

# Kansas City District Fisheries Newsletter

Spring 2018

## Biologist's Notes

It took a while for spring to get here, but when it did, it was a fast transition right into summer. Area fishing opportunities started to heat up and 2018 Kansas City District management activities are well underway. For the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive year, walleye eggs were collected at Hillsdale Reservoir. Although it was a slow start for walleye egg collection as female walleye were difficult to come by, catch improved toward the end of collection efforts. Approximately 17.5 million walleye eggs were collected, fertilized, and shipped to Milford Hatchery. Statewide we were able to meet hatchery walleye egg demand and better than average hatch rates produced an abundance of walleye and saugeye fry to be stocked in waters across the state. The Early-Spawmed Largemouth Bass Project is entering the sixth year of research at Hillsdale Reservoir. We will continue to collect genetic information to evaluate the success of the early-spawmed largemouth bass stockings. The Urban Channel Catfish Stocking Program is also back in full force, with plans to stock 15,315 lbs. of channel catfish sized 12-18 inches (0.75-1.5 lbs.

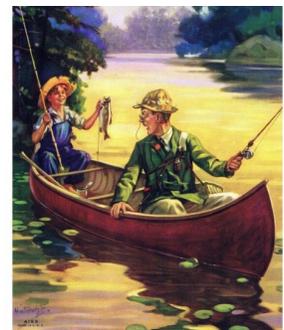
each) across 21 area waterbodies in the KC District between March and September 2018. A number of fish habitat projects will be scheduled for 2018 (please contact me if you or your group is interested in participating in a fish habitat project). As always, there are numerous youth fishing events planned throughout the year in the district. These are just a few of the ongoing projects aimed at improving the angling experience here in the Kansas City District.

This issue of the Kansas City District Fisheries Newsletter contains the Kansas City District's 2018 Fishing Forecast. The forecast can be a valuable tool for planning upcoming fishing trips, a guide to areas in which to focus your effort, or that extra motivation to explore a new waterbody.

"takemefishing"



Another beautiful female walleye caught for egg collection this spring at Hillsdale Reservoir



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# 2018 Kansas City District Fishing Forecast

## Hillsdale Reservoir

The fishing opportunities at Hillsdale Reservoir will be plentiful again in 2018. Crappie are historically the most targeted species at Hillsdale Reservoir and 2018 will be no exception. Hillsdale Reservoir is rated as the top reservoir in the state for crappie density. Catch rate from fall 2017 sampling was 42 fish/net night. The population's size structure has decreased slightly from last year as 49 percent of sampled crappie occurred in the 8-10 inch length range, but there should still be a good number of keeper-sized crappie (greater than 10 inches) available to anglers. Walleye abundance has improved with a greater proportion of keeper-sized walleye (greater than 18 inches) than the previous few years. Fall sampling for channel catfish had a catch rate of 5 fish/net night of channel catfish longer than 16 inches, and Hillsdale is ranked as the fourth best reservoir in the state for channel catfish. Although largemouth bass abundance dropped slightly in 2017, we are currently researching the success of stocking early-spawned largemouth bass. Genetic samples gathered from largemouth bass in 2017 revealed about 50 percent of sampled fish were of hatchery origin. Further, hatchery reared fish were generally longer than wild fish at age 1, which increases chances of survival.



Walleye sampled at Hillsdale Reservoir last fall

## Miami State Fishing Lake

Abundance of panfish (bluegill, redear sunfish, white and black crappie) at Miami SFL really rebounded in 2017. However, the size structures are still skewed toward smaller fish, with the majority of bluegill occurring in the 5- to 6-inch length range and the majority of crappie occurring in the 5- to 8-inch length range. Catch rate from fall 2017 sampling for channel catfish was 10 fish/net night, with the majority of the sampled fish occurring in the 11- to 16-inch length range. Catch rate for largemouth bass in 2017 was steady, and 42 percent of sampled fish occurred in the 15- to 20-inch length range, so there are some nice ones to be caught. Miami SFL does have a dense stand of curly-leaf pondweed, which is an invasive nuisance plant species. The cold spring slowed growth of the stand some, but growth will accelerate as we progress through spring. Warmer water temperature causes senescence in curly-leaf pondweed and the stand will be gone in early June.

# 2018 Kansas City District Fishing Forecast Continued

## Middle Creek State Fishing Lake

While catch rate for channel catfish at Middle Creek SFL dropped slightly from the previous year (6 fish/net night in fall 2017), the population is still balanced and in good shape with both smaller and larger individuals available to anglers. Largemouth bass numbers are less than desired, but slowly improving as early-spawned largemouth bass have been stocked in 2016 and 2017 to help increase abundance. The crappie population (both white and black) is lower than the historical average, with the size structure of the population skewed toward smaller fish in the 5- to 8-inch length range. There are fair opportunities for white bass, wiper, and flathead catfish each with some large individuals to chase.



Middle Creek channel catfish



Lake Olathe wiper

## 2018 Kansas City District CFAP Waterbodies Forecast

	Gardner City Lake	Lake Lenexa	Olathe Cedar Lake	Lake Olathe	Paola City Lake	Louisburg City Lake
Bluegill	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	Good	Fair	<b>Excellent</b>	Fair
Crappie	<b>Good</b>	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair
Channel Catfish	Good	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Fair	Fair	Good
Largemouth Bass	<b>Good</b>	Good	<b>Good</b>	Good	Fair	Fair
Saugeye	Poor	N/A	Poor	Poor	<b>Fair</b>	N/A
White Bass	Poor	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Good</b>	N/A
Wiper	N/A	N/A	N/A	Fair	<b>Good</b>	N/A

**Bold** indicates best bet\*

## Lake Lenexa Receives Honor

Lake Lenexa is named as one of the top 50 waterbodies in the nation of “Mom Approved Places to Fish and Boat.”

Recently, Lake Lenexa was nationally recognized by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation as one of the top 50 waterbodies in the nation, and the top spot in the state of Kansas as “Mom Approved Places to Fish and Boat.” The features of a “Mom Approved Place” include family-friendly amenities, play areas, picnic areas, easy parking, safe water, readily available boat and shore access, as well as a variety of fish species to be caught. It is no wonder Lake Lenexa made this list as both the waterbody and the park that surrounds it are picturesque, with great trails for jogging, hiking, and biking. Other notable attributes include well maintained playgrounds, easy access to the water, and great fishing opportunities.

Waterbodies were nominated by state and federal fish and wildlife agencies. Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation then surveyed

thousands of mothers nationwide to determine the top waterbodies. The nationwide list can be found here, [Top Mom-Approved Places to Fish and Boat](#). The general public is invited to cast their vote now through June 29, 2018 to determine the Top 10 “Mom Approved Waterbodies.” Voters can be entered for a chance to win a family fishing and boating trip to Fort Myers, Fla.

The Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase participation in recreational angling and boating, thereby protecting and restoring the nation's aquatic natural resources. To help recruit, retain and reactivate participants, Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation developed the award-winning Take Me Fishing™ and Vamos A Pescar™ campaigns to

create awareness about boating, fishing and conservation, and educate people about the benefits of participation. To learn more visit [TakeMeFishing.org](#) and [TakeMeFishing.org/es](#).

Congratulations City of Lenexa!



Lake Lenexa offers a variety of amenities that make it a wonderful place to visit

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We're on the web!  
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