



SHOVEL LAKE BANNER MARSH STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

LOCATION and DESCRIPTION: Located in Central Illinois, the 5,524 acre Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area lies adjacent to the Illinois River, 4 miles north of Banner, Illinois, along Route 24. The former bottomland lake and marsh was leveed and drained for agricultural practice from 1910 through 1958. From 1958 to 1974 approximately 90 percent of the site was strip-mined for coal. The strip-mined areas have since been reclaimed and purchased by the State of Illinois. Under the management of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (1978 - present) the primary objective for the site is to establish a freshwater marsh providing fish and wildlife habitat in the Illinois River Valley.

Banner Marsh SFWA was characterized by narrow strip pits and upland ponds, but in 1994 the hydrology changed due to the intentional cessation of pumping operations in the levee district. The water level rose approximately 7 feet (435 M.S.L.) due mainly to groundwater recharge by seepage under the existing 1-100 year flood-tight levee with the Illinois River. The total surface water acreage for the site increased from 530 acres to approximately 2400 acres and created a large vegetated littoral zone.

Shovel Lake (approximately 200 acres) is the third largest water area at the site. It is a "T" shaped final cut lake with limited habitat in the boat ramp arm. The opposite arm which lies adjacent to the Copperas Creek levee, contains points, flooded brush, beaver lodges, and diverse aquatic vegetation. The water acreage added in 2001 consists of very large littoral zones around deep water pockets. The maximum water depth is 65.0 feet. The average water clarity in the summer is often over 12 feet.

The Bell's Landing access area has a concrete boat ramp, 25 vehicle and trailer parking lot and restrooms. The lake has a 25 h.p. motor limit. The site is open 24 hours a day, except for the Central Zone Duck Season. At which time only shoreline fishing is allowed after 1 p.m.

HISTORY & STATUS of the SPORT FISHERY:

Largemouth Bass: The largemouth bass population was evaluated by 102 bass from electrofishing and 5 bass from trapnets in 2014. The largemouth bass population appears to be defined by a high percentage of fish from 6.3 to 20 inches in length with good average Relative weights. The 2014 fall electrofishing survey indicated a size structure of 24% of the bass over 16 inches and 10% over 18 inches. This bass populations structure has been consistent over the last 5 years.

The goal of the protected slot length limit was to create a high density bass population that is composed of fish large enough to be efficient predators upon the high density of slow growing panfish and the rough fish population. The benefit to bass anglers will be more fish surviving past 14 inches to catch, and for anglers wanting to harvest bass will be the opportunity to harvest more fish.

Bluegill:

The bluegill population continues to have an average size structure with 12% of the sampled fish over 7 inches. The current bluegill condition is only average due to the competition with the gizzard shad and carp.

Crappie: The black crappie population was surveyed by 35 stock size fish in 2014. 97% of these fish were over 9 inches and 63% were over 11 inches. The crappie population continues a trend of a moderate population of legal size fish. No white crappie were surveyed in 2014. This population is present in a very low density of quality fish.

Channel Catfish: 4 channel catfish were sampled in 2014 with all over 18 inches in length and in excellent body condition. A low density population is present and a stocking of 500 fish every three years is scheduled.

Walleye: The walleye population was represented by 1 fish at 22.2 inches long. The last walleye stocking was 1997 and a limited population of large fish is present.

Muskie: 25 muskie were sampled in the spring trapnet survey. The collected fish ranged from 28.3 to 43 inches. The first stocking of 450 fish at 11 inches was in 1999. In 2000, a total of 200, 2001-600, 2002-200, 2003-200, 2004-0, and 200 annually from 2005 through 2014 at an average size of 11.2 inches were stocked. The Illinois (Jake Wolf) muskie strain appear to be doing good in this lake.

FISHING REGULATIONS: Site specific angling regulations. Two pole and line fishing only except carp may be taken by bow and arrow devices, gigs or appears during May through August, all other statewide regulations apply. Species	Daily Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
All Fish	2 pole and line only	
Largemouth/Smallmouth Bass	3	12-18" protected slot length
Channel Catfish	6	None
Walleye	6	14" minimum
White and Black Crappie	25	9" minimum
Muskie	1	42" minimum

CONTACT INFORMATION – Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area: 309/647-9184.

IDNR Fisheries County Fish Biologist: 309/446-9143.

Illinois Fishing Information booklet and IFISHILLINOIS website <http://www.ifishillinois.org/>