



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

2018 Summary of Fishing Tournaments in Wisconsin

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Introduction

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources requires tournament organizers to hold a permit for fishing tournaments which contain more than 20 boats, more than 100 people, are held with a catch-hold-release format, are held on a trout stream, have more than \$10,000 in prizes awarded, or any tournament for bass that allows culling. For additional information about fishing tournament in Wisconsin, please see: [Fishing tournaments | Fishing Wisconsin | Wisconsin DNR](#)

Applications

633 Applications were received

- 18 applications were withdrawn

- 22 applications were cancelled

- 0 applications were denied

- 593 applications were approved and held

 - 358 catch-hold-release tournaments (60%)

 - 157 catch and keep tournaments (26.5%)

 - 118 immediate release tournaments (20%)

Notable Results

16 more tournaments were held in 2018 than in 2017; an increase of 2.7% from 2017 to 2018.

Prize value awarded increased by \$405,059 from 2017 to 2018.

Number of largemouth and smallmouth bass registered decreased by 7,109 and walleye increased by 9,682 from 2017 to 2018.

Figure 1: Permitted Fishing Tournaments by County in 2018

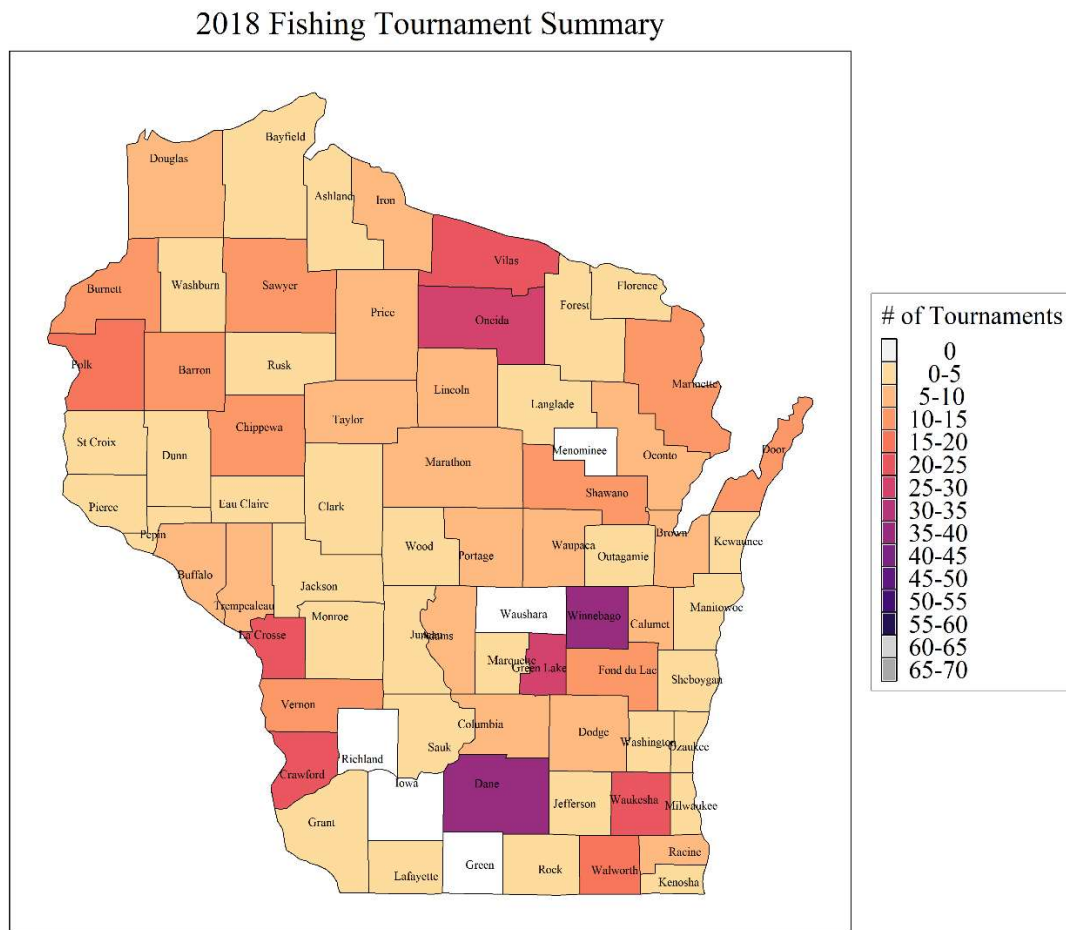


Figure 2: Species summary for fishing tournaments from 2009 – 2018

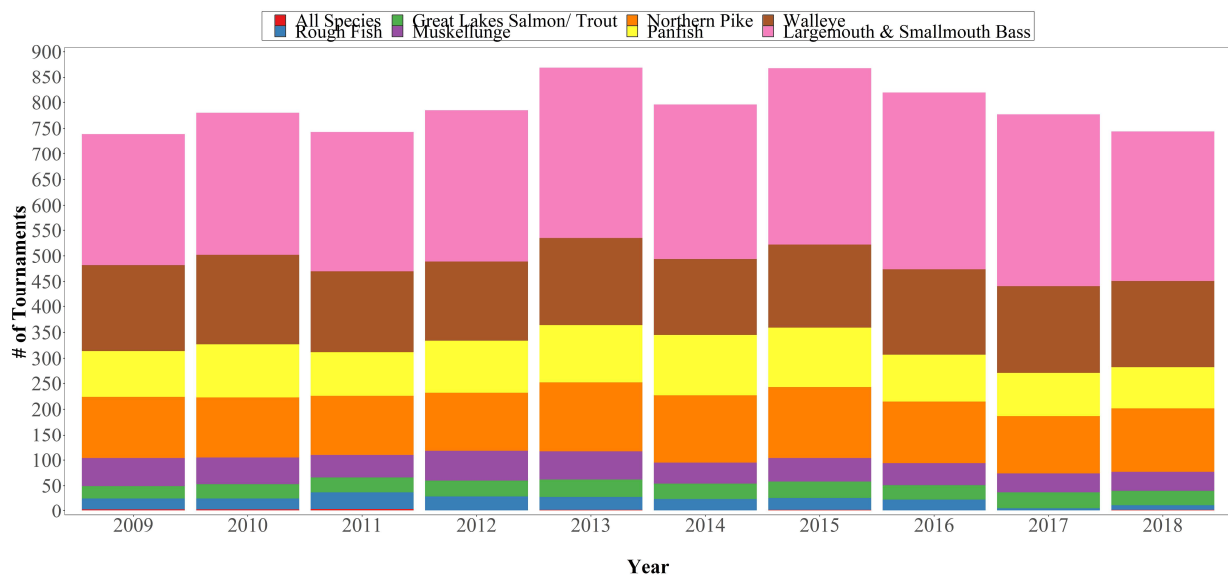


Table 1: Number of tournaments, projected effort, and prize value awarded 2016 - 2018

Effort/Prizes	2016	2017	2018
Tournaments	589	577	593
Anglers	74,075	68,512	95,052
Boats	16,775	20,911	19,786
Hours Fished	2,203,263	1,667,224	2,137,774
Prizes Awarded	\$4,277,109	\$4,097,692	\$4,502,751

Table 2: Catch numbers and release rates for events registering species from 2016 – 2018

Species	Number of fish registered			Percent fish released		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
Basses ¹	30,594	35,038	27,929	98%	98%	98%
Walleye ²	11,693	16,016	25,698	75%	79%	63%
Panfish ³	9,090	9,042	8,820	16%	28%	15.5%
Muskellunge	955	834	505	99.9%	99.8%	100%
Northern Pike	2,351	2,688	3,195	34%	42.5%	43%
Rough Fish ⁴	14,978	10,951	22,245	0.01%	1.17%	1.44%
Great Lakes ⁵	12,407	9,262	9,309	0.01%	9.44%	4.8%
Other ⁶	N/A	892	7,043	N/A	12.4%	3.6%
All Species	87,381	84,723	104,744	48%	62%	45%

¹Basses includes largemouth and smallmouth.

²Walleye includes walleye, sauger, and saugeye.

³Panfish includes crappies, bluegill, sunfish, and yellow perch.

⁴Rough fish includes alewife, buffalo, bullhead, bowfin, common carp, freshwater drum, gars, suckers, quillback, redhorses, and other minnows.

⁵Great Lakes includes all salmon and trout species.

⁶Other includes catch data submitted as "all species caught", "all gamefish", or gamefish not included in the above list.

Note: The catch numbers, number of anglers, number of boats, and prize money data were retrieved from reports submitted by the tournament organizers. Currently 47 out of 593 tournament reports have not been submitted.