

Citizen Resolution # 260123



Changes to Smallmouth Bass Regulation on Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake

Currently, the season for Smallmouth on these waterbodies begins on the third Saturday in June after the bass spawning season. This regulation was put in place to protect and enhance bass populations. Since that time the bass population has increased significantly (from 2008 to 2019) and concerns over competition between walleye and bass have increased. Anglers on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage (TFF) and Trude Lake are looking for increased opportunities to catch and keep Smallmouth and have asked for the season to open concurrent with the walleye and northern pike seasons. In the 2016 WDNR creel survey, it was found that only 3.5% of smallmouth bass caught were harvested, and thus providing increased angler harvest opportunities likely presents little to no biological concern to the smallmouth fishery. Ultimately, increasing harvest would align with current fishery management objectives of reducing smallmouth abundances to between 15-30 individuals/mile (TFF Fisheries Management Plan 2005; 50 individuals/mile in 2019 late spring electrofishing survey), and improve size structure.

Would you support increasing angler fishing opportunities by opening the smallmouth bass season on the TFF and Trude Lake concurrent with walleye and northern pike (the first Saturday in May).

Additional Information provided by author:

A 2020 survey of showed interest in balanced catch&release/harvest opportunity. Smallmouth increased from 2008-2019. During creel surveys, only 3.5% of angled smallmouth were harvested. Angler tradition and healthy populations suggests protection of spawning season is not necessary. Increasing harvest facilitates decreasing abundances, and potentially increase size structure meeting objectives in the 2005 Fisheries Plan. The resolution is supported by DNR and Property Owners Association.

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