

Department of Natural Resources

Chapters:

Adopted Expedited Emergency Game and Fish Rules:

6232

MILLE LACS LAKE FISHING

PUBLISHED 5-1-2023

EFFECTIVE 5-1-2023

EXPIRES 11-1-2024 (18 months)

Please see the attachment for language of this expedited emergency game and fish rules package relating to Mille Lacs Lake Fishing.

1.1 **Department of Natural Resources**

1.2 **Adopted Expedited Emergency Game and Fish Rules: Mille Lacs Lake Fishing**

1.3 **6264.0400 DESIGNATED SPECIAL MANAGEMENT WATERS.**

1.4 *[For text of subparts 1 to 3, see Minnesota Rules]*

1.5 **Subp. 4. Mille Lacs Lake and associated tributaries special management**
1.6 **regulations.**

1.7 A. This item applies while a person is on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its
1.8 associated tributaries to the posted boundaries; The angling season for northern pike begins
1.9 at 12:01 a.m. May 13, 2023, and continues to 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2024. The daily and
1.10 possession limit for northern pike is three. All northern pike in possession must be less than
1.11 24 30 inches in length or greater than 36 inches in length. All northern pike that are 24 to
1.12 36 30 inches or greater in length, inclusive, must be immediately returned to the water. A
1.13 person's possession limit may not include more than one northern pike over 36 inches in
1.14 length.

1.15 B. ~~The possession limit for smallmouth bass is one.~~ This item applies while a
1.16 person is on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries to the posted
1.17 boundaries; Unless otherwise authorized by special permits for fishing tournaments, the
1.18 angling season for largemouth and smallmouth bass begins at 12:01 a.m. May 13, 2023,
1.19 and continues to 11:59 p.m. February 25, 2024. All largemouth and smallmouth bass caught
1.20 before the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend must be immediately returned to the water.
1.21 Beginning at 12:01 a.m. September 11, 2023, all smallmouth bass must be immediately
1.22 returned to the water. Except as otherwise provided in this subpart, the daily and possession
1.23 limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass in aggregate is three. All largemouth and
1.24 smallmouth bass in possession must be 21 inches or greater less than 17 inches in length.
1.25 All largemouth and smallmouth bass less than 21 inches 17 inches or greater in length must
1.26 be immediately returned to the water. Waiver of the size, possession, and season restrictions

2.1 for largemouth and smallmouth bass under this item is permitted for a limited number of
2.2 bass-fishing tournaments each year. When determining whether to grant a waiver for a
2.3 tournament, the commissioner must consider:

2.4 (1) tournament size;

2.5 (2) expected participation;

2.6 (3) potential to generate public interest and local economic activity; and

2.7 (4) conservation and biological health of the fishery.

2.8 C. Except as provided in items D and E, this item applies for night fishing on
2.9 Mille Lacs Lake. Mille Lacs Lake is closed to the taking of fish between the hours of 10
2.10 p.m. and 6 a.m. daily during the period commencing beginning at 10 p.m. on the Monday
2.11 following the Saturday two weeks prior to the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend May
2.12 15, 2023, and ending at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, four weeks after the date of commencement
2.13 6:00 a.m. September 1, 2023. During the closure, no person shall be on the waters of Mille
2.14 Laes Lake while having in possession any equipment whereby fish may be taken. Spearing
2.15 is prohibited from December 1 through April 30. A person may not have a spear in possession
2.16 while on or fishing in Mille Laes Lake during this period. Beginning September 2, 2023,
2.17 at 12:01 a.m., Mille Lacs Lake is closed to taking fish between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and
2.18 6:00 a.m. daily until 11:59 p.m. November 30, 2023, at which time the ban on night fishing
2.19 is lifted.

2.20 D. Beginning June 3, 2023, at 10:00 p.m., Mille Lacs Lake is open to fishing for
2.21 muskellunge and northern pike between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. daily. Angling for,
2.22 harvesting, and possessing species other than muskellunge and northern pike during these
2.23 hours is prohibited. Only artificial muskellunge and northern pike lures greater than eight
2.24 inches in length, measured from the front of the eye of the lure to the end of the trailing
2.25 hook, or sucker minnows greater than eight inches in length may be used or in possession.

3.1 E. Beginning June 3, 2023, at 10:00 p.m., Mille Lacs Lake is open to bowfishing
3.2 for rough fish between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. daily. A person must not have any angling
3.3 equipment in possession while bowfishing under this item. Angling for, harvesting, and
3.4 possessing species other than rough fish while bowfishing during these hours is prohibited.

3.5 ~~D.~~ F. The commissioner may modify seasons and limits under Minnesota Statutes,
3.6 section 84.027, subdivision 13, or sections 97A.0451 to 97A.0459, to accommodate tribal
3.7 declarations for fish harvest in the 1837 Ceded Territory in compliance with the court ruling
3.8 in Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa v. Minnesota, 119 S.Ct. 1187 (1999). Changes shall be
3.9 posted at water access sites and the Department of Natural Resources website.

3.10 ~~E.~~ G. While a person is on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries
3.11 to the posted boundaries, the possession and daily limit for Northern cisco (tullibee) is ~~ten~~
3.12 five fish.

3.13 H. This item applies while a person is on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its
3.14 associated tributaries to the posted boundaries. Beginning at 12:01 a.m. May 13, 2023, the
3.15 daily and possession limit for walleye is one fish, which must be either between 21 and 23
3.16 inches in length or over 28 inches in length. All walleye less than 21 inches in length or
3.17 greater than 23 inches but less than 28 inches in length must be immediately returned to the
3.18 water. This item is effective until 11:59 p.m. February 25, 2024.

3.19 I. While a person is on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries
3.20 to the posted boundaries, angling for burbot is catch and release only. All burbot must be
3.21 immediately returned to the water.

3.22 F. J. While a person is on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries
3.23 to the posted boundaries, fish that are taken by angling and not immediately released into
3.24 the water after capture are considered to be in possession and part of the bag limit. Once a
3.25 fish has been reduced to possession, culling or live-well sorting (the act of exchanging one

4.1 fish for another) is not allowed, except that culling or live-well sorting before meeting a
 4.2 bag limit of fish reduced to possession is allowed for largemouth and smallmouth bass.

4.3 ~~G.~~ K. Unless otherwise specified, this subpart applies to the following waters.

4.4	Name	Location	County
4.5 4.6	(1) Mille Lacs	T.42-45, R.25-28, S.Various	Aitkin, Mille Lacs
4.7	(2) Borden Creek	T.44, R.25, S.5	Aitkin
4.8	(3) Seastade Creek	T.45, R.26, S.22	Aitkin
4.9 4.10	(4) Marmon (Twenty) Creek	T.45, R.25, S.32	Aitkin
4.11	(5) Grave Creek	T.45, R.25, S.8	Aitkin
4.12	(6) Peterson Creek	T.43, R.25, S.5	Mille Lacs
4.13 4.14	(7) Thains River (Malone Creek)	T.42, R.25, S.2	Mille Lacs
4.15	(8) West Sucker Creek	T.42, R.25, S.18	Mille Lacs
4.16	(9) South Sucker Creek	T.42, R.25, S.18	Mille Lacs
4.17 4.18	(10) Garrison (Borden) Creek	T.44, R.28, S.12	Crow Wing
4.19	(11) Seguchie Creek	T.44, R.28, S.36	Crow Wing
4.20	(12) Reddy Creek	T.45, R.26, S.23	Aitkin
4.21	(13) Whitefish Creek	T.43, R.27, S.7	Mille Lacs
4.22	(14) Seventeen Creek	T.44, R.25, S.17,18,29	Aitkin
4.23	(15) Cedar Creek	T.43, R.25, S.15	Mille Lacs
4.24	(16) McCleans Creek	T.45, R.27, S.34	Aitkin
4.25	(17) unnamed	T.43, R.25, S.8	Mille Lacs
4.26	(18) unnamed	T.42, R.26, S.11	Mille Lacs
4.27	(19) unnamed	T.42, R.26, S.22	Mille Lacs
4.28	(20) unnamed	T.43, R.27, S.8	Mille Lacs
4.29	(21) unnamed	T.43, R.27, S.6	Mille Lacs

5.1	(22)	unnamed	T.43, R.27, S.21	Mille Lacs
5.2	(23)	unnamed	T.44, R.27, S.31	Crow Wing
5.3	(24)	unnamed	T.44, R.28, S.36	Crow Wing
5.4	(25)	unnamed	T.44, R.27, S.4	Aitkin
5.5	(26)	unnamed	T.45, R.27, S.25	Aitkin
5.6	(27)	unnamed	T.44, R.25, S.29	Aitkin
5.7	(28)	unnamed	T.44, R.25, S.31,32	Aitkin
5.8	(29)	unnamed	T.44, R.28, S.24	Crow Wing
5.9	(30)	unnamed	T.44, R.28, S.13	Crow Wing
5.10	(31)	Rum River Outlet	T.43, R.27, S.33	Mille Lacs

5.11 *[For text of subparts 5 to 151, see Minnesota Rules]*

5.12 **REPEALER.** The expedited emergency amendment to Minnesota Rules, part 6264.0400,
5.13 subpart 4, published in the State Register, volume 46, page 1303, May 9, 2022, is repealed.