

SURVEY REPORT

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



FISH MANAGEMENT SURVEY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR

DEPARTMENT WATERS ON LEXINGTON WMA

2023

SURVEY REPORT

State: Oklahoma

Project Title: Fish Management Survey Report

Period Covered: 2023

Prepared by: OFRL Research Biologists

Date Prepared: January 2024

Abstract

The Central Region of fisheries manages several bodies of water on Lexington WMA for fishing opportunities. Three lakes are included, Dahlgren, Smith and Verlin, as well as a few smaller ponds. In 2023 Smith Lake and Verlin Lake were sampled to assess fish presence after some minor renovations to both bodies of water.

Smith Lake

Introduction

Smith Lake is an Oklahoma Department of Wildlife owned lake found in Cleveland County. The lake is in Lexington Wildlife Management Area. The lake consists of 5.3 surface acres and approximately a half mile of shoreline. The upper end of the lake consists of flooded timber, and there is one jetty that is maintained for fishing access. Repairs were necessary because of Beaver damage to Smith Lake dam. Water level was lowered to complete the repairs.

Results

Spring Electrofishing

Water temperature was 20° C during sampling and the lake was 3-4 feet below normal pool level. Considering this sample was more “exploratory” in nature, only two sites were sampled. Seventeen Largemouth Bass were sampled, the largest individual was 500 mm in total length (TL) and weighed 1555 g, and the smallest was 113 mm TL and weighed 10 g. One Channel Catfish was sampled and measured 705 mm TL and weighed 4025 g. Three sunfish species were found, Green Sunfish (5 individuals), Redear Sunfish (38 individuals) and Bluegill (25 individuals). The largest, a Green Sunfish, measured 237 mm TL and weighed 150 g, and the smallest, a Bluegill, measured 75 mm TL and weighed 5 g. Also of note, Golden Shinners were encountered while sampling, likely a bait bucket release, and appeared to be actively spawning.

Recommendations

1. Return when Smith fills to normal pool level and assess population dynamics for sportfish species (Largemouth, Sunfish Spp., Channel Catfish) following ODWC standardized sampling procedures (SSP).

Verlin Lake

Introduction

Verlin Lake is an Oklahoma Department of Wildlife owned lake found in Cleveland County. The lake is in Lexington Wildlife Management Area. The lake consists of 5.86 surface acres and approximately a half mile of shoreline. Repairs were necessary because of Beaver damage to Verlin Lake dam, dredging of the upper end was also needed because of siltation. Water level was lowered to complete the repairs.

Results

Spring Electrofishing

Water temperature was 20° C during sampling and the lake was 6+ feet below normal pool level. Considering this sample was more “exploratory” in nature, only one sample was obtained. Recent rains had also caused Verlin to be very turbid, which also impacted sampling efforts. Six Largemouth Bass were sampled, the largest individual was 412 mm in total length (TL) and weighed 840 g, and the smallest was 202 mm TL and weighed 95 g. X Bluegill were sampled, the largest individual was 193 mm TL and weighed 110 g, and the smallest individual was 65 mm TL and weighed 5 g.

Recommendations

1. Return when Verlin fills to normal pool level and assess population dynamics for sportfish species (Largemouth, Sunfish Spp., Channel Catfish) following ODWC standardized sampling procedures (SSP).