

Standard Methods for Sampling North American Freshwater Fishes

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Standardization in industry, medicine and science has led to great advances. However, despite its benefits, freshwater fish sampling is generally unstandardized, or at most standardized locally. Standardization across large regions would allow for measurement of large-scale effects of climate or geography on fish populations; larger sample sizes to evaluate management techniques; reliable means to document rare species; easier communication; and simpler data sharing. With increased interaction among fisheries professionals worldwide, reasons for wide-scale standardization are more compelling than ever. The Fish Management Section of the American Fisheries Society in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, USGS Cooperative Research Units Program, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, AFS Education and Computer User's Sections, and Arizona Game and Fish Department is developing a book of standard sampling methods for North America. Almost 50 United States, Canadian and Mexican fish sampling experts are authors. *Standard Methods for Sampling North American Freshwater Fishes* describes standard methods to sample fish in specific environments so population indices can be more easily compared across regions and time. Environments include ponds, reservoirs, natural lakes, streams and rivers containing cold and warmwater fishes. This book provides rangewide and regional averages; calculated from over 4000 data sets from 42 states and provinces; of size structure, CPUE, growth, and condition for common fishes collected using methods discussed. Biologists can use these data to determine if fish from their waterbody are below, above, or at average for an index. These methods were reviewed by 54 representatives from 33 North American agencies and by biologists from seven European and one African countries. Final drafts were reviewed by an additional 36 sampling experts. These procedures will be useful to those hoping to benefit from standard sampling programs in their regions.

This book will also provide other information necessary to standard sampling programs such as how to convert nonstandard to standard data; statistical and database procedures for standard sampling, and methods to prevent transfer of invasive species while sampling.

This book is in its final draft and will then be published by the AFS Books program. It has generated a considerable amount of attention throughout North America and even Europe. Be on the lookout for its release!