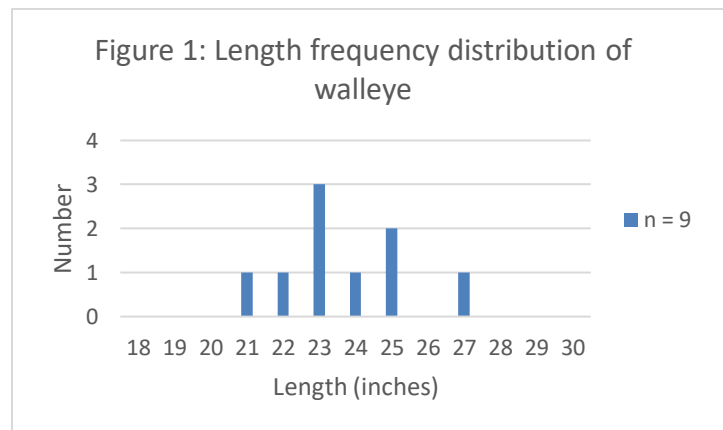


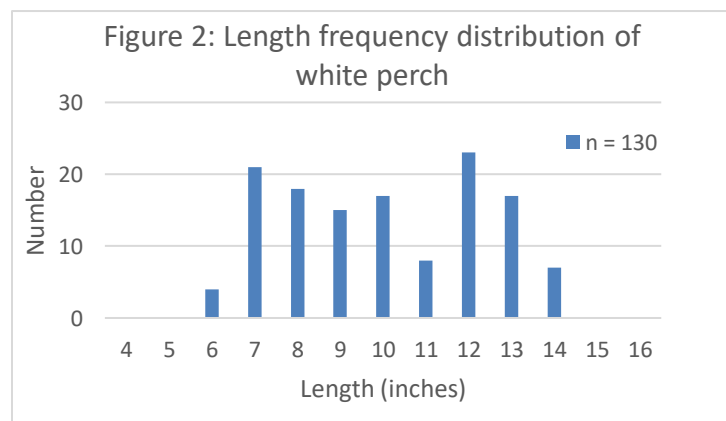
East Branch Reservoir Gill Net Survey (Survey 319012:) Ryan Coulter, Region 3 Fisheries

5/29/2020

East Branch Reservoir is a 525-acre reservoir located in the Town of Southeast, Putnam County, NY. The reservoir has roughly 8.5 miles of shoreline and has a maximum depth of 62 feet. Public access is provided by New York City Department of Environmental Protection. Walleye have been periodically stocked in the East Branch Croton River via private stockings and have established a fishable population in the East Branch Reservoir. Previous fisheries surveys and angler reports have shown that the walleye survive and grow well. A special regulation exists for walleye: season is open from 1st Saturday in May through March 15th, 18" size minimum, daily limit of three, ice fishing permitted. During the survey the reservoir was at 95% full pool. On 8/13 and 8/14/19, gill nets were set at a total of five different locations and were retrieved the following day. These nets fished an average of 22.7 hours each. The nets used were 270 ft by 10 ft with 2 inch, 3 inch and 4 inch monofilament mesh. All five nets were set on the surface, effectively fishing from 0 to 10 feet deep (dissolved oxygen levels were under 5 mg/l after 12 feet below the surface). The purpose of this survey is to monitor the walleye population.



A total of seven species were caught during this survey including two smallmouth bass, six bluegill, nine walleye, 14 black crappie, 28 white catfish, 195 alewife and 130 white perch. Walleye catch rate of 1.8 per net is slightly below average (Fourney et al 1994). Walleye lengths ranged from 21.5 to 27.8 inches (Figure 1). These fish appeared to be in good condition with weights ranging from 3.9 to 7.5 lbs. Scale samples showed two different year classes of walleye in our collection. Although in many waterbodies white perch may not be a desired species, the Croton Watershed is known for large white perch. White perch lengths ranged from 6.7 to 14.9 inches (Figure 2). It is unknown if the walleye are naturally reproducing, although this survey shows walleye growth and survival is successful. Starting in 2020 the DEC will stock walleye fingerlings on a biennial basis as part of a maintenance stocking policy. The DEC fisheries unit will continue to monitor the walleye fishery post stocking.



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Literature Cited

Forney, J.L., L.G. Rudstam, D.M. Green, and D.L. Stang. 1994 Percid sampling manual. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Albany, NY.

