

NDG&F July 21st Newsletter

Record Number of Lakes Stocked with Walleye

North Dakota Game and Fish Department fisheries personnel recently wrapped up stocking walleye in a record 133 lakes across the state.

Jerry Weigel, fisheries production and development supervisor, said thanks to the excellent walleye fingerling production from the Garrison Dam and Valley City national fish hatcheries, these waters received nearly 10 million fingerlings.

“With a record number of fishing waters across the state, the demand to stock these new waters with hatchery fish has greatly increased,” Weigel said. “We’ve increased our efforts to make sure we meet the record production demands.”

Game and Fish works with both federal hatcheries, providing operational funding and temporary staff, as well as collecting all the eggs and transporting fish to all the fishing waters across the state.

Most recently, the department partnered with the Fish and Wildlife Service to make improvements to the 50-year-old Valley City hatchery, which resulted in a hatchery record 2.5 million walleye fingerlings produced this year.

Stocking conditions were optimal this year, Weigel said, with cooler weather and increasing water levels at many lakes. The stocked 30-day-old fingerlings averaged about 1.25 inches in length.

“They should find lots of food and good survival conditions which bodes well for future fishing opportunity,” Weigel added. “Later this fall fisheries personal will sample walleye lakes to assess the success of this year’s walleye stocking, as well as what Mother Nature provides.”

One common observation fish haulers noted while traveling across the state, Weigel said, was the amount of fishing taken place, both from shore and from a boat. “There has never been a better time to fish for walleye,” he added. “Statewide, there are a lot of great opportunities, and a very good chance of success.”