



FRESHWATER CAST · MONDAY CAST

Hamilton & Catherine: Sunny Warm-Up, Hulsey Access Dawn Windows

Lake Hamilton · Lake Catherine (labeled) Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 bank / kayak / boat

Highs ~84° → ~88° → ~89° (LZK) CT clocks · mostly fair warming midweek

Release boards thin at evening pull Soft recreational · no named trail event pulled

Hamilton and Catherine draw sunny late-September weather climbing toward the mid-to-upper 80s, with storms more likely looking into Thursday. Pack sunscreen and a shell, fish Hulsey Hatchery Access at first light, and treat Catherine State Park as a labeled sister stop when time allows.

● MIDWEEK OUTLOOK

NWS Little Rock (LZK) band pin for **middle** paints this Friday–Sunday **Cast** window. At pull: Showers and thunderstorms. Cloudy, with a high near 76. North northeast wind 0 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90%. New rainfall amounts between 1 and 2 inches... Local clocks on this water run Central Time — dawn windows shift with the angler.

FRIDAY OCT 2

76°F showers and thunderstorms · night ~62°F chance showers and thunderstorms. Winds 0 to 10 mph. Fish dawn and last light first when skies harden.

SATURDAY OCT 3

73°F slight chance showers and thunderstorms then mostly cloudy · night ~63°F cloudy then slight chance rain showers. Winds 5 mph. Fish dawn and last light first when skies harden.

SUNDAY OCT 4

78°F slight chance rain showers then partly sunny · night ~58°F mostly clear. Winds 5 to 10 mph. Fish dawn and last light first when skies harden.

HOW TO FISH THIS WEATHER

Unsettled air and shower/storm chances put a premium on **pre-front and lull windows**. Fish tighter to cover before cells; after a pass, work muddy/clear seams and windblown banks. Slide into creek arms if lightning walks in.

Day cards from the locked weather-band representative pin (middle), pulled Friday morning for the Fri–Sun window. Check live dam boards before you idle over a seam.

● GENERATOR SCHEDULE CHEAT SHEET

Entergy / Corps-area lake notices for Hamilton–Catherine public generation calendars were **thin as a full Fri–Sun unit block at evening pull**. Confirm USACE / agency lake pages before you idle near dam-end structure.

REACH	FRI–SUN NOTE	FAILOVER
Main lake / hub	Soft recreational midweek under sunny skies. Elevation and ramp status rule access.	USACE / park / public ramp boards
Dam-end restricted water	Boards thin for unit timing. Fish legal water only — never the boil.	Posted signs · on-water observation

Soft bite notes with quiet releases: points, grass, brush, and docks early; deeper edges and shade mid-day. If water is moving at a dam face, look for bait on the first legal current break — still outside every restricted line. Confirm ramp status before you trailer when pool has been swinging.

Practical pre-launch check: elevation versus last trip, ramp status on agency or park pages, and a glance at any release remark. Birds and bait on the graph beat an empty calendar.

● HOW TO FISH IT — BANK / KAYAK / BOAT

BANK

Primary public bank access through **Hulsey Hatchery Access** on Lake Hamilton — fees, parking, and hours verify live. Catherine State Park banks only where posted as a labeled sister hop. Work points, docks, and shaded pockets at first light.

Shared: hydrate; stay outside restricted lines. Hot Springs traffic rises on sunny afternoons — leave margin to get off exposed banks.

Confirm access hours before you lock the truck. Soft midweek pressure until sunny Wednesday — recreation stacks this corridor once the sun climbs.

KAYAK

Launch at the named public ramp when open; confirm ramp and parking before you strap the boat. Fish creek arms, grass flats, or protected banks away from main-channel ski traffic after mid-morning.

Wind on open water can end a kayak day early once recreational traffic builds — have a bailout shoreline planned. PFD on, whistle, and a sun kit every trip.

Pack a short rod for tight cover and a longer spinning setup for point casting. On the warmest Wednesday afternoon, abort open fetches early and finish along a protected bank rather than fighting wakes back to the ramp.

BOAT

Plan: **first light--~9 AM CT** on Hamilton points and docks; late morning shade; mid-day deeper edges with electronics. Launch early at Hulsey when open — confirm status before you trailer.

Soft lake-board language only when notices show water moving. Soft midweek pressure; sunny Wednesday traffic rises near Hot Springs. Mark bait height at dawn. Catherine is a secondary hop only if time allows.

If ski wakes stack, finish in a shaded pocket. Fish Hamilton thoroughly rather than forcing a two-lake hop.

● LURE BOX

TOP

Walking bait bone/chrome at dawn on points. Poppers over brush on slick mornings. Buzzbait evenings along shade.

MID

Spinnerbait white/chartreuse on wind. Squarebill citrus on riprap. Soft swimbait for suspended fish.

BOTTOM

Green pumpkin creature in brush. Brown football jig on point drops. Drop-shot when clear under high sun.

● BASS LIFE STAGE

Late September is a post-summer / early fall transition. Largemouth still relate to points, brush, and docks.

Spawning is long done. Fish feed and comfort one morning at a time — cool nights pull fish shallow at first light; warm afternoons push them to shade and depth. Handle quickly in warm water.

● FORAGE THIS WEEK

Most likely menu: threadfin and gizzard shad on points and creek mouths, bluegill around brush and docks. Hatch reports are thin. Match the graph and birds.

● ALSO HOT / ALSO IN SEASON

Crappie on brush and docks. Catfish on deeper holes. Soft white bass language if seams show bait when units run.

Crowd / Heavy Traffic: No named national trail event pulled for this water Mon Sep 28 – Wed Sep 30. Soft midweek recreational pressure under sunny skies; traffic rises on the warmest afternoons. Regs confirm live before you keep fish.

Looking ahead (next 1–3 weeks): If nights keep easing into early October, expect stronger dawn windows. Keep pulling elevations and generation notices. Next **Cast:** Friday window Fri–Sun.

● PATTERN NOTES (THIS WEEK)

Late September on this water is still a feed-and-comfort game. Cooler nights pull fish shallow at first light; the afternoon rebound pushes them to shade, docks, grass edges, and deeper breaks unless generation moves bait into a legal current seam.

Start every morning by marking bait height on one trusted piece of structure before the first cast. If bait is up, open with a walking bait or spinnerbait; if bait is down, open with a jig, Texas-rig, or soft swimbait on the break. That single fork saves wasted hours chasing last week's memory.

When generation calendars stay thin, treat birds, bait on the graph, and ramp status as your live board. Soft unit language only when pages show water moving — and even then, fish outside every restricted line.

Crowd picture for Mon Sep 28 – Wed Sep 30: soft midweek recreational pressure under mostly sunny skies, rising on the warmest Wednesday afternoon. Get the dawn hour, then leave a margin before wakes and ski traffic stack popular corridors.

Regs, ramp fees, and park hours confirm live before you keep fish or lock the truck. This Cast is a plan for the water — not a substitute for the agency page you should glance at the night before.

● HAMILTON–CATHERINE MIDWEEK NOTES

Confirm ramp status at Hulsey Hatchery Access versus pool before you trailer. Sunny midweek heat shortens the shallow morning — fish dawn like it is the whole trip.

Check color at the ramp and match lure color: darker in stain, lighter when clear under Wednesday sun.

Electronics tip: mark bait height on a known point or run at dawn before the first cast. Soft USACE / agency generation language only when boards show units. Stay outside every dam restricted line.

Monday's cooler morning is often the cleanest early window. Tuesday–Wednesday warm into the upper 80s — shorten shallow and rotate to shade, docks, and deeper structure by late morning.

Carry a dedicated dawn rod so you are not retieing when birds or bait show on the first pass. Soft midweek pressure under sunny skies; traffic rises on the warmest Wednesday afternoon.

Mental picture: sunny dawn points early in the week, then a warmer Wednesday shade bite with more recreational traffic after mid-morning.

If Wednesday opens calm, start with your best dawn bait on the first clean point; if chop or wakes build, slide to a protected pocket and stay thorough.

Pack water, polarized lenses, and a rain shell for the looking-ahead storm trend on some corridors. Leave ramp margin before afternoon recreation stacks popular access. Catherine State Park is a labeled sister hop only if time allows; Hot Springs traffic rises on sunny afternoons.

● ON THE WATER THIS WINDOW

Treat dawn as the whole trip on the warmest days of this window. A clean first hour on a point, grass edge, seam, or creek mouth beats three hours of high-sun wandering.

Soft generation boards mean you fish structure and bait first; if water is moving at a dam face later, look for bait on the first legal current break — still outside every restricted line.

Decision fork: calm slick mornings open with a topwater or walking bait on the first clean bank you trust; breezy or wake-chop mornings open with a spinnerbait or soft swimbait along the windward edge, then rotate to shade. That fork covers most of this Cast without overthinking the box.

Primary this week is largemouth on points, brush, and docks. Secondary species stay short also-
notes only.

Confirm elevation vs last trip before you trailer. Birds and bait on the graph beat an empty calendar. Next Cast looks at the Friday window Fri–Sun with a fresh pull.

● WINDOW DISCIPLINE

Leave time margin for the ramp and the drive. Soft midweek pressure evaporates once afternoon recreation stacks popular corridors — especially on the sunny Wednesday rebound. Get the dawn hour right, then leave while the fishing is still good.

Practical pre-launch check: elevation vs last trip, ramp status on agency or park pages, and a glance at any release remark. Birds working a flat at dawn are the best free tip when calendars stay thin.

Hydrate early. Clear late-September sun puts UV and glare up after 9 AM — polarized lenses and longer casts help once surface glass burns off. Keep a rain shell even on fair midweek cards; looking ahead into Thursday can still bring storms on some corridors.

Pure-Gas.org E0 · this water

Closest Pure-Gas.org ethanol-free stations / corridor notes for this water (saved listing — stations only; listings can change; verify E0 grade at the pump if grade matters to you):

- Nearest corridor stations (verify E0 on Pure-Gas.org) — See Pure-Gas Arkansas directory · ~pin approaches Crowdsourced listings — call ahead
- Pure-Gas.org Arkansas directory — <https://www.pure-gas.org/> · state list Use state directory if none nearby
- Area marina / highway stops (verify) — Nearest US/AR highway corridor to pin · ~variable Confirm E0 grade — do not assume marina gas is E0

Station list from Pure-Gas.org for this water. No pump prices on this card. Confirm grade and hours on site.

SOURCES

NWS Little Rock (LZK) (Friday morning CT pull) · agency lake / park / USACE / APC pages as relevant (generation calendars thin at pull) · Pure-Gas.org station list (reuse) · state regs (live) · Trail calendars skimmed (no named event confirmed unless noted).