



OK-AFS

POND MANAGEMENT 101



Professor Bass sez...

**There are three steps
in managing a fishery**

1. Set Goals -

What do you want from the pond?



2. Evaluate the Resource -

What have you got now?



3. Using the tools in our toolbox –

Get where you want to go





GOALS?

**Largemouth
Bass**

Bluegill



Channel Catfish

Trophy Bass!



Striped Bass Hybrids

Crappie



**Rainbow
Trout**



New or Reclaimed Ponds

- **Free fish from ODWC**
 - **1/2 Acre minimum size**
 - **10 Acre maximum numbers**
 - **No existing fish population**
 - **Must allow Game Warden access**
- **Purchase fish from commercial producers**
 - **Follow OKAFS/ODWC recommendations**
 - **<http://www.oda.state.ok.us/forms/ais/ais-aqua.pdf>**

500/Acre



100/Acre



**100/Acre one
year later**



Existing Ponds with Fish Populations



Population Assessment



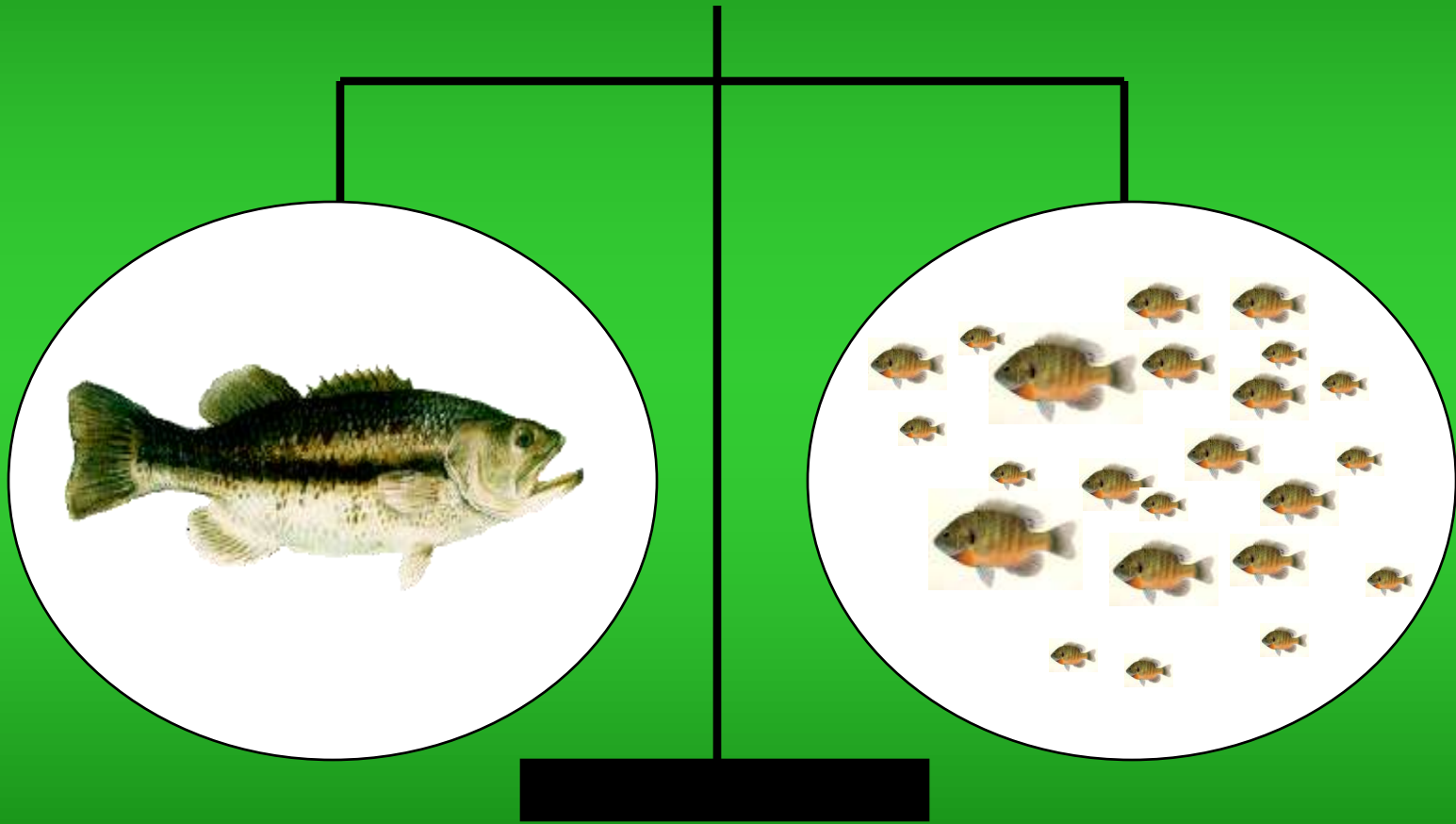
- **What Species are Present?**
- **How Many?**
- **What Sizes?**
- **What Condition?**

Record Keeping....

Measure and record



Balance



Predators

vs.

Prey

- **Balanced Population**
- **Crowded Bass**
- **Crowded Bluegill**
- **Abundant Trash Fish**

Balanced Population

- **Bass from 8" to over 15" with 2/3 over 12" and seine samples showing fingerling survival**
- **Bluegills from 4" to 8" with 1/2 over 6" and seine samples showing ample reproduction**

Maintain current strategy –

**Whatever you are doing is
working so keep it up!**

- **Balanced Population**
- **Crowded Bass**
- **Crowded Bluegill**
- **Abundant Trash Fish**

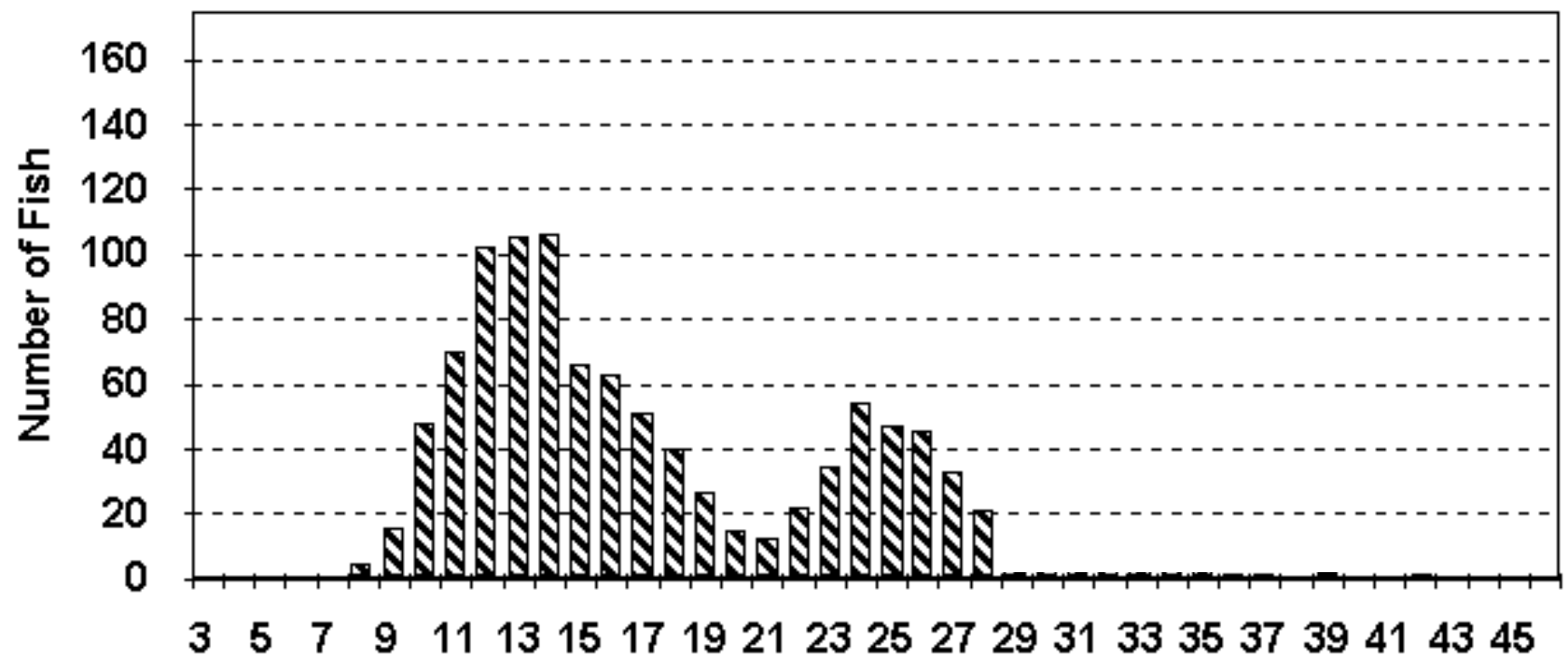
Crowded Bass

- **Bass are very abundant with few over 12” and they are thin**
- **Bluegill are low in numbers but may be very large with most over 6” long**



Catch and Release can be your worst enemy - more harvest is needed







Catch and Grease!

- **Balanced Population**
- **Crowded Bass**
- **Crowded Bluegill**
- **Abundant Trash Fish**

Crowded Bluegill

- **Bass are large but low numbers**
- **Bluegill are very, very abundant but most are 3" to 5"**



**Corrective stocking with adult bass –
try to regain predator-prey balance**

Caution!!!

Do NOT transplant bass from public lakes and reservoirs – you may be moving diseases that could harm your bass population

- **Balanced Population**
- **Crowded Bass**
- **Crowded Bluegill**
- **Abundant Trash Fish**

• **Abundant Trash Fish**

- **Bass are few but large**
- **Bluegill are small and thin**
- **Green sunfish, carp, shad, stunted crappie, gar, etc.**



**Reclaim or drain and start over
is usually the easiest thing to do**

Habitat Enhancement

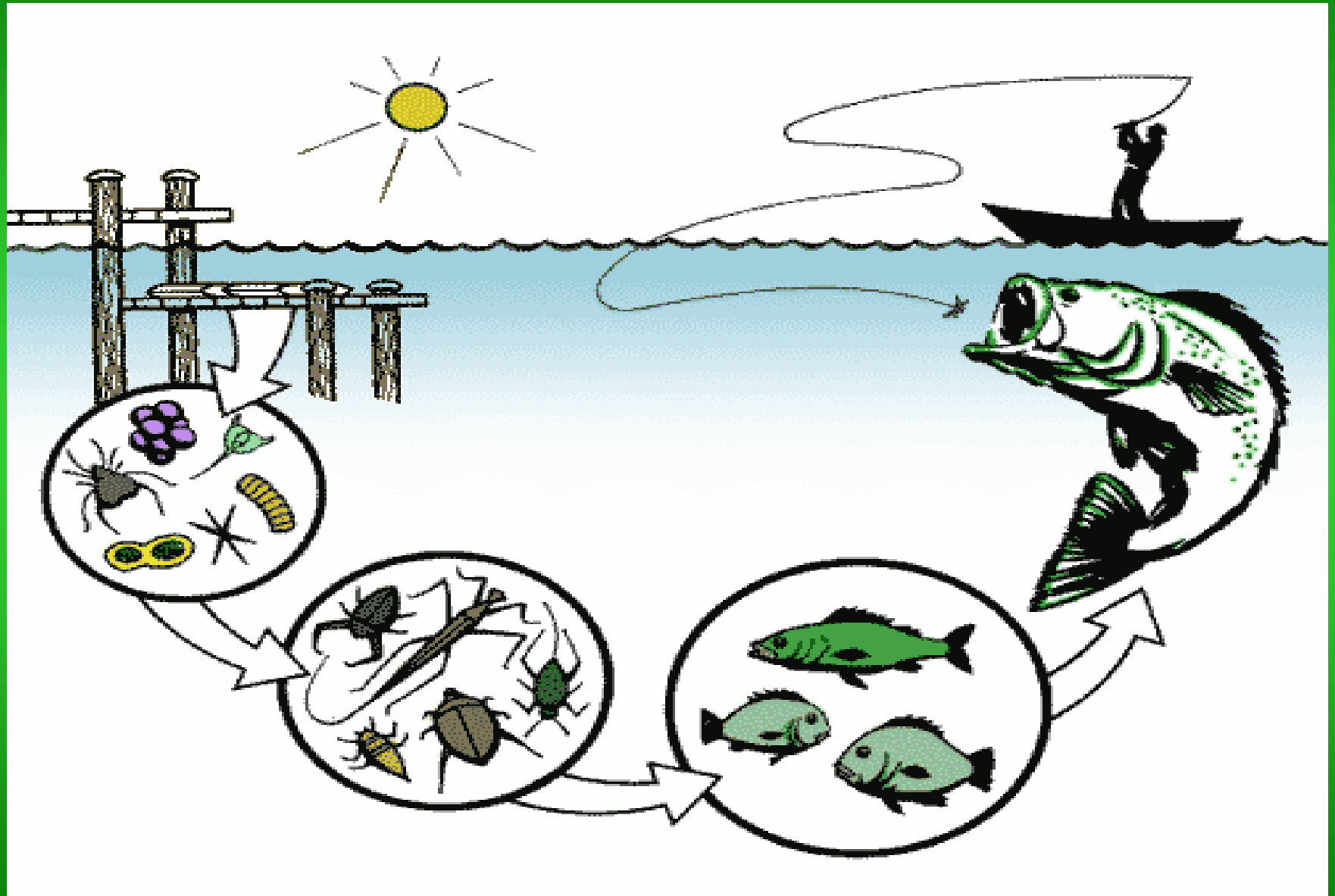




Aquatic Vegetation?

- **Submersed plants should occupy no more than 10-15% of the surface area of the pond**
- **Excess vegetation provide too much escape cover for prey fish**
- **Too little and there is no nursery cover for young bass**

Fertilization Option







Clearing muddy ponds with gypsum or hay



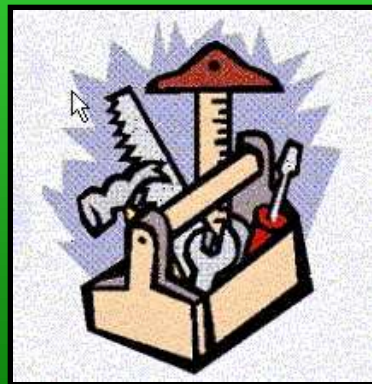
Goals



Assessment



Strategies



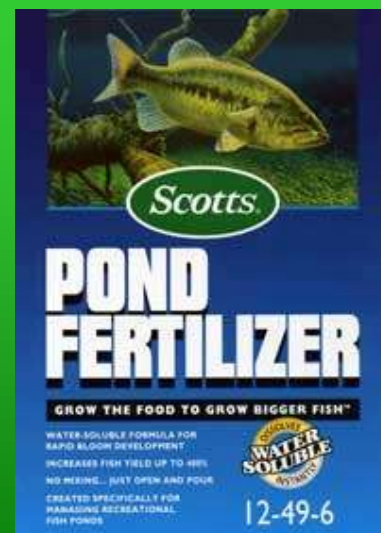
Stocking



Harvest



Habitat Enhancement





Questions?

**405-521-3721
for the name
and number of
your nearest
ODWC biologist**