

Foster Joseph Sayers Lake

Centre County

May 2011 Trapnetting Survey



Foster Joseph Sayers Lake is a 1,730 acre impoundment located at [Bald Eagle State Park](#) about 15 miles northeast of State College, Centre County. The primary function of the reservoir is flood control and lake levels are managed by the [US Army Corps of Engineers](#). The lake is drawn down during the fall and winter months to provide additional storage for high water events in the spring. Despite rather dramatic water level changes the lake is popular with anglers and boaters. Panfish (sunfish and crappies) harvest is regulated by [Panfish Enhancement Special Regulations](#) while take of all other species are guided by statewide regulations.

During the week of May 31, 2011 Fisheries Management Area 3 staff conducted a survey of panfish (pumpkinseed, bluegill, black and white crappie, and catfish) populations using 15 trap net sets at the reservoir. Each net was fished for approximately 24 hours for a total effort of 347 hours. Nine fish species were captured including; pumpkinseed, bluegill, yellow perch, black crappie, white crappie, channel catfish, rock bass, and brown and yellow bullhead.



A Pennsylvania style trap net set and ready to fish at Foster Joseph Sayers Lake.



Retrieving a trap net at Foster Joseph Sayers Lake.

Table 1: Length frequency distribution of fish captured at Sayers Lake during the week of May 31st 2011.

Species	Number Caught	Size Range (inches)
Pumpkinseed	95	3 - 7
Bluegill	292	2 - 8
Yellow Perch	47	4 - 11
Channel Catfish	131	5 - 29
Black Crappie	1803	3 - 13
White Crappie	83	3 - 14
Rock Bass	13	4 - 9
Brown Bullhead	133	8 - 13
Yellow Bullhead	7	6 - 11

“Sayers Lake” as it is locally known, is a favorite destination particularly for anglers seeking panfish and crappies. These species were the most numerous fish captured in the trapnets. The majority (82%) of crappie captured in trap nets ranged in size from 6 to 8 inches. The catches of crappie (including legal size fish ≥ 9 inches) were the highest ever recorded at the lake.

Crappie - Trapnetting

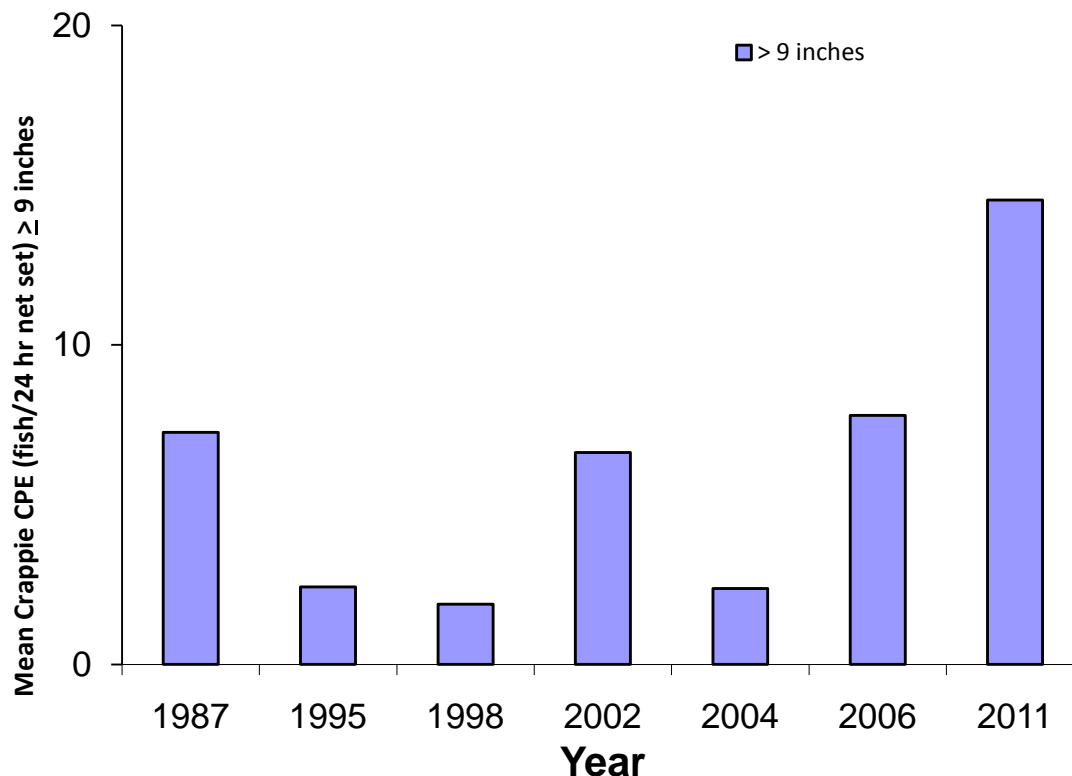


Figure 1: The average trap net catch of legal (≥ 9 inch) Crappie (black and white) at Sayers Lake from 1987 to the present.



A "keeper" black crappie captured at Sayers Lake during the week of May 31st 2011.



A healthy bluegill captured during trapnetting at Sayers Lake.

The 2011 survey also yielded good catches of channel catfish (131) and brown bullhead (133). The Channel catfish captured ranged in size from 5 to 29 inches with 76% being between 16 and 29 inches. The Brown bullhead captured during the survey ranging in size from 8 to 13 inches. Consistent stocking of Channel catfish at Sayers Lake began in 1998 and the population has increased steadily. During the 2011 survey, the trap net crew recorded the highest ever total catch and catch of channel catfish ≥ 12 inches for the lake.

Channel Catfish - Trapnetting

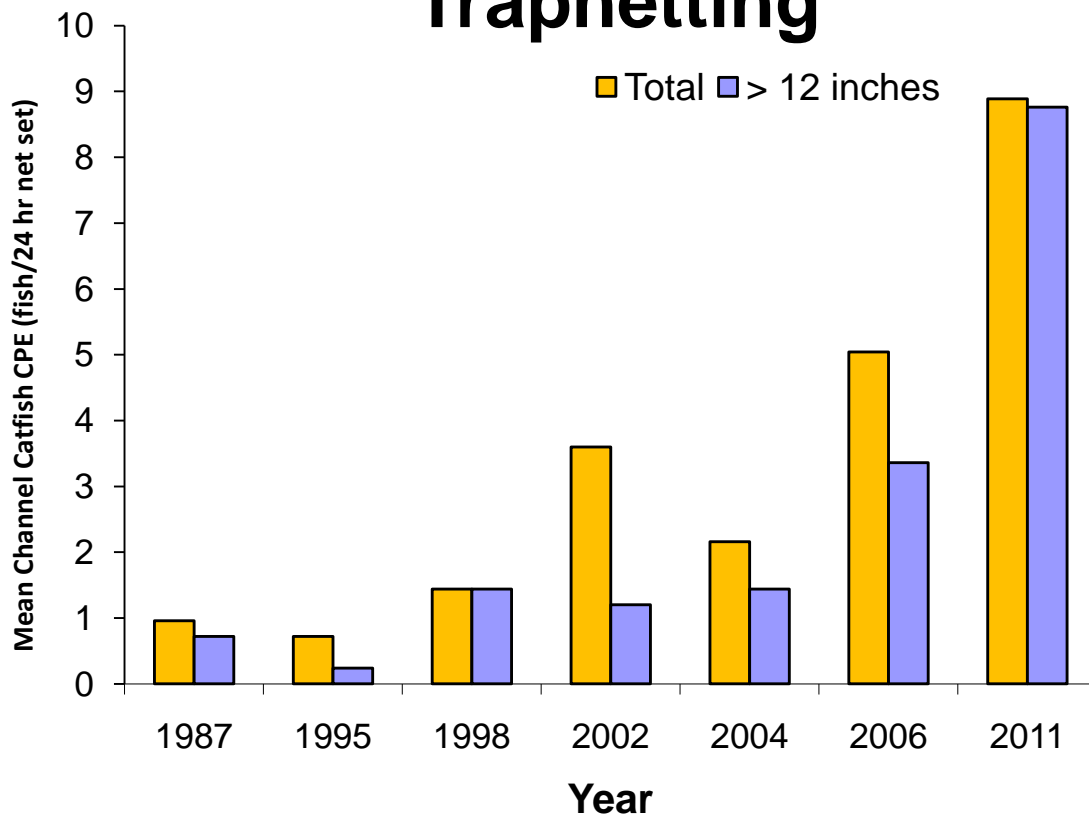


Figure 2: The average catch of Channel catfish at Sayers Lake from 1987 to the present.

--Andy Leakey and Steve Krum, Area 3 Fisheries Biologist Aides