

READER'S GUIDE to USING this PUBLICATION

Your fishing map guide is a thorough, easy-to-use collection of accurate contour lake maps along with geographic and biologic statistical information to help you locate a lake and enjoy a successful day out on the water of one of Michigan's excellent fisheries.

The heart of this book is the **contour lake map**. Copyrighted maps are used with permission from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and are not intended for navigation. The lakes selected for this guide are confined to those that are accessible to the public.

Each map is accompanied by a **detailed write-up**. In each piece, you'll find fishing tips and hot spots specific to the body of water you're planning to fish.

Lake **stocking records** and **management comments** are provided courtesy of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and summarized to reflect management trends and objectives for each fishery represented. Please keep in mind that annual fish stocking aspirations are directly affected by state hatchery production levels and sometimes the numbers available for stocking fluctuate considerably.

Detailed **area road maps** (1:210,000 scale) and **lake access** information is provided to help you plan your route to the lake. If there is more than one access point on a body of water, the GPS coordinates refer to the primary access. To locate a lake on these road maps, simply use the alphabetical lake listing on the back cover. Turn to that page to find the area road map page and coordinates for the lake. As a cross-reference, the area road maps include numbers on or adjacent to featured lakes, which designate the pages of the lake maps and information. Streams and rivers are also referenced in these area road maps.

While every effort is made to create the most accurate maps possible, the process of merging existing DNR maps with the latest GPS information will cause some slight differences to occur. (Especially on larger, more complicated lakes.) Please use the GPS grids provided in this book only as a guideline.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Gill net: This is the main piece of equipment used for sampling walleye, northern pike, yellow perch, cisco, whitefish, trout, and salmon. The standard gill net is 6 feet tall by 250 feet long, with 5 different mesh sizes. Gill nets are generally set in off shore areas in water deeper than 9 feet. Nets are fished for a period of 24 hours. Fish are captured by swimming into the net and becoming entangled. Fisheries workers record length and weight data from each fish, determine the sex, look for parasites or disease, and remove several of the fishes scales for determining the fishes age. Most of the fish taken in gill nets are

killed, but only a small portion of the lakes fish population is sampled during an individual survey event. The number of gill nets set during a survey is dependant on the lake acreage.

Trap net: This is the main piece of equipment used for sampling bluegill, crappie, and bullheads. The standard trap net is 4 feet tall by 6 feet wide with a 40 foot lead. Trap nets are generally set perpendicular to shore in water less than 8 feet in depth. Nets are fished for a period of 24 hours. Fish are captured by swimming into the lead and following it towards the trap. Most of the fish collected in trap nets are returned back to the water as soon as the necessary biological data is recorded. The number of trap net sets during a survey is dependant on the lake acreage.

Electrofishing: This is a specialized type of equipment that is most often used for sampling largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, and young of the year walleye. A boat-mounted generator is used to induce electrical current into the water that stuns the fish, allowing fisheries workers to net the fish for placement in live wells. Most of the fish caught by electrofishing recover rapidly and are promptly returned to the water after the necessary biological data is recorded.

CPUE: An acronym representing "Catch Per Unit of Effort," a way of representing the density of a species population. Readings are in fish captured per hour or minute of surveying. The higher the CPUE value, the greater the number of fish present.

PSD: An acronym for "Proportional Stock Density," which is a way of representing the size structure of fish populations. It represents the percentage of "quality-size" fish within a given population. In arriving at this figure, one considers only fish of "stock" length (the size at which members of a given species reach sexual maturity) or greater. Young-of year fish are not included in the calculation. The higher the PSD number, the greater the percentage of "quality" fish within a particular population.

RSD-12 (or -10 or -14, etc.): An acronym for "Relative Stock Density," which is yet another way of representing the size structure of fish populations. This corresponds to the percentage of fish at a given length or larger within a population. Hence, an RSD-14 reading of 25 for largemouth bass indicates that 25 percent of sexually mature bass are at least 14 inches in length. On another measurement scale, the RSD- values could be stated as "preferred," "memorable," or "trophy."

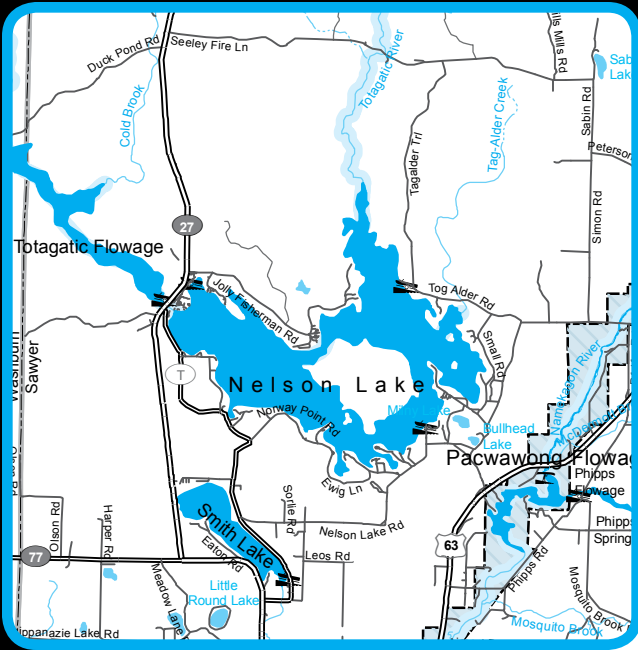
YAR: An acronym for "Young-(to)-Adult Ratio." This refers to the proportion of young-of-year fish in relation to adult or "quality-size" fish within a particular population. For balanced populations, the index should be about 1-to-10. In smaller waters, 1-to-3 is considered a reasonable ratio.

Secchi Disk: Used in measuring water clarity, it is a white-colored, plate-size device submerged on the end of a line until it reaches a point where it's no longer visible; the depth at which this occurs is measured and recorded. In this book, secchi disk readings are given in English measure. Of course, many factors influence water clarity, and secchi disk readings vary according to season, growth of vegetation, weather, location in a lake, even human activity. Hence the readings given are approximations for any lake—snapshots of the water clarity at a given time and in a given location.

LEGEND

	Boat Ramp		Marina		Marsh		Red & Green Channel Buoys
	Carry Down Access		Lily Pads		Emergent Vegetation		White Hazard Buoy
	Access by Navigable Channel		Submergent Vegetation		Manmade Canal		River Mile
	Portage Access		Emergent Vegetation		Marked Fishing Spots		Daymarker
	Access Information Marker		Stumps		Submerged Rail		Light & Daymarker
	Campground		Flooded Timber		Submerged Road		County Road
	Picnic Area		Rocks		Bridge		State Highway
	Fishing Dock (Pier)		Submerged Culvert		Submerged Riverbed		US Highway
	Shore Fishing		Submerged Ruins		GPS Grid		Interstate
	Fish Attractors						
	Boat tie-up						

NELSON LAKE Sawyer County



Area map page / coordinates: 15/D-6, 15/E-6, 16/D-1, 16/E-1
Accommodations: resorts, campgrounds, picnic area
Surface water area: 2,502 acres
Shorelength: 31.4 miles
Maximum depth: 35 feet
Mean depth: 5 feet
Secchi disk (water clarity): 3.2 feet
Water color: med. brown
Lake type: drainage
Littoral bottom types: 30% sand, 20% gravel, 15% boulder, 25% rubble, 10% detr.
Basic management: walleye, northern pike, bass, panfish
Accessibility: 1) Trailer Launch, 46° 6' 18" N / 91° 30' 30" W
Accessibility: 2) Trailer Launch, 46° 6' 19" N / 91° 27' 11" W
Accessibility: 3) Trailer Launch, 46° 4' 48" N / 91° 26' 51" W

Gamefish					Panfish					Rough Fish								
Muskie	N Pike	Walleye	LM Bass	SM Bass	Trout	Catfish	Sturgeon	B Crappie	W Crappie	Bluegill	Pumpkinseed	Y Perch	Bl Bullhead	Br Bullhead	Y Bullhead	Wh Sucker	Carp	Bowfin
P	P	A	C					C	A	P			C	P	P	A		

A=Abundant C=Common P=Present

FISHING INFORMATION

Nelson Lake is a good place to find walleyes and northern pike, including some of trophy size. Though there are not as many largemouth bass in the brownish waters of this 2,502-acre lake, they can often be positively huge, according to the folks at Hayward Bait and Tackle, 15737 Davis Ave., Hayward, WI 54843, (715) 634-2921. The walleyes are mostly on the small side, but an occasional 30-inch fish is caught. Sawyer County DNR fisheries technician Russ Warwick said Nelson is “a lake we are attempting to establish more walleye in, to get the walleyes back on track.” Part of the effort included stocking 125,000 small walleye fingerlings in 2003 and nearly 2,500 large fingerlings in 2005. The pike are more likely to be wall-hangers, with fish of 36 inches and bigger being caught often; an average pike, however, is a modest 16 inches. Terry Hogan, owner of Hayward Bait and Tackle, recommends leeches and suckers for the pike; he advises fishing the river channels and stumps. Largemouths in the 20-inch-plus range are regularly caught, though again the average fish is 15 to 16 inches. Hogan favors spoons tipped with pork frogs for the bass. Warwick said Nelson is a very good panfish lake, and starting in March 2007 there will be no size limit for panfish; however, there will be a 10-fish limit. There are lots of small perch and crappies to catch in Nelson.

Recent lake improvements include the placement of many fish cribs in various locations (see map) by the DNR and local sportsman’s groups. Nelson has lots of structure, but it’s dominated by a huge island (appropriately called Big

FISH STOCKING DATA			
year	species	age	# released
03	Walleye	Small Fingerling	125,000
05	Walleye	Large Fingerling	2,499

LENGTH OF SELECTED SPECIES SAMPLED FROM ALL GEAR									
species	Date: 9/27/04								Total
	Gear type: Boom Shocker								
	Number of fish caught for the following length categories (inches):								
	0-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	>29	
Northern Pike	2	5	19	43	12	-	3	1	85
Walleye	-	-	-	-	6	8	-	-	14
Largemouth Bass	2	5	19	43	12	-	-	-	81
Yellow Perch	79	51	2	-	-	-	-	-	132
Black Crappie	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	5
Bluegill	12	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	15

Island) that creates narrows around its perimeter and is big enough to have named bays of its own. For walleyes or crappies, work the narrows between the east side of Big Island and Tannings Point near Bean Bay (**Spot 1**). This is one of the places where fish cribs were installed, and it is often a hot spot. In the summer, expect to find the eyes and crappies suspended in that area. Another narrows off the southeast corner of the island (**Spot 2**) is also a good place to locate walleyes; fish 10- to 15-foot down. Springtime visitors have a good chance of finding crappies in the appropriately named Crappie Bay (**Spot 3**) toward the lake’s north end. Log Jam and Lily bays are also good places to locate crappies. For one of those lunker northern, work the shallow waters near Stacy Island (**Spot 4**), just south of the lake’s only deep hole (**Spot 5**), which is itself a good spot for crappies. Anglers looking to tie into one of the lake’s big largemouths are advised to try just off Eagle’s Nest Island (**Spot 6**), along the western shoreline. A bit farther north, around the waters of Grass Island (**Spot 7**), is a good place to locate bluegills. A long channel of 15-foot water that stretches east to west across the south end of the lake from the dam (the original Totagatic River channel) is another good place to hunt for walleyes (**Spot 8**). Many fish cribs are located there, too.

Nelson is also a good luck to bring the kids for some fast ice-fishing action, according to Warwick.

