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.

<u>Muskellunge</u>

 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

Fish species	Number Collected
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

<u>Muskellunge</u>

- ▶ 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





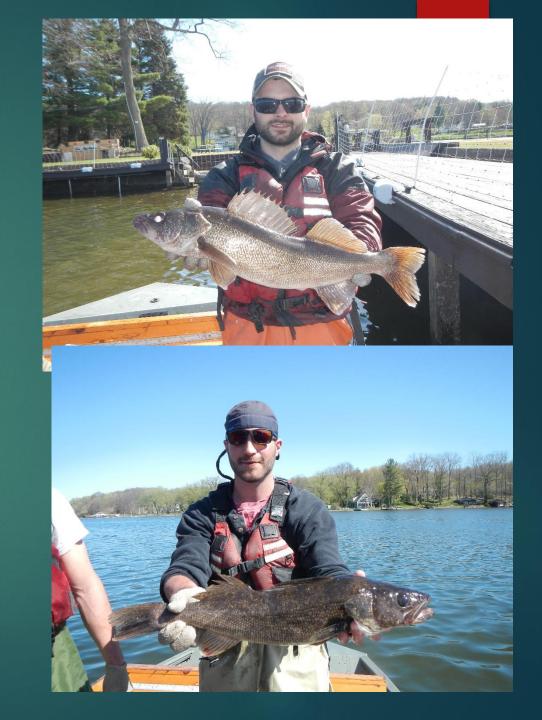
DEC fisheries staff with a few big Findley Lake muskies

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!

<u>Walleye</u>

- 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



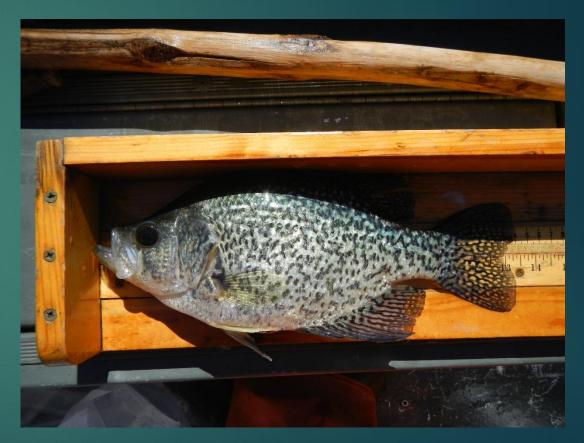
A net full of Findley Lake crappies!

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.