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Information Brief

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Natural Resources and Management in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan

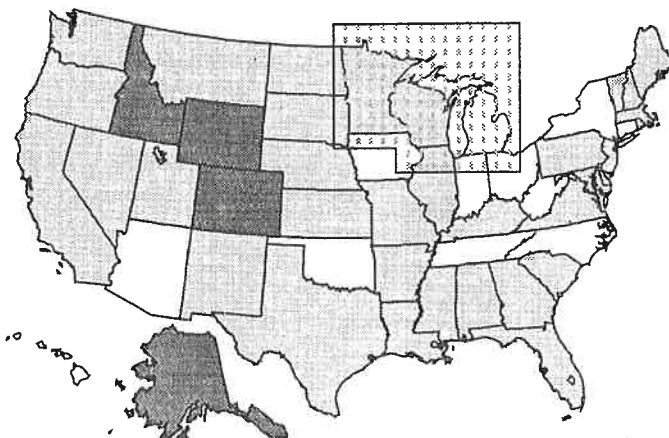
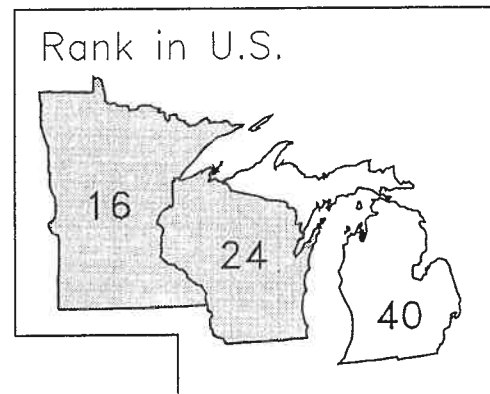
Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, the three upper midwest Great Lakes states, have similar political, economic and cultural characteristics, as well as common natural resources, such as minerals and forests, water bodies and recreation areas.

This information brief identifies both the similarities and some of the differences among the three state's natural resources. The brief focuses on resource management by their respective Departments of Natural Resources (DNRs).

Percent of State Budgets Used for Environmental Expenditures, FY 1991

This map shows how states compare with one another in the percent of their total budget that is devoted to environmental expenditures. The inset shows the rank of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan on this statistic, compared to all states.

Table 2 on the back page gives the actual percent for each state.






-  Above average
3 to 5.79%
-  Average
1 to 3%
-  Below average
0.62 to 1%

Table 1a

Natural Resources and Management in Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin

	Minnesota	Wisconsin	Michigan
Profile			
State Area (Square Miles)	84,068	56,138	96,791
State Population (1990 Census)	4,375,099	4,891,769	9,295,297
Natural Resources			
Miles of Great Lakes Shoreline	135 miles	860 miles	3,288 miles
Number of Lakes (over 10 acres)	15,291	14,974	11,000
Acres of Lakes	4,907,898	1,274,223	785,837
Number of Stocked Lakes	1,175	700 (estimate)	285
Number of Major River Basins	9	28	67
Miles of Rivers and Streams	92,000 miles	43,773 miles	36,350 miles
Miles of Trout Streams	2,600 miles	9,560 miles	17,000 miles
Acres of Wetlands	7.5 million acres	5.3 million acres	6.2 million acres
State-owned Percentage of Timbered Land	19% (2.7 million acres)	4% (.57 million acres; counties own 2.3 million acres)	20% (3.8 million acres)
DNR Budget and Staff			
Fiscal Year Budget (exclusive of bonding)	\$194,524,000 (1993) (DNR only)	\$326,556,552 (1992) (includes pollution control responsibilities)	\$336,513,100 (1992) (includes pollution control responsibilities)
Number of DNR Employees	2,100 Permanent	2,988 Permanent (including employees with pollution control duties)	2,700 Permanent (including employees with pollution control duties)
	700 Seasonal	No seasonal figures	300 Seasonal
Per Capita Expenditures	\$44	\$67	\$36
Conservation Officers	188	182	237

Highlights of Table 1a

Profile

Michigan has almost double the population of either Minnesota or Wisconsin and has a larger land area. Of the three states, however, Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources owns the greatest number of land acres and manages more total natural resource areas.

Natural Resources

In what may be a revelation for Minnesotans and non-Minnesotans alike, Minnesota has 15,000 lakes over ten acres in size. Wisconsin has almost 15,000 lakes of the same size. Minnesota has much more lake acreage than either Wisconsin or Michigan.

Minnesota stocks nearly double the number of lakes as Wisconsin and more than four times as many as Michigan. Minnesota raises and hatches almost one-half of all the walleyes on the North American continent.

DNR Budget and Staff

Michigan has the largest overall resource budget, but it is important to note that the Michigan and Wisconsin budget figures include their pollution control expenditures. Minnesota's figure only reflects the DNR expenditures. As a result, Minnesota's per capita expenditures, for natural resources alone, are quite high compared to Wisconsin's and Michigan's.

Table 1b

Natural Resources and Management in Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin

	Minnesota	Wisconsin	Michigan
Natural Resource Areas Managed by the DNR			
Acres of Land Owned by DNR	5,300,000	1,960,459	4,455,182
State Parks and Recreation Areas (attendance)	67 (8,000,000)	45 (14,648,964)	93 (22,000,000)
State Forests	57	9	6
State Trails	Summer: 3,672 miles (hiking, horse, biking) Winter: 15,963 miles (cross country skiing, snowmobiling)	2,875 miles (hiking, horse, biking) 1,468 miles (cross country skiing, snowmobiling)	1,013 miles (hiking, horse) 200 miles (cross country skiing plus 83,000 sq. mi. open to snowmobiles)
State Fish Hatcheries	21	14	6
Wildlife Management Areas	1,150	366	52 plus 44 mini-game areas
Natural Areas	101	275	36
Designated Canoe and Boating Routes	20 (3,550 miles)	No formal system of designation	No formal system of designation
Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers	7 (589 miles)	4 (139 miles)	14 (1,700 miles)
Public Access Sites	2,321	No state program (run by counties)	700
Recreation Licensing			
Number of Hunting Licenses	835,586	1,011,270	2.1 million
Number of Fishing Licenses	1,567,000	1,187,486	1.7 million
Number of Boats	714,806 licensed	501,917	726,239 registered

Highlights of Table 1b

Natural Resource Areas Managed by the DNR

Minnesota has fewer permanent employees than either Wisconsin or Michigan. Minnesota's DNR owns almost 2,000 acres for every DNR employee (permanent and seasonal)—a much higher ratio than Wisconsin and somewhat higher than Michigan.

Minnesota clearly has the most DNR-owned acres of the three states, ranking fourth among all states nationally.

Minnesota has many more designated wildlife management areas than Wisconsin or Michigan. It also has a category—designated canoe and boating routes—that the other states do not have. These routes involve land acquisition, management of campgrounds, and public access availability.

A 1987 House Research information brief also compared the three state's natural resources management efforts. Six years later Minnesota has changed as follows:

- ▶ The DNR budget has grown by \$76 million
- ▶ The number of permanent DNR employees has increased by 500
- ▶ Minnesota has three more state parks, four additional fish hatcheries, 180 more wildlife management areas, and has doubled the number of natural areas to 101
- ▶ Perhaps the most dramatic changes are in state trail miles—an increase of 17,500 miles (summer and winter)—and public water access, an increase of 2,221 sites

Recreation Licensing

Although Minnesota has much DNR-owned land and many wildlife management areas, it sells significantly fewer hunting licenses than Wisconsin or Michigan. Minnesota ranks second in the nation, after Michigan, in the number of boats registered per capita.

Additionally, Minnesota charges a public trail fee for cross-country skiers; Wisconsin does the same for bicyclists on state trails.

Table 2

Percent of State Budgets Used for Environmental Expenditures Budget, FY 1991

Rank	State	Percent	Rank	State	Percent
1	Alaska	5.79	26	Virginia	1.31
2	Wyoming	5.53	27	Arkansas	1.29
3	Idaho	3.55	28	South Carolina	1.27
4	Colorado	3.22	29	Maryland	1.22
5	Vermont	2.90	30	New Mexico	1.19
6	North Dakota	2.83	31	Rhode Island	1.17
7	Missouri	2.78	32	Kentucky	1.16
8	Montana	2.42	33	Massachusetts	1.16
9	California	2.38	34	Kansas	1.12
10	Oregon	2.28	35	Pennsylvania	1.07
11	South Dakota	2.21	36	Georgia	1.06
12	New Hampshire	2.05	37	Texas	1.06
13	Louisiana	1.97	38	Alabama	1.02
14	Utah	1.84	39	Iowa	.97
15	Delaware	1.83	40	MICHIGAN	.91
16	MINNESOTA (DNR Only)	1.74 (1.1)	41	New York	.90
17	New Jersey	1.70	42	Tennessee	.88
18	Maine	1.66	43	Hawaii	.84
19	Illinois	1.63	44	Oklahoma	.83
20	Nevada	1.61	45	West Virginia	.79
21	Washington	1.58	46	North Carolina	.75
22	Florida	1.51	47	Arizona	.73
23	Mississippi	1.51	48	Indiana	.67
24	WISCONSIN	1.44	49	Ohio	.64
25	Nebraska	1.35	50	Connecticut	.62

Source: The Council of State Governments, Resource Guide to State Environmental Management, 1993