

The Formation of Lake Anna

In 1971, Lake Anna was created to serve as a source of cooling water for Virginia Power's (now called Dominion) North Anna One and Two nuclear reactors. Creating the lake was accomplished by building a 90-foot high earth and rock dam on the North Anna River near Bumpass. Careful planning by engineers expected the creation of a 17-mile long Lake Anna west of the dam after about two years of regular rainfall and run off.

Would be LKAer's didn't have to wait that long, though. Mother Nature intervened with Hurricane Agnes in June of 1972 and 12 inches of rain fell in the water shed. Lake Anna was created about one-and-a-half years early with 225 miles of lake front property and approximately 13,500 acres were ready to be explored.

The down lake section of Lake Anna begins at the dam and runs back to the power station across from the mouth of Sturgeon Creek. It is characterized by clear water, shallow coves and little commercial development.

The mid lake region is the section from the power plant back up to The Splits where the North Anna River arm (approximately 8 miles) and Pamunkey Branch (approximately six miles) diverge. This part of Lake Anna is know for deep, clear water, much of the State Park land, Contrary Creek and most of the commercial businesses that operate on the lake.

Head past The Splits in either arm and you are in the up lake region. Here you'll find some agricultural land use, shallower water, water willow grass, some commercial businesses and the headwaters of the lake.

Also in 1972, work began on the acquisition and development of a water-oriented state park. Lake Anna State Park opened in 1983 on the north shore of the Pamunkey Branch just above The Splits as the culmination of these efforts.

Several bridges cross the North Anna River and Pamunkey Branch in the up lake region. Most boats, under 25 are able to cruise under these bridges (although you may have to lower bimini tops and antennas). The main bridge for Route 208 (New Bridge), approximately one mile below The Splits, is the only bridge that crosses the lower side of the lake.

All over the mainl ake there are hundreds of little coves that provide nearly endless opportunity to explore and more room for boating,

recreation and lake communities.

For the purpose of cooling the warm water discharged from the power plant, without affecting the main portion of the lake, Lake Anna was designed with two navigable parts, the public and private (warm) side. This was accomplished by building dikes across the mouth of the first three tributaries from the dam, on the south shore. Each of these tributaries were then inter-connected by canals to dispense the warm waters throughout all of them, eventually returning the cooled water to the main lake at Dike III.

The warm side of the lake also features hundreds of coves and lake communities, however commercial business is not permitted in this section of Lake Anna. You cannot reach the “private” side unless you have access to a boat ramp in one of it’s communities.

Together, both sides of Lake Anna creates a one-of-a-kind, highly desirable, 12-month out of the year site for those that enjoy water sports and fishing.