

Kansas City District Fisheries Newsletter

Spring 2020

Biologist's Notes

This would be the normal spot in a spring newsletter where I would share stories and have pictures displaying all the giant walleye we caught during egg collection efforts at Hillsdale Reservoir. Unfortunately spring 2020 is anything but normal as we all adjust our lives to protect ourselves and communities in stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The walleye egg collection effort at Hillsdale Reservoir was cancelled this year due to risk of spreading the virus. As I write this newsletter, I am presently working from home. Doing my part to help stop the spread of the virus.

During this unprecedented crisis it is extremely valuable to be able to spend time and enjoy the outdoors while practicing responsible social distancing. Spending some of your time outdoors can help to keep both your mind and body healthy and relieve some of the stressful burdens we are all experiencing right now. I thought it would be important to review what outdoor opportunities are currently available and unavailable within the Kansas City District and statewide. The broad

majority of our state owned and federal public wildlife areas and reservoirs are open for use provided that users practice social distancing. All appropriate permitting, licenses, and registrations are still required. So far, non-resident turkey tags are the only permit not being offered. Currently our offices are closed to the public, hopefully to resume normal operations soon. To accommodate users, permits, licenses, and boat registrations can be completed online (www.ksoutdoors.com), over the

phone, through the mail, or through the new mobile apps (HuntFish KS and CampIt KS, see pg. 2).

"takemefishing"

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Biologist's Notes Continued

Some programs and fish management activities have been affected but others will proceed as planned but modified to allow for social distancing guidelines. For the foreseeable future all aquatic education events have been canceled, hopefully to resume at some point this year. Some habitat improvement projects have been put on hold. The Urban Channel Catfish Stocking Program will continue with scheduled stockings. I was able to stock some surplus walleye fry in Hillsdale Reservoir from the Missouri Department of Conservation, so a BIG thanks to them for supplying us with a limited resource. We are currently working on protocols that will allow for us to safely conduct spring standardized sampling.

This is a challenging time for everyone. Outdoor opportunities do exist right now and they can be helpful for us adjusting to new lifestyle changes. Enjoy the opportunities, don't let them pass you by, but most importantly practice recommended social distancing guidelines to protect yourself and your community.

New Mobile E-licensing Apps



I want to make you all aware of some new mobile apps for e-licensing and other new online resources to streamline your outdoor experiences and make you a more effective angler. The two new mobile apps are HuntFish KS and CampIt KS, they are available for both IOS and android devices and included in most major app stores. The HuntFish KS mobile app allows hunters and anglers to purchase and store their licenses and permits electronically on any mobile device. The CampIt KS mobile app allows state park visitors to make campsite reservations electronically from any mobile device. You can also find app download information following these links:

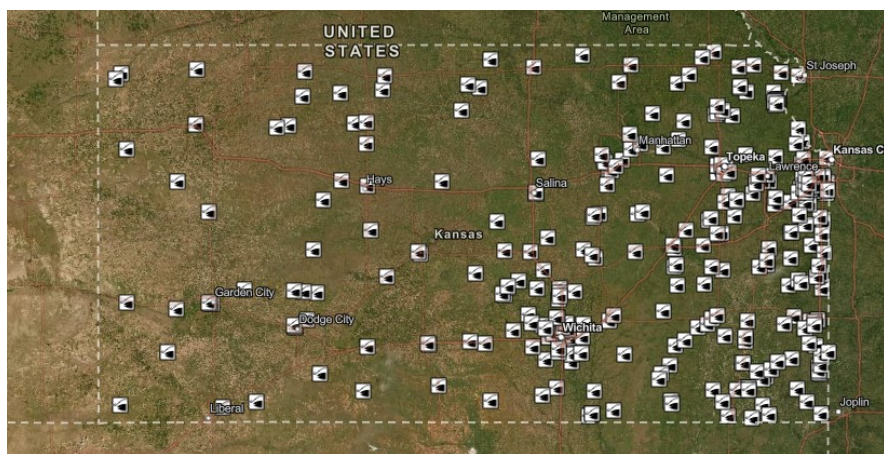
<https://ksoutdoors.com/License-Permits/HuntFish-KS>

<https://ksoutdoors.com/License-Permits/CampIt-KS>

We have also recently streamlined web access to fisheries access and habitat maps. These maps are arcgis maps of public access points and habitat locations statewide. This information has existed for awhile now and may not be new to you, but we streamlined the links to make the information more accessible. The new addresses are:

<https://ksoutdoors.com/fishhabitatmap>

<https://ksoutdoors.com/fisheries-map>



2020 Kansas City District Fishing Forecast

Hillsdale Reservoir

High-water conditions robbed a lot of the angling opportunities in 2019, but a silver lining from all the flooding is that Hillsdale appears poised to provide some good angling opportunities for multiple species in 2020. Angling reports for crappie were really good throughout the winter and that has carried over to the spring. Crappie catch rate from fall 2019 sampling decreased from the previous few years at Hillsdale Reservoir, but size structure of the population remained great with 56% of crappie sampled last fall exceeding 10 inches, which is the minimum length limit for harvest at Hillsdale. Catch rate of walleye was moderate during fall 2019 sampling, but size structure of the population was impressive with 34% walleye sampled in trapnets exceeding 20 inches and 18% exceeding 25 inches! The white bass population fared really well with the high-water conditions as catch rate of white bass smaller than 8 inches was higher than I have ever witnessed. A sign of improved white bass fishing in the future. Catch rate of stock-length channel catfish was 5 fish/net night in the fall 2019. Most of the channel catfish population occurs in the 16- to 24-inch length range.



A 13.5 inch Hillsdale crappie



KDWPT's Zach Ramsay displays a large Hillsdale walleye

Miami State Fishing Lake

Abundance and size structure are both improved for crappie at Miami State Fishing Lake. Catch rate for crappie (species combined) from fall sampling in 2019 was 64 fish/net night and size structure metrics indicated a nearly balanced population with both smaller and larger individuals. Catch rate from fall 2019 sampling for channel catfish was 5 fish/net night, with the majority of the sampled fish occurring in the 11- to 16- inch length range. Catch rate for largemouth bass in 2019 was slightly improved and there is a really good number of largemouth bass occurring in the 15- to 20- inch length range, with 5 largemouth bass sampled that exceeded 20 inches. Miami State Fishing Lake does have a dense stand of curly-leaf pondweed, which is an invasive nuisance plant species. Curly-leaf pondweed grows most during the cooler months with peak density occurring in May. Warmer water temperature causes senescence in curly-leaf pondweed and the stand will be gone in early June.



Monster paddlefish continue to show up in the fall sample at Miami State Fishing Lake

2020 Kansas City District Fishing Forecast

Middle Creek State Fishing Lake

Catch rate for channel catfish at Middle Creek State Fishing Lake was 5 fish/net night in fall 2019; the population is skewed slightly towards smaller fish. Largemouth bass numbers are less than desired, but continued an upward trend with steady improvement over the past 5 years and early-spawned largemouth bass have been stocked the past 4 years to help increase abundance. Catch rate of crappie (both species combined, white and black) decreased to 5 fish/net night in 2019 with a large portion of population occurring in the 8- to 10- inch length range. Catch rate of saugeye was the best in 5 years and size structure of the population is fairly balanced. Saugeye ranging in length from 11- to 24- inches were sampled during fall 2019. There will also be moderate opportunities to chase white bass, wiper, and flathead catfish at Middle Creek State Fishing Lake in 2020.

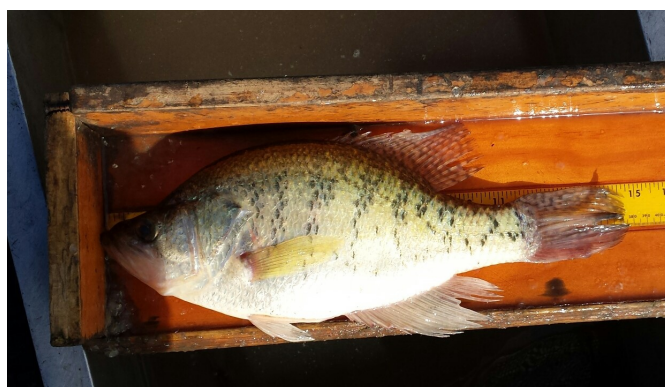
2020 Kansas City District CFAP Waterbodies Forecast

	Gardner City Lake	Lake Lenexa	Olathe Cedar Lake	Lake Olathe	Paola City Lake	Osawatomie City Lake
Bluegill	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good
Crappie	Good	Poor	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair
Channel Catfish	Good	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair
Largemouth Bass	Good	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Saugeye	Poor	N/A	Poor	Fair	Good	N/A
White Bass	Fair	N/A	N/A	N/A	Fair	N/A
Wiper	N/A	N/A	N/A	Fair	Fair	N/A

Bold indicates best bet*



Paola City Lake saugeye



White crappie sampled at Olathe-Cedar Lake just shy of 15 inches

We're on the web!
www.ksoutdoors.com



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