

# DIVISION OF FISHERIES

## 2010 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN AND OPERATIONAL PROJECTS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ILLINOIS FISHERIES RESOURCES



### **Our Mission:**

By law, the mission of the Division of Fisheries is to conserve and enhance the state's fisheries resources.

### **Our Vision:**

Excellence in fisheries management and research for the benefit of recreational anglers, the state's economy, and future generations of Illinois' anglers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The State of Illinois is 385 miles long from the northern border to the southern tip and possesses a great diversity of fisheries resources. For example, Lake Michigan in the north supports populations of salmon and trout while the cypress-tupelo swamps in the south are home for the banded pygmy sunfish. The state is nearly surrounded by water, with its entire western border formed by the Mississippi River, its southern and southeastern borders formed by the Ohio and Wabash Rivers, and the northeastern boundary delineated by the Lake Michigan shoreline. The interior is drained by an extensive system of tributary streams. Natural lakes are limited to several small glacial lakes in the northeastern part of the state and some river backwater lakes adjacent to the major streams. One of the most distinguishing features of the "Prairie State" is its general lack of topographic contrast. The gently rolling terrain and productive soils are the result of its glacial history.

Late in the 1800's the first conservationists foresaw the threatening drain on our natural resources and urged more conservative use of timber, soil, water and wildlife resources. Many citizens became sharply aware of the need for conservation of our natural resources during the "dust bowl" days of the 1930's.

Early settlers of Illinois found clear streams, vast prairies and extensive forests. The stream contained many species of fish. Beaver, turkey, river otter, the pileated woodpecker and many other species populated the woodlands. Prairies had abundant wildlife including the now-endangered prairie chicken.



But most wildlife no longer is abundant in this state; what remains is found in localized areas. Our losses in fish and wildlife are caused by losses of habitat and the reduction in quality of much of the habitat that remains.

Illinois' landscape has undergone major transformation in the past 160 years. In the 1820's, forests covered about 40 percent of the state; the remainder was mostly tallgrass prairie. Today about 10 percent of the forest and less than one percent of the original grasslands survive. Family farms, which once supported profuse populations of wildlife, have decreased in numbers from 200,000 to less than 100,000 in 80 years. During those fourscore years, little more than an average human life span, much of the state's wildlife resource base has been lost.

Now more and more Illinoisians are aware that our natural resources are dwindling at an alarming rate. Many citizens have joined the ranks of conservationists to urge more conservative management of our land, water and wildlife resources.

Illinois' large human population has greater need for recreational outlets than ever before. More and more people are demanding the use of our natural resources for camping, hiking, bird-watching, hunting, fishing and nature study. To satisfy these growing needs, requires the best technical and managerial skills from natural resource management agencies.

Table 1. The following is a breakdown by water category for the state as of 2008:

<b>Water resource type Classification</b>		<b>Number (bodies)</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Lake Michigan		1	976,640
Corps of Engineers reservoirs (Shelbyville, Carlyle, Rend Lakes)		3	54,580
Impoundments	State and public	1,287	121,667
	Private/Organizational	90,000	140,631
	Commercial	510	3,126
		<b>Miles</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Rivers and Streams	5'-100' wide	23,900	69,400
	100'-300' wide	19,030	18,000
	>300' wide	1,513	237,600
(Mississippi, Illinois, Ohio Rivers)			
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Total surface acreage			1,621,644
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Reservoirs ..... The three Corps of Engineers reservoirs in Illinois (Carlyle, Rend, Shelbyville).

Impoundments -

State ..... Waters owned or leased by the Department.

Public ..... Waters open to the public and owned or leased by other governmental agencies.

Organization ..... Waters owned or leased by sportsmen's club, homeowner's association, scouts, etc.

Private ..... Privately owned or leased waters which are not operated by organizations or as commercial areas.

Commercial ..... Licensed fee fishing areas and private fish hatchery ponds.

## Funding

The division has an annual operating budget of approximately \$50 million. The primary funding sources are the state's Fish and Wildlife Fund (license sales and stamp receipts) and the federal Sport Fish Restoration Program (federal tax dollars derived from sport fishing-related equipment and fuel). These sources are supplemented with competitive grant awards, cooperative agreements, partnerships, and legislative appropriations. All funds are allocated based upon the goals, objectives and activities outlined within this strategic plan.

## ANGLING TRENDS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FISHING IN ILLINOIS

Nearly 1.2 million Illinoisans fished 38 million angler-days in 2008, making Illinois one of the most heavily fished states in the United States. Fishing is one of the most popular outdoor activities in the state. Sport fishing generated approximately \$3.7 billion to the state's economy that year. Commercial fishing and recreational boating contributed additional hundreds of millions of dollars. For that reason conserving, managing and enhancing the state's aquatic resources is the important mission of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources- Division of Fisheries. Threats to that resource are water degradation by soil erosion, chemical and sewage release, and continued urban sprawl, especially in the urbanized Chicago area. In addition, Illinois, the Prairie State, has less water acreage than most states of its geographical size. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, by statute, has jurisdiction over 203 species of fish, 45 species of amphibians, 74 species of reptiles, 25 species of crayfish and 78 species of mussels.



The most angler-sought species in the state are the Black bass species, largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass (32%). Panfish, including the crappie species, follow closely with 29% of all angling days directed toward them. Catfish, all species (17%), coolwater species (12%), trout and salmon (6.4%) and carp (2.2%) make up nearly all the rest of the demand. Other fish species, frogs and turtles total approximately .6% of the demand. Actual harvest figures vary from the above list with panfish (64%), catfish (14%), black bass (5%), salmonids (4.6%) and coolwater species (3.7%) comprising the majority of the fish caught. Other fishes and underutilized species such as carp made up 7% of the catch. Frogs and turtles contributed .3% of the catch.

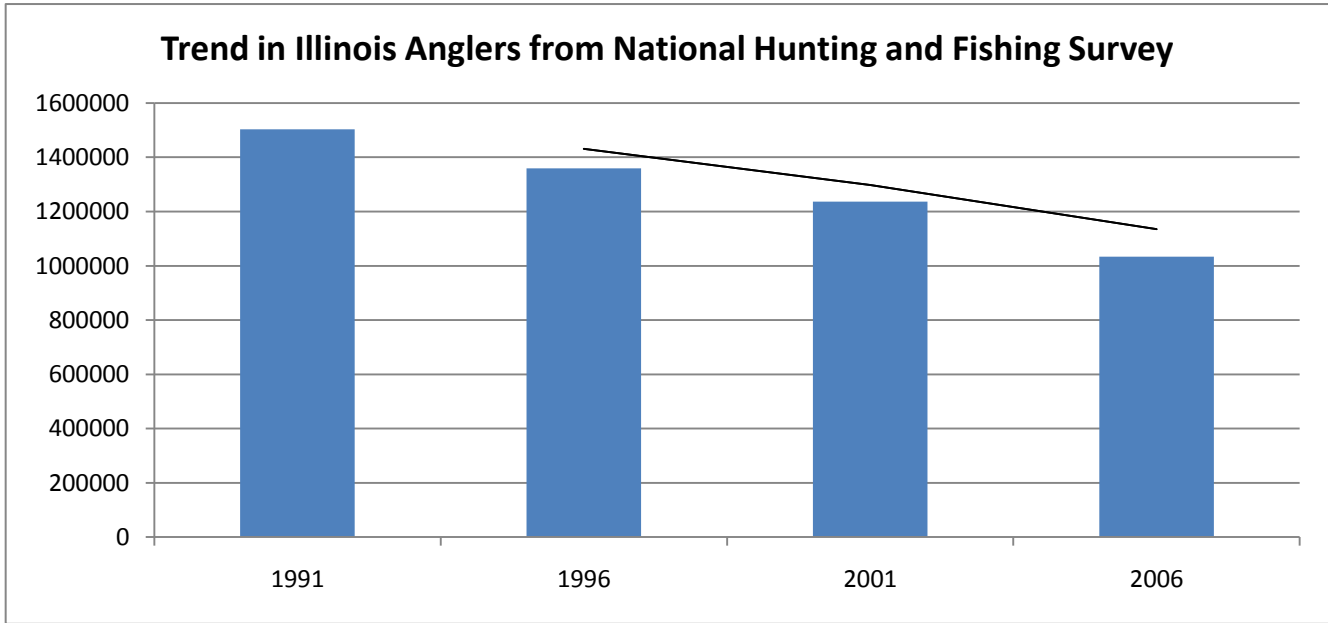


Demand for angling days by water type is as follows: Impoundments (61%), Streams (27%), Reservoirs (6%) and Lake Michigan (6%).

Supply of quality fishing days has historically (since statistics began in 1977) lagged approximately 10-15% below demand and is projected to continue that trend into the near future. For that reason, coupled with the lack of available water acreage and water quality degradation, the Division of Fisheries has to intensively manage those waters in its charge. This comprehensive Strategic Plan is intended to help direct that management. The five sections of this plan are delineated by their correlating budget line items.

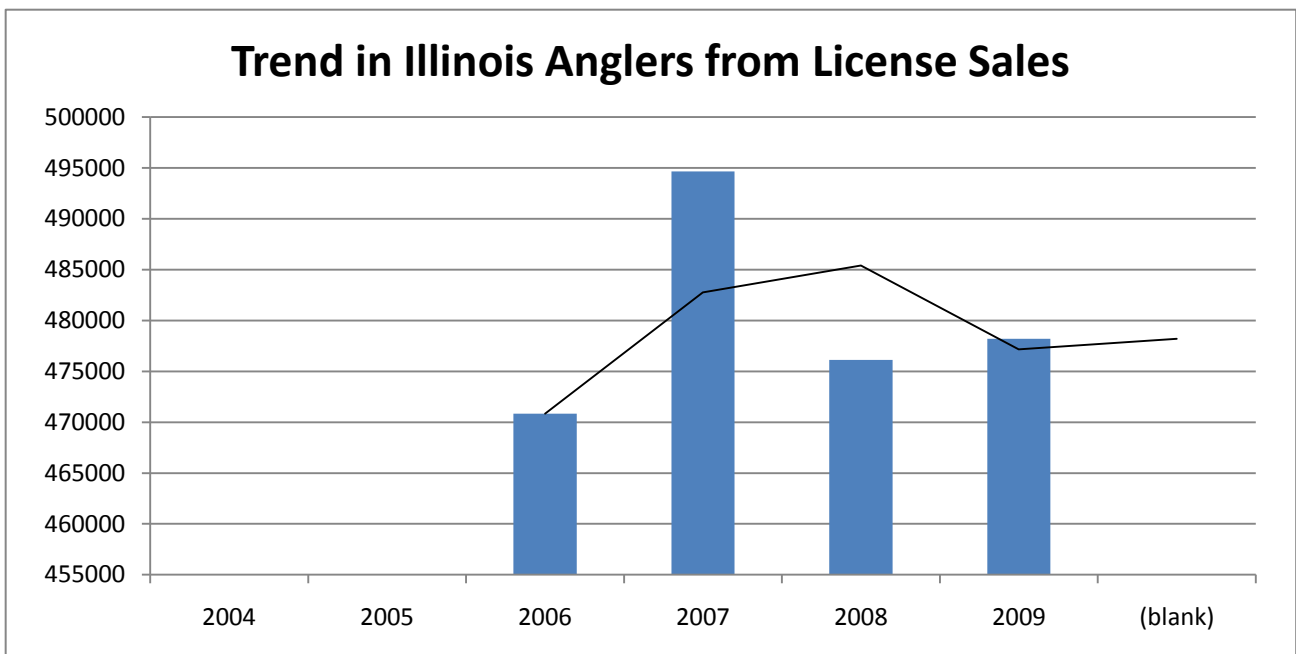
## National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (FHWAR)

Presents microdata records (with any information that might identify a specific person or household removed) on individuals involved in fishing, hunting, and other wildlife-associated recreation, such as wildlife observation, photography, and feeding. Data include state in which these activities occurred; number of trips taken; duration of trips; and expenditures for food, lodging, transportation, and equipment. The survey was conducted by the Census Bureau for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, which prepares printed reports in this field.



## Annual Sales of Illinois Fishing Licenses

Each year Illinois anglers and out-of-state anglers purchase fishing licenses from license vendor throughout the State. The recent trend in annual sales indicates that sales are gradually increasing in the last 5 years.



# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ILLINOIS FISHERIES RESOURCES

## Goal 1. Sport Fish Management

Ensure the sustained use of Illinois' recreational fisheries while optimizing economic and social benefits. Apply sport fish management activities and research on more than 400 state and public lakes and ponds, Lake Michigan, 3 Corp of Engineers reservoirs, 3 inter-state and 15 public river systems and private waters. (Federal aid sponsored activities)

**Objective 1. Develop, implement and maintain management objectives and activities that use state, river system, and district-wide management practices to produce a sustainable sport fish population.**

- Utilize annual state, **river system**, and district-wide review process to identify data needs and gaps, prioritize projects and review management strategies
  - Maintain the internal Management Review Committee (MRC) process
  - Continue to review and revise the Sportfish Analysis System (SAS)
    - Coordinate research and data set need activities, including revisions as technology advances, with the Illinois Natural History Survey and state universities
    - Coordinate intra and inter-agency fisheries resources data sharing
- **Implement and maintain fish and habitat management and monitoring activities on lakes and ponds, rivers and streams, and USCOE reservoirs**
  - **Implement and evaluate fish population surveys to collect growth, population structure and dynamics, species composition and abundance data**
  - **Implement and evaluate effectiveness of fish regulations**
  - **Implement and evaluate habitat enhancement projects**
  - **Implement and evaluate aquatic vegetation control projects**
  - **Implement and evaluate fish stocking and population control projects**
- Develop, maintain and review fishery management plans that incorporate objectives and remedial regulatory actions
  - Utilize the Sportfish Analysis System data entry and output programs for fishery management plan evaluation, with data entry into the shared state-wide data set
- Assess and monitor annually fish populations and habitat on approximately 125 river and stream stations in cooperation with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Basin Monitoring Program

- Assess and monitor fish pesticide and mercury contamination in cooperation with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Department of Public Health on 30 lake and stream sites per year
- Restore Division staff (administrative, biological, technical and clerical) to the 1998 level

Objective 2. Notify the public of management practices and policies in order to solicit their knowledgeable involvement in the regulatory process

- Conduct informal meetings with user groups
- Participate with fishing groups in a formal manner by involvement through the Conservation Congress
- Input through the Divisions website [ifishillinois.org](http://ifishillinois.org)
- Maintain Havana Fisheries Field Station, district and project offices for constituent interaction and coordination of fisheries research projects
- Staff must maintain a high profile through media outlets

Objective 3. Achieve angler compliance with laws and regulations

- Regularly update the Illinois Fishing Information booklet
- Educate anglers regarding regulations
  - Meet with user groups
  - Utilize media outlets
  - Maintain dialogue with Department Lands and Law Enforcement personnel

Objective 4. Maintain and cultivate associations with the angling public, clubs and other agencies

- Establish and maintain personal contact between staff and local communities, recreational anglers and angling associations
- Collaborate with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on fisheries issues

Objective 6. Minimize impacts of invasive species on native and stocked sport fish species and their habitat

- Detect and monitor invasive aquatic species
- **Manage or** eradicate invasive species when possible
- Develop and maintain public communication plans related to the prevention, identification and control of invasive species

- Utilize the Illinois Fishing Information booklet to educate the public about invasive species
- Utilize the website [ifishillinois.org](http://ifishillinois.org) to educate the public
- Utilize user group presentations for education purposes
- Utilize media outlets for public education

Objective 7. Plan scientifically and statistically sound, cost-effective fisheries research that addresses management information needs

- This research goes beyond the scope of traditional fisheries management, requiring specific long-term goals and strategies of the Division
- Research will meet the needs and requirements of the Division that cannot be met by management staff and will be annually reviewed by staff to ensure compliance
- Use the Management Review Committee (MRC) to identify research needs and information gaps
- The process will identify measurable objectives, sampling methods, analytical techniques, costs and ensure projects are critically reviewed prior to approval
- Projects will utilize the research expertise of cooperating entities including the Illinois Natural History Survey, state colleges and universities,
- Projects may improve understanding of population dynamics, life histories and habitat requirements of sport fish
  - Explore the use of alternative research technologies, methods and analyses
  - Create a consistent process to identify inter-departmental information needs and prioritize and coordinate future cooperative research projects
  - Utilize partnerships to fund and/or conduct research of common interests
- Conduct research to improve our understanding of angler use patterns, species preferences and constituent satisfaction
  - Conduct traditional mail, online or on-lake creel surveys to estimate use patterns, harvest data and angler satisfaction
- All research will be well-written, peer reviewed, published and available to Division personnel as needed

Objective 8. Diversify sport fishing opportunities through supplemental production of hatchery-reared fish

- All supplemental stockings of non-native species must have **no detectable** deleterious effect on native fish populations or their habitats

- Maintain policies related to genetics and pathology
- Follow stocking guidelines laid out in the **DOF** Species Management Plans
- Produce fish in a manner that is biologically sound, cost-effective and utilizes innovative practices
  - Develop best management practices (BMPs) for hatchery operations
  - Develop research plan to identify needs of the Division's aquaculture section
  - Develop partnerships with other state, federal and private hatcheries
  - Develop associations with user groups
- **Evaluate and** communicate stocking successes to fisheries' staff and to the public

Objective 9. Improve angler access

- Secure new public access through partnerships and/or leasing
- Maintain and improve current angler access **on public and private waters.**
- Keep the angling public apprised of access opportunities

**Goal 2. Native Fish Conservation**

**Develop, conduct, and evaluate environmental reviews, habitat restoration activities; fish management, technical assistance and fish stocks for private and organizational lakes; native fish, commercial fish and mussel monitoring, regulatory and management activities. (Non-federal aid activities)**

Objective 1. Review environmental restoration and protection planning activities

- Review USCOE 404 permits for all construction projects on rivers, streams and lakes
- Review hydropower, nuclear, coal-fired power plant and lock and dam construction projects on rivers, lakes and USCOE reservoirs

Objective 2. **Develop, conduct, and evaluate** fish management, stocking and technical assistance to approximately 300 private and organizational lake owners annually

- Utilize statewide hatchery system to supply fish stocks needed
- Field staff will provide fish management assistance either on-site or via telephone

### Objective 3. Develop and complete native fish, commercial fish and mussel monitoring and management activities on rivers and streams

- Monitor and regulate commercial fish harvest
- Monitor and regulate caviar harvest
- Monitor and regulate commercial mussel populations
  - Abundance and size structure
  - Species composition
  - Location
- Enter into interstate cooperative research, regulatory and management activities

### Goal 3. Aquatic Outreach Programs

Inform and educate the public about recreational fishing in Illinois with an emphasis on youth education

Objective 1. Inform sport anglers and division staff about Illinois' recreational fishing opportunities, angler access, regulations, sport fish management and the decision-making process

- Utilize media to provide timely updates regarding fisheries information and Administrative Rules (regulations) changes
- Continue to update the [ifishillinois.org](http://ifishillinois.org) website including informational updates for the public through the Internet
  - Utilize the Sportfish Analysis System to analyze and update fishing information for public dissemination through the website
  - Ensure timely updates of the website through coordination with the Illinois Natural History Survey

Objective 2. Promote participation in recreational fishing activities

- Develop and maintain Urban and Youth fishing programs statewide
  - Volunteer Instructor and Fisheries Clinics
    - Hold approximately 1500 structured Summer urban fishing clinics annually utilizing division employees and volunteers for 40,000 participants
  - Special Events fishing clinics
    - Hold special fishing clinics, much like the Urban clinics, for 40,000 youth and adult participants throughout the year

- Fishing Expos
  - Special one day events for 100-500 participants per event where instructional stations are individual topics are taught by fishing clubs, service clubs and/or businesses
- Fishing Derbies
  - Large group fishing clinics (40-200 participants) without the educational facet of above events
- Hooked on Fishing , Not Drugs
  - National program combining angling skills, actual fishing, ethical care of the environment, positive life skills into one curriculum
  - Continue cooperation with Illinois school districts
- School Classroom Programs
  - Multi-topic programs all involving aquatic ecosystems
- All Sport, Boat and Tackle shows
  - Kids fishing events
  - Fisheries information dissemination
- Conservation Field Days
  - 15-30 minute presentations about fish management, ID or other related aquatic topics. Usually to school kids but available to any user group
- Access to Fishing
  - Fishing loaner pole program. Poles are purchased by or donated to the Division then given to libraries, concession stands, and boat liveries. They can then be checked out for public use much like a library book
- Illinois State Fair
  - 750,000-1,000,000 people come through to the State Fair annually. Nearly 20% go through the Fisheries tent. Live fish and interactive fish displays are found there. This is a huge hit with the angling public especially the children.
- Staff meetings with user groups to promote fishing and aquatic education activities and to receive feedback from the angling public
- Conduct innovative recreational angler recruitment and retention initiatives
- Maintain public communications with our user groups both informally and, more formally for example, through the Conservation Congress

Objective 3. Create and maintain informational products to increase public understanding of and participation in the stewardship of Illinois' recreational fisheries resources

- Integrate stewardship principles in all division education programs
- Develop and deliver Illinois-specific K-12 stewardship and aquatic education curricula

#### **Goal 4. Aquatic Nuisance Fish Management**

Coordinate and monitor the implementation of a **Statewide Aquatic Nuisance Species Management, Prevention, Control and Abatement Strategies** program, including all non-native, invasive plant and animal species

Objective 1. Manage and monitor the implementation of a statewide invasive species control plan

- Coordinate projects with other state, federal, provincial, city and county agencies
- Control or attempt to control all invasive nuisance aquatic species
  - Monitor locations of invasive nuisance aquatic species
  - Eradicate where fiscally and environmentally possible
  - Coordinate eradication efforts with other federal, provincial, city and county agencies

Objective 2. Issue aquaculture permits, VHS permits, fishing stocking permits and fish importation permits to control the spread of fish disease aquatic nuisance species and other controllable movements of fish in Illinois

Objective 3. Communicate and disseminate information about aquatic nuisance species management to the public

- Incorporate all media outlets available- TV radio, newspapers, magazines
- Staff attendance at nuisance species conferences, giving public talks and slide presentations to interested user groups
- Maintain contacts with universities, colleges and other educational institution to garner up-to-date invasive species research data

#### **Goal 5. Chicago Urban Fishing Program**

The Illinois Urban Fishing Program was initiated in Chicago in 1985. Programs are held in city parks and consist of Summer educational fishing sessions which are followed by fishing at a nearby stocked lagoon. The Summer clinic program has since been expanded to additional parks but the original format remains the same. Events held throughout the year and special clinics are held throughout the city as well

Objective 1. Conduct fishing and aquatic environmental educational programs throughout the year

- Hold programs in schools (K-12), senior groups, at day care facilities and in parks to spur interest in fishing

Objective 2. Conduct approximately 500 Summer fishing clinics for 12,000 participants

- Stock 13 park lagoons with at least 60,000 catchable sized hybrid sunfish and 30,000 pounds of channel catfish
- Maintain clinic sites at Auburn, Columbus, Douglas, Garfield, Gompers, Humboldt, Jackson, Lincoln Park South, Marquette, McKinley, Riis, Sherman and Washington parks

Objective 3. Conduct seven special event clinics for 3,000 participants on weekends, after school or times when the structured clinic schedules or sites cannot be utilized.

- Hold special events for user groups such as special needs children, recreational groups, block clubs, school groups, senior citizens, park districts and any other interested group

## **Operational Projects - Major Budget Areas Annual Work Elements and Activities**

The supply of quality fishing waters is limited due to pollution and other physical degradations. Therefore, a comprehensive statewide fisheries management program (comprised of 5 major budget areas) is necessary to conserve, manage, and enhance Illinois' fishery resources under the Division of Fisheries' Strategic Plan.

### **1) Sport Fish Management Projects**

- a. Complete **applied sport fish management activities and research** on more than 300 state and public lakes, Lake Michigan, about 15 public river systems, 3 inter-state rivers, and 3 Corps of Engineers Reservoirs; including general studies, fish population surveys, fishing regulations, habitat enhancement, aquatic vegetation control, fish population control, management of satellite rearing ponds for fish production and stocking, and stock about 20 million fish produced from the State Fish Hatchery System.
- b. Complete **assessment and monitoring of sport fish populations** on about 125 river and stream stations in cooperation with the IEPA Basin Monitoring Program.

### **2) Native Fish Conservation Projects**

- a. Complete **environmental reviews and restoration planning activities** on rivers and streams for Corps of Engineers and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission construction and hydropower projects.
- b. Complete **fisheries management, fish stocking, and provide technical assistance** to about 300 organizational and private lakes and ponds.
- c. Complete **native fish, commercial fish, mussel, and caviar conservation, regulatory, and management activities** on rivers and streams including fishing regulations, issuing permits, conducting special surveys, and interstate coop management studies and activities.

### 3) **Aquatic Outreach Projects**

#### a. **Special Event Clinics (Aquatic Ed Program)**

**Special event clinics** are similar to regular summer clinics, but are held on weekends, after school, or at different locations where lakes with a suitable fish population are available. Several ice fishing clinics are also held in northern Illinois. Special event clinic participants (nearly 40,000 kids and adults) are also provided with fishing oriented literature packets.

#### b. **“Volunteer Instructor” and Fisheries Clinics (Urban Fishing Program)**

More than 1500 structured fishing clinics are held by volunteer individuals, by employees of state or local parks, recreation department employees, and are held at sites with a lake where fishing is available. The volunteers are trained and provided with Urban Fishing Clinic Program educational materials and with fishing poles to about 40,000 participants. This portion of the Program has shown a great amount of growth and has the potential for more, and will allow additional kids to learn to fish at a relatively low cost.

#### c. **Fishing Expos (Urban Fishing Program)**

**Fishing Expos** are large fishing clinics where each topic of the Program is taught at a separate station by trained instructors. After completing each instructional station, attendees then went fishing. These events are normally sponsored in part or entirely by local fishing clubs, service clubs, and/or private businesses. Expos are one-day events and are designed to accommodate between 100-500 participants.

#### d. **Fishing Derbies (Urban Fishing Program)**

**Fishing Derbies** usually involve a larger group of anglers (40-200 people), and included fishing without the educational part of the summer clinic program. Educational sessions are not practical due to large group size, participants arriving at different times, and time constraints.

#### e. **Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs Program**

The nationally acclaimed **Hooked On Fishing-Not On Drugs (HOFNOD)** Program combined angling skills along with actual fishing, ethical care of the environment, and positive life skills such as self esteem issues, decision making, goal setting, helping others, etc. into one curriculum. Many of our fishing programs qualified as a HOFNOD Program. Illinois teachers also contacted the HOFNOD office in Ishington, D.C. to request information and fishing programs for their school. HOFNOD then passed their request to our Department for us to handle, which made it possible to introduce fishing to additional schools.

#### f. **School Classroom Programs**

The **School Classroom Programs** included a variety of types of sessions. Some programs discussed lake ecosystems and related topics and then allowed students to pick up and handle live fish and other aquatic animals. Other programs included slide show fish related presentations followed by question and answer periods. Another program that is supported in part by the American Fisheries Society studied the water molecule and water's habits as it flowed through a stream. Some programs are educational bingo-type fish games.

#### g. **Sport Tackle Shows**

The **Sport Tackle Shows** are held indoors during the winter and they are set up to handle hundreds of persons wanting to visit with vendors selling fishing and outdoor products. Our activities usually included having kids fish for “felt fish” with velcro-covered bean bags attached to cane poles and then teaching them to identify and measure fish, or offered the use of a fish simulator that allowed participants to experience the thrill of catching a fish. We also promoted our various summer fishing programs and gave away aquatic and fish related literature.

#### **h. Conservation Field Day Programs**

**Conservation Field Day Programs** consist of 15- 25 minute presentations about fish and general aquatics, and are usually held outdoors at state parks for school groups that are on a field trip. Numerous groups of students participated and each group would rotate from station to station.

#### **i. Access to Fishing**

The Illinois “**Access to Fishing**” fishing pole loaner program is started in 1997 and remains a unique way of allowing anglers to try fishing without having to buy equipment. Fishing poles which had been purchased by or donated to IDNR are placed in establishments such as libraries, lake-side concession stands, bait stores, etc. This equipment is available to be borrowed at no cost, and handled much like checking out and returning a library book. Tackle packets (containing hooks, sinkers, a bobber, etc.) and instructional fishing literature are also available at no cost for users to keep when they borrowed a fishing pole. The Program is popular with the recent fishing clinic participant, the first-time angler, and the occasional angler who did not yet want to buy equipment.

#### **j. Illinois State Fair**

The **Illinois State Fair** is conducted each year with participants ranging from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 million people. Many of state fair goers pass through the Division of Fisheries tent and fishing pond to see the live and interactive fish displays and let kids catch fish and receive fish ecology and ethics talks.

### **4. Aquatic Nuisance Fish Management Project**

- a. Coordinate and monitor the implementation of a **Statewide Aquatic Nuisance Species Management, Prevention, Control and Abatement Strategies**. Manage and monitor the implementation of a statewide aquatic life diversity program. Coordinates projects with other state, federal, city and county agencies and other interested organizations.
- b. Issue **aquaculture permits, VHS permits, fish stocking permits, and fish importation permits** to control spread of fish disease, aquatic nuisance species, and other controllable movements of fish in Illinois.
- c. **Communicate and disseminate information** about aquatic nuisance species management programs to the public, other agencies and DNR employees by writing letters, memos, technical reports and magazine articles; gives public talks, makes slide presentations and participates in radio and TV interviews; attends conferences and give speeches to interest groups and organizations; maintain contacts with universities, colleges and other educational institutions.

### **5. Chicago Urban Fishing Projects**

The Illinois Urban Fishing Program is initiated in Chicago in 1985. Programs are held in city parks and consisted of summer educational fishing sessions which are followed by fishing at a nearby stocked lagoon. The summer clinic program has been expanded to additional parks but the original format remains the same.

- a. **Fishing and aquatic environmental educational programs** are offered throughout the year. These programs are held in schools, with senior groups, at day care facilities, and in parks on weekends. An important goal of this program is getting individuals interested in fishing so that they might develop it as a hobby in future years. If someone is to develop fishing as a hobby, it is most important that they actually go fishing when learning the sport.
- b. **Fishing Clinics and Fish Stocking** are started in 1985 at Marquette, Gompers, and Columbus Parks. The Program is expanded and now fishing clinics and/or fish stockings take place at the following **13** parks: Auburn, Columbus, Douglas, Garfield, Gompers,

Humboldt, Jackson, Lincoln Park South, Marquette, McKinley, Riis, Sherman, and Ishington. Each year about 500 fishing clinics are held for more than 12,000 participants, and about **30,000** pounds of catchable-sized channel catfish and **nearly 60,000** hybrid sunfish are stocked.

- a. **Special event clinics** are conducted on weekends, after school, or times when the structured clinic schedule and/or site could not be utilized. Special events also meant clinics for "special" groups, such as special education and special recreation groups, block clubs, school groups, senior citizens, park districts, and others that had expressed an interest. Nearly, **3,000** participants take part in one of the **seven** special event programs each year.