



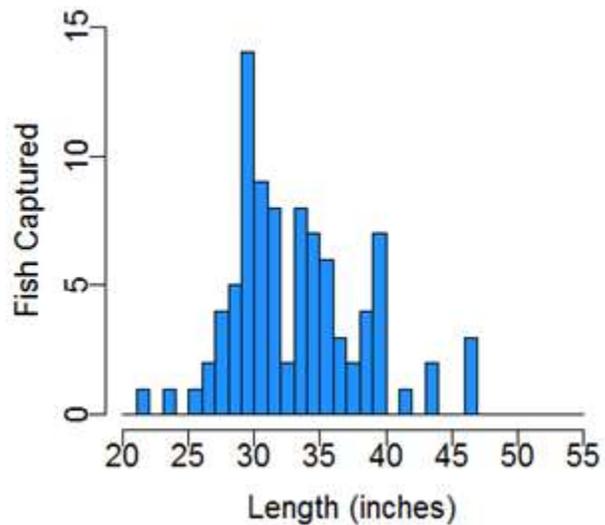
## Spring Fisheries Survey Summary Tiger Cat Chain, Sawyer County, 2015

The Hayward DNR Fisheries Management Team conducted a fyke netting survey on the Tiger Cat Chain (Burns, McClaine, Upper Twin, Lower Twin, Placid, and the Tiger Cat Flowage) from April 15-18, 2015 to assess the adult walleye, muskellunge, northern pike, yellow perch and black crappie populations in the lake. Fourteen nets were set overnight for three nights which resulted in 42 total net-nights of effort. An electrofishing survey conducted on June 9, 2015 documented the status of largemouth bass and bluegill. A little over nine miles of shoreline were shocked throughout the chain. Nets and electrofishing runs were spread throughout the chain to include at least some surveying with each gear type in each lake. 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.

### Muskellunge



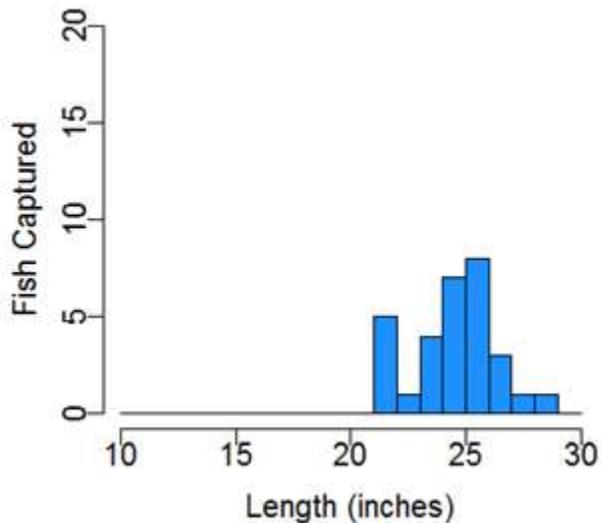
<b>Captured 2.1 per net-night <math>\geq</math> 20 inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq</math> 30"</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Memorable Size <math>\geq</math> 42"</b>	<b>7%</b>



### Walleye (Adult)



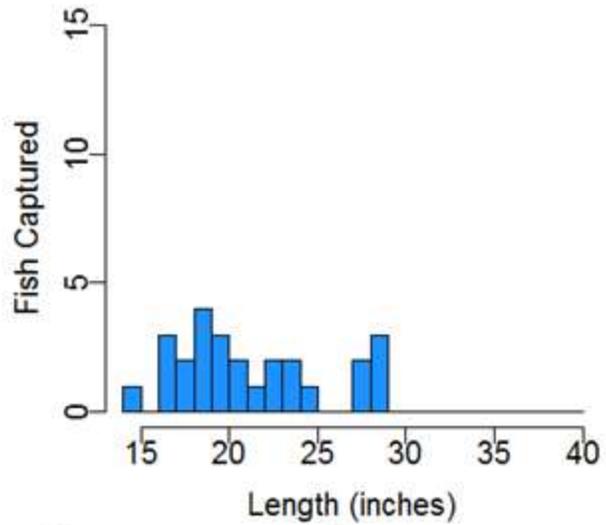
<b>Captured 0.7 per net-night <math>\geq</math> 10 inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq</math> 15"</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq</math> 20"</b>	<b>100%</b>



### Northern Pike



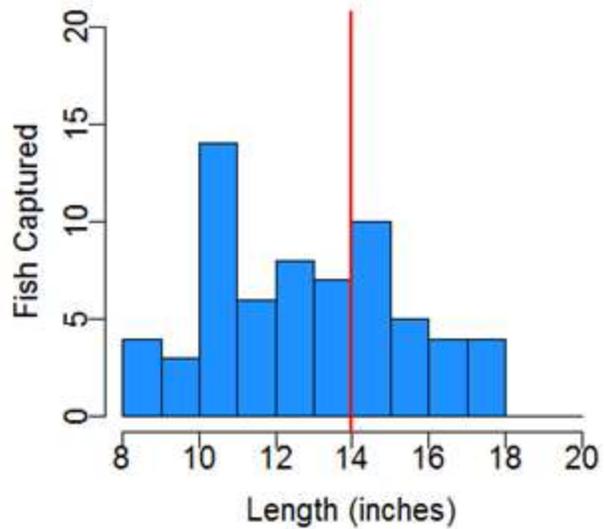
<b>Captured 0.6 per net-night <math>\geq 14</math> inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq 21</math>"</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq 28</math>"</b>	<b>12%</b>



### Largemouth bass



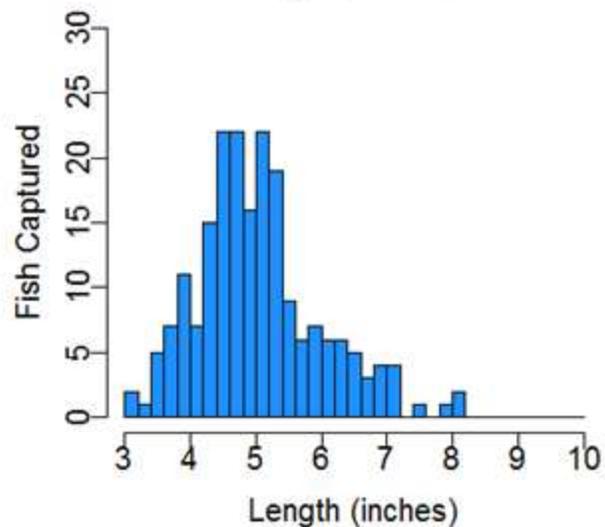
<b>Captured 7 per mile <math>\geq 8</math> inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq 12</math>"</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq 15</math>"</b>	<b>16%</b>



### Bluegill



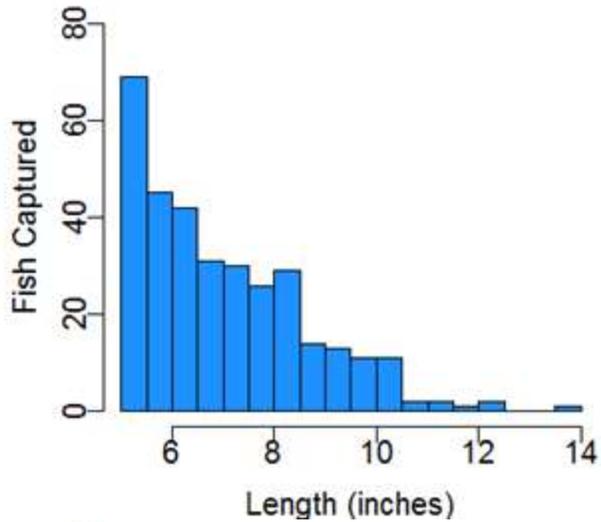
<b>Captured 68 per mile <math>\geq 3</math> inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq 6</math>"</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq 8</math>"</b>	<b>1%</b>



### Black Crappie



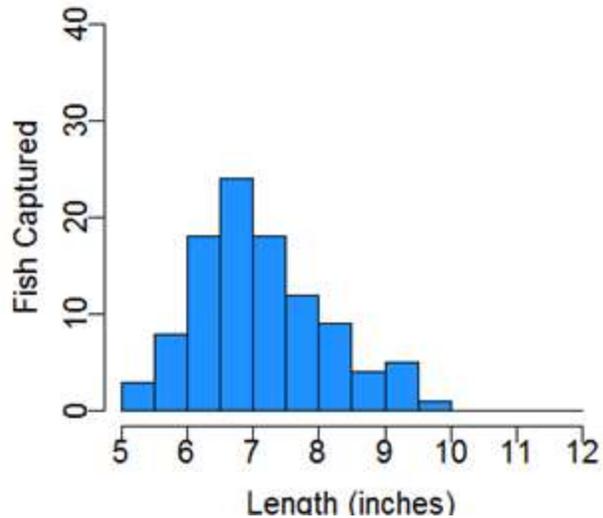
<b>Captured 8 per net-night <math>\geq</math> 5 inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq</math> 8"</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq</math> 10"</b>	<b>6%</b>



### Yellow Perch



<b>Captured 2.4 per net-night <math>\geq</math> 5 inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq</math> 8"</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq</math> 10"</b>	<b>0%</b>



## Summary of Results

Muskellunge are one of the most popular species in the Tiger Cat Chain. The Tiger Cat is considered an “action” muskellunge (musky) fishery where anglers can expect to catch musky at a higher rate, but typically with a lower average size. Our survey reinforced that perception of the fishery with a high catch rate for musky but most fish being less than 40 inches. That said, there were more fish in the upper 30/low 40 inch range than in previous surveys.

Walleye were captured at an overall low rate but with impressive size. Walleye reproduction in the Tiger Cat Chain is almost non-existent but fingerlings are stocked periodically by local clubs which results in a few fish surviving and growing to adulthood. There is ample prey available to walleye that are able to survive through the first few perilous years in this shallow, predator rich lake.

Northern pike are not native to the Tiger Cat Chain but started appearing in the lake in the 1990’s. Since that time, reports of pike have become increasingly common and local anglers have become concerned about impacts pike might have on the native fishery. This 2015 survey found that northern pike numbers have not increased since the last survey in 2011, although it is clear that pike are successfully reproducing in the lake. There is potential for negative impacts to the musky and bass fisheries, so anglers are encouraged to harvest up to 5 pike a day of all sizes. Tiger muskellunge, a hybrid between a pike and a pure musky that is striped in appearance, have started to be observed. Tiger musky are protected like true muskellunge and should be released if

caught out of season or under the size limit. Tiger muskellunge do not reproduce and pose no risk to the fishery, but do get large and are fun to catch.

Largemouth bass are moderately abundant in the Tiger Cat Flowage and many of the fish are considered quality size. The depth, substrate, and aquatic plants combine to make excellent largemouth bass habitat and a unique Northwoods bass fishing experience in the many connected lakes and channels of the Tiger Cat Chain.

The Tiger Cat Chain is not known as a panfishing destination. Overall abundance of all panfish species is relatively high, leading to slow growth and poor overall size. Some quality size panfish can be found by anglers willing to put in the time but these are usually a small portion of the overall catch



A nice Tiger Cat muskellunge waiting to be measured and returned to the lake.

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Special thanks to volunteers Todd Williamson and Becky Slattery  
Reviewed and approved by Mike Vogelsang