

Indiana State Report

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Marketing: The DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) entered its third year of the State Direct Mail Marketing Program in conjunction with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. The DFW has reached over 260,000 anglers during the past 3 years. The DFW created two interactive maps on their website to show people the locations of public fishing and hunting access. The “Where to Fish” and “Where to Hunt” maps can be viewed at www.wildlife.IN.gov.



New License Types: A new license type was created by the 2009 Indiana General Assembly. The non-resident youth license allows non-residents, 17 and younger, to purchase hunting licenses for a discounted price. Previously, non-resident youth paid the same price as a non-resident adult. In the last year, nearly 750 non-resident youths have purchased an Indiana hunting license for the first time.



Public Lands Program:

Kiwani (Lost) Marsh. In 2009, the DFW started work on restoring a 130 acre wetland located at Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area. The area had been a

challenge to farm for many years and it was decided that the area should be restored to help increase local production of waterfowl and provide quality migratory habitat. Even in the early stages of restoration, use by migratory waterfowl and shorebirds has been increasing. Restoration work is planned to be finished by mid-July, 2010. Once completed the site will be flooded, providing permanent water and refuge to waterfowl and other species of wildlife. Funding for this project was provided by the DFW and Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project Steering Committee, through its NAWCA grant.

Sprig Slough. In 2009, the Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project Steering Committee purchased a 104 acre parcel next to Kankakee FWA. The parcel is enrolled in the wetland reserve program through the NRCS. The DFW took over the restoration

plans for the site consisting of 15 acres of semi-permanent water. Restoration should be complete in June of 2010. This site is a major stop over point for pintails during the spring migration.

Bittern Bog WCA. Restoration of the new 74-acre Bittern Bog Wetland Conservation Area in Starke County is currently underway. The site will consist of six seasonal water areas totaling approximately 6.5 acres accompanied by warm season grass prairie in the upland areas. This was another project that was acquired and restored with funding by the Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project Steering Committee, through its NAWCA grant.

Public Access Program: The DFW's public access program oversees the maintenance, construction and management of approximately 350 public access sites in the state. In 2009, three new access sites were developed and one site was rehabbed. Repairs were made to various public access sites and Fish and Wildlife areas that were flooded during spring and fall 2009.



Hatcheries: The DFW operates eight state fish hatcheries that produce and stock nearly 22,000,000 fry and fish each year. These fish are stocked into public waters to increase fishing opportunity for nearly a million anglers in Indiana. Recently, the State hatchery unit completed an extensive review of their operational and fish culture practices to insure the facilities are properly protected and risks from fish stocked are minimized. HACCP plans (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) were drafted and approved for each hatchery. The plans have



been implemented and provide hatchery managers with a new decision making tool to improve hatchery performance and operation. Because decisions about facility risk now use a common process it is much easier for the entire hatchery unit to understand shared activities and coordinate production plans and schedules. Improvements in efficiency and effectiveness have been observed.

Fish Management: A first of its kind collaborative effort to join the district fish management role with Indiana's Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Program yielded highly successful results when work began as a result of LARE's diagnostic study recommending that the Upper Tippecanoe River Lake Area (UTRLA) be managed from more of a watershed perspective. District and LARE staff worked cooperatively with representatives from the seven lake associations in UTRLA to develop fish management objectives. Fish community and angler surveys were conducted last summer to help evaluate where these lakes ranked according to these objectives and that information was detailed in a recently completed report.

The report summarizes one of the most comprehensive series of fish surveys ever done on a watershed basis. The purpose of the surveys was to document which lakes provide good fishing and determine which lakes currently meet fishing standards set by local anglers, lake residents, and the DFW. The standards were established following a six-month public planning process spearheaded by the Tippecanoe Watershed Foundation



Overall, largemouth bass were twice as abundant in the UTRLA lakes compared to other lakes in northern Indiana, although they were generally small in size. Bluegill numbers and sizes fell within normal ranges at each lake except one with few but large bluegill and one with small slow growing bluegill. Overall fishing pressure, catch and harvest were lower than anticipated.

The DFW conducted its second large reservoir population estimate on largemouth and smallmouth bass at Brookville Reservoir in the spring of 2009. Brookville is a 5,260 acre USACOE flood control impoundment in southeast Indiana. Four fisheries districts electrofished eight, approximately 3.6 mile stations (52% of the available shoreline), over a 4 week period. Population estimates were calculated for each station and then expanded to provide a population estimate for the entire reservoir. As part of the study, otoliths were also collected to determine age, growth, and mortality for Brookville black bass populations. This project will provide baseline data for black bass at Brookville Reservoir and provide an opportunity to model the populations under different regulation suites.

Lake and River Enhancement: In 2009, successful treatment of 3,167 acres of aquatic vegetation control was achieved through LARE-granted projects on 40 lakes, with a net result of more than 16,700 acres of lakes having improved aquatic habitat and enhanced usability for fishing, boating, swimming and other activities. More than 59,000 cubic yards of sediment and organic material was removed in projects on several lake projects, improving the accessibility and usability of the water resources. Numerous LARE-funded Watershed Land Treatment projects addressed pollution prevention through measures installed in the watershed above lakes and rivers. These projects involve cooperation with county Soil and Water Conservation districts and other state and federal partners in working directly with land users. Numerous diagnostic and design projects on lake watersheds were initiated to provide necessary background information to effectively conduct future LARE projects. These are multi-year, long-term projects. Newly developed bathymetry maps for selected Indiana lakes were posted online for free public access. These maps were developed with LARE's hydroacoustic equipment.

