WISCONSIN DNR
FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET

Water: Mason Lake **County:** Adams **WBIC:** 175700 **Year:** 2012

The Wisconsin Rapids fisheries crew with the Department of Natural Resources surveyed Mason Lake, Adams County, with fyke nets from March 19th through March 27th, 2012 for a total of 41 net nights. In addition, electrofishing was conducted on March 22, 2012 to help target carp and largemouth bass. The survey was designed to give a basic overview of the lake's fishery. The predominant fishery is composed of largemouth bass, northern pike, bluegill, yellow perch and pumpkinseed. Other species caught during the survey included: black bullheads, yellow bullheads, channel catfish, common carp, gizzard shad, and white sucker. Growth rates of largemouth bass, northern pike (ages 3-8), black crappie, bluegill and pumpkinseed were found to be about the same as the state average, whereas northern pike ages 9 and greater and yellow perch growth rates were found to be below the state average. The most abundant panfish species in the lake was bluegill.

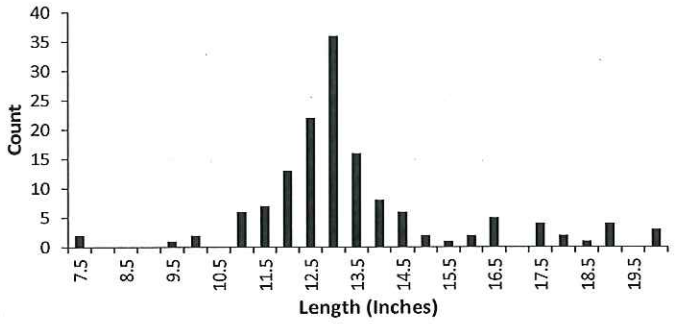

Figure 1. Length frequency of largemouth bass from Mason Lake during fyke netting and electroshocking surveys on March 19 -22 and 27th, 2012.

Largemouth Bass

We captured 64 largemouth bass during our netting survey and 77 electrofishing (figure 1). Fish ranged from 7.5 inches to 20.2 inches with an average of 13.6 inches.89 percent of the fish were of at least quality size (12 inches), 17 percent were at least of preferred size (15 inches) and 2 percent were of memorable size (20 inches).

Fish surveyed showed good growth rates, whereas most ages of largemouth bass grew the same as the state average.

Northern Pike

We captured 47 northern pike during the netting survey. Our catch per unit effort was 1.15 per net night. The northern pike ranged in size from 18.5 to 37.5 inches and had a mean length of 27.4 inches (figure 2). 96 percent of the fish observed were of quality size (21 inches), 38 percent were of preferred size (28 inches), and 11 percent were of memorable size (34 inches).

The age 3-8 fish surveyed showed growth rates and grow the same as the average northern pike observed in the state, but grew slower than the state average for age 9 and older fish in Mason Lake.

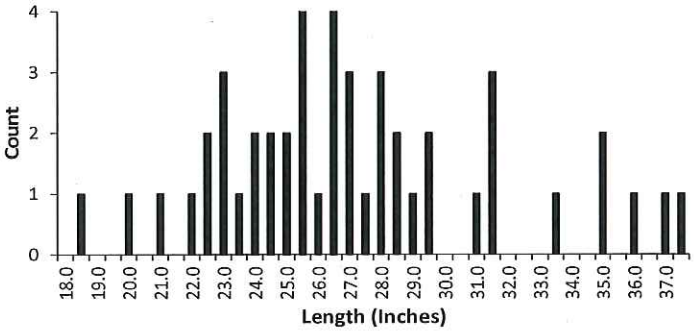

Figure 2. Length frequency of northern pike from Mason Lake during a fyke netting survey from March 19-22, 2012.

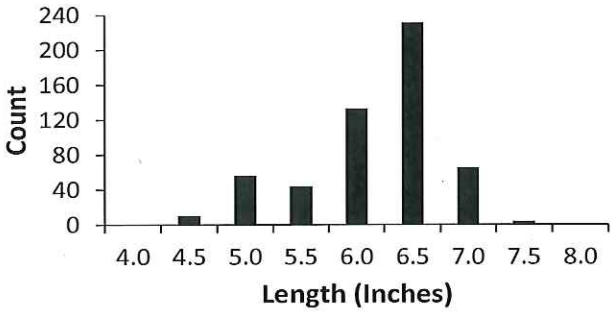

Figure 3. Length frequency of bluegill from Mason Lake during a fyke netting survey from March 19-22, 2012.

Bluegill

We captured 2,522 bluegills during the netting survey, giving a catch per effort of 61.5 bluegills per net night. Bluegills were the most numerous of the panfish species collected during our survey. The bluegill ranged in size from 4.5 to 7.5 inches with an average length of 6.5 inches (figure 3). 80 percent of the fish were at least of quality size (6 inches) and no fish were found of preferred (8 inches) or memorable (10 inches) size.

Bluegill of all ages caught (ages 2-6) in Mason Lake were growing the same as the average bluegill in Wisconsin.

Black crappie

We captured 724 black crappies during the netting survey, giving a catch rate of 17.66 crappies per net night (figure 3). Black crappies were the second most numerous panfish species observed. The black crappies caught ranged in size from 4.5 to 11.5 inches with an average length of 9.0 inches. 66 percent of the fish caught were at least of quality size (8 inches) and 38 percent were of at least preferred size (10 inches) and no memorable size (12 inches) crappies were caught.

Black crappie of all ages caught (ages 2-6) in Mason Lake were growing the same as the average black crappie in Wisconsin.

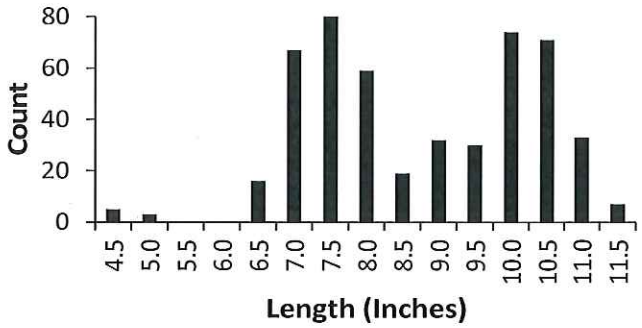

Figure 4. Length frequency of black crappie from Mason Lake during a fyke netting survey from March 19-22, 2012.

Yellow Perch

We captured 114 yellow perch during the netting survey, giving a catch rate of 2.78 fish per net night. Yellow perch ranged in length from 6.0 to 10.5 inches with an average length of 8.1 inches. 48 percent were at least of quality size (8 inches) and 6 percent were of preferred size (10 inches).

Yellow perch of most ages observed (age 3-8) in Mason Lake were growing slower than the average yellow perch in Wisconsin.

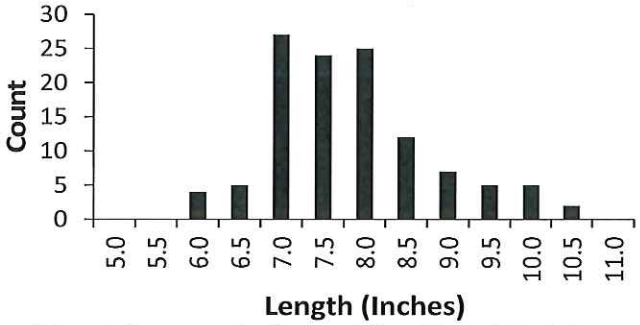

Figure 5. Length frequency of yellow perch from Mason Lake during a fyke netting survey from March 19-22, 2012.

Conclusions

Mason Lake should be managed for a largemouth bass, northern pike and panfish (bluegill, black crappie, yellow perch, and pumpkinseed) fishery. The habitat supports and is most suitable to provide these fisheries. Largemouth Bass are the most dominant predator fish with good size structure and growth. Growth rates of bluegill are good; however, the size structure of the bluegill population is truncated at 7.5 inches. Likely this is due to high exploitation of bluegill larger than 7.5 inches by anglers. The black crappie population has good growth and size structure. A large number of 7-8 inch black crappies were caught indicating good recruitment years that will be available to the fishery for the next 2-3 years.

Mason Lake, Adams County.

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities for Mason Lake, Adams County, contact:

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