

September MSC Kayak Group Trip

The Bass Hole

The day started out great. Blue skies, no wind, water temperature 83 degrees. A great day to be at the Bass Hole. A few of the kayakers even reported catching a few small bass within the first few minutes on the water. Things were looking good. Unfortunately, it didn't get much better. A few more small bass, and that was it.

Several years ago, an average day at the Bass Hole would mean each angler would catch at least 25 bass, with plenty of big ones mixed in. Several anglers had days with catches of more than 50. What happened?

Unfortunately, not everyone who fishes the Bass Hole practices CPR (catch-photo-release) as we do when we fish there. Add to that the fact that there are no minimum or maximum length limits and quantity limits have not been enforced. We asked some questions and found out that some "anglers" have been coming to the Bass Hole with the sole intention of taking home as many bass as they can, and they do. This has resulted in total destruction of what used to be a great place to enjoy a fantastic day of fishing. Based on what has happened here, I doubt whether there will be any future kayak trips made to the Bass Hole.

Actually watching a great fishing resource completely die off in a matter of less than 2 years is cause for concern. Size limits and enforcement of bag limits would have helped preserve this resource, but it looks like it is too late for the Bass Hole now. If you think about what is happening with salt-water fishing, there are some similarities. For the past few years, there have been reports of reductions in the number of fish being caught in both offshore and backwater locations. While some of the reductions may be from "over-fishing" a large part of it is more likely due to loss of sea grass and declining water quality. There are things that we can and must do to ensure that our water quality improves. The future of recreational fishing depends on it. Let the demise of the Bass Hole be an example for all of us. Get involved in efforts to clean up our water and help make a difference while we still can!

