

**Charter Boat Catch and Effort  
from the Michigan Waters of the Great Lakes, 2000**

**Gerald P. Rakoczy**

**and**

**Donna L. Wesander**

*Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station  
96 Grant Street  
Charlevoix, Michigan 49720*

*Abstract.*—Public Act 451 (Part 445) of 1994 requires all charter boat operators fishing state of Michigan waters to report sportfishing catch and effort to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The objective of the catch and activity reporting system is to obtain a continuous annual record of the number, type, and location of fish harvested by charter boat clients in Michigan. Ninety-seven percent of approximately 500 charter fishing operators complied with the law by returning their completed catch reporting forms in 2000. An independent observation program conducted at eight Lake Michigan ports found good agreement (76%) between reported and observed charter excursions. Charter fishing operators reported making 17,140 charter fishing excursions during April through October. The total number of charter excursions decreased slightly (-4%) in 2000 compared to 1999. Approximately 472,000 angler hours were spent fishing by some 78,987 charter clients. The distribution of charter fishing excursions was: 68% Lake Michigan, 16% Lake Huron, 11% Lake Erie, 3% Lake Superior, and 2% Lake St. Clair. Over 228,000 fish were reported harvested. The harvest was composed of about 58,700 yellow perch, 48,800 Chinook salmon, 47,000 walleye, 32,500 lake trout, 19,300 coho salmon, 10,800 rainbow trout, and 4,300 brown trout. Harvest rates of most salmonine species from lakes Michigan and Huron correlated significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) with harvest rates estimated independently from Michigan's Great Lakes creel survey during 1990–2000.