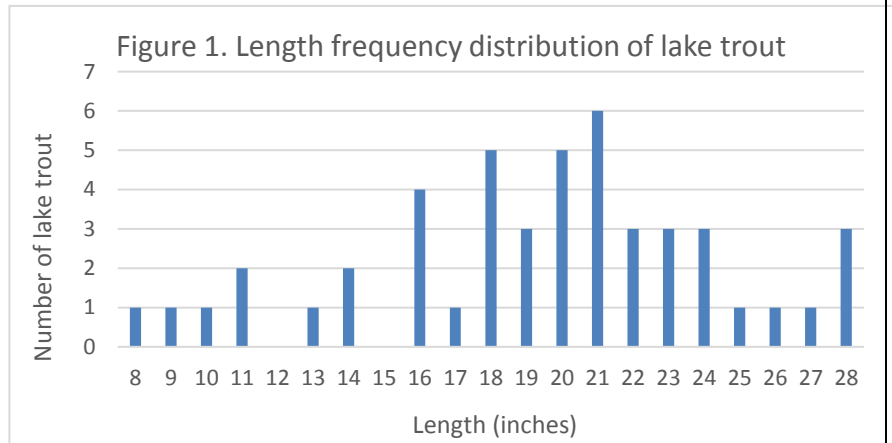


Hemlock Lake Standard Lake Trout Netting Survey (Survey #: 818018)
 Pete Austerman, Region 8 Fisheries September/24/2018

Hemlock Lake is an 1,800 acre lake in Livingston County with a maximum depth of 91 feet. The lake contains a variety of both warm and cold water fish. Annual stocking of 3,200 yearling and 6,600 fingerling lake trout supports a popular fishery. Hemlock Lake is located within Hemlock-Canadice State Forest and provides a unique fishing experience on one of the two undeveloped Finger Lakes. Gill netting was conducted during the week of June 25th to determine the current status of the lake trout population.

Forty-seven lake trout ranging from 8.3 to 28.5 inches (average length was 19.9 inches) were sampled from twelve gill nets (Figure 1). The largest lake trout caught was 7.4 pounds. Ninety-eight percent of lake trout caught were determined to be of hatchery origin based on fin clips. Natural reproduction of lake trout continues to be low and the population is dependent on annual



stocking of fish from DEC’s Bath Fish Hatchery. Fin clip data also indicated that yearling lake trout survive about twice as well as fingerling lake trout. This is most likely because yearling lake trout are much larger when they are stocked and therefore are less susceptible to predators. Future lake trout stocking in Hemlock Lake should shift away from fall fingerling stocking.

Comparing results from from past lake trout netting on Hemlock Lake suggests that the density of lake trout has declined slightly over the last two decades (Figure 2). This information will be used along with angler diary and forage fish (smelt, alewife, sculpin, etc.) data to determine if lake trout stocking rates need to be adjusted. Rainbow trout are also an important component of the trout fishery which need to be considered when we evaluate stocking levels.

