



Powell River 2009

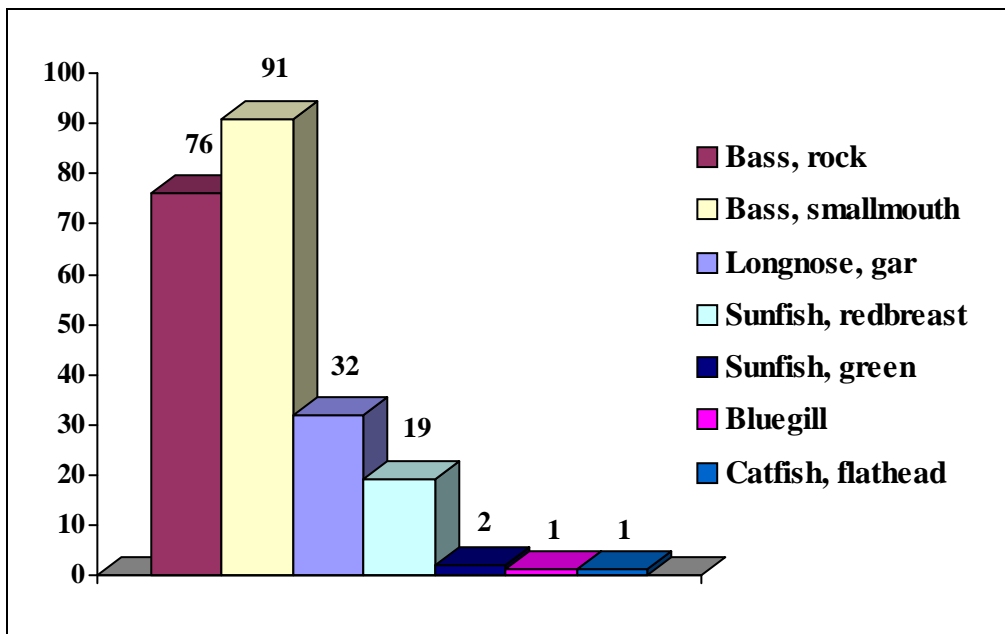
Introduction

The headwaters of the Powell River are located in Wise County, Virginia, and the river flows approximately 80 miles through Wise and Lee counties before entering the state of Tennessee. In 2008 the river was sampled in Lee County to evaluate the fishery. Samples were collected using an electrofishing boat at sites between river miles 150 and 167 in Virginia. A complete sport fish community sample was made.

General Sport Fishery

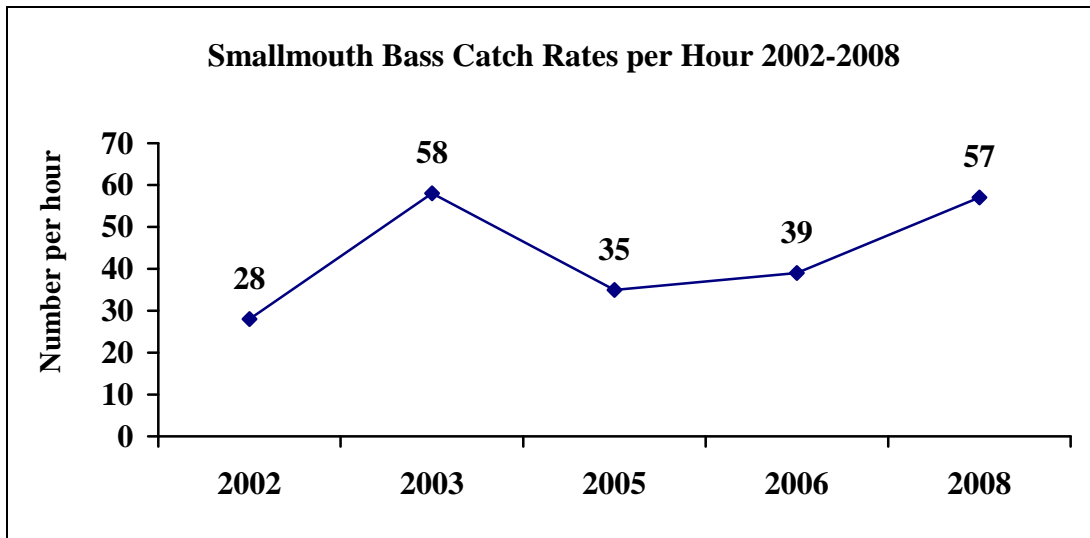
The Powell River supports several sport fish species like smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, spotted bass, rock bass, sunfish, walleye, sauger, musky, channel catfish and freshwater drum. Channel catfish, walleye and muskie are stocked annually, when available, to enhance these fisheries while populations of the other species remain stable. The following report summarizes the 2008 collections of smallmouth bass, rock bass and redbreast sunfish that make up 84% of the total sport fish catch as well as future management activities planned for the Powell River.

2008 Sport Fish Catch Powell River



Smallmouth Bass Fishery

Average catch rates for smallmouth bass were 57 per hour in 2008 (standard deviation 19.0, range 36-88 / hr.) up slightly from 2006. The average size of adult smallmouth bass within the population remains small at 245 mm or 9.6 inches (n = 44, standard deviation 49.6 mm, range 186-400 mm).

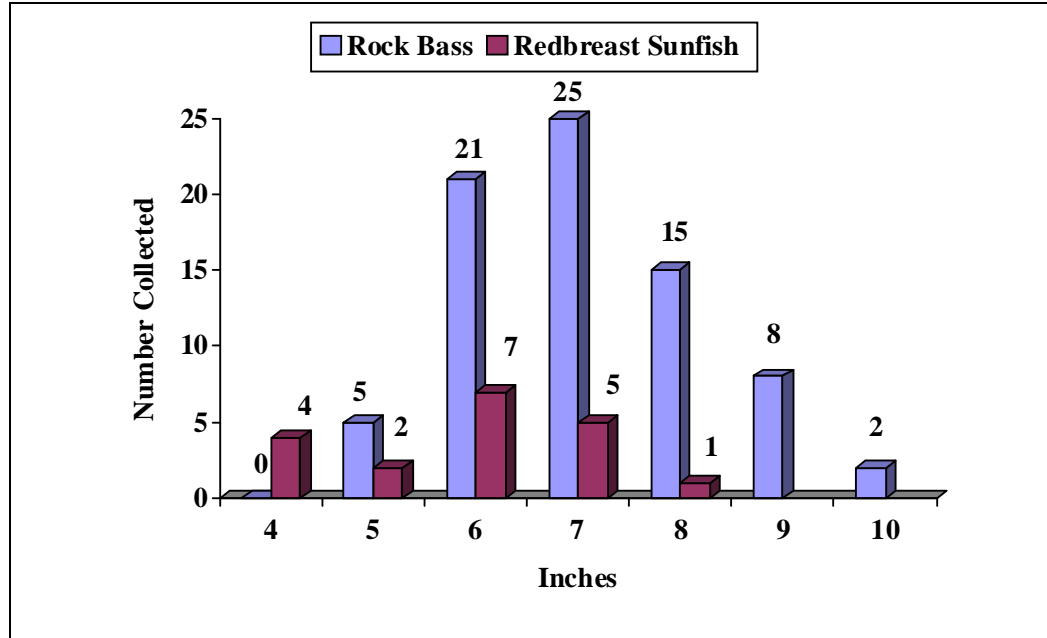


In 2008 the PSD (Proportional Stock Density is an index that measures the percentage of adult fish that are 280 mm (11 inches) or larger in the population) for smallmouth bass did not exceed 20, which means that only 20% of the smallmouth bass in the population sampled are ≥ 280 mm (11 inches). Body condition of smallmouth bass is measured by relative weight (Wr). Relative weight is an index of the fatness or plumpness of a fish. When a fish is in a good condition or good health the relative weight is measured close to 100. When relative weights are well below 100 the fish may have trouble feeding, causing the body condition to be less. Smallmouth bass condition has remained similar in 2002 - 2008. The following tables summarize the condition and relative weight for the sampling years.

Common Name:	Year:	N:	PSD:	Wr
Bass, smallmouth	2002	70	22	94.7
Bass, smallmouth	2003	187	23	93.9
Bass, smallmouth	2005	112	22	90.2
Bass, smallmouth	2006	97	14	88.1
Bass, smallmouth	2008	91	20	99.0

Rock Bass & Redbreast Sunfish Fishery

Rock bass were the second most abundant species collected in 2008. Average rock bass catch rates for 7 samples collected were 48 fish per hour (standard deviation 27.5/hr, range 12-88/hr.). The average size of rock bass within the population was 179 mm or 7 inches (n = 76, standard deviation 29.3 mm, range 127-250 mm). Redbreast sunfish were less abundant with a total of 19 collected in 7 samples. The following graph shows the catch of rock bass and redbreast sunfish in 2008 samples.



In 2008, 21,500 walleye fingerlings were stocked, and this stocking will be evaluated in spring 2009. In addition, channel catfish and muskie were stocked in 2008. In 2009, walleye, muskie and channel catfish have been requested for stocking.

Fishing the Powell in 2009

The Powell River will provide a variety of good fishing opportunities in 2009 if flows increase. The river has an abundance of redbreast sunfish, rock bass and smallmouth bass. Anglers may also catch a few spotted bass, channel catfish and muskie. There are few public access points on the Powell River, so anglers are encouraged to obtain landowner permission when accessing the river from private lands.

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