



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release: March 21, 1987

Elizabeth Lipscomb (202) 343-5634

INITIAL SURVEY FINDINGS INDICATE RECORD PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES

Preliminary results from a national survey released today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicate that a record 141 million Americans age 16 and over participated in wildlife-associated recreation in 1985, spending over \$55 billion on wildlife-related activities.

The 1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation reveals that in 1985:

- o 46.6 million, or more than one in four, adult Americans fished
- o 16.7 million, or about one in ten, adult Americans hunted
- o 109.7 million, or over half of all adult Americans, actively participated in nonconsumptive wildlife-related activities such as feeding, observing, or photographing wildlife.

"These preliminary results support what we have suspected--that more Americans than ever before are engaging in wildlife-related activities. And since those who enjoy these activities tend to be more involved in wildlife conservation, the record numbers reported here augur well for this country's wildlife resources," said Frank Dunkle, Director of the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service.

The preliminary figures were released by the Fish and Wildlife Service today at the 52nd Annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Quebec City, Canada.

The 1985 Survey is the seventh in a series of national surveys of wildlife-associated recreation conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service every 5 years since 1955. The Survey was formally requested by the States through the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in September 1983.

Over 100,000 households were contacted by telephone for the initial phase of the 1985 Survey, which was done by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the Fish and Wildlife Service. Detailed interviews were conducted in person with over 30,000 individuals who were found to be participants in wildlife activities during the initial phase.

(over)

These surveys represent the most comprehensive periodic examination of the participation of Americans in wildlife recreation, offering both a National report and an individual report for each of the 50 States. The data are used extensively by public and private wildlife managers to help them more appropriately meet increased or changing demands on fish and wildlife resources. They are also widely used by the recreational equipment industry, conservation organizations, and others interested in outdoor recreation.

Of the 46.6 million total adult anglers reported for 1985, 40.2 million (86%) fished in freshwater while 14.1 million (30%) fished in saltwater. Fishermen spent a total of \$28.2 billion on their sport--an average of \$604 per fisherman in 1985--and a total of 987.7 million days fishing--an average of 21 days per fisherman.

Interestingly, the 16.7 million hunters who were active in 1985 also spent an average of \$604 per hunter for their sport. They were afield a total of 335.1 million days, an average of 20 days per hunter.

Of the 109.7 million adults who reported participating in wildlife activities other than fishing and hunting, 105.3 million participated around their homes, including 63.6 million who observed wildlife, 82.5 million who fed wild birds, and 18.1 million who photographed wildlife. Over 29.5 million reported taking trips for the primary purpose of observing, feeding, or photographing wildlife. Americans spent a total of over \$14 billion on equipment such as binoculars, cameras, and birdfeeders; transportation; and other costs associated with these kinds of activities.

Big game was hunted by 12.5 million people, or 75 percent of hunters, and small game was hunted by 10.8 million people, or 65 percent of hunters. About 30 percent of hunters sought migratory birds, such as ducks, geese, and doves, and 17 percent reported hunting other animals, including raccoon, fox, and woodchuck.

According to the Survey, most sportsmen are male (69% of all sportsmen), white (93%), between 18 and 44 years of age (64%), with a high school or better education (78%), and an annual income of over \$25,000 (59%).

While the majority of anglers (60%) lived in urban areas, most hunters (55%) lived in rural areas. However, participation rates for both fishing and hunting were highest among residents of rural areas. In 1985, 33 percent of the rural population fished and 16 percent hunted. By comparison, 23 percent of the urban population fished and 6 percent hunted.

The preliminary results suggest a substantial increase in the number of fishermen between 1980 and 1985, a slight decline in the number of hunters, and an increase in participation in other wildlife-associated activities since the 1980 Survey. Service researchers caution, however, that the significance of variations or trends between the two survey results cannot be determined until all of the data are available.

(more)

Hunters and anglers paid the \$9 million cost of the 1985 Survey through excise taxes on sporting equipment which go into the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration and Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration accounts. An administrative portion of these tax funds is allocated to the Service to administer the programs and to conduct the Survey.

The final report of the 1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation is expected to be completed in late November 1987. Individual State reports will be issued 4 to 6 months later. Information on ordering these reports will be available as they are published.

-DOI-

NOTE TO EDITORS: A summary of highlights from the 1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation is attached. Additional data will become available when the final survey report is released in November.

INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE 1985 NATIONAL SURVEY OF FISHING, HUNTING, AND WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED RECREATION

Participation in Wildlife-Associated Recreation: 1985

Participants in wildlife-associated recreation	16 years old and older		6-15 years old	
	Number (thousands)	Percent of population in age group	Number (thousands)	Percent of population in age group
Total participants (fished; hunted, or nonconsumptive)	141,041	78	27,321	78
Total sportsmen (fished or hunted)	50,500	28	12,538	36
Total fishermen	46,609	26	12,242	35
Fished only	33,809	19	10,760	31
Fished and hunted	12,800	7	1,482	4
Total hunters	16,691	9	1,799	5
Hunted only	3,891	2	316	1
Fished and hunted	12,800	7	1,482	4
Total nonconsumptive participants	134,736	74	26,264	75
Total primary	109,675	61	17,789	51
Montesidential	29,326	16	6,615	19
Residential	103,297	58	16,151	46
Total secondary	127,441	70	24,984	71
Montesidential	89,544	49	NA	NA
Residential	117,425	65	NA	NA

Expenditures for Wildlife-Associated Recreation: 1985

Expenditure item	Total (millions)	Fishing (millions)	Hunting (millions)	Nonconsumptive (millions)
Total expenditures	\$55,450	\$28,166	\$10,092	\$14,271
Food and lodging	\$10,047	\$5,650	\$1,884	\$2,514
Transportation	\$7,019	\$3,718	\$1,612	\$1,689
Other trip costs	\$4,327	\$3,880	\$218	\$229
Licenses, tags, permits	\$811	\$392	\$418	NA
Equipment (fishing, hunting, nonconsumptive)	\$9,445	\$2,784	\$3,045	\$3,616
Auxiliary equipment	\$1,517	\$481	\$398	\$507
Special equipment	\$19,713	\$10,267	\$1,509	\$5,234

Fishing: 1985

Fishermen

Type of fishing	Fishermen	
	Number (thousands)	Percent of population fishermen
Total, all fishing	46,609	26
Total, all freshwater	40,185	22
Freshwater, except Great Lakes	38,815	21
Great Lakes	3,906	2
Saltwater	14,121	8
		30

Days of Fishing

Type of fishing	Days	
	Number (thousands)	Percent of fishing days per fisherman
Total, all fishing	987,697	100
Total, all freshwater	830,866	84
Freshwater, except Great Lakes	791,852	80
Great Lakes	48,796	5
Saltwater	157,925	16
		21

Expenditures for Fishing

Type of fishing	Expenditures	
	Amount (millions)	Average per day of fishing per fisherman
Total, all fishing	\$28,166	\$29
Total, all freshwater	\$19,556	\$27
Freshwater, except Great Lakes	\$17,988	\$23
Great Lakes	\$1,568	\$32
Saltwater	\$7,275	\$46
		\$604
		\$487
		\$463
		\$401
		\$515

INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE 1985 NATIONAL SURVEY OF FISHING, HUNTING, AND WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED RECREATION

Hunting: 1985

Hunters

Type of hunting	Hunters	
	Number (thousands)	Percent of population
Total, all hunting	16,690	9
Big game	12,520	7
Small game	10,831	6
Migratory bird	5,036	3
Other animals	2,837	2

Days of Hunting

Type of hunting	Days	
	Number (thousands)	Percent of hunting days
Total, all hunting	335,133	100
Big game	131,330	39
Small game	132,263	39
Migratory bird	41,682	12
Other animals	47,050	14

Expenditures for Hunting

Type of hunting	Expenditures	
	Amount (millions)	Average per day of hunting
Total, all hunting	\$10,092	\$30
Big game	\$ 6,068	\$46
Small game	\$ 1,853	\$14
Migratory bird	\$ 1,072	\$26
Other animals	\$ 362	\$ 8

Participation in Nonconsumptive Wildlife-Related Activities: 1985

Type of activity	Nonconsumptive participants	
	Number (thousands)	Percent of population
Total nonconsumptive participants	134,763	74
Total primary	109,675	61
Primary nonresidential	29,526	16
Observe wildlife	29,063	16
Photograph wildlife	13,566	7
Feed wildlife	13,064	7
Primary residential	105,297	58
Observe wildlife	63,649	35
Photograph wildlife	18,051	10
Feed wild birds	82,515	46
Feed other wildlife	23,743	13
Maintain natural areas	11,632	6
Maintain plantings	9,744	5
Visit public parks	16,482	9
Total secondary	127,441	70
Secondary nonresidential	89,544	49
Secondary residential	117,425	65