

2021 Moses Lake Walleye Fishing Prospects

During October 2020, WDFW conducted their annual Fall Walleye Index Netting Survey of Moses Lake, Grant County, WA. Results show a slight decline in the average number of Walleye caught per net from 2016 (the last survey conducted) to 2020 (Figure 1). The average size of Walleye collected in 2020 was 15.6 inches with the largest slightly above 27 inches. Forty-four percent of the Walleye collected were 12–20 inches and 53 percent were 18 inches or larger (Figure 2). Anglers specifically targeting Walleye in Moses Lake harvested an estimated 2,127 Walleye in 2020, with an average catch rate of approximately 0.24 fish per hour. Harvest of Walleye was low in Moses Lake during 2020, and we expect similar harvest during 2021; however, anglers may expect to see a few larger Walleye included in their catch. The majority of Walleye were caught by anglers during May and June, with success spread throughout the lake. A larger year-class of young-of-the-year (hatch-year) Walleye was observed in 2020 and is expected to improve Walleye catch rates during the 2022 season. The most successful techniques for catching Walleye include trolling worm harnesses (slow death hook and nightcrawler), trolling crankbaits, or vertical jigging with blade baits.

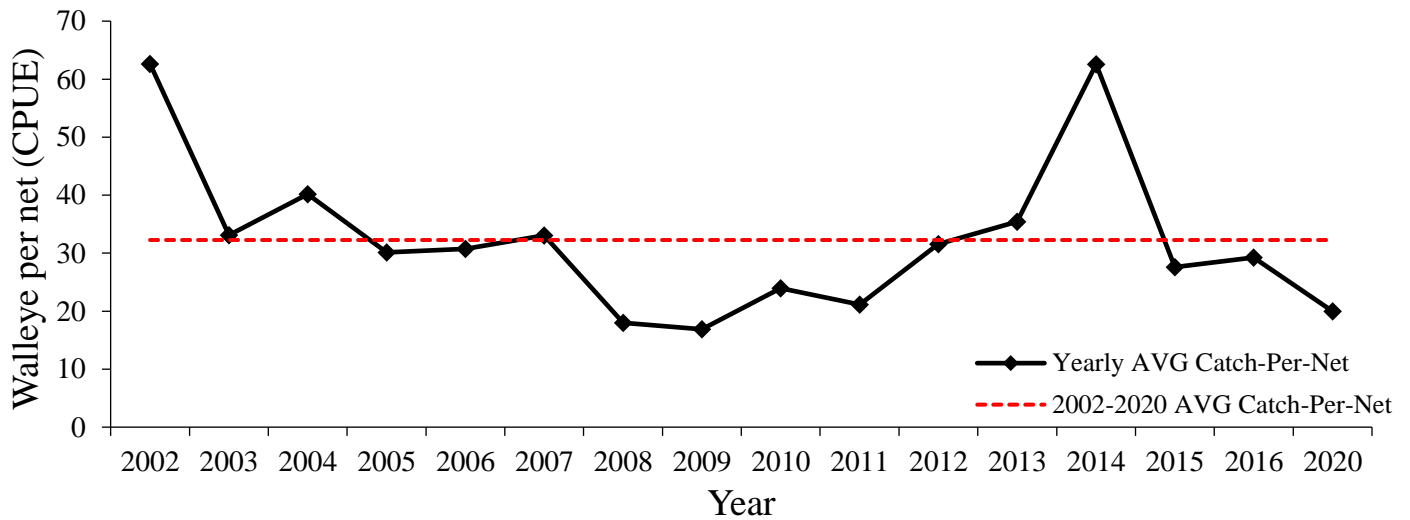


Figure 1. Average catch per net of Walleye caught in Moses Lake during 2020 compared to the 2002–2020 long-term average.

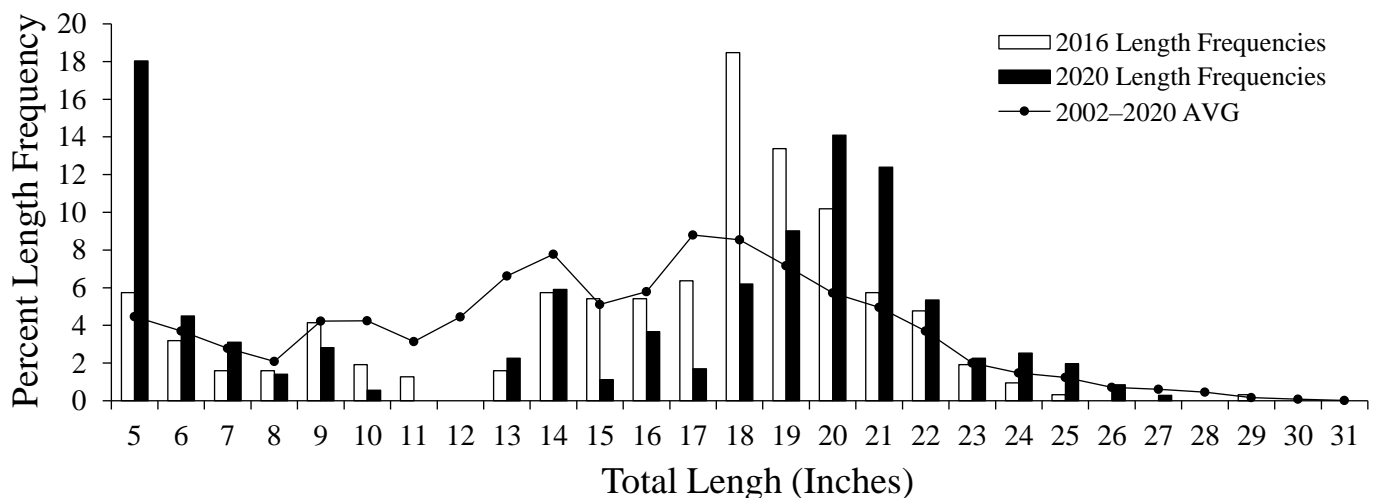


Figure 2. Percent length frequency of Walleye caught in Moses Lake during 2016 and 2020 compared to the 2002–2020 long-term average.