

Dodge City District Fisheries

Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Fisheries Division

Spring 2017

Western Kansas Ice Storm 2017

The following excerpt was from USA TODAY January 13, 2017;

“What could be the worst ice storm in 10 years began Friday in the central U.S., as forecasters warned it will unload freezing rain on a 1,000-mile swath from the central Plains to the mid-Atlantic over the weekend. The storm is expected to cause downed trees, extensive power outages and make driving dangerous or impossible as roads turn into sheets of ice.”

Boy, they weren't kidding! Throughout southwest Kansas, you could see fallen tree branches and often, entire trees in nearly every town. Thousands in the area were without power, many of the outages caused by the ice-covered branches breaking off and bringing power lines down with them. While this natural disaster was tough on us for a few days, it did benefit anglers in southwest Kansas.

Many of our recreational fishing waters in Kansas are aging. Over time, topographical features such as creek channels & rock piles get buried by silt and fish habitat in the form of old stumps, trees etc, which were inundated when the reservoirs were impounded, rot and disappear.

For years, fisheries biologists, often with the help of fishing clubs, sportsman's groups and Scouts, have constructed brush piles in lakes to enhance the habitat available to fish. These brush piles attract adult fish and also serve as vital brood-rearing habitat for fry and fingerlings. Typical species that benefit from these structures in southwest Kansas are crappie, bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish.



Employees from KDWPT and the City of Spearville work to clear streets and use the refuse to build fish habitat.

Over the course of several weeks, more than 30 trailer loads of fallen branches were loaded from the city of Spearville and taken to either HorseThief Reservoir or Clark State Fishing Lake.



Game Warden Daniel Haneke, left, and Larry Adams prepare to dump newly constructed brush piles into HorseThief Reservoir.

A large amount of downed tree limbs is still available and plans are to do additional brush pile construction at Meade and Barber state fishing lakes.



Another One Bites The Dust!



Captain Marvin Jensen (white shirt in the photo) retired on December 17, 2016, after 32 years of service to the sportsmen of Kansas. Marvin hired on in May of 1984 as a Game Protector for Ford, Hodgeman and Ness Counties. When he retired, Marvin was in charge of training and hiring for the entire KDWPT law enforcement division. Marvin will be missed in the Dodge City office. If you run into him “floating his boat” on Clark State Fishing Lake or hunting waterfowl, tell him hello and thanks for all that he has done for the natural resources of Kansas!



And Then They Scheduled a Meeting!



The originally proposed title for this photo was “Have you ever wondered what the inside of a clown car looks like”? Actually, Lynn Davignon (center), western Kansas fisheries supervisor, schedules quarterly meeting with those of us charged with managing the fisheries resources of western Kansas. It is during these gatherings we field biologists get information on a myriad of topics. Just a very small sample of topics covered are budgets, new technology, ongoing departmental research, equipment needs, youth education, labor requirements for and scheduling of important statewide projects such as our annual walleye egg taking project. This is also a good opportunity to share any thoughts, concerns or ideas we may have and “run them up the chain” so to speak.



Spring 2017 Water levels in southwest Kansas

Things have been a bit bleak regarding rainfall since the fall of 2016. As of March 13, 2017, water levels in some of our State fishing lakes and larger Community Lakes can be seen below.

The numbers in parentheses are the surface acreage when the lakes are at full and at conservation pool.

State Fishing Lakes	Community Lakes
Barber State Fishing Lake – (51) - Full	Coldwater City Lake – (250) – 1 foot low
Clark State Fishing Lake – (337) - Full	Jetmore City Lake – (110) – 3 feet low
Concannon State Fishing Lake – (50) - 3 foot low	Pratt County Lake – (51) – Full
Ford State Lake – (40) – 2 foot low	Larned City Pond – (2) - Full
Goodman State Lake – (40) acres – 2 feet low	HorseThief Reservoir – (450) – 4.5 feet low
Hain State Fishing Lake – (53) - 2 foot low	
Kiowa State Fishing Lake - 21 acres - full	
Meade State Lake – (80) - Full	

