

PROPOSED RULEMAKING

FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

[58 PA. CODE CH. 65]

Fishing; Special Fishing Regulations

The Fish and Boat Commission (Commission) proposes to amend Chapter 65 (relating to special fishing regulations). The Commission is publishing this proposed rulemaking under the authority of 30 Pa.C.S. (relating to Fish and Boat Code) (code).

A. *Effective Date*

The proposed rulemaking, if approved on final-form rulemaking, will go into effect upon final-form publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

B. *Contact Person*

For further information on the proposed rulemaking, contact Laurie E. Shepler, Esq., P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000, (717) 705-7810. This proposed rulemaking is available on the Commission's web site at www.fishandboat.com.

C. *Statutory Authority*

The proposed amendment to § 65.24 (relating to miscellaneous special regulations) is published under the statutory authority of section 2307 of the code (relating to waters limited to specific purposes).

D. *Purpose and Background*

The proposed rulemaking is designed to improve, enhance and update the Commission's fishing regulations. The specific purpose of the proposed amendment is described in more detail under the summary of proposal.

E. *Summary of Proposal*

Harveys Lake is a 658-acre natural lake in Luzerne County. It is one of the few lakes in this Commonwealth managed as a put, grow and take stocked trout fishery. Brown trout survive year-round in Harveys Lake and commonly reach weights in excess of 10 pounds. The Commission established a miscellaneous special regulation to protect this fishery in 1998. Under this regulation, Harveys Lake is closed to all fishing for a 2-week period from April 1 to the opening day of trout season. Trout harvest is permitted at all other times of the year. The creel limit is 3 trout per day, only one of which may exceed 18 inches in length.

Commission law enforcement personnel have received numerous requests to open Harveys Lake to year-round fishing. In addition to trout, Harveys Lake supports excellent fisheries for Black Bass, Walleye, Yellow Perch,

Rock Bass and Bluegill. Bass anglers in particular would appreciate this proposed amendment because Harveys Lake is one of the few lakes in the region large enough to support power boating.

Allowing year-round fishing will benefit Harveys Lake anglers. It also will benefit stream anglers because it will allow the Commission to stock Harveys Lake in March, thus freeing up a stocking trip closer to opening day for a stream that has trout residency problems. However, opening Harveys Lake to year-round fishing will also require a change in harvest dates. Currently, Harveys Lake is open to trout harvest from March 1 to March 31. Trout harvest should be prohibited from March 1 to opening day to make Harveys Lake consistent with other stocked trout waters that are open to year-round fishing. The closure to harvest is also necessary to allow recently stocked trout to avoid rapid harvest and grow to large sizes.

In summary, the two proposed amendments to the miscellaneous special regulation are to open Harveys Lake to year-round fishing and prohibit the harvest of trout from March 1 to opening day of trout season. The Commission proposes that § 65.24 be amended to read as set forth in Annex A.

F. *Paperwork*

The proposed rulemaking will not increase paperwork and will not create new paperwork requirements.

G. *Fiscal Impact*

The proposed rulemaking will not have adverse fiscal impacts on the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions. The proposed rulemaking will not impose new costs on the private sector or the general public.

H. *Public Comments*

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments, objections or suggestions about the proposed rulemaking to the Executive Director, Fish and Boat Commission, P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000, within 30 days after publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Comments submitted by facsimile will not be accepted.

Comments also may be submitted electronically by completing the form at www.fishandboat.com/regcomments. If an acknowledgment of electronic comments is not received by the sender within 2 working days, the comments should be retransmitted to ensure receipt. Electronic comments submitted in any other manner will not be accepted.

JOHN A. ARWAY,
Executive Director

Fiscal Note: 48A-273. No fiscal impact; (8) recommends adoption.

Annex A

TITLE 58. RECREATION

PART II. FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

Subpart B. FISHING

CHAPTER 65. SPECIAL FISHING REGULATIONS

§ 65.24. Miscellaneous special regulations.

The following waters are subject to the following miscellaneous special regulations:

<i>County</i>	<i>Name of Water</i>	<i>Special Regulations</i>
		* * * * *
Luzerne	Harveys Lake	During the period from the first Saturday after April 11 through midnight [March 31] last day of February , the daily creel limit for trout (combined species) is 3, only one of which may exceed 18 inches in length. [Fishing is prohibited from April 1 through 8 a.m. of the first Saturday after April 11.] Warmwater/coolwater species, except as provided in this section—Inland regulations apply.
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