



Salmon Ambassadors

2015 Results by Port

Prior to the 2015 fishing season, 166 anglers volunteered to participate in the *Salmon Ambassadors* program. The program involved measuring **each and every** Chinook Salmon caught over the course of the fishing season, checking each Chinook Salmon for an adipose fin clip, and recording this information along with the date and location of each catch.

The *Salmon Ambassadors* results presented in this report focus on the contribution of stocked (fin-clipped) and wild (unclipped) Chinook Salmon to ports around Lake Michigan and northern Lake Huron. At the end of the 2015 season, 58 anglers returned surveys and 34 provided useable data on 1,696 Chinook Salmon.

Registered volunteers represented over 25 Lake Michigan and northern Lake Huron ports. Due to the low numbers of fish reported at some ports, several of the following fact sheets group two or more ports into a larger area. Illinois and Northwest Michigan are not included on fact sheets due to the very low number of fish reported in 2015 (three from Frankfort and four from Illinois waters).

The *Salmon Ambassadors* program is a Michigan Sea Grant initiative developed in coordination with Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana DNRs, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This program would not be possible without the effort of dedicated volunteers from organizations including Michigan Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Association and Michigan Charter Boat Association. Special thanks go out to Detroit Area Steelheaders, who provided generous donations in 2015 and 2016 to support this program.

Dan O'Keefe
Michigan Sea Grant
12220 Fillmore St., Ste. 122
West Olive, MI 49460
(616) 994-4572
okeefed@msu.edu



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Manistee



Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

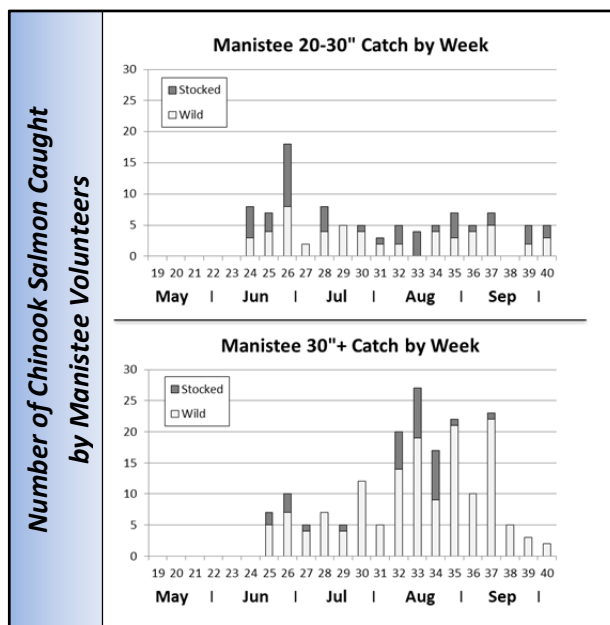
Number of volunteers reporting all catches **5**

Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers **341**

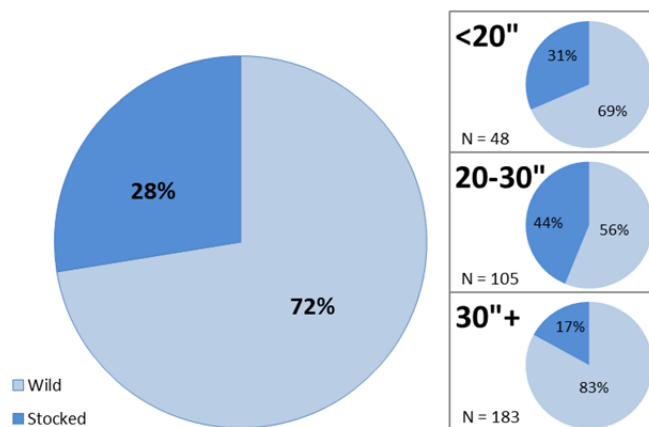
Average length of Chinook Salmon **27.5"**

Average length of stocked Chinook **25.7"**

Average length of wild Chinook **28.2"**



Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



Salmon Ambassadors found that 72% of Chinook Salmon caught from Manistee in 2015 were wild. Size had a significant effect on % wild in Manistee. Large (30"+) fish were more likely to be wild than smaller fish.

	Manistee		
	Stocked	Wild	% Wild
	Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught	
May	1	0	0%
Jun	31	50	62%
Jul	8	48	86%
Aug	37	77	68%
Sep	10	57	85%
Oct	7	15	68%
TOTAL	94	247	72%

Seasonal Effect

Anglers in Manistee found that % Wild increased from early (N=104) to late (N=237) in the open water fishing season.

May-Jun: 63% wild

Jul- Oct: 77% wild



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Ludington Area (includes Ludington and Pentwater)



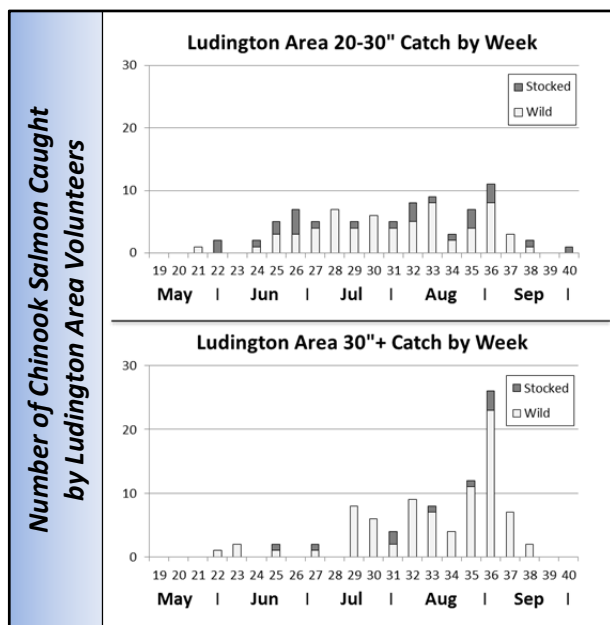
Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

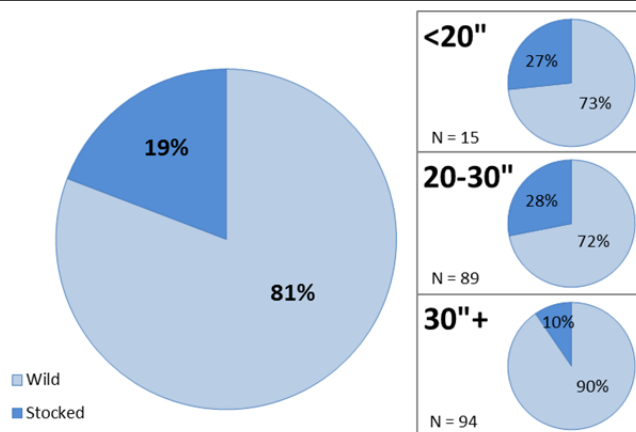
"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).



Number of volunteers reporting all catches	6
Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers	198
Average length of Chinook Salmon	27.9"
Average length of stocked Chinook	25.6"
Average length of wild Chinook	28.4"

Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



Salmon Ambassadors found that 81% of Chinook Salmon caught in the Ludington area in 2015 were wild. Size had a significant effect on % wild in the Ludington area. Large (30"+) fish were more likely to be wild than smaller fish. The port fished also had an influence on % wild, with Ludington anglers catching a significantly higher percentage of wild fish than anglers fishing out of Pentwater.

	Ludington			Pentwater		
	Stocked Chinooks Caught	Wild Chinooks Caught	% Wild	Stocked Chinooks Caught	Wild Chinooks Caught	% Wild
May	0	0	NA	4	8	67%
Jun	4	3	43%	4	8	67%
Jul	1	19	95%	6	22	79%
Aug	2	29	94%	9	31	78%
Sep	2	31	94%	6	9	60%
TOTAL	9	82	90%	29	78	73%

Seasonal Effect

Anglers in the Ludington area found that % Wild increased from early (N=31) to late (N=167) in the open water fishing season.

May-Jun: 61% wild

Jul-Sep: 84% wild



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Grand Haven Area (includes Saugatuck to Whitehall)



Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

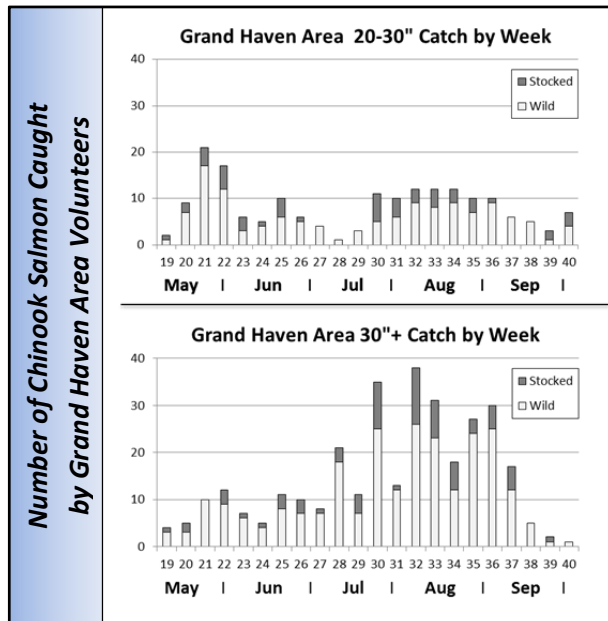
Number of volunteers reporting all catches **12**

Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers **579**

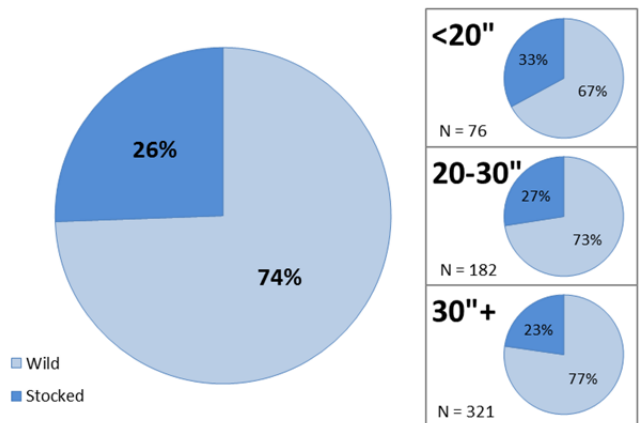
Average length of Chinook Salmon **27.8"**

Average length of stocked Chinook **26.7"**

Average length of wild Chinook **28.4"**



Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



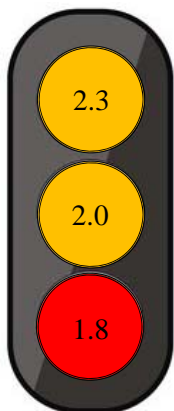
Salmon Ambassadors found that 74% of Chinook Salmon caught in the Grand Haven area in 2015 were wild. Season, size, and port fished had no significant effects on % wild in the Grand Haven area.

	Holland			Grand Haven			Muskegon		
	Stocked	Wild	% Wild	Stocked	Wild	% Wild	Stocked	Wild	% Wild
	Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught		Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught		Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught	
May	1	6	86%	29	93	76%	0	0	NA
Jun	1	2	67%	22	36	62%	1	10	91%
Jul	0	8	100%	26	69	73%	2	4	67%
Aug	6	19	76%	37	102	73%	1	7	88%
Sep	0	4	100%	17	57	77%	0	6	100%
TOTAL	8	39	83%	131	357	73%	4	27	87%



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Southwest Michigan (Includes St. Joseph to South Haven)



Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

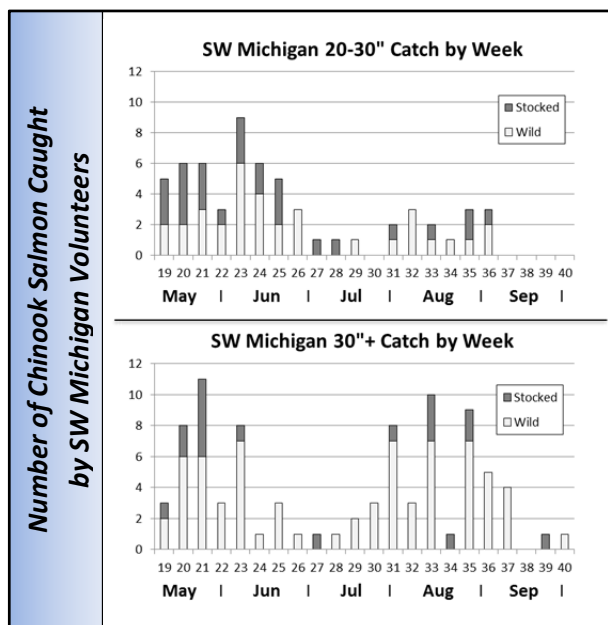
"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

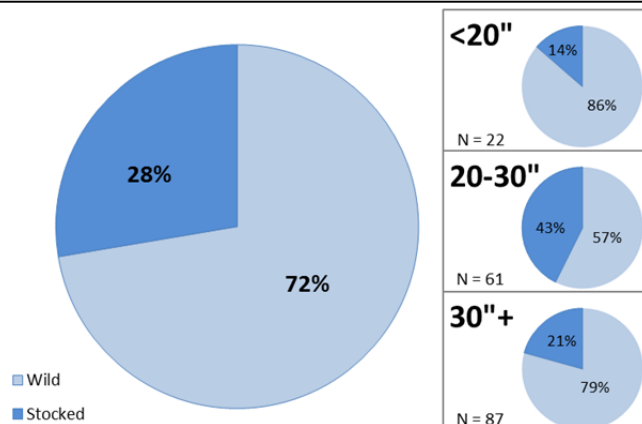
"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Number of volunteers reporting all catches	7
Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers	170
Average length of Chinook Salmon	27.6"
Average length of stocked Chinook	26.7"
Average length of wild Chinook	28.0"



Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



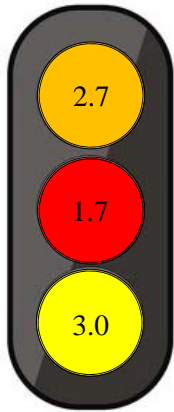
Salmon Ambassadors found that 72% of Chinook Salmon caught in Southwest Michigan during 2015 were wild. Season and port fished had no significant effects on % wild in Southwest Michigan. Size did have an important influence on % wild. Mid-sized (20-30") fish were significantly more likely to be stocked than either small (<20") or large (30"+) fish.

	St. Joseph & Benton Harbor			South Haven		
	Stocked	Wild	% Wild	Stocked	Wild	% Wild
	Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught		Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught	
May	13	21	62%	9	16	64%
Jun	3	15	83%	6	13	68%
Jul	2	8	80%	1	4	80%
Aug	1	11	92%	11	27	71%
Sep	1	4	80%	0	3	100%
TOTAL	20	59	75%	27	63	70%



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Door Peninsula (includes Kewaunee to Washington Island)



Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

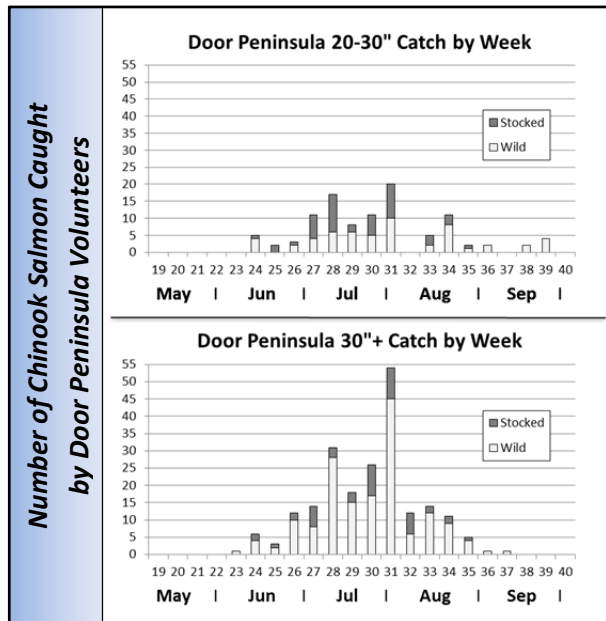
"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

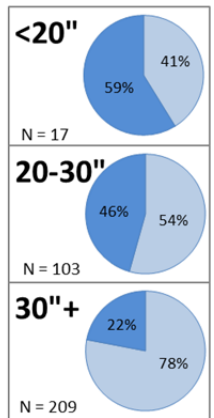
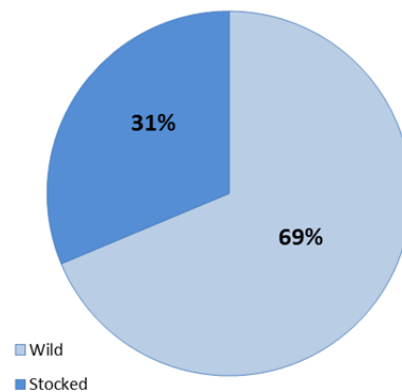
"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Number of volunteers reporting all catches	4
Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers	329
Average length of Chinook Salmon	29.9"
Average length of stocked Chinook	28.2"
Average length of wild Chinook	30.7"



Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



Salmon Ambassadors found that 69% of Chinook Salmon caught from Door Peninsula waters in 2015 were wild. The port fished had a significant effect on % wild. Anglers fishing Kewaunee found a slightly greater % wild than anglers fishing Gills Rock & Washington Island. Size also had an important influence on % wild. Large (30"+) salmon were significantly more likely to be wild than smaller (<30") salmon in Door Peninsula waters.

	Gills Rock & Washington Is.			Kewaunee		
	Stocked	Wild	% Wild	Stocked	Wild	% Wild
	Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught		Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught	
May	0	0	NA	0	0	NA
Jun	4	11	73%	7	12	63%
Jul	43	77	64%	19	56	75%
Aug	23	40	63%	3	16	84%
Sep	0	1	100%	1	9	90%
TOTAL	70	129	65%	30	93	76%



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Southern Wisconsin (Illinois border to Port Washington)



Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

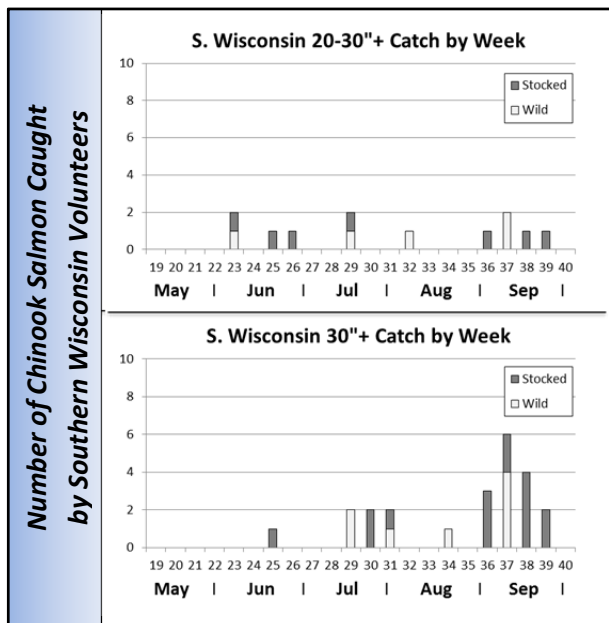
Number of volunteers reporting all catches **5**

Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers **37**

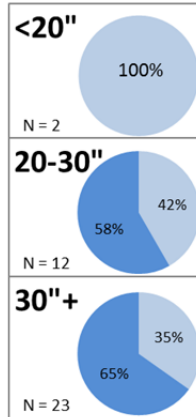
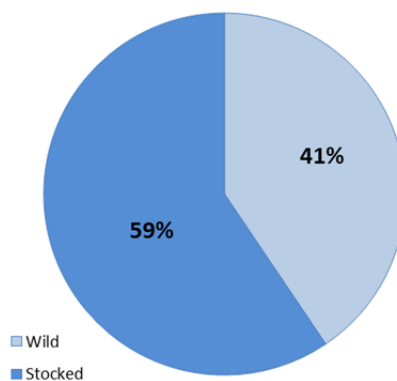
Average length of Chinook Salmon **29.9"**

Average length of stocked Chinook **30.6"**

Average length of wild Chinook **27.9"**



Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



Salmon Ambassadors found that 41% of Chinook Salmon caught in the southern Wisconsin area in 2015 were wild.

	Port Washington & Milwaukee			Racine & Kenosha		
	Stocked	Wild	% Wild	Stocked	Wild	% Wild
	Chinooks	Chinooks		Chinooks	Chinooks	
	Caught	Caught		Caught	Caught	
May	0	0	NA	0	0	NA
Jun	3	2	40%	0	0	NA
Jul	2	1	33%	2	3	60%
Aug	0	2	100%	0	0	NA
Sep	1	0	0%	13	6	32%
TOTAL	6	5	45%	15	9	38%

Small Sample Size

Volunteers in Southern Wisconsin only reported 37 Chinook Salmon in 2015.

This small sample size does not allow for meaningful tests on the effects of length, location or season.



Salmon Ambassadors 2015 Results

Northern Lake Huron (St. Ignace to Alpena)



Volunteers were asked if they agreed with the following:

"I was pleased with my fishing experiences this season."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from May-June."

"Fishing for Chinook Salmon was good from July-September."

Answers ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

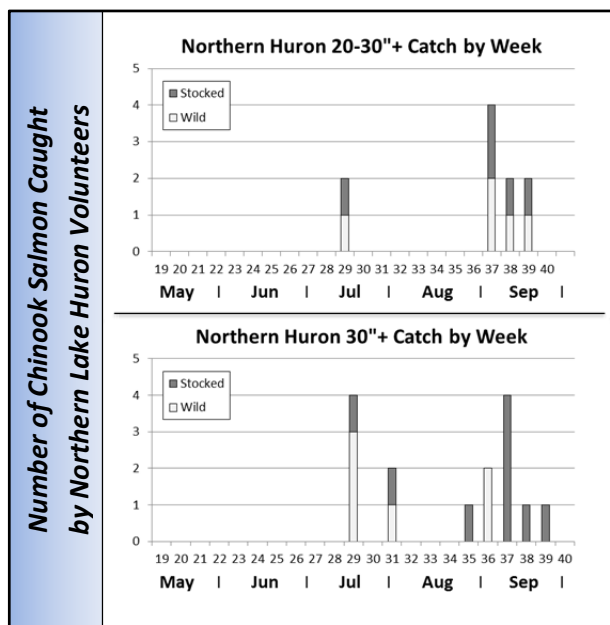
Number of volunteers reporting all catches **2**

Chinook Salmon caught by volunteers **35**

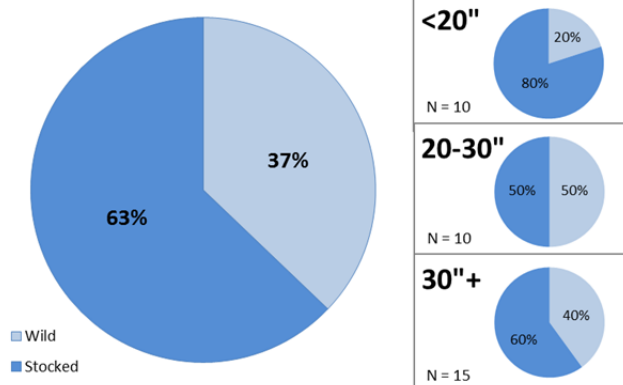
Average length of Chinook Salmon **24.5"**

Average length of stocked Chinook **22.9"**

Average length of wild Chinook **28.3"**



Stocked & Wild Chinook Salmon Catch



Salmon Ambassadors found that 37% of Chinook Salmon caught in northern Lake Huron in 2015 were wild.

	Straits to Mackinac Island			Rogers City		
	Stocked	Wild	% Wild	Stocked	Wild	% Wild
	Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught		Chinooks Caught	Chinooks Caught	
May	0	0	NA	0	0	NA
Jun	0	1	100%	0	0	NA
Jul	0	4	86%	1	1	100%
Aug	1	1	81%	1	1	68%
Sep	0	0	NA	18	1	16%
TOTAL	1	6	86%	20	3	13%

Small Sample Size

Volunteers in Northern Lake Huron only reported 35 Chinook Salmon in 2015.

This small sample size does not allow for meaningful tests on the effects of length, location or season.