

## 2017 Northeast Glacial Lakes Fishing Forecast – Week 2

Presented by Fishermens Net Guide Service LLC

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As I write this the wind is blowing 36 mph with wind gusts to over 50. I'm sure that it's raising havoc with the ice remaining on the lakes. We're going to see an early ice out this year and that's great!

What I plan to do here for the next few weeks is not to give a fishing report (because we're entering a transition period, ice to open water) but to highlight a few lakes every week and a lake survey history along with my 2017 fishing forecast. Not only will we visit the more popular lakes, I'll hit some of the lakes that are more off the beaten path.

**Antelope Lake (Day County)** – This 700 acre lake was last surveyed in July 2014 and is primarily managed for walleye and yellow perch. 16 nets were used in the survey which included 4 gill nets. The remaining ones were frame nets stationed along the shore. The walleye catch rate in 2014 was above the minimum objective and equivalent to other years the survey was run. But in 2006 the catch rate in gill nets was below the minimum objective while in 2011 the catch rate was 3 times higher than the objective.

Walleye size and length are well above management guideline objectives. Meaning we have some nice walleye in the lake. Year classes of 2009, 2011 and 2013 comprised 88% of the walleye catch and ran between 4" to 23" in size. The walleye grow fast too. A 2 year old walleye ranges from 12 ½" to 15 ½" while a 3 year old is between 16" to 17 ½" long. The Game, Fish and Parks stocked walleye fry in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. Each year 600,000 fry were stocked with the exception of 2015 where 365,000 fry were put in Antelope. Looking at history there could be another stocking in 2017.

Yellow perch catch rates and size were below objective levels.

Antelope has a good walleye population of some fairly decent fish. But please remember, practice some conservation measures. Do we always have to bag a limit to be successful?

**Lake Kampeska (Codington County)** – Here's one you probably didn't expect. This 5,200 acre lake has a love/hate relationship with some fishermen. Walleye in Kampeska benefit from natural reproduction and fish stocking. In each year 2008, 2009 and 2014, 2.5 million walleye fry were stocked. In 2013, 2.4 million walleye fry were stocked.

The lake was surveyed in 2014 and 2015. The catch rate was high but the size and length were below the objective. Walleye growth is variable, for example a 4 year old captured fish measures between 12 ½" to 16". Fishermen catch decent eater size walleye here but don't expect a couple guys going out for a few hours to bring in a limit of keeper size fish. Kampeska is a plug pullers dream due to being pretty much weed free. When pulling plugs you'll catch just about everything, walleyes, crappies, silver bass and an occasional perch.

The lake has a low density population of perch as it lacks suitable spawning habitat and cover to hide. But if you do get one it'll be a good one. And there is also a good population of crappies and silver bass with the silver bass being above average size.

If you're in the area and have your position limit of walleyes I would recommend trying this lake for smallmouth bass. It has a very good population of smallies with some in the 18" range and above. Fish the rocks along shore and the rock piles by Newcomb's point. With that said I would put it in the top 5 smallmouth bass lakes in Northeastern South Dakota.

Didn't see your favorite lake? Check in next week as we'll highlight other lakes in Northeast South Dakota. Also, check out our Facebook Page. <https://www.facebook.com/fishermensnetsd/>