

# Region 3 District Fisheries

Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Fisheries Division

Spring 2014

As we move into late spring and early summer, we'll take a look at fisheries activities around southwest Kansas. The up and down weather pattern has been one of the most dominating factors affecting fishing success so far this year. Record high temperatures like those below, often followed by temperature drops of 25, 30 and even 40 degrees do not make for very stable fishing conditions!

## Summary of Record High Temperatures on Sunday May 4, 2014

STATION	SUNDAY'S	HIGH PREVIOUS RECORD (YEAR)
ASHLAND	102	99 IN 1963 AND 1940
CIMARRON	96	95 IN 2012
GARDEN CITY EXP STA	96	96 IN 2012
GREENSBURG	99	96 IN 1940
JOHNSON	96	95 IN 2012
KINSLEY ISE	100	92 IN 2012
LARNED	99	95 IN 2012 AND 1936
RICHFIELD	98	97 IN 1936

Additionally, here in the southwest, we are still firmly in the grip of a serious drought. While many lakes remain extremely low or dry, there are still fishing opportunities. Electrofishing this spring has shown us there are still some bright spots to focus on. There are good opportunities throughout southwest Kansas, from Meade State Park and Clark State Fishing Lake, to Horsethief Reservoir and Stone Lake in Great Bend.



## 2014 Spring Sampling

We have been conducting our annual electrofishing this spring when the wind wasn't blowing 40-plus mph and, as suspected, the standard water bodies continue to produce excellent numbers of quality fish for anglers in our area.



It's a big job sampling lakes throughout 27 counties, and I would not be able to get it all done without the effort of a large group of folks. One of my main hands the last couple of years has been Larry Adams, pictured above. Larry was still working for the Dodge City Fire Department and was an AVID belly-boat angler when he and I met. When he retired, I put him to work!

Below are a couple of our conservation officers, Matt Hanvey and Tanner Dixon. Most officers are more than willing to spend a little time in the boat when I am sampling, so they can assure folks that "there are in fact, fish in this lake!"



## 2014 Spring Sampling cont'd

Each year, the Dodge City office gets as many questions about **Clark State Fishing Lake** as any other body of water in the southwest. Many folks saw the video I shared last summer when Clark filled virtually overnight. The big concern ever since then has been that all the fish went over the spillway. They didn't! The photo below shows a couple of the nice largemouth bass we sampled this spring. Plenty of fish in the 3- to 5-pound range are available, as well as good numbers of smaller fish and even a few bigger!



In addition, netting that did last October resulted in one of the best samples of channel catfish I have ever seen in 20 years of sampling the lake. Good to excellent numbers and catch rates of walleye and white bass give anglers lots of options this year. As seen below, Meade State Fishing Lake also offers some outstanding bass fishing opportunities for 2014. Larry and Officer Zimmerman did a grand job dipping up fish.



While sampling largemouth bass on Meade, we observed good numbers of bluegill and white crappie, though most of the crappie are small. A good number of channel catfish will be caught this year, as well.

**Horsethief Reservoir** in Hodgeman County is another popular destination for folks in southwest Kansas. Larry and Sean Lynott, Fisheries Supervisor for southern Kansas, show off a few of the nice largemouth bass that prefer to use big piles of submerged tumbleweeds for cover.



In addition to largemouth bass, Horsethief has plenty of big channel catfish and even a few flathead catfish. A nice population of bluegill is also coming along. The lake is currently 30 feet low, so recreational boaters, skiers and jetski fans are encouraged to use caution.



If you would like to tangle with this big flathead, **Stone Lake**, in Great Bend, should be your destination. We also shocked up a few smallmouth bass in addition to largemouth. Plenty of 3- to 6-pound wipers are also there to jerk your pole out of your hand!

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## Kansans Can Help Stop Aquatic Invaders

As the warming weather beckons outdoor enthusiasts to their favorite lake or river, Kansans should remember that they play a critical role in helping stop aquatic invaders that threaten lakes and rivers in Kansas and many other states. Aquatic nuisance species (ANS) are animals and plants not native to Kansas that can threaten lake and river ecology, harm native or desirable species, and interfere with our economy. They often hitchhike on the boats and equipment used by unsuspecting people who may unknowingly transport them to a previously uninfested body of water.

“These species don’t respect political boundaries, and they occur in public and private water bodies of all sizes,” said Jessica Howell, Kansas Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Coordinator.

“Whatever your destination, it’s important to follow the local laws and regulations concerning aquatic invaders. In Kansas, visit [ProtectKSWaters.org](http://ProtectKSWaters.org) for information about aquatic nuisance species and the necessary precautions.”

There are three primary ways to help stop the spread of ANS:

- CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY** – boats and equipment after every visit to any lake or river (including anything that gets wet, such as tackle, swim gear, footwear, etc)
- DON'T MOVE LIVE FISH** – between bodies of water or up streams
- DON'T DUMP PLANTS OR ANIMALS IN THE WATER OR DRAINAGE DITCHES** – Instead, discard unused bait on dry land or in an approved receptacle, and find a new home with a pet shop or friend for unwanted aquarium species or pets

In addition to stopping the spread of ANS, it is also important to prevent the introduction of new species such as aquarium pets. In 2013, three tropical fish specimens were discovered in Kansas – an arowana at Lake Shawnee, Topeka; a pacu at Stone Lake, Great Bend; and a tilapia at Mill Creek, upstream from Shawnee Mission Park. None of the exotic fish likely would have

survived the winter. However, in 2013 and early 2014, two new populations of Chinese and Japanese mystery snails were reported in Kansas – both of which now have reproducing populations in several Kansas waters. These snails are popular with aquarium and water garden enthusiasts.

For more details about aquatic nuisance species in Kansas and precautions that can be followed, visit [ProtectKSWaters.org](http://ProtectKSWaters.org).



### These are the current water levels in southwest Kansas. These are for the State fishing lakes and some of the larger Community Lakes.

The numbers in parentheses are the surface acreage when the lakes are at conservation pool

#### Region 3 State Fishing Lakes

Barber State Fishing Lake - Lower – (51) - 5 foot low  
Barber State Fishing Lake - Upper – (26) - Dry  
Clark State Fishing Lake – (337) - 1 feet low  
Concannon State Fishing Lake – (50) - Dry at this time  
Finney State Fishing Lake – (110) - Dry at this time  
Ford State Lake – (40) – Nearly dry  
Goodman State Lake – (40) acres – Dry  
Hain State Fishing Lake – (53) - Nearly dry  
Hamilton State Fishing Lake – (30) - Dry  
Hodgeman State Fishing Lake – (87) – Nearly dry  
Kiowa State Fishing Lake - 21 acres - full  
Meade State Lake – (80) - Full

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### Region 3 COMMUNITY LAKES

Coldwater City Lake – (250) - 1 foot low  
Dodge City Lake Charles – (1) - Full  
Dodge City - Mariah Hills Golf Course Pond – (1) - Full  
Great Bend Stone Lake – (50) - Full  
Jetmore City Lake – (110) - Nearly dry  
La Crosse Warren Stone Memorial Lake – (30) – Nearly dry  
Liberal Arkalon Area – (13) -Full  
Pratt County Lake – (51) – Full  
Larned City Pond – (2) - Full  
Pratt Kid's Fishing Pond – (1) - Full  
HorseThief Reservoir – (450) – 30 feet low  
Syracuse - Sam's Pond – (50) - 3 feet low

If you know someone who would like to subscribe to the newsletter, they can do so at <http://kdwp.state.ks.us/news/KDWP-Info/News/Newsletter-Request-Forms/Request-a-Newsletter-for-the-Dodge-City-Fishing-District> If you would like to unsubscribe, please send your info to [Contact Us](#) with “unsubscribe to Dodge City District Fisheries newsletter” and we’ll get you taken off of the list. Questions or comments? Send them as well.

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