

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Board Agenda Item**

**SUBJECT:**

Request that the Board approve the statement of scope for Board Order FH-04-20, and conditionally approve the public hearing notice for Board Order number FH-04-20 and notice of submittal of proposed rules to the Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse for proposed rules affecting chapter NR 20 related to sturgeon spearing harvest regulations and gear use.

**FOR: August 2021 Board meeting**

**PRESENTER'S NAME AND TITLE:** Todd Kalish, Fisheries Management Deputy Bureau Director

**SUMMARY:**

The statement of scope for Board Order FH-04-20 was approved by the Governor on May 13, 2021. On June 3, 2021, the co-chair of the Joint Committee for the Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR) requested that the department hold a preliminary public hearing and comment period on the scope statement. As required by s. 227.136(2), Wis. Stats., the Board approved the notice for the preliminary public hearing and comment period at the June 2021 NRB meeting. The preliminary public hearing on the scope statement was held on July 8, 2021. 39 members of the public attended the hearing, 8 provided comments, and 51 written comments were received on the scope statement. Preliminary public hearing link: <https://widnr.widen.net/s/vsx9plmwvf/fh-04-20-sturgeon-technology-scope-preliminary-hearing>

If the scope statement for FH-04-20 is approved, the department may begin drafting the rule language. As required by statute, the department may not begin work on the content of the proposed rule until the scope statement is approved. Once the rule is drafted, the department will seek public comment on the economic impact of the rule and on the proposed rule language. The 30-month time frame for submission of a final rule to the legislature for approval expires on November 24, 2023.

A rule stemming from this scope statement would address the use of technology during the Winnebago sturgeon spearing season. This rule would not apply to technology use during other fishing seasons.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the statement of scope for Board Order FH-04-20 and conditionally approve the public hearing notice for Board Order FH-04-20 and notice of submittal of proposed rules to the Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse.

**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS (check all that are applicable):**

- Statement of Scope
- Governor's Approval of Statement of Scope
- Public Comments Summary
- (insert document name)
- (insert document name)
- (insert document name)

Approved by	Signature	Date
Justine Hasz, Fisheries Management bureau director	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Justine R Hasz</i>	7/16/2021   8:10 AM CDT
Keith Wanke, FWP division administrator	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Keith Wanke</i>	7/16/2021   8:24 AM CDT
For Preston D. Cole, Secretary	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Todd Ambs</i>	7/19/2021   8:51 AM CDT

cc: Board Liaison - AD/8  
Department Tribal Liaison - AD/8  
Program attorney - LS/8 by Todd Ambs  
Department rule officer - LS/8

DS  
WR

**THIS PAGE WAS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.**

**CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM**

DATE: July 16, 2021

TO: All Members of the Natural Resources Board

FROM: Preston D. Cole, Secretary

SUBJECT: Response summary for statement of scope for FH-04-20, relating to sturgeon spearing harvest regulations and gear use

The department held an online preliminary public hearing on July 8, 2021 on the statement of scope for Board Order FH-04-20. Written comments on the statement of scope were accepted through the end of the day on July 8, 2021. Not including DNR staff, 39 people attended the preliminary public hearing. During the preliminary public hearing, the department received 8 spoken comments (1 in favor of the scope statement and regulating technology, 7 opposed to the scope statement and regulating technology). The majority of these spoken comments represent a subset of those who provided written comments. During the comment period for this scope statement, the department received 23 written comments and 3 appearance slips in favor of the scope statement (in favor of regulating technology use), 27 written comments and 1 appearance slip opposed to the scope statement (opposed to regulating technology use), and 1 written comment not stating a position on the scope statement. The department also received 2 phone comments in support of the scope statement. The general comments are summarized below, and written comments are included in the Appendix. Spoken comments are available through the hearing link: <https://widnr.widen.net/s/vsx9plmwvf/fh-04-20-sturgeon-technology-scope-preliminary-hearing>

*Comments on the impacts of technology use on sturgeon*

**The harvest cap system and other regulations adequately protect sturgeon from overharvest. The cap hasn't been hit in several years, even with the use of cameras. If there's concern about harvesting too many sturgeon, the cap can always be lowered.**

As outlined in the scope statement, harvest caps (juvenile females, adult females, and males) are utilized to prevent overharvest of sturgeon, regardless of whether technology is used while spearing the sturgeon. If harvest approaches the caps, the department will close the season in that area (Upriver Lakes or Lake Winnebago). Population monitoring ensures that appropriate harvest caps are set to manage sturgeon harvest for a sound population structure.

**Dirty water years are nature's way of protecting sturgeon from spearing. Using cameras and other technology to spear sturgeon is unnatural and not fair chase for the sturgeon.**

This scope statement does not attempt to regulate or define fair chase for sturgeon. Water clarity continues to be the main determinant of spearing success, regardless of technology use.

**The question of whether to regulate camera use should be revisited if and when the harvest cap is triggered multiple years in a row.**

This suggestion is noted for the record. The current scope statement has been developed to allow the department to begin considering further regulation of technology, in light of public input indicating support for such regulations as well as emerging technologies that may result in increased harvest rates for sturgeon.

**The use of cameras is resulting in people hitting and injuring sturgeon and other fish that they can't see, without resulting in legal harvest.**

**Cameras are not leading to wounding any more fish than spearing without cameras. The number of spearers making bad throws at sturgeon based only on a camera is very low.**

Injury to fish that are not subsequently harvested can be a risk of sturgeon spearing regardless of whether a camera or other technology is used, especially during years when water clarity is low. Assessing the number of fish injured but not harvested is difficult, as they are not included in harvest numbers. We have no way of knowing if use of cameras causes more or fewer injuries to fish that are not harvested. The department does not have data on spearing practices that lead to fish injury. Regulations to prevent spearing injuries to fish are beyond the breadth of the proposed scope statement.

**When cameras are used, people in the same shack throw multiple spears at a single fish.**

The practice of how spearers decide to throw spears is not a component of this scope statement.

**Cameras result in the harvest of larger fish over 100 pounds, which is impacting the number of trophy sturgeon available and the number of large female sturgeon contributing to the population. Larger, older sturgeon take a longer time to replace. If more people start using cameras, more large sturgeon will be speared that would normally not be because they're on the bottom, out of sight.**

Cameras can allow spearers to better see and identify sturgeon, potentially leading to preferential harvest of larger fish if such fish swim past the camera. We do not have data on how often this occurs. However, the department utilizes harvest data to monitor the numbers and demographics of sturgeon being harvested to ensure that the population remains healthy. Years with strong gizzard shad hatches are a key factor in allowing more lake sturgeon to exceed 100 pounds and become available for harvest, especially if strong hatches occur in consecutive years. In addition, water clarity is the biggest factor determining total number of sturgeon speared and number of larger sturgeon speared.

**Throwing a spear at a shadow in the water without knowing what type of fish it is or if it's the correct size is unethical, with or without a camera.**

Existing regulations prevent the harvest of other fish species while sturgeon spearing, and the scope statement makes no changes to these regulations. Spearers are responsible for correctly identifying a sturgeon as it swims into the ice hole when preparing to throw the spear, regardless of camera use.

**The use of technology impacts how many sturgeon are caught, which then impacts future harvest caps. More sturgeon are caught with the use of a camera than without using a camera.**

**Even with the use of a camera, it's still difficult to spear a sturgeon or judge size based solely on the video screen. Cameras do not result in greater sturgeon spearing success.**

Spearing success largely depends on water clarity in any given year, since good water clarity allows all spearers to better identify the target and accurately throw the spear. The department does not have evidence that technology use results in higher spearing success rates.

**Underwater cameras can attract sturgeon if they're illegally used with the lights on, and it's difficult to enforce keeping the lights off.**

Using lights when sturgeon spearing is illegal, and the [Winnebago system sturgeon spearing regulations](#) require that all lights on cameras be disabled before the spearing season begins. No technology used during the spearing season can involve artificial lights.

**If cameras are banned, would enough sturgeon be harvested to maintain a healthy population or would skinny sturgeon become more abundant? Harvest of fish is needed to allow young fish to enter the population.**

The overall sturgeon population in the Winnebago system is capable of maintaining adequate age classes and individual body condition even if fewer sturgeon are harvested, as demonstrated during consecutive years of poor water clarity. The department also monitors the sturgeon population through harvest registrations and other means to verify that the population remains healthy.

*Comments on the impacts of technology on the sturgeon spearing experience*

**The traditional spearing season does not involve technology and gives fish a better chance of survival. Technology such as cameras, side scanners, down scanners, fish locators, etc. will only continue to advance in ways that are not compatible with the intent of the sport (looking into the hole to spear the fish), and could result in spearing every sturgeon that comes within range. Spearers already can use power saws and cell phones to find and access sturgeon, and don't need any other advantages.**

One reason for pursuing this scope statement is to assess emerging technologies and their impacts on sturgeon spearing and the sturgeon population, and propose regulations if necessary. The scope statement does not aim to determine what is considered to be a traditional sturgeon spearing season. However, the current types of technologies used are not biologically impacting the sturgeon population.

**Cameras allow spearers to see sturgeon and other fish when you can't see the bottom, and give spearers something to look at when water clarity is low. Cameras allow family and friends to watch fish while out on the ice even if they don't spear a sturgeon, and spearers can share pictures and video of fish with friends and family later.**

This comment is noted for the record. Cameras have continued to increase in popularity for the reasons described above, and the intent of the scope statement is not to maliciously restrict opportunities for spearers and their friends and family, but rather to proactively review technological advances for which additional regulation may benefit the format of the sturgeon spearing season and maintain more equal footing for all spearers.

**Sturgeon spearing is supposed to be a traditional sport, and throwing a spear at a fish without seeing it yourself is not sporting. If they care about the sport, people will still likely go out sturgeon spearing even if cameras are no longer allowed. Spearing should be about seeing a sturgeon come through the hole with your own eyes, not being able to spear a sturgeon just because you spend money on a tag.**

This comment is noted, though the scope statement does not make a determination on fair chase principles for sturgeon spearing. Some spearers prefer waiting for a sturgeon to swim through the hole in the ice, while others prefer to see fish swimming underwater before they reach the hole, regardless of whether they have the opportunity to spear a fish. The scope of what is considered to be a traditional sturgeon spearing season is not a component of this scope statement. The department expects that good levels of participation will continue regardless of a future rule regulating technology use.

**What's considered to be a traditional spearing season since people can use chainsaws, modern shanties, and other commodities that weren't available historically? This is the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and technology can allow people to enjoy the sport in new ways and more efficiently.**

This scope statement does not attempt to define the bounds of a traditional spearing season in relation to types of tools and equipment beyond those used to locate, observe and identify fish under the ice, such as underwater cameras and electronic fish finders. Good levels of participation among spearkers that do not use technology indicate that the sturgeon spearing season still maintains its status as a unique Wisconsin fishing opportunity, regardless of technology use. However, it's true that a subset of spearkers approach the sturgeon spearing season equally as an opportunity to see sturgeon as to harvest one.

**Blind spearing based on a camera is unethical, but the camera could be placed 10-15 feet away from the shack to allow people to watch but not spear sturgeon with a camera.**

While no specific rule proposals are yet on the table, this alternative is noted for the record.

**The use of technology helps bring more people to the sport, which supports the local economy. Banning technology will turn them away from the sport. People have invested time and money into sturgeon spearing with a camera, and may not participate if they can't see anything while out on the ice, which could impact local businesses.**

The department acknowledges that technology use during the sturgeon spearing season is important for some spearkers and for keeping new spearkers engaged. However, due to split public input on the future of sturgeon spearing as a sport, as well as rapidly emerging technologies that may impact sturgeon harvest in the future, additional regulation may be needed.

**The use of cameras is not resulting in a shorter season for spearkers and is not restricting individual spearkers' chances of harvesting a sturgeon.**

Harvest success rates and season length depend more upon ice conditions, weather, and water clarity than technology use, and this will remain the case even if technology is regulated. The likelihood of an early season closure is greater during years with good water clarity. While the use of cameras and other technology is not restricting an individual's ability to harvest a sturgeon, newer and more expensive technologies may impact how well spearkers can see sturgeon during years with poor water clarity, resulting in potentially lower success rates for spearkers that do not use technology or do not have access to it, as compared with those that do.

**Making spearing easier through technology use is not needed because of the existing high participation levels. Spearkers should take the time to do things right rather than expect to get a sturgeon without spending as much time on the ice.**

Spearkers use technology for different reasons, including the perception of improved chances at spearing a sturgeon as well as to pass the time with others while waiting for a sturgeon to swim into the hole. The department anticipates good public participation in the sturgeon spearing season will continue, especially during years with good water clarity. However, most spearkers put in many hours on the ice before harvesting a sturgeon, whether traditionally or with the aid of technology.

**Limiting the use of technology has no benefits or expected positive outcomes, and technology use does not pose risks or negative impacts to the sturgeon population. This proposal would result in less participation in sturgeon spearing, especially when water clarity is low.**

While technology use does not currently biologically impact sturgeon populations, newer types of technology and increasing use of technology could impact sturgeon in the future. The department anticipates continued good public participation in the sturgeon spearing season regardless of technology use.

*Comments on regulating social preferences*

**Public surveys have not shown a strong opposition to cameras during the sturgeon spearing season. Due to the split public sentiment on this issue and the fact that harvest caps have not been reached, it seems like a waste of resources to legislate a social issue.**

The use of technology is a social rather than biological issue. The harvest caps are effective at preventing detrimental impacts to the sturgeon population. However, public surveys, Spring Hearings questions and other discussions over the past several years have indicated a public desire to explore the potential for future regulation to maintain the form and function of the sturgeon spearing season. In 2019, a Spring Hearing question on prohibiting the use of underwater cameras and electronic fish finders during the sturgeon spearing season resulted in overall public support (5418 in support of prohibiting underwater cameras and 2138 against, and 4773 in support of prohibiting electronic fish finders and 2750 against). The department disseminated two public surveys in 2013 and 2018 to gauge attitudes about underwater cameras, the results of which are depicted below. However, it's important to note that the debate over camera and technology use tends to intensify following years with poor water clarity. In general, water clarity was better in the years leading up to 2013 than the period leading up to 2018, and opposition to cameras was a few percentage points higher in 2018 as opposed to 2013.

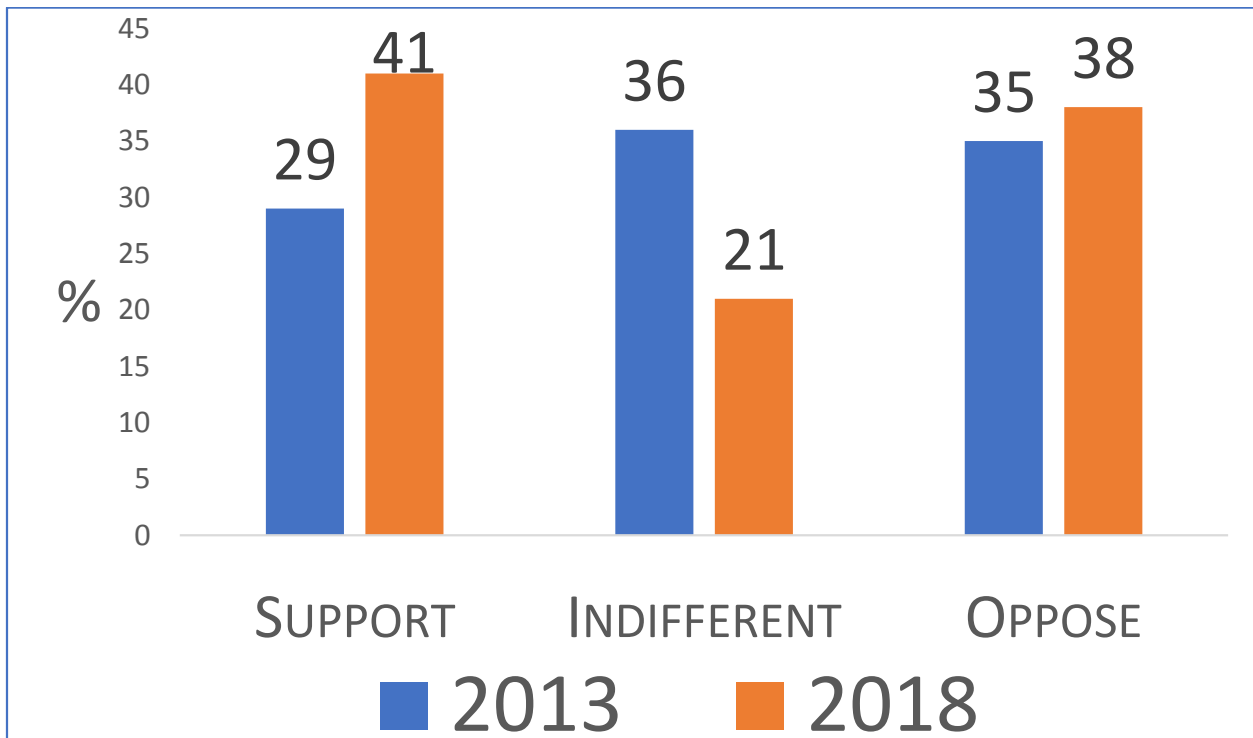


Figure 1: Attitudes about underwater cameras during the Winnebago sturgeon spearing season

**Some people's preference of using technology is not affecting the opportunity for others to enjoy the sport. Those that do not believe technology should be used when sturgeon spearing do not have to use it, similar to personal preferences of whether to use crossbows, fish locators, trail cams and**

**other gear for hunting and fishing. People should be able to fish how they want as long as it's not impacting sturgeon management goals.**

This comment is noted for the record. Additional public feedback will be collected on this topic if the scope statement is approved.

**The public already voted on this in 2019 at the Spring Hearings – why hasn't their vote already been implemented?**

The Spring Hearing public input received on the 2019 Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearing questions on this topic were advisory in nature. To pursue further regulations, a formal rule process is required. The scope statement is the first stage of that process. If the scope statement is approved, the department will offer additional public input opportunities to help develop rule options.

**The DNR doesn't know how many people use cameras during the spearing season.**

The department does not solicit information on camera use at the time of sturgeon harvest registration, but based on a 2018 poll of 523 spearkers in total, estimates that about 30% of spearkers use a camera or similar technology when sturgeon spearing.

**If regulations must be made to underwater cameras, regulate the size of the screen to make it more difficult to spear based only on the camera image.**

While no specific rule proposals are yet on the table, this alternative is noted for the record.

*Comments relating to the use of other technology while sturgeon spearing*

**Cameras are allowed for other types of fishing, so they should be allowed for sturgeon spearing too. Cameras are used in fishing tournaments and for targeting large bucks, so it doesn't make sense to single out camera use when sturgeon spearing.**

While cameras and similar technologies are used in other types of fishing and hunting, the Winnebago System sturgeon spearing season is a unique season for which special regulations have already been implemented in the past to ensure ethical spearing (such as the prohibition on using lights and fishing for other species while in the sturgeon spearing shack). Therefore, the department is approaching the concept of regulating technology on a separate basis through a scope statement limited only to technology use during the Winnebago sturgeon spearing season.

**Other fishing gear is not allowed in the sturgeon spearing shack, so why should cameras be allowed?**

The prohibition on possessing other types of fishing gear other than a handheld spear in the sturgeon spearing shack during the spearing season is in place to prevent a person from hooking a sturgeon and then spearing it while hooked. That practice is contrary to the purpose of the sturgeon spearing season, which relies on the skill of the spearker to hit the fish as it swims under the ice hole.

**A rule should also address the use of electronics used on the ice that have Bluetooth and ethernet capabilities.**

The scope statement allows this idea to be considered in a future rule.



**Drafters:** Meredith Penthorn, David Boyarski, Adam Nickel, Aaron O'Connell

# Appendix

Written comments, including those on appearance slips, are attached below.

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.**

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources

**HEARING APPEARANCE**  
Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

## PLEASE PRINT:

Date: <b>June 26 2021</b>	Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Name: <b>Gary Bodinger</b>	Telephone number (include area code): <b>(920 ) 439-1655</b>
Street or route (mailing address): <b>N3901 Lakeshore Drive</b>	
City, State and zip code: <b>Chilton WI 53014</b>	

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):  
[Redacted]
2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation – Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as “a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000”?  
 Yes  No

3. Comments:

I feel that ALL electronics, fish locators, cameras etc, should be ELIMINATED in sturgeon shacks; for use during the sturgeon fishing season. Just as the use of hook-and-line fishing was abolished in sturgeon shacks, because fishermen were using them to snag fish, and then spear them. All these are unfair advantages to the fish and other true sportsmen. I have fished this lake all my 73 years and there have been lots of changes ( as loss of sandpike fishing from overharvest during spawning.) These camera fisherman in my view are not true sportsman. Let's give the sturgeon a future, by not exploiting them by unnatural means. It is a great sport, let us keep it fair for all. Where is the SPORT, if we have to rely on cameras? I'm thankful for all the past DNR changes to protect the sturgeon population.



4. Position:  
(Check one)  In support  In opposition  As interest may appear

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.**

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Date: <b>6/26/21</b>	Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Name: <b>Jim Hoyt</b>	Telephone number (include area code): <b>(920 ) 410-8455</b>
Street or route (mailing address): <b>1635 Arlington Drive</b>	
City, State and zip code: <b>Oshkosh, WI 54904</b>	

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):

N/A

2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation -- Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as "a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000"?

Yes  No

3. Comments:

I am opposed to the proposed rule. I have used a camera the past two years and have been successful in harvesting a fish both years. However, realistically I spent the allowable hours in the shack for 5 days each year before seeing a sturgeon. A camera is not a miracle device some spearers would have you believe. In a typical viewing hole there is approximately 15 sq ft of viewing space, a camera will only show about 40% of that area in 14 ft of water. Then trying to spear a fish 14' below you by judging where it is on the monitor is still a challenge. What I find interesting is the evolution of using side imaging radar that can see a sturgeon 15' away, the direction its heading, and when it is directly below. This is quite a bit different than viewing 6 sq ft of 14 ft below you hoping a sturgeon swims in front of the camera.

Average cost of a camera and gear: \$350.00 (Shared with a Friend)  
Average cost of side scanner and gear \$1800.00 (Hardly in my budget)

In conclusion: I oppose the elimination of electronic gear for the harvesting of sturgeon.

4. Position:

(Check one)

In support  In opposition  As interest may appear

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

HEARING APPEARANCE Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

PLEASE PRINT:

Date: 6/28/2021	Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Name: Dylan Schmidt	Telephone number (include area code): (920 ) 418-0063
Street or route (mailing address): N6227 State Highway 55	
City, State and zip code: Hilbert, WI 54129	

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):

N/A

2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation -- Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as "a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000"?

Yes  No

3. Comments:

Seeing how sentiment to this issue is split, and (because if the harvest caps, which have not been reached for a few years) it has no impact on overharvesting the resource, I do not think the DNR should get in between this family feud. This has been the statement that had been echoed in past DNR Sturgeon meetings I have attended, so I question why this is even being proposed at this time. There is no biological reason for this, so I see it as a waste of DNR resources.

4. Position:

(Check one)

In support

In opposition

As interest may appear

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.**

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources

**HEARING APPEARANCE**  
Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Date: <b>6-28-21</b>		Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Name: <b>Ken Groeschel</b>		Telephone number (include area code): ( )	
Street or route (mailing address): <b>W3579 Hunters Lane</b>			
City, State and zip code: <b>Malone, WI 53049</b>			

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):  
[Redacted]

2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation – Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as “a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000”?  
 Yes  No

3. Comments:  
Opposed to any changes or restrictions of use of video cameras, sonar or other technology. The spearing cap is doing its job of maintaining the resource.  
Perhaps a better job can be done for the walleye population and river spawning fishing on the winnebago system

4. Position:  
(Check one)  In support  In opposition  As interest may appear

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Natural Resources

HEARING APPEARANCE  
Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Date: <b>June 29, 2021</b>		Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Name: <b>Stuart Muche</b>		Telephone number (include area code): <b>(920 ) 602-2037</b>	
Street or route (mailing address): <b>N9108 Lakeshore Drive</b>			
City, State and zip code: <b>Van Dyne WI 54979</b>			

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):

2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation – Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as “a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000”?

Yes  No

3. Comments:

4. Position: (Check one)	<input type="checkbox"/> In support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In opposition	<input type="checkbox"/> As interest may appear
-----------------------------	-------------------------------------	---	---

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

HEARING APPEARANCE Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

PLEASE PRINT:

Date: <b>july 3 2021</b>	Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Name: <b>joel Nimmer</b>	Telephone number (include area code): <b>(920) 8045435</b>
Street or route (mailing address): <b>N4886 county rd V</b>	
City, State and zip code: <b>Fond du lac WI 54937</b>	

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title):  
**myself**
2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation -- Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as "a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000"?  Yes  No
3. Comments:

camera and fish finder use should be banned from use during sturgeon spearing season...

4. Position:  
(Check one)  In support  In opposition  As interest may appear

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

From: Tom Head <tom@headinsurance.biz>  
 Sent: Monday, June 28, 2021 8:37 AM  
 To: Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
 Subject: Sturgeon advisory committee

Hi Meredith,  
 Giving you my 2 cents... either lower the quota on large females or disallow cameras! There has been more 100# fish theses last years because of camera, they are the future of spearing. There are a lot of ill speared fish that swim off and die.

Sent from my iPhone

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Ryan Hinz <Ryan.Hinz@schreiberfoods.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 28, 2021 7:59 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Cc:** Ryan Hinz  
**Subject:** Scope Statement Relating To Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations And Gear Use

I am someone that uses an underwater camera during spearing, and I would like that to remain legal. I definitely think this is something that should remain under conversation, but due to the fact that over the past decade, there have been many more years where the cap hasn't been hit on Winnebago compared to years where it has been, it doesn't seem that allowing cameras restricts spearkers chances of harvesting a fish due to a shortened season. If certain people do not want to use cameras, then they don't need to. If we get to a point where we have multiple years in a row where the caps are being triggered and the use of cameras is shortening the season, I think it would make more sense to revisit this question at that point. And I do agree with people that say the use of cameras does help with spearker engagement as well as attracting new people to the sport.

I also understand the idea of removing the 36 inch restriction on sturgeon length. I think getting rid of that restriction does make sense to reduce potential waste. I do think if the size limit is removed, that there should still be language in the regulations that spearkers should "try" to avoid spearing a fish under 36 inches to help maintain a healthy sturgeon population. But yeah, the idea of someone spearing a small one and throwing it back to have it die anyways, doesn't make a lot of sense.

Thank you.

Ryan Hinz – 311 Cross Gate Ln. De Pere, WI. 54115.

**Ryan Hinz** | Lead Software Developer, IS Development | Schreiber Foods  
T +1 920 455 6131 | M +1 920 562 4146 | [schreiberfoods.com](http://schreiberfoods.com)



**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** eplp@tm.net  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 27, 2021 2:12 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Lake Winnebago sturgeon spearing use of cameras

Hello Ms Penthorn,

The use of underwater cameras has perplexed us for a couple of years considering the fact you are not allowed to have electronic/fishing equipment in the shacks. It is unethical and the DNR has allowed long standing family traditions to be thrown away. People we know this past year bragged about how many they hit and injured but weren't able to get in the shack. We have limits on the amount of fish that may be speared in a year which also effects future years and is being eroded by the use of cameras. The same people whom condone the use of camera's also increased the spear sizes to bolster the chance of filling their tag. In short my husband, myself and 15 other family sturgeon spearer's hope the use of camera's be suspended immediately to save our fisherees and our traditions....we are not in favor of injuring helpless animals/fish.

Thank you,  
Eileen/Leonard Propson

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Gary Pernet <qaphunts@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 27, 2021 9:03 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Rule change to sturgeon spearing

I feel the 36" size limit should remain. I also believe the higher number of under sized fish being speared are due to people using cameras and other electronic devices. I hear numerous stories every year about people throwing spears at fish they don't really see, the size of a sturgeon is hard enough to judge when you can see them clearly, throwing a spear at a passing head or tail seems senseless.

My sons are 3rd generation spearkers and although we are very excited and thankful when someone gets a fish, the harvest is not what it's all about. It's a strong family tradition and something we will cherish as long as we can.

Dirty water/poor visibility and bad ice conditions are nature's way of helping to protect the species, I don't think electronic devices should negate that.

Thanks for letting me send you an email and voicing my opinion, rule changes are always hard and not everyone will be happy about them but we need to do what's best for the sturgeon fishery and that's banning all electronic devices.

Thank you,  
Gary A. Pernet

Sent from my iPad

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Joseph Kleist <josephkleist@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 3:37 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Scope statement

I am Not in favor of banning the use of electronics for sturgeon spearing as it has not impacted the harvest. I am in favor of eliminating the size limit. Joseph Kleist

[Sent from the all new AOL app for Android](#)

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Jay Freier <jaybirdski1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 11:27 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

ban all underwater cameras and all electronics during sturgeon spearing season might as well allow set lines also.then

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Steve VanDyke <4ahalibut@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 11:11 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Proposed sturgeon rule changes

Meredith

I am writing in non-support of proposed gear use rule changes:

10,000 plus outdoor people participate in spearing with the vast majority wanting no rule changes. A very small, very vocal group wants to see only a "traditional " event. The traditional event was horse drawn shacks and spudded holes. Please don't appease the minority group, they can choose not to use technology. The no tech group feels as if they need to protect future harvests, we have management tools for this purpose which have been extremely effective!

This is a social issue not a management issue. Absolutely no reason to legislate social issues.

Steve Van Dyke  
Email: 4ahalibut@gmail.com  
(920) 428-6128

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Dennis Doro <Dennis.Doro@appletonmarine.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 11:09 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon Spearing

We need to get back to the old fashion way. No technology use of any kind. Fish don't have a chance, Some year everyone will be complaining there are none left. No place for it. If the water is dirty the fish win that year Mother nature's way of protecting the fish. Should of stopped this years ago, just going to get worse.

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** schrdr1820 <schrdr1820@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 10:44 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon scope

I would like to convey my support to include the possibility of outlawing or regulating the use of cameras and live scope type technology in the Sturgeon spearing scope statement.

Thank You for this opportunity to add input.

Chris Schrader

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Laura Keuler <lkeuler011@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 10:33 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon spearing scope question.

I have used an underwater camera for several years and know other spearkers who use the camera. I have scene one sturgeon on camera and missed it. I have never missed a sturgeon I have scene with my naked eye. The DNR has set the safe harvest cap and I wholeheartedly agree with the cap system. On years in which you can not see bottom history has shown us that the safe harvest cap will not be met. In years where we can see bottom the safe harvest cap will most likely be reached. Cameras are used when a spearker can not see the bottom and the safe harvest cap will not most likely be reached. The cameras give the spearker something else to look at. If regulations need to be made, then I would regulate the size of the screen the spearker can use to see underwater. I use the small screen attached to my camera, but I know other spearkers that use larger TV screens which gives them added visibility. In years where we can see bottom I doubt that underwater cameras would be used.

As to the size limit, this is a personal spearker question. I started spearing when the legal length was 45". My dad taught me how to estimate size and I have never speared a short sturgeon. In the years since the legal size has been lowered to 36" I have let many sturgeon continue to swim even though they would have been "legal". I personally do not get a thrill out of killing a 10-12 lb sturgeon that is 36-40". I think that the size limit should be removed and let the spearker make that call. I think the ridicule these spearkers endure at the registration stations when they bring in a 36" sturgeon will be enough to stop them from spearing another small one. I was out spearing a few years ago with a friend who had never been spearing. A 35-40" sturgeon swam through the whole twice and he could not understand why I didn't throw the spear. I explained that, with my luck, someone would be registering a 100 pounder when I brought the little one in and I would be heckled. At the end of the day we went to the registration station and sure enough there was a spearker with a 38" sturgeon. Then a spearker pulled up with a 103 pounder and laid it next to the 38". You can imagine the comments that came from the crowd. My friend looked at me and said "good call".

Thanks for reading my opinions,  
Mark Keuler

Sent from my iPad

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** jeff messner <messnerjeff@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2021 5:45 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon spearing gear use

I am against banning cameras for sturgeon spearing, they have no effect on the harvest. Even though technically is getting better we haven't hit the harvest cap on Winnebago in many years. There is no supporting evidence to do this. if you decide to ban cameras my wife and grandkids will probably never go with me again because my camera is something that keeps them entertained watching perch and other fish swimming by that you can't see looking down the hole

Sent from my U.S.Cellular® Smartphone  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Krumenauer, Andy <akrumen@quad.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 25, 2021 8:56 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Camera use during spearing

I would love to see the use of cameras go away! This is not what our sport was meant to be! They are a great tool for scouting but otherwise should not be allowed in the hole while spearing. Same goes for other electronics.

### Andy Krumenauer

*Gravure Master Operator*

Quad

Lomira, Wisconsin

[andrew.krumenauer@quad.com](mailto:andrew.krumenauer@quad.com)

[www.QG.com](http://www.QG.com)

Confidentiality Notice | This e-mail, including attachments, may include confidential and/or proprietary information, and may be used only by the person or entity to which it is addressed. Any unauthorized use or disclosure is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender by reply e-mail and delete or destroy all copies of the original message and any attachments immediately.

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

From: Thomas Gronenq <Thomas.Gronenq@mercmarine.com>  
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2021 11:10 AM  
To: Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
Subject: Electronics for sturgeon spearing  
Attachments: 2019OverallResults.pdf

Meredith,  
What good was the 2019 Spring hearing votes on question 53 and 54 if they didn't implement the voice of the sportsmen and women then?  
I am not judging the people who want it or don't want it but I think that the sportsmen and women voted on this already...

Thank you,

Tom

*This data is internal to Brunswick.*

\*\*\*\*\*  
This email message may contain confidential or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete the message and any attachments and notify the sender by return email. You should not retain, distribute, disclose or use any of the information in this message.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

From: woelfeljs@frontier.com  
Sent: Monday, June 28, 2021 12:18 PM  
To: Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
Subject: Sturgeon Comments

**STOP these ever advancing "technological sturgeon weapons" now, before it is uncontrollable.**

Modern locators already detect fish 50 feet from the hole in the ice.  
What is next, surgical lasers on the spear, stunting devices, electrical shockers, etc.  
Science and technology are great advances, but should not be used to harvest our precious natural resources, the sturgeon.

Please proceed to ban "all" types of electrical operated devices, for the sturgeon ice spearing season on the Winnebago system.

Thanks,  
Steve Woelfel  
Chilton

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 29, 2021 1:06 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Cameras for Sturgeon spearing

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Meredith, please watch the many videos on you tube by googling Sturgeon spearing on lake Winnebago over the past number of years. I think then you will get a better understanding of what is making sturgeon spearing not the sport that is intended to be. Throwing at a fish you cant see is like shooting a deer at night with the aid of a spotlight which is not allowed. Such a unique sport we have here and the amount of fish being speared over 100# by the aid of camera is really taking a toll on the number of trophy size fish, just go back to years when cameras were not being used to harvest. The most memorable part of the sport is waiting for that fish to be seen with your own two eyes as it swims toward a decoy, yes some years go by and you don't get that opportunity but that's what brings you back again and again. Using cameras I personally know of people that have blindly thrown the spear at multiple fish a day using the aid of a camera. Really makes you wonder how many fish are actually being hit by a spear and tearing off because of a bad shot not knowing where to throw the spear. If you watch some of the videos it actually shows multiple people throwing multiple spears at a fish they see on a camera, WOW what a sport!!! Please take the time to think about the few things I pointed out to you and also I would prefer if my name is not used with this email during the meeting as I know friends that use cameras and they are in favor of using them. Friendships lost and arguments have become stronger over the past few years on this topic so that's why I am saying do not use my name in the public meeting. Thank You

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Joann Lakin <joannlakin@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 29, 2021 2:54 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** sturgeon scope hearing

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

*I would like to put my 2 cents in on the scope statement hearing that may or may not impact the use of underwater camera's etc. I have been spearing since I was old enough to buy a licence & before that with my father. At 72 yrs old I think I have a good idea of how things have changed over the years regarding sturgeon spearing. I love the sport but also know the importance of preserving this valuable resource. Our group has been using underwater cameras for quite some time now. We do not consider it an advantage to getting a sturgeon at all, yes it gives you an opportunity to see a sturgeon if the water is not clear, but it in no way means you will get one. First of by using a camera doesn't mean one will come through the hole, it is not a lure or attractant. I can tell you first hand that I know of far more fish that were not speared while using a camera then fish that were speared using a camera. As far as the idea that we are wounding large amounts of fish only for them to go off & die that is a fallacy. Even when you can see the fish with the naked eye you sometimes don't get a good hit on them & they come off, but I have seen fish speared with 1 tine that don't get away, so the reasoning of losing too many fish by using a camera doesn't hold water so to speak.*

*No matter which side of this issue you're on to me it's a personal preference, just like using fish locators, side imaging, crossbows, trail cameras, or whatever. If using an underwater camera to enhance your chances of at least seeing a sturgeon is what you want to do so be it. If you don't want to use one so be it. Technology has changed in a lot of ways, unless it is directly affecting taking too many sturgeon I see no reason for taking the cameras away. For our group it's about seeing a sturgeon or other fish to pass the time rather than about actually spearing a sturgeon. If you are out there for the sole purpose of spearing a sturgeon, or winning a pool you are out there for the wrong reason. It's about sharing time on the lake together in this very unique sport & having fun with family & friends & sharing stories.*

*If at any time by using cameras we start taking too many fish, by that I mean hitting the caps year after year then by all means something needs to be done. If it means raising licence fees for those of us who want to use a camera I am ok with that. Our group also uses recording devices that works like a trail camera, it works off motion detection, when something moves in front of the camera it triggers the recorder & records it onto a chip so you can download it & share with your friends. I can't tell you how many people have commented on how cool it is to see these fish on camera in their natural surroundings. I get great pleasure in seeing the look on their faces & here the excitement in their voices when they see these videos. At 72 yrs old it's not about spearing a fish anymore it's seeing them on camera & being able to watch them again & again.*

*Lets all try to get along & not bash someone who uses a camera. The younger generation of kids that come out love to watch the camera & it keeps their attention level higher then if they were looking into a murky hole. I think you will lose a lot of people & revenue if you take the cameras away. Remember using a camera does not draw the fish into your sturgeon hole. If all else fails you could put in an emergency rule that the DNR could use if we suddenly started spearing too many sturgeon every year because of cameras. So for the time being lets leave things the way they are. One last thing. If they have meetings on this subject it should only be open to people who buy a licence not for people who don't know what it's all about not someone who doesn't even spear. Also if implemented could we still use cameras for scouting & could we just cut a hole & use a camera as long as we didn't have spearing equipment or would we still need to buy a licence just to sit & watch for sturgeon even if we were not spearing?*

Thank you, Mike Lakin  
N3815 Long Road Chilton.



June 29, 2021

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

In regard to the latest discussion on technology and sturgeon spearing; when it is being said "In order to maintain a traditional spear fishery"; what are we referring to? Traditional can be referred to laying on the ice with a deer hide over your head.

We also have a harvest cap in place to alleviate any of these discussions and avoid law enforcement nightmares. Technology has NOT caused over harvest.

When someone says, "it may be unethical", please tell me how ethical it is to throw at an unknown shadow like people have done for years and cause the illegal harvest of many game fish species, primarily Musky and Northern verses knowing what you are throwing at.

I strongly recommend leaving technology run its course as it has with all other items in our lives.

In Wisconsin, we cannot afford to have another sport decline in interest.

Thank you,

Stuart Muche

920-602-2037

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Mose, Matt <MattMose@alliantenergy.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 29, 2021 4:18 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** sturgeon spearing harvest regulations and gear use

Meredith, I am emailing you because I received an email from the dnr saying email you about the scope statement for the sturgeon spearing rule changes zoom meeting coming up and that these emails would be kept as record just like speaking at the meeting.

My name is Matt Mose I live in Eldorado, WI in Fond du Lac county. I just want to say what a shame it would be to lose the use of cameras for sturgeon spearing season. I was talking to my wife about this last time this was brought up and she said that if we cant use cameras anymore she doesn't want to go spearing with me anymore. How terrible of a thing this would be to turn people away from the sport, not to mention how many of my friends have said the cameras keep there young kids interested, another important issue the future of the sport. I don't understand why this is an issue when we haven't hit the harvest cap for the last six years, and even if the caps were being hit big deal, that's what they are there for. I have heard many people talk about cameras being unethical, what is unethical is throwing a spear at something you are not sure of like a shadow, or a black line coming across your siding or pvc. Every year I hear of people spearing walleyes, northern, musky, carp, and sturgeon that aren't of legal size, with a camera you know exactly what you are throwing at and you can easily tell if the sturgeon is legal. If the sturgeon has scoots don't throw it might not be legal, simple as that. Another thing I would like to bring up, I was at the spring hearing when this was written in to ban cameras, the question was written with such negativity to camera use I know for a fact that people that didn't even spear were voting to ban them because they thought they were doing the right just based off of how the question was written. I know this because I talked to a group of people in the parking lot after the hearing. My request is that if this is brought to a spring hearing again that the question be written more neutral. It is my opinion that a survey be done when you buy a spearing license this way you get a true vote on what people want that actually partake in the sport. Thank you, Matt Mose

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

HEARING APPEARANCE Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

PLEASE PRINT:

Date: 6-29-21	Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Name: Duane Haedt	Telephone number (include area code): (920 ) 885-2302
Street or route (mailing address): 9145 Ivy Ln	
City, State and zip code: Berlin WI 54923	

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):

n/a

2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation -- Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as "a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000"?

Yes  No

3. Comments:

I absolutley see no problem with the use of cameras. With poor water clarity the last several years, it helps keep people interested in the sport knowing there is a possibility of seeing a sturgeon. Statistics show the use of cameras has not hurt the harvest quota. People have invested thousands of dollars in their ice shacks and some even take unpaid vacation to participate in sturgeon spearing. People will continue to purchase tags if they know they have a chance of seeing a sturgeon using a camera. That would be quite a bit of lost revenue when people stop purchasing tags because they know the water clarity is bad and they are not willing to invest the time to stare at a mudhole, so why waste the money. I also feel under no circumstances should the size limit be reduced to less than 36 inches.

Its unfortunate if bar talk by some fishing clubs is the reason behind this push to make these unnecessary regulation changes.

4. Position:

(Check one)

In support

In opposition

As interest may appear

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Michael Paulcheck <mikeandjoji@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 29, 2021 9:26 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon Spearing

Hello Meredith,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed scope statement for sturgeon regulations. I must say that I do not support these changes. Even with electronics being used I don't think the cap has been reached since I started spearing 5 years ago. As far as the traditionalists go I say step aside. They are welcome to spear their way but not tell others how to spear. I'm sure they don't use chainsaws & modern shacks with all the comforts of home. Just like the archers, muzzleloaders, Native American spearmen & many other outdoors people tradition is not wanted by the majority. Cameras are used by ice fishermen to gain a huge advantage. Anybody have a problem with that? I did not see anything in the statement about how many spearmen would no longer spear or how many youth that we try to get started in the sport that would be bored enough to go back to their video games. Just the occasional sighting of any of the fish in Lake Winnebago is very exciting to many. If the resource was being depleted or the cap was getting reached to quick I would be all for taking any advantage away. There may be a few spearmen that are taking bad camera throws with wide spears. I don't like laws that are made because of a few bad eggs. They will be bad no matter what the law is. I think narrowing the spear size is a move in the right direction. I think a 12 inch maximum rather than 18 would be even better. If taking less fish is the DNR goal then change the cap. When I spear I stay in a hotel & eat at restaurants. Now I have gotten my son & daughter in law into spearing. There is a lot of money put into the local economy by spearmen. How many can you afford to lose? I have not taken a Sturgeon yet but if I get to see one it makes it all worth while....Thank You.

Michael Paulcheck  
Fort Atkinson Wi.

Sent from [Outlook](#)

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Mark <c185.mark@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 30, 2021 8:05 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon issues

My name is Mark Beilfuss of New London, Wi.

I feel sturgeon spearing should not allow under water cameras and fish finders. This is wrong. On the other hand removing the size limit is good. This would remove a stressful judgement call on a spearer and reduce waste of accidental speared sturgeon.

Sent from my iPad

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** bloomvillenorth@frontiernet.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 30, 2021 1:34 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Winnebago Sturgeon Spearing Fishery Scope Statement - Bloom Comment Revised

**To:** [Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov)

**From:** John C. Bloom, 8250 Bloomville Lane, Lake Tomahawk, WI 54539 715-277-4133

**Re:** Winnebago Sturgeon Spearing Fishery Scope Statement

Thank you for allowing my comments. I'm 83 years old and have been deeply involved in the sturgeon fishery for over 70 years and five generations.

Over those years I have witness a lot of changes, some very good, some not so good. For years we chiseled and hand sawed our holes and only moved if the shanty got flooded out. I remember the year that there were 500 shanties on the lake and I thought "oh my God, and now there are 4,000!".

We have Dan Folz and Ron Bruch to thank for making regulation changes to help control illegal and overharvest including changing the season, hours, enacting harvest caps, etc. or we wouldn't have the fishery we have today.

Using electronics in the hole as an aid while sturgeon fishing is like using a drone to hunt deer. Look what has happened to Bow Hunting and Muzzle loaders from the intended traditional primitive sport.

I think of three sporting activities that haven't been tainted and they are stream trout fishing, grouse hunting and sturgeon spearing.

There is no better bonding than sitting over a sturgeon hole and quietly talking to your wife, son, daughter, grandchild etc. about what is important in life and the natural resources we have and must take care of for the future. It's not about tagging a fish but if you pay your dues you will be rewarded.

We have a choice to either have the sport unadulterated or allow technology to erase the meaning of sportsmanship. I've spent thousands of hours in a sturgeon shanty and feel that allowing electronics ruins the intent of tradition in pursuing one of the few fragile prehistoric species on our earth.

Let's not allow technology to overcome the fair chase that is left in the sport.

Thanks for listening.

Sincerely

J.C. Bloom

c.c. Wisconsin Natural Resources Board

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Wayne Blatz <wayneblatz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 30, 2021 12:51 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Spearing with electronics

Good day,

Thank you for allowing me to comment. The most important thing is the preservation of the sturgeon. If there's any indication that numbers of sturgeon would diminish due to the fact that spears are using electronic devices. Then there is no doubt that the following regulations you are proposing would go on affect immediately. It is your responsibility to make sure that the lake sturgeon are protected, so generations can enjoy the sport for decades. Do the right thing and stop the use of all electronic devices during sturgeon spearing.

Thank you  
Wayne Blatz  
Sent from my iPad

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Mark Fahrenkruq <mwfahrenkruq@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 30, 2021 4:46 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Cameras for Spearing

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Meredith:

I was hoping this debate would go away about cameras used for Spearing. I expressed my opinion a couple of years ago and below you can read what I felt then. I was ok with limiting the size of the spear because that had potential to get out of hand. Regarding the minimum size for spearing, I guess that's OK because if you speared a 36 inch fish what's the difference if it was a little smaller. It was probably a mistake anyway. Bottom line on the camera issue for me is that the practice is not affecting the harvest goals at all. If a fisherman chooses to fish blind these days, that's their choice. Watch your own bobber. Leave the rest of the fisherman alone. There is absolutely no reason to outlaw cameras. I hope you will consider putting this topic to rest based on the fact that the practice is not impacting the harvest goals at all.

Thanks for listening,

Mark

Letter to Ryan, January 2019

Ryan,

I was not one of those selected to participate in the survey and I won't be able to participate in the meeting.

Here are my thoughts.

First of all, last year was probably one of the most enjoyable years my group had since the last clear water year. The reason? Cameras.

It's the first year that my small group all invested in cameras so that we could fish in normal sturgeon haunts out in the deep water. We saw fish. We didn't get any, but we saw fish and had a blast all season long. Normally my group would have quit within a couple of days. Instead most of my group and other groups that I know of were out there all season long. The success was more about who would see a fish and not necessarily who speared one. My point is, it was all about the chase and not about the kill.

I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion on the matter, but I hope this is not something that is left to a popular vote. I have heard enough strong opinions out there against cameras and even bigger spears that make absolutely no sense to me. The use of cameras and big spears are doing nothing to infringe on others opportunity to enjoy the sport that choose not to use a camera. The use of cameras is not affecting the management goals or the length of season. I've heard that some consider it unethical, That you can't see what you are throwing at. I would ask those same people how often they practice throwing a spear, or how many times they threw at a blot on a pipe in hopes they connect.

As long as the management goals are being met I hope you can just let us continue to fish the way we want. Cameras and big spears are a non issue that should be left alone. Otherwise you may as well start looking at eliminating sidefinding technology because I'm sure someone is getting more walleyes than me because I don't use it. And outlaw trolling too because I like anchoring to catch fish and those guys are trolling over my spot and catching all my fish. Lol.

Thanks for listening.

Mark

f

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Rob rubin <mallard1717@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 02, 2021 1:23 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Electronics for sturgeon spearing

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I dont have a set in stone side to lean towards, I don't like that it's harder to determine size when using a camera, but that being said I do use one and I like that I see fish that I normally wouldn't see, I also find it silly to add more regulations when we can't seem to fill a quota on the big lake even when the water was as good as it was last year. My final vote is to allow the use of electronics as it is now.. thanks for allowing our input.

Tap to get Yahoo Mail

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** wdarkhouseangler@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 03, 2021 3:38 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon harvest regulations

Thank you for seeking the Public's input into sturgeon management, but remember, you have the final say into doing the right thing for the protection and fair chase harvest of sturgeon.

I'm very concerned about the future of Sturgeon harvest and the advancement of technology moving forward. This needs to be addressed now and a decision made on how we harvest such a valuable resource.

What is most concerning is the advancement of fishing technology and not just cameras ,for today we have side imaging, down imaging, 360° imaging, pan optics and live scope where are you can, in real time, see your bait ,the fish approach it and eat it. I have seen this for myself, and it is unbelievable. I can only shake my head when a young buddy pulled up to my boat, looked underneath it and told me I had two more walleyes to catch in that area!

In the not too distant future, instead of throwing blindly at sturgeon with a camera we will spear everyone that comes in. We need to address not only electronics in the hole but also with ether net and Bluetooth the surrounding ice.

Please keep in mind what sturgeon spearing was all about, a very traditional way of fair chase fishing and a unique method of take.

Where do we stop, remote guns for deer, drone scouting/ hunting , spearing with panoptics, it's a slippery slope. We have the technology, do we need to use it, should we harvest sturgeon by all means possible. That's not what hunting, fishing, spearing is about.

Thanks, Russ Bloom

Sent from my iPhone



**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 03, 2021 8:21 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** underwater camera use during the sturgeon spearing season

I am totally against the use of underwater cameras during the sturgeon spearing season. I have speared for 51 consecutive years and I don't like where the sport is headed. Use of cameras especially during a dirty water year puts the fish at a huge disadvantage. There have been numerous years over my 51 years of spearing where no 100 lb. fish were speared and many years where less than 10 fish were speared that weighed 100 lb. or more. The dirty water years saved these big fish which take years to mature and spawn. This past season "a dirty water year " 77 fish were speared that weighed 100 or more lbs. How long can our system handle this? Considering the surveys that have been done on camera use and with what I see from fellow spearkers , my guess and it is only a guess is that around 40% of spearkers use cameras. We are now in the stage of "if you can't beat them join them " so how many 100 plus lb. fish will be speared if 80 % or 90% of spearkers use cameras ? Right now the general public does not know what is going on with this camera use. The non spearkers I talk with can't believe this is going on . They make comments like "do these people call themselves sportsmen " . Every year our sturgeon biologist goes on the Green Bay news a few days before the spearing season and says the harvest will depend on water clarity , while that was true before the use of underwater cameras started , the harvest now also depends a lot on the number of spearkers using cameras. I have asked our sturgeon biologist to include that statement in his preseason comments but it has not happened. Does he not want the general public to know what is happening ? The last thing we need is for the non spearing public to start asking questions, we have seen that in other fish and game topics. It does not end up good. The number of true sportsmen is going down fast and allowing the continued use of cameras will only hasten that number. Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion. I would like that my name not be used. I have already been verbally attacked for voicing my opinion on this subject at a meeting at the North FDL high school. I feel this issue should have been ended 5 to 6 years ago when the camera use first started. [REDACTED]

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Joel Nimmer <joelnimmer@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 04, 2021 1:50 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Banning cameras during sturgeon spearing

My name is Joel Nimmer.

I have been a life long sturgeon spearer of more than 40yrs. I believe camera's should be banned during open season for sturgeon spearing.

We had a vote several years ago at the spring conservation congress meeting overwhelmingly voting camera use down.

That was obviously what the public wanted. Why isn't that vote being taken into consideration...????

The number of our largest females being taken has skyrocketed since camera use has ramped up.

Ethically we have taken our traditional and worldwide unique fishery and turned it into a video farce where we try spear a fish we can't even see. Seeing a sturgeon with your eyes, instead of on a video screen, is one of the most unique sights one can have. Turning our traditional harvest into a video game is wrong.

Ban camera's and fish finder technologies from sturgeon spearing.

Joelnimmer@yahoo.com

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

From: Brian Biettler <bsbiettler@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, July 05, 2021 11:06 AM  
To: Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
Subject: Future of Sturgeon Spearing

To whom it may concern,

The future of sturgeon spearing in this great state is in your hands. If you do not take the steps to stop the use of electronics in this sport it may be gone forever. Throwing a spear at nothing but an image on a TV screen in hope of hitting this sturgeon is not right!! The sturgeon spearing committee has gone to great effort to save this unique sport for future spearing. We stopped the use of line fishing in the sturgeon shacks, moved up the deadline to purchase tags( so on clear years people did buy tags for friends), shortened the season to half days (as they found more fish where speared in the later part of the day), stopped the use of lights as they found sturgeon were attracted to them.

So now it is the young generation's turn to sacrifice something so this great sport may continue for future spearers. What some of this young generation spearer don't realize is this is the only state where spearing is allowed as we have a natural reproducing sturgeon. They may say we have not hit cap totals with the use of cameras but we are taking the bigger sturgeon (big females) with the use of these cameras(on dirty years you can't see bottom) thus hurting the reproduction population of these fish.

The younger spearer claims that it's a boring sport without the camera or it keeps their kids interested in watching the camera well. A lot of these spearers went out with their Dad and sat all day just watching the hole. Older spearers said they would not appear if they got rid of the jigging poles in the shack but there they were the next year spearing. If you truly love the sport and the future of it we as spearer need to take the steps to keep it safe.

We need to stop the attitude well I spent \$20 on a tag I should get something for it or I don't have time to sit there for 2 or 3 weekend I have other things to do(Battle on Bago) the electronic help get it done sooner. They say if you get rid of electronics we should get rid of sled saws and other things. The thing is these do not help you spear a sturgeon(it may aid you in moving faster but on dirty years dont help you spear a fish).

So please help keep this great sport going forward for future generations by keeping it simple: see the sturgeon coming through the hole with your natural eye verses on a camera, fish locator or 360 degree technology. It's a great sport that only happens in 2 states Wisconsin & Michigan (where only 7 fish are allowed per season & the only last 45mins to hour and half)

So in closing please vote to stop the use of electronics in this great sport!! And thus keeping the tradition alive for future spearers!!!

Respectfully Yours & long time sturgeon spearer  
Brian Biettler

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Jim & Darlene Mueller <jmueller.wi@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 05, 2021 3:50 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Re: Meeting ID# SS 053-21 Regulation to Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations and Gear Use.

My name is James Mueller. I reside at N8710 Pine Road, Saint Cloud Wisconsin. I have been spearing sturgeon for 50 years. I am the third generation in my family to sturgeon spear.

Spearing sturgeon with poor water clarity has always been hard to do. With the addition of cameras it has made this sport much more exciting. It is more than just having a better chance at spearing a sturgeon. It is about seeing all the game fish. It has taken the boredom of not seeing anything during a full season to looking forward to what you may see any day that you are on the lake. Anyone who is a true sturgeon spearer knows it is not just the spearing of the fish, it is being on the lake with friends and discussing what you have seen. As I tell others, there is always supper on the table even when we don't spear a fish.

I think the DNR has done well at managing the sturgeon population on Lake Winnebago. I agree with quota limits to maintain the sturgeon population. Even with the addition of cameras in the last 5 to 6 years the quota limits have not been reached. It is not easy to spear a sturgeon that you cannot see except by camera. But it does add a lot of excitement to the sport. I am also ok with changing the 36 inch limit if it is needed. Personally we won't throw a spear at a sturgeon under 50 inches but that is our personal preference.

My son has joined us now in sturgeon spearing since the cameras are allowed. He spoke of how much more enjoyable the sport is since you see so much more than just clouded water. I think if you want to get the interest of the next generation, cameras are definitely the way to do this.

Cameras and other electronic devices are allowed for wildlife and hook and line fishing which adds the same excitement in those sports. I struggle to understand why this shouldn't be allowed for sturgeon spearers. Please let us keep the cameras for the enjoyment of what you truly see during the sturgeon spearing season.

Thanks!

Jim Mueller

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, July 05, 2021 9:12 PM  
To: Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
Subject: Scope Statement Relating to Sturgeon Spearing

Hello Meredith, My name is [REDACTED] I am 50 years old. I live in Fond du Lac, WI. and have grown up fishing the Winnebago System. I am a person that truly cares and respects our natural resources.

Back in the spring of 2017 at the Fond du Lac County annual Fish and Wildlife Public Hearing, I proposed in writing a citizen resolution #200217 "Restrict the use of underwater cameras for sturgeon spearing".

The use of underwater cameras and other similar devices is gaining popularity.

I believe that there are many sturgeon being speared with the use of these devices that normally would not be speared. Because spearers have been allowed to use cameras and other devices, it's in my opinion the sturgeon have been disrespected and cheated of living a longer life.

I understand it takes careful management of the sturgeon in our system. It's very crucial also because of the slow maturation of Lake Sturgeon. Female sturgeon reach maturity when she is about 25 years old and will only spawn about every 5 years. Males mature at about 15 years old.

A 50" sturgeon is about 20 years old. In the eyes of many sturgeon spearers a true trophy in recent past years is around the 70" and 100 pounds. That's a very old fish!

Let's give a example that I believe most spearers that maybe also deer hunt can relate to.

A Whitetail deer in Wisconsin matures at age 2. A whitetail can grow to trophy standards by age 4-5 years. Most female whitetails give birth every year.

My point here is that once a sturgeon is harvested and if it's a trophy sturgeon at around that 70" mark, it may never be replaced in our lifetime because it's very possible that sturgeon is 50 plus years old. Again a trophy whitetail can be grown in 4-5 years.

The bottomline Meredith is that I feel some people, the way they are going about trying to harvest a sturgeon, is wrong. To have a camera down and only be able to see a sturgeon with the aid of a device and then throwing a spear or many times multiple spears by multiple people is just the wrong way to harvest a sturgeon. It's not how sturgeon spearing was intended to be done.

I am a sturgeon spearer myself. I enjoy the sport of it and have been very successful.

I myself do use a camera for scouting prior to the season to see where the sturgeon are located. I have also used a camera and other devices to catch other kinds of fish. I am not against technology.

The difference between using the devices for other fish is that the fish have the option of biting your lure or not.

A sturgeon being seen only on camera and being speared by a lucky throw is wrong.

I feel that if you can not see the sturgeon with the naked eye and that you can not see it without the aid of a device such as cameras, then that sturgeon deserves to continue swimming the Winnebago system. Possibly to spawn and reproduce more sturgeon for tomorrow.

We have something very special and unique when it comes to the sturgeon swimming the Winnebago waters. Let's not allow these great fish to be cheated of a long life.

Meredith, I am going to email you 4 YouTube videos that will show you how people are going about spearing using cameras. There are many other videos out there. The number of people doing it this way is definitely growing.

This is very important to watch, so please take the time and closely watch and listen to these videos. I believe you will be very surprised how things are being done.

Please, I would like you to keep my name anonymous during any public meetings. I took some harsh words from people after writing the citizen resolution back in 2017.

You are welcome to personally call or email me with any questions.

Thank you for all you do!

[REDACTED]

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** John Lynch <lynch.johna@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 07, 2021 7:15 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Submitted Comments for Proposed Rule Change # FH-04-20  
**Attachments:** Rule No. FH-04-20 Hearing Comments - John Lynch - 7.7.21.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Meredith,

Thank you for your involvement in soliciting feedback for the proposed rule change to "Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations and Gear Use (Ch. NR 20)". Attached are my comments; I've also copied/pasted them below, in the event that the form does not come through cleanly.

In short, I urge members of the WDNR and other committee members to not move forward with this ruling. While I am supportive of removing any minimum length requirement on the sturgeon that are speared (to not penalize those who unintentionally spear a fish under 36" in length, and to ensure those fish are not wasted or discarded unethically), there is no benefit or merit to limiting the use of technology during the sturgeon spearing season. The scope statement doesn't outline a single positive outcome for doing so.

My comments from the attachment:

A rhetorical question: why would one fisherman want another fisherman to experience LESS success in spearing sturgeon? I have gone sturgeon spearing for 10 years, and have still not harvested a sturgeon even with the use of underwater fishing cameras the last 5 years. Doesn't every spearer buy a license and participate in the spearing season with the hope of harvesting a sturgeon? If so, doesn't this proposed rule change to limit the use of "some forms of Technology" seem rooted in jealousy, and potentially run the risk of upsetting more spearers, and not less? Think about how many sturgeon spearers already do not participate in years where water clarity is poor - it just isn't seen in the data, because all spearers are required to buy a license by October 31st of the prior year (so the impact is not seen in license sales, but it is very real). This rule contributes to even less participation in the sport, not more.

Another rhetorical question: how do we deem what "forms of technology" are or are not appropriate for sturgeon spearing, or for fishing in general? Should we ban the use of propane in Ice Shanty's because our forefathers did not have the benefit of heated dwellings when they speared sturgeon over 100 years ago? Should we ban the use of chainsaws to create cut holes in the ice for spearing, and allow only axes and other primitive tools going forward? Should we also ban the use of GPS to find spearing spots on the lake, and use landmark references only to locate our favorite spearing grounds going forward? Why don't we consider banning the use of fishing electronics for open-water as well, and ban the use of outboard motors on fishing boats, given that this type of technology didn't exist for our forefathers either? Surely, that would make fishing more primitive and "traditional".

The scope statement does not state any risk or negative impact of using underwater cameras or other forms of technology for spearing fish. Why implement a new rule/law to limit how people prefer to experience the sport, when the only outcome will be negative in return? Look at how technology has permeated our lifestyle - phones, tablets, and everything in-between. Do you think younger generations will be more interested in continuing this tradition and preserving our sport and heritage if you make these changes? Will it help recruitment of new spearers to the sport? I would argue that the obvious answer to all of these questions is, "No". Please don't make this rule change.

From the scope statement: While the use of cameras and fish finders does not currently contribute to overharvest of sturgeon due to the harvest limit of one sturgeon per licensed spearer and implementation of the harvest cap system, some spearers have expressed concerns related to the use of underwater cameras and other forms of technology. These spearers feel that the use of such technologies is unethical and improves the likelihood of spearing a sturgeon, especially during years when water clarity is low, compared to the traditional method of throwing the spear only when a sturgeon is observed with the naked eye as it passes through the hole cut in the ice.

Sincerely,

John Lynch

920-410-3994

### **Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Stephen Berholtz <berholtz4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 07, 2021 9:49 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** STATEMENT OF SCOPE

Meredith,  
My comment is as follows;

In #2 of page #1, it states that "it is managed under a harvest cap system to protect the fishery from overharvest". You cannot overharvest because of the cap! The system can only support so many fish! If you use so-called scientific data to make decisions, then tell me how many people use cameras. Oh! No! You can't. All it is, is a few people who know how to contact the right people and were to this stage. Very disappointed in the whole process. Most people don't even know this is happening! Just this year for spearing (2021) with clear water the cap was not reached on Lake Winnebago.

Thank you, Steve Berholtz

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Sherry Freiberg <freibs@charter.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 07, 2021 10:23 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon Spearfishing Rules

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

The purpose of this email is to express my opinion on the sturgeon spearfishing rules.

I am in agreement that cameras and other electronics should NOT be used.

We need to try to keep the tradition of spearing as it was. I have been spearing for almost 65 years, and have found the greatest thrill of spearing to be seeing the fish swim into the hole. The sturgeon is a very unique resource, and should be handled with the utmost care.

With the advent of cell phones, people are able to call their friends as soon as a fish is sighted. Having power saws allows them to cut in almost immediately upon receiving that call. Sportsmen and women should not need more advantages in pursuing this great resource.

Sincerely,  
Howard J. Freiberg

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Dave Barter <dbarter4558@att.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 07, 2021 1:43 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Proposed Sturgeon spearing rules

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I would like to comment on the use of cameras for sturgeon spearing. I have speared for 45 years in all kinds of water conditions. I think blind spearing with a camera is extremely unethical. However it is very interesting to sit in a shack and watch what's going on beneath your feet with a camera. There is a very simple solution to this question. All cameras come equipped with very long camera cords. If you require users to drill a camera hole 10 or 15 feet away from the shack they could still sit inside and watch what's going on below and not be able to use the camera to blind spear.

I believe the DNR should be very careful about making spearing easier to attract more participation, the participation is already huge. There is a lot to be said for making new spearers pay their dues and learn to do things right. We complain about people wanting instant gratification and then turn around and try and give it to them by making things easier. The hard part of spearing is dealing with all the needed equipment, not the spearing!!! Most of us believe that dirty water or bad ice is Mother Natures way of giving the fish a break.

Just because there is a harvest cap does not mean we need to reach it every year. Spearers don't think like that!!

Thank You for letting me voice my opinion,  
Dave Barter  
4557 Plummers Pt. Rd.  
Oshkosh WI 54904



**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Jim Lefeber <jml@ntd.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 07, 2021 7:02 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** July 8 Meeting -Technology and Sturgeon

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Meredith, As a long time spear fisherman I would like to voice my opinion on this subject. On the 1st item technology, in my 70 years of life I have enjoyed the out doors including spearing. I have witnessed changes in hunting technology with the use of gps, game cameras. In the fishing industry gps, underwater cameras, fish locators with down and side imaging, pan optics, live view technology, all these tools are a definite advantage, to coin a phrase "the genie is out of the bottle". With that being said I guess I question the motive about this discussion and why this particular sport is being singled out for tech use. Are there no concerns of all the technology used in all the fishing tournaments that catch and not release until the stage weigh in takes place and then released with a fairly high mortality rate after bouncing around in a live well for 20 miles, is this ethical? What about all the game cameras targeting large bucks and getting habit information and follow up with the kill. These subjects are another discussion for another time, this business about banning something based on someone's opinion on morality or ethics is just that, opinion. This sport is highly regulated, you have daily tallies, you have harvest limits, you can hit triggers that close the season. I don't have access to the yearly harvest reports but if my memory serves me they have not hit the caps in a few years, so this is not about harvest numbers. To say you want to ban technology from just this sport is a bit sanctimonious.

Thank you  
Jim Lefeber  
Oshkosh, Wi

Sent from my iPad

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Robert Theyerl <robert.theyerl@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 08, 2021 9:50 AM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Sturgeon spearing statement of scope

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I believe that the DNR needs to ban the use of underwater cameras and other technology during the open season. Currently most spearkers using cameras are in violation of the law because the law states that the use of a light is not permitted. Cameras use a light that sturgeon are attracted to, that can be turned off, but wardens contend that it's almost impossible to enforce their use. Most hunting and fishing rules seem to be moving toward instant gratification and have nothing to do with being ethical or at least following the framework of the original intent.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS FORM BEFORE THE START OF THE HEARING.

Personally identifiable information collected on this form is used for administrative purposes and may be provided to requesters under the public records laws, ss. 19.31 to 19.39, Wis. Stats.

Department of Natural Resources

HEARING APPEARANCE Form 8300-014 Rev. 4-10

PLEASE PRINT:

Date: 7/8/21	Do you wish to make an oral statement? (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Name: Peter Schuh	Telephone number (include area code): (920 ) 843-2368
Street or route (mailing address): W5581 Firelane 12	
City, State and zip code: Harrison WI 54952	

1. Representing (If you are the authorized representative of some other person or organization, identify who you represent and your title.):

[Redacted]

2. Regarding rule proposals only: Small business representation -- Are you representing the interests of a small business as defined by s. 227.114, Wis. Stats., as "a business entity, including its affiliates, which is independently owned and operated and not dominant in its field, and which employs 25 or fewer full-time employees or which has a gross annual sales of less than \$5,000,000"?

Yes  No

3. Comments:

We have taken a sport steeped in tradition and turned it into a glorified video game. The advances in technology are on such a fast pace that they are removing any sense of fair chase from the sport. Underwater cameras and electronic fish finding equipment should be banned. We have cheapened the sport. Soon you won't have to look down the hole at all. The advanced equipment will tell you when and where to throw the spear. The time to stop the nonsense is now. Soon it will be too late. Please don't allow the time honored sport of sturgeon spearing be ruined forever.

Thanks,

Pete Schuh

4. Position:  
(Check one)  In support  In opposition  As interest may appear

7/08/2021

DNR:

This is regarding your public hearing about Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations and Gear Use.

Spearing Harvest Regulations: I would be against making any change to the minimum length of sturgeon. I believe the current 36" minimum is small enough for any fish that may not be judged correctly. Seeing a "shadow" that is outside the spearing hole or in murky water is difficult, but the majority of fish smaller than that would most likely be thought to be carp, walleye or other fish that wouldn't be speared anyway. Also any fish smaller than 36" really doesn't have enough meat on it and wouldn't having the smaller fish in the system benefit the system anyway?

Gear use regulations: I would say that the harvest cap hasn't even come close in the previous number of years with the use of the electronics, so no harm there. Also, having electronics keeps the "spirit" alive in the shack and I believe helps entertain the younger generation to keep them interested in the sport. By eliminating the electronics, in years where the water conditions are bad, would reduce the amount of people going onto the lake, which would also hurt the local economy by people not traveling and staying in the area and visiting local restaurants etc. Having electronics can keep people going longer into the season, once again helping the local economies.

Haven't these questions been brought up in the spring public hearings over the past years? I believe the electronics questions certainly has and if I recall, the majority of the public consensus was against banning the electronic usage? If those meeting suggestions/recommendations aren't going to be used, then why ask for the public opinion then?

Thanks;

Scott Kwasny

Robert J Rahmer  
920 Hawthorne Place  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935  
902-948-0709

Hello,

If you want to take away electronics for sturgeon fishing then that DOES mean the DNR cannot use their technology in this, "21st century" which, I'm sure, has made their lives much easier and more accurate for the different management applications and studies they do. DNR probably has done double the work with new technology, no doubt. New technology has made lives easier in this new century and helps us enjoy as much of life as possible.

With that in mind, THIS IS THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY; peoples' lives are frantic in every way, meaning less time for what we love, however, technology can help us enjoy it in a shorter time in a different way; maybe in half the time, and maybe not, but it is there for us to use because this is not the olden days and we should try the new, rather than stay in the old.

The one thing I do know; counting and predicting sturgeons' population must be easier now than it has been in the past, due to technology. Either way, you tell us how many can be speared. Using new technology does NOT change this.

Very Sincerely,  
Robert J Rahmer  
920 Hawthorne place  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935  
902-948-0709

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Dan Lisowe <danlisowe20@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 08, 2021 8:32 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Meeting Comments

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I was unable to give my comments on the zoom call tonight, so I am providing them in writing.

In business, sports, hunting, fishing and in your home, technology is available to anyone who chooses to use it. I do use a camera for sturgeon spearing. We have a quota number to prevent overharvest of sturgeon. We have not hit the quota, if I recall correctly, since 2015. If we hit the quota year after year with the use of cameras, I would favor banning cameras.

If we ban cameras, will we harvest enough fish to sustain a healthy population or are we going to have an abundance of skinny sturgeon? Fish need to get taken out of the lake to make room for young fish. Don't regulate by eliminating the use of cameras. Regulate with the quota number as you are doing now. We have a healthy population which shows that the DNR is doing a good job regulating the numbers. Regulate by raising and lowering the quota numbers and let people enjoy the sport with whatever resource they choose.

Electronic devices should be allowed for sturgeon spearing.

Dan Lisowe  
Chilton, WI  
Calumet County

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Jim Lefeber <jml@ntd.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 08, 2021 7:37 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Underwater cameras

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I would like to add a few more comments after watching the zoom meeting, there was a comment made that this was not on the spring hearings agenda because it was more regional situation, and this is suppose to be a participants decision weather to move forward with the scope. Be for this should move forward at all there should be another survey of licensed spearers, the data you have is out of date, you have a record of all licenses from last year. Mail or email them so we can properly represented, the few number of people on the resources board don't represent the majority of spearers.

Thank you  
Jim Lefeber  
Oshkosh

Sent from my iPad

## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Dylan D Schmidt <Dylan.Schmidt@mercmarine.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 08, 2021 7:21 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** RE: Comment On Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations And Gear Use

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Meredith,

Thanks for running the meeting.

I just want to comment that I really feel the DNR needs to do it's due diligence and obtain additional survey results from the public. I understand David's response and comment about wanting a more regionalized opinion, but I think there are plenty of examples of other rule changes that were influenced without regionalized input, even though it had a regional specific impact. There are certainly ways to see and weigh the opinions from any specific county or counties in current public opinion gatherings the DNR holds, there are also more ways to get new survey results. I also want to add I think additional questions should be raised to get some data around if participation will change for individuals should a rule change occur. Any reduction in participation will effect the local economy, and should be reflected as such in the scope statement.

I certainly think that the dates, sample sizes, methods, and results of any surveys related to how this decision is being made should be publicly available and tied to these discussions. I just am not seeing where there is a majority support for a rule change.

As I mentioned, many people I talk to feel this is sudden, to be going straight to a rule change when there has been no "official" talk of this rule change being a possibility for a few years. We are not sure if this is coincident with recent events and changes in the department related to Sturgeon, but it is certainly concerning that future rules will be pushed through without public input under this new management. The last comments I had heard from the DNR staff was that due to the split opinion, the DNR had no desire to waste resources getting in the middle of a family feud that has no biological for a change.

The support or encouragement for this change from the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and/or the Winnebago Sturgeon Advisory Committee is also questionable based on the fact that, at least for the Winnebago Sturgeon Advisory Committee, I am not aware of any way to join this board or participate in the selection of the committee. Especially if they have enough influence to make a rule change on a publicly split opinion that has biological backing. For all anyone knows, this could be some "good old boys" club who only selects people with their same opinions.

Dylan Schmidt  
Senior Packaging Engineer  
Mercury Marine  
Office Phone: (920) 929-5741  
[dylan\\_schmidt@mercmarine.com](mailto:dylan_schmidt@mercmarine.com)



## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** Sheila Ecker <shecker2003@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 08, 2021 4:15 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Comment On Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations And Gear Use

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

I am unable to attend and speak at the Sturgeon Spearing Harvest public hearing tonight. I would still like to provide my input to be reviewed.

I do not feel that the minimum size limit should be eliminated.

- There is a minimum amount of meat to harvest from a 36" fish.
- Why would it be beneficial to harvest a smaller fish?
  - It would be wasteful and pointless to harvest smaller fish.
- What long term consequences to the sturgeon population would occur if people were allowed to spear smaller fish?

I do not feel that the use of technology should be restricted.

- Public Surveys from 2013 and 2018 were not strong against cameras.
- Eliminating cameras will reduce the number of tags purchased.
  - This will reduce the income to the DNR in tags purchased and income sturgeon spearkers bring to local businesses.
- Eliminating cameras will reduce interest in future generations.
  - Cameras provide entertainment with all the species of fish that can be seen and watched.
  - Cameras provide something interesting for the youth to watch and keep interest during the season.
- Cameras are not causing the quotas to be reached in a few days.
  - Look at how many years still went the full season when cameras were being used.
  - They are not negatively affecting the season for those without cameras

Banning Cameras will negatively affect businesses around the lake and the future of sturgeon spearing.

Thank you,

Sheila Ecker  
W1599 County Road E  
Chilton, WI 53014  
920-378-4549



## Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR

---

**From:** J Ecker <1980jecker@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 08, 2021 4:26 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** Comment On Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations And Gear Use

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

I can't make the Sturgeon Spearing Harvest public hearing tonight. I still want to provide input.

The sturgeon population needs a minimum size limit. There is a minimum amount of meat to harvest from a 36" sturgeon and less on a smaller sturgeon. How will no size limit affect the population?

Cameras and technology should not be banned. Public Surveys from 2013 and 2018 were not strong against cameras. Eliminating cameras will reduce the number of tags purchased which will reduce the income to the DNR in tags purchased and income to local businesses. Banning cameras will reduce interest in sturgeon spearing in future generations. Cameras provide entertainment for the youth to watch shad, perch, white bass, walleyes, etc. while watching for sturgeon. Cameras are not causing the quotas to be reached in a few days on Lake Winnebago. Look at how many years still went the full season when cameras were being used. Cameras are not negatively affecting the season for those without cameras.

Please do not ban cameras/technology. Please keep the minimum size limit.

Thank you,

Joe Ecker  
W1599 County Road E  
Chilton, WI 53014  
920-378-2896

**Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR**

---

**From:** Boyarski, David E - DNR  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 15, 2021 4:35 PM  
**To:** Penthorn, Meredith C - DNR  
**Subject:** FW: Sturgeon spearing rule

**From:** svandervelden4@new.rr.com <svandervelden4@new.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 25, 2021 9:02 PM  
**To:** Boyarski, David E - DNR <David.Boyarski@wisconsin.gov>  
**Subject:** Sturgeon spearing rule

Mr. Boyarski,

I have been spearing sturgeon on lake Winnebago for over 40 years. The traditional way of spearfishing needs to continue as it has for centuries. There is no place for modern technology to short cut success. Values in life are created by working for them. Young people need to learn patience and not short cut for the sake of instant gratification. Spearing a sturgeon should be a sense of accomplishment. The time to save traditional sturgeon spearing is now.

Sincerely,  
Steve Vander Velden

# STATEMENT OF SCOPE

## Department of Natural Resources

**Rule No.:** FH-04-20

**Relating to:** Sturgeon Spearing Harvest Regulations and Gear Use (Ch. NR 20)

**Rule Type:** Permanent

**1. Finding/nature of emergency (Emergency Rule only):**

This will be a permanent rule.

**2. Detailed description of the objective of the proposed rule:**

The Winnebago System is home to one of the largest lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) populations in the world, which supports a very popular sturgeon spearfishery. The annual sturgeon spearing season on Lake Winnebago and the Upriver Lakes (including Lakes Butte de Morts, Winneconne and Poygan) is managed under a harvest cap system to protect the fishery from overharvest and maintain a healthy sturgeon population. The sturgeon spearing season occurs through the ice in February, and spearer harvest success is often correlated with water clarity rather than spearing methods. In the shallower waters of the Upriver Lakes, spearing success is often higher because spearers can clearly see to the bottom in most seasons. In the deeper waters of Lake Winnebago, murkier waters can obscure sturgeon. However, in recent years, social preferences for harvest regulations and allowable sturgeon spearing methods and gear use have prompted the department to review and potentially change the rules for the Winnebago system sturgeon spearing season.

This rule may establish restrictions on technology used for spearing sturgeon in order to maintain a traditional spearfishery in light of rapid technological modernization, and may remove the size limit for sturgeon taken during this season. The Wisconsin Conservation Congress and Spring Hearings participants supported both proposals.

**3. Description of the existing policies relevant to the rule, new policies proposed to be included in the rule, and an analysis of policy alternatives:**

This rule may establish a prohibition on the use of underwater cameras, electronic fish finders, and other similar technology during the Winnebago system sturgeon spearing season only. While the use of cameras and fish finders does not currently contribute to overharvest of sturgeon due to the harvest limit of one sturgeon per licensed spearer and implementation of the harvest cap system, some spearkers have expressed concerns related to the use of underwater cameras and other forms of technology. These spearkers feel that the use of such technologies is unethical and improves the likelihood of spearing a sturgeon, especially during years when water clarity is low, compared to the traditional method of throwing the spear only when a sturgeon is observed with the naked eye as it passes through the hole cut in the ice. However, other people contend that the use of cameras, electronic fish finders and other technologies keeps spearkers engaged and potentially attracts new people to the sport by providing a glimpse of sturgeon and other fish moving around under the ice.

This rule may also remove the size limit for sturgeon taken during the spearing season. Under the existing 36-inch minimum length limit for sturgeon, undersized fish cannot be kept, and the sublegal-sized fish that are accidentally speared are released and likely exhibit high mortality. Removing the size limit would allow a spearer to legally keep a smaller sturgeon, whether speared accidentally or intentionally. This would potentially reduce waste of smaller fish while also potentially reducing the number of larger fish speared due to the one-fish sturgeon bag limit.

This rule may also address other minor changes reasonably relating to the Winnebago system sturgeon spearfishery, changes to facilitate enforcement of current law, and other changes to achieve congruence with statutory enactments.

**4. Detailed explanation of statutory authority for the rule (including the statutory citation and language):**

Section 29.014, Wis. Stats., “rule-making for this chapter,” grants the department the authority to establish and maintain open and closed seasons, bag limits, size limits and other conditions that will conserve fish populations and provide good fishing opportunities for the citizens of the state.

Section 29.041, Wis. Stats provides that the department may regulate fishing on and in all interstate boundary waters and outlying waters.

Section 29.053 (2), Stats., provides that the department may establish conditions governing the taking of fish for the state as a whole, for counties or parts of counties, or for waterbodies or parts of waterbodies.

**5. Estimate of amount of time that state employees will spend developing the rule and of other resources necessary to develop the rule:**

The department estimates spending 200 hours developing this rule, including holding public meetings and hearings.

**6. List with description of all entities that may be affected by the proposed rule:**

This rule would mainly affect participants in the Lake Winnebago sturgeon spearfishery. Some businesses that sell underwater cameras and other fishing technology may be impacted, but exact impacts are unknown since people can purchase this equipment from a variety of online and in-person sources. Additionally, the department is uncertain of the number of spearers that may continue or discontinue purchasing electronic equipment for use during other fishing seasons if a technology prohibition is in place during the sturgeon spearing season.

**7. Summary and preliminary comparison with any existing or proposed federal regulation that is intended to address the activities to be regulated by the proposed rule:**

No federal regulations currently apply. States possess inherent authority to manage the fishery and wildlife resources within their boundaries, except insofar as preempted by federal treaties and laws, including regulations established in the Federal Register. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently reviewing the conservation status of the lake sturgeon populations throughout the United States, but no action has been taken to further regulate lake sturgeon on a federal level.

**8. Anticipated economic impact of implementing the rule (note if the rule is likely to have an economic impact on small businesses):**


Economic impacts are expected to be minimal, if any. The rule is mainly applicable to individual anglers and imposes no compliance or reporting requirements for small business, nor are any design or operational standards contained in the rule.

**9. Anticipated number, month and locations of public hearings:**

The department anticipates holding 2 public hearings in the month of November 2021. Hearing cities will be: Appleton, WI and Fond du Lac, WI.

The department will hold these hearings in these locations to obtain public input from Winnebago sturgeon spearing season participants.

**Contact Person:** David Boyarski, 920-559-2341, [David.Boyarski@wisconsin.gov](mailto:David.Boyarski@wisconsin.gov); Meredith Penthorn, 608-316-0080, [Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov)

For  DocuSigned by:  
*Todd Ambros*  
6793A7BA427C4CD...

---

Preston D. Cole, Secretary  
3/29/2021 | 7:48 AM CDT  

---

Date Submitted



# Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

May 13, 2021

By Electronic Mail Only

Dear Secretaries and Agency Heads:

On this day, I approved the following statements of scope pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.135(2):

- A statement of scope by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted March 16, 2021, relating to site-specific phosphorus criteria for Lac Courte Oreilles (Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 102); and
- A statement of scope by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted April 1, 2021, relating to regulations for the purpose of updating Wisconsin's water quality antidegradation policy and procedures (Wis. Admin. Code chs. NR 102, 106, 205, and 207); and
- A statement of scope by the Department of Safety and Professional Services, submitted March 16, 2021, relating to barbering licensure and practice outside of a licensed establishment (Wis. Admin. Code chs. SPS 50 and 60-65); and
- Both an emergency and permanent statement of scope by the Psychology Examining Board, submitted April 16, 2021, relating to a legislative update (Wis. Admin. Code chs. Psy 1-5); and
- A statement of scope by the Department of Workforce Development, submitted April 30, 2021, relating to worker's compensation treatment guidelines (Wis. Admin. Code ch. DWD 81); and
- A statement of scope by the Department of Workforce Development, submitted April 30, 2021, relating to worker's compensation minimum permanent partial disability ratings (Wis. Admin. Code ch. DWD 80); and
- A statement of scope by the Department of Workforce Development, submitted April 30, 2021, relating to minor and technical changes to the worker's compensation program (Wis. Admin. Code ch. DWD 80); and
- A statement of scope by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted March 29, 2021, relating to sturgeon spearing harvest regulations and gear use (Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 20).

On this day, I approved the following proposed administrative rules pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.185:

- A proposed rule by the Department of Workforce Development, submitted April 14, 2021, relating to replacing derogatory or offensive terminology with current, inclusive terminology (Wis. Admin. Code chs. DWD 80, 272 and 277); and
- A proposed rule by the Public Service Commission, submitted April 29, 2021, relating to renewable resource tracking (Wis. Admin. Code ch. PSC 118); and
- A proposed rule by the Medical Examining Board, submitted April 26, 2021, relating to unprofessional conduct (Wis. Admin. Code ch. Med 10); and
- A proposed rule by the Psychology Examining Board, submitted March 31, 2021, relating to renewal and reinstatement of licenses (Wis. Admin. Code ch. Psy 4); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Public Instruction, submitted April 23, 2021, relating to age waivers for general educational development tests (Wis. Admin. Code ch. PI 5); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Public Instruction, submitted May 6, 2021, relating to revisions to pupil nondiscrimination procedures (Wis. Admin. Code ch. PI 9); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted April 23, 2021, relating to fish harvest in Lake Superior (Wis. Admin. Code chs. NR 20 and 25); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted April 14, 2021, relating to Lake Michigan whitefish management (Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 25); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted April 15, 2021, relating to the 2021 migratory bird season (Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 10); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Natural Resources, submitted April 14, 2021, relating to contaminated sediment sites, the implementation of 2015 Wisconsin Act 204 (Wis. Admin. Code chs. NR 756 and 758); and
- A proposed rule by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, submitted November 5, 2020, relating to residential rental practices (Wis. Admin. Code ch. ATPC 134).

Please direct any questions about this letter to my deputy policy director, Katie Domina.

Sincerely,



Tony Evers  
Governor

cc: Ryan Nilsestuen, chief legal counsel ([ryan.nilsestuen1@wisconsin.gov](mailto:ryan.nilsestuen1@wisconsin.gov))  
Katie Domina, deputy policy director ([katherine.domina1@wisconsin.gov](mailto:katherine.domina1@wisconsin.gov))  
DOA State Budget Office ([SBOAdminRules@spmail.wi.gov](mailto:SBOAdminRules@spmail.wi.gov))  
Emma Esch, DNR ([emma.esch@wisconsin.gov](mailto:emma.esch@wisconsin.gov))  
DSPS ([DSPSAdminRules@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DSPSAdminRules@wisconsin.gov))  
Mark Kunkel, DWD ([markd.kunkel@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:markd.kunkel@dwd.wisconsin.gov))  
Kara Koonce, PSC ([kara.koonce@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kara.koonce@wisconsin.gov))  
Carl Bryan, DPI ([carl.bryan@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:carl.bryan@dpi.wi.gov))  
Bradford Steine, DATCP ([bradford.steine1@wisconsin.gov](mailto:bradford.steine1@wisconsin.gov))