

New Fishing Regulations for 2015-2016 Season



The Department of Natural Resources' Natural Resources Commission finalized several regulations impacting the 2015-2016 fishing season at their meeting on Thursday, April 9. Fishing regulations are annually adjusted to ensure Michigan's fisheries resources are managed properly and to provide the best benefits to anglers and the public.

Due to the Natural Resources Commission's unforeseen loss of regulatory authority, several regulations were not determined in time for the start of the 2015-2016 angling year (April 1) and were subsequently not printed in the hard-copy version of the Michigan Fishing Guide. However, there are several areas of the guide that have an orange star to indicate there would possibly be changes forthcoming. The details are now online at Michigan.gov/fishingguide and include the following:

Statewide Crayfish Regulations (page 12 of printed guide):

- Allow for the limited possession for Rusty Crayfish for consumptive purposes only.
- Rusty crayfish may not be transported to other waterbodies or used for bait.

New Hook Restriction (page 10 of printed guide):

- An artificial lure is defined as a body bait, plug, spinner or spoon. An artificial lure is not a device primarily constructed of lead. From August 1 through November 15, inclusive, terminal fishing gear is restricted to single-pointed, un-weighted hooks, measuring ½-inch or less from point to shank or treble hooks, measuring ¾-inch or less from point to shank only when attached to an artificial lure on the following waters:
 - Benzie County: all waters of the **Betsie River**.
 - Manistee County: all waters of **Bear Creek**, all waters of the **Betsie River**, and the **Manistee River** from Tippy Dam downstream to Railroad Bridge below M-55 (T21N, R16W, S6).
 - Mason County: the **Big Sable River** (from mouth upstream to Hamlin Lake Dam).

Bass Fishing Season Change (Note 2, page 17 of printed guide):

- Allow Catch-and-Immediate Release (CIR) fishing for bass all year, statewide (unless otherwise closed to fishing). Please refer to the printed fishing guide for waters closed to fishing (Sylvania Wilderness Area, designated trout waters closed to fishing, etc.).

Green Bay Walleye Regulations Change (Note 3, page 17 of printed guide):

- Expand the boundary line for the early walleye season (March 2 – Friday before the 1st Saturday in May) in the Michigan waters of Green Bay to lengthen the zone approximately six miles north of the Cedar River.

Special Northern Pike and Muskellunge Fishing Regulations (Note 7, page 18 of printed guide):

- Additions to the list of lakes where up to five (5) northern pike may be retained with one over 24 inches allowed: Benzie County, **Long Lake**; Montmorency County, **Robarge Lake**; Ogemaw County, **East Twin Lake**.
- Van Buren County – remove **Bankson, Brownwood and Round Lakes** from special possession season category to align with statewide season.

Great Lakes Trout and Salmon Regulations (pages 24 – 25 of printed guide):

- **Lake Huron** Lake Trout and Splake regulations: change MH-1 and MH-2 Lake Trout and Splake regulations from season of May 1 – September 30 to January 1 – September 30 to align all of **Lake Huron** into one season.
- **Lake Michigan** Lake Trout regulations: change MM-1, MM-2, MM-3 and MM-4 to the following – minimum size limit shall be 15 inches and the maximum size limit shall be 27 inches, except the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) Lake Trout at 34 inches or greater. In MM-5, MM-6, MM-7 and MM-8 change the minimum size limit to 15 inches. In MM-1, MM-2, MM-3, MM-4 and MM-5, the Lake Trout daily possession limit has been reduced from three (3) to two (2).

Exceptions By County Listing (non-trout waters pages 34 – 38 of printed guide):

- Alpena County – remove **Beaver Lake Pike Marsh** closure.
- St. Joseph County – remove **Sand Lake** special catfish possession restriction.
- Luce County – remove special bass regulation on **Twin Lake**.

Inland Trout and Salmon Regulations (pages 46 – 66 of printed guide):

- **Statewide** – Modify the Type 4 trout stream minimum size limit for brook trout from eight inches to 7 inches.
- **Brook Trout Restoration Areas** – The following locations have more restrictive Brook Trout regulations. Fishing regulations on these waters shall supersede those in other sections which in any way conflict with the following: the harvest season for Brook Trout is from the last Saturday in April – September 30, the minimum size limit on Brook Trout, Lake Trout and Splake shall be 20 inches with a daily possession limit of one (1) Brook Trout, Lake Trout or Splake total combined.
 - **Big Garlic River** and tributaries (Marquette County), from County Road 550 (T50N, R26W, S33) downstream to Lake Superior (T50N, R26W, S21).
 - **Big Huron River** (Baraga and Marquette Counties), from Big Eric's Bridge (T52N, R30W, S35) downstream to Lake Superior (T52N, R29W, S18).
 - **Iron River** (Marquette County), from Lake Independence Dam (T51N, R27W, S13) downstream to Lake Superior (T51N, R26W, S18).
 - **Little Huron River** (Marquette County), from unnamed bridge crossing located at the southern border of section 20 (T52N, R29W, S20) downstream to Lake Superior (T52N, R29W, S17).

- **Pilgrim River** (Houghton County), from Paradise Road (T54N, R33W, S5) downstream to mouth at Portage Lake (T54N, R33W, S7).
- **Portage/Torch Lake system** (including the Portage River, Portage Canal, North Entry and South Entry, Houghton County).
- **Ravine River** (Baraga County), from Sicotte Road (T51N, R31W, S2) downstream to Huron Bay (T51N, R31W, S4).
- **Silver River** (Baraga County), from Silver River Falls (T51N, R32W, S26) downstream to Huron Bay (T51N, R31W, S18).
- **Slate River** (Baraga County), from Slate River Falls (1/2 mile upstream from Skanee Road T51N, R31W, S9) downstream to Huron Bay (T51N, R31W, S8).
- *Removals, Additions and Modifications to Lake Types*
 - Baraga County, **Alberta Pond** – remove Type B.
 - Isabella County, **Blanchard Millpond** – remove Type A.
 - Keweenaw County, **Lake Fanny Hooe** – remove Type B.
 - Marquette County, **Cecilia’s Pond** – remove Type A, **Big Trout Lake** – remove Type E, and **Lake Arfelin** – change from Type B to Type E.
 - Ontonagon County, **Paulding Pond** – remove Type B.
 - Otsego County, **Lost Lake, North Twin Lake, and South Twin Lake** – add Type D.
 - Schoolcraft County, **Dutch Fred Lake** – remove Type D.

Additional regulation changes that *were* included in the printed copy of the 2015 Michigan Fishing Guide include:

- There has been an addition of three waters to the experimental streams that allow anglers to retain five additional Brook Trout in the daily possession limit. The listed waters below shall have the following regulations: Fishing Season and Possession Season – last Saturday in April through September 30; Tackle – artificial lures and all types of natural bait may be used; Daily possession limit – five (5) trout and salmon in any combination, except the daily possession limit shall not include more than three (3) trout 15 inches or greater and five (5) additional Brook Trout may be retained as part of the daily possession limit.
 - Bryan Creek (Marquette and Dickinson Counties), from Spear Lake (T45N, R27W, S7) to confluence with West Branch of the Escanaba River (T44N, R26W, S28).
 - Presque Isle River and its tributaries (Gogebic County), from Manabezho Falls (T50N, R45W, S30) upstream to the headwaters at the Michigan-Wisconsin boundary line.
 - Rock River and tributaries (Alger County), from railroad bridge (T47N, R21W, S22) upstream to the bridge crossing (T46N, R21W, S15).
- Three new designated trout streams have been added this year – Beaver Tail Creek (Chippewa County) from M-134 upstream, Cable’s Creek and Iron Ore Creek located on Beaver Island (Charlevoix County) have been added as Type 1 trout streams.

- Sheldon Creek and tributaries (Cass and Van Buren Counties) have been removed from the designated trout stream list and will no longer be regulated or classified as a stream type.
- On Lac Vieux Desert Flowage, the daily possession limit for Walleye has been reduced from five (5) to three (3) in combination with Sauger from the first Saturday in May through March 1.