

Peters Lake – Reservoir Number 2

Washington County

April 2017 Trap Net and Night Electrofishing Survey

Peters Lake - Reservoir Number 2 is a fertile 40-acre impoundment located 4 miles east of Canonsburg, PA. In 1996, the lake was opened to public fishing when Peters Township purchased it and the surrounding property and developed Peters Lake Park. The majority of the lake is accessible by trail; however, there is a small 5-acre section on the east side of the lake that is designated as a wildlife sanctuary and is off-limits to fishing. Boating is permitted with unpowered boats only and there is a primitive boat launch available. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) manages Peters Lake for fishing.

Biologists from the PFBC Area 8 Fisheries Management Office in Somerset, PA, previously surveyed Peters Lake in May 2010. At that time, an unwanted introduction of Gizzard Shad was documented in the lake (see [2010 Biologist Report](#)) and a corresponding decline in the panfish populations was noticed. Additionally, the quality and size structure of the Largemouth Bass population had also declined at that time. In response to these changes, management recommendations were made to attempt to improve the fish populations of the lake. This included placing the lake in the Panfish Enhancement program for crappie and the Big Bass Program for Largemouth Bass.

Biologists from the PFBC Area 8 Fisheries Management Office in Somerset, PA conducted a fish survey of the lake in April 2017 using Pennsylvania style trap nets and night flat bottom boat electrofishing. The purpose of the survey was to document the fish population status in the lake. Table 1 below shows the results of the trap net survey at Peters Lake in 2017.

Table 1. Length and frequency distribution of sampled fish from trap nets.

Species	Number caught	Size range (inches)	Comments
White Crappie	114	2 - 12	15% over 9 inches
Black Crappie	63	5 - 12	11% over 9 inches
Bluegill	143	4 - 7	10% over 7 inches
Pumpkinseed	1	4	
Yellow Perch	5	7 - 9	
Channel Catfish	2	15 - 16	
Sauger	3	17 - 20	
Gizzard Shad	20	Not Measured	
Common Carp	3	Not Measured	

Bluegill catch rates were lower than the previous two surveys and overall size of Bluegill captured also continued to decline (Figure 1). Bluegills continued to display poor condition as in the previous survey in 2010. Direct competition with Gizzard Shad for food resources is likely the main reason for the poor Bluegill population.

Crappie trap net catch rates were intermediate to the 1999 and 2010 surveys. Catch rates of quality sized crappie over 9 inches were low, but showed a slight improvement from the previous survey (Figure 2). As Panfish Enhancement Regulations for crappie did not go into effect until 2016, we could not evaluate the full effect of the regulation during this survey. We will have a better

understanding of the impact of Panfish Enhancement Regulations on crappie in this impoundment following the next survey.

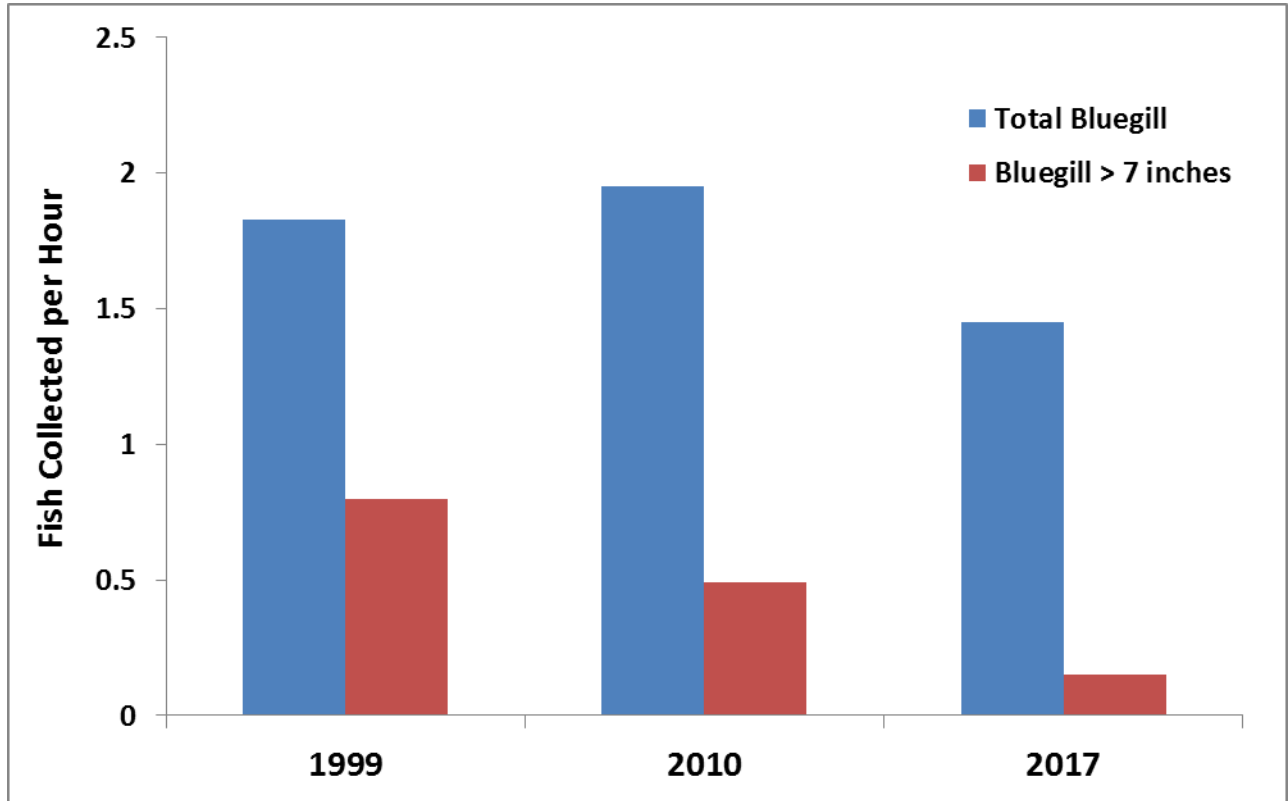


Figure 1. Bluegill trap net catch at Peters Lake Reservoir # 2.

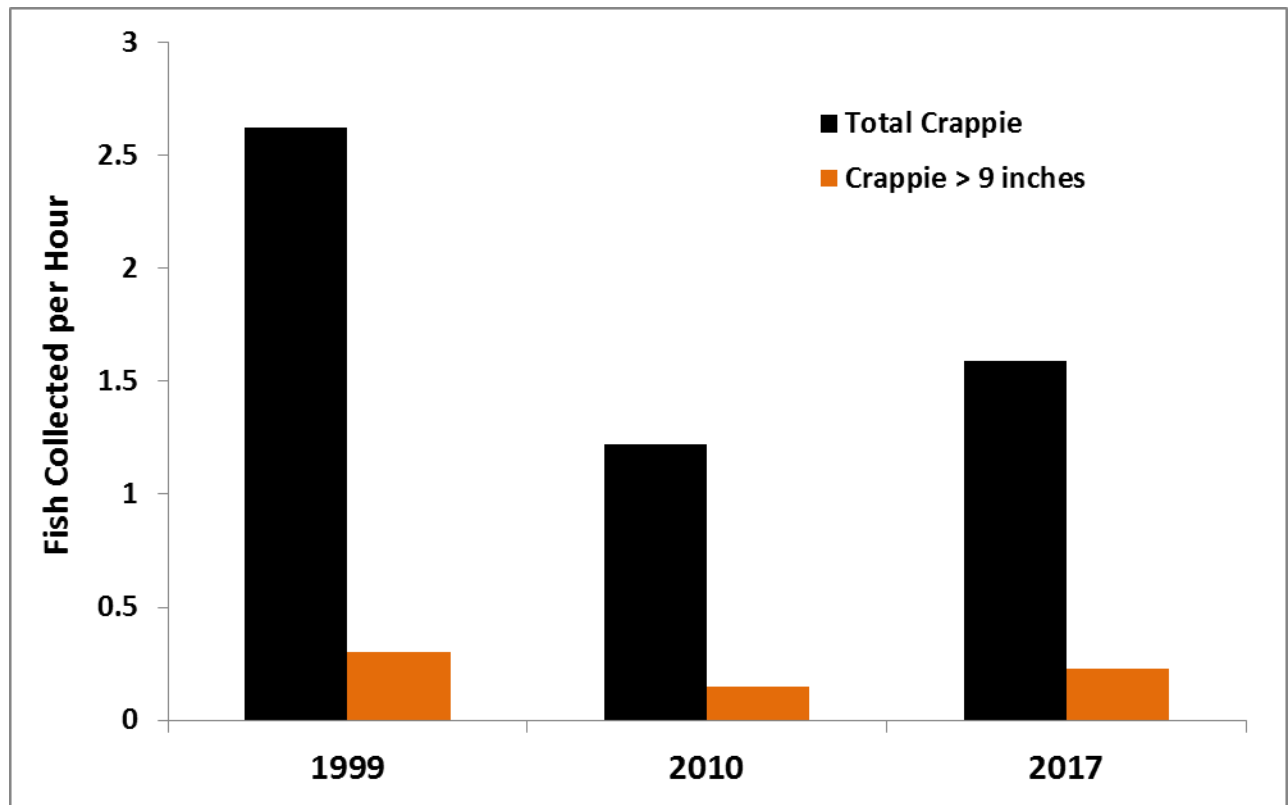


Figure 2. Crappie trap net catch at Peters Lake Reservoir #2.



Area Fisheries Manager Rick Lorson with a 20" Sauger captured at Peters Lake. The PFBC does not stock Sauger in this lake, and discourages anglers from transferring and releasing species from one body of water to another.

Night electrofishing for Largemouth Bass revealed an impressive number of fish present at Peters Lake (Table 2). Total catch of bass was 295 fish ranging from 3 – 21 inches. However, only a few bass were over the legal length of 15 inches and the majority of fish continued to be in the 8 – 11 inch range. The number of fish over 12 inches did improve since the previous survey in 2010 (Figure 3). As with the Panfish Enhancement Regulations, it is still too early to determine if Big Bass Regulations will result in an improved bass population at Peters Lake.

Table 2. Length and frequency distribution of Largemouth Bass from night electrofishing in 2017.

Species	Number caught	Size range (inches)	Comments
Largemouth Bass	295	3 – 21"	12% over 12 inches 2% over 15 inches



21" Largemouth Bass captured during night electrofishing at Peters Lake

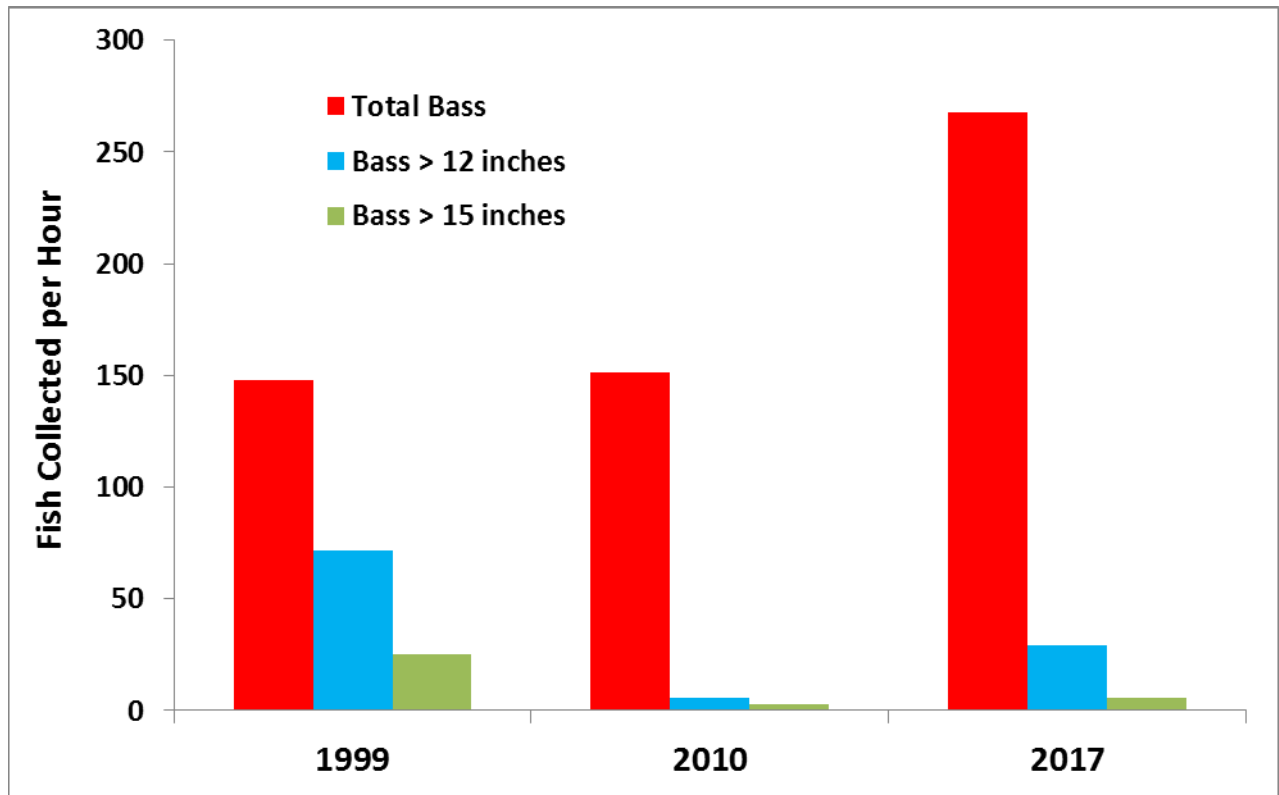


Figure 3. Largemouth Bass night electrofishing catch at Peters Lake Reservoir #2.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission stocks Peters Lake with fingerling Channel Catfish yearly. We captured only two during the trap net survey. It is likely that the dense Largemouth Bass population limits survival of the 2-inch stocked fingerlings. We will return in 2018 to set hoop nets to further attempt to assess the Channel Catfish population.

Overall, Peters Lake Reservoir Number 2 contains good fishing opportunities for a dense bass population, and fair fishing opportunities for Bluegill and crappie.

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