

Kansas City District Fisheries Newsletter

Spring 2022

Biologist's Notes

Spring weather in Kansas is always variable, but this year seems even more so. For most of this spring we have had large swings in air temperature which has slowed the warming of water temperatures. Days with high wind speeds have also been frequent this spring challenging outdoor enthusiasts and anglers alike. Nevertheless, many projects and management activities are underway this spring in the Kansas City District.

Walleye egg collection continued this spring at Hillsdale Reservoir. Despite battling some high wind days, walleye egg collection was very successful this year. Size structure of the walleye population again appeared great and we were able to collect over 19 million walleye eggs in 8 days of effort. The eggs are fertilized at the reservoir and shipped to our hatchery system where the eggs are then hatched and the fry are stocked in waters across the state. Collectively, from the statewide percid egg collection effort, more than 75 million walleye, saugeye, and sauger fry were stocked into Kansas waters this spring. Some fry will stay in the hatchery system and be raised to fingerlings (1.25-1.7 inches in length, which will be stocked toward the end of May) and some will be raised to "intermediate" size (8-10 inches when stocked in the fall). For more information on KDWP's intensive walleye culture process check out this link: [Kansas Walleye Initiative](#).

Other Kansas City District activities this spring include: The Urban Channel Catfish Stocking Program, an ongoing Water-Willow Restoration Project at Hillsdale Reservoir (See [Summer 2021](#)), and a Kansas River User Survey. Each are exciting projects to enhance angling in the area. Also contained in this newsletter, is the 2022 KC District Fishing Forecast (page 2 and 3). Let the forecast be a guide to your next fishing adventure. Whatever your species of choice is, many opportunities exist.



KDWP Biologist Carson Cox Holding a Nice Female Walleye During Egg Collection This Spring



Inside this issue:

Biologist's Notes	1
2022 KC District Fishing Forecast	2-3
The Great Kansas Fishing Derby 2.0	4

2022 Kansas City District Fishing Forecast

Hillsdale Reservoir

Crappie abundance continues to be good at Hillsdale Reservoir and anglers have been reporting a lot of success. During fall sampling, catch rate increased from the previous year and was 30 fish/net night, with 31% of sampled fish exceeding 10 inches, which is the minimum length for harvest at Hillsdale Reservoir. There is an even bigger number of crappie at 9 to 9.5 inches about ready to be harvestable, so I expect crappie fishing to be really good over the next year. Catch rate of walleye during fall sampling continued to be moderate, however size structure of the population observed last fall and during egg collection this spring was exceptional. Fifty-eight percent of walleye collected last fall from all gears exceeded 18 inches and 11% exceeded 25 inches! Based on catch rate from fall sampling, Hillsdale Reservoir is ranked third highest in the state for channel catfish. Most of the channel catfish population occurs in the 16- to 24-inch length range.



KDWP's Michael Parr With a Nice Hillsdale Walleye

Miami State Fishing Lake

Catch rate for crappie (species combined, white and black) from fall sampling in 2021 declined and was 18 fish/net night and the size structure of the population is skewed towards smaller individuals. Catch rate from fall 2021 sampling for channel catfish was high at 12 fish/net night, with the majority of the sampled fish occurring in the 16-24 inch length range. Good channel catfish angling opportunities are expected for 2022. Catch rate for largemouth bass in spring 2021 was 36 fish/hour of electrofishing. Size structure of the largemouth bass population indicated a balanced population with both smaller and larger individuals and a good number of largemouth bass in the 15-20 inch length range. Miami State Fishing Lake has a dense stand of curly-leaf pondweed, which is an invasive nuisance plant species. Curly-leaf pondweed grows most during the cooler months with peak density occurring in May. Warmer water temperature causes senescence in curly-leaf pondweed and the stand will be gone in early June. In the past we have combated the curly-leaf pondweed with chemical treatment which is expensive and has limited returns. I have begun experimenting with stocking a high density of triploid grass carp to aid in control of the vegetation.



A 75 Pound Paddlefish Sampled at Miami SFL Last Fall

2022 Kansas City District Fishing Forecast

Middle Creek State Fishing Lake

Catch rate for channel catfish at Middle Creek State Fishing Lake increased and was 7 fish/net night in fall 2021 and most of the sampled channel catfish were in the 16-24 inch length range . Largemouth bass numbers are less than desired, but size structure metrics show an adequate number of largemouth bass in the 15-20 inch length range. Catch rate of crappie (both species combined, white and black) increased and was 26 fish/net night in 2021. Fair crappie angling opportunities should be expected at Middle Creek SFL in 2022. Catch rate of saugeye was 1 fish/net night during fall sampling in 2021. A wide variety of sizes of saugeye can be caught at Middle Creek SFL, but 67% of sampled saugeye exceeded 18 inches in length. There will also be moderate opportunities to chase white bass, wiper, and flathead catfish at Middle Creek State Fishing Lake in 2022.

2022 Kansas City District CFAP Waterbodies Forecast

	Gardner City Lake	Lake Lenexa	Olathe Cedar Lake	Lake Olathe	Paola City Lake	Spring Hill City Lake
Bluegill	Good	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair
Crappie	Fair	Poor	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good
Channel Catfish	Good	Fair	Good	Fair	Good	Fair
Largemouth Bass	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Fair
Saugeye	Poor	N/A	Poor	Good	Good	N/A
White Bass	Fair	N/A	N/A	Poor	Fair	N/A
Wiper	N/A	N/A	N/A	Poor	Poor	N/A

Bold indicates best bet*



Still a Few Nice Wiper in Middle Creek SFL

The Great Kansas Fishing Derby 2.0



Cast a line and hook a PRIZE! For the second consecutive year Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks will be conducting the statewide Great Kansas Fishing Derby. The 2022 Great Kansas Fishing Derby will run from May 15 to September 15. Catch a tagged fish and redeem it for a prize. For more information and a full list of participating locations visit www.ksfishderby.com. A complete list of participating waterbodies will be announced on May 14th. Participating waterbodies near the Kansas City area are: Lake Lenexa, Lake Olathe, Paola City Lake, and Leavenworth State Fishing Lake.

We're on the web!

www.ksoutdoors.com



KDWP
Fisheries Biologist
Luke Kowalewski
8304 Hedge Lane Terrace
Shawnee, KS 66227
Phone: 913-422-1314