



Woodson District Fisheries News

Summer 2017

Woodson Wildlife Area, 738 Fegan Rd., Toronto, KS 66777
www.kdwpt.state.ks.us justin.l.morrison@ks.gov Office: 620-637-2748

Woodson State Fishing Lake Renovation



The way word travels these days, I'm sure that you have heard that we are draining Woodson State Fishing Lake, but many people are not aware of why we are draining the lake. Last September and October we received some extreme amounts of rain that caused significant damage to the spillway (pictured on the right) of the almost 80-year-old Woodson State Lake. In addition to repairing the spillway, it was decided that the main drain valve of the lake also needed to be replaced. Currently, the lake is down about 15 feet which was achieved by a large siphon line that was installed, but the siphon has quit working and now we are waiting on contractors to repair and/or replace the valve to lower the lake the rest of the way.

Yes, we are taking all of the water out of the lake. Why, you ask? The current fish population in the lake has become



unbalanced due to common carp, gizzard shad, and stunted crappie. What is going to happen to the fish in the lake? Right now we have a public salvage order in effect, which allows anglers to keep whatever they want without length or creel limits, but the current legal method is rod and reel. Eventually the lake will be opened up to snagging and other methods when the lake is drawn down to a smaller pool. After allowing anglers to remove as many fish as possible, we will go in and treat the remaining water to get rid of the undesirable species. Several ponds surrounding the lake will also be treated to make sure all undesirable species are eliminated before restocking the lake. Lake renovation projects don't come around very often for biologists so I hope to make the best of this opportunity by creating and building new habitat around the lake. Both artificial fish attractors (Georgia Cubes) and natural fish attractors (cedar trees and other brush) will be used. I'm also planning to create rock piles in different areas of the lake utilizing the abundant rock already on the lake bed. I plan to restock the lake with bluegill, black crappie, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, channel catfish, and walleye. On the right is some artificial fish attractors already in the lake.



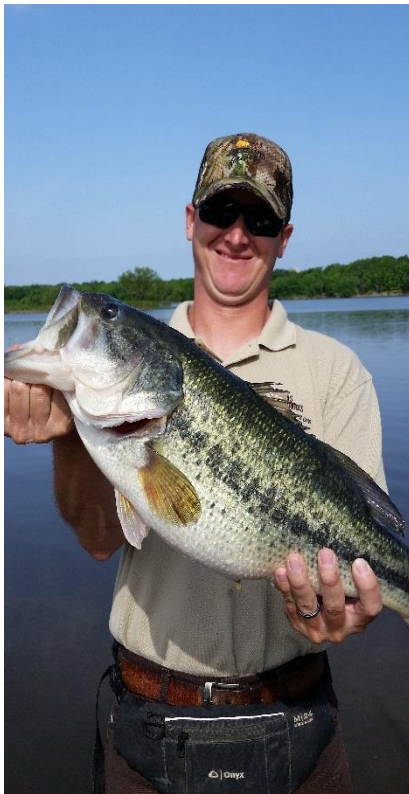
Spring Electrofishing Results

Largemouth

Lake	Total	Stock CPUE	RSD S-Q (8-12")	RSD Q-P (12-15")	RSD P-M (15-20")	RSD M-T(20-25")	Biggest Fish
Gridley City Lake	191	160	36	60	4	0	2.1
Garnett North Lake	157	163	29	50	21	0	3.59
Yates Center City Lake	251	152	45	42	13	0	2.72
Y.C. South Owl	184	73	52	34	14	0	4.41
Coffey County	57	17	34	24	42	0	4.8
Garnett Cedar Creek	275	126	37	33	24	6	8.5
Lebo City Lake	89	45	24	54	22	0	2.93

Smallmouth

Lake	Total	Stock CPUE	RSD S-Q (7-11")	RSD Q-P (11-14")	RSD P-M (14-17")	RSD M-T (17-20")	Biggest Fish
Coffey County	118	35	27	24	38	11	3.2



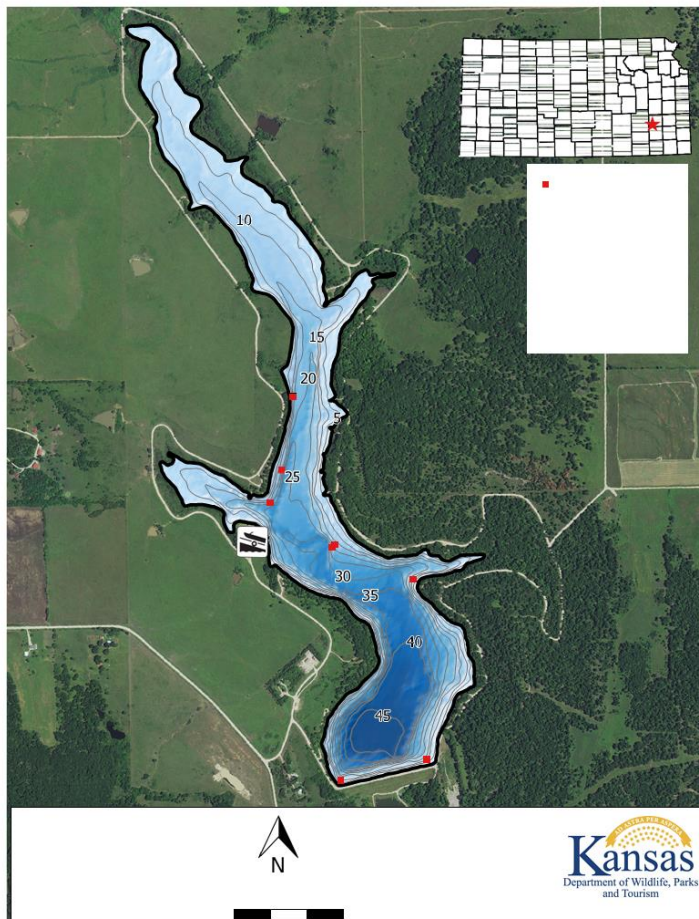
The majority of the lakes in my district have pretty good largemouth bass populations, but one lake stands alone as the big bass lake in the district. That lake is Garnett Cedar Valley Reservoir, which is the only lake I sampled this spring where we saw fish over 20 inches. As a matter of fact, 6 percent of our sample was made up of fish over 20 inches with the largest fish sampled weighing in at a whopping 8.5 pounds. If we include the fish that were 15-20 inches, 30 percent of our sample was made up of fish over 15 inches. Reproduction and recruitment has increased over the last couple of years pushing our catch rate to over 120 fish/hr. Translation, there are more bass to catch and they are growing well. If you are looking for a lake to take a youngster fishing for largemouth bass, you should consider any of the first three lakes in the chart. They all have high densities of largemouth bass, which should result in high catch rates for anglers. These higher density populations do come at a price though, with so many mouths to feed not many fish will get caught that are over 4 pounds.

There is only one lake in my district that offers a smallmouth bass opportunity, and it is Coffey County Lake. The smallmouth have always been prevalent at Coffey



County, but over that last couple of years the population has really increased along with the fishing pressure on them. This population offers a very high percentage of fish over 14 inches and good percentage of fish over 17 inches. The only problem with this population of smallmouth is the overall body condition of the fish. Most fish you will catch will look a little on

the skinny side, and those fish that are 17-20 inches will not weigh out like a 17-20 inches fish caught at a different lake such as Milford. There seems to be too much competition for food and/or overall lack of adequate forage to keep these smallies fat and happy. Nevertheless, this population will offer some excellent catch and release smallmouth bass fishing, as it is always at the top of the list in the fishing forecast.



Bathymetric Maps Available

Our staff at the Emporia Research Office has created bathymetric maps for many small community lakes and state fishing lakes around the state. These maps can be found on our website at the following link <http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing/Where-to-Fish-in-Kansas/Bathymetric-Lake-Maps>. The map on the left is the one they created for Woodson State Fishing Lake. The red dots on the map indicate locations of PVC habitat structures in the lake. These maps will help identify good fishing spots by being able to pinpoint good points and drop-offs that will hold fish. Other lakes

in my district maps are available for include Garnett North Lake, Garnett South Lake, and Lebo City Lake.

Blue Catfish in John Redmond

Blue catfish are starting to show up more and more in John Redmond. This year we used the electrofishing boat to sample them, and we captured 107 blue catfish. The thing is that 105 of them were fish that were 8-12 inches long. The other two, pictured on the right being held by Vickie Cikanek, wildlife biologist, and Carson Cox, fisheries biologist, were the biggest fish we sampled both around 23 pounds.

The last year blue catfish were stocked was 2010. These fish seem to be reproducing well, and given the amount of gizzard shad available within the reservoir these fish should grow well. Right now this population is managed only by a 5 fish/day creel, but consideration will be given to implementing a 35-inch minimum length limit to offer some protection to this up and coming population.

