishing activities of anglers on a body of water and make projections of harvest and other fishery parameters. Creel survey clerks work on randomly-selected

days and shifts, forty hours per week during the open season for gamefish from the first Saturday in May through the first Sunday in March, except during the month of November when fishing effort is low and ice conditions are often unsafe. The survey is run during daylight hours, and shift times change from month to month as day length changes.

Creel survey clerks travel their lakes using a boat or snowmobile to count numbers of anglers on a lake at predetermined times, and to interview anglers who have completed their fishing trip to collect data on what species they fished for, catch, harvest, lengths of fish harvested, marks (finclips or tags), and hours of fishing effort. Collecting completed-trip data provides the most accurate assessment of angling activities, and it avoids the need to disturb anglers while they are fishing.

A computer program is used to make projections of total catch and harvest of each species, catch and harvest rates, and total fishing effort, by month and for the year in total. Keep in mind that these are only projections based on the best information available, and not a complete accounting of effort, catch, and harvest. Accurate projections require that we sample a sufficient and representative portion of the angling activity on a lake. The accuracy of creel survey results, therefore, depends on good cooperation and truthful responses by anglers when a creel clerk interviews them.

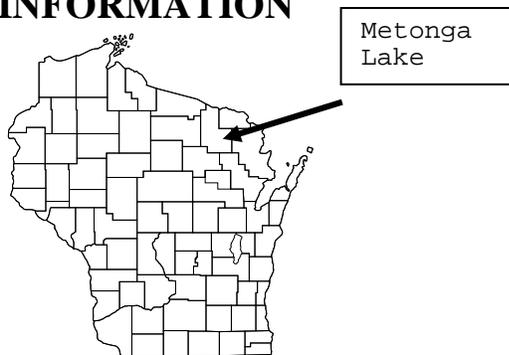
You may have encountered a DNR creel survey clerk on a recent fishing trip. We appreciate your cooperation during an interview. The survey only takes a moment of your time and it gives the Department valuable information needed for management of the fishery.

This report provides projections of:

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

Also included are a physical description of Metonga Lake; discussion of results of the survey; and detailed summaries, by species of fishing effort, catch and harvest.

GENERAL LAKE INFORMATION



Location

Metonga Lake is located in Forest County in the Town of Crandon.

Physical Characteristics

Metonga Lake is a 1991-acre drainage lake with a maximum depth of 79 feet. Littoral substrate is comprised primarily of sand, with lesser amounts of gravel, muck, and rock. Metonga Lake is a medium hard water lake having slightly alkaline, clear water of very high transparency.

Seasons Surveyed

The period referred to in this report as the 2010-11 fishing season ran from May 1, 2010 through March 6, 2011. The open water creel survey ran from May 1 through October 31, 2010 and the ice fishing creel survey ran from December 1, 2010 through March 6, 2011.

Weather

Ice-out on Metonga Lake was around April 5, 2010. Fishable-ice formed on Metonga Lake in mid December.

Sportfishing Regulations

The following seasons, daily bag limits, and length limits were in place on Metonga Lake during the 2010-11 fishing season:

Species	Season	Bag Limit	Min. Size
Largemouth Bass & Smallmouth Bass	5/01-6/18	Catch&Release	
	6/19-3/06	5	14"
Musky	5/29-11/30	1	34"
Northern Pike	5/01-3/06	5	none
Walleye	5/01-11/31	3	15"
	12/01-3/06	3	18"
Panfish	year round	25	none
Rock Bass	year round	none	none

SPECIES CATCH AND HARVEST INFORMATION

Angling effort, catch, and harvest information is summarized for each species in Table 2 and Figures 1-10. Table 2 also includes a comparison of these statistics with the previous creel survey. Information presented about species whose fishing season extends beyond March 6 should be considered minimum estimates. Each species page has up to five graphs depicting the following:

1. **PROJECTED FISHING EFFORT**
Total calculated number of hours during each month that anglers spent fishing for a species.
2. **PROJECTED SPECIFIC 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 that species is

reported.

3. PROJECTED CATCH AND HARVEST

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

4. LENGTH DISTRIBUTION OF HARVESTED FISH

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

5. LARGEST AND AVERAGE LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH

Monthly largest and average length of harvested fish of a species. Only those fish measured by the creel survey clerk are reported.

CREEL SURVEY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Survey Logistics

The creel survey went well. We encountered no unusual problems conducting the survey or calculating the projections contained in the report. This was the seventh time the department conducted a creel survey on Metonga Lake. The last treaty surveys took place in 2006-07.

General Angler Information

Anglers spent 68,883 hours or 34.6 hours per acre fishing Metonga Lake during the 2010 season (Table 1). That was more than the Forest County average of 29.0 hours per acre. January was the most heavily fished month (8.0 hours per acre). Fishing effort was lightest in October (1.6 hours per acre).

RESULTS BY SPECIES

Walleye (Table 2, Figure 1)

Walleyes were the second most sought-after species during the 2010 season. Anglers spent 10,172 hours targeting walleyes. Walleye fishing effort was greatest in August (2,546 hours). February had the least amount of walleye fishing effort (53 hours).

Total catch of walleyes was 3,894 fish with a harvest of 647 fish. Highest catch (1,410 fish) and harvest (328 fish) occurred in August. Anglers fished 4.4 hours to catch and 16.6 hours to harvest a walleye during 2010.

The mean length of harvested walleyes was 18.4 inches and the largest walleye measured was a 24.2 inch fish.

Northern Pike (Table 2, Figure 2)

Fishing effort directed at northern pike was 1,305 hours during the 2010 season. Northern pike fishing effort was greatest in July (352 hours).

Total catch of northern pike was 444 with a harvest of 142 fish.

The mean length of harvested northern pike was 25.7 inches and the largest northern pike measured was a 31.9 inch fish.

Smallmouth Bass (Table 2, Figure 3)

Fishing effort targeted at smallmouth bass was 5,197 hours during the 2010 season. Smallmouth bass fishing effort was greatest in June (1,202 hours).

Total catch of smallmouth bass was 10,465 fish with 255 harvested. Highest catch (3,857 fish) occurred in September. Anglers fished 1.4 hours to catch a smallmouth bass during 2010.

Largemouth Bass (Table 2, Figure 4)
Fishing effort directed at largemouth bass was 706 hours during the 2010 season. Largemouth bass fishing effort was greatest in July (570 hours).

Total catch of largemouth bass was 91 fish with no fish harvested. Highest catch (60 fish) occurred in July. Anglers fished 10.9 hours to catch a largemouth bass during 2010.

Panfish (Table 2, Figures 5-9)

Yellow perch were the most sought after fish species during the survey. Fishing effort directed at yellow perch was 58,445 hours.

Total catch of yellow perch was 128,145 fish with 76,522 harvested. Highest catch (25,539 fish) occurred in July while highest harvest occurred in January (17,284 fish). Anglers fished 30 minutes to catch and 48 minutes to harvest a yellow perch during 2010.

The mean length of yellow perch harvested was 8.6 inches and the largest yellow perch measured was a 13.5 inch fish.

Bluegills were the second most sought after panfish species during the survey. Fishing effort directed at bluegills was 335 hours.

Total catch of bluegills was 229 fish with 8 harvested. The mean length of bluegills harvested was 7.7 inches.

Rock bass were the third most sought after panfish species during the survey. Fishing effort directed at rock bass was 260 hours.

Total catch of rock bass was 2,524 fish with a harvested of 219 fish. The mean length of rock bass harvested was 8.0 inches.

Pumpkinseeds and black crappies were also

caught during the 2010 season.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completion of this survey was possible because of the efforts of the technical staff of the fisheries management and Treaty Fisheries Unit. Treaty staff responsible for ensuring completion of this survey included Jeff Blonski, Steve Kramer, Joelle Underwood, Marty Kiepkke, Jason Halverson, and Tim Tobias. Scott Yonker and Bob Consolo were the creel clerks on Metonga Lake during the survey period.

We also thank Mike Preul, Mole Lake tribal fisheries biologist and staff who worked in conjunction with the creel survey performing in-water sampling of the fish community.

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

The department thanks the cooperators, Vern and Chris Dvorak, who generously allowed the Department to keep a boat and Lloyd Kanzeback, who generously allowed the Department to keep a snowmobile on their property during this survey.

This creel report was reviewed by Dennis Scholl of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Woodruff, Wisconsin.

Additional copies of this report and those covering other local lakes can be obtained from the Woodruff DNR or online at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/ceded/reports.html>

Table 1. Sportfishing effort summary, Metonga Lake, 2010-11 season.

Month	Total Angler Hours	Total Angler Hours/Acre	Forest County Average Hours/Acre	Statewide Average Hours/Acre
May	4198	2.1	4.2	5.8
June	4458	2.2	5.0	6.1
July	9468	4.8	5.9	6.4
August	9432	4.7	5.0	5.4
September	4290	2.2	2.5	3.8
October	3141	1.6	0.9	1.6
December	4818	2.4	1.3	1.7
January	15901	8.0	2.3	1.5
February	10962	5.5	1.9	1.3
March	2214	1.1	0.2	**
*Summer Total	34987	17.6	23.3	29.1
*Winter Total	33895	17.0	5.7	4.5
Grand Total	68883	34.6	29.0	33.6

*"Summer" is May-October; "Winter" is December-March

**Too few lakes have been surveyed in March to give a meaningful statewide average.

Total Angler Hours is the estimated total number of hours that anglers spent fishing on Metonga Lake during each month surveyed.

Total Angler Hours/Acre is the total angler hours divided by the area of the lake in acres. This is useful if you wish to compare effort on Metonga Lake to other lakes.

County Average Hours/Acre is the average angler effort in hours per acre for county lakes that have been surveyed since 1990. This value can be useful in comparisons as well.

Statewide Average Hours/Acre is the average angler effort in hours per acre for inland lakes in the state surveyed between 1990 and 1995. This value can be used to compare Metonga Lake to other lakes statewide.

Table 2. Comparison of creel survey synopses, Metonga Lake, 2010-11 & 2007-08 fishing seasons.

CREEL YEAR: 2010-11

SPECIES	DIRECTED EFFORT (Hours)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	TOTAL CATCH	SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (Hrs/Fish) *	TOTAL HARVEST	SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (Hrs/Fish) **	MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH
Walleye	10172	13.28%	3894	4.4	647	16.6	18.4
Northern Pike	1305	1.70%	444	8.5	142	15.0	25.7
Smallmouth Bass	5197	6.79%	10465	1.4	255	28.9	16.9
Largemouth Bass	706	0.92%	91	10.9	0		
Yellow Perch	58445	76.31%	128145	0.5	76522	0.8	8.6
Bluegill	335	0.44%	229	2.3	8		7.7
Pumpkinseed	60	0.08%	127		76		7.0
Rock Bass	260	0.34%	2524	0.5	219	1.5	8.0
Black Crappie	29	0.04%	0		0		
Black Bullhead	78	0.10%	805	1.1	173	1.4	12.2

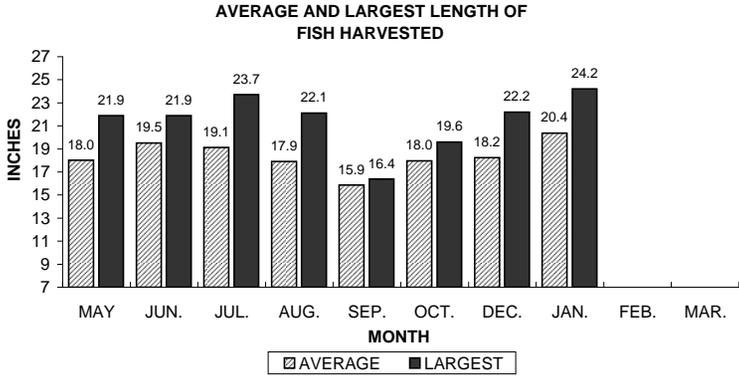
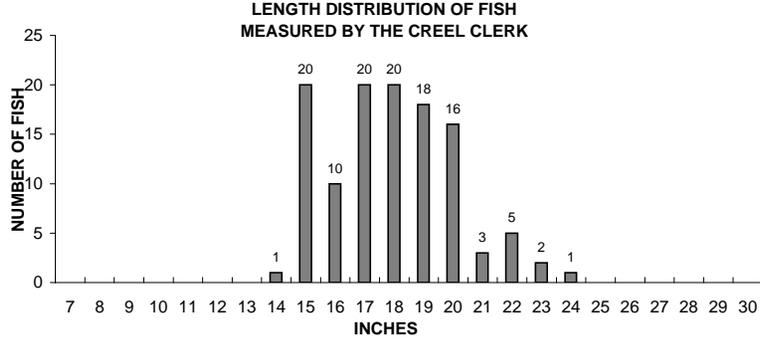
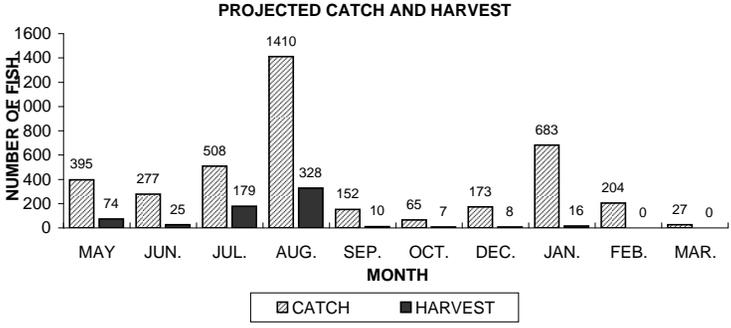
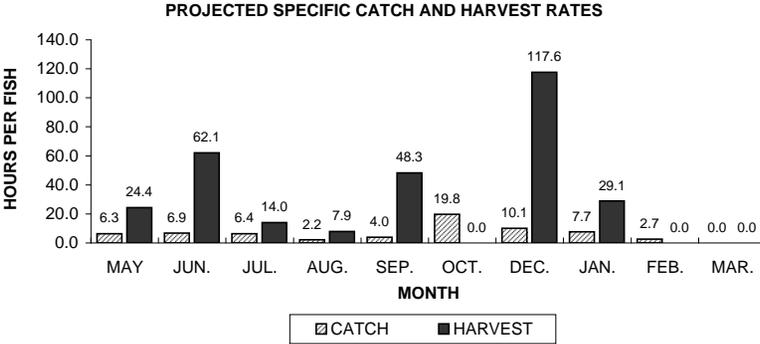
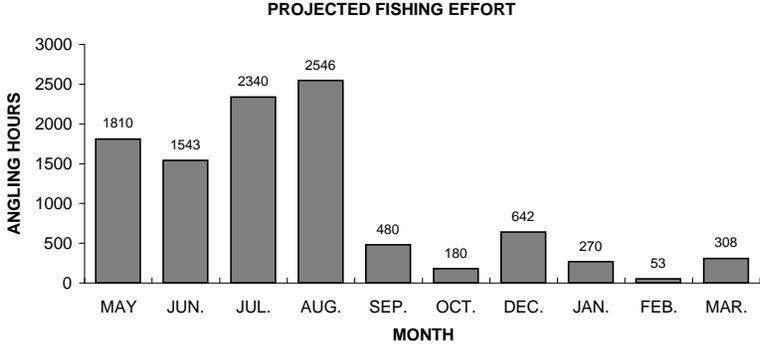
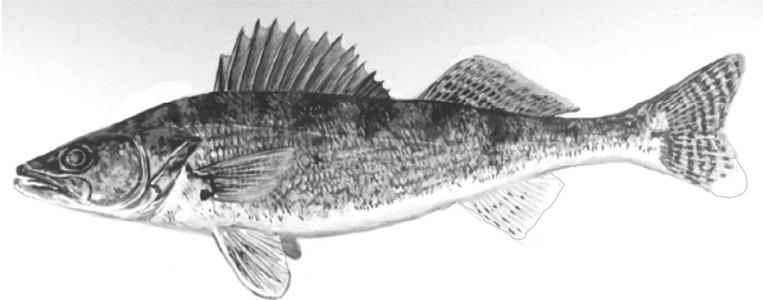
9 * A blank cell in this column indicates that no fish of a given species were caught by anglers who specifically targeted that species.

** A blank cell in this column indicates that no fish of a given species were harvested by anglers who specifically targeted that species.

CREEL YEAR: 2007-08

SPECIES	DIRECTED EFFORT (Hours)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	TOTAL CATCH	SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (Hrs/Fish) *	TOTAL HARVEST	SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (Hrs/Fish) **	MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH
Walleye	13816	24.21%	1615	8.9	444	31.3	17.0
Northern Pike	5639	9.88%	1099	9.5	444	17.5	24.8
Muskellunge	9	0.02%	0		0		
Smallmouth Bass	6628	11.62%	6451	1.7	270	28.7	16.9
Largemouth Bass	2321	4.07%	102	75.2	0		
Yellow Perch	27545	48.28%	73109	0.4	28716	1.0	8.1
Bluegill	875	1.53%	1653	1.3	206	20.7	7.4
Pumpkinseed	0	0.00%	160		14		6.8
Rock Bass	9	0.02%	2127		143		8.0
Black Crappie	99	0.17%	150	10.5	9	10.5	9.5
Black Bullhead	116	0.20%	3747	1.5	809	1.5	10.7

WALLEYE



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Figure 1. Walleye sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

NORTHERN PIKE

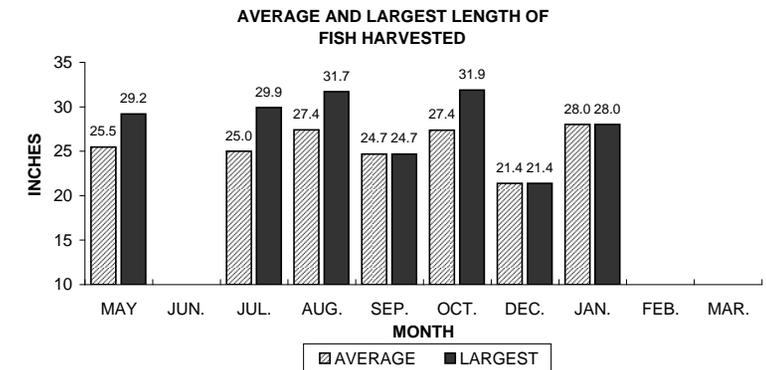
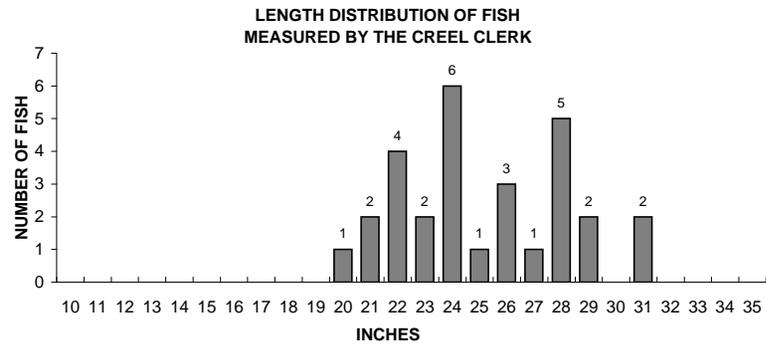
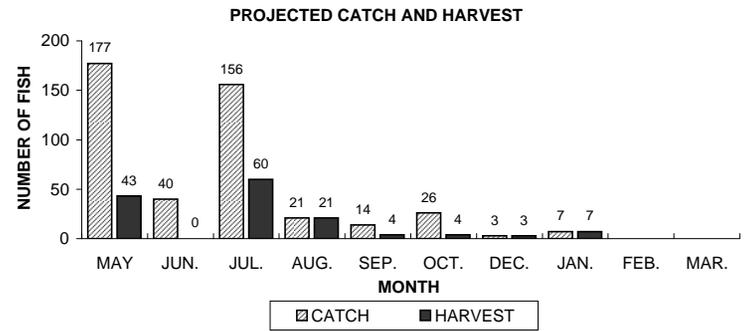
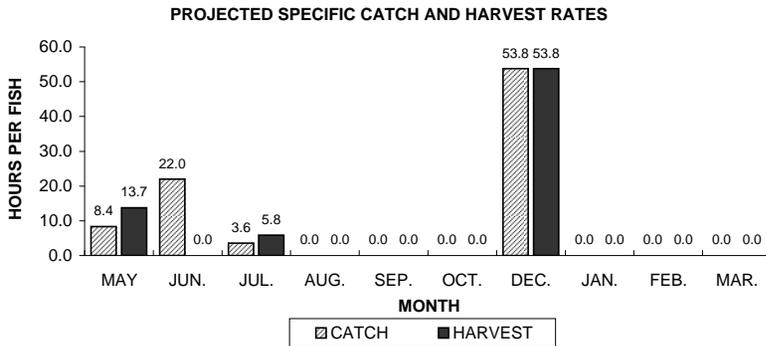
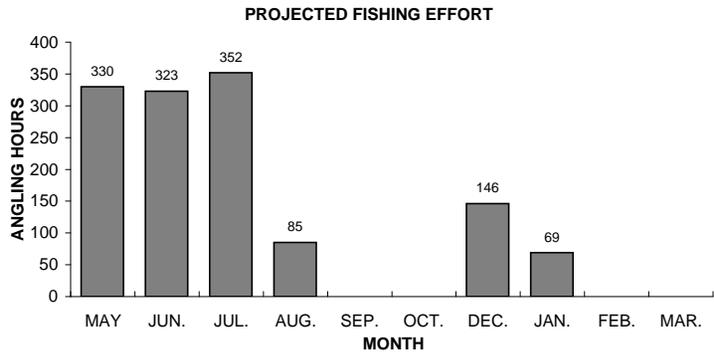
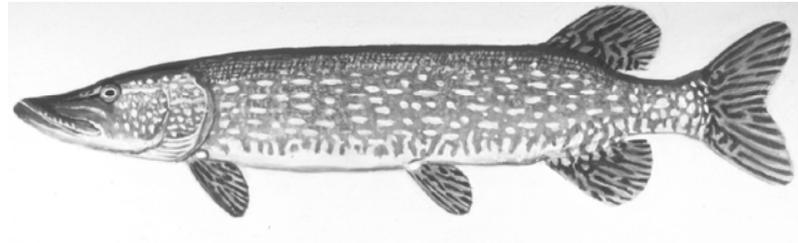
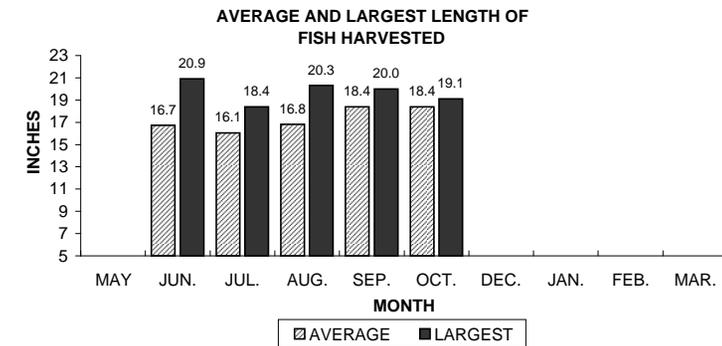
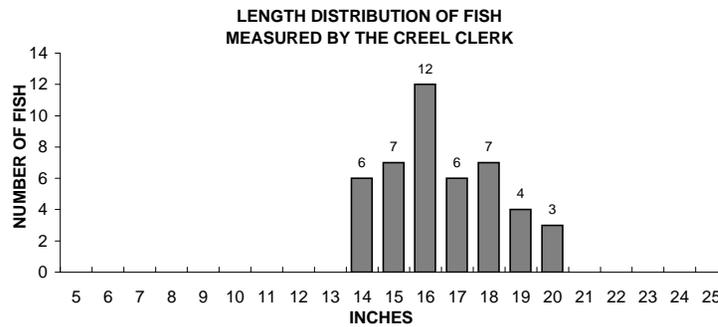
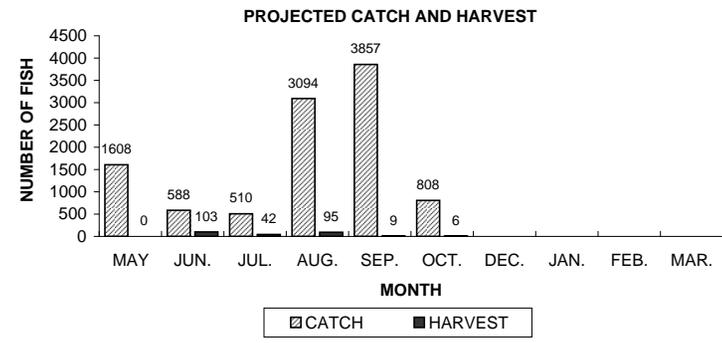
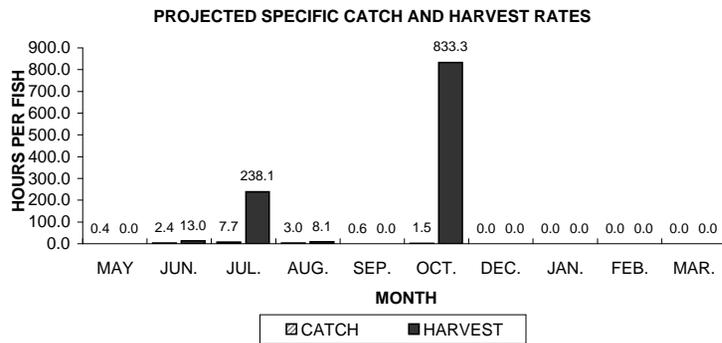
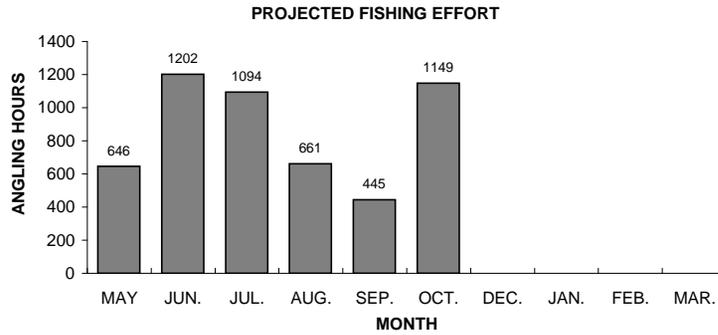
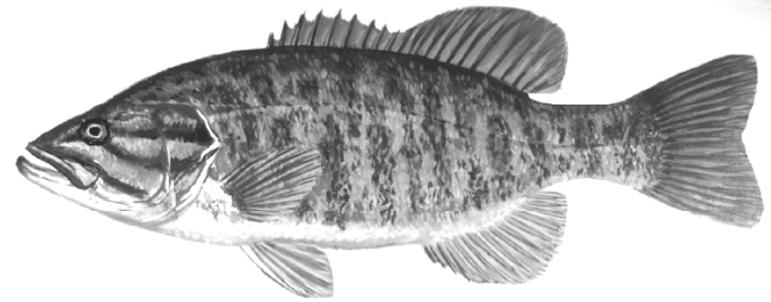


Figure 2. Northern pike sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

SMALLMOUTH BASS



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Figure 3. Smallmouth bass sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

LARGEMOUTH BASS

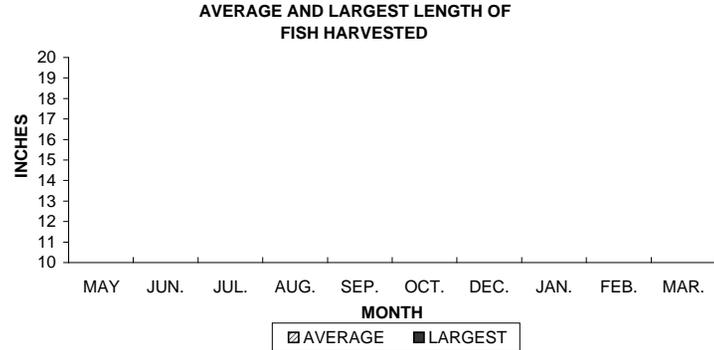
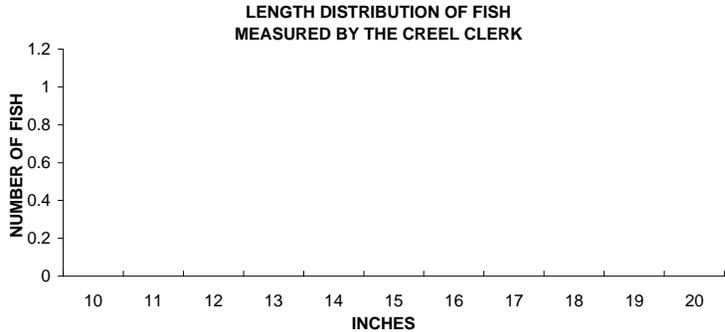
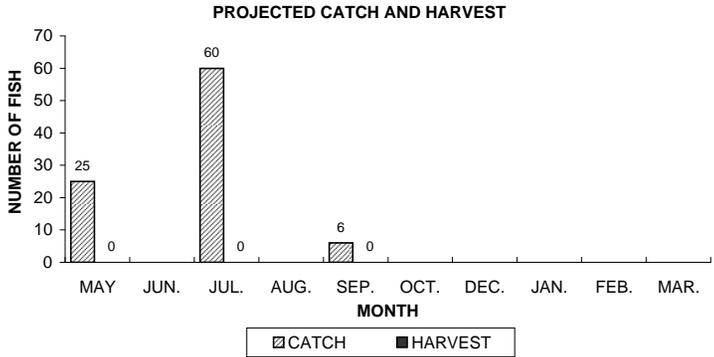
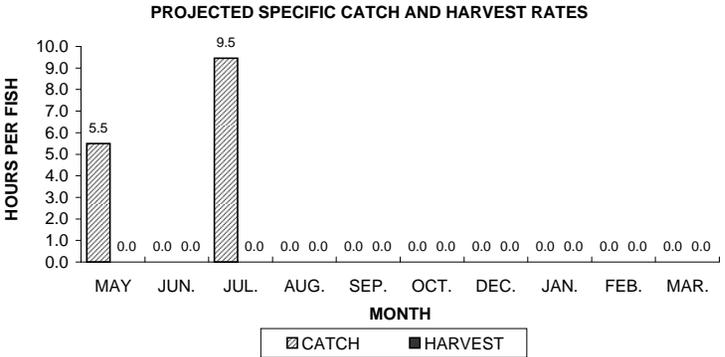
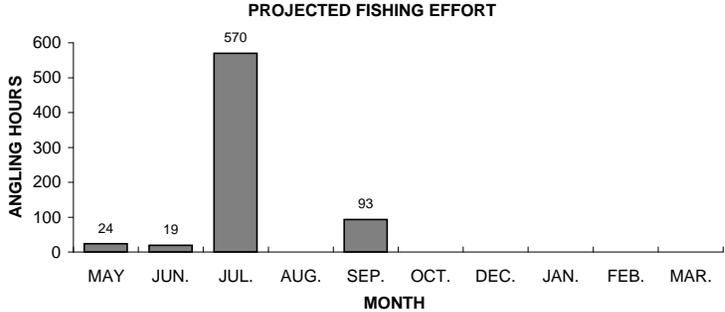
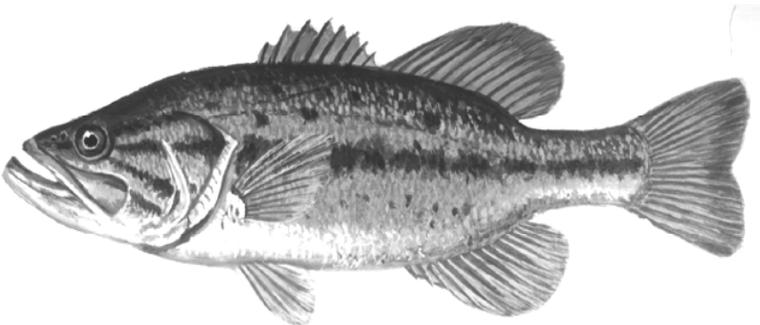


Figure 4. Largemouth bass sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

YELLOW PERCH

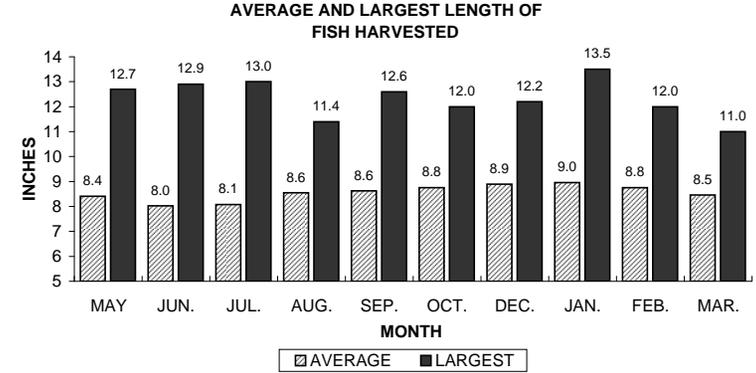
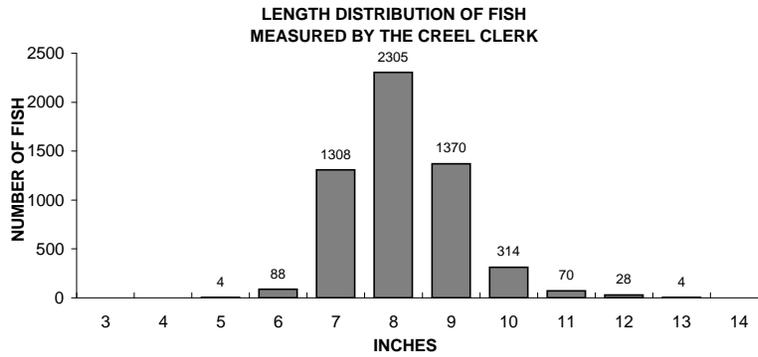
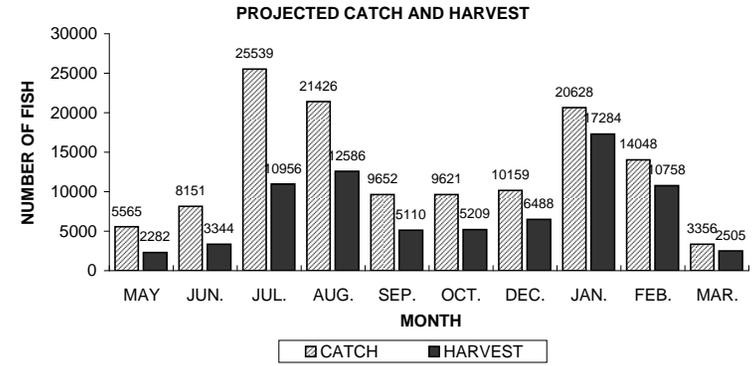
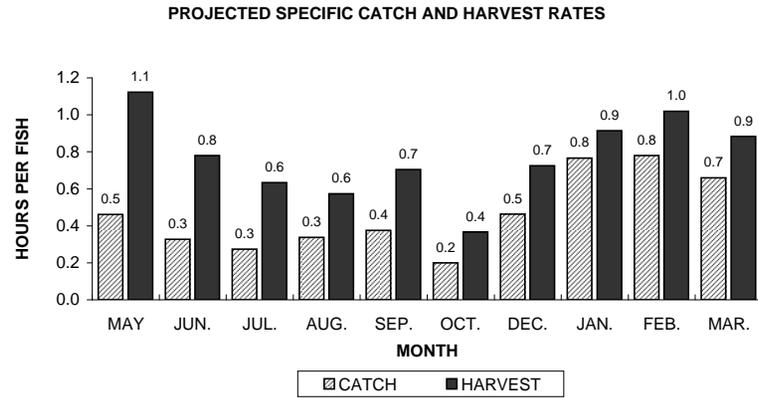
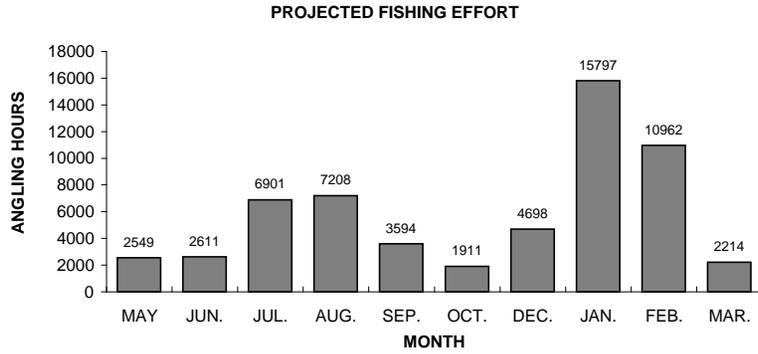
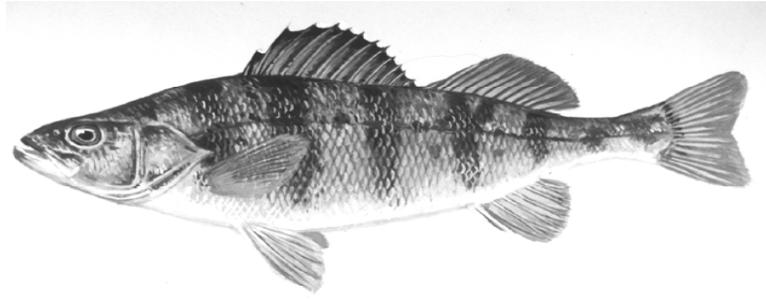


Figure 5. Yellow perch sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

BLUEGILL

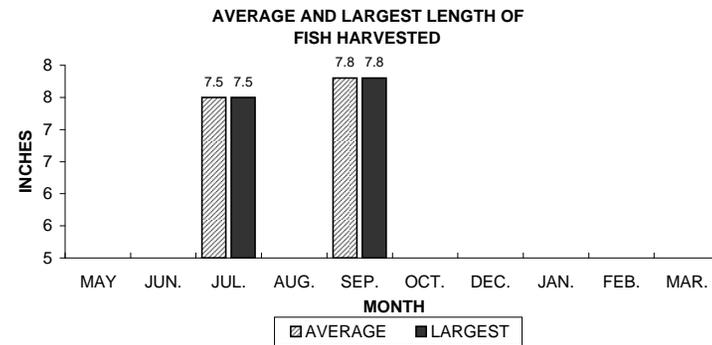
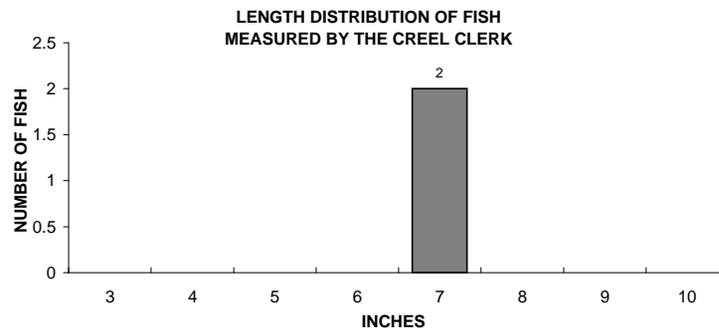
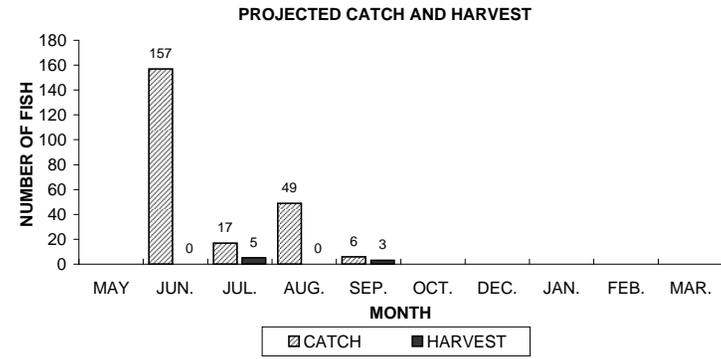
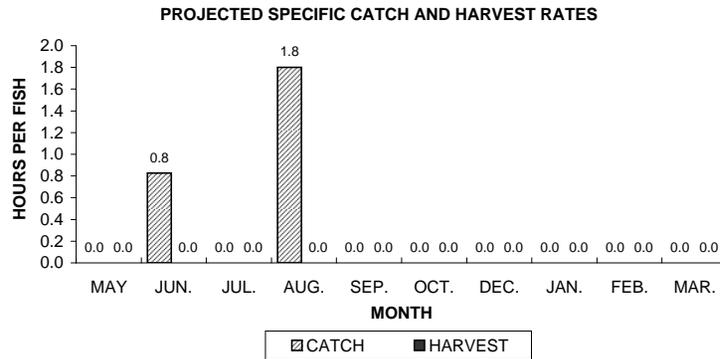
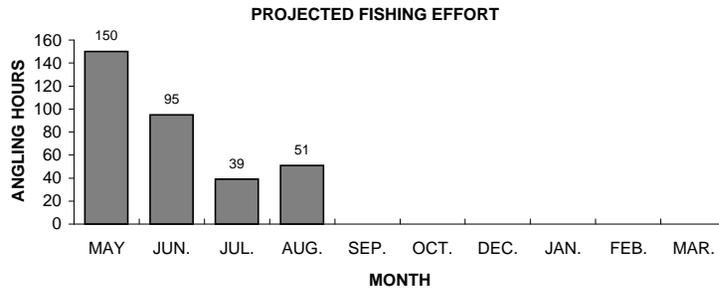
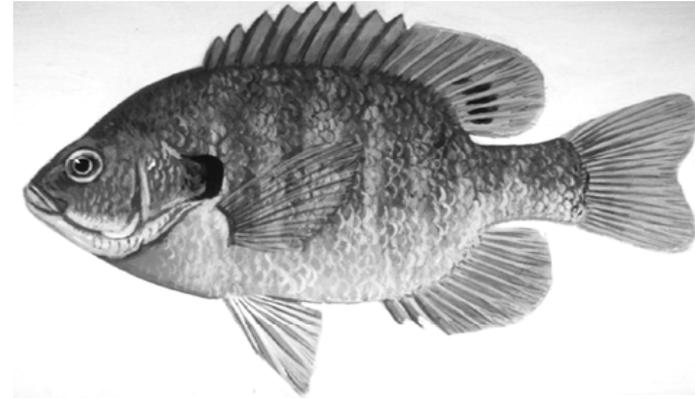


Figure 8. Bluegill sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

PUMPKINSEED

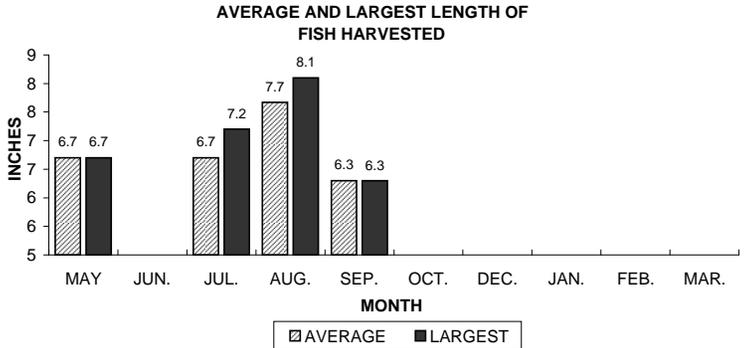
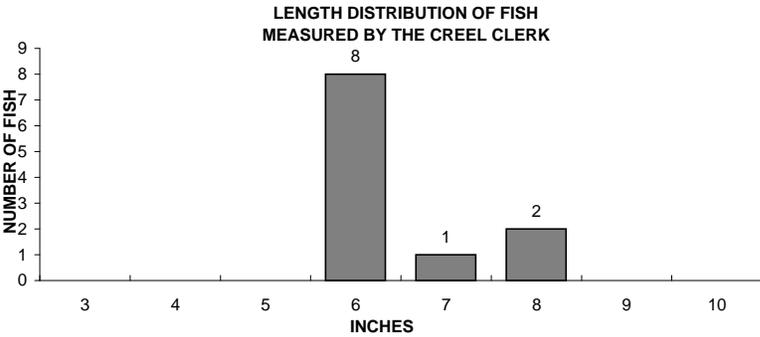
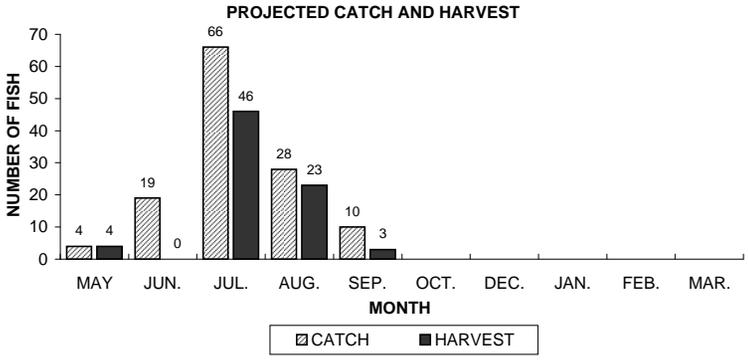
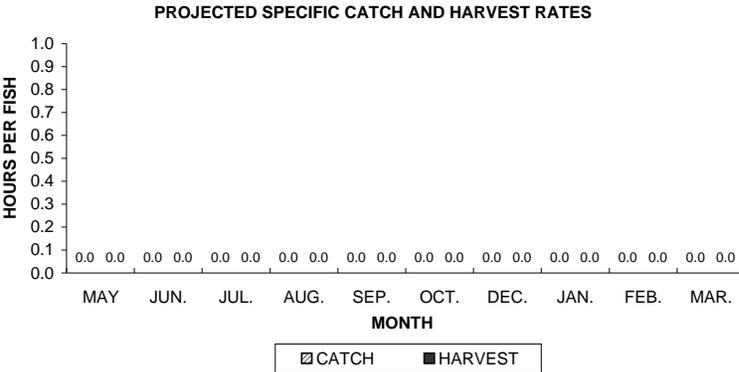
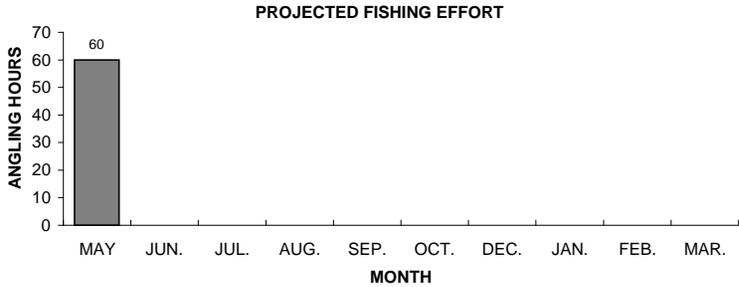
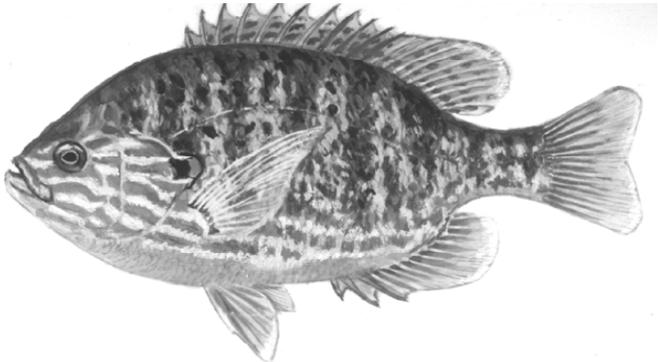


Figure 7. Pumpkinseed sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

ROCK BASS

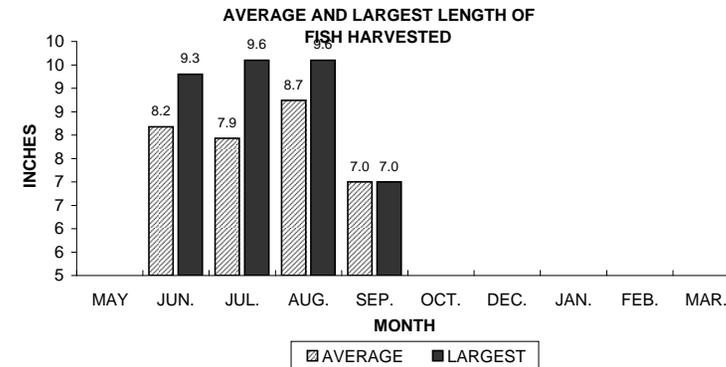
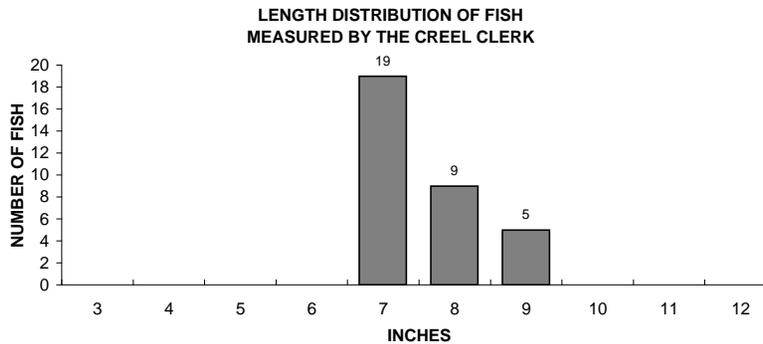
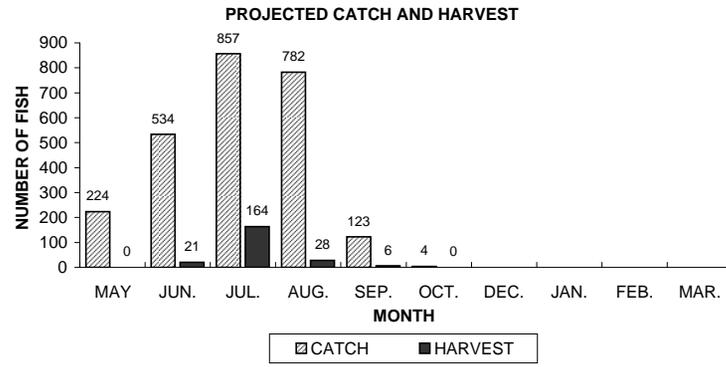
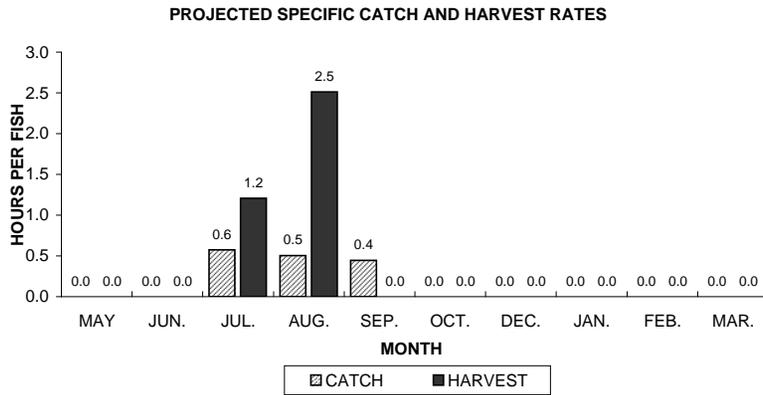
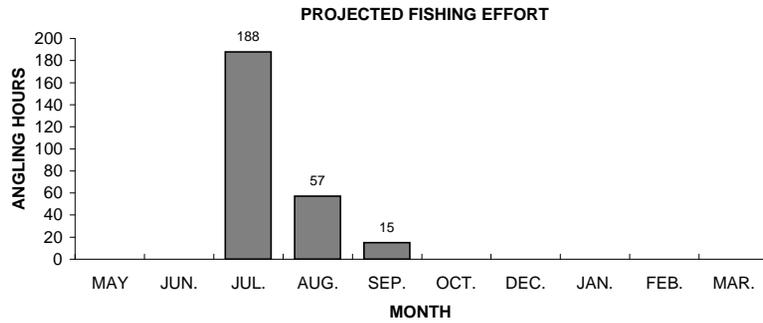
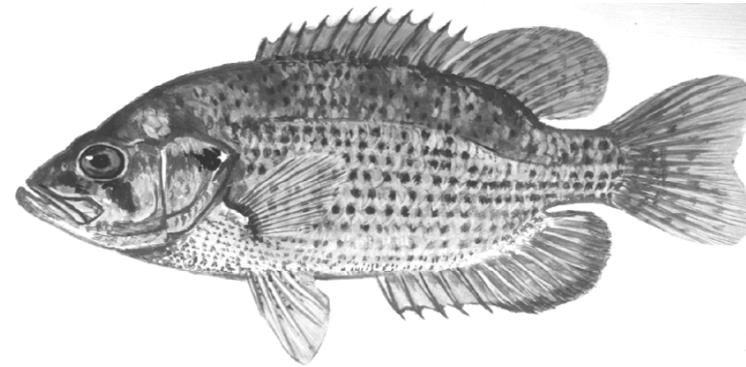


Figure 8. Rock bass sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

BLACK CRAPPIE

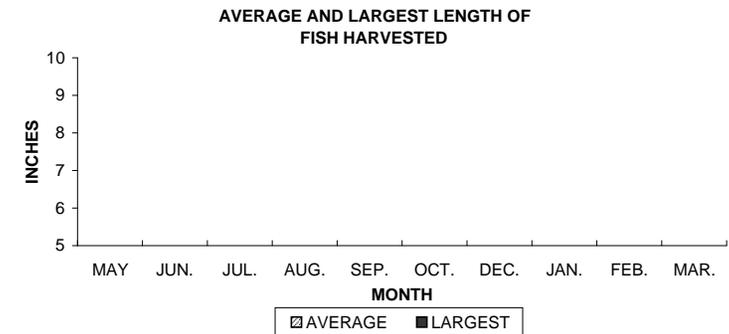
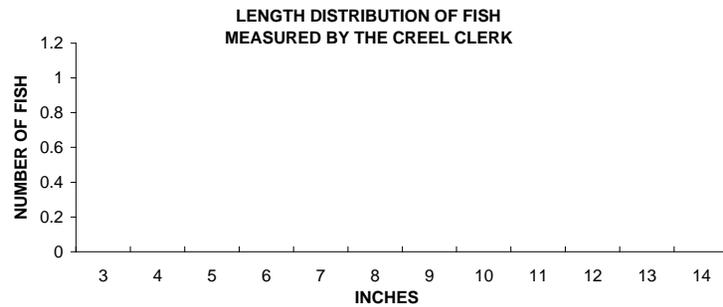
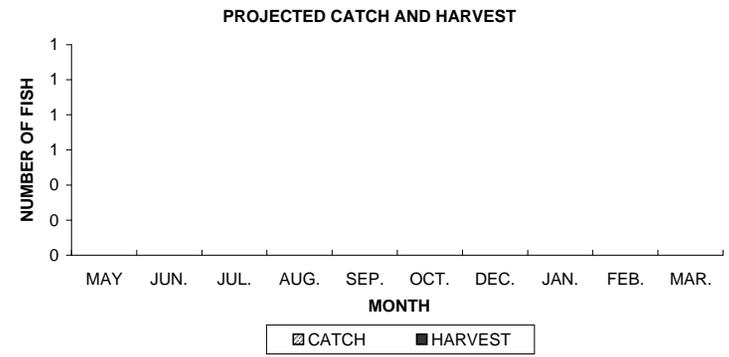
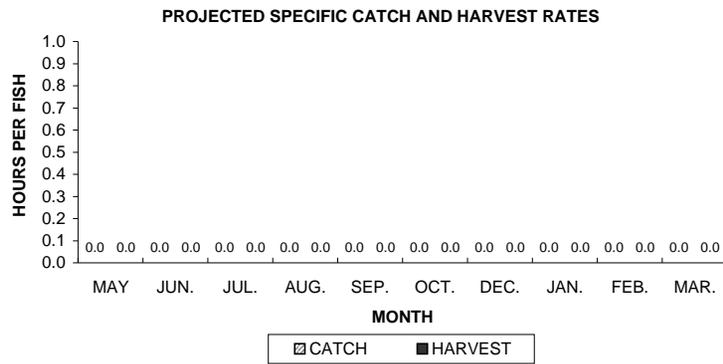
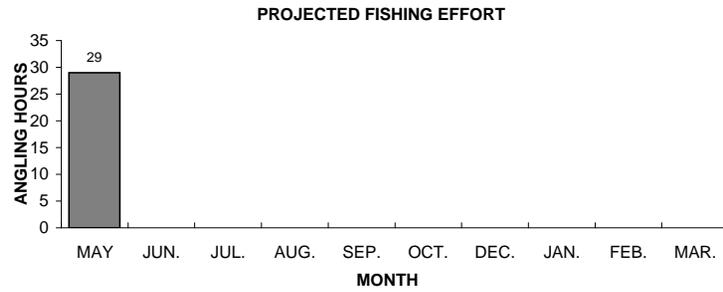
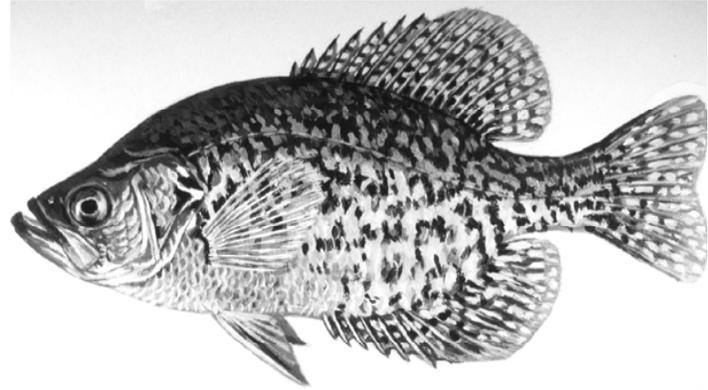


Figure 9. Black crappie sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.

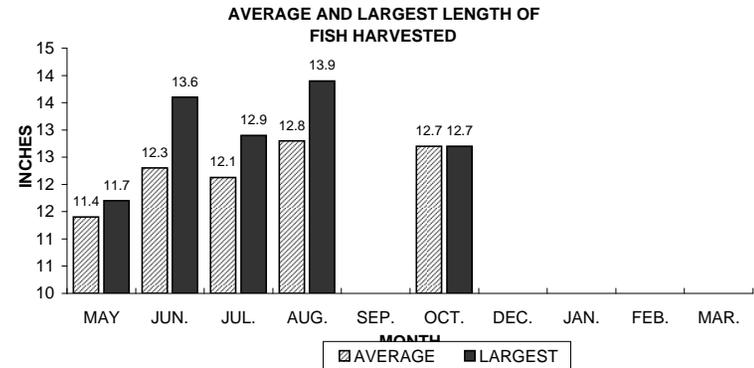
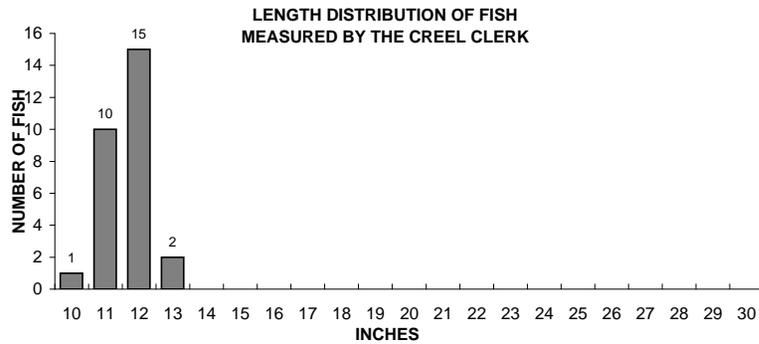
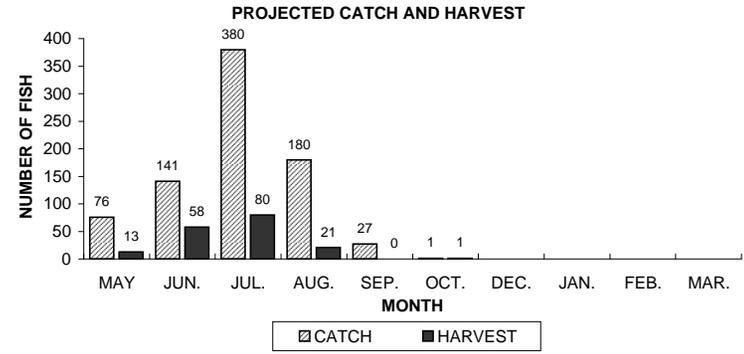
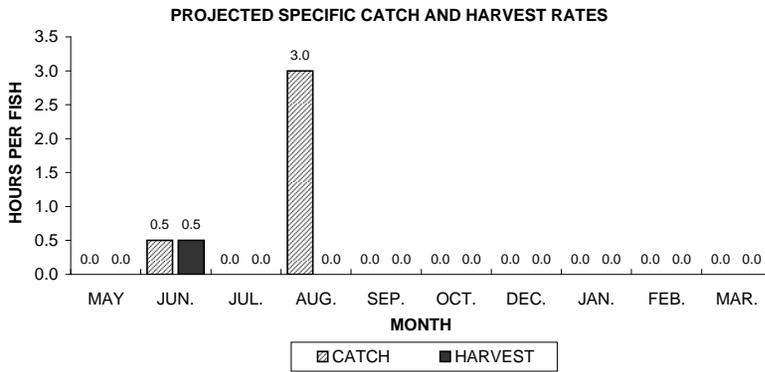
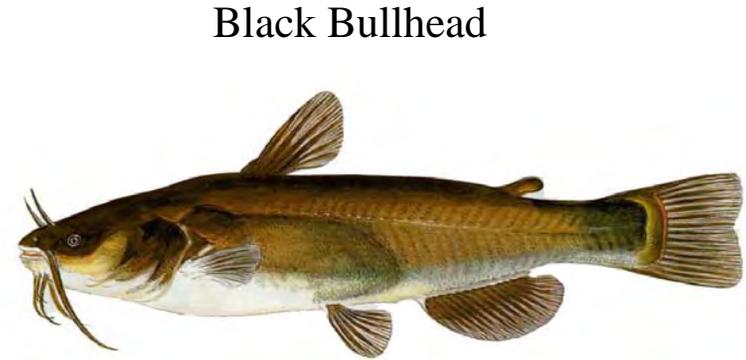
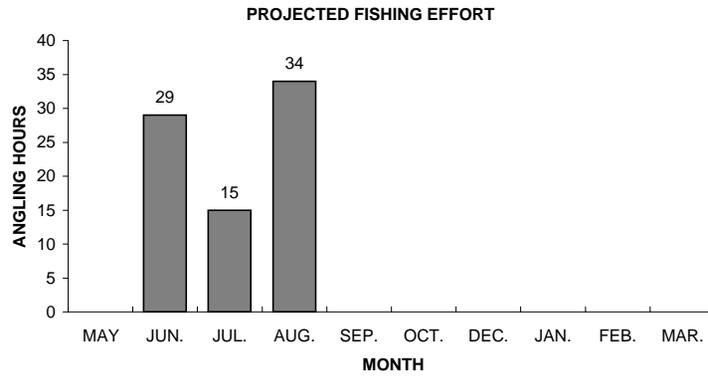


Figure 10. Black Bullhead sportfishing effort, catch, harvest, and length distribution, Metonga Lake, during 2010-11.