

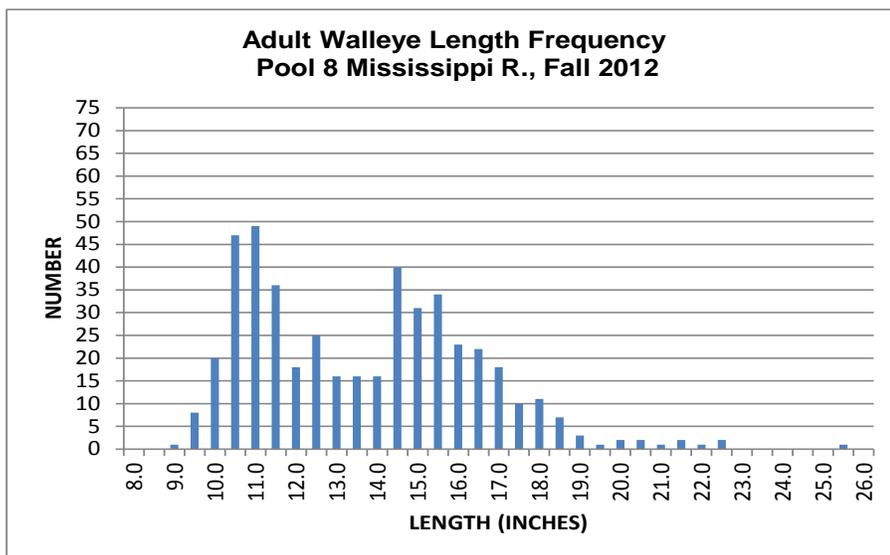


WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET. POOL 8, MISSISSIPPI RIVER WALLEYE AND SAUGER.

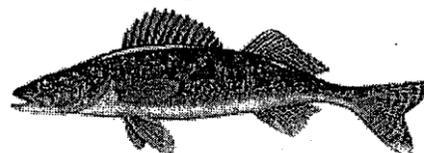
RIVER: MISSISSIPPI RIVER, POOL 8

COUNTY: LA CROSSE

YEAR: 2012

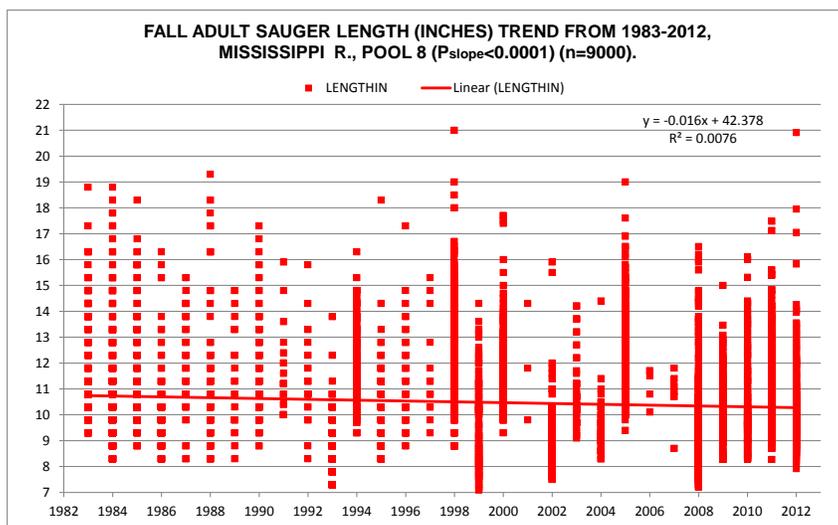


The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources surveyed Pool 8 of the Mississippi River in La Crosse County to determine the health of the walleye and sauger fishery. Over a five day period in October, a DNR crew collected a total of 463 adult walleye by electrofishing at night in the near-shore areas and around wingdams. In our sample, adult walleye were between 9.2 to 25.7 inches. Catch-per-unit-effort was 32 walleye per hour.



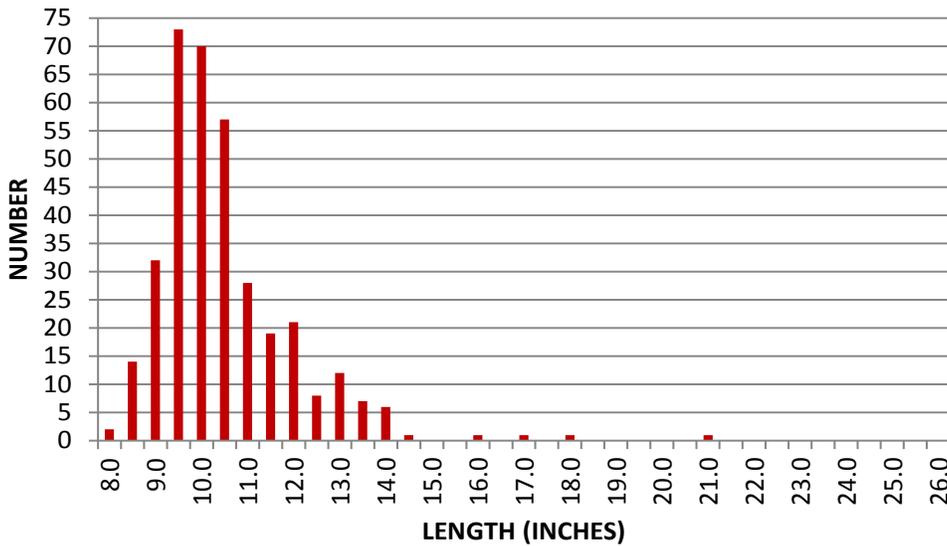
Since 2008, abundance of adult walleye, as measured by our catch-per-unit-effort, has remained about the same. Although annual abundance estimates varied from 13 to 96 adult walleye per hour, we saw no trend, either increasing or decreasing, from our samples.

Since 1983, average yearly size of adult walleye has varied from 11 to 16 inches. These fluctuations may be due to varying abundances of annual age classes growing into or leaving the adult population. We found no long term trend in annual sizes of adults suggesting that the size of adult fish has remained about the same for the last 30 years.



Our sampling efforts in Pool 8 currently indicate a healthy and self-sustaining walleye population.

Adult Sauger Length Frequency Pool 8 Mississippi R., Fall 2012

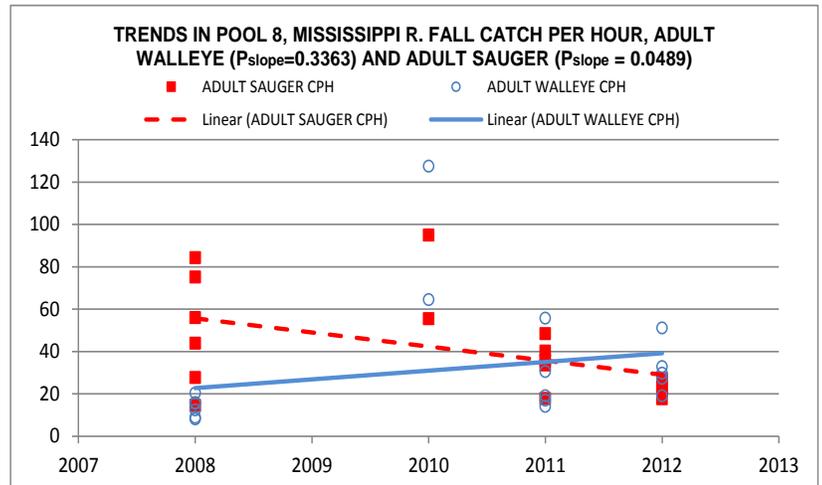


A total of 354 sauger were collected during this fall's survey. Adult sauger were between 7.9 to 20.9 inches. Catch-per-unit-effort was 23 sauger per hour.

Since 2008, abundance of adult sauger, as measured by our catch-per-unit-effort, has significantly decreased from a modeled estimate of 56 adult sauger per hour to 29 per hour.



Since 1983, average yearly size of adult sauger has varied from 8.3 to 12 inches. These fluctuations may be due to varying abundances of annual age classes growing into or leaving the adult population. We found a decreasing trend in annual sizes of adults suggesting that the size of adult sauger has decreased. This trend first occurred in 1994. Prior to 1994, there was no significant trend. Since 1994, the trend in decreasing size has continued. This suggests that there has been a reduction of 0.8 inches in average size since 1994. Fortunately, there was no concurrent reduction in young-of-the-year (fish born the year of sampling) abundance.



Long term reduction in size, coupled with a recent decline in abundance suggests that we should be keeping an eye on Mississippi River Pool 8 sauger. Pool 9, downstream of Pool 8, showed a decline in sauger and walleye size from 1999-2012 but not in abundance from 2003-2012. Unlike walleye, there is no minimum size limit on sauger for the Mississippi River bordering Wisconsin. Presently, the bag limit of these two fishes is 6 fish in aggregate and the walleye minimum size limit is 15 inches.

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