



# INDEPENDENCE GROVE LAKE

## LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

### FISHERIES STATUS SUMMARY

**LOCATION** – Located east of the Des Plaines River north of Buckley Road (Rt. 137) near Libertyville, IL: Lake County.

**DESCRIPTION** – Independence Grove Lake, formerly known as Liberty Pits, was filled with water in 2000. The Lake County Forest Preserve District acquired the area in the low 1990's and opened the facility once concessions, picnic areas, and a swimming beach were completed. Rental boats with electric motors are available through seasonal concessions. No outside boats, canoes or kayaks are allowed. No fish cleaning facilities are available; this is a "Catch and Release Only" lake; for all species. Independence Grove Lake is 110 acres; maximum depth is 50.0 ft., average depth is 7.5 ft. shoreline length is 4.3 miles.

**MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:** Periodic fish surveys are undertaken to track the fishery relative to "Catch and Release" recreational fishing. Very little aquatic plant "management" takes place in the lake but shoreline work does occur to improve cosmetics and control wind drive, bank, erosion.

**STATUS OF THE SPORT FISHERY** – Independence Grove has received a couple of northern pike stockings since 2000 but little else. The lake is managed as a no harvest "natural" system. Below is a brief description of catchable game species in this water body.

**LARGEMOUTH BASS** – In 2013, 102 bass were collected in one hour of shocking. Fish ranged from 6" to 21.5" and weighed up to 3.8 lbs.; 42% were over 12" long, 22% exceeded 14", 7% exceeded 15" and 5% exceeded 16". Many of the originally impounded bass that grew fast, large, and made the lake locally famous for trophy size fish have died off and now the system contains good size, second and third generation fish, that grow slower because of more crowding. Bass condition (Wr) was 88 which was slightly below the "normal range" (90 – 105) for northern Illinois. These data suggest bass were a little thin.

**BLUEGILL** – In 2013, 77 bluegill were collected in one hour of electrofishing. They ranged in size from 2" to 8.7" and topped the scale at 0.4 lbs.; 26% exceeded 6" long, 3% were longer than 7" and 1% were over 8". More predation and/or some "human predation" would help reduce abundance and increase growth rates but with current management practices, long term development of the bass population through natural reproduction is the only tool available to raise the size of panfish.

**BLACK CRAPPIE** – 29 black crappie were collected in 2013; fish measured between 7" and 13.5" long and weighed up to 1.2 lbs.; 86% of the catch exceeded 9", 44% exceeded 10" and 14% exceeded 11" long. This was our best crappie sample in several years, most crappie were collected in the western lagoon near timber.

**MUSKIE** – 1999 was the last time muskie were stocked in Independence Grove (n=330). Muskie are occasionally still being caught, rumors abound about a 50" fish being caught in 2013.

**ADDITIONAL FISH SPECIES:** 11 species of fish have been collected in this lake. Additional fish species include: common carp, golden shiner, walleye, channel catfish, northern pike, fathead minnow and yellow perch

**FISHING REGULATIONS – Catch and Release Only (All Species)**

(see current Illinois Fishing Information booklet and IFISHILLINOIS website <http://www.ifishillinois.org/> for specific details).

**ADDITIONAL SITE REGULATIONS:**

Boaters – No outside boats allowed, Rentals available at Concessionaire  
No live bait (minnows, shiners, etc)

**CONTACT INFORMATION –** Lake County Forest Preserve District, General Office: 847/367-6640.  
IDNR District Fisheries Biologist: 815/675-2319.

**Independence Grove Lake Map**

