

## GUIDELINES FOR HARVESTING FISH IN DEER LAKE

After the rebuilding of the dam in April 2001, Deer Lake was stocked with 565 hybrid bluegills, 225 largemouth bass, 200 redear sunfish and 150 trout. This stocking was according to recommendations from the *Pond Management Guide* of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. In November of 2006 200 12-16 inch rainbow trout were also introduced.

The objective is to maintain a balance between predatory (bass) and prey (sunfish.) To prevent overcrowding by one species or the other, fish populations must be monitored and harvested properly. Fish harvesting is an important factor in pond management when fish reproduce naturally as do our warm water species such as bass and sunfish. Trout normally do not reproduce in ponds.

### **Monitoring**

This is usually done by one of two methods: harvesting data from anglers (number of fish caught) and by seining. Once overcrowding is discovered, it can usually be corrected by removing more of one species or adding more of the other. If overcrowding persists, the lake may have to be drained, poisoned with rotenone and restocked with correct bass-to-bluegill ratio. Correcting an unbalanced fish population is a lot more trouble than keeping it in balance from the start. For this reason it is important to keep undesirable species such as other sunfish, crappies, bullheads, carp, suckers, shad and shiners out of the pond. **LIVE MINNOWS SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR BAIT.** Prevention is much easier than the cure!

### **Fish Harvesting Regulations**

**Proper harvesting is an important factor in lake management**

**Bass**                      **No limit over 12 inches. All bass under 12 inches should be carefully returned to the pond.**

**Bluegills  
& Redears**              **No limit on these sunfish.**

**Trout**                      **One trout per day per person.**

**These limits are subject to change as changes in fish populations occur.**