

## Summary Information

<b>Version Date:</b> July 2018	<b>Prepared by:</b> Owen Watkins	<b>Reviewed by:</b> Jason Cooper	<b>Approved by:</b> John Tchir - Resource Manager
<b>Waterbody ID:</b> 6832	<b>Surface Area:</b> 248 ha	<b>Hydrologic Unit Code Name (HUC_8):</b> Middle Battle River	<b>Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC_8):</b> 09020101
<b>Sport Fish Species:</b> Walleye, Northern Pike, Yellow Perch, and Burbot			
<b>Indigenous Fishery:</b> No			
<b>Fisheries Management Area:</b> Red Deer North Saskatchewan River (RDNSR)		<b>Fisheries Management Zone:</b> Prairie Parkland 2 (PP2)	<b>Fisheries Management Office:</b> Red Deer

## Background

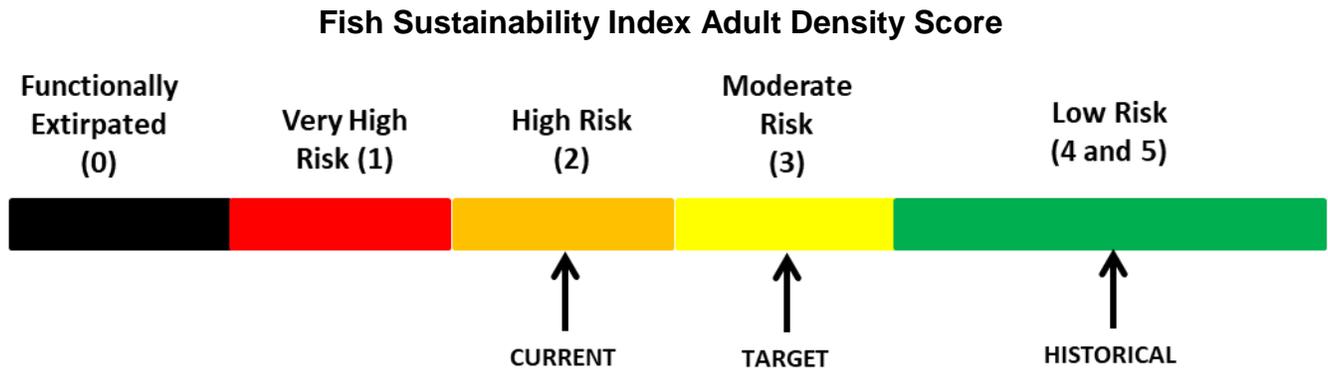
Forestburg Reservoir is located approximately 150 km southeast of Edmonton. This reservoir was created by the damming of the Battle River in 1956 to create a water supply for ATCO's thermal coal power generation facility, where water is withdrawn from the reservoir and heated to produce steam for electrical generation. Heated water is discharged into cooling canal areas and eventually flows back into the reservoir, whereby, creating productive conditions in the reservoir with respect to thick aquatic vegetative growth in littoral areas.

Although Forestburg Reservoir is primarily a storage reservoir for power generation, it also provides a number of recreational opportunities and a fishery in an area of the province where fisheries resources are more limited. Forestburg Reservoir is mostly known as a fishery for northern pike; however walleye are occasionally reported to be caught. Yellow perch were introduced into the reservoir in the early 1980's; however there is no recent record of any fishing success for yellow perch. Walleye were also stocked in the past (1960, 61, 62, 63), although any walleye now present would be either resident fish or migrants from upstream sources. The most recent assessment survey in 2018 showed a drastic decline in northern pike abundance from a previous FSI score of 4 (Low Risk) to a FSI score of 2 (High Risk); whereas, walleye remained low in abundance (FSI 1 – Very High Risk) and yellow perch were still not captured as previously noted in the 2006 assessment.

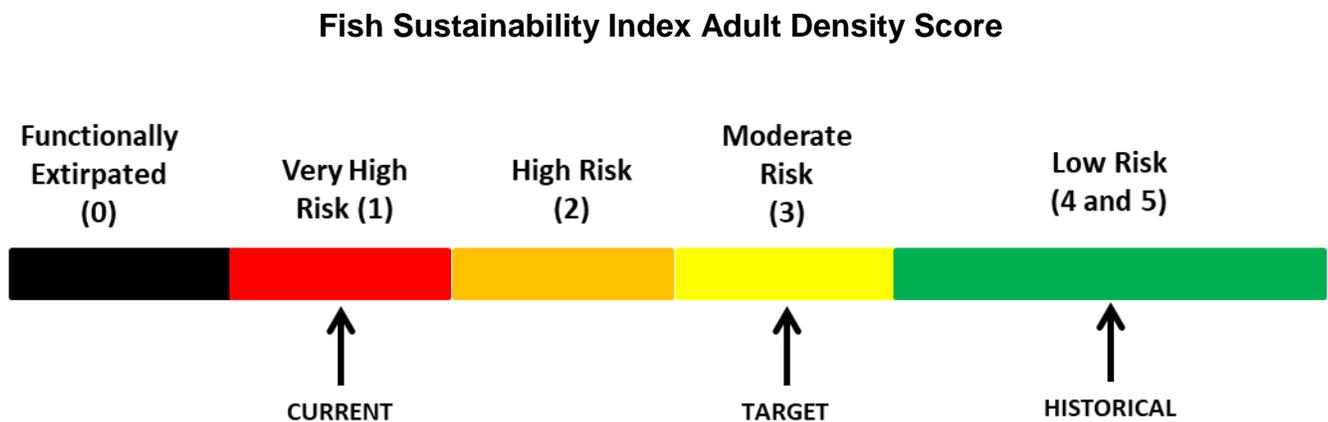
The land around the reservoir east of Highway 855 is all privately owned. West of Highway 855 on the south side of the Battle River is Bigknife Provincial Park, the north side is privately owned land. Land-use immediately around the reservoir is industrial - power generation and coal mining. In the larger watershed the main land-use is agriculture.

## Fish Population Status

### Northern Pike – Adult Abundance



### Walleye – Adult Abundance



**Yellow Perch – Adult Abundance – Undetermined: no longer present in Forestburg Reservoir**

**Burbot – Adult Abundance – Undetermined:**

## Recreational Fishery Management Objectives

The current **focal species** for recreational management is **Northern Pike**. The secondary species managed for recreational objectives are walleye. These sport-fisheries are directly assessed at intervals, and therefore are actively managed. The **Overharvest Protection Need** is assessed as **High Risk**.

**Northern Pike** - The proposed recreational fishery management objective for northern pike is **Sustainable Harvest**. The corresponding FSI score for the current mature density of northern pike was assessed at (2) **High Risk** to sustainability. The northern pike population is not currently meeting the status and criteria for the objective of a sustainable harvest fishery. The current management regulation for northern pike is 3 over 63 cm; however, the new management action is **Recovery** with a catch and release regulation.

**Walleye** - The proposed recreational fishery management objective for walleye is **Sustainable Harvest**. The corresponding FSI score for the current mature density of walleye was assessed at (1) **Very High Risk** to sustainability. The walleye population is not currently meeting the status and criteria for the objective of a sustainable harvest fishery. The current management action for walleye is a **Recovery** regulation of zero harvest (catch-and-release).

**Yellow Perch** - The recreational fishery management objective for yellow perch is the provincial default **Sustainable Harvest**. Provincially, the default sustainable harvest fishery maintenance regulation is 15 fish. The last two index netting assessments (2006, 2018) failed to capture or detect any yellow perch presence in the reservoir. No further management action will be focused on yellow perch, as the stocking of yellow perch have been determined to be unsuccessful in establishing a sustainable population. The proposed management action will be to de-list yellow perch from the regulation listing for Forestburg Reservoir.

**Burbot** – The recreational fishery management objective for burbot is the provincial default Sustainable Harvest. Provincially, the default sustainable harvest fishery maintenance regulation in Fisheries Management Zone: PP2 is 2 fish, but limit 0 from Feb. 1 to Mar. 31.

## Management Summary

Management Priority	Species	Overharvest Protection Need	Management Action	Sport Fishing Harvest Regulation
Primary	Northern Pike	High	Maintenance - Sustainable Harvest (current) <b>Recovery- Sustainable Harvest (proposed)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 &gt; 63 cm (2018-19)</li> <li><b>Catch and release (Proposed for April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019)</b></li> </ul>
Primary	Walleye	High	Recovery - Sustainable Harvest (current)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch and Release</li> </ul>
Secondary	Yellow Perch*	High	Maintenance - Sustainable Harvest (current) <b>Delist – No longer present in Forestburg Reservoir</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 any size</li> <li><b>Delist – (April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019)</b></li> </ul>
Secondary	Burbot*	High	Maintenance - Sustainable Harvest (current)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 fish, but limit 0 from Feb. 1 to Mar. 31</li> </ul>

\*Recreational management objectives for yellow perch and burbot 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.