

Citizen Resolution # 180514

Reduction of Panfish limits on Lake Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, from 25 panfish to 10



Each year the Conservation Congress accepts written resolutions from the public, in each county throughout the state regarding natural resource issues of statewide concern. These resolutions are introduced by the public in attendance during the Conservation Congress county meeting that is held annually in conjunction with the DNR Spring Fish and Wildlife Hearings in April.

In order for a resolution to be accepted for further consideration by the Conservation Congress and for public vote at the annual Conservation Congress county meeting, all resolutions introduced must meet the following requirements:

1. The concern must be of statewide impact.
2. The concern must be practical, achievable and reasonable.
3. The resolution must have a clear title.
4. The resolution must clearly define the concern.
5. Current state statutes and laws must be considered, with reasonable cause for change being presented.
6. The resolution must clearly suggest a solution to the concern and a description of further action desired.

The purpose of this resolution is to protect and grow the panfish population numbers and size in Lake Eau Claire, Eau Claire County. Before submitting this resolution, the Conservation Congress members should know some important information. First, I am submitting this proposal as President of the Lake Eau Claire Lake Association, Inc., with the full support of my association board and many lake residents who have submitted individual letters of support for this to Heath Benike, our DNR fish manager. Further, two businesses on our lake have also endorsed this resolution—The Hideaway Tavern and Inn and the Woodlands Gas Station. Also, more than seven years ago, our association appointed Dr. Rod Zika, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Geological Sciences of the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, to develop a scientifically sound lake management plan to improve and protect the lake's fisheries. As part of that study a sociological survey of lake residents and users was conducted. The results showed overwhelming concern by the public for a declining fish population and expressed a desire to take measures to correct the situation. To that end, our association has already invested heavily in that goal by installing 118 half-log fish cribs in the lake and initiating other habitat improvements. But the problem is that the lake has no natural wood habitat and only a modest aquatic plant community which is being stressed by increased shallow water boating pressure and heavy surface blue-green algal blooms. Worse, the surrounding lakes like Lake Altoona have already gone to a 10 panfish bag limit, while ours remains at 25. Thus, both summer and winter fishing pressure is too much for us to grow back a bluegill population and lengthen the typical 8 inch crappie caught in our lake. We need to have the same panfish limit as our surrounding lakes to balance the fishing pressure, allow the bluegill population to begin to grow, and to allow crappie sizes to become acceptable. I have spoken extensively with our DNR fish manager, Heath Benike, about this problem, and he supports considering this reduction in the panfish limit on Lake Eau Claire given the public support our association can demonstrate. I have also spoken with our local county Congress delegates to gain their understanding and support.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual meeting held in Eau Claire County on April 14, 2014, recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Department of Natural Resources to take action to correct this situation by changing the panfish limits on Lake Eau Claire from 25 to 10 panfish.

Frederick Poss,
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yes 56
no 26

Signature: 

Please print your resolution on 8 1/2 X 11 white paper (one-sided) and provide the WCC County Chair with TWO COPIES at the spring hearing. Only the individual author or designated representative may present the resolution. The