

# Pittsburg District Fisheries Newsletter

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

2019

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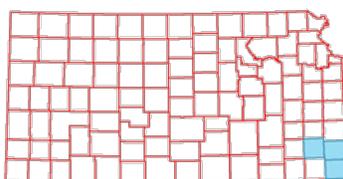
## 2019 Spring & Summer Fish Sampling Results

The Pittsburg District includes Cherokee, Crawford, and Neosho counties. Seven water bodies were sampled in the Pittsburg district in May of 2019 to monitor the black bass populations: Bone Creek, Crawford State Fishing Lake, Mined Land Wildlife Area (5-3, 7-1, 21-1, 35-1), and Neosho State Fishing Lake. Five water bodies were sampled in July and August of 2019 to monitor the channel catfish populations: Bone Creek Lake, Crawford State Fishing Lake, Neosho State Fishing Lake, Mined Land Wildlife Area 5-3, and Mined Land Wildlife Area 26-1. You will find black bass and channel catfish sampling results from the spring and summer of 2019, fish habitat additions, highlights of fishing opportunities, and exciting news for anglers of southeast Kansas.



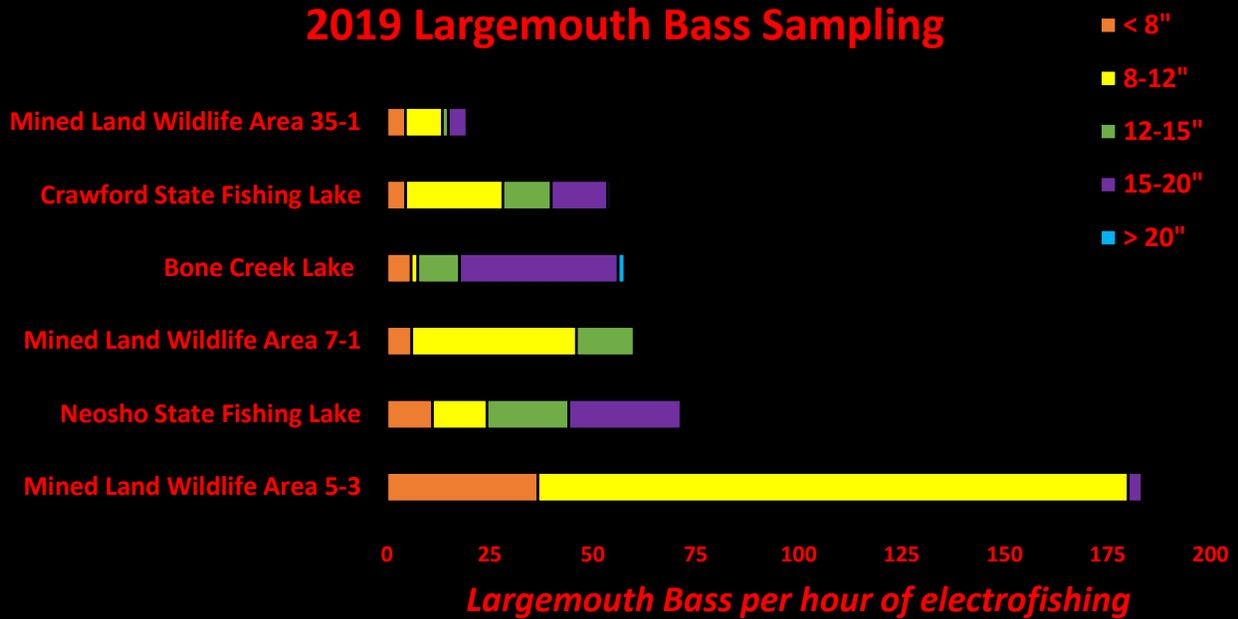
"A bad day at work is better than a bad day of fishing!"

"A bad day of fishing is better than.... Work and fishing are equally as fun!"



# Largemouth Bass

## 2019 Largemouth Bass Sampling



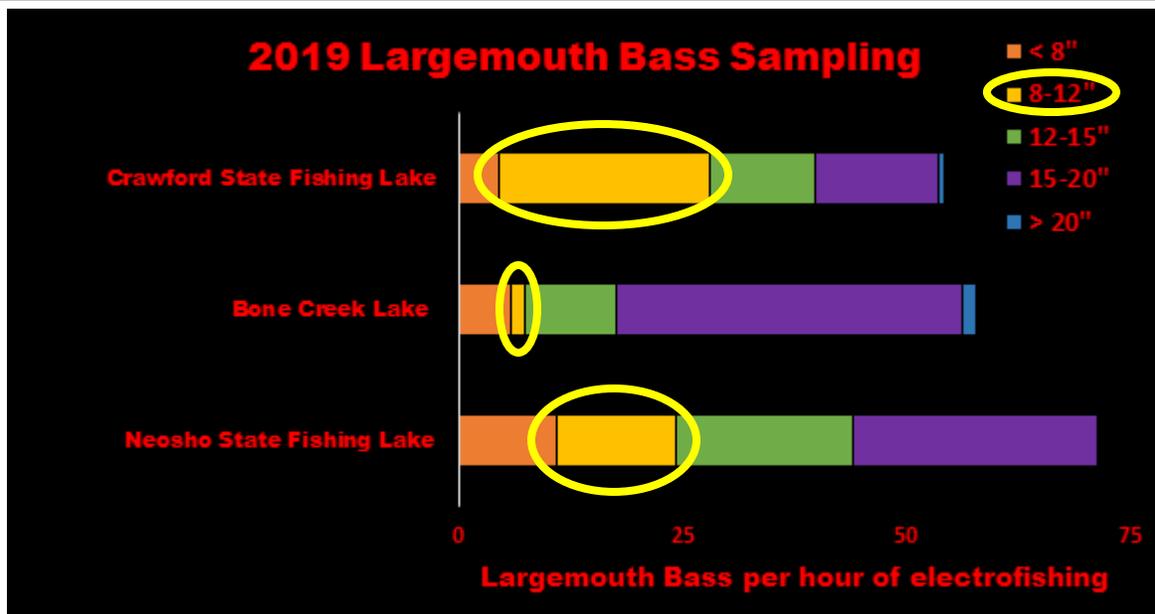
Largemouth Bass were sampled in May of 2019 at Bone Creek Lake, Crawford State Fishing Lake, Mined Land Wildlife Area, and Neosho State Fishing Lake. Anglers can once again expect southeast Kansas to provide high quality bass populations.

Mined Land Wildlife Area Unit #5-3 and Neosho State Fishing Lake have the highest densities of Largemouth Bass in the district. However, Crawford State Fishing Lake and Bone Creek Lake will provide ample fishing opportunity as well. Bone Creek will have the highest chance at a memorable fish with fish up to 21" sampled in 2019. Bone Creek was also stocked with 200,000 largemouth bass fry to bolster the population.

I'll explain what these sampling graphs mean and how to interpret them in the following pages, as well as highlight where to find 35-1, 7-1, and 5-3 strip pits that were sampled.



# Largemouth Bass

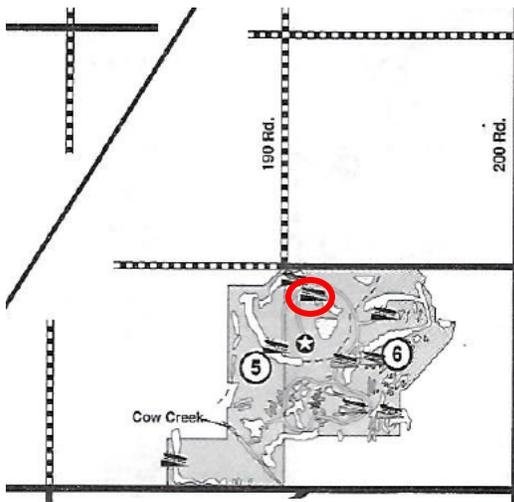


The yellow circles highlight the 8-12 inch size class of largemouth bass that were sampled. As you can see, there are differences between each lake. To interpret this, you'll look at the size of the bar of the color indicated for each size. For this example, Crawford State Fishing Lake has the highest density of 8-12 inch largemouth bass followed by Neosho State Fishing Lake and Bone Creek. You can use this example for all size ranges. If you're wanting to catch a lot of bass or take someone new to fishing, it may be your best bet to find the lake that has the highest number of 8-12 inch fish available as they seem to be the most aggressive fish to bite. Your destination will be Crawford State Fishing Lake. If you're wanting to catch bigger fish, you'll notice that the purple bars at Bone Creek and Neosho State Fishing Lake are the largest and have the highest density of 15-20 inch and above largemouth bass. This will be useful to know for future newsletters as this is how we interpret our populations and their respective sizes of fish available.

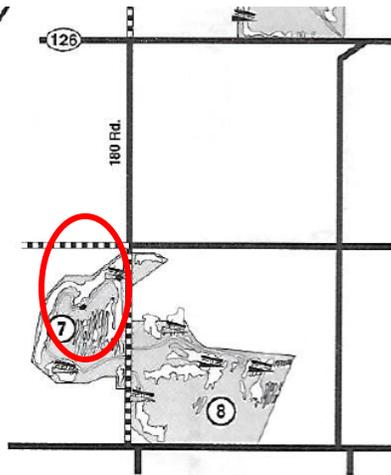


Pictured above are Adam Pistorius, Seasonal Fisheries Aide, and Jim Bussone, KDWPT Game Warden, (left) and myself (right) holding Largemouth Bass from Bone Creek Lake. It's always fun to get other employees from KDWPT to help with sampling. Plenty of smiles are always involved when fish sampling!

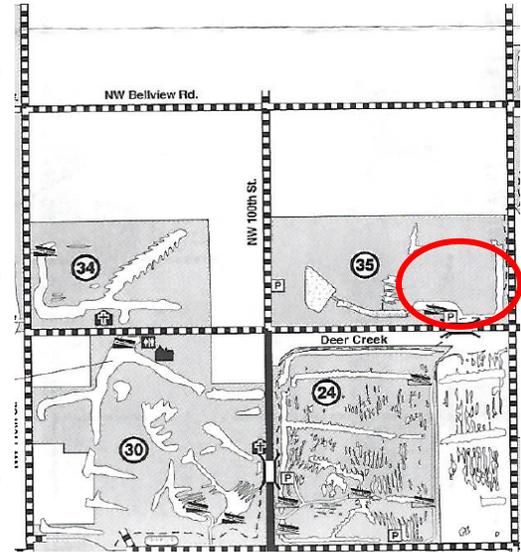
# MLWA Largemouth Bass



**Mined Land Wildlife Area 5-3**

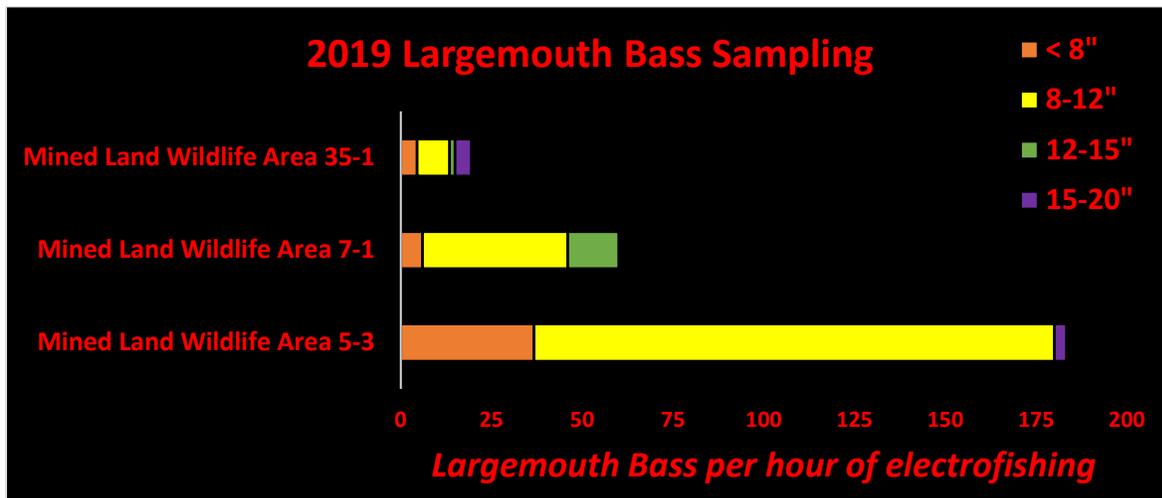


**Mined Land Wildlife Area 7-1**



**Mined Land Wildlife Area 35-1**

If you've been to the Mined Land Wildlife Area, you'll come to find that there are hundreds of strip pits to fish and endless fishing opportunity. The Mined Land Wildlife Area fish populations will be sampled on a rotational basis over time, so I will share results from those sampling events. Each pit has a unique number. You will see above a red circle indicating each pit that was sampled earlier this summer of 2019.

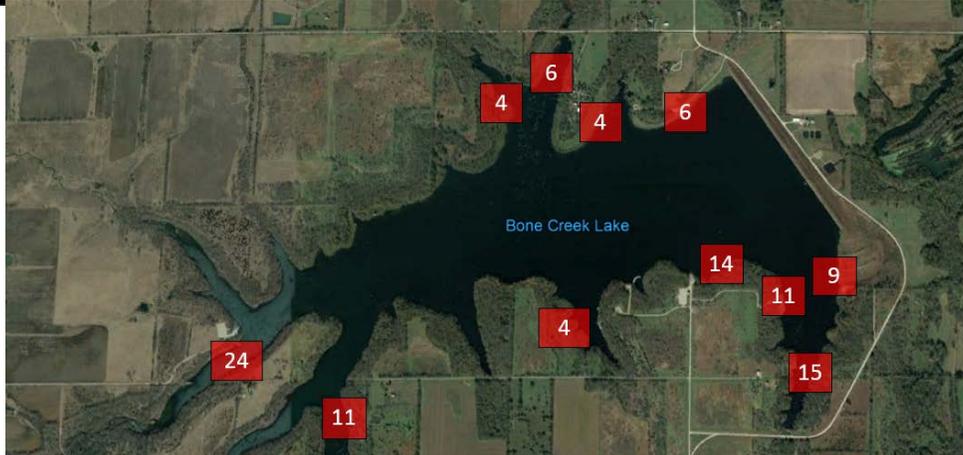


**Mined Land Wildlife Area 5-3:** This is the pit at the front of the office entrance on 560<sup>th</sup> ave with a handicap access area, boat ramp, and fish feeder. A total of 55 largemouth bass were sampled in 0.3 hours of electrofishing, which equates to nearly 185 largemouth bass per hour of electrofishing. The average size was 9 inches. Numerous redear sunfish and bluegill up to 9.5 inches were sampled. This is a fantastic spot with plenty of shoreline access to take the kids fishing for a fish filled afternoon.

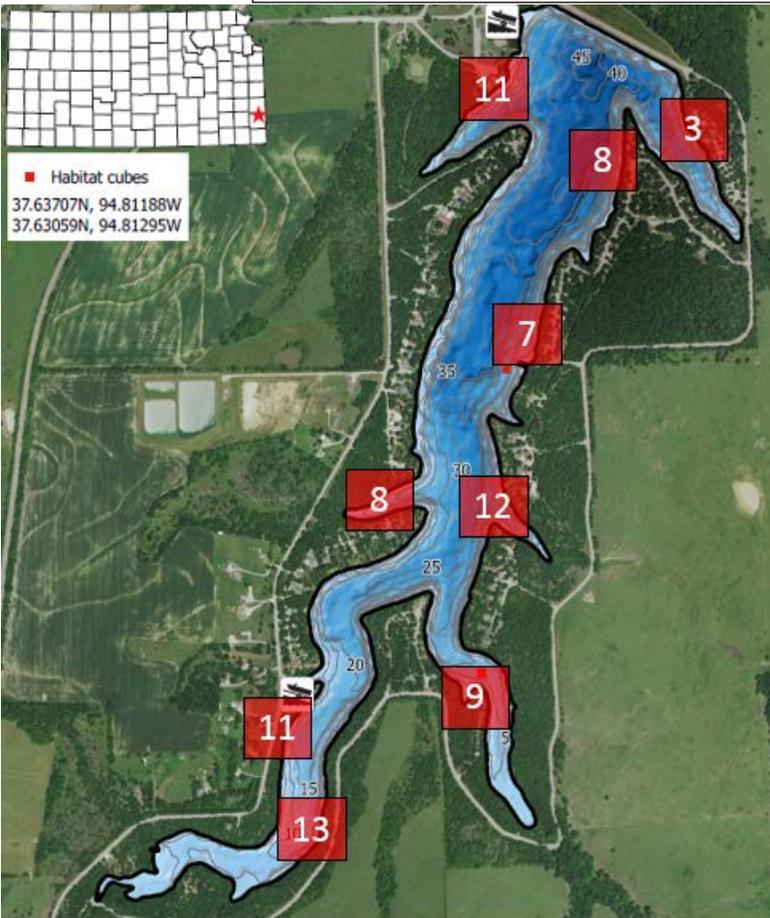
**Mined Land Wildlife Area 7-1:** This is the largest pit on the north side of Unit #7. A total of 31 largemouth bass were sampled in 0.3 hours of electrofishing which equates to nearly 70 largemouth bass per hour of electrofishing. The average size was 8.5 inches. This pit has a high quality panfish population that consists of bluegill, redear sunfish, and warmouth that reach sizes up to 10 inches.

**Mined Land Wildlife Area 35-1:** This is the largest pit on the southwest corner of Unit #35. A total of 12 largemouth bass were sampled in 0.67 hours of electrofishing which equates to nearly 25 largemouth bass per hour of electrofishing. The average size was 12 inches. The largest largemouth collected was 16 inches. Numerous native species, such as bigmouth buffalo, river carpsucker, and spotted gar, were collected as well. White crappie are common in this pit as well with fish sampled up to 14 inches.

# Honey Hole Largemouth Locations!



Pictured above are boxes with numbers showing how many Largemouth Bass were sampled at each location at Bone Creek Lake. They can be found lake wide, but anglers may want to focus their efforts near the south end of the dam and west end in 4-6 ft. of water.

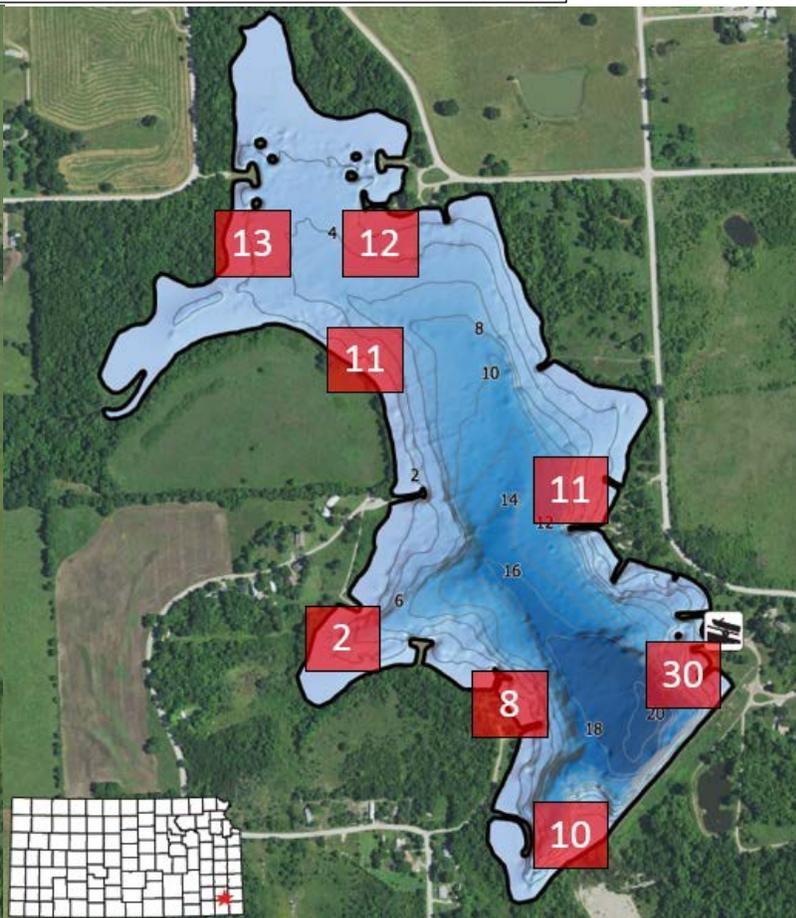


**Crawford State Fishing Lake**  
 37.6433N, 94.8094W  
 Area: 144 acres  
 Volume: 3,101 acre-feet  
 Mean depth: 21.5 feet  
 Maximum depth: 50.7 feet

NOTE: THIS MAP FOR REFERENCE ONLY  
 The requestor must be aware of data conditions and ultimately bear responsibility for the appropriate use of information with respect to possible errors, original map scale, collection methodology, data currency, water level, and other conditions specific to these data.

**Kansas**  
 Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism  
 Data collected May, 2017

Pictured above are boxes with numbers showing how many Largemouth Bass were sampled at each location at Crawford State Fishing Lake. They can be found lake wide, but anglers will find that the southwest cove is productive!



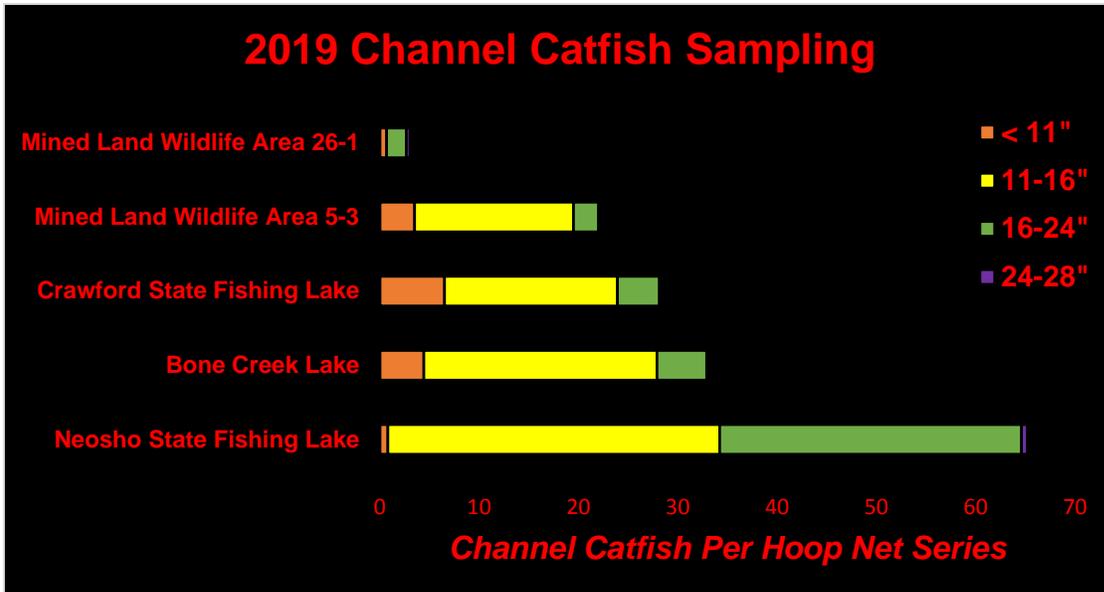
**Neosho State Fishing Lake**  
 37.4213N, 95.1983W  
 Area: 77 acres  
 Volume: 496 acre-feet  
 Mean depth: 6.4 feet  
 Maximum depth: 21.8 feet

NOTE: THIS MAP FOR REFERENCE ONLY  
 The requestor must be aware of data conditions and ultimately bear responsibility for the appropriate use of information with respect to possible errors, original map scale, collection methodology, data currency, water level, and other conditions specific to these data.

**Kansas**  
 Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism  
 Data collected September, 2016

Pictured above are boxes with numbers showing how many Largemouth Bass were sampled at each location at Neosho State Fishing Lake. A good summer tactic would be to fish the lower end, such as the dam, for Largemouth Bass.

# Channel Catfish



Channel Catfish are sampled in the fall across the state by fellow Fisheries Biologists using core panel gill nets. However, another method of sampling for Channel Catfish are tandem baited hoop nets. Three individual hoop nets are tied in tandem with one another. Each net is baited with waste cheese. These nets are set for two days allowing for the fish to congregate near the nets, find their way into the nets, and providing us with an efficient and reliable sample of the proportion of channel cats available to the anglers! These are ran in late July and early August.

The Pittsburg district waters are no exception to the rule that Kansas is a destination for anglers to catch channel catfish!

Neosho State Fishing Lake tops the list of the waters that were sampled with the highest density of channel catfish in the 16-24 inch size range. Fish up to 28 inches were collected with the average size being 17 inches. If you are in the area of Neosho SFL, otherwise known as Lake McKinley, don't hesitate to take the fishing poles, stink bait, and spend an evening fishing for catfish. You won't regret it.

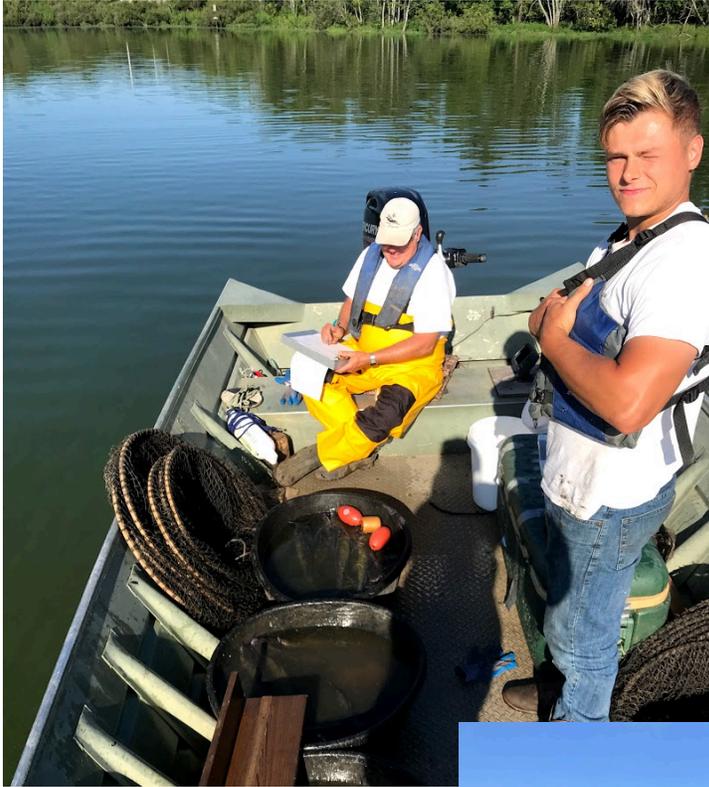
Bone Creek Lake tops the list when we're sampling with gill nets, but comes up to a close second on the density of fish up to 24 inches. Fish up to 25 pounds are often caught by anglers and should not be overlooked when you're looking for a place to fish.

Crawford State Fishing Lake had the highest density of fish less than 11 inches with a high number of fish up to 16 inches. Stocking rates will be altered in the fall of 2019. Anglers report fish up to 28 pounds being caught on the lower end of the lake during a rainfall.

The Mined Land Wildlife Area pits are another area to keep in mind for channel catfish. The pit at the front of the office, Unit #5-3, has a handicap access and a fish feeder. This pit will provide an easy escape over the lunch hour near Pittsburg for a quality fishing experience for channel catfish. Unit #26 is currently undergoing a project and nets were ran to evaluate the current fishery. Channel catfish will be stocked in Unit #26-1 to bolster the population for when Unit #26 is reopened to the public in the spring of 2020.

# Channel Catfish

Below are a few pictures from when we ran hoop nets. Thank you to all of the help from fellow employees for KDWPT, I certainly could not run nets solo, so I appreciate the help!



# Mined Land Wildlife Area

## Brown Trout Regulation Proposal

The 20" minimum length limit and daily creel of 1 Brown Trout per day currently on the Trout Pit is being proposed to be taken off. This will translate to a combined daily creel of 5 with no length limit for Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout. It will be voted on and if it passes, this will be effective on January 1, 2020. This will allow for the anglers to utilize the Brown Trout that are currently in the Trout Pit. However, very few angler reports and no brown trout sampled indicate that this will allow for management to change in upcoming years.

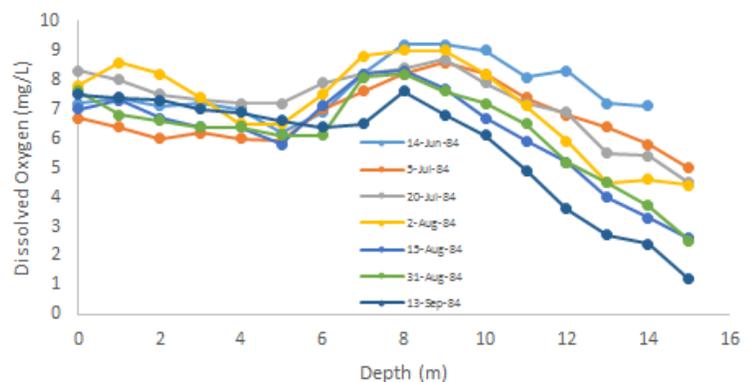


## Trout Pit

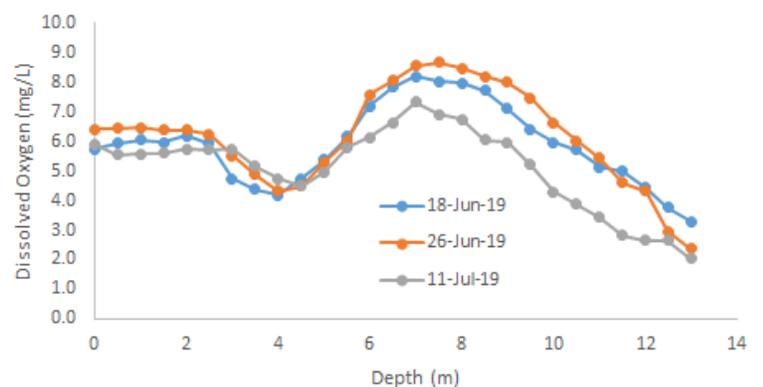
Limnology data collection has commenced on the Trout Pit on Unit #30 on MLWA. Limnology is the study of water and the parameters associated with the quality of the water. The Trout Pit has an underground spring and contains depths up to 63 feet deep! The dissolved oxygen and thermoclines (i.e., where the oxygen stratifies) are unique on this pit. There are actually two thermoclines and enough oxygen in sections of the pit where the water is cool enough to sustain trout. However, there's a lack of forage such as gizzard shad in the pit that may be impacting the ability for the trout to survive to larger sizes. However, the verdict is out and I have not found why trout are not reaching trophy sizes.

To the right, you will find the oxygen profiles for the Trout Pit. It is very unique and has changed slightly from the 1980s. Fish need an oxygen level of 7.0 mg/L to survive and flourish. When the oxygen gets below 5 mg/L, this is lethal. Not only do fish benefit from oxygen levels, but phytoplankton require sunlight and habitat as well to be able to produce the oxygen. Two thermoclines are not common on lakes in Kansas, but this is due to the clear water combined with a metalimnetic algae bloom. This simply means that algae are producing oxygen in mid depths, but not as much on the surface layer of the water.

1984 MLWA Trout Pit DO/Temp Profiles



2019 MLWA Trout Pit DO/Temp Profiles



# Mined Land Wildlife Area



Maps are currently being generated for the strip pits on the Mined Land Wildlife Area! The project is ongoing, but it is with hopes that kmz files (Google Earth files) and pdf versions will be available to anglers through our website in the near future. However, if you would like a map for a specific pit, don't hesitate to contact me and I would be happy to get a map generated for you in a timely manner.

It has been enlightening to me to realize the variation in habitat and the lack of depth in certain pits that were assumed to be 40 feet deep. Lack of depth is a GOOD THING in this scenario! If a pit is 20 feet deep versus 50 feet, this allows for more oxygen in the pit, better fish habitat, and more fish productivity.

However, some pits that have depths up to 50 feet can be productive in the summer time using a drop shot, wacky rig, or Ned rig technique for Largemouth Bass. These maps will assist anglers by providing depth contours and general areas where depth changes that they can key in on when the bite may be tough. In summary, this will allow for a better idea for planning a fishing trip to the Mined Land Wildlife Area to key in on certain pits that may provide better fish habitat.



## One More Cast!

Some of the best bluegill, redear sunfish, and warmouth fishing in Kansas can be had right here in the Pittsburg district.

This year, I have heard many reports of bluegill up to 10 inches being caught on the Mined Land Wildlife Area. I may have even made it out to throw a dry caddisfly, or two.

Grab the kayaks, take someone new that hasn't been fishing, and enjoy fishing in southeast Kansas!



Fall sampling is almost here! That means that water temperatures are cooling down enough to be able to enjoy being on the water at all times of the day. It also means time in a tree stand chasing whitetails is NEAR!

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