



**2022 Louisiana Annual Tournament Report Information
Project
(LATRIP)**

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The Louisiana Annual Tournament Report Information Project (LATRIP) is a voluntary project administered by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). Developed in 2021, the project supports the goals and objectives of the LDWF Black Bass Management Plan by promoting public awareness for the bass fishery resources of the State and establishing effective lines of communication between LDWF and the public.

Specific goals for LATRIP include: (1) gathering information that is of interest to LDWF and to bass anglers, (2) building relationships and fostering open lines of communications with bass fishing organizations, (3) providing an efficient and low-cost method to generate data that can be used to track trends in bass angling success rates over time, and (4) promoting Louisiana’s quality fisheries.

Data collection and reporting for this project was modeled after similar successful programs from our neighboring states of Arkansas and Mississippi.

Overview

A total of 37 tournament trails and/or organizations participated during the 2022 calendar year. Participating organizations either emailed their weigh-in data to LDWF or gave LDWF permission to gather the data from publicly available sources such as websites or social media postings. Data were submitted from 228 tournaments representing 40 waterbodies.

Only day-time tournaments (roughly 8 hours long) with 5-fish limits were included. Some data were available for both 3-fish limit tournaments and night tournaments, but the overall datasets for both were too limited for inclusion in this report.

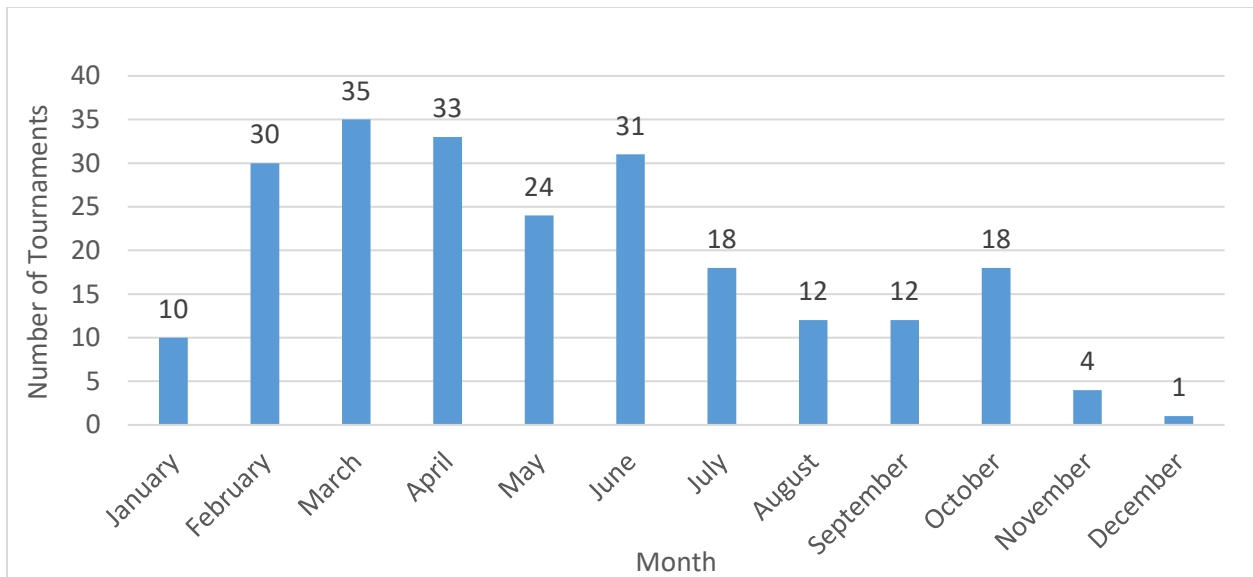


Figure 1. Monthly distribution of LATRIP tournaments during the 2022 tournament season.

Table 1. Number of LATRIP tournaments during the 2022 tournament season by waterbody. If multiple waterbodies are listed, the total applies to each waterbody.

Waterbodies	# of Tournaments
Toledo Bend	26
Lake Verret/Lake Palourde/Atchafalaya Basin Complex	21
Caddo Lake	16
Pearl River	14
Cross Lake & Lake D'Arbonne	11
Lake Des Allemands & Red River & Black Bayou Lake (Hosston)	9
Bienvenue Central Wetlands & Delacroix Marsh	8
Caney Lake (Caney Creek Reservoir) & Lake Bistineau	7
Lake Providence & Lake Claiborne & Ouachita River	6
Bayou Black Marsh (Amelia)	5
Maurepas Complex	4
Bonne Idee, Yucatan, Venice, Cane River, Black Lake (Campti), Sabine River, Calcasieu River, Grand Bayou Reservoir (John K. Kelly)	3
Poverty Point, Bayou Bartholomew, Lake Concordia, Bayou Signette, Cypress/Black Bayou Reservoirs, Corney Lake, Mill Creek Reservoir	2
Baker's Cutoff, Saline-Larto Complex, Lake St. John, Lake Bruin, False River, Chicot Lake, Cotile Lake	1

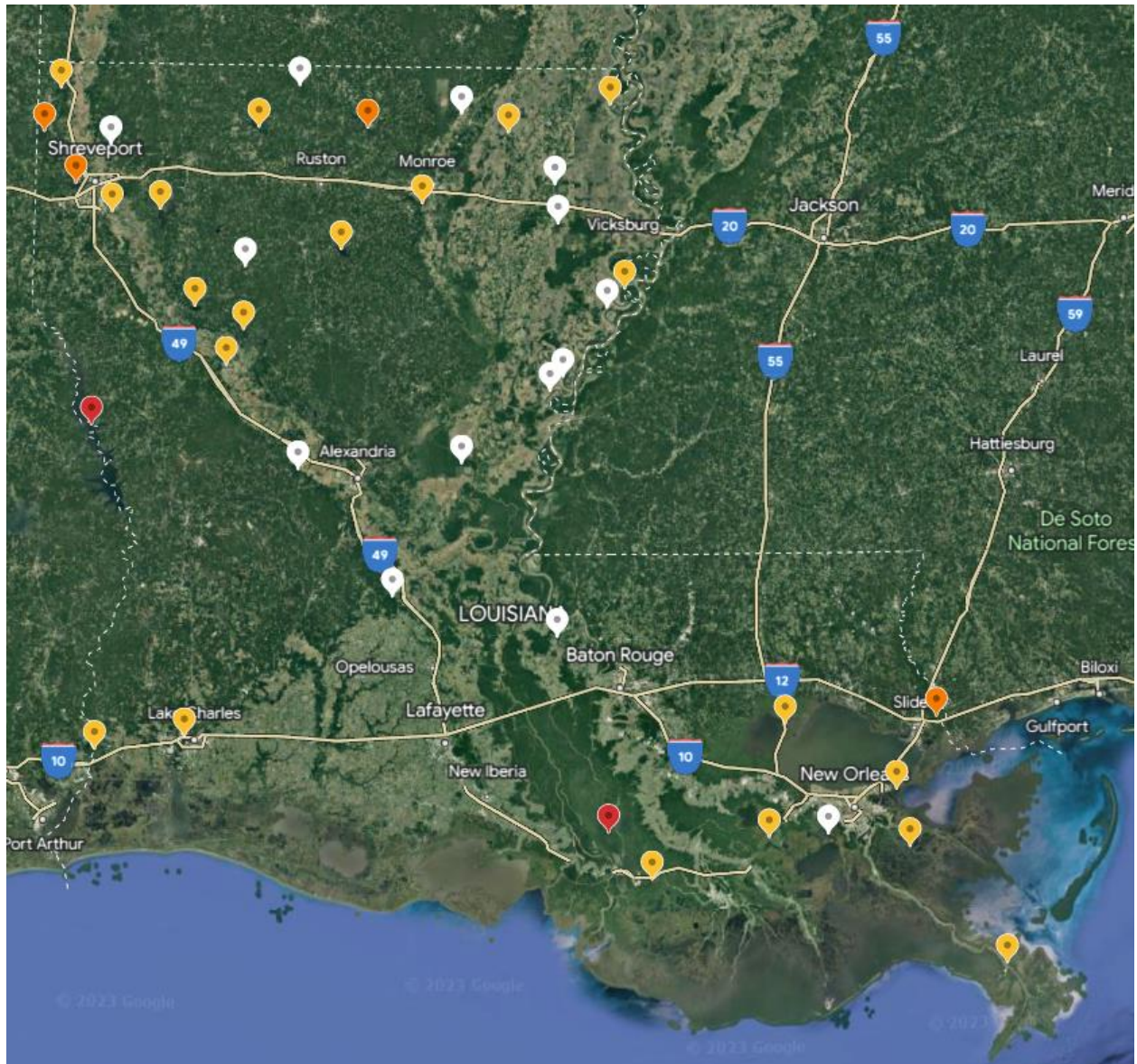


Figure 2. Distribution of 2022 LATRIP tournaments throughout Louisiana. The white markers indicate 1-2 tournaments reported, yellow markers 3-10 tournaments reported, orange markers 11-20 tournaments reported, and the red markers indicate greater than 20 tournaments were reported.

Data Analysis and Methods

Data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet for each tournament organization and grouped by waterbody. Fourteen individual metrics were calculated from the available data for each waterbody.

1. Average Number of Bass Weighed In per Boat
2. Average Weight per Bass Weighed In
3. Average Bag Weight per Boat

4. Percentage of Boats Weighing in at Least One Fish
5. Percentage of Boats with a 5 Bass Limit
6. Average Weight of Winning Big Bass
7. Average 1st Place Weight (Winning Weight)
8. Number of Angler Hours to catch a 5+ Pound Bass
9. Average 3rd Place Weight (i.e. "In the Money")
10. Average 2nd Place Big Bass Weight
11. Percentage of Boats with 10+ Pound Bags
12. Percentage of Boats with 15+ Pound Bags
13. Percentage of Boats with 20+ Pound Bags
14. Percentage of Boats with 25+ Pound Bags

In order to be considered for comparisons (Figures 3-15), waterbodies had to have a minimum of 3 tournaments to reduce biases from limited datasets. Twenty-six waterbodies were eligible for comparisons.

Because many of south Louisiana waterways are interconnected, many tournaments are not held on traditional, closed systems. Therefore, results from tournaments in these locations were lumped together where it was logical to provide sufficient data for waterbody comparisons. Tournament locations were combined from multiple launches within the same basins and in some locations for various reasons such as where competitors are typically limited by organizers from crossing a large body of water.

In addition to comparing the individual metrics listed above, waterbodies were ranked in different categories (see "Category Rankings" section below) by combining applicable individual metrics. For overall rankings by category, each waterbody was assigned points based upon its rank for each individual metric. Therefore, the first place waterbody for each individual metric received 26 points, the second place waterbody received 25 points and so on. Points were added up for all applicable statistics and the waterbodies ranked based upon total points.

Several lakes had special regulations in place that affect the number and size of fish that can be brought to the scales. Such regulations influence all individual metrics used in this report except the estimated number of hours to catch a bass greater than 5 pounds. Waterbodies included in LATRIP with special regulations are Grand Bayou Reservoir (14"-17" slot), Caddo Lake (14"-18" slot), Toledo Bend (14" minimum length), and Sabine River (12" minimum length).

All tournaments were converted to a standardized 8 hours before calculating angling hours. Although most lasted 7-9 hours, official start and end times were not available for all tournaments.

RESULTS

Total Tournament Statistics

- LATRIP tournaments averaged 31.22 boats per tournament, including championship tournaments with reduced fields.
- Approximately 74% of anglers were successful at weighing in at least one bass.
- Tournament anglers brought an average of 2.59 bass to the scales per boat, per tournament.
- The average individual weight was 2.13 pounds for all bass coming to the scales.
- The average bag weight per boat was 5.58 pounds.
- The average winning Big Bass per tournament was 5.32 pounds.
- On average, it took a bag weight of 14.33 pounds to win a tournament.
- Third Place bag weights were tracked throughout the year in an attempt to estimate what it would take to “be in the money.” Average 3rd Place bag weight for all tournaments was 10.79 pounds.
- Only 0.8% of boats weighed in more than 20 pounds of bass.
- It took 399.75 angler hours to catch a 5+ pound bass.

Individual Metric Rankings

Average Number of Bass Weighed In per Boat

The Venice marsh ranked the highest for the average number of bass weighed in per boat, with 3.82 fish per boat. Grand Bayou, Toledo Bend, and Caddo Lake ranked near the middle, and likely were influenced by slot limits and minimum length limits.

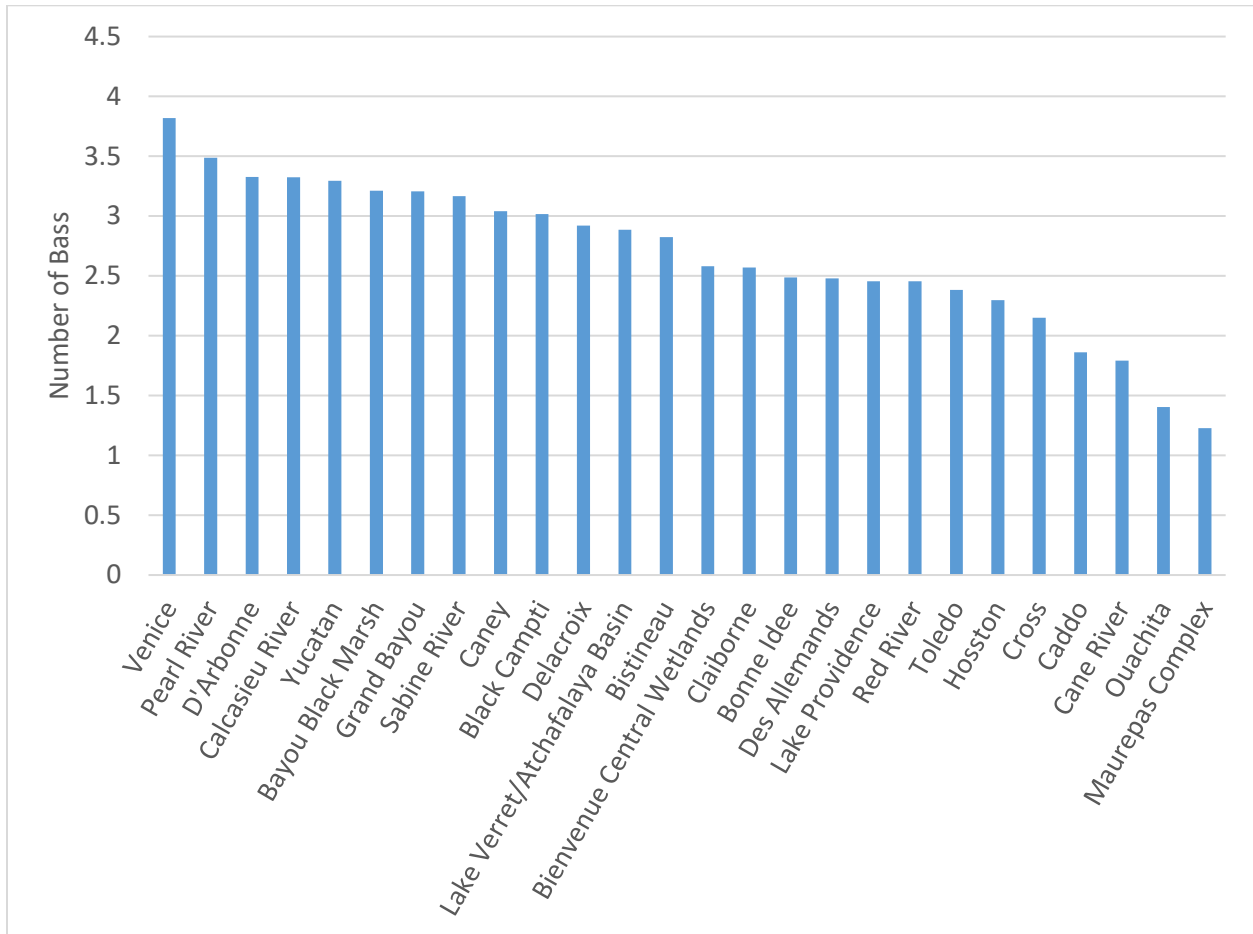


Figure 3. Average number of bass weighed in per boat at LATRIP tournaments on 26 waterbodies in 2022.

Average Weight per Bass Weighed In

Black Bayou Hosston provided the largest average weight per bass of 3.14 pounds. The Calcasieu River had the lowest average weight of 1.12 pounds.

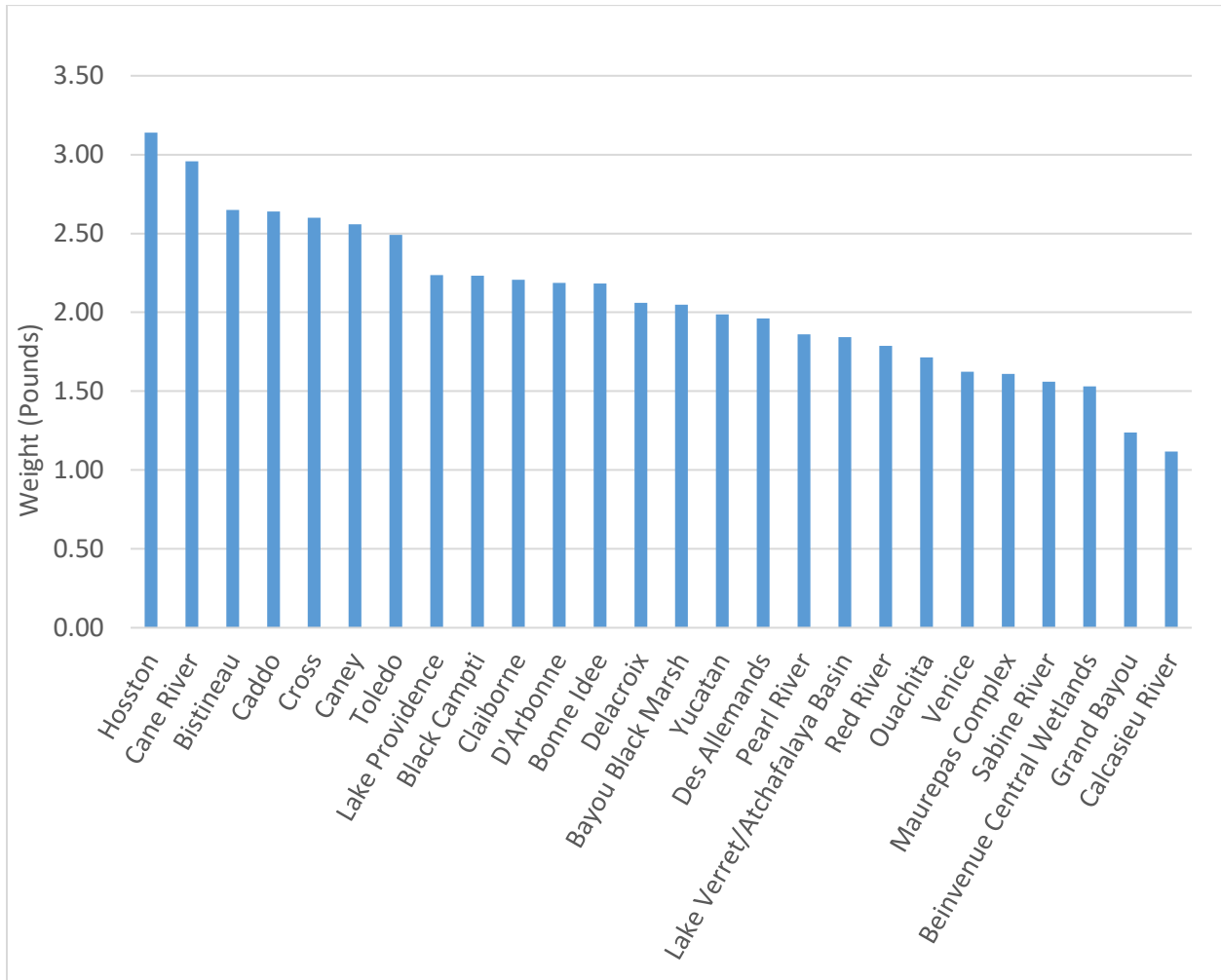


Figure 4. Average weight per bass weighed in at LATRIP tournaments from 26 different waterbodies in 2022.

Average Bag Weight per Boat

Delacroix ranks highest in the average bag weight per boat, partially due to high angler success rate. Delacroix ranks near the top for the percentage of boats bringing in a limit with only a few anglers not having fish to weigh. The Ouachita River had the lowest average of 2.37 pounds.

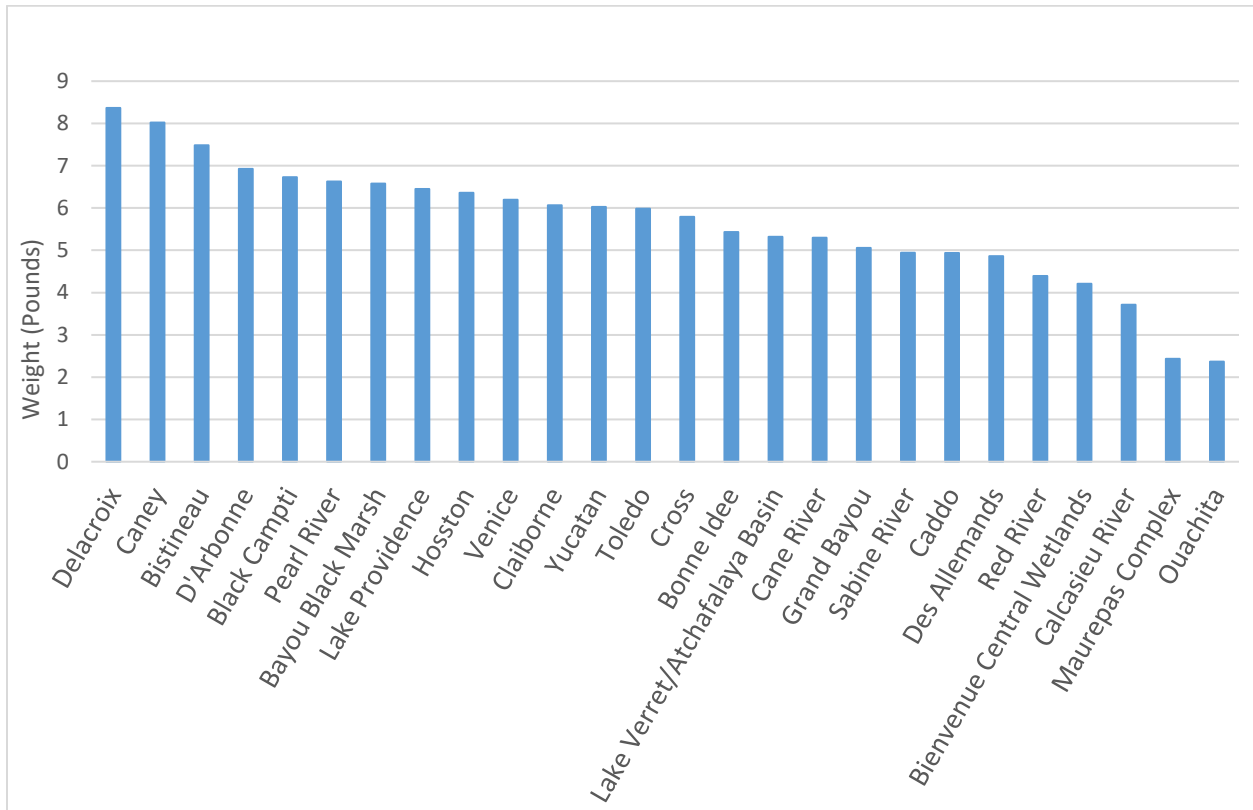


Figure 5. Average bag weight per boat at LATRIP tournaments from 26 waterbodies in 2022.

Percentage of Boats with Zero Bass to Weigh In

Venice ranked highest in this category with the fewest boats with zero bass to weigh in (9.09%). Success was much harder to come by for anglers on Caddo Lake, the Lake Maurepas complex and the Ouachita River in 2022 LATRIP tournaments.

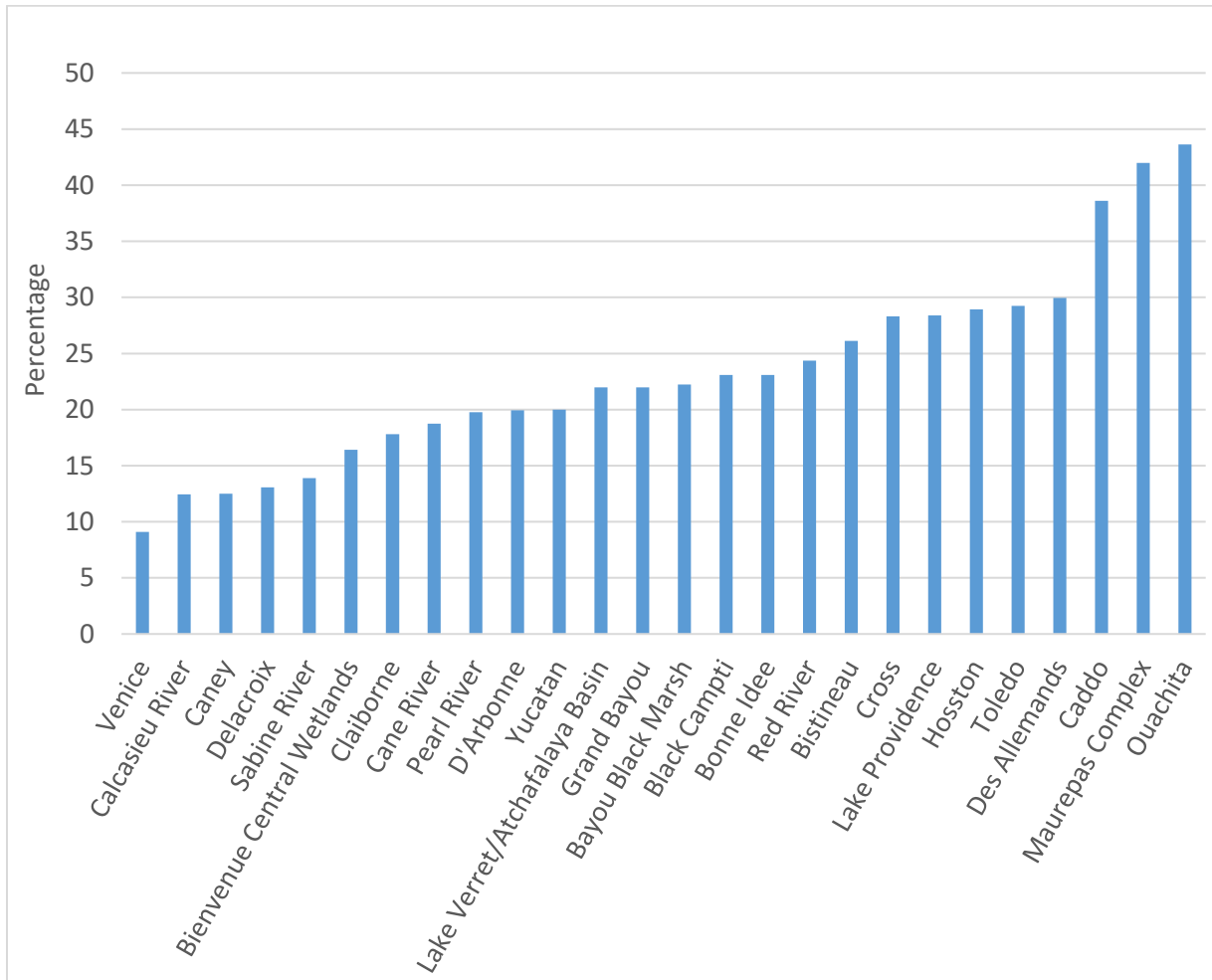


Figure 6. Percentage of boats with zero bass to weigh at LATRIP tournaments from 26 waterbodies in 2022.

Percentage of Boats with a 5 Bass Limit

The Pearl River ranked highest in the percentage of boats with a 5 bass limit (64.08%), while Caddo Lake, the Ouachita River, and the Lake Maurepas complex ranked near the bottom.

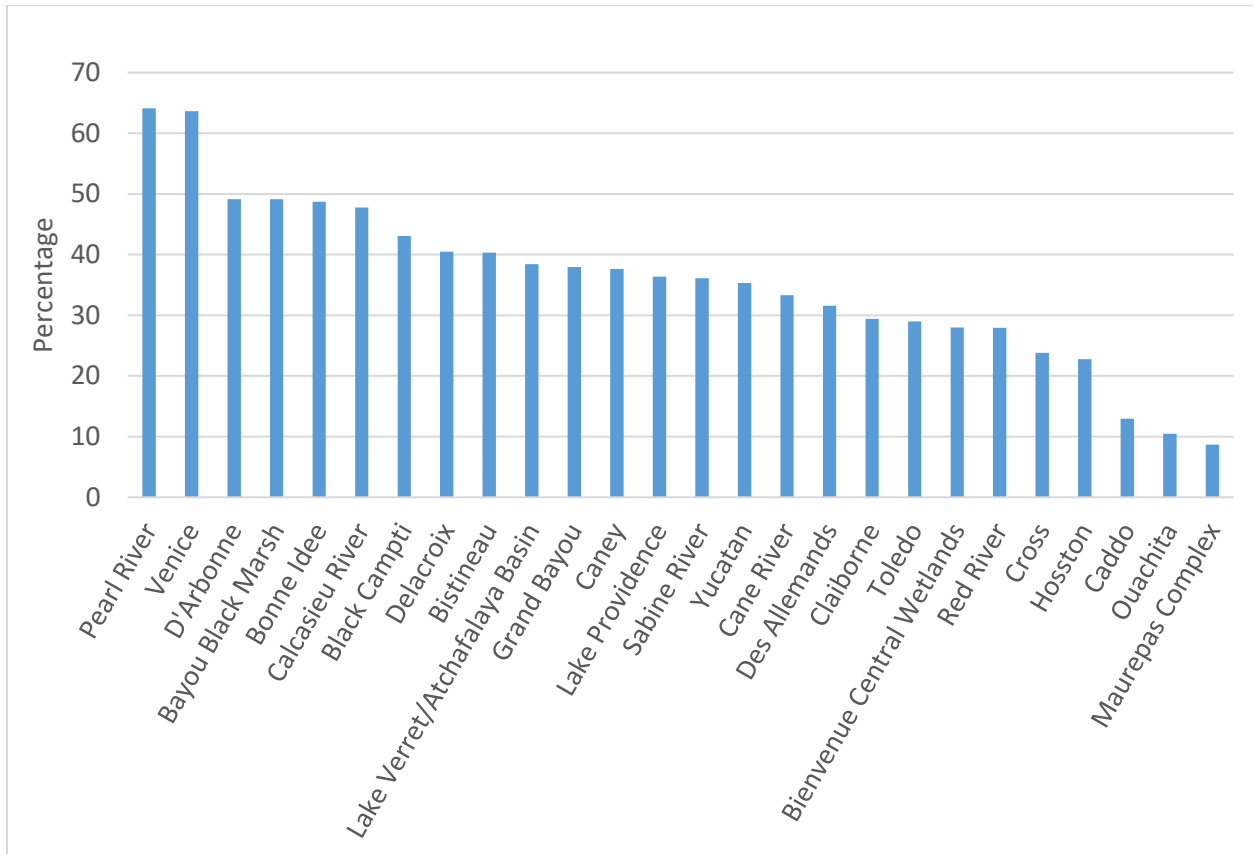


Figure 7. Percentage of boats with a 5 bass limit at LATRIP tournaments from 26 waterbodies in 2022.

Number of Angler Hours to Catch a Bass 5+ Pounds

Black Bayou Hosston ranked highest in this category with the least amount of angler hours required to catch a 5+ pound bass. Notice that the two river systems are on the higher end for the number of angler hours needed to catch a 5+ pound bass, likely due to less stable water conditions. Note that eight waterbodies included in LATRIP did not report catching a 5+ pound bass during a tournament. The number of angler hours needed to catch a 5+ pound bass is unknown for these waterbodies and therefore they are not represented in Figure 8 below.

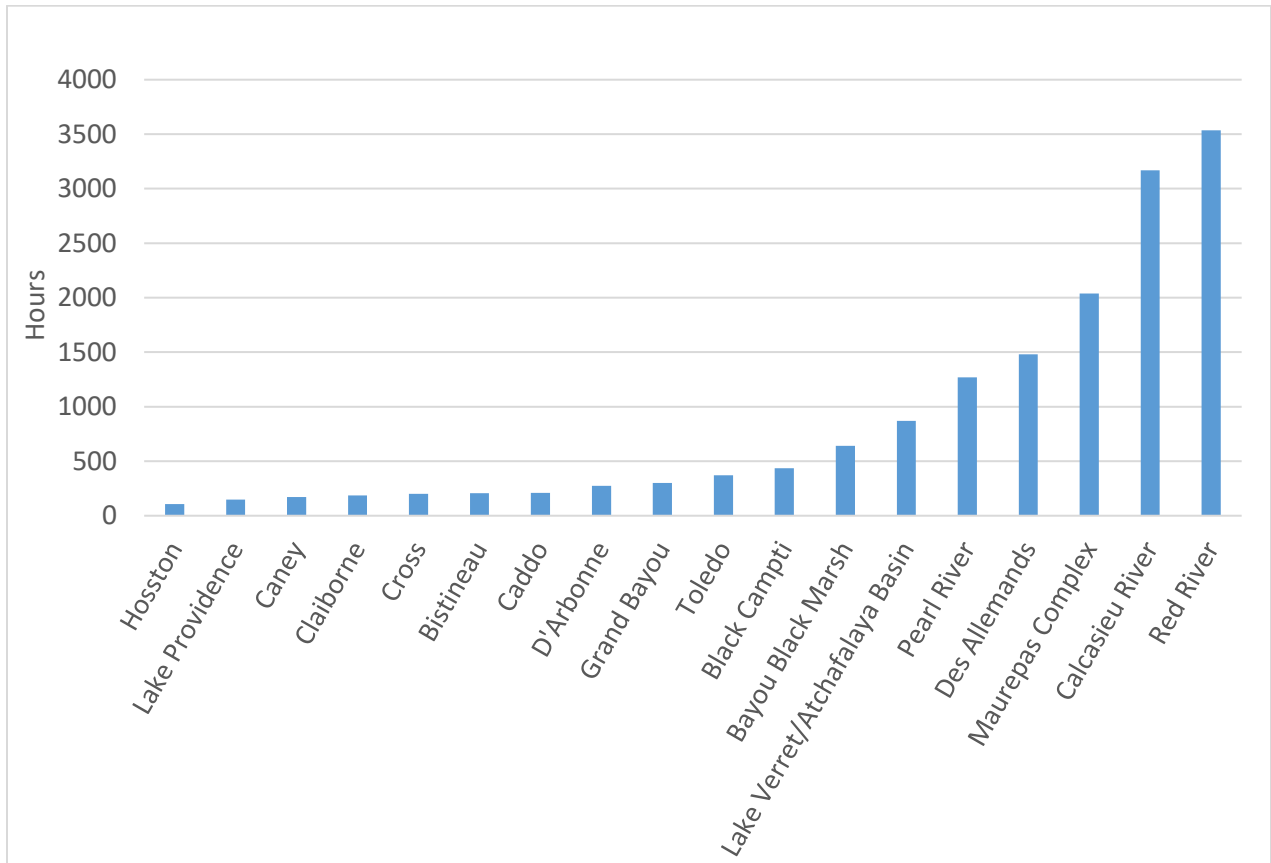


Figure 8. Number of angler hours necessary to catch a bass 5+ pounds at LATRIP tournaments from 18 waterbodies in 2022.

Average 1st Place Weight

Caney Lake (22.87 lbs.) and Lake Bistineau (20.16 lbs.) were ranked highest for the largest average 1st place weight for the 2022 LATRIP tournament season.

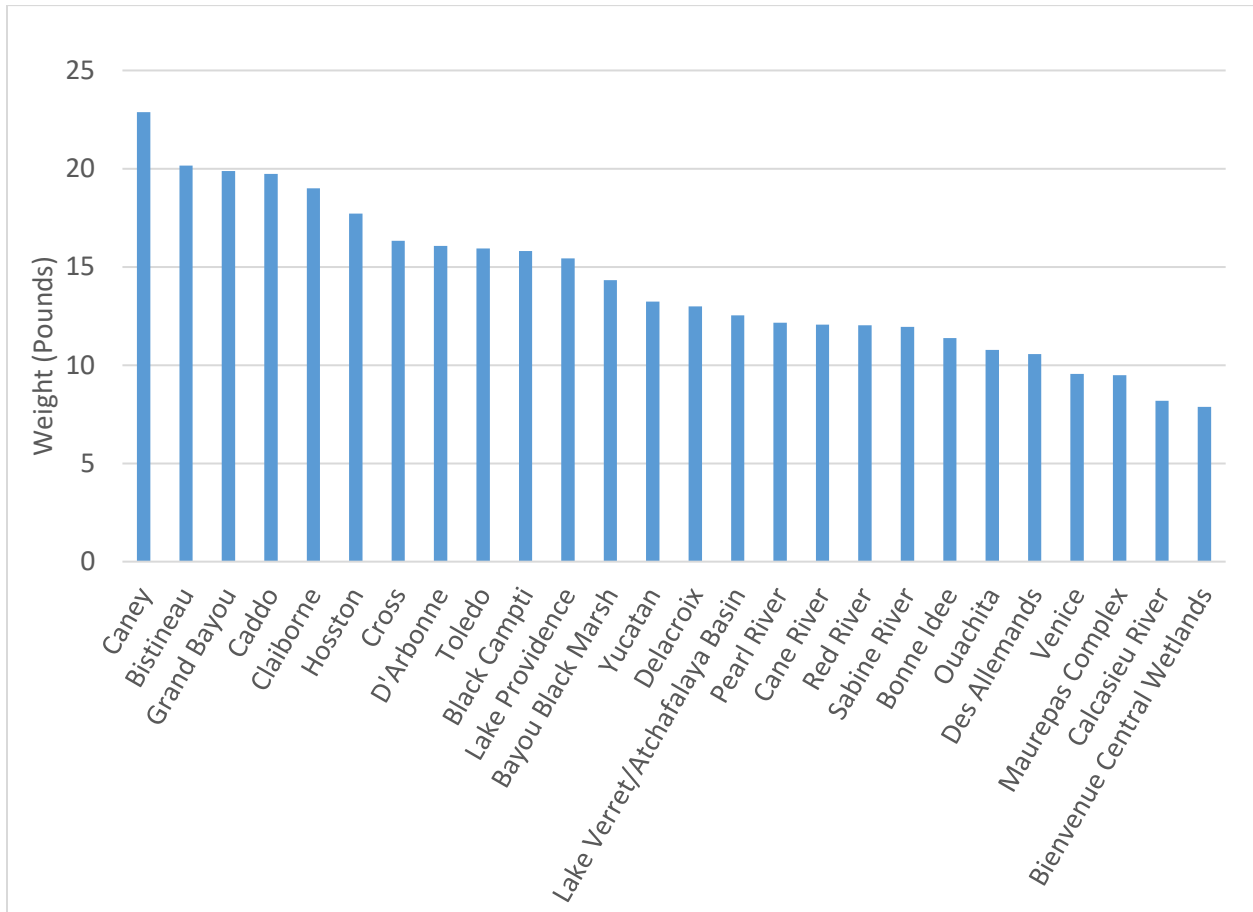


Figure 9. Average 1st place weight (winning weight) at LATRIP tournaments from 26 waterbodies in 2022.

Average Weight of Winning Big Bass

Caney Lake, Grand Bayou Reservoir, Black Bayou Hosston, and Lake Claiborne all boasted averages of over 7 pounds for winning big bass prizes.

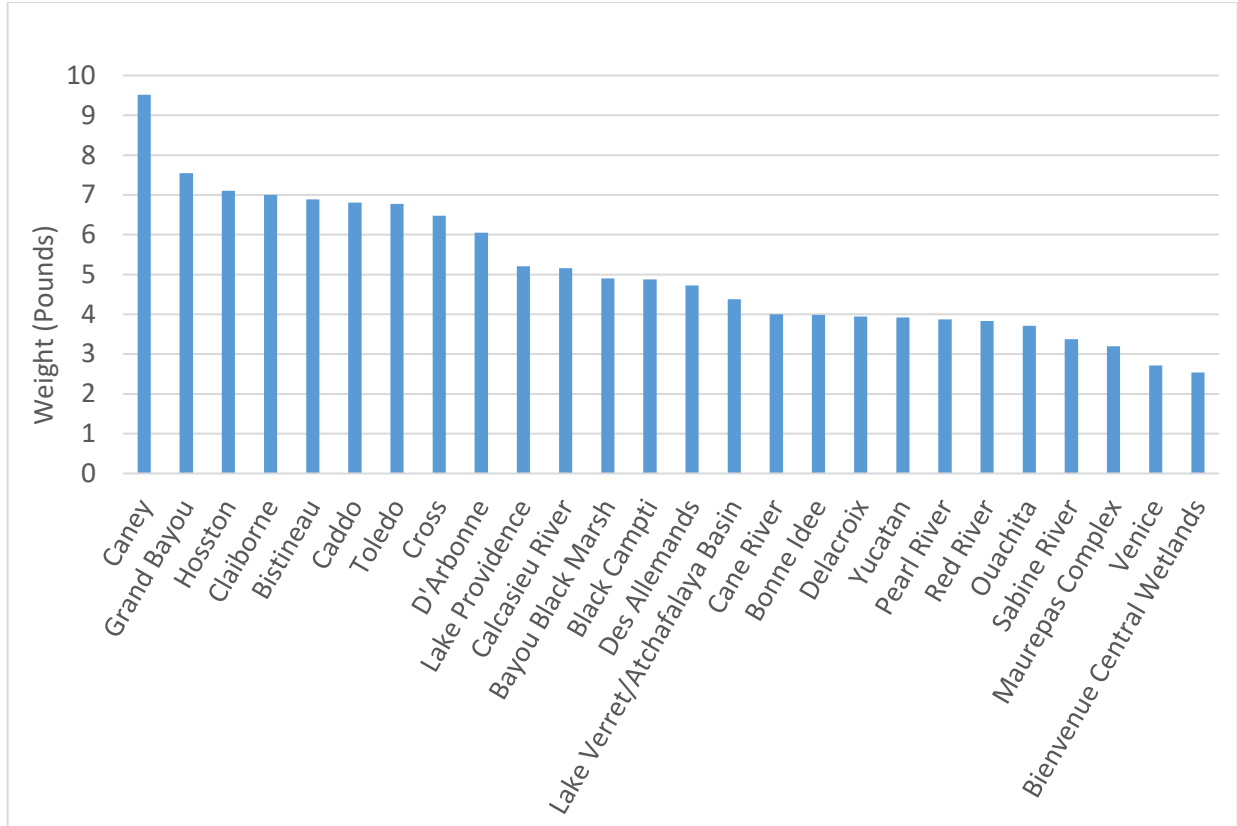


Figure 10. Average weight of winning Big Bass at LATRIP tournaments from 26 waterbodies in 2022.

Percentage of Boats with Bag Weights of 20+ Pounds

Caney Lake led the field with 5.45% of boats bringing in bags of 20+ pounds. Sixteen waterbodies failed to produce any bags of 20 pounds or more during LATRIP tournaments.

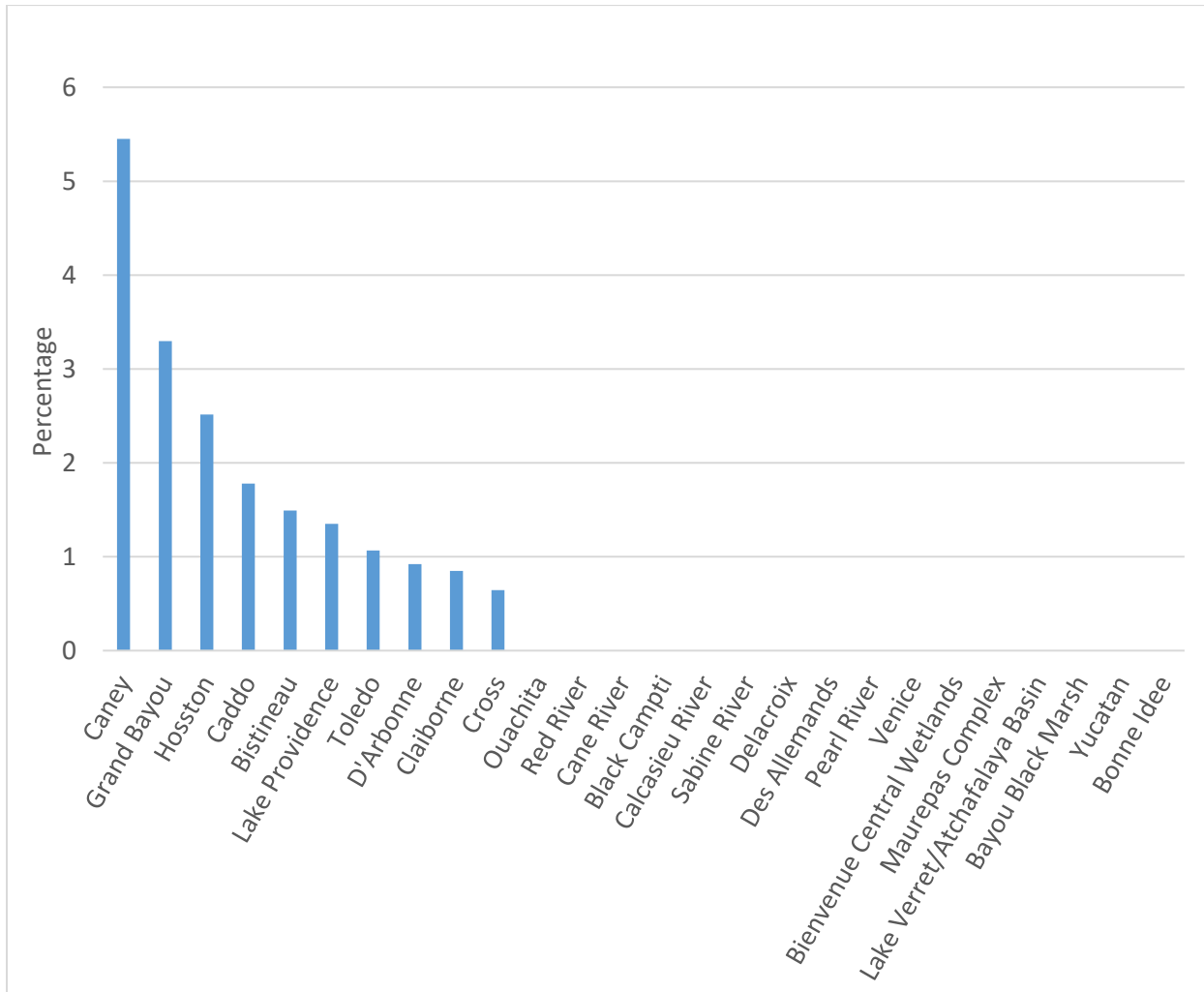


Figure 11. Percentage of boats at LATRIP tournaments with bags that were equal to or greater than 20 pounds in 2022.

Category Rankings

Overall Tournament Performance

In order to create a ranking system to evaluate which lake performed the best overall in 2022 LATRIP bass tournaments, all 14 individual metrics were included in this category. This ranking gives weight to waterbodies that not only perform well for winning weights, but also for high angler success. The graph below shows that Caney Lake ranked top in the state, scoring an impressive 329 out of a possible 364 points. Marsh and river systems generally ranked lower, likely due to less stable water conditions. Additionally, many coastal systems were recovering following major fish kills from Hurricanes Laura and Delta in 2020 along with Ida and Nicholas in 2021.

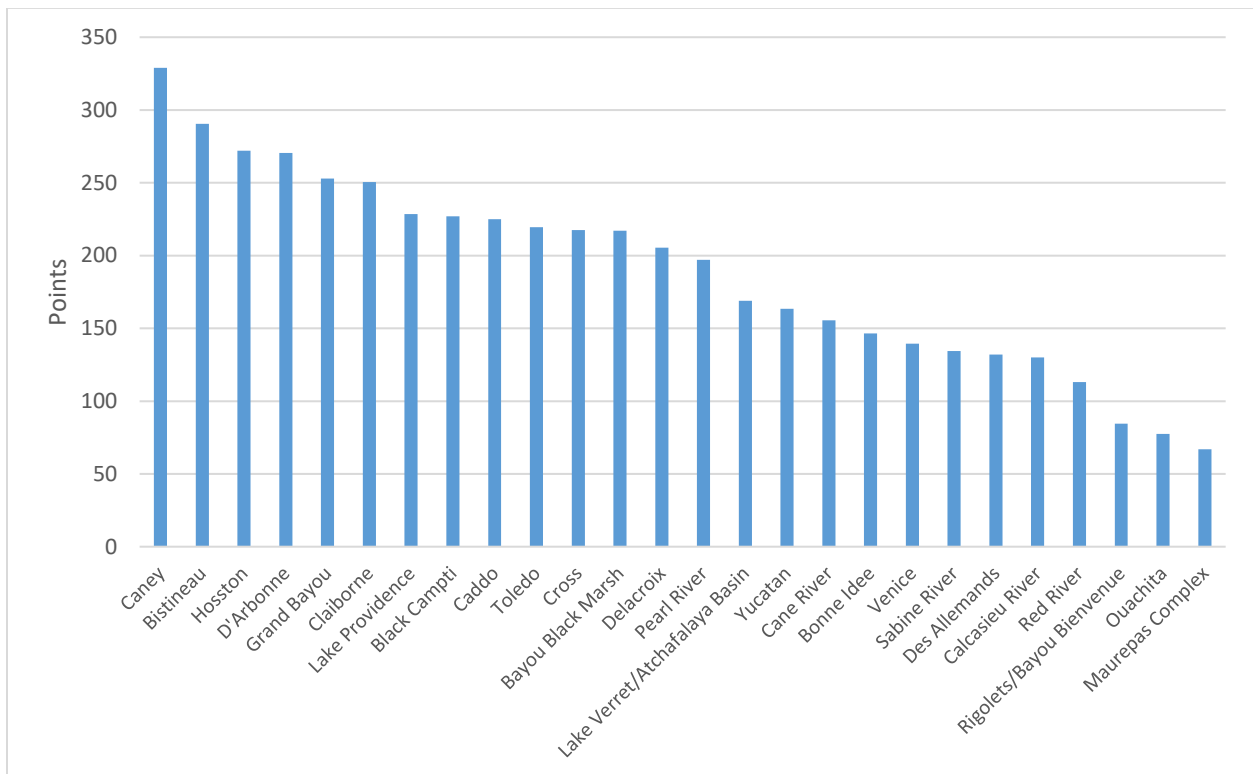


Figure 12. Comparison of 26 waterbodies based on overall LATRIP bass tournament performance in 2022.

Heavyweight Division

The Heavyweight Division ranking attempts to identify waterbodies that provide the best opportunity for tournament anglers to catch larger-size bass. Seven individual metrics were included: average weight per bass, average big bass, average 1st place weight, number of angler hours to catch a 5+ pound bass, average 2nd place big bass, percentage of boats with a 20+ pound bag, and percentage of boats with a 25+ pound bag. Again, Caney Lake, Black Bayou Hosston, and Lake Bistineau ranked near the top. Caddo Lake improved six places from its position in the overall ranking.

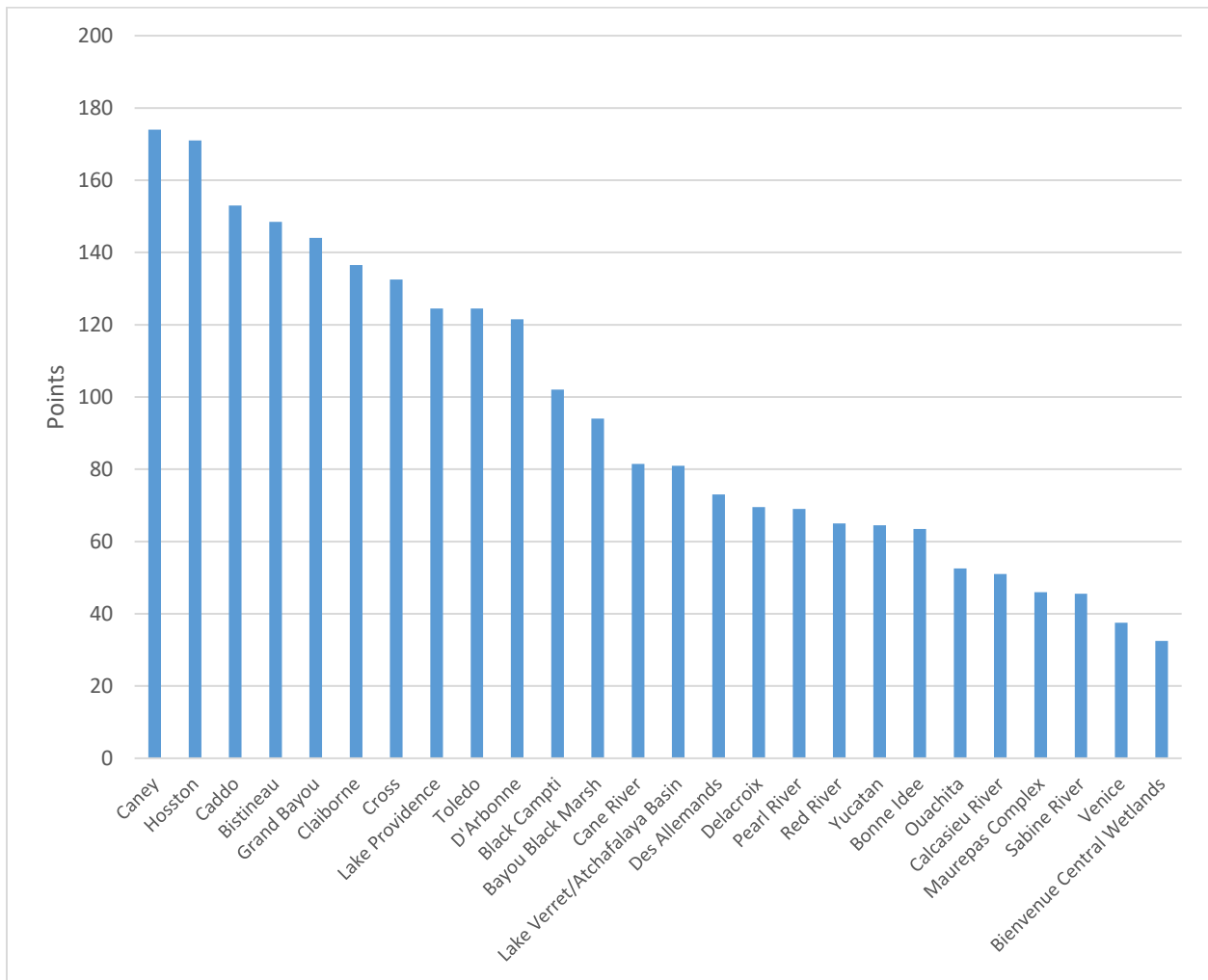


Figure 13. Comparison of 26 waterbodies focused on larger sized bass from LATRIP tournaments in 2022.

Toughest Waters to Fish

Waterbodies were ranked in an effort to determine which was the toughest to fish during the 2022 LATRIP tournament season. Five individual metrics were used to define this category: average number of bass per boat, percentage of boats with a limit, number of angler hours to catch a 5+ pound bass, percentage of boats with 10+ pound bags, and percentage of boats with 0 fish. The Ouachita River, Lake Maurepas Complex, and Bonne Idee were the waterbodies in which anglers had the most difficulty catching fish in 2022 LATRIP tournaments.

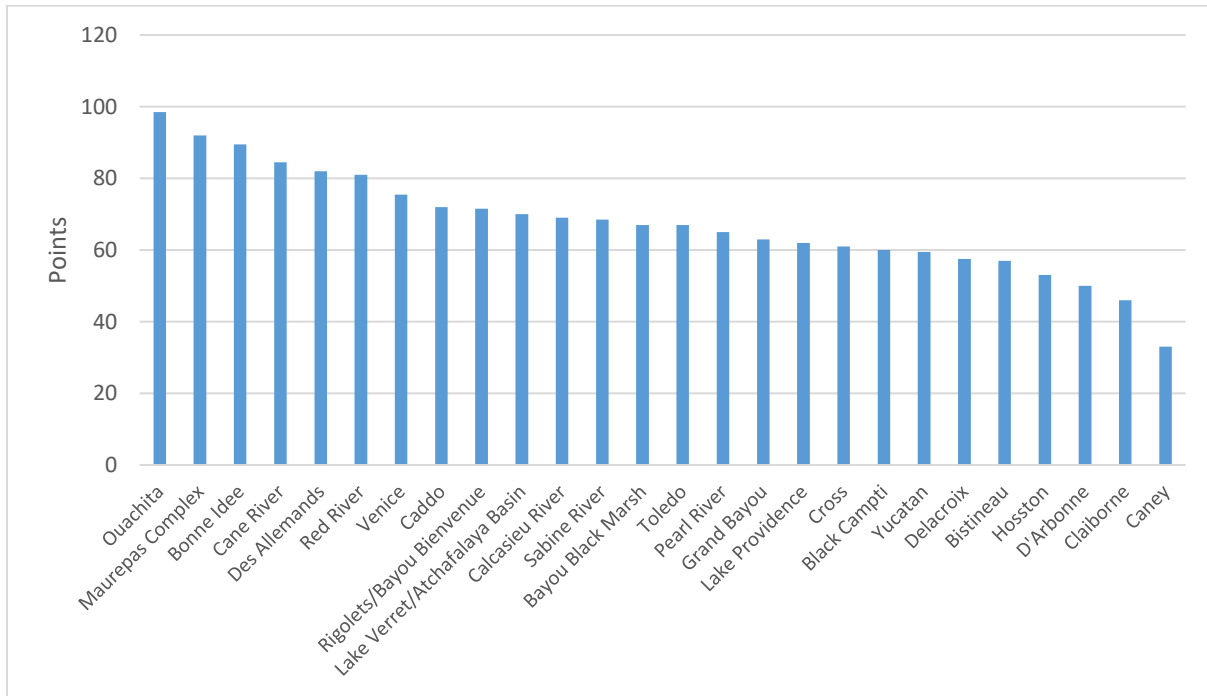


Figure 14. Comparison of 26 waterbodies focused on the toughest waterbodies to catch fish from at LATRIP tournaments in 2022. Waterbodies with a higher point total are more difficult to fish.

Fun Fishing Lakes (i.e., Easiest to Catch Numbers of Fish)

In an attempt to determine which lakes might be the best to hold a “fun” tournament, where more anglers have success, the following individual metrics were ranked: average number of bass per boat, percentage of boats with fish to weigh, percentage of boats with a limit, and percentage of boats with at least 10 pounds. Lake D’Arbonne and Caney Lake remain near the top, but are joined by several rivers and marsh systems where it is easier to catch more fish.

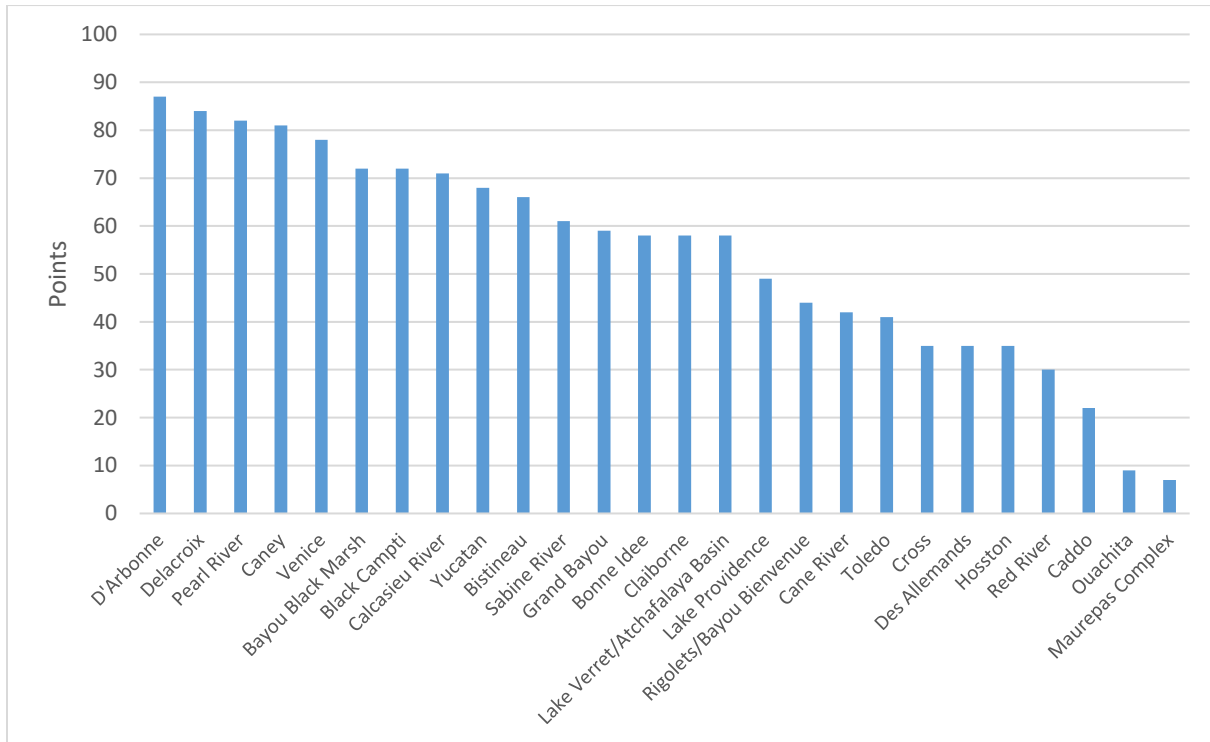


Figure 15. Comparison of angler success from 2022 LATRIP tournaments across 26 waterbodies.

Top Ten Big Bass

Table 2 below includes the 10 heaviest bass weighed in during a 2022 LATRIP tournament. Four were over 10 pounds.

Table 2. Heaviest Big Bass caught during 2022 tournament season.

Lake	Date	Big Bass	Tournament Club/Trail
Caney Lake	2/27/22	13.21	Media Bass North
Caney Lake	3/19/22	12.43	Louisiana Bass Nation North
Toledo Bend	3/5/22	12.16	Sportsman's Club
Caddo Lake	6/25/22	10.43	H&W Team Trail
False River	2/12/22	9.94	Fishers of Men South
Lake St. John	5/14/22	9.75	Tallulah Bass Club
Caney Lake	2/12/22	9.5	Twin City Bass Club (Monroe)
Lake Claiborne	2/19/22	9.14	North Webster Bass Club
Toledo Bend	2/5/22	9.12	Louisiana Bass Nation West Junior Division
Black Bayou Lake (Hosston)	5/21/22	8.98	North Webster Bass Club

Top Ten 1st Place Weights

Caney Lake was represented four times in the Top 10 heaviest bag weights, followed by three from Caddo Lake, two from Black Bayou Lake (Hosston) and one from Grand Bayou Reservoir (Table 3). With the exception of a May and a July tournament, all the heaviest bag weights came from an approximately 60-day period from late January through mid-March.

Table 3. Top 10 heaviest, 5-bass bag limits weighed in during the 2022 LATRIP tournament season.

Lake	1 st place weight (Lbs.)	Date	Club
Caney Lake	33.87	1/29/22	Media Bass North
Caddo Lake	30.03	3/13/22	High School Fishing League
Grand Bayou Reservoir	29.3	2/12/22	Funkbuster Team Trail
Caney Lake	28.88	2/27/22	Media Bass North
Black Bayou Lake (Hosston)	28.53	2/26/22	S'Port City Bass Club
Black Bayou Lake (Hosston)	28.01	5/21/22	North Webster Bass Club
Caddo Lake	27.06	3/6/22	Twin City Team Club (Shreveport)
Caddo Lake	27.0	7/10/22	Twin City Team Club (Shreveport)
Caney Lake	26.7	2/12/22	Twin City Bass Club (Monroe)
Caney Lake	26.55	3/19/22	Louisiana Bass Nation North

Number of Bass 5+ Pounds per Tournament

Table 4. Top lakes producing 5+ pound bass per LATRIP tournament in 2022.

Waterbody	Number of Bass 5+ Pounds per Tournament
Caney Lake	3.57
Lake Bistineau	3.0
False River	3.0
Caddo Lake	2.31
Black Bayou Lake (Hosston)	2.14
Corney Lake	2.0

2022 Tournament Club Statistics

Table 5. Summary statistics for each club from which LATRIP data were collected during the 2022 tournament season. Top ranks in each category listed in **BOLD**.

Clubs	Average # of boats per tournament	Percent of Boats with a limit	Average Winning weight (lbs.)	Average Big Bass (lbs.)	Average bag weight per boat (lbs.)
ARKLA Team Trail	44.75	38.17	14.89	4.80	5.78
Bass Busterz Bass Club	15.75	22.65	11.18	4.62	4.21
Bayou State Bass Club	29.11	23.74	12.06	5.38	3.97
Caernarvon Team Trail	19.16	86.01	14.35	4.05	9.02
Crescent City Bassmasters	8.5	11.70	6.29	NA	2.58
Delhi Bass Club	13.7	38.30	12.69	4.55	5.37
Eagle Claw Bass Club	7	30.25	6.84	2.37	3.55
Fishers of Men South	65.67	45.56	17.34	6.19	7.21
Funkbuster Team Trail	36.6	NA	20.27	6.48	6.33
H&W Team Tournament Trail	82.33	35.23	20.67	7.73	7.74
Hawgherders Bass Club	29	NA	15.25	6.70	4.70
High School Fishing League	91	16.02	19.57	6.87	4.30
Jr. Southwest Bassmasters	28	12.39	9.73	4.35	2.82
Junior Fishing League*	53.66	21.5*	11.01	5.74	2.81
LA High School Bass Nation East Juniors	21.67	16.67	9.48	3.47	3.1
LA High School Bass Nation East	138.33	27.46	14.43	4.97	4.06
LA High School Bass Nation North Juniors	23	24.60	14.48	5.75	4.96
LA High School Bass Nation North	149.5	47.69	24.61	9.78	8.81
LA High School Bass Nation State	125	5.6	11.27	3.85	1.74
LA High School Bass Nation State Juniors	25	0	3.47	2.64	0.85

Clubs	Average # of boats per tournament	Percent of boats with a limit	Average Winning weight (lbs.)	Average Big Bass (lbs.)	Average bag weight per boat (lbs.)
LA High School Bass Nation West Juniors	22	23.5	10.87	7.32	3.97
LA High School Bass Nation West	161	29.79	17.18	7.59	4.55
Liars and Lunkers	18.14	68.09	15.23	4.64	6.87
Lock Jaw Bass Club	11.37	31.84	11.69	4.32	4.81
Media Bass North (Individual)	31.67	32.04	20.29	7.44	5.88
Media Bass North (Team)	36.37	47.89	19.80	7.38	7.53
Media Bass South (Individual)	47.83	25.48	14.01	4.63	4.25
Media Bass South (Team)	37.5	62.20	16.78	5.80	7.88
National Bass Anglers Association	18.67	33.91	16.89	5.62	7.21
North Webster Bass Club	8.25	34.42	17.54	5.86	8.27
Southeast Bass Association	7.54	NA	9.50	3.02	6.06
S'Port City Bass Club	28.87	21.93	17.29	6.49	4.96
Sportsmans Club of SW LA	11.8	21.74	16.46	7.84	6.24
Tallulah Bass Club	9.8	NA	13.06	5.15	6.40
Twin City Bass Club	20.33	NA	20.36	7.93	7.81
Twin Cities Team Club	11.8	NA	15.92	6.35	5.59
Ultimate Bass Singles	21.8	40.93	19.49	6.68	7.99

*Calculated on a 3 fish limit

General Trends, Observations and Discussion

Generally speaking, the man-made reservoirs in central and north Louisiana rank higher for many of the individual metrics calculated in LATRIP. These lakes rank higher for largest bag weights, largest winning big bass, larger average size bass, higher percentage of boats with 20+ pound bags, etc. These waterbodies offer more stable water quality and a less stressful environment to bass than many of the swamps, marshes and coastal rivers in the southern portion of the state. Additionally, these lakes generally have a higher percentage of Florida bass genetics in the population.

Additionally, many coastal systems are recovering from major fish kills following Hurricanes Laura and Delta in 2020 and Ida and Nicholas in 2021. Historical fish kills from hurricanes may be a limiting factor in LDWF's attempts to get Florida bass genetics introduced into many of these systems

([https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Resources/Publications/Freshwater Inland Fish/2011 Evaluation of the 14-](https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Resources/Publications/Freshwater_Inland_Fish/2011_Evaluation_of_the_14-)

[Inch Minimum Length Limit for Largemouth Bass in the Atchafalaya Basin and Surrounding Waters Louisiana.pdf](https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Resources/Publications/Freshwater_Inland_Fish/2011_Evaluation_of_the_14-Inch_Minimum_Length_Limit_for_Largemouth_Bass_in_the_Atchafalaya_Basin_and_Surrounding_Waters_Louisiana.pdf)).

In those locations frequently impacted by hurricane related fish kills, bass are less likely to reach ages of 5+ years old where the advantages of Florida genetics become apparent. The populations must start over from nearly scratch every few years. Fish populations naturally recover quickly following catastrophic kills by increased reproduction and recruitment rates of the fish that remain alive. It is more difficult to integrate Florida bass fingerlings into the population when native bass are reproducing at such a high rate. Therefore, native northern bass dominate these populations and may explain the lower performance in some of the LATRIP individual metrics. It will be interesting to track the recoveries of these systems over time in tournament performances if additional storm-related kills can be avoided.

Through the process of collecting and compiling tournament data, several improvements were identified as needed and should be implemented in the future. A uniform format for reporting data to LDWF would be beneficial. In the 2022 season, the following variables were often missing from the dataset: 1) number of fish per boat, 2) number and weights of any fish over 5 pounds, 3) official start and end time of the tournament. Unfortunately, omissions of this information caused some data to be excluded in the analyses, or some assumptions to be made. Having a more complete dataset would be beneficial.

Acknowledgements

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries acknowledges the bass clubs and tournament organizers who voluntarily submitted information for this effort. Without their participation and desire to contribute to improving the natural resources of the Sportsman's Paradise, this effort would not have been possible. These efforts were funded in part by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Sport Fish Restoration Program.