



MAZONIA STATE FISH & WILDLIFE AREA

Bullhead Lake (Mazonia Lake #7)

FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION – Bullhead Lake (Lake #7) is located within the Mazonia State Fish and Wildlife Area Main Unit, 3 miles southwest of Braidwood in Grundy County on Illinois Route 53 and Huston Road.

DESCRIPTION – Bullhead Lake is one of the largest impoundments in the Main Unit at 32.9 surface acres. Shoreline access is limited by extensive stands of tall reed grass. The lake has a one-lane concrete boat ramp with adjacent parking. Bullhead Lake is closed to fishing during upland game and waterfowl season. Following the completion of the hunting seasons, it reopens for ice fishing dependent upon ice conditions.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: Bullhead Lake surveyed on an alternate year basis. Fish stocking has been limited to mainly channel catfish.

STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY –*No special mercury advisory or other contaminant-related consumption advisories pertain.*

LARGEMOUTH BASS – Electrofishing catch rates increased to their highest point in 8 years as the total number of stock size and larger bass (8"-plus) increased. The average size bass collected in 2017 measured 12.4". Although the total number of largemouth bass collected increased, there was minimal change to the overall population. Legal size bass declined slightly although good numbers of legal size bass are present; 4% of bass which were of quality size were at least 18 inches in length.

BLUEGILL – Bluegills were the second most common fish collected in 2017, accounting for 32.2% of the total fish collection. Bluegills continued to dominate the trap net catch, accounting for more than one-half of the total number of fish collected by that gear type (52.8%). While the 2015 survey indicated very good numbers of quality size plus bluegills, the 2017 survey indicated the opposite as the number of 6" plus bluegills declined to its lowest point in many years; the average size bluegill collected in the 2017 survey measured 4.7". It would appear that combined mortality has impacted the top end of the population. If the smaller bluegills recruit favorably, this population should begin to recover in the coming years.

CRAPPIE – White and black crappie were collected in fair number in 2017 with black crappie the more numerous of the two species. The combined crappie sample would indicate a fair population present with good angling opportunity. Crappie which were at least 10 inches and length comprised 16% of the adult population and several fish were collected which exceeded one pound.

CHANNEL CATFISH – A difficult species to sample in strip-mine lakes, channel catfish were collected in fairly low number in 2017. Reproduction and recruitment appear sporadic. Catfish collected in 2017 averaged 19.8" with the largest fish exceeding 25". Channel catfish are stocked on a rotational basis with other Mazonia lake.

ADDITIONAL FISH SPECIES: A variety of other species which can be caught include common carp, freshwater drum, bullheads, green sunfish and several gar species.

Length of Selected Species Collected in the 2017 Fall Survey (all gear types combined)

Species	Number of Fish Caught in Each Length Group (Inches)								
	0-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+	Total
Largemouth bass	10	28	46	78	36	2	0	0	200
Bluegill	136	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	161
Crappie (white and black)	2	28	3	4	0	0	0	0	37
Yellow perch	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Channel catfish	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Bullhead (black and yellow)	0	4	12	0	0	0	0	0	16
Yellow bass	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2

FISHING REGULATIONS – Statewide fishing regulations apply at this lake (see current Illinois Fishing Information booklet and IFISHILLINOIS website <http://www.ifishillinois.org/> for specific details).

Additional Site Specific fishing regulations:

Boaters - Trolling motor only, except Monster and Ponderosa Lake – gasoline outboards allowed, no wake

All fish species - Two pole and line fishing only.

Bluegill or Redear Sunfish – 10 fish daily creel limit on Ponderosa, unlimited elsewhere

Channel Catfish – 6 fish daily creel limit.

Largemouth Bass – 15” minimum length limit; 3 fish daily creel limit.

White, Black, or Hybrid Crappie – 10 fish daily creel limit

CONTACT INFORMATION – Mazonia/Braidwood State Fish & Wildlife Area: 815/237-0063.
IDNR Fisheries County Fish Biologist: 630/553-6680.