

Maloney Reservoir

2012 Fall Survey Summary



Jared Lorensen, Fisheries Biologist

Lake Maloney is the second canal reservoir downstream from Lakes McConaughy and Ogallala. This reservoir is utilized for regulation of water used in the NPPD North Platte Hydro Facility. Lake Maloney offers unique fishing opportunities as a result of its functionality. Notice these aspects at http://www.nppd.com/assets/public_recreation.pdf and water depth contours at <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/fishing/programs/lakemapping/pdfs/maloney.pdf>. Follow water level fluctuations at http://v1.nppd.com/About_Us/Energy_Facilities/facilities/water_data2.aspx.

The statewide one-over length daily bag limit regulation has changed for striped bass, white bass and their hybrids. Starting January 1, 2013 only one may be kept over 16 inches. This regulation change was made to decrease harvest of hybrid striped bass greater than 16 inches. Notice fishing regulation changes in the 2013-2014 Fishing Guide at <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/Fishing/guides/fishguide/pdf/FishGuide.pdf> or pick up a print copy at your local vendor or NGPC office.

Every fall the fishery at Lake Maloney is sampled using experimental gill nets, a method commonly used to sample fish found primarily in open water, such as walleye, white bass, channel catfish and hybrid striped bass. These nets are made of clear monofilament mesh strung between a weighted line and a floating line. This mesh ranges in size from $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch to 3 inches and the nets are typically set perpendicular to the shoreline in 6 to 12 feet of depth during late afternoon with an orange floating buoy on the ends to deter boats from being entangled and for ease of retrieval. Gill nets create an invisible wall in the water column that fish cannot sense so they are entangled by their gills as they attempt to move through.

Data collected from these surveys allow biologists to evaluate the population density, size structure, and growth rates for several species. This data provides valuable information to guide decision making scenarios that include fish species stocked, stocking rates and fishing regulations. This information also assists Game and Parks staff in guiding anglers to waterbodies that have the desired populations for fishing.

If you have questions or concerns about the fishery of Lake Maloney please contact

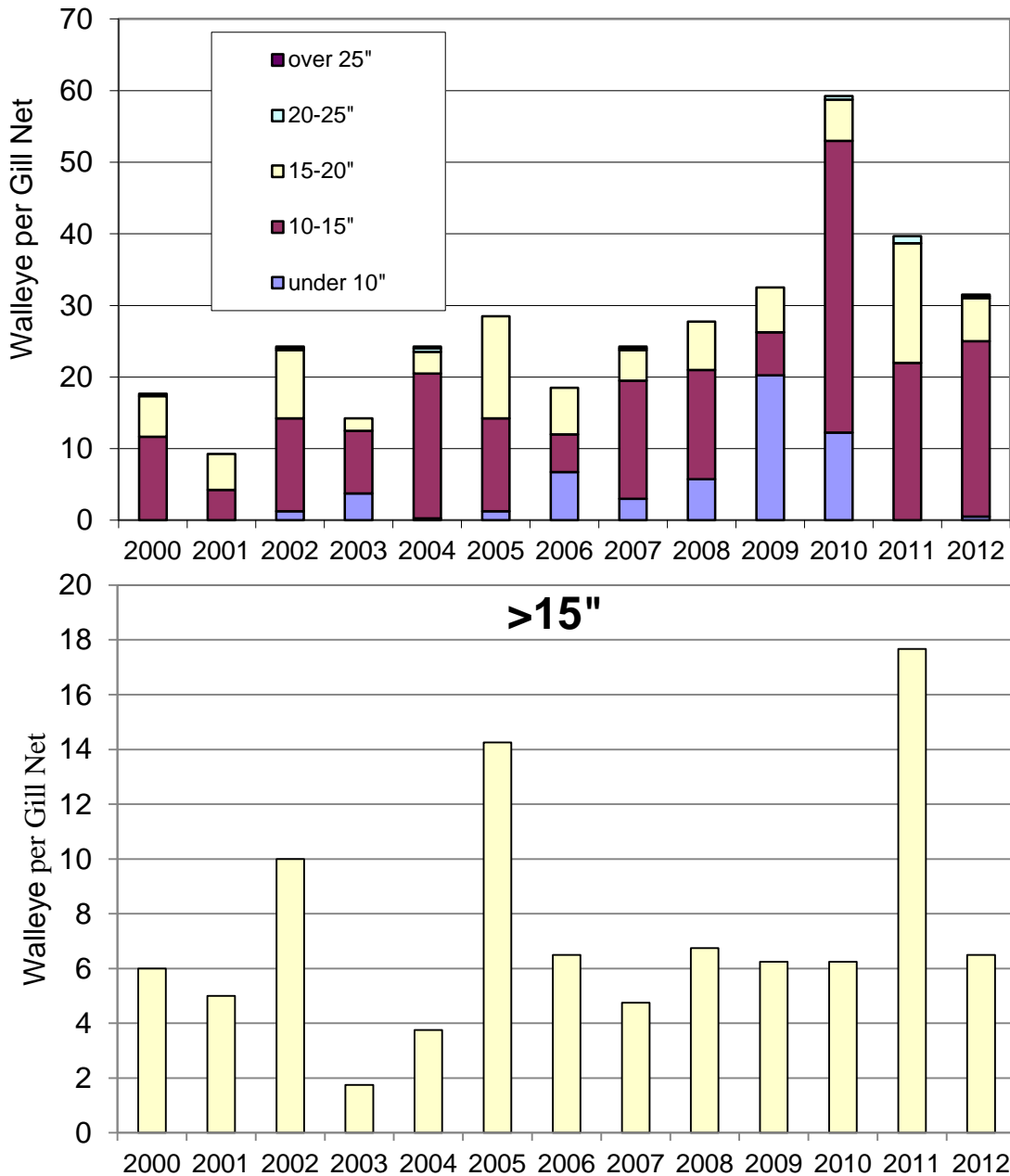
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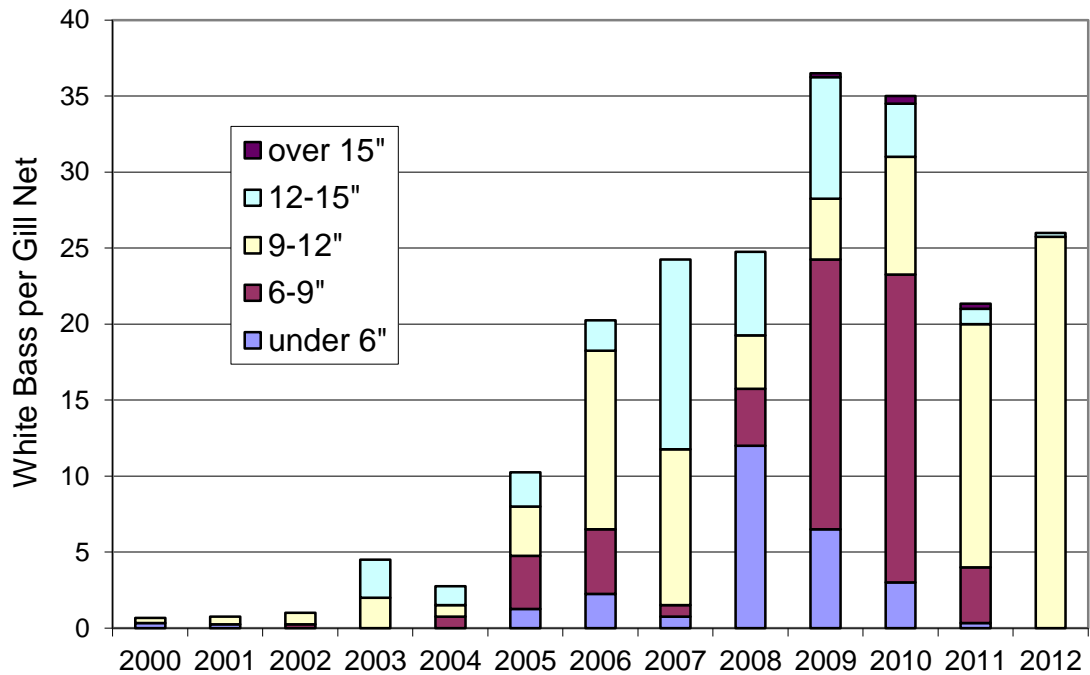
Walleye

All Length Groups



Angling success was high during 2012 and this occurrence is evident in the 2012 survey data. The abundance of legal length walleye observed in 2012's survey was much less than in 2011. Only 20% of those sampled were over 15" in 2012. Average length of those sampled was 14.1". In 2012, 40,472 walleye fingerlings (1 ¼") were stocked and a stocking of 40,000 is requested for 2013.

White bass



Although the quantity of white bass sampled was lower than 2009 and 2010, all were greater than 9". The mean length was 10 ½" and the majority of those sampled were naturally produced in 2010. White bass population density can be cyclical. Hopefully observed production and recruitment improves in the upcoming surveys.

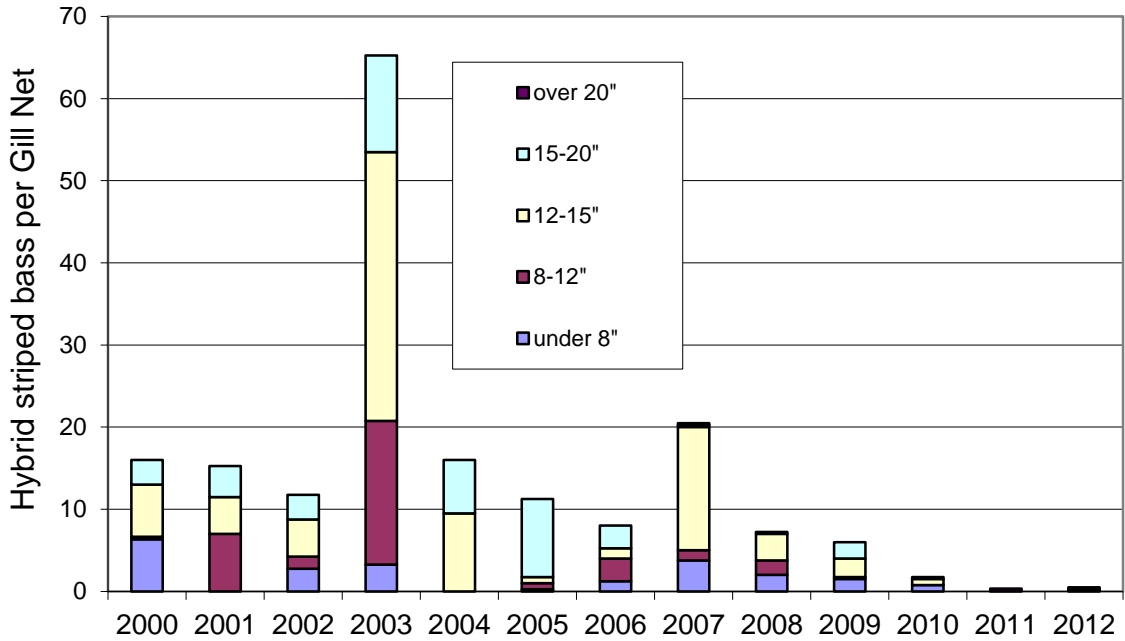


White bass



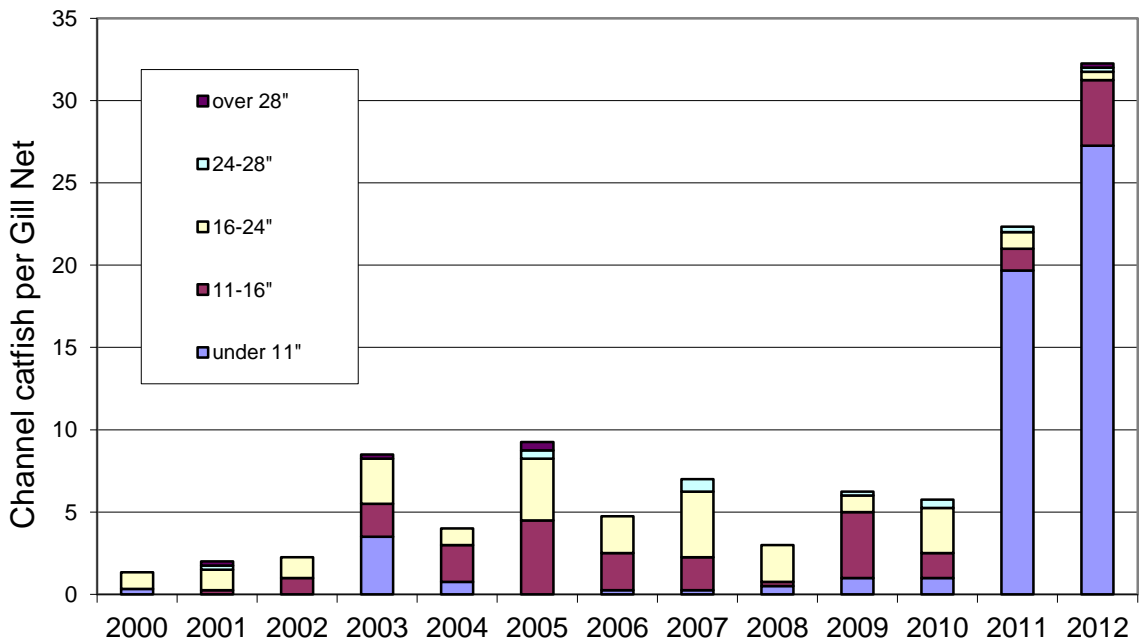
Hybrid striped bass

Hybrid striped bass



The hybrid striped bass population continues to decline. Proposed stocking rates have been decreased to enable a managing strategy that sustains a hybrid striped bass population but manages for large individuals. Stocking of hybrid striped bass did not occur in 2012 but a stocking of 24,000 is requested for 2013.

Channel catfish



In 2012, 32 channel catfish were sampled per gill net. Of these, 84% were less than 11" with a mean length of 10". These large catch rates likely indicate an influx from the NPPD Canal System that will hopefully lead to desirable sized catfish in coming years.

Zebra and Quagga Mussels

Anglers and boaters need to be aware of zebra and quagga mussels while using Nebraska Lakes and continue to **Clean, Drain and Dry** their equipment and boats prior to launching at a new waterbody. While no mussels have been identified at Lake Maloney, zebra mussels have been found at Zorinsky Lake in Omaha and are present in several reservoirs in neighboring states. Monitoring was completed at several Nebraska reservoirs during 2011 and 2012. No evidence of zebra or quagga mussels was found.

Anglers and boaters using Nebraska waters this season need to be aware of **new regulations** dealing with aquatic invasive species. Starting January 1, 2013 the following regulations went into effect to help prevent the spread of unwanted species.

- Any watercraft that has been on a Nebraska waterbody must drain the lake water from their compartments, equipment or containers before leaving the launch area. It is illegal to dump baitfish into a Nebraska waterbody.
- Livewells need to be drained prior to leaving a launch area: plan ahead and bring a cooler for harvested fish.
- All aquatic vegetation from that waterbody attached to the watercraft and/or trailer must be removed before leaving the launch area.

For more information regarding these new regulations consult the 2013-2014 Fishing Guide at <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/Fishing/guides/fishguide/pdf/FishGuide.pdf>.

Find more information concerning zebra and quagga mussels at <http://snr.unl.edu/invasives/> and <http://100thmeridian.org/zebras.asp>.

