



Pickett Reservoir 2009

Pickett Reservoir is a 384-acre mainstream impoundment of the Nottoway River located within and owned by the Fort Pickett Military Reservation. The reservoir serves as water supply for the town of Blackstone and for the military base. Management activities on the lake are the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The lake provides a warmwater fishery for largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, yellow perch, and channel catfish. Gizzard shad and sunfish species are the primary forage in Pickett Reservoir.

The largemouth bass fishery at Pickett Reservoir is average for a Southside impoundment. The size distribution is good with fish from three to twenty-one inches observed in our spring 2008 electrofishing survey but the density is lower than average for impoundments in this part of Virginia. The population is dominated by fish in the 11-17 inch range which makes for a nice fishery. Very few fish below 10 inches were sampled and few large fish were observed. The numbers of fish larger than 15 inches was greatly improved over previous surveys and density was about normal for Pickett Reservoir. Density of bass at Pickett Reservoir, measured as number of fish sampled per hour, was almost 77 bass/hour in 2008. Average catch rates for Southside reservoirs ranges from 100-150 bass/hour.

Besides largemouth bass, Pickett Reservoir has a good bream fishery as well. Bluegill and redear sunfish are present in the lake in high densities and average sizes. Bluegill density remains very high but no fish over eight inches were sampled in the 2008 survey. The size distribution and numbers of bluegill were very similar in 2001. Most bluegill sampled ranged in size from 4-7 inches and few small fish were detected. Turbid water conditions might have contributed to us not detecting fish smaller than four inches. Redear sunfish, "shellcracker", are also present in Pickett Reservoir. All redear surveyed ranged in size from 5-9 inches with most about seven inches. Density of redear is much lower than bluegill but was still about average for a Piedmont impoundment.

Fort Pickett also has a limited crappie fishery, with both black and white crappie in the reservoir. Most crappie sampled were about eight inches but crappie over 13 inches were present in low numbers. Other fish species of angler interest include channel catfish and very limited numbers of yellow perch (up to 10 inches). The reservoir is also heavily populated by redhorse sucker species.

Overall Pickett Reservoir offers an average fishery for most of the typical warmwater sportfish species. While none is exceptional as a stand-alone fishery, the diversity of species offers anglers of all types an opportunity to catch their favorite species. Bank fishing opportunities exist in several locations around the reservoir and Pickett can be accessed 24 hours a day. There is no boat motor size restriction on Pickett Reservoir, but the speed limit is set at 25 mph. You can reach Pickett Reservoir by traveling west on Route 40 from Blackstone. Turn left onto Route 46 and travel approximately six miles to the reservoir.