

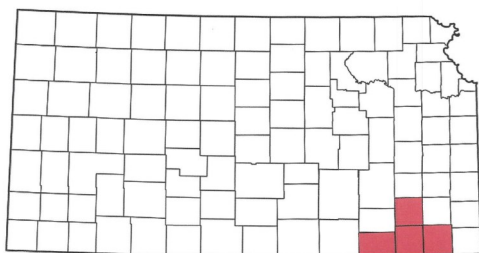
Independence District Fisheries

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New District Fisheries Biologist -Seth Lundgren

Hello, I would like to introduce myself to the area fisherman as the new Independence District Fisheries Biologist. I started my new job duties officially on May 22, 2017 and will be managing Chautauqua, Labette, Montgomery and Wilson Counties. I am excited to work with these lakes as well as meet all the fisherman in the area.

I was born and raised in a small town in northwest Iowa. While growing up I helped out on a small farm and worked construction for my grandfather. After high school I attended a junior college before moving on to South Dakota State University where I received my Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences.



In the summer of 2010 I started graduate school at the University of Nebraska at Kearney where I received my Master's Degree in Biology with an emphasis on fisheries management. While attending graduate school my work focused on stocking and monitoring yellow perch and sampling largemouth bass in small ponds.

While attending college I worked for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources where I worked on large natural lake systems. These natural lakes were focused on walleye and muskellunge management, as well as monitoring crappie, yellow perch, and catfish.





After completing graduate school I was hired on as a full time fisheries technician for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. In the 5 years I worked for Nebraska I was primarily on the Missouri River working with paddlefish and the endangered pallid sturgeon. I also gained knowledge working with flathead and blue catfish.

During my 12 years of working in the fisheries field I have gained many useful skills on many different types of water bodies. I have worked on small ponds, large natural lakes, streams, rivers and large reservoirs. My career has also given me experience with many fish species from endangered pallid sturgeon to large predators like muskellunge. I have given many professional and public presentations



and have published articles in scientific journals.

I hope my experience and knowledge helps me to manage the water bodies in this district and enhance your fishing opportunities. Please do not hesitate to contact me with your questions pertaining to fishing and fisheries management.

Elk City Blue Catfish

The blue catfish in Elk City Reservoir have continued to show up in good numbers in our annual summer sampling efforts. Blue catfish were first stocked into the reservoir in 2014 and were also stocked in 2015 and 2016. Currently there is a 35 inch minimum length limit on blue catfish in Elk City reservoir. This regulation was put into effect to ensure that the fish that were stocked are allowed to establish and remain in the reservoir until they are able to reproduce. We are hoping to see young blue catfish show up in our sampling in the next one to two years. If we achieve a self-sustaining population of blue catfish in Elk City Reservoir, then regulation changes may be made.



Above: This blue catfish was 35 1/2 inches long and weighed 23 pounds. It was captured on Cheney reservoir in August. We hope to see fish of this size in the near future on Elk City Reservoir.

Elk City Blue Catfish Continued

This July our sampling efforts resulted in catching 166 blue catfish in just over an hour-and-a-half of electrofishing time, which is very comparable to 2016. Blue catfish sampled ranged in size from 8 inches up to 24 inches in length. The largest blue catfish sampled in 2016 was 20 inches, indicating that the blue catfish are continuing to grow at above average rates. Our sampling effort also showed that all 3 year classes of stocked blue catfish are present



Above: 24 inch 5 1/2 pound blue catfish caught on Elk City reservoir in July.

and growing in Elk City Reservoir.

Fish Stocking

This past spring a couple of the area lakes were stocked with saugeye. On April 11 Sedan South (New) Lake received 70,000 saugeye fry. Parsons City Lake also received 20,300 saugeye fingerlings on May 31. Many other state fishing lakes and city lakes are on the list to be stocked with channel catfish this fall. I will keep you posted with where and how many are stocked in the next newsletter.

2017 Largemouth Bass Sampling

In May of 2017 we were able to sample for bass in three district lakes using electrofishing. With my start date not being until late May we were unable to fit more lakes in our spring electrofishing sampling, but will be able to get caught up next spring. The three lakes that we did make it to included Montgomery State Fishing Lake, Wilson State Fishing Lake and Big Hill Reservoir. Our catch rates were a little down from the previous years, however I would like to mention that unseasonably warm water temperatures many have led to lower catch rates (especially larger bass).

Montgomery State Fishing Lake

We were able to sample Montgomery State Fishing Lake on May 25. Water temperature was 68°F and the largemouth bass spawn appeared to have been over. However, we were able to collect 197 largemouth bass over a period of almost an hour-and-a-half (139 largemouth bass/hour). This catch rate was the highest of the three lakes sampled this spring. Average length of the fish sampled was 10 inches with the largest fish being 19 inches long and weighing about 3.5 pounds. Overall the bass condition was good, with the larger fish being in the best condition.

Big Hill Reservoir

On May 31-June 1 we sampled Big Hill Reservoir and caught 152 largemouth bass. Water temperature had already reached 74°F and the bass spawn was over. We electrofished for just over two-and-a-half hours, equaling 53 largemouth bass/hour. The average size of largemouth bass sampled was 12.5 inches with the largest measuring 21.5 inches long and weighing almost 5.5 pounds. Overall the largemouth bass condition was good and the larger fish



Above: 21 inch largemouth sampled out of Big Hill Reservoir in late May.

Big Hill Continued

We were also able to sample 18 smallmouth bass in our effort, or about 6 smallmouth bass/hour. Smallmouth bass averaged 10 inches long with the biggest being 16.5 inches and weighing a little more than 2 pounds. The condition of the smallmouth bass was comparable to the largemouth bass.

Wilson State Fishing Lake

On May 26 we sampled Wilson State Fishing Lake. Water temperature was at 69°F and like the other lakes the bass spawn was over. During our sampling we caught 136 largemouth bass over a period of just over an hour, or 126 largemouth bass/hour. On average the fish we caught were 11 inches long with the largest fish being 20 inches but only weighing about 4 pounds. However, overall the bass condition was excellent.

Wilson Lake Continued

We were also able to sample 53 spotted bass (49/hour) during our sampling at Wilson State Fishing Lake. Spotted bass averaged 11.5 inches in length with the largest being 16 inches and weighing almost 2 pounds. Overall spotted bass condition was excellent.

Fishing Report

The fishing in the district this summer has been great if you were willing to try different water bodies and fish for different species. Elk City Reservoir was consistently excellent for channel catfish and blue catfish (remember there is a 35 inch minimum) by simply drifting bait along the flats by the old river channel. The outlet was also a great producer of catfish if you timed the water releases right.

Montgomery and Wilson State Lakes were also great places to be to catch nice largemouth bass and also quality bluegill and redear sunfish. Shore fishing even stayed productive for most of the summer. These lakes also have abundant channel catfishing opportunities that many anglers took advantage of this summer.

Big Hill Reservoir was producing a lot of opportunities this summer to catch crappie from a boat and shore alike. The largemouth bass fishing was also consistently good throughout the reservoir most of the summer, and also many reports of a lot of big flathead catfish being caught in June and July.

Well that's a wrap for the summer 2017 newsletter. I hope to have a lot more information about fall sampling and stocking in the spring edition. I look forward to meeting any and all of you, and if you see me out there don't be afraid to come say hello. Also, please feel free to contact me in my office anytime with questions or comments.