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PROPOSED RULEMAKING

FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

[58 PA. CODE CH. 111]

Boating; Special Regulations Counties

[51 Pa.B. 5687]

[Saturday, September 4, 2021]

The Fish and Boat Commission (Commission) proposes to amend Chapter 111 (relating to special regulation counties). The Commission is publishing this proposed rulemaking under the authority of 30 Pa.C.S. (relating to Fish and Boat Code) (code). The proposed amendment updates the Commission's regulations pertaining to Blue Marsh Lake, located in Berks County.

A. *Effective Date*

This proposed rulemaking, if approved on final-form rulemaking, will go into effect upon publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

B. *Contact Person*

For further information on this proposed rulemaking, contact Wayne Melnick, Esq., P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000, (717) 705-7810. This proposed rulemaking is available on the Commission's web site at www.fishandboat.com.

C. *Statutory Authority*

The proposed amendment to § 111.6 (relating to Berks County) is published under the statutory authority of section 5124(a) of the code (relating to particular areas of water).

D. *Purpose and Background*

The specific purpose and background of the proposed amendment is described in more detail under the summary of proposal.

E. *Summary of Proposal*

Blue Marsh Lake is a 1,148-acre flood control project managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) in Berks County. Section 111.6 states that a boat may not tow more than one water-skier (that is, person) on Blue Marsh Lake. This regulation was promulgated shortly after the Blue Marsh Recreation Area was established to address a perceived safety issue relating to boats with multiple towlines. According to definitions contained in § 109.4 (relating to waterskiing, aquaplaning, kiteskiing and similar activities), the term "waterski" is defined as "a device used by a person to be towed through or on water behind a boat. The term includes conventional water skis, aquaplanes, kneeboards, inner tubes, inflatable hot dogs, air mattresses, parasails, kite skis and similar devices." Some of these devices are designed to carry more than one person.

In the fall of 2019, the USACOE requested a change to § 111.6 citing that it does not serve the intended purpose, causes confusion among boaters and unnecessarily limits recreational boating opportunities. The USACOE recently requested the Boating Advisory Board reconsider their request to amend § 111.6 with the intent to limit the number of devices towed by a boat—rather than the number of persons—to no more than one. The USACOE stated that with the popularity of inflatable towed devices designed to carry more than one person, this amendment will eliminate confusion among the boating public and increase recreational boating opportunities. It is also anticipated that the amendment will result in more effective and efficient law enforcement efforts on the lake. The number of persons being towed on a device is limited by the boat's persons capacity.

The Commission proposes that § 111.6 be amended to read as set forth in Annex A.

F. *Paperwork*

This proposed rulemaking will not increase paperwork and will not create new paperwork requirements.

G. *Fiscal Impact*

This proposed rulemaking will have no adverse fiscal impact on the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions.

H. *Public Comments*

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments, objections or suggestions about this proposed rulemaking to the Executive Director, Fish and Boat Commission, P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000, within 30 days after publication of this notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Comments submitted by facsimile will not be accepted.

Comments also may be submitted electronically by completing the form at www.fishandboat.com/regcomments. If an acknowledgment of electronic comments is not received by the sender within 2 working days, the comments should be retransmitted to ensure receipt. Electronic comments submitted in any other manner will not be accepted.

TIMOTHY D. SCHAEFFER,
Executive Director

Fiscal Note: 48A-315. No fiscal impact; (8) recommends adoption.

Annex A

TITLE 58. RECREATION

PART II. FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

Subpart C. BOATING

CHAPTER 111. SPECIAL REGULATIONS COUNTIES

§ 111.6. Berks County.

(a) *Blue Marsh Lake.*

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(3) A boat may not tow more than one **[water-skier] water ski device**.

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[Pa.B. Doc. No. 21-1467. Filed for public inspection Septemer 3, 2021, 9:00 a.m.]

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