

# FISHING HOLE

## HARRIET LAKE

**WHY GO:** Harriet is a solid option for walleyes in Lake County, with the opportunity to catch some big fish. There are pike and black crappies worth targeting on the lake. The U.S. Forest Service operates a rustic campground there.

**ACCESS:** There is a public water access with a concrete slab ramp, parking for six vehicles with trailers, and a toilet.

**VITALS:** This 264.9-acre lake sits in the Superior National Forest. It has 6.4 miles of shoreline and has a maximum depth of 37 feet.

**FISH SPECIES PRESENT:** Black crappie, burbot, lake whitefish, northern pike, walleye, yellow perch, white sucker, blacknose shiner, common shiner, golden shiner and Iowa darter.

**WALLEYES:** The Minnesota DNR, which most recently sampled the lake with gill nets in 2017, manages Harriet mainly for walleyes. That most recent survey turned up 7.7 fish per net, in six nets. That figure is higher than average compared to other similar lakes, but it was also the lowest catch rate recorded since 1973, according to a summary of the survey written up by the Finland Area Fisheries Office, which is charged with managing the lake.

The average weight and length of fish sampled was 1.1 pounds and 13.8 inches. There was a 26-incher netted that weighed

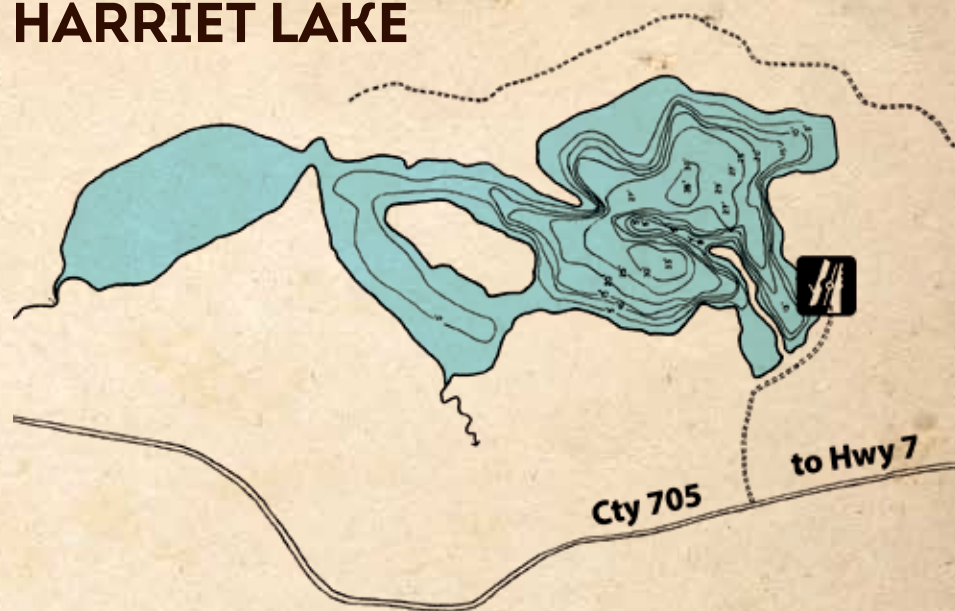
6 pounds. That year, anglers reported poor fishing, but DNR pointed out that the fish sampled had bellies full of young-of-the-year yellow perch, a likely reason for the slow bite.

DNR noted that the lake, which relies completely on natural reproduction, had consistent recruitment, with no particularly strong year classes present.

**NORTHERNS AND CRAPPIES:** While there are a number of other species present in the lake, such as lake whitefish and burbot, really it's northern pike and black crappie that round out the focus of most anglers' attention on Harriet. A single eelpout was sampled in 2017. The lake whitefish population is considered small, so fall recreational gillnetting isn't allowed. A lot of perch here sampled, but the largest was 8.1 inches, with most around 6 inches long.

While no giant pike turned up in the 2017 survey, the pike gill net catch rate was 5.3 fish per net, which is above average compared to similar lakes and almost met the historical high for the lake. Pike averaged 1.8 pounds and 20 inches, with the largest specimen measuring nearly 32 inches long and weighing 7.5 pounds, a size of pike that certainly provides some fun for anglers.

The black crappie catch rate was 0.6 per net, which is about average for the lake class. But the average length was 10.8 inches.



es. The largest fish measured 12 inches and weighed just over a pound. Those are crappies worth targeting, though their population may not be real high. The Finland office noted that their growth rate is average for the area with sporadic recruitment.

**CAMPING:** The Forest Service's Harriet Lake Rustic Campground is located at the site of an abandoned farm. The no-fee campground operates on a first-come, first-served basis, with a maximum of nine people allowed per site. Each site has room for a vehicle and a trailer, with additional vehicles

required to park on the spur. Vehicles are not allowed to park on the grass or where they impede traffic. There is no potable water available at the campground and lake water must be treated. There is a vault-style outhouse. Visitors must pack out their own trash and fish remains as there is no garbage service to the site.—*Javier Serna*

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