

## 2017 FISHING FORECAST FOR KIRWIN RESERVOIR

**KIRWIN RESERVOIR** - The reservoir elevation is approx. 3.56 (as of Feb. 1, 2017) feet below conservation pool. Usable boat ramps at this level include the North and South Shore ramps.

**BLACK BASS - Poor.** One largemouth bass was collected during the spring sample, however, additional bass were observed while performing other sampling around the reservoir. Some of the best locations for finding bass are going to be along Crappie Point and back toward Scout cove, the cove up by Gray's Park, the cove by the North Shore and South Shore ramps and along the dam and outlet area. Smallmouth bass have also been reported being caught around crappie point. **A 15-inch length limit is in effect.**

**CHANNEL CATFISH - Fair.** The overall supply of channel catfish is **FLATHEAD CATFISH - Fair.** fair as fish were scattered over a wide size range. Fish in the 4 to 12-inch size range accounted for 25 percent, fish in the 12 to 20-inch size range accounted for 50 percent, and fish over 20 inches accounted for 25 percent. The biggest channel catfish sampled in 2016 weighed 3.94 pounds. The supply of flatheads is also fair. No flatheads were sampled this year, however quite a few were observed while conducting other sampling activities. As the water starts warming up, these fish will be coming up shallow to feed, so fish the upper ends of coves and shallow areas using shad sides and gizzards. Also, the channels should be up in Bow Creek and the North Fork Solomon Rivers. These fish can be caught on rod and reel and/or setlines or trotlines using shad sides and gizzards, shrimp and stink or dip bait.

**WHITE CRAPPIE - Good.** White crappie numbers are higher than **BLACK CRAPPIE - Good.** last year and black crappie numbers are higher as well. This past year produced another good crappie spawn with 98 percent of the fall sample consisting of 2 to 8-inch fish. Hopefully these fish will recruit on up to produce some good fishing in the next couple of years. There are still some bigger fish in the population with 1 percent being 10 to 12 inches in length and 1 percent being 12 to 16 inches in length. The density rating for white crappie at Kirwin (8 inches and above) is 23rd, and for black crappie (8 inches and above) it ranks 7th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled in 2016 was a white crappie weighing 1.36 pounds and a black crappie weighing 1.27 pounds. Crappie should be concentrated around the North and South shore fish attractors and drop offs and can be caught using jigs, jigs tipped with minnows or small slab spoons and can be caught up in the shallows of coves and off the Dam during the spawn using jigs or

jigs tipped with minnows under a bobber.

**WALLEYE - Good.** There will be some catch and release this year since individuals in the 9 to 15-inch range accounted for 28 percent. However, there will be some nice catches of harvestable walleye - fish in the 15 to 20-inch size range accounted for 32 percent, fish in the 20 to 25-inch size range accounted for 29 percent and fish 25 inches plus accounted for 11 percent of the 2016 fall sample. The density rating at Kirwin (15 inches and above) is 5th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled this past year weighed 7.58 pounds. These fish can be caught off the Dam during the spawn in March and April casting jigs, roadrunners or crank bait's. After the spawn would get those night crawlers out and fish the flats and drop offs. **A 15-inch length limit is in effect.**

**WHITE BASS - Good.** This population is currently dominated by fish in the 6 to 9-inch size range which accounted for 35 percent of the 2016 sample. Individuals in the 4 to 6-inch size range accounted for 16 percent, fish in the 9 to 12-inch size range accounted for 13 percent, fish in the 12 to 15-inch size range accounted for 29 percent and fish over 15 inches accounted for 7 percent. Most of the fish will be running in the 1 to 2-pound range. The biggest fish sampled this past year weighed 1.95 pounds. The density rating at Kirwin (9 inches and above) is 19th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. Surface action should provide some exciting opportunities throughout the reservoir during the summer months as these fish chase shad, so keep an eye on the sky and find the gulls. Trolling diving lures should also entice these fish into biting.

**WIPERS - Good.** The supply is good and the quality of this fishery is good as well. Individuals in the 7 to 10-inch size range accounted for 26 percent of the fall 2016 sample. Fish in the 10 to 15-inch size range accounted for 20 percent, fish in the 15 to 20-inch size range accounted for 47 percent and fish 20 inches plus accounted for 7 percent. The density rating for wipers (12 inches and above) at Kirwin is 8th amongst all reservoirs in the state this year. The biggest fish sampled this past year weighed 4.83 pounds. Casting bucktail jigs into the wind along either side of the Dam, Knob Hill, between Bluegill and Crappie point's and around Cottonwood Grove could be productive, as well as trolling diving lures along the river channel and dam. Also, look for some good top water action this summer on calm days as these fish feed on shad.