

How did the Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System come to be?

During public discussions on Michigan's warm water fishing regulations in 2015, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) asked the Department of Natural Resources' Fisheries Division the following questions related to bass fishing tournament activity:

- 1) How many bass tournaments are conducted in Michigan each year?
- 2) How many anglers participate in bass tournaments in Michigan each year?
- 3) How many bass are handled and released in Michigan tournaments each year?
- 4) What is the economic impact of bass tournament fishing in Michigan?

At the time, the DNR could not provide the NRC with answers. In response, the NRC passed Fisheries Order 215.15A which in part requires all bass fishing tournaments to be registered with the DNR and that those tournaments provide basic participation and catch data after the completion of each tournament.

This summary report includes results from fishing tournaments and their catch reports submitted in 2017 via the Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System. This data, as well as information that will be collected in subsequent seasons, will be used to guide future management decisions and promote the state's recreational fisheries and natural resource based economy.

Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System Website

The Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System allows tournament directors to schedule tournaments and report their results. The site also provides tournament anglers, as well as the general public, the ability to search for registered bass fishing tournaments throughout Michigan. The site has been a huge success and has garnered high interest and visitor traffic with nearly 10,900 site visits in 2017. The system can be found online at Michigan.gov/fishingtournaments.

Wrapping Up

The DNR will continue to collect and analyze fishing tournament data in the coming years in order to guide future management discussions. Initially, the tournament program has been limited to bass fishing only in 2016, 2017 and 2018. However, it is anticipated that beginning in 2019, this program's requirements will be expanded to collect information from walleye, muskellunge and bowfishing tournaments as well.

10 "Heaviest" Bass Reported by Tournaments

Rank	Waterbody	County	Heaviest Fish (lb.)
1	Sand Lake	Lenawee	8.00
2	Halfmoon Lake	Washtenaw	7.96
3	Jordan Lake	Barry	7.00
4	Horeshoe Lake	Montcalm	6.92
5	Austin Lake	Kalamazoo	6.91
6	Lake St. Clair	Macomb	6.87
7	Lake St. Clair	Macomb	6.80
8	Lake St. Clair	Macomb	6.80
9	St. Clair Lake	Antrim	6.80
10	Wixom Lake	Gladwin	6.74

20 Most Popular Tournament Locations

Rank	Waterbody	County(s)	No. of Tournaments
1	Lake St. Clair	Macomb (73), St. Clair (7)	80
2	Austin Lake	Kalamazoo	65
3	Gull Lake	Barry	47
3	Muskegon Lake	Muskegon	47
5	Grand River	Ottawa (19), Ingham (14), Ionia (8)	41
5	Pontiac Lake	Oakland	41
7	Gun Lake	Barry (32), Allegan (8)	40
8	Portage Lake	St. Joseph	35
9	Kent Lake Pike Marsh	Oakland	34
9	Klinger Lake	St. Joseph	34
11	Coldwater Lake	Branch	32
12	Paw Paw Lake	Berrien	29
13	Morrison Lake	Ionia	28
13	Wabasis Lake	Kent	28
15	Wampplers Lake	Lenawee	27
16	Halfmoon Lake	Washtenaw	26
16	Jordan Lake	Barry	26
16	Lobdell Lake	Genesee	26
19	Lake Lansing	Ingham	25
19	Pine Lake	Barry	25
19	White Lake	Muskegon	25



Michigan's Fishing Tournament Information System 2017 Summary Report



At-A-Glance: Fishing Tournament Information Reported in 2017

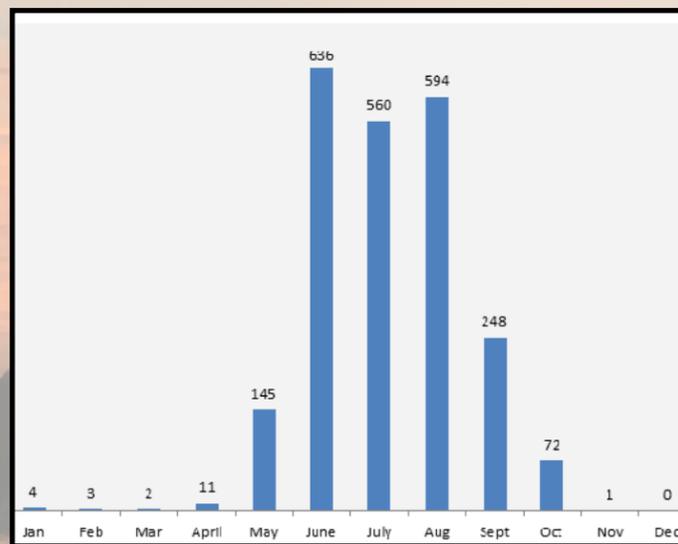
2,525 bass fishing tournaments were registered by 275 directors.

275 unique waterbodies within 70 of Michigan's 83 counties played host to tournaments. Heaviest concentration was in southern 1/2 of the Lower Peninsula.

20 most popular waterbodies hosted 33% of the tournaments, averaging 36 events each.

June was the most popular month for tournament activity with 636 events. Combined; June-August accounted for 78.6% of the year's total (1,790 tournaments).

Tournaments Registered by Month



Heaviest bass reported by any tournament was an 8-pound fish caught-and-released from Sand Lake (Lenawee County - July 2017). Overall, tournaments reported catching-and-releasing 43 bass exceeding 6 pounds.

Second most popular waterbody was Austin Lake (Kalamazoo County) with 65 events.

Tournaments, on average, had 25.3 anglers fishing from 13.7 boats.

100 waterbodies hosted two or fewer tournaments.

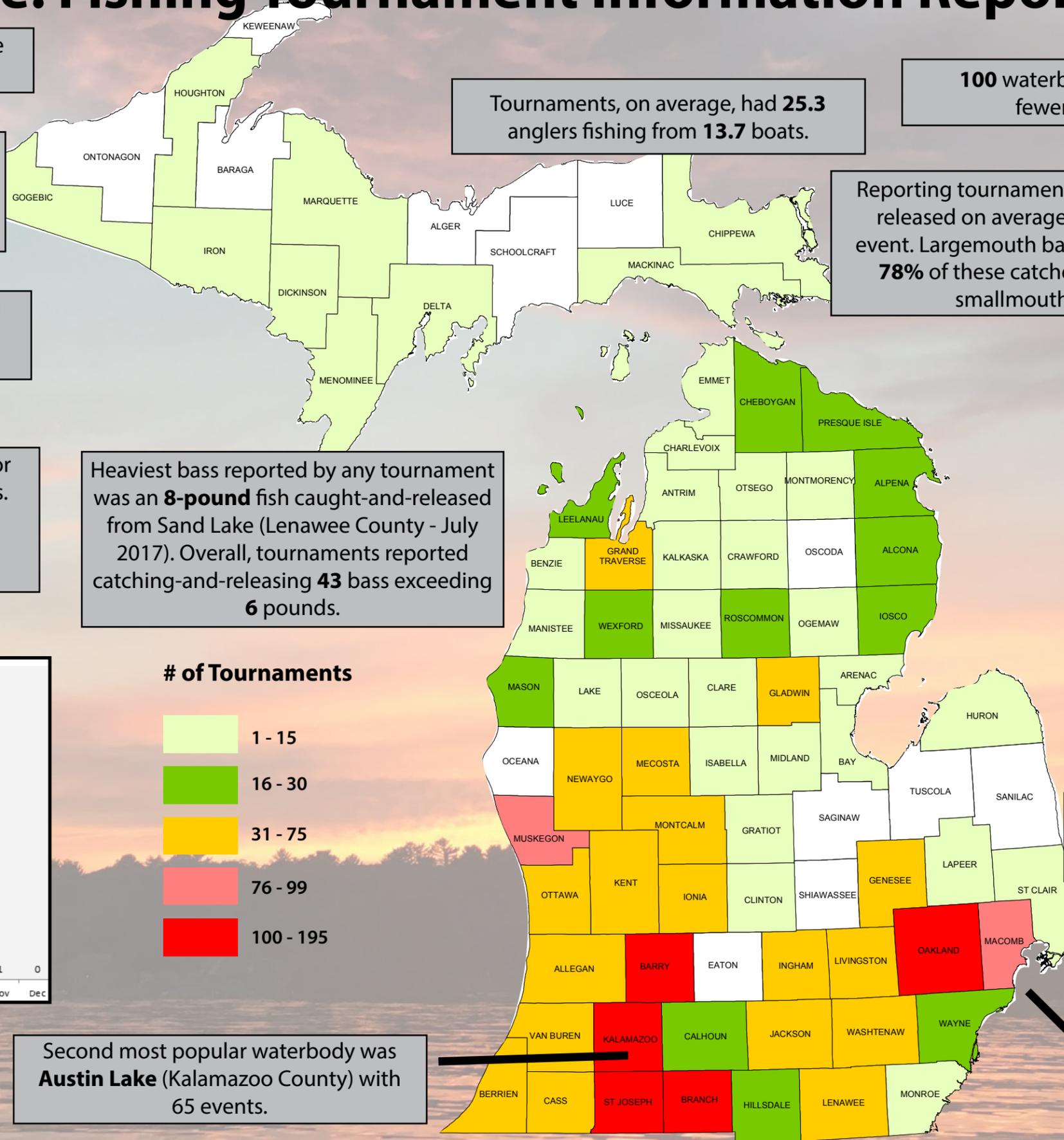
Reporting tournaments weighed-and-released on average 40.4 bass per event. Largemouth bass accounted for 78% of these catches versus 22% smallmouth bass.

Average statewide catch rate for tournament anglers was 1.6 fish weighed/angler.

Total fish entered in tournaments was estimated in excess of 90,000 fish (70,000 largemouth / 20,000 smallmouth).

Tournament bass, on average, weighed 2.2 pounds.

Most popular waterbody was Lake St. Clair with 80 tournaments.



This heat map shows the range of tournaments held per Michigan county.

