

MOUND CITY

District Fisheries Report

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Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks

Late Spring 2011

Ft. Scott Rearing Pond or The Little Pond that Could

In April of every year a great project takes shape. Though few people see the beginning many enjoy the finished product. Each year, since 1987 channel catfish are stocked into the Ft. Scott Rearing Pond. The numbers have varied some but usually over 6,000 channel catfish are stocked into this little 1.4 acre pond. These fish are about 5 inches long when they enter the rearing pond. These fish are carefully fed and monitored through the growing season. In late October, when the water cools and fish growth slows down, the pond will be drained and the catfish harvested. By now the fish have grown to a large size of 15 to 18 inches long. City personnel, Department staff and biologist from the Farlington Fish Hatchery all converge early at the pond. During the harvest the channel catfish are weighed, counted and transported to area fishing spots. These channel catfish are stocked into the 2 College ponds, Fern Lake in Gunn Park and in Ft. Scott Lake. The harvest usually is over 6,000 fish which with a 2 fish daily creel amounts to 3,000 successful anglers. Wow, that's a lot of fun from a little pond.



This is the second year these Two New Paddlefish Snagging Areas have been opened.

**The 2011 season opens on March 15 and runs
through May 15.**

The first area is owned by the City of Iola and located below the river dam at Highway 54. The second area is on the Marais des Cygnes River, from the upstream end of Unit G of the Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area downstream through the Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge to the state line river bridge. This new area of the Marais des Cygnes River is 15.4 miles long, currently the longest area ever opened to paddlefish snagging in Kansas. Thanks to the cooperative effort by The City of Iola, U.S.F & W Service and KDWP the Neosho River and the Marais des Cygnes River each supports another new paddlefish snagging area. Signs indicating the designated areas have been posted to assist anglers with boundary recognition. Although paddlefish exceeding 100 pounds are rare, paddlefish in the 30- to 50-pound range are fairly common, but even fish in this size range can generate a lot of excitement and will draw crowds where they are caught. Warm water temperatures and high flows excite spawning paddlefish as they concentrate below river dams. These conditions increase the chances for diligent paddlefish snaggers to be successful. Nonsport fish such as carp, drum and buffalo may be snagged and harvested in waters posted open to snagging during the paddlefish season. There are no limits on nonsport fish. A paddlefish permit is required and includes 6 carcass tags; the daily limit is two paddlefish. Paddlefish caught must be released or tagged immediately. Even though fishing conditions in 2010, were not the best there a projected 53 paddlefish anglers who took advantage of these new places to snag. Reportedly they caught 4 paddlefish. With better water levels in 2011 angler success is expected.

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Iola Paddlefish Snagging Area

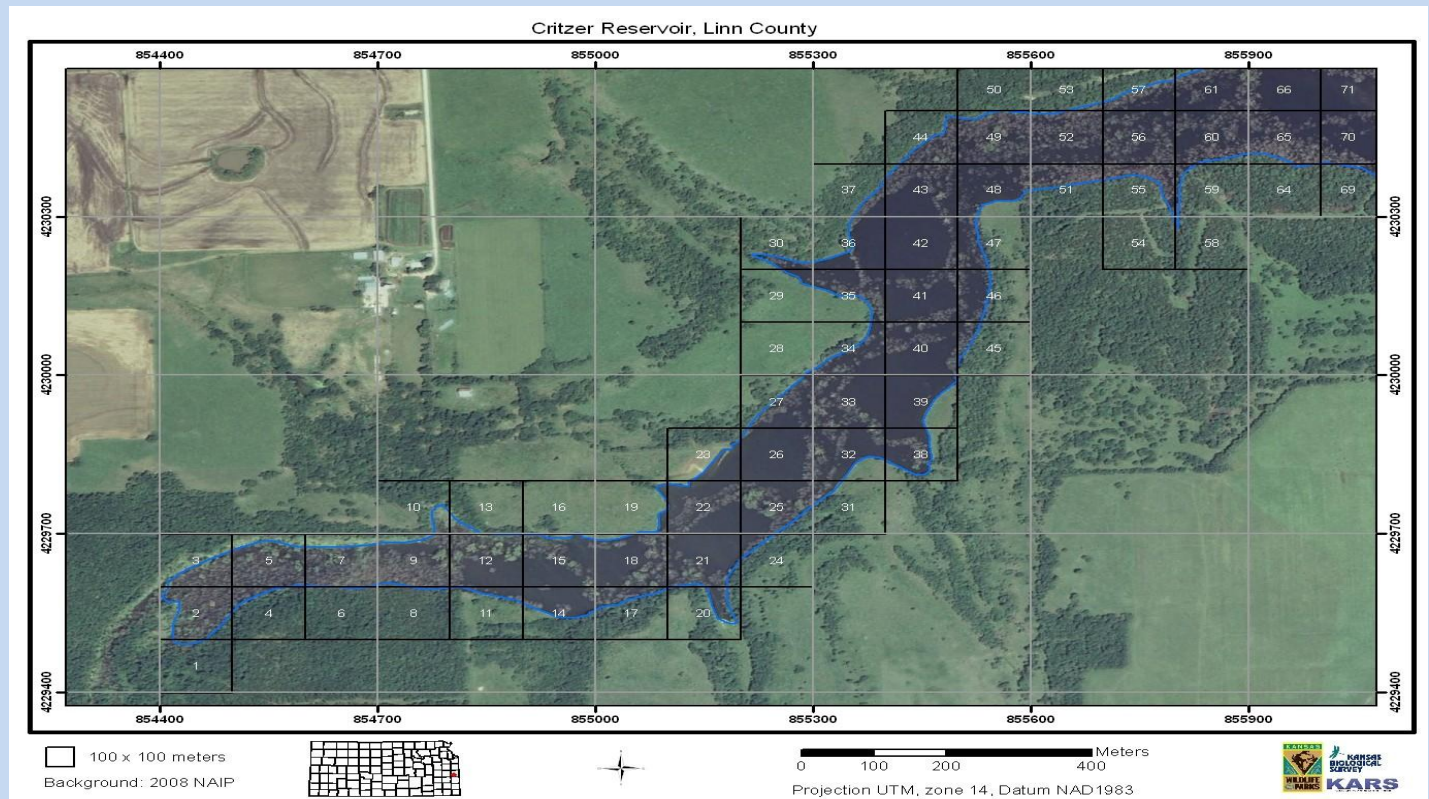


A view of the west side (above), and a view of the east side (below), of the Iola Paddlefish Snagging Area. With good water flow paddlefish are concentrated below the Hwy. 54 dam.



Status of The New Critzer Reservoir in Linn County.

Originally scheduled to be open to public fishing in mid May of 2011. This opening has hit a snag with the Marais des Cygnes Public Wholesale Water Supply District # 13 expressing concerns about opening this lake to public fishing. As of this date Linn County is negotiating with the District to address their concerns and hopefully get this fantastic fishing opportunity "OPEN TO FISHING".



Pictured is a map of the 220 acre Critzer Reservoir. Note the high volume of standing timber left standing during lake construction.



Cedar Trees along 69 Highway before being hauled to Ft. Scott Lake.

Habitat Project Improves Fishing Opportunity at Ft Scott Lake.

Thanks to the cooperative effort between Kansas Department of Transportation, The City of Ft Scott and Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Ft Scott Lake will benefit from fisheries habitat improvements. The Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining highways 69 and 54. They had planned to cut, stack and haul away numerous trees that had grown into the boundary fences up and down these highways. This is a labor intensive project that requires the trees to be cut, loaded and hauled to an area where they can be burned. As state employees we are always looking for a way to do more with less. Jim Bussone, Conservation Officer for Bourbon County and Ft Scott Lake called me one day and mentioned that the highway project trees would be just about the correct size to sink into Ft Scott Lake. We agreed, calls were made to the Ft Scott City Manager, David Martin and to K.D.O.T. District Managers. A plan was agreed upon. KDOT would stock pile the trees at a city location close to the lake boat ramp, where upon the city employees and Wildlife and Park's conservation officer and fish biologist will use boats to sink the trees in areas to benefit anglers. All together this project will save K.D.O.T. travel time and fuel, it will improve the fisheries habitat at Ft Scott Lake thereby benefiting the City of Ft Scott and produce a goal of the fishery biologist, to produce more angling opportunities. And I thank the Ft. Scott KDOT and City of Ft. Scott staff for their willingness to help make this project such a success

Ft .Scott Gunn Park GENESIS Project at the West Lake



Wildlife and Parks, through their Community Fisheries Assistance Program, funds many angling enhancement projects each year. This lake is about 100 years old and has filled in with soil. This makes the lake very shallow, muddy and produces a poor fishing opportunity. It is planned to request grant funds to completely renovate this lake. If this project is funded, many piers will be constructed with this fill dirt. This will make the lake deeper, the water clearer and increase the shoreline angling area and opportunities. Here is a picture of Ft Scott City employees Russ Hughs and Todd Farrel, and W&P Fisheries biologist, Don George measuring elevations at the West Lake in Gunn Park. This will be the location of a earthen pier that will constructed with excess dirt that has been deposited in the bottom of the lake. Fish attractors will also be placed during this period to attract fish to shoreline accessible areas. When the genesis project is completed the lake will be restocked and after some growing time the lake will reopen to public fishing.

Tight Line

- ✓ Anglers as the days grow longer and the water warms up fishing rapidly improves. Crappie and bass are in prespawn mode, moving into the shallows to spawn. This is probably the easiest time catch these species. Weather, cold fronts may push fish out to deeper water and a few days later a warm front pulls the fish back into to finish spawning. This is a great time to get out fishing, grab the kids of a friend as the fishing action can be utterly fantastic.
- ✓ Big Largemouth Bass –A largemouth bass that weighed 10 pounds was caught in a bass tournament at La Cygne Res. this spring.
- ✓ Close and Great Shoreline Fishing—Try one of the many community lakes such as Blue Mound City Lake, Richmond City Lake, Mound City Lake, Prescott City Lake, Pleasanton has 2 very good lakes and Ft Scott has 6 lakes to fish.
- ✓ Pleasanton West Lake – is still in the TOP 10 for great bass and channel catfish angling.
- ✓ The paddlefish snagging season is open at either the City of lola dam on Highway 54 or for a less crowded area the 15 miles of river along the Marais des Cygnes River.
- ✓ Anglers at Gunn Park in ft. Scott will notice that this lake is dry. This is a GENESIS PROJECT, where efforts are underway to bring this lake back to its full potential.
- ✓ Soon the fish feeders will be filled and turned on and the channel catfish feeding frenzy will once again have many anglers excited.
- ✓ This is a great time of year and every day presents new fishing opportunities.

Have fun and take a friend.
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