Responsiveness Summary: 2025 Amendments to Fisheries Rules

RE: Proposed Fish Rule Changes for 2026:
10 V.S.A. App. 10 § 122, Fish Management Rule
10 V.S.A. App. 10 § 123, Commercial Angling Rule
10 V.S.A. App. 10 § 124, Valley Brook-Spawning Waters
10 V.S.A. App. 10 § 141, Baitfish Rule

During the public comment period, a total of 155 individuals provided comments relevant to the proposed rule changes. This count includes input received via public meetings, phone calls, and emails. Many individuals commented on multiple aspects of the proposed rule changes, and several individuals provided their comments more than once and are counted as one individual.

Representatives of six organizations submitted comments. The Connecticut River Conservancy, the Lake Carmi Campers Association, and the Federation of Vermont's Lakes and Ponds submitted comments in favor of proposed changes to panfish rules in §122 and to commercial fishing rules in §123. Protect Our Wildlife supports adding crappies to the list of species that cannot be sold (§123). The Native Fish Coalition and the Connecticut River Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited supported proposed changes related to trout in §122, but they opposed the deletion of §124 (See Comment #13).

For the purposes of this response summary, comments expressing the same position have been consolidated and summarized. Pages 2 to 5 of this document provide the Department's brief responses to the substantive objections and suggestions that were collected during the public comment period. The remainder of the document lists the less substantive comments. The number of times the comment was made is provided in parentheses. Responses below have been categorized by the rule implicated.

Summary of Public Comment on the primary proposed rule changes

Proposed Change	# Individuals that Commented on the proposed change	In Support	In Opposition
Ban on Sale of Crappie	143	115	28
Panfish Harvest Limits	135	101	34
Fish Seller's Endorsement	117	92	25
Baitfish Harvest and Use	8	6	2*
Trout Fishing	9	7	2**

*See Comments #14 and #15.

** See Comment #13

Comment #1: The Department has no data to inform the proposed changes related to panfish and commercial fishing. (x11) (§ 122, Fish Management; § 123, Commercial Angling)

Response: The Department is proposing over 20 changes to the fishing rules and was not able to present all of the data in support of those changes for the Board's first vote or during the public meetings. The purpose of the public meetings is not to convince anglers to accept the changes but to collect public input, namely public opinions on the proposed changes. The proposed changes are all supported by social and biological data compiled by the Department over a number of years. To the extent that there is limited biological data demonstrating that commercial angling has had an adverse effect on crappie populations, the Board is authorized to adopt rules that reflect social data and practice and are designed to maintain the best health, population, and utilization levels of the species. The following is a brief summary of data related to the panfish limits and sale of crappies.

Panfish Limits:

- Social data
    - Statewide angler surveys 1990, 1999, 2009, 2019
        - Yellow Perch continues to be the most popular species for VT's anglers during the ice fishing season
        - Days spent fishing for sunfish and crappies have been increasing over time
    - 2022 sunfish angler survey (1,236 respondents)
        - 7% indicated they preferred to harvest as many sunfish as possible
        - 51% preferred a daily limit of 20 sunfish or fewer
    - Comments received on current proposal during public comment period
        - 101 individuals in favor of proposed limits
        - 34 individuals opposed to proposed limits
- Biological data
    - Other states - studies have demonstrated negative effects of angler harvest on panfish size structure and fishing quality
    - VT - Panfish populations with low angler pressure and harvest tend to have larger panfish than heavily harvested populations, as demonstrated in:
        - Panfish sampling
        - Angler creel surveys
        - Vermont Master Angler Program

Sale of crappies:

- Social data
    - Comments received on current proposal during public comment period
        - 115 individuals in favor of prohibiting the sale of crappies
        - 28 individuals opposed to prohibiting the sale of crappies
    - Law enforcement
        - Since 2021, the total number of law enforcement actions for over limit in the state were 8 for trout, 4 for crappies, 0 for all other species
        - All 4 crappie cases were commercial anglers
- Biological data
    - Crappies have been introduced to at least 30 new waters since 2008, possibly to create new populations for harvest and sale

Comment #2: Department staff are biased against commercial fishing. (x3) (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: Department staff are not biased against commercial fishing, nor do the proposed rule changes reflect the personal opinions or positions of Department staff.

Comment #3: We don't know what percentage of panfish sales are coming from inland waters (not Lake Champlain). (x4) (§ 122, Fish Management Rule)

Response: Fish buyers' reports from 2014 to 2023 indicate that 96% of commercially harvested panfish came from Lake Champlain. Comments by both fish sellers and fish buyers during the public meetings suggest that the actual percentage may be lower due to purposefully inaccurate reporting or buyers not asking sellers for this information, despite it currently being a Fish Buyers reporting requirement. The Department depends on the truth and efficacy of the Fish Buyers' reports to determine the source of commercially harvested fish in the State.

Comment #4: White perch should not be included in the panfish limit. (x4) (§ 122, Fish Management Rule)

Response: Consistent with this comment, the Department recommends removing white perch from the panfish limit. White perch only occur in two waters other than Lake Champlain and the Connecticut River (Lake Memphremagog and Parker Lake), and there is no need to protect white perch from harvest in these two waters, where white perch harvest is low.

Comment #5: Increase minimum length limit of crappies to 10". (x4) (§ 122, Fish Management Rule)

Response: The Department's primary reasons for proposing a ban on the purchase and sale of crappies is that the high value of crappies incentivizes bad behavior, including anglers exceeding the daily limit, importing crappies from other states where sale is illegal, and introduction of crappies to new waters. Increasing the minimum length limit may decrease the population of crappie that can be legally harvested, but it is unlikely to address ongoing issues of noncompliance with the rules.

Comment #6: Start by implementing the fish seller's endorsement and use that to determine how many people are participating in commercial fishing before you make other changes to panfish and commercial fishing rules. (x1) (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: The Department has adequate social and biological data, including data regarding the quantity and source of panfish purchased by buyers in the State, to support the proposed rule changes (see response to comment #1).

Comment #7: Instead of banning the sale of crappies to alleviate a law enforcement challenge, wardens should do a better job of enforcing the existing rules. (x3) (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: Enforcing daily limits is very time-consuming, requiring wardens to watch one or a few anglers for long periods of time throughout a single day. Enforcing against illegal importation and sale from other states is even more difficult, requiring complicated coordination between multiple states and federal law enforcement. Eliminating commercial sale of crappies is expected to significantly increase Vermont wardens' capacity to focus on other priority duties. It would also help our neighboring states where commercial sale of crappies is illegal.

Comment #8: Fish seller's endorsement and reporting is an undue burden on fish sellers. (x1) (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: The fish seller's endorsement would be a free add-on to the angler's license. The Department recommends establishing the fish seller's endorsement but deleting the fish seller's reporting requirement from the proposed rule (§123, Section 5.5). The Final Proposed Rule strikes the proposed Section 5.5, but adds a requirement to Section 4.2 requiring commercial fish sellers report certain information related to the size and species of fish sold.

Comment #9: Vermont should have an estimate in their model for the economic effects of the proposed changes to panfish and commercial fishing rules. (x1) (§ 122, Fish Management Rule; § 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: The Department does not have the expertise or data to perform a complete economic analysis of the commercial fishery, but it is assumed the proposed changes would have a minimal economic effect on fish buyers and sellers based on the data collected from Fish Buyers' reports regarding the quantity, species, and source of panfish purchased in the State. The Department is proposing a ban on the sale and purchase of crappies, which were only 4% by weight of all commercial sales from 1998 to 2023. The Department is not proposing any changes to panfish limits on Lake Champlain, from which 96% of purchased fish originated from 2014 to 2023 (as reported by Fish Buyer's annual reports). Commercial anglers can continue to sell panfish species other than crappies from inland waters, but they would be limited in how many fish they could legally harvest from these smaller waters daily.

Comment #10: The proposed panfish limits would make it unfeasible for me to continue to sell my panfish. (x1) (§ 122, Fish Management Rule)

Response: To clarify, the proposed panfish limits do not apply to Lake Champlain. Fish Buyers annual reports indicate that 96% of the fish they bought originated from Lake Champlain from 2014 to 2023. According to these data provided by Fish Buyers, the proposed limits would have minimal effect on anglers' opportunities to sell fish.

Comment #11: There should be a fee for the fish seller's endorsement. (x5) (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: The Department does not have the ability to impose new fees through rule; that would require a legislative change. Additionally, the Department does not intend to use the fish sellers endorsement to generate revenue.

Comment #12: Ban sale of all panfish. (x54) (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule)

Response: During the public comment period many people advocated for a total ban on the commercial sale of all panfish species. Prohibiting only the purchase and sale of crappies is a compromise between anglers that are opposed to all commercial fishing and anglers that participate in commercial fishing. Crappies are only 4% by weight of the total commercial sale, but they represent a relatively high percentage of law enforcement effort when compared to other panfish species. Banning the sale of crappie is intended to address the most urgent concerns related to commercial angling, including noncompliance with existing regulations and introduction of species to new inland waters, without eliminating opportunities for commercial angling in the State.

Comment #13: Maintain the current fishing closure at Valley Brook to protect spawning trout. (x2) (§ 124, Valley Brook Spawning Waters)

Response: We know from creel surveys on more popular trout streams that fishing effort is very low in the fall. Fishing effort is negligible on Valley Brook throughout the year, so it is highly unlikely that there would be enough angler effort in October to negatively impact spawning trout.

Comment #14: Trap opening should be at least 3" with no limits to trap size. (x1) (§ 141, Baitfish Rule)

In 2023, the Department studied bycatch of non-target fish species in commercially available minnow traps with 1" openings and commercially available crayfish traps with 2.25" openings. The traps were either 18" long or 31" long. The study demonstrated that capture rate of non-target fish species was not related to trap size or opening diameter for traps included in the study. We have not studied traps with larger openings or larger dimensions.

Comment #15: I oppose the proposed increase in trap size and opening. (x1) (§ 141, Baitfish Rule)

See response to Comment #14.

Less substantive comments

General:

- General agreement with proposed changes (x20)
- General opposition to proposed changes (x2)
- Listen to the recommendations of the biologists (x2)

Baitfish (§ 141, Baitfish Management Rule):

- General agreement with proposed baitfish rules (x4)
- I like the proposed increase in trap size and opening (x2)
- See also Comments #14 and #15 above

Trout (§ 122, Fish Management Rule):

- I agree with the proposed trout rules (x7)
- See also Comment #13 above

Comments in support of proposed panfish rules (§ 122, Fish Management Rule):

- General agreement with proposed panfish rules (x59)
- I support the proposed panfish limit (x21)
- Panfish populations in VT have been negatively affected by angler harvest (x27)
- We should protect panfish from over harvest (x15)
- States with more protective regulations have better fishing for panfish (x5)
- We should be protecting panfish for kids' fishing (x5)
- I am concerned about new technology that makes panfish harvest easier (x4)
- Overharvest eliminates big-fish genetics from panfish populations (x3)
- VT should learn from how other states are managing panfish fisheries (x3)
- Ecosystem benefits from better management of panfish populations (x2)
- No one needs to keep more than 50 panfish per day (x2)
- VT should be producing larger panfish than it does (x1)
- Concerned that warmer winters will move fishing effort from Champlain to inland waters (x1)

Comments opposed to proposed panfish rules (§ 122, Fish Management Rule):

- General opposition to panfish rules (x22)
- I oppose the proposed panfish limit (x9)
- Panfish populations are doing well in VT (x13)
- Cormorants are the real problem (x6)
- Harvest is good for panfish populations (x3)
- Proposed changes are driven by people from out of state (x3)
- Yellow Perch limit should stay at 50 (x3)
- Panfish limit should not include:
    - White perch (see Comment #4 above)
    - Bullhead (x3)
    - Rock bass (x2)
    - Pumpkinseed (x1)
- Making changes without science is what Protect Our Wildlife (POW) does (x3)
- Some waters produce big panfish with existing rules (x2)
- Alewives are the problem (x2)
- Focus on limiting harvest by commercial anglers rather than limiting harvest for everyone (x2)
- Department should focus on Salisbury hatchery, not panfish (x1)
- Complaints about panfish are based on jealousy (x1)
- Aquatic vegetation management is the problem (x1)
- See also Comments #1, #4, #5, #9, and #10 above

Comments in support of proposed commercial fishing rules (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule):

- General support for proposed commercial fishing rules (x66)
- I support banning sale of crappies/Crappies should be a gamefish (x28)
- I support the fish seller's endorsement (x11)
- I support fish seller's reporting requirement (x13)
- Law enforcement is a challenge (x12)
- Commercial fishing harms fish populations (x8)
- Public trust species should not be sold (x6)
- I am opposed to commercial fishing (x4)
- I am concerned about contaminants in sold fish (x4)
- Good recreational fishing benefits the economy (x3)
- Limit commercial fishing to Lake Champlain only (x2)
- Proposed rules do not go far enough (x2)
- Department staff should verify fish seller's reports (x1)
- Commercial sales should be reported to IRS (x1)
- Concerned that commercial value incentivizes fish introductions (x1)
- See also Comments #11 and #12 above.

Comments opposed to proposed commercial fishing rules (§ 123, Commercial Angling Rule):

- General opposition to proposed commercial fishing rules (x20)
- I oppose banning sale of crappies (x6)
- I oppose the fish seller's endorsement (x6)
- I oppose charging money for a fish seller's endorsement (x2)
- Commercial sale of panfish is similar to sale of wildlife and fishing tournaments, which are allowed in the VT (x3)
- Commercial fishing benefits local businesses (x3)
- Commercial fishing is a tradition we should protect (x3)
- Rules against commercial fishing will hurt license sales (x2)
- Fish seller's report is redundant to fish buyer's report (x3)
- The North American model is not appropriate (x2)
- Losing crappie sales will hurt my business (x1)
- Crappies are not a gamefish (x1)
- I can't afford to fish without commercial fishing (x1)
- Bass are also being introduced into new waters (x1)

- Bad behavior is a problem with fishing for other species too (x1)
- Requiring license and endorsement may prevent kids from selling fish (x1)
- See also Comments #1, #2, #3, #6, #7, #8, and #9.

Other comments:

- Number of fish sellers is declining (x4)
- Fish sellers do not make much money (x4)
- Why is the Department not concerned about sale of drum and catfish? (x1)
- I know for a fact that hardly any crappies were caught from Lake Champlain last year (x1)

VT Fish & Wildlife Dept.
1 National Life Drive - Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3702

Ann Vanneman
[redacted]
Wallingford, VT 05773

April 4, 2025

Dear Fish & Wildlife Officials,

I just finished reading the very informative article about panfishing in Today's VT Digger. I support your efforts to protect these fish populations. Who do these anglers think they are that they have a right to financially benefit from this state resource?

Please keep arresting these people and keeping this information about panfish in the public view. I had had absolutely no knowledge of any of this until I read the VT Digger article.

Thank you for all your work!

Sincerely,
Ann Vanneman

Ann Vanneman
avanneman@vermontel.net
[redacted] - Home

From: Adam Karle <aqkarle@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 12:07 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed Daily Bag Limits for Trout Too High

Good Morning,

What is the process to advocate for lower bag limits on Brook Trout in Rivers and Streams?

I am an avid trout angler and supporter of the Vermont Fisheries Programs. There have been a lot of great changes made to this program during my lifetime to create fantastic fishing opportunities throughout the state. One thing that I have a tough time understanding is how someone is allowed to go in and basically fish out every Brook Trout from a headwater hole, regardless of size. I have not seen enough sizable Brook Trout to support a harvest of this breed at this rate. 6 per day was too much. 8 per day is TOO MUCH for this delicate species. Seeing a string of 12 tiny fish caught between two people is advertising irresponsibility and is not what future generations should learn as acceptable fishing practices.

I propose that the daily bag limit for Brook Trout should be 2 per day with a minimum length of 12", regardless of stream, pond, or waterway in the state of Vermont.

Thank you,
Adam Karle
[redacted]

From: Adam Lowry <localkingdom@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 1, 2025 12:37 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Spear&pole fishing recommended changes

Hello,
I would like to discuss and propose changes to the current limited underwater hunting of fish in Vermont. How do I move forward with talking to someone regarding this issue?
Thanks,
Adam Lowry

Sent from my iPhone

From: Adam Stewart <bassboy11699@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 7:14 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

Good evening,

My name is Adam Stewart I am an avid fisherman as well as occasionally a commercial fisherman. First and foremost I won't to say that not all commercial fisherman are as bad as we are made out to be just like any hunter and any fisherman there are irresponsible anglers but not every single one should be labeled bad nor should they loose a privilege to do our activities. I can tell you just from what I've seen and what I know in my area (Rutland county) there are very few commercial fisherman and from what I see there isn't very many in the state period. From reading the recent Facebook post from Vermont fish and wildlife there is a suggestion to change limits as well as add crappie to the game fish list. There is also a suggestion to have commercial fisherman buy and enhanced license. Here's my take on it as I feel that everyone should be able to have a say and if you try to make a say on Facebook you're bashed so, here's what I'd like to see and what I'd hope you guys may consider before changing limits and not allow crappie sales. Instead of doing all at once. I feel the department should start with asking anyone who wishes to fish commercially to buy an enhanced license and see just how many commercial guys are actually left before limits are changed and the public blames commercial fishermen for that. My opinion is leave the limits as they are 50 perch on inland waters 25 crappie and no limit on bluegills. And see the numbers of each guy for yourself. Fish populations are just like deer there are predators that you have to factor in also and cormorants are one of the biggest on Champlain. I can assure you no commercial guy is making a living of it most are only making back what they spend in bait and maybe a few bucks for gas. It's not what many suspect that we go wipe lakes out and make millions doing it. It's just a reward at the end of the day and honestly it's helping local businesses such as bait shops most guys will also take their earnings and give it back in like I said bait and tackle. As well as rays sea food we are in a way helping local businesses stay afloat. I hope the department takes into consideration of trying an enhancement before switching everything all at once. I look forward to hearing back back from you and hearing the public meeting in Rutland.

Thank you ~ Adam

From: Aj Brundige <ajbr67@icloud.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 29, 2025 6:25 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Vt fishing regulations

To whom it may concern,

After a short read and some lengthy thought. The new regulations seem to be just what this state's fisheries need. Me myself I'm a simple man, I enjoy fishing and guiding folks on what is a lot of peoples first fishing adventure. I've been doing this for many years all around the country and Vermont has been by far one of the most beautiful the only thing lacking is the fish. While my time guiding in Vermont has been short due to this, it is where I call home and I still choose to recreate at times. Instead I've been finding way better success just over in NY where years ago they made these exact same regulation changes. And now the fishing has gotten way better. Studies show that commercial fishing can wreak havoc on local fish populations removing all the winning mature genetics from smal bodies of water with in just a few seasons can stunt fish populations for decades and in my opinion it has in the state of Vermont. Going to small lakes that when I was a child you could get some really nice perch and crappie now your lucky if you get two keepers while tossing the rest back in hopes they grow but in stunted populations that doesn't happen because those smaller genetics have taken over. In order to preserve fishing opportunities for generations to come this need to happen.

Also biodiversity is key in any ecosystem this is not only limited to the amount of species native or natural present with in those systems but the age classes of certain dominant species in any one given body of water. These are key factors in holding larger mature fish stocks, commercial fishing has destroyed that especially in smaller bodies of water that are loaded with 6 inch mature perch.

Commercial fishing has also had negative effects by putting dollar signs behind fish. When you do that and have limited checked commercial fishing you open the door for greed. There are not enough conservation officers in Vermont to make sure the commercial fishermen aren't over fishing. Nothing but honesty stops them from going home dumping the pale in a sachets freezer and then heading back out.

Thank you
A.j. Brundige
Field guide, Battenkill Valley Collective Field Educator , Merckforest and farmland center On a missions to inspire curiosity, love and responsibility for natural and working lands.

From: Aj Brundige <ajbr67@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 6, 2025 10:47 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Vt fishing regulations

To whom it may concern,

After a short read and some lengthy thought. The new regulations seem to be just what this state's fisheries need. Me myself I'm a simple man, I enjoy fishing and guiding folks on what is a lot of peoples first fishing adventure. I've been doing this for many years all around the country and Vermont has been by far one of the most beautiful the only thing lacking is the fish. While my time guiding in Vermont has been short due to this, it is where I call home and I still choose to recreate at times. Instead I've been finding way better success just over in NY where years ago they made these exact same regulation changes. And now the fishing has gotten way better. Studies show that commercial fishing can wreak havoc on local fish populations removing all the winning mature genetics from smal bodies of water with in just a few seasons can stunt fish populations for decades and in my opinion it has in the state of Vermont. Going to small lakes that when I was a child you could get some really nice perch and crappie now your lucky if you get two keepers while tossing the rest back in hopes they grow but in stunted populations that doesn't happen because those smaller genetics have taken over. In order to preserve fishing opportunities for generations to come this need to happen.
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Commercial fishing has also had negative effects by putting dollar signs behind fish. When you do that and have limited checked commercial fishing you open the door for greed. There are not enough conservation officers in Vermont to make sure the commercial fishermen aren't over fishing. Nothing but honesty stops them from going home dumping the pale in a sachets freezer and then heading back out.

Thank you
A.j. Brundige
Field guide, Battenkill Valley Collective Field Educator , Merckforest and farmland center On a missions to inspire curiosity, love and responsibility for natural and working lands.

From: Amanda Reed <areed1698@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 8:52 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

I support the proposed fish pan rules and we need to put an end to commercial fishing in Vermont waters!!!

From: ANR - FW Information
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 10:58 AM
To: Dave Jarvis
Cc: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: RE: panfish regulation

Dave,
I am forwarding your email to the Public Comment section so it will be on record.

-VERMONT

John Hall, Information Specialist
Agency of Natural Resources / Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department
Outreach Division
1 National Life Dr, Davis 2, Montpelier, VT 05620-3702

From: Dave Jarvis <srkingco@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 10:53 AM
To: ANR - FW Information <ANR.FWInformation@vermont.gov>
Subject:

I am writing to oppose the proposed new regulations for panfishing commercially. The Fish and Wildlife Board should just be honest. Bleeding the States fishermen through unneeded laws to RAISE money, loss on account of reduced sportsmen numbers. probably figures into this. A simple system starting at places like Rays to track numbers should work. Or raise taxes on this commodity. We all know most fish go through Rays Seafood. Taxing poor fishermen is the Republics right, but is it right?

From: ANR - FW Information
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 7:28 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Cc: Smith, Hannah; Murphy, Margaret; Drury, Charlee
Subject: Fish Reg comment from Allen Wedge

From: Allen Wedge <allenwedge1987@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 6:44 AM
To: ANR - FW Information <ANR.FWInformation@vermont.gov>
Subject:

To who it may concern

I'd first like to start by saying I agree with the proposed fishing rules.

Fish and Wildlife Board Invites Public Comment for Updates to State Fishing Regulations

MONTPELIER, Vt. – The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board is inviting public comment on several proposed changes to state fishing regulations.

The proposed changes to 10 V.S.A. App § 141, 10 V.S.A. App § 122, 10 V.S.A. App § 123 and 10 V.S.A. App § 124 were introduced to the Fish and Wildlife Board at its January 15, 2025, meeting. All proposed new language is available on the "active rulemaking" section of the board's website.

Notable proposed changes would:

Add panfish bag limits to inland waters of 50 fish in total per day, and no more than 25 of a given species, for bluegill, bullhead, black and white crappie, pumpkinseed, rock bass, white perch and yellow perch (§ 122).

Update the list of seasonally closed spawning waters and expand the spring closure window to protect spawning fish (§ 122 and § 124).

Require a new Fish Seller's Endorsement for anglers who want to sell panfish. Endorsement holders will be required to report their fish sales so that biologists can better understand commercial sale of fish (§ 123).

Add black and white crappie to the list of game fish species prohibited for sale and purchase (§ 123).

Increase the size of permissible minnow traps to allow anglers to catch larger bait fish (§141).

Clarify the rules for transporting wild bait fish between waterbodies to allow for some movement of wild bait fish off certain waterbodies (§ 141).

The department will accept public comment through April 7, 2025, via email to ANR.FWPublicComment@vermont.gov. Four public hearings will be held at the following dates and locations:

Monday, March 24 – Montpelier – Vermont Supreme Court Building, 111 State St., Conference Room #110, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 25 – St. Albans – Town Educational Center, 169 Main St., Library Room, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 27 – Rutland – Rutland High School, 22 Stratton Rd., Lecture Hall, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Monday, March 31 – Virtual – Microsoft Teams (by link, or by phone to 802-828-7667 with code 435865335#), 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

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VTF&W Photos

Under the proposed new fishing regulations it will no longer be legal to sell crappie, a popular game fish that is related to bass and sunfish

Sincerely, Allen Wedge

From: Anthony Thompson <apothideus@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 10:28 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: 10 V.S.A. Appendix §141Baitfish Rule_ANNOTATED.pdf

Dear Sir or Ma'am,

I have an opinion on the length/size of a minnow trap and the size of a cast net for use in catching minnows.

1. Minnow trap. Most commercially available minnow traps are small and would meet the current requirements as they are written. However, other commenters have made the point that a 1" opening is too small for desired pike, catfish, burbot, and lake trout baits. Increasing the size of the opening poses little risk to larger fish species (specifically sportfish) as they can simply be released from the trap during harvest with minimal handling. I can't know the actual mortality rate, but I have to guess that it would be very low. The max opening rule should be at least 3" in diameter to allow for larger shiners and suckers to be trapped. In terms of the size of the trap body, there really shouldn't be a size limit. Larger trap bodies keep the minnows just a little bit healthier, up to a point of course. There are several commercially available traps in larger sizes than current regulations allow, we might as well have regulations that allow us to buy off-the-shelf trap solutions (even though most traps sold are small). Lastly, when I catch too much bait I simply release what I don't think I'll use. Will everyone do that? I have no idea, but even current regulations can't govern an over-harvest situation... so at least change the rules so that we can have the proper sized bait for targeting our desired species of sportfish.
Several things to consider: how many people actually trap their own bait?; how many of those trappers want to use giant traps vs. smaller, commercially available traps?; and how many minnows do they actually take from each water system? I would feel more comfortable if your team knew those answers and I did as well. I have further comments, but I would need the aforementioned questions answered. I guess that the vast majority of anglers don't trap their own bait; broadening the rules will realistically impact and allow a very small portion of anglers better methods to obtain baitfish.

2. (Not up for change but I still have an opinion) Cast net size. Current regulations allow a 4 ft cast net. Have any of you ever tried using a 4' net? I've lived in 7 different states. Some did not allow cast nets, some allowed 3' or 4' nets, and some had no restrictions. Using a net only works for certain species of schooling, open water baitfish. The non-use of a net just means I have to set more traps, and it really just wastes my time, of which I have very little free time... I know the wildlife biomass and ecology is vastly different in each of those states, but the reality is that cast netting was never going to impact the ecosystem anywhere. In Alabama, I could actually catch baitfish with larger cast nets. In MN and CO, I couldn't because I was restricted on net size/use. Here in VT... a 4' net allows me to catch some shiners when they are shallow in the spring, but that small of a net is just too impractical for any type of fish that swims at a depth of 3' to 8' deep. It works great in small streams but does poorly in ponds and lakes. The closing mechanics of a net vary greatly based on the size of a net, and you need a very large net to go just 6' deep or below with any chance of a net opening large enough to capture baitfish. That said, does your team know how many anglers will actually use a cast net to collect bait? Will anglers self-regulate and only throw and appropriate size cast net to their situation and the amount of bait they need? I don't know, but I guess there is only a small amount of anglers willing to cast net to catch bait and that larger cast nets will not impact a water system. A 4' net is simply not an appropriate net for use outside of a small, shallow creek. If you go to this link to see a cast net in action, you can see how small even a 5' net gets once it is a couple feet below the surface... https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pchtdyhv0ok or search "cast net falling underwater" to see the video. A 4' net is significantly smaller, and even if the net is heavily weighted, it will still close its diameter and

minnows will evade the net if it isn't wide enough. Again, a 4' net is just too impractical, we need larger nets. Most folks will stop at about a 7' net because larger nets take a certain skill level to learn and throw, and though a net is more traumatizing to a baitfish, you can release almost all of a catch if you net too many baitfish and only keep what you need.

Thank you for considering my thoughts. I moved here a year and a half ago and I will move again in another year and a half (I am in the military and will be stationed elsewhere when my time here is up), so please take that into consideration. I understand that these changes will have little personal impact because I am moving, but there are a handful of anglers that will be able to take advantage of updated rules. I've fished all over the US over the last 15 years, and I grew up in MN which has very restrictive policies and seasons. Some states manage better than others... Now that MN is relaxing some of their regulations people are finding that there are no actual negative impacts from the relaxed regs, and that the restrictions really did impact peoples' ability to enjoy the sport. Please relax the minnow trap regulation even further than your proposal, and please consider allowing for larger cast nets.

Respectfully,
Anthony Thompson
[redacted]

From: Ariann Beltran <jariann53@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 6:01 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Support for Proposed Panfish Rules & Ending Commercial Fishing in Vermont Waters

Dear Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed panfish regulations and to advocate for an end to commercial fishing in Vermont waters. These measures are critical to ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of our fisheries, protecting our natural resources, and preserving recreational fishing opportunities for future generations.

By implementing these changes, Vermont can continue to maintain a balanced ecosystem, prevent overharvesting, and support local anglers who rely on these waters for sport and sustenance. Allowing commercial fishing to continue puts unnecessary strain on fish populations and threatens the overall health of our lakes and rivers.

I appreciate the efforts of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department in considering these regulations and urge you to move forward with their adoption. Thank you for your time and commitment to conserving Vermont's fisheries.

Sincerely,

A concerned citizen of Springfield VT

From: avanneman <avanneman@vermontel.net>
Sent: Friday, April 4, 2025 10:48 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: panfishing regulations

Dear Fish and Wildlife officials,

I just read the article in today's (April 4, 2025) VT Digger about your proposed panfishing regulations. I wholeheartedly support your efforts to regulate panfishing. Why do these anglers think they have the right to sell and profit from a state resource we all enjoy? The Digger article stated that sale of such fish is prohibited in all New England states except for Maine, apparently. Most other states in the south and southwest also prohibit such sale. I hope you will make public this "big picture" information at all your hearings to educate everyone. Use visuals, i.e. maps and charts to educate.

Thank you for your efforts and for keeping up the I'm sure endless good fight to protect our natural resources.

Sincerely,

Ann Vanneman

[redacted]

Wallingford, VT 05773

H: [redacted]

From: Barbie Stevens <barbiestevens9782@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 10:56 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

I support the proposed pan fishing regulations and want to see commercial fishing end.

Barbie Stevens

From: Bart <abartusek12@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 12:08 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Support of Panfish Regulations

Hello!

Wanted to take a second to email you all to show my support of all of the regulations you have up for public feedback currently on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife website.

- Adding Panfish Bag limits to inland waters, especially with a combined 50 fish per day between all the panfish species you listed is a no brainer. That is such a large amount of fish, quite simply no person would ever need to keep that much, but having a limitation like this so panfish populations cannot be decimated, especially in the winter, is something I am very in favor for.
- All for protecting fish in spawning seasons. Let them do their thing and repopulate the body of water naturally so we can have fun at all other times of year.
- Completely agree that commercial sales of panfish need to be reported so biologists can track them.
- Completely agree that black and white crappies should be listed as a game fish and prohibited from sale and purchase. This is one of the most sought after fish in America at this point and should be praised as a great species for families and youth to pursue to get into the outdoors.

In terms of bait, I am not very informed so I do not have great feedback on this. I don't use much live bait fishing so it doesn't effect me much and I trust the DNR on doing what they think is right.

In regards to panfish and crappies, I film an ice fishing show called "The Crappie Chronicles" and we ventured out to Maine 2 winters ago. The resources you all have in the Northeast are truly remarkable, and we'd love to come back to Vermont to spend more time fishing there. Please protect these resources!

Link: https://youtu.be/gTrDYLSBoVs

Tight Lines,

Adam Bartusek
(M) 952-393-6588
(IG) @adambartusek @bartusekmedia
Bartusek Media Facebook
Bartusek Media Management Website

BARTUSEK
MEDIA MANAGEMENT

From: Brad Bergeron <risingsun1271941@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2025 12:14 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed changes

Just wanted to email saying I support the proposed changes!

From: Brad Bergeron <risingsun1271941@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 8:15 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Regulations

I am in support of ending commercial fishing in VT and support the new proposed pan fish regulations.

From: Bretthejetwilliams <bretwilliams92@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 11:10 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

I support the proposed Pan Fishing Rule on Banning all Commercial Fishing on all Public Body of Waters and Rivers In the state of Vermont

From: Brian J Reynolds <briandifish@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 2:11 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Updates to fishing regulations

I am in favor of and support changes to state fishing regulations. As follows 10 VSA App 141, App 122, App 123, App 124 should all be adopted. Thank you. Brian J Reynolds [redacted] Wilmington VT. Conservative ID [redacted]

Sent from AOL on Android

From: Brian Reynolds <bomofishclub@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 4:41 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Updated Regulation Comments

Hey all!

I've read the proposed regulation updates. It seams to me like these are steps in positive direction to continue making Vermonts fisheries the best they can be. I was wondering if there is more information available about the spring closures and seasonally closed waters?
Thank you!
Brian Reynolds

From: Caleb Covey <brookiefishervt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 10:10 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: putting a stop to commercial fishing in Vermont waters.

I support the proposed pan fish rules and to end commercial fishing in vermont waters

From: Charles McFarren <xxxemogodxxx1995@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 5:36 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

commercial fishing end and that you support the proposed pan fish regulations

From: Charyn Jones <charynjo@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 10:23 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Support of commercial fishing ban

Good afternoon,

I am writing to inform you that I am in favor of a commercial fishing ban in Vermont and I support the proposed pan fish regulations which were advertised on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Facebook Site.

Thank you and have a great day.

Charyn Jones

Sent from my iPhone

From: Chris Wildt <wildt.chris@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 6:39 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Pan fish regulations

My brother and I love the idea of pan fish regulation and reporting. First it's free. Second it creates accountability. We fish Bomoseen 25 to 30 times per season. Our paths cross with several fishermen per season filling coolers with Bluegills and selling them for 80 cents per pound. We have no problem with this due to the massive population in the lake. However we would be very interested in knowing the total numbers ,where they are being sold and the accountability. Thanks for listening to our opinion. Chris and Rich

From: Christian Poupart <poupster2@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 5:34 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Please stop commercial fishing and proposed pan fish rules

I agree with the new pan fish rules and please stop commercial fishing in Vermont

Christian Poupart
Scroll saw Artisan
Facebook.com\\cp.scrollsawartisan

From: Christopher Williams <christopher@flexrealtyvt.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:24 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed pan fish regulations

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed pan fish regulations and to urge you to take action to end commercial fishing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Christopher Williams

From: Clinton Pierce <clintp@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 7:45 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed regulations

* Add daily limits for panfish on inland waters of 50 fish in total and no more than 25 of a given species

This seems completely reasonable. Anything more than this seems like farming fish and not really out for fun. There are some perfectly good lakes that need a better balance of panfish to larger predator fish like bass or pike.

As someone who fishes for panfish and the larger sportfish.

I support this rule change.

* Add black and white crappie to the list of game fish species that can't be sold or purchased

I support this rule change as well. I don't catch enough of these in our waters, Vermonters don't need to be siphoning them off for sale.

* Require anglers who want to sell panfish to have a new "fish seller's endorsement"

Another rule I'm completely in favor of. Who's selling panfish commercially? It's crazy that you don't need a license to sell panfish. Depleting panfish makes fisheries suffer, why incentivise this behavior and let people sell them.

Thank you.

From: Cody Peryea <codyperyea@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 6, 2025 10:49 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Input on proposed changes

To whomever this may concern,

Hello my name is Cody Peryea, I am a 9th grade Special Education teacher in Northern New York and hold a masters degree in Early Childhood/Special Education from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. When at Plattsburgh State, I was the President of the fishing club for three academic years. I have been an avid angler on Lake Champlain since I was 5 years old. This is where I found my passion for fishing. Unlike most other anglers at that age, who are taught to bass fish or fish for other types of recreational fish, that was not what I was first introduced to. I was introduced to panfishing, something that I was very fortunate to be taught by my father, who has been fishing panfish on Champlain since the 1980s. I am emailing you to voice my opinion on the proposed changes that may affect the panfish limits in the inland waters of Vermont and the attempt to prohibit the sale and purchase of black and white crappie.

There is nothing I love more than to catch and sell panfish, including sunfish, bluegill, yellow perch, white perch, crappie and rock bass. Being from New York, my father trailers his boat, or my boat, to either the Dillenbeck bay boat access or the West Swanton bridge boat access area to launch. Hopefully we will continue this tradition this upcoming season and consistently fish panfish, from ice out until the July 4th weekend, which we catch and sell to Lake Champlain fish Company or Hog Island Market. Ever since I have started fishing with my father, we have caught good amounts of all the species I have mentioned above. With the more that we fish, this trend of catching panfish has only gotten better throughout the years!

As my passion for fishing grew, I wanted to fish more, into the months of July, August and September when it was still seasonally warm. I then was introduced into fishing bass tournaments throughout New York State. With my college experience and experience funded on my own, I have tournament fished on different bodies of water such as Cayuga Lake, Lake Ontario/St.Lawrence River, Lake George, Candlewood Lake in Connecticut and even Smith Mountain Lake in Virginia. I now own my own bass boat with the most up to date and best technology that a competitive bass angler would have on their boat. You may ask "what does bass fishing have to do with fishing panfish?" My response to you is that I am now capable of seeing where all those panfish would vanish off to once the water increased in temperature in those hot summer months. These schools that go offshore from 10 feet all the way to as deep as 60 feet of water, would open the eyes to people who believe there is any decrease in our panfish population. It is amazing to come across the amount of panfish that I see in a day of bass fishing, in many areas of the lake. Once these fish go out into these depths of water they never can get fished effectively because an angler would need live sonar or to get lucky to land on a large school of fish like I constantly see. These schools have thousands of fish in them that may never have seen a bait in their life. There is no shortage of panfish on the northern end of Lake

Champlain. Putting a limit on panfish would decrease the amount of anglers that would want to target them because it wouldn't even be worth selling. This would then lead to the overpopulation of panfish in Lake Champlain.

Now I am going to take you 100 miles South to the southern end of the lake, which is basically an entirely different fishery. The southern end of Champlain is considered the largemouth mecca of this body of water. It consists of the most perfect habitat for largemouth bass, shallow/dirty water, thick vegetation, and offshore trees and debris. Last April, prior to the vegetation becoming thick, I took an entire day to side scan offshore structures that I would believe these bass would migrate to during the summer months. I ended up dropping around 50 waypoints in a 3 mile stretch of the lake. From what I found, there were far more of these structures located on the Vermont shoreline in comparison to New York. Fast forward to late August when I was practicing for a NYTBF bass fishing event out of Ticonderoga. I started fishing these offshore structures that I found ranging from 4 ft to 12 ft of water. After hours of being unsuccessful, constantly switching baits and not catching bass, on every structure I could see many groups of smaller fish on my live sonar. After downsizing my bait I quickly found out these were black and white crappie. Catching my limit within 20 minutes, I then decided to cull the fish and go to the different structure I saw them on previously. From what I could see on my live sonar, around each structure would range from 50-150 fish. In the eyes of anglers, this illuminates that there indeed is no lack of black and white crappie in Lake Champlain and that banning the sale of them would affect the ecosystem due to overpopulation. I would like to know who have you consulted regarding these possible decisions? Where are they studying the amount of schools compared to 2, 5, and 10 years ago? How are they tracking this? Please make sure before you make any decisions they are tracking these schools into the deep waters in late summer. Have you considered how implementing these rules will affect the size and numbers? A friend of mine, who loves to fish as much as myself, is on the lake every free moment he has. He completed a study while attending Plattsburgh State with a conservation biologist and saw the exact same patterns and amounts of fish in the lake that I am. I believe that the restrictions you have on crappie are warranted, however, the panfish are flourishing.

Finally my last regards on how this will affect me as an angler and how I believe it will affect the state of Vermont. Every year my father and I purchase an out of state Vermont fishing license, with a limit on panfish and banning the sale of black and white crappie, we no longer have the need to buy a license to fish in Vermont. Every year my father and I give business to the Boat Headquarters in Swanton that we trust to work on our boats. With a limit on panfish and banning the sale of black and white crappie, we no longer will give them business. My father and I have bought endless amounts of bait and tackle from Hog Island Market in Swanton, with a limit on panfish and banning the sale of black and white crappie, we no longer will have the need to give them our support. My father and I have gave countless amounts of business to stores on our way to Vermont such as the Jolly convenience store located over the bridge in Alburgh, the Valero located in Alburgh, and the new Maplefields located on Route 2S, with a limit on panfish and the banning sale of black and white crappie, we no longer will give them business. Think about the small mom and pop restaurants that serve perch dinner on Fridays and through Lent. How will this affect them? Lake Champlain is a destination fishery for catching and selling panfish. With all other bodies of water I have traveled to, no other lake compares to what Champlain has to offer. With what little amount that panfish anglers take out of the lake, it only holds it in check, so over population does not occur. My father and I are just two of the many panfish anglers who are displeased with these laws possibly going into effect. Just like my father did for me, I would one day like to take my son or daughter

out for the opportunity to catch and sell panfish. If these laws are passed I will never have the opportunity to do so.
If you have any questions please feel free to contact me
and I will be pleased to answer any questions to the best of my ability.

Thank you,

Cody Peryea

Email: Cody.peryea@gmail.com
Cell phone: [redacted]

From: Cole Campbell <campbell.coleman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 8:54 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: New commercial fishing rules

I am not in favor of the new rules. I would really appreciate it if you could keep the rules the same they have been for years and everyone else would appreciate it too.
Thank you
Sent from my iPhone

From: Cole Tupper <coletup@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 2:01 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish

I support the proposed pan fish rules and to end commercial fishing in vermont waters Also like to see crappies go to 10in to keep Sent from my iPhone

From: Cole Tupper <coletup@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 7:14 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing. Laws

I was at the Rutland meeting. Really like to push the idea of an age to sell fish. There plenty of people that go out with there kids and filling bucket and party fishing crappies to sell.

10 inch crappies would be a nice add on especially if you get rid of selling. Let the fish spawn and grow.
I use to sell fish and was never asked where I cought my fish and don't see anything wrong with selling gills and perch but when guys go fill buckets of crappies off the same small body's of water they don't bounce back. there needs to be laws on it. Maybe even limits on certain body's of water like quotas. Example once you hit 500lb of gill that body of water is closed for the year. Hold buyers responsible. If they have someone come in trying to sell 30 gills from inland waters they should have to call and report them

I do want to thank you guys. I know a few people have been making fools of themselves trying to fight this the new panfish laws but the only way to get the data they want is to but these laws into affect if not they would keep taking all the panfish out of these little bodies of water and you guys wouldn't be able to do a studies.

If you guys want to do a study on how selling fish affects lakes go to lake hortonia and shock it. I'd love to see it. Use to be one of the best crappie lakes in the state 10 years ago. And the fallowing 2 years onces guys selling fish found them on that lake they took them all out. Wasn't just one or two people there was 20-30 selling off there. Can't find crappie of size anywhere on the lake just small ones. And they do this to all the small body's of water that have crappie in it. Weed beds that use to be full of them just gone. Most the crappie we catch now are in 30ft+ of water bc the sellers won't go out there looking.

New trapping baitfish laws are perfect. Hopefully now the bigger size golden shiners will get caught.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Collin Audy <audycollin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 8:51 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: New fishing rules

I am NOT in favor of the new proposed commercial angling rule.

From: Connolly, Abigail
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 11:21 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: FW: Proposed Law Changes
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

From: Burnham, Nicholas <Nicholas.Burnham@partner.vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 9:21 AM
To: anr.fwboard@list.vermont.gov
Subject: [ANR.FWBoard] Fw: Proposed Law Changes

From: Cody Peryea <codyperyea@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 12:36 PM
To: ANR - FW Board Windsor <ANR.FWBoardWindsor@vermont.gov>
Subject: Proposed Law Changes

To Mr. Nicolas Burnham,

Hello my name is Cody Peryea, I am a 9th grade Special Education teacher in Northern New York and hold a masters degree in Early Childhood/Special Education from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. When at Plattsburgh State, I was the President of the fishing club for three academic years. I have been an avid angler on Lake Champlain since I was 5 years old. This is where I found my passion for fishing. Unlike most other anglers at that age, who are taught to bass fish or fish for other types of recreational fish, that was not what I was first introduced to. I was introduced to panfishing, something that I was very fortunate to be taught by my father, who has been fishing panfish on Champlain since the 1980s. I am emailing you to voice my opinion on the proposed changes that may affect the panfish limits in the inland waters of Vermont and the attempt to prohibit the sale and purchase of black and white crappie.

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If you have any questions please feel free to contact me and I will be pleased to answer any questions to the best of my ability. Thank you for reading Mr. Burnham.

Sincerely,

Cody Peryea

Email: Cody.peryea@gmail.com

Cell phone: [redacted]

_____
ANR.FWBoard mailing list
ANR.FWBoard@list.vermont.gov
https://list.vermont.gov/mailman/listinfo/anr.fwboard

From: Connolly, Abigail
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 10:16 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: FW: Public Hearing
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

VERMONT

Abigail Connolly (she/her) | Principal Assistant to the Commissioner
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Fish & Wildlife
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620
802-828-1454 (o) | 802-636-7414 (c)
abigail.connolly@vermont.gov
www.vtfishandwildlife.com

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Written communications to and from state employees regarding state business are considered public records and may be subject to public scrutiny.

From: Deimling, Beth <Beth.Deimling@partner.vermont.gov>
Sent: Sunday, March 30, 2025 9:09 AM
To: 'anr.fwboard@list.vermont.gov' <anr.fwboard@list.vermont.gov>
Subject: [ANR.FWBoard] Fw: Public Hearing

From: Frank Dattilio <frankdattilio@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 10:16 AM
To: ANR - FW Board GrandIsle <ANR.FWBoardGrandIsle@vermont.gov>
Subject: Public Hearing

Beth, thank you for attending the Board Public Hearing in St. Albans on March 25, 2025. I am one of the attendees who commented at that meeting and since you are my Islands representative I am addressing this email to you. There are a lot of misconceptions about the current and past history of commercial fishing in Vermont. When I grew up every mom and pop store that had fresh meat also sold fresh perch and smelt that they bought from local fishermen.There were no standards on how those fish were handled or where they came from. Fast forward to present day and for the past 35 plus years there has been a state of Vermont licensed broker handling 95 plus percent of the fresh fish being marketed. The fishermen catch the fish and generally the same day sell them at the going price at one of several licensed and regulated fish buyers. Those buyers as part of their license requirements have to report the numbers back to the state on what I believe a quarterly basis. There is one main broker in the state and all those buyers in turn sell their fish back to Ray's Seafood. The Dunkling family has a restaurant and a trucking business in addition to their fresh fish shop in Burlington. They process a portion of their fish into fillets and market them all over New England and New York. They sell and ship large amounts of whole perch to midwestern and Canadian processing plants to be processed and sold throughout the world for food. The flat

spiney type fish like sunfish, bluegills and crappie most often go to NYC fish markets. These Lake Champlain fish are feeding people somewhere. There is a misconception that the people selling fish are making all kinds of money which isn't true. I am one of the more active fishermen and generally fish Lake Champlain around 180 days each year and have been doing so for the 22 years that I have been retired. Like all fishing there are good days and bad days. Many of us travel long distances to trailer our boats to various places to fish. When one considers the cost of gas, tow vehicles, boats and necessary equipment it would take a lifetime of selling a few fish to even pay for one of those parts of fishing. Most days a successful day is when you cover the cost of ice, bait or gas. We all love to fish and many of us don't enjoy cleaning fish after a day out on the lake so we sell them. I look at the sale of fish similarly to the people selling squash, corn, tomatoes and cucumbers from a stand in their front yard which is common in summer all along the Islands roads. They do that as a Vermont tradition and that's the way we fishermen view selling our fish. It is true that the crappie are a highly sought after fish and yes there can be people who cheat and take more than their share. I have our 2 local game wardens on speed dial as do many other fishermen and don't hesitate to contact them when we observe someone doing something wrong. If there is a perceived problem with crappie then allow the wardens to do the job we are paying them for. To remove the problem is not the way to take care of it. Our biologists have justifiably set limits based on science and that's how the Fish and Wildlife Board should view any issue. To act as a state entity to change laws based on a small sample undocumented petition is wrong and is doing a disservice to the people you are supposed to be working for. One of the issues the biologists mentioned is gathering data on the raw numbers of fish sold commercially to better understand the biology and future regulations. These numbers are already given to the Department from all Licensed buyers in the state. If the Department wants to understand how many people are catching these fish just make the number of customers as well as the cumulative pounds of fish bought as part of the license requirement. There is no need to have a seller endorsement which will only require more administrative people to keep track of it and compile the data that they would be forced to send in. For the record most commercial fishermen are casual weekend people still working and selling a few fish that they catch on the weekend. Commercial fishermen are a very small portion of the people buying licenses. One blowback from over regulating commercial fishing will be reduced license sales. The numbers of people fishing commercially has plummeted through the years. I've been doing it all my life and can attest that the numbers are reduced by somewhere around 70 to 80 percent. The kids today don't seem to want to fish and as we older fishermen move on there are fewer and fewer people to replace us. There are many New York fishermen that buy a Vermont license to be able to fish our whole lake. Most of the better fishing grounds are on the Vermont side of the lake so they need both licenses to fish. Canadians are another large block of license sales that would end if commercial fishing becomes over regulated. Nationwide, reduced license sales are negatively impacting Fish and Wildlife agencies all across the Country. This results in cutbacks and reduced services provided by these agencies as well as increased licence costs which further impact raw license sales. I'll end this for now but have to say I am very disappointed in the current path that our Fish and Wildlife Department as well as the Board are following. Please do the right thing and table the portion of regulations pertaining to commercial fishing.

Frank Dattilio
[redacted]
North Hero, Vermont 05474

_____
ANR.FWBoard mailing list
ANR.FWBoard@list.vermont.gov
https://list.vermont.gov/mailman/listinfo/anr.fwboard

From: Connolly, Abigail
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 8:06 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: FW: Concerns of Bias and Prejudice in Fisheries Division and Commercial Fishing Laws
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

VERMONT
Abigail Connolly (she/her) | Principal Assistant to the Commissioner
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From: Frazier, Allison <Allison.Frazier@partner.vermont.gov>
Sent: Sunday, March 9, 2025 5:49 PM
To: 'anr.fwboard@list.vermont.gov' <anr.fwboard@list.vermont.gov>
Subject: [ANR.FWBoard] Fw: Concerns of Bias and Prejudice in Fisheries Division and Commercial Fishing Laws

I replied to Bethany and am forwarding to share the input with all board members. -Allison

---

From: Bethany Alger <bethany.alger@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 7:42 PM
To: ANR - FW Board Chittenden <ANR.FWBoardChittenden@vermont.gov>
Subject: Concerns of Bias and Prejudice in Fisheries Division and Commercial Fishing Laws

Allison Frasier and all board members,
I write to you from Westford, Vermont though a resident of central Vermont for 30 years. I went to the University of Vermont where I graduated with a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology. After graduating I went to work in sea lamprey research seasonally for the US Geological Survey in the Great Lakes. I am writing as I am concerned with what seems to be bias, prejudice and down right poor management being presented by the Fisheries division of Vermont Fish and Wildlife. I watched the recording from the recent board meeting where members of the fisheries division gave a presentation on what they know about commercial fishing and proposed new laws. I lost track of how many times I heard the presenter say we do not have that data, we don't know but then in the next minute say they "know" commercial fisherman lie, introduce species to non-native habitats for their own profit and commercial fisherman are the reason people have less enjoyment fishing. How can they say they "know" this? When was the last time the department did a legitimate creel survey? And not a survey where their creel clerks went out for an hour or two talking with people and then slept in the truck down the road from the access for hours. Or even a forage fish survey which should include panfish. What is their evidence that commercial fishermen lie?

When has anyone from the department gone to interact with any of the commercial fishermen or the buyers? Have they asked if they can sit and observe or even ,something that seems foreign to them, to collect real data at a fish buyer's shop? Or do they approach with a known bias, prejudice and attitude toward this group of people which makes it difficult for anyone to want to help them. Now introducing and transporting fish species for their gain, do you know how many lakes and ponds now have bass that were not there before? No one sells or buys bass, but bass fishing is one of the most popular in the state. So maybe it is not commercial fisherman like the department tried to make it seem.

One of my biggest issues with the department's presentation besides having no data to support anything they proposed is them stating commercial fishermen have caused the decline in satisfaction with fishing. The presenter went over a table showing that 15% of people say their enjoyment in fishing has decreased. The presenter said this was significant. How, in what mathematical relm is 15 % of a population a significant amount? It is about as significant as the petition they say this all stemmed from where 242 people signed it, 242 is less than 1% of the Vermont population. So are we now going to entertain and change our laws based on less than 1% of a population? What if someone submits a petition with 242 signatures stating they are against deer hunting and it should be outlawed in the state? Will we have this same response? Aside from this, has the department even considered that people have less enjoyment in fishing due to the 120 different tournaments that are held every year just in Vermont, a majority of them bass tournaments. Multiple high profile bass tournaments, out of New York, with hundreds of boats with fishermen and camera crews. One of the tournaments overlaps with Vermont's LCI weekend where for some, it is the one time of year they get out and fish. Professional bass fisherman do not care about the people on the lake or the lake's fish. They are here to catch their bags of bass and cash checks. They do not care if the fish they caught swallowed the hook a little too far down and ripped their gills in half. I believe this should be looked into more. If we are promoting the bass fishery we need to make sure the fishermen coming here respect it and the people who live here.

I hope you take time to think about what the department is presenting and how it makes them ,as well as the board, look. We now let the minority of people decide what our laws should be, the majority does not matter. We will make laws based on a petition from 242 people and have no data to back up our laws. I personally think this presentation makes the fisheries department look like jerks who are conspiring with 242 people, who may or may not be Vermont residents.

I will continue to do research and look forward to hearing back from you. I also encourage you to reach out to a fish buyer or commercial fisherman anywhere in the state and ask to have a conversation with them, maybe what you learn will surprise you.

Sincerely,

Bethany Alger

_____
ANR.FWBoard mailing list
ANR.FWBoard@list.vermont.gov
https://list.vermont.gov/mailman/listinfo/anr.fwboard

From: Connolly, Abigail
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 10:56 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: FW: Concerns of Bias and Prejudice in Fisheries Division and Commercial Fishing Laws
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

VERMONT
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Sincerely,

Bethany Alger

_____
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https://list.vermont.gov/mailman/listinfo/anr.fwboard

From: Connor Lang <connorlang230@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 2:38 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Vermont Regulation Changes

Hello,

I see evidence of declining numbers of yellow perch being sold in your data shown at the meeting on January 15th but is this because of a lack of fish or is it being caused by declining numbers of commercial fisherman and shorter ice fishing seasons, which is when more commercial fishing happens? I feel strongly that there is no need to add limits to the amount of panfish (Yellow Perch, Bluegill, White Perch, and Sunfish) to which anglers can keep and do as they please with, from lake champlain and other major bodies of water in Vermont. Lake Champlain is a big enough body of water where I do not think we are dealing with overfishing but instead a reduction in commercial fishermen which explains the decline in fish numbers being sold. For these reasons I feel we do not need to change the regulations on Panfish in Lake Champlain.

There has been very little change in the number of crappies being caught and sold according to your data shown in the January 15th meeting. I understand this is because we don't have a large population of them in Vermont to begin with but that is why we have limits for them. Very few anglers are filling their limits of crappie while fishing, and even fewer fishermen are selling the crappie they catch. This means the effect of commercial fishing on the crappie population is no different than the fisherman who catch crappie to keep and eat. With this information I think there is no argument as to why crappie should be moved into the category of game fish and forbidden to sell. I think after viewing the data provided and seeing how little the numbers have changed over the past twenty years that the regulations for them should stay the same and people should continue to be able to sell them.

By making it mandatory for commercial fishermen to get a commercial fishing license there will be a significant decline in the amount of people keeping and selling fish. This is going to have a very negative impact on local businesses all throughout the state who depend on buying fish from local fisherman and could very easily lead to Vermont companies going out of business which is bad for all outdoorsmen. I see no reason to stop the sale of fish in Vermont and believe it would end up hurting the amount of money the state would be making and lead to less money for the state to contribute to its conservation efforts. Commercial fishing is a part of Vermont's history and should not be taken away or made more difficult for the people who still decide to partake in the activity and as a Vermonter who has lived in this state his entire life and grew up hunting and fishing I think we need to put more importance on Vermont's Traditions. I think that the discussion of changing Vermont's commercial fishing regulations should go no further and be left as they are currently.

Thank you for your time,

Connor Lang

From: corey bechtold <cjbechtold@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 3:34 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed Panfish Regulations…
Attachments: Video.MOV

For whom it may concern. I support the proposed Panfish regulations.

Good fishing,

Corey Bechtold

Sent from my iPhone

From: Cory Curtis <corycurtis1981@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 2:52 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed fish regulation changes

White perch should not be included in the proposed fishing regulation changes for panfish as they are invasive to any lake or pond they are in. There should be no limit on white perch. Also the current limit of 50 fish daily for yellow perch has worked fine. Cutting it back more could cause overpopulation in an already abundant yellow perch population. Plus many people only have maybe a Saturday to fish then whatever they catch may be a feed for their family on Sunday. These people are not hurting the perch population. These rules should really be focused on and pointes to the commercial fishermen that are out fishing and catching limits as more daily. Commercial fishing is the problem, don't punish the guy that fishes once a week or months for a meal or two. Make a license specific for the commercial fisherman that wants to catch and sell their panfish.

Cory Curtis
Westmore Vermont

From: cullen hathaway <cjhathaway37@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:09 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Anti commercial fishing

It is RUINING our resources for people only making a small amount of money. Please put an end to it

From: Dan Lovell <dglphoto@dglphoto.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 8:43 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing regulation Changes

My name is Dan Lovell, and I reside in Brandon, Vermont. Fishing has been a lifelong passion of mine, and over the years, I have observed a concerning decline in the size classes of perch and crappie across several lakes I frequent, including Lake Dunmore, Lake Bomoseen, Lake Hortonia, and Burr Pond. I believe this issue stems from the overharvesting of panfish species by commercial anglers. The proposed commercial fishing regulations are a critical step toward preserving the integrity of our state's fisheries.

At the very least, these regulations should mandate that commercial anglers report every sale, providing detailed data on the number of fish sold. Additionally, I propose that this reporting include the designation of the largest and smallest fish within each species sold. Just as businesses are subject to some form of oversight, it is only logical that those profiting from the harvest and sale of fish from our public waters should be required to submit documentation detailing the quantity of fish harvested and the specific waterbody from which they were taken.

While there may be other factors contributing to the reduction in fish size, it is clear to me that over-harvesting plays a significant role. The sheer volume of anglers who line up day after day to fill pails with fish during safe ice conditions is alarming. These actions deplete local fish populations until the catch rate drops, prompting commercial anglers to move on to other lakes and repeat the process.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the passage of these proposed regulations to protect our fish populations and to ensure more accurate data collection from the commercial harvest of fish.

Thank you,
Dan Lovell
[redacted]

From: Dana Morey <moreydana@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 8:14 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed fishing regulation change

I support the change of proposed fishing regs and the end of commercial fishing. As both are hurting our fisheries.

From: Dave Groenewold <dgroenewold@rvtc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 11:36 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: pan fish limits

25 bluegill/sunfish, 25 perch, 25 crappie.
Opposed to selling panfish on the open market. Unwise practice.
The year before last year, Great River Hydro drew down the Connecticut River by 30-40 feet above the BF Dam. Large game fish have disappeared from this stretch of the river. I catch and release. Could this qualify for a tax break on my property? Politically, this state is clueless. Water treatment plants and wetlands keep building them.....
So disappointing
Chef David Groenewold

--
David Groenewold
River Valley Technical Center
Culinary Arts Instructor
802-885-8334

From: Dave Trevithick <dtrevithick19@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 9:53 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: State Fishing Regs

Hello,
I enthusiastically approve of the fishing regs being proposed. I live on a small Chittenden County pond and I have seen commercial fishermen hammer it day after day taking everything they caught. Crappie seem to be gone now and the sunfish are all so small. I like the prohibition on selling crappie and would even suggest that prohibiting all selling of panfish should be considered. I also really appreciate the limits based on species of no more than 25.
Thanks, Dave

From: David Chalmers <davidchalmers186@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 4:55 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing regulations

Sent from my iPhone

From: David Morey II <raven73071@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 11:03 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial Fishing changes

Good morning,

I am writing this email to add any support I can to changes in Vermont fishing regulations that would ban all commercial fishing. I have witnessed activities of those engaged in commercial fishing and believe that it has a negative impact on many fisheries, particularly small bodies of water when they come in and clean out everything big enough to sell. I've seen families bring a van load of kids just so they can keep a limit for each person even though the kids aren't even fishing. This practice is ruining many small fisheries.

Secondly, I'd like to add my support to a move to classify crappie as a game fish with a larger minimum length. 10 inch minimum would be better than an 8 inch in my opinion.

Respectfully,
David J. Morey II
N. Westminster, VT

From: David Wein <david_wein@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 7:47 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Cc: Luke Briccetti; Emily Bastian; Brian Cowden; Bob Mallard
Subject: Vermont NFC Fishing Regulation Comments
Attachments: VT NFC Comments.doc

Hello. Please find the attached comments on behalf of the Vermont Chapter of the Native Fish Coalition regarding the proposed fishing regulation changes.

Respectfully,

David Wein, Chair Native Fish Coalition - Vermont Chapter

Native Fish Coalition
PO Box 10
Pownal, ME 04069
NativeFishCoalition.org
info@NativeFishCoalition.org

03/10/2025

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board
1 National Life Drive
Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3702

RE: Proposed changes to Vermont fishing regulations

Dear Fish and Wildlife Board,

Please accept the following comments on behalf of the Vermont Chapter of Native Fish Coalition (NFC).

1. For the purposes of supporting the quality and continuity of the wild native brook trout population in **Mud Pond**, NFC supports the addition of this pond to the "Seasonally Closed" waters list.

2. With regards to increasing the minimum length limit Lake Trout on **Lake Memphremagog** from 18" to 24," NFC supports this regulation change aligned with Quebec's efforts to restore and maximize the wild native lake trout population.

3. Regarding the elimination of the rule that closes **Valley Brook** in October, NFC notes the brook contains native brook trout and some of those exceed 10" based on VTFWD date. NFC believes that maintaining a closed season during October to protect spawning brook trout should be consistent with other wild native brook trout waters.

4. NFC supports the addition of all wild native brook trout ponds to the "Restricted Waters" including but not limited to **Mud Pond**.

5. NFC supports the reduction in panfish harvest within inland waters to no more than 25 of any species within all waters in which these species are native based on the "Fishes of Vermont: Vermont Natural Heritage Inventory" published by VTF&W (March 13, 2022).

Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully,

David Wein, Chair Native Fish Coalition – Vermont Chapter

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 3:41 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: white perch in pan fish proposal

I do feel that white perch probably should not be in the same limits as the rest of the pan fish , for one they can over populate fast and are considered invasive I think and should be allowed to take more in champlain and magog at least , conn river there not a problem from what any of us seen and very seldom catch any from the river
Thanks Dennis Thomson

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 9:06 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: blue gill and pan fish limits
Attachments: 470242279_1108290877667047_6165821121172203096_n.jpg

Overfishing bluegill and other species can lead to a decline in the average size of bluegill as well as other species, potentially causing stunting, and negatively impact the overall ecosystem, research biologist Andrew Rypel analyzed size trends going back to the 1940's, and found that bluegills and other panfish species steadily declined in size over a 70-year period. and found that bluegill size rebounds when fishing pressure decreases ,fisherman and some fishery management used to believe that smaller blue gills was a sign of over populations but long term studies have proven that lower bag limits can mean better fishing and bigger fillets for the fish fry, many fish species have collapsed because of over fishing and commercial fishing in the world , Vermont's behind times and needs to catch up before we see even more negative effects of over fishing, we either need to end commercial fishing or regulate it and enforce those regulations or suffer the consequences for the future generations , our inland waters can not take this pressure and as we heard some commercial guys in the first public hearing say things that show there is more lying going on about how many fish really came out of Champlain vs inland waters , one man said 60 % came from inland and he has had plenty of pictures with 3 coolers full of blue gills on his fb page before this push to change regs came about , many of us have seen the decline in size and quantity in these pan fish over the years and it is not only commercial fishing but a big part of it , the other is to liberal of limits on them which is no limit on sun fish and 50 perch , and as we know this has and does create illegal limits such as the pan fish plunder case on the set back on Connecticut river that 3 men were caught selling over 700 fish from there and were busted , Nh has had many busts with very similar violations taking more fish then is allowed with there limits of 25 of each species and 50 per day total , and those were just the ones caught , when you ad money to things like this it creates bad behavior , and we just don't have the law enforcement needed to monitor this problem and as long as there is a place to sell these fish there will always be this issue ,there is a big reason that we once again are seeing guys come to the east side of the state catching fish and selling them from over here and in Nh and that is because many of the waters near where fish buyers are have seen huge reductions in the higher paying fish sizes and they migrate to where there is better fish to fill there pockets with money, While both commercial and recreational fishing contribute to fish management, recreational angling often plays a more significant role in funding and directly influencing management decisions due to the North American model of conservation, where anglers' fees and purchases fund fisheries management, commercial fishing takes more then it gives back , we need to look at managing this better so that future generations can enjoy this great healthy sport for years to come as well as protect our waters and ecosystems.
Dennis Thomson sr

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 3:48 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: its just wrong to commercial fish

reality is that it is like a town having a pile of salt for free for the tax payers to use and then there is a person that comes and takes that salt and sells it to make a profit , this is exactly what fresh water commercial fishing does , it is a public resource yet a companys making money from it and selling to other countrys and states , seams the tax payers and citizens should be getting there fair share of that money

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 12:35 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: on commercial fishing

https://www.trcp.org/2013/08/27/bad-comparisons-economic-value-of-recreational-vs-commercial-fishing/?fbclid=IwY2xjawJTBgZleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHZdn0P6PLa58aWmxH19pk8w94bRHoOSGliqCjmfk77g4WFi7z6yiqMM95Q_aem_Rc89CBw4SST91fw49d3ZvA

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 6:15 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: we may not have data on pan fish much but other state do

We don’t have to re invent the wheel , the work and studies have been done all over the country ,we are behind times in vt , heres an example of how over fishing with commercial fishing and liberal limits effect pan
https://www.themeateater.com/fish/freshwater/will-new-lower-panfish-bag-limits-mean-bigger-fillets

Dennis Thomson sr

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 8:47 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: proposed changes and commercial fishing

Commercial fishing needs to end or be regulated better with quotas ,studies and reporting as well as fees for sellers and taxes paid on fish sold, this is unfair for the tax payers who work and have to pay taxes, I would imagine many would love to fish and make money under the table but they don't on a scale like this , another issue is as long as there is a place to sell fish with these proposals or not it is still going to cause illegal limits to be caught , I had a long time commercial fishing guy say that 99 percent of all commercial guys take over limits because when you have money involved it creates greed, another issue I see is people do not know what is in the fish there eating that are sold to the public , do they have to put on the menu or in stores that you should only consume certain amounts of fish because of mercury and other things bad in our waters ? do they warn that some fish came out of no take zones because those fish have pcbs and other poison in them ? I would think the state would be concerned of liability if someone got cancer or sick and they found out it was because of fish the state allowed to be sold wasn't tested like usda does with beef pork and poultry , we are so far behind most states who ended commercial fishing and set better limits on fish so that generations can enjoy the fish we so enjoy to catch for years to come , Vermont may not have a lot of data on any of this but plenty of states have done a lot of studies and know that over fishing causes problems with fisheries , many times stunting populations or reducing them to a point that it effects many other things in the waters .

when any resident of northern America goes angling in public waters, he or she usually buys a state license and pays a substantial Federal tax (10 percent) on the equipment used. The license fees for the rights to fish and the special taxes pay for most, if not all, of the public costs of management and enhancement.

when any resident of northern America goes commercial fishing in public waters to catch perhaps a thousand times as many fish as the angler, he or she pays only modest "taxes" for license or landing fees on a per-fish basis, which pays very little of the public costs for research on and management of the commercial fishery resources. In addition, the commercial fishermen are heavily subsidized by both Canadian and U.S. governments, as well as much of the rest of the world, through low-cost loans, special advisory services, and unemployment insurance.

The difference in public costs between recreational and commercial fisheries is surprising because 1) there are more than 200 times as many anglers in northern America as commercial fishermen, and 2) the overall economic value of the recreational fisheries, with all of their supporting activities, is much greater than the value of the commercial fisheries. One might expect that general revenues rather than special revenues would be used for an activity popular among about 20 percent of our people, and that special services to less than 1 percent of our people would require some special taxes on them. But no, the commercial activity of a few is deemed important enough to require continuing transfer payments from the rest of the people; whereas, the recreation for many largely pays its own way.

it is perhaps less surprising that the research on and management of the recreational fisheries is a conservation, social, economic, and political success story; whereas, the research on and the management of the commercial fisheries just may be a conservation and a social success, but it is potentially, in many circumstances, an economic and political disaster.

Dennis Thomson sr

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:11 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: biological impacts of over fishing is real

As you all know I support the pan fish proposals but believe there is a lot more to it then just social , it is very much biological as well , Overfishing of panfish, like bluegills, can lead to smaller average sizes, reduced population diversity, and potentially stunted populations if fishing pressure, especially on spawning beds, is too intense.
Here's a more detailed biological report on the impacts of overfishing on panfish:
1. Impacts of Overfishing on Panfish Populations:

- **Reduced Size and Growth:**

Studies show that increased fishing pressure, particularly on spawning beds, can lead to a decrease in the average size of panfish populations.

- **Stunted Populations:**

If fishing pressure is high, it can lead to a situation where a large number of small panfish survive, while the number of larger, older fish declines, resulting in a stunted population.

- **Bluegill Specific Issues:**

For bluegills, stunting can also occur if all the large males are harvested, and smaller males reproduce at a younger age instead of growing larger before reproducing.

- **Bluegill Habitat:**

Good habitat for big bluegills includes lakes with emergent vegetation, plenty of epiphytic macroinvertebrates (bugs on plants), and good quality submerged vegetation, which provides cover and protection, as well as food for young fish.

- **Predator Control:**

If bluegills are able to avoid predators and have access to food, they can often grow quite large over time.

- **Bluegill Recruitment:**

In small impoundments, abundant but small largemouth bass populations can exert enough predation pressure to control bluegill recruitment and create low-density bluegill populations with higher size structure.
2. Overfishing and Fisheries Management:

- **Liberal Regulations:**

In the past, panfish regulations have often been liberal, with high bag limits, no size limits, and year-round seasons.

- **Bag Limit Adjustments:**

In response to concerns about overfishing, some fisheries management agencies have reduced bag limits to address the issue of overharvest and declining panfish size.

- **Selective Harvest:**

Some researchers advocate for selective harvest strategies, where anglers are encouraged to keep small panfish to address stunting, but this approach can be challenging as anglers tend to keep the largest fish they can catch.

- **Monitoring Fish Stocks:**

Due to the increasing instances of overfishing, methods of monitoring fish stocks, such as the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), have been developed globally.

- **Sustainable Management:**

Responsible management of fisheries is crucial to ensure that fish populations can be maintained and that fisheries can continue to provide food and livelihoods.
3. Ecological and Economic Impacts:

- **Ecosystem Health:**

Overfishing can disrupt the balance of aquatic ecosystems, as the removal of fish populations can have cascading effects on other species.

- **Human Livelihoods:**

Overfishing can negatively impact the livelihoods of people who rely on fishing for their income, as well as the food

security of communities that depend on fish as a source of protein.

- **Food Security:**

Overfishing can also jeopardize the ability of consumers to access the health benefits offered by fish.

I hope we can get these proposals past ,we are for some reason so behind other states who have got rid of most of the commercial fishing and have adjusted there limits to not be so liberal ,pan fishing's become every bit as popular and important as bass, trout and other species , I hope you seriously have looked at all the data from Vt as well as biological studies done in other states who have better funding to do so , we don't have to re invent the wheel .

Thanks Dennis Thomson sr

From: Dennis Thomson sr <hddennis@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 8:03 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: aldo leopolds visions

Leopold's vision calls for a radical shift in our relationship with nature, where we understand our role within the larger ecosystem and act accordingly, responsibly managing resources to ensure their long-term health and stability, including preventing overfishing.

We need to preserve what we have for future generations and stop over fishing these waters , just in my lifetime I have seen a huge decline in quality fishing and negative effects on our waters , vt may not have this data but plenty of other states do , it really isn't rocket science and we don't need to re invent the wheel , the works been done for us , thanks for all you do

Dennis Thomson

From: Dennis Thomson <jgrizzzz@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 8:12 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: I would like to see Commercial fishing outlawed in our state.

I am writing to support the outlaw of commercial fish in our state.

1- I feel that commercial fish is making honest people dis honest based on bringing money into the sport. I feel that our state does not have proper resources to police commercial fishing and holds a lot of trust into buyers and sellers of fish.

2- if we have commercial fishing I feel we should be able to sell other game such as deer. But I don't see that in the cards which I am happy about.

I feel if for any reason we want to keep commercial fishing there should be an inflated endorsement and bump up the the policing to be sure our resources are being treated with honesty. The anglers also should be held responsible for giving a monthly report on the bags and like anything else in this state they would be required to pay a "income tax" which should also go to fish and wildlife and agency of natural resources. I honestly do not believe that we can keep people honest with the man power we have with game wardens. Until then we should join the rest of the states and keep fishing a sport/ leisure activity not a 2nd job or a career.

I also support the new pan fish regulations.

Thank you,

Dennis Thomson Jr

From: Devon scott <devlomarsc@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 7:23 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed pan fish regulations

As someone who is an avid fisherman in Vermont waters and has been participating in it for the last 25 years, I am able to see first hand the health of our Vermont waters. I do support people using our renewable resources, but at the same time I don't support people bleeding the well dry of these resources. I feel with the current laws it is depleting our fish populations faster then nature can replenish them. I think with the proposed laws that I have just read it will certainly help bring our waters back up to the full of life lakes and ponds we used to enjoy long ago. I would honestly like to see fish selling get banned for at least a couple years to really give it a Jumpstart.

From: dj72020@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 2:36 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Support of Commercial Fishing Ban

Good afternoon,

I am writing to inform you that I am in favor of a commercial fishing ban in Vermont and I support the proposed pan fish regulations which were advertised on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Facebook Site.

Thank you and have a great day.

Daniel Jones

From: Don and Lauri (Munroe-) Hultman <hultmanfamily21@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 8:37 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comments on Proposed Panfish Rule

I'm offering comments on the proposed rule change specific to the sale of panfish in Vermont. First, I was shocked to learn that it is even allowed! I guess I never paid attention to that part of the regulations even though I am an avid angler on Lake Champlain where we have a camp.

The banning of commercial use of fish and wildlife was one of the first actions more than a century ago to stem the loss of species that belong to all Americans. Thus, I fully support your proposed rule change that limits the take and begins to get a handle on the scope and impacts.

I offer this endorsement as a fellow fish and wildlife professional. I spent 30 years with the National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as either staff or manager of national wildlife refuges in Minnesota, Michigan, North Dakota, and Montana. I also served as Regional Refuge Supervisor in Minnesota and as Deputy Chief of Refuges in Washington, D.C. My last assignment was manager of the 240,000-acre Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge that runs for 261 miles through Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois.

While at "Upper Miss," I directed the development of a comprehensive conservation plan that tackled many resource issues that had simmered for 50-plus years. We held 30 public meetings attended by 3,800 people. Since we were proposing many changes to waterfowl hunting, camping, and zoning of conflicting uses like airboats and jet skis, the meetings were large and the audience often angry. We weathered the public and political storm, compromised some, and ended with a plan that better protected the resource and the general public over special interests.

This is a long way around saying that I understand what you go through with proposed changes to "traditional uses" and applaud you for your courage to face opposition and do what is right by the resource, a resource that belongs to all of us, not just a minority that benefits financially.

My one suggestion is to ban panfish sale now. I fear that taking a slower approach to gather more information means you will have to fight this fight again in the future.

Sincerely,

Don Hultman
[redacted], North Hero, VT 05474

From: Drake Blackmun <drakeblackmun24@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 12:18 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial Fishing.

I believe that the commercial fishing regulations set are unnecessary and un lively for game fish in Vermont. I support the proposed pan fishing regulations to be set.

From: Eddie Miller <eddie.miller2515@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 6, 2025 7:05 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comments on Proposed Fishing Regulation Changes

To the members of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board,

My name is Edwin A. Miller of Waterbury, Vermont. I am a lifelong Vermonter and lifelong angler.

I am writing to express my support for ALL of the fishing regulation changes currently under consideration by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board.

I especially want to express my support for the proposed changes to creel limits on panfish. I believe the proposed 50 fish aggregate limit on panfish from inland waters is a very reasonable and important regulation change.
I have been concerned for a while that warmer winters will shift ice fishing pressure away from Lake Champlain on to smaller inland lakes and ponds that freeze more easily, which could have a serious impact on fisheries in those smaller waters.
I am also concerned constantly improving fishing and boating technology is making it easier to catch greater numbers of fish, and could therefore have a serious negative impact on smaller inland waters.
The way I see it, we would be better off implementing these modest creel limits on panfish now in order to maintain quality fishing, than have to resort to draconian regulation changes in the future when we've over fished inland waters.
For those reasons I would encourage the Fish & Wildlife Board to approve the proposed panfish regulation changes.

Thank you to the Fish & Wildlife Board for your service to Vermont's hunting and fishing community.

Sincerely,

Edwin Miller
Waterbury, VT

From: Evan Lethbridge <constructionwork.el@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 4:29 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

I support the changes !

From: Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds <vtlakesandponds@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 3:25 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Cc: Shortsleeve, Andrea; ANR - FW Board Caledonia
Subject: Letter of Support Proposed Commercial Angling Rules
Attachments: Letter of Support F&W Commercial Fishing Regs 20250407.docx

Attached please find a letter from the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds supporting the proposed new commercial amgling rules. We believe these rules will provide better protection for the aquatic habitat and fish populations of the state's inland lakes.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Pat Suozzi
President
Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds

The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds, Inc.
P.O. Box 766
Montpelier, VT 05601
www.vermontlakes.org

April 7, 2025

Andrea Shortsleeve
Commissioner
Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620

Dear Commissioner Shortsleeve,

The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds (FOVLAP) is one of Vermont's oldest nonprofit organizations dedicated to promoting water quality. From its inception in 1972 and evolution into a statewide organization in 2001, we have been committed to fostering and maintaining environmental quality standards and preserving Vermont lakes, ponds, watersheds, and aquatic ecosystems.

We were surprised to see the recent data reporting the quantity of fish that is commercially taken from Vermont's lakes and ponds.

Noting the studies on commercial and overfishing in freshwater and inland lakes, we are concerned about population declines, reduction in the average size, declines in genetic diversity, and disruption of the lakes' ecological balance.

At the recent public hearings, recreational anglers voiced their support for the newly proposed regulations.

Based on this information, FOVLAP is submitting this comment in support of the proposed changes to state fishing regulations 10 V.S.A. App § 122, 10 V.S.A. App § 123 and 10 V.S.A. App § 124 to protect panfish in our inland lakes, and to the listing of crappie as a game fish species prohibited for sale. These new regulations will protect and conserve these natural resources, and the ecosystems in which they reside for all Vermonters.

We hope the board will vote to adopt these new regulations.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Pat Suozzi
President

cc: Brad Ferland, Chair, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board

From: Frank Dattilio (via Google Docs) <frankdattilio@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 12:10 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: To Vermont State Fish and Wildlife Board,
Attachments: To Vermont State Fish and Wildlife Board,.docx

Frank Dattilio attached a document

Frank Dattilio (frankdattilio@gmail.com) has attached the following document:

Attached is a comment from Frank Dattilio- North Hero, Vt pertaining to fishing regulations

To Vermont State Fish and Wildlife Board,

To Vermont State Fish and Wildlife Board,

I attended the March 25, 2025 public hearing in St. Albans commented and am following up with more thorough comments.

First of all I want to thank the F&W Board for all they do to help keep Vermont's fish and wildlife laws current and pertinent to the times. As a member of many boards and commissions in my lifetime I understand the time commitments that go along with these things. I want to especially thank the 3 current members who attended the public meeting in St. Albans. That being said I would like more Board members to attend public meetings especially when the meetings pertain to statewide issues.

To give my comments some perspective I will share who I am and some of the life experiences I have. I am a native Vermonter age 76 and have hunted and fished all my life starting at an early age. I came from a sporting family and was taught early on how to follow the laws which are designed to keep our fish and wildlife in balance. I have served as a President and Board of Director on The Central Vermont Chapter of Trout Unlimited. In 1980 I successfully passed my U.S.C.G. Captains license and helped to form the Lake Champlain Charter Captains Association. I enjoyed several years of guiding on Lake Champlain. Later in life after retirement from my 34 year management career with Verizon I transitioned to just sport and panfishing. I am quite active on Lake Champlain and normally am out on the ice or open water in my boat around 180 days each year.

My first comment pertains to the proposed crappie sale regulation. I mentioned I was fishing pre Crappie limits and from my experience we have just as many today as we had back then. I feel that particular species of fish is doing well and is widespread from one end of Lake Champlain to the other. If anything I feel we are catching bigger fish today than ever before. It is clear to me from the information presented at the meeting that there is a bias within the Department and Board pertaining to the commercial sale of fish. Crappie due to their high market value seems to be the low hanging fruit to target as a first step to limit the sale of fish. First of all it has a biologically based limit and it is a sustainable natural resource native to Champlain. I understand our Wardens feel that due to the value it encourages people to catch more than their limits. The answer to that problem plays right on top of our Warden Service to do their jobs and enforce the laws which were formed by our biologists. To take the sale of Crappie away as the answer to a small percentage of over fishing is short sighted at best. I am out there and catch a lot of crappie especially in spring and fall. I have called wardens when I see something wrong and from my experience can state that the violations on crappie are very minimal and a vast percentage of anglers follow the rules. Most of the regular guys out there use counting clickers to keep track so an inadvertent error doesn’t happen. I'm sure you understand it is easy to lose track. I usually start out my crappie season filleting most of what I catch until my wife says that's enough fish for the freezer. From that point on I normally sell them. On average a limit of Crappie on Champlain can weigh anywhere from 15 pounds to 25 pounds depending on size. With crappie fishing there are far more bad days than good. Most of the commercial guys don’t target them for that reason and go out to catch perch, sunfish, bluegills and get a few crappie as an unintended catch. The crappies that are sold go to feed people though various markets in the big cities. They go to market with a fluctuating price that is dependent on supply and demand so the broker never knows if he can get his money out of

them. People can only eat so many fish so if the sale of crappie is prohibited very few will actually be caught which in itself could have some negative biological ramifications. The issue of a commercial fishing endorsement with associated data reporting is a bad idea. First of all, the commercial guys are diminishing in numbers as time goes on. In the past there were hundreds out there and now most days you can count them on 2 hands. There are people like myself who fish most days when the weather is OK and others who rarely get to go out either because of their jobs or other commitments. Casual fishermen data wouldn't be useful and putting that responsibility on the active guys would not be taken well. All the data on commercial sales rests with the buyers and all licensed fish buyers have to report those figures to the Department. I understand from talking to the buyers that the Department doesn't believe the numbers provided by the buyers. I can say with 100 percent certainty that they account for every pound of fish that comes into their shop from fishermen. Buyers like Hog Island then sell the fish that they bought to the main broker which is Rays Seafood. When Ray's buys fish from fishermen at their shop they report those numbers. When Hog Island buys fish from fishermen in their shop they report those numbers. Each buyer reports what came into their shop from fishermen. The data which the department gets is very accurate but it seems like they want to put an unneeded burden on the fishermen. My suggestion is to put out a fishing survey along with license renewals to get a handle on just how many people sold fish if that number is something the Department needs. I'll end with this comment. If commercial fishing is further diminished or cut out entirely, license sales for fishing will plummet. There are many New Yorkers who buy the Vermont license to commercially fish the Inland Sea and Missisquoi Bay areas. In addition, the Canadians who cross the border most days won't be coming down to fish. All across America the various fish and wildlife departments are suffering a declining license sale problem. Vermont is a very small player and can't afford to lose any license sales.

In closing I am quite dismayed that the Board would move these issues to Public Hearing Step 1 based on a small petition signed on social media from what has been mostly an anti hunting/ fishing group many of which were from out of state. I believe this issue came up somewhere around 2017 and the Board in their wisdom tabled it. I'm not sure how our current Board is made up but hope it is composed of all members who have a long history of enjoying what Vermont has to offer through hunting and fishing. The Sporting tax payers of Vermont deserve to have people in the Department and on the Board who are dedicated to biologically manage those natural resources. My hope is the current Board will realize that there are many Vermonters who cherish the rural way of life and the traditional sale of panfish must continue.

Thank You for Your Time,

Frank Dattilio
[redacted]
North Hero, Vermont 05474
Cell- [redacted]

From: Gabe Gries <gabegries@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:07 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed fish rules.

Hello

I am in support of all proposed fish rules, especially those protecting panfish, including no commercial sale of crappie.

Thank you
Sent from my iPhone

From: Garrett Lauzon <glauzon2002@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 7:22 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: S122 Fish Management Rule

Good evening, this email is in regard to the proposed panfish bag limits. I don't believe they need to change as panfish tend to be very prolific breeders and, if not managed properly, can easily become overpopulated. I certainly don't agree that there needs to be a limit on bullheads! This is simply my thoughts on this, take it for what it's worth. If you want to make new rules for commercial fishing, I'm not nessecarily opposed to that, but I don't think any need to be made for recreational fishing.

Sincerely, Garrett Lauzon

From: GRADY THAYER <climbinhigh1@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 4:12 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Vermont state commercial fishing ban/ panfish rules

As a native Vermonter and avid angler I am in favor of banning commercial fishing from all Vermont waters, and in favor the new panfish regulations to help protect our fisheries!

It is evident in almost all bodies of water that panfish need help and regulated better to help grow the populations back for all to enjoy responsibly! As someone who fishes and does so often through the ice and on lake Champlain there is a problem with commercial fishing now and has degraded the waters of large fish and big schools. It is not right to desecrate a fish population for gas and beer money or just for the fun of keeping a lot of fish. The new 25 limit would be a great start as well as banning commercial fishing. The true sportsman of the waters agree that it's blatantly obvious how panfish and perch numbers and size have gone way down in just the past 20 years.
New Hampshire laws have changed for the same exact reason and irs time for Vermont to step up as well and create better regulations for fairness and conservation of our beloved perch and panfish species in this great state. my name is Grady Thayer and live in Montpelier VT originally from Greensboro VT and I am in favor the new panfish regulations that would lower the limit and put a fair limit on bluegill and crappie so that we have fish to enjoy for more than just my lifetime! And the ban of commercial fishing!

Thank you

From: Howard Garcia <howardgarciavt@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 5, 2025 2:44 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed fishing changes

I disagree with the following (I fish 99% of the time on lake Champlain).

Bag limits. Currently for Crappie the limit on Champlain is 25. I know for a fact that hardly any were caught this year as I check daily at Martins General store.

Anglers having to report daily catches:
I sell all my perch at Martins who in turn sells to Rays Seafood, who is the exclusive buyer for northern Vt so they know exactly how many perch sold daily/weekly.

Fish populations in Champlain: Seems you are basing your planned action based on public opinion, which is probably mostly bleeding hearts who hate fishing and hunting. Very few commercial fishermen are willing to post information about their catches to avoid others knowing where to fish. Some say the perch population is decreasing because of us, but have you ever seen how many tons of fish the cormorant ducks eat daily.

Some say the perch population is dwindling. Maybe the schools of them have changed habitat based on fishing pressures. As an x-avid Bass fisherman (I ran my local B.A.S.S. Club for 10 yrs, as well as competed in local, State and National tournaments. Also competed in professional tournaments as a professional angler under the FLW. I know many local fishermen claim the smallmouth populations have dwindled. One reason is many weedbeds have disappeared (zebra muscles?), but I have found that due to increased fishing pressure they now live in 20-50' water versus the 6-10' in years past. Once the professional fishermen came to Champlain in the late 90's and bragged about our lake being one of the best in the US, now we see multiple Pro tournaments per year as well as many nearby state bass clubs hold tournaments here. On any given weekend there are at least 2-3 tournaments per weekend.

Summary: If you want the opinion from fishermen why not send a survey to everyone who purchased a VT Fishing license.

Thank you

From: James Knox <jigman26@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 5:00 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

I would like to see Commercial fishing end, I support the proposed pan fishing regulations. Thank You James Knox Sr

From: James Knox <jimboknox1991@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 3:16 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

I support the Ban commercial fishing
I don't think it's beneficial to the quality of our states fishery!!
We have game wardens and biologist saying it needs to change!!
All of our neighboring states have big quality panfish there's no reason we can't grow 2-1/2 pound crappies and 2 pound perch and 10 plus inch gills more frequently!!
In my opinion the only reason is because too many people are trying to sell every fish they catch and the state isn't regulating or enforcing enough

From: James L <jrepair603@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 10:11 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Pan Fish

I support the new pan fish regulatoins and I support the end of commercial fishing .

James Lee

From: James Smidutz <jsmidutz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 8:11 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing Vt.

I would like to see commercial fishing end in VT. I also support proposed pan fish regulations.

From: Jeremy Ayotte <jayotte2011@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 9:10 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Rule change

"Add panfish bag limits to inland waters of 50 fish in total per day, and no more than 25 of a given species, for bluegill, bullhead, black and white crappie, pumpkinseed, rock bass, white perch and yellow perch (§ 122)."

I do not support this rule change. The reasons why I do not support this are the following . First, bullhead, pumpkinseed, rock bass and white perch should be included in this measure. Secondly, White perch should not be limited in any way. It makes no sense. If the rule was changed to no more than 25 bluegill, black or white crappie and yellow perch each within inland waters I could support that.

"Update the list of seasonally closed spawning waters and expand the spring closure window to protect spawning fish (§ 122 and § 124)."

I support you.

"Require a new Fish Seller's Endorsement for anglers who want to sell panfish. Endorsement holders will be required to report their fish sales so that biologists can better understand commercial sale of fish (§ 123). "

Without funding behind it I would have to say no. I don't think it's fair to the fish and game department to have to continue to add on to its work or without getting funded for it's work. Legislative body would have to set up funding I believe. We're going to do this then you can probably add a few to it so that at least there's some kind of money coming into the agency. Can't get reimbursed for it or so the endorsement for 5-10 bucks and there's no sense to be on this.

"Add black and white crappie to the list of game fish species prohibited for sale and purchase (§ 123)."

I totally agree with it.

"Increase the size of permissible minnow traps to allow anglers to catch larger bait fish (§141)."

No!

"Clarify the rules for transporting wild bait fish between waterbodies to allow for some movement of wild bait fish off certain waterbodies (§ 141). "

Yes.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Ayotte
Fletcher, VT

From: Jeremy Jackson <jjjackson51385@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 10:28 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial Fishing

I Support The purposed Ban on commercial fishing.

From: Jerremy Jones <jerremy.jones@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 6, 2025 10:15 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comment On New Panfish Regulations

Hello Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department,

My name is Jerremy Jones, I live on Lake St. Catherine in Poultney, Vermont.

Until recently, I was not aware that commercial fishing was taking place in Vermont. I was also shocked to see the amount of fish being commercially harvested from our lakes and ponds. So, I read up on the impacts of freshwater commercial fishing, and attended the recent public hearings in Rutland, and online via Teams.

As a weekend angler who had a great time participating in the Master Angler program for the first time this year - and someone who cares deeply about preserving and protecting our lakes and ponds - I support the added panfish protections outlined in the proposed regulations.

I hope the board will vote to adopt these new regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and for the good work of the Department.

Thank you,

- Jerremy Jones

From: Jim Landry <jjwlandry@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 1:22 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing Shanty

I am concerned leaving shanties on the ice until the end of March as weather permits.
I believe end of February would be safer, lesson the last minute mistakes, again weather permitting.

On another subject yet to protect the habitat and our water ways as sportsmen & women are required posting name and phone on shanties and duck blinds, I would like to see docks and especially flotation barrels be required to do the same as for example you cannot drive across Sandbar without seeing a few floating in the spring or after Windstorms during the season. Just a thought/ observation.
Thanks
Jim

From: jimboknox1991@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, February 15, 2025 9:53 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

Over the last 8-10 years I've seen a major decrease in panfish population and especially size I fish bomoseen and lake Champlain from crown point all the way south my cousins and I used to catch a lot of 8-10 bluegill and 11" 15"perch and crappie and I see many boats and people on shore filling coolers and buckets just to make a couple dollars and over the years it's taken a toll on quality and quantity of panfish I don't see big schools of fish like I used to and definitely not catching nearly as many big fish!!
I would love to see commercial fishing END!!
At minimum we need make the bag limit less and increase the size slot. I'd love to take my kids fishing and have them catch as many nice fish as I did when I was a kid Sent from my iPhone

From: Jody White <jodywhite4212@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 7:54 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Public comment on new regulations

I do not have any particular comment, other than to urge the state to follow the recommendations of our fisheries biologists.

In the future, I would be interested in tweaking the bass season for Champlain to have an open season early in the spring and then the current (or similar) catch-and-release season during the spawn.

--
Jody White
[redacted]
lakebomoseen.org
@jodyblanco

From: JOHN JONES <coneflower721@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 10:13 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Selling fish in VT.

Hello,
I am sending this letter to let you know I agree with the changes you want to make to the process of selling fish in VT.

Thank You,
John Jones

From: JOHN LICCARDI <jsliccardi@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 10:19 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish Regs

I fully support the Department's proposed panfish regulations. Overall fishing pressure, commercial fishing and the advent of electronics has caused the populations of Bluegill, Perch and Crappie to visibly decline in our area.
Thank you.
John Liccardi, Rutland
Former Chair, F & W Board, '87 - '93

Sent from my iPad

From: Jonathan Butterfield <sorrygonefishin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 1:57 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jon Butterfield, and I enjoy fishing with my family. We fish the waters of Lake Dunmore, Lake Hortonia, Beaver Pond, Burr Pond, Huff Pond, and Champlain. There has appears to be a shortage of larger perch and crappie.

I would love it to help protect our smaller fish, commercial anglers should be required to report all sales, including how many fish they sell and their size range. I'm thinking that if businesses must track their sales, those making money from our public waters should do the same.

Over-harvesting is damaging our lakes. We have seen anglers who have filled pails with fish, depleting local populations before moving to the next body of water.

I support these new regulations to protect our fisheries and improve data collection on commercial fishing.

Sincerely,
Jon Butterfield

Jon Butterfield

From: JORDAN BRESETTE <jorjori3@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 4:12 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish limits

Good afternoon,
My name is Jordan Bresette I think the new rules you have proposed is what's needed. I have seen the decline of panfish in lakes like fern lake and lake dunmore doe to people over fishing for the purpose of selling them. I think you should add that they have to pay for a separate license for selling fish and pay taxes on the fish they sell. That will help generate more money for the state to help the fish hatcheries. Thank you for your time and making new rules.
Sent from my iPhone

From: Jordan McDowell <jordanmcdowell177@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:57 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: I oppose commercial fishing please

Hello this is Jordan McDowell, Bristol, I strongly support the proposed regulations on crappie and commercial fishing alike. Thank you."

From: Jordan Schroeder <jordanschroeder818@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:51 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: We the people are against the new proposed laws regarding to selling fish & panfish limits

https://chng.it/ZySvQBgvPk

Here is a petition against the proposed rule changes with over 265 signatures and climbing,

Thanks,
Jordan Schroeder

From: Kathy Urffer <kurffer@ctriver.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 5:32 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Cc: Ron Rhodes
Subject: CRC comments on 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 122 and § 123
Attachments: CRCcommentsVTFW_CommercialPanfishRules_4.3.25.pdf

Hello,
Please consider our comments attached on 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 122 and § 123.
Thank you.
Best,
Kathy Urffer

~~~~~~~~~~

Kathy Urffer
She/Her/Hers
Director of Policy and Advocacy/ VT River Steward
Connecticut River Conservancy
PO Box 6219 | Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-258-0413 | www.ctriver.org

Clean Water. Healthy Habitats. Resilient Communities.


~~~~~~~~~~

PO Box 6219, Brattleboro, VT 05302 - 802-258-0413 - ctriver.org
Connecticut River Conservancy

April 3, 2025

VT Department of Fish and Wildlife
1 National Life Drive
Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3702

Via email: ANR.FWPublicComment@vermont.gov

To Whom it May Concern:

The Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) restores and advocates for clean water, healthy habitats, and resilient communities to support a diverse and thriving watershed. Through collaborative partnerships in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, CRC leads and supports science-based efforts for natural and life-filled rivers from source to sea.

CRC is writing in support of the changes to 10 V.S.A. Appendix § 122, Fishing Regulations establishing bag limits for PANFISH, defined as Bluegill, Bullhead, Black and White Crappie, Pumpkinseed, Rock Bass, White Perch, Yellow Perch in inland waters and § 123 requiring a valid fishing license, fish seller's endorsement, and reporting for any angler selling fish in the state of Vermont.

CRC is encouraged that these changes will more closely match requirements on New Hampshire waters creating parity between the two states.

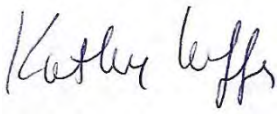
It is my understanding that Bluegill, Bullhead, Black Crappie, Pumpkinseed, Rock Bass, and Yellow Perch are native species. We are already seeing multiple impacts because of stormwater pollution, and excessive flooding and erosion as a result of increased storms. As our weather patterns continue to become more unpredictable, this may adversely affect these and other native fish species over the coming years. It is important to enforce bag limits to protect these native fish species.

CRC has been concerned about local reports of excess catch and commercial sales of panfish from the Connecticut River. CRC is supportive of the addition of § 123 Section 5.5 and 5.7 establishing reporting requirements which will discourage excessive commercial harvest resulting in better yield over time and greater protection of our native freshwater species while supporting increased data collection and better management.

Additionally, it is important to track all commercial fishing in the state, especially given fish consumption advisories on the Hoosic and Connecticut Rivers and Lake Champlain. The fish advisories as presented by the Department of Health currently imply that fish that is purchased is safer than fish caught in those waterbodies.[1] Increased oversight of commercial anglers will help with proper data collection and increased transparency for consumers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Kathy Urffer
Director of Policy and Advocacy/ VT River Steward

[1] See: https://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/recreational-water/mercury-fish

From: Kati Mcphee <kmchurt84@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 1:23 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing!!!

I'm in support of banning commercial fishing in our state waters. And I support the change in ruling when it comes to our pan fish!!!! We need to protect our waters and our pan fish!!!
Sincerely,
Kati McPhee

From: kazers1957@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 3:20 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: supporting pan fish regulations and do away with commercial fishing in vt

To whom this may concern

i would like to see these new pan fish proposals passed and crappie put on no sell fish , and rather see the end of commercial fishing in vt , we have witnessed people taking way more fish then they need and reported some who had over limits in vt and nh and have seen them sell these fish, i dont think our fish or our wild creatures should be for sale .

Thanks Karen

Westminster vt

From: KC's Wellness Adventures w/the Reel Deal <kandcdesigns36@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 10:51 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: #1 Please End Commercial Fishing & #2 we support the proposed pan fish regulations

To whom it may concern,
ANR associates....
#1 We would like to see the commercial fishing/selling of the fish end in the state of Vermont. The fisheries simply can't handle the depletion of fish any longer.
#2 We DO SUPPORT the NEW proposed pan fish regulations!!!

Sincerely & Respectfully,
Carrie & Kevin DeSanto
R & F Skincare Brand Consultant
Wellness Fishing Adventures >
On the Reel Deal
774-230-9428

From: Keith Myers <keith.myers1987@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:59 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish Regs

Hi folks,

As a lifelong Vermont angler, I want to write to let you know I am pleased to see the see the proposed changes to panfish SPECIFICALLY around selling fish.

I am also excited by the trap opening change. I hope these changes are implemented.

Thanks!

Keith Myers
E Montpelier
Sent from my iPhone

From: Keith Myers <keith.myers1987@me.com>
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 12:23 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comment on Fishing Regulations

Good afternoon,

While ice fishing this weekend we had an interesting discussion with a warden that led me to writing this comment.

We were discussing immediate control and in the conversation i discovered that at some point this language was updated to discriminate against those who are visually impaired. The regulation states that a fisherman must be able to visually observe their tip ups, which seems like it would discriminate against a person who was using audible tip up alarms instead of visual flags.

Modern technology has advanced in a way that that tip ups can be both audio and visual now but our regulation seems to have been updated to define control as only visual. This clearly discriminates under ADA against those who are visually impaired, and is short sighted (pun) as the modern audible alert systems alert REAL time, not in 10 minutes when someone looks up. As soon as a flag goes up the alert is generated and the alarm starts going off. I can set the alert angle so so that on a windy day the alarm will trigger even if the flag is being blown to the side and not actually going up.

I would argue that these devices are more immediate control than visual as they don’t have the risks of sun glare blocking view, or the flag blending in with the background, or the flag just flying off as happens from time to time.

Ultimately all technologies have limitations my Bluetooth BlueTipz alarm batteries can die (though they alert before hand by changing their flash sequence) or the receiver batteries could die, but in the same realm my 30 year old 3rd hand tip up may just not go off, or I could set it in error so it cannot trigger, so the risks are the same in any respect weather we trust visual or audible alerts.

I would request the department consider allowing audio alerting devices as immediate control for the regulation and discontinue the discrimination of those with visual impairments.

Regards,
Keith Myers
Sent from my iPhone

From: Keith Myers <keith.myers1987@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 24, 2025 12:35 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Immediate control regulation

Good afternoon,

While ice fishing this weekend we had an interesting discussion with a warden that led me to writing this comment.

We were discussing immediate control and in the conversation i discovered that at some point this language was updated to discriminate against those who are visually impaired. The regulation states that a fisherman must be able to visually observe their tip ups, which seems like it would discriminate against a person who was using audible tip up alarms instead of visual flags.

Modern technology has advanced in a way that that tip ups can be both audio and visual now but our regulation seems to have been updated to define control as only visual. This clearly discriminates under ADA against those who are visually impaired, and is short sighted (pun) as the modern audible alert systems alert REAL time, not in 10 minutes when someone looks up. As soon as a flag goes up the alert is generated and the alarm starts going off. I can set the alert angle so so that on a windy day the alarm will trigger even if the flag is being blown to the side and not actually going up.

I would argue that these devices are more immediate control than visual as they don't have the risks of sun glare blocking view, or the flag blending in with the background, or the flag just flying off as happens from time to time.

Ultimately all technologies have limitations my Bluetooth BlueTipz alarm batteries can die (though they alert before hand by changing their flash sequence) or the receiver batteries could die, but in the same realm my 30 year old 3rd hand tip up may just not go off, or I could set it in error so it cannot trigger, so the risks are the same in any respect weather we trust visual or audible alerts.

I would request the department consider allowing audio alerting devices as immediate control for the regulation as it's both less discriminatory, and actually more in line with the concept that is trying to be accomplished.

Regards,
Keith Myers
Sent from my iPhone

From: Kent Hedberg <khedberg85@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 8:53 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing Regulations update

Good morning,

I am writing to let you know that I fully support the changes that have been introduced to the fishing regulations. I believe better tracking of commercial fishing and adjusting the bag limit is the right path to better manage the fishery for panfish.

From: Kevin Kalahan <kkalahan56@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 2:04 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comment

Regarding changes to our fishing regulations.

1.The sale of crappies or any other species should be prohibited statewide including Lake Champlain.This is a public resource and should not be for sale! I fail to see how a few ipeople should be allowed to profit from something that belongs to all.

2.If commercial fishing does continue then individual reporting of catches must be instated. Persons engaged in the sale of fish must hold a (for fee) commercial permit .All proceeds from those sales must be reported to the I.R.S..

I have have no opinion on any of the other proposed changes.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

M. M. Kalahan

From: Kratzer, Jud
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 3:25 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: FW: panfish limits

From: Ralph Crocker <woodsduffer.44mag@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 2:53 PM
To: Kratzer, Jud <Jud.Kratzer@vermont.gov>
Subject: Re: panfish limits

Hi,
Thank you for getting back to me on this. I don't agree with it but I know that this is the way it is going to be. Waste of time to even try to fight it. I guess I will have to fish a couple more times a week to catch enough for a fish fry!!! Yes you are right Joe's pond perch can run small, but if they are biting you can can a lot of them and they won't be wormy and run 6 to 8 inches and once and awhile you will catch a 9 incher !!! If they're not biting they will be small, usually males, and wormy!!! And then you can have good days where you catch a really nice mess of perch!!! Also I believe the perch out of Joes are some of the best tasting perch in the Kingdom!!! I usually fish for about 2 hours and average anywhere from 20 to 50 perch. I am old school and I dress my perch. I don't fillet them. I have no problem dressing 50 perch a day and can do about a perch a minute!!!Again I thank you for getting back to me.
Best
Ralph
PS
The picture that shows the bigger fish was the last time I fished Joe's. Before all the snow hit us. I do plan to try it again when it gets a little colder and hopefully easier going!!!

On Thu, Feb 27, 2025 at 8:50 AM Kratzer, Jud <Jud.Kratzer@vermont.gov> wrote:

> Hello Mr. Crocker,
>
> Thank you for your question about panfish limits. Our main justification for the proposed rule change to panfish limits is to discourage large scale commercial fishing on inland waters (i.e., waters other than Lake Champlain). Over the last few years, we have been receiving complaints about anglers catching large numbers of panfish on inland waters and selling them. We have received reports that this harvest by commercial anglers is negatively affecting the size structure of these panfish populations. While angler harvest (commercial or otherwise) is unlikely to affect panfish numbers, we do know that it affects size structure (i.e., reducing the proportion of larger panfish). We propose only applying the new panfish limit to waters other than Lake Champlain because we are less concerned about commercial harvest on this large water body.
>
> We conducted an online survey of sunfish anglers in 2022. We found that just over 50% of respondents preferred a sunfish limit of 20 or fewer per day. Obviously, that survey does not necessarily apply to yellow perch anglers, but it indicated to us that at least some panfish anglers wanted lower limits. We assumed that most people don't want to fillet 50 fish a day. If we are wrong about that, please let us know. It would be good to hear from people (other than myself) who are willing to process 50 fish a day for their own personal use.
>
> And yes, I fish Joe's Pond for perch a bit myself. I see very few other people doing it. I can affirm that pond is loaded with perch, but mostly small. We do not expect the proposed limit to improve the size structure at Joe's Pond, but we do expect it to protect the size structure at other waters.

I'm curious, how many perch do you typically harvest during a trip to Joe's Pond and what is the smallest size perch you typically harvest there?

Jud

VERMONT

Jud Kratzer | Fisheries Biologist
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Fish and Wildlife
Fish Division
374 Emerson Falls Rd, Suite 4 | St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
802-371-8687
Jud.Kratzer@vermont.gov
http://vtfishandwildlife.com

From: Palmer, Eric <Eric.Palmer@vermont.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 8:09 PM
To: Kratzer, Jud <Jud.Kratzer@vermont.gov>
Cc: Murphy, Margaret <Margaret.Murphy@vermont.gov>
Subject: Fwd: panfish limits

Hi Jud,

Can you please respond to Mr. Crocker and cc: me?

Thanks,

Eric

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** ANR - FW Board Caledonia <ANR.FWBoardCaledonia@vermont.gov>
> **Date:** February 26, 2025 at 7:39:13 PM EST
> **To:** "Palmer, Eric" <eric.palmer@vermont.gov>
> **Subject: Fw: panfish limits**
>
> Eric, can you respond to this question, thank you.
>
> Get Outlook for iOS
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Ralph Crocker <woodsduffer.44mag@gmail.com>
> **Sent:** Wednesday, February 26, 2025 7:36:22 PM
> **To:** ANR - FW Board Caledonia <ANR.FWBoardCaledonia@vermont.gov>
> **Subject:** panfish limits
>
>

Hi,
I have read where it has been proposed to change the panfish limit from 50 to 25. The article I read did not state the reasoning behind this proposal. Could you explain to me why they are doing this? I am a yellow perch fisherman and I have alway obeyed the laws and have seen the limit go from unlimited, to 20 pounds of fish per day, to 50 fish per day. I have also seen the fishing pressure go from dozens of perch fishermen to at the most 4 or 5 that are dedicated to catching yellow perch so I don't see that overfishing is the problem!!! I will say that I only fish one pond { Joe's } in West Danville.
Thank you for your time.
Ralph Crocker

From: Kratzer, Jud
Sent: Monday, March 3, 2025 8:09 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: FW: pan fish

-----Original Message-----
From: David Langmaid <dlangmaid52@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 2, 2025 4:00 PM
To: Kratzer, Jud <Jud.Kratzer@vermont.gov>
Subject: pan fish

[You don't often get email from dlangmaid52@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Most of my fishing is done on ice at Joes Pond for perch. Generally fish for a couple hours with a bucket, hand auger and homemade jig stick. Average take around 35 5” - 8” perch, most with at least some grubs. My take on these results suggest an overabundance of perch in this body of water. Restricting us to 25 fish in my opinion is the exact opposite of what I feel should happen. This isn’t the philosophy of the deer biologists, how are fish management practices any different

Thank you for your time,

From: Kristine Owens <littlebluesmurf2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 4:58 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

I want to see Commercial fishing end, and I support the proposed pan fishing regulations. Thank you Kristine Owens

From: Kyle Hoskins <rem243j@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 1:27 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

I agree with the changes. Commercial fishing doesn't belong in such a small state like Vermont or anywhere else. It creates greedy people fishing for the wrong reasons and hurts the population and size of fish.
Do the right thing and end it please
Thank you

From: Lisa Graziano <lisagraz65@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 5, 2025 12:44 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Pan fishing regulations

I have fished for 50 years. I ice fish almost everyday. I see people every time I'm out on the lake fishing to sell their fish. Something needs to be done about selling fish. I don't catch fish like I use to.

From: Lloyd McSweeney <mcsweeney356@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 3:13 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Question's about fishing regulations possible changes.

Hi,
I'm an angler and I'm have some questions I. Regards to those fishing regulations..

*Require a new Fish Seller's Endorsement for anglers who want to sell panfish. Endorsement holders will be required to report their fish sales so that biologists can better understand commercial sale of fish (§ 123).
How do I get this endorsement and how much more money is that the angler have to pay.
Is this endorsement the same as the one to catch your minnows.
I have been fishing for over 30 years in Vermont only I'm disabled and I have a hard time finding fishing spots that are accessible for my disability, the ones you do have that are handicapped accessible are all fished out or shoulder to shoulder to fish. I enjoy fishing Vermont waters Mostly Northern Lake Champlain and rivers if you can help me out find fishing spots that are accessible for a person with a disability.
I want to get involved with fish and game do you offer any volunteer programs?
Thank you,
Lloyd

From: Louis Kindt <lmkindt@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 10:23 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed Regulations on Commercial Panfish Sales

Good morning.

My name is Louis Kindt. I am an avid VT fisherman and live in Sheldon VT. I would like to voice my 100% support in eliminating the commercial sale of panfish in VT. We have a great lake system and I see no reason why we should be able to support a better panfish population for the local Vermonters. No reason why we should be getting jumbo perch and crappie like other states like MI.

Thanks.

Louis

From: Lynn <coolwaters1993@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:34 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Pan fishing

I would like to see pan fishing in affect and put an end to Commercial fishing!
I could get a list of People who would like to see the same!!!

Lynn Mont

Vermonter

From: M Moy <mmbigdog_0413@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2025 6:07 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Gamefish

Hello, I support the movement to move crappie into the gamefish category!!

From: Marc Campbell <mdcampbell3000@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 2:19 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: New fishing regulations proposals

Please do not pass the new rules being considered for commercial fishing. I don't believe it will make the fishing any better. It's mostly jealous people that want the new rules. The alewives and the enormous comrant population are the problem.

Thank you
Marc Campbell

From: Marc Campbell <mdcampbell3000@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 8:58 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial angling rule

I would like to say I am not in favor of the new rules proposed. Commercial angling does not affect the number of pan fish in the lake nearly as much as the comrants. The rules are not necessary and are designed to make a small group of vocal people happy. Thank you for considering a no vote.
Marc Campbell

From: Mark Manley <markmanley36@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 12:22 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: 2025 Proposed Fish Regulation Changes

To Whom It May Concern,

With all due respect I am in disagreement with and do not support elements of subsections 122 and 123 of the 2025 proposed fish regulation change. The sale of fish harvested legally by rod and reel has been going on for decades without resistance from outside influences. I have been unable to find any scientific data from the Dept of Fish & Wildlife that would substantiate the need to impose unnecessary regulations on commercial panfishing which leads me to believe that this is a revenue play and a play to placate the small majority with loud voices who are against any form of commercial fishing on Lake Champlain and inland lakes/ponds. If regulations changes are necessary why aren't they targeted on the alewife population which compete with panfish for zooplankton to feed on and retard digestion in panfish as well as trophy fish in the lake. Why aren't weed harvests (e.g. Carry Bay) better regulated so that panfish aren't chopped up and that those that did survive aren't left exposed without cover to predators in the lake? These seem like real threats to the panfish population.

I am 61 years old and have been ice fishing and selling panfish for most of my life. More importantly I have ice fished with older gentlemen who have been ice fishing and selling panfish for longer than I have been alive. They tell stories of a time when catching a bluegill or crappie in Lake Champlain was rare and exciting because there were none in the lake. Over the last decade plus the bluegill population has boomed and fish of all sizes are caught. My recording of catches reveal that bluegills and sunfish are about even in catch and it is rare when a crappie is caught so further restrictions than what is already in place makes no sense. Furthermore, buyers of fish have length regulations in place to ensure that the population is not decimated and for every fish caught within that length limit there are orders of magnitude more caught and released that don't meet the length mark. Responsible fishermen know these limits and respect them as well as the panfish population resource.

To me, before regulatory changes even get proposed and made available for public discussion there needs to be some data collection to first determine if there is even a need. I am sensitive to the fact that Game Warden's are extremely busy but I can not remember the last time I was approached for a panfish creel survey. I believe the last was 10 years ago on Keeler's Bay. I could get behind the Fish Seller's Endorsement however, as is the case with the deer hunting surveys, I would be in the minority when it comes to actually filling it out.

Maybe the Department needs to rewind and engage fishermen on how to collect data to determine whether a problem exists or not instead of proposing non-fact based regulation changes.

Respectfully,

Mark Manley

From: mason alexander <masonalexander2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 3:33 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish propsal

I agree with the proposed regulations.
Mason alexander

From: Mason Martelle <martellemason@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 11:35 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

I want to see commercial fishing end and I support the proposed pan fish regulations

From: Matt Breton <mattbreton@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 8:33 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed Fishing Regulations

To the F&W Board,
I am writing in support of the proposed regulation changes for fishing, including reduced limits on panfish and tightening the regulations on the sale of fish. We should adhere to the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Two of the principles of this model apply here -
Elimination of Markets for Game - Commercialization of wildlife is prohibited, preventing overexploitation and promoting ethical hunting and fishing.
Wildlife Can Only Be Killed for a Legitimate Purpose - Animals can only be killed for legitimate purposes like food, self-defense, or property protection, not for sport or commercial gain.
I support the rest of the changes as well.
Thank you,
Matthew Breton
Charleston, VT

From: Matt Keith <keithmatt257@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 2:46 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

The prohibition of commercial fishing is long overdue. I have been fishing in Vermont for sixty years, and In that time the sizes and numbers of commercially fished species have plummeted. Especially yellow perch and black crappie. It is such an obvious infringement on sound fisheries management that I can't believe it was ever permitted at all. Why do you think it isn't allowed in any other states in the Northeast? I have dozens of fishing buddies and not one of them think it's a good idea. Thank you.

Matt Keith
Rutland

From: Matt Smith <matt_21_smith@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 8:35 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing ban and proposed panfish regulations

Hello,

I am a VT and NH angler and support the end of commercial freshwater fishing. I also support the new regulations that are on the table putting limits on yellow perch and reducing the limits on other panfish species.

Kindest regards,
Matthew Smith

From: Matt Spirowski <spirowski.matt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 3:46 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: New Panfish Regulation Proposal Support

Good Afternoon,

I am writing today to express my support for the newly proposed changes to the state panfishing regulations. I believe that the inclusion of a 25 fish bag limit, the protection of spawning fish through seasonal closures, and the designation of crappie as a game species are all vital steps toward ensuring the sustainability of our local fish populations and promoting a more responsible approach to recreational fishing.

The 25 fish bag limit seems like a reasonable and effective way to help maintain healthy fish populations while still allowing anglers to enjoy the sport. Likewise, protecting spawning fish during critical times of the year is a measure that will undoubtedly contribute to the long-term health of the ecosystem.

I also strongly support the proposal to classify crappie as a game species. This will not only protect crappie by banning sale, but also encourage anglers to respect the species in the same way they would other game fish, ensuring a more balanced and sustainable approach to fishing.

Finally, I would like to express my support for ending commercial fishing on all waters, except for Lake Champlain. Commercial fishing has often resulted in overharvesting and ecosystem disruption, and I believe that transitioning to a recreational-only model will benefit the state’s waters and fish populations in the long run.

Thank you for considering my views. I look forward to hopefully seeing these positive changes implemented and am confident they will have a lasting and beneficial impact on our state's fishing resources.

Thank you,

Matt Spirowski

From: matthew licursi <matthewlicursi@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 1:08 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: COMMERCIAL FISHING

Hello,

Id like to express my concern for the panfish population in Lake Carmi specifically and others as I know commercial fishing is now a huge problem in Vermont. From year to year the decline in perch population on Lake Carmi is NOTICEABLE when ice fishing. Last year they were plentiful and this year they were basically gone with nothing but bass biting… No coincidence as there is less food source for the predators to feed on.

Thank you for taking this into consideration,

Matthew Licursi

From: Michael Jasensky <michael_jasensky@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:34 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial panfishing

To whom it may concern-

I am writing this email to voice concern over the current regulations in VT that allow commercial fishing and selling of panfish. I actually live in CT however for about 10 years now I have been traveling 2+ hours to come up and fish in VT because the panfish fishing (used to be) WAY better than in my local waters of CT. I say used to be because I have personally noticed a huge decline in quality fish!! I am 99% of the time a catch and release fisherman and rarely keep fish to eat, I am after quality trophy class fish but unfortunately that is becoming (mostly has become) a thing of the past. I do believe that the current laws in place that allow people to harvest and sell panfish is the biggest reason. I have personally seen people fill buckets of panfish in the morning, leave, and then come back later and do it all over again in some small bodies of water!!!! I used to buy a full year license for VT just for the ice fishing season and I would come up 6 to 10 times, I would buy food, bait, gas ect supporting local businesses but unfortunately I have not bought a license or traveled to VT to fish in the last 3 years because honestly it's just not worth the time or cost. I'm not a huge political guy and I don't know what proposals are on the table I just know that the selling of panfish needs to stop so that even though it is probably too late for me and my generation hopefully generarions to come can enjoy the awesome fishing that we once did! Thank you for your time.

From: Michael Kuster <michaelkuster1979@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 10:50 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Let's make crappie a game fish

There is nothing better than fishing a body of water knowing you have a real chance at catching a true slab. With people catching crappie just to sell, our chances diminish immensely. Those of us who do it for the love of the sport let the big fish go and only keep a select few eaters. I feel that making crappie a game fish will help preserve these amazing fish for generations to come. My son got hooked on this amazing pastime fishing for crappie. Let's make sure that our future youth can look forward to the same opportunity.

From: Michaela Rathbun <michaela.rae47@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 10:25 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comercial fishing

Comercial fishing needs to end and I support the proposed pan fishing regulations.

Thank you.

From: Ms Mar <mlvt816@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:27 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial Fishing

Martine Limoge, Orwell
I strongly support the proposed regulations on commercial fishing and crappie becoming a game fish. I am exhausted with watching places I fish become victim to commercial fishing and fear for my children.
Thank you,
Martine Limoge

From: Nancy HOLCOMB <holcombn916@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:30 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

I am writing to you to say that I would like tosee commercial fishing end I support the proposed pan fish regulations!!!!
Please make this happen!!

Thank you,
Nancy Holcomb
Wells, Vermont

From: Nate Adam <natesmead@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 1, 2025 12:36 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Public Comment

F&W Board:

1) I am strongly against implementing/changing panfish limits on inland waters.
2) I am opposed to removing Crappie from the commercial fishing list.

Reasons:
-Panfish are prolific
-There are no data to suggest that any of these panfish species are at risk -Commercial fishing is not a “get rich” scheme. Claiming any potential tax revenue or lack thereof, as reason for changing the rules is a red herring. Anyone that sells fish could itemize and easily show a loss. This is a non sequitur.
-15 years ago, before Facebook was popular, there was a small yet vocal group on an ice fishing message board that was crying out against commercial fishing. This current small group is not a new phenomenon. Back then, a few would cry that they had been fishing the same spot for years and now all the fish were gone. They blamed this on commercial fishing. The truth is, fish move around. Their patterns change. If you aren’t willing to adjust and put in the effort, you might end up thinking the fish have disappeared. The fact is, they haven’t. Evidence for this can be found in the years of data from commercial fish harvests in Vermont. The irony is that one of the men advocating for restrictions uses this data to “support” his argument. I contend that the data strongly calls into question the contention that commercial fishing has “damaged” the panfish populations. After all these years, panfish are still prolific. That is a FACT!
-The “evidence” touted by the few that want these changes is purely anecdotal. ie. “We’ve seen a significant decline in the quality”.
-I believe it is extremely UNWISE to implement these proposed RESTRICTIONS, without biological DATA that clearly shows a problem with panfish populations. When we start imposing RESTRICTIONS, in the absence of scientific evidence, based primarily on anecdotes, we are heading down a slippery slope. There are factions within Vermont that make it their life’s mission to eliminate all forms of fishing, hunting, and trapping. Taking this tact, and considering RESTRICTIVE measures, without real scientific evidence, is right out of the playbook of groups such as “POW”. They would love to see these restrictions enacted.

I implore the board to vote NO, as these restrictions will only diminish opportunities for a dwindling number of license holders.

Thank you,
Nathan Smead
Berlin, Vermont

Sent from my iPhone

From: Nicholas Lombardi <nicholaslombardi97@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 1:20 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Lake Carmi

Hello,

I am a recreational fisherman who has been fishing Lake Carmi over the past couple of years.

I heard commercial fishing is allowed there and it makes sense as to why the fishing quality, especially for perch has significantly decreased.

As you know, this will affect the ecosystem of the lake, which I can already see present.

I never keep any of the fish I catch.

Would it be possible to look into possibly ending the commercial fishing there in order to save the lake's fishing quality for all anglers?

Thank you.

Nicholas

From: Octie <octaveflores@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 1:37 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Ending commercial fishing in Vermont

I agree with the panfish changes and ending commercial fishing in Vermont it’s bad practice and hurting the fishing. The size is getting smaller and numbers going down it’s easy to see

From: On The Fish <krazinative7@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 4:21 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Jason stevens, my 2 minute speech from Thursdays meeting

First off I would like to say that I started this petition cause I'm completely against commercial fishing. Secondly I'd like to say that anyone commercial fishing should have a asterisk next to there name because they will say anything they can to keep this side hustle of making money off a PUBLIC resource going.
I can tell you for a fact states with better regulations and management have better fishing. This has been proven over and over again.
Guess what guys going down to the Connecticut river catching way over there limits of bigger fish easier and bringing them to sell them, is because it's New Hampshire rules. They wouldn't be driving to the other end of the state if they didn't already ruin the fisheries on this side.
We all know it's smaller fish and no one wants that.
Vermont does not have enough lakes to support commercial fishing, there's no data NO DATA out there saying that commercial fishing has ever been beneficial to a fishery.
They the commercial guys want data saying it's harming it, look at all the data of commercial fisheries and the decline that happens. There is no reason for guys to be going into small lakes and ponds and cleaning it out.
They do not recover from losing the big fish genetics. You can't tell me taking every fish you can helps any body of water ever.
I've seen plenty of big fish in other states and vermont is not one of them.
We are messing up
Time to change.
These guys in st albans want to keep it on Champlain, good let them. Stay out of the Inland lakes if Champlain is so good. Then why go to ponds and lakes? Why keep moving around to other areas?
You can't keep taking from these places..

Thank you
Jason Stevens

From: On The Fish <krazinative7@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 7:23 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Jason stevens adding to my last comment

I also forgot to mention that adding crappie to game fish will put a end to alot of illegal activities. They have been coming from ny waters to Vermont and it's common knowledge that anyone doing this lies and says they come from Champlain.
I really hope we get with the times and stop selling these fish
Thank you

From: Patrick Bartlett <forestrywildlife@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 7:11 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Ban commercial pan fishing

Dear Sirs,

Please make it illegal to commercial ice fishing for perch and pan fish in Vermont.

Patrick Bartlett,
Woodstock Vermont

From: Paul Gosselin <me_89768@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:41 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: proposed panfish regulations

Hi My name is Paul Gosselin I live in middlebury vt and i agree with the proposed regulations. i am an avid crappie and walleye fisherman and i think we've all seen what over fishing did to the walleye population in lake champlain which i believe may never fully recover. using that as and example the pan fishing all over the state has certainly started going in the wrong direction also. honestly i would like to see even more strict regulations but this could be a great start. the crappie fishing in Minnesota is second to none and they have a daily limit of 5 per day. i know we're not set up quite the same but i agree with anything that helps to avoid decimating the population of panfish. Another argument i have is that the worse pan fishing gets the harder it will be to get the younger generations interested in the sport.

Thanks for your time,
Paul Gosselin

From: Paul@raysseafood.com
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 3:57 PM
To: ANR - FW Board Caledonia; ANR - FW Board Addison; ANR - FW Board Bennington; ANR - FW Board Chittenden; ANR - FW Board Essex; ANR - FW Board Franklin; ANR - FW Board GrandIsle; ANR - FW Board Lamoille; ANR - FW Board Orange; ANR - FW Board Orleans; ANR - FW Board Rutland; ANR - FW Board Washington; ANR - FW Board Windham; ANR - FW Board Windsor; Shortsleeve, Andrea
Cc: Sheryl@raysseafood.com
Subject: Panfish / Commercial fishing

I am Paul Dunkling I operate Ray's Seafood Market Inc .

First I would like to Apologize if I disrupted your meeting last night by speaking when I wasn't supposed to . But when VT Fish & Wildlife dept pays a employee to put on a presentation to the Fish & Wildlife Board I believe that person should only speak to facts and not be guessing If they do not know the answer then say so . Also when there Boss Eric Palmer is sitting there and knows the correct answer he should have been the one to speak up and make the correction not ME but I did not see him doing that he seemed to be more than happy to have the board lied to.

I have buying fish in the State of VT and NY for almost 40 years I have been to many meetings about commercial fishing and limits so it is upsetting when there is misinformation spread around a couple of key points I Noticed last night where. That the F & W Dept did a survey that showed only 15 percent of anglers where concerned about commercial fishing so the went out and did another survey because the result of the first one did not line up with there agenda and worded it differently in hopes of getting the results they wanted. Then there was the Warden that testified to the issues he has had at Charcoal Creek and the 5 span Bridge over Crappie and panfish it has been my experience any time you put people together competing weather it be Hunting / Fishing or any kind of Sports there is usually conflict of some kind . I bet you could ask any Game Warden that has patrolled a Walleye river on opening weekend and they could tell you about conflicts they have delt with. Any time Angler are crowded in small area there are conflicts after all that is what this petition was all about was that Dennis Thompson and a handful of his buddy's where upset because the last 2 years ice has been very limited and it put more pressure on the spots they fish because those where areas with safe ice. I spoke to Him and he told me that the set back on the CT river he likes to fish normally would only have 10 or 12 fishermen on it on any given day and the last 2 years it had 50 or 60 guys on it .Now I also want to remind you that this is the CT river and already falls under NH laws so if anyone fishing there was selling fish then the Wardens should have dealt with them because they where breaking the law . The other thing that really bothers me is the Dept says they don't believe the reports that buyer file with them are accurate we have been reporting this info to them for over 20 years if they don't believe the info we provide then why are they wasting our time to make these reports.
Commercial fishermen as we have been labeled are no different than any other fishermen that fishes any kind of tournament that pays a prize . Why do you think Bass fishing is such a big sport it is because they pay out huge $$$$ in prizes and money . Why are ice fishing tournaments so popular because they pay out $$. If you asked those same Game Wardens how many complaint they deal with a year because of Bass tournaments I bet it out numbers the complaints they get about Crappie fishermen 10 to 1 but the dept keep issuing more and more tournament permits.

I will answer any questions you might have for me if any just shoot a email

From: Peter Benevento <peterrben@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 9:37 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Cc: Diane Larose
Subject: Proposed Rule Change to 10 VSA App & 122 &123
Attachments: Proposed Rule Changes to 10 V.docx

Pursuant to the Public Comment Period, attached please find the endorsement of the Lake Carmi Campers Assoc., Inc. for the proposed rule changes to 10 VSA App & 122 & 123.
Thank you,
Pete Benevento, Pres.

Proposed Rule Changes to 10 V.S.A. App &122 and &123

This response is written on behalf of the Lake Carmi Camper's Association. It is public comment in response to the changes in regulations that the VT Fish & Wildlife regulatory board is proposing relative to fishing in Vermont waters.

It is our understanding that VT is one of the only states in the country that allows the **sale** of wild panfish by **recreational** anglers. Other states only allow **personal consumption** of panfish caught by **recreational** anglers.

The LCCA supports the prohibition of commercial sale of panfish, or at the very least, strict controls relative to the commercial sale of panfish by recreational anglers. With respect to all anglers, the proposed rule for Lake Carmi and other inland waters, whereby anglers would only be allowed to keep 25 of any given species of fish per day with a daily limit of 50 is reasonable to us. We also support the "Fish Seller's Endorsement", which would provide the State with information and accountability relative the number and amounts of fish people are selling if their sale is not prohibited.

In the past, we have seen anglers from New York State and Canada come day after day to oftentimes catch large numbers of panfish fish in our lake. Anecdotally, we were told they were being caught for resale. In addition, the catching of small bait fish for the purpose of resale has taken place on our lake.

One of our concerns is that allowing commercial fishing by recreational anglers incentivizes them to potentially introduce fish species that are readily saleable at high prices and are not native to Lake Carmi.

In addition, we believe our fish population and the overall ecological makeup of our lake needs protection at the fishery level. Proposed changes by the Department of Fish and Wildlife would help manage healthy, balanced fish populations and harvest levels. It would also ensure a healthy, balanced ecosystem and decrease the potential for illegal angler behavior.

We therefore fully support proposed changes to 10 V.S.A. App &122 and &123 which would ultimately impact Lake Carmi and other water bodies in Vermont.

Peter Benevento

President, LCCA

From: Peter J <peterdulude5@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 9:15 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

Yes We need pan fishing limits ,and should have too pay for Endorsement. To sell fish,

From: Protect Our Wildlife VT <info@protectourwildlifevt.org>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 9:38 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: POW SUPPORTS BAN ON SALE OF CRAPPIE | 10 VSA APP §123

Greetings:
While Protect Our Wildlife does not normally get involved with rulemaking regarding fishing, we have heard from a number of anglers who have asked for our support as it relates to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's proposed ban on the commercial sale of crappie. Our supporters cite increasingly hostile behavior by commercial fishermen and too much warden time being taken up monitoring this activity. We were surprised and disappointed to learn that Vermont is one of the few, possibly only two, states that allow hook-and-line anglers to sell panfish they catch!

It appears that some members of the Fish & Wildlife Board are opposed to the ban. They seem to forget that the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation prohibits the commercial sale of wildlife.

From an article in Meateater: "This system incentivizes bad behavior," Good said. "It's not just about crappies. We get a lot of complaints from regular anglers who have a hard time catching bluegills bigger than 5 inches on a pond after the commercial guys hammer it. You can spot commercial anglers a mile away on the ice. They're efficient and highly mobile. They hop hole to hole with their bucket, yanking perch and bluegills as fast as they can. And when crappies gather at backwater culverts in spring, we see fights and arguments when commercial guys run off a father and his kids. They're there to make money, and they act like they get priority."

Protect Our Wildlife supports the Department's proposed ban on the sale of crappie.

Thank you,
Brenna

Brenna Galdenzi
President
Protect Our Wildlife POW
www.ProtectOurWildlifeVT.org

From: Raphael Sacks <raphaelasacks@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 3:24 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: in SUPPORT of bag limits for panfish

I strongly support bag limits for panfish.

As a recreational angler, panfish are the entry point (especially for kids) to a lifetime of enjoying fishing. Anything to improve the levels of panfish/crappie/etc in Vermont waters is a good thing.
Vermont should be a RECREATIONAL fishery - not a commercial one. We have seen how bad it can get when commercial fishing takes over in other waters around the world

Raphael Sacks
South Burlington

From: RATHBUN634@roadrunner.com
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:20 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Updates to State Fishing Regulations

Good afternoon,
I have reviewed your Facebook post regarding proposed updates to state fishing regulations.

I am writing to let you know that I support these changes.

Dawn Mulcahy

From: Rob Harvey <catamountrob@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 10:03 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing regulations

Good morning,
I'm writing to convey my thoughts on your proposed changes to the fishing regs. It's my opinion that these changes are largely unnecessary and are being pushed by a handful of people that are fishing in online panfish tournaments and aren't happy that the fish they catch here aren't large enough to compete.
I fish a considerable amount, both open water and thru the ice and mostly for panfish; crappie, perch and bluegills. We don't have a shortage of any of them as far as I can see.
I don't sell fish and I don't fish in tournaments, I keep some to eat and give some to family and friends and release the rest. I believe that the folks citing reasons for implementing them are listing a few very rare incidents and are trying to make them seem commonplace. The same technique used by the anti-everything crowd.
A couple years ago you simplified our regs, a commendable change in my opinion, there's no reason now to start re-complicating them.
Is there any actual data to show that our limits on panfish are causing a problem?
Any data that shows that the limits placed on yellow perch many years ago made a difference?
Vermonters are allowed to fish commercially on a regular license and that's unusual, but so what?

Thank you for including my comments in your process. Rob Harvey, West Rutland, VT.
Sent from my iPhone

From: Rob Steele <tomsbait@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 2:02 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Comments on Fishing Regulations
Attachments: fish buyers reports and fish selling permit 1.jpg; fish buyers reports and fish selling permit 2.jpg; receipts.jpg

I would like to use this letter to voice my concerns over the proposed fishing regulations that were presented to you and that passed the first vote recently.

My name is Rob Steele, and I own Toms Bait and Tackle in Bomoseen Vermont. The bait shop has been in business since 1973 and has purchased fish since then. My wife and I took over and have run the business for and been a commercial fish buyer since 2005. To the best of my knowledge, I have been the farthest south and most inland fish buyer since at least that time. I believe some of the information presented to you was inaccurate and showed a definite bias by the department towards commercial fishing.

I generally stand with the Fish and Wildlife department's decisions on many things. I am a huge supporter of their Let's go Fishing Program and think that the walleye program has been transformed into something to be proud of. That being said, I have never seen a presentation from the department like the one that was presented to you on the night of the first vote. That presentation had inaccurate information, used assumptions by the department, and painted law-abiding commercial fishermen and commercial buyers in a negative light.

Eric Palmer talked to you about how he believes the number of pounds of fish sold annually is inaccurate due to the fish buyers not reporting the actual number of fish they purchase. As a commercial fish buyer, I am required to obtain a Commercial Fish Buyers Exemption annually from the department. To obtain this, I must fill out a report that is divided up quarterly with the amount (pounds) of fish we purchase. We must provide the poundage of each species we purchase. My report lists the weight of fish I purchased to the hundredth of a pound. For example, in Jan-March of 2024, I purchased 122.25 pounds of 8 inch and up yellow perch. I am not sure how much more accurately we can report. We have had to fill out this form and obtain a Fish Buyers exemption since 1997. If the department believes that fish buyers are presenting false information, why has it taken 28 years for them to want to do something about it? The form which I will attach must be approved by the department on a yearly basis. The form literally states, “This information is required as a condition of approval”. If they believe underreporting is a problem, they could not have approved the buyer's exemption and investigated whatever issue they felt there was. 28 years of what the department views as a problem, and not one investigation, makes no sense to me.

I have attached several receipts that fisherman receive when they sell fish to me. As you can see, all species are weighed
separately and to the nearest .01 pound. These slips are then added up and sent to the state in our quarterly report required to obtain a Fish Buyers Exemption. I am uncertain how requiring anglers to report individually will make the information provided to the state any more accurate than this. Submitting these numbers is already a requirement for a Fish Buyers Exemption for any fish buyer in the state. If the department isn't getting this information or getting what they feel is accurate information, they do not have to issue the buyer an exemption. There is no reason for a law change, they just need to follow through with what's already in pace.

There was talk about an endorsement or a special license to sell fish. This was brought up the last time we went through all this several years ago. At that time, the board voted on a requiring a special permit, but nothing was done by the department at that time. It is actually a rule. I have attached a copy of an email I had with Justin Stedman on this topic.

4611. Sale of Fish
(a)...

(b) A person shall not buy or sell fish caught in Vermont without a permit issued by the Commissioner, as required under the rules of the board...

The groundwork was done years ago on this, the department just never followed through. No permit or endorsement was ever created, even though it is the law. Will that happen again this time, who knows. And how would this work for a minor who needs no fishing license? Are we going to start requiring anglers of any age to purchase a license to get endorsement so they can sell fish. I do have anglers under 15 who currently sell me fish.

It was also discussed that reporting by each individual fish seller is something to consider. There are not many fish buyers in the state. I don't believe there are 20 of us left, but the department could give you those figures. Who would be reviewing all the extra reports from the individual buyers? Does the department have that much free time on their hands where they can go through what could be hundreds of individual reports. Is it worth the department's time to have to file a report for a 10-year-old kid who sold 3.87 pounds of bluegill so he could buy a lure or a pack of worms? I would think as overworked as the department is, a better use of time could be found.

The sale of crappies is another thing that seemed to trigger the department. The proposed ban of the sale of crappies makes no sense to me. It was admitted by the board that none of the proposed regulations were based on scientific data, an issue in itself. The main concern on the sale of crappies seems to be from a law enforcement standpoint. Law enforcement believes people are catching and selling more than their limit in one day. Keeping over you limit of fish is a violation, whether you are selling them or not. Isn't law enforcement's job to enforce regulations? If they believe that someone is breaking the law, isn't their job description to catch the law breaker? How many hours are put into deer jacking a year, and is that same amount put into counting fish and tracking those we believe are criminals? It is no secret that crappies bite the best in the early spring. It is no secret the spots the crappie bite in the early spring. I believe it was mentioned in the meeting about a bridge in North Hero, where they have had issues in the past during this time of year. If this area is such a hot spot for problems, then it shouldn't be that hard to monitor. They mentioned complaints about fights, that seems like something law enforcement is supposed to handle. I believe that fish and wildlife officers have the ability to stop people they feel are violating the law. Maybe pulling over some people that they know have been fishing and counting fish would be a start. If they make a presence known at these locations, the odds of someone breaking the law will significantly decrease. We all know where the police in our towns like to sit, and we make sure we don't speed in those areas, it's the same idea. Banning the sale of crappies because enforcement doesn't want to deal with it is not the way to go. There has been no scientific data or valid argument by the department to support banning the sale of crappies.

I also heard the presenter say multiple times that Vermont is the only state that allows commercial fishing. That is untrue. For example, New York not only allows commercial fishing, but in some regions, allows it with nets. Vermont only allows commercial fishing with a rod and reel. To think that a retired grandfather out with his grandson using a fishing pole to catch and sell a few fish to cover the bait for the day is going to clean out a fish population is outlandish. Commercial fishing is a dying tradition in Vermont. The older generation that enjoyed it is gone, and it doesn't attract many new anglers. To take it away from those few that do isn't the right thing to do.

Now I would like to get into the limit change on panfish. Right off the bat, white perch are an invasive species to all inland lakes. To limit them to 25 fish, and make it count towards your 50 fish total makes no sense. It should be encouraged to catch as many white perch as possible out of the inland lakes, without them counting towards your daily possession limit.

As a state who is trying to increase angler opportunities and attract not only new anglers but anglers from out of state, limits on bluegill and a 50 fish aggregate on panfish is absurd. This was proposed to the board based on no scientific data from our waters. The department has one year of data collected on panfish from several lakes in my area. I question the accuracy of this data, at least on Bomoseen. I don't believe the data recorded is an accurate measure of the panfish in Lake Bomoseen. Nets were placed in 6 to 8 feet of water to catch panfish. The problem was that the lake water warmed up early last year, and at the time the nets were placed and the survey done, the panfish had already moved out to deeper cooler water. Anglers at that time reported catching the majority of their blue gills in 18 feet of water and deeper. I feel very strongly that without data from our own lakes that show that overharvesting of panfish from our local waters is having a negative impact on fish size and population that the limits should be left as

While some may say 25 perch or 25 sunfish is enough for a meal, which very well may be true, it isn't always possible to catch that many. Some anglers may have a tough time catching these species during the hot summer months. These species, like many, tend to move to deeper water mid-summer. Which makes it challenging for some, and almost impossible for anglers offshore. These anglers, much like me, who don't get to fish very often due to the long hours my shop is open, may need to stock up the freezer during the times of year they are easy to catch. Limiting someone who enjoys blue gill/sunfish to 25 a day would be devastating to someone who may only get a day or two a month to actually fish. 25 sunfish fillets most certainly won't last a month for a family who enjoys eating foods they harvest themselves. For someone who is retired, 25 fish a day may not be a big deal as they can go anyway, they want, but for those of us with limited time to fish, it will be a major deterrent. And isn't it a goal of the Fish and Wildlife Department to increase angler opportunities? This is not only decreasing angler opportunity but discouraging it.

The last thing that I will say is probably the most important. A board member, and I am sorry I don't remember his name, brought up the sale of fish being against the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. This seemed to spark a discussion, and in my opinion has the possibility of leading to problems for the department. The short version is that some believe that there should be no monetary gain from our fish and wildlife. The sale of fish should be banned because it doesn't follow that model. If the public, and the department use this as a reason to ban the sale of fish, whether it be one species or all as some would like, you will be opening a door that has the potential for repercussions across all management departments. If selling fish is against the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation because of a gain from wildlife, then wouldn't trapping and selling the pelts also be against it? Although some trap just for nuisance purposes, I believe many still trap and sell the pelts, making a gain off wildlife. Trapping is already under fire from the different groups, and a decision on fish selling could set a precedent. World Wildlife Watch or one of the other groups, I can never keep up with all their names, has already

spoken up in support of the ban of commercial fishing. You can bet that other groups are following this. And you can also bet that they reviewed the meeting tapes and picked up on the fact that it was stated none of this is based on scientific data. You currently have a first vote of yes on regulations that were admitted by Fish and Wildlife staff to be based primarily on social issues and no hard data. If this goes through, a precedent will be set that allows social ideas to hold enough weight to change how we manage our wildlife.

Game suppers, trapping, commercial fishing, the sale of wild game such as bear, moose, and deer during season and two weeks after season, guided fishing trips, fishing tournaments and many other activities all use our wildlife for monetary gains. Any decision made on any one of these will set a direction on all of them. If anyone of these is altered and the North American Wildlife Conservation Model used as reasoning, which was advocated for during the board meeting, you will be setting a precedent that will hold weight in the future and give these wildlife groups an opening to go after the other traditions we all enjoy and that are part of many Vermonters Heritage.

This regulation change isn't the right thing to do. While some adjustments could be made on the commercial fishing side of things, the groundwork is already there for those adjustments.

Rob Steele

Toms Bait and Tackle

Bomoseen Vermont

Division of Warden Service
1 National Life Dr Davis 2 | Montpelier, VT 05620
802-828-5005 office | 802-324-1715 cell | 802-828-1250 fax
justin.stedman@vermont.gov
https://vtfishandwildlife.com/

From: Rob Steele <tomsbait@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 8:14 AM
To: Stedman, Justin <Justin.Stedman@vermont.gov>
Subject: Fish buyers reports and fish selling permit

Good morning Justin,

We had a conversation quite a while ago that stemmed from a conversation about someone selling fish to another anger at the launce etc. You had responded to an email that was shared on Facebook stating anyone selling fish needed a seller's permit. After a bunch of searching, I believe you had found that the law book you have stated a seller's permit is required, but that Fish and Wildlife never followed through and there was no such permit ever created. It has been a long time so I may be missing some of it but I believe that was the overall take away from our conversation.

Last night at the Fish and Wildlife review board meeting there was extensive talk on making a special permit/license, etc to sell fish. Would it be possible for you to look through the laws and see if I am remembering our conversation correctly in the fact that that was already in the laws somewhere but was never followed through with by the commissioner?

Also, I remember the board approving that commercial fish buyers had to submit a quarterly report instead of a yearly report. This hasn't been happening, but I am almost positive that it was approved and again not followed through with. Is there any way you could look up the law and see if it states quarterly reports are required?

I am going back a few years here now, I believe to 2017 on the law change, but I really think that some of this stuff was already in law somewhere, but again I am trying to remember a conversation we had years ago.

Thanks
Rob Steele
Toms Bait and Tackle

Justin Stedman <justin.stedman@vermont.gov> 1/16/2025 9:10 AM

RE: Fish buyers reports and fish selling permit

To Rob Steele <tomsbait@comcast.net>

Morning Rob,

You have a heck of a memory! And you are correct. 4611 states:

> 4611. Sale of fish.
> (a) A person shall not buy or sell a salmon, trout, lake trout, walleye, northern pike, muskellunge, black bass, or any other fish specified by rule by the
> Board taken in this State, or imported from another state or country where sale of such fish is prohibited, except such fish reared in licensed propagation farms
> within the state.
> (b) A person shall not buy or sell fish caught in Vermont without a permit issued by the Commissioner, as required under the rules of the Board and the
> requirements of part 4 of this title. A propagation farm with a valid permit issued under 10 App. V.S.A. § 117 shall not be required to obtain a permit under
> this section. Added 1961, No. 119, 1, eff. May 9, 1961; amended 1981, No. 85, 8.

At present, it is my understanding that the department considers a fishing license as the permit that is mentioned.

As for the fish buyer's reports, it is a quarterly requirement in App 123 section 5.4.

I hope that helps.

I hope to get up to see you this winter as we finally have ice, I just need to find time to get out and about!!

Take care.

Thank you.

Justin

VERMONT

Justin Stedman, Game Warden Colonel | Director
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Fish and Wildlife

002247

Toms Bait Shop

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. | DATE 2/11/25

NAME Bill [redacted]

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

SOLD BY	CASH	C.O.D.	CHARGE	ON. ACCT.	MDSE. RETD.	PAID OUT

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1		
2 4YP	.99 @ 1.00	99
3		
4 SWV	13.93 @ 80	11.14
5		
6		
7	1492 #	
8	1 Tote	
9		12.13
10		Paid
11		Cash
12		
	Champlain	

RECEIVED BY [redacted]

A-3705 T-46240/46250 KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE 01-11

002241

Toms Bait Shop

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. | DATE 1/28/25

NAME Adam [redacted]

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

SOLD BY	CASH	C.O.D.	CHARGE	ON. ACCT.	MDSE. RETD.	PAID OUT

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1		
2 4YP	.45 @ 1.00	45
3		
4 SWV	3.73 @ 80	2.98
5		
6 LBC	.65 @ 240	1.56
7		
8		
9	4.83 #	
10	1 Tote	4.99
11		Paid
12		Cash
	Champlain	

RECEIVED BY [redacted]

A-3705 T-46240/46250 KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE 01-11

002235

Toms Bait Shop

CUSTOMER'S ORDER NO. | DATE 1/10/25

NAME Ed [redacted]

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

SOLD BY	CASH	C.O.D.	CHARGE	ON. ACCT.	MDSE. RETD.	PAID OUT

QUAN.	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1		
2 SW	8.23 @ 80	6.58
3		
4		
5	8.23 #	
6	1 Tote	
7		
8		Paid
9		Cash
10		
11		
12		
	Bomoseen	

RECEIVED BY

A-3705 T-46240/46250 KEEP THIS SLIP FOR REFERENCE 01-11

From: Robert Marinace <robtecndt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 3:11 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing regs

Hello, to whom it may concern, I am glad the Department is asking for public opinion on the state of our wildlife. With that I and many other fishermen feel it is time to no longer allow the selling of smelt to be used for resale as bait. There are many reports of people both working and out of work catching massive amounts of smelt and making a substantial profit. Catching in excess of 200 in a night, sometimes stockpiling literally a thousand of them and selling them for between $18 and $22 a dozen. I don't see how this is sustainable to the smelt population in Vermont. There are already talks about the diminished amounts that are being caught by some. Its one thing if I go catch 20 for a weekend of fishing or to fry some up vs someone out of work living in an ice shanty catching $500 worth of smelt in a night. Overall, I feel the excess number of smelt being caught could have an adverse effect on the smelt population and also the fish that feed on them. I know this is only my opinion and that I am no fishery biologist, but it doesn't seem sustainable for the future of the smelt population. Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: Robert Pratt <robertpratt1992@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 4:50 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Public comment

Hi. I'm reaching out again about the new proposed regulations on pan fish. I agree with the proposals. I am 100% for it. I also want to see selling fish in Vermont state come to a complete stop... I also agree crappie should be made a game fish. Thank you for your time

From: Robert Pratt <robertpratt1992@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 7:08 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

My name is Robert. I'm born and raised in Vermont. There's a lot of concerns for me about the commercial fishing going on in Vermont. People are over harvesting, it's depleted the amount of fish, and definitely the size of the fish, which isn't natural. These are obviously not salt waters were talking about, fresh water lakes/ponds, cannot sustain such a large amount of commercial fishing. That's on top of your average fisherman that enjoys going out and keeping a few to feed his family. In my eyes there is a huge difference between harvesting fish to eat, spending time on the water with friends and family having fun ketching a few fish. Fishing is also a great hobby that many people enjoy. Commercial fishing is keeping everything you ketch within the size permitted no matter what filling buckets/coolers of fish for a profit. That's not a hobby, and our waters cannot sustain it. Most states have already classified the species "Crappie" as a game fish... All our surrounding states have bigger fish than us and better fishing because they do t allow this type of behavior. I think it's unethical to do such a thing if I'm being honest. I agree with the proposals on making "Crappie" a game fish and limitations on how many fish people are allowed to harvest. Something needs to be done about this problem, and I hope commercial fishing in Vermont water will be banned ultimately and we follow suite of our surrounding states. Thanks for your time....

From: Robert Pratt <robertpratt1992@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 4:48 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

Hi, I am in agreement to the new proposed pan fish regulations, and want to see commercial fishing in Vermont terminated. Please take this into consideration. Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: Roy Gangloff <rgnglff59@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 29, 2025 10:35 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed panfish regulations

Hello,
I am a long time angler and avid panfish angler and would like to give my support and appreciation for the proposed changes in regards to pan fish.
These proposals make sense to me from what I have seen and what I deem practical and necessary to protect and even enhance this valuable resource.
With recent developments in fish revealing electronics such as forward facing sonar catch and harvest rates have gone up. There are also more derbies today and additionally pan fish tournaments are becoming popular. Many out of state anglers are coming here from other New England states and farther and saying their panfish numbers and quality have dropped off dramatically. I have also witnessed first hand how rapidly these fish can became scarce when exploited by commercial anglers taking them by the bucket loads. These anglers destroyed the pan fish population on the southern CT River setbacks, broke transport regulations, created major conflicts among other anglers and because of their actions the state of New Hampshire accordingly placed bag limits on panfish. The results of that have been good but after five or so years not quite what it once was.
Let’s be proactive and do what we can to protect ours.
I fully support all proposals put forth by biologists form VTFW in their proposed regulations for taking of pan fish.
Furthermore on the subject of crappie these should be regarded as gamefish as they are in many other states and not subject to sale.
Also anyone selling their catch should be required at the very least to attain a permit and report their catch to VTFW.
If was up to me the permit would require a fee and the catch to be sold be verified by a game warden or other VTFW personnel.
We are lucky to have fisheries biologists who are forward thinking and trying to maintain our resources for the better of all of us!
Sincerely,
Roy Gangloff
West Dummerston VT
Sent from my iPhone

From: ryan jennings <rjhunts06@outlook.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:22 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: crappie regulations

“I’m Ryan Jennings, from Addison, I strongly support the proposed regulations on crappie and commercial fishing alike. Thank you.

From: Ryan Johnson <rdj6412@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 7:42 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

Commercial fishing needs to end I support the new pan fishing regulations that are being processed I believe this will help the fish in all bodies of what in and around Vermont

From: Sam Parker <samanthalynn222@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 7:23 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment

Stop commercial fishing

From: scoombs@sover.net
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 11:46 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing regulations

I favor the restriction of the sale of any VT sport fish. I'd consider allowing the sale of invasive spp, except I fear that that might encourage illegal propagation of invasives in new water bodies.

Seth Coombs
[redacted]
N. Chittenden, VT 05701

From: Scott Smith <smittyscott8@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 22, 2025 4:58 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: New fishing regulations!

Hi my is Scott Smith and would like to give my opinion on any new regulations regarding panfish white perch and yellow perch! I don't support any new changes on limits on panfish perch or white perch! I'm 61 years old and grew up in a fishing family and have lived in Essex Junction my whole life. My father is 89 and has fished his whole life and was part of the original group of guys fishing panfish when everyone else were just fishing perch and Northerns thru the ice. In fact when my dad Richard Smith was young in the 1950's he used to work in the summer for the state of Vermont doing surveys on fish on Lake Champlain from the southern to northern part with Biologist Leonard Halnon. They did a lot especially on bays and also a lot on shallow water along shore lines. In those days they would get several species of fish including sunfish but never would get crappie or blueguills. When dad and his friends started fishing sunfish, if you got a blueguill or crappie it was very rare. Now the lake is loaded with blueguills of all sizes and supports a good population of crappie.The old timers are not comfortable with social media so unfortunately you don't get good data from reliable sources or many of them are no longer with us. Why would we want to put a limit on these fish that now we have a abundance population of? I feel that the State of Vermont gets pressured from a certain group of fishermen and non fishermen and anti who really don't know what they're talking about or have actual data to support it! The biologist don't have any scientific data supporting any changes to regulations on Lake champlain. The sale of fish by legal take of rod and reels have been going on for many years. Additionally people aren't making a living selling fish on Champlain like some think. I enjoy eating them and occasionally sell some if i have extra that helps me pay for fishing supplies that have gone up in price! Why would anyone want a limit on white perch when the lake is loaded with them and they are a non native species of the lake. Lake Champlain is huge and there is a lot of areas that don't even get fished especially in the winter time! Panfish also are in a little deeper water sometimes not just shallow and don't even get fished. I wonder tho if weed harvesting in some of they bays have taking a toll on some of our fish and young fish. Maybe from killing them or taking away there habitat. Also i feel that the statement of more people fishing them are questionable as a lot of the old timers are no longer fishing them because they're no longer with us. These are the guys that should of been giving the input to you not the guys who are just giving false information on social media and having people jumping on board with them without knowing the facts! Social media can very misleading. Hopefully the State keeps the regulations as they're and doesn't put a limit on them. Again i'm agaisnt any new changes! Thanks for you time!

From: services@secure.bnpparibas.net <jaychr2003@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 1:09 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish Fishing Regulations Hearings

Commercial fishing needs to end in VT.
Please make this happen.

Jason Michaud
Fairfax

From: Shayna Lamoria <slamoria021790@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 4:41 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Public comment

Hi, my name is shayna lamoria. I wanted to reach out and give my opinion on the new proposal updates on panfish regulations and sales. I am in agreement to the new proposals I think the daily limit should be a total of 50 fish. No more then 25 of a given species, definitely make crappie a game fish. Our waters cannot sustain commercial fishing. My kids love to fish and i would love for them to be able to keep fishing without the worry of Comercial fisherman cleaning out our waters.

From: Sherry Dubuque <chere1020@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:01 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: New panfish laws

To whom it may concern.

Please don't do this. It's ridiculous to limit panfish. They are not endangered and if you want to help them get rid of those God forsaken cormorants. They are doing way more damage than any fisherman ever did. Start where the problem is. And most of the people who sell their pan fish are older people who are supplementing their income. Or low income people who are supplementing their income. And charging us for an endorsement to say where a commercial fisherman or whatever thing you think you need to do is ridiculous. It's just another way to add a fee to us. anglers are one of the most conscientious group of people because we don't want to lose the Fish population we have. And you know that it's the cormorant it's not us. They have increased by 400% do something with them. They're ruining our islands they're ruining our fishing and now you're gonna pass that on to us Anglers. Just one more way the state can make money on our elderly and low income people. Please don't pass these laws. Thank you, Sherry Dubuque.

From: sokerole <sokerole@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:08 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed panfish regulation

I support the proposed panfish regulations, and we need to see an end to commercial fishing in Vermont.

From: Staci Bickford <stacib7586@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 6:33 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: changes we hope to see on fishing regulations

Good evening,

I AM WRITING THIS E MAIL IN SUPPORT OF GETTING CRAPPIE OFF SELLING LIST AND I AM IN FULL SYPPORT OF PROPOSED REGULATIONS AND LOWERING LIMITS!! LETS MAKE A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER!!!

From: staci milks <eeyore_1769@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 7:53 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: i support the pan fish regulations proposed

I support and agree with all proposed pan fish regulations..

From: Stephanie B <stephxnnnie@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:05 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: End commercial fishing

I would love to see an end of commercial fishing & I fully support to proposed pan fishing regulations

From: sue barnett <sb162pro@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:48 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing end

I want to see commercial fishing end and i support the proposed pan fish regulations, Sue Sent from my iPhone

From: Sue <webs4298@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:01 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proped limits and selling of fish

Hello,

I support reducing the daily limits of fish and curtailing selling of fish. Thank you for asking for public input.

Thank you,

Sue Webster
Georgia Center, VT

From: Theodore Rossi <tedrossi@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 7:55 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Pan Fish Proposed Regulations

As a lifelong fisherman in Vermont I've noticed a great decline in the number of panfish in Lake Dunmore, Lake Bomoseen, and Lake Hortonia. This is especially evident during the winter.

I therefore support the new regulations to help restore these fish populations.

Theodore Rossi

Stowe, VT

From: Thomas, Timothy <tthomas@waynecsd.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:35 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: End Commercial Fishing

As an angler all my life, and now a professional angler, I would like to express my support for ending commercial fishing in VT and enforcing the proposed panfish regulations. This will allow fisheries that are diminished from the commercial harvesting to recover and allow for better fishing for the general public. Regulating the panfish will also help keep fish populations strong, and allow for trophy fish size to develop. As shown in NY, better fisheries increase business for charters, tourism, increase the overall angler participation in the state, and can gain exposure for VT through the new online tournaments as anglers become more competitive against anglers from other states.

Thank you for listening to our concerns!

--
Tim Thomas
Wayne HS
Earth Science Teacher
Boys Varsity Volleyball Coach
Fishing Club Advisor

From: Todd Roscoe <toddroscoe58@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:42 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing

Sent from my iPhone

Hello. My name is Todd Roscoe. I am a resident of Bristol Vermont for 47 years (my entire life). I am sending this e mail to voice I'm not in favor of commercial fishing. I have hunted and fished Vermont sense I was a young man and feel this is an important issue. Over the past 25 years I have seen a decline in the abundance of fish in small ponds from overfishing them and I feel commercial fishing only makes it worse Thank you for taking the time to read.

From: tom . <tom@fabianearthmoving.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2025 5:26 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Panfish

Sent from my iPhone I am very concerned for my 3 grandchildren’s future of fishing , they fish with me about every weekend on lake bomoseen and Champlain, we need to put the brakes on commercial fishing in our state before it’s too late ! Deal free to contact me if necessary

From: TRIP Westcott <jivetw@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 2:31 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: commercial fishing

I have lived on Lake Bomoseen for most of my 80 year life. I wish to comment on the commercial fishing that I have observed .

This form of fishing is not for sport only for financial gain by a few unscrupulous people
It is not regulated or taxed as it is a cash only business
Commercial fishers sell there catch to local bait shops unprocessed, un cleaned or gutted.
A bait shop keeps the catch cold until a whole sale truck picks up the load , usually 2 or 3 times a week
Our local bait shop does not advertise this business and keeps the coolers out of sight of the road and shop
Black crappie brings a higher price than other species
There is no party that prevents multiple trips to the bait shop for weighing
Any and all species can be sold
Some fishers that do a high volume will have a cooler at their house and the wholesale truck will stop for them individually.
The boats are mostly manned by 2 fishers. carrying several ice chests for separating the black crappie from other species
The reduced population of pan fish is visible from around the docks and is discouraging to young people that want to wet a worm or lure.

I believe that stopping this trade is beneficial for all sportsmen present and future
Trip Westcott ,Bomoseen VT jivetw@hotmail.com

From: Tyler Ask <tylerask10@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 8:09 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing

I strongly oppose commercial fishing
Sent from my iPhone

From: Tyler Bartholomew <tylerbartholomew1986@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 8:44 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: The commercial sale of fish in Vermont

This email is in regards to the commercial fishing in Vermont and the impact i have seen over the years to local fisheries. I for one have seen first hand day after day, over harvesting , taking of undersized fish and to top it off, buckets of fish on multiple occasions taken from the pcb ridden hudson river in the border state of ny to be sold to market in Vermont. I have spoken with nys DEC on more than one occasion and have been told they're hands are tied in many ways and to contact officials or make a public statement to raise awareness. Panfishing is on a steep decline to say the least! They're not many rules or regulations regarding the sale of these fish and frankly I feel it should be stopped! I hope Vermont heeds notice before we have an ecological imbalance due to negligence or health related illness due to contaminated fish. Thank you for time, a concerned citizen, Tyler Bartholomew.

From: tyler johnson <tjohnson_032@ymail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 1:52 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: No more commercial fishing

Hello I would like to see commercial fishing i support the proposed pan fish regulations. We need to protect our fisheries for future and present. Thank you Sent from my iPhone

From: Virginia Stevens <virginiastevens90@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 5:30 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Please end commercial fishing

I agree with the proposed changes and feel as though there is no reason to continue commercial fishing on small ponds in vermont. To many people are doing it when they should honestly be working not taking advantage of a public resource. It hurts the quality and size of the fish please change this.
Thank you.

From: Widness, John A <john-widness@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 9:43 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Cc: David Deen (strictlytrout@vermontel.net); Charles Soucy; David Wein; Kevin Stine; Matt Darrow; Paul Gudewicz
Subject: Our TU Connecticut River Valley Chapter's public comments re. proposed changes to the 2025 Fish & Wildlife Regulations
Attachments: CT River responses to regulation changes.pdf

Dear Vermont Fish & Wildlife Staff,

Below (and attached as a PDF) are our TU Chapter Board's responses to your Department's proposed changes to the 2025 Fish & Wildlife Regulations. Please include these as our chapter's public comment on these changes.

Jack Widness

——

President, Trout Unlimited Connecticut River Valley Chapter 450
316 Lake Raponda Road
Wilmington VT 05363
E-mail: john-widness@uiowa.edu
Landline re, phone calls & leaving voice messages: 802-464-8981
Cell phone & texting: 319-331-5628

-

Trout Unlimited Connecticut River Valley Chapter 450 Responses

1. Connecticut River Valley Trout Unlimited supports the quality and continuity of the native brook trout population in **Mud Pond** and thus support the addition of this pond to the "seasonally closed" waters list
2. For the purposes of establishing an attractive fishery in a remote setting in a river stretch essentially devoid of wild trout, Connecticut River Valley TU supports the permanent addition of the **Deerfield River** in the dimensions described as a "trophy fishery."
3. With regards to increasing the minimum harvest size of Lake Trout on **Lake Memphremagog** from 18" to 24," Connecticut River Valley TU supports this regulation change in alignment with Quebec's efforts to restore and maximize the wild lake trout population.
4. Connecticut River Valley Trout Unlimited disagrees with the idea of eliminating the rule that closes **Valley Brook** during the fall spawning season. Our objection is based on concern of how eliminating the "closed spawning season" might impact the current presence of a large established population of fall spawning trout. Page 76 https://anrweb.vt.gov/PubDocs/FWD/FisheriesLibrary/Fisheries/Historic%20Fish%20Documents/F36-R15/F36R15JK03.pdf
5. Connecticut River Valley Trout Unlimited supports establishing March 16 as an earlier stream closing date for vulnerable spring spawning species including Steelhead in several waters including **Blodgett/Tarbox brook**.
6. Connecticut River Valley TU supports the addition of all native brook trout ponds to the "restricted water's" list to protect these populations from invasives and wonder if **South Pond** near Chittenden should be added based on a recent snorkeling survey.
7. Connecticut River Valley TU supports the reduction in harvest limits for panfish from 50 to 25 fish for inland waters.
8. Connecticut River Valley TU does not support the practice of allowing the sale of game or panfish from inland waters and support methods to better monitor and track the commercial sale of fish harvested within Vermont for the purpose of conservation and enforcement of relevant laws.

March 27, 2025

Dear Vermont Fish & Wildlife Staff,

Below are our TU Chapter Board's responses to your Department's proposed changes to the 2025 Fish & Wildlife Regulations. Please include these as our chapter's public comment on these changes.

Jack Widness
——
President, Trout Unlimited Connecticut River Valley Chapter 450
316 Lake Raponda Road
Wilmington VT 05363
E-mail: john-widness@uiowa.edu
Landline re, phone calls & leaving voice messages: 802-464-8981
Cell phone & texting: 319-331-5628

Trout Unlimited Connecticut River Valley Chapter 450 Responses

1. Connecticut River Valley Trout Unlimited supports the quality and continuity of the native brook trout population in **Mud Pond** and thus support the addition of this pond to the "seasonally closed" waters list
2. For the purposes of establishing an attractive fishery in a remote setting in a river stretch essentially devoid of wild trout, Connecticut River Valley TU supports the permanent addition of the **Deerfield River** in the dimensions described as a "trophy fishery."
3. With regards to increasing the minimum harvest size of Lake Trout on **Lake Memphremagog** from 18" to 24," Connecticut River Valley TU supports this regulation change in alignment with Quebec's efforts to restore and maximize the wild lake trout population.
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8. Connecticut River Valley TU does not support the practice of allowing the sale of game or panfish from inland waters and support methods to better monitor and track the commercial sale of fish harvested within Vermont for the purpose of conservation and enforcement of relevant laws.

From: William Perry <wmjperry@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 7:14 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Fishing regulations

To whom it may concern.
I am an avid panfish enthusiast, and would like to see the 50 combined species limit implemented. This would stop the market fishing from straining our fish stocks.

Sincerely
William Perry
Bennington vt

From: Zach Merriam <zachm1996vt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 10:12 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Commercial fishing
Attachments: received_961663542215499.jpeg

Hello! I have been apart of this rule change from the very beginning and I fully support this change. This is absolutely sickening that the state would allow people do do this to our lake and ponds (see attached image) these people are able to profit off our wildlife and give nothing in return my license to fish helps with many F&W projects, events, and goals for our wildlife. This is highly wasteful. I'm 28 and I will dedicate my life to this law change I will be doing this for the rest of my life untill the law is changed.

From: Zachary Bickford <zbickford307@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 6:34 PM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Changes to fishing regs

Good evening,

I AM WRITING THIS E MAIL IN SUPPORT OF GETTING CRAPPIE OFF SELLING LIST AND I AM IN FULL SYPPORT OF PROPOSED REGULATIONS AND LOWERING LIMITS!! LETS MAKE A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER!!!

From: Zachary McNaughton <zachmac@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:29 AM
To: ANR - FW Public Comment
Subject: Proposed Fishing Regulation Changes - I say YES!

I am sending this email in support of the proposed changes to Panfish Limits, re-classifying Crappie as Game Fish, the creation of a seller endorsement, extending closed water for spawning, and increasing the size of minnow traps.

I think we've seen time and time again what commercial fishing can do to a population of fish, especially in smaller more vulnerable waterbodies. Commercial anglers have been wrecking fishing for the rest of us and it's time for change.

I would highly encourage you to move forward with making these proposed changes official.

Additionally, I would like F&W to take a closer look at protecting all of Vermont's Native Species - especially when it comes to shooting. I would like to see all shooting of native species banned.
Thanks again for all the work that you do!

--
Zachary McNaughton
McNaudio Media Solutions LLC
802.659.4867