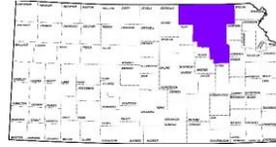


Tuttle Creek Fisheries Newsletter

Summer 2017



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Black Bass Sampling Results

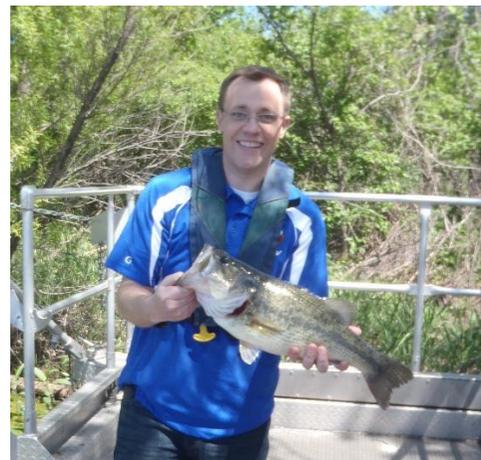
Every spring KDWPT fisheries biologist get to spend some time on the lakes they manage sampling fish populations. This is the time of the year where most of the data for largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass is collected.

Pictured below is the electrofishing boat that I use. It puts electricity into the water that temporarily stuns the fish that are in the electrified field. The fish can then be netted up and moved to a holding tank.

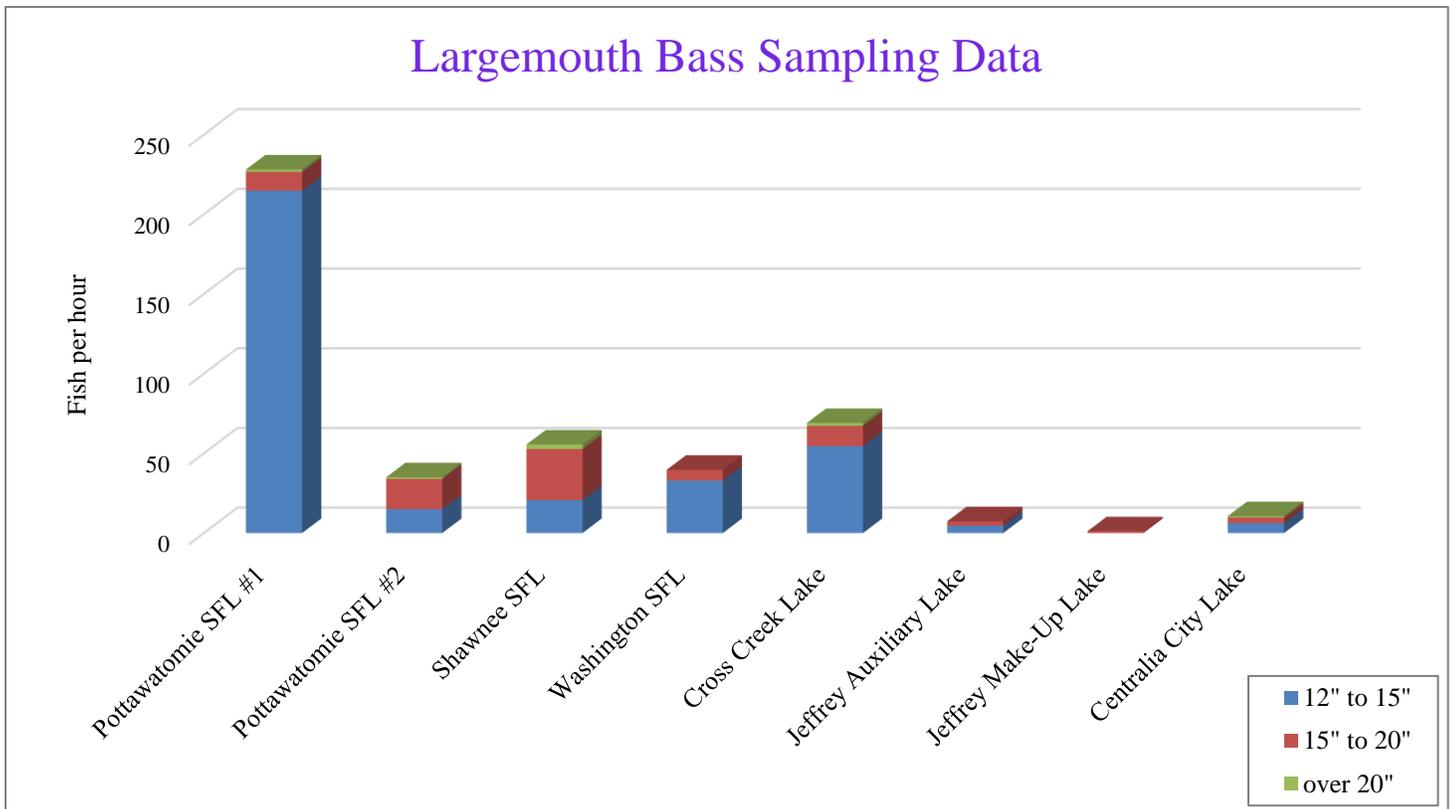


I have been doing this long enough that I sometimes forget how some of the things that I do for a living can be very interesting to people that have not experienced it before. I was reminded of this when I had a couple of guests on the boat this spring at Shawnee State Fishing Lake.

News anchor Chris Fisher and photojournalist Rick Felsburg from WIBW joined the crew to get a front row view of the process. They got a little wetter than I think they were planning on but they seemed pretty amazed at all the fish that came to the surface.



I put Chris to work netting up bass while Rick collected video on the whole process. They then produce a great story on our spring bass sampling. I can't take everyone along on the boat with me to experience electrofishing first hand, but you can watch the process by viewing the video at <http://www.wibw.com/content/news/Fish-go-belly-up-after-shocking-research-422730604.html>



Ok, now that we are past my 15 minutes of fame let's move on to the fish data. The graph above is for largemouth bass for all the lakes sampled in the Manhattan District in 2017. The vertical bars represent how many bass were collected per hour for each length group: blue is 12 to 15 inches, red is 15 to 20 inches and green is fish over 20 inches. Largemouth bass less than 12 inches were not included. The lakes are in no particular order.

It is hard to know how many fish actually live in a lake. This is why fisheries biologist use the number of fish collected per hour of electrofishing to help evaluate and compare abundances of different lakes.

Looking at this graph can help you to visualize how abundant bass are in a particular lake and also what the size structure of the bass looks like. You can also read the next few paragraphs that contain my two cents on the largemouth bass populations in each of the lakes I sampled.

Pottawatomie State Fishing Lake #1 has ridiculous numbers of largemouth bass in it. Last year the lake had the highest number of bass per hour of any lake

in the state that was sampled by KDWPT in 2016. This spring, the number actually went up a fair amount for a new record high for the lake. This should easily put Pott#1 as number one again. The size structure is a little on the small size due to all those mouths to feed. The bulk of the fish we saw were from 12 to 14 inches. The lake is a great place to get a kid started on fishing as it is full of the easy to catch sized largemouth bass.

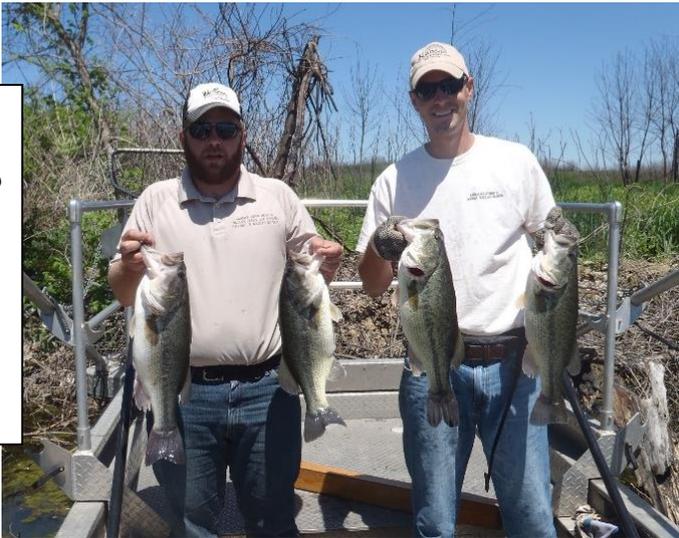
There is an angler creel survey going on at Pottawatomie SFL#1 this year. Catch data and opinions from anglers help fisheries biologist customize the management on a lake towards anglers that actually fish that lake. So if you get approached by a creel clerk that is your opportunity to share your experiences and opinions with us. Thanks for all who take part.

Now don't count out the other lakes on the graph just because they fall short of Pott#1. Many have good largemouth bass populations, but it is hard to visually compare them on the graph to the absurdly high numbers recorded at Pott#1.

Sample numbers at Pottawatomie State Fishing Lake #2 have fallen some the last few years but the lake still has a pretty decent population of largemouth over 15 inches.

Shawnee State Fishing Lake has been the go to lake for bigger bass in the Manhattan District for some time now. The lake has been maintaining good numbers of bass over 18 inches since 2010. This lake should be on your list if you like nice sized bass in a moderate sized body of water.

Shawnee State Fishing Lake



The largemouth bass population at Washington State Fishing Lake is on its way up from some down years. The 2017 sample collected the most bass in a decade. These fish are starting to put on some growth with most of the fish we collected this spring being over 12 inches.

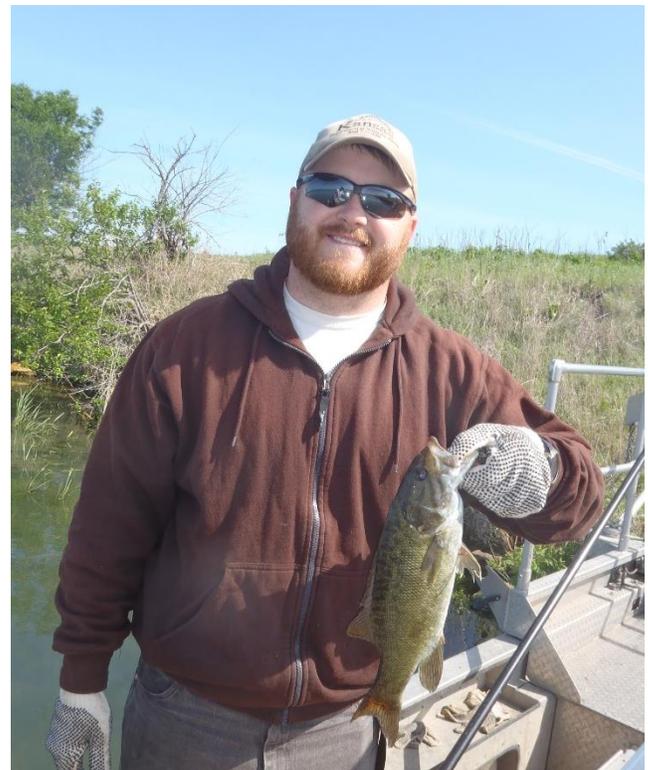
Cross Creek Lake is like a big farm pond and continually provides a good bass fishery. The lake has a 13 to 18 inch slot length limit, which means fish in that range needs to be released, but fish above 18 inches or below 13 inches can be harvested.

The numbers of largemouth at Jeffrey Auxiliary Lake are still low but they have been trending up the last three years so that the lake is now providing a moderate fishery for the species. Largemouth do not do well at Jeffrey Make-Up Lake and have been nearly nonexistent the last five years.

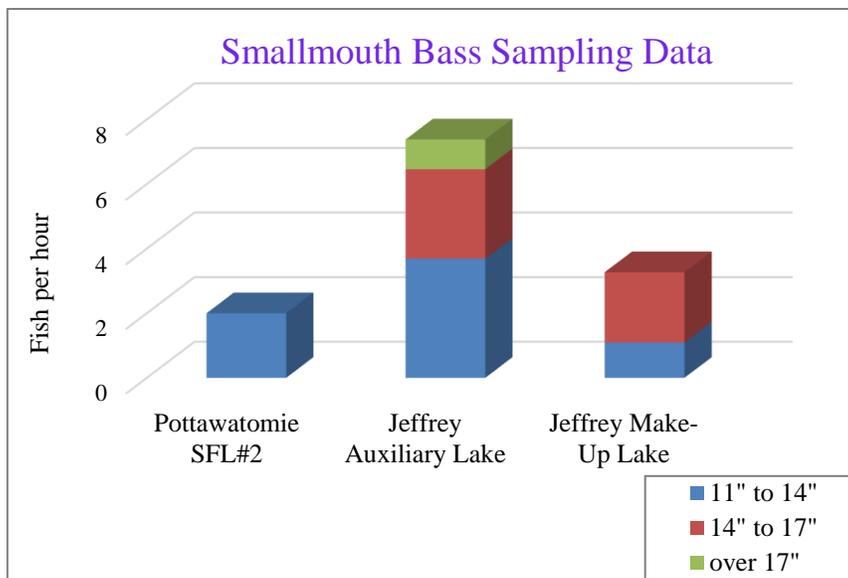
I am hopeful that bass are recovering at Centralia City Lake. Successful spawns have been documented the last two years, which was not the case in the previous ten years. The lake finally has some young fish that will help to improve overall numbers and future spawning potential. We also saw a lot of nice sized crappie up shallow. The lake was a popular place for crappie anglers this spring.

Next up is a graph for smallmouth bass for lakes in the Manhattan District from this spring. The blue bars represent fish from 11 to 14 inches, red is 14 to 17 inches and green is fish over 17 inches.

I was not able to effectively collect smallmouth bass this spring to form a representative sample of their populations. Smallmouth are up shallow for a shorter timeframe than largemouth and if you don't hit it just right then a lot of the smallmouth will be in to deep of water for the electrofishing boat to adequately sample them. So what does this mean? Just that I believe that there are more smallmouth in these lakes than what the 2017 data indicates.



Jeffrey Auxiliary Lake



The two lakes on the Jeffrey Energy Center have been ranked at or near the top of all the smaller lakes in Kansas for smallmouth bass over the last few years. At Auxiliary Lake (the larger, lower lake) these fish can be found about anywhere on the lake but the better areas are along rocky banks. The smallmouth

bass population at Jeffrey Make-Up (the smaller, upper lake) has been improving over the last five years with most of the fish inhabiting the East bank or the dam.

Smallmouth bass at Pottawatomie SFL #2 have never maintained a high density in the lake, but they do offer some additional angling opportunities for local bass anglers. Smallmouth were stocked into Shawnee SFL in 2012 and 2016, yet a successful spawn has not been documented to date.

Pictures of some of the fish we saw this spring can be found on the next two pages. We are out on the lakes for bass sampling but sometime we will pick up other species for a quick photo. All fish were released to be caught again.

Overall, I believe the Manhattan District has some really good and diverse black bass angling opportunities. Good luck!

New Fish Habitat in the Area



I am currently working on sinking some of these habitat cubes into the lakes that I manage. You can find the locations of all the cubes that have been placed at lakes around the state by going to <http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing/Fishing-Reports>

You can download a file to look at them on Google Earth for an aerial map view. Or you can download a list of the GPS locations to enter into your device. They are in Decimal Degrees so you may need to convert them to suit your particular unit. These files will be updated periodically as new locations are added.

Also on this page is a link to the free bathymetric lake maps that we have available. KDWP has been creating these for lakes around the state so make sure to check back occasionally to see if new lakes have been added. Hopefully, these can be valuable tools on your next fishing adventure.

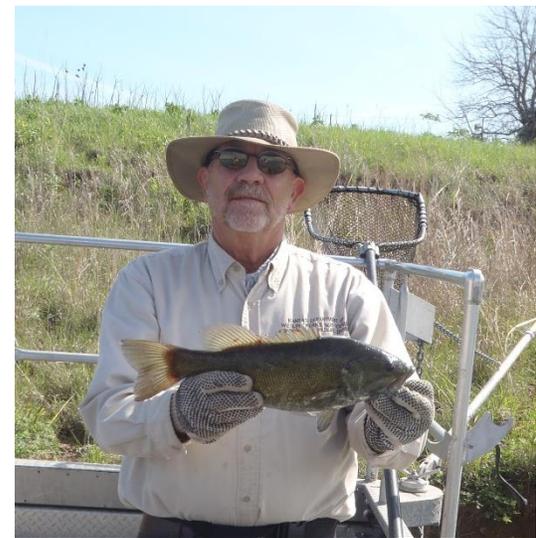




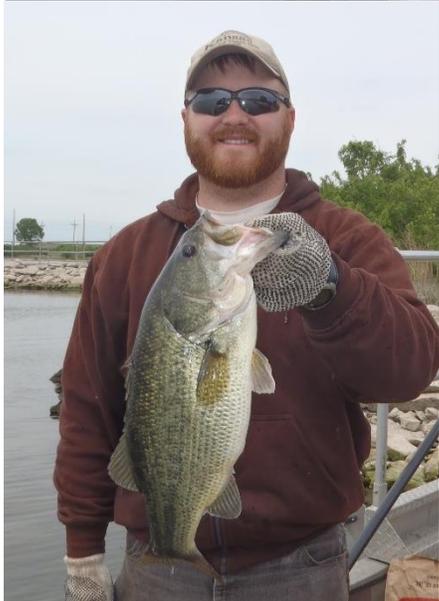
Pottawatomie SFL#1 is absolutely full of bass this size



Good numbers of nice sized largemouth bass and a few smallmouth at Pottawatomie SFL#2. Saw lots of crappie while we were there too.



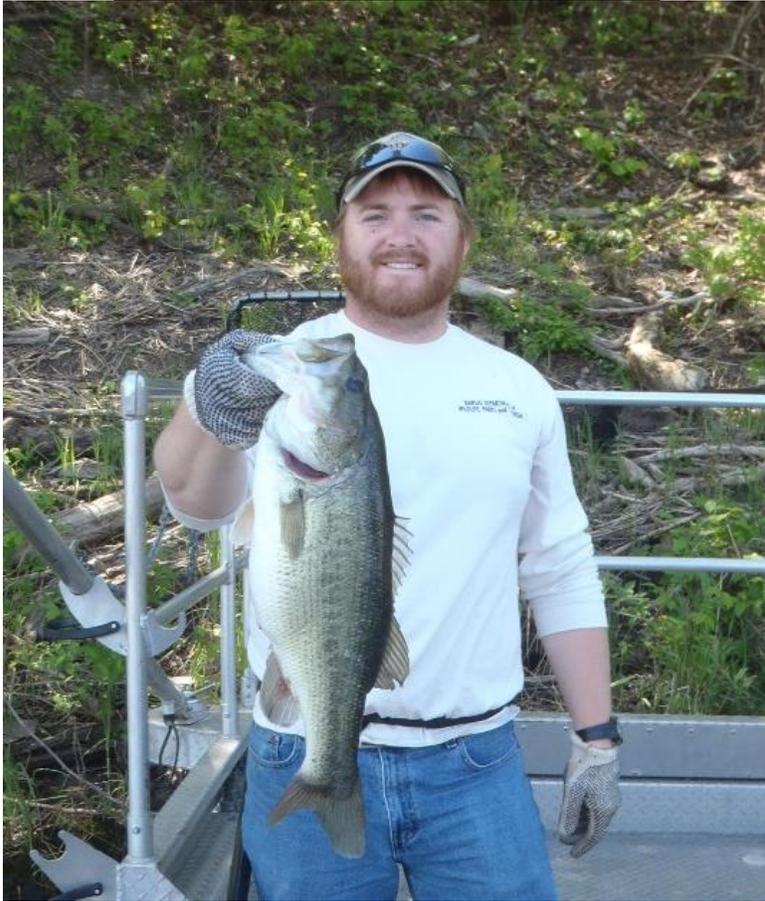
Jeffrey Auxiliary Lake



Jeffrey Make-Up Lake: smallmouth bass, largemouth bass and the big flathead catfish came out of his hole again

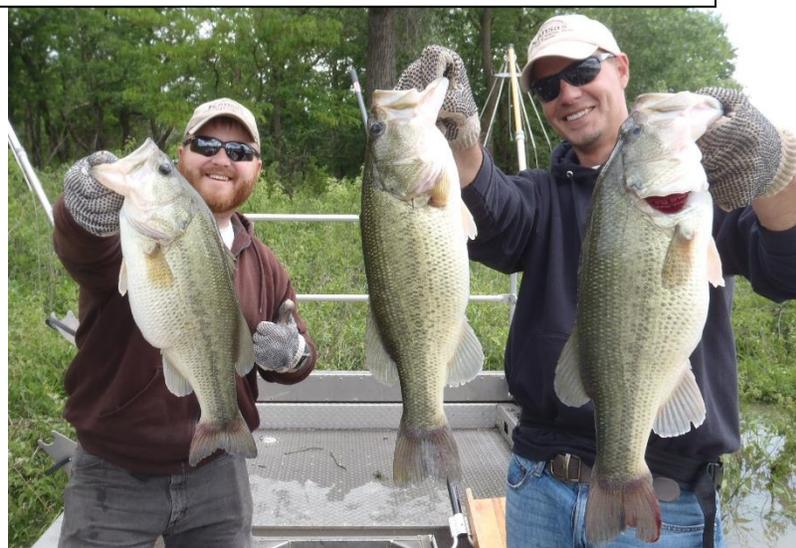


Cross Creek Lake in Pottawatomie Co.



The biggest fish we saw this year was from Centralia City Lake at 7.28 lbs

Holding the fish normal vs holding them bass style at Washington State Fishing Lake



A big Thank You to all the fish holders that helped me this spring: Alex, Ben, Bryon, Danny, Chris and Chuck! And a Thank You to **YOU** for reading this. I hope you enjoy these newsletters. Good luck fishing this year.