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**DEC ADOPTS NEW FRESHWATER FISHING REGULATIONS FOR 2012-2014
Changes to Become Effective October 1, 2012**

Changes to freshwater fishing regulations will be in effect starting Oct. 1, 2012, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced.

“New York provides some of the best fishing in the nation and, periodically, DEC modifies existing freshwater sportfishing regulations to enhance fishing opportunities for anglers throughout New York,” said Assistant Commissioner for Natural Resources Kathy Moser. “Input received from anglers and other stakeholders during the public comment period earlier this year resulted in some suggestions becoming incorporated in the final changes announced today.”

The new regulations are a result of a two-year process which included DEC assessment and evaluation of biological and ecological data, discussions with anglers, and a formal public review and comment period. Some of the adopted changes apply to all waters in New York, while many others apply only to specific waters. Highlights of the final changes include:

Regulation changes that pertain to walleye:

- Prohibit fishing in the following stream sections from March 16 until the first Saturday in May (opening day for walleye) to protect spawning walleye: Lake Pleasant outlet to the mouth of the Kunjamuk River (Hamilton County); and Little Sandy Creek (Oswego County) from the intersection of the channelized area next to Koster Drive downstream of the State Route 3 bridge to the lower boundary of the public fishing rights section located upstream of the State Route 3 bridge.
- Remove special walleye regulations (18-inch minimum size and three per day) and apply the statewide regulation (15-inch minimum size and five per day) for Lime Lake (Cattaraugus County) and Bear and Findley lakes (Chautauqua County).
- Change the walleye daily limit for Lake Erie and the Upper Niagara River to six per day.

Regulation changes that pertain to black bass:

- Eliminate the special black bass closed season for Oneida Lake and implement statewide regulations.
- Apply statewide black bass regulations for Allen Lake (Allegany County) and Cassadaga Lake (Chautauqua County).

Regulations that pertain to trout and salmon:

- Extend the catch and release-only regulation for brook trout into tidal streams in Suffolk County.
- Eliminate Suffolk County tidal trout regulations and apply freshwater stream trout regulations to these sections.

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- Change minimum length for salmonids in the Upper Niagara River to any size.
- Change the trout regulations for the Titicus Outlet (Westchester County) and Esopus Creek, Shandaken tunnel outlet to Ashokan Reservoir (Ulster County) to a daily limit of five fish with no more than two trout longer than 12 inches.
- Delete the 12-inch size and three fish per day limit for kokanee salmon in Glass Lake (Rensselaer County).
- Open Lake Kushaqua and Rollins Pond (Franklin County) to ice fishing for lake trout.
- Open Blue Mountain Lake, Eagle Lake, Forked Lake, Gilman Lake, South Pond and Utowana Lake (Hamilton County) to ice fishing for landlocked salmon and reduce the daily limit for lake trout in these waters from three per day to two per day.
- Delete the catch and release trout regulation for Jordan River from Carry Falls Reservoir upstream to Franklin County line (St. Lawrence County).
- Implement a 12-inch minimum size for brown trout in Otisco Lake (Onondaga County).
- Reduce the limit of rainbow trout from five to one in the western Finger Lakes and three to one in the tributaries. Western Finger Lakes include Seneca, Keuka, Canandaigua, Canadice and Hemlock lakes.
- Remove the restriction of no more than three lake trout as part of the five trout limit in the western Finger Lakes.
- Eliminate trout catch and release section for Ischua Creek (Cattaraugus County) in the village of Franklinville.
- Change the minimum size limit for rainbow trout in Skaneateles Lake (Onondaga, Cayuga and Cortland Counties) and Owasco Lake (Cayuga County) from nine inches to 15 inches.
- Add the tributaries of Beaverdam Brook (Oswego County) from their mouths to the upstream boundary of the Salmon River Hatchery property to the current Beaverdam Brook fishing closure (which also currently prohibits fishing within 100 yards of any DEC fish collection device).
- Delete the special trout regulation for Palmer Lake (Saratoga County) to match the statewide regulation.

Regulations that pertain to pickerel, muskellunge and tiger muskellunge:

- Institute a catch and release only regulation for chain pickerel in Deep Pond (Suffolk County).
- Implement a 40-inch size limit for muskellunge and tiger muskellunge in the Chenango, Tioughnioga, Tioga and Susquehanna rivers (Chenango, Cortland, Broome and Tioga counties) and a 36-inch size limit at Otisco Lake (Onondaga County).

Regulations that pertain to ice fishing and baitfish:

- Delete special ice fishing regulation for Square Pond (Franklin County).
- Eliminate the existing ban on the use of tip-ups in Crumhorn Lake (Otsego County).
- Allow ice fishing on stocked trout lakes in Allegany, Niagara, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Erie and Cattaraugus counties unless otherwise stated.

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- Allow ice fishing on specific waters currently deemed as trout waters in the counties of Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida and St. Lawrence Counties.
- Provide for ice fishing at privately managed water in Hamilton County (Salmon Pond).
- Include Cayuta Lake (Schuyler County) as a designated water from which baitfish may be commercially harvested.

Regulations that pertain to gear and angling methods:

- More clearly specify that attempting to take fish by snagging is prohibited.
- Permit the use of multiple hooks with multiple points on Lake Erie tributaries.
- For the Salmon River (Oswego County) allow a bead chain to be attached to floating lures. The distance between a floating lure and hook point may not exceed three-and-a-half inches when a bead chain configuration is used.
- For the Salmon River (Oswego County) implement a “no weight” restriction (i.e., only floating line and unweighted leaders and flies allowed) from May 1 – 15 for the Lower Fly Area and from May 1 – August 31 for the Upper Fly Area.
- Explicitly and clearly indicate that the catch and release requirement for New York City waters does not apply to snakeheads and that any snakeheads caught while angling are not to be returned to the water.

The complete list of freshwater sportfish regulation changes can be viewed under 'Recently Adopted Regulations (Previous Twelve Months)' on DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/propregulations.html. All comments received from the public were categorized and reviewed for substance, and staff responses were compiled. A summary of the “Assessment of Public Comment is available on the Department of State website at www.dos.state.ny.us/info/register.htm.

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