

NDG&F February 13th Newsletter

2012-14 Fishing Regulations Set, New Licenses Required

North Dakota's 2012-14 fishing proclamation is set, with regulations effective April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2014. In addition, anglers are reminded that new fishing licenses are required April 1.

Greg Power, fisheries chief for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, said the northern pike daily and possession limits are increased to five and 10 statewide. "The intent is to provide more of an opportunity for those anglers who like to fish for and keep pike," Power said. "This will not affect the population because the pike fishery is in excellent shape. We have a record number of lakes with pike, many with record populations. Pike anglers should be happy the next few years."

Another noteworthy change involves opening most waters to darkhouse spearfishing, except for a small number of lakes that contain muskie. "The merits of different criteria were closely assessed, and the existence of muskie was the only criteria used to exclude a lake," Power said. "We have not observed any significant problems in the past 10 years, and biologically speaking there should be few, if any, in the future."

Lakes where darkhouse spearfishing is not allowed are Braun Lake, Emmons County; New Johns Lake, Burleigh County; East Park Lake, West Park Lake and Lake Audubon, McLean County; McClusky Canal; Heckers Lake, Sheridan County; Red Willow Lake, Griggs County; Sweet Briar Dam, Morton County; and the Red and Bois de Sioux rivers.

Other noteworthy regulation changes include:

- Added Sundays for snag-and-release only during the paddlefish season.

- Added a 14-inch walleye length restriction to six lakes in southeast North Dakota – Alkali Lake, Buffalo Lake and Tosse Slough in Sargent County; and Lake Elsie, Lueck Lake and West Moran Lake in Richland County.

- Increased the minimum harvest length of a muskie to 48 inches.

- Added Mott Watershed in Hettinger County and Nelson Lake in Oliver County to the list of "no live baitfish" lakes.

- Eliminated the 24-inch minimum length restriction for northern pike at North and South Golden lakes in Steele County.

Fishing licenses can be purchased March 1 at the Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov.

The 2012-14 North Dakota Fishing Guide will be available in March at Game and Fish Department offices and license vendors throughout the state.

Game Wardens Association to Give Scholarship

The North Dakota Game Wardens Association has a \$300 scholarship available for a graduating high school senior entering college in fall 2012 who enrolls in fisheries or wildlife management with an emphasis on law enforcement.

Applicants must be North Dakota residents and have maintained a 3.25 grade point average. The scholarship will be awarded to the student upon proof of enrollment in college.

Applications are available by contacting the North Dakota Game and Fish Department at 328-6604; or email ndgf@nd.gov. Applications must be postmarked no later than May 4, 2012.