



## Lake Superior Summer Creel Fishing Report

**The Lake Superior summer** creel survey has been conducted annually since 1969. The summer creel survey provides estimates of angling pressure, harvest, and catch rates along the North Shore of Lake Superior. The survey focuses mainly on Lake Trout, Chinook Salmon, and Coho Salmon.

Two creel clerks conduct the summer creel survey from the Memorial Day weekend through the first full weekend in October. The Lower Shore clerk interviews anglers from Duluth to Two Harbors, while the Upper Shore clerk interviews anglers from Twin Points to Hovland. Clerks follow pre-determined schedules to ensure that their data accurately represents all anglers' effort and catch on Lake Superior.

**Fishing reports are updated on the web on Thursdays at: <http://mndnr.gov/areas/fisheries/lakesuperior/report.html> or by calling our office at 218-302-3293 and selecting 1 for the updated fishing report.**

### **Update 10/12/2015**

The Lake Superior Lake Trout Fishing season and the Summer creel survey have ended. The Lake Trout season will reopen on December 1. To protect spawning Lake Trout, fishing is not allowed during October 6 through November 30 from boats, in an area near Duluth between the mouth of Chester Creek and the Duluth lighthouse. Otherwise, anglers may fish for salmon, Rainbow Trout, and Walleye in Lake Superior and in tributaries below posted boundaries. Most salmon are caught while trolling near shore in the upper 80 feet of the water surface. All unclipped Rainbow Trout must be released immediately. Biweekly fishing reports will begin again next spring when the tributaries open up and the Spring Creel survey commences. The Summer creel survey will begin on May 28 and weekly Summer fishing reports will begin on June 2.

**\*\*\* Please note the new phone number! 218-302-3293\*\*\***

### **Update 10/1/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing effort was fairly light this past week, which is normal for this time of year, even when the weather cooperates. Boaters continued to pull boats from marinas in preparation for the end of the season. Anglers caught mostly smaller Lake Trout in water as deep as 145 feet, near the bottom. Pink and orange in especially the “two face” versions seemed to be good colors lately, particularly with spoons. Success at catching salmon is nearly close to zero. Shore anglers on the north end of the area began to catch Lake Trout, especially in the early morning. Better success close to shore is likely over the last weekend of the Lake Trout season coming up.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Fishing pressure was mostly light to moderate this past week in the lake and light in the tributaries. Water surface temperatures were warm along the upper shore with consistent readings in open waters in the 52-55 degree range. Anglers caught good numbers of Lake Trout from all upper shore areas, particularly



near shore in depths of 60 to 120 feet. The fish were generally 18 to 25 inches long and weighed 2 to 6 pounds. Anglers caught larger Lake Trout, with several reports of fish in the mid teens to twenty pound class, but overall, larger lake trout have been inconsistent and on the move, with larger fish present one day and seemingly gone the next. Anglers caught few salmon again, with a just a few 18 to 25 inch fish. Small Chinook and Coho Salmon in the 12-16 inch class also continue to be reported occasionally from all upper shore lake stations. Lake anglers also caught an occasional steelhead, including some unusually large fish. Pink Salmon, although present in most larger tributaries, are too sparse to maintain anglers' interest. No Chinook or Coho salmon were reported in tributaries. Tributary flows have been moderate and dropping.

Here's one last reminder for those of you who fish for Lake Trout. The season ends on Sunday, October 4 and reopens on December 1. During the closed season, fishing is not allowed in the area south of the line between the Duluth lighthouse and the mouth of Chester Creek in Duluth.

#### **Update 9/24/2015**

##### **Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:**

Fishing pressure was mostly light this past week, and the weather was decent enough at times. Anglers continued to catch Lake Trout, using mostly the same methods as previously. The fish were mostly in 90 to 120 feet of water near the bottom, but some were caught as high as 50 feet down. The fish hit green flasher and fly combinations and spoons and also on spin-n-glo/flasher combinations. A few anglers even caught fish while jigging, near Agate Bay, and even in 10 feet of water at dusk and dawn near Two Harbors. Lake Trout may be moving into the shallows now. An angler caught one steelhead on a spoon while fishing between the Knife River and Two Harbors. Salmon fishing was still slow, but anglers caught a couple of Chinook Salmon near the Knife River and salmon were observed feeding at the surface near shore. Boaters were pulling their boats from the marinas this past week in preparation for the end of the season. The past week's heavy rains are likely to draw the salmon into the river mouths. The Pink Salmon run was nearly nonexistent, but maybe a few fish will be drawn by the higher flows too.

##### **Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:**

Angler pressure was light at most accesses this past week, due to the lateness of the season and to bad weather which can pop up quickly, reminding boaters to stay fairly close to safe harbor for the sake of safety. Anglers reported good catches of Lake Trout from all stations. Most of the fish were smaller, about 17-20 inches long. Anglers caught these smaller fish in shallower and near shore waters in the 30-70 foot depth range, or even from shore where anglers can cast from points and piers near deeper water. Larger Lake Trout were tougher to find this past week than the week before. Water temperatures were warm again, averaging 52 to 58 degrees at the surface in open waters. Recent strong winds have begun to cool the water and create inconsistent temperatures, in some areas dropping into the mid forty degree range. Anglers report that a few salmon can still be found along the upper shore, especially Chinook Salmon in the 24-28 inch class and weighing up to eight pounds, but overall the anglers are catching fewer salmon. The Pink Salmon run is really late this year. The run began this past week, the fish are bigger than average and are easier to spot as stream levels drop, and anglers are catching them in the more northern tributaries. This is an unusually late run for Pink Salmon. By now in most years the peak of the run has come and gone. Anglers reported 8-12 inch Brook Trout and also a few 25 inch steelhead tributaries. While water levels in tributaries had moderated, recent rains are pushing upper shore tributaries to consistently higher levels.



Just a reminder; the Lake Trout season ends on Sunday, October 4 and reopens on December 1. During the closed season, fishing is not allowed in the area south of the line between the Duluth lighthouse and the mouth of Chester Creek in Duluth.

#### **Update 9/17/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing has picked up this past week across the area. Anglers are finding Lake Trout in 90 to 120 feet of water, many near the bottom but some also suspended as high as 50 down. Anglers caught fish on green flasher/fly combinations and spoons, plus green and pink stickbaits, mostly by trolling. The largest fish are hitting prepared baits too. An angler caught a 14 pound Laker. Anglers caught some Siscowet also, which are usually caught in deeper water. Anglers weren't catching Coho Salmon and only a few Chinook Salmon. Some boats fished quite near to shore, probably looking for Salmon and not having much luck.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was moderate at most accesses when weather conditions have allowed, but the weather was turbulent at times, which is normal. Anglers caught more Lake Trout this week than before, especially from Taconite Harbor, Grand Marais and Horseshoe Bay. The fish came from a range of distances from shore, from near shore to way offshore. Larger Lake Trout congregate at the first deep water breaks and along the deep side of these breaks from 100 to 200 feet down and generally closer to bottom. Smaller Lake Trout were caught in shallow and near shore waters also. The fish averaged 5 to 10 pounds and weighed up to 20 pounds. Chinook Salmon in the 4-9 pound class were caught in modest numbers from all accesses. Chinook salmon were scattered throughout the top 100 feet of the water column and generally near shore. Catches of Coho Salmon were very sporadic at all accesses. Anglers caught a few steelhead scattered across most stations. Anglers also caught few or no pink salmon in the tributaries, despite good water conditions.

#### **Update 9/10/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure and catches have been fairly good, especially just recently and especially out of Duluth. Recent calm weather has allowed smaller boats to venture onto the lake and go offshore. Warm water moved into the Duluth area, down to about 100 feet deep, and anglers caught Lake Trout at depths of over 100 feet. The fish hit spoons and meat, and purple seemed to be a good color. Most of the Lake Trout were 2-5 pounds, the biggest was just shy of 10 pounds, but the big spawners have not moved into the area yet. Anglers caught more siscowet Lake Trout than usual. Salmon fishing is really slow now and reports of steelhead catches are low also.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light from Twin Points and Horseshoe Bay and moderate from other stations. Bad weather did limit the fishing at times, weather such as rain and thunderstorms, brisk and unpredictable winds, and even some fog. Boaters at Silver Bay and Grand Marais have begun to pull their boats out for the season. This past week warm water became established in near shore waters along the entire upper shore. Surface temperatures were in the mid to upper fifty degree range. Anglers from most stations reported that Lake Trout were scattered from the surface to much deeper water and have been tough to pattern.



Most Lake Trout were 16-21 inches long. Two big Lake Trout, at 16 and 18 pounds, were recorded from Grand Marais. In recent days more siscowet have been observed, compared to earlier in the season. Warmer water has helped heat up the fishing a bit for Chinook Salmon, especially at Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais. Anglers caught 24-28 inch Chinook salmon in increasing but not high numbers. Coho Salmon have all but disappeared from anglers' catches along the upper shore. Anglers caught just a few steelhead from Silver Bay, Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais. Our clerk has not seen a Pink Salmon yet in any tributary, although the fish may be hard to see because the tributaries are running high and somewhat turbid. When they are abundant, Pink Salmon generally show up in tributaries after the first significant rainfall in early September.

### **Update 9/3/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure and catches picked up again this week, this time farther up the shore, and pressure was moderate at most stations. The weather has been good for the anglers but a bit tricky too when the fog rolls in. Lake Trout are hitting spoons, suggested colors of Pink Lady and Monkey Puke, generally below the thermocline at 50 feet or deeper, in at least 120 feet of water. There were exceptions, as usual, with a couple of Lake Trout coming up to 15 feet or so to hit spoons. The Lake Trout are average sized with a few big ones, the biggest being a 36 incher that was caught and released out of the Knife River area. Shore fishing off the Two Harbors breakwall has been slow, as was fishing for Coho and Chinook Salmon. The Cohos are big and getting heavier.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was moderate to heavy at Grand Marais and lighter at Silver Bay and Twin Points. Weather, including fog and some wind, kept angler pressure low at times. The fog was caused, as usual, by the contrast between cold water and warm air. Upper shore anglers have experienced variable surface temperatures with slightly warmer water in the Grand Marais area where surface temps averaged 46-51 degrees while area surface temps at Twin Points averaged 42 to 46 degrees. Anglers from Twin Points and Silver Bay have reported tough fishing for Lake Trout with most Lakers in the 17-20 inch class and scattered in deep water locations. Anglers from Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais have also reported scattered Lake Trout, with mostly small 16-20 inch fish and a few larger 25-36 inch fish. Coho and Chinook Salmon fishing was slow before this week and slowed even more this past week in the upper shore area. An occasional 23-27 inch Chinook Salmon was reported from Silver Bay, Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais. Grand Marais anglers caught a few 25-27 inch steelhead and some of the fish were unusually deep and heavy-bodied.

### **Update 8/27/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure and catches picked up lately, especially near Duluth. The Charter captains have been busy. Few anglers used the accesses from McQuade Harbor to Two Harbors, however the catch rates picked up at Two Harbors. Strong northeast winds late last week brought in warmer water. The surface temperatures moved into the mid 50s but dropped again following the westerly winds. Lake Trout were hitting at depths below the thermocline, which was at 50 to 60 feet. The Lakers are hitting spoons and meat trolled below the thermocline on orange and sometimes on pink, green, and purple as well as silver. Most of the fish were average size, but a few big fish were caught, up to 17 pounds, 13 ounces. Anglers picked up a couple of fatty Siscowet after the strong winds.



Chinook Salmon were scattered, mostly down with the Lake Trout, with an occasional fish caught near shore or near the canal. Coho Salmon, well, the clerk saw one that hit a stickbait and it was big, at 4 pounds, 9 ounces. Anglers caught a couple of walleyes in the lake too.

#### Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Similar to the upper section of the Lower Shore, fishing had picked up early in this reporting period as surface temperatures warmed into the 52-55 degree range, and then strong offshore winds lowered the temperatures into the low 40s, which slowed the fishing. Early in the past week anglers did catch smaller Lake Trout nearer to shore in shallow depths near Grand Marais, but in general the Lake Trout were scattered all throughout the water column. The fish averaged 20-27 inches long with a few larger fish, some up to 20 pounds near Grand Marais, Taconite Harbor, and Silver Bay. For Chinook Salmon, the recent cooler waters didn't halt the improving catches, especially from Grand Marais and Hovland. The fish were 23-28 inches long. Coho Salmon have been fewer in numbers with only an occasional Coho around 22-24 inches long. A few steelhead in the 25-28 inch range were reported from Grand Marais.

Overall on the North Shore, cooler north winds will give way to calm and warm winds coming from the South, so during and after this upcoming weekend the surface water should warm up and fishing is likely to improve.

#### **Update 8/20/2015**

##### Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure and catches were good this past week from the Duluth area and light from McQuade Harbor to Two Harbors. The weather varied considerably, having cooled down and become windy in recent days. The unsettled weather will probably create more consistent temperatures in the water column and also create mud-lines in places. The Lake Trout continue to bit on spoons, flashers + flies and meat, all trolled either near the thermocline, which is 40 to 60 feet deep, and down all the way to 180 feet. Pink, green, and purple were good colors, as was a green, white, and orange combination. The fish are average size, 17-25 inches long, except for a couple of larger fish here and there. The clerk measured one 35 inch fish that weighed 14.5 pounds. Anglers caught very few Coho Salmon and just a few Chinook Salmon. The Chinooks were caught in the same places as the Lake Trout. Anglers did not report catching Siscowet this week.

##### Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was moderate at most stations and a little higher on the weekend, especially at Silver Bay. Warmer water has been key to better catches. Anglers catch more of all species when nearshore waters are warmer; anglers' catches drop off quickly when the water turns cold. Nearshore water temperatures had been warming into the mid 50s and even near 60 degrees in spots early this past week, but strong west winds dropped the surface temperatures into the low 40s. Anglers caught a few Lake Trout, generally in the 17-25 inch range, which were widely scattered throughout the area. A few larger Lake Trout in the twenty pound class were reported from Grand Marais, Taconite Harbor and Silver Bay. Most of the large Lake Trout were caught far from shore in water that was consistently warmer. Anglers reported better catches of Coho Salmon from the Silver Bay and Twin Points stations, but not in areas further north. Coho Salmon were generally 21-25 inches long and weighed 3-4 pounds, with a few Coho Salmon exceeding five pounds. The unusually large Coho Salmon have confused anglers and some of these fish are probably misidentified as Chinook Salmon or steelhead. Experienced anglers are unanimous that in



memory, on average these are the largest Coho Salmon they have ever seen. Anglers caught light numbers of Chinook Salmon which were fairly evenly distributed along the Upper North Shore. The Chinook Salmon averaged 24-27 inches and 3-6 pounds, with a few nearing ten pounds. Anglers are beginning to catch 24-27 inch steelhead, especially from Silver Bay. Some anglers reported watching fish chase small, silvery fish on the surface, especially at Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor. Anglers who cut open their salmon have seen stomachs that were gorged full of one to two inch long fish, which may be herring.



### **Update 8/13/2015**

#### Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure and fishing success were good this past week from the Duluth area and light from McQuade Harbor to Two Harbors. Hot weather has raised the surface temps off Duluth to the upper 50's, probably hitting 60 today or tomorrow. Patchy fog, Northeast winds, and 4 foot waves kept anglers off the lake for a day or so and the waves mixed the surface water up and pushed fish deep. Anglers aren't targeting specific surface temperatures as much, but are targeting mostly depth and fish marked on sonar. The fish are eating everything from herring to terrestrial insects. Anglers caught Lake Trout on spoons, flashers and flies, and prepared smelt or herring, all trolled near the thermocline at 40 feet to 60 feet down to 180 feet. The Coho Salmon are mostly off of Two Harbors, in deeper water with the Lake Trout at 60 to 100 feet down. The Coho Salmon are larger this year, with the biggest fish this week weighing 4 pounds 11 ounces. The Cohos are hitting spoons and flashers or dodgers and flies. A few anglers picked up Siscowet Lake Trout in deeper water. Chinook Salmon are rather scarce in the area. One set of anglers caught and released a couple of nicer steelhead Rainbow Trout near the Knife River; all steelhead must be released immediately when caught from the Minnesota waters of Lake Superior.

#### Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Anglers have reported somewhat better fishing, especially in near shore waters since surface waters have warmed. Overall, anglers who fished for salmon and trout in the top 100 feet of the water column had a tough time catching fish consistently while anglers who fished deeper have at least caught some Lake Trout consistently. The Lake Trout bite in shallow near shore waters was been light, which has been bad news for shore anglers all season and particularly for anglers near Grand Marais who are somewhat accustomed to catching these smaller Lake Trout. These mostly slow reports from anglers have been consistent at all upper shore stations with few differences in angler success from station to station. Most Lake Trout were caught at depths of 140 to 200 feet and have averaged 16 to 20 inches. A few larger Lake Trout have been caught nearer to the surface, averaging 22 to 27 inches with a few Lake Trout reported in the teens pound class. Anglers also caught a few Coho salmon and steelhead from most stations, with possibly slightly better reports coming from the Silver Bay and Twin Points stations. Chinook Salmon remain elusive and have averaged from 22 to 30 inches with a few Chinook Salmon reported near ten pounds. Chinook Salmon have been reported as scattered through the top 100 feet of the water column while Coho and steelhead were caught nearer to the surface.

### **Update 8/7/2015**

#### Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure and fishing were fair this past week in the lower shore area. The winds blew the warm water out again, leaving the coldest water near shore. Anglers caught Lake Trout on a variety of baits, from spoons to prepared smelt or herring and the occasional stickbait, all trolled from the thermocline at about 40 feet down to the bottom. Anglers caught Coho Salmon on flasher and fly combinations near Two Harbors in the top 30 feet of water, and anglers also picked up a few Chinook Salmon, generally in the 30 to 100 foot depth range. The Coho Salmon were fairly large, reaching weights of over 4 pounds, and the Chinook Salmon were 3 to 6 pounds. Many of the Lake Trout and Coho Salmon were caught relatively close to shore in the cold water. One angler caught a Siscowet at a depth of 170 feet in 400 feet of water just north of Two Harbors, which indicates where some anglers were willing to go to find fish.



Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure has been moderate from Twin Points and Grand Marais and somewhat lighter elsewhere. Near shore water temperatures remained very cold, near 40 degrees, and tended to warm up slowly as distance from shore increases, but still reaching only 50 degrees or so many miles from shore. As of Wednesday, some 50 degree water had drifted into a mile or so from shore. Anglers continue to struggle to catch fish along the entire upper shore. A few better reports are coming from the Twin Points and Silver Bay area. Twin Points anglers caught Lake Trout from very deep water (200 plus feet down) near the bottom. A few Silver Bay anglers caught Lake Trout, with a few larger fish in the mid teens pound class, many miles from shore where surface temps are slightly warmer. The few anglers who strayed far off shore have contended with a long run and windy conditions. Anglers from Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais have encountered very tough conditions and have caught very few Lake Trout. Anglers reported catching just a few 24-27 inch Chinook Salmon near shore and these fish seem to be provide the only consistent fishing near shore.

#### **Update 7/30/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was moderate to high near Duluth and was lighter from McQuade to Two Harbors. Surface water temperatures warmed to above 70 degrees for the weekend and then plummeted to below 50 degrees by midweek. Near Duluth, Lake Trout were hitting spoons and also flashers with flies, trolled near the thermocline at 40 to 60 feet deep and sometimes down to 180 feet. Many of the Lakers were smaller, 2-5 pounds. Salmon fishing was very slow. Some anglers fished successfully in the St. Louis Estuary by targeting Walleyes and Smallmouth Bass.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure has been light to moderate as many anglers are waiting for water temperature conditions to warm up and fishing to improve. Near shore water temperatures have been persistently cold at 39 to 46 degrees. Surface water temperatures are warmer off shore than near shore. At times and at varied locations along the upper shore, 50-60 degree surface temps can be found a mile off shore while at other locations water remains cold within several miles of shore. Anglers have reported travelling eight miles from shore before finding surface temps over fifty degrees. These surface temp differences vary and change daily. Weather conditions have hindered boaters, with some stiff afternoon winds but more so with nearly daily thick fog, especially near shore. These lake fog conditions have worsened as air temperatures became hot and the water remained very cold. Anglers along the entire upper shore have experienced a very tough time finding any fish and catch rates have been very light. Salmon have almost disappeared from the catch with only an occasional Chinook Salmon reported with even fewer Coho Salmon reported in the catch. Anglers have not been able to find fish in the typical near shore, deep water locations. Some anglers from all stations have attempted to stray far off shore to fish in warmer waters, only partially successfully. No steelhead were reported.

#### **Update 7/23/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:





Fishing pressure was fairly light due to high winds from different directions at times. Surface water temperatures were around 70 degrees near Duluth until Saturday, after which strong west to southwest winds blew the warm surface layer offshore and water temperatures dropped to 40 degrees from McQuade to Two Harbors accesses on Sunday. Fishing was very slow for most boaters and at most accesses; however the charters caught a fair number of Lake Trout. Of note, a 20 pound or larger Lake Trout was caught. The Lake Trout were caught mostly on spoons trolled down to around 50 feet. Salmon catches were nearly nonexistent during the past week.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Early in this reporting period, anglers experienced steadily warming water temps and improving fishing for Coho salmon from Twin Points to Taconite Harbor. On Saturday strong winds dramatically lowered the near shore water temperatures to the low to mid forty degree range at all upper shore stations. Water temps have only recently begun to recover and now near shore surface temps are about 50 degrees along the lower end of the region. With continued strong afternoon winds, angler pressure has been light to moderate this past week. Grand Marais area anglers continued to see slow salmon fishing. Lake Trout have been difficult to find and are widely scattered. Taconite Harbor to Silver Bay area anglers have also had a tough time finding consistent fishing since water temperatures cooled and widely scattered Lake Trout and salmon have been tough to find.

#### **Update 7/16/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Surface water temperatures reached the low 70s near Duluth this past week, but thunderstorms and stiff northeast winds stirred the water, which dropped temperatures into the high 60s. The rough weather kept smaller boats off the lake, however the bigger boats were able to keep fishing. Anglers caught a fair number of Lake Trout, mainly by trolling spoons and also sometimes stickbaits. The Lake Trout were in or below the thermocline, down to as deep as 140 feet. Anglers caught few salmon, mostly near the surface. The salmon moved north; in response the anglers moved north towards Twin Points. Anglers also caught a few Walleye on the west end of the big lake.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water temperatures rose steadily into the 55 to 60 degree range at Twin Points and Silver Bay. At Grand Marais, the water was 50 to 55 degrees offshore and slightly cooler near shore, even into the low 40s. Angler pressure was heavy at Twin Points and moderate elsewhere. Lake Trout catches have been steady with fish widely scattered across areas and across depths. Most Lake Trout were caught in depths of 100 to 160 feet. Anglers caught mostly 17-25 inch Lake Trout. Anglers caught fair numbers of 17-21 inch Coho Salmon from Twin Points early in this reporting period. In the last few days anglers caught Coho Salmon as far north as the Tofte area. Anglers only caught a few Chinook salmon from any station, though the fish have been nice, averaging 4-8 pounds.

#### **Update 7/9/2015**



Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Angling pressure was high at the Charter Docks and Two Harbors this past week and light to moderate elsewhere. Northeast winds and swells suppressed fishing on the weekend, especially at McQuade Harbor. Near Duluth, the thermocline is moving down to 30 to 60 feet and surface temperatures are reaching the mid-60s. Anglers are catching Lake Trout on trolling spoons and a few stickbaits throughout the water column, down to 60 feet or so, and a few fish are now hitting trolled smelt or herring. Some of the larger fish hit dodger & fly combinations north of the temperature break in the cooler water. Green seems to be a good color right now. The Lake Trout are generally 2 to 5 pounds and the largest observed fish was 12.75 pounds. Coho Salmon moved northward, with good numbers reported off of Two Harbors and a few fish as far north as Encampment Island. The Cohos were caught near the surface on dodger or flasher & fly combinations as well as with stickbaits. Some Cohos were caught as deep as 30 feet on stickbaits. Cohos seem to be hitting dodger & fly combos behind planer boards on leadcore trolled near the surface. The average Coho is 18 to 20 inches long. Anglers also caught a few Chinook Salmon in scattered areas from Duluth to Two Harbors. The Chinooks are often larger, 27 to 28 inches long, and a few are smaller, 23 to 25 inches long. Walleye fishing in the estuary has slowed down and the effort there has dropped off also.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure has been moderate and increasing at all stations as the water warms up. Water temperatures are now in the 48-54 degree range. Lake Trout continue to be scattered throughout the water column and while best catches have been reported from deep water in the 130-200 foot range, some anglers reported catching Lake Trout nearer to the surface and also in shallow water near shore. Lake Trout were generally 17 to 25 inches long with only a few reports of larger fish. Coho and Chinook Salmon continue to be scarce. Anglers from Twin Points and Silver Bay have reported a few Coho Salmon in the 18-20 inch range. Chinook Salmon in the 23-27 inch range have also been reported from most stations though in very light numbers. A few Steelhead, in the 24-27 inch range, have been reported from Grand Marais.

#### **Update 7/2/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Water is warming along the lower shore area and angler effort has increased, especially from McQuade to Two Harbors, except during a couple of rough weather days as is typical for the big lake. Most fish were caught in 43-49 degree water. Anglers did okay on Lake Trout, catching most fish while trolling spoons and stickbaits throughout the water column (near the surface to as deep as 60 feet and some deeper), as well as jigging with meat as deep as 200 feet, which was the same pattern as last week. Most of the Laker Trout were 2-5 pounds, the largest fish measured was 13 pounds, and a 17 pounder was reported. Coho Salmon moved north with the surface temperature break, with good numbers reported off of Two Harbors. The Cohos were caught near the surface on dodger & fly combinations as well as with stickbaits. Some Cohos were caught as deep as 30 feet on stickbaits. The Cohos were 18-20 inches long on average and several were 21 inches or longer. Anglers caught few Chinook Salmon, but the fish were bigger, about 23 inches long. Walleye fishing has slowed in the St. Louis Estuary.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:



During this reporting period, lake surface temperatures warmed into the upper forty to low fifty degree range along the upper shore. Angler pressure has been light to moderate at all upper shore stations. Anglers from Silver Bay have been finding only light numbers of Lake Trout while fishing areas both near and far off shore. As the first warm waters begin to show, Silver Bay anglers are accustomed to fishing far off shore where sharp water temperature breaks can be located and large Lake Trout are targeted. Early reports have been of scarce and widely scattered fish. Anglers from Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais have reported that Lake Trout have been tough to find and widely scattered through the water column, with best catches in deeper water. Lake Trout from 17-26 inches have been reported. Anglers from Silver Bay report a few steelhead in the 25-27 inch range, the first reported of the season. While warmer water temperatures have arrived, no salmon were reported caught from upper shore stations.

#### **Update 6/25/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Water temperatures warmed to 60 degrees near Duluth and the surface water temperature break moved north. Many of the fish caught this past week were caught in 43 to 49 degree water. Angling pressure increased this past week in most areas but was still light at Two Harbors; the one exception was on Monday when storms kept anglers off the lake. Anglers caught fair numbers of Lake Trout and Coho and Chinook Salmon, mostly between the pump house and Knife River, but a few were caught near the Knife River. Most of the Lake Trout were caught with trolling spoons and stickbaits throughout the water column and also by jigging in up to 200 feet of water. Most of the Lakers were 2-5 pounds; the largest fish measured was a little over 10 pounds. Chinooks have been running 4-6 pounds with an occasional 9-10 pounder. Salmon are hitting spoons and spin-n-glo rigs, from 30 to 100 feet down in 160 feet of water. The average Coho is smaller, 2-3 pounds and 18-20 inches. In the St. Louis Estuary, anglers caught a fair number of walleyes and also some channel catfish.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Lake surface temperatures remained cold along all upper shore stations with warmest reports only recently reaching the low 40 degree range. Upper shore anglers have experienced unstable weather in the past week with times of stiff winds, fog, rain and thunderstorms causing concern for lake boating. Anglers report that most consistent action continues to come from deep water and near to bottom structure for Lake Trout in the 16-22 inch range. This pattern has held consistently at all stations. Unstable weather and cold water conditions have held angler pressure at light levels at all upper shore stations. Many anglers continue to wait for the first signs of warmer water which usually starts off better action for Lake Trout and Salmon. Anglers have reported that a few Lake Trout have been caught from river mouths of larger tributaries. The Brule, Devil Track, Cascade and Poplar rivers have been reported to hold modest numbers of Lake Trout in the 20-25 inch range. Tributaries are holding moderate flows with consistent rains measured in recent days.

#### **Update 6/18/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure in this area increased in the past week. Water temperatures were in the high 50s around Duluth and 43-49 degrees in the temperature break north of Duluth. A walleye tournament was held in the St. Louis Estuary on the weekend. In the lake, anglers caught Lake Trout and Coho Salmon by trolling spoons and stickbaits from the surface down to 30 feet in the temperature break between McQuade Harbor and the Lester River, often out from the Duluth pumphouse. Some larger Chinook Salmon, up to 10 pounds, were caught, and infrequently a bigger Laker was caught, especially after an East or Northeast wind,



otherwise anglers caught mostly Lakers in the 2-5 pound range with an occasional 8 pounder here and there. Fishing pressure at Two Harbors slowed down somewhat, though experienced anglers still caught fish.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Anglers reported slowly improving fishing as lake water temps begin a slow rise. Water surface temps averaged 36 to 41 degrees for this reporting period. Anglers from all stations continue to report the most consistent action for Lake Trout in the 16-20 inch range in deep water areas and close to bottom structure. Anglers have used both trolling and vertical jigging techniques to target these deep water Lake Trout in the 120-200 foot range. Anglers reported that a few larger Lakers have been caught suspended in the water column. Anglers from Grand Marais reported that a few Chinook Salmon in the 3-5 pound range were caught. A few reports were received of fair fishing for Lake Trout in river mouths. Angler pressure was light during this reporting period with weather conditions presenting limitations for lake boaters with periods of heavy fog and some windy conditions.

#### **Update 6/11/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was fairly light earlier in the week but is now picking up, particularly with the nice weather. Water temperatures were 39 degrees around Two Harbors and the Knife River but are at 49 degrees at the Lester River and 54 degrees near Duluth. Anglers are catching mostly 2-5 pound Lake Trout by jigging deep with prepared smelt or herring (i.e. meat) or by trolling with spoons. Anglers are also catching salmon and a few Lake Trout closer to the surface by trolling with stickbaits and spoons, especially near the Lester River. A few salmon were caught near the Knife River. The Coho Salmon are running 1-3 pounds and the Chinook Salmon are averaging 3 pounds. The clerk observed a 6 pound Chinook and a 14 pound Laker.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

In upper shore tributaries, water flowing at strong to moderate levels. A few Lake Trout in the 17-20 inch range were observed, but no steelhead or Brook Trout. In the lake, surface water temperatures remain cold, around 35-37 degrees. Weather conditions were variable and angling effort was light at all stations. Anglers from Grand Marais and Silver Bay reported that fair catches of Lakers in the 16-20 inch range were caught from deep water and near to bottom structure, and anglers reported that in the last few days some nice Lake Trout, up to 15 pounds, have been caught throughout the water column. The salmon have not yet migrated this far north.

#### **Update 6/4/2015**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was light in the lower shore area, due in part to strong winds on a couple of days, except for moderate effort from Charters. The larger boats were able to fish and sometimes caught limits of Lake Trout and also some Coho Salmon and an occasional Chinook Salmon. Most fish were 2-5 pounds and the largest fish observed was over 7 pounds. The surface water temperatures were 47-48 degrees near Duluth. Fishing effort in the St. Louis Estuary was also light this past week. A few walleyes are being caught but a strong bite has yet to develop.



Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

In upper shore tributaries, some steelhead remain and a few anglers have been targeting them. Water levels have been moderate to strong and conditions have been favorable in upper shore tributaries. In the lake, surface water temperatures are still cold, around 35-37 degrees. Angler pressure has been light at all upper shore stations. Weather conditions have been variable with fog, onshore winds and some precipitation being the limiting factors during this reporting period. Upper shore lake anglers have reported that Lake Trout remain mostly in deep water from 150-200 feet deep and near to bottom structure. Lake Trout in these deep water spots are mainly smaller fish in the 15-20 inch range. A few Lake Trout in the 20-24 inch range have been reported as caught more scattered in the deep water column. No salmon have been reported from any station.

**Update 5/26/2015:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was light near Duluth and Two Harbors. Most successful anglers caught fish in 120 feet of water on downriggers. Near Duluth, anglers caught a few Coho and Chinook Salmon and a fair number of Lake Trout. The largest fish the clerks measured was an 8 lb Lake Trout. Further north, anglers caught fewer fish, mostly Lake Trout in deep water. Water temperatures were about 38 degrees near Two Harbors and close to 50 degrees near Duluth.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water in stream tributaries was flowing well last week due to recent rains, and steelhead were observed in several upper shore streams, however angling effort was somewhat light given the presence of fish. On the lake, water temperatures were cold at 35-38 degrees. Anglers reported fair catches of Lake Trout in the 16-21 inch range. The fish were caught from deep water and generally near bottom structure in 150-200 feet of water. Angler effort was light over the weekend and Charter services are beginning to fish at Grand Marais, Taconite Harbor, and Silver Bay. Weather was mostly good for anglers.