

George Ross Lakes Fisheries Management Study

The George Ross Lakes are a popular fishing venue for Circle D property owners. A park usage survey conducted this past spring showed that about 48% of property owners contacted at the park enjoy fishing the lakes. The most frequent answer to the survey question of “what improvement would you suggest for the park” was to restock the lakes.

Professional fisheries management methods exist to assess the stocking needs lake that go beyond anecdotal evidence available from one method of capture (fishing) and angler testimony. A science-based assessment of the state of the fisheries in the George Ross Lakes will be initiated this spring to help answer the questions of what fish species are



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currently in the lakes, what size classes there are, and how much natural reproduction and recruitment there is. Additionally, depth and topography data of the lake bottoms has been collected ahead of the fish sampling and will be used to create an underwater contour (bathymetric) map.

The Circle D Civic Association was fortunate to team up with Texas A&M Wildlife and Fisheries Assistant Professor, Dr. Josh Perkin, who is excited to use the study as an applied teaching experience for his students to learn fisheries management methods. The study represents a mutually beneficial opportunity for Circle D to gain valuable lake information and fisheries management recommendations on an ongoing basis in return for providing the study lakes and the real-world application for Texas A&M fisheries students to learn how to gill net, electrofish, seine, measure fish, identify fish species, compute metrics, and apply their findings to established fisheries management data relationships to determine the current state of the fisheries and provide guidance to Circle D on possible ways to maintain and/or enhance the fisheries based on our management goals.

The study will involve one overnight trip, with daytime gill netting and/or seining and nighttime electrofishing for a few hours using a specially equipped boat. The date for the spring sampling trip has not yet been determined but will be posted on the website close to the date of the trip. The results of the study will be available toward the end of the spring semester. Everyone is welcome to observe the activities. Click [here](#) to read about the project or go to About the Association tab, click on the Park Committee link and look for the George Ross Lake Study Proposal link.

Submitted by Beverly Villarreal

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