

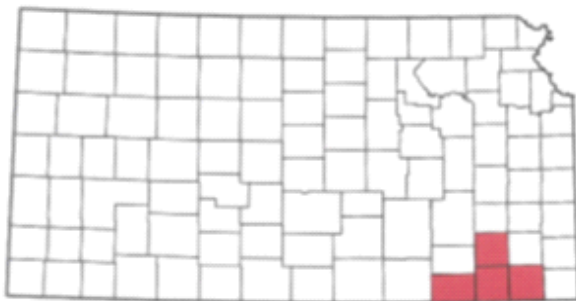
Independence District Fisheries

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Area Happenings

This past fall and winter were full of challenges in the Independence Fisheries District, but fish sampling, stocking and even tagging were completed.

This past fall we were able to sample fish populations via gill nets and trap nets in 2 Federal Reservoirs, 2 State Fishing Lakes and 3 CFAP Lakes. We also completed our intermediate Channel Catfish stockings during October, where over 10,000 were stocked in the Independence Fisheries District alone. These fish were raised at the Farlington Fish Hatchery and the Woodson State Fishing Lake rearing pond.



Fish Stocking

During the month of October, fish hatchery crews and fisheries biologists alike are busy seining and hauling one-year-old Channel Catfish throughout the State of Kansas. These fish are stocked into many waterbodies around the state that don't have good natural reproduction. These waterbodies are chosen by fisheries biologists based upon sampling data from the previous year, and stocking requests are made to the hatchery systems.



Above: Logan Martin with a 13-pound Channel Catfish from Parsons City Lake.

Fish Stocking Continued...

Fish Stocking Locations and Numbers

Lake	Species	Number
Montgomery SFL	Channel Catfish	3,679
Wilson SFL	Channel Catfish	2,757
Elk City Kids Pond	Channel Catfish	100
Tanko	Channel Catfish	632
Tanko	Rainbow Trout	522
LeClere	Channel Catfish	251
LeClere	Rainbow Trout	781
Parsons Prairie West	Channel Catfish	107
Big Hill Wildlife Area - North	Channel Catfish	313
Altamont - East	Channel Catfish	585
Altamont - West	Channel Catfish	301
Neodesha City Lake	Channel Catfish	102
Elk City Wildlife Area	Channel Catfish	359
Buffalo Ranch Pond	Channel Catfish	251
Bartlett City Lake	Channel Catfish	402
Edna City Lake	Channel Catfish	390
Independence CC Pond	Channel Catfish	75
Nazarene Church Pond	Channel Catfish	102

In 2020 the State Fish Hatcheries were able to produce more Channel Catfish than were requested, which allowed us to stock five additional waterbodies. Without these excess Channel Catfish, the five extra waterbodies that were stocked would have had to wait until October 2021 for these stockings. We were also able to continue stocking Lake Tanko in Cherryvale and LeClere Lake in Coffeyville with Rainbow Trout.



Above: Me with a Flathead from Montgomery State Fishing Lake.

Left: Stocking Channel Catfish into the Kids Pond at Elk City State Park.

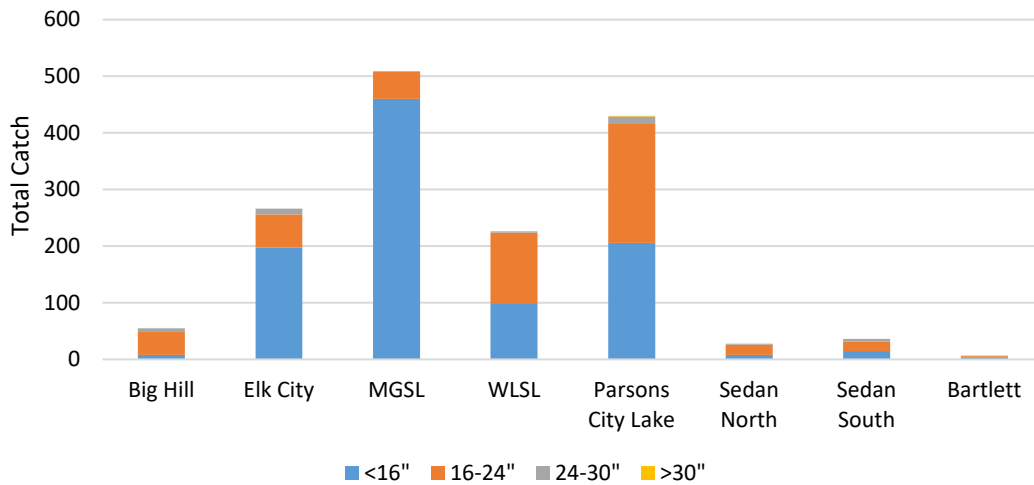
Below: Danci with a 20-inch Saugeye from Parsons City Lake.



Fishing Forecast

Channel Catfish

2020 Fall Sampling



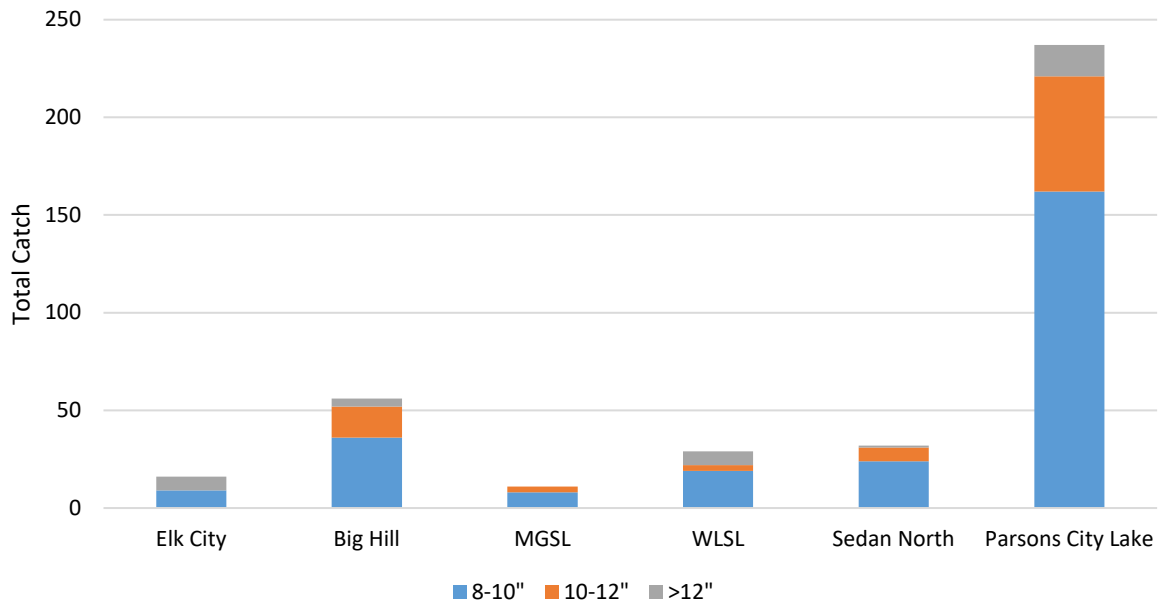
Channel Catfish sampling data shows there are many places to go to find quality Channel Catfishing. In the graph above you can see where the most fish were sampled and of what sizes. However, keep in mind that extra effort was put into sampling Elk City Reservoir, Montgomery State Fishing Lake (MGSL), Wilson State Fishing Lake (WLSL) and Parsons City Lake this summer via baited hoop nets. I would not hesitate to tell you to fish for Channel Catfish on the other four waterbodies sampled this year, as they have quality Channel Catfish fisheries as well. If you are looking for places to catch Channel Catfish from the shore I would recommend MGSL, WLSL and Parsons City Lake, as they all have great shore access points and good numbers of fish to catch. If you are looking for bigger Channel Catfish I would recommend Big Hill Reservoir, Parsons City Lake and both Sedan City Lakes.

Crappie

Crappie sampling was also conducted this fall via ½ inch frame nets ran from the bank. Sampling indicated that large numbers of crappie could be found at Parsons City Lake and Big Hill Reservoir. We also found decent numbers of crappie at MGSL, WLSL and Sedan City Lake – North. Also, do not be deterred by the graph of Elk City Reservoir as a cold front hit as we were sampling, causing the crappie to disappear. If you are looking for larger size crappie, Big Hill Reservoir has seen an improvement in size structure lately, and as always there are bigger fish in Elk City Reservoir.

Fishing Forecast Continued...

2020 Fall Crappie Sampling



Above: Grant holding a 16-inch White Crappie from Elk City Reservoir.

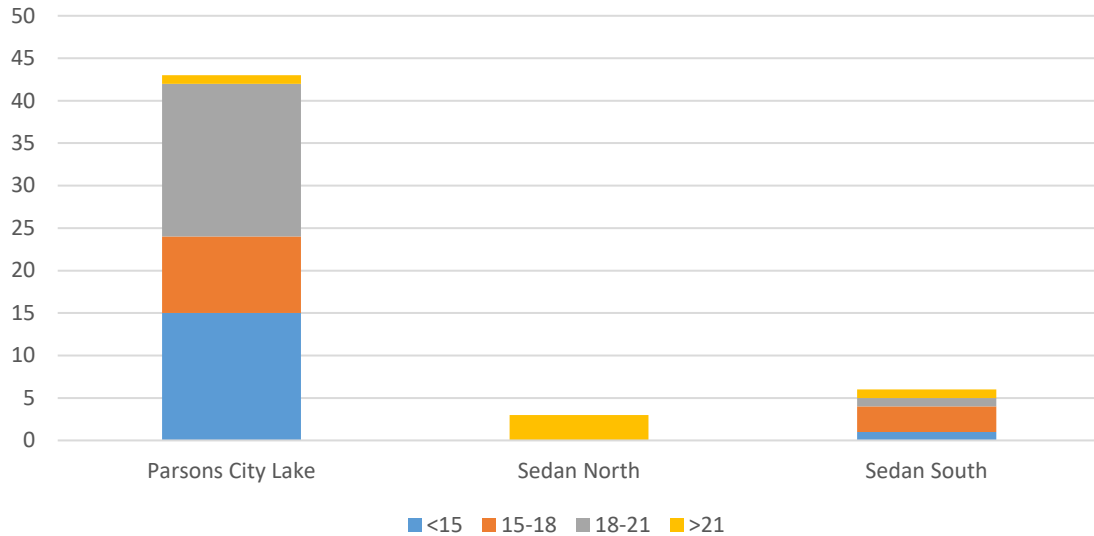


Above: Elaine with a 14-inch White Crappie from Parsons City Lake.

Fishing Forecast Continued...

Saugeye

2020 Fall Sampling



If you like the white flakey fillets of Walleye, look to these three lakes that have been stocked with Saugeye for years. Saugeye are simply a hybrid cross of Walleye and Sauger and are found and fished for the same way you would fish for Walleye (they taste the same too). Both Sedan City Lakes are stocked annually with Saugeye fry and can offer fishing opportunities for some quality fish. If you are looking to find numbers, Parsons City Lake has a large population of Saugeye that are above the 18-inch minimum length limit.



Above: Chase and Grant with three Saugeye from Parsons City Lake.

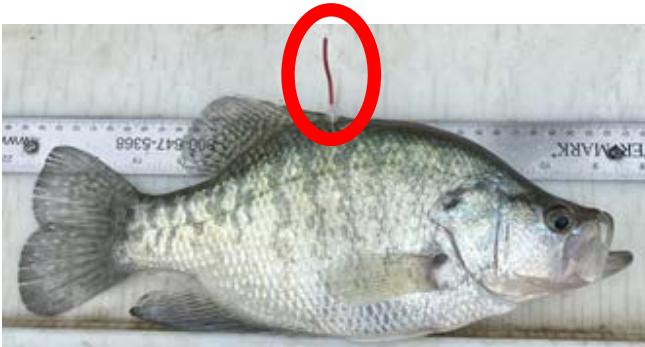


Above: Scout with a 24-inch Saugeye from Parsons City Lake.

Crappie Tagging Project

As some of you may have heard, seen the signs or even been lucky enough to catch one already, KDWPT has teamed up with Missouri State University to assess crappie harvest. Danci Johnston is a graduate student at MSU that is working on tagging 1,000 crappie in Elk City Reservoir, Big Hill Reservoir and Parsons City Lake.

So far she has tagged 1,000 crappie in Big Hill Reservoir and Parsons City Lake and has a few tags out at Elk City Reservoir. We hope to capture and finish the tagging in Elk City Reservoir before crappie spawn this spring. This study will give KDWPT valuable information pertaining to angler harvest, preferred size, crappie movement, growth, and vulnerability to being caught. **Reporting a tagged fish will in no way reduce crappie limits at any of these reservoirs.**



Above: Tagged White Crappie that was released into Elk City Reservoir in October.



Above: Example of prizes being drawn for reporting tagged crappie.

If you are lucky enough to catch one or multiple of these tagged crappie at one of these locations, please call the phone number on the tag and report the capture, where it was caught, tag number, if it was harvested or released and the length of the fish. Upon reporting your first tagged fish you will receive a small prize and also be entered into a drawing for a hard sided cooler (estimated value ~\$300). Each additionally tagged fish that you accurately report will give you more chances into the drawing for the coolers. We are going to give away one cooler per lake in the study, so each tag reported at any of the lakes could be a winning phone call.

Below: Up close example of a floy tags that are being used.





Above: Chase holding a 34-inch Blue Catfish from Elk City Reservoir



Above: A stringer of Bluegill from Big Hill Reservoir.

Right: Ali with a 20-inch Saugeye from Parsons City Lake.



Final Thoughts

I hope that this newsletter finds everyone healthy and ready to hit the water this spring. If 2020 has taught me anything it is that the great outdoors is always there and available to be enjoyed no matter the circumstances. This crazy year has also taught me that sometimes all you need is a lake, a fishing pole and a good friend by your side to make the most of a pandemic.

I also hope that 2021 is a year of normalcy and making more memories with friends and family at the lake. As always feel free to contact me at the information provided with any questions or concerns you may have or visit our website at: <http://ksoutdoors.com/>

Happy Fishing!



Above: Ed Miller fishing Big Hill Reservoir.