Summary Report of Black Bass Fishing Contests Held in California During 2013

Lake and Reservoir Management & Research Project

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Introduction

Fishing contests represent an important component of recreational fishing in California, and typically include tournaments and derbies. Black bass tournaments represented 91% of all fishing contests held in California in 2013; therefore this report focuses on the black bass subset.

According to Southwick Associates (2011), U.S. bass anglers spend approximately $9 billion annually on boats, tackle, traveling, renting gear, and other trip-related expenses (based on the USFWS 2006 National Survey on Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation). This equates to $243.43/bass angler. The same national survey indicated that 328,000 state residents targeted black bass in California in 2006 (DOI and DOC 2007). Therefore, California black bass anglers spent an estimated $80 million pursuing bass that year. Although rough, this may help put into perspective the socioeconomic value of bass angling in the state.

Note that this includes *all* black bass anglers, as California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) does not currently collect data identifying "tournament" anglers.

History of Fishing Contest Management

Beginning in 1975, organizers offering prizes or other inducements for the taking of sport fish in any California water were required to obtain a fishing contest permit from the CDFW. Since 1985, organizers have been required to submit a "Fishing Contest Report" to the CDFW detailing the results of each permitted contest. In 1990, in an effort to gather more data, regulations were established that provided two types of contests, "Event" and "Annual." An "Event" type contest permit is designed to regulate large fishing contests often run by commercial organizations. The "Annual" type contest permit is designed to gather data from smaller organized contests, such as those offered by bass clubs or individuals.

Permitting Process

An "Event" type permit is required for contests in which more than 50 anglers will participate or the sponsor is offering $1,000 or more in prizes or other inducements. An "Event" contest targeting black bass may not exceed 3 days duration, and no more than one "Event" type contest may be held on any water on the same day with the exception of the Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta (Delta). On the Delta, up to 3 "Event" permits may be issued per day as long as only one weigh-in location appears in each of the following counties: San Joaquin, Contra Costa, and Sacramento.

An "Annual" type permit is required for contests with 50 or fewer participants and the sponsor is offering less than $1,000 in prizes or other inducements. Up to 12 individual contests may appear on each "Annual" type permit, and there is no limit to the number of "Annual" type permits that can be issued for each date and/or water.

Reporting Requirement

For each permit issued, the organizer is required to complete and return a "Fishing Contest Report" form to the CDFW within 30 days of the conclusion of each contest. Report compliance has varied from year to year - averaging about 60%. Beginning in 2007, in an effort to improve compliance, the CDFW began sending a "Letter of Notice" to organizers that specific contest reports were delinquent. In late 2008, CDFW improved reporting procedures by developing a writeable PDF form and e-mail submission procedures.

Future of Fishing Contest Management

Fishing contests can put intense fishing pressure on black bass fisheries. Continued management is essential to ensure fishery health while maintaining and improving recreational fisheries. Management includes activities implemented by CDFW, water control agencies, property or marina managers, fishing contest sponsors, and the anglers.

CDFW does its part by:

- Approving or denying permits to hold fishing contests according to regulations
- Rescinding permits of non-compliant sponsors
- Monitoring fishing contests with an observer
- Responding to angler inquiries and concerns regarding tournaments
- Assessing the effects of fishing contests on the fishery, including poor fish care, barotrauma incidence, and mortality rates

Tournament organizations can do their part as a sponsor by:

- Enforcing proper fish care by participants in your contest
- Following the livewell guidelines provided (See "Additional Resources")
- Informing your participants of unique conditions at any water, such as the presence of protected aquatic species, areas off limits to fishing, or non-standard length or bag limits
- Communicating with the local marina, water control agency, or property owner to ensure you have the appropriate permits and permissions
- Enforcing any aquatic invasive guidelines for all boats, such as quagga mussel inspections, and ensuring your participants are aware of any required inspections
- Filing your tournament reports in a timely manner.

Anglers can do their part by:

- Taking the best care of your fish possible at all points during the tournament. Remember, high mortality rates don't just hurt your performance in the tournament; they hurt the fishery. The loss of large fish from the population reduces not only their density (and your catch rates), but also reduces the spawning potential of the population. Big females produce far more eggs than small females.
- Following the livewell guidelines provided (See "Additional Resources")
- Following directions from sponsors during weigh-ins
- Respecting the special conditions identified for bass tournaments (See "Additional Resources")
- Following all guidelines and regulations for aquatic invasive species and protected species

Permits Issued

In 2013, a total of 1,798 permits were issued to sponsors offering prizes for the taking of game fish in California. Of those permits, 1,634 were issued for tournaments targeting black bass. Not all permitted contests were held since some contests were cancelled. In 2013, 72% of all black bass fishing contest reports were submitted and used in the analysis described in this report (Figure 1).

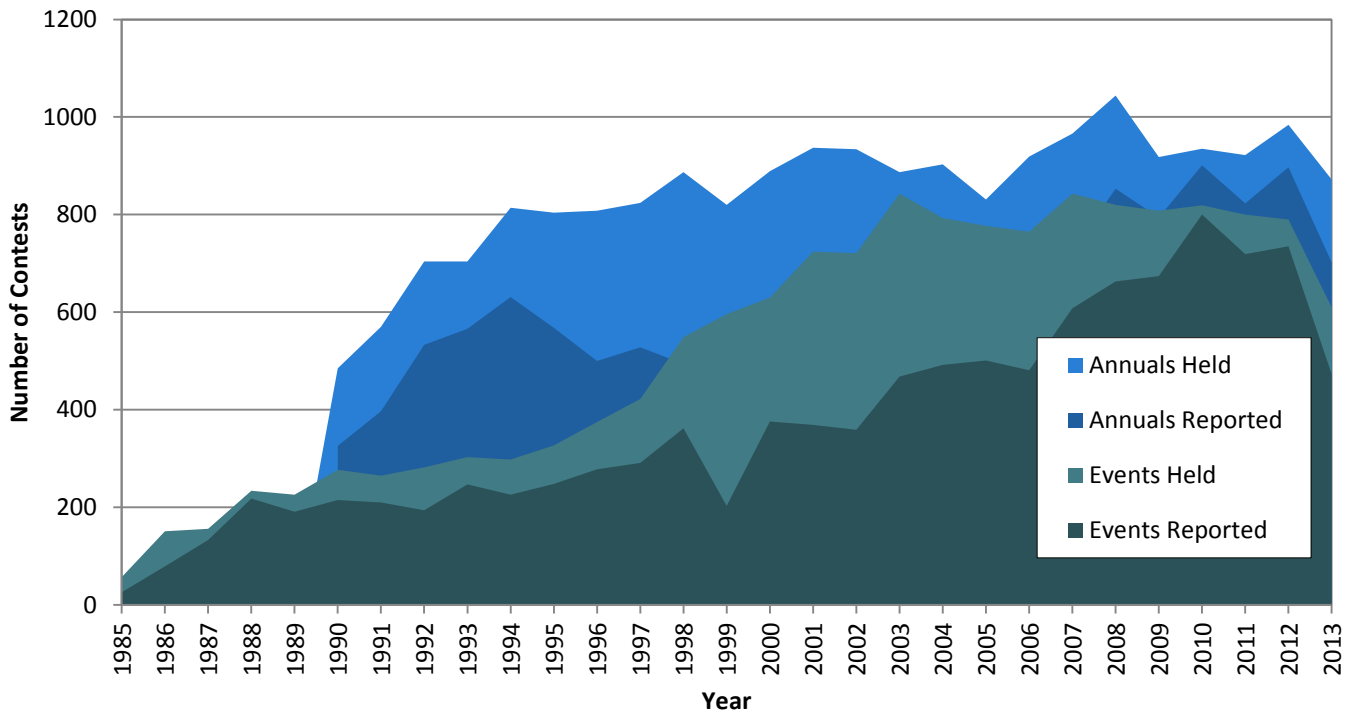

Figure 1. Number of fishing contests permitted and subsequently reported from 1985-2013 by type.

A total of 659 "Event" type fishing contests were permitted in 2013, of which 522 contests submitted complete reports. This represents a decrease from the number of contests permitted in 2012 (

Table 1). Because 50 contests were cancelled or excluded for various reasons, a total of 472 "Event" type black bass contests were actually reported and held.

A total of 975 "Annual" type contests were permitted in 2013, of which 806 submitted completed reports. The number of "Annual" type contests permitted in 2013 represents a slight decrease from the previous year but still remains above the long-term average (

Table 2). Because 104 contests were cancelled, a total of 702 “Annual” type contests were actually reported and held.

The number of “Annual” contests permitted has remained fairly consistent for the last five years. The number of “Event” contests dropped significantly in 2013 and was the lowest since 2000.

Table 1. Number of "Event" type bass fishing contests permitted annually from 1985-2013.

Year	Number of Contests	Year	Number of Contests	Year	Number of Contests	Year	Number of Contests
---	---	1990	277	2000	630	2010	819
---	---	1991	265	2001	724	2011	800
---	---	1992	282	2002	721	2012	790
---	---	1993	303	2003	843	2013	659
---	---	1994	298	2004	793		
1985	57	1995	327	2005	777		
1986	151	1996	375	2006	765		
1987	156	1997	422	2007	843		
1988	234	1998	549	2008	820		
1989	226	1999	596	2009	808		

Table 2. Number of "Annual" type bass fishing contests permitted annually from 1985-2013.

Year	Number of Contests	Year	Number of Contests	Year	Number of Contests	Year	Number of Contests
---	---	1990	485	2000	889	2010	935
---	---	1991	570	2001	937	2011	922
---	---	1992	704	2002	934	2012	984
---	---	1993	704	2003	887	2013	975
---	---	1994	814	2004	903		
1985	---	1995	804	2005	831		
1986	---	1996	808	2006	919		
1987	---	1997	824	2007	966		
1988	---	1998	887	2008	1,044		
1989	---	1999	820	2009	918		

Participation

Overall participation decreased from last year. The number of participants dropped 20% from 2012 for "Event" type contests and 6% for "Annual" type contests (*Figure 2*). Participation by anglers in "Event" type contests has declined by about 38% since 2007.

The average number of anglers participating in a tournament has generally decreased for "Event" type contests since 2000, whereas the average participation for "Annual" type contests has remained stable (*Figure 3*). There was a peak in "Event" type participation rates in 2007, but it has since dropped to about 50 anglers per tournament. The largest contest attracted 360 anglers, while the smallest contest attracted 2 anglers.

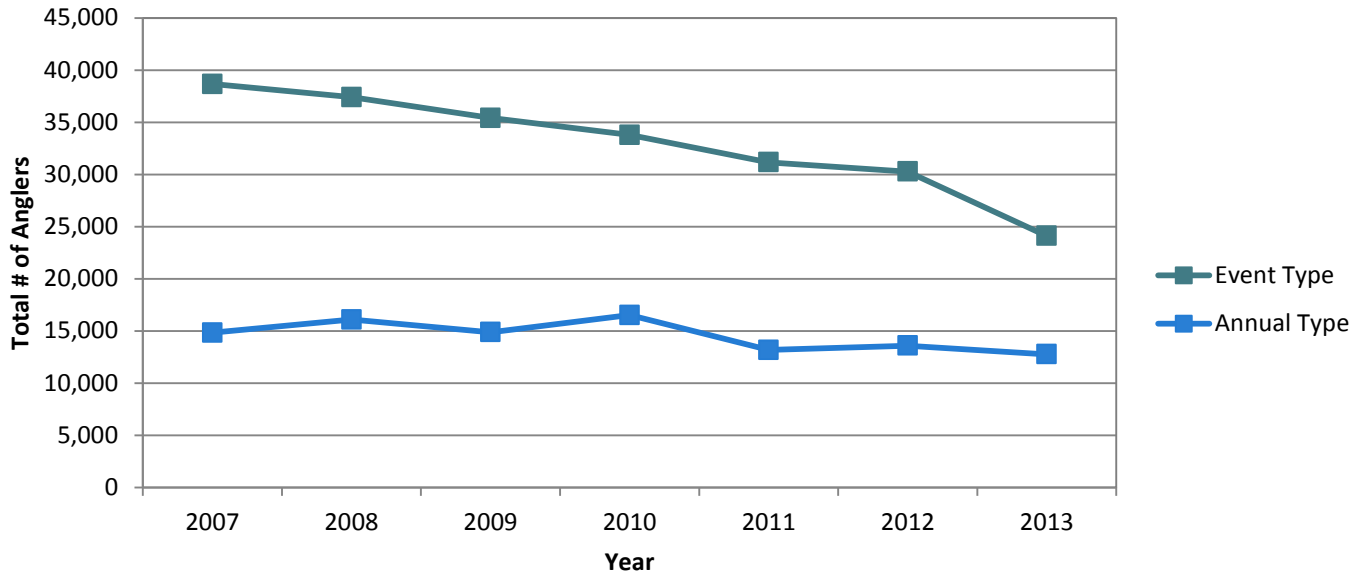

Figure 2. Total number of participants in black bass fishing contests from 2007-2013.

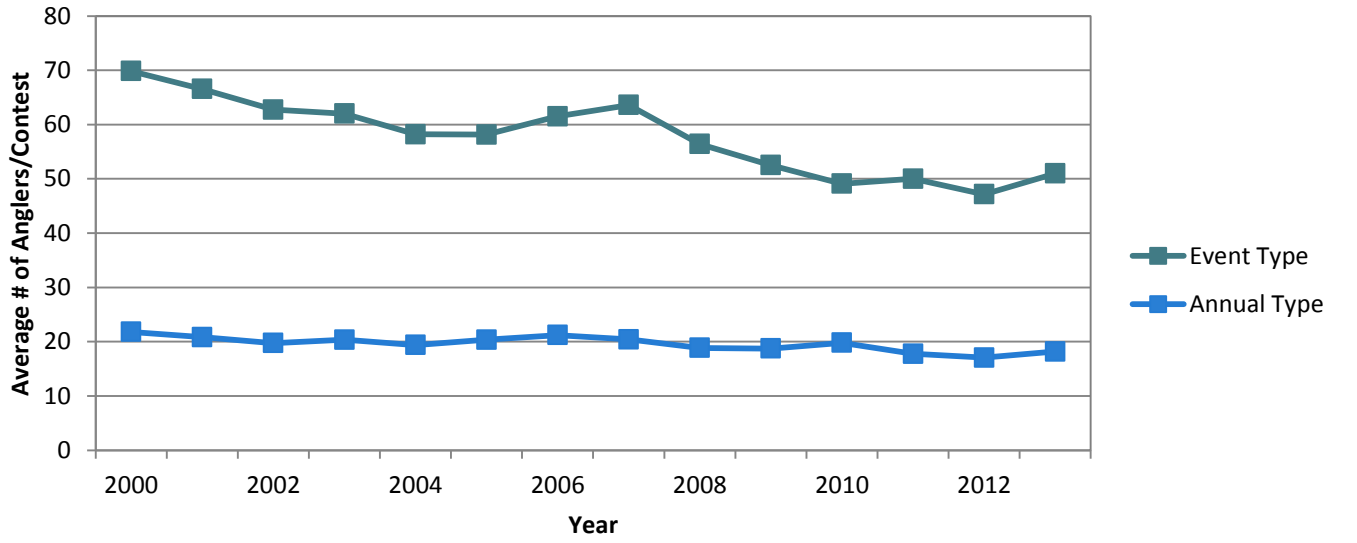

Figure 3. Average number of participants per contest from 2000-2013.

Fishing Locations

"Event" type fishing contests were held on 50 different waters throughout California (*Table 3*). In northern California, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta held the most tournaments of any water body, but up to 3 contests may be permitted on the Delta each day. For locations where only one "Event" type permit was permitted each day, Clear Lake was the most popular location in northern California, while El Capitan Lake was the most popular location in southern California. A total of 702 "Annual" type fishing contests were held on 66 different waters throughout California (*Table 4*). Again, the greatest number of "Annual" type tournaments was held on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, while Clear Lake was also a very popular tournament location. In the southern portion of the state, Lower Otay Lake and Lake Piru were the most popular waters.

Table 3. Location and number of "Event" type contests targeting bass in 2013.

Water	# Contests	Water	# Contests
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta	84	Pyramid Lake	5
Clear Lake (Lake County)	37	Casitas Lake	4
Lake McClure	33	Castaic Lagoon	4
Lake Oroville	30	Lake Piru	4
El Capitan Lake (San Diego County)	23	Silverwood Lake	4
Don Pedro Reservoir	20	Lake Sonoma	4
Diamond Valley Lake	17	Lake Almanor	3
Isabella Lake	15	Camanche Reservoir	3
Lake Kaweah	15	Hensley Lake	3
H. V. Eastman Lake	14	New Melones Lake	3
Castaic Lake	13	Black Butte Lake (Glenn County)	2
Lake Success	12	Colorado River (Riverside County)	2
Lake Berryessa	11	Coyote Lake (Santa Clara County)	2
Lake Hodges	11	East Park Reservoir	2
Perris Reservoir	11	Folsom Lake	2
Pine Flat Lake	9	Ruth Lake (Trinity County)	2
Shasta Lake	9	Bass Lake (Madera County)	1
Lopez Lake	7	Camp Far West (Yuba County)	1
Lower Otay Lake	7	Lake Havasu	1
San Antonio Lake	7	Iron Gate Reservoir	1
Santa Margarita Lake	7	New Bullards Bar Reservoir	1
Big Bear Lake (San Bernardino County)	6	Pardee Reservoir	1
Millerton Lake (Fresno County)	6	Lake Pillsbury	1
Lake Cachuma	5	Skinner Reservoir	1
Lake Nacimiento	5	Lake Sutherland	1

Table 4. Location and number of "Annual" type contests targeting bass in 2013.

Water	# Contests	Water	# Contests
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta	118	Colorado River (Riverside County)	4
Clear Lake (Lake County)	66	New Hogan Lake	4
Shasta Lake	50	Vail Lake	4
Lake Berryessa	31	Whiskeytown Lake	4
Lake Oroville	24	Bass Lake (Madera County)	3
Don Pedro Reservoir	22	Lake Britton	3
Lower Otay Lake	20	Castaic Lake	3
Lake Piru	20	Iron Gate Reservoir	3
El Capitan Lake (San Diego County)	18	Salt Springs	3
Tulloch Reservoir (Tuolumne County)	18	Silverwood Lake	3
Casitas Lake	17	Stony Gorge Reservoir	3
Lake Nacimiento	17	Thermalito Afterbay	3
Camanche Reservoir	15	Antelope Lake	2
Pyramid Lake	14	Big Lake (Shasta County)	2
Lake Almanor	12	Black Butte Lake	2
Cachuma, Lake	12	Butt Valley Reservoir	2
Perris Reservoir	12	Camp Far West (Placer County)	2
Pine Flat Lake	12	Hogan Lake	2
Diamond Valley Lake	11	Lake Mendocino	2
Folsom Lake	10	Murray Reservoir	2
Lopez Lake	10	Skinner Reservoir	2
New Bullards Bar Reservoir	10	Walker Lake	2
New Melones Lake	10	Bullard Basin Creek	1
Sonoma, Lake	10	Camp Far West (Yuba County)	1
Castaic Lagoon	9	Lake Elsinore	1
McClure, Lake	9	Irvine Lake	1
Pardee Reservoir	9	Jenkinson Lake	1
Havasu, Lake	8	Martinez Reservoir	1
San Antonio Lake	8	Merle Collins Reservoir	1
Trinity Lake	8	Parker Dam Reservoir	1
Amador, Lake	7	Scotts Flat Reservoir	1
Hodges, Lake	7	Shastina Reservoir	1
Santa Margarita Lake	7	Stampede Reservoir	1

Timing

On average, 98 fishing contests targeting bass were held statewide each month in 2013. During April, the most popular month for bass contests, there were 159 contests held throughout the state. Spring is the preferred time for tournament fishermen to target bass because the fish have typically moved up into the shallow water and feed aggressively in preparation for spawning. Since most contests are held on either Saturday or Sunday, there were approximately 20 fishing contests held each weekend day during the month of April.

On average, 39 "Event" type contests were held each month throughout the state. The lowest number of contests per month was during the month of December (*Figure 4*). Fishing contests peaked during April. This year, fall was the least popular season for contests. Fewer sponsors avoided the period from June 15th – September 15th than in the past, a trend related to the 6-hour rule. This rule limits time between blast off and the first weigh-in, not to exceed six hours in duration during the peak of summer. The 6-hour rule was implemented to help protect fish health.

For "Annual" type fishing contests, organizers conducted an average of 59 tournaments each month (*Figure 5*). April was the most popular month to hold a tournament with 89 contests held that month statewide. The 6-hour rule did not seem to deter organizers of "Annual" type contests either, as 136 contests were held between June 15th and September 15th. December was the least desirable month for sponsors of "Annual" type permits.

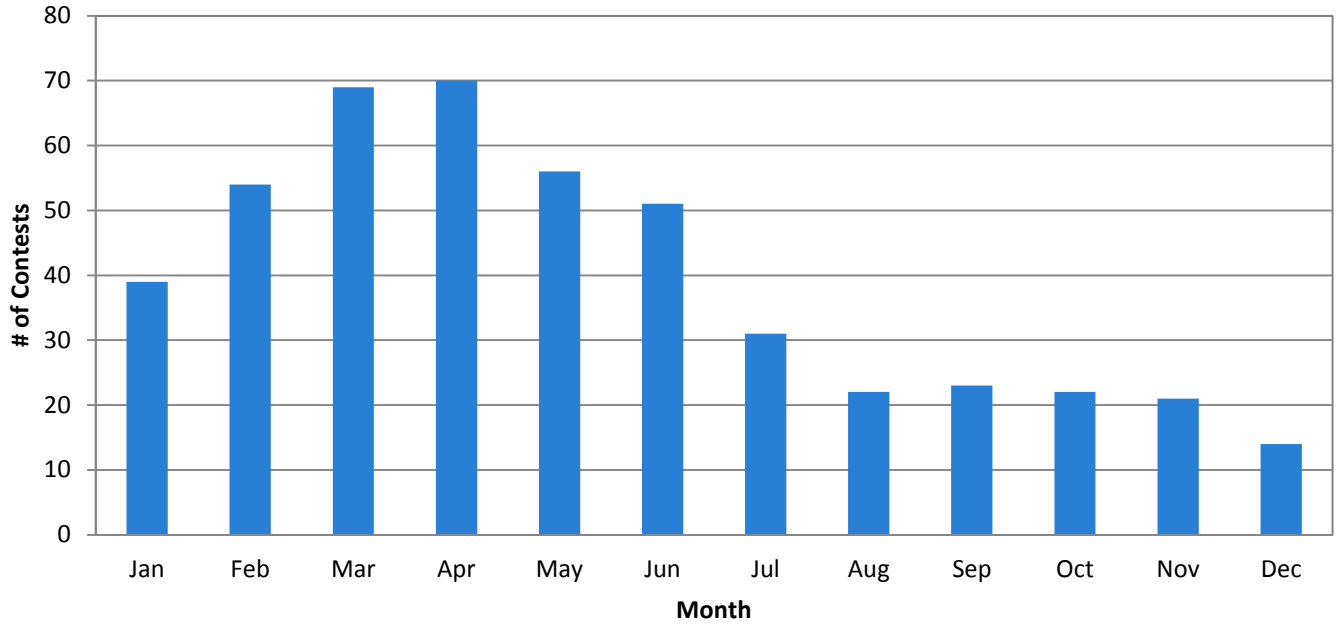

Figure 4. Monthly distribution of "Event" type fishing contests targeting bass in 2013.

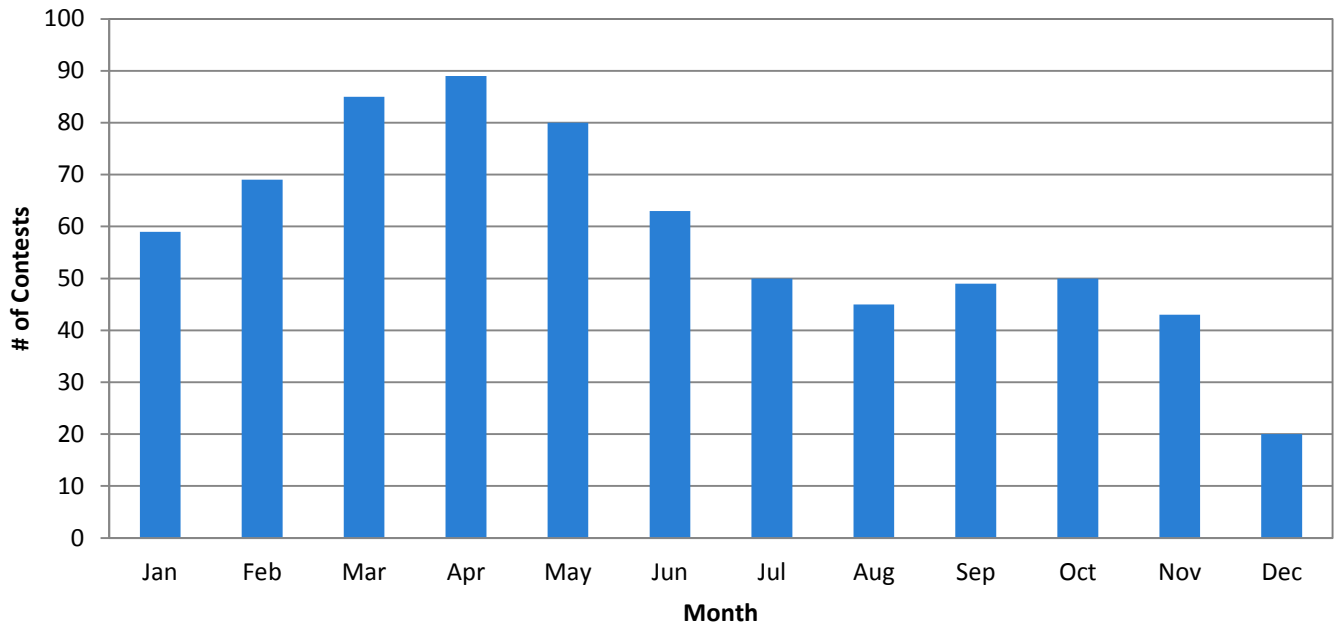

Figure 5. Monthly distribution of "Annual" type fishing contests targeting bass in 2013.

Total Catch

A total of 97,195 bass were reported caught in fishing contests in 2013. This is for all species combined – largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass – because organizers seldom separated catch by species in fishing contest reports. This represents a 15% decrease compared to total catch reported in 2012, and a 7% decrease in the 5-year average (*Figure 6*).

By contest type, organizers of "Event" type contests reported a total catch of 63,997 black bass (*Table 5*). This represents a 17% decrease in total catch from that reported in 2012. For "Annual" type contests, organizers reported a total catch of 33,198 black bass (

Table 6). This represents an 11% decrease in total catch from that reported in 2012 for "Annual" contest types.

Table 5. Total number of bass caught in "Event" type fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Total Catch	Year	Total Catch	Year	Total Catch	Year	Total Catch
---	---	1990	44,602	2000	61,868	2010	81,248
---	---	1991	34,099	2001	56,458	2011	76,421
---	---	1992	39,166	2002	52,951	2012	76,765
---	---	1993	47,321	2003	68,895	2013	63,997
---	---	1994	53,645	2004	81,715		
1985	6,011	1995	50,095	2005	71,441		
1986	15,663	1996	55,571	2006	78,475		
1987	32,807	1997	60,874	2007	119,436		
1988	36,437	1998	64,930	2008	100,675		
1989	32,109	1999	33,755	2009	90,668		

Table 6. Total number of bass caught in "Annual" type fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Total Catch	Year	Total Catch	Year	Total Catch	Year	Total Catch
---	---	1990	12,170	2000	22,224	2010	38,349
---	---	1991	12,600	2001	24,624	2011	32,458
---	---	1992	21,510	2002	22,683	2012	37,385
---	---	1993	25,715	2003	24,363	2013	33,198
---	---	1994	35,125	2004	29,685		
1985	---	1995	28,882	2005	24,815		
1986	---	1996	28,138	2006	34,148		
1987	---	1997	31,013	2007	44,403		
1988	---	1998	26,291	2008	39,537		

1989	---	1999	5,452	2009	35,801

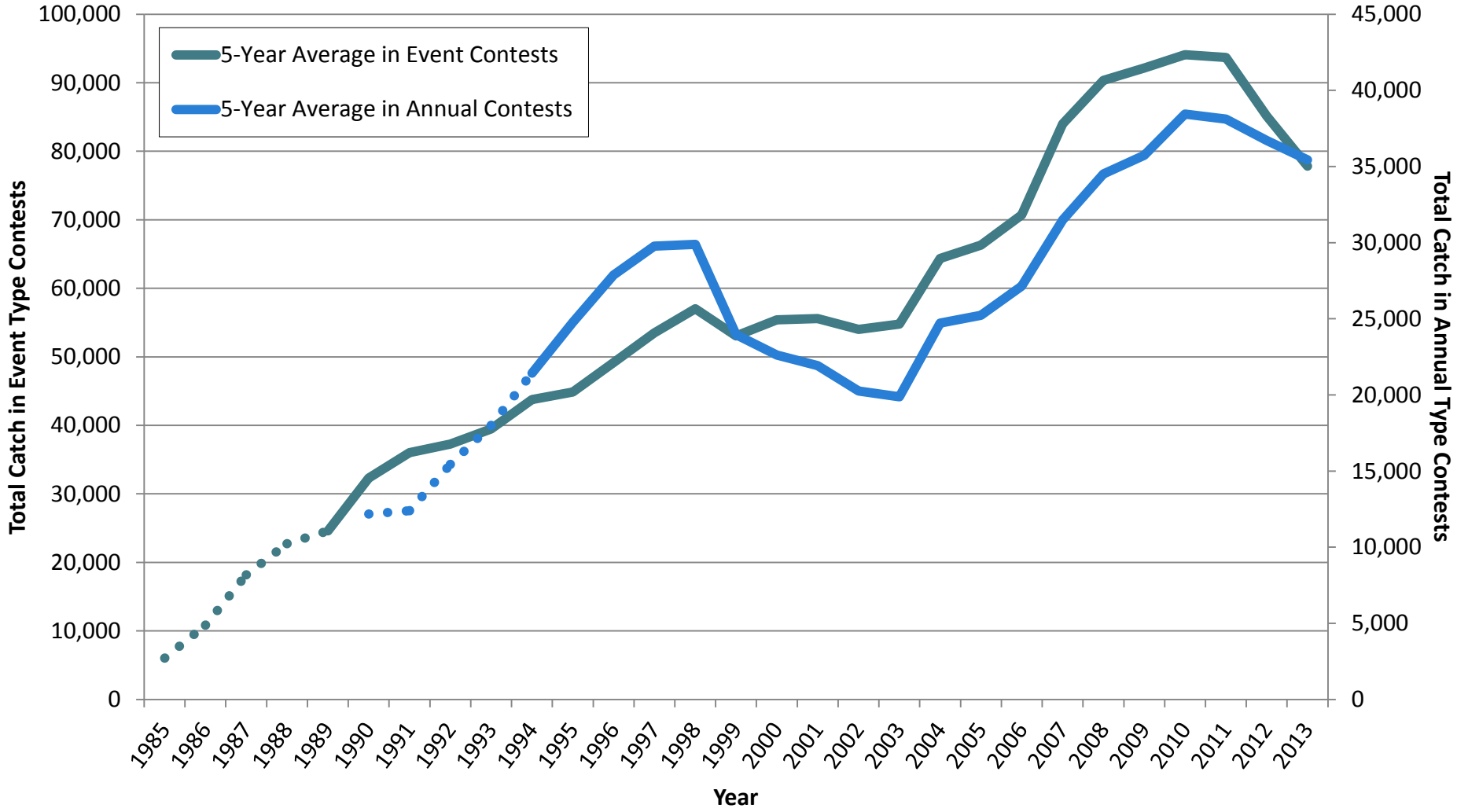

Figure 6. Five-year average in total catch of black bass in fishing contests from 1985-2013. Dotted lines indicate that less than 5 years were used calculate the value, due to the date at which initial data collection began.

Catch Rate

The overall catch rate for all bass contests held in 2013 was 0.30 fish/hour. The catch rates for "Event" (*Table 7*) and "Annual" (

Table 8) type contests were 0.29 fish/hour and 0.31 fish/hour, respectively. In general the catch rate for tournament-caught bass has slowly risen since the beginning of data collection (*Figure 7*).

Table 7. Catch rate (fish/hour) of bass by year for "Event" type bass fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Catch Rate	Year	Catch Rate	Year	Catch Rate	Year	Catch Rate
---	---	1990	0.22	2000	0.26	2010	0.25
---	---	1991	0.18	2001	0.28	2011	0.28
---	---	1992	0.20	2002	0.29	2012	0.32
---	---	1993	0.21	2003	0.25	2013	0.29
---	---	1994	0.25	2004	0.26		
1985	0.21	1995	0.23	2005	0.24		
1986	0.17	1996	0.25	2006	0.25		
1987	0.23	1997	0.26	2007	0.27		
1988	0.18	1998	0.25	2008	0.28		
1989	0.19	1999	0.24	2009	0.26		

Table 8. Catch rate (fish/hour) of bass by year for "Annual" type bass fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Catch Rate	Year	Catch Rate	Year	Catch Rate	Year	Catch Rate
---	---	1990	0.20	2000	0.26	2010	0.26
---	---	1991	0.18	2001	0.27	2011	0.29
---	---	1992	0.21	2002	0.29	2012	0.34
---	---	1993	0.22	2003	0.25	2013	0.31
---	---	1994	0.27	2004	0.26		
1985	---	1995	0.25	2005	0.26		
1986	---	1996	0.27	2006	0.28		
1987	---	1997	0.29	2007	0.30		

1988	---	1998	0.27	2008	0.28
1989	---	1999	0.28	2009	0.26

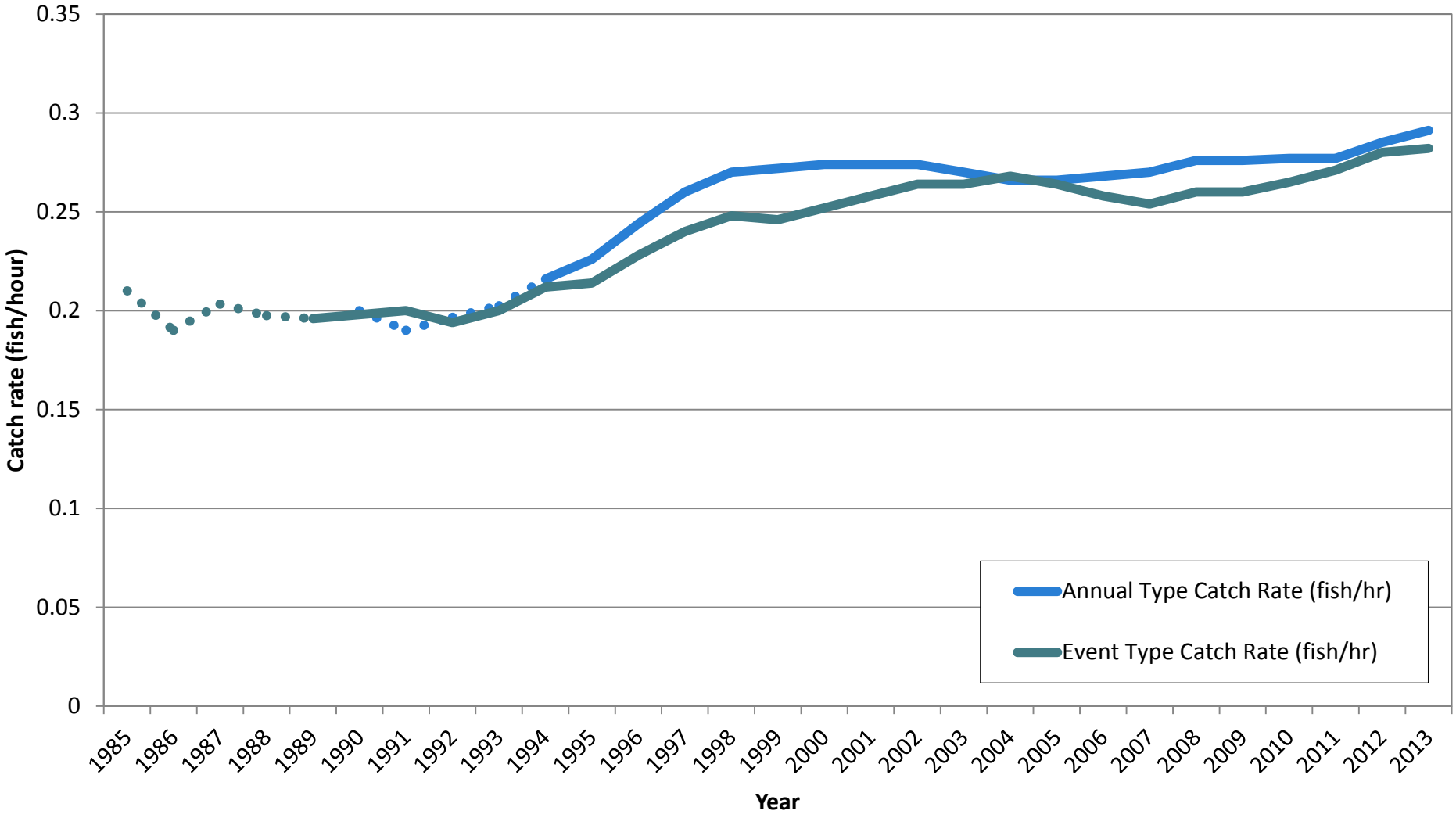

Figure 7. Five-year average catch rate (fish/hour) in "Annual" and "Event" type fishing contests from 1985-2013. Dotted lines indicate that less than 5 years were used calculate the value, due to the date at which initial data collection began.

Fish Size

The average weight of all black bass weighed in during 2013 was 2.32 pounds, which was nearly identical to the average size reported in 2012. This is the combined average weight of largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass. In "Event" type contests, the average bass weighed 2.45 pounds (*Table 9*). In "Annual" type contests, the average weight of bass was 2.18 pounds (

Table 10).

Table 9. Average weight (lbs) of bass caught in "Event" type fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Average Weight	Year	Average Weight	Year	Average Weight	Year	Average Weight
---	---	1990	1.76	2000	1.98	2010	2.19
---	---	1991	1.70	2001	2.01	2011	2.41
---	---	1992	1.83	2002	2.22	2012	2.47
---	---	1993	1.92	2003	2.21	2013	2.45
---	---	1994	1.90	2004	2.22		
1985	---	1995	1.88	2005	2.30		
1986	---	1996	1.91	2006	2.32		
1987	---	1997	1.93	2007	2.18		
1988	---	1998	2.00	2008	2.40		
1989	---	1999	2.08	2009	2.24		

Table 10. Average weight (lbs) of bass caught in "Annual" type fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Average Weight	Year	Average Weight	Year	Average Weight	Year	Average Weight
---	---	1990	1.62	2000	1.88	2010	2.05
---	---	1991	1.57	2001	1.92	2011	2.17
---	---	1992	1.50	2002	2.03	2012	2.18
---	---	1993	1.58	2003	2.14	2013	2.18
---	---	1994	1.64	2004	2.12		
1985	---	1995	1.66	2005	2.10		
1986	---	1996	1.67	2006	2.01		
1987	---	1997	1.84	2007	2.12		
1988	---	1998	1.83	2008	2.13		
1989	---	1999	2.09	2009	1.94		

At each tournament, a record is kept noting the largest bass weighed in at that contest. In 2013, the largest bass weighed in during a bass tournament was a largemouth bass that weighed 15.32 pounds, taken on 3/09/13 from New Melones Reservoir. Other large fish taken during bass tournaments in 2013 were also largemouth bass, one caught from Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta weighing 14.00 pounds (4/27/13), one from El Capitan Lake weighing 13.60 pounds (8/17/13), and another from Hodges Lake weighing 12.73 pounds (4/27/13).

While these bass are trophy class fish, they are not the largest bass caught during a tournament in California. The largest tournament-caught bass on record (18.24 pounds) was caught in 1993 from Lake Cachuma (*Table 11*).

Table 11. Largest tournament-caught bass in California each year from 1986–2013. The largest tournament-caught bass on record in California is highlighted.

Year	Location	Date Caught	Species	Weight (lbs)
1986	Clear Lake	6/15/1986	Largemouth	12.80
1987	Lake Castaic	6/6/1987	Largemouth	17.90
1988	Lake Cachuma	3/18/1988	Largemouth	16.40
1989	Lake Castaic	6/10/1989	Largemouth	13.00
1990	Lake Casitas	3/10/1990	Largemouth	15.80
1991	Clear Lake	6/1/1991	Largemouth	15.38
1992	Lake Castaic	6/20/1992	Largemouth	17.87
1993	**Lake Cachuma**	**4/17/1993**	**Largemouth**	**18.24**
1994	Lake Casitas	4/30/1994	Largemouth	15.47
1995	Lake Castaic	6/10/1995	Largemouth	13.71
1996	Lake Perris	11/10/1996	Largemouth	15.38
1997	Lake Hodges	9/27/1997	Largemouth	16.50
1998	Lake Shasta	11/19/1998	Largemouth	16.56
1999	Lake Casitas	6/19/1999	Largemouth	14.74
2000	CA Delta	4/30/2000	Largemouth	17.57
2001	Lake Perris	11/11/2001	Largemouth	14.04
2002	Lake Casitas	6/15/2002	Largemouth	15.54
2003	CA Delta	4/12/2003	Largemouth	14.08
2004	Lake Success	5/15/2004	Largemouth	14.76
2005	Lake Shasta	10/9/2005	Largemouth	15.84
2006	CA Delta	4/15/2006	Largemouth	15.81
2007	Lake Pyramid	5/6/2007	Largemouth	16.40
2008	CA Delta	4/5/2008	Largemouth	14.25
2009	CA Delta	4/11/2009	Largemouth	15.59
2011	New Melones Reservoir	3/20/2011	Largemouth	18.11
2012	Lake Kaweah	1/21/2012	Largemouth	15.79
2013	New Melones Reservoir	3/09/2013	Largemouth	15.32

Initial Mortality

Tournament organizers are required, insofar as possible, to release all bass alive and in good condition back to the water where taken. In some instances bass are brought to the weigh-in scales dead; this is recorded as initial mortality on the Fishing Contest Report submitted by the contest organizer. Initial mortality is the only type of tournament-associated loss regularly monitored for bass fishing contests, although an unknown amount of delayed mortality occurs after release. Delayed mortality can be significant, and has been documented as high as 85% in other states.

For both "Event" type and "Annual" type contests held in 2013, organizers reported an initial mortality of 1.6% and 1.3% respectively (*Table 12* and

Table 13). Initial mortality has remained less than 2.0% since 1988, when CDFW implemented the "Special Black Bass Tournament Conditions" to protect fish health.

Table 12. Initial mortality rate (%) of bass caught in "Event" type fishing contests from 1985 - 2013.

Year	Initial Mortality	Year	Initial Mortality	Year	Initial Mortality	Year	Initial Mortality
---	---	1990	1.2	2000	1.3	2010	0.7
---	---	1991	0.9	2001	1.1	2011	0.9
---	---	1992	1.1	2002	1.0	2012	1.1
---	---	1993	0.7	2003	0.9	2013	1.6
---	---	1994	0.7	2004	1.0		
1985	2.8	1995	0.8	2005	0.9		
1986	2.0	1996	0.9	2006	1.1		
1987	2.3	1997	1.0	2007	0.8		
1988	1.4	1998	1.0	2008	0.8		
1989	1.6	1999	0.9	2009	1.0		

Table 13. Initial mortality rate (%) of bass caught in "Annual" type fishing contests from 1985-2013.

Year	Initial Mortality	Year	Initial Mortality	Year	Initial Mortality	Year	Initial Mortality
---	---	1990	2.0	2000	1.4	2010	0.9
---	---	1991	1.5	2001	1.3	2011	0.9
---	---	1992	1.9	2002	1.2	2012	1.1
---	---	1993	1.9	2003	1.2	2013	1.3
---	---	1994	1.7	2004	1.3		
1985	---	1995	5.0	2005	1.2		
1986	---	1996	1.4	2006	1.6		
1987	---	1997	1.8	2007	1.2		
1988	---	1998	1.4	2008	1.1		

1989	---	1999	2.1	2009	1.1

REFERENCES

DOI (U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service) and DOC (U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau). 2007. 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation: California.

Southwick Associates. 2011. Fishing Participation and Market Trends: 2011 Bass Angler Report. Southwick Associates: Fernandina Beach, Florida.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND FAQS

Where are upcoming tournaments?

Upcoming fishing contests are listed online at: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FishingContests/default.aspx.

I am from the local lake management (e.g., water control agency, state park, marina). Where can I get more information on the contests scheduled in my area? Your online portal does not provide enough information.

Contact Max Fish, the Lake and Reservoir Program's Warmwater Specialist, for more information at max.fish@wildlife.ca.gov or (916) 327-8849.

How do I apply for a fishing contest permit?

To apply for a fishing contest permit with CDFW, complete form FG-775, accessible online at https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=16629. An additional form is required for "annual" type contests in CDFW Region 4, accessible at https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=9895. Forms requesting exemption from fishing regulations are also available online at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fish/Administration/Permits/FishingContest/.

Mail or turn in your application at your regional CDFW headquarters, with an address line "ATTN: Fishing Contest Application." The appropriate addresses are listed online: https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=17840.

How do I report the results of a fishing contest?

Within 30 days of your contest's conclusion, you should complete form FG-776, accessible online at https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=3324. You can turn this report in via email to contestreports@wildlife.ca.gov or via mail to:

ATTN: Fishing Contest Reports
Fisheries Branch
830 "S" Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Do you have guidelines for livewells?

We recommend checking livewells before the tournament begins. Immediate disqualification may be an effective method of ensuring anglers adhere to your livewell requirements.

All bass shall be kept in a follow-me bag (for float tubers) or livewell. Livewells must meet or exceed the following dimensions: Minimum 48 quart ice chest. Plastic bins or storage totes are not allowed or approved to use as a livewell. Livewells must also have an electric bilge pump with a Minimum 500 GPH (gallons per hour) set up so it fills the livewell with water and creates oxygen for the fish by spraying the surface of the water. Livewells must also have an overflow for fresh water. Battery operated oxygen bubblers may also be used but are not mandatory.

During special running tournaments, bilge pump and bubbler must be running at all times during travel and at the weigh-in line. The use of rejuvenate or bass meds of some sort may also be used during running events.

Homemade live wells and/or follow-me bags should be pre-approved by the Tournament Director, Tournament Director Assistants or designated club officer.

These guidelines were originally developed by the Sonoma County Belly Boat Bass Club. We recommend adopting a similar policy as part of your fishing contest rules.

Appendix 1

SUMMARY OF 2013 FISHING CONTEST REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL WATER

ALL CONTEST TYPES

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Lake Almanor	18	897	2145.6	15	333	148.0	3118.0	0.29	2.39
Lake Amador	8	313	691.8	21	133	58.0	1056.0	0.30	2.21
Antelope Lake	3	46	81.9	1	17	15.0	126.0	0.37	1.78
Bass Lake (Madera County)	4	197	517.0	4	113	24.0	536.0	0.37	2.62
Lake Berryessa	46	3164	7654.3	64	1272	351.5	10264.5	0.31	2.42
Big Bear Lake (San Bernardino County)	6	134	226.5	0	64	42.0	448.0	0.30	1.69
Big Lake (Shasta County)	2	3	7.0	0	10	16.0	80.0	0.04	2.32
Black Butte Lake	4	162	367.3	4	85	29.0	626.0	0.26	2.27
Lake Britton	4	76	156.9	0	65	28.0	536.0	0.14	2.06
Bullard Basin Creek	2	55	114.0	0	28	16.0	448.0	0.12	2.07
Butt Valley Reservoir	3	18	49.3	0	21	17.0	180.0	0.10	2.74
Lake Cachuma	23	983	1734.4	12	332	168.8	3398.8	0.29	1.76
Camanche Reservoir	19	591	1370.6	2	282	140.9	2239.6	0.26	2.32
Camp Far West	4	150	227.6	0	70	33.0	571.0	0.26	1.52
Casitas Lake	25	959	2373.5	0	506	161.8	3601.5	0.27	2.47
Castaic Lagoon	14	853	2049.3	11	368	98.0	2804.0	0.30	2.40
Castaic Lake	17	1672	3655.0	22	853	107.5	5525.0	0.30	2.19
Clear Lake (Lake County)	164	14812	54310.4	374	4048	1201.5	51644.5	0.29	3.67
Colorado River (Riverside County)	10	393	727.0	5	106	84.0	1320.0	0.30	1.85
Coyote Lake (Santa Clara County)	2	198	434.8	10	100	18.0	900.0	0.22	2.20
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta	224	19550	47132.0	356	7226	1652.7	61416.6	0.32	2.41
Diamond Valley Lake	30	2133	5149.1	25	1333	216.0	10292.0	0.21	2.41
Don Pedro Reservoir	46	3761	7559.1	40	1536	363.5	12648.0	0.30	2.01
East Park Reservoir	2	304	610.3	4	107	12.5	782.5	0.39	2.01
El Capitan Lake (San Diego County)	45	3115	9362.7	44	1352	331.0	11423.0	0.27	3.01
Lake Elsinore	1	3	6.0	0	6	6.5	39.0	0.08	2.00
Folsom Lake	12	750	1579.5	9	314	91.0	2468.0	0.30	2.11
H. V. Eastman Lake	15	805	1218.1	23	416	113.5	3565.0	0.23	1.51

All Contest Types

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Lake Havasu	14	789	2002.3	18	114	124.0	1598.0	0.49	2.54
Hensley Lake	3	195	311.6	2	85	16.5	427.0	0.46	1.60
Lake Hodges	20	954	3107.1	14	591	138.0	4474.0	0.21	3.26
Hogan Lake	2	68	123.1	0	27	20.0	252.0	0.27	1.81
Iron Gate Reservoir	8	157	297.8	5	86	52.5	1145.5	0.14	1.90
Irvine Lake	1	37	80.9	1	28	6.0	168.0	0.22	2.19
Isabella Lake	16	631	2289.1	8	290	112.0	2216.0	0.28	3.63
Jenkinson Lake	1	16	23.6	0	14	8.0	112.0	0.14	1.47
Lake Kaweah	17	656	1151.0	11	363	112.5	2554.0	0.26	1.75
Lopez Lake	20	1065	2717.5	13	496	143.5	3986.5	0.27	2.55
Martinez Reservoir	2	84	236.2	1	18	16.0	288.0	0.29	2.81
Lake McClure	43	4626	7632.5	48	1940	337.5	15433.0	0.30	1.65
Lake Mendocino	2	28	51.1	9	37	15.0	282.0	0.10	1.83
Merle Collins Reservoir	1	46	93.1	0	17	8.5	144.5	0.32	2.02
Millerton Lake (Fresno County)	6	798	1052.6	15	275	48.0	2200.0	0.36	1.32
Murray Reservoir	2	35	68.7	1	16	18.0	144.0	0.24	1.96
Lake Nacimiento	26	1267	1625.7	9	608	201.0	5304.5	0.24	1.28
New Bullards Bar Reservoir	11	135	230.3	5	125	86.2	987.2	0.14	1.71
New Hogan Lake	5	138	249.3	2	45	30.0	336.0	0.41	1.81
New Melones Lake	13	1001	2154.6	6	333	104.0	2622.0	0.38	2.15
Lake Oroville	61	10326	17459.3	34	2925	495.0	31513.0	0.33	1.69
Lower Otay Lake	27	1701	3113.6	19	606	217.0	4703.0	0.36	1.83
Pardee Reservoir	10	390	809.0	4	191	81.8	1562.5	0.25	2.07
Parker Dam Reservoir	1	26	52.0	0	9	12.0	108.0	0.24	2.00
Perris Reservoir	23	892	2528.9	9	639	168.0	4588.5	0.19	2.84
Lake Pillsbury	1	82	265.2	2	64	8.0	512.0	0.16	3.23

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Pine Flat Lake	23	1355	1875.0	17	523	179.5	4303.5	0.31	1.38
Lake Piru	28	1260	2667.4	17	618	171.0	4357.0	0.29	2.12
Pyramid Lake	19	1129	2636.7	5	517	138.0	4014.0	0.28	2.34
Ruth Lake (Trinity County)	2	157	394.0	2	86	18.0	774.0	0.20	2.51
Salt Springs	3	137	400.2	1	64	22.0	452.0	0.30	2.92
San Antonio Lake	18	1144	2198.1	8	446	131.0	3834.0	0.30	1.92
Santa Margarita Lake	16	1124	3409.3	10	461	134.5	3870.0	0.29	3.03
Scotts Flat Reservoir	1	29	48.1	4	7	8.5	59.2	0.49	1.66
Shasta Lake	69	5113	7105.7	47	1412	539.5	13933.5	0.37	1.39
Shastina Reservoir	1	18	26.5	0	7	8.0	56.0	0.32	1.47
Silverwood Lake	8	301	548.0	3	158	54.5	1255.0	0.24	1.82
Skinner Reservoir	4	96	269.6	0	39	30.0	436.0	0.22	2.81
Lake Sonoma	15	571	1141.4	7	290	106.0	2210.0	0.26	2.00
Stampede Reservoir	1	3	5.4	0	7	6.0	42.0	0.07	1.79
Stony Gorge Reservoir	4	141	248.1	4	68	32.0	768.0	0.18	1.76
Lake Success	14	980	2137.2	12	425	87.0	3000.0	0.33	2.18
Lake Sutherland	1	57	118.9	1	16	9.0	144.0	0.40	2.09
Thermalito Afterbay	3	71	200.9	1	52	22.0	364.0	0.20	2.83
Trinity Lake	12	281	673.0	1	87	92.0	1042.0	0.27	2.39
Tulloch Reservoir (Tuolumne County)	18	593	1187.8	8	419	96.0	1932.0	0.31	2.00
Vail Lake	4	205	494.4	1	43	27.0	304.0	0.67	2.41
Walker Lake	2	95	218.8	0	40	17.0	332.0	0.29	2.30
Whiskeytown Lake	4	95	242.1	0	36	34.0	309.0	0.31	2.55
Statewide Totals	**1359**	**97195**	**229483.2**	**1431**	**36859**	**10086.0**	**327509.3**	**0.30**	**2.36**

Appendix 2

SUMMARY OF 2013 FISHING CONTEST REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL WATER

"EVENT" TYPE CONTESTS

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Lake Almanor	3	190	545.5	0	91	23.0	752.0	0.25	2.87
Lake Berryessa	11	1503	4319.0	0	700	88.0	5600.0	0.27	2.87
Big Bear Lake (San Bernardino County)	6	134	226.5	0	64	42.0	448.0	0.30	1.69
Black Butte Lake	2	140	317.0	4	60	15.0	456.0	0.31	2.26
Lake Cachuma	8	356	591.9	3	143	50.0	1546.0	0.23	1.66
Camanche Reservoir	3	165	409.0	0	56	25.0	462.0	0.36	2.48
Camp Far West	1	50	79.5	0	20	8.0	160.0	0.31	1.59
Casitas Lake	8	321	791.0	0	204	24.0	1224.0	0.26	2.46
Castaic Lagoon	4	231	465.7	10	70	32.0	560.0	0.41	2.02
Castaic Lake	14	1469	3208.4	21	767	85.0	4888.0	0.30	2.18
Clear Lake (Lake County)	57	11229	41928.8	305	3043	411.5	39796.0	0.28	3.73
Colorado River (Riverside County)	2	173	328.1	4	59	16.0	530.0	0.33	1.90
Coyote Lake (Santa Clara County)	2	198	434.8	10	100	18.0	900.0	0.22	2.20
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta	93	13465	33887.0	297	4996	685.5	43653.0	0.31	2.52
Diamond Valley Lake	19	1915	4643.7	23	1160	131.0	8976.0	0.21	2.42
Don Pedro Reservoir	21	2288	4772.5	25	1072	169.5	8697.0	0.26	2.09
East Park Reservoir	2	304	610.3	4	107	12.5	782.5	0.39	2.01
El Capitan Lake (San Diego County)	27	2267	7171.6	29	970	186.0	8335.0	0.27	3.16
Folsom Lake	2	427	893.8	7	134	16.0	1072.0	0.40	2.09
H. V. Eastman Lake	15	805	1218.1	23	416	113.5	3565.0	0.23	1.51
Lake Havasu	2	150	410.6	6	15	16.0	240.0	0.63	2.74
Hensley Lake	3	195	311.6	2	85	16.5	427.0	0.46	1.60
Lake Hodges	13	777	2512.4	13	462	85.0	3478.0	0.22	3.23
Iron Gate Reservoir	2	65	123.0	5	44	16.0	704.0	0.09	1.89
Isabella Lake	16	631	2289.1	8	290	112.0	2216.0	0.28	3.63
Lake Kaweah	17	656	1151.0	11	363	112.5	2554.0	0.26	1.75
Lopez Lake	8	563	1592.7	8	285	55.0	2188.0	0.26	2.83
Lake McClure	34	4180	6891.9	44	1741	272.0	13933.0	0.30	1.65
Millerton Lake (Fresno County)	6	798	1052.6	15	275	48.0	2200.0	0.36	1.32

Event Type Contests

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Lake Nacimiento	5	344	431.8	1	230	41.0	1874.0	0.18	1.26
New Bullards Bar Reservoir	1	16	56.0	1	12	8.0	96.0	0.17	3.50
New Melones Lake	3	398	1068.4	0	141	24.0	1128.0	0.35	2.68
Lake Oroville	36	9194	15565.0	32	2469	296.0	27806.5	0.33	1.69
Lower Otay Lake	7	527	986.2	8	203	50.0	1450.0	0.36	1.87
Pardee Reservoir	1	63	128.0	0	22	8.0	176.0	0.36	2.03
Perris Reservoir	11	674	1938.3	9	461	79.0	3250.0	0.21	2.88
Lake Pillsbury	1	82	265.2	2	64	8.0	512.0	0.16	3.23
Pine Flat Lake	9	768	1176.8	8	343	72.0	2744.0	0.28	1.53
Lake Piru	4	342	626.7	6	141	30.0	1096.0	0.31	1.83
Pyramid Lake	5	281	589.5	3	133	36.0	1004.0	0.28	2.10
Ruth Lake (Trinity County)	2	157	394.0	2	86	18.0	774.0	0.20	2.51
San Antonio Lake	8	677	1359.4	2	289	65.0	2600.0	0.26	2.01
Santa Margarita Lake	7	612	1936.5	8	282	58.0	2294.0	0.27	3.16
Shasta Lake	13	2587	3626.2	39	721	84.0	7600.0	0.34	1.40
Silverwood Lake	4	202	328.6	3	108	31.0	873.0	0.23	1.63
Skinner Reservoir	2	79	230.0	0	18	16.0	288.0	0.27	2.91
Lake Sonoma	4	211	542.5	1	109	30.0	858.0	0.25	2.57
Lake Success	14	980	2137.2	12	425	87.0	3000.0	0.33	2.18
Lake Sutherland	1	57	118.9	1	16	9.0	144.0	0.40	2.09
Statewide Totals	**540**	**63997**	**156968.5**	**1016**	**24111**	**3934.5**	**219910.0**	**0.29**	**2.45**

Appendix 3

SUMMARY OF 2013 FISHING CONTEST REPORTS BY INDIVIDUAL WATER

"ANNUAL" TYPE CONTESTS

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Lake Almanor	15	707	1600.1	15	242	125.0	2366.0	0.30	2.26
Bass Lake (Madera County)	3	96	230.0	3	67	24.0	536.0	0.18	2.40
Lake Berryessa	35	1661	3335.4	64	572	263.5	4664.5	0.36	2.01
Black Butte Lake	2	22	50.3	0	25	14.0	170.0	0.13	2.29
Lake Cachuma	15	627	1142.6	9	189	118.8	1852.8	0.34	1.82
Camanche Reservoir	16	426	961.6	2	226	115.9	1777.6	0.24	2.26
Camp Far West	1	22	35.9	0	13	8.0	104.0	0.21	1.63
Casitas Lake	17	638	1582.5	0	302	137.8	2377.5	0.27	2.48
Castaic Lagoon	10	622	1583.6	1	298	66.0	2244.0	0.28	2.55
Castaic Lake	3	203	446.6	1	86	22.5	637.0	0.32	2.20
Clear Lake (Lake County)	107	3583	12381.7	69	1005	790.0	11848.5	0.30	3.46
Colorado River (Riverside County)	8	220	398.9	1	47	68.0	790.0	0.28	1.81
Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta	131	6085	13245.0	59	2230	967.2	17763.6	0.34	2.18
Diamond Valley Lake	11	218	505.4	2	173	85.0	1316.0	0.17	2.32
Don Pedro Reservoir	25	1473	2786.6	15	464	194.0	3951.0	0.37	1.89
El Capitan Lake (San Diego County)	18	848	2191.1	15	382	145.0	3088.0	0.27	2.58
Folsom Lake	10	323	685.7	2	180	75.0	1396.0	0.23	2.12
Lake Havasu	12	639	1591.8	12	99	108.0	1358.0	0.47	2.49
Lake Hodges	7	177	594.7	1	129	53.0	996.0	0.18	3.36
Iron Gate Reservoir	6	92	174.9	0	42	36.5	441.5	0.21	1.90
Lopez Lake	12	502	1124.9	5	211	88.5	1798.5	0.28	2.24
Lake McClure	9	446	740.6	4	199	65.5	1500.0	0.30	1.66
Lake Nacimiento	21	923	1193.9	8	378	160.0	3430.5	0.27	1.29
New Bullards Bar Reservoir	10	119	174.4	4	113	78.2	891.2	0.13	1.47
New Melones Lake	10	603	1086.2	6	192	80.0	1494.0	0.40	1.80
Lake Oroville	25	1132	1894.3	2	456	199.0	3706.5	0.31	1.67
Lower Otay Lake	20	1174	2127.4	11	403	167.0	3253.0	0.36	1.81
Pardee Reservoir	9	327	681.0	4	169	73.8	1386.5	0.24	2.08
Perris Reservoir	12	218	590.6	0	178	89.0	1338.5	0.16	2.71

Annual Type Contests

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Pine Flat Lake	14	587	698.3	9	180	107.5	1559.5	0.38	1.19
Lake Piru	24	918	2040.7	11	477	141.0	3261.0	0.28	2.22
Pyramid Lake	14	848	2047.3	2	384	102.0	3010.0	0.28	2.41
San Antonio Lake	10	467	838.7	6	157	66.0	1234.0	0.38	1.80
Santa Margarita Lake	9	512	1472.8	2	179	76.5	1576.0	0.32	2.88
Shasta Lake	56	2526	3479.5	8	691	455.5	6333.5	0.40	1.38
Silverwood Lake	4	99	219.4	0	50	23.5	382.0	0.26	2.22
Skinner Reservoir	2	17	39.7	0	21	14.0	148.0	0.11	2.33
Lake Sonoma	11	360	598.9	6	181	76.0	1352.0	0.27	1.66
Camp Far West	2	78	112.2	0	37	17.0	307.0	0.25	1.44
Murray Reservoir	2	35	68.7	1	16	18.0	144.0	0.24	1.96
Lake Mendocino	2	28	51.1	9	37	15.0	282.0	0.10	1.83
Merle Collins Reservoir	1	46	93.1	0	17	8.5	144.5	0.32	2.02
New Hogan Lake	5	138	249.3	2	45	30.0	336.0	0.41	1.81
Vail Lake	4	205	494.4	1	43	27.0	304.0	0.67	2.41
Bullard Basin Creek	2	55	114.0	0	28	16.0	448.0	0.12	2.07
Tulloch Reservoir (Tuolumne County)	18	593	1187.8	8	419	96.0	1932.0	0.31	2.00
Salt Springs	3	137	400.2	1	64	22.0	452.0	0.30	2.92
Hogan Lake	2	68	123.1	0	27	20.0	252.0	0.27	1.81
Martinez Reservoir	2	84	236.2	1	18	16.0	288.0	0.29	2.81
Trinity Lake	12	281	673.0	1	87	92.0	1042.0	0.27	2.39
Thermalito Afterbay	3	71	200.9	1	52	22.0	364.0	0.20	2.83
Butt Valley Reservoir	3	18	49.3	0	21	17.0	180.0	0.10	2.74
Stony Gorge Reservoir	4	141	248.1	4	68	32.0	768.0	0.18	1.76
Lake Amador	8	313	691.8	21	133	58.0	1056.0	0.30	2.21
Whiskeytown Lake	4	95	242.1	0	36	34.0	309.0	0.31	2.55
Lake Britton	4	76	156.9	0	65	28.0	536.0	0.14	2.06

Water Name	Contest Days	Total Fish Count	Total Fish Weight	Total Fish Reported Dead	Number of Competitors	Total Contest Hours	Total Hours Effort	Mean Catch Per Hour	Mean Weight Per Fish
Lake Elsinore	1	3	6.0	0	6	6.5	39.0	0.08	2.00
Walker Lake	2	95	218.8	0	40	17.0	332.0	0.29	2.30
Shastina Reservoir	1	18	26.5	0	7	8.0	56.0	0.32	1.47
Antelope Lake	3	46	81.9	1	17	15.0	126.0	0.37	1.78
Scotts Flat Reservoir	1	29	48.1	4	7	8.5	59.2	0.49	1.66
Big Lake (Shasta County)	2	3	7.0	0	10	16.0	80.0	0.04	2.32
Irvine Lake	1	37	80.9	1	28	6.0	168.0	0.22	2.19
Stampede Reservoir	1	3	5.4	0	7	6.0	42.0	0.07	1.79
Jenkinson Lake	1	16	23.6	0	14	8.0	112.0	0.14	1.47
Parker Dam Reservoir	1	26	52.0	0	9	12.0	108.0	0.24	2.00
Statewide Totals	**819**	**33198**	**72514.6**	**415**	**12748**	**6151.5**	**107599.3**	**0.31**	**2.18**