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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 water 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. During September and October lake levels fluctuate two feet, and from November through December daily water levels can fluctuate 13 feet. In September and October, Sunset Marina is the only public boat launch available to power boats. Beginning in November, boaters need to use the boat ramp at the park near Cheat Lake dam. As days become shorter and water temperatures decrease in the fall, fishing for a variety of species heats up. Cheat Lake has good numbers of Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass. Largemouth Bass are often located near woody structure and aquatic vegetation often found in Ruble and Morgans Run embayments. Smallmouth Bass tend to be scattered throughout the main lake and concentrated into the riverine section in rocky areas. Bass anglers often have the some of the very best fishing of the year in September and October. During the fall, Walleye and Yellow Perch tend to congregate in the middle section of Cheat Lake. Walleye are reproducing with some success in Cheat Lake, but the population is supplemented every other year with stockings from the WVDNR. Walleye in this lake are not overly abundant but grow fast and large. The Ices Ferry Bridge fishing access site is a good area for shoreline anglers to catch both Walleye and Yellow Perch. Channel Catfish are abundant in Cheat Lake. These fish have a strong migration pattern as they congregate at the head of the lake during warmer months but move towards deep water as temperature cools near the dam. As the water temperatures decrease in the fall, Crappie and other Sunfish will move closer to shore throughout the lake. During cold periods in fall, minnows fished around downed trees can be very effective for these tasty gamefish. A fishing pier in the tailwater area just below the dam provides excellent fishing opportunities for Walleye and Sauger during the fall.

Tygart Lake is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control lake having extreme water level fluctuations. The winter drawdown is 60 feet below summer pool. Typically, lake drawdown begins following Labor Day. There are three public boat ramps on Tygart River, with two allowing boats to be launched near winter pool. The reduced water volume in the lake condenses fish and provides lots of shoreline for anglers without boats. 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 is steep sided and has lots of shoreline rocky habitat for Smallmouth Bass, which is much more abundant than Largemouth Bass. September and October typically provide bass anglers with improved fishing over the hot summer months when Smallmouth Bass feed on crayfish and shiners near shoreline. Tygart Lake has an excellent reproducing Walleye population with most being "pan-sized". During fall, Walleye are scattered throughout the lake, but anglers should concentrate on rocky points during the day and in shallow water during low-light periods where Walleye will be chasing abundant Emerald Shiners. As the lake level decreases during fall, White Bass can often be seen chasing shiners near the surface, and this is a great time to cast small spoons for some fast action. The tailwater area just below the dam is stocked with Trout once within the two weeks following Columbus Day in October. Walleye will begin moving through the dam in late November or early December and provide an excellent fishery. A boat ramp is available

in the tailwater, and anglers can use the shoreline also. The shoreline provides 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. In District 1's portion of the upper Ohio River, Hannibal tailwater at New Martinsville provides the best shoreline access for anglers. Pike Island tailwater near Wheeling has a fishing pier on the Ohio shore that also provides good river access. Morgantown tailwater provides the best angler access on West Virginia's portion of Monongahela River, but good fishing can also be had at the Hildebrand and Opekiska tailwaters. To provide exciting fishing experiences, thousands of hybrid striped bass are stocked annually into Ohio and Monongahela rivers. During autumn, these fish tend to congregate in the tailwater areas below dams, at the heads of islands, tributary mouths, and warmwater discharges, especially as water temperatures decrease. Eddies and back-current areas in tailwaters are especially good places. Chasing Hybrid Striped Bass and White Bass with topwater lures that mimic baitfish can be very productive and exciting. Additionally, Walleye and Sauger are found at the mouths of tributaries, island backwaters, and some main channel shorelines covered in riprap. Depending on swiftness of the current, 1/8 – 3/8 oz jigs tipped with minnows fished near the bottom in these areas, especially in low-light conditions, can be very productive for Walleye and Sauger. In recent years, anglers have reported catching Walleye up to 30-inches on both rivers, so anglers may want to use plastic swimbaits up to four or five inches or large crankbaits if targeting larger fish. Flathead Catfish are very common in Ohio River with some giants available to anglers, especially in September and October. Excellent Channel Catfish fishing can be had almost anywhere on Monongahela River. Areas to target Catfish are deep pools at tributary mouths or outside bends and tailwater areas below dams. Good techniques to catch Flathead Catfish are to bottom fish or drift circle hooks baited with live bait near creek mouths, in eddies and off rocky banks in tailwater areas. Channel Catfish can be readily caught on stink bait, cut bait, night crawlers, and chicken liver. In the upper Ohio River, for smallmouth bass, fish shoals that have formed at the mouths of creeks or the rocky banks below the tailwaters of dams. On both Ohio and Monongahela rivers, target largemouth bass in areas of remaining vegetation along the shoreline, near brush piles or in tributary backwaters. Muskellunge are common on Monongahela River and anglers successfully catch these toothy fish with decreasing fall temperatures by casting and trolling large crank baits.

D1 Rivers/Streams –

Cheat, Tygart, and West Fork Rivers provide excellent fishing opportunities in District 1. Upper Cheat River offers very good Smallmouth Bass fishing and some bonus Rock Bass. Cheat River water trail offers good access to this beautiful river for either float or wade fishing. In September and October, Smallmouth Bass fishing can be exceptional with decreasing water temperatures, but float fishing can become difficult due to low water during this time of year. Typically, a flow less than 400 cfs at the USGS Parsons gage means lots of dragging kayaks and canoes. Tygart River provides very good Smallmouth Bass fishing and is well known for its Musky fishery also. West Fork River has been known as a very good Musky stream, but the Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass, Channel Catfish, and Flathead Catfish are all abundant. Other notable Smallmouth Bass and Rock Bass streams within District 1 are Buckhannon River (Barbour County), Fish Creek (Marshall County), Fishing Creek (Wetzel), Buffalo Creek (Brooke County), Dunkard Creek

(Monongalia County) and Dry Fork of Cheat River (Tucker County). Three-inch twister tails, crankbaits, crayfish imitations, small spinners, plastic baits such as hellgrammites and 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. 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. Blackwater River in Tucker County and Tygart River in Taylor County just below Tygart Dam receive fall trout stockings once within the two weeks following Columbus Day in October. Use the WVDNR fishing map to gather information of stream fishing opportunities near you: <https://www.mapwv.gov/huntfish/map/?v=fish>

D1 Impoundments -

Several small impoundments in District 1 provide excellent fishing opportunities for family fun and for those looking for good fishing in a quiet setting during the fall colors. Many of these impoundments are stocked with Trout in the spring, but once trout fishing season is over, crowds are minimal. During September and October when water temperatures cool, Largemouth Bass fishing can be excellent in small impoundments such as Curtisville Lake (Marion County), Dunkard Fork Lake (Marshall County), Castlemans Run Lake (Brooke County), and Dents Run Lake (Marion County). Additionally, several impoundments such as Dixon Lake (Monongalia County), Teter Creek Lake (Barbour County), and Fairfax ponds provide very good bluegill fishing. Coopers Rock Pond (Monongalia County) and Teter Creek Lake (Barbour County) both receive fall trout stockings once within the two weeks following Columbus Day in October. Use the WVDNR fishing map to gather information of small impoundment fishing opportunities near you: <https://www.mapwv.gov/huntfish/map/?v=fish>