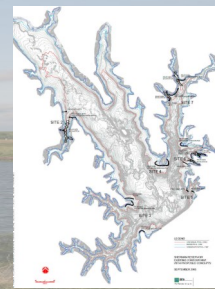


Sherman Reservoir

2017 Angler Survey Summary

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Brad Eifert, Fisheries Biologist



An angler survey was completed at Sherman Reservoir in 2017 from April through October. During the survey, anglers were counted and interviewed on approximately 10 week days and 6 weekend days per month. In total, there were 118 days surveyed and 986 parties interviewed during the seven month time period. Angler surveys provide estimates of fishing effort, catch and harvest rates, catch per hour, and size structure of the fish caught.

The following text and graphs provide summaries of the 2017 survey with comparison to previous years.

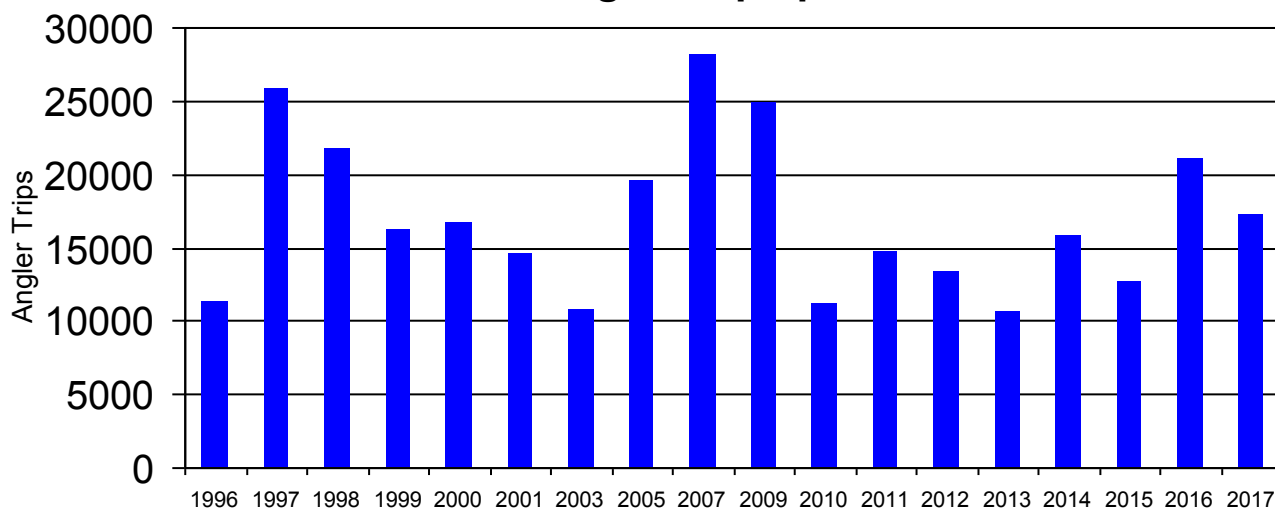
Fishing Effort Summary

The number of anglers making fishing trips to Sherman Reservoir was slightly lower in 2017, as an estimated 17,262 angler trips were made to Sherman Reservoir during the seven month survey period.

There were 578 bank anglers and 408 boat anglers interviewed during the survey period. When the data is extrapolated, bank anglers spent 17,383 hours and boat anglers spent 74,890 hours of angling effort during the survey. Total effort spent fishing at Sherman Reservoir from April through October was 92,273 hours.

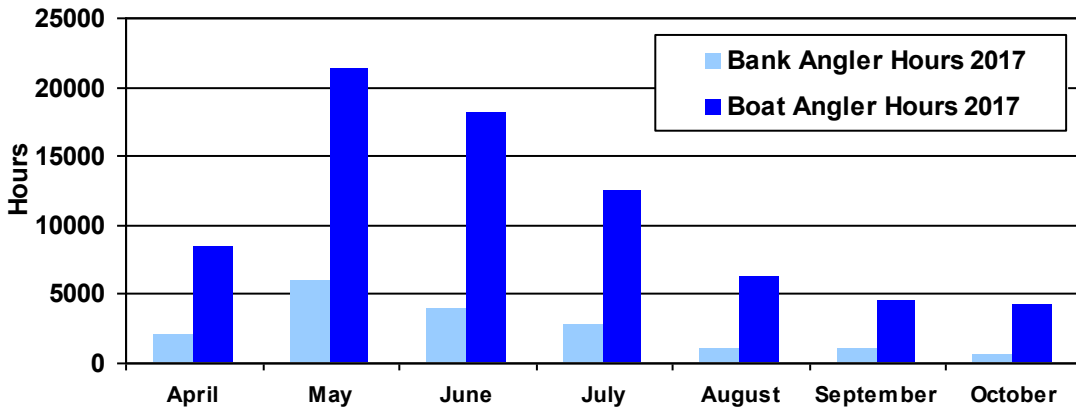
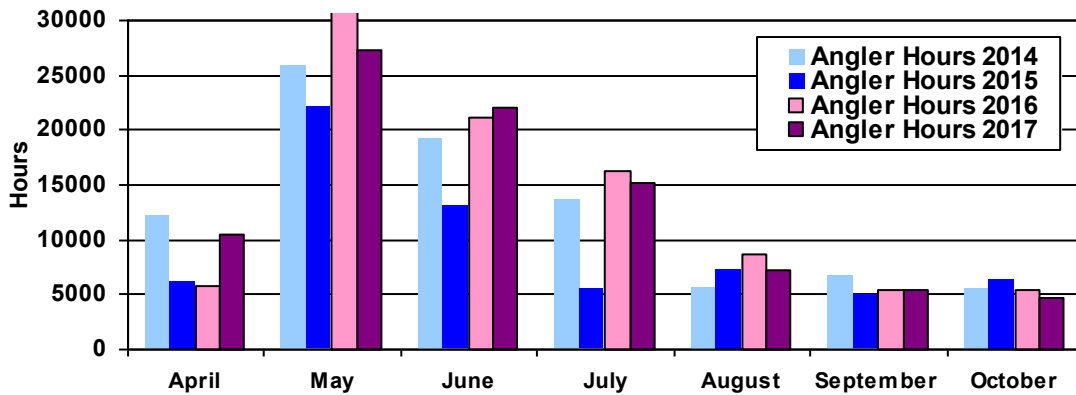
While most anglers who fish Sherman were from Nebraska, anglers from twelve other states were contacted during the survey. Nebraska anglers originated from 114 different communities and 46 counties from across the State. The most common counties represented in the survey included: Hall (35%), Buffalo (15%), Sherman (8%), Howard (6%), and Custer (5%).

Total Angler Trips per Year



Fishing Effort by Month

May and June were the busiest months for angling at Sherman. High reservoir levels throughout the summer months has allowed for higher than average use during the months of July and August the past two years.



Supplemental Questions

Several supplemental questions were also asked of the anglers during the survey.

How many days is your current fishing trip?

78% responded with one day, 10% - two days, 8% - three days, and 4% - four days or longer.

What type(s) of live bait did you use today?

37% did not use live bait, 27% fish, 21% worms, 11% fish and worms, 1% leeches, 3% combination of fish, worms, leeches

Where did you obtain the live bait?

88% bait shop, 10% self collected, 2% both bait shop and self collected, 0.5% both bait shop and gifted by angler on site, 0.3% gifted by angler on site

Where did/will you dispose the live bait?

73% retained unused bait, 8% no bait left over, 6% trash can or dump station, 6% dumped on land, 5% released into water, 2% gave away

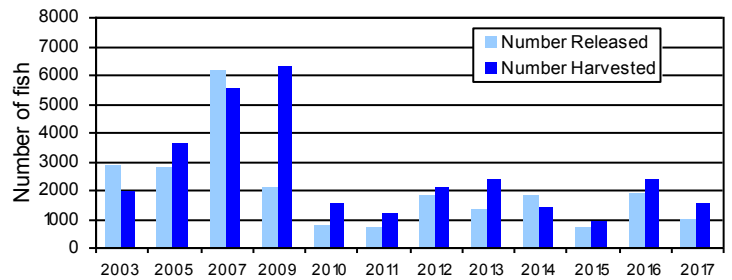
Channel Catfish

2017 Regulations: *No length limit, 5 fish daily bag*

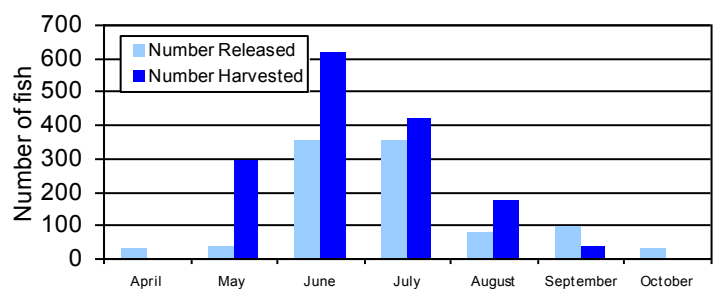
Channel catfish catch was much lower during 2017, with only 969 catfish released and 1,538 harvested. Catfish caught during the survey ranged from 4 to 40 inches. The length of harvested catfish ranged from 11 to 32 inches and the average length was 20.4 inches. The month of June had the highest catch and harvest of channel catfish, followed closely by May and July. Anglers seeking catfish caught 0.03 fish/hour and harvested 0.017 fish/hour throughout the entire survey period. July had the highest monthly catch rate of 0.05 fish/hour.



Channel Catfish Caught Per Year



Channel Catfish Caught Per Month



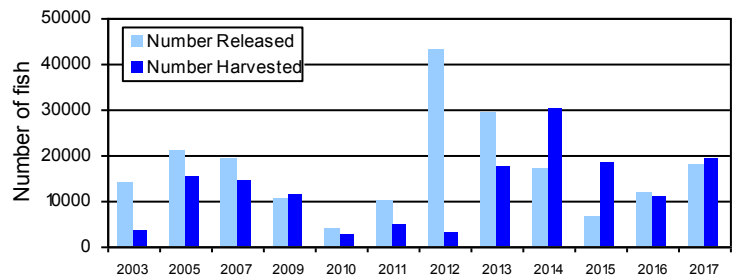
Crappie

2017 Regulations: *10-inch minimum length limit, 15 panfish daily bag*

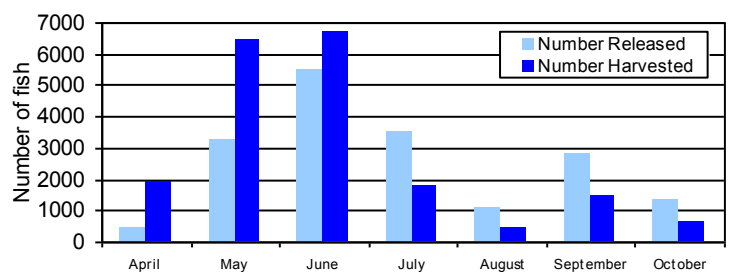
Crappie catch was improved and was the highest since 2014. There was a total of 37,234 crappie caught, with 19,318 of those harvested. Approximately 49% of the total catch of crappie consisted of fish shorter than the ten-inch minimum length limit and had to be released. Crappie that were harvested ranged from 8 to 16 inches, with an average length of 10.8 inches. Compliance with the length limit was very good, as only two percent of the harvest consisted of fish shorter than the minimum length limit. May and June were the best two months to catch crappie, but all months provided decent fishing. The catch rate throughout the entire survey period for crappie anglers was 0.4 fish/hour, while harvest was 0.2 fish/hour. September had the highest catch rate of 0.8 fish/hour.



Crappie Caught Per Year



Crappie Caught Per Month



Walleye

2017 Regulations: *Daily bag limit may include 2 walleye between 15 inches and not greater than 20 inches and 1 walleye longer than 28 inches. There is a slot limit protecting walleye 20 through 28 inches.*

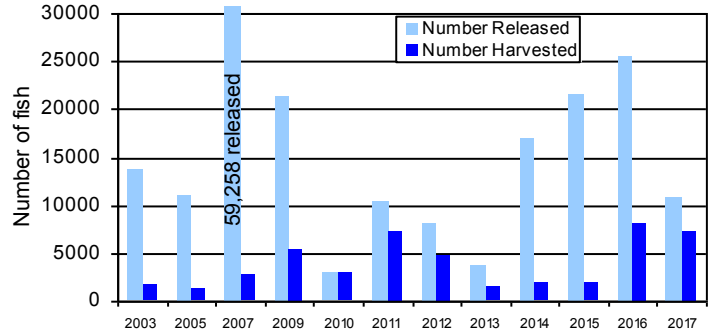
The total walleye catch was the lowest recorded since 2013, but the number of harvested walleye was the second highest documented during the eighteen year history of the angler survey at Sherman Reservoir. Total catch was 17,998 walleye, with released fish totaling 10,799 and harvested fish totaling 7,199. Walleye caught by anglers during the survey ranged from 4 to 29 inches. When the total angler catch is broken down by size groups: 50% of the catch was less than 15 inches; 44% was between 15 and 20 inches; and 6% was greater than 20 inches.

The majority of harvested walleye ranged from 16 to 18 inches and the average length was 16.6 inches. Compliance with the length regulation remains very good, as only 1.6% of the total harvest was smaller than 15 inches and 0.3% was in the 20 to 28 inch protected slot. May and June were the best months for catching walleye at Sherman. Catch rates for anglers seeking walleye were 0.195 fish/hour and harvest rates were 0.078 fish/hour. June had the highest overall catch rate for anglers targeting walleye at 0.31 fish/hour.

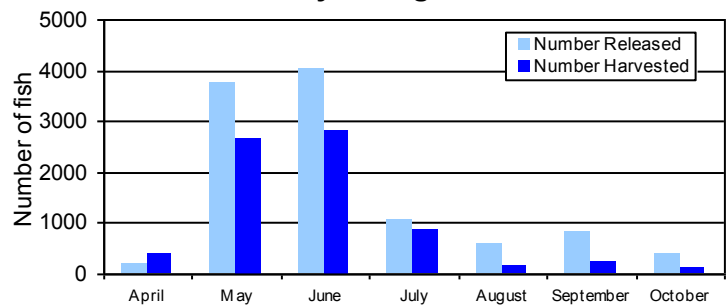
The restrictive length limits that were enacted in 2009 continue to create positive fishing opportunities at Sherman Reservoir. Although the regulation has reduced the daily bag limit to only two fish, the annual angler harvest of walleye has on average more than doubled. The average harvest prior to the 2009 regulation change was only 1,691 fish per year. The average harvest since 2009 has been 4,494 fish annually.

Future success of the walleye length limit continues to be dependent on successful walleye recruitment and compliance from the anglers pursuing walleye at Sherman.

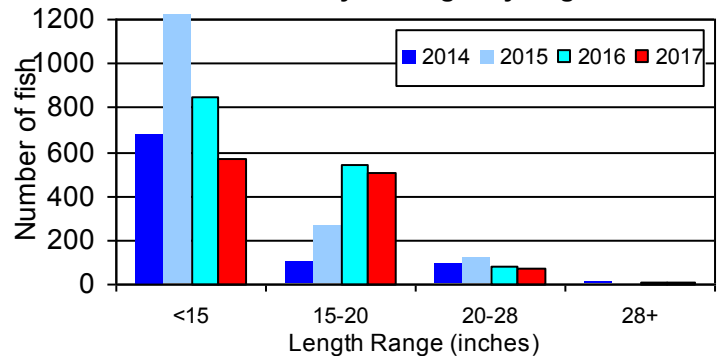
Walleye Caught Per Year



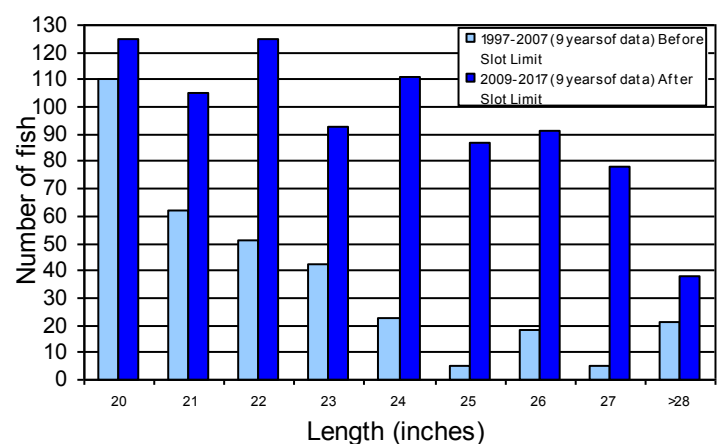
Walleye Caught Per Month



Size of Walleyes Caught by Anglers



Number of 20 to 28 Inch Walleye Caught By Anglers

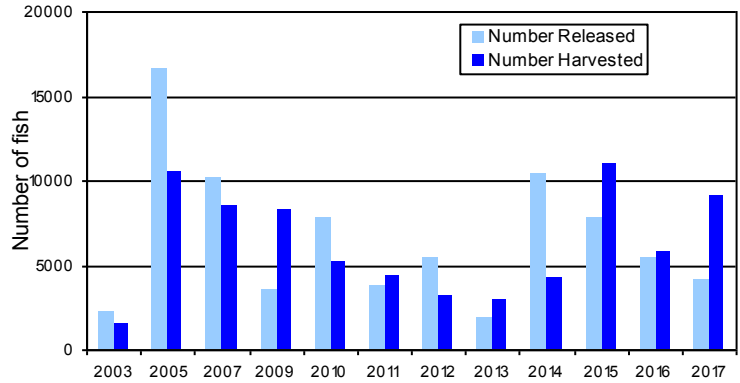


White Bass

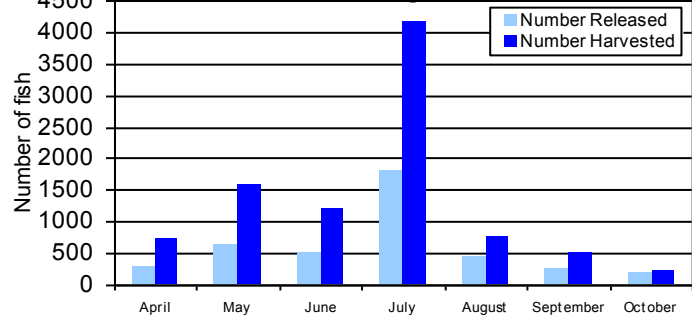
2017 Regulations: 15 fish daily bag, no more than one fish over 16 inches in daily bag

White bass catch was improved and the harvest was the second highest recorded over the past ten years. There were a total of 13,185 white bass caught and 9,090 harvested in 2017. Harvested fish ranged from 8 to 16 inches and the average length was 12.5 inches. July had the highest catch and harvest of white bass, but May and June were also good months for anglers. The overall catch rate for anglers seeking white bass was 0.14 fish/hour and the harvest rate was 0.09 fish/hour. The highest monthly catch rate was in July when anglers were catching 0.4 white bass per hour of angling effort.

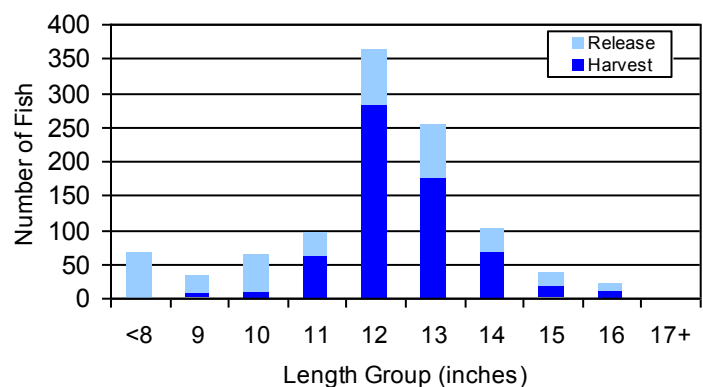
White Bass Caught Per Year



White Bass Caught Per Month



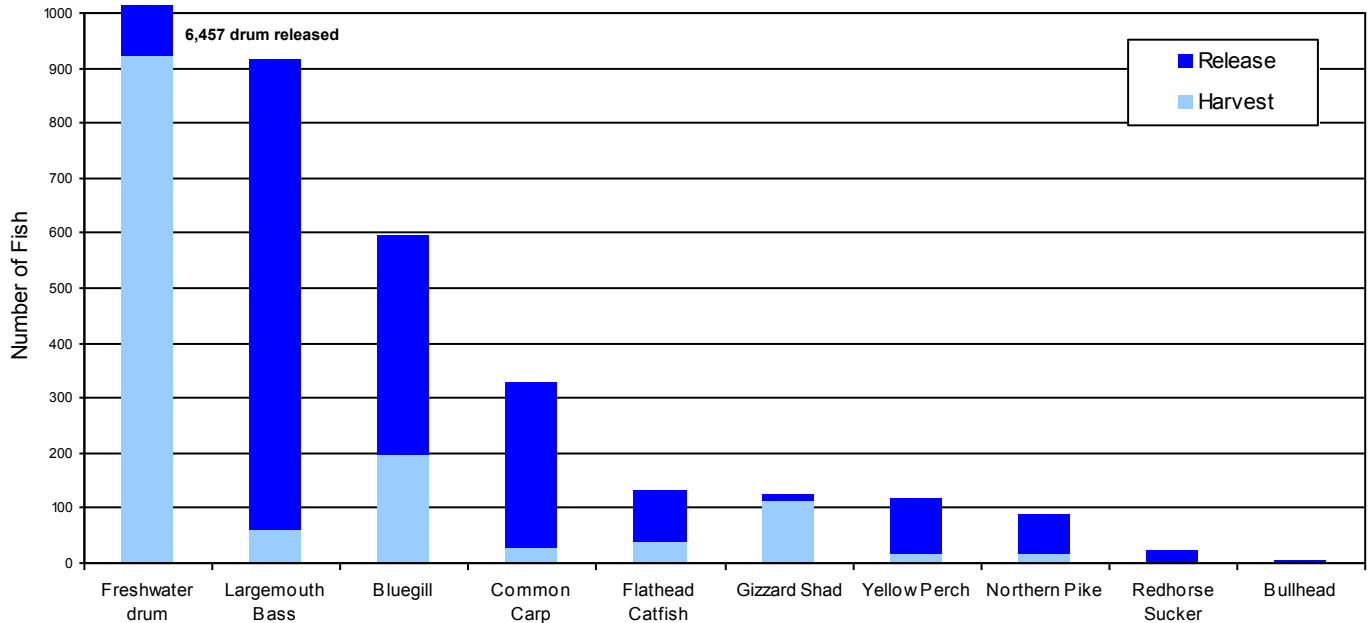
Length of White Bass Caught by Anglers



Miscellaneous Species

There were ten other fish species represented in the 2017 angler catch. Freshwater drum were most commonly caught, followed by largemouth bass, bluegill, common carp, flathead catfish, gizzard shad, yellow perch, northern pike, redhorse suckers, and bullheads.

2017 Sherman Reservoir Catch by Species



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

District Manager: Brad Newcomb: brad.newcomb@nebraska.gov

Biologist: Brad Eifert: brad.eifert@nebraska.gov