



SPRING NLA NEWSLETTER

May 2018



NLA Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 9, 2018

9:00 A.M. — Noon

Hayward Vet's Center

Join Us!



Agenda

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 9:00 AM | Coffee, Continental Breakfast |
| 9:30 AM | Nelson Lake Park Project |
| 10:00 AM | Fish Habitat and Stocking Projects |
| 11:00 AM | Annual Meeting Business |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of June 11, 2016 Minutes• Financial Report• Membership Status• Nominations and Elections• Any Other Business |
| 12:00 Noon | Adjourn to June 8, 2019 |



2018 UPCOMING EVENTS:

Annual Meeting

Saturday June 9, 2018

9:00-Noon @ Hayward Vet's Center

Annual Picnic

Saturday, August 11, 2018

4:00-7:00 PM @ Nelson Lake Landing Resort

2019 UPCOMING EVENTS:

Winter Rama 2019

Saturday January 5, 2019

Noon—4:00PM

@ Nelson Lake Landing Resort

www.nelsonlakeassociation.org

Nelson Lake Association is a 501(c)3 Non-profit Organization

ELECTION— by Bill Wilcox

This year the office of President is up for election and Rick Lindner is the current candidate for that position. There are three Director at Large positions up for election and Art Saxum and Angie Wuethrich-Dorenski are the current candidates. We therefore have an open position for Director, plus we can have more than one candidate for any of the positions. If you would like to be a member of the Board please let any of the current Board members know and we will add you to the list of candidates for election at the *Annual Meeting*.

NLA Board Members

◆ **President**

Bill Wilcox
715-634-7128



Bill Wilcox



Harold Burton



Cara Goldman



Steve Bilitz

◆ **Vice President**

Harold Burton
715-634-2909



Rick Lindner



Gordy Christians



Tom LeMay



John Welter

◆ **Secretary**

Steve Bilitz
715-638-2553



Angie
Wuethrich-
Dorenski



Kelly Plote



Art Saxum



Casey Stangl

◆ **Treasurer**

Cara Goldman
715-580-0317

DIRECTORS

◆ **Rick Lindner**
715-634-4290

◆ **Tom LeMay**
715-634-2594

◆ **Angie Wuethrich-Dorenski**
715-699-1484

◆ **Art Saxum**
715-634-5073

◆ **Gordy Christians**
715-634-3156

◆ **John Welter**
715-634-4175

◆ **Kelly Plote**
715-864-0015

◆ **Casey Stangl**
715-699-1213



From the President — Bill Wilcox

This is my last “From the Pres” article since after being the NLA president for 12 years it is time for someone else to fill that position. In case you have not already heard, it has also become time for Marlene and I to move closer to two of our daughters in the Twin Cities area. That move will probably take place sometime this summer.

I have been a member of the NLA Board for the last 19 years and it has been an exciting and rewarding time. The Association has had more projects than I can remember or list, but I think the major accomplishment has been the prevention of aquatic invasive species. This has been a long term project that has involved a lot of people and creative ideas and requires ongoing attention and support. I’m also pleased to see the signs of an improving fishery. That too has required a variety of projects and a lot of volunteer support.

Nelson Lake and the people we have associated with will always have a special place in my heart.

Sincerely, Bill

FINANCIALS



From the Treasurer Cara Goldman



We extend a warm welcome to the new members that have joined the Nelson Lake Association this year and thanks to all members for their support during this past year!

General Fund.....	\$32,247.06
Fish & Wildlife.....	\$ 4,860.11
Lake Project.....	\$ 414.43
Invasive Species...	<u>\$10,836.24</u>
TOTAL	\$48,357.84

MEMBERSHIP = Our membership stands at 242

Walleye Stocking — by Rick Lindner

In the fall of 2017 the Wisconsin DNR Walleye Initiative placed 27,000 extended growth walleyes (6 to 8 inches long) in Nelson Lake at three locations. The locations used were Gerlach Landing, Patro's Landing off Small Road, and Bog Bay behind Revelle's campground. These locations were chosen for a very specific purpose, and that was because they provided some containment for the stocked walleye so minnows could be stocked concurrently to provide a food source for the young walleye, thereby increasing the survival rate. In a 2016 experiment on Smith Lake minnows were stocked concurrently with Walleye and survey data indicated nearly 10X increase in survival rate. Keep in mind that this was a single experiment on a smaller lake so there is no guarantee that it will duplicate on Nelson Lake, but it's worth a try.

After discussions with the DNR Fisheries Biologist (Max Wolter) it was decided that we should stock 200 pounds of minnows (300,000) at each location where 9,000 Walleye are stocked. The 900,000 minnows were purchased by our association at a cost of \$2,100.00, which was shared by the Nelson Lake Resort Association and the Walleyes For Northern Wisconsin organization. Survival rate is the key to success in fish stocking programs. This is the third initiative taken by our association to increase walleye survival. Previous initiatives included the Fish Sticks project to improve habitat and shelter for young walleye, and sucker stocking to provide new hatch sucker minnows for the natural reproduction and stocked walleye. Our efforts have been frequently recognized by DNR as ground breaking leadership in the Walleye stocking initiative.



Stocking Minnows

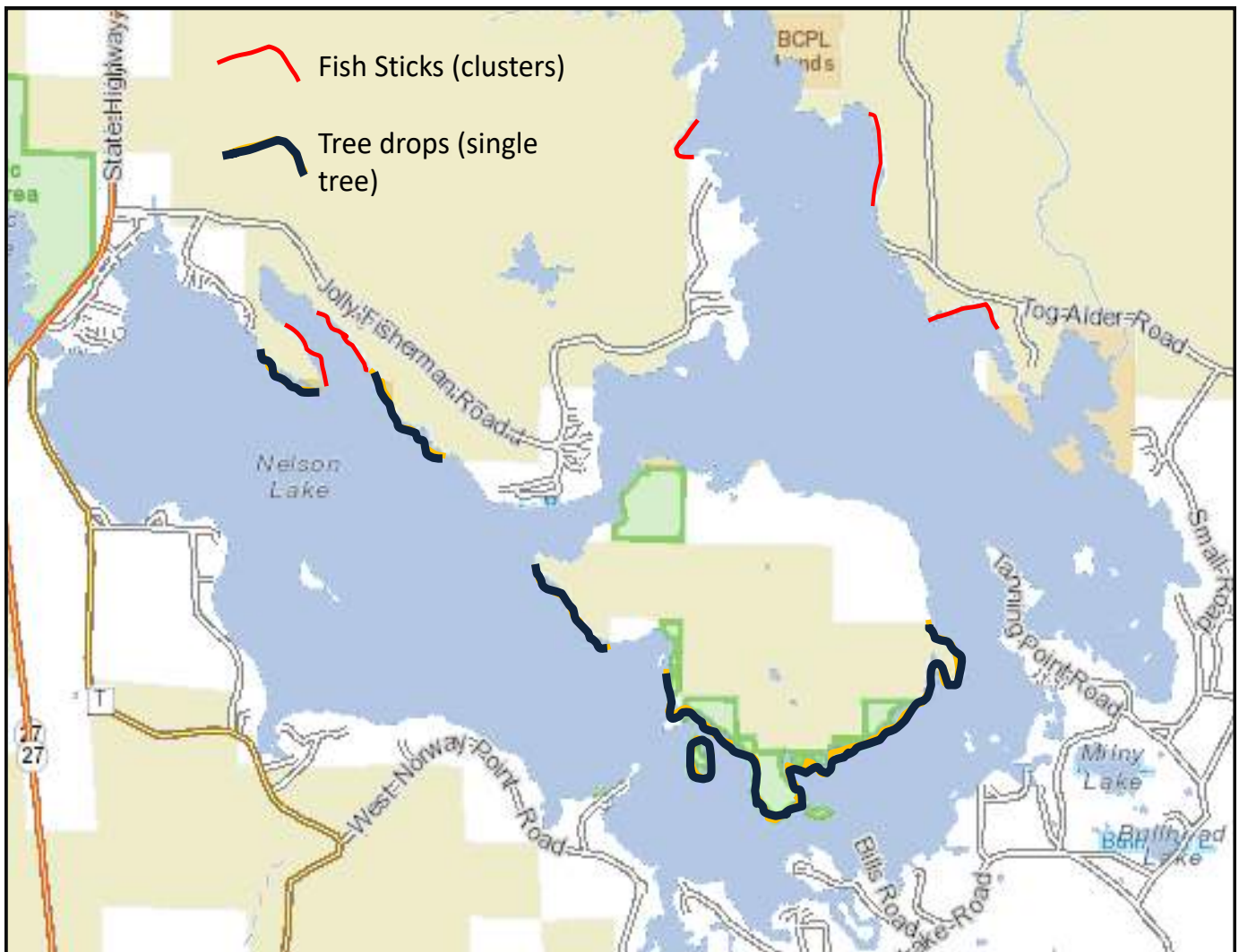


Stocking Extended Growth Walleye

Fish Sticks Project — *by Rick Lindner*

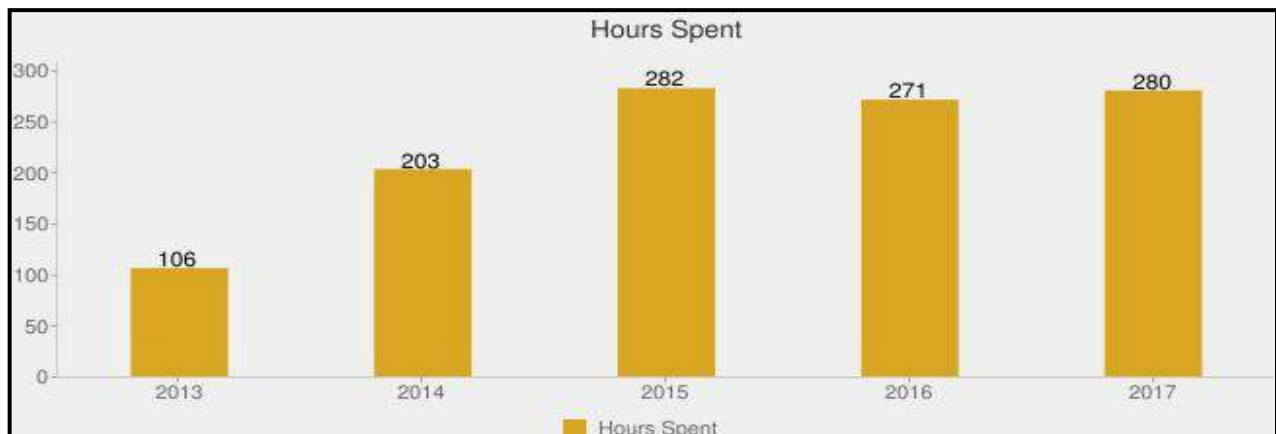
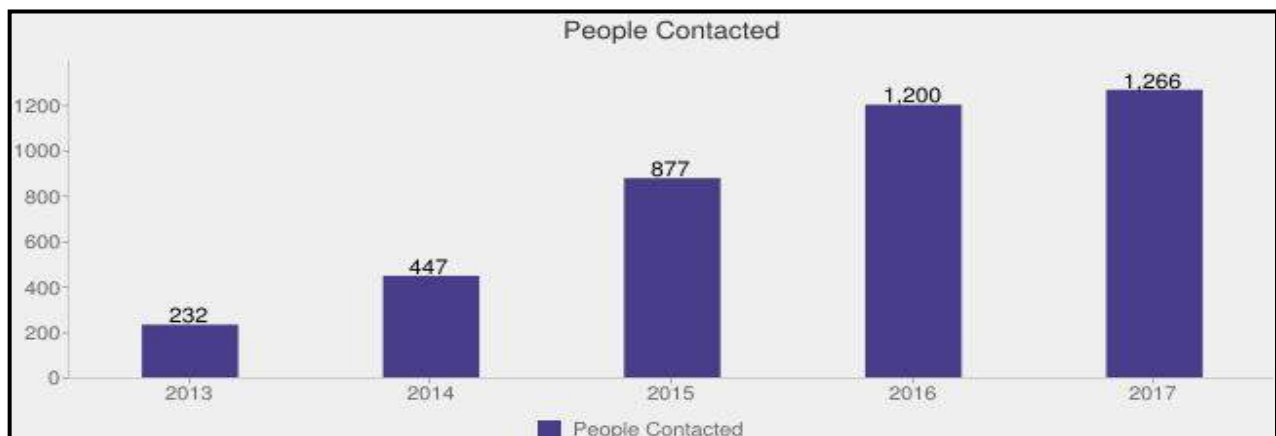
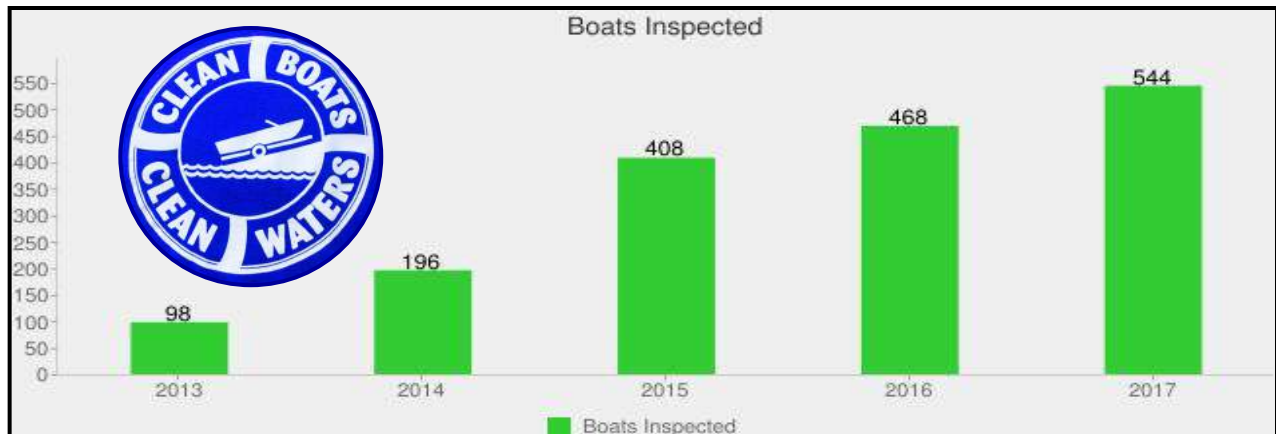
The Fish Sticks project started in 2012 and has resulted in nearly 1100 trees being placed in the water along the shorelines of Nelson Lake. During the winter of 2018 volunteers from our association completed the Fish Sticks tree drops along the north shoreline of the East Basin from Crappie Bay to Tag Alder Bay. This completed the last existing permit granted by the DNR.

The map below shows the areas of the lake where Fish Sticks have been placed, which are all shorelines on County Forest Land. Essentially all suitable shorelines on County Forest Land have now been completed. Future activity is still to be determined but will likely be deferred until some data is obtained to confirm the effectiveness.



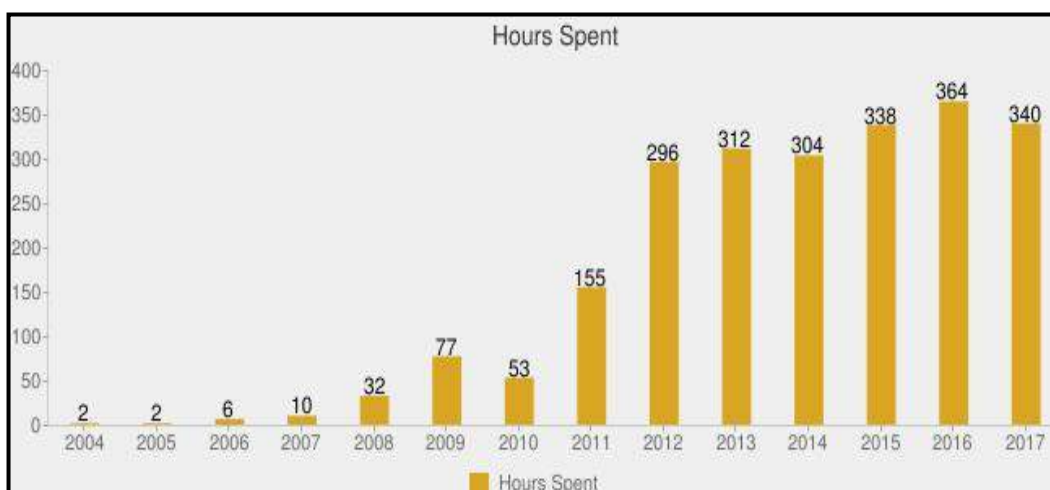
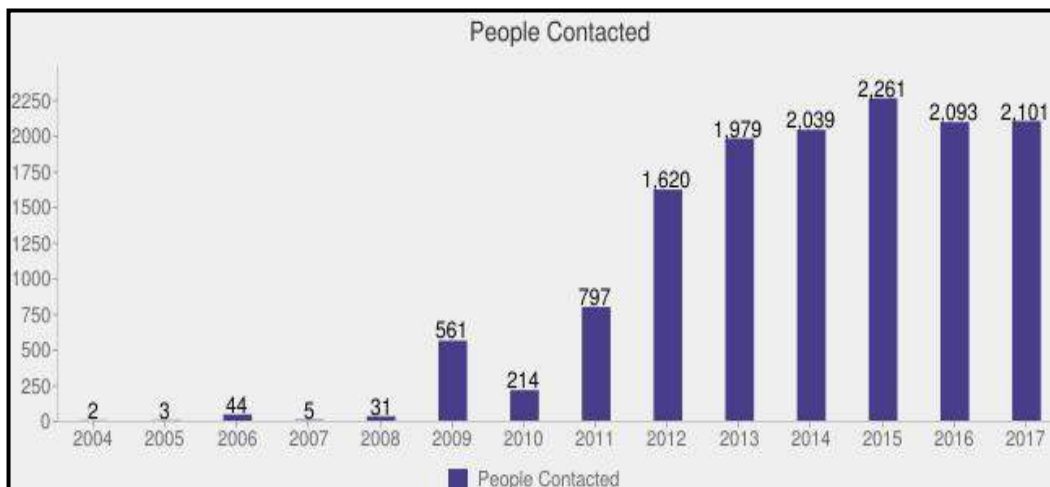
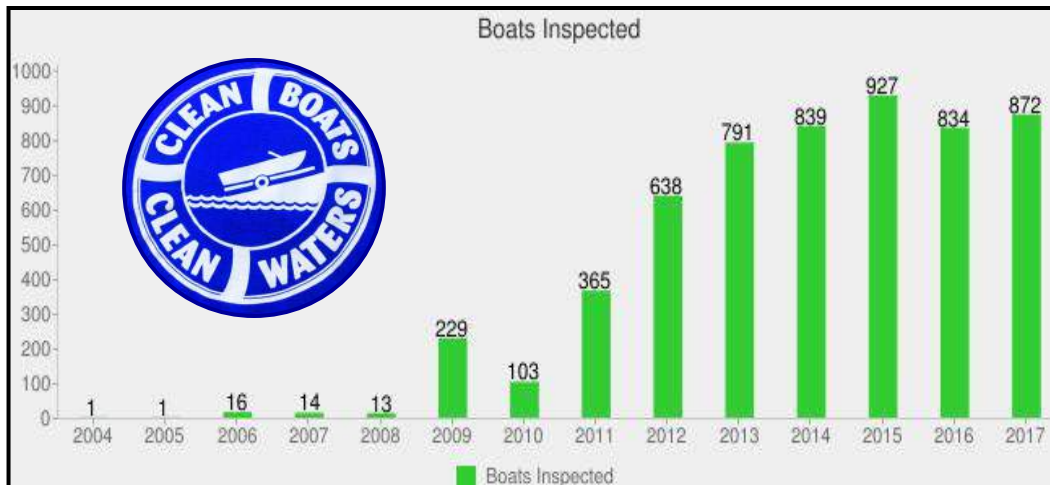
Park Landing Boat Inspections—2017— by Rick Lindner

Last summer we saw an increase in the usage of the Park Boat Landing. There were 544 boats inspected at that landing. We expect the usage to continue increasing when the park renovation and improvements are completed. We are always looking for people to help with boat inspections. If you know anyone interested in working at either landing have them contact any board member. The association pays the workers \$12.00 per hour. **Art Saxum will be coordinating the work schedule this year.**



Gerlach Landing Boat Inspections—2017 — by Rick Lindner

Our boat inspection process continues to provide benefits to Nelson Lake. We are still fortunate to have a lake without the infection of invasive species like Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed. At a previous meeting about invasive species we were informed that a smaller lake in Sawyer County was fighting invasives at a cost of \$70,000. The cost associated with our prevention program (\$7,302.00) is only a fraction of the cost to fight the problem. As you can see from the graph below Gerlach Landing continues to see high usage with 872 boats inspected last summer.



How Does the Creel Survey Operate?

— by Max Wolter, Fisheries Biologist, Wisconsin DNR

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regularly conducts fishery surveys of area lakes and reservoirs to gather information on species composition, population size, reproductive success, size/age distribution, and growth rates. The information from the netting and electrofishing surveys helps the WDNR determine the best management practices for that body of water. Another important aspect of a fishery is the amount of harvest that is occurring on the lake. This information is collected by creel census or creel survey.

On lakes in the Ceded Territory of Wisconsin, harvest of fish is divided between sport anglers and the six Chippewa tribal bands. The six Chippewa tribal bands harvest fish under rights governed by federal treaties of 1837 and 1842. Most tribal fish harvest is done by spearing during a short period of time in the spring. All speared fish are individually counted by tribal creel clerks, allowing for a complete “census” of the tribal fish harvest in the spring.

Information is also collected on the effects of sport angler harvest on fish populations. Because it would be impractical and costly to conduct a complete “census” of the fish harvested by sport anglers on area lakes, a creel survey is conducted to estimate the amount of fish harvested by sports anglers.

A creel survey is a sampling tool used to measure the fishing activities of the sport anglers and to estimate the amount of fish harvested on a body of water. Creel surveys are designed to have a creel clerk on a lake, work random shifts, and forty hours each week throughout the fishing season.

Each month these shifts cover a sample of all the daylight hours. Creel clerks travel their lakes using a boat, snowmobile or vehicle to interview anglers and count fish caught.

The information collected from anglers during the interview includes the species of fish being targeted, catch and harvest, lengths of harvested fish, and hours of fishing effort.. Typically only anglers that have completed their fishing are interviewed because it provides the most accurate information and it avoids the need to disturb anglers while they are fishing.

This creel survey report will provide you with four types of estimated information for this body of water:

1. Overall fishing pressure
2. Fishing effort directed at each species
3. Catch and harvest rates
4. Numbers of fish caught and harvested.

 *Max H. Wolter*
Fisheries Biologist
Hayward Service Center
Bureau of Fisheries Management
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

[On the next page](#) is a summary of the creel data from last summer and this winter. This data shows comparisons to the last 2 creel surveys.

Creel Data Takeaways From Last Summer and This Winter

Major Takeaways:

1. **Walleye catch is not terrible.** 5.6 hours of angling per caught walleye. That's identical to 10 years ago and actually better than the 90's! You can compare that number to Grindstone Lake (2015) which was 3.5 hours per fish caught. That's one of our best wall eye lakes, and Nelson is in the same neighborhood.
2. **Most caught walleye are small.** 96.4% of all walleye that were caught were released. Most of that is due to the protective regulations, but some may be catch and release ethic of the larger females. It's encouraging to see smaller walleye getting caught and the regulation is doing its job in protecting them. That is one thing we need to have to rebuild the population. The other is getting better stocking survival or natural reproduction.
3. **Anglers are keeping less bass.** I am ok with this. They are also becoming a more popular part of the fishery. Most of the research done in the last few years has shown that bass are not driving the walleye issues. Encouraging harvest of small bass is still a good idea, because it will lead to better bass size in the long run. And in fact, we saw better bass size in our surveys and in the creel. So keep that selective harvest message going (harvest largemouth less than 14 inches if you want to harvest).
4. **Crappie size is not great.** No surprise there, you have probably heard that from everyone. Catch rates are highest we have seen, but only about 40% of crappies that are caught get kept. Some of that is the lower bag limit, but a lot of that is probably people "sorting" to get bigger fish. Average size of harvested crappie is lower than in the 90s. There is interest among anglers in changing the panfish bag limit, but I am convinced that will not help and may hurt.
5. **Very few pike get kept.** High size limit is doing its job there as well. Only about 5% of caught pike leave the lake.
6. **Muskellunge.** Yes, someone reported catching one and that gets *extrapolated* out to 16 based on how we calculate these creel numbers. But the fish was not seen by a creel clerk so we can't verify the species. Based on the surrounding conditions I am extremely skeptical that it was actually a musky. But plenty of fodder for musky conspiracy theorists here. Worth noting: we have netted and shocked Nelson Lake close over 50 times and have never seen a musky.
7. **Smallmouth.** Yes, smallmouth were documented. We saw them in our survey last spring as well. Still very rare, but present
8. **Effort is up from 10 years ago.** We documented a total of 95,259 hours of fishing effort on Nelson Lake. That's up slightly from 08-09 (94,663), but down from 92-93 (125,900). The main difference between the 90's and today is less walleye effort. Effort for most other species has

Fishing Regulations

NELSON LAKE General Fishing Regulations

Species	Season	Daily Bag Limit	Length Limit
Walleye	General gamefish*	3	18" minimum
Northern Pike	General gamefish*	1	32" minimum
Largemouth Bass	General gamefish*	5, both species combined	None
Smallmouth Bass	Catch and release only from first weekend in May to third weekend in June		None
Panfish (Crappie, Bluegill, Yellow Perch, Sunfish)	Open Year Round	10 combined	None

*General gamefish season runs from the first Saturday in May through the first Sunday in March

3-line motor trolling is allowed



**Thank You
For Adhering
To The
Fishing
Quotas!**

THANK YOU to all the NLA members for keeping our roads around Nelson Lake clean and looking beautiful! If you see trash along our roadsides, please take time to stop and pick it up.

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THIS YEAR WE OFFER 2 RAFFLE PRIZES!



Raffle #1

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**Tickets are \$10 each
or 3 for \$25**

A total of 100 tickets to be sold

**Tickets
Available
Here!**

RAFFLE TICKETS will be available for purchase at resorts on Nelson Lake, as well as at the NLA Annual Meeting, Saturday, June 9, 2018 at the Hayward Vet's Center.

RAFFLE DRAWING will be held Saturday, August 11, 2018 during the Nelson Lake Association Picnic (4:00-7:00pm) at Nelson Lake Landing Resort, Hayward, WI.

THIS YEAR WE OFFER 2 RAFFLE PRIZES!



Raffle #2

WIN THIS RIFLE!



Buy tickets for:

Raffle #1

or

Raffle #2

or

BOTH!

GOOD LUCK!

Remington Mod 710, 243 Win Caliber with a Nikon ProStaff 3-9x40 Matte Nikoplex scope and sling.

**Tickets are \$10 each
or 3 for \$25**

A total of 100 tickets to be sold

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Winter Rama 2018

Winter Rama was held on Saturday, January 6, 2018 at Nelson Lake Landing. What a fun gathering — a time to see your neighbors and NLA members during a long winter! Great fun and food was enjoyed by all with the Chili and Dessert contests and the golf putting “championships.”

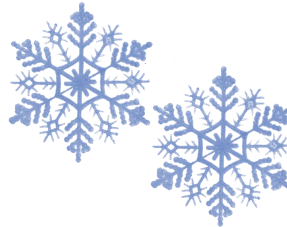


Hank LeMay
1st Place Winner

CHILI WINNERS



Bernie Bell
2nd Place Winner



DESSERT WINNER



Cindy Thoreson (left)
Dessert Winner

GOLF WINNER



Ron Read
Golf Putting Winner



Winter Rama 2018



Dessert Contest!



Winter Rama 2018

Thank You Casey!



Bill Wilcox thanked **Casey Stangl** for his 8-1/2 years of service as NLA Board Treasurer. He presented Casey with his very own abacus as a reminder of his tenure as Treasurer. *Happy calculating Casey!*



Thank you for your Support!



Hayward, Wisconsin

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