

District 3 (Jim Walker, Aaron Yeager) – 304-924-6211
163 Wildlife Rd.
French Creek, WV 26218

D3 Reservoirs –

District 3 has 5 large reservoirs all situated along the I-79 corridor in central West Virginia. Stonewall Jackson, Burnsville, Stonecoal, Sutton, and Summersville Lakes.

Stonewall Jackson Reservoir: (Corps. of Engineers) is well known for its largemouth bass population, musky, and panfish. It's a shallow lake and still contains lots of standing timber. The lake is lowered for flood control 6 feet Nov-April but typically is at the summer pool level (recreation pool) by mid-April. Largemouth will be moving from shallow water spawning locations to deeper water as the water temperatures increase. Find areas where shallow water with cover is next to deeper water. Rip rap banks, shallow points, road beds, standing timber as well as trees that have fallen. Creek channels and large mats of hydrilla can be very productive summertime fishing spots. Topwater lures and weedless presentations of soft plastics progressing to faster crankbaits will prove effective in these areas as temperatures increase. Post-spawn bass can tough to fool, but gizzard shad imitations of the correct size will locate actively feeding fish. Musky move to deeper water this time of year as well and head to areas that provide refuge from high surface temperatures. Successful angers troll and cast large plugs, spinners and specialized musky baits. Crappie, perch, bluegill (panfish) this time of year is great. Try beaver huts, blow down trees, bridges, and hydrilla weed mats as water temperature increase. Live bait (minnow on light jig) or small plastic jigs can produce many fish and is a great way to introduce a new angler to the sport of fishing because action can be fast. The tailwaters of this lake can also produce many warmwater gamefish such as bass, yellow perch and crappie. You may be lucky enough to catch a trout that carried over from the spring trout stockings. When streams and rivers are high, tailwaters can be some of the only fishable water. Be sure to take advantage of the good access and parking. Daily lake and tailwater conditions can be obtained by calling the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at: 304-269-4588

Burnsville Reservoir: (Corps. of Engineers) is known for its largemouth, spotted bass, catfish, musky, and panfish. The lake is lowered for flood control 13 feet Nov-April but typically is at the summer pool level (recreation pool) by mid-April. It's a shallow lake and still contains some standing timber. Largemouth will be moving from shallow water spawning locations to deeper water as the water temperatures increase. Find areas where shallow water with cover is next to deeper water. Rip rap banks, deeper downwind sides of shallow points, road beds, standing timber as well as trees that have fallen. Deep areas of cover adjacent to springtime spawning locations can be really productive for summertime bass. Faster moving lures such as soft plastic flukes/worms, crankbaits and topwater lures shine as water temperatures increase. Post-spawn bass will be in 6-14 feet of water as temperatures climb and will be holding to cover near the thermocline. A channel/flathead catfish population is a bonus to Burnsville and fish have been caught in the 20-30 lbs. range. Try live bait on the bottom as temperatures warm up. Musky move to deeper water this time of year as well and head to main lake areas with ambush cover. Successful angers troll and cast large plugs and specialized large musky baits. Crappie, and bluegill (panfish) this time of year is great. Try beaver huts, blow down trees and creek channels as water temperatures increase. Live bait (minnow on light jig) or small plastic jigs can produce many fish and is a great way to introduce a new angler to the sport of fishing because action can be fast. The tailwaters of this lake is also very productive and contains many warmwater gamefish. Discharges above 200cfs in the

tailwaters can be especially good fishing as fish actively pass through the dam. Tailwaters can sometimes be the only fishable water with good access and parking. Daily lake and tailwater conditions can be obtained by calling the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at: 304-853-2371

Stonecoal Reservoir: (First Energy Corp.) is well known for its largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye, musky, and panfish. Stonecoal is a deep lake with a 9.9 hp limit that keeps the lake quiet, resulting in a backcountry feel perfect for canoe or kayak fishing. Largemouth will be moving from shallow water spawning locations to deeper water as the water temperatures increase. Find areas where shallow water with cover is next to deeper water. Rocky banks, deeper downwind areas of shallow points, road beds, submergent vegetation (pondweed/lily pad beds) as well as trees/brush piles that WVDNR Fisheries staff has added. Deeper weed lines in coves can be productive summertime fishing locations. Faster moving lures such as soft plastic worms/flukes, crankbaits and topwater lures are good as temperatures increase. Post-spawn bass will be in 10-15 feet of water as temperatures climb and feeding actively around areas of cover. Walleye like to congregate around the brush piles/felled trees as water temperatures warm. Musky move to deeper water this time of year as well and hold in areas with good ambush cover. Successful anglers troll and cast large plugs and specialized large musky baits. Crappie, perch, bluegill (panfish) this time of year is great. Try upper end of lake (pondweed/lily pads), beaver huts, blow down trees and creek channels as water temperature increase. Live bait (minnow on light jig) or small plastic jigs can produce many fish and is a great way to introduce a new angler to the sport of fishing because action can be fast. Stonecoal Lake Fishing Map can be found here: http://www.wvdnr.gov/Lake_Maps/

Sutton Reservoir: (Corps. of Engineers) is known for its largemouth, spotted and smallmouth bass, and panfish. The lake is lowered for flood control 29 feet Nov-April but typically is at the summer pool level (recreation pool) by mid-April. Sutton is a deep steep-sided lake with lots of rock and blow down shoreline trees. Largemouth will be moving from shallow water spawning locations to deeper water as the water temperatures increase. Find areas where shallow water with cover is next to deeper water. Rip rap banks, deeper downwind sides of shallow points, road beds, standing timber as well as trees that have fallen. Mouths of coves can also be productive springtime bass locations. Faster moving lures such as plastic worms/flukes, crankbaits and topwater lures work well as temperatures increase. Post-spawn bass will also be in 10-15 feet of water as temperatures climb. Smallmouth can be found in rocky shoreline areas near the upper end of lake all the way to the first riffle up the Elk. Crappie, bluegill, and rockbass (panfish) this time of year is great. Try beaver huts, blow down trees, creek channels and weedbeds as water temperature increase. Live bait (minnow on light jig) or small plastic jigs can produce many fish and is a great way to introduce a new angler to the sport of fishing because action can be fast. The tailwaters of this lake also produce many warmwater gamefish (Smallmouth, walleye, musky and panfish). You may be lucky enough to catch a trout that carried over from the spring trout stockings. When streams and rivers are high sometimes the tailwaters are the only fishable water with good access and parking. Daily lake and tailwater conditions can be obtained by calling the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at: 304-765-2816

Summersville lake (Corps. of Engineers) is known for its natural reproducing walleye population, smallmouth bass, and panfish. The lake is lowered for flood control 77 feet Nov-April but typically is at the summer pool level (recreation pool) by mid- April. it's a deep and steep sided lake with lots of rock, blow down shoreline trees, and habitat enhancement structures at various levels. Walleye will be moving to deeper water (30-60 feet) as summer temperatures set in. Try a minnow tipped jig or night crawler slow trolled on a bottom bouncer rig. Trolling small crankbaits are also a very effective method for catching walleye at different depths. Smallmouth will be moving from shallow water spawning locations to deeper water as the temperatures increase. Find areas where shallow water with cover is next to deeper water. Rock drop off banks, deeper downwind sides of shallow points, road beds, as well as habitat structures. Mouths of coves can also be productive summertime bass locations. Try live crawfish or crawfish imitation lures such as plastic worms/flukes, crankbaits and topwater lures as temperatures increase. Post-spawn bass will be in 12-25 feet of water as temperatures climb. Smallmouth can be found throughout the lake in summer. Look for the habitat enhancement structures in Battle Run (entire cove) and McKees Creek (near Marina). Crappie, yellow perch, bluegill, and rockbass (panfish) this time of year is great. Try beaver huts, blow down trees, habitat enhancement structures, and shallow coves as water temperature increase. Live bait (minnow on light jig) or small plastic jigs can produce many fish and is a great way to introduce a new angler to the sport of fishing because action can be fast. Use sonar/electronics to find groups of fish on your screen as well as habitat enhancement locations that will hold fish. The tailwaters of this lake is also stocked with trout February-May and contains many warmwater gamefish as well. When stream and rivers are high sometimes the tailwaters are the only fishable water with good access and parking. Daily lake and tailwater conditions can be obtained by calling the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at: 304-872-3412

D3 Rivers/Streams –

The Elk, Gauley, Little Kanawha, Greenbrier Rivers, and Buckhannon are good summertime fisheries. Focus on the Elk and Gauley for big walleye in early summer around tributaries and riffles. Little Kanawha and Buckhannon are great for musky as the current state record musky came out of the Little Kanawha in spring of 2017. Smallmouth Bass can be found in all the above rivers and summer time is a productive and totally fun time to fish. Anglers should target deep pools near shoals and flats, eddies along the bank, fallen timber from the shore boulders or other current breaks. As the water warms Smallmouth Bass will move from the back of the deep pools to the head of the pools closer to the current. Spawning will occur in shallow areas with sand, gravel and small rocks. Popular lures are jigs, tubes, jerkbaits, crankbaits, spinnerbaits, swimbaits, and crawfish imitations.

District 3 is trout country so visit WVDNR website for daily stream trout stockings. The river flows have been great this year and many trout (as well as golds from the Goldrush stockings) still remain in streams. It is a more peaceful time of year to fish for trout without the big crowds but still plenty of opportunity to catch some fish. A few streams that are included in this are: Cranberry, Shavers Fork, and Greenbrier Rivers to name a few. Please check the website for complete listing. <https://commerce.wv.gov/goldrush>

D3 Impoundments

District 3 has 12 small impoundments scattered around an 8-county region. Most all of them have good bass populations, channel catfish, and excellent panfish opportunities. Anglers can find Largemouth

Bass around cover in the form of fallen trees, beaver huts, submerged timber, stumps, points, weedmats and riprap. Several of these impoundments are stocked with trout and surprisingly the warmwater fish populations are often overlooked but can produce bass in the 7 lbs. range. During the post-spawn find deeper areas near woody structures. Try soft plastics, crankbaits, and topwater as water temps. warm. Good population of crappie and bluegills with some larger-than-average-sized fish are found in several small impoundments, most notably Big Ditch and Wallback Lakes. Find structures like stumps and submerged timber. Use small jigs, minnow imitations, night crawlers, and wax worms. Bluegills will move to deeper areas near submerged cover/weeds.

Catchable catfish will be stocked the first week of June in 8 small impoundments: Big Ditch, Camp Caesar, French Creek, Handley, Indian Rock, Seneca, Wallback, and Watoga lakes.