

Citizen Resolution # 660323



Remove Bait Minnow Restrictions

Native fish diseases only affect populations that get overpopulated or are subjected to environmental stress. When Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) entered the Great Lakes it was feared it would cause massive, indiscriminate mortality to a long list of fish species. To control its spread, DNR imposed restrictions on the harvest and use of bait minnows for personal and commercial use. The restrictions greatly increased bait costs and are the most complicated fishing rules in the book. The restrictions inadvertently increased the importation of minnows from states which often have dismal records on exotic species control in general.

16 years of sampling shows that where it is present, VHS poses no more threat to healthy fish populations than native diseases and VHS cannot persist in the warm water ponds and streams where most bait harvest occurs.

Should DNR review and rescind all VHS restrictions on bait harvest and use that are not clearly necessary based on the current scientific evidence?

Additional Information provided by author:

Submitting Author:

Larry Damman
W7962 Sand Rd
Shell Lake, WI 54871
(715) 520-2916
larry@shearluckfarm.com
Washburn County

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