

HotSpots Digital Maps

by Mike Barkley

The popular "**Fishing Hot Spots**" maps have gone "Digital". This map series is now available on CD for your computer.

The Michigan CD features 9 digital maps - Detroit River – Lake Erie/Western Basin – Lake Gogebic – Grand Traverse Bay – Little Bay de Noc – Mullet/Burt Lakes – Muskegon Lake – Saginaw Bay and Lake St. Clair.

If you are familiar with the Fishing Hot Spot maps, these digital maps have **ALL** of the features of the paper ones (fishing info, launch info, tips, etc.) plus some very useful features only possible through computer technology.

The 2 features that, I feel, make the program worth the \$39 price tag are that you can point your cursor at any spot on the map and it will display the GPS coordinates of that spot. If that isn't enough to make you part with the bucks, consider this feature - Ever wonder how far it is from the ramp to your favorite fishin' hole? With the distance feature, just click on the 2 spots and it will show you the exact distance. This feature can also be used to calculate distances of a more complicated route by clicking on each segment of your route. Another nice feature allows you to mark spots on the map and let's you print out maps (or specific areas).

Those of you that have previously purchased this CD are aware of the numerous glitches in the software. These glitches have all been corrected and a "patch" has been released and is available as a free download from their website, **www.fishinghotspots.com**. Go to the site and click on **CD UPDATES**, download the patch and double-click on it and your program will be fixed and updated (This should be done with a new CD purchase also). If you are not comfortable with downloading, give me a holler, I have the patch file.

The software is fairly easy and straight forward to install, with one very irritating exception. After you install the program, a "Registration" screen comes up and you can not get into the program until you fill it out. This "registration" consists of numerous pages of personal information that has absolutely no purpose other than marketing. Since it won't let you bypass it, I just fill it with gibberish and print it out (or electronically submit it-This will send them garbage, which I personally feel is very fitting). Once this is done, you will never be asked again and you will not end up on a lot of mailing lists.

It is a pretty "User Friendly" piece of software and has an excellent help system. If you need any help or have any questions about this program, Holler!

Overall, I have found it a very useful program and I would highly recommend it. It's well worth the price. It's available at most large fishing stores. I know that Cabela's and Gander Mountain carry it and **Lakeside Tackle** (one of DWF's supporters) has it for \$34.95. For more info, go to the Fishing Hot Spots Web site at www.fishinghotspots.com

P.S. You can now make purchases online from Lakeside at www.lakesidefishingshop.com