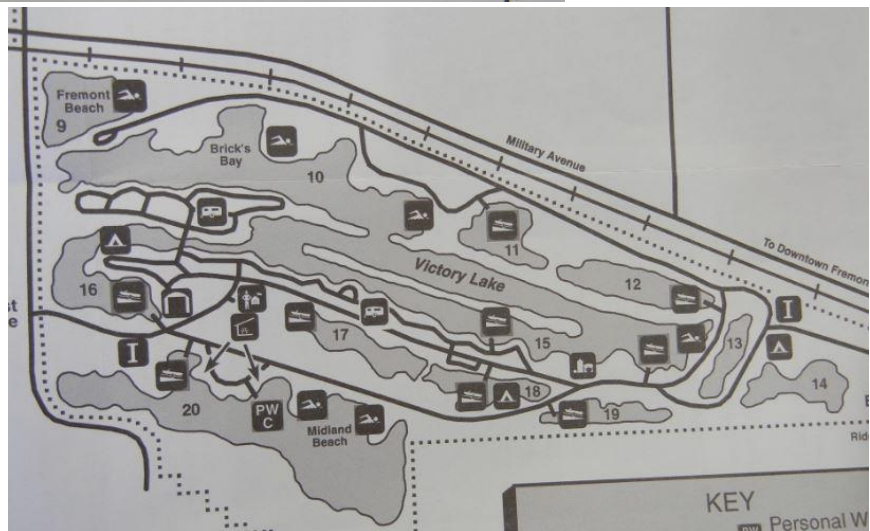


## 2013 Fremont State Lakes Survey Results

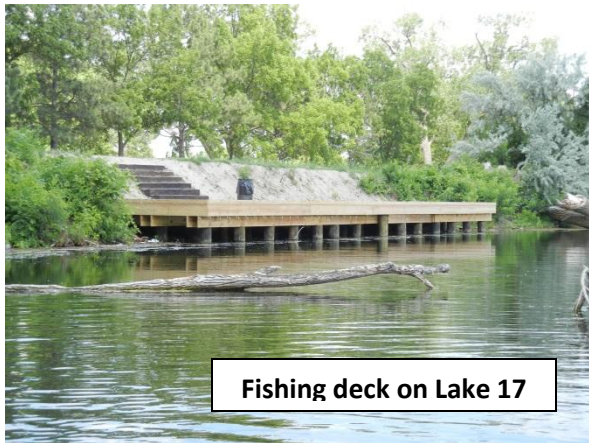
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission  
Phil Chvala, Fisheries Biologist, NE District



The Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area provides 18 sandpit lakes that range in size from 3 to 84 acres that are open to public fishing (lakes 3A and 6 shown on the map don't support fish). The fish communities primarily consist of largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, and channel catfish. In addition, approximately 2,000 black bullheads are stocked each August in Lake 3, 250 twelve inch muskellunge are stocked every other year in Lake 20, and rainbow trout are seasonally stocked in Lake 2 (5,000 ten inch fish each in October and March). There are also several undesirable species present in some of the lakes on the area including white perch, gizzard shad, common carp, and buffalo. In response to these species' presence and in an effort to regain more desirable sport fish populations, several of the lakes on the area were renovated between the fall of 2012 and the spring of 2013 and subsequently restocked. They included lakes 7/8, 9, 13, and 16. Thus, anglers may want to delay fishing those lakes until mid-2014 and into 2015 as there will likely be few harvestable fish until then or after. Several other lakes on the area also contain those undesirable species but their population levels have not reached a point where they have become problematic. Lake renovations constitute a

significant cost, in both time and monetary expense, and they are not entered into lightly. There is substantial evidence that private individuals are moving and stocking fish into different lakes on the area. Thus, anglers are reminded that this activity is not only illegal but also detrimental to the fish communities in these lakes and will only reduce angling opportunity at some point in the future. If you have a question about why a certain species is not stocked in a lake, please contact a biologist.

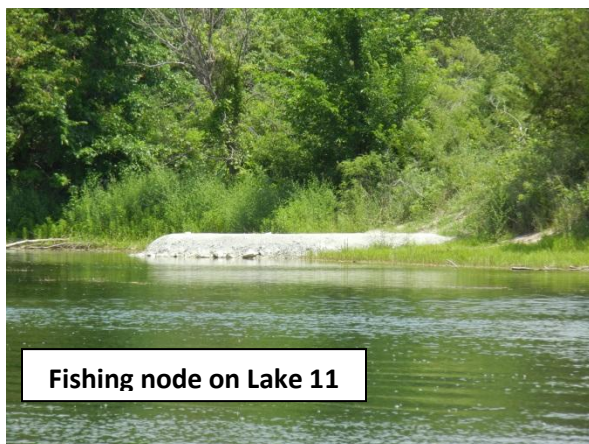
Anglers regular to the area should also notice a couple of other recent improvements to the area. Water quality in many of the lakes should be noticeably improved as most of the lakes received an alum treatment in the fall of 2012. Alum binds the nutrient phosphorus, which is used by algae, and settles to the bottom and "holds" it there. Thus limiting its availability to the algae and reducing the occurrence of algae "blooms", resulting in clearer water. Second, an expansive shore angler enhancement project was completed in 2013 resulting in trails, fishing decks and pads, and shoreline clearing and grading that has greatly improved bank angling opportunities throughout the area.



**Fishing deck on Lake 17**



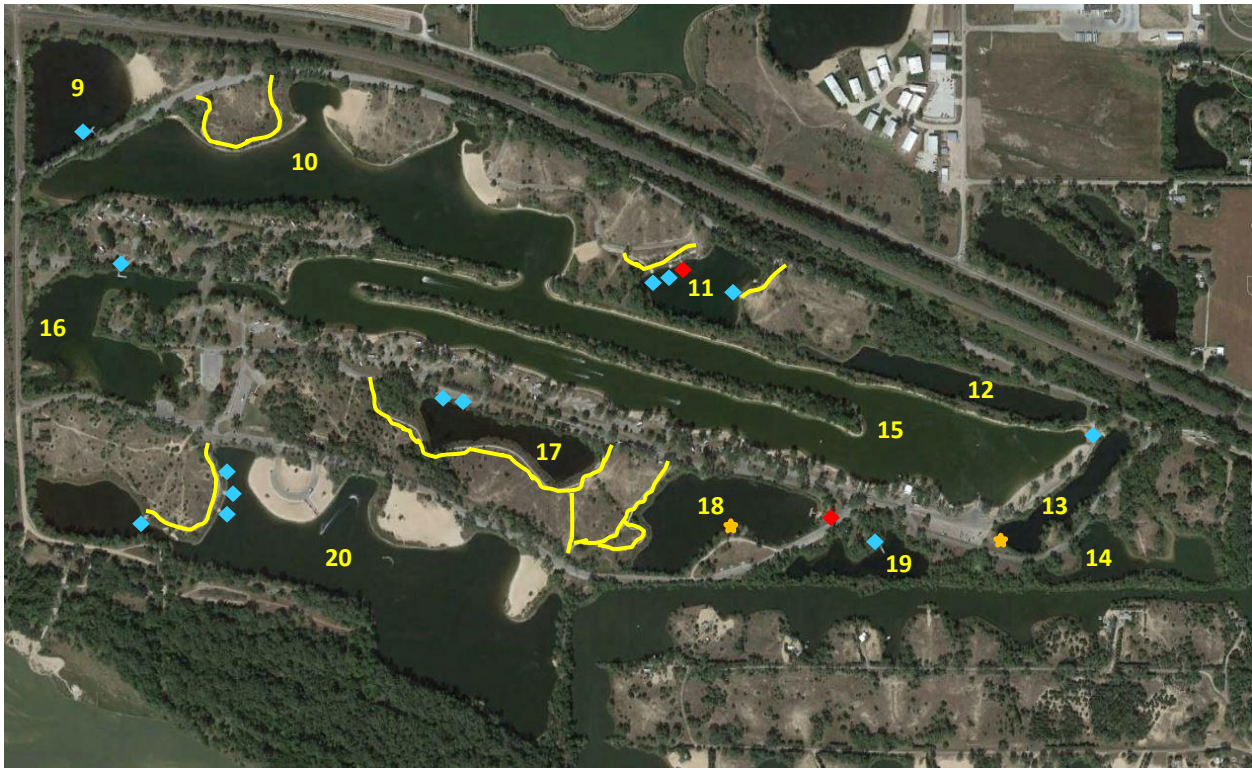
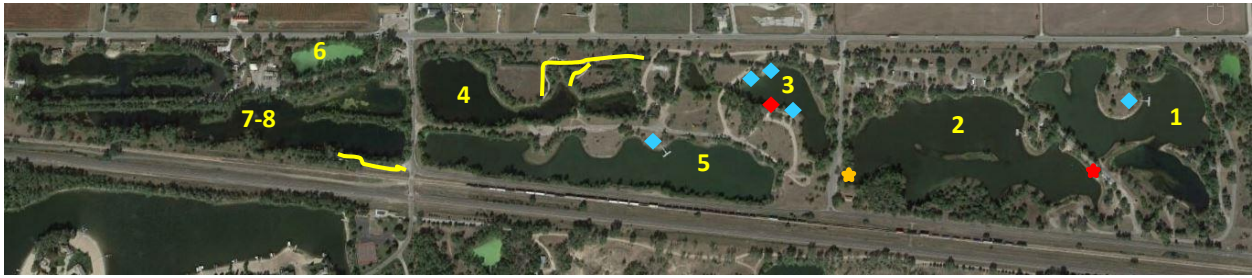
**Fishing pier on Lake 9**



**Fishing node on Lake 11**



**Trail on Lake 20**



- ◆ Fishing deck, pier, or node      ◆ Handicap-access fishing deck, pier, or node      ★ Cleared, graded bank
- ★ Handicap accessible-accessible boat ramp parking      — Trail

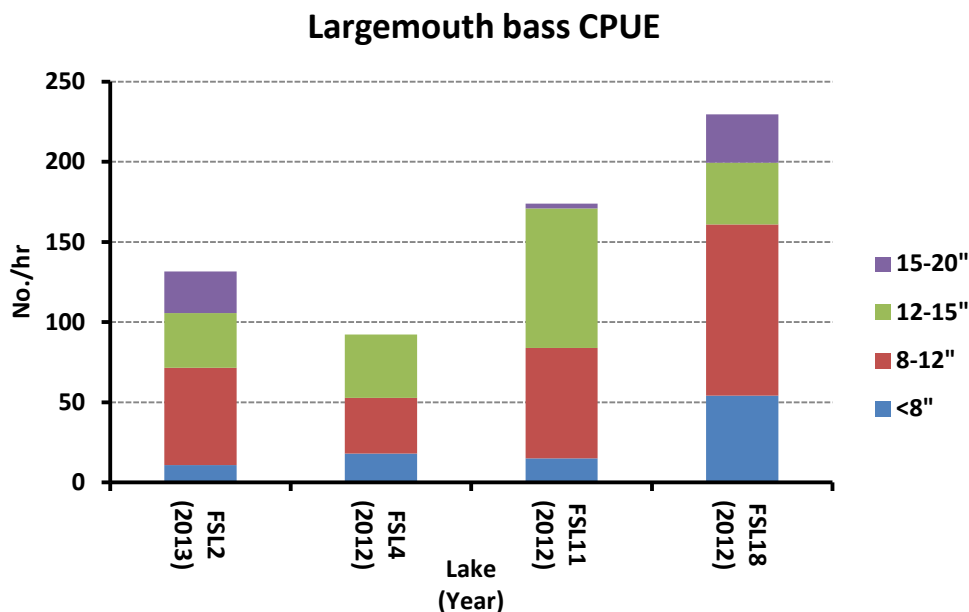
Contour maps of the lakes are available on the Game and Parks website at: <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/fishing/programs/lakemapping/district3.asp>.

**Watercraft use**

Pertaining to watercraft use on the area, two of the lakes, Lake 20 and Victory Lake (which actually includes Lakes 10 and 15), are open to power-boating while the remaining are open only to non-powered watercraft and electric motors. Boaters and anglers are reminded of the new regulations that went into effect in 2013 requiring any boat that has been on a waterbody must have the water drained from all compartments, equipment, or containers before leaving the launch area and to remove all aquatic vegetation from the boat and trailer before leaving the launch

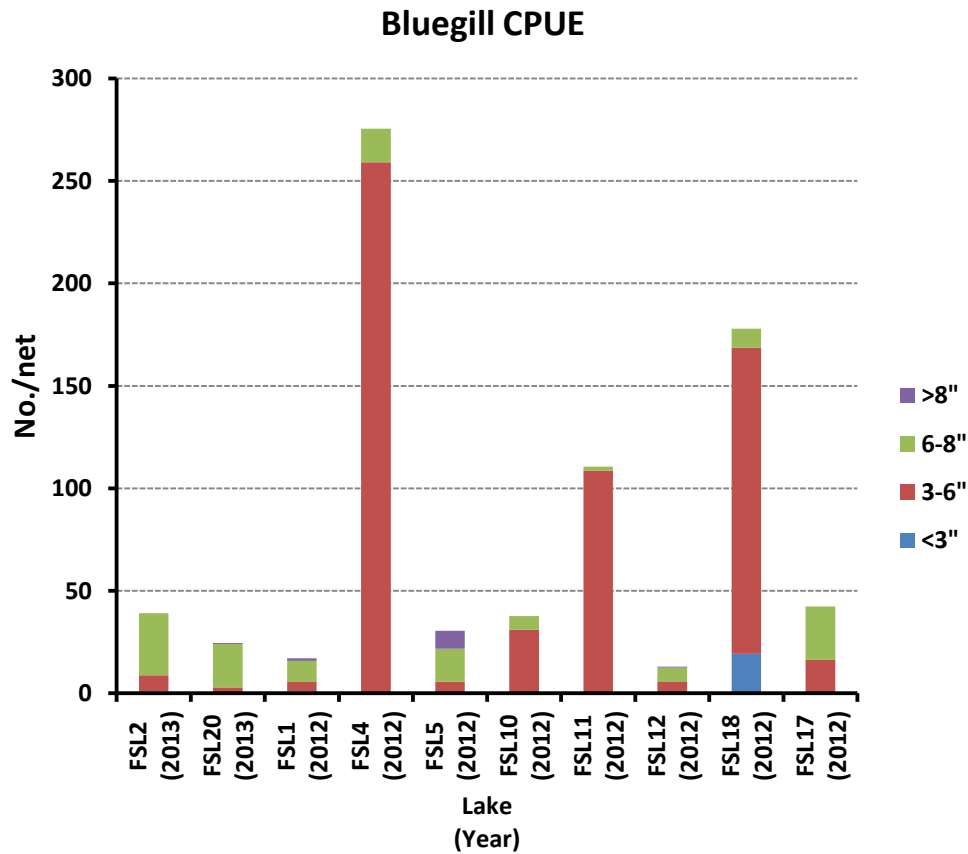
area. These new regulations are meant to control the spread of aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, and curly-leaf pondweed to name a few. Additional information about aquatic invasive species and preventing their distribution can be found in the 2013-2014 Nebraska Fishing Guide (pp. 28-29) and at the University of Nebraska Invasive Species website: <http://www.neinvasives.com>. More information for Northeast District lakes such as location, boat ramps, species present, special regulations, etc. can also be found in the Nebraska Fishing Guide.

## Largemouth bass



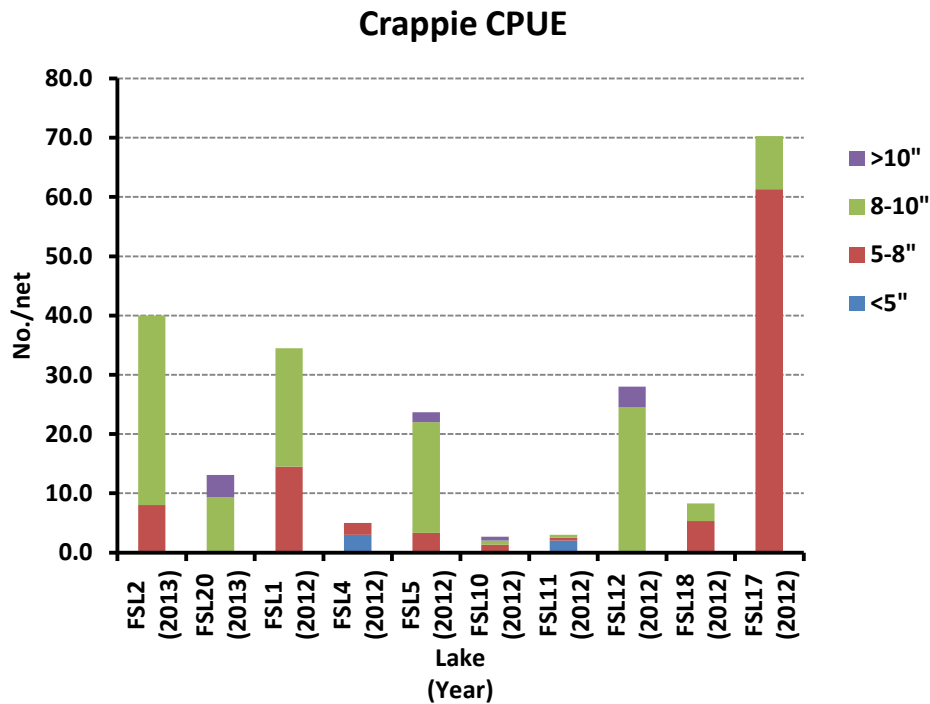
Data from both 2012 and 2013 are included in the graph above as only one lake was sampled for bass in 2013. Bass are collected by night-time electrofishing efforts that are conducted in the spring of the year. A catch rate of at least 150 bass per hour of electrofishing is desirable as it not only equates to good catch rates for anglers seeking bass but also limits panfish recruitment so that desirable growth rates and size structure on those panfish can be maintained. Catch was a bit low for bass in lakes 2 and 4 but decent size distribution was apparent in all four recently sample lakes. Bass can be caught in any of the lakes on the area but those that should provide high catch rates for lots of action would include 1, 11, 12, 17, and 20. Those with more moderate catch rates, but where regular action could still be expected, along with the potential to catch a few larger fish, might include lakes 2, 5, and 18. Regulations pertaining to largemouth bass include a 15-inch minimum length limit and a daily bag limit of 5, of which only one can equal or exceed 21 inches.

## Bluegill



Netting efforts took place in a number of the lakes on the area over the last two years. Like bass, bluegill can also be caught from any of the lakes on the area but those that hold larger fish that anglers might be interested in taking home include lakes 1, 2, 5, 12, and 20. Those with high numbers where faster action could be expected include lakes 4, 11, and 18. Growth rates should be very good in the four lakes that were renovated in 2012 and 2013 so decent bluegill should be present in those lakes by 2015 if not sooner.

## Crappie



Crappie catch rates can be quite variable depending on timing but recent sampling revealed that lakes 5, 10, 12, and 20 have populations that have a good proportion of larger fish. Lakes 1 and 2 appeared to support higher density populations with smaller fish. However, those two lakes have produced some nice crappie in years past and shouldn't be overlooked. Additionally, they have had one to two additional growing seasons since the sampling was conducted so larger fish could be available this spring.

Crappie and bluegill harvest is regulated by the aggregate (combined species) panfish bag limit of 15. Other panfish species are also present on the area in low densities, including hybrid sunfish and a few yellow perch, for example. A list of all species considered panfish and thus regulated under this bag limit can be found on page 14 of the 2013-2014 Fishing Guide.

### Other Species/Stocking

Ten-inch **channel catfish** are regularly stocked in September of each year in most of the lakes on the area. They are stocked in all of the lakes except 3, 7/8, 14, and 19. Those that have provided some of the better (larger) catfish angling opportunities over time have been lakes 5, 10/15 (Victory), 18, and 20. Stockings of other species over the past five years are provided in the following table along with the 2014 projected stockings:

Lake #	Date	Species	Number	Size (inches)
2	3/27/2009	Rainbow trout	4,250	10
2	10/20/2009	Rainbow trout	4,250	10
2	3/26/2010	Rainbow trout	5,251	10
2	10/6/2010	Rainbow trout	5,000	10
2	3/18/2011	Rainbow trout	4,978	10.75
2	10/5/2011	Rainbow trout	5,000	10.25
2	3/16/2012	Rainbow trout	5,000	11
2	11/6/2012	Rainbow trout	5,000	10.5
2	3/15/2013	Rainbow trout	5,100	10.5
2	10/7/2013	Rainbow trout	4,750	10.3
2	3/2014	Rainbow trout	5,000	10
2	10/2014	Rainbow trout	5,000	10
3	9/1/2009	Black bullhead	1,610	9.6
3	8/31/2010	Black bullhead	1,759	9.5
3	8/18/2011	Black bullhead	2,004	9
3	8/28/2012	Black bullhead	2,630	10
3	8/27/2013	Black bullhead	1,172	10
3	9/2014	Black bullhead	1,500	10
7/8	9/27/2012	Bluegill	5,015	2
7/8	9/27/2012	Largemouth bass	1,004	4
7/8	6/26/2013	Largemouth bass	1,552	1.5
9	9/27/2012	Bluegill	5,865	2
9	9/27/2012	Largemouth bass	1,159	3.5
9	6/26/2013	Largemouth bass	1,843	1.5
13	5/1/2013	Bluegill	2,100	1.25
13	6/26/2013	Largemouth bass	680	1.5
16	9/27/2012	Bluegill	7,140	2
16	9/27/2012	Largemouth bass	1,460	4
16	6/26/2013	Largemouth bass	2,425	1.5
20	3/31/2011	Muskellunge	249	12
20	4/23/2013	Muskellunge	262	13
20	5/2015	Muskellunge	250	10

As always, actual numbers stocked depends on availability from Game and Parks Hatcheries.

Questions concerning fish management on the Fremont Lakes SRA can be directed to Phil Chvala ([phil.chvala@nebraska.gov](mailto:phil.chvala@nebraska.gov)) or Jeff Schuckman ([jeff.shuckman@nebraska.gov](mailto:jeff.shuckman@nebraska.gov)) at the Northeast District Nebraska Game and Parks office in Norfolk (402-370-3374).