

**EMERGENCY RESTRICTIONS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF VHS IN NPS OWNED AND ADMINISTERED WATERS WITHIN APOSTLE ISLANDS NATIONAL LAKESHORE**

To avert the emerging and possibly imminent threat to park fishery resources presented by the rapidly spreading Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) virus, as well as to limit the spread and impact of other aquatic invasive and non-native species in the park's aquatic and near-shore environments, I am imposing the following emergency restrictions within the federally owned and administered lands and waters within Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, under authorities vested by Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.5 and 1.7, pending further consultation with appropriate parties and formal rulemaking on these matters as necessary. All State of Wisconsin fishing regulations continue to apply within the National Lakeshore except for the following restrictions designated under the authority of Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 7.82. Effective 4/12/08:

Ballast Water Exchange

- The uptake and/or discharge of ballast water by all vessels within the authorized boundary of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, which extends a distance of ¼ mile into Lake Superior from every island and the mainland unit, is prohibited. (See lakeshore map.)

Recreational Boating and Movement of Gear and Equipment Between Water Bodies

- The launching of any watercraft, powered or non-powered, or any other gear or equipment that has not been decontaminated prior to launch into NPS administered waters within the National Lakeshore is prohibited. For purposes of this rule:

“Launching” is defined as entering the waters of Lake Superior within Apostle Islands National Lakeshore from any land area, or upon moving watercraft, gear, or equipment over land to access bodies of water within the Lakeshore.

“Decontamination” is defined as cleaning and drying the watercraft and/or all associated gear and equipment so that they are dry and free of any vegetation, animals and mud and that the bilges, live wells and other compartments are also clean, dry and free of all organic material. All water from the bilge and vessel compartments or containers of non-potable water (except those carrying VHS-free certified baits in accordance with State of Wisconsin rules) must be disposed of where it will not drain directly into Lake Superior or inland waters onshore at least 100 feet from any water source including shoreline, stream banks, launching ramp/areas and enclosed rainwater drainage systems. Organic material removed from the watercraft or equipment must be disposed of in a National Park Service provided trash can, or stored in a closed container that remains on land or in a vehicle until it can be properly disposed of outside of the National Lakeshore.

Use of Bait for Fishing

Pending further monitoring of the spread of VHS, and in light of current State of Wisconsin regulations for fishing on Lake Superior, the following rules shall apply within the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore:

- For fishing inland waters on any island, only artificial bait may be used.
- For all other waters, only the following may be possessed or used as bait:
 - Any live or dead fish or fish part, including fish roe (eggs) otherwise permitted for use by the State of Wisconsin provided that it was harvested from the Wisconsin waters of Lake Superior within Ashland or Bayfield Counties.
 - Live minnows purchased from a State of Wisconsin licensed bait dealer in compliance with the State's fish health standards for bait fish (i.e. tested as VHS-free using methods approved by the State by a qualified fish health expert).
 - Worms, crayfish, and other non-fish organic baits otherwise permitted for use by the State of Wisconsin.

In addition, anglers are also strongly urged to make sure the baits they are using on streams that originate outside the National Lakeshore, but flow into streams on the lakeshore's mainland unit and then into Lake Superior, are both approved by the State of Wisconsin and are certified as free of VHS.

I have implemented these restrictions because I have determined that they are: the minimum actions necessary to protect fishery resources within Apostle Islands National Lakeshore; are consistent with the purpose for which the area was established; will not be detrimental to other park wildlife or the reproduction potential of the species to be taken; and will not have an adverse effect on the ecosystem. I regret any inconvenience to park visitors and the angling public, but solicit your full cooperation. Violators of these regulations are subject to fines, prosecution and/or possible civil penalties.