Bullhead Lake Survey Summary

Bullhead Lake, located 3.0 miles northwest and 2.0 miles south of Lake City, is managed as a northern pike and yellow perch fishery, but other fish species (e.g., bluegill, walleye) are present and contribute to the fishery.

- **Northern pike.** Northern pike were the most abundant fish species in the 2024 gill net catch. At 3.3 per gill net, relative abundance was considered moderate to high. Those sampled ranged in length from 17.3 to 33.5 inches, 75% were ≥ 21.0 inches and 20% were ≥ 28.0 inches.

- **Walleye**. Although the lake is managed as a northern pike and yellow perch fishery, walleyes are commonly stocked. Walleye numbers were higher in 2024 than in 2019, but relative abundance remained low (2.8 per gill net). Sampled walleyes ranged in length from 16.5 to 28.0 inches, all (100%) were ≥ 15.0 inches and 71% were ≥ 20.0 inches. Eight year classes contributed to the catch, each was represented by five or fewer individuals. The oldest walleye sampled was from the 2009 (age-15) cohort. Sample sizes were low, but the 2024 sample suggested good walleye growth with mean length at captures at age 3 and age 5 of 17.0 and 20.4 inches, respectively.

- **Yellow perch**. Yellow perch were not abundant (1.5 per gill net). In 2024, gill nets collected nine yellow perch that ranged in length from 5.5 to 7.1 inches and represented two cohorts (2020 and 2021).

For more detailed results see the computer generated South Dakota Statewide Fisheries Survey for Bullhead (Marshall; below)

SOUTH DAKOTA STATEWIDE FISHERIES SURVEY
Bullhead, Marshall County
UJA-Lake-866-022
2024

Lake Information

Name: Bullhead
County: Marshall
Surface Area: 150 Acres
Maximum Depth: 15 Feet
Mean Depth: 7 Feet

Surveys and Investigations

Survey methods used by gear type, date, and effort.

Gear	Date	Effort
AFS std gill net	Sep 17, 2024	6 net-nights

Common Fish Species Present

Walleye

Northern Pike

Yellow Perch

Black Bullhead

Black Crappie

Bluegill

Common Carp

White Sucker

Largemouth Bass

Terminology

Catch per unit effort (**CPUE**) refers to the relative abundance of a species. It is defined as the number of fish captured per unit of effort (i.e., number of fish captured per net-night or number of fish captured per hour electrofishing). In this report CPUE is typically given for only stock-length fish (see length categories table for stock lengths).

A statewide effort to help make netting efforts comparable to all waters sampled across the state, occurred in 2017, with a switch to American Fisheries Society gill nets. Past gill netting efforts were completed with different style/types of nets and are not comparable side by side.

- **AFS std gill net** – 80 ft experimental gill net containing eight panels (10 ft each) of varying monofilament meshes of 0.75, 1.00, 1.25, 1.50, 1.75, 2.00, 2.25 and 2.50 inches.
- **std experimental gill net for non-Missouri River waters** - 150 ft experimental gill net containing six panels (25 ft each) of varying monofilament meshes of 0.5, 0.75, 1.00, 1.25, 1.50 and 2.00 inches.
- s**td experimental gill net for Missouri River reservoirs** – 300 ft experimental gill net containing six panels (50 ft each) of varying multifilament meshes of 0.5, 0.75, 1.00, 1.25, 1.50 and 2.00 inches.

$$CPUE = \frac{number\ of\ fish}{effort}$$

Population size structure is quantified using the indices proportional size distribution of quality-length fish (**PSD**) and proportional size distribution of preferred-length fish (**PSD-P**). These indices indicate the proportion of stock-length fish that are equal to or greater than a given length. Minimum lengths for stock, quality and preferred length fish are given in the length categories table.

$$PSD = \left(\frac{number\ of fish \geq quality\ length}{number\ of\ fish \geq stock\ length}\right) \text{x } 100$$

$$PSD - P = \left(\frac{number\ of fish\ \geq preferred\ length}{number\ of\ fish \geq stock\ length}\right) \text{x } 100$$

Relative weight (**Wr**) is used to quantify fish plumpness. Relative weight is the ratio of what a fish weighs (W) compared to a length-specific standard weight (Ws) multiplied by 100. Relative weight values of 95-105 are commonly cited as optimum values, but values in the 80s are common during summer sampling in South Dakota.

$$Wr = \left(\frac{W}{Ws}\right) \text{x } 100$$

Confidence intervals (**CI**) are provided for many of the estimates calculated in this report. The confidence interval provides a range in which the true mean is expected to fall. For example, with an 80% CI we are 80% confident that the interval contains the true value.

Length categories include stock (**S**), quality (**Q**), preferred (**P**), memorable (**M**) and trophy (**T**). Length categories for most species have been defined based on a percentage of the world record length for that species. Some species mentioned in this report do not have defined length categories. Length categories for species used in this report are provided in the following table. Measurements are the minimum total length for each category and are reported in inches (in) and centimeters (cm).

	Stock		Quality		Preferred		Memorable		Trophy	
Species Name	(in)	(cm)	(in)	(cm)	(in)	(cm)	(in)	(cm)	(in)	(cm)
Black Bullhead	6	15	9	23	12	30	15	38	18	46
Black Crappie	5	13	8	20	10	25	12	30	15	38
Bluegill	3	8	6	15	8	20	10	25	12	30
Brown Trout	8	20	12	30	16	40	20	50	18	46
Channel Catfish	11	28	16	41	24	61	28	71	36	91
Freshwater Drum	8	20	12	30	15	38	20	51	25	63
Lake Trout	12	30	20	50	26	65	31	80	39	100
Largemouth Bass	8	20	12	30	15	38	20	51	25	63
Muskellunge	20	51	30	76	38	97	42	107	50	127
Northern Pike	14	35	21	53	28	71	34	86	44	112
Pumpkinseed	3	8	6	15	8	20	10	25	12	30
Rainbow Trout	10	25	16	40	20	50	26	65	31	80
Rudd	6	15	10	25	12	30	15	38	19	48
Sauger	8	20	12	30	15	38	20	51	25	63
Smallmouth Bass	7	18	11	28	14	35	17	43	20	51
Walleye	10	25	15	38	20	51	25	63	30	76
White Bass	6	15	9	23	12	30	15	38	18	46
White Crappie	5	13	8	20	10	25	12	30	15	38
Yellow Bullhead	4	10	7	18	9	23	11	28	14	36
Yellow Perch	5	13	8	20	10	25	12	30	15	38

Catch Summary of Stock Length Fish

Catch per unit effort (CPUE), proportional size distribution (PSD), proportional size distribution of preferred length fish (PSD-P), and relative weight (Wr) for species sampled in survey with 80% confidence interval (CI-80).

*** Methods/Species that ignore stock length**

			Abundance		Stock Density Indices				Condition	
Gear	Species	Sample Size (n)	CPUE	CI-80	PSD	CI-80	PSD-P	CI-80	Wr	CI-80
AFS std gill net	Black Bullhead	16	2.7	1.6	100		81		86	2
	Black Crappie	6	1.0	0.7	0		0		109	3
	Bluegill	5	0.8	0.5	40		0		108	6
	Common Carp	3	0.5	0.5	33		33		116	6
	Largemouth Bass	2	0.3	0.3	50		50		111	
	Northern Pike	20	3.3	1.1	75	16	20		85	2
	Walleye	17	2.8	1.0	100		71		86	1
	White Sucker	2	0.3	0.3	100		100		111	10
	Yellow Perch	9	1.5	1.2	0		0		91	4

10-Year Catch Per Unit Effort by Gear and Species

Catch per unit effort (CPUE) and average (Avg) of species across 10 years using different gear types.

*** Methods/Species that ignore stock length**

		CPUE										
Gear	Species	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Avg
AFS std gill net	Black Bullhead					0.3					2.7	1.50
	Black Crappie					0.2					1.0	0.60
	Bluegill					0.7					0.8	0.75
	Common Carp					0.0					0.5	0.25
	Largemouth Bass					0.2					0.3	0.25
	Northern Pike					3.7					3.3	3.50
	Walleye					1.0					2.8	1.90
	White Sucker					0.7					0.3	0.50
	Yellow Perch					17.2					1.5	9.35

10-Year Size Structure and Condition Statistics by Gear and Species

Species proportional size distribution (PSD), proportional size distribution of preferred length fish (PSD-P), and relative weight (Wr) collected by different gear types across 10 years.

			Year									
Gear	Species	Index	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
AFS std gill net	Northern Pike	PSD					82					75
		PSD-P					14					20
		Wr					92					85
	Walleye	PSD					100					100
		PSD-P					67					71
		Wr					93					86
	Yellow Perch	PSD					3					0
		PSD-P					0					0
		Wr					90					91

Length at Capture

Mean length at capture by age across years sampled, sample size (N).

Species: Walleye

		Mean Length (expanded sample number) at capture by age									
Year	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
2024	17			431 (2)		517 (5)	606 (3)				652 (7)
2019	6					514 (2)		496 (1)		565 (1)	621 (2)

Species: Yellow Perch

		Mean Length (expanded sample number) at capture by age									
Year	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
2024	9			160 (8)	164 (1)						
2019	104		146 (54)	173 (1)	158 (14)	164 (29)	173 (4)				

Fish Condition

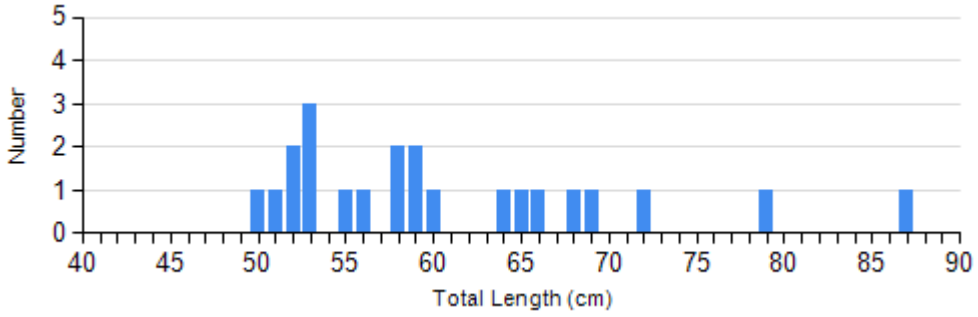
Mean relative weight (Wr) by sample size (N), length category stock to quality (S-Q), quality to preferred (Q-P), preferred to memorable (P-M), and memorable (M) for species collected across survey years with standard error (SE).

		Length Groups							
		S-Q		Q-P		P-M		M	
Species	Year	N	Wr (SE)	N	Wr (SE)	N	Wr (SE)	N	Wr (SE)
Northern Pike Gill Net	2024	5	81 (2.9)	11	84 (1.8)	4	92 (5.0)	0	
Walleye Gill Net	2024	0		5	86 (1.3)	7	85 (1.4)	5	87 (2.8)
Yellow Perch Gill Net	2024	9	91 (3.2)	0		0		0	

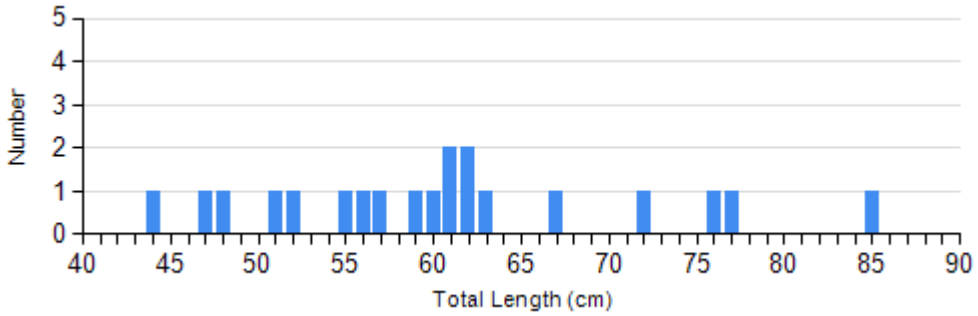
Length Frequency Distribution

Length frequency histogram of species sampled by year.

Species: Northern Pike
Gear: AFS std gill net

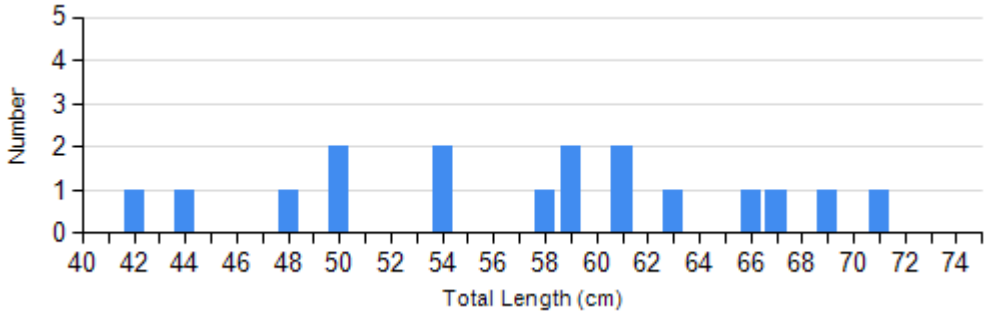


2019



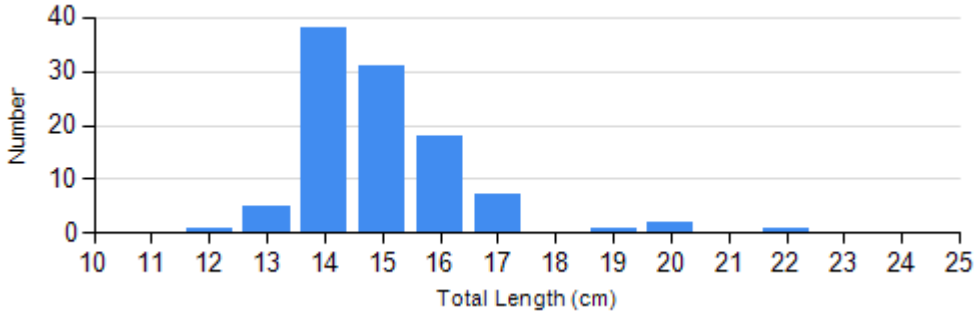
2024

Species: Walleye
Gear: AFS std gill net



2024

Species: Yellow Perch
Gear: AFS std gill net

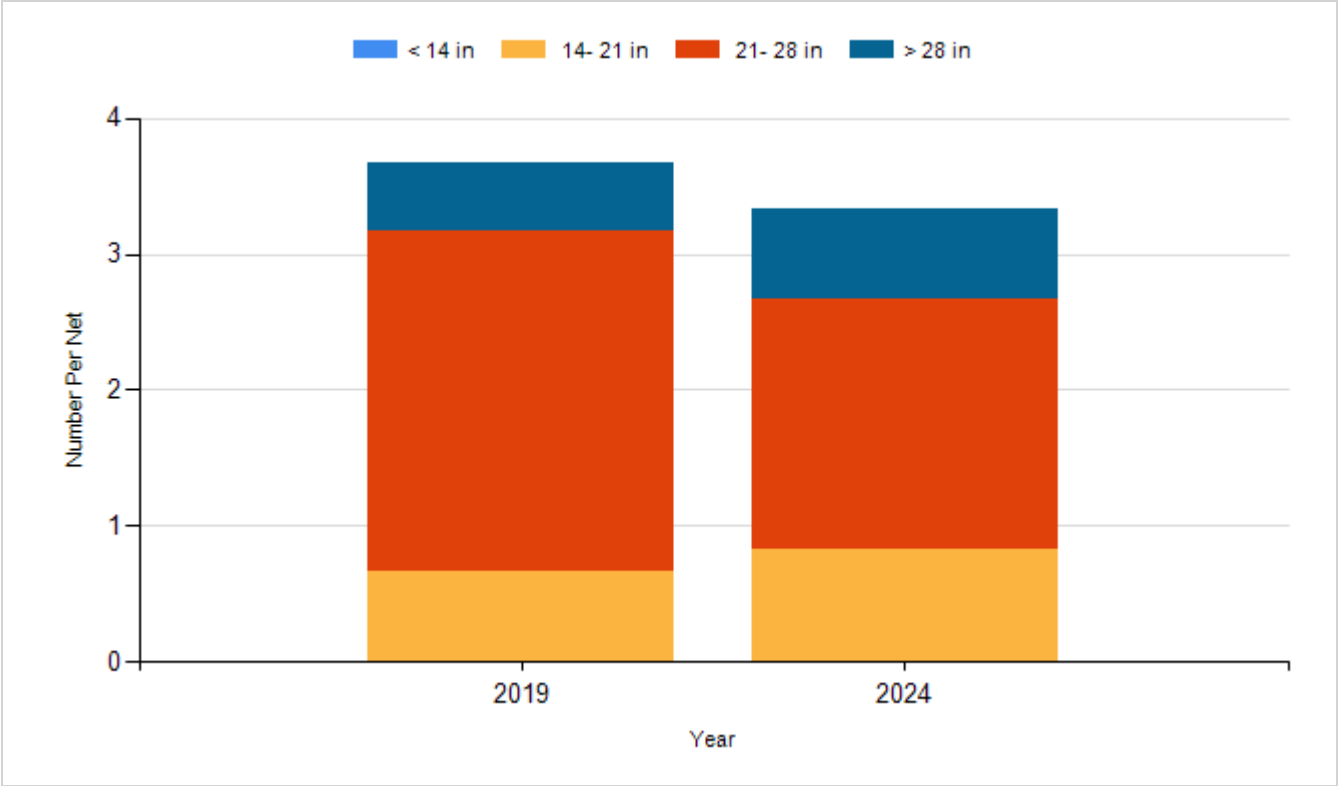


2019

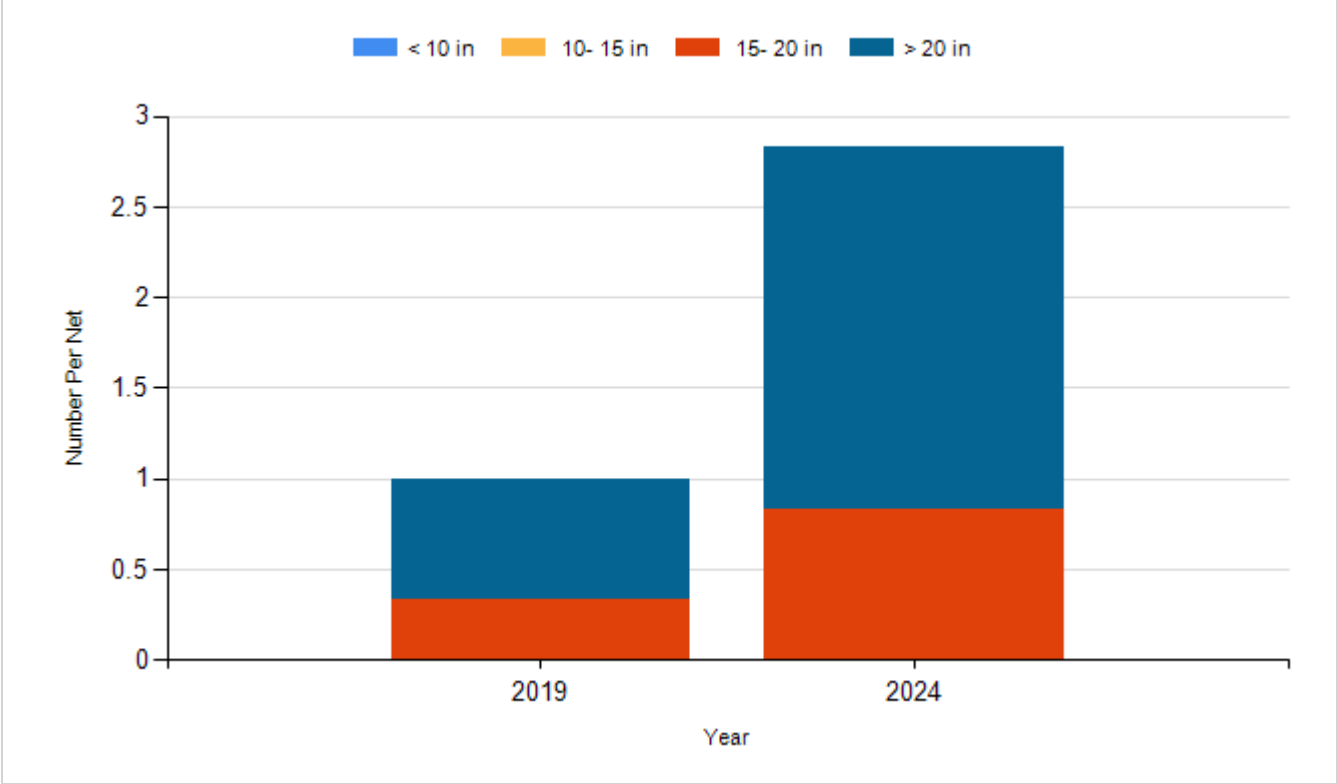
Historic Fish Sizes and Relative Abundance

Size distribution per net by color for species sampled by year.

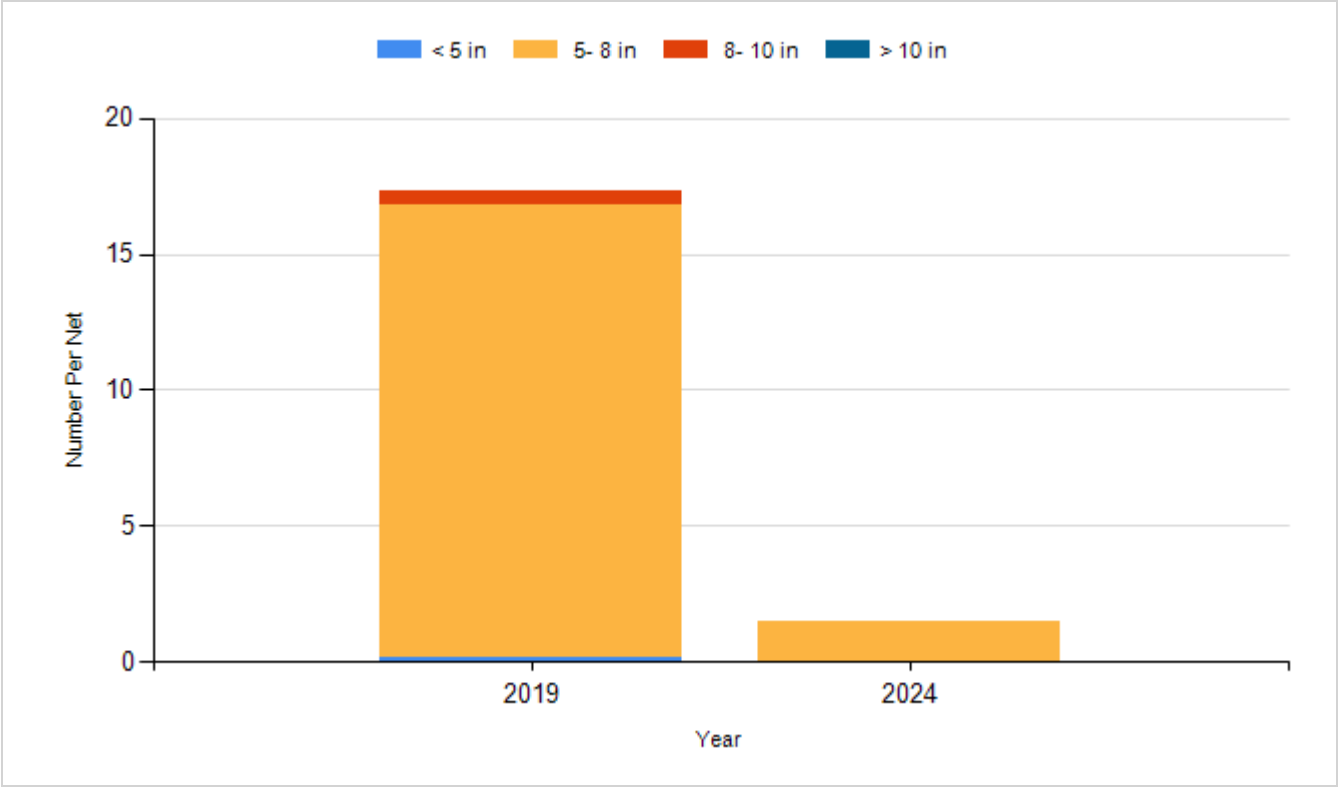
Species: Northern Pike
Gear: AFS std gill net



Species: Walleye
Gear: AFS std gill net



Species: Yellow Perch
Gear: AFS std gill net



Fish Stocking

Number of fish stocked by year, species, and size.

Year	Species	Size	Number
2014	Walleye	Fry	85,000
2018	Walleye	Fry	100,000
2021	Walleye	Fry	100,000
2022	Walleye	Juvenile	8,165
2023	Walleye	Fry	100,000
2024	Walleye	Fry	100,000