



# Wisconsin Association of Lakes

A nonprofit group of citizens, organizations, and businesses working for clean, safe, healthy lakes for everyone.

4513 Vernon Boulevard, Suite 101 · Madison, WI 53705-4964

608-661-4313 · 800-542-5253 (in WI) · 608-661-4314 fax

wal@wisconsinlakes.org · www.wisconsinlakes.org

Assembly Natural Resources Committee  
Chair Representative Scott Gunderson  
Room 7 West, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

April 30, 2008

Dear Representative Gunderson and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of Natural Resources proposed fishing tournament rules (NR 20.40). We appreciate the time Department staff and other Fishing Tournament Advisory Committee members have devoted to developing a reasonable rule that balances diverse interests and resource needs. The Wisconsin Association of Lakes supports this rule and encourages their adoption.

The Wisconsin Association of Lakes and our membership are pleased with rule provisions that

- address the potential for transport of aquatic invasive species (AIS) between lakes during a tournament, and
- require tournament organizers notify local units of government of the date, time, location and size of the tournament once a tournament has been granted a permit.

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are a serious threat to the health of our lakes, recreational opportunities like boating and fishing enjoyed by many citizens and visitors, and tourism related businesses and services. Many of our member Lake Districts and Lake Associations are spending a good portion of the annual operating budgets on suppressing existing AIS populations and preventing further introductions through educational programs, monitoring efforts, and volunteer watercraft inspection programs.

We appreciate the Department's attention to aquatic invasive species in Section 11 of this rule. Preventing the spread of costly invasives—such as Eurasian water-milfoil, zebra mussels and viral hemorrhagic septicemia—is critical to the continued health of our lakes. All boaters must take steps to prevent the spread of AIS from lake to lake. Requiring tournament participants to comply with all aquatic invasive species statutes and administrative rules, and requiring tournament organizers to inform participants of decontamination procedures are positive steps toward this larger goal.

Many local units of government and Lake Districts have local boating ordinances that require slow no wake zones in certain areas (to protect sensitive shorelines for example), and to ensure everyone can have an enjoyable time on the lake. Advanced notice of tournaments can help avoid accidental violation of local ordinances as well as help the larger lake community adjust their lake use plans during a tournament.

We encourage the committee to approve these rules, and thank you for your attention to this issue.

Tamara Jackson  
Wisconsin Association of Lakes