

# Mound City District Fisheries Report

## FALL of 2016

### Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism: Fisheries Division

**District impoundments include:** Pomona Reservoir; La Cygne Reservoir; Bourbon State Fishing Lake; Richmond City Lake; Pleasanton Old, West and East City Lakes; Parker City Lake; Prescott City Lake; Mound City Lake; Critzer Lake; Blue Mound City Lake; Linn County Strip Pits; Elm Creek Lake; Cedar Creek Lake; Ft Scott City Lake; Rock Creek Lake; Ft Scott Community College – East and West Lakes; Ft Scott Gunn Park – Fern and West Lakes.

**Public Partially Accessible Rivers:** Marais des Cygnes River, Marmaton River, Little Osage River.

*I want to begin this newsletter by thanking all the people who carried some of my project while I was gone.*

At the end of March 2015, while co-caption of the Hillsdale walleye egg-taking project, I slipped and fell, detaching my rotator cuff and tearing many other valuable body parts. Fortunately after surgery 10 months later and another five months of rehab, I was able to return to my duties as a fisheries management biologist.

I want to say thanks to my replacement Sydney Hale and to Ft. Scott Gunn Park manager, Todd Farrel, who continued on with the construction phase of the West Lake Renovation Project. Thanks to wildlife biologist, Justin Harbit, conservation officer, Jim Bussone, and fisheries biologists, Rob Friggeri, Carson Cox, Justin Mrrison, and Lucas Kowaleweski who sampled lakes in my district.

Without great people to work with my district would have fell apart and our customers would suffer.

I know these extra responsibilities made for some very long weeks for you. Thank you.

### FALL 2016 Issue:

- Back to WORK,
- THANKS
- News and Updates
  - Pomona Res. Receives walleye stocking
  - Habitat Cubes
  - La Cygne Reservoir Creel Census
- Three Community Fisheries Assistance Program Projects
- Fishing Forecast
- 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Fishing Derby



## News and Updates

### POMONA RESERVOIR RECEIVES WALLEYE STOCKING.

This spring of 2016, 2 million walleye fry were stocked in Pomona Reservoir. Currently the walleye population is low but this stocking should hopefully boost and improve walleye numbers, thereby providing additional angling opportunities at this impoundment. When we stock fry we are looking at the long-term, as these fish will take years to reach harvestable size. Yearly sampling efforts will provide some insight on this developing population.



### Habitat Cubes

Fisheries districts throughout the state have received PVC aquatic habitat cubes that can be placed to enhance sport fish habitat in public waters. The specific design of these cubes, referred to as Georgia Cubes, are a combination of PVC and corrugated tubing. Observation has shown that not only do sport fish appear to hunt from these cubes, but actually may be living in these cube clusters. The cubes provide habitat for the fish, but as we record the locations of the cubes, they are also meant to create additional angling opportunities for fishermen. Mound City District received 27 Georgia Cubes last spring. Sydney Hale and district wildlife biologist Justin Harbit assembled and placed these cubes at specific sites in La Cygne Reservoir. The cubes were sunk in clusters of five in the coves and off the points around the marina, as well as in the Horse Riding Trail Cove near the fish feeder on the southwest side. GPS coordinates for these clusters can be found on the ksoutdoors.com website. One

of the goals was to keep these cube clusters accessible for bank fishermen. A request has been made for 30 cubes for Bourbon State Fishing Lake, as well.

### CREEL CENSUS AT LA CYGNE RESERVOIR



*Creel clerk Bob Calvert gets ready to conduct a creel census at La Cygne Reservoir.*

In an effort to monitor angler usage, fishing success and fish populations, a creel census is under way for La Cygne Reservoir. This creel census began in March and continues through October. Bob Calvert is our creel clerk, and he has lots of experience as he has conducted similar work at Miami State Fishing Lake and La Cygne. Part of Bob's job is to interview anglers and gather information about their angling preferences, what kind of fish they are there to catch, how far they traveled to get there, and angling success. If the angler has harvested fish, Bob will look at the fish to identify and measure it.

Collecting the most accurate information is important to the outcome of the project. The entire interview only takes a few minutes, but the information gathered helps management biologists understand angler harvest rates, angler distribution and angler preferences. With up-to-date angler-fish-harvest information, lake management can be directed toward meeting the needs of. This fresh information also can help determine regulation and stocking effectiveness.

Bob definitely knows the best fishing bait around and has the latest “hot” fishing information available. So if you see Bob at the La Cygne Reservoir this season, be sure and spend a few minutes with him. And ANGLERS Thanks for your time and help with the La Cygne Creel Census.



#### WORKING TO IMPROVE ANGLING AND ANGLER ACCESS

Always trying to improve fishing access for anglers at community lakes is a big responsibility for fisheries biologists. One of our best tools is the Community Fisheries Assistance Program (CFAP). This program provides funds and the expertise of fisheries biologists to help communities improve and enhance fishing opportunities. Many of our customers/anglers are older or bring their young children and enjoy access to fishing that is less challenging. There were three fantastic projects completed recently. Parker City Lake floating dock, Critzer Lake floating dock and the complete

renovation of The West Lake in Gunn Park at Ft. Scott.

I am highlighting some of these successful projects CFAP projects on community lakes in my district.

Parker City Lake now has a beautiful floating dock to enhance angling opportunities.



*Mound City District Fisheries Biologist Don George at Parker City Lake with newly placed fishing access dock.*

The new fishing dock has a strong floatation system that produces a very solid structure. The sturdy handrails enhance and provide a safe area for fishing at Parker City Lake. In addition, the Parker City Council has also improved shoreline access, the entrance road, bridge and added restrooms to this lake. All of these enhancements were cost-shared with CFAP funds and supervised by the district biologist.

If you're looking for a clean, and fishing-friendly lake to take the family, then try Parker City Lake. It's located 1 mile south of town and ½ mile west, on the north side of the road. Have fun and catch fish.



This is the new dock at Critzer Lake. With this design we should be able to accommodate boaters and angling. Located adjacent to the double lane boat ramp, this will help with loading and unloading of boats while producing a very stable platform for some angling especially for anglers who are physically challenged. To decrease maintenance and construct a permanent walkway, we formed and poured a concrete pad and sidewalk, starting at the edge of the parking lot extending to the base of the floating dock. This concrete and walkway also protects the pier from erosion when the water level at Critzer Reservoir is above normal. The current dock design should easily allow for a 3- to 4-foot water level rise. This entire project was cost-shared with a CFAP grant in cooperation with Linn County, which contributed much of the machine time and labor. The Marais des Cygnes Public Wholesale Water Supply Number 13 also deserves credit for graciously allowing public use on the lake. The lake and land around it are also enrolled in KDWPT's Walk-In Hunting Program, allowing hunting on the project. Use of this lake and land is limited to hunting or fishing.



Here's a picture of Critzer Lake after the fish feeder just went off, and you can see the feed slick on the water. And there's a couple of lucky anglers right in the middle of a catfish feeding frenzy. The channel catfish in this lake are nice with a high percentage of fish over 3 pounds.

## FT. SCOTT GUNN PARK WEST LAKE



*A picture at Gunn Park West Lake, looking south of the floating dock at the three earthen piers.*

This is one of my favorite projects. We were able to perform a genesis project here at this lake. The city park and lake were constructed in the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). And while many of the WPA projects still stand and serve the public today, this lake dam needed some enhancement and did not meet new engineering standards.

After a lot of calculating, measuring, designing, and meeting with the Ft. Scott Staff, we applied for a CFAP grant to renovate this lake. We were fortunate and received the grant funds. Working in a lake bottom has many problems, especially rain, which caused many delays. Starting with the dry old lake, we cleaned out about 70 years of soil deposition. Some of this mud/dirt was used to reslope the lake shoreline and some was used to create five new earthen piers. I designed these piers to be wide and user friendly. By constructing the fishing piers, we were able to double the fishing usable shoreline, and consume tons of soil, saving the cost of hauling it off and we ended up with structures that will last many years.

A new water outlet was constructed to better manage overflow water. A large, wide floating dock with a roof and a concrete sidewalk leading to it was also added to the lake's facilities. The floating dock and closest pier are far enough away so anglers won't be in competition with each other.



*The beautiful covered, floating dock at Gunn Park West Lake. Note the earthen piers and fish feeders in the background.*

Floating fish feeders were added to boost the food supply and placed in areas to attract fish to angler accessible areas. Numerous structures made of plastic, boxes made of wood pallets, were submerged to improve fish habitat. And finally, a single lake boat ramp was constructed to further enhance this project.

In June, at the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission meeting and tour, Secretary, Robin Jennison, in conjunction with Ft. Scott City Manager, Dave Martin, and other dignitaries, cut the ribbon and officially opened this great project to public fishing and use.



*This community building is adjacent to the west lake and is a tribute to the labors of the WPA.*

This lake renovation project also compliments the entire park, adding to the recreational opportunities of a very beautiful park. In the fall this park is absolutely gorgeous.



## **STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!**

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.  
Clean **all** recreational equipment.  
[www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)

### **When you leave a body of water:**

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.

## ***Fishing Forecasts***

Interested in Crappie fishing this fall?

Try **La Cygne Reservoir**, there is an excellent white crappie population here, with an abundance of quality-size and larger fish, including some memorable and trophy crappie.

**Pomona Reservoir** has an abundant crappie population, as well, although not quite as comparable in size as La Cygne, fish are in good condition. Anglers are likely to catch numerous 10-inch and under fish, with a small percentage larger.

**Bourbon State Fishing Lake** black and white crappie population numbers are moderate; however, our sampling data showed that the majority of the crappie are fairly large, and opportunities of 10-inch-plus fish are readily available.

**Bourbon County Cedar Creek Lake** has a great population of white crappie, with many preferred- and memorable-sized crappie, and a small percentage of trophy fish. There is lots of cover to fish around at this lake, so be cautious when boating in these areas.

**Ft. Scott Lake, Pleasanton Old and West, Elm Creek Lake:** All of these lakes provide crappie angling opportunities; however, crappie size on average tends to be smaller.

**Mound City Lake:** Although not at the top of the sampling list, consistently nice crappie are produced from this lake every year, with some very nice crappie as long as 12 inches.

### **Bass Fishing**

There are bass fishing opportunities throughout the district, but **La Cygne Reservoir** is an exceptional largemouth bass fishery. Population abundance is high and size is great. Sampling has shown it's not rare to see 5- to 6-pound bass, as well as fish up to 8 pounds. Fish the flooded weed beds and riprap rock areas.

I like to remind people that **Bourbon State Fishing Lake**, although not abundant with trophy and memorable bass, has a respectable largemouth as

well as *spotted bass* population, which is fairly unique for this area. As a newer lake it may take some time before we see memorable or trophy fish, but keep **Critzler Lake** mind. It has been stocked multiple years with smallmouth bass, most recently in 2015.

### **Catfishing Opportunities**

The good news is the Mound City District has an assortment of catfishing impoundments to choose from, as channel cat are stocked in the majority of the district impoundments yearly. If you are looking for a change of pace, try fishing for blue catfish at **La Cygne**, where there is a decent population, although not overly abundant, sizable fish are taken out of this impoundment yearly. Also, respectable flathead catfish can be found at **Pomona and La Cygne reservoirs**.

### **Walleye**

Walleye have been stocked over the years in multiple impoundments within the district, although not always extremely successful, it is nice to know there are some additional angling opportunities available. **Pomona Reservoir** is at the top of the list, followed by **Bourbon State Fishing Lake** (which was last stocked in 2009, and a request has been made for 2016), **Critzler Lake, Elm Creek Lake, Mound City Lake, and Pleasanton East**.

### **White Bass and Wiper**

**Pomona and LaCygne Reservoir** both provide great white bass and wiper populations. Also **Pleasanton East Lake**, which we will hopefully have new data on after 2016 sampling.



Kayaks are perfect fishing boats for many of the Mound City District waters. Here's what a fisheries biologist loves to see. This angler was having a boatload of fun catching channel catfish beside the fish feeder.

## **Pictures from the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Kids Fishing Derby at The Linn County Fair**

### *Casting for distance*



### *Precision casting at mineral tubs*



Each year for 28 years KDWPT has participated in the Linn county Fair by organizing a kids casting and fishing contest. It's always a fun time.

Thanks for reading the Fall 2016 Mound City Fisheries District Newsletter! Fall sampling season is upon us once again and I am looking forward to participating in this year's sampling. I'll report back to you with the data we collect this fall in the Spring 2017 newsletter! Fish feeders are soon to be turned off and winterized for the off season. Go fishing!

Questions or concerns in your fisheries district?

You can contact

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