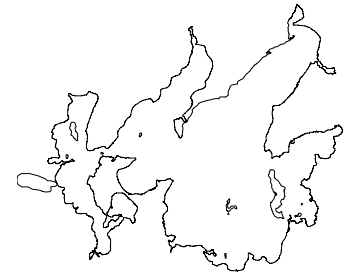




Leech Lake Update 10/10/2008
Walker Area Fisheries Office
07316 State Hwy. 371 NW
Walker, MN 56484
218-547-1683



Greetings!

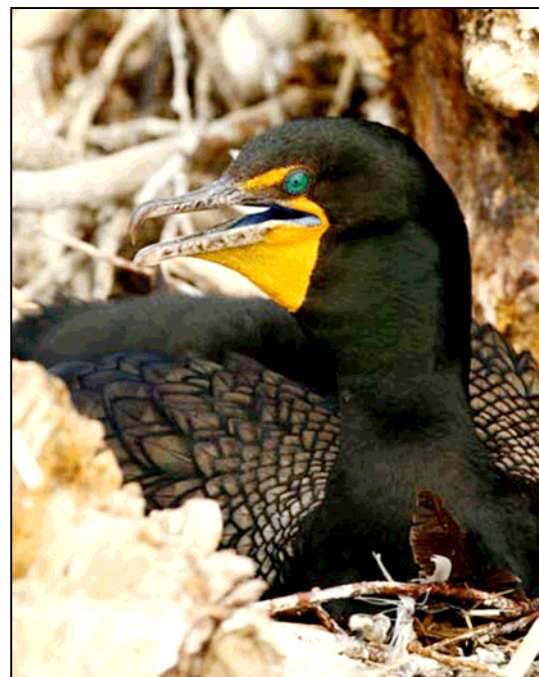
This update is part of a series of reports the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is sending to Leech Lake area resorts, businesses and others interested in DNR activities on Leech Lake. The goal of these messages is to keep you up to date with our findings and current activities on the lake. Earlier 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, would like copies of previous updates not posted on the website, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

Invasive Species

- Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) continues to be discovered in new boat harbors around Leech Lake.
- An average of 5 harbors have been treated for EWM each year since its discovery in 2004. That number increased dramatically to 22 harbors needing treatment in 2008.
- You can prevent the spread of exotic species. Remove all vegetation from your boat, motor, and trailer. Drain all water from live wells, bilges, and lower units 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 invasive aquatic species can be found at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticanimals/index.html

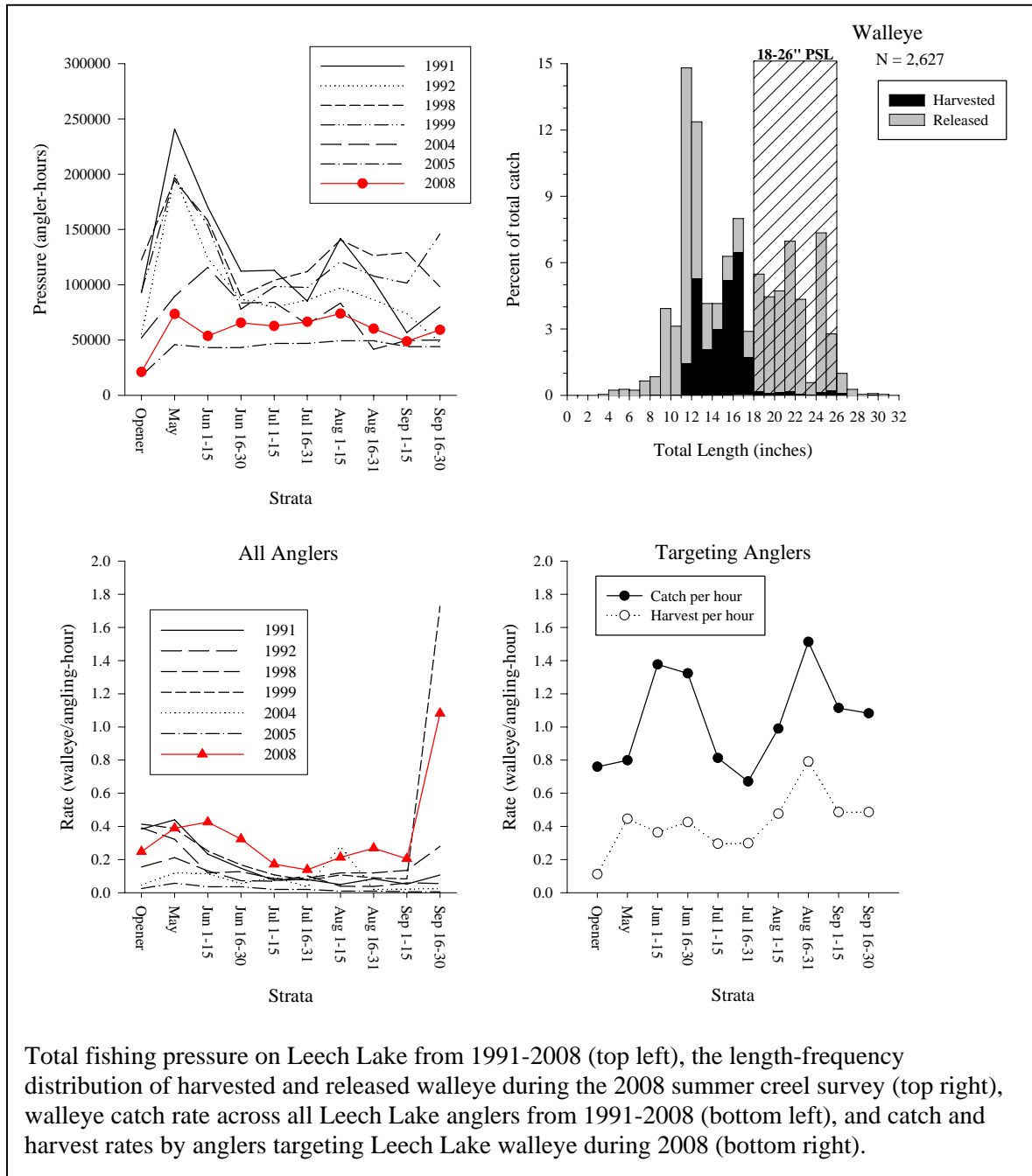
Cormorant Management

- Double-crested cormorant conflict management continued under the supervision of the Division of Resources Management, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.
- An additional 2,601 birds and 79 eggs were removed during 2008. A total of 9,487 birds have been removed from Leech Lake since diet sampling and population control efforts began in the fall of 2004.
- Anglers and hunters are reminded that an area around Gull and Little Pelican islands remains closed to boat traffic this fall to provide a resting place for migrating birds.
- Further information on Leech Lake cormorant management can be found on the Band's web site at <http://www.ildrm.org/corm.html>.



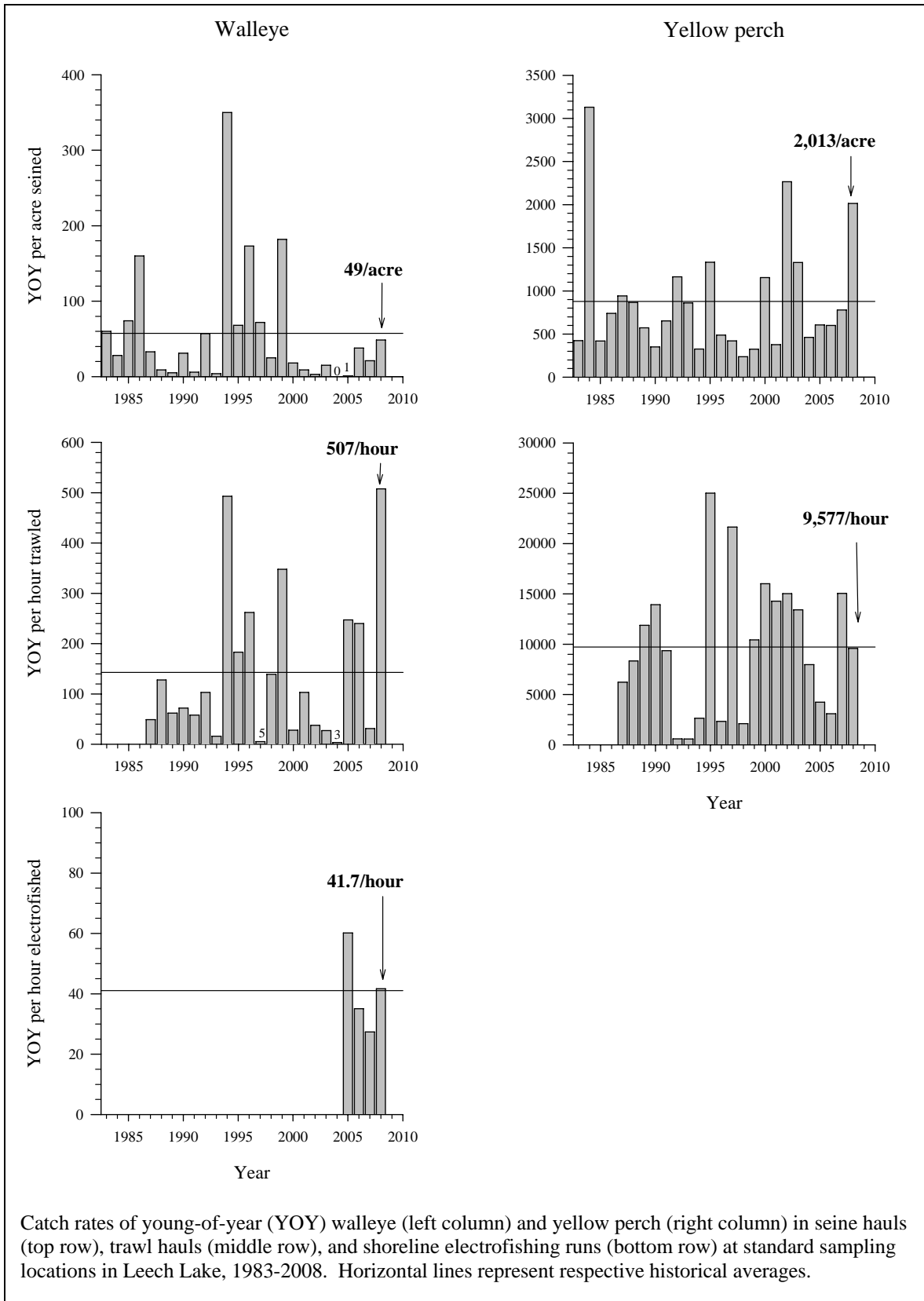
2008 Fishing Season – Preliminary Findings

- Reports from anglers as well as creel survey findings indicate great walleye fishing on Leech Lake this year!
- While fishing pressure was below average (below), persons targeting walleye enjoyed a successful summer as their catch rates averaged over 1.0 walleye/hour for the entire survey.
- Walleye catch rates across all anglers were above average throughout the summer and walleye of all sizes were reported.
- Some non-compliance with the 18-26” protected slot limit (PSL) was observed.
- To report a violation, call **Minnesota TIP (Turn In Poachers) 1-800-652-9093**.

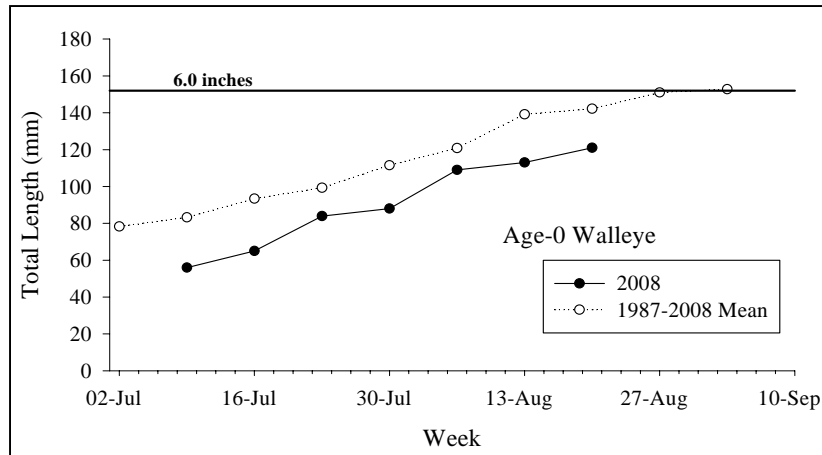


2008 Young-of-Year Sampling

- Shoreline seining was completed weekly during July. A total of 40 seine hauls yielded average catch rates of 49 YOY walleye/acre and 2,013 YOY yellow perch/acre.

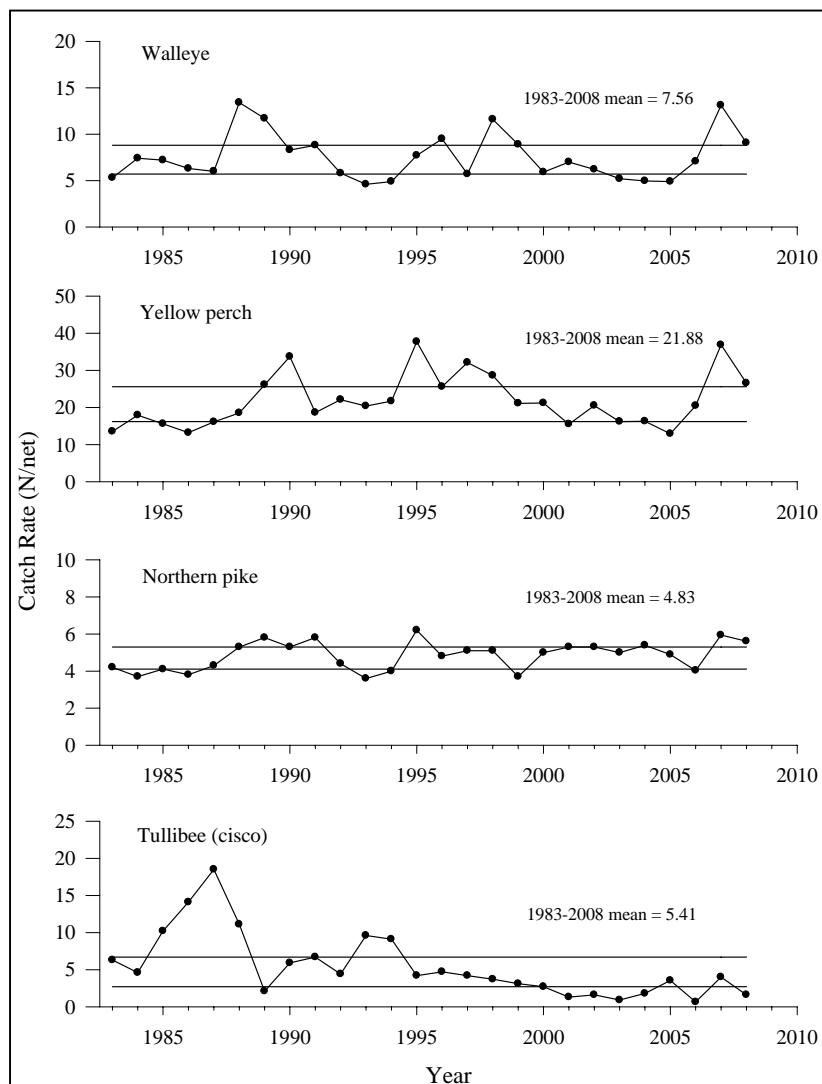


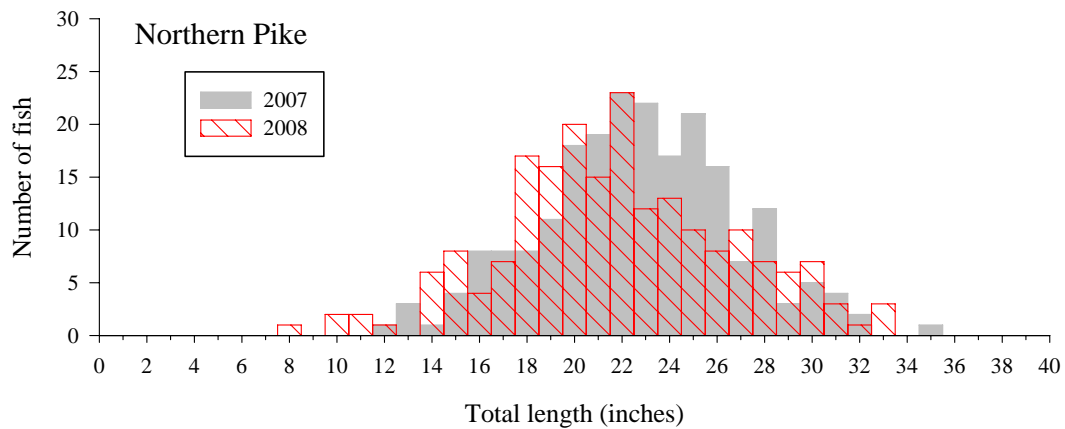
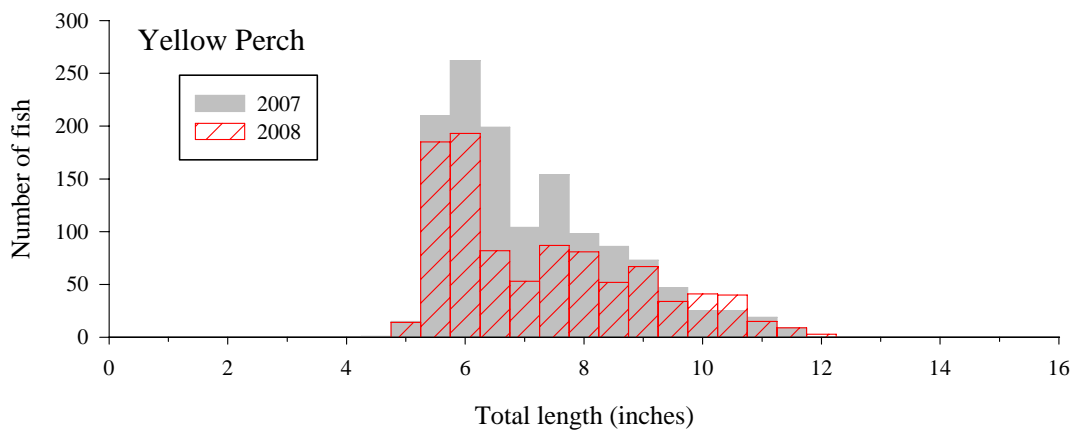
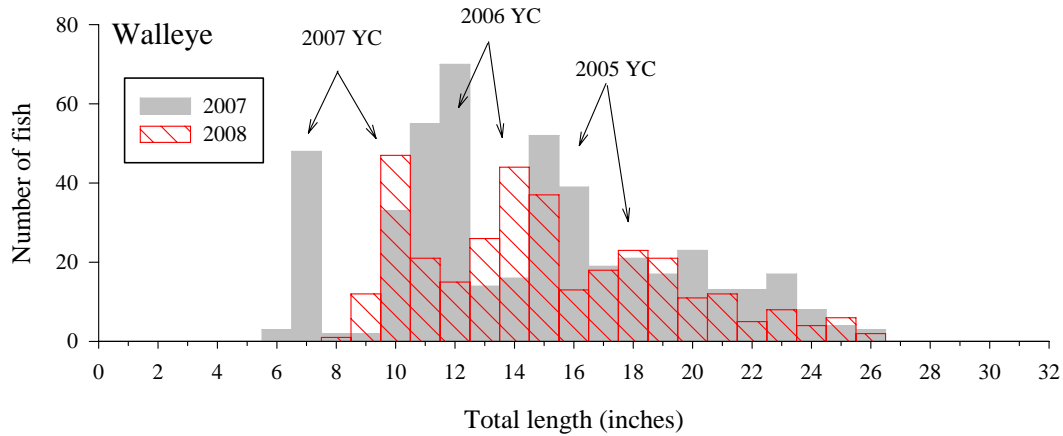
- Trawling was completed weekly from August 11 through August 19. A total of 20 five-minute trawl hauls resulted in an average catch rate of 507 YOY walleye/hour and 9,577 YOY yellow perch/hour.
- Shoreline electrofishing was completed during the week of September 15. Favorable weather allowed for successful sampling of all four stations this year. The mean catch rate of age-0 walleye during 2008 was 41.7 fish/hour.
- Growth of age-0 fish, indexed by average length-at-week (right), was below the long-term average this year.



2008 Gillnet Survey

- The annual gillnet survey was completed during the first two weeks of September. Gillnet catch rates of some species declined slightly from 2007 observations.
- Catch rates of walleye, yellow perch, and northern pike all remained above the upper quartile for their respective group (right).
- Catch rates of cisco remain below average.
- The 2007 year class of walleye appears to be average to above-average in strength, making it the third consecutive year class of walleye to establish in Leech Lake.





Length-frequency distributions of walleye, yellow perch, and northern pike sampled with experimental gillnets in Leech Lake during 2007 (shaded bars) and 2008 (hatched red bars). Peaks in the 2007 and 2008 distributions created by the 2005-2007 year classes of walleye are also highlighted.

If you have questions, comments, or requests please contact:

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or

Harlan Fierstine (harlan.fierstine@dnr.state.mn.us)