

2017 State Updates

Arkansas

The majority of activities on small impoundments in Arkansas in 2016 were routine sampling. However, there was one non-routine activity from District 10 and updates from the Derby Program.

District 10 – Central Arkansas

Lake Cargile was chosen by the Black Bass Program as a study lake in the advanced fingerling Largemouth Bass stocking contribution study. In the Fall of 2015, 3,705 advanced fingerling Largemouth Bass were freeze branded, fin clipped, and stocked in Lake Cargile. During the Spring 2016 electrofishing sample, 149 Age-1 Largemouth Bass were sampled. Only one (0.7%) of the 149 individuals collected was breeze branded or fin clipped and it was the smallest Age-1 Largemouth Bass collected in the sample. It just so happened that our catch rate of Age-1 Largemouth Bass in 2016 was 70.1 (SE = 10.6) fish per hour, which is significantly greater than previous sample years (ANOVA: $F= 18.69$, $df = 2, 22$, $P < 0.0001$; Figure 2). The take home message is that the advanced fingerling Largemouth Bass stocking was not successful on Lake Cargile, but this could be partially due to the very strong 2015 year class.

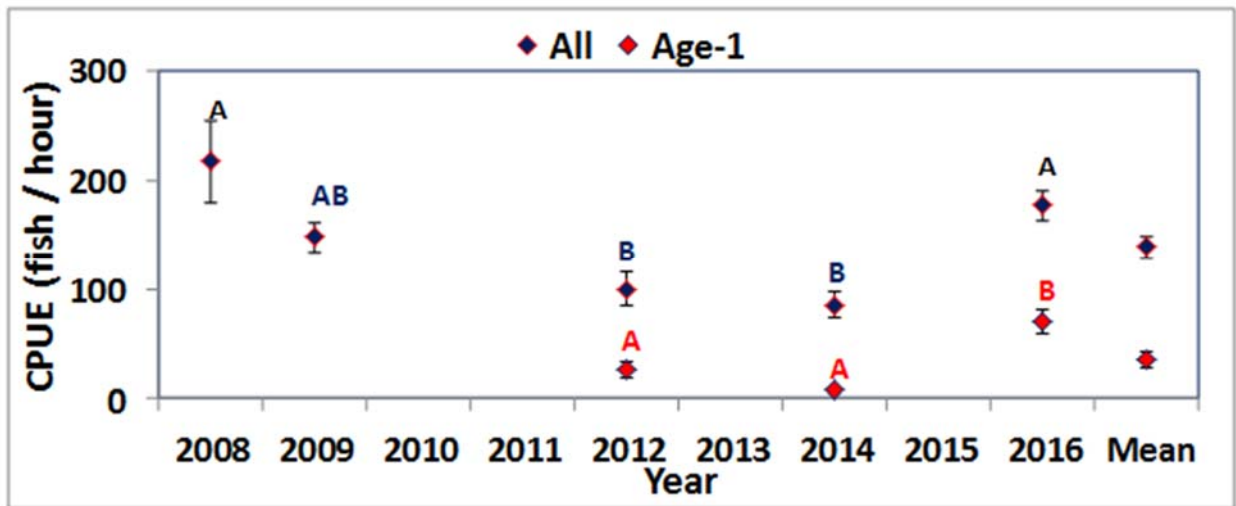


Figure 2. CPUE of all Largemouth Bass (blue) and Age-1 Largemouth Bass (red) from Lake Cargile electrofishing data, 2008-2016. Error bars are standard error. Matching letters indicate statistical similarity.

Derby Program

- The Derby Program held 233 derbies in 2016.

Texas

In Texas, public water bodies range from a fraction of an acre to over 100,000 acres in size; however, this summary focuses on bodies of water under 500 acres. These smaller impoundments are typically managed by local governments (cities, townships and counties) and serve the purpose of flood control, water supply and recreation. Some reside within state parks and are great venues for those looking for an all-around outdoor package. State park ponds provide free fishing opportunities under a free fishing initiative program. Anglers fishing within a state park are not required to possess a fishing license. This was designed to entice people to become involved in fishing while visiting state parks. Many small impoundments are focal points in small communities and serve as a great attraction for local residents. Others are spread throughout major metropolitan areas and serve as close-to-home opportunities for fishing and outdoor recreation. Most of these waters are managed with regular fish stockings to sustain fishing activity. Over 806,000 Channel Catfish and 322,000 Rainbow Trout were stocked into Texas waters; many into small impoundments to provide excellent fishing opportunities for Texas anglers.

The Texas population is expected to double by 2050, with most residents living around major cities. As demographics shift, fisheries managers need to work to maintain fishing relevant for future generations. With most residents centered on areas with small impoundments, these waters can serve as our best tools to provide fishing opportunities close to home. Also; with fluctuating water levels affecting access at many major Texas reservoirs, these small lakes, at times, become the most reliable fishing holes for Texas anglers. In the future, these small impoundments may become invaluable fishing resources as water issues become more challenging. TPWD, in conjunction with local authorities, is focused on managing these impoundments to provide fishing opportunities for everyone. For management purposes small impoundments have been classified into several categories to identify with certain programs/initiatives.

Small Lakes

These are typically small impoundments between 75 and 500 acres, constructed as water supply reservoirs for smaller cities or are nested within state parks. These reservoirs may have regulated access and more restrictions than our larger reservoirs to preserve water quality and wildlife populations. When appropriate, TPWD will manage these small lakes similar to large reservoirs by applying fishing regulations, restoring fish habitat and angler access to enhance fishing opportunities. Stockings may not be applied as rigorously as in some smaller impoundments since the larger size and habitat availability will aid self-sustaining populations. Creel surveys and general fish population monitoring efforts are typically conducted as needed in these small lakes.

Community Fishing Lake (CFL)

A CFL is a small impoundment designation, defined as a public impoundment 75 acres or smaller located totally within incorporated city limits or a public park, or any impoundment lying totally within the boundaries of a state park. Nearly 800 CFLs have been registered statewide, with many new ones being added every year, mainly around large metropolitan areas, where development is high. Many CFLs are stocked annually with Channel Catfish and/or Rainbow Trout. Special fishing regulations apply to CFLs,

which differ from statewide fishing regulations. While stocking and regulation have been the primary management action for this classification of lakes, other management efforts have been applied at several locations. These waters regularly serve as host sites for angler outreach events and other educational purposes.

Neighborhood Fishin' Program (NF)

Neighborhood Fishin' has become a trademark for urban fishing in Texas. This successful program has grown significantly thanks to generous funding support coming from the prestigious Toyota Texas Bass Classic (TTBC); a world class professional bass fishing tournament benefiting the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Since its inception in 2007, the TTBC has generated \$2.5M in funding to support youth fishing initiatives, including the Neighborhood Fishin' program. This program is also supported by numerous other local government and private partners. Total program costs run about \$525K per year at current levels.

Neighborhood Fishin' consists of 18 small (1-6 acre) community park lakes (CFLs) located in 11 major metropolitan areas. Lakes are stocked on a seasonal, biweekly regime of Channel Catfish or Rainbow Trout eleven months during the year. With the program surpassing 14 years since inception, TPWD continues to pursue an extensive marketing campaign. For information on Neighborhood Fishin', please visit www.neighborhoodfishin.org

Diversified Community Angling (DCA)

DCA is an initiative designed to provide a more advanced quality fishing opportunity for anglers. Small impoundments, mainly CFLs, serve as host sites for these unique fisheries. These impoundments are intensively managed for different species utilizing management practices such as highly-restrictive harvest regulations, fertilization, aeration, forage stockings and habitat and access enhancement. The goal is to develop and manage for diversified angling opportunities to existing and potential anglers in Texas. This will create quality urban fishery options not directed towards harvest opportunities, like provided by Neighborhood Fishin'; but more towards catch and enhancing sport fishing skills. DCA impoundments portray the following characteristics:

- A. Self-sustaining/productive lakes (larger size, habitat)
- B. High-quality, non-harvest oriented fishery; focus on recreational opportunity
- C. Controlled and improved access
- D. Improved infrastructure and fish habitat via effective partnerships
- E. Marketable to more experienced anglers

Currently pilot sites in different cities are at different stages or progression under their exclusive management plans. The goal is to successfully implement these management plans and evaluate impacts on anglers within five years of implementation. Afterwards, the plan is to make this initiative

marketable and will become the focus of expansion under developed partnerships with local stakeholders.

Other

- The TPWD Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC) in Athens was stocked and used for outreach events, reaching well over 10,000 participants annually.
- We're continuing work with Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation and Bass Pro Shops to increase Hispanic participation in angling, which can be addressed heavily in urban areas, where these small impoundments can serve as important venues.
- Based on the results of our statewide catfish angler survey; it has become clear that we need to develop and promote catfish angling opportunities where 85 percent of Texans live. Eighty percent of our 1.8 million anglers fish for catfish and they want good fishing close to home. Our community-based programs will serve as a platform to meet these needs.
- TPWD offers valuable small impoundments management information for the private sector in its web site at: http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/habitats/private_water/
- Information on TPWD fishing programs, please visit: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/fish/>