



# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Fisheries Information Sheet

**LAKE:** Cable and Wiley lakes

**COUNTY:** Bayfield

**YEAR:** 2024

### Introduction

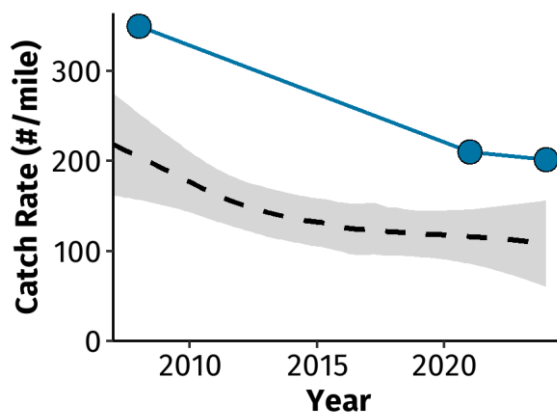
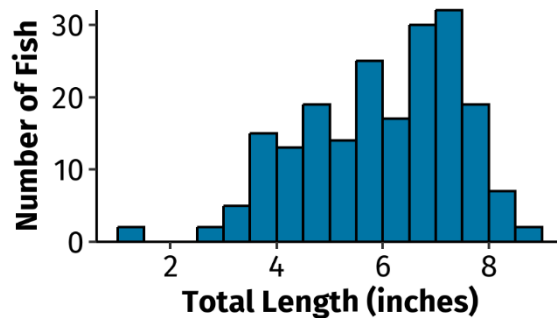
A late spring electrofishing (SE2) survey was conducted on Cable and Wiley lakes (WBIC 2729700 and 2729800) in Bayfield County on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. These two lakes are connected by a navigable channel. Data from both lakes were combined for this report. All species were collected along one mile of shoreline and gamefish were collected along an additional three miles of shoreline. Another SE2 survey was completed in 2021 but reports of a winterkill over the winter of 2022-2023 prompted this survey. Although SE2 surveys primarily target bass and panfish, species observed in the 2024 survey included largemouth bass, northern pike, bluegill, black crappie, pumpkinseed, rock bass, golden shiner, common shiner and yellow bullhead. Steep shorelines with abundant large woody habitat made sampling difficult, so fish abundances in Cable and Wiley lakes are likely higher than catch rates indicate.

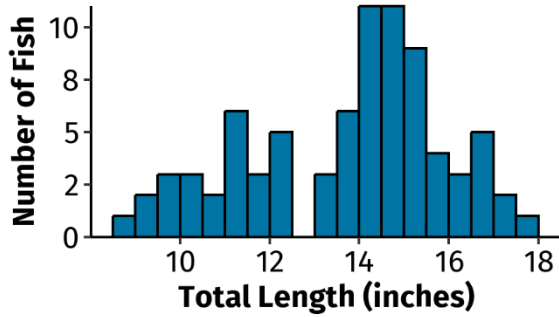
### BLUEGILL



There were 202 bluegills captured and length ranged from 1.3-8.9 inches. Bluegill catch rate (blue dots) was above average for simple-cool-clear lakes in Wisconsin (dashed line; 95% confidence interval shaded). Since the 2021 survey, the bluegill catch rate remained similar, but size structure improved. Eighteen 6-7-inch bluegills were kept for aging. Most of these fish were either age-4 (7 fish) and age-7 (8 fish). The fast growing, age-4 fish likely took advantage of abundant resources following the winterkill while the age-7 fish had survived in over-crowded conditions prior to the winterkill for longer.

Year	2021	2024
# Captured Per Mile	210	202
Quality Size ( $\geq 6''$ )	29%	53%
Preferred Size ( $\geq 8''$ )	3%	4%

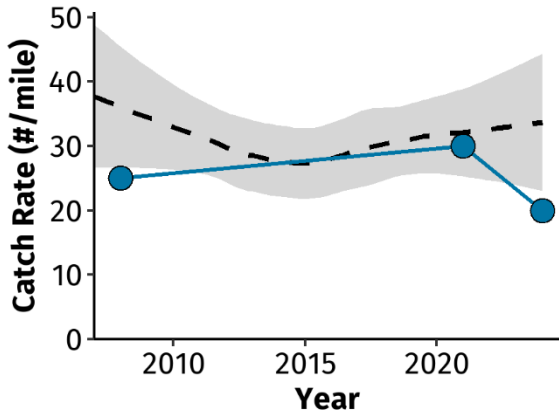




## LARGEMOUTH BASS



There were 80 largemouth bass captured and length ranged from 8.8-17.8 inches. Largemouth bass catch rate (blue dots) was slightly below the average for simple-cool-clear lakes in Wisconsin (dashed line; 95% confidence interval shaded). Since the 2021 survey, the largemouth bass catch rate and size structure declined slightly, but both remained good.



Year	2021	2024
# Captured Per Mile	30	20
Quality Size ( $\geq 12''$ )	86%	75%
Preferred Size ( $\geq 15''$ )	36%	30%

## OTHER SPECIES

There were 19 northern pike captured and length ranged from 10-31.7 inches. Only six black crappies were captured and length ranged from 8.3-9.5 inches, however, the steep shorelines and abundant woody habitat made sampling black crappies particularly difficult. Other species captured in low numbers (1-2 fish) included pumpkinseed, rock bass, golden shiner, common shiner and yellow bullhead.

## Summary

Overall, the winterkill in early 2023 does not appear to have substantially harmed the fish populations in Cable and Wiley lakes. Bluegill size structure improved while catch rates remained similar. The proportion of preferred size bluegills did not increase, but it may take another year after the winterkill to see those improvements. The slight decline in largemouth bass catch rate and PSD are likely a short-term result of the winterkill, as winterkills tend to be hard on largemouth bass, especially larger individuals. The presumed low oxygen levels leading to a winterkill likely only affected a small portion of the total fish community, and the surviving fish were able to quickly recover and fill their void.

*General fishing regulations for Cable and Wiley lakes in Bayfield County, Wisconsin.*

<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>SEASON DATES</b>	<b>DAILY BAG LIMIT</b>	<b>MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT</b>
Largemouth Bass	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday in May to 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in March	1	18 inches
Northern Pike	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday in May to 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in March	5	None
Panfish	Open all year	25	None

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities on Cable and Wiley lakes, contact:

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