

Lac Vieux Desert Walleye Rehabilitation Plan Informational Sheet

Progress in the Right Direction – February 2024

- By 2006, juvenile walleye (ogaa) survival in Lac Vieux Desert (LVD) had declined to undetectable levels. Since then, partnered fall electrofishing surveys have been conducted annually by Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Wisconsin DNR to monitor trends in juvenile walleye survival (natural and stocked). These efforts detected no improvements in juvenile survival, and by 2016, adult walleye density had fallen to its lowest recorded level.
- To address the decline in juvenile survival, collaborative, rehabilitative walleye stocking efforts began shortly after 2006 and encompassed a variety of stocking strategies, with limited success. As part of the Wisconsin Walleye Initiative, Wisconsin DNR substantially increased stocking of extended growth fingerling walleye into LVD beginning in 2016. Additional walleye stocking efforts have been led by Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (LVD Tribe) and LVD Lake Association, Inc.
- In 2013, LVD Tribe voluntarily suspended harvesting walleye and no tribal harvest via spearing or netting has occurred since 2017.
- In 2017, LVD Tribe, Sokaogon-Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, GLIFWC, Michigan DNR and Wisconsin DNR partnered to formalize a plan to rehabilitate the LVD walleye fishery.
- In 2018, Michigan DNR and Wisconsin DNR implemented a special angling regulation - an 18-inch minimum length and 3-fish daily bag limit - to reduce angling harvest of walleye.
- In spring of 2023, Michigan DNR and Wisconsin DNR assessed the adult walleye population in LVD. The results were an estimated 1.6 adult walleye per acre, representing an approximate three-fold increase in abundance since the historical lowest level of 0.5 per acre in 2016.
- In January 2024, the partners met and agreed to continue the rehabilitation plan, with the primary goals being to 1) recover the adult walleye density to a minimum of 2.5 adult walleye per acre and 2) restore sufficient natural reproduction and juvenile survival to sustain LVD's walleye fishery.
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