SEPOND
SOUTHEASTERN POND MANAGEMENT

Management Plan For

LAKE CAMERON

April 6, 2026

INTRODUCTION

As an integral part of the ongoing management program for Lake Cameron, Southeastern Pond Management conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the 200 acre impoundment on April 15, 2026. A representative sample of the fish community was collected by electrofishing to accurately assess the present state of balance. In addition, a water chemistry test was conducted to determine total alkalinity. The degree of aquatic weed infestation was also recorded. Results of the assessments provide the basis for this management plan.

LAKE ASSESSMENT

The aquatic environment of Lake Cameron is in excellent condition, as usual. Water chemistry is in the ideal range. At the time of this evaluation visit, the lake was free and clear of any aquatic weeds or filamentous algae.

Water hyacinth has been in Lake Cameron. This invasive exotic weed is a warm/hot season plant and is typically only active during the warm summer months. If it is still present, continue to control/eradicate it as much as possible. It can be manually removed or treated with herbicide—the aquatic formulation of 2,4-D is very effective on water hyacinth.

FISHERY ASSESSMENT

During this evaluation, we shocked up, collected and/or observed bass, bluegill, shellcrackers, black crappie, channel catfish and gizzard shad. **No threadfin shad** were turned up during this evaluation.

Bluegill and shellcrackers were shocked up and observed in good numbers, as usual. Several large active shellcracker spawning beds were observed, with exceptionally large shellcrackers turned up—a 1.75 lb shellcracker was collected.

Largemouth bass were shocked up, observed and collected in good abundance and across a healthy range of sizes (Figure 3, next page). The largest bass collected in this evaluation was 7 pounds (cover photo) but no larger bass were collected. The bass continue to grow and progress—note the greater abundance of 16-17" bass this year compared to last year.

Small, sub-quality bass remain in low abundance, such that harvest of small bass is still not necessary or recommended at this time.

The **average relative weight (Wr)** of adult bass in our most recent sample additionally reflects little change over last year. This year's average relative weight was **99**, as compared to last year, which was **101** (Figure 4). This is not truly statistically different and could be explained by simply day to day sampling variation. Overall and in general, the bass are fat, chunky and in good condition.

Several large crappie were shocked up with the largest just under two pounds (cover photo). Some small crappie—3-5"- were observed, indicating successful reproduction and adult recruitment going forward.

Channel catfish are still present in appreciable numbers and should be harvested out as much as possible.

The **decline in the threadfin shad population** is due to **cormorant and pelican predation** through the winter. Cormorants and pelicans are voracious fish eating birds and are particularly harmful to the threadfin shad, which travel in dense schools and are especially vulnerable to bird predators. Cormorants and pelicans are migratory waterfowl and, as such, are protected by federal migratory waterfowl laws. Unfortunately, there are no truly efficient, effective deterrent methods to keep cormorants and pelicans off the lake.

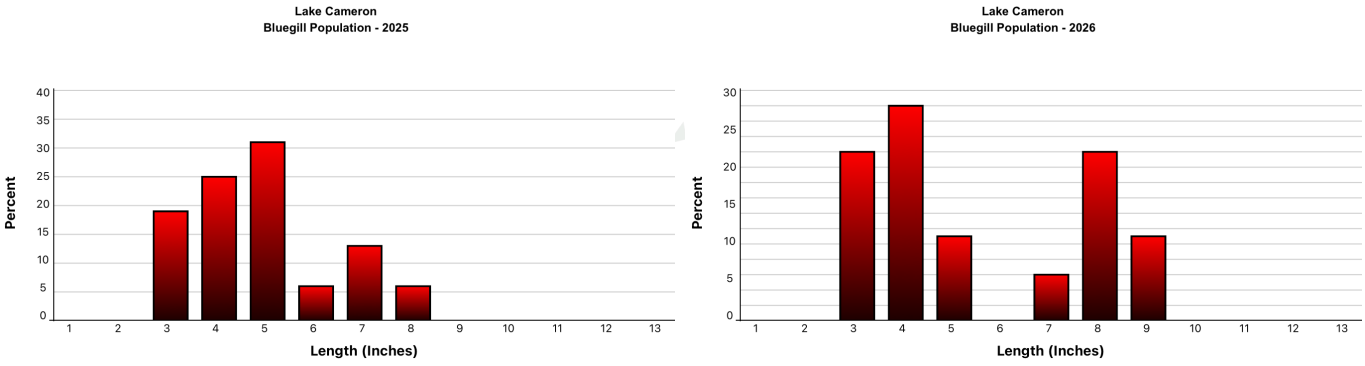

Figure 2. Comparison of the length distribution of bluegill collected from Lake Cameron in April 2025 and April 2026.

FISHERY ASSESSMENT

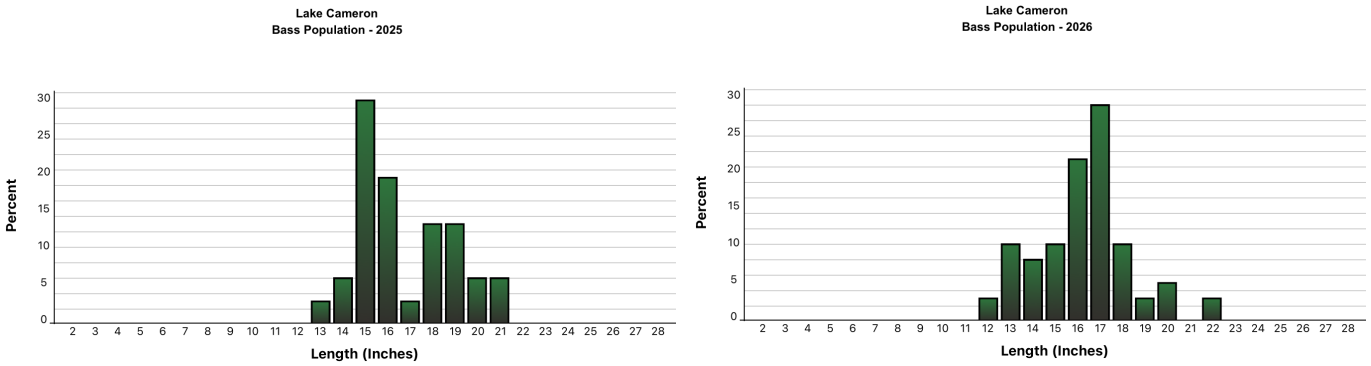

Figure 3. Comparison of the length distribution of bass collected in Lake Cameron in April 2025 and April 2026.

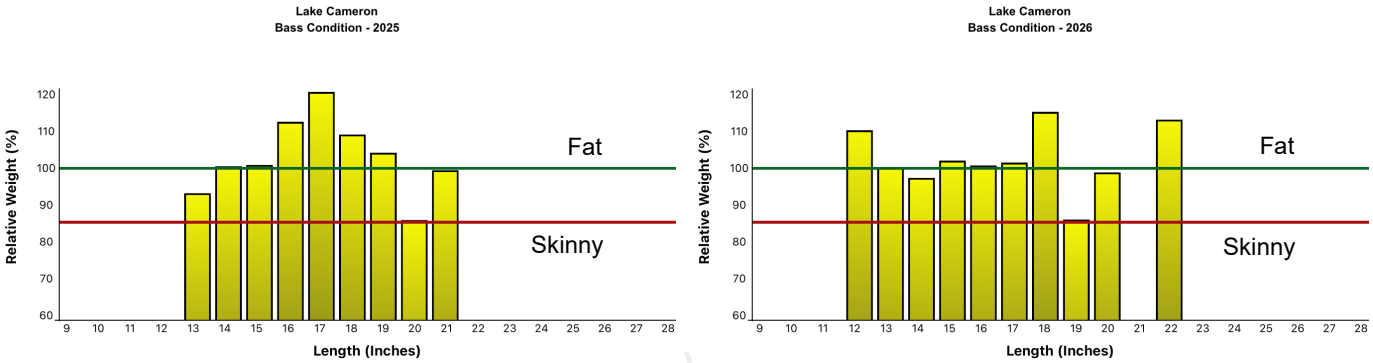

Figure 4. Relative weight distribution of adult largemouth bass collected from Lake Cameron in April 2025 and April 2026.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Lake Cameron's fish population is currently in good condition. The bass continue to grow and progress. The currently present good abundance of quality size bass in the 16-17" range bodes well for the future, as those fish grow into the large/trophy size class. No bass harvest is needed at this time. The only concern is the scarcity of threadfin shad this year compared to recent years. All other aspects remain status quo.

Continue NO bass harvest. Fish for fun, catch-and-release as much as desired.

Stock threadfin shad this spring.

Continue channel catfish harvest without limit.

Observe a conservative limit on adult crappie harvest.

The management activities we recommend over the course of the next twelve months are listed in the following pages. In an effort to assist in the prioritization of these management inputs, we have developed a simple color-coding system. You will note this system in the bottom right-hand corner of the respective Management Recommendations to follow:

LEVEL 1 Highest priority. Generally, require immediate attention.

LEVEL 2 Secondary in importance to Level 1. Directed toward achieving your stated management objectives.

LEVEL 3 Increase enjoyment and/or functionality of your pond but have less impact on the overall management program.

THREADFIN SHAD

SPRING 2026

COST: $ 2,000.00/load

Current Status: Awaiting Owner Approval

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Declined** ☐ **Done**

Date Approved: _____

Date Done: _____

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY:
Stock 5 loads (~50,000) of adult threadfin shad

LEVEL 1