



PUBLIC COMMENT

SPEARFISHING AMENDMENT

NOV 12, 2024

Wickman, Erik

From: R. Craig Woods <clwoods7933@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 12, 2024 2:06 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I'm against proposed regulations on underwater spearing of pike!

The new proposal is to allow underwater spearing on pike on all region 1 waters with pike!! This is a horrible idea in my opinion. This was in place many years ago and was shut down do to people spearing Bass and other game fish. This will also decimated are trophy pike fisheries we have now and I believe is possibly some of the best trophy pike in lower 48!! There seems to be an agenda recently to eradicate our great fisheries especially warm water. I'm also against the FWP pushing the single hook only from Cfalls bridge to Flathead Lake proposal which is also a bogus idea due to the annual whitefish run where anglers use jigs with treble hooks. Please stop messing with our fisheries.

Sincerely
Craig Woods
253 Fox Den Trail
Kalispell

Wickman, Erik

From: Jacob Link <jacob.link49@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 12, 2024 4:58 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pike spearing and single shank hook proposals in region 1

I am an angler in region 1 and these new proposals regarding pike spearing in the region and single shank hooks on the Flathead River are bogus.

You are ruining trophy pike waters with opening these lakes to spearing. In addition, people spearing are going to spear other game fish, whether the regs say it or not. FWP does not have enough officers to enforce that.

By only allowing single shank hooks on the river you are limiting fishing opportunity for multiple species, namely Lake Superior whitefish.

This commission is so removed from anglers' interests in this region and it is sad that they have the power to make these decisions.

In summary, the anglers in region 1 are strongly against these proposals and we hope that the commissions understands how this affects the fisheries in our region.

Jacob Link

Wickman, Erik

From: Garin McGrann <garinmc406@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2024 9:15 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pike spearing

I don't think it's a good idea to open all waters to spearing for pike. It would decimate the population which has already seen a lot of increased pressure. They are not overpopulated and if anything struggling. These fish take years to get big. They are a trophy fish and the population needs to be preserved. Please do not pass this.

Wickman, Erik

From: Brady Ewing <ewing.brady@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 11:15 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on spearfishing access

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my desire for increased access for Spearfishing in Montana's waters, both in terms of species and bodies of water. I live in Philipsburg and would love to see more access for our small but growing community.

Because there are so few of us, and given the difficulty of the sport, there is no way we put us statistical dent in any of the fish populations we target. Anglers generally feel like what we do is akin to shooting fish and a barrel, but I assure you it is not.

Please support our increased access to Montana waters!

Many thanks,
Brady Ewing

Wickman, Erik

From: Mike Davis <mtmike.davis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 12:54 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Region 1 spearing for pike

As someone who enjoys the hunt for large pike I am really against being able to spear them. The majority of us hunting big pike practice catch and release to sustain our large fish population. Spearing would really hurt that population of larger pike.

Not sure why you would even propose this? A lot of our water in this area that has pike also has healthy bass, perch, Whitefish and bull trout (where applicable) fish populations. Echo Lake Flathead River, Flathead Lake, Whitefish lake and our flathead river slough are great examples.

Please, no spear fishing for our pike in Region 1.

Sincerely,
Mike Davis
Columbia Falls, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Steven Gottfredson <gottfredson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 11:21 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Spearfishing Proposed Regulation

Please approve spearfishing access as proposed in the current regulation cycle.

Spearfishing is experiencing a surge in popularity. Notably,

- Michigan recently expanded spearfishing for game fish, and
- shows like "Meateater" frequently highlight the sport, even dedicating a section of their website for spearfishing gear.
- There's a huge trend right now where people want to feel connected to the food chain w out intermediaries and supermarkets. Spearfishing is central because it provides such a unique encounter w the environment and our precious fish resource.

As we look to the future, we hope spear anglers will be seen not as a niche group but as peers within the broader angling community.

- Trust us as advocates for pristine water and thriving aquatic ecosystems.
- Recognize our value as dedicated volunteers.
- Consider spearfishing as way to showcase the division's charter to increase public access to MT majestic waters.

I challenge you to work with us on a future

- Where spear anglers aren't just called on to help w eradication of invasive species but where we are treated as equals w other anglers and have the opportunity to explore more waters and take home fish to our families and friends.
- Where the division understands our selectivity; a spear angler only shoots when sure, just as an angler releases a fish not meant for home.
- where our activity and travel in the State benefits both the ecosystem and economics of the State.
- Where the angling community understands that we can reliably identify species underwater as accurately as traditional anglers or hunters on land.

We ask the Board to see spearfishing not just as a management tool, but as an integral, equal part of the angling community.

I earnestly request your approval to ratify any proposals to open spearfishing in MT.

Steve Gottfredson

Wickman, Erik

From: Randal Siemens <randal041@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 20, 2024 9:15 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commission Ammendment Proposal - Public comment.

In respect to the proposal for underwater spear fishing.

I Adamantly OPOSE the proposal for underwater spear fishing. All species become targets for spear fishermen. That is why it was discontinued before.

Randy Siemens
161 Killdeer lane,
Kalispell MT 59901
406.249.1132

Wickman, Erik

From: Chancy Jeschke <chancyfish@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2024 11:52 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

I am sending my comments in regards to underwater spearing in the western district.

I strongly oppose the underwater spearing!! There are many reasons why!! At one point in time you could spear on Echo Lake it was closed down due to people spearing Bass and other game fish. There are many people spearing on lakes closed already to spearing, Lake Blaine, Bitterroot Lake and Thompson. They are spearing Bass and any fish they can. Our wardens are way under staffed already they cannot keep up as it is. There is a strong safety issue also. A young man was killed in Whitefish Lake many years ago from shooting underwater electric line.

As for the Pike fisheries you will be harvesting large fish which are main predator on small pike. The Pike have been here in many water since the 70s that pushing 60 years. There is a huge following of trophy pike fisherman here. We have some of best Pike fishing in the lower 48.

Fwp should not be sneaking in admenents without full disclosure of who is proposing the admenents to the regulations.

I also strongly oppose the single hook band on the flathead river from Columbia Falls bridge to Flathead Lake.

I strong oppose both of these issues. I am own my own tackle shop and worked in the fishing industry here in Kalispell my while life. I believe the issues that been proposed by FWP recently are disgusting and have no data or support for them!! Fwp commission need to talk to the anglers and Sportsman in there distric before these horrible rules are every even proposed!!!

Chancy Jeschke
85 West Evergreen Dr
Kalispell MT 59901

Wickman, Erik

From: suzukimx397@yahoo.com
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:52 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Spearing

I do not believe all under water spearing is a good idea as people will be to tempted to spear other fish as in trout bass and others.

Wickman, Erik

From: Rick Wolfe <rickwolfe49@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:54 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Underwater spearing is a step too far for northern Pike the species has a huge angler following, which would not like to see a decimated

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Pete Jellar <admin@petestackleshop.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 12:39 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Under water spearing I'm against as they will target other species that are regulated. We don't have enough wardens to police all the pike waters. Bad idea.

Peter jellar
143 welf lane
Kalispell Mt 59901

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Wickman, Erik

From: Levi Jeschke <levi.jeschke@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 12:53 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Underwater spearing for pike

Hi FWP,

I'm against opening underwater spearing for pike in all waters for region 1. Due to the reasons listed below:

- 1: The door being open to illegal spearing of other species of fish. People not following these rules.
- 2: Safety hazard as not all people follow the rules, for example people not marking there spearing holes.
- 3: Northern pike eggs, fry, and young are a viable food source to other aquatic animals and fishes,

Thank you,
Levi

Wickman, Erik

From: Sam Stricker <sstrickeredu@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 3:05 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Pike Spearing

I am writing in opposition to the proposed amendments to the fishing regulations regarding spearing Northern Pike:

“From Page 23 of the 2024 Extant Fishing Regulations Spearing:

All waters are closed to spearing of game and nongame fish except open for spearing northern pike through the ice, and by persons swimming or submerged in waters open to fishing, or as otherwise noted under District Exceptions.”

Allowing sportsman to be able to spear pike will decimate our trophy pike population. Waters all around Montana hold trophy pike, having personally caught two over 40, I believe this would be an end to this. Many lakes where these fish are located, do not pose an undue risk to native species. Northern Pike is likely in the top 3 most popular species to target, and you should not allow them to be killed with a spear. Stop messing with the warm water species.

Sam Stricker

Wickman, Erik

From: Josh Greene <greene3968@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 5:25 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Spearing

The idea of opening all bodies of waters to spearing is a terrible idea. There is no way the fish and game can regulate or monitor that. It is opening the door for individuals to spear whatever is below them or in front of them. They will not just target "pike" i can see people targeting bulltrout has they are very abundant in the flathead basin . There was several cases in the last year where people fell in and lost machines do to the fact that spear holes were not properly marked or properly filled back in. This is not a good idea opening every lake to eradicate pike spearing. It is not going to fix the population. It will eradicate other game fish and other species other then pike.

Wickman, Erik

From: Chad Thiem <driftpartner16@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2024 11:00 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Underwater spearing proposal

I vote totally against this proposal due to the fact nothing will stop underwater spear fishermen from damaging underwater habitats as well as spearing game fish. this is a ridiculous proposal

Wickman, Erik

From: Wickman, Erik
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2024 1:20 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: MOGA Spearfishing Comments
Attachments: doc00979820241028130957.pdf

Erik Wickman | Executive Office Manager | Assistant to the Director Headquarters | Director's Office Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Office: (406) 444-7826 | Cell: (406) 594-8921

Montana FWP | Montana Outdoors Magazine

-----Original Message-----

From: kyocera@mt.gov <kyocera@mt.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2024 1:10 PM
To: Wickman, Erik <Erik.Wickman@mt.gov>
Subject:

TASKalfa 7353ci
[00:17:c8:e4:17:a0]

Wickman, Erik

From: Flathead Bait <flatheadbait@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2024 6:12 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Northern pike spearing

Sent from my iPhone

I am very much against any change to the northern pike regulations that would allow any more harvest of pike. Pike are a very popular sport fish and spearing of pike only encourages the removal of large fish that help to control smaller pike. As the bigger fish are taken out of a system you wind up with lots more small hungry pike.

Wickman, Erik

From: Kirk Rasmussen <kirkasmussen86@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2024 6:20 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO to Pike Spearing

How far are is FWP going to go? There are to many irresponsible people out there not fisherman that will take this to for if you open this door pike are not the only fish thay will suffer. To many other important species will be taken. Again not a good plan at all. No on open water spearing

Wickman, Erik

From: pete madison <pmadison7989@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 9:13 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Spearing

Dear Sirs'

I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the plan to allow underwater spearing in Montana waters. There is a very limited group of people who would participate in this activity while you would greatly effect the much larger group of people who enjoy fishing for the species that you want to eradicate. There is no catch and release in spear fishing. You made a great blunder with the introduction of Mysis shrimp in Flathead Lake and ruined a very healthy salmon fishery which no one ever mentions the negative economic impact it had on the community. Please consider dropping this idea along with limiting the lakes where spearing is allowed through the ice. Thank you for your service and my chance to express my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Pete Madison ALS# 02/06/1956 4

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Karch, Kellan on behalf of FWP Wildlife
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 3:38 PM
To: Wickman, Erik
Cc: Dorvall, Ryan
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] MWF 11/12/24 Commission Comment Letters
Attachments: Final Hook Definition in 2025-2026 Regs_10_31_24 MWF.pdf; Final Trout Daily and Possession Limits 10_31_24 MWF.pdf; final Wolf regulations comments November 2024.pdf; Final Spearfishing for Northern Pike 10_31_24 MWF.pdf; MWF Bull Trout 2024.docx (1).pdf

From: Frank Szollosi <frank@mtwf.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 3:29 PM
To: Temple, Dustin <dtemple@mt.gov>; FWP Wildlife <fwpwld@mt.gov>; commissionerregion1@mtfwf.org; commissionerregion2@mtfwf.org; commissionerregion3@mtfwf.org; KC Walsh <commissionerregion4@mtfwf.org>; commissionerregion5@mtfwf.org; commissionerregion6@mtfwf.org; commissionerregion7@mtfwf.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MWF 11/12/24 Commission Comment Letters

Dear Chair Robinson, fellow Commissioners, Director Temple and staff,

Please accept these comment letters in advance of your next Commission meeting.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Frank Szollosi
Executive Director
Montana Wildlife Federation

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Frank Szollosi
executive director he/him
montana wildlife federation
established 1936
call or text me at 406-417-9909
engage on [facebook \[facebook.com\]](https://www.facebook.com) or [instagram \[instagram.com\]](https://www.instagram.com)
and at [www.montanawildlife.org \[montanawildlife.org\]](https://www.montanawildlife.org)
or drop us a line at P.O. Box 1175 Helena, Montana 59624