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Bayfield County Lakes Forum

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Resolution:

April 12, 2010

Title: Independent management of Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass as a separate species

The Problem: For decades, the management of LM and SM Bass has been done as though they are one species in spite of the fact that, clearly, they are not. Bag and size limits have been the same, with very few exceptions as have season lengths and starting dates in most cases.

Research shows that these are two separate species. Each has a totally different impact on the overall fishery of a lake. In the past, these two species have been managed similarly for the convenience of the DNR rather than for the need for proper management. It is time to correct this poor policy.

At the 2009 WCC Spring Hearings held in Sawyer County this concept was offered as a resolution and passed by a vote of 52 Yes and 5 No.

In 2009, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Warm Water Committee considered Sawyer County's resolution #58-03-09 on separate management of SMB and LMB and voted in favor. It failed to be further advanced due to a language error, not because of its merits.

Managing SMB and LMB as the same species makes just as much sense as managing Northern Pike and Walleyed Pike as the same species. They are different and should be treated as such. Separate management will give our fisheries biologists a better opportunity to enhance these fish populations as well as the populations of walleyes and other species.

The Solution:

Be it resolved that the Bayfield County Wisconsin Conservation Congress agrees that Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass should be managed as different species and that separate bag and size limits should be established for LMB and SMB as needed. Season opener dates should also be considered differently.

Be it further resolved that, if this is not adopted statewide, then, at the very least, SMB and LMB should be managed as different species on all lakes in Bayfield County and separate bag and size limits should be established for LMB and SMB and different season opener dates should be considered.

Submitted by

Note: The Bayfield County Fisheries Biologist has been consulted on this matter.