

Glen Elder District Fisheries

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Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Fisheries Division

Spring 2010

Glen Elder Reservoir 2010 Fishing Forecast

Scott Waters, District Fisheries Biologist
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Glen Elder Reservoir is approximately 2 feet low in March 2010. All boat ramps and facilities will be open and usable again in 2010. The Bureau of Reclamation will be completing dam maintenance this summer and will need to leave the lake around 2 feet below conservation through the fall to finish their work.

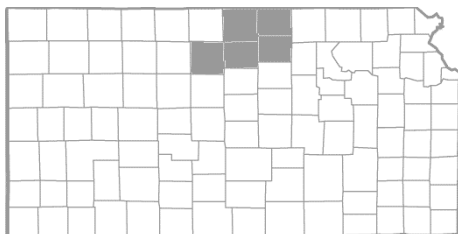
Remember the 18 – inch minimum length limit on walleye at Glen Elder.

BLACK BASS - Good. The smallmouth bass population was again well-represented in the fall electrofishing sample, accounting for 96 percent of black bass collected. The smallie population ranks third in the state for density and second for both quality and lunker-sized fish. There are a lot of young fish coming on, so catch rates of fish between 7 and 10 inches will be high, but there are also good numbers of larger fish that anglers should be able to find. The largest fish collected during fall electrofishing weighed 4.2 pounds with several other 2- to 3-pound fish sampled. The best months to fish for smallies include April, May, September, and October. The fish move deep during the summer and can be difficult to locate. Smallmouth can be found around the bluffs, along the dam, the Granite Creek causeway, main lake rocky points, and anywhere between Marina Cove and the dam. Largemouth bass showed a very slight increase with a handful of age-0 and age-1 fish collected. With two years of high water, largemouth bass may be starting to return in modest numbers. There are also a limited number of adult fish in the 14- to 21-inch range, and a few spotted bass can still be found. **18-inch minimum length limit in effect for largemouth and smallmouth bass. 15-inch minimum length limit in effect for**

CATFISH - Good. The number of channel catfish collected during fall sampling was similar to 2008, but size structure was smaller. Glen Elder dropped to tenth in the state among reservoirs for density and twelfth for both preferred and lunker fish. This is the second consecutive year that the catch rate of stock-sized fish declined, but numbers should remain adequate in 2010. Approximately 23 percent of channel cats sampled were between 12 and 15 inches long, 23 percent were 16 to 20 inches long, and 18 percent were longer than 20 inches. Biggest channel cat collected weighed 4 pounds and trophy potential is fair. The 2009 creel survey indicated that channel catfish continue to be the most sought after species at the reservoir and ranked third for total number harvested. Fishing over chum piles with stinkbaits, cut shad, and nightcrawlers is the most popular method during the summer. Fishing the south bluffs, Cawker City causeway, and other rocky areas during the spawn can yield nice limits of catfish as well. Setliners have good success for both channels and flatheads fishing up the river channels, around Mill Creek, and in the Carr Creek area.

CRAPPIE - Good. The Glen Elder crappie population is on the upswing and anglers should expect results similar to or better than in 2009. The recent creel survey indicated 22,000 crappie were harvested between March and October, an increase from 3,600 in 2007. In addition, the ice fishing this past winter would be rated as good to excellent, given the high number of quality-sized fish caught in December and January. The catch rate of 8-inch and bigger crappie was lower than expected during fall netting, but this is likely the result of the fish residing at depths greater than the nets sampled. Catch rate of fish from the 2008 and 2009 year classes was extremely high, however, indicating two strong year classes coming on. The future of crappie angling at Glen Elder looks very bright. Fishing will be good for 2-3 weeks in the spring during spawning activities in Osage and Marina Coves, Mill Creek, Oak Creek, Carr Creek, and around riprap at the Cawker causeway. Best areas post spawn, summer, and fall will be at fish attractor brush piles near the swimming beach point, Campground 3, Harrison Point, and below the Cawker causeway. Additional trees will be added to these fish attractors in 2010 to enhance the habitat.

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Glen Elder Fishing Forecast - continued from pg. 1

WALLEYE - Good. The catch rate of stock-sized walleye remained similar to the 2008 sample, but many of these fish are under the 18-inch length limit. The 2008 year class (12 to 15 inches long) dominated the catch, accounting for 76 percent of the walleye collected. Fair to good numbers of larger fish were also collected with 14 percent of the sample greater than the minimum length limit. Still, anglers should expect better success in 2010 with many of last year's 16- to 17-inch fish over 18 inches by May. Relative weight indices were excellent, indicating the fish are in very good shape. Largest fish collected weighed 6.3 pounds, so trophy potential is limited, but improving. Anglers will experience a similar amount of catch and release angling with the new length limit; decent numbers of legal fish will be available for harvest this year. The best fishing usually occurs during an eight-week period between late April and June. The fish move to the flats on the west end of the reservoir and can be caught using a variety of methods. Anglers have also had success in recent years fishing shallow near Walnut Creek and the bluffs during the hot summer months. Over 6 million fry have been requested for stocking in April. **18-inch minimum length limit in effect.**

WHITE BASS - Good. Numbers of white bass in 2010 will be excellent, but size structure will be less than what Glen Elder anglers are used to. The fall sampling catch rate of white bass was the highest in recent years due to the big 2008 year class. These 9- to 12-inch fish accounted for 82 percent of the catch, the age-0 whites represented 16 percent, and only 2 percent were greater than 12 inches long. The Glen Elder white bass population ranks first among the state's reservoirs in terms of density, fourteenth for preferred size, and eleventh for lunkers. Harvest of large white bass was excellent during the spring spawning run last April, but only average during the remainder of the year. Anglers harvested an estimated 14,300 whites in 2009, an increase from the 8,700 in 2007, but lower than the 19,200 in 2004. Anglers can try a variety of methods to catch white bass with the spring spawning period up both river forks; an excellent bet now that inflows have returned. Hot summer days will find whites schooling in open water and chasing shad on the surface while night anglers do very well using floating lights. Fall is often a great time to pull out the slabs and fish along rocky points and other inshore areas, while winter ice fishing may be the best time to catch these guys when they stack up along the river channels.

WIPERS - Good. The wiper population is looking very good at Glen Elder with two year classes now established. Wipers rank fifth in the state's density ratings, fourth for preferred-size fish, and fifth in the lunker rating. The 2006 year class has grown well with the fish reaching 19-22 inches or 3-6 pounds in three years. The 2008 year class ranges between 14 and 17 inches. Anglers can find wipers mixed in with white bass throughout the year, but in general, the wipers tend to occupy the lower end of the reservoir near the dam. Slabbing over humps, trolling crankbaits, or casting bucktail jigs off windy points are some of the better methods for catching wipers. The next wiper stocking will take place in 2011.

Lovewell Reservoir 2010 Fishing Forecast

Scott Waters, District Fisheries Biologist
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Lovewell is approximately 1.2 feet low and rising in March 2010.

CATFISH - Good. The number of channel catfish sampled last fall was down slightly from the 2008 sample with an increase in size structure. Lovewell ranks fifth among the state's reservoirs for density and is first for both preferred and lunker-sized fish. The largest fish sampled weighed 14.4 pounds with several others between 11 and 14 pounds collected. Twenty-seven percent of the population is less than 15 inches long, 21 percent is between 15 and 20 inches long, 26 percent is between 21 and 25 inches long, and 26 percent is over 25 inches. Flathead catfish sampling last summer indicated good numbers of 26- to 42-inch fish and fair numbers of 15- to 22-inch fish. The biggest flathead sampled weighed 46 pounds. Channels and flatheads will be vulnerable in all arms of the reservoir, including Montana, Windmill, and Prairie Dog Creek, as well as up White Rock Creek near the Highway 14 Bridge. During peak irrigation releases, catfish can be readily caught close to the inlet and outlet structures, and are susceptible along the dam and other rocky areas during the spawn.

CRAPPIE - Fair. Crappie numbers showed a very nice increase during fall 2009 sampling compared with the previous four years. Both black and white crappie populations look much improved but not quite back to the 2002-2004 years. White crappie density and preferred ratings at Lovewell both rank fourth while black crappie density ranks second, and preferred rating comes in at third.

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Lovewell Fishing Forecast - continued from pg. 2

CRAPPIE – continued. The majority of white crappie are between 8 and 11 inches long with fish up to 14 inches available. The black crappie are a little smaller with most fish between 8 and 10 inches, and a few up to 12 inches. Biggest white crappie collected weighed 1.4 pounds; biggest black crappie weighed 1 pound. A small year class may have been produced in 2009 if the fish can survive the low water conditions in the winter. Several brushpiles are maintained annually to help concentrate fish for anglers, and decent success can be found fishing around the flooded vegetation in Montana Creek and other coves during late April and May when the fish are spawning.

WALLEYE - Good. The walleye population continued its upward trend with improved catch rates for the fourth consecutive year and the highest catch since 1986. The population is dominated by the 2007 (16-18 inches) and 2008 (13-16 inches) year classes with a fair number of fish over 18 inches long. Overall, 25 percent of the population was over 18 inches when sampled in October 2009, with an additional 13 percent over 17 inches. These fish should reach the minimum length limit of 18 inches by May 2010 and offer anglers a good chance at harvesting legal fish. Another good year class was produced in 2009 for the fourth consecutive year, and the fifth out of the last 7 years. Relative weights were excellent, indicating the fish are very healthy right now. Lovewell ranks second in the state for walleye density, and eighth for both preferred and lunker-size fish. Fishing continues to be best from late April through early June with anglers drifting jig/nightcrawler combos having the best success, especially along 2-mile road. Anglers are encouraged to carefully measure any questionable fish and handle sublegal fish with care. **18-inch minimum length limit in effect.**

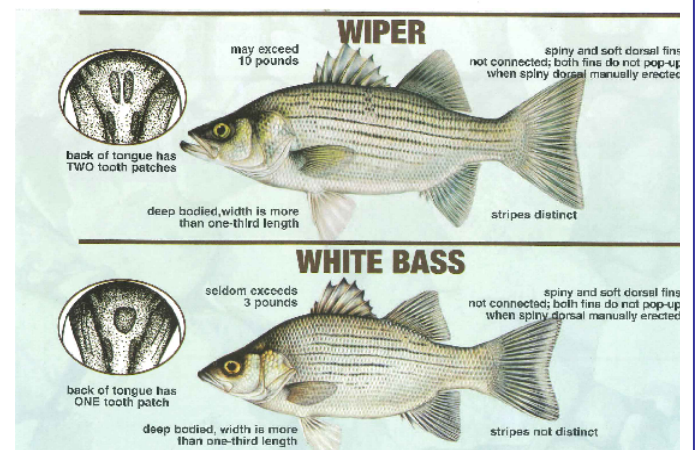
WHITE BASS - Fair. White bass numbers exhibited a sharp decline in fall 2009 sampling compared with the previous year as the density rating declined from 38.5 to 11.2. Preferred (2.5) and lunker (0.5) ratings also showed a decline from 20 and 3.3, respectively. The density ranking puts Lovewell fourteenth best in the state, while the preferred rating comes in ranked seventeenth. For the second consecutive year, a small year class of whites was sampled with a catch rate of only 3 age-0 fish per net. Fish between 10 and 12 inches long accounted for 62 percent of the population with 14 percent between 13 and 15 inches, and 2 percent over 15 inches. Largest fish sampled weighed 1.8 pounds. As in the past, the best time to fish for Lovewell whites will be in the summer during peak irrigation releases. The inlet and outlet areas historically produce the majority of whites harvested, while summer topwater activity can also be productive.

WHITE BASS – continued. Night fishing using floating lights was fair to good in 2009, and drifting or slabbing over submerged roadbeds and humps throughout the year is also an effective method for hooking into a nice stringer of whites.

WIPERS - Fair. Wiper numbers followed a pattern similar pattern to white bass with decreased numbers expected during the 2010 angling season. The density rating declined from 11.7 in 2009 to 6.2 in 2010. Preferred rating remained steady (2.7) while the lunker rating actually increased slightly from 0.8 to 1.3. The population is primarily comprised of two year classes. The 2008 fish (13-15 inches) accounted for 57 percent of the catch while the 2006 fish (18-22 inches) comprised 41 percent. Anglers may have limited success this year targeting wipers, but should be able to find a few while fishing for white bass and walleye. Lovewell ranks tenth in the state for density, eleventh for preferred fish, and ninth for lunker. Wipers were last stocked in 2008 and will be stocked again in 2010. Similar to white bass, decent numbers of wipers can be caught during the irrigation season as the fish migrate to the inlet and outlet areas. Other anglers report good success for bigger wipers trolling crankbaits and deep-diving rapalas along the north shore and the dam.

White bass vs. Wiper ID

Anglers are encouraged to closely identify their catch as wipers and white bass can look very similar, especially when small. The daily creel limit on wipers is two fish!



Local Anglers Assist with Habitat Improvements

Glen Elder Reservoir anglers volunteer their time to build brushpiles.

Cecil Miller of Cawker City is an avid angler at Glen Elder Reservoir who can be found on the water most every day throughout the year. Whether he's jigging for crappie at the marina or over brushpiles, chumming up channel catfish, or tempting white bass and crappie through the ice, Miller will be easy to find if you head out to the lake. You'll also often see him with a chainsaw in hand cutting down hundreds of cedar trees.

He is one of many anglers who have assisted with brushpile construction over the last year at Glen Elder. Thanks to the assistance of these local volunteers, we have been able to place more than 700 trees in the reservoir in less than a year. The cedar trees are cut from the wildlife area around the reservoir and hauled to the lake near their destination. Cinder blocks are wired to the trees to allow them to sink and stay in place.

During the warm months, a large pontoon boat hauls them out to be dumped in a designated location. If we have good ice in the winter, the trees can be dragged out on the ice with 4 wheelers and placed exactly where we want them. As the ice thaws, the trees and cinderblocks fall through the ice and eventually end up on the bottom of the lake.

Last May, we really beefed up three brushpiles located near the state park on the north shore. The Campground 3 brushpile received an additional 217 cedar trees placed in 15-35 feet of water. The new brushpile off the swimming beach point received 225 trees, and the brushpile just outside of the swimming beach cove had an additional 60 trees added. Each of these brushpiles is marked with a Fish Attractor buoy making them easy to locate.

In January, we were able to create two new brushpiles west of the Cawker causeway using about 100 cedar trees on each. One is located at the junction of the North and South Fork river channels while the other is just southwest of where the north roadbed ends. All of the brushpile information can be found on the web at:

<http://kdwp.state.ks.us/news/Fishing/Where-to-Fish-in-Kansas/Fishing-Locations-Public-Waters/Region-1/Glen-Elder-Reservoir/Fishing-Spots>

I would like to thank the following individuals who have helped with this habitat work. They include Cecil Miller, Mike Lake, Rick Lake, Henry Park, Gilbert Specht, Bill Loomis, Brian Huiting, Jim Huiting, Jason Martin, Jason Adams, Patrick Jay, Bob Green, Stan Deneke, Darin Zimmer, Roger Nuzum, Chuck Kant, Jesse Shields, Tom White, Kevin Marsh, and Chuck Barr. In addition, my fisheries aide Angie Lickteig also provided many hours of work last spring.

With their assistance we should be able to place more trees in the reservoir annually, which can only help the fishery and anglers' success. If you would like to help out with future habitat projects, simply call Scott Waters at 785-545-3345. **We are planning on a big habitat project the weekend of April 17th and 18th on the south side near the bluffs and will take all of the help we can get!**

Crappie Age and Growth

We examined crappie age and growth this past fall with 102 white crappie and 45 black crappie analyzed. Results below indicate the crappie are growing well in relation to other populations in the Midwest. The data shows whites reach 10 inches by the end of their fourth growing season (age-3+) with blacks requiring an additional year. In general, we found that black crappie grow slower than white crappie in Glen Elder Reservoir, and there are fewer old fish out there now.

Age	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+	6+	7+
White	5.4	7.7	10.4	12.2	13.8	-	16.0
Black	5.3	6.8	9.3	10.1	-	-	13.1



Three crappie limits taken from under the ice at Glen Elder Reservoir in February 2010.

Trout Stocked at Glen Elder Park Pond

Reminder of the diverse fishing opportunities at Glen Elder State Park

Trout have been stocked again this winter in the park pond located at Glen Elder State Park. Three loads of 1,100 fish each were stocked on November 19, December 22, and February 17. Ice cover has limited angling opportunities for most anglers this winter, meaning there are still very high numbers of fish in the pond. Fishing should be excellent once the ice recedes.

Several improvements have been made at the pond to improve angling opportunity. Most important, the washout under the tube was sealed with netting and rocks to assure all stocked fish remain in the pond. In addition, several areas on both the east and west banks were cleared toward the north end of the pond to allow increased access for shoreline anglers.



Rainbow trout being stocked in the Glen Elder Park Pond.

As always, special regulations apply while fishing trout waters between October 15 and April 15. All anglers are required to purchase a trout permit (\$12.50) if they intend to fish the park pond, whether they are fishing for trout or not. Anglers 15 and younger are exempt. In addition, all residents 16 through 64 years and non-residents 16 and older must also have a valid fishing license. The daily creel limit is 5 trout (2 trout for anglers 15 and younger fishing without a trout permit). The possession limit is three times the daily creel. So come on out, late February through early April should be a great time to catch trout!

How old is that catfish I caught?

Age data were collected from both Glen Elder and Lovewell channel catfish in 2009

Fisheries biologists use a variety of techniques to determine the status of a fish population. One of the most informative assessments is determining the age of a population and the corresponding growth rates. The most commonly used structure is the fish scale. Fish lay down a growth ring (similar to trees) on their scales throughout their life, but during the winter growth rings are placed much closer together due to slowed growth. This creates a dark band or a different growth pattern called "crossing over" that indicates one winter. Biologists use these dark bands to count the number of winters, or years, the fish has been alive to determine age.

Obviously, catfish do not have scales and must be aged using a different technique. Pectoral spines (the sharp ones sticking out on the side) also lay down growth rings. The spine is removed from the catfish, the catfish is released alive, and the spine is placed in an envelope for later examination. In the lab, the spine is sectioned using a fine saw. The sliver of spine is about the width of a dime, and the rings can be viewed under a microscope. Each spine is matched with the individual fish's total length, thus allowing a determination of length at age.

Channel catfish from either reservoir have not been aged in over two decades, so we decided it was time to collect some data. We collected 202 catfish from Glen Elder Reservoir and 39 catfish from Lovewell Reservoir last year from anglers and during our standard test netting, and pulled spines on each of them to determine their age. The results are listed in the figure on the following page.

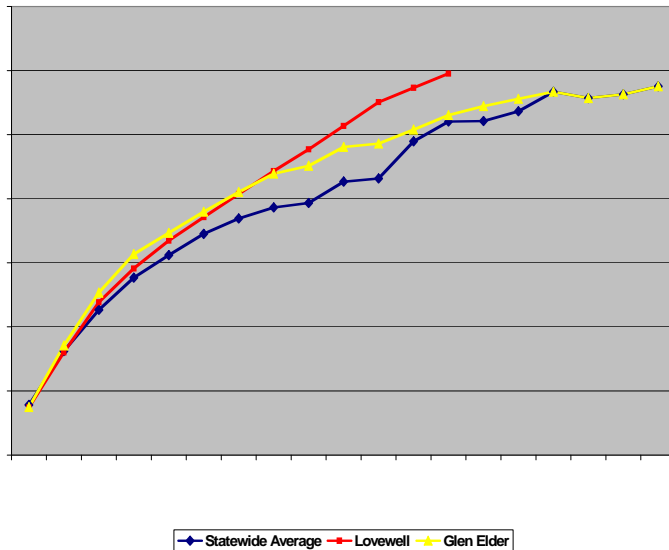
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Check out the following link for fishing reports at both Glen Elder and Lovewell Reservoirs. Reports are updated weekly beginning in March!

[Region 1 / Fishing Reports / Fishing / KDWP - KDWP](#)

How old is that catfish I caught? – continued from page 5

Of the 202 Glen Elder fish we aged, all but two were between 1 and 11 years old. In addition, we had one age-16 and one age-19 fish. In fact, these two fish were the oldest fish collected in the state last year. The 2- to 4-year-old fish comprised a large portion of the sample, and the 7- to 9-year-olds were also a common age group of fish collected from anglers. Channel catfish in Glen Elder reach 16 inches in about four years by growing 3-5 inches per year. This is what most anglers consider a keeper fish. But as the fish continue to age, their growth rate slows to only 1-2 inches each year. Most anglers might not realize that a 29-inch, 14-pound channel catfish from Glen Elder Reservoir could be 19 years old! Channel catfish in Glen Elder appear to be growing faster than catfish from the average reservoir across the state, especially at the younger ages. This is likely due to an abundant food supply available to these fish that allows growth to continue at a quicker rate.



Channel catfish in Lovewell reach 15 inches in about four years by growing 3-4 inches per year. But as the fish continue to age, their growth rate slows down to only 1-2 inches each year. Most anglers might not realize that a 30-inch, 14-pound channel catfish from Lovewell Reservoir is 13 years old!

Channel catfish in Lovewell appear to be growing faster than catfish from the average reservoir across the state. Fish length is similar through age five, but the older, larger fish collected from Lovewell are growing significantly faster than catfish from other reservoirs. This is likely due to an abundant food supply available to these bigger fish that allows growth to continue at a quicker rate.

As you can tell, the channel catfish populations at Glen Elder and Lovewell Reservoirs appear to be very healthy and are thriving. This year we plan to examine flathead catfish age and growth at both reservoirs using the same methods. We also plan to collect more channel catfish pectoral spines at Lovewell to verify our findings. It will be interesting to find out how old that 40- or 50-pound monster flathead really is! Hopefully, by this time next year, we'll be able to tell you.



Here's a very successful family fishing outing at Glen Elder Reservoir. Bring your family out to see how you do! (photo at left)

If you catch a large fish, of any species, and want to know its age, stop by the Glen Elder State Park office and ask for Scott. I'll take scale or spine samples, age the fish, and let you know the results.

Waconda Lake Association 2010 Fish-A-Thon

Waconda Willie is back at Waconda Lake and ready for someone to catch him! The Waconda Lake Association (WLA) is sponsoring a fun fishing event this summer, which will begin on May 1 and run through Labor Day.

Over 300 fish worth \$10,000 will be tagged with orange plastic tags prior to May 1 and will be swimming around Waconda Lake. Each of these fish was sponsored and named by a local business and is valued from \$25 to \$300 if caught. To be eligible, simply stop by one of 13 local merchants who are selling family tickets. These cost only \$10 for the entire family and are good for the summer. Once a ticket is purchased, head out to the lake and see if you can catch one of these prized fish. Walleye, white bass, channel catfish, flathead catfish, crappie, drum, wipers, and even bluegill will be tagged so just about anyone fishing at the lake has a chance to catch a fish.

If you are lucky enough to catch a tagged fish, simply stop by the Glen Elder Marina, Wayne's Sporting Goods, The Little Bait Shop, or Lakeside Convenience to claim your prize. If Waconda Willie is not caught in 2010, \$100 will be added for 2011 and so on until the fish is caught.

Come on out to Waconda Lake this summer and try your luck at one of these prized fish. Even if you don't run across Waconda Willie, you and your family are sure to have a fun time trying!



In 2009, Mike Hyman caught Red Head Salmon, a Walleye, good for a \$100 gift certificate from Trappers Bar & Grill in Simpson.

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Fishing Events in 2010

Glen Elder

- May 1 - Sept 6 WLA Fish-A-Thon at Glen Elder
- May 15 1st Annual WLA Crappie Tournament
- May 23 Governor's Cup Walleye Tournament
- June 5 6th Annual Youth Fishing Tournament
- June 5-6 FREE Glen Elder State Park Entrance
- August 14 WLA Catfish Tournament

Lovewell

- April 17 OK Kids Day
- June 6 Kids Fishing Derby
- August 7 Lovewell Fun Day

Free Fishing Weekend is June 5 and 6 statewide!

This is the first edition of the Glen Elder district newsletter. I will continue to provide information for Glen Elder and Lovewell Reservoirs, Jewell State Fishing Lake, Rocky Pond in Belleville, and Jewell City Lake. Don't forget to check out the many FISH properties in the area as well. They can offer some great fishing for those without a boat.

I will be starting a brag board on the KDWP website so make sure and send any pictures of fish you catch at the above mentioned lakes with your name, date, etc. and I will get it posted for all to see (scottw@wp.state.ks.us).

If you know someone who would like to subscribe to the newsletter, they can do so [HERE](#). If you would like to unsubscribe, please send your info to [Contact Us](#) with "unsubscribe to Glen Elder District Fisheries newsletter" and we'll get you taken off of the list. If you have any questions or comments feel free to send them in.

Scott Waters
District Fisheries Biologist
Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks
2131 180 Road
Glen Elder, KS 67746
785-545-3345
scottw@wp.state.ks.us