

## 2019 Winterkill on Hutchinson Management Area Lakes

Reports of dead fish, on some shallower lakes (Hook, Echo, Spencer, Silver-Sibley County, Clear-McLeod County, High Island, Thompson, Hope, Otter/Campbell, Schilling, and Long Lake-Grove City), started coming in to our DNR office in late March. Netting assessments were done on several lakes (Silver-Sibley County, Thompson, Clear-New Ulm, and Hook) to document the severity of the winterkill.

A partial winterkill occurred on Hook, but a trap net survey indicated that fair to good numbers of Northern Pike had survived. However, no Walleye, Bluegill, Black Crappie, or Largemouth Bass were netted at Hook, likely indicating that winterkill was significant on those species. Plans are under way to stock Walleye, Bluegill, and Black Crappie this spring, at Hook Lake.

Trap netting at Silver Lake - Sibley County showed that at least a few Black Crappie were still present, but Walleye were not sampled. The net catches were dominated by Black Bullhead and Common Carp following the 2019 partial winterkill.

Trap netting at Thompson Lake failed to sample any Walleye in the spring of 2019. A total of eight Yellow Perch were captured, but none were over five inches in length. Black Bullhead were the most abundant fish sampled following the 2019 winterkill. Plans are to restock the lake with Walleye fry this spring.

Trap netting at Clear Lake – New Ulm indicated that high numbers of 8-8.5” inch Black Crappie were still present following the 2019 winter. Nets also sampled low numbers of Walleye and Northern Pike. A total of 7 dead Common Carp were observed on the lake’s shoreline following the 2019 winter, likely indicating that the 2019 winterkill was light.

No netting was done at High Island Lake this spring, but high numbers of dead fish along the shoreline indicated that a severe winterkill occurred in 2019.