



Rend Lake

2019 Fisheries Fact Sheet

Rend Lake was completed in 1971 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The lake was formed by constructing a 2 mile long dam across the Big Muddy River floodplain.

Location – Rend Lake is located in Franklin and Jefferson counties along IL Interstate 57 approximately 15 miles south of Mt. Vernon just northwest of Benton.

Area – At normal pool (405.0 feet), Rend Lake has a surface area of 18,900 acres, a maximum depth of 35 feet, and a mean depth of 10 feet. The lake is thirteen miles long and three miles wide, and has 162 miles of shoreline. It is the second largest impoundment in Illinois.

Status of the Sport Fishery – There are more than 30 species of fish in Rend Lake. In addition to traditional sportfish, Rend Lake also contains large populations of carp, buffalo, gar, drum, and shad. The fish population is surveyed annually, and summaries of some of the more popular sport fisheries below are based on the results of the most recent fall population survey.

Largemouth Bass – During the 2018 survey, bass were collected at a rate of 38 fish/hr which represents the lowest catch rate on record. However, the lake water level was 3.7 feet above normal pool which represents the highest water level ever during a fall survey. Historically the survey catch rates decline when the water level is significantly above normal levels. The average catch rate during the last 5 surveys is 53 fish/hr. Currently 24% of the bass population exceeds the 14-inch minimum length limit and 16% are greater than 15 inches. Almost 457,000 bass fingerlings have been stocked in Rend Lake in the last ten years including just under 18,400 in 2018. For 2019, the majority of fish above the minimum length limit will be between 14-18 inches and weigh between 1.5-4.0 pounds. The number of larger bass over 18" in length will remain stable but low. One spotted bass (13 inches) was collected in the 2018 survey. The bass fishing at Rend Lake should be average in 2019.

Crappie – The fishing prospects for crappie remain excellent for the coming year. The 2018 catch rate for crappie (86 fish/net) was very close to the five year average catch rate of 90 fish/net. Of the crappie collected during the netting survey, 34% were over 10 inches and another 27% were between 9-10 inches. Of the crappie collected during the netting survey, 97% were white crappie.

Bluegill - Bluegill will be abundant in the coming year with most keepers 6.5"- 8" in length and averaging 1/3 lb or less. No bluegill over 8 inches were collected during the survey.

Catfish - The fishing prospects for channel catfish remain excellent for the coming year. The 2018 catch rate for channel catfish was 17 fish/hr which was just above the five year average catch rate of 15 fish/hr. In the coming year channel catfish from 1–3 lbs should be abundant with larger fish up to 6 lbs common. This lake remains one of the premier channel catfish waters in southern Illinois. Eighteen flathead catfish were collected during the survey and ranged from 11-35 inches with largest weighing 21 lbs.

White Bass – The 2018 catch rate for white bass was 5 fish/hr which was just below the five year average catch rate of 8 fish/hr. Anglers can expect the catchable population in the coming year to be largely comprised of fish 12-16 inches and weighing 0.6-1.5 lbs. Five hybrid striped bass (17-18 inches, 2-3 pounds) were collected in the 2018 survey.

Fishing Regulations: *Consult the current Illinois Fishing Regulations Booklet for more detailed information.

Species	Creel Limit	Minimum Length Limit
Largemouth, Smallmouth, or Spotted Bass	6	14"
White, Black, or Hybrid Crappie	25 daily, not more than 10 exceeding 10"	
White, Yellow, or Hybrid Striped Bass	20 daily, not more than 3 exceeding 17"	
Channel Catfish	None	None

Additional Contacts: Rend Lake U.S Army Corps of Engineers 618/724-2493

Rend Lake Marina 618/724-7651

IDNR Fisheries 618/687-4546

Fish Attractors – for a map showing types and locations of fish habitat added to Rene Lake please visit the following website: visitrendlake.com