



TWRA NEWS

CONTACT: Dave Gabbard
200 Lowell Thomas Drive
Jackson, TN 38301
1-731-423-5724
1-800-372-3928
1-731-423-6483 (fax)
E-Mail: Dave.Gabbard@state.tn.us
Hearing Impaired TDD # 615-781-6691
Website at: www.tnwildlife.org

“STOP POACHING” 1-800-831-1173

DATE: May 31, 2006

TWRA PROPOSES CHANGES TO THE 2006/07 HUNTING SEASONS

SMALLMOUTH LICENSE PLATE OVER THE TOP

CUTS BY CONGRESS THREATEN FIVE YEAR OLD GRANTS PROGRAM FOR WILDLIFE

REGION I FISHING REPORT

TWRA PROPOSES CHANGES TO THE 2006/07 HUNTING SEASONS

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission took final action on the hunting season proposals from the TWRA in Nashville on May 25, 2006 during their regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The proposals, along with supporting justifications, were presented to the Commission and public last month. These changes will take effect in August and will be in the new *2006 Hunting and Trapping Guide*.

The following is a summary of the major proposed changes. To view the entire proclamations, go to TWRA's web site at www.tnwildlife.org:

Manner and Means of Hunting and Trapping

- Legalize all centerfire rifles for hunting deer, bear and boar (presently only .24 caliber and larger are legal)
- Allow hunters who have already filled their bag to accompany other hunters in the woods
- Legalize Sudden Valley Supply trap pads for use on offset jaw traps.
- Allow hunters on private land to hunt from a stationary ATV or other vehicle that cannot be licensed to operate on the state of Tennessee's highways.

Furbearer Hunting and Trapping Seasons

- Extend the otter trapping season in east TN to Jan 31
- Remove the river otter bag limit of four per season in east TN

Big Game Hunting Seasons

- Move Franklin and Smith counties to Unit L
- Increase or adjust quota and /or non-quota hunts in Anderson, Blount, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Hawkins, Houston, Knox, McMinn, Meigs, Overton, Rhea, Roane, Stewart, and Sullivan counties
- Redefine antlerless hunting boundaries in Anderson county
- Eliminate hog hunting with dogs in Greene, Unicoi, and Washington counties
- Add early season weekend bear hunts to Carter, Johnson, Polk, and Sullivan counties
- Adjust the bear and boar seasons in Blount, Cocke (South of I-40), and Sevier counties. Added two hunts, Gun-Muzzleloader-Archery (Dogs permitted): Nov. 13-16 and Nov. 30 – Dec. 8.
- Add a bear dog training season on private lands in Blount, Carter, Johnson, Monroe, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington counties
- Add or increase fall turkey seasons in Decatur, Lawrence, Lewis, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Putnam, White, and Williamson counties

Spring Turkey Seasons

- Clarify bag limits – One bearded turkey per day, not to exceed four per season with no more than two per season on Wildlife Management Areas and Refuges except turkeys taken on all quota hunts are bonus turkeys.
- WMA date changes and liberalizations

Smallmouth License Plate Over the Top

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency announced today that the smallmouth bass license plate will soon go into production, thanks to Danny Baker, from Fayetteville,

Tennessee. “Mr. Baker was recognized at the May 24 meeting of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission as the fisherman who put us over the top,” stated Bobby Wilson, TWRA Assistant Chief of Fisheries. “This was a team effort among our marketing, information and fisheries staff. It’s a huge win for our agency. I can’t wait to see this beautiful plate on vehicles across the state.”

Tennessee law requires that, as with any specialty plate, a minimum of 1,000 be “pre-sold” before it can be produced for the public. The deadline for the smallmouth plate to reach this goal was June 30, 2006. “We’re ecstatic that we beat our deadline by more than a month,” Wilson continued. Buyers who pre-ordered the new license plate will be assigned plates first when they become available. The new smallmouth license plates, featuring the work of renowned wildlife artist Al Agnew from a print titled *Sunlight on Bronze*, may be purchased soon at the county court clerk offices for \$35.

As with other TWRA specialty license plates such as the Watchable Wildlife bluebird, the black bear and wild turkey plates, the new smallmouth plate will cost \$35 above the regular cost of registering a vehicle. A portion of the proceeds from plate sales helps fund TWRA fisheries and wildlife management programs.

What’s the next step? The list of those who pre-ordered the plate will be sent to the Department of Safety. The agency will also send the license plate template to TDOS. The Department of Safety will then begin the process of developing and printing the plates, which may take from three to six months.

After the plates have been printed, the TDOS will send them out to the various county court clerk offices throughout Tennessee, and they will send out notices to those who purchased them. After receiving their notice, the license plate recipients will go to their respective county court clerk office to pick up their new plates.

If the recipient has a current plate that has not expired, as most will be, they must turn in their current plate in exchange for the smallmouth bass plate and they will be given credit for the amount of time remaining until their plate expires.

Once the new licenses go on sale, a person can have their new plates personalized, but it will cost an additional \$40 and only five numerals or letters can be used.

For a look at the design of the new plate, visit the TWRA Web site at www.tnwildlife.org.

Cuts By Congress Threaten Five-Year-Old Grants Program For Wildlife

The nation's 50 state fish and wildlife agencies aren't waiting around for more wildlife to be listed on the Endangered Species List. According to a new report that documents the last five years of the State Wildlife Grants Program, state fish and wildlife agencies are working ahead to prevent threats to habitat, population and health, and making a real difference for America's wildlife. But despite the success of the last five years, State Wildlife Grants—the nation's core program for preventing wildlife from becoming endangered—received a major cut in funding when the U.S. House of Representatives recommended only \$50 million of the \$74.7 outlined in the President's budget.

“State Wildlife Grants have made it possible for state fish and wildlife agencies from California to Maine to take on pressing wildlife concerns before requiring emergency tactics,” said John Cooper, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks and President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. “As the *State Wildlife Grants Five-Year Accomplishment Report* shows, State Wildlife Grants have been highly successful. I sincerely hope that the Senate steps up and restores funding for this core program.”

The report (available at (http://www.teaming.com/pdf/SWG_Report.pdf) highlights how these federal funds are addressing pressing conservation needs in each state. In Missouri for example, State Wildlife Grants funding was used to fix polluted groundwater, which was feeding into Tumbling Creek Cave—the most biologically diverse cave west of the Mississippi. In Kansas, State Wildlife Grants funds are helping cattle farmers determine which grazing techniques will protect nesting grassland birds while also optimizing beef production. In Tennessee, the State Wildlife Grants program has allowed the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to identify important habitats for scores of species, many of them in need of conservation and management; to establish

geographically-linked databases, allowing the TWRA to focus its efforts in the most important areas for recovery and maintenance of wildlife populations.

“The State Wildlife Grants program has enabled us to do some wonderful things for Tennessee wildlife and their habitats over the past five years,” TWRA Executive Director Gary Myers said. “From reintroducing lake sturgeon into the French Broad River to key savannah restoration on the Cumberland Plateau, to reforestation projects for birds along the Mississippi River, TWRA has been able to conserve our resources for future generations. State Wildlife Grant monies enabled us to partner with The Nature Conservancy to develop a plan and set our priorities for the future. Reductions in Congressional funding will severely limit our ability to make progress on implementing that plan.”

Prior to the creation State Wildlife Grants, there was virtually no federal funding focused on preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. Congress addressed this need in 2000, when, at the persistent urging of the Teaming with Wildlife Coalition, they created State Wildlife Grants. In a survey of 32 states, State Wildlife Grants was the single largest source of funds for wildlife diversity programs.

Hailed by republicans and democrats alike as vital to conservation efforts and an important investment for future generations of Americans, over 170 Representatives and 56 Senators have signed a letter asking that the program receive \$85 million in FY 2007, just as it did in 2002.

“The State Wildlife Grants Program is an essential funding source for every state fish and wildlife agency and a core program for conserving our nation’s wildlife,” said Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID), Co-Chair of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus. “This type of collaboration and cooperation is exactly what we should focus on if we want to make significant progress in species recovery. State Wildlife Grants saves taxpayer dollars by preventing more endangered species listings and I hope my colleagues in the Senate will join me in working to restore funding for State Wildlife Grants at \$85 million.”

“Tennessee’s Wildlife Action Plan, mandated by Congress when the State Wildlife Grants program was initiated, was funded through the State Wildlife Grants program,” the TWRA’s Myers noted. “Now that our plan is completed, our job is to work

with our partners to implement the plan. The State Wildlife Grants program has the potential to help us achieve that goal if it is fully funded. The funding cuts proposed in this year's Interior appropriations bill will make our job that much harder, but we will keep working with Congress and all of our partners to try and restore that funding."

Region I Fishing Report:

BROWNS CREEK LAKE (located ten miles south of I-40 in Natchez Trace State Park):

Creel Limits- Bass- 5 (16"-21" PLR) only one per day greater than 21", Blue and Channel Catfish - 5, Crappie - 30 (10" minimum). Bass fishing is good, fish are being caught on crank baits and jerk baits. Crappie fishing is fair, being caught on small minnows and blue & white jigs around the fish attractors. Catfish are being caught on turkey livers. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent. Fish being caught on crickets and red worms.

CARROLL LAKE (located on Hwy. 22 between McKenzie and Huntingdon):

Creel Limits- Bass- 5, Blue and Channel Catfish -5, Crappie - 30 (10"minimum). Bass fishing is fair, fish are being caught on plastic worms and lizards. Crappie fishing is good. Catfish are being caught on turkey livers. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent.

DAVY CROCKETT LAKE (located 4 miles west of Humboldt off Hwy. 152):

Creel Limits- Bass-10, Blue and Channel Catfish- 5, Crappie-30 (10" minimum).). Catfish are being caught chicken/turkey livers and night crawlers. Bass fishing is good in shallow water using plastic lizards. Crappie fishing is good, fish being caught in deep water on small minnows and white/chartreuse jigs. Bluegill/shellcrackers are being caught on wax worms.

GARRETT LAKE (located on Hwy. 190 near Dresden):

Creel Limits- Bass- 5, Blue and Channel Catfish - 5, Crappie-30 (10" minimum).). Catfish are being caught chicken/turkey livers and night crawlers. Bass fishing is fair using spinner baits. Crappie fishing is slow Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is good.

GIBSON CO. LAKE (located at Trenton)

Creel Limits – Bass – 5 (14"-18" PLR) only one per day greater than 18", Bluegill/Redear (in combination) – 20, Blue and Channel Catfish - 5, Crappie- 30 (10"

minimum). Catfishing is good. Bass fishing is fair using spinner baits and crank baits. Crappie fishing is fair. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent. Fish are being caught using wax worms, crickets and red worms..

GLENN SPRINGS LAKE (located on Glenn Springs Rd, 12 miles northeast of Millington):

Creel Limits- Bass - 5 (14"-18" PLR) only one per day greater than 18", Bluegill/Redear (in combination) – 20, Blue and Channel Catfish - 5, Crappie- 30 (10" minimum). Catfish are being caught chicken/turkey livers and night crawlers. Bass fishing is good. Fish being caught using crank baits and plastic lizards. Crappie fishing is fair. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent. Fish are being caught on red worms, crickets and jigs tipped with waxworms.

HERB PARSONS LAKE (located 8 miles north of Collierville off Collierville-Arlington Road): **Creel Limits-** Bass - 10 (14"-18" PLR) only one per day greater than 18", Blue and Channel Catfish -5, Crappie - 30 (10" minimum). Bass fishing is good. Catfishing is good, being caught on chicken/turkey liver. Crappie is fair. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent. Fish being caught on wax worms, red worms and crickets.

LAKE GRAHAM (located 5 miles east of Jackson on Cotton Grove Road):

Creel Limits- Bass - 10 (14"-18" PLR) only one bass per day greater than 18", Blue and Channel Catfish -5, Crappie- 30 (10" minimum). Bass fishing is good, fish being caught on crank baits and plastic worms. Crappie fishing is fair, fish being caught on jigs and minnows in 12-16 ft. water. Catfishing is good, some big fish are being caught on turkey livers and night crawlers. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent. Fish being caught in the 1lb. range using red worms and small jigs tipped with wax worms.

MAPLES CREEK LAKE (located 4 miles north of I-40 in Nathez Trace State Park):

Creel Limits- Bass -5, Blue and Channel Catfish - 5, Crappie - 30 (10" minimum). Bass fishing is fair, fish are being caught on spinner baits. Crappie fishing is fair. Catfish are being caught on turkey livers. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is good. Fish being caught on red worms and crickets.

WHITEVILLE LAKE (located 2 miles south of Whiteville off Hwy. 64):

Creel Limits- Bass - 5, Blue and Channel Catfish- 5, Crappie- 30 (10" minimum). Bass fishing is good. Fish being caught on spinner baits and plastic lizards. Catfishing is good. Fish being caught on night crawlers and turkey livers. Crappie is fair. Some fish being

caught on small minnows. Bluegill and shellcracker fishing is good. Fish are being caught on red worms, crickets and wax worms.

REELFOOT LAKE:

Creel Limits- Bass – 5 (minimum length 15 inches), Crappie – 30 (no size limit). Water temps in the low 80's. Lake level is about 7-8 inches above normal pool. Bass fishing is good. Fish being caught on spinner baits and crank baits shallow. Crappie fishing is good. Fish being caught in 6-7 ft. water. Bream fishing is excellent, fish being caught using crickets and on jigs tipped with wax worms. Catfish being caught in the ditches on nightcrawlers.

KENTUCKY LAKE:

Creel Limits- Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass – 5 (minimum length 15 inches), Crappie – 30 (minimum length 10 inches) Sauger – 10 (minimum length 14 inches), Catfish (only one catfish over 34 inches per day. No limit on fish under 34 inches)

North of I-40: Water temps in upper 70's. Bass fishing is good. Fish being caught around weeds and logs on plastic lizards or jigs. Crappie fishing is good. Fish are moving out to deeper water. Catfishing is good. Fish being caught along rocks in the Danville and Paris areas on turkey livers or night crawlers. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent. Fish being caught on gravel bars on jigs tipped with wax worms.

South of I-40: Water temps in the 70's. Bass fishing is good. Some fish being caught in the creeks in 2-3ft. water on spinner baits. Crappie fishing is good. Fish being caught in deeper water in the creeks on minnows and jigs. Catfishing is good. Fish being caught on the main channel in 35 ft.-40 ft. water. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing is excellent.

PICKWICK LAKE:

Creel Limits: Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass – 5 (15 inch minimum length limit on bass). Crappie – 30 (minimum length 9 inches). Water temps are in the mid 70's. Largemouth and smallmouth bass fishing is good. Fish being caught early and late off the points. Crappie fishing is fair. Bluegill/shellcracker fishing good. Fish being caught on crickets and jigs tipped with waxworms.

LAKE BARKLEY:

Creel Limits: Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass – 5 (minimum length limit 15 inches on bass). Crappie – 30 (minimum length limit 10 inches). Water temps in the mid 70's. Bass fishing is good. Fish being caught on jigs and spinner baits around weeds. Crappie fishing is good. Fish are scattered, some being taken around stumps and other cover

along edge of creek channels on minnows. Catfishing is good. Fish being caught on night crawlers and turkey livers. Bluegill / Shellcracker fishing is excellent.