



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fisheries Information Sheet

LAKE: Lower Eau Claire

COUNTY: Douglas/Bayfield

YEAR: 2025

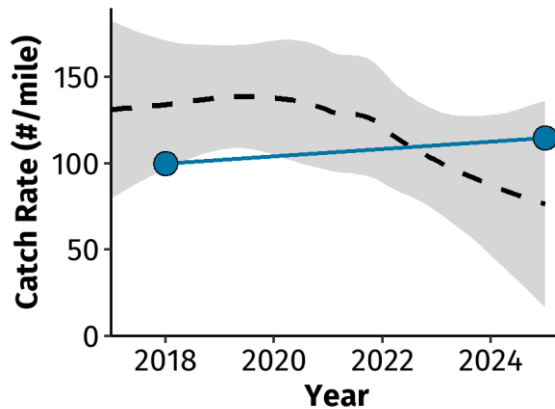
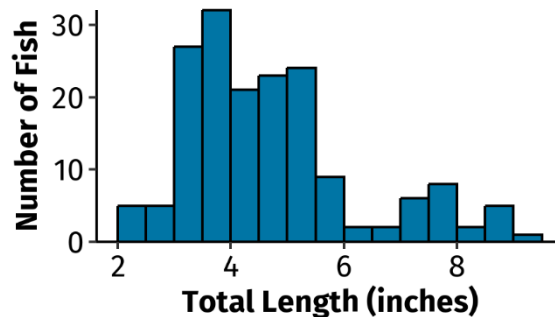
Introduction

A late spring electrofishing survey was conducted on Lower Eau Claire Lake (WBIC 2741600) in Douglas and Bayfield counties on May 12th, 2025. All species were collected along 1.5 miles of shoreline and gamefish were collected along an additional 4.5 miles of shoreline. Although these surveys primarily target bass and bluegill, other species observed included smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye, pumpkinseed, black crappie, yellow perch, warmouth, rock bass, white sucker and nine other prey fish species. Comparisons were made to previous surveys and similar Wisconsin lakes in the same lake class.

BLUEGILL



There were 172 bluegills captured and length ranged from 2.1 to 9.1 inches. Bluegill catch rate (blue dots) was slightly above average for similar Wisconsin lakes (dashed line). Since the 2018 survey, the bluegill catch rate increased slightly and size structure remained similar. Sixteen 6–7-inch bluegills were kept for aging. Age ranged from 4 to 9 years with a mean of 5.3 years, which is near the average for Douglas and Bayfield counties.



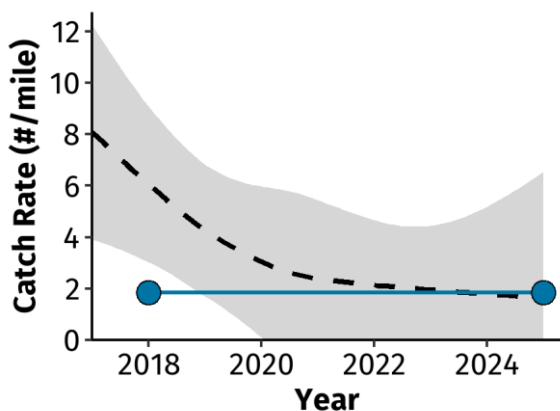
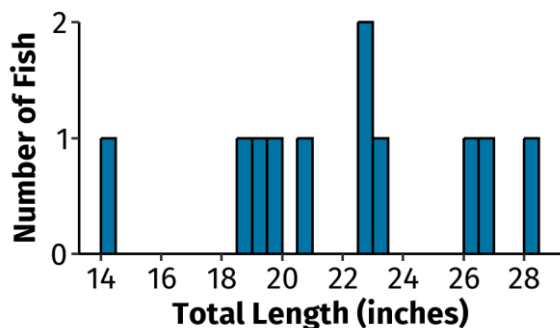
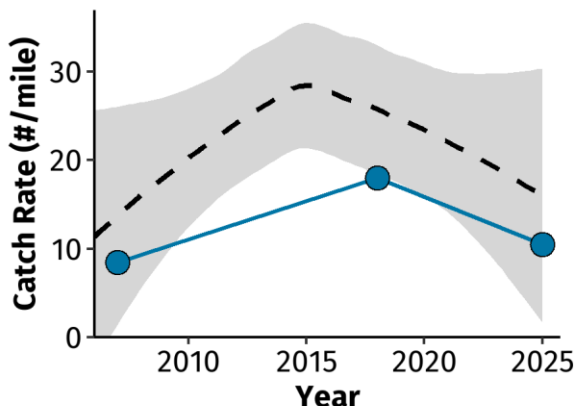
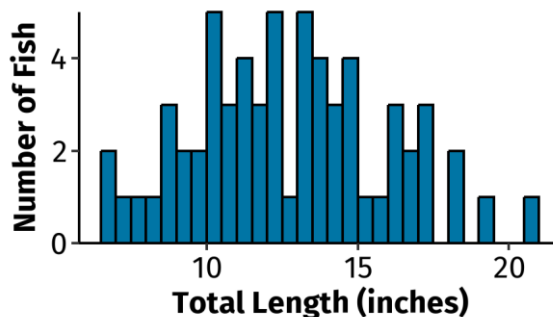
Year	2018	2025
# Captured Per Mile	100	115
Quality Size ($\geq 6''$)	15%	15%
Preferred Size ($\geq 8''$)	1%	5%

LARGEMOUTH BASS



There were 63 largemouth bass captured and length ranged from 6.7 to 20.8 inches. Largemouth bass catch rate (blue dots) was slightly below average for similar Wisconsin lakes (dashed line) but size structure was good. Since the 2018 survey, the largemouth bass catch rate decreased, and size structure increased slightly.

Year	2018	2025
# Captured Per Mile	18	11
Quality Size ($\geq 12"$)	62%	57%
Preferred Size ($\geq 15"$)	13%	22%

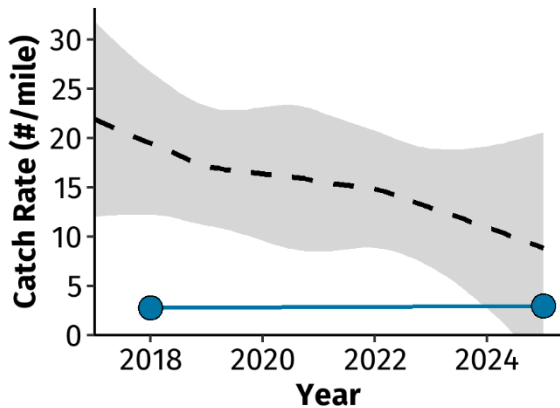
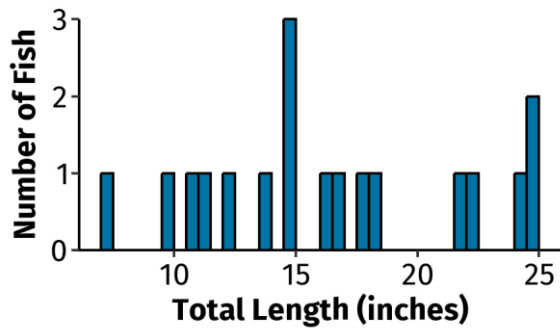


NORTHERN PIKE



There were 11 northern pike captured and length ranged from 14.0 to 28.4 inches. Northern pike catch rate (blue dots) was near the average for similar Wisconsin lakes (dashed line). Since the 2018 survey, the northern pike catch rate and size structure remained similar.

Year	2018	2025
# Captured Per Mile	1.9	1.8
Quality Size ($\geq 21"$)	67%	55%
Preferred Size ($\geq 28"$)	8%	9%



WALLEYE



There were 18 walleyes captured and length ranged from 7.4 to 25.0 inches. Walleye catch rate (blue dots) was slightly below the average for similar Wisconsin lakes (dashed line). Since the 2018 survey, the walleye catch rate and size structure remained similar.

Year	2018	2025
# Captured Per Mile	2.8	3.0
Quality Size ($\geq 15"$)	76%	50%
Preferred Size ($\geq 20"$)	10%	28%

OTHER SPECIES

There were 49 yellow perch captured and all were less than 6 inches. Eleven white suckers and seven rock bass were captured. Other species captured in low numbers (five or fewer fish) included smallmouth bass, black crappie, pumpkinseed, warmouth, emerald shiner, golden shiner, blacknose shiner, blackchin shiner, spottail shiner, bluntnose minnow, brook silverside, central mudminnow and johnny darter.

Summary

Overall, Lower Eau Claire Lake supports a wide array of fishing opportunities. Largemouth bass provide a high-quality fishery with good size structure. Smallmouth bass and walleye had relatively low abundance but tended to be large. Northern pike abundance and size were average for similar lakes. The overall high abundance of predators is supported by plentiful small bluegills, yellow perch, and a wide variety of other prey fish. Only one black crappie was captured but black crappies are not sampled well during late spring electrofishing surveys.

General fishing regulations for Lower Eau Claire Lake in Douglas and Bayfield counties, Wisconsin.

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Largemouth Bass (LMB)	1 st Saturday in May to 1 st Sunday in March	5 in total with SMB	None
Smallmouth Bass (SMB)	3 rd Saturday in June to 1 st Sunday in March	1	18 inches
Northern Pike	1 st Saturday in May to 1 st Sunday in March	5	None
Panfish	Open all year	25	None
Walleye	1 st Saturday in May to 1 st Sunday in March	3	18 inches
Muskellunge	Saturday nearest Memorial Day to Dec 31	1	40 inches

For fisheries management questions about Lower Eau Claire Lake, contact:

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