

FINAL REPORT – LAKE BELLE VIEW NATIVE FISH RESTORATION

July 15, 2011

BACKGROUND:

As part of the Lake Belle View restoration project, the new lake has been separated from the main stem of the Sugar River. Now that the common carp population has been reduced, if not eliminated, habitat for desirable native fish species is being established. A critical component of the comprehensive lake restoration of Lake Belle View (Belleville, Wisconsin) was to restore a diverse warm water fishery through fish stocking and transfer of native species from the Sugar River to the lake. Unlike typical “farm pond” fish restoration projects where only a few species including fathead minnows, bass and bluegill are purchased from private hatcheries, this project focused on establishing ecologically diverse fish populations that are typically found in off-channel lake environments.

PROJECT RESULTS:

An important aspect of this project is to establish a diverse native fish community that can suppress common carp and other potential invasive species.

Under the direction of DNR fish managers, fish were collected using standard towed electro-shocking gear in sections of the Sugar River on June 8, June 13, June 27, July 7 and July 13, 2011. Twenty-six species were collected (see attachment) and were immediately transported in aerated coolers to the lake. Water temperatures were monitored to prevent thermal stress when they were released. Prior to release, all fish were clearly identified to ensure that undesirable species, such as carp, were removed. Fish species that were more compatible to a riverine environment were released back into the Sugar River. Data on numbers, species and location collected have been provided to DNR fisheries managers for maintaining records on the transfers.

Considering the diversity and numbers of fish transferred, the lake will sustain ecologically diverse fish populations that are typical of off-channel habitats.

ADDITIONAL FUTURE WORK: Supplementary transfers and fish stocking are recommended throughout the summer and fall of 2011. Supplemental fish collection and transfers are recommended to insure that enough individuals of certain species are adequate to sustain genetically healthy populations. Hatchery fish stocking will focus on establishing bluegill, largemouth bass, black crappie and channel catfish populations. Subsequent survey work should be done in the fall of 2011 and in future years to monitor recruitment, survival rates and growth rates. Monitoring will also focus on determining the status of common carp in the lake, and if present is reproduction occurring.

Figure 1: Results of Fish Transfer from Sugar River to Lake Belle View

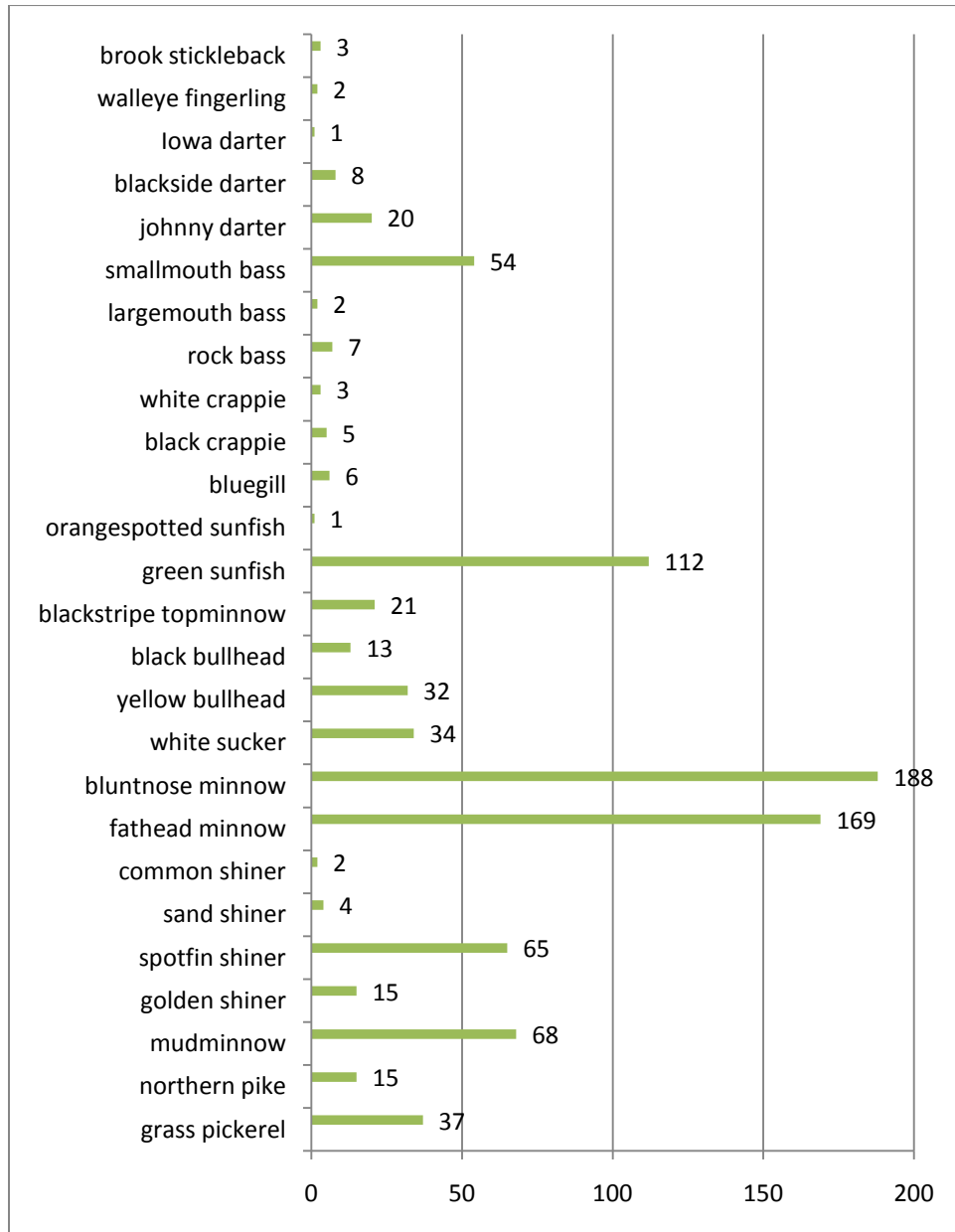


Table 1: Preliminary Fish Transfer Data, Dates and Locations Collected

Date	6/8/2011	6/8/2011	6/8/2011	6/13/2011	6/13/2011	6/27/2011
Location	Above dam	Below dam	CTH EE	Above dam	Beloit-Newark	Nelson Rd
grass pickerel			2		3	32
northern pike		1			10	2
mudminnow			13	1	43	6
golden shiner	2	1	1		1	5
spotfin shiner	5	13	43	4		
sand shiner	1		1	2		
common shiner	2					
fathead minnow	88	78	1			
bluntnose minnow	25	37	67	49		
white sucker	15	17				
yellow bullhead		1	2	1		2
black bullhead			7		4	2
blackstripe topminnow						5
green sunfish	33	3	20			13
orangespotted sunfish						1
bluegill			1	1		
black crappie			2			
white crappie			1			
rock bass						
largemouth bass	1		1			
smallmouth bass		11	3			
johnny darter	1	1	2	4		
blackside darter	3	1	1			
iowa darter	1					
walleye fingerling						2
brook stickleback				3		

Table 1 (continued)

Date	7/8/2011	7/8/2011	7/8/2011	7/8/2011	7/14/2011	7/14/2011	Prel total
Location	Avon	Albany	CTH X	CTH EE	Avon	Above dam	
grass pickerel							37
northern pike					2		15
mudminnow					5		68
golden shiner		3	2				15
spotfin shiner			1				65
sand shiner							4
common shiner							2
fathead minnow						2	169
bluntnose minnow			1	6		3	188
white sucker						2	34
yellow bullhead							32
black bullhead							13
blackstripe topminnow	9					7	14
green sunfish		14	5	24			112
orangespotted sunfish							1
bluegill				2		2	6
black crappie				3			5
white crappie				2			3
rock bass		7					7
largemouth bass							2
smallmouth bass		34	6				54
johnny darter		12					20
blackside darter		3					8
iowa darter							1
walleye fingerling							2
brook stickleback							3

Collection of Fish for Transfer



Releasing Fish



Grass Pickerel

