



## **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

### **2020 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**

693 Applications were received  
59 applications were withdrawn  
91 applications were cancelled  
0 applications were denied  
543 applications were approved and held  
438 catch-hold-release tournaments (80.5%)  
118 catch and keep tournaments (21%)  
137 immediate release tournaments (25%)

### **Notable Results**

81 fewer tournaments were held in 2020 than in 2019; a decrease of 13% from 2019 to 2020.

Prize value awarded decreased by \$2,812,656 (51%) from 2019 to 2020.

Number of basses registered decreased by 8,362 (21%) and walleye decreased by 8,454 (46%) from 2019 to 2020.

Note: The COVID pandemic may have led to a significant decrease in tournaments occurring in 2020.

Figure 1: Permitted Fishing Tournaments by County in 2020

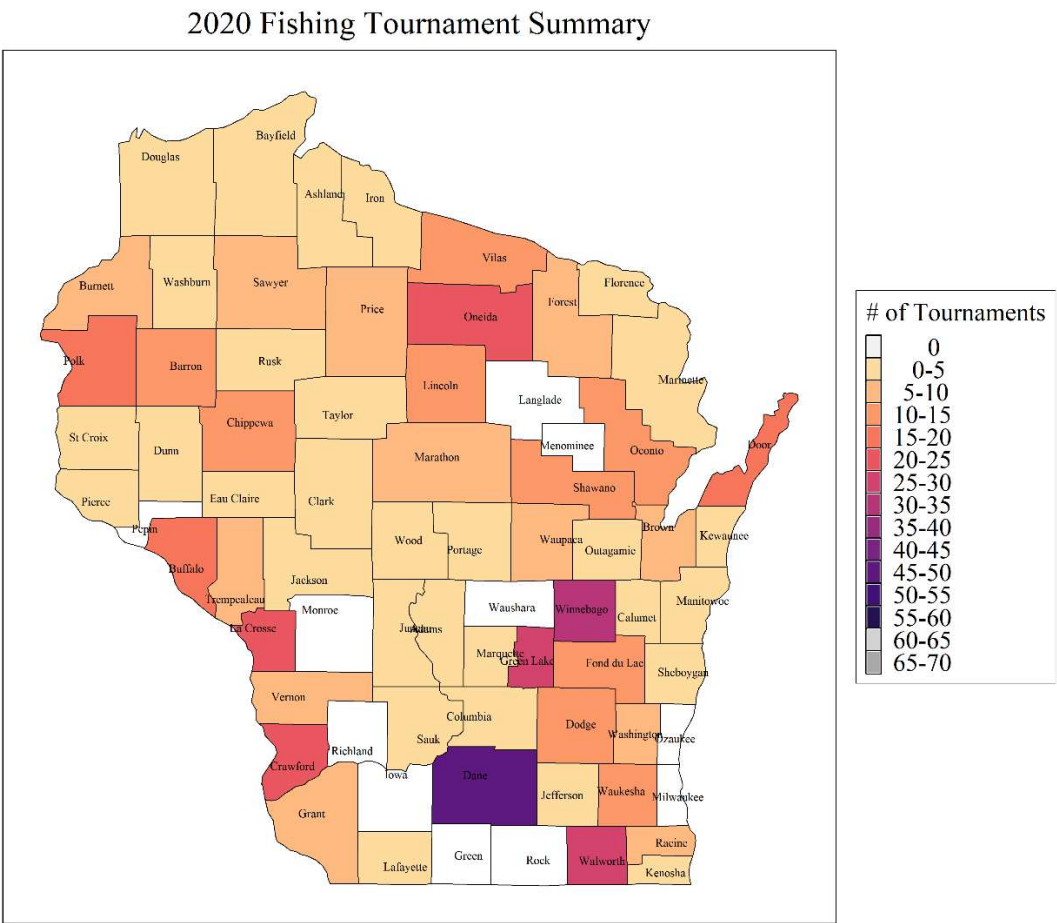
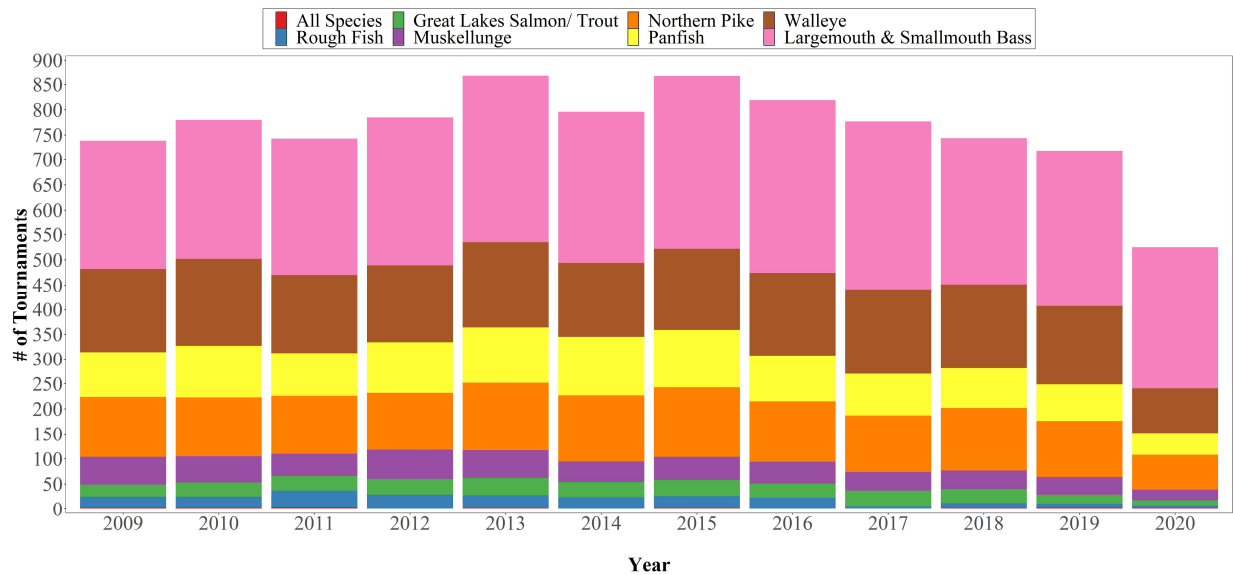


Figure 2: Species summary for fishing tournaments from 2009 – 2020



**Table 1: Number of tournaments, projected effort, and prize value awarded 2018 - 2020**

<b>Effort/Prizes</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Tournaments	593	624	543
Anglers	95,052	78,999	56,132
Boats	19,786	18,865	13,354
Hours Fished	2,137,774	2,196,312	2,260,024
Prizes Awarded	\$4,502,751	\$5,500,494	\$2,687,838

**Table 2: Catch numbers and release rates for events registering species from 2018 – 2020**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Number of fish registered</b>			<b>Percent fish released</b>		
	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Basses <sup>1</sup>	27,929	40,346	31,984	98%	98.6%	99%
Walleye <sup>2</sup>	25,698	18,440	9,986	63%	64.5%	79%
Panfish <sup>3</sup>	8,820	8,842	4,570	15.5%	26%	20%
Muskellunge	505	739	343	100%	99.9%	100%
Northern Pike	3,195	2,780	1,931	43%	30%	44%
Rough Fish <sup>4</sup>	22,245	12,519	2,971	1.44%	13%	0.9%
Great Lakes <sup>5</sup>	9,309	5,529	3,431	4.8%	14.5%	0%
Other <sup>6</sup>	7,043	1,636	1,541	3.6%	9.5%	10%
<b>All Species</b>	<b>104,744</b>	<b>90,831</b>	<b>56,757</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>74%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Basses includes largemouth and smallmouth.

<sup>2</sup>Walleye includes walleye, sauger, and saugeye.

<sup>3</sup>Panfish includes crappies, bluegill, sunfish, and yellow perch.

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

<sup>5</sup>Great Lakes includes all salmon and trout species.

<sup>6</sup>Other 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 132 out of 543 tournament reports have not been submitted.