

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment  
Fisheries Division

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
GEAR RESTRICTED STREAMS**

September 2, 2010



## **INTRODUCTION**

This document summarizes more than two years of effort to review regulations that govern fishing for trout and salmon on streams in Michigan. This review has been conducted by staff in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Fisheries Division, in close collaboration with members of the Division's Coldwater Steering Committee. The Committee is comprised of individuals representing many of the State's largest sportfishing, conservation, and environmental groups.

During this time period, staff in the Division, with significant help from members of the Committee, focused our efforts on 1) soliciting comments and recommendations from the public for sections of streams to be included in the Gear Restricted Streams category, and 2) using a set of established criteria, evaluating biological parameters for trout and physical parameters of the sections of streams that were proposed for inclusion in the category. The solicitation process resulted in over 500 e-mail messages in which more than 1,300 miles of sections of streams were proposed for inclusion in the category. When the comment period ended, staff in the Division began a rigorous review process of those proposed sections of streams as well as those sections of streams that are currently classified in the Gear Restricted Streams category.

In May 2010, a draft proposal was produced by staff in the Division and distributed to the public for their review. The original proposal, which is posted online, included reviews by staff of each section of stream proposed by the public for inclusion in the Gear Restricted Streams category, and our preliminary recommendations for sections of streams to include in the category. To gather additional public input on the proposal, staff held 17 public meetings around the State during the month of June. After further consultation with the Coldwater Steering Committee regarding the information collected at the public meetings, several regulations proposed for specific sections of streams in the original proposal have been revised.

By law gear restrictions can be applied to a maximum of 212 miles of rivers in Michigan. Gear restrictions are currently in place on 104.9 miles of rivers. This proposal includes maintaining gear restrictions on the existing 104.9 miles of rivers, and adding an additional 72.9 miles of rivers to be managed under gear restrictions. With the addition of the newly proposed miles, a total of 177.8 miles of rivers are proposed to be managed under gear restriction regulations.

The recommendations proposed in this document will be incorporated into Fisheries Order 200, which will be presented to the DNRE Director and for public review and comment at the October 7, 2010, November 4, 2010, and December 9, 2010 meetings of the Natural Resources Commission. This will allow opportunity for the public to provide additional input into the decision-making process.

The recommendations proposed in this document represent an ongoing commitment to improve regulations that govern fishing for trout and salmon in rivers of the State, and to create diverse fishing opportunities and experiences for anglers pursuing trout and salmon on the State's rivers. Following the completion of this process, the DNRE will continue its efforts to further refine regulations for trout fishing in Michigan. Fisheries Division appreciates the input of everyone involved in this process.

**EXISTING GEAR RESTRICTED STREAMS**

As of today, gear restrictions are in place on ten stream reaches, which are identified below. Under this proposal, gear restrictions will remain on all ten reaches. Some changes are being proposed on five of the ten reaches, and these changes are denoted by a double asterisk before the regulation category.

**Au Sable River, (Crawford County), Mainstream, Burton's Landing to Wakeley Bridge****No changes to existing regulations.**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	open for the entire year
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed for the entire year; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open for the entire year
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout
<b>Mileage:</b>	9.0 miles

**Au Sable River, (Crawford County), North Branch, Sheep Ranch to confluence with Mainstream****Changes to existing regulations (denoted by \*\*).**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	open for the entire year
<b>Possession season:</b>	last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout
<b>** Daily possession limit:</b>	two (2) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) trout 18 inches or greater in total length
<b>** Size limits:</b>	<b>minimum size limits:</b> brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches
<b>Mileage:</b>	20.7 miles

**Au Sable River, (Crawford County), South Branch, Chase Bridge to Lower High Banks****No changes to existing regulations.**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	open for the entire year
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed for the entire year; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open for the entire year
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout
<b>Mileage:</b>	4.3 miles

**Au Sable River, (Crawford County), South Branch, Lower High Banks to confluence with Mainstream****Changes to existing regulations (denoted by \*\*).**

- Gear restriction:** artificial flies only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**\*\* Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) trout 18 inches or greater in total length  
**\*\* Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 11.5 miles

**Duck Creek, (Gogebic County), Railroad Bridge to confluence with Middle Branch Ontonagon River****Changes to existing regulations (denoted by \*\*).**

- Gear restriction:** artificial lures only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout  
**\*\* Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** all species of trout – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 6.5 miles

**Escanaba River, (Delta County), From Boney Falls Dam to mouth of Silver Creek****No changes to existing regulations.**

- Gear restriction:** artificial lures only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout  
**Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 12 inches; rainbow trout – 12 inches  
**Mileage:** 14.2 miles

**Johnson Creek, (Wayne County), Napier Road to its confluence with the Middle Branch Rouge River****No changes to existing regulations.**

- Gear restriction:** artificial lures only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout  
**Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 12 inches; rainbow trout – 12 inches  
**Mileage:** 6.0 miles

Little Manistee River, (Lake County), Spencer's Bridge to Johnson's Bridge**Changes to existing regulations (denoted by \*\*).**

- Gear restriction:** artificial flies only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for all other species of trout and salmon  
**Daily possession limit:** two (2) fish, any combination of trout and salmon  
**\*\* Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 15 inches; all other species of trout and salmon – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 7.5 miles

Manistee River, (Crawford, Kalkaska counties), M-72 downstream to CCC Bridge**Changes to existing regulations (denoted by \*\*).**

- Gear restriction:** artificial flies only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**\*\* Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) trout 18 inches or greater in total length  
**\*\* Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 16.7 miles

Pere Marquette River, (Lake County), M-37 Bridge to Gleason's Landing**No changes to existing regulations.**

- Gear restriction:** artificial flies only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** closed for the entire year; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open for the entire year  
**Daily possession limit:** zero (0) trout and salmon; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout or salmon  
**Size limits:** not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the **minimum size limit** shall be 8 inches and the **maximum size limit** shall be 12 inches for all species of trout and salmon  
**Mileage:** 8.5 miles

**NEWLY PROPOSED GEAR RESTRICTED STREAMS**

New gear restrictions are being proposed for an additional eleven reaches of streams around the State, which are identified below. Some of these reaches of streams are currently designated as Research Areas and, as such, are already being managed with gear restrictions. The remaining streams in the list are not currently being managed with gear restrictions.

**Au Sable River, (Crawford County), Wakeley Bridge downstream to McMasters Bridge**

**Gear restriction:** artificial lures only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) trout 18 inches or greater in total length  
**Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 8.0 miles

**Au Sable River, (Oscoda County), Mio power line downstream to McKinley Bridge**

**Gear restriction:** artificial lures only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**Daily possession limit:** two (2) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) trout 18 inches or greater in total length  
**Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 7 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 15.0 miles

**Black River, (Montmorency, Otsego counties), Tin Shanty Road Bridge downstream to Town Corner Lake Stairs**

**Gear restriction:** artificial lures only  
**Fishing season:** open for the entire year  
**Possession season:** last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout  
**Daily possession limit:** five (5) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than two (2) brook trout  
**Size limits:** **minimum size limits:** brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 8 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches  
**Mileage:** 4.4 miles

Cooks Run, (Iron County), Forest Highway 16 downstream to confluence with South Branch Paint River

**From the last Saturday in April through September 30, this reach of stream will be managed under Type 2 regulations.**

**From October 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April, this reach of stream will be managed under gear restricted regulations as follows:**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	October 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout
<b>Mileage:</b>	4.5 miles

Fox River, (Schoolcraft County), Fox River State Forest Campground downstream to M-28

**From the last Saturday in April through September 30, this reach of stream will be managed under Type 1 regulations.**

**From October 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April, this reach of stream will be managed under gear restricted regulations as follows:**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	October 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout
<b>Mileage:</b>	7.6 miles

**Huron River, (Oakland County), sign below Moss Lake outlet to signs 100 yards below Wixom Road (T2N, R7E, S13)**

**From the last Saturday in April through September 30, this reach of stream will be managed under Type 1 regulations.**

**From April 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April, this reach of stream will be managed under gear restricted regulations as follows:**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	April 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed; except that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout; except that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; except that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout
<b>Mileage:</b>	2.0 miles

**Manistee River, (Crawford County), County Road 612 downstream to M-72**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial lures only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	open for the entire year
<b>Possession season:</b>	last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	two (2) trout; EXCEPT that the daily possession limit shall not include more than one (1) trout 18 inches or greater in total length
<b>Size limits:</b>	<b>minimum size limits:</b> brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches
<b>Mileage:</b>	8.2 miles

**Paint Creek, (Oakland County), Gun Road downstream to Tienken Road**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial lures only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	last Saturday in April through September 30 for all species of trout
<b>Possession season:</b>	last Saturday in April through September 30 for all species of trout
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	two (2) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	<b>minimum size limits:</b> all species of trout – 14 inches
<b>Mileage:</b>	5.0 miles



Pere Marquette River, (Lake County), Gleason's Landing downstream to Bowman Bridge

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	open for the entire year
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed for the entire year; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open for the entire year
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout and salmon; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout or salmon
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout and salmon
<b>Mileage:</b>	2.9 miles

Pigeon River, (Otsego, Cheboygan counties), Elk Hill Campground Horse Trail downstream to Pine Grove Campground Stairs

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial lures only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	open for the entire year
<b>Possession season:</b>	last Saturday in April through September 30 for brook trout and brown trout; open for the entire year for rainbow trout
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	two (2) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	<b>minimum size limits:</b> brook trout – 10 inches; brown trout – 18 inches; rainbow trout – 10 inches
<b>Mileage:</b>	5.3 miles

South Branch Paint River, (Iron County), Cooks Run downstream to North Branch Paint River

**From the last Saturday in April through September 30, this reach of stream will be managed under Type 2 regulations.**

**From October 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April, this reach of stream will be managed under gear restricted regulations as follows:**

<b>Gear restriction:</b>	artificial flies only
<b>Fishing season:</b>	October 1 through the Friday before the last Saturday in April
<b>Possession season:</b>	closed; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the possession season is open
<b>Daily possession limit:</b>	zero (0) trout; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the daily possession limit shall be one (1) trout
<b>Size limits:</b>	not applicable; EXCEPT that for children under the age of 12-years old the <b>minimum size limit</b> shall be 8 inches and the <b>maximum size limit</b> shall be 12 inches for all species of trout
<b>Mileage:</b>	10.0 miles