

Report to
Legislative Council Rules Clearinghouse
NR 20, 21, 22, and 23 Wis. Adm. Code
Natural Resources Board Order FH-18-12

Wisconsin Statutory Authority

Sections 29.014(1), 29.041, and 29.053(2), Stats.

Federal Authority

Not applicable

Court Decisions Directly Relevant

None

Analysis of the Rule – Rule Effect – Reason for the Rule

The proposed rule would make modifications to portions of chs. NR 20, 21, 22, and 23 pertaining to sport fishing regulations. These changes are proposed to protect and enhance the State's fish resources. Please note, some elements of ch. NR 20 in this Board Order are anticipated to be amended prior to this rule by Natural Resources Board Order FH-19-12.

With this rule, the Department will make changes to fish size limits, bag limits, seasons, and other regulations related to fishing in inland, outlying, and boundary waters. Fishing regulations are in place to help meet management goals and objectives for waters and their fish species, such as providing a trophy walleye fishery or a bass fishery that maximizes predation on smaller fishes. New regulations are proposed when management goals have changed or the Department must address a critical need, such as a major fish population decline. They are based on input solicited from stakeholders when the proposals were developed as well as plans for evaluating the regulations after they are in place.

The rule does not change existing policy behind regulating angler harvest. These changes are proposed to protect and enhance the State's fish resources. All rule change proposals were submitted by fish biologists and peer-reviewed for justification and enforceability by Fisheries Management supervisors and the Bureau Director, species management teams, and the Bureaus of Law Enforcement and Legal Services. Proposals were discussed with Wisconsin Conservation Congress members and will be presented at the 2013 Fish and Wildlife Spring Hearings. Proposals that reduce regulation complexity or eliminate a special regulation in favor of a statewide one were given preference.

The proposed rule will primarily affect sport anglers. As with any change in regulations, there will be a requirement for anglers to learn the new rules. The Fisheries Management Bureau works to notify the public of new regulations via press releases, the internet, and fishing regulations pamphlets.

All rule elements are delineated in the plain language analysis of the rule.

Agency Procedures for Promulgation

Public hearing, Natural Resources Board final adoption, Governor's Office of Regulatory Compliance final approval, followed by legislative review

Description of any Forms

None

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