

Stone Lake Comprehensive Fisheries Survey 2023

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Outline

- Sampling
- Stocking History
- Results
- Creel Survey Results
- Management Recommendations

What We Did



- Netted for pike/walleye
- Electrofished for walleye
- Electrofished the shoreline for bass and panfish
- Fall electrofished to check walleye reproduction
- Creel survey – started in May 2023 – March 2024

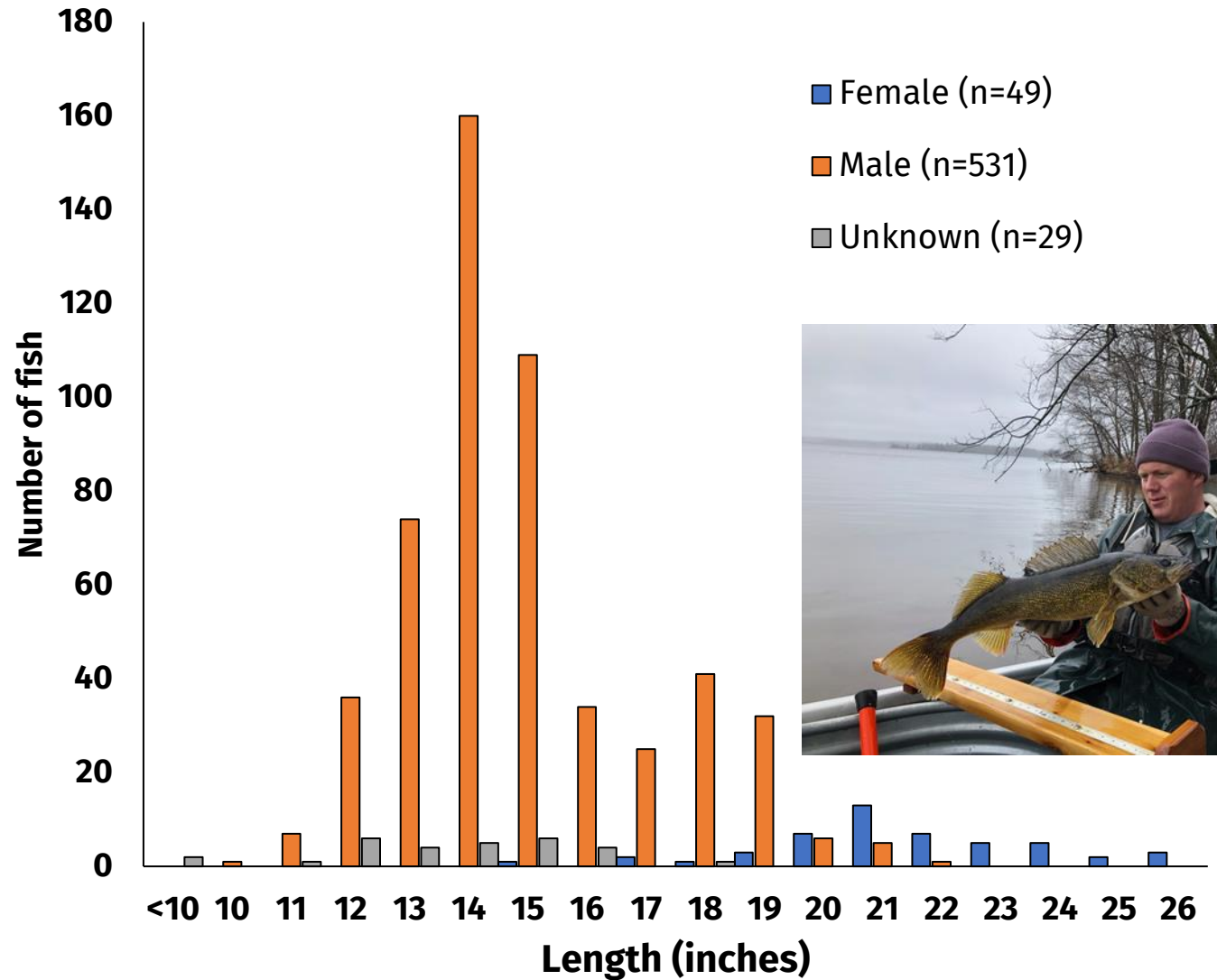
Stocking history

Year	Species	Age Class	Number Stocked	Avg. Length (in)	Source
2000	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	26,150	1.5	DNR
2002	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	26,135	1.7	DNR
2004	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	26,130	2.4	DNR
2006	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	18,280	2.0	DNR
2007	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	1,956	7.3	PRIVATE HATCHERY
2008	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	18,584	1.6	DNR
2009	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	2,000	7.0	PRIVATE HATCHERY
2010	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	18,305	1.7	DNR
2011	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	1,999	7.0	TRIBAL HATCHERY
2012	WALLEYE	SMALL FINGERLING	18,305	1.7	DNR
2013	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	2,000	7.0	PRIVATE HATCHERY
2014	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	7,520	6.4	DNR
2016	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	7,343	7.5	DNR
2018	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	7,229	6.5	DNR
2020	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	7,349	7.1	DNR
2022	WALLEYE	LARGE FINGERLING	7,335	6.9	DNR

**Average
cost =
\$7796.51**

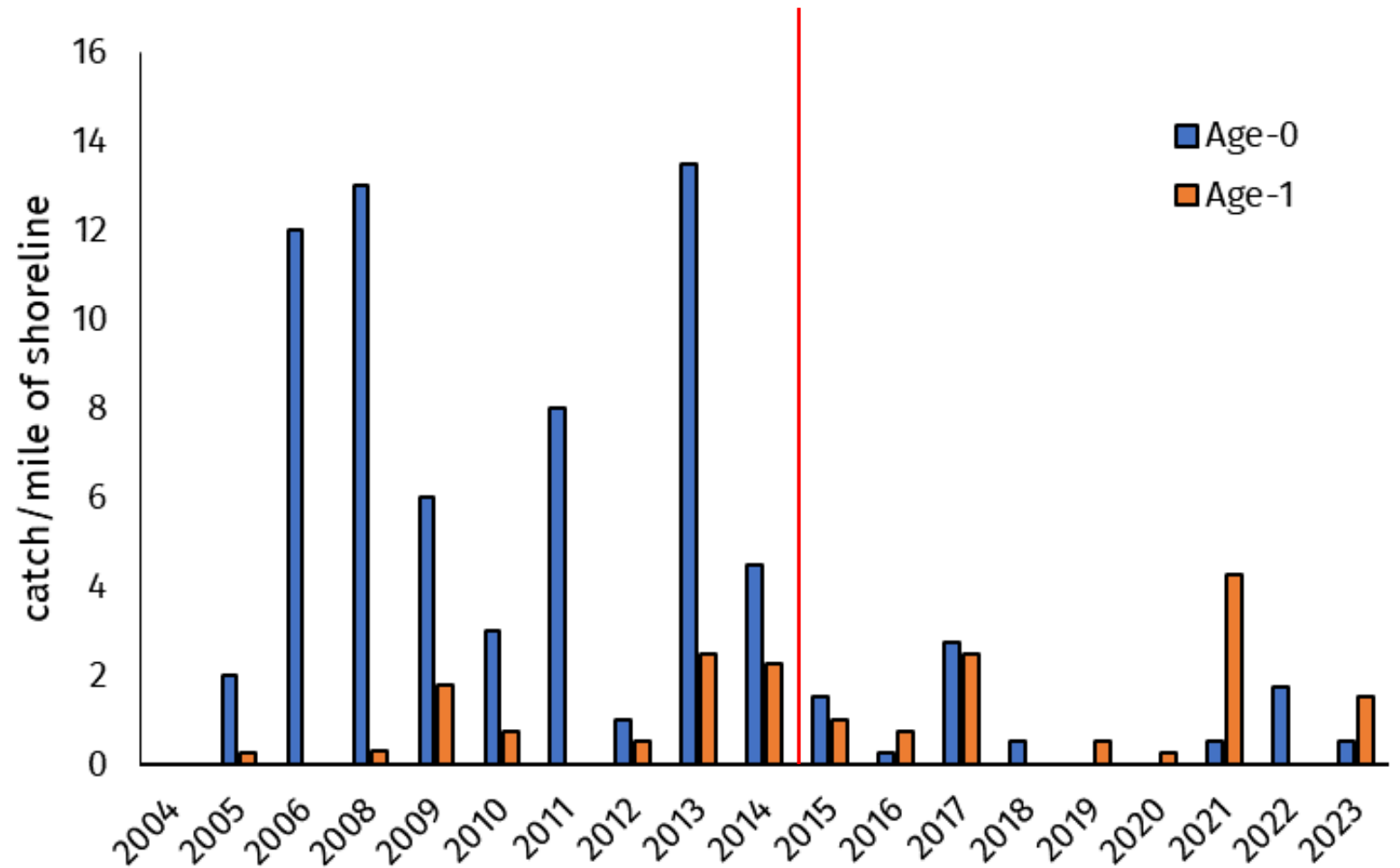
2023 Walleye

- 1.5 adult walleye/acre
- Adult population was higher than 2010 (0.9 fish/acre)
- Average size was larger (15.9" vs 15.5")
- Recruitment based on stocking and natural reproduction.

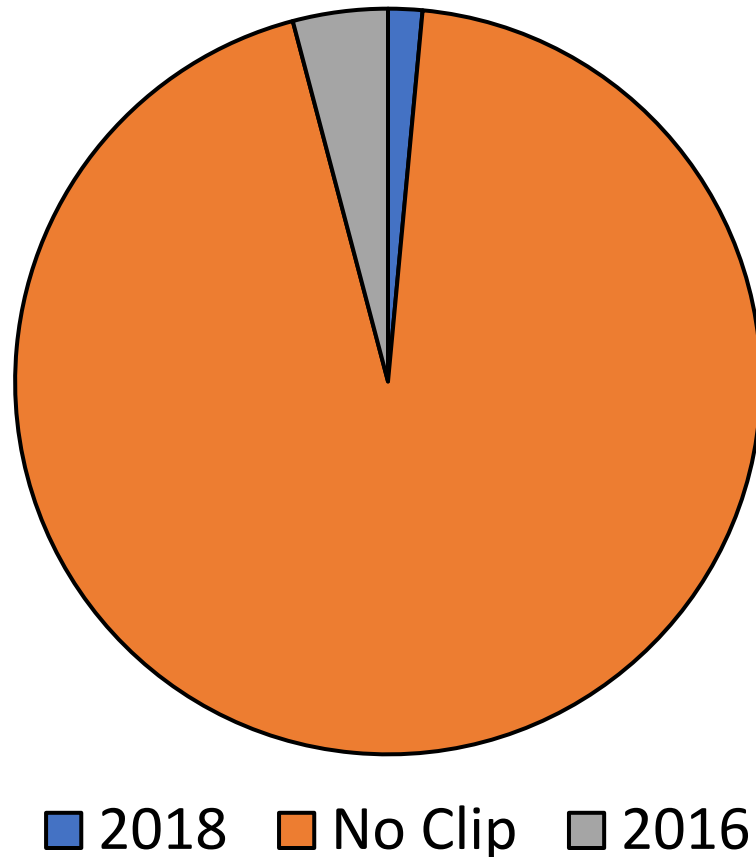


Young Walleye

- Natural walleye are not abundant
- Stocked walleye and natural walleye survival does not appear to be good
- However, our adult data suggests this is not the best indicator for Stone Lake



Stocking contribution



- Clipped walleye from 2016 and 2018 only contributed 5%
- Cost to age-5- \$651.41 (17 inches)
- Cost to age-7-\$262.34 (18 inches)
- 2020 appears to have a big contribution but was not clipped (COVID YEAR)

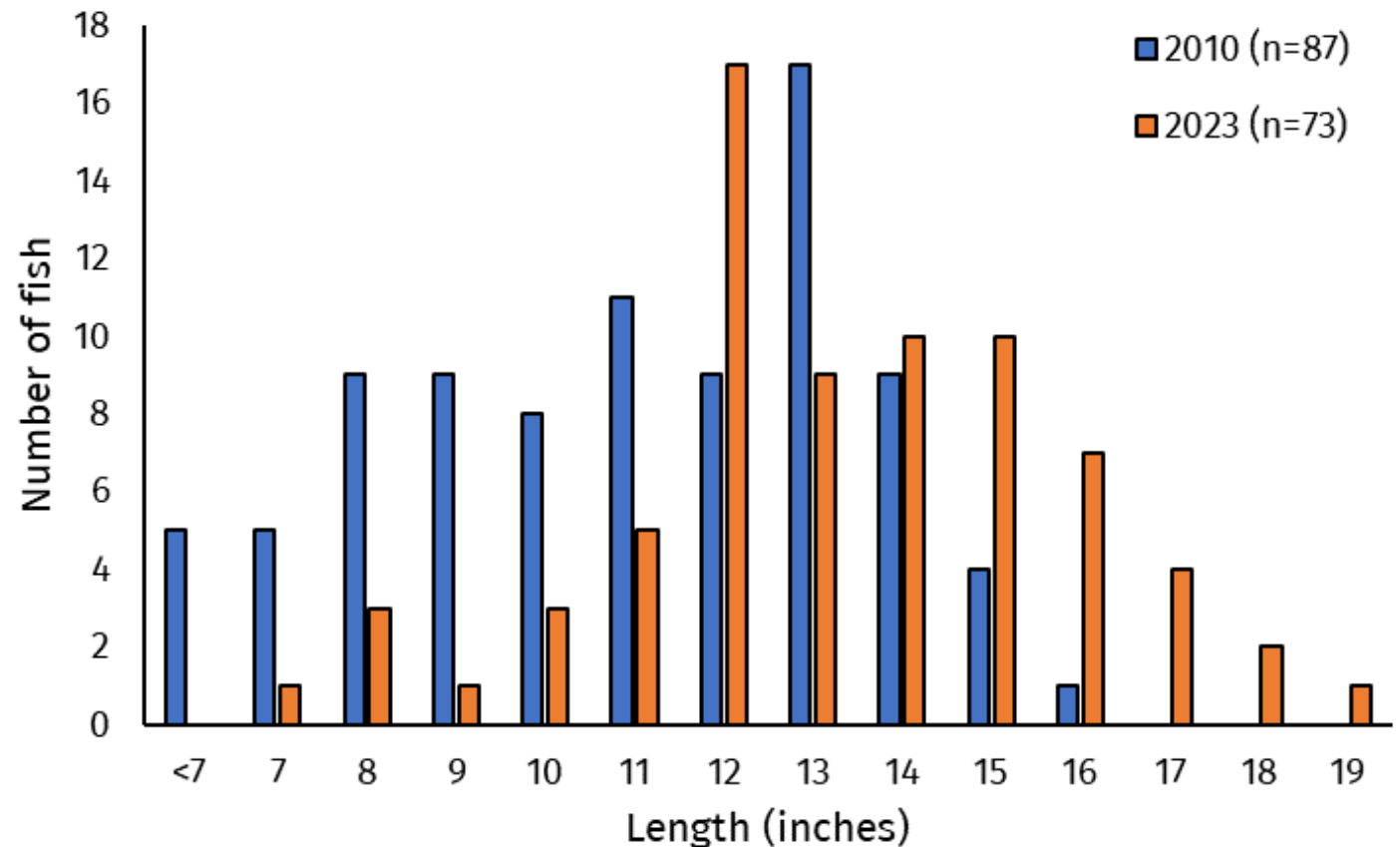
Northern Pike

- Very few northern pike – 19
- Catch rate was 0.5 fish/net
- Average size was 20.5 inches
- Not much habitat for pike - vegetation



Smallmouth Bass

- Most abundant game fish
- Catch rate decreased from 21.8 fish/mile to 18.3 fish/mile
- Average size increased from 11.1 inches to 13.6 inches



Largemouth Bass

- Only collected 9 largemouth bass
- Cold front impacted our catch
- Catch rate was lower than 2010
- Average size was 9.8 inches



Panfish

- Weather also impacted fish collected in sample
- Rock bass, bluegill, yellow perch, and crappie
- 20 rock bass were collected, 7.6 inch average
- Creel survey tells more



Common Carp

- Low density
- Observed 3 carp during all of our survey work
- Since 2014, our fall catch rate has averaged 0.5 fish/mile
- Highest catch rate was 1.3 fish/mile



2023-24 Creel Survey

- 5.9 hours/acre – low pressure
- Less than Washburn County (28.3 hrs/acre) and Ceded Territory (32.0 hrs/acre)
- 1st Walleye (32%) – 15.6 inch
- 2nd Smallmouth Bass (30%) – 16.7 inch
- 3rd Crappie (14%) – 11.1 inch
- Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, and Northern Pike



2023 vs. 2010 Creel Survey

- Less overall fishing pressure - 5.9 hrs/acre vs 11.7 hrs/acre (2010)
- Much less than Washburn County (31.1 hrs/acre) and Ceded Territory (32.0-Northern WI)
- Walleye and smallmouth bass remain the most pursued in the lake
- 5X more fishing pressure on other creeded Washburn County Lakes.
- Estimated harvest was higher for all species in 2010

Management recommendations

- Continue walleye stocking but at a reduced rate (10/acre), if natural reproduction contributes more cut stocking
- Consider a 14-18 inch protected slot for smallmouth bass, no minimum for largemouth bass, Need public interest
- No potential regulation changes for other species
- Fisheries habitat protection/promotion – Fish Sticks

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OFF THE RECORD"