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D1 Reservoirs –

District 1 has two large reservoirs, Cheat Lake near Morgantown and Tygart Lake near Grafton. Cheat Lake is a hydropower lake and its levels are permitted to fluctuate differently depending on the season. It's important to understand these water level fluctuations not only for angling, but for boat access. Throughout the summer, water levels only fluctuate two feet to enhance recreation. Sunset Marina is the only public motorboat ramp available during the summer months. Anglers can launch carry down watercraft (jon boats, kayaks, etc.) at the Ices Ferry Bridge access site and at the Cheat Lake Park. Although water levels only fluctuate 2 feet during the summer, anglers can still check Cheat Lake's water level at the following USGS website: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/wv/nwis/current/?type=flow>. Additionally, anglers may consider checking the flow of Cheat River at Albright as incoming river flows can influence fishing within the lake. Fishing during the summer months in Cheat Lake can be more challenging, with increasing water temperatures and heavy boat traffic during the day. Anglers can still find success targeting several species within the lake. Due to boat traffic and fish activity patterns, fishing is often more productive in early morning or late evening and in sheltered coves or embayments. Yellow Perch can be caught with success around the I-68 bridge area. A good tactic to find schools of Yellow Perch is to drift fish with live minnows, worms, or jigs at varying water depths. Although the Walleye population within Cheat Lake is improving, summertime can be challenging. Quality size male Walleyes often remain in the riverine portion of the lake upstream of I-68 throughout the summer. These fish may be easier to target than females that suspend in deeper water within the main lake. Walleye in this lake are not overly abundant but grow fast and large. Anglers can find success targeting Largemouth Bass in the large embayments (Morgans and Rubles Run) and fish will often be located near woody structure. Smallmouth Bass fishing can be good from the I-68 bridge area and upstream in the riverine section. The rocky habitat upstream holds good numbers of Smallmouth Bass. Channel Catfish are also common and can provide great fishing in the summer months. Channel Catfish can be found throughout the lake and caught on a variety of baits including chicken liver, stink baits, worms, and cut bait. White Bass are also common within Cheat Lake. Anglers should watch for schools of White Bass breaking the surface feeding on baitfish. Once the schools are found, jigs, spoons, small crankbaits can be very effective at catching several fish in a short amount of time. Cheat Lake also has excellent sunfish opportunities. Large Pumpkinseed sunfish and Bluegills can be found in coves and other nearshore areas. Sunfish will often spawn throughout the summer and anglers can look for sunfish nests to target aggressive fish. Crappie fishing can still be productive in the summer if anglers target downed trees or submerged wood next to deeper water. Small jigs, in-line spinners, and minnows can be very effective for these tasty gamefish. Anglers without a boat have a couple of shoreline fishing opportunities where a variety of species can be caught. Extensive shoreline areas and fishing piers can be found at Cheat Lake Park out Morgans Run Road. This area of the lake provides opportunities for Largemouth Bass, sunfish, White Bass and catfish. The Ices Ferry Bridge fishing access site is also a good shoreline area to catch a variety of species. Anglers may catch Yellow Perch, Walleye, catfish, Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass. A fishing pier in the tailwater area just below the dam also provides good fishing opportunities for Walleye, Hybrid Striped Bass, and Channel Catfish.

Tygart Lake is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control lake having extreme water level fluctuations throughout the year. Summer pool elevation for Tygart Lake is 1093.5 feet above sea level. Although this level remains fairly consistent throughout the summer, anglers should be aware that heavy precipitation events and high river levels can cause water levels to increase. Like Cheat Lake, boat traffic on Tygart Lake becomes heavy in summer, which along with fish activity patterns, can make fishing more difficult. During difficult periods anglers should focus their efforts in sheltered coves or embayments, or fish during early morning or late evening hours. Tygart Lake is known as a very good Walleye and Smallmouth Bass lake, with Crappie, Channel Catfish, White Bass and Musky also available. Tygart Lake has an excellent reproducing Walleye population with most being “pan-sized”. During the summer months Walleye will transition to deeper water especially during daylight hours, often deeper than 30 feet, and sometimes at depths greater than 50 feet. Many anglers locate fish by trolling at varying depths using crankbaits or nightcrawlers or minnow tipped jigs on bottom bouncers. Tygart Lake is steep sided and has lots of shoreline rocky habitat for Smallmouth Bass where they feed on crayfish and shiners. Crankbaits, jerkbaits, and topwater lures can all be productive. Night crawlers, minnows, and crayfish are very good Smallmouth Bass baits when artificial lures aren’t producing. White Bass can often be seen chasing shiners near the surface, and this is a great time to cast small spoons or roostertails for some fast action. There are several areas throughout the lake where fish habitat structures have been placed by the WVDNR and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers including near Tygart Lake State Park and at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area. These are good places to cast small jigs, in-line spinners, minnows, or meal worms to catch Crappie and other sunfish. Additionally, Walleye are found in the tailwater but catch rates often decline during the summer months. A boat ramp is available in the tailwater, and anglers can use the shoreline also. The shoreline provides very good access but can be difficult to navigate due to large rocks and sometimes slippery conditions. Daily lake and tailwater conditions can be obtained by calling the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at: 304-265-5953

D1 Nav Rivers –

Both Ohio River and Monongahela River are within District 1. Several dams on both rivers provide good shoreline fishing access and boats are not needed or permitted in these areas due to safety. A variety of species can be caught in navigable rivers, especially in the tailwater areas downstream of dams during the summer. Jigs tipped with minnows fished near the bottom or along rocky banks in low light conditions can be very productive for Walleye and Sauger. Tailwater areas are popular for White Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass and these species can be caught using spoons, jigs, or surface lures. Fishing for Channel Catfish can be very productive during the summer. Monongahela River has an excellent Channel Catfish population as they are very abundant and reach large sizes. They can be caught using live bait, cut bait, and stink baits. Channel Catfish are found throughout the river in good numbers but tailwater areas and areas of the river near structure or tributaries are often productive. Flathead Catfish are less common on Monongahela River but can reach good sizes of 40-inches or more. These fish are often slow growing and very old. Fish larger than 30 inches are often 20 years or older! For those targeting large Flathead Catfish, Ohio River is the place to go as it holds lots of large Flatheads. These fish are active during the summer but can become more difficult to catch during the hottest periods. Good techniques to catch Flathead Catfish are to bottom fish or drift circle hooks baited with live bait near creek mouths, in eddies, near large woody structure and off rocky banks.

D1 Rivers/Streams –

Cheat, Tygart, and West Fork Rivers are perhaps the most popular warmwater river fisheries in District 1. Upper Cheat River offers very good Smallmouth Bass fishing and some bonus Rock Bass. The Cheat River water trail offers very good access to this beautiful river for either float or wade fishing. Tygart River provides opportunities for Smallmouth Bass and is becoming well known for its Musky fishery. West Fork River has been known as a very good Musky stream, but the Smallmouth Bass, Channel Catfish, and Flathead Catfish are all abundant. Other notable Smallmouth Bass and Rock Bass streams within District 1 are Buckhannon River, Fish Creek, Fishing Creek, Buffalo Creek (Brooke County), Dunkard Creek and Dry Fork of Cheat River. Three-inch twister tails, crankbaits, crayfish imitations, small spinners, plastic baits such as flukes or dingers, or buzz baits can all be excellent Smallmouth Bass lures. However, simply using live bait such as nightcrawlers, crayfish, or minnows can be just as and sometimes more effective. Good numbers of Smallmouth Bass can be caught during the summer, but larger fish tend to be more challenging to catch. Adequate gear for catching Smallmouth Bass in these smaller rivers would be a six-foot medium action rod and spinning reel spooled with six to eight-pound monofilament line. Anglers can have lots of action catching good numbers of Smallmouth Bass, Rock Bass, and sunfish floating or wading these small streams with just a handful of lures. Anglers should target deeper pools, current breaks, large boulders, and woody debris for most species including Smallmouth Bass, Rock Bass, Musky, sunfish, and Channel Catfish. During the hottest periods, fish will position themselves closer to current created by riffles and runs where water temperatures are cooler and oxygen levels are higher. Use the WVDNR fishing map to gather information of streams and fishing opportunities near you:

<https://www.mapwv.gov/huntfish/map/?v=fish>

D1 Impoundments -

District 1 has over twenty small impoundments scattered throughout each county that provide good access and excellent fishing opportunities. These impoundments typically have excellent Largemouth Bass and Bluegill fisheries. Panfish are popular with both seasoned and novice anglers as they can provide hours of fun and are excellent table fare. Bluegill can be found near brush, downed trees, or shoreline vegetation. During summer, Bluegill spawning will continue and anglers can often find aggressive fish guarding nest sites. Fancy and expensive equipment is not needed to enjoy catching Bluegill this time of year. Crickets, meal worms, and red worms floated under bobbers on a 10-foot cane pole can be extremely effective and enjoyable. Bluegill can also be caught with small in-line spinners and small plastic or hair jigs on typical spinning or spincast reels on a light to medium action rod. Topwater lures such as small poppers and other small topwater baits can be effective and fun for catching large Bluegill in summer. Small impoundments such as Dents Run Lake, Teter Creek Lake, Fairfax Ponds, Mason Lake, and Dixon Lakes are known to have good Bluegill fisheries. Our small impoundments also provide excellent Largemouth Bass fishing, often better than our large reservoirs. Anglers may find largemouth near shoreline structure or vegetation. Topwater action can be extremely fun for anglers using buzzbaits, poppers, frog imitations, etc., especially in early morning and late evening hours. Dunkard Fork Lake and Curtisville Lake are known for exceptional largemouth bass fisheries. Keep in mind that many small impoundments stratify during mid- to late summer, meaning that at greater depths (but sometimes as shallow as 6-8 feet in muddier waters) there may be little to no oxygen available. In these conditions fish will be located in shallower water where oxygen is available. Catchable

catfish will be stocked the first week of June in the following 9 small impoundments: Tomlinson Run, Dunkard Fork, Mason, Coopers Rock, Newburg, Pendleton, Teter Creek, Hinkle, and Deegan Lakes.

Use the WVDNR fishing map to find new places to fish near you:

<https://www.mapwv.gov/huntnfish/map/?v=fish>