

Walleyes Unlimited Fish Stocking

by Walt Koch

Well, I checked another project off my to-do list. Many months ago, I proposed that we stock some walleyes again. The Board of Directors authorized \$1000 to be spent on this project. The proposal was to stock extended growth fingerlings (6-8" fish) to assure a better survival rate. The original plan was to stock one of our local club lakes, so members could benefit from improved walleye fishing.

Unfortunately the plan was met with some resistance along the way. I contacted the fish biologist from northern Illinois, hoping to stock these fish into the Fox Chain O' Lakes. He turned me down, because the Fox Chain already gets plenty of stocking every year. OK, let's stock our fish in Geneva or Delavan. The fish biologist for that area turned me down also, because of the *Wisconsin Walleye Initiative*, both these lakes and Pewaukee were getting plenty of stocking. We eventually agreed to stock the upper Fox River, near Waterford, WI.



Gollon Bait and Fish Farm in Dodgeville, WI was our supplier and as it turns out they have the desirable Rock River/Fox River strain of walleye which the Wisconsin DNR thought was ideal for our project. Luke Roffler the fish biologist for Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties was very helpful in getting the fish stocking application completed and approved.

Tim Gollon owner of *Gollon Bait and Fish Farm* reserved some extended growth fingerlings for us indicating these walleyes would probably be ready by the middle of September. So we wait while the fish grow. Once they reach a certain size they are fed a diet of minnows. Eventually, got the call and scheduled the stocking for September 21st.



John Nuebel and I travelled to northwest Racine County to the designated stocking location, which was the DNR launch for Tichigan Lake. Our walleyes arrived in the several tanks on his truck. First they checked the river water temperature, which was 66° while the fish tanks were 65°, within the 3 degree allowable difference so no water tempering was needed. He transferred the fish to buckets and then moved them to the Fox River.



They all swam away strong & healthy, not a one was floating. John and I were impressed by the size (8") and quality of the fish, surprisingly the entire process took about 20 minutes and the walleyes were none the worse for the ordeal.



So, our \$1000 budget allowed us to stock 570 extended growth walleye fin-gerlings. I was proud of the commitment that our club made for another worthwhile public service activity.

Let's forward several years from when we first began this stocking project. Now 2017 Walleyes Unlimited has continued its commitment to stocking quality extended growth walleye fingerlings for the last few seasons in conjunction with the WIDNR. Our board of directors is committed to this fine programs and we should start to see the fruits of our labor in some larger fish in the near future.