

Chapter NR 20

FISHING; INLAND WATERS; OUTLYING WATERS

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(Sections 29.085 and 29.174, Stats.)

NR 20.01 Closed seasons. There shall be and are provided and established the following open and closed seasons, bag limits, size limits, possession limits and other regulations for the several varieties and species of fish, crayfish, and frogs in the waters within the state of Wisconsin. A closed season is established for each variety of fish, crayfish and frogs named in this chapter extending during all the time of the year except the open season period embraced within the specified dates, both inclusive, and except as otherwise expressly provided no person shall take, catch or kill fish of any variety in excess of the daily bag limit and no person shall take, catch or kill fish, or fish for fish by any means other than hook or line, nor at any time other than the open season therefor, nor have in his possession or under his control any fish, crayfish, or frogs in excess of the possession limit, or below the minimum size therefor during the open season.

History: 1-2-56; am. Register, December, 1957, No. 24, eff. 1-1-58; renum. from WCD 20.01 to be NR 20.01, Register, November, 1970, No. 179, eff. 1-1-71.

NR 20.015 Definitions. For the purpose of this chapter, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (1) Fisher means any person engaged in fishing.
- (2) Fishing includes taking, capturing or killing fish or fishing for fish of any variety at any time in the waters of the state.

History: Cr. Register, December, 1976, No. 252, eff. 1-1-77

NR 20.02 Waters classified; hook and line fishing in outlying waters. (1) For the purpose of regulating hook and line fishing in the outlying waters, the closed seasons, size limits, bag and possession limits, number of hooks and lines and ice fishing regulations shall be the same as those prescribed for the inland waters of the county in which such

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outlying waters are located, except as otherwise specifically provided in the following table:

Species	Area	Open season	Daily bag limit	Minimum length (in.)	
(a) WALLEYE AND SAUGER (Bag limit means total of all)	Lake Michigan and Green Bay	At all times	3	No size limit	
	Lake Superior	At all times	5	No size limit	
(b) NORTHERN PIKE	Lake Michigan and Green Bay	At all times	5	No size limit	
	Lake Superior	At all times	5	No size limit	
(c) PERCH	Lake Michigan and Green Bay	Continuous	No bag limits or size limit; except during the closed season for commercial fishing in the waters of southern Green Bay and in the waters of Lake Michigan and northern Green Bay when there shall be a daily bag limit of 50 per day.		
	Lake Superior	Continuous	50	No size limit	
(d) 1. TROUT AND SALMON	Lake Michigan, Green Bay	Continuous	5 in aggregate of which only 3 may be lake trout	10	
	2. TROUT AND SALMON EXCLUDING LAKE TROUT	Lake Superior	Continuous	10 in aggregate of which only 5 may be trout	10
	3. LAKE TROUT	Lake Superior	December 1 to September 30	5 in aggregate with trout	10
(e) LARGEMOUTH AND SMALLMOUTH BASS	Lake Michigan and Green Bay (excluding waters within 1/4-mile of Washington, Detroit, Plumb, Pilot, Hog and Rock Islands)	First Saturday in May to March 1	5 of each	No size limit	
	Town of Washington Island	July 1 to March 1	5 of each	No size limit	
	Lake Superior	Second Saturday in May to March 1	5 of each	No size limit	
(f) LAKE STURGEON	Lake Superior	Continuous	1 per yr	40	

(g) Herring of any size with no bag limit may be taken by hook and line at all times in the outlying waters.

(h) All species of fish of lawful size may be taken from the outlying waters including Chequamegon Bay by trolling from a motor driven boat or sailboat during the open season therefor. It shall be unlawful to spear any species or variety of fish in the outlying and reserve waters at any time, except that rough fish may be speared from sunrise to sunset in all outlying waters and may be taken with the use of spear guns by the

method commonly known as skin diving by divers under the water in Lake Michigan. Northern pike may be speared through the ice in Lake Superior.

History: 1-2-56; am. (1) (a) Register, December, 1956, No. 12, eff. 1-1-57; am. (1) and (1) (a), Register, December, 1957, No. 24, eff. 1-1-58; am. (1) (a) and (d); renum. (1), (e), (f) and (g) to be (1) (f) (g) and (h); cr. (1) (e), Register, October, 1958, No. 34, eff. 1-1-59; r. and recr. Register, December, 1959, No. 48, eff. 1-1-60; am. (1), (g) and (j), Register, December, 1960, No. 60, eff. 1-1-61; r. and recr., Register, December, 1961, No. 72, eff. 1-1-62; am. (1) (d) and (1) (i), Register, June, 1962, No. 78, eff. 7-1-62; am. (1) (d), Register, July, 1962, No. 79, eff. 8-1-62; am. (1) (g), Register, December, 1962, No. 84, eff. 1-1-63; am. (1) (g), Register, December, 1963, No. 96, eff. 1-1-64; am. (1) (intro. par.), (b) and (g), Register, December, 1964, No. 108, eff. 1-1-65; am. intro. par., Register, November, 1965, No. 119, eff. 1-1-66; r. and recr. (1) (d), (f), and (g), Register, December, 1966, No. 132, eff. 1-1-67; am. (1) (d) and (g), Register, December, 1967, No. 144, eff. 1-1-68; r. and recr. (1) (e); r. (f); renum. (g) and (h) to be (f) and (g); renum. (i) to be (h) and am., Register, December, 1968, No. 166, eff. 1-1-69; r. and recr. (1) (d) and r. (1) (f), Register, March, 1969, No. 159, eff. 4-1-69; renum. from WCD 20.02 to be NR 20.02, and am. (1) (e), Register, November, 1970, No. 179, eff. 1-1-71; cr. (1) (f), Register, August, 1971, No. 188, eff. 1-1-72; emerg. r. and recr. (1) (d) eff. 9-23-72; am. (1) (e), Register, November, 1972, No. 203, eff. 1-1-73; emerg. r. and recr. (1) (d) eff. 11-16-72; am. (1) (d), Register, May 1973, No. 209, eff. 6-1-73, am. (1) (d) 1 and (e), Register, November, 1975, No. 239, eff. 12-1-75; am. (1) (e), Register, December, 1978, No. 276, eff. 1-1-79; am. (1) (c), Register, August, 1979, No. 284, eff. 9-1-79; am. (1) (d), Register, December, 1980, No. 300, eff. 1-1-81; r. and recr. (1) (c), Register, December, 1981, No. 312, eff. 1-1-82; am. (1) (a), Register, October, 1982, No. 322, eff. 11-1-82.

NR 20.03 Season tables; open and closed seasons, size and bag limits and measurements. (1) The open seasons specified in the following table apply to fishing in open waters and fishing through the ice, except that the department shall close the season for fishing through the ice in any inland waters when it finds after scientific investigation and study that continued fishing through the ice in such waters would result in a depletion of the supply of game fish therein and that such closed season is necessary to conserve the fish supply and insure the citizens of this state continued opportunities for good fishing therein and such closed seasons shall be put into effect by posting a notice thereof on or in the vicinity of the shore of the waters affected, such posting being deemed by the department to be the most feasible way of notifying the public that such closed season is in effect and such closed seasons shall remain in full force and effect so long as such waters are covered with ice and so long as such posting is continued. The department may also, following scientific investigation and study, establish bag limits and size limits on the individual inland waters when it finds that the taking of fish will aid in management of the fishery and insure the citizens of this state additional opportunities for good fishing. Such special regulations shall become effective only after public informational meetings are held. For open seasons in specified waters see s. NR 20.04. The possession limit for each species of fish shall be double the daily bag limit specified in this chapter except that no person shall have in his possession or under his control more than the daily bag limit while on the ice or waters or while fishing in the state of Wisconsin. The measurement of all fish taken shall be in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the utmost end of the tail fin fully extended.

Kind of fish and locality	Open season (both dates inclusive)	Daily bag limit	Minimum length (inches)
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(a) LARGEMOUTH AND SMALLMOUTH BASS

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Kind of fish and locality	Open season (both dates inclusive)	Daily bag limit	Minimum length (inches)
1. Park lake and Silver lake, Columbia county; Forest lake, Fond du Lac county; Beckmann lake, Green county; Blue Spring lake, Jefferson county; and Little Elkhart lake, Sheboygan county (largemouth bass)	First Saturday in May to March 1	5	14
Browns lake, Racine county and Pretty lake, Waukesha county (largemouth bass)	First Saturday in May to March 1	5	16
Rockland lake, Racine county and Beulah Lake, Walworth county (largemouth bass)	First Saturday in May to March 1	5	No minimum length, except the possession of fish between 12 and 16 inches is prohibited.
2. Clear lake (sec. 16, T39N, R7E) Oneida county (smallmouth bass)	First Saturday in May to March 1	5	12
3. Nebish lake (sec. 11, T41N, R7E) Vilas county (smallmouth bass)	Continuous	None	10
4. In all other waters	First Saturday in May to March 1	5 of each	No size limit
(c) WALLEYE AND SAUGER In all waters of Barron, Burnett, Polk and Sawyer counties	First Saturday in May to March 1	5 in aggregate	13
In all other waters (See also NR 20.04)	First Saturday in May to March 1	5 in aggregate	No size limit
(d) NORTHERN PIKE (See also NR 20.04)			
1. In all waters of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine and Walworth counties	First Saturday in May to March 1	2	No size limit
3. Shawano lake in Shawano county and all waters in Menominee county	No closed season	25	No size limit
4. In all other waters	First Saturday in May to March 1	5	No size limit
(e) MUSKELLUNGE (includes hybrid muskellunge)			
1. Twin Valley lake, Iowa county	First Saturday in May to November 30	1	36
2. Big lake (sec. 4, T42N, R6E), Vilas county	First Saturday in May to November 30	1	34
(f) 1. Trout and Salmon (any variety except splake and lake trout) (Bag limit means total of all)			
a. Columbia, Grant, Green, Iowa, LaCrosse, Lafayette, Richland and Sauk county waters, including lakes (ponds) except that portion of Trout creek beginning in SE¼ SE¼, sec. 5, T6N, R5E downstream to the earthen dam located on sec. lines 19 and 30, T7N, R5E, Iowa county, which shall be open to fishing subject to s. NR 20.04 (7) (e).	January 1 to but not including the first Saturday in May.	2 in aggregate	6
	First Saturday in May to September 30.	5 in aggregate	