A study conducted by Rutgers University estimates that in 1973 the New Jersey sportsman contributed over $100 million to the coastal fishing industry in the state. The study was designed to estimate the number of persons who engaged in various kinds of fishing in 1973 by surveying a statewide sample of adults. The study found that over 16% of the sample had done some kind of salt water fishing in the past year. By projecting this 16% to the total adult population in the state, the study estimates that at least 875,000 Jerseyans did some salt water fishing in 1973. A recent study by the U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife estimated that the average salt water angler in the Middle-Atlantic States spends $127.00 per year on his fishing. Sport fishing in New Jersey's coastal waters by Jerseyans alone thus represents an annual industry of well over $100 million.

Rutgers' estimate of 875,000 fishermen in the state is a conservative estimate of the number of people who actually fish the N.J. shore. The Rutgers figure does not include children under 18 or non-resident anglers who use the Jersey shore. Since most of the respondents indicated they took children fishing with them "occasionally" (33%), or "usually" (35%), the number of Jerseyans who fish in New Jersey's coastal waters is well over one million.

The 16% fishermen in the sample were asked what variations of the sport they had tried in the past year. Many of the persons surveyed gave more than one response. Fishing in estuaries (salt water bays and rivers) was as popular as deep sea fishing; nearly 65% of the fishermen had fished estuaries while 65% had fished in the ocean. Surf fishing was tried by 30% of the sportsmen.

-more-
The foundation of this industry is the population of game fish, such as striped bass, blue fish, flounders, and weak fish. According to James Applegate, the Cook College professor who conducted the study, "Virtually all species of marine game fish are dependent on shallow bays and rivers for survival during some period of their life. Protection of the remaining wetlands of New Jersey thus should be a very personal matter to more than a million of our citizens who enjoy fishing."

The data were collected as part of a cooperative study between the Eagleton Institute, the New Jersey Division of Fish, Game, and Shellfisheries and the Forestry and Wildlife Section at Cook College, Rutgers University.

The Ninth New Jersey Poll was conducted by telephone from the Eagleton Institute of Politics in New Brunswick, N.J. A scientifically selected random sample of 1226 New Jerseyans 18 years of age or older were interviewed.

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TO:       POLITICAL REPORTERS (SPORTS REPORTERS)
FROM:     JAMES APPLEGATE
SUBJECT:  THE NINTH NEW JERSEY POLL, RELEASE #10, WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON,
           MARCH 20, 1974

The questions on which this released is based are as follow:

"Did you go fishing in New Jersey this past year?" (IF "NO", respondent did not answer any further questions about fishing.)

"Did you go salt water fishing in the past year?" (IF "NO", respondent did not answer any further questions about fishing.)

When you go fishing do you usually take young people under 18 with you, only occasionally take them, or never take young people with you?

"Did you go surf fishing in the past year?"

"Did you fish in any salt water bays or rivers during the past year?"
(As a check on the respondents' definition of "salt water bays or rivers" the poll asked respondents identify the location by name.)