

## 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 Thursdays at the Minnesota DNR's web page for the Lake Superior fisheries office. The web address is at <http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/lakesuperior/2017-su-creel.pdf> . You may also call our office at 218-302-3293 and selecting 1 for the updated fishing report.**

### **Update 10/13/2017:**

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 26 and weekly Summer fishing reports will begin on May 31.

### **Update 10/5/2017:**

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

Bad weather suppressed fishing again this past week. The warm water layer was still thick, running at 60-64 degrees down to 130 feet or deeper, which pushed the Lake Trout into depths of 130 feet or more, even down to 180 feet for some anglers. Most of the fish were caught offshore. Salmon were almost non-existent in anglers' catches. The Lake Trout were 19-30 inches long, a few of the Lakers were the fatter variety that live in deeper water, the siscowet, and a few Walleye and Brown Trout showed up in the catch. Spoons and flasher-fly combinations caught fish, and meat rigs were somewhat successful too. Green-backed lures and glow-in-the-dark styles were good, as well as orange-gold and purple colors. Recent heavy rains drew salmon into the tributaries. The Pink Salmon run is past peak now and the fish are degrading. Water levels in the St. Louis River were high and fluctuated throughout the day, which caused some problems at shallow accesses. Walleye fishing has been really slow this fall in the River.

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

Anglers faced poor weather conditions this past week with wind, rain and thunderstorms hampering anglers attempts. Water surface temperatures were warm and consistently in the upper 50s along the entire mid to upper shore. The warm water extended to below 100 feet. Anglers at Grand Marais reported good fishing for Lake Trout with some bigger fish being caught. Across most of the upper shore, most of the fish were caught from depths of over 100 feet and the fish



have not begun to move to shallow water. Anglers still caught some of the siscowet variety of Lake Trout, however more larger and leaner fish are being caught as spawning season approaches. Pink salmon remain in tributaries in fair numbers although most fish are now deteriorating. Heavy rains raised tributaries to very high levels in recent days and this will make for tough conditions for anglers in the short term.

Lake Trout fishing ends after this next weekend, and the summer creel survey and weekly fishing reports will also end. In Lake Superior and in tributaries below posted boundaries, the fishing season remains open for salmon, Rainbow Trout, or Brown Trout. Most anglers who fish during the late season do best when fishing shallower and closer to shore. All unclipped Rainbow Trout, or steelhead, must be released immediately. Be sure to review the Minnesota DNR's fishing regulation booklet for other restrictions.

#### **Update 9/28/2017:**

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

More strong Northeasterly winds reduced fishing pressure again this week. The winds also continued to push warm water towards Duluth and the water temperatures were in the low 60s. The warm water pushed the Lake Trout into deeper water, often down to 150-200 feet. At these depths, anglers pulled up a fair number of siscowet Lake Trout and in some trips anglers caught only siscowets. A few Lake Trout were larger, running to 35.5 inches long. The clerk saw no Coho or Chinook Salmon this past week. Anglers caught Lake Trout on glow-in-the-dark lures and on meat rigs with squid bodies in the deep, dark water. Shore fishing is still slow and anglers are hoping for cooler water near shore too. Pink Salmon have moved into the rivers in abundance in most streams. The fish are small, averaging about  $\frac{3}{4}$  pound. The Lake Trout fishing season on Lake Superior ends on October 8.

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

Angler pressure was moderate at Grand Marais and Silver Bay and light elsewhere. Water surface temperatures were consistently in the upper 50s to lower 60s. Anglers continue to wait for cooler water and for Lake Trout to move shallower and become more accessible. Anglers at Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais caught almost 2 fish per trip, but the fish were often deep, on the move, and hard to pattern. Anglers from Twin Points and Silver Bay caught fewer fish that were also scattered and deep. The Lake Trout were fairly large this past week, with some fish in the mid teens pound range. Anglers were not catching Salmon in the lake. Pink Salmon have moved into the streams in relatively high numbers. Anglers caught few steelhead, which has been the pattern lately.

#### **Update 9/21/2017:**

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

Strong easterly winds early in the week pushed warmer water into this end of the lake, with surface temperatures hovering in the low-60's, while temperatures reached the upper-50's down to around 100 feet deep. This pushed fish deeper than 100 ft and often around 130-160 feet deep, especially near Duluth. Many of the anglers who were able to fish were able to catch some nice fish. Most of the Lakers were 19-23 inches long, a few ranged up to 27 inches or so, about 1 in 20



or so was closer to 30 inches, and at least one fish went to the taxidermist this past week. The Lake Trout near Two Harbors were caught while either trolling or jigging on the bottom in 170 to 200 feet of water. Spoons with green or chartreuse on one side caught some fish, with white and gold/orange also being good colors. Some fish are still being caught on meat rigs too. Coho and Chinook Salmon were rarely caught. The largest measured salmon of the week was a Coho trolled up out of Two Harbors that was 20.6 inches and 3 pounds. A few shore anglers caught Pink Salmon and small Chinook Salmon. Shore-casters are reporting that Rainbow Trout are hitting spoons. Pink Salmon are in the rivers or at river mouths following the recent rains. Saint Louis River fishing pressure was low and no fish were reported, although the wind may have reduced the fishing pressure those days.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angling pressure was low this past week due to lousy weather, including strong easterly winds. Water surface temperatures were steady and warm at 58-62 degrees. Anglers had to go deep for cooler water, but most of the fish were not far offshore. The action for Lake Trout was fair and mostly in deeper water. Pink Salmon have moved into the rivers and were being caught despite challenging conditions due to higher water in the rivers.

#### **Update 9/14/2017:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was generally relatively low again this past week. It was windy at times again also, which blew in some warmer water. Surface temperatures were in the lower to mid 60s. Anglers caught Lake Trout down 50-120 feet, most often 70-90 feet down in water that was 110 feet or deeper. Fish were caught on trolling spoons, however some anglers near Two Harbors also jigged in 120-160 feet of water. Salmon are really scarce right now. Soon the Lake Trout will move into shallower water in preparation for spawning. Salmon are also preparing to spawn, moving into tributaries.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angling pressure was moderate when weather conditions allowed. Surface temperatures were stable and relatively warm, at 63 degrees near Silver Bay and 60 degrees near Horseshoe Bay. Anglers caught a decent number of Lake Trout, averaging 1-2 per angler from each access. The fish ranged up to 20 pounds and catches of larger fish increased. The fish are widely scattered and suspended over deep water. Anglers caught few fish near the surface or near shore, so downriggers are the tool to use. Practically the only salmon that anglers caught were 13-16 inch Pink Salmon and even smaller 11-13 inch Coho Salmon. Often the salmon are near death when caught and so, despite being too small, are not released. The salmon are caught within 80 feet of the surface. Anglers again caught few steelhead over the past week. Pink Salmon have moved into the tributaries but may be hard to spot due to unusually high water.

#### **Update 9/7/2017:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was generally relatively low this past week at all accesses. Wind hindered fishing effort, however the fishing was really good at times for those who went out in the wind. Surface temperatures dipped into the high 50s and then rose back into the low 60s and very recently the Northwest winds pushed out



warmer water and the temperatures cooled again. The cooler water has scattered the fish in the water column. Anglers caught mostly lean Lake Trout that were 20-26 inches long with maybe 1 out of 15 fish that were closer to 30 inches or 10 pounds. Very few salmon were caught. Anglers were most successful when using meat rigs, followed by spoons. The largest fish ate herring, otherwise the fish ate Rainbow Smelt. Rainy weather has produced muddy water, which some anglers said reduced their catch rates. Angling effort in the Saint Louis River is low and the action is slow.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angling pressure was fairly moderate at times in the past week, affected at times by stronger Northwest winds. The offshore winds persisted long enough to cool the water, down to 43-54 degrees near Grand Marais. Anglers caught fair numbers of Lake Trout that were scattered across the deeper water column. Anglers also caught fair numbers of siscowet Lake Trout which are generally caught in deeper water. Anglers caught a few Pink Salmon and 10-13 inch Coho Salmon, but no bigger salmon. Anglers caught just a few steelhead. Tributary flows were moderate and water flow at the lake mouths are being affected by high lake levels. Pink Salmon are difficult to see in rivers due to higher water, however the Pinks have moved into the tributaries as the water cools.

#### **Update 8/31/2017:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was generally relatively low this past week at all accesses except the Charter docks which were moderately active. Rain and wind often hindered the effort, however the fishing was good for those who went anyway. Surface temperatures hovered in the mid 60s, ending the week around 65 degrees. Most of the fish were lean Lake Trout plus now anglers are catching a fair number of siscowet Lake Trout, or fats, which are less tasty than the leans. The fish were often caught at 80-100 feet over deeper water. Some of the Lake Trout were over 30 inches and up to 20 pounds. A few Coho Salmon were caught at the same depth as the Lake Trout and those fish were 3-4 pounds. Best lures for this week were meat rigs. Many of the fish were eating Rainbow Smelt. Some fish were also caught with spoons in shades of green or chartreuse, or white or glow-in-the-dark. Angling effort in the Saint Louis River is low and the action is slow.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angling pressure was moderate to light, depending mainly on weather and wind conditions. East winds have created evenly mixed and warm water along the shore. The surface temperatures were consistently in the low 60s down to about 100 feet. The best fishing was in deep, offshore water, and often scattered throughout the water column, whereas fishing close to shore was generally unproductive. Anglers caught a fair number of fish, over a fish per trip, but had to work to find the fish. The Lakers were 20-35 inches long and weighed up to 13 pounds. Anglers caught a few Coho Salmon near Twin Points and Silver Bay, no one reported catching Chinook Salmon, and Pink Salmon were caught throughout the area and particularly at Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor. The Pinks are smallish, 14-16 inches long and weighing about a pound, and are very ripe and changing physiologically as they prepare to run into the tributaries in a week or two. A few anglers caught steelhead at various areas, but overall the anglers said they saw light numbers this year.

#### **Update 8/24/2017:**



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

Fishing pressure was moderate this past week, affected as usual by the sometimes windy weather. Success was moderate also, or good if anglers got on fish which were deeper due to previous wind patterns that pushed warm water into the area. Surface temperatures ended the week at around 64° off McQuade and 61° around Two Harbors. Fishing for Lake Trout was decent this week when the wind gave anglers a break, especially towards Two Harbors. The largest LAT measured this year, thus far, at 33.7 inches 14 lb 5 oz (a big male) was caught out of Two Harbors early in the week. There were also several in the 25-30-inch range, with the majority ranging from 17 to 23 inches long. The big fish tended to have herring in their stomachs. Smaller Lake Trout and also salmon were feeding on Rainbow Smelt. Green continued to be popular color, with fish caught on silver/green-backed spoons, as well as flasher-fly or dodger-fly rigs, and mostly on spoons near Two Harbors. Many anglers caught fish on meat rigs. Anglers caught very few salmon, but a few of them were 5-10 pound Chinook Salmon and a few were 16 inch Pink Salmon. Overall, most fish were caught by trolling deep at 140-160 down to around 200 feet or by jigging down to 200 feet, especially North of McQuade. Some fish were still caught up in the 80-90 feet depth range. Saint Louis River pressure and success seems to be low.

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

Fishing pressure was lower this past week due to some afternoon winds at times. Water surface temperatures remained warm and consistent from 60 to 64 degrees and slightly warmer near Silver Bay and Twin Points. Anglers from Grand Marais caught fewer Lake Trout than during the previous week. Smaller fish were largely absent in shallow, near shore waters and also fewer fish were caught close to the surface over deeper water. Most successful anglers caught fish from 90-170 feet of water and close to the bottom. Lake trout were generally 3-8 pounds. Anglers near Silver Bay and Twin Points caught more Lake Trout, both near and far from shore. Larger fish were generally caught further from shore and within 100 feet of the surface while smaller fish were caught in good numbers close to the bottom in deeper, nearshore waters. Anglers near Silver Bay and Twin Points also caught fair numbers of Coho Salmon that ran 20-22 inches long and 2-3 pounds each. The Coho Salmon were on the move and anglers often had to search to find them. The Cohos were caught fairly near the shoreline and about 50-100 below the surface. Anglers caught just a few Chinook Salmon, however the fish were 3-5 pounds on average. Anglers caught Pink Salmon fairly regularly and the fish were 13-16 inches long. A few 10-13 inch Cohos and small Steelhead have also been caught, and the Cohos are changing in appearance, making fish identification difficult at times.

#### **Update 8/17/2017:**

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

Nice weather early in the week allowed anglers to get out and enjoy good fishing, especially farther North in the lower shore area. Fishing pressure was high at the Charter Docks and at McQuade and moderate to light elsewhere this past week. Anglers caught over a fish per trip overall. Water temperatures were in the mid to upper 60s until the Northeast wind stirred up the water column and the temperature dropped to around 60 degrees. Fish were holding deep, with salmon 80-90 feet down and Lake Trout 90 - 200 feet down in water as deep as 200 feet or even deeper at times. Green was the color this week, with Monkey Puke and green-backed Wonderbread being good spoon color patterns along with orange, with meat rigs taking some fish as well. Lake Trout size varied considerably, from 18 to 37 inches long, and the average was the usual 19 to 23 inches or so. Fewer larger fish were caught than in the previous week. After the wind ceases anglers might hook into some larger fish. The Coho Salmon were 19 inches long on average. Chinook Salmon were mostly in the low to mid 20 inch



range but with one fish measured at 33 inches. Most of the salmon were caught early in the past week. Anglers did report catching Walleyes in the Lake. Angling pressure in the Saint Louis River was low again this week and mayflies had a large hatch.

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

Fishing pressure was moderate throughout the area and was almost high at Grand Marais. The weather limited the boating activity this past week and weather will be better for boating this weekend. Water temperatures were consistently warm, in the low to mid 60s, especially offshore. The high winds on Thursday may push warmer water towards the shoreline. Anglers report steady action for Lake Trout at all stations, catching well over a fish per angler trip on average. While fish remain widely scattered, fewer numbers of small Lake Trout are present in very shallow, near shore waters. Lake Trout seem to be holding in slightly deeper water in the Silver Bay and Twin Points locations, in the 90-140 foot range. However, anglers continue to catch Lake Trout that are scattered including many fish within fifty feet of the surface. The best locations to catch fish change on a daily basis. Lake Trout of all size ranges were caught, including some fish up to twenty pounds. Anglers caught a few Coho Salmon in the upper shore area and the fish were often around 20 inches long. Anglers even caught a few Pink Salmon, mostly 13-15 inches long. While Chinook Salmon remain scarce in angler reports, a few of the fish were in the 7-15 pound range. Steelhead have been reported in light numbers across much of the upper shore area again this week.

#### **Update 8/10/2017:**

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

Fishing pressure was high at the Charter Docks and at McQuade and moderate to light elsewhere this past week. Anglers caught about a fish per trip overall. Water temperatures were warm again this past week, staying in the 60s down to about 20 feet and being variable below 48 degrees at over 100 feet deep. In the Southern half of the Lower Shore, most fish were caught 70-100 feet down in the warmer water using downriggers over water that was 120-180 feet deep. In the Northern half, some of the best success was 50-80 feet down off islands and reefs, followed by catches in 80-110 feet in deeper water. The weather changes that occurred this past week forced anglers to be more tuned into the actual water temperatures at depth, and anglers sometimes moved fairly close to shore. The largest Lake Trout measured by the clerk was 13.5 pounds; however more 9-10 pound Lake Trout are being caught now. The fish are now eating some herring along with more smelt. Anglers near Duluth caught a fair number of salmon at times, and those fish also ate smelt rather than insects. The Coho Salmon have grown to about 21 inches and 3 pounds. Most trolled fish of any type were caught on meat rigs. Green, chartreuse, and monkey puke colors worked well. In the St. Louis Estuary, fishing pressure was mostly low again.

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

Fishing pressure was moderate throughout the area and was heaviest at Grand Marais. Water temperatures were variable, as the winds changed, pushing the temperatures from the low 60s down into the low to mid 50s at times. Generally, fishing was tough this past week as anglers worked to find fish that were responding to the temperature changes. The Lake Trout were found at a wide range of habitats, from closer to shore and farther up in the water column, to



bottom structure areas or suspended in open water. A few anglers found larger Lakers far offshore and close to the surface. The Lake Trout were generally 17-24 inches long. Salmon seem scattered and tough to locate at all stations. Coho Salmon were more difficult to find this past week. A few larger Chinook Salmon were reported from the Fishermen's Picnic weighin, including local fish up to 19 pounds. A few Pink Salmon were caught throughout the upper shore area and most of were less than 1 pound. Anglers caught a few steelhead scattered across the entire area.

#### **Update 8/3/2017:**

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

Fishing pressure was moderate to high again this past week due to hot weather and good fishing. Anglers caught up to 1.5 fish per trip, depending on the access. Water temperatures are at their highest for the year, reaching the low 70s near Duluth and into the high 60s farther north. Water temperatures were still a cool 45 degrees at 80 feet. In the Southern half of the Lower Shore, most fish were caught 80-120 feet down in the warmer water using downriggers over water that was 120-180 feet deep. In the Northern half, a few fish were caught near the surface, however most fish were caught at least 80 feet down in water as deep as 200 feet. The largest Lake Trout measured by the clerk was 9 pounds. A few Chinook Salmon were caught again this week, mostly offshore, and the nicest of these fish averaged 23-25 inches long or 5-7 pounds. Coho Salmon averaged 19 inches long and were seen near Two Harbors. Most trolled fish of any type were caught on meat rigs, which usually use prepared herring or smelt. Some fish were caught on spoons this week, or flasher or dodger and fly or spoon combinations. Bright colors such as pink and chartreuse worked well, and sometimes also gold. In the St. Louis Estuary, fishing pressure picked up this past week. Some of the pressure was due to pre-fishing for a Walleye tournament.

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

Fishing pressure was moderate to high from most areas this past week when the weather allowed. Generally, warmer water was reported from mid shore areas where surface temperatures rose into the 60s. Surface temperatures fluctuated with the weather and declined during the most recent offshore winds. Lake Trout were holding in deeper water as the temperature warmed, but anglers in bigger boats caught fish farther offshore while fishing at the top of the water column. Some Lakers were caught near shore also. Anglers caught salmon closer to shore and near the surface, and though the fish were scattered some anglers had good catches of Coho Salmon at times. Salmon were sparse or not caught from the Hovland and Horseshoe Bay areas farther north. The Cohos in the upper shore area were 16-20 inches long and weighed 1-3 pounds. Anglers caught few Chinook Salmon but the fish were often larger, up to 9 pounds or so. Pink Salmon were also caught, but in light numbers, and generally were 13-15 inches long and weighted under a pound each. Anglers caught an occasional steelhead throughout the area, some being large fish, but overall numbers seem to be light.

#### **Update 7/27/2017:**

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





Fishing pressure was moderate to high this past week due to nice weather and good fishing. Near Duluth, water temperatures were in middle 60s at the surface and 50 degrees at about 40 feet down. Near Two Harbors the surface temperatures were in the high 50s to low 60s. In the Southern half of the Lower Shore, most fish were caught 80-110 feet down in the warmer water using downriggers over water that was 180 feet deep. In the Northern half, fish depth ranged from 0-30 feet down or 80-110 feet down in water as deep as 200 feet. Sizes of Lake Trout ranged up to few 16 to 20 pounders throughout the lower shore area. A few Chinook Salmon were caught again this week, mostly offshore, and the nicest of these fish averaged 24-26 inches long or 5-7 pounds. Coho Salmon averaged 19 inches long. Most trolled fish of any type were caught on spoons this week, or combinations of flasher or dodger with a fly or spoon. Some fish were caught with meat also. Some of the fish stomachs contained rainbow smelt and fewer fish ate insects than in previous weeks. Bright colors such as pink and chartreuse worked well, and some anglers also did well with gold colors. In the St. Louis Estuary, fishing pressure was low and anglers caught a variety of fish, including a few Walleye again this week.

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

Fishing pressure was moderate from most areas this past week. The weather was much nicer than in previous weeks. Fishing success varied with water temperatures. Near Silver Bay, water temperatures were 60-65 degrees and fishing slowed and shifted towards deeper water for Lake Trout and sometimes far from shore, whereas salmon fishing was best when anglers fished closer to shore. Near Taconite Harbor, water temperatures approached 60 degrees and action picked up for Coho Salmon in the 18-20 inch range while Lake Trout fishing was good with some large fish up to 17 pounds. Lake Trout were widely scattered both deep and near to the surface. Near Grand Marais, anglers saw improved catches of Cohos as the surface warmed into the 50s. Lake Trout were scattered through the water column and numbers of smaller fish were caught in shallow and near shore waters. Lake Trout caught near Grand Marais have varied greatly in size and fish up to twenty pounds were reported. Few anglers caught Chinook Salmon and Steelhead throughout the entire area.

#### **Update 7/20/2017:**

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

Fishing pressure continued to increase this past week due to warm weather and lighter winds for most of the week. Near Duluth, water temperatures were in middle to high 50s at the surface and the middle 40s at mid-depth. Near Two Harbors the surface temperatures warmed into the mid 50s. Many fish are feeding in the bug slicks. In the Southern half of the Lower Shore, most fish were caught 75-100 feet down in the warmer water using downriggers. In the Northern half, fish depth ranged from just under the surface for Coho Salmon to deeper water 150 to 170 feet while jigging or trolling for Lake Trout in as deep as 200 feet of water. The Lake Trout were average sized, but fish up to 30 inches were measured by the clerk. Chinook Salmon are still being caught near Duluth, as well as a few Cohos. The Cohos averaged 19-20 inches long. The Cohos are moving northward, as anglers are reporting large schools near Two Harbors. Most trolled fish were caught on spoons this week, or a combination of flasher or dodger with a fly or spinner. Bright colors such as pink worked well, as well as yellow and chartreuse. Some anglers caught fish on meat rigs, which are prepared smelt or herring. In the St. Louis Estuary, fishing pressure was generally low, however anglers did catch a few Walleye that ranged from 14 to 26 inches long.





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

Fishing pressure increased considerably over the past week, particularly in the Silver Bay area, in part due to the annual Silver Bay Salmon Classic fishing contest, but also due in part to the increased catches of Lake Trout and recent catches of Coho Salmon there. Water surface temperatures continue to warm to over 50 degrees along the North Shore. Anglers at Silver Bay caught a range of Lake Trout sizes. Most large Lakers from Silver Bay were caught far off shore, with some fish weighing up to 28 pounds. Anglers from Grand Marais and Hovland report that Lake Trout were scattered through the water column, including close to the surface and sometimes in very shallow and near shore waters, offering opportunities to lightly equipped boat anglers and also shore fishermen. The great majority of Lakers were 16-22 inches long and weighed up to four pounds. North of Silver Bay, anglers continue to wait for the salmon to arrive. Twin Points and Silver Bay area anglers report increasing numbers of Coho salmon in their catch with Coho salmon reported up to four pounds during the fishing contest in Silver Bay last weekend. Coho salmon were reported scattered through near shore waters and generally within 70 feet of the surface. Few Chinook Salmon were caught.

#### **Update 7/13/2017:**

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

Fishing pressure picked up this past week due to warm weather and lighter winds for part of the week, except for Wednesday with its strong Northeast winds and 7 foot waves. Near Duluth, water temperatures warmed into middle 60s at the surface and the middle 40s down at 45 feet. Near Two Harbors the surface temperatures were around 45 to 50 degrees. Anglers reported that bug slicks began to set up on Tuesday, but the slicks probably disappeared with the wind on Wednesday. In the Southern half of the Lower Shore, most fish were caught 50-70 feet down in the warmer water using downriggers, especially out toward the State line. In the Northern half, fish depth ranged from just under the surface for Coho Salmon and even some Steelhead, to deeper water 150 to 170 feet down in as deep as 200 feet of water for Lake Trout that were either caught while jigging and trolling. The Lake Trout were average sized, but fish up to 33.4 inches were measured by the clerk. Chinook Salmon are still being caught near Duluth, as well as a few Cohos. The largest Chinook measured this week was 30 inches long, a memorable catch for the angling couple. Cohos averaged 19 inches long. Most trolled fish were caught on spoons this week, or a combination of flasher or dodger with a fly or spoon. Bright colors such as pink worked well, with a few fish even caught on glow-in-the-dark lures. Now that the winds have mostly subsided, anglers might catch some big fish in the Lower Shore area. In the St. Louis Estuary, fishing pressure was low and Walleye catches were low too.

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

Fishing pressure had been increasing steadily until the high winds on Wednesday. Water temperatures continued to warm, somewhat unevenly as the winds came and went. The temperatures ranged from the low 40s to the low 50s. Grand Marais and Hovland temperatures were slightly cooler. Grand Marais anglers report fair action for Lake Trout that are beginning to scatter throughout the water column and some catches of Lake Trout were from shallow, near shore waters. A wide variety of sizes of Lakers were caught, although most fish were in the 1-3 pound class. However, a few larger Lakers in the mid teens pound class were caught from Grand Marais. Grand Marais anglers are just beginning to catch a few Coho Salmon also. Twin Points and Silver Bay anglers report fair fishing for Cohos in the 17-20 inch range, as well as a few Pink Salmon and small Chinook Salmon, and of course a wide size range of Lake Trout too. One angler at Silver



Bay caught a clipped Brown Trout, probably a fish that swam over from Wisconsin. Anglers from Grand Marais and Silver Bay caught a few steelhead with some large steelhead reported at near 30 inches long.

#### **Update 7/6/2017:**

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

Fishing pressure this past week was a bit slower than normal. Moderate effort was seen at the Charter docks and at McQuade Harbor but was light elsewhere. The warm weather did bring out the recreational boaters though. Water temperatures ranged from the upper 50s near Duluth to the middle 40s near Two Harbors. Most fish were caught closer to the surface due to the relatively narrow warm layer of only 30-40 feet thick, however some anglers were beginning to find warmer, deeper water and caught a few Lake Trout closer to the bottom. The Lake Trout were mostly 18-23 inches long with fish up to 25 inches measured by the clerk. Blue and green were good colors this week, as well as the usual pink and orange. Coho Salmon were the usual 18-20 inches long. The largest Chinook Salmon that the clerk saw was 23 inches, but anglers reported catching larger fish including a 24 pound Chinook from McQuade. Anglers have also been releasing the occasional 8 inch Chinook. Cohos were still somewhat spread out, but most have moved northward toward Two Harbors. The salmon bite was best early in the morning near the surface with flasher-fly rigs doing well on leadcore line, as well as spoons and a few on stickbaits. The rest of the day, fish were caught down 30-60 feet using downriggers or dipsy-divers. In the St. Louis Estuary, Walleyes ranged from 12 to 18 inches and the fishing seemed slow.

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

Fishing pressure was light again this past week throughout the upper shore. Anglers along the entire upper shore report noticeably warming surface temperatures with averages climbing into the middle 40s. Anglers reported fairly slow fishing of less than a fish per trip on average. Anglers from Taconite Harbor and further up the shore have not yet reported catching salmon and catches have continued to consist of Lake Trout in the 17-25 inch range. While most catches of Lake Trout were caught from deeper water, anglers also found Lakers showing up in slightly shallower water from most stations. Anglers from Silver Bay and Twin Points have reported the first salmon. Most salmon have been Cohos in the 17-20 inch range. Anglers also report a few Pink Salmon and a few small Chinooks from Silver Bay. Recent rainfalls have led to impressive waterfalls in tributaries along the North Shore and the tributaries flows are moderate to high. The area between Tofte and Schroeder seemed to receive the highest quantities with reports of over six inches in three days and the Two Island River was as high as it has been in over 25 years.

#### **Update 6/29/2017:**

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

Rough weather continued to hamper fishing pressure this past week. Surface temperatures ranged from the upper 40s nearshore to the low 50s offshore due to strong Northwest winds that blew warmer water away from the North Shore. Better fishing occurred in the warmer temperatures offshore and when the weather cooperated. Thankfully, the weather was good on Monday morning during the Veterans Fishing event at Knife River. The volunteer boaters, including many charter captains, helped the veterans catch dozens of Lake Trout and also a few Salmon and a willing and able crew helped fillet the fish. We saw an 18



pound Lake Trout and a 30 inch Chinook Salmon. For all anglers this past week, the Lake Trout were 3-5 pounds on average. The Coho Salmon are still 17-19 inches long on average and Cohos were caught across a wider area from Duluth to Northeast of Two Harbors. Anglers also picked up a Walleye or a Brown Trout once in a while. In the St. Louis Estuary, Walleye angling has slowed as the water warms, however other fish are being caught further up the river.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Fishing pressure was light again this past week throughout the upper shore due to unsettled weather. The water remained cold, in the mid to upper 30 degree range across most of the area. Anglers reported fair fishing of a fish per trip on average from most areas. Anglers from Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor reported fair catches of Lake Trout in the 18-22 inch range. Most Lake Trout were caught from deep water in the 150 plus foot range. Silver Bay and Twin Points anglers reported that best catches of Lake Trout were in 180-240 feet of water near bottom structure. Anglers from Silver Bay are beginning to search the offshore waters for warmer water, but so far the warm water and good offshore fishing are absent. Recent rains have led to moderate to high waters in tributaries.

**Update 6/22/2017:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Rough weather and switching winds reduced fishing pressure and pushed the warmer water around, again. Water temperatures ranged from the upper 40s to the upper 50s, depending on which way the wind was blowing. Anglers caught an average of a fish each. Lake Trout and Coho Salmon were still in the top 20 feet and caught with bright patterns such as pink, orange/yellow, and purple. The Lake Trout were generally 3 to 5 pounds each, with fish up to 8 pounds. Anglers continued to catch some Cohos, and most were 17 to 19 inches long. The Salmon are slowly shifting Northward. Anglers have caught few Chinook Salmon this summer. In the St. Louis River, anglers caught many small Walleyes, usually 11 to 14 inches long, and the larger fish are moving towards the Rice's Point area.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Fishing pressure remains mostly light throughout the upper shore. The water was still cold, in the 38-40 degree range with some slightly warmer pockets of water over 40 degrees. Anglers report fair fishing of 1 to 2 fish per trip from most areas. Most of the fish were Lake Trout that were 18 to 24 inches long. One adipose clipped Lake Trout was caught that weighed over fifteen pounds from Grand Marais this past week. Most anglers continue to target deep water and structure oriented locations in the 150-220 foot range and trolling presentations close to the bottom. This method produces smaller and more numerous Lake Trout early in the season. Only a few anglers have tried trolling at suspended depths over deep water in search for larger Lake Trout, a technique that anglers use when the surface waters warm and salmon move up the shore from the South. As of now, anglers have reported very few, if any salmon from any area.

**Update 6/15/2017:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:



Fishing pressure was moderate from the Duluth harbor area and light to the North. Rough weather and strong switching winds reduced pressure and pushed the warmer water around. Surface temperatures varied from the mid-40s to the low 50s near Duluth and cooler farther North. The Lake Trout and Coho Salmon that were caught near Duluth were still caught mostly in the top 20 feet of water on bright colors, which is the same pattern as last week. The Lake Trout were also similar in average size to the previous week, mostly in the 2 to 5 pound range. Walleye anglers continued to do well in the St. Louis Estuary, averaging about 4 fish for each angler trip.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light during this reporting period mostly due to poor weather and the threat of severe weather over the weekend. East winds have caused rough lake conditions. Water temperatures were cold again, barely getting to 38 degrees. Anglers continued to target Lake Trout from deep water locations and generally near bottom structure in water depths of 150-220 feet. Lake Trout in the 16-22 inch range have been most commonly reported from these deep waters. Tributaries continue to hold strong flows and reports have been received of a few Lake Trout and Brook Trout caught in warmer river water at the mouths of tributaries.

**Update 6/8/2017:**

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure was moderate from the Duluth harbor area and light to the North, which was similar to the previous week. The weather was reasonable for fishing but winds did shift around some. Surface temperatures warmed to over 50° near Duluth and were even warmer in the sediment plume near Duluth. Temperatures only reached the low 40s near Two Harbors and wind patterns caused frequent changes in the temperature too. Anglers caught about 1 fish per trip near Duluth and slightly less than that near Two Harbors. The Lake Trout were mostly 2-5 pounds with the largest measured fish at a 33.7 inches and 14 lb 9 oz, and a couple of anglers also reported catching fish near 25 pounds. Stickbaits trolled in the top 20 feet caught the majority of fish near Duluth, with pink, orange/yellow, and purple being the best colors. Spoons didn't seem to catch many fish this week. Coho Salmon were mostly 17-20 inches long and seem to be concentrated in the sediment plume. In the St. Louis Estuary, the Walleye bite has been good, with anglers catching over 7 fish per trip of fish that were mostly 11-14 inches long and with some keepers in the 15-21 inch range.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angling pressure was light at all accesses during this past week. Weather conditions were often not conducive to good boating. Water temperatures were generally cold at 36-38 degrees. Anglers from Grand Marais reported fair fishing of an average of 1.5 Lake Trout per trip, mostly 16-20 inch fish that were caught near the bottom in 140-200 foot of water. Some anglers who fished near river mouths reported catching Brook Trout, Lake Trout, and Steelhead. The tributary flows were moderate.

**Update 6/1/2017:**



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

Lake Superior fishing began prior to Memorial Day weekend for a few Charter captains and sometimes a few dozen other boaters. Many anglers capitalized on a good Coho Salmon bite during late March and early April. Over Memorial Day weekend the water temperatures were in the mid-40s near Duluth and only 36 degrees from Knife River to Two Harbors. Fishing pressure was moderate near Duluth and light elsewhere. Anglers caught moderate numbers of Lake Trout, some Coho Salmon, and a Chinook Salmon or a Steelhead once in a while. Many anglers targeted fish that were concentrated in a sediment plume near the Lester River. Chinooks were caught in and around the dirty water, as well as Cohos and some Lake Trout. The Chinooks were 20-33 inches (or 2-15 pounds) or larger. Cohos were 17-19 inches long and Lake Trout averaged 2 to 5 pounds with a few fish up to 27 inches long. Spoons and stickbaits in the top 20 or so feet of water picked up most of the fish, and bright colors seemed to do well, for example orange, chartreuse, and pink, although the water is cold enough for fish to utilize the entire water column. Strong West Northwest winds on Monday disturbed the temperature break around the sediment plume and pushed the warmer water further offshore. Thunderstorms on Sunday and wind on Monday reduced the fishing pressure. In the St. Louis River Estuary, anglers caught 2 walleyes each on average and also caught a few Northern Pike.

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

The fishing season started slowly, as usual. Water temperatures were consistently and typically low, near 36 degrees. Anglers from Grand Marais reported fair fishing for Lake Trout, mostly 16-20 inch fish that were caught from deep water in the 140-200 foot range and generally close to bottom structure. In other areas, anglers saw the same pattern of smaller Lake Trout in deep waters and no Salmon at all, a pattern that is consistent during the early season on the upper North Shore.