

Creel Survey Summary 2008

A creel survey is a technique for estimating fishing effort by interviewing anglers and surveying their catch. Creel surveys were conducted in Metro Parks, Serving Summit County parks in 2008. Fourteen fishing locations within the parks were selected to be surveyed in an effort to estimate the importance and use fishing serves. The creel survey was organized by the Natural Resource Management Department and conducted by the Ranger Department. These surveys were completed in an effort to understand the current role fishing plays in the park district. Answers to these questions will help guide future management recommendations for these areas.

Fishing locations surveyed included the Cuyahoga River at Cascade Valley and Gorge Metro Parks, as well as at the Bike & Hike Trail at S.R. 91. The Tuscarawas River was surveyed in Firestone Metro Park. Fishing locations at Firestone Metro Park that were also surveyed included Little Turtle Pond and the Race. Brushwood Lake in Furnace Run Metro Park, Alder Pond in Goodyear Heights, Heron Pond in Munroe Falls, Long Lake at the Ohio and Erie Canal/S.R. 93 and the Canal were all included in the survey. Big Oak, Piney Pond and Silver Creek Lake in Silver Creek Metro Park were also included in the surveys.

The creel survey was modeled after the Inland Creel Survey established by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife. (ODOW) They have been conducting creel surveys for many years on their inland reservoirs. Metro Parks' surveys were tailored for smaller water bodies that lacked the large draw most sport-fishing reservoirs hold. The survey included seventeen questions which could be answered with one word or less (refer to Appendix A for survey form). Many questions had multiple choice answers for ease of use and data analysis.

Rangers were trained to conduct the angler interviews in March and conducted survey during spring and summer at these locations. Sixty-nine surveys representing 10 fishing locations were completed over the course of the season. Seventy-two percent of the anglers surveyed were male and 26% were female. Most of the anglers surveyed in both categories were under the age of 40. Raw data is listed in Appendix B.

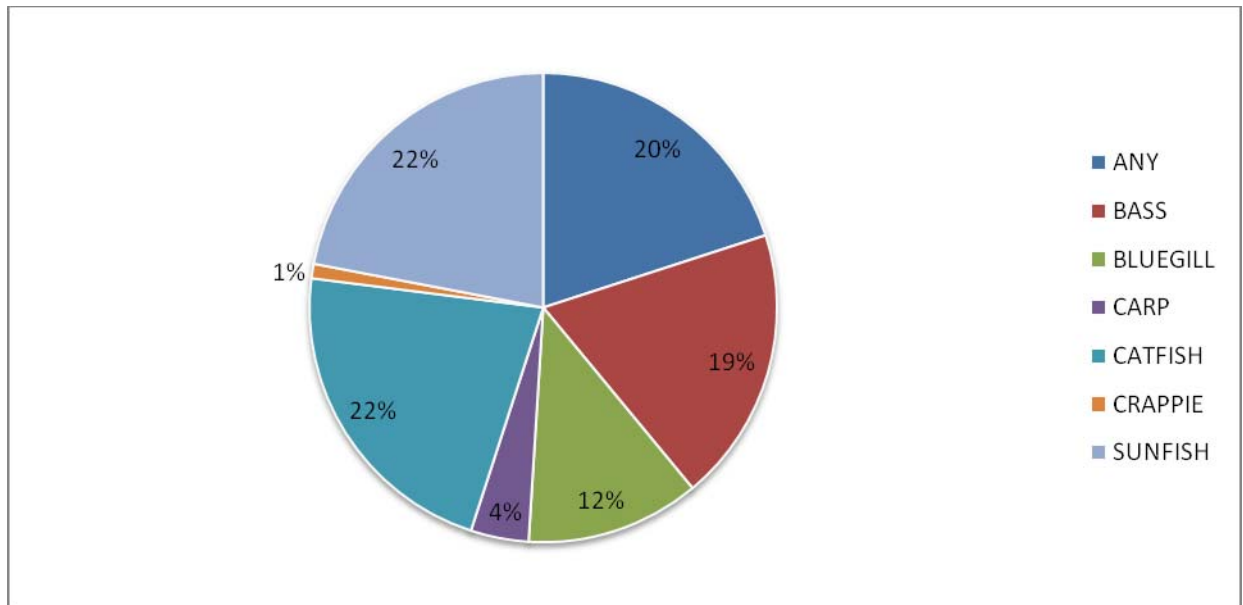
Silver Creek Lake was the most surveyed fishing location within the parks, followed by Little Turtle Pond. Table I illustrates the number of surveys completed at each fishing location and also compiles the surveys by park. Some fishing locations were not surveyed at all including the Cuyahoga River in Gorge Metro Park or at the Bike & Hike Trail at S.R. 91, the Race in Firestone Metro Park, the Canal along the Ohio and Erie Canal/S.R. 93, and Big Oak and Piney Pond in Silver Creek Metro Park.

Table I. Number of Creel Surveys Completed by Fishing Location in Metro Parks, Serving Summit County, 2008.

Location/ Park	CV	FR	FS	GH	MF	SC	TP
ALDER POND				2			
BIG OAK						4	
BRUSHWOOD		5					
CANAL							6
CUYAHOGA	7						
HERON POND					3		
LAKE						17	
LONG LAKE							5
TURTLE POND			15				
TUSCARAWAS			5				
Grand Total	7	5	20	2	3	21	11

The Metro Parks was interested in determining what type of fish anglers were targeting while fishing in the parks (Graph I). While an equal number of anglers were targeting sunfish species and catfish (22%), just as many anglers were happy to catch any species (20%). Bass were also a favorite at 19%.

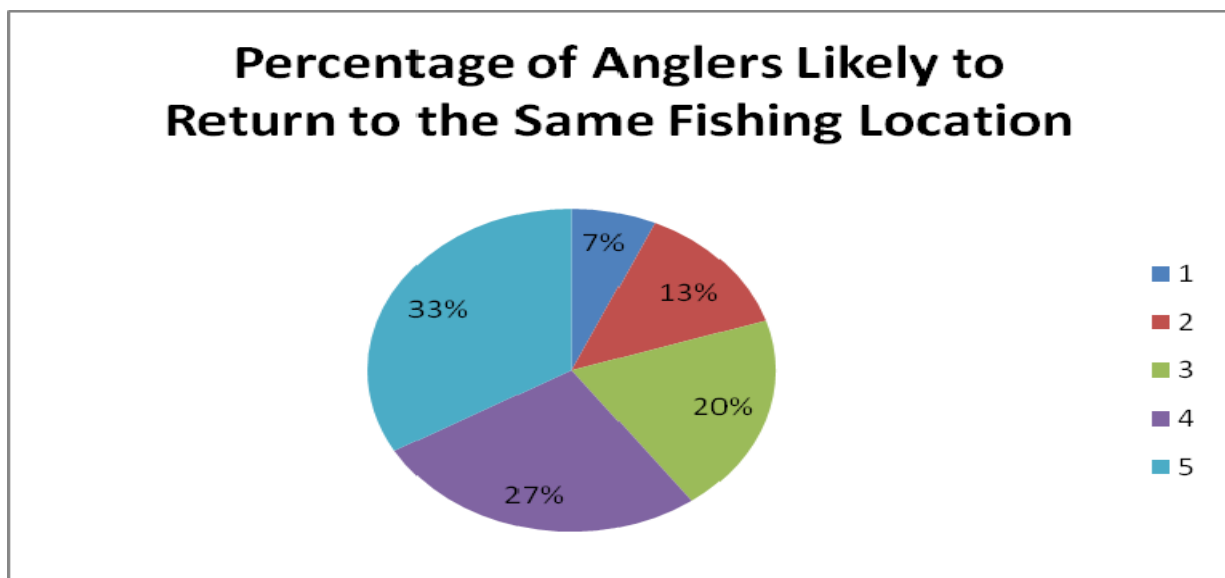
Graph I. Target Species Sought by Anglers in Metro Parks, Serving Summit County, 2008.



Anglers reported that they fished a total number of 2,989 days in the state of Ohio and that 2,382 of those were fished in Summit County (80%). Of those days fished in Summit County, 1,258 were fished at the park location where the angler was surveyed, or 42%.

Of the anglers surveyed (69), 33% said they were highly likely to return to the same fishing location again. An additional 27% felt they were very likely to return. Graph 2 illustrates the responses of anglers when asked if they were likely to return to the same fishing location on a scale of 1 to 5.

Graph 2. Percentage of Anglers Likely to Return to the Same Fishing Location Surveyed.
(Surveyed conducted on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most likely and 1 being the least likely.)



When asked how important the fishing location was to anglers, 75% felt it was extremely important for them to be able to fish at the location where they were surveyed. Again, the question was held on a scale of 1 to 5. No angler interviewed gave this question a score lower than 3.

While the creel surveys answer some interesting questions about the anglers in the parks and the importance of these fishing locations to park patrons, the sample size is extremely small. In 2006, there were almost 800,000 fishing licenses sold in the state of Ohio. Nearly 40,000 were sold in Summit County alone (Appendix C).

Interestingly, the greatest number of licenses sold were from the 44203 zip code, the same area as Silver Creek Metro Park (Appendix D). This could be a coincidence because it is a very large zip code in a rural part of the county. However, it is where 25% of the creel surveys were conducted (refer to Appendix D). A large number of surveys (20 surveys, or 29%) came from Firestone Metro Park where Little Turtle Pond and the Tuscarawas River were surveyed. This map also displays where the angler resides by zip code. As you can see many of the anglers surveyed came from within Summit County. However, Cuyahoga, Portage, Stark, Wayne and Medina counties were also represented.

Half of the anglers travelled between two and ten miles to the fishing locations where they were surveyed. Another 30% traveled less than two miles to reach their destination. It is clear that the majority of anglers in the parks are fishing close to home. It would be interesting to know if this is a product of high gas prices this year, or if this occurs every year.

Seventy percent of anglers surveyed do not eat any meals caught in the parks. Twenty percent claimed to eat 1-11 meals, while 10% ate 11+ meals from the parks. Similarly, 16% found it extremely important to eat the fish they caught in the parks and 44% found it unimportant to them to eat their catch.

Conclusions

The creel survey asked some very interesting questions of anglers in our parks. Unfortunately the number of surveys is very small compared to the total number of fishing licenses sold to Summit County residents. Because of this small sample size, reporting on the findings of the study is difficult. However, generalizations and observations from the data are useful. Caution should be taken when using this small data set and therefore weak information to make resource management plans.

Appendix A

Angler Interview Form



Angler Interview Sheet

Date:

Time:

Park/Fishing Location: CV – Cuyahoga River FP – Cuyahoga River FP – Race
FP – Turtle Pond GO - River FR - Brushwood GH - Alder MF - Heron
Pond SC – Big Oak SC – Lake SC – Piney Pond BHT /Rt. 91 – Cuyahoga River
OET/Rt. 93 – Long Lake OET/Rt. 93 - Canal

What time did you start fishing today? (24hr format)

If not obvious, how many people in your party are fishing?

What are you fishing for today? (name one target species)

What kinds of fish and how many of each did you (or your party) catch and release?

Species	# Released	# Kept
Black Bass (large and smallmouth bass)		
Crappie (black and white)		
Sunfish (any sunfish species)		
Catfish (any catfish species)		
White bass, white perch or hybrid		
Saugeye		
Muskie		
Pike		
Trout		

How much did you (and your party) spend on items such as gas, bait, food, lodging or related items for today's fishing trip?

0-\$25 \$26-\$50 \$50-\$100 \$100+

Angler Information (these questions should be estimated by the creel clerk)

Gender: F M **Ethnicity:** Caucasian Afro-American Hispanic Asian

Age: < 16 years 16-40 40-65 66+

What is the zip code at your residence?

How far do you live from this fishing location? 0-2 miles 2-10miles 10+

Have you been interviewed while fishing this reservoir during 2008? YES
NO

If yes, END SUVEY. If no, continue.

How many days did you fish in Ohio during 2008?

Of those days, how many were spent fishing in Summit County? **In this location?**

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not likely and 5 being extremely likely, how likely are you to return here to fish? 1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not important and 5 being extremely important, how important is it for you to eat the fish you catch at this location? 1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being not important and 5 being very important, how important is it for you to be able to fish at this location?
1 2 3 4 5

How many meals of fish do you eat per year from this location?

Comments from Staff:

Comments from Angler:

Appendix B

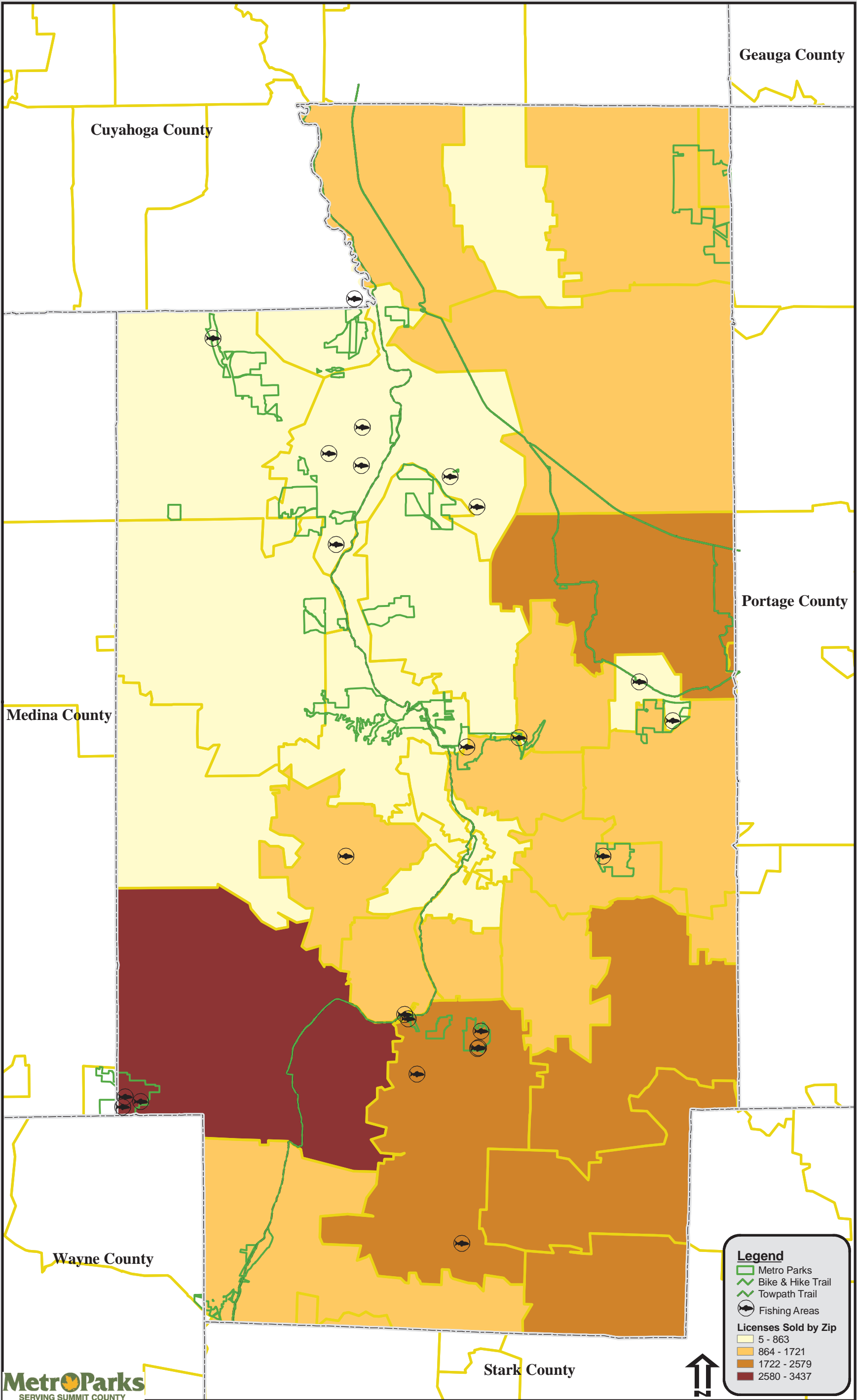
Raw Data

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Appendix C

Residence with Licenses in Summit County by Zip Code

Appendix C
Residents of Summit County with Licenses by Zip Code



Appendix D

Creel Survey Summary

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