

2021 Fisheries Management Spring Hearings Questions

If you have questions or comments about any of the below questions, please contact Fisheries Regulations Specialist Meredith Penthorn at Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov or (608) 316-0080.

STATEWIDE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT RULE CHANGES

1. Walleye Ceded Territory Regulation – Multiple waters in Ashland, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer and Vilas counties

This regulation proposal would apply the Ceded Territory standard walleye regulation (minimum length limit of 15 inches but walleyes from 20-24 inches may not be kept and only one walleye over 24 inches may be kept, and a daily bag limit of 3) to multiple waters in Ashland, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer and Vilas counties. The current regulation allowing anglers to keep 3 walleyes of any size with one larger than 14 inches is no longer appropriate amid declining trends in natural recruitment. We seek to increase adult walleye population density toward the objective ranges outlined in the [fishery management plans](#) that stakeholders helped us develop for these waters. The proposed regulation should promote our goal by protecting young walleye until they mature and allowing some adults to grow larger.

This proposal would apply to the following waters between Turtle-Flambeau Dam and Thornapple Dam:

- Big Falls Flowage (Rusk County)
- Crowley Flowage (Price County)
- Dairyland Reservoir (Rusk County)
- Elk River (entire) (Price County)
- Flambeau River, including waters of the North Fork Flambeau River, between Turtle-Flambeau Dam and Thornapple Flowage Dam (Ashland, Iron, Price, Rusk, and Sawyer counties)
- Grassy Lake (Price County)
- Lac Sault Dore (Price County)
- Ladysmith Flowage (Rusk County)
- Lower Park Falls Flowage (Price County)
- Phillips Chain (Duroy, Elk, Long, Wilson lakes and connecting waters combined) (Price County)
- Pike Lake Chain (Amik, Pike, Round, Turner lakes and connecting waters combined) (Price and Vilas counties)
- Pixley Flowage (Price County)
- Solberg Lake (Price County)
- South Fork Flambeau River (entire) (Price, Rusk and Sawyer counties)
- Upper Park Falls Flowage (Price County)
- Thornapple Flowage (Rusk County)

1. Do you favor consistently applying the Ceded Territory walleye regulation (minimum length limit of 15 inches but walleye from 20-24 inches may not be kept and only one walleye over 24 inches may be kept, daily bag limit of 3 walleye) to all waters listed above, including the Flambeau River and its eight impoundments between Turtle-Flambeau Dam and Thornapple Dam, Solberg Lake, the entire Elk River, including the Phillips Chain of Lakes, Lac Sault Dore, and Grassy Lake, the Pike Lake Chain of Lakes, and the entire South Fork Flambeau River in Ashland, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, and Vilas counties?

1. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____

2. Walleye experimental regulation – Escanaba Lake, Vilas County

The proposed regulation would establish the Ceded Territory standard walleye regulation (minimum length limit of 15 inches but walleyes from 20-24 inches may not be kept, and only one walleye over 24 inches may be kept, and a daily bag limit of 3) on Escanaba Lake during a season running from the second Saturday in June until an annual quota (pounds of walleye) is met; then catch-and-release only until the first Sunday in March. The department would notify the public a week in advance of the transition to catch-and-release fishing through such methods as local news releases and website notifications as well as posting signs near the lake. A closed season would be in place from the Monday following the first Sunday in March until the Friday before the second Saturday in June. The current regulation is a minimum length limit of 28 inches and daily bag limit of one walleye with no closed season.

Escanaba Lake is an experimental fisheries research lake used to address high-priority research needs and assess the impact of fishing regulations. The proposed regulation would allow researchers to assess adult walleye abundance and recruitment of walleye into the fishery in response to ten years of experimental overharvest under the current Ceded Territory of Wisconsin default regulation for walleye. Angler harvest will be an important component of the experiment.

2. Do you support applying the Ceded Territory regulation of a 15-inch minimum length limit and 20-24 inches protected slot, with only 1 fish greater than 24 inches allowed to be kept, and daily bag limit of 3 walleye on Escanaba Lake in Vilas County, with a harvest season beginning on the second Saturday in June until an annual harvest quota (pounds) is reached, and then catch-and-release walleye fishing only until the first Sunday in March?	2. YES _____
	NO _____
	NO OPINION _____

<p align="center">PROPOSED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT LOCAL RULE CHANGES</p>

3. Walleye – Clear and Katherine lakes, Oneida County; Anvil and Laura lakes, Vilas County

The proposed regulation would establish an 18-inch minimum length limit but fish from 22 to 28 inches may not be kept, and a daily bag limit of 1 for walleyes in Clear Lake and Katherine Lake in Oneida County and Anvil Lake and Laura Lake in Vilas County. The current regulation is the Ceded Territory standard walleye regulation (15-inch minimum length limit but walleye from 20-24 inches may not be kept and only one over 24 inches may be kept, and a daily bag limit of 3) for Clear Lake, Katherine Lake and Anvil Lake, and no minimum length limit but only one fish over 14 inches allowed for harvest for Laura Lake.

The management goals for these lakes are to increase adult walleye densities and re-establish naturally-reproducing, self-sustaining, walleye fisheries.

This change to a more protective slot regulation and a more conservative daily bag limit is based off biological survey data collected by the DNR and Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. Recent adult walleye population estimates, along with annual juvenile walleye population surveys, indicate that these walleye populations will continue to decline in the near-term. These walleye populations all had naturally-reproducing, self-sustaining walleye populations in recent times, which provided strong fisheries.

However, levels of natural walleye reproduction have drastically dropped to levels that will not sustain these populations. Therefore, stocking efforts have been initiated on all lakes, and other efforts aimed at rehabilitating these walleye populations are in the works. The change to a more restrictive regulation will protect more adult walleyes from harvest which will benefit the chances of successful natural walleye reproduction to resume in these lakes.

3. Do you favor applying an 18-inch minimum length limit but fish from 22 to 28 inches may not be kept and daily bag limit of one for walleyes in Clear, Katherine, Anvil and Laura lakes in Oneida and Vilas counties? 3. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____

4. Bass protected slot limit – Butternut and Franklin lakes, Forest County; North Nokomis Lake, Oneida County; Nugget Lake, Pierce County; White Mound Lake, Sauk County; and the Tiger Cat Chain of Lakes, Sawyer County

The proposed regulation for largemouth and smallmouth bass is no minimum length limit, except bass between 14-18 inches may not be kept and only one over 18 inches may be kept, with a daily bag limit of 5 bass in total. The current regulation is a minimum length limit of 14 inches and daily bag limit of 5 largemouth and smallmouth bass in total. The proposed regulation would apply to the following waters:

- Butternut and Franklin lakes, Forest County
- North Nokomis Lake, Oneida County
- Nugget Lake, Pierce County
- White Mound Lake, Sauk County
- Tiger Cat Chain of Lakes (Upper Twin, Lower Twin, McClain, Burns, Placid lakes and Tigercat Flowage), Sawyer County

Butternut and Franklin lakes: The proposed regulation will allow anglers to reduce the abundance of smallmouth bass, which will allow increased growth rates and body condition for the population as a whole. This regulation will also reduce bass abundance by focusing the harvest on smaller fish (rather than larger fish), which will increase the size structure of the population. Reduced abundance of smallmouth bass would not only improve the smallmouth bass fishery in Franklin Lake, but it may have an impact on panfish and non-game fish populations, which would have a positive impact on the fishery as a whole.

North Nokomis Lake: The management goal for North Nokomis Lake is to reduce the abundance and increase the size structure of largemouth bass while increasing the size structure and maintaining a low adult density of smallmouth bass to provide a bass fishery with an opportunity for both harvest and memorable size fish. There is an abundance of largemouth bass under 14 inches and largemouth bass over memorable size (18 inches) are present. The adult smallmouth bass population shows to be low density with relatively good size structure. Implementing a 14-18-inch protected slot with 1>18 inches length regulation will aid in lowering the abundance of largemouth bass <14 inches and improving the overall size structure of both largemouth and smallmouth bass while maintaining a low density of smallmouth bass.

Nugget Lake: The management goal is to provide a healthier largemouth bass population with increased growth rates and fish of harvestable size. The proposed regulation will help to reduce densities of small largemouth bass which will increase growth rates and provide harvest opportunities for quality length largemouth and provide more opportunity for trophy potential. Currently only 5 percent of the bass population is larger than 14 inches; therefore, this proposed regulation will aid in increasing the number of fish available for harvest which will in turn help to improve the size structure of the population. This regulation proposal is one tool to help meet the management goal because this would help to reduce largemouth bass densities, which should improve the size structure of the population and increase growth rates to provide a quality fishery.

Tiger Cat Chain: The Tiger Cat Chain in Sawyer County is being managed as a quality bass fishing opportunity. Harvest of small bass (<14 inches) may be beneficial to the overall quality of the bass fishery, while release of larger bass can enhance quality catch-and-release fishing opportunities.

White Mound Lake: The management goal of the proposed slot limit is to improve bass growth and size structure by increasing harvest of smaller bass, and ultimately providing a bass fishery with a more desirable mix of ages and sizes. This will provide a bass fishery with both more harvest opportunity and more large fish available to anglers. The management goal is currently not being met because of an overabundant population of small (less than 14-inch) bass. Objectives to decrease overall bass abundance. The second objective is to decrease the amount of time it takes a bass to grow to 14 inches. The third objective is to increase the percentage of the bass population that is larger than 14 inches. This regulation is one tool to help meet the management goal because increased harvest of small bass is expected to improve growth rates by reducing competition, preserve a range of sizes by protecting 14 to 18-inch bass, and provide an additional harvest opportunity.

4. Do you support a bass regulation of no minimum length limit and a 14-18-inch protected slot with one bass over 18 inches allowed for harvest, and a daily bag limit of 5 bass in total, for Butternut and Franklin lakes in Forest County, North Nokomis Lake in Oneida County, Nugget Lake in Pierce County, White Mound Lake in Sauk County, and the Tiger Cat Chain of Lakes in Sawyer County?

4. YES _____
 NO _____
 NO OPINION _____

5. Bass size limit removal – Katherine Lake, Oneida County, and Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes, Vilas County

This proposal would remove the size limit (no minimum length limit) for largemouth and smallmouth bass on Katherine Lake in Oneida County and Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes in Vilas County, and retain the daily bag limit of 5 bass in total. The current regulation is a 14-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of 5 bass in total.

Katherine Lake: The management goal for Katherine Lake is to reduce the overabundant largemouth (5.6 adults per acre) and smallmouth (7.3 adults per acre) bass populations, especially those under 14 inches. Removal of the 14-inch minimum length limit will aid in reducing adult bass densities to the goal of 3 adults per acre or less for each individual species. The population density goal for largemouth and smallmouth bass is 3 adults per acre or less for each species. Additionally, another management goal is to

re-establish a naturally reproducing walleye fishery maintained at an adult density of 3-6 per acre. Natural recruitment of walleye is at historic lows in Katherine Lake, and reducing adult bass densities is expected to reduce potential predation on young walleyes and also reduce competition for resources.

Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes: This proposal would remove the 14-inch length limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass in Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes and allow for bass of any size to be harvested. The management goals are to provide a harvest-oriented bass fishery and reduce bass abundance. This regulation proposal will help meet that management goal by allowing more harvest of bass.

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5. Do you support a regulation of no minimum length limit and daily bag limit of 5 bass in total for Katherine Lake in Oneida County and Upper and Lower Buckatabon lakes in Vilas County?
5. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____
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6. Largemouth bass size limit removal – White Potato Lake, Oconto County

This proposal would apply a daily bag limit of 5 bass in total and no minimum length limit on largemouth bass in White Potato Lake, Oconto County. The current regulation is a 14-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of 5 bass in total, which would remain for smallmouth bass.

The management goal is to reduce largemouth bass abundance through increased harvest. This regulation proposal is one tool to help meet the management goal because increased harvest of largemouth bass is expected to reduce their abundance over time.

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6. Do you support applying no minimum length limit for largemouth bass and a daily bag limit of 5 bass in total for White Potato Lake, Oconto County?
6. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____
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7. Northern Pike 40-inch minimum length limit – Lake Tomah, Monroe County

The proposed regulation is a 40-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of one fish. The current regulation is a 32-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of one fish.

Although the current northern pike fishing regulation on Lake Tomah has been effective in maintaining a northern pike population with quality size structure (recent surveys indicate that 15% of adult pike exceed 32 inches), additional protection of large pike from fishing mortality may provide more trophy pike fishing opportunities. Local anglers have expressed their desire for more trophy opportunities and, in 2017, a local WCC resolution passed (29 to 4, in favor) supporting a 40-inch minimum length limit for northern pike on Lake Tomah. At that time, the department was still in the process of evaluating whether raising the minimum size limit would have the potential to improve the trophy opportunities for pike. This

evaluation has been completed and DNR surveys indicate that growth rates in the lake are good (for example, 47% of females reached 32 inches or larger after only 7 years of growth) and that increasing the minimum size limit has the potential to reduce mortality of large pike (≥ 32) and increase the number of trophy pike in the lake.

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7. Do you favor a minimum length limit of 40 inches for northern pike on Lake Tomah in Monroe County?
7. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____
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8. Northern Pike protected slot limit – Big Muskego Lake and Bass Bay, Waukesha County; Long, Wilson and Irogami lakes, Waushara County

This regulation proposal would apply no minimum length limit but a protected slot of 25-35 inches (fish from 25-35 inches may not be kept) and a daily bag limit of 2 for Big Muskego Lake upstream to Little Muskego Dam and downstream to Big Muskego Dam and Bass Bay in Waukesha County, and Long, Wilson and Irogami lakes in Waushara County. The current regulation is a minimum length limit of 40 inches and daily bag limit of 1 for the Waukesha County waters and a 26-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of 2 for the Waushara County waters.

Big Muskego Lake and Bass Bay: The management goal for Big Muskego Lake and Bass Bay is to provide anglers with more diversified northern pike harvest opportunities while maintaining quality size structure, and to maintain current northern pike population levels and natural reproduction. The proposed regulation will allow for harvest of smaller pike while maintaining good recruitment and female size structure.

Long, Wilson and Irogami lakes: The management goal for Long, Wilson and Irogami lakes is to produce a self-sustaining northern pike population that provides anglers with both consumptive and trophy fishing opportunities, while also protecting adult females from overharvest. The proposal will help meet the management goal by allowing anglers to harvest some small pike, helping keep pike densities in check while protecting primarily female pike, which have the potential to grow to trophy size in these waters.

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8. Do you support applying a regulation of no minimum length limit, a protected 25-35-inch slot limit, and daily bag of two for pike on Big Muskego Lake and Bass Bay in Waukesha County and Long, Wilson and Irogami lakes in Waushara County?
8. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____
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9. Northern Pike size limit removal – Tuttle Lake, Marquette County; Big Hills, Morris, and Pine lakes, Waushara County

This proposal would apply a daily bag limit of 5 fish and no minimum length limit for northern pike in Tuttle Lake in Marquette County, and Morris, Big Hills and Pine lakes in Waushara County. The current regulation is a minimum length limit of 26 inches and daily bag limit of two. Most of the lakes in Marquette and Waushara Counties are highly developed, lack suitable habitat and do not have the forage base to support fast-growing northern pike populations. Over the years, many lakes have experienced high-density, slow-growing northern pike populations. This allows for virtually no harvest because very few fish reach 26 inches.

The management goal is to encourage the harvest of smaller, slow-growing pike, to increase northern pike harvest opportunities in Marquette and Waushara counties, simplify regulations and potentially reduce density and promote better growth and size structure of the population.

This regulation proposal is one tool to help meet the management goal because it will allow anglers to harvest small pike, thereby reducing density and improving growth rates and size structure of the northern pike population.

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| 9. Do you favor applying a no minimum size limit and daily bag limit of 5 for northern pike in Tuttle Lake, Marquette County and Big Hills, Morris and Pine lakes, Waushara County? | 9. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____ |
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10. Northern Pike protected slot limit – Parker Lake, Adams County

The proposed regulation for Parker Lake in Adams County is no minimum length limit, a 25-35-inch protected slot (pike from 25-35 inches may not be kept), and a daily bag limit of 5. The current regulation is a 26-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of 2.

The goal of this proposed regulation is to provide a quality northern pike fishery with consumptive harvest opportunities. The no minimum length limit with protected slot limit will allow anglers to harvest overabundant, slow-growing small pike while improving size structure and protecting larger pike.

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| 10. Do you support changing the northern pike regulation from a 26-inch minimum length limit, daily bag of 2 to a 25-35-inch protected slot with a daily bag limit of 5 for Parker Lake in Adams County? | 10. YES _____
NO _____
NO OPINION _____ |
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11. – 12. Northern pike standard regulations – Portage County waters

The proposed regulations would apply to all waters of Portage County except the Wisconsin River system (including flowages) and Jacqueline Lake, which would remain at a minimum length limit of 32 inches and daily bag limit of 1, and Jordan Pond, and Collins Lake, which would remain at a minimum length limit of

26 inches and daily bag limit of 2. The proposal for waters north of Highway 10 is the northern zone standard regulation of no minimum length limit and a daily bag limit of 5. The proposal for waters south of Highway 10 is the southern zone standard regulation of a minimum length limit of 26 inches and daily bag limit of 2. The current regulation is a minimum length limit of 26 inches and daily bag limit of 2 countywide. Reverting to the statewide standard pike regulations that are based on pike management zone rather than county will help to better manage northern pike populations exhibiting small size structure and diversify northern pike angling and harvest opportunities.

11. Do you favor applying the standard northern pike zone regulation of no minimum length limit and daily bag of 5 on Portage County waters north of Highway 10, excluding the Wisconsin River system and flowages, Jordan Pond, Jacqueline Lake, and Collins Lake?

11. YES _____
 NO _____
 NO OPINION _____

12. Do you favor applying the standard southern pike zone regulation of a 26-inch minimum length limit and daily bag of 2 on Portage County waters south of Highway 10, excluding the Wisconsin River system and flowages, Jordan Pond, Jacqueline Lake, and Collins Lake?

12. YES _____
 NO _____
 NO OPINION _____

13. Panfish protection – Big Eau Pleine Reservoir, Marathon County; Big Round Lake, Polk County; Cranberry Lake, Price County; Lake Chippewa, Sawyer County; Huron Lake, Waushara County

The proposed regulation is a daily bag limit of 10 panfish in aggregate. The current regulation is a daily bag limit of 25 panfish in aggregate.

This regulation would apply to each of the following waters:

- Big Eau Pleine Reservoir, Marathon County
- Big Round Lake, Polk County
- Cranberry Lake, Price County
- Lake Chippewa (upstream to the Moose Lake dam on the west fork of the Chippewa River and County Highway B on the east fork of the Chippewa River and downstream to Winter Dam), Sawyer County
- Huron Lake, Waushara County

Big Eau Pleine Reservoir: Growing angler concerns have increased regarding the quality and duration of the panfish fishery on Big Eau Pleine Reservoir and recent survey data indicate signs of an exploited black crappie and yellow perch population. Recent research has shown that reducing black crappie and yellow perch daily bag limits to ≤10 fish may noticeably reduce harvest mortality that may improve black crappie and yellow perch population structure, and it may also enhance the quality of fishery by allowing more anglers a greater chance of filling a bag limit and potentially prolonging duration of time anglers can utilize available year classes.

Our goal is to have moderate to high density population of black crappie and yellow perch characterized by multiple strong year classes in the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir, able to sustain quality harvest opportunities throughout the year and provide equitable harvest opportunities amongst anglers. A reduction in panfish daily bag limit from 25 fish to 10 fish (in aggregate) will help to achieve this goal.

Big Round Lake: The management goal is to sustain a bluegill population with high size structure that provides a more consistent angling opportunity for quality bluegill. Although Big Round Lake currently has quality panfish populations, this regulation may also improve panfish size structure, especially for bluegills. The current regulation allows for high panfish harvest, so their populations tend to have more year-to-year variability, especially for larger panfish. This regulation proposal is one tool to help meet the management goal because it should reduce the number of panfish harvested from Big Round Lake and could increase panfish size structure.

Cranberry Lake: Citizens have long voiced their concerns that high fishing pressure and harvest could jeopardize the high-quality angling opportunity that Cranberry Lake offers for black crappies, bluegills, and yellow perch. Cranberry Lake’s habitat, water quality, and fish community are well aligned to produce large panfish that anglers prefer. Reducing the daily bag limit from 25 to 10 panfish in total could help to protect the size structure of Cranberry Lake’s panfish populations and distribute the harvest more evenly among anglers.

Lake Chippewa: The Chippewa Flowage is a dynamic system with a fishery that responds to water level manipulations. Recently, planned drawdowns have been used to control invasive species and boost walleye recruitment. The resulting changes in the fishery (more abundant walleye, less abundant panfish) lead to conditions where regulation changes may create better size structure of panfish while distributing harvest more equitably.

Huron Lake: Huron Lake is a small pothole lake, similar to many lakes in the area, that has little near shore habitat and is vulnerable to overharvest of panfish. Bluegill abundance has decreased 60% since the last survey in 2010, most likely due to harvest and predation by an overabundant largemouth bass population. Panfish size structure has also declined. The 14” minimum size limit for largemouth bass was removed in 2019 and a bag limit reduction for bluegill to 10 will help to further protect the bluegill population.

13. Do you favor reducing the daily bag limit for panfish from 25 in aggregate to 10 in aggregate for each of the following waters: Big Eau Pleine Reservoir, Marathon County, Big Round Lake, Polk County, Cranberry Lake, Price County, Lake Chippewa, Sawyer County and Huron Lake, Waushara County?	13.	YES _____
		NO _____
		NO OPINION _____

14. Muskellunge trophy management – Namekagon River, Washburn and Burnett counties; Presque Isle Chain of Lakes, Vilas County

The proposed regulation is a 50-inch minimum length limit and daily bag limit of one fish. The current regulation is a minimum length limit of 40 inches and daily bag limit of one. The proposed regulation would apply to the following waters:

limit of 12 inches and a daily bag limit of 5 fish from Lost Hollow Road, upstream to STH 58 bridge 0.25 miles north of Loyd. The current regulation on both streams is catch and release: artificial lures only and all trout shall be immediately released.

The management goal is to provide harvest opportunity while increasing quality and larger-sized fish. Current high densities of brown trout reduce growth potential and limit quality size fish potential. Allowing harvest of fish less than 12 inches along these stream reaches can reduce densities of young adults and increase growth potential, thereby increasing size structure.

16. Do you favor applying a maximum length limit of 12 inches and daily bag limit of 5 trout, no gear/bait restrictions, on Mill Creek from USH 14 upstream to Quarry Hill Road and on Willow Creek from Lost Hollow road upstream to STH 58 bridge 0.25 miles north of Loyd in Richland County?	16.	YES _____
		NO _____
		NO OPINION _____

17. Brook Trout Management – Little Wolf River and connected creeks, Marathon, Portage, Shawano and Waupaca counties

This proposal would apply a daily bag limit of 3 trout in total and a minimum length limit of 8 inches for all trout species in the Little Wolf River from its headwaters to the downstream end of the classified section (44.61577° N; -89.05220° W), Comet Creek, Jones Creek, Jackson Creek, Flume Creek, Rainy Creek, and Bradley Creek (from their headwaters to the confluence with the Little Wolf River). The current regulation for all of these streams is a daily bag limit of 3 trout in total with a 12-inch minimum length limit for rainbow trout and brown trout and an 8-inch minimum length limit for brook trout. The management goal of all of these streams is to maintain the high-quality brook trout fisheries that can be found in all of them while at the same time limiting the displacement of brook trout by brown trout.

17. Do you favor applying a daily bag limit of 3 trout in total with a minimum length limit of 8 inches for all trout species in the Little Wolf River from its headwaters to the downstream end of the classified section (44.61577° N; -89.05220° W), Comet Creek, Jones Creek, Jackson Creek, Flume Creek, Rainy Creek, and Bradley Creek in Marathon, Portage, Shawano and Waupaca counties?	17.	YES _____
		NO _____
		NO OPINION _____

18. Trout early catch-and-release season--Popple River, Forest and Florence counties; Plover River, Marathon and Langlade counties; and Waupaca/Tomorrow River, Portage and Waupaca counties

This proposal would add the following waters to the list of counties with an early catch-and-release only, artificial lure-only trout fishing season. This season runs from the first Saturday in January at 5 a.m. to the Friday preceding the first Saturday in May. These waters are currently closed to the early catch-and-release trout season.

- Popple River in its entirety, Forest and Florence counties

- Main stem Plover River upstream of Highway 153, Marathon and Langlade counties
- Waupaca/Tomorrow River between Durant Rd and Frost Valley Rd, Portage and Waupaca counties

Popple River: Currently the Popple River is not open for the early catch and release season, even though biologically the Popple River is very similar to the other three main rivers in the area that allow early catch and release fishing. By adding the Popple River to the streams open for the early season, the regulations will be consistent among the rivers in the area and anglers will be able to fish the Popple River during the early season.

Plover River: This proposal will open the Plover River upstream of Hwy 153 (main stem only; not including tributaries or off-channel springs) to early season catch-and-release trout fishing. Currently, few opportunities for early season catch-and-release trout fishing exist in Central Wisconsin and many local trout anglers seek these unique angling opportunities. Opening the Plover River to early season trout season is anticipated to have no significant negative impacts on the trout populations, based on the results from trout streams across 50 counties in Wisconsin which have been implementing early season catch and release trout fishing since 2014.

Waupaca/Tomorrow River: This proposal would open the stretch of the Waupaca/Tomorrow River between Durant Road and Frost Valley Road to early season catch and release fishing. The rest of the Waupaca/Tomorrow River from Amherst Dam in Portage County to STH 54 in Waupaca County is open to fishing during the early catch and release season. No significant negative impacts on trout recruitment have been observed in other streams throughout Wisconsin that are open during the early catch and release season. Because of this, the department does not anticipate any negative impacts on brown trout recruitment if this segment of stream is opened to fishing during the early catch and release season.

<p>18. Do you favor applying an early trout catch-and-release season, where only artificial lures are allowed, to the Popple River in Forest and Florence counties, Plover River in Marathon and Langlade counties and Waupaca/Tomorrow River between Durant Rd and Frost Valley Rd in Portage and Waupaca counties?</p>	<p>18. YES _____</p> <p>NO _____</p> <p>NO OPINION _____</p>
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19. Trout – Removal of late catch-and-release season on the Popple, Peshtigo and Rat rivers in Florence, Forest and Marinette counties

This proposal would remove the late catch-and-release-only season from the Popple, Peshtigo and Rat rivers in Florence, Forest and Marinette counties. The late catch-and-release season runs from Oct. 16 to Nov. 15, and only artificial lures may be used. Removing the late season will make regulations simpler and more consistent on the Popple, Peshtigo, and Rat River and neighboring Pine River. The current late catch-and-release trout season is underutilized, and a late catch-and-release season may impact spawning migrations of brook trout. The Peshtigo and Rat Rivers already have an early catch-and-release trout season, and that season is proposed for the Popple River in a separate question to maintain catch-and-release opportunities for anglers.

Affected waters would be:

It would be beneficial to conservation law enforcement agents to have regulation consistency between these connected waters that function as a chain. There may also be benefits to evaluating the experimental regulations in Durphee by applying them consistently within the chain.

21. Do you favor applying the same regulations to Schoolhouse Lake that are in place on Durphee Lake, Sawyer County, so that both lakes are managed consistently as a chain?

21. **YES** _____
 NO _____
 NO OPINION _____

22. Urban Fishing Pond – Pipke Park pond, Vilas County

This proposal would add Unnamed Lake (T44 R6E S34), locally known as South Pond in Pipke Park in the Town of Presque Isle, as a community fishing pond. This would include regulations as follows:

- Special season from the second Saturday in March to the Friday before the last Saturday in April for juveniles 15 years of age and younger and certain disabled anglers, and an open season for all anglers at all other times of year.
- Daily bag limit of 3 trout, 1 gamefish, and 10 panfish with no minimum length limits on any fish would apply year-round.

This regulation would create a unique Northwoods fishing opportunity, for locals and tourists alike, in a beautiful municipal park.

22. Do you favor designating Pipke Park in Vilas County as an urban fishing pond with a daily bag limit of 3 trout, 1 game fish and 10 panfish (no size limits)?

22. **YES** _____
 NO _____
 NO OPINION _____

23. Allowing the incidental harvest of carp on the Winnebago system by people who possess sturgeon tags and are otherwise legally participating in the sturgeon spearing season.

Currently, the carp spearing season is closed on the Winnebago system during the period when the sturgeon spearing season is open. A result of this closure is that the only legal spearing activity is for sturgeon. All people who are spearing must follow the same regulations such as spearing hours, spear size, and hole size. Sturgeon spearing regulations are easily followed and can be effectively enforced.

A disadvantage of closing the carp season during the season for spearing sturgeon is that the incidental harvest of a carp is illegal. Protecting carp is not necessary for fisheries management purposes.

It is possible to maintain the closed spearing season for carp but allow their incidental harvest by people who possess the proper permit and are legally participating in the sturgeon spearing season. This would

maintain regulations that protect sturgeon which are easily followed and effectively enforced. It would also allow the incidental harvest, removal, and utilization of carp.

This proposal originates from a Conservation Congress advisory question that was asked in 2020 and was supported in voting.

23. The carp spearing season is closed on the Winnebago system when the sturgeon spearing season is open. Do you support maintaining the closed carp season but allowing the incidental harvest of carp species by people who possess the proper permits and are legally participating in the sturgeon spearing season?	23. YES _____ NO _____ NO OPINION _____
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FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY QUESTION

24. Lake Michigan Lake Trout Regulation Extension

The proposed regulation would maintain a daily bag limit of 5 in total for trout and salmon, including lake trout, on waters of Lake Michigan and Green Bay and their tributaries, including Green Bay rivers and streams up to the first dam or lake. The proposal would also maintain a continuous open season for lake trout on Lake Michigan, Green Bay and major tributaries. The minimum length limit of 10 inches would remain the same. This regulation has been in place since 2017, but in 2021 reverted to a daily bag limit of no more than 2 lake trout, with a lake trout season running from March 1 to October 31 each year. Creel data indicate that lake trout harvest has been comfortably below harvest limits each year since the continuous season and daily bag limit of 5 were implemented. Allowing a daily bag limit of 5 lake trout provides an additional harvest opportunity for anglers without threatening the ongoing cooperative, multi-state rehabilitation of lake trout in the waters of Lake Michigan and Green Bay. In addition, the department will continue to analyze the annual harvest of lake trout to ensure we are utilizing the appropriate bag limit and open season to continue our rehabilitation efforts on lake trout.

24. Do you support maintaining a daily bag limit of 5 and continuous open season for lake trout in Lake Michigan, Green Bay and tributaries?	24. YES _____ NO _____ NO OPINION _____
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