STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: August 10, 2012
RESUBMITTED: September 17, 2012

MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR

Information: Natural Resources Commission

Subject: Special Fishing Regulations for Coolwater Species on Select Lakes (FO-206)

Authority

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, authorizes the Director to provide for better protection and preservation of fish, game and birds.

Discussion and Background

Fisheries Order 206 administers special fishing regulations for coolwater species on select lakes. The regulations contained in this Order are more restrictive than the general hook-and-line regulations and are necessary to improve our ability to protect and enhance populations of sport fish in specific lakes. There are two substantial changes being proposed to this Order. We propose enacting a new northern pike protected slot limit regulation on six lakes that would protect fish from 24 inches to 34 inches from harvest. Next, we propose eliminating the 30-inch minimum size limit regulation from the Order.

Over the past year, Fisheries Division has worked with the Warmwater Resources Steering Committee (WRSC), a public advisory group, to discuss various regulations affecting warmwater fishes and to specifically review northern pike regulation proposals. As a result, several northern pike regulation options were developed. From March 26 through May 25, 2012, the public was given an opportunity to comment on the regulations developed and proposed by the WRSC. It is difficult to apply one all-purpose regulation to northern pike because of the wide variation in growth rates across the state, the wide variation in exploitation, and the density-dependent nature of this species. Michigan has a 24-inch minimum statewide northern pike regulation with a daily possession limit of 2 fish. There are also a large number of waters with a no minimum size limit regulation on northern pike and daily possession limit of five fish and there are eight waters with a 30-inch minimum size limit on northern pike. Anglers have indicated their support to add another management option to possibly improve northern pike size structure, given that it will only be used on a limited number of waters. Therefore, we are proposing to add a 24- to 34-inch protected slot limit on northern pike to the Order.

The protected slot limit prohibits the harvest of fish where the lengths fall within the protected interval of 24 to 34 inches. The daily possession limit would be two northern pike. This regulation is being proposed for six waters and it will allow anglers to harvest smaller northern pike (those less than 24 inches) and larger northern pike (those larger than 34 inches). Protecting northern pike between the lengths of 24 to 34 inches will benefit the northern pike populations by increasing predation on the smaller northern pike and should help to improve overall size

structure of the fishery. Anglers will benefit by being able to catch smaller fish and in several years should be able to catch larger northern pike on these waters.

24 to 34-inch Protected Slot Additions:

Pine Creek Flooding, Allegan County
Long Lake (T3S, R10W, S17, 18, 19, 30), Kalamazoo County
Bass Lake (T10N, R9W, S12, 13, 14), Kent County
Blind Sucker Flooding, Luce County
Bodi Lake, Luce County
Townline Lake, Montcalm County

We are also proposing to eliminate the 30-inch minimum size limit regulation from the Order since it is no longer needed. The regulation was characterized as too restrictive so managers were hesitant to place it on too many waters. Therefore, we propose to remove this regulation for eight waters. We would like to note that Fish Lake in Marquette County will remain in the Order since the bass regulation provision will still remain in effect.

30-inch Minimum Size Limit Removals:

Fish Lake, Barry County
Cable Lake, Iron County
Porter Lake, Iron County
Lake Gratiot, Keweenaw County
Fish Lake (T47N, R29W, S5, 6, 8), Marquette County
Big Bass Lake, Schoolcraft County
Grassy Lake, Schoolcraft County
McKeever Lake, Schoolcraft County

Anglers have indicated their support for these changes and law enforcement personnel have been involved in the process and are supportive of the recommendations. We are now implementing the changes and this Order as part of a suite of Orders which governs northern pike.

Recommendation

It is our recommendation that the change proposed to Fisheries Order 206 as indicated above be approved to take effect on April 1, 2013. The recommended changes will increase our options available to try and improve waters with large populations of stunted northern pike. This regulation will enhance future northern pike fishing opportunities as more fish will be protected from harvest with the potential to increase overall northern pike size structure in some waters.

This Order was submitted for information at the September 2012 meeting of the Natural Resources Commission. This Order is being resubmitted for action at the October 2012 meeting of the Natural Resources Commission. This item appeared on the Department's September 2012 calendar, and is eligible for approval on October 11, 2012.

James L. Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division

Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division

Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division

Bill O'Neill, Chief
Forest Resources Division

Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division

William E. Moritz, Ph.D.
Natural Resources Deputy

I approve the staff recommendation.

Keith Creagh, Director

Date

ORDER

SPECIAL FISHING REGULATIONS, FOR COOLWATER SPECIES ON SELECT LAKES

Under the authority of sections 41101 through 41105 of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.41101 through 324.41105, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources on October 11, 2012, ordered that for a period not to exceed five years, the following special regulations are established for the listed lakes:

ALGER COUNTY

Echo and Duck Lakes on Grand Island

1. Smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession Limit: zero (0).

ALLEGAN COUNTY

Pine Creek Flooding

1. Northern Pike:
   a. Protected Slot Limit: Northern Pike 24 – 34 inches shall not be harvested.

BARRY COUNTY

Thornapple Lake

1. Muskellunge:
   a. Minimum size: 50 inches.
   b. Season: last Saturday in April through November 30, inclusive.
2. Northern Pike:
   a. Season: last Saturday in April through November 30, inclusive.

Williams Lake

1. Possession limit: zero (0). Catch and release only.
2. Season: last Saturday in April through December 15, inclusive.

CASS COUNTY

Corey Lake (T6S, R13W, S24)

1. Largemouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

Stone Lake (T6S, R15W, S35)

1. Largemouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Mullett Lake and Specific River Sections

1. Area included:
   - Mullett Lake proper
   - Cheboygan River from Mullett Lake downstream to Cheboygan Dam (T38N, R1W, S31).
   - Black River from Alverno Dam (T37N, R1W, S35) downstream to its confluence with the Cheboygan River.
2. Daily possession limit for walleyes: three (3) walleyes per angler per day.
3. Season for harvest of walleyes: May 15 through March 15, inclusive.

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Wakeley Lake (T26N, R2W, S23)

1. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only. It shall be unlawful to use or possess live bait, dead bait, organic or processed food or scented material at any time on the shore or water.
2. Season: June 15 through August 31.
3. Possession limit: zero (0). Catch and release only.

DICKINSON COUNTY

Hamilton, Louise, and Mary Lakes (T39N, R28-29W)

1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Season: last Saturday in May through June 20, inclusive.
   b. Possession limit: zero (0).

GOGEBIC COUNTY

Lake Gogebic

1. Yellow Perch:
   a. Possession limit: twenty-five (25), with no more than five (5) fish 12 inches or greater.

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

Arbutus Lake

1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

Spider Lake (T26N, R10W, S9,10)

1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

IRON COUNTY

Fire Lake

1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
   b. Minimum size: 18 inches.

Indian Lake

1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
   b. Minimum size: 18 inches.

Ottawa Lake

1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

Winslow Lake (T46N, R36W, S36)
1. Walleye:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

KALAMAZOO COUNTY
Long Lake (T3S, R10W, S17,18,19, 30)
1. Northern Pike:
   a. Protected Slot Limit: Northern Pike 24 – 34 inches shall not be harvested.

KALKASKA COUNTY
Cub Lake (T27N, R5W, S19)
1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

KENT COUNTY
Bass Lake (T10N, R9W, S12,13,14)
1. Northern Pike:
   a. Protected Slot Limit: Northern Pike 24 – 34 inches shall not be harvested.

LAKE COUNTY
Big Bass Lake (T20N, R14W, S34)
1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

LEELANAU COUNTY
North Manitou Lake (T32N, R14W, S29, 32)
1. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only. It shall be unlawful to use or possess live bait, dead bait, organic or processed food or scented material at any time on the shore or water.
2. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
   b. Minimum size: 18 inches.

Florence Lake (T31N, R15W, S9)
1. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only. It shall be unlawful to use or possess live bait, dead bait, organic or processed food or scented material at any time on the shore or water.

LENAWEE COUNTY
Lake Hudson
1. Northern Pike and Muskellunge:
   a. Season: last Saturday in April through November 30, inclusive.

LUCE COUNTY
Blind Sucker Flooding
1. Northern Pike:
   a. Protected Slot Limit: Northern Pike 24 – 34 inches shall not be harvested.

Bodi Lake
1. Northern Pike:
   a. Protected Slot Limit: Northern Pike 24 – 34 inches shall not be harvested.

Twin Lakes (T45N, R10W, S10,11)
1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
   b. Minimum size: 18 inches.

MARQUETTE COUNTY

Deer Lake Basin (T48N, R27W, S27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34), Carp River downstream from M-28 (T47N, R27W, S4) and all other tributaries to Deer Lake Basin.
1. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only. It shall be unlawful to use or possess live bait, dead bait, organic or processed food or scented material at any time on the shore or water.
2. Possession limit: zero (0). Catch and release only.

Fish Lake (T47N, R29W, S5, 6, 8)
1. Largemouth and smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
   b. Minimum size: 18 inches.

MONTCALM COUNTY

Townline Lake
1. Northern Pike:
   a. Protected Slot Limit: Northern Pike 24 – 34 inches shall not be harvested.

MONTMORENCY COUNTY

North and South Blue and Robarge (Pike) Lakes
1. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only.
2. Season: last Saturday in April through September 30, inclusive.
3. Possession limit: zero (0). Catch and release only.

NEWAYGO COUNTY

Sand Lake (T11N, R13W, S19)
1. Channel catfish, flathead catfish, and bullhead:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

Brush Lake (T14N, R12W, S1)
1. Channel catfish, flathead catfish, and bullhead:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

Baptist Lake (T11N, R11W, S23, 24)
1. Walleye, channel catfish, flathead catfish, and bullhead:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

OGEMAW COUNTY

Jewett Lake (Rifle River Recreation Area)
1. In addition to a valid Michigan fishing license, anglers must possess a valid Jewett Lake fishing permit.
2. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only.
3. Season: May 15 through September 30, inclusive.
4. Possession limit: zero (0).

ONTONAGON COUNTY

Lake Gogebic

1. Yellow Perch:
   a. Possession limit: twenty-five (25), with no more than five (5) fish 12 inches or greater.

Lake of the Clouds (T15N, R43W, S21,22)

1. Gear Restrictions: Artificial lures only. It shall be unlawful to use or possess live bait, dead bait, organic or processed food or scented material at any time on the shore or water.
2. Smallmouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

Corey Lake (T6S, R12W, S17, 18, 19, 20, 29)

1. Largemouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

Sand Lake (T6S, R10W, S27, 34)

1. Flathead catfish:
   a. Possession limit: zero (0).

Big Pleasant Lake

1. Largemouth bass:
   a. Minimum size: 10 inches.

VAN BUREN COUNTY

Bankson Lake

1. Northern Pike and Muskellunge:
   a. Season: last Saturday in April through November 30, inclusive.

Brownwood Lake

1. Northern Pike and Muskellunge:
   a. Season: last Saturday in April through November 30, inclusive.

Round Lake

1. Northern Pike and Muskellunge:
   a. Season: last Saturday in April through November 30, inclusive.

WASHTENAW COUNTY

Horseshoe Lake

1. Largemouth bass:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
2. Northern pike:
   a. Possession limit: one (1).
3. Bluegill, pumpkinseed, redear, green sunfish, black and white crappies, warmouth bass, and rock bass:
   a. Possession limit: ten (10).

This Order shall be assigned number FO-206.13, and is entitled "Special Fishing Regulations for Coolwater Species on Select Lakes."

This Order supersedes the Order entitled "Special Fishing Regulations for Coolwater Species on Select Lakes," which became effective April 1, 2012, and is assigned number FO-206.12.

This Order shall take effect on April 1, 2013. This Order shall remain in effect until March 31, 2018, or until this Order is amended/rescinded, whichever comes first. Although this Order may be reviewed and amended on an annual basis, a review of this Order shall occur no later than August 1, 2017.

Issued on the _____ day of _____, 2012.

Keith Creagh, Director

The Natural Resources Commission has reviewed this Order.

Timothy L. Nichols
Chairperson

Deb Whipple
Executive Secretary