

Notice of Hearing

The Department of Natural Resources announces that it will hold a public hearing on a permanent rule to revise ch. NR 19 and 20, relating to wild bait harvest regulations, at the time and place shown below.

Hearing Information

Date: November 2, 2023

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Virtual Location Link: [Join online via Zoom](#) (pre-registration required) or by phone at 1-312-626-6799, Meeting ID 891 4254 8874

Rule Information: Bait harvest regulations are established to manage harvest of wild bait, especially minnows, from waters of the state. These regulations are important for allowing bait harvesters and anglers of Wisconsin fair and equitable access to and use of baitfish, while maintaining populations of these fish as forage for native game and non-game fish and other wildlife. Bait harvest regulations also help mitigate the spread of aquatic invasive species and disease and minimize disturbances to sensitive aquatic resources. This rule aims to modernize bait harvest regulations to improve permitting and reporting efficiency for bait harvesters and the department while continuing to protect wild fish populations. This rule will also update gear use regulations to meet current needs. This rule will address wild bait harvest regulations for both commercial and personal bait harvesters. This rule will also create a white sucker spawning permit to allow bait dealers to harvest eggs and milt from white suckers to rear as bait.

Accessibility

For the hearing or visually impaired, non-English speakers, or those with other personal circumstances which might make communication at the meeting/hearing difficult, DNR will, to the maximum extent possible and with reasonable advance notice, provide aids including an interpreter, or a non-English, large-print, or recorded version of hearing documents. To access these resources, please contact the email address or phone number listed below as soon as possible.

Appearances at the Hearing and Submittal of Written Comments

The public has the opportunity to testify at the hearing. Registration will take place at the hearing by completing a Hearing Appearance form, which is available here:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/forms/8300/8300-014.pdf>. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged if you plan to provide spoken comments during the hearing. To pre-register, please download and complete the fillable [Hearing Appearance form](#) and send it to

Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov.

Comments on the proposed rule must be received on or before November 2, 2023. Written comments may be submitted by U.S. mail, E-mail, or through the internet and will have the same weight and effect as oral statements presented at the public hearing.

Written comments and any questions on the proposed rules should be submitted to:

Department of Natural Resources
Attn: Meredith Penthorn, FH/4
P.O. Box 7921
101 S. Webster Street,
Madison, WI 53707-7921
Meredith.Penthorn@wisconsin.gov

The rule may be viewed at: <https://dnr.wi.gov/news/input/ProposedPermanent.html>

Comments can be made at: DNRAAdministrativeRulesComments@wisconsin.gov

The rule may be reviewed, and comments made at:
<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/chr/hearings>.

Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis: This rule will have a minimal economic impact (less than \$50,000 in total) on bait harvesters and their businesses. No new costs are expected as a result of revising the wild bait harvest permit duration and creating a white sucker harvest permit, nor for changes to the non-standard gear permit. Commercial bait harvesters are already required to record information on their minnow harvests and disposition and maintain records for inspection upon the request of department staff. The main costs would stem from reporting minnow harvest activities electronically for bait dealers that do not currently own a smartphone; however, paper reporting will be allowed in the short-term after implementing this rule, so additional costs are not expected upon implementation. Additionally, according to the Pew Research Center¹, an estimated 85 percent of American adults owns a smartphone. Based on this estimate, we assumed that about 8 of the 55 commercial bait harvesters do not own a phone with internet access. Assuming a cheap smartphone and plan would cost about \$230 a year, the total compliance cost for the group of bait harvesters without phones would be approximately \$1,840 per year.

1. Demographics of mobile device ownership and adoption in the United States. (2021, April 07). Retrieved June 13, 2023, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/>.

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