

Title: Comprehensive Survey of Cedar Lake, Manitowoc County

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Dates of Field Work: August 1994 through June 1995

Work Purpose: To determine the status of the fish community of Cedar Lake in Manitowoc County.

Findings: Seining, electrofishing, and fyke surveys have shown that largemouth bass, and bluegill are the most abundant fish in Cedar Lake. Other fish commonly caught during surveys were northern pike, yellow perch, and black crappie.

Largemouth bass have increased in average length as compared to previous surveys which may be a result of the 14" size limit.

The northern pike population was estimated at 4.5/acre, but fish were small in size and somewhat slow growing. Heavy angler harvest during ice fishing may have removed larger individuals, and limited forage may account for slow growth.

As in earlier surveys, few walleye were found. Stocked walleye did not appear to survive well and have not established a self-sustaining population.

Bluegill, and the other collected centrarchids have decreased in number and size as compared to earlier surveys. Overharvest, and loss of habitat appear to be the cause of the decline. Yellow perch number and size were similar to earlier surveys.

Conclusions: Cedar Lake because of it's water quality, and fish growth rates has the potential to be one of the best fishing lakes in Manitowoc County. Although overharvest of fish is a problem, the 14" size limit on bass, and the 26" size limit on northern pike should help. Habitat loss due to aquatic plant harvesting, and placement of fill on the lake bed have hurt panfish and forage fish populations. There is a need to work with the Cedar Lake Association to develop long term goals for the lake that would enhance the fishery by protecting areas of vegetation and reducing the amount of fill in placed in the lake.