

Interstate 80 Lakes — Grand Island to Elm Creek

Fish Survey Results — Updated Spring 2017

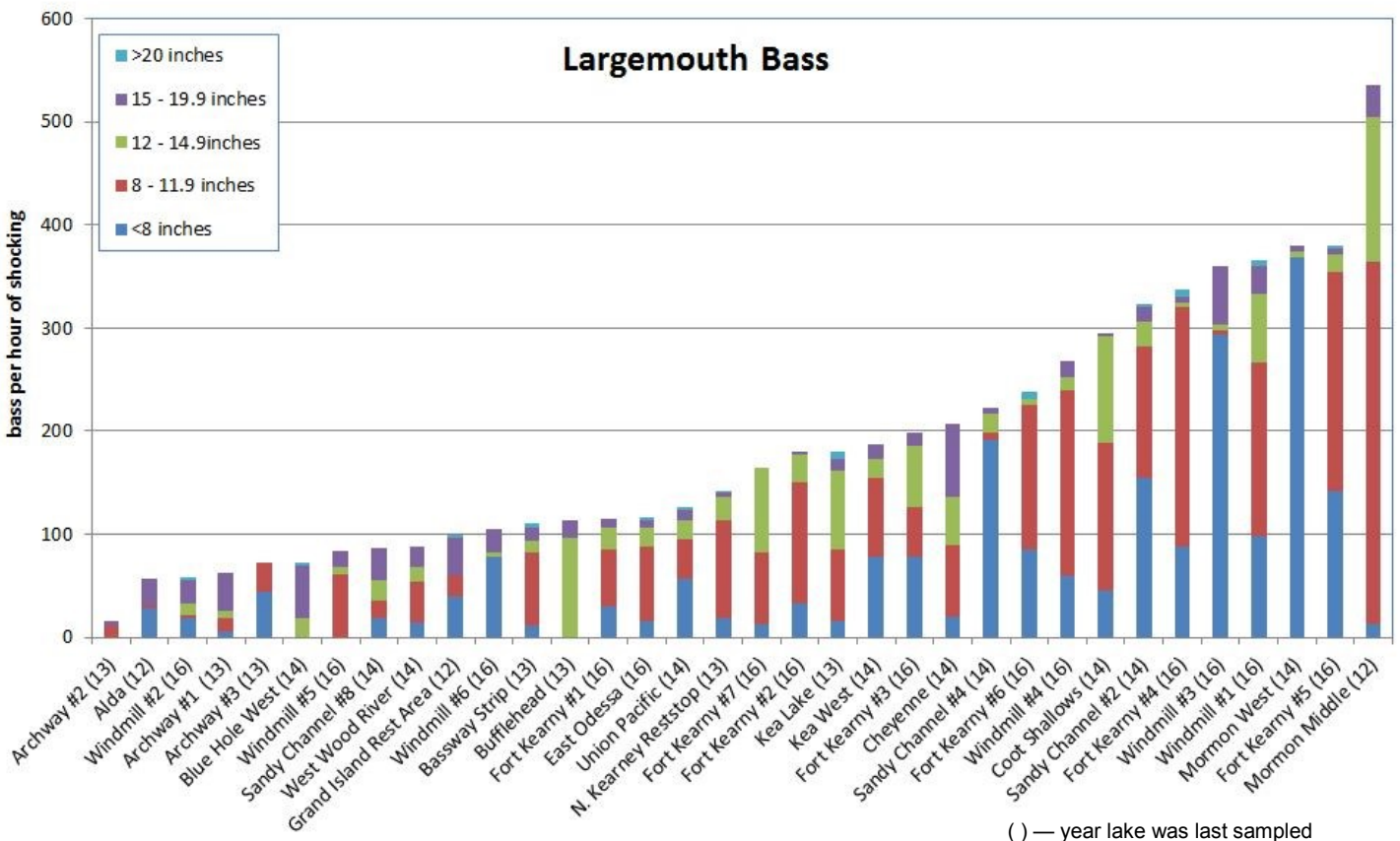


Brad Eifert, Fisheries Biologist

Spanning a stretch of 150 miles along Interstate 80 from Grand Island to Hershey more than 60 small lakes are available for public fishing. Fisheries staff from the Kearney office has the management responsibility for the Interstate lakes located from Grand Island to Elm Creek. These man-made lakes, most of which were created for fill material when the Interstate system was developed in the 1960's, range in size from 1 to 42 acres. The ground water fed lakes have excellent shoreline access for anglers and usually contain clear water and abundant aquatic vegetation, providing excellent habitat conditions for largemouth bass and bluegill. In addition, most of the lakes contain channel catfish, while others have crappie, rock bass, walleye, and northern pike. The fish populations are surveyed on a five year rotation and the following graphs and text display these results.

Largemouth Bass

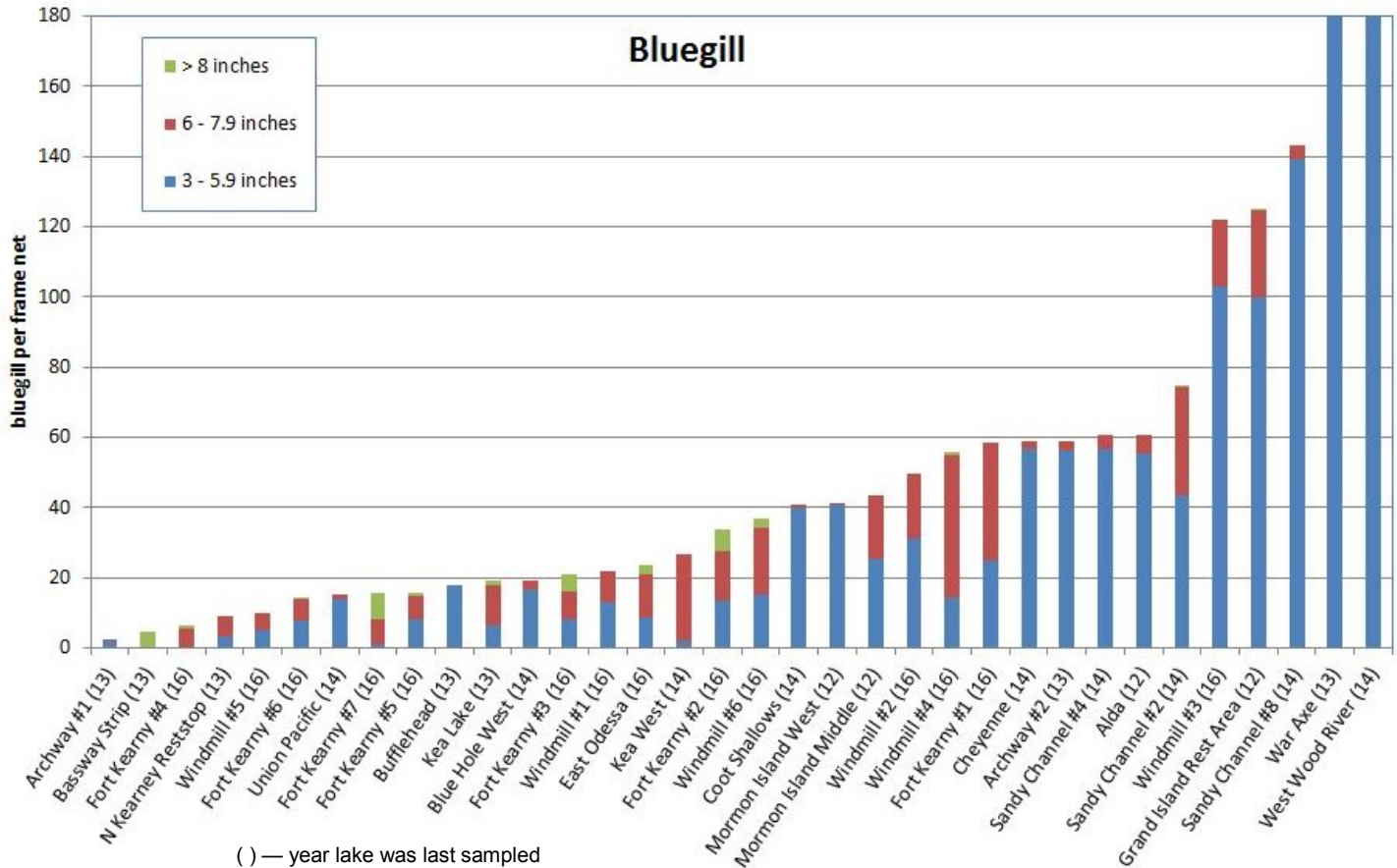
Largemouth bass are present in all of the Interstate lakes in the central portion of Nebraska, with the exception of War Axe, which has been stocked with smallmouth bass. Lakes with high densities of smaller bass, include Windmill, Ft. Kearny, West and Middle Mormon Island, Kea Lake, Coot Shallows, and Sandy Channel #2. Lakes that traditionally produce larger bass include Cheyenne, Windmill #1, Bassway Strip, Blue Hole West, and Sandy Channel #8. Most of the I-80 lakes have a 15-inch minimum length limit on black bass. Exceptions include; Mormon Island SRA, Cheyenne, West Wood River, War Axe, Windmill SRA, Fort Kearny SRA, Archway Lakes, and Sandy Channel SRA, all of which have a 21-inch minimum length limit. In addition, Kea West is designated as a catch and release only lake for all species. Anglers are encouraged to practice catch and release on bass in the I-80 Lakes as they are easily over-harvested.



() — year lake was last sampled

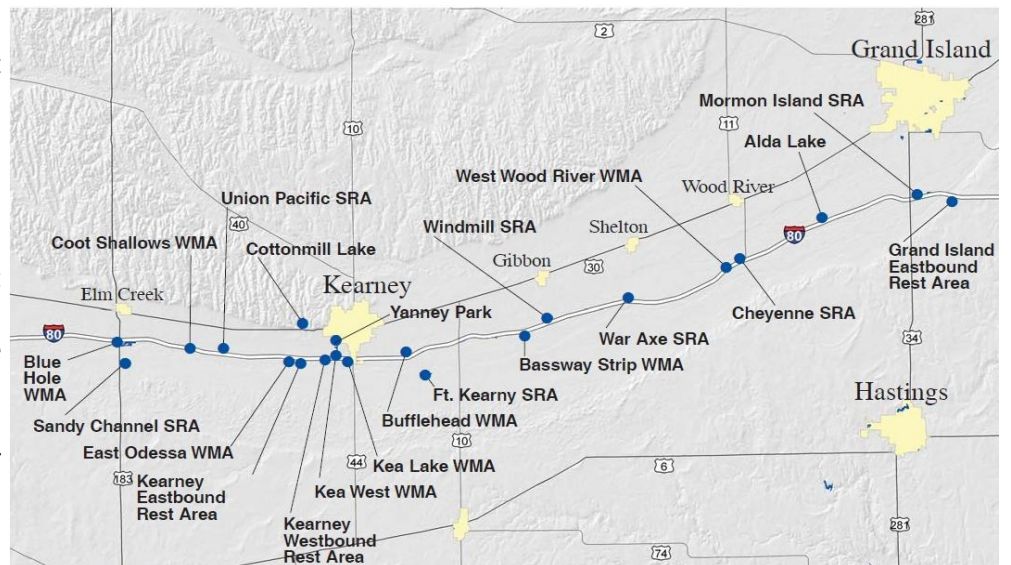
Bluegill

Bluegill are present in most of the I-80 lakes in central Nebraska. While most of the lakes can be great places to catch bluegill, some of the best lakes to catch six to eight inch bluegill include Mormon Island Middle, Cheyenne SRA, Windmill SRA, Fort Kearny SRA, Kea West, and Sandy Channel SRA. Big bluegills, greater than eight inches, can also be found in many of the lakes. Lakes that consistently produce larger bluegill include Bassway Strip, Kea Lake, North Kearney Rest Stop, Windmill #6 and Ft. Kearny #2 and #7. Anglers are reminded that the daily bag limit for panfish is 15 fish per day.



Lake Summaries

The remainder of this document provides additional information on the Interstate 80 Lakes open to public fishing in the central portion of Nebraska. Lakes are covered individually and in geographic order starting at Grand Island and heading west to Elm Creek. Information from the most recent fish population surveys, special regulations, boating regulations, and other general information is covered.



Grand Island Rest Area Lake

Location: 1 mile east of Grand Island Locust Street (Exit 314) Interchange (accessed only from eastbound lane of I-80.)
Latitude: 40.82310 Longitude: -98.32785

Waterbody Information: Grand Island Rest Area Lake is a shallow 6 acre lake with a maximum depth of eight feet. It is owned by the Nebraska Department of Roads. The fishery was renovated in 2004 to remove rough fish and was restocked with largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Survey results from May 2012 indicated a good fishery for largemouth bass, with numerous fish ranging from 16 to 19 inches. The channel catfish population also had a fair number of large fish ranging from 20 to 28 inches. Most of the bluegill sampled were small, ranging from 4.5 to 6.5 inches. Unfortunately, drought and low water levels during the summer of 2012 resulted in a substantial fish kill that likely killed most of the large bass and channel catfish present in the lake. Although numerous small bass and bluegill survived the fish kill, it will likely be several years before the abundance of



large fish rebounds. Due to the shallow depths of this lake, the likelihood of future fish kills remains high during drought years. Water levels were once again very low during the summer of 2013 resulting in another minor fish kill. Future fisheries management and stocking have been temporarily suspended until water levels improve. No boating is allowed on this lake. Low water levels and abundant aquatic vegetation can make fishing difficult during the summer months. Access for shoreline angling is fair.

Mormon Island State Recreation Area

Location: Exit 312, NE quadrant of Grand Island Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.82498 Longitude: -98.37416

Waterbody Information: Three lakes are present at the Mormon Island State Recreation Area. The area is maintained by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission as a State Recreation Area and a park entry permit is required to enter. Modern and primitive camping is available, as well as a shower house and swimming beach. A concrete boat ramp is present on the middle and west lakes and boating is limited to 5 mph/no wake. A



handicapped accessible fishing pier is located on the west lake. Shoreline access is excellent on the middle and west lakes making them great places for family fishing outings. Access to the east lake is by walk-in only and shoreline access is poor. Special fishing regulations for these lakes include a 21-inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass and a 40-inch minimum length limit for muskellunge.

Mormon Island West: The largest of the three lakes at 42 acres. The lake has varied depths, with a maximum depth of 25 feet. A contour map can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>. The fishery in this lake was renovated in 2010 to remove rough fish and has been restocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish, black crappie and muskellunge. Eight-inch walleye were stocked in 2013, 2014 and 2016. A fish population survey was completed on the lake during the spring of 2012, which indicated that the newly established fishery is progressing well. Largemouth bass were very numerous and had an electrofishing catch rate of 590 bass per hour. Most of these fish were from the 2011 year-class and ranged from 4 to 8 inches. Bass from the original 2010 stocking ranged from 11 to 13 inches. Muskellunge also appeared to be doing well and were showing good growth rates. The muskellunge caught during the survey ranged from 18 to 24 inches. Channel catfish were introduced in 2010 and this year-class has provided good angling opportunities during the past year, as these fish range from 15 to 19 inches.

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Mormon Island West (continued):

An additional 2,100 10-inch channel catfish were stocked in the fall of 2012, 2014 and 2016. Two year-classes of black crappie were sampled with the 2010 year-class averaging nine inches and the 2011 year-class averaging five inches. The bluegill from the original stocking ranged from 6 to 8 inches, but most of the bluegill sampled were from the 2011 year-class and averaged three inches. Future fish stockings includes 2,100 10-inch channel catfish and 420 8-inch walleye during the fall of 2018. Forty-two 12-inch muskellunge are scheduled to be stocked in March 2017. The next fish population survey is scheduled for the spring of 2017.

Mormon Island Middle: This 19 acre lake is shallower than the west lake and has a maximum depth of 12 feet. The lake normally has very clear water and has abundant submerged aquatic vegetation. A contour map can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>. The fishery was renovated in 2005 to remove rough fish and has been restocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish, black crappie and redear sunfish. The fish population was last surveyed during the spring of 2012 and results indicated a healthy fish population. Largemouth bass abundance was very high with the majority of the bass ranging from 9.5 to 12.5 inches. There was a fair abundance of 15 to 18 inch bass and the largest collected was nearly 20 inches. Bluegill were abundant, but most were small, ranging from 4.5 to 6.5 inches. Redear sunfish were also common and had slightly better size distribution than the bluegill. Most redear ranged from 6 to 8.5 inches. There were very few black crappie sampled in the survey. Channel catfish were moderately abundant and ranged from 12 to 20 inches. Future fish stocking includes 570 10-inch catfish scheduled for 2018. The next fish population survey is scheduled for the spring of 2017.

Mormon Island East: This 31 acre lake is owned by the Department of Roads. While no active fisheries management occurs on this lake, it has fishable populations of largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, and yellow perch. Access to this lake is by walk-in only through Mormon Island SRA. Shoreline access is very poor due to dense stands of cattails. The fishery has not been surveyed since 1995. No boating is allowed on this lake.

Alda

Location: Exit 305, NE quadrant of Alda Interstate 80 Interchange

Latitude: 40.80278 Longitude: -98.49172

Waterbody Information: Alda is a 12 acre lake owned by the Nebraska Department of Roads. Maximum depth of the lake is 15 feet. The latest fish population survey was completed during the spring of 2012. The quality of the fishery at time was fair. Largemouth bass abundance was lower than what is normally sampled in I-80 lakes. About half of the bass collected during the survey ranged from 3 to 4 inches, while the other half ranged from 15 to 19 inches. Advanced bass fingerlings were stocked in the fall of 2012 to help improve abundance. Bluegill were very abundant, but had a poor size distribution. Most of the bluegill collected ranged from 3 to 5 inches. Only a few bluegill up to 7 inches were caught. Channel catfish were not abundant, but there were some quality sized fish present. Several catfish



averaging 25 inches were sampled. There were 300 10-inch catfish stocked during the fall of 2012, 2014, and 2016. Northern pike have been stocked several times over the years and survey results indicated a fair population of 22 to 28 inch pike present. There were sixty 10-inch pike stocked during the fall of 2013 and 2014. Other species caught during the survey included high numbers of four inch alewife and low numbers of three inch green sunfish. Future fish stockings include 60 10-inch northern pike in the fall of 2017 and 300 10-inch channel catfish during the fall of 2018.

There is a 30-inch minimum length limit on northern pike. No boats are allowed on this lake. There is a small parking area on the north side of the lake which provides fair shoreline access for bank anglers.

Cheyenne

Location: Exit 300, NW quadrant of the Wood River Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.76500 Longitude: -98.59027

Waterbody Information: Cheyenne is a 17 acre lake with a maximum depth of 12 feet. The latest fish population survey was completed in 2014. Survey results indicated that the lake has a very good largemouth bass fishery, with both high abundance and large fish present. Bass from 8 to 12 inches and from 14 to 17 inches were most numerous. The largest bass sampled were 18 inches. There is a 21-inch minimum length limit on black bass for this lake. Bluegill abundance was high, but most of the bluegill ranged from 3 to 5 inches. Only a few bluegill between 5 and 7 inches were sampled. Black crappie are also present. All the crappie collected during the survey ranged from 3 to 4 inches and should provide good fishing in the future. Larger crappie have historically been common at Cheyenne. Channel catfish were very abundant. Most of the sampled catfish ranged from 11 to 19 inches and the largest was 28 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years with the next stocking of 570 10-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other fish species sampled included a moderate abundance of 8 to 25 inch common carp and a few green sunfish and white suckers. Cheyenne has a gravel boat ramp and boating is limited to 5 mph/no wake. Shoreline access is excellent, allowing for family friendly fishing trips. The area is managed as a State Recreation Area and a park entry permit is required. Primitive camping is available.



West Wood River

Location: West Binfield Road & South 140th Road, Directions from Wood River Interchange (Exit 300) go 1/2 mile south, 1 mile west, North across overpass, 1/4 mile west
Latitude: 40.75687 Longitude: -98.61049

Waterbody Information: West Wood River is 15 acres and has a maximum depth of 10 feet. The latest fish population survey was completed in 2014. Survey results indicated a low density largemouth bass population, but the size structure was good. Bass from 8 to 10 inches and from 14 to 16 inches were most abundant. The largest bass collected was 17 inches. There is a 21-inch minimum length limit on black bass for this lake. Bluegill were very abundant, with most of them ranging from 3 to 5 inches. No bluegill larger than six inches were sampled. Black crappie are also present in low abundance. The size structure of the crappie population was very good, as they ranged from 11 to 13 inches. Channel catfish abundance was also very good and lengths ranged from 11 to 18 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 450 10-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. There is a high abundance of common carp present, most ranging from 16 to 25 inches. Other fish collected in low abundance were green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrids, and white suckers. West Wood River is managed as a Wildlife Management Area. Shoreline access is good. A gravel boat ramp was constructed in 2012 and boating is limited to 5 mph/no wake.



War Axe

Location: Exit 291, NE quadrant of Shelton Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.72451 Longitude: -98.73529

Waterbody Information: War Axe is 14 acres and has a maximum depth of 20 feet. The fish population was renovated in 2007 to remove rough fish and has been restocked with smallmouth bass, redear sunfish, channel catfish, and walleye. In addition, bluegill and yellow perch have been illegally introduced. The fish population was last surveyed in the spring of 2015. Survey results showed mixed results regarding the quality of the fishery. Smallmouth bass abundance was good, but has declined since the previous survey. Most smallmouth collected ranged from 13 to 18



inches. Smaller bass were much less common and recruitment might be suffering from high bluegill abundance. There is a 21-inch minimum length limit for black (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted) bass. The redear sunfish population continues to do well, with most fish ranging from 7 to 9 inches. The largest redear sampled were ten inches. There is a high abundance of channel catfish, with sampled fish ranging from 11 to 25 inches. Channel catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 420 10-inch catfish scheduled for the fall of 2017. Bluegill have been illegally introduced in War Axe and their presence is negatively impacting the fishery. Bluegill abundance is extremely high and the size structure is poor, with most of the bluegill ranging from 3 to 5 inches. Yellow perch are also present in moderate abundance, with most fish ranging from 3 to 7 inches. Eight-inch walleye (280 fish per year) were stocked in 2015 and 2016 to assist with panfish control. Additional walleye are scheduled to be stocked in 2018. A gravel boat ramp is present and boating is restricted to 5 mph/no wake. Shoreline access for anglers is good and the area is a great place for a family fishing outing. The area is managed as a State Recreation Area and a park entry permit is required for entry. Primitive camping is available and a modern restroom is open during the summer months. A bathometric map of the lake can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>

Windmill State Recreation Area

Location: Exit 285, NE quadrant of Gibbon Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.70691 Longitude:

98.845301

Waterbody Information: Six lakes are available for fishing at Windmill SRA ranging from 1 to 7 acres. The area is maintained as a State Recreation Area and a park entry permit is required to enter. The area provides both modern and primitive camping, as well as a shower house and swimming beach. Shoreline access is excellent on all of the lakes and the area is an excellent place to introduce youngsters to fishing. There is a 21-inch minimum length limit in effect on all of the lakes for largemouth bass. No boat ramps exist on these lakes, but boats with electric motors and non-powered boats may be used. The fisheries in all of these lakes were last surveyed during the spring of 2016.



Windmill #1: This is the largest lake on the area at 7 acres. This lake has a high abundance of largemouth bass in all size classes. Survey results revealed good numbers of bass over 15 inches, with the largest bass sampled topping 21 inches. Bluegill abundance was also high and the size structure of the population was fairly good. Most bluegill sampled ranged from 5.0 to 7.5 inches. Black crappie abundance was fair, with crappie up to 9.5 inches present. Other gamefish species sampled included low abundance of small green sunfish and yellow perch. This lake commonly floods, so there are numerous other species present. Common carp, bullheads, gizzard shad, and gar are abundant. Future stockings for Lake #1 include 400 10-inch channel catfish during the fall of 2017. A lake map can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>

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Windmill State Recreation Area (continued)

Windmill #2: This 2 acre lake has a maximum depth of 18 feet. Largemouth bass abundance has declined since the last survey was completed, but bass were sampled in all size groups. There were good numbers of bass larger than 15 inches, with the largest fish approaching 21 inches. The size quality of the bluegill fishery also declined, but abundance remains high. Most of the bluegill sampled ranged from 5 to 6.5 inches. Black crappie up to 11 inches and yellow perch up to 8 inches were also present in low abundance. Channel catfish were abundant, ranging from 12 to 27 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 100 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. This lake also contains a few large common carp. A handicapped accessible fishing pier is located on the north side of this lake. Catchable rainbow trout are stocked seasonally in this lake. Stocking rates consist of 300 trout in the spring and 600 trout in the fall. A map of the lake can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>

Windmill #3: This one acre lake is the smallest at Windmill. Largemouth bass abundance is high, but the majority of the bass sampled were less than 10 inches. Several bass larger than 15 inches were collected, with the largest bass approaching 17 inches. Bluegill abundance was very high. Most bluegill collected ranged from 3 to 6 inches. Channel catfish abundance was lower, likely due to a catfish die-off that occurred two years ago. All catfish sampled ranged from 9 to 17 inches. Fifty 10-inch channel catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking scheduled for the fall of 2017. To help provide quality catfishing opportunities, this lake has been designated as catch and release only for channel catfish. Black crappie are present in low abundance, but were not collected in the latest survey. There are also a few very large common carp present. A map of Lake #3 can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>

Windmill #4: This three acre lake has a maximum depth of 24 feet. Largemouth bass abundance is high, although most of the bass collected during the survey were less than 10 inches. Larger bass were less common, but several between 15 and 17 inches were sampled. Bluegill were abundant, with most sampled fish ranging from five to seven inches. Channel catfish are present in moderate abundance, with most fish ranging from 12 to 15 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 150 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. A small population of black crappie also exists, but none were collected in the latest survey. Common carp are rather numerous, with most of the fish ranging from 24 to 28 inches. A lake map of Lake #4 can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>

Windmill #5: Windmill #5 is a shallow, six acre lake with a maximum depth of nine feet. This lake also has a designated swimming beach on the west end. The abundance of largemouth bass is low. Most of the bass ranged in length from 8 to 11 inches, although a few bass up to 19 inches were sampled. Bluegill abundance was also low with most fish ranging from 5 to 7 inches. Several sizes of channel catfish were sampled, with lengths ranging from 13 to 29 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years with the next stocking of 300 10-inch fish occurring in the fall of 2017. Common carp are in high abundance, with most fish ranging from 15 to 20 inches. A few black crappie ranging from 9 to 13.5 inches were also sampled. Yellow perch are also present in low abundance.

Windmill #6: This 2.5 acre lake has a maximum depth of 25 feet. This lake has a low abundance of largemouth bass. The majority of the bass sampled in Lake #6 were less than eight inches. There were very few intermediate sized bass present, although there was a fair abundance of bass from 15 to 19 inches. Bluegill were abundant ranging in length from 3 to 8 inches. This lake had the highest abundance of 7 to 8 inch bluegill at Windmill SRA. Channel catfish have historically been numerous in this lake, but only a few 12 to 20 inch catfish were sampled. Channel catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 125 10-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other species sampled included a few large common carp and shortnose gar.



Bassway Strip

Location: Exit 279, Minden Interstate 80 Interchange, 1/4S on Nebraska Hwy. 10, east on county road back toward I-80
Latitude: 40.68630 Longitude: -98.94866

Waterbody Information: This nine acre lake has a maximum depth of 24 feet. A map of the lake can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>. The fish population was last surveyed in May 2013. Survey results indicated that the abundance of largemouth bass declined since the 2008 survey, but remains a decent bass fishery. Bass from 10 to 12 inches were the most abundant size group sampled, with fish from 15 to 18 inches the next most common size group. The largest bass sampled were 21 inches. Bluegill abundance and average size was also lower than previous survey results. Most bluegill sampled ranged from 6 to 7.5 inches. While Bassway Strip has historically produced good numbers of bluegill larger than eight inches, none were collected during the 2013 survey. A few black crappie up to 11 inches were also collected during the survey. Channel catfish abundance was lower, but the population continues to have a good size distribution. The largest catfish sampled were 29 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 270 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other fish showing up in the survey included common carp and yellow bullheads. Carp abundance remains higher than preferred for an Interstate lake. Two size groups of carp were sampled; 16 to 24 inches and 26 to 32 inches. Yellow bullhead abundance also remains higher than preferred. Most of the bullheads collected during the survey ranged from 8 to 11 inches. A concrete boat ramp is available and boats are limited to 5 mph/no wake. Shoreline access for angling is fair. Several smaller lakes are also located on the Bassway Strip Wildlife Management Area. While no active fisheries management occurs on these lakes, they do provide fair fishing opportunities for largemouth bass, channel catfish and carp. The area also provides excellent access to the north channel of the Platte River.



Fort Kearny State Recreation Area

Location: From Kearney Interstate 80 Interchange (Exit 272), 2 miles south, 5 miles east on Highway 50, 1 mile north
Latitude: 40.65208 Longitude: -98.98943

Waterbody Information: Seven lakes are available for fishing at Fort Kearny SRA ranging from 1 to 4 acres. The area is maintained as a State Recreation Area and a park entry permit is required to enter. The park provides both modern and primitive camping, as well as a shower house, swimming beach, and picnic shelters. A 1.8 mile hike/bike trail located on the eastern edge of the park provides access to the Platte River. Shoreline access for angling is very good on most of the



lakes and the area is an excellent place to introduce youngsters to fishing. No boat ramps exist on these lakes, but boats with electric motors and non-powered boats may be used. The fish populations were last surveyed in the spring of 2016. Anglers are reminded that there is a 21-inch minimum length limit in effect for black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted) on all of the lakes at Fort Kearny.

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Fort Kearny State Recreation Area (continued)

Fort Kearny #1: Lake #1 consists of two 1.5 acre lakes connected by a small channel. Depths on each lake approach twenty feet. Largemouth bass abundance is fair and most bass range from 6 to 10 inches. The largest bass sampled was 15 inches. Bluegill are abundant with the majority of fish ranging from 5 to 7 inches. Channel catfish abundance is also good and fish up to 15 inches were collected. Catfish are stocked in alternate years and the next stocking of 150 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2018. Low numbers of black crappie are present, with fish sampled during the survey ranging from 7 to 10 inches. Other fish collected during the survey included low numbers of very large common carp and green sunfish.

Fort Kearny #2: Lake #2 is a three acre lake with a maximum depth of 28 feet. The largemouth abundance is very good, with most bass ranging from 8 to 12 inches. Few fish larger than 12 inches are present and the largest bass sampled was 15 inches. Bluegill were abundant and there are good numbers of 7 to 8.5 inch fish. The channel catfish population is excellent, both in term of high abundance and numbers of large fish. Catfish of all sizes were collected, with the largest fish measuring 28 inches. There is a catch and release only regulation in effect for catfish on this lake. Catfish are stocked on alternate years with the next stocking of 150 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2018. Black crappie are present in low abundance, but none were collected in the last survey. Other fish collected during the survey included low numbers of green sunfish.

Fort Kearny #3: Lake #3 is only one acre and is the smallest lake on the area. It has a maximum depth of 28 feet. Largemouth bass abundance is high and most of the bass collected ranged from 6 to 14 inches. The largest bass was 15 inches. Bluegill are abundant and good numbers of 7 to 8.5 inch fish were seen during the survey. Channel catfish are present in low abundance, with most fish less than 15 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years with the next stocking of 60 ten-inch catfish scheduled for the fall of 2018. Other fish sampled during the survey included a few large common carp, green sunfish and green sunfish x bluegill hybrids.

Fort Kearny #4: Lake #4 is 3 acres with a maximum depth of 18 feet. This lake was treated with rotenone in 2003 to remove rough fish. Currently there is a very high abundance of largemouth bass. Most of the bass population consists of fish less than 11 inches, but there were several from 20 to 22 inches sampled. Bluegill are not very abundant, but most of the fish ranged from 6.5 to 8.5 inches. Black crappie are present in low abundance. Channel catfish abundance was fair, with most fish ranging from 20 to 27 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years with the next stocking of 150 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2018. Other fish sampled during the survey included low numbers of green sunfish and green sunfish x bluegill hybrids.

Fort Kearny #5: Lake #5 is 3.25 acres and has a maximum depth of 32 feet. Largemouth bass abundance is high, with most of the fish ranging from 6 to 12 inches. There were few bass larger than 12 inches sampled, but the largest bass was 22 inches. Bluegill abundance was low and most of the fish ranged from 6 to 8.5 inches. Black crappie are present in low numbers. Channel catfish are present, but only a few up to 28 inches were sampled. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next scheduled stocking of 150 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2018. Other fish captured in low numbers during the survey included large common carp (30-32 inches) and green sunfish. Yellow perch fingerlings have been stocked several times in recent years, but predation from largemouth bass has limited their survival and no perch were caught during the survey.



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Fort Kearny State Recreation Area (continued)

Fort Kearny #6: Lake #6 is 3.75 acres and has a maximum depth of 20 feet. There is a high density of largemouth bass present, but the majority of the bass are less than 11 inches. Few bass larger than 12 inches were sampled, but this lake did produce two of the largest bass (22 and 23 inches) collected during the 2016 Fort Kearny survey. Bluegill are not overly abundant and most of them are 5 to 7.5 inches. Channel catfish are abundant, with good numbers of fish up to 29 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next scheduled stocking of 200 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2018. Low numbers of black crappie are also present. Catchable-sized rainbow trout are stocked in Lake #6 during March and October. There are 600 trout stocked in March and 1,200 trout stocked in October. Other fish encountered during the survey included a few very large common carp and green sunfish. A handicapped accessible fishing pier is located on the south side of Lake #6.



Fort Kearny #7: Lake #7 is 3.5 acres and has a maximum depth of 28 feet. This lake has a designated public swimming beach on the south side. Shoreline access is poor around most of the lake, but a handicapped accessible pier is located on the northeast corner. Largemouth bass abundance is high, with most of the bass collected measuring from 10 to 12.5 inches. There were few bass larger than 12 inches sampled and the largest bass was only 14 inches. Bluegill abundance was good, with excellent numbers of 7 to 9 inch fish present. Channel catfish are present, but only a few up to 22 inches were sampled during the survey. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next scheduled stocking of 175 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2018. Other fish captured in the survey included a couple very large 34 to 36 inch common carp and small green sunfish.

Bufflehead

Location: From Kearney Interchange (Exit 272), 1 mile north to 11th Street, 3 miles east to Cherry Avenue, 1 mile south, 1/2 mile east

Latitude: 40.67087 Longitude: -99.01802

Waterbody Information: Bufflehead is a shallow 15 acre lake with a maximum depth of 12 feet. The shallow depths and clear water allow for an abundance of vegetation to grow. The fish population was last surveyed during May 2013. Survey results indicated that the quality of the fishery has declined since the previous survey was completed. Largemouth bass abundance was much lower and overall average size was down. No bass smaller than 12 inches were collected and most of the bass sample consisted 12 to 14 inch fish. The largest bass sampled was 18 inches. The quality of the bluegill population has also declined. Historically, Bufflehead has traditionally produced eight inch bluegill, but no fish larger than five inches were collected during the survey. Bluegill lengths ranged from 2.5 to 5 inches. Rock bass are also normally fairly common in Bufflehead, but only one 10-inch rock bass was collected during the 2013 survey. Yellow perch are also present in Bufflehead, but none were collected during the survey. Yellow perch fingerlings have been stocked several times in recent years to improve abundance. Channel catfish appear to be abundant, with most of the sampled fish ranging from 18 to 20 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 450 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. The only other species captured during the survey were low numbers of common carp (20-28 inches). Shoreline access is limited due to tree encroachment along the shoreline. An improved concrete boat ramp is available and boats are limited to 5mph/no wake.



Archway Lakes

Location: From Kearney Interchange (Exit 272), 1/2 block north, 1 block east on Talmage St., 1 block south on 1st Ave, 3 miles east on 1st St

Latitude: 40.67106 Longitude: -99.03850

Waterbody Information: An agreement was signed with the Archway Foundation in 2010 to provide public fishing access to the four lakes located on their property. These lakes range in size from 1 to 25 acres. There is a 21" minimum length limit for black bass (largemouth, smallmouth) on all of the Archway Lakes. Non-powered boats are permitted. All of these lakes were last surveyed during the spring of 2013.



Lake #1: At 24 acres, Lake #1 is the largest lake on the property. The entire lake is currently open to public fishing access, with the exception of the area immediately surround the bridge in the middle of the lake. Lake #1 has a variety of different species ranging from largemouth bass to common carp. Largemouth bass were not overly abundant, but the size structure of the population was very good. Fish of most size classes were sampled and a high percentage of the population ranged from 14 to 18 inches. The largest bass captured during the survey was 19 inches. Bluegill were also not very abundant, with most of the bluegill ranging from 5 to 7 inches. A few bluegill were up to 8.5 inches. Other game fish species sampled in low abundance included green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrids, channel catfish and yellow perch. Channel catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 300 10-inch fish scheduled for September 2018. Rough fish are very common in Lake#1, as common carp, carpsucker, and gizzard shad were abundant. Most of the common carp ranged from 20 to 25 inches.

Lake #2: This two acre lake was chemically treated with rotenone during the summer of 2010 to remove rough fish populations. It has been re-stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, black crappie and channel catfish. Survey results from the spring of 2013 indicated that the fish population was slowly developing into a good fishery. Largemouth bass abundance was low, with most of the sampled fish averaging about ten inches. A large number of three inch bass were present, which should provide decent fishing in future years. The largest bass collected was 16 inches. Bluegill were very abundant and the vast majority of the sample consisted of 2.5 to 6 inch fish. The largest bluegill collected were 7.5 inches. Black crappie were also abundant and two year-classes were sampled. Most of the sample consisted of age-1 crappie which averaged 4 inches, while the crappie from the original 2011 stocking averaged ten inches. Channel catfish were also very abundant and two age-classes were sampled. The original stocking from 2010 ranged from 20 to 24 inches, while fish from the 2012 stocking averaged 12 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 100 10-inch fish scheduled for fall of 2018.

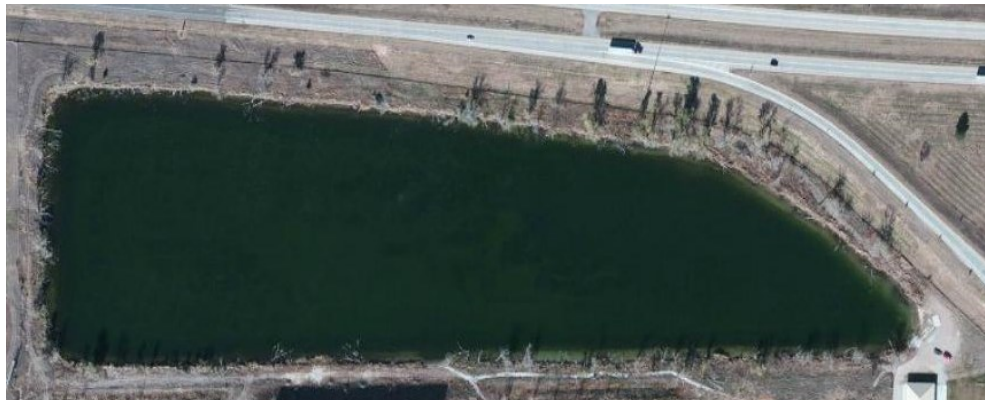
Lake#3: This 1.8 acre lake was reduced in size during the addition of the new Cherry Avenue Overpass. Lake #3 contains both largemouth and smallmouth bass. Largemouth bass were most numerous during the 2013 survey, with lengths ranging from 4 to 9 inches. Smallmouth abundance was fair, with all of the sampled fish ranging from 8 to 12 inches. Bluegill x green sunfish hybrids are very abundant in Lake #3. Sizes range from 3 to 8 inches, with the most common size group being 5 to 6 inches. Bluegill were also fairly abundant, ranging in length from 4 to 7 inches. Low numbers of green sunfish, yellow perch and black crappie were also sampled. No channel catfish were sampled. Sixty 10-inch channel catfish are scheduled to be stocked during the fall of 2018.

Lake#4: This one acre lake is the smallest on the Archway property. It was chemically treated with rotenone during the summer of 2013 to remove common carp and bullhead populations. It has since been re-stocked with largemouth bass and yellow perch. Redear sunfish (750 fingerlings) and channel catfish (75 10-inchers) were introduced during 2014. Fifty 10-inch channel catfish are scheduled to be stocked during the fall of 2018.

Kea Lake

Location: Exit 272, Southwest quadrant of the Kearney Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.66765 Longitude: -99.08783

Waterbody Information: Kea Lake is 20 acres and has a maximum depth of 12 feet. The fish population was last surveyed during May of 2013. Survey results indicated that the lake had a very good fishery for several different species. A high abundance of largemouth bass was present. The most common length groups for bass were 8 to 10 inches and 12 to 14 inches, although bass of all sizes were sampled. The largest bass captured was 21 inches. Bluegill abundance was fair, with most fish



ranging from 6 to 7.5 inches. A few bluegill larger than eight inches were sampled. Kea Lake also has a small population of triploid hybrid crappie, also known as jumbo greys. These fish are created in the hatchery by crossing white and black crappie. The fertilized eggs are subjected to pressure to make them triploid, which results in fish that are sterile and unable to reproduce. This allows the fish to achieve faster growth rates as energy is not used for reproduction. Six stockings of hybrid crappie have been introduced into Kea Lake since 2003. While the triploid crappie exhibited very good growth rates, stocking survival was low and the fish are time consuming and expensive to produce. Therefore, triploid crappie stocking has been suspended at Kea Lake. Anglers will likely encounter small numbers of these fish for the next several years and the ones caught should be large fish. Channel catfish were very abundant during the last survey, with most of the fish collected measuring from 12 to 24 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years with the next stocking of 600 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other fish caught in the survey included small green sunfish and one walleye. The City of Kearney manages the land surrounding the lake and a walking trail circling the lake is available. Shoreline access is good for anglers. A concrete boat ramp is available on the east end of the lake. Boats are restricted to 5 mph/no wake. A lake map is available here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>

Kea West

Location: From Kearney interchange (Exit 272), 1 mile N to 11th Street, 1 1/4 mile W to Kea West Rd, 1 mile S to overpass approach, turn east
Latitude: 40.66765 Longitude: -99.08778

Waterbody Information: Kea West is seven acres with a maximum depth of 20 feet. The fishery was last surveyed in 2014 and results indicated a good fishery for several different species. Largemouth bass were abundant and the population had a good size structure. While most of the bass sampled ranged from 6 to 12 inches, there was a good representation of bass from 14 to 18 inches. The largest bass collected were 18 inches. While not overly abundant, bluegill had a good size distribution, ranging from 6 to 7.5 inches. Black crappie were also common, with most fish ranging



from 9 to 10.5 inches. Rock bass were moderately abundant in Kea West, ranging from six to ten inches. There is a low density of yellow perch, most of which range from 7 to 10 inches. Yellow perch fingerlings have been stocked several times during the past five years to improve densities. Channel catfish are moderately abundant, with several different sizes sampled. The largest catfish collected was 25 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next catfish stocking of 210 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other species captured in low abundance included large common carp (30-35 inches), green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrids, walleye, and flathead catfish. Kea West has been managed as a catch and release only lake for all species since 2011. Possession of any fish species other than baitfish while fishing this lake is prohibited. Shoreline access is good and a mowed trail encircles the lake. A gravel boat ramp is located on the west end and boats are limited to 5 mph / no wake.

North Kearney Rest Stop

Location: From Kearney Interchange (Exit 272), 1 mile north to 11th Street, 2 miles west to 30th Ave, 2 miles south
Latitude: 40.67159 Longitude: -99.12372

Waterbody Information: North Kearney Rest Stop is seven acres with a maximum depth of 14 feet. The lake is located directly north of the westbound Interstate 80 Rest Area and the property around the lake is maintained by the Nebraska Department of Roads. Anglers can either access the lake via the rest stop or from 30th Avenue. Access to the lake is walk-in only and no boats are allowed. Shoreline access is fair and is best along the south side. The fishery was last surveyed in 2013. Largemouth bass abundance is slightly higher than the average normally observed on I-80 lakes. The majority of the bass ranged in length from 10 to 12 inches. There were also moderate numbers of 12 to 15 inch bass present. The largest bass sampled was 22 inches.



Bluegill were not overly abundant, but fish of several size groups were sampled, ranging from 3 to 7.5 inches. Channel catfish were very abundant and also had a very good size distribution. Most the sampled catfish ranged from 18 to 24 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 210 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other fish captured in low abundance included common carp (32-36 inches), flathead catfish (15 inches), green sunfish, and green sunfish x bluegill hybrids. There were 700 three-inch rock bass fingerlings stocked in November 2012, but none of these fish were captured during the survey.

South Kearney Rest Stop

Location: 4 miles west of Kearney Interstate 80 Interchange (Exit 272) — access is only available from the east bound lanes of Interstate 80 or by walking in from East Odessa WMA
Latitude: 40.67066 Longitude: -99.15849

Waterbody Information: This one acre lake is one of the smallest public lakes located along Interstate 80. It has a maximum depth of 14 feet. The lake is located directly southwest of the eastbound Interstate 80 Rest Area and the property surrounding the lake is maintained by the Nebraska Department of Roads. No boating is allowed and shoreline access for anglers is fairly good. Due to its small size and restricted access, limited fisheries management occurs on this lake. The fishery was last surveyed in 2003 and the quality of the fishery at that time was fair. Largemouth bass abundance was lower than average and the majority of the bass ranged from 5 to 12 inches. A few fish greater than 15 inches were sampled and the largest bass was 17 inches. Panfish were abundant and several species were present; including black crappie, bluegill, redear, and sunfish hybrids. Crappie ranged from 6 to 12 inches, bluegill ranged from 3 to 6 inches, and the redear ranged from 3 to 7 inches. A few large common carp were also collected. No catfish were sampled and they are not currently stocked in this lake.



East Odessa

Location: From Odessa Interstate 80 Interchange (Exit 263), 4 miles east on gravel access road on south side of I-80
Latitude: 40.67048 Longitude: -99.16491

Waterbody Information: This seven acre lake has a maximum depth of 28 feet. The fish population was last surveyed in the spring of 2016 and the next survey is scheduled for 2021. Largemouth bass abundance is moderately low, but the population contains a variety of sizes. Most bass ranged from 6 to 13 inches, but there were several larger than 15 inches. The largest bass sampled was 21 inches. Bluegill are not abundant, but the population had a good size distribution with most fish ranging from 5 to 8 inches. Channel catfish are numerous and the population contains some large individuals. Catfish lengths ranged from 10 to 29 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 210 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. Common carp are abundant and most of them range in size from 24 to 30 inches. Longnose gar, shortnose



gar, and yellow bullhead are also present in low abundance. East Odessa lake is located on the 160 acre East Odessa Wildlife Management Area. The access road leading to the property is minimally maintained and can become difficult to navigate when wet. Shoreline access around the lake is fairly good. No boat ramp is available, but the lake is open to electric motors and non-powered boats. Access to the Platte River is also available on this area.

Union Pacific

Location: Exit 263, NE quadrant of Odessa Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.67881 Longitude: -99.25220

Waterbody Information: This 15 acre lake has a maximum depth of 21 feet. A map of the lake can be found here: <https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>. The fish population was last surveyed in 2014 and the next survey is scheduled for 2019. While largemouth bass were only moderately abundant, the size structure of the population was very good. Bass from 7 to 9 inches were most abundant, but there was also a good representation of 13 to 16 inch bass. The largest bass sampled during the survey was 22 inches. Bluegill are abundant in Union Pacific, but few quality sized fish were sampled. Most of the bluegill ranged from 3 to 5 inches, with only a few fish up to seven inches. Rock bass are present in low abundance and most ranged from 3 to 5 inches, although a few rock bass up to ten inches were sampled. Channel catfish are abundant and several different size groups were caught. Catfish lengths ranged from 15 to 24 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 360 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. Other fish captured included a few common carp (25 inches), small green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrids (5.5-7.5 inches), and a black crappie. Union Pacific Lake is located on the Union Pacific State Recreation Area and a park entry permit is required to enter. Primitive camping facilities are available and a modern restroom is open during the summer months. A gravel boat ramp is present and boats are restricted to 5 mph/no wake. Shoreline access along the north side of the lake is mowed and is good for bank angling.



Coot Shallows

Location: From Odessa Interstate 80 Interchange (Exit 263), 3/4 mile North, 2 miles west on 11th Road
Latitude: 40.68423 Longitude: -99.29258

Waterbody Information: This 16 acre lake has a maximum depth of 12 feet. The fish population was last surveyed in 2014 and the next survey is scheduled for the spring of 2019. Survey results from 2014 indicated a decent fishery for several different species. Largemouth bass were very abundant. There were bass from 5 to 16 inches sampled, but the majority of the bass population consists of 8 to 13 inch fish. Large bass were uncommon and only one fish larger than 15 inches was collected. Bluegill were extremely abundant, but the majority of the sample consisted of 3 to 4 inch fish. A few bluegill up to seven inches were sampled. Channel catfish were abundant and had a good size structure. Catfish lengths ranged from 11 to 24 inches, with an average length of 15 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next scheduled stocking of 480 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. Black crappie are present in low abundance, with fish from 6 to 9.5 inches most common. Yellow perch were also sampled for the first time in



2014, with a moderate abundance of perch ranging from 4.5 to 8.5 inches. A concrete boat ramp is available and boats are limited to 5 mph/no wake. Shoreline access is fair around the lake. Efforts are ongoing to remove brush and trees along the north side of the lake to improve angler access.

Blue Hole West

Location: Exit 257, SW quadrant of the Elm Creek Interstate 80 Interchange
Latitude: 40.68717 Longitude: -99.38198

Waterbody Information: This 24 acre lake has a maximum depth of 12 feet. Blue Hole has an active channel of the Platte River flowing through it, creating poor water quality and allowing various rough fish species to enter. The fish population was last surveyed in 2014 and is scheduled to be surveyed again in the spring of 2019. The fishery contains a variety of different species, but still provides some decent fishing opportunities. Largemouth bass are not as abundant as they are in other I80 lakes, but Blue Hole consistently produces large bass. Bass from 12 to 20 inches were sampled and the average length was 15.5 inches. Bluegill are present in moderate abundance and they ranged from 3 to 7.5 inches. Both white and black crappie can also be found in low abundance. Excellent numbers of channel catfish are present, with lengths ranging from 15 to 25 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next

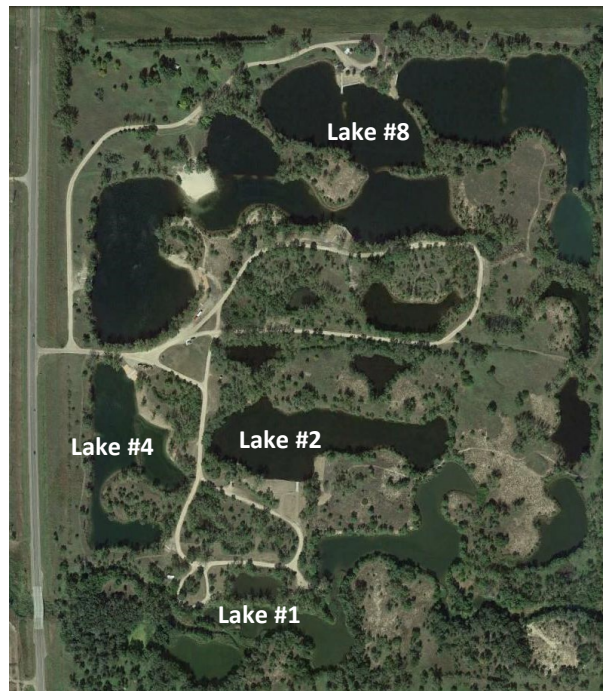


stocking of 720 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. Sauger fingerlings have been stocked annually over the past ten years. These stockings have created a low density sauger population, but have failed to produce a quality fishery. Sauger up to 24 inches have been occasionally caught from Blue Hole. Although they are low in abundance, white bass from 8 to 15 inches were sampled. With the connection to the Platte River, Blue Hole supports a plethora of rough fish species. Common carp, carpsuckers, buffalo, gizzard shad, gar, and white suckers are numerous. Other species caught in low abundance included black bullheads, green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrids, and redear sunfish. A gravel boat ramp is available and boats are limited to 5 mph/no wake. Shoreline access is fair. Access to the Platte River is available through this property.

Sandy Channel

Location: From Elm Creek Interstate 80 Interchange (Exit 257), 2 miles south on Highway 183
Latitude: 40.66838 Longitude: -9937982

Waterbody Information: Ten lakes ranging from 0.5 to 28 acres are available at Sandy Channel State Recreation Area. The area is maintained by the Parks Division, and a park entry permit is required to enter the park. Primitive camping is allowed and vault toilets are available. Shoreline access ranges from poor to very good on these lakes. A concrete boat ramp is available on Lakes #2, #4, and #8. Boats are limited to 5 mph/no wake. All the other lakes are open to electric and non-powered boats only. Active fisheries management occurs on Lakes 2, 4 and 8. The remaining lakes are either too shallow or have flooding issues, which limit their potential for quality fisheries. The four lakes listed below provide most of the fishing opportunities at Sandy Channel. A fish survey was completed on Lake's 2, 4, and 8 in 2014 and the next survey is scheduled for 2019. An angler access project was completed in 2015, which improved shoreline and boating access on Lake's 2, 4 and 8. Anglers are reminded that there is a 21-inch minimum length limit for black bass on all the lakes as Sandy Channel.



Lake #1: This 20 acre lake is located on the southern edge of the park. The south channel of the Platte River flows through this lake allowing rough fish to enter and creating poor water quality. No fisheries management is done on this lake. The lake does provide good fishing for channel catfish, common carp and gar. Shoreline access is poor.

Lake #2: This 10 acre lake has a maximum depth of 16 feet. The lake was renovated in 2003 to remove rough fish populations and was re-stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, and channel catfish. Yellow perch and rock bass were added in 2012. Lake #2 currently has a good fishery for several different species. Largemouth bass are extremely abundant. The majority of the bass population ranged from 6 to 10 inches, but there were fair numbers of bass from 12 to 16 inches. The largest bass was 22 inches. Bluegill were abundant and while most were less than 6.5 inches, there were a few fish up to eight inches collected. Although several stockings of channel catfish have occurred since



the renovation, no catfish were collected in the latest survey. Catfish are stocked on alternate years and the next stocking of 300 ten-inch fish is scheduled for the fall of 2017. There were several small rock bass collected in the survey, but no yellow perch. Other fish species caught in low abundance included green sunfish and bluegill x green sunfish hybrids. Shoreline access has been improved along the south side of the lake. A concrete boat ramp is present on this lake.

Lake #4: This 5 acre lake has maximum depth of 14 feet. Results from the latest survey indicated a fair fishery for largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Largemouth bass abundance was high, but most of the bass collected during the survey were less than six inches. Larger bass were less common and low numbers of bass from 8 to 15 inches were sampled. Bluegill were very numerous, but most of them were 3 to 5 inches. Only a few bluegill from 6 to 7.5 inches were collected. Channel catfish were fairly abundant with fish ranging from 11 to 18 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 250 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. Rock bass were introduced into this lake in 2012 and several were collected during the survey. Rock bass lengths ranged from 4 to 7 inches. Other fish captured included some very large common carp (28-34 inches), several white bass (up to 16 inches), one large black crappie (13 inches), and a few small green sunfish x bluegill hybrids. Shoreline access has been improved and Lake #4 has a fishing node located on the southeast portion of the lake. A concrete boat ramp is also present on this lake.



Sandy Channel (continued)

Lake #8: At 28 acres, this is the largest lake on the area. Lake #8 has a maximum depth of 28 feet and a detailed contour map of the lake can be found here:

<https://maps.outdoornebraska.gov/lakemaps/>. This lake has extremely clear water and provides good fishing opportunities for several species. Largemouth bass are abundant and the population contains good numbers of large fish. Bass collected in the survey ranged from 6 to 20 inches. While bass of all sizes were sampled, there was a high abundance of 14 to 17 inch fish collected during the survey. Bluegill were also abundant with the majority of them ranging from 3 to 5 inches. Bluegill larger than six inches are present, but were low in abundance. Rock bass densities were high, with most of the fish ranging



from 4 to 9 inches. Both black and white crappie are present in low numbers, with most fish less than ten inches in length. There is a fair population of yellow perch present in Sandy Channel #8, but all of the perch sampled were less than nine inches. A large number of channel catfish were sampled, ranging from 9 to 24 inches. The average length of channel catfish was 19 inches. Catfish are stocked on alternate years, with the next stocking of 840 ten-inch fish scheduled for the fall of 2017. One large walleye (20 inches) was collected during the survey. Walleye have been sporadically stocked in Sandy Channel #8 over the years, so a few larger walleye should be present. Advanced walleye (300 8-inchers) were stocked during the fall of 2013, 2014, and 2016. Future walleye stocking will be dependent on the success of these three stockings. Other fish captured in the survey included a few large common carp, green sunfish, and green sunfish x bluegill hybrids. Muskellunge were introduced into this lake during the spring of 2013, when 60 12-inch fish were stocked. They were stocked again in 2015 and are scheduled for 2017. Muskies are stocked on alternate years when available from the hatchery. Anglers are reminded that there is a 40-inch minimum length limit in place for muskellunge. Shoreline access has been improved on this lake with the addition of four angler nodes. The angler node next to the boat ramp is handicapped accessible. A handicapped accessible concrete boat ramp is located on the northeast side of the lake.



For additional information about fisheries management on these Interstate Lakes, please contact the NGPC Kearney office at 308-865-5310 or by email at the addresses listed below.

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