

**FISHERIES & HABITAT COMMITTEE
BULLHEAD REDUCTION PROJECT
2025 PROJECT SUMMARY**

I. COMMITTEE PLANNING

- Planning for the 2025 Bullhead Reduction Project began in April via email messaging with the full committee and individual exchanges with Mike Preul and Greg Matzke prior to virtual meeting. (Email exchanges were printed and saved in hard copy records for reference next year if needed)
- In early April Ed Smith resigned from the committee
- Virtual meeting was held on April 17, 2025. (Meeting Minutes available on Website)
- Meeting discussion items included delayed start of collection site, collection site worker schedule, rusty crayfish discussion, bullhead as detrimental fish designation by the DNR and its impact on the project operations, if any for 2025.

II. PROJECT TASKS TIMELINE & VOLUNTEER WORK

- Scheduling and follow-up contacts by Phil Resch
- Contact with Mike Preul for details of electroshocking results by Julie Janquart
- Contact with Greg Matzke to acquire volunteer paperwork, print & post on website by Julie Janquart
- Yeti / Palubicki coupon purchases by Phil Resch
- Collection site signage hung and taken down by Grant Reed (Stored in JJ's shed)
- Collection site paperwork, pails, etc. by Phil Resch
- Collection disposal by Phil Resch
- Collection data and DNR Volunteer paperwork recordkeeping by Grant Reed
- Newsletter articles by Julie Janquart and Julie Van Lannen

III. ELECTROSHOCKING ADULT HARVEST RESULTS (MIKE PREUL)

- With approximately 25 hours of work Mole Lake Fisheries harvested 2,242 adult bullheads weighing in at 2,629 pounds with the average length being 12.1" and average weight at 1.2 lbs. each
- Preul reported: "we had to work hard this year to remove adults on Metonga... no doubt there are still a fair number out there."
- Need to continue the annual removal of eggs and fries to keep the population level down.

IV. COLLECTION SITE SUMMARY

- Collection site attendees reported that fewer bullhead eggs and minnow schools to be found and netted this year.
- Sixteen individuals submitted their "catch" to the site, which was a total of 57 adults, approximately 2400 eggs and 47,874 fry which is slightly higher than 2024 data.
- In addition to the reported 57 adults collected, 53 adult bullheads (11.0" – 13.4") were removed during the fall walleye completed by the WDNR (Matzke) and Tribal Treaty (Preul) crews.

V. 2025 FALL WALLEYE SURVEY RESULTS (GREG MATZKE) [COMPLETED ON 10-25-25]

- Greg Matzke, WDNR email commentary: ...*"So attached is this years fall survey. And a great year it was!!!! Your lake group and Mike's teams effort are paying off. A great year class!"*
- Mike Preul, Mole Lake email commentary: ... *"This survey was performed jointly with WDNR (crew from Rhinelander); we did the east shoreline, WDNR did the west side. Results from our side were good and better than the past few years for the east shoreline. Young of the year walleye were nice size and in great condition with abundant small yellow perch throughout...I think this will be a nice year class, potentially one of the better ones in the past 5 years. "*
- See page 3 & 4 for the detailed summary.

VI. BUDGET & EXPENDITURES

▪ Budget balance carried over from 2024	\$3,617.15
▪ Additional funding	<u>\$0.00</u>
▪ Total Available Funding 2025	\$3,617.15

2025 EXPENSES

▪ Palubicki \$10.00 Coupons (10 purchased/10 donated)	\$100.00
▪ Yeti \$10.00 Coupons (10 purchased / 5 donated)	<u>\$100.00</u>
▪ Total Expenses	\$200.00

2025 BUDGET**\$3,617.15****2025 EXPENSES****\$200.00****BUDGET BALANCE (Carry over to 2026)****\$3,417.15****VII. INCENTIVE DRAWING**

- All individuals submitting catch to the collection site received a Yeti or Palubicki \$10.00 coupon.
- Remaining coupons not distributed will be used in 2026 at the collection site.
- No drawing was held this year at the conclusion of the project as was done in previous years.

CURRENT FISHERIES & HABITAT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Phil Resch, Committee Chairperson

Lynn Smith, LMA Board Liaison

Grant Reed

Julie Janquart

Kayla Reed (Remotely participating)

SUMMARY FISHING RECORD
Form 3600-63

Department of Natural Resources

County	Forest	Waters	Lake Metonga	MWBC: 394400
Sampling Objective	Gamefish Recruitment	Number and Locations of Stations (Habitat)		
Period Fished (Dates)	9/25/2025	Miles Actually Shocked =	Game 9.47	All 0
		Acres =	1,991	Source LM
		Total Miles of Shoreline =	7.9	LM
		Total Miles of Shockable Shoreline =	9.5	GPS

GEAR

Boomshocker (Hours)	3.95	Time	√ Night	Day
Visual Hours	Time of Day	Haul Seine (Length)	Mesh Size	Area Covered
Angling (Hours)	Time of Day	Trap Net (No. of Net Lifts)	Mesh Size	Depth
Minnow Seine (No. of Hauls)	Area Covered	Gill Net (No. of Feet x No. of Lifts)	Mesh Size	Depth
Other (Hours or Lifts)	Boomshocker(s): 2 Dip Netter(s): 4	Mini-boomshocker(s): Dip Netter(s):	Characteristics Walleye Recruitment Code: NR	

FISHING RESULTS		*ENTIRE SHORELINE*	Distance:	9.47 miles	Time:	3.95 hrs.
Walleye (Age 0+)	426	6.3	4.8 - 7.8	107.85 / hour	44.98 / mile	
Walleye (Age 1+)	25	9.3, 10.5	9.0 - 11.2	6.33 / hour	2.64 / mile	
Walleye (Other)	16	12.0, 12.7	11.6 - 14.4	4.05 / hour	1.69 / mile	
Smallmouth Bass (age 0+)	29	3.5-3.9	≤ 2.9 - 4.9	7.34 / hour	3.06 / mile	
Smallmouth Bass (age 1+)	13	6.5-6.9	5.5 - 6.9	3.29 / hour	1.37 / mile	
Smallmouth Bass (Other)	28	9.0-9.4	7.0 - 9.9	7.09 / hour	2.96 / mile	
Largemouth Bass (age 0+)	10	4.5-4.9	3.0 - 4.9	2.53 / hour	1.06 / mile	
Largemouth Bass (age 1+)	3	5.0-5.4	5.0 - 5.9	0.76 / hour	0.32 / mile	
Largemouth Bass (Other)	2	N/A	7.5 - 9.4	0.51 / hour	0.21 / mile	
Northern Pike (age 0+)	0		-	0.00 / hour	0.00 / mile	
Northern Pike (age 1+)	0		-	0.00 / hour	0.00 / mile	
Northern Pike (Other)	0		-	0.00 / hour	0.00 / mile	

ALL FISH STATION	0 mi.	0.00 hrs.	*Did Not Complete This year*
Bluegill	0		/ hour / mile
Yellow Perch	0		/ hour / mile
Black Crappie	0		/ hour / mile
Rock Bass	0		/ hour / mile
Common Shiner	0		/ hour / mile
Golden Shiner	0		/ hour / mile
White Sucker	0		/ hour / mile
Mottled Sculpin	0		/ hour / mile
Bullhead	0		/ hour / mile

Other Species	Abundance	Size Range	Other Species	Abundance	Size Range
Bullhead	5.6/mile	11.0-13.4"			

1) Tank Mortality: None 2) Weather: Clear, Calm 3) H₂O Temp: 68°F 3) Reliability: High

4) Stocking: None

5) Comments: Mileage not recorded, used 2023 distance. Mole Lake has removed the majority of the adult bullheads the last few years. The Lake Association has removed millions of juvenile bullheads the last 4 years. These removals seem to be very effective, as we do not see juvenile BHs during these fall surveys. The recent bullhead removals have worked as intended with a solid year class of walleye produced in 2023 (22.5/mile), which have survived extremely well (14.4/mile as age-1's last year). This years survey shows a very nice year class of walleye produced. I don't think this lake lends itself to very accurate age-0 walleye CPUE. There are vast flats of shallow water, which doesn't seem to condense the age-0 fish near shore like we see on other lakes. My opinion is that this causes us to underestimate walleye reproduction for Lake Metonga. Walleye age breaks determined via age estimation, other species age breaks determined via length frequency analysis. Survey conducted by Treaty (W Shore) and Mole Lake (E Shore). All bullheads captured (53 fish) were removed.

6) What was Collected: WE ≤ 14.9", all BH, Bass ≤ 9.9", and NP ≤ 14.9" were collected the entire time. We did not complete an "All Fish" station this year.

Rev. 10-70 Signed (Compiler) Gregory R. Matzke Date 10/13/25

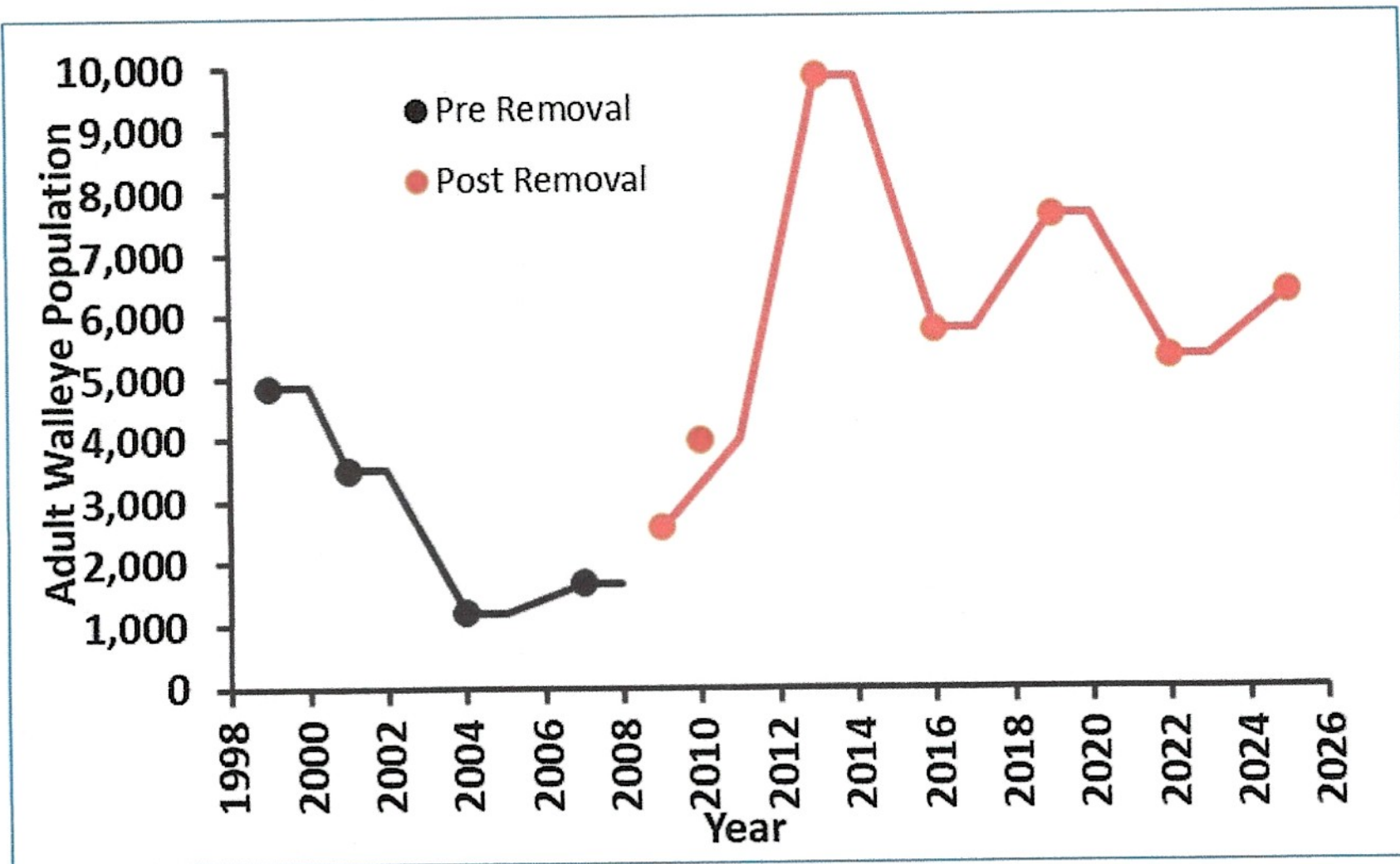


Figure. Estimated adult walleye abundance in Lake Metonga, Forest County, 1999-present.

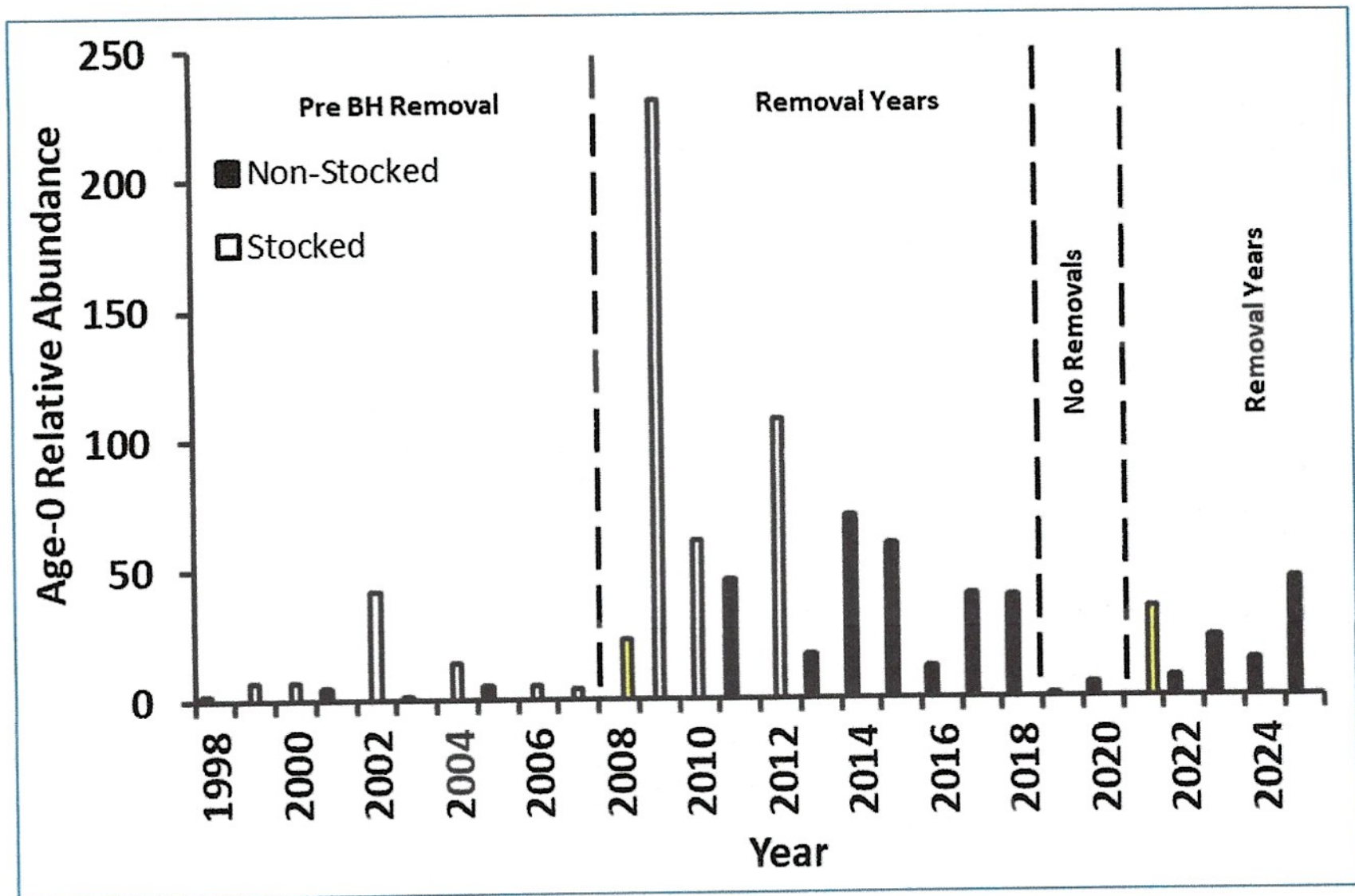


Figure. Walleye recruitment, indexed using age-0 walleye catch per mile during fall electrofishing surveys, in Lake Metonga, Forest County, 1998-present.