

Northwestern Ontario

FREE

# Outdoors



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE



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# Kayak Fishing

*Samantha Neureuther and a chunky bass she caught while fishing out of her Hobie!*



## No Paddle? No Problem!

*By Samantha Neureuther, NOSA Member*

There aren't few experiences that compare with a calm quiet sunny morning, kayaking across the water to a remote spot few others frequent. Watching small-mouth bass quietly push bait to the surface, trolling for Salmon or Lake Trout, and those deep summer Walleyes in a quiet undetectable kayak have made kayak fishing a popular pursuit. For seasoned anglers and beginners alike, the ability to access places that boats cannot, to find uncharted waters, just can't be beat. The wide variety of gear choices and initial learning curve of kayaking can seem a bit challenging, but from the second you hop in you'll see it is truly one of the most easy and accessible ways to hit the lake and cast a line by yourself.

Of course kayaks lack the speed and range of a boat, but on the flip side, you can launch them in almost any body of water down any back road trail you can get to, that a bigger boat couldn't. If your only kayaking experience is a tippy old 'sit-in-side' kayak you might be second guessing kayak fishing. But these days the kayak fishing game has completely changed. Enter the 'pedal-controlled' kayak. These are a highly efficient successful way to fish. No longer are the days of paddling in unstable water for a few casts to have to paddle over and over again leaving less time to fish. Goodbye paddle, unless for an emergency that is.

These new kayak designs are turning anglers to these watercraft as an alternative to traditional kayaks. What makes a pedal controlled kayak better than a typical paddle kayak? For obvious reasons if you are a kayak angler, it's hands down the ability to be virtually "hands free" while fishing at the same time.

The pedal systems works easy, pedaling with your feet while steering a small lever with a rudder at the back of the kayak to control the direction. Hobie was the first to invent a pedal controlled kayak called the "Mirage Drive" forcing other kayak companies to follow in their footsteps or get left behind. Mimicking the way a penguin uses their fins to propel underwater, is the same way the pedals move underneath the kayak. Now there are many different kayak manufacturers offering a pedal controlled fishing kayak. Each kayak does have a spare paddle in case of emergency.

Open body, pedal propelled kayaks are the most stable reliable fishing kayaks on the market today. Having a pedal drive will allow you to hold over fish against wind or current. I've had many rough days on the water so far including bigger lakes such as Lake Superior and Lake Michigan, but with one of these kayaks you can confidently power through waves and handle moderately rougher water unlike most other 'sit-in' or 'on-top' fishing kayaks. There is so much stability that you can safely stand up and fish on relatively calm days.

Having the ability to not only travel at consistently higher than average speeds but also for longer before getting tired means you are able to go much further than you would consider when paddling. Because of this, you are more likely to explore areas that would typically be out of range. There are also many different features, with almost any add on you can think of from livewells, mounts for fish finders, camera mounts and many storage and tackle compartments, the list goes on and on.

Pedal controlled kayaks like a Hobie Outback, which I own, or Old Town Predator do cost a bit more than traditional ones, but the differences are well worth the money and the experience is a much more different one for fishing. They are fairly easy for anyone to maintain and considering the cost of gas with the long-term savings and next to no maintenance, plus the being at one with the water and the amazing opportunities for fishing, wildlife and untouched areas of water make a pedal controlled kayak an option well worth exploring in our many remote fishable lakes here in Northern Ontario!

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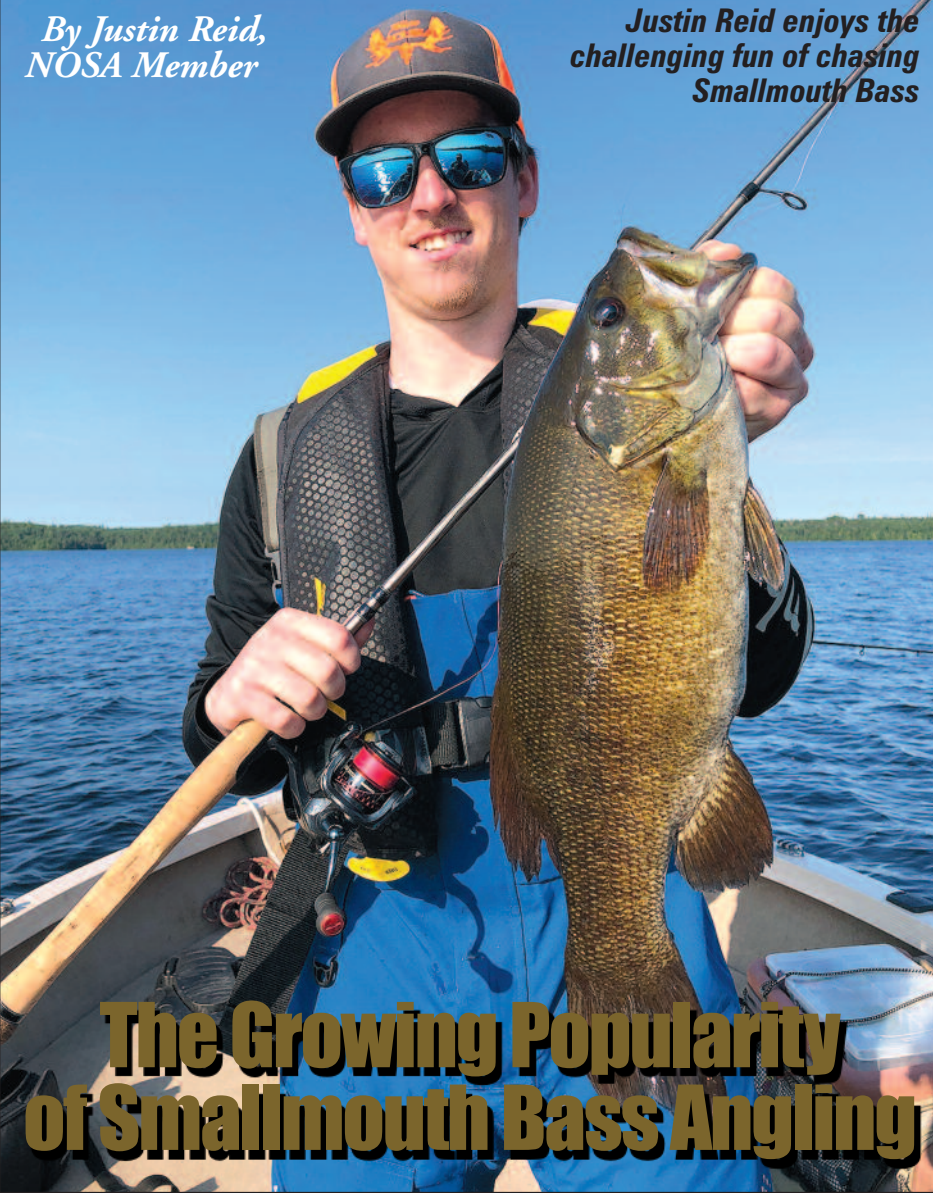
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*By Justin Reid,  
NOSA Member*

*Justin Reid enjoys the  
challenging fun of chasing  
Smallmouth Bass*

## The Growing Popularity of Smallmouth Bass Angling

Northwestern Ontario holds some of the best smallmouth fishing a region has to offer. From lakes that offer deep, rocky shorelines and crystal clear water, to lakes with calm bays to escape the wind. There is no shortage of opportunities to get out and enjoy some breath-taking views topped off with some amazing bass fishing. The heightened activity levels for bass in the warm summer months make for action packed fishing trips leaving memories to last for many years.

### Accessibility

There are many lakes in the surrounding area that have a high population of smallmouth, so accessibility is not an issue. Northern Ontario anglers are very fortunate to have spacious, well maintained boat launches on some great lakes, with room for everyone to share. Having a campsite at Northern Light Lake gives me the opportunity to fish many lakes in that area. Sunbow Lake, Icarus, and Northern Light Lake are a few great smallmouth lakes with very rocky structures that provide many areas to find fish. Since there are so many lakes in Northwestern Ontario to explore, I encourage all bass anglers to hit the waters while the weather is hot and try to perfect your bass hooking skills.

Bucket list big bass lakes: One island, Two island, Hawkeye, Oliver Lake, Cloud Lake, Lenore, Shebandowan, Sandstone, Northern Light Lake, Icarus, Sunbow Lake.

### Have you tried the Ned Rig?

Though live bait always is and always will be very effective, there are countless artificial baits that are just as effective in catching bass. Topwater baits are a crowd pleaser to go along with a wacky rig. However, the Ned Rig is starting to take over the market and has become a go-to presentation for myself while targeting smallmouth. This is a finesse bait that is designed to be fished off the bottom which covers a lot of water. The Z-man Finesse Shroomz Jig Head is my favourite hook of choice. Z-Man offers this hook in many different colours and sizes. It features a welded wire bait keeper that helps the baits last through numerous fish. There are three different brands of Ned Rig baits that I personally enjoy throwing.

The Jackall Yammyfish, X Zone Ned Zone, and the Z-Man Finesse TRD/Crawz TRD. All of these baits have their own unique shapes, sizes, and colours which is why I always have multiple packs of each brand in my tackle bag. My favourite of the three brands is the Z-Man Finesse TRD and TRD Crawz due to their undeniable durability. They use Elaztech technology that is advertised as 10 times stronger than any bait, which is no exaggeration. These baits last anywhere from 5-10 fish per bait! This is extremely high for the average artificial bait. Oftentimes I “accidentally” end up catching walleye with these baits which is a very nice surprise and can always be a backup plan while fishing for walleye if your live bait just isn’t cutting it.

### Rods, reels and lure combinations

There are five rods that I prefer to bring fishing with me while gearing up for a bass trip. These rods and reels may vary depending on the lake I’m fishing and what I plan to use. Adventuring to a new lake can be tricky for me as there are usually three setups that seem to always work, while the other two are a little more uncertain. My favourite two setups to use are both similar. 7’ rods with 2500-3000 series spinning reels with a Ned Rig attached to one, and a wacky rigged Gary Yamamoto senko attached to the second. My third rod that always travels with me is a 6’10” medium extra fast rod that I use for topwater lures. This rod is very similar to the first two, however it has an extra fast rod that is slightly softer at the tip so it doesn’t rip the bait out of the fishes mouth prematurely. This makes it a lot better for hook sets. My other two rods are similar to the previous three with small variations. A tube jig and drop-shot rig are the other two go-to setups. While the tube jig rod will likely be similar to the other rods, the drop-shot rod and reel is the most different from the others. Because this bait is usually used directly below the boat, I prefer a shorter rod and a lighter reel. A 6’8”-6’10” medium fast spinning rod with a 1500-2000 series reel is my favourite. Having a lighter reel and shorter rod to fish directly under the boat gives me more control over the bait and the hook sets seem to be more firm. The only way to find out what works best for you is to go out and practice all techniques. If one lure isn’t working well, challenge yourself by switching to something you’re not as familiar with. This allows you to gain confidence with any lure you may choose to throw.

Bass fishing in Northwestern Ontario is continuing to become more popular. If you haven’t already done so, recruit a couple friends or family members and venture out to a nearby lake in search of some big smallmouth bass. In can be challenging to fish the unique lakes mentioned above, but as us anglers know, the challenge is what makes the reward worth it!



# Superior Lakers on the fly!

By Rebekka Redd, NOSA Team Member

Rebekka releasing a nice  
Superior Lake Trout.

Lake trout are of the char family – found mainly in lakes of N. America, in oxygen-rich, cold, fresh water. This game fish is extremely susceptible to over fishing due to the lake trout’s slow maturation along with its popularity among anglers everywhere. It’s one of the largest fish species native to the Great Lakes and other nearby bodies of water. It’s a rather beautiful looking fish with an array of spots and cream white belly and white edging of the fins. Lake Trout is also fantastic table fare. Lakers are tremendous fighters when on the line and a favourite of anglers, especially when caught using fly fishing tackle!

Summer time lake trout tend to swim to the deep depths once the water temps reach about 60 degrees. The most common and popular way to catch lake trout seems to be on down riggers and conventional gear. However, it is possible to catch them on the fly as well.

Here are a few basic essential tips to help get you started with the pursuit of summertime lakers on the fly:

ROD: 8-9 wt fast action 9’ , 4 pc rods will do great. These rod weights will be able to throw heavy sinking line and big clunky streamers.

REEL: Smooth drag with large arbour - Lakers never stop pulling once hooked, so good drag can help stop them from slowly taking all of your backing out into the depths.

LINE: Sub-surface 350+ grain full sink lake line is a must with 7 ft tapered leader in 20 lb test.

FLYS: Streamers are my top choice. Everything from cone headed zonkers ( in an array of colours) pink flesh fly, to godzilla sculpin in olive/white and all white flesh flies. If I tie my own fly, I like to wrap the hook in lead wire as the base to give a faster sink rate and I use barbell eyes (weighted) along with rabbit fur & some flash. Typical size is 3.5 to 5-inches in length with a 1/0 or 2/0 mustad hook .

### TARGETING LAKER LOCATIONS:

Cast over reefs and drop zones – Let the line sink at least 20 ft before stripping in. During July and August the Lake Trout typically will be in well over 30 plus feet of water – so it’s imperative to have fast sinking line and fly’s to reach them.

Lake trout give a tremendous fun fight on the fly rod!

Use barb-less hooks and keep your hands out of the gills if you intend to release your catch. If keeping your catch, smoked lake trout is amongst my all time favourite snacks!



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# Ontario Proposes Changes to Moose Management



## THIS MONTH'S NEWS



specific seasons are being proposed for WMU's with open moose seasons where no archery season/quota currently exist(except for far north WMUs).

Proposed for 2021 will be a new Selective Harvest Approach that will aim to improve quota setting by moving to add Calf Validation Tags along with Cow and Bull validation tags province wide. This will bring in WMU specific quotas for calf tags in the province, thus eliminating the inclusion of an "over the counter" calf validation tag that currently is included with the purchase of a moose license. In addition to these changes an Adult Cow Validation Tag will be allowed to be used to tag a calf moose. Calves would be permitted to be hunted throughout the entire open moose hunting season for a particular WMU.

Hunters would apply for a bull, cow or calf tag through a newly proposed allocation process that would be based on a stand-in-line points based system that would also see the elimination of the current Group Application system. Northern residents would receive one bonus point in any given year that they apply to the draw in a northern WMU (units 1-42). Hunters who apply and are notified of successfully drawing a tag in the bull/cow or calf draw, would have the option of refusing to accept the tag thus retaining their points for the following season. This would allow partys of hunters to ensure they are not accepting too many tags for their hunting party, when they may only want one or two adult tags for example.

Also for 2021, tag transfer rules will become stricter and Party Hunting would be regulated by reducing the distance members of a hunting party can be from the tag holder from 5km to 3km. Party hunting size would be limited to a maximum of 10 members that can hunt on a single tag.

Also contained in the moose management review and report submitted by BGMAC are a number of additional

recommendations that the OMNRF intends to continue to work on with BGMAC. Some of these include:

- Review and consider adjustments to moose hunting season length if other measures are ineffective at reducing tag fill rates. Consider pilot season adjustments to study the effectiveness of this strategy at reducing tag fill rates and supporting sustainable management.

- Work with MNRF to solicit hunter feedback and review and recommend any required changes to improve effectiveness of the new allocation system once it has been in place for 3 years (i.e. long enough to evaluate hunter use and satisfaction).

- BGMAC to review Tourism Industry (TI) moose tag allocation approach and consider opportunities for tags that aren't being utilized to be shared between the resident and TI allocation.

- MNRF must ensure habitat prescriptions for moose are being applied as part of forest management practices and conduct adequate monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of moose management prescriptions.

- MNRF should devote additional resources to moose science efforts.

- MNRF should address hunter concerns about the potential impacts of predation on moose populations to complement efforts to restrict hunter harvest.

A complete Environmental Registry of Ontario(ERO) posting on these proposed changes can be found on the ERO Ontario website by citing registry #019-0405. Comments can be submitted online until Sept. 26, 2019 or they may be submitted in writing to:

**Public Input Coordinator**  
**Species Conservation Policy Branch**  
**Wildlife Section**  
**300 Water Street**  
**5th Floor, North Tower**  
**Peterborough, ON K9J 3C7**  
**Canada**

## Attention Hunters: Tag System and Mandatory Reporting for this Fall Hunting Season

Ontario is introducing a new paper game validation tag to replace the plastic version of the game seals hunters used for tagging any legally harvested game during hunting seasons. Your tag is available to print when you buy your license/tag online as long as you were successful in any draw for a tag. For example, successful adult moose draw tags became printable after hunters were notified online if they were successful in the tag draw.

It is illegal to print or have in your possession more than one tag for the game animal you have purchased a license to hunt. Your tag must accompany you at all times when hunting, and transporting harvested game animals. If you are not accompanying the harvested game animal while it is being transported or it is being left in the care of your hunting party members in your absence, then the tag must be attached to the harvested game animal. Tags must be notched for date, month and time immediately at the site of kill and before the animal is moved.

Hunting activity reporting is also now mandatory in Ontario for moose, deer, elk, bear, wild turkey and wolf/coyote. Even if you DO NOT HARVEST one of these game animals that you've purchased a license to hunt, you must still report your hunting success/activity within 14 days of the end of the hunting season for that species. You may do so by calling 1-800-288-1155 or by visiting [www.huntandfishontario.com](http://www.huntandfishontario.com)

Hunters are encouraged to set up an online account at [www.huntandfishontario.com](http://www.huntandfishontario.com) and follow your license/draw status/purchases/print license summary and apply for email reminders to submit mandatory reports at season's end. All you need to set up an account is a valid Outdoors Card#, an email address and password along with a credit card when using your account to purchase a game license/tag.

**For more information visit: [www.huntingandfishingontario.com](http://www.huntingandfishingontario.com)**

port, the Minister's office moved ahead with a recent announcement for proposed changes to moose management over the next two years.

Proposed for 2020 are calf harvest controls in the form of calf validation tag (CVT) quotas in WMU's 37, 40, 41, 42, 47. Calf harvest in these WMU's is extremely high and is likely impacting recruitment and population growth. With tighter control over the calf harvest in these WMU's, the ministry would be able to allow calf hunting throughout the full length of the moose hunting season. Calf tags would be valid during the gun and bow seasons in these WMUs.

Also for 2020 additional new bow seasons and separate quotas for the bow

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# Proposed Changes to Wolf and Coyote hunting Regs in Northern Ontario



## THIS MONTH'S NEWS



OMNRF is proposing changes to wolf and coyote hunting regulations in Northern Ontario to address recommendations from the Big Game Management Advisory Committee (BGMAC) and hunter concerns about the impacts of wolf predation on moose.

BGMAC heard significant concern from hunters about:

- the number of wolves being observed while hunting
- their potential impacts on moose populations

### Proposed Changes

OMNRF are proposing to implement regulation changes for 2020 to address hunter concerns:

- eliminate the tag requirement for hunting wolves and coyotes in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) 1A, 1C, 1D, 2-10, 11A, 11B, 12-37 in northern Ontario
- continue to require a Small Game Licence for the hunting of wolves and coyotes in these WMUs
- maintain the existing September 15 – March 31 of the following year

season for wolves in these WMUs

- introduce an annual bag limit of 2 wolves per hunter in these WMUs
- expand the coyote hunting season to year-round in these WMUs (consistent with southern Ontario, except for the period when small game licences are invalid in central and northern Ontario from June 16 to August 31 each year)

Note: Wolf/coyote tags and mandatory reporting will still be required for wolf/coyote hunting in Central and near Northern Ontario Wildlife Management Units (WMUs 38-42, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 53A, 53B, 54, 55, 56, 57 and 58).

OMNRF will collect information about wolf/coyote hunting and harvest activities in areas where there is no mandatory reporting requirement through periodic surveys of small game licence holders.

OMNRF intends to amend Ontario Regulation 665/98 (Hunting) and Ontario Regulation 670/98 (Open Seasons) under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act to implement the proposal should it proceed. No additional opportunity for comments will be provided.

Ontario is proposing changes to improve how moose are managed in the province and this proposal on wolf management is intended to compliment the proposals under ERO #019-0405 Proposed Changes to moose management.

To submit comments you can visit the Environmental Registry of Ontario and cite ERO#019-0406 to submit comments on the wolf and coyote hunting regulation proposals. Or submit comments in writing to:

**Public Input Coordinator**  
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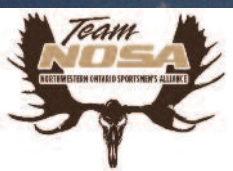
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## Northern Pike...

**Justin Reid Hoists  
a Trophy  
Northern Pike**

*By Rich Brochu,  
NOSA Member*



## A Misunderstood Fish

Northern pike can be found in most lakes in and around our Northern region. Other names include pike, jackfish, northern and also once called luce when fully grown. Some anglers have other names for the fish like snake, slime bucket, grass pike and long nose. No matter what name you use, Northern pike, in most cases have a bad rap. Whether it is their bony flesh, slime and smell when caught, they for some reason are at the bottom of the preferred-fish list for most anglers. Despite this reality there are those that enjoy catching this fish and spend good money chasing them.

Pike can grow to impressive size with the average length being 40-55 cm (16-22 in) with maximum recorded lengths of up to 150 cm (59 in). The current world record pike weighed 55 lbs. and was caught on Greffern Lake in Germany. So despite the name Northern Pike they are not privy to just our northern region or Canada. Pike are one of the top five fish sought after in Canada despite their annoyance to some walleye fishermen. Some anglers from the States come to Canada specifically to target large pike and the excitement they offer.

Personally I like catching pike. I find they offer a good battle and can be very aggressive. They are a top predator in our waters and have a ferocious appetite. I remember as a young boy being in awe of their size when my older brother would bring them home after a day's fishing. With their teeth showing and large mouth I remember being intimidated by them but yet intrigued to catch them. Being and ambush predator they lie in wait for a chance at eating other fish. They do not discriminate; they can cannibalize their own when competing for food. As they stay still and wait for unsuspecting fish their acceleration can be remarkable and precise. If you are fishing without a leader and your line is bitten off in a second, you automatically know who the culprit was.

Pike are found in rivers, streams, lakes and shallow weedy places. Recently I took part in a walleye tournament and found pike on rocky shores adjacent to deeper water. They appeared to stage near the rocks in order to target the walleye swimming in deeper areas. The average northern was in the five to seven pound range. We also caught a few that were ten to fifteen pounds during the two day event. Unfortunately we were targeting walleye but the pike didn't care. As soon as our lures would cross their path they would attack it aggressively. Despite enjoying the battle of these big fish, my partner was not as impressed with their fighting ability as I was.

Targeting large pike can be a lot of fun but handling them is very important. In most cases you can grip a smaller pike across the back of the head, behind the eye and over the gill plate. Larger fish should be handled in a net. They can thrash with incredible strength and easily knock itself out of your grip if you are not careful. Jaw spreaders and needle nose pliers will be helpful in getting your hook out. Pike have extremely sharp teeth and anglers need to take care to avoid injury. Releasing them properly is also important. When dealing with larger fish, giving them time to regain their strength is imperative. Holding onto it's tail once the fish is in the water and pulling it slowly back and forth will allow the gills to circulate water and help them regain their strength. Once they feel re-energized they will take off. I like seeing them swim away like torpedoes back to the deeper depths to live to fight another day.

A good medium to heavy action rod with a medium to heavy spooled spin casting reel will do the trick. Twelve to fifteen pounds test line with a leader should help you avoid losing these great fighting fish. Daredevil spoons, Rapalas and jigs baited with medium to large minnows will get you on some hungry pike. Fishing close to river edges, weed beds and rocky shores will hold these fish with some areas offering impressive sizes.

Pike fishing can be a lot of fun. Treating these fish with respect is everyone's responsibility. Pike are a great tasting fish once you figure out how to remove the bones. You can look up u-tube videos to help you learn how to prepare the fillets boneless. Enjoy the outdoors and all the opportunities that are offered in our northern wilds. Cheers!



# Members In The Field



Bowen Dobrolowsky proudly holds up his first walleye!



Teghan and Isla Dobrolowsky share in the glory of this huge



Dave Haywood and a big Superior Salmon



Dani Duquette with her big summer lake trout



Paul Trevisan loving the summertime walleyes



Joe Kostecki with a nice walleye taken using one of his jig-flies



McKenzie Brassard and her big summertime walleye



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