

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



FISHERIES BUREAU



MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211
www.mdwfp.com



Your purchase of fishing equipment and motor boat fuels supports Sport Fish Restoration and boating access facilities.

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) began a program in 1998 for bass tournament anglers to help biologists monitor bass populations. These results continue to be a valuable addition to the data that MDWFP biologists use to manage bass populations. In some waters, it may be the only measure we have of what anglers are catching.

Bass clubs and tournament organizers are encouraged to provide tournament results to MDWFP on the form shown below. The form may be mailed, faxed or emailed to the address below. Forms, reports and data input can be accessed via internet at:

<http://www.mdwfp.com/fishing-boating/fishing-tournaments.aspx>

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT REPORT CARD

Lake: _____	Date: _____	Start: _____	Stop: _____
Tournament Type:	Individual ()	Team ()	Director: _____
Club or Organization: _____			Phone: _____
Address: _____	City: _____	State: _____	Zip: _____
Total No. of Anglers or Teams: _____		Limits Caught: _____	
Number of bass weighed-in:	_____		
Total Weight (all bass):	_____Lbs.	_____ozs./tenths	
First Place Weight:	_____Lbs.	_____ozs./tenths	
Tournament Lunker:	_____Lbs.	_____ozs./tenths	
No. of Bass over 5 Pounds: _____			

By mail: Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks C/O Larry Pugh 1505 Eastover Drive Jackson, MS 39215	ph: 601-432-2208 fax: 601-432-2203 email: larry.pugh@mdwfp.state.ms.us
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2016 Bass Tournament Summary

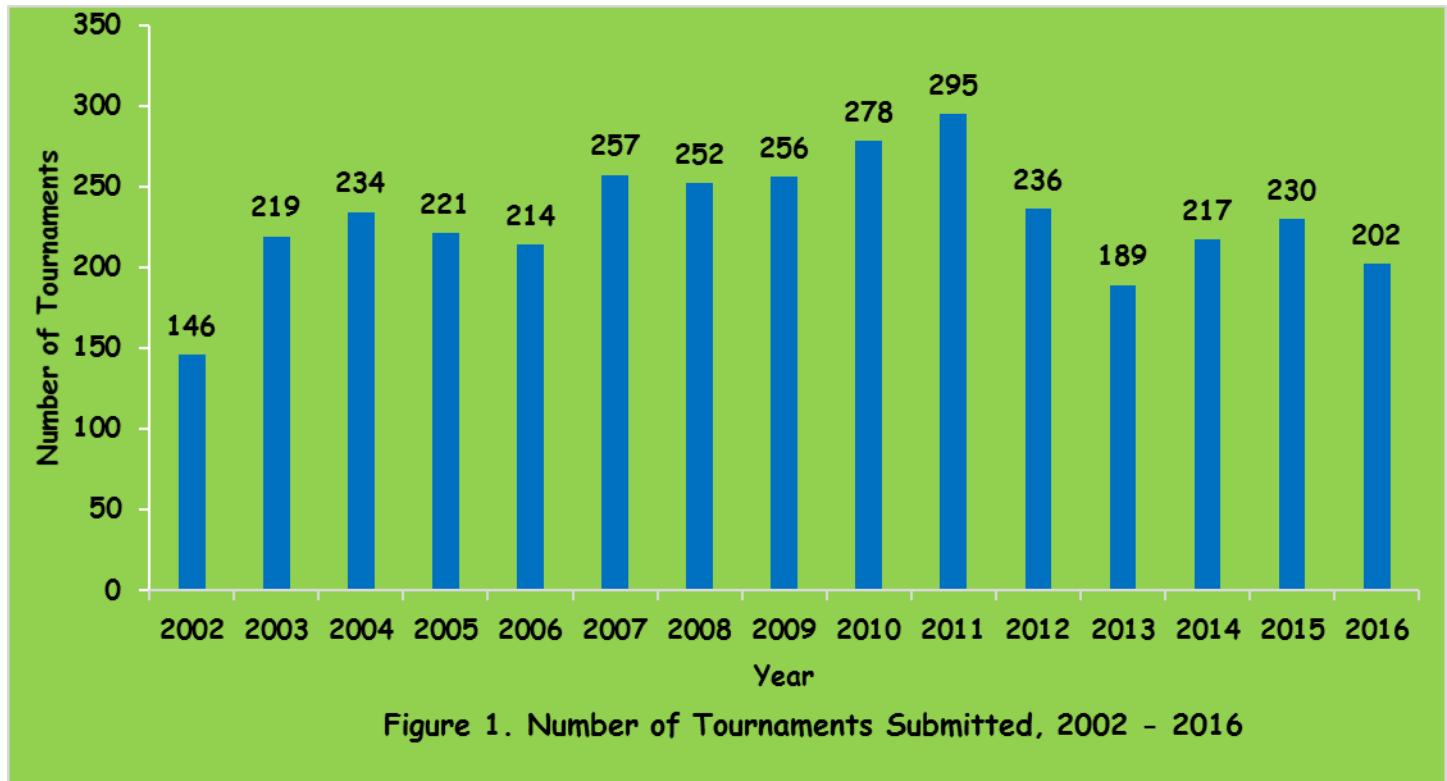
Mississippi's bass tournament anglers had another good year in 2016 based on 202 tournament reports. Average statistics for all lakes in 2016 were similar to those in 2014 and 2015. The average weight of bass and total numbers of bass caught were higher in 2016 than in 2014 or 2015. In 2016, average lunker weight was higher than the 2014 value, but lower than the 2015 value. **At least five reports** are needed from a lake to be included in the final "Lake Rankings." In addition, the five reports must include all of the information for each ranking metric. Eight lakes were included in the lake rankings. Once again in 2016, anglers were excited about the quality of the fishing at Ross Barnett Reservoir, and Pickwick Lake is still producing heavy winning bass stringers during tournaments. The coastal rivers continued to provide the best numbers of bass per day in 2016. The following summarizes the most important points from the 2016 Tournament Report:

- 202 reports were submitted from 26 different lakes
- In 2016, **Pickwick Lake** finished as the top lake in overall quality indicator rankings followed by **Okatibbee**, **Ross Barnett**, and **Bay Springs**.
- The largest bass was 11.34 pounds from Ross Barnett Reservoir.

Statewide Tournament Statistics

- 1.82 - Number of bass caught per angler - day
- 3.99 - Pounds of bass caught per angler - day
- 2.23 - Average weight of bass caught
- 360 - Hours to catch a 5 pound bass
- 5.26 - Average lunker, or big bass weight
- 14.55 - Average 1st place weight
- 205 - Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

- A total of 202 tournaments reported 8,671 anglers that weighed-in 15,925 bass (Table 1). The number of tournament reports decreased in 2016 from 2015 (Figure 1). The most reports came from Pickwick.



- It took an average of 14.55 pounds to win a tournament in 2016 (Table 1). Of lakes with at least five tournaments reported, Pickwick, Bay Springs, and Ross Barnett had the highest average winning weights.
- Average weight of bass ranged from 1.28 pounds at Jourdan River to 3.40 pounds at Eagle Lake (Table 1). The statewide average weight was 2.23 pounds. Using average length of tournaments to define an angler day, the number of bass caught per angler day was highest on the Jourdan River and the pounds caught per angler day was highest at Lake Ferguson.
- The seasonal distribution of 2016 tournaments appears in Figure 2. March through July were the most popular months to conduct tournaments with at least 20 per month reported. Tournament reports were submitted from all 12 months.

Table 1. Summary of Bass Tournament results from the 2016 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.

Waterbody	Report		Bass	Bass	Pounds	Percent	Average	No.	Big	Average
	Cards	Entries	Caught	Per Day	Per Day	Success	Weight	> 5 lbs.	Bass	1st Place
Aliceville	1	68	140	2.06	4.34	64	2.11	5	6.18	17.08
Back Bay	1	17	49	2.88	4.96	35	1.72	0	4.47	12.32
Bay Springs	7	151	295	1.96	4.58	60	2.37	5	5.93	18.10
Bee Lake	1	27	63	2.33	4.37	19	1.87	0	4.97	11.11
Bogue Homa	19	741	506	0.71	2.21	7	3.08	34	6.21	14.51
Columbus Pool	2	292	428	1.47	3.29	8	2.22			14.76
Eagle Lake	2	103	91	0.92	3.10	19	3.40	4	6.59	18.34
Enid Lake	2	68	163	2.66	4.94	47	1.93	3	5.90	16.65
Flint Creek	1	28	43	1.54	2.59	36	1.68	1	6.14	9.20
Jourdan River	1	15	53	3.53	4.54	33	1.28	0	2.34	7.81
Lake Aberdeen	1	19	33	1.74	3.37	11	1.94	0	4.37	10.02
Lake Archusa	1	30	60	2.00	4.19	67	2.09	2	7.48	17.64
Lake Ferguson	3	123	308	2.67	7.38	68	2.78	5	6.55	21.54
Lake Lincoln	1	32	44	1.38	3.26	31	2.37	2	7.77	15.30
Lake Washington	4	187	358	1.91	5.61	62	2.90	4	6.31	21.45
Little Eagle	1	23	78	3.39	5.61	43	1.65	0	4.43	13.32
Moon Lake	2	106	214	2.01	4.16	71	2.07	1	4.65	17.38
Okatibbee Reservoir	8	343	707	2.49	4.80	61	2.06	15	5.75	15.60
Pascagoula River	22	296	769	2.69	3.67	34	1.38	1	3.12	8.80
Paul B. Johnson SP	26	563	386	0.70	0.96	11	1.40	4	3.23	7.07
Pearl River	12	336	530	2.25	4.60	60	1.71	1	4.18	11.87
Pickwick	51	2531	5263	1.96	5.27	38	2.72	60	6.21	18.16
Ross Barnett	26	2373	5041	2.16	4.76	45	2.22	53	6.39	17.24
Sardis Lake	1	50	55	1.10	2.31	24	2.10	1	5.84	18.90
TTW "Lake"	3	44	81	1.84	4.68	68	2.64	2	6.21	22.62
Tunica Lake Cutoff	2	94	102	1.14	2.33	30	2.12	2	6.64	16.64
Wolf Lake	1	24	65	2.71	5.42	54.17	2.00	0	2.99	10.74
Totals	202	8671	15925					205		
Average				1.82	3.99	35.82	2.23	1.01	5.26	14.55

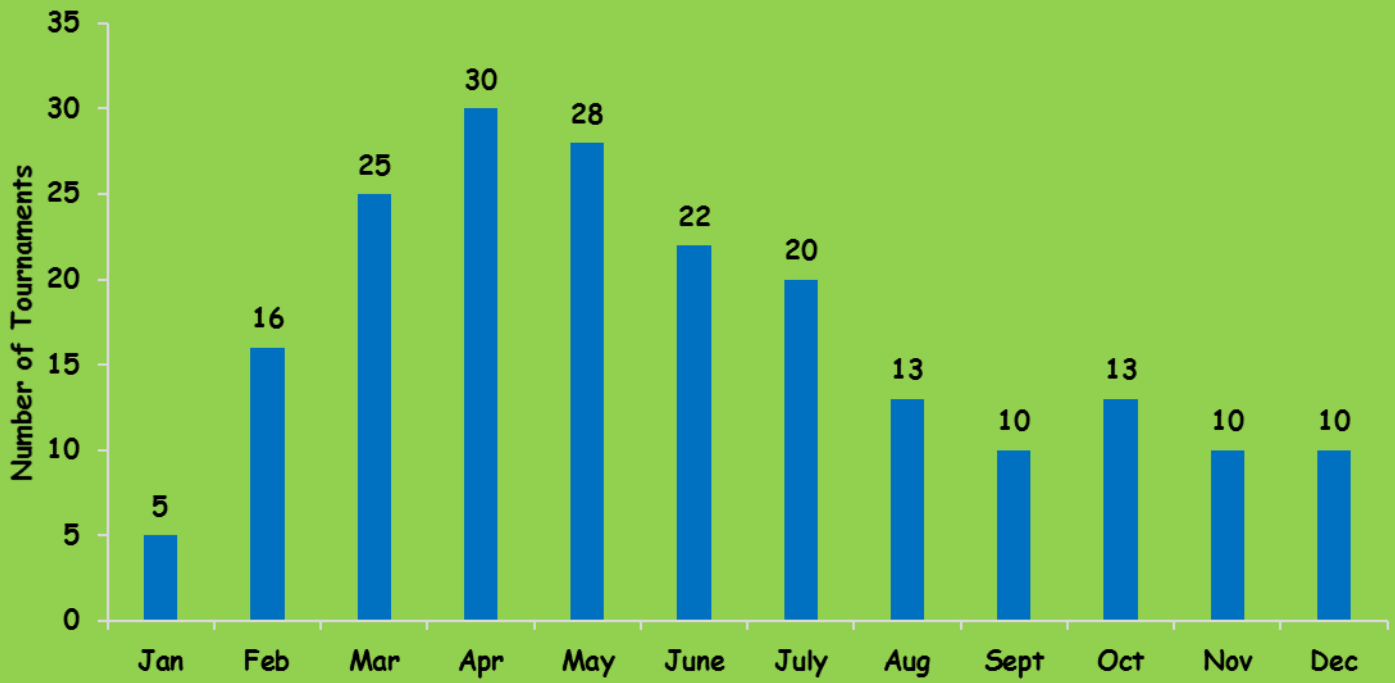


Figure 2. Monthly Distribution of 2016 Tournaments

- Average weight of bass weighed-in (2.23) in 2016 was higher than in 2014 and 2015. Pounds per day (3.99) in 2016 was similar to the 2014 and 2015 values. The hours to weigh-in a five pound bass increased from 338 in 2015 to 360 in 2016 (Figure 3).

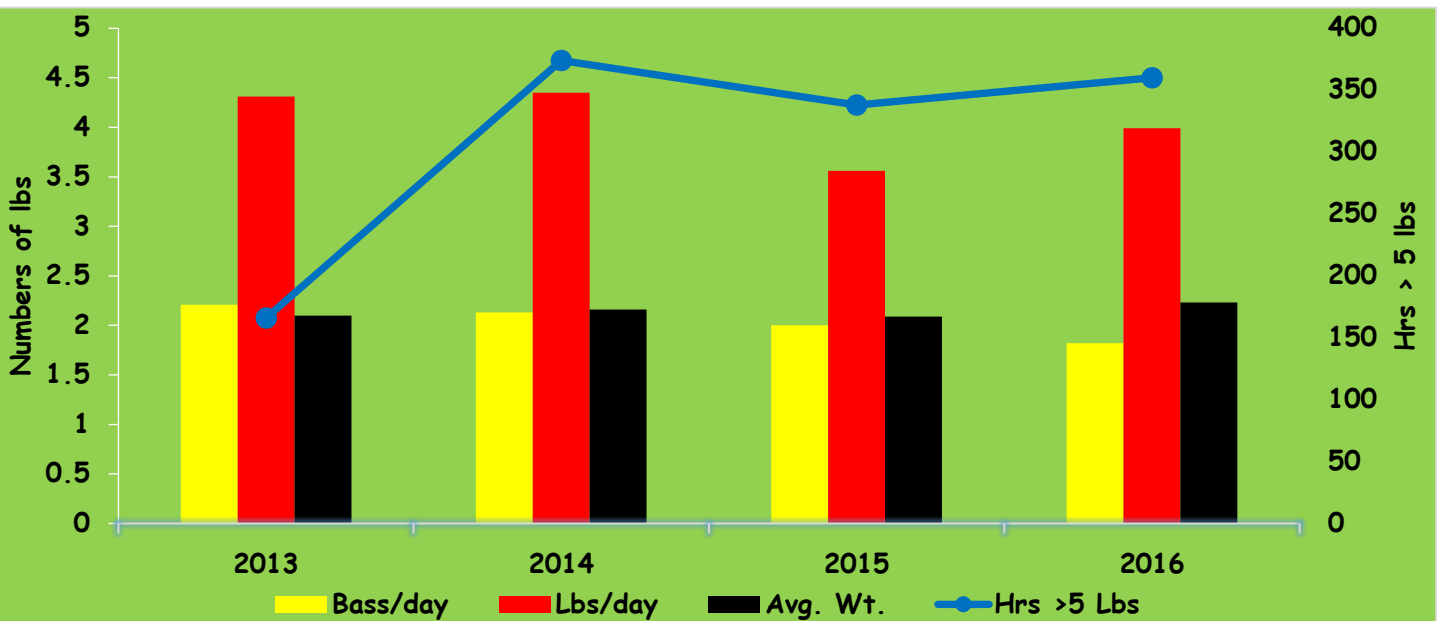


Figure 3. Fishing Success for Reported Tournaments (2013 - 2016)

- Once again in 2016, five of the top 10 heaviest 5-bass limits came from Pickwick Lake (Table 2). Ross Barnett Reservoir had the second heaviest stringer while Bogue Homa had a top ten heaviest stringer in 2016. The largest sack was weighed-in at Pickwick by PWBT during December. First place for PWBT on December 31 weighed an impressive 32.44 lbs. Four of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during March and three of the big sacks were weighed in December.

Table 2. The top 10 heaviest limits weighed-in 2016 MDWFP Bass Tournament Report

Lake	Date	Tournament	1st Place Weight (lbs)
Pickwick	31-Dec	PWBT	32.44
Ross Barnett Reservoir	12-Mar	Fishers of Men	27.54
Pickwick	17-Dec	PWBT	26.69
Pickwick	5-May	FLW	25.50
TTW "Lake"	20-Feb	Fishers of Men	24.48
TTW "Lake"	12-Mar	Lee County Bass Club	24.28
Lake Washington	22-Oct	MRAA Winter Trail	24.14
Pickwick	3-Dec	PWBT	24.02
Pickwick	12-Mar	PWBT	23.69
Bogue Homa	26-Mar	MS South	23.15

- The number of bass weighed-in at least five pounds slightly decreased from 219 in 2015 to 205 in 2016. On average, it took 360 angler hours to weigh-in a bass equal to or over five pounds. There were 205 bass that weighed a minimum of five pounds. This was 1.3% of the total number weighed in 2016.
- In 2016 there were 33 lunkers that weighed at least seven pounds. There was one lunker that weighed over 11 lbs. and two lunkers weighed over 10 pounds (Table 3). The largest lunker was caught at Ross Barnett Reservoir on March 12 and weighed 11.34 pounds. The second largest lunker was caught on Pickwick on December 3 weighing in at 10.36 lbs. and the third largest lunker weighed in at 10.22 lbs. also on Pickwick. Pickwick accounted for 45% of the big bass and 18% were caught at Ross Barnett Reservoir. Bogue Homa supplied 9% of the big bass.
- Twenty-six clubs or tournament organizations submitted 202 reports (Table 4). Sixteen clubs submitted five or more reports and 8 clubs submitted 10 or more. The average number of reports received per club or organization was eight.

Table 3. Summary of bass weighed-in that were seven pounds or larger from the 2016 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report

<u>Lunker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Tourney</u>
11.34	3/12/2016	Ross Barnett Reservoir	Fishers of Men
10.36	12/3/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
10.22	6/4/2016	Pickwick	AL Bait
9.54	8/27/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
9.46	5/28/16	Ross Barnett Reservoir	Media Bass
8.91	3/12/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
8.66	5/19/2016	Paul B. Johnson SP	Paul B. Johnson Fruit Jar
8.47	4/23/2016	Pickwick	AL Bait
8.27	3/12/2016	TTW "Lake"	Lee County Bass Club
8.14	4/5/2016	Bogue Homa	Bogue Homa Fruit Jar
8.02	12/31/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
8.01	2/6/2016	Bogue Homa	Dixie Bass Club
8.00	3/12/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.99	5/28/16	Ross Barnett Reservoir	Media Bass
7.98	2/13/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.92	3/12/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.83	3/20/2016	Ross Barnett Reservoir	Media Bass
7.77	5/21/2016	Lake Lincoln	Media Bass
7.66	12/17/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.61	12/31/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.58	5/21/2016	Tunica Lake Cutoff	Peanut Craft Lures Tournament Trail
7.53	7/16/2016	Lake Ferguson	Media Bass
7.52	3/24/2016	Paul B. Johnson SP	Paul B. Johnson Fruit Jar
7.48	7/23/2016	Lake Archusa	Media Bass
7.47	6/19/16	Ross Barnett Reservoir	Media Bass
7.44	4/9/2016	Pickwick	AL Bait
7.20	12/31/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.15	4/23/2016	Ross Barnett Reservoir	Media Bass
7.15	3/19/2016	Bay Springs Lake	Fishers of Men - North Miss Team
7.08	12/31/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.06	1/30/2016	Bogue Homa	Sumrall Bass Open
7.02	1/30/2016	Pickwick	PWBT
7.00	6/18/2016	Eagle Lake	Media Bass

Table 4. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2016 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
AL Bait	8	417
American Fishing Tour	9	161
Attala Bass Club	7	163
Belmont Bass Anglers	3	40
Bogue Homa Fruit Jar	14	561
CGM Bass	2	88
Collinsville Bass Club	6	398
Dixie Bass Club	2	46
Dockside Marine Tour Trail	5	220
Fishers of Men	10	655
FLW	18	2231
Jones County Bass Association	1	46
Lee County Bass Club	6	94
Magnolia Bassmasters	10	160
Media Bass	17	1292
MS South	1	52
MRAA Winter Trail Lake Washington	2	93
Okatibbee Fruit Jar	1	40
Paul B. Johnson Fruit Jar	26	563
Peanut Craft Lures Tournament Trail	8	405
Pearl River Singles Circuit	5	82
Philadelphia Bass Club	1	17
PWBT	25	659
Singing River Bassmasters	12	102
Sumrall Bass Open	2	58
West Lauderdale Student Council	1	28

- Team tournaments were more popular than individual tournaments with 62% of the reports submitted from team events. These tournaments averaged 21 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments accounted for 38% of the reports and averaged 45 participants per event. Limits of bass were weighed-in by 34% of all anglers or teams during 2016.
- Lakes with at least five tournament reports were ranked by averaging seven "quality indicators" (Table 5). The top five lakes in order in 2016 were Pickwick, Okatibbee, Ross Barnett, Bay Springs and Bogue Homa. Pickwick Lake received high marks for winning weight and pounds of bass weighed-in per day. Lake Bogue Homa received high marks for average weight of individual bass weighed-in and hours to catch a bass equal to or over five pounds. The highest rank for average lunker belonged to Ross Barnett Reservoir. The Pascagoula River received high ranks for the number weighed-in per day, and Okatibbee Reservoir had the highest percentage of anglers weighing in a 5-fish bag. Natural fluctuations in bass abundance and size structure are normal, plus environmental conditions and angling pressure vary from year to year.
- Tournament bag limits varied from three to five bass and were more restrictive than state regulations. Most tournaments had a 12-inch minimum length limit.
- Success of this program depends on participation from clubs and tournament organizers. We thank all those who voluntarily submitted report cards. Higher numbers of reports allow better estimates of fishing conditions; not just a good or bad day's fishing by one or two clubs. Results can be used by tournament directors, anglers and biologists to better manage and enjoy our fisheries resources. Angler involvement has been and remains the key to protecting and managing Mississippi's fisheries resources.

Table 5. Final rankings of tournament lakes in Mississippi based upon 2016 reports.

Ranked by "Fishing Quality Indicators" from lakes with five or more tournament reports

Average weight/bass (lbs.)		Average Number Caught per 8-hour day		Average Pounds Caught per 8-hour day		Index hours to catch a bass \geq 5 lbs.		Average big bass weight (lbs.)		Average 1st place weight (lbs.)		Percentage of anglers with a 5-fish bag		Overall Rank	
BH	3.08	PS	2.69	PK	5.27	BH	1.85	RB	6.39	PK	18.16	OK	61	1	PK
PK	2.72	OK	2.49	OK	4.80	OK	1.94	PK	6.21	BS	18.10	PR	60	2	OK
BS	2.37	PR	2.25	RB	4.76	BS	2.57	BH	6.21	RB	17.24	BS	60	3	RB
RB	2.22	RB	2.16	PR	4.60	PK	3.59	BS	5.93	OK	15.60	RB	45	4	BS
OK	2.06	PK	1.96	BS	4.58	RB	3.81	OK	5.75	BH	14.51	PK	38	5	BH
PR	1.71	BS	1.96	PS	3.67	PJ	11.96	PR	4.18	PR	11.87	PS	34	6	PR
PJ	1.40	BH	0.71	BH	2.21	PS	25.16	PJ	3.23	PS	8.80	PJ	11	7	PS
PS	1.38	PJ	0.70	PJ	0.96	PR	28.56	PS	3.12	PJ	7.07	BH	7	8	PJ

BS=Bay Springs Lake; **BH**=Lake Bogue Homa; **OK**=Okatibbee Reservoir; **PS**=Pascagoula River; **PJ**=Paul B. Johnson State Park; **PR**=Pearl River; **PK**=Pickwick Lake; **RB**=Ross Barnett Reservoir