



FISHERIES WARMWATER STREAM RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

REGION 5	AREA Lake City	STREAM NAME Middle Fork Zumbro	TRIBUTARY NO. M-34-56	LENGTH 34.9 mi.
COUNTY Olmsted		WATERSHED NAME, NO. Zumbro River - 41	SOURCE (T.R.S) T108N R18W S30	MOUTH (T.R.S) 108N 15W S12

DATE(S) OF ASSESSMENT: Angling: 9/3 and 9/9/2003

ASSESSMENT PURPOSE: Reconnaissance to assess smallmouth bass size structure through angling.

LOCATIONS/STREAM MILES:

Similar reaches and specific sampling locations are labeled in the Discussion and Summaries of this report.

Discussion of the fishery (angler/s):

From upstream working downstream:

Mile 20.6 – 18.5, from Concord to Berne (Schmidt, Binder): Substrate in this station was mostly crumbled slabs of limestone. Creek chub and common shiner were common to abundant. Crayfish, though not seen, were probably present. Water level was extremely low, and pools were nearly isolated by trickling riffles. Smallmouth habitat was good to excellent but would have been better with more water. The largest, deepest pools held the largest bass. Several pools were actually slow runs of about 1.5 feet deep. The substrate in these runs was sand, and there was little or no fish cover. Overall, most smallmouth bass collected were plump and in very good physical condition.

Mile 5.9 – 0.0, from the Lake Shady Dam downstream to Sandy Point on Lake Zumbro (Schmidt, Hoxmeier): This reach was similar to the reach immediately below the Mayowood Lake Dam on the South Fork Zumbro in terms of water clarity. Lake Shady, like Mayowood, degrades water quality. Brown/green water persisted to Lake Zumbro, improving only slightly moving downstream. Many areas of deepwater runs and pools exceeding 5 feet were sampled. The catch probably represents smallmouth bass size structure but not abundance as many areas could not be thoroughly sampled due to time constraints. Another similarity of this reach to the South Fork Zumbro was the number and size of white bass caught (40-50, 8 to 12-inch fish). The presence of white bass is very encouraging since a 1997 fish kill in this portion of the Zumbro appeared to have negatively impacted the white bass population.

Stream: Middle Fork Zumbro

Date: September, 2003

SMALLMOUTH BASS SAMPLING SUMMARY

Station*	1	2				
Gear	Anolina	Anolina				
Date	9/3/03	9/9/03				
Location (Mile)	5.9-0.0	22.2-18.5				
Location (Description)	From the Lake Shady Dam, downstream to the Sandy Point Public Access on Lake Zumbro. **	From Concord, downstream to Berne.				
Effort (Angler-hrs)	13.0	5.25				
Smallmouth bass >5"	34	51				
CPE (Fish/AnHr)	2.6	9.7				

* Station numbers used for this Recon only.

** The lowest 2 miles were not fished.

SMALLMOUTH BASS LENGTH FREQUENCIES:

Station	1	2					Total
Length (inches)							
4							
5	1						1
6	4	2					6
7	2	8					10
8	7	12					19
9	5	12					17
10	6	9					15
11	3	6					9
12		2					2
13	2						2
14	1						1
15	1						1
16	1						1
17	1						1
18							
Total	34	51					85
Median	9.0	8.5					---
Mean	9.6	8.9					9.2

SUMMARY:

Similar to the South Fork Zumbro and SBMF Zumbro, the MF Zumbro smallmouth bass population is generally comprised of fish less than 10 inches. As expected, station 1, representing the reach from the Shady Lake Dam downstream to Lake Zumbro had a higher number of larger smallmouth bass. This is most likely due to winter habitat available in Lake Zumbro. A total of 7.6 miles of river was sampled, with 85 smallmouth bass caught. Average number of smallmouth caught per angler hour was 6.2. Stations 1 and 2 are separated by Lake Shady. Smallmouth bass in station 2 do not have ideal winter habitat available. Large, deep pools with little or no current are rare and may be lacking all together if

flood conditions do not occur from time to time. Several quality pools noted in the 2000 reconnaissance had been filled at the time of this survey. A large, deepwater seine was used in November 2003 to determine winter habitat usage near the lower end of the stream and in Lake Shady. Although the seine was difficult to operate, two hauls were completed in areas where smallmouth were expected to be – none were caught.

Credits and Signatures:

Field Crew: Al Schmidt, Randy Binder and John Hoxmeier

Report Completed by: Al Schmidt

APPROVED BY:

Area Supervisor's Signature

Regional Fisheries Manager's Signature

Date