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| |  | | --- | | **DEC Announces Proposed Changes to Freshwater Sportfishing Regulations** | | **Public Comments Accepted Through October 7, 2016**  **Regulations to be Effective April 2017**  The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is accepting comments on proposed changes to freshwater fishing regulations through October 7, 2016, Commissioner Basil Seggos announced today.  DEC modifies freshwater sportfishing regulations approximately every two years as part of DEC's commitment to enhance fishing opportunities and protect the State's freshwater resources.  "New York provides some of the best fishing in the nation, and the continuous assessment and modification of sportfishing regulations ensure that this remains the case for generations to come," said Commissioner Seggos. "I encourage anglers to review what is being proposed and provide input during the public comment period."  DEC assessed the status of existing freshwater sportfish populations and the desires of anglers in developing these proposed regulations. Many of the proposed changes are the result of an effort to consolidate regulations and eliminate special regulations that are no longer warranted or have become outdated. The new freshwater sportfishing regulations are scheduled to take effect on April 1, 2017. Once enacted, the new regulations will be included in the 2017-18 Freshwater Fishing Regulations Guide.  The proposed regulations were first provided for informal public review on the DEC website in February 2016. The early feedback helped DEC determine which regulation changes to advance or eliminate.  Comments on the proposed regulations should be sent by email to [regulations.fish@dec.ny.gov](mailto:regulations.fish@dec.ny.gov) or mailed to Gregory Kozlowski, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Bureau of Fisheries, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4753.  The [full text of the proposed regulations](http://links.govdelivery.com/track?type=click&enid=ZWFzPTEmbWFpbGluZ2lkPTIwMTYwODI0LjYyOTQ1NTgxJm1lc3NhZ2VpZD1NREItUFJELUJVTC0yMDE2MDgyNC42Mjk0NTU4MSZkYXRhYmFzZWlkPTEwMDEmc2VyaWFsPTE3MTA1ODM3JmVtYWlsaWQ9aGFybGVxdWluMDRAaG90bWFpbC5jb20mdXNlcmlkPWhhcmxlcXVpbjA0QGhvdG1haWwuY29tJmZsPSZleHRyYT1NdWx0aXZhcmlhdGVJZD0mJiY=&&&103&&&http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/propregulations.html) are also available on DEC's website. The proposed changes include:  **Great Lakes Proposals:**   * Clarify that St. Lawrence River tributaries in Franklin and Clinton counties are exempt from Great Lakes regulations. * Define the portion of Cattaraugus Creek subject to Lake Erie and tributary fishing regulations from Lake Erie upstream to the Springville Dam. * Expand the Lake Erie and tributaries 20-inch minimum size limit one fish daily limit black bass regulation to December 1 through the Friday before the third Saturday in June. * Improved language for interpreting combined trout and salmon creel limit in Lake Ontario. * Reduce the daily limit from five to three northern pike for St. Lawrence River and define boundary between Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. * Clarification of boundary between Lake Ontario and the Salmon River. * Provide an exception allowing access for fishing to the closed section of the Salmon River on Salmon River Hatchery property by permit.   **Walleye, black bass and northern pike proposals:**   * Establish an 18-inch minimum size limit and daily creel limit of three walleye for Titicus Reservoir (Westchester County); Sacandaga Lake and tributaries and outlet and Lake Pleasant and tributaries (Hamilton County); Kiwassa Lake, St. Regis Falls Impoundment, and Little Wolf Pond (Franklin County); Putnam Pond (Essex County); Cazenovia and DeRuyter lakes (Madison County); Waterport Reservoir (Orleans County); Rio Reservoir (Orange and Sullivan counties); East Sidney Reservoir (Delaware County); Taghkanic Lake (Columbia County); Canadarago Lake (Otsego County); and additional portions of the Seneca River (Cayuga, Onondaga, Seneca and Wayne counties). * Eliminate 18-inch minimum size limit and daily creel limit of three walleye in Chautauqua Lake (Chautauqua County) and Franklin Falls Flow (Essex County). * Clarify that the 22-inch minimum size five fish daily limit for northern pike regulation applies to the Wayne County portion of the Seneca River. * Clarify that statewide black bass regulations apply to the Hamilton County portion of Fourth Lake. * Eliminate the special regulation for black bass in the Hamilton County portion of the Hudson River.   **Trout and salmon proposals:**   * Decrease the minimum size limit for trout at Colgate Lake (Greene County) from 12 to 9 inches. * Eliminate special trout regulation on Whey Pond (Franklin County). * Eliminate the special regulation for landlocked salmon for Piseco Lake (Hamilton County). * Decrease the minimum size length for lake trout in Woodhull Lake (Herkimer County) from 21 to 18 inches. * Change the end time anglers are allowed to fish Spring Creek on the Caledonia State Fish Hatchery property from 4:00 PM to 3:30 PM. * Eliminate the 9-inch minimum size limit for trout in the Carmans River (Suffolk County) in Southaven County Park as well as the catch and release section of the Carmans River for brown and rainbow trout. * Reduce the number of brown trout and rainbow trout that can be kept as part of a five fish daily limit in Skaneateles Lake to no more than three of either species. * Reduce the allowable daily harvest of brown trout and rainbow trout from five of each to three of each and increase the allowable daily harvest of lake trout from three to five as part of the five in any combination daily limit regulation for trout, lake trout, and landlocked salmon at Cayuga and Owasco lakes. * Increase the minimum size limit for rainbow trout from 9 to 15 inches at Owasco, Skaneateles and Otisco Lake tributaries.   **Gear and use of gear proposals:**   * Eliminate the allowance for spearing bullheads and suckers in all Cayuga, Oswego and Wayne county tributaries to Lake Ontario. * Allow for the taking of suckers by snatching (but not blind snatching) from January 1 through March 15 in specific portions of the Otselic and Tioughnioga rivers in Cortland County. * Eliminate the allowance for lake whitefish snatching and blind snatching at Piseco Lake in Hamilton County. * Continue to restrict the number of devices allowed for ice fishing on Bigsby and Copperas ponds (Essex County), Upper Saranac Lake (Franklin County), and Fawn Lake (Hamilton County). * Allow for ice fishing in Rushford Lake in Allegany County. * Re-open Crane Pond (Essex County) to ice fishing.   **Baitfish and non-game fish proposals:**   * Remove the prohibition on the use or possession of smelt in Lake George and allow for harvest of smelt by angling. * Clarify that taking and possessing sauger and mooneye is prohibited in Lake Champlain.   **Fishing prohibited proposals:**   * Prohibit fishing at any time on Buttermilk Creek from mouth to Fox Valley Road Bridge. * Close two short sections of Fish Creek and Indian River in St. Lawrence County to fishing from March 16 until the opening of walleye season. * Close a section of the Grasse River in St. Lawrence County to all fishing from March 16 until the opening of walleye season. * Clarify the portion of the Bouquet River that is closed to fishing at any time. * Eliminate the angling and dipnetting prohibited regulation on Dutch Hollow Brook in Cayuga County.   Several non-substantive regulation modifications are also proposed to remove duplicate regulations and to make structural changes designed to allow for easier modification of regulations in the future. | |
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