

STATUS OF THE MUSKIE FISHERY



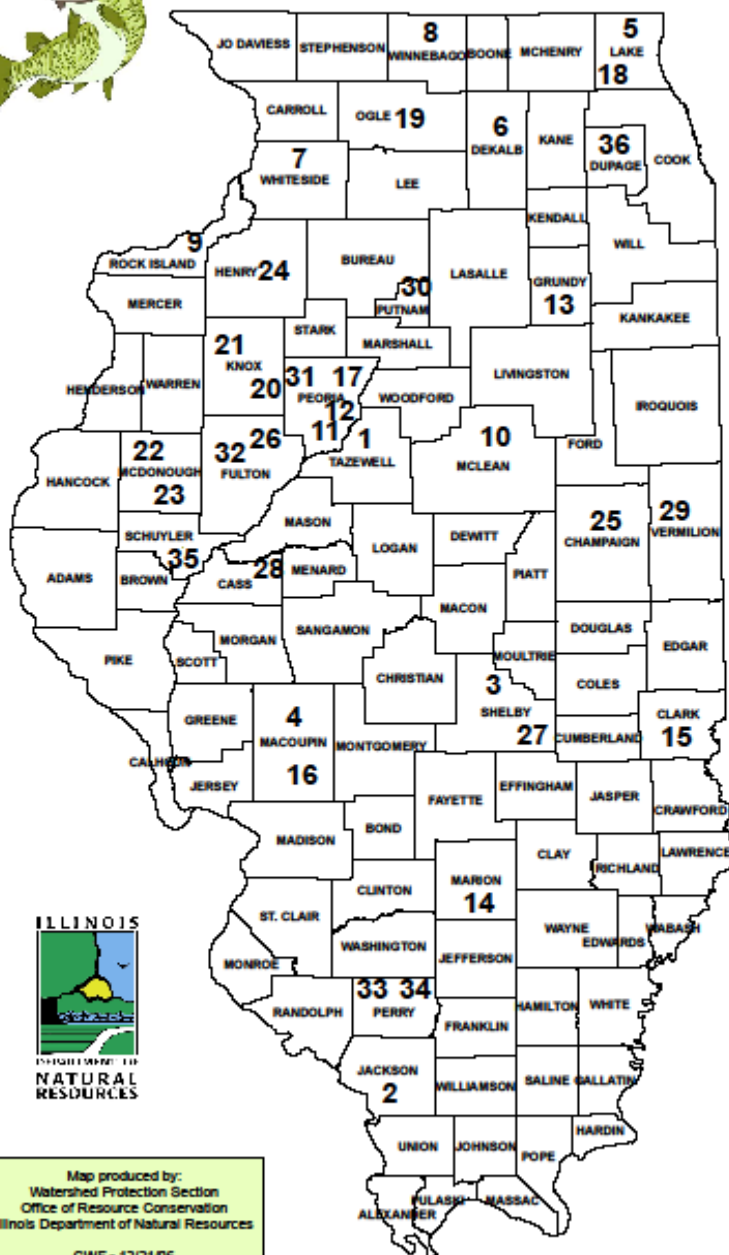
**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

DIVISION OF FISHERIES

JANUARY 2011



Illinois' Public Muskie Lakes



Legend

Muskie Lakes

- 1, Spring Lake (North)
- 2, Kinkaid Lake
- 3, Shelbyville Lake
- 4, Otter Lake
- 5, Fox Chain
- 6, Shabbona Lake
- 7, Lake Carlton
- 8, Pierce Lake
- 9, Lake George
- 10, Evergreen Lake
- 11, Wheel Lake
- 12, Shovel Lake
- 13, Heldecke Lake
- 14, Forbes Lake
- 15, Mill Creek
- 16, Staunton City Lake
- 17, Johnson Lake
- 18, Sterling Lake
- 19, Lake Sule
- 20, Lake McMaster
- 21, Lake Storey
- 22, Spring Lake
- 23, Argyle Lake
- 24, Johnson Sauk Trail
- 25, Lake of the Woods
- 26, Canton Lake
- 27, Pana Lake
- 28, Prairie Lake
- 29, Lake Mingo
- 30, Hennepin Hopper Lake
- 31, Deep Lake
- 32, Double T Lake
- 33, Goldeneye Lake
- 34, Canvasback Lake
- 35, Schuy - Rush Lake
- 36, Mallard Lake



Map produced by:
 Watershed Protection Section
 Office of Resource Conservation
 Illinois Department of Natural Resources
 CWF - 12/21/05

2010 STATEWIDE MUSKIE STOCKING SUMMARY

DATE	SIZE	LAKE NAME	NUMBER	SOURCE
08/31	10.9	Lake Shelbyville	5,500	Illinois
08/31	10.9	Kinkaid Lake	2,000	Illinois
08/31	10.9	Canvasback Lake - Pyramid State Park	50	Illinois
08/31	10.9	Goldeneye Lake – Pyramid State Park	50	Illinois
08/31	10.9	Evergreen Lake	926	Illinois
09/01	10.9	Fox Chain O'Lakes	1,500	Illinois
09/01	10.9	Pierce Lake (R)	39	Illinois
09/01	11.4	Pierce Lake (R)	125	Illinois
09/01	11.4	Lake George	334	Illinois
09/01	11.4	Carlton Lake	152	Illinois
09/01	11.4	Hennepin-Hopper Lake	1,000	Illinois
09/01	11.4	Mallard Lake	89	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Johnson Lake – Banner Marsh	600	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Wheel Lake – Banner Marsh	350	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Shovel Lake – Banner Marsh	200	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Busse Lake	840	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Shabbona Lake	319	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Lake Mingo (R)	170	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Mill Creek Lake	366	Illinois
09/02	11.4	Sam Dale Lake (R)	194	Illinois
09/03	11.4	Deep Lake	25	Illinois
09/03	11.4	Double T SFWA	64	Illinois
09/03	11.4	Staunton Lake	84	Illinois
09/03	11.4	Otter Lake	765	Illinois
09/03	11.4	Lake Shelbyville	2,372	Illinois
09/08	11.6	Lake of the Woods	52	Illinois
09/08	11.6	Hennepin-Hopper Lake	500	Illinois
09/08	11.6	Lake Sule	150	Illinois
09/08	11.6	Otter Lake	765	Illinois
09/08	11.6	Prairie Lake	210	Illinois
09/08	11.6	Argyle Lake	93	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Schuy-Rush Lake	370	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Spring Lake – McDonough Co.	277	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Canton Lake	500	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Fulton Co. Cons. Area Lake #3	90	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Fulton Co. Cons. Area Lake #4	36	Illinois
09/09	11.6	McMaster Lake	90	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Lake Storey	135	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Johnson Sauk Trail Lake	58	Illinois
09/09	11.6	Fox Chain O'Lakes	500	Illinois
09/10	11.6	Pana Lake	280	Illinois
09/10	11.6	Evergreen Lake	925	Illinois
09/10	11.6	Lake Shelbyville	3,494	Illinois

TOTAL: 26,639

(R) - Research

2010 GREEN GENE STOCKING SUMMARY

DATE	SIZE	POPULATION	NUMBER	STOCK	SOURCE
Sam Dale Lake					
09/02	11.40	North Spring Lake, IL	194	Illinois	Jake Wolf Hatchery
			TOTAL: 194		
Lake Mingo					
09/02	11.40	North Spring Lake, IL	170	Illinois	Jake Wolf Hatchery
			TOTAL: 170		
Pierce Lake					
09/01	10.90	North Spring Lake, IL	39	Illinois	Jake Wolf Hatchery
09/01	11.40	North Spring Lake, IL	125	Illinois	Jake Wolf Hatchery
			TOTAL: 164		

GRAND TOTAL: 528

Total Illinois muskie = 528

Note: Sam Dale Lake, Lake Mingo, and Pierce Lake did not receive any out of state muskie stockings this year as the project is nearing completion.

STATUS OF MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS REGION I

DISTRICT 1: JO DAVIESS, STEPHENSON, WINNEBAGO, BOONE, DEKALB, OGLE, AND CARROLL COUNTIES

SHABBONA LAKE - This lake was built in 1974 and first opened to fishing in 1977. The lake is 319 acres and the basin was shaped and designed with Sport Fish Restoration funds. Standing timber, stump fields, fish cribs, anchored trees, rock piles, fish piers, a gravel road bridge, and a cement block house provide some very interesting structures for the angler. The shoreline is well-vegetated with a variety of aquatic plants including water lily.

In addition to muskie, the lake's predator population includes largemouth bass in substantial numbers, walleye, smallmouth bass, and hybrid striped bass are stocked yearly. The prey population includes gizzard shad, bluegill, yellow perch, golden shiners, white suckers and brook silversides.

The lake was initially stocked with 30,000 tiger muskie fry in 1976. The stocking success was excellent with 53 tiger muskie collected in the fall electrofishing survey of 1976. The lake was again stocked with 286 tiger muskie fingerlings in 1980.

Two state record tiger muskie were claimed from Shabbona Lake; the first in 1982 from the original stock and the second in 1986 from the supplemental stock.

From 1983 to 1989 the lake was stocked with 2,229 pure 11" muskie from the Carlton Silt Basin and Muskie, Inc. This stocking effort has been a success since two state records came from the 1985 stocking at 34 pounds, 3 ounces in 1994 and a latter state record in 1997 at 37 pounds, 13 ounces.

From 1990 through 1999 - 4,812 muskie 8" to 12" were stocked from Jake Wolf Hatchery or through a purchase by the Shabbona Lake Sportsmen's Club. Muskie were stocked only in odd years beginning in 2001 with 638 fish or 2 per acre followed by 638 fish in 2003. In 2005, 850 - 10 inch muskie were stocked. In 2006, 1,150 10 inch muskie were stocked. In 2007, 319 - 11 inch muskie were stocked. In 2008, 319, 11.4" muskie were stocked on August 27. In 2010 319, 11.4 inch muskie were stocked

April trap-netting for walleye (1997-2002) yielded 283 muskie with two estimated to be over 40 pounds. With reduced efforts in 2003, 28 muskie were captured. In 2005, 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 66 muskie of which 65 were greater than 30 inches. In 2006, 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 26 muskie of which 25 were greater than 30 inches. In 2007, 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 46 muskie of which 45 were greater than 30 inches, 21 were greater than 36 inches. The largest muskie collected in 2007 weighed just under 37 pounds. In 2008, 6 trap nets resulted in the collection of 48 muskie of which 46 were greater than 30 inches, 35 were greater than 36 inches. The largest muskie collected in 2008 was just under 28 pounds. In 2009, 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 20 muskie of which all were greater than 30 inches and 12 were

greater than 36 inches. The largest was 30.4 pounds. In 2010 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 40 muskie of which 32 were greater than 32 inches.

The long-awaited barrier net was completed on August 4, 1998 completely blocking the exit of larger fish over the spillway. Prior to the net's installation, members of Muskie, Inc. collected 22 muskie below the dam in the Indian Creek tailwaters. A similar September survey in 2000 found only one muskie. A new barrier net was installed on July 9, 2008, after an 11 inch rain the nets collapsed. The nets were repaired on 9-23-08. A muskie salvage in the tailwaters after the net was repaired resulted in the collection of 102 muskie. All of these muskies were safely returned to the lake. The 2010 fishing season was very good for muskie anglers.

There is a 48" size limit on muskie at Shabbona Lake with a limit of one per day.

PIERCE LAKE - This 162-acre lake was built in 1960. It was completely drained in 1970 due to a defective valve. The lake's predators in addition to muskie include largemouth and smallmouth bass, and walleye stocked supplementally each year. Among the many prey species are gizzard shad, brook silversides, white suckers, and carp.

A muskie stocking program was begun in 1983, and to 1989 - 1,274 large fingerling muskie (11") were stocked from the Carlton Silt Basin, state hatcheries, and Muskie, Inc.

The muskie sign-in program from 1987 to 1991 has reports of 59 fish caught with 42% of these fish being harvested. Creel data from 1993 found an estimated 30 muskie caught with none reported as being harvested. Creel data from 1999 estimated 50 muskie caught with 3 estimated harvested.

An Illinois Natural History Survey study was begun in 1990 to determine the comparative survivability of stocked 4", 8", and 10" fish. In 1990 - 3,335 muskie were stocked as part of this study of which 1,000 were 10" fish. The study was continued in 1992 and 3,772 muskie were stocked of which 709 fish were 10" in size. The lake was monitored through 1997. The preliminary results were that no survival occurs on muskie stocked under 8.0" in size.

From 1997 to 2003, Jake Wolf supplied 1,301 muskie 10" - 13" and the Flatlanders Muskie, Inc. supplied an additional 330 muskie with 51% of these fish over 20" and 79% from the Leech Lake Strain. Jake Wolf production was good in 2003 and Pierce Lake was stocked with 824 - 6.0 to 10.0" fish. The lake is now part of a statewide muskie genetic survival study and will continue to receive generous stocks of muskie from strains throughout the country. In 2004, 300 - 11 inch muskie were stocked from Jake Wolf Fish Hatchery as part of the genetic study.

From 1997 through 2002, 60 muskie were taken below the dam with 25 of them taken during the wet 2000 year. This generated interest from the Flatlanders in installing a barrier net to prevent fish escapement. Initial planning and fund-raising began in 2001,

but by mid-2002, the State Water Survey determined a net could not be installed due to possible dam failure. Retrieval of muskie below the dam will continue in future years.

The Lake and Willow Creek tailwaters has a 48" size limit on muskie with a limit of one per day.

DISTRICT 2: ROCK ISLAND, HENRY, BUREAU, LASALLE, LEE, AND WHITESIDE COUNTIES

LAKE GEORGE - This 167 acre lake in Rock Island County was built in 1966 and has a maximum depth of 62 feet with an average depth of 24 feet. Because Lake George is located near a heavily populated area, it receives between 200 and 350 man hours per acre fishing pressure.

Other predators in Lake George, in addition to muskie, are largemouth bass, walleye, and striped bass hybrids which are stocked supplementally each year. The main prey species in the lake since 1990 is gizzard shad.

The lake was first stocked with pure muskie fingerlings in 1983. By 1993, Lake George had developed into one of Illinois' premiere muskie lakes especially for muskie over 40 inches. In 1993 and 1994, Lake George suffered some mortality to larger muskie. Approximately 50 muskie 36 to 42 inches died. The cause could not be determined. Lake George was not stocked with muskie in 1995, but was stocked with 167, 12 inch Leech Lake strain muskie fingerlings purchased by the Mississippi Valley Chapter of Muskie, Inc., in 1996 and 1997. In 1997, the state also stocked 169, 10" muskie. In 1998, the lake was doubled stocked again to make up for muskie lost in 1993 and 1994 with the Mississippi Valley Chapter of Muskie, Inc. purchasing 169 muskie. In 1999, the lake received 1000, 4 inch muskie; 334, 11-13 inch muskie from state stockings. The lake also received 170, 11 inch muskie from the Mississippi Valley Chapter of Muskie, Inc. In 2000, the state stocked 167 - 10.0" muskie and 167 - 11.0" muskie. In 2001, the state stocked 334 - 11.2" muskie. In 2002, the state stocked 334, 6.8 inch muskie and 167, 11.9 inch muskie. In 2003, 332 - 10 inch muskie were stocked. Muskie were not stocked in 2004. In 2005, 167 - 10.0 inch muskie were stocked. In 2006, 367, 11 inch muskie were stocked and 1,190, 5 inch muskie were also stocked. In 2007, 167, 10.8 inch muskie were stocked. In 2008, 501, 11.0 inch muskie or 3 per acre were stocked. In 2009, 167, 11.2 inch muskie were stocked. In 2010, 334 11.4 inch muskie were stocked.

The volunteer muskie creel program from 1987 to 1991 recorded 106 legal muskie caught with 90 being released. Creel report data from 1994 reported 83 muskie caught with only 3 harvested. The lake has a 36 inch size restriction on muskie with one fish per day creel limit. In 1999, thirteen trapnets set overnight in April resulted in the collection of 9 muskie greater than 33 inches. The largest was over 35 pounds. In 2002, 28 trapnets set overnight resulted in the collection of 37 muskie greater than 24

inches. In 2003, 10 trapnets resulted in the collection of 23 muskie greater than 25 inches. In 2005, 10 trapnets resulted in the collection of 24 muskie greater than 30 inches. In 2006, 15 muskie of which 14 were greater than 32 inches. In 2007 and 2008, 6 trapnets were set and they collected 10 muskie each year. All except 1 were greater than 36 inches. In 2009, 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 12 muskie of which 3 were greater than 44 inches, and in 2010 6 trapnets resulted in the collection 9 muskie. The lake has a good number of 40 inch plus muskie with several muskie collected near the Illinois state record. Lake George is scheduled to be stocked in 2011 with one, 12 inch muskie per surface acre. With the large gizzard shad population that has developed in Lake George, muskie fishing is tough because of the prey density.

LAKE CARLTON - This 76.7 acre lake was built in 1969 with a maximum depth of 27 feet and an average depth of 12 feet. The lake was originally stocked with tiger muskie in 1978. Pure muskie were not stocked until 1983. Since then, 1,630 - 12 inch muskie have been stocked in the lake. The 75 - 11.5 inch muskie stocked in 1995 were purchased by the Illinois Chapter of Muskie, Inc. In 2002, 76 - 11.9 inch muskie, and in 2003, 76 - 11.0 inch muskie were stocked by the State. Muskie were not stocked in 2004. In 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009, 76-10.0-12 inch muskie were stocked by the State. In 2010 152, 11.4 inch muskie Lake Carlton possess high water clarity with visibility occasionally extending down 15 feet. The lake has numerous bays, points, and extremely shallow flats of submerged vegetation and water lotus beds.

Lake Carlton, although only 77 acres, has been the number one muskie lake for almost every year since 1987. The lake has produced more legal sized muskie than any other lake in the state. Creel data from 1994 found a catch of 148 muskie and a harvest of only three. The fishing pressure was reported as 606 man hours per acre. Lake Carlton should remain as one of Illinois' premiere muskie lakes for years to come. The fall electrofishing survey in 1995 produced five muskie in excess of 40 inches. Ten trapnets set in April of 1998 resulted in the collection of 32 muskie greater than 28 inches. Eleven trapnets set in April of 1999 resulted in the collection of 29 muskie greater than 30 inches and five trapnets in April 2000 collected 11 muskie over 33 inches. Twelve trapnets in 2001 resulted in the collection of 23 muskie greater than 19 inches. Six trapnets set in April of 2002 resulted in the collection of 29 muskie between 30 and 46.5 inches. Fourteen minutes of night electrofishing resulted in the collection of 4 muskie. Two of the muskie were greater than 42 inches. Five trapnets set overnight in April of 2003 resulted in the collection of 12 muskie greater than 26 inches. The muskie body condition showed improvement in 2003. In 2005, 6 trapnets set over night resulted in the collection of 33 muskie of which 32 were greater than 30 inches. In 2006, 8 trapnets set over night resulted in the collection of 25 muskie of which 24 were greater than 30 inches. In 2007 only 6 trapnets were set and 12 muskie were caught greater than 34 inches. Three of the muskie were greater than 24 pounds. In 2008 only 6 trap nets resulted in the collection of 16 muskie of which 11 were greater than 36 inches and 4 were greater than 40 inches. In 2009 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 3 muskie two were greater than 40 inches. In 2010 6 trapnets resulted in the collection of 18 muskie and 12 of these were greater than 36 inches. The lake has a 36 inch size restriction on muskie with a one fish per day limit.

DISTRICT 3: HENDERSON, KNOX, MCDONOUGH, MERCER, AND WARREN COUNTIES

LAKE McMASTER - This 165 acre watershed impoundment, located in the center of the 2,500 acre Snakeden Hollow State Fish & Wildlife Area, has several unique physical and chemical features that support a quality muskie fishery. The lake's physical habitat consists of a maximum depth of 65 feet in the main lake basin with adjacent shallow bars and abrupt drop-offs, numerous bays and points, flooded timber, and extensive shallow flats of submerged vegetation and cattails. The lake also has very clear water with clarity occasionally extending to the 25 foot depth.

Since the 1st stocking in 1991, Lake McMaster has received 3,000 muskie of the Leech Lake strain having an average size of 12 inches. The management goal for muskie at Lake McMaster is to maintain a population density of 1 to 3 fish/acre that will produce a trophy fishery of healthy fish. To date, several muskie over the 50 inch trophy size have been taken at Lake McMaster.

Spring trap net data for 2010, revealed an overall average catch rate of 1.46 muskie/net night, which is slightly higher than the historic Lake McMaster catch rate of 1.40 muskie/net night. Data from pit tagged muskie that were recaptured in the April, 2010, survey revealed that the average muskie (males & females combined) grew 1.13 inches and 0.82 pounds/year. In general, female muskie have a faster rate of growth. A 2009 creel survey (218 days) at Lake McMaster revealed that 193 muskie having an average size of 8.96 pounds were caught and released with only 7 fish having an average size of 14.09 pounds being harvested. Muskie anglers in 2011 can expect this unique lake to offer fish up to and over 50 inches and a satisfactory catch rate for smaller muskie. Lake McMaster has a 42 inch minimum length and a 1 fish/day harvest limit.

LAKE STOREY - This 133 acre public co-op watershed lake, located in Knox County at the northwest edge of Galesburg, is a very fertile impoundment that supports high poundages of various sport fish. The lake's fishery is managed by the Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources for the following sport fish: largemouth bass, black & white crappie, bluegill, redear sunfish, channel catfish, walleye and muskie. A fall water level drawdown of 5 to 6 feet for the purpose of predator-prey balance is an annual fish management practice. The lake is heavily fished with an estimated annual pressure of 300 to 600 hours/acre for all fish species. A 2007 creel survey revealed that 3.3 percent of the Lake Storey anglers named muskie as their sought fish species.

Tiger muskie were originally stocked at Lake Storey in 1976 which resulted in a 20 pound 13 ounce state record in 1982. Since 1993, only Leech Lake strain pure muskie have been stocked. During the 1993 to 2010 period, a total of 2,027 muskie (9 to 14 inch) and 405 muskie (6 inch) have been stocked at Lake Storey. The management goal for muskie at Lake Storey is to maintain a population density of 1 to 3 fish/acre that will produce a trophy fishery of healthy fish. To date, several muskie over the 50 inch trophy size have been caught.

Spring trap net data for 2010 at Lake Storey revealed a favorable muskie catch rate of 1.29 fish/net night, but lower than the historic lake catch rate of 1.81 fish/net night. Very clear water at time of the survey could have had a negative effect on the current catch rate. The average muskie in the current 2010 survey was 36.6 inches and 12.22 pounds. Muskie anglers in 2011 can expect a normal catch rate of 30 to 45 inch fish with a few trophy sizes up to 50 inches. A 42 inch minimum length with a 1 fish/day limit is enforced at Lake Storey.

DISTRICT 4: PEORIA, FULTON, AND STARK COUNTIES

LAKE #3 FULTON COUNTY CAMPING AND RECREATION AREA - This lake is south of Canton near St. David, IL. It is a 46 acre former strip mine lake that is long and narrow in shape. The lake’s major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, channel catfish and black crappie. The recreation area has an entrance fee, camping and electric motors only restriction. The site phone number is (309) 668-2931. Lake #3 has two gravel boat ramps and a minimum size limit of 36" for muskie.

Lake #3 Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Source</u>
2007	Muskie	11.2"	90	J.W. N. IA
2008	Muskie	11.4"	90	J.W. Spring Lk IL
2010	Muskie	11.5"	90	J.W. Spring Lk IL

LAKE #4 FULTON COUNTY CAMPING AND RECREATION AREA - This lake is south of Canton near St. David, IL. It is a 19 acre former strip mine lake that is steep, deep and clear. The lake’s major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, channel catfish and black crappie. The recreation area has an entrance fee, camping and electric motors only restriction. The site phone number is (309) 668-2931. Lake #4 has two gravel boat ramps and a minimum size limit of 36" for muskie.

Lake #4 Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Source</u>
2007	Muskie	11.2"	36	J.W. N. IA
2008	Muskie	11.4"	36	J.W. Spring Lk IL
2010	Muskie	11.5"	36	J.W. Spring Lk IL

CANTON LAKE - This lake is a 250 acre water supply reservoir located on the northeast side of Canton. The lake has a maximum depth of 35 feet, housing development near about half of the shoreline and woody debris is the main structure in the lake.

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, yellow bass, channel catfish, flathead catfish, blue catfish, carp, and gizzard shad. The City of Canton has various user fees for boat use and an 85 horse power motor limit. The lake has a concrete boat ramp and camping. The phone number for Canton City Hall is (309) 647-0288.

The spring 2009 trapnet survey collected 25 muskie in 17 trapnet nights of effort. These fish ranged from 15 to 32 inches long. The muskie length limit is 42 inch minimum.

Canton Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Source</u>
1985	Tiger Muskie	8.3"	250	J.W.
1985	Tiger Muskie	8.5"	250	J.W.
1987	Tiger Muskie	6.0"	250	J.W.
1988	Tiger Muskie	8.0"	250	J.W.
1989	Tiger Muskie	8.0"	250	J.W.
1990	Tiger Muskie	8.0"	250	J.W.
1991	Tiger Muskie	8.0"	413	J.W.
1992	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	250	J.W.
1993	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	250	J.W.
1994	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	250	J.W.
1995	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	250	J.W.
1996	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	750	J.W.
1997	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	750	J.W.
2000	Muskie	3.5"	2,500	J.W.
2001	Muskie	10.0"	650	J.W.
2002	Muskie	6.8"	250	J.W.
2003	Muskie	6.0"	2,500	J.W.
2006	Muskie	Fry	134,962	J.W.
2006	Muskie	5.0"	750	J.W.
2006	Muskie	11.0"	1,521	J.W.
2007	Muskie	11.2"	500	J.W.
2008	Muskie	10.8"	750	J.W. Spring Lk
2009	Muskie	6.0"	1,247	J.W.
2010	Muskie	11.5"	500	J.W.

DOUBLE T SFWA - This site is located 3 miles northwest of Canton and was acquired by the state of Illinois in September 2001. The big lake is approximately 64 surface acres in size and has very steep and deep profile that is typical of a stripmine lake.

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, carp and gizzard shad. A concrete boat ramp was installed in 2005 and the lake is electric motors only. The site office can be reached at phone number (309) 647-9184.

The spring 2009 trapnet survey collected 9 muskie in 10 trapnet nights of effort. These fish ranged from 25 to 44 inches long. The current muskie regulation is a 42 inch minimum.

Double T SFWA Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Source</u>
2002	Muskie	10-13"	179	J.W.
2003	Muskie	10"	64	J.W.
2005	Muskie	10"	64	J.W.
2006	Muskie	10.4"	64	J.W.
2007	Muskie	10.8"	64	J.W.
2008	Muskie	10.8"	64	J.W. Spring Lk
2009	Muskie	10.9"	64	J.W.
2010	Muskie	11.4"	64	J.W.

FITCH AND BOND LAKE (Canton Park District) - This lake is located on the northwest edge of Canton in Lakeland Park. The lake is a 64 acre former stripmine lake that has a large basin (38 acres) connected to a long narrow section (26 acres).

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, crappie, channel catfish, carp, and gizzard shad. The Canton Park District has user access fees for fishing and electric motors only restriction. The lake has a concrete boat ramp and a concession stand. The Canton Park District can be reached at phone number (309) 647-1345.

A spring trapnet survey in 2005 collected 11 muskie in 10 trapnet nights of effort. These fish ranged from 31.9 to 37.8 inches long. The current muskie regulation is a 42 inch minimum.

Fitch and Bond Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Source</u>
1985	Tiger Muskie	8.3"	61	J.W.
1985	Tiger Muskie	8.5"	40	J.W.
1986	Tiger Muskie	8.0"	150	J.W.
1987	Tiger Muskie	6.0"	63	J.W.
1987	Tiger Muskie	10.0"	64	J.W.
1988	Tiger Muskie	8-10"	64	J.W.
1989	Tiger Muskie	8-10"	61	J.W.
1990	Tiger Muskie	8.5"	128	J.W.
1991	Tiger Muskie	8-10"	96	J.W.
2000	Muskie	12-14"	180	L.H.
2002	Muskie	10-12"	100	L.H.

WHEEL LAKE (Banner Marsh) - At normal pool the 350 acre lake is composed of a deep final cut section and a large series of strip mine wheel cut lakes. The wheel cut portion (280 acres) contains a maze of points, islands, flooded brush and diverse aquatic vegetation, while the final cut portion (70 acres) has a maximum depth of 60 feet and rocky structure.

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, white and black crappie, and gizzard shad. Other fish species present are smallmouth bass, walleye, channel catfish, yellow bullhead, carp, green sunfish, and yellow perch. The lake has a concrete boat ramp, restrooms and picnic area. There is a 25 horse power limit at Banner Marsh. The site office can be reached at phone number (309) 647-9184.

The spring 2010 trapnet survey collected 16 muskie in 10 trapnet nights of effort. The fish ranged from 25 to 48 inches long. The current muskie regulation is a 42 inch minimum.

Wheel Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>
1996	Muskie	8.6"	350
1997	Muskie	10.0"	351
1998	Muskie	10.0"	350
1998	Muskie	19.0"	100
1999	Muskie	4.0"	2000
1999	Muskie	11.3"	350
2000	Muskie	10.0"	350
2001	Muskie	11.4"	350
2002	Muskie	11.4"	350
2003	Muskie	10.0"	350
2005	Muskie	10.0"	350
2006	Muskie	10.0"	350
2007	Muskie	10.8"	350
2008	Muskie	10.8"	350
2009	Muskie	10.9"	350
2010	Muskie	11.4"	350

SHOVEL LAKE (Banner Marsh) - Shovel Lake was enlarged to over 200 acres by the end of 2000. It is a "T" shaped final cut strip mine lake (74 acres) with a maximum depth of 65 feet that was attached to approximately 100 acres of littoral zone surrounding deep water pockets (25 acres of strip mine ponds).

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, white and black crappie, walleye, channel catfish, carp, and gizzard shad. The lake has a concrete boat ramp, restrooms and picnic area. There is a 25 hp limit at Banner Marsh. The site office can be reached at phone number (309) 647-9184.

The spring 2010 trapnet survey collected 9 muskie in 10 trapnet nights of effort. The fish ranged from 25 to 39 inches in length. The current muskie regulation is a 42 inch minimum.

Shovel Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>
1999	Muskie	11.0"	250
1999	Muskie	11.0"	200
2000	Muskie	10.0"	200
2001	Muskie	Fry	191,788
2001	Muskie	11.4"	600
2002	Muskie	11.4"	200
2003	Muskie	10.0"	200
2005	Muskie	10.0"	200
2006	Muskie	12.5"	18
2006	Muskie	10.4"	200
2007	Muskie	10.8"	200
2008	Muskie	10.8"	200
2009	Muskie	10.9"	200
2010	Muskie	11.4"	200

JOHNSON LAKE (Banner Marsh) - Johnson Lake is approximately 600 acres and is composed of a maze of deep strip mine water connected to shallow flats of flooded trees.

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, white and black crappie, walleye, channel catfish, northern pike, carp, and gizzard shad. The lake has a concrete boat ramp, restrooms, and handicap dock and picnic area. There is a 25 hp limit at Banner Marsh. The site office can be reached at phone number (309) 647-9184.

The spring 2010 trapnet survey collected 8 muskie in 10 trapnet nights of effort. The fish ranged from 28 to 44 inches long. The current muskie regulation is a 42 inch minimum.

Johnson Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>
2001	Muskie	11.4"	600
2001	Muskie	11.8"	1,574
2002	Muskie	10.9"	725
2003	Muskie	10.0"	1,333
2005	Muskie	10.0"	600
2006	Muskie	10.4"	600
2007	Muskie	10.8"	600
2008	Muskie	10.8"	600
2009	Muskie	10.9"	600
2010	Muskie	11.4"	600

DEEP LAKE (Wildlife Prairie State Park) - Wildlife Prairie State Park is located 10 miles west of Peoria. This lake is a 14 acre manmade impoundment. The lake has a maximum depth of 33 feet and 50% of the basin is flooded timber.

The lake's major fish species are largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, crappie and channel catfish. The lake has no boat ramp and is accessible by a trail system. Boats are allowed with electric motors only. The site has an entrance fee, concession stand, picnic area and restrooms. The site office can be reached at phone number (309) 676-0998. The current muskie regulation is a 42 inch minimum.

Deep Lake Esocid Stocking Data:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Number</u>
1992	Tiger Muskie	12-14"	5
2001	Muskie	11.8"	25
2002	Muskie	11.4"	25
2003	Muskie	10.0"	25
2005	Muskie	10.0"	25
2006	Muskie	10.4"	25
2007	Muskie	10.8"	25
2008	Muskie	10.8"	25
2009	Muskie	10.9"	25
2010	Muskie	11.4"	25

DISTRICT 5: MARSHALL, PUTNAM, TAZEVELL, AND WOODFORD COUNTIES

SPRING LAKE NORTH (Tazewell County) - In 1978, Spring Lake was divided into two distinct waters for the purpose of capital improvement and the restructuring of the fish population. Prior to 1916, Spring Lake was part of the Illinois River system as a lateral freshwater marsh. In 1916 it was separated from the river by a high levee and has remained a separate body of water. From 1916 until 1981, the quality of the fishery habitat and the fish population declined due to rough fish populations such as carp and bullheads. In 1981 the lake was treated with rotenone to remove the existing fish population and encourage the growth of aquatic vegetation. The key to the rehabilitation was the re-establishment of lush aquatic vegetation which had occurred by summer of 1983, and has remained ever since.

Always a shallow water marsh, Spring Lake today has an average depth of 2.9 feet. Of the 578 acres of water, at least 75 percent is covered with 17 identified different species of aquatic vegetation by late May of each year. The majority of this coverage now consists of Eurasian milfoil, lotus and lily. The tremendous spring recharge from the bed of the lake amounts to 52 acre feet a day, creating very cold water temperatures under the insulating layer of vegetation for the majority of the summer months. This is a unique situation and only occurs in Spring Lake within the State of Illinois. The resulting temperature regime and water quality is excellent habitat for muskie.

Because of its proximity to the Jake Wolf Hatchery, North Spring Lake has been used as a brood source for muskie the past 23 years and has provided most of the early muskie stocks for statewide stocking each year. In an effort to collect fish for egg production, extensive population assessment data has been gathered since 1991. We know quite a lot about the size structure and age of the population as well as growth. It appears that growth of female fish is excellent when compared to nation-wide populations. Growth of male muskie is in the normal range when making a similar comparison. There is a big difference in the length at age between sexes! A 32 inch female is usually 4 years old, whereas a 32 inch male is 5 years old, on average.

North Spring Lake is stocked with muskie every third year at a rate of between 2 and 3 fish per acre. It has been observed that significant cannibalism occurs if muskie are stocked every year. Young muskie are especially vulnerable to 1 and 2 year old male muskie at North Spring Lake.

A muskie tag reading project is in its 11th year on North Spring Lake. It is important to gain information regarding growth of fish by sex and age as well as potential egg production data. This tagging project has answered many questions concerning muskie biology in Illinois.

In 2010, 300 muskies were collected by trap nets in March. Of these fish, 60 were females and 17 were flowing eggs when captured. All fish were taken to Jake wolf hatchery for processing and then were returned in good condition to the lake. There were 22 recaptures of muskie tagged in previous years, resulting in excellent growth data information. A total of 824,723 eggs were obtained from these brood fish.

Fishing for muskie on North Spring Lake is a challenge. The water temperatures rise quickly and usually result in fish feeding actively in late March. Aquatic vegetation becomes thick and hard to fish no later than May 15th of each year and lasts until the lake closes for regular waterfowl season. The narrow window of opportunity between the middle of March and mid-May results in some excellent fishing. The fish are then refuged by the thick vegetation until the following year. Sometimes fishing the holes in the vegetation in June is quite effective. There are a number of large fish in the population available to muskie fishermen.

North Spring Lake has three useable boat ramps and is accessible by the Manito Blacktop, 12 miles south of Pekin. No fuel or services are available; however, camping and food is. There is a 25 horsepower limit at Spring Lake. The majority of the lake is closed for fishing for regular waterfowl season. Information for Spring Lake can be obtained by calling (309) 968-7135.

STATUS OF MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS REGION 2

DISTRICT 6: DUPAGE, KANE, AND McHENRY COUNTIES

MALLARD LAKE - Mallard Lake is an 89-acre reclaimed gravel pit lake owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. It is the largest fishing lake in the DuPage County Forest Preserve system and it was selected to receive muskie because of its size, depth, and suitable prey base that includes large gizzard shad and yellow bass populations. To ensure the successful establishment of a muskie population and future sport fishery, IDNR stocked pure muskie at a rate of two advanced fingerlings per acre during fall 2006, 2007, and 2008 ($N = 178-180$ fingerlings; average length = 11.2-11.4 inches). No muskies were stocked during 2009, but 89 (1/acre) 11.4" fish were stocked in 2010 and will continue on an alternate year basis to further maintain and enhance the fishery.

Yearling muskies were captured by electrofishing during spring in 2007, ($N = 7$), 2008 ($N = 6$), and 2009 ($N = 3$). While still small, these yearlings averaged between 12.0 and 14.9 inches long and weighed about 0.5 pounds. Although older muskies have not yet shown up in electrofishing surveys or a spring trap net survey conducted during early April 2008 (effort = 4 net-days), a 30- to 35-inch long individual (probably from the 2006 stocking) was observed last spring when it went airborne to avoid capture by the DC shock boat. In addition, a stratified-random angler creel survey conducted for IDNR by the Illinois Natural History Survey estimated 150 juvenile muskie averaging 0.78 pounds were caught and released by anglers from March through October 2007. Most of the muskies caught by anglers were taken incidentally, as effort directed toward muskies was only 1% of the 22,493 angler-hours of total fishing effort. The plan is to survey anglers again in 2013 to further examine effects of muskie introductions on the Mallard Lake fishery. Electrofishing or trap netting surveys also will be conducted annually to monitor survival and growth of the developing population.

At this time, only shoreline fishing is allowed at Mallard Lake, but an extensive trail system and bridges to islands make for plenty of good fishing spots. Handicap accessible fishing piers are available and further access development is likely in the future. There is a 48-inch minimum length limit for muskie at the lake.

DISTRICT 7: LAKE COUNTY

FOX CHAIN O'LAKES - The Fox Chain O' Lakes has been stocked with muskie since 1982 and has developed into a consistent and outstanding pure muskie fishery. Since the mid to late 1990's spotted (Leech lake strain) muskie have been stocked through donations from SOB Chapter of Muskie Inc. Fishermen have reported spotted muskie up to 46" long and many have been captured in our sample nets. We collected a 51.25"

fish that appears to be a spotted muskie in spring 2010. This suggests fish survive but unfortunately we haven't collected spotted muskie in proportion to their stocking numbers.

Since fall 2006 our stocking protocol has been to stock 3000 fingerlings per year. We will continue this protocol until catch rates during spring sampling increase from pre-2006 numbers and an increase in abundance is detected. Three thousand fingerlings per year equates to a stock rate of just approximately 0.4 fish per acre. Prior to 2006 the stocking goal was 0.3 fish per acre every other year (or 2130 fingerlings every other year); as you can see this was quite a jump in the number of fingerlings stocked. The change sets up a more predictable stocking time-table and allows for adjustments based on the quantity of fish donated verses anticipating donations that may never materialize. If growth rates slow due to density dependent factors stocking rates will be adjusted downward. Trend data could take 5 to 7 years to evaluate since fish become vulnerable to our sampling gear after 3 or 4 years of age.

No Leech Lake fingerlings were stocked in 2006 because of the Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) quarantine placed on importation of vulnerable species by the USDA. Approximately 500 Leech Lake Strain fingerlings were stocked in fall 2007, none were stocked in 2008 but 1250 were stocked in November of 2009.

Catch rates have exceeded Management Objectives established by the Esocid Task Group for several years. The objective is 0.3 fish per trap net night, catches have hovered around 2.3 muskie per trap net night overall with catch rates up to 2.6 fish per trap net night at peak catches. Fishermen report catches in the 50" class and many more near legal length (48"). The average Chain muskie is about 36" long (from survey data) with males averaging around 33" long and females averaging 39" long. The largest fish collected to date was 51.25" long and the heaviest weighted 36 lbs.

Tagged fish have been reported from all lakes in the Chain and in the Fox River as far south as Yorkville and north into Wisconsin. The longest a floy tagged fish swam at large before being recaptured was 8 years! Most fish grow approximately 2 inches per year until they reach 36" to 38" then male growth rates slow dramatically and females continue to grow at just under 2" per year. A cleithra collected from a 47" dead muskie (in 2006) was estimated at 12 years old.

Generally speaking, male muskie in the Chain only occasionally exceed 40 inches but females easily grow beyond 40 inches and make up almost all fish over 42". The Fox Chain O' Lakes has a muskie length limit of 48" and 1 fish per day creel from the Wisconsin line south to the Algonquin Dam.

STERLING LAKE - This 74.4 acre lake is managed cooperatively with the Lake County Forest Preserve District. It is the only actively managed muskie water in Lake County, outside of the Fox Chain, that is open to the public. Sterling Lake has received

intermittent muskie stockings of pure strain fingerlings from either Muskie Inc. or the IDNR since 1990. It was stocked with 150 State produced fingerlings from Jake Wolf Hatchery in 2009 and 2008, 300 in 2007, and 150 in both 2006 and 2005. These year classes should carry the fishery forward for years to come.

Spring sampling in 2006 yielded 7 fish ranging in size from 13 inches to 37 inches. The catch rate of 6 fish per hour of electrofishing (A/C gear) exceeded Management Goals established by the Esocid Management Committee of 1.0 fish per hour of electrofishing. Survey data from spring 2009 yielded three muskie electrofishing with a D/C rig and one fish from two trapnets. The big fish was a 45" fish weighing 23 lbs. Both sampling methods exceeded Management Goals established for the lake. Sterling Lake has produced fish exceeding 48 inches long but none of these monsters have been collected by the IDNR, yet.

There are no concession facilities at the lake though it offers ample picnic, pit toilets, and shorefishing access. Sterling Lake has a variety of sport and pan fish species present so everyone can have a happy time catching fish. A 48 inch length limit and 1 fish per day creel limit exist on the lake for muskie.

DISTRICT 8: COOK COUNTY

BUSSE LAKE - Busse Woods was added to the Coolwater Stocking List for muskie in 2007 and has received approx. 800 fall fingerlings (approx. 12"–14" long) each fall since. Just under 200 fish from the 2007 stocking were implanted with PIT tags (Passive Integrated Transponders) to attempt to track their growth over time. In spring 2010 thirteen net nights of effort yielded a catch rate of 0.8 fish per net night. This exceeded the Management Goal of 0.3 fish per net night. No tagged fish were collected. The largest muskie collected in spring 2010 was a female, 31.2" long. Of the 10 fish collected three were females, four were males and three were immature.

Busse Lake has an abundance of white suckers, gizzard shad and small sunfish which provides ample forage for these fish to grow large and relatively fast. Additional spring surveys will be conducted to monitor the fishery and to confirm progress reported by the fishing public.

DISTRICT 9: GRUNDY, KENDALL, WILL, AND KANKAKEE COUNTIES

HEIDECKE LAKE - As part of a research project, 1,955 acre Heidecke Lake which is located in Grundy County near Morris received an initial stocking of pure muskellunge in 1980. Annual additions of these fish (which were extensively-reared, purchased fish) commenced in October of that year. Field data from these early stockings indicated slightly accelerated growth rates and fair recruitment. Pure muskellunge stockings ceased in 1986 with the completion of the research project. Tiger muskie were initially stocked in 1981 and were released on a semi-annual basis through 1997. Tiger muskie

released from 1993 through 1997 were "minnow-finished", larger in size and released later in the year. In 1999 when surplus fish produced by the state hatchery system became available, pure muskellunge were once again released into Heidecke Lake and continue to be stocked on a biennial schedule. The muskie population is evaluated via ancillary and biennial standardized surveys, formal angler creel surveys, voluntary angler survey (green card) and via annual spring trap netting. Since 2005, a total of 68 muskellunge have been fitted with PIT tags (internal) which provide valuable age and growth data. A number of fish have also been marked with Floy tags (external). Annual spring trap netting conducted in 2010 yielded very disappointing results as 28 net-nights of effort failed to collect a single muskellunge. Water temperature plays a key role in the success of this sampling. Average daily surface water temperatures were higher in 2010 (60°F) than 2009 (50°F). However, a total of 53 muskies were collected in 2006 when surface water temperatures averaged 60°F. Based on this information and historical data, it could be anticipated that better catch rates may be realized when average daily surface water temperatures exceed 55°F but are not greater than 60°F. Ancillary electrofishing in mid-summer resulted in the collection of one fish measuring 937mm/37.0" while four others were observed but avoided capture. The biennial fall survey resulted in the capture of 24 muskellunge, all by electrofishing. As is typical with this gear type, several others were noted as "observed" but avoided capture. These fish ranged from 502mm/19.8" to 1110mm/43.9". None of the muskellunge captured in 2010 sampling had been previously collected. Voluntary angler or "green card" information for 2010 was not yet available when this report was being compiled. Angler harvest of muskellunge at Heidecke Lake is presently regulated by a 48-inch length limit. A partially perched lake, Heidecke came become very rough under windy conditions. The decommissioning and demolition of the Collins Generating Station has eliminated thermal loading to Heidecke and has resulted in ambient water temperatures. There is no horsepower limit and boat and motor rental are available at the lake concession. Heidecke Lake is open to fishing from April 1st to mid-October, closing ten days prior to the opening of the North Zone waterfowl season.

STATUS OF MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS REGION 3

DISTRICT 10: CHAMPAIGN, DEWITT, FORD, IROQUOIS, LIVINGSTON, MCLEAN, PIATT, AND VERMILION COUNTIES

EVERGREEN LAKE - This lake was first stocked with muskie in 1990. A spring netting survey was initiated in 2002 to monitor the muskie population. We captured 1.7 muskie per net-night in 2007. Approximately 90% of the muskie captured in 2007 were larger than 30 inches, 29% were larger than 38 inches, and 13% were larger than 42 inches. In 2008 the catch rate improved to 3.7 per net-night. In 2008, approximately 92% of the muskie captured were longer than 30 inches, 24% were longer than 38 inches and 5% were longer than 42 inches. In 2009, we collected 3.2 muskie per net-night. The seven-year average is 2.4 muskie per net-night. Approximately 92% of the muskie

captured in 2009 were larger than 30 inches, 29% were larger than 38 inches, and 11% were larger than 42 inches. The largest muskie collected in 2009 was a female that was 46.8 inches long and weighed 32.5 pounds. In 2010, the catch improved to 7.4 muskie per net-night. The eight-year average is 3.1 muskie per net-night. In 2010, approximately 78% of the muskie collected were larger than 30 inches, 28% larger than 38 inches and 9% larger than 42 inches. The heaviest muskie collected in 2010 was a female that was 47.2 inches long and weighed 40.2 pounds.

Muskie exhibit ideal weights at all sizes in Evergreen Lake. Muskie have now been in Evergreen Lake long enough to allow them to reach a large size. The muskie population in this lake is developing nicely and starting to show its true potential. Muskie were collected over the current state record during spring netting surveys in 2006, 2007, and 2010.

Evergreen Lake has two boat ramps and has a 10 horsepower limit on all boats. In order to launch a boat on Evergreen Lake, a sticker must be purchased. The stickers can be purchased at the boat ramps, Comlara Park Visitor's Center, or by calling 309/726-2022.

LAKE MINGO - In 2002 muskie were first stocked into Lake Mingo as part of a research project conducted by the Illinois Natural History Survey and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The project is titled *Evaluation of Growth and Survival of Different Genetic Stocks of Muskellunge: Implications for Stocking Programs in Illinois and the Midwest*. Muskie have been stocked each year since 2002. Netting surveys were conducted in April of 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010. In 2006, a total of 52 muskellunge were netted during the 4 days resulting in an average of 1.2 fish per net-night.

In 2007, a total of 98 muskie were netted during 4 days of sampling resulting in an average of 1.7 fish per net-night. The largest muskie captured in 2007 was over 40 inches. In 2008, a total of 99 muskie were collected during the 4 days resulting in an average of 1.87 fish per net-night. There was also one muskie collected over 40 inches in 2008. In 2009, a total of 63 muskie were captured in 6 days of netting. The catch rate declined to 0.83 muskie per net-night. The largest muskie collected in 2009 was 38.8 inches. In 2010, a total of 51 muskie were collected in 6 days of netting. The catch rate declined to 0.59 muskie per net-night. The largest muskie collected in 2010 was 42 inches and weighed 21.25 pounds.

The muskie are exhibiting good growth rates and survival. Lake Mingo has a good muskie fishery and will only improve with time. For more information regarding Lake Mingo and Kennekuk Cove County Park call 217-442-1691.

**DISTRICT 11: CLARK, COLES, CUMBERLAND, DOUGLAS, EDGAR, MACON,
MOULTRIE, AND SHELBY COUNTIES**

MILL CREEK LAKE - Located approximately 8 miles west of Marshall, in Clark County. This lake has a surface area of 731 acres, with a maximum depth of 60 feet, and an average depth of 22 feet. Public boat launching facilities are available and the Clark County Park District (217-889-3901) collects a boating access fee. A 42-inch minimum length limit with a one (1) fish per day creel limit is in effect for muskie.

This lake was stocked initially in fall of 1999 with pure muskellunge to diversify the fishery and take advantage of outstanding habitat, water quality, and abundant adult gizzard shad and white suckers for forage. Recent reports indicate that this fishery is developing well, with reports of 48"+ fish being caught in recent years. Six muskie were observed in the 2009 fall survey, with four being recently stocked young-of-year and two older fish, 26' & 28" respectively. Fishing prospects are rated as fair to good in 2011.

LAKE SHELBYVILLE - Located in Shelby and Moultrie Counties in east-central Illinois. This lake has a surface area of 11,100 acres, with a maximum depth of 67 feet, and an average depth of 18.9 feet. Public boat launching facilities are available, with a fee assessed on U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (217-774-3951) boat ramps, and free access on state park or Corp gravel boat ramps. A 48" length - 1 fish daily creel limit will remain in effect. The limit is in effect in the headwaters up to the Corps of Engineers project boundary and extends below the dam, downstream to the State Route 128 bridge near Cowden.

Pure muskellunge were first stocked in Lake Shelbyville in 1978. It wasn't until 1988, however, that somewhat consistent year-to-year stockings of 5,500 fingerlings per year were initiated. Compared to the known potential longevity of this species, this fishery is still relatively young compared to the many well known fisheries in northern United States and Canada. In recent years this lake has produced an outstanding muskie fishery, however catch rates in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 have been depressed for unknown reasons. Floods may have been partially to blame in '08 and '09, allowing muskies to use heavy brush for cover which makes fishing for them more difficult, however water levels were close to normal in fall 2010. Fishing for muskie was very poor during the spring and summer, both on the lake and below the spillway in 2007 and 2008, but improved slightly in 2009 and 2010. Fishing improved the most below the spillway.

Two major muskie tournaments held on Lake Shelbyville in fall 2010. The catch as reported was distributed as 3 fish (LSMC, 14 boats, biggest 36") and 10 fish (IMTT Fall Classic, 25 boats, biggest 44"). One team caught all three fish in the first tournament reported.

Without extensive sampling it is difficult to assess muskie numbers on Lake Shelbyville. No muskies were collected in the 2010 fall fish population survey by the IDNR crew. Illinois Natural History Survey employees collected several muskie in subsequent surveys while collecting fish for a diet study of muskie. Although collection rates were poor, muskie numbers likely remain good on the lake and improved in the area below the dam. Fishing prospects for 2011 remain good for numbers and size on the lake and below the spillway.

STATUS OF MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS REGION 4

DISTRICT 13: CASS, CHRISTIAN, LOGAN, MASON, MENARD, MORGAN, AND SANGAMON COUNTIES

PRAIRIE LAKE (Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish & Wildlife Area) - Initial stockings in 1999 on this newly constructed lake included the standard largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish and channel catfish. This was followed by a stocking of pure muskies. It received 210, 10"-12" fingerling muskies in October of that year and has received 210 fish every other year, on the odd years, since then. This is a relatively small lake for muskies and has a sunfish forage base so growth rates and body conditions are a little lower than larger lakes with gizzard shad. That problem has been eliminated and since the fall of 2009, gizzard shad have been and will continue to be stocked in order to establish a strong shad population for not only the muskie but the large and smallmouth bass well. The lake is deep, steep-sided and clear and has excellent woody cover and aquatic vegetation so the muskies have done pretty well. The spring 2010 electrofishing survey produced only 11 fish but the survey had to be cut short in order for the biologists to direct time to the Asian Carp problem in the Chicagoland area. The largest muskie collected was 46.5" and weighed just over 24 pounds. Many in the 44"-48" have been reported to the site office and the biologist, with one over 50" reported as well. So there are some really nice muskies in the lake and it is starting to gain a little notoriety among avid muskie anglers.

By the way, there are reports of tiger muskies (hybrids between northern pike and muskies) being caught in the lake. The IDNR has not stocked hybrid muskies anywhere in the state since the mid-90 and there haven't even been any tigers in the state's hatchery system since that time so these cannot be tigers in Prairie Lake. The fish in question are strongly barred pure muskies. All from Spring Lake (IL) stock. The crystal clear water really brings out the color pattern. Note: A few tigers have been stocked in a couple of lakes in the state by Muskie clubs, in cooperation with the Department, but our hatchery does NOT raise any. Currently there is an unlimited horsepower limit but the entire lake is a No Wake Zone except for boats 10hp and less which can operate as normal. Two concrete ramps and campgrounds are found on site and there are rental cabins on the lake as well. For more information on Prairie Lake contact the site office 217/452-7741 or the district fisheries biologist's office at 309/543-3316.

DISTRICT 14/15: GREENE, JERSEY, SCOTT, MACOUPIN, AND MONTGOMERY COUNTIES

OTTER LAKE - Information gathered from the 2010 spring netting evaluation hinted muskie numbers have stabilized in comparison to the 2009 survey (47 muskie), as well as the historical catch rates. Twenty-nine fish were captured in March of 2010, which is a substantial decrease compared to 2009. These individuals measured 25.4" to 39.3", and weighed 4.2 lbs. to 16.7 lbs. in total weight. The length frequency shows the following: 14 fish (48.3%) measured 24" to 30", 7 muskies (24.1%) were 31" to 35", and 8 individuals (27.6%) ranged from 36" to 40" in total length. The 14 year mean for this annual sample (1996 - 2009) is 33.1 muskie collected per year. The best three sampling years were from 2000 - 2002 (avg. 60.1 fish per year) prior to the two 100 year flood events that occurred. The 2010 survey would rank 7th since these evaluations began. 21 (75%) were males, and 7 (25%) were females. One muskie was not sexed. With the extremely high ratio of males to females, it is easy to see why average length and weight dropped during this survey year.

Once again, in discussing muskie management with local anglers, and the Otter Lake Water Commission, this fishery is steadily improving since the floods. Fishermen/women are very happy with the population in place. These anglers are more content with catching muskie rather than hooking a trophy fish. A new barrier net was put up during the summer of 2009. This management tool should only aid in creating a solid muskie fishery in this impoundment.

When fish are available, Otter Lake is stocked with at least one fish per acre per year. With the solid stocking program, a new barrier net, and a restrictive 48" length limit with a 1 fish per day creel limit, this population/fishery should only improve into the future.

STATUS OF MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS REGION 5

DISTRICT 21: ALEXANDER, JACKSON, PERRY, PULASKI, AND UNION COUNTIES

KINKAID LAKE - This lake was built in 1972 and first stocked with muskie in 1985. Muskie (MUE) habitat at Kinkaid is abundant with high water clarity, good depth, and 82 shoreline miles of necks, bays, and points. Weed beds can be found in certain shoreline areas. Large numbers of gizzard shad and spotted suckers are available and preferred as forage. Growth rates and conditions are exceptional. During early summer of 1996, it was discovered that a high number of MUE escape over the spillway during periods of heavy rain. Since June 1996, electro sampling by biologists has resulted in 230 MUE (28-47 inches in total length) being returned to the lake. At least 12 of these MUE had been rescued below the spillway, tagged and returned to the lake, and subsequently recaptured again below the spillway. One fish has been documented

as going over the spillway on three separate occasions. During the fall of 1998, a spillway barrier was installed across the dam to reduce MUE escapement during periods of high water flow. This barrier should greatly enhance opportunities to grow trophy MUE and keep them in the lake. Sampling efforts will continue to assess the effectiveness of the spillway barrier and the resultant effect on the Lake's MUE population.

The largest documented MUE known from Kinkaid Lake was collected in an IDNR net in 2002. The female measured 50 inches and weighed 34.7 pounds (she had already lost most of her eggs). Kinkaid Lake was stocked with 2000 ten inch MUE during 2010. Spring 2010 trap netting resulted in the collection of 256 muskies with the largest fish measuring 48 inches and the heaviest fish weighing 21 pounds. The 2010 spring trap netting was the best on record in terms of catch per unit effort. The previous best sampling season occurred in the spring of 2009.

If you catch a tagged MUE from Kinkaid Lake **DO NOT REMOVE THE TAG**. Please contact Shawn Hirst, District 21 Fisheries Biologist at 618/687-4546 with the following information: date of catch, length of MUE, tag number (If number is covered with algae simply scrap the algae away with your fingernail or a knife). Anyone providing a tag number will receive the history of that particular fish.

CANVASBACK LAKE - This 60 acre strip cut is located in the Denmark Area of Pyramid State Park in Perry County. Muskie were first stocked in August 2002. Canvasback Lake is stocked with 50 ten inch MUE in even-numbered years. This lake has a 10 HP motor limit. Fishing is prohibited from October 28 through February 28. Muskie up to 37 inches have been caught at this lake.

GOLDENEYE LAKE - This 125 acre strip cut is located in the Galum Area of Pyramid State Park in Perry County. Muskie were first stocked in August 2002. Goldeneye Lake is stocked with 50 ten inch MUE in even-numbered years. This lake has a 10 HP motor limit. From October 28 through February 28 fishing is permitted in designated areas only, and fishing hours are from ½ hour before sunrise to 2 pm. Muskie up to 37 inches have been caught at this site. IDNR collected a 39" male muskie from this lake in the spring of 2008.

SUPER LAKE - This 230 acre strip cut is located in the Captain Area of Pyramid State Park in Perry County. This is a newer muskie lake. Super Lake was stocked with 460 ten inch MUE in August 2008. In the future Super Lake will be stocked with 230 ten inch MUE in even-numbered years. This lake has a 10 HP motor limit. Fishing is prohibited from October 28 through February 28. IDNR collected a 27" male muskie from this lake in the spring of 2010.

STATUS OF MUSKIE FISHERY IN ILLINOIS RIVERS

FOX RIVER - Muskie occur in the Fox River as a result of escapement from stocking programs in Chain-O-Lakes, Lake Shabbona, and Lake Holiday. Although not abundant, they are common in many areas in Kane and Kendall Counties with most individuals ranging from 30-45 inches. Mouths of larger creek are preferred summer habitat, but they can be found ranging throughout the free flowing areas of the river in especially at Montgomery, Yorkville, and near Silver Springs. Electrofishing catch rates in these areas range from 2- 8 fish per hour.

Northern pike are generally very rare in the Fox River. Higher gradient conditions, combined with lack of spawning habitat (except in the upper river and Chain-O-Lakes), may be limiting factors.

DES PLAINES RIVER - This low gradient river, with associated wetland and backwater areas, provides good habitat for northern pike in some areas. In 2007, a total of 5 pike were collected by electrofishing near Riverside and Hodgkins. Most of the fish were in the 20-25-inch range. Catch rates were similar to those found in previous years. Anglers report frequent catches of northern pike, especially in the early spring months.

KASKASKIA RIVER (Shelby County) - The Kaskaskia River, in the tailwaters of Lake Shelbyville, is the home of the current state record for Muskellunge. The record fish was caught in 2002 and weighed over 38 pounds. 2009 and 2010 fall surveys in the tailwaters raised several large muskies. The muskies are still there in good numbers, although they are spread throughout waters reaching further downstream. As flow regimes at the dam continue to follow a more normal pattern, musky fishing should be excellent at Shelbyville.

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