Management Plan for Inland Trout in Michigan

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Introduction

This plan focuses on the ecology and management of inland trout populations that primarily reside in rivers and inland lakes of Michigan. Brown Trout *Salmo trutta* and Brook Trout *Salvelinus fontinalis* are the primary species of interest in streams, though resident Rainbow Trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss* occur in a few waters, such as the upper Au Sable River and several tributaries to the Manistee River, most notably the Pine River. Inland lakes with suitable water quality conditions are (or could be) managed for any of several trout species, including Brook Trout, Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Lake Trout *Salvelinus namaycush*, Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*, and splake *Salvelinus fontinalis x S. namaycush*, a hatchery-based hybrid of Brook and Lake trouts. These species share similar characteristics, but they differ in their suitability for specific fishery management purposes. This report does not cover adfluvial salmonids, such as Chinook Salmon *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, Coho Salmon *Oncorhynchus kisutch*, migratory Rainbow Trout (steelhead), or Brown Trout that reside in the Great Lakes and migrate inland from the Great Lakes to spawn. Likewise, the report does not cover steelhead, which occasionally remain in streams as “resident” trout and do not migrate out to the Great Lakes.

The intent of this document is to provide an overview of inland trout habitats in Michigan, the biology and ecology of inland trout populations, and management activities directed towards inland trout and their habitats. This report provides the foundation for current and future management of inland trout fisheries in Michigan’s inland lakes and streams. It is not meant to be time-constrained, but rather a template to follow to ensure successful management of the state’s diverse inland trout resources.