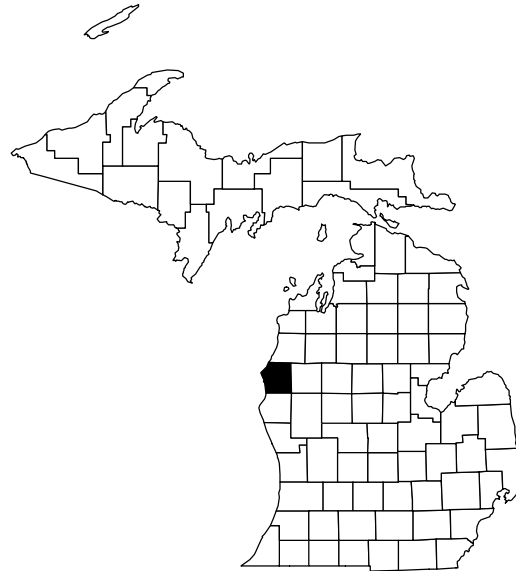


MASON COUNTY TOURISM PROFILE

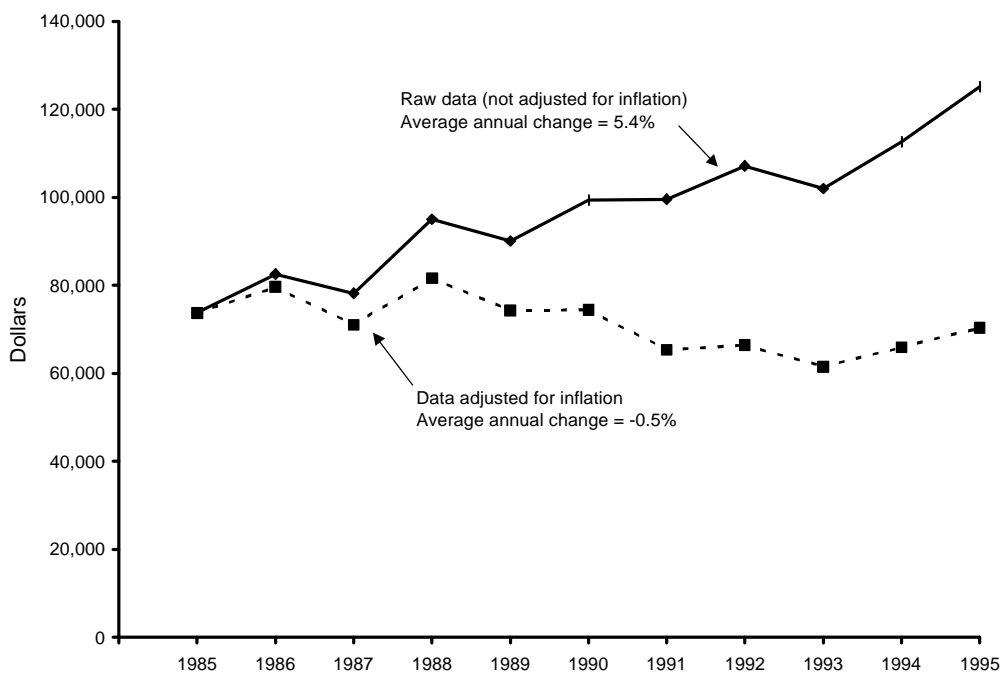
Prepared by Daniel M. Spencer, Dae-Kwan Kim, and Philip J. Alexander

October 1998

MSU Extension has prepared this profile to help developers, tourism professionals, public officials, and others make informed decisions regarding the travel and tourism industry in Mason County. All statistics pertain to Mason County unless otherwise noted, and are the most current available. Further assistance is available from the Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center at Michigan State University (517/353-0793) or the MSU Extension office in Mason County (616/757-4789).



TRENDS IN STATE OF MICHIGAN LODGING USE TAX COLLECTIONS FOR MASON COUNTY



NOTE: The lodging use tax is a state tax on the rental of a guest-room or cabin. To ensure comparability of statistics over the entire 10-year period shown, tax collections after May 1, 1994, when the tax rate increased from 4% to 6%, were adjusted so that they equaled what they would have been at the 4% rate. The comparable statewide average annual change figures are 6.3% in the case of raw data and 0.4% in the case of adjusted data.

SOURCE: Michigan Department of Treasury, Systems Division.

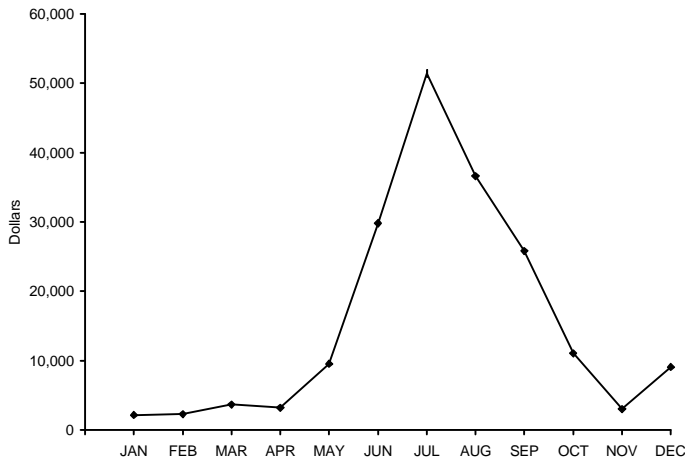
ESTIMATED MARKET SHARE, TRIP VOLUME, AND EXPENDITURES BY TOURISTS IN MASON AND NEIGHBORING COUNTIES, 1996

<u>COUNTY OF MAIN DESTINATION</u>	<u>ESTIMATED MARKET SHARE</u>	<u>ESTIMATED NO. PLEASURE TRIP-NIGHTS</u>	<u>ESTIMATED DIRECT EXPENDITURES</u>
Lake	0.2%	206,700	\$11,231,000
Manistee	1.5%	1,378,300	\$74,879,000
Mason	1.4%	1,326,900	\$72,088,000
Newaygo	0.3%	283,000	\$15,373,000
Oceana	1.2%	1,168,600	\$63,486,000

NOTE: Estimates are based on results from a telephone survey being conducted by the Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center at Michigan State University. "Pleasure trips" are overnight or day trips to places at least 50 miles from respondents' homes that were made for enjoyment, including vacations, weekend getaways, shopping trips, and trips to visit friends and relatives. The study region consists of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Ontario. "Market share" is the percentage of pleasure trips to Michigan that originated from this region and had a given county as its main destination. Estimated pleasure trip-nights are the product of these percentages and a survey-based estimate of 93.8 million pleasure trip-nights in Michigan in 1996. Direct expenditures are the product of these percentages and a survey-based estimate of \$5.1 billion in direct pleasure trip expenditures in Michigan in 1996. Estimates do not include pleasure trip-nights or expenditures of travelers who resided outside the study region or who merely passed through a county. Estimates are preliminary and subject to revision as additional data become available. They should be used judiciously since they are in some cases based on small samples for a given county.

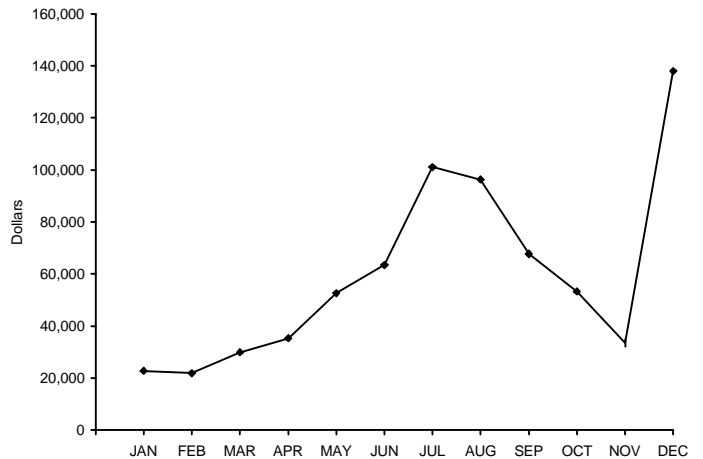
SEASONALITY IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

**State of Michigan Lodging Use Tax Collections
for Mason County, 1995**



SOURCE: Michigan Department of Treasury.

**State of Michigan Sales Tax Collections of Family Restaurants and
Cafeterias for Mason County, 1995**



SOURCE: Michigan Department of Treasury.

INDICATORS OF TRAVEL ACTIVITY FOR MASON COUNTY

Estimated number of visits to Ludington State Park (1996)	673,423
Unadjusted (6%) State of Michigan lodging use tax collections (1995)	\$187,731

RECREATION AND TRAVEL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCES

No. land acres in county (1989)	316,480
No. water acres in county (1989)	10,496
Total no. acres in county (1989)	326,976
No. acres of public recreation land (1990)	
National parks/lakeshores	0
National wildlife refuges	0
National forests	59,581
State parks and recreation areas	4,582
State boating and fishing sites	1,335
State game/wildlife areas	290
State forests	0
Other areas	0
Total	65,788
No. acres of publicly or privately owned forest land (1994)	172,700
Total no. acres of designated state or federal wilderness (1990) ...	3,450
Average no. inches of snowfall (1981/82-1990/91)	96.2
No. miles of Great Lake shoreline	28
Total no. miles of rivers and streams	238
No. miles of state or federal wild/scenic/natural river (1990)	132.5
No. inland lakes > 50 acres in size	20
Combined acres of natural or artificial lakes and ponds (1991)	9,711
Total no. acres of legislatively protected sand dunes (1989)	6,440
Natural heritage site: Nordhouse Dunes in Manistee National Forest	

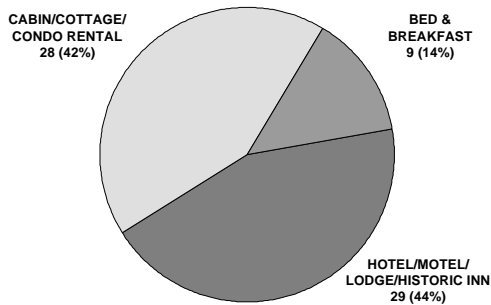
RECREATION AND TRAVEL FACILITIES

No. public access sites (1990)	26
No. recreational harbors on the Great Lakes (1990)	1
No. Great Lake marinas (1994)	10
No. Great Lake marina slips (1994)	500
No. licensed charter boats (1996)	41
No. 9-hole golf courses (1995)	0
No. 18-hole golf courses (1995)	2
No. agricultural markets/wineries/u-picks (1993)	16
No. miles of designated scenic highway (1990)	0
No. owned second homes (1990)	2,782
No. licensed food service establishments (1995)	
Table service	31
Fast food	53
Cafeteria	20
Bar only	6
Other	34
Total	144
No. boat liveries (1990)	32
No. watercraft for rent (1990)	323
No. miles of state-funded snowmobile trail (1990)	15.3
No. miles of hiking/skiing/mtn. biking trail (1994)	37
No. miles of designated off-road vehicle trail (1992)	19.5
No. museums (1990)	3
No. historical attractions open to the public (1990)	2
No. miles of interstate highway (1990)	0.0

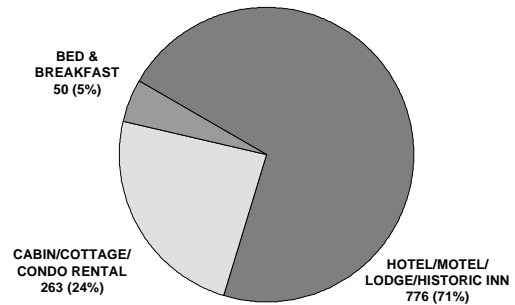
PRINCIPAL ATTRACTIONS AND EVENTS

Recreational harbor facilities at Ludington on Lake Michigan; Ludington State Park; two groomed and rated cross-country ski trails; White Pine Village; Rose Hawley Museum, Ludington; West Shore Community College; in Ludington - Freedom Festival (July), Gold Coast Water Festival (August), West Michigan Fair (August), Autumn Festival (October), Winter Fun Fest (February), Carferry Festival (May), Lakestride Half-Marathon (June), Gus Macker 3-on-3 Charity Basketball Tournament (July), Scottville Harvest Festival (September).

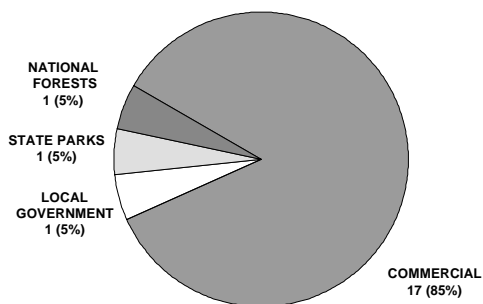
NO. COMMERCIAL LODGING ESTABLISHMENTS, 1990



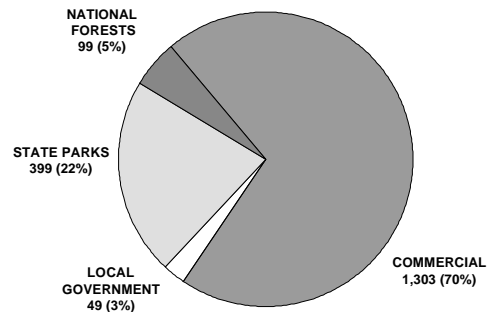
NO. GUEST-ROOMS IN COMMERCIAL LODGING ESTABLISHMENTS, 1990



NO. CAMPGROUNDS, 1990



NO. CAMPSITES, 1990



RANK IN RELATION TO OTHER MICHIGAN COUNTIES

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Date of Data</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>County's Rank</u>	<u>Range of Ranks Statewide</u>
No. licensed charter boats	1996	41	4	1-22
No. miles of state or federal wild/scenic/natural river	1990	132.5	4	1-39
No. natural heritage sites	1990	1	6	1-7
No. historical attractions open to the public	1990	2	7	1-9
No. agricultural markets/wineries/u-picks per 1,000 residents	1993	0.60	9	1-48
No. museums	1990	3	11	1-14
No. designated campsites	1990	1,850	11	1-81
No. Great Lake marina slips per 1,000 residents	1994	18.39	13	1-41
No. public access sites	1990	26	16	1-83
No. licensed rental watercraft per 1,000 residents	1990	12.65	18	1-76
No. lifts or tows at downhill ski areas	1990	0	20	1-20
Estimated direct pleasure trip expenditures	1996	\$72,088,000	22	1-83
No. eating and drinking places per 1,000 residents	1995	5.24	23	1-74
Average no. inches of snowfall (1981/82-1990/91)	Avg.	96.2	24	1-82
No. miles of Great Lake shoreline	n.d.	27.5	28	1-38
Total no. units in commercial lodging establishments	1990	1,089	28	1-82
No. miles of designated off-road vehicle trail	1992	19.5	33	1-38
No. miles of designated scenic highway	1990	0.0	35	1-35
No. owned second homes	1990	2,782	35	1-83
No. acres of public recreation land	1990	65,788	36	1-83
Combined area of natural or artificial lakes and ponds	1991	9,711	36	1-83
No. miles of state-funded snowmobile trail	1990	15.3	41	1-47
No. acres of publicly or privately owned forest land	1994	172,700	41	1-82
Total no. public golf course holes per 1,000 residents	1995	1.31	46	1-74
No. miles of designated hiking/skiing/mtn. biking trail	1994	37.00	48	1-79
Estimated population	1995	27,487	49	1-83
Total no. miles of rivers and streams	1944	238	61	1-77

NOTE: This table is intended to provide an indication of the county's competitive advantages and disadvantages. Many types of tourism facilities are patronized by local residents as well as tourists. The number of such facilities in a given county is therefore a function of the county's population as well as its popularity as a tourist destination. To provide a meaningful indication of popularity in such cases, counts of facilities are presented as number of facilities per 1,000 residents. "Natural heritage sites" are scenic vistas, unique geological features, significant wildlife observation areas, or major waterfalls. Range of ranks statewide is not always 1-83 due to ties.

SOURCES OF STATISTICS IN THIS PUBLICATION

U.S. Bureau of the Census; Michigan Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Public Health, Transportation, and Treasury; Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center at Michigan State University.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE

- Ludington Area Chamber of Commerce: 5827 West US 10, Ludington, MI 49431.
- Ludington Area Convention and Visitors Bureau: 5827 West US-10, Ludington, MI 49431. (616) 845-1747. Fax: (616) 845-6857. E-mail: suelacvb@aol.com Web site: <http://www.ludington.com>
- West Michigan Tourist Association: 1253 Front Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504-3216. (616) 456-8557. Fax: (616) 456-8958. Web site: <http://www.wmta.org>
- Travel Michigan: P.O. Box 30226, Lansing, MI 48909. (517) 373-0670. Web site: <http://www.Michigan.org/>
- Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center, Michigan State University: 172 Natural Resources Building, East Lansing, MI 48824-1222. Phone: (517) 353-0793. Fax: (517) 432-2296. E-mail: dholecek@pilot.msu.edu Web site: <http://www.tourism.msu.edu/>



Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center
Michigan State University



County tourism profiles are a program of MSU Extension's Tourism Area of Expertise Team. Information about the Team and its programs may be found on the World Wide Web at "<http://www.tourism.msu.edu/>". Tourism profiles for each Michigan county, as well as explanations of technical terms and procedures, may be obtained from this same Web site.