

Most fishing is for species such as the largemouth bass, bluegill (bream), redear sunfish (shellcrackers), and crappie (speckled perch). Channel catfish can be supplementally stocked to attract fishermen. Much of the fisherman's interest is in the spring of the year when these species are close to shore and easily caught.

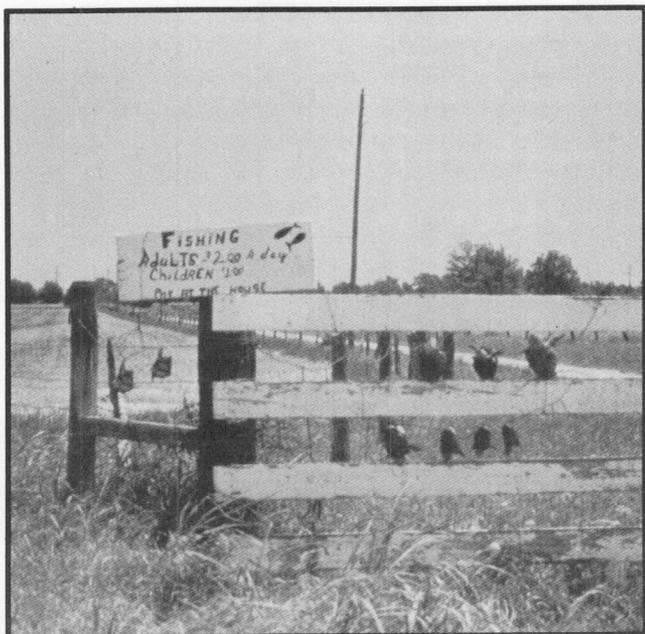


Figure 2. Sign posted along the roadside to attract anglers to a day-lease fishing pond.

**Steps** - Advertisement of a day-lease operation can be as simple as by word of mouth. This method will generally restrict use to local fishermen, and thus a small group of anglers will use the pond and a small income will likewise result. Larger numbers of fishermen may come to such a pond simply by posting a sign along the roadside (Fig. 2).

Location of a day-lease pond should be close to the manager's residence, so that he can be assured that all anglers pay the entrance fee. The simplest way to collect the entrance fee is to have the fishermen drop it off in a deposit box as they enter the property. This reduces the time expended by the manager in collecting fees. This method works well when dealing with small numbers of local anglers who can be trusted. One way to regulate access to the pond is to require anglers to check in with the manager before gaining access to the pond. This can sometimes prove to be inconvenient when it disrupts work or family life. Limiting the hours of operation and even the seasons of the year when the pond is fished can relieve some of this inconvenience. A third method of keeping track of those who have paid is to

allow anglers open access to the pond. The manager can then simply stop by the pond on a regular basis and collect an entrance fee. If large numbers of anglers frequent the pond, a dated receipt, ticket, or permit could be given to those who have paid. This could be obtained directly from the manager or through a nearby store that could retain a portion of the fee as a handling charge. The manager can then simply stop by the pond and make sure that each fisherman has a current ticket. This last method greatly simplifies knowing who has or has not paid the entrance fee. A seasonal pass could also be sold.

An aesthetically appealing pond site helps attract users. The site must be kept clean of litter. Trash containers should be located on site and emptied regularly to ensure their use by patrons. Any litter on the ground should be picked up. Added features such as pavilions, a picnic area with tables, and shade trees will help increase the attractiveness of the site. Minimal toilet facilities are encouraged, but are usually not supplied. Access to the water should be maintained by mowing the banks and managing aquatic vegetation.

**Costs and returns** - The cost of maintaining such an enterprise are intermediate to those of long-term leasing and operating a fish-out enterprise. The major cost is that of collecting the daily use fee or checking fishermen for current permits. Moderate travel expenses may be incurred if the pond is remotely located. A major expenditure is liability insurance. Current cost for such insurance run from \$350 to \$1500 per year for \$2 to 3 million worth of insurance. This cost can be reduced if the day-lease is operated as a "club". (Most insurance companies charge reduced rates for such operations.) The fisherman is given a membership card when he first fishes the pond. This card is then presented to the pond owner during future fishing trips to the pond. A small one-time fee is often charged for processing the card. In addition, the normal entrance fee is charged for each day of fishing.

Input into the pond is usually minimal because the pond owner can rely upon the natural production and carrying capacity of the pond to produce the fish that are harvested (Fig. 3). Supplemental stocking can increase the catch by the anglers and their interest in returning to the pond. The cost of such a program varies with the quantity and cost of the fish stocked. Returns from a stocking program can far outweigh its cost. Additional costs that may be incurred are those associated with properly managing the pond for fishing. These include such practices as aquatic weed control, fertilization, liming, and supplemental feeding.