

Commissioner's Order #3 ML 2017

Amend walleye limits to make adjustments to manage fisheries in the 1837 Ceded Territory (Mille Lacs)

Effective Date: December 1, 2017

Statutory authority: *Minnesota Statutes*, section 97C.005, subd. 3

Supersedes: Commissioner's Order #2 ML 2017

BACKGROUND

Each year a harvestable surplus is set for walleye in Mille Lacs Lake by a joint management process between the state and the eight Chippewa Bands. The harvestable surplus is the pounds of fish that can safely be taken from Mille Lacs Lake while ensuring sufficient walleye remaining in the lake for a healthy population. The harvestable surplus for 2018 has not yet been set, so in keeping with the 2017 consensus agreement the minimum harvestable surplus will be 64,000 pounds for the 2017/2018 fishing season.

To stay within its share of the 2017 harvestable surplus the state, by expedited emergency rule, commissioner's order and public notice closed the Mille Lacs walleye fishery to state angling for 33 days from July 7 through August 10, 2017. The Mille Lacs walleye fishery reopened to state angling at 12:01 AM on August 11, 2017, and closed again on September 5, 2017, at 12:01 AM.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has determined that it can reopen the walleye fishing on Mille Lacs Lake during the winter 2017/18 fishing season with the harvest restrictions outline in the order below. The walleye winter fishing season begins on December 1, 2017 and extends through February 25, 2018. This decision is based upon the results of recent fisheries surveys that indicate that the Mille Lacs walleye fishery can accommodate an ice fishery and stay within the projected state share of the 2018 harvestable surplus.

For all other species, the Expedited Emergency Game and Fish Rule adopted on May 8, 2017, will remain in effect.

ORDER

Now, Therefore, It is hereby ordered that:

Commissioner's Order #2 ML 2017, signed on August 25, 2017, and published in the 5 September 2017 State Register (42 SR 318), expires at 12:01 AM on Friday, December 1, 2017, after

which the Expedited Emergency Game and Fish Rule part 6264.0400, subp.4, as published in the 8 May 2017 State Register (41 SR 1287), again takes effect for species other than walleye item E.

The possession and size limits for walleye are as follows:

From December 1, 2017, at 12:01 AM, through February 25, 2018, at 11:59 PM, the possession limit for walleye is one, and walleye in possession must be:

- a. Equal to or more than 20 inches in length and equal to or less than 22 inches in length; or
- b. Equal to or longer than 28 inches in length.

Fishing for all other species, including northern pike, muskellunge, bass, perch, and panfish, and the existing regulations for all other species, continue unaffected by this order.

Date: November 20, 2017

/s/ TOM LANDWEHR
Tom Landwehr
Commissioner