

## Hutch Lake

### Recreational Fisheries Management Objectives

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<b>Waterbody ID:</b> 4886	<b>Surface Area:</b> 610 ha	<b>Hydrologic Unit Code Name (HUC_8):</b> Meander River	<b>Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC_8):</b> 19010303
<b>Sport Fish Species: Walleye, Northern Pike and Yellow Perch</b>			
<b>Indigenous Fishery: NLT 140 mm, Closed: Apr 1 – May 31</b>			
<b>Environment and Parks Region:</b> Peace Region		<b>Fisheries Management Zone: Northern Boreal 3 (NB3)</b>	<b>Fisheries Management Office:</b> Peace River

### Background

Hutch Lake is a reservoir in the upper reach of the Meander River located approximately 25 km northwest of the Town of High Level. Hutch Lake is approximately 11.5 km long but only 0.5 km wide, with a surface area of 610 ha and a maximum depth of 8.0 m. There are several intermittent inlet streams and a large wetland complex at the southeast end of the lake. The reservoir outlet is the source of the Meander River, which flows approximately 37.5 km (straight line distance) northwest to the Hay River confluence. The reservoir was created in 1989 and attempts have been made to establish populations of walleye and yellow perch through various stocking programs. Northern pike and white sucker were present as native species to the Meander River and are also found in the lake

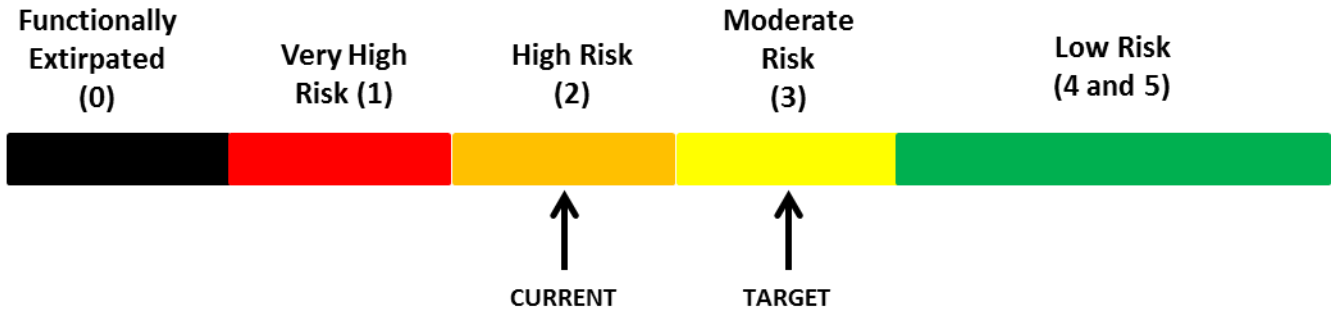
The lake shoreline is largely undeveloped, consisting of a recreation area near the dam that includes a campground and boat launch; and a few small rural acreages to the north of the lake. Hutch Lake is eutrophic and experiences algal blooms as well as periodic winterkill events including partial winterkills in 2001/02 and 2002/03 which reduced fish densities. A major winterkill in 2004/05 depleted fish stocks and transplants of both walleye and northern pike were made from Rainbow Lake. The last major walleye stocking was made in 2007 with approximately 250,000 fry stocked. There is no Domestic or commercial fishery on Hutch Lake.

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## Section 1. Fish Population Status

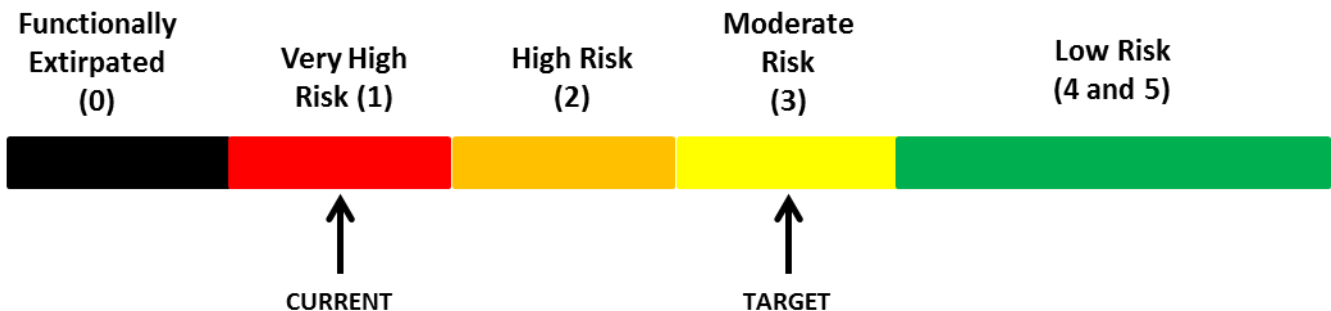
### Walleye – Adult Abundance

#### Fish Sustainability Index Adult Density Score



### Northern Pike – Adult Abundance

#### Fish Sustainability Index Adult Density Score



### Yellow Perch – Adult Abundance – Undetermined

## Section 2. Recreational Fishery Management Objectives and Management Summary

The **focal species** for recreational management is walleye. The secondary species managed for recreational objectives are northern pike and yellow perch. The **Overharvest Protection Need** is assessed as **Moderate**.

**Walleye** – The recreational management objective for walleye is a **Sustainable Harvest** fishery. The corresponding Fish Sustainability Index (FSI) score for the current adult density of walleye was assessed at **High Risk** to sustainability. The walleye population is not currently meeting the status and criteria for the objective of sustainable harvest fishery. The required management action is **to promote recovery through the use of catch and release** until such time as the population increases into the moderate risk (yellow) category, at which time, opportunities for harvest will be explored. This is a change from the current regulation of 1 walleye over 50cm.

**Northern Pike** – The recreational management objective for northern pike is a **Sustainable Harvest** fishery. The corresponding FSI score for the current adult density of northern pike was assessed at **Very High Risk** to sustainability. The northern pike population is currently not meeting the status and criteria for the objective of sustainable harvest fishery. The required management action is **to promote recovery through the use of catch and release** until such time the population increases into the moderate risk (yellow) category, at which time, opportunities for harvest will be explored. This is a change from the current regulation of 1 pike over 63cm.

**Yellow Perch** – The yellow perch population was assessed in 2011 and although there is no FSI completed for yellow perch, the current adult density was estimated to be at **Very High Risk**. The current management action is **to promote recovery through the use of catch and release** until such time the population increases into the moderate risk (yellow) category where alternative options can be explored (open harvest).

### Management Summary

Management Priority	Species	Overharvest Protection Need	Management Action	Sport Fishing Harvest Regulation
1	Walleye	Moderate	Recovery – Sustainable Harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 &gt; 50cm (2017-18)</li> <li><b>Catch and Release (Implementation April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018-19)</b></li> </ul>
2	Northern Pike	Moderate	Recovery – Sustainable Harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 &gt; 63cm (2017-18)</li> <li><b>Catch and Release (Implementation April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018-19)</b></li> </ul>
3	Yellow Perch*	Moderate	Recovery – Sustainable Harvest	Catch and Release

*\*Recreational management objectives for yellow perch have not been fully developed into management frameworks, and will be subject to change pending on-going work and development. However, general action statements have been listed for these species within the context of relative abundance, catch rates and trends associated with index netting assessments, in relation to the management of these species at a provincial level.*