

The Business of Fishing: Use and Satisfaction of Anglers on a Large Reservoir

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Fisheries management is shaped not only by ecology, but by politics, economics and sociocultural beliefs. Understanding the attitudes, desires and interests of user groups is the primary motivation for fisheries management. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) strives to produce angler satisfaction ratings of 70% satisfied or better on Lake Oahe on the Missouri River; the state's prime walleye fishery. Satisfaction ratings have ranged from 65-89% over the last five years. Although the fishery on Lake Oahe typically meets or exceeds objectives set by GFP, factors influencing satisfaction ratings are poorly understood. We used results from standardized angler satisfaction surveys completed on Lake Oahe from 2001-2012 to identify assess factors that drive satisfaction ratings. Ordinal logistic regression was used to build a set of a priori models and Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC) was used to rank fitted models. Preliminary results indicate that walleye catch rates and number of walleye harvested are positively correlated to angler satisfaction. Anglers fishing in a party were more likely to be satisfied than solo anglers. Understanding factors that influence satisfaction ratings is important when developing and fostering support for management strategies.