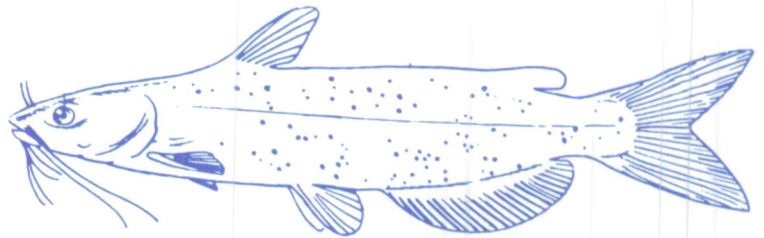
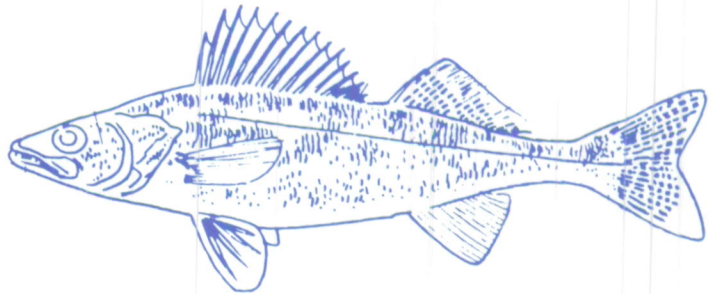
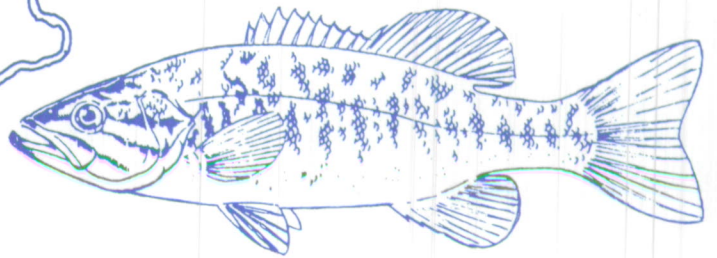


# FOX RIVER ACCESS AREAS & FISHING GUIDE



CHAIN O' LAKES

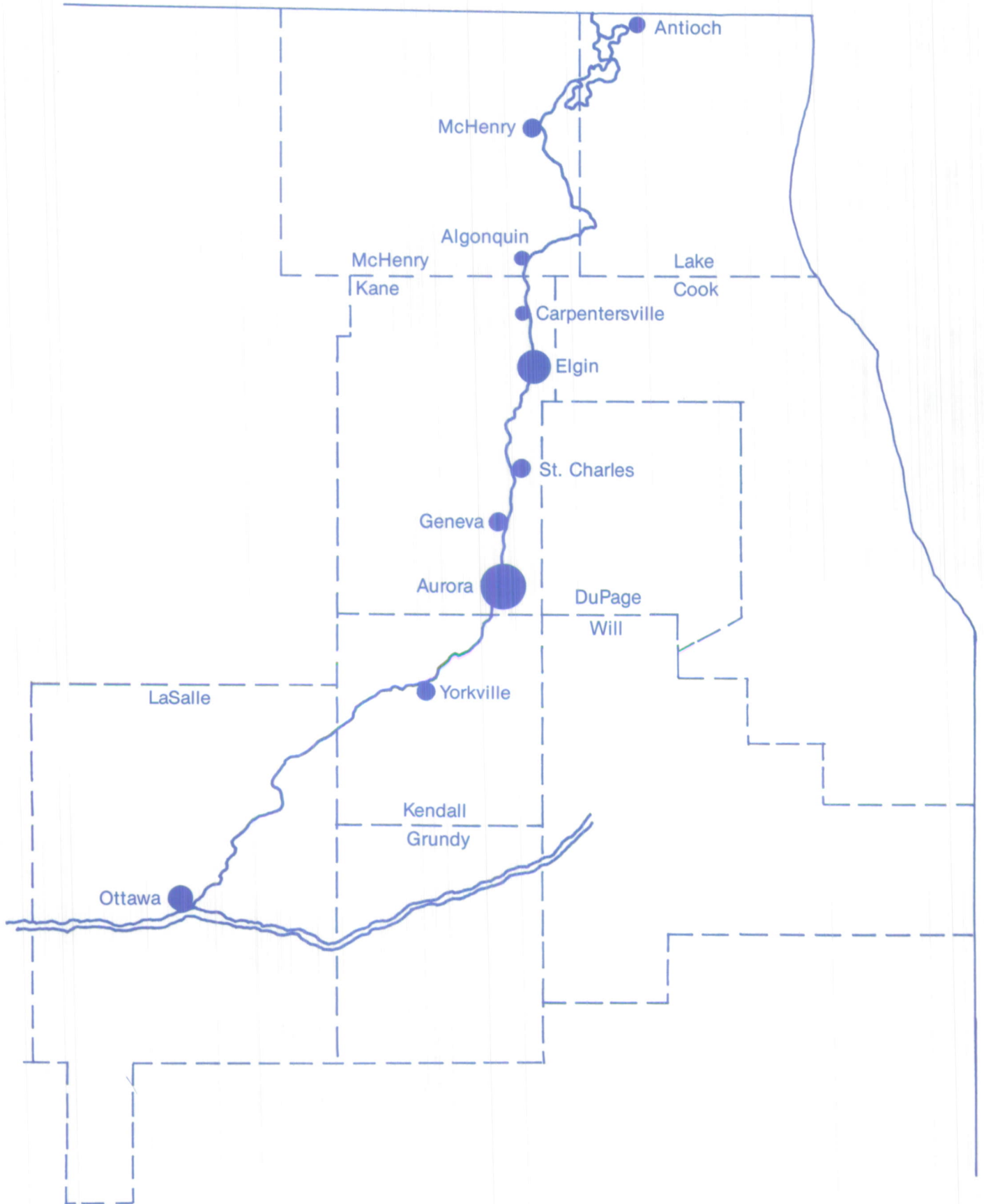


ILLINOIS RIVER



Illinois  
Department of  
Natural Resources

# LOCATION OF THE FOX RIVER IN NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS



**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF FISHERIES**

**FOX RIVER  
ACCESS AREAS  
AND  
FISHING GUIDE**

by

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and

**Harvey Brown  
District Fishery Biologist**

**Revised: April, 1996**

**INTRODUCTION**

Originating northwest of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Fox River enters Illinois near Antioch and flows generally in a southerly direction for 115.2 miles through populous northeastern Illinois emptying into the Illinois River at Ottawa. This major tributary to the Illinois provides considerable recreational opportunity and is within easy access of the more than 7 million people living in the greater Chicago metropolitan area. Sport fishing is one of the major recreational activities engaged in along its course, particularly in the tailwater areas below 15 major dams, which impound the river into pools of varying length. The majority (11) of these dams are found in the Elgin-Aurora area, more specifically located at Carpentersville, Elgin, South Elgin, St.

Charles, Geneva, Batavia (2), North Aurora, Aurora (2), and Montgomery. Other dams are located at McHenry, Algonquin, Yorkville, and Dayton. The Dayton Dam is the only one on the river used to generate electrical power.

The McHenry Dam, reconstructed by the State of Illinois in 1939, became the only dam on the river to provide boat lockage and created the 6,500 acres of water forming the Fox Chain O'Lakes. Boaters can go through the lock at McHenry and proceed upstream into the Fox Chain O'Lakes, one of the most popular recreational areas in Illinois. A separate publication, **FOX CHAIN O'LAKES ACCESS AREAS AND FISHING GUIDE**, is also available through the Division of Fisheries.

## REGULATIONS

When fishing the Fox River, anglers should consult State fishing regulations regarding current size and creel limits — particularly, largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye\*, and northern pike. All State boating and hunting regulations are also applicable and enforced.

Copies of these regulations can be obtained where fishing licenses are sold or by writing to:

Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Fisheries  
Lincoln Tower Plaza  
524 South Second Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62706

\* A special regulation became effective April 1, 1992: An 18-inch minimum length limit and 3 fish daily creel limit was imposed upon all walleye harvested from the Fox Chain O'Lakes proper and that portion of the Fox River from the Illinois-Wisconsin State Line south to the McHenry Dam.

## POLLUTION

Pollution problems have stemmed from enrichment — particularly, in the form of nitrates and inorganic phosphates introduced from agricultural drainage, sewage effluents, and other sources. The enrichment triggers tremendous blooms of planktonic algae, which can give the river a bright green appearance during the warm summer months.

Water quality has improved due to good environmental management practices. Legislation has been enacted for floodplain protection, especially in the upper areas of the river and Chain O'Lakes region. Construction of housing, which displaced wetlands and marshes essential as biological filters and as fish spawning and rearing areas, has ceased because of recent legislation. In addition, governmental agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have assisted in controlling pollutants which are introduced into the Fox River Basin.

## SAFETY

Whether boating or wading, safety is an important concern on the river. Avoid the areas immediately above and below dams. The boil area below the dam can be extremely hazardous, especially during high water periods. A certain amount of respect for the river is only good judgment.

## SPECIFIC AREAS TO FISH

The most popular fishing areas have been at the following dams: Dayton, Yorkville, Montgomery, North Aurora, St. Charles, and McHenry. Spring and fall are the best times to catch most species of fish found in the Fox River. Limits of walleyes are not uncommon at these times, especially in April and September, with many smallmouth bass taken right along with the walleye.

The farthest downstream dam at Dayton is located approximately 5.5 miles up from the confluence with the Illinois River. In addition to the tailwater area below the dam, another exceptional fishing spot is located here. Immediately below the hydroelectric power plant on the west side of the river just down from the dam has been a hot spot for walleye, white bass, crappie, and channel catfish.

Proceeding upstream, in addition to the fine tailwater fishery below the various dams, there are several well-known channel areas that provide fine angling opportunities. Channels and backwaters, in addition to spring and fall, can be exceptionally productive during the ice fishing season and at times of high water. Bluegill, crappie, and yellow bass are most commonly caught at these locations. The east channel just above Montgomery Dam has been noted as probably the best. This channel, at one time, was dug for the purpose of boat lockage; but the project was never completed and has provided a very popular place to catch fish and enjoy the outdoor setting.

Another good channel is an area known as Depot Pond. Located on the west side of the river, at the upper Batavia Dam, it also produces fine catches of panfish, especially crappie.

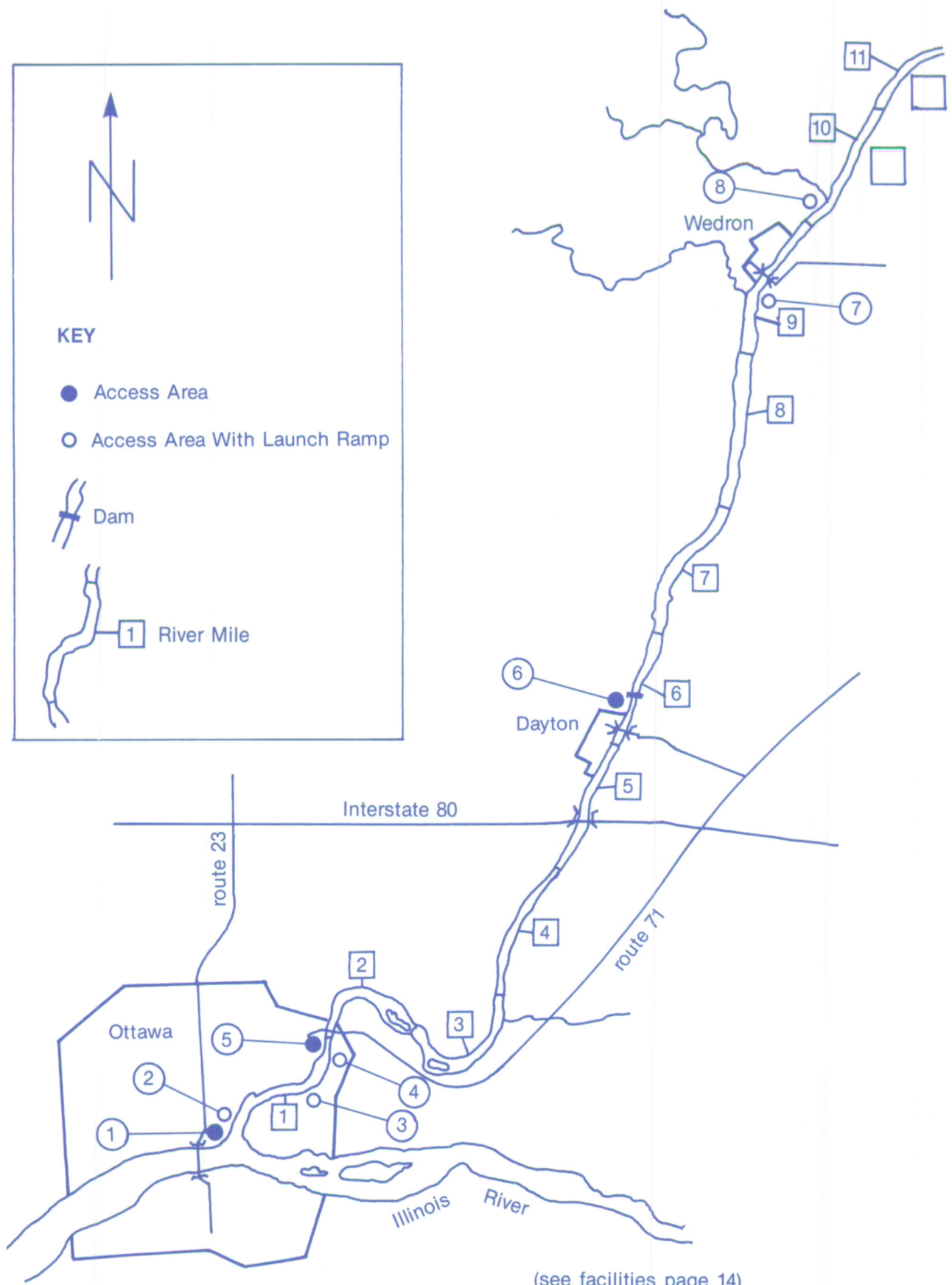
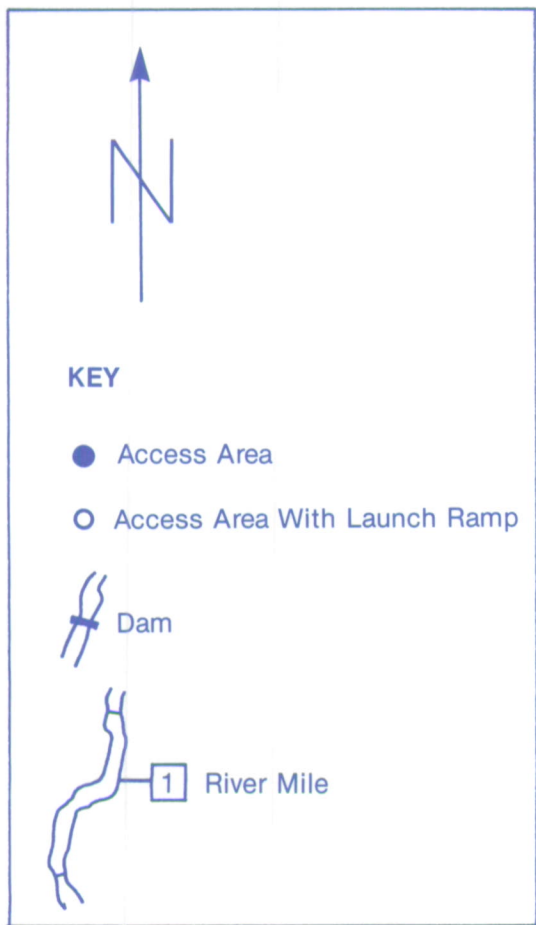
To the north, the farthest upstream dam is located 2.5 miles south of McHenry. Providing a tailwater fishery of the Fox Chain O'Lakes, this area provides more walleye than any spot on the river and is a prime area for channel catfish, white and yellow bass, and crappie. Flathead catfish have been caught below most Fox River dams, including McHenry Dam, where 20 to 30 pound fish are not uncommon. Northern pike are also taken, especially in April.

In order to be a successful fisherman, one must expend some time and effort to learn and understand the behavior and habits of the various fish; the types of bait and tackle to use, and when, where, and how to fish for them. As the old saying goes, "Ten percent of the fishermen catch ninety percent of the fish." Hence, all fishermen must learn to be patient if they expect to consistently catch fish.

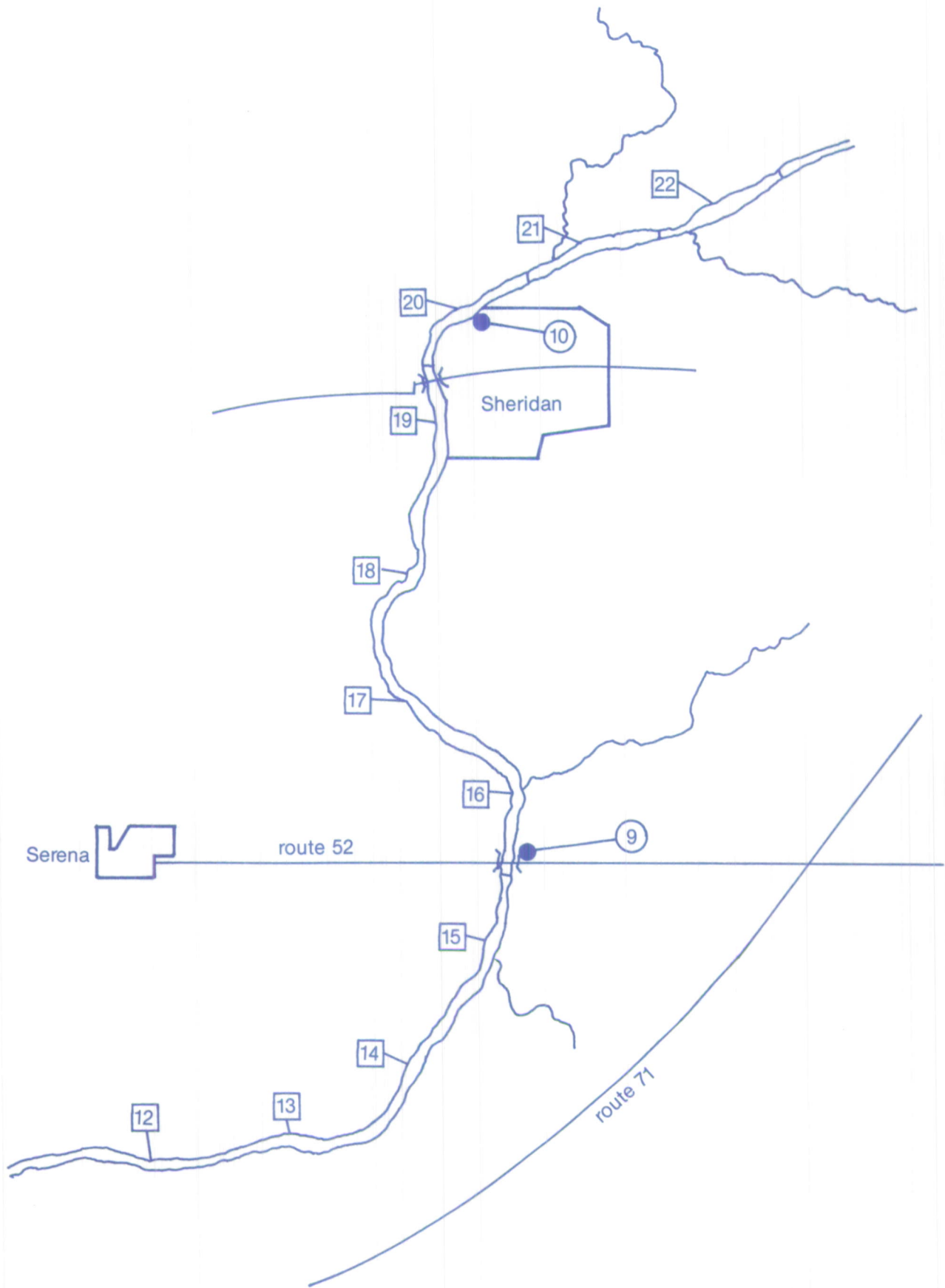
## ACCESS AREAS

The following pages contain information relative to the public and private access areas along the Fox River. Sites are numbered and listed in tabular form showing facilities available. Maps show access numbers and river miles beginning at the junction with the Illinois River at Ottawa upstream to the Illinois-Wisconsin State Line near Antioch. Access areas along the section of river, which becomes part of the Chain O'Lakes, have been listed in a separate report, FOX CHAIN O'LAKES ACCESS AREAS AND FISHING GUIDE.

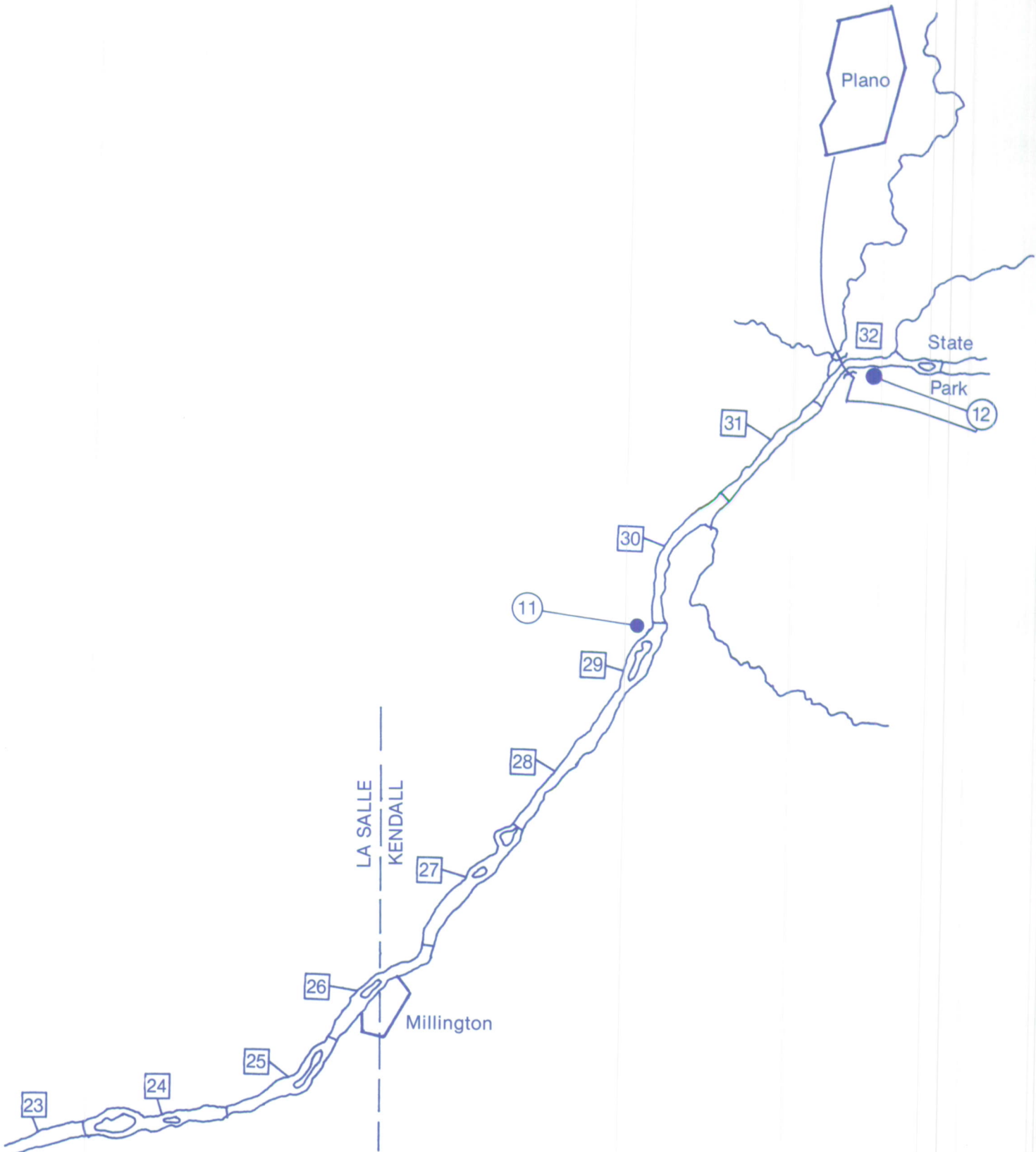
A few major named highways have been shown but a State highway map would be useful in finding exact locations of access areas.



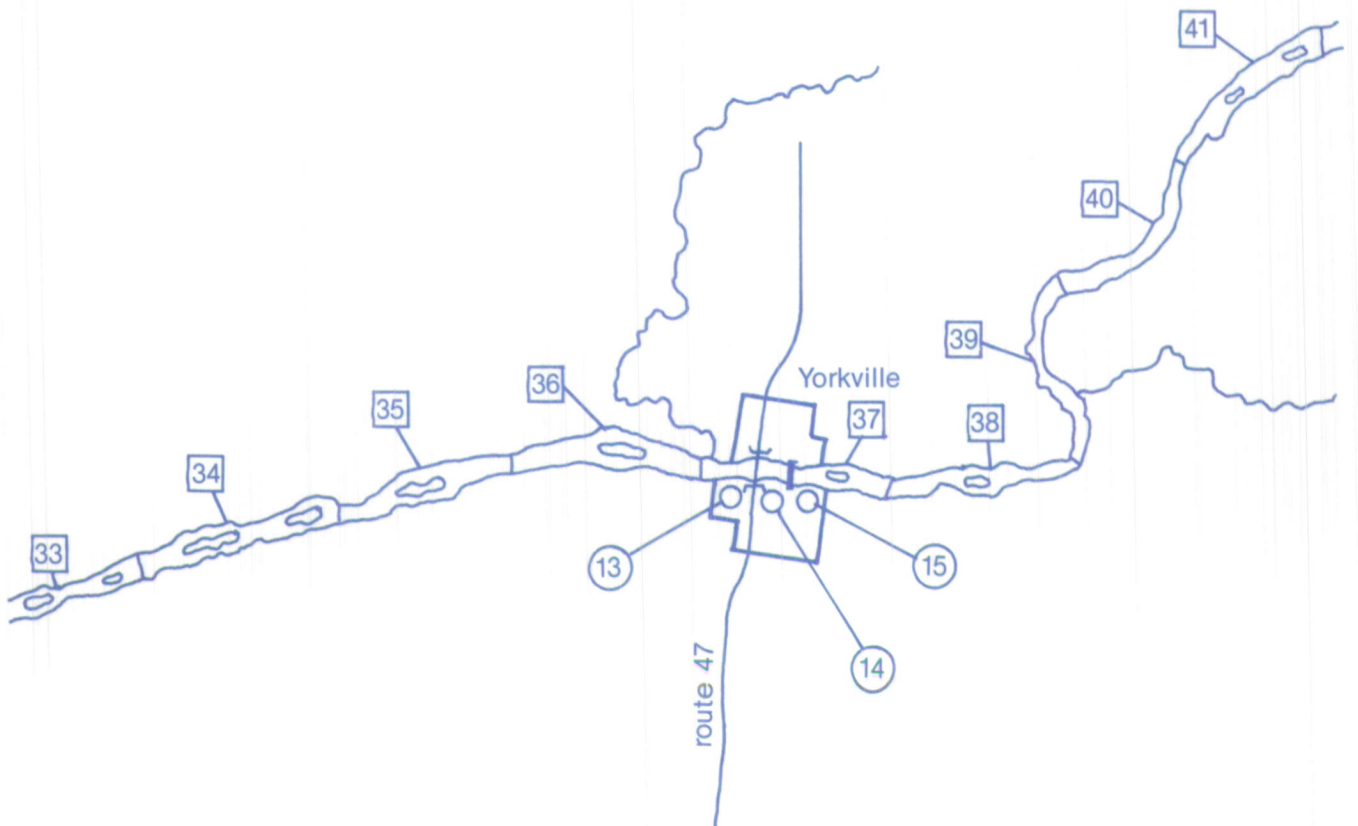
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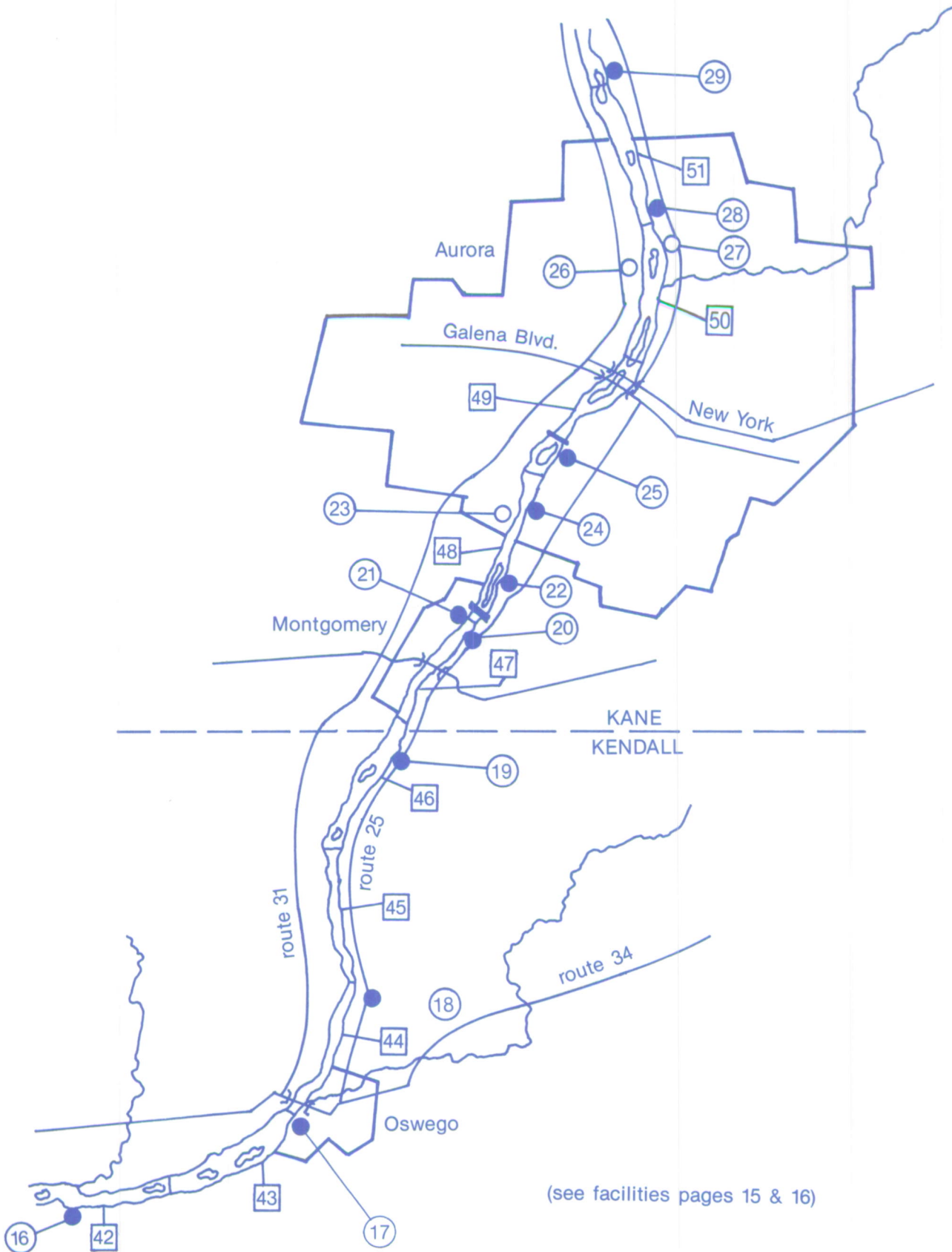


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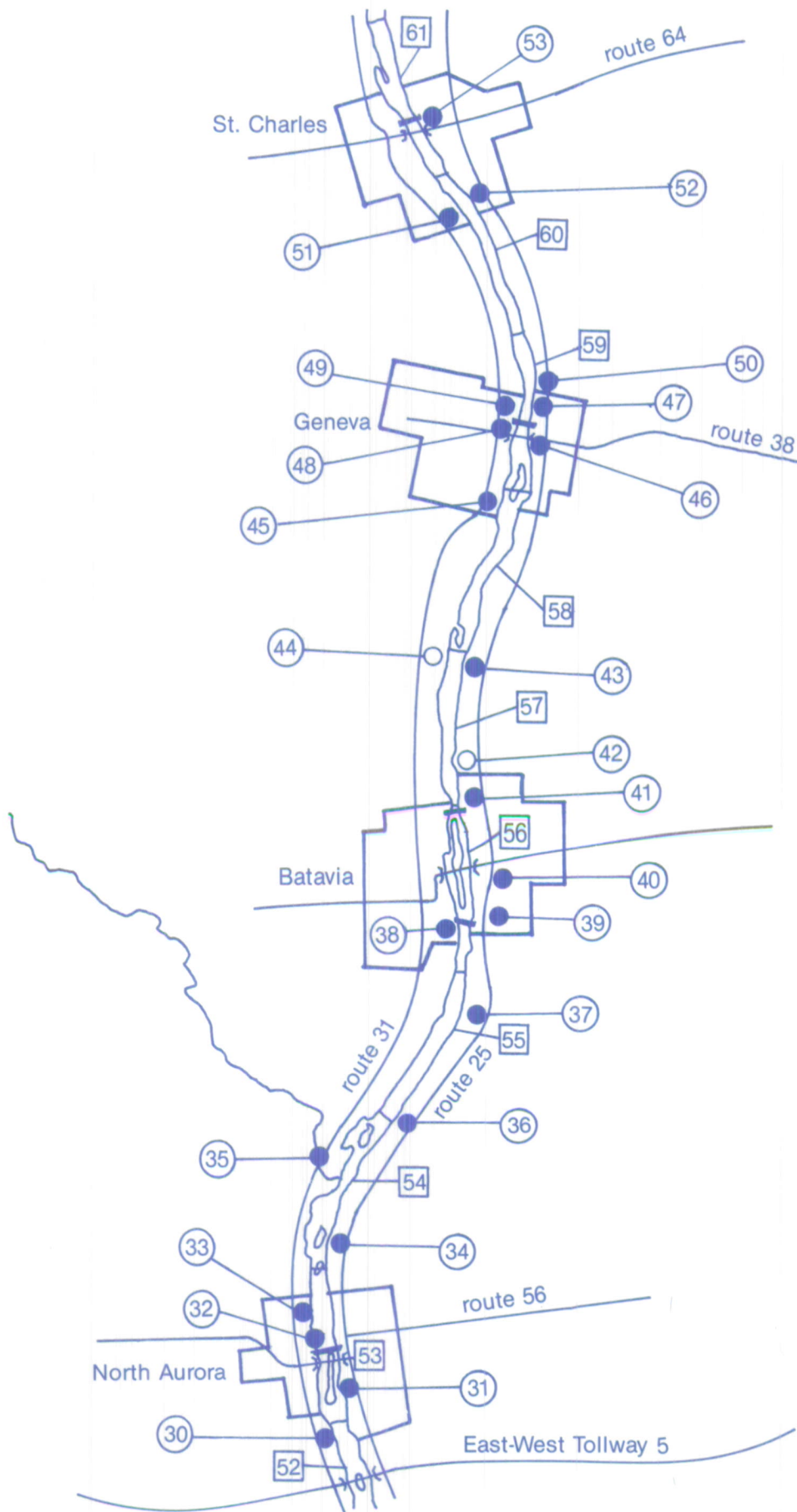


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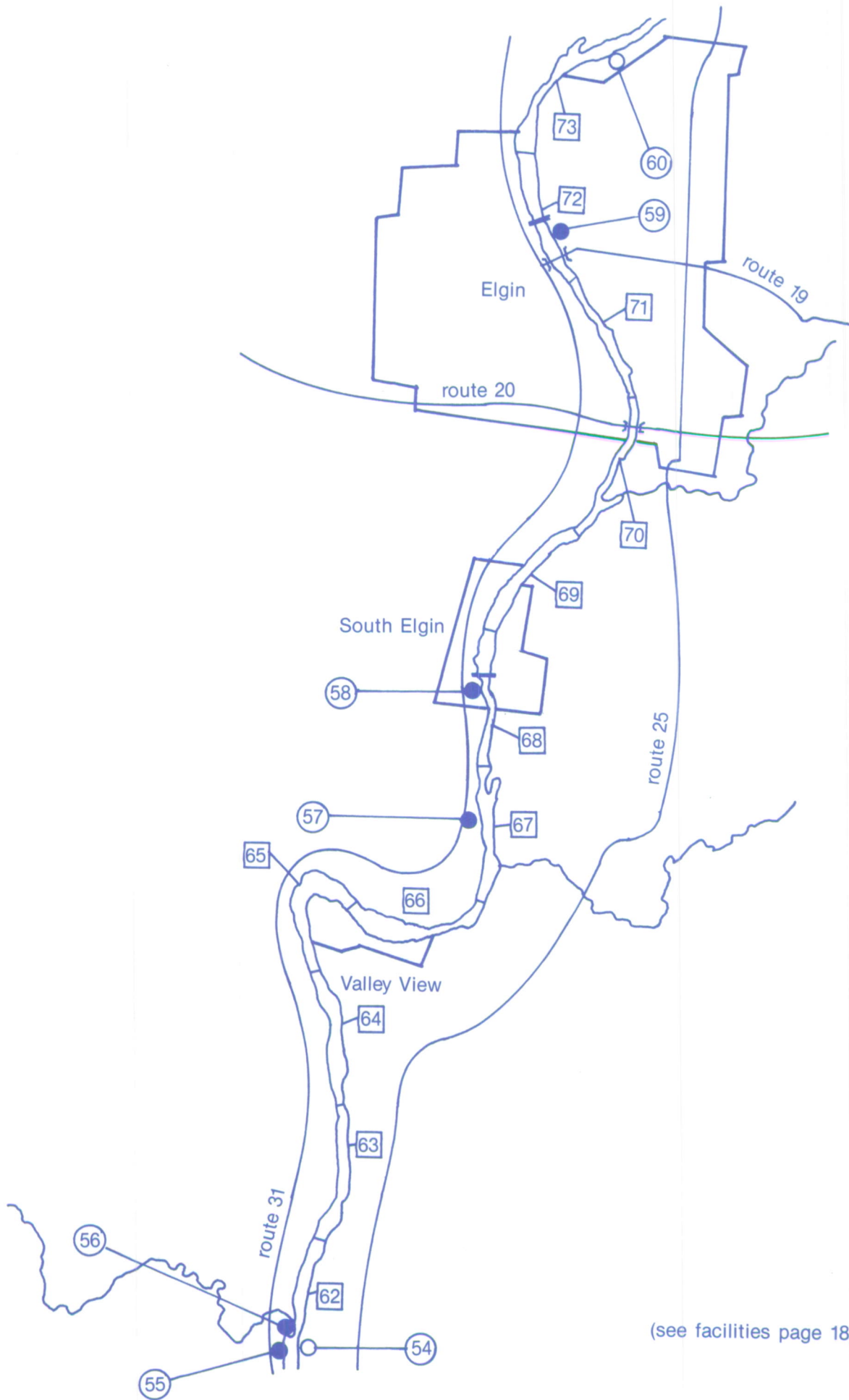




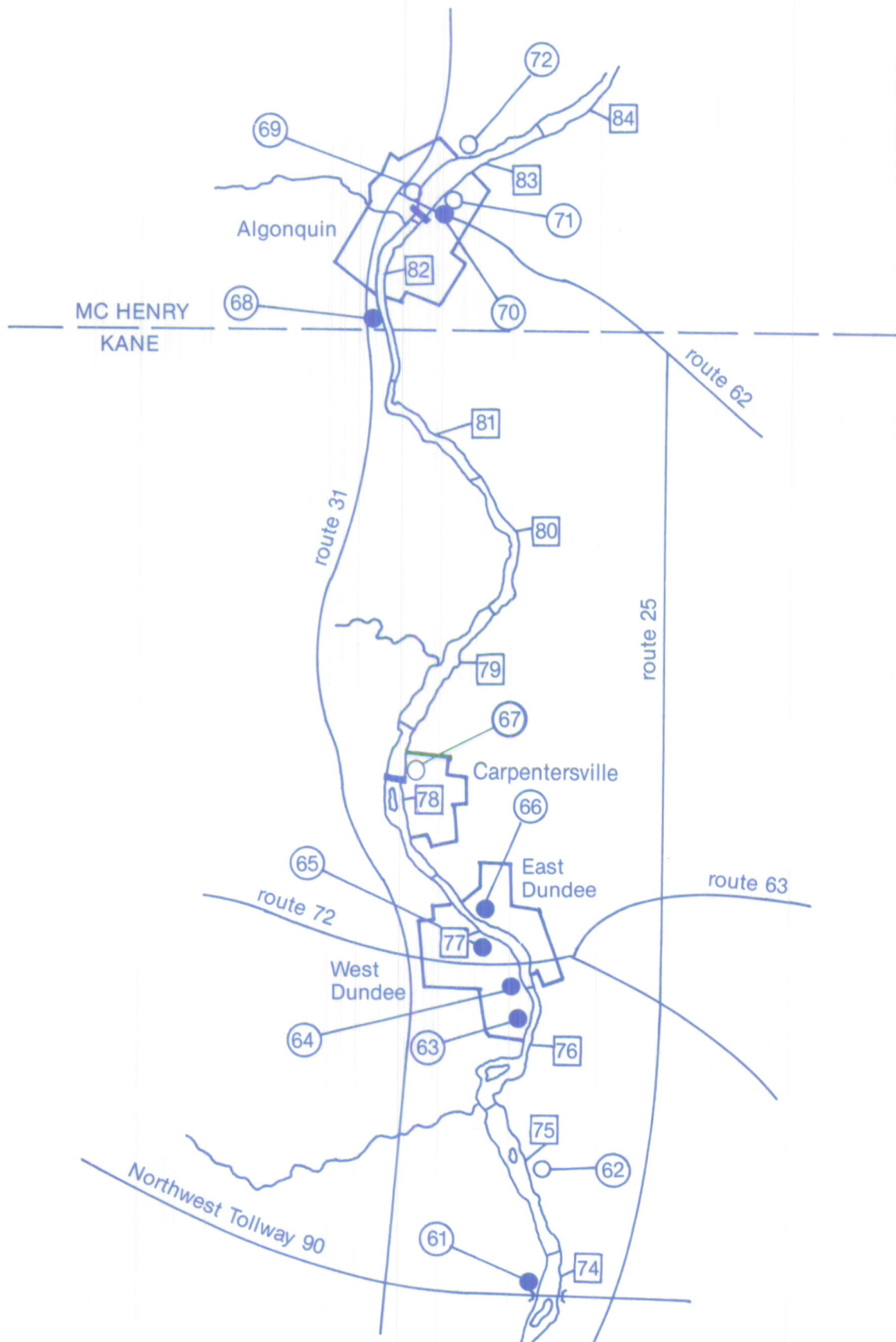
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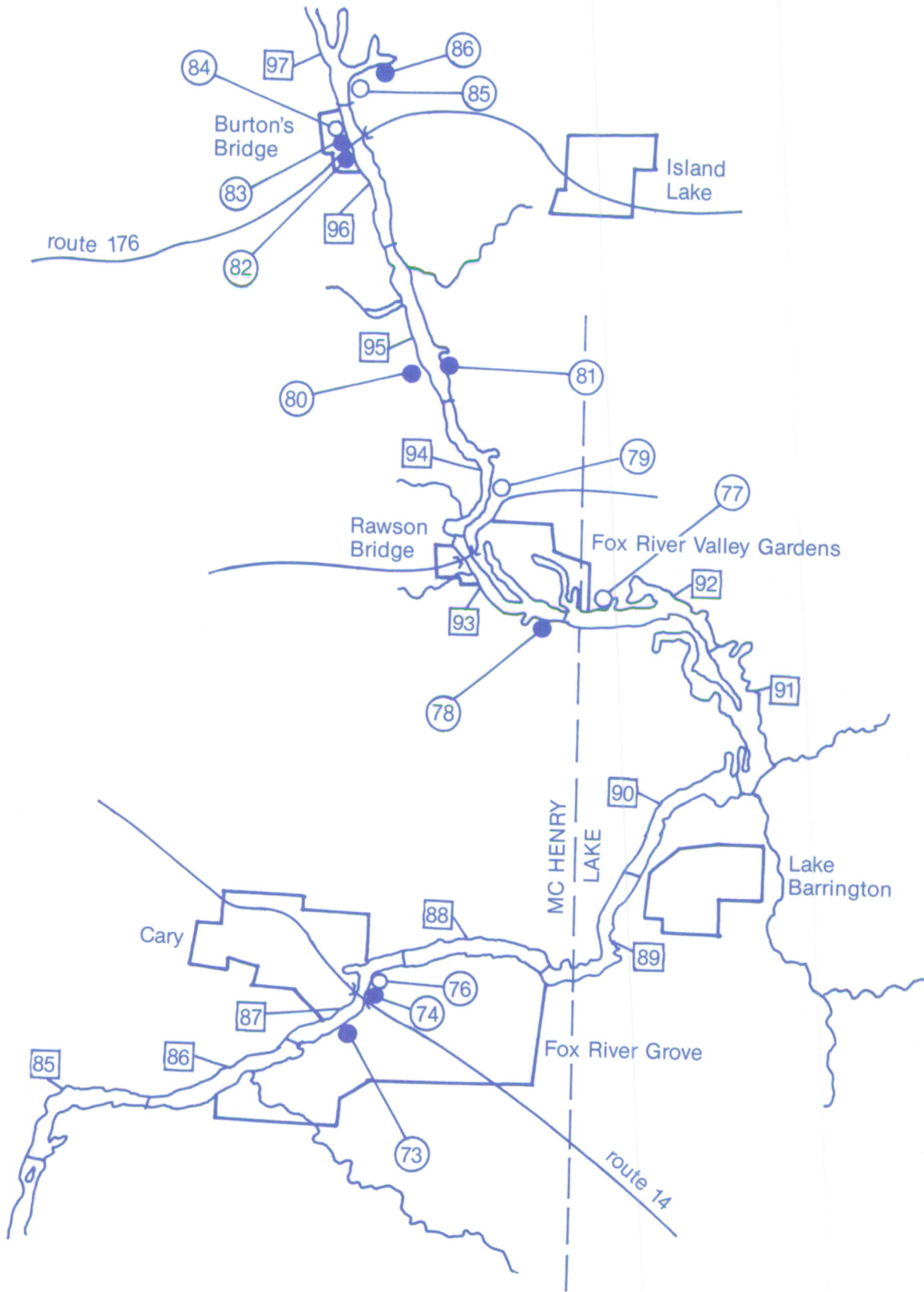
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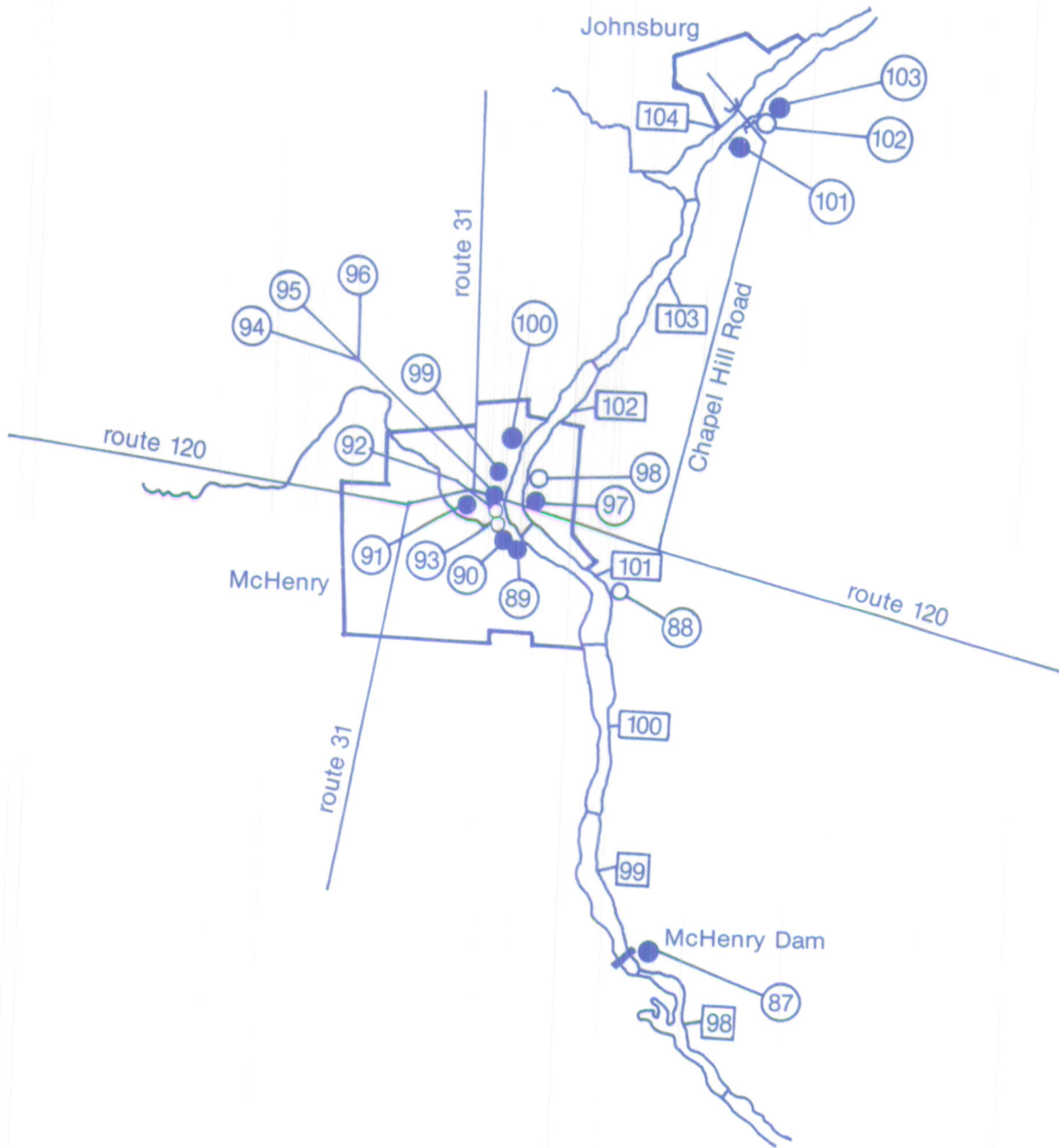
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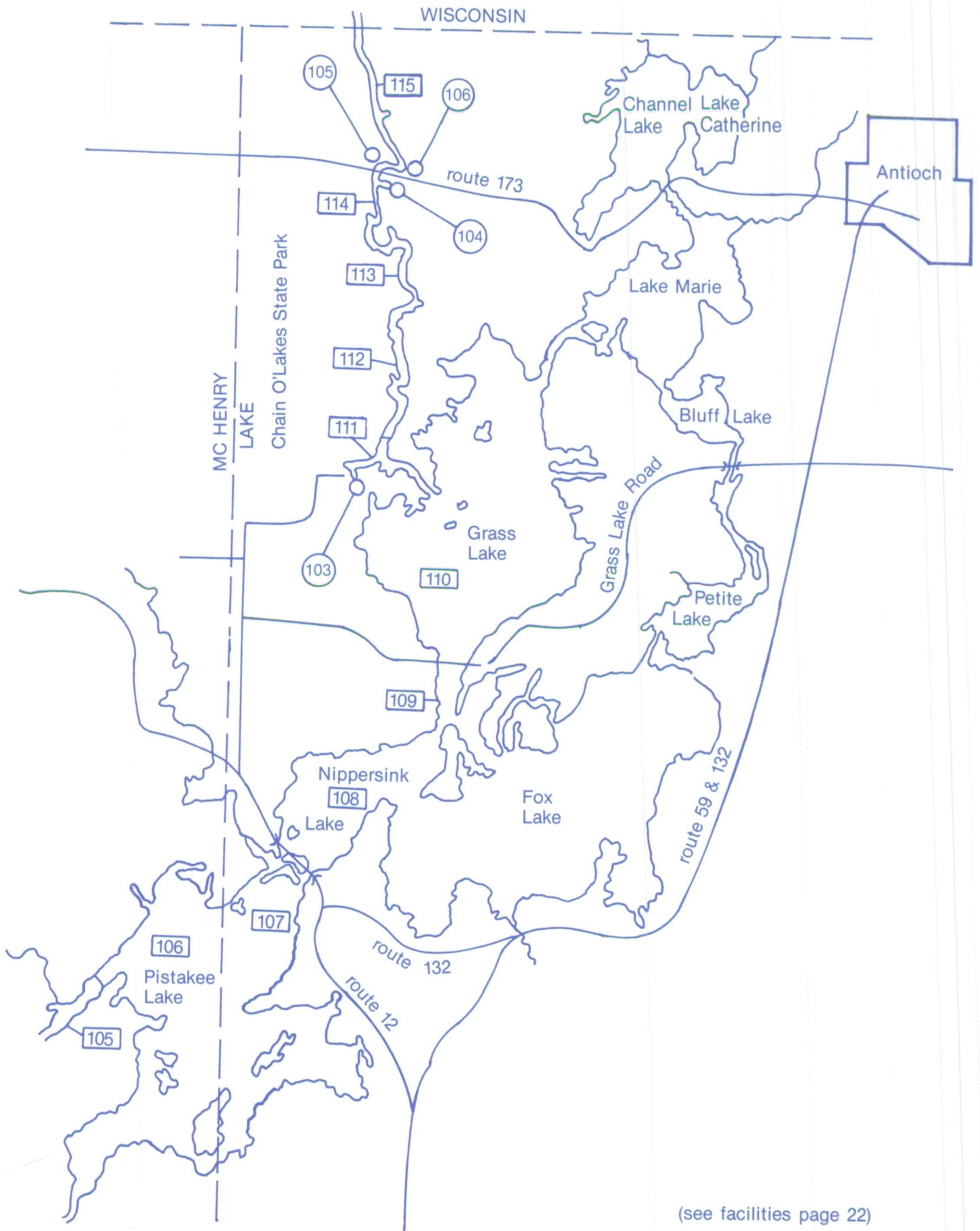
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(see facilities pages 21 & 22)



(see facilities page 22)

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
1	Ottawa Marine Service Ottawa	0	T33N R3E S11 SE¼		1 concrete for rescue squad only		4	X	X	X								Diving Service
2	Starved Rock Yacht Club Ottawa	0	T33N R3E S11 NE¼		Ramp & hoist for members only		150										X	
3	Shoreline Boat Club Ottawa	1	T33N R3E S12 NW¼		1 concrete fee		75							X			X	
4	Fox River Marina Ottawa	2	T33N R3E S11 NE¼	X	1 concrete fee		40	X	X	X	X			X	X			Store
5	Montes Riverside Inn Ottawa	2	T33N R3E S1 SW¼				3									X	X	
6	Dayton Dam Dayton	6	T34N R4E S29 SE¼	X														Electrical Power Generation
7	Fox River Tavern Wedron	9	T34N R4E S9 SE¼		1 dirt local use free												X	
8	Ayers Landing Wedron	10	T34N R4E S3 SW¼		1 concrete fee	canoes	6						X	X	X	X		Drivers available (fee)
9	Route 52 Bridge Sheridan	16	T35N R5E S20 SE¼	X														Canoe float drop off site
10	Sheridan Bait Shop Sheridan	20	T35N R5E S5 NW¼			canoes			X	X								Canoe float drop off site
11	Millbrook Bridge	29	T36N R6E S9 SW¼	X														
12	Silver Springs State Fish and Wildlife Area Yorkville	32	T37N R6E S34 SE¼	X		canoes					X	X	X	X				



Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
13	City Boat Launch Below Dam Yorkville	37	T37N R7E S32 NE 1/4	X	1 gravel													
14	Freemans Sport Shop Yorkville	37	T37N R7E S33 NW 1/4			canoes		X	X	X		X						
15	Yorkville Dam Yorkville	37	T37N R7E S33 NW 1/4	X	dirt/gravel									X				
16	Saw-wee-kee Park Oswegoland Park District	41	T37N R7E S23 NE 1/4	X	1 concrete free													
17	Violet Patch Park Oswego	44	T37N R8 <sup>3</sup> S8 SW 1/4	X										X				
18	Unnamed Oswego	46	T37N R8E S5 NW 1/4	X														
19	Unnamed Montgomery-Public Access	47	T38N R8E S33 SW 1/4	X										X				
20	South Island Park Montgomery	47	T38N R8E S33 NE 1/4	X										X				
21	Montgomery Dam Montgomery	47	T38N R8E S33 NE 1/4	X										X				Playground on both sides of river
22	South Island Park Aurora	48	T38N R8E S33 NE 1/4	X										X				
23	Park & Park District Office Aurora	48	T38N R8E S28 SE 1/4	X	1 concrete free									X				
24	South Broadway Park Aurora	48	T38N R8E S28 SE 1/4	X										X				

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
25	Hurd Island Park North Avenue Dam Aurora	49	T38N R8E S21 SE¼	X										X				Playground Bathrooms
26	Illinois Avenue Island Park Below Bridge Aurora	50	T38N R8E S15 SE¼	X	1 concrete free													
27	Illinois Avenue Park Above Bridge Aurora	50	T38N R8E S15 SE¼	X	2 concrete free													Both sides of river
28	Unnamed Aurora	51	T39N R8E S27 SW¼	X														
29	Q.W. Gregory Park Indian Trail Bridge Aurora	52	T38N R8E S10 SW¼	X										X				
30	Unnamed Aurora	52	T38N R8E S4 SE¼	X														
31	North Aurora Island Park North Aurora	53	T38N R8E S4 NE¼	X										X				Playground Pavilion
32	North Aurora Dam North Aurora	53	T38N R8E S4 NE¼	X										X				
33	Unnamed North Aurora	53	T38N R8E S4 NE¼	X														
34	Red Oak Nature Center North Aurora	54	T39N R8E S33 NE¼	X										X				Museum Aviary Hiking Trails
35	Leslie C. Arends Forest Preserve District Moosehart	54	T39N R8E S33 NE¼	X										X				
36	John A. Lippold Outdoor Recreation Center Batavia	55	T39N R8E S27 SW¼	X									X	X				Archery Range Playground Snowmobiling

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
37	Kane County Forest Preserve Glenwood Park Batavia	55	T39N R8E S27 NE¼	X										X				Hiking and Snowmobiling Trails Bathroom
38	Quarry Park Batavia	55	T39N R8E S22 SW¼	X									X	X				Pool Playground Tennis Bike Trail
39	Lower Batavia Dam Access via Island Batavia	56	T39N R8E S22 SE¼	X										X				Bike Trail
40	Island Park Batavia	56	T39N R8E S22 SE¼	X										X				Baseball Fields
41	Upper Batavia Dam Batavia	57	T39N R8E S22 NW¼	X														
42	Batavia Boat Club Batavia	57	T39N R8E S15 SE¼	X	1 concrete free									X				
43	Kane County Forest Preserve District Fabyan Forest Preserve Geneva	57	T39N R8E S10 SE¼	X										X				Bike Trail Windmill (restored)
44	Kane County Forest Preserve District Fabyan Forest Preserve Geneva	57	T39N R8E S10 SE¼	X	1 concrete free									X				Museum
45	Gunnar Anderson Forest Preserve Geneva	58	T39N R8E S10 NE¼	X										X				Baseball and Soccer Fields
46	Island Park (Geneva Dam) Geneva	58	T39N R8E S2 SE¼	X										X				
47	Old Mill Park (Geneva Dam) Geneva	58	T39N R8E S2 SE¼	X										X				
48	Geneva Garden Club (Geneva Dam) Geneva	58	R8E S3 SE¼	X										X				

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
49	City of Geneva Boat Launch Geneva	58	T39N R8E S3 SW $\frac{1}{4}$	X	1 asphalt													
50	Bennet Park Geneva	58	T39N R8E S2 NE $\frac{1}{4}$	X										X				
51	Riverside Park St. Charles	60	T40N R8E S34 SE $\frac{1}{4}$	X										X				Hiking Trails Bike Trails X-Country Skiing
52	Mt. St. Mary Park St. Charles	60	T40N R8E S34 SE $\frac{1}{4}$	X										X				Hiking Trails
53	St. Charles Dam St. Charles	61	T40N R8E S27 SW $\frac{1}{4}$	X										X				
54	Pottawatomie Park St. Charles	62	T40N R8E S27 NW $\frac{1}{4}$											X	X			Softball Field Tennis, Golf, Playground, Pool, Paddlewheel Boat Rides
55	Boy Scout Island Park St. Charles	62	T40N R8E S27 NW $\frac{1}{4}$	X			4							X				
56	Ferson Creek Park Kane Co. Forest Preserve	62	T40N R8E S22 SW $\frac{1}{4}$				4									X		
57	Kane County Forest Preserve Blackhawk Park South Elgin	67	T40N R8E S2 NW $\frac{1}{4}$	X	1 concrete									X				
58	Panton Mill Park South Elgin Dam South Elgin	68	T41N R8E S35 NE $\frac{1}{4}$	X														
59	Walton Island Elgin Dam Elgin	72	T41N R8E S11 NE $\frac{1}{4}$	X										X				
60	Slade Avenue Boat Ramp Elgin	74	T41N R8 <sup>s</sup> S1 SW $\frac{1}{4}$		1 asphalt													

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
61	Kane County Forest Preserve Voyageur Landing Elgin	74	T42N R8E S35 NW¼	X	1 concrete 1 asphalt		3							X				
62	Hunts Marine East Dundee	75	T42N R8E S35 NW¼		1 concrete 1 asphalt fee			X	X	X	X			X				
63	Dundee Township Park District South End Park West Dundee	76	T42N R8E S26 NW¼	X										X				Baseball Field Basketball Court Playground
64	Dundee Township Park District William Aldis Sr. Park West Dundee	77	T42N R8E S26 NW¼	X										X				Tennis Court Playground
65	West Dundee Riverside Park West Dundee	77	T42N R8E S26 NW¼	X										X				
66	East Dundee Riverside Park East Dundee	77	T42N R8E S22 SE¼	X										X				
67	Fox River Shores Kane Co. Forest Preserve Carpentersville	78	T42N R8E S15 SW¼	X	1 concrete rubber raft													Private Dam — Fishing by daily or annual fee
68	Buffalo Park Algonquin	82	T42N R8E S3 NW¼	X		canoe				X	X	X	X	X	X			Snowmobile Rental Swimming Pool
69	Port Edward Above Algonquin Dam Algonquin	83	T43N R8E S34 NW¼				50								X	X		
70	Dam Marina Algonquin	83	T43N R8E S34 SE¼					X										
71	Boat House Marina Algonquin	83	T43N R8E S34 SE¼		1 concrete fee		32	X		X	X							Sanitary Pump
72	Treadwell Marine Algonquin	83	T43N R8E S27 SE¼		2 gravel/ steel grate fee		150	X	X	X	X							

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities	
73	Fox River Grove Park Fox River Grove	87	T43N R9E S18 SE¼	X														Playground	
74	Johnsons Dead End Fox River Grove	87	T43N R9E S18 SE¼				4									X			
Public Access No Longer Available																			
76	Varky's Marine Service Fox River Grove	87	T43N R9E S18 SE¼		2 hoists for repair service only 1 concrete fee		25	X	X	X	X								
77	Kaximours Marina Lake Barrington	92	T43N R9E S4 NW¼		1 concrete fee		100	X	X	X	X			X					
78	McHenry County Conservation District Hickory Grove Fox River Valley Gardens	93	T43N R9E S5 NE¼	X										X				Nature Trails Horseback Riding, Trails	
79	Broken Oar Fox River Falley Gardens	94	T44N R9E S32 NW¼		1 concrete fee		30	X		X							X		
80	Fox Valley Campground Burton's Bridge	95	T44N R9E S29 SE¼	X										X				*For Campers Only	
81	Harbor Lights Burton's Bridge	95	T44N R9E S29 SW¼				10										X		
82	Turnkey Classics Burton's Bridge	96	T44N R9E S19 NE¼		1 concrete fee		12	X										* Inboard Engines Only Antique Boat and Car Sales	
83	Kief's Reef Burton's Bridge	96	T44N R9E S19 NE¼				2										X		
84	Dercole Launch Burton's Bridge	96	T44N R9E S19 NE¼		1 concrete fee		2							X					

Access No.	Access Area	River Mile	Legal Location	Bank Fishing	Launching Ramp	Boat, Canoe, or Motor Rental	Dockage or Slips	Gasoline and Oil	Repair Service	Marine Supplies	Winter Storage	Bait	Camping	Picnic Areas	Refreshment Stand	Restaurant	Liquor	Other Services and Facilities
85	De Mar Marine Burton's Bridge	97	T44N R9E S19 NE¼		1 concrete 1 asphalt 1 hoist fee		50	X	X	X	X							
86	Edgewater Beach Hotel Burton's Bridge	97	T44N R9E S19 NE¼	X			10							X		X	X	
87	Moraine Hills State Park McHenry Lock & Dam McHenry	99	T44N R8E S12 NW¼	X		rowboat						X		X	X			Playground Handicap Fishing Piers, Bike/Hiking Trails, Boat Lockage
88	Snug Harbor McHenry	101	T45N R8E S36 NW¼		1 concrete fee		25									X	X	
89	Riviera Yacht Basin McHenry	102	T45N R8E S35 NE¼		3 hoists for repair service only		75	X	X	X	X							Sanitary Pump
90	Bruce Marine McHenry	102	T45N R8E S35 NE¼		3 hoists for repair service only		40	X	X	X	X				X			
91	Walsh Park City of McHenry McHenry	102	T45N R8E S35 NE¼				2											Rest Benches
92	Dobyns House McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SW¼					X								X		Lunch/Dinner Cruises Excursion Boats
93	Millers Dream Marine McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼		1 concrete fee		20	X	X	X	X							
94	Fox River Valley Boat Company McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼				16	X	X	X	X							Boat Refinishing
95	Bimbo's McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼				6									X	X	
96	Old Bridge Tavern McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼				4										X	

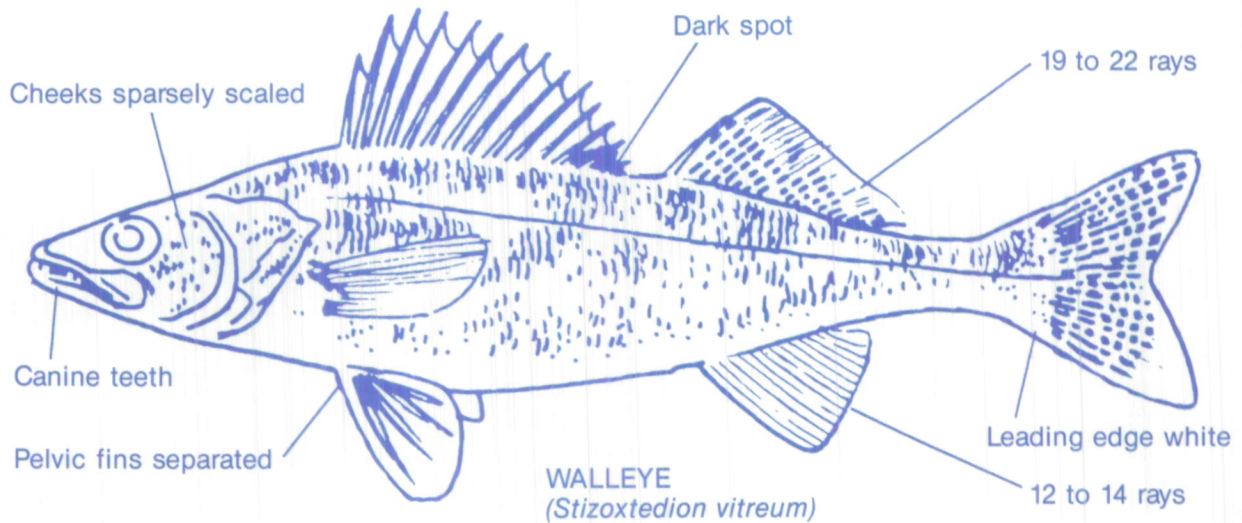
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97	Vickie's Place	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼				44									X	X	
98	Water Tower Marine McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼		1 concrete fee		100	X	X	X	X							Boat Wash
99	After the Fox Ltd. McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼				10									X	X	* Sandwiches
100	Weber's Park City of McHenry McHenry	102	T45N R8E S26 SE¼	X														Playground Rest Benches
101	Paradise Cove Johnsburg	104	T45N R9E S18 SW¼		1 Fee Ramp		20								X	X		Motel and Banquet Facilities
102	Raymonds/Peer Inn Johnsburg	104	T45N R9E S18 SW¼		1 asphalt fee		20								X	X		Bowling
103	Maple Grove Chain O'Lakes State Park Spring Grove	111	T46N R9E S21 SE¼	X	4 asphalt free	rowboat	20					X	X	X	X			Playground * Camping Hiking and Horseback Riding Trails in other areas of park
104	Oak Point Chain O'Lakes State Park Spring Grove	114	T46N R9E S10 SW¼	X	3 concrete free		25							X				
105	Bridge-Port Inn Antioch	114	T46N R9E S10 SW¼				16							X	X	X		
106	Fox River Recreation Antioch	114	T46N R9E S10 SW¼	X	1 concrete fee		4	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			Fireplace Wood
	Illinois - Wisconsin State Line	115.2																



## MAJOR SPECIES OF FISH KNOWN PRESENT IN THE FOX RIVER

ACCEPTED NAME	LOCAL NAMES
Largemouth bass	Largemouth, bass, black bass, bigmouth bass, line side, green bass, green trout, Oswego bass, slough bass, lake bass.
Smallmouth bass	Smallmouth black bass, black bass, smallmouth, Oswego bass, bronzeback, redeye bass.
Northern pike	Common pike, pickerel, great northern pike, northern, jack fish.
Grass pickerel	Pickerel, grass pike, mud pickerel, little pickerel, slough pike.
Walleye	Pike-perch, walleyed pike, pike, jack salmon, jack.
White bass	Striped bass, streaker, silver bass, silver fish.
Yellow bass	Streaker, striped bass, barfish, black-striped bass, gold bass.
Black crappie	Calico bass, strawberry bass, crappie, speckled crappie.
White crappie	Crappie, silver crappie, bachelor, newlight.
Yellow perch	Perch, ringed perch, ringtail perch, lake perch.
Rock bass	Redeye bass, goggle-eye, rock sunfish, redeye.
Bluegill	Bream, brim, sunfish, sun perch, gill.
Green sunfish	Green perch, sunfish, perch, black perch, creek perch, rock bass.
Orangespotted sunfish	Redspotted sunfish, pumpkinseed, dwarf sunfish, pigmy sunfish.
Pumpkinseed	Common sunfish, round sunfish.
Channel catfish	Fiddler, spotted cat, channel cat, catfish.
Flathead catfish	Shovelhead cat, mud cat, yellow cat, Hoosier, goujon, shovelnose cat, Johnny cat, Morgan cat, flat belly.
Black bullhead	Bullhead, common bullhead, yellow-belly cat, catfish, horned pout.
Brown bullhead	Speckled bullhead, speckled cat, bullhead.
Yellow bullhead	Yellow-bellied cat, greaser, catfish, white-whiskered bullhead, bullhead.
Longnose gar	Billy gar, garpike, billfish.
Bowfin	Dogfish, grindle, mudfish, cypress trout.
Carp	German carp, European carp, mirror carp, scaleless carp.
Goldfish	Carp, goldfish.
Quillback	Silver carp, carpsucker, white carp.
Hog sucker	Sucker, hognose sucker.
White sucker	Common sucker, fine-scaled sucker, sucker, mullet, whitehorse, slender sucker, black sucker.
Muskellunge	Great Lakes muskellunge, muskie (musky), lunge, maskinonge.
Freshwater drum	Sheepshead, drum, white perch, perch, croaker, grunting perch, gaspergou.
*River redhorse	The River Redhorse is a threatened species in Illinois therefore; possession of this fish is illegal. If caught, the fish should be released immediately.

Plus various minnows, darters and redhorse suckers.



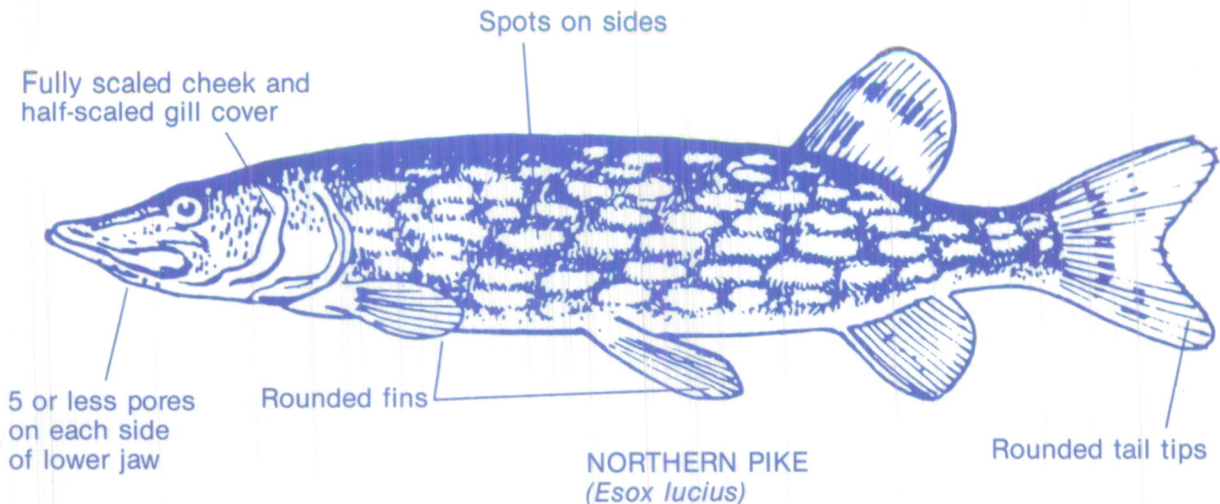
## WALLEYE

The walleye, one of the most prized cool water game fish, is becoming especially popular on the Fox River system. Since 1978, millions of fry have been stocked by Illinois fishery biologists to supplement the once depleted population in the Chain O'Lakes; and their survival rate has been very good. Many of these fish have moved down the Fox River and are providing excellent catches during the spring run.

Walleye spawn to a limited extent in both the Fox River and Chain O'Lakes. The fish will seek out

shallow, rocky, gravel areas when water temperatures approach 45 to 50 degrees.

Fishing begins when these fish move into the shallows to spawn. Minnow-jig combinations and small spinning lures are most effective if bumped along the bottom. During the summer months, walleye will gradually move out to deeper holes where a few can be taken by lures or deep diving crank baits. Fishing picks up again when water temperatures begin to drop in the fall, where similar techniques to those used in the spring can put this tasty fish in the frying pan.



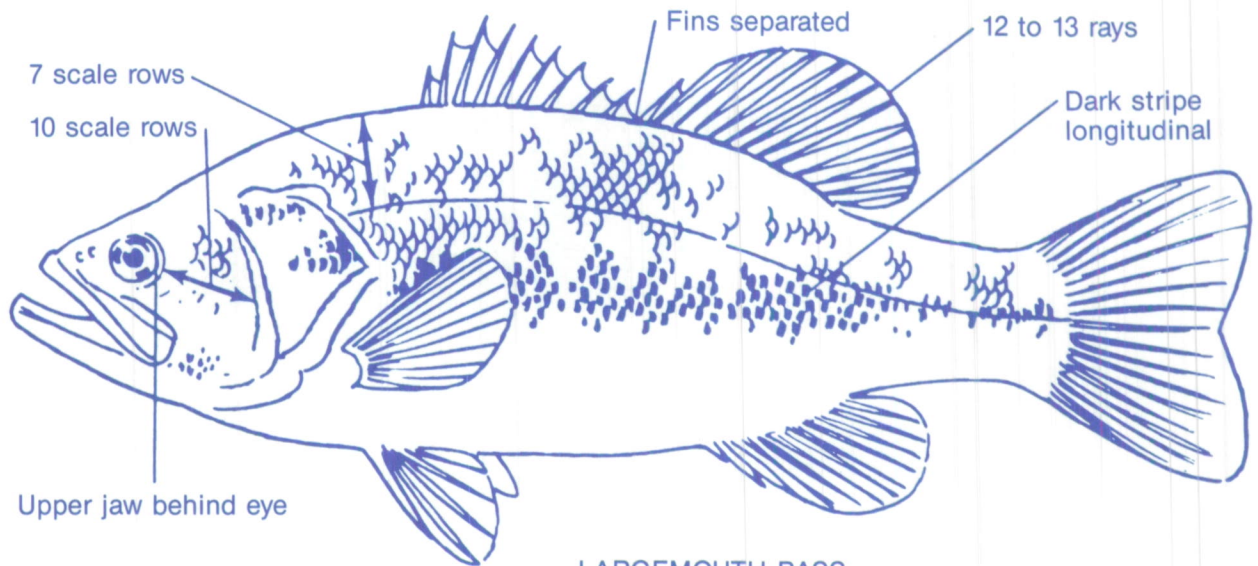
## NORTHERN PIKE

Northern pike can be found in the Fox River and are most frequently caught in early spring. Shortly after the spring thaw, during March and April, northern pike migrate upstream seeking flooded, grassy lowland areas to spawn. Many of these fish end up below the dams where they can be easily found by fishermen.

Heavy tackle with steel leaders is considered a must when attempting to take this fish, as they

are notorious for breaking poles and cutting line with their needle sharp teeth.

Large spinners, crank baits, plugs, and minnows are all effective during the spring period. Toward summer the fish seek deeper, cooler water in which casting or trolling with large spoons or deep running crank baits generally produces good results. Tip-ups can be used to fish through the ice using large minnows. Shallower, quiet areas are preferred.

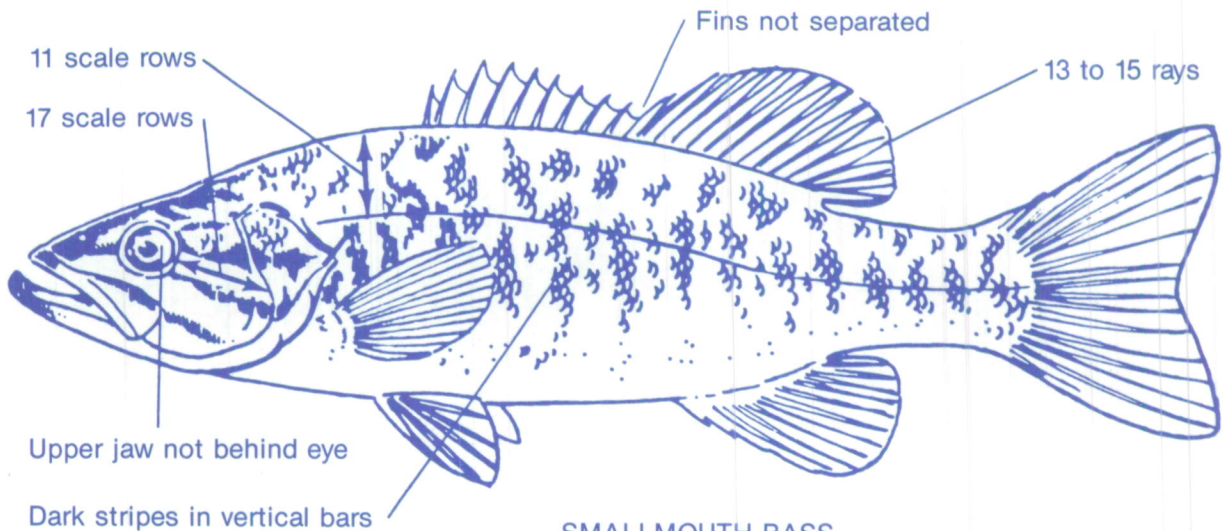


LARGEMOUTH BASS  
(*Micropterus salmoides*)

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Largemouth bass are most frequently taken in the more quiet, slow moving pools and channels. They like the cover of weed beds, brush, stumps, willows, and fallen trees where they can hide from their prey. Since largemouth bass are sight feeders, they are attracted by action and not by smell of the bait or lure. They succumb to the tempta-

tions of a variety of lures, plugs, and jigs, which must each be retrieved in the manner best suited to the lure. Common lures are spinners and plastic worms. Minnows hooked below spinners provide more attraction than the lifeless form of a minnow alone. The best fishing is in May, June, and September.



SMALLMOUTH BASS  
(*Micropterus dolomieu*)

## SMALLMOUTH BASS

Smallmouth bass are considerably more common than largemouth in the Fox River and found in swifter areas, particularly below the dams. Although the smallmouth does not attain the size of the largemouth bass, it is more of a scrapper and

pound-for-pound provides a more heart-pounding action than any other stream species in Illinois. Artificial lures such as plastic worms, jigs, spinners, and spoons are most effective, but live frogs and crayfish are also successful. Fish in early morning or late evening.

Dark spot with no margin

Small mouth

Body sometimes shows cross bars

BLUEGILL  
(*Lepomis macrochirus*)

3 anal spines

Dark spot has margin

Large mouth

Body often shows longitudinal lines

GREEN SUNFISH  
(*Lepomis cyanellus*)

Yellow edge

Dark bars radiating from eye

Teeth on tongue

Large mouth

Body brassy mottled with dark brown

WARMOUTH  
(*Lepomis gulosus*)

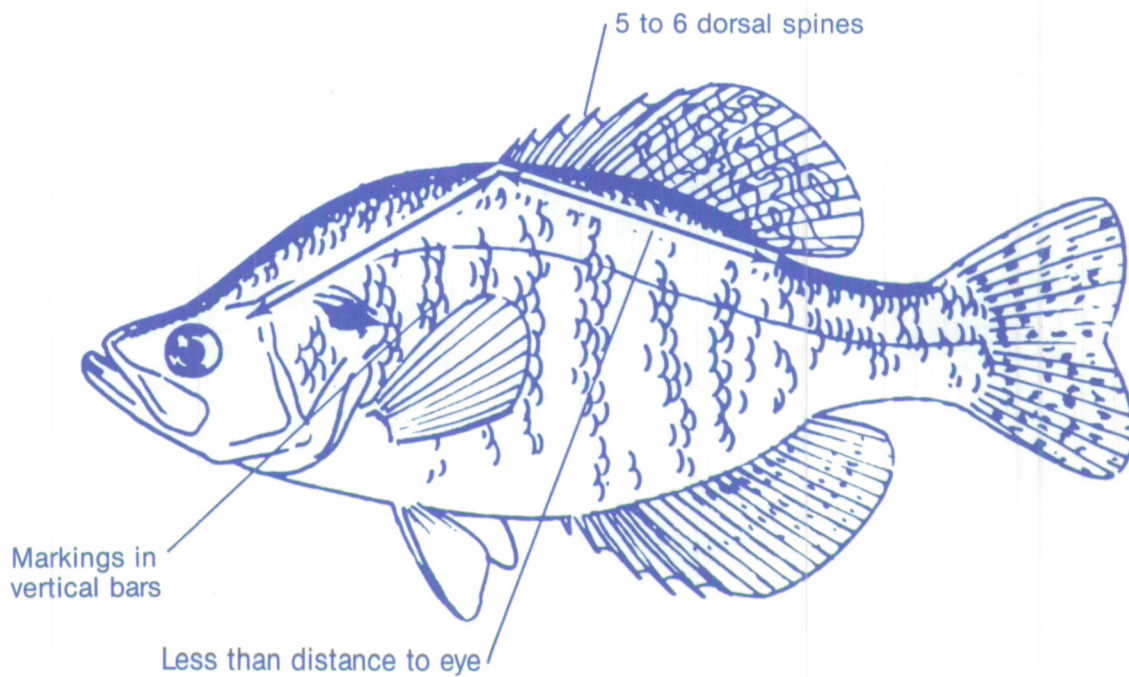
Body thick

3 anal spines

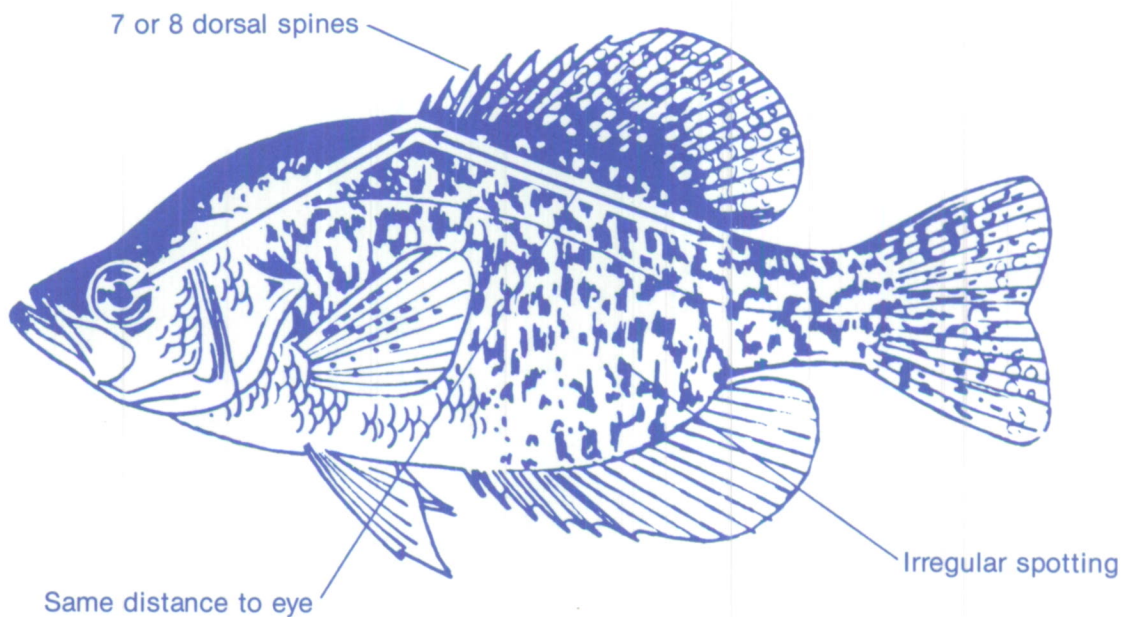
## SUNFISH

Sunfish occurring in the Fox include bluegill, green sunfish, warmouth, and occasionally orange-spotted sunfish, pumpkinseed sunfish, and rock bass. Fish near cover such as brush piles, stumps, or weed beds and drop your bait as close as possible to the cover.

For great action, an ultralight spinning rod or fly rod/reel combination using crickets, grasshoppers, red worms, small minnows, or wet flies are ideal. However, a cane pole and bobber can be just as rewarding. For ice fishing, wax worms are quite effective.



WHITE CRAPPIE  
(*Pomoxis annularis*)



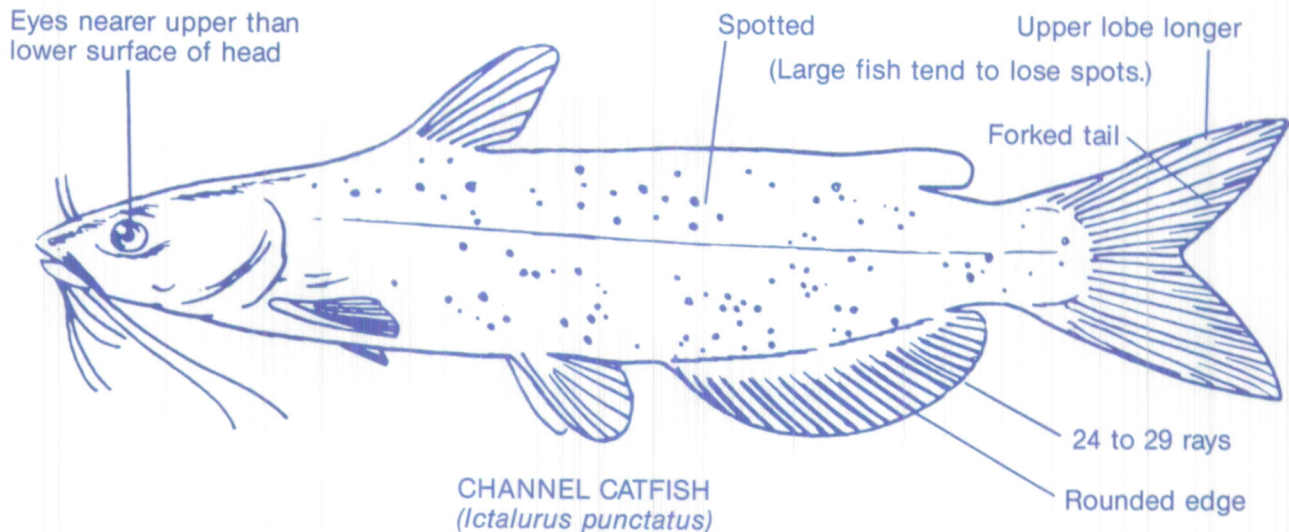
BLACK CRAPPIE  
(*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*)

## CRAPPIE

Both species of crappie, black and white, are found in the Fox River. Generally, white crappie favor areas which maintain a flow of current such as channels and are more tolerant of turbid waters. Black crappie inhabit calmer, clearer waters. Like bluegill, crappie are sight feeders and prey upon insects, crustaceans, and small fish.

Still fishing is the most common method used to fish for crappie. A number 6 or 8 hook with a

small minnow in combination with a long, stiff fiberglass rod or cane will do the job. A bobber is not necessary, however, a 1/2 to 1 ounce split shot placed six inches above the hook should be used to get the bait down to the desired depth. The bait should be jigged to tease the fish into striking. Ice fishing using the same techniques as with bluegill is also very popular.

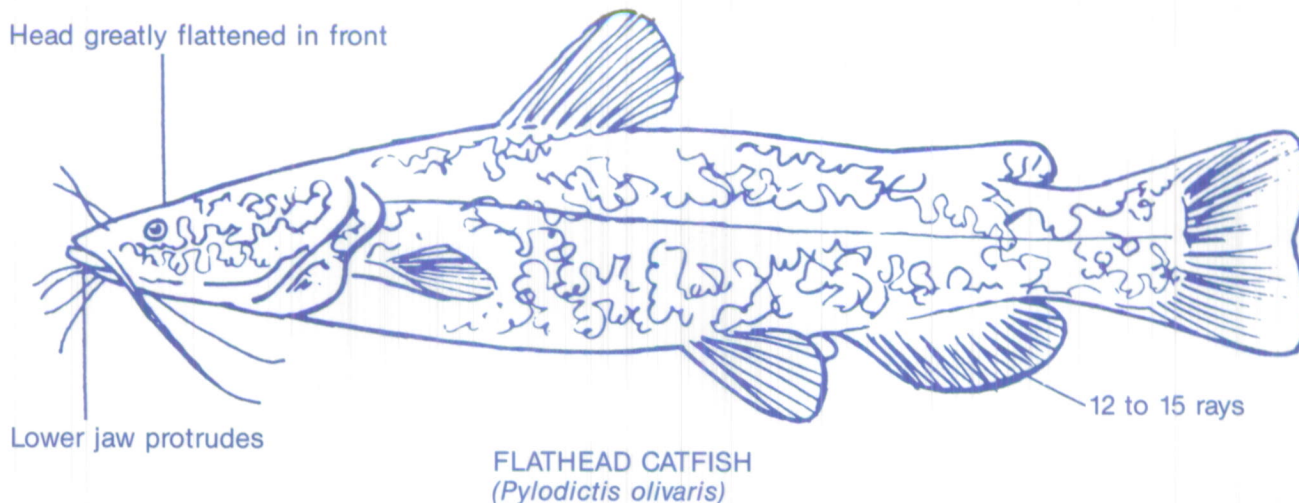


## CHANNEL CATFISH

Channel catfish can be taken almost anywhere in the Fox River. "Cats" often hole up underneath old stumps, downstream of fallen trees, below dams and in other areas of cover. Since these fish rely primarily on their olfactory sense to detect food, prepared baits with a strong odor are most effective. These include blood baits, cheese baits, and various homemade concoctions. Worms, min-

nnows, crayfish, liver, shrimp, and an almost endless variety of goodies are successful at one time or another for catfish.

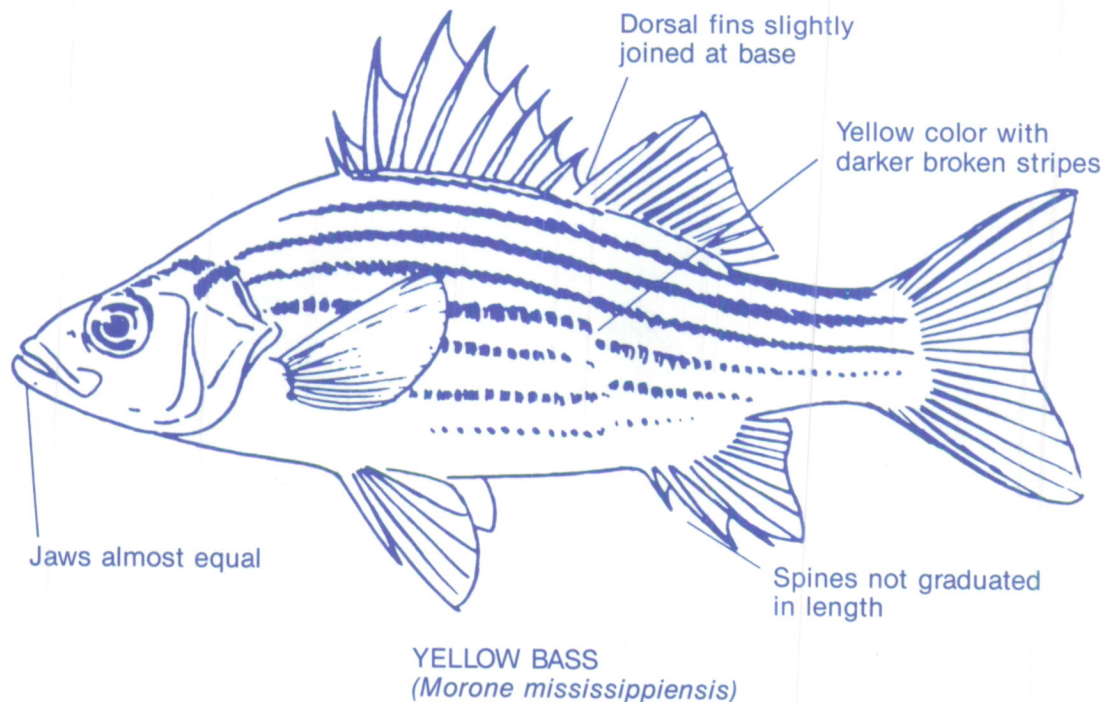
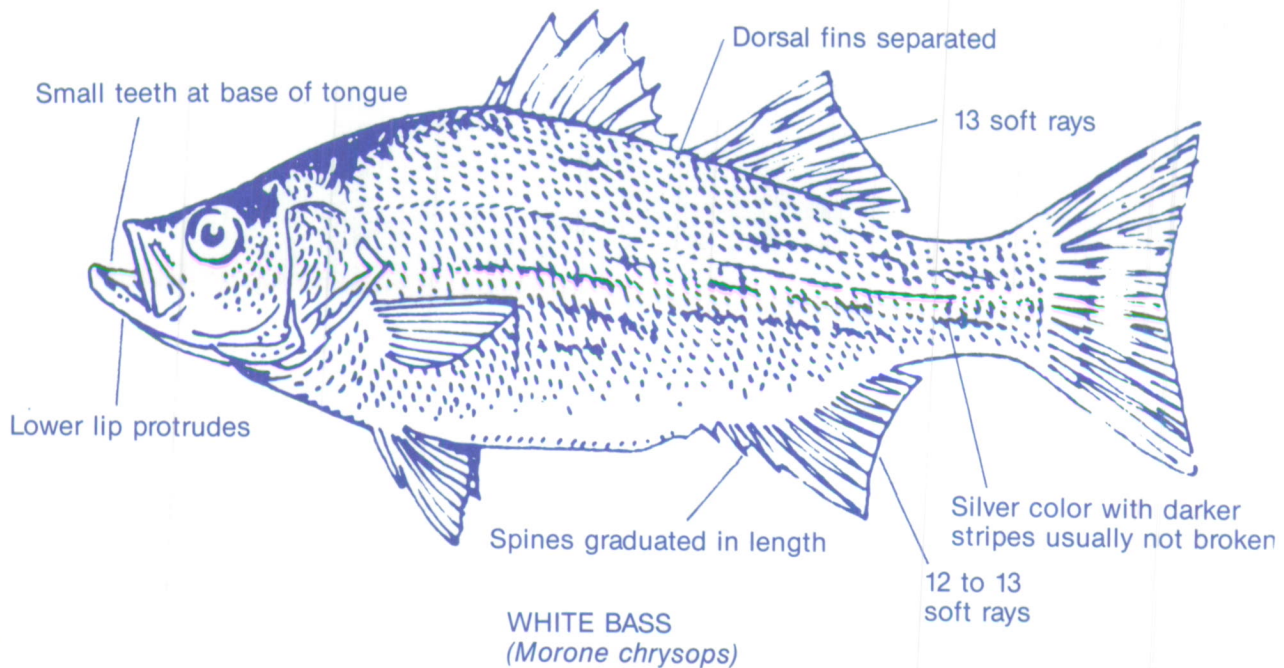
The more solid, prepared baits can be balled around a treble hook and fished on the bottom with a tight line weighted by a sliding sinker. Pieces of sponge rubber are dipped in baits having a thinner consistency and placed on or before a hook. Best fishing is usually during May, June, September, and October, but anytime there is a rise in the water level a feeding spree can follow.



## FLATHEAD CATFISH

Whenever this species is caught, it is generally considered a bonus or trophy fish. The Fox River has a fair population of "flatheads" and some anglers specialize in trying to catch this species. Big hooks, big baits (golden shiners), and strong lines are some basic tackle requirements. Fishing is best during the months of May through September.

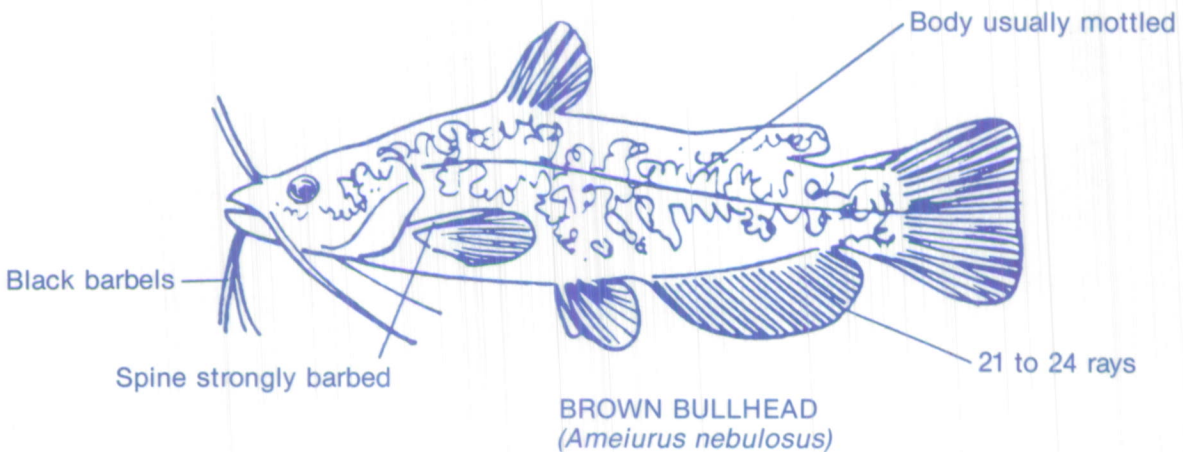
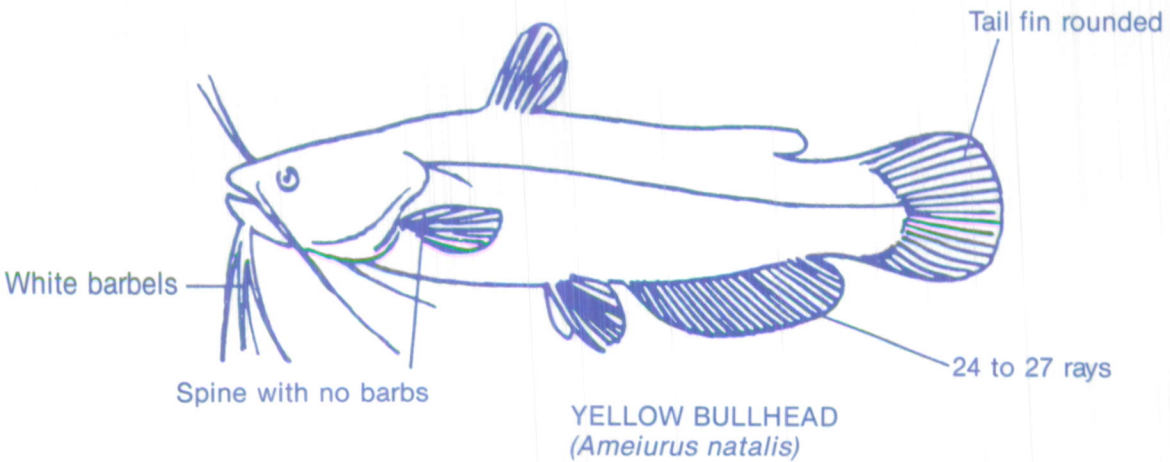
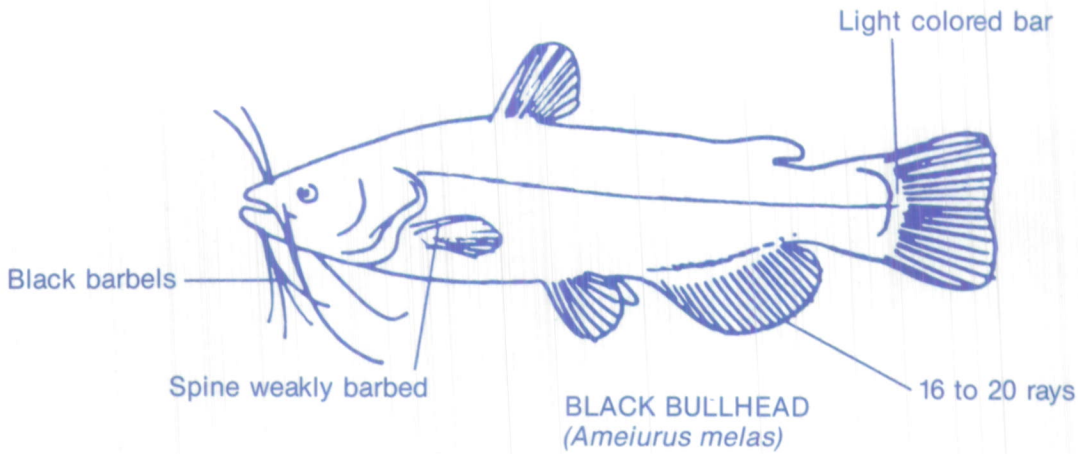
Most flatheads are taken in or around deep holes below dams. Catches of individual flatheads up to 40 pounds have been reported. This species is more often taken by anglers while fishing for other species. Flatheads are occasionally caught on worms, jigs, spinners, or crayfish. Live fish are preferred baits.



## WHITE & YELLOW BASS

The white and yellow basses are the true basses native to Illinois. Fishermen will often group these two species together and commonly refer to them as "stripers." However, the true striped bass or Rockfish is their larger, ocean going cousin, which has adapted very well to inland freshwater lakes and rivers. The striped bass and its hybrids have been stocked in some of Illinois' larger reservoirs and power plant cooling lakes.

Yellow bass, which do not attain the size of white bass, are more abundant in the Fox River. These fish like current and turbulence as is shown by their abundance in tailwater areas below dams. They can be taken using jigs and small minnows. Best fishing seems to be in the morning or evening, but bass may be taken from deeper water during the day by retrieving an artificial lure or minnow a short distance off the bottom. May and August have been the most productive months for the true basses.

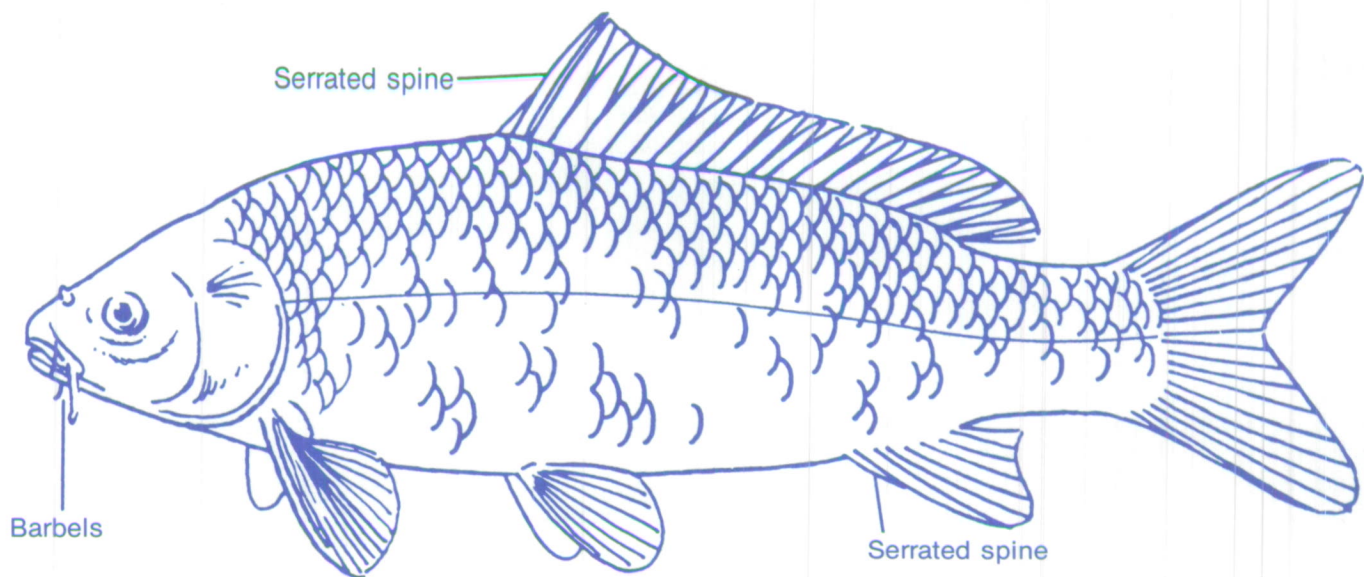


## BULLHEADS

Black, brown, and occasionally yellow bullheads are found in the Fox River. Although black bullheads are more abundant than the other two species, their combined numbers are not very great. Frequently these fish are inadvertently caught while fishing for other species using light tackle

with nightcrawlers. Bullheads feed primarily at night in shallow areas. Although their unsightly looks make them somewhat unattractive to sport fishermen, anyone who has tried them knows that their exceptional good taste makes up for their unpalatable appearance.





CARP  
(*Cyprinus carpio*)

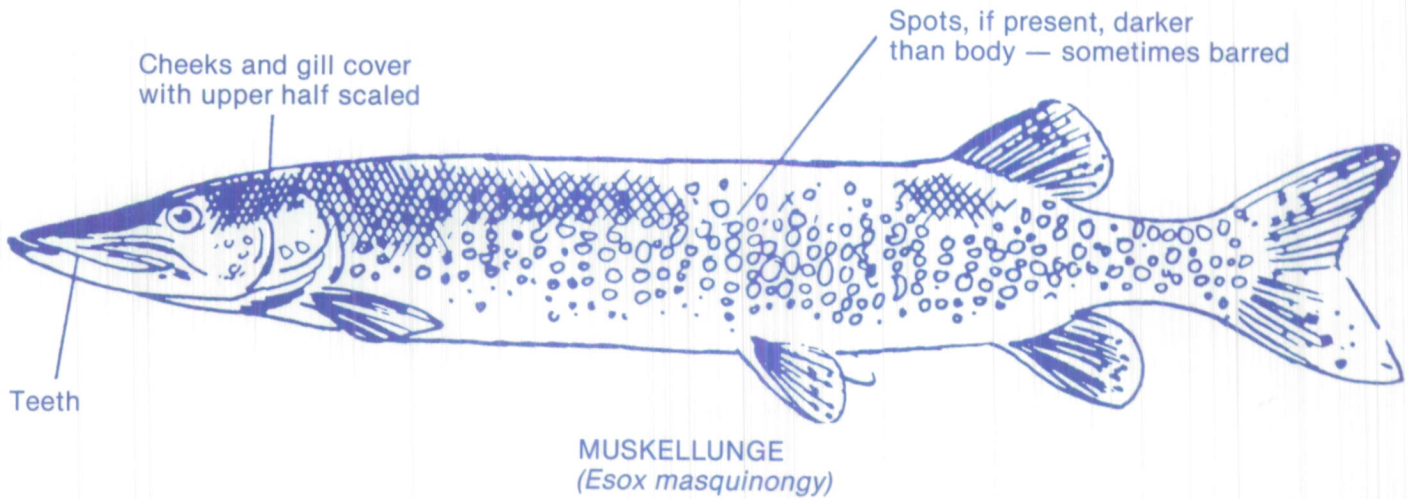
## CARP

Many anglers overlook real sport when they ignore the carp, especially when fishing is slow for other species. While carp are considered by many sportsmen to be a trash fish, unworthy of their expertise, the fish actually is a great fighter and a challenge to any sportsman who ties into one. Carp can be caught throughout the river from late spring to early fall.

Carp are most commonly taken on worms, corn, and doughballs. Doughballs can be made out of a mixture of flour, a flaky type cereal, and water. This mixture is balled around a small treble hook.

More and more anglers are finding that carp are good to eat. Filleted, scored (vertical 1/8 inch cuts made through the flesh down to the skin), rolled in cornmeal and cooked in hot deep fat (375°F), makes carp a tasty fare — with no bones to pick out. Any dark areas should be trimmed away before cooking. Smoking carp is another fine way to prepare them. Another method of preparing carp is to fillet off the carp sides, remove the skin and cut into 1½ to 2 inch chunks. These are then packed tightly into jars with 1 teaspoon each of salt and vinegar per pint, sealed and then pressure cooked for 1 to 1½ hours at 15 pounds pressure. The result is a product that is difficult to distinguish from canned salmon. It contains no bones and is delicious when used in a salad, chip dip, or made into patties and fried.

Pickling is another preparation method gaining in popularity. The meat is prepared in the same manner as for canning, except the flesh is cut into ½ to ¾ inch cubes. These cubes are then soaked in a brine or one gallon of white vinegar and one cup of canning salt for 10 days, stirring once daily. After the brining period, the cubes are thoroughly rinsed in cold water and drained. The fish cubes are then packed into pint jars, alternating layers of fish and onion rings. Add one teaspoon of pickling spices and cover completely with a solution made of one cup of white vinegar and one cup of sugar (do not cook). Store in refrigerator. After 10 days, you will have tasty morsels that will be palate pleasing. Although this recipe is given for carp, other species of fish can be prepared in like manner.



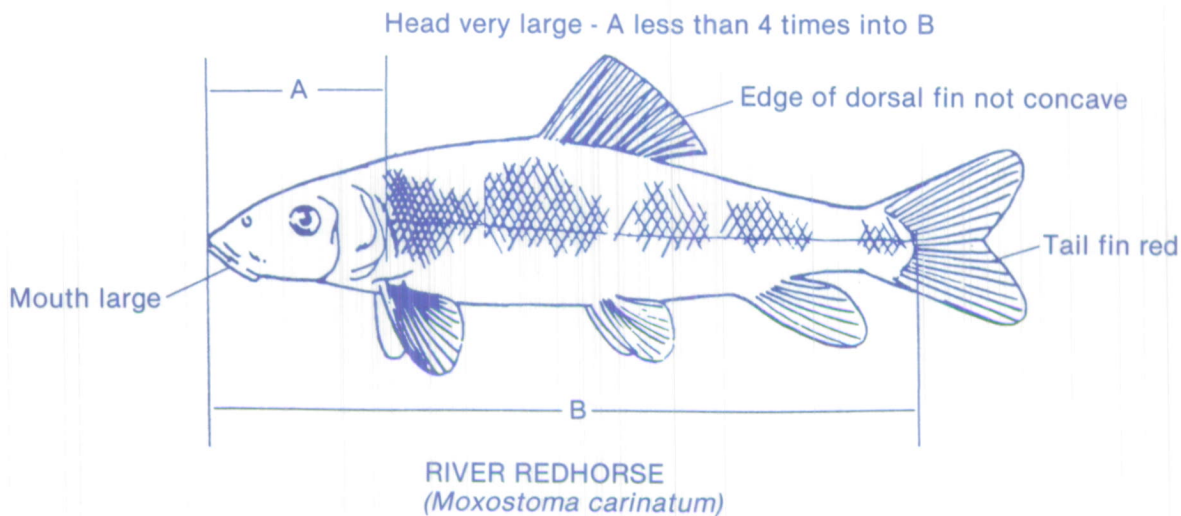
## MUSKELLUNGE

The muskellunge, commonly referred to as a muskie, can be distinguished from the northern pike, by the absence of scales on the lower half of the cheeks and opercles.

Their habits are quite similar to those of northern pike. Large muskie are generally solitary and prefer to inhabit bays and channels where aquatic vegetation or submerged brush and logs

are available.

Fingerling introductions of pure muskellunge into the Fox Chain O'Lakes during 1981 thru 1992 have resulted in a number of legal size (36 inches) muskie being taken in recent years from the Fox River. The dedicated angler now has ample opportunity to experience the mystique of this highly prized sport fish.



## RIVER REDHORSE

The river redhorse occurs only in the Fox River mainstream and a very few select tributary streams. This species has large molar-like throat teeth that distinguish the river redhorse from other Illinois redhorses. These large molar teeth are an adaptation for crushing the shells of mollusks. The river redhorse inhabits the pools and riffles of the Fox where gravel or rocky

bottoms and continuous strong flows are prominent. Spawning is believed to take place in late April and May over the shallow riffles and shoals. Adults are commonly 12 to 28 inches long and weigh 1 to 11 pounds. If caught by the angler, this species of redhorse should be returned to the waters of the Fox River System.



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# Outdoor Illinois

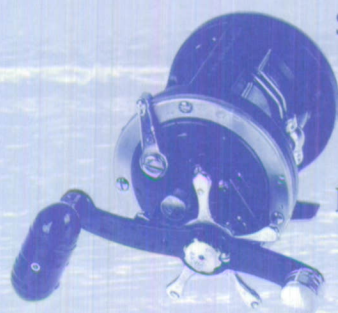
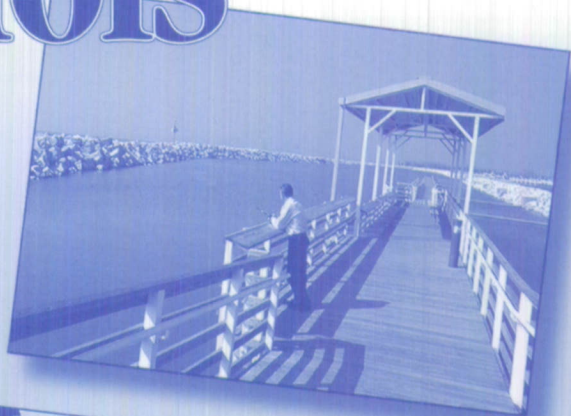
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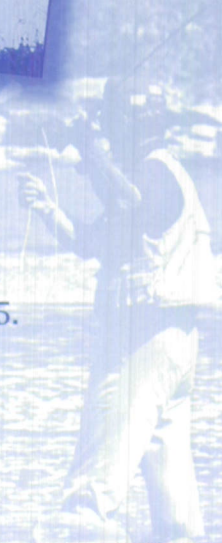
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