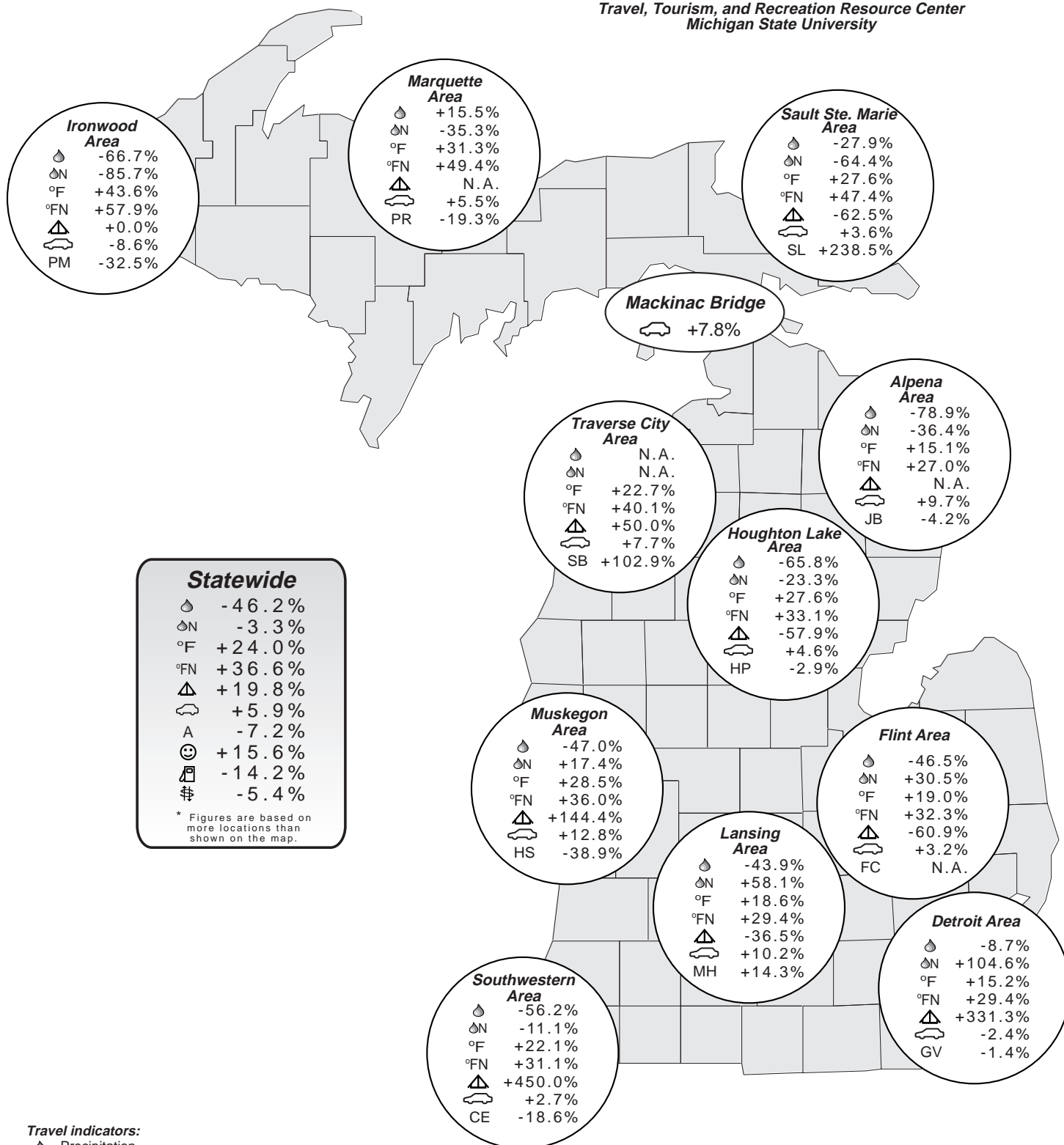


# Michigan Travel Indicators February 1998 vs. February 1997

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.

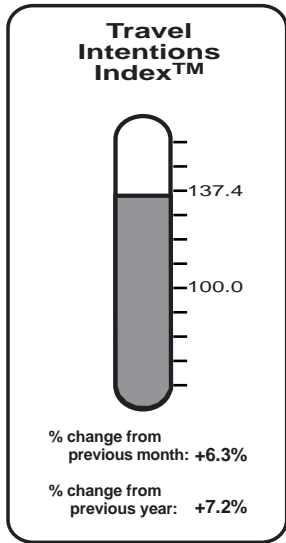
## Comments

by Sinji Yang and Donald F. Holecek

Highway traffic volume during the second month of 1998 increased almost 6% compared to February 1997. Increases occurred in all monitored areas except Ironwood (-8.6%) and Detroit (-2.4%). Double-digit increases occurred in the Muskegon (+13%) and Lansing (+10%) areas. Compared to last year, Mackinac Bridge crossings in February 1998 increased 8%, which broke the record for February crossings set in 1996.

Overnight stays at state parks increased 20% compared to February 1997. Most increases occurred in the Southern Lower Peninsula. Aggregate attendance at selected attractions declined 7%, although substantial increases occurred at Soo Locks (+239%), Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (+103%), and the Michigan Historical Museum (+14%).

Weather conditions remained generally favorable for travel and tourism in Michigan. Statewide overall precipitation in February was 46% lower than February 1997 and 3% lower than normal. Average temperatures were 24% higher than February 1997 and 37% higher than normal.



## **Travel Forecast**

*by Sinji Yang and Donald F. Holecek*

At the beginning of 1998, we projected that travel volume would increase in the range of 3-4% during the year. In February 1998, highway traffic volume increased 6%, which is higher than what we forecasted. The increase in traffic counts may be attributed to the unusually warm weather Michigan experienced during the month, due in part to the El Nino phenomenon.

During February 1998, gasoline prices declined 14%, the U.S./Canadian exchange rate decreased 5%, and the Consumer Confidence Index increased 16% compared to February 1997. The Michigan Travel Intentions Index in February 1998 was 137.4. This was 6% higher than the previous month and 7% higher than February 1997.

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

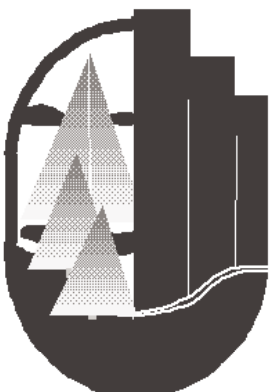
We would also like to acknowledge the financial support of the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station and Michigan State University Extension.

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

## **Michigan Travel Indicators, Report No. 26**

Published monthly by the Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center  
 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](mailto:dholecek@pilot.msu.edu)  
[yangsinj@pilot.msu.edu](mailto:yangsinj@pilot.msu.edu)

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



# **MICHIGAN TRAVEL INDICATORS**

## **February 1998 Report**

**Michigan State University**  
**Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Resource Center**