

## **YELLOW PERCH - Recreational Management Options**

### **What is being considered?**

The Department would like to modify the recreational regulations for yellow perch to improve spawning success and equity between fishing sectors. The Department is considering two approaches and we would like the public to provide feedback on which one is preferred. The changes would apply to all tidal waters and to streams and rivers in nontidal waters.

Option 1: Reduce the creel limit of yellow perch from 10 fish to 5 fish while maintaining the current minimum size limit of 9 inches.

Option 2: Implement a slot limit for yellow perch of 9 to 11 inches and maintain the current creel limit of 10 fish. This means that all fish smaller than 9 inches and larger than 11 inches would have to be released, but fish that are exactly 9 inches or exactly 11 inches could be kept.

### **Why is this change necessary?**

Yellow perch are experiencing a period of low recruitment that has occurred over the last six years. The Department believes action is necessary to improve the chance of spawning success and equitably manage the burden of reduced harvests that have been experienced by the commercial fisheries reduction in quota. Both options are expected to reduce the harvest of larger females, allowing them to spawn.

### **Who will this affect?**

Recreational anglers who fish for yellow perch in tidal waters or nontidal streams and rivers.

### **When would this be effective?**

The Department projects that this change could be effective in the spring of 2026. However, the exact date cannot be determined. The Department will follow our normal [procedures](#) if this concept moves forward.

### **Has this change been discussed with advisory bodies or other interested individuals?**

- The yellow perch workgroup met May 22, 2025 to discuss the status of the fishery and current management measures.
- A verbal summary of the meeting and recommendations from the meeting were provided at the July 2025 meetings of the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission and Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission. We solicited feedback on preferred approaches to reducing the recreational harvest. We heard a comment at SFAC to maintain the season. That comment informed the options we are scoping.
- Scoped with the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission (SFAC) and Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission (TFAC) at their meetings in October 2025. SFAC suggested including nontidal streams and rivers and made a recommendation that Option 1 is best. Not including nontidal streams and rivers was an oversight by the Department and the scoping information was changed to include those areas.