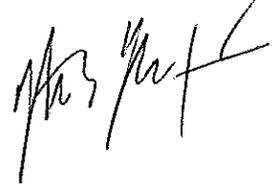


02,01,13



Title: Size and Quantity of Perch in Chequamegon Bay, Closing Perch Fishing for the Spawning Cycle

The Problem:

The size of perch in the Chequamegon Bay has gotten smaller over the years. Angler's fishing perch have kept smaller fish over the years to be able to keep enough perch for a meal. Perch fishing is one of the close shores fisheries that youth, low income families and basic shore anglers can do with minimal costs. Perch fishing is an economic proponent in the surrounding communities throughout the year. It provides a recreational/tourism dollars for the surrounding businesses it also provides low cost enjoyment for many people as the number one fish sought after. If the fish were the size and quantity they were in the past the angler populations of surrounding states would be traveling here to fish, not northern MN, MI or Canada. If the Perch were allowed to reproduce in the spawning cycle there would be an increased population in the bay. With the increased population over time the size would increase. The perch have been receiving heavy fishing pressure during all times of the year.

The Perch of Chequamegon Bay have diminished in size and the quantity of fish isn't what it has been in the past. The quantity of perch is validated by the DNR limit of fish allowed by the daily bag limit possession imposed lately to 25 perch per angler. Also the Chequamegon Bay Assessments and creel surveys have shown a decline in the number of perch. An increase of perch quantities would also provide forage for the many predator fish as a food source for Bass, Northern Pike, Walleye and the many other species that feed on perch, which also generate funds for the State of Wisconsin.

At present, state law permit and allows perch fishing all year round on the Chequamegon Bay. We feel that Wisconsin law should be altered to close perch fishing from the 3rd week of April to the 2nd week of May. Dependent on the "Ice Out" dates this could limit perch fishing for the average angler about 1 week.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Ashland County on April 8, 2013 recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to take action to correct this situation by introducing a rule change to close perch fishing during the spawning time of the perch with minimal impact on the sport angler's.

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