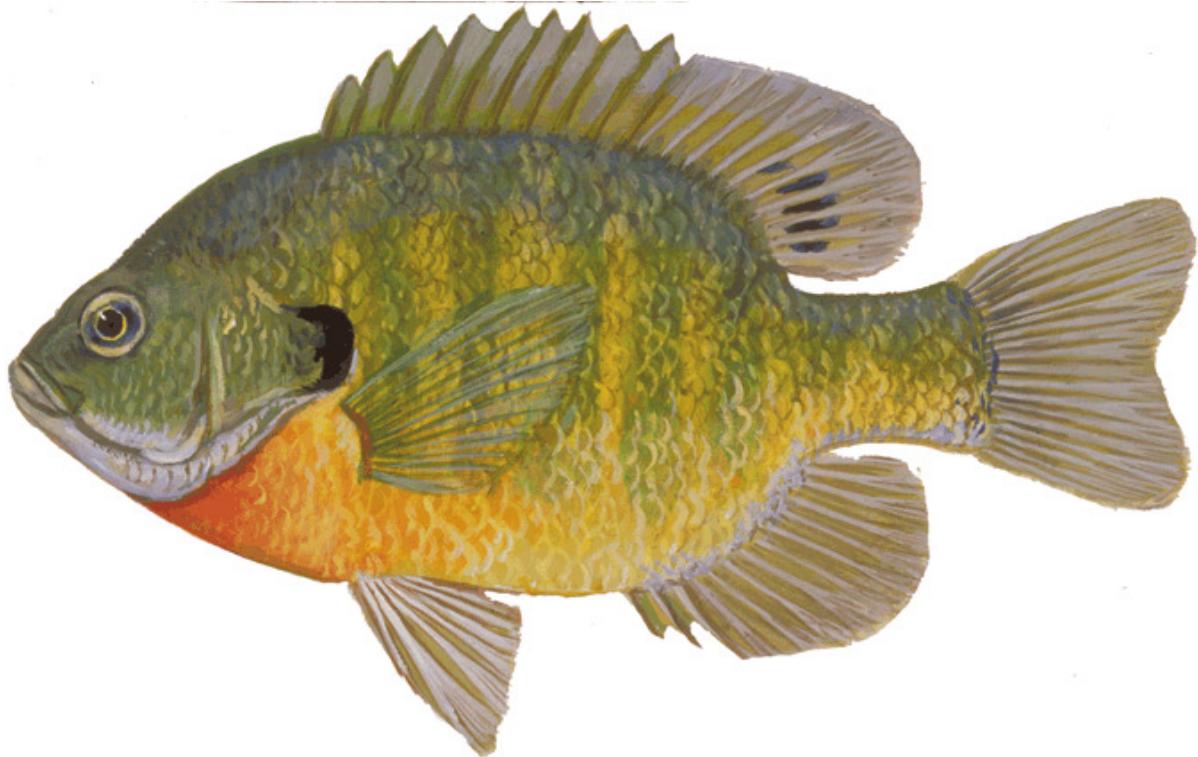


# FISHERY DRAMA IN BEAVER DAM LAKE

Meet Leo the bluegill your new in lake neighbor that has been joined by 26,000 of his relatives in Beaver Dam Lake.



The past week, through funding by the Community, the Beaver Dam Lake District and BDLIA stocked 26,001 bluegill fish in our Lake. You might envision this is a rather large number of fish to be added to the Lake until you consider that we have 6,800 Acres of lake. The resulting four new fish per acre is a welcomed addition to their current shrinking population of bluegill relatives already in the lake. Hopefully they will school together and find common habitat to provide food and cover.

We were also fortunate to have the DNR Fish Bureau initiate their electro-fish count at Trestle Bay on the north east corner of the Lake. With the use of a specially equipped boat the DNR Fishery Biologist projected a small electric charge into the water which stuns the fish. After marking the fish on the first pass they then return for a second pass that identifies the catch per unit of effort. The DNR Fishery biologist can then estimate the number of rough fish present, carp and buffalo. The resulting information was somewhat surprising with rough fish consisting of 107,000 lbs. of carp and 56,000 lbs. of buffalo in this small bay.

Returning to Leo the bluegill, who is now checking out his new home, he has found that the neighborhood is full of rough fish at roughly 525 fish per acre. So Leo and the other bluegill have their work cut out for them to find safe cover and some aquatic vegetation. The most industrious bluegill will begin scouting for some rock piles that will serve as their spawning circles in the spring. Our Leo the bluegill will need to be pretty tough and smart if he is to make this his home and survive for many seasons to come.



### Bluegill Spawning Bed

The story does not end here with after a seven year pause since 2017, when contract fishing ended on Beaver Dam Lake, limited fishing has now resumed at Trestle Bay. The rough fish removal program has entered its first phase with limited harvesting of carp and buffalo following the DNR electro fish count. The contract fisherman removed 51,000 lbs. of carp and 24,500 lbs. of buffalo over the first week in October. Caught in their nets were an additional estimated 30,000 lbs. of buffalo which had to be returned to the waters. The return of the buffalo is due to their designation as a native fish so a restriction on their capture. Not a bad start to clearing the way to help Leo to find a better place to live in this habitat.



Contractor Netting and Removal of Rough Fish from BDL

Leo the bluegills is somewhat happy with the reduction of roughly 75,000 lbs. of rough fish from their bay but the resulting level far exceeds the 87 lbs. per acre recommended by the US Fish and Wildlife. Above this level the game fish are in competition with the carp and at our estimated 525 lbs. per acre habitat destruction is of great concern. The carp thrash around on the lake bottom stirring up legacy phosphorus laden sediment as they also remove the important vegetation which supports water quality and Leo. One of Leos' favorite foods are carp eggs so at least this spring he will have a full buffet to choose from.



Carp Going to Market

With the electro fish estimate and the resumption of contractor fishing we have turned the corner to understand the fish balance in our Lake and the level of restoration that will be required. This is only the beginning of rough fish management which will require many years to achieve the levels recommended by US Fish and Wildlife for a healthy lake environment and provide Leo the bluegill with a better chance to prosper.