

The forecast is produced using data collected by fisheries biologists during their annual lake monitoring activities (which include test netting and electroshocking). Not every lake is sampled each year. Waters with low densities of certain species may not be listed.

Data is separated into three categories – reservoirs (those larger than 1,200 acres), lakes (waters from 10 to 1,200 acres), and ponds (waters smaller than 10 acres) – because sampling on small water bodies may not be comparable with that on larger waters.

Tables have been created for popular species and include a **Density Rating**, **Preferred Rating**, **Lunker Rating**, **Biggest Fish**, **Biologist's Rating**, and **3-Year Average**.

The **Density Rating** is the number of fish that were high-quality size or larger sampled per unit of sampling effort. The number, listed in parentheses at the top of the **Density Rating** column, is the length of fish considered acceptable to most anglers and is different for each species. The higher the **Density Rating**, the more high-quality-sized or larger fish per surface acre in the lake. Theoretically, a lake with a **Density Rating** of 30 has twice as many high-quality-sized fish per acre as a lake with a **Density Rating** of 15.

The **Preferred Rating** identifies how many above-average-sized fish a water contains. For example, a lake may have a good density of crappie, but few fish over 10 inches. The **Preferred Rating** tells you which lake to go to for a chance to catch bigger fish.

The **Lunker Rating** is similar to the **Density Rating**, but it tells you the relative density of lunker-sized fish in the lake. A lunker is a certain length of fish considered a trophy by most anglers. It also differs with each species and that length is listed in parentheses at the top of the **Lunker Rating** column. For example, most anglers consider a channel catfish longer than 28 inches a lunker. Many lakes may have a **Lunker Rating** of 0, but this does not mean there are no big fish in that lake. It just means that no lunker fish were caught during sampling, and they may be less abundant than in lakes with positive **Lunker Ratings**.

You can use the **Density Rating** and **Lunker Rating** together. If you want numbers, go with the highest **Density Rating**. If you want only big fish, go with the **Lunker Rating**. However, a lake with a good **Preferred Rating** might be a better choice.

The **Biggest Fish** column lists the weight of the largest fish caught during sampling.

The **Biologist's Rating** adds a human touch to the forecast and allows each biologist to consider environmental conditions that may have affected the sampling. They also consider previous years' data. A rating of P (poor), F (fair), G (good), or E (excellent) will be in the last column. Sometimes the **Density Rating** may not agree with the **Biologist's Rating** and means the **Density Rating** may not accurately reflect the biologist's opinion of the fishery.

The **3-Year Average** rating refers to the averaging of the **Density Rating** over the previous three years of sampling to help show a trend for a particular lake.

This brochure is designed to help improve your fishing success. Your ability to catch fish depends on many factors such as water temperature, water clarity, weather, angling skills, fishing pressure, and density of fish in the lake (i.e. number of fish/acre). You may not have much control over many of these factors, but you can use these tables to select a high-density population of your favorite species.

Be sure to keep a copy of the current fishing regulations summary in your tackle box. The pamphlet includes a listing of laws and regulations, information about aquatic nuisance species precautions and distribution, as well as all the length and creel limits for reservoirs and state and community lakes. The pamphlet also has an application for a Master Angler Award, as well as a list of state records.



Purchase your fishing license with the all-new HuntFish KS mobile app. Available in the Apple App and Google Play stores.



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KANSAS Fishing Forecast 2020



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