

FILE

STATE Texas

PROJECT NO. F-3-R-1, Job B-3

PERIOD Nov. 1, 1953 - May 31, 1954

Job Completion Report

by

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TITLE

Check on Commercial Catch of Rough Fish from Caddo Lake.

OBJECTIVES

To determine the effectiveness of commercial fishing on the control of rough and predacious species and the value of the local commercial fishery as well as the relative abundance and seasonal variation by species in the commercial catch.

METHODS

Commercial fishermen were contacted once each month and were provided with forms on which to record their catch.

DISCUSSION

Due to the itineracy of some of the commercial fishermen, complete data was difficult to obtain. However, one of the public camp operators who buys and sells fish states that he buys most of the commercial fish caught in Caddo Lake. This man has been on the lake for a number of years and is in frequent contact with the commercial fishermen. He has been very cooperative in keeping accurate records of fish he has bought. His information, supplemented by information obtained from the more cooperative fishermen, should be a fairly accurate estimate of the total commercial catch.

Those fish which have no commercial value in this area were killed on the spot and returned to the lake so no record was kept.

Table 1 shows the commercial catch by species for the seven months period. Recorded in Table 2 are the present average prices and total value of the catch for each species and for all species.

Table 3 shows the relative abundance in percent by weight for each species. Attempts have been made to obtain data on numbers of fish as well as weight but commercial fishermen are reluctant to do this, especially when large numbers of smaller fish are taken.

Seasonal variations in the commercial catch are shown by the six graphs in Table 4. Paddlefish were not graphed because only 80 pounds were caught during the entire period.

## SUMMARY

Complete records were difficult to obtain from commercial fishermen because some are itinerant and could not be depended upon to keep records or could not be located again after being provided with data forms. One commercial fisherman who buys wholesale fish from other fishermen kept accurate records which were supplemented by data from other commercial fishermen. The figures in this report are no doubt a little below the actual values but it is believed that they are as accurate as could be obtained under existing circumstances.

A total of 15,461 rough fish were taken which have a market value of \$5,106.05 at the present price. Buffalo were the most abundant by weight, making up 37.5 percent of the total catch.

It has been proposed that this job continue into the next segment in order to obtain an estimate of the catch for a full year. Meanwhile efforts are being made to establish better relations with the commercial fishermen and to persuade them to keep accurate records of their catch.

Table No. 1

Weights of Fish Taken by Commercial Fishermen by Month and Species,  
Caddo Lake, Harrison County, Texas, November 1, 1953 through May 31, 1954

Species	Weight in Pounds							Total
	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	
Paddle fish	62.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.0	80.0
Buffalo	925.5	97.0	870.0	916.5	593.0	1087.0	1317.0	5806.0
Bullheads	1338.0	684.5	674.5	1043.0	412.0	0.0	0.0	4152.0
Blue catfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.0	98.5	101.5	107.5	316.5
Flathead catfish	64.5	0.0	45.0	64.0	208.0	709.5	480.0	1571.0
Channel catfish	381.0	326.0	543.0	451.5	338.5	601.0	477.5	3118.5
Freshwater drum	0.0	0.0	73.0	85.0	79.5	94.0	85.5	417.0
als	2771.0	1107.5	2205.5	2569.0	1729.5	2593.0	2485.5	15,461.0

Table No. 2

Market Value of Fish Caught by Commercial Fishermen, Caddo  
Lake, Harrison County, Texas, November 1, 1953 through May 31, 1954

Species	Total Catch (Pounds)	Average Retail Market Price Per Lb. Not Dressed	Total Value
Paddlefish	80.0	\$ 0.15	\$ 12.00
Buffalo	5,806.0	0.30	1,741.80
Bullhead Catfish	4,152.0	0.30	1,245.60
Blue Catfish	316.5	0.40	126.60
Flathead Catfish	1,571.0	0.40	628.40
Channel Catfish	3,118.5	0.40	1,247.40
Freshwater Drum	417.0	0.25	104.25
Total	15,461.0		\$5,106.05



TABLE 4, SEASONAL VARIATION, COMMERCIAL CATCH, CADDO LAKE, NOV. 1 THROUGH MAY 31, 1953-54

