

Dodge City District Fisheries

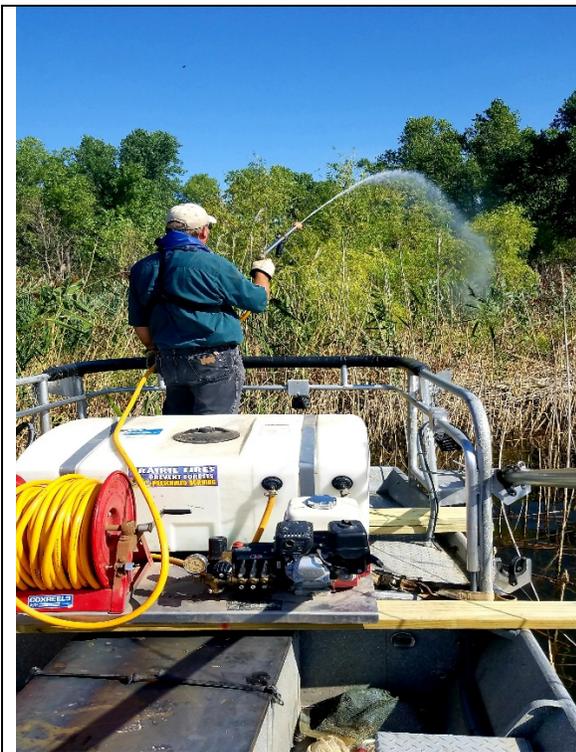
Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Fisheries Division

Fall 2019

Invasive Species at Barber State Fishing Lake

In late August, the fisheries division and the Public Lands division cooperated to address a different type of invasive species that has become quite prevalent in Kansas. The non-native *Phragmites australis*, or common reed, has shown up in many areas of Kansas, one of them being Barber State Fishing Lake. It is usually found in thickets growing in or near shallow water. It can rapidly form dense stands of stems which can reach over 15 feet in height. This in turn will crowd out or shade native vegetation. It is native to Eurasia and Africa. *Phragmites* turns rich habitats into monocultures devoid of the diversity needed to support a thriving ecosystem. Non-native *Phragmites* can alter habitats by changing marsh hydrology; decreasing salinity in brackish wetlands; changing local topography; increasing fire potential; and outcompeting plants, both above and belowground. These habitat changes threaten the fish and wildlife that depend on those areas for survival.

There are herbicides available for *Phragmites* control. New colonies, with smaller root and rhizome systems, are easier to control with herbicides. It seems that late summer or early fall is the best time for treatment. Multiple years of treatment may be necessary to eliminate any surviving rhizomes.



Todd Gatton, Public Lands Manager for Barber State Fishing Lake sprays phragmites at Barber SFL on August 20, 2019.



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Clark State Fishing Lake Habitat Work During Spillway Repairs

As detailed in the Spring newsletter, major repairs are under way at Clark State Fishing Lake. It was decided that this would be a good time to do some habitat work in the lake basin itself. Tanner Dixson, Clark County Conservation officer was able to make contact with a landowner that wished to have a large block wall removed. Several trailer loads of material were hauled to the lake and we used a skid steer to build a rock reef that is approximately 90 feet long, 3 – 4 feet high and 6 feet wide.



Rock pile constructed from a deteriorated block wall in Clark County.

Summer aide Kolby Stein places a Georgia cube into Clark SFL.

In addition to the rock reef, more than 130 Georgia cubes were placed in 7 locations throughout the lake basin. Some folks were concerned that the structures were in very shallow water and some were even on dry ground. When we reminded them that the lake was approximately 11 feet low at that time and that these cubes would be in 7 – 12 feet of water when the lake refills, they felt better! In addition to fish attractor buoys marking these locations, GPS locations will also be made available on the public website <https://ksoutdoors.com/>



Horsethief Happenings

Folks have asked why there are no Gizzard shad in Horsethief Reservoir. Gizzard shad are quite common throughout Kansas and play a huge role as a food source for walleye, striped bass, black bass, white bass and channel catfish. The problem is that while gizzard shad provide an important food source as juveniles, they become inaccessible to many predators after reaching their 12- to 19-inch adult size. Studies have shown adult gizzards directly compete with bluegill and sunfish populations, lowering their numbers and decreasing overall bluegill size.

Another species of shad is the threadfin shad. Throughout the southeast part of the country threadfins are stocked as a supplemental forage species in sport fish waters. Their relatively small adult size and high reproductive capabilities equates to the perfect food for sportfish. For several years we have been trying to obtain threadfin shad to stock in Horsethief and the goal was finally realized in 2019. As there is only one commercial producer in the United States, a road trip was in order! On the 29th of April, fisheries staff headed for Boligee, Alabama to transport threadfins back to Kansas.



Staff from Southeast Pond Management operate a large seine reel to capture threadfin shad from a pond.



Threadfin shad are loaded for the trip back to Kansas.

It is intended that a stocking of threadfin shad early in the spring will allow them to spawn and provide an additional forage source, for young of year largemouth bass and crappie in particular. If successful, the plan is to stock threadfin shad every other year to provide a supplemental forage boost.

The fish were loaded by 11 a.m. on Tuesday April 30 and the trip back to Kansas began. We arrived at Horsethief at 4 a.m. on May 1st. Water temperature in the lake at that time was 56

degrees and in the tank that we hauled them it was 78. After tempering (slowly lowering the water temperature) the fish for 2 hours, they were stocked into Horsethief.



On the left is a female threadfin shad full of eggs before spawning. On May 25th, several of these were sampled in different areas of the lake.



The bottom fish in the middle row is one of the original fish stocked. This sample was July 30 and all the other fish were spawned in Horsethief.

It is anticipated that the age 0 fish that were spawned will themselves spawn at the end of August, resulting in another forage boost for the sportfish before winter. Unfortunately, threadfin shad are not very hardy fish and will most assuredly perish when water temperatures fall below 42 degrees. It is hoped that fall sampling and spring electrofishing will show improved body condition of the sportfish in Horsethief and that the program can continue and possibly expand to other small water bodies throughout Kansas.



Fall 2019 Water levels in southwest Kansas

Water levels in some of our State fishing lakes and larger Community Lakes as of August 25, 2019, 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) – full
Clark State Fishing Lake – (337) – 11 feet low	Jetmore City Lake – (110) – 2 feet low
Concannon State Fishing Lake – (50) – dry	Pratt County Lake – (51) – Full
Ford State Lake – (40) – 1 foot low	Larned City Pond – (2) - Full
Goodman State Lake – (40) acres – full	Horse Thief Reservoir – (450) – 2 feet low
Hain State Fishing Lake – (53) - 1 foot low	
Kiowa State Fishing Lake - 21 acres - full	
Meade State Lake – (80) - 1 foot low	

