



## MILL CREEK LAKE 2016 Lake Status Summary



**LOCATION:** Located approximately 8 miles west of Marshall, in Clark County

**DESCRIPTION:** 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 (CCPD) collects a boating access fee.

**MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:** The fish population in Mill Creek Lake is surveyed every two years. Muskie and channel catfish populations have been maintained by stocking. Additional species of aquatic plants have been established throughout the lake to reduce shoreline erosion and stabilize habitat. Fish attractors have been constructed and placed by the CCPD for greater fishing success. Moderate fertility levels slightly reduce the overall production of fish in this lake.

**FISHERY STATUS: LARGEMOUTH BASS** densities are high due to abundant vegetation for nursery habitat. Currently, high numbers of bass from 10-14" are present, while the number of larger fish is less than desirable. Largemouth bass virus resulted in a bass kill in 1999, from which the quality of this fishery has never fully recovered. Still, bass over 6 lbs. are caught on occasion. Fishing quality is rated as excellent for number available and fair for size structure in 2016. **Note:** New regulations were put in effect in April 2015. Harvesting the limit of bass less than 15 inches, especially from 11-13 inches, is **HIGHLY ENCOURAGED** to reduce bass numbers and improve growth.

**CRAPPIE**, both white crappie and black crappie are abundant. Growth rates have been good. Anglers may catch crappie up to 18 inches and 3+ lbs! Fishing quality is rated as excellent for 2016! **Note:** Regulations allowing the harvest of only 2 crappie, 12-inches or longer, are in effect to maintain the high quality of this fishery. Remember, culling is illegal outside of tournaments, as culled fish are more likely to die after being retained on stringers or in containers and handled multiple times.

**BLUEGILL** fishing is rated as fair-good. Recent surveys found some bluegill over 8 inches! Anglers are encouraged to voluntarily release these largest bluegill. Recent research has revealed that the presence of these larger males encourages smaller male bluegill to delay maturity. This improves growth and recruitment to larger sizes, improving angling quality. Bluegill differ visually from redear by a solid dark "gill flap" and a "barred" pattern on the body. Males have orange or copper-colored "throats", while females have yellow "throats."

**REDEAR SUNFISH** are present in good numbers from 8 to 10 inches long. Fishing during the spawning season (mid-May) is the best time to catch redear. Fishing quality is rated as good to excellent in 2016! Redear differ from bluegill visually by a red, orange, or yellow-colored crescent on edge of the "gill flap" and a "freckled" pattern on the cheek and body. Redear sunfish are highly dependent on vegetation to maintain a high-quality fishery.

**MUSKELLUNGE** catch rates by anglers have been fair-good with fishing pressure relatively light. Muskie in excess of 48 inches have been caught by fishermen and in surveys. Fishing quality is rated fair-good for 2016. **Note:** Although often maligned due to their large size and teeth, muskie can be a benefit to the entire fishery on Mill Creek Lake. The number stocked is relatively low in an attempt to establish a trophy fishery, 366 annually. A recent muskie diet study in Illinois lakes indicates that when gizzard shad are present, like Mill Creek Lake, muskies feed exclusively on shad. Bass are never a preferred or abundant food item. Muskie predation on large adult gizzard shad is highly desirable on Mill Creek Lake to thin this size group. White suckers are a valuable diet item to enhance the growth of large muskie. Additional research indicates that lakes stocked with muskie experience improvements in bass numbers and white

crappie growth rate compared to lakes not stocked with muskie.

**CHANNEL CATFISH** are moderate in abundance. The average catch goes from 2 - 8 lbs. The CCPD maintains this fishery through purchasing and stocking of channel catfish. Fishing quality is rated as fair-good in 2016.

**OTHER: Longear sunfish and Green sunfish** are present, but are seldom attain harvestable size. **Yellow Bullheads** and **Black Bullheads** reach a respectable size (12"+) in Mill Creek Lake. **Gizzard shad, Golden shiners, and White suckers** are present and serve as the primary forage base. Unfortunately, **Common carp** were collected for the first time in 2015. Their introduction is from an unknown source and their effect on habitat highly undesirable. Never move fish from Mill Creek Lake to other water bodies, or fish from other waterbodies to Mill Creek Lake.....inappropriate species or diseases can be transferred, causing permanent and significantly negative consequences!

**REGULATIONS:** All statewide and special site regulations are in effect, refer to the Illinois Fishing Information guide.

Species	Daily Harvest Limit	Length Limits
<b>All</b>	<b>2 pole and line, only</b>	
<u>Large</u> or Smallmouth Bass (see below)	4	Less than 15"
<u>Large</u> or Smallmouth Bass	1	15" or longer
Muskellunge (special live bait regs.)	1	42" minimum
White, Black, or Hybrid Crappie	25	Of which, only 2 can be 12 inches or longer
Channel Catfish	6	None

**COOPERATIVE SPORTSMEN + STRUCTURED HARVEST = OPTIMAL FISHING QUALITY!**

**Please remove all litter, including fishing line**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Clark County Park District, 20482 N. Park Entrance Road, Marshall, Illinois 62441: phone: 217-889-3901  
or  
Mike Mounce, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, 1660 W. Polk Ave. Charleston, Illinois 61920:  
phone: 217-345-2420