

From Kevin Jacobson Silver Lake Resident and Walleyes For Tomorrow Volunteer:

Gentleman, I will forward the OTC study report from Heath with this email. As Heath reports it was an unusually hot day for our marking and release. The water was completely calm at the time of release so I was able to watch the fry for several minutes. They were slow and you could observe that some were not moving at all so it's hard to conclude the total effect of thermal shock. This will add to our learning curve so we can prepare if another unusually hot day occurs. Over all good news that Silver had at least an average survival rate even though we cannot completely identify our efforts. Again thank you to everyone for your dedicated effort at the Silver Lake hatchery project. I very much enjoyed working with this great group of people. I will keep you posted on any upcoming Walleyes For Tomorrow information. Hey two flags are up.. See Ya! Kevin J.

From Heath Benike – Wisconsin DNR:

Here are the results of the walleye OTC work done in Barron County last year. I am sending this to Silver Lake (Kevin Jacobsen), Walleyes for Tomorrow (Larry Sharp) and Walleyes for Chetek (Larry Stafsholt) because each of you were participants in this. Please feel free to pass this on to others in your organization.

We did not document any OTC marks from the 34 fish we collected from Silver Lake. Based on this, the fish that were present this year probably did not come from the walleye wagon, however without having marked fish to verify a mark took place this is never 100% accurate.

I am somewhat hesitant to draw a lot of conclusions from this first years data on Silver Lake because I think some if not many of the fry may have died when we released the fish that day. If you remember it was very hot that day (mid 90's). That morning we put lake water into the coolers which was cool water. The fish sat in the coolers for 6 hours getting their bath and were released around 6 pm that night. We grabbed lake water near the dock and we put the fry into the cooler. After the second time we did this, I noticed the lake water was considerably warmer than the cooler water. We might have put a temperature shock on the fish this first year which may have influenced our results. Kevin said they were pretty lethargic when he released them. Nevertheless, their were still some walleye left in the lake that were not spawned by the wagon and they reproduced naturally on their own and generated a respectable year class this past year.

Also included are the results of DNR stocking of small fingerling walleye on the Chetek Chain this past year.

You can see the Pokegama Lake was the best lake and had decent natural reproduction as well as good stocking success from the small fingerlings that the DNR stocked. You can also see the results for Chetek Lake which show mostly stocked fish but a little bit of natural reproduction and the results of Prairie Lake which was poor with only one stocked fish showing up and no natural reproduction.

For whatever reason, we are not getting much bang in Prairie Lake, however the results on Pokegama Lake are encouraging. For some reason there is still decent natural reproduction taking place and stocking success is very good here. Chetek Lake is somewhere in between and it is likely that fish from Pokegama could filter into Chetek pretty easily.

The extended growth fish that the Walleyes for Chetek and the Resort Owners are purchasing are probably the ticket for Prairie Lake. I think we could quit stocking the extended growth fish in Pokegama and focus them on Chetek and Prairie, because we are getting good natural reproduction of walleye as well as DNR small fingerling stocking success in Pokegama. I do not have a good handle on how the extended growth fish are doing, because they are not stocked until after we do our surveys, but I am told there are a lot of small walleye being caught so I would suspect many of those are coming from the extended growth walleye because they seem to do well on other lakes we stock them in.

Heath