

# New Strawn District Fishing News

Spring 2016

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## 2016 Fishing Forecast



### John Redmond Reservoir



**White Crappie - Excellent** - The crappie population is still at a very high level. John Redmond ranked first among reservoirs for the second year in a row. We caught a total of 1,044 crappie of which 480 were of stock length or greater (6" or more). To break the numbers down further, 331 out of the 480 fish were 10-12 inches and 36 fish were 12-15 inches. There were 68 fish sampled that were 8-10 inches and 45 fish sampled that were 6-8 inches. We also sampled a large number of fish less than 6 inches, called sub-stock fish. The 564 sub-stock fish sampled was a good indicator of successful reproduction. This population continues to reap the benefits of timely flooding events with extended periods of high water. With the current population dynamics, I expect this population to be

good for at least a few more years. This spring places to target crappie should include the dam or

any rip rapped/gravelly bank, Otter Creek, Eagle Creek, Hickory Creek, and the main river should all provide good opportunities for some slabs.

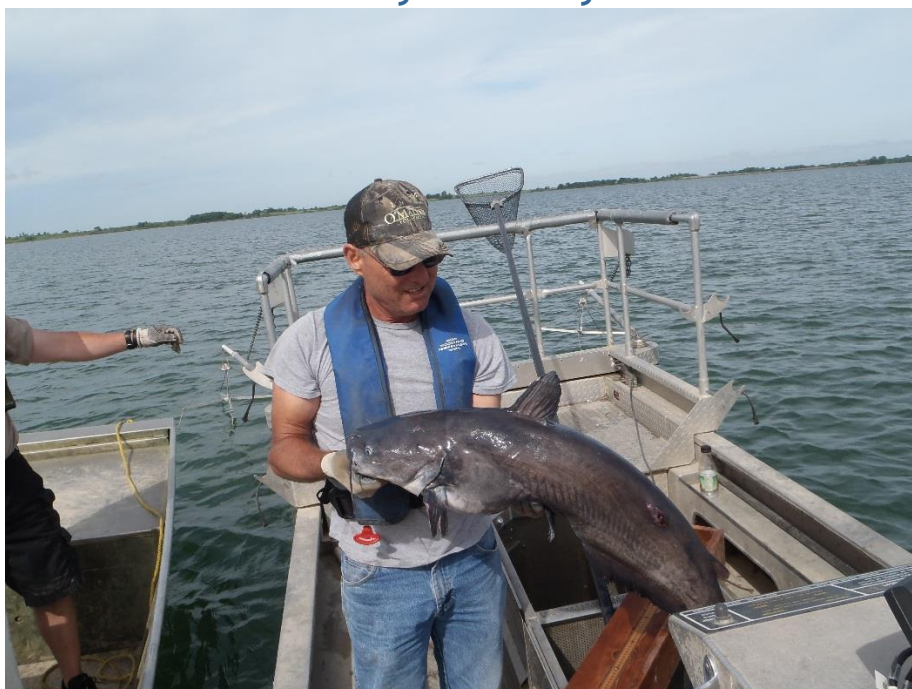
**White Bass - Good** - White bass are still thriving at John Redmond. Good numbers of fish are in the 13- to 15-inch range, and there are also good numbers of fish over 15 inches available. Small spinners, crankbaits, or jigs can be productive and anglers should target any type of rocky habitat or large schools of shad. The spring spawning run last year was reported to be the best in several years. Hopefully the water conditions this year will allow the same success.

**Channel Catfish - Good** - Catfish anglers should continue to expect some good catfishing in 2016. Our catch rate of catfish improved this year, but is not indicative of a great population. The largest fish we caught was close to 14 pounds. Most anglers have luck drifting baits around river channel.

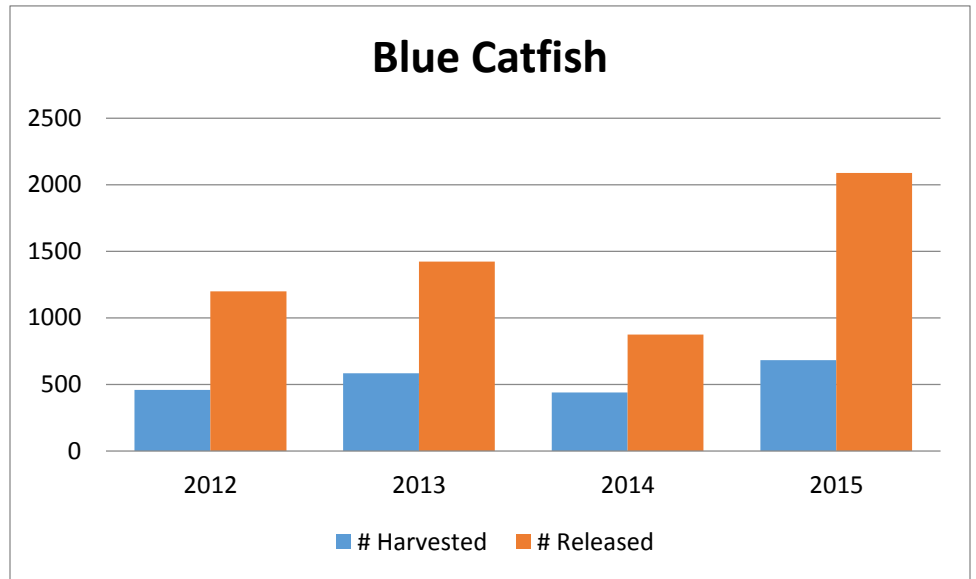


**Blue Catfish - Poor** - Even though this year we caught a 16-pound fish, I still don't see evidence that the numbers are enough to provide a quality opportunity. However the sample showed a couple of good signs for the population in that three different year classes were represented. With an abundant forage base and plenty of productive water, this species has the potential to do well at John Redmond.

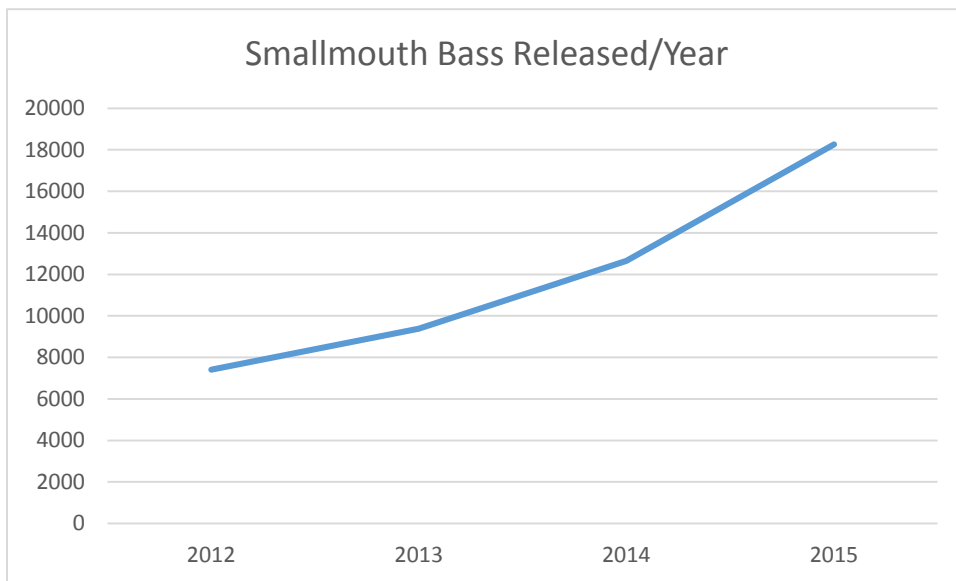
## Coffey County Lake



**Blue Catfish - Good** - The blue catfish population is in stable condition and should provide pretty good opportunities for 2016. The number of fish caught and released increased in 2015 as illustrated in the graph and harvest numbers only slightly increased. Good numbers of 20- and 30-pound fish seem to be available, but fish over 40 pounds are hard to come by. The Catfish Chasers fishing club held a night tournament at Coffey County Lake on August 29, 2015. Wes Fleming, the Wolf Creek biologist, and I attended the weigh-in to record data on the fish that were brought in. There were 90 blue cats caught, 19 of which were over 20 pounds. The largest fish weighed 33 pounds. All fish were released, and only two fish died during the tournament. These two fish, one 22.5 inches and the other 23.5 inches, were aged to get a bearing on their growth rate. The 22.5-inch fish was estimated at 6 years and the 23.5-inch fish was estimated at 8 years. I compared these numbers to a study done at Milford and found that the growth was similar. Eight years for a fish that was 5 pounds, just imagine how old those 30 pound fish are.



**Smallmouth Bass - Excellent** - The smallmouth bass population at Coffey County Lake is in really good condition. Results from the exit creel show that smallmouth surpassed the white bass as the number one species caught and released in the lake. There were a total of 18,262 smallmouth caught and released in 2015, and as the graph illustrates the population has been rising since 2012. The electrofishing sample showed a large group of fish in the 14- to 17-inch range and a decent number of fish over 17 inches. Smallmouth are easily caught year-round, but the best months seem to be May and June.



## Small Water Fishing Forecast

Below is a table that quickly summarizes the forecast for the smaller lakes in my district. I did not run nets on Garnett North, Garnett South, or New Strawn City Lake so no data was available to create a forecast. Many good angling opportunities are available in the district. To see how these lakes ranked among the others in the state visit <http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing/Fishing-Forecast>

	Woodson	SFL	YC New	YC Owl	Gridley CL	Lebo CL	Garnett North	Garnett South	Cedar Valley	New Strawn CL
Bluegill	Poor	Fair	Poor	Good	Poor	N/A	N/A	Fair	N/A	
Crappie	Fair	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	N/A	N/A	Fair	N/A	
Channel Catfish	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Fair	N/A	N/A	Good	N/A	
Largemouth Bass	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	
Saugeye	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Fair	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Walleye	Poor	Fair	Fair	Fair	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Wiper	Fair	Fair	Poor	Fair	Fair	N/A	N/A	Poor	N/A	

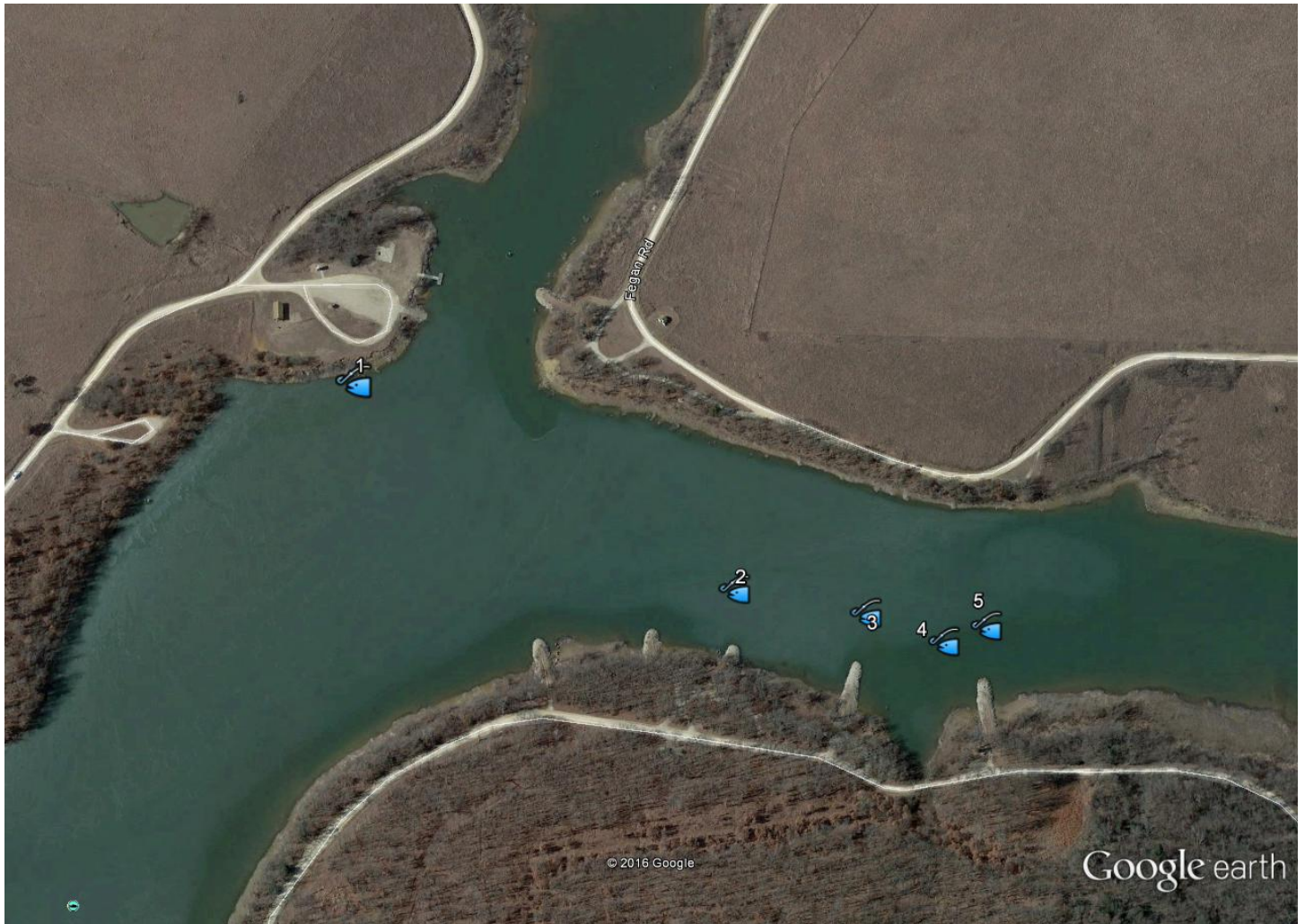
# John Redmond Dredging

The work has begun on the John Redmond dredging project. The slurry pipe is being laid that will carry the mixture of silt and water to the designated holding ponds. Dirt work is underway on these holding areas where the silt will be deposited and left to dry for several years. So far only three areas, totaling 180 acres, have been made available to hold the first 600,000 cubic yards of silt (approximately one year's worth of dredging). Just how much is 600,000 cubic yards? Imagine an area three football fields long by three football fields wide and with a depth of 20 feet. That is a lot of dirt, but keep in mind this amount is equivalent to 372 acre feet of silt and the estimated siltation rate of John Redmond is 739 acre feet/year. In other words, John Redmond is not gaining any storage capacity through the dredging process. Basically, the overall goal is to maintain the current storage capacity to ensure at least 55,000 acre feet of water is available through 2045 when the Federal Energy Regulation Committee license expires for the Wolf Creek power plant. The bottom line is, this is a massive project that can go on for many years depending on the availability of land for the silt deposition. Dredging is set to begin sometime this summer. This information was pulled from the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (FPEIS) put together by the U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers and the Kansas Water Office, and it can be found at <http://www.kwo.org/Projects/JohnRedmondDredging.html>. This document outlines the entire scope and detail of the project. Below is an example of a hydraulic dredge, a similar machine will be used on John Redmond.



## Woodson State Lake Winter Habitat Work

Since we had such a mild winter, I decided to make use of the nice weather and create some new brush piles. We used 25 trees to make five different brush piles. These trees were placed in 12-18 feet of water to provide better habitat in deeper water. The best part about these new piles is that they are within casting distance from the shore and are easily accessible. More habitat projects are certain to happen in the future because without good habitat we don't have good fishing. Check out the map below for the locations, the GPS coordinates are also listed.



## Coordinates

1. 37°47'42.24"N 95°50'48.12"W
2. 37°47'51.00"N 95°50'42.48"W
3. 37°47'54.00"N 95°50'41.88"W
4. 37°47'55.80"N 95°50'41.10"W
5. 37°47'56.76"N 95°50'41.58"W

# Good Luck Fishing!



This 2.94-pound crappie was caught out of Garnett's Cedar Valley Reservoir.