

2014 Lincoln Area Fishing Forecast

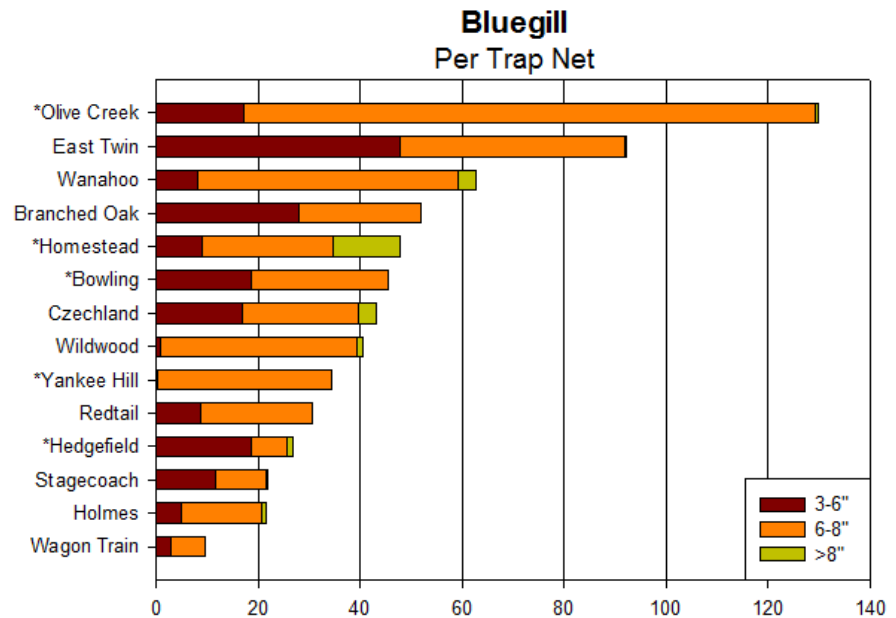


This is a fishing forecast for the Salt Valley area. The forecast includes figures for area public water bodies that were surveyed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) during *2012 and 2013. Therefore, there may be other water bodies in the area that provide good fishing opportunities that 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.org.



Bluegills

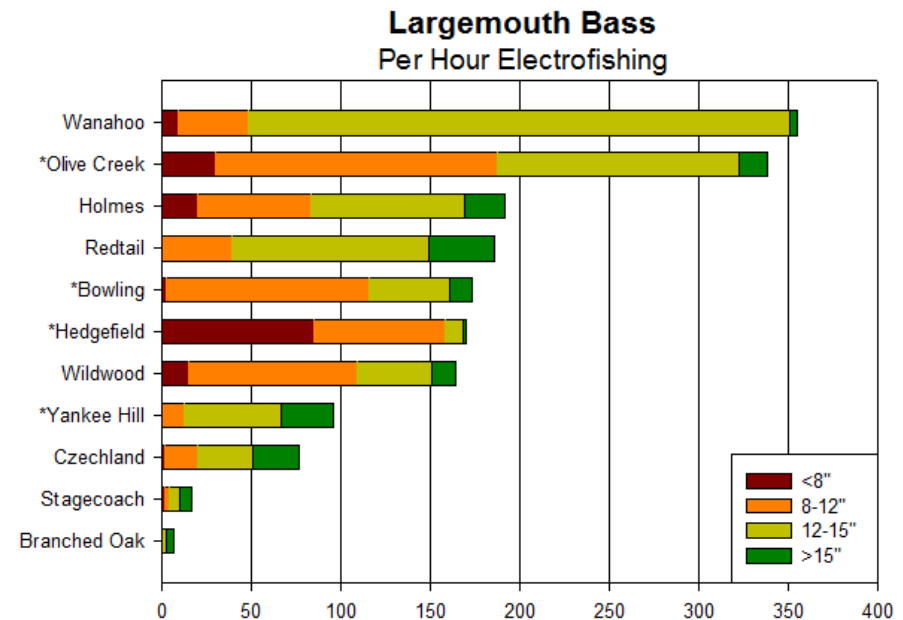
Bluegills prefer clean water and an abundance of aquatic plants. They are an excellent fish for beginning anglers to pursue. Bluegills can be caught year round, but may be most susceptible to anglers during the spawn. Spawning activity peaks when water temperatures are 70-75 degrees Fahrenheit, usually late May or early June. **East Twin** and **Olive Creek** will be a good choice for recreational anglers or beginners, while anglers targeting larger bluegills should try **Wanahoo**, **Homestead**, or **Czechland**.



* 2012 Survey

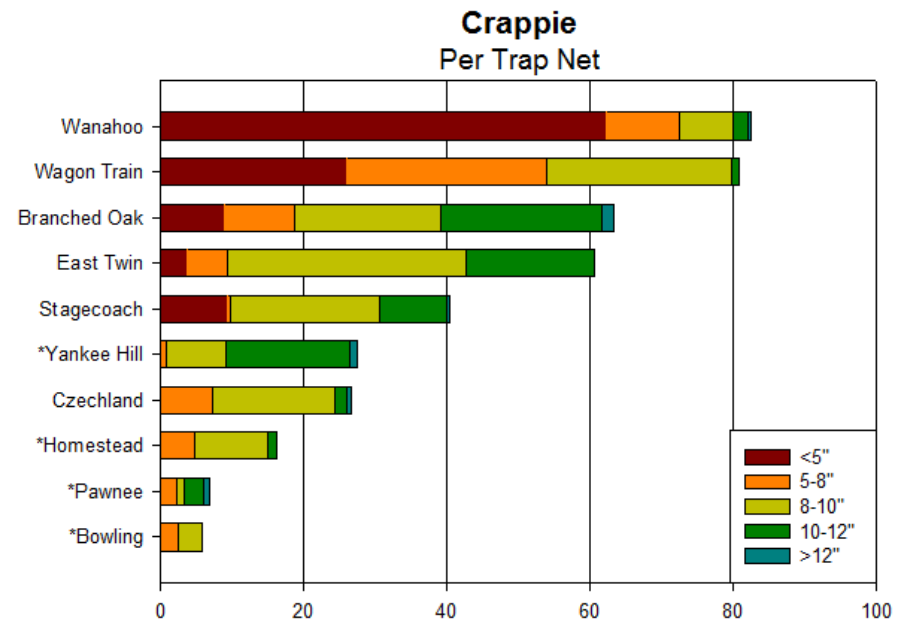
Largemouth Bass

Largemouth bass are routinely targeted by anglers and are known for their aggressiveness and fighting ability. Largemouth bass, like bluegills and other members of the sunfish family, prefer clean water and an abundance of shallow water cover. A number of Salt Valley reservoirs such as **Olive Creek, Wildwood, Holmes** and **Redtail** will offer a good opportunity to catch good numbers of largemouth bass with some greater than 15 inches. **Stagecoach** and **Branched Oak** may be sleeper lakes with chances at large bass



Crappie

Crappies are highly regarded by anglers and are often considered to be among the best tasting freshwater fish. Crappies prefer habitat with sheltered coves or bays with an abundance of cover and aquatic vegetation. Anglers looking for plenty of eating-size crappies should head to **East Twin, Wagon Train, or Stagecoach**. A better chance at catching crappies larger than 12 inches exists at **Branched Oak, Yankee Hill** or **Wanahoo**. A 10 inch minimum on crappie is in effect at Branched Oak and Czechland.



* 2012 Survey

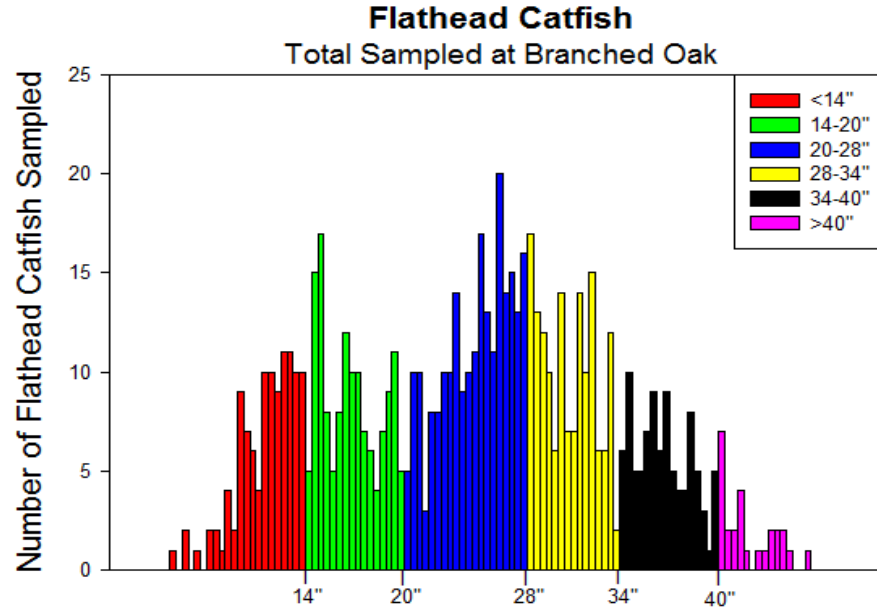
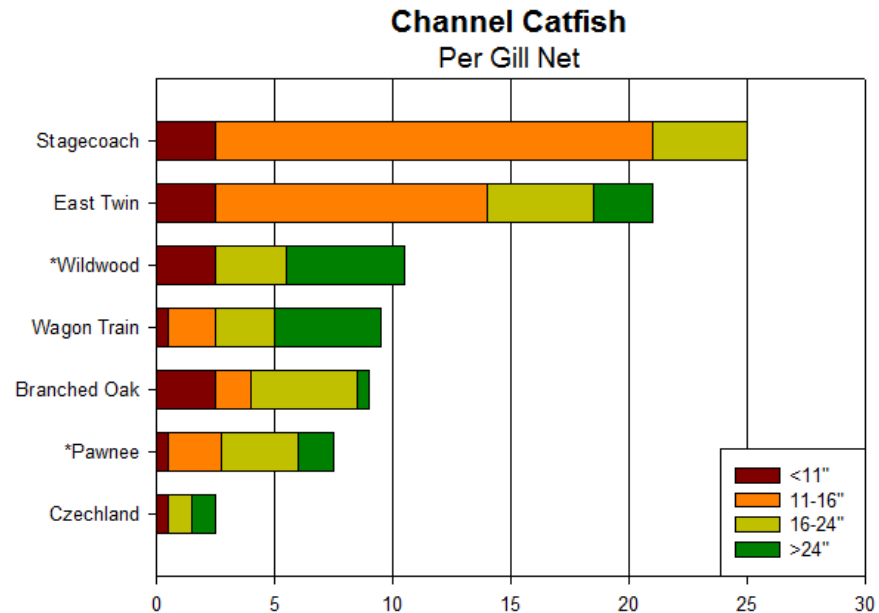
Channel Catfish

Channel catfish are popular throughout Nebraska and can be found in almost every reservoir and river in the Salt Valley area. Some waters to note for anglers seeking eater-sized catfish would be **East Twin** and **Stagecoach**. Anglers seeking larger catfish may want to try **Branched Oak**, **Wagon Train** or **Czechland**. The catch and release regulation at **Wildwood** also provides a great opportunity to catch a trophy channel catfish.

The Platte River, water willing, will also provide some good catfishing opportunities. Anglers should target log jams in deep holes or channel drop offs. Nightcrawlers, stink bait, or cut bait are all good bait options. Public access on the Platte River can be found at **Schilling WMA**, **Louisville SRA**, **Platte River State Park**, **Schramm Park SRA**, **Two Rivers SRA**, **Platte River Landing** near Valley, **Hormel Park** in Fremont, **Bramble WMA**, **Whitetail WMA**, and **Tailrace Park** in Columbus.

Flathead Catfish

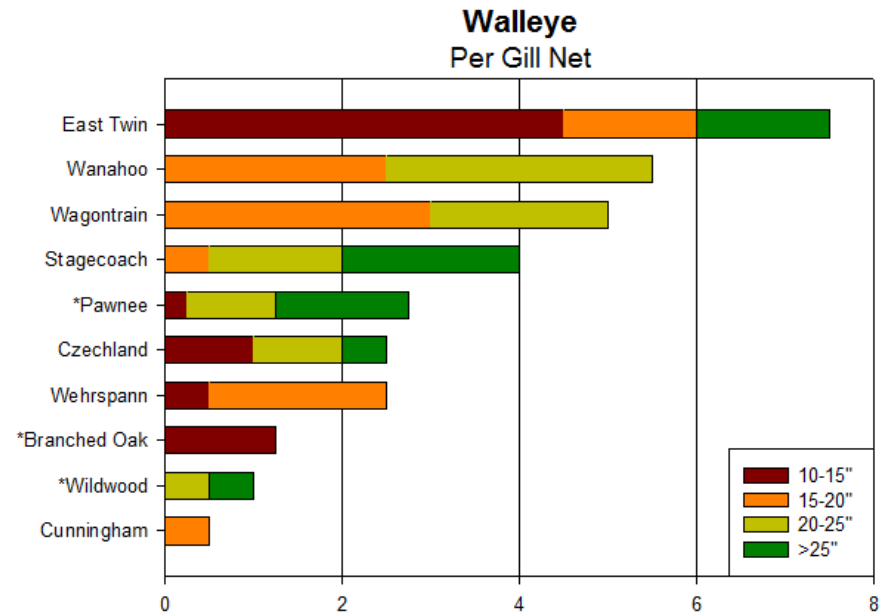
Branched Oak continues to be one of the top flathead destinations in the state and with multiple fish over 40"; anglers will have a chance to catch a true trophy. A research project is currently underway and fish tagging efforts will continue in 2014. Anglers are asked to report all tag information to the NGPC. Anglers should also note that there is a catch and release regulation on flathead catfish at Branched Oak.



* 2012 Survey

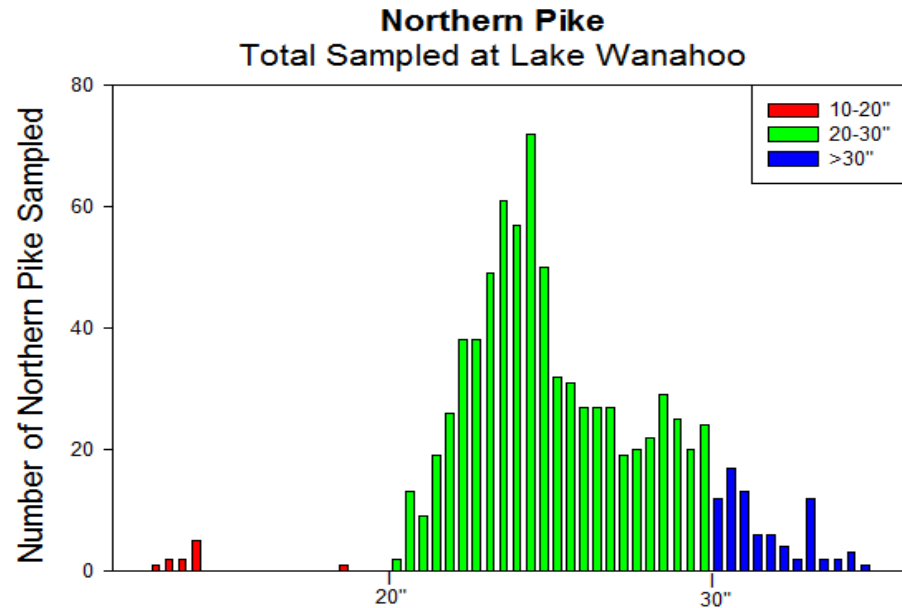
Walleye

Anglers targeting eater-sized walleyes in the Salt Valley will want to try **Wanahoo** or **Wagon Train**. Opportunities for trophy sized walleyes will be best at **Stagecoach** or **East Twin**. Also, in order to improve southeast Nebraska walleye fishing, advanced fish (8") were stocked at **Wanahoo**, **Wildood**, **Branched Oak** and **Holmes** in the fall of 2013.



Northern Pike

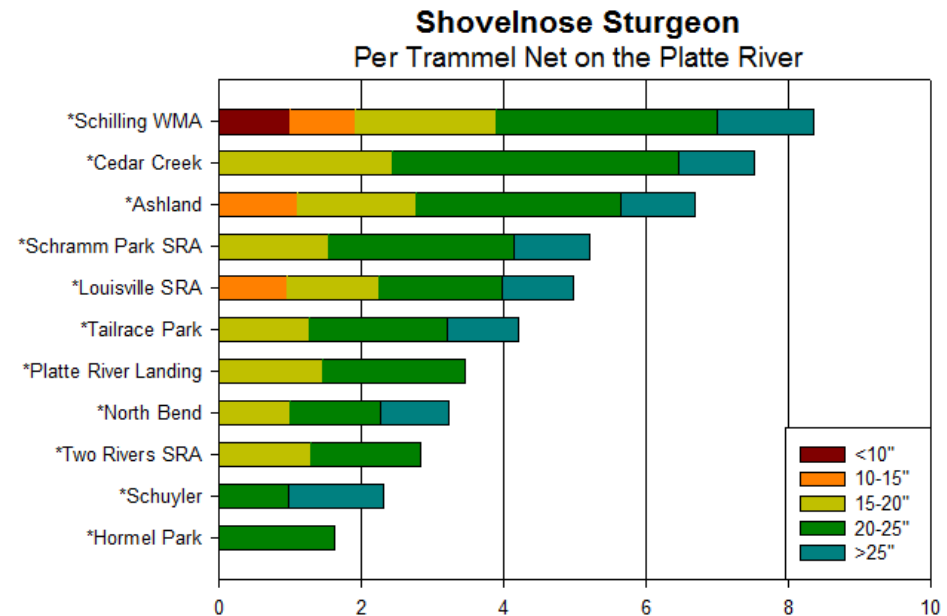
Lake Wanahoo will again provide a unique fishing opportunity to catch northern pike in Eastern Nebraska. Larger fish are becoming more abundant and anglers will have a chance to catch fish greater than 30 inches. Remember that all northern pike caught must be released immediately. The northern pike tagging study will continue in 2014 and anglers are asked to report all tagged fish to the NGPC.



* 2012 Survey

Shovelnose Sturgeon

Shovelnose sturgeon, the smallest sturgeon species found in North America, are a unique and ancient looking fish. Shovelnose sturgeon can be found in the **Platte River**. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) has been researching shovelnose sturgeon in the lower Platte River for the last few years and provided us with some catch data. Anglers targeting shovelnose sturgeon should try nightcrawlers on channel drop offs or areas of shallow swift current, and will have their best chance at **Schilling WMA**, the **Louisville** area, or near **Ashland**. UNL is also conducting a tagging study and asks all anglers to report tagged fish to the phone number on the tag.



Other Species

Blue Catfish

Blue catfish can be found in **Branched Oak**, **Wanahoo**, and the **Platte River**.

Bullheads

Bullheads provide a great fishing opportunity for beginners and children because they are easy to catch and a simple hook and worm is all you need. Catchable sized bullheads can be found at **Yankee Hill**, **Olive Creek** and **Wanahoo**.

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 at **Bowling Lake**.

Wipers

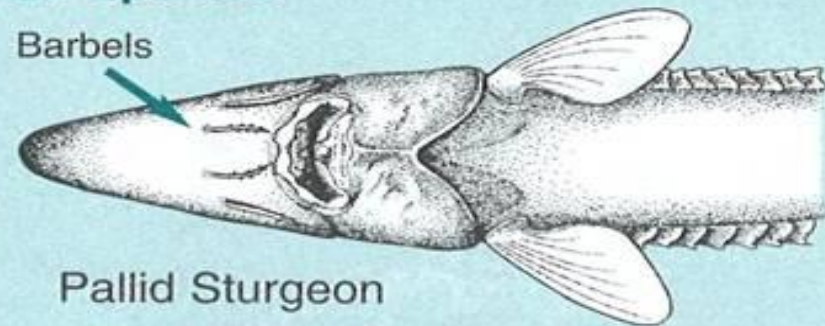
Salt Valley reservoirs such as **Wagon Train**, **Stagecoach** and **Branched Oak** will again provide anglers an opportunity at some big wipers in eastern Nebraska. Anglers can keep only one white bass or wiper that is 16 inches or longer in their daily bag limit, except at Branched Oak where a catch and release regulation is in place. Remember white perch, a similar looking species to white bass and wipers, cannot be transported live from any waterbody as they are an aquatic invasive species.

* 2012 Survey

KNOW YOUR CATCH

Pallid Sturgeon - An Endangered Species

- Illegal to possess
- Outer barbels twice as long as inner barbels
- Base of barbels "U" shaped, inner two set out in front



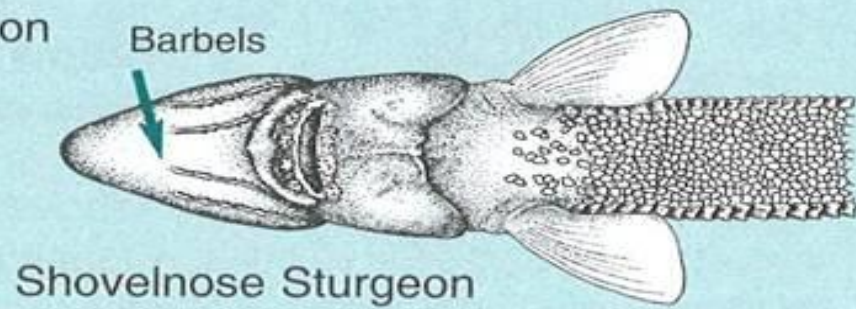
Lake Sturgeon - A Threatened Species

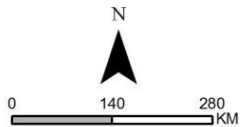
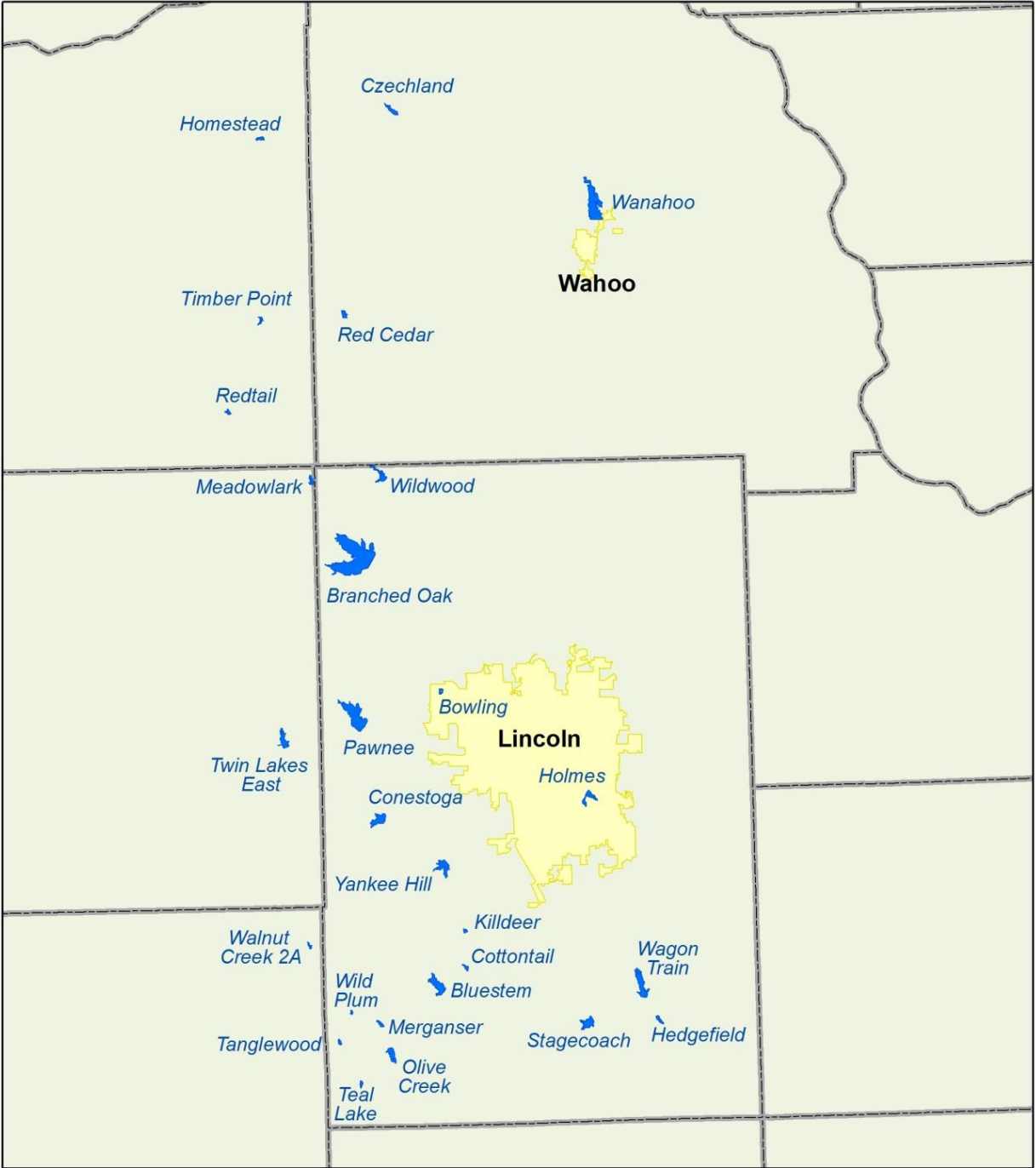
- Illegal to possess
- Short snout turns up at end
- Barbels are not fringed



Shovelnose Sturgeon

- Nebraska's most common sturgeon
- Barbels all the same length
- Barbels straight across
- Smallest Nebraska sturgeon, rarely exceeds 4 pounds





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Trisha Schlake, IT Division, 12/18/2012

