

Stockton District Fisheries Newsletter

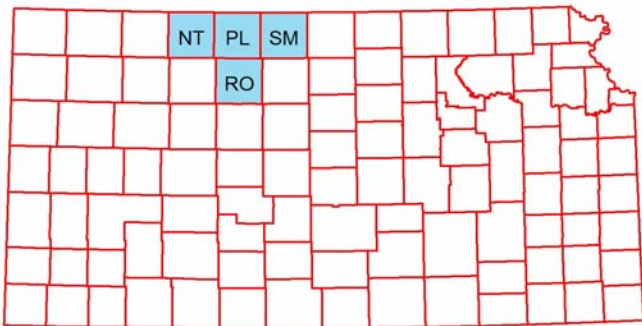
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Welcome to the Stockton Fisheries District

The Stockton District consists of four counties in northwest Kansas: 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; two Community Fisheries Assistance Program (CFAP) lakes -- Logan City Lake and Plainville Township Lake; and various Fishing Impoundments and Stream Habitats (F.I.S.H.) properties, which consist of 41.4 acres of ponds in Smith and Rooks counties and 6.05 miles of stream access on the North and South Fork Solomon rivers.



Water Levels

Water levels over the summer have varied quite a bit around the district. Some areas have had very timely rains and other areas did not. Water was released for irrigation out of all three reservoirs this summer. When irrigation releases were started, Webster was right at 1 foot below conservation pool and when the irrigation releases were shut off on Aug. 8, the reservoir was 4.48 feet below conservation pool. Kirwin was the fortunate one this summer for getting timely rains with runoff. When irrigation releases were started, Kirwin was 1.50 feet above conservation pool and when irrigation releases were shut off on Aug. 8, the reservoir was just below conservation pool. Water was also released for irrigation at Keith Sebelius, but only for a short amount of time. The reservoir was 6.31 feet below conservation pool at the start of irrigation releases and ended up at 7.51 feet below conservation pool. Rooks State Fishing Lake (SFL) dropped approximately 2.5 feet and is currently about 4.5 feet low. Overall, the reservoirs have fared pretty well considering all the HOT and WINDY days that we experienced over the summer and all the water that was released for irrigation. Hopefully, we can get some inflows back into the reservoirs before next year.

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



Reservoir Habitat

This summer has been busy with habitat work at Webster and Keith Sebelius reservoirs. This work takes a lot of coordination with the public land and park managers to get the cedar trees and equipment lined out. Then we have to make sure we have weights to sink the cedar trees. We had a lot of help from the inmate crews out of Stockton and Norton to get the weights made and also getting the trees on our habitat barge so that we could take them out and sink them. Our weights are molded in a five gallon bucket with the bottom cut out of it and then filled about two-thirds full of concrete. Our handles for the weights are made from 4-foot fence stays that are twisted up tighter using a drill and vise. We then have to cut them in half and bend them into a handle that looks like this . These handles are then inserted into the bucket of cement and then the form/bucket is then slid off the cement and on to the next weight. Once all the weights are made and curing out, we go to work getting cedar trees cut and staged for sinking. Once



Cedar trees staged to be sank

trees are staged along the waters edge, we bring the habitat barge in and load the trees onto the front of it. Once on the barge, we attach the weights to the base of the cedar tree using No. 9 wire so that a couple branches hold the wire from slipping right off the bottom of the cedar. The weight is also put down toward the base of the tree so that when the tree is pushed over the edge the tree will basically just stand straight up as it descends to its new resting place.



Cedar tree ready to be sank by my summer aide Taylor Myers



A cedar tree as it stands up and sinks to the bottom

After the trees have been dropped off, it's back to the staging area for another round. The two maintained fish attractors at Webster, the ones with the fish attractor buoys on them, have been updated on the south shore, as well as the breakwater off Goose Flats. At Keith Sebelius, trees were added to the fish attractor by the swim beach and the one on the south side, as well as around the public fishing dock and in the sandpit. Over 200, 10- to 20-foot cedar trees were placed into Webster and Keith Sebelius reservoirs this summer. So get those jigs ready and go out and see if these new trees have any new inhabitants in them. I'm sure the crappie will like them.

Aquatic Education

Aquatic education is a big part of our summer schedule. We participated in four aquatic education events this summer with just under 300 kids participating. These events were held at Webster and Keith Sebelius reservoirs, Webster stilling basin and Logan City Lake. A big thank you goes out to the various sponsors of these events. Whether the donation of worms, minnows, fishing poles or just a little bit of your time, contributions were greatly appreciated and thoroughly enjoyed by the kids.



Kids fishing at the Logan City Lake clinic



Creel Survey at Keith Sebelius

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) is conducting a creel survey at Keith Sebelius Reservoir this season, which started on March 1, 2011 and runs thru October 31, 2011. Therefore, we would appreciate it if anglers who are approached by our creel clerk Larry Johnson take a few minutes to answer some questions so that we can gather good harvest and fishing pressure data for the reservoir. Thank you for your patience and cooperation with this year's creel survey. I hope everyone gets out to do some fishing and especially to enjoy the great outdoors.

Bass Sampling

Bass sampling this spring yielded various results, some good, some not so good. At Webster we collected 27 largemouth bass per hour EFT (energized field time). We electrofished for 1.67 hours EFT, collecting 45 bass. The size structure was three sub-stock (less than 8 inches) fish, seven stock (8 to 12 inches) fish, 21 quality (12 to 15 inches) fish, and 14 preferred (15 to 20 inches) fish. The biggest bass that sampled weighed 4.34 pounds. At Kirwin we collected 15 largemouth bass per hour EFT. We electrofished for 1.67 hours EFT, collecting 25 bass. The size structure was two sub-stock (less than 8 inches) fish, five stock (8 to 12 inches) fish, 17 quality (12 to 15 inches) fish, and one preferred (15 to 20 inches) fish. The biggest bass sampled weighed 2.84 pounds. At Keith Sebelius, we collected 214 largemouth bass per hour EFT and 58 spotted bass per hour EFT. We electrofished for 1.67 hours EFT, collecting 358 largemouth bass and 0.50 hours EFT collecting 29 spotted bass. The size structure for largemouth bass was 144 sub-stock less than 8 inches) fish, 79 stock (8 to 12 inches) fish, 97 quality (12 to 15 inches) fish, and 38 preferred (15 to 20 inches) fish. The biggest largemouth bass sampled weighed

Bass sampling cont.

3.40 pounds. The size structure for spotted bass was five sub-stock (less than 8 inches) fish, one stock (8 to 11 inches) fish, 16 quality (11 to 14 inches) fish, and seven preferred (14 to 17 inches) fish. The biggest spotted bass sampled weighed 2.23 pounds.



A couple nice Rooks bass

At Rooks State fishing lake, we collected 210 largemouth bass per hour EFT. We electrofished for 1.00 hours EFT, collecting 210 bass. The size structure was 36 sub-stock (less than 8 inches) fish, 161 stock (8 to 12 inches) fish and 13 preferred (15 to 20 inches) fish. The biggest bass sampled weighed 4.13 pounds.

At Plainville Township Lake, we collected 92 largemouth bass per hour EFT. We electrofished for 0.50 hours EFT, collecting 46 bass. The size structure was two sub-stock (less than 8 inches) fish, three stock (8 to 12 inches) fish, four quality (12 to 15 inches) fish, 36 preferred (15 to 20 inches) fish and one memorable (greater than 20 inches) fish. The biggest bass sampled weighed 7.10 pounds.

At Logan City Lake we collected 176 largemouth bass per hour EFT. We electrofished for 0.50 hours EFT, collecting 88 bass. The size structure was 58 sub-stock (less than 8 inches) fish, nine stock (8 to 12 inches) fish, five quality (12 to 15 inches) fish and 16 preferred (15 to 20 inches) fish. The biggest bass sampled weighed 4.37 pounds.

Overall, the bass populations are doing pretty well and should make for some good fishing throughout the summer and into fall.

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.

This has been a fast and busy summer for the Stockton District and a lot of the work could not have been completed without the help of my summer aide Taylor Myers. I would like to wish him the best as he heads back to college at FHSU. Hopefully this newsletter has given you some information on what we have been doing this summer to 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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