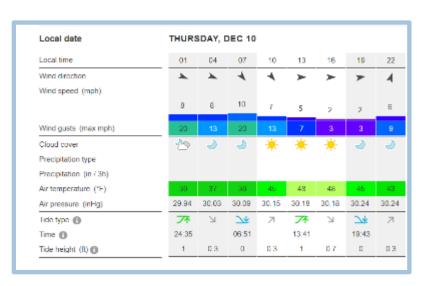
Using Online Resources to Plan Your Fishing Trip

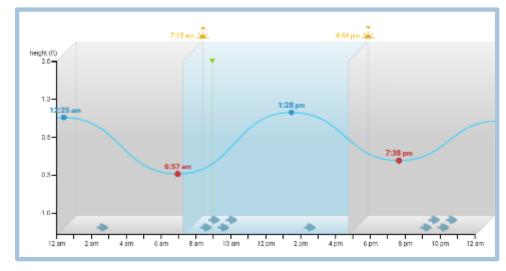
John Veil

410-212-0950

john@veilenvironmental.com







Overview of Talk

- Types of online data for planning your fishing trip
 - Geography
 - Maps
 - Aerial photos
 - Weather
 - Wind speed and direction
 - Tides
 - Highs and lows
 - Water height differential
 - Tidal current velocity
 - Stream flow (gages)
 - Depth contours
 - Solunar times (??)

About John Veil

- § Grew up in Eastern PA with a natural trout stream running through the community
 - Did not have the patience to fish as a youth
 - Never caught a trout there
- Solution
 Did not get seriously into fishing until the late 1980s.
- Sowned a series of small fishing boats from 10' to 23' and various canoes and kayaks
- Member of Pro Staff team for Native Watercraft kayaks since 2013
- Lived in Annapolis since 1991
- Secondary of the sec
- In my retirement years I fish frequently (>150 days/year)
- All fishing is light and ultralight tackle
 - 98% artificial lures and occasionally use bait

My Fishing Year in 2020

- I went fishing 208 days in 2020 in fresh, salt, and estuarine waters
 - 188 days kayak fishing in my own kayaks
 - 5 days kayak fishing in Florida with guides
 - 7 days fishing on charter boats or friends' boats
 - 8 days shoreline fishing
- § 42 total species caught
 - 14 from Florida
 - 28 from Maryland
- Souther than 5 days fishing in Florida in February, all fishing was done in Maryland, and most within one hour's drive of Annapolis

My Fleet - 3 Paddle Kayaks

- S Native Watercraft Manta Ray 11
- S Native Watercraft Ultimate FX15
- S Native Watercraft Manta Ray 12 XT (kept in Florida at a guide's house)
- S During 1st quarter of 2020, sold my 16' center console flats boat and my pedal drive kayak







Caveats

- The web addresses I give in this presentation are for a desktop or laptop computer
 - I use very few smart phone apps, and do my trip planning homework on a laptop
 - Many of the same companies have phone app versions of the websites
 - Those visual interfaces and sets of features may be different from what is shown here
- The websites I reference here are the ones I use regularly
 - There are other alternate sites that give similar information
 - You should use the websites that you are most comfortable with
 - The key point is to improve your chances of being comfortable on the water and finding fish by using online information to plan
- § My fishing is primarily done on tidal waters from a kayak
- Some FSFF members fish primarily in non-tidal waters (ponds, streams) and may fish by wading or from boats other than kayaks or canoes
 - Hopefully some of the ideas presented here will help you too

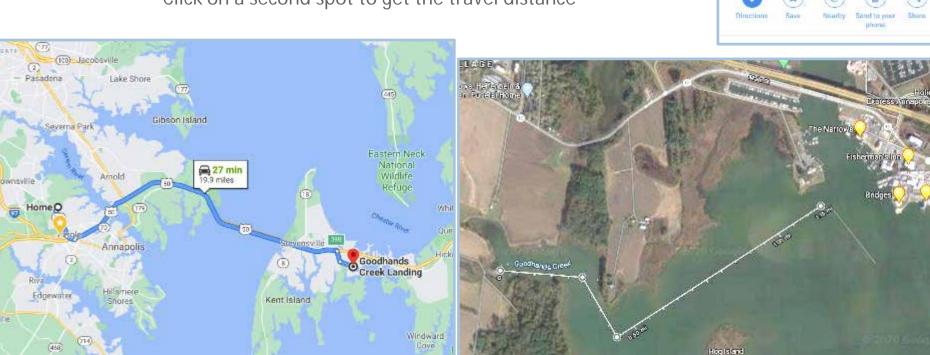
Online Geography Info

- § Google Maps
 - https://www.google.com/maps/
- Soogle Earth Pro (requires a download)
 - https://www.google.com/earth/download/gep/agree.html?hl=en-GB
- Savionics
 - https://webapp.navionics.com/

Maps Can Help in Choosing Fishing Spots

Study Google Maps/Google Earth Pro (map view vs Satellite view)

- Distance from home
 - Use Directions function to estimate travel distance and time
- Distance from parking or launch point to fishing spot
 - Use Measure tool
 - Right click on spot
 - Choose Measure Distance
 - Click on a second spot to get the travel distance



odhand Creek Road, Chester, MD | Q

Goodhands Creek Landing

3.6 * * * * * 6 reviews

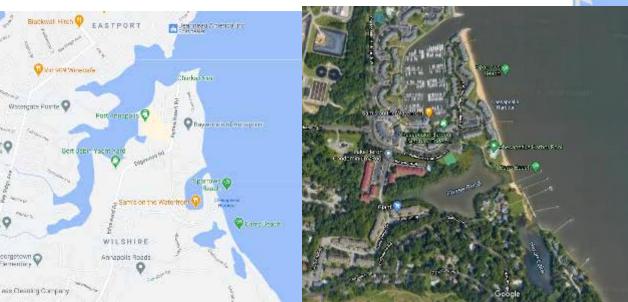
Boat ramp

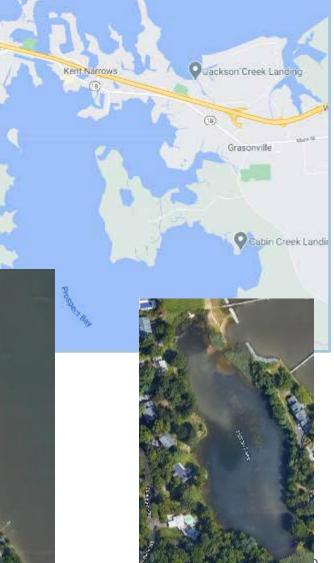
goodhands creek landing goodhand creek road ches

Goodhands Creek Landing Goodhand Greek Road, Che

Google Maps/Google Earth(2)

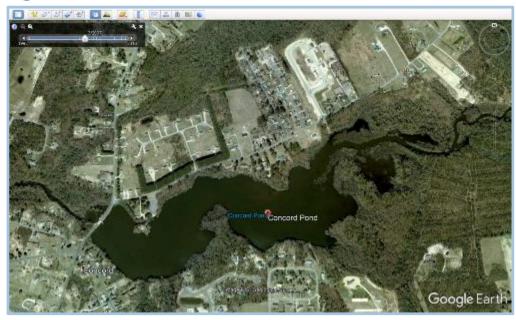
- Seconsider orientation of land structure to aid in blocking wind
 - Jackson Creek better with winds from south
 - Cabin Creek better with winds from north
- S Check out suitability of tributaries you have not previously visited

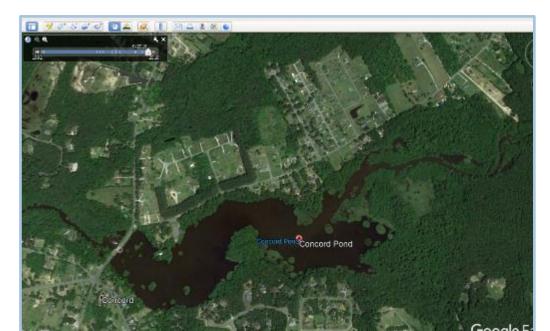




Google Maps/Google Earth Pro

- S Google Maps is quicker to use, but Google Earth Pro provides more information
 - Can look at satellite imagery from different years or seasons
 - March 2007 (top)
 - June 2018 (bottom)
- S Also helps to look when leaves are off of trees
- Source of the original of t





Nautical Charts

- Solution of land masses and structures of interest
 - Discussed more under depth contour section

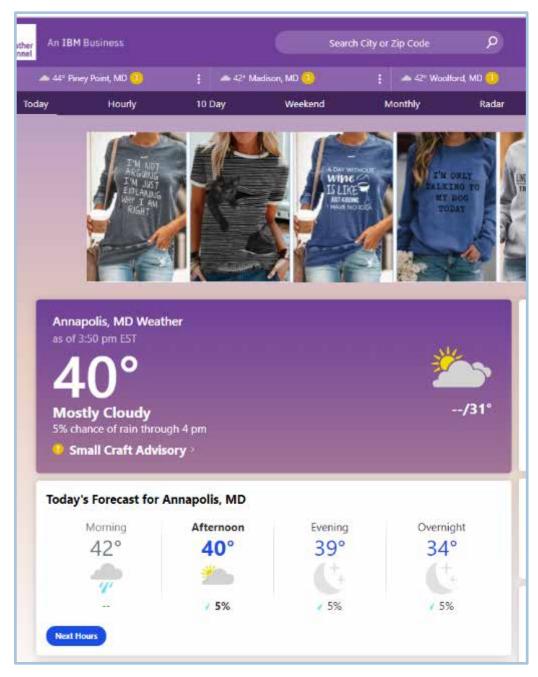


Online Weather Info

- Weather Channel
 - https://weather.com
- S Dark Sky
 - https://darksky.net/
- Windfinder
 - www.windfinder.com

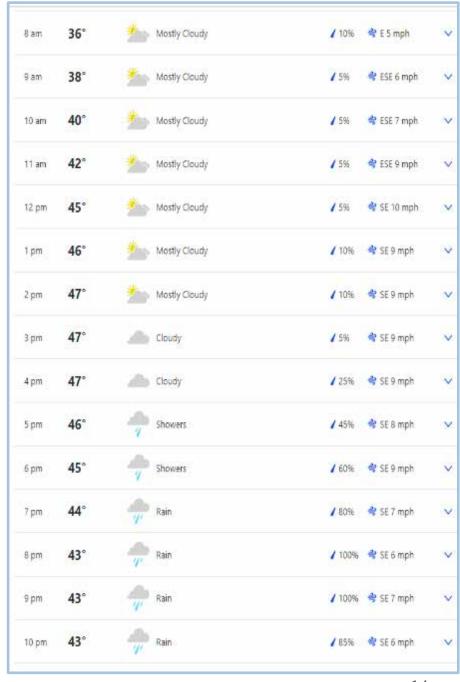
Weather.com

- The first place I look is on the Weather Channel website (weather.com)
 - Choose a location near to where you want to fish
- I generally look at the Hourly forecast (looks ahead for 48 hours) for data on temperature, weather conditions, chance of rain, and winds



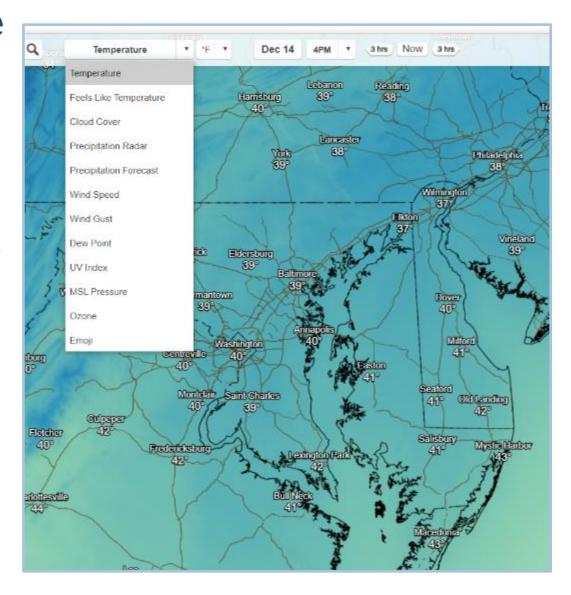
Weather.com (2)

- I look to see if there are any notable changes in temperature, wind speed or direction (more on this later), or precipitation
 - If so, I can plan the timing of a trip to include or avoid those changes
- I also make sure that those parameters are within a range that is safe and acceptable for the fishing I want to do
 - Winds above 10 mph are not good for open water, but could work for fishing in a sheltered spot
 - Overnight air temp below 30 deg could lead to formation of skim ice during the morning hours
- § For planning a trip several days in advance, look at the 10-Day forecast
 - Keep in mind that weather forecasting is not an exact science



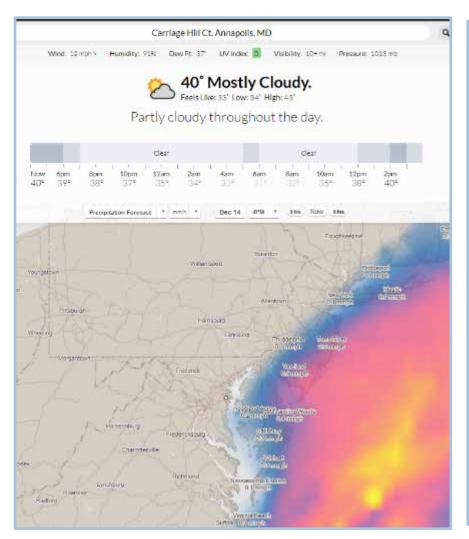
Dark Sky website

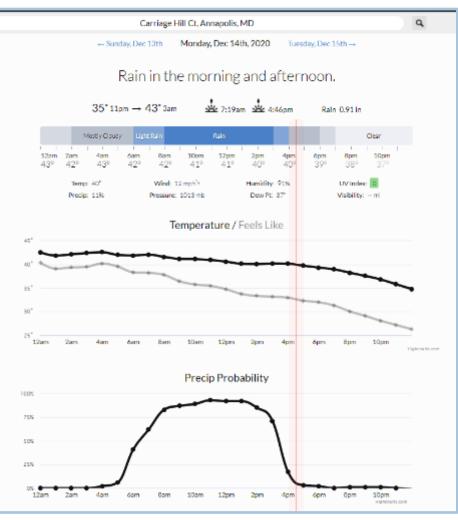
- § This website offers detailed localized weather information
 - Enter a specific address
 - Choose a weather parameter from the drop down menu
 - Choose a date and the time of day



Dark Sky (2)

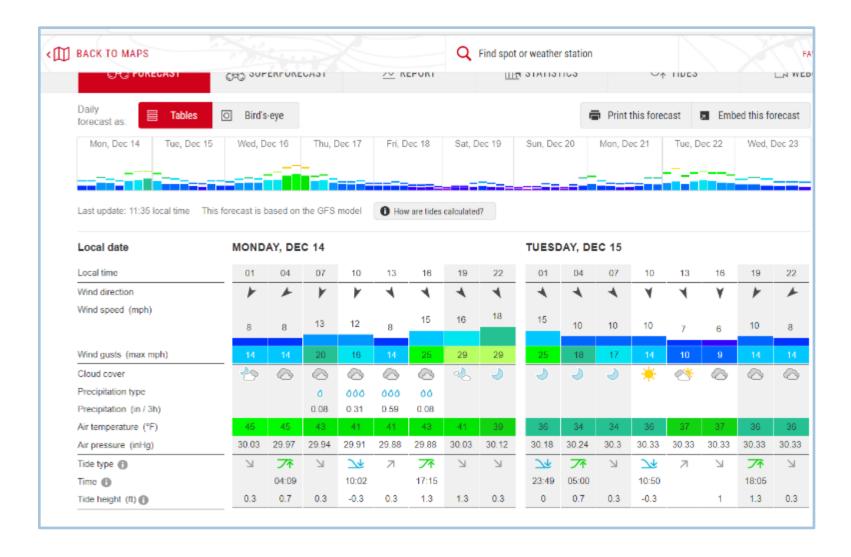
- **§** Example outputs for the street where I live
- Solution
 Data are available in map format or in other tabular and graphic forms





Windfinder.com

- Windfinder is primarily a wind site, but also gives weather data
 - More discussion in the wind section



Online Wind Speed and Direction Info

- S Windfinder
 - www.windfinder.com
- § Many other sites, including the following:
 - Tides4Fishing
 - https://tides4fishing.com
 - Weather Channel
 - https://weather.com/
 - Dark Sky
 - https://darksky.net/

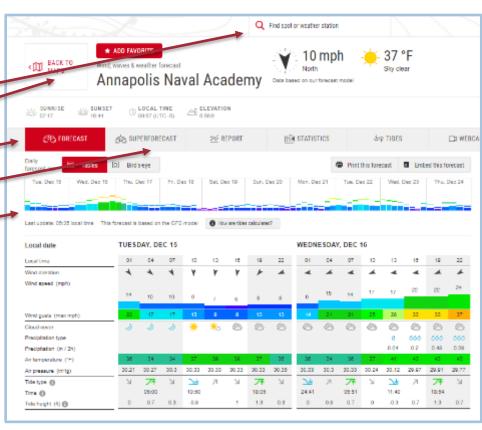
Windfinder.com

- Windfinder is my first stop for wind information
- I use it to learn the wind speed and direction, and how those change over the time period I am considering

§ As noted on the previous slide, many other weather websites provide

wind information too

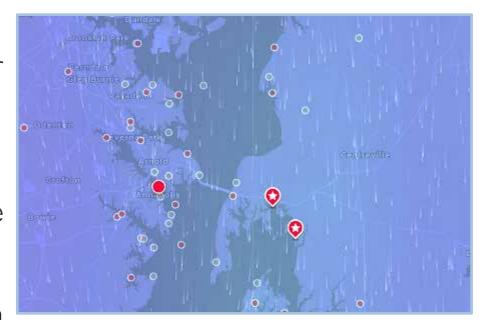
- Controls to note:
 - Find spot or weather station -
 - Back to Maps button
 - Forecast tab
 - Superforecast tab
 - Graphical wind bar

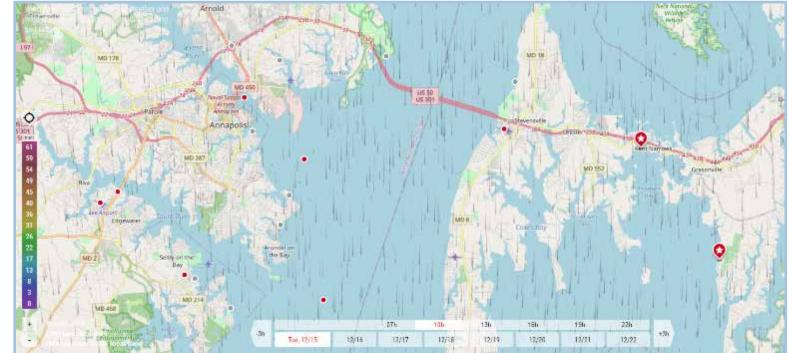


Choosing a Site

- Type name in Find spot or weather station box
- So directly to the Back to the Maps button
- This view shows wind vectors with the background colo corresponding to velocity

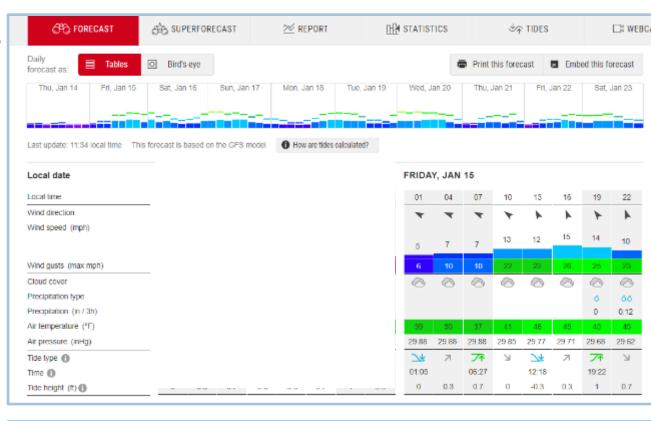
Solicking on date or time at the bottom changes these

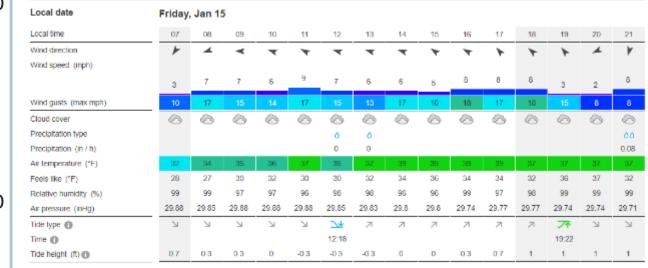




Two Different Wind Models

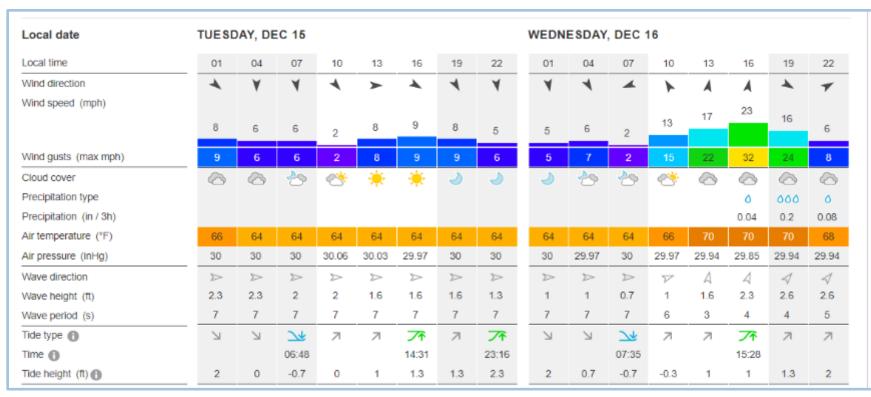
- Windfinder provides wind info using two different wind models
 - Don't always give the same results
 - Forecast tab Predictions are available in 3 hour increments for up to 10 days into the future.
 - Superforecast tab Predictions are available in 1 hour increments for up to 3 days into the future.





Using the Wind Data

- Second Look at wind data for Ft DeSoto, FL over two days
 - Low winds on Tues from the NW and W
 - High winds on Wed from S
- When should I fish there?
 - Tues looks better from wind perspective, especially during the morning
 - Tides are moving from 6:48 am to 2:31 pm
 - If you fish on Wed, go early and plan to finish by mid-morning



Using the Wind Data (2)

- There are several launch spots at Ft DeSoto – choose one with less exposure to NW wind
- S Closer to home (Unicorn Lake), use wind direction and speed to select time and location

 Winds on Tues blow down the length of the lake, but on Wed blow across the lake

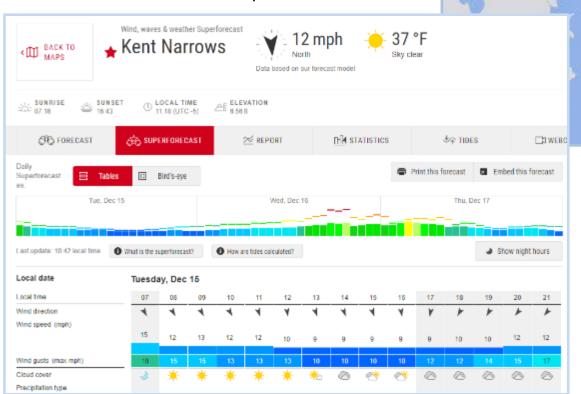


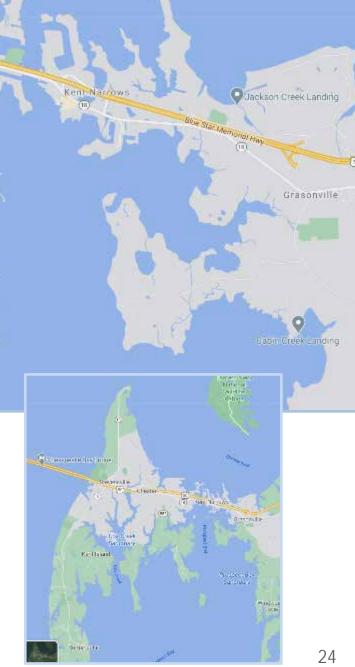


Using the Wind Data (3)

HESLOU

- S Choosing where to fish near Kent Narrows on a particular day
- Sec 15 winds from 9 to 13 mph from the NW and N
- § Jackson Creek launch would be bad
- § Goodhands Creek and Cabin Creek launches would be possible

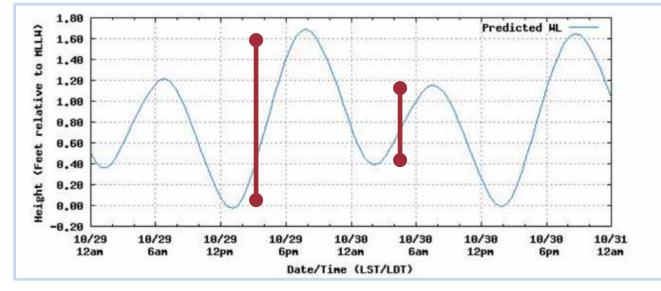




Online Tide Info

- Tides4Fishing
 - https://tides4fishing.com
- Windfinder
 - www.windfinder.com
- Second Representation of the second Representation Representation of the second Representation Representatio
 - Tide times and elevations
 - https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/map/index.html?region=Maryland
 - Tidal current flow
 - NOAA Current Predictions Current Predictions

Tidal Cycles

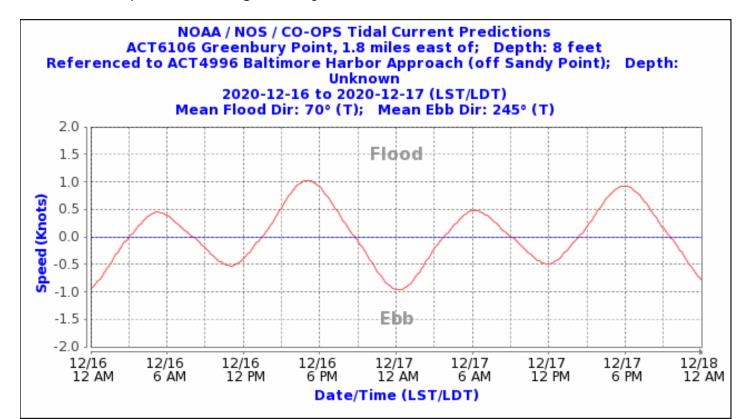


- In tidally influenced areas in Maryland there are two high tides and two low tides in each 25-hour period
- Transition from a high to a low tide or a low to a high will take a bit more than 6 hours
- Often one of the high tides in a day will be higher than the other, and one of the low tides will be lower than the other
- § The differential water height from one extreme to the other (i.e., tidal coefficient) determines how much water will flow past a spot during that part of the tidal cycle
 - The height differential from the 10/29 12:00 pm low tide to the 10/29 7:00 pm high tide appears to be about 1.7 feet. But the height differential from the 10/30 2:00 am low to the 10/30 8:00 am high appears to be only about 0.75 feet.
 - Over similar 6-hour periods more than twice as much water will move in the first of those periods compared to the second of those periods.

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Tidal Cycles (2)

- In general, fish in tidal environments bite better with a moving current the more water that moves past a spot in a given amount of time, the more likely the fish bite will be good
- § Tide charts can provide some idea of whether there will be strong water movement or weak water movement.
- Also the water does not move at the same velocity throughout the full 6-hour period. At the start of
 a tidal exchange (either the high or the low), the predicted current is low initially but builds to a peak
 toward the middle of the period, then gradually diminishes toward the end.

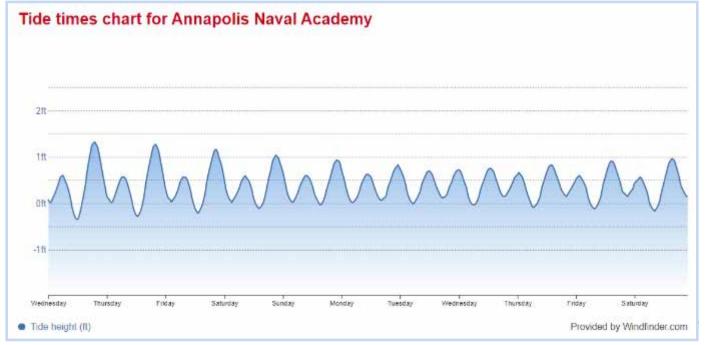


Windfinder

- When I am checking the wind forecasts for an area in windfinder.com, I can see the time and height for the high and low tides
 - This gives a quick look, which usually is adequate

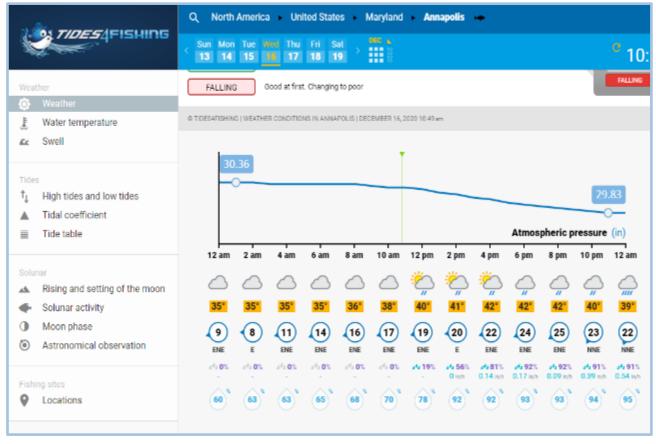
S Or for predictive purposes, I can click on the Tides tab and get tidal data for multiple days

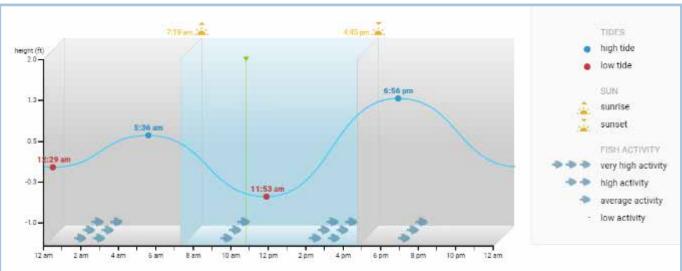
THURSDAY, DEC 10 Local date Local time Wind direction Wind speed (mph) Wind gusts (max mph) Cloud cover Precipitation type Precipitation (in / 3h) Air temperature (°F) Air pressure (inHg) 30.03 30.09 30.15 30.24 30.24 74 Tide type (1) 06:51 13:41 19:43 Time (1) 0.3 0 0.3 0.7 0 0.3 Tide height (ft)



Tides4Fishing

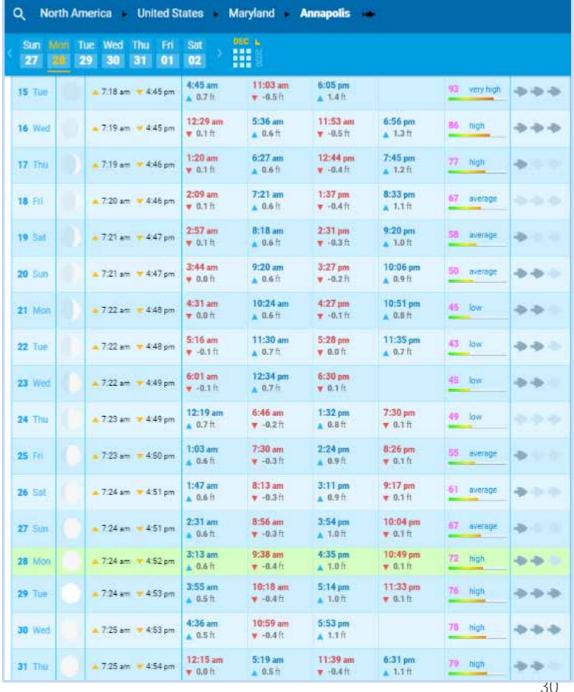
- § To get more detailed information on tides and other useful data, I visit tides4fishing.com
- Wind and weather data
- § Tidal times and heights
- Solunar predictions





Tides4Fishing (2)

- Tidal data are displayed for an entire month, allowing easy access for planning a future trip
- Moon phase
- Tide times and heights
- Tidal coefficient (the difference in height between the consecutive high tides and low tides in any given area)
- The more water that moves during a tidal, the stronger the tidal current and better chance of a good bite



Wind Can Dominate Tides

- The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries are generally shallow. Often strong wind events on the day in question or during the several days prior can overwhelm the tides.
- § For example, strong winds blowing toward the south or east can push a lot of water out of the Severn River. As that water moves out, it pulls water from the tidal creeks and ponds
 - I have experienced quite a few days last fall when the tide table predictions were way off. I would arrive at a Severn launch spot near projected high tide and find water at a low level. Under those conditions, there is unlikely to be much tidal current, regardless of what the tide tables predict.
- § A few days after a strong blow, the water that was pushed out will slosh back, leading to higher water levels than predicted.



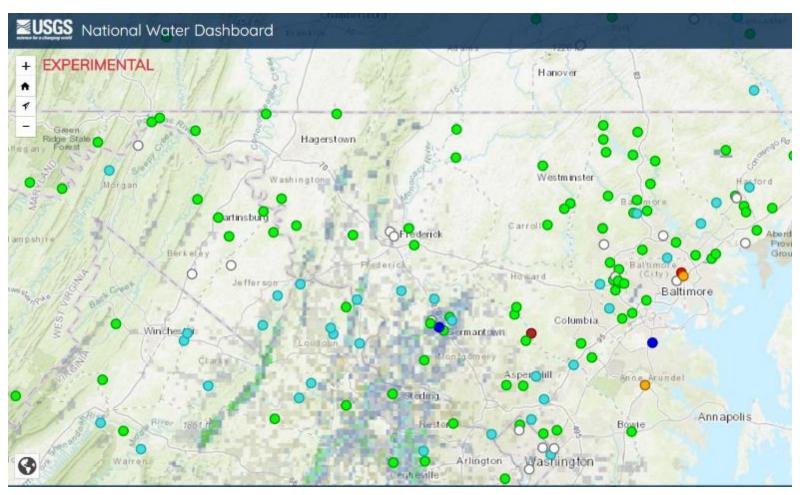


Online Stream Flow Info

- Substitution
 § USGS stream gage data
 - USGS | National Water Dashboard
 - USGS Current Conditions for Maryland_ Streamflow

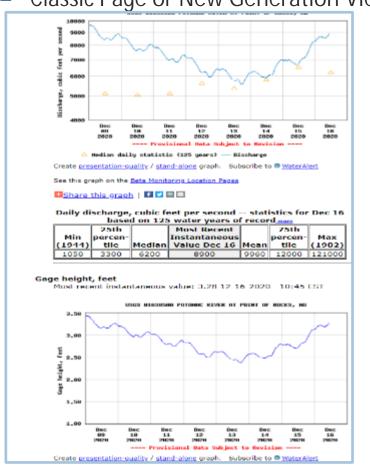
USGS Stream Gages

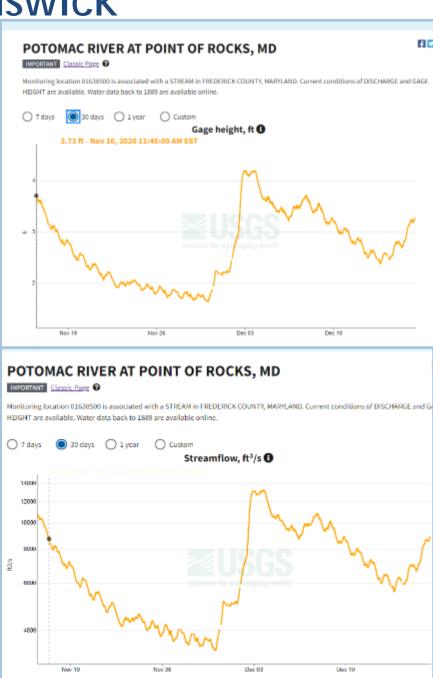
- USGS maintains stream gages at thousands of sites across the country
- The National Water Dashboard is a new way of displaying stream data
- Choose a location from the map to get data on current and recent past stream flow (cfs) and height



Potomac River Near Brunswick

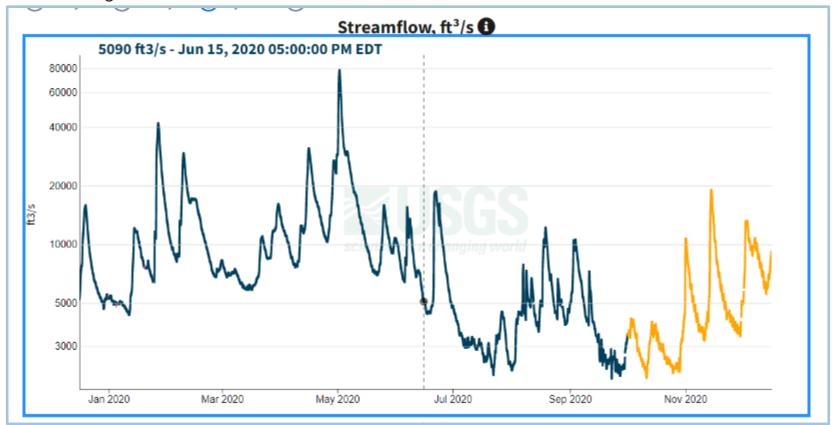
- Two stations are near Brunswick
- Point of Rocks (downstream)
- Piney Run (upstream)
- Choose Point of Rocks
 - Classic Page or New Generation View





Safe Levels

- § The stream gage data can tell you how high the water was and the stream flow recently, and how it is trending plus can show historical trends
- § Important to learn what the safe and fishable values are for any particular station
- I fish rarely in free-flowing streams and rivers, and do not have that historical knowledge



Safe Levels (2)

- Check with a friend or fishing buddy to see what he/she recommends
- When you are at the ramp, follow posted guidelines
- I fished near Brunswick on June 16, 2020
 - Water height = 2.18 ft
 - Flow = 4,850 cfs







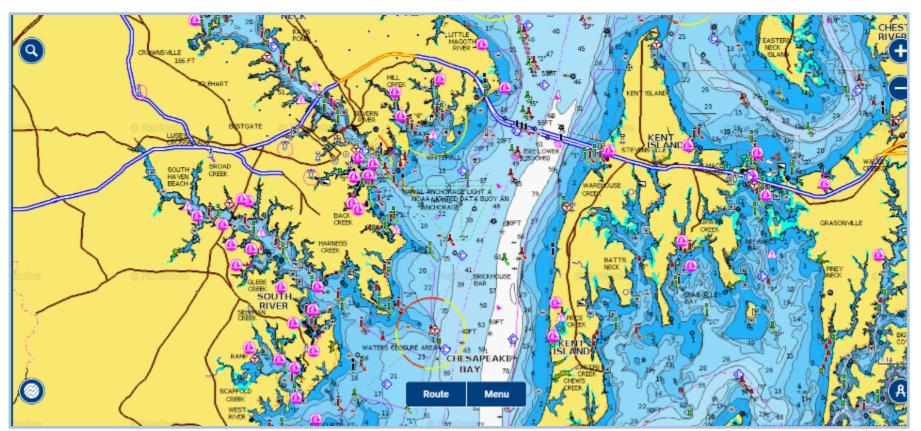


Online Depth Contour Info

- S Navionics
 - https://webapp.navionics.com/

Navionics Charts

- § Navionics sells mapping cards to use with GPS units
- S Also provide free online nautical charts for use on a computer
 - Separate phone app with a fee

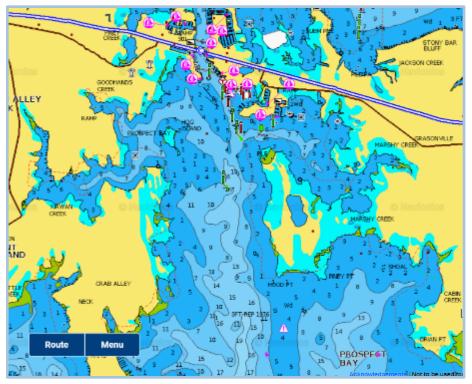


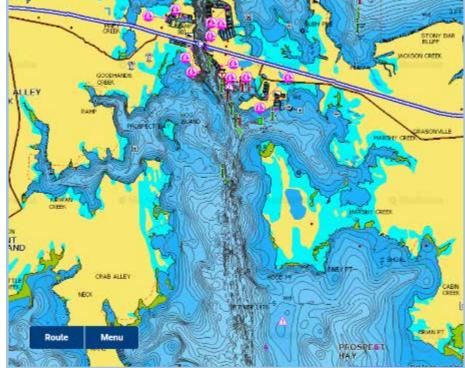
Navionics Charts (2)

- Click on icon in lower left
 - Get two choices of mapping info
 - Standard Navionics is based on NOAA charts
 - SonarChart is more detailed and is based on user measurements collected by Navionics



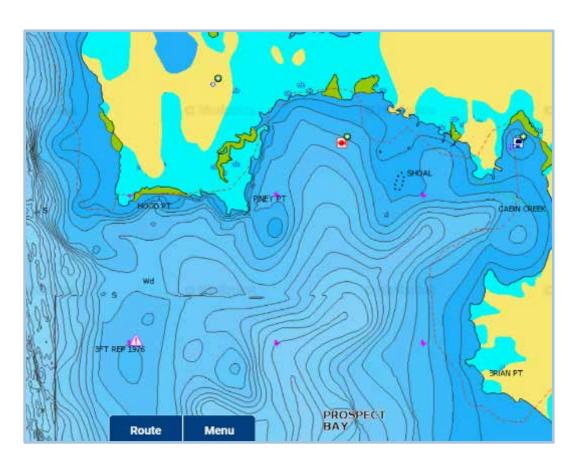


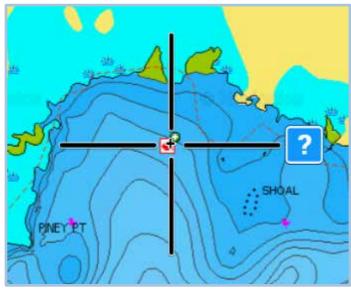


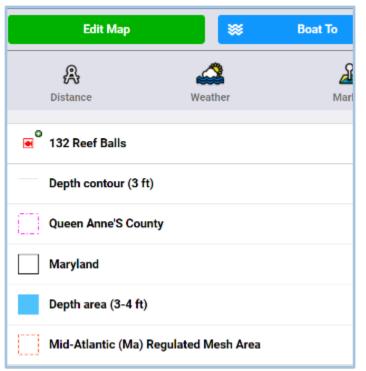


Getting Details on a Spot of Interest

- Move cursor to a spot of interest
 - Click on red fish icon
 - Shows black cross and?
 - Click on ? to get info







Online Solunar Info

- § Tides4Fishing
 - https://tides4fishing.com

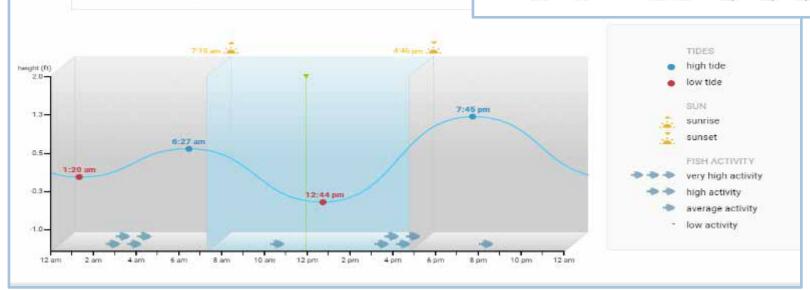
What Is the Solunar Theory?

- This explanation is taken from the Tides4Fishing website
- **§** The action of the sun and the moon influences the activity of all living beings in nature. The times of day in which living beings show greater activity are the so-called solunar periods.
- Two types of solunar periods
- § Major periods
 - They have approximately 2 hours duration although on certain occasions they may exceed 3 hours.
 - They begin when the moon is overhead and when the moon is under our feet
 - Normally these are the moments of greatest fish activity during each day.
- § Minor periods
 - They are periods of lesser duration (approximately 1 hour) which coincide with the rising and the setting of the moon.
 - During these periods there is also an increase in fish activity in relation to the rest of the day.
- § Can also observe a notable increase in the activity of fish if the sunrise or sunset takes place during the solunar period. In these cases (shown in green on the data), we may expect more action than that initially forecast.

Solunar Data

S Tides4Fishing presents solunar data in a text box, bar chart, and as part of the tidal cycle plot





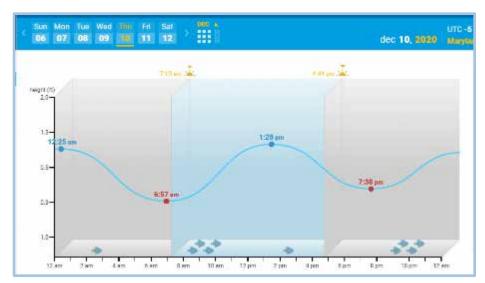
My Own Experience with Solunar Data

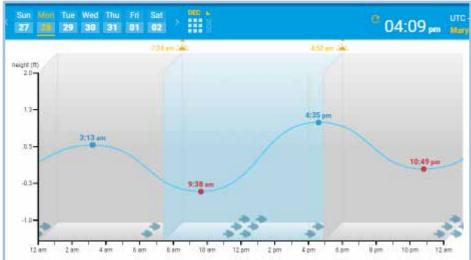
- § I think it is fun to see what the solunar data predicts for a fishing trip
- § I have not observed a strong correlation between my catching success and the solunar data
 - Some days I catch well during solunar high activity periods, but on other days I catch nothing
 - Likewise, some days I have poor fishing success during low activity periods, but on other days I find the fish biting well
- In an informal poll of experienced Chesapeake Bay anglers, most felt that in tidal waters, the actual tidal movement was more important than solunar predictions
- § However, see this article in Salt Water Sportsman Fishing By the Solunar Tables | Salt Water Sportsman
- Two examples on next slide show different trends



Two Examples

- **S** Example 1 Dec 10 pickerel fishing no fish from 1:00 to 4:00, then 6 fish from 4:00 to 4:30
- **§** Example 2 Dec 28 pickerel fishing no fish from 9:30 to 11:00, then 3 fish from 11:00 to 11:15





My conclusion

- Knowing the solunar times cannot hurt you, and might help
- I do not plan my trips around solunar times, but for others it may be something to consider

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Closing Thoughts

- In determining when and where to fish, pay attention to:
 - Weather forecast
 - Forecasted wind speed and direction
 - Projected high and low tide times for that day and how much water height differential is estimated between highs and lows
 - Solunar times (maybe)
- § But recognize that the forecasters can only make an educated guess. Computer models do not always reflect reality. Mother Nature may throw you a curveball, and the fish themselves don't always follow the feeding rules.
- § I go whenever the actual conditions allow me to feel comfortable on the water. Some days produce more fish than others.
- § If you stay at home you are guaranteed to not catch fish

