

TO: MN DNR FISHERIES, DULUTH OFFICE
FROM: FISH LAKE SDM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE
DATE: JULY 09, 2012
CC: DON PEREIRA

After much deliberation through the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Process, Reviewing available data, discussing options and asking questions to MN DNR staff the Fish Lake SDM committee is making recommendations to improve the walleye population in Fish Lake. The committee stemmed from interest and concern that the walleye fishery was in decline. Through the SDM process, the committee has discussed and listed all the related values and objectives regarding the Fish Lake fisheries, including but not limited to, the relative values of most game species in the lake. While discussing other game species, walleye was and continues to be the predominant species that are of most interest to the greatest number of committee members.

The committee reviewed most recent available fisheries data and weighed many management actions against the goals of maintaining and increasing walleye populations along with other fisheries populations in the lake. In addition, management actions were weighed against social and economic considerations such as hydroelectric production and lake dependent businesses. After a numerical scoring process done by both committee members and DNR Fisheries Staff the highest scoring management actions along with the fisheries goals were compared in relation to how they would affect the fisheries populations of interest. The committee members scored “increase walleye populations above 12” the highest importance with the second being “in lake reproduction of walleye”. When weighted against various management actions and with discussion with MN DNR fisheries staff, the following recommendations are being made from the Fish Lake SDM committee:

- Establish a harvest slot of 13-17” for Walleye with the allowance of one fish over 28”,
- Establish a maximum bag limit of 3 per day,
- Encourage the stocking of walleye fry that are marked with oxytetracycline (OTC),
- Encourage the Establishment of a “flash” type largemouth bass tournament in the spring to allow for removing fish from their beds but not harvesting the fish,
- Continue monitoring and research to elucidate the cause of the walleye decline in the lake.