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## **National fishing survey will yield valuable information for Alberta**

*Edmonton...* They may be notorious for embellishing tales about “the one that got away,” but anglers across the country will soon be asked for the strict truth about their fishing experiences.

Alberta will be part of the 2005 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada, the seventh in a series of national surveys conducted every five years since 1975. Results provide a picture of trends in recreational fishing across Canada.

“With Alberta’s population growth, this presents an important opportunity to assess how angling has changed in the province,” said David Coutts, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development. “In the past, the survey has provided key information for the Improving Alberta’s Fisheries initiative and helped us make decisions about fish harvesting. I encourage all those who receive a survey to participate.”

Anglers will be asked where they fished, how often they fished, how satisfied they are about their fishing experiences and how many fish they caught.

Co-ordinated by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, each province and territory distributes questionnaires specific to their jurisdiction. Alberta will mail survey questionnaires in mid-January to 5,000 Alberta residents and 800 non-residents who fished in the province in 2005. Survey respondents were chosen at random from those who purchased an Alberta recreational fishing licence last year.

Sportfishing contributes about \$350 million to Alberta’s economy each year. In 2000, an estimated 182,000 licensed Alberta anglers spent an average of 15 days each fishing and another 14,000 licensed non-resident anglers each spent about six days fishing. To add those numbers another way, it would equal one person spending over 2.9 million days fishing! During 2000, about 12.4 million fish were caught in Alberta, of which nearly two million were harvested.

For more information about the survey or fishing in Alberta, visit the website of Sustainable Resource Development <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/fw/fishing/index.html>.

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