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City of N.P.  
Lake Killarney

## Lake Killarney to Get 4,500 Bass

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In an effort to improve fishing satisfaction for the state's anglers, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFC) is preparing to stock Lake Killarney in Orange County with about 4,500 Phase II largemouth bass. Phase II bass measure between 8-12 inches in length.

"The goal of this project is to increase the numbers of adult bass in lakes that have degraded habitat, poor reproduction and survival during the bass's first year of life. In healthy lakes, reproduction, survival and growth occur naturally and such measures are not needed," said Sam McKinney, fisheries biologist for GFC's Central Region.

The experimental stocking will take place on Thursday, Nov. 9 in the 237 acre lake located in Winter Park. Although the lake has no public access biologists chose it because it meets the necessary criteria.

"Lake Killarney, as well as Lake Seminole in Pinellas County, were chosen because of the near absence of the size of fish to be stocked, the size of the lakes and the fact that they have an adequate food base to support the hatchery-raised bass," said McKinney. "If the bass survive and grow under these controlled conditions, we

hope to conduct similar experimental stocking in lakes where the fish are more apt to be caught and released by anglers. This will tell us if being caught and released causes unacceptably high mortality rates."

The bass, which were hatched in April at GFC's Richloam Fish Hatchery in Sumpter County, have been raised on commercial fish pellets and have grown to between 8-12 inches in about seven months.

"Raising bass on the commercial fish pellets is economical and allows the fish to grow larger much faster than bass in the wild, which would only grow 3-4 inches during the same time period," McKinney said. "This is another tool we may be able to use to help increase the bass population in areas where habitat management is not an option."

For the past several weeks, biologists have been introducing live food to some of the bass to acclimate them to their new food source. McKinney said he doesn't think the bass will have much of a problem adjusting to their new environment.