

CARLYLE LAKE FISHING PROSPECTS FOR 2012

2011 was another great year for the Carlyle Lake fishery. High water which started in mid-May and lasted throughout much of the summer provided excellent nursery areas for young fish and great spawns for a number of species. Growth and condition for most types of fish was superb and we observed some of the highest numbers of various fish species to date.

LARGEMOUTH BASS - EXCELLENT – Simply stated, the largemouth bass population is fantastic! We collected record numbers of bass. Not only are young fishes abundant, but numbers of bass are also very dense in the 10 to 16 inch length range which means that fishing should be good for several more years. During our survey we collected 109 fish per hour which translates to 114 pounds of bass per hour. That is a lot of well fed bass folks! Thirty-four percent of the stock was 14 inches or greater in length while 18% of these fish were 15 inches or more. The largest bass observed weighed in at 5.6 lbs with a 6.5 lb fish collected earlier in the spring. All the bass were extremely fat from feeding on record numbers of small shad. Look for 2012 to provide some of the best largemouth bass fishing ever in Carlyle Lake. A 14" minimum length limit/6 fish per day creel applies.

WHITE BASS - EXCELLENT - White bass are very abundant and had quite a successful spawn in 2011. We observed high numbers of young fish during our survey in which we collected 102 white bass per hour. Fish in the 10 to 12 inch length range were also common. All fish were in superb condition from feeding on shad which means that white bass should overwinter very well. Thirteen percent of the stock was 12 inches or greater in length. Look for great white bass fishing in 2012 as the fish continue to feed and grow.

CRAPPIE – EXCELLENT – The crappie population is superb, possibly the best in years. During our 2011 fisheries survey we collected 110 fish per hour. White crappie make up 26% of the population and a whopping 56% of this stock was 10 inches or greater in length. The remaining 74% of the population is composed of black crappie. Thirty-seven percent of the black crappie are between 9 to 10 inches while 9% are 10

inches or greater in length. All crappie are in fantastic condition and show excellent growth. In 2012 there should be a great number of legal crappie available for harvest. A 10 inch minimum/10 fish per day creel for crappie applies.

CATFISH - GOOD – Our fisheries survey data show that the channel catfish population has remained fairly stable over the years in terms of numbers and size structure. Currently, most channel catfish range in length from 15 to 27 inches and weigh from 1.1 to 8.5 lbs. Condition and growth of channel catfish is only fair to good. The flathead catfish population is as abundant as the channel catfish with much better growth and condition. Flatheads exhibit exceptionally good reproduction in Carlyle Lake. We pick up many young fish during our surveys. Flatheads occur in all sizes ranging from fish weighing less than a pound to 50 lbs or more.

SAUGER - GOOD – Sauger are doing well in the lake. Several year classes are present and condition is good. During our population survey we collected fish ranging in length from 3 to 17 inches. Thirty-three percent of the adult fish are 15 inches or more in length. The largest fish observed weighed 2 lbs. Most sauger originally came from our annual spring fry stocking program. Trolling with deep diving lures produces some nice catches in the lake, while the spillway area offers excellent fishing. A 14 inch minimum length limit/6 fish per day creel applies.

BLUEGILL - VERY GOOD – Due to a few high water years, the bluegill population has experienced a substantial increase in numbers as well as a better population structure. During our latest population survey, one hundred and fifty-six fish were collected per hour. Currently, fifty-five percent of the adult fish are 6 inches or more in length which is quite good. The majority of bluegill range in length from 5 to 7 inches and we collected eight inch fish as well. Condition and growth of the bluegill is excellent. Expect very good fishing for this species in 2012.