

2020 Lincoln Area Fishing Forecast



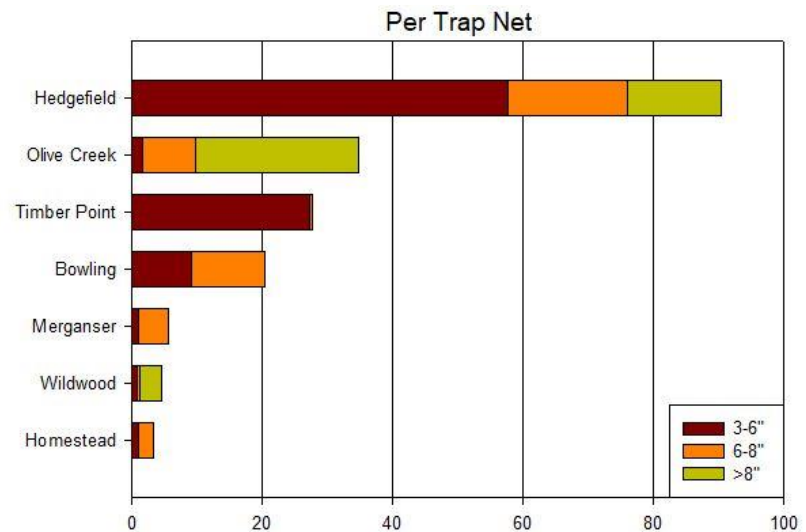
This is a fishing forecast for the Lincoln area. The forecast includes figures for area public water bodies that were surveyed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) during *2018 and 2019. Therefore, there may be other water bodies in the area that provide good fishing opportunities that are not included in this forecast (see map). The following information will help anglers decide on where the best fishing for a variety of species can be found based on survey results. Anglers seeking more information on area lakes such as locations, lake maps, regulations and stocking reports are encouraged to browse the Nebraska Game and Parks website at www.outdoornebraska.gov



Photo 1. Bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*)

Bluegill

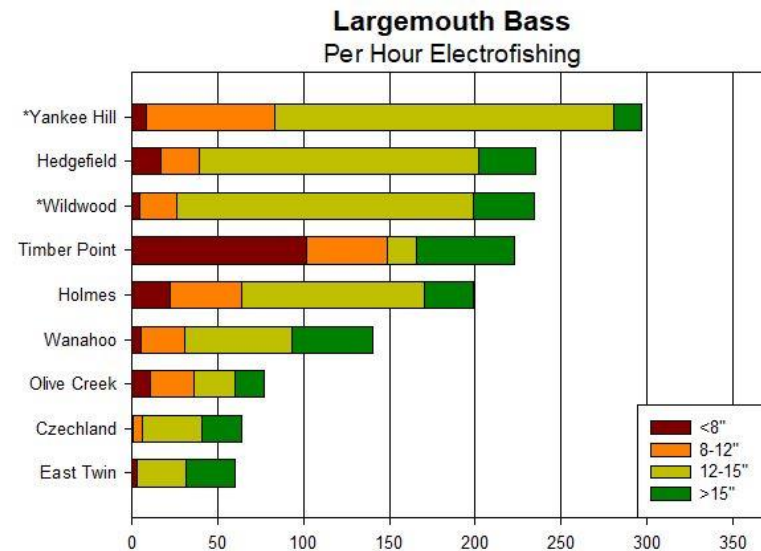
Multiple lakes in 2019 were sampled for bluegills in the Lincoln area. **Hedgefield** had the highest catch rates of bluegill followed by **Olive Creek**, **Timber Point**, and **Bowling**, respectively. **Olive Creek** showed a high proportion of fish greater than 8 inches in length for anglers seeking larger bluegill. It should also be noted that **Olive Creek** and **Homestead** had significant fish kills in 2018, but some bluegill survived.



* 2017 Survey

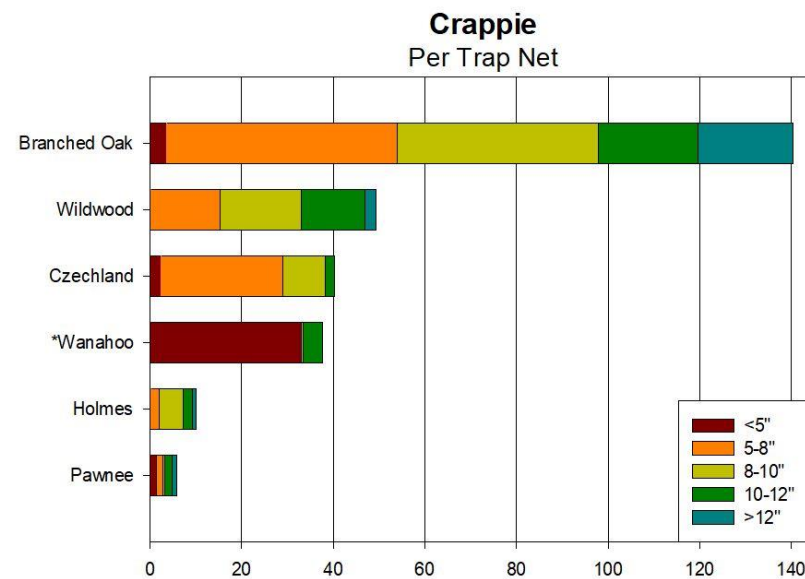
Largemouth Bass

Largemouth bass fishing will be very similar to the last few years in the Lincoln area. **Yankee Hill** had the highest catch rates of largemouth bass as well as some bass greater than 15 inches for anglers targeting larger bass as well as more numbers of bass to potentially catch. **Hedgefield, *Wildwood, Timber Point,** and **Holmes** also saw good catch rates and proportions of fish greater than 15 inches.



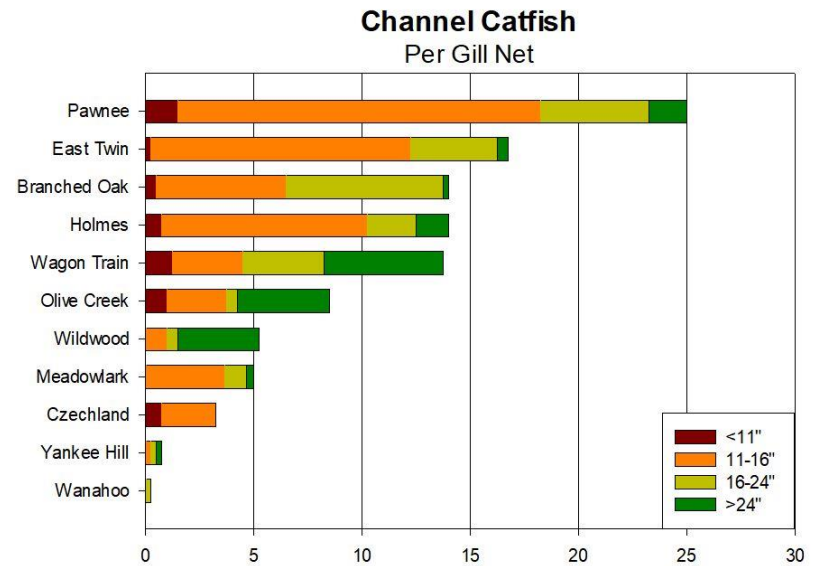
Crappie

Anglers seeking crappies in the Lincoln area will have plenty of opportunity. **Branched Oak** exhibited the highest numbers of crappie sampled (both black and white crappie) as well as the greatest number of fish larger than 12 inches which should provide a good fishing opportunity. **Wildwood, Czechland,** and ***Wanahoo** will also provide good crappie fishing opportunities in 2020.



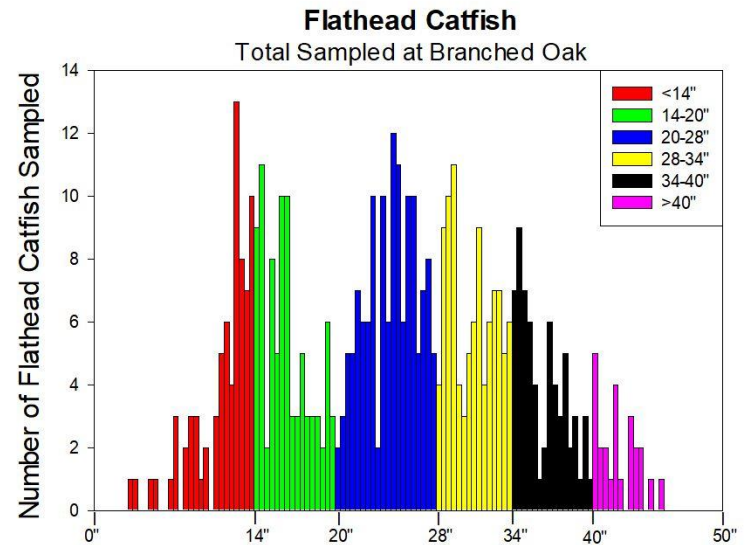
Channel Catfish

Similarly to last year, anglers seeking eater-sized catfish should head to **Pawnee, East Twin, or Branched Oak**. Anglers seeking larger catfish may want to try **Wagon Train, Olive Creek, or Wildwood**. The catch and release regulation at **Wildwood** continues to provide a great opportunity to catch a trophy channel catfish.

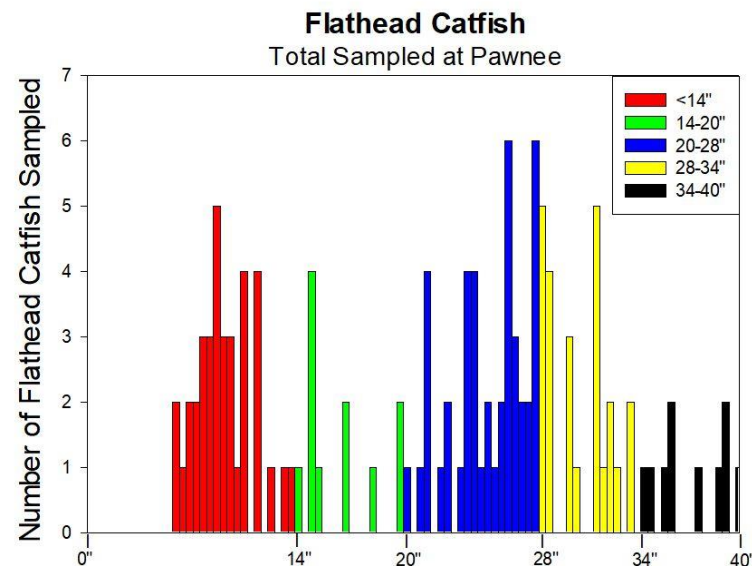


Flathead Catfish

Branched Oak continues to be one of the top flathead destinations in the state with numerous fish over 40" captured in standard surveys, giving anglers a chance to catch a true trophy flathead catfish. Anglers should also note that there is a catch and release regulation on flathead catfish at Branched Oak.

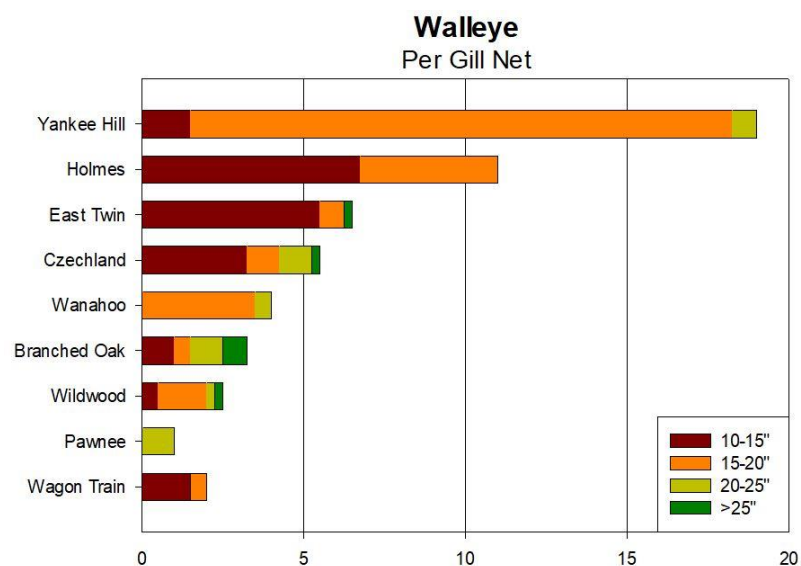


Pawnee Lake will also provide some good flathead fishing in 2020. Unlike Branched Oak, anglers are able to harvest up to five flatheads at Pawnee; however, only one can be over 30 inches.



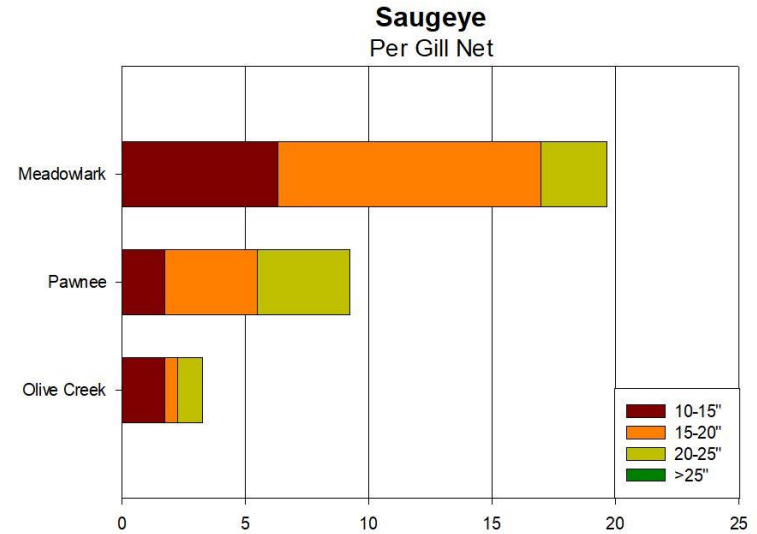
Walleye

Anglers should have a good chance at catching some keeper sized (fish greater than 15 inches) walleye at **Yankee Hill**, **Holmes**, and **Wanahoo** in 2020. Although net results were low anglers can still expect to catch a few walleyes at **East Twin**, **Czechland**, **Pawnee**, **Holmes** and **Branched Oak**.



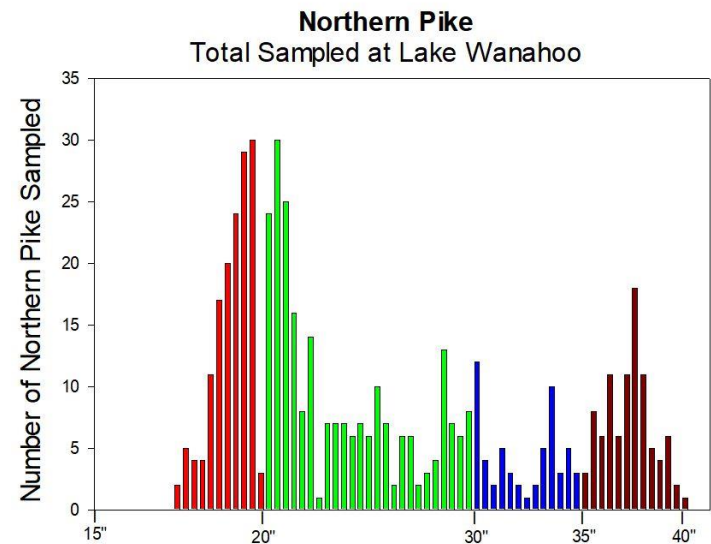
Saugeye

Saugeye were first stocked in a few reservoirs in 2015, and results have been pretty good so far. Anglers looking to catch legal saugeye (fish greater than 15 inches) in the Salt Valley should head to **Meadowlark**, **Olive Creek**, which had one of the best saugeye fisheries in the area, experienced a severe fish kill in 2018 and was restocked; survey results show some saugeye survived the fish kill and the stockings were successful.



Northern Pike

The northern pike in **Lake Wanahoo** continue to grow and provide anglers with a unique fishing experience. Multiple fish over 40" have been sampled in the in the last few years along with a multitude of fish in the 35-40" range. Remember that all northern pike caught must be released immediately. The northern pike tagging study will continue in 2019 and anglers are asked to report all tagged fish to NGPC.FISHTAGS@NEBRASKA.GOV.



Blue Catfish

The Blue catfish stocked in **Pawnee** over the last few years appear to be doing quite well. Anglers can expect these fish to be around 15-20" now. **Branched Oak** continues to produce some really nice blues and a large stocking of fish in 2018 will hopefully continue that trend in the future.

Bullheads

Catchable sized bullheads can be found at **Yankee Hill**, and **Lake Wanahoo**. Several master angler bullheads (>15") were sampled at **Lake Wanahoo** during the spring.

Rainbow Trout

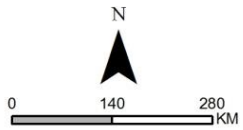
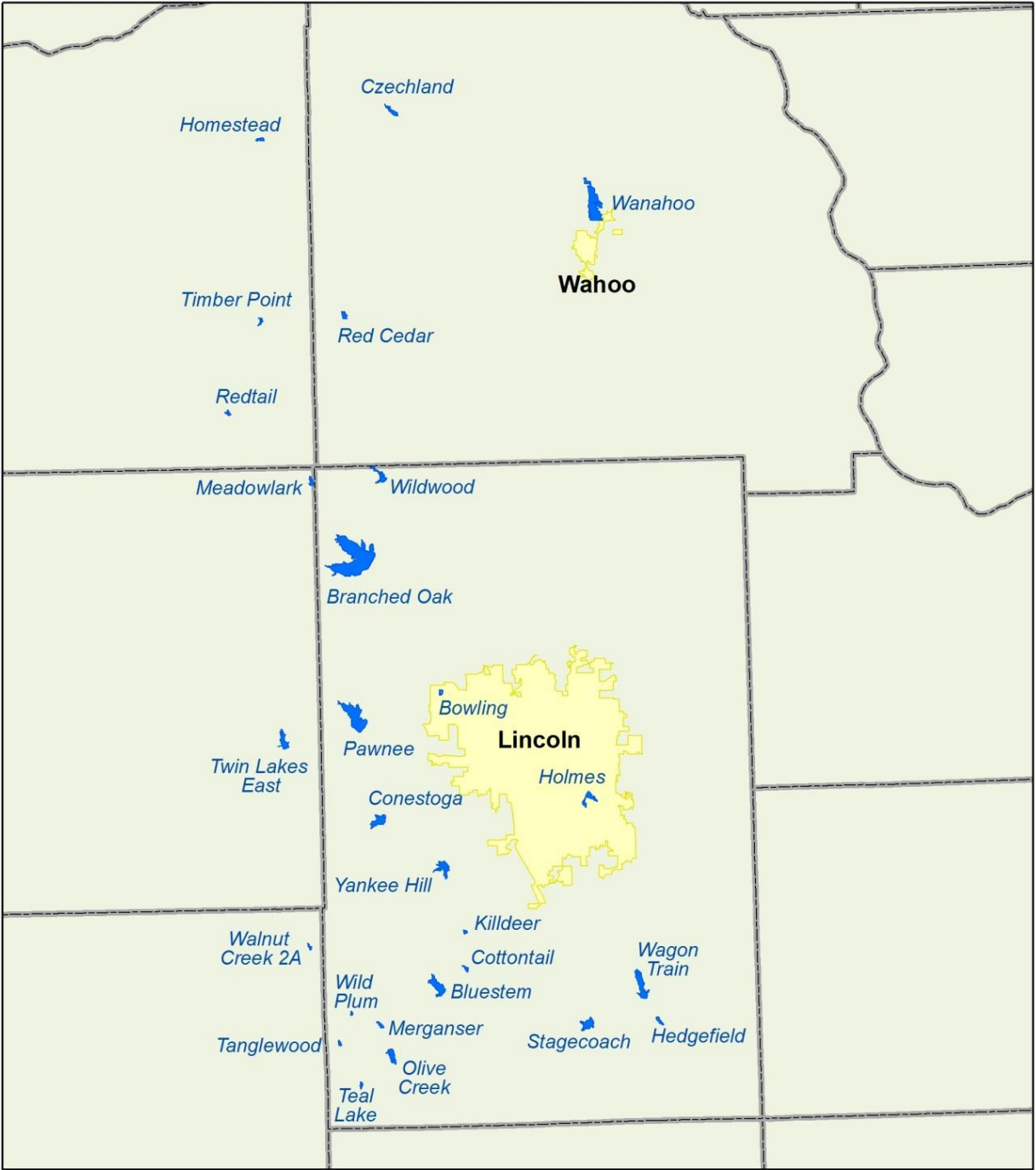
Rainbow trout also provide a great fishing opportunity for children or beginners. Rainbow trout are stocked in the spring, fall and winter at **Holmes Lake** and in the fall and winter in the south pond at **Bowling Lake**.

Wipers

Salt Valley reservoirs such as **Branched Oak** and **Wagon Train** will continue providing angling opportunities to catch wipers in eastern Nebraska. The advanced sized wiper stockings continue to look like a success as many wipers up to and exceeding 20" have were sampled in 2019. Anglers are reminded that they can keep only one white bass, striped bass or wiper that is 16" or longer in their daily bag limit, except at **Branched Oak** where a catch and release regulation is in place. Remember white perch, a similar looking species to white bass, striped bass and wipers, cannot be transported live from any waterbody as they are an aquatic invasive species.



Photo 2. Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)



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Trisha Schlake, IT Division, 12/18/2012

