

I've come up with a template for a graphic which incorporates several key elements affecting the decision about whether to keep fishing at a specific location or move from it, and allowing for tracking the specific production rates for a spot over time.

On this graphic, I've placed five elements across the bottom....**Long Term Track Record (LTTR)**, breaking that down into two parts, the number of efforts made at the spot and the percentage of productive ones, **Short Term Track Record**, again breaking it into the raw number of trips over recent weeks, and the percentage of successful ones, **Signs** indicating the presence of fish, **Bite Frequency** and **Number and Size of Fish Caught**. These five elements essentially form the horizontal access for the graphic.

On the left side of the vertical axis, I place numbers, which allow for ranking each element (and part of each element) on a scale from 0-5. On the right side of the vertical axis, I've placed numbers which allow for rating the size of the spot selected, from small to large, moving upward along the axis. Over on this side of the graphic, I've also created a place for putting the name or number of the spot, for reference.

Along the top, I've created a secondary horizontal access, one which describes the **correlation of the conditions** encountered to those expected for the spot at the time. I also created space for describing the specific conditions in play, to include air and water temperature, water clarity, wind speed and direction and other weather conditions, like the amount and type of cloud cover.

At the top right corner, I make room for recording the date and time-frame for the outing.

I see this template as playing a potentially large role in tracking data for different spots over time. It can become a valuable component in any fishing log I've copied and pasted the template below, and then copied and pasted one after filling in values for all the elements, using a hypothetical spot and situation to do so.

I simply copied the blank template and opened it in the Paint program on my computer to generate the completed one. What I'd really like to have is some kind of software designed specifically for use with a template like this, which would make using it easier and simpler, and also facilitate ways to crunch data from it, after a number of trips have been documented. I can imagine typing in the name of a spot and having it provide the relevant data for the spot after combining it in some way, or typing in a date range and having the software search for all entries which fall into that range and provide an analysis of data that way.

In addition to filling in the blanks on the graphic, so to speak, anglers would also benefit from making specific notes about all trips (stops) documented, to clarify things further. Doing so would definitely enhance the value of the data on the graphics.

On the last page of this blog, I've put in some "fake" comments, which would give further detail to go with the data I entered on the graphic for spot 001, fished on 1/3/16.

Anyone who learns to use this template to create and store detailed information about their trips can enhance the quality of their fishing logs, without question. I've created a second blog which allows for copying and pasting the template, for visitors to this site to use as they wish.

“We fished 001 first on 1/3/16, staying for about four hours and catching a couple of the 'right fish', despite experiencing a slower bite than what we expected. The cold conditions of the time generally enhance the potential of the spot, where we've caught big trout on a high percentage of outings lots of times, over a decade or more. I had not been to the spot many times in recent weeks prior to the trip, since the weather had been somewhat mild for December. I saw enough bait activity to give me confidence, and managed to get a couple bites on sinking FatBoys early. Did catch one 29 inch trout which weighed just under 8 pounds on a pink FatBoy. Bite was kind of slow as the sun rose higher, and we switched to soft plastics and wound up getting about 15 more bites. Caught three fish between 24 and 26 inches, and another 29, which weighed 8.25 pounds, that one on a watermelon/red flake Provoker dragged around the edge of a pile of rocks on the bottom.”