

# Fisheries Management Zone 10

## Muskellunge



In Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) 10, muskellunge populations are healthy. The zone also has unique waterbodies that show the potential to support a world class fishery.

### Proposed regulation change for FMZ 10 muskellunge

In FMZ 10, a few waterbodies support muskellunge populations that exhibit the growth potential to justify the 137cm minimum size limit options. These populations are all associated with rivers flowing into Lakes Huron and Superior.

We are proposing creating regulation exceptions for select waterbodies to support the muskellunge objectives to:

- ensure healthy, self-sustaining muskellunge populations throughout their native range within FMZ 10; and
- to recognize and promote the significant social and economic value of high-quality muskellunge fisheries.

In 2020, zone-wide regulation changes were made to encourage the sustainability of muskellunge under recommendations made by the FMZ 10 Advisory Council. For 2022, the following exceptions to the zone-wide regulation are being proposed.

### Muskellunge exceptions being proposed

#### Great Lake Tributaries

- Goulais River – Upstream to the area known as Whitman Dam.
- Echo River including Echo lake – Upstream to dam at 46.574046, -83.935321.

- Thessalon River – Upstream to Rydal Dam in Plummer Township at 46.36537, - 83.74196.
- Mississagi River –Upstream to dam at Red Rock Falls.
- Serpent River –Upstream to Highway 17.
- Wanapitae River – Portion upstream of confluence with French River to Sturgeon Chutes.
- French River – All waters of FMZ 10 and FMZ 11.

### Option 1: Maintain status quo

- Sport licence -1; must be greater than 122 cm, and conservation licence -0
- Season: Third Saturday in June to December 15.

### Option 2: Modify season and catch and possession limits

- **Sport fishing license -1; must be greater than 137 cm**, conservation license - 0
- Season: Third Saturday in June to December 15.

### Spanish River Muskellunge Exception

- Spanish River – upstream to Hwy 6 bridge (also include Aux Sables River from confluence with Spanish River, upstream to Highway 17).

### Option 1: Maintain status quo

- Closed all year for muskellunge.

### Option 2: Modify season and catch and possession limits

- **Sport Fishing License -1; must be greater than 137 cm**, conservation License - 0
- Season: Third Saturday in June to December 15.

## FMZ 10 Fisheries Management Plan

In Ontario, the ministry uses size-based regulations to manage muskellunge populations, based on growth potential and ultimate maximum size. In 2020, the current zone-wide muskellunge regulation was changed to a maximum size of 122 cm. This regulation supports optimal sustainability by releasing mature females between their age at first maturity and 122 cm.

Several areas in the province are managed with a 137 cm minimum size limit, including FMZ 14, FMZ 12, and Lake of the Woods. In FMZ 10, several large river systems (see **Table 1**) and some lakes support muskellunge and are generally distributed in the southern part of the zone. This is also supported by Muskie Canada's angler diary program. Muskellunge populations that have growth potential to support a 137 cm minimum size limit in FMZ 10 include: Goulais River, Echo River, Thessalon River, Mississagi River, Serpent River, Spanish River, and the French River.

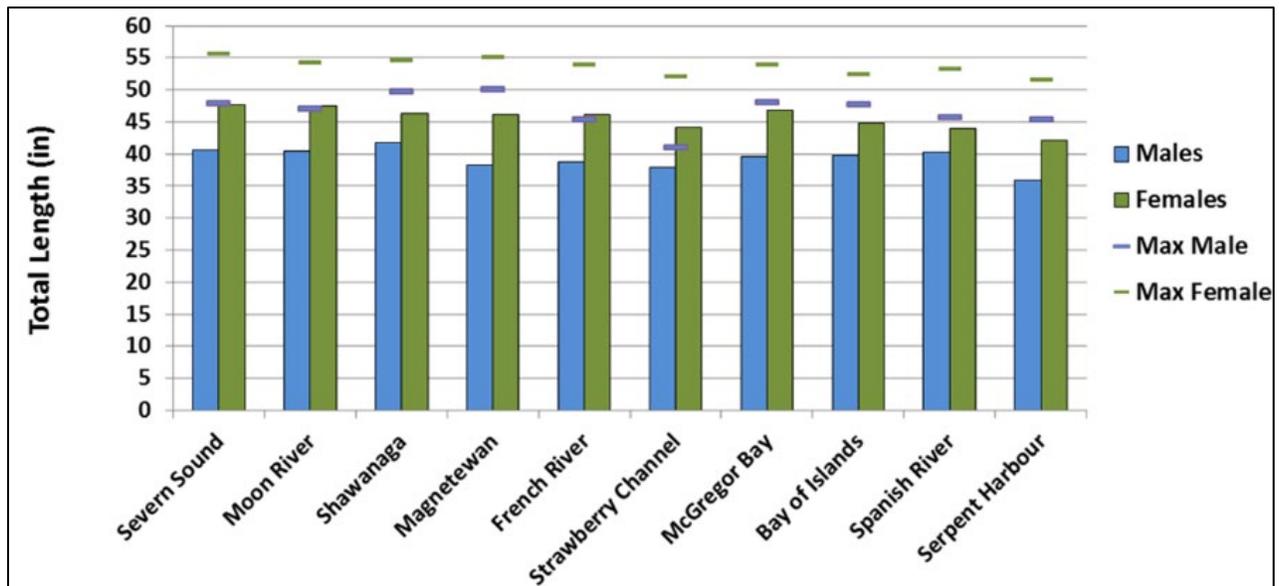


Table 1 - Average and maximum length for male and female muskellunge

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