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Bag, size and possession limits lifted from Lake Tomah

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TOMAH – As part of an ambitious plan to restore Lake Tomah, the impoundment will be drawn down later this year and any fish remaining in the lake will be eliminated with a chemical treatment.

In the meantime, to minimize waste, fishermen will be allowed to catch, spear or net as many fish as they can clean and stuff in their freezers, subject to state regulations.

The state Department of Natural Resources opened the liberal harvest season Tuesday on Lake Tomah in Monroe County. It will run until the chemical treatment begins, probably in October, or until further notice.

During the open season all species of fish of any size may be taken with no bag or possession limit. Other regulations remain in effect. Anglers must still abide by the "three hooks, lines or lures" restriction described in the "Guide to Wisconsin Hook and Line Fishing Regulations".

"Dip net" means a piece of netting suspended from a round or square frame that does not exceed 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square. "Minnow seine" means a seine less than 35 feet in length with mesh that does not exceed one-half-inch stretch measure. Please note this is a minnow seine, not a drag seine such as a trawling vessel would use.

"Spear" means a pole or shaft with an attached sharp barbed point or points designed for the purpose of impaling a fish. It does not include a snag line, snag pole, snaghook or cluster of hooks that might be used for snagging, which is prohibited by state law.

"Spearing" means fishing with a device consisting of a shaft with an attached sharp point or points and includes devices such as spears, bows and arrows, spear guns or similar devices.

In spring 2010 the lake will be restocked. New size and bag limits will allow various species of game fish to re-establish sustainable populations.

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