

RE: All the fisheries work that was completed on Clearwater Lake this year.

The open water creel survey was completed October 30, 2022.

No real news to report on the summer creel as we are in the infancy stage of entering the data and will not get to analysis until this winter. Speaking of which our winter creel is scheduled to start Dec. 15 and will go until the end of March at the latest. We will be asking similar questions as to the summer survey mostly inquiring about angler feelings on reduced daily bag limits for sunfish and crappie.

This spring we conducted spring bluegill and crappie assessments (summary attached). Both populations look to be in good shape.

This summer we conducted a gill net assessment (summary attached) as part of a statewide study looking at the effects of zebra mussels on walleye recruitment. This is a 10-yr study with which we will be sampling the lake every three years. Walleye numbers were up a little with a GN catch at 2.7/net, while pike number appeared to be down (6.8/net).

This fall we conducted some night electrofishing to try and document any natural reproduction taking place in the lake. Tom Midas tagged along on this trip as well. This will be conducted annually again as part of the statewide walleye/zebra mussel study. We have had limited success with our more recent fry stockings (see graph) in the lake, but low and behold we did see a few young-of-the-year (YOY) walleye in our sample.

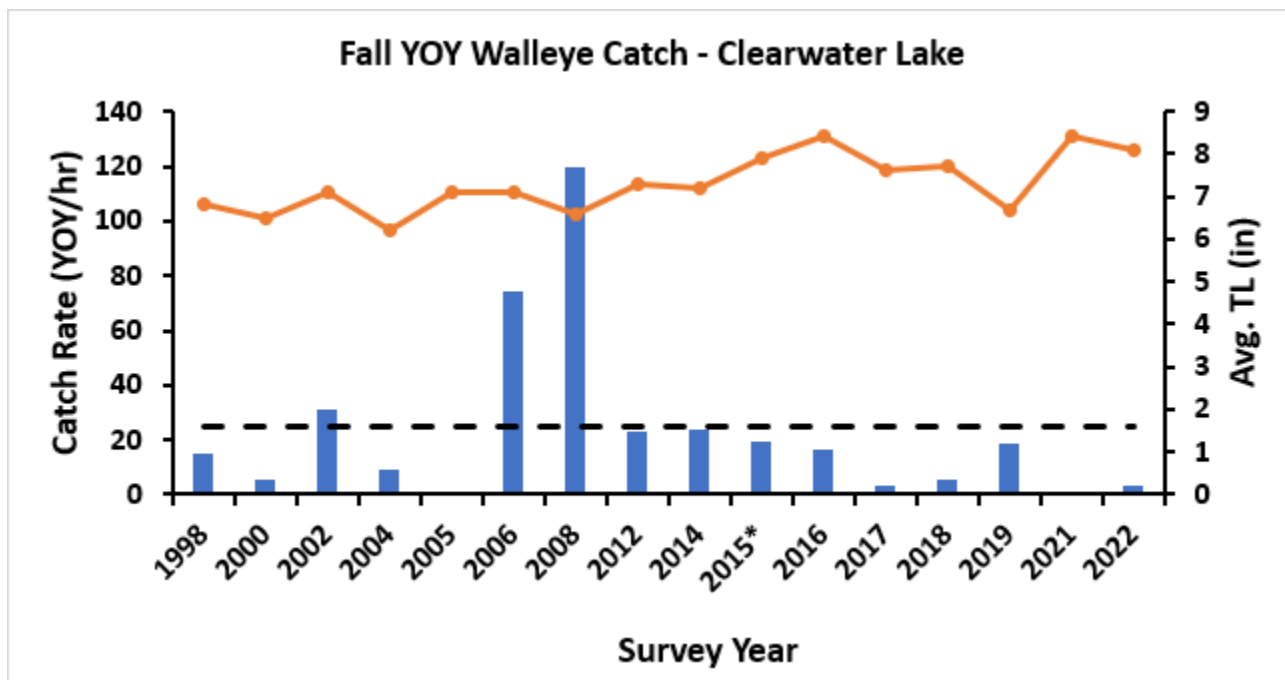


Figure 1. Fall YOY walleye catch rates from 1998 – 2022 from Clearwater Lake. Surveys are conducted in October during years that we stock fry. The orange line is the average size of YOY walleye sampled in a given year and the black dashed line is an indicator of success (i.e., catches above the dotted line are considered good, catches below the dotted line are considered poor). 2015 was when the lake was listed as infested with zebra mussels and no stocking occurred in 2022 (natural reproduction).

In 2019, because we had a surplus of walleye fingerlings, we supplemented the walleye population by stocking about 56,000 fingerlings that fall. Similarly, this fall a couple of our offices had surplus walleye fingerlings so supplemented the population again by stocking 42,000 fingerlings.