



SHOVEL LAKE BANNER MARSH STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION and DESCRIPTION: Located in Central Illinois, the 5,524 acre Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area lies adjacent to the Illinois River, 4 miles north of Banner, Illinois, along Route 24. The former bottomland lake and marsh was leveed and drained for agricultural practice from 1910 through 1958. From 1958 to 1974 approximately 90 percent of the site was strip-mined for coal. The strip-mined areas have since been reclaimed and purchased by the State of Illinois. Under the management of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (1978 - present) the primary objective for the site is to establish a freshwater marsh providing fish and wildlife habitat in the Illinois River Valley.

Banner Marsh SFWA was characterized by narrow strip pits and upland ponds, but in 1994 the hydrology changed due to the intentional cessation of pumping operations in the levee district. The water level rose approximately 7 feet (435 M.S.L.) due mainly to groundwater recharge by seepage under the existing 1-100 year flood-tight levee with the Illinois River. The total surface water acreage for the site increased from 530 acres to approximately 2400 acres and created a large vegetated littoral zone.

Shovel Lake (approximately 200 acres) is the third largest water area at the site. It is a "T" shaped final cut lake with limited habitat in the boat ramp arm. The opposite arm which lies adjacent to the Copperas Creek levee, contains points, flooded brush, beaver lodges, and diverse aquatic vegetation. The water acreage added in 2001 consists of very large littoral zones around deep water pockets. The maximum water depth is 65.0 feet. The average water clarity in the summer is often over 12 feet.

The Bell's Landing access area has a concrete boat ramp, 25 vehicle and trailer parking lot and restrooms. The lake has a 25 h.p. motor limit. The site is open 24 hours a day, except for the Central Zone Duck Season. At which time only shoreline fishing is allowed after 1 p.m.

HISTORY & STATUS of the SPORT FISHERY:

Largemouth Bass: In 2019, spring trapnetting and fall D.C. electrofishing were used to survey the fish population. The largemouth bass population was evaluated by 86 bass from electrofishing in 2019.

The largemouth bass population appears to be defined by a high percentage of fish from 5.5 to 19.5 inches in length with good average Relative weights. In 2000, the bass regulation for the Marsh was changed from a 14 inch minimum size limit and 1 fish per day - to a 12 to 18 inch protected slot length with a harvest of 3 fish under or over the slot per day.

The 2019 fall electrofishing survey indicated a size structure that is continuing to maintain a very good level and stability since 2004. The PSD of 85, the RSD14 of 72, the RSD16 of 44 and the RSD 18 of 18 were all very good.

The goal of the protected slot length limit was to create a high density bass population that is composed of fish large enough to be efficient predators upon the high density of slow growing panfish and the rough fish population. The benefit to bass anglers will be more fish surviving past 14 inches to catch, and for anglers wanting to harvest bass will be the opportunity to harvest more fish.

Bluegill: The bluegill population was sampled by 24 stock size fish in the fall electrofishing survey. The bluegill population has remained poor in size structure with only 3% over 7 inches in length and poor body condition value of 73.

Crappie: The black crappie population was surveyed by 24 stock size fish in 2019. The PSD was 96, the the RSD9 was 50 and the RSD11 was 33. The body condition was good with a Wr value at 99. The black crappie population is very good with the 11 to 14 inch fish weighing .85 to 1.5 pounds.

No white crappie were surveyed in 2019. This population is present in a very low density of quality fish. In 2018 the crappie harvest regulation changed to a harvest limit of 25 fish per day with only 10 fish over 10 inches allowed. Anglers should be able to concentrate on crappie with the flooded brush providing excellent habitat.

Channel Catfish: No channel catfish were sampled in 2019. A low density population is present and a stocking of 500 fish every three years is scheduled.

Muskie: A total of 10 muskie were sampled by the spring trapnet survey in 2019. These fish ranged from 27.5 to 40.7 inches long. The body condition of these fish was good at an average Wr of 94. The first stocking of 450 fish at 11 inches was in 1999. In 2000, a total of 200, 2001-600, 2002-200, 2003-200, 2004-0, and 200 annually from 2005 through 2014 at an average size of 11.2 inches were stocked. No muskie were stocked in 2015 or 2016. In 2017, 200 fish at 12.4 inches long were stocked. A triennial stocking is now scheduled to maintain a moderate density of healthy muskie.

| FISHING REGULATIONS: Site specific angling regulations. Two pole and line fishing only except carp may be taken by bow and arrow devices, gigs or appears during May through August, all other statewide regulations apply. | Daily Creel Limit | Minimum Length Limit |
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| All Fish | 2 pole and line only | |
| Largemouth/Smallmouth Bass | 3 | 12-18" protected slot length |
| Channel Catfish | 6 | None |
| Walleye | 6 | 14" minimum |
| White and Black Crappie | 25 | With only 10 over 10" |
| Muskie | 1 | 42" minimum |

CONTACT INFORMATION – Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area: 309/647-9184.
IDNR Fisheries County Fish Biologist: 309/446-9143.

Illinois Fishing Information booklet and IFISHILLINOIS website <http://www.ifishillinois.org/>

