

Sacandaga Lake Percid Survey # 519037: Jonathan Fieroh, Region 5 Fisheries

01/09/2020

Sacandaga Lake (UH-P314) is 1,589-acre water located about 2 miles west of the Town of Speculator in Hamilton County. Much of the Northern and Western shorelines are either part of the Jessup River Wild Forest or the NYSDEC Moffitt Beach Campground, with the remainder in private ownership. Sacandaga Lake has a maximum depth of 59 feet and the lake bottom is quite irregular, with multiple basins and shoals. The pH here is circumneutral and abundant dissolved oxygen was present to at least 55 feet. The 2019 survey was undertaken as part of an evaluation following 5 years of walleye stocking on Sacandaga Lake, but analysis of the walleye population will not be undertaken in this brief. Then other species stocked into Sacandaga Lake will be evaluated in this brief, lake trout and the brown trout. The evaluation of walleye will be included in a report drafted by the Warm Water Unit.

A total of 12 gill nets were set on June 18 and 19, 2019. Of the 12 nets, 10 were monofilament walleye nets which consist of 6, 25-ft monofilament panels 6 feet deep, and also deployed were two multifilament juvenile lake trout gang nets. The juvenile lake trout gangs are composed of 3, 100-ft nets of 1.5, 2, and 2.5-inch mesh and are designed specifically to target lake trout up to 5-years old, although occasionally some larger lake trout are also captured (Table 1.).

Table 1. Number and length ranges of fish collected, Sacandaga Lake, 2019.

Species	Number collected	Minimum length (in)	Maximum length (in)
Lake trout	1		6.9
Walleye	10	11.1	21.8
Smallmouth bass	6	7.7	12.0
Yellow perch	138	5.5	13.0
Chain pickerel	1		17.8
Rockbass	16	4.9	8.9
White sucker	7	13.6	20.7

Only a single 6.9-inch, 2-year old lake trout was collected during the entire survey despite annual lake trout stocking which began in 2009. Brown trout were not specifically targeted in the 2019 survey and none were collected. However, multiple anglers targeting brown trout report success and brown trout have been collected in other recent surveys (#518019, #595033). Only 6 smallmouth bass were collected during this survey, but smallmouth bass were abundant during recent electrofishing surveys (#518019, #517014, #516064), and individual fish in the 14 to 18-inch range were well represented in those surveys. Brown bullhead and largemouth bass were also collected in the recent electrofishing surveys.

Given the collection of only a single small lake trout, the stocking policy for 2,800 fin clipped lake trout yearling annually should be discontinued, while the brown trout policy of 1,500 yearling brown trout annually, which provides a popular fishery, should continue.