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CREEL CENSUS ON HAMLIN LAKE

WINTER OF 1935-36

The winter census on Hamlin lake was taken by men from the Ludington State Park Camp (SP-2) from January 6 to March 4, 1936. This census was taken by a crew of four men and covers fishing on Lower Hamlin and its connecting bayous only. It is reported that about two-thirds of the fishing was on Upper Hamlin. Because of the large size of Hamlin Lake and the paucity of winter fishing on the lake in general, it did not appear advisable that a crew sufficiently large to cover the entire lake be used. Most of the fishermen on the area covered by the census (Lower Hamlin) were contacted. The work was under the general supervision of Foreman William Coulter and under the immediate supervision of Sub-leader Frank J. Horowski. The sheets were prepared well, indicating that the census was taken in a careful manner.

Data for the period, by half-month periods, are given in Table 1. The catch included 344 perch of an average size of 8.2 inches, 62 northern pike of an average 25.7 inches and 10 dogfish, 1 gar, 2 bullheads and 1 walleye. These fish were taken in a total of 377 fishing days, averaging about 4 hours each. The records represent a total of  $1474\frac{1}{2}$  hours fishing. Each fisherman-day yielded on the average 1.1 fish taken at the average rate of .3 fish per hour (1 fish every  $3\frac{1}{3}$  hours of fishing). Almost three-fourths (72%) of those who fished caught no fish. The fish taken had an average length of 11.0 inches.

Table 1

Creel census data for Lower Hamlin Lake,  
Mason County, January and February, 1936

	January		February		Total or Average
	6-15	16-31	1-15	16-29	
1. Number of fishermen	171	154	23	29	377
2. Number of fish caught	157	195	43	25	420
3. Number of hours fished	684 $\frac{1}{4}$	590 $\frac{3}{4}$	82 $\frac{1}{2}$	117	1474 $\frac{1}{2}$
4. Catch per fisherman	.9	1.2	1.8	.8	1.1
5. Catch per hour	.2	.3	.5	.2	.3
6. Average number of hours per fishing day	4.0	3.8	3.5	4.0	3.9
7. Number taking no fish	118	112	17	23	270
8. Per cent taking no fish	69	73	74	79	72
9. Average size of all fish caught (in.)	13.2	9.8	9.2	9.2	11.0
10. Catch by species <sup>2</sup>					
<u>Perch</u>					
Number	108	175	40	21	344
Average size	8.8	8.0	8.0	7.0	8.2
<u>Northern Pike</u>					
Number	38	17	3	4	62
Average size	25.5	26.8	26.3	21.0	25.7

<sup>1</sup> Dogfish not included in these estimates

<sup>2</sup> Ten dogfish, 1 gar, 2 bullheads and 1 walleye were also caught.

Most of the fishing for the two months was covered by the census. Fishing for the entire winter probably produced less than twice the number of fish recorded (less than 840 fish). Lower Hamlin has an area of approximately 3100 acres; the catch was therefore probably less than one fish per 35 acres. It must be concluded, therefore, that fishing on Lower Hamlin was relatively insignificant, that the catch was too meager to influence fishing adversely during the coming summer.

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