

STUDY PERFORMANCE REPORT

State: Michigan

Project No.: F-80-R-6

Study No.: 230487

Title: Performance, survival and production of steelhead strains in tributaries of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron.

Period Covered: October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005

Study Objectives: To evaluate strain performance of winter (Michigan) and summer (Skamania) strains of steelhead. To evaluate the performance of steelhead in six rivers, Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. To evaluate returns of steelhead from upstream and downstream plants in rivers. To describe year-to-year variation in growth and survival of steelhead populations in Michigan. To define the quality, condition, and health of different strains and batches of hatchery-produced fish.

Summary: We completed the stocking of steelhead with coded-wire tags (CWTs) for this study in 1999. Study fish have been being recovered through volunteer angler returns, Great Lakes and river creel clerks, headhunters hired to look for study fish, and by Michigan Department of Natural Resources personnel conducting assessment work for other studies. CWTs were collected from the river fisheries by part-time personnel in 1998. Full river creel surveys have been conducted from 1999 until 2005 on the Muskegon, Manistee and St. Joseph rivers. A full creel survey was also conducted on the Au Sable River in 1999 and 2000. Tags have been collected through 2005, though numbers are low in the last year around 20 fish. As indicated in the 2005-06 amendment, a final report/draft manuscript will be submitted by December 31, 2006.

Findings: Only Job 8 was scheduled for 2004-05, and progress is reported below.

Job 8. Title: Analyze data and write report.—As indicated in the 2005-06 amendment, a final report/draft manuscript will be submitted by December 31, 2006. The extension will allow time to coordinate, obtain, and integrate feedback from managers regarding steelhead management plans. Additionally, staffing cutbacks and an increased workload from duties related to court mandates (i.e., work on lake trout regulation changes, treaty modeling, and revising growth and lamprey estimation procedures for Lake Michigan), have reduced time available for writing the final report in 2005, as planned. The extension will also result in a more thorough report that is well integrated with management processes and incorporates information from related studies. This manuscript will be submitted for publication to the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society during the 2006-07 cycle.

Prepared by: Jory Jonas

Date: September 30, 2005