



WHALON LAKE

FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION – Whalon Lake is located in Bolingbrook, 2 miles west of Route 53 off Royce Road and just minutes from Interstate 55.

DESCRIPTION – Whalon Lake is owned and operated by the Forest Preserve District of Will County (FPDWC), and the fishery is cooperatively managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and FPDWC. This site was surface-mined by Elmhurst-Chicago Stone for sand, gravel and limestone for nearly 50 years and was purchased in the 1990's by FPDWC. Following the completion of a site development project, the lake was allowed to fully impound and opened to the public in 2008. Whalon Lake has a maximum depth of nearly 100 feet with an average depth of 15.0 feet. The watershed is very limited, but the lake is fed by groundwater. During high water events, water can also enter the lake from the adjacent DuPage River. Shoreline length is approximately 1.5 miles, excluding the two islands located in the southeast portion of the impoundment. Whalon Lake offers diverse habitats, both natural and man-made. Very user-friendly, the entire shoreline is accessible to bank fishing and a barrier-free fishing pier facilitates access for anglers with special needs. Whalon Lake has a two-lane concrete boat ramp. See “Additional Lake Information” below for important site information.

HISTORY AND STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY: Whalon Lake is routinely surveyed on a biennial basis, but other surveys may take place as circumstances dictate. Aquatic vegetation is managed by FPDWC, in cooperation with the IDNR. Channel Catfish and Walleye are stocked on a regular basis (biennially and annually, respectively). Prior to the impoundment of Whalon Lake, three large overflow pipes with which the quarry was fitted were specified to contain valves to prevent the ingress of fish from the nearby DuPage River. Unfortunately, this vital component of the lake level control system was omitted and during high water events riverine species have gained access to the lake. Consequently, the fishery also supports riverine species (e.g., Gizzard Shad, White Suckers, and Bullhead species).

No special mercury advisory or other contaminant-related consumption advisories pertain. However, the statewide methylmercury advisory for sensitive populations is in effect (one meal per week of predatory sportfish for the most sensitive populations).

LARGEMOUTH BASS – The 2021 electrofishing survey resulted in a marked increase in the Largemouth Bass catch rate (2.1/minute) over the 2017 survey (1.3/minute). The number of fish over 8 inches remained the same, though average length declined to 7.6 inches. Other size structure indices (PSD and PSD-P) also declined, with 55% of the adult fish being over 12 inches and 36% over 15 inches (both of which are still excellent values). The proportion of adult fish over 18 inches (legal size) increased to 5%. Body condition was excellent for all size groups, indicating sufficient forage is present for adequate growth.

SMALLMOUTH BASS – Smallmouth Bass were absent from the 2021 electrofishing survey and are generally at lower densities than Largemouth Bass. Past surveys have collected fish nearing legal size.

BLUEGILL – Bluegill catch rate declined in the 2021 electrofishing survey (1.3/minute) compared to the 2017 survey (1.8/min). The number of fish over 3 inches also declined, as did the average length (4.7 inches). However, the proportion of adult fish over 6 inches increased to 15% (which is still below the target range of 20% – 40%). Body condition was good for all size groups, indicating sufficient forage is present for adequate growth.

CRAPPIE – Due to timing constraints, Spring or Fall Trap netting was not conducted. However, 12 Crappies (11 Black and 1 White) were collected during the 2021 electrofishing survey. Lengths ranged from 5.0 – 6.4 inches). Electrofishing is not typically used to evaluate Crappie populations, and as such this survey does not provide a good assessment of the fishery.

CHANNEL CATFISH – Surveys tend to produce a very low number of Channel Catfish and the 2021 electrofishing survey was no different (Channel Catfish were absent). Electrofishing is not typically used to evaluate Channel Catfish populations, and as such this survey does not provide a good assessment of the fishery. Channel Catfish are stocked biennially.

WALLEYE – The 2021 electrofishing survey resulted in 17 Walleye being collected. Lengths ranged from 10.7 – 26.8 inches, with 31% (n = 5) being legal size (over 16 inches). This is the same number of fish collected in the 2017 survey. Body condition was sub-par for all size groups indicating a potential forage bottleneck currently exists. Walleye were first stocked in 2010 and are stocked annually by IDNR.

ADDITIONAL LAKE INFORMATION – Swimming is prohibited. Electric trolling motor only. Ice fishing is prohibited, and fishing is open daily during open water. **Statewide fishing regulations apply.**

Additional Site-Specific Fishing Regulations:

All Fish Species: Two Pole and Line Fishing Only

Bluegill or Redear Sunfish: 15 Fish Daily Harvest Limit

Channel Catfish: 3 Fish Daily Harvest Limit

Large or Smallmouth Bass: 18-inch Minimum Length Limit (1 Fish Daily Harvest Limit)

Walleye, Sauger, or Hybrid Walleye: 16-inch Minimum Length Limit (3 Fish Daily Harvest Limit)

CONTACT INFORMATION – Forest Preserve District of Will County: 815-727-8700
IDNR District Fisheries Biologist: 630-553-6680.