WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Creel Survey Report
Enterprise Lake, 2024-2025

Langlade County

Treaty Fisheries Publication

Created by

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Contents

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Fish Graphics: Virgil Beck, Stevens Point, WI

Introduction

Fish populations can fluctuate due to a variety of factors including natural forces like climate, reproductive success, predation and competition. Human activities such as fish harvest, stocking, habitat change and invasive species introduction can also have significant impacts. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fisheries crews regularly conduct fishery surveys on lakes and reservoirs to gather the information needed to monitor changes, identify concerns, evaluate past management actions and to prescribe fishery management strategies. Netting and electrofishing surveys are used to gather data on the status of fish populations and communities, measuring such parameters as species composition, population size, reproductive success, size and age distribution and growth rates. Harvest is another key component of fisheries that we need to measure.

On many lakes in the Ceded Territory of northern Wisconsin, harvest of fish is divided between sport anglers and the six Ojibwe bands who harvest fish under rights reserved by federal treaties. The tribes harvest fish primarily using spearing, a highly efficient method, during a relatively short time in the spring. Every fish in the spear harvest is counted and reported, creating a complete census of the harvest.

We also measure the sport angler harvest to assess its impact on the fishery. It would be highly impractical and very costly to conduct a complete census of every angler who fishes on a lake, so we conduct creel surveys instead.

A creel survey is an assessment tool used to sample the fishing activities of anglers on a body of water to make estimates of harvest and other fishery parameters. Creel survey clerks work on randomly-selected days and shifts, forty hours per week. The survey is conducted during daylight hours throughout the open season for gamefish from the first Saturday in May through the first Sunday in March. Creel surveys are not conducted in November when fishing effort is low and ice conditions are often unsafe.

Creel survey clerks travel their lakes using a boat or snowmobile to count the number of anglers at predetermined times and to interview anglers who have completed their fishing trip. Data are collected on what species they fished for, catch, harvest, lengths of fish harvested, marks (fin clips or tags) and hours of fishing effort. Collecting completed-trip data provides the most accurate assessment of angling activities, and it avoids the need to disturb anglers while they are fishing.

A computer program is used to estimate catch and harvest of each species, catch and harvest rates and fishing effort by month, as well as for the year in total. Keep in mind that these are estimates based on the best information available and not a complete accounting of effort, catch and harvest. Accurate estimates require that we sample a sufficient and representative portion of the angling activity on a lake. The accuracy of creel survey results depends on good cooperation and truthful responses by anglers when a creel clerk interviews them.

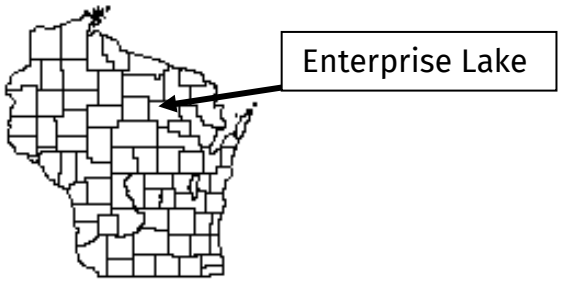
You may have encountered a DNR creel survey clerk on a recent fishing trip. We appreciate your cooperation during an interview. The survey only takes a few minutes of your time and it gives the DNR valuable information needed for management of the fishery.

This report provides estimates of:

1. Overall fishing effort (pressure)
2. Fishing effort directed at each species
3. Numbers of fish caught and harvested
4. Catch and harvest rates

Also included are a physical description of Enterprise Lake, discussion of results of the survey and detailed summaries by species of fishing effort, catch and harvest.

General Lake Information



LOCATION

Enterprise Lake is located in Langlade County near the town of Elcho.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Enterprise Lake is a 505-acre drainage lake with a maximum depth of 27 feet. Littoral substrate consists primarily of sand and muck, with some gravel, rock, and boulders. Enterprise Lake has neutral clear water of low transparency.

SEASONS SURVEYED

The period referred to in this report as the 2024-25 fishing season ran from May 4, 2024, through March 2, 2025. The summer creel survey ran from May 4 through Oct. 31, 2024, and the winter creel survey ran from Dec. 1, 2024 through March 2, 2025.

WEATHER

Ice-out on Enterprise Lake was in early April 2024. Fishable ice formed on Enterprise Lake in early December 2024.

FISHING REGULATIONS

The following seasons, daily bag limits and length limits were in place on Enterprise Lake during the 2024-25 fishing season:

SPECIES	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	MIN. SIZE
Largemouth bass	5/ 04 - 3/ 02	5*	14"
Smallmouth bass	6/ 15 - 3/ 02	5*	14"
*Bass species have a combined bag limit of 5. Catch & release is open all year.			
Muskellunge	5/ 25 - 12/ 31	1	40"
On open water			
Northern pike	5/ 04 - 3/ 02	5	None
Walleye	5/ 04 - 3/ 02	3	15"
20"- 24" Protected Slot, 1>24"			
Panfish	Open all year	25	None
Rock bass	Open all year	None	None

Species Catch And Harvest Information

Summaries of angling effort, catch and harvest information for each species are in Table 2 and Figures 1-10, along with a comparison of these statistics with the previous creel survey in Table 2. Information about species with fishing seasons extending beyond March 2, 2025 should be considered minimum estimates. Each species page has up to five graphs depicting the following:

1. **DIRECTED FISHING EFFORT**
   Estimated number of hours during each month that anglers spent fishing for a species.

2. **TOTAL CATCH AND HARVEST**
   Estimated number of fish of the indicated species caught or harvested by all anglers, regardless of targeted species.

3. **SPECIFIC CATCH AND HARVEST RATES**
   Estimated number of hours it takes an angler to catch or harvest a fish of the indicated species. Only information from anglers who were specifically targeting that species is reported.

4. **LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH**
   All fish of a species that were measured by the clerk during the entire creel survey season.

5. **LARGEST AND AVERAGE LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH**
   Largest and average (mean) length of a species of fish harvested. Only fish measured by the creel survey clerk are reported.

Creel Survey Results And Discussion

SURVEY LOGISTICS

We encountered no unusual problems conducting the survey or calculating the projections contained in the report. This was the second time the DNR conducted a creel

survey on Enterprise Lake. The last creel survey took place during 1991-92.

GENERAL ANGLER INFORMATION

Anglers spent 13,774 hours, or 27.3 hours per acre, fishing Enterprise Lake during the 2024-25 season (Table 1). That was less fishing effort than both the Langlade County average of 40.0 hours per acre, and the 1991-92 creel survey (41.8 hours per acre). July was the most heavily fished month (2,811 hours). Creel clerks were able to conduct 462 interviews throughout the survey.

RESULTS BY SPECIES

WALLEYE (Table 2, Figure 1)
Anglers spent 3,240 hours targeting walleye. Fishing effort for walleye was highest in May (822 hours). Total catch of walleye was 638 fish, and total harvest was 112 fish. Highest catch (177 fish) and harvest (58 fish) occurred in May. Anglers fished an estimated 7.0 hours to catch, and 32.8 hours to harvest a walleye during the survey. Mean length of harvested walleye was 16.8 inches and the largest measured was a 25.5-inch fish.

NORTHERN PIKE (Table 2, Figure 2)
Fishing effort directed at northern pike was 2,019 hours during the season. Northern pike fishing effort was greatest in February (325 hours). Total catch of northern pike was 1,393 fish, and total harvest was 148 fish. Anglers fished an estimated 4.6 hours to catch a northern pike during the survey. Mean length of harvested northern pike was 20.2 inches and the largest measured was a 30.1-inch fish.

MUSKELLUNGE (Table 2, Figure 3)
Muskellunge received the most fishing effort of any gamefish species during the season. Anglers spent 3,716 hours targeting muskellunge. Muskellunge fishing effort was greatest in July (821 hours). Total catch of muskellunge was 242 fish, and the highest catch (50 fish) also occurred in July. Anglers fished an estimated 19.7 hours to catch a muskellunge. Anglers harvested an estimated five muskellunge based on a 15.9-inch muskellunge observed by the creel clerk which the angler mistook for a northern pike.

SMALLMOUTH BASS (Table 2, Figure 4)
Fishing effort targeted at smallmouth bass was 752 hours during the season. Smallmouth bass fishing effort was greatest in July (202 hours). Total catch of smallmouth bass was 1,049 fish, with 5 fish harvested. Highest catch (286 fish) occurred in July. Anglers fished an estimated 4.5 hours to catch a smallmouth bass during the survey.

LARGEMOUTH BASS (Table 2, Figure 5)
Fishing effort directed at largemouth bass was 713 hours during the season. Largemouth bass fishing effort was greatest in July (175 hours). Total catch of largemouth bass was 213 fish, and total harvest was 6 fish. The highest catch (63 fish) occurred in August, and anglers fished an estimated 93.0 hours to catch a largemouth bass during the survey.

YELLOW PERCH (Table 2, Figure 6)
Yellow perch were the most sought-after panfish species during the survey. Yellow perch received 4,797 hours of directed fishing effort. Total catch of yellow perch was 5,652 fish, and total harvest was 2,257 fish. Mean length of yellow perch harvested was 8.5 inches, and the largest measured was an 11.1-inch fish.

BLUEGILL (Table 2, Figure 7)
Fishing effort directed at bluegill was 3,881 hours. Total catch of bluegill was 7,849 fish, and total harvest was 2,354 fish. Mean length of bluegill harvested was 7.8 inches and the largest measured was an 10.5-inch fish.

BLACK CRAPPIE (Table 2, Figure 8)
Black crappie received 3,536 hours of directed fishing effort. Anglers caught 2,007 black crappie and harvested 1,340 fish. Mean length of black crappie harvested was 11.6 inches and the largest measured was an 14.5-inch fish.

PUMPKINSEED (Table 2, Figure 9)
Pumpkinseed received 1,021 hours of directed fishing effort. Anglers caught 1,182 pumpkinseed and harvested 468 fish. Mean length of pumpkinseed harvested was 7.1 inches and the largest measured was an 8.5-inch fish.

ROCK BASS (Table 2, Figure 10)
Rock bass received no directed fishing effort. Anglers caught 432 rock bass and harvested 71 fish. Mean length of rock bass harvested was 7.7 inches and the largest measured was an 8.5-inch fish.

BULLHEAD SPECIES
Bullhead species received no directed fishing effort. Anglers caught 3 bullheads with no observed harvest.

Acknowledgements

The DNR thanks all the anglers who took the time to offer information about their fishing trip to the creel clerk. The survey would not have been possible without their cooperation.

We also thank our cooperator, the Town of Elcho, who generously allowed the DNR to keep a boat and snowmobile on their property during this survey.

Completion of this survey was possible because of the efforts of the following DNR fisheries management staff: John Kubisiak, Lawrence Eslinger, Jason Halverson, Mark Love, Eric Brown and Bob Consolo. Creel clerks on Enterprise Lake during the survey period were Eric Lindberg, Jacob Cafferty and Tyler Olson.

Additional copies of this report, and those covering other local lakes, can be obtained from the DNR Woodruff Service Center or online at:
http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/north/trtycrlsrvys.html

Table 1. Sportfishing effort summary, Enterprise Lake, 2024-25 season; compared to 1991-92 creel results, Langlade County averages, and Ceded Territory averages.

MONTH	NUMBER OF ANGLER PARTY INTERVIEWS	TOTAL ANGLER HOURS	TOTAL ANGLER HOURS/ACRE	1991-92 TOTAL ANGLER HOURS/ACRE	LANGLADE COUNTY AVERAGE HOURS/ACRE	CEDED TERRITORY AVERAGE HOURS/ACRE
May	55	2,128	4.2	6.2	6.4	4.7
June	62	1,923	3.8	7.5	6.9	6.0
July	74	2,811	5.6	10.5	9.0	6.4
August	50	1,640	3.2	6.6	4.6	5.0
September	60	1,355	2.7	2.9	2.6	3.1
October	33	936	1.9	2.5	1.3	1.4
December	31	753	1.5	3.3	1.7	1.0
January	49	1,015	2.0	1.4	3.1	1.7
February	43	1,093	2.2	0.7	4.0	1.6
March	5	121	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.2
Summer Total	334	10,792	21.4	36.2	30.8	26.5
Winter Total	128	2,982	5.9	5.6	9.2	4.6
Grand Total	462	13,774	27.3	41.8	40.0	30.7

Note: Summer is May-October; Winter is December-March

Number of Angler Party Interviews is the number of groups of anglers interviewed by the creel clerk. A party is considered the members of a group who fish together in the same boat, ice shanty or from shore. The clerk fills out one interview form for each group of anglers. The number of individual anglers actually contacted by the clerk is usually much greater than the number of groups listed in this table since most groups consist of more than one angler.

Total Angler Hours is the estimated total number of hours that anglers spent fishing on Enterprise Lake during each month surveyed.

Total Angler Hours/Acre is the total angler hours divided by the area of the lake in acres. This is useful in order to compare effort on Enterprise Lake to other lakes.

1991-92 Total Angler Hours/Acre is the total angler hours divided by the area of the lake in acres. This is from the previous creel survey that took place on Enterprise Lake.

County Average Hours/Acre is the average angler effort in hours per acre for county lakes that have been surveyed since 1990. This value is useful for fishing pressure comparisons with other waters.

Ceded Territory Average Hours/Acre is the average angler effort in hours per acre for inland lakes in the Ceded Territory that have been surveyed since 1990. This value can be used to compare Enterprise Lake to other lakes in northern Wisconsin.

Table 2. Comparison of creel survey synopses, Enterprise Lake, 2024-25 and 1991-92 fishing seasons.

CREEL YEAR: 2024-25

SPECIES	DIRECTED EFFORT (HOURS)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	TOTAL CATCH	SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (HRS/FISH)	TOTAL HARVEST	SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (HRS/FISH)	MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH
Walleye	3,240	13.7%	638	7.0	112	32.8	16.8
Northern pike	2,019	8.5%	1,393	4.6	148	17.0	20.2
Muskellunge	3,716	15.7%	242	19.7	5	*	15.9
Smallmouth bass	752	3.2%	1,049	4.5	5	*	16.1
Largemouth bass	713	3.0%	213	93.0	6	*	16.8
Yellow perch	4,797	20.3%	5,652	1.1	2,257	2.5	8.5
Bluegill	3,881	16.4%	7,849	0.6	2,354	1.7	7.8
Black crappie	3,536	14.9%	2,007	1.8	1,340	2.7	11.6
Pumpkinseed	1,021	4.3%	1,182	2.2	468	3.8	7.1
Rock bass	*	*	432	*	71	*	7.7
Bullheads	*	*	3	*	0	*	**

CREEL YEAR: 1991-92

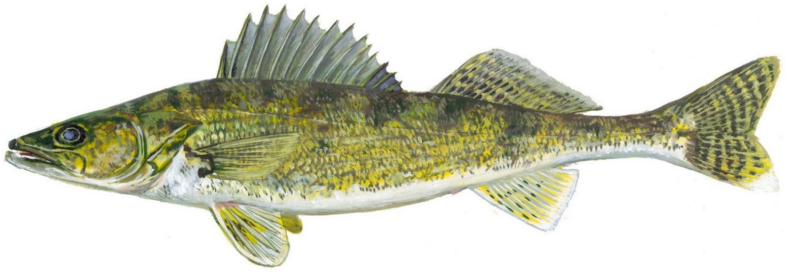
SPECIES	DIRECTED EFFORT (HOURS)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	TOTAL CATCH	SPECIFIC CATCH RATE (HRS/FISH)	TOTAL HARVEST	SPECIFIC HARVEST RATE (HRS/FISH)	MEAN LENGTH OF HARVESTED FISH
Walleye	8,407	24.5%	655	13.2	316	27.4	17.5
Northern pike	3,426	10.0%	469	10.3	230	18.0	25.1
Muskellunge	8,863	25.9%	345	30.1	70	126.6	37.2
Smallmouth bass	1,780	5.2%	456	4.7	134	15.3	14.7
Largemouth bass	141	0.4%	0	*	0	*	*
Yellow perch	4,587	13.4%	7,172	0.8	1,116	4.7	7.5
Bluegill	3,028	8.8%	3,956	0.9	465	7.5	5.8
Black crappie	2,510	7.3%	872	3.1	614	4.2	10.0
Pumpkinseed	120	0.4%	63	5.9	28	0.0	5.1
Rock bass	1,196	3.5%	1,030	2.1	39	84.7	5.8
Bullheads	222	0.6%	1,924	2.9	143	0.0	8.2

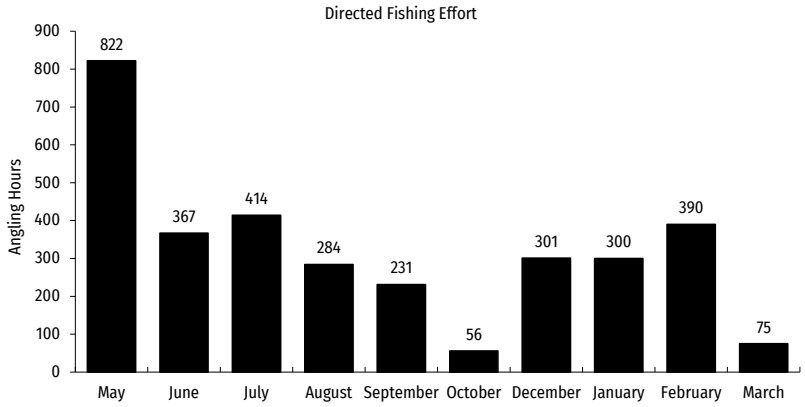
Note: If a species is not shown in a table, no data was collected by the creel clerks for that species.

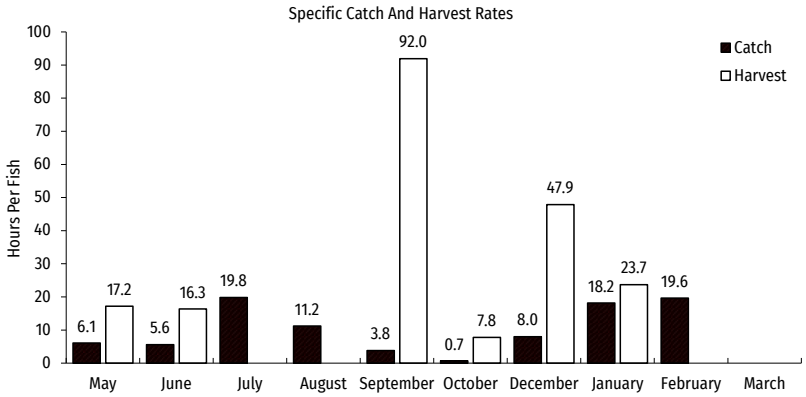
* Indicates that no fish of this species were caught or harvested (depending on the column) by anglers who specifically targeted this species.

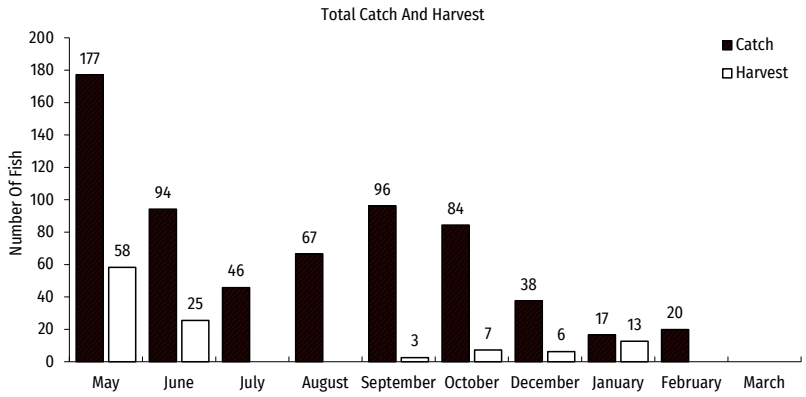
** Indicates that no fish were measured by the creel clerks for this species.

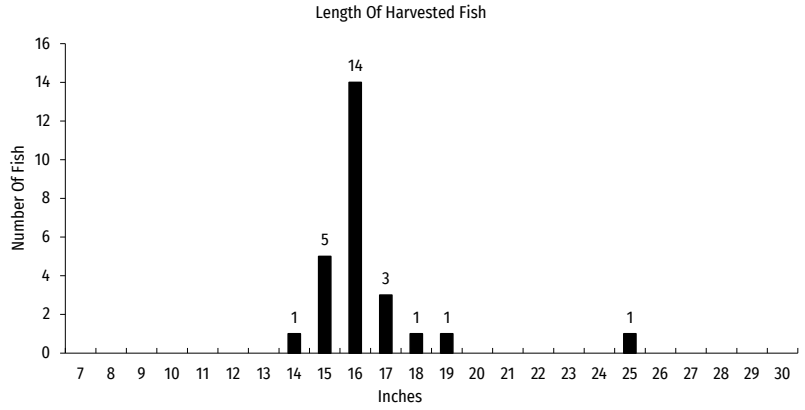
Walleye











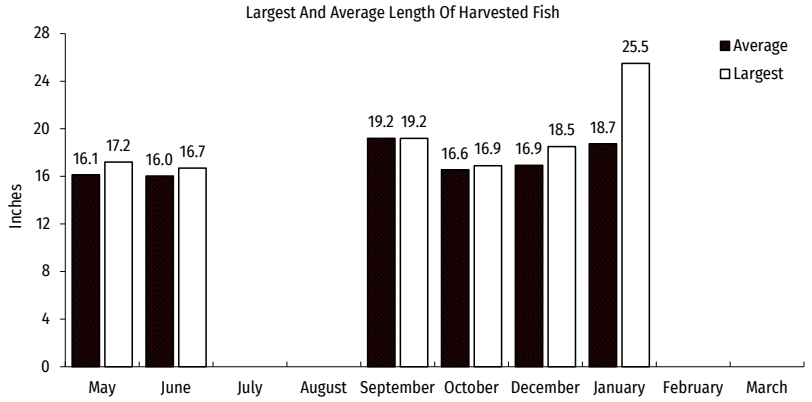
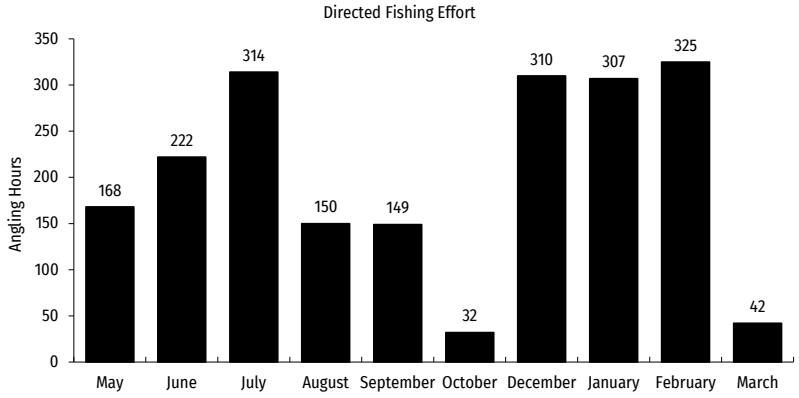
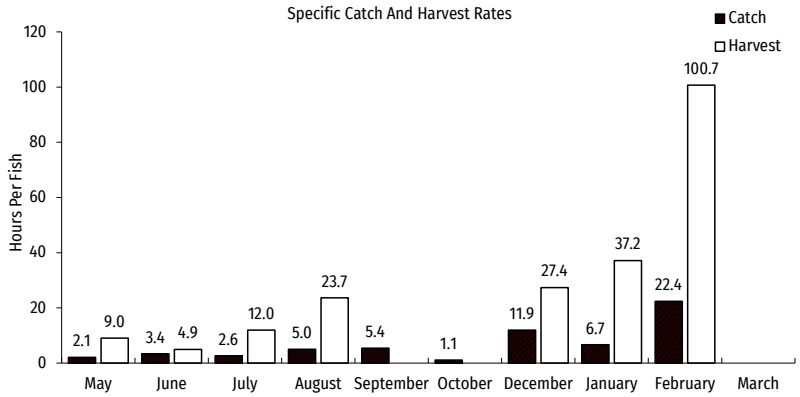
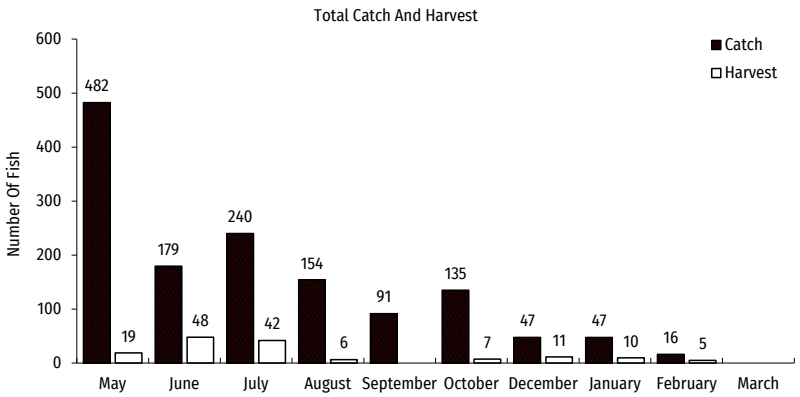


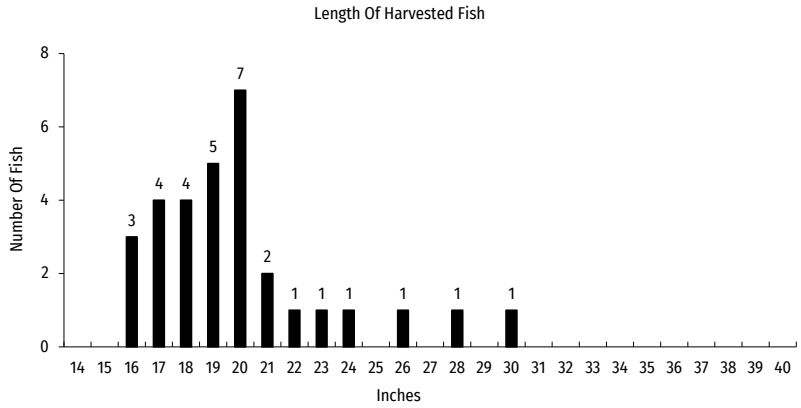
Figure 1. Walleye fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.



Northern Pike







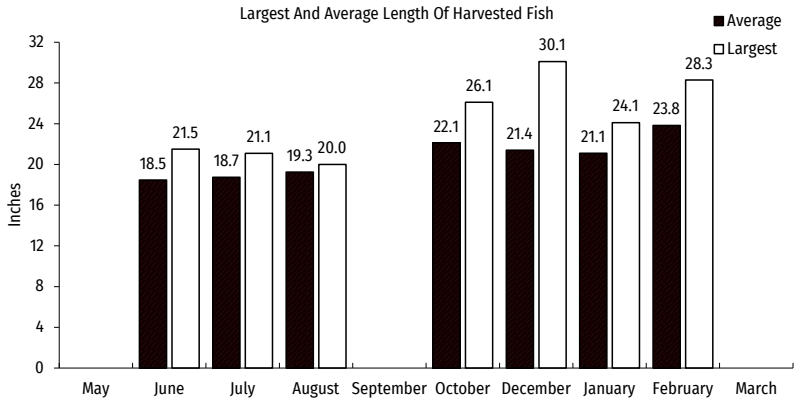
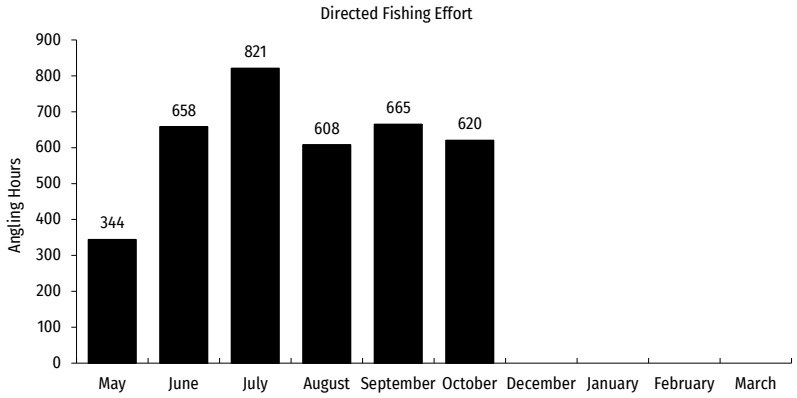
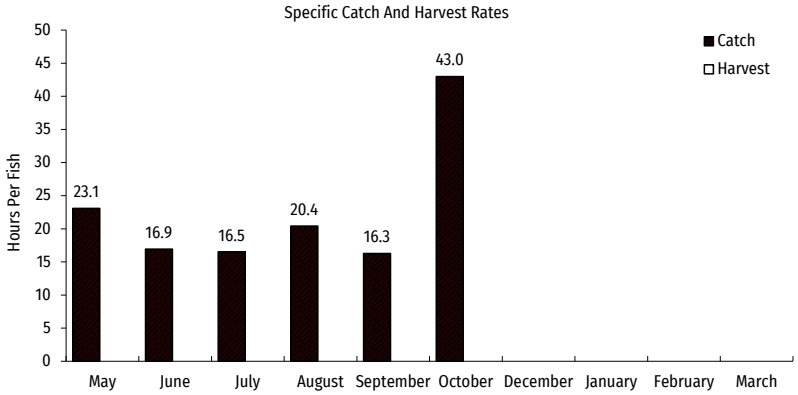
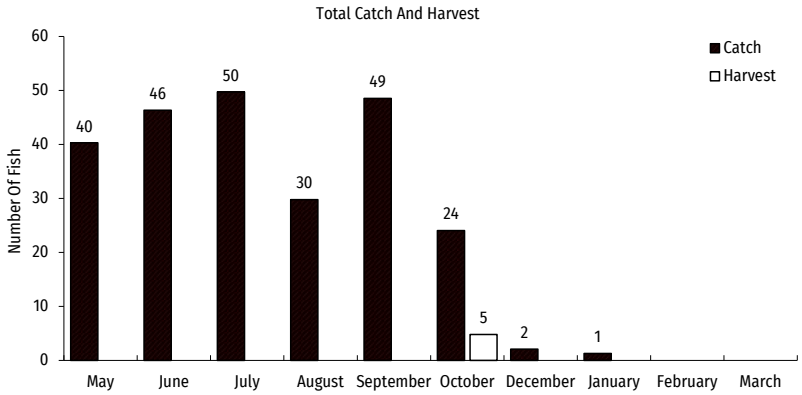


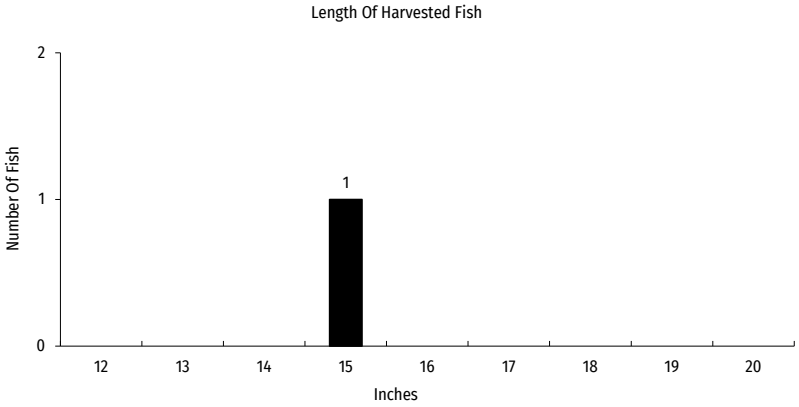
Figure 2. Northern pike fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.

Muskellunge









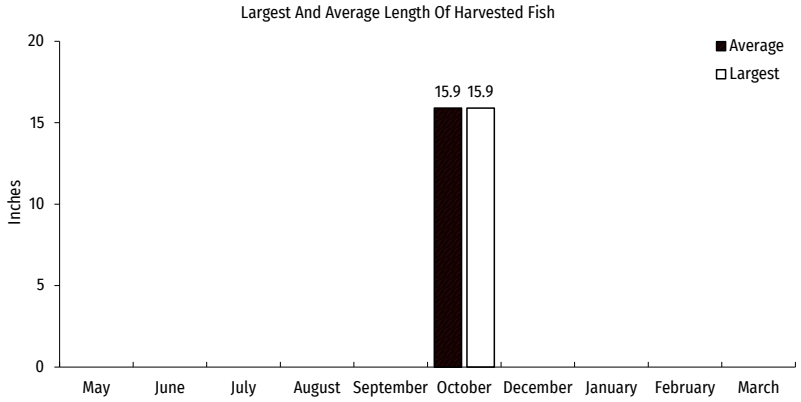
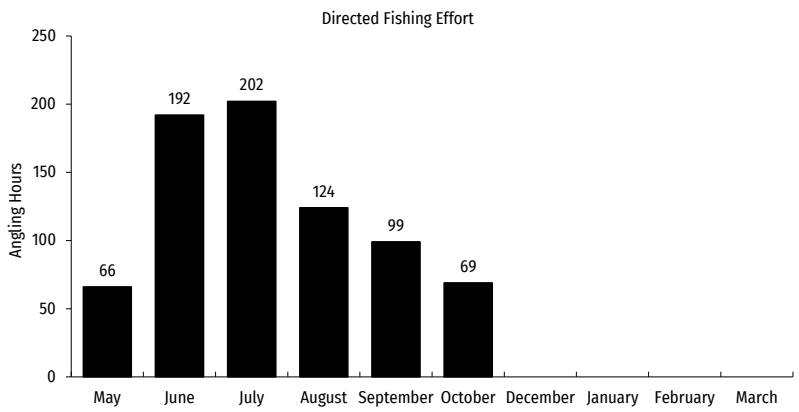
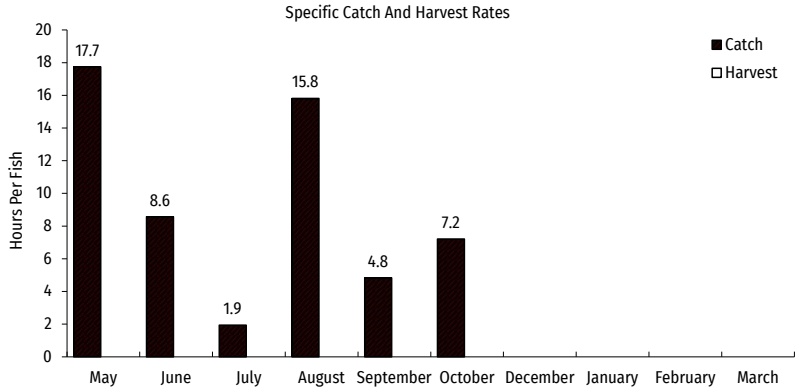
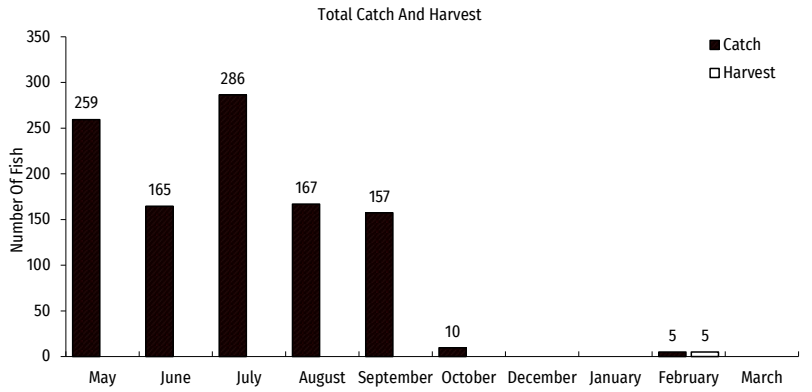
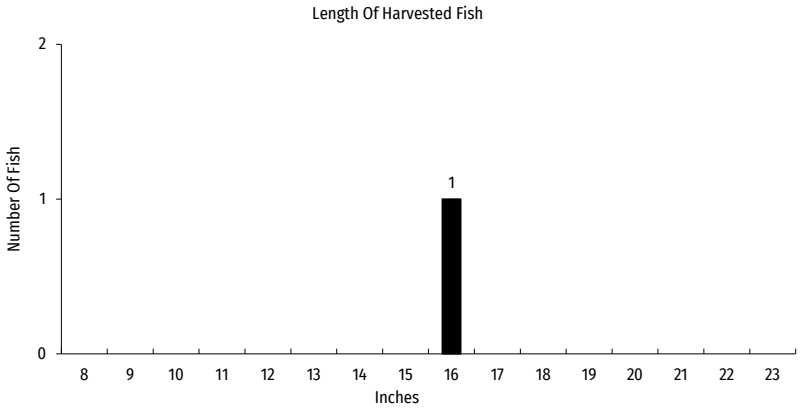


Figure 3. Muskellunge fishing effort, catch and harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.









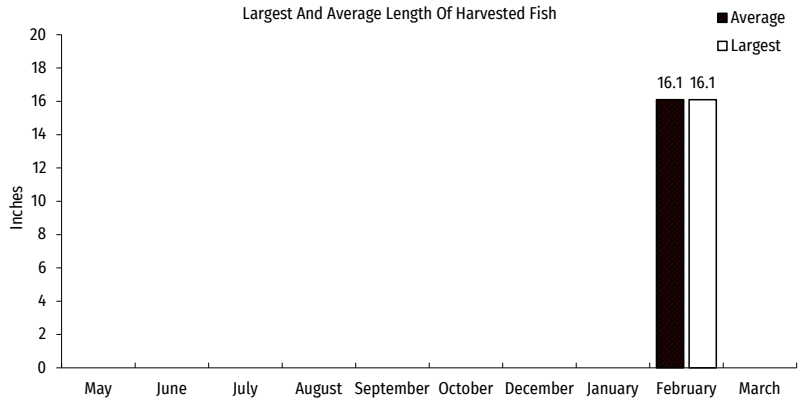
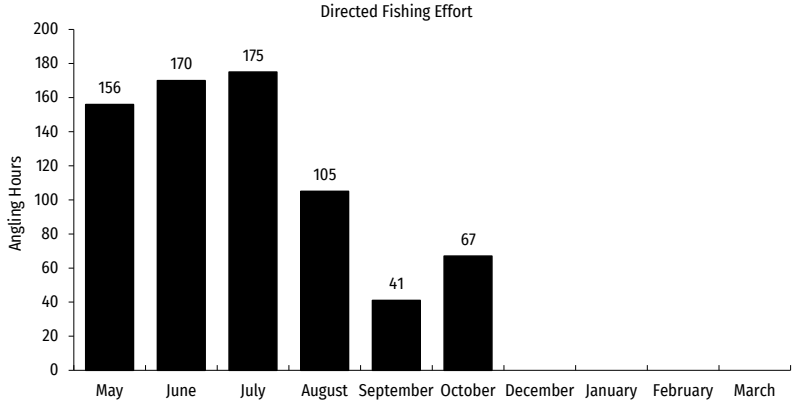
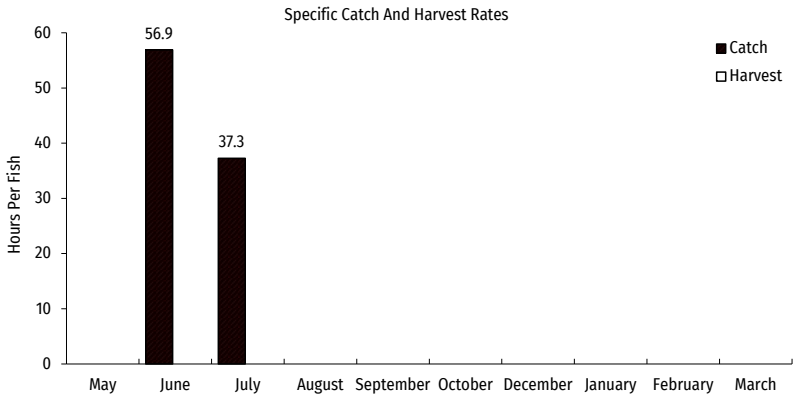
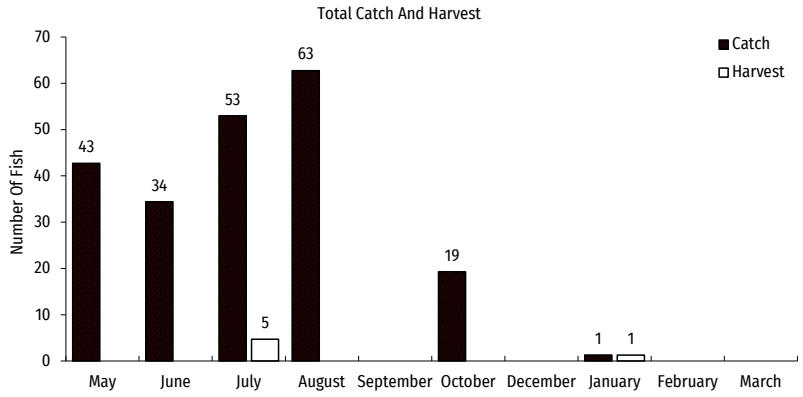


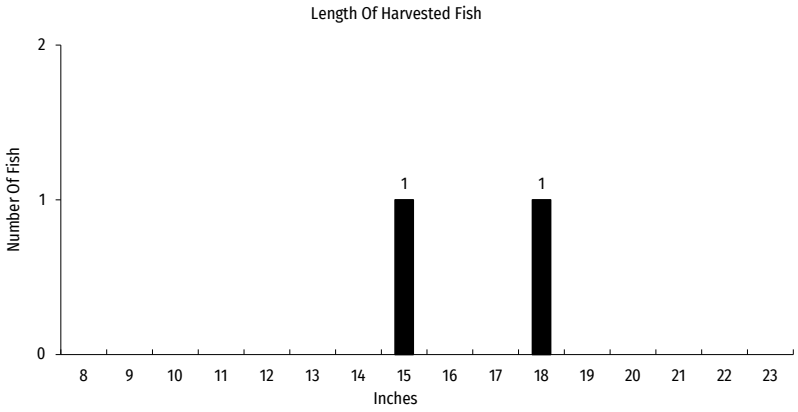
Figure 4. Smallmouth bass fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.



Largemouth Bass







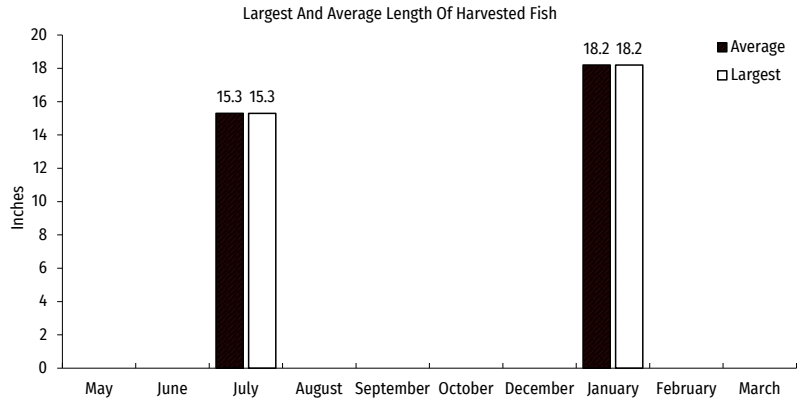
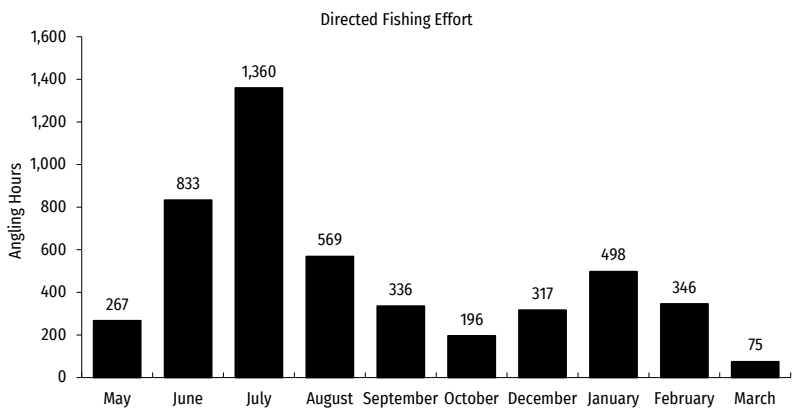
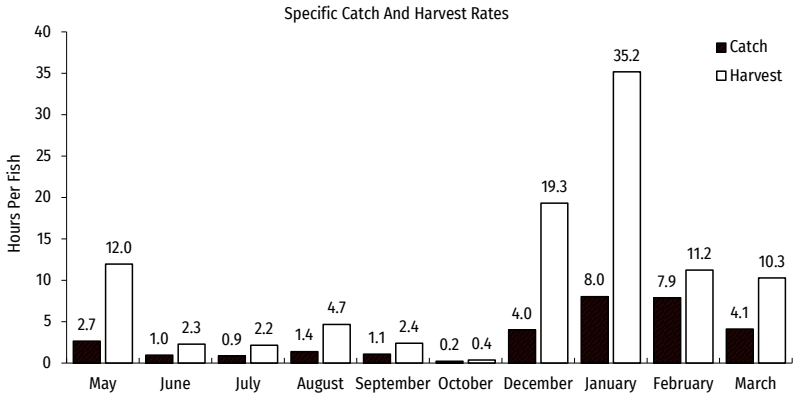
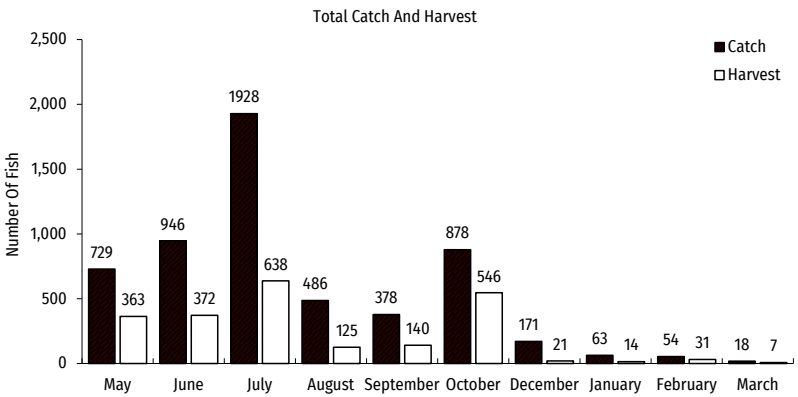


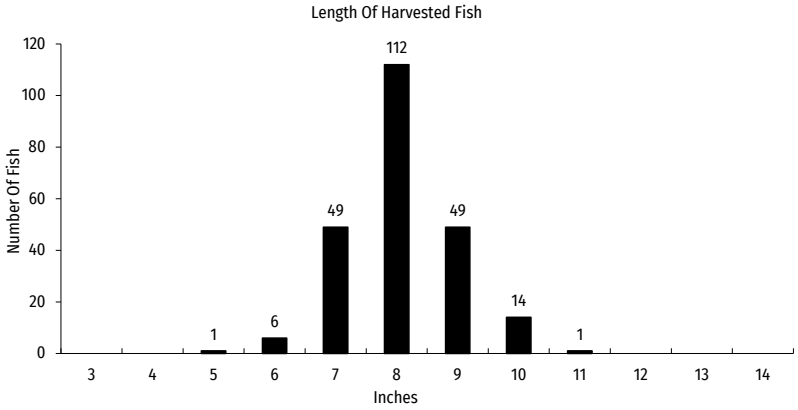
Figure 5. Largemouth bass fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.



Yellow Perch







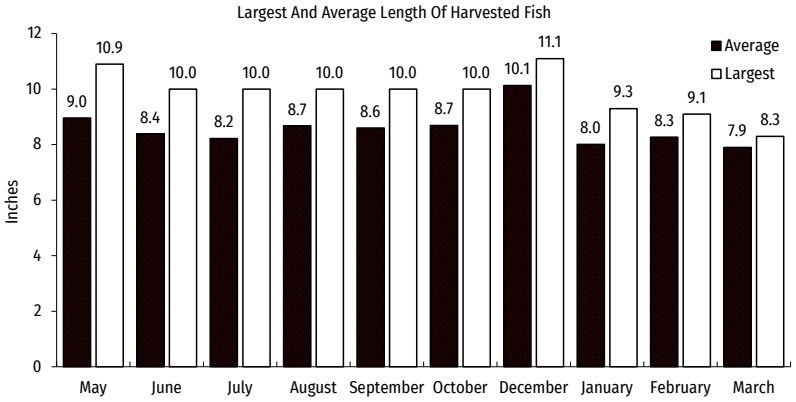
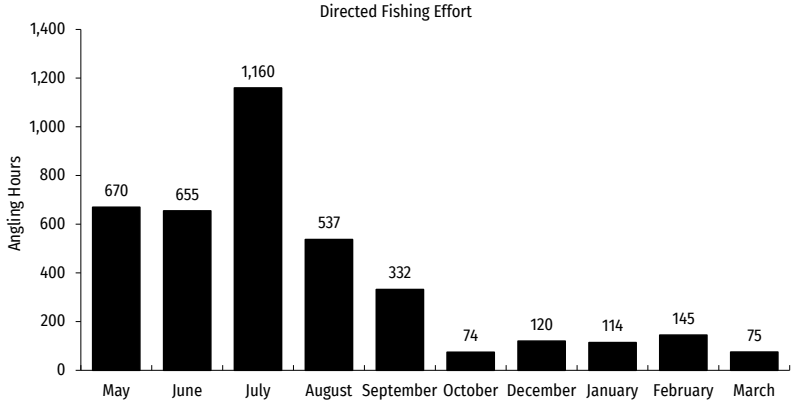
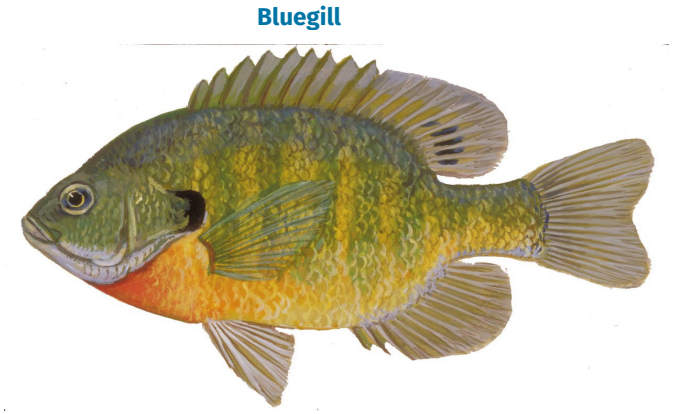
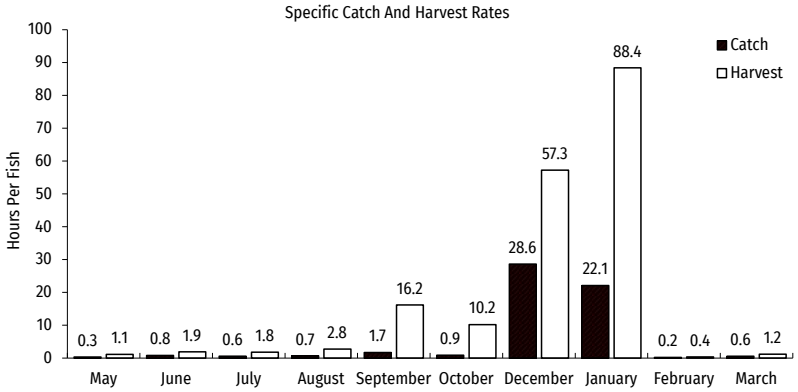
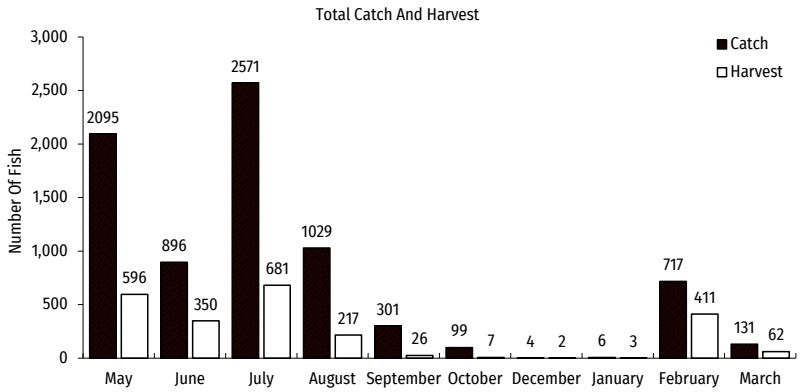


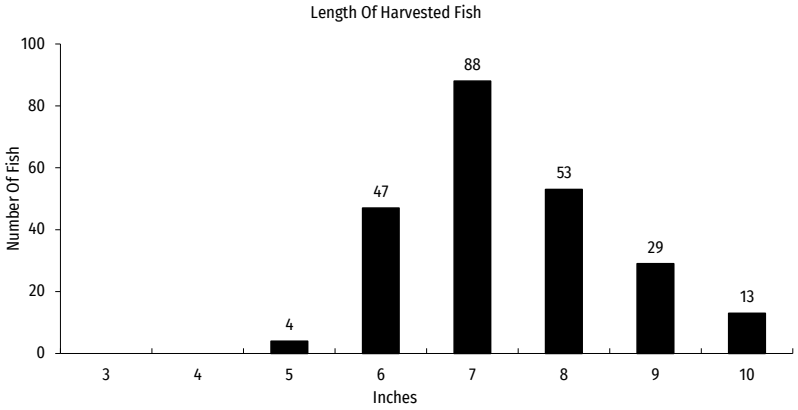
Figure 6. Yellow perch fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.











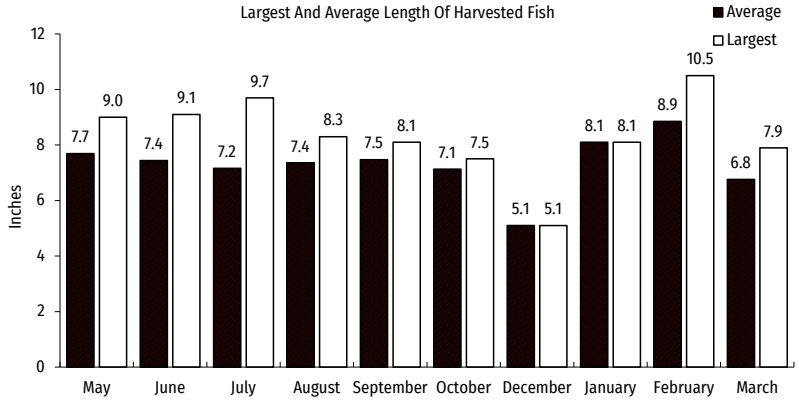
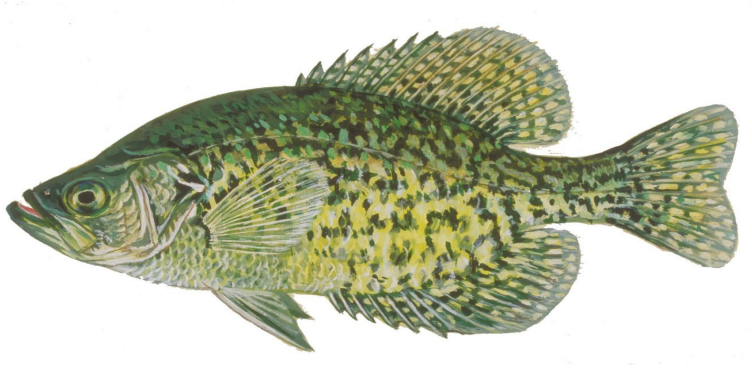
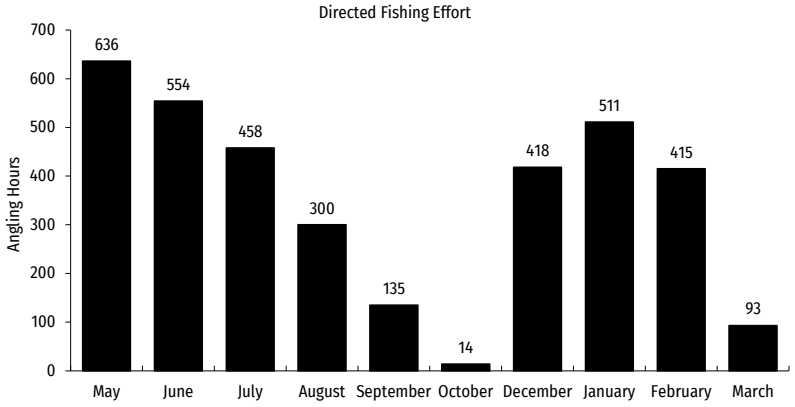
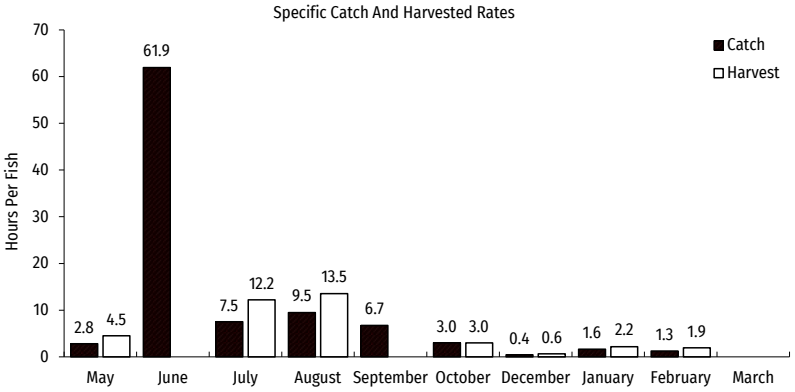


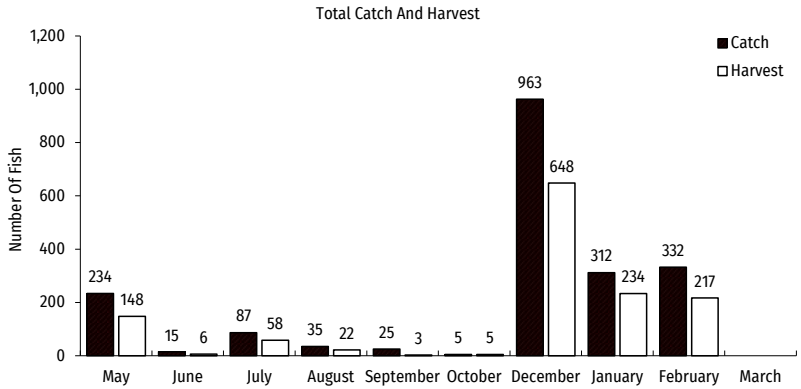
Figure 7. Bluegill fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.

Black Crappie









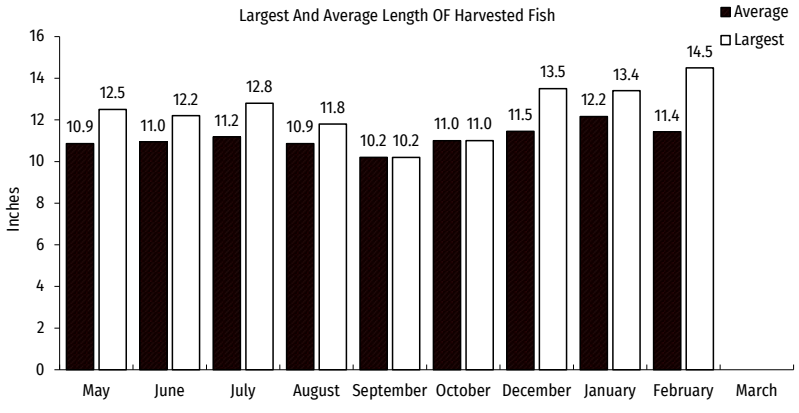
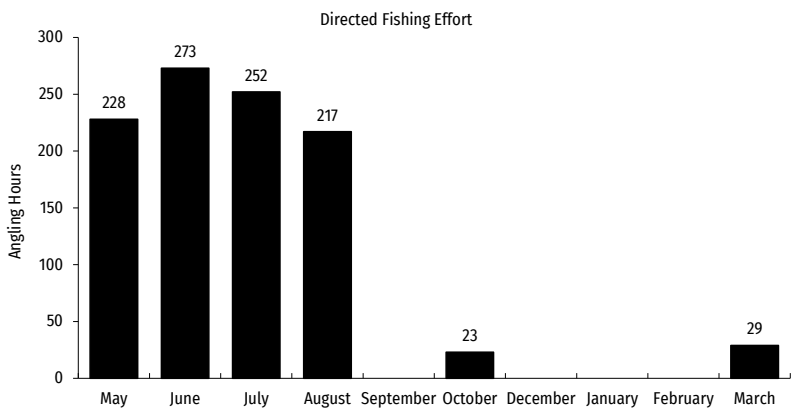
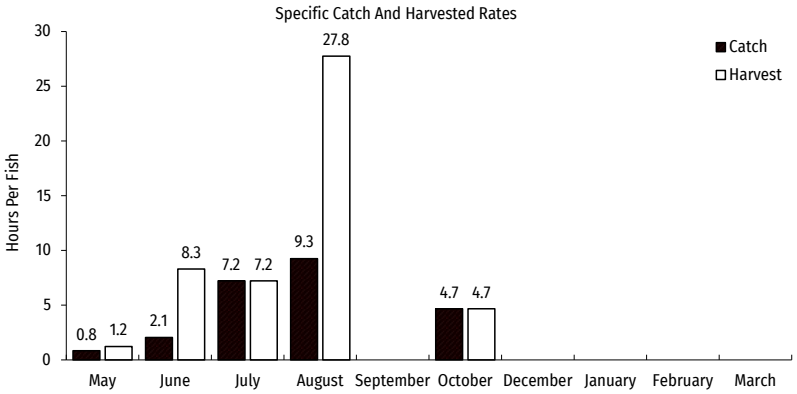
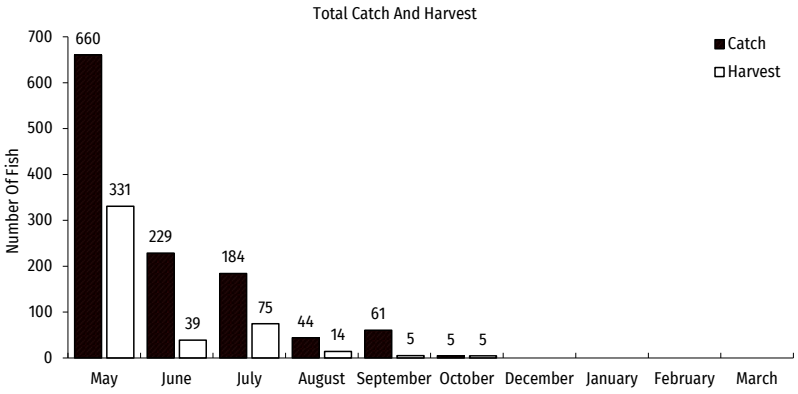


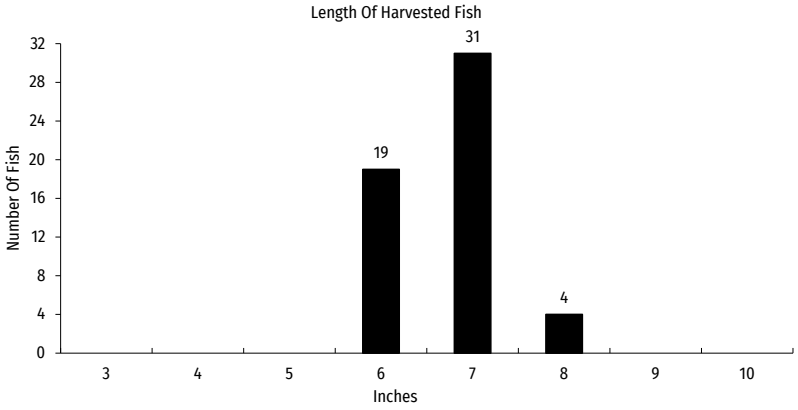
Figure 8. Black crappie fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.



Pumpkinseed







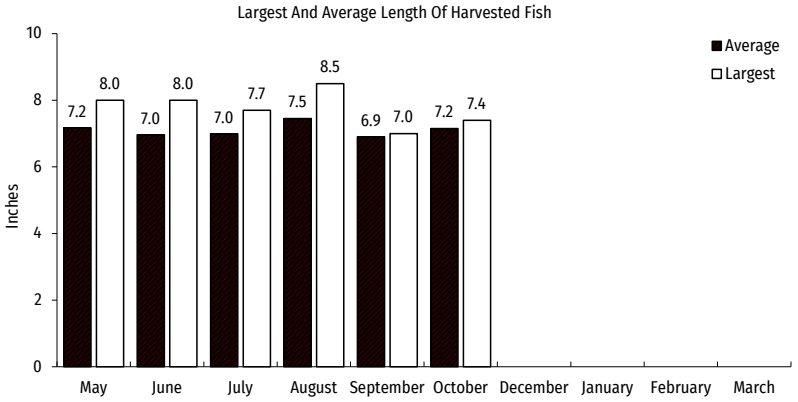
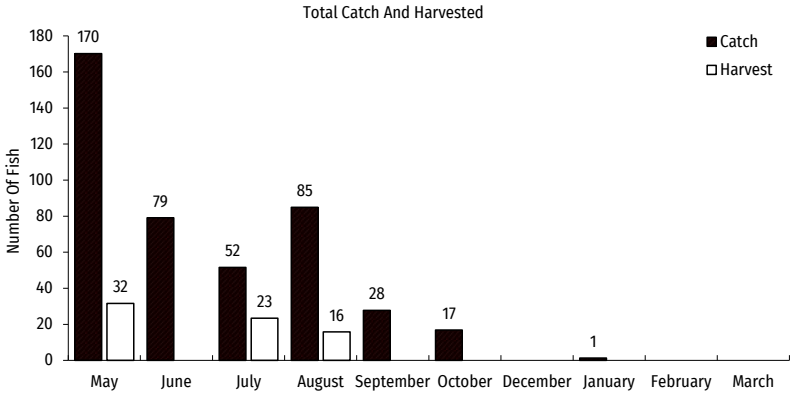
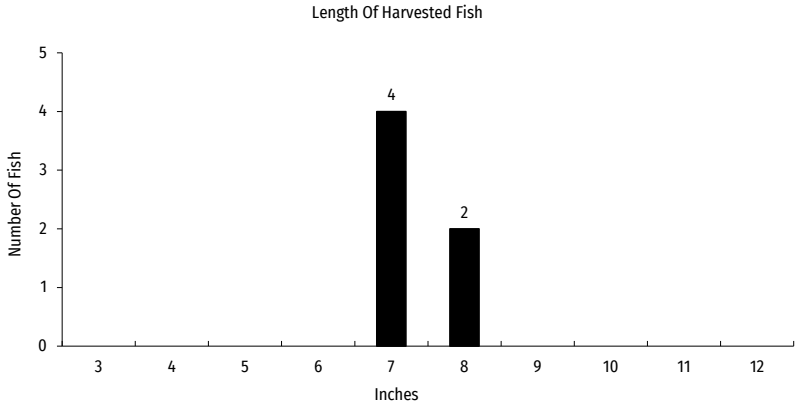


Figure 9. Pumpkinseed fishing effort, catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.

Rock Bass





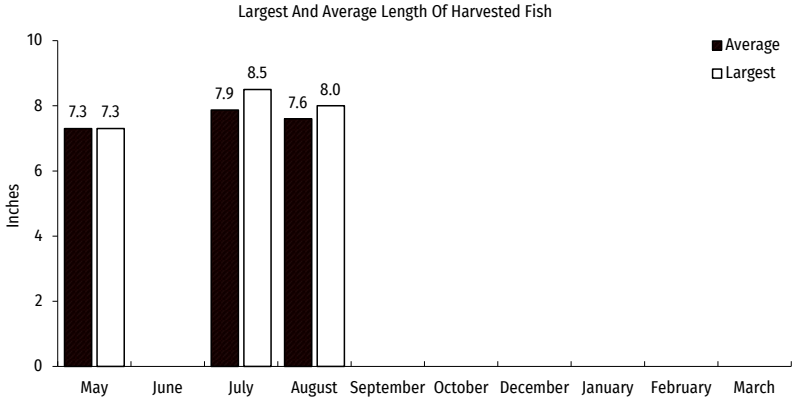


Figure 10. Rock bass catch, harvest and length distribution, Enterprise Lake, during 2024-25.