STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: July 15, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Subject: Fisheries Order 235.14
Fishing Regulations – Craig Lake State Park Waters, Baraga County
FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, provides the Natural Resources Commission the exclusive authority to regulate the taking of fish in this state.

Discussion and Background:

This Order governs fishing regulations at Craig Lake State Park in Baraga County and is effective through March 31, 2014. Craig Lake State Park is the most remote state park in Michigan. It spans more than 6,900 acres and access into the park is somewhat of an adventure. The park contains six lakes and numerous small ponds for anglers to fish. The current fishing regulations have been in place since the time the property was owned by members of the Miller Brewing Company and acquired by the department in the late 1960's.

This Order is up for renewal and the Department proposes to renew it with one minor change. The current minimum size limit for walleye in Craig Lake State Park is 13 inches as established in the 1960's. Over time, the fish community in Craig Lake State Park has changed and the formerly abundant walleye population is much less abundant now. Presently, the most sought after fish by anglers are black crappie and muskellunge and walleyes are no longer frequently targeted because of their limited abundances. To help protect the limited and slow growing walleye population, the Department proposes to increase minimum size limit for walleye to 15 inches. The 15 inch minimum size limit will align with statewide regulations and should provide additional protection for walleyes and possibly allow their abundance to increase within Craig Lake State Park.

The proposed change was discussed with stakeholders at management unit meetings in Escanaba and Iron Mountain and the public was supportive. The proposal was presented to park managers and law enforcement staff who have also indicated their support for this proposal.

Recommendation:

This order is being submitted for information and consideration. This item appears on the Department's July 2013 calendar and may be eligible for approval on September 12, 2013.

James 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

FISHERIES ORDER

FISHING REGULATIONS – CRAIG LAKE STATE PARK WATERS, BARAGA COUNTY
Order 235.14

By authority conferred on the Natural Resources Commission by section 48703a of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.48703a, it is ordered that effective April 1, 2014, the following section(s) of the Fisheries Order shall read as follows:

The following regulations shall apply to the waters of Craig Lake State Park, Baraga County:

1. Statewide open seasons apply.

2. Minimum size of walleye ~~13~~ **15** inches.

3. The daily possession limit on all species shall be according to statewide regulations, except that the daily possession limit on walleye shall be two, and that muskellunge, northern pike, largemouth bass, and smallmouth bass fishing shall be catch and release only and none shall be possessed.

4. Method of take shall be hook and line fishing with artificial lures only. Artificial lures are construed to include any form of commonly accepted fishing lure.

5. No live, dead or preserved bait or organic bait substance of any type shall be used or possessed.

In Clair, Craig, Crooked, Keewayden, Nelligan, Teddy, and Thomas lakes, all species of fish may be taken subject to the above restrictions.

This Order shall be assigned number FO-235.14, and is entitled "Fishing Regulations - Craig Lake State Park Waters, Baraga County."

This Order supersedes the Order entitled "Fishing Regulations - Craig Lake State Park Waters, Baraga County," which became effective April 1, 2009, and is assigned number FO-235.09.

This Order shall take effect on April 1, 2014, and shall remain in effect until amended/rescinded.

Issued on this 12th day of September, 2013.

J. R. Richardson, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission