

Stockton District Fisheries Newsletter

2019, Issue 2

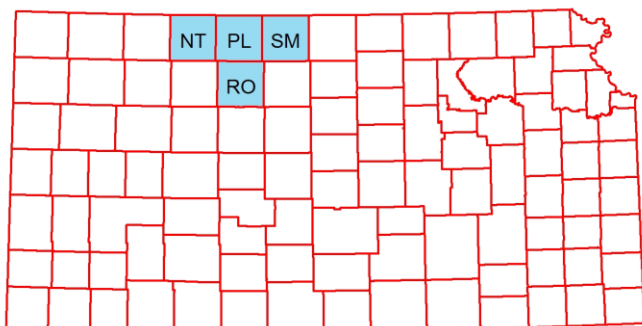
Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism, Fisheries Division

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Welcome to the Stockton Fisheries District

The Stockton District consists of four counties in northwest Kansas. They are Rooks (RO), Phillips (PL), Smith (SM) and Norton (NT). The district includes three Reservoirs; Webster, Kirwin and Keith Sebelius, one state fishing lake; Rooks State fishing lake, three Community Fisheries Assistance Program (CFAP) lakes; Logan City lake, Plainville Township lake and Agra City Lake; and various Fishing Impoundments and Stream Habitats (FISH) properties consisting of 62.5 acres of ponds in Phillips, Smith and Rooks counties and 3.8 miles of stream access on the North and South Fork Solomon rivers.



020 BASS FISHING FORECAST FOR WEBSTER RESERVOIR



BLACK BASS - Good

The black bass population has turned around considerably. This is due to the fact that Webster Reservoir started the year above conservation pool and a lot of terrestrial habitat has been inundated. Also, 82,055 fingerling largemouth bass were stocked into the reservoir to help boost the population. The current largemouth population is dominated by 12 to 15-inch fish accounting for 44.8 percent of the 2019 sample. Bass in the 4 to 7-inch size range accounted for 7.8 percent of the sample, fish in the 8 to 11-inch size range accounted for 37.9 percent of the sample, and fish over 15 inches made up 9.5 percent. By spring 2020, these fish should all be 2 to 4 inches bigger. No smallmouth bass were sampled or observed this year. Spinner, crank and artificial baits should work well along Rock Point and Old Marina coves, along the dam and bluffs, and between Rock Point and the outlet gates.

A 15-inch length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass is in effect at Webster Reservoir.

2020 BASS FISHING FORECAST FOR KIRWIN RESERVOIR

LARGEMOUTH BASS - Good

The Largemouth Bass population at Kirwin is looking very impressive! Kirwin Reservoir started 2019 nearly a foot above full pool, maintaining near-perfect habitat conditions. In addition, 82,294 fingerling largemouths were stocked in the spring, making use of the great conditions and boosting largemouth density. The Kirwin bass population is dominated by 12 to 15-inch fish accounting for 85.3 percent of the 2019 spring sample. Largemouth bass in the 4 to 7-inch size range accounted for 8.8 percent of the sample, and fish in the 15 to 20-inch size range accounted for 5.9 percent. Look for a noticeable jump in numbers within this size class of largemouths at Kirwin over the next two years. Some of the better bass angling locations includes the shoreline area between Crappie Point and Boy Scout Cove, coves near the north and south shore boat ramps, and along the dam and outlet area.

A 15-inch length limit is in effect on the harvest of Largemouth Bass at Kirwin Reservoir.



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2020 BASS FISHING FORECAST FOR SEBELIUS RESERVOIR

BLACK BASS - Good

The Sebelius Largemouth Bass population is dominated by 3 to 8-inch fish accounting for 40.0 percent of the sample. Largemouth bass in the 8 to 12-inch size range accounted for 19.0 percent of the sample, fish in the 12 to 15-inch size range accounted for 29.5 percent and fish over 15 inches made up 11.6 percent. The biggest largemouth sampled weighted in at 4.45 pounds. Nice numbers of spotted bass are also present with 26.7 percent being in the 3 to 7-inch size range, 6.7 percent being in the 8 to 10-inch size range, 13.3 percent being in the 11 to 13-inch size range and 53.3 percent being in the 13 to 17-inch size range.

If you're interested in catching a trophy Spotted Bass in Kansas, Sebelius should be first on your list of destinations! The largest spotted bass sampled weighted in at 2.26 pounds this past spring. However, larger fish have been observed in past years, and are no doubt present.

Spinner and artificial baits should work well when targeting gravelly shorelines and the rock outcrops of Leota Cove, along the dam, Shoen's Cove and near the underwater sandpit at the west end. In late April and through the month of May, Sebelius spots forage heavily on the abundant crayfish residing around the rocky habitat.

A 15-inch length limit is in effect on all black bass at Sebelius Reservoir.



*Sebelius spotted bass

Rainbow Trout Season Starts November 1st

The Webster Stilling Basin, a 6-acre impoundment below the dam, is stocked five times (Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, & Mar) each trout season. Each stocking consists of 2,100 trout averaging approximately ½ pound each with an occasional bigger fish thrown in to make it exciting. Projected stocking dates are usually around the 1st of each month. Look for updates regarding the Webster trout experience for the upcoming season. Reservoir water levels may play a role in this year's season start.

Fishing Information

You can visit the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism website at <http://ksoutdoors.com> for a wealth of fisheries information. When you click on the fisheries tab at the top of the page you can access all kinds of information like where to fish, reports and forecasts, seasons and limits, species and fish records, fishing regulations, aquatic nuisance species, learn about fish and fishing, special fishing programs, certified bait dealers, tournaments, fish consumption advisories, blue-green algae and you can also report violators. If you cannot find the information you are looking for from the website, you can call or stop by any of the area, park or regional offices.



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Young-of-the-Year Shad Sampling Results

Young-of-the-year (YOY) shad sampling was completed this past August at Webster, Kirwin and Keith Sebelius Reservoirs. Baby shad are sampled at 10 random sites throughout the water body and then sampled for 360 seconds of EFT (energized field time). When all is said and done one hour of effort is expended at each impoundment. This sample is performed to determine what size the shad are and how many are available for sportfish to utilize. These YOY fish are the ones that help sustain all the other fish and maintain them through the winter. The goal is typically around 250 fish per site with 50 percent of them being under 70 mm. All three reservoir samples exhibited excellent forage production indices in 2019.



* Young of the year shad sampling.

At Webster, 1,295 age-0 shad were collected per site, with 46 percent of the sample being under the 70 mm threshold for preferred size quality.

Kirwin yielded 1,580 shad per site, with 67 percent being under 70 mm while Keith Sebelius produced 2,010 shad with 90 percent of the sample being under 70 mm in length.

Sportfish welfare should be characterized by excellent overall body condition when end-of-the-year sampling arrives in October.

New CFAP Lake in Agra

A new lake has been signed into the Community Fisheries Assistance Program (CFAP). The City of Agra has enrolled the Agra Lake into the program, and it is now open to fishing. The lake is located on the West edge of Agra. No fees are required to fish the lake or to launch a boat (non-motorized only) for fishing.



A lot of work has been done by the City to renovate the lake and associated buildings, and their efforts have turned out spectacular. The City applied for a CFAP grant to obtain a courtesy dock. The grant was awarded in 2018, and the new dock has been installed and is usable at this time.



The fish population is still young, however, there are some keeper fish in the lake. Fathead minnows, bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish have been stocked with more fish requested for this fall.



KDWPT is delighted to partner with the City of Agra in developing additional fishing waters for the angling public. Even if you are not an angler, you should visit this historic lake for a stroll on the walking trail, or just take a moment for some fresh air and enjoy the hard work that the City has done on this renovation project. It is still a work in progress that will only get better in the future. Enjoy the lake and PLEASE help to keep it CLEAN.



* A satisfied Kirwin angler

The summer is winding down with schools starting back up and football and hunting seasons quickly approaching. However, there is still a lot of good fishing to be had as the water temperatures cool down and sportfish begin feeding up for winter. Don't put the boat and fishing poles away just yet, get out and enjoy the cooler days catching some fish.

Hopefully, this newsletter has given you some information that will make your outings more pleasurable and memorable. So, get out there, take a friend with you and take advantage of the many fishing opportunities available. Good luck, be careful, and enjoy the great outdoors!

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**Get your friends, get your family
... and FISH KANSAS!**

