



ASSESSING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT & SIGNIFICANCE OF RECREATIONAL ANGLING ON PENNSYLVANIA'S LAKE ERIE WATERS: A \$40 MILLION ANNUAL ECONOMIC INPUT

Within the Lake Erie watershed, the well-established recreational angling industry is a cornerstone of the economy and lifeblood for many residents.

Lake Erie is the most biologically productive of the five Laurentian Great Lakes and possesses the largest diversity of fishes within all of the Great Lakes. This highly diverse mixture of cold and warm water fish species attracts anglers from around the world to Lake Erie's unique and prolific waterways.

Natural resource managers and stakeholders alike recognize the need for credible economic data to inform policy and sustain this resource for generations to come.

In 2016, Pennsylvania Sea Grant funded researchers at Penn State University and the University of New Hampshire to assess the economic impact and significance of the recreational angling industry within the Pennsylvania section of Lake Erie, and provide insights into angler experiences.

This study utilized a mixed methodology, which resulted in 1,189 completed online and mail-back questionnaires (Phase I) and 516 completed on-site questionnaires (Phase II) of Lake Erie anglers.

Key Economic Observations

In 2016, angling related activities brought in an estimated \$40.6 million in revenue to Erie County Pennsylvania.

Erie-based anglers spent an average of \$459 on expenditures such as groceries, gas, groceries, fishing rods, reels, and other fishing equipment.

Anglers visiting the region reported spending \$503 on expenditures such as overnight lodging and accommodations, gas, and food and drinks at restaurants and bars.

Pennsylvania Lake Erie angling supports approximately 539 jobs within Erie County and provides more than \$13 million in income for Erie County residents.

Key Angler Experience Observations (Phase I)

Approximately 74% of respondents live in Pennsylvania but report traveling an average of 103 miles to their fishing destination.

Approximately 78% of the anglers polled indicated that they had a strong connection to the region and that it meant a lot to them.

In general, the reasons for visiting the region included, to be outdoors, to experience natural surroundings, to be close to nature, to get away from the regular routine, for relaxation, and to do things with your companions.

Anglers reported high levels of satisfaction with the setting and environmental conditions for the Pennsylvania section of Lake Erie, with more than 60 percent reporting being satisfied with the water quality, cleanliness, and habitat conditions.

Anglers were most likely to fish from a private boat (41%) or the shoreline (39%), while angling from a pier (13%), a charter boat (7%), a rental boat (< 1%), and ice fishing (< 1%) represented the smaller angler segments.

Anglers primarily sought to catch Steelhead (27%), Walleye (26%), Yellow Perch (18%), Smallmouth Bass (11%), and Largemouth Bass (9%). Other species targeted included Brown Trout (5%), Crappie (2%), Muskellunge (2%), and Bluegill/Sunfish (2%).

Key Angler Experience Observations (Phase II)

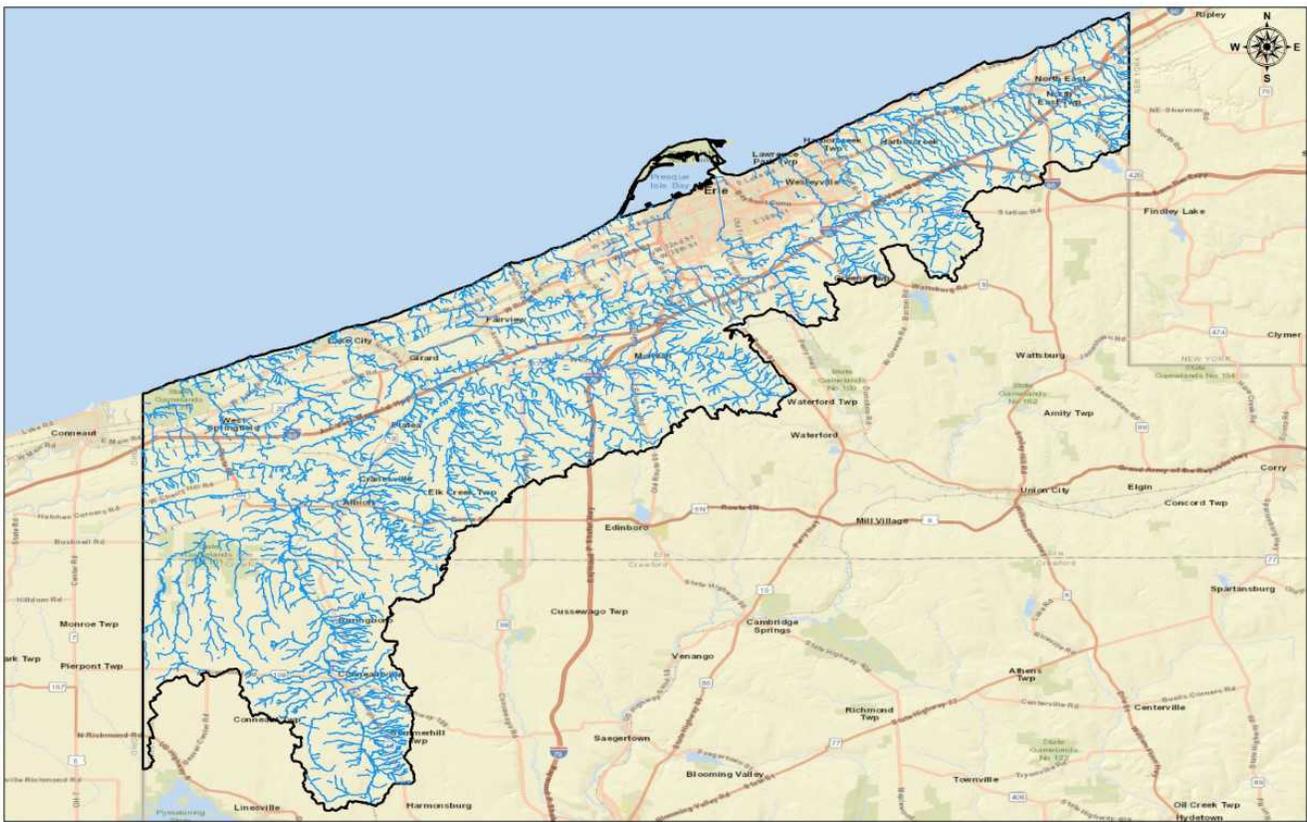
Approximately 91% of respondents live in Pennsylvania but report traveling an average of 69 miles to their fishing destination.

Anglers identified a variety of reasons and motivations for visiting the Pennsylvania section of Lake Erie, including relaxation, enjoyment of nature, challenge seeking, and social and family togetherness.

Anglers reported high levels of satisfaction with the setting and environmental conditions for the Pennsylvania section of Lake Erie, with more than 72% reporting being satisfied with the weather, water quality, cleanliness, and habitat conditions.

Anglers were most likely to fish from the shoreline (38%) or a private boat (22%), while angling from a charter boat (3%), a rental boat (< 1%), and ice fishing (< 1%) represented the smaller angler segments.

Anglers primarily sought to catch Yellow Perch (49%), Walleye (17%), Steelhead (10%), Smallmouth Bass (9%), and Largemouth Bass (6%). Other species targeted included Bluegill/Sunfish (6%), Brown Trout (1%), and Crappie (1%).



The Pennsylvania Lake Erie shoreline extends 76.6 miles between the borders of New York and Ohio

Pennsylvania Sea Grant is a collaborative program of the Pennsylvania State University, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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