

Bass Anglers Information Team

2017

Annual Report



84 North Union Street, Suite 551, Montgomery, Alabama 36130

B.A.I.T.
Bass Anglers Information Team
2017
Annual Report



By

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Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

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www.outdooralabama.com/fishing/freshwater-fishing-creel-and-size-limits

Freshwater Boating Access...

boatramps.dcnr.alabama.gov

Tournament Listings...

www.outdooralabama.com/tournaments

Interactive map with habitat structure locations & more...

conservationgis.alabama.gov/dcnr/



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2017 B.A.I.T. Summary

Bass fishing in the State of Alabama has remained excellent for the past several years. During 2017, four of five quality indicators improved over the previous year (Average Bass Weight: increased 3%, Percent Success: increased 0.23%, Bass/Angler-Day: remained at 3.5, Pounds/Angler-Day: increased 2.4%, and Hours to catch a 5lb. Bass decreased 13%). All five quality indicator values (percent success, average weight, number of bass per angler-day, pounds per angler-day and number of hours to catch a 5 pounder) were better than the 30 year average. The number of 8 lb. bass caught increased from 25 in 2016, to 29 in 2017, despite the fact that the number of fishing hours decreased by 28%. Although the larger Tennessee River impoundments have always been traditional angler favorites, Wilson has turned the most heads recently, finishing No. 1 overall the past four years in the Quality Indicator Ranking. Jordan was 2nd overall, jumping up from last year where it ranked 12th overall.

- *Wilson* remained on top in the overall quality indicator rankings.
- *Jordan* and *Millers Ferry* both showed considerable improvement in the quality indicator rankings, both moving up 10 spots. The *Mobile Delta* also moved up 8 spots while *Smith* (down 15), *Weiss* (down 6) and *Logan Martin* (down 6) fell in the overall rankings.
- *Wilson, Jordan, Mitchell, Millers Ferry and Wheeler* were the top five lakes in the overall quality indicator rankings.
- *Pickwick, Wilson, Eufaula, Guntersville and Wheeler* were the top five big bass lakes in Alabama.

2017 Statewide B.A.I.T. Statistics

14.35 – Average winning weight (5 fish)
3.47 – Number of bass caught per angler-day
7.46 – Pounds of bass caught per angler-day
2.16 – Average weight of bass caught
229 – Hours required to catch a 5 pound bass
10.92 – Weight of the largest bass caught
29 – Number of bass 8 pounds and larger
419 – Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

Introduction & Methods

The printing of the 2017 B.A.I.T. Annual Report marks the 32nd year of the B.A.I.T. Program. The objective of the program since its inception has been to gather information on bass populations by combining the efforts of bass club members and state fisheries biologists. The B.A.I.T. Program summarizes catch data on reservoir bass populations that are collected and provided to us by participating clubs. This information is used by state fisheries biologists in combination with data from other sources as a basis for fisheries management decisions. Bass anglers use the report to establish future tournament sites, or to locate a reservoir that provides a particular type of fishing.

Through 2017, we have summarized 15,117 tournament reports. Anglers have spent 3,476,340 hours collecting data for this program. They have contributed data from 928,561 bass that weighed 1,748,989 pounds.

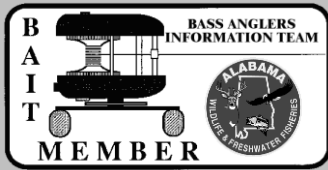
This report also contains information related to the Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries' Boating Access Maintenance and Development Program which maintains 114 boating access areas statewide. Information regarding the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Team (HEART) program is also included. The accomplishments made by these programs during 2017 may be of particular interest to tournament bass anglers and their organizations.

Every year, we attempt to maintain the support of the previous year's clubs and to enlist the support of new clubs through public meetings, news releases and letters. Participating club officers or tournament directors are sent the previous year's annual report and tournament report postcards to be completed following each tournament. Clubs are assigned individual numbers to insure confidentiality. As tournament cards are received, they are checked

for accuracy and entered into a computer database. Club officers are contacted when data are suspected to be erroneous. We compile and analyze the data following receipt of December tournament reports. Statewide tournament results are sorted by reservoir and by club.

To rank reservoirs, five "fishing quality" indicators were used: percent of successful anglers (percent of anglers with one or more bass at weigh-in), average bass weight, number of bass per angler-day, pounds of bass per angler-day, and hours required to catch a bass five pounds or larger. Since the length of a fishing day varies between tournaments, an angler-day is defined as one angler fishing for ten hours. In this report, an angler-day may simply be referred to as a "day" of fishing. A minimum of five tournaments for an individual reservoir is considered necessary for minimum confidence in each reservoir dataset. Reservoirs with five or more tournament reports are ranked for each of the quality indicators. Values are assigned to each rank and an overall rank is determined for each reservoir by summing the values of the five quality indicators. This ranking system is intended to be a quick reference for club tournament site selection. It does not constitute a "best and worst" list of Alabama reservoirs and should not be interpreted that way.

Tournament results were also broken down by month for each reservoir with 10 or more reports. This section was intended to aid clubs in scheduling tournaments since the quality of fishing can vary considerably from one season to the next on any given reservoir. It also allows anglers to better understand their chances of achieving a particular goal (i.e., catching a big bass) on a given lake by studying in detail how anglers performed during each month of the year. When studying this section of the report, be aware that some months are represented by only one tournament, which may not be a good indicator of the overall quality of fishing during that month.

		<h2>B.A.I.T. TOURNAMENT REPORT</h2>																																									
Club name:	Backlash Bass Club	Club rep.:	Damon Abernethy																																								
Street:	64 N. Union St.	Phone:	555-555-5555																																								
City:	Montgomery	Reservoir:	Jordan																																								
State:	AL	Zip:	36104																																								
Launch site:	Bonners Point																																										
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Total number of anglers and/or teams:		12																																									
Total number of bass caught:		45																																									
No. of anglers/teams with 1 or more bass:		12																																									
Total number of bass released:		43																																									
No. of anglers/teams with limits:		6																																									
No. over 5 lbs: 2 ; over 8 lbs: 0																																											
Total weight of bass: 99.00 lbs. 2 oz.		Big bass weight: 10.00 lbs. 4 oz.																																									
Winning weight: 15.00 lbs. 6 oz.																																											

NOTE: Format should be: *TEAM, DRAW, or SOLO*
Weigh-in should be: *TEAM or INDIVIDUAL*

Example B.A.I.T. Report Card



Proceeds from the sale of each Freshwater Fishing license plate will be used to:

- Enhance and restore aquatic habitats
- Reestablish robust wild populations of threatened species
- Promote conservation education
- Support bass genetics research
- Fund fish disease research
- Minimize the damage caused by invasive species
- Produce fish for stocking in public waters

**Purchase Your
Freshwater Fishing
License Plate
TODAY!**



Visit our website at
www.outdooralabama.com
for details.

Statewide Tournament Results

Bass clubs submitted 339 tournament reports during 2017, down from 466 in 2016 (Tables 1 and 3). Club representatives did a fine job filling out the cards and no reports were rejected due to incomplete or erroneous information. We want to thank the participants of the B.A.I.T. Program and urge them to keep up the good work! Forty-four clubs provided data in 2017. Forty-nine reports from Alabama

waters were received from Fisheries Biologist Clint Peacock of Georgia DNR, who summarizes tournament data from the Georgia Bass Federation; and another 46 reports were received from Fisheries Biologist Stan Crider, with the Mississippi Department

of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. Without their support, several Alabama reservoirs would not have been well represented in the quality indicator rankings (Table 2). Once again, we must stress that reports from more locations increase the capability of the summaries to reflect actual fish population conditions and not just a good or poor day's fishing by one or two clubs.

In 2017, tournament reports were received from 30 bodies of water that were fished 105,114 hours. B.A.I.T. anglers caught 36,784 bass that weighed 79,296 lbs. (Table 1). A total of 419 bass five pounds and larger were reported for an overall catch rate of

one bass five pounds or larger for every 229 hours of fishing. Tournament anglers weighed in 29 bass eight pounds and larger in 2017. The largest bass caught in 2017 came from Pickwick, and weighed 10.92 pounds. With 115 bass weighing five pounds or larger, Pickwick led this category. Eufaula was next in line with 100 big bass over five pounds.

Of the 44 organizations that submitted data during 2017, 60% submitted five or more tournament reports, and 30% submitted 10 or more reports. Twelve contributors submitted only one report. A list of contributing clubs for the 2017 B.A.I.T. Report is presented in Table 4.

Average catch rates in 2017 for number of fish caught per angler/day (3.5) mirrored 2016's value, while pounds per angler/day increased 0.2 from 2016. Compared to 2016, fifteen lakes improved in overall fishing success in 2017. Most notably, Jordan and Millers Ferry each move up 10 spots into the top 5 in the overall rankings (Table 2). The Mobile Delta moved up 8 spots overall, and ranked 2nd for the number of bass per angler/day. Pounds

per angler/day caught from the Delta (8.23) this year was 46% above the 32 year average. Average weights for Jordan (2.51 lbs.), Martin (1.64 lbs.), and Pickwick (2.81 lbs.) all reached record highs. The statewide average weight was 2.16 lbs.

CLUB	LAKE	DATE	No. ≥5lbs.
BFL Bama Division	Guntersville	Mar. 4	21
Hawg Wild Bass Tour	Eufaula	Mar. 4-5	15
Alabama BASS Nation	Eufaula	Mar. 11	15
Fishers of Men	Pickwick	Mar. 25	14
Alabama Bass Trail	Guntersville	Jun. 10	12
BFL Choo-Choo Division	Guntersville	Feb. 18	10
Alabama Bass Trail	Eufaula	Mar. 18	10
Ala-Tenn Bass Club	Wilson	Mar 11	9
Alabama Bass Nation	Guntersville	May 13	9
Boyd's Marine Tournament Trail	Eufaula	Mar. 4	8

Most 2017 reports were received from Pickwick (54), Mobile Delta (38), Eufaula (30) and Guntersville (27), accounting for 44% of reports. Martin had 23, while Jones Bluff, Lay, Logan Martin and Mitchell each had 14 or more reports (Table 1). The other 21 reservoirs contributed 31% of the total for 2017. A good distribution of reports provides more robust statistics from which accurate summaries can be prepared.

CLUB	LAKE	DATE	WEIGHT
BFL Bama Division	Guntersville	Mar. 4	40.69 lbs.
Alabama Bass Trail	Wheeler	Feb. 25	30.59 lbs.
Alabama Bass Trail	Guntersville	Jun. 10	30.45 lbs.
Fishers of Men	Pickwick	Mar. 4	30.07 lbs.
Pickwick Winter Bass Trail	Pickwick	May 20	29.35 lbs.
Alabama Bass Trail	Eufaula	Mar. 18	28.85 lbs.
Alabama Bass Federation	Guntersville	Feb. 25	28.56 lbs.
Pickwick Winter Bass Trail	Pickwick	Jan. 28	28.11 lbs.
Pickwick Winter Bass Trail	Pickwick	Dec. 16	26.52 lbs.
Pickwick Winter Bass Trail	Pickwick	Dec. 2	26.39 lbs.

All club representatives should understand that every report is important to the continued success of the B.A.I.T. Program.

Of the 30 reservoirs from which reports were received, 19 had five or more tournament

reports (Table 1). The following comments deal with these reservoirs, which are ranked by quality indicators in Table 2. The percent of successful anglers (those with one or more fish) ranged from 49% at Holt to 95% at Logan Martin. The average weight of bass caught ranged from 1.37 pounds at Bartlett's Ferry to 2.81 pounds at Pickwick (Table 1). Catch rates expressed as bass per angler-day ranged from 2.6 at Smith to 4.9 at Martin. Catch rates as pounds per angler-day ranged from 4.65 at Bartlett's Ferry to 11.1 at Jordan. The statewide average winning weight for a single day 5 fish sack was 14.35 pounds, up a half pound from last year.

Statewide Tournament Results

Overall, Wilson accumulated more quality indicator points (77) than any other reservoir in Alabama, keeping the top spot for the fourth consecutive year. Jordan (72), Mitchell (65), Millers Ferry (65), and Wheeler (64) rounded out the top five (Table 2).

Readers should note that the primary intent of Table 2 is not to determine the overall “best” reservoir, but to characterize the fishery of each reservoir. Anglers should first review the quality indicator that is most important to them. The overall rating would be used to narrow choices. For example, if an angler wanted to have the best chance to catch a bass greater than 5 pounds, then Pickwick, Wilson or Eufaula would be good choices. Clubs interested in having all its members catch good quality stringers would look at the pounds per angler-day rankings to find that Jordan, Wilson, and Millers Ferry offered the best opportunity. If catching lots of bass is important, then Martin, Mobile Delta, or Millers Ferry again might be the best destination based upon their bass per angler-day rankings.

Bass data, as expressed in the B.A.I.T. report from reservoirs with harvest restrictions or length limits, will be biased since the data is a function of the restrictions. Length limits are imposed to increase the number of fish below a minimum length or within a specified length range (slot limit) which should eventually result in a greater supply of bass above the limit. Because all minimum lengths and length ranges will be above the 12-inch limit self-imposed by most tournaments, the restrictions will reduce the total harvest in numbers and possibly pounds. However, those fish weighed in will be larger (longer) by virtue of the minimum length (MLL) or slot limit. In the B.A.I.T. Report, length limit lakes should rank high for average weight and near the bottom for percent success and bass per angler-day.

Length limits remained in effect during 2017 on West Point (14-inch MLL on largemouth), Eufaula (14-inch MLL on largemouth), Demopolis (14-inch MLL on all black bass), Little Bear Creek (13- to 16-inch slot on largemouth), Smith (13- to 15-inch slot on all black bass), Harris (13- to 16-inch slot on largemouth), Pickwick (15-in. MLL on largemouth or smallmouth bass), Wilson (15-in. MLL on smallmouth bass), Wheeler (15-in. MLL on smallmouth bass), and Guntersville (15-in. MLL on smallmouth and largemouth bass). No more than five of the daily creel limit of 10 black bass may be smallmouth bass.

The graphs throughout this report provide a historical record of how your favorite waters have performed in the B.A.I.T. Program. A few words of caution - these graphs are not restricted to bodies of water with five or more tournaments. Data points for some years may be represented by only a few tournaments. However, those situations are restricted to water bodies that have not been included in the quality indicator rankings in Table 2. These graphs can be used to predict future fishing quality by looking for trends.

Bass fishing in Alabama has been excellent in recent years. Members of the BAIT program have a unique opportunity to contribute valuable biological data that helps make our bass fishery one of the best in the country. BAIT members realize the value of this program, and we appreciate the individuals that provides their tournament catch data.

Good luck fishing, and don't forget to take a child with you and introduce him or her to your sport. They are our future anglers and stewards of Alabama's resources.

Lake Records Set in 2017 (32 Year History of B.A.I.T. Reporting)

(Lakes with 5 or more reports)

Waterbody	Record	2017 Value	Lake Average
Jones Bluff	Pounds Per Angler-day	7.95	4.49
Jordan	Average Weight	2.51	1.94
Jordan	Bass Per Angler-day	4.42	2.93
Jordan	Pounds Per Angler-day	11.10	5.71
Lay	Bass Per Angler-day	4.04	2.88
Mitchell	Bass Per Angler-day	4.46	3.05
Mitchell	Pounds Per Angler-day	8.69	5.44
Mobile Delta	Bass Per Angler-day	4.69	2.80
Mobile Delta	Pounds Per Angler-day	8.23	4.47
Pickwick	Average Weight	2.81	2.40
Pickwick	Hrs. to Catch a 5lb. Bass	80	262

Bass Over Eight Pounds from 2017 B.A.I.T. Reports

Date	Organization	Lake	Big Fish
Oct. 7	Ram Open Series***	Pickwick	10.92
Mar. 11	Alabama Bass Trail	Pickwick	10.36*
Jan. 28	Pickwick Winter Bass Trail***	Pickwick	9.65
Mar. 4	BFL Bama Division	Guntersville	9.56*
Apr. 1	Ram Open Series***	Pickwick	9.56
Feb. 25	Alabama Bass Trail	Wheeler	9.47
Apr. 8	Ala-Tenn Bass Club	Pickwick	9.25
Apr. 28	Marietta Bassmasters**	Guntersville	9.01
Jan. 28	Pickwick Winter Bass Trail***	Pickwick	8.75
Dec. 2	NBT GA/AL District	Eufaula	8.49*
May 13	Ala-Tenn Bass Club	Wheeler	8.38
Feb. 18	BFL Choo-Choo Division	Guntersville	8.31*
Mar. 11	Alabama BASS Nation	Eufaula	8.16
Mar. 18	Alabama Bass Trail	Eufaula	8.05
Dec. 2	Pickwick Winter Bass Trail***	Pickwick	8.02

* Indicates two or more bass over eight pounds weighed in

**Submitted by GADNR

***Submitted by MDWFP

Monthly Tournament Stats

In this section, reservoirs with at least 20 reports are discussed in detail and the monthly tournament results listed in Table 6 are frequently referenced. This table provides monthly catch information for all reservoirs with at least 10 reports.

Eufaula

Thirty (30) tournaments were reported during 2017. All months except January were represented by at least one report with the majority occurring in April (8). One thousand two hundred and five (1,205) anglers fished for 10,117 hours to catch 3,236 bass that weighed 8,108 pounds, with an average size of 2.51 pounds. Largemouth bass made up 81% of the total catch, while spotted bass accounted for 19%.

The quality of fishing on Eufaula has shown a pattern of inconsistency throughout the 32 year history of BAIT reporting, and that trend has continued into the 2010's. However, the past six years have offered quality fishing compared to other reservoirs in the state.

Percent success hit a record high of 85.1% in 2015, up from 83% in 2014, dropped significantly in 2016 to 68% and back up to 74% in 2017. The average sized bass (2.51 lbs.) weighed in by tournament anglers was above the post-LMBV average. Catch-rates of bass larger than five pounds (112 hours) improved over last year when anglers caught them at a rate of one every 15 days of fishing. In 2014, that value was only 67 hours, an all time low since 1986.

March and April were the most popular fishing months, and comprised half of the tournaments for the year. Months with the lowest percent success were October and November (Table 6).

Guntersville

Twenty-seven (27) tournaments were reported during 2017, with most tournaments occurring in May and October (6 each). No tournaments were reported for January, August and November. One thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight (1,788) anglers fished for 15,321 hours to catch 3,597 bass that weighed 9,860 pounds, with an average size of 2.74 pounds. Largemouth bass accounted for 73% of the total catch, while spotted bass comprised 26%.

Although the number of tournament reports received declined almost 30% from 2016, the number of hours fished only declined 7%. Eighty-five bass were weighed in that were over 5 pounds. Most big bass were caught in March, with 11 fish weighing 8 pounds or better that month. On average, it would take 17.78 pounds to win a tournament on Guntersville, however, it would take about 25 pounds in February and March.

Martin

Twenty-three (23) tournaments were reported during 2017. Most were in November (7). No reports were received May-September. Eight hundred and twenty-one (821) anglers fished for 6,764 hours to catch 3,311 bass that weighed 5,425 pounds, with an average weight of 1.64

pounds. Spotted bass comprised 68% of the catch. All five quality indicators declined from 2016, forcing Martin to drop 4 spots in the 2017 overall rankings, however, Martin still ranked 1st in the number of bass per angler-day and 2nd in percent success. Each quality indicator value was still above the 32 year average.

Mobile Delta

Thirty-eight (38) tournaments were reported in 2017, with most occurring in September (6). All months had at least one tournament reported. Nine hundred and fifty-eight (958) anglers fished for 8,428 hours to catch 3,954 bass that weighed 6,934 pounds, with an average size of 1.75 pounds. Largemouth bass made up 96% of the total catch, while spotted bass accounted for 4%.

Bass per angler-day (4.69) and pounds per angler-day (8.23) both set records for the Delta in 2017. Each of these values are over 40% higher than average for this waterbody. On average, it took almost a 12 pound bag to win a tournament. The Delta produced 9 fish over 5 pounds, and the average big bass weighed nearly 4 pounds. Average bass weight has been consistent the past three years at almost 1.8 pounds. In the quality indicators, the Delta ranked 2nd only to Lake Martin in the number of bass caught per angler-day. The Delta jumped up 8 spots, placing 9th out of 19 overall in 2017's quality indicator rankings.

Pickwick

Fifty-four (54) tournaments were reported during 2017 (up 4 from a year ago), with the majority being held in April (11) and June (10). Otherwise, tournaments were generally dispersed evenly throughout the year. Two thousand one hundred and thirty-nine (2,139) anglers fished for 18,078 hours to catch 5,509 bass that weighed 15,474 pounds (the most for 2017), averaging an impressive 2.81 pounds apiece (a record for this lake). Largemouth bass comprised 52% of the total catch, smallmouth bass accounted for 39% and spotted bass comprised 10%.

The percent of anglers who caught at least 1 fish was 80% in the spring months, on average, while summer months showed 84%. The average big bass weighed 6.82 pounds (the highest for all lakes in 2017). Anglers reported 115 bass over 5 pounds, nine were over 8 pounds. Compare this to 2016 where only 58 were reported, but the number of hours fished were virtually the same. For the 2nd year in a row, Pickwick earned the heaviest average winning weight (19.15 lbs.) of all 30 reservoirs reporting tournaments.

All five quality indicators were higher than 2016 values, and well above the 32 year average. The number of hours required to catch a 5 pound bass (80) set another 32 year record for Pickwick. On average, it usually takes 262 hours to land one.

Standardized Electrofishing Results

The Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries manages 45 public reservoirs through five District Offices. Inside the front cover of this publication, each District Office is listed along with the reservoirs within their area of responsibility. Each reservoir is sampled on a routine basis to monitor the population structure of its sport fish species. These samples are conducted in a standardized manner according to the guidelines of the Alabama Reservoir Management Manual so that changes in population characteristics can be monitored over time. Most reservoirs are sampled on a three year cycle and management recommendations, such as length and creel limits, are determined from this research. There are three key components of the fish population that biologists must characterize in order to make these decisions; they are growth, mortality, and recruitment. Another important non-biological element is bass harvest rates, which is determined through the use of angler creel surveys.

These four variables ultimately determine the quality of each fishery, but all of them are limited by the nutrient levels in each reservoir. Even



Alabama Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries biologists conduct a standardized electrofishing sample on 3-Mile Creek, a Mobile River tributary.

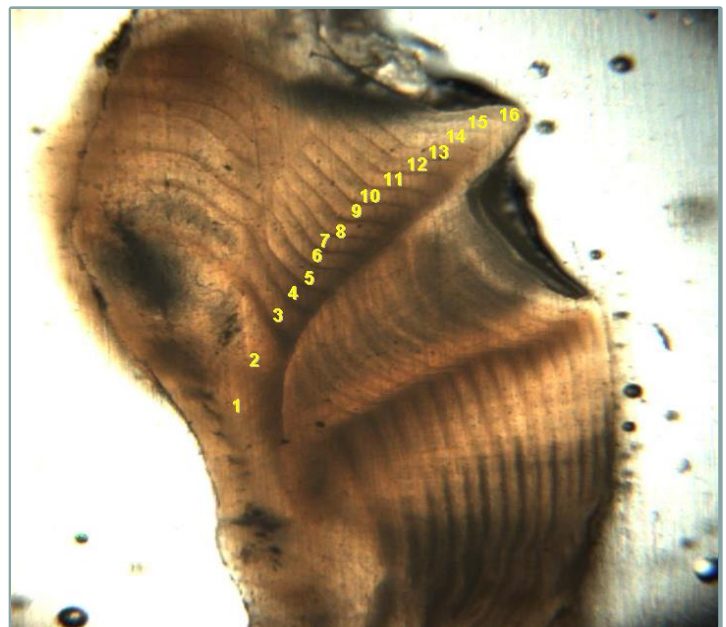


Bass are measured and weighed so that biologists can determine the size structure of the population, growth rates, and relative condition.

with good management, reservoirs with low fertility or poor water quality do not have the potential to produce outstanding fisheries. Depending on the results of these investigations, some management objectives may include the reduction of small bass through the use of slot limits, or increasing the number of larger fish using minimum length limits, which can also reduce the effects of variable recruitment.

A careful review of the information in this section reveals certain fishery trends that are reflected in the tournament reporting data. For example, reservoirs that consistently produce good numbers of trophy bass are usually those with populations that exhibit low annual mortality and rapid growth. Conversely, lakes that rarely produce trophy bass are often characterized by slow growth and high annual mortality.

Complex statistical models are developed from these variables that are used to predict how fish populations might respond to changes in the length or bag limits imposed on each reservoir. Over time, these model's predictive ability can be validated by comparing the predicted effects to the actual fishery responses to the changes in harvest restrictions. In general, harvest restrictions have miniscule impacts unless the rate of fishing mortality approaches or exceeds that of natural mortality because there is little biological justification for protecting fish that are dying primarily of natural causes. Since bass harvest in Alabama is generally very low, few reservoirs have restrictive length limits at this time. However, routine monitoring of bass populations will allow changes in harvest restrictions to be made whenever necessary.



Cross-section of an otolith from a 16 year old largemouth bass. Dark bands are formed in winter when cold temperatures reduce growth.

Standardized Electrofishing Results

Growth

One of the three most important objectives of fisheries biologists' assessments of a fish population is to determine the growth-rates for the fish being studied.

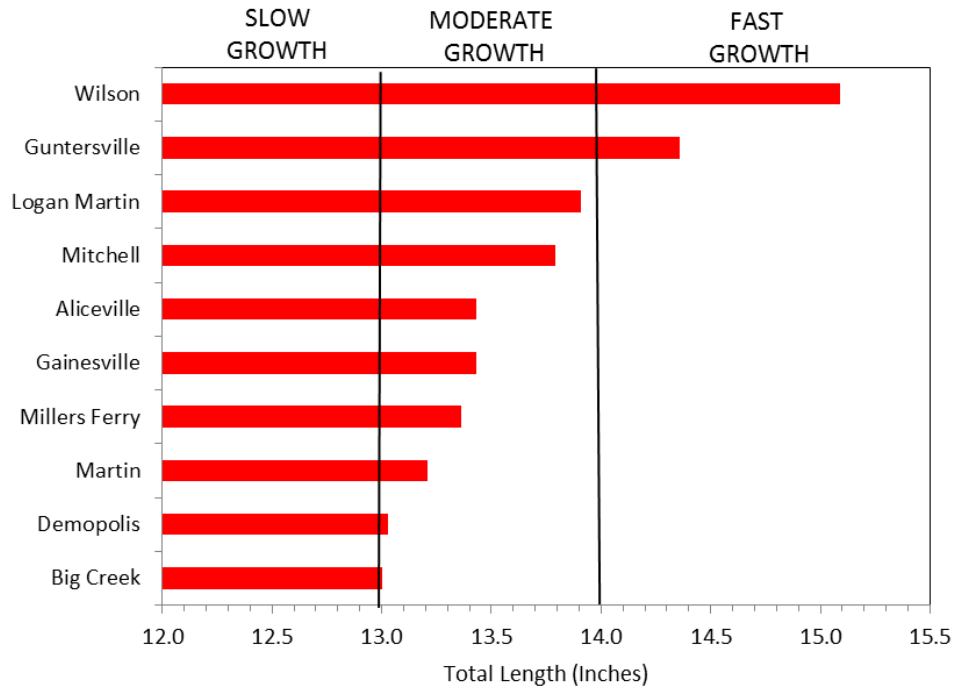
There are many factors that can affect the rate at which fish grow. The most important are prey abundance, size, and nutritional value; and of course, the number of other fish competing with them for those food resources. Other factors include the age and health of the fish, water temperature, and water quality. Obviously, these variables do not remain constant over time, so the assessment represents a snapshot in time and can vary depending upon when the samples were obtained.

Biologists determine fish growth-rates by measuring their lengths at each age represented in the sample. This is done by examining the fish's otoliths, which are free-floating bones in the inner ear that form growth-rings similar to those that are visible on the top of a tree stump. These rings are formed because calcium is deposited at a constant rate no matter how fast the fish is growing. During winter, when the fish is not actively growing, the calcium is deposited in a more concentrated area, and leaves behind a ring once the fish's growth-rate increases as water temperatures become warmer. Using this technique, biologist's can easily determine the amount of annual growth since birth, or between two given years.

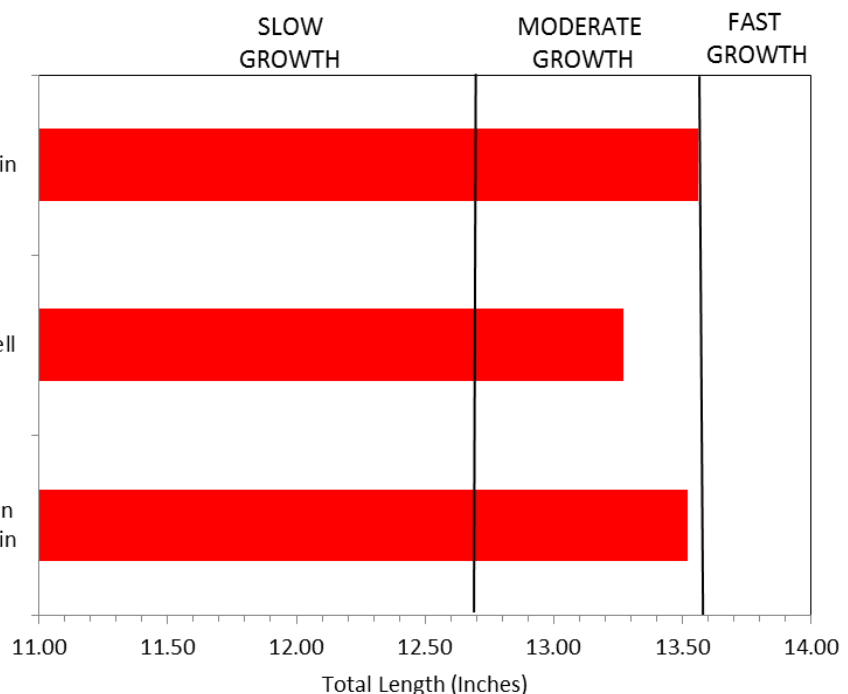
In Alabama, largemouth bass rarely exceed 10 years of age, and relatively few of the fish in these samples include fish greater than 5 years old. In warmer climates, bass grow faster but do not live as long as fish in colder climates. Additionally, a biologist's ability to impact the size structure of a fish population through the use of length limits is most easily measured by examining the population characteristics of fish that are about to enter the fishery (i.e. those fish becoming available for harvest). Given all of these factors, a good benchmark for the growth-rates of most Southeastern bass populations is the average length of bass at three years of age, which is usually 12 -14 inches. The adjacent bar charts illustrates the results of these studies on the reservoirs that were sampled by Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries biologists during Spring 2016.

In order to make good management decisions, growth-rates of bass populations are classified as slow, moderate, or fast. However, it should be noted that growth-rates are only one piece of the fish production puzzle and must be complimented by other desirable population characteristics in order to produce high quality fisheries.

Total Length of Largemouth Bass at Three Years of Age



Total Length of Spotted Bass at Three Years of Age



Standardized Electrofishing Results

Mortality

The second of the three most important objectives in fishery assessments is to determine the mortality rate for the population. Mortality is the death of fish, which can be caused by a wide range of things that include both natural causes, and fishing-related causes. In this section, it is total annual mortality that will be discussed; however, separating natural mortality from fishing mortality is an important step in good fisheries management. Determining the fishing-related component of mortality is the most important, and most difficult, task that a fisheries biologist faces. Documenting the number and size of fish being harvested by anglers is relatively easy to do using angler interviews, but understanding how many fish die following tournaments or catch-and-release is a much more difficult task.

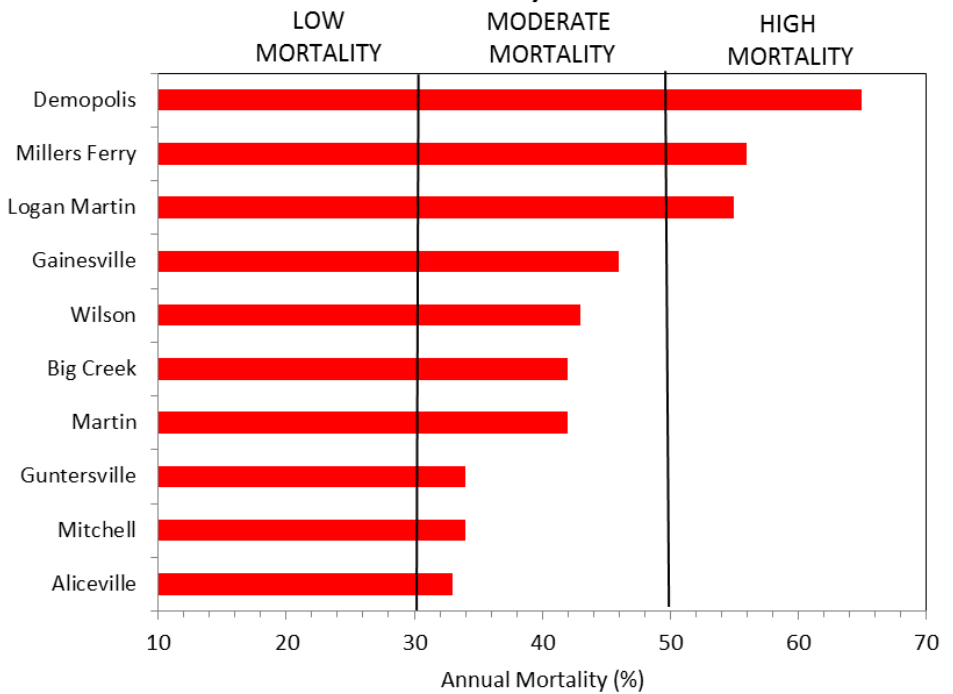
The most common way that biologists determine the mortality rate of a fish population is to measure the rate of decline in the number of fish represented in each age group in the collection. For example, from a collection of fish with a mortality rate of 50%, you might expect to see a decline similar to this: Age-1 (100 fish), Age-2 (50 fish), Age-3 (25 fish), Age-4 (13 fish), Age-5 (6 fish), Age-6 (3 fish), Age-7 (2 fish), Age-8 (1 fish).

In Alabama, typical annual mortality-rates for largemouth bass range from 35% to 45%, but can vary considerably from one year to the next. Only a small percentage of bass in Alabama populations live to exceed 10 years of age. Typically, less than 1% of bass collected in a standardized reservoir sample will exceed 10 years of age. Even in populations with very low mortality-rates, this figure is usually less than 3%.

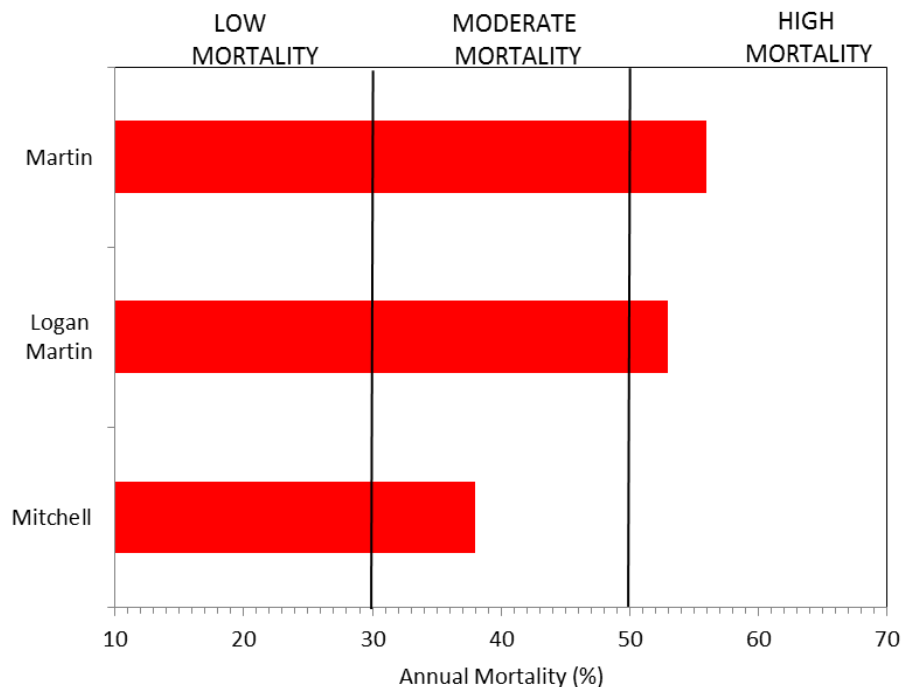
Minimum length limits are a management tool often considered by biologists if mortality-rates are high; however, they are only effective if a large portion of the total annual mortality can be attributed to fishing-related causes. Limiting angler harvest cannot reduce bass mortality from natural causes.

The adjacent chart reflects the total annual mortality rates of largemouth bass populations sampled during Spring 2016. Biologists use this information to help guide them to make management decisions in an effort to improve the quality of fishing. A reduction in mortality-rates following the enforcement of a length limit is an indication that this management action has had a positive influence on the population. Obviously, if fishing-related mortality is low, then length limits will do little to improve the quality of a fishery.

Total Percent of the Largemouth Bass Population that Die Annually



Total Percent of the Spotted Bass Population that Die Annually



Standardized Electrofishing Results

Recruitment

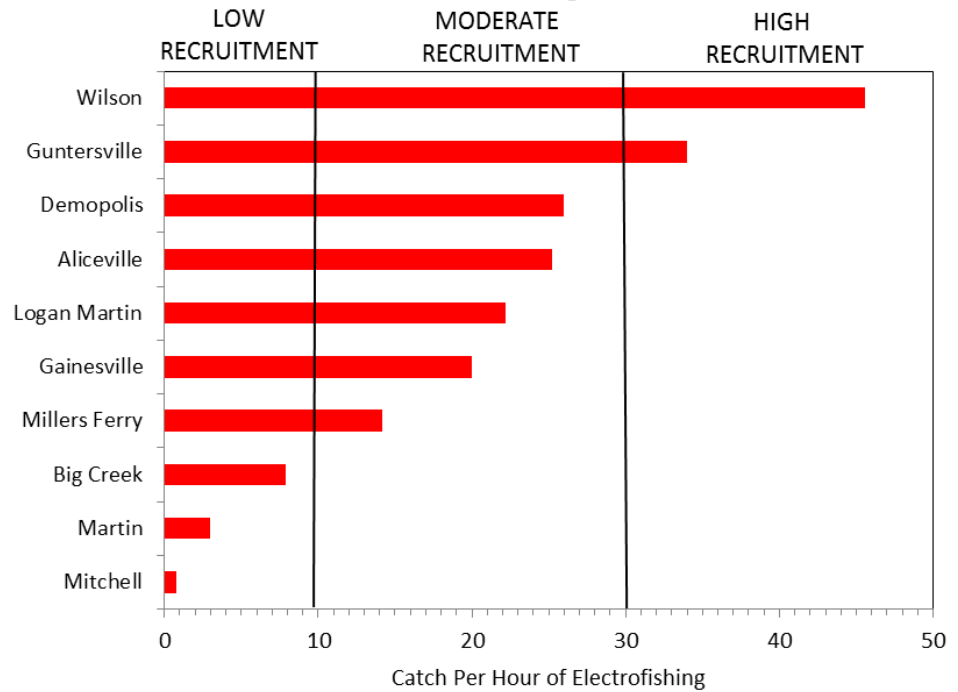
The final critical objective in fishery assessments is to determine recruitment of the population into the fishery.

This is generally defined in two ways: 1) the number of fish surviving to reach one year of age, or 2) the number of fish surviving to reach harvestable size. The first is important because fish that do not reach 3 to 3 ½ inches before their first winter are less likely to survive to the following spring. The second is important because it is a measure of the percentage of fish that reach sizes large enough to be caught or harvested by anglers. Recruitment can be impacted by density-dependent and/or density-independent factors.

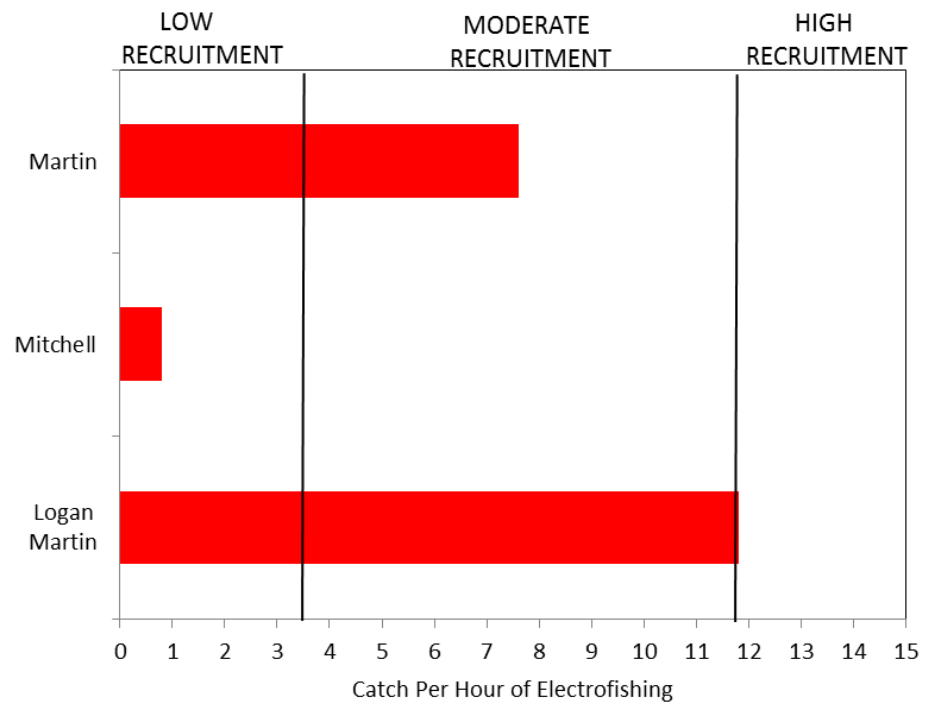
Density-dependent factors include population size, fish size and growth characteristics, reproductive fertility, cannibalism, disease, predation, and competition for food. Density-independent factors are non-biological in nature and may include floods, droughts, temperature extremes, excessive wind, and pollution.

Obviously, all of these factors can influence one another and may vary considerably over time. Although it is the biological and environmental interactions that have the greatest impact, exploitation (fish removed from the population by angling) can also influence the recruitment potential of a population.

Number of One Year Old Largemouth Bass Caught Per Hour of Electrofishing



Number of One Year Old Spotted Bass Caught Per Hour of Electrofishing



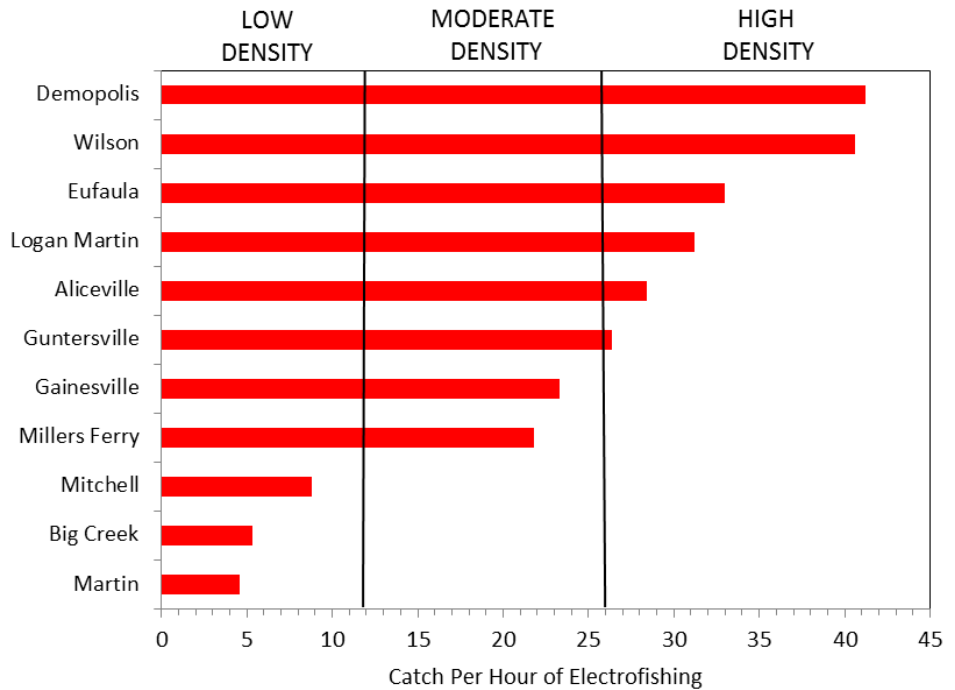
Standardized Electrofishing Results

Abundance

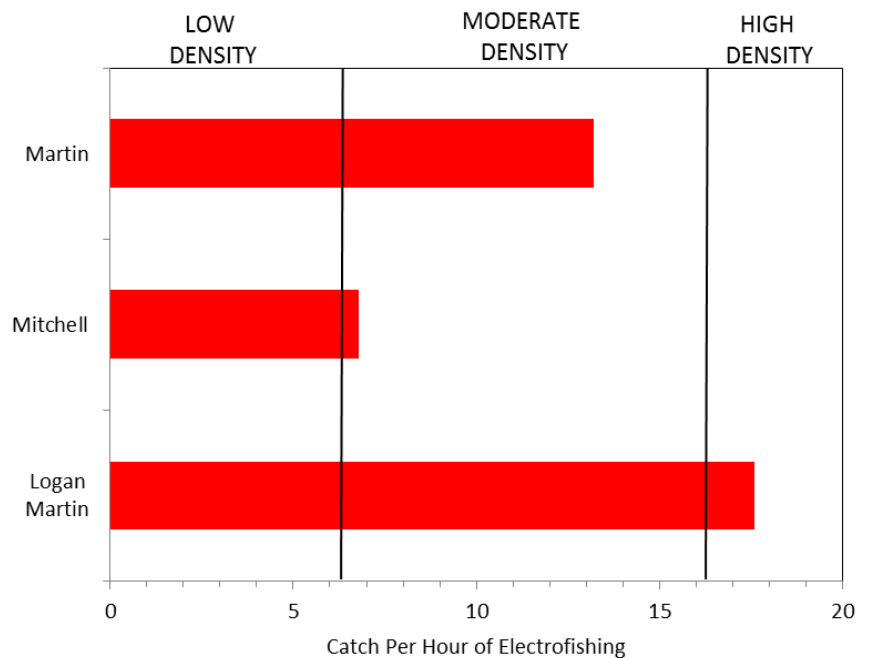
Another important population variable is the abundance of catchable sized fish in the population. Actual abundance is determined by a wide range of things, which may include survival during critical phases of life, habitat suitability, water quality, fertility, water productivity, competition with other fish, predation, or disease. However, it is also important to remember that a biologist's assessment of overall abundance is determined from electrofishing samples that are a snapshot in time and may be influenced by temporary environmental conditions during the sample period. Muddy water can prevent a biologist from seeing fish beneath the surface while electrofishing, cold fronts may cause fish to move away from the shoreline, aquatic weeds can hinder their ability to see or capture fish that would ordinarily be collected, fish may be deeper than the reach of the electrical field in extremely clear water, etc. All of these things have the potential to bias estimates of abundance.

The number of 8 – 12 inch largemouth bass, and 7 – 11 inch spotted bass, collected per hour of electrofishing is a general indicator of overall population abundance. In Alabama, the majority of samples, statewide, fall within the 11 – 26 fish per hour range for largemouth bass, and 6 – 16 fish per hour for spotted bass. The adjacent chart illustrates these values for samples conducted on public reservoirs during Spring 2016.

Number of 8-12 Inch Largemouth Bass Caught by Electrofishing

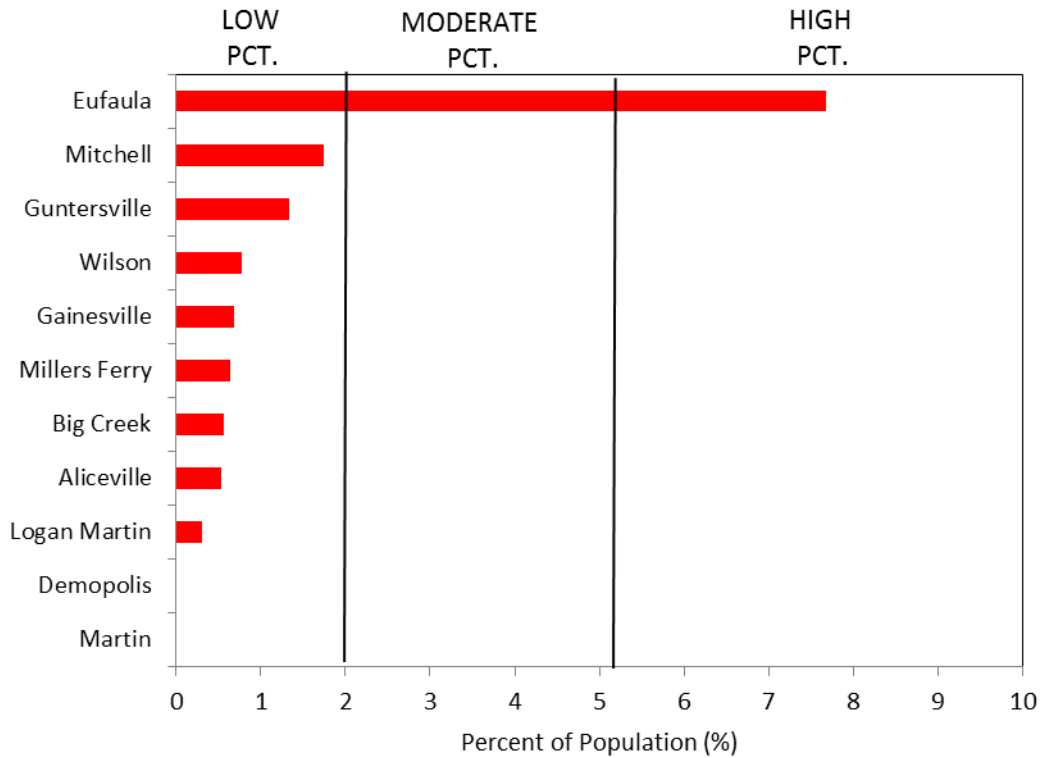


Number of 7-11 Inch Spotted Bass Caught by Electrofishing



Standardized Electrofishing Results

Percent of the Largemouth Bass Population Over 20 Inches
(About 5 Pounds)



Percent of the Spotted Bass Population Over 17 Inches
(About 3 Pounds)

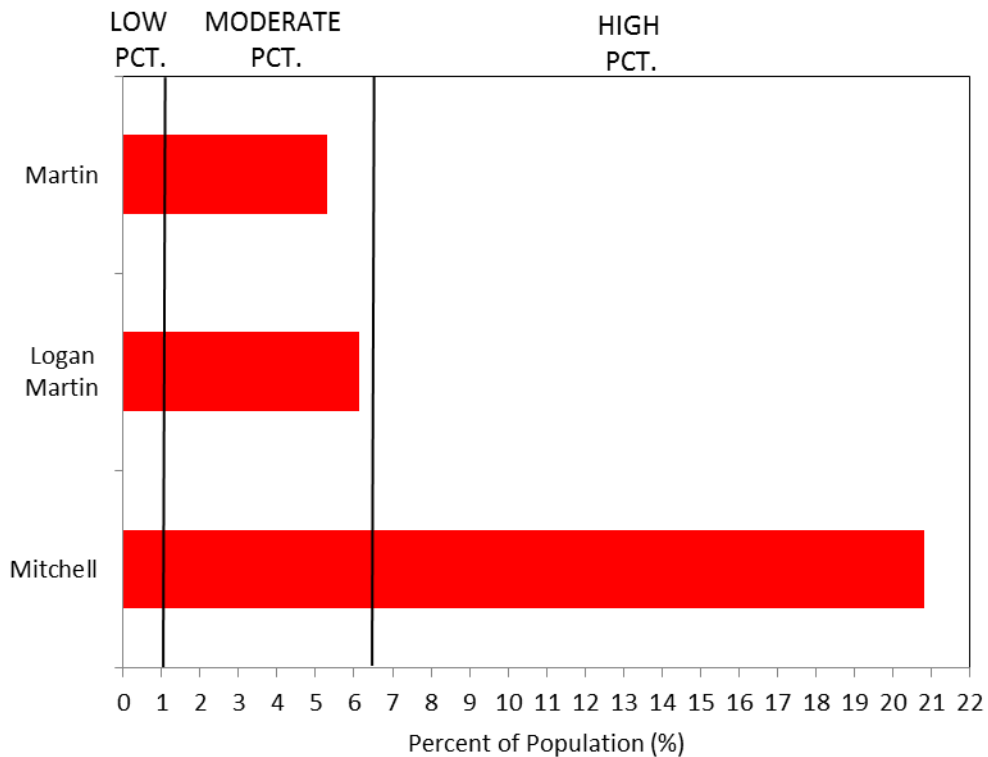


Table 1. Statewide summary of tournaments for bass clubs participating in the 2017 B.A.I.T. Program.

Lake	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.
Bankhead	5	84	84.5	71.4	700	229	80.7	19.3	0.0	99	417	1.82	2	0	4.81	12.16	84.52	3.27	5.96	350	35
Bartlett's Ferry	5	65	86.2	27.7	575	195	49.7	50.3	0.0	99	267	1.37	0	0	4.22	10.15	86.15	3.39	4.65	.	.
Cedar	3	46	82.6	47.8	379	93	68.9	31.1	0.0	99	136	1.46	1	0	4.12	14.06	82.61	2.45	3.59	379	38
Claiborne	3	75	96.0	16.0	630	234	73.9	26.1	0.0	100	532	2.27	5	0	4.64	10.97	96.00	3.72	8.46	126	13
Coffeeville	1	13	92.3	76.9	104	55	.	.	.	98	101	1.84	0	0	4.88	.	92.31	5.29	9.75	.	.
Demopolis	4	85	85.9	60.0	742	316	79.5	20.5	0.0	99	688	2.18	8	0	4.57	15.10	85.88	4.26	9.27	93	9
Eufaula	30	1205	74.3	29.0	10117	3236	80.9	19.1	0.0	98	8108	2.51	100	4	5.72	17.63	74.27	2.90	7.19	112	11
Gainesville	2	49	85.7	57.1	450	182	91.8	8.2	0.0	99	343	1.88	2	0	5.69	12.75	85.71	4.04	7.62	225	23
Guntersville	27	1788	68.7	19.5	15321	3597	73.0	26.0	0.9	98	9860	2.74	85	13	6.10	17.78	68.68	2.35	6.44	170	17
Harris	1	6	100.0	50.0	60	21	9.5	90.5	0.0	100	33	1.56	0	0	.	9.82	100.00	3.50	5.44	.	.
Holt	7	102	49.0	20.6	483	171	9.1	90.9	0.0	100	264	1.54	1	0	3.68	8.49	49.02	3.54	5.46	483	48
Jones Bluff	14	385	76.6	57.7	3089	1314	30.5	69.5	0.0	98	2456	1.87	7	0	4.23	12.87	76.62	4.25	7.95	441	44
Jordan	10	348	88.5	61.8	2855	1263	30.6	69.4	0.0	99	3169	2.51	5	0	3.99	12.89	88.51	4.42	11.10	571	57
Lay	16	532	82.9	54.3	4917	1987	39.2	60.8	0.0	98	3937	1.98	13	0	4.40	12.72	82.90	4.04	8.01	378	38
Logan Martin	14	554	95.3	52.7	7181	2371	31.1	68.9	0.0	98	4078	1.72	4	0	3.89	11.86	95.27	3.30	5.68	1795	180
Martin	23	821	92.0	72.2	6764	3311	32.3	67.7	0.0	99	5425	1.64	6	0	4.01	11.25	91.96	4.90	8.02	1093	109
Mobile Delta	38	958	86.1	62.9	8428	3954	95.7	4.3	0.0	83	6934	1.75	9	0	3.92	11.93	86.12	4.69	8.23	936	94
Millers Ferry	5	139	85.6	66.2	1172	542	77.5	22.5	0.0	95	1032	1.90	3	0	4.13	14.08	85.61	4.62	8.80	391	39
Millers Ferry	17	382	91.6	57.9	3224	1438	26.6	73.4	0.0	99	2802	1.95	3	0	4.03	12.03	91.62	4.46	8.69	1075	107
Neely Henry	11	583	86.6	59.7	4840	2046	49.8	50.2	0.0	97	3703	1.81	9	0	4.56	13.21	86.62	4.23	7.65	510	51
Pickwick	54	2139	77.0	32.1	18078	5509	51.6	9.7	38.7	99	15474	2.81	115	9	6.82	19.15	77.05	3.05	8.56	80	8
Smith	12	1015	77.8	25.4	8311	2157	37.4	62.6	0.0	98	4399	2.04	3	0	4.19	13.99	77.83	2.60	5.29	2304	230
Tuscaloosa	1	16	100.0	68.8	128	68	73.5	26.5	0.0	100	101	1.48	0	0	3.56	10.69	100.00	5.31	7.88	.	.
Upper Bear	3	38	81.6	42.1	307	75	32.0	68.0	0.0	99	99	1.31	1	0	4.57	8.00	81.58	2.44	3.21	307	31
Warrior	2	25	92.0	84.0	234	112	76.8	23.2	0.0	97	192	1.72	1	0	4.92	13.13	92.00	4.80	8.23	234	23
Weiss	9	121	89.3	35.5	1155	394	54.1	45.9	0.0	95	726	1.84	3	1	4.87	11.97	89.26	3.41	6.29	385	39
Wheeler	9	347	85.0	57.6	2872	1176	68.2	19.7	12.1	99	2437	2.07	16	2	5.60	17.16	85.01	4.09	8.49	180	18
Wilson	7	156	89.7	71.8	1296	508	82.9	7.9	9.2	98	1205	2.37	14	0	5.02	18.43	89.74	3.92	9.30	93	9
West Point	4	51	82.4	29.4	440	144	31.9	68.1	0.0	100	219	1.52	1	0	5.11	9.18	82.35	3.27	4.97	264	26
Yates	2	31	87.1	45.2	266	86	68.4	31.6	0.0	99	161	1.87	2	0	5.23	14.05	87.10	3.23	6.05	133	13
Grand Total	339	12159	80.3	42.4	105114	36784	51.4	46.2	2.4	96	79296	2.16	419	29	4.87	14.35	80.32	3.47	7.46	229	23

^aa day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 2. Ranking by quality indicators for all reservoirs with five or more tournament reports in the 2017 B.A.I.T. Program.

Rank	Percent Success	Average Bass		Bass per Angler-Day		Pounds per Angler-Day		Hours per Bass > 5 lbs.		Overall	Value
		Weight	Angler-Day	Angler-Day	Angler-Day	Angler-Day	Angler-Day	Bass > 5 lbs.	Bass > 5 lbs.		
1	Logan Martin	Pickwick	Martin	Martin	Jordan	Jordan	Pickwick	Pickwick	Wilson	77	
2	Martin	Guntersville	Mobile Delta	Mobile Delta	Wilson	Wilson	Wilson	Wilson	Jordan	72	
3	Mitchell	Jordan	Millers Ferry	Millers Ferry	Millers Ferry	Millers Ferry	Eufaula	Eufaula	Mitchell	65	
4	Wilson	Eufaula	Mitchell	Mitchell	Mitchell	Mitchell	Guntersville	Guntersville	Millers Ferry	65	
5	Weiss	Wilson	Jordan	Jordan	Pickwick	Pickwick	Wheeler	Wheeler	Wheeler	64	
6	Jordan	Wheeler	Jones Bluff	Jones Bluff	Wheeler	Wheeler	Bankhead	Bankhead	Pickwick	62	
7	Neely Henry	Smith	Neely Henry	Neely Henry	Mobile Delta	Mobile Delta	Lay	Lay	Martin	56	
8	Bartletts Ferry	Lay	Wheeler	Wheeler	Martin	Martin	Weiss	Weiss	Lay	54	
9	Mobile Delta	Mitchell	Lay	Lay	Lay	Lay	Millers Ferry	Millers Ferry	Mobile Delta	53	
10	Millers Ferry	Millers Ferry	Wilson	Wilson	Jones Bluff	Jones Bluff	Jones Bluff	Jones Bluff	Weiss	49	
11	Wheeler	Jones Bluff	Holt	Holt	Neely Henry	Neely Henry	Holt	Holt	Neely Henry	49	
12	Bankhead	Weiss	Weiss	Weiss	Eufaula	Eufaula	Neely Henry	Neely Henry	Jones Bluff	47	
13	Lay	Bankhead	Bartletts Ferry	Bartletts Ferry	Guntersville	Guntersville	Jordan	Jordan	Eufaula	47	
14	Smith	Neely Henry	Logan Martin	Logan Martin	Weiss	Weiss	Mobile Delta	Mobile Delta	Guntersville	44	
15	Pickwick	Mobile Delta	Bankhead	Bankhead	Bankhead	Bankhead	Mitchell	Mitchell	Bankhead	39	
16	Jones Bluff	Logan Martin	Pickwick	Pickwick	Logan Martin	Logan Martin	Martin	Martin	Logan Martin	36	
17	Eufaula	Martin	Eufaula	Eufaula	Holt	Holt	Logan Martin	Logan Martin	Smith	25	
18	Guntersville	Holt	Smith	Smith	Smith	Smith	Smith	Smith	Holt	24	
19	Holt	Bartletts Ferry	Guntersville	Guntersville	Bartletts Ferry	Bartletts Ferry	Bartletts Ferry	Bartletts Ferry	Bartletts Ferry	22	

Table 3. Tournament summary for bass clubs participating in the 2017 B.A.I.T. Program.

Club No.	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.
1	5	134	79.1	20.9	1153	283	49.8	50.2	0.0	96	499	1.76	4	0	4.63	11.15	79.10	2.45	4.33	288	29
2	12	108	77.8	30.6	909	283	20.8	79.2	0.0	99	493	1.74	0	0	3.45	11.66	77.78	3.11	5.42	.	.
3	10	103	91.3	49.5	954	359	73.8	26.2	0.0	98	550	1.53	0	0	3.51	9.59	91.26	3.77	5.77	.	.
4	12	171	94.2	56.1	1503	666	73.1	26.9	0.0	99	1134	1.70	1	0	3.84	11.93	94.15	4.43	7.55	1503	150
5	9	71	85.9	26.8	623	180	83.3	16.7	0.0	73	260	1.44	0	0	2.87	9.40	85.92	2.89	4.18	.	.
6	1	10	80.0	30.0	80	29	.	.	.	100	62	2.15	0	0	4.02	16.02	80.00	3.63	7.80	.	.
7	10	274	84.3	61.3	2354	892	84.1	4.9	11.0	98	2095	2.35	33	2	6.40	18.10	84.31	3.79	8.90	71	7
8	8	54	98.1	81.5	480	263	.	.	.	100	500	1.90	1	0	3.61	11.31	98.15	5.48	10.43	480	48
9	6	324	89.8	46.9	3177	1353	.	.	.	98	2380	1.76	9	0	5.14	16.67	89.82	4.26	7.49	353	35
10	1	11	63.6	45.5	99	31	6.5	93.5	0.0	100	68	2.20	0	0	3.63	14.50	63.64	3.13	6.89	.	.
11	7	963	70.6	15.2	7704	1872	.	.	.	98	5180	2.77	29	2	7.52	18.64	70.61	2.43	6.72	266	27
12	12	205	90.7	49.8	1656	734	18.9	81.1	0.0	99	1248	1.70	2	0	4.10	12.23	90.73	4.43	7.53	828	83
13	7	102	92.2	58.8	884	382	61.3	38.7	0.0	98	699	1.83	4	0	4.20	12.21	92.16	4.32	7.91	221	22
14	1	49	98.0	77.6	.	307	.	.	.	100	836	2.72	15	0	6.90	.	97.96	.	.	.	.
15	2	190	37.9	20.5	1520	309	86.9	13.1	0.0	100	863	2.79	16	0	6.54	22.33	37.90	2.03	5.68	95	10
16	12	2394	84.3	62.5	21784	8995	43.0	52.2	4.8	99	19444	2.16	57	5	6.69	21.28	84.30	4.13	8.93	382	38
17	1	12	75.0	66.7	72	43	.	.	.	100	97	2.26	0	0	4.30	14.70	75.00	5.97	13.51	.	.
18	1	34	79.4	76.5	306	134	.	.	.	100	355	2.65	4	0	7.10	22.60	79.41	4.38	11.60	77	8
19	8	111	87.4	73.9	976	455	62.9	37.1	0.0	99	878	1.93	5	0	5.09	13.97	87.39	4.66	9.00	195	20
20	1	32	93.8	87.5	256	142	.	.	.	100	279	1.96	0	0	4.19	14.09	93.75	5.55	10.88	.	.
21	12	213	81.7	52.6	1704	437	72.5	25.9	1.6	98	786	1.80	4	0	4.72	16.35	81.69	2.56	4.61	426	43
22	3	117	87.2	63.2	1069	455	91.6	8.4	0.0	97	971	2.13	11	0	5.54	16.35	87.18	4.26	9.08	97	10
23	1	13	92.3	76.9	104	55	.	.	.	98	101	1.84	0	0	4.88	.	92.31	5.29	9.75	.	.
24	1	51	100.0	0.0	434	152	84.2	15.8	0.0	100	398	2.62	5	0	5.61	.	100.00	3.51	9.19	87	9
25	4	41	87.8	24.4	369	114	50.0	50.0	0.0	95	241	2.11	2	0	4.60	14.16	87.81	3.09	6.52	185	18
26	1	31	51.6	38.7	310	68	100.0	0.0	0.0	100	214	3.14	6	0	6.25	23.88	51.61	2.19	6.90	52	5
27	7	394	81.0	68.0	3152	1502	93.3	6.7	0.0	97	2831	1.88	1	0	4.60	14.69	80.96	4.77	8.98	3152	315
28	5	237	86.5	72.2	1920	970	94.8	5.2	0.0	40	1845	1.90	2	0	4.88	15.28	86.50	5.05	9.61	960	96
29	1	56	96.4	58.9	448	234	.	.	.	97	585	2.50	7	0	6.09	21.31	96.43	5.22	13.05	64	6
30	2	14	100.0	92.9	120	69	73.9	26.1	0.0	100	115	1.67	0	0	3.93	.	100.00	5.75	9.60	.	.
31	4	774	75.3	31.8	6192	1955	.	.	.	98	4137	2.12	34	11	6.91	24.17	75.32	3.16	6.68	182	18
32	12	761	86.6	56.9	6706	2377	54.0	46.0	0.0	98	5104	2.15	38	1	5.53	17.79	86.60	3.54	7.61	176	18
33	11	92	87.0	23.9	797	240	57.1	42.9	0.0	96	525	2.19	5	0	4.50	13.20	86.96	3.01	6.58	159	16
34	4	81	75.3	21.0	808	264	62.5	37.5	0.0	100	514	1.95	5	2	5.76	14.99	75.31	3.27	6.36	162	16
35	6	724	74.3	10.8	5792	1053	38.7	61.3	0.0	97	2264	2.15	0	0	4.50	15.25	74.31	1.82	3.91	.	.

^aa day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 3. Cont'd.

Club No.	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.
36	5	69	40.6	8.7	211	75	5.3	94.7	0.0	100	119	1.58	1	0	3.31	7.51	40.58	3.55	5.63	211	21
37	9	220	66.8	39.5	1760	499	.	.	.	.	964	1.93	5	0	4.93	12.69	66.82	2.84	5.48	352	35
38	12	111	78.4	21.6	937	248	60.7	36.7	2.6	100	509	2.05	3	0	4.01	13.15	78.38	2.65	5.43	312	31
39	10	71	80.3	45.1	721	220	48.9	51.1	0.0	95	380	1.73	2	0	4.50	11.27	80.28	3.05	5.27	361	36
40	7	123	89.4	39.0	912	369	.	.	.	98	630	1.71	2	0	3.96	10.45	89.43	4.05	6.90	456	46
41	46	1779	76.4	29.6	15122	4507	.	.	.	.	12598	2.80	95	5	6.95	19.26	76.45	2.98	8.33	66	7
42	1	56	85.7	55.4	448	251	.	.	.	100	380	1.51	0	0	4.75	14.75	85.71	5.60	8.49	.	.
43	1	66	86.4	80.3	1056	544	.	.	.	99	891	1.64	2	0	5.44	.	86.36	5.15	8.44	528	53
44	48	713	86.5	36.3	7536	2414	50.0	50.0	0.0	96	4274	1.77	9	1	4.50	10.55	86.54	3.20	5.67	583	58
Grand Total	339	12159	80.3	42.4	105114	36784	51.4	46.2	2.4	96	79296	2.16	419	29	4.87	14.35	80.32	3.47	7.46	229	23

^aa day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 4. Clubs supporting the 2017 B.A.I.T. annual report.

Club Name	Club Number	City	State	Representative	Phone
4:19 Bass Club	6	Clanton	AL	Mike Graham	205-294-1882
Alabama Association of General Contractors	26	Irondale	AL	Josh West	205-451-1400
Alabama B.A.S.S. Nation	32	Birmingham	AL	Eddie Plemons	205-979-3526
Alabama Bass Federation	9	Prattville	AL	Jim Sparrow	334-201-4135
Alabama Bass Trail	16	Decatur	AL	Clay Baldis	256-309-9852
Alabama Children's Classic Bass Tournament	29	Eufaula	AL	Sam Williams	334-355-5057
Ala-Tenn Bass Club	7	Lawrenceburg	TN	Jonathan Edwards	931-762-5531
Bass Boat Central (N. AL)	10	Oneonta	AL	Derek Coburn	256-312-9161
BASS Southern Open	35	Birmingham	AL	Chris Bowes	407-557-0131
Bay Area Bassmasters	4	Robertsdale	AL	Joe Barnett	251-931-3025
Benning Bass Club	1	Fort Mitchell	AL	Cris Cox	706-570-0886
BFL Bama Division	31	Benton	KY	Robert Evans	270-252-1589
BFL Choo Choo Division	11	Benton	KY	Alan Gray	270-703-5441
Bluff City Bassmasters	33	Eufaula	AL	Jim Howard	334-616-1918
Boyd's Marine Tournament Trail	15	Dothan	AL	Bill Knight	334-441-8421
Brookwood Bass Club	30	Tuscaloosa	AL	James Steadman	205-792-9194
Carbon Hill Bass Club	21	Eldridge	AL	Mark Edmonds	205-389-2505
Christian Bassmen of Montgomery	40	Pike Road	AL	Brian Selix	334-328-8163
Collinsville Bass Club	22	Collinsville	MS	George Little	601-513-0429
Dannelly Air National Guard	8	Prattville	AL	Jim Sparrow	334-201-4135
Dixie Bass Trail	27	Saraland	AL	Ernest Rachel	251-599-3727
Fayette Bass Club	37	Bankston	AL	Todd Tucker	
Fishers of Men - Alabama South	13	Brewton	AL	Allen Couch	251-867-9852
Fishers of Men Alabama Central	20	Notasulga	AL	Walt Higgins	334-283-5515
Fishing Buddies	36	Bessemer	AL	Roger Fields	205-497-3262
Georgia DNR	44	Social Circle	GA	Clint Peacock	478-988-7191
Goldsmith Sunday River Tournament	17	Lowndesboro	AL	Robert Brown	334-850-0338
Hawg Wild Bass Tour	14	Panama City	FL	Jerry Harvey	850-819-2719
Kowaliga	39	Tallassee	AL	Hank Golden	334-354-3387
Lake Guntersville Bass Masters	38	Grant	AL	Pete Pinkerton	530-604-2215
Lowndes Rebel Club	18	Lowndesboro	AL	Robert Brown	334-850-0338
Mediabass AL	28	Petal	MS	Allen Stephens	601-624-6647
Miss. Div. Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks	41	Tupelo	MS	Stan Crider	601-432-2400
Mobile Bass Association	42	Mobile	AL	Robin Clark	251-605-3073
Mobile Bassmasters	5	Mobile	AL	Bob Steele	251-661-9600
Mobile Boat Show Bass Tournament	43	Mobile	AL	Robin Clark	251-605-3073
National Bass Trail (GA/AL)	34	Cataula	GA	Blaine Souerwine	706-577-6874
Northport Bass Club	19	Northport	AL	Robert Findlay	205-339-5546
Pine Level Bassmasters	12	Prattville	AL	Jim Sparrow	334-201-4135
Ridgecrest Baptist Youth	24	Tuscaloosa	AL	Brad Hamilton	205-553-9063
Rumbling Waters B.A.S.S. Club	2	Eclectic	AL	Tomy Gamble	
Southern Masters	3	Mobile	AL	Robin Clark	251-605-3073
Team Share the Gospel	23	Chatom	AL	Rev. Howard Gaston	251-232-1940
Weiss Lake Bassmasters	25	Oneonta	AL	Derek Coburn	256-312-9161

Table 5. Statewide summary of bass tournaments by month for bass clubs participating in the 2017 B.A.I.T. Program.

Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% of anglers w/ at least 1 fish	% of anglers w/ a limit of fish	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Bass per day ^a	Pounds per day ^a	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	Days ^a to catch a bass over 5 lb.
JAN	19	295	85.8	43.4	2421	939	49.6	50.3	0.2	100	1927	2.05	15	2	4.63	13.67	85.76	3.88	7.96	161	16
FEB	30	1307	80.6	45.1	10790	3965	49.4	46.3	4.3	100	9327	2.35	64	3	5.50	16.37	80.57	3.67	8.65	163	16
MAR	35	1770	79.4	42.9	14622	5539	66.2	21.4	12.4	100	13409	2.42	130	16	5.68	17.32	79.38	3.58	8.60	127	13
APR	48	2180	79.6	43.6	18855	6590	51.4	48.2	0.5	98	14102	2.14	61	2	5.20	14.97	79.59	3.50	7.48	245	24
MAY	38	1564	80.2	42.1	13472	4722	51.1	48.9	0.0	92	10074	2.13	33	1	4.63	14.24	80.24	3.51	7.48	327	33
JUN	33	1177	84.3	55.2	10024	3965	60.2	38.9	0.9	90	9233	2.33	42	0	4.82	15.84	84.28	3.96	9.21	195	20
JUL	23	551	78.4	48.3	4466	1618	52.7	45.5	1.8	95	3071	1.90	21	1	4.76	13.26	78.40	3.62	6.88	201	20
AUG	17	270	77.8	57.0	1933	860	37.7	61.7	0.5	72	1520	1.77	7	0	4.24	11.49	77.78	4.45	7.86	276	28
SEP	38	1599	75.5	23.3	13468	3608	41.8	58.2	0.1	98	7235	2.01	12	0	4.18	12.11	75.55	2.68	5.37	865	86
OCT	31	810	83.1	31.2	9664	2705	44.7	54.5	0.8	97	4962	1.83	16	1	4.42	12.64	83.13	2.80	5.13	574	57
NOV	19	503	87.5	58.6	4149	1779	35.4	64.3	0.2	100	3082	1.73	9	0	4.45	12.13	87.48	4.29	7.43	461	46
DEC	8	133	85.7	50.4	1253	494	57.2	42.8	0.0	100	1352	2.74	9	3	5.25	16.66	85.71	3.94	10.79	139	14
Grand Total	339	12159	80.3	42.4	105114	36784	51.4	46.2	2.4	96	79296	2.16	419	29	4.87	14.35	80.32	3.47	7.46	229	23

^aa day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 6. Summary of bass tournaments by lake and month for bass clubs participating in the 2017 B.A.I.T. Program.

Lake	Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	Bass per day ¹	Pounds per day ¹	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	
Eufaula	JAN
	FEB	3	54	77.8	494	154	82.5	17.5	0.0	97	355	2.30	8	0	6.45	17.18	3.12	7.18	62	
	MAR	7	555	72.6	4208	1537	80.2	19.8	0.0	99	4174	2.72	53	2	6.44	20.27	2.92	7.93	111	
	APR	8	372	69.9	3452	845	93.6	6.4	0.0	98	1999	2.37	23	0	5.63	18.99	2.45	5.79	123	
	MAY	2	62	95.2	504	184	19.2	80.8	0.0	92	401	2.18	3	0	5.83	14.82	3.65	7.95	168	
	JUN	1	56	96.4	448	234	.	.	.	97	585	2.50	7	0	6.09	21.31	5.22	13.05	64	
	JUL	1	6	100.0	54	15	100.0	0.0	0.0	100	45	3.01	0	0	4.16	20.25	2.78	8.36	.	
	AUG	1	5	100.0	45	16	87.5	12.5	0.0	94	40	2.50	0	0	4.69	16.87	3.56	8.88	.	
	SEP	2	35	68.6	280	75	56.0	44.0	0.0	100	126	1.68	2	0	6.26	14.21	2.68	4.50	140	
	OCT	3	35	57.1	272	52	71.2	28.8	0.0	98	89	1.70	1	0	3.85	10.77	1.92	3.26	272	
	NOV	1	5	60.0	40	8	87.5	12.5	0.0	100	13	1.63	0	0	2.96	6.22	2.00	3.25	.	
	DEC	1	20	95.0	320	116	81.9	18.1	0.0	100	282	2.43	3	2	8.49	24.11	3.63	8.81	107	
Guntersville	JAN
	FEB	3	368	64.1	3008	590	100.0	0.0	0.0	100	1757	2.98	16	2	7.06	26.10	1.96	5.84	188	
	MAR	2	230	57.0	1840	298	83.3	16.7	0.0	100	877	2.94	22	11	7.42	25.32	1.62	4.77	84	
	APR	4	302	73.5	2746	709	81.4	18.6	0.0	99	1882	2.65	7	0	7.71	18.47	2.58	6.85	307	
	MAY	6	369	74.5	3431	834	86.3	13.7	0.0	96	2195	2.63	16	0	5.19	15.59	2.43	6.40	214	
	JUN	2	204	71.1	1728	602	57.0	41.0	2.0	98	1657	2.75	13	0	6.28	30.45	3.48	9.59	133	
	JUL	1	19	73.7	152	36	.	.	.	.	102	2.83	2	0	6.69	.	2.37	6.71	76
	AUG
	SEP	2	184	67.4	1472	335	.	.	.	.	881	2.63	4	0	.	14.66	2.28	5.99	368
	OCT	6	102	72.5	864	180	97.9	2.1	0.0	100	482	2.68	5	0	4.84	13.72	2.08	5.57	117	
	NOV
	DEC	1	10	70.0	80	13	76.9	23.1	0.0	100	28	2.12	0	0	3.75	11.44	1.63	3.44	.	
Jones Bluff	JAN
	FEB	2	42	88.1	320	130	13.7	86.3	0.0	100	260	2.00	3	0	5.18	15.43	4.07	8.12	107	
	MAR	2	46	78.3	378	177	.	.	.	100	452	2.55	4	0	5.70	18.65	4.68	11.96	95	
	APR
	MAY	2	228	71.1	1840	760	34.5	65.5	0.0	97	1336	1.76	0	0	4.27	13.04	4.13	7.26	.	
	JUN	1	6	83.3	60	17	47.1	52.9	0.0	88	25	1.46	0	0	.	8.57	2.83	4.14	.	
	JUL	1	8	62.5	64	20	20.0	80.0	0.0	100	34	1.70	0	0	3.35	11.57	3.13	5.30	.	
	AUG	2	25	84.0	188	82	18.3	81.7	0.0	100	121	1.48	0	0	3.90	10.59	4.37	6.45	.	
	SEP	1	5	100.0	40	21	.	.	.	100	33	1.55	0	0	2.75	9.50	5.25	8.13	.	
	OCT	1	7	85.7	56	27	.	.	.	100	44	1.63	0	0	3.06	9.50	4.82	7.86	.	
	NOV	1	6	100.0	48	29	.	.	.	100	54	1.84	0	0	4.13	12.13	6.04	11.15	.	
	DEC	1	12	100.0	96	51	13.7	86.3	0.0	100	99	1.93	0	0	3.56	13.56	5.31	10.26	.	
Jordan	JAN	1	10	80.0	80	29	.	.	.	100	62	2.15	0	0	4.02	16.02	3.63	7.80	.	
	FEB	1	224	96.0	1792	1012	32.6	67.4	0.0	100	2667	2.64	5	0	6.21	24.95	5.65	14.89	358	
	MAR
	APR	2	23	91.3	207	73	26.0	74.0	0.0	100	162	2.22	0	0	4.54	14.16	3.53	7.84	.	
	MAY	1	17	82.4	136	48	16.7	83.3	0.0	100	86	1.80	0	0	3.75	11.56	3.53	6.34	.	
	JUN
	JUL	2	32	56.3	268	42	19.0	81.0	0.0	69	69	1.65	0	0	2.67	8.54	1.57	2.59	.	
	AUG
	SEP	1	9	66.7	79	13	7.7	92.3	0.0	100	20	1.55	0	0	2.18	7.46	1.65	2.55	.	
	OCT	1	25	80.0	225	30	.	.	.	100	73	2.45	0	0	5.06	13.16	1.33	3.26	.	
	NOV	1	8	75.0	68	16	18.8	81.3	0.0	100	28	1.73	0	0	2.96	10.38	2.35	4.08	.	
	DEC

¹a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 6. Cont'd.

Lake	Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	Bass per day ¹	Pounds per day ¹	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	
Lay	JAN
	FEB
	MAR
	APR	4	173	89.6	1523	636	42.3	57.7	0.0	98	1379	2.17	6	0	4.52	14.96	4.18	9.05	254	
	MAY	2	19	94.7	170	67	20.0	80.0	0.0	97	106	1.58	0	0	3.71	12.05	3.94	6.24	.	
	JUN	2	221	72.4	1768	714	38.5	61.5	0.0	98	1502	2.10	4	0	4.78	15.44	4.04	8.50	442	
	JUL
	AUG	2	15	80.0	141	53	24.5	75.5	0.0	100	109	2.06	1	0	7.06	12.02	3.76	7.74	141	
	SEP	3	79	94.9	1128	453	31.9	68.1	0.0	97	733	1.62	2	0	4.51	11.67	4.02	6.50	564	
	OCT	2	18	77.8	131	33	63.6	36.4	0.0	79	49	1.49	0	0	3.58	9.35	2.52	3.75	.	
	NOV	1	7	100.0	56	31	.	.	.	100	59	1.89	0	0	3.19	13.19	5.54	10.45	.	
	DEC
Logan Martin	JAN	1	22	100.0	198	104	18.3	81.7	0.0	100	193	1.85	0	0	4.79	13.62	5.25	9.72	.	
	FEB	1	89	98.9	801	390	.	.	.	100	730	1.87	0	0	4.88	19.88	4.87	9.11	.	
	MAR
	APR	3	26	100.0	208	112	11.6	88.4	0.0	94	167	1.49	0	0	3.63	9.89	5.38	8.04	.	
	MAY	1	14	92.9	112	55	45.5	54.5	0.0	91	82	1.49	0	0	3.02	11.32	4.91	7.32	.	
	JUN
	JUL	1	17	100.0	136	70	21.4	78.6	0.0	83	100	1.44	0	0	4.26	11.62	5.15	7.39	.	
	AUG	1	18	100.0	144	72	11.1	88.9	0.0	94	103	1.43	0	0	3.64	10.38	5.00	7.17	.	
	SEP	3	24	100.0	198	82	25.6	74.4	0.0	100	127	1.55	0	0	2.85	8.89	4.15	6.43	.	
	OCT	3	344	91.1	5384	1486	34.7	65.3	0.0	98	2576	1.73	4	0	4.79	14.29	2.76	4.78	1346	
	NOV
	DEC
Martin	JAN	6	110	95.5	855	370	35.9	64.1	0.0	100	539	1.46	0	0	3.34	9.74	4.33	6.30	.	
	FEB	1	7	100.0	56	35	.	.	.	100	66	1.88	1	0	5.13	10.38	6.25	11.78	56	
	MAR	3	58	93.1	464	254	6.3	93.8	0.0	100	443	1.75	0	0	3.88	12.38	5.47	9.55	.	
	APR	3	305	93.8	2456	1408	47.1	52.9	0.0	99	2303	1.64	3	0	4.60	12.12	5.73	9.38	819	
	MAY
	JUN
	JUL
	AUG
	SEP
	OCT	2	20	100.0	340	140	19.3	80.7	0.0	91	207	1.48	0	0	2.63	.	4.12	6.09	.	
	NOV	7	311	88.4	2508	1065	22.3	77.7	0.0	100	1797	1.69	2	0	4.54	12.03	4.25	7.17	1254	
	DEC	1	10	80.0	85	39	12.8	87.2	0.0	100	70	1.79	0	0	3.21	11.20	4.59	8.20	.	
Mobile Delta	JAN	3	30	93.3	264	112	100.0	0.0	0.0	100	171	1.52	0	0	3.30	10.92	4.25	6.48	.	
	FEB	4	46	91.3	412	176	83.0	17.0	0.0	100	313	1.78	3	0	3.89	11.11	4.28	7.62	137	
	MAR	4	162	90.7	1869	971	100.0	0.0	0.0	99	1746	1.80	2	0	4.73	13.67	5.20	9.34	935	
	APR	1	10	100.0	90	24	100.0	0.0	0.0	42	37	1.53	0	0	3.26	10.39	2.67	4.09	.	
	MAY	4	132	83.3	1113	483	96.0	4.0	0.0	58	888	1.84	0	0	4.21	13.51	4.34	7.98	.	
	JUN	4	77	85.7	652	259	100.0	0.0	0.0	24	448	1.73	1	0	2.83	10.65	3.98	6.88	652	
	JUL	2	72	79.2	584	252	98.2	1.8	0.0	95	455	1.81	1	0	4.56	13.94	4.32	7.79	584	
	AUG	3	104	89.4	808	447	100.0	0.0	0.0	52	802	1.79	0	0	4.40	11.34	5.53	9.93	.	
	SEP	6	208	79.8	1669	762	90.2	9.8	0.0	99	1363	1.79	1	0	4.05	12.38	4.57	8.17	1669	
	OCT	2	24	91.7	204	79	98.7	1.3	0.0	72	120	1.52	0	0	3.16	9.96	3.87	5.87	.	
	NOV	4	82	90.2	687	348	100.0	0.0	0.0	100	516	1.48	1	0	4.01	11.24	5.07	7.52	687	
	DEC	1	11	90.9	77	41	100.0	0.0	0.0	100	73	1.78	0	0	4.08	13.68	5.32	9.48	.	

¹a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

Table 6. Cont'd.

Lake	Month	No. of tournaments	No. of anglers	% success (anglers w/ at least 1 fish)	Total hrs. fished	Total bass caught	% largemouth	% spotted bass	% smallmouth	Percent of bass released alive	Total lbs. of bass	Avg. bass weight	Bass over 5lb.	Bass over 8lb.	Avg. big bass weight	Avg. winning weight	Bass per day ¹	Pounds per day ¹	Hrs. to catch a bass over 5 lb.	
Mitchell	JAN	1	15	93.3	128	59	84.7	15.3	0.0	100	108	1.84	0	0	4.05	12.63	4.63	8.50	.	
	FEB
	MAR	2	186	93.0	1488	737	23.6	76.4	0.0	100	1493	2.03	3	0	5.53	17.07	4.95	10.03	496	
	APR	5	89	98.9	808	403	21.5	78.5	0.0	98	786	1.95	0	0	4.10	13.35	4.99	9.73	.	
	MAY	2	13	100.0	123	40	25.0	75.0	0.0	95	72	1.79	0	0	3.11	11.65	3.25	5.82	.	
	JUN	2	17	94.1	164	52	26.9	73.1	0.0	94	100	1.92	0	0	4.47	12.02	3.17	6.10	.	
	JUL	1	9	44.4	63	7	.	.	.	100	12	1.64	0	0	2.69	5.94	1.11	1.83	.	
	AUG
	SEP
	OCT	3	45	80.0	382	124	11.1	88.9	0.0	100	208	1.68	0	0	3.88	10.48	3.25	5.46	.	
	NOV
	DEC	1	8	75.0	68	16	0.0	100.0	0.0	100	23	1.45	0	0	3.34	6.37	2.35	3.42	.	
Neely Henry	JAN
	FEB	1	10	90	90	24	42	58	0	100	46	2	1	0	5	11	3	5	90	
	MAR
	APR	1	12	100.0	108	40	30.0	70.0	0.0	98	73	1.84	0	0	4.13	15.63	3.70	6.80	.	
	MAY	1	190	84.7	1520	742	34.5	65.5	0.0	99	1384	1.86	3	0	5.72	16.64	4.88	9.10	507	
	JUN	2	118	92.4	1062	416	76.0	24.0	0.0	95	812	1.95	2	0	5.28	19.00	3.92	7.65	531	
	JUL	3	227	84.6	1852	747	54.7	45.3	0.0	95	1275	1.71	3	0	4.69	12.39	4.03	6.89	533	
	AUG	2	15	80.0	120	36	66.7	33.3	0.0	94	58	1.62	0	0	3.71	12.01	3.00	4.87	.	
	SEP	1	11	90.9	88	41	51.2	48.8	0.0	100	54	1.31	0	0	3.10	8.25	4.66	6.10	.	
	OCT
	NOV
	DEC
Pickwick	JAN	4	65	81.5	553	208	.	.	.	.	744	3.58	14	2	8.43	23.24	3.76	13.47	39
	FEB	3	70	62.9	578	176	.	.	.	.	536	3.04	9	0	6.58	19.69	3.04	9.27	64
	MAR	4	305	82.3	2493	882	40.7	9.9	49.4	99	2756	3.12	28	3	7.69	25.09	3.54	11.06	89	
	APR	11	546	68.1	4656	1055	74.1	2.5	23.5	.	2800	2.65	19	2	6.56	16.44	2.27	6.01	103	
	MAY	6	363	78.0	3086	917	.	.	.	.	2441	2.66	8	0	6.27	19.50	2.97	7.91	51
	JUN	10	316	91.5	2672	1097	63.6	30.3	6.1	98	2949	2.69	7	0	5.23	18.91	4.11	11.04	122	
	JUL	4	77	76.6	668	220	82.8	0.0	17.2	92	623	2.83	12	0	6.40	20.63	3.30	9.33	56	
	AUG	1	6	83.3	51	25	.	.	.	.	61	2.44	6	0	6.38	20.13	4.90	11.96	9
	SEP	5	199	70.4	1692	401	.	.	.	.	979	2.44	.	.	.	14.35	2.37	5.79	.
	OCT	3	100	79.0	850	222	88.7	4.8	6.5	100	547	2.46	2	1	6.90	14.57	2.61	6.44	425	
	NOV	1	30	70.0	255	88	.	.	.	.	259	2.94	4	0	7.78	21.83	3.45	10.14	64
	DEC	2	62	83.9	527	218	.	.	.	.	779	3.57	6	1	7.80	26.46	4.14	14.77	88
Smith	JAN	1	22	59.1	176	27	14.8	85.2	0.0	100	54	2.01	0	0	3.82	.	1.53	3.08	.	
	FEB	1	11	63.6	99	31	6.5	93.5	0.0	100	68	2.20	0	0	3.63	14.50	3.13	6.89	.	
	MAR	1	27	66.7	216	60	.	.	.	.	83	1.38	0	0	2.88	9.13	2.78	3.83	.
	APR	1	199	93.0	1592	874	40.7	59.3	0.0	98	1747	2.00	3	0	6.27	17.09	5.49	10.97	531	
	MAY	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	JUN	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	JUL	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	AUG	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	SEP	6	724	74.3	5792	1053	38.7	61.3	0.0	97	2264	2.15	0	0	4.50	15.25	1.82	3.91	.	
	OCT	2	32	90.6	436	112	14.3	85.7	0.0	98	183	1.64	0	0	3.50	.	2.57	4.20	.	
	NOV
	DEC

¹a day is defined as one angler fishing for 10 hours

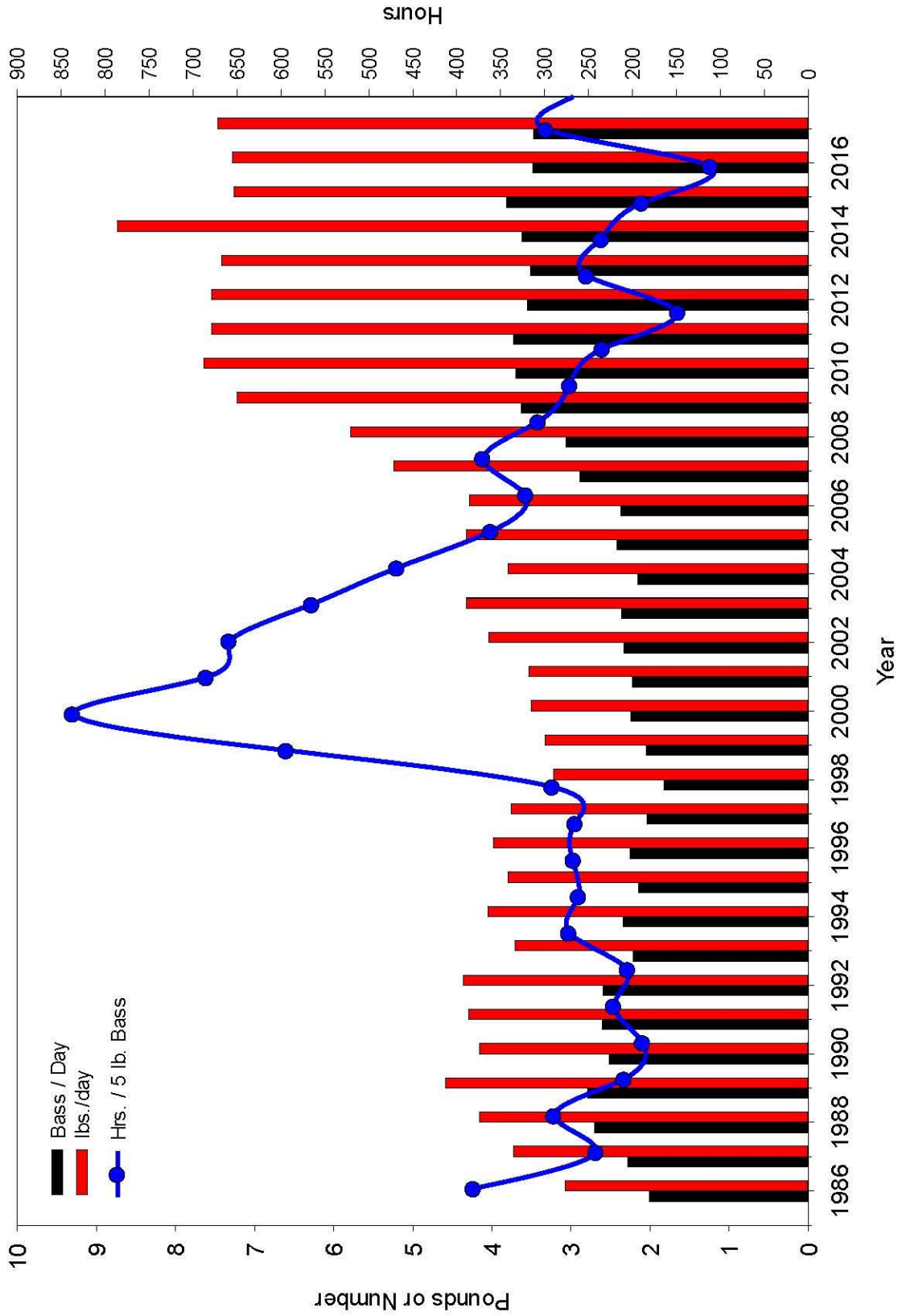


Figure 1. Annual catch for B.A.I.T. tournaments, 1986 - 2017.

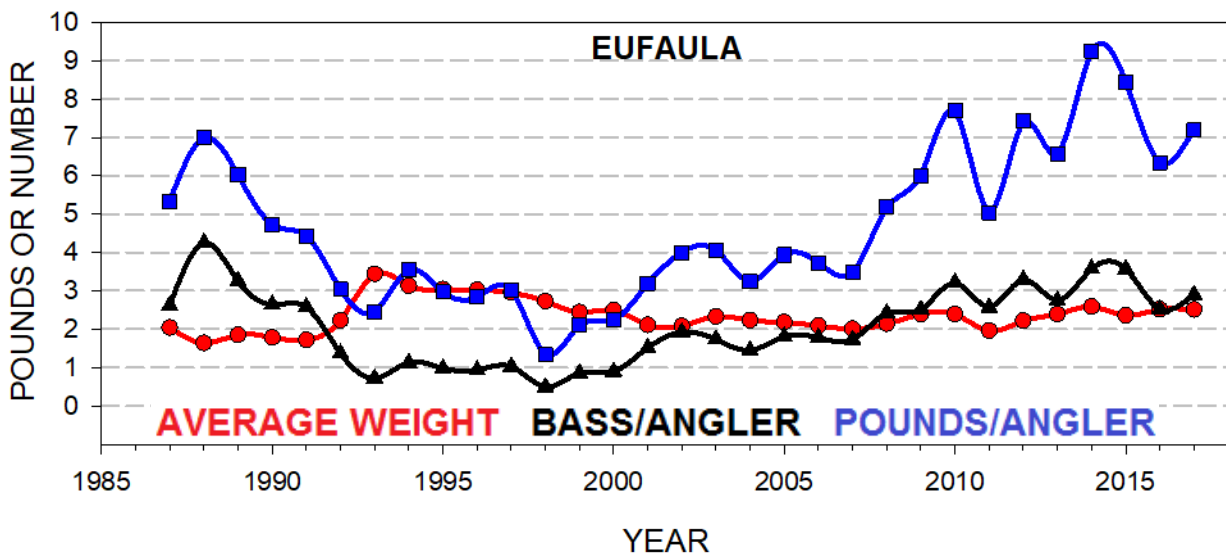
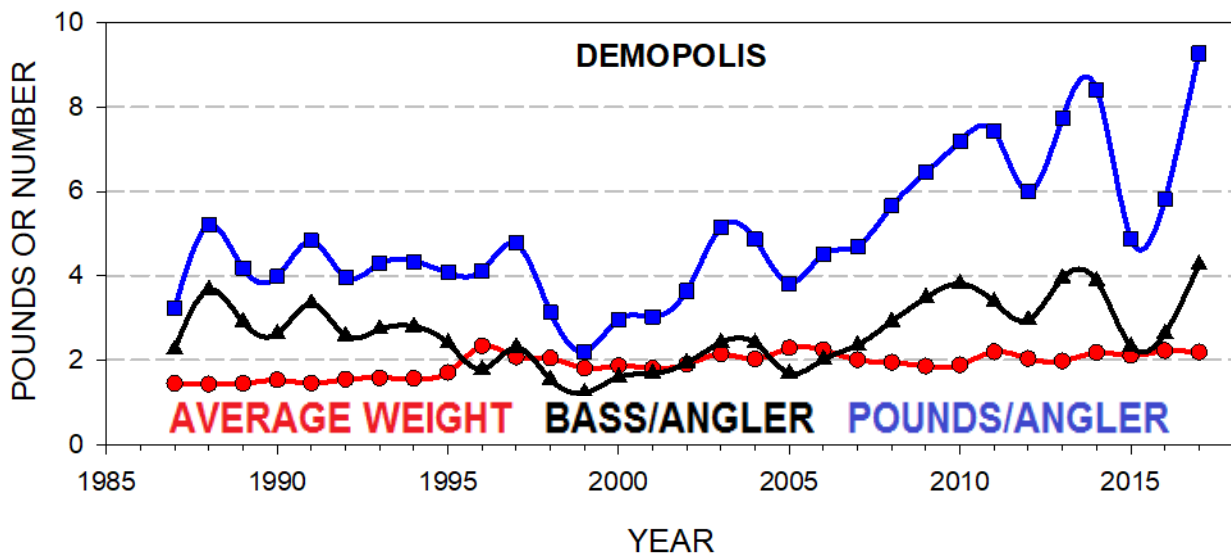
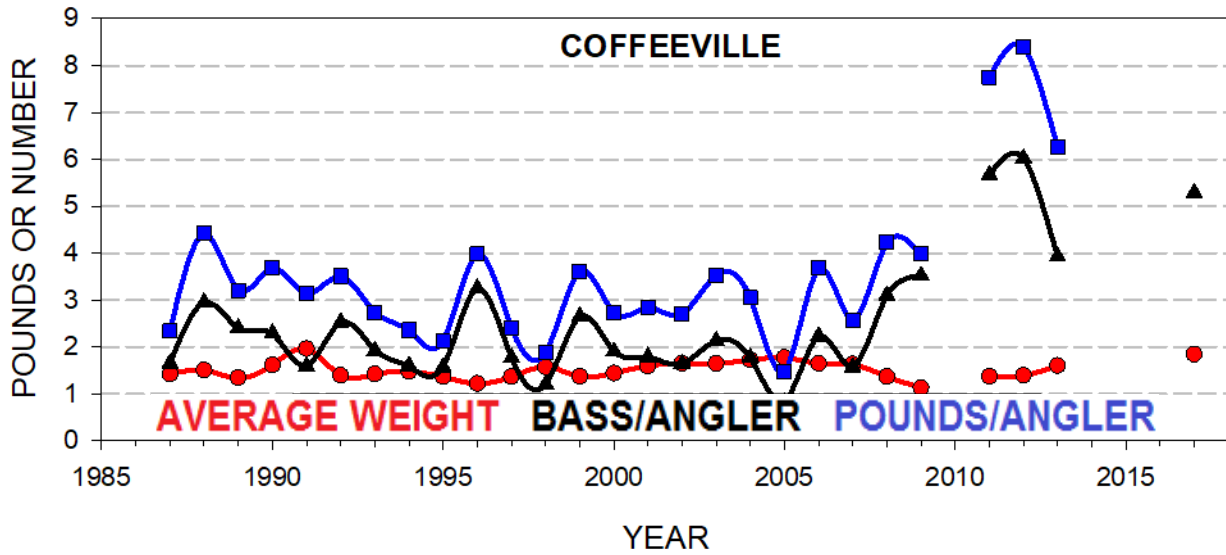


Figure 2. Annual quality indicators for Coffeerville, Demopolis, and Eufaula, through 2017.

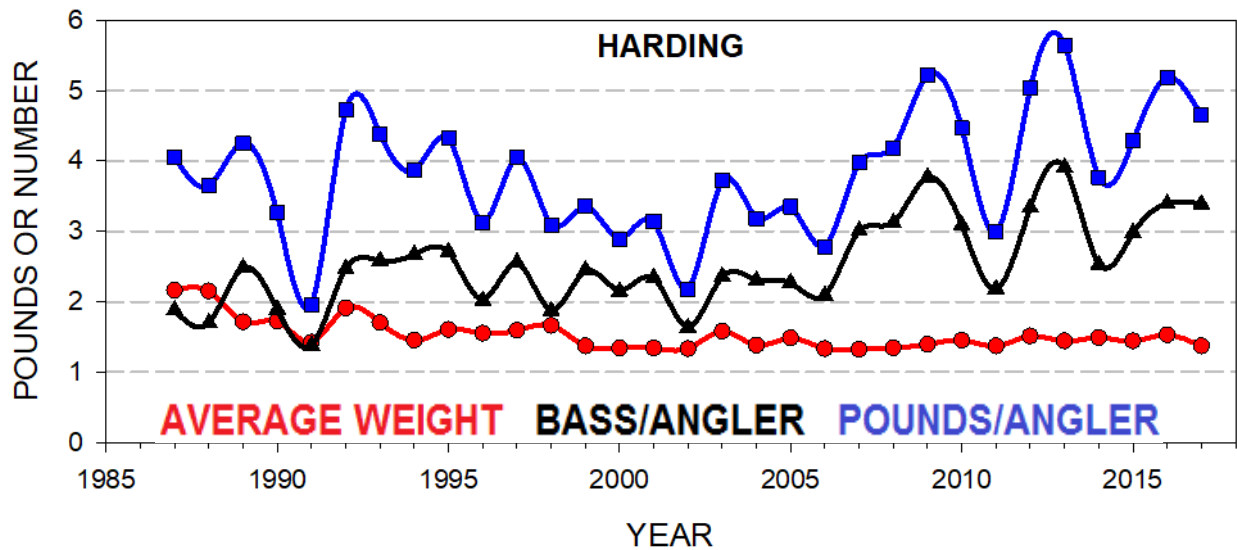
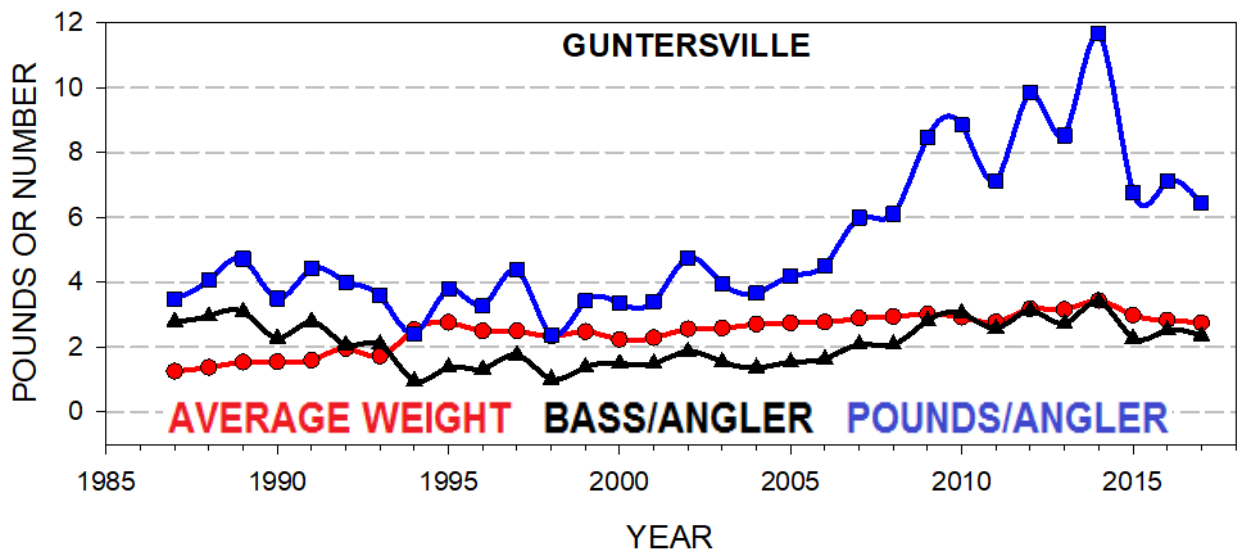
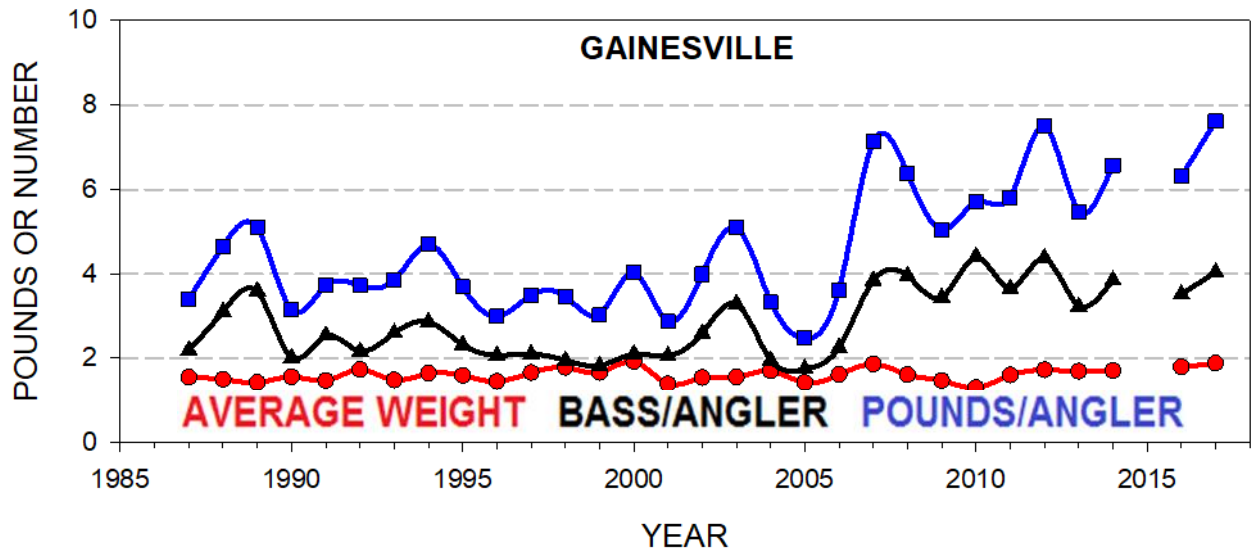


Figure 3. Annual quality indicators for Gainesville, Guntersville, and Harding, through 2017.

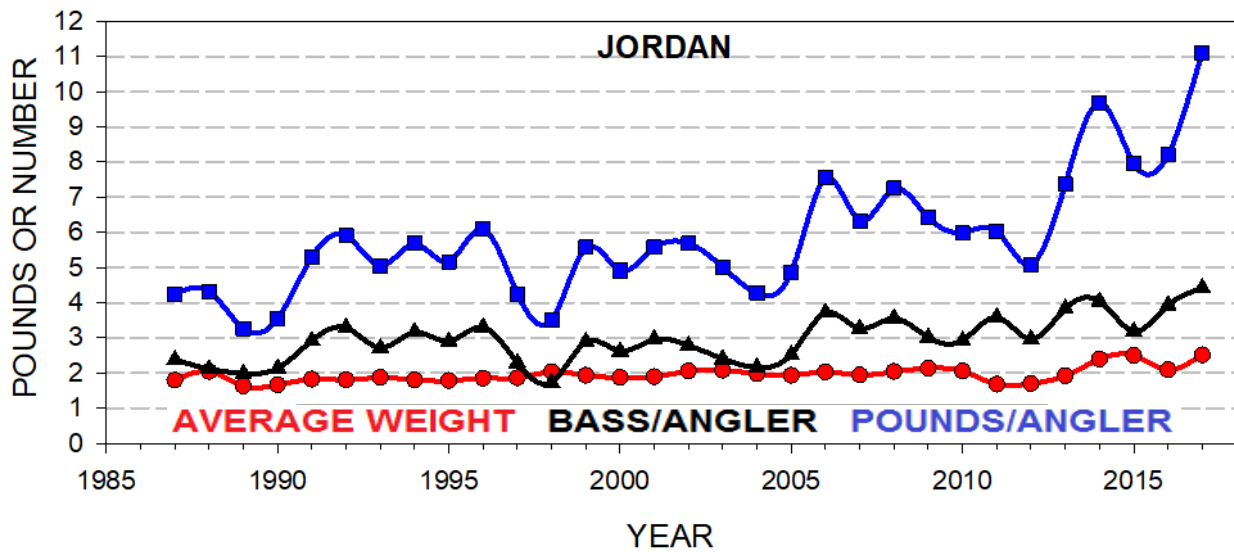
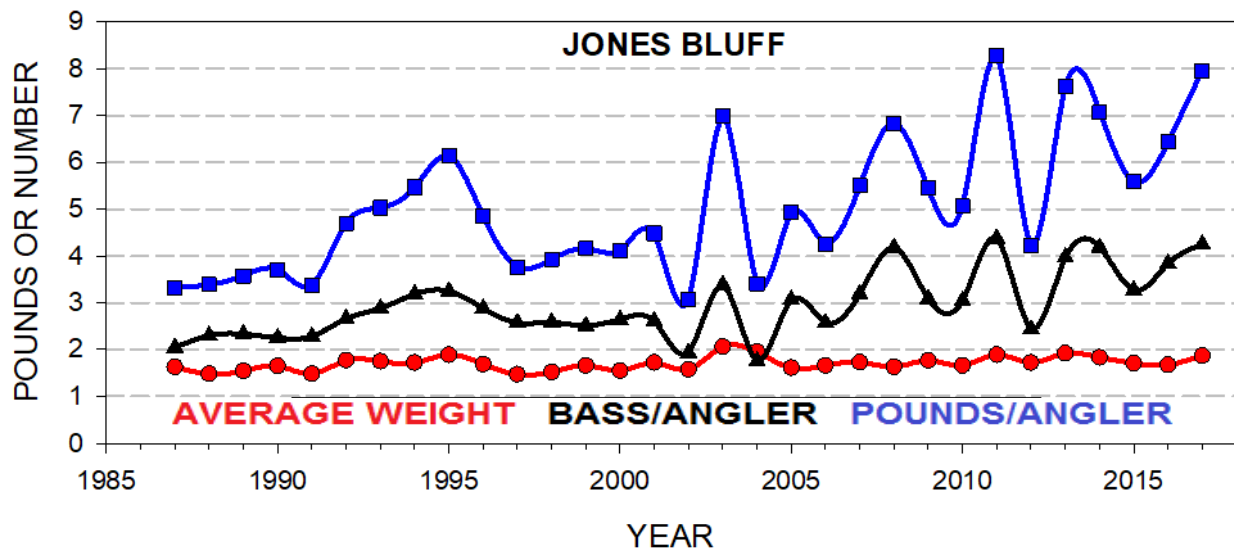
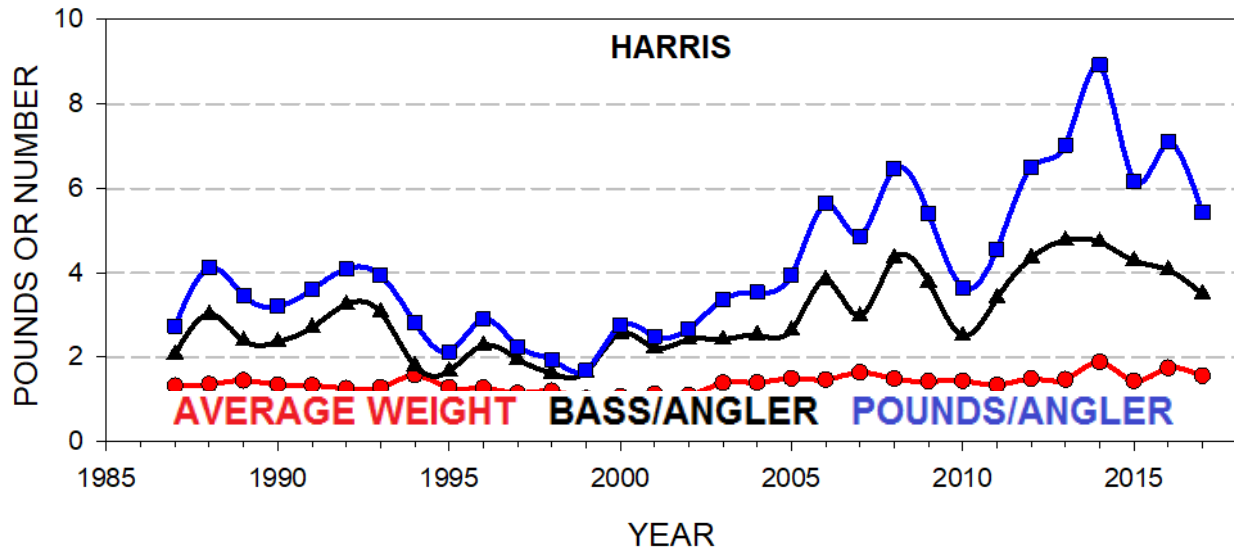


Figure 4. Annual quality indicators for Harris, Jones Bluff, and Jordan, through 2017.

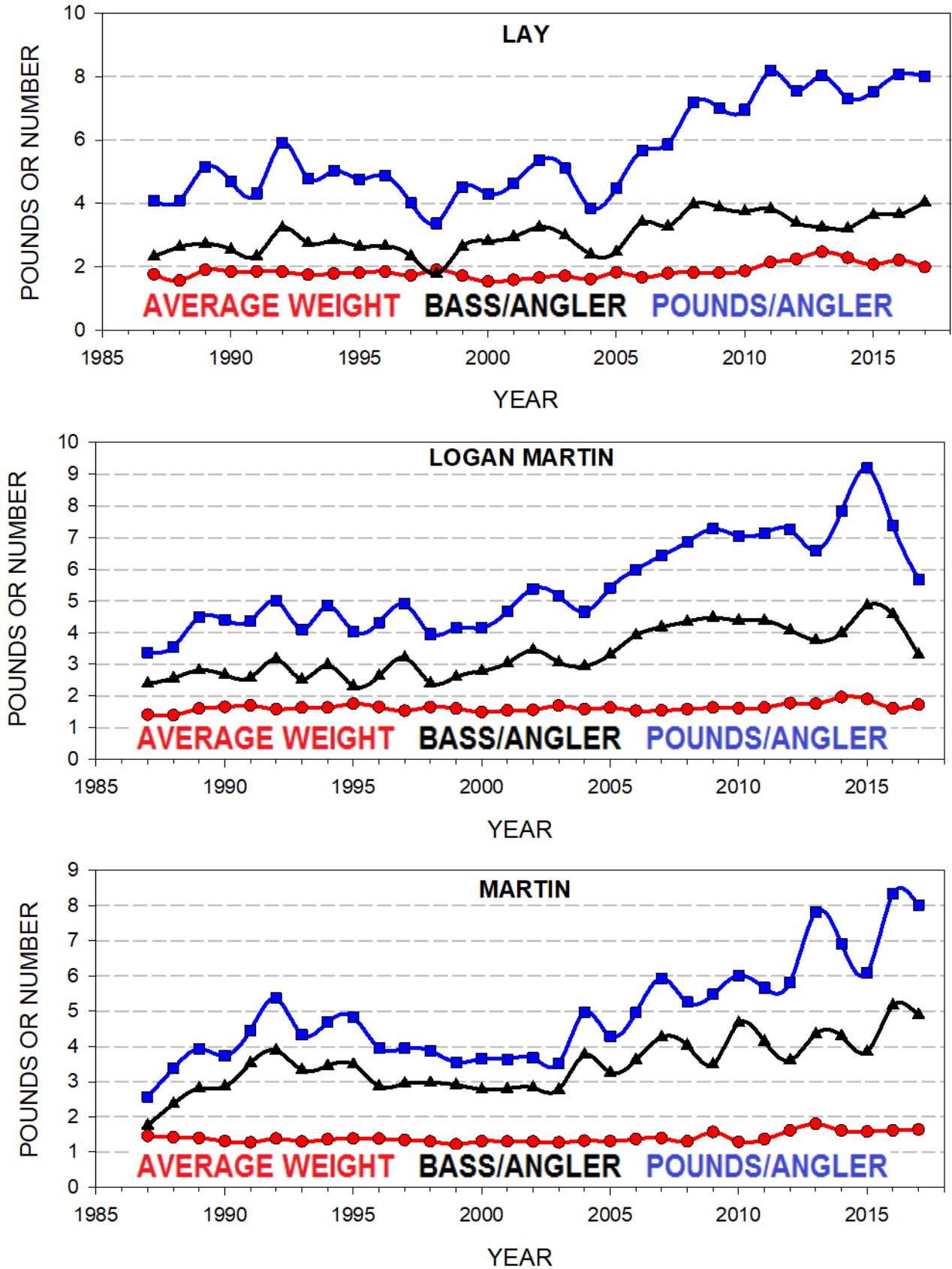


Figure 5. Annual quality indicators for Lay, Logan Martin, and Martin, through 2017.

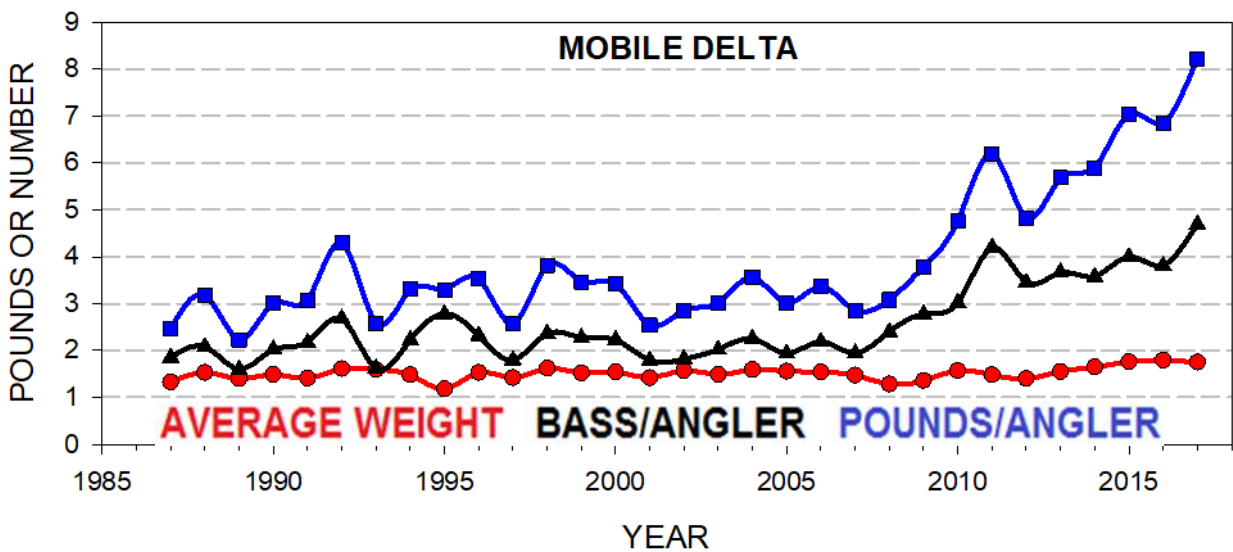
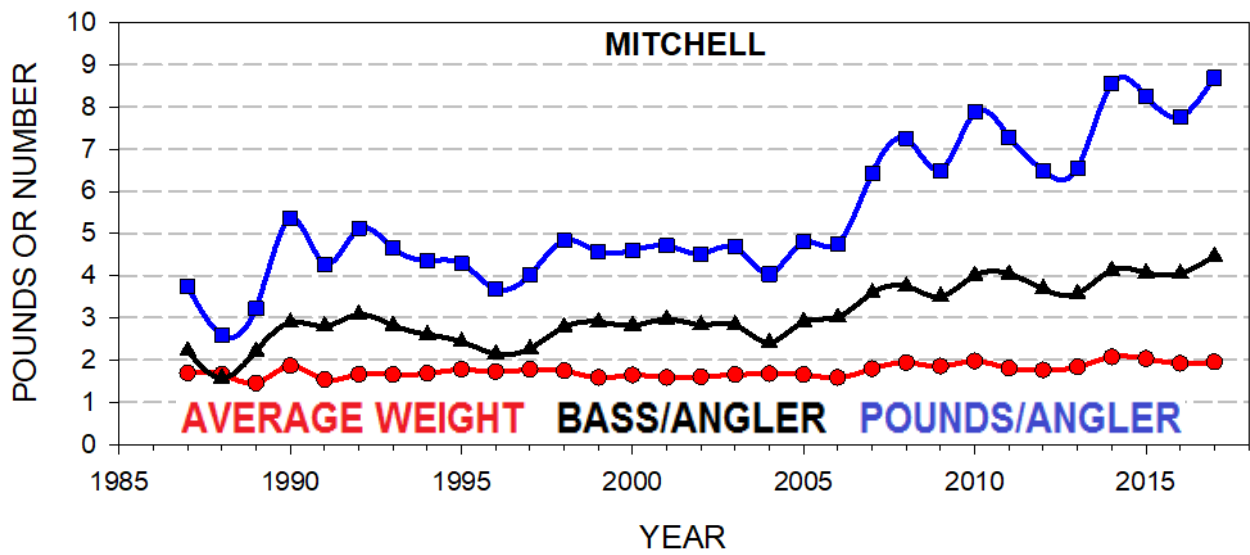
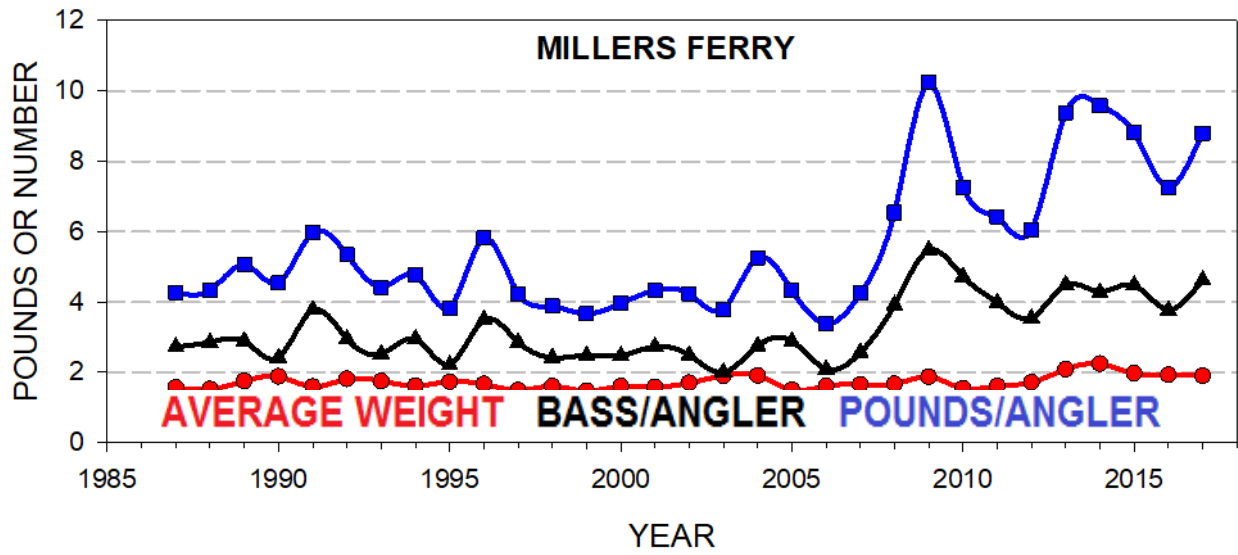


Figure 6. Annual quality indicators for Millers Ferry, Mitchell, and the Mobile Delta, through 2017.

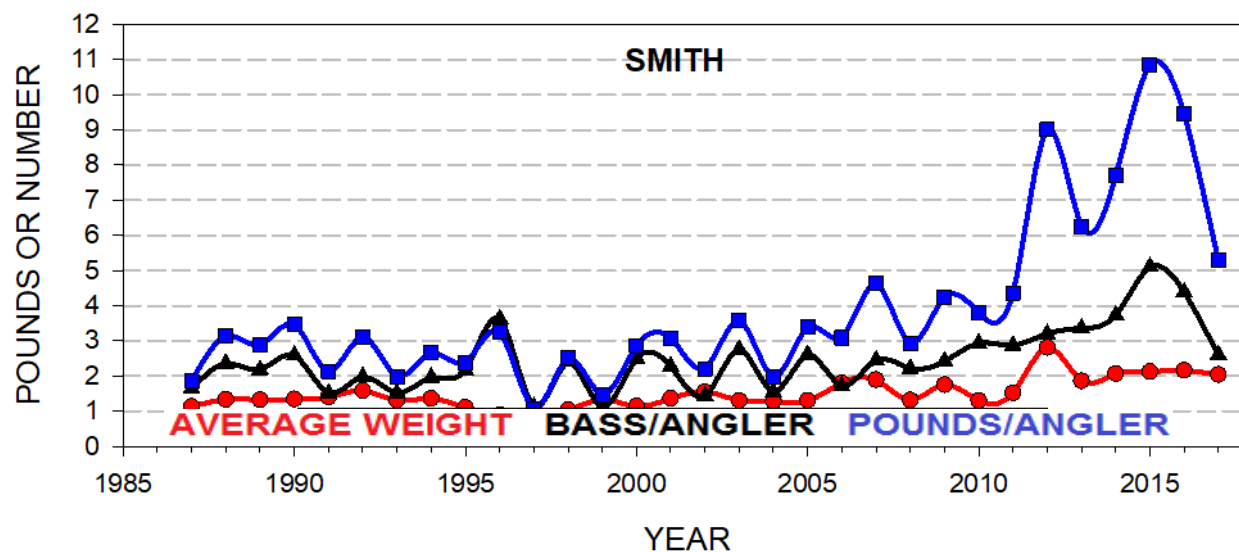
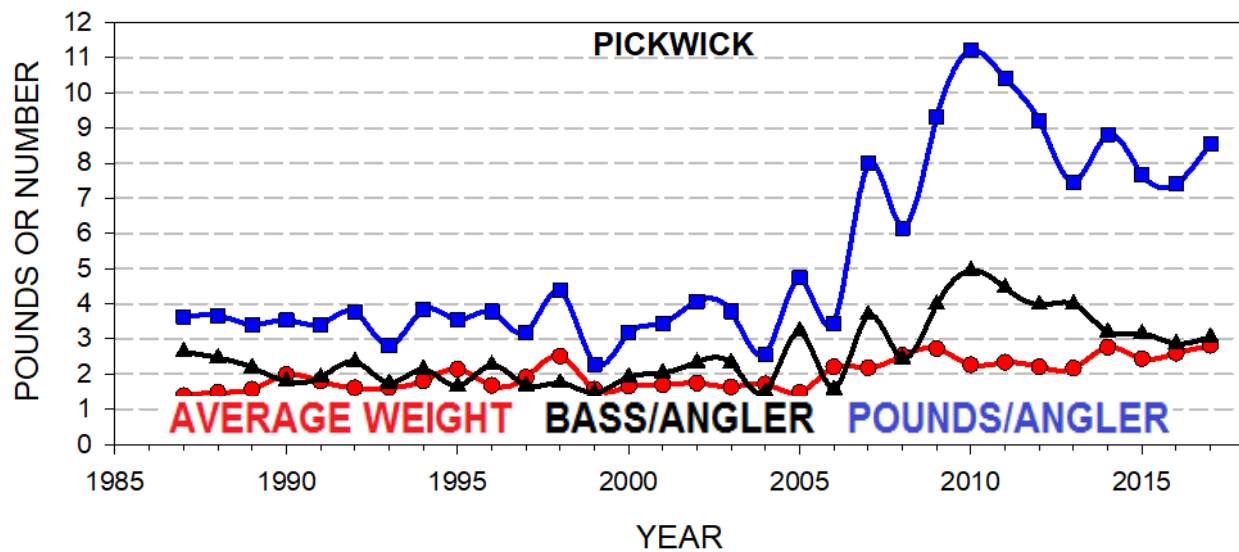
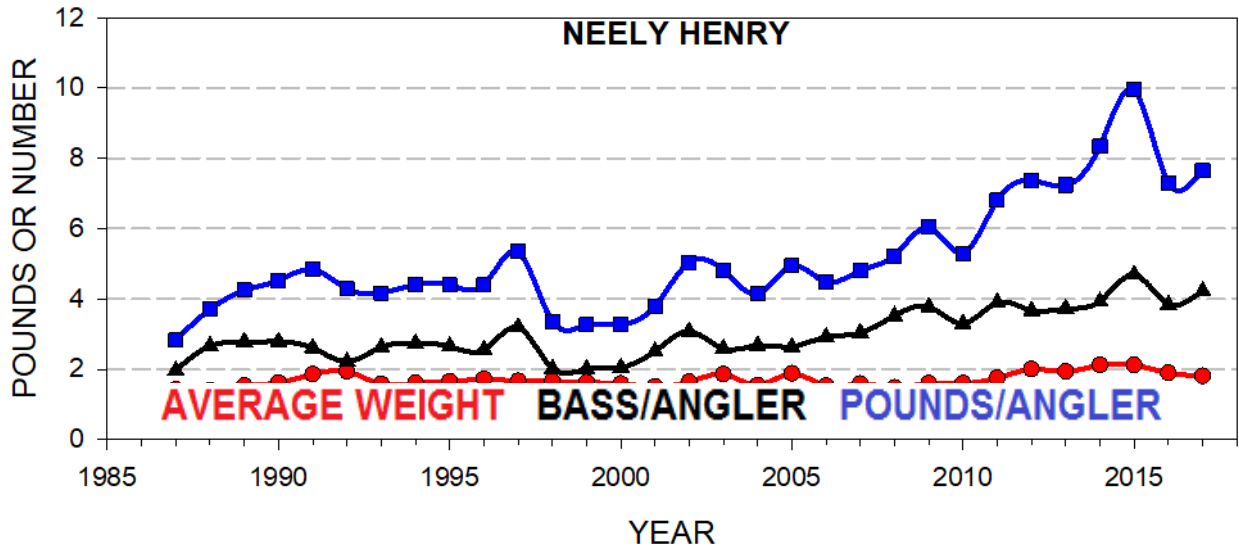


Figure 7. Annual quality indicators for Neely Henry, Pickwick, and Smith, through 2017.

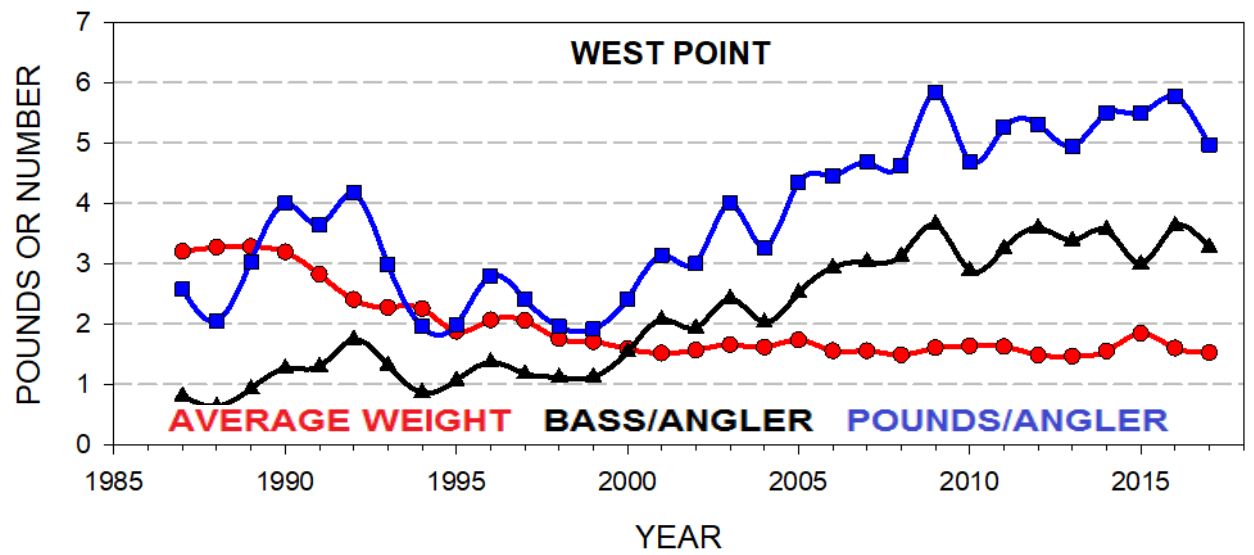
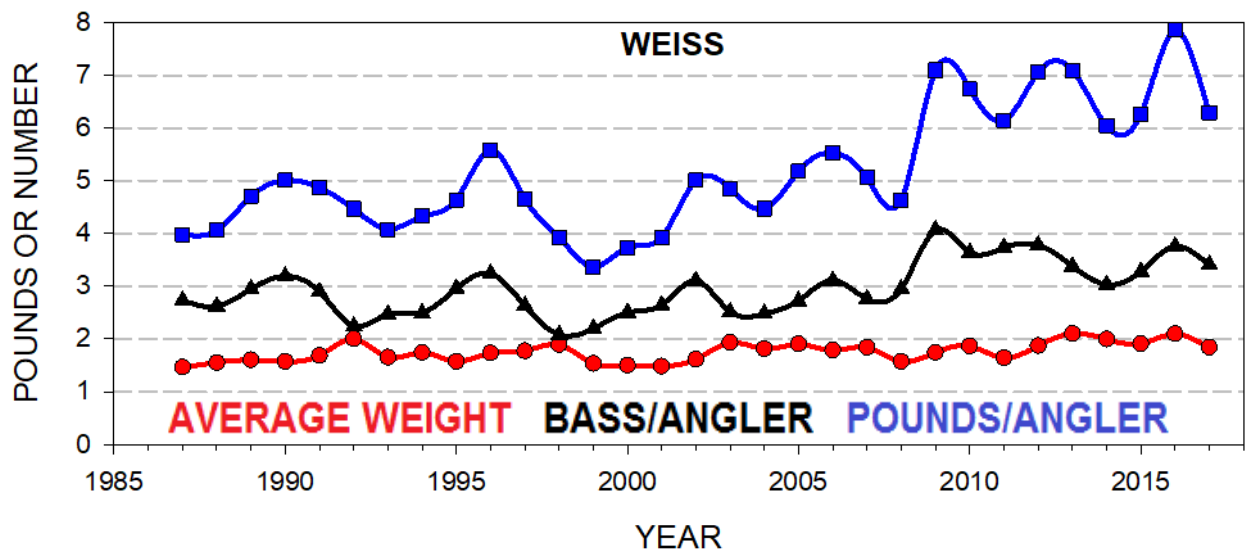
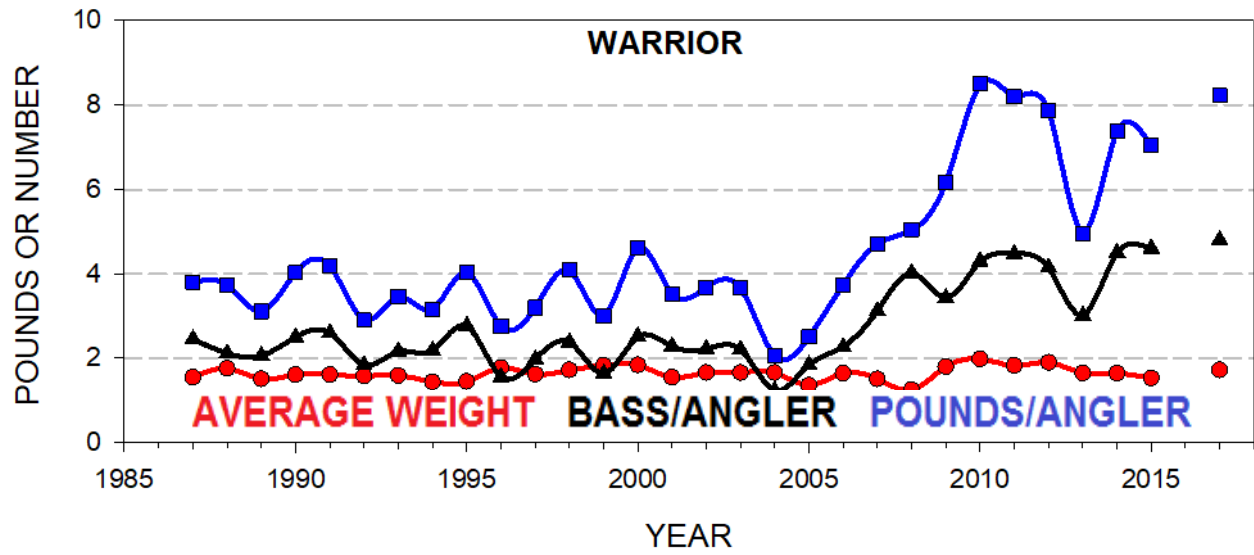


Figure 8. Annual quality indicators for Warrior, Weiss, and West Point, through 2017.

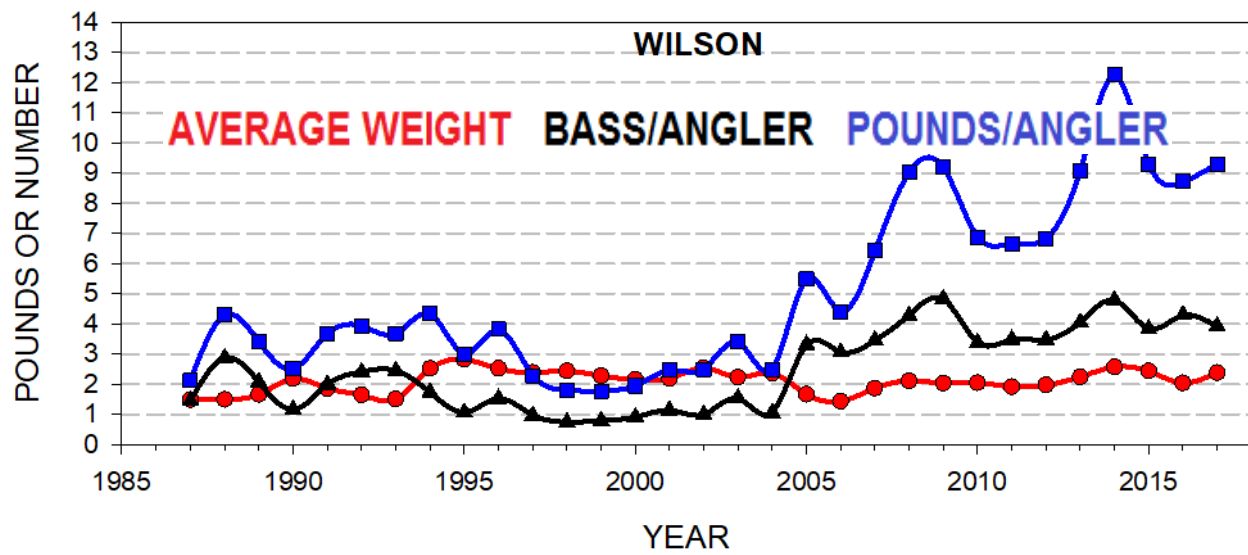
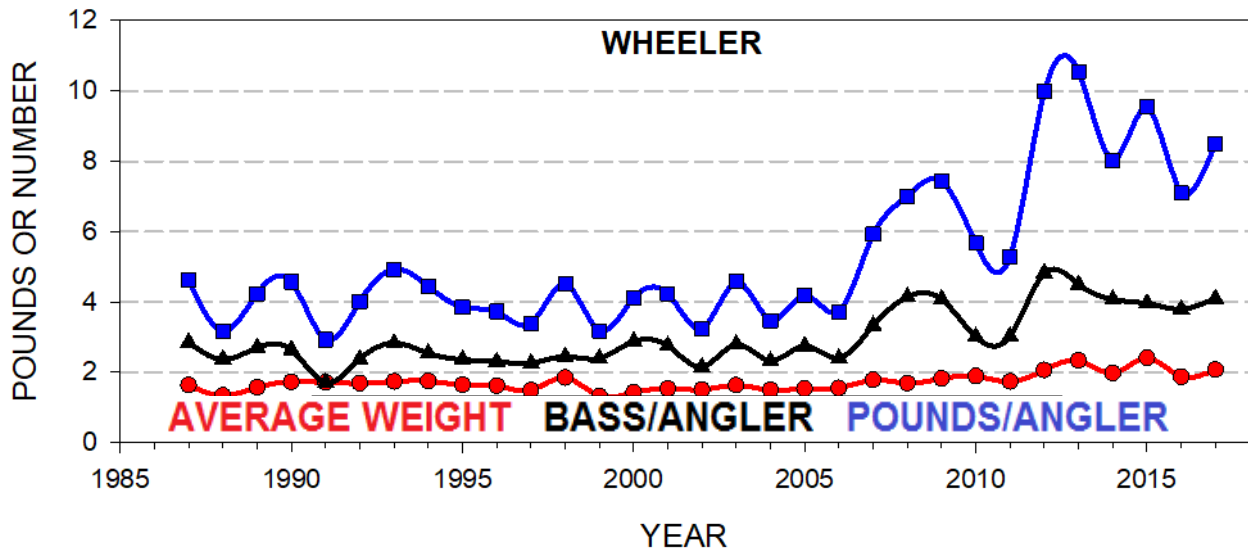


Figure 9. Annual quality indicators for Wheeler and Wilson, through 2017.

Other Topics

TOURNAMENT PERMITS

The Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries does not require tournament organizations to secure tournament permits for any of their events. However, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA), Department of Public Safety (DPS), Marine Patrol requires a Marine Event Permit for any event (including bass tournaments) with more than 100 boats participating. Applications can be obtained from the ALEA Marine Patrol free of charge by calling (334) 242-3630, and must be completed and submitted to them at least 15 days prior to the event.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also requires a Special Use Permit for bass tournaments with more than 10 boats which are held on any of their reservoirs. Corps permits must be submitted 30 days prior to the event, and can be obtained from your local project office or from their website at: <http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Recreation/>.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS ANNUAL DAY USE PERMITS

Annual passes can be obtained from the guard station at all park entrances, or by contacting your local Corp of Engineers Resources Management office. These passes allow you to use any boat ramp operated and maintained by the Corps of Engineers, nationwide. The charge for these permits is \$40 and is good for one year from the date of purchase. Local and regional offices are listed below.

Alabama River Lakes Site Office (Hayneville)	334-872-9554
Millers Ferry Resource Office (Camden)	334-682-4244
Holt Resource Office (Peterson)	205-553-9373
Black Warrior/Tombigbee Project Mgmt. Office (Tuscaloosa)	205-752-3571
Demopolis Site Office (Demopolis)	334-289-3540
Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Office (Carrollton)	205-373-8705

TRAILER TOURNAMENTS

Any tournaments where rules permit anglers to fish in various water bodies and then bring their catch to a particular lake for a weigh-in where fish are then released alive into that body of water are in direct violation of Alabama's Public Water Stocking (220-2-.129) regulation. Moving live fish from one lake to another can have a number of detrimental consequences; examples include 1) moving fish caught from lakes with consumption advisories into lakes without advisories, 2) introducing genetically inferior strains of spotted bass into our world-class spotted bass fisheries of the Coosa River, 3) introducing diseases such as the Largemouth Bass Virus which decimated many of our bass fisheries in Alabama beginning in the late 1990's, 4) diluting the genetic benefits of our Florida bass stocking program, and 5) introducing non-native, potentially harmful species into lakes where they do not currently exist.

It is important for anglers to know that only the act of releasing fish into a body of water other than where they were caught is

illegal. If tournament organizations want to continue to offer these types of tournaments to their competitors, they are certainly free to do so as long as the fish brought in from other reservoirs are not released there. If you participate in one of these tournaments, **do not release your fish into a lake you did not catch them from**. Your fish can be eaten, donated to a charitable organization such as an orphanage, or returned to the reservoir from which they were caught. Fish can only be moved legally from one reservoir to another if they are transported by boat through a navigable lock.

CATCH-AND-RELEASE

Access area creel surveys conducted by Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries biologists have revealed a significant decline in bass harvest rates, statewide. In 2017, nearly 100% of all bass caught from public waters were released.

As the catch-and-release ethic has evolved during the last 25 years due to intense promotion by tournament organizations and participants, many well-intentioned anglers have become so passionate about this angling ethic that they feel a moral obligation to release every bass they catch, which often leads them to make some poor choices with regard to the handling of their fish.

An unfortunate consequence of catch-and-release is that tournament anglers are often so focused on releasing their fish alive, that they sometimes fail to recognize when a fish is too far gone to survive the stress. Making this mistake can result in numerous dead fish floating in the water around the boat ramp the following day. The number of complaints received by ADCNR accusing tournament anglers of killing and wasting fish during organized bass tournaments is on the rise, so please encourage your anglers to be aware of this growing problem, and consider adopting tournament rules that discourage the release of fish in poor condition following bass tournaments.

Tournament Website

www.outdooralabama.com/tournaments

Type the above link into your web browser to access the improved "Fishing Tournaments" webpage where you can post your tournaments or view those posted by other organizations.

Click here to post information about your tournament, then . . .

enter your tournament information including contacts, a link to your website, or even a copy of the registration form.

The screenshot shows the website's search interface. At the top, there are filters for "Tournament Type" (Freshwater Fishing), "Month and Year" (a dropdown), "Body" (a dropdown), and "Target Species" (a dropdown). Below these is a "Get Tournaments" button. A table titled "Freshwater Fishing Tournaments" lists various events with columns for Organization, Water Body, Boat Ramp, Start Date Time, End Date Time, and Species. A red circle highlights the search filters, and a red arrow points from the "Post a New Fishing Tournament" link to the search filters.

Organization	Water Body	Boat Ramp	Start Date Time	End Date Time	Species
ALABAMA WEEKEND ANGLERS STOP #5	Lay	Beeswax	07/18/2015 6:00 AM CT	07/18/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
Auburn Bassmasters	Jordan	Camp Rotary (State Ramp)	07/18/2015 5:30 AM CT	07/18/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
Central Bama Bass Club	Jordan	Bonner's Point	08/08/2015 4:00 AM CT	08/08/2015 12:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
En Fuego Ministries	Mitchell	Higgins Ferry Park	08/08/2015 6:00 PM CT	08/09/2015 6:00 AM CT	Bass (Black)
En Fuego Ministries	Mitchell	Higgins Ferry Park	08/08/2015 6:00 PM CT	08/09/2015 6:00 AM CT	Bass (Black)
OGS Tournament Trails	Eufaula	Lakepoint State Park	08/08/2015 Safe Daylight	08/08/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
Casting for the Cure	Logan Martin	Pell City Lakeside City Park	09/12/2015 6:00 AM CT or Safe Daylight	09/12/2015 2:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
OGS Tournament Trails	Eufaula	Lakepoint State Park	09/12/2015 Safe Daylight	09/12/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
	Guntersville	Goose Pond	09/18/2015 Safe Daylight	09/19/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
	Guntersville	Val Monte Rd. (Bucky Howe)	09/19/2015 6:30 AM CT	09/19/2015 3:00 PM CT	Catfish
	Guntersville	Guntersville State Park	09/19/2015 Safe Daylight	09/19/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
	Lay	Beeswax	09/19/2015 5:00 AM CT or Safe Daylight	09/19/2015 2:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
	Jordan	State Ramp (Camp Rotary)	09/19/2015 Safe Daylight	09/19/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
	ation Smith	Smith Lake Park	10/03/2015 Safe Daylight	10/03/2015 TBD	Bass, Bass (Black)
	Eufaula	Lakepoint State Park	10/03/2015 Safe Daylight	10/03/2015 3:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)
	Wheeler	Ingalls Harbor	10/09/2015 5:30 AM CT	10/10/2015 5:00 PM CT	Bass (Black)

Select from these options to search all tournaments being held statewide.

Please let other tournament anglers know about this website, and if you have questions or comments call 334-242-3471.

This website exists for your convenience and we welcome any suggestions you might have that would improve this valuable tool.

The form is titled "Fishing Tournaments" and includes a "Home" link. It contains several input fields: "Tournament Types" (dropdown), "First Name", "Last Name", "Email Address", "Phone Number", "Organization", "Target Species" (dropdown), "Water Body" (dropdown), "Boat Ramp" (dropdown), "Start Date", "End Date", "Start Time" (with AM/PM and Safe Daylight options), "End Time" (with Weigh-In and Hours of Fishing options), "Estimated Number of Boats", "Tournament Overview" (text area), "Web Address", and "Upload File" (with "Select File" button). A "Submit" button is at the bottom. A "PLEASE NOTE:" section states: "The tournament must be approved by the DCNR staff before it is displayed on OutdoorAlabama.com."

New Online BAIT Reporting System

tournaments.dcnr.alabama.gov

Type the above link into your web browser to access the new online BAIT Reporting System where you can easily submit your tournament catch data.

BAIT - An Official Web site of Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Home Tournament Report Manage Fishing Club

B.A.I.T. Tournament Report

* If possible please submit a Tournament Report for each day *

Reporter				Tournament Rules, Fish Type, and Number Caught							
Name	<input type="text" value="Robert Kyle Bolton"/>	Email	<input type="text"/>	Phone	<input type="text"/>	Creel Limit	<input type="text"/>	Size Limit	<input type="text"/>	Fishing Time	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
Fishing Club <input type="button" value="Add New Club"/>				LargeMouth	<input type="text"/>	Spotted	<input type="text"/>	SmallMouth	<input type="text"/>		
Fishing Club	<input type="text" value="-Select one-"/>	Representative	<input type="text"/>	#Bass Caught	<input type="text" value="0"/>	#Bass Released	<input type="text"/>	#Over 5 Lbs	<input type="text" value="0"/>	#Over 8 Lbs	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Street	<input type="text"/>	City	<input type="text"/>	#of Anglers or Teams	<input type="text" value="0"/>	#of ANGLERS/TEAMS with Limits	<input type="text" value="0"/>	#of ANGLERS/TEAMS with 1 or more Bass	<input type="text" value="0"/>		
State	<input type="text" value="-Select one-"/>	Zip	<input type="text"/>	You can enter Weights in either Lbs or Lbs & Ozs <input type="radio"/> Lbs <input checked="" type="radio"/> Lbs & Ozs							
Tournament Dates, and Types				Total Weight of Bass	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	Lbs	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Ozs			
Reservoir	<input type="text" value="-Select one-"/>	Launch Site	<input type="text"/>	Big Bass Weight	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	Lbs	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Ozs			
Start Date	<input type="text"/>	End Date	<input type="text"/>	Winning Weight	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	Lbs	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Ozs			
Weighin	<input type="text" value="-Select one-"/>	Format	<input type="text" value="-Select one-"/>								
Time	<input type="text" value="-Select one-"/>										

This system is an additional option for submitting BAIT tournament reports. Anglers can still email their reports to kyle.bolton@dcnr.alabama.gov by using the Excel file found at outdooralabama.com/tournaments or by mailing in paper BAIT cards to 3608 Fairground Rd., Montgomery, AL 36110. If you would like copies of the paper cards or have any questions, please call 334-242-3471.

The BAIT program is a valuable fisheries management tool. Without the support of tournament anglers and organizers, this program would not exist.

THANK YOU!

Boating Access

The Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries maintains 114 public boating access areas statewide. Several of these facilities received upgrades during 2017. For more information on ADCNR freshwater boating access, visit boatramps.dcnr.alabama.gov/.

Leesburg (Weiss)

ADCNR is working with the Town of Leesburg to renovate and provide a major boat ramp facility on Weiss Lake (Coosa River). Phase I will be completed by summer of 2018 and phase II will be completed fall of 2020. Phase I includes construction of a new 60' wide launching slab, paved entrance and exit roads with make ready and tie down areas, paved parking for 263 truck / trailer rigs and construction of two 50' floating piers. Phase II will include a 412' wharf style pier with 18 finger piers. The pier will accommodate 36 vessels at once. The Town of Leesburg will be responsible for ordinary maintenance.



New ramp construction at Leesburg

Canoe Creek (Neely Henry)

ADCNR partnered with St. Clair Co. to provide a modern boat ramp on Neely Henry (Coosa River). The property is leased to ADCNR by St. Clair County. The facility is capable of hosting most major fishing tournaments. Located east of Rainbow City, the facility includes a 60' wide launching slab, paved parking for 80 truck / trailer rigs, make ready and tie down areas, two 100' floating piers and two fixed boardwalk piers. The design allows users to effectively launch and retrieve boats at a fast pace during high use periods. St. Clair Co. is responsible for all ordinary maintenance.



New facility at Canoe Creek

Pollard (Conecuh River)

This project was completed winter of 2017. ADCNR partnered with Escambia County to provide a modern boating access facility on the Conecuh River near Pollard (9 miles south of Brewton, AL). The new facility includes a 15' wide launching slab and parking for 17 truck / trailer rigs. It provides access on a stretch of the Conecuh River that is void of comparable access for miles upstream and downstream.

Smith Lake Park (Smith)

Major renovations to Smith Lake Park Boat Ramp broke ground in 2017. ADCNR is working with Cullman Co. to expand the facility to handle most local and regional fishing tournaments. Phase I will be completed spring of 2018 and will include a 90' wide launching slab (6 lanes), paved parking for 113 truck / trailer rigs and 10 cars (with make ready and tie down areas). The final phase is scheduled to begin fall of 2018. Improvements include: security lighting, paved overflow parking for 70 truck / trailer rigs, one 45' stationary aluminum pier, two floating aluminum piers (225' and 170') and a fixed aluminum pedestrian bridge connecting the overflow and main parking areas. ADCNR leases the property from Cullman Co., who will handle routine maintenance.



Renovation at Smith Lake Park

Others

Shelby County began clearing and grading for a new overflow parking lot at **Beeswax (Lay)**, which will increase the truck / trailer parking from 71 to 155. ADCNR plans to pave and stripe the new lot in 2018. Alabama Power Company constructed new sidewalks to adjoin the existing access piers at **Pace's Point (Martin)**, **Hwy. 48 Bridge (Harris)** and **Glover's Ferry (Lay)** access areas. ADCNR constructed two new access piers (5'x 50' and 5'x 60') to replace flood damaged piers at **Cliff's Landing (Mobile Delta)**, repaved the head of the ramp to provide smooth access to the launching slab at **Honeycomb Creek (Guntersville)**, installed handrails at **Lion's Park (Smith)** and replaced the launching slab at **Pride Station Landing (Pickwick)** to provide easier access during winter pool. All new boat landings and renovations comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design.

Habitat Enhancement

Habitat is a pillar that allows all organisms to thrive. As our reservoirs continue to age, we need to curtail loss of habitat and explore ways to effectively manage our watersheds for the benefit of our natural resources and the public. Our program intends to efficiently attract fish in our state's reservoirs, produce more fish if habitat is a limiting factor in a particular waterbody, improve water quality in our streams, rivers and reservoirs, and monitor effectiveness. Our efforts should increase angler success, improve fishery health, water quality and contribute research data and ideas for use by other resource managers.

In 2017, the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Team completed a number of reservoir habitat restoration projects, and prepared for many upcoming enhancement activities. Since the first year of the program (2015) over 3,700 fish attractors have been installed throughout the state.

While most of the projects have focused on *fish attraction* (i.e. artificial structures), other projects are aimed to enhance *fish production*. The Environmental Affairs Division of Alabama Power Co. and other partners have assisted with many projects, including transplanting native American water willow (*Justicia americana*) on Martin and Smith Reservoirs, as well as buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) on Martin, Smith, West Point, Logan Martin and Weiss Reservoirs. These projects will greatly enhance aquatic habitat, providing cover for juvenile fishes and nesting cover for largemouth bass. Reservoirs selected for aquatic vegetation enhancement operate on an annual drawdown schedule. These unstable water levels are not conducive for "natural" establishment of aquatic vegetation, therefore, efforts to transplant native vegetation are ongoing. We expect that placing these plants in the "drawdown zone" will coax them into long-term colonization.

List of habitat projects completed in 2017

Waterbody	Type	Amount	Install Date
Neely Henry	Spiderblocks	100	Apr. 2017
Holt	Bamboo	9	May 2017
Jordan	Porcupine@Fish Attractors	50	Jul. 2017
Martin	Porcupine@Fish Attractors	35	Aug. 2017
Martin	Spiderblocks	15	Aug. 2017
Lay	Spiderblocks	30	Aug. 2017
Gainesville	Cedar trees	50	Dec. 2017
Point A	Spiderblocks	50	Dec. 2017
Point A	Pea gravel substrate	0.25 ac.	Dec. 2017
Smith	Water willow establishment	0.5 ac.	Mar. 2017
Harris	Water willow establishment	0.5 ac.	Mar. 2017
Martin	Buttonbush establishment	750	Aug. 2017
Smith	Buttonbush establishment	600	Aug. 2017
Weiss	Buttonbush establishment	1000	Aug. 2017
West Point	Buttonbush establishment	200	Aug. 2017
Logan Martin	Buttonbush establishment	300	Aug. 2017
Mitchell	Christmas trees	250	Feb. 2017
Jordan	Christmas trees	150	Feb. 2017
Smith	Christmas trees	150	Mar. 2017
Martin	Christmas trees	150	Mar. 2017

Visit the Outdoor Alabama Interactive Map on the web (conservationgis.alabama.gov/dcnr/) to view detailed structure locations. Coordinates can be downloaded at <http://www.outdooralabama.com/freshwater-fishing/where-fish-alabama>.



Planted Buttonbush on Smith Lake



Spiderblocks installed during Point A Reservoir drawdown

Habitat Enhancement



Newly planted water willow on Lake Martin



Artificial fish attractors ready for installation on Lake Jordan

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The mission of the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division is to manage, protect, conserve and enhance the wildlife and aquatic resources of Alabama for the sustainable benefit of the people of Alabama.

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