

**Sportfishing Catch and Effort from the Michigan Waters  
of Lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Superior,  
April 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995**

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*Abstract.*—Sportfishing catch and effort were sampled on lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Superior from April 1, 1994 through March 31, 1995. The objective of the creel monitoring program is to obtain a continuous record of sport catch, catch rates, and catch composition for the Great Lakes and important anadromous river fisheries. Over 85,000 anglers were interviewed at the completion of their fishing trips. Catch and effort estimates were calculated by month for all areas sampled. It was estimated that anglers spent 6.2 million angler hours in all areas of the Michigan waters of the Great Lakes that were surveyed. Total harvest was estimated to be over 5.3 million fish. Yellow perch were the most abundant species in the sport catch in most sample areas. Great Lakes sport anglers harvested an estimated 4.5 million yellow perch, 317,000 walleye, 75,000 chinook salmon, 59,000 brown trout, 58,000 lake trout, 31,000 coho salmon, and 31,000 rainbow trout.

Michigan's Great Lakes sport fishery has been monitored with a statewide contact creel survey program since 1983. The objective of the program is to obtain a continuous record of sport catch, catch rates, and catch composition for the Great Lakes and important anadromous river fisheries.

A fundamental requirement for sound management of the Great Lakes fisheries is knowledge of the response of fish stocks to fishing and the contributions of various fish stocks to the fisheries. Success and future value of the Great Lakes and anadromous stream fisheries depends on long-term consequences of current management. It is essential that management decisions be based on a sound

empirical knowledge of the history, current status, and dynamics of fish communities.

Fishing statistics are needed for stock assessment and to facilitate stock identification. Coupled with fish marking studies, these kinds of data can identify Great Lakes and anadromous fish stocks and determine their distribution, movements, and contribution to various sport fisheries. Data collected from this program have been used to develop, test, and improve decision models which help discern management strategies for Great Lakes fish communities and fisheries.

For example, the catch and effort estimates for yellow perch and walleye from Lake Erie are an important component of interagency harvest