



HERMAN BROTHERS FISHERIES

Electrofishing Survey Results/Data/Recommendations

Oak Run Lake Report 2025

# HERMAN BROTHERS FISHERIES

## Fishery Evaluation Report – Oak Run 2025 Spring Survey

Prepared for: **Oak Run Association**

Date: **Spring 2025**

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## Summary of Recommendations

- Continue building walleye population with supplemental stocking.
- Stock 5 largemouth bass per acre (3,000 bass, 6–8" \$3.78 each) in 2025; reevaluate in 2026.
- Consider future introductions of tiger muskie, hybrid striped bass, or blue catfish if balance allows.
- Focus 2025 remaining budget on walleye stocking 5-8" \$2.27 each.
- Monitor shad population as it expands—it is currently thriving and provides strong forage.

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## Executive Summary

Electrofishing revealed a multi-species fishery with solid predator structure, abundant young shad, and strong walleye performance for a spring sample. Largemouth bass (LMB) spanned 11–20.5" with a healthy top end but a large middle cohort in average to slightly light condition—consistent with strong competition for bluegill/crappie forage prior to this year's shad boom. Smallmouth bass (SMB) were present in low numbers but included quality fish up to 19" (tagged). Crappie ranged 8–12", and yellow perch to 11.5".

Management priority for 2025: Keep building predator quality while protecting and channeling the shad pulse into growth. Stock a light infusion of premium largemouth (5/acre), continue walleye, and reassess fall 2025. Consider a small experimental apex (tiger muskie or HSB) only if monitoring remains strong and user goals align.

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## Methods & Waterbody Notes

We completed two standardized shoreline electrofishing runs (~60 min each) pre-dawn. All fish were measured (total length, inches) and weighed (pounds) when feasible; select bass received external tags. Water was clear enough for consistent netting; conductivity and time-of-day likely suppressed shallow crappie visibility.

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## Species Results (with catch tables)

### WALLEYE

Overall abundance was modest (typical for spring shoreline runs), sizes bracketed by a quality 23" fish. Continued annual plants are recommended.

Length (in)	Weight (lb)	Notes
23.0	4.30	Run 1
12.0	0.60	Run 1

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Length (in)	Weight (lb)	Notes
23.0	4.30	Run 1
12.0	0.60	Run 1

### LARGEMOUTH BASS

We tagged extensively across sizes. Many fish were 14–18" at 1.3–3.2 lb; a few quality recaptures appeared (e.g., Tag 282 @ 20.5", 5.3 lb). Untagged bass from Run 2 are listed separately.

#### Tagged LMB (Runs 1–2)

Tag #	Length (in)	Weight (lb)	Notes
243	14.75	1.40	Run 1 (blue)
238	19.0	3.22	Run 1 (blue)
282	20.5	5.30	Run 1 (orange; recapture; clipped fin)
237	20.0	4.48	Run 1 (blue)

236	17.5	2.78	Run 1 (blue)
235	13.0	1.32	Run 1 (blue)
234	16.0	2.04	Run 1 (blue)
232	11.0	0.62	Run 1 (blue)
231	13.5	1.18	Run 1 (blue)
230	17.0	2.88	Run 1 (blue)
229	14.5	1.68	Run 1 (blue)
226	16.0	2.09	Run 1 (blue)
201	12.5	1.01	Run 1 (pink)
202	15.0	1.52	Run 1 (pink)
203	17.0	2.66	Run 1 (pink)
204	16.0	2.24	Run 1 (pink)
205	15.5	1.68	Run 1 (pink)
206	11.0	0.70	Run 1 (pink)
207	15.5	2.05	Run 1 (pink)
208	19.0	3.84	Run 1 (pink)
209	17.0	2.64	Run 1 (pink)
210	14.0	1.40	Run 1 (pink)
211	15.5	1.68	Run 1 (pink)

212	14.75	1.50	Run 1 (pink)
213	15.75	2.08	Run 1 (pink)
215	14.5	1.64	Run 1 (pink)
216	14.0	1.66	Run 1 (pink)
217	13.25	1.24	Run 1 (pink)
218	14.0	1.26	Run 1 (pink)
219	15.25	1.90	Run 1 (pink)
220	14.0	1.60	Run 1 (pink)
221	13.5	1.28	Run 1 (pink)
222	17.0	2.90	Run 1 (pink)
223	16.5	2.02	Run 1 (pink; black spotting)
224	12.25	0.92	Run 1 (pink)
<b>225</b>	14.0	1.26	Run 1 (post-genetics)
226†	17.0	2.62	Run 1 (post-genetics; dup tag see 226 above)
227	19.25	3.56	Run 1
228	18.0	3.26	Run 1
230	18.0	3.10	Run 2
231	16.25	2.22	Run 2
232	13.75	1.24	Run 2

233	17.0	2.50	Run 2 (weight assumed "lb")
234	17.5	2.88	Run 2
235	17.5	3.18	Run 2
236	18.0	2.96	Run 2
237	14.0	1.40	Run 2
238	12.0	0.74	Run 2
239	17.0	2.58	Run 2
240	17.0	2.74	Run 2
241	14.25	1.28	Run 2
242	13.0	1.14	Run 2
243	15.25	1.80	Run 2
244	17.5	2.48	Run 2
245	11.0	0.64	Run 2
247	17.0	2.96	Run 2
248	14.5	1.64	Run 2
249	14.0	1.30	Run 2
250	18.5	3.38	Run 2
251	15.5	2.06	Run 2
252	16.0	2.02	Run 2

253	15.0	2.02	Run 2
254	14.25	1.40	Run 2
255	14.0	1.38	Run 2
256	14.0	1.32	Run 2
257	12.0	0.97	Run 2
258	15.25	1.80	Run 2
259	15.0	1.64	Run 2
260	15.25	1.70	Run 2
261	13.25	1.36	Run 2
262	15.5	2.08	Run 2
263	17.0	2.48	Run 2

† Tag 226 was encountered twice with different sizes/weights in Run 1; treat as a likely **recapture/mis-tag** and verify in the physical log before analyses.

#### **Additional untagged LMB (Run 2)**

##### **Length (in)    Weight (lb)**

14.0	1.30
14.0	1.12
12.0	0.86
13.5	1.16
13.5	1.18

11.0        0.68

11.5        0.72

13.0        1.14

12.0        0.68

12.5        0.98

14.0        1.28

15.25       1.72

13.0        1.32

12.0        1.00

15.0        1.78

14.0        1.54

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## **SMALLMOUTH BASS**

Catch rates were low but quality was good, including a 19" tagged fish in Run 2. Several mid-teens SMB were present in Run 1.

<b>Tag #</b>	<b>Length (in)</b>	<b>Weight (lb)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
—	18.5	3.02	Run 1
—	17.0	2.16	Run 1
—	13.5	1.00	Run 1
—	13.0	1.00	Run 1

229	19.0	4.24	Run 2 (tagged)
—	16.0	2.00	Run 2

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### **BLACK CRAPPIE**

Observed 8–12" fish; many lacked weights due to rapid handling in low-light conditions.

Length (in)	Weight (lb)	Notes
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11.0	0.75	Run 1
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12.0	—	Run 1
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11.0	—	Run 2
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12.0	—	Run 2
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10.5	—	Run 2
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10.5	—	Run 2
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10.0	—	Run 2
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9.0	—	Run 2
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9.0	—	Run 2
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8.0	—	Run 2
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### **YELLOW PERCH**

Length (in)	Weight (lb)	Notes
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10.0	0.54	Run 1
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## Synthesis & Diagnosis

- **Predator layer:** LMB size structure is broad with recurring 14–18" fish at middling weights, plus a clear quality top end ( $\geq 19"$ ). With shad now “exploding,” growth potential is excellent through 2025–26 if we avoid over-thinning predators.
- **SMB:** Still a minor component but capable of trophy individuals; treat as a boutique bonus fish unless recruitment strengthens.
- **Walleye:** Above-average spring encounter rate and condition; this species is tracking well and fits angling goals.
- **Crappie/YP:** Moderate crappie presence to 12"; perch present but sparse—both likely to benefit from shad and from targeted harvest discipline.
- **Forage: Gizzard shad** appear to be surging—this is the single biggest tailwind for bass and walleye growth in the near term. Keep monitoring to ensure they serve growth (not suppression) dynamics.

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## Management Recommendations (2025–2026)

### 1. Stocking (2025)

- **Largemouth Bass:** *Light genetic/top-off only* — ~5 per acre of 6–8" fish (3,000 fish total, \$3.78 each) this year. Rationale: leverage the shad bloom with a modest cohort; too many new bass would dilute growth.
- **Walleye:** Allocate the remaining 2025 budget to walleye (5-8" \$2.27 each); this has been performing and provides high-value angling with minimal recruitment risk.

### 2. Optional (late 2025 or 2026)

- Consider Tiger Muskie, Hybrid Striped Bass or Blue Catfish if we feel necessary.

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## Conclusions & Next Steps

The Oak Run fishery is in very good condition, with strong predator survival and excellent forage (shad). Largemouth bass are well represented and responding well to tagging and recapture. Smallmouth bass, while fewer, are healthy and should be monitored to determine whether supplemental stocking is necessary.

Crappie and perch are present in modest numbers, while walleye are performing strongly and should be a continued management focus.

### **Recommended next steps (2025–2026):**

1. Stock ~3,000 largemouth bass (6–8") this year for \$3.78 each.
2. Use the remainder of the 2025 budget for walleye stocking 5-8" \$2.27 each.
3. Consider tiger muskie, hybrid striped bass, or blue cats as future bonus predators if balance is maintained.
4. Continue tagging and recapture surveys to track survival and growth.

With this strategy, Oak Run will continue to develop into a highly productive, multi-species fishery with excellent angling opportunities. Please let us know if you need anything at all!

Sincerely,

**Austin Bennett**

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