

Great Sacandaga Lake Angler Diary Report

2007 Fishing Season

Robert Fiorentino
Aquatic Biologist
NYSDEC Region 5 Fisheries
June 2009

Introduction

An angler diary cooperator program designed to monitor Great Sacandaga Lake's fishery began in 2002. A similar diary program oriented specifically towards monitoring the warm-water fishery in Great Sacandaga Lake ran from 1975 to 1981. The current program allows for a comparison of the Great Sacandaga Lake fishery between the two time periods. The comparison should reveal if there have been any significant changes in the fishery since the early 1980's.

The Region 5 fisheries office has gone through many staff changes over the last few years. The fisheries biologist position in the Warrensburg office was vacant for nearly half a year and other positions have been lost due to retirements. These changes have caused a delay in preparing this report. Thank you for your understanding.

If you were a cooperator during the 2007 fishing season and sent in your diaries, your name should appear in Table 1. If your name does not appear in the table and you returned a diary to us last year, please contact me at the Warrensburg office.

Results

Participation

A total of 15 cooperators returned diaries of their 2007 fishing season. They recorded information from a total of 293 fishing trips (Table 1), including trips that did not have a start or end time. This is a 14% reduction of fishing trips from the 2006 fishing season. There were also four less cooperators in 2007.

Cooperators can target more than one species on a fishing trip and these are referred to as targeted trips. The total number of targeted trips in 2007 was 593. Statistics in Tables 2 refer to the number of targeted trips for each species. Table 3 provides information on total numbers of different fish species caught and their lengths.

Fishing

Walleye again accounted for the greatest effort in both the number of trips and angler hours recorded. Trout and salmon were the second most sought after group. There were two more trips taken for smallmouth bass than northern pike, but more time was spent fishing for pike. Yellow perch were targeted by one cooperator in 2007. The catch statistics for anglers targeting a specific fish species are presented in Table 2. The data presented in Table 2 only include trips that were recorded completely in the diaries. Ice fishing trips comprised 2.77 % of 2007's total fishing trips recorded by cooperators, down from 19.2% in 2006.

There was a considerable increase in the catch rate for targeted walleye in 2007 from the 2006 season. There were also less trips and angler hours logged by cooperators fishing for walleye in 2007. The catch rate was 0.45 walleye per hour, which translates into one walleye for every 2 hours and 12 minutes of fishing on average. In 2006, the catch rate was 0.25 walleye per hour. Open water catch rates for walleye were much higher than catch rates from ice fishing.

Smallmouth bass catch rates continue to be much higher than during the 1970's. Catch rates then ranged from 0.04 to 0.09 smallmouth per hour. The 2007 rate of 0.24 is lower than the last three years, (2006's 0.30, 2005's 0.45 and 2004's 0.46) but still markedly higher than the relatively low rates of the 1970's.

Six cooperators targeted northern pike in 2007. The 2007 open-water and ice fishing catch rate was 0.02 northerns per hour. This is a similar rate to the 1970's, but considering ice conditions for the year and the lack of targeted fishing for pike this is not a surprise.

Great Sacandaga Lake has a nice trout fishery with rainbow and brown trout stocked by the Great Sacandaga Lake Fisheries Federation (GSLFF). There were approximately 6400 trout stocked in 2007 by the federation. These are two year old fish that are 14-19 inches in length. The catch rate for all trout and salmon in 2007 on the lake was 0.12 trout/salmon per hour on open water. There were only seven cooperators that targeted trout and salmon compared to 14 in 2006. Two land locked salmon were caught in 2007 by cooperators. Angler effort totaled 528.8 hours down 37% from 2006.

Only one cooperator targeted yellow perch in 2007 for a total of 68 trips. There were 110 trips targeted 2005.

Information on the lengths and numbers of fish caught in various size classes is presented in Table 3.

Walleye lengths for 2007 are up from 2006, but still similar to those from the 1970s. The average walleye caught was 15.2 inches long. Ice fishing produced larger fish with the average walleye 17.0 inches long.

In 2007, smallmouth bass lengths again are very similar to past years. Rainbow and brown trout numbers indicate the vast majority of the trout stocked by the GSLFF have been rainbow trout. Average reported trout lengths demonstrate the large, high quality trout they are able to purchase for stocking. These fish are much larger than those available from the DEC and thus provide a fishery that the state is simply unable to duplicate.

Overall catch information is provided in Table 4 that compares open water to ice fishing. Table 5 separates angler effort by cold water and warm water fish.

The DEC began stocking rainbow trout yearlings into Great Sacandaga Lake in the spring of 2006. This experimental stocking will continue through 2010. Beginning in 2007, the rainbows had one of their fins removed prior to stocking. This will help distinguish the DEC stocked rainbows from the GSLFF stocked rainbows. In an effort to track the performance of these rainbows, beginning in 2007, we have asked anglers to record the fin-clip (if any) on the rainbow trout they catch. In 2007, the adipose fin was removed, and in 2008 it was the left ventral fin. In 2009, the right ventral fin will be clipped (Table 6). You may encounter rainbows with any of these three marks during your 2009 fishing trips.

2007 angler diaries did not have any clipped rainbow trout recorded. This could be due to one of many reasons including; anglers not looking for clips, low number of cooperators in the program, or poor survival of the DEC stocked rainbow trout.

Length frequency distributions for all recorded fish by species are presented in Figures 1 through 6. These figures include all fish caught by anglers regardless of what they were targeting.

The walleye length frequency distribution (Figure 1) is very similar to the last three years of data. Historic length frequency distributions for other species are not available, so direct comparisons with the current data are not possible. However, the length-frequency distribution for rainbow trout, (Figure 2) shows the quality of fish that the GSLFF stocks annually.

Thank you

I would like to thank all the angler diary cooperators for your support and participation in the diary program. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about the angler diary report or the diary program itself, please call me at (518) 623-1234 or email me at rjfioren@gw.dec.state.ny.us. Our diary program can always use additional cooperators. If you have friends who like to fish Great Sacandaga Lake, please tell them about our diary program and if they're interested, have them complete the attached form and mail it in. We will then send them the materials and instructions for keeping a diary. Thank you!

Good fishing!

Table 1. List of active cooperators for the Great Sacandaga Lake angler diary cooperator program during the 2007 fishing season.

ANGLER NAME	NUMBER TRIPS FISHED
Bob Mazur	15
Dan Looman	40
Randy Gardiner	3
Lou Clough	18
John Pochobradsky	34
Raymond Bollart	69
John Fura	29
Kevin Forgette	40
Clarence Frederick Jr	8
Mathew Flanders	2
Glenn Mosier, Sr.	15
Tim Barnard	1
Richard A. Valachovic	4
Chris Spencer	2
Paul Pranys	13
TOTAL	287

Table 2. Catch statistics for Great Sacandaga Lake angler diary cooperators by target species during the 2007 fishing season. These statistics include only those trips where a particular species, alone or in combination with another species, was targeted.

TARGET SPECIES WALLEYE

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	NUMBER OF TRIPS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	NUMBER OF COOPERATORS	WALLEYE CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	LEGAL-SIZED WALLEYE CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	WALLEYE CREELED PER ANGLER HOUR	TOTAL NUMBER WALLEYE CAUGHT	NUMBER LEGAL WALLEYE CAUGHT	TOTAL NUMBER WALLEYE KEPT
Open	192	778.4	12	.49	.30	.23	385	230	178
Ice	7	99.8	3	.07	.05	.05	7	5	5
TOTAL	199	878.2	15	.45	.27	.21	392	235	183

TARGET SPECIES SMALLMOUTH BASS

OPEN WATER	NUMBER OF TRIPS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	NUMBER OF COOPERATORS	SMALLMOUTH CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	LEGAL-SIZED SMALLMOUTH CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	TOTAL NUMBER SMALLMOUTH CAUGHT	NUMBER LEGAL SMALLMOUTH CAUGHT	TOTAL NUMBER SMALLMOUTH KEPT
Open	88	198.0	6	.24	.17	47	34	1
TOTAL	88	198.0	6	.24	.17	47	34	1

Continued.....

Table 2. (Continued)

TARGET SPECIES TROUT/SALMON

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	NUMBER OF TRIPS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	NUMBER OF COOPERATORS	TROUT/SALMON CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	TROUT/SALMON KEPT PER ANGLER HOUR	TOTAL NUMBER TROUT/SALMON CAUGHT	TOTAL NUMBER TROUT/SALMON KEPT
Open	149	528.8	6	.12	.10	63	54
Ice	3	21.0	1	.10	.10	2	2
TOTAL	152	549.8	7	.12	.10	65	56

TARGET SPECIES NORTHERN PIKE

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	NUMBER OF TRIPS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	NUMBER OF COOPERATORS	NORTHERN PIKE CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	LEGAL-SIZED NORTHERN PIKE CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	TOTAL NUMBER NORTHERNS CAUGHT	NUMBER LEGAL NORTHERNS CAUGHT	TOTAL NUMBER NORTHERNS KEPT
Open	83	223.6	4	.02	.01	4	3	0
Ice	3	58.0	2	.02	.02	1	1	0
TOTAL	86	281.6	6	.02	.01	5	4	0

Continued.....

Table 2. (Continued)

TARGET SPECIES YELLOW PERCH

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	NUMBER OF TRIPS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	NUMBER OF COOPERATORS	YELLOW PERCH CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR	TOTAL NUMBER YELLOW PERCH CAUGHT	TOTAL NUMBER YELLOW PERCH KEPT
Open	65	180.0	1	.01	2	0
Ice	3	21.0	1	.00	0	0
TOTAL	68	201.0	1	.01	2	0

Table 3. Numbers and lengths of various fish species reported by Great Sacandaga Lake angler diary cooperators for the 2007 fishing season.

WALLEYE

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	TOTAL NUMBER WALLEYE CAUGHT	AVERAGE WALLEYE LENGTH CAUGHT	NUMBER LEGAL WALLEYE CAUGHT	NUMBER WALLEYE KEPT	AVERAGE WALLEYE LENGTH KEPT	NUMBER WALLEYE CAUGHT >18"	NUMBER WALLEYE CAUGHT >21"	NUMBER WALLEYE CAUGHT >25"
Open	389	15.19	234	178	16.99	46	0	0
Ice	7	16.96	5	5	18.15	4	0	0
TOTAL	396	15.22	239	183	17.02	50	0	0

BROWN TROUT

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	TOTAL NUMBER BROWN TROUT CAUGHT	AVERAGE BROWN TROUT LENGTH CAUGHT	NUMBER BROWN TROUT KEPT	AVERAGE BROWN TROUT LENGTH KEPT	NUMBER BROWN TROUT CAUGHT >15"	NUMBER BROWN TROUT CAUGHT >18"	NUMBER BROWN TROUT CAUGHT >21"
Open	8	16.38	3	19.00	5	3	1
Ice	2	19.25	2	19.25	2	2	0
TOTAL	10	16.95	5	19.10	7	5	1

Continued.....

Table 3. (Continued)

RAINBOW TROUT

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	TOTAL RAINBOW TROUT CAUGHT	AVERAGE RAINBOW TROUT LENGTH CAUGHT	NUMBER RAINBOW TROUT KEPT	AVERAGE RAINBOW TROUT LENGTH KEPT	NUMBER RAINBOW TROUT CAUGHT >15"	NUMBER RAINBOW TROUT CAUGHT >18"	NUMBER RAINBOW TROUT CAUGHT >21"
Open	54	15.90	51	16.07	41	6	0
Ice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	54	15.90	51	16.07	41	6	0

SMALLMOUTH BASS (SMB)

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	TOTAL SMB CAUGHT	AVERAGE SMB LENGTH CAUGHT	LEGAL SMB CAUGHT	NUMBER SMB KEPT	AVERAGE SMB LENGTH KEPT	NUMBER SMB CAUGHT >15"	NUMBER SMB CAUGHT >18"	NUMBER SMB CAUGHT >21"
Open	118	13.43	88	2	16.88	39	4	1
Ice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	118	13.43	88	2	16.88	39	4	1

Continued.....

Table 3. (Continued)

NORTHERN PIKE (NOP)

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	TOTAL NOP CAUGHT	AVERAGE NOP LENGTH CAUGHT	LEGAL NOP CAUGHT	NUMBER NOP KEPT	AVERAGE NOP LENGTH KEPT	NUMBER NOP CAUGHT >20"	NUMBER NOP CAUGHT >25"	NUMBER NOP CAUGHT >30"	NUMBER NOP CAUGHT >35"
Open	13	23.38	12	0	0	8	5	3	1
Ice	1	24.50	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	14	23.46	13	0	0	9	5	3	1

YELLOW PERCH

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	TOTAL PERCH CAUGHT	AVERAGE PERCH LENGTH CAUGHT	NUMBER PERCH KEPT	AVERAGE PERCH LENGTH KEPT	NUMBER PERCH CAUGHT >10"	NUMBER PERCH CAUGHT >12"	NUMBER PERCH CAUGHT >15"
Open	38	9.70	14	11.25	18	7	0
Ice	1	10.25	1	10.25	1	0	0
TOTAL	39	9.71	15	11.18	19	7	0

Table 4. Angler effort and catch statistics for the 2007 fishing season.

OVERALL CATCH STATISTICS

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	NUMBER OF COOPS	NUMBER OF TRIPS	MEAN TRIP LENGTH IN HOURS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	NUMBER OF FISH CAUGHT	TOTAL CATCH PER ANGLER HOUR FOR ALL REPORTED SPECIES	TOTAL NUMBER OF FISH KEPT	NUMBER OF FISH KEPT PER ANGLER HOUR
Open	13	272	2.79	956.4	622	.66	249	.26
Ice	3	7	5.68	99.8	11	.11	8	.08
TOTAL	16	279	2.86	1056.2	633	.60	257	.24

Table 5. Comparison of cold water catch rates to warm water species catch rates.

SALMONID AND WARM WATER CATCH RATES

OPEN WATER VERSUS ICE FISHING TRIPS	NUMBER OF TRIPS	MEAN TRIP LENGTH IN HOURS	EFFORT IN ANGLER HOURS	TROUT & SALMON CATCH PER ANGLER HOUR	WARM WATER SPECIES CAUGHT PER ANGLER HOUR
Open	272	2.79	956.4	.07	.35
Ice	7	5.68	99.8	.02	.06
TOTAL	279	2.86	1056.2	.06	.33

Table 6. Number of rainbow trout stocked by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, by year and their corresponding fin clip.

Year	Number Stocked	Fin Clipped
2007	10,870	Adipose
2008	12,000	Left Ventral
2009	11,340	Right Ventral



Figure 1. Length frequency distribution of walleye from 2007 Great Sacandaga Lake angler diaries, n = 412.



*n = number of fish caught

Figure 2. Length frequency distribution of rainbow trout from 2007 Great Sacandaga Lake angler diaries, n = 58.

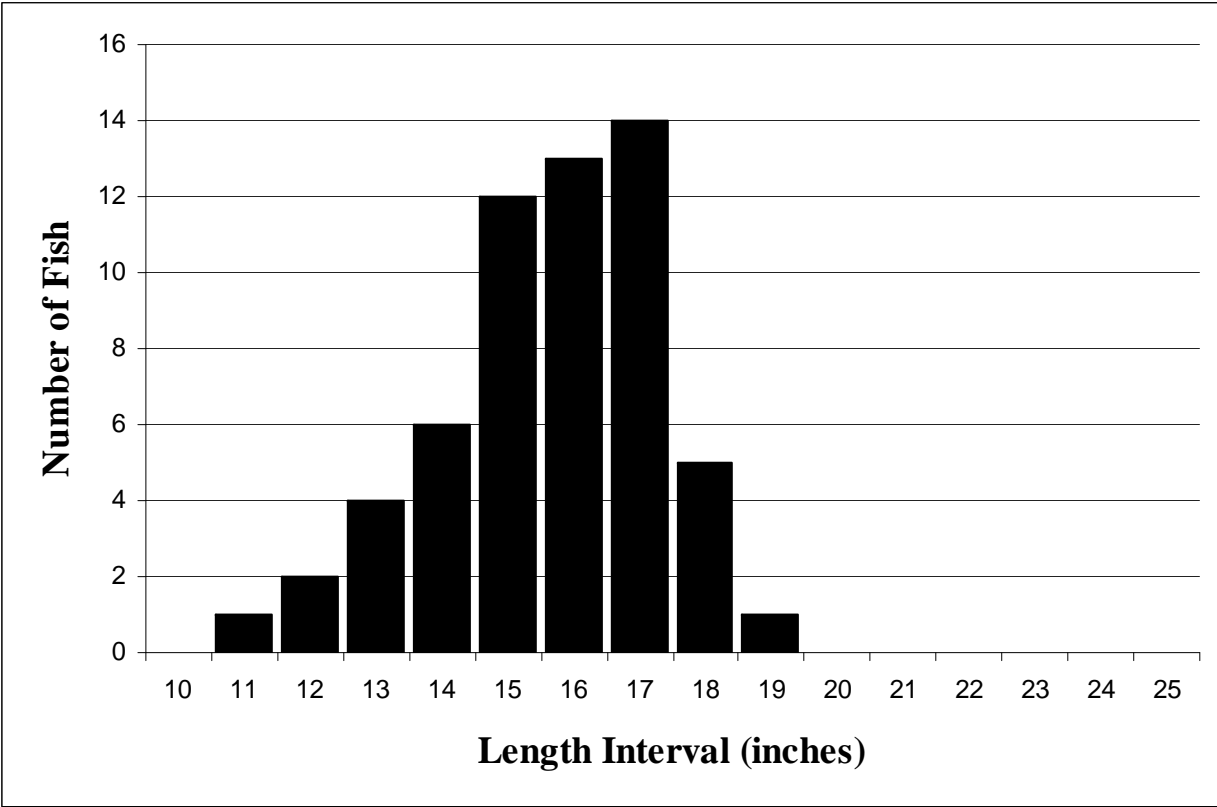


Figure 3. Length frequency distribution of brown trout from 2007 Great Sacandaga Lake angler diaries, n = 10.

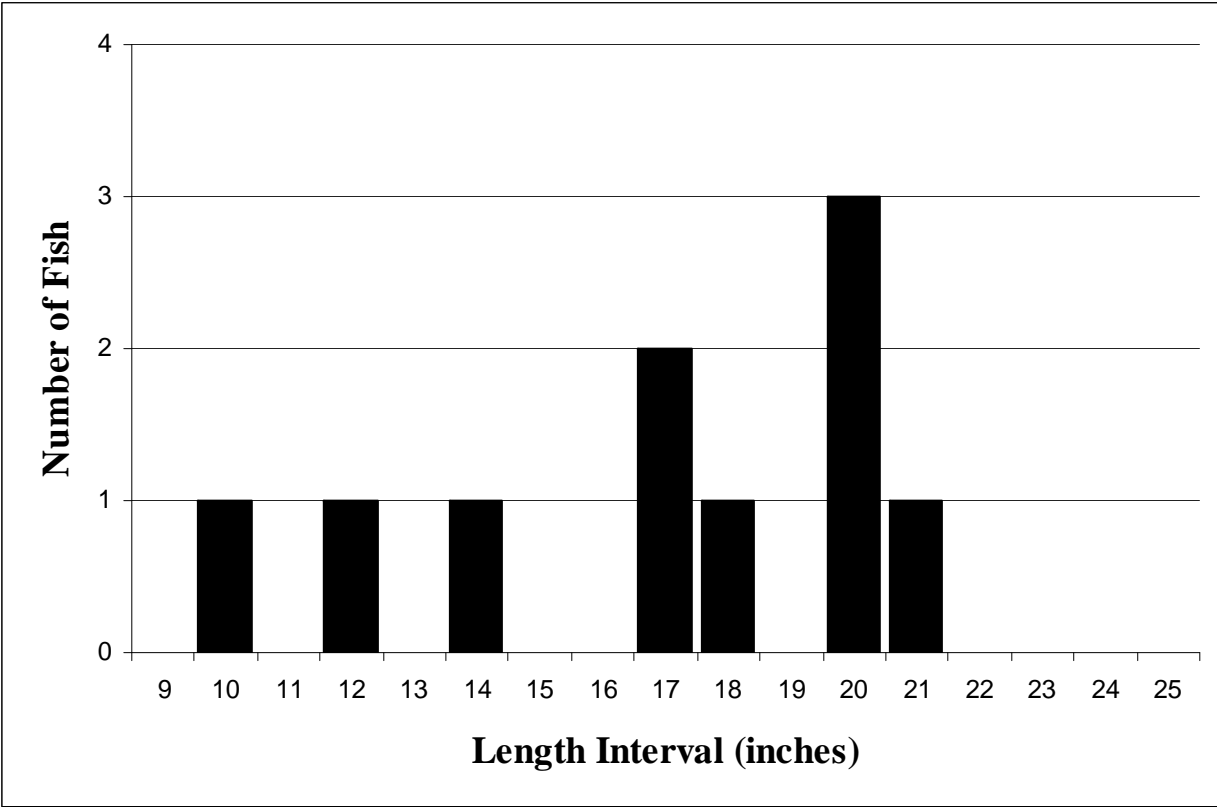


Figure 4. Length frequency distribution of smallmouth bass from 2007 Great Sacandaga Lake angler diaries, n = 121.

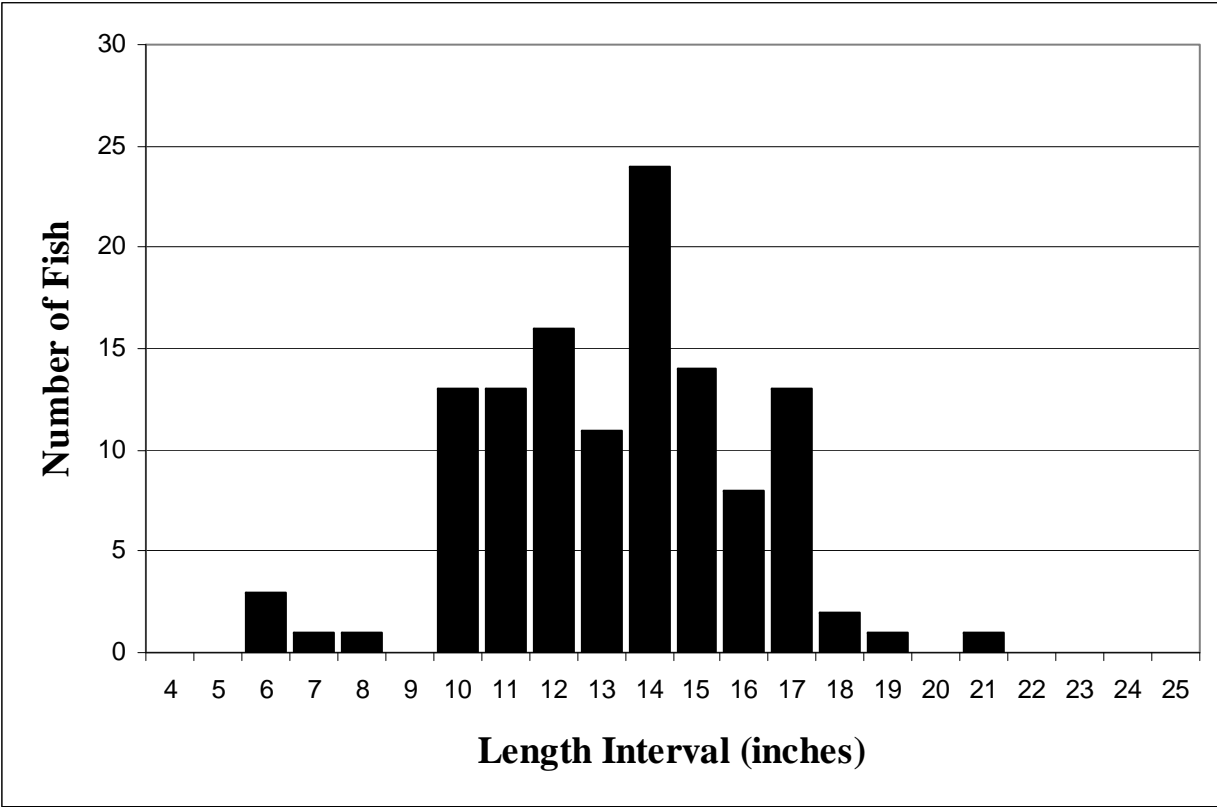
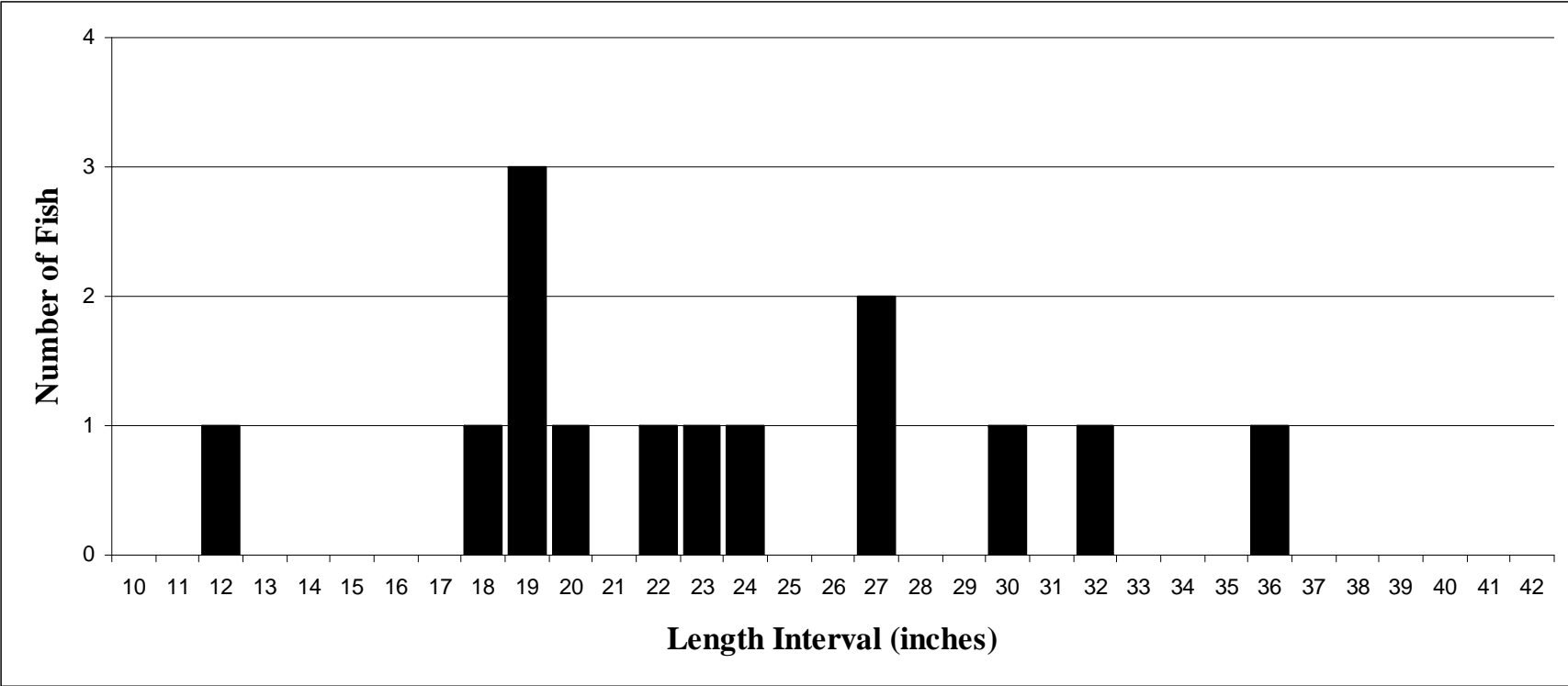


Figure 5. Length frequency distribution of yellow perch from 2007 Great Sacandaga Lake angler diaries, n = 39.



Figure 6. Length frequency distribution of northern pike from 2007 Great Sacandaga Lake angler diaries, n = 14.



GREAT SACANDAGA LAKE DIARY COOPERATOR PROGRAM

Interested in helping us monitor the fish populations in Great Sacandaga Lake? If you fish Great Sacandaga Lake and would be willing to keep a diary of your fishing trips, please mail in this form and we will send you the details. As a diary cooperator you will receive an annual report and your fishing information will be used to help make management decisions. Thanks!



NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

Please mail to:
NYS DEC Fisheries
232 Golf Course Road, P. O. Box 220
Warrensburg, NY 12885