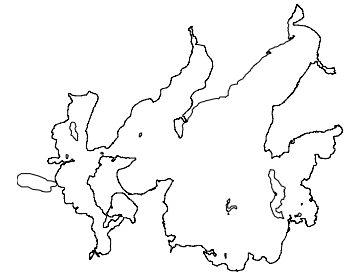




**Leech Lake Update 1/15/2009**  
 Walker Area Fisheries Office  
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 218-547-1683



Greetings!

This update is part of a series of reports the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is sending to Leech Lake area resorts, businesses and others interested in DNR activities on Leech Lake. The goal of these messages is to keep you up to date with our findings and current activities on the lake. Earlier updates are available by visiting <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/walker/index.html>. Feel free to contact our office if you have any questions or comments, would like copies of previous updates not posted on the website, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

**2008 Creel Survey**

- Approximately 585,371 angler-hours of fishing effort were expended on Leech Lake during 10 May – 30 September 2008.
- An estimated 67,502 walleye (81,410 pounds) were harvested at a rate of 0.115 fish/hour across all anglers. Targeting anglers harvested walleye at a rate of 0.459 fish/hour.
- A total of 136,096 yellow perch (59,149 pounds) were harvested at a rate of 0.233 fish/hour across all anglers. Anglers targeting perch harvested them at a rate of 2.730 fish/hour.
- Season totals of catch and harvest rates of walleye, yellow perch, and northern pike during recent summer creel surveys completed on Leech, Mille Lacs, Lake of the Woods, and Winnibigoshish, are presented below for general comparison.
- The full report for the 2008 creel survey should be completed and posted on the Walker Area website by the end of February 2009.

		Walleye/hour		Yellow perch/hour		Northern pike/hour	
		Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest
All Anglers	Leech, 2008	0.278	0.115	0.766	0.233	0.087	0.029
	Mille Lacs, 2007	0.305	0.101	0.105	0.026	0.009	0.001
	LOTW, 2007	0.544	0.288	0.022	0.009	0.012	0.002
	Winnibigoshish, 2007	0.432	0.164	0.657	0.173	0.182	0.037
Targeting Anglers	Leech, 2008	1.064	0.459	6.881	2.730	0.881	0.339
	Mille Lacs, 2007	0.391	0.129	5.061	1.184	0.11	0.048
	LOTW, 2007	0.550	0.290	NA	NA	0.110	0.040
	Winnibigoshish, 2007	0.545	0.229	4.380	1.380	0.451	0.123

**Status of the Fishery**

- Recent management actions and favorable environmental conditions have led to quick improvements in the Leech Lake walleye and yellow perch populations.
- All goals for the 2005-2010 action plan aimed at improving the Leech Lake walleye population have been met or exceeded for the second consecutive year.
- Establishment and fast growth of walleye year classes during 2005-2007 have been a primary contributor to the improvements in fishing quality on Leech Lake.
- The full report reviewing the current status of the Leech Lake fishery is available on the Walker Area Fisheries website: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/walker/index.html>.

## Stocking Update

- During May 2008, 22.1 million Woman Lake/Boy River walleye fry were marked with oxytetracycline (OTC) and stocked into all major bays of Leech Lake.
- A total of 511 young-of-year walleye were collected using shoreline seining (July), bottom trawling (August), and shoreline electrofishing (September) and examined for the presence of an OTC mark.
- Of the fish examined, 55% were identified as stocked fish. The hatch rate of wild fry during 2008 was estimated to be 0.31%, the second highest observed since stocking began in 2005.
- To date, walleye hatch rates have been very similar to, if not better than, those estimated in Red Lake.
- As per actions of the 2008 legislative session, 22.5 million walleye fry will be stocked into Leech Lake in 2009.

## Double-crested Cormorant Control

- To date, a total of 12,357 double-crested cormorants (eggs, juveniles, and adults) have been removed from Leech Lake under the supervision of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. This a correction to the 9,487 birds reported in the last update and this year's Large Lake Report.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has published a proposed rule and Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) to extend the expiration dates of current double-crested cormorant depredation orders. **Comments on the proposed rule and DEA are due by January 22, 2009.**
- You may submit comments by one of the following methods:
  - *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Keyword search "double-crested cormorant", follow the instructions for submitting comments on revision of expiration dates for cormorant depredation orders.
  - *U.S. mail or hand-delivery:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: RIN 1018-AW11; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203-1610.
  - Emails and faxes will not be accepted. All comments will be posted on <http://www.regulations.gov/>. This generally means that any personal information provided will also be posted.
- For further information contact: Terry Doyle, Division of Migratory Bird Management. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Bird Management, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop 4107, Arlington, VA 22203-1610, or telephone 703-358-1825.

If you have questions, comments, or requests please contact:

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or

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