Lawrence Baker, Alan Herlihy, Philip Kaufmann, and Joseph Eilers furnish a scholarly review in the May 24 ***Science*** (Vol. 252:1151-1154) of the National Surface Water Survey conducted by the EPA in acid-sensitive areas of the U.S. This statistically designed survey of lakes and streams found that atmospheric deposition was the dominant source of acid anions in 75 percent of the acidic lakes and 47 percent of acidic streams. Organic anions were dominant in one-fourth of the acidic lakes and streams; acidic mine drainage was the dominant acid source in 26 percent of the acidic streams. Other causes were relatively unimportant on a regional scale. Nearly all the deposition-dominated acidic systems were found in six well-delineated subpopulations that represent about one-fourth of the NSWS lake population and one-third of the NSWS stream population.

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