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DNR fisheries summer fieldwork schedule on Aitkin area lakes

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Aitkin area fisheries staff has announced the assessment schedule for the 2013 field season.

The DNR conducts fisheries surveys and assessments on a regular basis to monitor changes in fish populations, and to determine if management strategies have been effective. Survey frequency varies on each lake based on ongoing management evaluations and by angler use. Large lakes with heavy use are scheduled more frequently than small remote lakes. Lakes that are stocked on a regular basis are also sampled more frequently to assess stocking success and monitor growth rates. Staff then review the data and incorporate it into individual fisheries lake management plans. The plans identify goals for key species in the lake and outline specific management activities.

As soon as the ice is out through mid-June:

- Mille Lacs northern pike trap netting (now – May)
- Mille Lacs walleye population estimate (May – June)
- Mille Lacs muskellunge trap netting (May)

Mid-June through October (Dates subject to change dependent on Mille Lacs work):

- Elm Island Lake – full resurvey (June 10-14).
- Hay Lake and Little Ball Bluff Lake – population assessments (June 17-21).
- Hanging Kettle Lake – full resurvey (June 24-28).
- Population assessments – Diamond Lake (July 1-3), Big Sandy Lake (July 8-12).
- Full resurveys – Wakefield Lake (July 15-19), Farm Island Lake (July 22-26).
- Population assessments – Ripple Lake (July 29-Aug. 2), Gun Lake (Aug. 12-16).
- Tullibee habitat assessments (Aug. 5-9) on Ball Bluff, Little Ball Bluff, Big Sandy, Cedar, Farm Island, Long, Little Pine, Round (01-0070), Round (01-0204), and Spirit lakes.
- Round (01-0204) Lake full resurvey (Aug. 19-23).
- Big Pine Lake special assessment (Aug. 26-30).
- Mille Lacs Lake – aquatic invasive species related monitoring throughout the summer, and annual fall surveys in September.
- Big Sandy, Farm Island, Mille Lacs, Clear, Minnewawa, Dam, Spirit, Gun and Wladimiraf (Section 10) lakes – fall juvenile walleye electrofishing assessments in September on as many of these lakes as time and weather permit.
- Blue Lake trout population assessment Oct. 8-12.

The information collected in 2013 will be available as a lake survey report in the spring of 2014 on the DNR website at www.mndnr.gov, or from the area fisheries office. For more information contact the Aitkin Fisheries office at 218-927-3751, aitkin.fisheries@state.mn.us, or in writing at MN DNR, Area Fisheries, 1200 Minnesota Ave., Aitkin, MN 56431.

The DNR's summer fieldwork activities are largely funded through the sale of fishing licenses and the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Act.

