

Review and Comparison of Fishing, Hunting and Trapping License Fee Structures in Upper Midwestern States



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About this Report

As part of the 2015-2017 State Budget, Wisconsin's legislature directed the Department of Natural Resources to consult with stakeholders and prepare a report to the Joint Committee on Finance on a plan to address an imbalance in the state's Fish and Wildlife Account. The department's Social Science Team has gathered, compiled and synthesized social and economic information to help inform the department's efforts in response to this legislative directive. This report is one of a series of documents prepared by the team to provide objective, policy-relevant information. This report presents specific study findings, interprets the information within pertinent contexts, and may identify potentially useful lines of additional inquiry. This report does not, however, include specific recommendations or policy prescriptions.

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Review and Comparison of Fishing, Hunting and Trapping License Fee Structures in Upper Midwestern States

Introduction

This report provides an inventory and comparative analysis of recreational (non-commercial) fishing, hunting and trapping licensing and fee structures in Wisconsin and surrounding Upper Midwestern states including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota. An addendum provides information for Missouri and Ohio. For the purposes of comparison, license fees here forth discussed, unless otherwise noted, refer to fees for adult (18-65 years old), United States citizen, able bodied, non-veteran civilians. License fees, structures and regulations discussed in this report are from the 2015 season unless otherwise noted. Average license costs are provided for comparative purposes only when licenses are similar enough to warrant comparison across multiple states. Also note that the following comparisons do not necessarily imply equal angling or hunting experiences. Costs presented are those associated with granting an angler or hunter licensure or necessary tags/permits, and thus only convey the comparative cost of obtaining the privilege to fish, hunt or trap in a particular place; all states in this study use different population management techniques, harvest dates (season structures) and bag limits, and have natural variability in species populations based on geographic location and other factors, which all have differential impacts on the subjective quality of the outdoor experience.

Contents

- Review of Upper Midwest State Fishing License Fees..... 2
- Review of Upper Midwest State Hunting License Fees..... 5
 - White-tailed Deer*..... 5
 - Big Game*..... 8
 - Wild Turkey*..... 8
 - Small Game and Birds*..... 10
- Review of Upper Midwest State Trapping License Fees..... 12
- License Fee Packages and Value..... 13
- Additional Observations..... 16
- Sources Consulted..... 16
- Supplementary Material..... 17
- Addendum: Review and Comparison of Fishing, Hunting and Trapping License Fee Structures in Missouri and Ohio..... 19

Review of Upper Midwest Fishing License Fees

Fees for resident fishing licenses in Wisconsin are comparable to prices charged in surrounding Midwestern states. Annual, individual, resident fishing licenses are available in all six states. As seen in Table 1, they range \$15-\$27, averaging \$20.00, the amount which Wisconsin charges for this license. All states in the study also offer 24-hour fishing licenses. Wisconsin's 24-hour, individual, resident fishing license (\$8.00) is \$0.67 less than the average cost among the study states (\$8.67). Similarly, the annual combo resident fishing license (an annual fishing license for a legally married couple) is \$4.00 less in Wisconsin than Minnesota (\$35.00 in Minnesota vs. \$31.00 in Wisconsin).

Table 1

Base Fishing Licenses *								
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI	Average	WI v. Avg.
Resident Licenses								
Annual Individual	\$15.00	\$17.00	\$19.00	\$27.00	\$22.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$0.00
24-Hour Individual	\$5.50	\$9.00	\$9.50	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$8.00	\$8.67	-\$0.67
2-7 days Individual	-	-	\$13.50	\$30.00	\$12.00	-	-	-
Combo (married)	-	-	-	-	\$35.00	\$31.00	\$33.00	-\$2.00
3 year	-	-	\$53.00	-	\$63.00	-	-	-
Lifetime	\$435.00	-	\$52.50	-	\$335-508	-	-	-
Nonresident Licenses								
Annual individual	\$31.50	\$35.00	\$41.00	\$69.00	\$45.00	\$50.00	\$45.25	\$4.75
24-Hour Individual	\$10.50	\$9.00	\$10.50	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$10.33	-\$0.33
3-4 day	\$15.50	-	\$17.50	\$30.00	\$32.00	\$24.00	\$23.80	\$0.20
7-15 day	-	\$20.00	\$32.00	-	\$38.00	\$28.00	\$29.50	-\$1.50
15 day Family	-	-	-	-	\$48.00	\$40.00	\$44.00	-\$4.00
Annual Family	-	-	-	-	\$60.00	\$65.00	\$62.50	\$2.50
Lifetime individual	-	-	-	-	\$702-1054	-	-	-

* May not include fish species which require additional licensing, tags or stamps for harvest.

“\$0.00” indicates the sporting opportunity is available, regulated through a permit or included in another license, but has no associated fee.

“-“ indicates the license or permit is not available.

Fees for nonresident fishing licenses in Wisconsin are also comparable to prices charged in surrounding Midwestern states. Annual, individual, nonresident fishing licenses range \$31.50-\$69.00 in the study states, averaging \$45.25. The annual, individual, nonresident fishing license costs \$50.00 in Wisconsin; it is \$4.75 higher than the average. The range of prices for annual, individual, nonresident fishing licenses is the widest of any fishing license type offered in all six states, the cheapest being half of the most expensive license. The wide spread can be partially attributed to the fact that Michigan's \$69 annual nonresident fishing license is an all-species-encompassing license package, including fish types (e.g., salmon, trout, sturgeon, muskellunge), which anglers are required to purchase stamp, tag or license privileges for in other states, in addition to their base fishing licenses. The price differential may also be explained in part by the natural differences in species and opportunity availability that exist across states. The 24-hour nonresident licenses range \$9.00-\$12.00, averaging \$10.33. Wisconsin's 24 hour nonresident license is \$10.00, \$0.33 lower than the average.

The cost ratio between resident and nonresident fishing license fees within each state is small. Nonresident annual individual fishing licenses are 2.05-2.56 times more expensive than annual fishing licenses for residents. In Wisconsin for example, the annual, individual nonresident license costs 2.5 times as much as the annual, individual resident license. 24-hour licenses are generally similarly priced for residents and nonresidents. Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin charge equal amounts to 1.25 more for nonresidents than residents for 24-hour fishing licenses. Illinois has the highest ratio of nonresident to resident fee for their 24-hour licenses, charging nonresidents almost twice what they charge residents. The ratio of nonresident to resident cost for 24-hour fishing licenses is higher in Wisconsin than in other states (except Michigan), however as will be later discussed, many fishing, hunting and trapping opportunities in Wisconsin are made available to nonresidents at equal opportunity as residents, whereas other states bias their drawing systems and often limit activities to residents only.

Besides offering annual and daily fishing licenses, all states in this study offer some type of short term fishing license from 72 hours to 2 weeks. The most common time increments for these short term licenses are 3-day, 7-day and 15-day license options. Illinois and Michigan offer a 3-day license only, Indiana offers a 7-day license only, and Iowa and Minnesota offer both 3-day and 7-day licenses. Similar to Iowa and Minnesota, Wisconsin offers two short term licenses: a 4-day license and a 14-day license. Wisconsin's fee for a 4-day nonresident fishing license differs from surrounding states' 3-day licenses by less than a dollar while offering an additional day. The surrounding states' 3-day, nonresident fishing licenses range \$15.50-\$32.00 (averaging \$23.80). Wisconsin's \$24.00, 4-day license is \$0.20 higher than the average of the 3-day licenses. Compared to the average cost (\$29.50) for a 7-day license in Indiana (\$20.00), Iowa (\$32.00), and Minnesota (\$38.00), Wisconsin's \$28.00, 14-day license is \$1.50 cheaper while offering an additional week of fishing license coverage. Wisconsin also offers a 24-hour fishing license 'upgrade' where the cost of a 24-hour fishing license purchased earlier in the season can be applied retroactively to the cost of an annual license purchased later in the season. An individual who decides to fish for more than one day after having brought a 24-hour license can apply the \$8 (resident) or \$10 (nonresident) to their annual, individual fishing license purchase.

Fishing for certain managed species, such as sturgeon, trout, salmon, walleye and muskellunge require additional license, tag or stamp purchases in most Midwestern states (Table 2). Trout and salmon fishing of some sort is available in all of the study states and is permitted in five out of six states through the purchase of a trout stamp as an add-on to an existing base license. Michigan allows salmon and trout fishing, but as aforementioned, does not currently require a separate purchase of any tags, stamps or licenses, as all fish species are covered under the state's base fishing license privileges. Trout stamp fees in the study states range \$6.50-\$12.50, averaging \$10.15. The price of the trout stamp in Wisconsin's falls in the middle of the range, at \$10.00 (\$0.15 less than average). Although five out of the six study states border one (or more) of the Great Lakes, Wisconsin and Illinois are the only states which differentiate between trout fishing on the Great Lakes and inland trout fishing, requiring a separate (but like priced) stamp to be purchased for each of the respective waterbodies where the angler intends to fish for trout. All stamp-requiring states, except for Iowa, charge an equal amount for trout/salmon stamps to residents and nonresidents. In Iowa, nonresidents are charged \$2.50 more than residents (\$15.00 vs. \$12.50) for trout stamps.

Wisconsin offers a unique short term trout/salmon stamp license combination, which can be particularly helpful for people who might go on one or two weekend fishing trips on the Great Lakes. Wisconsin's Two-Day Sports Fishing License (for both residents and nonresidents) costs \$14 and provides the base fishing license coverage and a Great Lakes trout/salmon stamp for the period of two days. This short term combination license, provides value to both residents and nonresidents, as they would otherwise have to pay \$10 for a Great Lakes Salmon & Trout Stamp, plus either the nonresident four day \$24.00 or

two resident 24-hour licenses for \$8 each. The Two-Day Sport Fishing License can save anglers \$12-20 for a one time Great Lakes weekend fishing trip.

In addition to regulating salmon and trout with the use of stamps, Minnesota and Wisconsin currently regulate other species of fish through additional license and tag sales. Both states offer opportunities to catch sturgeon. In Minnesota, it is permissible to catch sturgeon with a hook and line method, but they are required to be tagged with a \$5 tag at the time of harvest. In Wisconsin, sturgeon can be caught with a hook and line or by spearing during a limited season (with a limited geographic scope). The sturgeon hook and line tag costs \$23.00 for residents and \$50.00 for nonresidents, in addition to an annual fishing license. The sturgeon tag and spearing license costs \$20.00 for residents and \$65.00 for nonresidents. Although spearfishing for rough fish in Wisconsin requires the spearer to hold a general fishing license, sturgeon spearfishing is classified differently than rough fish spearing, and therefore requires the separate, license/tag, but does not require the sturgeon spearer to hold a general fishing license in addition to the sturgeon tag and spearing license. Minnesota does offer spearfishing, but not for sturgeon. The license to spearfish costs \$5 for residents and \$15 for nonresidents. To spear from a dark house on a lake in Minnesota, spear fishers also pay additional fees for rental of a shanty and for the privilege of leaving it on the lake overnight.

Minnesota also offers a voluntary Walleye Stamp for purchase (\$5.00). It is not required to fish for walleye as the trout stamp is required to fish for trout, but instead is a voluntarily purchased stamp. Sale proceeds go towards habitat and species management of walleye specifically. Minnesota's walleye stamp is the only voluntary fish habitat stamp available for purchase among the study states.

Table 2

Species-specific Fishing Licenses and Fees								
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI	Average	WI v. Avg
Resident License Fees								
Inland Trout Stamp	\$6.50	\$11.00	\$12.50	\$0.00	\$10.75	\$10.00	\$10.15	-\$0.15
Great Lakes Salmon & Trout Stamp	\$6.50	-	-	\$0.00	-	\$10.00	\$8.25	\$1.75
Sturgeon Spearing License & Tag	-	-	-	\$0.00	-	\$20.00		
Sturgeon hook & line license/tag	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$23.00		
Spear Fishing	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$5.00	-		
Walleye Stamp	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$5.00	-		
Nonresident License Fees								
Inland Trout Stamp	\$6.50	\$11.00	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$10.75	\$10.00	\$10.65	-\$0.65
Great Lakes Salmon & Trout Stamp	\$6.50	-	-	\$0.00	-	\$10.00	\$8.25	\$1.75
Sturgeon Spearing License & Tag	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$65.00		
Hook and Line Lake Surgeon/tag	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$50.00		
Spear Fishing	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$15.00	-		
Walleye Stamp	-	-	-	-	\$5.00	-		

Review of Upper Midwest State Hunting License Fees

Before comparing hunting license fees for individual species, it is important to note that the study states are split in the fundamental structure of their licensing systems. In Indiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin, hunters purchase hunting licenses and tags based on the type of game they wish to pursue, more or less in an 'ala carte' fashion (although packages are offered, as will be discussed later). For example, in any of these states (Indiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin) if a hunter wishes to hunt turkey, small game and deer, they would purchase individual licenses and associated tags or stamps for each type of game. In Illinois, Iowa and Michigan, hunters are required to purchase a base/small game hunting license plus pay a habitat fee, and then can add on any additional licenses for game they wish to pursue. A brief outline of base hunting license costs and associated habitat fees is provided below in Table 3. It is difficult to compare the total cost of any one individual hunting license across all six states in the study because of this difference. For the following comparisons of deer hunting, big game hunting, turkey hunting and small game/bird hunting in this section, licenses will be discussed as total cost of the license (including the base license and habitat fee if applicable), as if the hunter were only participating in one hunting activity. A discussion of discounts and license value will follow in the subsequent License Fee Packages and Value section of this report.

Table 3

Base License & Habitat Fee						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Residents						
Base/Small Game License Cost	\$12.50	-	\$19.00	\$12.00	-	-
Habitat Fee	\$5.50	-	\$13.00	-	-	-
Nonresident						
Base/Small Game License Cost	\$57.75	-	\$112.00	\$152.00	-	-
Habitat Fee	\$5.50	-	\$13.00	-	-	-

White-tailed Deer

Because of the varied deer management approaches in the different states, comparing both cost and opportunities for hunting white-tailed deer between them is complicated. The cost of hunting deer in each state varies based on deer population size and number of deer tags available (based on management objectives) in relationship to demand, base hunting and habitat fees, license cost, the location of hunting activity (area within a state), land type, land ownership status, weapon used for hunting and sex of deer a hunter wishes to harvest. To begin with a simplified comparison, the minimum cost for harvesting (at least) one deer (regardless of sex) with a gun deer license, including any base hunting license or habitat stamp necessary, by state, is enumerated in Table 4.

Table 4

Total Cost for Harvest of One Deer *							
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI	Avg.
Resident	\$43.00	\$24.00	\$60.50	\$32.00	\$30.00	\$24.00	\$35.58
Nonresident	\$363.25	\$150.00	\$353.00	\$172.00	\$165.00	\$160.00	\$273.04

* at least 1 deer, via firearm

Note that as aforementioned, Table 4 relates the minimum cost to hunt deer in the six study states; there may be licenses which allow a higher bag limit (e.g., the allocation of free tags in the farmland areas of Wisconsin) than others which may only initially allow the harvest of one deer with the basic license. The cost for residents to hunt for one deer is generally \$24 to \$43. Iowa is an outlier in charging a higher fee for deer hunting. At a total cost of \$60.50, Iowa requires at least \$17, and up to \$36 more than any neighboring state. Wisconsin's cost for the harvest of one whitetail is equal to the fee in Indiana. Wisconsin and Indiana have the overall lowest cost in comparison to the other states. They are below the average of \$35.58 by \$11.58.

Nonresident hunting is significantly more expensive than resident hunting in all states, costing at least five times as much as comparable resident licenses. Illinois has the highest ratio of nonresident to resident fees at 8.45:1, and Michigan has the lowest at 5.38:1. Wisconsin sits in the middle of ranges for nonresident to resident fee ratios at 6.67:1. Nonresident hunting is most expensive, and least available in Iowa. To hunt for deer in Iowa, nonresidents must submit an application and payment upfront (\$112 base hunting + \$13 habitat fee + \$228 deer hunting license) to be put into a drawing. If an applicant is not drawn, they receive a refund. Drawings are not uncommon for limited species, but paying the total cost of the license upfront is not a method used by other states in this study. Hunting a deer as a nonresident is cheapest in Indiana, where it costs \$150 total. Wisconsin is in a close second with Minnesota for being the next cheapest. Removing Illinois and Iowa, which are significantly more expensive for nonresidents to hunt deer in, the average of fees in the remaining states is \$161, just \$1 more than the price Wisconsin charges for a nonresident hunting license.

Table 5

Total Cost for Harvest of Two Deer							
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI	Avg.
Resident	\$60.50 1AO+1ES	\$65.00 1B+2AO	\$89.00 1AO+1ES	\$52.00 2Deer*	\$45.00 2Deer*	\$24.00 1B+1AO**	\$55.91
Nonresident	\$388.25 1AO+1ES	\$295.00 1B+2AO	\$551.00 1ES+1AO	\$342.00 2 Deer*	\$245.00 2Deer*	\$160.00 1B+1AO**	\$333.54

* Sex depends on hunting region, only one buck allowed maximum.

** Price of second deer tag depends on region (some areas allocate AO tags free, some charge \$12).

"AO" = Antlerless only; "ES" = Either sex; "B" = Buck

Table 5 expands the scope of Table 4 from examining the cost of hunting a single deer to the cost for two or more deer, while still limiting other cost influencing variables (e.g., weapon type or land ownership). Four of the six study states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan) offer a license upgrade, bundle or package for hunting two or more deer. The states which do not offer this additional license, Wisconsin and Minnesota, regulate the take

of additional deer through the sale (or give away) of additional tags based on unit area. Similar to conclusions drawn in Table 4, Iowa is the most expensive state in which to hunt (one or more) deer for both residents and nonresidents, and Wisconsin and Indiana are the least expensive states in which to hunt (one or more) deer for both residents and nonresidents. In terms of relative value, the difference between hunting two versus one deer is cheapest in Wisconsin – in many counties and land types in Wisconsin, two deer tags are included in the purchase of one license.

All states in this study manage deer population with some sort of tag or permit strategy. All deer which are harvested in the study states require a tag. Tags are generally allocated according to the goals for management of the deer population by region (within the state). Some states allocate tags by lottery and some sell tags until a quota is reached. Wisconsin for example, provides at least one tag with the purchase of a deer license; everyone who buys a deer hunting license gets one buck tag in Wisconsin. Then, if a hunter would like to harvest additional deer, they can purchase (or receive free, depending on location), an additional antlerless deer to be harvested by purchasing (or receiving free) doe tags.

Table 6 outlines the fees for hunting deer in the six study states. Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Minnesota require hunters to purchase weapon specific licenses. Michigan and Iowa do not require hunters to purchase a weapon specific license. Once hunters have purchased their hunting license, they may use the weapon of their choice as is permitted by the relevant laws, regulations and season times. Weapon options are similar across states except that Wisconsin does not require a muzzleloader specific license, as they are covered under the firearm license, but are used in a different season.

Table 6

Total Cost of Hunting White-tailed Deer						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Residents						
Hunting license & habitat fee	\$18	-	\$32	\$12	-	-
Gun Deer License	\$25	\$24	-	-	\$30	\$24
Muzzleloader Deer License	\$17.50	\$24	-	-	\$30	\$0
Archer Deer License	\$26	\$24	-	-	\$30	\$24
Cross Bow Deer License	\$0	\$24	-	-	-	\$24
Antlerless Deer Tags	\$17.50	\$15	\$28.50/\$13	-	\$15	\$12
1 Deer Tag (either sex)	\$20	-	\$28.50	\$20	-	-
Deer Combo Hunting License	\$42.50	\$65	-	\$40	-	-
Nonresident						
Hunting license & habitat fee	\$63.25	-	\$125	\$152	-	-
Gun Deer License	\$300	\$150	-	-	\$165	\$160
Muzzleloader Deer License	\$300	\$150	-	-	\$165	\$0
Archer Deer License	\$410	\$150	-	-	\$165	\$160
Cross Bow Deer License	\$0	\$150	-	-	-	\$160
Antlerless/bonus Deer Tags	\$25	\$24	\$228	-	\$80	\$20
1 Deer Tag (either sex)	-	-	-	\$20	-	-
Deer License Bundle	\$325	\$295	\$426	\$190	-	-

Wisconsin also differs in that it has both archery and crossbow licenses available, as well as a \$3 upgrade (not listed in Table 6). The upgrade enables the hunter to use both hunting weapons without having to pay for them both individually, costing a total of only \$27 to use both crossbow and archery licenses instead of paying for the two licenses separately (a total of \$48).

Big Game

Three states currently offer big game hunting opportunities; Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Black bear hunting is allowed in all three states for both residents and nonresidents. The price for a resident to hunt bears costs \$42-\$53.50 (see Table 7). When considering total cost (the base hunting license, the bear hunting license, and the application fee), Wisconsin has the most expensive resident license for bear hunting. Wisconsin's bear hunting license for nonresidents is also the most expensive license among the three study states with big game hunting opportunities. A bear hunting permit for a nonresident costs between \$182 in Michigan and \$255.50 in Wisconsin (Minnesota is in the middle at \$231). For both residents and nonresidents, Wisconsin recently eliminated its Class B bear license that allowed hunters to bait bears, train dogs to track bears, act as a back-up shooter and assist hunters with pursuing bears. Michigan offers an equivalent of Wisconsin's Class B bear license (not listed in Table 7) for \$15. Minnesota and Michigan offer elk hunting, but only for residents. Minnesota's elk hunting permit is much more expensive than Michigan's. Minnesota has permitted moose hunting (for residents only) in the past, but currently does not have a moose season for 2015-2016. From 2012-2014 Wisconsin and Minnesota also allowed the hunting of wolves, but do not currently have seasons for legal hunting of wolves. When wolf hunting was permitted, Wisconsin charged more than Minnesota for resident wolf hunting licenses, but less than Minnesota for nonresident licenses.

Table 7

Total Cost of Big Game Hunting						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Resident License Fees						
Elk	-	-	-	\$117.00	\$291.00	-
Bear	-	-	-	\$42.00	\$45.00	\$53.50
Wolf*	-	-	-	-	\$34.00	\$49.00
Nonresident License Fees						
Bear	-	-	-	\$182.00	\$231.00	\$255.50
Wolf*	-	-	-	-	\$254.00	\$251.00

* There was not a hunting season for wolves in Minnesota or Wisconsin in 2015; they are not currently huntable in the Midwest because they are listed as an endangered species; prices listed are from the last open season in each respective state.

Wild Turkey

All states in this study have biannual turkey hunting seasons, with one hunting season in the fall and one in the spring. Most states allow residents and nonresidents to participate in

a turkey hunt (with separate credentials per season) via a drawing for tags or permits. In Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, hunters are required to submit a \$3-\$5 application fee to obtain a permit through a drawing (Table 8). Wisconsin is at the bottom of the range, lower than both other states, charging \$3 for the application fee.

Resident turkey hunters who are selected to receive a permit/license/carcass tag (different names in different states, but refer to the same thing), spend \$5.50-\$26.00 for a license. In addition to purchasing an application and the permit/license, in Indiana and Wisconsin, hunters must also purchase a turkey stamp. This is the equivalent of what other states call their 'habitat fee', which is a requirement to hunt any species in the state. The price of a turkey stamp is \$5 in Minnesota, and is included in the cost of the \$26 license, instead of being listed as a separate line item in their purchasing system such as is the case in Indiana and Wisconsin. Comparing the cost of turkey hunting licenses alone, Minnesota's \$26, stamp-inclusive license is at the top of the range, and Illinois' \$5.50 archery license is at the low end of the range. Illinois differentiates between weapons used for hunting, charging a lower fee for use of bow and arrow than for firearms. Considering Illinois' \$15.00 gun hunting license as the more standard option, the average across the six study states for a turkey hunting permit is \$20.08. The average price for a license alone is about \$5 above Wisconsin's fee. When comparing the total cost to hunt a turkey (for residents), Wisconsin is also the lowest below the average of all six states. The total cost, including the application, tag/license and turkey stamps is \$23.25 (for a resident, for one season).

Table 8

Total Cost of Wild Turkey Hunting								
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI	Avg.	WI v. Avg.
Resident								
Base hunting license/habitat	\$18.00	-	\$32.00	\$11.00	-	-		
1 Season License/carcass tag	\$5.50 ⁺ /15.00 [^]	\$25.00	\$24.50	\$15.00	\$26.00*	\$15.00	\$20.08	-\$5.08
1 Season Application	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$4.00	\$3.00		
Turkey Stamp (annual)	-	\$6.75**	-	-	-	\$5.25		
Total cost of single wild turkey hunt	\$33.00	\$31.75	\$56.00	\$31.00	\$30.00	\$23.25	\$34.17	-\$10.92
Nonresident								
Base hunting license/habitat	\$63.25	-	\$125.00	\$152.00	-	-		
1 Season License/carcass tag	\$75.50 ⁺ /125 [^]	\$125.00	\$102.00	\$15.00	\$96.00*	\$60.00	\$87.17	-\$27.17
1 Season Application	\$25/37.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$4.00	\$3.00		
Turkey Stamp (annual)	-	\$6.75**	-	-	-	\$5.25		
Total cost of single wild turkey hunt	\$225.75	\$131.75	\$227.00	\$172.00	\$100.00	\$68.25	\$154.13	-\$85.88

+ Denotes archery license, ^ Denotes gun license; unmarked licenses make no distinction between archery or gun.

* \$5 turkey stamp included in Minnesota licenses (no option to purchase separately).

** Stamp for Indiana is an upland game bird stamp that also includes pheasant.

Although Wisconsin has more itemized costs for turkey hunters than other states, the total cost for a season of turkey hunting for both residents and nonresidents is least expensive in Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, after tags have been allocated per season, unclaimed tags or additional tags can be purchased (to harvest an additional turkey per hunter) at an additional cost of \$10 (resident)/\$15 (nonresident). Minnesota offers a similar surplus tag

sale program (\$26 resident/\$96 nonresident). In the other four states, turkey harvest is usually limited to one turkey per person, per season. Iowa, does not have a surplus tag program, and only allows nonresident turkey hunting in the spring.

Small Game and Birds

All states in this study allow hunting of small game. Due to close proximity, these Midwestern states have mostly similar small game hunting opportunities, however they do significantly differ in species hunting season length, allowable methods of take, bag limits and vary slightly in the list of animals which are allowed to be hunted with a small game license. Notably, badger, quail, porcupine, partridge, grouse, woodchuck, striped skunk, jack rabbit, sandhill crane and prairie chicken, have considerably uneven hunting opportunities across the six states.

Table 9

Total Cost of Small Game Hunting								
	IL*	IN	IA*	MI*	MN	WI	Avg.	WI v. Avg
Resident License Fees								
Small Game License	\$18.00	\$17.00	\$32.00	\$12.00	\$22.00	\$18.00	\$19.83	-\$1.83
Nonresident License Fees								
Small Game License	\$63.25	\$80.00	\$125.00	\$152.00	\$102.00	\$85.00**	\$101.21	-\$16.21

* Indicates base license fee + habitat fee.

** Wisconsin nonresident small game license does not include furbearing animals; nonresidents need to purchase a furbearer’s license to hunt furbearing animals.

To hunt small game, Indiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin require a small game license to be purchased. Illinois, Iowa and Michigan’s base licenses all include a small game license in the cost of purchase, therefore in those states the cost to hunt small game is the base license plus any habitat fees that are required for small game. The total cost (habitat fees, base licenses combined if applicable) is seen in Table 9. Iowa and Michigan bookend the range of small game licenses at respectively, \$32.00 and \$12.00. The high cost in Iowa can be attributed to the \$13 habitat fee required to hunt most species in addition to the \$19 hunting license. Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin resident, small game license fees group together in the middle in the \$17-\$22 range. Wisconsin is slightly below average for both the resident and nonresident small game hunting fees. The ratio of nonresident to resident fees for small game hunting is 3.5-4.7: 1 for all states except Michigan, where the ratio is 12.7: 1. Michigan has both the lowest resident fee and the highest nonresident fee for small game hunting.

States also offer sub-annual license options for nonresident small game hunting (see Table 10). Michigan offers a 7-day, small game license at \$80 (does not require purchase of the \$152 base license, or substitute for it – this license serves only as a small game license for one week). Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin all offer 5-day small game licenses. Wisconsin’s 5-day game license is about \$14 more than the other 5-day licenses. Minnesota’s small game 3-day license is unique in that for \$75, it allows three days of small game hunting, including waterfowl and pheasant stamps, which would otherwise cost \$15.75 (combined), plus the cost of the annual small game license (\$102).

Table 10

Nonresident 3-7 Day Small Game Licenses						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Nonresident Small Game Hunting						
Small Game 7 Day	-	-	-	\$80.00	-	-
Small Game 5 Day	\$35.75	\$31.00	-	-	-	\$55.00**
Small Game 3 Day	-	-	-	-	\$75.00 ⁺	-

* Indicates total small game hunting.

** Wisconsin nonresident small game does not include furbearing animals.

⁺ Includes waterfowl and pheasant stamp.

Certain managed species within the small game hunting license category require additional stamps, tags or permits. All hunters in these Midwestern states are required to possess a federal duck stamp from the US Department of Interior to hunt migratory ducks. Some state departments of natural resources do not sell the stamp in the department, because the stamps are federally issued. The federal stamps are sold by the United States Post Office for \$25.00. Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin facilitate the sale of the stamp by serving as a pass through for the stamp, so that hunters can purchase all of their requirements at one time and place. Wisconsin and Minnesota charge more for the federal duck stamp to offset the cost of their employees and facilitate mailing the stamp to the hunter.

Table 11

Managed Species Fees, Permits and Stamps						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Resident and Nonresident						
Federal duck stamp	-**	\$25.00	\$25.00	-**	\$27.50	\$28.00
Waterfowl Stamp (or MI Waterfowl License)	\$15.50	\$6.75	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$7.50	\$7.00
Goose permit	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4.00	\$3.00
Pheasant Stamp	\$0.00	\$6.75 [^]	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7.50	\$10.00
Sharp Tailed Grouse Application	-	-	-	\$0.00	-	\$3.00
Sand Hill Crane	-	-	\$0.00	-	\$3.00	-
Prairie Chicken*	-	-	-	-	\$27.00	-

* Only available to Minnesota residents.

** Not available through the DNR; only available through the United States Postal Service.

[^] Upland game bird stamp (includes both turkey hunting and pheasant hunting).

All six states in this study also require a state waterfowl stamp (in addition to the federal duck stamp) to be purchased for hunting waterfowl. The fee for a state waterfowl stamp ranges \$6.75 to \$15.50 with an average of \$9.79. Wisconsin's \$7 duck stamp is \$2.79 below the average of the surrounding states but still falls within the middle of the price distribution. Of the neighboring states, only Minnesota requires a goose permit as Wisconsin does. Wisconsin's goose permit is \$1 less expensive than Minnesota's permit.

Of the three states that require a pheasant stamp, Wisconsin charges the most. Indiana and Minnesota both charge under \$8, whereas Wisconsin's pheasant stamp is \$10. Illinois, Iowa and Michigan offer pheasant hunting, but do not sell individual pheasant stamps because the fee is included in their habitat stamp fees and/or base hunting fees.

Review of Upper Midwest State Trapping License Fees

Trapping is allowed and regulated in all states in this study although the species which can be legally trapped vary from state to state. In most states, including Wisconsin, only furbearing mammals can be trapped, therefore a trapping license and fur harvest license can be synonymous. Fur harvest license can also cover hunting of fur bearing animals where applicable as well. In Michigan and Iowa, for example, a fur harvest license is needed to trap because furbearers are the only trappable animals, but the fur harvest license is not called a trapping license because in addition to trapping privileges, it allows for hunting of furbearing animals as well. In most states, base or small game hunting licenses are not required to trap, however Michigan and Minnesota are exceptions. In the other base hunting license structure states, Illinois and Iowa, trappers are not required to have their base/small game license, but are still required to purchase the habitat fee.

Table 12

Trapping License Fees						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Resident						
Small game/base hunting license & habitat	\$5.50*	-	\$13.00*	\$11.00	\$22.00	-
Trapping License	\$10.50	\$17.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$23.00	\$20.00
Fur Harvest License	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22.50	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bobcat Application	-	-	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6.00
Fisher Application	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3.00
Otter Application	\$5.00	\$0.00	-	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3.00
Nonresident						
Small game/base hunting license & habitat	\$5.50*	-	\$13.00*	\$152.00	\$102.00 [^]	-
Trapping license	\$175 ⁺	\$140.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$84.00 [‡]	\$150.00
Fur Harvest License	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$202.00	\$15.00	\$183.00	\$160.00
Bobcat License	-	-	\$0.00	-	\$0.00	\$6.00
Fisher Application	-	-	-	-	\$0.00	\$3.00
Otter Application	\$5.00	\$0.00	-	-	\$0.00	\$3.00

* Only habitat fee is needed for trapping (no small game hunting license required).

[‡] Trapping is only authorized for nonresidents who are landowners.

⁺ \$175 for residents of states that allow trapping, \$250.50 for states that do not have reciprocity.

[^] Small game license required for trapping.

The basic cost of trapping for residents ranges \$16-\$35.50 in the study states (Table 12). Wisconsin is about average when the outlying cost of \$35.50 (Iowa) is not factored in. The basic cost of trapping for nonresidents ranges \$150-\$215. Wisconsin offers the cheapest nonresident trapping license of the study states, for \$150.

The structure for nonresidents of Wisconsin is slightly different than for residents though. As previously mentioned, Iowa and Michigan have a fur harvester license rather than a trapping license. The license is called a fur harvest license because some of the furbearers which can be trapped can also be hunted, and these states do not make a distinction between methods of harvest; the focus is on the fact that harvesting a furbearing animal needs to be regulated and separate from other huntable populations. Wisconsin, similar to Illinois or Indiana, however, does not separate out furbearers for their residents. Licenses required relate to the method of take, not the animal which is being harvested. For example, in Illinois and Wisconsin, coyote are considered furbearers which may be trapped or hunted. To trap a coyote, a person needs a trapping license, and to hunt with a gun, the person needs a small game hunting license.

For nonresidents, Wisconsin has a different licensing system to make a distinction between furbearer hunting and trapping licensing. The nonresident trapping license costs \$150 in Wisconsin and as for residents, allows only the trapping of furbearers. If a nonresident wishes to hunt a furbearer, they would need a fur harvester license, which costs \$160 and does not include trapping. A small game license is not needed if only furbearers are being hunted. Wisconsin is unique in making this distinction for only nonresidents.

It should also be recognized that in Wisconsin, certain nonresidents are not allowed to do trapping. Wisconsin does not allow residents of Hawaii, Minnesota or Washington, DC to trap. Iowa charges residents of these states more than residents of other states because of bans on trapping in Washington, DC and Hawaii, and because Minnesota only allows nonresidents to trap if they own property in Minnesota. Although most states do offer a discount or allow free trapping of nuisance wildlife to farmers or landowners, it is only required to be a landowner to trap in Minnesota.

Included in Table 12 above, are three species which are separately regulated, as is the case with some types of fishing and bird hunting discussed previously. Bobcats, fishers and otters have harvest limits regulated through a permit drawing system. To apply for a permit, there is an associated non-refundable fee in Wisconsin and Illinois. The prices charged for submitting an application in both Illinois and Wisconsin are equal for residents and nonresidents. Michigan and Minnesota also regulate the populations of these three species, similarly to Wisconsin and Illinois, with the use of tags, however the application for tags is free in these states. Illinois also charges an application fee for trapping otters and will be charging a \$5 application fee to trap bobcat in the 2016 season (this fee is not included in the above chart because there was no season for bobcat trapping in 2015).

License Fee Packages and Value

All states in this study give discounts to youth, elderly, disabled, military veterans and current active duty United States Military personnel, on most, if not all types of licenses including fishing, hunting, trapping and package licenses. Additionally, some states offer discounts to new hunters/anglers. Perhaps in response to decline in participation in hunting and fishing, five out of six states in this study offer a discount program for first time sportspeople. Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Minnesota offer an "apprentice license" for new hunters and anglers. Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota give a one-year discount for apprentice hunters/anglers, but with the provision that the person has to be supervised by a legally licensed adult. Indiana's apprentice licenses are not discounted. Although Wisconsin does not have an apprentice license aside from the youth licenses or learn to hunt

programs, it is unique among the states in this study in that it gives a discount for first time buyers of any license. First time hunters or anglers, or those who haven't purchased a license in over 10 years, (both residents and nonresidents) can purchase their licenses for only \$5.

In addition to encouraging new sportspeople through license discounts, Wisconsin offers more opportunities for families to participate in sporting activities together, for example by offering family and spousal license options. Of all the study states, Minnesota is the only state besides Wisconsin that offers a spousal license for fishing. In Wisconsin, kids fish free until age 16, but have to purchase a youth license at age 16-17, and an adult license at age 18. Sixteen and seventeen-year olds are eligible for a reduced rate fishing license (\$7), but they can also fish under the 15-day and annual nonresident family licenses. Minnesota also offers a similarly structured family fishing license.

Some states provide additional discounts through their lifetime or multi-year license offerings. For example Iowa and Minnesota both offer a 3-year fishing license option (for a \$5 and \$3 discount respectively). Iowa also offers a 3-year hunting/habitat combo license (see Table 13) at a \$10 discount compared to purchasing the license individually each year. Wisconsin does not offer any lifetime or multi-year licenses. In states that offer lifetime hunting and fishing licenses, cost is priced at a point for which it takes 15-25 years to realize savings (considering no annual fee increase), and are typically only offered to residents.

All six states in this study have a license package offering for residents, however Michigan and Wisconsin are the only states that offer a sports package for nonresidents, and Wisconsin is the only state to offer the comprehensive Conservation Patron's license package for nonresidents. The sports packages compared in Table 13 vary in price partially due to the fact that they combine different license privileges as follows:

- Illinois: annual base hunting, annual fishing
- Indiana: annual small game hunting, annual fishing
- Iowa: annual base hunting, habitat fee, annual fishing
- Michigan: annual base hunting, annual all species fishing license, deer combo license
- Minnesota: annual small game hunting, annual fishing
- Wisconsin: annual small game hunting, annual base fishing license, gun deer license

As seen in Table 13, the Wisconsin Sports License costs \$60 /\$275 for residents and nonresidents respectively. The Sports License package saves Wisconsin residents \$2 and nonresidents \$20 if they had to purchase the included licenses individually. The average amount of savings provided by resident sports packages is around \$4. Wisconsin's \$2 discount for a resident Sports License package is under average. Overall, Wisconsin's sports package is more expensive than most other states', but it includes gun deer hunting. The Wisconsin Sports License compares most closely with Michigan's except for that it does not include all species for fishing – additional trout or salmon stamps may be needed in Wisconsin.

The other package offered in Wisconsin is the annual Conservation Patron's license, which includes an annual fishing license, Great Lakes trout and salmon stamps, inland trout stamp, sturgeon hook and line inland license, sturgeon hook and line WI-MI license, a small game license, a pheasant stamp, a gun deer hunting license, archery and crossbow hunting licenses, a trapping license, applications for otter, fisher, spring and fall turkeys, spring and fall turkey hunting licenses, a turkey stamp, an early goose permit, an exterior or Horicon goose permit, a waterfowl stamp, an annual park sticker and annual state parks trail pass, admission to Heritage Hill State Park and an annual subscription to the *Wisconsin Natural Resources* magazine. The Conservation Patron's license provides significant savings to both residents and nonresidents, saving them respectively \$116 and \$317. Minnesota has an equivalent license (super sports license, combining fishing, gun deer hunting, small game

hunting, trout, waterfowl and pheasant stamps), but it is offered for residents only and does not include a number of licenses that are included in the Wisconsin Conservation Patron's license.

Table 13

License Packages						
	IL	IN	IA	MI	MN	WI
Resident License Packages						
Annual Sports Individual	\$26.25	\$25.00	\$47.00	\$77.00	\$38.00	\$60.00
License Value	\$27.50	\$34.00	\$51.00	\$79.00	\$44.00	\$62.00
Annual Conservation Patron	-	-	-	-	\$93.00	\$165.00
License Value	-	-	-	-	\$99.75	\$281.00
Annual Hunting/Habitat	-	-	\$30.00	-	-	-
3 year Hunting/Habitat	-	-	\$86.00	-	-	-
Nonresident License Packages						
Annual Sports	-	-	-	\$267.00	-	\$275.00
License Value	-	-	-	\$411.00	-	\$295.00
Annual Conservation Patron	-	-	-	-	-	\$600.00
License Value	-	-	-	-	-	\$917.00

Most states in this study (except for Michigan, as above mentioned) do not have package options available to bundle licenses for a discount as Wisconsin does, however the system of using a base license and habitat stamp does provide savings which Wisconsin's system does not. As discussed in the introductory hunting paragraph, states with base licenses have a built in savings mechanism for hunters who pursue multiple hunting opportunities; they can realize savings because as they purchase more types of licenses, the cost of the one-time, base license gets distributed across multiple hunting opportunities. The initial buy-in for hunting therefore becomes marginally cheaper per activity when a hunter participates in more activities in these base-license-structured states. The savings inherent in this structure benefit residents and nonresidents equally. For example, if a hunter from Illinois wanted to hunt small game in Michigan (a base license structure state) it would cost \$152 and in Wisconsin it would cost \$85. Now, when that same hunter wants to hunt wild turkey and white-tailed deer in addition to small game, it would cost \$192 in Michigan, compared to \$313.25 in Wisconsin. Although it is more expensive to hunt in states with base license structures for only one type of game, the savings inherent in the structure have large potential when multiple hunting opportunities are pursued.

Additional Observations

Some differences between the states' hunting and fishing structures beyond price which are worth noting include the differential treatment of landowners, available hunting opportunities (hunnable species) and the differences in drawings and payment structures.

In the Midwest, a significant proportion of land is held by private land owners. All of the Midwestern states compared in this report recognize a farmer or landowner's right to protect their crops or manage their land in many ways, from specific license exemptions, to discounts, to allocation of additional fishing, hunting or trapping privileges. The ways that the various state departments of natural resources apply their licensing structure (and exemptions to it, to landowners) vary state by state.

Wisconsin offers the same if not more hunting opportunities than surrounding states. Minnesota only offers one hunting opportunity for nonresidents – hunting sand hill cranes- which Wisconsin does not. Other neighboring states offer additional big game hunting opportunities (elk), but they are not made available to nonresidents. Wisconsin also offers trapping of bobcat, otter, fisher, and spearing of sturgeon, which are not offered in other states.

Due to limited availability of animals to hunt in relationship to demand for hunting those animals, states often utilize a drawing system to allocate a limited number of tags in an equitable way. Wisconsin requires a small, nonrefundable fee for submitting applications for all drawings (ex. \$4.50 bear application, \$3 turkey application, \$6.00 bobcat hunting application). Although the fee is nonrefundable, it is a relatively small amount. Applicants are not required to already have purchased their licenses – they can purchase a license if they are drawn from the applicant pool. Some states do not require an application fee at all, and yet others require licenses to be purchased upfront as part of the application fee. For example in Iowa, if you are nonresident and want to be put into a buck drawing you pay all of your hunting license fees up front - \$13 Habitat Stamp, \$112 Hunting License and \$426 (buck) or \$228 (doe). A total of up to \$551 has to be paid at once, and then people who have paid are put into the drawing. People who are not chosen in the drawing can get a refund, but it takes a week or more to get the refund. In most drawing systems, preference points are generally tracked based on how many times a person has applied ensuring an equitable chance for people (those who have been waiting longer will have a better chance). In Wisconsin, residents and nonresidents are generally on an equal level in drawings. In other states however, preference points can be bought, and residents and nonresidents are not considered in the same drawing pool. In Iowa, for example a preference point can be bought for \$50. In Illinois for example, resident deer hunting applicants are included in a first lottery, nonresidents will only be considered in the second and third lotteries (two or more months later).

Sources Consulted

State natural resource agency websites were the primary sources consulted in production of this report.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources - [2015-16 License Fees Webpage](#)

Indiana Department of Natural Resources – [2015-2016 License Fees Webpage](#)

Iowa Department of Natural Resources – [Iowa DNR Homepage](#)

Michigan Department of Natural Resources – [Licenses, applications and permits webpage](#)

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – [Licenses and vehicle registrations webpage](#)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – Guides and regulations handbooks published annually, available on the [department's website](#)

Supplementary Material

Numerous groups have completed reviews or comparisons of license fees. Although some are dated, they provide other useful comparison information. A few additional comparisons include:

National Shooting Sports Foundation: "2014 Hunting in the 50 States"
Regulation/License Review
[Available Online](#)

"2004-2015 US Fish and Wildlife Service National Hunting License Report"
[Available Online](#)

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Addendum: Review and Comparison of Fishing, Hunting and Trapping License Fee Structures in Missouri and Ohio

April 2016

This addendum provides an inventory and comparative analysis of recreational (non-commercial) fishing, hunting and trapping licensing and fee structures in Missouri and Ohio. The original comparison of six Upper Midwestern states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin) is referenced throughout the addendum. As in the primary report, license fees here forth discussed, unless otherwise noted, refer to fees for adult (18-65 years old), United States citizen, able bodied, non-veteran civilians. License fees, structures and regulations discussed in this report are from the 2015-16 season unless otherwise noted. Average costs are provided for comparative purposes only when licenses are similar enough to warrant comparison across multiple states. Information for this addendum was sourced from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) websites, hunting/fishing regulations and other publications.

Contents

Fishing License Review and Comparison	19
Hunting License Review and Comparison	21
<i>White-tailed Deer</i>	22
<i>Big Game</i>	22
<i>Wild Turkey</i>	23
<i>Small Game and Birds</i>	24
Trapping license Review and Comparison	25
License Fee Packages, Discounts and Additional Funding Sources	26
Sources Consulted	27

Fishing License Review and Comparison

Fees for both resident and nonresident fishing licenses in Missouri and Ohio are enumerated in Table 14 and Table 15. Individual, annual fishing licenses and individual, daily fishing licenses are offered in both Missouri and Ohio. The fees for annual, individual fishing licenses in Ohio (\$19 resident, \$40 nonresident) fall within the range, and near the average of prices seen in other Midwestern states: \$15-\$27, \$20 on average for a resident, and \$31-\$69, \$45.25 on average for a nonresident. In Missouri, the fee for a resident annual fishing license is below all of the other reviewed Midwestern states, at only \$12; the lowest of the original states reviewed was Illinois at \$15 for a resident annual fishing license. The price for an individual, annual nonresident license, \$42, in Missouri, is close to the average for an annual nonresident license (\$45.25) seen in the other Midwestern states.

Comparing the difference in price between resident and nonresident licenses, Ohio is similar to the other study states with a nonresident to resident fee ratio of 2.1:1. Missouri's

nonresident to resident license fee ratio is high in comparison to nonresident to resident fee ratios in the other study states; nonresident to resident fees are a ratio of 3.5:1 in Missouri.

Daily (24-hour), individual fishing licenses are offered in both states as well. Ohio's 24-hour license costs slightly more than daily licenses in five out of the six Midwestern states (the exception being Minnesota's \$12 nonresident 24-hour fishing license). Ohio's fishing license, like Michigan's, is an all species license. The Ohio license does not require additional tags for managed species (e.g. trout, walleye, sturgeon or salmon, which are managed with additional tags/permits in other states). Missouri's 24-hour, individual fishing licenses are \$7 (for both residents and nonresidents) and fall within the price range for resident, individual 24-hour licenses in the other Midwestern states, but are priced \$3 below average for the individual, 24-hour nonresident fishing licenses in other states. Of all state 24-hour, individual, nonresident fishing licenses in the Midwestern states, Missouri's is least expensive. Similar to Michigan and Indiana, Missouri and Ohio charge residents and nonresidents the same fee for a 24-hour, individual fishing license.

Unlike places like Wisconsin or Minnesota, Missouri and Ohio do not offer family or married/couple combo licenses, they offer individual licenses only. Missouri does however, have an individual lifetime, individual fishing license offer available. The fee for this license is tiered based on age, from \$35-\$400.

Table 14

Fishing Licenses		
	MO*	OH
Resident Licenses		
Annual Individual	\$12	\$19
24-Hour Individual	\$7	\$11
2-7 days Individual	-	-
Combo (married)	-	-
3 year	-	-
Lifetime	\$35-400	-
Nonresident Licenses		
Annual individual	\$42	\$40
24-Hour Individual	\$7	\$11
3-4 day	-	\$19
7-15 day	-	-
15 day Family	-	-
Annual Family	-	-

Table 15

Species-specific Fishing Licenses and Fees		
	MO	OH
Resident License Fees		
Trout Stamp	\$7	-
Great Lakes Salmon & Trout Stamp	-	-
Sturgeon Spearing License & Tag	-	-
Sturgeon hook & line license/tag	-	-
Spear Fishing	-	-
Walleye Stamp	-	-
Nonresident License Fees		
Trout Stamp	\$7	-
Great Lakes Salmon & Trout Stamp	-	-
Sturgeon Spearing License & Tag	-	-
Hook and Line Lake Surgeon/tag	-	-
Spear Fishing	-	-
Walleye Stamp	-	-

*May not include fish species which require additional licensing, tags, or stamps for harvest, i.e., Trout.
 "\$0.00" indicates a permit is required which is free or included in another license (has no associated fee).
 "-" indicates the license or permit is not available or not needed.

Regarding 24-hour, individual fishing licenses, Ohio offers a system for 'upgrading' licenses to annual licenses similar to Wisconsin. After the purchase of a 24-hour, individual fishing license, anglers can 'upgrade' their license to an annual license by applying the \$11 cost of their 24-hour license as a credit to the price of an annual license. Residents and nonresidents alike can take advantage of this credit.

All six states in the original review offer some type of multi-day, sub-annual licenses (usually targeted at nonresident anglers). Missouri does not offer a multi-day, sub-annual license for any anglers. Similar to the previously reviewed states, Ohio offers a 3-day license for \$19 for nonresidents only. Compared to the other four states offering a 3-day license, the \$19 fee in Ohio is in the middle of the \$15.50-\$32 range, below the \$23.80 average.

In addition to offering the 24-hour and 3-day licenses, Ohio offers one other unique short term license—not seen in any other state in the study: the Lake Erie Charter 1-day fishing license for \$11. Although the price and fishing privileges are equivalent to the 24-hour, individual fishing license, the Lake Erie Charter 1-day fishing license is different in that it is geared towards tourists taking a trip via a charter. Given that a trip may be canceled or rescheduled at any time due to a number of factors (weather being one), the Charter 1-day license allows the holder to have the license until it is validated for one day. This provides some flexibility for the license holder to purchase the license ahead of time, without necessarily using it on the day of purchase.

Missouri also offers a unique license, the Discount White River Border Lakes Permit, which offers a type of reciprocity to anglers from Arkansas on adjoining waters. Arkansas residents with valid Arkansas fishing licenses can fish (excluding trout fishing) on the bordering lakes outlined in Missouri’s fishing regulations handbook for \$10 rather than the full \$42 nonresident license.

As seen in Table 15, Missouri requires the purchase of a permit to fish for trout. In comparison to trout fee/license/permit/stamps offered in other Midwestern states, the \$7 trout permit in Missouri is inexpensive. The only trout stamp less expensive is the \$6.50 trout stamp in Illinois. Trout stamp/permits in the other four study states requiring stamps range \$10-15. Ohio and Michigan do not require purchase of an additional stamp or permit for trout fishing.

Hunting License Review and Comparison

Similar to Illinois, Iowa and Michigan, Ohio requires the purchase of a base hunting license for hunting (Table 16). The base hunting license serves as a small game license as well, but does not include permits or tags for any deer, turkey, waterfowl or the hunting or trapping of furbearers. Licenses and permits for hunting in Missouri are sold on a per species basis.

Table 16

Base License & Habitat Fee		
	MO	OH
Residents		
Base/Small Game License Cost	-	\$19
Habitat Fee	-	-
Nonresident		
Base/Small Game License Cost	-	\$125
Habitat Fee	-	-

White-tailed Deer

Table 17 outlines the total cost for an either sex, firearms white-tailed deer permit. Total cost includes any base hunting licenses or habitat fee where applicable. The average total cost for resident hunters to harvest one deer with a firearm in the six original study states is \$35.58. Missouri's \$17 resident, either-sex deer hunting permit has the lowest cost among all study states. At \$43, Ohio's fee is slightly above the average observed in the original comparison, but equal to the resident cost of a similar permit in neighboring Illinois.

Table 17

Total Cost for Harvest of One Deer *		
	MO	OH[†]
Resident	\$17	\$43
Nonresident	\$225	\$149

* Via firearm.

† Total cost includes cost of base license.

Comparing resident and nonresident fees for a single either sex, firearm deer permit in Table 17, Missouri's nonresident fee is about thirteen times more expensive than the resident fee. This ratio is almost double the average of nonresident to resident deer license fee ratios observed in other Midwestern states. The fee for resident and nonresident deer permits in Ohio is equal, \$24 for both residents and nonresidents.

Both Missouri and Ohio offer purchase of antlerless deer tags/permits. Missouri's resident antlerless permit costs \$7 and its nonresident antlerless permit costs \$25. Ohio's antlerless permit for both residents and nonresidents costs \$15, in addition to the base hunting license fee.

Whether for an antlerless deer or an either sex deer permit, Ohio does not require a different permit/license to be purchased based on what hunting weapon is used. The Ohio base hunting license and deer permit allow for all weapons (per legal seasons and weapon regulations outlined in the state hunting regulations) to be used under the same license for one fee. Missouri requires an archer's hunting permit for hunting deer, wild turkey and small game. The archer's hunting permit is a package license, of which the full value will be later discussed in the packages section. The resident archery license is \$19 and the nonresident archery license is \$225, which includes two deer of either sex. Antlerless deer archery permits are \$7 for Missouri residents and \$25 for nonresidents, and are add-ons to the archer's hunting permit, which is required as a prerequisite to purchasing an archer's antlerless permit.

Big Game

There are currently no licenses offered by either the ODNR or MDC for hunting big game, as there are not currently significant populations of big game managed by these state agencies. Opportunities for large game hunting, however, are available on private ranch-type operations in both states. The MDC does not require hunters to hold a general hunting license while hunting on private game ranches, but does require both resident and nonresident hunters to purchase a 'Licensed Hunting Preserve Permit.' The licensed hunting preserve hunting permit is \$10 and a 3-day licensed hunting preserve hunting permit is \$5. This type of license within the context of this report is exclusive to Missouri; no other states in this study have this type of license.

Wild Turkey

Firearms wild turkey hunting permits (Table 18) cost Missouri residents \$13 in fall (for two turkeys of either sex) and \$17 in spring (for two male turkeys or turkeys with visible beard). The total cost of hunting turkeys in Missouri is only the license fee (no application or stamp necessary). In either season, hunting turkeys in Missouri is cheaper than any other Midwestern state. The permit costs for fall and spring averaged out are \$15; equal to that of Wisconsin's single season turkey carcass tag. Wisconsin, however, charges additional fees for submitting an application and for a turkey habitat stamp, raising the total cost to \$23.25. The total cost for turkey hunting is \$6.25-\$43 less expensive for Missouri residents than for residents in other Midwestern states. The \$110-\$190 cost for a nonresident turkey hunting permit in Missouri (average \$150) is about equal to the average total cost (\$154.13) of turkey hunting in the six Midwestern states reviewed in the original report.

As was the case for deer permits in Ohio, turkey permits are also the same price for both residents and nonresidents in both the fall and spring seasons – the price is always \$24 (figures reported in Table 18 are the total cost to hunt a turkey, including base license). The total cost for an Ohio resident (including the base hunting license) to hunt a turkey is slightly more expensive than the average total cost in the other Midwestern states. Keeping in mind that Ohio requires a base hunting license (Table 16) in addition to species-specific permits, the base license structure works to make the marginal cost of adding additional hunting activities cheaper as more activities are added, as was discussed in the original report. For example, to hunt one turkey in Ohio during the fall, residents pay \$43 and nonresidents pay \$149. If a hunter were to hunt turkeys in both fall and spring, their cost would only be the base license fee (\$19/\$125), plus \$24 for the fall permit, plus \$24 for the spring permit, or a total of \$67 for residents and \$173 for nonresidents. If for example a Missouri nonresident wanted to hunt turkeys in both fall and spring with firearms, it would be \$110 plus \$190, a total of \$300.

Table 18

Total Cost of Wild Turkey Hunting		
	MO	OH
Resident		
Fall turkey permit	\$13*	\$43
Spring turkey permit**	\$17	\$43
Archer's hunting permit	\$19 ⁺	\$0
Nonresident		
Fall turkey permit	\$110*	\$149
Spring turkey permit**	\$190	\$149
Archer's hunting permit	\$225 ⁺	\$0
Turkey Stamp (annual)	-	-

* Allows the harvest of two turkeys of either sex. This permit is valid in all but 7 counties in Missouri.

** Allows the harvest of two male turkeys with a visible beard, hunters are not allowed to take both birds on the same day. Resident landowners hunting on their own land can get this permit free.

⁺ This permit allows for the harvest of two turkeys of either sex total. Turkeys may be hunted under this permit in a special season 9/15-11/11 and 11/23-1/15. See packages section for additional details.

Both Missouri and Ohio are similar in that they do not require a habitat fee, stamp or drawing/application for hunting turkeys. They are also similar in that turkey hunting is free for resident landowners hunting on their own land, within the legal turkey hunting regulations.

Small Game and Birds

As discussed in the original report, small game license regulations (including bag limits, acceptable hunting weapons, seasons and huntable species) vary significantly by state, therefore comparing small game licenses across states may not perfectly capture the variation in products encompassed in the individual state small game licenses. Missouri’s resident, annual small game license is the least expensive of all study states’ resident, annual small game licenses. At \$10, it is more than \$9 below average. In addition to offering an annual, small game hunting permit for residents, Missouri also offers a lifetime small game hunting permit, price tiered by age group, ranging \$35 for age 60-64 to \$400 for ages 16-29. Small game hunting is covered under the \$19 base hunting license in Ohio. The base hunting license is similar in price to Illinois’ \$18 base hunting license and habitat fee, Wisconsin’s \$18 annual, resident, small game license and Iowa’s \$19 base license alone. Ohio’s \$19 resident small game license is close to average annual, small game license cost from Midwestern states, just \$0.83 less.

Table 19

Total Cost of Small Game Hunting		
	MO	OH
Resident License Fees		
Small Game License	\$10	\$19*
Nonresident License Fees		
Small Game License	\$80	\$125*
Daily Small Game License	\$11	-
3-Day Small Game	-	\$40

* Indicates base license fee.

Nonresident, annual small game license fees in both Missouri and Ohio fall within the \$63.25-\$152 range observed in the original study (Table 19). All states in the original study offered a sub-annual small game license for nonresidents. Both Ohio and Missouri also offer ‘tourist’ licenses which cost less and are for less time than an annual small game hunting license. Missouri offers an \$11 tourist 1-day license for nonresidents. It is the only state in the study which offers a daily small game license option. Like Minnesota, Ohio offers a 3-day small game license. The 3-day, nonresident, small game license costs \$40 in Ohio.

Missouri and Ohio are similar to all other Midwestern states in requiring species-specific permits or stamps in addition to the necessary federal stamps and state hunting licenses to hunt waterfowl and or migratory birds (Table 20). Neither state differentiates between resident and nonresident in cost for their species-specific permits. Missouri’s migratory bird hunting permit is \$6 and covers waterfowl, doves, snipe, woodcock and rails. This \$6 permit is the least expensive waterfowl permit offered by any of the Midwestern states. In addition

to the species-specific migratory bird permit, Missouri requires a \$40 conservation order permit for the hunting of geese (Ross, snow and blue). This permit costs significantly higher than goose permits in other Midwestern states. Of the other study states, only Minnesota and Wisconsin have goose permits with fees associated, which cost \$4 and \$3 respectively. Ohio's state wetlands habitat stamp costs \$15 and covers geese, brant, ducks, coots and mergansers. Ohio's wetlands habitat stamp is closest in price to Illinois' \$15.50 waterfowl stamp.

Table 20

Managed Species Fees, Permits and Stamps		
	MO	OH
Resident and Nonresident		
Federal duck stamp	-	-
Waterfowl Stamp	\$6	\$15
Goose permit	\$40 ⁺	\$0
Hunting preserve permit	\$10 [^]	-

[^] For hunting pheasants, partridges, quail or other exotic animals on a licensed game preserve.

⁺ "Conservation Order Permit" for hunting Ross, Snow and Blue Geese.

Neither Missouri nor Ohio sells Federal Duck Stamps; waterfowl hunters still need the federal stamp in both states, but they must purchase it through the U.S. Post Office.

Trapping License Review and Comparison

Most similar to Minnesota in fee structure, Missouri offers a trapping permit to residents, and a fur harvester permit/license for nonresidents (Table 21). Missouri's \$10 resident, annual trapping permit allows residents to trap animals within the limits of the state trapping regulations. Missouri residents who wish to hunt furbearers must purchase a small game hunting permit. Nonresidents who want to trap can purchase an annual, nonresident furbearer hunting and trapping permit for \$130 that allows them to hunt, trap and sell furbearers. Both the resident trapping permit and the nonresident furbearer hunting/trapping permit are least expensive in comparison to all of the other study states (in their respective categories). The resident trapping permit is at least \$6 less expensive than any other resident trapping permit/license in the Midwestern states, and the nonresident furbearer hunting/trapping permit is at least \$10 less than in any other Midwestern state. In addition to costing the least amount for either license, Missouri does not charge any application fees for managed furbearing species, as is seen in Illinois or Wisconsin, for example.

Ohio, like Michigan offers a fur taker permit which is required for both residents and nonresidents to trap. The only animals which can be trapped in Ohio are furbearers, but some furbearers can also be hunted, therefore both the hunting license and a fur taker permit are required whether hunting or trapping furbearers. The fur taker permit costs \$15 for both residents and nonresidents, in addition to the base hunting fees of \$19 for residents and \$125 for nonresidents. With a total cost of \$34 for residents and \$140 for nonresidents, the total cost of trapping for both residents and nonresidents in Ohio, is similar to that of the other Midwestern states.

Table 21

Trapping License Fees		
	MO	OH
Resident		
Small game/base hunting license & habitat	-	\$19.00
Trapping License	\$10.00	-
Fur Harvest License	\$0.00	\$15.00
Bobcat Application	\$0.00	-
Otter Application	\$0.00	\$0.00
Nonresident		
Small game/base hunting license & habitat	-	\$125.00
Trapping license	-	-
Fur Harvest License	\$130.00	\$15.00
Bobcat License	\$0.00	-
Otter Application	\$0.00	\$0.00

License Fee Packages, Discounts and Additional Funding Sources

Ohio and Missouri both offer discounted or free licenses to active duty military personnel, veterans, disabled people, youth, elderly people and first time sports people. Both states also have some form of license/permit discount or exemptions for resident landowners or tenants who are permanent residents of agricultural lands.

As was discussed in the original report, states with a base license fee have a higher cost of entry for hunting one species. Under the base hunting license fee system, savings are realized when hunting for multiple species. Example – if a nonresident hunter wants to hunt only turkey in Ohio for one season, the cost is \$125 (base license fee) + \$24. Adding on a second turkey hunting season in a year only costs an additional \$24, since the base license fee would already have been paid. Beyond the inherent value adding system inherent in Ohio’s license fee structure, the state does not list any hunting/fishing license packages in their hunting regulations handbook for 2015-2016.

Missouri offers an equivalent to what other states call their annual, individual sports license – a \$19 small game and fishing permit. This permit is offered to residents only and affords small game hunting, fishing (except for specially permitted species), frog, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish and birds (except turkeys). This permit does not include trapping of furbearers, or stamps/permits needed for managed species (e.g. duck stamp, migratory bird habitat fee, conservation order permit).

Missouri requires an archer’s hunting permit, for those wishing to hunt with bow and arrows. The archer’s hunting permit is also a package deal though. At \$19 for residents and \$225 for nonresidents, the archer’s hunting permit allows for two deer of either sex, two turkeys of either sex and harvest of small game and furbearers (legal bag limit regulations). The archer’s license is a savings over buying these multiple permits separately as is required with firearms licenses.

As aforementioned in the small game hunting section, Missouri offers lifetime permits for resident small game hunting. As well as a lifetime small game permit, Missouri also offers residents a lifetime conservation partner, which is similar to the annual resident hunting and fishing permit (except that it is for lifetime.) The lifetime conservation partner permit includes small game hunting, fishing, a conservation order permit (goose hunting) and a migratory bird stamp, and ranges in cost from \$70-\$800 based on the purchaser's age (16-29 \$800, 30-39 \$700, 40-59 \$600, 60-64 \$70).

In comparison to the other states in this and the original report, hunting and fishing licenses are generally much less expensive in Missouri than in other states. This may be due to the fact that Missouri utilizes an additional natural resources and conservation funding mechanism not seen in other states. In 1976, Missouri adopted their "Design for Conservation" program which sets aside 1/8th of 1% sales tax for the Missouri Department of Conservation. It can also be reasonably assumed that the funding structure of receiving state income for conservation through sales tax explains the larger difference between resident and nonresident permit fees in Missouri than in other states. Tax income likely comes primarily from Missouri residents' purchases and therefore they should correspondingly pay less for their licenses than nonresidents since they have already paid for conservation through their contributions via sales tax. Unlike other states in this and the original report, Missouri natural resources management and conservation is not relying primarily on license sales for departmental funding.

Sources Consulted

State departmental websites were the primary sources consulted in production of this report.

Missouri Department of Conservation: <http://mdc.mo.gov/about-us/department-details>
<http://huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/downloads/HuntTrapRegs-2016.pdf>

Ohio Department of Natural Resources:
<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/Portals/wildlife/pdfs/hunting/HuntingRegulations.pdf>