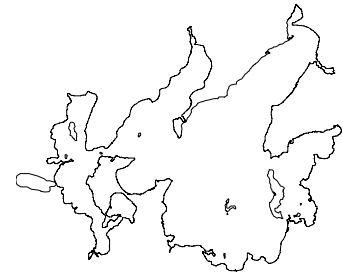




Leech Lake Update 6/13/2008
Walker Area Fisheries Office
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Greetings!

This update is part of a series of reports the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is sending to Leech Lake area resorts, businesses and others interested in DNR activities on Leech Lake. The goal of these messages is to keep you up to date with our findings and current activities on the lake. All updates are available by visiting <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/walker/index.html>. Feel free to contact our office if you have any questions or comments, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

2008 Fishing Season

- In spite of a late ice-out, angler catch rates during the opener were average when compared to historical records, with many of the fish being caught within the 18-26" protected slot limit. As water temperatures warmed so did the walleye bite and the number of harvestable-sized fish encountered by anglers.
- Walleye catch rates for the month of May on Leech Lake (right) have been similar to those observed during the excellent fishing of the late 1990's as well with more recent surveys on some of Minnesota's other premier walleye fisheries during the same time period.
- During May, 55% of all walleyes caught by Leech Lake anglers were shorter than 18 inches and 45% were 18 inches and longer, with fish over 30 inches being reported. These proportions were nearly identical among the main lake and western bays basins.
- Although fishing pressure remains below average for comparable time periods from 1991-2005, fishing effort on Leech Lake has been steadily increasing since the opener.
- Anglers considering staying on Leech Lake should contact their favorite resort for availability, or contact the Walker Area Chamber of Commerce (www.leech-lake.com) for a list of resorts and other accommodations.

		Walleye/hour	
		Catch	Harvest
All Anglers	Leech, 2008	0.36	0.15
	Mille Lacs, 2007	0.43	0.19
	LOTW, 2007	0.42	0.41
Targeting Anglers	Leech, 2008	0.79	0.42
	Mille Lacs, 2007	0.46	0.21
	LOTW, 2007	0.87	0.42

Exotic Species

- Eurasian watermilfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, rusty crayfish, and banded mystery snails are present in Leech Lake. Other harmful invasive species, such as the spiny water flea, have been found in waters throughout the state.
- You can prevent the spread of exotic species. Remove all vegetation from your boat, motor, and trailer. Drain all water after loading your boat and never empty bait buckets into the lake.
- Precautions for anglers and boaters can be found at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/preventspread.html
- Further details on aquatic invasive species can be found at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticanimals/index.html

Stocking Update

- With the assistance of Leech Lake Fishing Task Force members and other volunteers, 22.1 million marked walleye fry were dispersed among each major bay of Leech Lake. This is the fourth consecutive year Leech Lake has been stocked with marked walleye fry.

Total walleye fry stocked into each year class, the percent of young-of-year (YOY) walleye collected from those year classes that were from stocking, and the approximate sizes (inches) of walleye in those year classes at the start of the 2008 fishing season in May.

	Year Class				
	2004 and earlier	2005	2006	2007	2008
Fry stocked (millions)	0	7.5	22.1	7.5	22.1
% Marked as YOY	NA	39	86	23	To be determined
Length (in)	18" and larger	14-18"	10-14"	6-9"	NA

2008 Operational Plans

- Annual fishery assessment work includes: shoreline seining during July and bottom trawling during August to sample young-of-year fish; gillnetting during the first half of September to survey the adult population; and shoreline electrofishing during the latter half of September for young-of-year walleye.
- Individuals interested in accompanying DNR personnel while sampling Leech Lake can contact Doug Schultz at the Walker Fisheries office.
- Double-crested cormorant control efforts will continue under the supervision of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwa during 2008.

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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or

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