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Abstract Submission

Symposium: Fish Under the Radar: Native, Non-game, and Taken for Granted [ID # [9468](https://afs.confex.com/afs/2020/webprogrampreliminary/Session9468.html)]

**Title:**

Population Characteristics of Commercially Harvested Bigmouth Buffalo in NW Iowa Lakes

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**Abstract:**

Bigmouth Buffalo (*Ictiobus cyprinellus*) are native to the Missouri and Mississippi River drainages from Louisiana to Alberta, Canada, and are commercially harvested across the Midwest United States and sold for human consumption in large metropolitan areas. However, little known about how commercial harvest of this species affects population characteristics. Fish may compensate for harvest through multiple pathways including increased natural survival, increased recruitment, or increases to individual growth and condition. We examined how these factors that may compensate for harvest changed in response to variable exploitation rates where Bigmouth Buffalo were tagged at six lakes in northwest Iowa. Tags returned from commercial harvesters generally showed exploitation rates between 0% and 30% per year. Each of the potential ways fish populations can compensate for harvest were variable between lakes, changes in