



2017 Online Angler Survey

Swan Valley Sport Fishing Enhancement Inc.

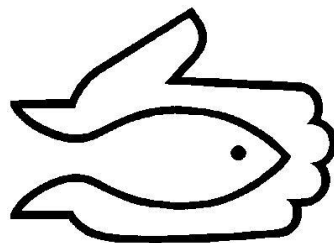
Submitted by SVSFE Technical Staff:

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**FISH AND
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ENHANCEMENT FUND



Online Angler Survey Feedback

2017 Online Angler Survey Summary:

SVSFE understands the importance of qualitative data and incorporating angler's insight into potential management objectives. In 2015, a survey questionnaire was created and conducted in-person by a summer student(through a Service Canada grant) as well as an online submission option. The following year, 2016 was continued with completely online submissions. Although submissions were relatively low in 2016, so were cost and time allocation. There was a noticeable spike in entries for both FLIPPR and SVSFE when posts and reminders were released online. 2017 brought an increase of surveys with the combined efforts from Parkland Trout Fisheries and SVSFE on Facebook.

Online submissions were made available on the SVSFE website throughout the winter of 2016 continuing until the end of October 2017. Partnerships made with FLIPPR and Roblin Economic Development increased the study area into the Parkland region to provide extended insight and feedback from anglers. Promotion through social media and distribution of posters and informational cards were the main contributors to receiving entries. The following is a review from surveys received.

Angler demographic/Area use specifics:

Out of the 43 surveys received in 2017, anglers were generally from Manitoba (Figure 1). The remaining anglers were from Saskatchewan, Alberta and the USA respectively.

Figure two represents the towns/cities in which anglers resided. The radius anglers are travelling to visit the Parkland is about 480km, excluding the anglers from Calgary, AB and Weybridge, Vermont(USA). Of the 35 Manitoba residents, 14 were from the Swan Valley, 5 from Winnipeg, 4 from Brandon, 4 from Dauphin area, 3 from Roblin area, and 1 from Thompson, Zhoda, Neepawa and Glenboro respectively. The majority of anglers possessed regular licenses(58%) followed by conservation(37%) and youth/other(both at 2.5%).

Angler Residence

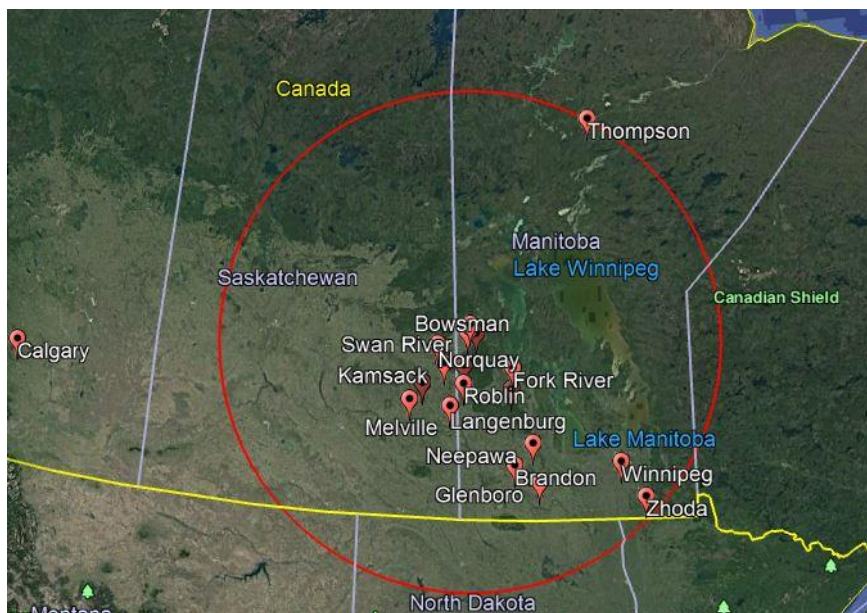
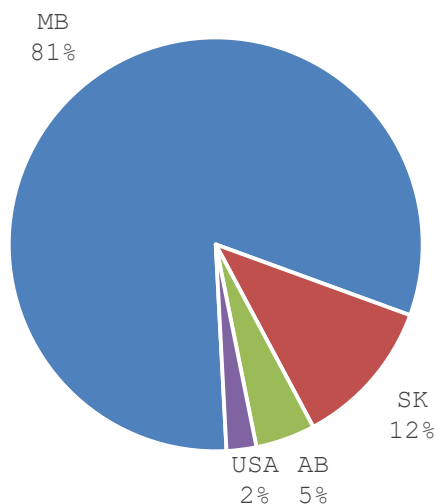


Figure 1: Composition of Angler Residence

Figure 2: Radius of MB travel the Parkland

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Angler demographic/Area use specifics cont'd:

The first question on the survey asks anglers which area they usually fish. The options were the Duck Mountains, Porcupine Mountains, Southwest Parkland, River systems, and Other. The Duck Mountains was noted as the most fished area, followed by the Southwest Parkland, River systems, Porcupine Mountain, and Other. The amount of trips made to each area is vary significantly. Local anglers are fishing 3-6 days a week in multiple areas while some visit the Parkland once a year. On average in the Duck Mountains anglers visit 19 times/year(range 1-50). In the Southwest Parkland the average visits per year is 15(range 1-56). In the Porcupine Mountains the average visits per year is 19(range 4-50). The majority of the patrons are making daily visits. In terms of accommodations, they prefer Hotel/Motels followed by campgrounds both daily and seasonally. Five of 43 anglers were cabin owners. Angling has been identified as the primary reason for trips to the Parkland by 88% of surveys while the remaining 12% were visiting as cabin owners or as campers.

Anglers declared the Duck Mountains as the favorite fishing destination. Favorite lakes specifically were East Blue Lake and Wellman Lake. On average, anglers are spending \$287 per trip, and \$2800 per year. It is obvious there is a few notable discrepancies in dollars spent by anglers on recreational fishing depending on demographic(See Table 1). When asked how many times they fish per year in general (not just in the Parkland) the most common answer was "as much as possible!". In numeric terms, average days/year spent fishing was 75(range 1-224).

Table 1: Money spent by anglers according to demographic

	Anglers living in or close to the Parkland	Anglers living 300km+ from the Parkland	Out of Province Anglers	Out of Country Anglers
Range \$ Spent Per Trip	\$10-60	\$100-1,000	\$100-2,000	\$2500
Range \$ Spent Per Year	\$100-10,000	\$300-20,000	\$600-10,000	\$10,000

General Fishing Inquiries:

On average, anglers are retaining 18% & releasing 82% of their catch in the Parkland. The retain/release percentage stayed relatively consistent even when it came to area exclusive (Southwest Parkland, Duck Mountain, Porcupine Mountain) anglers with the exception of Porcupine Mountain exclusive anglers retaining 37.5%/releasing 62.5%(See Appendix). The top sought after species of fish was rainbow trout, followed by walleye and northern pike respectively (Figure 3). Anglers had multiple fishing expectations when in the area. Most common reasons for going angling were to catch big/master angler fish while spending time with family and friends (Figure 4). Anglers utilize different types of fishing tactics besides regular rod/reel in the Parkland such as ice fishing and fly fishing. Majority of patrons participate in ice fishing(47%), fly fishing (21%) and both ice and fly fishing (28%). There was also 2 out of 43 anglers that fly fish exclusively. In regards to enforcement, 42% of anglers indicated they have never been checked by a Conservation Officer/Park Patrol and 42% have been checked in the past year. The remaining anglers have been checked at some point in their life. Checks in the past year average 2 times/yr with a range of 1-5 times/year.

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Target Species Specified by Anglers

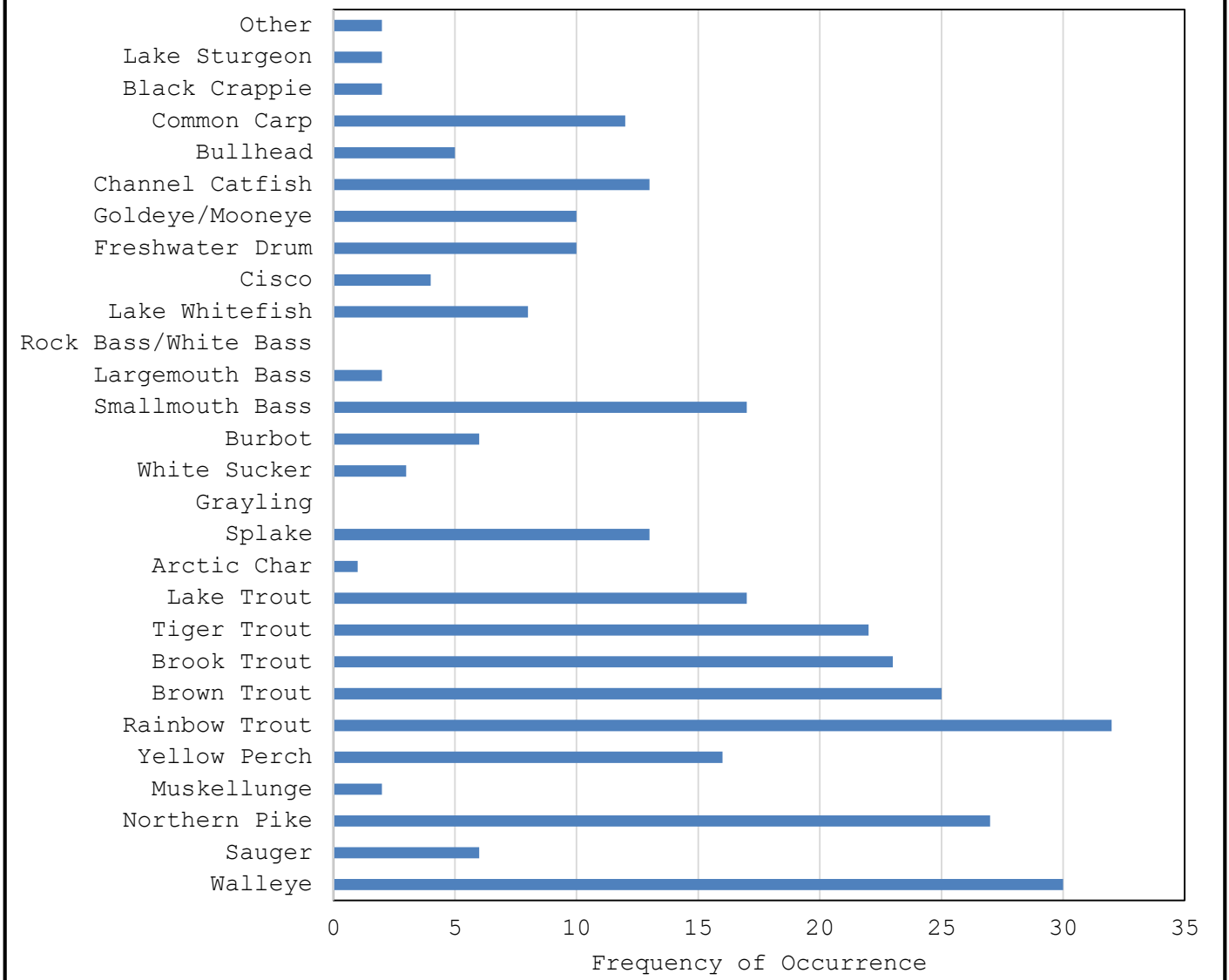


Figure 3

Fishing Expectations

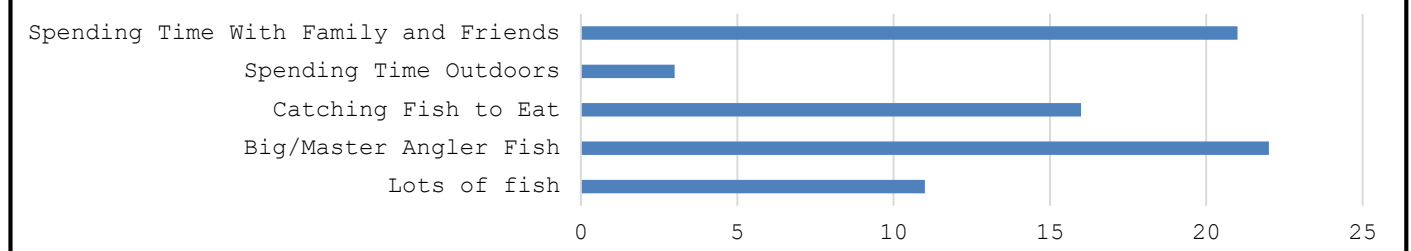


Figure 4

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Fisheries Enhancement Questions:

Approximately 93% of individuals were previously aware of the Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Fund and 98% supported those initiatives. Ninety-five percent of individuals were previously aware of SVSFE and of those, 100% supported their initiatives. Individuals were asked if they would consider contributing to the FWEF stamp even if they were exempt (ie. Senior) from purchasing a license and 95% were in favor.

The most common project/activity supported by anglers was to continue stocking fish. This has been the most supported project every year since this survey was initiated in 2015. This shows a strong awareness of the significant role our hatcheries play in recreational fishing, further signifying the importance of efficient and practical stocking practices. Habitat enhancement was a close second place followed by developing new fisheries(Figure 5)

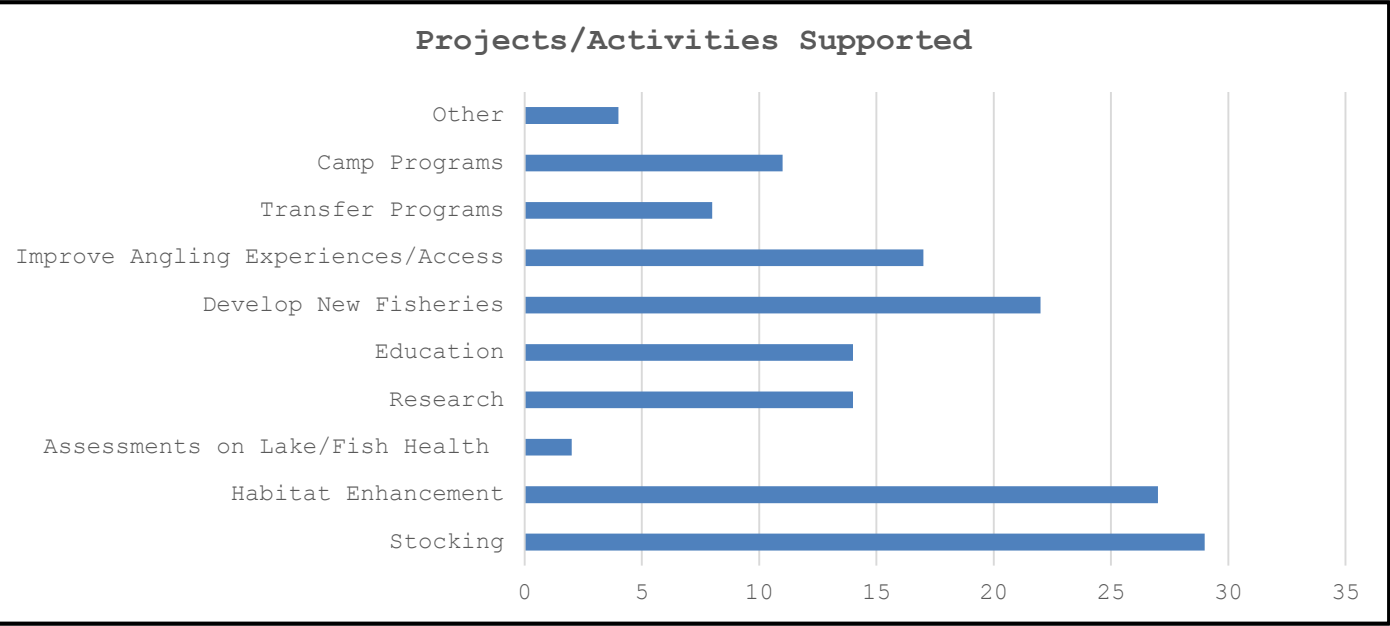


Figure 5

Anglers were given the opportunity to specify activities they'd like done or issues they face. A full list of suggestions can be viewed in the appendix, but a few examples included:

- ✓ Stocking/Develop new fisheries in the parkland- There was four surveys requesting the development of a black crappie fishery, followed by three requests for a largemouth bass fishery.
- ✓ Other stocking suggestions-"stock tiger trout in West Blue or Two Mile", "Splake stocking. If possible and funds available, fewer gaps in the stocking of splake.", "Child's, Laurie, and East blue need more Lake trout and Splake. Really need to try tiger trout in a Lake like West Blue."
- ✓ Improve angling experiences/access- "More access to the lakes with paths built for someone to walk around lakes like the one around West Goose", "modifications to docks that maybe have hand rails etc. I have seen and helped elders who have a difficult time getting in and out of their boats at docks.", "Lake shores are getting a mess with garbage . Need more garbage cans and enforcement", "Garbage around Two mile is insane and needs to be cleaned up"

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On a lighter note, some complimentary quotes towards efforts to date:

- ✓ "Manitoba has one of the best fisheries I have experienced out of the 4 provinces I have lived in. Great job"
- ✓ "Overall very happy with my fishing experiences in the Parkland."
- ✓ "Parkland region is a fishery unlike any other in the province"
- ✓ "I love the dedication of the SVSFE and very much appreciate their work!"

In addition to the general questionnaire, anglers have access to a daily catch form. Entries were received from all areas of the Parkland. Individual surveys should be reviewed in the appendix as each fishery is unique. Average fishing quality for the Parkland was 6.9, with ten being the highest quality. Average hours spent fishing was 4.9 and average catch was 2.8 fish/hour with a 87% release rate.

Conclusion:

In summary, out of 43 surveys completed in 2017, 81% of anglers were from Manitoba, 58% possessed a regular license and declared the Duck Mountains as the most frequented area visited. Between all Parkland areas, anglers are visiting on average 18 times/year and spending \$2800 annually. When asked, in general, how often anglers fished, the response equated to 75 times/year (equal to 6 days out of a month). When related to the minimum cost stated per fishing trip (\$10), this would equate to a minimum investment of \$750/angler/year into Manitoba's recreational angling. The majority of anglers are making daily visits to the area but if they are staying, they prefer hotels/motels. Last years surveys preferred campgrounds so it is justifiable to state it depends on the angler from year to year.

The Duck Mountains as a whole were declared as the most favourite fishing destination. Anglers are looking to catch big/master angler fish and spend time with family/friends when heading to the Parkland. For the second year in a row, rainbow trout was the most targeted fish species.

Fisheries enhancement initiatives were highly supported both on provincial and local levels. In addition, there was a high support towards contributing to the FWEF stamp even if anglers were exempt from purchasing a license. This initiative would be something similar to other provinces where all anglers must purchase a stamp and contribute to a "fisheries initiative fund". The most common practices anglers would like seen is the continuation of fish stocking, development of new fisheries and habitat enhancement.

Increasing participants should be of utmost importance. Last years recommendation was to develop a more tailored strategy to advertise and exploit angler surveys (ie. frequent boosts, public notices). Upon execution of this recommendation, online survey numbers almost doubled (from 26 to 43). There is a strong correlation between the days online boosts occurred and the amount of surveys received and therefore should be continued for the 2018 Angler Survey. It is evident, angler input is beneficial to the fishery world. These are the eyes, the ears, the hands on the water. They are the reason organizations like, FLIPPR, SVSFE, FWEF, Parkland Paradise, etc exist. After all, "we're all in this together!" (Stokotelny, 2017)

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Acknowledgements:

A special thank you to the organizations who supported this year's survey; FLIPPR, Rural Municipality of Roblin, Parkland Paradise, Fisheries and Wildlife Enhancement Fund, Manitoba Sustainable Development - Parks, local lodges and outdoor/fishing shops. SVSFE would also like to express gratitude to those anglers who took the time to fill out angler surveys and tagged fish returns over the years. This signifies your true investment into our fisheries and we ask you to continue sharing, spread the word! We need more anglers informed on how important it is to have managers aware of what fisherman are experiencing. With significant data comes quality management. Management that will ensure sustainable and high quality fisheries for Parkland users.

2017 Online Angler Survey Winners:

- 1st - Mike Hlady (Dauphin, MB)- Helix Sonar from Sticky's Bait & Tackle
- 2nd - Darren Chmeloski (Swan River, MB) - Custom rod from North Creek Baits
- 3rd - Ross Tressel (Yorkton, SK) - \$100 Gift Certificate to Canadian Tire (Yorkton)



2017 1st Place Winner- Mike Hlady

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Appendix:

Angler Suggestions, Comments, Concerns

- Manitoba has one of the best fisheries I have experienced out of the 4 provinces I have lived in. Great job
- Not related to fishing but Lake shores are getting a mess with garbage . Need more garbage cans and enforcement
- Child's, Laurie, and East blue need more Lake trout and Splake. Really need to try tiger trout in a Lake like West Blue.
- Removal of all invasive perch from 2 mile it's destroying the trout fishing and the splake aren't keeping up
- West blue could use some more fishing docks along the hiking trail. Garbage around 2 mile is insane and needs to be cleaned up minnow tubs and beer cans everywhere. Drinking and boating is a big problem in the ducks there are certain places on blue where you can see sank beer cans and bottles all over the place and I'm sure they work as minnow traps this needs to stop before someone gets hurt as well
- "The release of water[reverse osmosis] for the Town of Roblin...Why couldn't it be released, after the lakes start to algae up. Rather than early, which imo causes a premature turnover. Hence shutting down fishing.imo the release caused the poor fishing in the Bug chucker & the Nationals. Which as you know is why people travel thousands of miles to attend..I have heard that this is a reg. practice, with records showing the release dates etc. How about trying a release later on .After the tournaments & the peak spring /summer fishing. That extra water may actually benefit the fish, more oxygenated water. The algae blooms are going to happen. Why preload the lakes. When all those efforts went into getting people to the area... I & friends 10 of us this year pretty well all left after the lakes[goose],turned to slime..."
- BROKEN PIPE LAKE
- One concern is people parking at or on the boat launch. More education and enforcement of existing legislation. More access to the lakes with paths built for someone to walk around lakes like the one around West Goose. Overall very happy with my fishing experiences in the Parkland.
- Develop black crappie fishery, same with small and largemouth bass
- I hadn't found your website in the past, but now with it I will definitely be fishing each time I come to Swan River. We are actually planning to move to the area
- Really happy with the efforts put forward
- Keep up the great work
- Introduction of Large Mouth Bass in the Parkland Region
- Parkland region is a fishery unlike any other in the province. I feel its only missing two species at the moment, muskellunge (I hear stocking has started tho!) and large mouth bass, a bass lake would compliment the area so well I think with that it would be the ultimate angling destination area! Thanks for your time
- The Parklands are a gem
- NO PROBLEMS
- Would like to see Gass Lake in the porcupines turned into a catch and release only. Its a very good sport fishing lake but it's to small to keep producing trout for these large groups that come once a year for a week and fish it hard

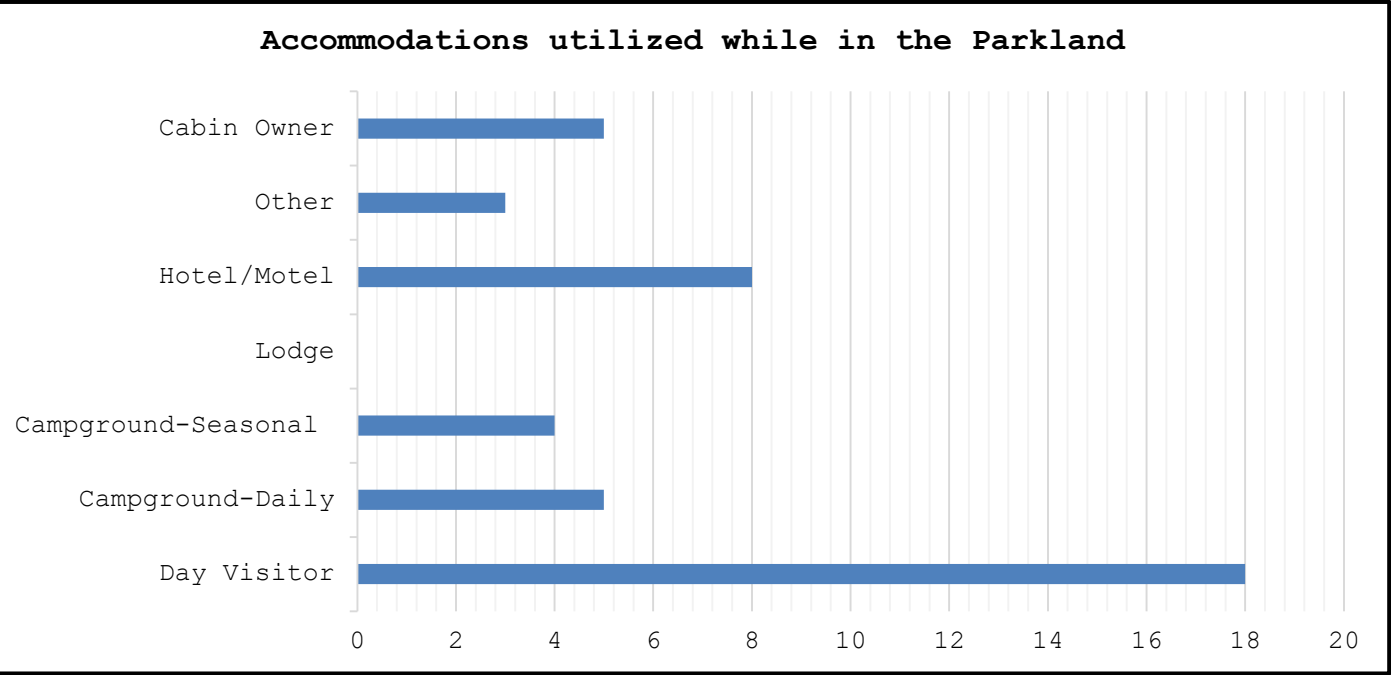
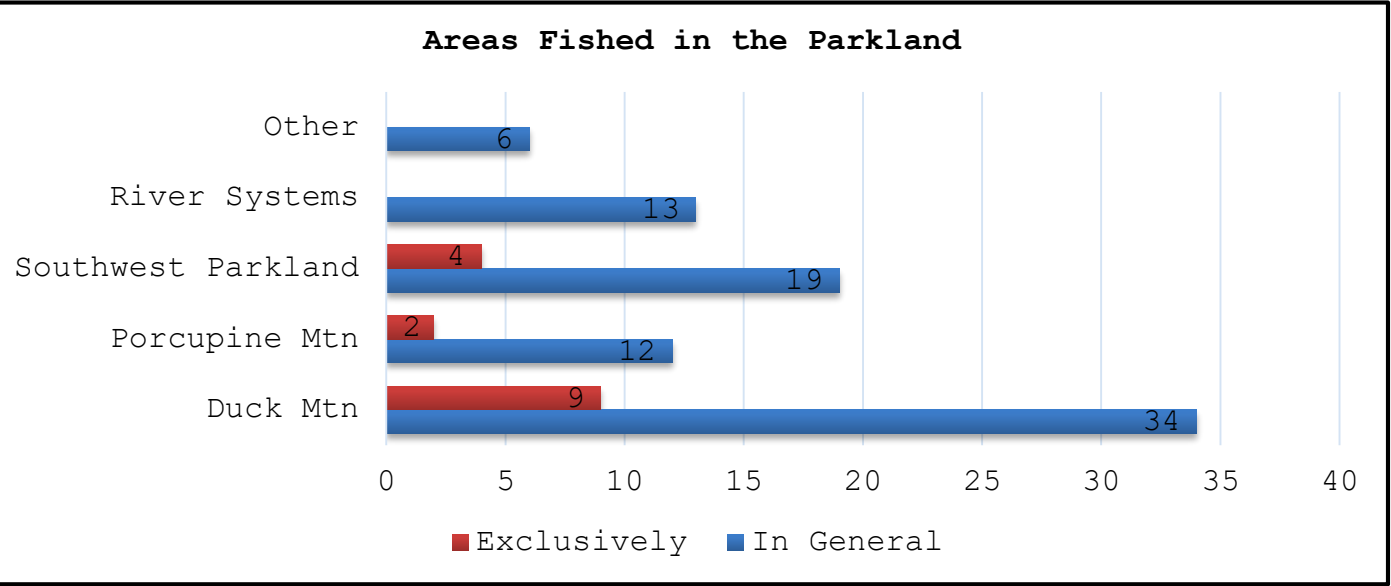
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Appendix: Angler Suggestions, Comments, Concerns Cont'd

- Adult Fish Enhancement Camps, Eco tourism opportunities/ planned trips with knowledgeable people
- Research natural recruiting trout streams, and developing and stocking new trout streams. Especially brown and rainbow trout. Make available stocking reports or documents/analysis of prior stocked trout in ie. Shell River, Big Boggy, etc.
- Splake stocking. If possible and funds available, fewer gaps in the stocking of splake
- Create more of a smallmouth bass fishery
- I love the dedication of the SVSFE and very much appreciate their work!
- Would like to see some large mouth bass lakes and black crappie lakes
- Develop black crappie fishery
- Just continue doing more of what's already being done (very good!)
- I hope Singush Lake gets cleared of Zebra Mussels. It has always been one of my favourite lakes to fish at. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!
- Keep pike out of Vini lake to help lake trout population can grow
- Great fishing, many species in small area!!
- Black crappie fishery
- I would like to see a slot size for Walleye implemented on West Blue Lake, I personally seen massive breeder Walleye slaughtered daily by seasonal campers at East Blue Lake Seasonal sites. By way of (Spear Fishing) This needs to be stopped people fish West Blue for not only Brook trout but for the giant Walleye in this beautiful lake it is an absolute shame that this is happening here. needs to stop ! or cancel spear fishing in this lake !
- Stock more Albino Trout, Brood Stock male Rainbow Trout, Protect the Walleye at West Blue Lake, Stock more Trout and Bass at Perch Lake for kids to catch, No gas motors on East Blue lakes and Jet Ski's it puts the fish in danger of pollution
- Better access to lakes also user friendly docks for elders
- I would like to see some modifications to docks that maybe have hand rails etc. I have seen and helped elders who have a difficult time getting in and out of their boats at docks. you guys do great work!! Keep it up
- STOCK TIGER TROUT IN WEST BLUE OR 2 MILE
- In my opinion, without the efforts of SVSFE the fishing in the Duck Mtns would be non existent. The government does nothing to enhance the fishing experience in the Ducks. It appears to me that the governments attitude is to discourage the public from enjoying the Duck Mtns and the fishing/outdoor experience. WELL DONE TO SVSFE
- The Duck Mtn park is one of the best 'natural' parks anywhere! Glad to see the removal of invasive species ie mullets from these pristine waters

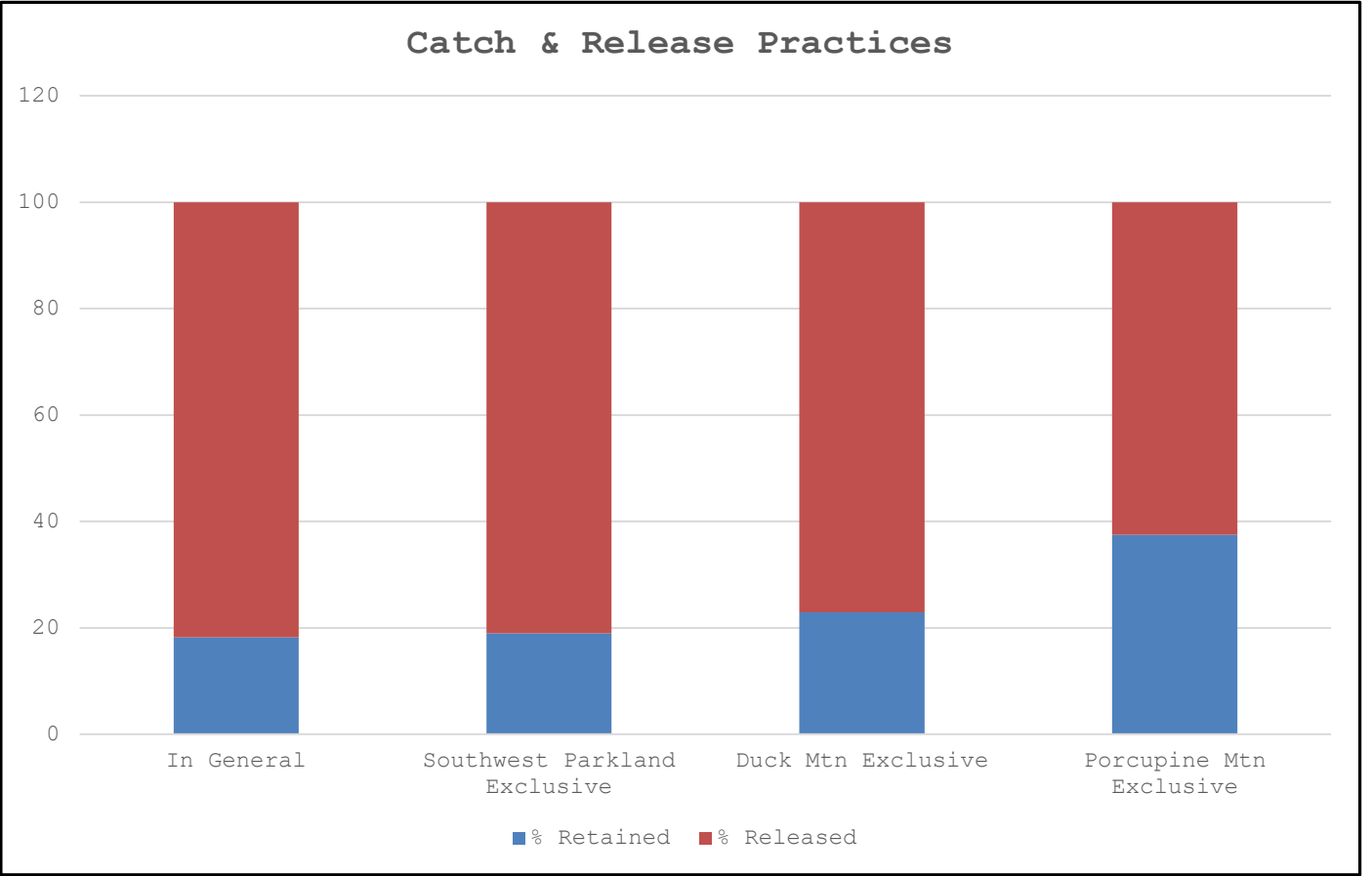
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Appendix: 2017 Daily Catch Submissions

Date	Location	Fished From	Fished To	Hours Fished	# of Anglers	Quality (1-10)	Method	# Fish Caught/Hr	Catch Details: Species, # Caught, # Released, Size of Fish, Comments
09/06/2017	East Blue Lake	8:30 AM	12:30 PM	4	1		Boat	1.0	Rainbow trout, 2 caught, 2 retained, 15, 16"
07/06/2017	West Blue Lake	7:00 PM	8:30 PM	1.5	2		Boat	4.0	Brook trout, 6 caught, 2 retained, 1 master 22"
24/05/2017	East Blue Lake	8:30 AM	12:15 PM	3.75	1		Boat	2.4	Rainbow trout, 6 released 18" 22", 3 retained, 17/18"
25/05/2017	East Blue Lake	9:00 AM	1:00 PM	4	1		Boat	2.0	Rainbow trout, 5 released 17/18", 3 retained 16/17/18"
23/05/2017	East Blue Lake	9:00 AM	1:00 PM	4	1		Boat	1.0	Rainbow trout, 2 released 16, 17", 2 retained 16, 17"
26/05/2017	East Blue Lake	8:30 AM	1:00 PM	4.5	1		Boat	0.4	Rainbow trout, 1 released 18", 1 retained 14"
05/05/2017	West Blue Lake	12:30 PM	5:15 PM	4.75	2	10	Boat	1.5	Nice Brookies, caught 7 and had several good hits, fished south end, biggest fish was 19.5 inches, one 18, other 5 were 15 and 16 inch.
05/05/2017	Two Mile	11:00 AM	5:00 PM	6	2	7	Boat	1.0	4 perch, 1 small brookie ("13"), and 1 splake (21.5"). The splake made the trip. Other locals had two large trout (1 splake, 1 brr) on a stringer.
07/05/2017	West Blue Lake	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	8	2	10	Boat	3.1	Landed approx. 25 brookies, lost many more. All fish 10"-16", no huge ones landed.
05/11/2017	Laurie Lake	8:00 AM	12:30 PM	4.5	2	8	Boat	0.4	Splake 24", Brown trout 20", both released
23/05/2017	Persse Lake	12:00 PM	5:00 PM	5	1	5	Boat	1.2	6 small to medium perch all released
10/06/2017	Persse Lake	9:00 AM	1:00 PM	4	2	5	Shore	25.3	Brook Trout: caught 1: it was released (size: approximately 10") Perch: caught probably 100 or more: 15-20 kept (size 11-12") the rest released (10" or smaller)
04/07/2017	Corstiphine Lake	6:30 PM	9:30 PM	3	1	6	Boat	1.0	3 18" rainbows, released
24/06/2017	Wellman Lake	11:30 PM	2:30 PM	3	1	10	Other	6.3	All 19 fish were Smallmouth. Size ranged from 11 inches to 18.5. Several fish in the 16.5 to 17.5 range. Probably the best Bass fishing I have ever experienced.
22/06/2017	Two Mile	12:00 PM	4:30 PM	4.5	1	1	Boat	0.9	Many, many perch and 4 small Rainbows.
14/08/2017	Laurie Lake	7:00 AM	4:00 PM	9	2	6	Boat	0.6	4 Lake trout between 25-30 inches 1 brown trout 24 inches all released
16/07/2017	Cross Lake	4:00 PM	9:00 PM	5	2	6	Other	2.0	8 jack fish between 28-32 inches all released 2 walleye 17 3/4 kept
03/09/2017	Elk Lake	3:00 PM	6:30 PM	3.5	2	3	Boat	1.4	All 5 jack fish between 15-20 inches, extremely shallow lake the deepest spot marked on the fish finder was 6 feet all fish released
27/08/2017	Pine River	11:00 AM	2:45 PM	3.75	2	10	Other	2.1	brook trout, 8 caught, 5"-12", WADED DOWN THE RIVER FISHING THE RAPIDS AND POOLS WITH 4LB LINE AND A FLY WATER WASNT TOO HIGH AND THE WEATHER WAS GREAT
12/10/2017	Laurie Lake	9:00 AM	1:00 PM	4	2	8	Boat	1.0	1 Splake 24 inch male, 3 Lake trout 22-24 inches, all released
14/10/2017	Laurie Lake	8:00 AM	8:30 PM	12.5	1	8	Boat	0.5	Laker: 1 caught, released, approx. 23", very light colouration and full of fight, Splake: 5 caught, 21" female, 22", 22.5", 23.5", 24.25" males, all released, the biggest male was gorgeous, red bellied, nice fins with white leading edges. Was able sight fish to almost each fish. Even came across of browns fanning beds in deeper water 10-12 feet. Amazing clarity in Laurie. Splake are an awesome fish. Please continue to stock these fish!
24/10/2017	Vini Lake	3:00 PM	7:30 PM	4.5	4	8	Boat	2.7	2 Lake trout (23", 21") Released 10 pike: sizes (One 39.5", and rest were 16", 25") released all.