

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/2018-su-creel.pdf> . You may also call our office at 218-302-3293 and selecting 1 for the updated fishing report.

Update 10/9/2018:

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 8 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 25 and weekly Summer fishing reports will begin on May 30.

Update 10/4/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

In the past week, most days were at least fishable, despite the weather. However, fishing effort was light. Prior to the recent strong winds the warm water layer was thick, which forced the Lake Trout into deep water. Angler success was decent, especially at Two Harbors, and overall anglers caught 2 fish per trip. Lake Trout had been holding at 140-180 feet down near the bottom, anglers marked large schools of bait, and fish were eating Rainbow Smelt. Current conditions have changed, the surface water temperatures dropped below 60 degrees and the nearshore thermocline at McQuade is now at 66-82 feet which will make the fishing easier for the last weekend of Lake Trout fishing. For bait, meat and brightly colored spoons or flasher/fly rigs work the best. Most of the Lake Trout were 19-23 inches long and size ranged up to 33 inches. Salmon have been scarce lately. Recent rains have muddied the waters of tributaries and probably also the St. Louis Estuary.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Windy weather made for tough fishing this past week. Water surface temperatures cooled into the low 50s, the thick warm water layer has thinned, and Lake Trout are not so consistently hugging the bottom in deep water. Anglers caught almost to 2 fish per trip on average this past week. Anglers at Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais caught good numbers of big Lake Trout in near shore waters from a wide range of depths. Anglers at Silver Bay caught fewer and smaller Lakers than was reported from further up the shore, but the Silver Bay anglers had fair luck with Chinook Salmon in the 3-6 pound class and

also a few Coho Salmon and steelhead. Anglers continued to release small salmon in the 8-14 inch class from most locations. Pink Salmon are running up the tributaries but recent rains clouded the water and the fish are tough to spot. The Temperance River continues to show the most fish and salmon numbers are light elsewhere, except that a few Coho Salmon were caught from the Baptism River as well. Quality of the Pink Salmon varies by stream, for example fish in the Gooseberry River look good whereas fish in the Cross River were degrading.

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 9/27/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Strong winds greatly reduced fishing pressure and managed to push enough warm water toward Duluth that the few Lake Trout that were caught were 200+ feet down, the maximum depth for those downriggers. A few stray Chinook Salmon were as high as 100 feet down. Anglers caught considerably less than 1 fish per trip per angler, so yes it was really tough fishing, which is not the norm for this time of year. Size wise, the Lake Trout ranged from 18-25 inches, and the Chinooks were 16-24 inches long. Glow-in-the-dark spoons and meat should both do well at those depths, if one has enough cable to get there. Surface temperatures started around 63° and ended around 59°-60°. Hopefully some westerly winds will push the warm water out for the last week of the Lake Trout season.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure has been dramatically reduced during this reporting period, mostly due to very poor weather conditions. Lake surface temps have dropped into the low to mid fifty degree range. Like in the Lower Shore, anglers caught less than 1 fish per trip. Lake Trout continue to hold deep, moving in and out of near shore waters, close to classic points and reefs and at times in specific areas. If anglers find where these lake trout are on certain days they can catch numbers of big lake trout. Some of these best known areas are quite a distance from access points and with poor weather conditions, anglers are restrained from travelling very far from safe harbor. While a few salmon are still being caught, most of the Cohos and Chinooks are just 9-15 inches long and are too small to interest anglers very much. A very few larger Chinook salmon were caught. Pink Salmon are now present in large tributaries. So far, numbers of Pinks have been observed as mostly light, with best numbers in the Temperance River. Recent rains have clouded the water making it more difficult to see fish in rivers. Remember, the Lake Trout fishing season ends at the end of October 7.

Update 9/20/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

East winds continued to push warm water into the Lower Shore area this past week, which made for tough boating conditions and continued warm water. Surface temperatures were in the low 60s and the thermocline was at 100-110 feet deep. Fishing effort was light, however the anglers who did get out managed to catch over 1 ½ fish per trip. The Lake Trout were caught at depths of at least 100 feet in deeper water. To catch these fish, meat rigs were most productive,

however a few anglers continued to catch fish on spoons and flasher/fly combos of various colors. The Lakers were mostly 18-23 inches long, and the proportion of siscowet Lakers increased this past week. A few Chinook Salmon were caught at varied depths and no Coho were reported. The Chinook and Coho Salmon will start spawning in a couple of weeks. Few anglers ventured onto the St Louis Estuary.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Very similar to the Lower Shore area, east winds pushed warm water toward shore, forced the Lake Trout deeper into the water column, and probably spread the salmon over a wider range of depths. The surface temperatures were still 59-62 degrees. Angler effort was low, and success dropped to less than 1 fish per angler per trip. Anglers had the best success when they fished deep and close to the bottom. A few salmon were caught but their numbers are dropping. Some smaller 9-13 inch Cohos were caught and anglers sometimes called these fish Pink Salmon and released them. Speaking of which, the Pink Salmon are spawning in the rivers along the North Shore, especially at the Temperance River and with fewer numbers at the Poplar, Cascade, Devil Track, and Brule Rivers. Smaller Tributaries are very low and many are beach blocked, which prevents some of the salmon from swimming upstream.

Update 9/13/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Northeast winds pushed warmer water toward Duluth, which pushed fish deeper than they were last week. Although surface water temperatures remained in the mid 60s, the Lake Trout were 100-140 feet deep or deeper in 110-400 plus feet of water. It's getting late in the season now and angler effort has declined; indeed, no boaters were out from McQuade when I went by on this nice Thursday morning. Knife River saw more action due to the Veterans Fishing event on the 10th; thank you to all those who helped our Veterans get out and do some fishing! This past week the fishing was decent overall, averaging over 1 ½ fish per trip per angler. Anglers caught Lake Trout mostly, plus a few Chinook Salmon. Because most fish were caught from deep water, fish were caught mostly by jigging or trolling using downriggers. Meat rigs seem to be working the best now. Spoons (green or pink) also picked up a few fish as did flasher/fly combos. The average size of Lakers caught increased this week as the winds seemed to bring in more 22-26 inch fish, and anecdotes of some larger fish in the mid-30-inch range also came in. The Chinooks that are still around are relatively small (20-24 inches), and the Cohos are around 20 inches long but nearly nonexistent in the area. A few steelhead and a Brown Trout were also caught. Fishing in the St. Louis Estuary was slow and the Walleyes were undersized.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler effort continued to drop this past week and the dicey weather pushed effort even lower. Overall, anglers caught about 1 fish per angler per trip. Surface waters were still 59-62 degrees and the warm water extended as deep as 120 feet down. Lake Trout continued to stage in near shore waters and are being reported in increasing numbers in deep water and at times adjacent to points and reefs. More larger fish are being caught, especially by those can find fish in specific areas of deep water and who fish with downriggers, by trolling deep with wire line, or by jigging. Smaller fish are becoming scarce, so overall the catch rate was low. Anglers reported catching just a few nice sized Chinook Salmon and almost no Cohos. Some anglers caught and released a few small salmon that were difficult to identify to species. Pink Salmon were sighted in the Temperance River on Thursday, the 12th of September. The Pink Salmon run will probably be small this year, given that few Pinks were caught in the lake so far. The Pinks, or Humpers, were more abundant last year and they tend to have only a good year once in a while.

Update 9/6/2018:**Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:**

Windy and sometimes rainy weather hindered fishing again this past week, and fishing pressure was moderate again. Surface water temperatures were in the mid 60s near Duluth and the low to mid 60s near Two Harbors. Fishing success was slightly better than last week, at an average of 1 1/4 fish per angler per trip. Anglers caught Lake Trout mostly, plus a few Chinook and Coho Salmon. Most of the fish were 65-80 feet down in water that was 90-300 feet deep, or deeper. The same lures and colors patterns worked as well as last week, including spoons in pink/chartreuse two-face and glow-in-the-dark, also some flasher/fly rigs in glow-in-the-dark, especially on cloudy days, and fish also hit stickbaits in pink and chartreuse colors. The Lakers were generally 18 to 22 inches long and a few really nice fish over 36 inches were caught too. The Chinooks were mostly 22-24 inches long and the Cohos were 20-22 inches long, so not a big difference in size. Possibly the bigger Chinooks and the Cohos are beginning to move toward the spawning areas on the South Shore or toward Ontario. Near Two Harbors, jigging near the bottom worked well for Lake Trout. In the Saint Louis Estuary, a mayfly hatch seemed to be keeping the fish well-fed.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Weather was unstable this past week, which will become more of the norm as the season changes and folks will be keeping a lookout for quickly changing conditions. Angler pressure was moderate from the Hovland, Grand Marais, Taconite Harbor, and Silver Bay accesses and light from Twin Points. Overall, anglers caught a little over a fish per angler per trip. Surface waters were still 59-64 degrees along the upper shore despite some strong winds at times. Anglers at Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais are noticing larger Lake Trout staging in deep waters of 100-200 feet near shore off the first breaks and the fish move in and out of these areas from day to day. The bigger fish are running 5-15 pounds, and one over 20 pounds was caught too. Otherwise, some anglers targeted smaller Lakers in the 1-3 pound range in fairly shallow water, sometimes even visible on the bottom, which is ordinarily uncommon for this late in the year. The numbers of salmon continued to decline, especially the 20 inch Cohos, but a few nice 3-8 pound Chinooks were caught. The survey clerk has yet to see any Pink Salmon, the fish he has seen were mostly 10-15 inch Chinooks. Catches of these smaller fish are picking up. What has not increased is the steelhead catch, which has been slow all summer.

Update 8/29/2018:**Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:**

Windy weather hindered fishing this past week, and fishing pressure was moderate when anglers could get out. Surface water temperatures were in the mid to upper 60s near Duluth and the low to mid 60s near Two Harbors. Fishing success declined again this past week, down to an average of a fish per angler per trip, which is somewhat unexpectedly slow for this time of year. Anglers caught Lake Trout mostly, plus a few Chinook Salmon and Walleye, but no Coho Salmon were reported. Most of the fish were 40-80 ft down in water at least 80 feet deep, and often much deeper. Spoons worked well, with an array of colors catching fish: pink/chartreuse two-face, glow-in-the-dark, and green/gold. Some fish were hitting flasher/fly rigs as well. Hot-colored (pink, chartreuse) stickbaits were also taking some Lake Trout and Chinooks. Most of the Lake Trout were leans, but fish caught from deeper water were sometimes the fat or siscowet variety.

The Lakers were generally a little smaller than last week, 16 to 22 inches long, with a few 29-30 inch fish too. Anglers caught a few Chinooks that were 23-25 inches long and big ones around 28 inches. Farther from Duluth, trolling was less effective. In the Saint Louis Estuary, fishing was as slow as summer fishing usually is.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Weather was poor this past week with a mix of conditions limiting anglers and boating on the lake. As a result, angler pressure was low. However, the surface waters were still 58-64 degrees along the upper shore. Anglers in the Silver Bay area noted that while surface temps were warm, water as cold as 40 degrees could be found only 10 feet below the surface and these conditions may have contributed to slow fishing. Further up the shore, water temps from Taconite Harbor to Grand Marais were reportedly warmer deeper into the water column and fishing for salmon seemed to be more productive this past week. Lake Trout fishing was fairly slow throughout the upper shore with lakers widely scattered and not showing anglers reliable patterns to target. Anglers caught more siscowet type Lake Trout recently. A few 20-25 inch steelhead were reported from Tac Harbor and Grand Marais. Cohos averaged 20 inches long and close to three pounds and Chinooks varied from little 10 inchers to hefty fish up to 8 pounds, although most fish were 2-4 pounds. No pink salmon have been observed in the summer catch and so far in the tributaries none have been heard of, though it is still early and the rivers are very warm.

Update 8/23/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Weatherwise the area has been typically inconsistent for a while now, except there's been no consistently strong west winds to push the warm water away from the west end. Surface water temperatures from Duluth to McQuade were in the upper 60s and even around Two Harbors it was in the mid 60s. Fishing picked up this past week and anglers caught 1.5 fish per trip on average. Most of the Lake Trout were leans, but the proportion of siscowets increased from last week. The Lakers were generally 16 to 24 inches long plus a few more memorable 30 inch plus fish, as usual. The fish were mostly 60-80 feet down over at least 110 feet of water, like the previous weeks, however a few fish were caught in 40-60 feet depths over 90 feet of water. The fish hit green, purple, pink, and orange spoons and flasher/fly combos, and fishing with meat rigs was successful too. Up towards Two Harbors, Lakers seem to be staging in deep water near spawning reefs, leading to better success from jigging than trolling. Near Duluth, anglers caught a few Chinooks that were 23-24 inches long and big ones up to 30 inches, always a treat to catch one or two of those. A few Coho Salmon were caught, mostly 18-21 inches long and a couple of 7-10 inchers too. The Saint Louis Estuary produced just a few fish this past week, though the variety was interesting and the catch included more Sheepshead or Freshwater Drum.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Warm weather brought warm water throughout the area, generally in the low 60s. The wind blew on Thursday, which might mix up the current fishing patterns and water temperature patterns. Overall, anglers caught a little more than a fish per trip on average, slightly more than last week and hopefully an indicator of better fishing ahead. Angler pressure was mostly moderate but heavy when the weather was nice. Fair numbers of Lake Trout were caught from most areas and from differing depths and locations. Grand Marais area anglers targeted Lake Trout in 2 separate habitats, catching larger Lake Trout far off shore in the top 100 feet over deep water, and catching smaller Lakers in shallow waters very close to shore. Along with these specialized techniques, anglers also caught more

bigger fish throughout the water column. Anglers targeted salmon to catch some of those bigger Chinooks in the 3-7 pound range but caught fewer Cohos than in previous weeks. Anglers did best in the early morning hours, often at depths of 30-90 feet below the surface in nearshore waters. The Pink Salmon bite has not yet begun and though a few smaller salmon were reported, the little ones the clerk saw were 10-15 inch Cohos and Chinooks. The steelhead bite is still minimal.

Update 8/16/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Warmer water prevailed near Duluth again this past week and the fishing conditions were similar to the week before also. Surface water temperatures near Duluth were in the mid to upper 60s, near McQuade it was in the mid 60s, and near Two Harbors it was in the low 50s. The temperatures did fluctuate some with the wind, however, and the Northeast winds kept smaller boats off the lake. The recent winds may bring some cooler water; a few fish were caught in the 40-60 feet range very recently. Overall, anglers caught a fish per trip on average. The variety was lower though, nearly all Lake Trout and almost no Cohos, Chinooks, Brown Trout, or Walleyes. Anglers near Duluth caught fish 60-80 feet down over at least 110 feet of water. Spoons were working well again, with an array of colors catching fish: pink/chartreuse two-face, glow-in-the-dark, and Monkey Puke (green/gold). Some fish were hitting flasher/fly rigs with green, and meat rigs are starting to catch fish. Smaller fish in the DNR's juvenile assessment were eating smaller Rainbow Smelt. The Lake Trout were 17-22 inches long on average and some 30 inch fish were caught. More siscowets are being caught now as more anglers troll or jig near the bottom. Anglers caught a few Chinooks that were 23-25 inches long. Fishing in the Saint Louis Estuary was low and slow again this past week. Those who fish in the Estuary during summer are sometimes treated to a variety of fish, including Channel Catfish, Yellow Perch, Rock Bass, Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass, and Sheepshead or Freshwater Drum.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Variable weather conditions produced variable water conditions this past week, resulting in inconsistent fishing. Overall, anglers caught less than a fish per trip on average, which is slow for the upper shore area. Angler pressure remains moderate but dropped slightly in the past week. Surface water temperatures were well over 60 degrees in spots at times, including the high 60s at Silver Bay. The warm water extends well down into the water column. The result of the temperature changes are that fishing is better near the surface when water temperatures are cooler near the surface. However, smaller Lake Trout catches were more often caught in deep water or sometimes shallow and very near shore, again it depends on the weather and water temperatures for that day. Larger fish were caught suspended over deep water and quite a distance from shore, especially from the Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor accesses. Anglers continued to catch Coho Salmon throughout the area but the numbers seem to be declining overall. Anglers caught a few Chinook Salmon, mostly in the 2-4 pound range but also a few that were 7-14 pounds. Similar to the lower shore area, very few steelhead were caught this past week.

Update 8/9/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Weather was somewhat variable this past week, but anglers managed to get out onto the lake at times. Activity was high from the Waterfront Plaza charters, moderate at Two Harbors, and light elsewhere. Overall, anglers caught a little over 1 fish per trip. Surface water temperatures near Duluth were in the mid to upper 60s and surface temps farther North were in the mid 60s near McQuade and low 50s near Two Harbors. Anglers near Duluth caught fish 60-80 feet down over at least 110 feet of water. Spoons were working well, with an array of colors catching fish: pink/chartreuse two-face, glow-in-the-dark, gold/purple, and green. Some fish were hitting flasher/fly rigs, green was a good color, while the meat bite hadn't really taken off yet. Fish stomachs often contained baitfish remains. The Lake Trout were 17-22 inches long on average and some 30 inch fish, even a 40 incher, were caught too. Although most of the fish were leans, a few were the siscowet or fat variety. Anglers picked up a few Chinook Salmon, Brown Trout, and even Walleyes once in a while. The Chinooks ranged widely in size from 22 to 30 inches, the Brown Trout were 17-26 inches, and Walleyes were 20-30 inches long. Closer to Two Harbors, anglers caught Lake Trout while trolling near the bottom and Lake Trout and Coho Salmon in the top 40 feet in 52-53 degree water. The fish appear to be relating to schools of baitfish. For shore fishing, a few anglers manage to catch a fish or two, including a Northern Pike at McQuade. Fishing in the Saint Louis Estuary was low and slow again this past week and most of the Walleyes were less than the 15 inch minimum length limit.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Weather was influential again this week, with fog, wind, and some surprise thunderstorms affecting when anglers got out, especially on the weekend. Water surface temperatures stabilized in the 53-56 degree range, considerably warmer than the previous week. Overall, angler pressure was a bit lower than usual due to the weather and anglers only caught about 1 fish per trip. The Lake Trout continue to be scattered and tough to pattern from day to day. Sometimes the fish were shallow, sometimes not, and probably fewer fish will be caught in shallower water as the water warms up. Lakers varied considerably in size, mostly from 1 to 15 pounds. Coho Salmon continue to be fairly evenly distributed, although very recently fewer Cohos were caught near Grand Marais and northward. Anglers caught salmon farther from the water surface than usual, in 40-70 feet depths for Cohos and even deeper for Chinooks. The Chinooks are fairly sparse, however one never knows when a big one will hit, including the 18 pounder that ended up winning the Fisherman's Picnic fishing contest in Grand Marais this past weekend. Most Chinooks have been 2-7 pounds.

Update 8/2/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Strong East winds on Wednesday pushed warmer water back towards Duluth, compared to cooler water in the previous week due to westerly winds. Fishing effort picked up a bit this past week when anglers could get out. The water temperatures were cooler near shore until Wednesday, in the mid 40s to mid 50s. Lake Trout fishing was decent near Two Harbors, with anglers netting about a fish per trip per angler. The Lakers were 16-25 inches long with a few in the 30 inch range. Walleyes continue to bite along the west end near Duluth. Coho Salmon were caught from Two Harbors and north, generally near the surface over deeper cool water. The fish are pushing 20 inches in length. A few Chinooks were caught this past week also, more toward Duluth. The fish were generally 23-26 inches long with a couple up to 30 inches or so. Overall, although some fish were still caught in the top 30 feet of the surface, more anglers had success at 90-150 feet in deeper water of at least 180 feet. Most were caught while trolling a wide variety of colors of spoons such as gold, Monkey Puke, purple, two-face pink, and chartreuse. Anglers also occasionally picked up a fish or two on stickbaits and now also some cut bait or meat, and anglers are having some success with jigging

too, as well as some luck with downriggers fished near the bottom. Anglers who fished off the breakwall at Two Harbors also picked up an occasional Lake Trout while casting. In the St Louis Estuary, Walleye fishing effort and success were slow and anglers caught white perch too.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Weather changes affected anglers as it did in the lower shore area, with cold temperatures near the shore until the recent east winds pushed warmer water back towards shore, which should improve fishing success this next week. Angler pressure was moderate to heavy at most places except Horseshoe Bay, where effort was low. Overall, anglers caught 1 fish per angler per trip. Lake Trout catches varied, probably because anglers are pursuing salmon more of the time so they are spending more time trolling near the surface with smaller spoons and flasher/fly combinations. The Lake Trout were generally 2 to 7 pounds, but a 27 pounder was caught near Grand Marais. Folks who fished deep for Lake Trout generally had decent success. Anglers from all stations had decent catches of Coho salmon that were 18 to 20 inches long and weighed up to 3 pounds. Anglers caught few Chinook Salmon and the fish were generally 3-5 pounds. Combined, overall anglers caught more salmon than Lake Trout. A few steelhead also managed to grab some lures throughout the upper shore area this past week.

Update 7/26/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Overall, warmer and less turbulent weather resulted in better fishing conditions this past week. Fishing pressure has increased for chartered trips near Duluth, otherwise effort was low from Duluth to McQuade and moderate at Knife River and Two Harbors. Water temperatures were 60 or warmer up to Two Harbors and in the 50s up to Gooseberry River. Lake Trout fishing was good near Two Harbors, with anglers netting over 1.5 fish per trip. Success was lower near McQuade and Duluth. The fish were 19-24 inches long with a few up to 34 inches. A substantial number of Walleyes are biting along the beach near Duluth and the fish are generally 20-28.5 inches long. This Walleye bite has helped increase the Charter catches near Duluth. Coho Salmon are now nearly non-existent in the lower shore area and Chinook Salmon are caught infrequently; the Chinooks are 22-24 inches long, or 4-6 pounds. Most fish were caught higher in the water column, 20 to 50 feet down and suspended over deep water. Colorful spoons are catching more fish now. Shore fishing was slow again this past week. In the St Louis Estuary, Walleye fishing was slow, the water is muddy, and anglers are doing better when fishing out in Lake Superior.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Anglers experienced improved fishing while surface waters have continued to warm. As a result, effort was moderate and increasing at all stations. Temperatures varied due to fluctuating winds, resulting in temperatures from near 50 degrees up to above 60 degrees in places throughout the upper shore area. For example, on Thursday morning water temps were in the low to mid 40s from Grand Marais, down 10 degrees from the previous day. Anglers from all stations had fair to good catches of Coho salmon that were 16 to 18 inches long and weighed 1.5 to 2.5 pounds. In addition to the usual catches within 40 feet of the surface, anglers also caught fair numbers of salmon from deeper water down to 120 feet. Chinook catches were really low, though anglers did net a few 5-10 pounders near Silver Bay and Taconite Harbor. A few steelhead of various sizes were caught throughout the area, and anglers kept a few smaller steelhead they thought were Coho Salmon. Remember to update your fish ID skills. Lake Trout catches were inconsistent from all stations. Grand Marais anglers caught fair numbers of Lakers far from shore with a few Lakers in the mid teens pound range. This off shore bite is inconsistent though and fish can be tough to target in the expanse. Anglers from all stations have reported that catches of deep and shallow Lake Trout varies daily with no real patterns emerging.

At the Silver Bay Salmon Classic Tournament, anglers weighed in many Cohos and few Chinooks and the Laker catch was relatively low compared to previous years. The Silver Bay fishing contest produced these results.

	CHS	COS	LAT
1.	9.28	2.74	19.19
2.	7.63	2.65	18.58
3.	6.53	2.46	16.80
4.	5.04	2.44	15.93
5.	4.32	2.44	15.92

Update 7/19/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

The weather was more conducive to fishing this past week, but persistent muddy water from recent rains hampered fishing success. Water temperatures varied from 38 degrees to over 60 degrees, depending on the day and location. Now, warmer water has moved into the Two Harbors area. The salmon seem to have migrated out of the area, as few were caught anywhere in the lower shore area. As in the past weeks, anglers had to contend with muddy water near Duluth and many responded by moving northward. Effort was greatest at Two Harbors, including over dozens of boats at times. Some anglers also moved far offshore to find decent temperatures, possibly a temperature break, and clear water. Many fish were still caught in the upper 30 feet of water with brightly colored spoons and stickbaits, also some flasher fly combinations, and also now some Lake Trout have been caught in deeper water from 90 to 150 feet. The Lake Trout were still mostly 18-25 inches long. Chinook Salmon were caught sporadically and some of these fish weighed over 5 pounds. Shore fishing has been slow to nonexistent in the lake. Walleye fishing in the Saint Louis Estuary was decent, but most of the fish were just under the 15 inch minimum limit.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water temperatures were looking up this past week, reaching close to 50 degrees in spots, but recent southwest winds pushed temperatures back to the cooler side, low 40s down to upper 30s. Effort has still increased in the upper shore area as anglers hear the news about Cohos. Most of the Cohos are smaller, 15-18 inches. A few Chinook Salmon were also caught, mostly 3-7 pounds each. The Lake Trout fishing was slow, possibly because anglers are targeting the Cohos which are near the surface and not down below 100 feet. The Lake Trout were 18-24 inches long. If you plan to travel to Silver Bay, the Salmon Classic tournament is on this weekend so the access will be busy until late in the weekend.

Update 7/12/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

More rain, more wind, interspersed with nice weather, that was the pattern this past week. Early this past week some stronger west winds pushed the muddy water to the East, resulting in clearer water near Duluth and warmer water farther up the shore. Folks took advantage of the nice days and shied away from the rain and wind even on days when the weather turned out to be okay. Water temperatures warmed into the low 50s near Two Harbors, especially farther from

shore. Anglers found their best luck along temperature breaks between 48 and 54 degrees. The fish have been surface-oriented, within the top 30 feet and shallower, and anglers caught fish on longlines and dipsey divers with bright-colored stickbaits, and sometimes a spoon or a flasher and fly combination. However, the general clearing up in water clarity will probably result in more Lake Trout on the bottom, and downriggers will become more effective for Lakers. Fishing success was low overall this past week, averaging just a half a fish per trip per angler. The Lake Trout were generally 19 to 24 inches long. Coho Salmon catches are fairly low, especially near Duluth, as the fish move northward with the warmer water, but the fish are averaging 18 inches apiece. Fishing in the St. Louis Estuary is still slow, but boating is picking up especially during festivals at the Bayfront and on calm, sunny days.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Like the lower shore area, weather conditions varied and so did angler pressure. Overall more anglers are getting out now. The clerk talked to several folks who were going to fish in the area this next week. The water is warming into the high 30s and low 40s and even close to 50 degrees in pockets near Silver Bay and Twin Points. Catch rates were about a fish per angler per trip overall. Most fish, especially near Grand Marais and Tofte, are in deep water, however anglers started to catch fish in shallower water and near the surface. Larger Lakers were caught this past week also, up to 13 pounds. Steelhead showed up on the ends of trollers' lines at times too, from Silver Bay and Grand Marais. Salmon should be on their way to the area soon as the water warms, maybe just in time for the Salmon Classic on July 21 and 22.

Update 7/5/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

The weather was hit or miss this week. Sunday and Wednesday brought light to heavy rains which kept many anglers away from the lake. Wednesday, July 4th, was actually decent in the afternoon but folks had other plans by then. We just keep getting East winds, which has held temperatures down from Two Harbors North. Water temperatures were sometimes in the 60s in the dirty water near Duluth and only in the mid 40s near Two Harbors. Anglers found their best luck along the mudline, between 48 and 54 degrees. The mudline extended from Duluth to Stoney Point, but now the westerly winds have clouded most of the water near Duluth. Fishing pressure is shifting northward as a result. The fish remain surface-oriented, within the top 30 feet and sometimes within the top 6 feet. Fishing success averaged about ¾ of a fish per trip per angler overall. The Lake Trout were generally 18 to 24 inches long and a couple over 26 inches long, including a 20 pounder that is exciting just to hear about. Coho Salmon catches are fairly low, though one fellow did limit out, and the fish are averaging about 18 inches long. A few 6 pound Chinook or King Salmon were caught as well as some little ones. Be careful with your fish identification, the steelheads are easily mistaken for salmon. Ask the clerk for a fish ID card when you see him next time. Anglers continue to catch fish on longlines and dipsey divers with bright-colored stickbaits, but now sometimes a spoon or a flasher and fly combination. Green is also becoming a productive color. The clerk didn't seem much action in the St. Louis Estuary this past week, due to an overlap of the schedule with bad weather.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light again this week, partly due to fog and wind and rain and combinations of conditions that just aren't helpful for anglers. The water remains below 40 degrees throughout the area. Anglers continue to experiment with shallower water or near the surface, with limited success. Most fish are caught in the 120-170 foot depth range while trolling near bottom structure, but anglers also picked up fish a little shallower. Some anglers near Silver Bay and Twin Points are venturing way out into the lake and finding warm temperature breaks and can catch a few fish. Calmer, clearer weather would help more anglers

get out that far. For what it's worth, maybe some more westerly winds will blow warmer water into the area and with it some salmon. The Silver Bay Salmon Classic is only a couple of weeks away. Regarding the tributaries along the North Shore, rains have resulted in muddy and high water which is not conducive for trout fishing.

Update 6/28/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Weather was more amenable to fishing on the big lake this past week. Effort is moderate to heavy from the Waterfront Plaza to Agate Bay in Two Harbors. McQuade Harbor was especially busy over the weekend. Water temperatures were consistently in the high 50s in the dirty water near Duluth and about 40 degrees near Two Harbors. Fishing success ranged from 1 to almost 2 fish per trip per angler at various locations. The Lake Trout were generally 18 to 22 inches long with a few fish up to 12 to 13 pounds. The Coho Salmon are growing and are now about 18 to 19 inches long. Few Chinook Salmon have been caught. Anglers should double-check their fish ID skills, some steelhead are being harvested illegally, probably because they resemble Cohos. The fishing pattern from past weeks persists, with most fish being caught in the top 30 feet of water on orange, purple, and pink stickbaits, and anglers are fishing the temperature break of 48 to 52 degrees or so. A lot of the fish are eating terrestrial insects, and anglers near Knife River have been successful with stickbaits near the surface. Farther north, the Lake Trout are in deeper water and anglers picked up a few Cohos also. Shore fishing is really slow now along the lakeshore. In the St. Louis Estuary, anglers are catching mostly smaller Walleye but recently are also catching a few 15 to 18 inch keepers.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light again this week but is picking up, probably as anglers anticipate the arrival of warmer water. It isn't happening yet, the water remains below 40 degrees throughout the area. Anglers are experimenting with shallower water or near the surface, without much success. Most fish are caught in the 140-200 foot depth range while trolling near bottom structure. Most of the fish were 16-20 inch Lake Trout with an occasional 10 pounder caught just a little shallower. Salmon are once again pretty much absent from the area. A few anglers picked up 5 pound Lake Trout near river mouths also. Hopefully the warmer air temperatures can nudge the water temperatures up soon.

Update 6/21/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Combination of wind and wet weather conspired to reduce fishing effort this past week and especially over the weekend. The heavy rains yielded lots of silt in the Estuary and out into the lake a ways. The storms also pushed lots of logs and other floating debris into the estuary and the lake, making navigation hazardous at times. Some boaters were also affected on Sunday when an ore boat got stuck near the lift bridge. Water temperatures were in the mid 50s near Duluth and almost 40 near Two Harbors again this week. The temperature break seems to be between Lester River and McQuade Harbor. Fishing success varied more widely this past week, ranging from 1/3 to 2 fish per trip per angler, depending on the location. The Lake Trout were generally 20 to 25 inches long, the Coho Salmon were about 16 inches long, and anglers also caught a few Steelhead that were 18-22 inches long and also just a few bigger Chinook Salmon. The Chinook, or King, Salmon will probably be caught on the edge of the silt plume or mud-lines. Most fish were caught in the top 30 feet of water on the same

bright-colored stickbaits as before, such as orange, purple, and pink, but fishing is more offshore now and in water that is closer to 50 degrees. Farther north, the Lake Trout are in deeper water. Near Two Harbors, the few Lake Trout that anglers did manage to catch were in 150-200 feet of water. In the St. Louis Estuary, the rain, weather, and other events shut down the Walleye fishing. The murky water warmed into the low 60s.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was very light due to poor weather conditions over this past weekend with rain, fog and thunderstorms. The water is still cold, running between 35 and 38 degrees on average. Anglers near Grand Marais caught Lake Trout in 100-200 feet of water near bottom structure. Anglers near Taconite Harbor caught over 2 fish per angler per trip. The Lake Trout were average size. Salmon have yet to make their appearance in the upper shore area. Tributaries in the southern end of this area, down to Tofte, received quite a bit of water due to the weekend rains, not so much in the northern tributaries.

Update 6/14/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Weather conditions started to switch to more westerly warmer winds which pushed the warm surface water out of Duluth, however more strong East/Northeast winds pushed the warm water back towards Duluth. Most of the fishing pressure is still near Duluth. Angler pressure from the McQuade Harbor access has increased in just the past couple of days due to calmer morning weather. So, fishing conditions have not changed much from previous weeks. Water temperatures were in the low 50s near Duluth and almost 40 near Two Harbors. Fishing was a bit slower than last week, from one to two fish per trip per angler on average, and considerably lower near Two Harbors. The Lake Trout were generally 21 to 26 inches long, a few bigger Chinook Salmon (also called King Salmon) were caught, and some boats caught several Coho Salmon (also called Silver Salmon). The Cohos grew into the 16-19 inch size class range. A few anglers also caught Steelhead while targeting Salmon and suspended Lake Trout. Anglers are still working the edge of the sediment plume from the Lester River to the North. Cohos are beginning to eat bugs from the surface. Most fish were caught in the top 20 feet of water on bright-colored stickbaits in various colors including orange, purple, pink, and Watermelon. Near Two Harbors, a few anglers are catching Lakers in 150-200 feet of water, suspended 80-90 feet down. In the St. Louis Estuary, anglers again caught a decent number of smaller Walleyes. For this weekend, be aware that a Walleye tournament is occurring in the Bay, and Grandma's Marathon races are this weekend and traffic will be congested, especially on Saturday.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

This past week was somewhat of a repeat from previous weeks, with poor fishing conditions due to gusting winds and periods of rain. The water is still cold, below 40 degrees. Catches may have declined slightly from the previous week. Anglers near Twin Points caught Lake Trout in 150-200 feet of water along with a bit of success now at 90 feet deep. Anglers near other areas caught Lakers mostly in 160-220 feet of water. The Lake Trout were generally 17-22 inches long. Anglers caught a few 10 inch Brook Trout from shore in the Grand Marais harbor, and some anglers caught a few Lakers in the warmer river water at the mouths of tributaries. In the tributaries, water temperatures exceeded 60 degrees at times and some of the small tributaries are quite low or even blocked at the outflow. If you are traveling to the area from the South, be aware that traffic through Duluth will be slow due to Grandma's Marathon races on Saturday morning.

Update 6/7/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Windy and wet weather suppressed fishing somewhat in the lower shore area this past week. However, pressure was relatively low even during decent weather. Winds continued to push warm water toward the west end of the lake. Water temperatures were in the mid 50s near Duluth and near 40 near Two Harbors. Anglers caught fish at a decent clip, well over a fish per trip per angler on average. The Lake Trout were generally 20 to 26 inches long, a few big 5 pound Chinook Salmon were caught, and some boats caught several Cohos each. The Cohos were around 16 inches long. Many anglers fished along the sediment plume, especially along the Minnesota-Wisconsin state line. Steelhead continue to attack anglers' lures here and there too. Most fish were caught in the top 30 feet of water on bright-colored stickbaits in various colors including orange, purple, pink, and Wonderbread. Although the fish are eating Rainbow Smelt, anglers aren't catching fish on Smelt this time of year. Presumably the successful anglers a bit farther up the shore, near Two Harbors, fished for Lake Trout in 120 feet or so of water. Some shoreline anglers caught 18-20 inch Rainbow Trout but few anglers are fishing the lower shore tributaries. A few anglers caught 28-30 inch Walleyes in the lake. In the St. Louis Estuary anglers caught a decent number of Walleyes, which were mostly below 15 inches and too small to keep legally.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Anglers experienced some poor fishing conditions, with strong winds a common event this past week. Water temperatures remained cold, not reaching 40 degrees. The Lake Trout appear to be hanging out in their usual places this time of year, which is near the bottom in 150-200 feet of water. Anglers from Taconite Harbor reported fair fishing for Lake Trout near the bottom in over 150 feet of water. Overall, anglers caught about nearly two fish per trip per angler. In the tributaries, recent rain has raised the water levels and anglers reported fair action for steelhead.

Update 5/31/2018:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Despite the late Spring, some decent weather in May allowed small boaters and charter captains to get out and catch some fish well before the Memorial Day weekend. Many anglers capitalized on a good bite of 20-27 inch Lake Trout and smallish 15-17 inch Coho Salmon into late May. Someone even caught a 24" Lake Whitefish. The early fishing was aided by abundant Rainbow Smelt, as was mentioned in the Spring fishing report a week or so ago. Recent easterly winds has pushed warm water into the Duluth area and the water temperatures rose into the mid 50s. Anglers responded to warmer water by moving farther from Duluth. After some recent rain many anglers fished along the sediment plume which pushed north of the Lester River. Conversely, the water was only about 38 degrees near Two Harbors. Cooler Northeast winds reduced fishing pressure during the midweek. Fishing pressure was light to moderate throughout the Lower Shore. Anglers caught moderate numbers of Lake Trout, some smaller Coho Salmon, and infrequently a Chinook Salmon. Anglers caught a few Steelhead also. Any unclipped Rainbow Trout must be released immediately. Most of the Lakers were 20-27 inches long, with a few larger fish including reports of a 34 pounder! Some of the Lakers were caught near the mouths of rivers. Most fish were caught in the top 20 feet of water, where water is warmer, on bright-colored stickbaits in various colors including orange, purple, pink, and mixed colors. Shoreline anglers, especially at McQuade Safe Harbor Access, caught Rainbow Trout and Brook Trout. In the St. Louis Estuary anglers caught Walleyes that were below the 15" minimum length limit.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

The fishing season started slowly, as usual. Anglers experienced some fair weather conditions mixed with fog and threatening weather. Water temperatures were consistently and typically low, in the 34-38 degree range. Anglers from Grand Marais reported fair fishing for Lake Trout, mostly 18-22 inch fish that were caught near the bottom in 150-200 feet of water. 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. The Lake Trout fed heavily on Rainbow Smelt and sometimes also on Alewives. Some anglers also caught Lake Trout at the mouths of rivers such as Poplar, Cascade, and Devil Track Rivers. Within the tributaries themselves, anglers reported fair action for steelhead. Stream water levels fluctuated as dry weather was replaced with rains recently.