

Regulation Proposal Form

Print Form

Email Form

Proposal Title Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass 18 inch Minimum and Bag limit of one	
Author Stephen Gilbert	Date 9/22/2011
Location Information:	
Affected water(s) Sparkling Lake	
County Vilas	WBIC(s) 1881900
Upstream/downstream boundaries, if applicable—Law Enforcement should be consulted n/a	
Will this regulation affect Ceded Territory water and are there any anticipated impacts to tribal fisheries? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Current Regulation 18 inch Minimum and a bag limit of one – Sunset in 2014
Proposed Regulation 18 and Minimum and a bag limit of one – Permanent
Management Goal Summary statement that characterizes the desired fishery (e.g. provide a naturally reproducing harvest-oriented walleye fishery; provide a bass fishery dominated by large adults that maximizes predation on smaller fishes) Control rainbow smelt and rusty crayfish numbers through increased predation and provide a quality fishing experience.
Description of the Water(s) and Fishery Provide a brief description of the water(s), past regulations and other management actions. Summarize all applicable fisheries data, particularly from surveys meeting protocols (Table 1). Sparkling Lake is 154 acres, oligotrophic, and has a maximum depth of 64 feet. It is a seepage lake in the Trout River drainage. The lake is located 7 miles north of the town of Woodruff. It has 2.3 miles of shoreline and 13% is privately owned (Black et al. 1963). There is public access to the lake at a roadside landing off of state highway 51. Sparkling Lake had a long history as a popular walleye fishery. This fishery was maintained by natural recruitment until 1989. In 1982, rainbow smelt were discovered in the lake. By the late 1980's their numbers had increased dramatically. Smelt became abundant enough to effect natural walleye recruitment (figure 1). Fall electrofishing surveys conducted since 1990 found evidence of natural walleye recruitment in only 2003 (small fingerlings were stocked in 1997 and 2001). Rusty crayfish were first found in Sparkling Lake in the 1970's. Recent research on rusty crayfish in Sparkling Lake has found that increasing numbers of predatory fishes through restricted fishing, combined with trapping, can substantially decrease crayfish numbers in a lake (Hein et al. 2006). While rusty crayfish numbers have declined dramatically since the start of the project, rainbow smelt abundance has not declined to the same extent.

Management Objective(s)

a) Goals are general, objectives are specific. Objectives are used to evaluate the effectiveness of your action and determine if you have achieved your goal. Provide a management objective that is specific, measurable, able to be achieved, related to the goal, and has a temporal component (e.g. increase walleye harvest rate to 0.1 fish/hour while maintaining recruitment at or above 10 YOY/mile within 5 years; increase largemouth bass RSD14 to 35 and bluegill RSD8 to 15 within 5 years
Create a bass fishery with an adult abundance of 1 per acre. Conduct bass PE in the next 5 years

b) Describe how the management objective and associated target levels for metrics were developed (e.g. lake management plan, stakeholder meeting, comparison to other water(s)).

Consultation with UW-Madison researchers.

Current Problem

Use survey data or provide context for a similar water or group of waters (e.g. lake type, watershed) to demonstrate how the fishery is not meeting the desired management objective. Identify hypothesized problem(s) you hope to address.

Current regulation is set to expire in 2014.

Proposed Regulation Justification

How is the regulation change expected to meet your objective(s)? Demonstrate expected results of the regulation using tools such as modeling, comparisons to other waters, peer-reviewed literature, etc...

The current regulation has been in place since 2002 and is due to expire in 2014. This regulation must be maintained to keep game fish populations as high as possible. Changing regulations at this point in the study may make it difficult to detect the impacts of game fish on the exotic species present. These regulations are also part of the standard regulations offered to biologists at this time.

Evaluation Plan

Provide a suggested plan and timeline for evaluating whether the objectives are met in response to the regulation change.

Indicate potential courses of action if objectives are not being met. If proposed regulation is not part of the "toolbox" (Table 2) the evaluation plan needs to be additionally detailed with an explanation of how the costs of evaluation will be covered.

Future plans call for monitoring game fish recruitment on an annual basis. Population estimates of game fish and a creel survey should also be conducted on the lake within five years to evaluate the impact of these regulation changes.

Previous Action

Include details on previous regulation proposals that were intended to address the current problem, if applicable.

Prior to 2002, fishing regulations on Sparkling Lake followed the general inland rules for the state.

The current restrictive regulations were voted on at the 2001 conservation congress meetings and had statewide support. The regulation change passed 29 to 8 in Vilas County and 1,559 to 684 statewide.

In 2008, this regulation was again presented to the conservation congress to ask for an extension since the regulation was due to expire in 2009. The regulation change passed 60 to 16 in Vilas County and 1,471 to 611 statewide.

If no action is taken the regulations will revert to the statewide general inland limits in 2014. The increase in angler harvest that will occur will greatly affect the ability of researchers in evaluating the impact of increased game fish on these exotic species.

Public Participation in Developing Proposed Regulation

Was input solicited from stakeholders when developing the proposed regulation change? Include documented comments from affected user groups (positive and negative), contacts made with local Conservation Congress Representatives, lake associations, angler groups, etc...

Most of the lake is in public ownership as part of the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest. There are a few private residents on the lake and they have been very supportive of the current research. University staff meets with residents and other member of the local community on a regular basis to keep them up to date on the status of their research.

This regulation change should cause no conflicts with tribal harvest. Tribal members have not harvested game fish from this lake since 2002 as part of an agreement between the Lac du Flambeau tribe and UW – Madison. It is expected that this arrangement will continue for the duration of the research project.

Small Business and Fiscal Effect

Explain who is likely to be economically impacted and in what way. If possible, provide estimates.

This regulation should have no adverse effect on small business. This quality fishery has created increased angler interest in this lake.

Draft Question: for inclusion in Spring Hearing questionnaire

This proposal would (insert proposed regulation):Make permanent the current regulations for largemouth and smallmouth bass (18" minimum length limit, 1 daily bag limit) on Sparkling Lake, Vilas County.

The Management Goal is:The goal is to restore the natural fish and plant community that was present prior to the invasion of these two exotic species. It is hoped that the information gained from this intensive cooperative project can be applied to control exotics in other waters of the state.

This regulation proposal is one tool to help meet the management goal because:

Do you favor : : Maintaining the 18 inch minimum and one fish bag limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass on Sparkling Lake, Vilas County

Fish Team Supervisor Regulation Proposal Review Checklist

Proposal Title 18" Min/one daily bag for Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass.		
Author Steve Gilbert	Reviewer Mike Vogelsang	Date 10/04/2011
Fish Team Supervisor Reviewer Notes: This reg proposal would normally have been submitted at a later date. However recent changes to Department rule making process necessitate submittal now, for 2013 Spring Hearings with anticipated implementation for 2014-15 fishing season. High interest in Sparkling Lake by U.W. Madison to keep scheduled research projects moving and not be confounded by having current rules sunset and revert to Statewide default gamefish rules.		

Recommended Action by Fish Team Supervisor

Approve Reject

Regional Fish Supervisor Regulation Proposal Review Checklist

Proposal Title Sparkling Lake		
Author	Reviewer Steve Avelallemant	Date 11/10/11
Regional Fish Supervisor Reviewer Notes: I recommend to add to the mix. No changes		

Recommended Action by Regional Fish Supervisor

Approve Reject

Species Team Regulation Proposal Review Checklist

Proposal Title Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass 18 inch minimum and bag limit of one		
Author Stephen Gilbert	Reviewer Bass Team	Date 12/14/2011
Species Team Reviewer Notes: The Bass Team supports this regulation change proposal. While there were little data presented that indicate how the sunset regulation has been performing in terms providing a quality fishery, literature suggests that bass predation has assisted with rusty crayfish reduction. Given the support within the community and more importantly and to allow for proper evaluation of the long-term research project with UW-CFL this proposal should be approved.		

Recommended Action by Species Team

Approve Reject