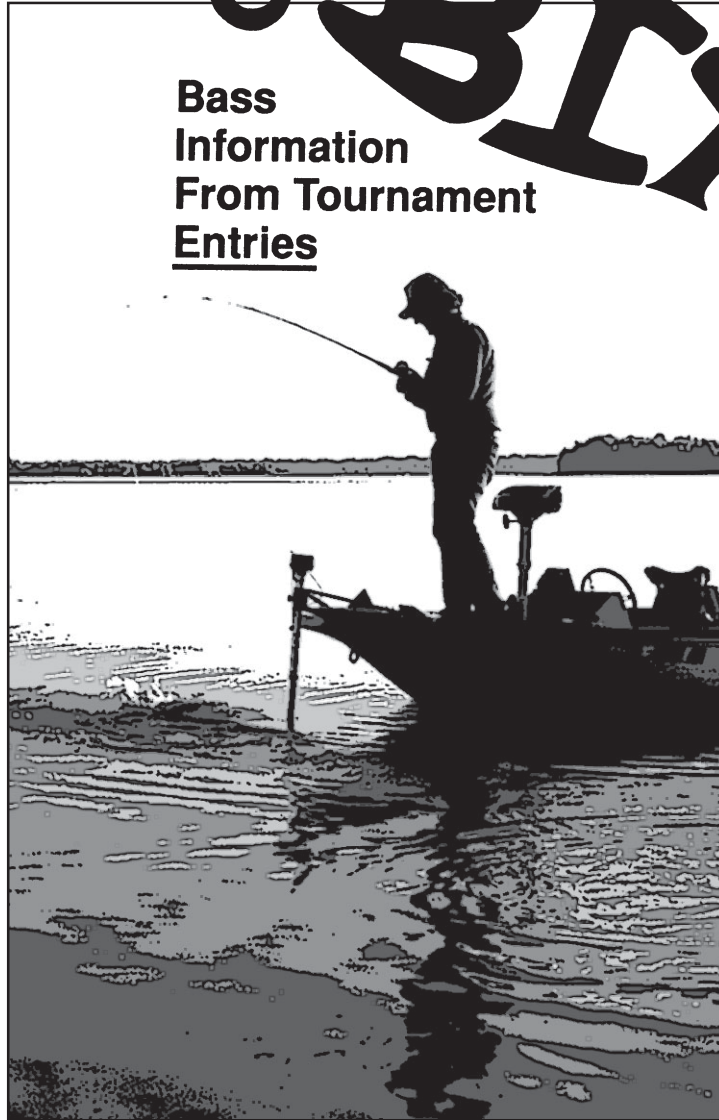


TWRA BITE

**Bass
Information
From Tournament
Entries**



2002

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Fisheries Management Division
Ellington Agricultural Center
P. O. Box 40747
Nashville, TN 37204



INTRODUCTION

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) initiated the Bass Information from Tournament Entries (B.I.T.E.) program in 1989 as a cooperative effort between the agency and Tennessee's organized bass fishing clubs. Completing its fourteenth year, the objective of the program has been to establish a closer working relationship with bass clubs and tournament organizations through the mutual exchange of bass tournament data. The B.I.T.E. program summarizes catch data already being collected by participating clubs on reservoir bass populations. These data will supplement T.W.R.A.'s reservoir fishery database, while providing bass clubs with a statewide summary of tournament results for their interest and possible use in tournament site selection.

Based on TWRA creel survey results, reservoir bass fishing is one of Tennessee's important recreational resources with approximately 36 percent of fishing effort statewide geared toward black bass. These bass anglers produced an estimated 2.7 million angler hours of effort in pursuit of black bass in 2002. (Note: The estimated 4.1 million angler hours reported in the 2001 annual report for the year 2000, was in error. The revised figure was 2.3 million).

Economically, fishing generated over \$480 million in total expenditures by anglers in Tennessee during 2001 (USFWS 2001). Total trip expenditures by bass anglers on reservoirs in Tennessee were estimated at over \$6.8 million during 2002 (TWRA Creel Survey 2002). These expenditures only included items such as fuel, food, bait, and lodging, but excluded boat and vehicle costs.

Through 2002, 4,820 tournament reports have been summarized. More than 142 clubs or tournament organizations participated through the first fourteen years of the program. Bass anglers have spent over 1,388,695 hours collecting data for this program and contributed data from 271,638 bass weighing 501,526 pounds.

METHODS

Participation in the B.I.T.E. program was solicited via fishery biologists, creel clerks, wildlife officers, statewide news releases, TWRA web site, and support from the Tennessee B.A.S.S. Federation, including their website. Direct mailings were used in maintaining the support of the previous years' clubs.

Participating clubs and tournament organizations were sent the previous year's annual report, along with postpaid tournament report cards to be completed and mailed after each tournament. Completion of one card per tournament was all that was required from each club. Electronic mail and fax was also used to collect tournament data. During 2002, the Tennessee Bass Federation developed an online BITE tournament reporting form (Figure 1) which allows the reporting of tournament data to

be more convenient. This form can be found at www.tnbass.com/forms and at the TWRA's website www.tnwildlife.org (click the "fishing" link). Clubs were assigned individual code numbers for confidentiality. Tournament data cards were checked for accuracy and entered into a computer database. Club officers were contacted when data were incomplete or suspected to be erroneous.

Statewide tournament data were summarized by club and by reservoir. Various indices including fishing success (weighing in one or more bass), average weight, bass per day, and pounds per day were calculated to measure bass fishing tournament characteristics on specific reservoirs and for each club. Since the length of a fishing day varied between tournaments, an angler-day was defined as 10 hours of fishing effort. Bass weight listed in the tables is reported in pounds. Ft. Loudoun and Tellico reservoirs were combined for analyses when tournament anglers could "lock through" to fish either reservoir. The individual reservoir is reported when "lock through" was not allowed. Therefore, in Table 2 and 4 these reservoirs are separated based on this specific reporting. Unless otherwise noted in this report, the term "bass" is used collectively to include largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted (Kentucky) bass.

Reservoirs with five or more tournament reports were ranked according to important tournament characteristics. A minimum of five tournaments per reservoir is considered necessary for minimum confidence. The categories were as follows: percent successful (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. Values were assigned to each rank and an overall rank was determined for each reservoir by averaging the values of the five categories. The intent of this ranking system was not to rank the "best" or "worst" reservoirs in the state, but to provide club members with a reference guide for possible use in tournament site selection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The B.I.T.E. program was supported by forty-seven clubs or tournament organizations during 2002, which submitted 422 tournament reports (Table 1). This is down almost 9 percent from 2001. Reports were also received from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (53) and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (10), for reservoirs on the Tennessee River system, and are included in Table 2. Club representatives did a great job filling out the report cards, and only 2 were rejected due to incomplete or erroneous data. Thirty-seven clubs (78%) submitted five or more tournament reports, up 7 percent from last year. Seventeen clubs submitted 10 or more reports. On average, 9 reports were received per club. Higher numbers of reports allow estimates to reflect fishing conditions more closely, and not just a good or bad day's fishing by one or two clubs. All club representatives should remember that each tournament report is important to this program. A list of clubs and tournament organizations contributing tournament results for this report are presented in Table 6.

During 2002, tournament reports were received for 36 bodies of water that were fished 151,740 hours (Table 2). Tournaments averaged 36 anglers per event, for an average of 8.2 hours each. The average tournament had 46 bass weighing 99 pounds. Most tournaments were received from Guntersville and Pickwick (48), followed by Kentucky Lake, and Percy Priest. Cheatham, Chickamauga, Douglas, Tims Ford, Watts Bar and Wheeler each had 20 or more tournament reports. Eleven lakes were represented by 20 or more reports in 2001. The more reports received from each reservoir increases the size and utility of the statewide database and provides more representative catch statistics from which meaningful summaries can be prepared. Of the 18,503 bass anglers competing, 11,349 (61%) were successful. These anglers brought 23,585 bass (12 inches and larger) weighing 50,749 pounds to weigh-ins. Average weight of bass caught on in-state reservoirs ranged from 1.59 pounds on Douglas reservoir to 3.04 pounds on Center Hill. Overall, the average weight was 2.15 pounds, up slightly from last year's 1.93 pounds. Fishing success on in-state reservoirs ranged from a high of 3.06 bass per angler-day at Reelfoot Lake (one tournament) to 0.64 at Melton Hill reservoir. The overall average fishing success was 1.55 bass per angler-day. Pounds per angler-day were highest for Reelfoot Lake at 7.10, and lowest for Melton Hill reservoir at 1.12 pounds per angler-day. The overall average was 3.34 pounds per angler-day, up from 3.06 pounds in 2001.

Reservoirs with exceptions to the statewide black bass regulations of five fish daily with no length restriction during 2002 are listed in Table 3. B.I.T.E. club participants used a self-imposed length limit of 12 inches on 31% of reported tournaments where length limits did not exist. Approximately 98% of all bass caught by B.I.T.E. participants were released. Approximately 12% of individual and team anglers brought in limits of bass.

A total of 396 bass, weighing five pounds or more, were reported caught during 2002 (up from 336 in 2001), with an overall catch rate of one 5-pound bass or larger for every 383 hours of fishing (a marked decrease from last year's average of 479 hours). The largest bass reported was 8.43 pounds taken from Percy Priest in March as reported by Professional Bass Fisherman, Inc. Guntersville led all reservoirs in the catch of bass five pounds and larger with 69 fish, followed by Percy Priest with 51. A total of 18 bass seven pounds and larger were reported in 2002 (Table 4) with most (44%) of these big fish being caught in March. Eleven bass seven pounds or larger were reported in 2001.

The seasonal distribution of tournament fishing effort, including night tournaments, is presented in Figure 2. Most tournaments were held during March, April and May. Night tournaments accounted for approximately 25% of tournaments with most occurring in June through August.

Of the 36 waterbodies from which tournaments were reported, 22 had 5 or more tournaments reported (three less than in 2001). Relative ranks of these 22 reservoirs within 5 categories were determined and the following comments relate only to these reservoirs (Table 5). Percent successful

anglers (those with one or more fish) ranged from 37% at Boone to 84% at Ft. Loudoun/Tellico. Average weight of bass caught ranged from 1.50 pounds at Wheeler to 3.04 at Center Hill. The average weight for these reservoirs was 2.20 pounds. Catch rates expressed as bass per angler-day ranged from 0.64 at Melton Hill reservoir to 2.72 at Douglas. Catch rate as pounds per angler-day ranged from 1.12 at Melton Hill reservoir to 5.06 at Center Hill. The average was 3.00 pounds per angler-day. Anglers at Ft. Loudoun expended the least amount of time required to catch a bass 5-pounds or larger at 158 hours.

Overall, using the relative ranking procedure, Gunter'sville reservoir ranked the highest, just as it did in 2001, followed closely by Center Hill (Table 5). Kentucky Lake ranked third, and Pickwick fourth, a move downward from second and third, respectively, in 2001. Center Hill ranked 15th in 1999, the last year it was in the ranking procedure. Remember, the intent of this ranking procedure is not to determine the "best" reservoir, but to characterize the bass fishery of each reservoir. Anglers should first look at the category that is important to them. The overall rating would be used to narrow the choices. For example, Douglas and Pickwick produced high numbers of fish but of relatively low average weight. They ranked high for pounds per angler-day, a measure important at weigh-in. If you want to catch big fish they may not be the "best" place to go. But, if you want to catch good numbers of fish, along with fewer hours required to catch a bass 5 pounds or larger, then Pickwick may be the "best" choice between the two. It is important to remember that these rankings are relative in nature and sensitive to fluctuations in bass abundance and size structure. Varying environmental conditions and angling pressure from year to year also affect the rankings.

Tournament fishing success for number of bass per angler-day remained similar to last year, but pounds per angler-day increased (Figure 3). Average weight increased for the third year in a row. The hours required to catch a bass 5 pounds or larger during the year (383) declined for the second year, from the all time high of 509 in 2000. Unlike last year, this decrease in hours corresponded to an increase in the number of bass five pounds or larger. A similar decrease in hours required to catch a bass 5 pounds or larger has also occurred in Alabama in the past two years. The number of bass 5 pounds or larger reported to B.I.T.E. had declined since 1997 (876 in 1997; 637 in 1998; 426 in 1999; 376 in 2000; to 336 in 2001), but increased to 396 in 2002.

According to TWRA surveys, growth rates of bass in Tennessee reservoirs have remained relatively unchanged with forage densities ranging from good to excellent. Bass abundance has been impacted somewhat in the past several years, although 2001 electrofishing surveys showed some improvements ranging from fair to good on many reservoirs. Recruitment (survival of young bass) continues to fluctuate, with the same surveys showing 15 reservoirs having good to excellent recruitment, and 11 reservoirs having fair to poor. Fish population abundance cycles to some degree naturally, with water level fluctuations and other habitat changes (cover/structure) contributing to this cycling.

Mortality of larger fish is still being investigated, especially as it relates to the largemouth bass virus (LMBV). Since 1995, LMBV has been found in bass populations in at least 17 states, including Tennessee. Bass kills have been attributed to this virus in at least a dozen states, although kills and their impact have declined considerably in the past couple of years. However, the virus continues to be found annually in new waters. Recently the virus has been found in the Mississippi River, adding Wisconsin and Minnesota to the list. LMBV outbreaks appear to be triggered by a combination of stress and heat and adult bass larger than 2 pounds seem to be most affected. Symptoms of the virus are the fish appear near the surface and have trouble swimming and remaining upright. Thus far there has not been a fish kill attributed to LMBV in Tennessee, although the virus has been found in every reservoir tested by TWRA. These reservoirs include: Barkley, Boone, Chickamauga, Dale Hollow, Douglas, Ft. Loudoun, Melton Hill, Norris, Old Hickory, Percy Priest, Watts Bar, and Woods. The occurrence of the virus in samples from Tennessee reservoirs during 2002 ranged from 2.7% to 25%. This is a decrease from the 5% to 28% in 2001, and the 7% to 47% occurrence during 2000. Much is still unknown about this virus, such as how it is spread, why it primarily affects larger fish and what its long-term impact on bass populations will be. However, indications are that it may not cause long-term harm to fisheries. Adding to the unknown is the belief that there are different strains of the virus, which may have different affects on fish.

Because of the importance of the black bass resource, federal and state agencies, (including TWRA) universities and private groups are working to learn more about LMBV and its impact on bass populations. Anglers are also important in lessening the impact of the virus. Preliminary recommendations from LMBV investigators include cleaning the live wells and weigh-in tanks with a 5% or stronger bleach solution and allowing them to dry out for several days between tournaments. Recent research suggests that a solution of ¼ cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water and the drying out time will kill the virus in live wells. Handling bass as little as possible during hot weather and never moving fish or water between waterbodies are strongly recommended. Cleaning boats and trailers between fishing trips is suggested. When not fishing competitively, release fish immediately to minimize stress and mortality associated with holding fish in a live well for extended periods of time. This is particularly important during July and August when water temperatures are high. If fish are to be harvested they should put on ice and not held in live wells.

TWRA fisheries biologists will continue to monitor reservoir bass populations and work with researchers studying the LMBV. Efforts will also continue with government agencies, universities, bass clubs, and private groups to improve fish habitat, including water level management. We will continue to rely on bass clubs and tournament organizations to provide event data so that we can continue to follow the trends. Please report any unusual bass die offs to the nearest TWRA regional office. For further information on LMBV visit www.tnwildlife.org or www.bassmaster.com - and choose the "Bass Conservation" link.

Because of concern expressed to us regarding the lack of available information on handling tournament bass, we are providing recommendations for tournament procedures that reduce bass mortality during tournaments in the back of this report. In addition, TWRA and the Tennessee Bass Federation have produced a publication entitled, "Keeping Your Tournament-Caught Bass Alive". It is intended to help tournament anglers and organizers increase survival of tournament caught bass. For a copy, call 615-781-6575 or visit www.tnwildlife.org.

Also, B.A.S.S. has a more detailed publication titled, "Keeping Bass Alive: A Guidebook for Anglers and Tournament Organizers". According to B.A.S.S, this publication will help tournament anglers and organizers maximize the survival of bass caught and released in bass tournaments. To request a copy call 334/272-9530, ext. 404 or visit their website at: www.bassmaster.com

The Appendix provides anglers with a historical record of reservoir statistics from the B.I.T.E. program since 1989. Please note that these graphs were not restricted to reservoirs with five or more tournaments. Data points for some years were represented by only one tournament, and data are completely absent in some years. Reservoirs from which three years or less of data were reported are not included. Readers should be aware that the scales on the vertical graph axes vary in range, which must be considered when comparing reservoir trends.

The B.I.T.E. program exists only because of the time and effort participating clubs or tournament organizations have provided to contribute bass tournament data to TWRA (Table 6). With your continued support, and the additional support of other bass clubs across the state, the program will continue to be successful and yield important information about Tennessee's reservoir bass resources. This report is also available on TWRA's Internet site: www.tnwildlife.org (choose "Fishing in Tennessee" link).

Figure 1. Online B.I.T.E. tournament reporting form.

Club Name:	<input type="text"/>	Club Rep:	<input type="text"/>
Street:	<input type="text"/>	City:	<input type="text"/>
State:	<input type="text" value="TN"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>	Phone:	<input type="text"/>
Reservoir:	<input type="text"/>	Date Start:	<input type="text" value="Jan"/> <input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="2002"/>
Launch Site:	<input type="text"/>	Date End:	<input type="text" value="Jan"/> <input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="2002"/>
Bass Creel Limit:	<input type="checkbox"/> Size Limit: <input type="text"/> inches	Day/Night:	<input type="text" value="Day"/> <input type="text"/> Hours Fished
Bass Numbers:	Caught: <input type="text"/> Released: <input type="text"/>	Over 4.99 lbs:	<input type="checkbox"/>
# of Anglers:	<input type="text"/> w/1 or more: <input type="text"/> w/Limit: <input type="text"/>		
Total Weight:	<input type="text"/> lbs <input type="text"/> ozs	Type:	<input type="text" value="Individual"/>
Big Bass:	<input type="text"/> lbs <input type="text"/> ozs	If Team:	<input type="text"/> Number of Teams

Optional Information:

Number of Largemouth Bass caught: Total Weight: lbs ozs

Number of Spotted Bass caught: Total Weight: lbs ozs

Number of Smallmouth Bass caught: Total Weight: lbs ozs

Table 1. Tournament summary for bass clubs participating in the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.

CLUB	TOURNAMENTS	NUMBER ANGLERS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL	BASS CAUGHT	BASS WEIGHT	BASS=>5LB.	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day*	LBS. PER ANGLER-day*	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.
4	7	564	460	908	2052	13	5076	81.56	2.26	1.79	4.04	390
7	6	1514	1060	1848	3914	27	12413	70.01	2.12	1.49	3.15	460
14	11	231	153	366	690	2	1826	66.23	1.88	2.00	3.78	913
17	11	349	179	375	741	2	2503	51.29	1.98	1.50	2.96	1251
21	17	386	264	436	847	17	3537	68.39	1.94	1.23	2.39	208
23	10	149	126	228	383	3	1263	84.56	1.68	1.81	3.03	421
26	26	1350	653	937	2211	16	9805	48.37	2.36	0.96	2.26	613
27	10	126	126	329	575	1	1260	100.00	1.75	2.61	4.56	1260
38	12	256	152	146	326	4	2080	59.38	2.24	0.70	1.57	520
39	7	158	118	224	452	5	1286	74.68	2.02	1.74	3.51	257
43	5	74	61	114	212	1	677	82.43	1.86	1.69	3.14	677
45	8	79	69	242	544	8	919	87.34	2.25	2.63	5.91	115
52	7	175	92	186	358	2	1662	52.57	1.93	1.12	2.16	831
53	33	1299	490	727	1784	2	5532	37.72	2.45	1.31	3.23	2766
58	9	367	236	348	656	2	3303	64.31	1.88	1.05	1.99	1652
59	9	242	82	154	331	3	2277	33.88	2.15	0.68	1.45	759

Table 1. (CONT.) Tournament summary for bass clubs participating in the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.

CLUB	TOURNAMENTS	NUMBER ANGLERS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL	BASS CAUGHT	BASS WEIGHT	BASS=>5LB.	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day*	LBS. PER ANGLER-day*	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.
61	11	402	161	173	414	2	2480	40.05	2.39	0.70	1.67	1240
62	4	761	520	906	2861	42	6689	68.33	3.16	1.35	4.28	159
65	16	160	146	280	485	7	1407	91.25	1.73	1.99	3.45	201
68	7	149	80	173	359	6	1483	53.69	2.08	1.17	2.42	247
69	7	424	324	752	1528	14	3816	76.42	2.03	1.97	4.01	273
72	2	416	159	609	1238	0	3849	38.22	2.03	1.58	3.22	-
73	5	904	573	1179	2633	9	7232	63.38	2.23	1.63	3.64	804
76	3	78	37	124	277	0	966	47.44	2.24	1.28	2.87	-
78	5	63	39	63	108	1	553	61.90	1.71	1.14	1.95	553
80	3	24	20	43	94	0	192	83.33	2.18	2.24	4.89	-
82	8	146	96	261	417	1	1372	65.75	1.60	1.90	3.04	1372
83	7	281	53	154	370	4	1251	18.86	2.40	1.23	2.96	313
85	1	52	12	30	84	0	416	23.08	2.79	0.72	2.01	-
87	24	745	191	191	589	8	3725	25.64	3.08	0.51	1.58	466
88	12	255	185	629	1000	4	2237	72.55	1.59	2.81	4.47	559
89	4	564	308	818	1901	36	5579	54.61	2.32	1.47	3.41	155

Table 1. (CONT.) Tournament summary for bass clubs participating in the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.

CLUB	TOURNAMENTS	NUMBER ANGLERS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL	BASS CAUGHT	BASS WEIGHT	BASS=>5LB.	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day*	LBS. PER ANGLER-day*	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.
90	1	16	9	15	47	0	128	56.25	3.15	1.17	3.69	-
91	2	11	11	15	29	0	88	100.00	1.90	1.70	3.24	-
92	4	48	21	35	83	1	384	43.75	2.37	0.91	2.16	384
102	7	2049	1594	2518	6024	64	18654	77.79	2.39	1.35	3.23	291
119	8	91	49	93	185	0	804	53.85	1.98	1.16	2.30	-
123	13	187	145	331	674	2	1827	77.54	2.04	1.81	3.69	914
165	18	260	177	410	732	5	2357	68.08	1.79	1.74	3.11	471
255	8	169	142	444	784	4	1645	84.02	1.77	2.70	4.77	411
260	7	70	43	100	235	2	613	61.43	2.35	1.63	3.84	307
448	10	179	106	248	431	4	1432	59.22	1.74	1.73	3.01	358
493	2	24	19	72	124	1	192	79.17	1.72	3.75	6.44	192
512	9	96	70	174	311	2	846	72.92	1.78	2.06	3.67	423
548	5	87	54	138	266	4	798	62.07	1.93	1.73	3.34	200
844	11	148	94	236	414	5	1383	63.51	1.75	1.71	2.99	277
4691	10	186	114	189	373	5	1474	61.29	1.98	1.28	2.53	295
TOTALS	422	16364	9873	18971	41147	341	131287	60.33	2.17	1.44	3.13	385

*BASED ON A 10 HOUR FISHING DAY

Table 2. Statewide reservoir summary of tournament data reported to the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.**

RESERVOIR	TOURNAMENTS	NUMBER ANGLERS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL	BASS CAUGHT	BASS WEIGHT	BASS=>5LB.	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day*	LBS. PER ANGLER-day*	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.
BARKLEY	15	853	490	785	2154	26	7546	57.44	2.74	1.04	2.85	290
BAY SPRINGS	4	45	43	76	110	0	383	95.56	1.45	1.99	2.88	-
BEECH LAKE	2	28	24	34	81	0	224	85.71	2.37	1.52	3.60	-
BOONE	6	167	62	119	295	0	1236	37.13	2.48	0.96	2.39	-
CANEY FORK RIVER	2	37	33	113	160	0	296	89.19	1.42	3.82	5.41	-
CENTER HILL	5	436	310	671	2043	19	4038	71.10	3.04	1.66	5.06	213
CHEATHAM	32	770	418	665	1306	21	7048	54.29	1.96	0.94	1.85	336
CHEROKEE	16	741	398	812	1933	2	6395	53.71	2.38	1.27	3.02	3197
CHICKAMAUGA	25	747	394	924	1929	12	5547	52.74	2.09	1.67	3.48	462
COLD CREEK	1	17	15	30	55	0	157	88.24	1.82	1.91	3.48	-
CORDELL HULL	2	36	21	40	67	0	306	58.33	1.68	1.31	2.20	-
DALE HOLLOW	1	22	16	31	52	0	154	72.73	1.69	2.01	3.41	-
DOUGLAS	32	1029	741	2452	3900	8	9024	72.01	1.59	2.72	4.32	1128
FT. LOUDOUN	8	128	80	156	313	7	1107	62.50	2.01	1.41	2.83	158
FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO	9	477	401	578	1159	12	4123	84.07	2.00	1.40	2.81	344

Table 2. (CONT.) Statewide reservoir summary of tournament data reported to the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.**

RESERVOIR	TOURNAMENTS	NUMBER ANGLERS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL	BASS CAUGHT	BASS WEIGHT	BASS=>5LB.	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day*	LBS. PER ANGLER-day*	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.
FT. PATRICK HENRY	2	30	17	41	69	2	251	56.67	1.68	1.63	2.75	126
GUNTERSVILLE	48	1611	1210	3027	7703	69	16347	75.11	2.54	1.85	4.71	237
KENTUCKY LAKE	46	2233	1697	3323	7308	45	19402	76.00	2.20	1.71	3.77	431
KEOWEE	1	20	19	76	107	0	300	95.00	1.41	2.53	3.57	-
MELTON HILL	5	87	42	47	82	1	734	48.28	1.75	0.64	1.12	734
NICKAJACK	4	62	51	141	269	0	660	82.26	1.91	2.14	4.08	-
NORMANDY	2	36	12	22	41	0	301	33.33	1.84	0.73	1.35	-
NORRIS	6	79	40	59	119	0	665	50.63	2.02	0.89	1.79	-
OLD HICKORY	12	654	476	892	1722	25	6699	72.78	1.93	1.33	2.57	268
PERCY PRIEST	43	1953	826	1094	2924	51	12710	42.29	2.67	0.86	2.30	249
PICKWICK	48	1387	994	3087	5550	35	12491	71.67	1.80	2.47	4.44	357
PIN OAK LAKE	2	29	27	44	114	6	253	93.10	2.60	1.74	4.52	42
REELFOOT	1	9	9	22	51	1	72	100.00	2.32	3.06	7.10	72
SOUTH HOLSTON	7	307	183	378	834	4	2397	59.61	2.21	1.58	3.48	599
TELLICO	2	34	16	34	59	1	272	47.06	1.74	1.25	2.17	272
TIMS FORD	41	1838	838	1178	2796	2	10051	45.59	2.37	1.17	2.78	5026
TIPPAH LAKE	1	9	9	17	24	0	72	100.00	1.44	2.36	3.39	-
WATAUGA	8	219	103	213	389	2	1637	47.03	1.83	1.30	2.38	818

Table 2. (CONT.) Statewide reservoir summary of tournament data reported to the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.**

RESERVOIR	TOURNAMENTS	NUMBER ANGLERS	NUMBER SUCCESSFUL	BASS CAUGHT	BASS WEIGHT	BASS=>5LB.	TOTAL HOURS	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day*	LBS. PER ANGLER-day*	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.
WATTS BAR	33	1767	905	1341	3230	31	13176	51.22	2.41	1.02	2.45	425
WEISS	1	9	9	64	111	2	135	100.00	1.74	4.74	8.25	68
WHEELER	25	357	273	750	1129	4	3447	76.47	1.50	2.18	3.27	862
WILSON	11	193	117	168	428	4	1684	60.62	2.54	1.00	2.54	421
WOODS	3	47	30	81	130	4	407	63.83	1.60	1.99	3.19	102
TOTALS	512	18503	11349	23585	50749	396	151740	61.34	2.15	1.55	3.34	383

*BASED ON A 10 HOUR FISHING DAY

**INCLUDES TOURNAMENTS (90) FROM RESERVOIRS OF THE TENN. RIVER IN ALABAMA AND MISSISSIPPI

Table 3. Reservoirs having exceptions to the statewide black bass regulations of five fish daily with no length restriction during 2002.

<u>Reservoir</u>	<u>Largemouth bass</u>	<u>Smallmouth bass</u>	<u>Spotted bass</u>
Barkley	15" minimum	15" minimum	-
Boone	15" minimum	15" minimum	15 fish creel
Center Hill	15" minimum	15" minimum	12" minimum
Cheatham	14" minimum	14" minimum	-
Cherokee	15" minimum	15" minimum	15 fish creel
Chickamauga	14" minimum	18" minimum with 1 fish limit	14" minimum
Dale Hollow	15" minimum	16-21" PLR with 1 under 16" & 1 over 21"	-
Douglas	-	20" minimum with 1 fish limit	-
Ft. Loudoun/Tellico	14" minimum	14" minimum	15 fish creel
Guntersville(TN portion)	-	18" minimum with 1 fish limit	-
Guntersville(AL portion)	15" minimum	-	-
Kentucky Lake	14" minimum	14" minimum	-
Melton Hill	14" minimum	14" minimum	15 fish creel
Nickajack	14" minimum	18" minimum with 1 fish limit	14" minimum
Normandy	15" minimum	15" minimum	-
Norris	14" minimum	18" minimum	15 fish creel
Old Hickory	14" minimum	14" minimum	-
Percy Priest	15" minimum	15" minimum	-
Pickwick(TN portion)	-	14" minimum	-
Pickwick(MS portion)	-	-	-
Reelfoot Lake	15" minimum	-	15" minimum
Tims Ford	15" minimum	15" minimum	-
Watauga	12" minimum	12" minimum	15 fish creel
Watts Bar	14" minimum	16" minimum with 1 fish limit	14" minimum
Wilson	15" minimum	-	-

Table 4. Bass seven pounds and larger reported* from 2002 tournament reports.

WEIGHT (LBS)	DATE	LOCATION	REPORTING CLUB/ORGANIZATION
8.43	03/16	PERCY PRIEST	PROFESSIONAL BASS FISHERMAN, INC.
8.08	03/16	GUNTERSVILLE	ALABAMA DEPT. OF CONSERV. & NATURAL RESOURCES
8.04	03/30	PICKWICK	MISSISSIPPI DEPT. OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS
7.99	03/30	CENTER HILL	BASS INVITATIONAL TEAM EVENTS-MIDDLE TN.
7.63	10/20	KENTUCKY LAKE	KENTUCKY LAKE OUTDOOR TRAIL
7.62	03/30	PICKWICK	MISSISSIPPI DEPT. OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS
7.61	03/16	WATTS BAR	BASS INVITATIONAL TEAM EVENTS-EAST TN.
7.56	06/01	GUNTERSVILLE	ALABAMA DEPT. OF CONSERV. & NATURAL RESOURCES
7.56	04/06	PICKWICK	ALABAMA DEPT. OF CONSERV. & NATURAL RESOURCES
7.44	04/06	PERCY PRIEST	FLW OUTDOORS
7.43	03/30	PICKWICK	MISSISSIPPI DEPT. OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS
7.38	03/23	GUNTERSVILLE	ALABAMA DEPT. OF CONSERV. & NATURAL RESOURCES
7.19	04/06	WATAUGA	BASSMASTERS OF EAST TENNESSEE
7.19	09/14	GUNTERSVILLE	HAMILTON COUNTY BASS CLUB
7.16	05/11	CHEATHAM	CHEATHAM COUNTY BASS CLUB
7.06	05/04	BARKLEY	TENNESSEE BASS FEDERATION
7.06	07/21	CHEATHAM	PRO FISH ENDEAVORS
7.01	04/27	BARKLEY	BASS INVITATIONAL TEAM EVENTS-MIDDLE TN.

*Reported as big bass for each tournament

FIGURE 2. SEASONAL DISTRIBUTION OF TOURNAMENTS
2002 B.I.T.E. PROGRAM

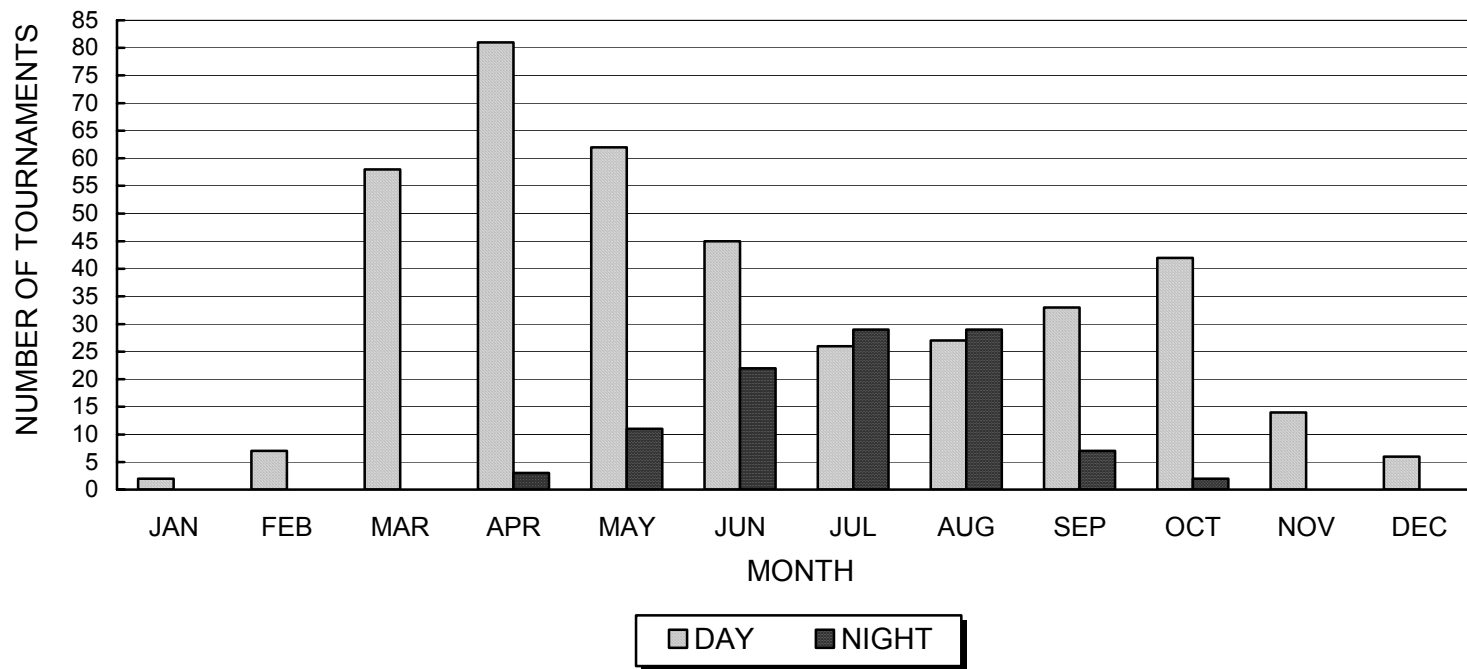


Table 5. Relative ranking for reservoirs with 5 or more tournaments reported in the 2002 B.I.T.E. program.*

RANK	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	BASS PER ANGLER-day	POUNDS PER ANGLER-day	HOURS PER BASS=>5LB.	OVERALL
1	FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO	CENTER HILL	Douglas^^	CENTER HILL	FT. LOUDOUN	GUNTERSVILLE^
2	Wheeler	BARKLEY	Pickwick^^	GUNTERSVILLE^	CENTER HILL	CENTER HILL
3	KENTUCKY LAKE	PERCY PRIEST	Wheeler	Pickwick^^	GUNTERSVILLE^	KENTUCKY LAKE
4	GUNTERSVILLE^	WILSON	GUNTERSVILLE^	Douglas^^	PERCY PRIEST	Pickwick^^
5	OLD HICKORY	GUNTERSVILLE^	KENTUCKY LAKE	KENTUCKY LAKE	OLD HICKORY	FT. LOUDOUN
6	Douglas^^	BOONE	CHICKAMAUGA	South Holston	BARKLEY	BARKLEY
7	Pickwick^^	WATTS BAR	CENTER HILL	CHICKAMAUGA	CHEATHAM	FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO
8	CENTER HILL	CHEROKEE	South Holston	Wheeler	FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO	South Holston
9	FT. LOUDOUN	TIMS FORD	FT. LOUDOUN	CHEROKEE	Pickwick^^	Douglas^^
10	WILSON	South Holston	FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO	BARKLEY	WILSON	Wheeler+
11	South Holston	KENTUCKY LAKE	OLD HICKORY	FT. LOUDOUN	WATTS BAR	OLD HICKORY+
12	BARKLEY	CHICKAMAUGA	WATAUGA	FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO	KENTUCKY LAKE	CHICKAMAUGA
13	CHEATHAM	NORRIS	CHEROKEE	TIMS FORD	CHICKAMAUGA	WILSON
14	CHEROKEE	FT. LOUDOUN	TIMS FORD	OLD HICKORY	South Holston	CHEROKEE
15	CHICKAMAUGA	FT. LOUDOUN/TELLICO	BARKLEY	WILSON	MELTON HILL	WATTS BAR
16	WATTS BAR	CHEATHAM	WATTS BAR	WATTS BAR	WATAUGA	PERCY PRIEST
17	NORRIS	OLD HICKORY	WILSON	BOONE	Wheeler	CHEATHAM
18	MELTON HILL	WATAUGA	BOONE	WATAUGA	Douglas^^	TIMS FORD
19	WATAUGA	Pickwick^^	CHEATHAM	PERCY PRIEST	CHEROKEE	WATAUGA
20	TIMS FORD	MELTON HILL	NORRIS	CHEATHAM	TIMS FORD	BOONE
21	PERCY PRIEST	Douglas^^	PERCY PRIEST	NORRIS	BOONE	NORRIS
22	BOONE	Wheeler	MELTON HILL	MELTON HILL	NORRIS	MELTON HILL

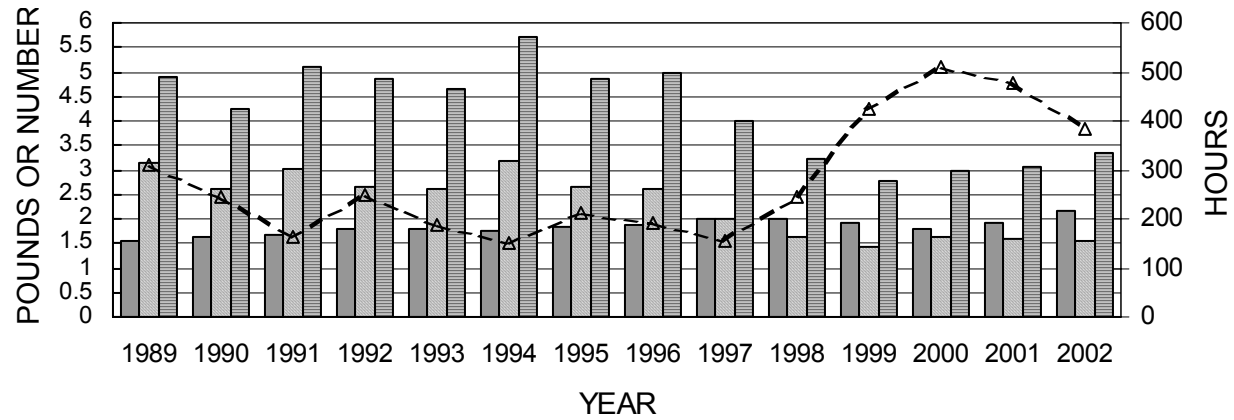
*Size limit restrictions in effect on CAPITALIZED reservoirs.

^In Tennessee portion, size limit restriction on smallmouth bass only. In Alabama, size limit restriction on largemouth bass only.

^^Size limit restrictions on smallmouth bass.

+Tie

FIGURE 3. FISHING SUCCESS FOR REPORTED TOURNAMENTS



AVG. WEIGHT
 BASS/ANGLER-day
 LBS/ANGLER-day
 - - Δ - - HRS/BASS=>5LB

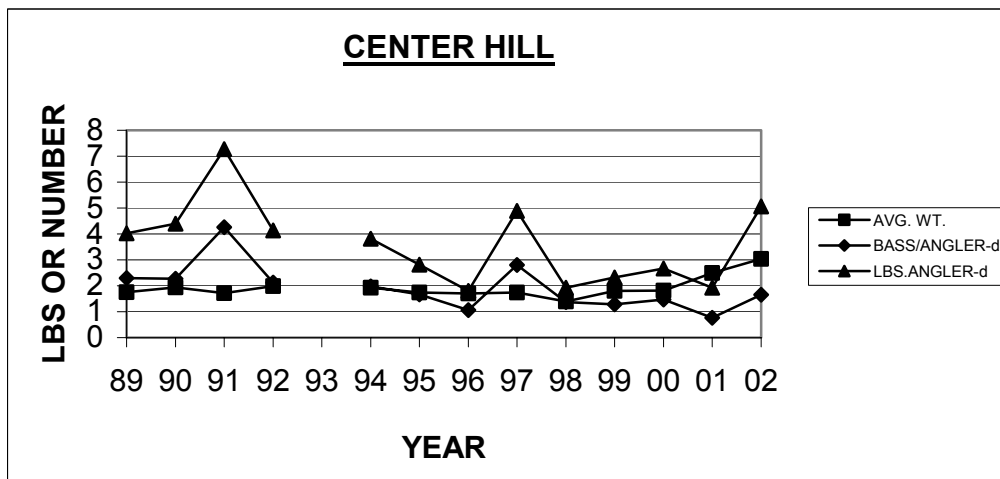
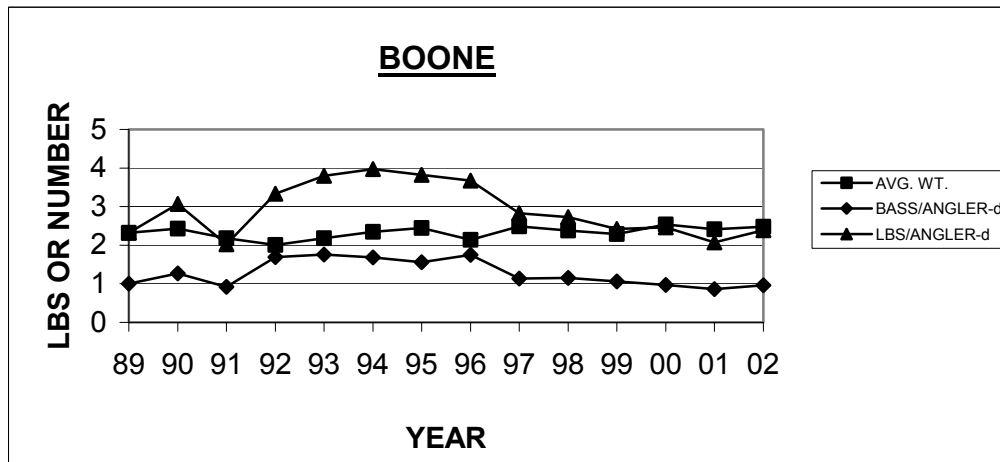
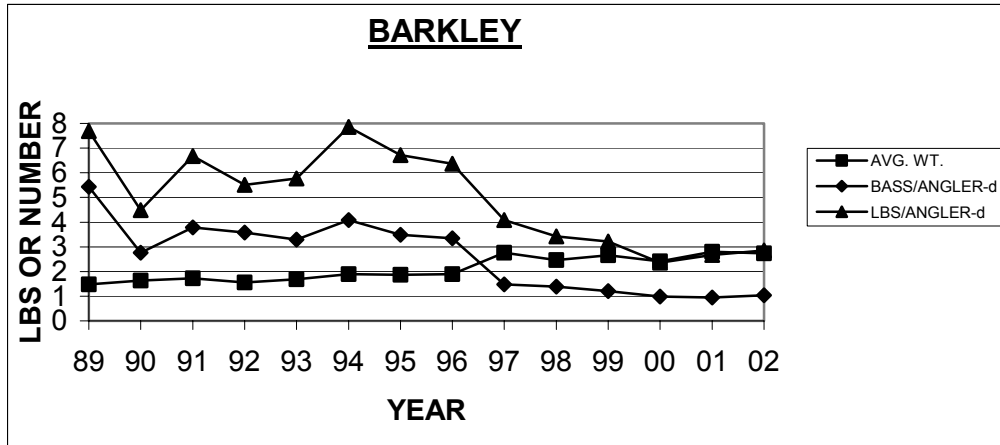
Table 6. Clubs or Organizations contributing to the 2002 B.I.T.E. report.

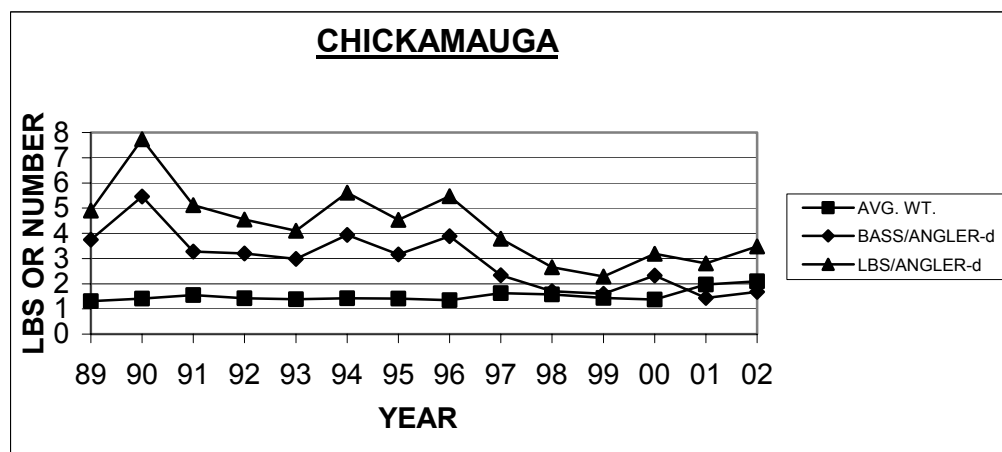
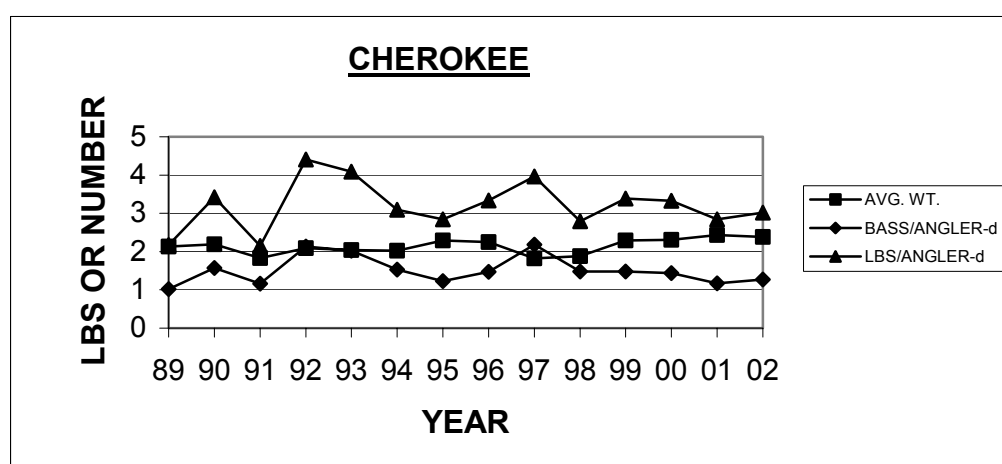
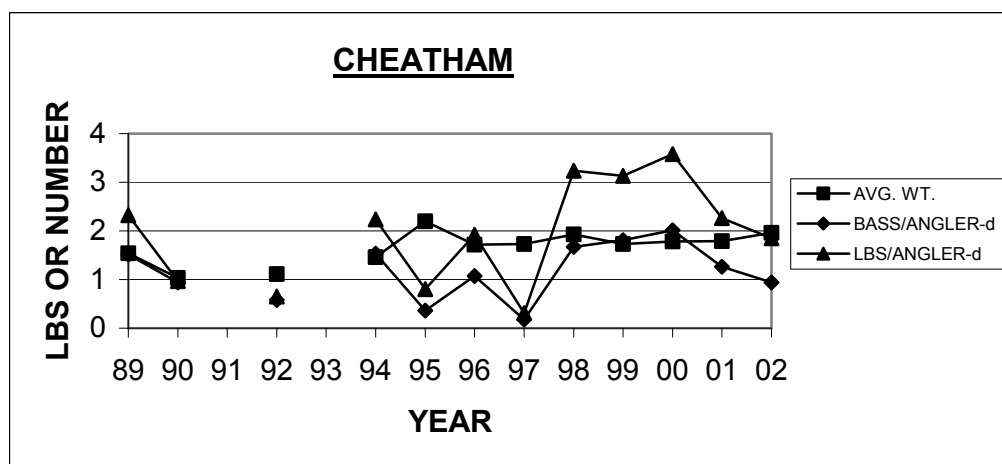
CLUB NAME	CLUB REPRESENTATIVE	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIPCODE	PHONE
BASS "N" ACTION	M.B. Ausban	P.O. Box 5536	Knoxville	TN	37928	865/687-2981
BASS INVITATIONAL TEAM EVENTS-EAST TN	Jane Kawakami	11728 Georgetown Dr.	Knoxville	TN	37922	865/966-5784
BASS INVITATIONAL TEAM EVENTS-MIDDLE TN	Jane Kawakami	11728 Georgetown Dr.	Knoxville	TN	37922	865/966-5784
BASSMASTERS OF EAST TENNESSEE	Bill Hart	219 Putman Ln.	Mountain City	TN	37683	423/727-2714
BEND OF THE RIVER BASS CLUB	Casey Hitchcock	P.O. Box 1184	Dunlap	TN	37327	423/949-6022
CHEATHAM COUNTY BASS CLUB	Mike Stubbs	P.O. Box 110478	Nashville	TN	37222	615/269-4217
CHEROKEE BASSMASTERS	Eddie Mullins	Route 2, Box 3431	Bean Station	TN	37708	865/993-3540
CLARKSVILLE BASS CLUB, INC.	Ken Head	P.O. Box 554	Clarksville	TN	37040	931/358-9575
DAYTON WORKING MAN BASS CLUB	Perry Massengill	673 Riverbend Dr.	Dayton	TN	37321	423/775-2244
EAST TENNESSEE BASS ANGLERS	Brad Allison	10641 Dogwood Dr.	Knoxville	TN	37931	865/927-3905
EAST TENNESSEE BASS ANGLERS of MORRISTOWN	Stan Strickland	4416 Danbury Dr.	Morristown	TN	37813	423/587-6591
FAYETTE COUNTY BASS CLUB	Jason Risley	9889 Leda Cove	Cordova	TN	38016	901/409-2872
FLW OUTDOORS	Ron Lappin	#30 Gamble Rd.	Benton	KY	42025	270/252-1000
FRIDAY NIGHT BIG FISH	Lewis Ledbetter	221 Joann Ct.	Nashville	TN	37211	615/833-1788
GALLATIN ASSOC. BASS ANGLERS (GABA)	William Pickard	P.O. Box 1392	Gallatin	TN	37066	615/451-0604
GREENRIDGE BASS CLUB	Mike Binkley	4548 N. Wallace	Springfield	TN	37172	615/384-4447
GUYS AND GALS BASS ANGLERS	Jane Kawakami	11728 Georgetown	Knoxville	TN	37922	865/966-5784
HAMILTON COUNTY BASS CLUB	Phil Dietsch	506 Heartheron Ln.	Hixson	TN	37343	423/877-9231
JACK DANIELS BASSMASTERS	Russ Reynolds	41 Franklin Rd.	Tullahoma	TN	37388	931/455-5700
JACKSON BASS CLUB	Ed Weaver	210 Pennington Pl.	Jackson	TN	38305	731/668-6535
KENNY'S FISHING CLUB	Charles Graybeal Jr.	P.O. Box 712	Erwin	TN	37650	423/743-4346
KENTUCKY LAKE BASS ANGLERS	Charles Mitchell	2597 Ogden Rd.	McEwen	TN	37101	931/296-4428
KENTUCKY LAKE OUTDOOR TRAIL	Randy Sullivan	587 Diamond Grove Rd.	Beech Bluff	TN	38313	731/423-4450
KINGSPORT BASS CLUB	Ralph Matlock	1604 Brumley St.	Kingsport	TN	37665	423/245-1270
LAWRENCEBURG BASS BUSTERS	E. F. Bryant	1505 Frances St.	Lawrenceburg	TN	38464	931/762-6025
McNAIRY COUNTY BASS ANGLERS	Gilbert Gough	3158 Kendrick Rd.	Corinth	MS	38834	662/286-2040
MIDDLE CREEK FISHING CLUB	David Slack	177 County Road 568	Englewood	TN	37329	423/745-4572
MIDDLE TENNESSEE BASS ANGLERS	Marc Pfaff	316 Williamsburg Dr.	Hendersonville	TN	37075	615/824-8442

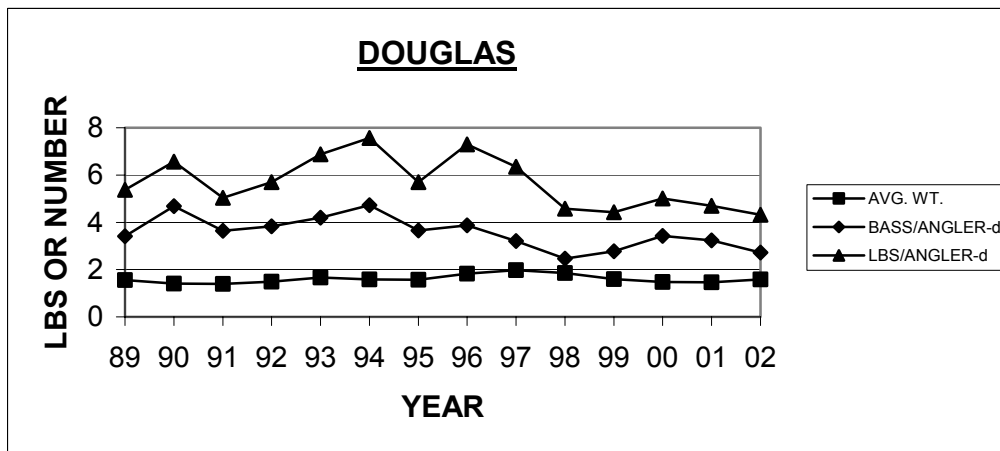
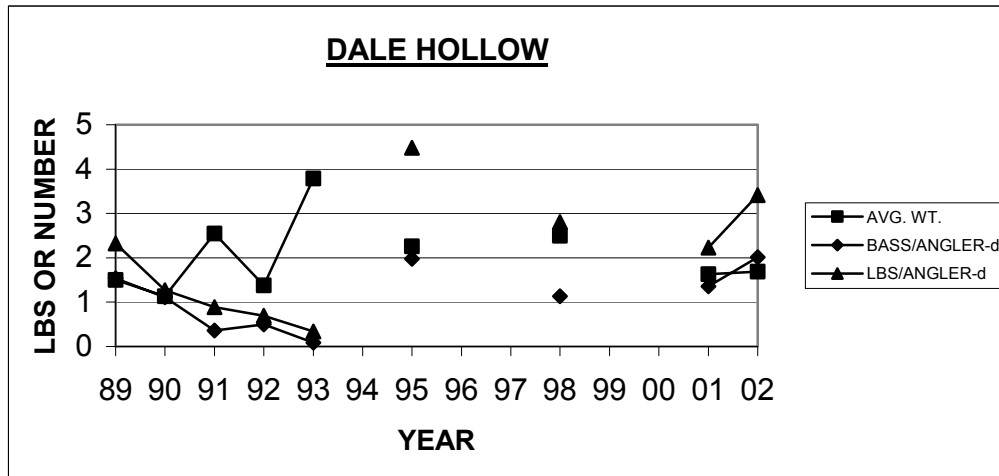
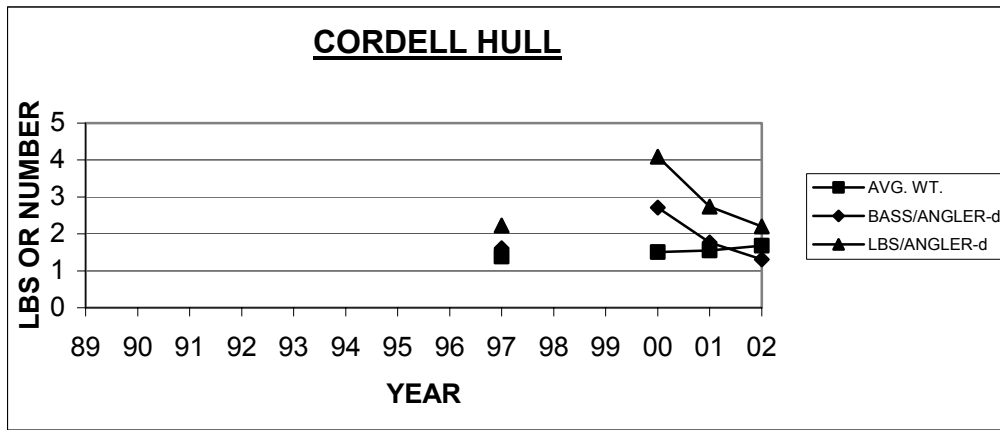
Table 6. (CONT.) Clubs or Organizations contributing to the 2002 B.I.T.E. report.

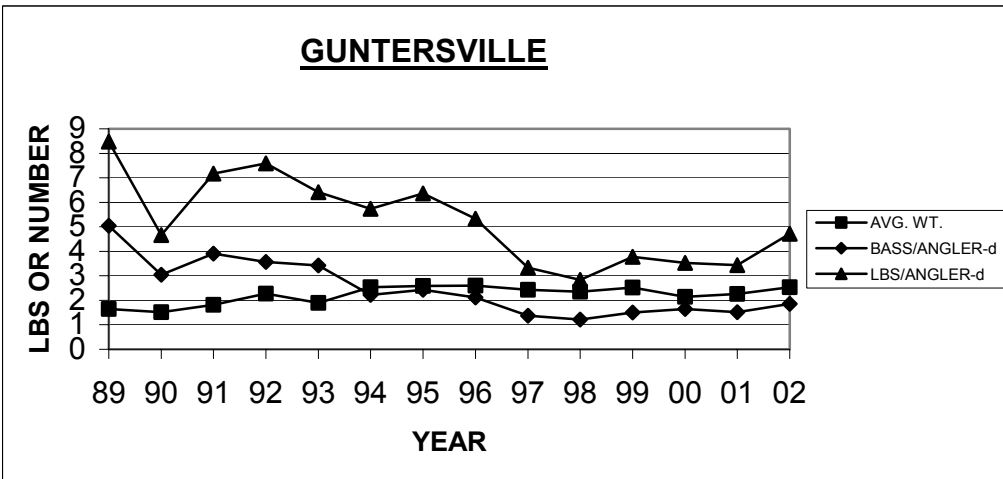
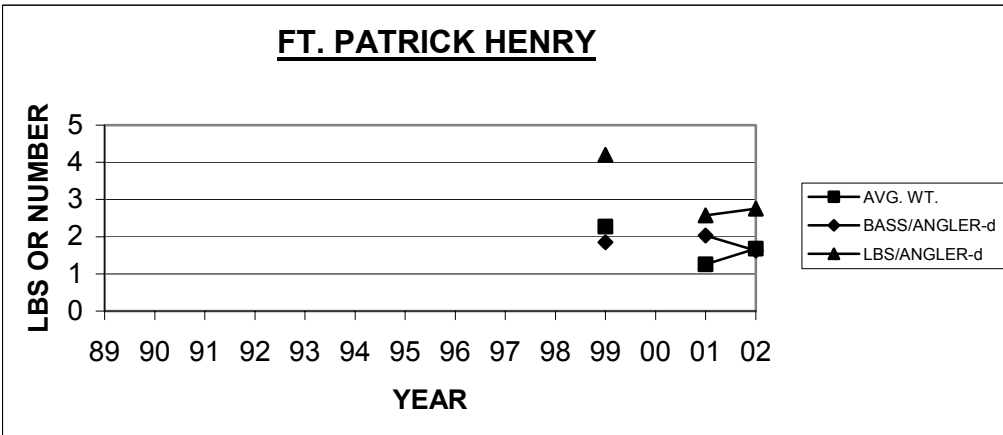
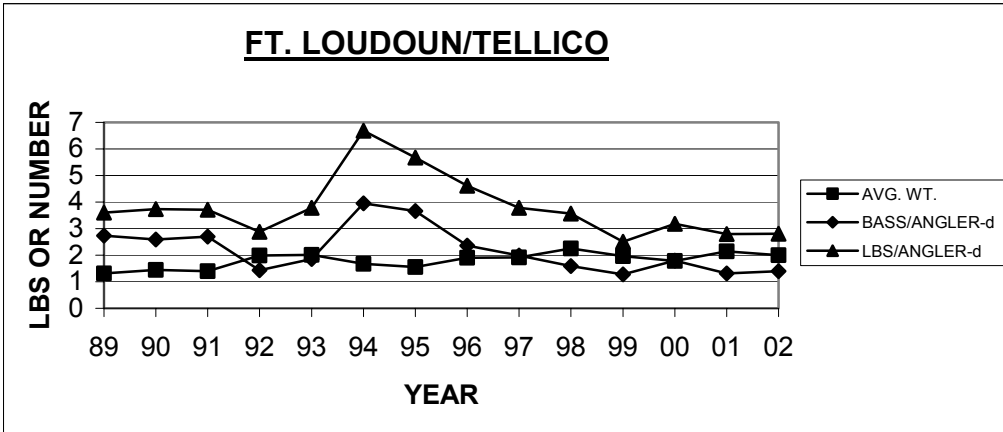
CLUB NAME	CLUB REPRESENTATIVE	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIPCODE	PHONE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY BASS CLUB	Terry Becknell	135 Darlene Dr.	Clarksville	TN	37042	931/645-5972
MOUNTAINEER BASSMASTERS	Jeff Russell	370 Paint Rock Rd.	Kingston	TN	37763	865/376-3987
PERCY PRIEST SPORT FISHING	Jeff Roth	213 Deer Rd.	Smyrna	TN	37167	615/459-8019
PICKWICK LAKE OUTDOOR TRAIL	Randy Sullivan	587 Diamond Grove Rd.	Beech Bluff	TN	38313	731/427-5707
PROFESSIONAL BASS FISHERMAN, INC.	Mike Stubbs	P.O. Box 110478	Nashville	TN	37222	615/269-4217
PRO FISH ENDEAVORS	Bill & Sherry Garrett	P.O. Box 235	Ashland City	TN	37015	615/792-4172
REELFOOT LAKE BASS CLUB	Brent Callicott	1808 Shatz Rd.	Union City	TN	38261	731/885-7109
RISING STARS BASSMASTERS	Tony Collins	777 Whippoorwill Cr.	Seymour	TN	37865	865/577-2505
SALE CREEK BASS CLUB	Creed Poole	15924 Poole Road	Sale Creek	TN	37373	423/332-3674
SMOKY MTN. BASS ANGLERS	John Howard	1825 Sedgewick Dr.	Knoxville	TN	37922	865/690-3894
SPARTA BASS CLUB	Ricky England	154 Hawthorne Rd.	Sparta	TN	38583	931/738-9611
STONES RIVER BASS ANGLERS	Mike Taylor	6740 Holt Rd.	Nashville	TN	37211	615/833-8182
TEKSID BASS ANGLERS	Walter Hankins	1666 Bear Creek Rd.	Vanleer	TN	37181	615/763-2616
TENNESSEE BASS FEDERATION	A.D. Sanford	75 Hickory Flat Rd.	Cedar Grove	TN	38321	731/987-3061
TIMS FORD BASS CLUB	Bob Krueger	747 Wilkerson Ln.	Winchester	TN	37398	931/967-8063
TRI COUNTY BASS CLUB	John Gregory	2352 Henpeck Ln.	Franklin	TN	37064	615/781-6563
TWIN CITY BASS CLUB	Gary Heath	30528 Lee Hwy.	Glade Spring	VA	24340	540/944-3115
VOLUNTEER BASS ANGLERS	Lawrence Sanford	120 Wood Cemetary Ln.	Jackson	TN	38305	731/423-8573
VOLUNTEER BASSMASTERS	Bill Hill	1431 Hill Road	Newport	TN	37821	423/623-8251
ALABAMA CONSERV. & NATURAL RESOURCES	James J. McHugh	64 North Union St.	Montgomery	AL	36130	334/242-3883
MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS	Larry Pugh	P.O. Box 451	Jackson	MS	39205	662/840-5172

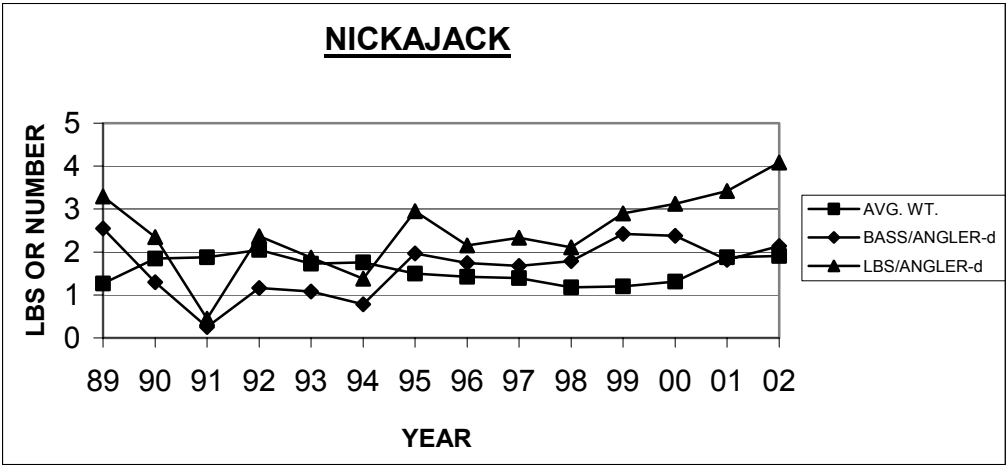
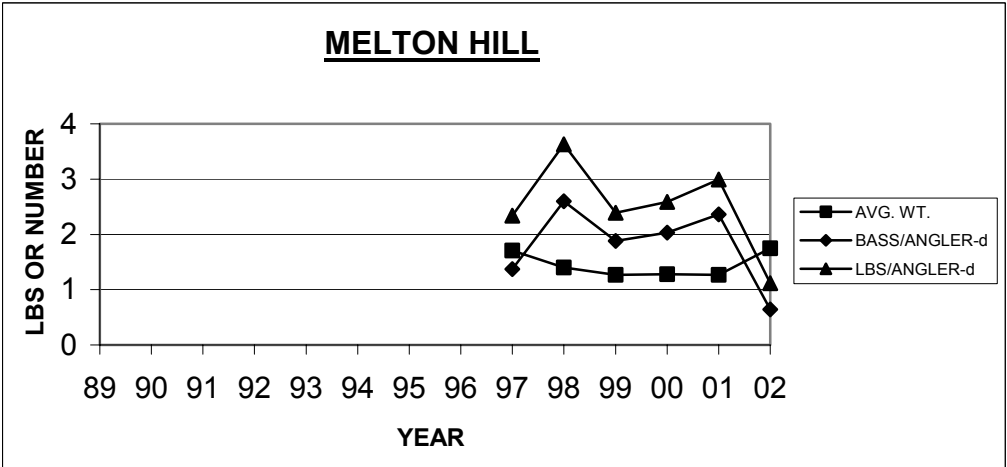
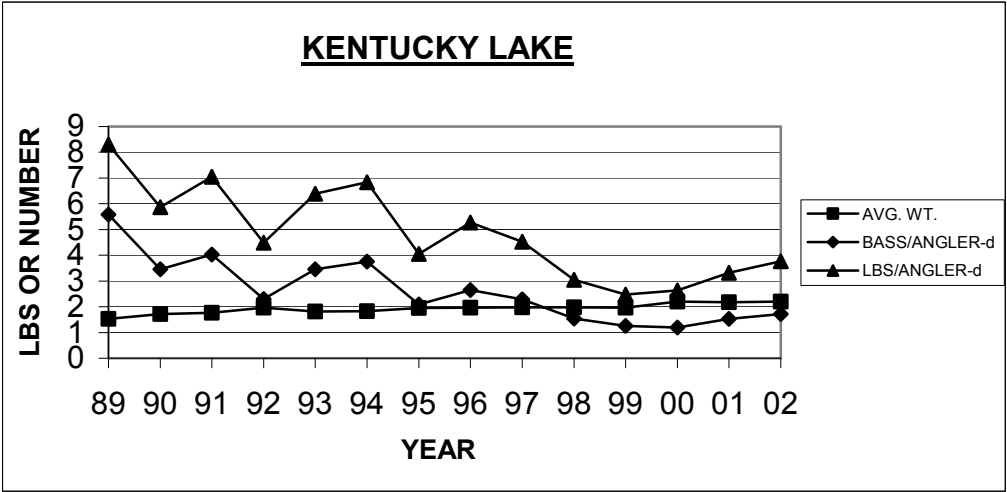
APPENDIX

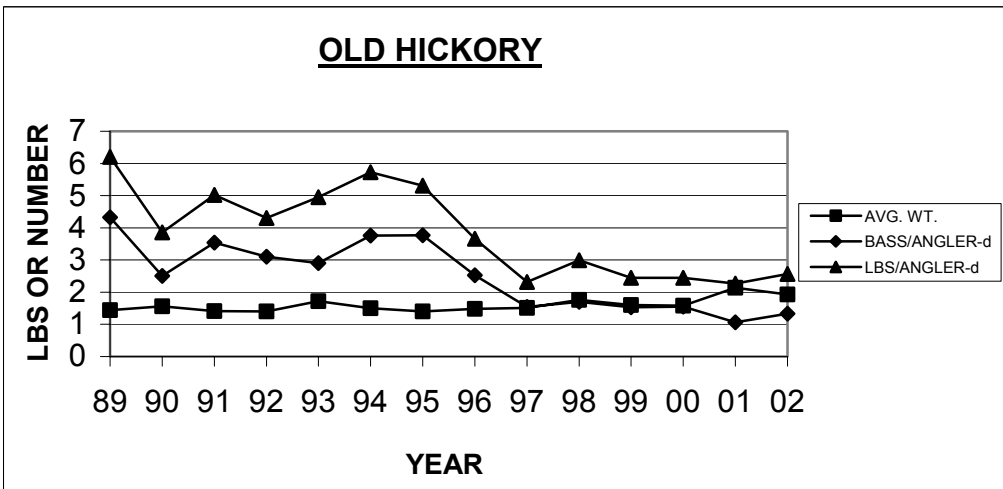
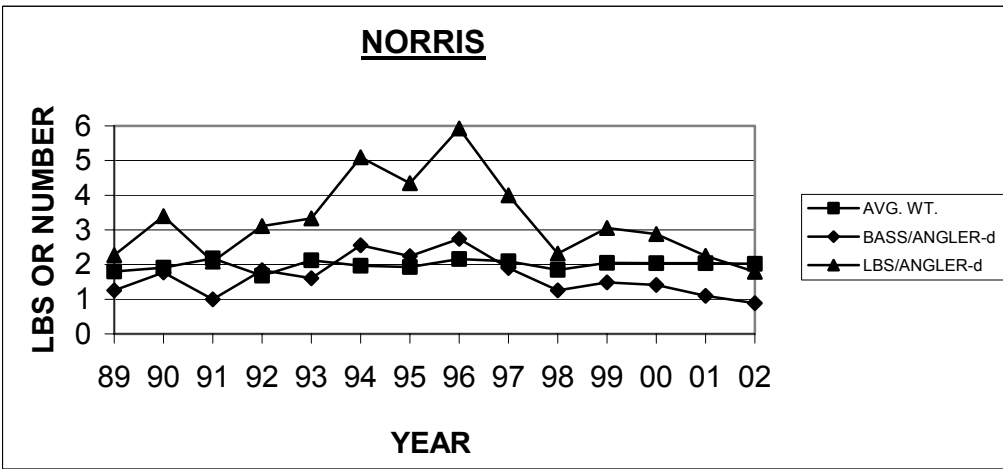
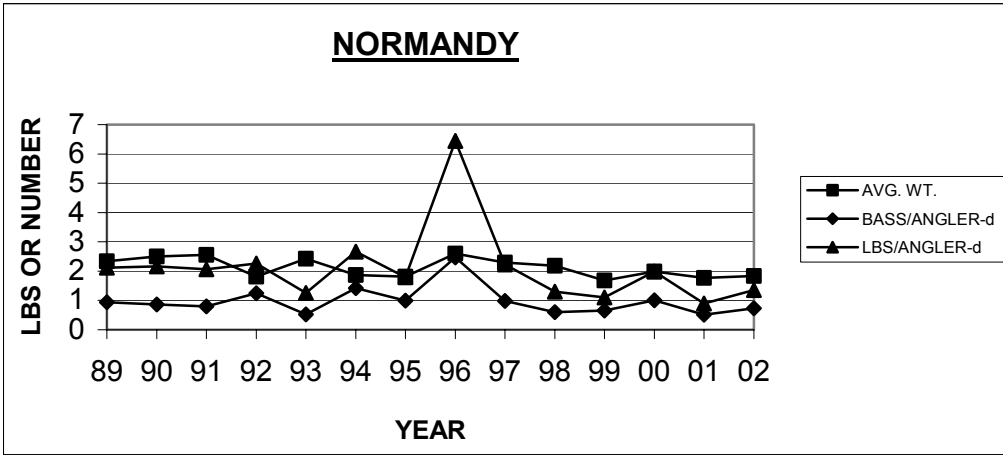


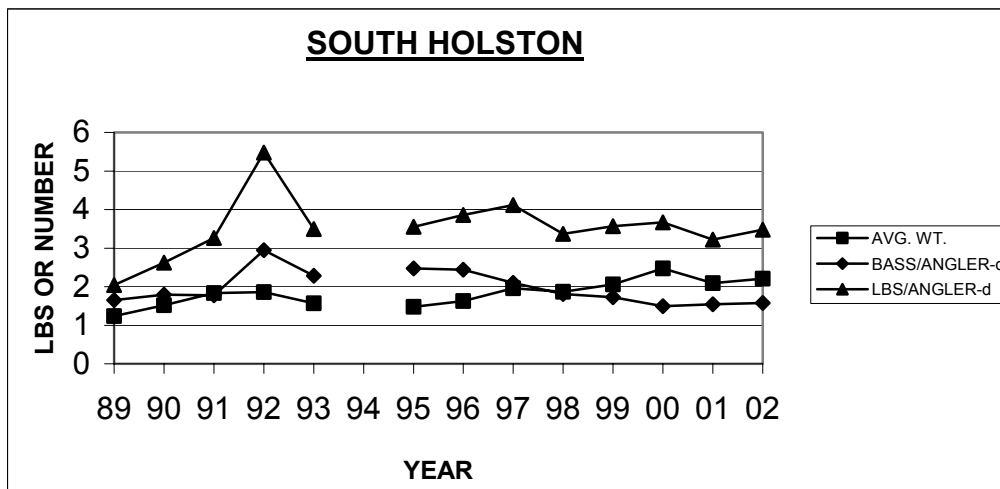
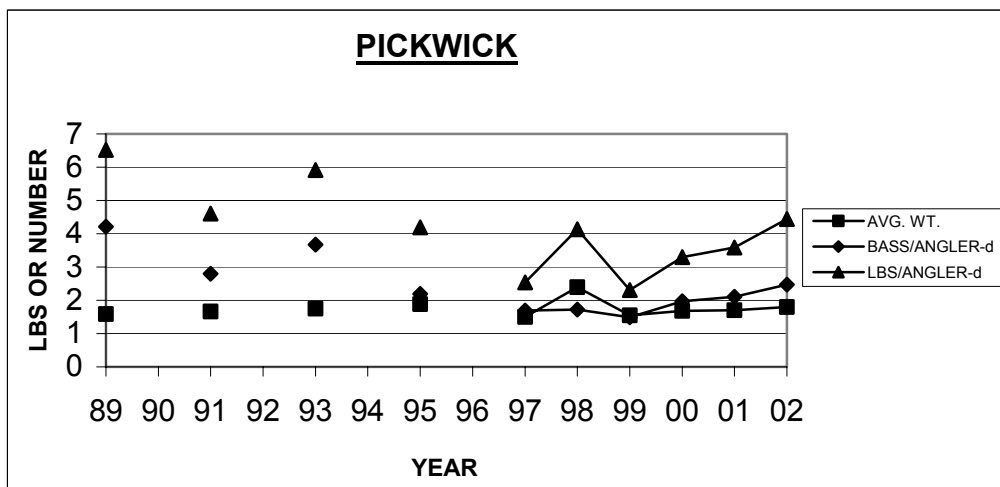
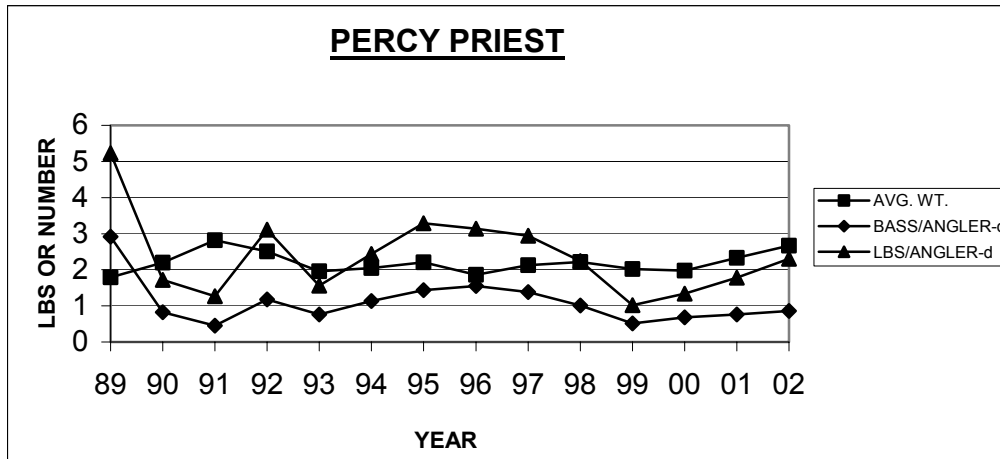


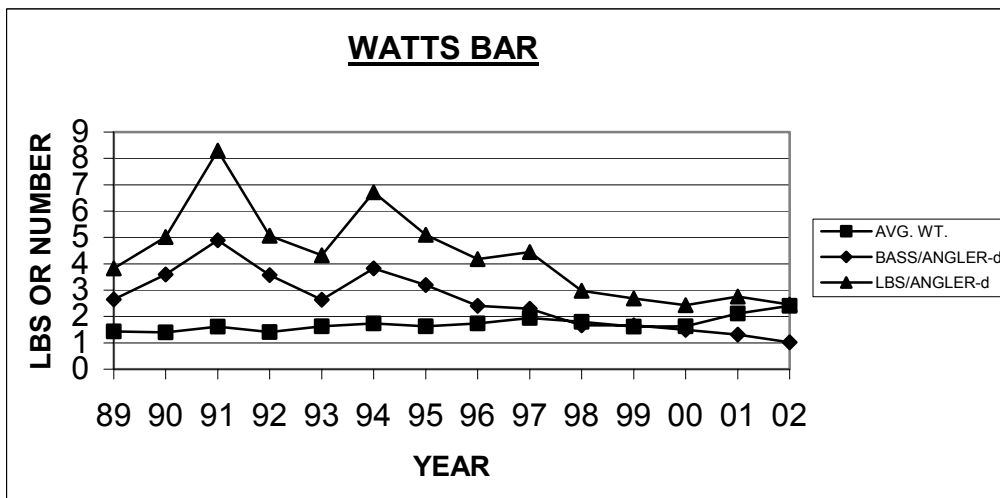
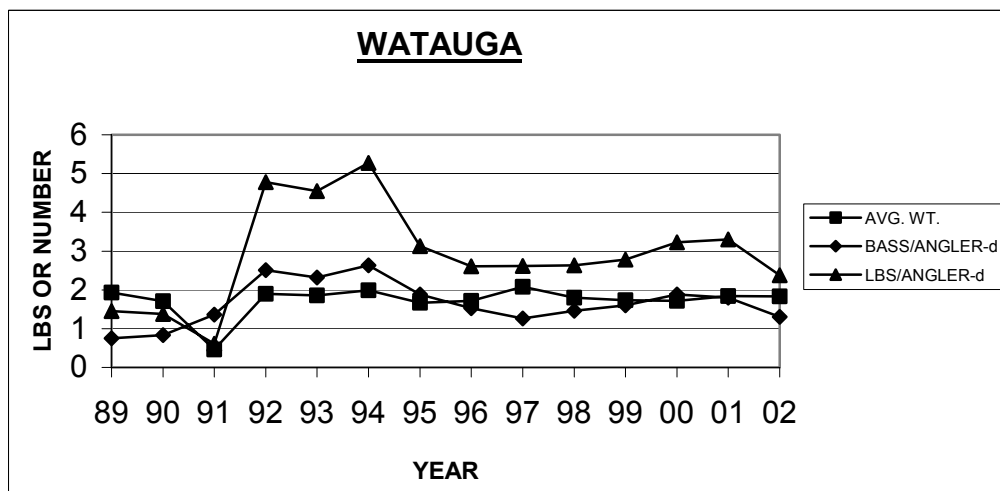
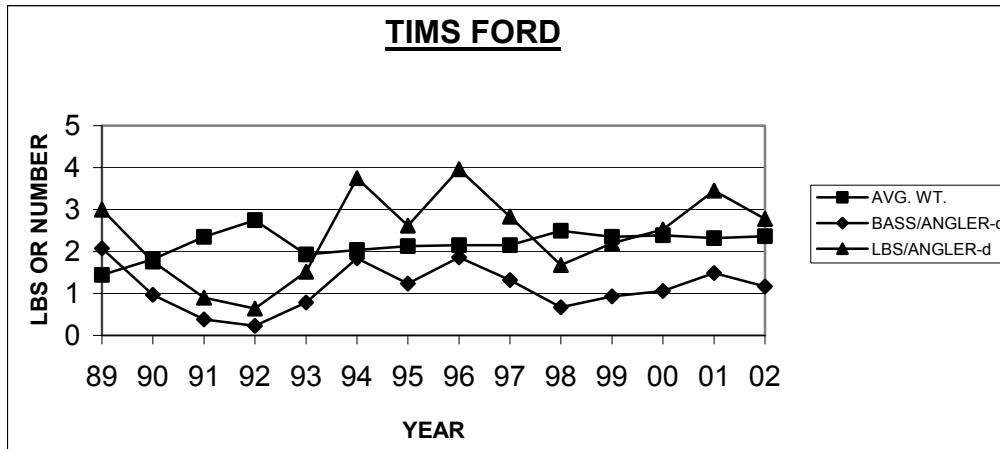


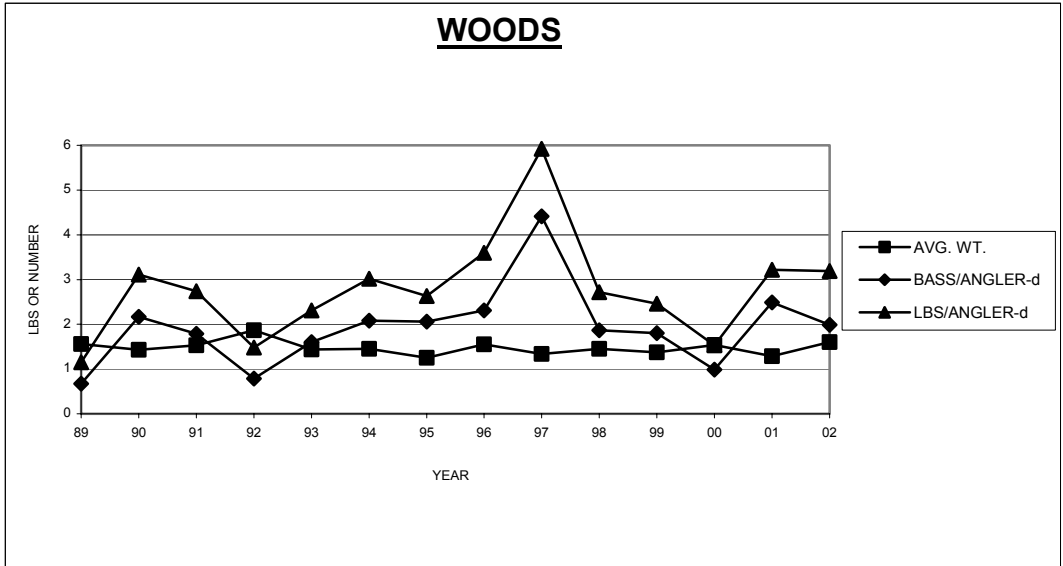












BASS HANDLING/TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has several tips for tournament anglers to help keep fish alive. The following suggestions reflect current research by southeastern fisheries management agencies into practice of culling fish during tournament events and the stress caused by holding fish in live wells.

1. Fill your live well immediately upon arrival at your first fishing location (Open water areas with good water quality). Turn on aerator systems to begin building oxygen levels in the live well. Run aerators/recirculating pump continuously when you have fish in the live well. If the aerator must run on a timer, run as often as possible as oxygen depletion occurs quickly when the pump is off. Make sure aeration system provides proper aeration while boat is moving or on a trailer. If you don't have a recirculating system, add on. (Live well capacities vary, but allow at least one gallon of water per one pound of fish)
2. Try not to play the fish to total exhaustion and land them by hand, if possible or use knotless nylon or rubber nets. Grasp bass by the lower jaw and hold them vertically, supporting large fish with a wet hand under the belly. Do not allow fish to touch boat or carpet and rub off protective slime. Remove hooks quickly with as little tissue damage as possible with needlenose pliers or hemostats. When attempts fail, or the fish has swallowed the hook cut the line five or six inches above the hook. Try not to hold the fish out of the water longer than you can hold your breath. This includes fish in bags headed for weigh-in. If the fish has become exhausted, hold it gently in the water until it becomes acclimated, moving it slowly back and forth to help it regain and maintain its equilibrium. Keep fish in rear live wells, evenly distributed between compartments. Fish in forward live wells are more likely to be injured from bouncing on rough water. Remove dead fish from live well immediately to prevent further mortality.
3. Add 1 cup of non-iodized salt (rock salt, sea salt, etc.) to 15 gallons of live well water (1/3 cup per five gallons) to maintain electrolyte balance and reduce the effects of shock and stress. Commercially available live well additives can also be used as directed. Don't over salt if using both. Pre-measure salt and additive into zip-lock bags for use when you exchange water in the live wells (see #5).
4. Monitor lake surface water temperatures and add small amounts of non-chlorinated ice to keep live well temperatures 5 to 10 degrees cooler than surface temperature. **(Do not reduce temperature more than 10 degrees below the lake surface temperature to avoid thermal shock when the fish are leased back to the lake)** If lake water temperatures are above 75 degrees, recirculate cooler, aerated live well water rather than pumping in warmer lake water. Block ice is preferred, because it melts slower and it can be made economically by freezing water-filled half-gallon plastic jugs. Use hot water or a chlorine remover in making the ice jugs to reduce the possible release of toxic chlorine when the ice is used. A one gallon block of ice will lower the temperature of 30 gallons of water approximately 10 degrees for about three hours. At water temperatures above 80 degrees, and during the months of July and August, consideration should be given to reducing tournament times or postponing tournaments until cooler water temperatures. Holding tournaments at night during the summer does not make much difference in reducing bass mortality, since water temperatures do not change that much over a 24-hour period.
5. Constantly monitor the fish for signs of stress and drain half the live well water every three hours to remove toxic waste products (carbon dioxide and ammonia). Refill with fresh water and add half the amounts of ice, salt and/or a commercial live well additive (as directed) each time.
6. Install an oxygen delivery system, which delivers oxygen directly into live wells from a pressurized tank through air-stones or hose. The system must have a regulator or pressure valve and the tank must be securely mounted. The system is better than simple aeration (air is only 21% oxygen) and solves oxygen demand problems. Although less need for water temperature adjustments is usually required, flushing with freshwater every 3 hours is still essential.



**Don't Forget To Take A Kid Fishing. They Are Our
Future Anglers and Stewards of Tennessee's
Resources!**