



CHARLESTON SIDE CHANNEL LAKE (LAKE CHARLESTON) 2016 FISHERIES FACT SHEET



LOCATION: Charleston Side Channel Lake is located approximately three miles southeast of Charleston, just off Rt. 130 in Coles County. The Charleston Lower Channel Lake is the impounded Embarras River.

DESCRIPTION: The lake covers 330 surface acres with a maximum depth of 12 feet and average depth of 5.7 feet. The Charleston Side Channel Lake is the primary water supply for the City of Charleston and is separated from the Embarras River by a dike that provides excellent shoreline access. Recreational opportunities include; fishing and limited boating. Public boat launching facilities are available. There is a no-wake regulation in effect on the entire lake.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: The fish population in Charleston Side Channel Lake is intensively surveyed every two years. The fish are measured, weighed, and scales collected before releasing them alive. Annual evaluations of saugeye, and hybrid striped bass have been made. Saugeye and hybrid striped bass populations have been maintained by annual stockings. Desirable species of aquatic vegetation have been introduced in an attempt to establish populations to improve water quality, reduce shoreline erosion, and provide valuable and necessary fish habitat.

FISHERY STATUS: **Largemouth bass** are moderate in abundance due to a lack of aquatic vegetation for nursery habitat. Improved numbers of bass from 1/2-2 lbs. are present with fish over 6 lbs. caught on occasion. Fishing prospects are rated as fair for 2016.

Crappie, both white and black crappie are abundant. Growth rates vary from slow to fast within this population. Anglers may catch crappie up to 14 inches and 1+ lbs. Fishing prospects are rated as excellent for 2016.

Saugeye (sauger X walleye hybrids) are stocked annually from IDNR hatcheries which has developed a good fishery. Saugeye are abundant from 12 to 26 inches, with fish in excess of 6 lbs. have been caught in the lake annually. Fishing prospects are rated as excellent for 2016.

Hybrid striped bass (striped bass X white bass hybrids) are stocked annually from IDNR hatcheries. Good numbers of hybrid striped bass have been caught in recent years by fishermen. Hybrids in excess of 15 lbs are reported caught and have been collected in fish population surveys. Fishing prospects are rated as good for 2016.

Channel catfish are abundant in the lake. The average catch goes from 3/4 - 2 1/2 lbs., with the occasional fish over 10 pounds caught. Fishing prospects are rated as good for 2016.

Flathead catfish are low in abundance. Fishermen catch a few large flatheads infrequently. Catch and release is encouraged. Fishing prospects are rated as poor for 2016.

Bluegill fishing is fair. Bluegill are abundant, with a few fish exceeding 8 inches. The body condition is good. Fishing prospects are rated as fair - good for 2016.

Common carp are abundant with fish exceeding 8 lbs. Fishing prospects are rated as excellent for 2016.

Freshwater Drum, commonly called drum "perch", are moderately abundant with fish exceeding 5 lbs.

Yellow bass, longear sunfish, green sunfish, warmouth, and yellow bullheads are present, but are seldom harvested by fishermen due to the small size attained by these species.

REGULATIONS: Pole and line fishing only, with no more than two poles allowed per person, with only two hooks or lures per pole. Carp and carpsuckers can be taken by bow and arrow and gigs. All statewide regulations are in effect. There is a no wake regulation in effect on the entire lake.

Species	Daily Creel Limit	Length Limits
Large or Smallmouth Bass	6	14" minimum
Channel Catfish	6	none
Saugeye, walleye, sauger	6	14" minimum
Hybrid striped bass	3	17" minimum
White, black, or hybrid crappie	10	under 10"
- crappie continued	10	10" or larger

COOPERATIVE SPORTSMEN + STRUCTURED HARVEST = OPTIMAL FISHING QUALITY!

Please Remove All Litter!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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