



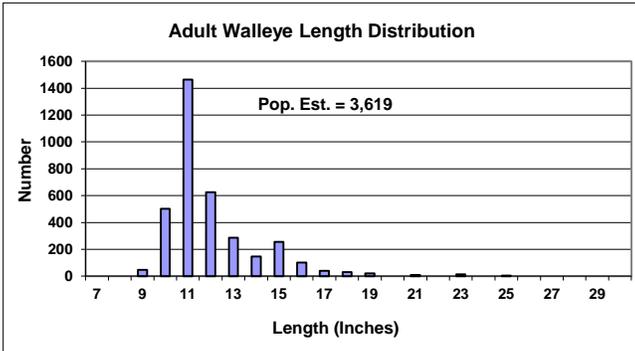
**WISCONSIN DNR
FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET**

LAKE: BIG FORK

COUNTY: ONEIDA

YEAR: 2014

The Department of Natural Resources surveyed Big Fork Lake, Oneida County, from May 8 through May 20, 2014, to assess the walleye and muskellunge populations. Big Fork Lake is a drainage lake within the Three Lakes chain of lakes with a sand, gravel, muck substrate and a naturally-reproducing walleye population. It has a surface area of 690 acres and a maximum depth of 37 feet.



* Note: Adult walleye are defined as all sexable walleye and walleye of unknown sex \geq 15 inches long.

Walleye



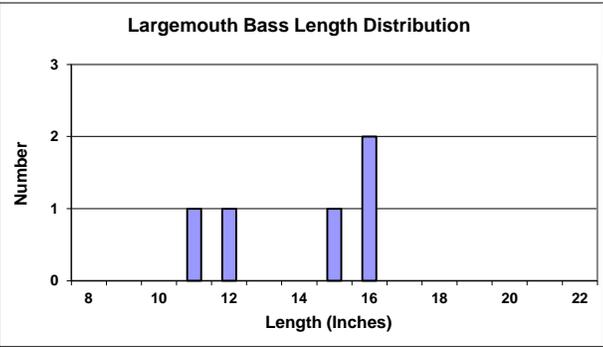
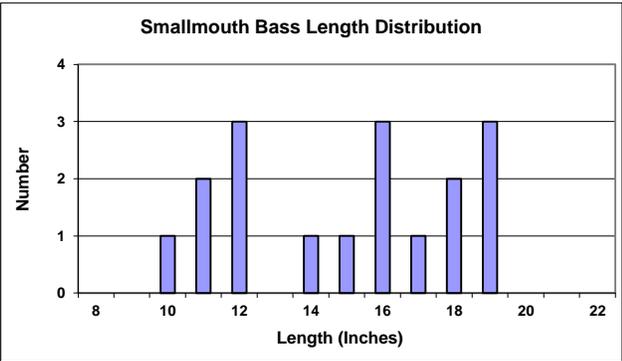
A mark-recapture survey of Big Fork Lake's adult walleye population was conducted from 5/8-5/15, 2014. During 7 days of fyke netting, 1086 adult walleye were captured and marked with a fin clip. A crew then sampled the lake with an electro-fishing boat on May 15 and captured 304 adult walleye. During electro-fishing 31% (93 of 304) of captured walleye bore the fin clip given during fyke netting. The largest walleye we captured was a 25-inch female.

Based on those results, Big Fork Lake was estimated to contain 3,619 adult walleye (5.5 /acre). An estimated 13% (478 of 3,619) of adult walleye were 15 inches long or larger.

Smallmouth Bass



Smallmouth bass were not a primary target of our survey of Big Fork Lake. Sampling occurred prior to peak smallmouth spawning. However, we did capture 17 smallmouth bass, 8 inches or larger, during fyke netting and electro-fishing. Of those smallmouth captured, 65% (11 of 17) were 14 inches long or larger. The largest smallmouth captured was 19.8 inches long.



Largemouth Bass



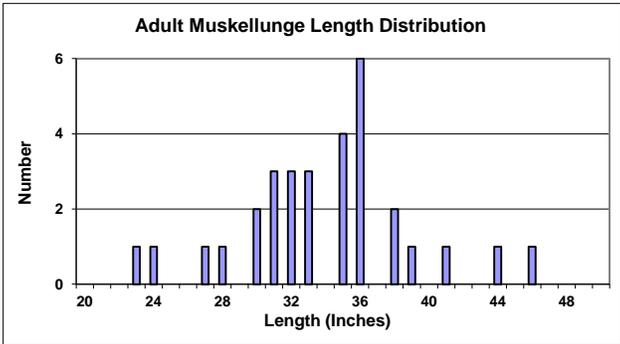
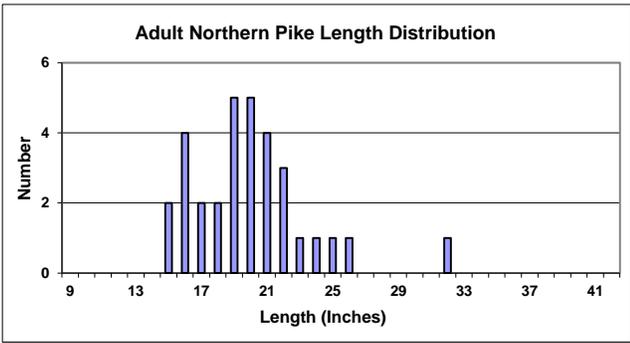
Largemouth bass were also not targeted during our survey of Big Fork Lake. However, we incidentally captured 5 largemouth bass, 8 inches or larger, during fyke netting and electro-fishing. Of those largemouth captured, 60% (3 of 5) were 14 inches long or larger. The largest largemouth captured was 16.3 inches long.

Northern Pike



From May 8 through May 20, 2014, 32 adult northern pike were captured in fyke nets fished in Big Fork lake. Of the adult northern pike captured 94% (30 of 32) were less than 26 inches long. The largest northern pike captured was a 32.5-inch female.

* Note: Adult northern pike are defined as all sexable northern pike and northern pike of unknown sex \geq 12 inches long.



Muskellunge



During our fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Big Fork Lake, 31 adult muskellunge were captured. Of the muskellunge captured, 10% (3 of 31) were 40 inches long or larger. The largest muskellunge captured was a 46.6-inch female.

* Note: Adult muskellunge are defined using PSD stock size as all sexable muskellunge and muskellunge of unknown sex \geq 20 inches long.

Other Species

In addition to the game fish mentioned above, 10 other species of fish were captured during fyke netting and electro-fishing sampling of Big Fork Lake. Yellow perch, black crappie, and white sucker were common in our fyke net catches. Other species sampled included bluegill, pumpkinseed, rock bass, yellow bullhead, burbot, cisco and golden shiner.

A creel survey will be conducted on Big Fork Lake throughout the 2014-15 fishing season to get estimates of fishing effort and angler harvest. Creel clerk Andrew Disch will count and interview anglers and examine their catch. The information gathered will be used to estimate fishing effort and angler harvest.

Table 1. General Fishing Regulations for Big Fork Lake, Oneida County, 2014

FISH SPECIES	OPEN SEASON	DAILY LIMIT	MINIMUM LENGTH
Walleye	May 3 - March 1	3	None, but only 1 fish > 14 inches
Largemouth Bass	May 3 - March 1	5 in total with SMB	14 inches
Smallmouth Bass	May 3 - June 20 (C&R) June 21 - March 1 (Harvest)	5 in total with LMB	14 inches
Muskellunge	May 24 - Nov. 30	1	40 inches
Northern Pike	May 3 - March 1	5	None

A brief summary of selected fishing regulations for Big Fork Lake is included above (Table 1). While the regulatory information provided was current at the time the surveys were conducted, it is not comprehensive and should not be used as a substitute for the current fishing regulation pamphlet. You may obtain a copy of current fishing regulations when you purchase your fishing license, or download a copy from our web site at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/regulations>

This report is interim only; data and findings should not be considered final. Results of creel surveys should be available by June 2015. Watch for survey summaries at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Fishing/north/trtysprngsrsvs.html> or contact:

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