15 – #1 – 2010
CODE – RES# – YEAR

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# Great Lakes
# (Green Bay)
# Dark house spearing on outlying waters

**The Issue:** Prior to the year 2000 members of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reviewed the regulations in regards to the waters of Lake Michigan and Green Bay. Upon review of the regulations, individuals in charge of this task noticed that the spearing of Northern Pike through the ice was legal at the time, but thought since nobody currently participates in this activity the law was no longer needed. At this time, the law was removed from the Administrative code that regulates fishing on Lake Michigan and Green Bay.

Currently the spearing of Northern Pike through the ice is legal on Lake Superior in Wisconsin Waters. Spearing of Northern Pike is also legal on the waters of Green Bay in Michigan waters. One of Wisconsin's tasks was to have consistent regulations with adjacent states for fishing regulations where waters are "shared". Wisconsin currently also allows the spearing of Lake Sturgeon on Lake Winnebago annually and the "Upper Lakes" of the Winnebago system on a permit system annually.

By re-instating the regulation to allow the spearing of Northern Pike through the ice, another opportunity would be re-gained by anglers wishing to pursue this activity. Spearing may have a number of negative connotations, but when looking at the biologic issues of spearing it is much more resource friendly than traditional hook and line techniques typically practiced. The Department of Natural Resources conducted a study on the effects of hooking mortality on Northern Pike, this study revealed that the hooking mortality is approximately 40% of all fish that are hooked and brought through the hole in the ice. An individual who is engaged in Dark house Spearing will make a decision if they are going to harvest a fish, or just let the fish pass. This is similar to the practices of QDM (Quality Deer Management); it is in essence a selective harvest type fishery.

The recommendation would be if the spearing of northern pike through the ice were re-authorized, individuals choosing to spear northern pike through the ice would be limited to dark house spearing in January and February. The daily baglimit for spearing would have a restricted baglimit of three fish vs. the current daily baglimit of five fish for hook and line fishing. Individuals would also be prohibited from possession hook and line equipment for fishing while engaged in dark house spearing, and hole size restriction would also be in place which is consistent with the regulations for the spearing of Lake Sturgeon on the Winnebago system and required to register as an individual engaged in Dark house Spearing annually.

Therefore, Be it Resolved that the Conservation Congress at it annual meeting held in Door County on April, 2010 support the re-instating of the regulation that authorizes the harvest of Northern Pike through the ice by the method of spearing in a Dark house on the waters of Green Bay with specific regulations relating to Dark house spearing.

Submitted by:


Name: DAVID TUPA

Address: 6691 COUNTY A

City, State, Zip: EGG HARBOR, WI 54209

County: DOOR

Telephone Number: (920) 495-2864