

Advanced Tactics Pressured Walleyes

PRESENTED BY

Chip Leer



Goals for Today...

- **Rewire how you think about walleyes.**
- **Help you build effective patterns by translating what you experience on the water into good decisions.**
- **Help you identify opportunities that others miss...by looking outside the “walleye” box for solutions.**
- **Help you tweak presentations to make them more effective. “Little things” like line choice does impact success.**

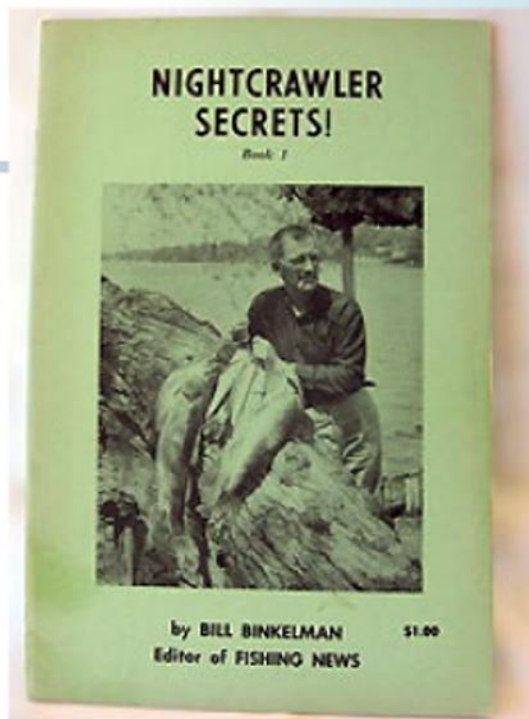




- **Chip Leer is a passionate and respected multi-species angler. 2019 Inductee into the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame.**
- **Stage host of the world's most prestigious walleye tournament circuit, Bass Pro Shops/Cabela's National Walleye Tour**
- **The angler driving the popular digital fishing information hub, Fishing the Wildside.**
- **He is an industry influencer has shaped many of the products we fish with and refined techniques we use daily to catch fish.**
Over his 30 plus year career he has been the tournament director of the In-Fisherman Professional Walleye Trail, TV Host of the FLW Walleye Tour, co-host of In-Fisherman Ice Guide TV, and published in numerous regional and national publications.



Walleye...Not a Mythical Beast



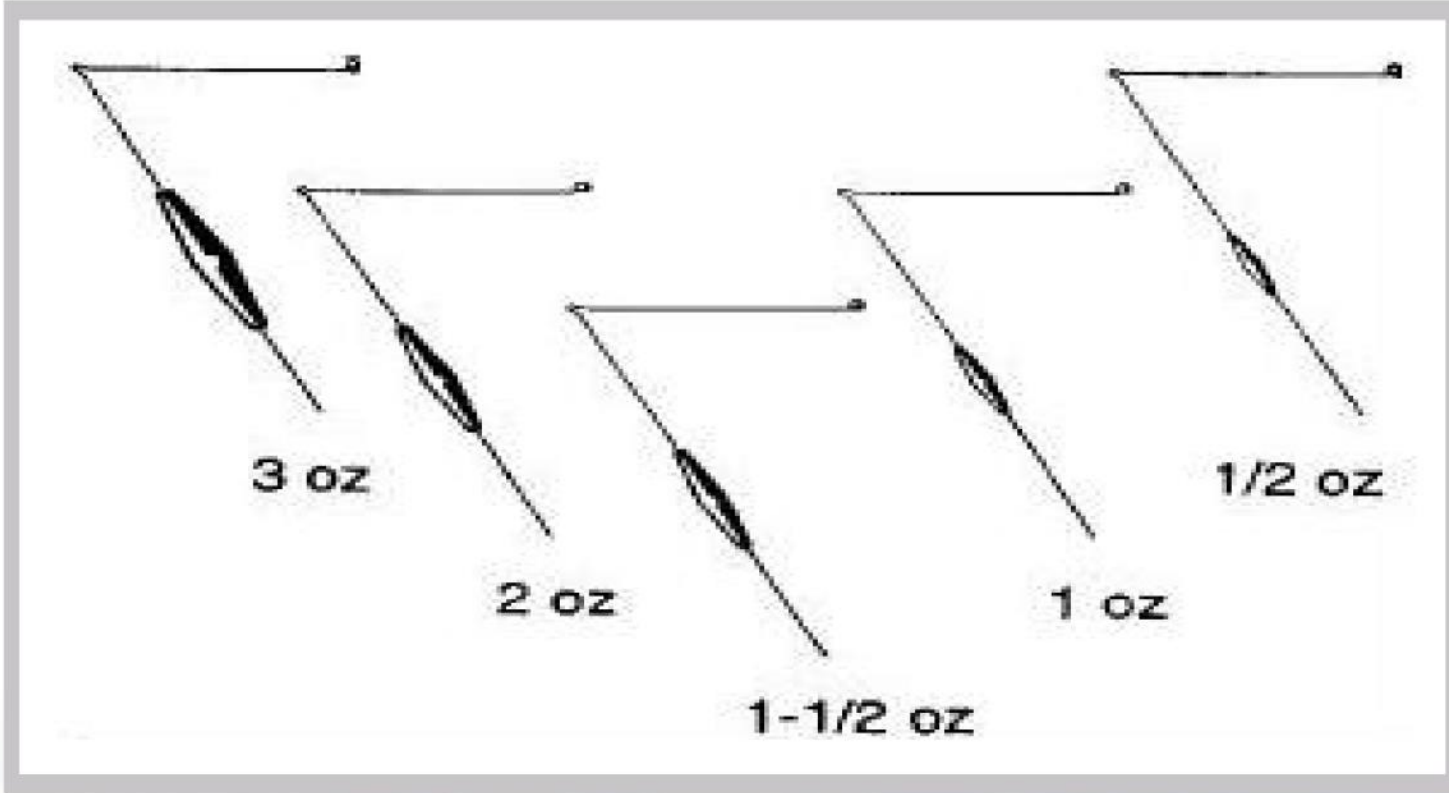
Angler success still hampered by misconceptions about walleye

- **1965 Bill Binkelman –Nightcrawler Secrets**
- **Preached small hooks, light line**
 - **Lots of disciples—Spence Petros, Lindners (Lindy Rig), many others.**
 - **First generation of anglers with access to mono, spinning gear and sonar ... made finesse possible and they killed fish!**

The Problem—There are still anglers who believe the only way to catch walleyes is finesse rigs and live bait!



Exploding Walleye Myth



- Early days of MWC (Manufacturer's Walleye Council), boys from the Dakotas showed up with bottom bouncers and guys from Minnesota thought they were nuts... they weren't
- Bouncers aren't just for bouncin!
- Keep an open mind



Lessons Earned on the Water



There is no magic lure or bait!

- Some work much more than others, but no lure is the best every day.
- The difference between catching fish and getting skunked is often very small - something as simple as the line you are using or the sinker can impact success.

FISH TALE - Bass/Carolina Rig...finesse power

FISH TALE - Spoon is not a Spoon/Jig is not a Jig



Catching Pressured Walleyes...

You target “Pressured Fish” every day...

**Live on a great walleye lake... see effects of pressure daily -
boat after boat hit best spots multiple times**

“Pressured fish” are fish reacting to the presence of anglers...

- They move, typically off a spot, even when feeding
- Quit biting
- Respond to new presentations (importance of new tackle)
- Finesse techniques and live bait can be killer,
but then so can power fishing



Catching Pressured Walleyes



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Find Fish Others Can't

Consistently successful anglers are those who find unpressured fish

- Secondary areas now key
- Non-traditional walleye spots
- Lot of pressure on good spot?
- Play detective ahead of arrival
- Ask yourself – WHERE DID THEY GO?



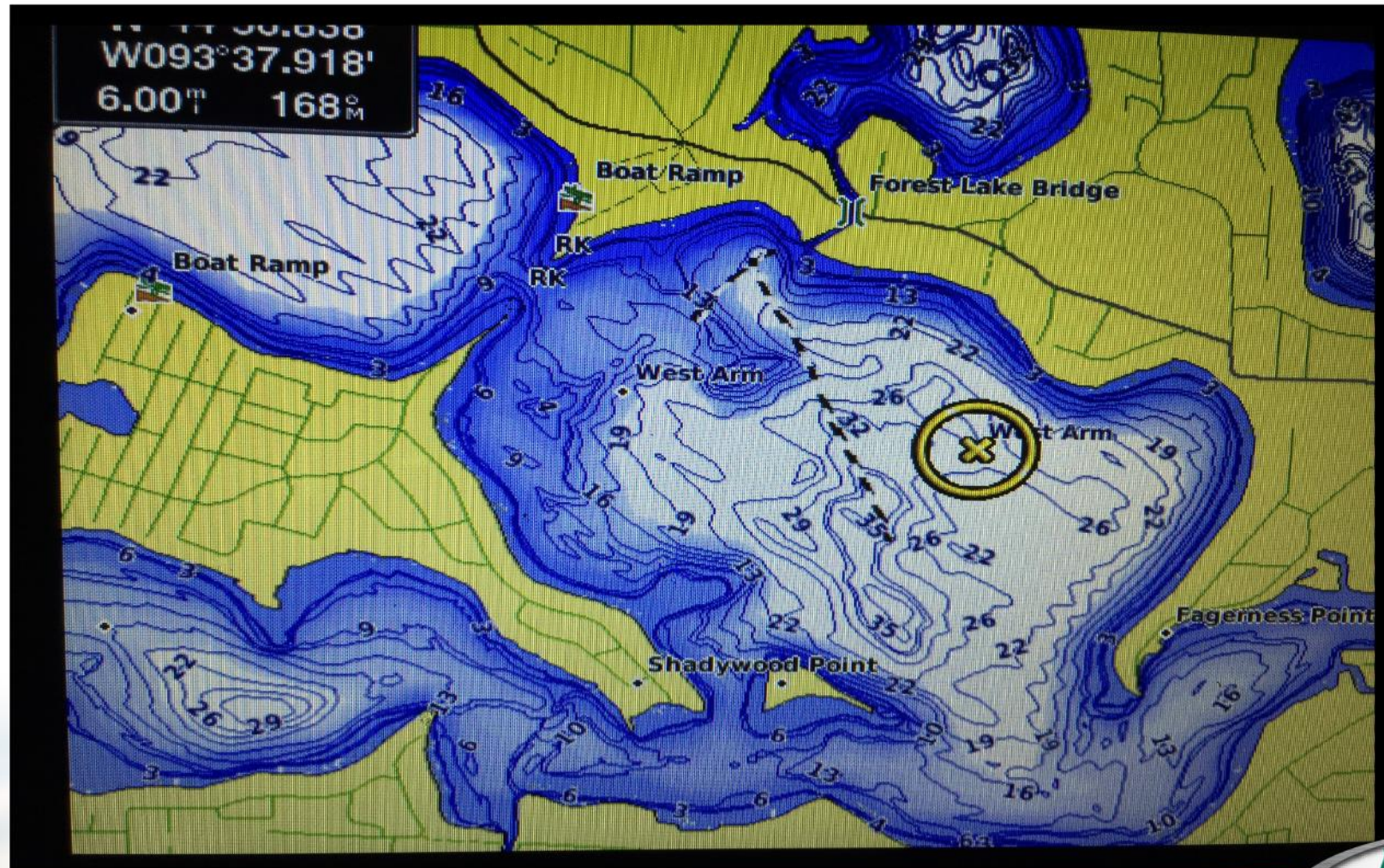
Effects Mapping on Walleye Fishing



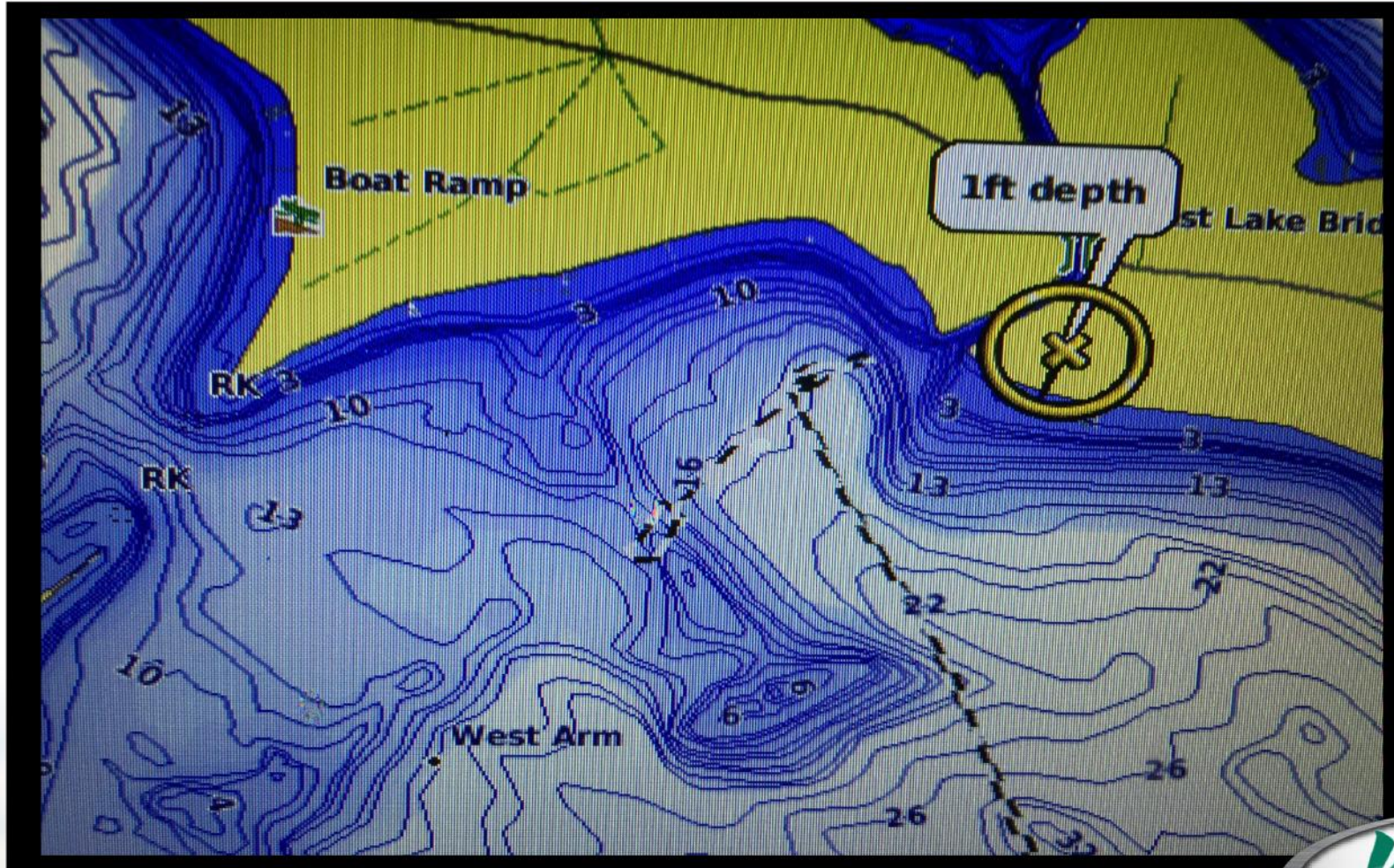
- Back in 90s, was there when Magellan unveiled portable GPS
- Mapping soon arrived-blown away on a trip... found marker bouy...7 miles out and 2 feet under the water!
- Mapping still blows me away because the information available:
 - Easily locate structure (and so can everyone else)
 - Overhead view provides useful info on what's holding fish
 - Look at depth, is structure is shoreline connected or mid-lake
 - What's around it---deep, shallow, contours (fast, slow)
 - Shape (points, inside turns...)
 - NOW FIND OTHER SIMILAR AREAS!



Case Study - Kraus Anderson



Case Study - Kraus Anderson



Pressured Fish—Secondary Spots



**Walleyes live in the green stuff!
Some anglers still avoid weed walleyes!**

**Early 1990s MWC - Cane in Winnebago System
- Stiles and Berry**

- Perry Good - Gull Lake tourney took big walleyes using bottom-bouncers, spinner rigs and plastic worms to pluck weed walleyes to 7 pounds

Rainy Lake -Mid-July: pods of walleyes in shallow cabbage chasing jerkbaits

- Great Summer Pattern - Rattle baits over mid-lake humps -Pine Mountain, Edward—fish to 10, with bonus bass, crappie and pike

**FISH TALE - Walleyes on Bass Spinner Baits
Bottom Bouncer = Weed Deflector**



Catching Pressured Walleyes



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Break From the Rules

- Innovation comes when you don't follow the crowd.
Traditional walleye spots get hammered
- see it daily.
- Fish where others aren't, try things other don't.

FISH TALE – Top waters in 60 feet

FISH TALE – Walleyes in harbor

FISH TALE - 70' LOW walleyes

Study Types of Rejections



Catching Pressured Walleyes

3

Responding Effectively - No Bites



Change locations -
when to change is one of fishing's toughest questions

- Shallow to deep
- Shoreline to offshore
- Weeds to rock
- Different lake?

Presentation tweaks

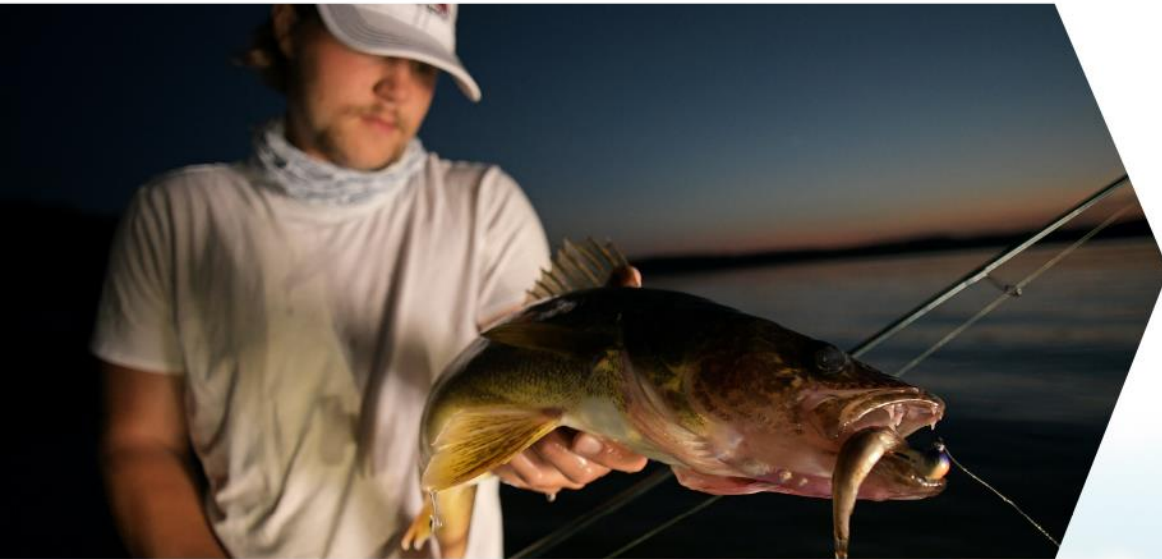
- Speed up or slow down
- Change presentation direction
- Select best bait options
- Try different colors



Catching Pressured Walleyes

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Decision Process - Every Rod Helps Lure/Bait Selection



- Location determines presentation
- Doesn't mean everyone in boat should use same bait or lure!
- Start with different presentations:
Lures, colors, live baits, and let fish tell you what they want!

FISH TALE - Mille Lacs (leech vs minnows)

FISH TALE - small red spinner



Early Spring - Location / Techniques

Best Locations:

- **Weedy Flats - Close to spawning areas**
- **Depths: 2-6 feet**

Fish here are spooky - trolling motor in or you blow fish out.

Fish can be scattered over whole flat, but typically found in small schools - catch a fish, work the area before moving on.

- **Wind and cloud cover help bite**
- **Cast with wind**
- **Avoid shallow back bay - want harder bottom areas**



Best Baits / Jigs



Northland
FISHING TACKLE



1. Jigs—Very Effective

- 1/32, 1/16, 1/8, 1/4 ounce typically best. Go as large as you can to fish fast - that may mean 1/32 ounce

2. Artificial vs. Live Bait

- Both work--artificial baits are tougher, last longer. Lots of reaction strikes

3. Top Lures

- Impulse Smelt Minnow 3.5' & 4.5"
- Impulse Jigging Leech
- Impulse Paddle Minnow
- Note: tip jigs with a piece of crawler if you MUST have live bait for confidence

5. Jig Stroke

- Most of the time I use standard jig stroke, but there are times when ripping or slow swimming action works better.
- Short, precision casts to weed edge or weed holes are preferred, especially when fishing denser milfoil

6. Bass Tactics for Walleye

- Drop Shot
- Jiki rig



Line Selection



1. Braided Lines

- No Stretch-Sensitive, great hook sets
- Floats (Important)
- Must tie good knots
- Great casting distance

2. Fluorocarbon

- Nearly invisible Underwater
- Sinks
- Stretches



3. Monofilament

- Neutrally buoyant
- Stretches (25-28%)
- Knot strength is great



Crank Baits



Deadly for weed walleyes.

- In many fertile lakes, weed walleyes are found very shallow 3-4 feet, and response very well to small cranks - like #4 and #5 Flicker Shads and Shad Raps. Baits have sunfish profile!
- Superb baits in low light...rattles work well then. Throw on 8-pound Bionic Braid on 7-foot spinning rod. I usually add a short leader of 8-pound mono...makes it easier to re-tie quickly.
- Short casts—steady retrieve with numerous rod twitches - Key
- Trolling - line lining minnow imitators works well after dark, as does working the outer edge of the weed flat with shad style baits. Move up bait sizes as needed - #6 & 7 Flicker shads.



Color Selection



Late Spring - Summer



1. Key Locations:

- When weeds get really thick, walleyes move to the outer edges and concentrate in areas like points, inside turns and cups, in areas adjacent to the main-lake basin...
- * The key here is covering water. You are faced with lots of green, relatively little gold.

2. Key Techniques:

- Trolling —especially with Bottom bouncers and spinners.
- Go as heavy as needed to maintain a 45-degree angle to bottom
- Run the trolling motor for stealth.
- Spinner rigs - leave the dock without live-bait and try baits like the Impulse crawler, jigging leech or rigging leech or the new 7-inch Spinner crawler, which has built-in bends for more action on the hook. No panfish issues.



Rigging for late Spring - Summer



Spinner Rig Alternative - Slow Death

- Based on Slow Death hook and short piece of artificial or live crawler
- Most full-time guides and tournament pros have a personal version
- Reduce size of GULP packages and ad IMPULSE crawler package



Plain Hook, Floaters

- Plain Hook
- Floaters
- Gulp Pinched Crawler



Rigging for late Spring - Summer



Jig Worms

- Killer this time of year

Structure Trolling

- Deep-diving baits for shorter line and more control.
- Using your map and sonar to stay tight to cover,
- Troll the edges of weedlines
- Focus on core areas like points, inside turns and cups.
- Mark places you catch fish and go back and jig





Minnesota has over 11,000 lakes Less than 7% infested –

- It's far from over!

Why

- 50,000 non-native species (terrestrial and aquatic) in North America, 4300 of those are considered invasive
- There are 796 fish (marine and freshwater) species listed on the USGS list of non-natives and 199 aquatic plants

Did you know

- 21 Day Dry Mandatory for any equipment transfer.
Docks, Swimming raft, Irrigation pump

Behavior Change is the answer

- Seat Belts, Fish Harvesting, Life Jackets
- AIS campaign launch 40% vs. current 2% of Boat Plug law violators (97% compliance, 98% have no weeds)

What can I do

- Talk, Talk, Talk! Family, Friends, Neighbors, visitors & other boaters
- Share information on social media
Don't be shy.... Speak up more!
- Think Small = Aqua shoes & water toys





**Let's
Talk
Fishing!**







Thank You! & Happy Fishing!



www.FishingTheWildside.net

