

Creating a void for walleyes

How bio-manipulation saved the walleyes of Wisconsin's Lake Metonga

By Eric Engbretson

Something was going very wrong in Lake Metonga. The 2,000-acre lake in Wisconsin's north woods had been a successful walleye lake for decades, but by the late 1990s, natural reproduction and walleye recruitment had slowed to a

trickle. To make matters worse, by 2004, the adult walleye population had sharply declined. Spawning habitat was excellent, but young fish, either stocked or natural, were not surviving to adulthood.

Mike Preul, fisheries biologist for the Mole

Lake Sokaogon Chippewa Community has been involved with fisheries work on Lake Metonga for twenty years. He took a closer look at the lake to see what changes might explain why walleyes were suddenly having such a rough time. The fish community in Lake

Metonga had always included black bullheads, but now fishermen were telling Mike how often they were catching the small catfish.

"We were doing some routine electro shocking

one day and when the stunned fish floated to the surface, all you could see were yellow bellies. That's when I knew there was a problem," he said.

The abundance of bullheads had become enormous.

"We did some simple math and calculated what a bullhead eats in a year. They were taking up a lot

See page 12



3 - During 2011 there was a large population consisting of purely naturally reproduced walleyes, so stocking was not needed in 2012.

When you invest with us, your money goes to work right here to make our community a better place for families, consumers, business owners, and everyone who calls our town home.

For your community. For your future.



Iron Mountain • Kingsford
Iron River • Menominee



First National Bank
& Trust

ROOTED IN YOUR
COMMUNITY

Member FDIC 906.774.2200

fnbimk.com



**GET SPECIAL
SUMMER SAVINGS
ON THE OFFICIAL
TRACTOR OF TOUGH**

**SUMMER
SALES
EVENT**
Mahindra

QUINLAN'S
EQUIPMENT

Highway 45 South, Antigo, WI 54409

715-627-4331

MahindraUSA.com © 2020 Mahindra USA Inc.

Mahindra
Rise.