

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Fisheries Bureau
1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211

February 25, 2020

Milton Jenkins
105 Westline Drive
Madison, MS 39110

Dear Mr. Jenkins,

I have enclosed a management plan for the 180 acre lake we visited on February 25, 2020. Our management recommendations are based on your goals along with the current status of the fish population, water quality, and habitat. I recommend stocking advanced size bluegill, adding cover, and continuing a consistent fertilization program.

I recommend stocking 500 advanced size (3-4 inch) bluegill per acre. If you would like Redear Sunfish (chinquelin), stock an 80:20 mix of Bluegill:Redear (400:100/acre). Do not stock in the summer when water temps are high. If you cannot get the fish early enough, wait until the fall to stock when water temperatures cool. The newly stocked fish population needs time to establish. In a lake this size feeders aren't necessary, but if you do keep the feeding program going try to put only enough feed out that your bream can consume in 10 minutes. Do not harvest any bream for a year. If desired you can harvest catfish and crappie as anglers see fit. I recommend to start harvesting 10 lbs. of bass per acre. Harvest bass 14 inches and under from your lake. The stocking history shows that 2,000 grass carp was recently stocked in 2018. Our recommendations are 5 carp to the acre and your rate was about 11 to the acre. I would recommend not stocking any grass carp for several years. The carp should be able to handle the aquatic vegetation issues in the future.

Your bass population is in good shape. Although we didn't see any shad the bass in the lake are doing very well. The relative weight (wr) for bass in your lake is 104 which is very good. A good population has relative weights in between 90 – 100. Although there are a good supply of healthy bass, there wasn't many collected in between that 5 – 9 inch range. Having a good population of bream is great because as the bream reproduce smaller bass have a steady forage base for now and the foreseeable future. The table below gives a representation of the fish that were collected through electroshocking.

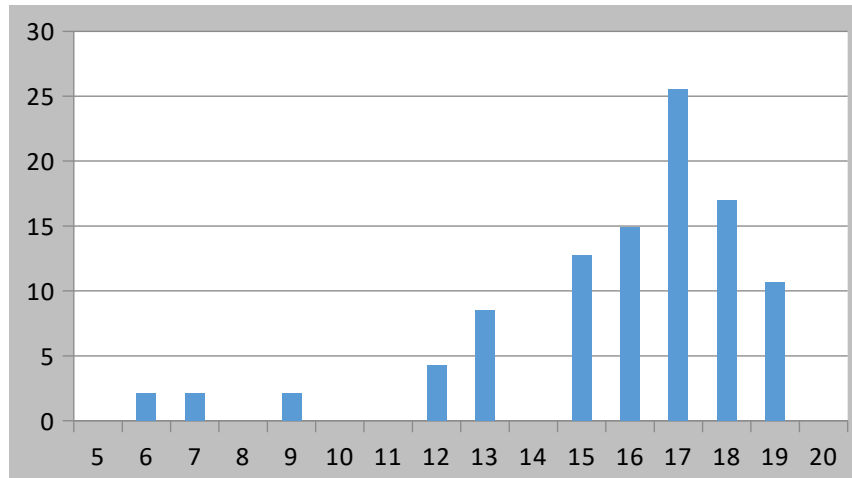


Table: Percentages of each length group that was sampled.

Most of the lake's bream population is along your dam area with riprap. When you move away from that habitat bream populations dip dramatically at other parts of the lake. Adding extra habitat to the shallow areas can enhance your fish production as it provides cover for smaller fish. I recommend adding some new structure (hardwood brush tops or artificial) to your lake. If you're using natural structure try and cut oak trees because they usually sink, while some others will float. If you're not sure which trees will float or sink all you need is a quick test. Cut off a branch or two from the tree you are thinking about putting in your lake. If that branch sinks to the bottom then the tree itself will sink. If the branch floats you know you will have to tie an anchor to the tree to sink it. Try to put some of the structure where some of your bream beds are too. That way your bream have some refuge from predators.

I recommend continuing your fertilization program to boost fish production. A properly maintained fertilization program can double the biomass of fish in your lake. Understand that a fertilization program is a commitment of not only funds, but time since someone will be responsible for monitoring visibility and applying fertilizer. Collect a soil sample for testing to know if you need lime or not. Collect samples of the pond bottom from 6-8 different places around the lake and mix them together. Take a dried sample of the mixture to your local county MSU Extension Office for testing. If the lake requires lime, add in the fall. Purchase lime from your local co-op and ask to spread evenly over the pond.

Your goal is to obtain a phytoplankton bloom (green shade). Phytoplankton are primary producers and form the base of the food chain which the rest of your fish population is dependent upon. It is optimal to maintain 18-24 inches of visibility in your pond. Visibility should not remain in single digits (<10 inches) for prolonged periods. This may result in a fish kill. In this case, suspend fertilization program until water clears then reduce amount applied. Techniques are discussed below in the management plan.

Good luck on your lake and feel free to call or email us if you have any questions in the future.

Sincerely,

Jamaal Bankhead
MDWFP Fisheries Biologist

POND MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

MDWFP Technical Guidance

Name: Milton Jenkins
Address: 105 Westline Drive
City/ST: Madison, MS
Phone: (501)765-1560

Lake size: 180 acre
County: Madison
Date checked: February 25, 2020

INTERVIEW AND/OR ELECTROFISHING OBSERVATIONS:

Clear water with a visibility of 54 inches. Very few bluegill were sampled with most being along the dam area. Can use some structure in the shallow areas. Feeders are not necessary, but can continue if desired.

CURRENT CONDITION OF POPULATION:

Healthy population of good size bass, but can start to become bass crowded due to poor forage base of bream throughout the lake

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

Healthy “balanced population” with multiple sizes of bass, bream and crappie

AQUATIC VEGETATION PRESENT:

None at the moment

FERTILIZATION PROGRAM NEEDED:

Yes. Continue fertilizing each year after the water temperature steadily reaches 60-65 degrees F. Measure water visibility to determine timing of fertilizer applications; maintain visibility between 18-24 inches until the water temperature drops below 60 degrees F in the fall (pages 26-31 in booklet). 10-52-4 powdered fertilizer rates are 4-6 lbs. per acre. Optimally try and cover about 80% of the lake with the fertilizer. Other fertilizer rates are available in the booklet on page 29. Should you have an issue obtaining and keeping a bloom, you may need lime. If so, collect a soil sample from 6-8 locations in the pond bottom. Take a dried sample of that mixture to your local county extension agent for testing. Add lime in the fall if necessary and try to cover at least 80% of the pond bottom.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Add habitat to shallow depths (cut hardwood brush or artificial)
- Stock advanced size (3-4”) bream at 500/acre
- Don’t stock any grass carp for several years
- Cease bream harvest for one year
- Catfish can be harvested as see fit
- Crappie can be harvested as see fit
- Harvest 10 pounds/acre of largemouth bass 14 inches and below
- Continue fertilization program, maintain 18-24 inches of visibility

- Once fertilization program is consistent, bass harvest rates can double and bream can be harvest as seen fit