LDWF INLAND FISHERIES UPDATE 2019

Brian J. Heimann | FRWC meeting | May 1, 2019
SAMPLING EFFORTS & RESULTS
Electrofishing

Primary target of sampling by electrofishing ➔ largemouth bass (LMB)
Spring 2019 – point estimate is the highest observed largemouth bass CPUE in 23 years.
Electrofishing – CPUE

Spring 2019 – Increasing trend (50 LMB/hr to 184 LMB/hr) in largemouth bass CPUE from 2012
Spring 2019 – Quality size fish (12”-15”) at 25 year observed high; preferred size fish (15”-20”) at 23 year observed high
Electrofishing – CPUE

Spring 2012 to Spring 2019 – Increasing trend in CPUE of all size categories of largemouth bass since 2012
Electrofishing – Relative Weights

Fall 2018 – Increasing trend in largemouth bass relative weight over the past 20 years. In 2018, some of the highest relative weights ever observed from False River bass.
Increasing trend in largemouth bass relative weight over the past decade. In 2018, some of the highest relative weights ever observed from False River bass.
Seine

Primary target of seine sampling ➔ YOY fish (bass/bream)
Seine – largemouth bass

Variability in YOY bass/seine haul over the past 28 years, showing an increasing trend in CPUE in recent years.
YOY largemouth bass from fall electrofishing

Increasing trend in LMB CPUE of sub-stock fish over the past 10 years, most notably since 2013.
Gill nets

Primary target of gill net sampling ➔ rough fish species (e.g. carp/buffalo/gar/bowfin/drum)
Gill nets – rough fish/1000 yds.

High variability across all years; stable in recent years
Gill nets – common carp/1000 yds.

High variability across all years; steady decline over the past decade
Gill nets – lbs./100 ft.

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<td>Striped Bass</td>
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<td>Black Crappie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common Carp</td>
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<td>15.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bigmouth Buffalo</td>
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<td>Channel Catfish</td>
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<td>Longnose Gar</td>
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<td>Spotted Gar</td>
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<td>Gizzard Shad</td>
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<td>Paddle Fish</td>
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<td>5.19</td>
<td>4.28</td>
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Common carp and smallmouth buffalo make up the majority of gill net captures.
Lead nets

Primary target of lead net sampling ➡️ crappie
Have only sampled with lead nets in False River for 2 years; plan to continue sampling in the future to build a more robust dataset.
Water Clarity – secchi disk
Secchi disk – average readings (in centimeters)

Increasing trend in water clarity since 2001, when secchi readings began at False River; 2019 highest observed average readings.
Future standardized sampling in False River

Sampling will continue in False River, as water level allows.

Upcoming sampling:

- Seines – summer 2019
- No fall 2019 electrofishing, no fall 2019 lead nets – due to low water
- Stocking – Hybrid striped bass requested for 2019
- Spring electrofishing 2020
DRAWDOWN SCHEDULE
2019 drawdown rescheduled from abbreviated 2017 drawdown. Then resume normal schedule beginning in 2020, 2023, 2026, etc.
RECENT FISH STOCKING
Stocking – 6,000 FLMB being stocked tomorrow
Stocking – winter 2018/19
• 4,828 - 5” black crappie
• 4,682 - 4” bluegill
SPAWNING BEDS
Spawning beds – Total of 16 gravel beds
Spawning beds
Spawning beds
OTHER HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS
Fish habitat – willow trees
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Fish habitat – gas pipe structures; excess polyethylene gas pipe from Entergy LA and Atmos Energy
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