WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fisheries Information Sheet

LAKE: HATFIELD LAKE **COUNTY: ST. CROIX** **YEAR: 2025**

Introduction

Hatfield Lake is located within the City of New Richmond and is accessible by a public boat ramp in Hatfield Lake Regional Park on the south shoreline. This seepage lake is 86 acres and has a maximum depth of 9 feet. Because of its depth and watershed characteristics, Hatfield Lake has been prone to winterkill. To alleviate the risk of winterkill, a winter aeration system was installed in 2001 to assist with improving dissolved oxygen conditions in the winter. The aerator was used until early 2011. The aeration system was then upgraded and turned back on in 2022. The fish species present in Hatfield Lake include northern pike, yellow perch, black crappie, black bullhead and golden shiner. Within Wisconsin's Lake Classification System, Hatfield Lake is classified as a simple-harsh lake with a fishery. This classification generally implies that a lake may contain one to two gamefish species and has a relatively small lake area. These lakes are frequent to winterkill and can be dominated by bullheads if present. The only invasive species found in the lake is Curly Leaf Pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) which was found in 2006.

The lake was surveyed in the spring of 2025 when water temperatures reached 55-60˚F. Nighttime boat electrofishing was used to assess the overall health of the fishery. The shoreline of the lake was divided into three stations to assess gamefish and panfish throughout the lake. The total distance sampled was 2.1 miles of a gamefish station, and one 0.5 mile all species station. All fish were measured to the nearest tenth of an inch. Relative abundance was calculated as catch per unit effort (CPUE) or the number of fish captured per mile of shoreline.

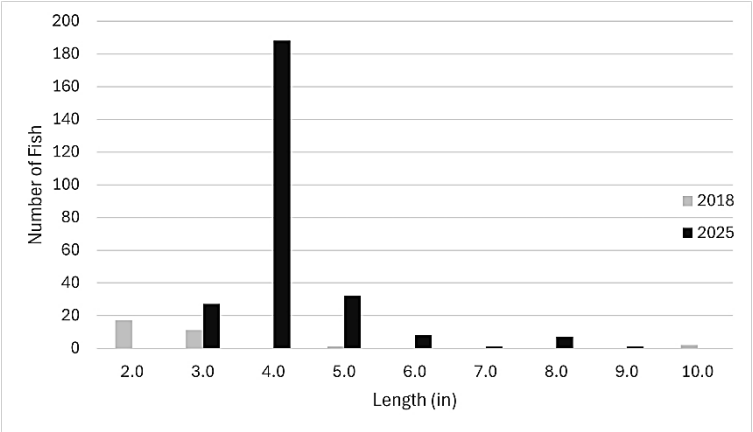
BLACK CRAPPIE

Black crappie were present in low abundance with only five fish captured in this survey. Black crappie were not present during the previous survey in 2018.

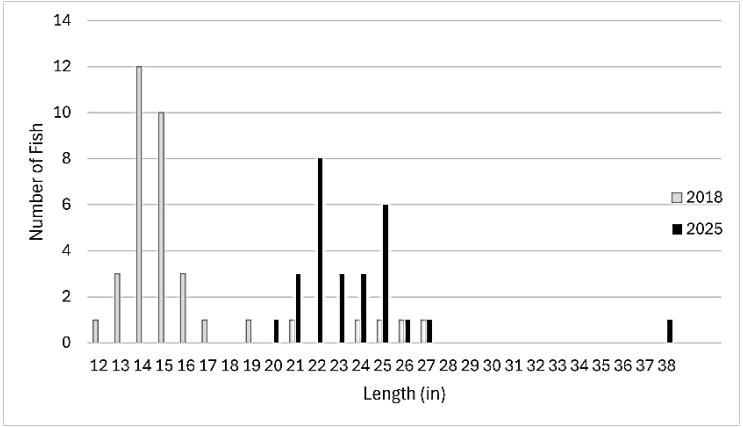
	2018	2025
CPUE (fish per mile)	0	2
Length Range (inches)	0	9.5 to 11.1
Mean Length (inches)	0	10.6

YELLOW PERCH

Yellow perch relative abundance increased from 62 fish per mile in 2018 to 101 fish per mile in 2025. The mean length of yellow perch increased slightly from 3.5 to 4.6 inches in the 2025 survey while maximum length has slightly declined. Perch were found to be in the 95th percentile for mean length when compared to similar lakes around the state. This was an increase from the 2018 survey with the mean length being in the 50th percentile compared to similar lakes in Wisconsin.



	2018	2025
CPUE (fish per mile)	62	101
Length Range (inches)	2.8 to 10.4	3.7 to 8.4
Mean Length (inches)	3.5(50)	4.6(95)



NORTHERN PIKE

Northern pike remained in low abundance in 2018 and 2025. The mean length of northern pike has increased from 16.5 inches in 2018 to 24 inches in 2025. In addition, one larger northern pike was captured that was 38.3 inches in length.

	2018	2025
CPUE (fish per mile)	14	10
Length Range (in)	12 to 27	20.5 to 38
Mean Length (inches)	16.5	24

BLACK BULLHEAD

Black bullhead were found in high abundance in both the 2018 and 2025 surveys. Catch rates in the current survey were 270 fish per mile. Bullhead were not collected in 2018 but were abundant. The mean length of black bullhead was 5.8 inches.

Summary

Northern pike and yellow perch were present in moderate abundance with black crappies present in low abundance. The mean length of northern pike has increased compared to the previous survey; however, no northern pike less than 20 inches were documented. The lack of smaller northern pike is likely an indicator of poor spawning success caused by lower water levels which may limit access to suitable spawning habitat. Yellow perch abundance has increased and mean length has increased slightly and was within the 95th percentile for similar lakes across the state. Black bullhead were in high abundance and are the primary species that was found in the survey. The abundance of bullhead can inhibit the growth and survival of gamefish populations (Sikora et al. 2021). If successful winter aeration continues, Hatfield Lake could support a more diverse predator population that may aid in reducing bullhead abundance. Stocking of largemouth bass, northern pike and bluegill could be considered to provide a more diverse fishery if winterkill conditions are alleviated.

Overall, Hatfield Lake contains a yellow perch population that provides the main fishery along with low numbers of northern pike with some quality size fish present. With the high number of black bullhead, improvements in gamefish and panfish populations may be limited without the aid of additional fish stocking. Continued winter aeration is needed to maintain and improve fish populations in the lake.

Table 1. General fishing regulations for Hatfield Lake in St. Croix County, Wisconsin.

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT
Northern Pike	Saturday in May to 1st Sunday in March	5	None
Panfish (bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie and yellow perch)	Open all year	10	None

Acknowledgements

For answers to questions about fisheries management activities on Hatfield Lake contact:
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Literature Cited

Sikora L. W., VanDeHey J. A., Sass G. G., Matzke G., Preul M. 2021. Fish Community Changes Associated with Bullhead Removals in Four Northern Wisconsin Lakes. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, 41:71–81.