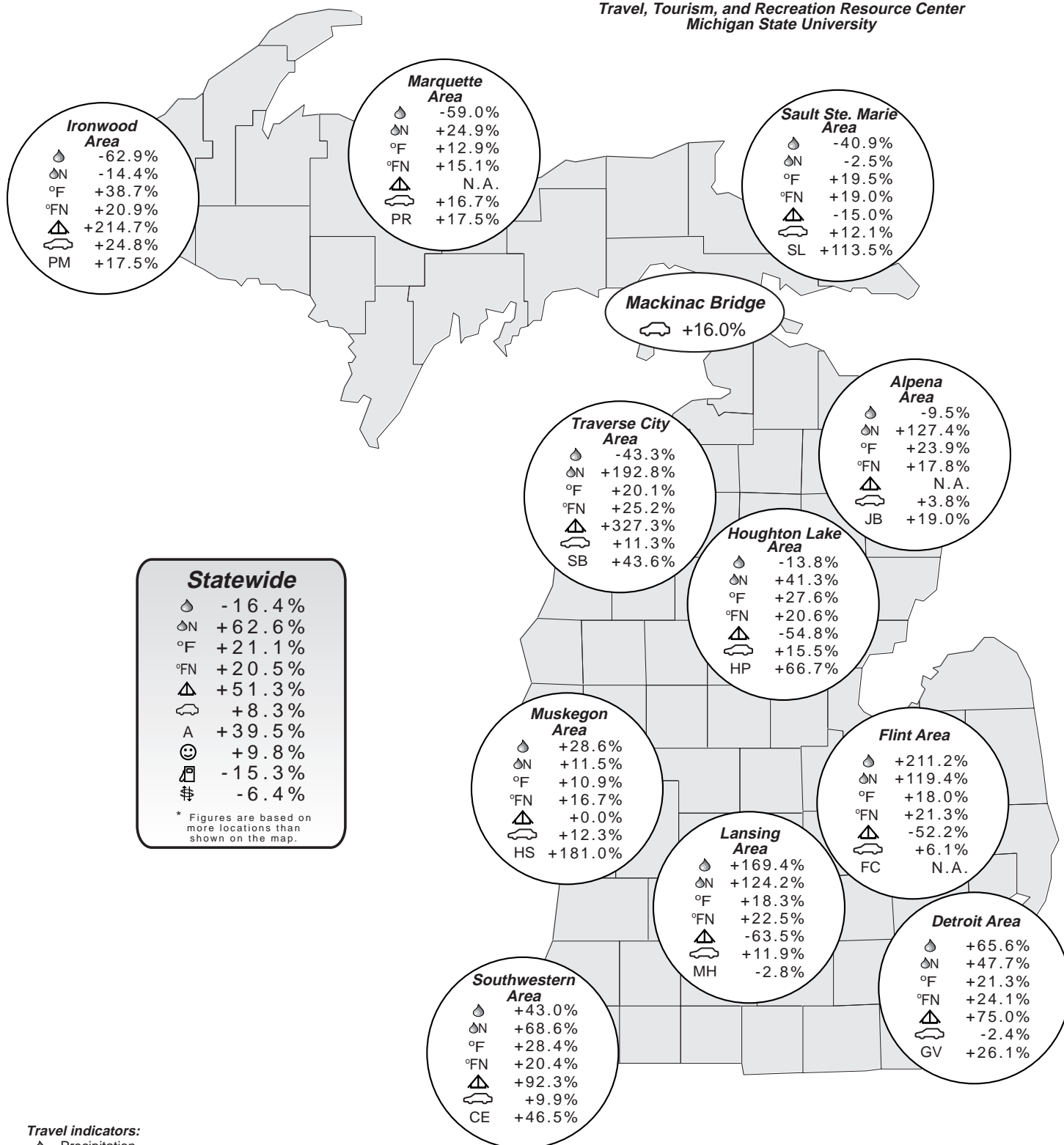


Michigan Travel Indicators January 1998 vs. January 1997

Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center
Michigan State University



Travel indicators:

- ☔ - Precipitation
- ☔N - Normal precipitation
- °F - Temperature (average high)
- °FN - Normal temperature
- △ - Number of overnight stays at state parks
- 🚗 - Highway traffic counts
- A - Attendance at attractions
- 😊 - Consumer confidence
- 🛖 - Gasoline prices
- 💵 - Exchange rate (US\$/CAN\$)

Selected attractions:

- CE - Cook Energy Information Center
- FC - Flint Cultural Center
- GV - Greenfield Village & Henry Ford Museum
- HP - Hartwick Pines State Park
- HS - P.J. Hoffmaster State Park
- JB - Jesse Besser Museum
- MH - Michigan Historical Museum
- PM - Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park
- PR - Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- SB - Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
- SL - Soo Locks

Data sources: Michigan Departments of Transportation and Natural Resources (Parks and Recreation Division); managers of selected tourist attractions in Michigan; RJO Analysis; Federal Reserve Bank of New York; Mackinac Bridge Authority; Michigan AAA; Midwestern Climate Center.

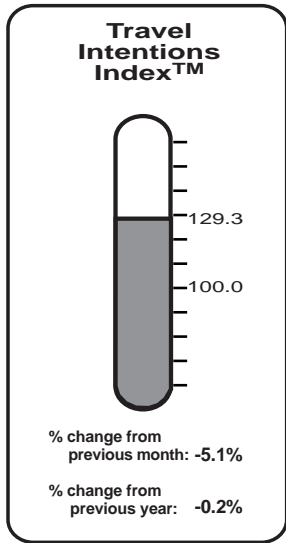
Comments

by Sinji Yang and Donald F. Holecek

Statewide highway traffic volume during the first month of 1998 increased 8% compared to January 1997. Increases occurred in all monitored areas except Detroit, where traffic volume declined 2%. The Upper and Northern Lower Peninsulas experienced significant increases in traffic counts. Mackinac Bridge crossings increased 16%. The Mackinac Bridge Authority reported that it was a new record high for the month since the bridge opened in 1957.

State park overnight stays increased 51% statewide, although decreases occurred in the Sault Ste. Marie, Houghton Lake, Lansing, and Flint areas. Aggregate attendance at selected attractions increased 40%. All attractions that we monitor experienced increases during the month, except for the Michigan Historical Museum, which experienced a 3% decrease.

Overall precipitation in January 1998 decreased 16% compared to January 1997, but was 63% higher than normal. Statewide average temperatures in January 1998 were 21% higher than January 1997 and 21% higher than normal.



Travel Forecast

by Sinji Yang and Donald F. Holecek

Highway traffic volume continued on an upward trend from last year, increasing by a substantial 8% compared to January 1997. Due to generally favorable weather conditions, we expect this growth will persist until the middle of the fall of this year. However, the La Nina effect may create severe weather conditions during the coming winter.

During January 1998, gasoline prices declined 15% and the U.S./Canadian exchange rate decreased 6% compared to last January. Consumer confidence in January 1998 declined 8 points from the previous month. However, the index was still 10% higher than last January. The general outlook for the U.S. economy remains optimistic, but it has been more or less affected by the economic crises in many East Asian countries.

The reading on the Michigan Travel Intentions Index was 129 in January 1998. This was 5% lower than December 1997 and 0.2% lower than January 1997.

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dae-Kwan Kim and Semok Yoon in preparing this report.

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Please note: You may contact Sinji Yang with questions regarding the methodology employed in producing this report.

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 172 Natural Resources Building, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1222
 Phone: (517) 353-0793, Fax: (517) 432-2296
 E-mail: dholecek@pilot.msu.edu
yangsinj@pilot.msu.edu

Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center
 172 Natural Resources Building
 Michigan State University
 East Lansing, MI 48824-1222



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January 1998 Report

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