

WILD HARVEST INITIATIVE®

A Program of conservation VISIONS®

QUARTERLY UPDATE

•
JUNE 2019



We are excited to welcome the National Wildlife Federation to the Wild Harvest Initiative® Partners' Alliance!

The 1st meeting of the Wild Harvest Initiative® Partners' Alliance will take place in St. John's, Newfoundland, from August 27th – 29th

We hope to see you there!

PROGRESS REPORTING

Wild Harvest Initiative® Database

Recreational Angling Harvest Data

The WHI Team has now completed collection and initial review of all available recreational angling data provided by each of the 63 jurisdictions identified in our study.

From our initial review of the data, we have produced a list of fish species legally harvested by recreational anglers in the US and Canada. Fish species were then divided into 2 categories, distinguishing "marine" species from "freshwater" species and entered into the WHI database. A literature review focusing on live and dressed weights of freshwater fish is in progress. Once completed, this will

enable estimates of recreational catch biomass.

We are currently developing a standardized database schema to facilitate entry of jurisdictional angling harvest data, including individual creel surveys. The compiled creel surveys will be analyzed to produce an estimate of the total inland fish harvest in the United States, as most American inland fish harvest is unrecorded by jurisdictional wildlife agencies. Marine harvest estimates for the United States will be gleaned from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Recreational Information Program. Estimates of Canadian fish harvest will be obtained via the National Surveys of Recreational Fishing in Canada. A plan is being formulated to facilitate data entry for acquired data which will begin during the next quarter.

Economic Value of Harvest

To enable a value appraisal of recreational fish harvests we are now collecting data regarding the economic value of commercial fish landings, as well as fish price data at the retail level.

Research to determine the best methodology to calculate fair market values for wild harvested meat and fish is ongoing. Input from industry experts is also being sought.

Database Updates

Several database additions and upgrades are in progress which will facilitate more efficient analyses. Ongoing updates include additional features for the custom user interface and the implementation of an email notification system to allow for immediate diagnosis and resolution of technical or hardware problems.

Wild Meat Sharing and Consumption Index

We are seeking proposals from experts to implement data analyses for survey results.

EMERGING INSIGHTS

Inconsistent Reporting of Recreational Fish Catch/Harvest

The Wild Harvest Initiative® has completed an initial assessment of all available recreational angling data for the United States and Canada. This assessment identified considerable inconsistencies between reports prepared by various jurisdictions, primarily in terms of scope and taxonomic classifications of reported harvests (genus level or family level vs. species level).

For example, of 50 US jurisdictions from which data were collected, only 2 states – Alaska and Minnesota – could provide estimates of statewide recreational angling harvests. Most other states could provide only creel surveys for specific waterbodies, no statewide estimates. Varying methodologies and inconsistent nomenclature are problematic for data comparisons across multiple jurisdictions, even at the regional level. In some jurisdictions, such as Colorado and Delaware, no recreational angling data were available at all.

Overall, the greatest deficiency seems to be the absence of reporting recreational fish catch and harvest for inland waters at the national level in the US as well as the lack of annual monitoring of recreational Canadian fish harvests.

Implications

Inconsistencies and vacancies in reporting and data collection concerning recreational angling pose several challenges for the Wild Harvest

Initiative®. These inconsistencies require the derivation of detailed methodology to integrate all harvest data into one standardized format for analysis, leading to generalizations that may not have been necessary had all harvest been properly monitored and recorded. The lack of available data also means that the harvest of some fish species will remain unknown, leading to an understatement of the total benefits of recreational angling harvest.

Furthermore, these inconsistencies and data deficiencies lead to problems for wildlife managers in terms of monitoring populations, predator prey cycles, and environmental planning. They may also present obstacles to angler recruitment and retention, which have negative implications for fish and wildlife conservation.

Wild Harvest Initiative® Partnership Alliance

During the previous quarter the Partnership Alliance was significantly strengthened with the addition of the National Wildlife Federation, the United States' largest private, nonprofit conservation education and advocacy organization, bringing the total number of supporting partners to 33.

Inaugural Meeting of the WHI Partnership Alliance

The first meeting of the WHI Partnership Alliance will be held in St. John's, Newfoundland from August 27-29, 2019. Attendees are asked to arrive on August 26th. Registration forms have been circulated to all Partners and the response to date has been incredible. We encourage all participants to confirm attendance and book accommodations at the earliest opportunity. We have circulated the meeting agenda and will be forwarding updates as changes are made. We are excited to welcome our Alliance members to Newfoundland and are eager to showcase the tremendous progress we have achieved!

Communications

As we begin to transition from data capture to analysis and outreach our historically strong efforts in terms of communications will continue to increase.

Social Media Growth

Our social media following continues to grow and we now have a combined following of more than 976,000 individual users on Facebook alone. This represents a growth of more than 100,000 individuals in the past 3-4 months. This exceptional growth was assisted by a new video release that garnered considerable attention from diverse audiences. The Conservation Visions short-film, *Women in Early North American Conservation*, has proven to be our most successful release to date, achieving more than 1.2 million views. Please press CTRL + Click on the image below to view the film.

Website

Development of a standalone Wild Harvest Initiative® website is ongoing. The site will feature a section to showcase WHI Partners. Each partner (individual or organization) will have a page dedicated to promoting their own efforts/business, while also communicating their reason for supporting the WHI program. Partners have recently been contacted and asked to provide page content. We plan to highlight this new platform during the WHI Alliance meeting in August.

Women in Early North American Conservation:





Species Profile: Largemouth Bass

- Scientific name is *Micropterus salmoides*
- Average adults weigh 1 - 4.5 pounds
- Average lifespan is 10 - 16 years
- Spawning begins at about 1 year of age and happens in spring
- Largemouth bass are carnivorous
- Species has a high survivability rate from catch and release angling
- Largest largemouth bass on record weighed about 10 Kg (approx. 22 lbs)

Species profile – Largemouth Bass

Harvest in the United States

The most recent data available from NOAA's Marine Recreational Information Program for 2018 indicates that largemouth bass are fished recreationally in at least 5 US states including Alabama, Florida, Maryland, Mississippi, and North Carolina. Total catch from these 5 jurisdictions for 2018 is reported at 898,476 largemouth bass. An estimated 92% of this total catch was released, while the remaining 8%, representing a live weight of about 62,563 Kg (137,926 lb), was harvested, presumably for consumption.

It is important to note that these estimates represent only a fraction of the total US recreational largemouth bass fishery for several reasons. The first reason relates to the data reporting methodologies employed in some American jurisdictions within the

NOAA data. In these select jurisdictions bass catch and harvest statistics are reported at the genus and family levels, rather than the species level, making it impossible to differentiate between catches of largemouth bass and other bass species. The second reason harvests are underreported is attributable to the fact that most catches from inland waters are not recorded by jurisdictional wildlife agencies, and thus are not represented in this harvest estimate. Finally, we know that largemouth bass are harvested in more jurisdictions than the 5 indicated by this data set. As we expand our estimates to include inland waters and all jurisdictions, we will continue to refine and update our catch and harvest estimates as appropriate.

Harvest in Canada

The most recently available data from the Canadian Recreational Fishing Survey for

the year 2010 indicates that largemouth bass are harvested in at least 3 Canadian jurisdictions, Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia. The total catch reported for Canadian jurisdictions in 2010 was 6,131,717 fish. An estimated 87% of this total catch was released, while the remaining 13%, representing an approximate live weight of 524,583 kg (1,155,504 lb), was harvested. However, bass harvest data for the provinces of Quebec and British Columbia were reported at higher taxonomic levels than species. As in the US circumstance, this leaves no practical way to differentiate between harvests of various bass species in these jurisdictions. Additionally, we know that catch and harvest of largemouth bass occurs in more jurisdictions than the 3 indicated in the Canadian data set. As a result, catch and harvest of largemouth bass in Canada is, as in the United States, underreported.



QUARTERLY MILESTONE PROGRESS TRACKING

The Wild Harvest Initiative® Team carefully tracks progress to ensure efficient use of project resources and timely meeting of deliverables. A progress timeline highlighting program achievements from the previous quarter is shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3 below.

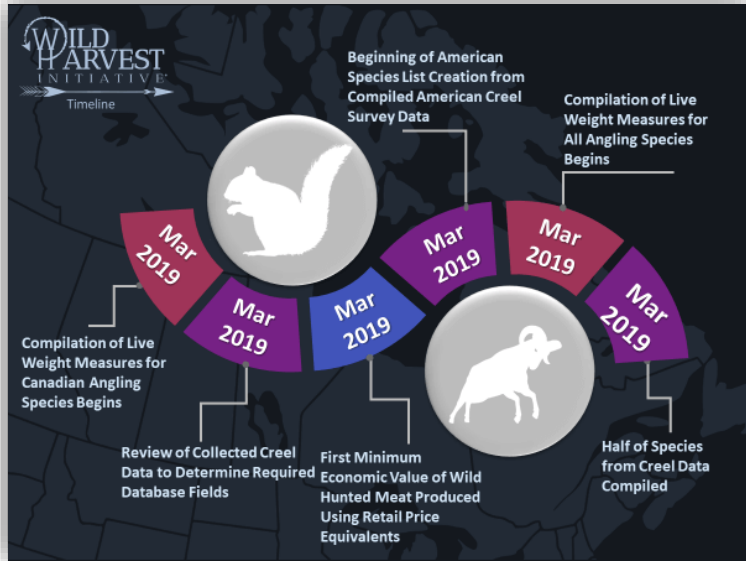


Figure 1: Progress Tracking March 2019

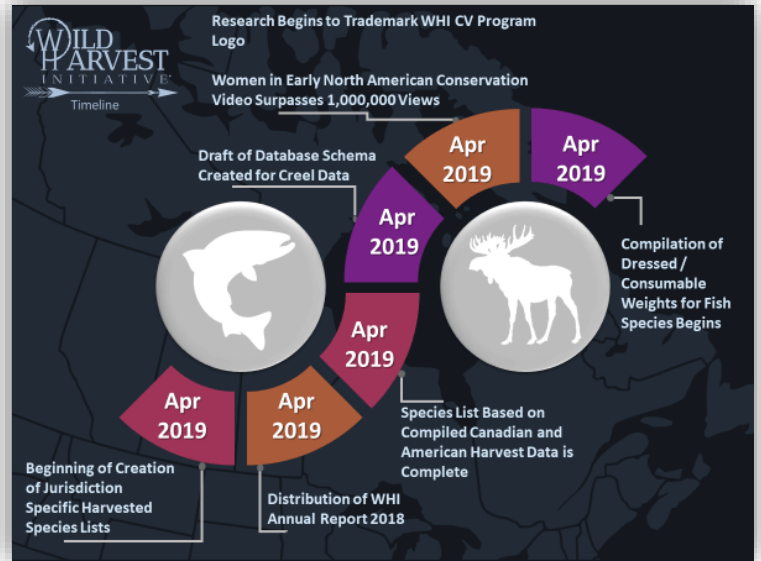


Figure 2: Progress Tracking April 2019

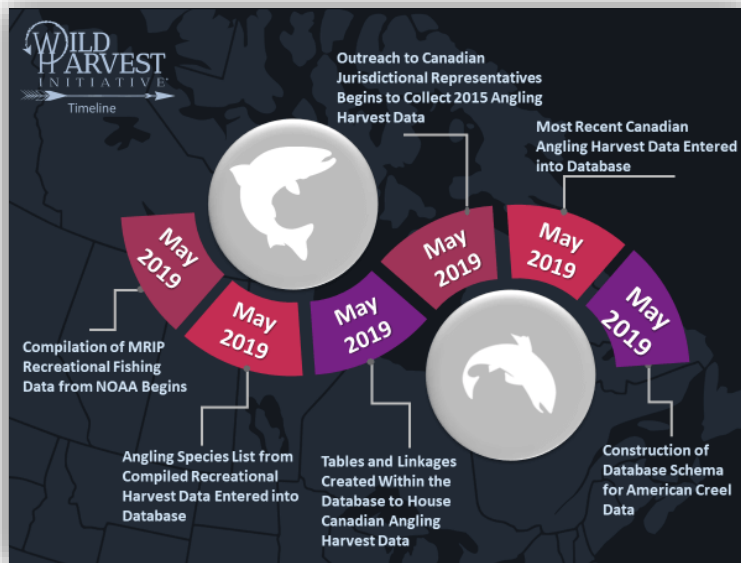


Figure 3: Progress Tracking May 2019

THE WILD HARVEST INITIATIVE® PARTNERSHIP ALLIANCE

