

Stockton District Fisheries Newsletter

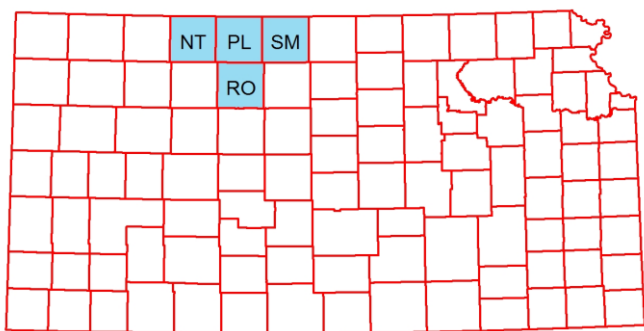
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Welcome to the Stockton Fisheries District

The Stockton District consists of four counties in northwest Kansas. They are Rooks (RO), Phillips (PL), Smith (SM) and Norton (NT). The district consists of three main Reservoirs; Webster, Kirwin and Keith Sebelius, one state fishing lake; Rooks State fishing lake, two Community Fisheries Assistance Program (CFAP) lakes; Logan City lake and Plainville Township lake; and various Fishing Impoundments and Stream Habitats (FISH) properties which consist of 97.5 acres of ponds in Phillips, Smith and Rooks counties and 5.80 miles of stream access on the North and South Fork Solomon rivers.



2013 FISHING FORECAST WEBSTER RESERVOIR

WEBSTER RESERVOIR - As of April 24, 2013, the reservoir elevation was 12.74 feet below conservation pool. The Morel Boat ramp is currently high and dry and not usable at this time. However, all the other ramps are usable.

BLACK BASS - Good. The largemouth bass population is dominated by 15 to 20 inch fish accounting for 49 percent of the sample. Largemouth bass in the 3 to 5 inch size range accounted for 9 percent of the sample, fish in the 8 to 11 inch size range accounted for 2 percent and fish 11 to 15 inches accounted for 40 percent. The biggest largemouth bass sampled this past year weighed 3.68 pounds. A remnant population of smallmouth bass also exists at Webster. An 11 inch smallmouth was collected during the spring bass sample and a couple others were observed. Spinner, crank and artificial bait's should work well in Rock Point and Old Marina coves, along the dam and bluff's, the coves between Rock Point and the outlet gates. **A 15 inch length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass is in effect.**

CATFISH - Good. Channel catfish fishing should be good this year. Channel catfish are scattered over a wide size range with the majority of fish being in the 16 to 24 inch size range. Young of the year fish in the 8 to 10 inch size range accounted for 7 percent of the fall sample. Fish in the 11 to 16 inch size range accounted for 40 percent, quality fish in the 16 to 24 inch size range (3 to 5 pounds) accounted for 53 percent. The biggest channel catfish sampled weighed 4.86 pounds. Flatheads are also present in a wide range of sizes with 5 to 20 pound fish being in the population. These catfish should congregate around the dam, north & south shore breakwaters and along the bluffs. Also, if any water is coming in from the South Fork Solomon River these fish should be up to the

West end by Bow City and Methodist Camp. They can be caught on rod and reel, setlines or trotlines using traditional bait's like shad and shad gizzards, shrimp, stink and dip bait's and night crawlers.

BLACK CRAPPIE – Good. Another good crappie spawn was produced in 2012 with 69 percent of the fall sample consisting of 2 to 6 inch fish and 8 percent being 6 to 8 inches. Hopefully these fish will recruit on up to produce some good fishing in the next couple of years. There are still some bigger fish in the population with 23 percent being 8 to 15 inches in length. Webster's density rating for black crappie (8 inches and above) is 1st amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest crappie sampled was a black crappie weighing 1.28 pounds and white crappie weighing 1.75 pounds. Look for the crappie around the North and South shore fish attractors, the breakwater's on the North and South sides, along the dam and in Rock Point cove and Old Marina cove. Best bait's are jigs, jigs with minnows under a bobber or small slab spoons.

RAINBOW TROUT - Very Good to Excellent. The Webster Stilling Basin, a 6-acre impoundment below the dam, is stocked five times (Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan, & Mar) each trout season. Each stocking consists of 2,100 trout averaging approximately ½ pound each with an occasional bigger fish thrown in to make it exciting. Projected stocking dates are usually around the 1st of the month.

WALLEYE - Good. There is going to be a lot of keeper fish caught this year with 85 percent of the fall sample being over 15 inches. Individuals in the 7 to 15 inch range accounted for 15 percent and 15 to 20 inch fish accounted for 75 percent. The potential for catching larger fish (20 inches plus) also exists this year accounting for 10 percent. Webster's density rating for walleye (15 inches and above) is 1st amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest walleye sampled in 2012 weighed 7.47 pounds. Look for the walleye to be up along the dam in March and April as they come into spawn and then move out onto the flat's in May. During the spawn the best bait's to use are jigs, road runners and crank bait's. When they move out to the flats, get those night crawlers out.
A 15 inch length limit on walleye is in effect.

WHITE BASS - Fair. This population is currently dominated by fish in the 12 to 15 inch size range which accounted for 53 percent of the fall sample. Individuals in the 9 to 12 inch size range accounted for 25 percent and fish over 15 inches accounted for 22 percent of the sample. The biggest fish sampled weighted 1.93 pounds. Webster's density rating (9 inches and above) is 10th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. Surface action should provide some exciting opportunities throughout the reservoir during the summer as these fish chase the shad around. Trolling diving lures and casting road runners should also be productive.

WIPERS - Good. The supply should be good again this year. Fish in the 6 to 15 inch size range accounted for 46 percent and fish in 15 to 20 inch size range accounted for 42 percent. Larger fish (20 inches +) accounted for 12 percent of the sample, so hang on to those fishing rods. Webster's density rating (12 inches and above) is 5th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled in 2012 weighed 8.79 pounds. Surface action should be pretty good as these fish feed on shad, as well as, casting bucktail jigs into the wind around the corners of the Dam and lower portion of the reservoir.



2012 Webster Wiper found floating in the water

2013 FISHING FORECAST KIRWIN RESERVOIR

KIRWIN RESERVOIR - As of April 24, 2013, the reservoir elevation was 5.82 feet below conservation pool. Usable boat ramps at this level include the North and South Shore ramps.

BLACK BASS - Good. The largemouth bass population is dominated by 15 to 20 inch fish accounting for 58 percent of the sample. Fish in the 6 to 12 inch size range accounted for 25 percent and fish 13 to 15 inches accounted for 17 percent. Water levels this past year kept a lot of terrestrial habitat inundated. This inundated habitat and the numbers of 6 to 15 inch fish coming on should make for some pretty good fishing within the next few years. The best locations for finding bass are going to be along Crappie Point and back toward Scout cove, the cove up by Gray's Park, the cove by the North Shore and South Shore ramps and along the dam and outlet area. Smallmouth bass have also been reported being caught around crappie point. **A 15 inch length limit is in effect.**

CHANNEL CATFISH - Good. The overall supply of channel catfish is good as fish were scattered over a wide size range. The population is currently dominated by fish in the 16 to 24 inch size range. Individuals in the 9 to 12 inch size range accounted for 6 percent of the fall 2012 sample. Fish in the 12 to 16 inch size range accounted for 39 percent, fish in the 16 to 24 inch size range accounted for 45 percent and fish over 24 inches accounted for 9 percent. The biggest channel catfish sampled in 2012 weighed 23.37 pounds. The supply of flatheads is also good with 60 percent of the fish sampled being over 20 inches. The biggest flathead sampled in 2012 weighed 11.18 pounds. As the water starts warming up, these fish will be coming up shallow to feed, so fish the upper ends of coves and shallow areas using shad sides and gizzards. Also, the channels should be up in Bow Creek and the North Fork Solomon Rivers. These fish can be caught on rod and reel and/or setlines or trotlines using shad sides and gizzards, shrimp and stink or dip bait.



2012 Kirwin 23.37 pound
Channel Catfish

WHITE CRAPPIE – Fair. Black crappie numbers are slightly lower than last year, however, white crappie numbers made a significant increase mostly due to a good spawn. The high water level's this past year produced another good crappie spawn with 99 percent of the fall sample consisting of 2 to 5 inch fish. Hopefully these fish will recruit on up to produce some good fishing in the next couple of years. There are still some bigger fish in the population with 1 percent of the sample being 8 to 15 inch fish. The density rating for white crappie at Kirwin (8 inches and above) is 20th, and for black crappie (8 inches and above) it ranks 5th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled in 2012 was a white crappie weighing 1.51 pounds and a black crappie weighing 0.85 pounds. Crappie should be concentrated around the North and South shore fish attractors and drop offs and can be caught using jigs, jigs tipped with minnows or small slab spoons and can be caught up in the shallows of coves and off the Dam during the spawn using jigs or jigs tipped with minnows under a bobber.

WALLEYE - Good. There will be some catch and release this year since individuals in the 7 to 10 inch range accounted for 17 percent and 11 to 15 inch fish accounted for 24 percent of the sample. However, there will be some nice catches of harvestable walleye - fish in the 15 to 20 inch size range accounted for 17 percent and fish in the 20 to 24 inch size range accounted for 34 percent of the 2012 fall sample. The density rating at Kirwin (15 inches and above) is 5th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled this past year weighed 8.10 pounds. These fish can be caught off the Dam during the spawn in March and April casting jigs, roadrunners or crank bait's. After the spawn would get those night crawlers out and fish the flats and drop offs. **A 15 inch length limit is in effect.**

WHITE BASS - Fair. This population is currently dominated by fish in the 12 to 15 inch size range which accounted for 80 percent of the 2012 sample. Individuals in the 9 to 12 inch size range accounted for 4 percent and fish over 15 inches accounted for 14 percent. Most of the fish will be running in the 1 to 2 pound range. The biggest fish sampled this past year weighed 2.43 pounds. The density rating at Kirwin (9 inches and above) is 14th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. Surface action should provide some exciting opportunities throughout the reservoir during the summer months as these fish chase shad, so keep an eye on the sky and find the gulls. Trolling diving lures should also entice these fish into biting.

WIPERS - Good. The supply is strong and the quality of this fishery is good as well. Individuals in the 8 to 11 inch size range accounted for 7 percent of the fall 2012 sample. Fish in the 12 to 15 inch size range accounted for 33 percent, fish in the 15 to 20 inch size range accounted for 46 percent and fish 20 inches plus accounted for 14 percent. The density rating for wipers (12 inches and above) at Kirwin is 2nd amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled this past year weighed 8.49 pounds. Casting bucktail jigs into the wind along either side of the Dam, Knob Hill, between Bluegill and Crappie point's and around Cottonwood Grove could be productive. Also, look for some good top water action this summer on calm days as these fish feed on shad.

2013 FISHING FORECAST FOR SEBELIUS RESERVOIR

SEBELIUS RESERVOIR - As of April 24, 2013, the reservoir elevation was 9.71 feet below conservation pool. Usable ramps at this level include the East and West Leota Cove ramps.

BLACK BASS – Excellent. The largemouth bass population is dominated by 8 to 12 inch fish accounting for 41 percent of the sample. Largemouth bass in the 3 to 8 inch size range accounted for 17 percent of the sample, fish in the 12 to 15 inch size range accounted for 28 percent and fish over 15 inches made up 14 percent. The density rating for Sebelius largemouth bass (12 inches and above) is 1st amongst all reservoirs in the state. Good numbers of spotted bass are also present with 32 percent being in the 3 to 11 inch size range, 44 percent being in the 11 to 14 inch size range and 24 percent being in the 14 to 17 inch size range. The density rating for spotted bass (11 inches and above) is 1st amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. Spinner and artificial bait's should work well in Leota cove, along the dam, Shoen's cove and up the river channel by the sandpit. Fish the rocky areas for the spots. **A 15 inch length limit on largemouth and spotted bass is in effect.**

CHANNEL CATFISH – Good. According to **FLATHEAD CATFISH – Good.** 2012 netting results, the supply of channel catfish is good with 24 to 30 inch fish being particularly plentiful. Individuals in the 17 to 24 inch size range accounted for 33 percent and fish 24 inches and above accounted for 67 percent of the sample. The biggest channel catfish sampled weighed 8.07 pounds. Also, flathead numbers are on the rise and these big cats have become an important component of the catfish fishery. Individuals over 19 inches accounted for 100 percent of the fall sample. The biggest flathead sampled in 2012 weighted 3.08 pounds. These fish can be caught off the public fishing dock when they congregate around the fish feeder, around Leota cove, along the dam, up west by the Marsh Dike and around the Sandpit using shad sides and gizzards, night crawlers, stink bait or shrimp.



18.3 pound
Sebelius
channel cat

BLACK CRAPPIE – Good. Currently, crappie
WHITE CRAPPIE – Fair. are present in good numbers for blacks and fair numbers for whites. Both the black and white crappie had good spawn's this past year, so hopefully they will recruit on up to make for some good fishing in the years to come. Crappie in the 2 to 5 inch size range accounted for 62 percent of the sample, fish in the 5 to 10 inch size range accounted for 27 percent and fish 10 to 15 inches accounted for 11 percent. While fish under ¾ of a pound are likely to dominate the catch this year, some fish in the 1 to 1 1/2 pound range will be taken as well. The density rating for Sebelius black crappie (8 inches and above) is 3rd amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest black crappie sampled weighed 1.29 pounds and the biggest white crappie weighed 0.95 pounds. These fish can be found around the public fishing dock, Marina slips, fish attractor's or up in the coves using jigs, jigs tipped with minnow under a bobber or small slab spoon.

SAUGEYE - Good. Catch rates will be pretty
WALLEYE – Fair. good again this year and the opportunity for harvest will fair for saugeye and fair for walleye. The saugeye population is starting to come back with 8 to 15 inch fish accounting for 24 percent, fish 15 to 18 inches accounted for 62 percent and harvestable fish over 18 inches accounted for 14 percent of the 2012 fall sample. Sebelius still holds the current state record (9.81 lbs.) which was caught in November 1998. The density rating at Sebelius (14 inches and above) is 1st amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest saugeye sampled weighed 6.97 pounds. Four walleye were sampled in 2012, however, all of the fish were just under the 18 inch length limit. Look for these fish to be up by the Dam in March and April and then move to the flats in May, so get those jigs, crank bait's and night crawlers ready. **An 18 inch length limit is in effect for saugeye and walleye.**



Sebelius 6.1 pound saugeye

WIPERS - Good. The supply is strong and the quality of this fishery is good as well. Fish in the 15 to 20 inch size range are especially plentiful with larger fish available as well. Individuals in the 15 to 20 inch size range accounted for 55 percent and larger fish (20 inches plus) accounted for 45 percent. The biggest wiper sampled in the fall of 2012 weighted 9.59 pounds. The density rating at Sebelius (12 inches and above) is 8th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. Bucktail jigs that are cast into the wind along the North shore have been effective, as well as fishing night crawlers and shrimp on the bottom in Leota cove and using live bait off the drop offs outside of Leota and Concrete coves. Could also be some good top water action this summer as these fish feed on shad.

Fishing Information

You can visit the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks website at www.kdwpt.state.ks.us for a wealth of fisheries information. When you click on the fisheries tab at the top of the page you can access all kinds of information like fishing in Kansas, where to fish in Kansas, how to fish, fishing frequently asked questions (FAQ's), are fish safe to eat, tournaments, special fishing programs, aquatic nuisance species (ANS), hatcheries, fish stocking records, state record fish, fishing reports, fishing forecast, fish regulations, fishing fees, fish identification and public fishing images. If you can not find the information you are looking for from the website, you can call or stop by any of the area, park or regional offices.



Creel Survey at Kirwin Reservoir

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism will be conducting a creel survey at Kirwin Reservoir this season, which starts on March 1, 2013 and runs thru October 31, 2013. Therefore, we would appreciate it if anglers get approached by our creel clerk, Ali Hadley they take a few minutes to answer some questions so that we can get some good harvest and fishing pressure data for this impoundment. Thank You for your patience and cooperation with this year's creel survey. Hope everyone gets out to do some fishing and especially to enjoy the great outdoors.

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One bait, one lake: Do it for the future's sake.

Know the rules. Visit: ProtectKSWaters.org

Get your friends, get your family
... and FISH KANSAS!



The weather and water is starting to warm up, therefore, the fishing should also start getting better. If you get out fishing and would like to post a fishing report you can do so at <http://ksfishing.blogspot.com/>. We would really like to hear about your fishing trip.

Hopefully this newsletter has given you some information that will make your outings more pleasurable and memorable. So get out there, take a friend with you and take advantage of the many opportunities that are available. Good luck, be careful and enjoy the great outdoors.

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