

# 2012-2013 Sport Fishing Rule Change Proposals Affecting Northern Pike

## Northern Pike Classification

**Proposal:** Removes northern pike from being designated as a game fish and retains the designation as a prohibited species.

**Explanation:** Currently, northern pike (*Esox lucius*) in Washington is classified as both a game fish and a prohibited species. Northern pike have expanded greatly in numbers and distribution in the northeast section of Washington. Their position as an apex predator and prolific spawner creates widespread potential for negative impacts to native and other game species. The potential for their negative impacts, both environmentally and economically, cannot be overstated. Having this species classified as both a game fish and a prohibited species is at cross purposes to our goal of controlling their numbers and distribution. Removing the northern pike's designation as a game fish better aligns with the management intent for this species and will not affect the Department's ability to manage this species and promote their harvest. It will also not affect sport angler's ability to fish for, catch and harvest northern pike.

## Pend Oreille Two Pole Fishery (Pend Oreille County)

**Proposal:** Allows for a two-pole endorsement on the Pend Oreille River. This will help increase sport catch and harvest of northern pike and assist with native salmonid recovery.

**Explanation:** This rule change will result in increased opportunity for harvest of northern pike in Box Canyon and Boundary reservoirs via the use of the two-pole endorsement. The increased harvest of northern pike is the result of their abundance increasing dramatically in recent years, resulting in the decreased abundance of native fish and other game fishes in Box Canyon Reservoir..