

**Bay Lakers,**

**As many of you know, the pike population on Bay Lake is very high. In fact, the spring 2014 DNR netting survey indicated the density of northern pike on Bay Lake is four times that of a healthy lake. Too many small northern outcompete other fish species like walleye and provide no biological incentive for those little ‘hammerhandles’ to grow larger. The DNR has stated in the past that they will cease to continue walleye stocking efforts if the northern population is not brought under control. While Bay Lake may never be a prime Minnesota walleye lake, it would be nice to at least catch a couple on opener!**

**An easy first step for us to all take is to release all northern over 24 inches long. This was recommended by the local DNR fisheries supervisor as a critical step in trying to push the average size upwards. The lake can support a certain number of pounds of a certain species- a healthy population has a balance of large and small individuals. Since the larger pike are so rare on the lake, we need to do our best to protect them.**

**The pike overpopulation has troubled the lake for years and is not showing any signs of resolving without our help. Please click on the following link to read an article from the Star Tribune that does an excellent job of explaining how this problem and some steps that the DNR is taking to solve it.**

**[“Legislative intervention has tipped fish balance in scores of lakes”](#)**

**Keep an eye out for more on this in the spring- how to catch those hammerhandles and what to do with them when you do!**

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