

Matteson Lake Association Fish Committee Report – June 27, 2020

The Fall 2019 fish plant of 1,000 six-inch hybrid sunfish was executed on September 20. The DNR planted 1,251 six-inch Walleye in Matteson Lake on October 30.

In the Spring of 2020 we planned to plant 2000 Yellow Perch to sustain the Yellow Perch population, which is preyed upon by both Walleye and Largemouth Bass, as well as fishermen. Our committed source was unable to produce the Yellow Perch to plant, the planting was cancelled and deferred to March 2021.

We have located Yellow Perch for next year's Spring planting. The fish farm owner has committed to plant the fish in Matteson Lake early in March. This is specifically to take advantage of the sexual maturity of roughly 30% of these yearling fish. If planted in a lake with water below 45 F, the yearlings will add 2-3M eggs to the year's brood.

The Fish Committee is planning to assess the Fat Head Minnow population by evaluating their shoreline activity. This assessment will enable us to determine if we need to plant more Fatheads in the future to sustain their population. Fathead Minnows are the perfect feeder fish at the bottom of the fish food chain. They are also used as bait fish by fishermen. They are essential to support Yellow Perch, Walleye and Largemouth Bass populations.

- Fathead Minnow facts:
- They spawn when the lake reaches 60 F and continue to spawn to the end of August
- They grow to 3 to 4 inches long at maturity.
- Prior to spawning, the male develops a dark coloration, breeding tubercles on its head that resemble small horns, and a mucus-like patch on its back, and builds a nest.
- Males prepare nests under rocks and sticks near the shore. The female enters the nest and turns upside down and lays adhesive eggs on overhead objects. After the female leaves, the male fertilizes the eggs, which it then guards, fans with its fins and massages with the special, mucus-like pad on its back.

Fish Shelters: We are considering adding more fish shelters in Matteson Lake. We want to make a fish shelter contact with someone on Palmer Lake to compare approaches and learn best practices. We currently have 4 shelters in place in Matteson Lake. Palmer Lake has many more already in place.

Creel Report: We currently collect a fish survey from Lake Association members, which represents the fish they would like planted in the lake. A Creel Report would capture data as a result of fishing from participating lake anglers, such as:

- Date Fished
- Name
- Number of anglers
- Number of hours fished
- Species Targeted
- # of each by species kept
- # of each species released
- Lengths for species of interest, for example Northern Pike 34 inches

The Creel Report would provide the Fish Committee with supportive information when making fish planting decisions.