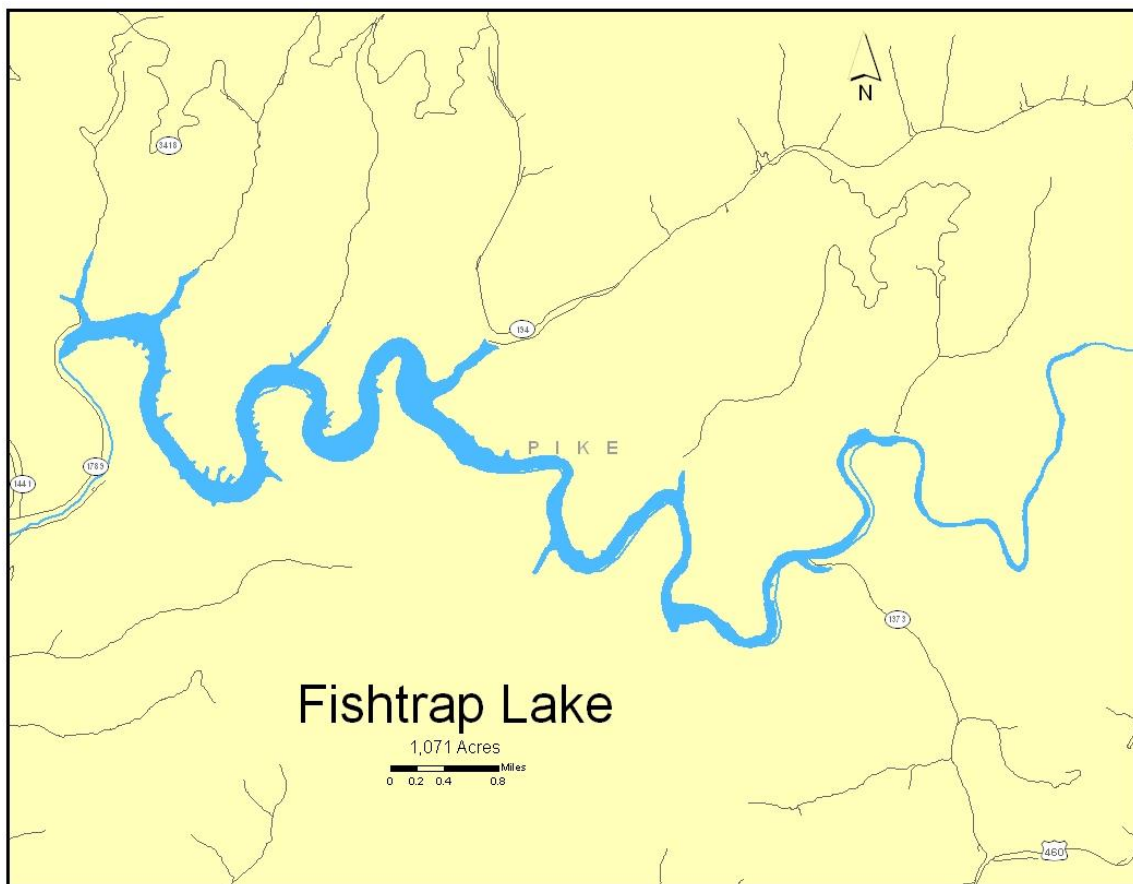


## Fishtrap Lake Bass Assessment 2016

Fishtrap Lake is a 1,143 acre multipurpose reservoir on the Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy River in Pike County. This lake is an excellent choice as a fishing destination for many species including hybrid striped bass, white crappie, bluegill, flathead, and channel catfish. The lake also provides good opportunities for all three black bass species (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass) common to Kentucky. In addition to statewide consumption advisories for mercury, specific advisories are in place for PCB in bottom feeders and white bass. These advisories limit harvest and have subsequently increased the quality of fish present in the lake.

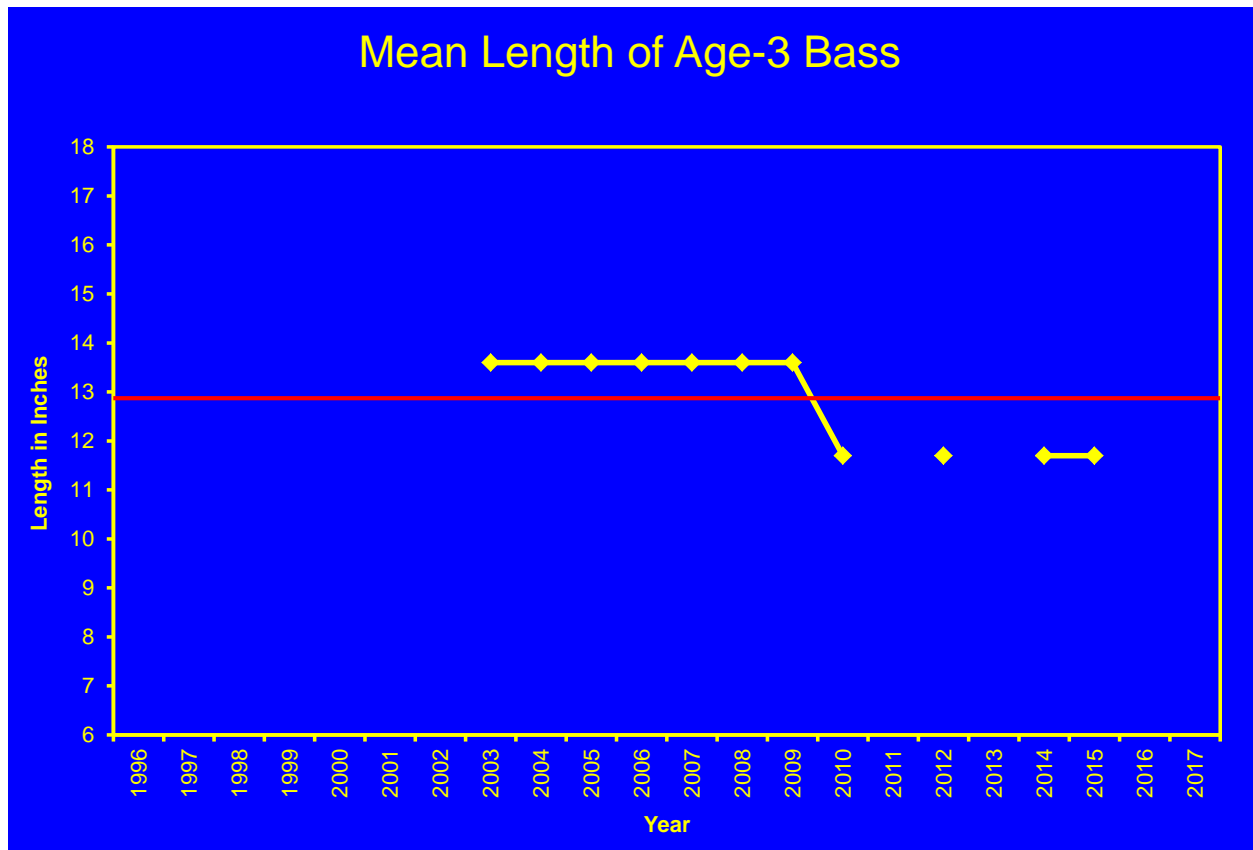
The following graphs show trends and rankings for each of the five population parameters used in the largemouth bass assessment.

Please see the [Sportfish Assessments](#) page for an explanation of how the assessment works and for a list of other lakes with largemouth bass assessments.



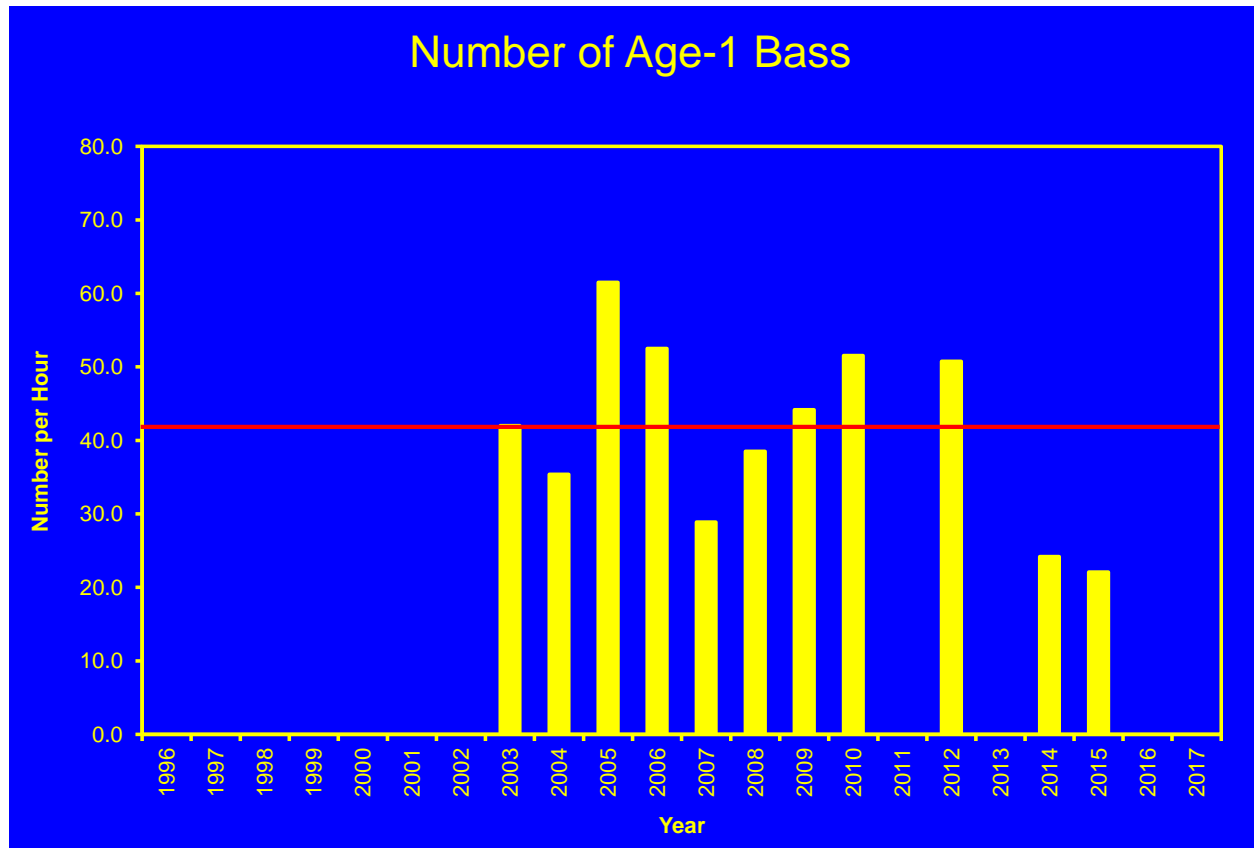
## Parameter 1 – Length at age-3 (growth rate)

At Fishtrap Lake, the length of an age-3 largemouth bass has averaged 12.9 inches from 2003 to 2015 (see red line). When compared to other lakes of this size this is considered to be good growth for largemouth bass. Age data has not been collected since 2010 (periodic sample). Spring of 2016 was to be the next collection year but high water levels in the spring prevented sampling. Growth rates are generally related to factors such as population density, food resources, and weather patterns. Data collection in the spring of 2017 should provide more up-to-date results for this parameter.



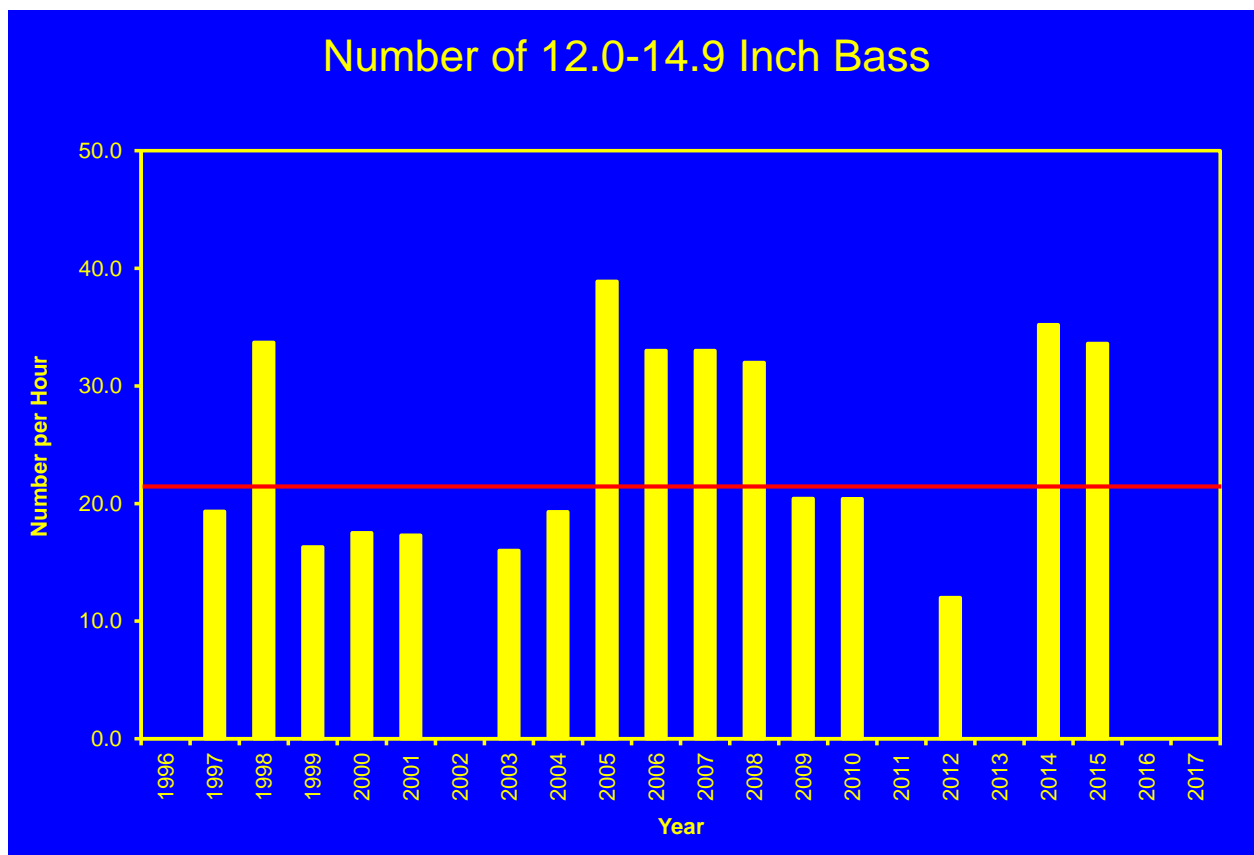
## Parameter 2 – Numbers of age-1 bass (how good the spawn was)

KDFWR looks at the electrofishing catch rates of age-1 largemouth bass to assess the success of the spawn which occurred in the prior year. This is an important parameter because the number of age-1 bass produced represents how good the fishing will be once these fish grow large enough for anglers to catch. At Fishtrap Lake, age-1 largemouth bass catch rates have averaged just over 41.1 fish per hour of electrofishing (red line) since 2003. When compared to other lakes in this size range, this is considered to be a “good” age-1 catch rate. Since the 2005 high of 61.5 fish/hr, the spring catch of age-1 largemouth bass began a declining trend. Catch rates then rebounded to a level of 51.6 in 2010 and 50.8 in 2012, which is considered “excellent”. There were no samples collected during the spring of 2011 and 2013. 2014 and 2015 again revealed lower catch rates indicating that natural recruitment is weak at Fishtrap Lake. The lake received supplemental stockings in the fall of 2012, 2013 and 2014 which have kept the population in balance.



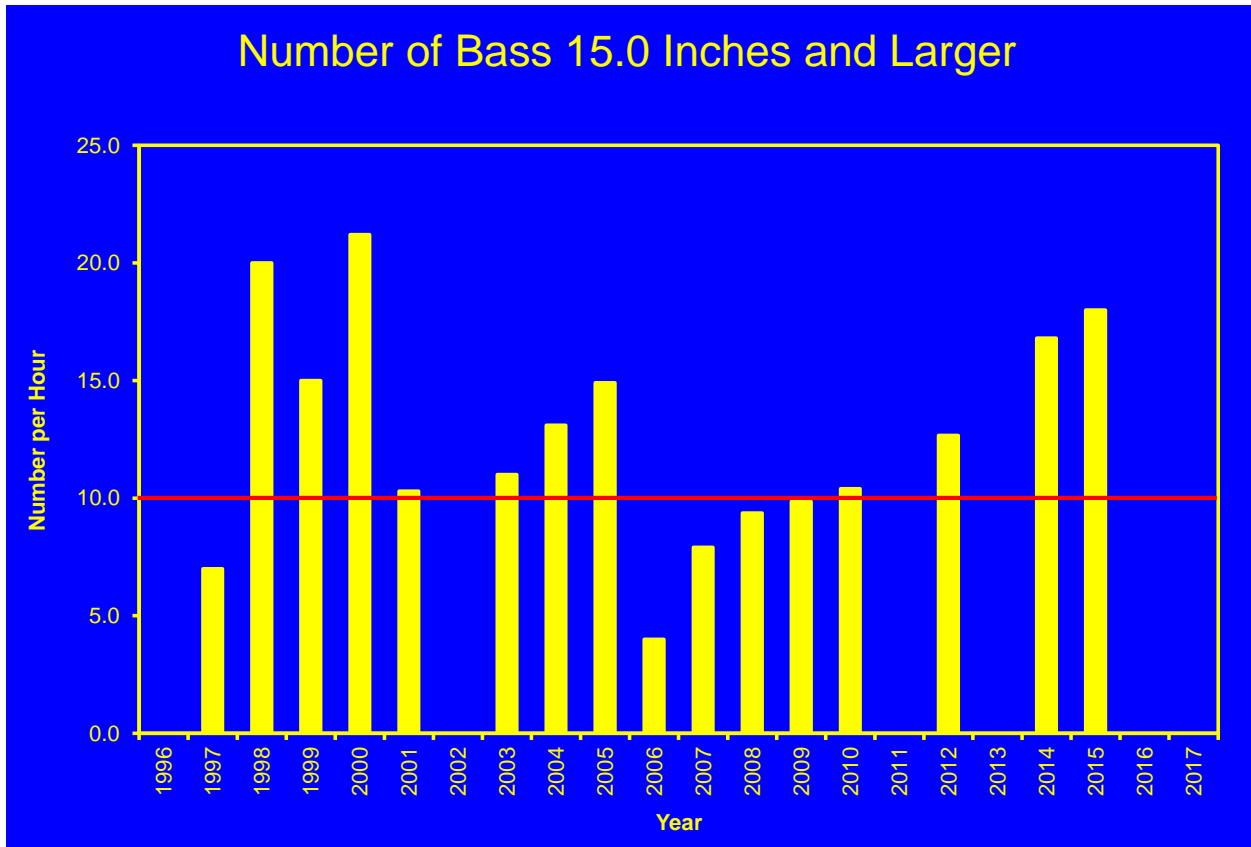
### Parameter 3 – Numbers of 12.0-14.9 inch bass

The electrofishing catch of 12.0-14.9 inch largemouth bass has averaged 21.3 fish/hr (red line), which gives Fishtrap Lake a “fair” rating when compared to other lakes in its size range. In 2005, the catch rate for this size range of bass peaked at 38.9 fish per hour. Supplemental stockings from 2013 to 2015 have succeeded in helping keep these catch rates up and stable in recent years. These numbers are important because these fish will soon grow to exceed the 15.0 inch legal size limit at the lake in the next year or two. Fish numbers greater than 15 and 20 inches are doing very well to furnish a quality fishery. There was no data collected in 2002, 2011, 2013 and 2016 due to high water levels.



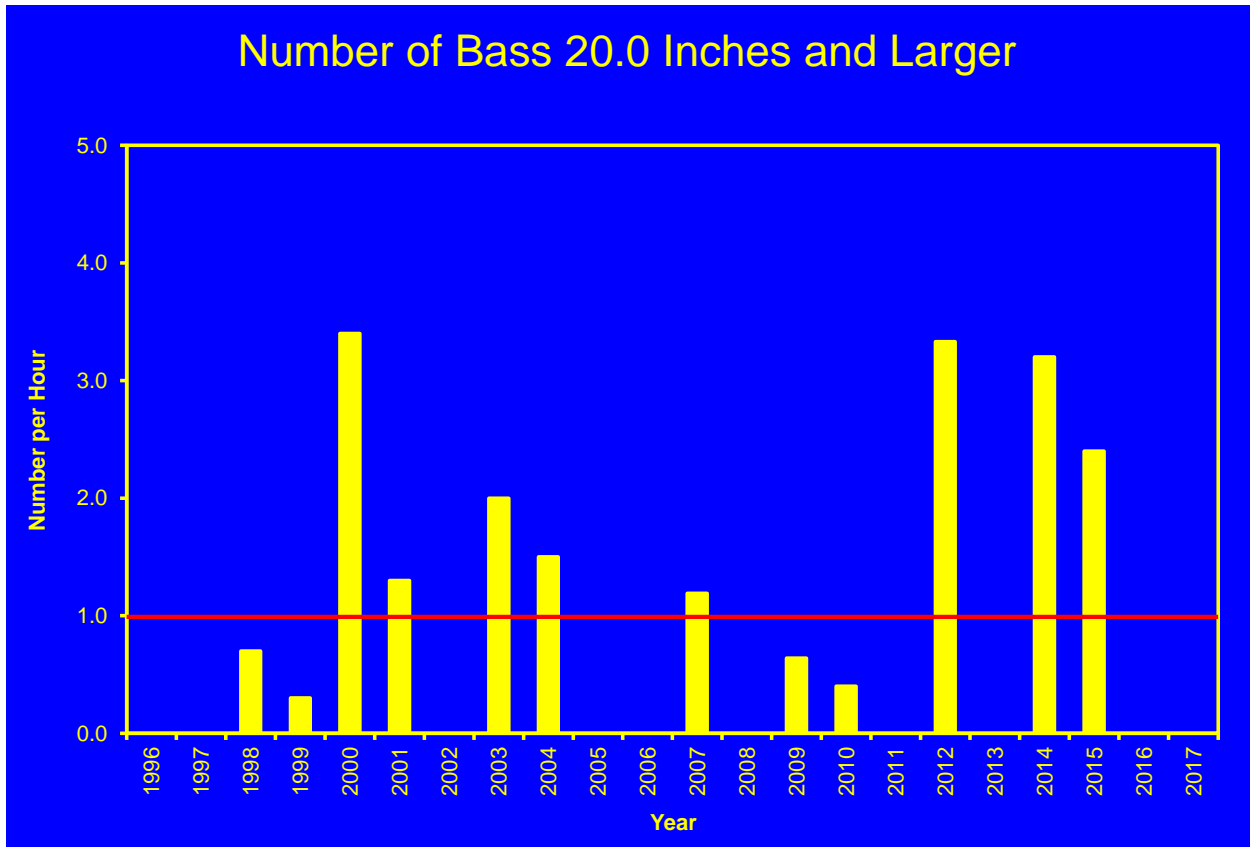
## Parameter 4 – Numbers of 15.0 inch and larger bass

The catch rate of 15.0 inch and larger largemouth bass at Fishtrap Lake has averaged 10.0 fish per hour of electrofishing (represented by the red line) for a rating of “fair” since 1986. Since 2006, the catch rate has steadily increased every year. This score is now well above the lake average at 18.0 fish/hr. This indicates that the harvestable largemouth bass population in Fishtrap Lake has improved and will be relatively stable for the next few years.



## Parameter 5 – Numbers of 20.0-inch and larger bass

The electrofishing catch of 20.0 inch and larger largemouth bass has averaged 1.0 fish per hour for Fishtrap Lake since 1986 (represented by the red line). This catch rate gives the lake a “good” rating when it is compared to other lakes in its size range. In 2012, biologists observed a catch rate of 3.3 fish per hour over 20 inches and it has remained “excellent” since. Anglers at Fishtrap Lake should have good opportunity to catch trophy fish.



## Overall – Total Assessment Score (All five parameters added together)

Overall, the largemouth bass fishery at Fishtrap Lake has averaged a “good” rating (13.6) since 2003 (represented by the red line). Inconsistencies in natural recruitment have led to supplemental stockings in recent years. Since 2003, the overall assessment rating for the largemouth bass population at Fishtrap Lake has maintained a “good” rating. Since 2012, there have been greater numbers of fish over 15 and 20 inches compared to most all previous years at Fishtrap Lake. Close monitoring of the spring numbers of age-1 fish and improvements to this component of the fishery will likely be significant to a stable largemouth bass population in the future. Supplemental stockings and the addition of crucial, winter habitat will be utilized as needed to aid recruitment of these small fish to the population.

