

**Department of Natural Resources**

**Chapters:**

**Adopted Expedited Emergency Game and Fish Rules:**

**6264**

**MILLE LACS LAKE FISHING**

**PUBLISHED 05-10-2021**

**EFFECTIVE 05-10-2021**

**EXPIRES 11-10-2022 (18 months)**

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

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. The angling season for northern pike begins at 12:01 a.m. on May 15, 2021,  
1.8 and continues to 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2022. While a person is on or fishing in Mille  
1.9 Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries to the posted boundaries, the possession limit for  
1.10 northern pike is three. All northern pike in possession must be less than ~~24~~ 30 inches in  
1.11 length ~~or greater than 36 inches in length.~~ All northern pike that are ~~24 to 36~~ 30 inches or  
1.12 greater in length, inclusive, must be immediately returned to the water. ~~A person's possession~~  
1.13 ~~limit may not include more than one northern pike over 36 inches in length.~~

1.14 B. ~~The possession limit for smallmouth bass is one. While a person is on or fishing~~  
1.15 ~~in Mille Laes Lake or its associated tributaries to the posted boundaries, all smallmouth~~  
1.16 ~~bass in possession must be 21 inches or greater in length. All smallmouth bass less than 21~~  
1.17 ~~inches in length must be immediately returned to the water. Unless otherwise authorized~~  
1.18 ~~by special permits for fishing tournaments, the angling season for largemouth and smallmouth~~  
1.19 ~~bass begins at 12:01 a.m. May 15, 2021, and continues to 11:59 p.m. February 27, 2022.~~  
1.20 All largemouth and smallmouth bass caught before the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend  
1.21 must be immediately returned to the water. Beginning at 12:01 a.m. September 13, 2021,  
1.22 all smallmouth bass must be immediately returned to the water. While a person is on or  
1.23 fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries to the posted boundaries, the possession  
1.24 limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass in aggregate is three. All largemouth and  
1.25 smallmouth bass in possession must be less than 17 inches in length. All largemouth and  
1.26 smallmouth bass that are 17 inches or greater in length must be immediately returned to the

2.1 water. Waiver of the size, possession, and season restrictions for largemouth and smallmouth  
2.2 bass under this item is permitted for a limited number of bass-fishing tournaments each  
2.3 year. When determining whether to grant a waiver, 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. Mille Lacs Lake is closed to the taking of fish between the hours of 10:00 p.m.  
2.9 and 6:00 a.m. daily during the period commencing (summer night closure) beginning at  
2.10 10:00 p.m. on the Monday following the Saturday two weeks prior to the Saturday of  
2.11 Memorial Day weekend on May 17, 2021, and ending at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, four weeks  
2.12 after the date of commencement. During the closure, no person shall be on the waters of  
2.13 Mille Lacs Lake while having in possession any equipment whereby fish may be taken.  
2.14 Spearing is prohibited from December 1 through April 30. A person may not have a spear  
2.15 in possession while on or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake during this period 6:00 a.m. September  
2.16 16, 2021, except as provided in subitems (1) and (2). Beginning September 17, 2021, at  
2.17 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 (fall night closure) until 11:59 p.m. on November 30, 2021, except as provided  
2.19 in subitems (1) and (2).

2.20 (1) Beginning June 5, 2021, at 10:00 p.m., fishing for muskellunge and  
2.21 northern pike is allowed between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. daily. Angling for, harvesting,  
2.22 and possessing species other than muskellunge and northern pike during these hours is  
2.23 prohibited. Only artificial muskellunge and northern pike lures greater than eight inches in  
2.24 length, measured from the front of the eye of the lure to the end of the trailing hook, or  
2.25 sucker minnows greater than eight inches in length may be used as bait or in possession.

3.1           (2) Beginning June 5, 2021, at 10:00 p.m., bow fishing for rough fish is  
3.2 allowed between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. daily. A person must not possess any angling  
3.3 equipment while bow fishing under this subitem. Angling for, harvesting, and possessing  
3.4 species other than rough fish while bow fishing during these hours is prohibited.

3.5           *[For text of items D and E, see Minnesota Rules]*

3.6           F. The walleye restrictions under subitems (1) to (5) apply while a person is on  
3.7 or fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries to the posted boundaries.

3.8           (1) Beginning at 12:01 a.m. May 15, 2021, the possession limit for walleye  
3.9 is one fish, which must be from 21 inches in length to 23 inches in length, inclusive, or over  
3.10 28 inches in length. All walleye less than 21 inches in length or greater than 23 inches but  
3.11 less than 28 inches in length must be immediately returned to the water. This subitem is  
3.12 effective until 11:59 p.m. on May 31, 2021.

3.13           (2) Beginning at 12:01 a.m. on June 1, 2021, angling for walleye is catch and  
3.14 release only. All walleye must be immediately returned to the water. This subitem is effective  
3.15 until 11:59 p.m. on June 30, 2021.

3.16           (3) Beginning at 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2021, the state walleye fishery is closed.  
3.17 Angling for walleye is prohibited. All walleye caught must be immediately returned to the  
3.18 water. This subitem is effective until 11:59 p.m. on July 15, 2021.

3.19           (4) Beginning at 12:01 a.m. on July 16, 2021, angling for walleye is catch  
3.20 and release only. All walleye must be immediately returned to the water. This subitem is  
3.21 effective until 11:59 p.m. on September 15, 2021.

3.22           (5) Beginning at 12:01 a.m. on September 16, 2021, the possession limit for  
3.23 walleye is one fish, which must be from 21 inches in length to 23 inches in length, inclusive,  
3.24 or over 28 inches in length. All walleye less than 21 inches in length or greater than 23

4.1 inches but less than 28 inches in length must be immediately returned to the water. This  
 4.2 subitem is effective until 11:59 p.m. on November 30, 2021.

4.3 G. Angling for burbot is catch and release only. All burbot must be immediately  
 4.4 returned to the water.

4.5 F. H. Fish that are taken by angling and not immediately released into the water  
 4.6 after capture are considered to be in possession and part of the bag limit. Once a fish has  
 4.7 been reduced to possession, culling or live-well sorting (the act of exchanging one fish for  
 4.8 another) is not allowed, except that culling or live-well sorting before meeting a bag limit  
 4.9 of fish reduced to possession is allowed for largemouth and smallmouth bass.

4.10 I. The bait restrictions under subitems (1) to (3) apply while a person is on or  
 4.11 fishing in Mille Lacs Lake or its associated tributaries to the posted boundaries. For purposes  
 4.12 of this part, "bait" means whole or parts of fish; minnow; annelid worms, such as night  
 4.13 crawlers and garden worms; leeches; or crayfish and includes live, dead, or preserved items.

4.14 (1) There are no bait restrictions for angling from 12:01 a.m. on May 15,  
 4.15 2021, through 11:59 p.m. on June 30, 2021, except as provided in item C, subitem (1).

4.16 (2) From 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2021, until 11:59 p.m. on July 15, 2021,  
 4.17 angling may be conducted using only artificial lures. No person may use or have in possession  
 4.18 bait, except for northern pike or muskellunge anglers who may use sucker minnows greater  
 4.19 than eight inches in length according to item C.

4.20 (3) There are no bait restrictions for angling between 12:01 a.m. on July 16,  
 4.21 2021, through 11:59 p.m. on November 30, 2021, except as provided in item C, subitem  
 4.22 (1).

4.23 G. J. This subpart applies to the following waters.

| 4.24 | Name | Location | County |
|------|------|----------|--------|
|------|------|----------|--------|

|      |      |                         |                             |                    |
|------|------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 5.1  | (1)  | Mille Lacs              | T.42-45, R.25-28, S.Various | Aitkin, Mille Lacs |
| 5.2  |      |                         |                             |                    |
| 5.3  | (2)  | Borden Creek            | T.44, R.25, S.5             | Aitkin             |
| 5.4  | (3)  | Seastade Creek          | T.45, R.26, S.22            | Aitkin             |
| 5.5  | (4)  | Marmon (Twenty) Creek   | T.45, R.25, S.32            | Aitkin             |
| 5.6  |      |                         |                             |                    |
| 5.7  | (5)  | Grave Creek             | T.45, R.25, S.8             | Aitkin             |
| 5.8  | (6)  | Peterson Creek          | T.43, R.25, S.5             | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.9  | (7)  | Thains River            | T.42, R.25, S.2             | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.10 |      | (Malone Creek)          |                             |                    |
| 5.11 | (8)  | West Sucker Creek       | T.42, R.25, S.18            | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.12 | (9)  | South Sucker Creek      | T.42, R.25, S.18            | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.13 | (10) | Garrison (Borden) Creek | T.44, R.28, S.12            | Crow Wing          |
| 5.14 |      |                         |                             |                    |
| 5.15 | (11) | Seguchie Creek          | T.44, R.28, S.36            | Crow Wing          |
| 5.16 | (12) | Reddy Creek             | T.45, R.26, S.23            | Aitkin             |
| 5.17 | (13) | Whitefish Creek         | T.43, R.27, S.7             | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.18 | (14) | Seventeen Creek         | T.44, R.25, S.17,18,29      | Aitkin             |
| 5.19 | (15) | Cedar Creek             | T.43, R.25, S.15            | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.20 | (16) | McCleans Creek          | T.45, R.27, S.34            | Aitkin             |
| 5.21 | (17) | unnamed                 | T.43, R.25, S.8             | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.22 | (18) | unnamed                 | T.42, R.26, S.11            | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.23 | (19) | unnamed                 | T.42, R.26, S.22            | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.24 | (20) | unnamed                 | T.43, R.27, S.8             | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.25 | (21) | unnamed                 | T.43, R.27, S.6             | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.26 | (22) | unnamed                 | T.43, R.27, S.21            | Mille Lacs         |
| 5.27 | (23) | unnamed                 | T.44, R.27, S.31            | Crow Wing          |
| 5.28 | (24) | unnamed                 | T.44, R.28, S.36            | Crow Wing          |
| 5.29 | (25) | unnamed                 | T.44, R.27, S.4             | Aitkin             |
| 5.30 | (26) | unnamed                 | T.45, R.27, S.25            | Aitkin             |

|     |      |                  |                     |            |
|-----|------|------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 6.1 | (27) | unnamed          | T.44, R.25, S.29    | Aitkin     |
| 6.2 | (28) | unnamed          | T.44, R.25, S.31,32 | Aitkin     |
| 6.3 | (29) | unnamed          | T.44, R.28, S.24    | Crow Wing  |
| 6.4 | (30) | unnamed          | T.44, R.28, S.13    | Crow Wing  |
| 6.5 | (31) | Rum River Outlet | T.43, R.27, S.33    | Mille Lacs |

6.6 *[For text of subparts 5 to 150, see Minnesota Rules]*

6.7 **EFFECT OF RULE.** The expedited emergency amendments to Minnesota Rules, part  
 6.8 6264.0400, subpart 4, supersede the commissioner's order issued by the commissioner of  
 6.9 natural resources on December 1, 2020.

6.10 **REPEALER.** The expedited emergency amendments to Minnesota Rules, part 6264.0400,  
 6.11 subpart 4, published in the State Register, volume 44, page 1261, May 4, 2020, are repealed.