

Proposed Resolution #D
Requires 2/3 Majority

Sponsored by: Jonathan Durtka, Individual Member, Patrick Hogan, Life Member
Proposed: August 17, 2024 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Expand Underwater Spearfishing Opportunities

1. **WHEREAS:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) is the largest statewide conservation
2. organization in the nation. Founded in 1937, our mission is to unite citizens to conserve, protect
3. and enhance Michigan's natural resources and outdoor heritage. This mission drives everything
4. we do as an organization, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** MUCC has already adopted Policy Resolution AC100601 which supports
6. clear definitions of waters open to spear and bow fishing along with additional opportunities
7. and improved access to them, and;
8. **WHEREAS:** Underwater Spearfishing is an ecological, selective and sustainable method of
9. harvest, and;
10. **WHEREAS:** Michigan enjoys the largest bodies of freshwater (Great Lakes) in America
11. with ample space for Underwater Spearfishing to take place without conflicting with other
12. angling methods. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) confirmed there
13. were *zero* reported conflicts between spear anglers and rod and reel anglers on an April 3,
14. 2024, fisheries meeting, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** Multiple non-coastal inland states such as Wisconsin, North Dakota, South
16. Dakota, Utah, Arkansas, Wyoming, New Mexico and others with comparatively fractional water
17. acreage to land mass have equal opportunity for underwater spearfishing anglers and hook
18. and line anglers regarding table-worthy game fish availability, and;
19. **WHEREAS:** The seasons, size and possession limits for all species are to be adhered to by all
20. anglers and angling methods to mean that the harvest of fish utilizing underwater spearfishing
21. equipment shall not harm the resource, and;
22. **WHEREAS:** MDNR fishery biologist have stated emphatically there is no biological impact to
23. the fishery, and;
24. **WHEREAS:** current regulations require underwater spear anglers to be fully submerged when
25. attempting to harvest fish, the seasonal conditions limit access to the water based on
26. temperature and visibility, artificial breathing devices such as scuba and rebreathers are
27. Prohibited, and;
28. **WHEREAS:** MUCC supports expanding seasons and/or methods of take when sound science

29. supports such an opportunity, and;

30. **WHEREAS:** Any opposition to expansion of this method of take (underwater spearfishing) is

31. purely based on unsubstantiated perceived social pressure which will not stand within this

32. organization, and;

33. **WHEREAS:** Again, there is *no biological impact on the fishery*, and there have been zero

34. reported conflict between various angling methods, NOW;

35. **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** As long as it is supported by sound science provided by our

36. MDNR fishery biologists that MUCC adopt the policy to create fair access to Michigan's aquatic

37. resources and support the expansion of underwater spearfishing opportunities for game

38. species to coincide with current species-specific regulations and include waters in the Great

39. Lakes and Great Lakes connecting waters, as defined by Lake St. Clair, St. Clair River, St.

40. Mary's River, Detroit River, and to exclude designated trout lakes, designated trout streams,

41. and tribal treaty waters.