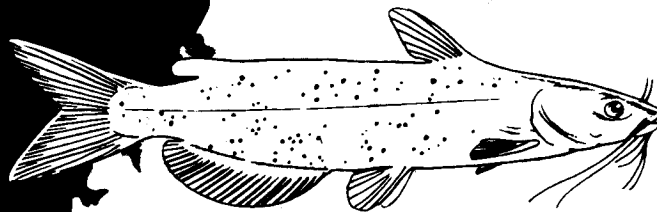
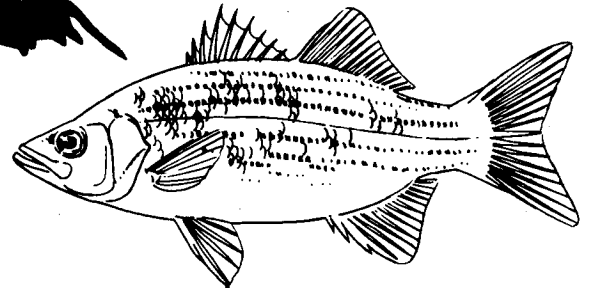
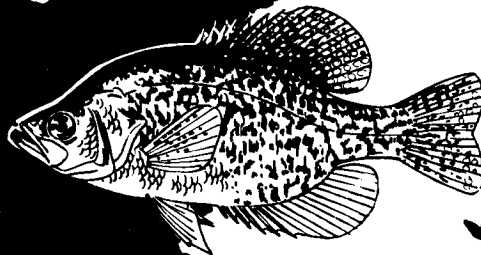
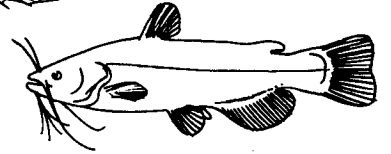
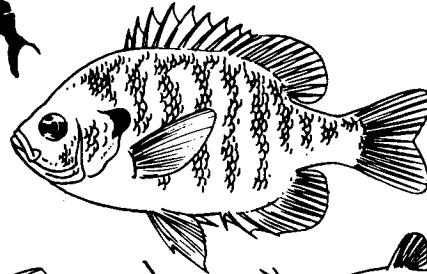
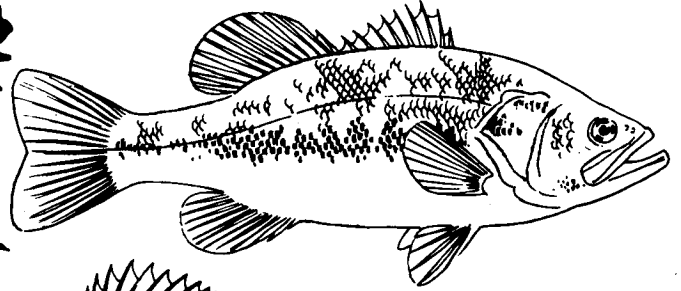
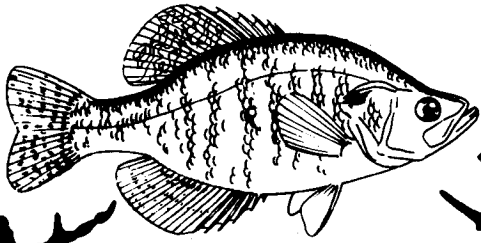


# REND LAKE FISHING GUIDE



Illinois  
Department of  
Natural Resources



# REND LAKE FISHING GUIDE

BY

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AND

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MARCH 1996

## INTRODUCTION

Of all outdoor activities, there are few more appealing to thousands of Illinoisans than fishing, regardless of their age, sex or financial status. What specifically there is about fishing that appeals to so many is often difficult to describe. To one angler, it may mean a peaceful, meditative way to spend a day off. To another, it may be the challenge of limiting-out or catching a trophy-size fish. Other anglers feel that fishing is simply great fun.

In one manner or another, man has probably fished since the beginning of time. Archeological evidence (fish bones, spears, and crude stone hooks) indicates that the taking of fish for food was an integral part of early man's life. The importance of fish, and the esteem in which they were held, was further reflected in the statuary, paintings, carvings, pottery and jewelry of its artisans. Throughout recorded history, the taking of fish has played a major role in the development of civilizations and nations. The abundance of fish in the lakes and streams of the New World was, in fact instrumental in spurring many Europeans into settling the United States.

Today, although Americans still consume millions of pounds of fish from our inland waters and bordering oceans, the pursuit of fish for food is no longer the main reason for going fishing. Fishing has become a sport, a pleasurable, relaxing activity, a means of getting away from one's tension-filled technical world and back to the wonders of the outdoor world.

In Illinois, one has the opportunity to fish many kinds of waters; ranging from small artificial lakes to large Corps of Engineers reservoirs, small fast flowing smallmouth bass streams to the mighty Mississippi River; and river bottomland lakes to Lake Michigan. In terms of acreage, Illinoisans have 281,475 acres of private, public and federal impoundments, 256,574 acres of streams and rivers, and 976,640 acres of Lake Michigan in which to fish. One's choice of fish to catch is also varied, ranging from bluegill, carp, crappie, catfish and bass to walleye, northern pike, trout and salmon.

Conversely to what one might believe, fishing is as good, if not better, than it was 30 to 60 years ago. Factors contributing towards more and better angling opportunities have been due primarily to: (1) the emphasis on eliminating pollution of our lakes, rivers and streams; (2) improved and more diligent use of soil and water conservation techniques; (3) building of numerous water supply ponds, lakes, power and flood control reservoirs; and (4) improved fisheries management techniques.

Illinois' sport fisheries management is geared to produce "more and better fishing" throughout the State. As a result, many of our waters now support excellent populations of sport fishes. However, we frequently find that even where there are large numbers of desirable-size fish, they are not always caught in proportions to their abundance. Therefore, it is for those people who are just beginning to fish or who are unfamiliar with our waters that we try to provide some of the basic whats, wheres, and hows of sport fishing.

## LAKE DESCRIPTION

Situated amidst the gently rolling hills of Franklin and Jefferson Counties, Rend Lake is the second largest inland impoundment in Illinois. Completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1971, this huge lake has rapidly become one of the more popular recreational playgrounds in southern Illinois.

Rend Lake affords good fishing, boating, skiing, sailing and hunting opportunities. Numerous Corps of Engineer recreational areas and Wayne Fitzgerald State Recreation Areas provide excellent camping, picnicking and boating facilities. Nature and equestrian trails, swimming beaches, and a professional 18-hole golf course are additional attractions found around the lake.

Rend Lake was formed by constructing a 2 mile compacted earthen dam across the wide Big Muddy River Floodplain, approximately 3 miles northwest of Benton. The water level is controlled by a 435 foot concrete spillway at 410 feet mean sea level (M.S.L.) with a lower notch with a width of 31 feet and a depth of 5 feet to maintain an average lake level of 406 feet M.S.L.

Being a multipurpose reservoir in nature, Rend Lake was built to provide a source of water supply, flood control protection, recreation, fish and wildlife conservation, and to ensure downstream water quality.

The general configuration of Rend Lake is a broad "Y". At an average pool level of 406 feet M.S.L., this lake covers 18,900 acres. It has a shoreline of 162 miles. The normal length and width of the Lake is 13 and 3 miles, respectively. The maximum depth of Rend Lake is 35 feet with an average depth of 9.7 feet.

Principal tributaries of the Lake are the Big Muddy River and Casey Fork. The lake remains quite clear throughout the year due to the silt settling nature of the subimpoundment dams on the above two streams at the head end (upper-end) of the lake. Major bays of the lake are Marcum Branch, Gun Creek, Atchison Creek, Jackie Branch and Sandusky Creek. Two large peninsulas of the lake, Nason Point and Wayne Fitzgerald State Recreation Area are dominant land features of the lake.

That portion of Rend Lake lying north of Route 154 is quite shallow; generally 10 feet or less in depth. However, it also provides some of the best fish habitat and fishing found on the lake. Much of the existing timber of the Big Muddy and Casey Fork Arms surrounding Nason Point was left intact and flooded upon impoundment. Boatways were cleared where dense timber stands were left uncut. Some timber in Gun Creek was also flooded upon impoundment.

South of Route 154, Rend Lake is deeper in nature. However, boaters unfamiliar with the lake should be aware that there are a number of shallow areas with only one to three foot water depths, particularly in the Gun Creek and Dam West Access Areas. These hazardous areas are indicated on the maps included in this fishing guide.

Typical of most Illinois waters, Rend Lake becomes chemically and thermally stratified during the summer months. Generally from early June to mid-September, the dissolved oxygen becomes quite low or non-existent below the 15 foot level. Thus, summertime anglers should avoid fishing below this level as few fish will be caught.

Included with this fishing guide are maps showing the hydrological features of the lake, plus the major recreation areas, surrounding roads and water depths. These can also be used to find the old road beds, flooded timber, boating hazards or your way around Rend Lake.

Recreationalists will find excellent highway access to Rend Lake. State routes 148, 127, 51, 15, 13, 154, 34 and 37 provide direct routing to the lake. East of Sesser, Route 154 transects the mid-portion of Rend lake, Interstate 57, which joins with Interstate 64, 70, 74 and 80, runs parallel to the east side of the lake and provides the least congested, carefree travel route to Rend Lake.

It is only about a 4 hour trip from Bloomington, 3 hours from Springfield or Champaign-Urbana, 1½ hours from the St. Louis-East St. Louis metropolitan area, or 6 hours from Chicago to Rend Lake.

## ACCESS AREAS, SERVICE & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Illinoisans going to Rend Lake will generally find this recreational complex has everything needed to satisfy their outing desires. Table 1, found on the following page provides a quick reference to the public facilities found at each of the major recreation areas. These areas range in quality from the most modern to those having facilities developed just to meet one's basic needs. Another outstanding feature of the Rend Lake Complex is the number of access areas which enable the public to use every portion of the lake, depending on their interest.

The Dam West Recreation Area, located at the southwestern corner of the lake, is a lovely 37 acre picnic and launching area. It also has grills, water and sanitary facilities. It's a pleasant spot to enjoy one's outdoor meal while watching the boating and water skiing activities. The Rend Lake Corps of Engineers Management Office is located on the hillside directly north of this area.

Rend Lake Marina is located one-half mile north of Dam West and is presently the only full service marina on the lake. Bait and tackle, tour and guide service, rental boats and motors, gas and oil, snack items, motor repair service, daily and yearly dockage rental, plus boat and motor sales are the primary service features of this area.

Sandusky Creek Bay, the largest arm of the lake south of Route 154 separates two of the most modern recreational sites on the lake — South and North Sandusky Recreation Areas. Paved camp pads, electrical hook-ups, flush toilets, dump stations, showers and two amphitheaters are top features of these two Corps of Engineers areas.

Combined, there are 239 camp units (tables, grill and campsite) and 10 walk-in tent sites, plus 5 picnic shelters, 2 boat launching ramps, 80 picnic units, and water and playground equipment in the two areas. South Sandusky also has a swimming beach, bath house and nature trail. Both areas rate high scenically. Sandusky Bay is also one of the most popular fishing spots on the lake, especially for bluegill, bullhead, crappie and largemouth bass.

Jackie Branch is the first large bay north of Route 154 on the western side. A small concrete fisherman-hunter boat ramp is located at the site.

Approximately 2 miles north of Jackie Branch one will find another small hunter-fisherman access area, known as the Turnip Patch with a 2 lane concrete launching ramp. heading on north, there are several other hunter-fisherman access sites along the western shore of the Big Muddy Arm of the lake.

Located on the western shoreline, between the Big Muddy Subimpoundment Dam and the C. & E.I. Railroad, is the Waltonville Access, a 2-lane concrete launching ramp designed specifically for hunter-fishermen access to the uppermost portion of the Big Muddy Arm of the lake.

Hunters and fishermen who wish to utilize the Big Muddy Wildlife Management Area north of the subimpoundment dam can gain access at three areas: the Route 148 Bridge 1½ miles east of Waltonville, at the east corner of the Big Muddy Subimpoundment Dam, and another one mile north and one mile west of Nason, known locally as the Dareville Access. All have concrete launching ramps.

Three other hunter-fisherman access areas are found southwest of Nason that provide additional bank fishing or cartop launching. Locally, one is known as the "Bluegill Hole", another as Elk Prairie Access and the third is located south of the Big Muddy Subimpoundment Area.

Swinging east of Nason to the Casey Fork Wildlife Management Area, hunters or fishermen can gain access to the western side of this area at two spots: one a quarter mile north of the Casey Fork Subimpoundment Dam and another 1½ miles further northeast. On the east side of the Casey Fork Wildlife Management Area, access is possible at one spot northwest of Bonnie and at two concrete ramp areas southwest of Bonnie, designated as the Casey Fork Subimpoundment Access and Bonnie Access.

Located directly west of the town of Ina and the Ina exit of I-57 is the Ina Access Area. This area offers a two lane concrete boat ramp, protected harbor, mooring sites, comfort stations, bulletin board and picnic tables, as well as access to the Casey Fork arm of the lake. Food, gas and bait can be found in nearby towns.

Several walk-in access areas, which are primarily for hunters or bank fishermen, are found on the Gun Creek Wetlands Complex east of Route 37, midway between Ina and Whittington.

The largest single recreational complex on Rend Lake is

the Wayne Fitzgerald State Recreation Area. Within the boundaries of this 3,300-acre park, one can find 265 modern camp units, 45 primitive tent sites, 4 picnic shelters, 5 boat launching ramps and 150 picnic units. Campers will find that each modern camping unit has a table, grill, pad and electrical hookup. Flush toilets, showers and playground equipment are found throughout the camping and picnic grounds. A dump station is conveniently located for trailer campers. A nature trail and a bridle path compliment the list of recreational facilities found in the park. Facilities include a restaurant, convenience store (handling bait), gas island, 2 10-unit boatels and 14 over-night units, a swimming pool, playground and tennis courts. By the fall of 1996, a banquet room and 49 additional over-night units are to be added. Last but not least bank fishing is premium, since over three-fourths of the entire park margin is bordered by water. Near the southern tip of Wayne Fitzgerald State Park south of Route 154 another 2-lane concrete boat launching ramp and protected harbor is available.

Near the southern tip of Wayne Fitzgerald State Park south of Route 154 another 2-lane concrete boat launching ramp and protected harbor is available.

During November and December, undeveloped portions of the Wayne Fitzgerald State Park are utilized for permit pheasant hunting. Other portions of the park are utilized for dog field trials. A barn, stable, club house and hunter check station are conveniently located just north of Route 154, to serve the horseback riders, hunters and field trial people.

The Gun Creek Access owned and operated by Rend Lake Conservancy District is situated southwest of the intersection of Interstate 57 and Route 154. This is principally a camping and picnic area, having 100 camping units, a picnic shelter and 30 picnic units. The area also has a launching ramp and a trailer dump station, plus the usual water and sanitary facilities.

Another of the fine Corps of Engineers Recreation Areas found on the Rend Lake is North Marcum. This area also has 40 picnic units, 2 picnic shelters, playground equipment and a large swimming beach with bath house. One of the most modern water plants in Southern Illinois is in operation at the south edge of this area. This plant supplies water to over 60 towns and cities.

The South Marcum Recreation Area is located south of Marcum Branch Bay. Mingled among the several heavily wooded points are 147 camp units, 14 walk-in tent sites, 1 picnic shelter and 31 picnic units, plus the usual comfort stations, a trailer dump station, water hydrants and playground equipment. An excellent fun & fitness trail and a large amphitheater are the special features of this area. A group use and group camping area are located in this area.

North and south of the blacktop road running across the dam, near the spillway, 3 miles northwest of Benton is the Spillway Area. This area is used primarily by sightseers and bank fishermen. The Visitor Center is extremely popular with visitors of all ages. The Visitor Center gives

viewers a quick glimpse of the Rend Lake area — its development for the historical past to the present.

Additional commercial campgrounds and service facilities are found around the entire perimeter of the lake. Those desiring motel or hotel accommodations can find them in Benton, West City, Mt. Vernon, or at Fitzgerald State Park and the Rend Lake Conservancy District. Bait and tackle shops, boat and motor sales and service, grocery stores, service stations, etc., can be found around the lake or in the nearby towns and cities.

The preceding descriptions of the access areas and recreational facilities are merely intended to give those who come to Rend Lake a quick summary of what this new

southern Illinois recreational complex has to offer. One is reminded that development is not complete by any means. The future promises more and bigger service and recreational facilities.

The Rend Lake Recreation Information Network provides travellers and recreationists with up-to-date information on conditions and happenings at the lake. The weather forecast and lake level information is updated daily throughout the year. Additional segments include information on interpretive schedules, recreation area openings and closings, shelter reservations, special events, fishing reports, fishing tips, water safety, hunting seasons and much more. This network can be accessed by calling 435-2765 or tuning your AM radio to 530 KHZ.

- X - Available at site
- O - Available nearby — less than three miles
- - Not available or does not apply
- \* - Handicapped Accessible

**TABLE I**

	Dam West	South Sandusky	North Sandusky	Turnip Patch Access	Waltonville Access	East Waltonville Access	Dareville Access	Nason Areas Access	Elk Prairie - Bluegill Hole	Casey Fork Subimpoundment A.A.	Bonnie Access	Fitzgerald State Recreation Area	Gun Creek Wildlife Management Area	Gun Creek Access	North Marcum	South Marcum	Spillway Access	Rend Lake Marina	Rend Lake Conservancy District
Boat Ramp & Parking	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Picnic Tables & Grills	X	X	X	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	X	O	X	X	X	O	—	—
Picnic Shelters	X	X	X	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	X	O	X	X	O	—	—	—
Toilets	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	*X	X	X
Water Supply	X	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Playground Equipment	O	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	X	X	O	O	—
Swimming	O	X	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	O	X	O	O	O	—
Tent Camping	O	X	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	O	O	O	X	O	O	—
Trailer Camping	O	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	O	X	X	X	O	O	—
Electricity	O	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	—
Dump Station	O	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	O	X	X	X	—	O	—
Showers	—	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
Amph. Theatre	O	X	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	X	X	*X	O	—
Boat Storage & Dockage	O	O	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	O	—	X	—
Boat & Motor Rental	O	O	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	O	X	—	—	—	O	—	X	X
Gas & Oil	O	O	O	—	O	—	O	O	O	—	O	X	O	O	O	O	—	X	—
Bait & Tackle	O	O	O	—	O	—	O	O	O	—	O	X	—	O	O	O	—	X	—
Groceries	O	O	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	O	X	—	O	O	O	—	O	—
Restaurant	O	O	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	O	X	O	O	O	O	—	X	X
Fish Cleaning Station	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Telephone	O	X	X	—	—	—	O	O	O	O	—	X	O	X	X	—	X	X	X
Equestrian Trail	—	—	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	O	—	—	—	—	—
Hike - Nature Trail	O	X	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	O	—	X	O	O	—
Bath House	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	X	—	—	—
Visitor Center	O	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	O	*X	—	—
Marine Sanitary Pump	O	O	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	O	—	X	—
Logding	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	—	—	—	—	X

## REGULATIONS

Since Rend Lake is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reservoir, there are a number of federal regulations which must be observed. These regulations are posted on bulletin boards located at all access areas, or a copy of these regulations may be obtained by writing to: Rend Lake, Management Office, Rt. 3, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Benton, Ill. 62812.

All state boating, hunting, fishing and park regulations also remain in full force where applicable, and are posted on the same bulletin boards.

As on all large lakes, Rend Lake can become rough when the wind exceeds 15-20 m.p.h. All boaters should keep a close eye on the weather. Shallow areas and underwater hazards do exist in portions of the lake and boaters should operate their craft accordingly. Depth maps are excellent guides but they cannot pinpoint floating hazards. Whether boating, fishing, hunting, swimming or camping, "Safety First", although an undefined rule, is the responsibility of each individual to insure that his trip is one of happy memories, rather than tragedy. Common sense and courtesy should also guide everyone's actions. If each recreationalist would follow these simple rules of outdoor etiquette, all trips would be more rewarding and enjoyable experiences. . . .

## ENTERTAINMENT — THINGS TO DO

Besides the camping, picnicking, swimming, power and sail boating, hunting, fishing, nature and equestrian trails, game fields and playground equipment, additional entertainment can be found around the area. Interpretive programs and special events are provided at several of the Corps of Engineers recreation areas. Campers or visitors who wish to attend these programs should check at the various campground booths, state park or Corps of Engineers headquarters for exact programs, locations, dates and times.

Additional entertainment such as bowling, tennis and outdoor movie theaters are found both in Benton and Mt. Vernon. Golfers can treat themselves to playing a beautiful championship 27 hole golf course, located directly south of the Gun Creek Area. This area, operated by the Rend Lake Conservancy District, also has tennis courts, a restaurant, motel and a large pro shop.

For those who enjoy community festivals, Benton annually sponsors the Rend Lake Festival in May. Sesser has its "Rend Lake Days" in July. DuQuoin hosts the State Fair of Southern Illinois during the latter part of August — first part of September. Several other towns and cities within a 30 mile radius of Rend Lake also hold annual fairs or festivals, but one should check with the local or state tourism offices for times and places of these events. Three other spots of interest, the Southern Illinois Arts and Crafts Marketplace, the Mitchell Art Museum at Mt. Vernon and the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge are certainly worth one's time to visit.

Tours are also given through the large water plant at North Marcum, if arrangements are made one week in advance by calling the Rend Lake Conservancy District Office — 618-439-4321. This same agency also has a deluxe ten-field trap shooting range. This area can be reached by taking the Ina interchange to the large water tower, south of Rend Lake College, which is on the Franklin-Jefferson County Line Road.

## YOU AND YOUR FISHING TRIP

Fishing is a sport enjoyed by young and old, rich and poor alike. It is recognized as one of the most relaxing, peaceful and contemplative of all recreational activities. One can enjoy learning to be a good fisherman and still have time to savor Mother Nature's wonders. Fishing also provides the opportunity to rest and meditate away from the pressures of the job. . . . which is in itself therapy for body, mind and soul.

But to be really successful at fishing, one must put forth some effort to learn about fish and their habits, the types of gear and bait to use, and when, where and how to fish for various species. The so-called "lucky fisherman" isn't lucky at all. The individual has taken the time to learn the sport and in the course of learning has become successful. A fisherman must learn to be observant, adaptable and determined, if he wants to put fish in the frying pan consistently. Like the weather, fish can be changeable and it's up to the fisherman to change his ways.

## TIPS TO MAKE YOUR FISHING TRIP MORE ENJOYABLE AND SUCCESSFUL

1. Plan your trip. Be sure to check your tackle and equipment prior to going afield; a forgotten raincoat, fouled spark plugs, or a dirty reel can spoil a fishing trip. Monofilament line should be changed yearly. Learn to tie the proper knots. An improperly tied knot can mean the loss of a plug or a nice fish. Also practice your casting before leaving on a fishing trip.
2. On arrival at Rend Lake, check with local fishermen or the bait and tackle shops regarding what species are being caught, what baits to use and where to fish. Bait shops are in the business to serve you, and a customer steered in the right direction is going to return.
3. Fish for the species that are either most abundant or hitting best. Use the right baits for various species. A lake may have a large population of hungry catfish or fat bluegill, and one who uses only artificial lures may go home empty handed. As the season progresses, one must also remember that what's hitting in April may not be in July or August.
4. If you fail to catch fish in one spot using the various recommended baits and techniques, move to another area or habitat. Many species of fish such as crappie, largemouth bass and white bass will move back and forth between shallow and deep water, or range from one area to another.

5. As you become more knowledgeable and successful, share fishing tips or fishing holes.
6. Be courteous and considerate of others. Don't crowd in on another's fishing spot. Don't create big wakes or run close to or between other boats.
7. Learn the lake regulations, and fish and boating laws... and follow them.
8. When boating, follow proper and safe operational techniques. Don't overload your boat. Do not run your craft at a high rate of speed near the shoreline and bank fishermen. Watch out for obstructions and other boats.
9. Give assistance where needed. A friend in need is a friend indeed.
10. Be careful. Use required safety equipment of reputable manufacture. Don't take chances. When moving, wear your life saving gear.
11. Do not litter, treat each area as if it were your own property.
12. Watch the weather, when the lake becomes rough or a storm front is sighted, seek the protection of a marina or a sheltered cove.

## FISHES

The most popular sport fishes found in Rend Lake are black and white crappie, white bass, largemouth bass, bluegill, black and yellow bullheads and channel catfish. Other species occasionally caught by anglers are green and longear sunfish, carp, bowfin, freshwater drum, warmouth and yellow bass.

The white bass, a species not normally found in Southern Illinois waters, were initially stocked on an experimental basis by the Division of Fisheries. They have become well established and now provide some great summer and fall angling, which has really caught the fancy of the sport fishermen.

For a change of pace, anglers should try fishing in the spillway and auxiliary channel below the dam. Over 24 different species have been caught from this area with crappies, bullheads, carp, freshwater drum, bluegill and channel catfish being the most frequently caught. But occasionally one might also catch flathead catfish, buffalofishes, carpsuckers, yellow and white bass, suckers, gar, bowfin, American eel, sauger or largemouth bass.

Table II will provide a general guide to some of the major areas which provide good fishing for various species. It is up to the individual angler to learn the specific spots within these designated areas. Only those species commonly caught in each area are indicated; although many other species will be caught in the same locality.

With the maps included in this fishing guide one can more quickly locate the flooded timber, high points and old road beds that previously crossed the Big Muddy River Basin. Numerous fence rows of trees and brush were also left intact prior to filling the lake to congregate the fish for fishermen. For the structure fisherman, Rend Lake offers some of the best.

**TABLE II  
SPECIES COMMONLY  
CAUGHT FROM  
VARIOUS AREAS  
ON REND LAKE**

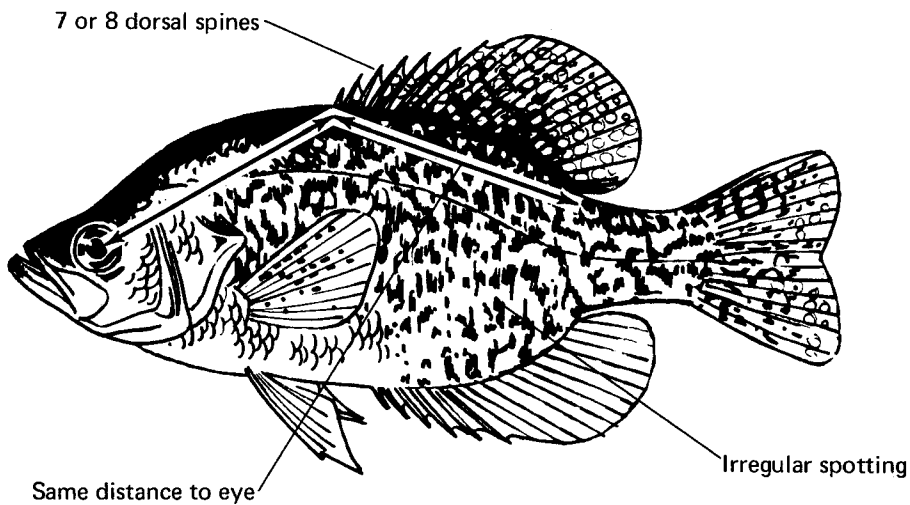
Areas	Largemouth Bass	Bluegill	Crappie	Bullhead	Carp	White Bass/Striped Bass Hybrids	Channel Catfish/Flathead Catfish	Freshwater Drum
Rend Lake Dam	X		X			X		X
Dam West Access	X	X	X			X	X	
Sandusky Creek Bay	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Route 154	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Jackie Branch	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Turnip Patch Area	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Big Muddy Arm	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Big Muddy Subimpoundment		X	X	X	X			X
Nason Point Area	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Casey Fork Subimpoundment		X	X	X	X		X	X
Margin of Fitzgerrell State Rec. Area	X			X	X	X		
Gun Creek	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
North Marcum Branch Area	X			X	X	X	X	
Marcum Branch		X	X	X	X	X	X	

## FISHING REGULATIONS (subject to change)

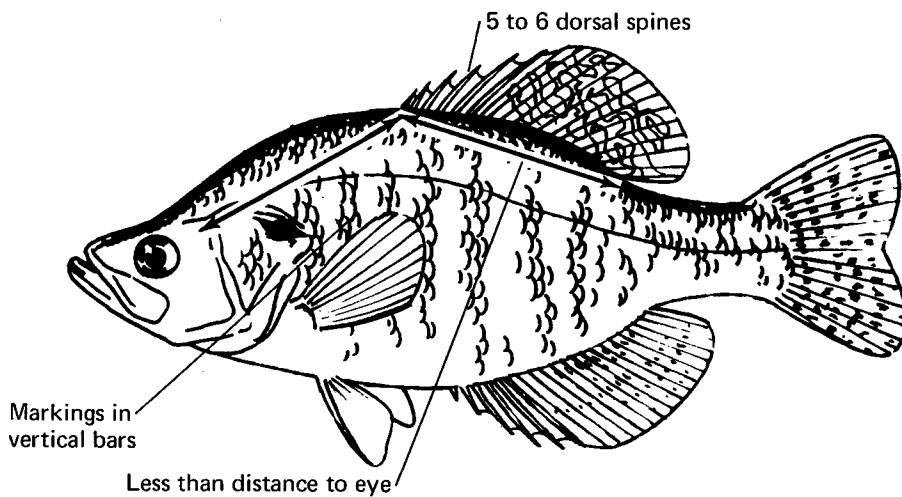
Fishing regulations on Rend Lake are the same as for the rest of the state, except largemouth bass must be 14 inches or longer and there is a daily limit of 10 white bass, hybrid striped bass, and yellow bass in combination (only 3 of which may be 17 inches or longer).

If one is in doubt about the state fishing regulations, copies can be obtained where fishing licenses are sold or by writing to: Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fisheries, Lincoln Tower Plaza, 524 S. 2nd St., Springfield, IL 62706.





**BLACK CRAPPIE**  
*(Pomoxis nigromaculatus)*



**WHITE CRAPPIE**  
*(Pomoxis annularis)*

**CRAPPIES**

Both black and white crappie are found in Rend Lake. There are no striking differences in the habits of these two species; although, the white crappie is apparently more tolerant of turbid waters. Both species like areas with an abundance of cover which provides protection, food and some shade. Therefore, they are generally found in bays and coves with stickups and flooded timber, around submerged fence rows, bridge pillars, in creek channels and along rip-rap areas from mid-September to early June. During the summer months, crappie seek the cooler, deeper water of the lake which usually results in poorer fishing.

Crappie, like the other sunfishes, are nest builders. They generally spawn in late April to early June at depths ranging from 2 to 12 feet, depending on water clarity. The eggs hatch in three to five days, depending on water temperature. When the young crappie are about a half inch long, they are left by the adults to fend for themselves.

The main food items of crappie are insects, crustaceans and small fish. Since they are sight feeders, periods of good crappie fishing are usually determined by the clearness of the water and they also bite best when the temperature of the water is between 50° and 75°F. Both species are shortlived fish, seldom living more than six years.

Crappie fishing is usually best during the spring and fall months but many are also taken during the winter by ice fishermen. However, if they can be located in their deeper haunts, crappie can also be caught during the hot summer months.

Minnow fishermen prefer using 10 to 14 foot fiberglass extension poles, cane poles or stiff action fly rods with single action reels, or any device that will hold a small amount of line. These are rigged with 8 to 15-pound test monofilament line which is strong enough that crappie can be quickly pulled from the brush, or the wire hook straightened out if one be-

comes snagged on brush or a tree. Light wire hooks, size No. 6 to No. 2 and small round, oblong or quill bobbers are commonly used. Split shot, wrap around sinkers, or a spinner blade weighing 1/8 to 1/4 of an ounce is usually placed on the line, four to six inches above the hook.

Tightlining, using the above equipment except for a bobber, is the most popular method of fishing for crappie. Using this method, the bait can easily be fished at various depths to locate the crappie. The bait should be jigged (moved quickly up and down two or three inches) frequently to entice the crappie into striking the bait. Two other variations of this method are to substitute a small maribou jig or a small white plastic beetle on with the minnow. If the minnow is knocked off with the first strike, crappie will frequently hit the jig or beetle body....resulting in one more crappie for the frying pan. Once the type of cover and depth of the crappie is established, most anglers will attach a stationary or sliding-type bobber. If the crappie are schooled up in brush or on spawning beds, a single jig worked up and down over these spots can frequently produce a full stringer in a short period of time.

Many fishermen who like to fish the rock rip-rapped road causeways or spillway area use the long fiberglass poles and bait with a small minnow or a small 1/32 ounce jig with a small bobber. The bait or lure is allowed to drift along the bottom with the current or wind and jigged frequently to tease the crappie into hitting. This is a very popular way to catch crappie early in the spring or late in the fall when the water is quite cold and the crappie only slightly tip the bobber when taking bait.

Light spinning tackle is popular when the water is relatively clear. Light colored 1/32 to 1/4 ounce hair and maribou jigs or small spinning lures like the beetle-spins or twister tail lures come into play under these conditions. Casting these lures towards or into the stickups, bridge pillars, steep banks, rock riprap or over submerged brushy cover and retrieving them in a

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Considered by many as the "king" of sport fishes, the largemouth bass is one of the most popular species in Rend Lake. Angling for this fish has increased tenfold within the last decade. This is due in part to the seemingly mystic nature of the largemouth bass, the challenge and prestige of being able to catch them consistently, and the possibility of landing a real "Lunker Bigmouth". Other related factors are the improvements made in fishing tackle, boats, motors and other electronic gear; such as fish locators, temperature and oxygen meters.

Hundreds of bass fishing clubs have been formed in the midwest within the past ten years enabling anglers to learn more about and participate in the sport of largemouth bass angling. Many of these clubs fish weekly among themselves or against other fishing

slow, slightly jerky manner is a very effective way to catch crappie.

During the warmer months of the year (mid-June to mid-September), crappie usually frequent the cooler and deeper waters along the steep drop-offs, river and creek channels, spring holes and old flooded ponds. It is during this period that they are quite hard to find. But if located, they can be caught on small beetle-spin or twister tail lures, spinner-jig or spinner-minnow combination. These baits should be allowed to sink to the depth of the crappie and retrieved steadily with an occasional twitch of the rod tip to be effective.

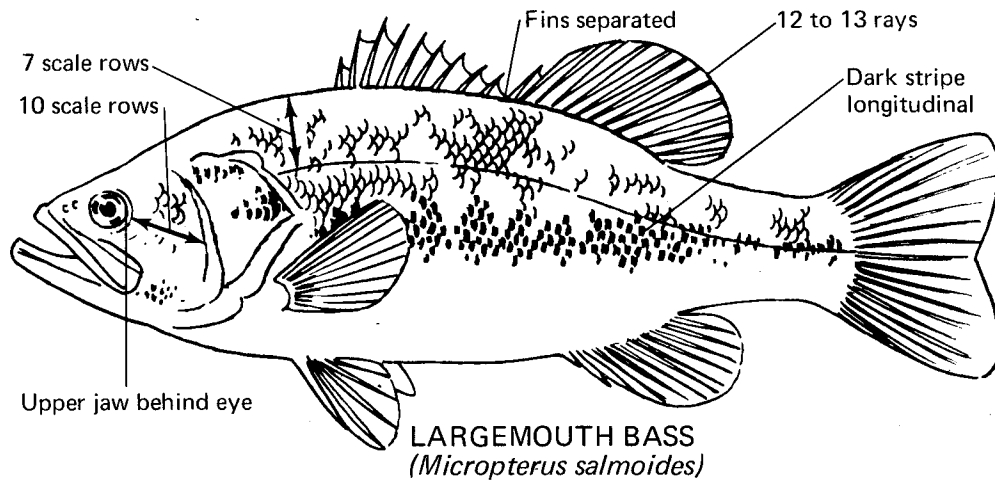
Other anglers catch crappie during the summer months by fishing at dusk or dawn when they come into the shoreline shallows to feed on small fishes and insects. A fly rod rigged with dry flies or poppers is the best type of set-up to use to put fish on the stringer.

Lantern fishing is another angling method for catching crappie. As darkness sets in, a gas lantern is tied about four feet above the water to a limb or a stout stickup or a boat mounted 6 foot pole. An aluminum reflector is placed on the windward side of the lantern, which should also be the side between the angler and the lantern. As darkness sets in, the area illuminated by the lantern attracts bugs, then minnows and hopefully, the crappie.

During the winter months when there is a solid ice cover of six inches or more, good crappie fishing can be found in the shallower portions of the lake. The best ice fishing is generally found in brushy areas along the creek and river channels or the shallow bays with stickups or submerged brush. These areas are usually not more than eight feet deep. Ice fishermen use small 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 foot rods, tiny bobbers and with small wire hooks or the many small artificial ice flies. These are baited with small minnows or larvae of insects (mousies, waxworms, golden grubs, corn borer, meal worms, blackeyed susan grubs, etc.) and jigged frequently to attract the fish.

clubs. Dozens of books have been written about the largemouth bass and the art of catching them. National bass fishing organizations have been formed throughout the country, many of which publish magazines devoted to the when, where and how of the sport. These same organizations also hold competitive state, regional and national bass tournaments with purses running into the thousands of dollars.

The largemouth bass, a member of the sunfish family, is a species that likes the still water environments provided by Illinois ponds, lakes and reservoirs. They prefer to inhabit areas having weed beds, submerged brush and logs, flooded timber and rock riprap that provide suitable protective cover and a nearby source of food.



Largemouth bass are sight feeders. After hatching, the bass fry feed largely upon tiny crustaceans called Cladocerans and Copepods. The primary food items of fingerling and adult bass are: insects, crayfish, frogs and other fish, especially the gizzard shad. Young bass frequently school-up to feed but once they reach a size larger than a pound, they appear to be more solitary in nature.

In Rend Lake, largemouth bass fishing is generally best from early April to mid-June and again from early September to mid-October when the water temperature ranges between 55 and 75 degrees. The best spots to fish in the spring or fall are shorelines, rock riprap or shallow, brushy or weedy areas that are utilized either for spawning or protective cover.

When daytime summer water temperatures approach the 80° mark, bass generally move to the deeper, cooler water along steep banks, in river and creek channels or old pond beds and spring seeps that also have protective cover. Plastic worms, spinner baits and the deep diving plugs are the best baits to use under these conditions. However, they will move from these areas into the shoreline shallows to feed during the early morning or late evening hours, which are prime times to fish. During the winter, largemouth bass can also be caught by using the ice fishing methods described briefly under crappie and bluegill.

Although it is impossible to describe all the ways to take bass (many books and magazine articles have been written on this subject), a few may be pointed out to hopefully increase your success. It is difficult to catch largemouth bass consistently, but they can be caught on a greater variety of baits and lures than practically any other fish. Casting with bait, spincast or spinning tackle is probably the most popular method of catching "Mr. Bigmouth".

During the spring, when most lakes have periods of murkiness, the single or tandem spinner baits, wobbling and flashing spoons with pork rinds, spinning lures and light colored sub-surface lures are the best artificials to use. Live bait fishermen use a 3 to 6 inch

minnow or a fat nightcrawler with a cane or fiberglass pole, and only fish the stickups when the lake is murky.

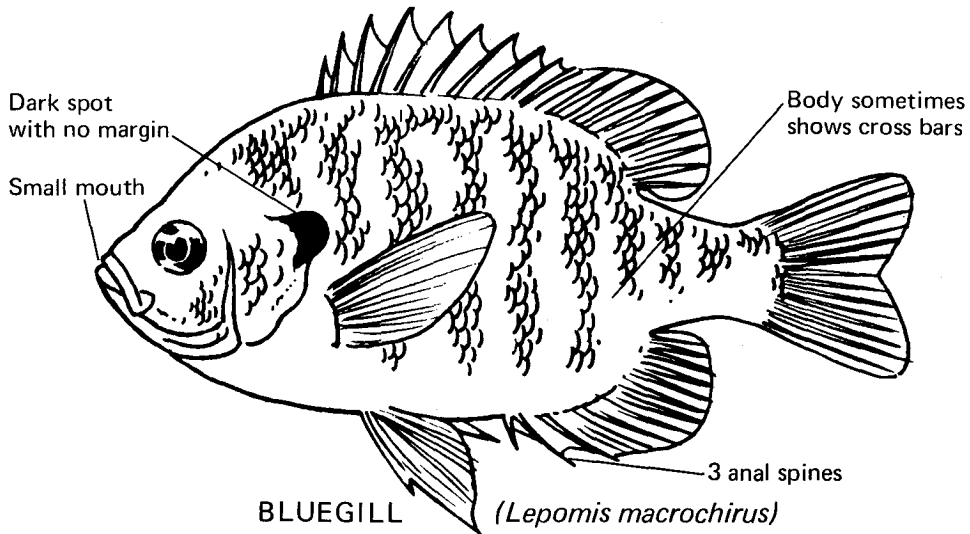
In the summer, especially during the heat of the day, diving or deep running plugs and plastic worms are usually the most productive. If the water is clear, top water plunker, buzzer, crawler or diving baits fished along shoreline cover early in the morning or late in the evening, frequently yield limit catches. When bass are feeding on shad schools, any surface or sub-surface lure that imitates a crippled minnow is very effective. This is also the time to use a fly rod with large poppers, streamers, wet flies or hair bug lures. Other summertime fishermen use stout fiberglass poles with 25 to 50 pound test line and a weighted plastic worm, large jigs or shiners to take bass from their cool shady hideouts.

During the cooler fall months, largemouth bass generally feed from mid-morning to mid-afternoon. Again depending on water turbidity and temperatures, type of cover or time of day, one can frequently use any lure in the tackle box to catch a mess of bass.

The fisherman, who likes to use live bait such as crayfish, nightcrawlers or minnows, can frequently catch more bass than the man using a \$75 rod and reel and the large boxes of artificial lures. These natural baits are usually fished around and over hanging banks, submerged brush, logs, stumps or on hard mud and sand bottoms. At other times, lives baits are more effective if they are worked slowly over the bottom, or drifted with the wind or current into pockets, holes and riffles, or jigged over good cover.

Because of their temperamental moods, diverse habits and tendency to move from one area to another, catching bass can be a frustrating, mind boggling situation. To become a good bass fisherman, one must learn to be patient, adaptable and determined to be successful. Probably the best advice to give a budding bass fisherman is to learn all about the bass' habits and habitats, fish as frequently as possible, and go with someone who has developed a degree of expertise in catching this species.

# BLUEGILL



Ounce for ounce many anglers consider the bluegill one of the sportiest of game fishes. As a general rule, this species is fairly easy to catch, puts up a scrappy fight if caught on a fly or ultra-light rod and is mighty fine eating.

At Rend Lake, the best bluegill fishing is from May through mid-June when they are on spawning beds. Bluegill build their nests in colonies, in water two to five feet deep where there is a hard mud or sand bottom. Once these areas have been located, an offering of a cricket, roach, grasshopper, grub, redworm or small minnow is enough to start the action. A cane or fiberglass pole or a fly rod rigged with monofilament line, a small split shot or a spinner and a small bobber and small hooks (No. 10 - No. 8) is all the tackle needed. If the water is clear, a fly rod and a wet fly or an ultra-light spinning rod and tiny 1/32 ounce jig can also work wonders.

After spawning, bluegill disperse to the shady cover of the stickups, floating logs, undercut banks and rock riprap, to spend the summer and fall months gorging on insects and their larvae. During the summer, fishermen look for bluegill pimpling the water surface at dusk feeding on an emerging aquatic insect hatch. This is the time to put the fly rod and poppers or dry flies into action. Another popular way to catch bluegill during the summer and fall is to use a light spinning or ultra-light rod with a clear plastic casting bobber and a wet fly. The wet fly, which is tied to a 2 to 3 foot piece of monofilament line, is attached to the floating bobber and casted towards any shoreline cover. The use of a slow steady or jerky retrieve will often produce some of the more cautious hand-sized bluegill.

This species also rates a big plus when it comes to ice fishing. A fisherman can become outfitted with all the necessary ice fishing equipment for around \$15. Other than warm winter clothes and boots, all that is needed is two ice fishing rods, a half dozen ice fishing lures, several dime-sized bobbers, a spring clip sinker for sounding the depths, a 4 foot ice chisel which can be made by any blacksmith shop, any type of strainer or dipper for scooping out the chipped ice, and a five gallon pail that will serve for carrying one's tackle, provide a seat, and hauling the fish home. With a little extra effort, a portable ice sled can be built to house a small alcohol or charcoal stove, provide a comfortable seat, a base to attach a wind breaker, and compartments for holding one's tackle and fish.

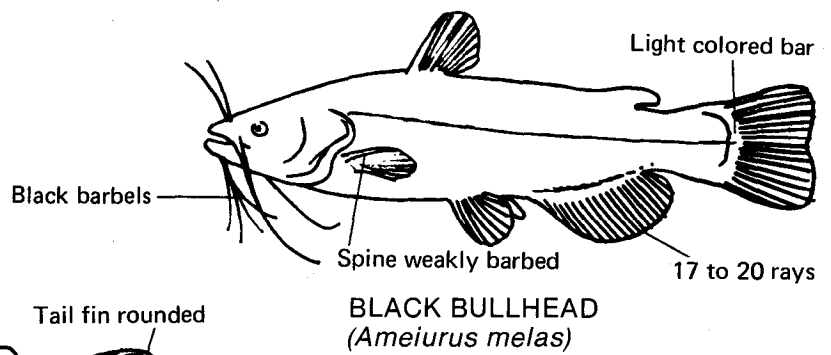
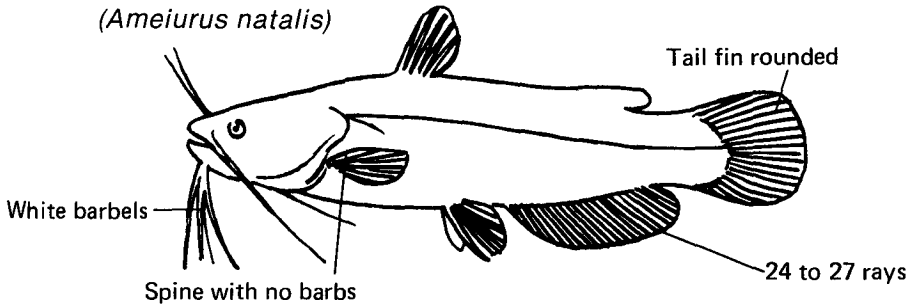
During the winter months, bluegill are usually found in shallow water (2 to 6 feet deep) in and around brush. But at other times, they may move into deeper water or creek channels, flooded ponds and the center of the small bays.

Baits used for ice fishing consist of tiny redworms, small minnows, and insect larvae such as rattailed maggots, waxworms, goldenrod grubs, corn borers, blackeyed susan grubs, etc. These baits are used in combination with No. 12 or 14 hooks, small ice flies or spoons. Jigging of these baits will usually attract the bluegill's attention and produce the fastest action.

Other sunfishes found in Rend Lake are green sunfish, redear, warmouth and longear sunfish. These species can be caught by using the same methods as described for bluegill.

## BULLHEADS

### YELLOW BULLHEAD (*Ameiurus natalis*)



### BLACK BULLHEAD (*Ameiurus melas*)

Due to their persistence in nibbling at the bait until it is gone, the black and yellow bullheads are two of the easiest fish to catch. Unfortunately, few fishermen fish for these two good eating species because of the abundance of the other more popular sport species.

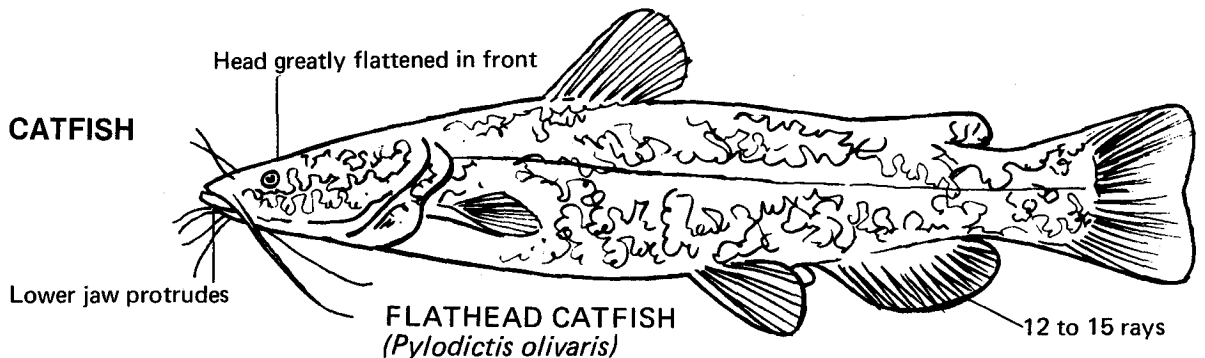
All one needs for bullhead fishing is bait or spin casting tackle, a few No. 1 or No. 2 hooks, some 1/2 to 3/4 ounce sinkers and a can of worms. Two types of riggings are usually used by bullhead anglers. One is to attach separately two 6-inch leaders with hooks at one foot intervals above the sinker tied to the end. The other rigging is to thread a sinker on the line, move it 12 to 14 inches up, pinch a split shot below the sinker, and then attach a single or treble hook to the end of the line. The advantage of this rig is that the fish can nibble at, or pick up and run with the baited hook without feeling the resistance of the sinker. This rig is also very popular with fishermen who fish the rivers and streams for channel catfish.

Bullheads spawn in June in bank cavities, hollow logs or in saucer-shaped nests built on mud or sand among weed and tree roots in water 2 to 4 feet deep. The male bullhead guards the nest and fans the eggs until they hatch. He protects the young until they are about two inches long.

Bullheads are omnivorous, feeding on any living or dead animal and plant material that might suit their fancy. However, the major items in their diet consist of aquatic insects and their larvae, small clams, crayfish and worms.

Trotline fishing is another popular way to catch bullheads. Nightcrawlers, crayfish, liver, chicken entrails, small chunks of fish, sour clams, shrimp, shiners, leeches and catalpa worms are just a few of the popular baits used.

## FLATHEAD CATFISH

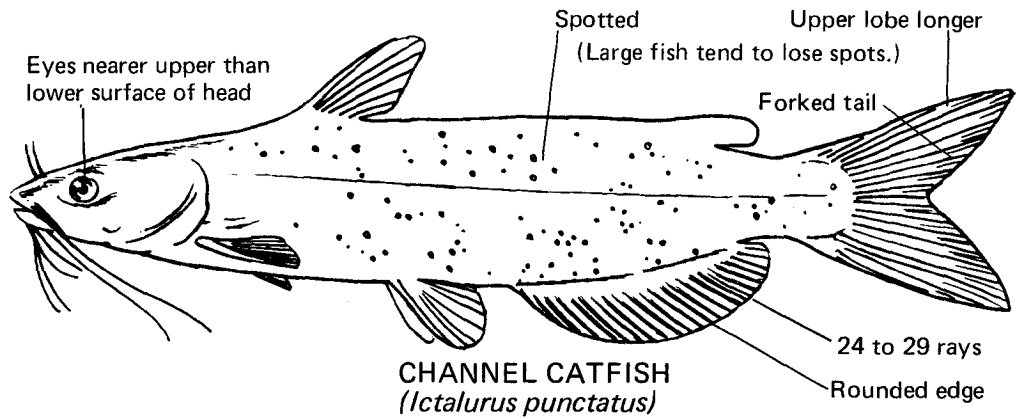


This species is occasionally caught from Rend Lake. When it is, it is considered a bonus or trophy fish. Efforts made by the Division of Fisheries to establish a good breeder population are starting to produce quality flathead catfish angling.

Some trotline fishermen specialize in trying to catch big "flatheads". Through experience, they have learned that it takes big hooks (No. 2.0 to No. 6.0), strong main and staging lines, and equally big baits to

catch and hold this fish. The majority of the flathead catfish are taken on trotlines set in or around the flooded river channels. The baits used range from live green sunfish, bullheads, carp and large shiners to leeches, chicken guts, bullfrogs and large chunks of meat from bowfin, white carp and buffalo fishes. Occasionally, this species is also taken by pole and line fishermen using jigs, streamers and small spinning lures along the rock riprap areas or in the tailwater.

## CHANNEL CATFISH



Channel catfish may not be as popular with as many anglers as the largemouth bass, but few are more devoted to their sport than the catfishermen. Since the lake was stocked with channel catfish in 1974, the population of channel catfish has been increasing yearly.

The best fishing period for channel catfish runs from early May until mid-October. Peaks of good fishing occur whenever there is a rise in pool level; especially in the shallower bays influenced by the tributary streams.

Channel catfish spawn in June when the water temperature reaches about 75 degrees. The eggs are laid in bank cavities, muskrat runs, under tree roots, in hollow logs or even old tires, tiles and large cans. After spawning, the male catfish assume the total duties of hatching the eggs and protecting the young until the school breaks up when the young are about 1 1/2 to 2 inches long.

Channel catfish are quite secretive in their feeding habits, seeking food mainly between dusk and dawn. As darkness begins to fall, they will move from their hiding places into the shallows to feed. However, they can be caught during the daylight hours if the water is murky or a bait is worked into a deep hole or cover where they are hiding. Channel catfish are omnivorous feeders or ones that are not selective in the food they eat. Their main food items are crayfish, insects and their larvae, snails, small clams, worms and fish, both living and dead. However, any bait that will give off a strong smell or taste such as cheese, blood, soured fish, clam and meat chunks, entrails and liver will also attract the attention of a hungry channel catfish.

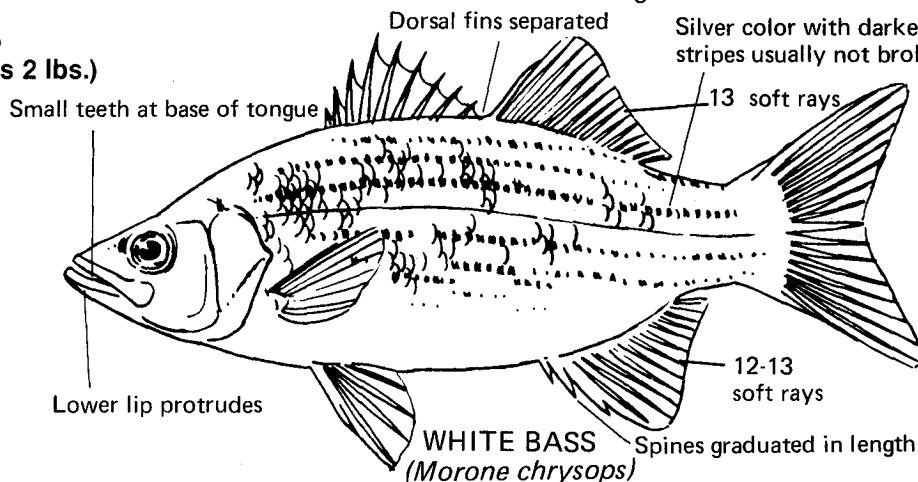
There are two distinct groups of channel catfishermen at Rend Lake, those who pole and line fish and those who prefer to use trotlines or jugs.

The pole and line fishermen confine the major part of their activities to the river and creek channels, or bay and shoreline areas where there are hard mud and sand bottoms. From mid-May to mid-September, good pole and line fishing can also be found in the river and two channels below the dam. These fishermen generally use the slip sinker rig (described under bullheads) which will allow the channel catfish to pick up the bait and run with it before trying to swallow it. A myriad of baits are used, ranging from the blood and cheese stink baits to crayfish, minnows, worms, shrimp, sour clams, liver and leeches.

Trotline or jug fishermen also like to set their lines or jugs in or near the flooded river and creek channels. Other good areas to set a trotline or drift jugs are on or over the shallow flats covered with 3 to 10 feet of water, shoreline margins and those bays with flooded standing timber and small tributary streams. When the pool level is rising, sets made of jugs drifted parallel to the shoreline in 2 to 4 foot water can be very productive. Baits that are most popular with the trotline crowd are large shiners, small shad, crayfish, nightcrawlers, leeches, chicken entrails and chunks of shad or carp.

The eating qualities of the channel catfish are renowned. Fried up crisp, eaten with barbecued beans, "tater" salad, slaw, rye bread, butter and one's favorite beverage is a perfect way to enjoy one of the best tasting fish found in Rend Lake.

## WHITE BASS (Seldom exceeds 2 lbs.)



The white bass were successfully introduced into the lake in 1971. Since that time, they have become one of the more popular, sought after sport fish in the lake. Tens of thousands are caught annually.

Beginning in late March, white bass begin to congregate along the rock riprap areas of the dam and Route 183 or begin moving into the small tributary streams of Rend Lake. This spawning movement also signals the first opportunity of the year to catch this species. Any small bright colored spinning lure, jig or minnow may take white bass at this time.

Spawning usually occurs during the latter half of April in Rend Lake. A large female may spawn a half million eggs or more over the sand and gravel bars of the lake and tributary streams or on rock riprap. The eggs hatch within three to six days, depending on water temperature. The white bass fry's first foods are microscopic crustaceans. As they reach a larger size small insects and their larvae and tiny fish of other species become more important in their diet. This species grows very rapidly, frequently reaching lengths of five to eight inches the first year. As the white bass matures, fish make up the largest percentage of their diet. This is a short-lived fish, seldom living more than four years.

After spawning, white bass return to the lake. During May and early June, they can often be caught from the shallow flats when they are foraging for insects and small fishes, particularly the first hatch of gizzard

shad. During this period, fishing for this species is generally best during the early morning or late evening hours, unless the day is cloudy. Then they might be caught anytime during the day.

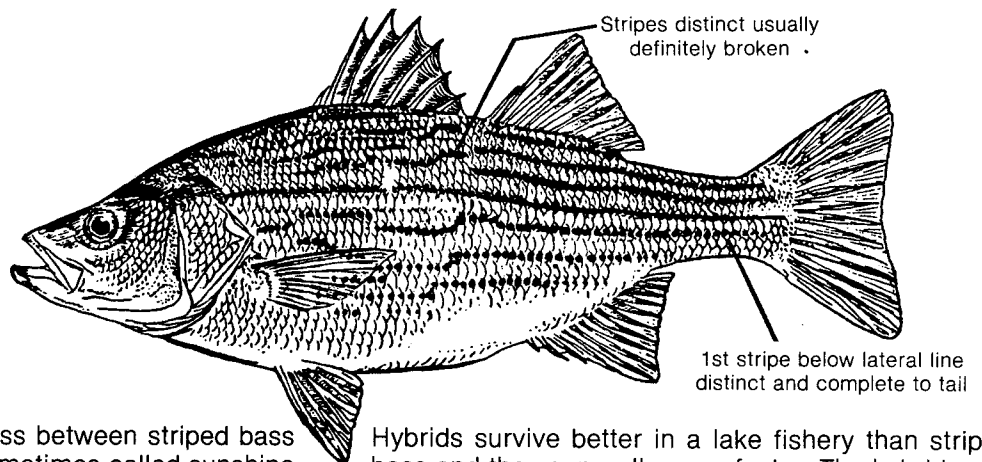
By mid-July, when the young shad school-up and range near the surface of the lake, the white bass will also move more extensively in search of these schools. From this time until early September, anglers should keep their eyes peeled for small shad jumping frantically out of the water. Chances are good that the white bass are busily gorging themselves below the fleeing school. Any bright-bladed spinning or spoon-type lure cast in the direction of the jumping shad and retrieved near the surface will often result in white bass on the stringer. Overall, the best white bass baits have been shysters, roostertail, gay blades, sonars, wireworm and sonics.

As fall approaches and the water cools, white bass move into deeper water. When they do, they can occasionally be caught by trolling a minnow, a jig or minnow-spinner combination on or near the bottom. The heavy bodied spinning lures, such as the Little Georges and Pedigo Spinrites are often effective if worked in a similar manner during this same period.

The best areas to fish for Rend Lake white bass have been along the rock riprap of Route 154, Interstate 57, and the dam; off the points of Marcum Branch, Fitzgerald State Park and Sandusky Creek Bay; and around islands east of the Rend Lake Marina.

### HYBRID STRIPED BASS X WHITE BASS

*(seldom exceeds 10 pounds)*



Hybrid striped bass is a cross between striped bass and white bass. They are sometimes called sunshine bass or wipers, depending on the sex of their parental cross. While these fish do not attain the size of an ocean-going striped bass, they will exceed the white bass in length and weight. The hybrids frequently get up to 5 to 8 pounds.

Key characteristics in distinguishing the hybrid striped bass from white bass include examining the stripes. The longitudinal stripes on the hybrid striped bass are distinct and usually definitely broken, whereas, they are faint on the white bass. The first stripe below the lateral line is distinct and complete to the tail while on the white bass the stripe is neither distinct nor complete.

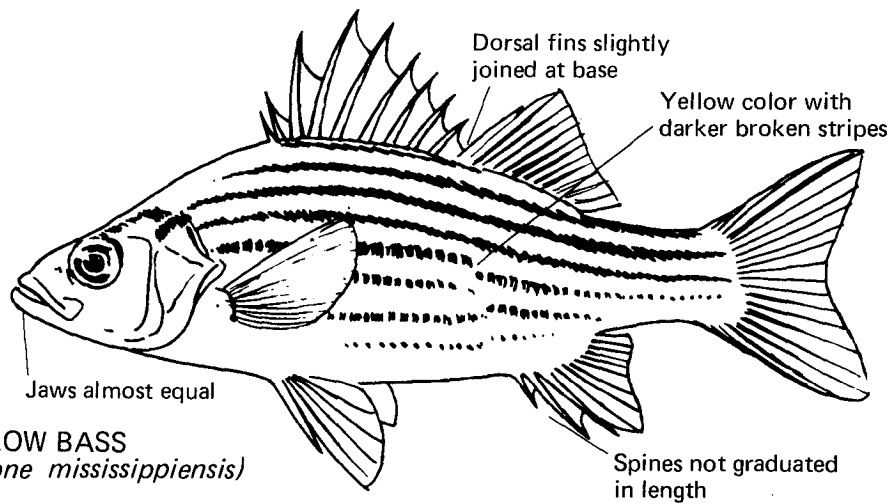
Hybrids survive better in a lake fishery than striped bass and they generally grow faster. The hybrids can be managed easier than white bass because the hybrids do not spawn.

Hybrid striped bass were initially stocked in Rend Lake in 1983 and 3-pounders were caught as early as the fall of 1985.

Hybrids "bust" schools of shad in a similar manner as white bass. They can also be caught by trolling in open water.

Almost all shad-imitating plugs, spoons, and jigs are effective lures.

**YELLOW BASS**  
(Seldom exceeds ½ lb.)



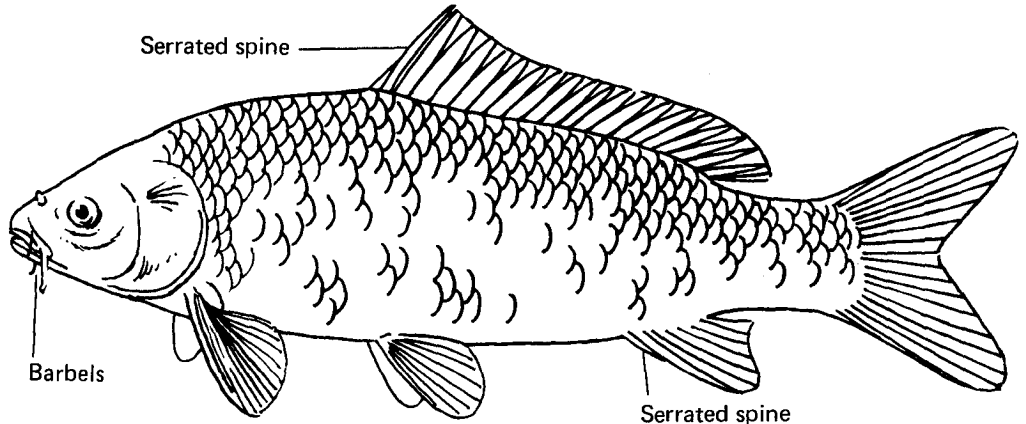
**YELLOW BASS**  
(*Morone mississippiensis*)

This species, hybrid striped bass and white bass are the only three true basses found in Rend Lake — the largemouth bass, crappie and bluegill all being members of the sunfish family.

Yellow bass generally travel in schools, and when one is caught, several can usually be taken before the school moves on. Techniques employed to catch this species are similar to those used for crappie. The best angling occurs during May, when yellow bass congregate along the rock riprap, around islands or flooded brush and timber prior to spawning. Small minnows,

worms and jigs are the best bait to use. If a school of yellow bass can be located feeding on minnows or on insects hatched along the shoreline, they can occasionally be taken on poppers, flies and small spoons and spinning lures.

Fishing for yellow bass is usually poor during the summer months. However, good summertime catches of this species are often made by bank fishermen during the early morning or late evening hours, if they can find the yellow bass foraging for worms, insects of small crayfish over the bottom areas of hard mud or sand.



**CARP**  
(*Cyprinus carpio*)

**CARP**

An Asiatic minnow, an import from Germany known by all, loved by some, hated by others, tolerated by most, and one of the most widely distributed and numerous fishes found in the United States; all descriptions fit only one species — the carp. Few fish have such widespread but questionable notoriety or invoke such diversified opinions as “Old Buglemouth”. The poor acceptance of this fish is generally due to two reasons (1) they may have an undesirable flavor if taken from shallow stagnant or polluted waters and (2) they are very bony to eat if not prepared properly.

Carp are omnivorous feeders eating both animal and vegetable material alive or dead. The main items in their diet are insects and their larvae, crustaceans and small mollusks. If the opportunity presents itself, they may consume tree seeds or the roots, stems and leaves of aquatic weeds in large quantities.

Carp generally spawn from early May into June, depositing their eggs over aquatic weeds, sticks, brush or tree roots. A large female may lay as many as a million eggs which are left to the mercy of the elements and predators. Typical of carp and other species that do not protect their eggs or young, the spawning of tremendous numbers of eggs seems to be Mother Nature's way of insuring the survival of these fish.

The carp is one of the most abundant species found in Rend Lake, yet, it is almost totally ignored by the angling public. It is a difficult fish to catch because of its small mouth and cautious biting habit. But once hooked, the carp puts up a strong and determined fight.

The same type of tackle and slip sinker rig as described to be used for bullheads, and channel catfish



works equally as well for carp. However, smaller single or treble hooks must be used so the carp can more readily take the bait into his small sucker-like mouth. Baits commonly used by carp fishermen include such items as worms, small crayfish, shrimp tails, canned corn, grasshoppers and 101 types of homemade and commercial dough balls.

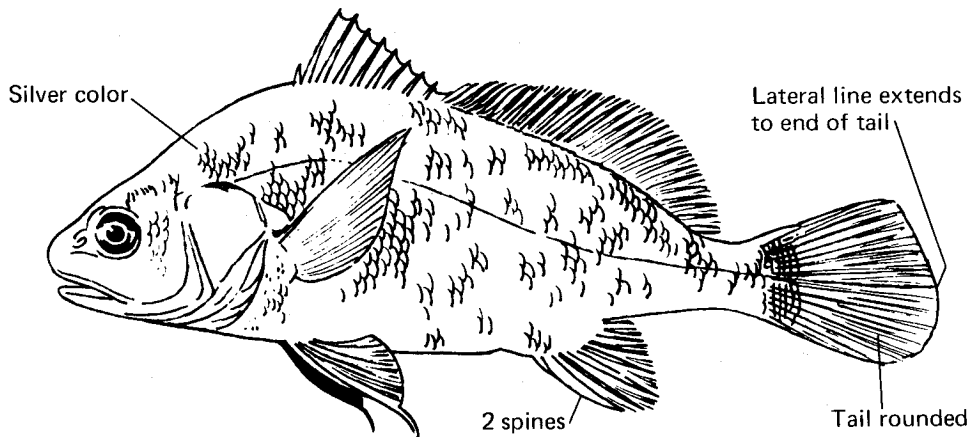
Those anglers who fish for carp in the lake generally fish the shallow bays or the creek and river channels. Some carp fishermen have found that they can greatly enhance their catch rate in a lake situation by baiting an area each day with sour whole kernel field corn several days prior to the actual fishing trip. Before fishing on the awaited day, the area is again baited with more sour corn. Then all an angler must do is to slip a few kernels of canned whole corn on a small single or treble hook, flip it lightly into the baited area, and sit back and wait for some real sporty action.

More and more anglers are finding that carp are good to eat. Filleted, scored (vertical 1/6 inch cuts made through the flesh down to the skin) rolled in cornmeal, and cooked in hot deep fat (375°F), makes carp a tasty fare — with no bones to pick out. Smoking carp is another fine way to prepare them. Other fishermen

prefer to can the carp they catch. After the carp are filleted, the skin is removed and the flesh cut into 1 1/2 to 2 inch chunks. These are then packed tightly into jars with 1 teaspoon each of salt and vinegar per pint, sealed, and then pressure cooked for 1 to 1 1/2 hours at 15 pounds pressure. The result is a product that is difficult to distinguish from canned salmon. It contains no bones and is delicious used in salad or made into patties and fried.

Pickling is another preparation method gaining in popularity. The meat is prepared in the same manner as for canning, except the flesh is cut into 1/2 to 3/4 inch cubes. These cubes are then soaked in a brine of one gallon of white vinegar and one cup canning salt for 10 days, stirring once daily. After the brining period, the cubes are thoroughly rinsed in cold water and drained. The fish cubes are then packed into pint jars, alternating layers of fish and onion rings. Add one teaspoon of pickling spices and cover completely with a solution made of one cup of white vinegar and one cup of sugar (DO NOT COOK). Store in refrigerator. After 10 days, you will have tasty pickled morsels that will be palate-pleasing. Although this recipe is given for carp, other species of fish can be prepared in like manner.

## FRESHWATER DRUM



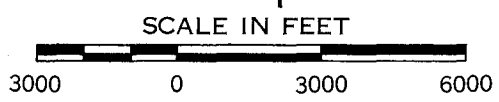
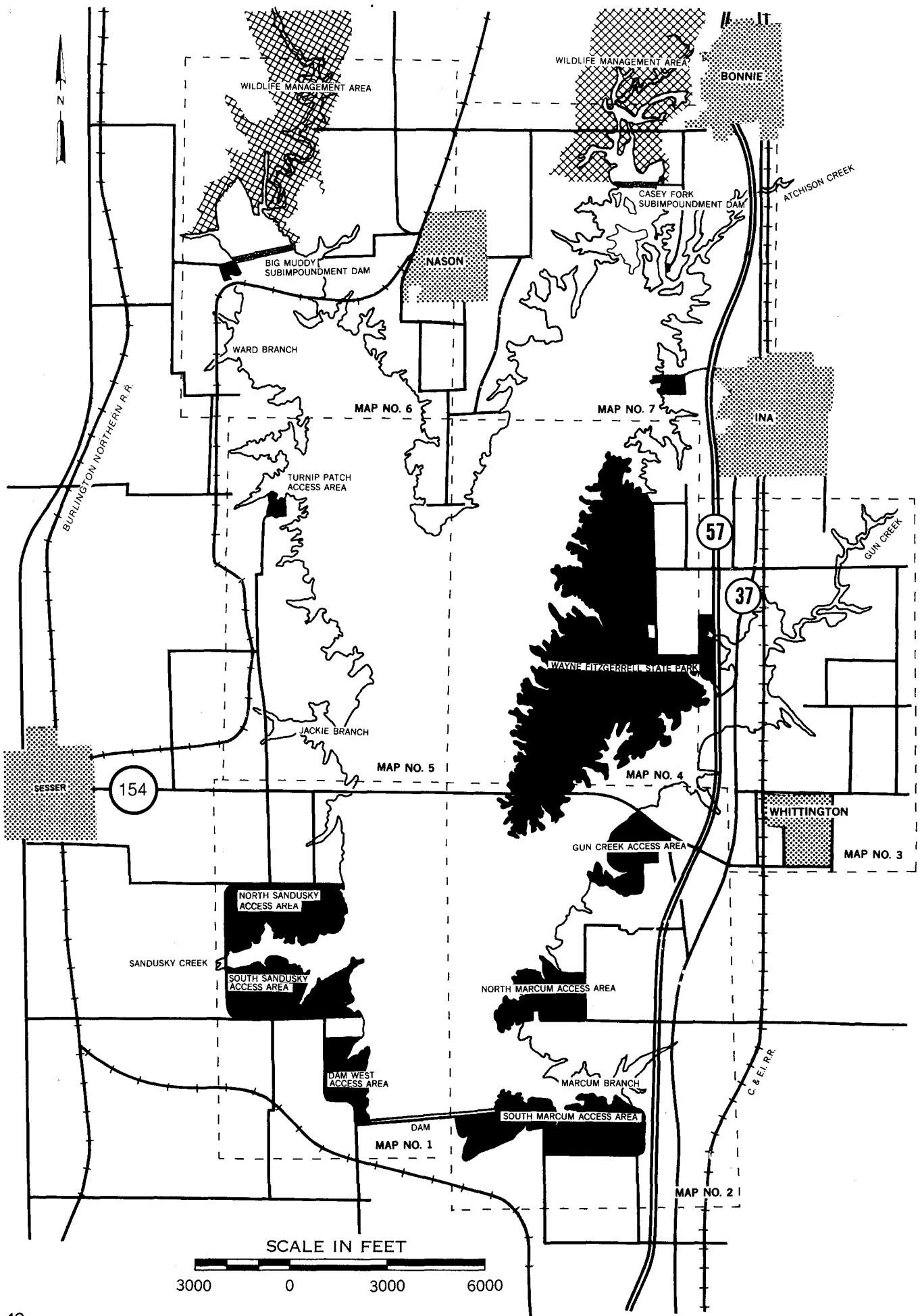
FRESHWATER DRUM  
(*Aplodinotus grunniens*)

While usually viewed as a commercial species, the freshwater drum can also be considered a good eating sport species. It is fairly abundant both in the lake and in the tailwater and river below the dam.

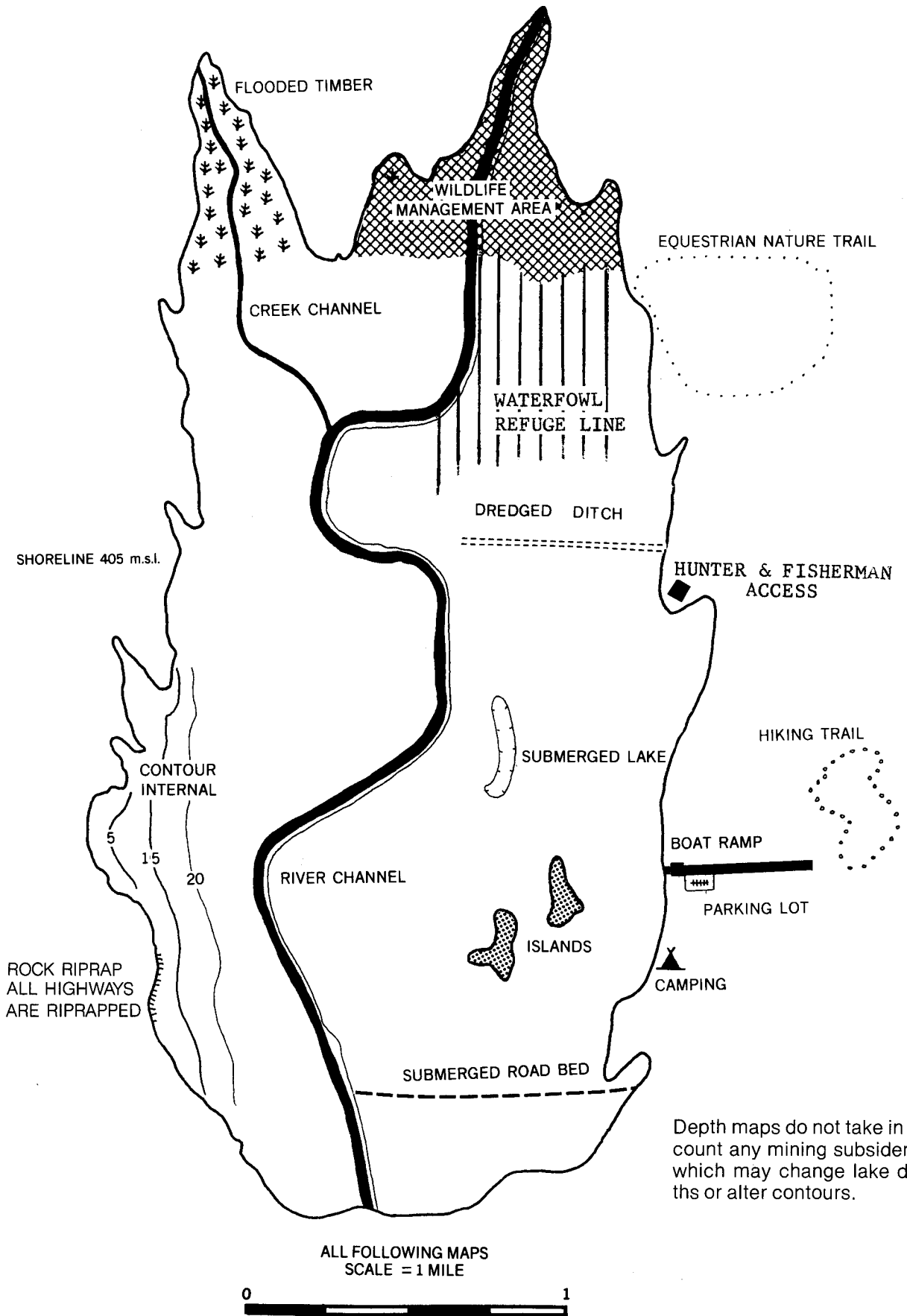
The drum is primarily a creature of the bottoms. It feeds principally on clams, snails, crayfish, insect larvae and small fishes. Although distributed throughout the lake, anglers generally find the better drum fishing in the flooded river and creek channels of the lake,

along rock riprap areas, over areas with mud bottoms or the channels below the dam.

Drum can be caught on worms, small crayfish, bait shrimp, or live and dead minnows, fished on or near the bottom on the lake or stream. During the summer months, some anglers have found that they can catch drum by bumping small 1/32 to 1/4 ounce jigs along the rock riprap of the dam and Route 154. To the surprise of many anglers, the drum is capable of putting up a scrappy fight on light spinning tackle.



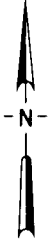
# KEY TO SYMBOLS



↑  
SEE MAP NO. 5

← TO SESSER

154



NORTH SANDUSKY ACCESS AREA

BOAT RAMP

BOAT RAMP

SOUTH SANDUSKY ACCESS AREA

HIKING TRAIL

MARINA

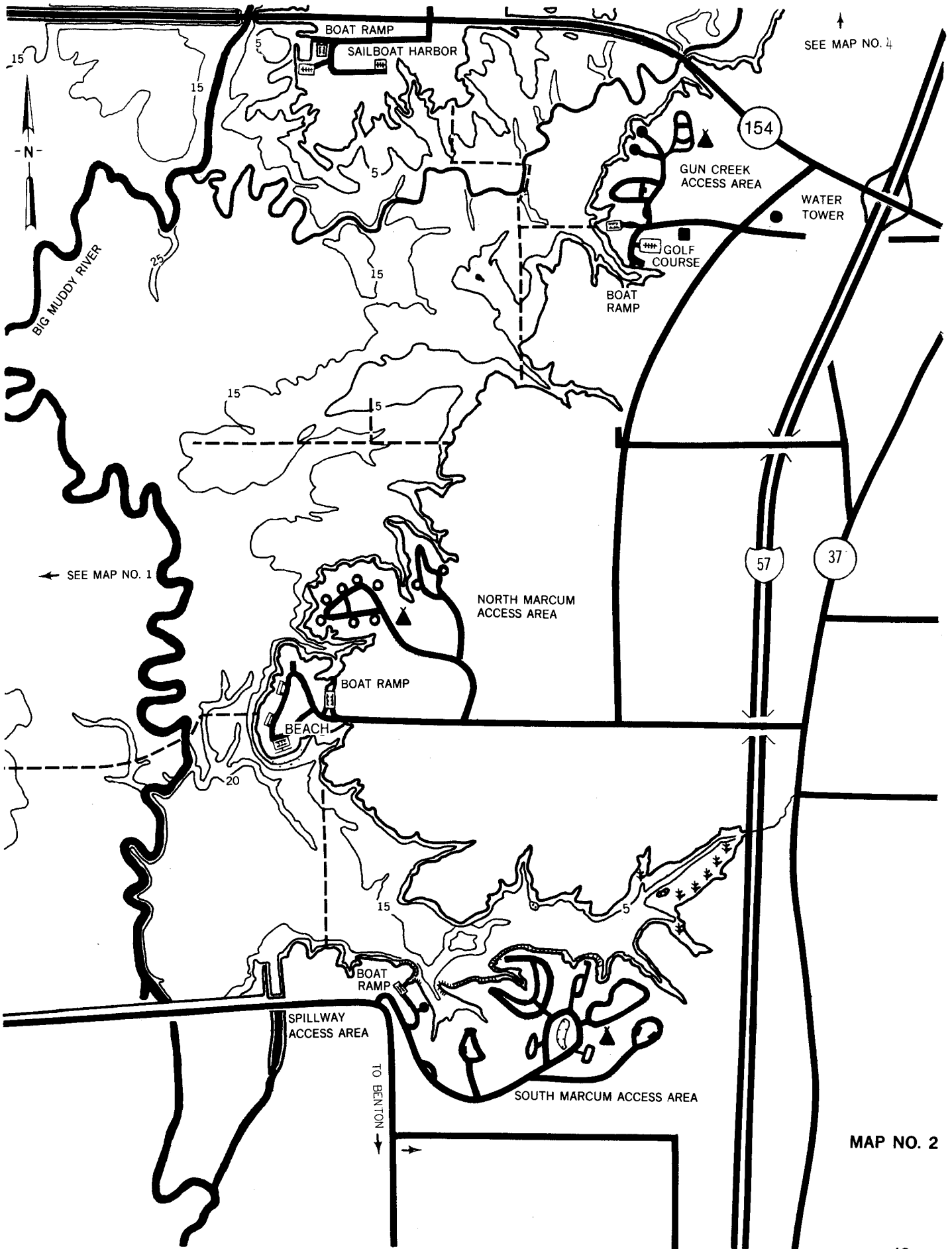
DAM WEST ACCESS AREA

DAM

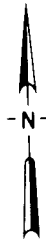
SEE MAP NO. 2 →

BIG MUDDY RIVER

MAP NO. 1



SEE MAP NO. 4



BIG MUDDY RIVER

SEE MAP NO. 1

BOAT RAMP

SAILBOAT HARBOR

154

GUN CREEK ACCESS AREA

WATER TOWER

GOLF COURSE

BOAT RAMP

NORTH MARCUM ACCESS AREA

BOAT RAMP

BEACH

57

37

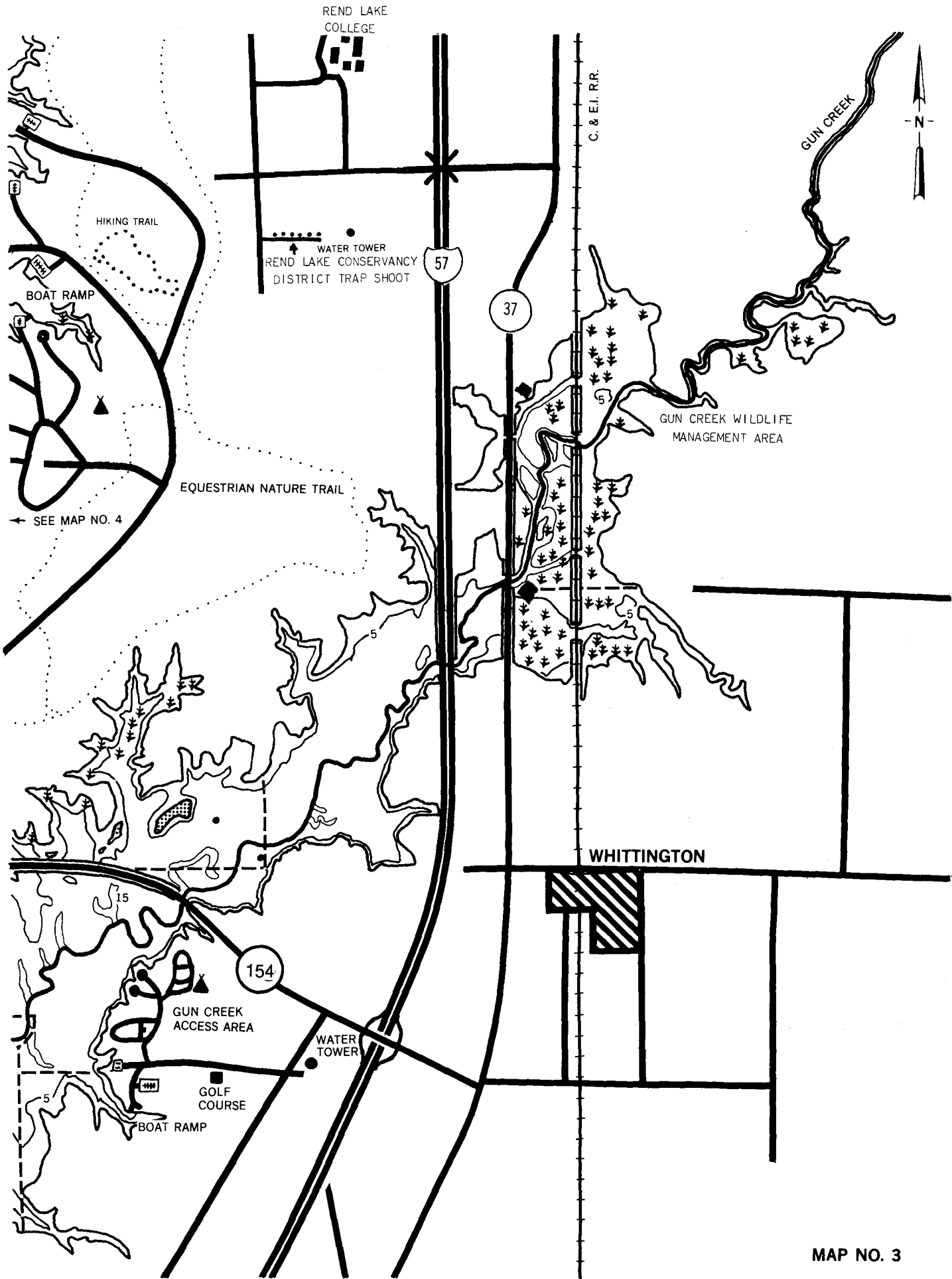
BOAT RAMP

SPILLWAY ACCESS AREA

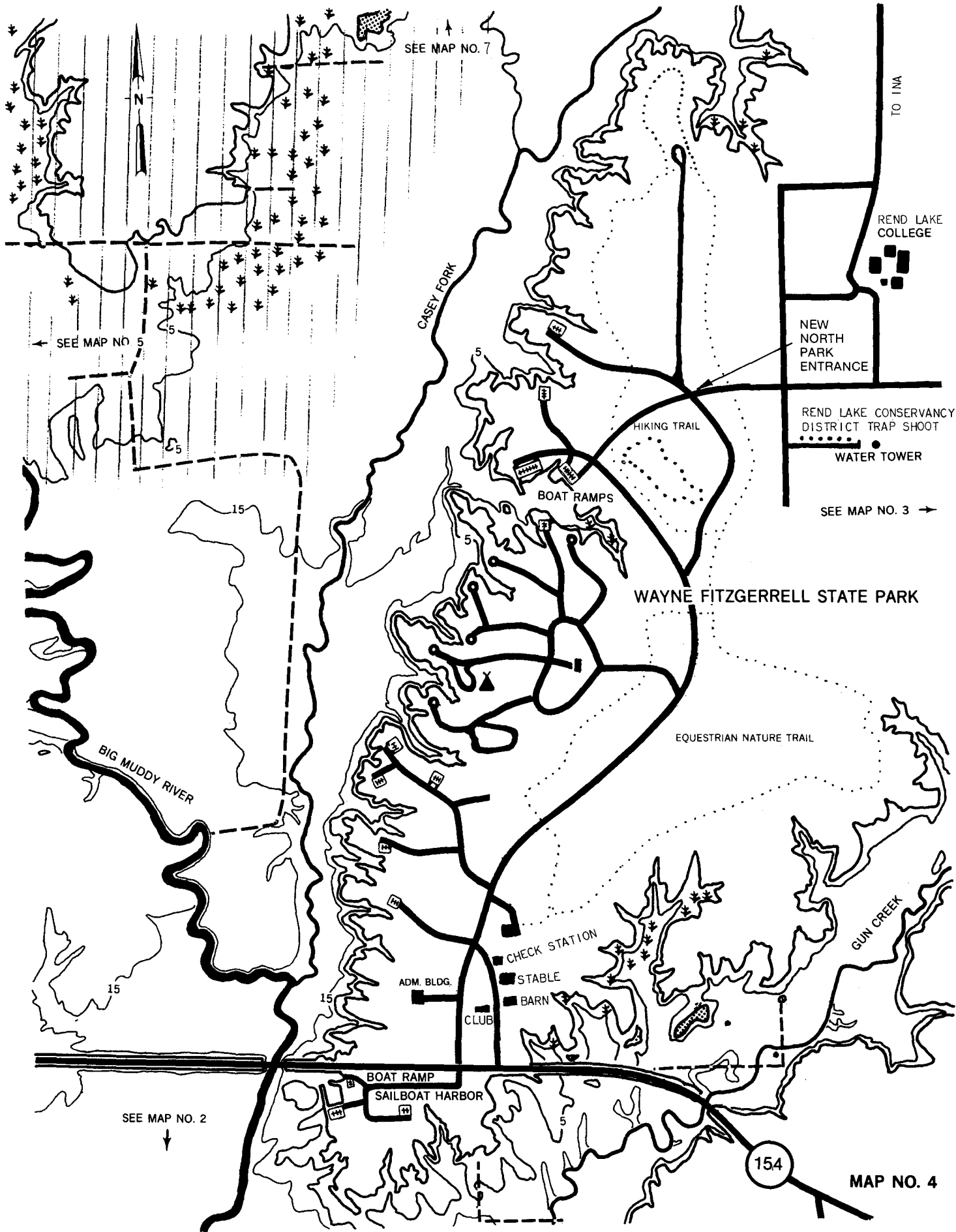
TO BENTON

SOUTH MARCUM ACCESS AREA

MAP NO. 2

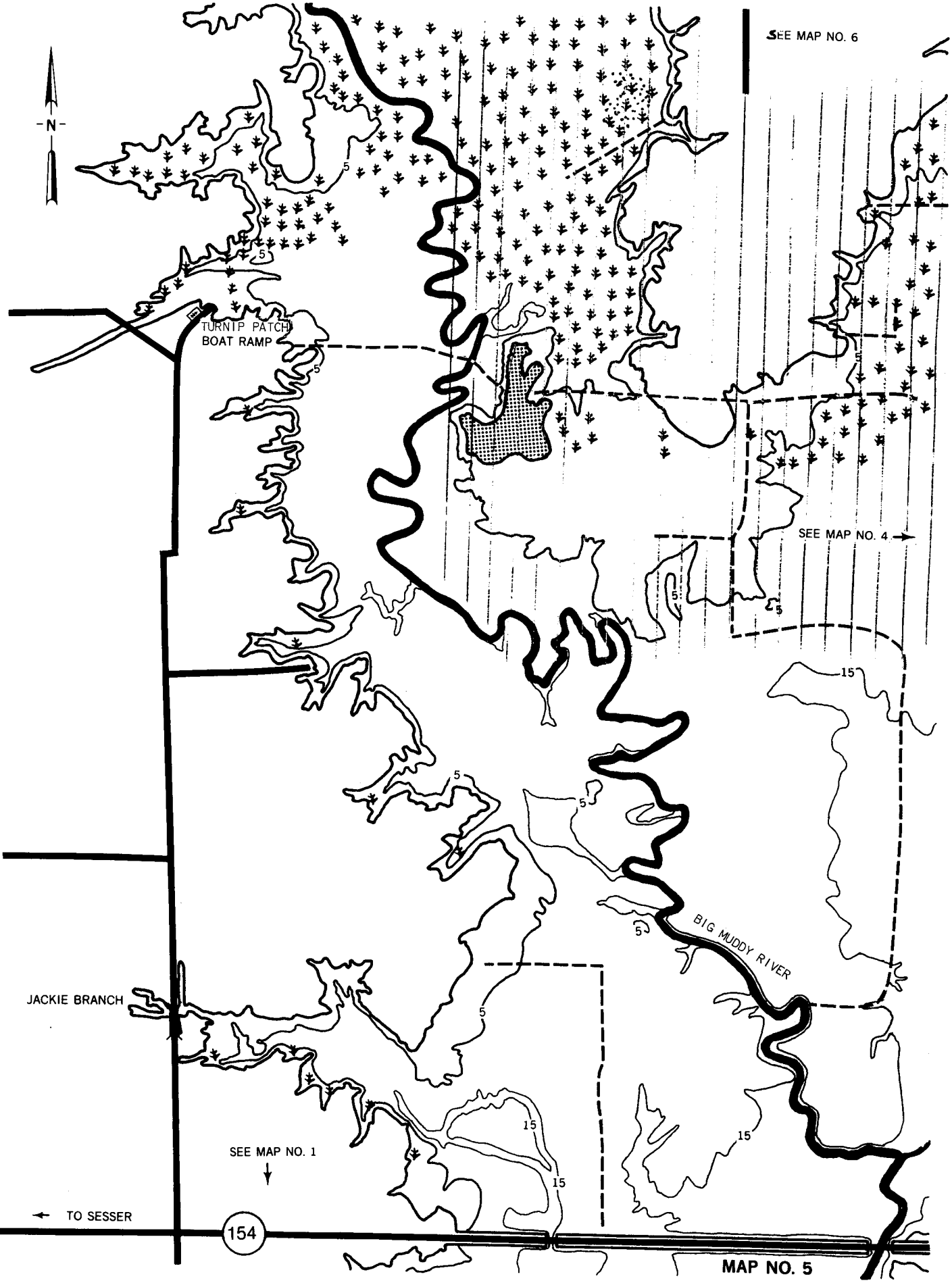
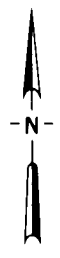


MAP NO. 3



MAP NO. 4

SEE MAP NO. 6



TURNIP PATCH  
BOAT RAMP

SEE MAP NO. 4

BIG MUDDY RIVER

JACKIE BRANCH

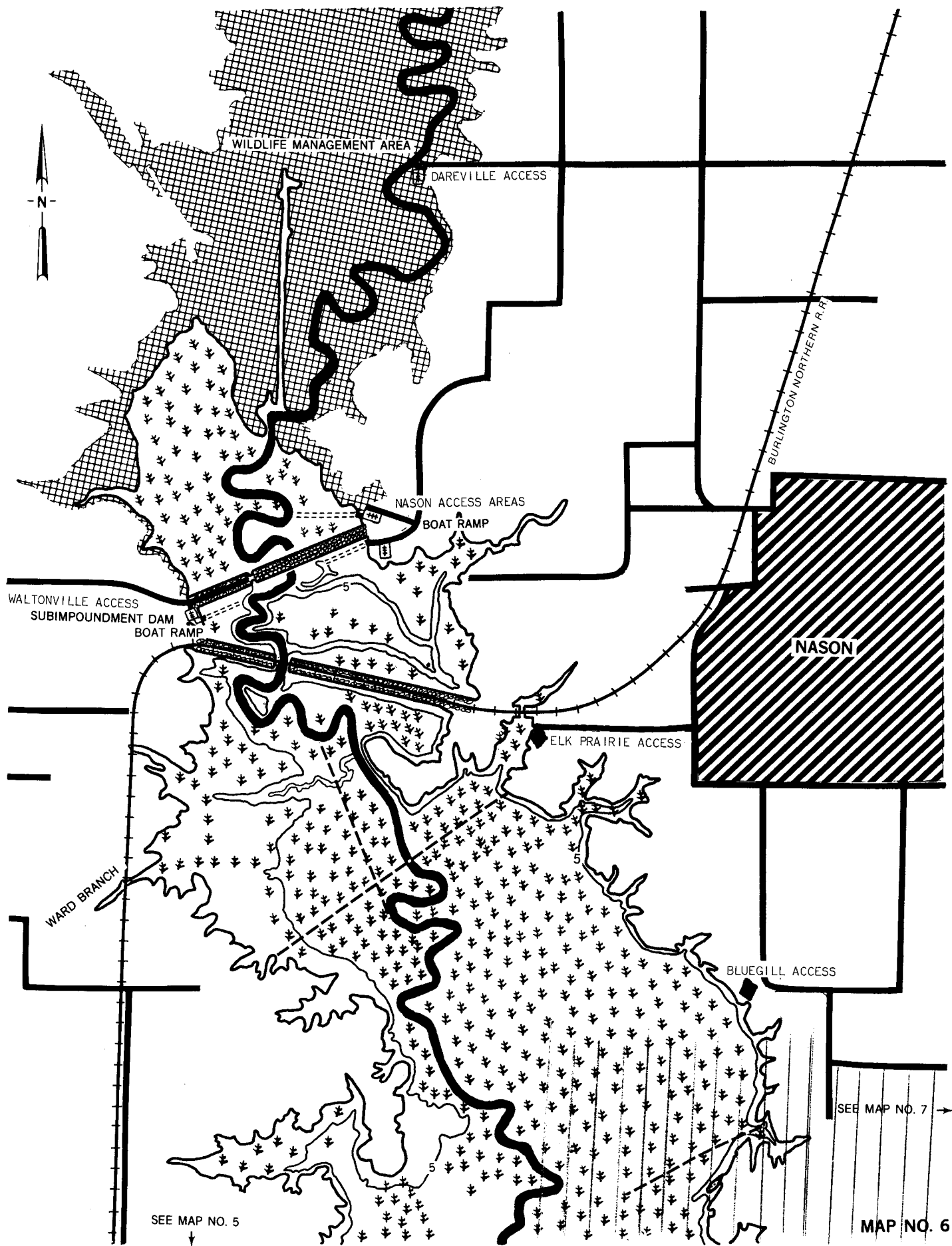
SEE MAP NO. 1

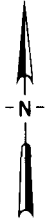
← TO SESSER

154

MAP NO. 5







REND LAKE REFUGE HEADQUARTERS

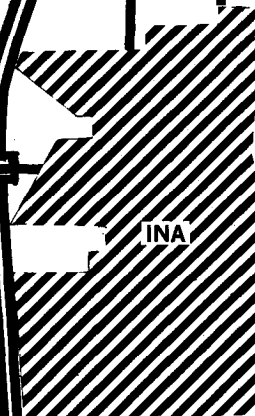
SEE MAP NO. 6

SEE MAP NO. 4

↑ TO BONNIE

57

37



MAP NO. 7



# FEDERAL AID IN SPORT FISH RESTORATION

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives monies authorized by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 (Dingell-Johnson Act) and its 1984 Wallop-Breaux Amendment. This act imposes a manufacturer's tax on fishing tackle, "flasher" type fish finders, electric trolling motors, motorboat fuel, and import duties on fishing tackle and boats.

This money is received as a 75% reimbursement on approved projects. At Rend Lake such monies are spent for:

- Hatchery stocking of largemouth bass and hybrid striped bass;
- Rearing of largemouth bass and hybrid striped bass in three nursery ponds;
- Stocking of threadfin shad to improve the forage base;
- Placement of discarded Christmas trees for fish habitat;
- Conducting a variety of biological surveys to monitor fish populations, evaluate past management activities, and set regulations;
- Creel surveys studying angler's catch to determine the quality of fishing, angler preferences, and trends;
- And a portion of boat ramp operation and maintenance costs on the Rend Lake Fish and Wildlife Area.

This Sport Fish Restoration Program is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in partnership with the states.



**Illinois**  
Department of  
**Natural Resources**