**WATERBODY:** Mississippi R. Lawrence/Target Area  
**COUNTIES:** Houston, MN.  

**YEAR:** 2017

The WDNR surveyed backwaters and sloughs in the Lawrence/Target, Iowa Area, Pool 9 of the Mississippi River in fall 2017. We used electrofishing equipment to determine the health of the fishery. The study area included all backwaters near La Crescent, MN downstream to Lawrence Lake (Figure 1).

A total of 1639 fish representing 37 species were captured. Bluegill was the most abundant followed gizzard shad, largemouth bass, yellow perch, golden redhorse, freshwater drum, and bowfin.

Similar sampling was done in 2013. Since then, abundance, as measured by catch per hour (CPH) of all game fish combined remained the same (~49.7 per hour). The bluegill catch rate (~32.7 per hour), largemouth bass (~7.4) and yellow perch (~4.6) remained steady. Average lengths of juvenile and adult bluegill did not change from 2013 to 2017 (4.8 inches). Nor did largemouth bass (11.0 inches) or yellow perch (7.7 inches).

**Contact Information:** David Heath - Fisheries Biologist; 3550 Mormon Coulee Rd.; La Crosse, WI 54601; Telephone: 608-785-9993.  
David.heath@Wisconsin.gov
Compared to other surveys with similar sampling methods, 2017 Lawrence/Target Area ranked in the upper tier of combined game fish abundance (Figure 5). This lake unit ranks statistically similar to 19 surveys, was higher than the lower tier of 12 surveys. This suggests a fairly high relative abundance of game fish during 2017. Bluegill was lower than 7 surveys and the same as all remaining 24 surveys. Similarly, largemouth bass were lower than 10 surveys and the same as the remaining 21 surveys. Yellow perch had below average relative abundance. It was lower than 8 other surveys and the same as 23.