

# Status of the Findley Lake Fishery

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF 2017 NYSDEC SURVEY AND THOUGHTS  
(FULL SURVEY ANALYSIS AND FISHERIES REPORT IS STILL IN PROGRESS)



# Findley Lake stocking

- ▶ Tiger muskellunge stocking was discontinued in 2008 due to low survival rates.

## Muskellunge

- Since 2009, DEC has been annually stocking fingerling muskies (8-9 inches) in the fall.

## Walleye

- DEC currently stocks 5,500 pond fingerling walleye (1.5-2 inches) every other year

# Things to consider...

- ▶ The target of this survey was muskellunge, and to assess the status of the muskellunge population.
- ▶ Other fish are collected, but numbers caught may not be representative of actual population size.
- ▶ However, it does give us an idea of what's going on with other fish populations in the lake.
- ▶ Other fish species are better sampled at different times of the year.



# 2017 Muskellunge Trap Net Survey

- ▶ The goal was to assess the muskellunge population but all fish populations were evaluated.
- ▶ 3 trap nets were set from 4/10/17 to 4/24/17
- ▶ Nets were checked every other day
- ▶ Fish caught were identified, counted, measured, and released.



DEC Region 9 fisheries staff checking a trap net on Findley Lake.

# 2017 Trap Netting Results

- ▶ 2,659 total fish collected representing 15 different species

<b>Fish species</b>	<b>Number Collected</b>
Muskellunge	41
Northern Pike	192
Walleye	19
Largemouth bass	7
Smallmouth bass	3
Black crappie	864
White crappie	5
White perch	267
Bluegill	98
Pumpkinseed	108
Yellow perch	3
Rock bass	2
Brown bullhead	818
Yellow bullhead	205
White sucker	3

# Muskellunge

- ▶ 41 adult muskellunge caught
- ▶ Length ranged from 25 to 42 inches
- ▶ 24 males and 14 females – 1.7 : 1 male to female ratio
- ▶ This is promising for musky reproduction in Findley Lake
- ▶ Future surveys will tell us if muskies are successfully reproducing in the lake.



A tank of muskies collected from Findley Lake trap nets.



# Findley Lake Muskies



DEC fisheries staff with a few big Findley Lake muskies

# Northern Pike

- ▶ Northern pike appear to be the dominant predator in Findley Lake
- ▶ Largest pike caught in 2017 survey was 32 inches
- ▶ Most pike caught were in the 20 to 30 inch class
- ▶ Sorry, no pictures!
- ▶ Northern pike fishing in Findley Lake should be excellent!



# Walleye

- This survey did NOT target walleye, but it is evident that walleye are surviving and growing in Findley Lake.
- Anglers targeting walleye can expect decent fishing.
- Future surveys will target assessing the walleye population.





# Panfish populations

- Black crappie and white perch were the most abundant panfish. Fishing for them should be excellent!
- Bluegill and pumpkinseed populations are stable and should provide good fishing
- Yellow perch catch was low, but that doesn't mean they aren't there



A net full of Findley Lake crappies!



# Findley Lake crappies

- Crappies are plentiful and appear to have good growth rates
- Numerous 12+ inch crappie were collected in 2017 survey



DEC staff with big Findley Lake crappies



A 13+ inch crappie from Findley Lake!



# Black Bass

- ▶ Bass were not the target of the 2017 survey, but some sizable largemouth and smallmouth bass were caught.
- ▶ Early spring is not a good time to sample bass populations
- ▶ Bass fishing is expected to be fair to good in Findley Lake



DEC fisheries staff with a 19.5 inch largemouth bass from Findley Lake

# Looking ahead...

- ▶ A full analysis and report of the 2017 trap net survey will be produced and made available this winter

**Spring 2019** – DEC expects to conduct a spring electrofishing survey to better assess bass and panfish populations in Findley Lake.

**Fall 2019** - A fall electrofishing survey could also be conducted to monitor the walleye population and check for natural reproduction.

\*Angler reports are always welcomed by DEC. It helps us to monitor the overall health of the fishery.\*