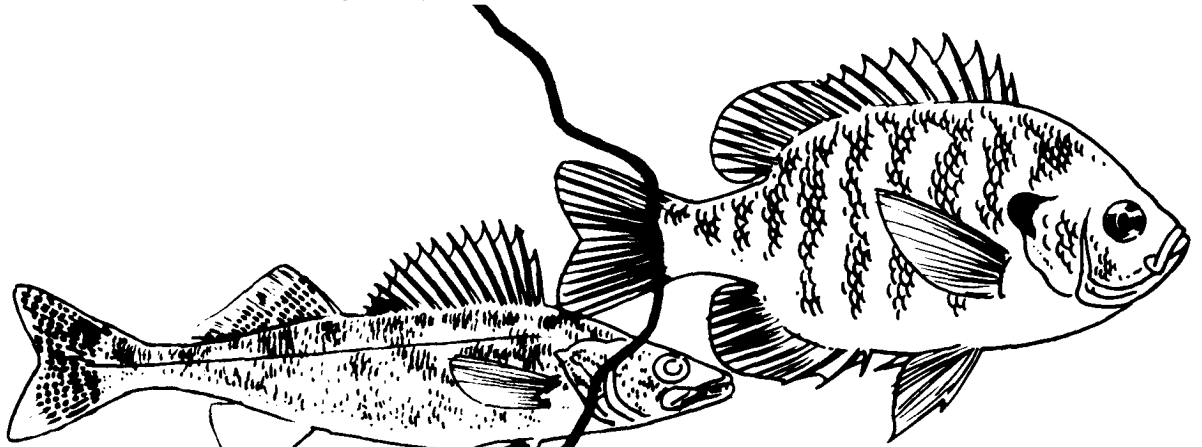
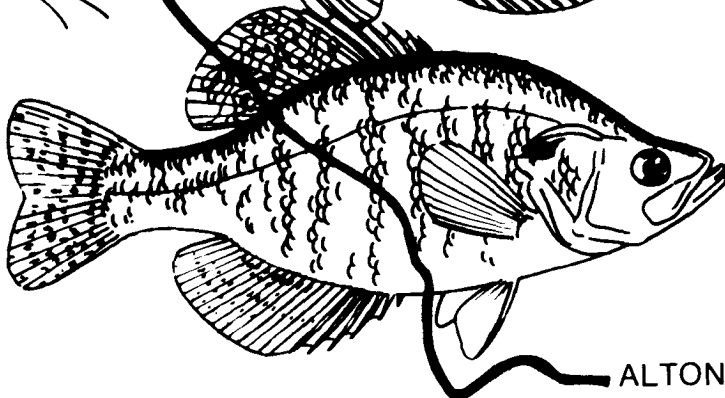


DUBUQUE

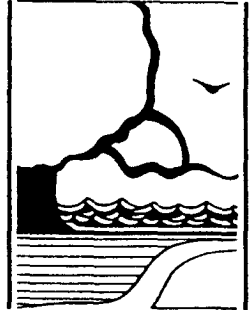


FISHING THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI

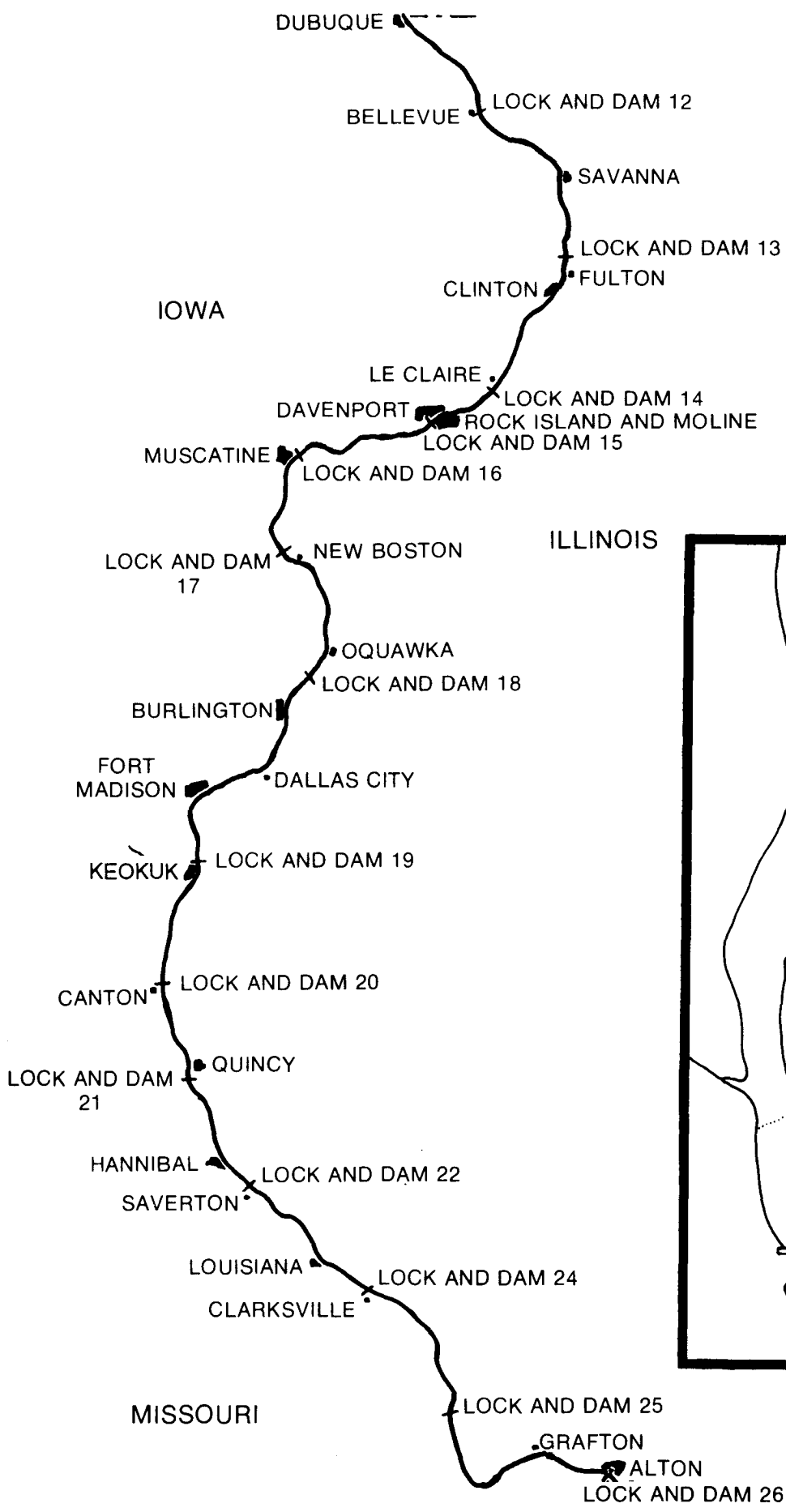


ALTON

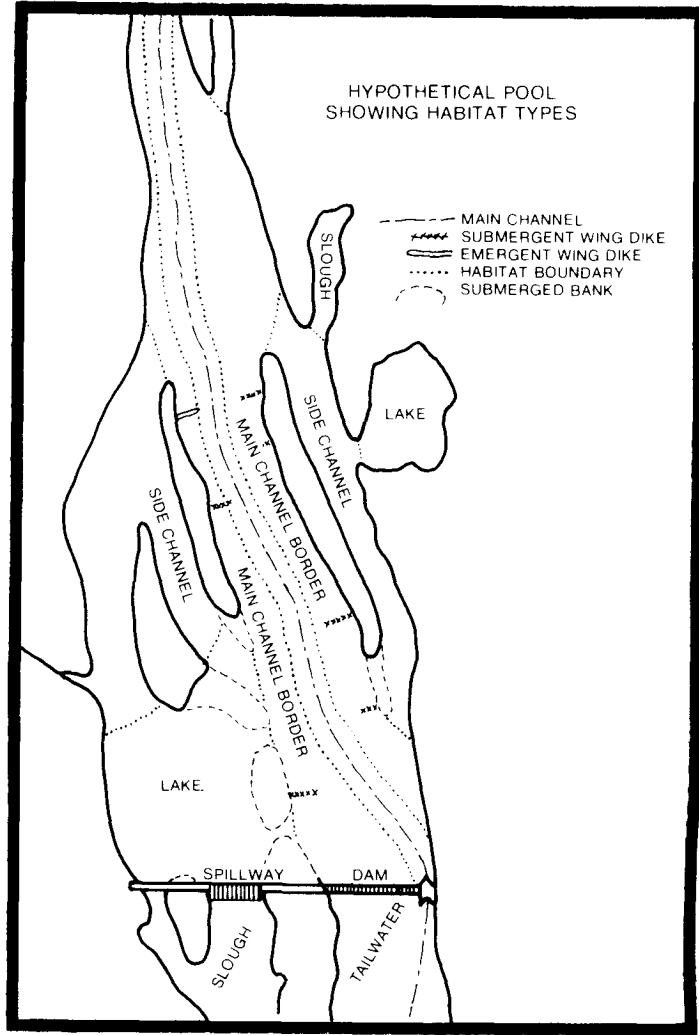
ILLINOIS



DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL
RESOURCES



POOLED SECTION OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER BORDERING ILLINOIS



FISHING REGULATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FISHERIES

FISHING THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI

Revised September, 1996

INTRODUCTION

The vast sport fishery resources of the Mississippi River provide Illinois fisherman with sport as fine as that found anywhere in the state. Major game fish of the river include crappie, largemouth bass, walleye and sauger, channel catfish, white bass, and bluegill. However, the river does not receive the amount of fishing pressure it could stand, even though many Illinoisans are crying for a place to fish.

It is with the hope of bringing fish and fishermen together, that this fishing guide to the pooled Illinois portion of the Mississippi River is provided. Fishery biologists have sampled many locations on the river over the past three years. Their data and aerial fishermen counts, creel censuses, access surveys, and discussions with other people knowledgeable of the river provide the basis for this guide.

DESCRIPTION OF RIVER

The portion of the upper Mississippi River between Alton and East Dubque, Illinois provides some 200,000 acres of water for sport fishing. This section of the river differs from the Mississippi below Alton because at normal water stages it is actually a series of reservoirs formed by 14 navigation dams. These reservoirs or "pools" range from 10 to 47 miles in length and 3,725 to 33,500 acres in size. The diverse aquatic habitats occurring in each pool provide homes for a variety of sport fish. From studies of these different habitats we have found that certain fish typically favor one habitat over another, so we can predict what species will be found in a particular area.

Tailwater areas, below each of the navigation dams, are stretches of fast turbulent water caused by the passage of water through the gates of the dam. Tailwaters are the most heavily fished areas throughout the year, providing the most constant good fishing because fish congregate in the rough waters. The best fishing for walleye and sauger is in tailwater habitat from late fall through late spring. White bass and drum are taken in these areas in summer.

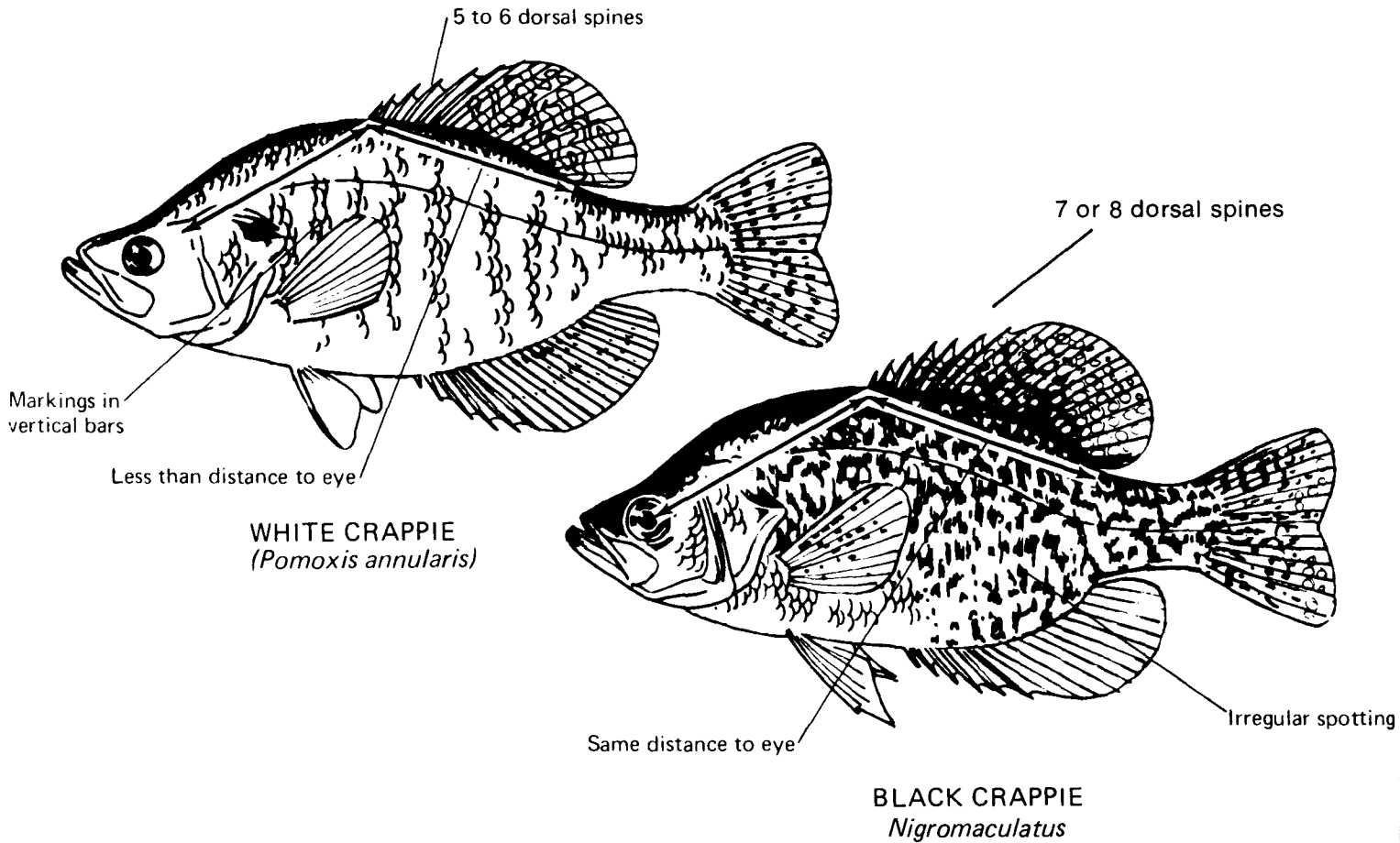
Lake and slough habitats are the most picturesque and favored by many fishermen who do not care to venture out onto the main river. Both habitats have little or no current and may have aquatic vegetation. Lakes are separated from sloughs by having deeper water. These areas are the best for crappie, bluegill, largemouth bass, and bullheads from spring through fall. Ice fishing produces good catches of bluegill and crappie in many of these spots.

Side channels are departures from the main channel and may be as wide and deep as the main channel or be so shallow that they are close to slough habitat. All side channels have current in them during normal water stages. Fish commonly taken in side channel habitat include channel catfish, white bass, crappie, and drum.

Main channel border habitat is the area between the edge of the navigation channel and the closest land or shallow water over submerged land. The emergent or submergent wing dams along the main channel are in this habitat and these often provide excellent fishing for white bass, catfish, drum, sauger and walleye.

The remaining type of habitat is the main channel, which, for safety's sake is a poor place to fish.

FISHING



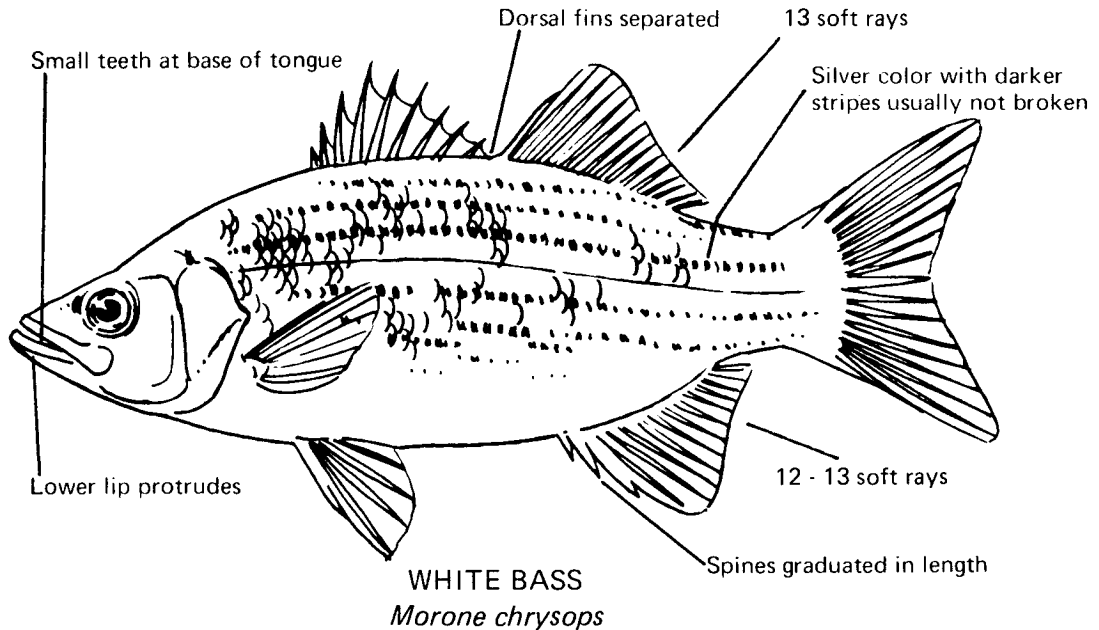
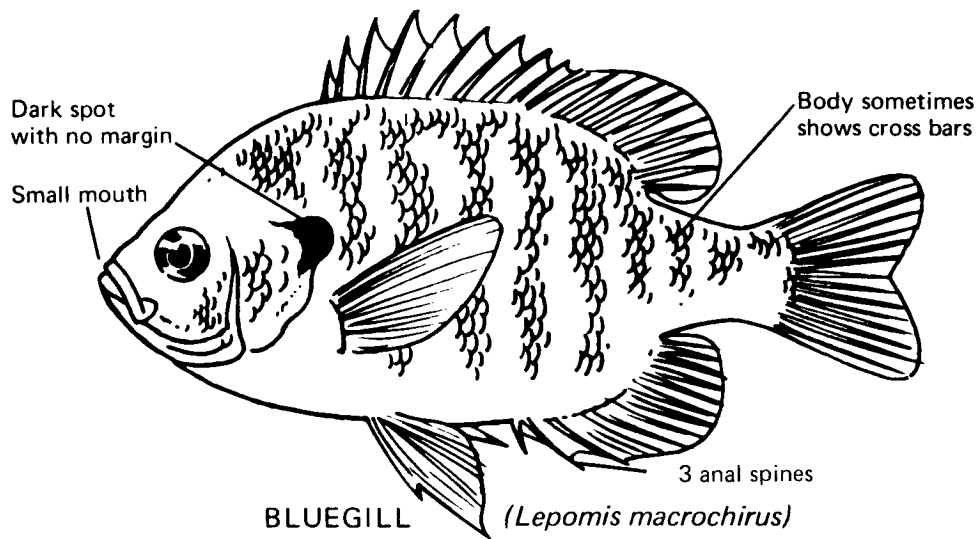
Two crappie species occur — the white crappie and the black crappie — but, there is no apparent difference in their bait preference or methods used to catch them. These species are most often taken from lake habitat, where catches of 1 to 1½ lb. fish are common and 2 pounders are reported occasionally. Fish near stumps, brush piles, or other such shelter. Small minnows are the most common bait and these should be hooked high in the back on a small hook with a bobber 2 to 3 feet above the hook.

Nightcrawlers can also be used effectively in early spring. When crappie start schooling spawning (April and May) leadhead jigs and spinners become productive and may be used in combination with a lip hooked minnow. Usually the best months are March, April, and May; then fishing picks up again in the fall. Ice fishing on pools 12-15 is good using minnows or wax worms for bait in areas where water depth is 5' or less. For ice fishing use a small bobber because the fish are sluggish and the bit is gentle.

BLUEGILL

Bluegill are the most abundant sport fish in sloughs and can be taken during the summer months on a variety of baits. The most popular bait is the nightcrawler on a small hook, but crickets and grasshoppers work well. Fish near cover such as brush piles, stumps, or weed beds and drop your bait as close as possible to the cover. Use a small

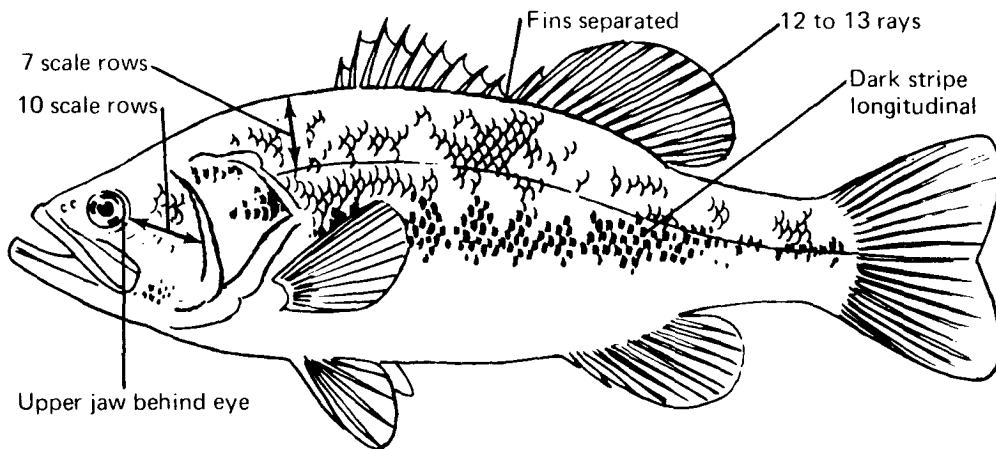
bobber to keep the bait off the bottom. Bluegill fishing is good during the evening, June through September. Ice fishing is, perhaps, the best for bluegill in waters 5' or less with ice cover up to 12". Wax worms or corn borers are used to take thousands of bluegill each winter on pools 12 through 15, and certain areas on lower pools.



WHITE BASS

The white and the yellow basses are the true basses in our state. Local fishermen often call the white bass "striper" which is a misnomer since the true striper (or striped bass) is a larger salt water cousin that is currently being introduced into many reservoirs. The white bass is much more abundant than the yellow bass on the river and 1-2 pounders are frequently taken. These fish like current and turbulence as is shown by their abundance in tailwaters. They are often taken on jigs by bank or boat fishermen casting into the rough water directly below a dam gate. Another place to try is the downstream side of wing dams in the main channel border where the water roils after crossing the dam or going

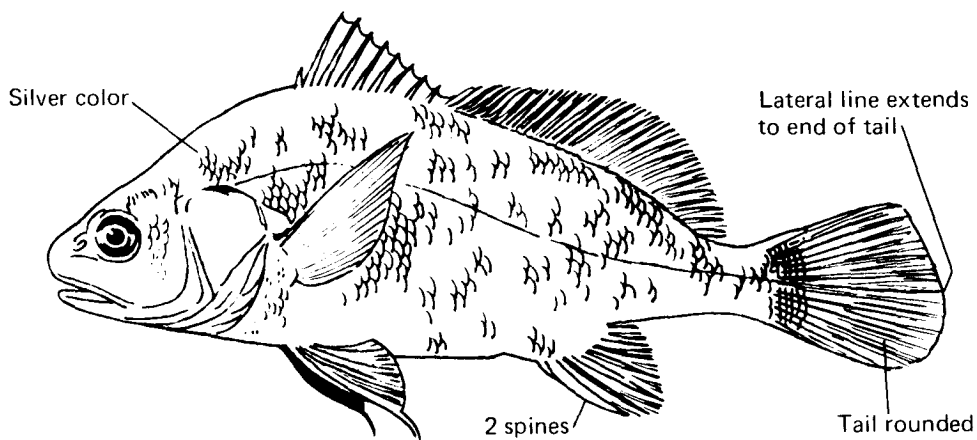
around the end. Sometimes bass can be found in the quieter water along a sand bar or bank in the main channel border. Spinners with minnows or artificial lures resembling minnows are effective when a school of white bass are spotted by the furious surface activity of minnows, trying to elude them. Best fishing seems to be in the morning or evening, but bass may be taken from deeper water during the day by retrieving the artificial lure or minnow a short ways off the bottom. May and August have been the best months for bass during the summer. Ice fishermen take white bass on minnows from deep holes having 15' or more water depth by fishing the bait a few feet off the bottom.



LARGEMOUTH BASS
(Micropterus salmoides)

Largemouth bass are found in almost any of the backwater lakes and many slough areas, but occur less frequently in the other habitat types. They prefer the cover of weed beds, brush, stumps, willows, and fallen trees where they can play hide and seek with their prey. Since largemouth are sight feeders they are attracted by action and not by smell of the bait or lure. They succumb to the temptations of a variety of lures, plugs, and jigs which must each be retrieved in the manner best suited to the lure. Mepps spinners are commonly used and plastic worms are

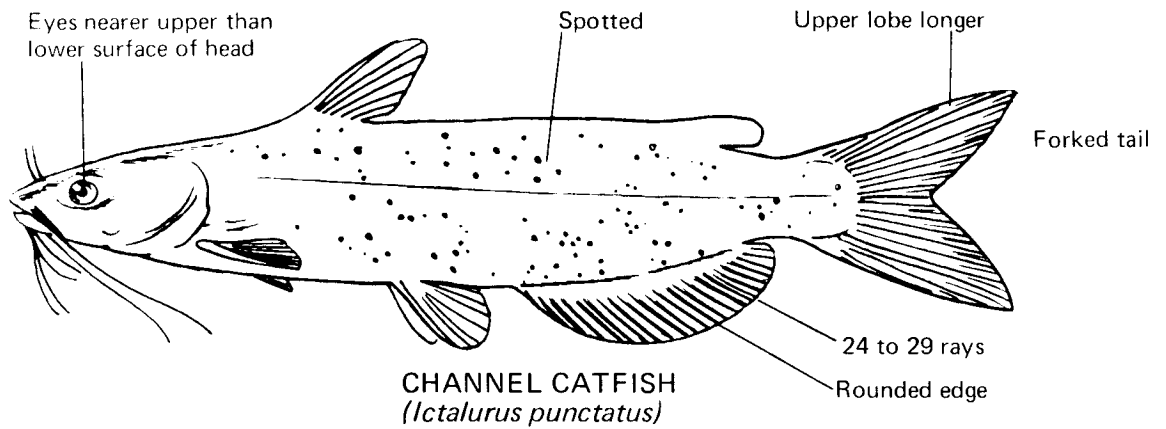
popular, as can be seen by the number adorning snags and limbs in some of the better bass areas. Minnows hooked below spinners probably take a larger percentage of the largemouth on the river than they do in other areas of the state. Still fishing with minnows will seldom take a largemouth, but appears to be more successful during winter when ice fishermen commonly take 1 or 2 with their mess of crappie. The best fishing is in May, June and September; in early morning or in the evening, once water temperatures go above 75°.



FRESHWATER DRUM
(Aplodinotus grunniens)

Drum are perhaps more commonly called white or silver perch, although they are not a member of the perch family. On the river they are most common in areas where there is good current — namely tailwater, side channel, and main channel border habitat.

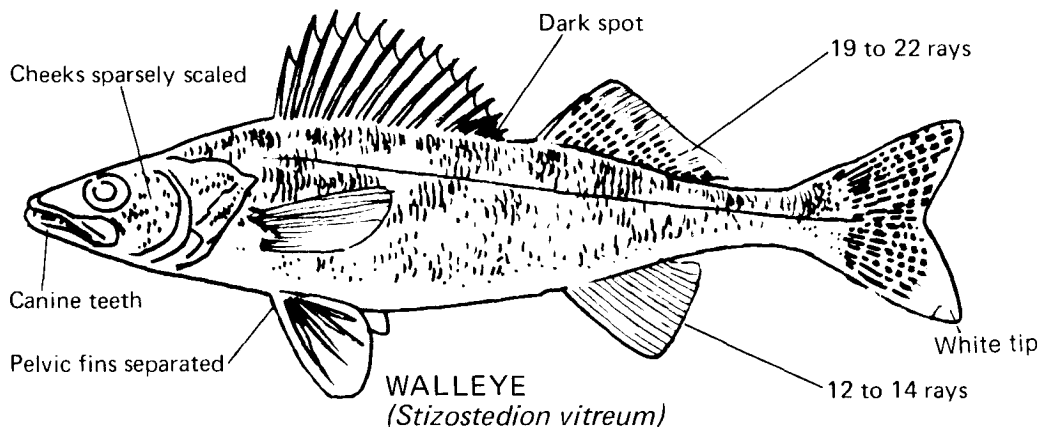
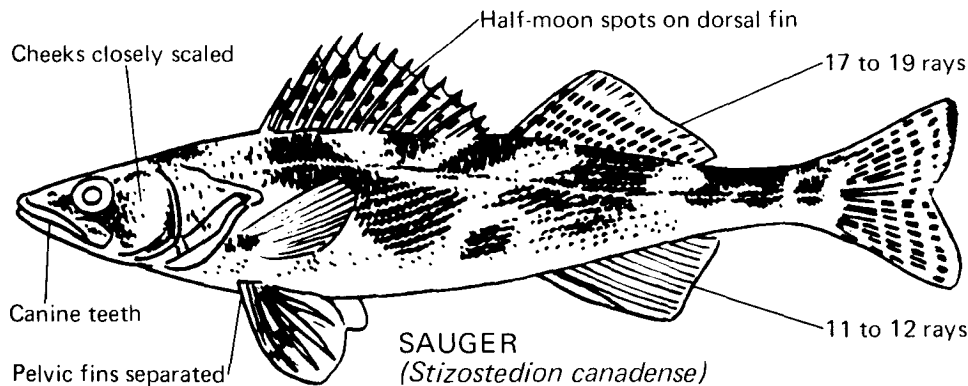
They are taken most frequently on worms fished with a tight line, on the bottom. Large drum are seldom caught by sport fishermen although 2 and 3 pounders are not uncommon.



To a lot of people, fishing, when referring to the Mississippi, means catfish. These fish are the meat fish for many people who appreciate the occasional 10-15 pound channel cat or 30-40 pound flathead they catch along with the common 2-10 pounders. The popularity of these species seemingly reaches its peak around pools 18 and 19. Favorite hideouts for flatheads and channel catfish are around the base of old stumps often occurring in "stump fields" — areas where trees were killed by flooding and have long since fallen and been washed away leaving only stumps, sticking a foot or two above water. These areas are usually shallow lake or main channel border habitats, 2-5' deep. Along banks of side channels or main channel borders catfish can be found hiding in holes downstream of fallen trees or small log jams along the bank. Wing dikes are likely areas, also, especially when they are in a series. Prepared stink baits, blood baits, cheese baits, and secret homemade recipes are found in use most often. Worms, liver, shrimp, and an almost endless variety of goodies are successful at one time or

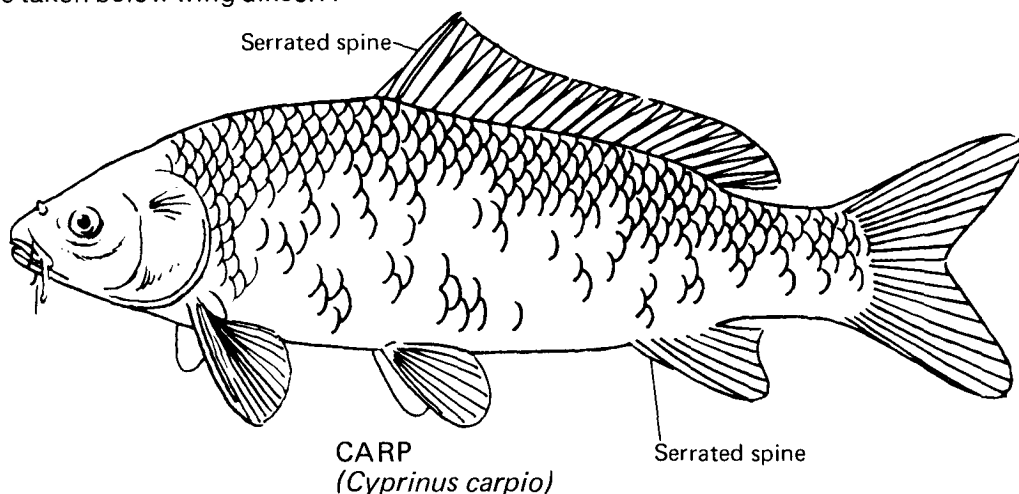
another for catfish. The more solid prepared baits can be balled around a treble hook and fished on the bottom with a tight line weighted by a sliding sinker. Pieces of sponge rubber are dipped in some baits having a thinner consistency and placed on or before a hook. With any bait, bottom fishing appears to be the most successful when possible. Around trees and log jams a bobber is often necessary to keep from losing gear. Catfish also provide the basis for good trot-lining; and if you're going after flatheads, use large hooks and big bait such as 6" carp. Fishing picks up for catfish when its slacking off for many species, and the summer months are undeniably the best (July through September).

Bullheads may be caught during the warmer months in most shallow backwater areas. Most bullheads are taken by bank fishermen using worms below a bobber or fished on the bottom 10-30' from shore. The presence or absence of cover such as brush or logs appears to be of little importance to these tasty catfish.



Walleye and sauger fishing on the Mississippi is the best in the state. In the spring the tailwaters are crowded with boats of fishermen after their favorite sport and table fish. Most of the fish taken are the more abundant sauger, which may range in weight up to 5 pounds (the state record sauger was 5 lbs. 12½ oz. taken from the Mississippi). The less abundant walleye are generally larger, and reports of 10 pounders come in each year. Between spring and fall these fish can often be taken below wing dikes. A

common lure is a jig-minnow combination with the minnow hooked through the head and a weight attached via a three way swivel to fish the jig a foot or so off the bottom. Lead head jigs or minnows by themselves are also popular. The tailwaters can be fished through winter for walleye or sauger because the rough water keeps them free of ice cover. Reportedly the largest walleye are caught during winter and it takes the hardest anglers to fish for them.



Carp are both the villain and heroes of the river fishery, because they can be caught in all habitats on almost any bait and at times when other species aren't biting. They are villains because this leads many people to believe they constitute the bulk of the sport fishery (which they don't). They are heroes because their abundance and willingness to bite have rescued people from fishless outings. In fact, their size and fighting ability have made fishermen out of people who would not be on the river, if it were

not for the chance they might hook into a 10-40 pound monster. In addition, a 2-5 pound carp can provide some of the best eating available anywhere. People who have sampled every sport fish available in this state, including trout, have rated carp (scored and deep-fat fried) as fine fare. Carp are commonly taken on worms, corn, and doughballs. Doughballs can be made out of a mixture of flour, a flaky cereal, and water; and this mixture is balled around a treble hook. The most productive areas are shallow lake or slough habitats anytime from May through October.

SAFETY ON THE RIVER

Some fishermen avoid the river because they are afraid of it. For these fishermen who prefer quiet water, the many backwater sloughs and lakes on the river can be safer than that pond or reservoir they usually fish. However, a certain amount of respect for the river is only good judgment. Small boats are fine on quiet backwaters, but if a person intends to travel the side channels or main channel where he may encounter strong current, wakes from tows, or whitecap waves, a stable boat is needed. A wise man would use nothing smaller than a 14' jon boat or a 12' V-bottom boat with a 5 or 6 horsepower motor to navigate the open river. Boats of this size and larger can still be easily swamped if overloaded or handled by an inexperienced or careless person. Here are some additional points to take note of:

1. pay *full* attention to navigation of your boat
2. stay well away from towboats and barges
3. watch for wing dikes extending from the shore which may have only 1-2' of water over them
4. wear life vests, at least while travelling to and from the place you fish
5. avoid the areas directly below and above navigation dams — *the corps asks that you stay at least 50 yards downstream or 200 yards upstream of the dams*

Before operating a boat on the river or any water of this state, a person should obtain and read the pamphlet on the boat registration and safety act. These are available from the Department of Conservation, 400 S. Spring St., Springfield, Illinois.

FISHING REGULATIONS

There are site specific regulations in effect for the Mississippi. These are subject to change annually. Check the site specific section of the annual fishing information booklet. Copies of the current regulations may be obtained at local sporting goods dealers or by writing to: Department of Natural Resources,

Division of Fisheries, 524 S. Second, Springfield, Illinois 62706. However, the Mississippi is a boundary water, and once the fisherman crosses the navigation channel marked by buoys, he is technically in another state. Reciprocal agreements between Illinois and the states of Iowa and Missouri allow an Illinois fisherman to fish "in any of the *running* waters forming a boundary between such States," without purchasing a non-resident license from the adjoining State. The term "running water" is the key — it refers to the side channels and areas that *have current through them*. "Bayous, backwaters, or dead end sloughs" can only be fished with a non-resident license; and a non-resident license is also required if an Illinois fisherman wants to tie or attach his boat to a Missouri or Iowa bank. If you are unsure an area across the river is available to the resident Illinois fisherman, contact the local Illinois conservation officer.

SPECIFIC AREAS TO FISH

On the following maps, areas have been marked in each pool that are better fishing areas. For each area marked and numbered, the sport fish most commonly taken are checked in the box on the same page. Undoubtedly, good fishing spots exist that were not noted; and as these are discovered they will be publicized. Access sites available to the public are lettered and listed in a second box with the basic facilities found at each site checked. No attempt was made to list all access sites, but only those near fishing spots marked on the map.

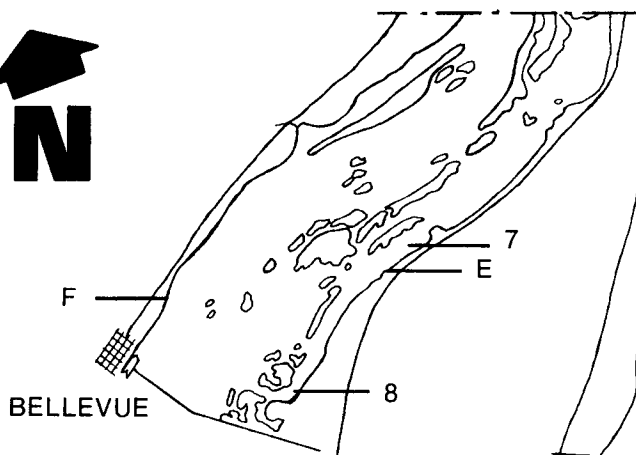
Abbreviations used for species listed on the maps are: LMB largemouth bass; BG, bluegill; Cr, crappie; WhB, white bass; ChC, channel catfish; Bull, bullheads; Rbass, rock bass; War, warmouth; W-S, walleye-sauger; and NP, northern pike. Area name abbreviations include: Is, island; Ch, chute; Sl, slough; L, lake; Pd, pond; and Pk, park.



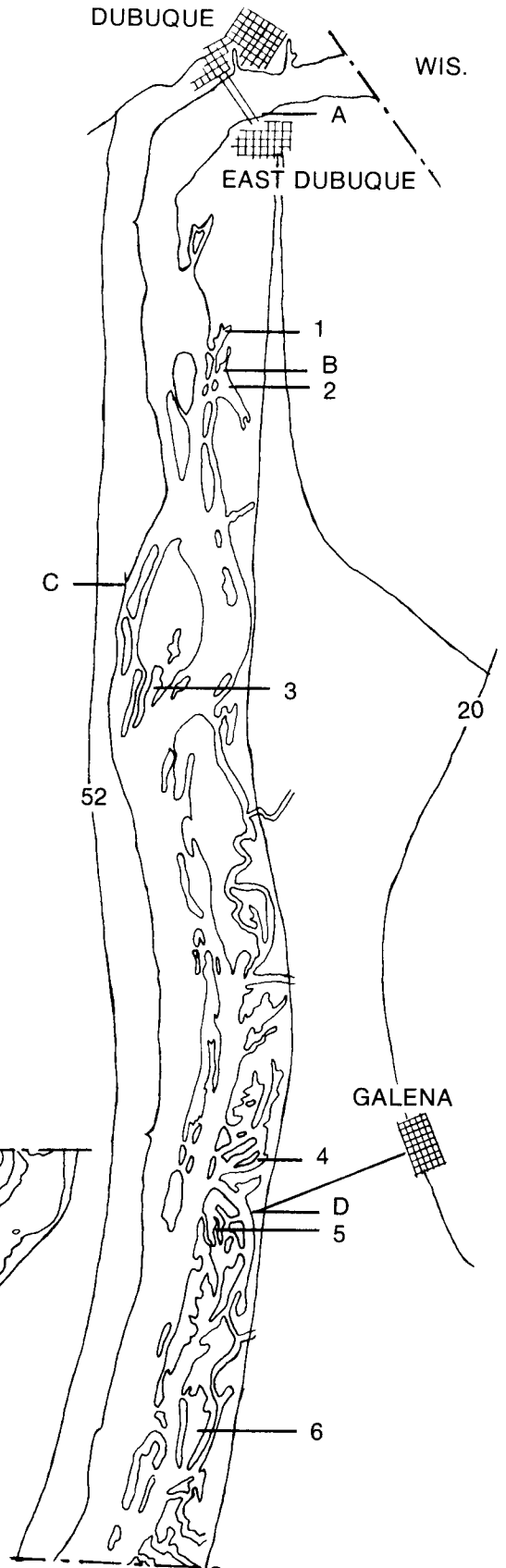
POOL 12

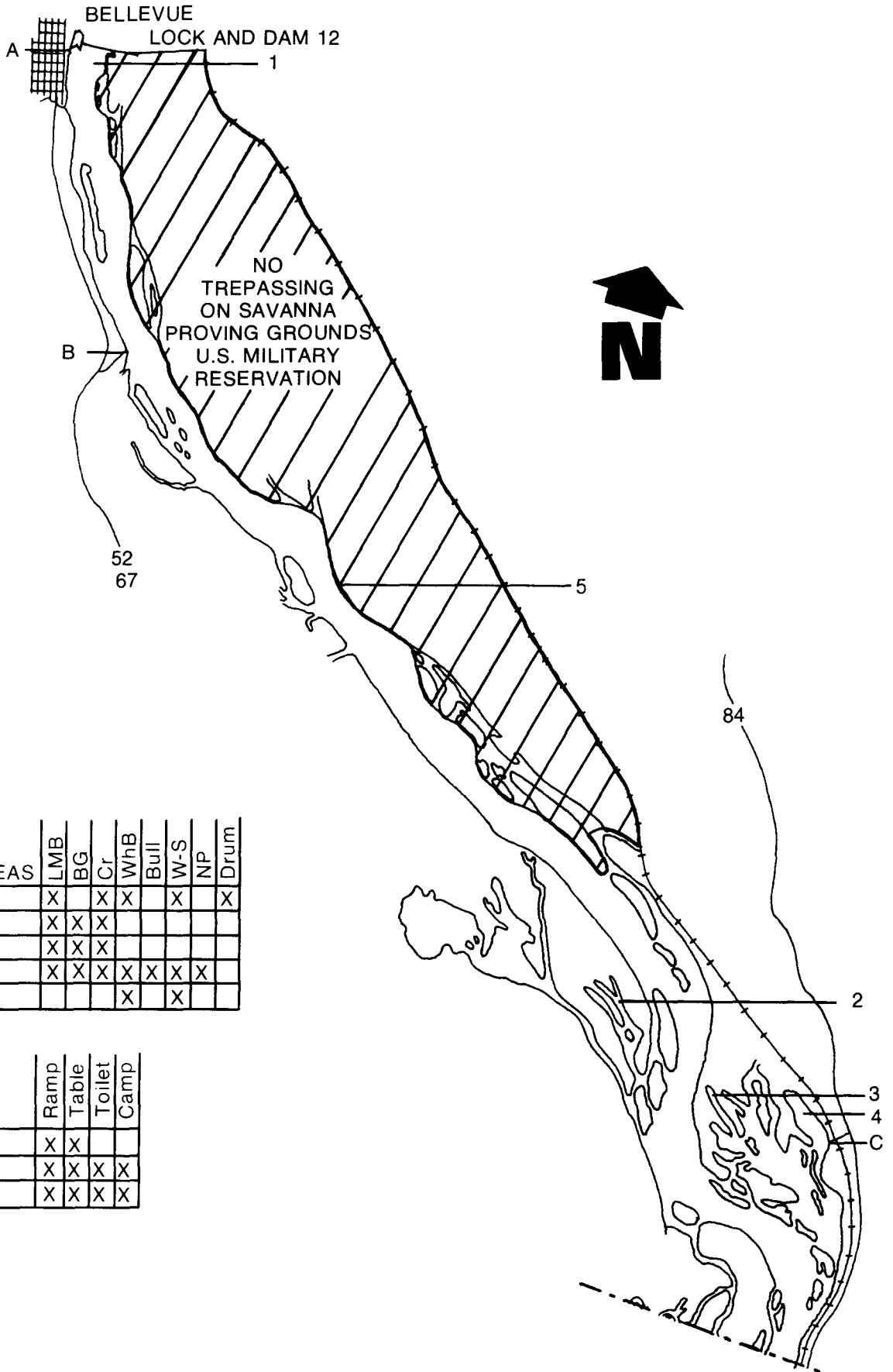
BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	Bull	W-S	NP	RBass
1. Switzer L.	X	X	X			X			
2. Frentress L.	X	X	X	X		X	X		
3. Nine Mi. Is.		X	X						
4. Kehough Sl.		X	X			X			
5. Fishtrap L.	X	X	X			X		X	
6. Sunfish L.		X	X					X	
7. Perchangs	X	X	X						
8. Crooked Sl.	X	X	X	X	X			X	X

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. E. Dubuque	X			
B. Frentress L.	X			
C. Massey Ldg.	X	X		X
D. Gears Ferry Ldg.	X		X	
E. Blandings Ldg.	X	X	X	X
F. public ramp	X			



LOCK AND DAM 12



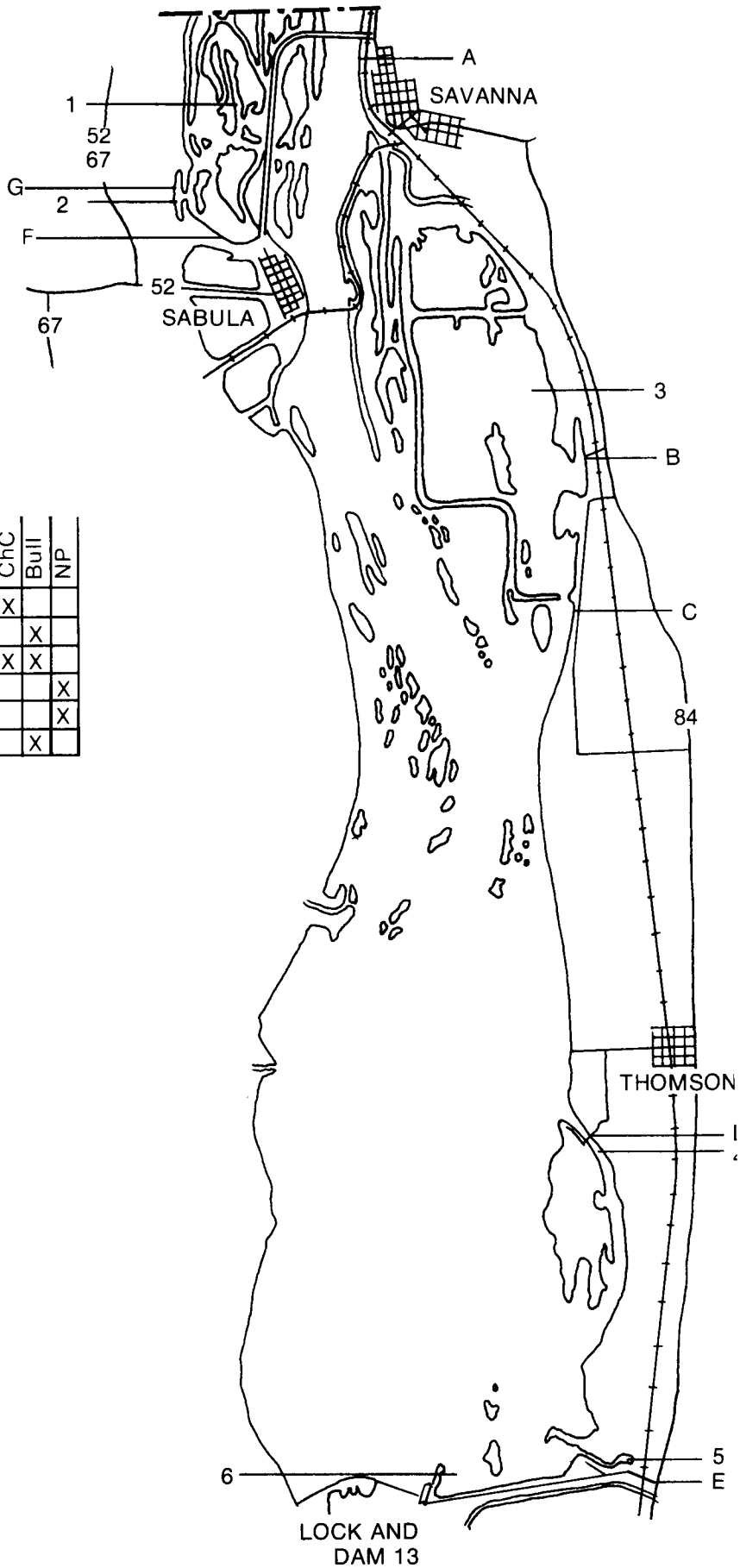


POOL 13

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	Bull	W-S	NP	Drum
1. tailwater	X		X	X		X		X
2. Pin Oak L.	X	X	X					
3. Hickory L.	X	X	X					
4. Millers L.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
5. wing dikes				X		X		

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Bellevue	X	X		
B. Pleasant Ck.	X	X	X	X
C. Palisades Pk.	X	X	X	X

POOL 13



BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	Bull	NP
1. Dead L.		X	X		X		
2. Barge L.		X	X			X	
3. Spring L.	X	X	X		X	X	
4. Potter's Sl.	X	X	X				X
5. borrow pit	X		X				X
6. lake	X		X			X	

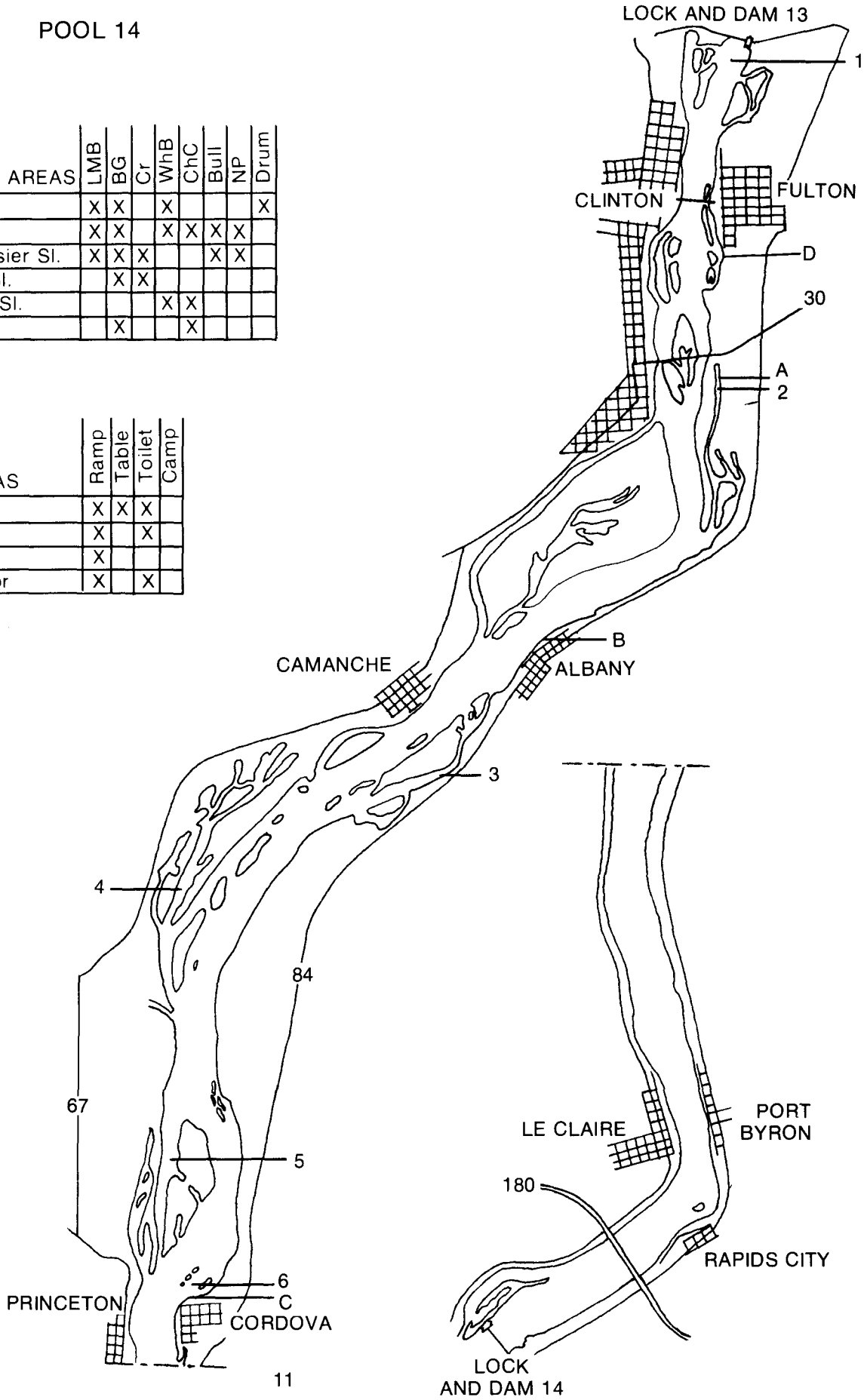
ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Savanna	X		X	
B. Spring L.	X	X	X	X
C. Big Sl.	X	X	X	
D. Thompson Pua	X	X	X	X
E. Lock	X	X		
F. Sabula	X	X	X	
G. Esmay Slough	X			



POOL 14

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	Bull	NP	Drum
1. tailwater	X	X		X				X
2. Sunfish Sl.	X	X		X	X	X	X	
3. Marais D'Osier Sl.	X	X	X			X	X	
4. Schricker Sl.		X	X					
5. Steamboat Sl.				X	X			
6. stumps		X			X			

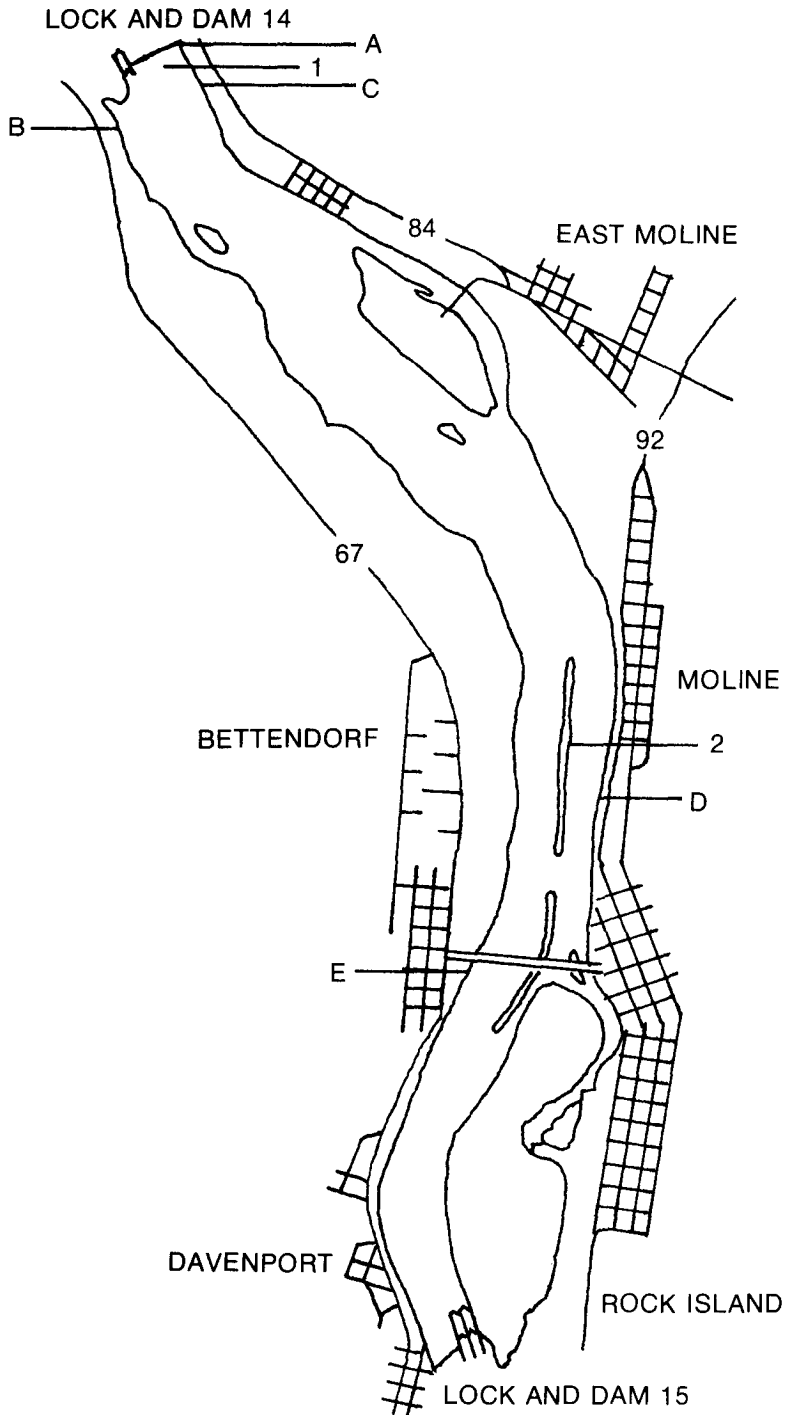
ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Cattail Sl.	X	X	X	
B. Albany	X		X	
C. Cordova	X			
D. Fulton Harbor	X		X	



POOL 15

BEST FISHING AREAS	WhB	ChC	Carp	Drum
1. tailwater	X	X	X	X
2. lateral dike		X	X	X

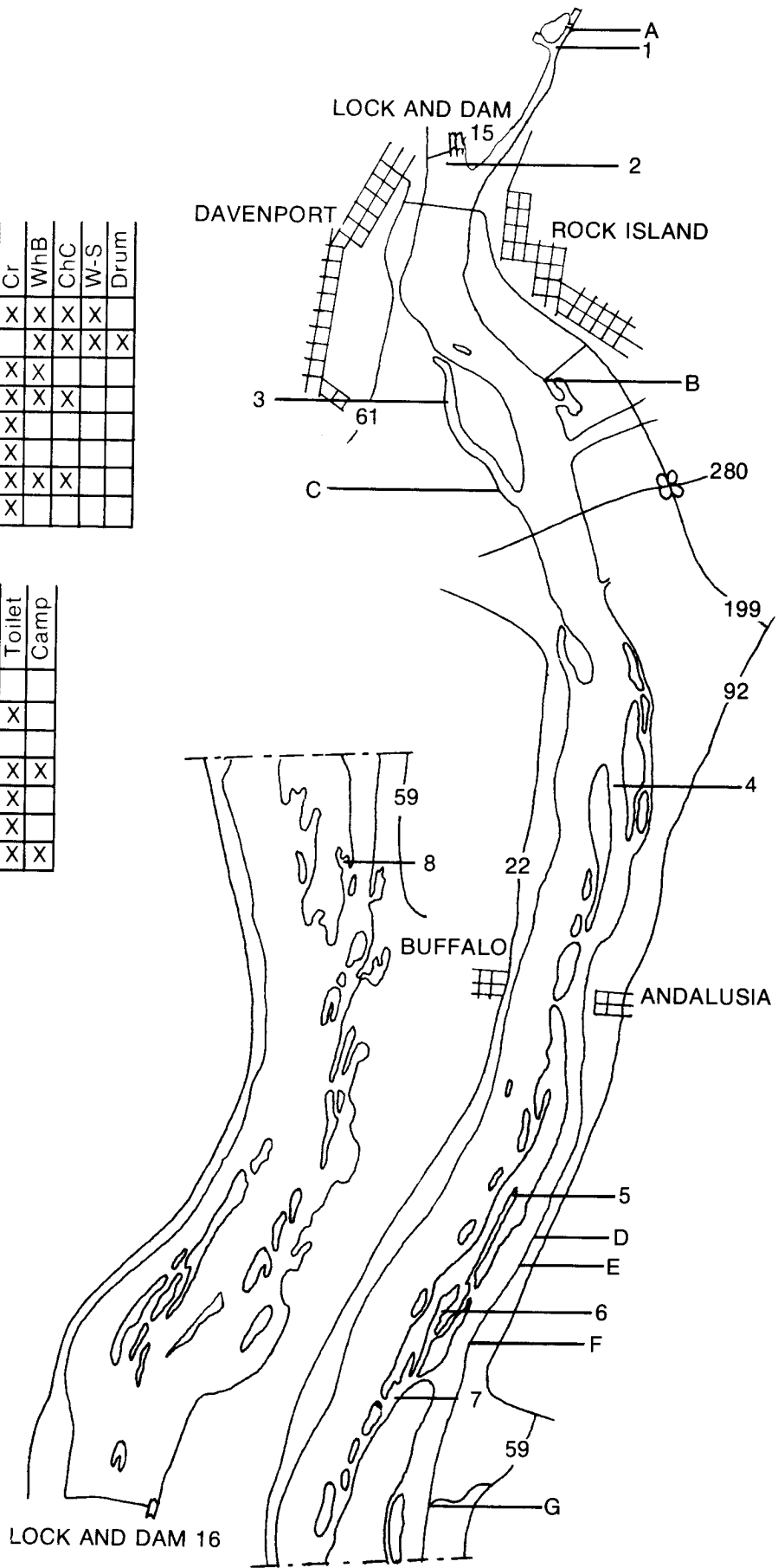
ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Fisherman's Corn.		X	X	X
B. LeClaire	X			
C. Illiniwek	X	X	X	X
D. 34th St.	X			
E. 12th St.	X			



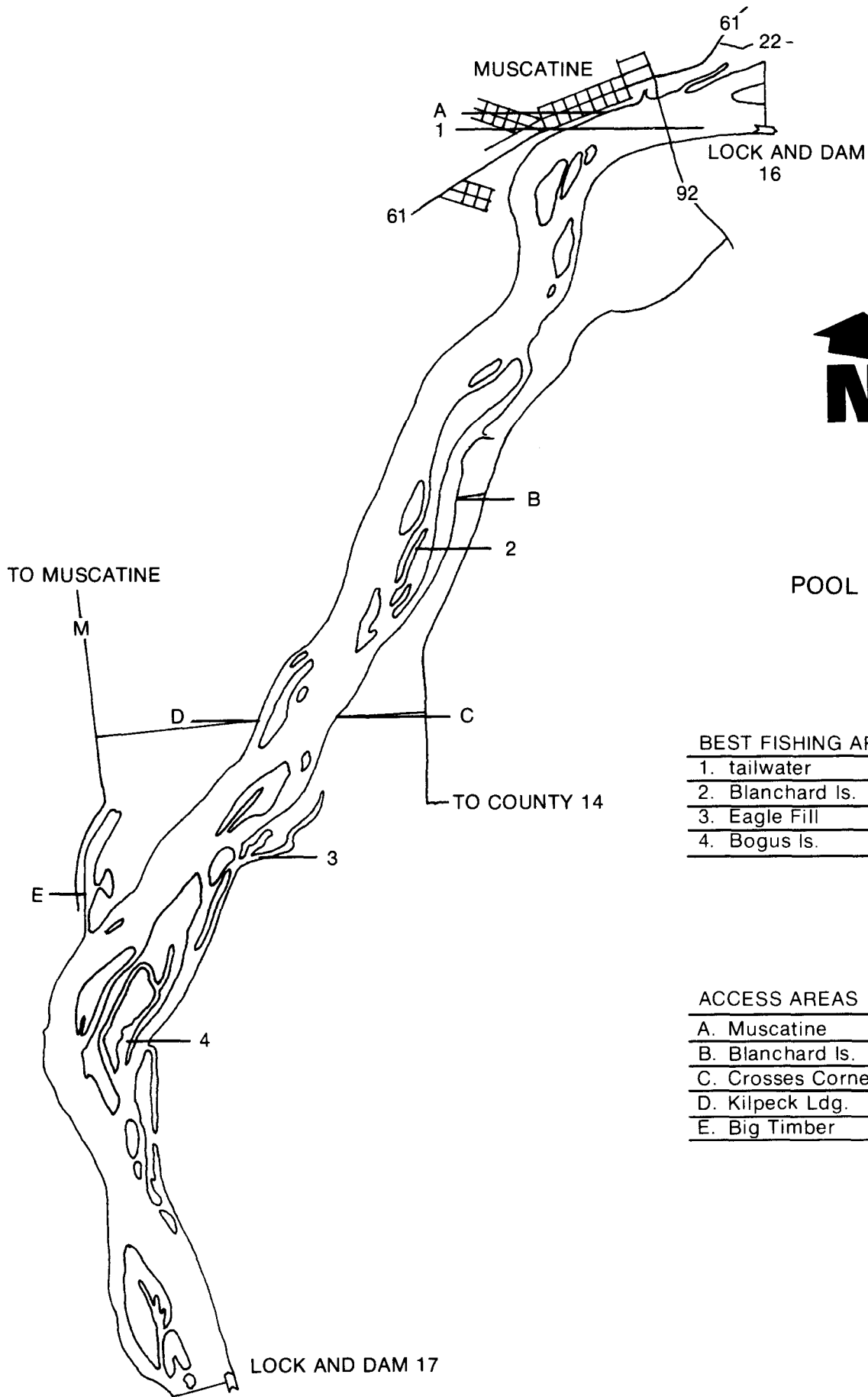
POOL 16

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	W-S	Drum
1. Sylvan Sl.			X	X	X	X	
2. tailwater				X	X	X	X
3. Credit Is. Sl.		X	X	X			
4. Andalusia Sl.	X	X	X	X	X		
5. Sunfish Sl.	X	X	X				
6. Goose Pd.		X	X				
7. Velie Ch.	X	X	X	X	X		
8. Big Sunfish Sl.		X	X				

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. 2nd St.				
B. Sunset Pk.	X	X	X	
C. Concord St.	X			
D. Andalusia Sl.	X	X	X	X
E. county ramp	X		X	
F. county ramp	X	X	X	
G. Loud Thunder	X	X	X	X



LOCK AND DAM 16



BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	Bull	Drum	W-S
1. tailwater				X		X	X
2. Blanchard Is.	X	X	X		X		
3. Eagle Fill	X	X	X		X		
4. Bogus Is.	X	X	X				

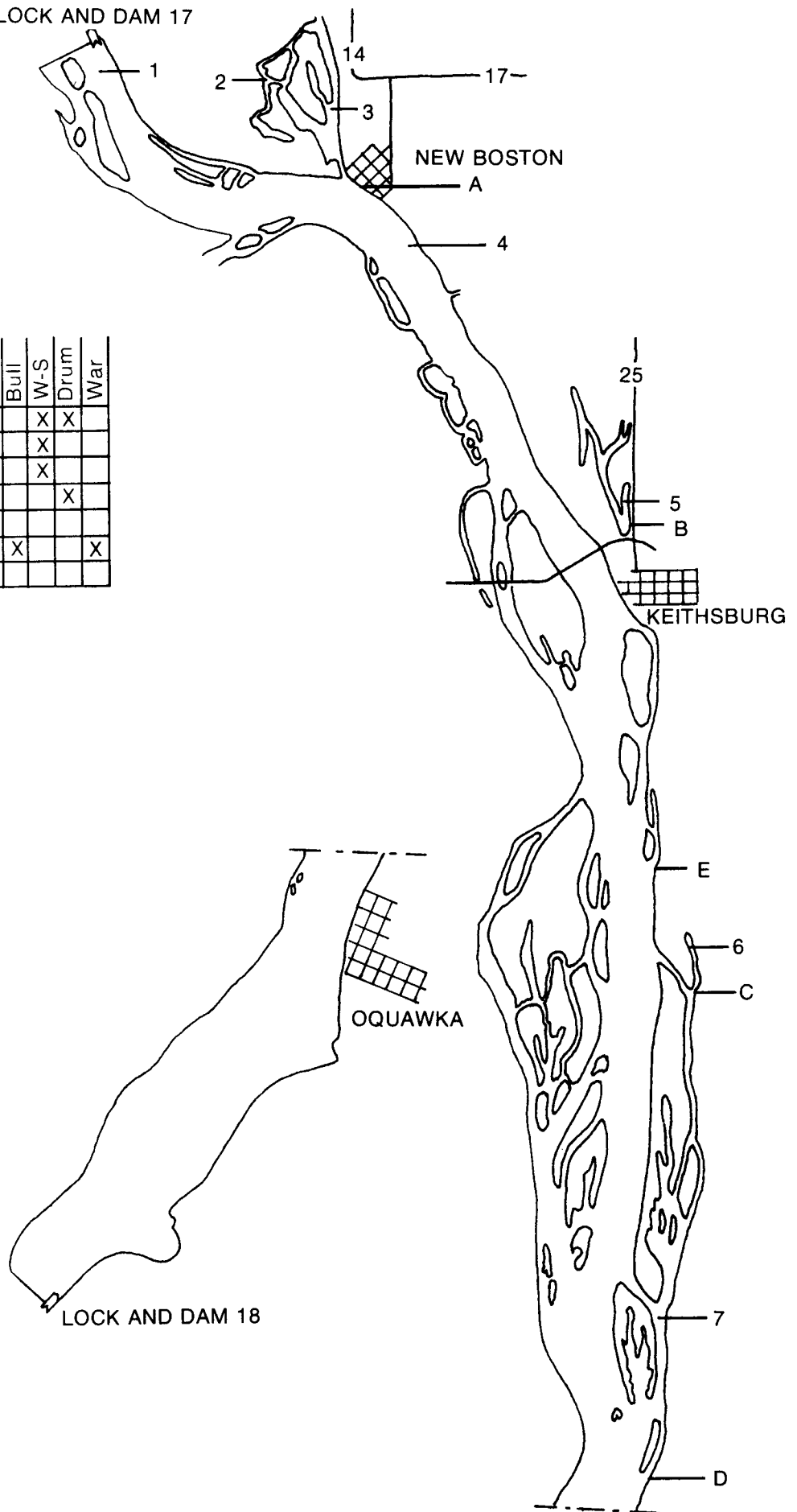
ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Muscatine	X			
B. Blanchard Is.	X	X	X	X
C. Crosses Corner	X			
D. Kilpeck Ldg.	X	X		X
E. Big Timber	X			

LOCK AND DAM 17

POOL 18

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	Bull	W-S	Drum	War
1. tailwater	X			X			X	X	
2. Bell's Pocket	X		X	X	X		X		
3. Boston Bay	X	X	X	X			X		
4. wing dikes				X	X			X	
5. Keithsburg Refuge	X	X	X						
6. Spring Sl.	X	X	X			X			X
7. Benton Ch.	X			X	X				

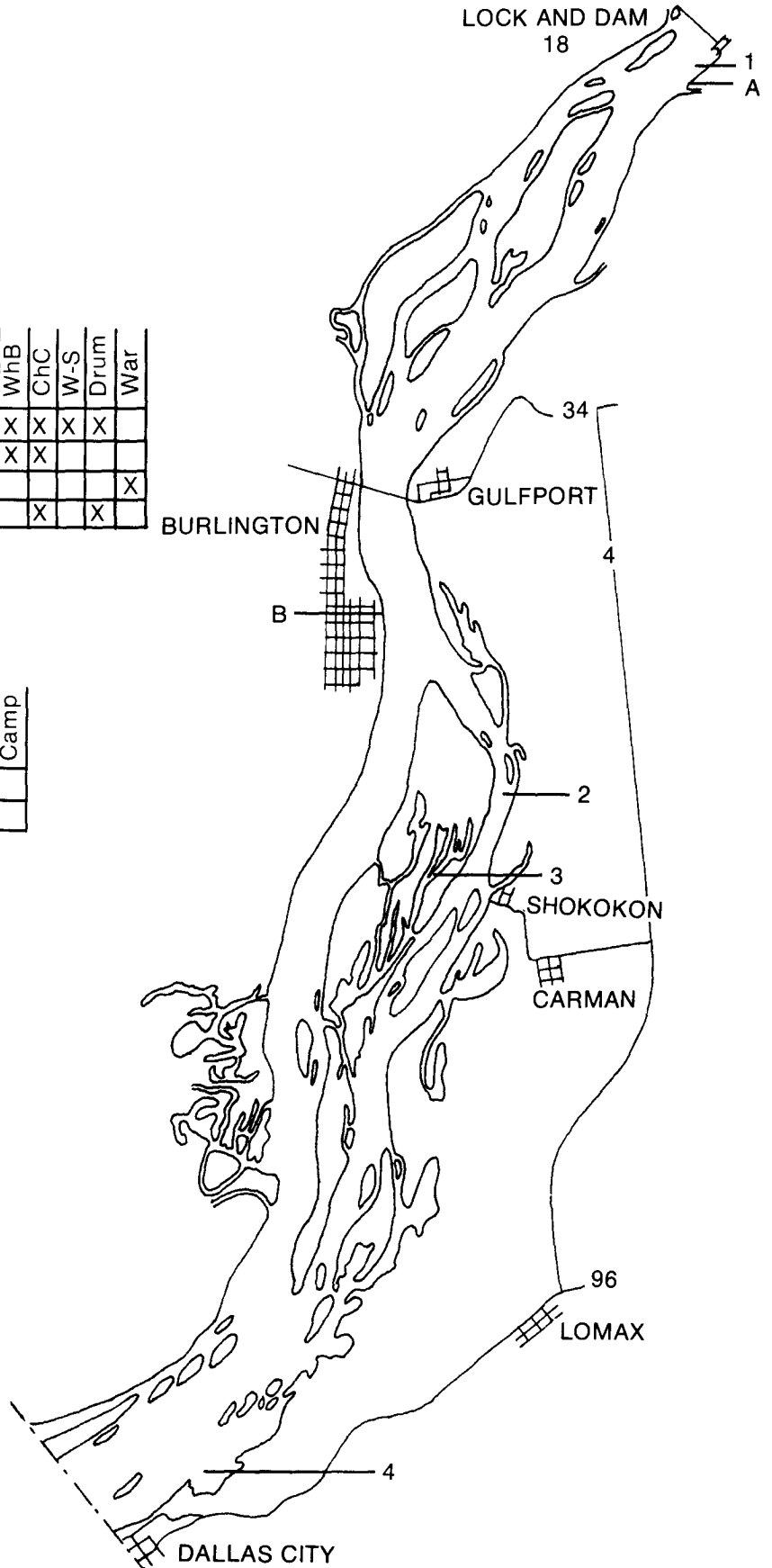
ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. New Boston	X		X	X
B. Keithsburg Refuge	X			
C. Putney's Ldg.	X	X	X	
D. Delabar Pk.	X	X	X	X
E. Big River Forest	X	X	X	X



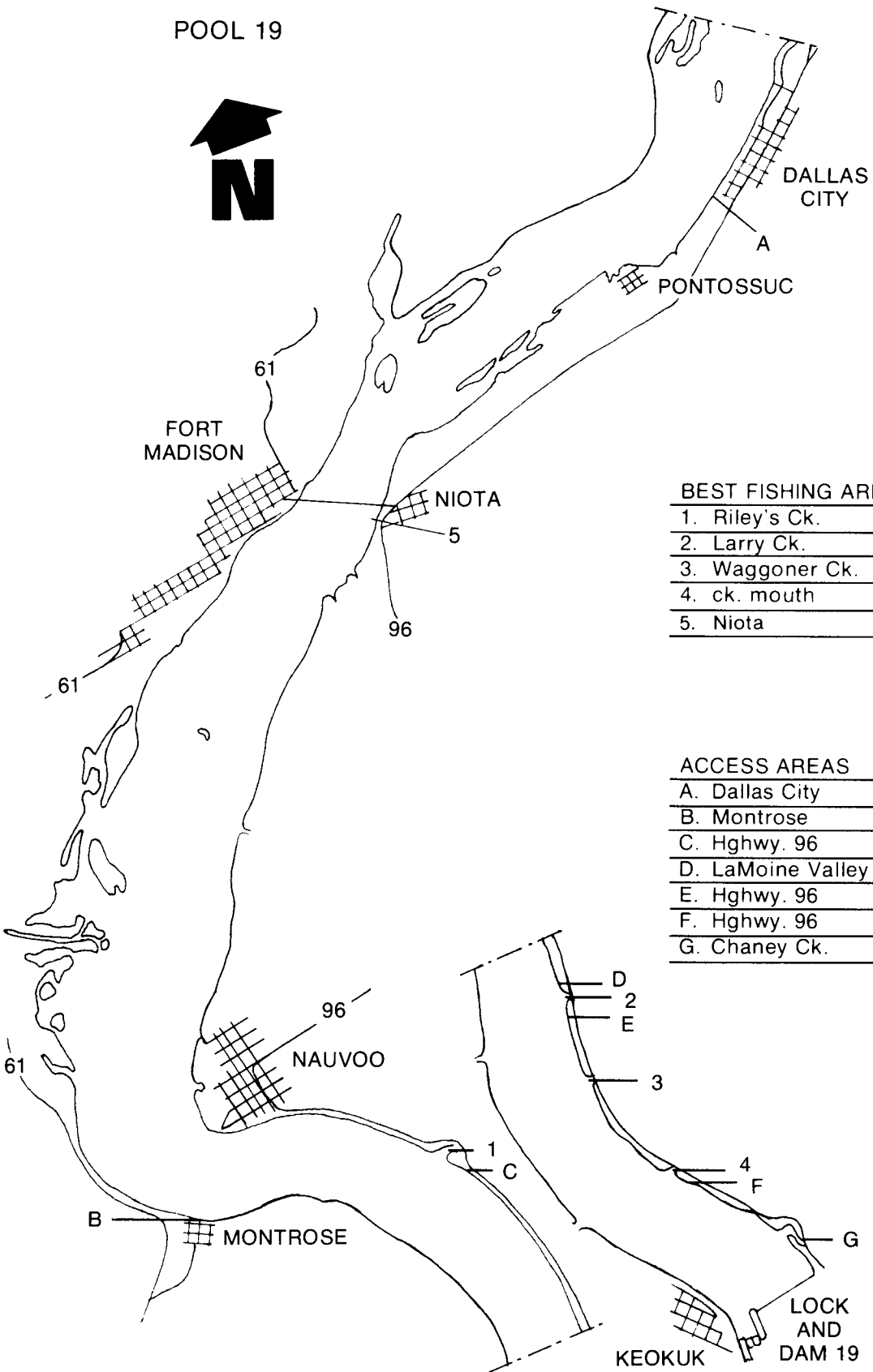
POOL 19

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	W-S	Drum	War
1. tailwater				X	X	X	X	
2. Shokokon Sl.				X	X			
3. Burlington Is.	X	X	X					X
4. Thompson Sl.	X	X		X		X	X	

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Henderson Ck.	X	X	X	
B. Burlington	X		X	

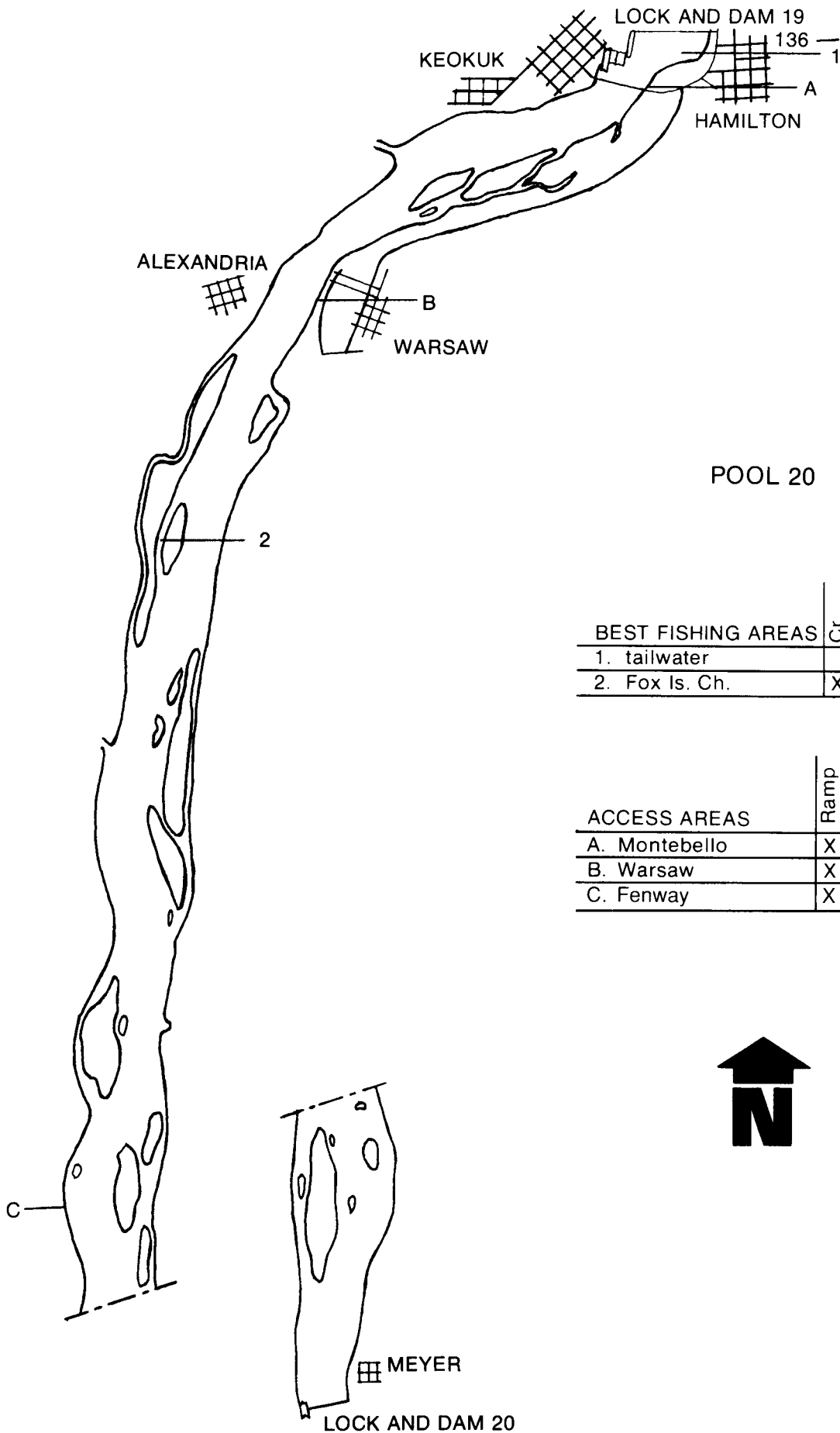


POOL 19



BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	ChC
1. Riley's Ck.	X	X	X
2. Larry Ck.	X	X	
3. Waggoner Ck.	X	X	X
4. ck. mouth		X	X
5. Niota	X	X	

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet
A. Dallas City	X		
B. Montrose	X	X	
C. Hghwy. 96		X	
D. LaMoine Valley	X		X
E. Hghwy. 96		X	
F. Hghwy. 96		X	
G. Chaney Ck.	X	X	X

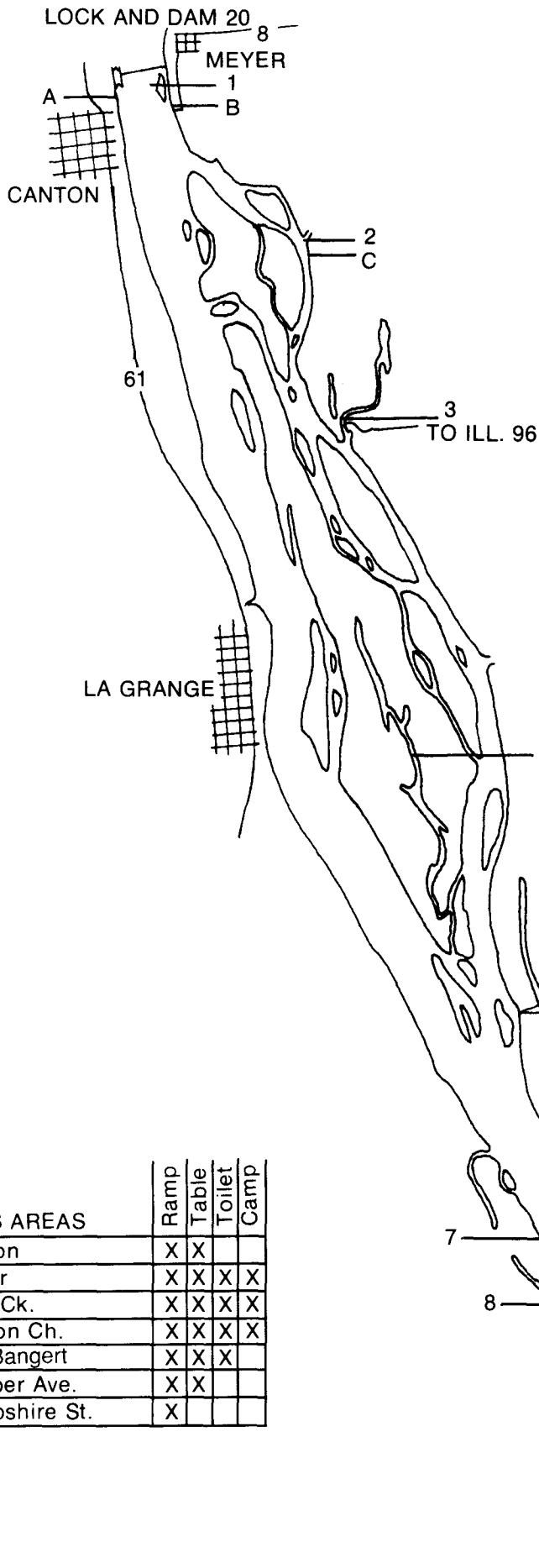


POOL 20

BEST FISHING AREAS	Cr	WhB	ChC	Drum
1. tailwater		X	X	X
2. Fox Is. Ch.	X	X	X	

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Montebello	X			
B. Warsaw	X			
C. Fenway	X	X	X	X





POOL 21

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	W-S
1. tailwater		X		X	X	X
2. Bear Ck.	X	X	X			
3. Corner Sl.		X	X		X	
4. Long Is. L.	X	X	X			
5. Quincy Bay			X	X	X	X
7. Cottonwood Is.	X	X			X	
8. Cotton wood Is. Sl.	X	X	X			
9. slough	X	X	X			



ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Canton	X	X		
B. Meyer	X	X	X	X
C. Bear Ck.	X	X	X	X
D. Canton Ch.	X	X	X	X
E. Bob Bangert	X	X	X	
F. Lumber Ave.	X	X		
G. Hampshire St.	X			

LOCK AND DAM 21

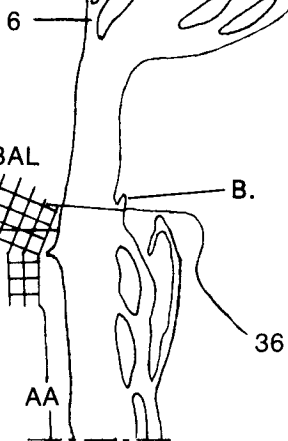
1
A
TO ILL. 57

POOL 22

BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WnB	ChC	W-S
1. tailwater			X	X		X
2. Texas Chute	X	X	X	X	X	
3. Beebe Is. Ch.	X	X	X	X		
4. Whitney Is. Ch.				X	X	
5. Sny Sl.	X	X	X			
6. Glaucus Is. Ch.			X	X		

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Lock 21	X	X	X	
B. John Hay	X	X	X	
C. Hannibal	X	X	X	

TO ILL. 57



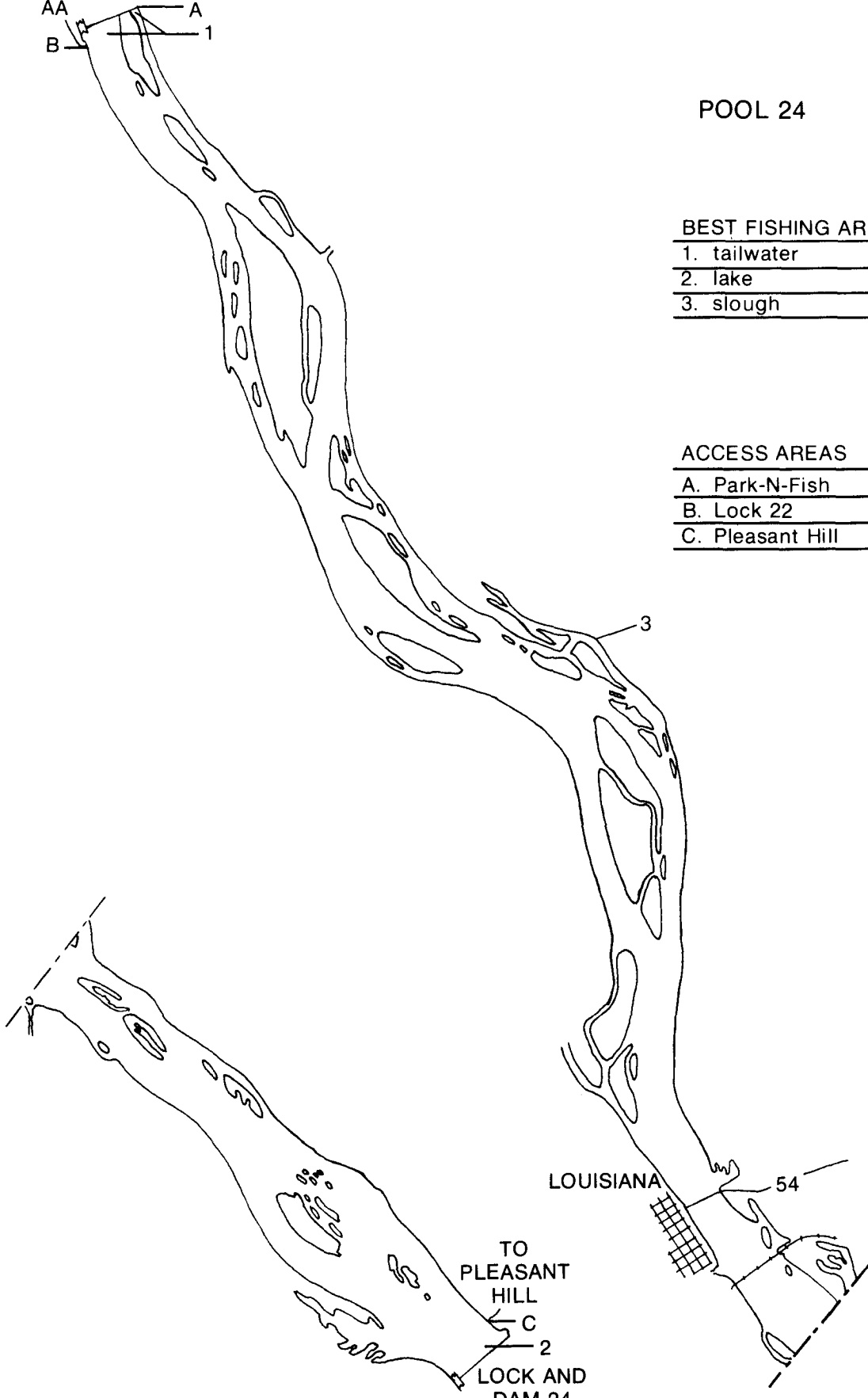
LOCK AND DAM 22

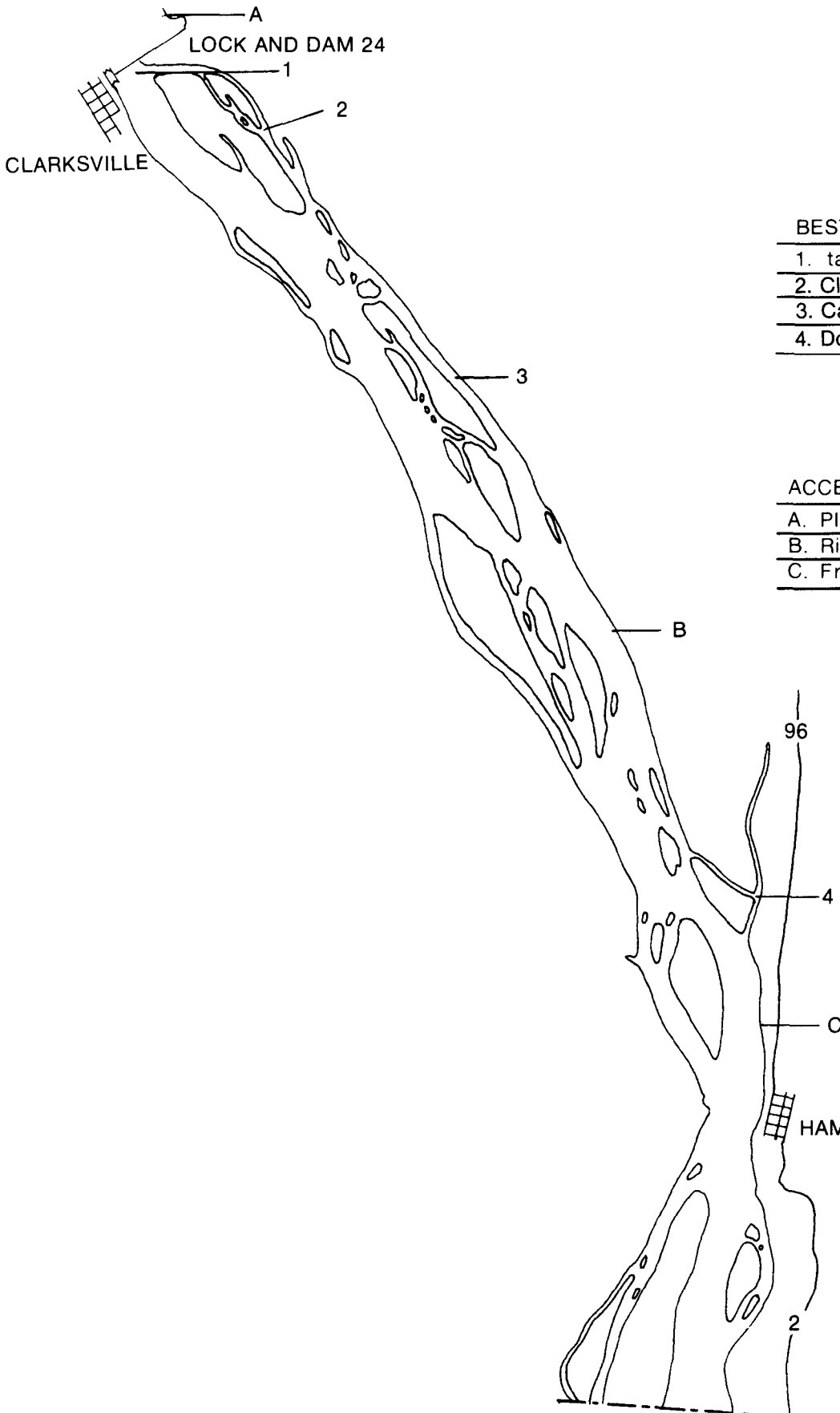
LOCK AND DAM 22
 AA A
 B 1

POOL 24

BEST FISHING AREAS	BG	Cr	WhB	ChC	Drum
1. tailwater	X	X	X	X	X
2. lake	X	X		X	X
3. slough		X		X	X

ACCESS AREAS	Table	Toilet	Camp	Ramp
A. Park-N-Fish	X			
B. Lock 22	X			
C. Pleasant Hill	X	X		X



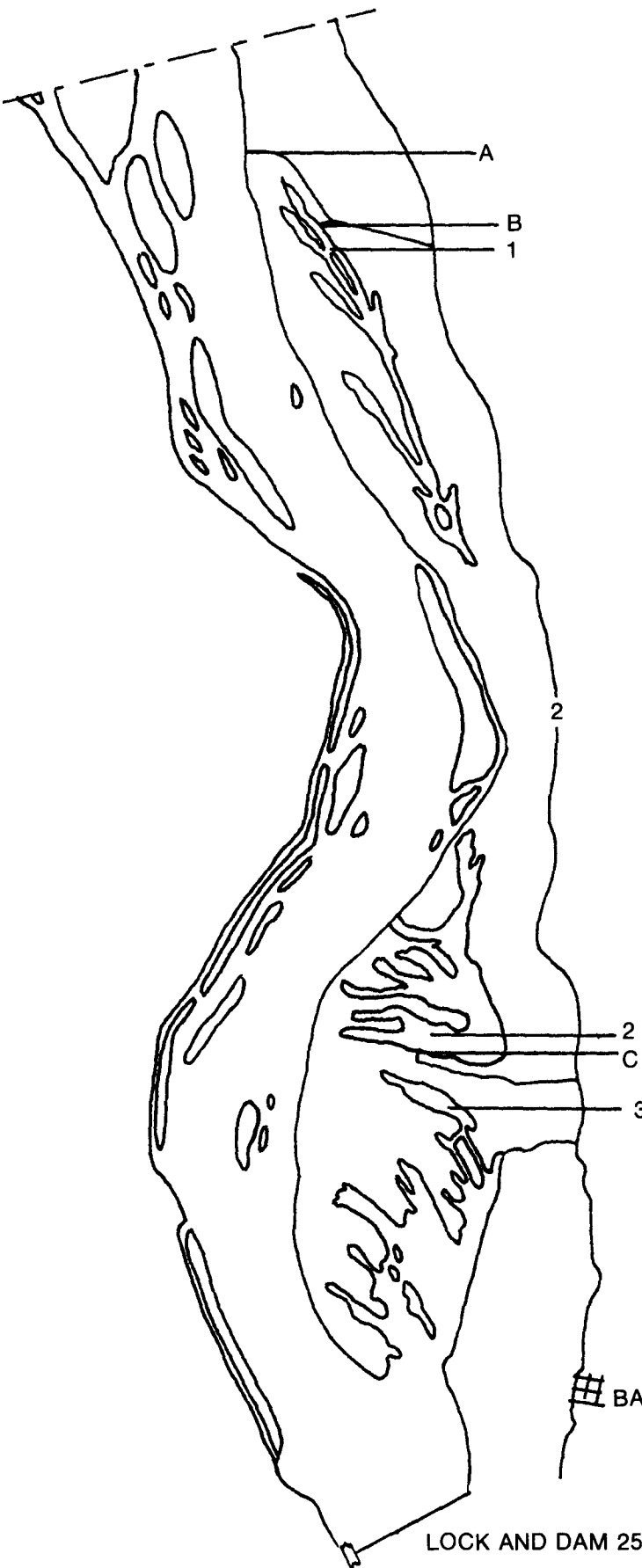


BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	Cr	WhB	ChC	W-S	BG
1. tailwater			X	X	X	
2. Clarksville Ch.	X	X	X	X		
3. Carrol Ch.	X	X	X	X		
4. Dog Island Ch.	X	X				X

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Pleasant Hill	X	X	X	
B. Rip-Rap Ldg.	X	X	X	
C. Frontier Campground	X	X	X	X



POOL 25

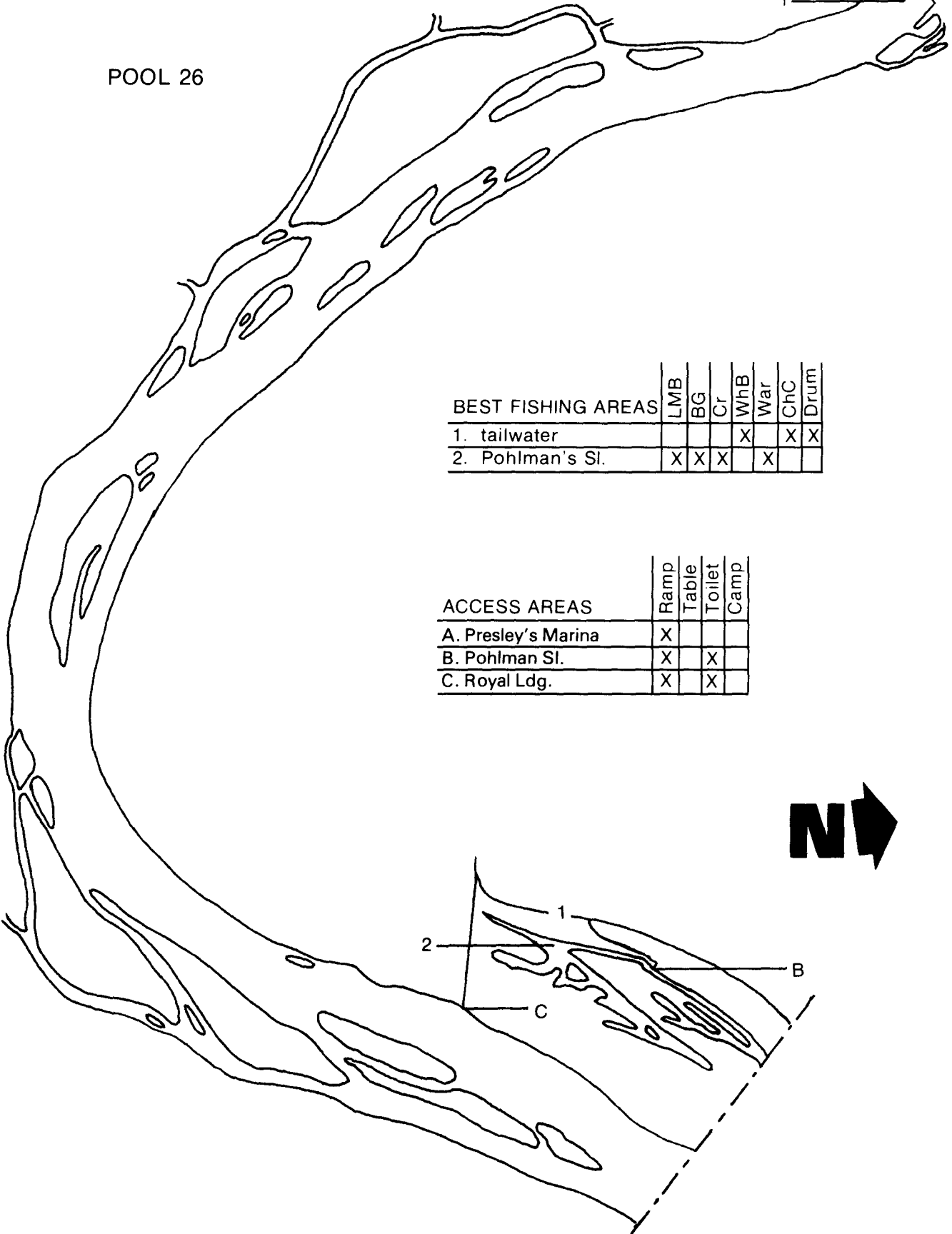


BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	War	ChC
1. Gilead Sl.	X	X	X		
2. Prairie Pd.	X	X	X	X	
3. Dixon Pd.	X	X	X		

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Red's Ldg.	X	X	X	
B. Red's Ldg.	X	X	X	
C. refuge	X			

A
1

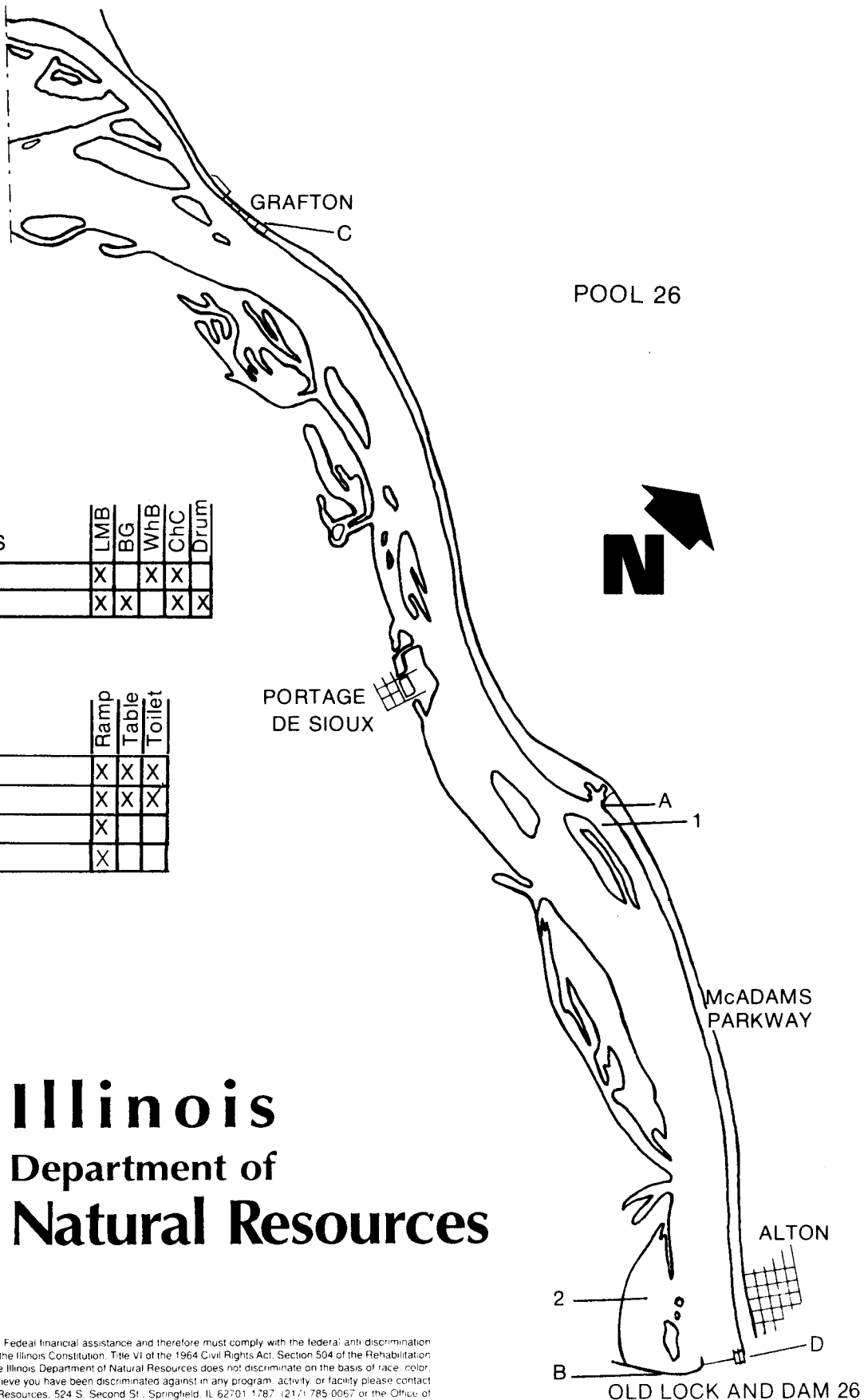
POOL 26



BEST FISHING AREAS	LMB	BG	Cr	WhB	War	ChC	Drum
1. tailwater				X		X	X
2. Pohlman's Sl.	X	X	X		X		

ACCESS AREAS	Ramp	Table	Toilet	Camp
A. Presley's Marina	X			
B. Pohlman Sl.	X	X		
C. Royal Ldg.	X	X		



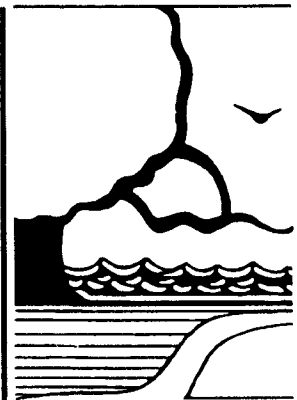


BEST FISHING AREAS

	LMB	BG	WhB	ChC	Drum
1. Piasa Is. Ch.	X		X	X	
2. lake	X	X		X	X

ACCESS AREAS

	Ramp	Table	Toilet
A. Piasa Ck.	X	X	X
B. W. Alton	X	X	X
C. Grafton	X		
D. Alton	X		



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