**Big Fish Lake Northern Pike Slot Limit Update, by Allen Schmitz**

Some of you may be interested in the “New” Northern Pike Zone Regulations going into effect March 1, 2018 and how they affect Big Fish Lake (BFL). I recently contacted Joe Stewig from the DNR Fisheries Office. He said the current Northern Pike slot regulations for BFL were scheduled to be reviewed in the fall of 2015. However, with the push to move forward with the Statewide Zone Pike Regulations in 2015 and 2016, the review of the Northern Pike Regulation was put on the back burner. By state statute the DNR is required to have a public input meeting in order to drop, add, or amend any existing regulation. DNR will be posting a sign at the public access by the fishing opener this year stating that the Northern Pike regulation will be up for review in the fall (Sept. – Oct.) with the possibility that the regulation may change. Then based on the biological data as well as written and emailed comments from the input meeting DNR will make a decision on how to proceed by December 2018. Any changes would then go into effect March 1, 2019.

Joe Stewig stated the new Northern Pike Zone Regulations that go into effect March 1, 2018 **will not** supersede the current regulation. So the 24” – 36” protected slot with a three fish bag limit will still be in effect until the regulation review process is complete.

The current BFL slot limit was created in 2005 with a 10 year trial & review. From preliminary information I've received from DNR it sounds like the current slot limit is not working as intended. Since the current slot limit was created I've heard many negative comments related to the slot limit. This fall's DNR meeting will provide residents an opportunity to provide input on the current slot limit. A Constant Contact email will be sent out by BFLA when a meeting date has been set. We will also be discussing at our annual BFLA meeting in June.