



LAKE MILLIKEN

FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION – Lake Milliken is located in Will County within the confines of the Des Plaines State Fish and Wildlife Area, 3 miles west of Wilmington off River Road and just minutes from Interstate 55.

DESCRIPTION – Lake Milliken was constructed in 1961, a borrow pit resulting from the construction of Interstate 55. A fairly shallow, fertile lake, Milliken has a maximum depth of 8 feet and an average depth of 4 feet. Intensified management of aquatic vegetation is required to provide fishermen with easier angling opportunity on the main basin. The South end, which is relatively shallow, generally supports very lush aquatic plant growth. There is no boat access and watercraft is not permitted.

STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY – Due to the severity of the winter of 2013-14, Lake Milliken experienced a near-complete fish kill. Currently the lake is in a “recovery mode” which has involved an aggressive restocking program, coupled with restrictive harvest limits on selected species. Lake Milliken also receives catchable Rainbow Trout for the Spring season.

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 – Catch rates slightly declined from the 2017 survey, and Largemouth Bass sizes ranged from 4.0 – 19.5 inches. The proportion of adults over 15 inches greatly increased from the previous survey, though the number of fish over 8 inches declined by half. Length-frequency distribution suggests that natural reproduction is taking place. **Catch-and-Release Fishing Only.**

BLUEGILL – Catch rates improved from the 2017 survey, and Bluegill ranged from 1.6 – 6.1 inches. Though the proportion of adults over 6 inches remained largely unchanged (2%), fish over 8 inches were not observed. The number of fish over 3 inches declined from the 2017 survey, though half of all fish captured were under 3 inches (indicating natural reproduction is taking place).

BLACK CRAPPIE – One of the few species which survived the 2013-14 winter kill, Black Crappie were very common in the 2017 Fall survey and dominated the trap net collection. Although a few larger adults were present the majority of that collection was dominated by younger fish; the average length collected in the 2017 Fall survey measured 6.9 inches. Although they were absent in the 2015 survey, many White Crappie were collected in 2017. A Crappie-specific survey was not conducted in 2021.

CHANNEL CATFISH – Channel Catfish are requested from the State Hatchery System on an annual basis. These fish are typically 8 – 10 inches and immediately provide anglers the opportunity to bring home their catch. **6 Fish Daily Harvest Limit**

COMMON CARP – Due to an extended period of high water, Common Carp gained access to the lake from the nearby creek. Efforts have been initiated to remove/reduce the carp population before

it has a chance to become too problematic. Directed effort electrofishing has been conducted annually since 2015 and has resulted in the removal of over 1,500 pounds of Common Carp from this lake. Common Carp removal will be an ongoing management activity.

ADDITIONAL LAKE INFORMATION: Statewide Fishing Regulation Apply

Additional Site-Specific Fishing Regulations:

All Fish Species: 2 Pole and Line Fishing Only

Channel Catfish: 6 Fish Daily Creel Limit

Large or Smallmouth Bass: Catch and Release Fishing Only

Rainbow Trout: Spring Closed Season