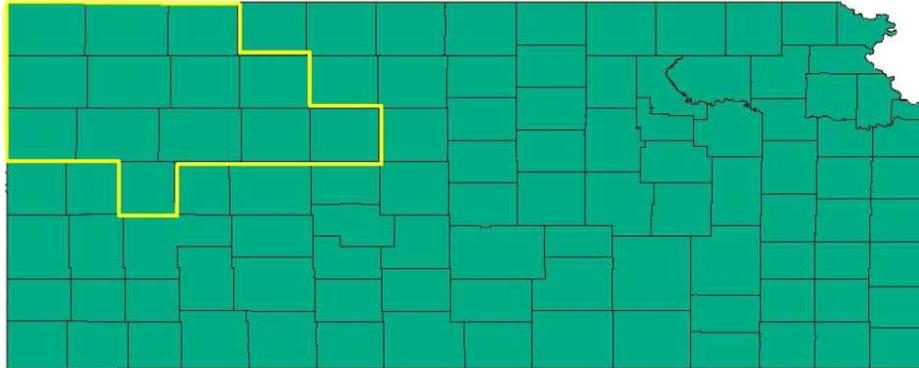


# Cedar Bluff District Fisheries

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism Fisheries Division  
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## 2019 Fishing Forecast Edition



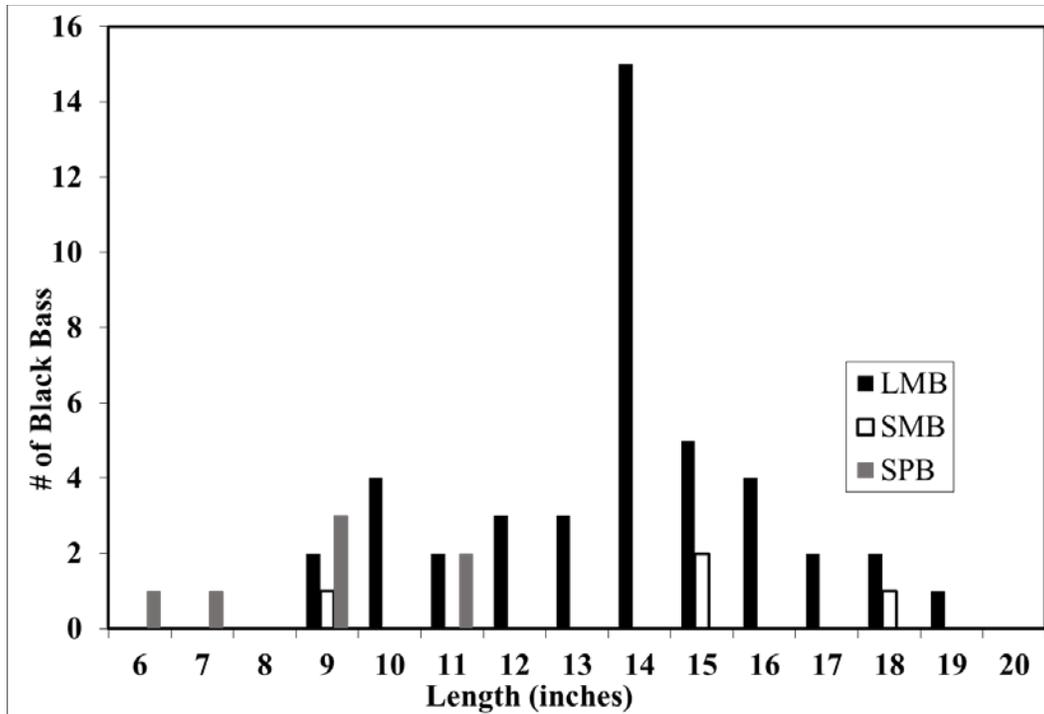
*The above figure shows the 13 counties outlined in yellow that comprise the Cedar Bluff District*

### Cedar Bluff Reservoir

#### **Black Bass – Fair**

Largemouth, spotted, and smallmouth bass all inhabit Cedar Bluff, and all three populations have been negatively affected by degradation of habitat and declining water levels since the reservoir refilled in the mid- to late-1990s. Abundance of all three species has declined to low levels, but fishable populations still exist. Most largemouths range in length from 12 to 18 inches, and best fishing opportunities exist during the pre-spawn and spawning timeframes from April through the end of May. All sizes of spotted bass up to but rarely exceeding 15 inches, are available and are typically caught off rocky shorelines and points. Smallmouth bass abundance has increased to a level similar to the abundance of spotted bass. Recent smallmouth reproduction appears to have improved as a result of stocking adult fish possessing a different genetic background than the original strain stocked shortly after initial impoundment of the reservoir. Smallies are usually caught in areas of similar habitat as spotted bass although they seem to occupy a little deeper water.



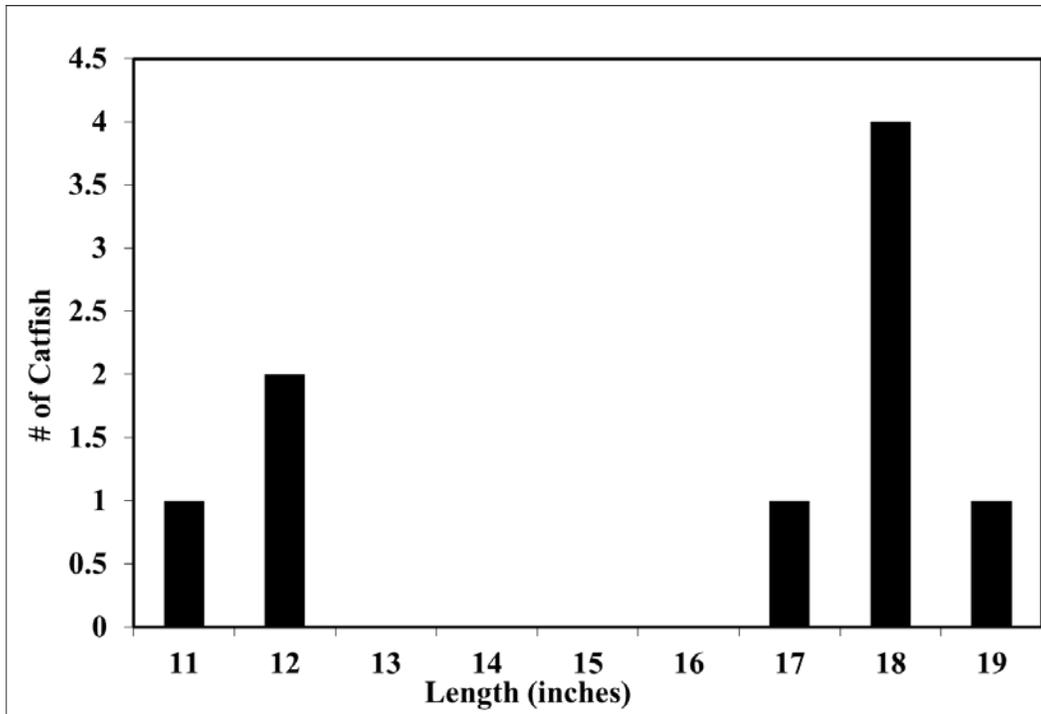


*Length-frequency of black bass sampled at Cedar Bluff in 2018*

**Channel Catfish – Poor**



Lack of flow in the river has minimized prime channel catfish spawning and nursery habitat and thus recruitment has been low for a number of years. Low recruitment of young fish to the fishery has resulted in low overall abundance, but the fish that do survive grow well. The resulting population is low in number, but implementation of a supplemental stocking program will hopefully improve the outlook in the future. Setline anglers fishing trot and limb lines over shallow flats and toward the upper ends of coves in June typically realize the best success.



*Length-frequency of channel catfish sampled at Cedar Bluff in 2018*

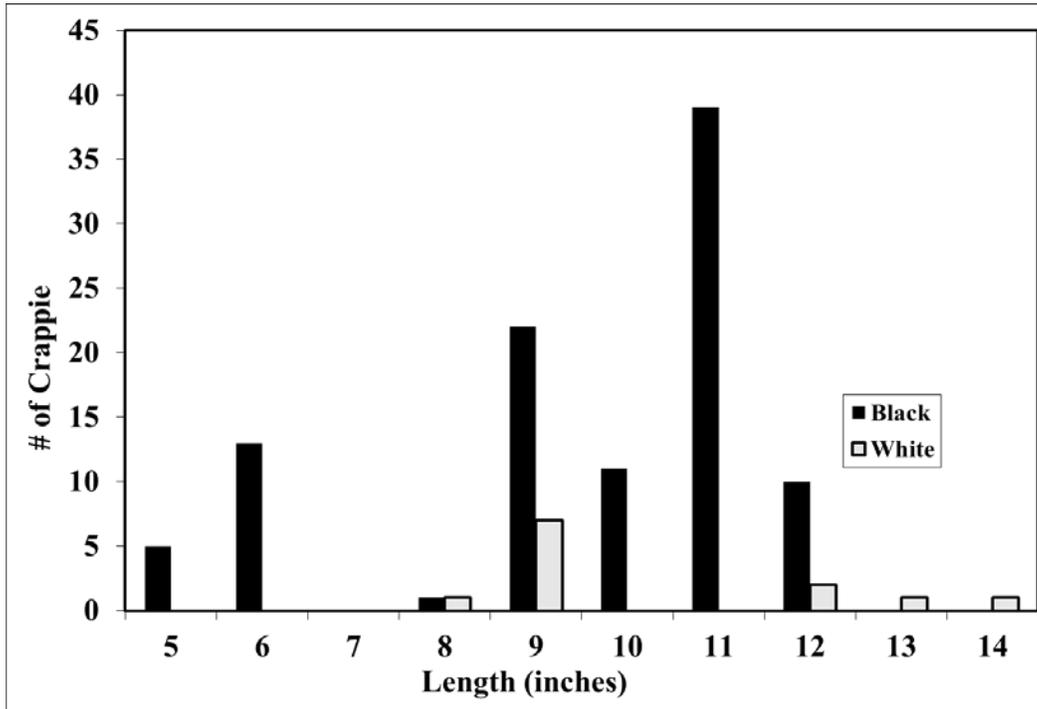
### **Crappie – Fair**

Both black and white crappie inhabit Cedar Bluff, and both populations suffered limited reproduction and recruitment during the recent drought. However, easing of drought conditions beginning in 2014 helped improve crappie recruitment conditions resulting in a slow rebuilding of both populations. With limited recruitment and rapid growth of existing individuals, a 10-inch minimum length limit was implemented January 1, 2018 to extend the use of a limited resource. Overall abundance will be low to moderate, but



harvestable-sized fish make up respectable segments of each population as approximately 71% of black crappie range from 10 to 13 inches and 33% of white crappie range from 13 to 15 inches. Targeting

crappie when they are concentrated, such as on spawning areas during late-April to early-May or on the fish attractors during the fall and winter should yield the best crappie angling opportunities.



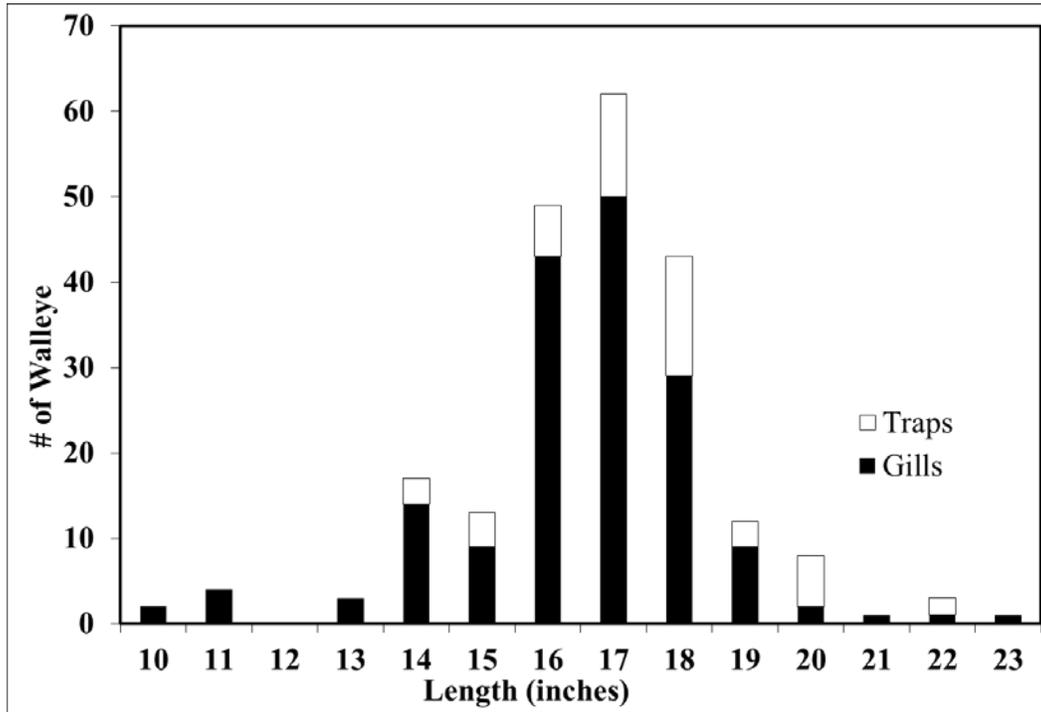
*Length-frequency of black and white crappie sampled at Cedar Bluff during 2018*

### **Walleye – Good**

Natural production, recruitment, and thus establishment of year classes has been relatively consistent at good to exceptional levels resulting in an abundance of walleye. Establishment of an exceptionally strong 2014 year class has boosted abundance. But increased harvest resulting from Cedar Bluff’s recent reputation as a walleye lake has reduced the abundance of fish 18 inches and larger. In response to reduced size structure quality, a 21-inch minimum length limit was implemented January 1, 2018 to allow rebuilding of the population. High abundance of young fish ranging from 15 to 18 inches in length will make for excellent catch-and-release fishing. But limited numbers of fish 18 inches and larger combined with the more restrictive length limit will reduce harvest opportunities in 2019. Given an additional year or two of growth, harvest potential is expected to increase to levels similar to those realized in the past with the



primary difference being larger fish harvested. Fishing jig-and-worm combinations or crankbaits over hard bottomed points, roadbeds, and parking lots in April through early-June will be most productive.

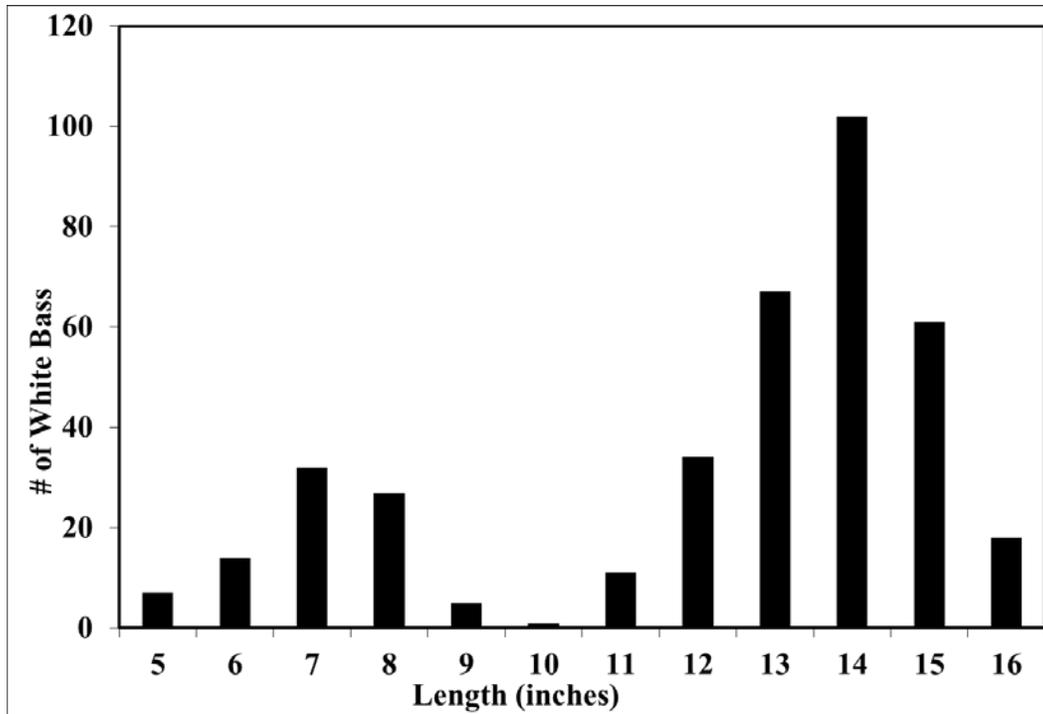


*Length-frequency of walleye sampled in trap and gill nets at Cedar Bluff during 2018*

**White Bass – Excellent**

White bass abundance has been consistent at moderate to high levels and fish in the 13- to 16-inch range occupy the largest proportion of the population. Better than average gizzard shad production over the recent past resulted in good growth and condition realized by white bass. Anglers can expect similar angling opportunities to those experienced over the past several years with catches consisting of good numbers of fish ranging in length from 13 to 16 inches. Best angling opportunities exist in early April when fish spawn near the dam. Good angling opportunities can be had through much of the rest of the year as whites bust shad on the surface during late June, transition to feeding off deeper points and breaks in the summer, and feed on shad off shallow points and in the shallows of coves in the fall.



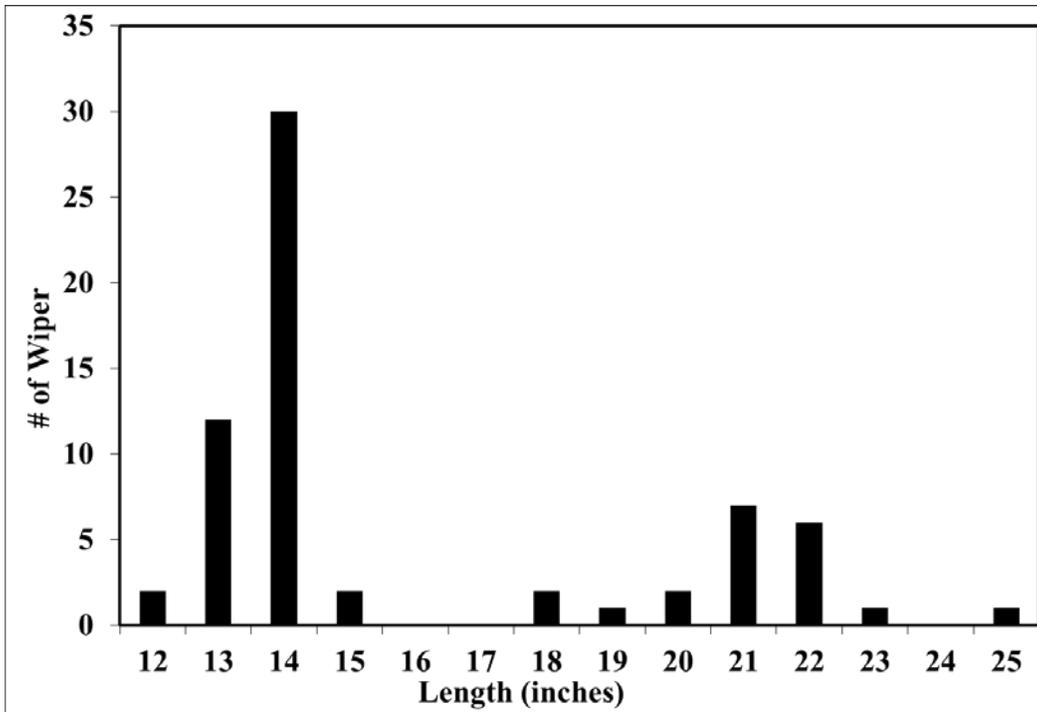


*Length-frequency of white bass sampled at Cedar Bluff during 2018*

**Wiper – Good**



Biannual stocking has successfully maintained this population at a consistent, moderate level. Good recruitment of a 2017 year class resulted in an abundance of 14- to 16-inch fish. Although trophy-sized fish are rare, individuals ranging from 20 to 24 inches made up 25% of the most recent sample and will provide good angling opportunities in 2019. Spring angling opportunities consist of fishing shallow, windy points with shad imitations such as bucktail jigs early, but as wipers transition to deeper water later in the spring, drifting live bait over deeper points and drop-offs is effective. Once young shad become available in the summer, jigging spoons vertically or fishing live shad over deeper points, drop-offs, and around the fish attractors can be effective. As the water cools in the fall, fishing shallow points and other shallow, hard-bottomed areas with shad imitation lures can be good.



*Length-frequency of wiper sampled at Cedar Bluff during 2018*

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## Protect Our Waters

Stop aquatic hitchhikers!



**Clean. Drain. Dry.**

Every lake, every time.

**Use it where you catch it.**

One bait, one lake: Do it for the future's sake.

Know the rules. Visit: [ProtectKS Waters.org](http://ProtectKS Waters.org)

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*Anglers and boaters are reminded of the perils of aquatic nuisance species, two of which can be found at Cedar Bluff Reservoir. Please take the time and effort to clean, drain, and dry your vessel and trailer following an outing on Cedar Bluff, to prevent infestation of other waters. Eurasian milfoil and zebra mussels are the two aquatic nuisance species inhabiting Cedar Bluff. There are lakes close by that remain clean and ANS free, we'd sure like to keep them that way!*