

The Lake Wisconsin Walleye Fishery in 2016

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Walleye Population Surveys-Lake Wisconsin

- Annual fall recruitment survey 1993-Present
- Night electrofishing Lake Wisconsin and Dells
- 8 repeatable stations, water < 65°F, one of a kind
- Collect all WAE/SAU, most interested in YOY
- >10 WAE/mile sampled=successful year class
- <10 WAE/mile=poor year class/failure
- Larger adults not typically captured

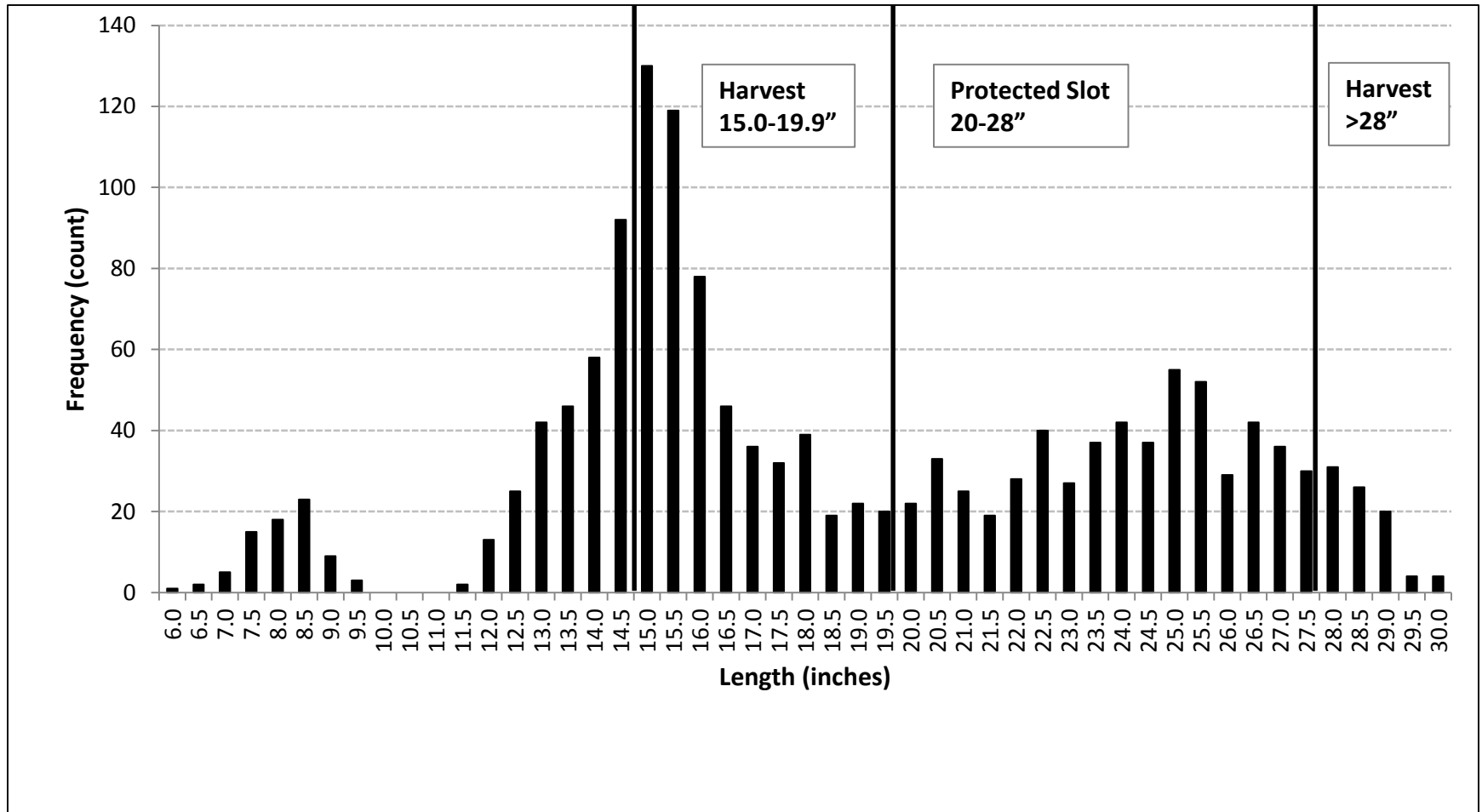
Walleye Population Surveys-Lake Wisconsin

- 2012 Comprehensive Fishery Survey included WAE/SAU targeted sampling, water temp 40-55°F
- Night electrofishing Wisconsin River@Dells
- Sample adult (spawning) walleyes early spring
- Adult size distribution
- Large WAE/SAU more common than fall survey
- Next comp survey is 2017

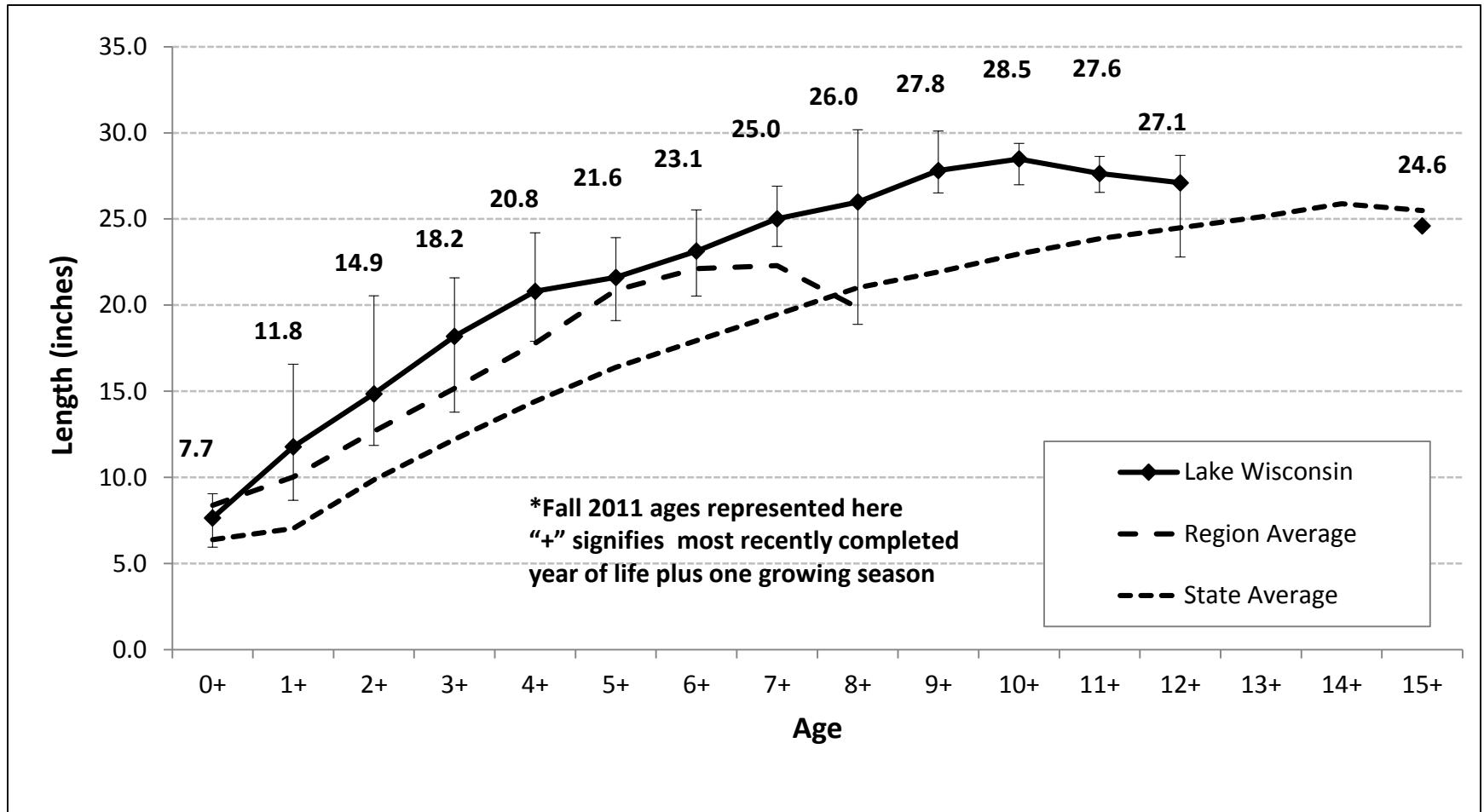
2012 Spring WAE/SAU Electrofishing

- Day and night electrofishing March 12-23, 2012
- 1,459 unique “adult” walleyes collected
- WAE length range 6.4-30.2 inches
- 5% of adult walleyes > 28 inches
- Sauger catch increased and walleye catch decreased at water temp > 50°F, sauger spawn at warmer temperatures than walleyes

Length Frequency From Walleye PE



Walleye Length at Age



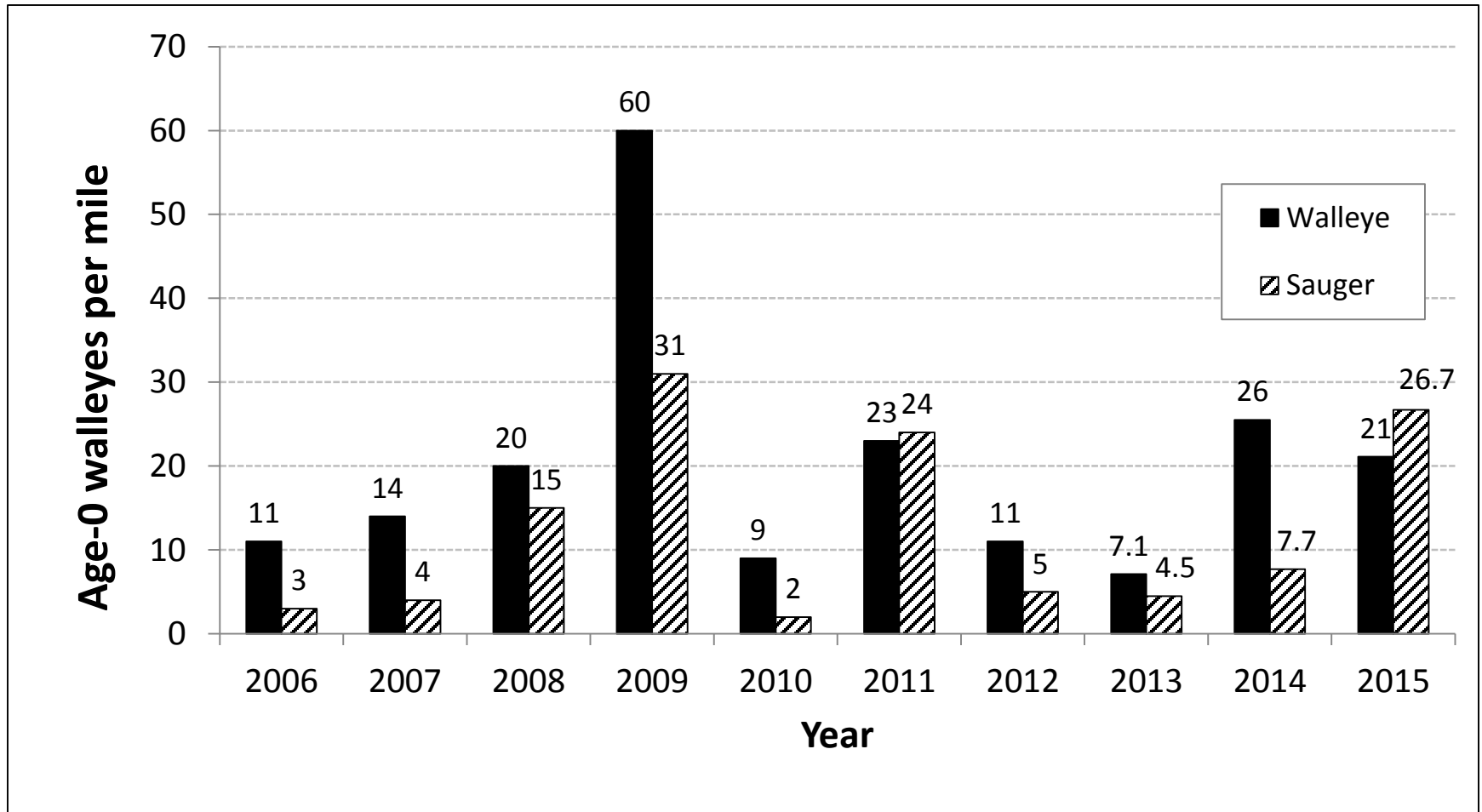
2016-Why so many “shorts” and no “eaters”

- Explained by a combination of factors:
 - Answers found in fall survey data
 - Good to excellent WAE and SAU year classes in 2009 and 2011
 - Long cold winters in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 caused mass gizzard shad die-offs
 - Lots of hungry walleyes plus reduced forage=HOT FISHING 2013 and 2014, into early 2015 via ice fishing

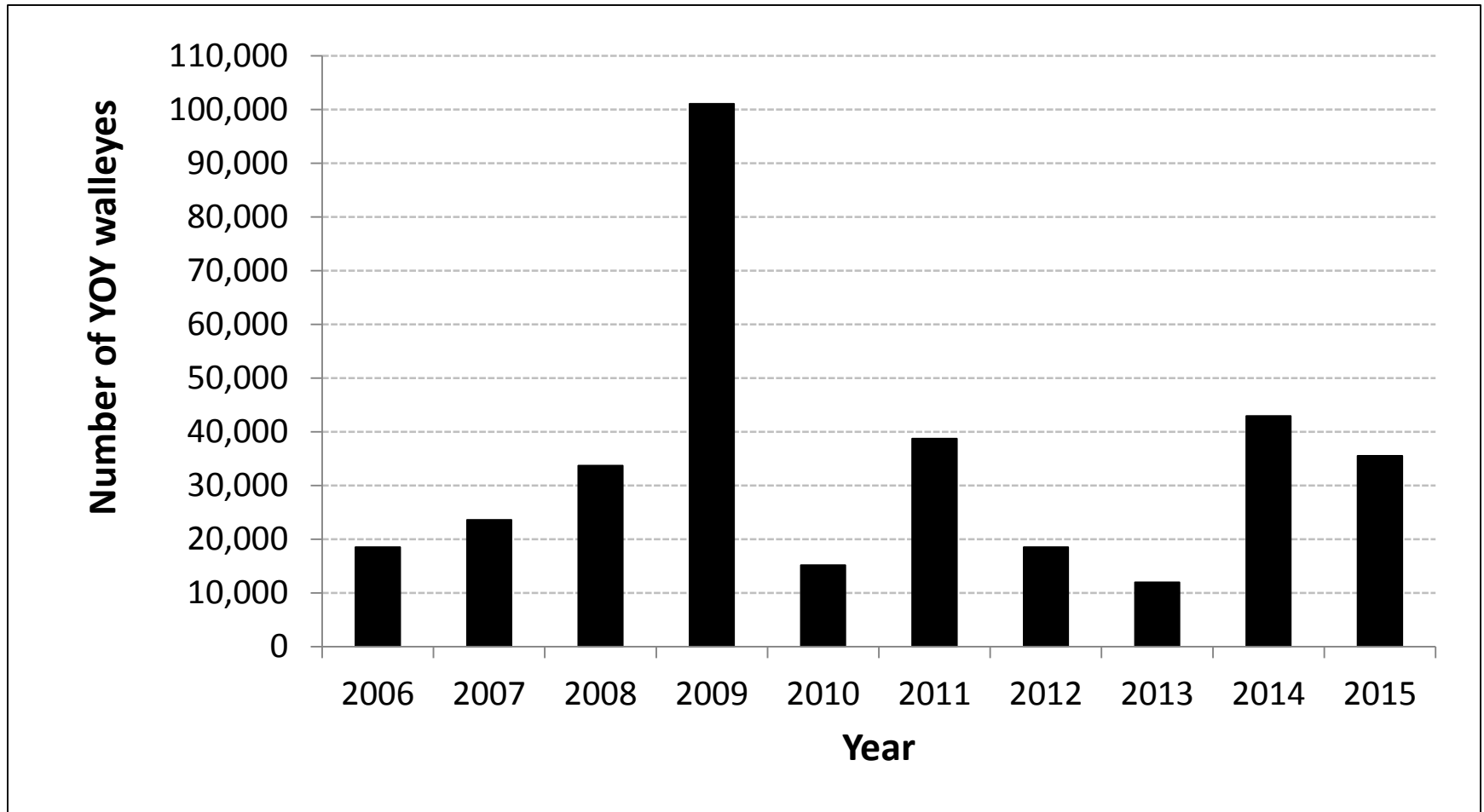
Why so many “shorts” and no “eaters”

- Poor walleye and sauger year classes in 2010, 2012, 2013
 - 2012 and 2013 weather/temperature related
 - 2009 and 2011 classes fished out or entered protected slot by 2015, relatively few fish to replace them
- Shad recover quickly after die-offs
 - Forage levels recovered, now abundant, fish not as hungry
 - Less apt to bite

Fall Walleye Survey 2006-2015



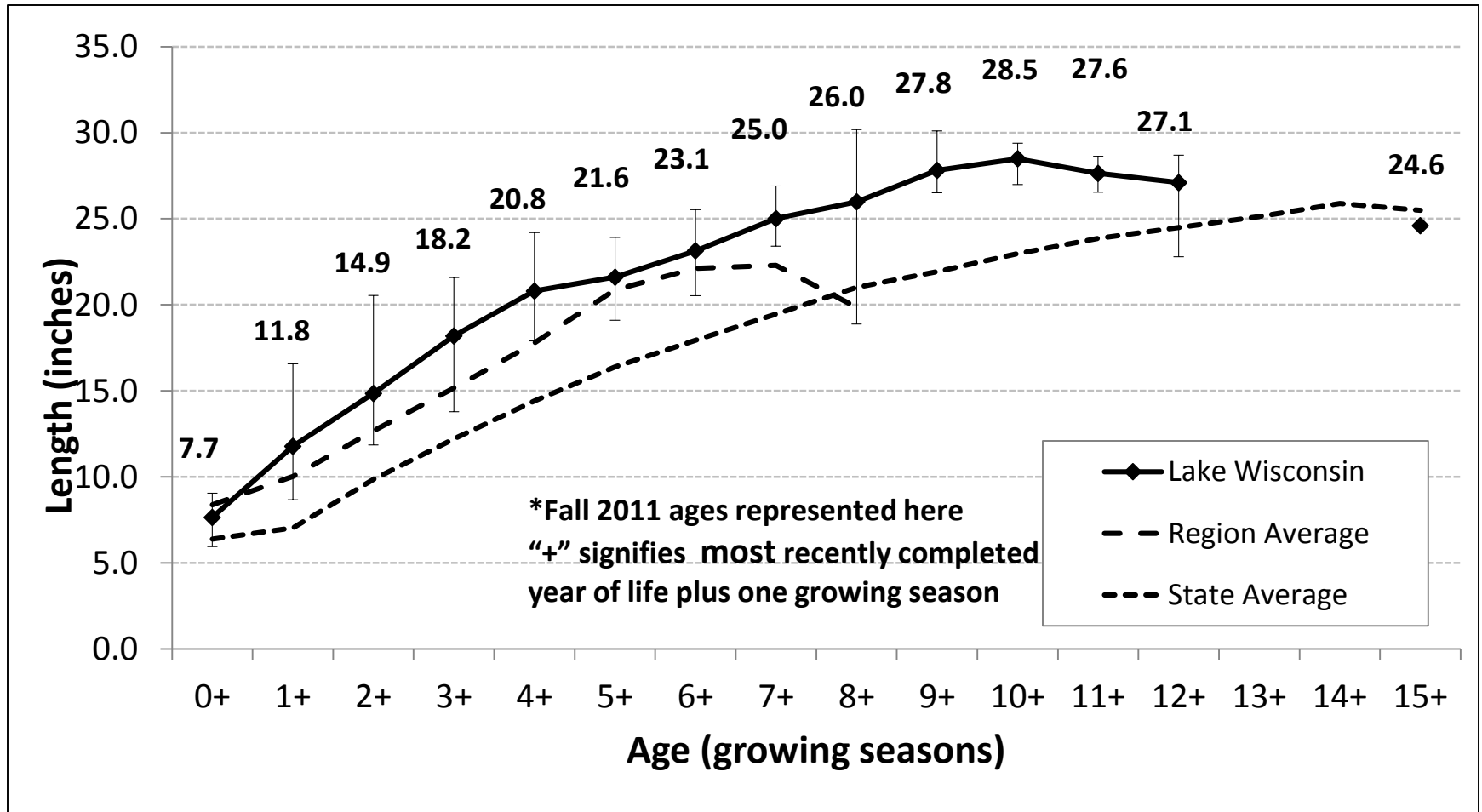
How many YOY walleyes? Serns Index



Help is on the way

- 2014 and 2015 WAE year classes were good
- 2015 SAU year class was very good
- 2014 WAE class = harvestable size by late 2016 or in 2017
- 2015 WAE class = harvestable size by late 2017 or in 2018
- SAU ~1 year “behind” walleyes for harvestability
- BE PATIENT
- 2016 survey will indicate new year class strength

Walleye Length at Age-Fall 2011



Sauger Length at Age-Fall 2011

