



BUFFALO PRAIRIE PHEASANT HABITAT AREA LAKES AND PONDS FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION:

Buffalo Prairie Pheasant Habitat Area is located 2.5 miles northeast of the town of Victoria. The main parking lot is located on Knox Road 2250 North, just west of the junction with State Route 180. This site is just northeast of Snakeden Hollow State Fish and Wildlife Area.

DESCRIPTION :

Buffalo Prairie Pheasant Habitat Area Lakes and ponds consist of Buffalo Lake South at 21 surface acres, Buffalo Lake North at 7 surface acres, and Buffalo Pond Northwest and Wetland at 3 surface acres. These bodies of waters are all former strip-mine lakes. Submerged rooted aquatic plants are present in most areas under 8 feet deep during the summer months and the water clarity can be over 8 feet also.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

Buffalo Prairie Pheasant Habitat Area is a site that is managed for upland prairie habitat, wetland habitat and several small ponds and lakes.

The lake and its sport fishery are evaluated biannually by electrofishing surveys which direct fish stocking, fishing regulations and other types of fish management.

Largemouth Bass:

In 2020, a late summer D.C. electrofishing survey was used to evaluate the fish population. The largemouth bass population was evaluated by 61 bass from electrofishing.

The largemouth bass population appears to be defined by a high percentage of fish from 3 to 13 inches in length. The average relative weight was 89. In 2017, the bass regulation for Snakeden Hollow SFWA waters were changed from a 3 fish daily harvest limit with only 1 fish greater than or equal to 15 inches, to a protected slot length limit from 14 to 18 inches with 3 fish daily harvest limit. The goal of the new bass regulation is to increase the density of the bass population from 14 to 18 inches.

This increased bass density should help create a population that is composed of fish large enough to be efficient predators upon the panfish population. The benefit to bass anglers will be more fish surviving past 15 inches to catch, and for the anglers wanting to harvest bass will be the opportunity to still harvest fish under 14 inches.

Bluegill:

The bluegill population was sampled by 94 fish in the 2020 electrofishing survey. The current bluegill population is rated as good with the larger fish over 8.0 inches in length. This population is of high density and in good body condition with a Wr average of 94.

Redear Sunfish:

The redear sunfish population was sampled by 1 fish in the electrofishing survey. The current redear population is rated as good with the larger fish up to 10.5 inches in length. This population is of low density and in very good body condition with a Wr average of 114.

In 2017, the bluegill and redear sunfish regulation was changed from a 10 fish daily harvest limit to a 25 fish daily harvest limit. This change will allow anglers the ability to harvest more bluegill and redear sunfish per daily visit to Snakeden Hollow SFWA waters.

Other Fish Species:

2 bluegill x redear hybrids and were also sampled in 2020. They are present in low density populations

Fishing Regulations:

All Fish - 2 pole and line fishing only.

Large or Smallmouth Bass:

- **Protected Slot Length Limit from 14 to 18 inches with 3 fish daily harvest limit.**

Bluegill or Redear Sunfish:

- **25 fish Daily Harvest Limit.**

White, Black, or Hybrid Crappie:

- **25 Fish Daily Harvest Limit with no more than 10 fish greater than or equal to 10 inches.**

Pure Muskellunge:

- **Harvestable slot from 36 to 42 inches, and 48 inch minimum length limit with 1 fish daily harvest limit.**

Channel Catfish:

- 6 fish daily harvest limit.

Walleye, Sauger, or Hybrid Walleye:

- 3 fish daily harvest limit.

Recreational Use Restrictions:

- Waterfowl Refuge or Hunting Area (all use other than upland hunting prohibited during the central zone upland hunting season) All live bait greater than 8 inches must be rigged with a quick set rig.

- portable boats like canoes and kayaks are allowed.

CONTACT INFORMATION –

Snakeden Hollow State Fish & Wildlife Area: (309)879-2607

IDNR Fisheries County Fish Biologist: (309) 446-9143.

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