

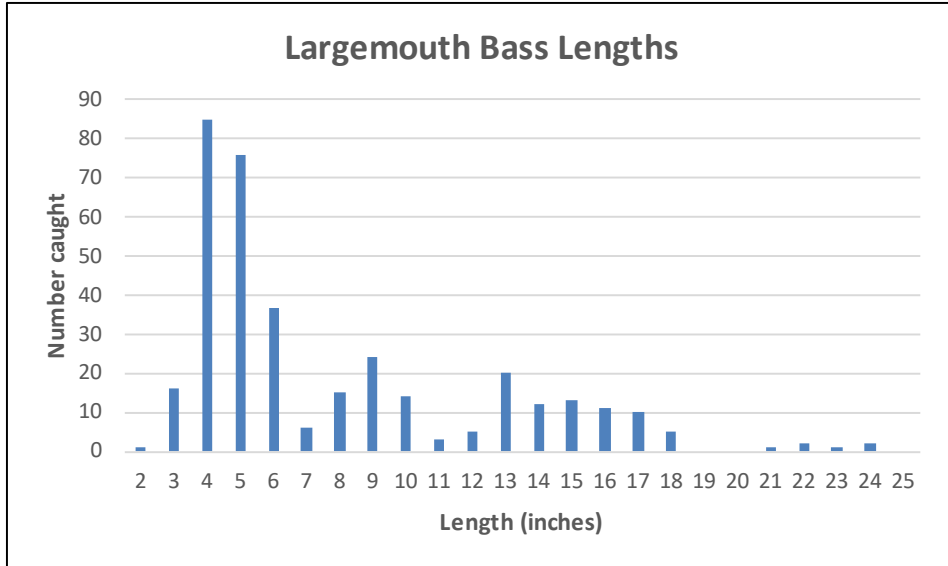


## Lake Conner 2023

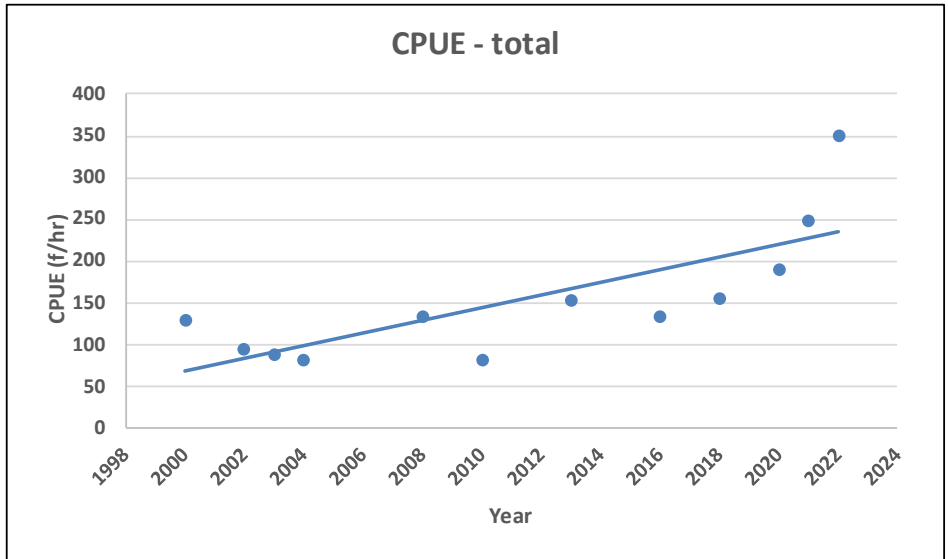
Lake Conner is a 110-acre impoundment in Halifax County, Virginia. The lake is owned and managed by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (VDWR). Located in rural Southside Virginia, Lake Conner offers anglers great fishing opportunities in a picturesque, wooded setting. However, Lake Conner is best known for holding the state record Largemouth Bass (16 pounds-4 ounces) since 1985.

Anglers fishing Lake Conner are likely to catch Largemouth Bass, Channel Catfish, Black Crappie, Bluegill, Redear Sunfish, Chain Pickerel, Yellow Perch, and bullhead catfish. Largemouth Bass harvest is regulated with a “trophy slot limit” of 16-22 inches to try and maintain citation-sized bass in the lake. Experienced anglers pursuing trophy bass will be challenged at Lake Conner, but the lake is also well suited for beginning anglers who are interested in catching fish that aren’t necessarily trophies. Statewide regulations apply to all other species except Channel Catfish which have a 15-inch minimum length limit and eight per day creel limit. Lake Conner is open 24 hours a day and gas motors are not permitted.

For years, Largemouth Bass in Lake Conner were overabundant, but in 1999, the DWR changed the regulation to a 16–22-inch protected slot limit. This limit was designed to increase harvest on younger Largemouth Bass to maintain good growth rates. Additionally, this limit would protect adult Largemouth Bass until they reached trophy or citation size. Sampling over the past several years indicates that the regulation is in fact accomplishing its objective. The abundance of Largemouth Bass in the protected size range (16-22 inches) is excellent and fish over 20 inches were abundant in recent samples. Even though it has been over 30 years since the state record Largemouth Bass was caught, Lake Conner remains one of the best lakes for trophy Largemouth Bass in the state. In 2022, biologists sampled bass over eight pounds and one that weighed in at 9 pounds! Early spring is the best time to catch trophy bass but anglers should also have success during the heat of the summer by fishing early and late in the day.



Biologists track the largemouth population health with an index called catch-per-unit-effort or CPUE. This index is tracked using sampling gear that targets bass and other species while they are close to shore for the spring spawn. Any measure of bass over 100 fish per sample hour (f/hr) is considered good. With total CPUE's above 150 bass per hour and an overall increasing trend in bass abundance since 2000, the bass fishery is in good shape at Conner. With high abundance observed in recent years, biologists will continue to monitor this population to assure that it remains a healthy fishery.



Bluegill, Redear Sunfish (aka shellcracker), and crappie are popular with anglers in Lake Conner. Bluegill and crappie abundance bounces around from year to year but both populations are currently experiencing average abundance. Unfortunately, very few quality size fish of either species were detected in the most recent VDWR samples. Redear Sunfish, commonly called shellcracker, are abundant and tend to be larger than Bluegill. Unfortunately, few quality

shellcracker are currently present in this population. All of the panfish species have up and down cycles so we fully expect a quality fishery to return to Lake Conner. Beginning in late April, anglers should be able to catch a lot of fish as they begin to move into shallow water to spawn. Live bait such as crickets and worms work great on panfish but fly anglers can also be successful throwing popping bugs. Anglers may also find enjoyment with Yellow Perch at Lake Conner although fish rarely exceed 10 inches.

There is a limited Channel Catfish fishery at Lake Conner even though it is stocked annually. However, Lake Conner has an excellent bullhead fishery with many 2-3 pound fish.

Lake Conner has a single lane concrete boat ramp and a large gravel parking lot. Additionally, there are a lot of opportunities for anglers without a boat to fish the shoreline adjacent to the boat ramp as well as the dam. No restroom facilities are available. Lake Conner is located approximately 20 miles north of South Boston, Virginia. From U.S. 360, take Route 746. Turn left on Route 603, then right on Route 619, then right on Route 623 to Route 624.