

INTRODUCTION

The Fisheries Division's Biennial Report is a record of the activities of the Division during the period October 1, 1980 through September 30, 1982. However activities are dynamic and seldom fall nicely within fiscal year limits. Summaries of last year's fishing are sometimes not completed until next year and management actions are ongoing. The result is a report that covers more than the designated calendar time for some activities and less for others. The years 1981-82 were ones of an increase in problems and complex solutions but also an increase in fishing and happy anglers. The highlights of the period follow.

HIGHLIGHTS

In the Great Lakes during 1980 and 1981, sportfishing continued to increase. In 1981, 9 million angler days of fishing were recorded, a 9.8% increase over 1980.

In commercial fishing, catch of whitefish was at the highest levels since the early 1900's and lake trout harvest was also at the highest since rehabilitation of the stock began in the 1950's. However, the harvest of lake trout was mainly of stocked fish and was large enough in many areas to severely retard the effort to rebuild self-sustaining stocks.

Controversy over the Indian treaty fishing rights continued while negotiations were ongoing with the tribal leaders to obtain a compromise solution.

In the inland waters during 1980 and 1981, anglers fished approximately 13.2 and 14.4 million angler days, respectively. Total catch amounted to 52 million fish in 1980 and 60 million in 1981. Despite the outstanding Great Lakes recreational fishery that had developed over the past decade Michigan's inland fishery continued to hold prime