



Pond Home Study Course

Lesson 6: Case Studies

Case Study 3: Fisheries Management

A sportsmen's club has decided to lease a one-acre farm pond in Blair County to provide fishing for their club members. Their goal is to create a fishery with large (>15") largemouth bass.

Here are the current pond conditions:

- The pond was initially constructed and stocked with largemouth bass and bluegill about ten years ago.
- The land around the pond has been posted since it was constructed and the farmer indicates that it was rarely, if ever, fished.
- Walking along the edges, they are able to observe numerous 9 to 12 inch bass but no large bass. They also only spot a few bluegill.
- The pond is fed by a small spring and the water temperature in the pond on a late July day was 79°F. Depth of the pond ranges from about 3 feet around the edges to about 10 feet in the center.
- The pond has very little aquatic vegetation or algae.
- A club member recorded pH readings of 5.5 to 6.0 over several days using simple pH test strips.
- The club cannot afford to hire a professional fisheries biologist. Instead, they are interested in doing all of the work themselves.

Here are the questions that they have about the pond:

1. How could they go about determining the status of the bass and bluegill populations?
2. Based on their initial visual observations, they want to know what they will likely have to do to get bigger bass?
3. Are the water quality conditions (pH and temperature) adequate for a bass/bluegill fishery? If not, what could be done to improve the pond?
4. Are there additional water quality parameters that the club should test on this pond? If so, what are the parameters you would recommend?
5. After initial discussions about stocking and harvesting, the club asks if trout could be stocked in this pond. How would you respond?
6. Another club member asks if golden shiners would be a good fish to stock to get bigger bass. Would they be a good alternative in this case?

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