

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AMENDMENT

FWP proposal to be amended: 2025-2026 Fishing Regulations

Commissioner: Vice Chair (Region 1 Commissioner Pat Tabor

Date Received by Commission: 10/4/2024

Proposed Amendment:

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission change the following with respect to spearfishing in the Western District:

From Page 23 of the 2024 Extant Fishing Regulations

Spearfishing: All waters are closed to spearfishing of game and non-game fish except open for spearfishing northern pike through the ice, and by person swimming or submerged in waters open to fishing, or as otherwise noted under District Exceptions.

From Page 25 of the 2024 Extant Fishing Regulations

Northern Pike 15 daily and in possession. All waters open for spearfishing through the ice, and by person swimming or submerged in waters open to fishing, or as otherwise noted in District Exceptions.

Requested by FWP: No

Rationale and Background:

Northern Pike throughout the Western District is considered invasive and is often managed in fashion to protect endemic fish. Recently regulations in other districts have been liberalized to increase opportunity by allowing spearfishing in open water. Many sportsman have requested that spearfishing opportunity for Northern Pike be expanded to more locations and during open water season throughout the Western District instead of a limited number of bodies of water or only through ice. This amendment will enhance sportsmen opportunity and increase efforts to control an otherwise known predator fish.

Department Response:

FWP anticipates no fish population impacts from this amendment. FWP does believe there is potential for localized user conflicts between hook/line enthusiasts and those spearfishing.