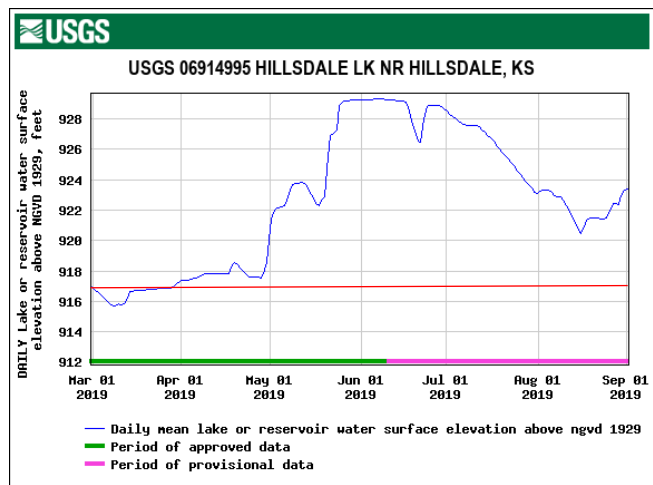


Kansas City District Fisheries Newsletter

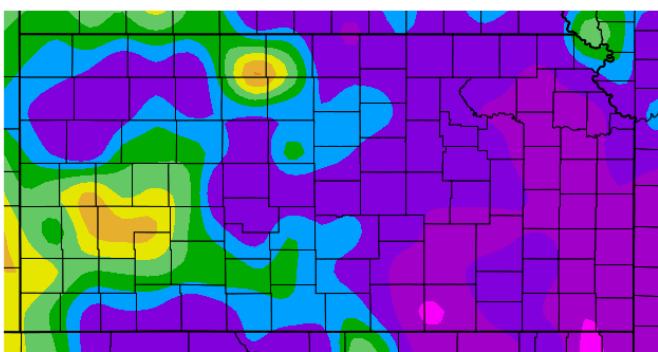
2019

Biologist's Notes

Yet another summer has come and gone here in the Kansas City District, and the major story of summer 2019 was the historical amount of precipitation that fell on the eastern half of the state. The unprecedented rainfall totals for some areas kept streams and rivers running high nearly all summer. Flooding conditions persisted throughout the Missouri and Mississippi River Basins causing many of our area reservoirs to hold water well above normal conservation pools. On June 6th, Hillsdale Reservoir reached a record 12.3 feet above conservation pool—the highest water level since the lake construction was completed in 1982. Flood conditions occurred all across the eastern half of the state, Tuttle Creek Reservoir reached nearly 61 feet above conservation pool!!!!



*Hillsdale Reservoir water level 2019
917 feet is normal conservation pool level*



Generated 9/6/2019 at HPRCC using provisional data. NOAA Regional Climate Centers

*Percent of normal precipitation to date in 2019 for
Kansas*

So the question is, *what does all this high water mean for area fisheries and fish populations?* I suspect there will be both benefits and consequences from the flooding that occurred. One major benefit is that this year should be a great year for fish production. As flood waters connected with the floodplain, flooded vegetation added nutrients, food, and nursery habitat for young-of-the-year fish. (Continued Page 2).

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Biologist's Notes Continued

I have already observed that gizzard shad production is plentiful at several waterbodies and I expect the sport fish populations to follow suit. The elevated gizzard shad production should allow predator fish to “pack on the pounds” throughout the rest of this year as well. An expected consequence is that some fish will flush downstream as flood waters are released, but this is usually small in comparison to the added production depending on timing and duration of flooding. Another possible benefit of the flooding is decreased fishing pressure at many waterbodies. The decreased fishing pressure during high water periods allowed fish that otherwise might have been harvested earlier in the year, to continue to grow in size. Although, this phenomenon also had an inverse effect on other waterbodies that remained accessible during high water periods (e.g., Middle Creek State Lake). Those waterbodies experienced much higher than average fishing pressure and therefore, likely increased harvest.

The explosive spread of zebra mussels within Hillsdale Reservoir was one alarming and harmful occurrence that was observed during the flood of 2019. Conditions were just right for zebra mussels to take advantage of newly flooded structures, and their spread can be witnessed lakewide. This serves as another reminder to clean, drain, and dry your boat to help stop the spread of invasive species, because once established, these populations can really take off.

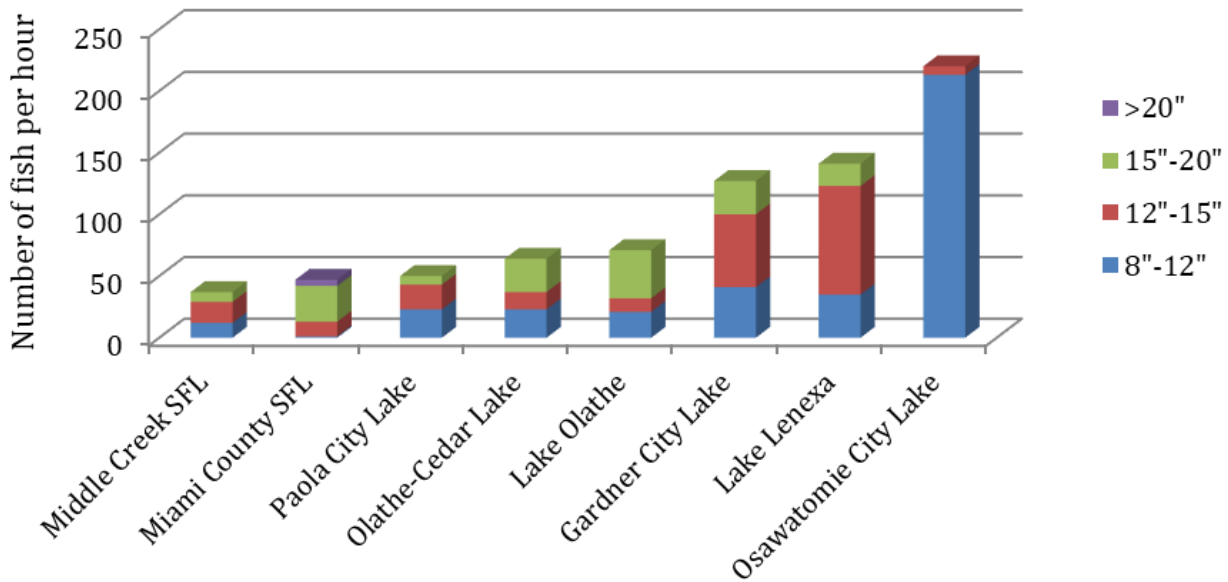
Good news is some waterbodies are beginning to return to normal pool and the fall season can offer some of the best fishing opportunities. Prey fish are very abundant and predators are actively feeding to fatten up for winter. Enjoy the cooler weather and don't let the opportunity pass you by.



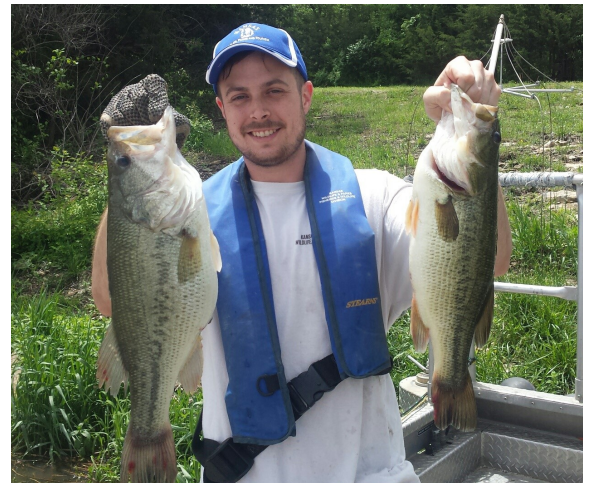
Zebra mussels attached to a State Park shelter that was flooded

2019 Kansas City District Largemouth Bass Sampling Summary

Fisheries biologists use a variety of gear to sample fish depending on species, season, and environmental conditions. Every spring, district fisheries biologists around the state use electrofishing boats to assess black bass populations. Black bass sampling is conducted during the spring when the bass are in shallow waters and can be caught more efficiently. This sampling allows biologists to assess relative abundance, length structure, and condition of black bass populations. Below is the largemouth bass sampling summary for the Kansas City District in 2019. This information is a good guide to current largemouth bass populations at some area waterbodies. Lake Lenexa currently has a great largemouth bass population, with a really high abundance of 12-15 inch fish. We sampled an impressive amount of fish > 15 inches, and 5 fish that exceeded 20 inches at Miami State Fishing Lake. Osawatomie City Lake has a very abundant population of smaller (10 inches) largemouth bass. We were unable to obtain a spring largemouth bass sample for Hillsdale Reservoir due to high water.



Lunkers were abundant at Miami State Fishing Lake in 2019



Nice largemouth bass from Cedar Lake in Olathe

Hidden Gems in Your Neighborhood

I want to call attention to three CFAP waterbodies here in suburban Johnson County that really are gems in terms of their fish populations and ease of access. They are potentially located under the radar in a neighborhood near you. Ironwoods Park Pond (Ironwood Ct. and Mission Rd. in Leawood), Mize Blvd. Lake (Cedar Creek Parkway, north of K-10 in Lenexa), and Wilderness Lake (east of 161st and Rosewood Dr. in Overland Park) are all really enjoyable places to spend some time fishing. I get numerous reports of quality fish caught from each location. Mize Blvd. Lake and Wilderness Lake offer plenty of catchable sized channel catfish as they are both part of the Urban Channel Catfish Stocking Program. Ironwoods Park Pond is a largemouth bass hotspot. All three locations offer fine sunfish angling as well. Each of these waterbodies are part of the CFAP Program so all you need to fish them is a valid State of Kansas Fishing License. I recommend checking out all three.



Ironwoods Park Pond



Wilderness Lake



Mize Blvd. Lake

We're on the web!

www.ksoutdoors.com



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