

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS, AGENCY RESPONSE**

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR FINAL REGULATIONS**

Subject matter of the Regulation  
**SPORT FISHING IN THE INLAND DISTRICT**

Proposed amendments to sections 26-112-39, 26-112-43, 26-112-44, 26-112-45, 26-112-46, and 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

**Introduction.** The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is proposing to amend sport fishing regulations concerning angler access in easement areas; fishing methods, creel and possession limits (culling, catch-and-release) and gear types (cast nets); closed fishing seasons, harvest regulations for certain species (trout, Kokanee Salmon), and Trout Management Lakes (one waterbody added). Several minor technical changes, corrections and updates are also made.

Many of these proposals are intended to bring the inland sport fishing regulations into compliance with, or to facilitate, provisions of Public Act 21-12 prohibiting a closed fishing season for trout, while also maintaining and enhancing fishing opportunities throughout the state. These proposed regulations include provisions eliminating the statewide closed fishing season for trout and all closed seasons on specific waterbodies with the exception of several limited closures in specific areas intended to protect fish health. Below is a summary of the proposed changes:

**Section 1.** Updates provisions concerning behavior in easements/leased properties and provisions concerning use of state boat launches to conform with current boating regulations.

**Section 2.** Eliminates the existing definition of closed season as a closure of an area to all fishing; establishes definitions and restrictions for “culling” and “cast nets”; and clarifies that an angler in the inland district may continue to fish (catch-and-release) once they reach their creel/possession limits provided they are not “culling” fish.

**Section 3.** Eliminates the current closed seasons at all lakes and ponds and for all rivers and streams (with exceptions for closures intended to protect fish health).

**Section 4.** Amends trout seasons to conform with provisions of PA 21-12 prohibiting closed seasons for trout; revises statewide trout and kokanee creel limits (establishing a five fish limit for trout and a five fish limit for kokanee); and establishes a catch-and-release only requirement for trout and Kokanee during the proposed open season from March 1 to 6 am on the second Saturday in April, inclusive.

**Section 5.** Updates provisions of several subsections to conform with provisions of sections 2, 3 and 4 concerning seasons, closed areas and trout creel limits; amends trout regulations at East Twin Lake to reflect increases in alewife populations; designates Long Pond as a Trout Management Lake; and creates a new special management area (“tidal waters and tributaries”) for the “rivers and streams open year-round” waterbodies formerly in sec. 26-112-44.

**Section 6.** Eliminates the closed season at Quassapaug Lake; and establishes a prohibition on ice fishing at Factory Pond, Lake Chamberlain, Lake Saltonstall, and the Maltby Lakes.

Additionally, there are several technical changes and updates.

This document provides an explanatory statement for the final regulations concerning sport fishing in the inland district. It includes a summary of the public comments submitted: 1) via the eRegulations system, 2) emailed or mailed directly to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) as provided in the Notice of Intent, or 3) presented during an online public hearing held on March 16, 2022; and the Department’s response to the comments, including any revisions to the proposed regulations. The wording of the proposed regulations as posted on eRegulations and as presented at the public hearing, a statement of purpose, summaries of the comments received, final wording, and explanation for each regulation are presented under the corresponding section.

The Notice of Intent, the full text of the proposed regulations and statement of purpose, a fiscal note and a small business Impact statement were posted to the eRegulations system on February 23, 2022. The public comment period was open until 11:59 pm, April 1, 2022. A notice concerning the proposed regulations including a link directly to the posting on the eRegulations system was posted on the Department’s website. A notice concerning the proposed regulations (including the Notice of Intent) was distributed electronically to: 1) individuals who had requested notification, 2) over twenty outdoor writers and newspaper sports editors, 3) over 60 individuals who have requested to receive updates and news from DEEP’s Fisheries Division, 4) water companies known to offer some fishing access including the South Central Connecticut Water Company (SCCRWA), The Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), Aquarion Water Company, and CT Water Company, and 5) two Connecticut organizations of municipalities, the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (CT COST) and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM). Finally, an email with said notice was sent to over 118,000 2021 fishing license holders and said notice was posted on DEEP’s Fish and Wildlife Facebook page. As required by section 26-113 of the General Statutes, the notice of the public hearing was also published in several newspapers (for this hearing, the Hartford Courant, The Day, and the Waterbury Republican-American), ensuring coverage in every county, sixteen days prior to the hearing.

**General note on public hearing.** A virtual public hearing was held via ZOOM conferencing software on March 16, starting at 6:30 pm. Less than 20 individuals (including DEEP staff) logged into the hearing and only four members of the public spoke. Several attendees later submitted written comments.

**General note on comments submitted.** A total of 92 comments are posted on the eRegulations system for this regulations package (PR2021-038). These comments were submitted by 81 individuals, three entities that manage public drinking water resources (South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, The Metropolitan District Commission, Connecticut Water Company) and one lake authority (Gardner Lake Authority). Four of the individuals and The Metropolitan District Commission all submitted multiple comments and there were two duplicate comments that were post to the system inadvertently. The record of all submitted comments, including the full text, can be found at the end of this document.

**Section 1.** Section 26-112-39 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 26-112-39. Conduct of fishermen**

The following regulations relating to fishing and the behavior and conduct of fishermen apply through the inland district.

- (a) Entrance and exit from streams, lakes and ponds is restricted to rights-of-way designated by posters or when consent has been obtained from the landowner or his agent.
- (b) (1) All fishermen shall keep within a reasonable distance of the banks of streams, lakes and ponds and shall not trespass on lawns or posted property. (2) On stream open to fishing under leases, permanent fishing easements or formal agreements, all fishermen shall keep within ten feet of the stream bank[.] or at such distance as specified under said leases, permanent fishing easements or formal agreements, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.
- (c) Domestic animals, agricultural crops and other property shall not be damaged.
- (d) Swimming and/or picnicking is prohibited on any area when such prohibition is shown by posters erected by the Department or its agent.
- (e) Fishing and/or trespassing is prohibited in fish spawning areas, refuge and closed areas and safety zones, when such prohibition is shown by posters erected by the Department or its agent.
- (f) Fishing is prohibited in any state reservation area when such area is so posted by the Department of Environmental Protection.
- (g) No motor vehicle shall be operated or parked upon any public or private road, parking area, lane, passageway, right-of-way, field or lot when such prohibition is shown by posters erected by the Department or its agent.
- (h) Discarding of bottles, glass, cans, paper, junk, litter and trash is prohibited on any land and water open to fishing or otherwise under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Protection.
- (i) Vehicles using Department-controlled parking areas shall be parked only in authorized places as indicated by posters.
- [(j) At Department-controlled boat launching areas no boat shall be moored or anchored in a manner that will obstruct or interfere with the launching of other boats, and no boat shall be left unattended in the water unless such boat has, in an exposed area, the name and address of the owner of such boat painted or branded thereon or in any legible manner attached thereto.

(k) At Department-controlled boat launching areas on inland lakes and ponds boats left moored or anchored after December fifteenth and before April first shall be subject to impoundment at the expense of the owner and such owner shall be subject to the penalties provided for violations of the provisions of this subsection.]

**Summary of proposal:** This proposal will update provisions concerning conduct of fishermen along streams where access is by leases, fishing easements and formal agreements, and eliminate obsolete provisions concerning mooring of boats at state boat launches.

**Hearing testimony.** Four individuals provided testimony at the public hearing but did not comment on this section.

**Comments:** The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). The agency received five submissions that indicated support or approval to all of the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, none of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations (including this section). No comments were submitted, either in support of or in opposition to this section.

**Final Wording:** As proposed.

**Explanation and response to comments:** Section 26-112-39 (RCSA) regulates angler behavior and conduct when fishing. This section was last amended in 1977 and several provisions required updating. Subsection (b) contains a provision requiring anglers to stay within ten feet of the stream banks on private property that is open to public fishing under terms of a lease, permanent fishing easement or formal agreement. There are now a variety of provisions found in current leases, permanent fishing easements and formal agreements providing for angler access and this proposal updates subsection (b) to explicitly follow the actual provisions of certain leases, easements and agreements.

Subsections (j) and (k) address the use of state boat launches anglers to moor boats and still reflect the practice of allowing individuals to moor their vessels at launches from April 1 to December 15 with certain requirements. This practice has been discontinued for many years and other current department regulations (subsections (j) through (m) of section 26-16-1 RCSA) under the purview of the Boat Division prohibit this practice at state water access areas. This proposal eliminates a conflict between two department regulations and avoids any confusion concerning regulations addressing activities at state boat launches.

**Section 2. Section 26-112-43 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:**

**Sec. 26-112-43 Definitions and restrictions**

As used in sections 26-112-21 to 26-112-48, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:

(a) "Angling" means fishing with hook and line which shall be personally attended, but shall not include ice fishing or snagging or snatching. Not more than three lines, with or without

rods, may be used at one time except in Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trout Parks, Sea-run Trout Streams and Trophy Trout Streams, as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, where no more than two lines may be used at one time. Each line may have any combination of hooks, flies or lures, among which not more than three hooks may be baited.

(b) “Bait” means any animal, bait species as defined in section 26-112-45(d) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, fish eggs, insect or vegetable, or parts thereof, living or dead, except for certain nuisance aquatic invertebrates as provided for in section 26-55-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, used with a hook for the purpose of attracting and catching fish. Any fish legally acquired, except black bass (largemouth and smallmouth), chain pickerel, northern pike, trout, salmon, carp and goldfish may be used as bait, except as provided in section 26-112-48(b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(c) “Bait fishing” means taking or attempting to take bait species, for personal use as bait or food, by use of a bait seine, bait trap, umbrella net, scoop net or by hand.

(d) “Bait seine” means a seine or net which, for the purpose of this regulation, does not exceed fifteen feet in length and four feet in depth and is used for the taking of bait species.

(e) “Bait trap” means a glass, wire or wooden device which does not exceed twenty inches in length and fifteen inches in diameter and is used for the taking of bait species.

(f) “Barbless hook” or “barbless fishhook” means a curved, pointed device, without a barb, used to catch fish and includes single, double or treble hooks provided each point is without a barb and hooks manufactured with a barb if the barb has been bent down to the hook, broken off or otherwise made ineffective.

(g) “Bobbing” means fishing with a ball or mass of worms or other bait attached to a line held in the hand or a line attached to a rod held in the hand to which no hooks are attached.

(h) “Bow and arrow fishing” means fishing by use of a compound bow, longbow, recurved bow or crossbow by which an arrow is propelled. Arrows shall have barbed heads and be attached to the bow, or to a fishing reel attached to the bow. Any fish taken by bow and arrow shall be part of the possession limit of the individual taking such fish and shall not be released to the waters where taken.

(i) “Children’s stream” and “children’s pond” means waters that are set aside in whole or in part as children’s fishing areas when such restriction is indicated by posters. Angling in such areas is restricted to children under sixteen years of age.

(j) “[Closed season” means that period of time during which all fishing is prohibited in the area specified.] “Cast net” means a circular or conical net with a round weighted opening that is cast and then retrieved by hand using lines attached to its margins, and is used to take fish or bait species. The use of cast nets to take fish or bait species in the inland district is prohibited, except that in tidal waters and tributaries, as provided in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, bait species may be taken by cast net.

(k) “Daily creel limit” means the quantity or number of fish of a species or species group that can be taken by an individual during the period from 12:01 a.m. to midnight. In the inland district an individual that has attained their daily creel limit of fish for a species or species group

may continue fishing for said fish provided all fish so taken are immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(l) “Persons with Disabilities Fishing Area” means an area set aside for the exclusive use by persons with physical disabilities when such restriction is indicated by posters.

(m) “Downrigger” means a device, supplemental to a fishing line, used to deploy, via an electric or handpowered winch, reel or spool that projects over the side or stern of a boat and is used as a hoist, main line and terminal weight, one or more fishing lines to a desired depth in the water column.

(n) “Gaff” means a spear or hook, with or without a handle, used for holding or lifting fish. The use of a gaff to land or assist in landing a fish is prohibited in the inland district.

(o) “Hook” or “fishhook” means a curved, pointed device, with or without barb, used to catch fish. Hooks may be single, double or treble and each point shall be considered as a single hook.

(p) “Fishing” or “sport fishing” means taking or attempting to take fish in the inland district, except for commercial purposes, and is restricted to angling, bow and arrow fishing, bobbing, ice fishing, snagging or snatching, spearing, scoop netting, and taking or attempting to take fish by hand.

(q) “Float” or “bobber” means any buoyant object attached to a fishing line. No such float shall be used unless the line is personally attended.

(r) “Fly” means a single or double hook dressed with hair, feathers, tinsel, thread, yarn or similar material to which no bait, spinner, spoon, plug or other device is added.

(s) “Fly fishing” means angling with the use of a fly reel, fly rod, fly line, leader and a fly or flies, except that Tenkara fishing shall also be considered fly fishing. Additional weight may be built into the fly in its construction, as in a weighted nymph, and additional weight may be attached to the leader. The use of strike indicators, as defined in this section, is permitted.

(t) “Hand-held jig” means a rod, jig stick or line held in the hand, used for fishing through the ice.

(u) “Ice fishing” means fishing through the ice with tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs. The following restrictions shall apply to ice fishing:

(1) An individual may use, at one time, tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs in any combination thereof, not exceeding six in the aggregate.

(2) Each line shall be restricted to not more than three baited hooks, with or without attractors, or three ice flies or three artificial lures or any combination thereof, not exceeding three in the aggregate.

(3) All tip-ups, bobbers or floats or similar devices shall have the name and address of the person using the same legibly printed thereon or attached thereto.

(4) No tip-ups, bobbers or floats or similar devices shall be used unless they are personally attended.

(v) “Leadcore line” means a fishing line constructed with a metal core.

(w) “Minimum length” means the smallest total length of a species or species group that may be legally possessed, measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail. No person shall

possess any fish less than the lengths specified and any fish less than the minimum length shall, without avoidable injury, be immediately returned to the water from which taken.

(x) “Possession limit” means the total number of fish of any species or species group that may be legally possessed by one person, either on the person, on the waters of the inland district, or the shores of such waters, or in any type of vehicle. Any fish placed on a stringer, in a container, cooler, live well or similar device, or otherwise not immediately released to the water shall count against the possession limit. An individual that has attained their possession limit of fish for a species or species group may continue to fish for said fish provided all fish so taken are immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

Possession limit in the field shall not exceed the daily creel limit. Any fish in possession shall be intact to the extent that neither the heads nor the tails have been removed but gills and viscera may be removed. Possession limit shall not be construed to restrict the number of legally acquired fish that may be kept in storage in the home or in other storage facilities.

(y) “Scoop net” or “scap net” means a net attached to a handle which, for the purpose of this regulation, shall be not over thirty-six inches across the widest point of the single hoop or have a mesh bag more than thirty-six inches in depth at its deepest point. Such net shall be constructed of flexible mesh material and shall be manually operated by a single individual. The use of any such net constructed of metal mesh or stiff plastic mesh is prohibited.

(z) “Set line” means a line with one or both ends secured to the shore or to a fixed or buoyant object in the water which is used for fishing and is not personally attended. Set lines shall not be used in the inland district.

(aa) “Snagging” or “snatching” means the taking of fish by foul hooking, that is, hooking fish in any part of the body other than inside the mouth. Snagging or snatching is prohibited in all waters in the inland district for all species of fish and any fish so taken shall be released immediately, except, in [streams open to fishing throughout the year] tidal waters and tributaries, as provided in section [26-112-44] 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, menhaden, alewives and blueback (glut) herring may be taken by snagging or snatching.

(bb) “Spearing” means the use of any pointed instrument, with or without barbs, which is propelled by hand. The use of spears is prohibited in lakes and ponds and in streams, or sections of streams, stocked with trout and salmon. Spears may be used only for taking carp, bowfin, tench, suckers, eels and sea lampreys. In the inland district, fish shall not be taken by underwater spear fishing and the use of any type of spear gun in fishing is prohibited.

(cc) “Strike indicator” means a brightly colored, highly visible tab, sleeve or bead or similar material used in fly fishing. Such devices may be attached to the line or leader when used in areas restricted to fly fishing only.

(dd) “Take” or “taking” means killing, capturing or otherwise rendering into possession, any fish or bait species, or attempting to kill, capture or render into possession, or assisting in taking or attempting to take any fish or bait species.

(ee) “Bubble float” means a type of float that is attached to a fishing line or leader and can be filled with water to adjust its buoyancy.

(ff) “Maximum length” means the largest total length of a species or species group that may be legally possessed, measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail. No person shall possess any fish greater than the lengths specified and any fish greater than the maximum length shall, without avoidable injury, be immediately returned to the water from which taken.

(gg) “Tenkara fishing” is a traditional form of sport fishing and means angling with the use of a tenkara rod, tenkara line and a fly or flies, without the use of a reel of any type.

(hh) “Culling” or “high-grading” means discarding or returning a previously retained fish to the water in order to retain a more desirable fish of the same species or species group. In the inland district culling is prohibited except that an individual fishing for black bass in a fishing tournament or derby that has been permitted under the provisions of section 26-112-42 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies may cull provided said individual has not yet attained their possession limit for black bass.

**Summary of proposal:** This proposal eliminates the existing definition of closed season as a closure of an area to all fishing; revises regulations concerning daily creel and possession limits to clarify that an individual may continue to fish after reaching their limits provided no additional fish are retained; establishes a definition of culling (or high grading) and prohibits its practice in most instances; and establishes a definition for cast nets and limit their use to certain tidally influenced rivers including the Connecticut River and its tributaries. Several technical and conforming changes are also made.

**Hearing testimony.** Although not commenting directly on this section, one individual spoke in opposition of elimination of “Opening Day”, two supported the elimination of a closed season, and one additional individual supported it with reservations centering around excess mortality due to poor fish handling skills.

**Comments:** The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). The agency received five submissions that indicated support or approval to all of the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, none of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations (including this section). Eight other commenters expressed support for all provisions of this section, ten additional commenters expressed support specifically for the provision eliminating the closed season definition, two additional commenters expressed support for the provisions establishing definitions and restrictions for “cast net” and “culling” and the provision that clarifies that an angler can continue to fish after reaching their creel/possession limits but is limited to catch-and-release only. One additional individual expressed support only if enforcement was adequate. One individual commented in opposition to the elimination of the closed season in this section and four others expressed opposition to the provision allowing catch-and-release fishing for a species after reaching their creel/possession limits.

**Final Wording:** As proposed except for a revision to subsection (u) and the addition of subsection (ii). Both the revision and the addition are to conform with revisions in section 5 (subsection (d) of 26-112-46, Trout Management Lakes) adding Wononskopomuc Lake to the

list of Trout Management Lakes and modifying certain gear restrictions at Wononskopomuc Lake and East Twin Lake. Subsections (u) and (ii) are as follows:

(u) “Ice fishing” means fishing through the ice with tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs. The following restrictions shall apply to ice fishing:

(1) [An] Except as provided in section 26-112-46(d) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, an individual may use, at one time, tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs in any combination thereof, not exceeding six in the aggregate.

(2) Each line shall be restricted to not more than three baited hooks, with or without attractors, or three ice flies or three artificial lures or any combination thereof, not exceeding three in the aggregate.

(3) All tip-ups, bobbers or floats or similar devices shall have the name and address of the person using the same legibly printed thereon or attached thereto.

(4) No tip-ups, bobbers or floats or similar devices shall be used unless they are personally attended.

(ii) “Inline circle hook” means a fishing hook on which the point and barb are not offset from the plane of the shank and bend of such hook, and such point is perpendicular to such shank.

**Explanation and response to comments:** Public Act 21-12 included a provision that eliminates closed seasons for fishing for trout. Current inland fisheries regulations provide both closed seasons for species and for closed seasons at specific waters where all fishing is prohibited. To conform with this legislation, a concurrent proposal amends section 26-112-45 to eliminate this closed season for fishing for trout. This section provides a definition for area-specific “closed seasons” as a period of time during which all fishing is prohibited in specified areas. “Closed season” as defined and relevant in this section is not species specific as it prohibits all fishing in a specific waterbody. There was one comment in favor of retaining closed seasons, however as it is expected that this type of closure would not apply to trout due to the prohibition on closed seasons for trout found in the public act this definition of “closed season” needs to be eliminated.

The definitions of daily creel limit and possession limit are being revised to clarify that an individual may continue to fish once they have attained their daily creel and possession limits provided any fish of a species or species group caught for which the creel or possession limits have been reached are immediately released without avoidable harm (often termed “catch-and-release fishing”). Although this has generally been the practice, especially at certain special management areas as provided in sec. 26-112-46 where only catch-and-immediate release fishing is allowed and the daily creel and possession limits are zero in these areas, the current wording was ambiguous and could alternately be interpreted as prohibiting fishing for a species or species group once the creel or possession limits are reached and has sometimes led to confused guidance to anglers and inconsistent enforcement of fishing regulations in the inland district. Four commenters expressed opposition to this proposal, generally citing a concern that

the rates of compliance by some anglers would be low, and enforcement difficult. This proposal will remain as proposed. DEEP recognizes the potential for lack of compliance and the difficulties in enforcement, but feels that this change will better define current practice, eliminate any confusion or disagreement in guidance to anglers and in enforcement of regulations, and reflects the goals of current fisheries management to enhance fishing opportunities.

This proposal defines and prohibits “culling”, the practice of releasing or discarding previously caught and retained fish to keep a more desirable (typically a larger one) fish of the same species or species group. As most methods for storing caught fish in the field, such as in a cooler or other container, or on a stringer, can be damaging or eventually deadly to the retained fish, culling leads to excess mortalities and can effectively increase the number of fish removed from the population by an angler to well above their daily creel and possession limits. Additionally, in support of the prohibition on culling a provision is added to the definition of “possession limit” explicitly stating that any fish placed on a stringer, in a container, cooler, live well or similar device, or otherwise not immediately released to the water counts against an individual’s possession limit. This proposal includes an exception to the prohibition on culling is for participants of permitted black bass fishing tournaments wherein caught fish are retained in a live well until the end of the tournament at which time they are measured (typically weighed) and then released back into the water. Due to various measures (aerated and cooled live wells, treated water) protecting the temporarily retained bass mortalities are generally well within acceptable levels, unlike the mortalities induced by retaining in other types of containers such as coolers without water or kept on a stringer. There were no comments in opposition.

Finally, this proposal establishes a definition for “cast net” and allows their use in certain tidally influenced rivers including the Connecticut River and its tributaries, Thames River, lower Housatonic and Naugatuck rivers, lower Salmon River, Mystic River, Niantic River and lower Quinnipiac River. A cast net is a device, which is thrown by hand with the intent to entrap fish, usually bait fish. Currently inland regulations do not include cast nets as an allowable method of take for any fish species or species group, or for bait species, so their use in inland waters is not allowed. However, this is not explicitly stated in the regulations, causing confusion as to whether a cast net can be used to fish for bait fish in the inland district. DEEP expects this proposal to eliminate confusion concerning use of cast nets in the inland district. As a cast net is an effective tool to capture menhaden and other bait species in tidal waters their use will be allowed in a number of tidally influenced waters (see above) while their use remains prohibited in other inland waters, where their use would possibly be more problematic (or used to take other fish besides bait fish). There were no comments in opposition.

### **Section 3. Section 26-112-44 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:**

#### **Sec. 26-112-44. Closed seasons**

(a) Streams. [The closed season for fishing in streams shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, except as provided below:]

Streams are open to fishing throughout the year except as provided in sections 26-112-46 and 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

[(1) Streams open to fishing throughout the year. There shall be no closed season for fishing in the following streams, or portions thereof, as specified:

(A) Coginchaug River, Middletown – downstream from Route 3 bridge to its junction with the Mattabesset River (Sebethe River).

(B) Connecticut River and its coves.

(C) Farmington River – downstream from the outlet of the Rainbow Dam Tailrace Canal to its confluence with the Connecticut River (all fishing is prohibited in the Rainbow Dam Tailrace Canal and in the Farmington River from the Tailrace Canal upstream to Rainbow Dam).

(D) Housatonic River – downstream from the dam on Lake Housatonic (the Derby Dam).

(E) Mattabesset River (Sebethe River), Middletown – downstream from the Route 372 bridge to its junction with the Connecticut River.

(F) Mystic River, Groton and Stonington – downstream from the confluence of Whitfords Brook and Haleys Brook.

(G) Naugatuck River – downstream from the Kinneytown Dam (Seymour) to its confluence with the Housatonic River.

(H) Niantic River, East Lyme and Waterford.

(I) Quinnipiac River – downstream from the highway bridge on Route 5 in North Haven to its junction with New Haven Harbor.

(J) Salmon River, Haddam and East Haddam – downstream from the bridge on Route 151 to its junction with the Connecticut River.

(K) Thames River and its coves, including the Shetucket River downstream from Greenville Dam and the Yantic River downstream of the falls at Indian Leap in Norwich.

(2) Trout Management Areas. There shall be no closed season for fishing in Trout Management Areas listed in section 26-112-46(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies except as provided therein.

(3) In areas where fishing for Atlantic salmon is allowed, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the closed season for Atlantic salmon fishing shall be as provided in section 26-112-45(c)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(4) Wild Trout Management Areas. Except as provided in section 26-112-46(g), the closed season for fishing in Wild Trout Management Areas shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

(5) Sea-run Trout Streams. Except as provided in section 26-112-46(j) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the closed season for fishing in Sea-run Trout Streams shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(b) Lakes and Ponds. There shall be no closed season for fishing lakes and ponds[, except as provided below].

[(1) The closed season for fishing in the following lakes and ponds shall be from midnight on October thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Angus Parks Pond (Eastbury Park Pond), Glastonbury

Beaver Park Lagoon, New Haven

Bicentennial Pond (Mansfield Town Pond), Mansfield

Godfrey Pond, Stonington

Hewitt Flyfishing Pond (Gallup Pond), North Stonington

Mohegan Lake, Fairfield

Pistol Shop Pond, Middlefield

Prospect Park Pond, Prospect

Shenipsit Reservoir, Ellington, Tolland, Vernon

Tollgate Ponds, Greenwich

Wononscopomuc Lake, Salisbury. Fishing hours shall be from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. prevailing time.]

[(2) The closed season for fishing in the following lakes and ponds shall be from midnight on the last day of February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Allen Brook Pond (Wharton Pond), Wallingford Baldwins Pond, Meriden

Ball Pond, New Fairfield

Barber Pond, Bloomfield, Windsor

Bashan Lake, East Haddam

Baummer Pond, Naugatuck

Beach Pond, Voluntown and Rhode Island

Beachdale Pond, Voluntown

Beaver Brook Ponds (Upper and Lower), Windham

Bigelow Pond, Union

Billings Lake, North Stonington

Black Pond, Meriden, Middlefield

Black Rock Flood Control Impoundment, Watertown

Black Rock Pond, Watertown

Blanchard Pond, New Canaan, Wilton

Branford Supply Ponds, Branford

Broad Brook Mill Pond, East Windsor

Brookfield Pond, South Windsor

Cedar Lake, Chester

Clarks Pond, Hamden

Clarktown Pond, Orange

Cobbs Mill Pond, Weston

Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment, Colebrook, and Massachusetts  
Day Pond, Colchester  
Dayton Pond, Wallingford  
Disbrow Pond, New Fairfield  
Dodge Pond, East Lyme  
Enders Pond, Granby  
Factory Pond, Redding, Wilton  
Fitchville Pond, Bozrah  
Fort Shantok Pond, Montville  
Fountain Lake, Seymour, Ansonia  
Freshwater Pond, Enfield  
Gardner Lake, Salem, Montville, Bozrah  
Gay City Park Pond, Hebron  
Gills Pond, Berlin  
Green Falls Reservoir, Voluntown  
Hallville Pond, Preston  
Hancock Brook Flood Control Pool, Plymouth  
Hanover Reservoir, Canterbury, Sprague  
Hewitt Pond (Lower Hewitt Pond), North Stonington Higganum Reservoir, Haddam  
Hop Brook Flood Control Pool, Middlebury Hopeville Pond, Griswold  
Horse Pond, Salem  
Howells Pond, Hartland  
Johnson's Pond, Bolton  
Keney Park Pond, Hartford  
Lafayette Pond, Somers  
Lake Stibbs, Southbury  
Lake Wintergreen, Hamden  
Lantern Hill Pond, Ledyard, North Stonington  
Little Pond, Thompson  
Long Pond, Ledyard, North Stonington  
Lower Storrs Pumping Station Pond, Mansfield  
Mad River Flood Control Impoundment, Winchester  
Mansfield Training School Ponds, Mansfield  
Mashapaug Lake, Union  
McGovern Pond, West Hartford  
Millers Pond, Durham

Millers Pond, Ridgefield  
Moosup Pond, Plainfield  
Mt. Tom Pond, Morris, Litchfield, Washington  
Nells Rock Reservoir, Shelton  
Northfield Brook Flood Control Pool, Litchfield  
Norwich Pond, Lyme  
Pages Millpond, North Branford  
Paine Pond, Ashford  
Pataconk Lake (Russell Jennings Pond), Chester  
Picketts Pond (Osborndale State Park), Derby  
Roseland Lake, Woodstock  
Saint Martha's Pond, Enfield  
Salmon Brook Pond, Glastonbury  
Sawmill Park Pond, Ledyard  
Schreeder Pond (Chatfield Hollow Pond), Killingworth  
Scoville Reservoir, Wolcott  
Shaw Lake (Hayward Lake), East Haddam  
Silvermine Pond, New Canaan  
Somersville Mill Pond, Somers  
Southford Falls Pond, Oxford, Southbury  
Starret Pond (Huntington Park Pond), Redding  
Stillwater Pond, Torrington  
Stratton Brook Park Pond, Simsbury  
Taftville Reservoir, Norwich  
Tankerhoosen Lakes, Vernon  
Tungsten Mine Park Pond, Trumbull  
Twin Brooks Park Pond, Trumbull  
Tyler Pond, Goshen  
Uncas Lake (Hog Pond), Lyme  
Upper Fulton Park Pond, Waterbury  
Valley Falls Pond, Vernon  
Walker Reservoir (East), Vernon  
Wangumbaug Lake (Coventry Lake), Coventry  
Wards Millpond, Branford  
Wauregan Reservoir (Quinebaug Lake), Killingly  
West Branch Reservoir (Hogback), Hartland, Colebrook

West Side Pond, Goshen

Woodruffs Pond, Hamden

Wyassup Lake, North Stonington]

[(3) The closed season for fishing in the following lakes and ponds shall be as specified.

Bunnells Pond (Beardsley Park Pond), Bridgeport. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Great Hollow Pond, Monroe. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Isinglass Reservoir (Far Mill Reservoir), Shelton. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Lake Chamberlain, Bethany. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Lake McDonough (Compensating Reservoir), New Hartford, Barkhamsted. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Fishing hours shall be from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. prevailing time, except opening day when fishing shall start at 6:00 a.m.

Lake Saltonstall, Branford, East Haven. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Maltby Lakes (#1, #2, #3), Orange West Haven. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Mohegan Park Pond (Spaulding Pond), Norwich. From midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Pasture Pond (Quinebaug Valley Trout Hatchery), Plainfield. From midnight on September thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Shelton Reservoir #2, Shelton. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

Simsbury Town Park Ponds, Simsbury. From midnight on June fifteenth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.

West Pequonnock Reservoir, Monroe. From midnight on December thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

[(4) Children's Ponds. The closed season for fishing in the following posted children's ponds shall be from midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, except as specified.

Butternut Pond, East Windsor. Open season 6:00 a.m. second Saturday in April through October thirty-first.

Factory Pond, Salisbury

Gould Manor Pond, Fairfield

Helen Keller School Pond, Easton

Katz Pond, Trumbull

Mill Pond, Newington

Sochrin Pond, Seymour]

[(5) Trout Management Lakes. The closed season for fishing in Trout Management Lakes listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be as specified therein.]

[(6) Boundary Waters. The closed season for fishing in boundary water listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be as specified therein.]

**Summary of Proposal:** This proposal would implement the provision of Public Act 21-12 that eliminated the closed fishing season for trout. The current general statewide closed season for rivers and streams is removed and the closed seasons specified for lakes and ponds are also removed. Use of the term “closed season” in reference to closures of areas to all fishing is eliminated, with any such remaining closures being indicated by the regulation simply stating that the specified area is closed to all fishing for a specified period.

**Hearing testimony.** Although not commenting directly on this section, one individual spoke in opposition of eliminating Opening Day, two supported the elimination of a closed season, and one additional individual supported it with reservations centering around excess mortality during the proposed late winter/early spring catch-and-release period for trout (see sec. 4) due to poor fish handling skills.

**Comments:** The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). The agency received five submissions that indicated support or approval to all of the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, none of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations (including this section). Eighteen other individuals expressed support for the provision of this section eliminating closed seasons at nearly all waterbodies and four individuals voiced opposition to the elimination of closed seasons, and its result, the elimination of the traditional “Opening Day”.

Three water companies offering fishing access to some of their properties, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Company (SCCRWA), The Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), and CT Water Company all commented in opposition to the removal of the closed seasons at waters under their control. Currently the closed seasons on most of their waterbodies begin several months earlier than the more typical end of February closing of most waterbodies in the state with a closed season. All three entities noted both that they did not have sufficient staff available over the winter for management of recreational activities at their waters, and that management was more difficult to conduct during the winter. All were especially concerned with the possibility of individuals being out on the ice and anglers ice fishing, both for public safety and public health concerns at water supply reservoirs. The MDC specifically requested retention of a closed season at Lake McDonough and CT Water Company requested retention

of the closed season on Shenipsit Lake. Both MDC (Lake McDonough) and CT Water Company (Shenipsit Lake) also requested prohibitions on ice fishing (*DEEP notes that in earlier discussions SCCRWA had requested a prohibition on ice fishing at their waters where fishing is allowed and those prohibitions were included in the proposed regulations prior to issuance of the Notice of Intent – see section 6*).

The Gardner Lake Authority also commented in opposition to the removal of the closed season at Gardner Lake, expressing a concern that the removal of the closed season at this lake would impact the duration of the winter drawdown of Gardner Lake. With fishing allowed year-round, would the drawdown be terminated earlier in the winter to accommodate anglers, especially bass fishing tournaments, reducing the effectiveness of the drawdown to reduce invasive aquatic plant populations in the lake.

**Final Wording:** As proposed:

**Explanation and response:** Public Act 21-12 (codified as section 26-112-28b of the Connecticut General Statutes) included a provision that prohibited closed seasons for sport fishing for trout. Current regulations include both a species/species group specific closed season for sport fishing for trout and numerous waterbody-specific closed seasons where fishing for all species is prohibited. Following consultations with the Office of the Attorney General concerning the interpretation of the provisions of Public Act 21-12 prohibiting closed seasons for trout, it was determined that the provisions of PA 21-12 also applied to the all-species waterbody-specific closed seasons, the one exception being for closures intended to protect fish health and population well-being. This proposal therefore eliminates closed seasons on all lakes and ponds, and all rivers and streams with a few exceptions for closures of areas associated with protecting trout and other fish from undue stress by retaining thermal refuge closure areas in portions of Trout Management Areas, Trophy Trout Streams, the Housatonic River, and the lower Salmon River.

As DEEP is now required to eliminate a closed season for trout it cannot maintain a traditional closed season ending with a first day of trout fishing commonly known as Opening Day. For the same reason, it also cannot maintain closed seasons at water company waterbodies. Any changes to the prohibition on trout fishing would require legislative action, and cannot be accomplished by regulation.

DEEP realizes that Opening Day traditions were important to many trout anglers and suggests that new traditions based on the first spring fishing trip of the year could be developed by individuals, families, and businesses. As for water company waterbodies, as owners/managers of their facilities, they have, and can continue to, manage recreational access at their water bodies and doing so can alleviate their concerns over DEEP's elimination of closed seasons from sport fishing regulations. This can include limiting access in the winter or prohibiting any on-ice activities. In light of concerns expressed by MDC and CT Water Company, DEEP has also revised section 6 of this proposal to include prohibitions on ice fishing at Lake McDonough and Shenipsit Lake (ice fishing prohibitions on certain SCCRWA waters were earlier included in this proposal).

**Section 4. Section 26-112-45 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:**

**Sec. 26-112-45. Species limitations**

(a) Alewives (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*).

(1) Alewives and blueback herring may be taken only by angling or scoop net, except that in [streams open to fishing throughout the year] tidal waters and tributaries, as provided in section [26-112-44] 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, alewives and blueback herring may also be taken by snagging or snatching.

(2) The taking of alewives and blueback herring by scoop net from June sixteenth through March thirty-first, both dates inclusive, is prohibited.

(3) In rivers and streams, the taking of alewives and blueback herring by angling and snagging or snatching from June sixteenth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April is prohibited.

(4) The taking of alewives and blueback herring from the section of Brides Brook, East Lyme, extending from the dam at Brides Pond downstream to Brides Brook Road is prohibited.

(5) Alewives and blueback herring shall not be taken from Saturday 12:00 midnight to Tuesday 12:00 midnight except in lakes and ponds, the main body of the Connecticut River, the main body of the Housatonic River, and the main body of the Thames River including the Shetucket River to the base of the Greenville Dam.

(6) The daily creel limit for alewives and blueback herring shall be twenty-five in the aggregate.

(b) American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) and hickory shad (*Alosa mediocris*).

(1) American shad and hickory shad may be taken only by angling.

(2) The daily creel limit for American shad and hickory shad shall be six fish of both species in the aggregate, except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(3) In all areas of the inland district except for the Connecticut River and those portions of its tributaries [open to fishing throughout the year] designated as tidal waters and tributaries as provided in section [26-112-44(a)(1)] 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the daily creel limit for American shad shall be zero, and all American shad caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of American shad on the waters or on the shores of the inland district, except for the waters and shores of the Connecticut River and those portions of its tributaries [open to fishing throughout the year] designated as tidal waters and tributaries as provided in section [26-112-44(a)(1)] 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, is prohibited.

(4) The open season for taking American shad from the Pawcatuck River, North Stonington-Stonington-Rhode Island, shall be as provided by Rhode Island regulations authorized by section 20-1-12 of the General Laws of Rhode Island.

(c) Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)

(1) The taking of Atlantic salmon is prohibited, except that the Commissioner may, by an annual declaration, allow the taking of Atlantic salmon during a specified period in specified waters as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection shall inform the public of open seasons and angling regulations for Atlantic salmon by annually [issuing a news release] posting notice on the Department of Environmental Protection’s website and social media accounts, posting signs, and by printing notice in the [anglers’] fishing guide.

(2) During any period during which the taking of Atlantic salmon is allowed, the Commissioner may, by declaration, specify the angling methods allowed for the taking of Atlantic salmon.

(3) During any period during which the taking of Atlantic salmon is allowed, the Commissioner may, by declaration, specify the daily creel limit and the minimum length for Atlantic salmon.

(4) The taking of Atlantic salmon in the main stem Connecticut River shall be as provided by regulations of the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission, as authorized by Chapter 494 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(d) Bait species. Bait species include the following species of fish, amphibians, aquatic insects and crustaceans to the exclusion of all other species: golden shiner or “pond shiner” (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*), common shiner (*Luxilus cornutus*), fallfish (*Semotilus corporalis*), creek chub (*Semotilus atromaculatus*), spottail shiner or “river bait” (*Notropis hudsonius*), blacknose dace (*Rhinichthys atratulus*), longnose dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*), pearl dace (*Semotilus margarita*), bluntnose minnow (*Pimephales notatus*), fathead minnow (*Pimephales promelas*), cutlips minnow (*Exoglossum maxillingua*), chub sucker (*Erimyzon oblongus*), white sucker (*Catostomus commersonii*), banded killifish (*Fundulus diaphanus*), mummichug (*Fundulus heteroclitus*), striped killifish (*Fundulus majalis*), tidewater silverside (*Menidia beryllina*), Atlantic silverside (*Menidia menidia*), sand lance or “sand eels” (*Ammodytes* spp.), frogs (except the northern leopard frog, *Rana pipiens*), crayfish (except rusty crayfish, [Orconectes] Faxonius rusticus), perch bugs, helgramites, and mayfly nymphs. Bait species may be taken only for personal use as bait and food, except as provided in section 26-55-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and shall not be sold or offered for sale, except as provided in sections 26-142a-1 to 26-142a-6 inclusive, 26-142a- 12 and 26-142a-15 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(1) Bait species may be taken by bait seine, bait trap, umbrella net, by hand, by scoop net, [and] by angling and by cast net, as provided below:

(A) In all inland waters, except those lakes and ponds where the use of fish (dead or alive) as bait is prohibited, bait species may be taken at any time by bait traps not to exceed twenty inches in length and fifteen inches in diameter and by umbrella nets not to exceed four feet in length by four feet in width.

(B) In all streams bait species may be taken at any time with bait seines not to exceed fifteen feet in length and four feet in depth. Bait seines shall not be used in lakes and ponds, except in those lakes and ponds designated by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

as open to the commercial taking of bait. In such lakes and ponds bait seines not exceeding fifteen feet in length and four feet in width may be used to take bait species at any time of year.

(C) [During the open season for fishing in] In inland waters, when open to fishing, bait species may also be taken by hand, by scoop net and by angling.

(D) In tidal waters and tributaries, as provided in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, bait species may be taken by cast net.

(e) Black bass. Black bass include largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) and smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*).

(1) Black bass may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The daily creel limit for black bass shall be six, except in Boundary Waters and Bass Management Areas as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and except as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(3) There shall be no minimum length for black bass taken in streams, except in the Connecticut River, and its coves, where the minimum length shall be twelve inches. The minimum length for black bass taken in lakes and ponds shall be twelve inches, except in Boundary Waters and Bass Management Areas as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and except as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(f) Common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), bowfin (*Amia calva*), tench (*Tinca tinca*), white suckers (*Catostomus [commersoni] commersonii*), American eels (*Anguilla rostrata*), and sea lampreys (*Petromyzon marinus*).

(1) Common carp, bowfin, tench, suckers, eels and sea lampreys may be taken by angling, bobbing, ice fishing, bow and arrow fishing and spearing, except that, in streams or sections of streams stocked with trout and/or salmon, these species may be taken only by angling or ice fishing. Spearing is prohibited in all lakes and ponds.

(2) The daily creel limit for American eel shall be twenty-five.

(3) The minimum length for American eel shall be nine inches.

(4) The daily creel limit for common carp shall be five, not more than one of which may exceed thirty inches in length, except as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection or in Trophy Carp Waters as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The commissioner may grant an exemption from the daily creel limit or length requirements specified for common carp in this subsection to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 to conduct a fishing tournament or derby provided that all fish caught shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken.

(5) The daily creel limit for common carp taken by bow and arrow fishing shall be twelve, not more than three of which may exceed thirty inches in length, in the following areas: West Thompson Lake, the Thames River and its coves, including the Shetucket River downstream from Greenville Dam and the Yantic River downstream of the falls at Indian Leap in Norwich, the Connecticut River and its coves downstream of the Arrigoni Bridge, the Mattabesset River

(Sebethe River) downstream of Route 3, including the Cromwell Meadows Wildlife Management Area, the Coginchaug River downstream of Route 3, the Quinnipiac River downstream of Route 40 and the Housatonic River downstream of the Derby Dam.

(g) Chain pickerel (*Esox niger*).

(1) Chain pickerel may be taken only by angling or ice fishing.

(2) There shall be no daily creel limit for chain pickerel taken in streams and the daily creel limit for chain pickerel taken in lakes and ponds shall be six, except in Boundary Waters as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(3) There shall be no minimum length for chain pickerel taken in streams and the minimum length for chain pickerel taken in lakes and ponds shall be fifteen inches, except in Boundary Waters as specified in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(h) Northern pike (*Esox lucius*). Northern pike includes tiger muskie, the hybrid of a northern pike and muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*).

(1) Northern pike may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The taking of northern pike from March first through April thirtieth, both dates inclusive, is prohibited in Bantam Lake, Little Pond (Little Bantam Lake), and their tributaries, Litchfield-Morris.

(3) The daily creel limit for northern pike shall be two, except that in Lake Lillinonah the daily creel limit shall be one, and, during the period December first through the last day of February, the daily creel limit for northern pike in Bantam Lake, Little Pond (Little Bantam Lake), and their tributaries, Litchfield-Morris, shall be one.

(4) The minimum length for northern pike shall be twenty-six inches, except that in Lake Lillinonah the minimum length for northern pike shall be thirty-eight inches, in the Connecticut River and its coves the minimum length for northern pike shall be twenty four inches and, during the period December first through the last day of February, the minimum length for northern pike in Bantam Lake, Little Pond (Little Bantam Lake), and their tributaries, Litchfield-Morris, shall be thirty-six inches.

(i) Panfish. Panfish include yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*), white perch (*Morone americana*), calico bass (*Pomoxis* spp.), rock bass (*Ambloplites rupestris*), and all species of sunfish (*Lepomis* spp.) except banded sunfish (*Enneacanthus obesus*). Panfish may be taken only by angling, bobbing and ice fishing.

(j) Smelt (*Osmerus mordax*)

(1) Smelt may be taken in lakes and ponds only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The taking of smelt in rivers and streams is prohibited.

(3) The daily creel limit for smelt taken in lakes and ponds shall be fifty fish.

(k) Striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) regulations governing the taking and possession of striped bass in the inland district shall be as specified in sections 26-159a-2, 26-159a-4, 26-159a-7, and 26-159a- 20 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(l) Sturgeon (*Acipenser* spp.). The taking of sturgeon is prohibited.

(m) Trout and kokanee. Trout and kokanee include brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), kokanee (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), and their hybrids.

(1) Trout and kokanee may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

[(2) The taking of trout and kokanee from March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April is prohibited, except: in boundary waters, Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Sea-run Trout Streams and Trout Management Lakes as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein; in streams open to fishing throughout the year as listed in section 26-112-44 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.]

[(3)] (2) The daily creel [limit] limits for trout and kokanee, except in boundary waters, Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trout Parks, Sea-Run Trout Streams, Trophy Trout Streams and Trout Management Lakes as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein; in tidal waters and tributaries as listed in section 26-112-46 and as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, shall be [eight in the aggregate, not more than five of which may be trout and not more than five may be kokanee except: in boundary waters, Trout Management Areas, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trout Parks, Sea-Run Trout Streams, Trophy Trout Streams and Trout Management Lakes as listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein; in streams open to fishing throughout the year as listed in section 26-112-44 and as specified in section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.] as follows:

(A) During the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be five and the daily creel limit for kokanee shall be five.

(B) During the time period from March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout is zero, the daily creel limit for kokanee is zero, and all trout and kokanee caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout or kokanee in the waters or on the shores of the waters from which taken is prohibited.

(4) The minimum length for lake trout shall be twenty inches.

(5) There shall be no minimum length for trout (except lake trout) and kokanee except:

(A) In Trout Management Lakes, Wild Trout Management Areas, Trophy Trout Streams, Sea-Run Trout Streams and Trout Management Areas listed in section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as specified therein.

(B) In [streams open to fishing throughout the year] tidal waters and tributaries, as provided in section [26-112-44] 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, where the minimum length shall be fifteen inches.

(C) In the following streams, or portions of the streams, where the minimum length of trout shall be nine inches:

Belden Brook, Hartland, Granby- that portion downstream from Fuller Road in Hartland.

Blackledge River, Glastonbury, Marlborough- that portion downstream from Route 94.

Burlington Brook, Burlington- that portion downstream from Covey Road.

Center Brook, Colebrook- that portion downstream from Route 183.

Cherry Brook, Canton- that portion downstream from Route 179.

Colebrook Brook, Winchester, Colebrook.

Dickinson Creek, Colchester, Marlborough- that portion downstream from Route 66.

East Branch Salmon Brook, Granby- that portion downstream from the Connecticut-Massachusetts state line.

East Branch Eightmile River, Salem, East Haddam, Lyme- that portion downstream from Witch Meadow Road in Salem.

East Branch Farmington River, Barkhamsted, New Hartford– that portion downstream from the dam at Lake McDonough.

Eightmile River, East Haddam, Lyme- that portion from Foxtown Road downstream to the dam at Mt. Archer Road.

Farmington River, Farmington, Avon, Simsbury, East Granby, Bloomfield, Windsor- that portion downstream from Route 177.

Fawn Brook, Marlborough, Hebron- that portion downstream from Slocum Road.

Indian Meadow Brook, Winchester.

Jeremy River, Colchester- that portion downstream from Greyville Road.

Judd Brook, Colchester, Hebron- that portion downstream from Old Colchester Road.

Mad River, Norfolk, Winchester- that portion downstream from Grantville Road in Norfolk.

Meadow Brook, Colchester- that portion downstream from Route 16.

Mill Brook, Winchester- that portion downstream from Hannifin Road.

Morgan Brook, Barkhamsted- that portion downstream from the dam on West Hill Pond.

Mountain Brook, Granby- that portion downstream from the Route 20 bridge located between the

Route 20 intersections with Case Street and Enders Road.

Pequabuck River, Plymouth, Bristol, Plainville, Farmington - that portion downstream from Canal Street in Plymouth.

Pine Brook, East Hampton, Haddam- that section downstream from Sexton Road in East Hampton.

Ratlum Brook, Canton, New Hartford- that portion downstream from the confluence with Spruce Brook.

Raymond Brook, Hebron- that portion downstream from Old Colchester Road.

Safstrom Brook, East Hampton- that portion downstream from Tartia Road.

Salmon River, Colchester, East Hampton, East Haddam, Haddam- that portion from the confluence of the Blackledge and Jeremy rivers downstream to Route 151.

Salmon Brook, East Granby, Granby.

Sandy Brook, Colebrook, Norfolk- that portion downstream from the Connecticut-Massachusetts state line.

Still River, Barkhamsted, Colebrook- that portion downstream from the confluence with the Mad River.

West Branch of Fawn Brook, Marlborough, Hebron- that portion downstream from Slocum Road.

West Branch of Salmon Brook, Granby- that portion downstream from Route 179.

(n) Any fish or bait species taken contrary to this section shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(o) Marine finfish. Unless otherwise specified by this section, the species limitations for marine finfish taken by sport fishing from the waters of this state shall be as specified in regulations adopted under authority of section 26-159a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(p) Walleye (*Sander vitreus*).

(1) Walleye may be taken only by angling and ice fishing.

(2) The daily creel limit for walleye shall be two.

(3) The minimum length for walleye shall be eighteen inches except that in Lake Pocotopaug, East Hampton, the minimum length for walleye shall be twenty inches.

(q) Banded sunfish (*Enneacanthus obesus*). The taking of banded sunfish is prohibited.

(r) American brook lamprey (*Lethenteron appendix*). The taking of American brook lamprey is prohibited.

(s) Catfish and bullheads.

(1) All species of catfish (*Ameiurus* spp. and *Ictalurus* spp.), including bullheads, may be taken by hand, angling, bobbing and ice fishing.

(2) The daily creel limit for channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) and white catfish (*Ameiurus catus*) shall be six fish of both species in the aggregate, except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(3) The daily creel limit for channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) and white catfish (*Ameiurus catus*) shall be three fish in the following lakes and ponds:

Beaver Park Lagoon, New Haven

Birge Pond, Bristol

Bunnells Pond (Beardsley Park Pond), Bridgeport

Center Springs Park Pond, Manchester

Colony Pond (Abe Stone Park Pond), Ansonia, Shelton

Crescent Lake, Southington

Freshwater Pond, Enfield

Keney Park Pond, Hartford

Lake Wintergreen, Hamden

Lakewood Lake, Waterbury  
 Mirror Lake (Hubbard Park Pond), Meriden  
 Picketts Pond, Derby  
 Rogers Park Pond, Danbury  
 Rowans Pond (Butternut Park Pond), Middletown  
 Mohegan Park Pond (Spaulding Pond), Norwich  
 Stanley Quarter Pond, New Britain.

**Summary of proposal:** This proposal adapts trout seasons and creel limits to conform with a provision of Public Act 21-12 that eliminated a closed season for trout. Establishes a catch-and-release only period for trout during the previous statewide closed season for trout. Several minor, conforming and technical changes are also made.

**Hearing testimony.** One individual spoke in opposition of elimination Opening Day, two supported the elimination of a closed season, and one additional individual supported it with reservations centering around excess mortality during the proposed late winter/early spring catch-and-release period (see sec. 4) replacing the closed season for trout due to poor fish handling skills. This individual suggested that a gear restriction be put into effect should there be a catch-and-release period, perhaps flies and artificial lures only.

**Comments:** The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). The agency received five submissions that indicated support or approval to all of the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, none of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations (including this section).

Sixteen individuals commented favorably on elimination of a closed season for trout, most citing the additional opportunities for trout fishing that would be available. Four of those in favor of this closed season expressed approval specifically as the tradition of Opening Day would be diminished or eliminated. Conversely, nine commenters expressed opposition to elimination of the closed season for trout, with six specifically noting the likely loss of the Opening Day tradition, and the others expressed concern for the possible increase in fishing pressure negatively affecting trout fishing.

Twelve individuals commented in favor of the statewide trout creel limit remaining at five and nine individuals opposed the five trout per day creel limit, suggesting a creel limit of three (six supporters) or two (three supporters). These commenters mentioned either the extended open season for trout fishing, or the current dense human population of the state (two individuals). Fourteen individuals expressed support for establishing a catch-and-release only season for trout during the period from March 1 to 6 a.m. on the Second Saturday in April that had been the closed season for trout prior to passage of Public Act 21-12. There were seven recommendations to require more protective gear requirements, such as use of artificial lures only and flies. In most cases the commenters expressed concern that bait fishing during this time would lead to high rates of post release mortality. Nine individuals commented in opposition to the catch-and-release season, several noting that there would be likely high rates

of post-release mortality, two indicating that anglers should be able to harvest all year long and three objecting that the catch-and-release season would still retain the flavor of the traditional Opening Day, and lead to overcrowding at some popular fishing locations.

**Final Wording:** As proposed:

**Explanation and response to comments:** DEEP recognizes that a significant subset of trout anglers in Connecticut may prefer to maintain a closed season and an “Opening Day”. However, as DEEP is required by Public Act 21-12 to eliminate closed seasons for trout it cannot maintain a traditional closed season ending with a first day of trout fishing commonly known as Opening Day. Any changes to the prohibitions on trout fishing would require legislative action and cannot be accomplished by regulation. DEEP also realizes that Opening Day traditions have been important to many trout anglers and suggests that new traditions based on the first spring fishing trip of the year could be developed by individuals, families, and businesses.

This proposal establishes a daily creel limit of zero (catch-and-release fishing only) during the now eliminated closed period from March 1 through 6:00 am on the second Saturday in April. This daily creel limit choice was based on staff assessments of management options and angler preferences (as suggested by the results of a survey that was both posted on DEEP’s Fish & Wildlife Facebook page and emailed to inland fishing license holders who had supplied an email address). The two most popular choices from the survey were 1) maintain the closed season regulations and 2) catch-and-release only for trout during the previously closed season. The comments received for this proposal also displayed a lack of consensus concerning creel limits, catch-and-release seasons, and possible gear restrictions. DEEP recognizes that the concerns expressed for post-release mortality during the practice of catch-and-release fishing by less experienced anglers are legitimate, however, allowing year-round harvest would also be a source of increased mortality, and would likely require a major reassessment and revision of the statewide creel limits. DEEP feels that at this time, the daily creel limit of zero during the previously closed season can provide the best early season trout fishing opportunities, while addressing angler preferences, and conserving stocked trout resources to maintain adequate trout fishing opportunities throughout the now extended spring trout fishing season. This proposal will remain as proposed.

## **Section 5. Section 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:**

### **Sec. 26-112-46. Special management areas**

(a) **Boundary Waters.** Boundary waters are defined as those lakes and ponds forming a common boundary between Connecticut and an adjoining state. Connecticut sport fishing regulations shall apply, except as provided in this section.

(1) Beach Pond, Voluntown - Rhode Island. [The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] Connecticut or Rhode Island fishing license legal on entire pond. Connecticut and Rhode Island regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall

be five and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Trout and kokanee: the daily creel limits shall be five for trout and five for kokanee and there shall be no minimum length. Not more than six tip-ups may be used when ice fishing.

(2) Breakneck Pond, Union-Massachusetts. Connecticut or Massachusetts license legal on entire pond.

(3) Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment. [The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day in February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire impoundment. Upstream demarcation line posted by Massachusetts.

(4) Congamond Lakes (South Pond, Middle Pond and North Pond), Suffield - Massachusetts. [There shall be no closed season for fishing.] Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on all three lakes. Massachusetts regulations apply as follows: Trout: the daily creel limit shall be six, during the period from the Saturday next preceding the third Monday in April, one hour before sunrise, through the Sunday following the third Saturday in October. Trout: the daily creel limit shall be three, during the period from the Monday following the third Saturday in October to the Saturday preceding the third Monday in April. Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be ten inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than two hooks may be used during periods of open water fishing and not more than five hooks may be used when ice fishing.

(5) Hamilton Reservoir, Union - Massachusetts. [There shall be no closed season for fishing.] Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire pond. Massachusetts regulations apply as follows: Trout: the daily creel limit shall be six, during the period from the Saturday next preceding the third Monday in April, one hour before sunrise, through the Sunday following the third Saturday in October. Trout: the daily creel limit shall be three, during the period from the Monday following the third Saturday in October to the Saturday preceding the third Monday in April. Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be ten inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than two hooks may be used during periods of open water fishing and not more than five hooks may be used when ice fishing.

(6) Hazard Pond, Voluntown - Rhode Island. [There shall be no closed season for fishing.] Connecticut or Rhode Island fishing license legal on entire pond. Connecticut and Rhode Island regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than six tip-ups may be used when ice fishing.

(7) Indian Pond (Indian Lake), Sharon -New York. [The closed season for] All fishing [shall be] is prohibited from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April. Connecticut or New York license legal on entire pond. New York regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the closed season for the taking of black bass shall be from midnight on November thirtieth through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in

April, the daily creel limit shall be six and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Not more than five tip-ups and two hand held jigs may be used for ice fishing.

(8) Keach Pond, Thompson - Putnam - Rhode Island. Connecticut or Rhode Island license legal on entire pond. Rhode Island regulations apply.

(9) Killingly Pond, Killingly - Rhode Island. [There shall be no closed season for fishing.] Connecticut or Rhode Island fishing license legal on entire pond. Connecticut and Rhode Island regulations apply as follows: Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth): the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be twelve inches. Chain pickerel: the daily creel limit shall be five and the minimum length shall be fourteen inches. Not more than six tip-ups may be used when ice fishing.

(10) Muddy Pond, Woodstock-Massachusetts. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire pond.

(11) Perry Pond, Thompson - Massachusetts. Connecticut or Massachusetts fishing license legal on entire pond.

(b) **Fly Fishing Only Areas.** In the following waters or portions thereof, as indicated by ~~posters~~ signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, fishing is restricted to fly fishing only:

Bantam River (outlet), Morris, Litchfield.

Hewitt Flyfishing Pond (Gallup Pond), North Stonington.

Housatonic River, Cornwall, Sharon.

Moosup River, Plainfield.

Salmon River, Colchester.

Saugatuck River, Westport, from Dorr's Mill Dam to Merritt Parkway.

Willimantic River, Tolland, Willington.

Yantic River, Lebanon, above Johnsons Bridge and Bozrah.

(c) Trout Management Areas.

(1) The Housatonic River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Housatonic River in Salisbury, Canaan, Sharon, and Cornwall from the bridge at Route 112 downstream to the bridge at Routes 4 and 7. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Housatonic River Trout Management Area, except that those] Those portions of [this trout management area] the Housatonic River Trout Management Area within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive. Fishing within a portion of the Housatonic River Trout Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is restricted to fly fishing only. The daily creel limit for trout in the Housatonic River Trout Management Area is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Housatonic River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(2) The Willimantic River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Willimantic River in Tolland and Willington from the mouth of Roaring Brook downstream to the bridge at Route 74. Fishing in the Willimantic River Trout Management Area is restricted to fly fishing only. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Willimantic River Trout Management Area.] The daily creel limit for trout in the Willimantic River Trout Management Area is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Willimantic River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(3) The Mianus River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Mianus River in Stamford, from Merriebrook Lane to the dam approximately one mile upstream, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. [There shall be no closed season for trout in this area and the] The minimum length for trout taken in the Mianus River Trout Management Area shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, fishing in this area is restricted to single hook flies and artificial lures only, the daily creel limit for trout is zero, and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Mianus River Trout Management Area is prohibited. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Mianus River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout is two.

(4) The Farmington River Trout Management Area shall be the West Branch Farmington River in Hartland, Barkhamsted, and New Hartford and that portion of the Farmington River from the junction of the East and West Branches of the Farmington River in New Hartford downstream to the Route 177 Bridge in Unionville. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Farmington River Trout Management Area except that the portion of such trout management area from the intersection of Hogback Road and Route 20 in Hartland, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, downstream to the gas pipeline crossing approximately four-tenths miles downstream of the confluence with the Still River in Barkhamsted, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, shall be closed to all fishing during the period April first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] The daily creel limits for trout in the Farmington River Trout Management Area shall be as follows:

(A) In that portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area from the Goodwin Dam in Hartland downstream to the foot bridge abutments approximately one and four-tenths miles downstream of the confluence with the Still River in Barkhamsted, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the daily creel limit for trout in any combination shall be two and the minimum length for any trout taken shall be twelve inches during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first. During said time period, possession of trout less than twelve inches or possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April,

possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of this portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(B) In that portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area from the foot bridge abutments approximately one and four-tenths miles downstream of the confluence with the Still River in Barkhamsted, downstream to the bridge at Route 219 in New Hartford, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, fishing is restricted to the use of barbless hooks only, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of this portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(C) In that portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area from the bridge at Route 219 in New Hartford downstream to the Route 177 Bridge in Unionville, the daily creel limit for trout in any combination shall be two and the minimum length for any trout taken shall be twelve inches during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first. During said time period, possession of trout less than twelve inches or possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of this portion of the Farmington River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(5) The Hammonasset River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Hammonasset River in Killingworth and Madison, from the Lake Hammonasset Dam downstream to Chestnut Hill Road. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Hammonasset River Trout Management Area is prohibited. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in August, the daily creel limit in the Hammonasset River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout is two and the minimum length for any such trout taken shall be nine inches.

(6) The Mill River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Mill River in Fairfield, from the Merritt Parkway Bridge downstream to Lake Mohegan. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Mill River Trout Management Area]. The daily creel limit in the Mill River Trout Management Area for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Mill River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(7) The Moosup River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Moosup River in Plainfield from the bridge at Route 14 downstream to the junction with the Quinebaug River. Fishing within a portion of the Moosup River Trout Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is restricted to fly fishing only. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Moosup River Trout Management Area.] The daily creel limit for trout in the Moosup River Trout Management Area is zero and all trout

caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Moosup River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(8) The Salmon River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Salmon River in Colchester and East Hampton, from the junction of the Blackledge and Jeremy Rivers downstream to the Route 16 bridge. Fishing within a portion of the Salmon River Trout Management Area is restricted to fly fishing only as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Salmon River Trout Management Area.] From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in August, the daily creel limit for trout in any combination in the Salmon River Trout Management Area shall be two and the minimum length for any trout taken shall be nine inches. From September first to 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Salmon River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(9) The Naugatuck River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Naugatuck River from Route 118 in Harwinton and Litchfield, downstream to the Thomaston Dam in Thomaston. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Naugatuck River Trout Management Area, except that those] Those portions of [this trout management area] the Naugatuck River Trout Management Area within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive. From September first through March thirty-first, fishing is restricted to those methods specified by the Commissioner for the taking of Atlantic salmon in accordance with section 26-112- 45(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Naugatuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(10) The Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area shall consist of (A) the portion of the Housatonic River from Bulls Bridge Dam downstream to the Gaylordsville Bridge (Route 7) and (B) the Ten Mile River from the New York State border downstream to the confluence with the Housatonic River. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area, except that those] Those portions of [this trout management area] the Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive. The daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Bulls Bridge Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(11) The William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Saugatuck River in Westport from the Dorr's Mill Dam to the Merritt Parkway bridge. Fishing within the William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area is restricted to fly fishing only. [There shall be no

closed season for trout and in this area.] From 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area for any combination of trout is two and the minimum length for trout taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the William Doc Skerlick Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(12) The Hockanum River Trout Management Area shall be the portion of the Hockanum River from I-84 in Vernon downstream to where the river crosses under I-84 at the Manchester/East Hartford town line as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Hockanum River Trout Management Area.] The daily creel limit for trout is zero in the Hockanum River Trout Management Area and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Hockanum River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(13) The Pequabuck River Trout Management Area shall consist of (A) that portion of the Pequabuck River in Bristol and Plainville from King Street (Route 229 & 72) downstream to Route 177 and (B) that portion of Coppermine Brook in Bristol from Artisan Street downstream to the confluence with the Pequabuck River. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Pequabuck River Trout Management Area.] The daily creel limit for trout is zero in the Pequabuck River Trout Management Area and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Pequabuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(14) The Yantic River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Yantic River from Barstow Road in Lebanon, downstream to the bridge crossing at the intersection of Fitchville Road and Schwartz Road in Bozrah. Fishing within portions of the Yantic River Trout Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is restricted to fly fishing only. [There shall be no closed season for trout in this area.] From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Yantic River Trout Management Area for any combination of trout is two and the minimum length for trout taken shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 A.M. on the second Saturday in April, possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Yantic River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(15) The Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Saugatuck River in Redding from Diamond Hill Pond Dam downstream to Saugatuck Reservoir, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area.] The daily creel limit for trout is zero in the Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which

taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Upper Saugatuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(16) The Aspetuck River Trout Management Area shall consist of (A) that portion of the Aspetuck River in Easton, Redding and Newtown upstream from the bridge at Valley Road in Easton and (B) those portions of the unnamed inflow and outflow streams to Lyons Swamp in Easton and Redding from North Park Avenue downstream to the confluence with the Aspetuck River. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Aspetuck River Trout Management Area.] The daily creel limit for trout is zero in the Aspetuck River Trout Management Area and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Aspetuck River Trout Management Area is prohibited.

(17) The Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area shall be that portion of the Mill River within Sleeping Giant State Park located between Tuttle Avenue and Mount Carmel Avenue, Hamden. [There shall be no closed season for trout in the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area and the] The minimum length for trout taken in the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area shall be nine inches. From September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, the daily creel limit for trout is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. During said time period from September first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April possession of trout in the waters or on the shores of the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area is prohibited. From 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through August thirty-first, the daily creel limit in the Sleeping Giant Trout Management Area for any combination of trout is two.

(d) **Trout Management Lakes.** In the following lakes during the period March first through [March thirty-first] 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be sixteen inches, except as otherwise specified herein. For the purposes of this subsection “slot limit lengths” shall mean the lengths between which fish may not be retained and all fish equal to or greater than the lower limit but less than the upper limit must be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(1) Amos Lake, Preston. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(2) Candlewood Lake (including Squantz Pond), New Fairfield, Danbury, New Milford, Sherman, Brookfield. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(3) Crystal Lake, Ellington, Stafford. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the slot limit lengths for trout shall be from twelve inches to sixteen inches total length and the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in total length.

(4) East Twin Lake, Salisbury. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the

period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February the daily creel limit for trout shall be five. During said period, there shall be no minimum lengths or slot lengths for trout except there shall be slot limit lengths from fourteen inches to twenty-two inches total length for brown trout and not more than one brown trout may equal or exceed twenty-two inches in total length. During the period from March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the minimum length limit for brown trout shall be twenty-two inches.

(5) Highland Lake, Winchester. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the slot limit lengths for trout shall be from twelve inches to sixteen inches total length and the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in total length.

(6) Quonnipaug Lake, Guilford. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(7) Rogers Lake, Lyme, Old Lyme. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(8) West Hill Pond, New Hartford, Barkhamsted. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(9) Black Pond, Woodstock. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brook trout that equals or exceeds fourteen inches in total length. During the period March first through [March thirty-first,] 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be fourteen inches.

(10) Mohawk Pond, Cornwall, Goshen. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brook trout that equals or exceeds fourteen inches in total length. During the period March first through [March thirty-first,] 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be fourteen inches.

(11) Long Pond, Ledyard, North Stonington.

(e) **Special use of streams by persons with disabilities.** The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is authorized to set aside sections of streams for temporary use by groups of persons with disabilities from state institutions, veteran or similar organizations, upon written request, and under conditions as specified by the department.

(f) **Bass Management Areas.** In addition to the provisions of section 26-112-45 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the following provisions shall apply in the following listed waters. For the purposes of this subsection, “slot limit lengths” are the lengths between which fish may not be retained. Measurements shall be from the tip of the snout to the end of

the tail and all fish equal to or greater than the lower length limit and less than the upper length limit shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(1) The slot limit lengths for black bass shall be from twelve to sixteen inches in length and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be six, not more than two of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in length, in: Bashan Lake (East Haddam), Billings Lake (North Stonington), Black Pond (Meriden-Middlefield), Bolton Lakes (Upper, Middle, Lower; Bolton, Coventry, and Vernon), Lake Chamberlain (Bethany), Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment (Colebrook), Coventry Lake (Coventry), Halls Pond (Eastford and Ashford), Hayward Lake (East Haddam), Lake Kenosia (Danbury), Maltby Lakes (#1, #2, #3; New Haven, Orange and West Haven), Mamasasco Lake (Ridgefield), Mansfield Hollow Reservoir (Mansfield, Chaplin, and Windham), Mashapaug Lake (Union), Pickerel Lake (Colchester and East Haddam), West Side Pond (Goshen) and Wononscopomuc Lake (Salisbury).

(2) The minimum length for black bass shall be sixteen inches and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be two, in: Gardner Lake (Salem, Montville, and Bozrah), Highland Lake (Winchester), Housatonic Lake (Shelton, Derby, Monroe, Oxford, and Seymour), Mohegan Park Pond (Norwich), Quinebaug Lake (Killingly), Taftville Reservoir (Norwich), and Wyassup Lake (North Stonington).

(3) The slot limit lengths for black bass shall be from twelve to eighteen inches; and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be six, not more than one of which may equal or exceed eighteen inches in length, in: Amos Lake (Preston), Moodus Reservoir (East Haddam), Mudge Pond (Sharon), and [Pataganset] Pattagansett Lake (East Lyme).

(4) The minimum length for black bass shall be eighteen inches and the daily creel limit for black bass shall be one, in: Lake Saltonstall (Branford and East Haven).

(5) The Commissioner may grant an exemption from minimum length and daily creel limit requirements of this section to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies to conduct a fishing tournament or derby on Gardner Lake or Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, provided that all fish caught shall be released without avoidable injury to the waters where taken, and that each participating boat shall be furnished with live wells with aerators or circulating pumps.

(6) The Commissioner may grant an exemption from minimum length and daily creel limit requirements of this section to any person issued a permit under section 2-112-42 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies to conduct a fishing tournament or derby in any Bass Management Area between September 1 and June 30, provided that all fish caught shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken, and that each participating boat shall be furnished with live wells with aerators or circulating pumps.

(7) The Bulls Bridge Bass Management Area shall consist of (A) the portion of the Housatonic River from Bulls Bridge Dam downstream to the Gaylordsville Bridge (Route 7) and (B) the Ten Mile River from the New York state border downstream to the confluence with the Housatonic River. The daily creel limit for smallmouth bass and largemouth bass is zero and all smallmouth bass and largemouth bass caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of smallmouth bass or largemouth bass in the waters or on the shores of the Bulls Bridge Bass Management Area is prohibited.

**(g) Wild Trout Management Areas.**

(1) [There shall be no closed season for trout in class one Wild Trout Management Areas.] Fishing in [these areas] class one Wild Trout Management Areas is restricted to barbless single-hook artificial lures and barbless single-hook flies. The daily creel limit for trout in these areas is zero and all trout caught shall be immediately returned, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken. Possession of trout on the waters or shores of these Wild Trout Management Areas is prohibited. The following are class one Wild Trout Management Areas:

(A) The Belding-Tankerhoosen Wild Trout Management Area, which shall consist of (i) those portions of the Tankerhoosen River and its tributaries contained within the Belding Wildlife Management Area in Vernon and (ii) those portions of the Tankerhoosen River and its tributaries contained within the Tankerhoosen Wildlife Management Area, as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(B) Deep Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall consist of (i) that portion of Deep Brook in Newtown from Wasserman Way downstream to the confluence with the Pootatuck River and (ii) that portion of the Pootatuck River upstream and downstream of the confluence with Deep Brook as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(C) Eightmile River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the Eightmile River in Southington.

(D) Hawleys Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Hawleys Brook in Easton and Weston within the Trout Brook Valley property that is owned by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Aspetuck Land Trust, and the town of Weston.

(E) Merrick Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall consist of (i) that portion of Merrick Brook and Beaver Brook in Scotland within the Talbot Wildlife Management Area and (ii) that portion of Merrick Brook upstream of the Talbot Wildlife Management Area as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(F) Mill River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Mill River in Easton and Fairfield from upstream of the first bridge crossing below Easton Reservoir (South Park Avenue) as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to downstream of the third bridge crossing the Merritt Parkway as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(G) Quinnipiac River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Quinnipiac River in Cheshire and in Southington upstream of Cheshire Street.

(H) Wachocastinook Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Wachocastinook Brook on Mt. Riga Corporation property in Salisbury as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(I) Upper Mill River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Mill River in Easton and Monroe from Route 59 downstream to Judd Road.

(J) Lower Macedonia Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Macedonia Brook in Kent from the confluence with Bog Hollow Brook downstream to Route 341.

(K) Sessions Woods Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Freeman Hill Brook in Burlington upstream of Route 69.

(2) In class two Wild Trout Management Areas during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two and the minimum length for trout shall be twelve inches. Possession of more than two trout or possession of trout less than twelve inches on the waters or shores of these Wild Trout Management Areas is prohibited. The following are class two Wild Trout Management Areas:

(A) Heather Reaves Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Furnace Brook in Cornwall Bridge upstream of the Housatonic River as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(B) Salmon Brook (Glastonbury) Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Salmon Brook in Glastonbury downstream of Addison Pond.

(3) In class three Wild Trout Management Areas during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, as provided for in section 26-112-45(m)(3) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and the minimum length for trout shall be nine inches. Possession of trout less than nine inches on the waters or shores of these Wild Trout Management Areas is prohibited. The following are class three Wild Trout Management Areas:

(A) Beacon Hill Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Beacon Hill Brook in Naugatuck and Beacon Falls from Route 63 downstream to the confluence with the Naugatuck River.

(B) Blackberry River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Blackberry River in Canaan downstream of the Whiting River to the confluence with the Housatonic River.

(C) East Aspetuck River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the East Aspetuck River in New Milford and in New Preston downstream of Lake Waramaug to the confluence with the Housatonic River.

(D) East Branch Naugatuck River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the East Branch Naugatuck River in Torrington from Newfield Road downstream to the confluence with the West Branch Naugatuck River.

(E) Farm River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Farm River from Mill Road in North Branford downstream to the I-95 Bridge in East Haven.

(F) Fenton River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the Fenton River in Mansfield and in Willington.

(G) Little River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Little River in Oxford from Towner Lane downstream to Park Road.

(H) Macedonia Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be those portions of Macedonia Brook in Kent within Macedonia Brook State Park.

(I) Morgan Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be Morgan Brook in Barkhamsted.

(J) Norwalk River Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of the Norwalk River in Wilton and in Ridgefield upstream of Wolf Pit Road.

(K) Pease Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Pease Brook in Lebanon within the Pease Brook Wildlife Management Area.

(L) Eric C. Schluntz Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the portion of Roaring Brook in Glastonbury from Route 94 downstream to the confluence with the Connecticut River.

(M) Roaring Brook (Stafford) Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be the portion of Roaring Brook in Stafford and in Willington from Route 190 downstream to the confluence with the Willimantic River.

(N) Salmon Brook (Granby) Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be that portion of Salmon Brook and East Branch of Salmon Brook in Granby and in East Granby from Route 20 downstream to the confluence with the Farmington River.

(O) Shunock Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be Shunock Brook in North Stonington.

(P) Stony Brook Wild Trout Management Area, which shall be Stony Brook in Montville.

(h) **Atlantic salmon management areas.** From September first through March thirty-first, angling for all species in the following areas is restricted to those methods specified by the commissioner for the taking of Atlantic salmon in accordance with section 26-112-45(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:

(1) The Upper Naugatuck River Atlantic salmon management area is that portion of the Naugatuck River from Route 118, Harwinton and Litchfield, downstream to Thomaston Dam, Thomaston.

(2) The Lower Naugatuck River Atlantic salmon management area is that portion of the Naugatuck River from Prospect Street, Naugatuck, downstream to Pines Bridge Road, Beacon Falls.

(3) The Shetucket River Atlantic salmon management area is that portion of the Shetucket River from the Scotland Dam, Windham, downstream to the Occum Dam, Norwich and Sprague.

(i) **Trout Park Areas.**

Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, in the following waters during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be two and possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited:

(1) Black Rock Pond and Branch Brook within Black Rock State Park (Watertown).

(2) Schreeder Pond and Chatfield Hollow Brook within Chatfield Hollow State Park (Killingworth).

(3) Natchaug River within Natchaug State Forest (Eastford).

(4) Allen Brook Pond (Wharton Pond) within Wharton Brook State Park (Wallingford).

(5) Eight Mile Brook and Papermill Pond within Southford Falls State Park (Oxford).

(6) Day Pond (Colchester).

(7) Stratton Brook ponds and Stratton Brook as indicated by signs posted by the Department of Environmental Protection within Stratton Brook State Park (Simsbury).

(8) Valley Falls Pond within Valley Falls Park (Vernon).

(9) Mohegan Park Pond (Spaulding Pond, Norwich).

(10) Great Hollow Lake within Wolfe Park (Monroe).

(11) Kent Falls Brook within Kent Falls State Park (Kent).

(12) Pasture Pond (Quinebaug Valley Trout Hatchery), Plainfield.

(13) McGovern Pond, West Hartford.

**(j) Sea-run trout streams.**

(1) In the Eightmile River (East Haddam and Lyme): [There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the dam at Mt. Archer Road.] The daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length limit for trout shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of the dam at Mt. Archer Road. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(2) In the Farm River (North Branford and East Haven): [There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the I-95 bridge.] The daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of the I-95 bridge. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(3) In the Hammonasset River (Clinton, Killingworth, and Madison): in the following waters during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be nine (9) inches. Possession of trout less than nine (9) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited. [There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the breached dam located approximately 300 feet above River Road.] The daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of the breached dam located approximately 300 feet above River Road. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(4) In Latimers Brook (East Lyme): [There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the I-95 bridge.] Downstream of the I-95 bridge the daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be fifteen (15) inches. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(5) In Oil Mill Brook (Waterford, East Lyme): Downstream of the I-95 bridge the daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be fifteen

(15) inches. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(6) In the Mianus River (Greenwich and Stamford): Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be nine (9) inches. Possession of trout less than nine (9) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(7) In Whitfords Brook (Groton, Ledyard, and Stonington): [There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of the Route 184 bridge.] Downstream of the Route 184 bridge the daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be fifteen (15) inches. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(8) In the Saugatuck River (Danbury, Redding, Weston, and Westport): [There shall be no closed season for fishing downstream of Wood Dam.] The daily creel limit for any combination of trout is two (2) and the minimum length for trout shall be fifteen (15) inches downstream of Wood Dam. Possession of trout less than fifteen (15) inches or possession of more than two (2) trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

**(k) Trophy Trout Streams.**

(1) In the Natchaug River (Eastford, Chaplin, and Windham), during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two. Possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores during said time period is prohibited.

(2) In the Naugatuck River (Torrington, Harwinton, Plymouth, Watertown, Waterbury, Naugatuck, Beacon Falls, Seymour, and Ansonia), except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two. Possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores during said time period is prohibited. Those portions of the Naugatuck River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

(3) In that portion of the Pequonnock River in Trumbull, from the Whitney Avenue Bridge Crossing, during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two. Possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores during said time period is prohibited.

(4) In the Pomperaug River (Woodbury and Southbury), during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two. Possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores is prohibited.

(5) In the Salmon River (Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, and Haddam), during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February,

inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two. Possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores during said time period is prohibited.

(6) In the Shetucket River (Windham, Scotland, Sprague, and Norwich), during the time period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day in February, inclusive, the daily creel limit for any combination of trout shall be two. Possession of more than two trout on such waters or their shores during said time period is prohibited. Those portions of the Shetucket River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of tributary streams shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

**(l) Trophy Carp Waters.** (1) Except as provided in section 26-112-45(f)(5) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the maximum length for common carp shall be twenty- six inches and the daily creel limit for common carp shall be one in: Batterson Park Pond (Farmington, New Britain), the Connecticut River, its coves, and those portions of its tributaries [open to fishing throughout the year] designated as tidal waters and tributaries as provided in section [26-112-44(a)(1)] 26-112-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and Squantz Pond (New Fairfield).

(2) The Commissioner may grant an exemption from the maximum length and daily creel limit requirements of this subsection to any person issued a permit under section 26-112-42 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies to conduct a fishing tournament or derby in any Trophy Carp Water provided that all fish caught shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken.

(3) Any individual fishing in any Trophy Carp Water may, at any time, temporarily retain in their possession one common carp that exceeds the maximum length requirement of this section, for the purposes of measurement, provided such fish shall be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters where taken.

**(m) Tidal waters and tributaries.**

There shall be no closed season for fishing in the following streams, or portions thereof, as specified:

(1) Coginchaug River, Middletown – downstream from Route 3 bridge to its junction with the Mattabesset River (Sebeth River).

(2) Connecticut River and its coves.

(3) Farmington River – downstream from the outlet of the Rainbow Dam Tailrace Canal to its confluence with the Connecticut River (all fishing is prohibited in the Rainbow Dam Tailrace Canal and in the Farmington River from the Tailrace Canal upstream to Rainbow Dam).

(4) Housatonic River – downstream from the dam on Lake Housatonic (the Derby Dam).

(5) Mattabesset River (Sebeth River), Middletown – downstream from the Route 372 bridge to its junction with the Connecticut River.

(6) Mystic River, Groton and Stonington – downstream from the confluence of Whitfords Brook and Haleys Brook.

(7) Naugatuck River – downstream from the Kinneytown Dam (Seymour) to its confluence with the Housatonic River.

(8) Niantic River, East Lyme and Waterford.

(9) Quinnipiac River – downstream from the highway bridge on Route 5 in North Haven to its junction with New Haven Harbor.

(10) Salmon River, Haddam and East Haddam – downstream from the bridge on Route 151 to its junction with the Connecticut River.

(11) Thames River and its coves, including the Shetucket River downstream from Greenville Dam and the Yantic River downstream of the falls at Indian Leap in Norwich.

**Proposal summary:** Updates provisions of several subsections to conform with provisions of sections 2, 3 and 4 concerning seasons, closed areas and trout creel limits; amends trout regulations at East Twin Lake to reflect increases in alewife populations; adds Long Pond to the list of Trout Management Lakes; and adds a new special management area (“tidal waters and tributaries”, formerly the waters designated as “rivers and streams open year-round” in sec. 26-112-44).

**Hearing testimony.** Four individuals provided testimony at the public hearing but did not comment on this section.

**Comments:** The proposed amendment was endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). The agency received five submissions that indicated support or approval to all of the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, none of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations (including this section).

A total of eight comments were submitted relevant to subsection (d), Trout Management Lakes. Five expressed support for more restrictive regulations for Brown Trout at East Twin Lake with two suggesting even more restrictive slot limit regulations than proposed and a third opposing the slot limit concept, instead suggesting a more restrictive minimum length. Two supported the revisions to the East Twin Lake Brown Trout regulations and requested that similar regulations be established at Wonoskopomuc Lake (also in Salisbury) and another individual requested more protective regulations at Wonoskopomuc Lake although not specifically referencing East Twin Lake. For Wonoskopomuc Lake, commenters expressed concerns over what they perceived as significant take of larger Brown Trout well beyond sustainable levels, especially during winter. They noted that until this past winter when PA 21-12 became effective, trout were protected by an extended closed season during late fall and winter at this lake. One suggested that additional gear restrictions be established at Lake Wonoskopomuc and another suggested additional gear restrictions including reducing the allowable number of fishing tip-ups and requiring the use of circle hooks. Finally one individual opposed the designation of Long Pond as a Trout Management Lake, feeling that the area of deep water was not sufficiently large to warrant the designation, suggesting that Beach Pond might be a better alternative in that area and one individual opposed Trout Management Lake regulations in

general, claiming that they were too complicated for anglers to follow. There were no comments submitted that were specific to the other provisions of this section.

**Final Wording:** As proposed, except for revisions to subsection (d), Trout Management Lakes. Wononskopomuc Lake is added to the list of designated Trout Management Lakes with the same protective regulations as East Twin Lake and more protective gear restrictions (reduced number of ice fishing devices and required use of circle hooks when using bait) are established at both lakes. Subdivision (d) is as follows:

(d) **Trout Management Lakes.** In the following lakes during the period March first through [March thirty-first] 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be sixteen inches, except as otherwise specified herein. For the purposes of this subsection “slot limit lengths” shall mean the lengths between which fish may not be retained and all fish equal to or greater than the lower limit but less than the upper limit must be released, without avoidable injury, to the waters from which taken.

(1) Amos Lake, Preston. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(2) Candlewood Lake (including Squantz Pond), New Fairfield, Danbury, New Milford, Sherman, Brookfield. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(3) Crystal Lake, Ellington, Stafford. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the slot limit lengths for trout shall be from twelve inches to sixteen inches total length and the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in total length.

(4) East Twin Lake, Salisbury. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] (A) During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brown trout, and the minimum length for brown trout shall be twenty-two inches, During the period March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be twenty-two inches.

(B) Not more than two tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs in any combination thereof, in the aggregate, may be used at any one time when ice fishing at East Twin Lake.

(C) No person shall fish for trout with bait at East Twin Lake unless such person uses an inline circle hook. Any trout taken by use of bait on a hook other than an inline circle hook shall be returned immediately, without avoidable injury to the waters from which taken.

(5) Highland Lake, Winchester. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the slot

limit lengths for trout shall be from twelve inches to sixteen inches total length and the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may equal or exceed sixteen inches in total length.

(6) Quonnipaug Lake, Guilford. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(7) Rogers Lake, Lyme, Old Lyme. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(8) West Hill Pond, New Hartford, Barkhamsted. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.]

(9) Black Pond, Woodstock. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brook trout that equals or exceeds fourteen inches in total length. During the period March first through [March thirty-first,] 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be fourteen inches.

(10) Mohawk Pond, Cornwall, Goshen. [The closed season for fishing in this area shall be from midnight on March thirty-first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February, the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brook trout that equals or exceeds fourteen inches in total length. During the period March first through [March thirty-first,] 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be fourteen inches.

(11) Long Pond, Ledyard, North Stonington.

(12) Wononskopomuc Lake, Salisbury. (A) During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brown trout, and the minimum length for brown trout shall be twenty-two inches, During the period March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be twenty-two inches.

(B) Not more than two tip-ups, bobbers or floats, similar devices or hand-held jigs in any combination thereof, in the aggregate, may be used at any one time when ice fishing at Wononskopomuc Lake.

(C) No person shall fish for trout with bait at Wononskopomuc Lake unless such person uses an inline circle hook. Any trout taken by use of bait on a hook other than an inline circle hook shall be returned immediately, without avoidable injury to the waters from which taken.

**Explanation:** To comply with, and facilitate implementation of, the provisions of Public Act 21-12 prohibiting closed seasons for trout, concurrent proposals amending sections 26-112-44 and 26-112-45 eliminated the closed season for trout, the statewide closed season for rivers and streams, and all closed seasons at lakes and ponds. Additionally, a catch-and-release season for

trout was established in section 26-112-45 during the former closed period and the creel limit for trout and Kokanee Salmon were also revised. This proposal primarily makes conforming changes and adaptations to the provisions of section 26-112-46 reflecting these other amendments and are either required by Public Act 21-12, will facilitate its implementation or are a consequence of its implementation. The thermal refuge closure areas in portions of Trout Management Areas, Trophy Trout Streams, the Housatonic River, and the lower Salmon River are retained to protect trout and other fish from undue stress; and the waterbodies formerly designated as “Streams open to fishing throughout the year” are added as a type of special management area to this section and redesignated as “Tidal waters and tributaries”.

In addition, Long Pond and Wononskopomuc Lake are being designated as Trout Management Lakes, and special regulations for Brown Trout are established at East Twin Lake and Wononskopomuc Lake. Trout Management Lakes are designated as such because of the presence of coldwater habitat during the summer months, which is key to the potential to holdover and grow large trout. Fisheries staff have determined that Long Pond (Ledyard-North Stonington) has both the physical characteristics (a suitable well-oxygenated cool layer of water) and the best potential to provide additional trout fishing opportunities in southeastern Connecticut if managed as a Trout Management Lake.

As originally proposed these amendments did not include the designation of Wononskopomuc Lake as a Trout Management Lake or any additional gear restrictions at Trout Management Lakes. However, in light of several comments submitted on these amendments, plus additional information that is now available concerning increased fishing pressure, especially during newly opened ice fishing season, Wononskopomuc Lake will also be designated as a Trout Management Lake. This lake has long been a destination trout fishery due to its combination of quality lake habitat and forage availability, limited public access and a short fishing season. However the passage of Public Act 21-12 eliminating closed seasons for trout greatly expanded fishing access and allowed for ice fishing for the first time in decades. Several commenters provided both oral and written comment that the opening of the lake to ice fishing for the first time has drawn considerable fishing pressure, which in their opinion has been detrimental to the unique fishery. Requests were to limit the harvest and/or number of tip ups for use during ice fishing. These concerns were also supported by anecdotal reports of significant numbers of large trout being harvested that were received by DEEP and by staff observations. Designation as a Trout Management Lake and the establishment of more restrictive regulations are expected to better protect the Brown Trout population at Wononskopomuc Lake.

This proposal will also re-establish special regulations for Brown Trout at East Twin Lake and establish similar regulations at Wononskopomuc Lake. In East Twin Lake Brown Trout are very dependent on land locked Alewife populations. When Alewives are abundant the lake has the potential to produce Brown Trout of outstanding size and quality. However, when alewife populations plummet as they did in the early 2010’s there is not sufficient other forage to support many Brown Trout. The land locked Alewife population has now rebounded and become re-established throughout East Twin Lake to the levels needed to support production of large Brown Trout. This proposal establishes a highly protective high minimum length (22 inches) for Brown Trout to support the production of very large and highly desired trophy Brown Trout that feed on the resurgent Alewife population. The same highly protective

minimum length is also established at Wononskopomuc Lake to protect Brown Trout from over-exploitation. And finally, to better protect Brown Trout at both lakes, more protective gear restrictions (reduced number of ice fishing devices and required use of circle hooks when using bait) will be established at both lakes.

**Section 6. Section 26-112-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies is amended to read as follows:**

**Sec. 26-112-48. Miscellaneous restrictions**

(a) In the following waters the indicated miscellaneous restrictions shall apply:

(1) Bog Meadow Pond, Norwich. The use of vessels is prohibited.

(2) Hewitt Pond (Lower Hewitt Pond), North Stonington. The operation of vessels with motors, except for electric motors, is prohibited.

(3) Housatonic River, Kent. Those portions of the Housatonic River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of Kent Falls Brook and Macedonia Brook shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

(4) Isinglass Reservoir (Far Mill Reservoir), Shelton. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(5) Messerschmidt's Pond, Deep River, Westbrook. The operation of vessels with motors, except for electric motors, is prohibited.

(6) Quassapaug Lake, Middlebury, Woodbury. [The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day of February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] Ice fishing is prohibited. The daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length shall be eighteen inches. The daily creel limit for black bass shall be one and the minimum length shall be eighteen inches.

(7) Salmon River, East Haddam. Those portions of the Salmon River in East Haddam within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the spring entering the Salmon River, approximately 220 feet south of the paved boat ramp in Sunrise Resort State Park, shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.

(8) Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(9) Shelton Reservoir #2, Shelton. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(10) West Pequonnock Reservoir, Monroe. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(11) Factory Pond, Salisbury. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(12) Lake Chamberlain, Bethany. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(13) Lake Saltonstall, Branford, East Haven. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(14) Maltby Lakes (#1, #2, #3), Orange West Haven. Ice fishing is prohibited.

(b) (1) In reclaimed waters the use of fish, alive or dead, as bait, is prohibited when so posted. The possession on such waters or the shores of such waters of any species of fish, alive or dead, except trout or salmon, is prohibited when so posted.

(2) In the following waters the use of alewives, blueback (glut or river) herring, gizzard, hickory or threadfin shad as bait is prohibited. The possession on such waters or the shores of such waters of any live individuals of said species, is prohibited.

Alexander Lake, Killingly.

Colebrook Flood Control Impoundment, Colebrook and Massachusetts.

East Twin Lake, Salisbury.

Lake Pocotopaug, East Hampton.

Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston.

Shenipsit Lake, Ellington, Tolland, Vernon.

Waumgumbaugh Lake (Coventry Lake), Coventry.

West Branch Reservoir (Hogback), Hartland, Colebrook.

West Hill Pond, New Hartford, Barkhamsted.

West Twin Lake, Salisbury.

Wononscopomuc Lake, Salisbury.

**Proposal summary:** Eliminates the closed season at Quassapaug Lake; and establishes a prohibition on ice fishing at several lakes and ponds (Factory Pond, Lake Chamberlain, Lake Saltonstall, Maltby Lakes).

**Hearing testimony.** Four individuals provided testimony at the public hearing but did not comment on this section.

**Comments:** These proposed amendments were endorsed by the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC). The agency received five submissions that indicated support or approval to all the proposed regulations, including this section of the proposed regulations. Conversely, none of the comments submitted indicated opposition to all sections of the proposed regulations (including this section). No individuals submitted comments on this proposal.

The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Company commented in favor of the provision in this proposal prohibiting ice fishing at Lake Chamberlain, Lake Saltonstall and the Maltby Lakes. Although not specifically commenting on this section, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) requested a prohibition on ice fishing at Lake McDonough and the CT Water Company requested that ice fishing be prohibited at Shenipsit Lake. All three water companies noted that they did not have sufficient staff available over the winter for management of recreational activities at their waters, and that management was more difficult to conduct during the winter. All were especially concerned with the possibility of individuals being out on the ice and anglers ice fishing, both for public safety and public health concerns at water supply reservoirs.

**Final Wording:** As proposed except for a revision to subsection (a) of two additional waterbodies (subdivisions (15) and (16) at which ice fishing is prohibited. These revisions are in response to requests by the MDC and the CT Water Company for prohibitions on ice fishing at Lake McDonough and Shenipsit Lake respectively. Subdivision (a) is as follows:

(a) In the following waters the indicated miscellaneous restrictions shall apply:

- (1) Bog Meadow Pond, Norwich. The use of vessels is prohibited.
- (2) Hewitt Pond (Lower Hewitt Pond), North Stonington. The operation of vessels with motors, except for electric motors, is prohibited.
- (3) Housatonic River, Kent. Those portions of the Housatonic River within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the mouths of Kent Falls Brook and Macedonia Brook shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.
- (4) Isinglass Reservoir (Far Mill Reservoir), Shelton. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (5) Messerschmidt's Pond, Deep River, Westbrook. The operation of vessels with motors, except for electric motors, is prohibited.
- (6) Quassapaug Lake, Middlebury, Woodbury. [The closed season for fishing shall be from midnight on the last day of February through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April.] Ice fishing is prohibited. The daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length shall be eighteen inches. The daily creel limit for black bass shall be one and the minimum length shall be eighteen inches.
- (7) Salmon River, East Haddam. Those portions of the Salmon River in East Haddam within one hundred feet of signs indicating such closure posted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at or near the spring entering the Salmon River, approximately 220 feet south of the paved boat ramp in Sunrise Resort State Park, shall be closed to all fishing during the period June fifteenth through September fifteenth, inclusive.
- (8) Saugatuck Reservoir, Easton, Redding, Weston. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (9) Shelton Reservoir #2, Shelton. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (10) West Pequonnock Reservoir, Monroe. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (11) Factory Pond, Salisbury. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (12) Lake Chamberlain, Bethany. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (13) Lake Saltonstall, Branford, East Haven. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (14) Maltby Lakes (#1, #2, #3), Orange West Haven. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (15) Lake McDonough (Compensating Reservoir), New Hartford, Barkhamsted. Ice fishing is prohibited.
- (16) Shenipsit Lake, Ellington, Tolland, Vernon. Ice fishing is prohibited.

**Explanation:** This amendment makes conforming edits to this section reflecting the elimination of closed seasons on lakes and ponds in compliance with the provisions of Public Act 21-12 that eliminated closed seasons for the sport fishing for trout. Additionally, in response to requests by a municipality and several water companies, the proposal prohibits ice fishing at six

additional waterbodies. During development of these proposed regulations, the Town of Salisbury had requested the prohibition at Factory Pond, and the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority had requested the prohibition at Lake Chamberlain, Lake Saltonstall and the Maltby Lakes. During the public comment period the Metropolitan District Commission requested an ice fishing prohibition at Lake McDonough and the CT Water Company requested the prohibition at Shenipsit Lake. These prohibitions were requested due to their concerns over lack of sufficient winter staff, public safety or for public health concerns (water contact at water supply reservoirs). DEEP acknowledges their concerns and has included ice fishing prohibitions requested by the Town of Salisbury, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, the MDC and the CT Water Company.