

Notice of Hearing

The Department of Natural Resources announces that it will hold a public hearing on a permanent rule to revise ch. NR 25, relating to trawling regulation on Lake Michigan and affecting small business, at the time and place shown below.

Hearing Information

Date: January 13, 2025

Time: 3:00 pm

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Join the meeting now](#)

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 608-571-2209](tel:+16085712209).,208106432# United States, Madison

Phone conference ID: 208 106 432#

Rule Information: This rule codifies trawling regulations on Lake Michigan and removes the sunset on the previous rule so that the regulation would be in place indefinitely. It allows for an exemption that would allow trawls to continue to fish for a limited period of time in the event that their surveillance system wasn't working; clarifies previously ambiguous language to better define the size of the trawl and gives current trawlers two years to get their gear into compliance with the requirements that are currently in place.

Accessibility

For the hearing or visually impaired, non-English speakers, or those with other personal circumstances which might make communication at the meeting/hearing difficult, DNR will, to the maximum extent possible and with reasonable advance notice, provide aids including an interpreter, or a non-English, large-print, or recorded version of hearing documents. To access these resources, please contact the email address or phone number listed below as soon as possible.

Appearances at the Hearing and Submittal of Written Comments

The public has the opportunity to testify at the hearing. Registration will take place at the hearing by completing a Hearing Appearance form, which is available here [Hearing Appearance form](#). Pre-registration is strongly encouraged if you plan to provide spoken comments during the hearing. To pre-register, please download and complete the fillable [Hearing Appearance form](#) and send it to Kari.LeeZimmermann@Wisconsin.gov.

Comments on the proposed rule must be received on or before January 13, 2025. Written comments may be submitted by U.S. mail, E-mail, or through the internet and will have the same weight and effect as oral statements presented at the public hearing.

Written comments and any questions on the proposed rules should be submitted to:

Department of Natural Resources
Attn: Kari Lee-Zimmermann (FH/4)
P.O. Box 7921

101 S. Webster Street,
Madison, WI 53707-7921

The rule may be viewed at: <https://dnr.wi.gov/news/input/ProposedPermanent.html>

Comments can be made at: DNRAAdministrativeRulesComments@wisconsin.gov

The rule may be reviewed, and comments made at: <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/chr/hearings>.

Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis: As is the case with the current regulations that allow trawling for whitefish in Lake Michigan, commercial fishers that choose to trawl instead of using other types of nets for harvesting whitefish will continue to be required to use a commercial trawl that differs slightly from gear requirements for other species and will also continue to be required to have a video surveillance system. Installation of the video system is estimated to cost \$7,000 per trawling vessel. Trawls are expected to cost up to \$10,000 per fishing vessel, if the commercial fisher does not already own appropriate trawling gear. However, since the use of trawling over other methods of harvesting lake whitefish is voluntary, only commercial fishers that choose to trawl may incur the costs associated with complying with the monitoring, reporting and gear requirements.

Sport anglers, fishing guides and related businesses may be indirectly affected due to the ongoing changes in the type of gear used in the area of Lake Michigan near Two Rivers. Reduction or elimination of trap nets due to increased trawling have reduced the potential for boat entanglement with nets, and because trawling does not overlap as much with the sport fishing season as the use of trap nets, the incidence of sport and commercial fishers encountering one another is also diminished.

Agency Small Business Regulatory Coordinator:

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