



Stonehouse Lake 2012 Management Report



Stonehouse Lake is a 41-acre impoundment located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Amherst County. This is one of three public reservoirs owned by the County and offers very good fishing opportunities for bass, crappie, and sunfish. The various facilities include picnic tables with shelters, grills, restroom, and play area. This lake has a good boat ramp for boat anglers but has limited bank fishing access. The reservoir is open year round but nighttime activities are prohibited except for fishing. Anglers are required to obtain a permit from the county to fish at night. Boats propelled by oar or electric motor are welcome but outboard motor use is prohibited.

This small reservoir is one of the most productive largemouth bass fisheries in the region and consistently ranks as one of the better producers of quality size largemouth each year. Game & Inland Fisheries sampling indicates the bass population had been stable for many years. However, with recent highlights of Stonehouse Lake as a top bass destination, the number of larger bass has declined since 2008. As a result, the previous 12-15 inch protective slot limit was changed in 2012 to a 14-22 inch protected slot limit to protect additional large bass and maintain the lakes full potential.

The Crappie population has been more stable than most small reservoirs (<1,000 acres) for several years but reproduction has been cyclic resulting in a fluctuating population. High crappie harvest rates continue to keep the population at a moderate level but still higher than most small reservoirs with numerous 8-9 inch fish available.

The sunfish population is dominated by bluegill but contains good redear sunfish as well. The bluegill population has maintained high densities and are abundant in the 5-7 inch groups with limited numbers of 8 inch fish. Redear sunfish numbers have been increasing and provide great sunfish opportunities with most fish in the 8-9 inch groups and some reaching 11 inches. Stonehouse Lake currently has the best sunfish fishery of any of the three Amherst County lakes and one of the best lakes in the region.

Stonehouse Lake currently maintains a quality fishery with high fish abundance and balanced fish populations. This is a shallow reservoir with low water visibility unlike neighboring Mill Creek and Thrasher Lakes. Reports from anglers indicate bass fishing can be challenging which is probably due to the abundant forage.

To access this reservoir, turn northeast on Rt. 610 from Rt. 60 (approximately 9 miles west of Amherst), then turn left on Rt. 625, and the lake access road will be the first road on the left. Permits for night fishing are available through Amherst County at 434-946-9371.