



FISHING LICENSE SALES IN NEW YORK'S GREAT LAKES COUNTIES

by Diane M. Kuehn
Extension Specialist

INTRODUCTION

Fishing license sales increased overall in New York's Great Lakes counties between 1972 and 1988 according to sales data collected by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. This publication summarizes these data, emphasizing those from 1984 to 1988. The Great Lakes region consists of Cayuga, Chautauqua, Erie, Jefferson, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Oswego, St. Lawrence, and Wayne Counties.

Both resident and nonresident licenses related to fishing are available in New York State: seasonal, combined small game and

fishing, combined small/big game and fishing (Sportsman), and 3-day fishing for residents, and seasonal and 5-day for nonresidents. Nonresident 3-day and 7-day fishing licenses were last issued in the 1987 license year. A license year begins on October 1 and ends September 30 of the following year (for example, the 1988 license year began October 1, 1987 and ended September 30, 1988).

LICENSE SALE TRENDS

License sales increased 39% in New York State and 80% in the Great Lakes region between 1972 and 1988. However, both areas suffered a notable decrease in 1976

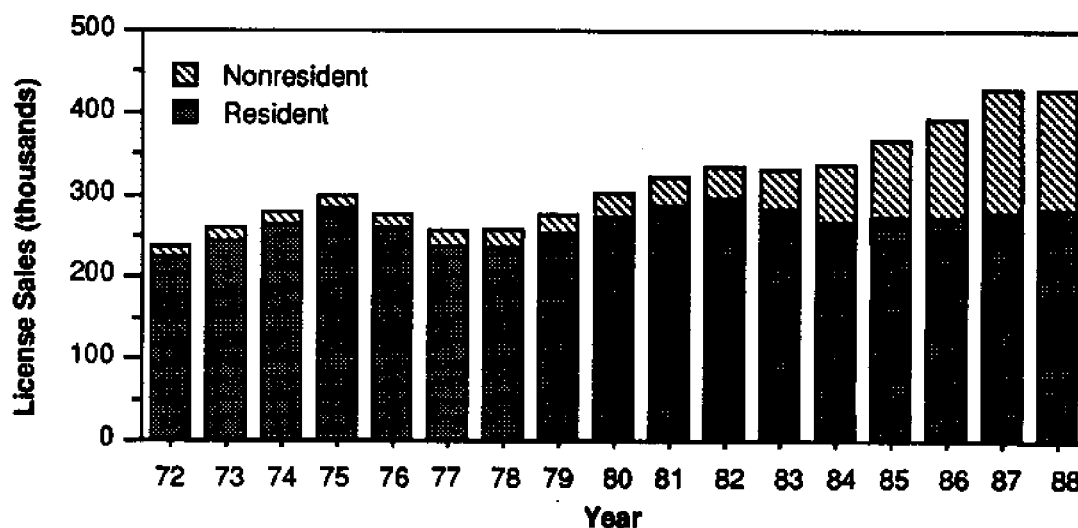


Figure 1. New York resident and nonresident fishing license sales in the Great Lakes counties from 1972 to 1988.

and 1977; slight decreases occurred in both areas in 1983 and in the Great Lakes region alone in 1988 (Fig. 1). The 1976 and 1977 decreases were likely caused by the ban that the New York State Department of Health, in conjunction with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, placed on the possession of eight species of Lake Ontario fish in 1976. These species were banned because of possible health effects associated with fish contamination. The 1983 decrease was probably caused by the increase in fishing license fees in that license year. Though the Great Lakes license sales total decreased slightly in 1988 (0.2%), reasons for this have not been identified.

Between 1984 and 1988, statewide fishing license sales increased 17% while Great Lakes region sales increased 26% (Table 1). Residents purchased 281,238 licenses in the Great Lakes region in 1988, an increase of 5% since 1984. Nonresident sales in the Great Lakes region totaled 146,741 in 1988, an increase of 107%.

The counties with the greatest number of resident license sales in 1988 were Erie and Monroe (69,808 and 57,077 sales, respectively; Table 2), both with large metropolitan

areas. However, nonresident sales were relatively low in both of these counties (1,143 and 4,701 sales, respectively).

The largest number of nonresident licenses in New York State was sold in Oswego County in 1988 (63,988 sales or about 70% of total county license sales; Table 2). Oswego was the only county in the Great Lakes region to have a greater number of nonresident than resident sales between 1984 and 1988 (Fig. 2). Salmon fishing along the Salmon River in this county is a major attraction to nonresidents, especially those from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Other counties with large nonresident sales include Jefferson and Niagara, both of which have major highways and bridges connecting them with Canada, another source of nonresident anglers.

The largest percent increases in total fishing license sales from 1984 to 1988 (144%) occurred in Orleans County (Table 1), the county having the second smallest number of total sales. Oswego, Wayne, Niagara, Jefferson, and Cayuga Counties also had large total increases, which, as in Orleans County, were mainly due to increased nonresident sales.

Table 1. Percent change in fishing license sales in the Great Lakes counties from 1984 to 1988. Decreases are indicated by parentheses ().

County	1984-88 Percent Change		
	Resident	Nonresident	Total
Cayuga	9.1	299.3	34.1
Chautauqua	12.5	0.1	7.4
Erie	1.0	14.1	1.2
Jefferson	19.5	66.7	36.3
Monroe	(11.2)	105.7	(7.2)
Niagara	10.6	273.0	52.5
Orleans	19.6	445.7	144.8
Oswego	17.0	145.4	85.1
St. Lawrence	8.0	0.9	6.7
Wayne	27.3	203.8	53.3
Great Lakes Total	5.1	106.9	26.4
State Total	8.4	65.3	16.6

Table 2. Fishing license sales for New York State's Great Lakes counties in 1988.

County	License Sales			Nonresidents Percent Contribution to County Total	County Percent Contribution to Great Lakes Total
	Resident	Nonresident	Total		
Cayuga	9,804	3,382	13,186	25.6	3.1
Chautauqua	18,190	11,364	29,554	38.4	6.9
Erie	69,808	1,143	70,951	1.6	16.6
Jefferson	28,403	21,903	50,306	43.5	11.8
Monroe	57,077	4,701	61,778	7.6	14.4
Niagara	26,673	17,074	43,747	39.0	10.2
Orleans	6,411	12,186	18,597	65.5	4.3
Oswego	27,016	63,988	91,004	70.3	21.3
St. Lawrence	21,410	4,215	25,625	16.4	6.0
Wayne	16,446	6,785	23,231	29.2	5.4
Total	281,238	146,741	427,979	34.3	100.0

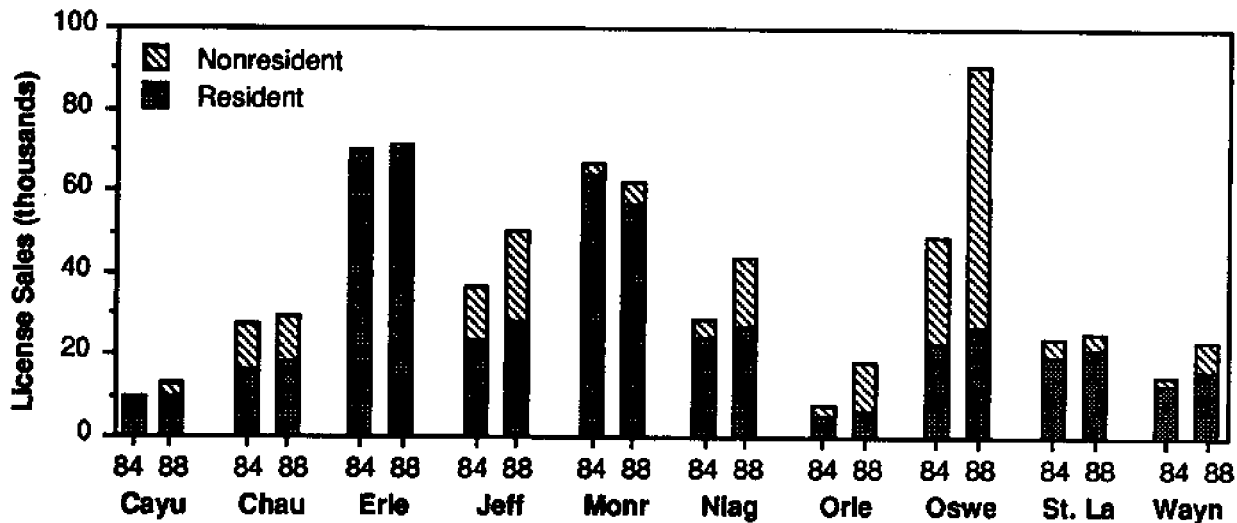


Figure 2. New York resident and nonresident fishing license sales by Great Lakes county for 1984 and 1988.

DISCUSSION

Angler trip expenditures, totaling over \$133.4 million in 1988, have greatly contributed to the economy of the Great Lakes area (Connelly, Brown, and Knuth, in press). Expenditures for anglers fishing the Salmon River alone increased from \$62,100 in 1973 (Brown, 1976) to \$10.0 million in 1989 (Connelly, Brown, and Dawson, in press). Future angler expenditures in Oswego County could be affected if the New York

State Department of Environmental Conservation implements its proposed ban on salmon snagging. A survey of Oswego County license purchasers revealed that of the 34% that participated in snagging on one or more days in 1988, 26% indicated that they would no longer participate in salmon fishing if snagging is prohibited (Dawson and Brown, 1989).

Fishing license sales are not an exact indicator of fishing activity in a county since anglers can buy a license in any county in New York State. However, it is reasonable to assume that most anglers (especially nonresidents) purchase their licenses in the county of their destination; they probably do not stop to purchase a fishing license while traveling. For this reason, the fishing license sales of each county are used to indicate fishing activity there.

CONCLUSION

Fishing license sales data indicate that fishing activity has increased overall in the Great Lakes region since 1972. Between 1984 and 1988, nonresident activity increased greatly in most Great Lakes counties. Counties having highly populated areas have greater resident fishing activity, while areas with easy access from Canada or fishing "hotspots" have greater nonresident activity. Great Lakes region tourism, recreation, and the economy are all affected by angler trips and expenditures.

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