

DNR Calls for Nominations of Coldwater Streams for 2011 Regulations

Coldwater stream classification to be simplified to three types plus gear restricted categories

DNR Fisheries Division, in conjunction with coldwater fisheries stakeholders, have been holding meetings over the last eight months designed to make inland trout and salmon regulations more consistent and easier to understand. As a result of these talks there are three new types of streams plus a gear restricted classification designed to handle a handful of rivers that have special characteristics for their salmonid populations.

Type 1 will remain the same as always with the exception of a new statewide 7" brook trout minimum size. Type II will remain the same

The changes start with Type III. It will now have a 10" minimums for brooks and browns during the regular season and year around fishing with no-kill for brooks and browns in the off season.

Then there's Gear Restricted, a classification that will require Angler input. By definition, "gear-restricted" waters are where only artificial lures and flies are allowed to be used. State law limits the maximum number of river miles that may fall into this designation to approximately 212 miles. Presently only 97 miles of river have been designated with gear restrictions. It is the intent of the MDNR Fisheries Division to undertake a comprehensive review of possible candidates for addition to this category.

Starting on January 7, 2010 an internet email address: dnr-gearrestricted@michigan.gov has been established for the public to provide these nominations directly to Fisheries Division staff. They will be accepting input until February 5, 2010. They are requesting that nominations be as specific as possible and include information such as; the specific section of stream being suggested (use road/bridge or landmark boundaries to identify the section being nominated), brief description of the rationale for why you believe the nomination is justified, and what you think the gear-restricted regulation should entail They should also include contact information so that the nominator can be reached for more information if needed. Any supporting info will also help.

Fisheries Order 213 is useful in providing general criteria to be considered for gear-restricted waters, and can be found at

<http://www.michigantu.org/index.php/conservation/54-resource-management>.

We will be called upon, probably around April to conduct town hall meetings if necessary and to help sell the new reaches.