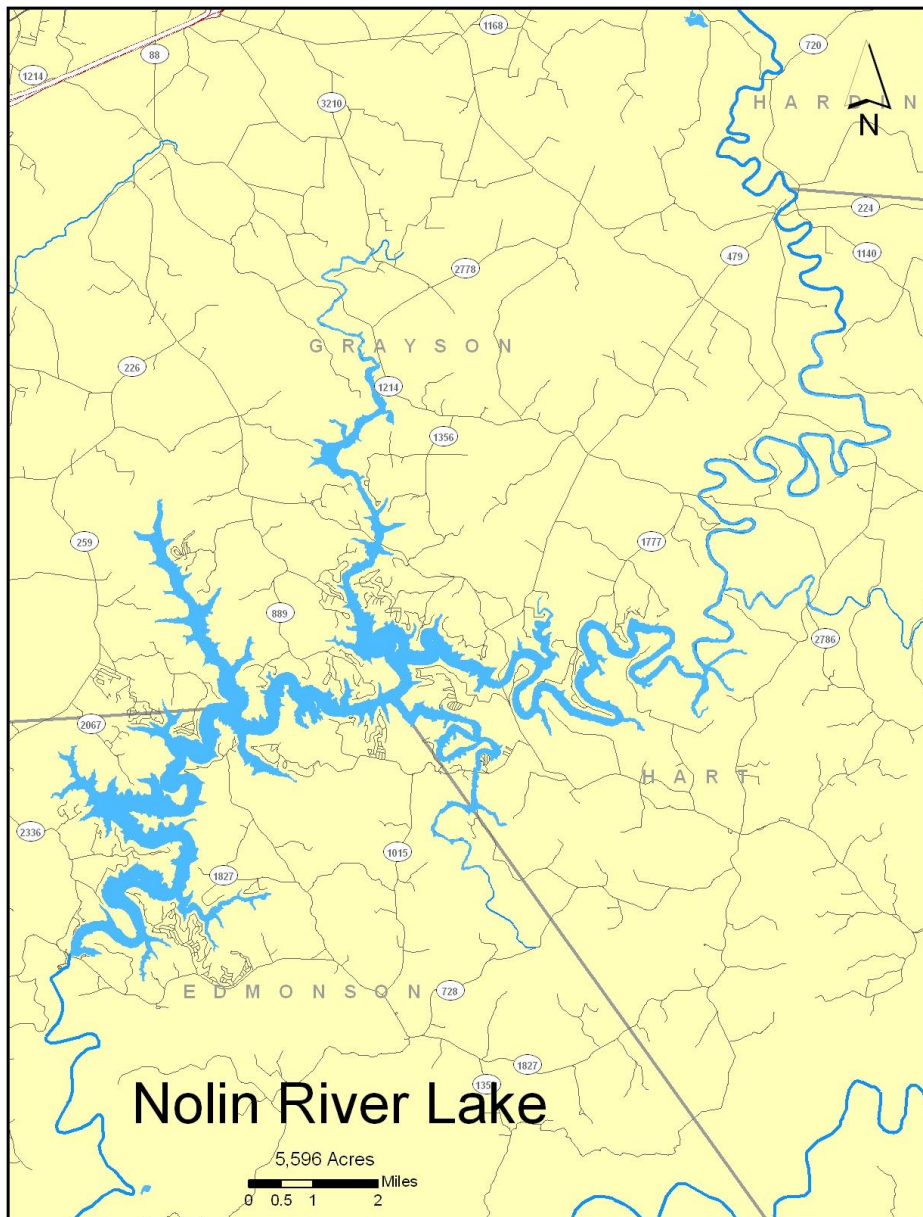


Nolin River Lake Largemouth Bass Assessment 2016

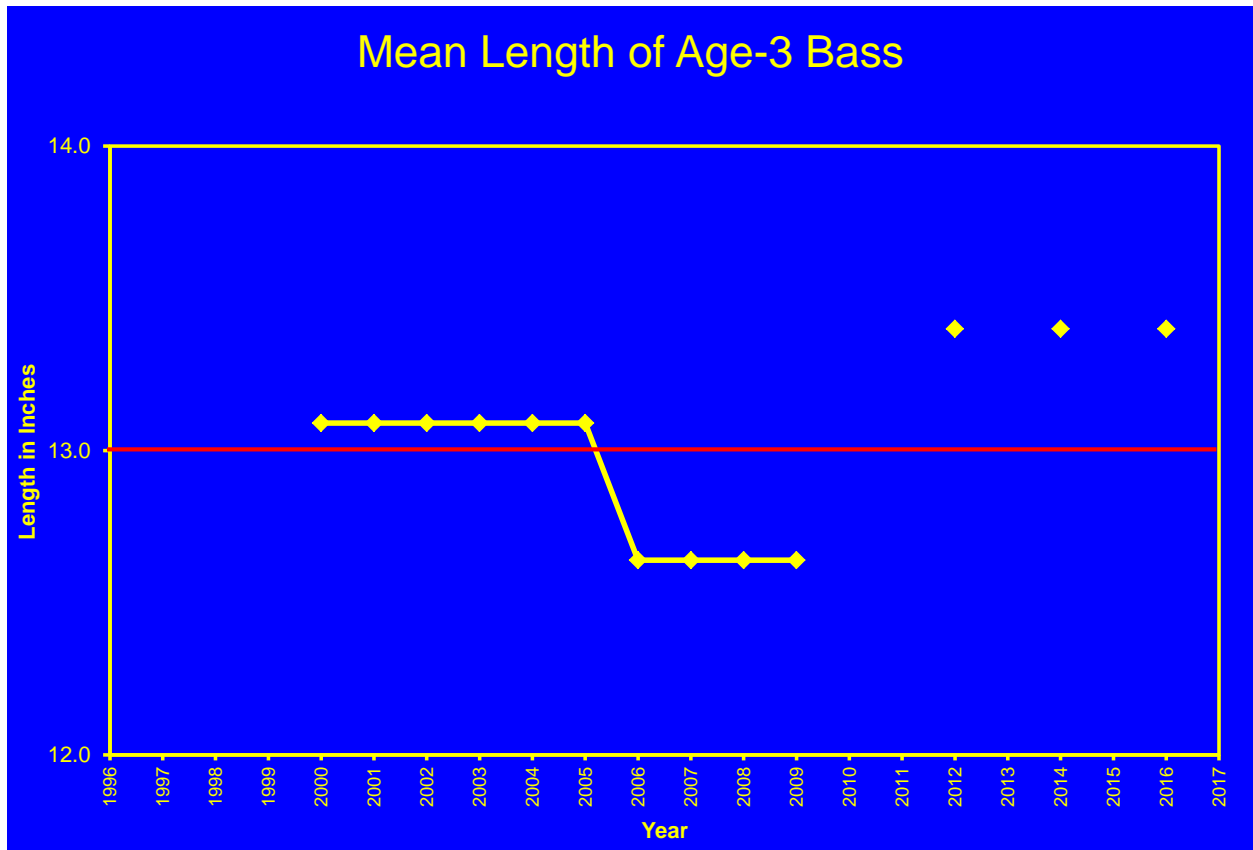
Nolin River Lake is a 5,790-acre multipurpose reservoir on Nolin River. The lake, located in Edmonson, Grayson and Hart counties, has 9 boat ramps, 3 marinas and is a popular fishing destination for largemouth bass, white bass, crappie, walleye, and catfish. The following graphs show data trends and rankings for each of the five 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.



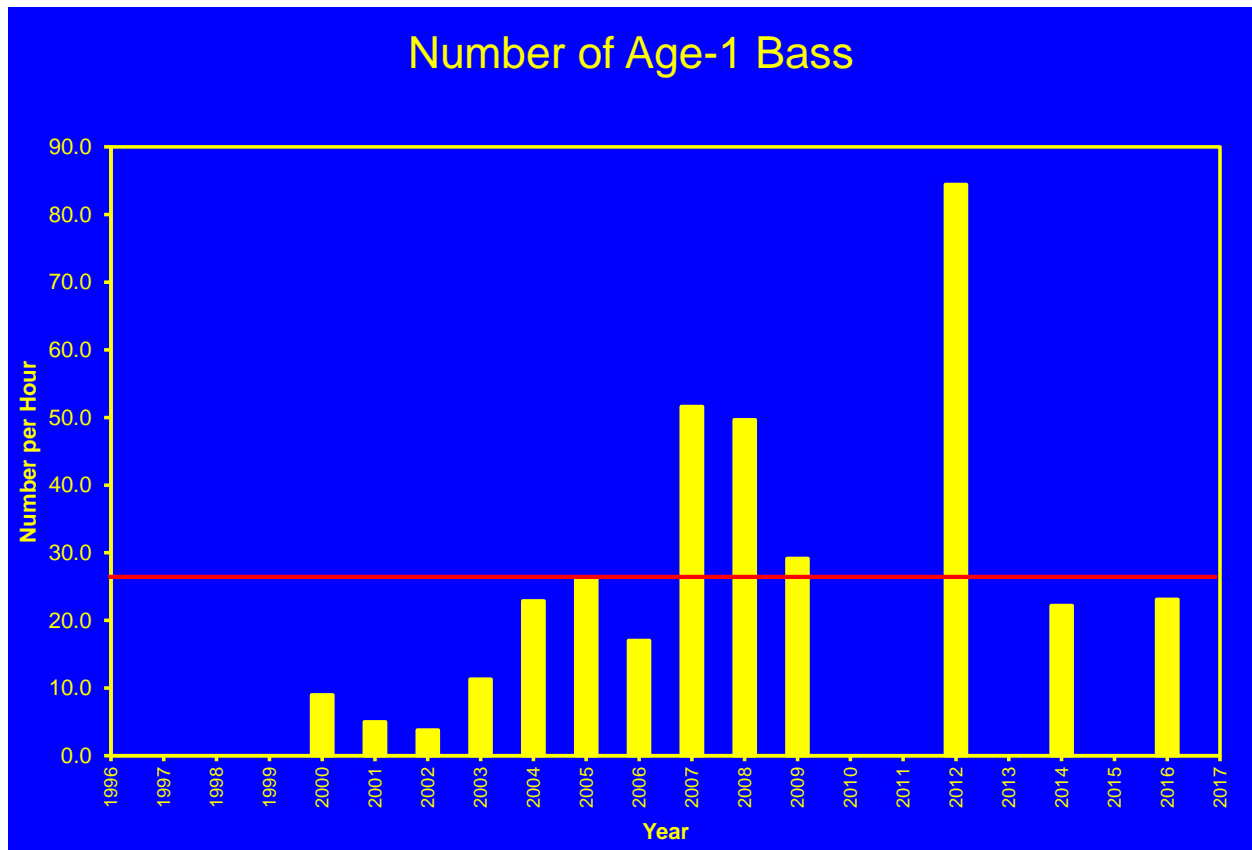
Parameter 1 – Mean Length at Age-3 (growth rate)

At Nolin River Lake, from 1996-2016, the average length of 3-year old largemouth bass is 13.0 inches (represented by the red line). This parameter is an average of the lengths of all three year old bass collected, and is important for management purposes because it indicates how well fish are growing. When compared to other lakes of similar size, this growth rate for largemouth bass is considered “Good”. Growth rates are related to factors such as population density, watershed fertility, food availability, and weather.



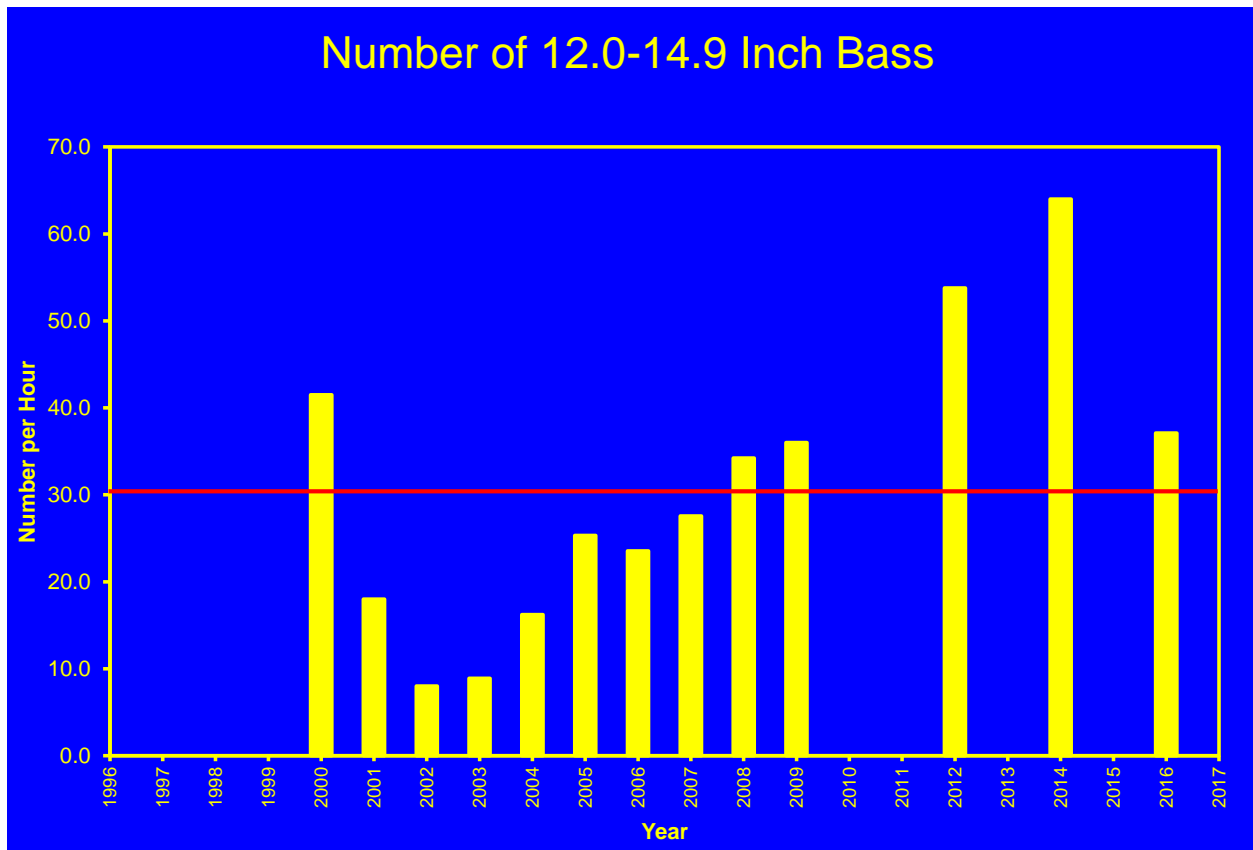
Parameter 2 – Number of Age-1 Bass (spawning success)

The electrofishing catch rate of 1-year old largemouth bass is calculated to determine the spawning success of the previous year. This is an important parameter because the number of age-1 bass is used as a predictor for how good fishing will be in the future. At Nolin River Lake age-1 largemouth bass catch rates increased from 2002 to 2012, but have been lower during the last two samples. Overall, the age-1 catch rate has averaged just over 27.3 fish per hour of electrofishing. The catch rate of age-1 fish in 2012 was the highest ever recorded and indicates a very successful spawn in 2011 most likely due to extremely high water level.



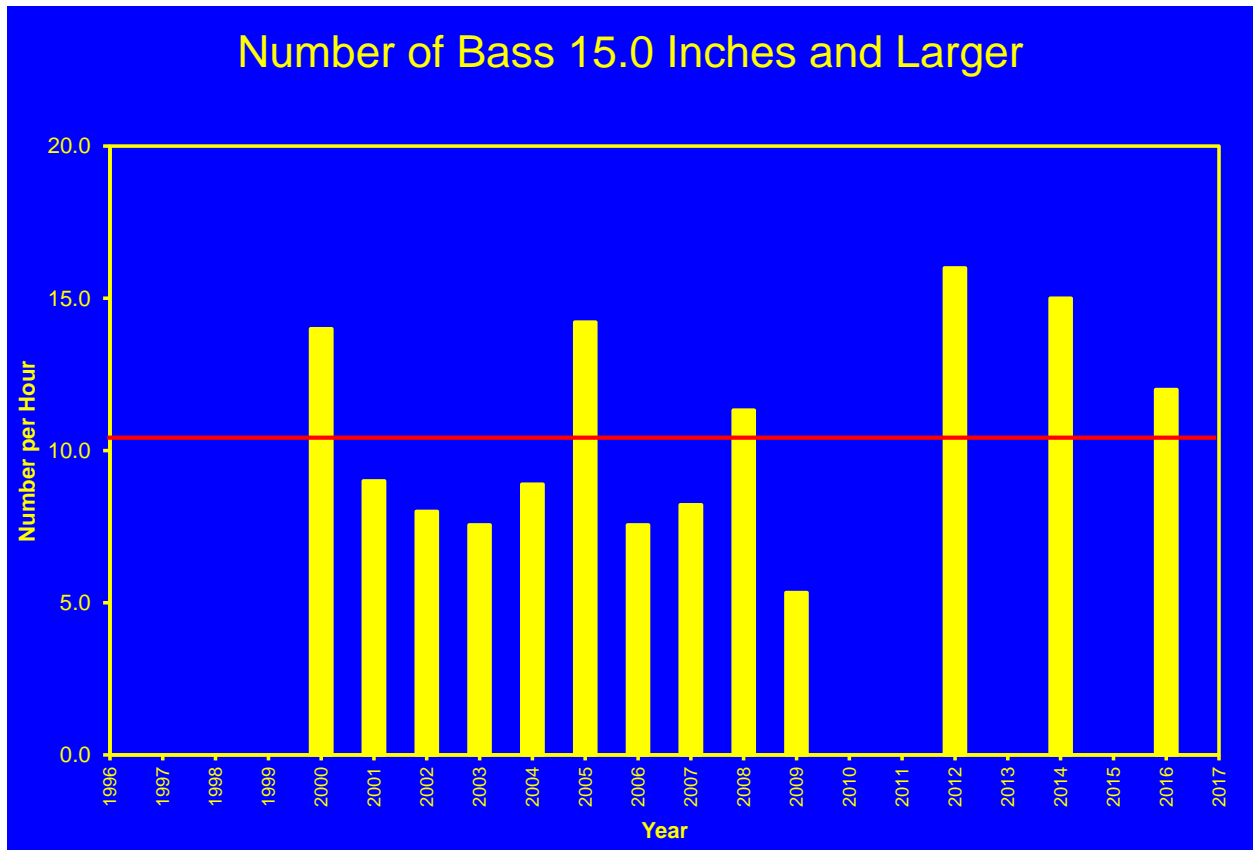
Parameter 3 – Number of 12.0-14.9-Inch Bass

The electrofishing catch for 12.0-14.9-inch largemouth bass averaged 30.3 fish/hour from 1996 to 2016. This puts Nolin River Lake in the upper end of the “Good” rating when compared to other similarly sized lakes. This parameter is important because it is indicative of the number legally harvestable fish that will be available to anglers in the next 1 to 2 years as they grow and reach the 15-inch size limit. Although the 2016 catch rate is lower than 2012 and 2014, catch rates have been generally increasing for the last several years. Age and growth data collected in 2012 indicate largemouth bass are growing exceptionally well.



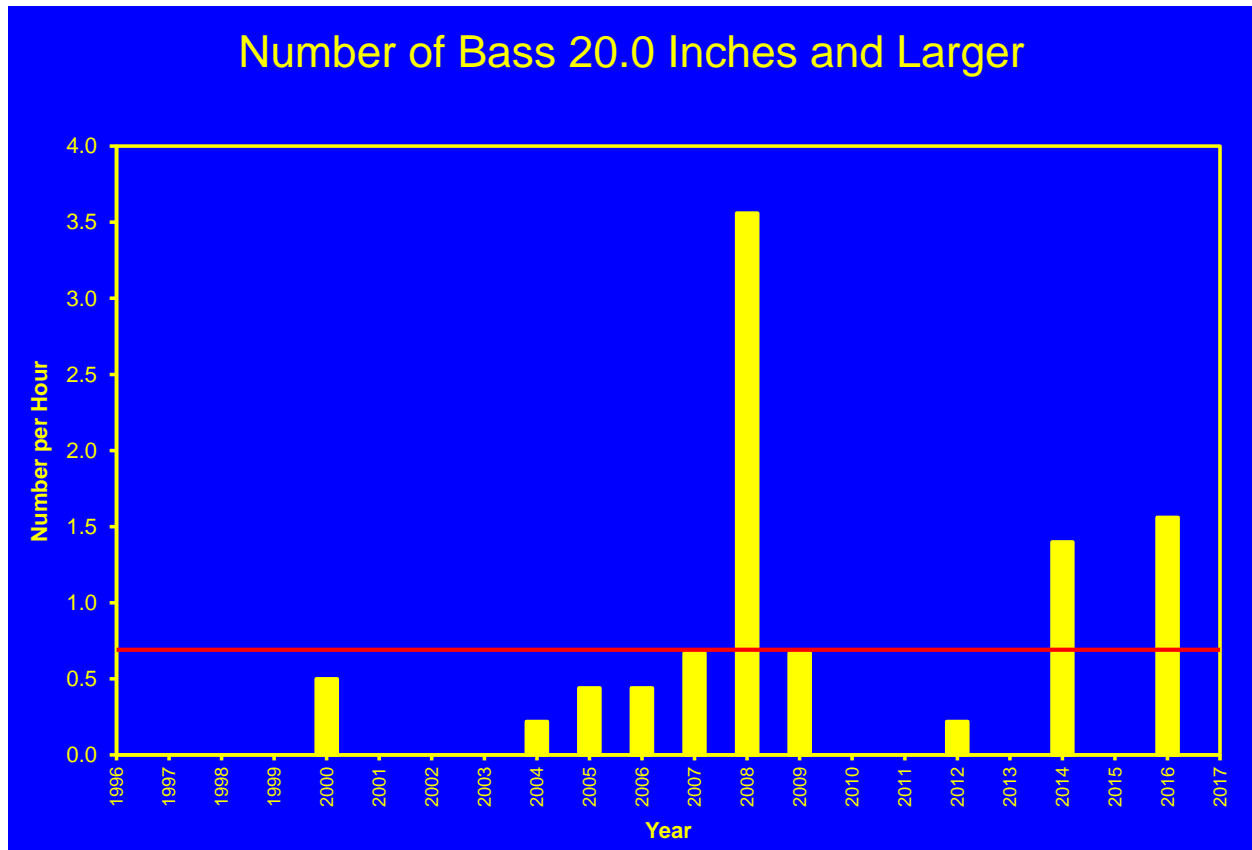
Parameter 4 – Number of 15.0-Inch and Larger Bass

The catch rate of 15.0-inch and larger largemouth bass at Nolin River Lake averaged 10.5 fish/hour of electrofishing from 1996 through 2016. The catch rate of 15-inch and larger fish has been erratic throughout the years. Larger fish are more difficult to sample which probably accounts for much of the variation in catch rates. When compared to other lakes, Nolin River Lake has never scored at the top in terms of the number of ≥ 15.0 inch bass and usually gets a “Fair” rating. However, the 2016 catch rate of ≥ 15 inch fish is above the average.



Parameter 5 – Numbers of 20.0-inch and larger bass

The electrofishing catch of 20.0 inch and larger largemouth bass averages 0.7 fish/hour for Nolin River Lake. When compared to similarly sized lakes this catch rate is considered “Good”. Fish of this size in a reservoir environment are difficult to sample consistently which likely accounts for the range in catch rates rather than any significant change in the population. In 2014 and 2016 the catch rate was well above the average and ranked in the “Excellent” range. There has been a general increasing trend for this catch rate since 2004.



Overall – Total Assessment Score (all five parameters added together)

Overall, the largemouth bass fishery at Nolin River Lake has averaged a “Good” rating (13.3) over the past 21 years as indicated by the red line. 2008 was an exceptional sampling year and reiterates the fact that data must be looked at over time and information collected in a given year cannot be used singularly to make management decisions. Since 2012 the total assessment score has ranked in the “Excellent” range. This is mostly due to the increased catch rates of larger fish and should indicate good fishing for the next few years.

