

# Northern Pike Regulations in the Little Falls Work Area

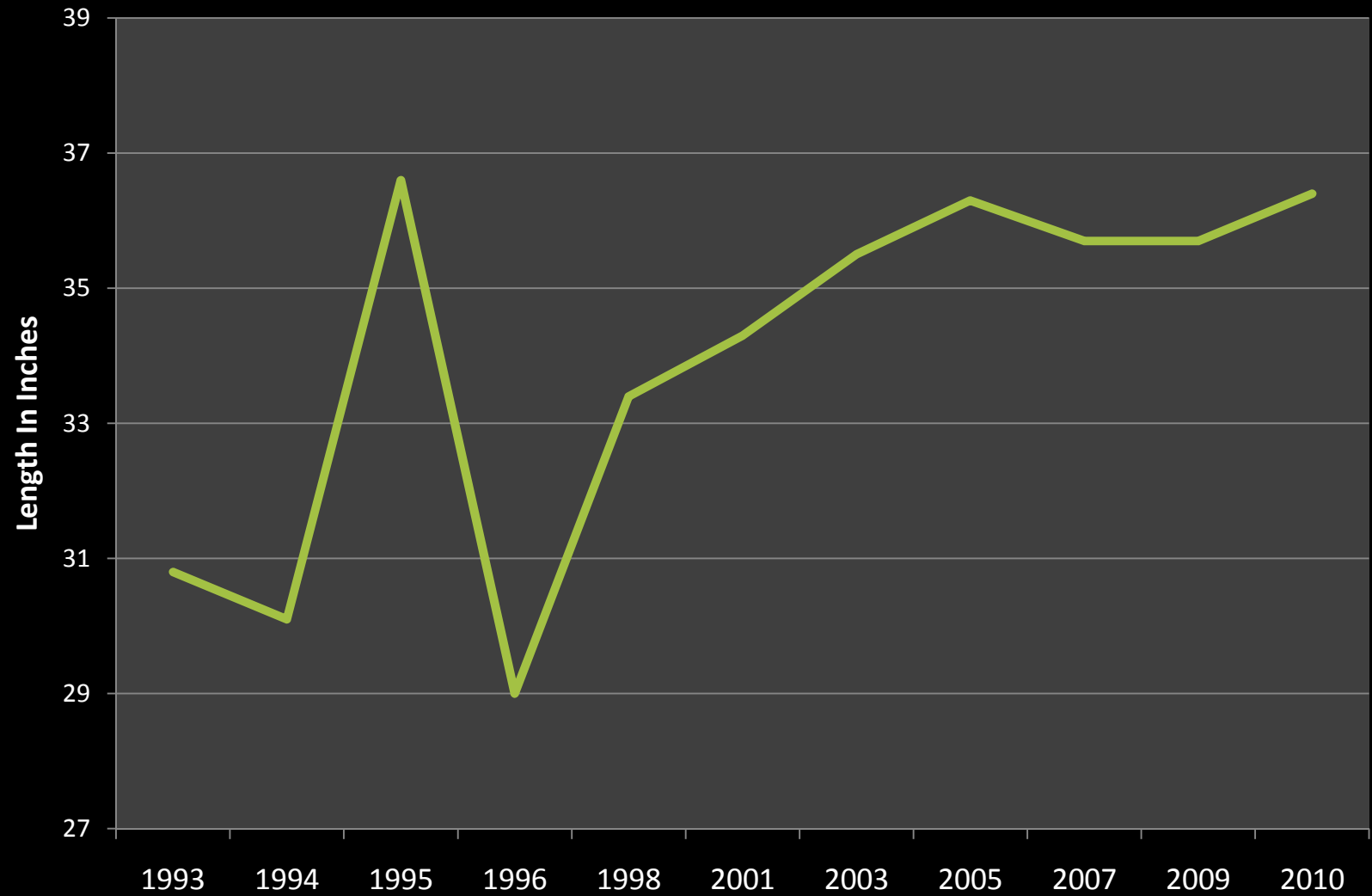


How are they working?

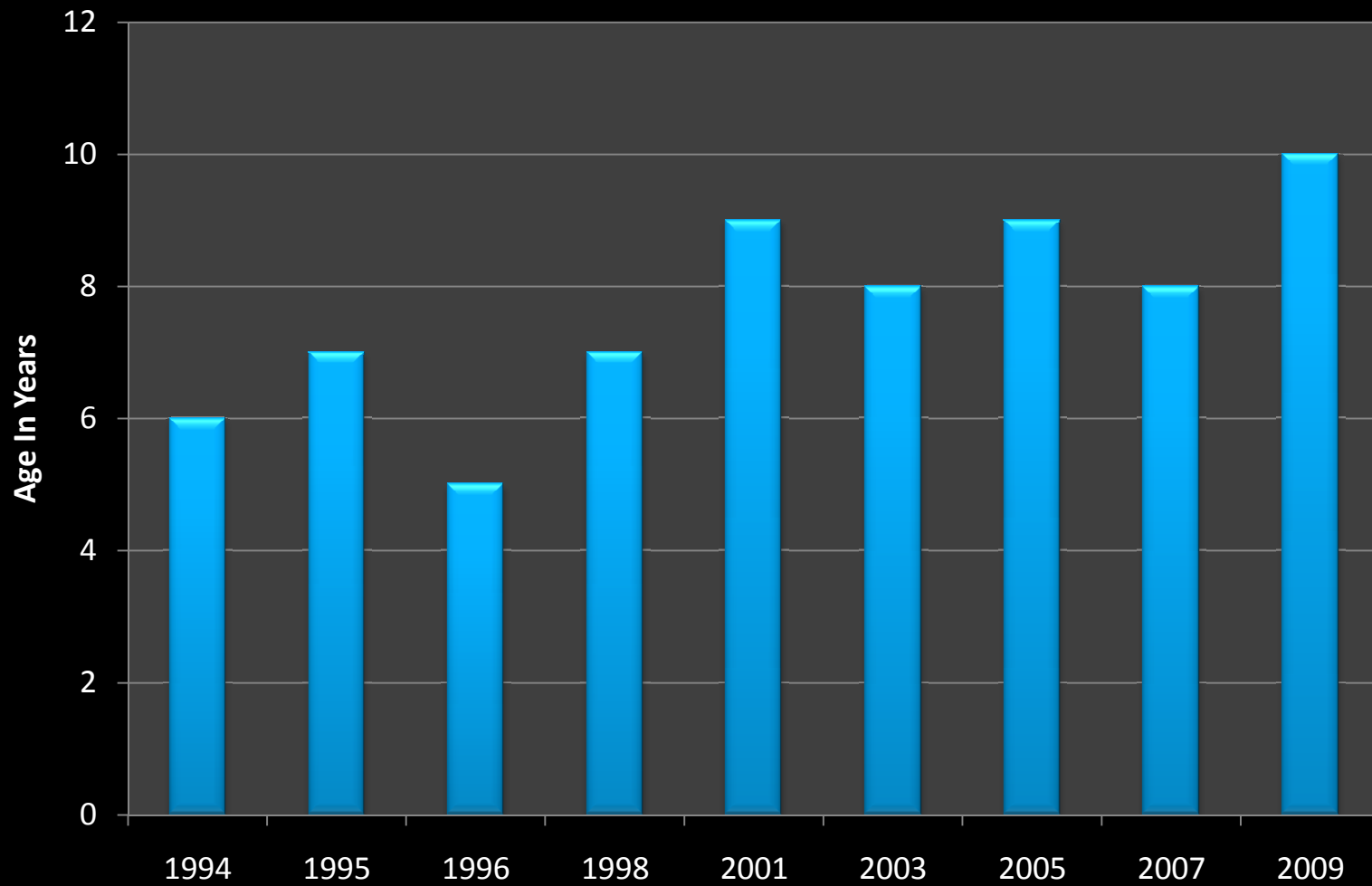
# Big Birch Lake

- ❖ Regulations since 1996
- ❖ Maximum length of pike sampled increasing
- ❖ Maximum age of pike sampled increasing
- ❖ More fish over 30 inches – still few over 36"
- ❖ More fish over 5 years of age
- ❖ No trends in proportion of fish over 24"
- ❖ Walleye and panfish populations doing well
- ❖ Sunset date March 1, 2015

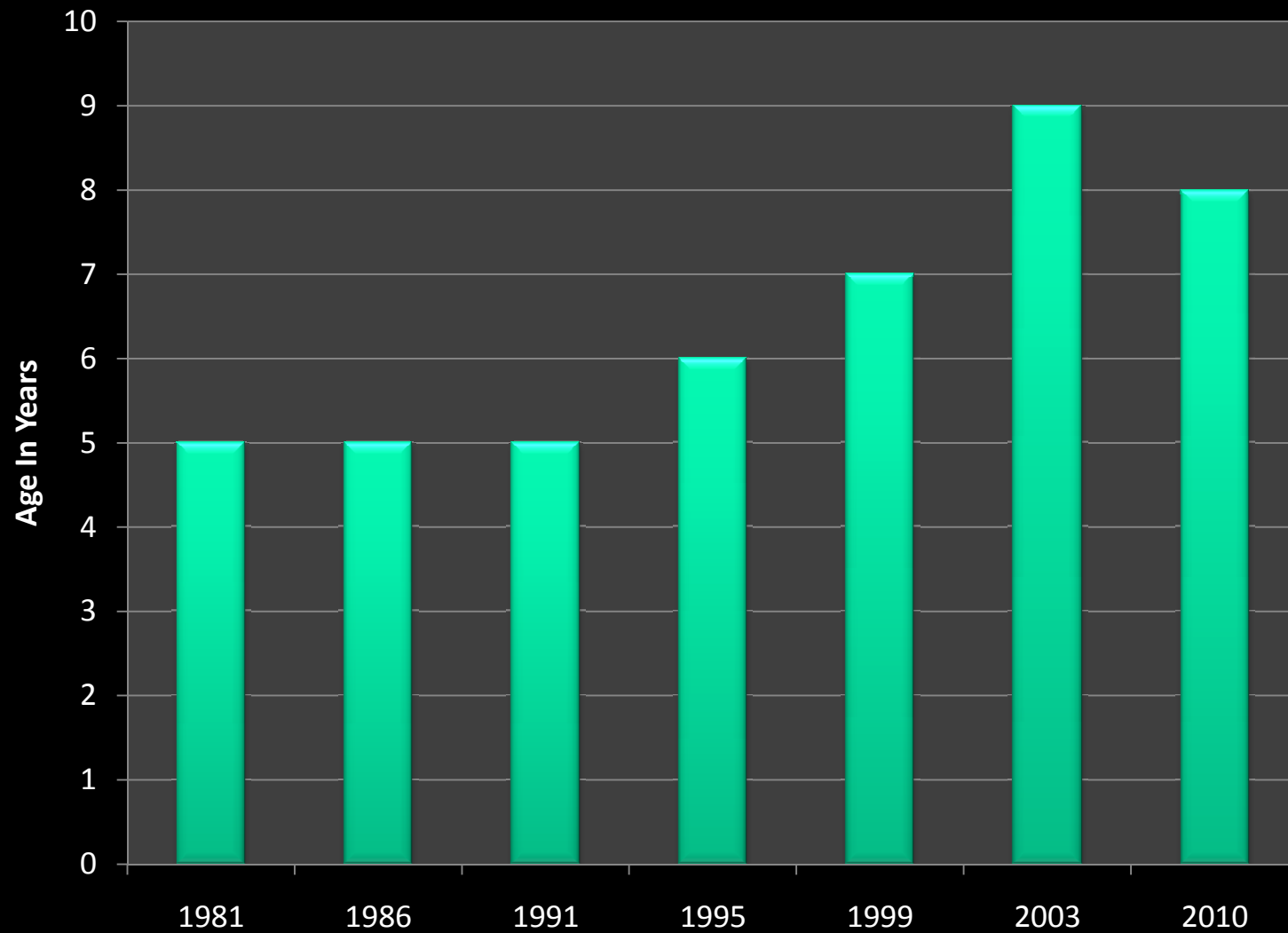
## Big Birch - Largest Pike Sampled in Ice-out Trapnets



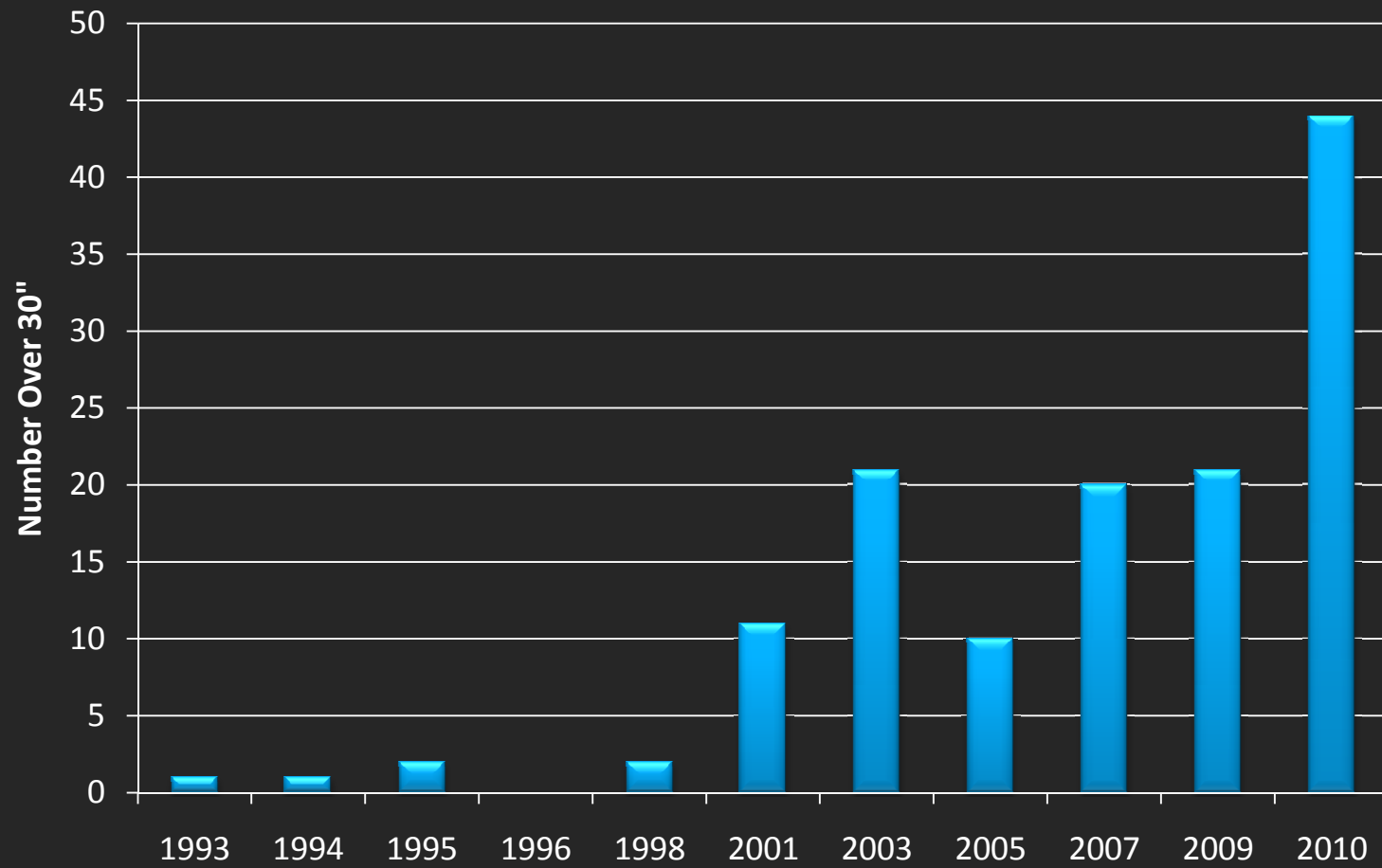
### Big Birch Ice-out Trapnets- Maximum Age of Pike Sampled



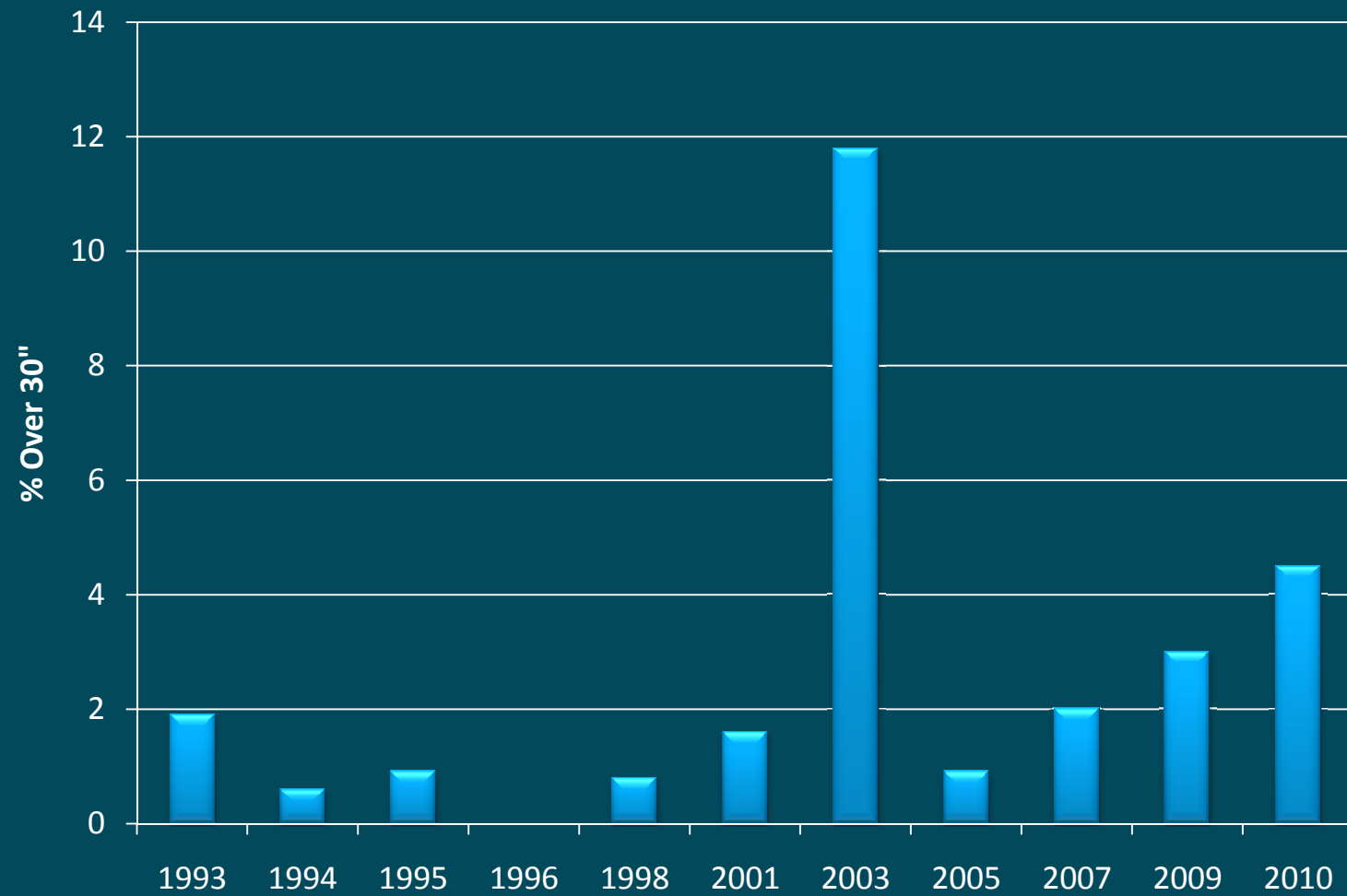
## Big Birch Gillnets- Maximum Age of Pike Sampled



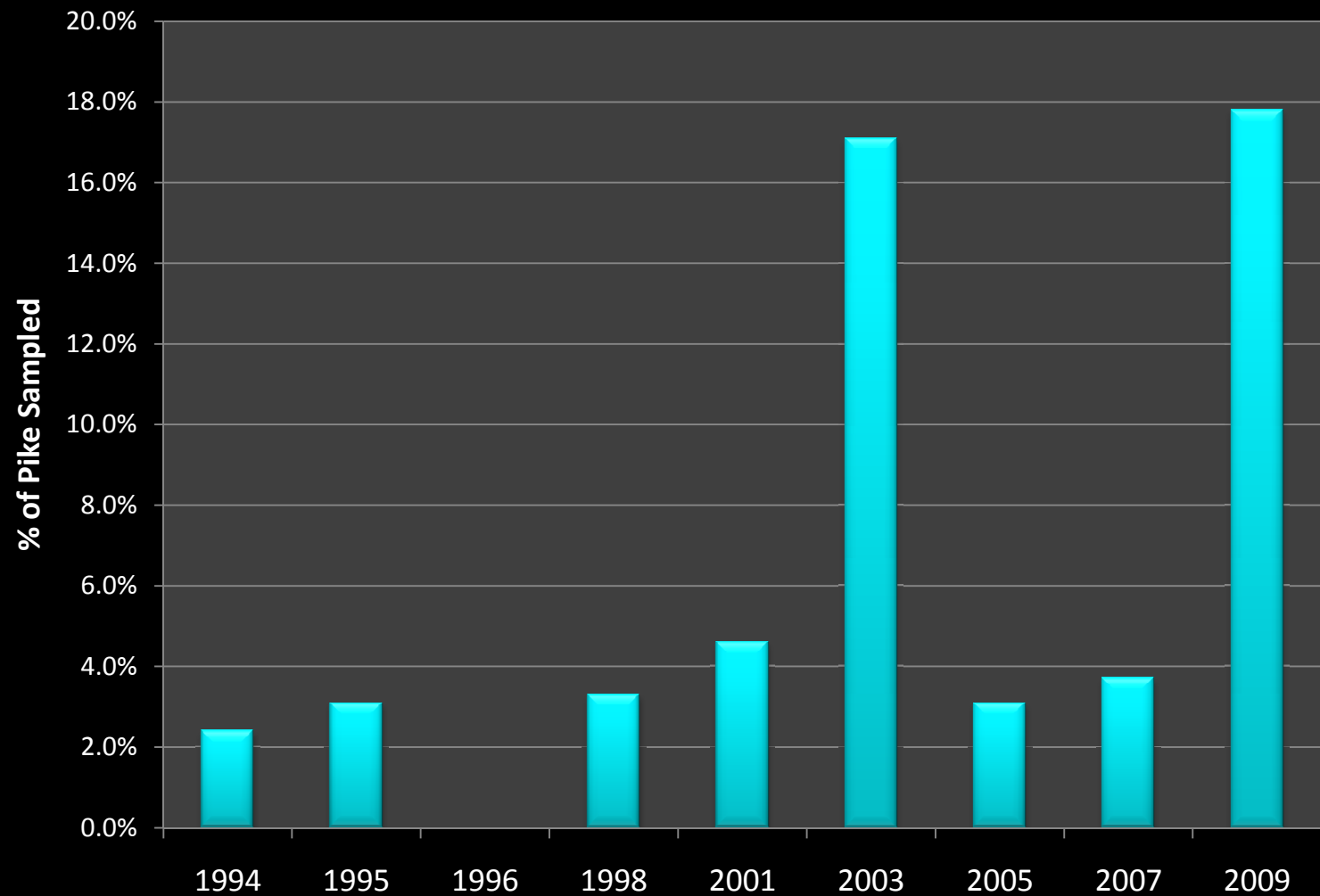
**Big Birch Number of NOP>30"-Ice-Out Trapnets**



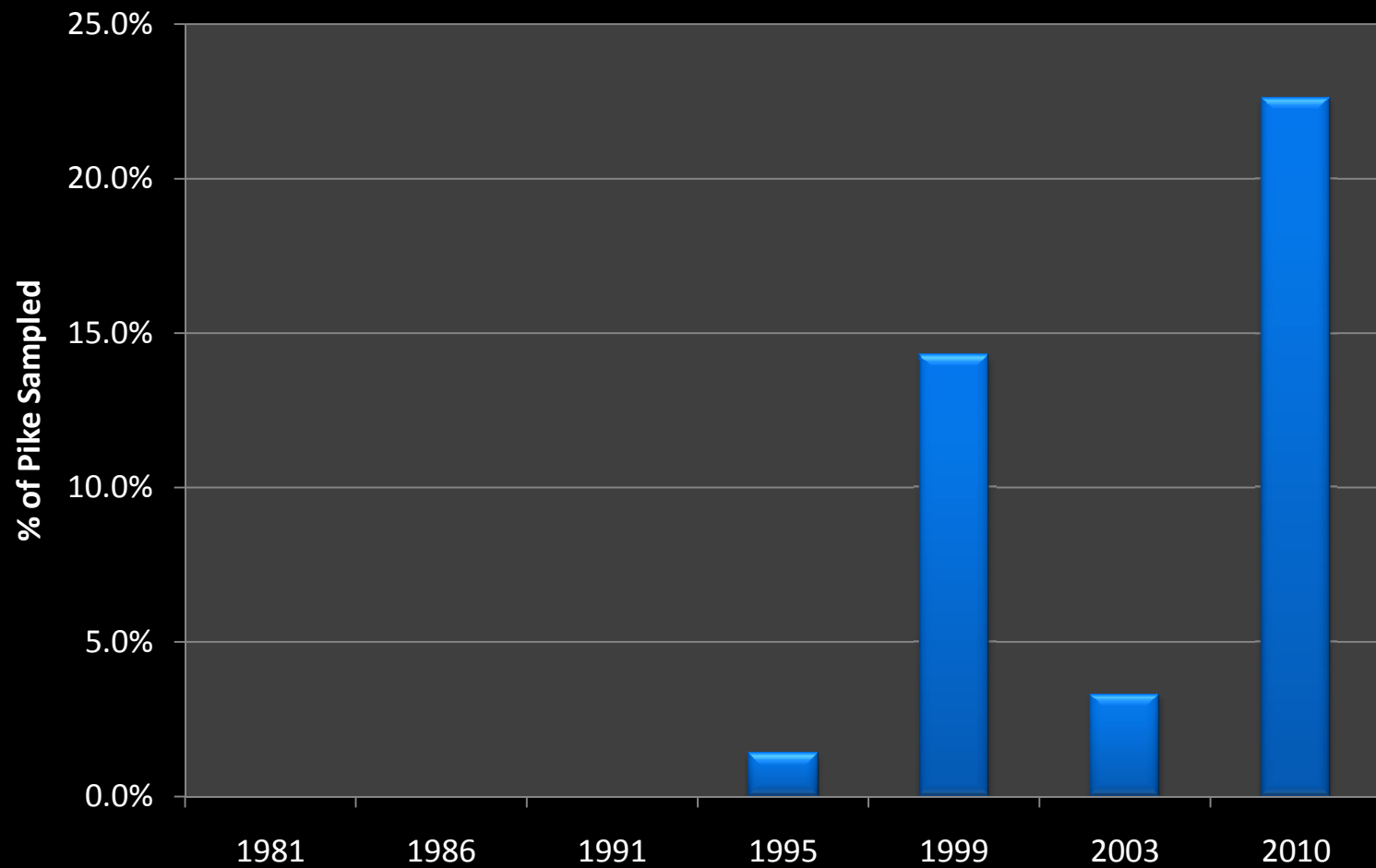
### Big Birch NOP %>30" -Ice-out Trapnets



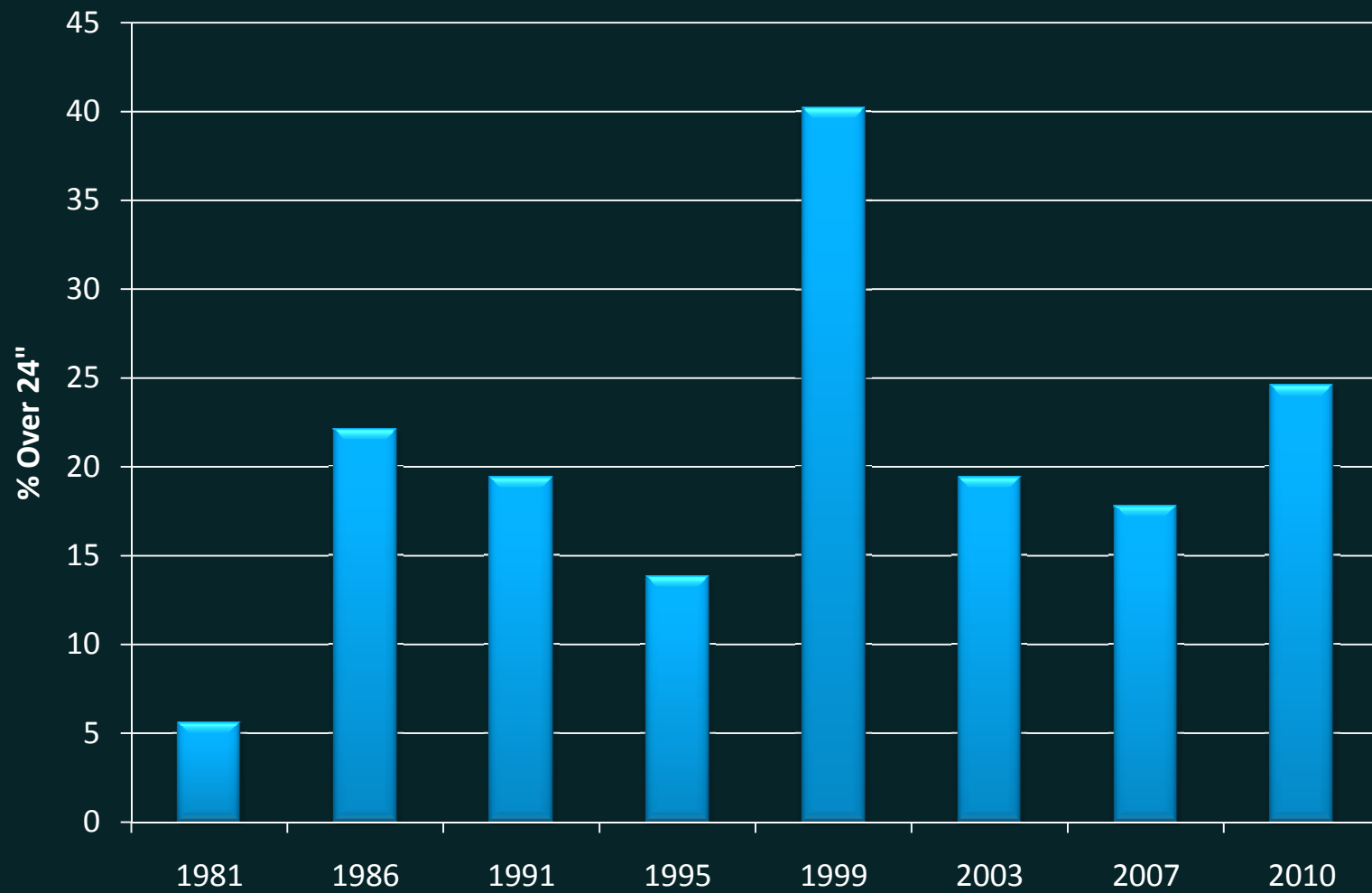
## Big Birch Ice-out Trapnets % Age 6 and Older



## Big Birch Gillnets % Age 6 and Older



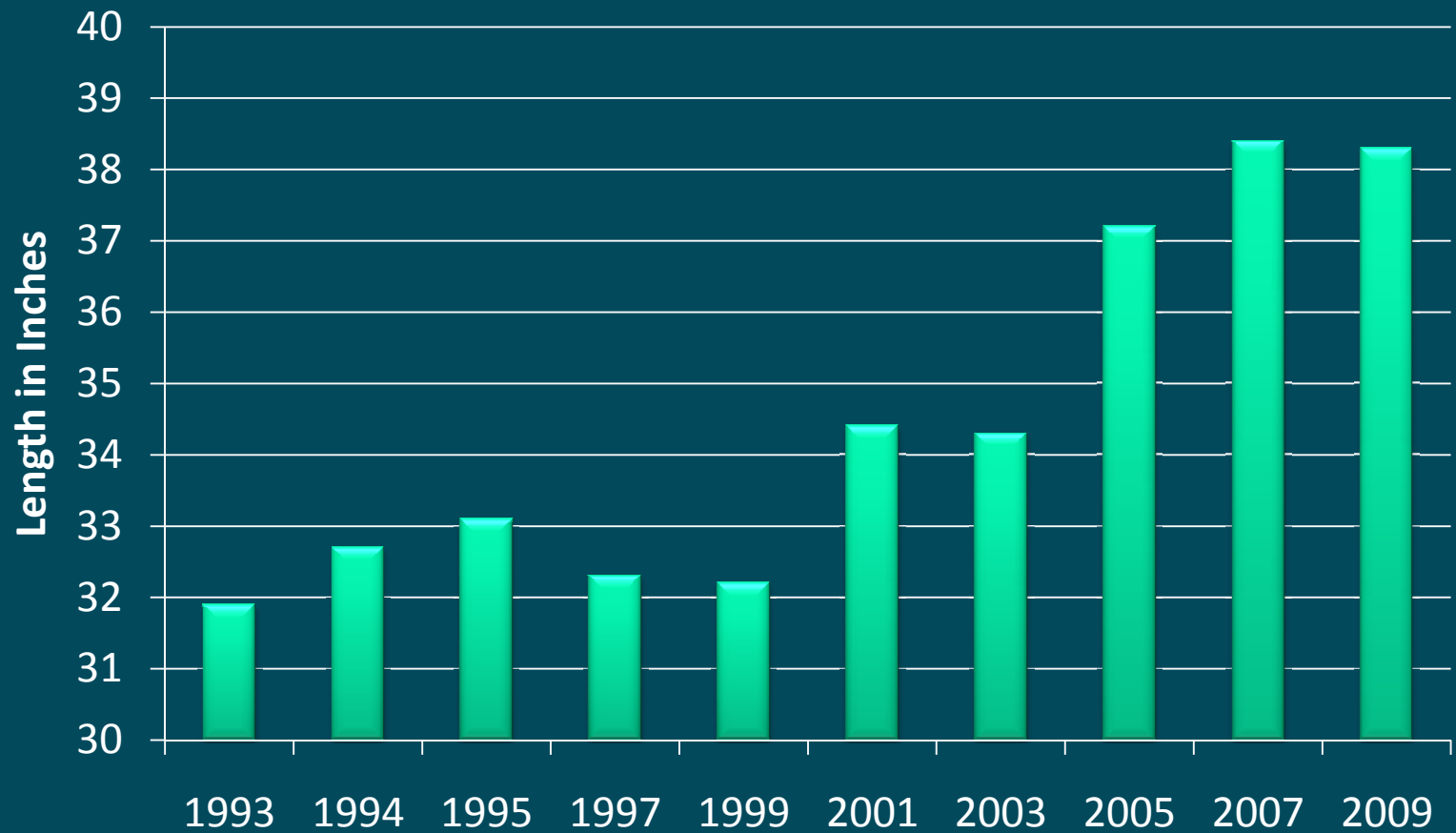
## Big Birch %NOP>24"-Gillnets



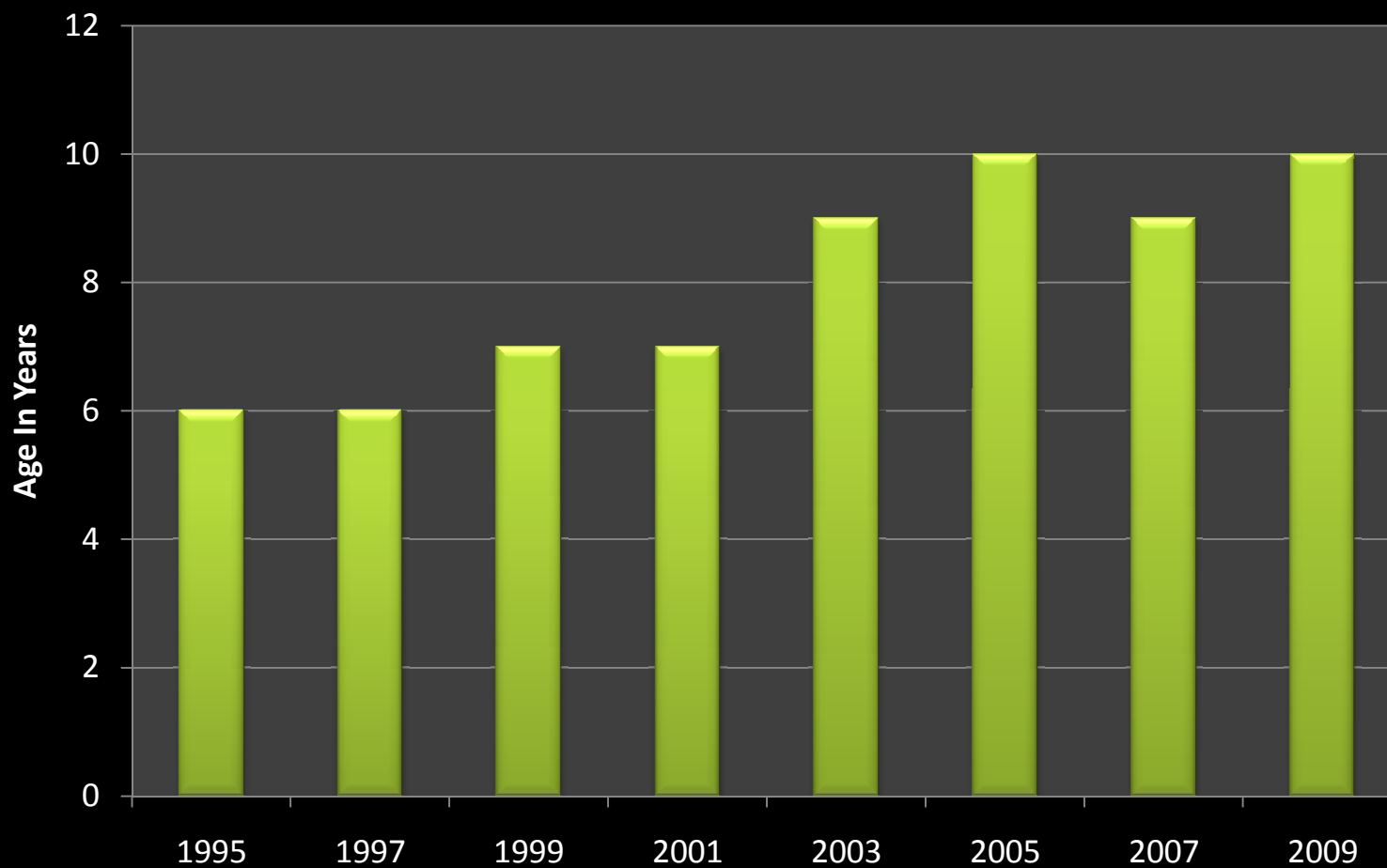
# Big Swan Lake

- ❖ Regulations since 1997
- ❖ Maximum length of pike sampled increasing
- ❖ Maximum age of pike sampled increasing
- ❖ More fish over 30'' – 7 fish > 36'' since 2005
- ❖ More fish age 6 and older
- ❖ More fish over 24 inches
- ❖ Walleye and panfish unchanged
- ❖ Sunset date March 1, 2013.

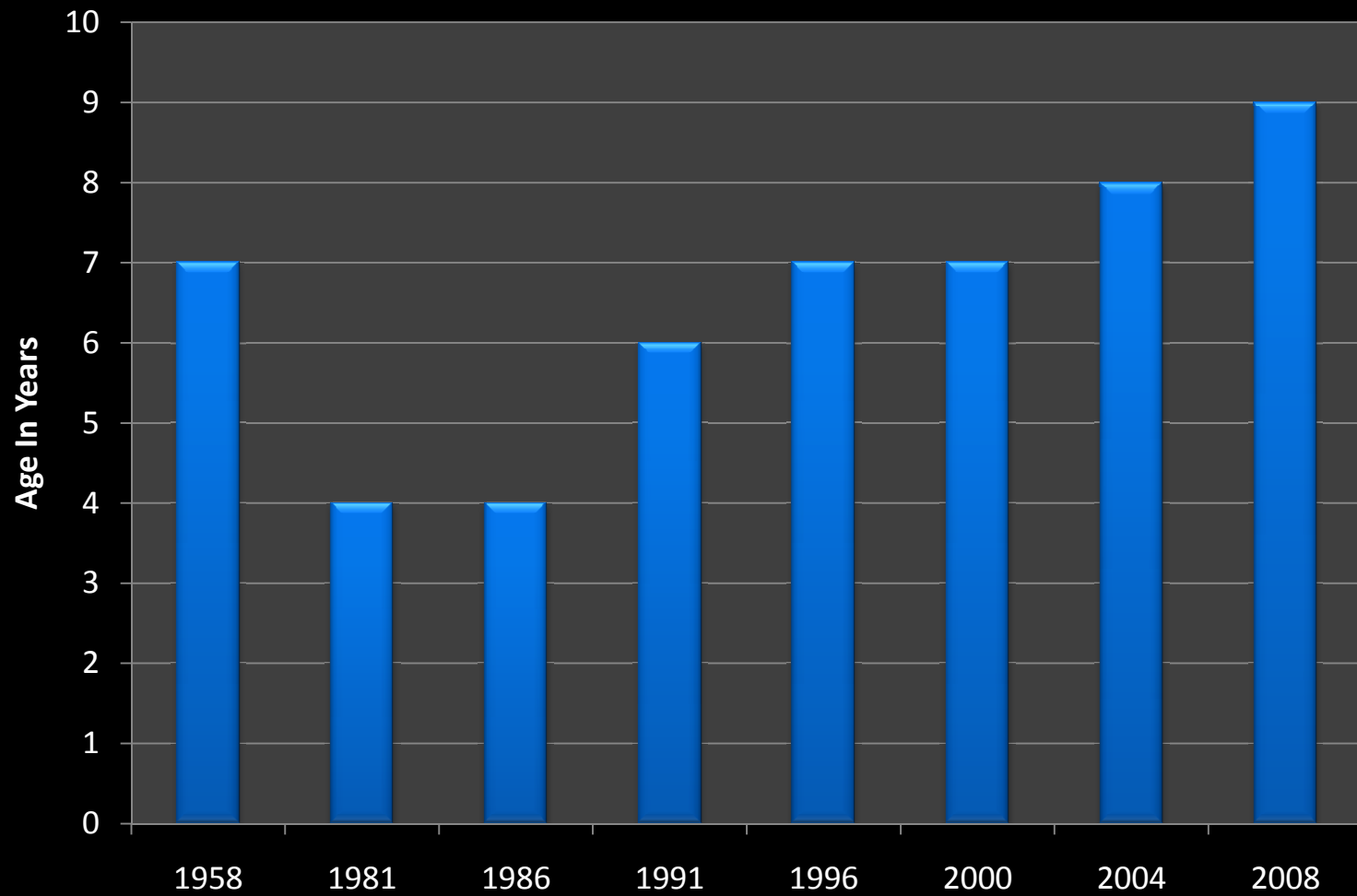
## Big Swan Lake - Ice-Out TN Largest NOP Sampled (Inches)



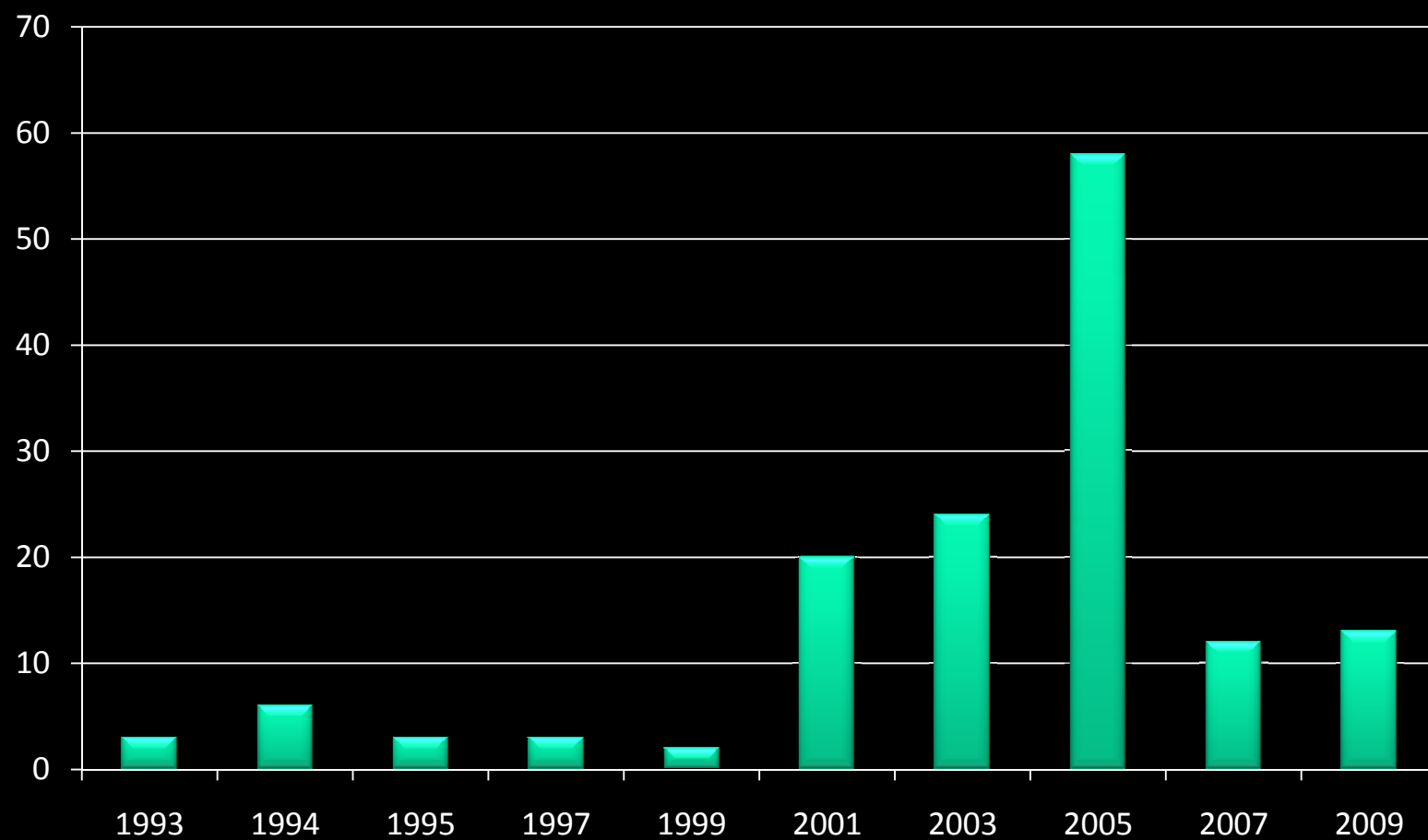
## Big Swan Ice-out Trapnets-Maximum Age of Pike Sampled



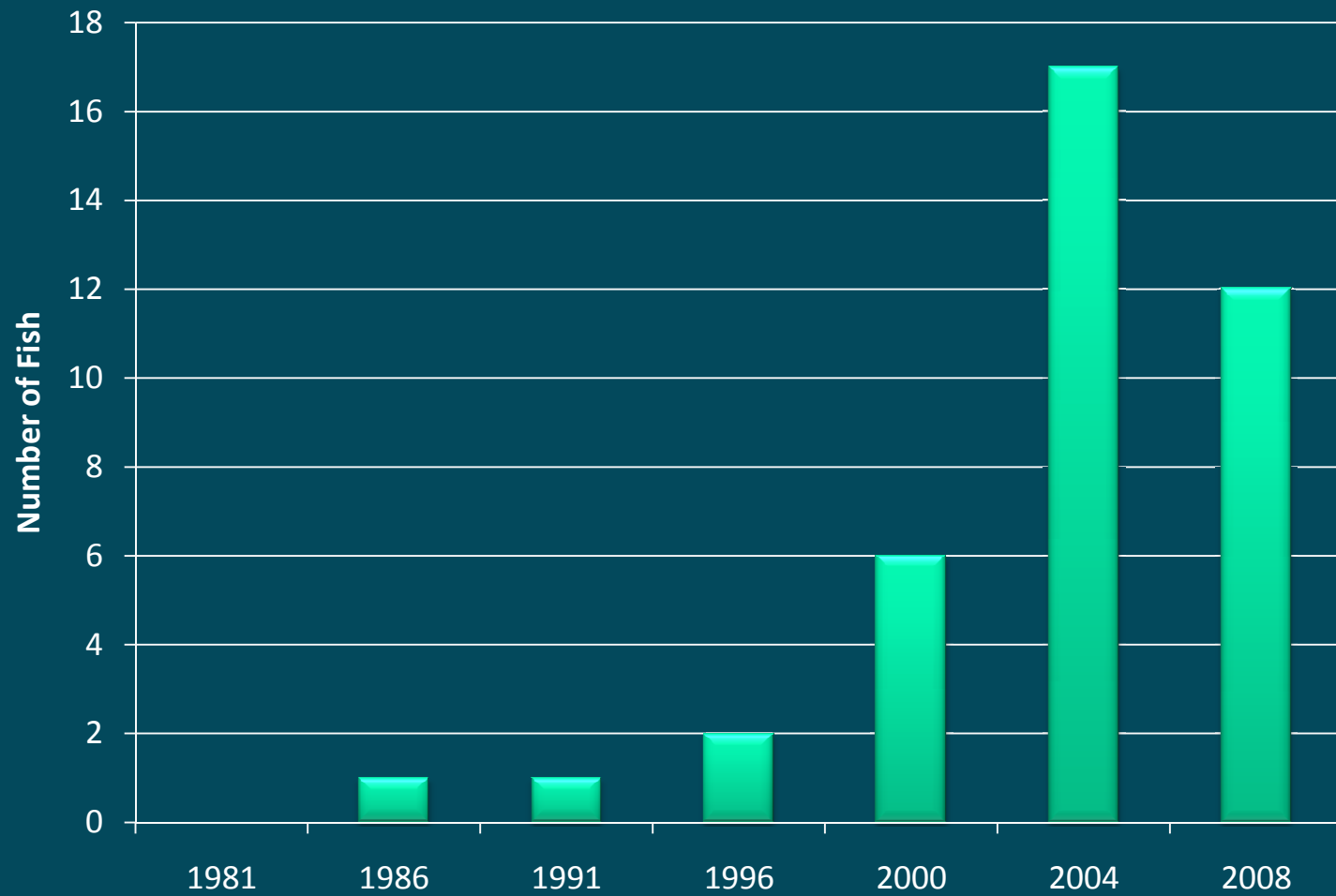
## Big Swan Gillnets-Maximum Age of Pike Sampled



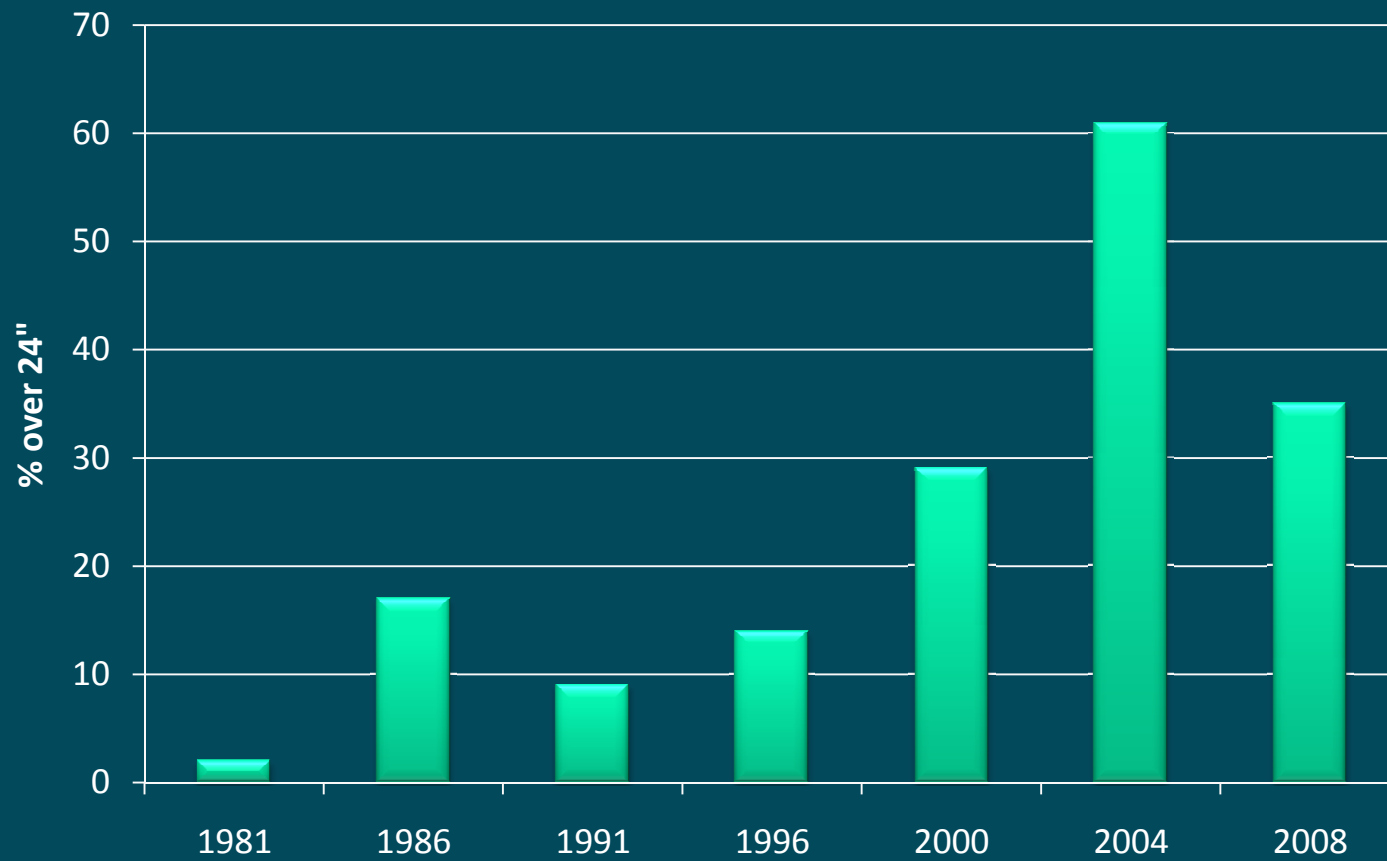
### Big Swan Number of NOP>30" - Ice-Out Trapnets



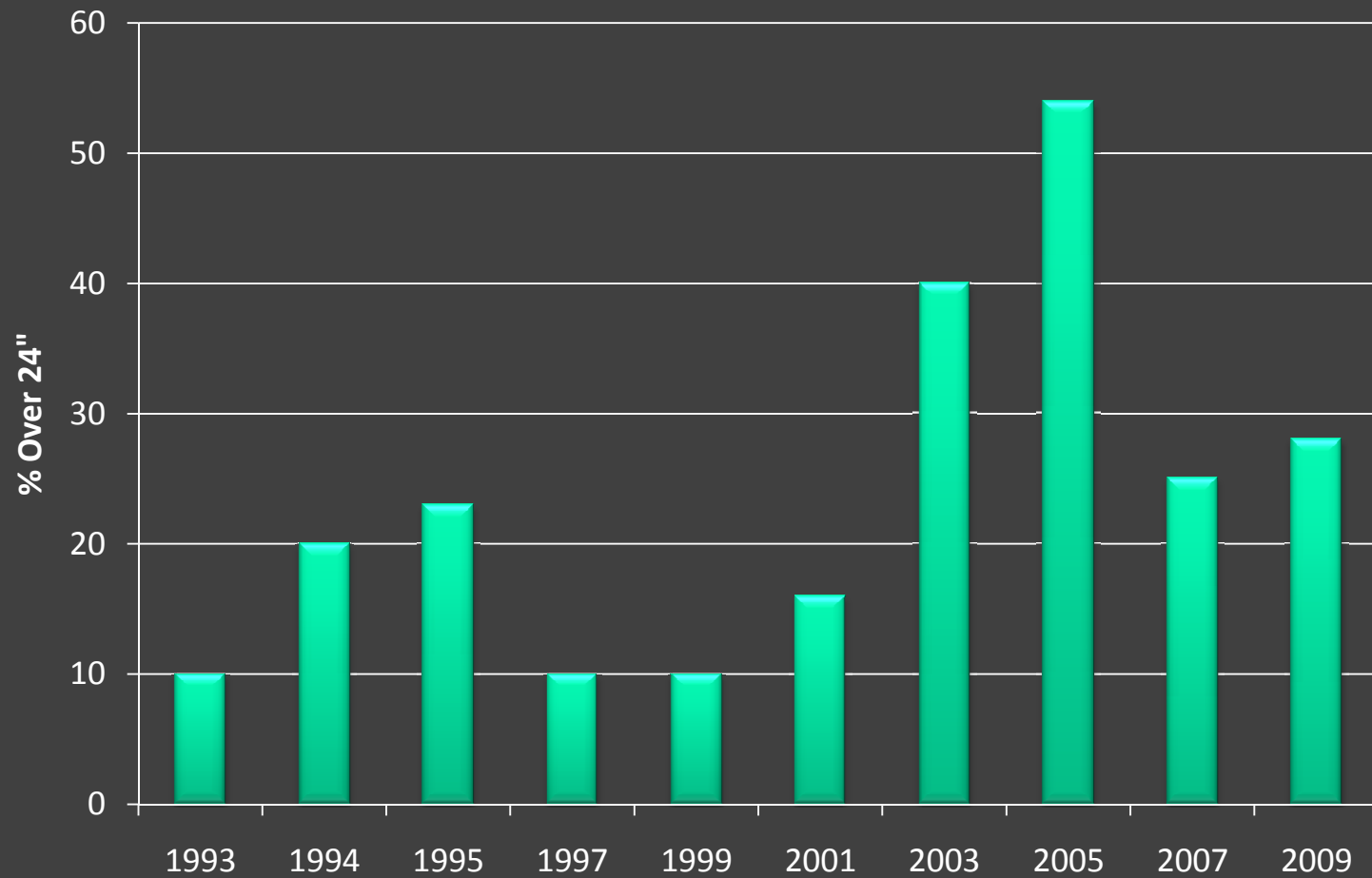
## Big Swan NOP Number>30" - Gillnets



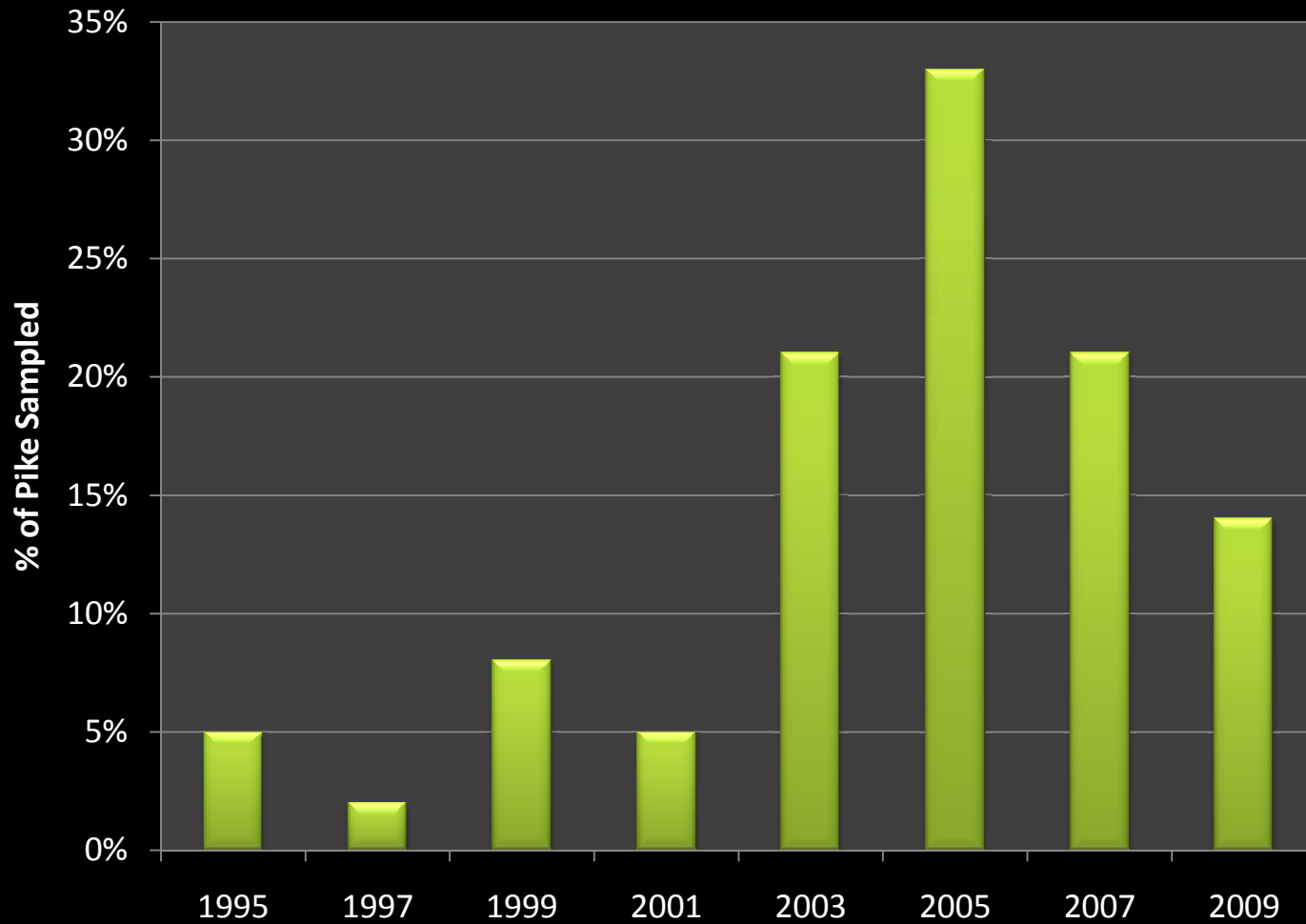
## Big Swan Lake NOP%>24"-Gillnets



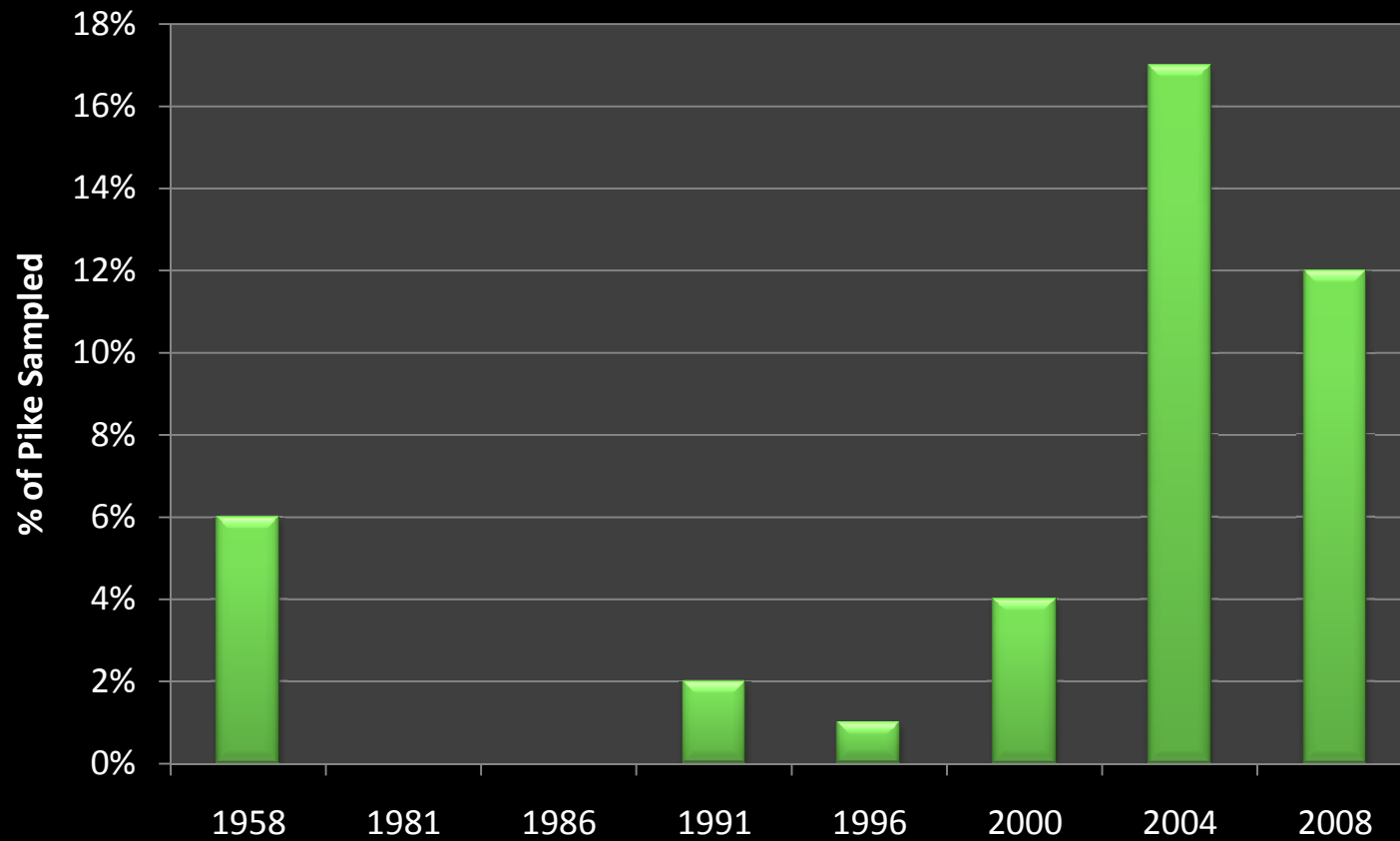
### Big Swan Lake - %NOP>24" - Ice-Out Trapnets



## Big Swan Ice-out Trapnets % Age 6 and Older



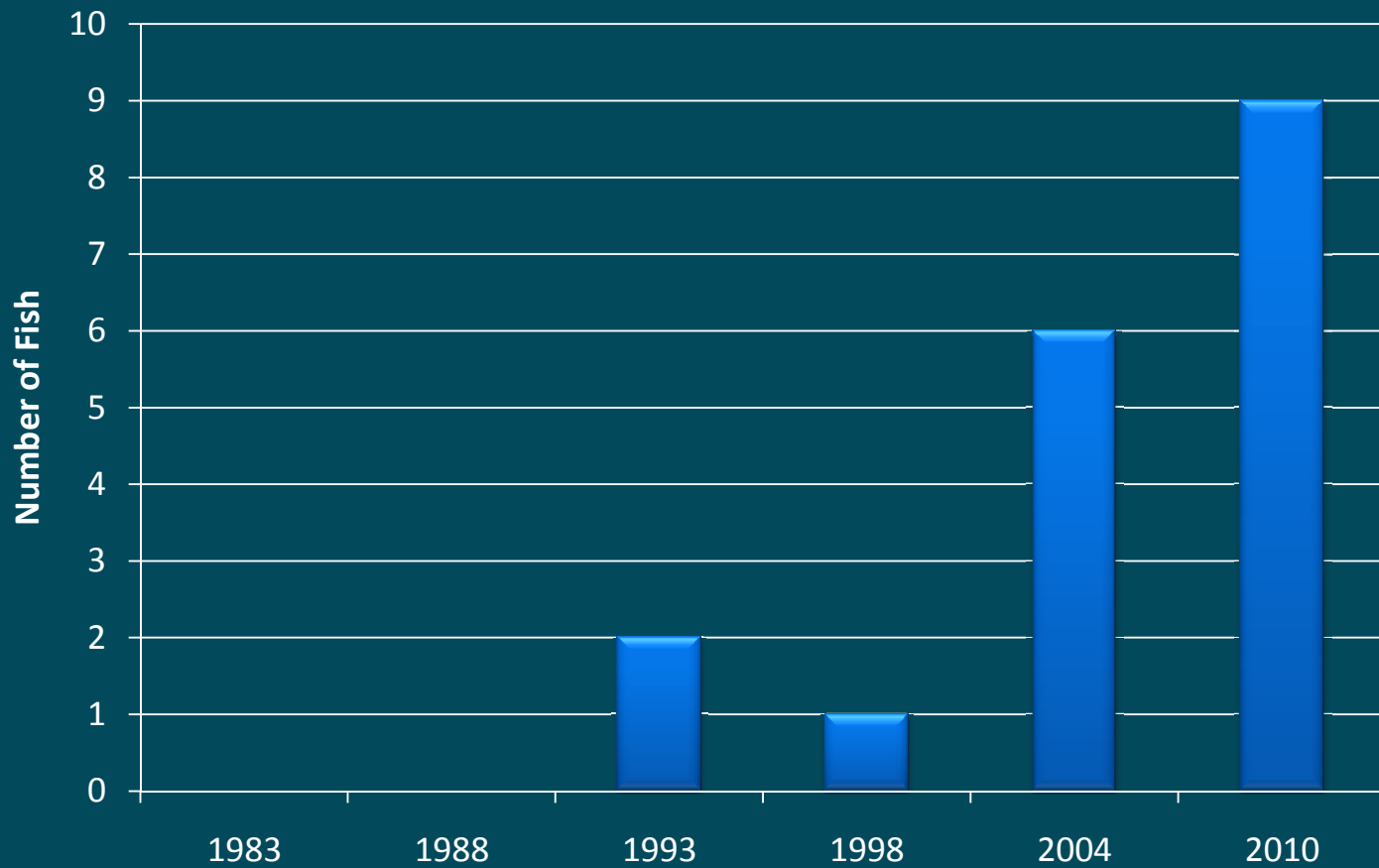
## Big Swan Gillnets % Age 6 and Older



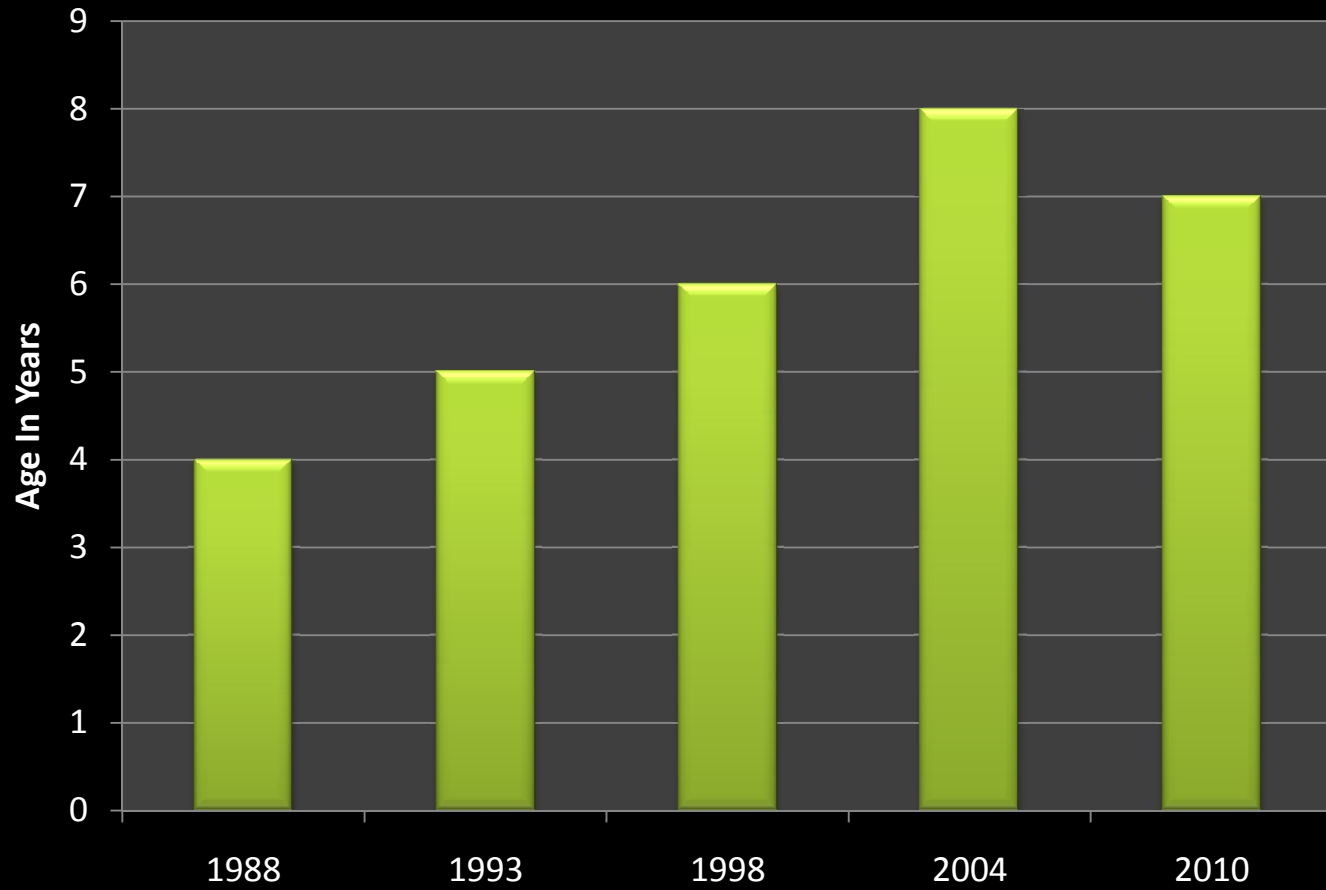
# Long Lake (Burtrum)

- ❖ Regulations since 2003
- ❖ Maximum age increasing - % >Age 6 higher
- ❖ Maximum length no trend
- ❖ More fish over 30 inches
- ❖ Proportion over 24" variable- currently high
- ❖ Largest pike sampled= 36.5 inches in 2004
- ❖ Ice-out scheduled for 2012 – needed for trend evaluation
- ❖ Sunset date March 1, 2013.

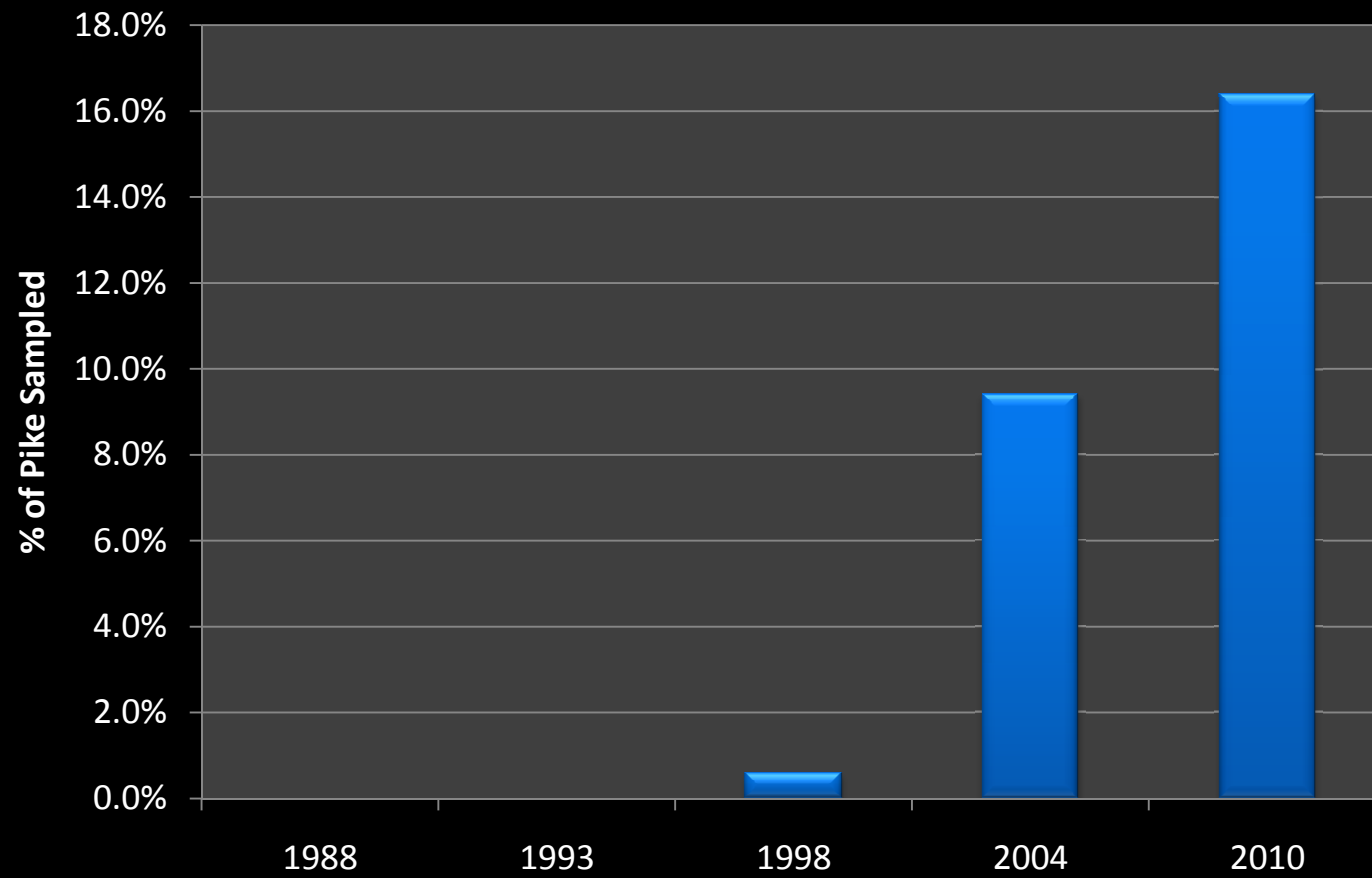
### Long Lake NOP Number>30" - Gillnets



## Long Lake - Maximum Age of Pike In Gillnets



### Long Lake Gillnets - % Pike Age 6 and Older



# “Conservation” Regulations Lakes

- ❖ Three lakes in this category – Bass (40” min.), Cedar (40” min.), and Little Sauk (24”-30”)
- ❖ Due to increased access and pressure on small lakes with quality fish present
- ❖ Goal to maintain desirable size structure
- ❖ No sunset dates – not experimental
- ❖ Protective regulations not subject to modification

# Cedar Lake (Upsala)

- 223 pike sampled in Ice-out trapnets before regs. – ave. length 23.0", 7.6% > 30"
- 558 pike sampled in Ice-out trapnets since 2006 – ave. length 24.1", 15.6% > 30"
- Max. length has not changed in trapnets
- Max. age 10 in 2008, age 8 oldest sampled in past surveys
- Anglers reported several 40+" fish during winter of 2010-11, 47" largest
- Regulation since 2002

# Bass Lake (Burtrum)

- Regulations since 2003
- Very low catches of pike prior to 1998 – No pike in 2004 gillnets
- 1998 Gillnets – 11% > 24", 6% > 30", max. 41"
- 2010 Gillnets – 28% > 24", 6% > 30", max. 37.4"
- 2002 Ice-out – 60% > 24", 18% > 30", max. 38.1"
- 2010 Ice-out – 16% > 24", 6% > 30", max. 41.3"
- 2007 Year Class exceptionally strong, 70%+
- Fish up to Age 13 in 2010, up to Age 10 in past

# Little Sauk Lake

- Regulations since 2000
- Only 3 of 195 pike sampled in gillnets from 1954-1997 were over 30".
- Of 57 pike sampled since regs. began 7 have exceeded 30".
- Max. length sampled before regs. = 31", largest pike sampled (35.5") in 2009
- Max. age of 6 prior to regs., fish up to age 9 in 2009 gillnets

# General Observations

- Regulations have increased the number of large pike (over 30 inches)
- Regulations have resulted in more pike reaching 6 years of age and older
- Regulations have not resulted in a reduced abundance of small pike
- Regulations have not delivered fish community benefits such as more walleye and perch
- Regulations have not produced negative impacts on walleye, perch, and panfish populations

# A Postcard Survey of Northern Pike Anglers and Spearers in Central Minnesota



By: Brady Becker, Carl Bublitz

DNR Fisheries – Little Falls

March 2011



# Scope of Project

- Randomized subsample generated from license bureau query of 9,278 licensed anglers & spearers in study area
- 550 cards – Initial mailing, 315 cards -second mailing
- Explanation letter sent with cards
- 315 cards returned – 58% response rate

# Survey Card

1. What % of your total angling/spearing time do you seek Northern Pike?  
☐ 0%   ☐ 1-10%   ☐ 11-20%   ☐ 21-30%   ☐ 31-40%   ☐ 41-50%   ☐ more than 50%
2. Do you ice-fish for Northern Pike?  
☐ YES   ☐ NO
3. Do you spear Northern Pike?  
☐ YES   ☐ NO
4. Would you like to see more medium to large-sized Northern Pike on local lakes you fish?  
☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ NO OPINION / DON'T KNOW
5. Have you fished on a lake with a Northern Pike slot limit (such as a 24-36" release regulation)?  
☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ DON'T KNOW
6. Do you support the use of slot limits (such as a 24-36" release regulation) to manage Northern Pike populations?  
☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ NO OPINION / DON'T KNOW
7. How many fishing trips per year do you typically make?  
☐ 1-5   ☐ 6-10   ☐ 11-20   ☐ more than 20
8. What is your home residence City or Zip Code? \_\_\_\_\_

><((({">      *Thank-you for participating!*      ><((({">

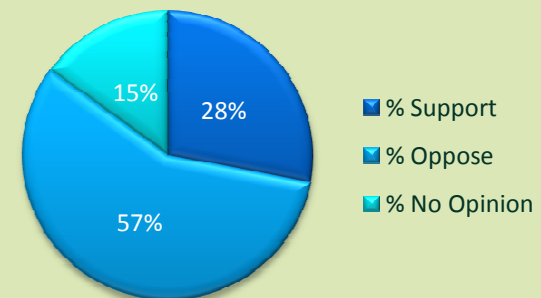
The results of this survey will be posted upon completion on the DNR Fisheries Little Falls Area Web Page  
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/littlefalls/index.html>

# Spearers

- ❖ Only category of user where opposition to regulations (57%) was greater than support
- ❖ Tended to take more angling/spearing trips/yr. than non-spearers
- ❖ Most (81%) also ice fished for northern pike
- ❖ 76% had visited regulated lakes – highest of all user categories
- ❖ 78% responded they wanted to see more medium to large pike



**Spearers - Support For  
Northern Pike 24-36"  
Slot**



# Support From Other User Categories

- ❖ Support outweighed opposition in all categories of users (except spearers)
- ❖ Ice anglers who sought pike but did not spear supported regulations 62% to 21% (25% no opinion)
- ❖ Anglers who did not ice fish for pike supported regulations 50% to 21% (29% no opinion)
- ❖ 65% of anglers (excluding spearers) who took more than 10 trips/yr. supported regulations
- ❖ 68% of anglers (excluding spearers) who targeted pike >30% of the time supported regulations

## Support For Regulations Among User Categories

