

Mound City District Fisheries Report

Fall of 2018

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism: Fisheries Division

District impoundments include: Pomona Reservoir; La Cygne Reservoir; Bourbon State Fishing Lake; Richmond City Lake; Pleasanton Old, West and East City Lakes; Parker City Lake; Mound City Lake; Critzer Lake; Blue Mound City Lake; Linn County Strip Pits; Elm Creek Lake; Cedar Creek Lake; Ft Scott City Lake; Rock Creek Lake; Ft Scott Community College – East and West Lakes; Ft Scott Gunn Park – Fern and West Lakes.

Public Partially Accessible Rivers: Marais des Cygnes River, Marmaton River.



Fall 2018 Issue:

- La Cygne Reservoir receives national recognition.
- La Cygne and Pomona Reservoir receives successful stockings
- La Cygne Reservoir and Bourbon State Fishing Lake receives additional habitat improvement
- Community Fisheries Assistance Program Grants

News and Updates

BASSMASTERS RECOGNIZES LA CYGNE RESERVOIR IN TOP 10 BASS LAKES IN THE CENTRAL DIVISION

Each year Bassmasters, the Worldwide Authority on Bass Fishing, solicits information from fisheries management agencies with excellent largemouth bass fisheries. This year La Cygne Reservoir was included in that package of information for Bassmasters' consideration. Thank you Bassmasters for recognizing La Cygne Reservoir as one of the TOP 100 Best Bass Lakes in North America and furthermore placing La Cygne Reservoir's largemouth bass fishery in the National Top 10 Lakes from the Central Division.

Talk about a David and multiple Goliaths competition, this 2,600 acre lake battled it out with lakes that were 71 times larger but held her own and remained in this elite classification. The information collected from spring electrofishing and information from anglers who caught

largemouth bass over 10 pounds is considered. According to the information presented by Bassmasters Magazine, National Top 10 Lakes from the Central Division: “This new addition to the list is, hands down, the best lake in Kansas. Electrofishing samples last year turned up 11 bass larger than 20 inches per hour – 17 times the number of 20-inch bass sampled in the next-best lake in the state. While most Kansas lakes produce 6-pounders, this fishery produced two 10-pounders on the same weekend this march.”

As the fisheries management biologist, I am grateful that this fishery has received this award. Anglers for years have asked me, what makes this such a great bass lake. And I believe it’s a combination of factors, first and foremost is the warm water temperatures due to the operation of KCP&L electrical generation, the Florida strain largemouth bass that I stocked back in 1979, an 18-inch length limit, and a good supply of bluegill and gizzard shad.



I hope that with this recognition that more anglers will have a chance to try these warm waters and appreciate some of the bass fishing here.

POMONA RESERVOIR - WALLEYE and BLUE CATFISH STOCKING PROGRAM CONTINUES

During the spring of 2018, 1.5 million walleye fry and 8,913 blue catfish fingerlings were stocked in Pomona Reservoir. These fish were to supplement past stockings of walleye and blue catfish. In 2017, there were 4,255 blue catfish fingerlings stocked and in 2016 there were 2 million walleye fry stocked along with 3,396 blue catfish fingerling. When we stock fry and fingerlings, we are looking at the long-term, as these fish will take years to reach harvestable size.

Currently the walleye and blue catfish populations are low, but they are improving. Continued stocking should hopefully boost and improve both of these sought-after sport fish populations. Fall sampling efforts indicate that the stockings have been successful and are improving these developing populations.



Fall test netting at La Cygne Reservoir – big blue catfish

La Cygne Reservoir has produced some very large blue catfish for many years. It is believed that the first blue catfish were transported via the power plant's pumps while moving water from the Marais ds Cygnes River in the early 1990s. These fish have never really produced a dense population. To remedy this, blue catfish fingerlings have been stocked to boost this existing population.

In the spring of 2018, there were 5,187 blue catfish fingerlings stocked in La Cygne Reservoir. These fish supplemented past stockings of blue catfish. In 2017, there were 2,603 blue catfish fingerlings stocked and in 2016 there were 7,350 blue catfish stocked. When we stock fingerlings, we are looking at the long-term, as these fish will take years to reach harvestable size. The good news is that fall sampling results indicate that the stocking has been successful, and the density of blue catfish has improved.



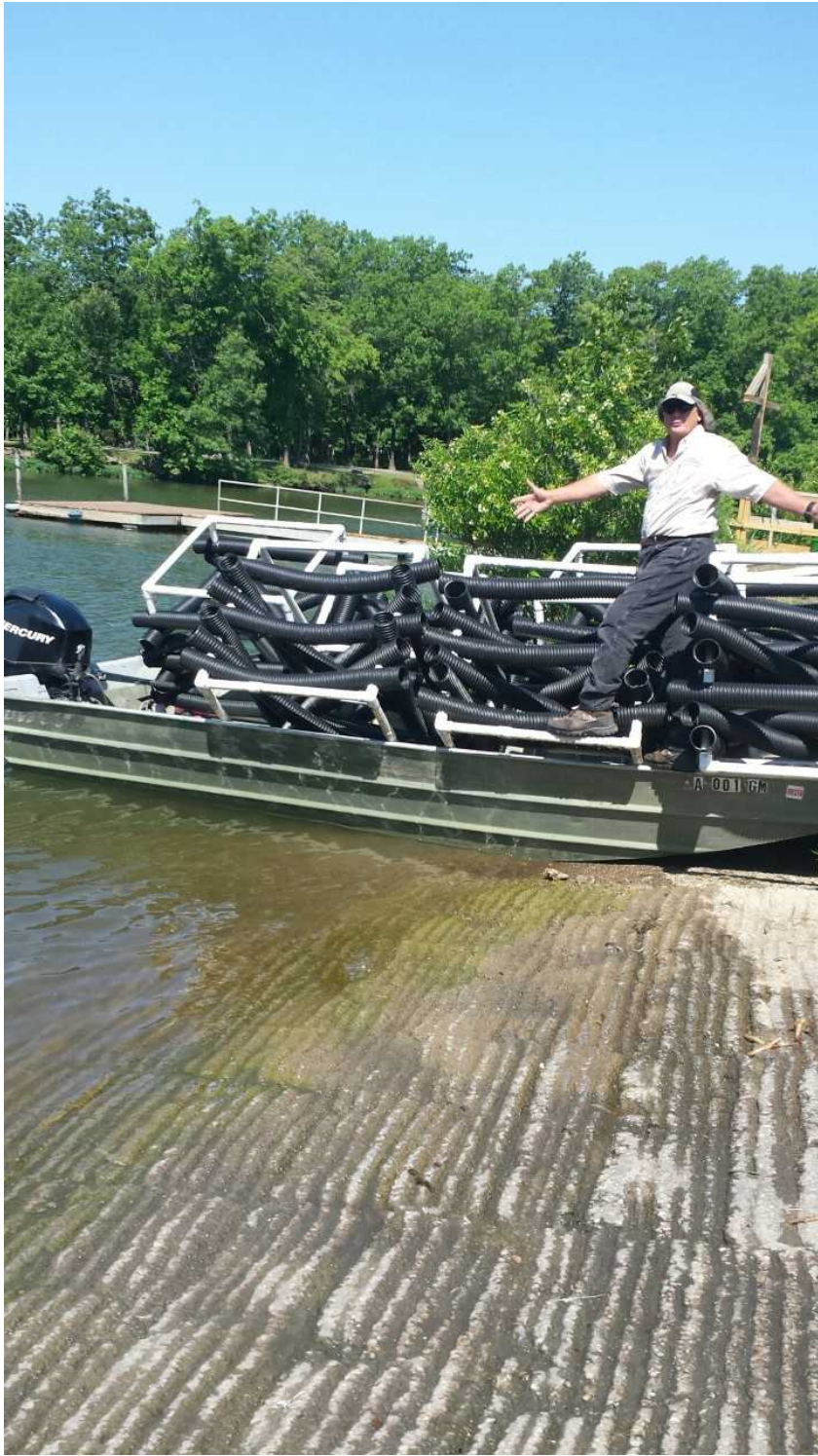
Improving Habitat using Georgia Cubes

Fisheries districts throughout the state have been provided the opportunity to receive PVC habitat cubes. This specific design is also referred to as a “Georgia Cube” (as shown above).

Observation has shown that not only do sportfish appear to hunt from these cubes, but actually may be living in these cube clusters. Not only do the cubes provide habitat for the fish, but as we record the locations of the cubes, they are meant to create additional angling opportunities for fishermen. The Mound City District ordered and received two truckloads or 55 Georgia Cubes for Bourbon State Fishing Lake and two truckloads for La Cygne Reservoir. It takes quite a bit of time to assemble and then place these structures, but it is worth it to improve the fishing success for anglers. The design of these structures decreases the chances of an angler's hook becoming snagged or fouled, much more so than brush piles. I place these cubes close to the areas where anglers have good shoreline access hopefully improving their angling success.



Bourbon State Fishing Lake is drained down each fall to produce fisheries management goals. While the water was down additional Georgia cubes were placed in specific areas along the west shoreline of Bourbon State Fishing Lake. (Spring, 2018)



At La Cygne Reservoir, the cubes were sunk in clusters of fives, in the coves and off the points around the marina, as well as in the horse riding trail cove near the fish feeder on the southwest side. GPS coordinates for these clusters can be found on the ksoutdoors.com website. The pvc pipe and materials are precut at the El Dorado Correctional Facility.

Working to Improve Angling and Angling Access

Continually improving angler access at community lakes is a big responsibility for fisheries biologists. One of our best tools is the grants issued through the Community Fisheries Assistance Program (CFAP). This program provides funds and the expertise of fisheries biologists to improve and enhance fishing opportunities. Many of our customers/anglers are older or bring their young children and desire access to fishing that is less challenging. There were three fantastic projects completed recently. Parker City Lake floating dock, Critzer Lake floating dock and the complete renovation of The West Lake in Gunn Park at Ft Scott.

I am highlighting some of these successful projects CFAP projects on community lakes in my district.



This at Parker City Lake. The newly placed fishing access dock will compliment an already beautiful city lake.



The new fishing dock has a strong floatation system that produces a very solid structure. The sturdy handrails enhance and provide a safe area for fishing at Parker City Lake. In addition the Parker City Council approved projects to improve shoreline access, the entrance road, bridge and added restrooms to this lake. All of these enhancements were cost shared with CFAP funds and supervised by the district biologist.

If you're looking for a very clean and fishing friendly lake to take the family then try Parker City Lake. It's located 1 mile south of town and ½ mile west, on the north side of the road. Have fun and catch fish.



This is the new dock at Critzer Lake, in Linn County. With this design we should be able to accommodate boaters and angling. Located adjacent to the double-lane boat ramp, this will help with loading and unloading of boats while producing a very stable platform for some angling especially for anglers who are physically challenged. To decrease maintenance and construct a permanent walkway, we formed and poured a concrete pad and sidewalk, starting at the edge of the parking lot extending to the base of the floating dock. This concrete and walkway also protects the pier from erosion when the water level at Critzer Reservoir is above normal. The current dock design should easily allow for a 3- to 4-foot water level rise without any problems. This entire project was cost shared with a CFAP grant in cooperation with Linn County, which contributed much of the machine time and labor. Also thanks to the Marais des Cygnes Public Wholesale Water Supply Number 13, which graciously allows public use. The lake and land around it is also enrolled in the KDWPT's Walk-in Hunting Program (WIHA), allowing hunting on the project. Use of this lake and land is limited to hunting or fishing.



Here's a picture of Critzer Lake – the fish feeder just went off – can you see the feed slick on the water? And there's a couple of lucky anglers right in the middle of a catfish feeding frenzy. The channel catfish in this lake are nice with a high percentage of fish over 3 pounds.

Ft Scott Gunn Park, West Lake



A picture of Gunn Park West lake, looking south of the floating dock at the three earthen piers.

This is one of my favorite projects. We were able to perform a genesis project here at this lake. Originally the city park and lake was constructed in the 1930s by the WPA or Works Progress Administration. Many of the WPA projects still stand and serve the public today. But this lake dam needed some enhancement and did not meet the new engineering standards.

After a lot of calculating, measuring, designing, and meeting with the Ft. Scott staff, we applied for a grant through the CFAP to renovate this lake. We were fortunate and received the grant funds. Working in a lake bottom has many problems, the biggest one is rain, which delayed our work many times. Starting with the dry old lake we cleaned out about 70 years of soil deposition, some of this mud/dirt was used to re-slope the lake shoreline and some was used to create five new earthen piers. I designed these piers to be wide and very user friendly. By constructing the fishing piers, we were able to double the fishable shoreline, and consume tons of soil that didn't we didn't have to pay to be hauled off, and we ended up with structures that will last many years.

A new water outlet was constructed to better manage overflow events. A big and wide floating dock with a roof and a concrete sidewalk leading to it was also added to the lake's offerings. The floating dock and closest pier are far enough away so anglers won't be in competition with each other.



This beautiful covered, floating dock is at Gunn Park West Lake. Note the earthen piers and fish feeders in the background.

Floating fish feeders were added to boost the food supply and placed in areas to attract fish to handy fishing areas. Numerous structures made of plastic, and boxes made of wood pallets, were sank to improve fish habitat. Also a single-lane boat ramp was constructed to further enhance this project.

Finally, in June of 2017, at the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission meeting and tour, Secretary Robin Jennison, in conjunction with Ft. Scott City Manager Dave Martin and other dignitaries, cut the ribbon officially opening this great project to public fishing and use.



This community building is adjacent to the west lake and is a tribute to the labors of the WPA.

This lake renovation project also compliments the entire park, adding to the recreational opportunities of a very beautiful park. In the fall this park is gorgeous.

We will soon be improving the dock at the Mound City Lake, so don't be surprised when you are there fishing. I encourage anglers to visit with city council persons, county commissioners and me about their wishes for improvements at community lakes. When you support these activities with the proper entities, it makes it easier for these projects to become reality.



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



Fishing Forecasts

Interested in Crappie fishing this spring?

Try **La Cygne reservoir**, there is an excellent (white) crappie population here, with an abundance of quality-size and larger fish, including some memorable and trophy crappie.

Pomona reservoir has an abundant crappie population as well. Anglers are likely to catch numerous 10-inch and under fish, with a small percentage of larger fish.

Bourbon State Fishing Lake has moderate number of black and white crappie; however, our sampling data showed that the majority of the crappie are fairly large in size, and opportunities of 10-inch-plus fish are available.

Bourbon Co. Cedar Creek Lake has a great population of white crappie, with many preferred- and memorable-sized crappie, as well as a small percentage of trophy fish. This lake has lots of cover to fish around, but be cautious when boating in these areas.

Fort Scott Lake, Pleasanton Old and West, Elm Creek Lake: All provide crappie angling opportunities; however, crappie size on average tends to be smaller in these impoundments.

Mound City Lake: Although not at the top of the sampling list, consistently nice crappie are produced from this lake every year with some very nice crappie above 12 inches.

Bass Fishing

There are bass fishing opportunities throughout the district, but as for the best, **La Cygne Reservoir** is an exceptional largemouth bass fishery. Population abundance is high, and size is great. Sampling has shown it's not uncommon to see 5- to 6-pound bass with fish up to 8 pounds. in this impoundment. Fish the flooded weed beds and riprap rock areas.

I like to remind people that **Bourbon State Fishing Lake**, although not abundant with trophy and memorable bass, has a respectable largemouth as well as *spotted bass* population, which is fairly unique for this area.

Catfishing Opportunities

The good news is, the Mound City District has a variety of catfishing impoundments to choose from, as channel cat are stocked in the majority of the district impoundments yearly. If you are looking for a change of pace, try fishing for blue catfish at **La Cygne**, where there is a decent population, although not overly abundant, and sizable fish are taken out of this impoundment yearly. Also, respectable flathead catfish can be found at **Pomona and La Cygne Reservoirs**.

Walleye

Walleye have been stocked throughout the years in multiple district impoundments. Although not always extremely successful, it is nice to know there are some additional angling opportunities available. **Pomona Reservoir** is at the top of the list, followed by **Bourbon State Fishing Lake, Critzer Lake and Pleasanton East Lake**.

White Bass and Wiper

Pomona Reservoir and **LaCygne Reservoir** both provide great white bass and wiper populations. **Pleasanton East Lake** produces some nice wiper angling, especially in the fall when the shad come up on top.



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Thanks for reading the Spring 2018 Mound City Fisheries District Newsletter! The fish will soon be in spawn mode. The fish feeders will be turned on soon also. Go fishing!

Questions or concerns in your fisheries district?

You can contact

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