



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fisheries Information Sheet

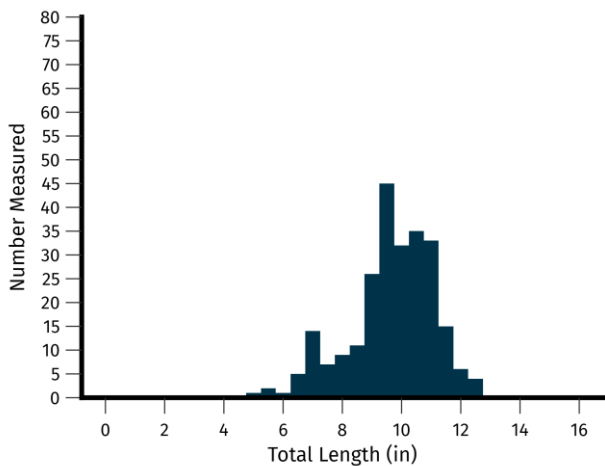
LAKE: Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk

COUNTY: Oneida

YEAR: 2024

Introduction

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) surveyed Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk lakes, Oneida County during the spring of 2024. Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk lakes are soft-water drainage lakes with predominantly sand substrate and substantial areas of rubble and gravel. These lakes are classified as complex-two-story lakes possessing cold-water and warm-water fish species. The combined lakes have a surface area of 3,552 acres, 32.5 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 84 feet. Lake Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk had 273 dwellings, nine resorts, two campgrounds, two camps and one prison along the shoreline. Gamefish were collected over five electrofishing transects covering 7.5 miles of the shoreline. All species were collected during five half mile transects covering 2.5 miles of shoreline. Walleyes were targeted with 77 net-nights of fyke netting and an electrofishing run around the entire shoreline.



BLACK CRAPPIE



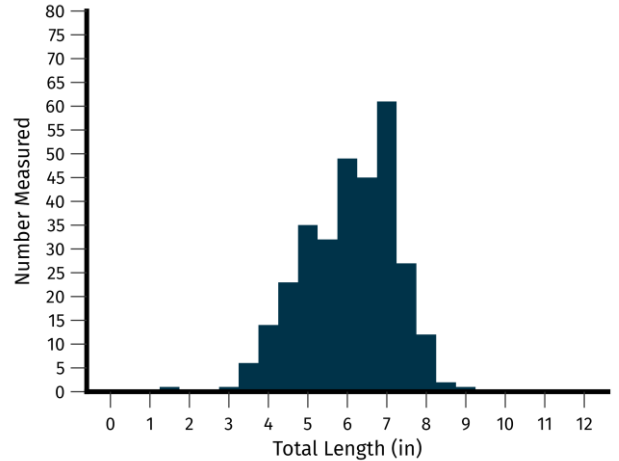
A total of 288 black crappies were captured while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Black crappie relative abundance during late spring electrofishing targeting all species was around the 50th percentile for Oneida County lakes (i.e., 50% of Oneida County lakes have lower relative abundance of black crappie). The lengths of measured black crappies varied between 5.2 inches and 12.7 inches, with a mean length of 9.7 inches.

11.2 black crappie per mile	
Quality size \geq 8 inches	8.0 per mile
Preferred size \geq 10 inches	3.2 per mile

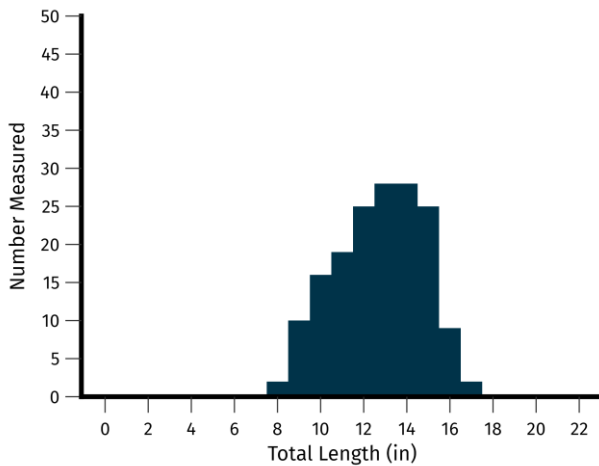
BLUEGILL



A total of 331 bluegills were captured while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Bluegill relative abundance during late spring electrofishing when targeting all species was around the 75th percentile for complex-two-story lakes and slightly above the 50th percentile among Oneida County lakes. The lengths of measured bluegills varied between 1.5 inches and 8.6 inches, with a mean length of 6.1 inches.



112.8 bluegill per mile	
Quality size \geq 6 inches	58.0 per mile
Preferred size \geq 8 inches	1.6 per mile



LARGEMOUTH BASS



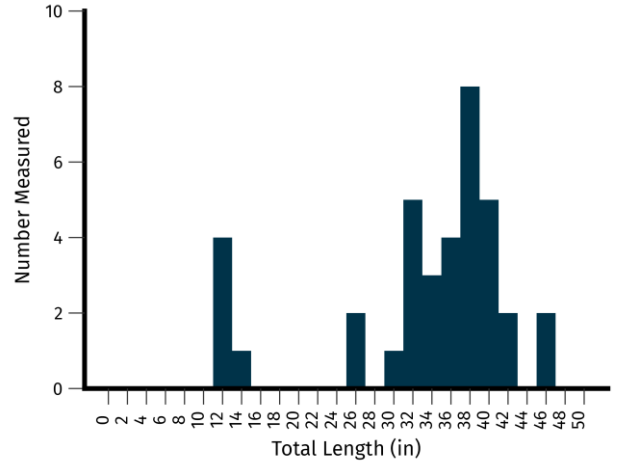
A total of 164 adult largemouth bass were captured while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Largemouth bass relative abundance during late spring electrofishing targeting gamefish was near the 75th percentile for complex-two-story and slightly above the 50th percentile among Oneida County lakes. The lengths of measured largemouth bass varied between 7.6 inches and 17.3 inches, with a mean length of 12.7 inches.

9.9 largemouth bass per mile	
Quality size \geq 12 inches	5.0 per mile
Preferred size \geq 15 inches	0.9 per mile

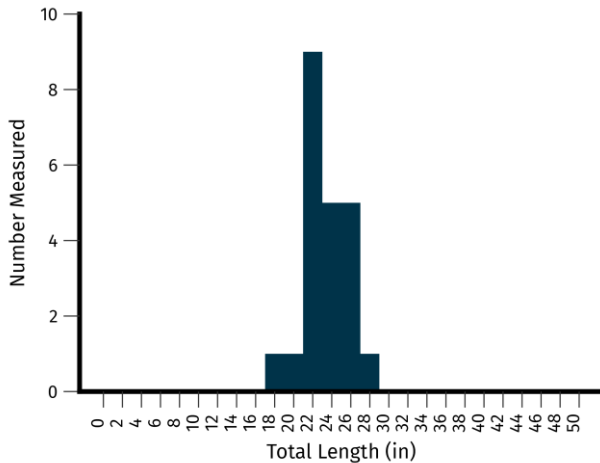
MUSKELLUNGE



A total of 37 muskellunge were captured while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Muskellunge relative abundance was slightly above the 50th percentile for complex-two-story and near the 50th percentile among Oneida County lakes despite not being the primary target of any netting. The lengths of measured muskellunge varied between 11.7 inches and 45.5 inches, with a mean length of 33.3 inches.



0.3 muskellunge per net night	
Quality size \geq 30 inches	0.3 per net night
Preferred size \geq 38 inches	0.1 per net night



NORTHERN PIKE



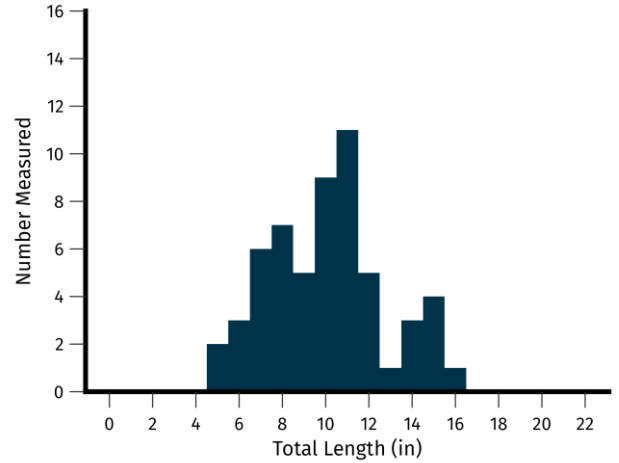
A total of 22 northern pike were captured while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Northern pike relative abundance was slightly above the 50th percentile for complex-two-story and near the 50th percentile among Oneida County lakes despite not being the primary target of any netting. The lengths of measured northern pike varied between 18.6 inches and 27.6 inches, with a mean length of 23.4 inches. Caution should be applied when interpreting northern pike size structure as a low number were captured.

0.2 northern pike per net night	
Quality size \geq 21 inches	0.2 per net night
Preferred size \geq 28 inches	0.0 per net night

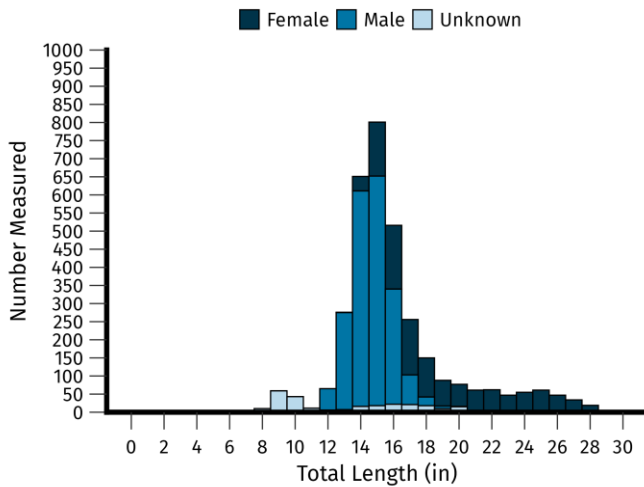
SMALLMOUTH BASS



A total of 57 smallmouth bass were captured while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Smallmouth bass relative abundance during late spring electrofishing was slightly above the 50th percentile for complex-two-story lakes and 50th percentile among Oneida County lakes. The lengths of measured smallmouth bass varied between 5.2 inches and 16.4 inches, with a mean length of 10.1 inches. Caution should be applied when interpreting smallmouth size structure as a low number were captured.



4.8 smallmouth bass per mile	
Quality size ≥ 11 inches	1.3 per mile
Preferred size ≥ 14 inches	0.4 per mile



WALLEYE



Fyke netting and electrofishing surveys captured 3,392 walleyes while surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. Mark-recapture population estimate procedures estimated 16,658 adult walleyes in Lake Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk. The lengths of measured walleye varied between 7.5 inches and 29.0 inches, with a mean length of 16.3 inches. Walleyes were 1.5 inches longer on average at age-1 and age-2 compared to previous surveys and other complex-two-story lakes but 1.2 inches shorter from ages 3 to 10.

Estimated 4.7 adult walleye per acre	
12 – 14.9 inches	0.7 per acre
15 – 19.9 inches	2.2 per acre
20 inches and greater	1.9 per acre

OTHER SPECIES

Other species encountered in surveying Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk Lake included bluntnose minnow (five), bowfin (nine), grass pickerel (one), johnny darter (one), mimic shiner (20), pumpkinseed x bluegill (11), pumpkinseed (24), rock bass (128), white sucker (13), yellow bullhead (14) and yellow perch (five).

Summary

Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk Lake are complex-two story lakes with mixed fisheries. A collaborative walleye rehabilitation project has been ongoing throughout Minocqua chain of lakes including Tomahawk Lake since 2015. The walleye population has increased in abundance since the low of 0.7 per acre observed in 2015 and the previous high of 3.2 per acre observed in 2021. The slower growth of walleye from age 3 to 10 may demonstrate impacts of increasing abundance following stocking and closure of harvest. Largemouth bass and smallmouth bass appear to be responding to the no minimum length limit implemented in 2012 as relative abundance has decreased while mean length has increased. Black crappies relative abundance was higher, bluegills was similar, pumpkinseeds was lower, rock bass higher and yellow perch lower compared to what was found during fall of 2003 survey targeting all species.

Table 1. General fishing regulations for Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk lakes, Oneida County Wisconsin in 2024. While the regulatory information provided was current at the time of surveying, it should not be used as a substitute for the current fishing regulation pamphlet. You may obtain a copy of the current fishing regulations by downloading a copy from the [DNR Fishing Regulations page](#).

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
*Largemouth bass (harvest season)	May to March	5	No minimum length
Muskellunge	End May to Dec 31	1	50" minimum length
Northern pike	May to March	5	No minimum length
Panfish	Open all year	25	No minimum length
*Smallmouth bass (harvest season)	Mid-June to March	Catch and release only	Catch and release only
Walleye	May to March	1	18" minimum, 22" to 28" protected slot

* Catch and release fishing is allowed year-round for largemouth bass and smallmouth bass.

Acknowledgements

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities on Tomahawk and Little Tomahawk, contact:

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