

# MEMORANDUM



**To:** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

**From:** Tom Champeau, Director, Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management

**Date:** June 22, 2016

**Subject:** Consent Item: Clarification to Conditional Non-native Species in 68-5.002(1)(r)

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## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this amendment is to provide clarification and reduce regulation regarding the ability to take Northern largemouth bass on a fee- or for-hire basis.

## **Summary:**

FWC is proposing to amend 68-5.002, Conditional Non-native Species, to clarify the language in subsection (1) and paragraph (r) regarding the ability to take Northern largemouth bass on a fee- or for-hire basis. The classification of Northern largemouth bass as a non-native conditional species prohibits the possession of this fish south and east of the Suwannee River. However, under 68-5.001(1)(c)3, conditional non-native aquatic species are prohibited from being taken on a fee or for-hire basis. The original intent of the rule was to preserve the genetic integrity of the native subspecies of largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides floridanus*) not to prohibit guide services from targeting Northern largemouth bass. The proposed amendment to 68-5.002(1)(r) would provide clarifying language and reduce the regulations regarding the ability to take Northern largemouth bass on a fee or for-hire basis.

## **Staff Recommendation:**

If the rule amendment is approved for both advertisement and final adoption, and if no additional public hearing is requested, then Commission staff will file the rule for adoption as allowed by s. 120.54(3) Florida Statutes, as soon as possible.

## **Staff Contact:**

Tom Champeau, Division Director (presenter)