



2012 Colorado Angler Survey Fact Sheet

Purpose of the study: To determine the spatial distribution of angling pressure for various species, across Colorado and collect data to help predict demand for sport fish species around the state over the next 30 years.

Methods: Between March and August 2012, we mailed a survey to 3,000 individuals who had purchased Colorado fishing licenses in 2011. Half were residents (5% senior, 12% combination, 50% annual and 33% 1-day licenses) and half were non-residents (76% annual and 24% 1- or 5-day licenses). We had a valid sample of 2,577 anglers and received a total of 1,404 responses to the survey (54% adjusted response rate; 56% of residents and 44% of non-residents).

Highlights of results: Key findings of this survey were:

- Among anglers of all types, the 3 most commonly targeted species were rainbow trout, brown trout and cutthroat trout. All anglers desired an increase in opportunity for these species over other species.
- Frequent and moderate anglers were more satisfied with their fishing experience in Colorado than infrequent anglers. Moderate and frequent anglers were very satisfied with the variety of fish and waters they could fish in Colorado. Infrequent anglers were not satisfied with the number and size of fish they caught and the complexity of the fishing regulations in Colorado.
- Annual, resident license purchasers fished for an average of 24 days in 2011; annual, non-resident license purchasers fished for an average of 17 days. Senior license purchasers fished for an average of 13 days and combination license purchasers fished for an average of 15 days.
- Resident anglers were very satisfied with the variety of fish and water available to them to fish, and their ability to eat the fish they caught. Residents reported the highest level of dissatisfaction with the number and size of fish they caught and the availability of wild fish.
- Non-residents were satisfied with the variety of fish and water available to them, and their ability to eat fish they caught. Non-residents were more satisfied with all aspects of fishing than residents.
- Colorado anglers spent the highest mean number of days fishing for carp, wiper and striped bass, and bluegill, but these were the least commonly targeted species. The three most commonly targeted species (brown trout, cutthroat trout and rainbow trout) averaged the fewest days fished.
- The Colorado population between 51 and 70 years old will decrease over the next 30 years and the population between 71 and 90 years old will increase. This change will not likely affect demand for species or types of access, but may increase participating in fly angling and demand for trout species.
- Demographers predict that the white, non-Hispanic population in Colorado will decrease, while the Hispanic population will increase in the next 30 years. White and Hispanic anglers prefer similar species to target and locations in which to fish, but Hispanic anglers are much more likely to keep their catch, which may lead to increased harvest pressure on trout stocks in Colorado in the future.
- Colorado is predicted to attract immigrants from California, Texas and Arizona in the next 10 to 20 years. This type of in-migration is unlikely to change demand for species or access in an appreciable way. There may be a slight increase in demand for warm-water game fish such as walleye, but this is likely to be overshadowed by desire for cold-water species found more commonly in Colorado.

For more information: For more information about this and other Human Dimensions surveys, please contact Stacy Lischka at stacy.lischka@state.co.us or (303) 291-7279.