

RLA Walleye Rehab Report 5/24/25

I'm happy to report that our walleye rehabilitation project is coming along swimmingly! (See what I did there?) I had some success through the ice last winter and so did my neighbors. One night I caught 3, 12" fish from the same hole. There must have been a school of them hanging out under there.

Last October the RLA stocked 6500 fingerling walleyes and the Mole Lake Fisheries donated another 2966 for a total of 9466 fish stocked. These fish averaged 7.8" in length. Last summer Mole Lake Fisheries also stocked some 1 year old fish approximately 13" long. Sorry, I don't know how many. Each fish had a clipped fin, and some of those fish turned up in the DNR's fall survey.

[Greg Matzke](#) is our DNR fisheries biologist. I asked him for an update. His response is as follows:

[\(Picture of Lake with red and yellow shoreline here Roberts_FE1_2024_Map\)](#)

We did do a fall electrofishing survey to look for walleye natural reproduction last fall. I attached the survey report and map. In the shoreline area marked in red we captured and recorded Walleye, Muskie, Large Mouth Bass, Northern Pike, and Small Mouth Bass. In the yellow area we collected and recorded all fish netted. We did capture 30 age-0 walleye that were produced naturally, which is good, but not great. We are still hoping that the walleye population will turn it on now that the fishery is in much better shape for walleye.

Mole Lake did stock age-1 walleye last summer.....these were fish that were kept overwinter and fed and were much larger (about 13" when

they were stocked). All of those fish were given a clip, and we did capture 12 of those fish during the fall survey as well.

Currently the USFS has nets out for muskie. It is a 2-year survey to estimate muskie abundance, so this is just the first year. I don't have the data yet, but I believe they have handled about a dozen different muskie so far this year. Nets will likely be in until the end of next week.

Jake Carleen is our USFS fisheries biologist. His update is as follows:

(Picture of graph here, [Image003.png](#))

Got the last day of netting info from Greg so I was able to run final numbers on our muskie efforts this year. We marked a total of 19 muskies this year, 12 males and 7 females. We had an initial marking goal of 20 fish based on the last muskie population estimate, so we are happy with getting 19 marked. Males averaged 36.3 inches and females averaged 39.9 inches. The largest fish we surveyed was a 43.8 inch female, we actually caught her on the first day of netting and again on the last day after she made a journey from the north shore of the lake to the south shore of the lake. The length-frequency graph on screen is for all muskies, male and female, we surveyed this year.

As far as other fish, we had a high catch of panfish with a relatively small size structure throughout the survey. We caught a fair amount of walleye early in the survey but they disappeared from the nets as spawning concluded, which was expected. We had a relatively low catch of largemouth bass and northern pike which would suggest the removal is working. We did survey some nice smallmouth bass, a couple over 21 inches.

I have no plans on doing any additional work on Roberts this year until a potential fall walleye shocking run. Not sure at this point if that will fall on my schedule or WDNR/Mole Lakes.

After the comprehensive survey next year we'll have better data on walleye/bass/panfish and year two of muskie netting results and should be able to paint a better picture of the fishery out there.

You are correct about 2025, we'll be doing a comprehensive survey on Roberts Lake. So we'll probably be out there busting ice with the boat to get walleye right as they spawn. After that we'll just keep nets in to get the second part of the muskie survey accomplished (year 1 is a marking year and year 2 is a recapture year). We will also be back in June for panfish netting with fyke nets. We shouldn't need any help from the association, but if anyone wanted to join for a day we could likely make room in the fyke net boat.