

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/2019-su-creel.pdf> . You may also call our office at 218-302-3293 and selecting 1 for the updated fishing report.

Update 10/10/2019:

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 7 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 23 and weekly Summer fishing reports will begin on May 28. If you would like to see any of the past weeks reports, go to the Minnesota DNR's Lake Superior office website and click on Updates for Lake Superior fishing reports and then choose the summer report.

Update 10/3/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Small craft advisories seemed to be the theme this past week, which puts a damper on fishing on the big lake. The water profile was not conducive for fishing for most of September, with temperatures in the low 50s down to 100 plus feet. On average this past week, anglers caught a fish per trip, and a few folks had really good trips. The distribution for fall spawners is changing now as Lake Trout move shallow and salmon migrate into streams to spawn. The Siscowet variety of Lake Trout have moved into shallower areas as well and anglers are catching them regularly. Trolling 40-90 feet down or on the bottom picked up some Lakers near Duluth, whereas deep trolling and jigging produced fish throughout the lower shore area. Green on spoons and flasher/fly rigs still caught fish while trolling, and glow-in-the-dark and white worked for deeper fishing. Meat fishing with smelt or herring has worked well lately for some anglers. The Lakers were generally 18-25 inches long and a couple were in the 29-31 inch range. In the Saint Louis River Estuary, musky anglers caught a few fish this past week.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Poor weather dominated again this past week and the east winds kept pushing warm water towards shore and anglers off the water. The water temperatures were in the low 50s. Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor anglers caught more larger Lake Trout in near shore waters. These fish are greatly scattered through the deep water just off the first drops and the best catches were 70-160 feet below the surface. The fish were mostly over four pounds and ranged up to fifteen

pounds. A few anglers caught smaller Chinook Salmon in the 18-22 inch range throughout the upper shore area. Shore fishing was still slow, probably due to lack of cooler water within casting distance. The tributaries are running high and muddy and seeing spawning salmon is challenging. The Pink Salmon were still present in tributaries, however spent carcasses washed up on nearby beaches and the Pink Salmon spawning run is nearly over.

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, and Brown Trout. Late-season fishing is best in shallower water closer to shore. If you catch fish after this weekend, be sure to immediately release all unclipped Rainbow Trout, or steelhead. Be sure to review the Minnesota DNR's fishing regulation booklet for other restrictions as well.

Update 9/26/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

The Lake Superior Lake Trout season will be coming to an end soon, which means that some Lake Trout are moving towards shore. It appears that the siscowet variety of Lake Trout are also moving in and hitting what anglers are offering. Overall, anglers caught a little over a fish per trip on average this past week. A few fish were still being caught in that same depth of 30-50 feet down on stickbaits and the surface temperatures were in the mid 50s for much of the week, and the temp loggers near McQuade show low 50s. Trolling 70-90 feet down also resulted in a few Chinook and Coho Salmon, and trolling on the bottom in 100-200 feet of water, especially farther from Duluth, was successful for Lake Trout for some folks. Orange seemed to be a good color this past week. The Lake Trout were generally 18-25 inches long and a few were up to 28 inches, the Chinooks were generally 22-27 inches long, and the Cohos were 19-21 inches. Very few folks wandered into the Saint Louis River Estuary this past week to fish.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Poor weather held back fishing effort this past week. The onshore winds continued to keep the nearshore water in the low to mid 50s. This warmer water seems to have delayed the Lake Trout migration toward shore. Shore anglers have found few fish near shore. The Lakers are holding over deep water, especially near Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor, and bigger fish in the 4-7 pound range are being caught. Chinook and Coho catches continue to dwindle and most of the fish are smaller Chinooks in the 16-20 inch range. Pink Salmon are in the upper shore tributaries, especially in the larger rivers. Although it's hard to spot the fish, the numbers appear to be light to moderate at best. Water temps in the tributaries are warm, in the mid 60s range.

Update 9/19/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Seems to be a trend, windy and stormy weather reduced overall fishing pressure this past week. Anglers caught a bit more than a fish per trip on average. A few fish were still being caught in that same depth of 30-50 feet down on stickbaits as surface temps were in the high-40s much of the week. The surface temps are in the low 50s now, down to about 60 feet. Folks also caught Lake Trout while trolling in 140-200 feet of water. Some of the deeper fish were the Siscowet variety. Green and glow-in-the-dark are still good colors for spoons and flasher/fly rigs. The Lakers averaged 18-25 inches long with a couple in the 31 inch range,

the Chinook Salmon were 21-23 inches, and the Cohos were 21-22 inches. Folks are picking up a Walleye here and there too. Fishing was pretty quiet in the estuary this past week. Brown Trout, Cohos, and Pink Salmon are in the tributaries now, which might offer an alternative to lake fishing this time of year.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Poor weather suppressed fishing again this past week, and the weather variety also included fog. Recent weather and wind has pushed warmer water into near shore areas with surface water temps fairly steady at 49-52 degrees. Earlier this past week the salmon bite declined and the Lake Trout were not yet biting near shore. Lately, especially at Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais, the Lakers were moving in and starting to bite, including some fish in the 4 to 10 pound range. The fish were scattered through the water column including being suspended close to the surface. Shore anglers near Grand Marais caught a few nice Lakers as fish begin to move closer to shore. Boat anglers near Grand Marais caught a few steelhead too. Although salmon catches declined, some anglers did manage to catch fair numbers of Chinook Salmon in the 3-7 range. Coho catches continued to decline as the season progresses. Pink Salmon were present in all of the large tributaries and some anglers have been getting after them. With recent rains raising river levels it is difficult to see the Pinks in the turbid and high tributaries and it's hard to know if strong numbers are present. From past reports we do know the fish are larger than average.

Update 9/12/2019:**Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:**

Several days of East and Northwest winds reduced overall fishing pressure this week, but anglers did get out there when the weather allowed. Anglers caught a bit less than a fish per trip on average. A few fish were still being caught 30-50 feet down on stickbaits as surface temps were in the high-40s much of the week. Folks caught Lake Trout, as well as a few Chinook and Coho Salmon, while trolling 40-90 feet down or on the bottom, whereas those who trolled near the bottom in 140-200 feet of water did well for Lake Trout. Anglers who trolled on the sand near Duluth caught Walleyes as well. Green is still a good color for spoons and flasher/fly rigs, although glow-in-the-dark and white (wonderbread) fooled a few fish this week also. Lake Trout averaged 18-25 inches long with a couple in the 28-30 inch range. Measured chinooks were 22-24 inches, and the Cohos were 12-22 inches and as heavy as 3 lb. Fishing pressure in the estuary remains low, and anglers released a couple Muskellunge.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Poor weather suppressed fishing this past week, which is usual for the stormy fall season. Angler pressure is decreasing along the upper shore as anglers transition to their next sport season or activity. Water temperatures remained chilly with average surface temps ranging through the low to mid 40s. Charter captains and experienced anglers from Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais have observed that Lake Trout are not yet in their usual fall locations and are hard to find. The usual spots for adult Lake Trout at this time is in deep water near to shoreline-oriented structure. Despite the lack of Lakers, anglers continue to catch Coho Salmon so late in the season along with the usual decent catches of Chinook Salmon, especially from Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais. Cohos have averaged 19-22 inches and Chinooks were 20-27 inches long. Pink salmon have entered upper shore tributaries, but high water has hindered anglers' abilities to see the fish, and more rain on the way certainly won't help.

Update 9/5/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing pressure has begun to wane with the passing of Labor Day, and last week's strong westerly winds resulted in water surface temperatures around 40 degrees, warming only to 49-53 degrees by Wednesday. The bite was slow as well, less than a fish per angler trip. The cool weather scattered fish throughout the water column and trolling 40-90 feet down or on the bottom picked up some Lake Trout as well as a few Chinook and Coho Salmon, while trolling near the bottom in 140-200 feet of water did well for Lake Trout throughout the lower shore area. Green is still a good color for spoons and flasher/fly rigs, although glow-in-the-dark and pink also took fish. The Lakers were generally 18-25 inches long with a couple in the 30-31 inch range. The Chinooks were still around 22-24 inches long and the Cohos were 20-22 inches long and as heavy as 3 lb. Fishing pressure in the estuary remains low, but anglers picked up a few muskies and Walleye.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

While anglers enjoyed a nice holiday weekend and angler pressure was brisk, weather conditions fell apart, with strong winds giving boaters concerns later in this past week. The water temperatures were cold at 38-44 degrees. Mixed reports from this past week reflect the mixed fishing that anglers have faced all season long. Anglers that did the best seem to concentrate more effort on trolling near the surface, especially for salmon. While some very nice Lake Trout in the 4-7 pound range have been caught from Twin Points to Hovland, most of these bigger fish were caught when anglers targeted salmon, otherwise most Lake Trout were smaller. Folks are focusing more on Lake Trout as Coho and Chinook Salmon catches drop for the season. The Pink Salmon, however, are biting more regularly now and the fish are 16-18 inches long. Anglers and the clerk have not observed Pinks in the streams yet, but the fish will soon move into the tributaries and provide some fall action.

Update 8/30/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Weather was decent earlier in the week, followed by a washout in fishing effort due to high winds. Fishing success was also decent earlier in the week, with anglers catching at least a fish per trip. The surface temperatures were in the low to mid-60s, and presentations trolled 40-90 feet down or on the bottom did well for Lake Trout as well as a few Chinook Salmon and Walleye closer to Duluth. Jigging and trolling near the bottom in 180-200 feet did well for Lake Trout. The color green has been good for spoons and flasher/fly rigs, although glow-in-the-dark and pink also took fish. Adding smelt or herring for both jigging and trolling rigs has worked well lately. The big Lake Trout were biting this past week, with a few fish in the 34-36-inch range (14-15 lb) along with the average fish of 19-23 inches. Chinooks were 22-25 inches long. Cohos were still a challenge to find. Cisco, or lake herring, provided a little action too, hitting spoons in areas that are closer to Duluth. Strong westerly winds later in the week changed the water conditions for the Labor Day weekend, as the water was only in the 40s on Thursday, as seen on the UMD buoy website. Successful anglers will probably target temperature breaks associated with warmer water. Fishing pressure in the estuary has been low, although anglers started to report that muskies are starting to bite as the water cools..

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

During the first part of the past week, the weather was more stable and the surface waters averaged 54-60 degrees near shore. Recently, windy weather made

fishing conditions difficult and also pushed the warm water out of the area. The surface water temps dropped to the upper 30s and lower 40s. Angler did well before the winds, catching well over a fish per trip. Anglers from all areas caught good numbers of Coho Salmon that averaged 2-3 pounds. Anglers also caught Chinook Salmon from a wide range of sizes, from 2 to 10 pounds. Salmon remain scattered along the entire upper shore with slightly better reports coming from Taconite Harbor and Grand Marais. As usual, most were caught in the top 50 feet of the water column with many reports suggesting that anglers trolling lures very close to the surface have done the best. While anglers continued to target Lake Trout in deep water, most Lakers were caught suspended and some even very near the surface. Up north here, cooler windier weather provides hints that the fall season is approaching, and the fall weather brings Pink Salmon. A few anglers caught some Pinks and the fish are quite large, averaging 16-18 inches long. Catch rates of steelhead were low this past week. The water is cold now, but with any luck anglers will see south and east winds that bring warmer water back into the area late in the Labor Day weekend.

Update 8/22/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Moderate to strong westerly wind patterns over several days pushed the warm layer offshore again and reduced fishing pressure on some days. However, the Coho Salmon did not return in response and catch rates for all fish were less than a fish per angler trip on average. Surface temperatures near shore were in the low 40s and the offshore temps were slightly warmer in the low 50s by Tuesday the 20th. Lake Trout were spread out in the water column or on the bottom, and the best success was from jigging in 160 to 200 feet of water. Spoons and flasher/fly rigs trolled 50 to 90 feet down caught a few fish, with green and/or chartreuse usually part of the color pattern. White and purple were also good colors. Lake Trout sizes were larger this week, with several fish in the 26-30 inch range. The rest were eater-size of 18-23 inches long. Anglers at the Agate Bay breakwall in Two Harbors picked up a few miscellaneous fish, for example a Chinook Salmon and a Northern Pike. Diverse fishing experiences also affected the Duluth area anglers, including online chatter that indicated Duluth Charter captains caught a mix of Lakers, Chinooks, some Walleyes, and one boat even released a large lake sturgeon that hit a spoon. Estuary fishing pressure remains low, and many pleasure-boaters launched from Rice's Point.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

During this reporting period some poor weather, including strong winds kept angler pressure light for stretches at a time. With good weather, angler effort increased substantially. However, the water temperatures decreased substantially, especially near shore where temperatures went from the mid 50s to the upper 30s. Fishing success dropped in response to cooler water conditions. Anglers have reported fair fishing for Salmon at most stations. Coho Salmon, while seeming to be dropping off in numbers have still been a common report with Cohos in the 20-22 inch range. Chinook Salmon still seem to be common despite the temperature drop, maybe even more common than Cohos. Chinooks have averaged in the 2-6 pound range and the clerk has heard no reports of big fish being caught. Lake Trout continue to be scattered and caught throughout the water column. The most consistent catches were from deep water while jigging or trolling to target lakers in water from 120-200 feet and close to bottom.

Update 8/15/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Water conditions began to return to normal this week as the cold layer settled back down, and Northeast winds pushed the warmer water (mid-60s) back toward Duluth by Tuesday. The bite was relatively slow, under a fish per angler trip. The bite will likely pick up soon as water conditions become more stable. This past week the surface bite transitioned to deeper water, with most trolled fish hitting 40-90 feet down on spoons, flasher/fly rigs (some with meat), or smelt rigs. Green was a popular color, as well as pink/purple and glow-in-the-dark. Lake Trout averaged 18-23 inches with a couple measured fish in the 31-inch range. Coho Salmon were 18-20 inches long. Although the bite has been slower, folks on one boat landed an incredible fish, 45 inches long which might have been a state record, and they released the fish so you have a shot at catching that lunker again. In the Estuary, Walleye fishing is slow but pleasure-boating traffic was high due to the Festival of Sail event this past week.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Nearshore water temperatures fluctuated considerably over the past week and even in the same day as winds blew warmer surface water in and out of

nearshore locations. Average water temps ranged from 41 to 56 degrees. Angler effort has been moderate throughout the upper shore area and folks averaged almost a fish per trip. Lake Trout remain scattered and while fish numbers were generally light, some larger lakers were observed with a 22 pounder recorded from Taconite Harbor this week. Anglers continued to target lakers in deep water locations and closer to bottom and this remains the best option for numbers of Lake Trout, although these deeper fish are of a smaller average size and larger lakers will be caught suspended and nearer to the surface. Anglers caught Cohos consistently throughout the upper shore area and the fish were generally in the 19-21 inch range and weighing up to three pounds. Chinook Salmon have also been commonly reported with most fish in 2-4 pound range although a few larger Chinooks in the 6-13 pound class were caught too. Steelhead catches remained steady and the fish varied widely in size with a few very large steelhead near 30 inches caught and released this week.

Update 8/8/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

This week saw a drop in fishing effort and success (from the small boats) as warm water moved back to the Northwest, with surface temperatures at Two Harbors rising to the mid-50's and as warm as the mid-60's near Duluth. Near Two Harbors, anglers caught fish in the top 30 feet of water with brightly colored spoons and stickbaits (pink/purple, chartreuse, orange/gold), whereas near Duluth, anglers caught Lake Trout, Chinook Salmon, and even a Walleye down 60-90 feet, with meat rigs, spoons, and flasher/fly rigs. Some Lakers were caught 160-200 feet down near the bottom, mostly from McQuade Northward, on spoons. Glow-in-the-dark patterns worked well for the deeper fish. Lakers were mostly eater size of 19-24 inches long with a couple over 30 inches long. The Coho Salmon catch was low, due to the fish moving up the shore beyond Two Harbors. In the St. Louis River Estuary, Walleye effort and success were low, and a couple anglers released a few Smallmouth Bass and Largemouth Bass.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water surface temperatures in nearshore waters warmed into the middle and upper 50s near Taconite Harbor and Silver Bay and low to mid 50s near Grand Marais and Hovland. Fishing effort was moderate along the upper shore with some flashes of heavy pressure such as during the Fisherman's Picnic in Grand Marais recently, otherwise fishing effort was light for a mid-summer week. Lake Trout remain scattered with changing locations being the norm. Lake Trout were caught throughout the water column and some anglers targeted fish close to the surface far from shore, which produces fewer but larger Lake Trout compared to more numerous but smaller fish closer to shore. Some anglers continue to find the most consistent catches in deep water and near to bottom structure. Lake trout have ranged widely in size with one huge and beautiful laker at nearly 33 pounds from Taconite Harbor. Both Coho and Chinook Salmon were caught along the entire shore from Twin Points to Grand Marais, in near shore waters close to shore, usually within 100 feet of the surface, and no particular area was obviously better. Coho salmon averaged 19-21 inches long and weighed 2-3 pounds and Chinook salmon were 20-30 inches long with some nice fish nearing 10 pounds. Anglers caught steelhead periodically in the upper shore and the fish were 22-26 inches long. A few silvery steelhead have been kept in recent days, so be sure to identify your fishes correctly, you can look online for fish ID guides or request a card from the creel survey clerk.

Update 8/1/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

This past week was an anomaly for this time of summer as strong Northwest winds pushed the warm water offshore, resulting in nearshore water temperatures that were in the mid 40s. Offshore temperatures were in the mid 50s near Two Harbors and mid 60s near Duluth. Angler effort was high at times near Duluth and at Two Harbors, otherwise the effort was moderate for this time of year. Angler success was low on average, anglers having caught less than a fish per trip on average. The cooler water brought Coho Salmon back to the area, including near Duluth, and much of the bite this past week was in the top 30 feet. Brightly colored spoons and stickbaits in pink/purple, chartreuse, orange/gold caught fish in the top 30 ft, and meat rigs and flasher/fly rigs did well near Duluth but down 60-90 feet down for Lake Trout and a few Chinook Salmon, plus some deep fishing with glow-in-the-dark spoons in 160-200 feet near the bottom. A 16 ½ inch Pink Salmon was caught and its size hints at bigger pinks this fall. Lake Trout were mostly eater size (19-24 inches) with a couple around 30 inches long (7-9 pounds). Cohos were 17-20 inches long (1.5 to 2 pounds). The few Chinooks that were measured were 22-24 inches long. Steelhead are still caught trolling, so

anglers should continue to double-check identification before reducing silvery fish to possession. Estuary Walleye pressure remains fairly low, and a mayfly hatch early in the week likely resulted in limited success.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Like in the Lower Shore area, the offshore winds blew warm water away this past week and colder water upwelled to produce nearshore water temperatures that were 42-46 in the Silver Bay-Twin Points area and 38-42 near Grand Marais. Offshore water was warmer, however the bite was slower offshore and anglers were more successful near shore. Angler effort was low for mid-summer and fishing was slow, but at least fishing picked up and anglers caught a little over a fish per trip on average. Lake Trout were scattered throughout the water column again, which challenges anglers who depend on lakers being in more predictable locations. While most of the lakers that are caught nearer the surface and suspended are generally larger, averaging 3-7 pounds, most fish from deeper water were smaller. Anglers have also commented that "reefer" lake trout have been mostly absent from usual shallow, near shore water locations in the Grand Marais area. Both Coho and Chinook Salmon were caught within 100 feet of the surface, with Cohos being nearer to the surface than Chinooks. Coho catches increased throughout the area so that most anglers are targeting them, whereas Chinook catches increased but were still low. Regarding steelhead, few anglers reported catching them.

Update 7/25/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Warmer weather this past week led to warmer surface water temperatures, which in the Duluth area pushed the fish a bit deeper, to 55-80 feet down and even lower for Lake Trout. The water patterns slowed the bite considerably, such that anglers caught less than a fish per trip on average, as measured in the creel survey. Near Duluth, anglers had the most success with spoons and smelt rigs. Pink/purple, green, and glow-in-the-dark were good colors for fishing near Duluth. The surface bite appeared to have moved further north and offshore by the end of the week. Pink and orange were good colors further from Duluth, as were white (pearl) and green, with fish hitting a variety of lures from stickbaits and dodger/fly rigs trolled 30 feet down to spoons trolled deep (160-200 feet down on the bottom). The best surface bite was in 600-750 feet of water. Lake Trout were 18-30 inches long with a few in the 38-40 inch range. Coho Salmon were 17-19 inches long on average, with one fish measuring over 20 inches. Chinooks continue to bite near Duluth, with most in the 22-25 inch range and reports of fish around 30 inches. Steelhead have ranged from 21 inches to 25 inches and were caught mainly near the surface. A few Walleyes were mixed in with the Lakers and Chinook near Duluth. The Walleye bite and fishing effort in the Estuary, however, was virtually nonexistent this past week.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Strong winds blew offshore, which halted the previous warming trend and really lowered the surface temperatures along the upper shore. The drop was particularly strong near Silver Bay and Twin Points where the water temperatures dropped into upper 30s and low 40s. Since then, water temperatures struggled to recover, especially in the Taconite Harbor, Grand Marais and Hovland areas. Fishing effort and catch also slowed considerably due to the colder water. The catch rate overall, as measured from creel interviews, was less than a fish per trip. Despite this, the Silver Bay Salmon Classic produced Lakers over 20 pounds, Chinooks up to 9 pounds, and Cohos in the 3 pound range. Lake Trout were generally scattered and while anglers from Grand Marais report that Lakers can still

be found in deep water structure areas, they are also being caught near to the surface, suspended over deep water and in shallower water near to shore. While some nice Lakers in the 3-6 pound range were caught, the clerk has seen or heard of few large or very large fish. Salmon have become scattered and hard to find. Coho Salmon were caught within 50 feet of the surface while Chinook Salmon were caught deeper with some reports of fish in 90-150 feet below the surface. The Cohos were in the typical 16-20 inch length range and weighed 1.5-2.5 pounds, and Chinook were 22-26 inches long on average and weighed 3-6 pounds. An adipose-clipped 23 inch Brown Trout was caught near Grand Marais; this fish probably migrated across the lake from Wisconsin.

Update 7/18/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Hot weather has continued to warm the water, with the surface temperature near Duluth reaching 75° on Wednesday. A well-defined thermocline has not set up yet, however the Large Lake Observatory buoy data seem to indicate that a thermocline might set up soon. Fishing effort was higher this past week, however the catch rates were fairly low, probably due to the lack of that well-defined thermocline. Regarding the fish, most were caught from 25 to 60 feet down, mostly on spoons, although stickbaits and flasher/fly rigs still took a few fish. Lake Trout lengths ranged from 12 to 25 inches with the largest around 27 inches long. Coho Salmon are biting at the surface, but now farther north than Two Harbors, and the surface temperatures rose there into the upper-50s and higher, with stickbaits and dodger/fly rigs doing well for some. The fish are eating bugs mostly. Pink and orange were good colors, as were white (pearl) and glow-in-the-dark for deeper rigs. Coho average size is still around 17-18.5 inches, with reports of a couple around 19 inches. Chinook Salmon are still hanging around, with the largest fish going at least 30 inches long and a few reports of broken tackle on big fish too. A few anglers picked up some bigger Walleyes near Duluth while fishing for Lake Trout and Chinooks. Estuary Walleye pressure remains low, and most of the boating traffic continues to be pleasure-craft and people listening to concerts.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Although the lake surface temperatures has warmed to desirable levels at times, temperatures still fluctuated between the upper 40s to upper 50s and have varied among areas and day by day. Anglers with downrigger probes found varying thickness to the warm water layer, as deep as 50 feet but mostly thinner overall. Angler pressure has been increasing and anglers caught 1.5 fish per trip on average. Effort was heavy at the Twin Points and Silver Bay accesses and moderate from more northern accesses. Lake Trout are now more suspended and near to the surface across the upper shore area. Grand Marais area anglers caught decent numbers of smaller Lake Trout near the surface and near to shore at times. Anglers from Twin Points and Silver Bay report good numbers of Coho Salmon with Cohos averaging 17 to 19 inches long. The Cohos seem a little skinny this year and don't weight 2 pounds yet. Most Cohos were caught near to the surface and during early morning hours. If you are fishing in the Silver Bay Salmon Classic this weekend on July 20 and 21, you have a good chance of catching some Cohos. The Cohos have not yet reached the Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor areas in decent numbers yet. While a few Chinook salmon have been reported, very few seem to be caught recently from any area. Few Steelhead have yet to be caught.

Update 7/11/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Weather conditions were similar to last week and the surface water is warming into the 60s and even into the low 70s at times near Duluth and more anglers are getting out, especially at Duluth and especially from charter boats. Eventually the warmer water will work its way down and provide better fishing with downriggers, but this past week anglers caught most fish in the top 30 ft on a variety of lures, from spoons and stickbaits to flasher-fly rigs. Bright colors still did best (pink, orange). Lake Trout lengths ranged from 13 to 25 inches. Chinook Salmon have been biting offshore near the state border near Duluth, and Coho Salmon were biting in the Two Harbors area. The Cohos were generally around 17-19 inches, with reports of a couple into the low 20s. In the Estuary, Walleye angling seems to have slowed, but anglers are still picking up a few eater-size Walleye and the occasional Channel Catfish or Rock Bass. Again this week, be careful about your fish ID, steelhead are still being illegally harvested and anglers are being cited, which ruins a trip.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water temperatures continue to warm along the upper shore and while reports vary and include angler reports of colder water into the low forty degree range, most reports are of water surface temps now in the upper forty and lower fifty degree range. Angler pressure and success are on the rise from all upper shore stations. Lake Trout were caught increasingly scattered throughout the water column with increasing numbers from closer to the surface and also nearer to shore. While most Lakers continue to be caught from deeper water and average from 16-22 inches, some larger lakers have also been reported and most larger lake trout have been reported as found more scattered and suspended. Anglers from all stations are catching salmon in near shore waters and in increasing numbers as the recent days pass with better reports from Twin Points and Silver Bay. Coho Salmon in the 16-19 inch range have been common and most Cohos were caught within fifty feet of the surface. Fewer Chinook Salmon were caught, mostly in the 18-26 inch class and caught deeper than were the Cohos.

Update 7/5/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Hot summer weather made for great boating this week, but the surface temps have been warming quickly, pushing the surface bite to the north and scattering fish near Duluth. Surface temps off Duluth have been as warm as the upper-60s but the warm layer is still narrow and most fish were caught within 30 feet of the surface rather than on a deep thermocline. The temperature break has been somewhere between Knife River and Stoney point, but the surface is warming quickly up the North Shore (already in the 50s in Thunder Bay on the GLCFS website 7/3). Fish were caught on a variety of lures, from spoons and stickbaits to flasher-fly rigs. Bright colors still did best, colors such as pink and orange. Lake Trout lengths ranged from 18-23 inches with the largest around 27 inches long. Coho Salmon average size is still around 17-18.5 inches, with reports of a couple around 19 inches. Chinook are still hanging around, with the largest fish being 28.5 inches long. Estuary anglers are still picking up a few eater-size Walleye and the occasional Yellow Perch and Smallmouth Bass. Estuary boating traffic is turning over to more pleasure-boating as the water has warmed. Just a reminder to anglers, be sure to brush up on your Steelhead versus Coho/Chinook identification, as the clerk measured the third steelhead (harvested) of this summer season.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water surface temps along the upper shore warmed into the 40s and at times up to 50 degrees, although anglers with downrigger probes confirm that the warm layer is thin and transient and the temperatures drop back into the upper 30s to low 40 following brisk winds. Angler pressure, while still light to moderate from

most stations, is increasing at all stations.

Twin Points and Silver Bay area anglers are beginning to target and catch fair numbers of Coho salmon in the 16-18 inch class. Most fish are near the surface and might provide good catches at times. Anglers caught a few Chinook Salmon, mostly 18-22 inches long, from all stations. Lake Trout have been caught from deep water near structure, however now some of the fish are more scattered and suspended through the water column and anglers have reported catching a few lakers within 100 feet of the surface. The Lakers are 18-24 inches long, on average.

Shore anglers report fair fishing for Brook Trout in the Grand Marais harbor with some larger brook trout spotted by anglers, though most fish caught were 10-14 inches long. Also in the harbor a few anglers caught small steelhead. As in the Lower shore area, be sure to know your fish identification before you keep anything, especially between steelhead and Cohos. Also remember to immediately return any Brook Trout that is less than 20 inches long.

Update 6/27/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Northeast winds and thunderstorms put a damper on fishing pressure again this week, but anglers who did get out found Lake Trout, Coho Salmon, and Chinook Salmon still in the top 20 feet or so. On average, anglers fared better than last week, catching almost 2 fish per trip. Hot-colored presentations did well, mostly stickbaits and spoons. Surface water temperatures near Duluth were as warm as the low 50s and at this time the Large Lake Observatory buoys near McQuade are reading 48 to 52 degrees at the surface and consistent cold water below 100 feet. The warm water has been trying to spread further north, but E/NE winds have repeatedly pushed it back. Anglers have done well in the horizontal temperature break from McQuade to Knife River, although the location varies daily as the winds have been a factor. Fishing effort near Knife River jumped up too, in response to the annual Veterans' fishing event. Thanks to the folks who helped our Veterans get out on the lake for a decent day for fishing. Fishing effort near Two Harbors is still low and the Cohos are just beginning to move in that direction. Cohos were still 17-18.5 inches on average with a few fish up to 20 inches long. The Lake Trout were generally 18-23 inches long with the largest around 30 inches. Chinook Salmon were sparse as usual, with one fish reaching 23 inches. In the Estuary, anglers are still picking up a few eater-size Walleyes, but not as readily as before.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light again this past week, due to some brisk winds, fog, and cold water. However, that cold water is just beginning to warm into the low 40s when the sun is out. Reports from anglers at Grand Marais, Taconite Harbor, and Hovland indicate good fishing for Lake Trout can be had near the bottom in deep water of 130-200 feet, but also sometimes suspended off the bottom in that deep water. A few anglers caught Chinook Salmon when the surface temperatures were in the 40s. A few anglers near Grand Marais and Silver Bay caught Brook Trout in nearshore areas where warmer water is running into the lake, such as at marinas, harbors, river mouths, and warm water discharges.

Update 6/20/2019:**Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:**

Weather conditions were reasonable this past week, however fishing pressure was only light to moderate. Surface water temperatures near Duluth were as warm as the low 50s, whereas temperatures were 43-48 degrees near McQuade. Effort was mostly lower from Knife River to Two Harbors. Overall, catch rates were just over a fish per trip, however some reports indicate that fishing was better than average. Most fish were caught in the top 20 feet of water as the Lake Trout, Coho Salmon, and Chinook Salmon fed on the bug slicks, especially near McQuade. For fishing methods and lures, anglers are sticking with trolling bright-colored stickbaits, plus occasionally by trolling spoons or flasher/fly combos. Lake Trout lengths varied mostly from 18 to 23 inches, with reports of fish up to 27 inches long. Chinook Salmon were still fairly sparse and are generally 3 pounds or larger. In the Estuary, another Walleye tournament drew lots of attention, including a few dozen boats at Rice's Point at one time. The Walleye bite was good again this past week, but some fish will probably move into the big lake soon, especially as the lake water warms toward the 60s close to Duluth.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light again this past week, due mostly to the fact the lake is still cold. Water surface temperatures remained mostly in the 35-38 degree range and sometimes close to 40. On average, anglers caught a little over a fish per trip. Grand Marais and Taconite Harbor anglers reported fair fishing for Lake Trout in the 17-24 inch class and these fish were found in 150-200 feet of water near bottom structure. In the Upper Shore area, we are still waiting for warmer weather and warmer water.

Update 6/13/2019:**Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:**

Weather conditions improved from the past couple of weeks and so did the fishing, especially near Duluth. Water temperatures were in the low 50s in the dark water close to Duluth, around 46 degrees near McQuade and the pumphouse, and in the high 30s from Knife River to the North. Effort was mostly moderate, but low at Knife River. Overall, catch rates improved to one and a half fish per trip and more than half were Coho Salmon. So yes, the Coho bite was particularly good this past week. Anglers did well again by trolling bright-colored stickbaits, plus occasionally by trolling spoons or flasher/fly combos. Lake Trout lengths varied from 18 to 27 inches, with reports of fish up to 34 inches long being released. The Cohos averaged 16.5-18 inches with a few 19 inchers too. Chinook Salmon were still fairly sparse. In the Estuary, the Walleye bite was good again this past week, with lots of 15-18 inch fish being caught. Plus, the Estuary is home to a wide variety of fish species and there is always a chance for a surprise at the end of the line.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light again this past week, due to windy and rainy weather conditions at times and to cold water. Water surface temperatures remained mostly in the 35-38 degree range with a bump up to 40 degrees at times, but cooler weather will delay the warming trend and the better fishing. On average, anglers caught a little over a fish per trip. Grand Marais anglers reported fair fishing for Lake Trout in the 17-23 inch class and these fish were found in 150-200 feet of water near rock structure off the first breaks from shore. Taconite Harbor anglers report much the same with few reports of suspended or surface-

oriented fish. No one reported catching Salmon or steelhead in the lake. There were hints that some nice Brook Trout were caught near Silver Bay but their locations was not disclosed, of course. The upper shore tributaries are still flowing well and anglers still ventured upstream to fish, however the water is warming toward the upper 60s and few fish were caught.

Update 6/6/2019:

Lower Shore – Duluth to Two Harbors:

Fishing effort and weather conditions were similar to the previous week. Effort was moderate when the weather permitted, and even high at the best times of the day, otherwise effort was low on most weekdays. Overall, anglers caught a little more than a fish per trip and the fish were about half Lake Trout and half Coho Salmon plus a few steelhead. Successful anglers found fish in the warmer, dirty water which was up to 47 degrees and less fish in colder, clearer water. Trolling bright-colored stickbaits on top produced the majority of the fish near Duluth, with lakers ranging from 18 to 32 inches and as heavy as 10.5 lb, and the cohos were mostly 16-18 inches long with the largest measuring over 19 inches. Some anglers crossed the lake to the south to catch Brown Trout and steelhead as well as lakers and cohos. North of Duluth, most lakers were caught near the bottom in 170-200 feet of water while trolling or jigging. Walleye are still biting in the lower portions of the Estuary, including at least one 50 fish trip for a couple of anglers.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Angler pressure was light this past week. Water surface temperatures were mostly in the 35-37 degree range. Despite the cold water, Grand Marais anglers sometimes had good fishing for Lake Trout in 150-200 feet of water. Most of the fish were smaller, however some of the fish were in the 3-6 pound class and were feeding heavily on Rainbow Smelt. Silver Bay and Twin Points anglers report fair catches of Lake Trout in the 16-20 inch class caught from deep water structure areas. In the tributaries, some anglers continue to target steelhead, although catching these late season fish is a challenge. The smaller tributaries are nearing their low levels and larger rivers held moderate flows.

Update 5/30/2019:

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. The Coho Salmon bite was good in late April and anglers focused on the west end of the lake, especially around the 21st to 26th Street area and also near Brighton Beach and the McQuade Safe Harbor. The Rainbow Smelt ran well in some streams but the Park Point beach was iced over for much of the smelting season. The fish bite subsided in early May, plus there were season openers for Walleye in Wisconsin and then in Minnesota and effort through mid May was lower. More folks got out over the early part of Memorial Day weekend, especially close to Duluth. Water temperatures were up to 43 degrees in the dirty water and 37-38 degrees elsewhere. Air temperatures are just now in the summer range and a distinct thermocline has not set up yet, plus some stronger winds mixed up the water column too. You can see updated temperature and wave data at the UMD LLO website. Lake Trout lengths ranged widely, from 18 to 31 inches, with a report of a 35 inch fish that weighed in at 10.5 pounds. The Cohos were 16-18 inches long, which is somewhat bigger than last year's early fish, and the Chinook Salmon were 20-27 inches long. One Steelhead was reported as caught and released; remember, any unclipped Rainbow Trout must be released immediately. Most lakers and salmon

were caught near the surface on bright-colored stickbaits, as is usual for this time of year. Plus, some anglers at Two Harbors caught lakers while jigging on a reef. In the St. Louis Estuary anglers caught good numbers of 16 inch Walleyes, plus some Northern Pike and Yellow Perch.

Upper Shore – Twin Points to Hovland:

Water temperatures are very cold this time of year, as usual, averaging only 35 degrees along the upper shore. The cold water yields few good fishing locations. The most effective method is targeting fish in water over 150 feet deep and near structure, usually using downriggers or by jigging vertically; however, anglers might use weighted wire line as well. The few Lake Trout that were caught this past week were mostly in the 15-20 inch range which is typical for deep water fish this time of year. Anglers might also catch lakers that are holding in warmer water where rivers enter the big lake, and some of those fish may be big. In the tributaries, some anglers reported fair action for steelhead and the tributaries hold strong flows despite being late in the season.