



**CESU Final Report Summary for
Net Benefits of Recreational Fishing in the Great Lakes, Upper Mississippi River,
and Ohio River Basins - W912HZ-11-2-0030 (Report A)**

Purpose: This report provides estimates of the net value to anglers of recreational fishing in the Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi and Ohio River basins within the following 12 states: Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York. Within these three basins, particular attention is given to those lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams that are located downstream from all barriers impassable to fish (dams, waterfalls, etc.). It is these waters that the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) considers susceptible to the effects of possible aquatic nuisance species (ANS) transfer between the Great Lakes basin and the Upper Mississippi and Ohio River basins (in either direction).

Location: Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi and Ohio River basins within the following 12 states: Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York.

Methods: Cornell University (CU) developed an economic model to estimate net baseline recreational fishing values using the travel cost valuation method. The development of these net benefit estimates took place in three stages: (a) a series of focus groups with recreational anglers; (b) surveys of recreational anglers; and (c) the development and estimation of an economic model of angler behavior. The surveys were also used to develop estimates of trip expenditures.

Results: Based on fishing license sales data provided by the states, it was estimated that 6.6 million anglers lived and fished in the 12-state study area in 2011. These anglers spent an estimated 62.9 million days fishing in those portions of the Great Lakes basin below barriers impassable to fish. They spent 57.6 million days fishing in those portions of the Upper Mississippi and Ohio River basins that are below barriers impassable to fish. The average net value per angler day, estimated from CU's recreational fishing model, was \$19.52. The aggregate net value of recreational fishing in those portions of the Great Lakes basin below barriers impassable to fish is estimated to be \$1.228 billion for calendar year 2011. The corresponding aggregate net value of recreational fishing in those portions of the Upper Mississippi and Ohio River basins below barriers impassable to fish is estimated to be \$1.124 billion. This report serves as an indicator of the net value of recreational fishing that could be impacted in the future without-project (FWOP) condition – the case where no Federal action is taken to prevent the transfer of ANS between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins.

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