

My boys and I met Tony Havranek yesterday (April 20, 2015) and successfully radio tagged 7 carp and marked (fin clipped) ~300 other carp that were all released back into the lake. I have attached several pictures I took of the event. We tested all 7 of the radio transmitters after they were implanted. There were a couple of interesting observations we made throughout the day. First, Tony was a bit surprised of the size and health of the carp in Circle Lake. All of the carp that were caught were over 10 pounds. I would estimate that they averaged around 15 pounds and were quite healthy. Of the 300+ fish that were in the seine, there was only two game fish – two largemouth bass. This may be because the seine was located in shallow water, but I still thought it was an interesting statistic. Of the 7 carp that were tagged, there was only 1 male and the rest females that were obviously full of eggs. As we were working, Tony told me about another project he is working on in Wisconsin, where a local tribe is using the same methods to remove carp from a wild rice lake. They are in their third year of the project and have removed over 600,000 pounds of carp. They have been able to recover 200 acres of wild rice beds that were previously destroyed by the carp and have seen significant water quality improvements. They have made this progress through radio tagging/removing carp and stocking and increasing Bluegill habitat.

Tony adjusted the radio tags to utilize a built in feature that shuts them off at night time. This will help conserve battery life and ensure our tags are operational for the duration of the project. Over the next couple of weeks, as the water temperatures begin to rise, Tony will come out and track the 7 tagged fish to ensure that there are no mortalities. He said that he has tagged over 100 carp in the past years and has only lost 2.

The next step of the project is to monitor the carp throughout the spawning season to help determine where they are going to spawn. In the fall, we will implant the remaining 5 radio tags to monitor the winter aggregation and pinpoint the area that will be used for the removal seining. Tony is working to cultivate a good relationship with Mike and Jim Mertens, which will help ensure we have their support next winter. Mike Mertens supported this effort by seining the 300+ carp that Tony and I marked. I will be attending the meeting tonight and will be prepared to provide a project summary and answer any questions from the group.

Thanks,
Jason Wood

