

2015-2016 SPORT FISHING RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS



January 15, 2015

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SPORTFISHING RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS

This year the Commission adopted a three year process for sport rules. Under this process, proposals are considered for the Columbia River Basin the first year, 2014; proposals for the Puget Sound and Coastal freshwaters are considered the second year, 2015; and proposals for saltwater are considered the third year, 2016.

The department initially recommended 32 rule proposals for the Columbia River Basin. Five public meetings occurred as shown in the table below. Written public comments were due by December 1, 2014. Oral comments were received at the Public Hearing portion of the Commission Meeting December 12-13, 2014. The written public comments are summarized below. All written public comments are available online at: http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/rule_proposals/2015-2016/. The Public Hearing comments are available as a downloadable audio transcript at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/commission/meetings/2014/> (within the December 12-13 meeting information). Following public comment, the department recommended 31 proposals, made modifications to 5 proposals, and provided options for proposal #5, Stream Strategy (Grande Ronde River, Asotin County). The Commission adopted the 31 recommended proposals.

Public Meeting Table.

Region	Date	Time	Location
1	August 26	6 - 7:30pm	Walla Walla Community College Clarkston Campus Clarkston Main Bldg. - Multipurpose Room 1470 Bridge St Clarkston, WA 99403
1	August 27	6 - 7:30pm	WDFW Spokane Regional Office 2315 North Discovery Place Spokane Valley, WA 99216
5	August 28	6-8 pm	WDFW Vancouver Regional Office 2108 Grand Boulevard Vancouver, WA 98661
2	September 10	7-9 pm	Chelan PUD 327 N. Wenatchee Ave. Wenatchee, WA 98801
3	September 11	7-9 pm	Selah Police Dept. 617 S. 1st St. Selah, WA

NOT REGION SPECIFIC/ BASIN WIDE

1. Technical changes

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Corrects Washington Administrative Code language to reflect rule adoptions made by the Commission (technical changes). Formats the language in a clear structure and corrects mistakes in spelling, etc.

Explanation

This proposal corrects errors in WAC language and is a technical fix to address these errors. This change is needed so that the WAC language matches the Commission's intent.

Proposal 1. Technical changes table

Item	Region	Technical changes
1	Not region specific	Sturgeon language clarification and location within Washington Administrative Code. The language clarification removes multiple entries of language that needs to be changed yearly (e.g. (i) It is unlawful to retain sturgeon, except on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays January 1 through July 31 and October 20 through December 31. (ii) Release sturgeon August 1 through October 19), references the yearly rule in one location, and replace the remaining multiple entries with "Seasons, days of the week, daily limits, and size limits same as in adjacent waters of mainstem Columbia River."
2	Region 1	Rock Creek (Adams/ Whitman counties). Change "Endicott Road" to "Endicott West Road."
3	Region 1	Tucannon River mouth is defined as the water south of a line of sight from a sign with an orange triangle along the shoulder of Highway 261 (the northwest of the Tucannon River), southeast across to the eastern, unsubmerged shoreline of the Tucannon River. The embayment between the eastern shoreline of the Tucannon River and the rock bluff to the east that has an affixed orange channel navigation marker, along the south shore of the Snake River, is considered part of the Snake River.
4	Region 2	Cougar Lake (Winthrop/ Okanogan counties) language clarification. Include selective gear rules in the Washington Administrative Code. This language was adopted as part of the catch and release rule but was inadvertently left out in the rule language.
5	Region 3	Put "Reflection Pond" beside Sarg Hubbard Pond in the Washington Administrative Code in parentheses because "Reflection Pond" is the common name for this pond.
6	Region 3	Teaway River and tributaries should be changed to "Teaway River and tributaries except North Fork" because the North Fork Teaway has its own entry.
7	Region 3	Yakima River from Roza Dam to Easton Dam. The closed waters entry incorrectly states that the boat launch ramp on the Roza Access Area is "approximately 1/2 mile" upstream from Roza Dam. The distance should be changed to "approximately 1.3 river miles."
8	Region 5	Abernathy Creek language clarification for closed waters. Change to the following: Closed waters from posted markers 500 feet below Abernathy Fish Technology Center upstream to Abernathy Falls.
9	Region 5	Jewitt Creek (Klickitat County) is incorrectly spelled and should be "Jewett Creek."
10	Region 5	Molton Falls is spelled incorrectly and should be changed to "Moulton Falls"
11	Region 5	North Fork Lewis is incorrect and should be changed to "Lewis River"

Written Testimony (4 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal.

Oppose: No comments oppose this proposal.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Modifications:**

1. The CR102 WAC documents have been revised to accurately reflect the technical changes described in the above table.
2. Rock Creek (Adams/ Whitman counties) “George Knott Road” changes to “Jordan Knott Road” based on recent information provided by the Whitman County Road Department.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as modified.

Commission Action:

Adopted as modified.

2. Remove internal combustion motors prohibition on small streams

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Remove internal combustion motor prohibition rule from small streams in the Columbia River basin.

Explanation

This change removes the internal combustion motor (ICM) prohibition from small rivers and creeks where the use of a floating device equipped with an ICM is impractical and would not be considered feasible. Removing these prohibitions will streamline fishing regulations from streams in the following counties: Adams; Asotin; Clark; Columbia; Cowlitz; Garfield; Lewis; Skamania; Wahkiakum; Walla Walla; Whitman. Table (2). Streams and rivers affected by this proposal.

Proposal 2. Region 1, Change Internal Combustion Motor Prohibition for some river sections.

County	Stream	Section (if needed)
Asotin	Asotin Creek	North Fork mouth to USFS boundary
Pend Oreille	Calispell Creek (Calispell River)	From Calispell Lake upstream to the source.
Stevens	Colville River	From Bridge at Valley upstream and all tributaries
Pend Oreille	Harvey Creek	From Bridge 4830 upstream
Pend Oreille	Kalispell Creek and all tributaries	
Stevens	Little Pend Oreille River	
Walla Walla	Mill Creek	
Garfield Co.	Pataha Creek	upstream of City Limits of Pomeroy
Adams/Whitman	Rock Creek	Endicott W Road to the bridge at Jordan Knott Road at Revere

Pend Oreille	Sullivan Creek	
Columbia	Touchet River	North Fork mouth to Spangler Creek
Columbia	Touchet River	North Fork above Spangler Creek
Columbia	Touchet River	Wolf Fork mouth to Coates Cr and in Robinson Creek
Columbia	Touchet River	Wolf Fork above Coates Creek
Columbia	Touchet River	South Fork mouth to Griffen Creek
Columbia	Touchet River	South Fork above Griffen Creek
Columbia	Tucannon River	mouth to Tucannon Fish Hatchery Bridge- upstream of Turner Road Bridge
Columbia	Tucannon River	Upstream of Tucannon Fish Hatchery Bridge
Columbia/Garfield	Wenaha River tributaries	

Proposal 2. Region 2, Change Internal Combustion Motor Prohibition for some river sections.

County	Stream	Additional information or section (if needed)
Chelan	Big Meadow Creek	
Okanogan	Cedar Creek	And all tributaries above Cedar Falls
Chelan	Chelan Lake tributaries	
Chelan	Chickamin Creek and tributaries	
Chelan	Chiwaukum Creek and tributaries	Upstream of Fool Hen Creek
Chelan	Chiwawa River	And all tributaries from Buck Creek upstream, including Buck Creek
Chelan	Chumstick Creek	
Chelan	Entiat River	And all tributaries above Entiat Falls
Okanogan	Goat Creek	
Okanogan	Lost River	
Chelan	Mad River	And all tributaries from mouth to Jimmy Creek, including Jimmy Creek
Chelan	Nason Creek and tributaries	From Smith Brook to Stevens Creek
Chelan	Peshastin Creek	And all tributaries from Ruby Creek upstream, not including Ruby Creek
Chelan	Phelps Creek	And all tributaries from the mouth to the barrier falls
Chelan	Rainy Creek	
Chelan	Rock Creek	
Chelan	Roaring Creek and tributaries	

Proposal 2. Region 5, Change Internal Combustion Motor Prohibition for some river sections.

County	Stream	Section (if needed)
Lewis	Butter Creek	
Lewis	Cispus River, North Fork	
Lewis	Cowlitz River	Clear Fork and Muddy Fork
Cowlitz	Gobar Creek	
Wahkiakum	Grays River, East Fork	

Lewis	Johnson Creek	
Cowlitz	Kalama River	From 1000 feet above fishway at upper salmon hatchery upstream to Summers Creek
Cowlitz	Kalama River	From Summers Creek to Kalama Falls
Clark	Lewis River, East Fork	Mouth to top boat ramp at Lewisville Park (Apr. 16-Fri. before first Sat. in June)
Lewis/Pierce	Ohanapecosh Creek	
Lewis	Silver Creek	Mouth to USFS Rd. 4778
Lewis	Tilton River	North, South, and West forks
Cowlitz	Toutle River, South Fork	Mouth to 4100 Rd. Bridge
Clark	Washougal River	Mouth to Mt. Norway Bridge (Apr. 16-Fri. before first Sat. in June)
Skamania	Wind River	From 100 feet above Shipherd Falls to 800 yards downstream of Carson National Fish Hatchery (Sept. 16-Nov. 30)
Skamania	Wind River	From 800 yards downstream of Carson National Fish Hatchery to Moore Bridge
Lewis	Winston Creek	
Lewis	Yellowjacket Creek	

Written Testimony (20 comments)

Support: Support for this proposal includes a statement that streamlining the regulations would be a welcome change. There was also a suggestion that the use of internal combustion motors while fishing only be allowed on rivers and small streams by people with disabilities.

Oppose: Opposing comments include: a) do not understand reason for this change based on the description; b) this could create conflict between anglers; people will find a way to use motors if the restriction is removed; c) it is not obvious what benefit comes from removing this restriction. One person suggested “...Continue to specify which streams are open to power boats, and if you want to simplify things, specify that unless a stream is specifically open to motorized boating it is closed.”

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Modifications:

1. The CR102 WAC documents have been revised to accurately reflect the changes described in the above tables.
2. Rock Creek (Adams/ Whitman counties) “George Knott Road” was changed to “Jordan Knott Road” based on recent information provided by the Whitman County Road Department and as reflected in the modification shown in proposal #1, Technical Changes.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as modified.

Commission Action:

Adopted as modified.

3. Black Friday trout opener

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Provide targeted holiday fishing opportunities on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Explanation

This proposal expands the "Black Friday" trout opener initiated in 2012 in southwest Washington (Region 5). List of lakes and proposed opening dates for Black Friday opener (Table 3) addresses the WDFW strategic initiative to increase freshwater license sales.

Proposal 3. Black Friday Trout Table.

Lake Name (County)	Proposed Open Date	Proposed Close Date
Fourth of July Lake (Adams/ Lincoln)	First Friday after Thanksgiving	March 31
Hatch Lake (Stevens)		
Hog Canyon (Spokane)		
North Elton Pond (Yakima)		
Williams Lake (Stevens)		

Written Testimony (10 comments)

Support: All comments support this proposal. Suggestions include that this proposal be expanded to include more lakes throughout the state and for whitefish. There is also a request that this be done as long as wild species are protected and only planted stocks allowed to be harvested (retained).

Oppose: There are no opposing comments.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

4. Tenkara fly fishing gear

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Modify the definition of "Fly Fishing only" waters to include Tenkara fly fishing gear.

Explanation

Tenkara fly fishing uses a long limber rod with a braided Tenkara fly line permanently attached to the tip of the rod. Tenkara fly lines vary in length from 12 to 25 feet with an additional leader attached. This technique is gaining in popularity and is not legal to use under the current "fly fishing only" rules. It is disqualified from use because of the term "conventional fly line". Using the term Tenkara in the rule will clearly define the type of fly line is required to comply with the rule change.

Written Testimony (79 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal and include: a) Tenkara is fly fishing in a minimal form; b) makes catching a fish more challenging; c) produces less stress to the fish; d) is physically easier to use than conventional tackle. There was a request to allow nylon/ fluorocarbon line as well (known as "level" line in Tenkara). There was a suggestion that the definition of fly fishing be focused more on the fly and weight; for example "*Fly fishing waters = Use of unbaited/unscented tied flies as lures only, with no additional weight attached to the line at any point.*"

Oppose: Opposing comments include: a) Tenkara style fishing is not compatible with normal USA fly fishing because it is "dabbling" and would cause conflict with fly fishing; b) enforcement is stretched too thin to add minutiae to the rules; c) no change is needed because this method could be done with conventional fly fishing line as is currently stated in the rules and the current rules state nothing about the use of a reel.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

5. Stream Strategy for the Columbia Basin

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Conservation

Short Description

Closes all rivers, streams, and beaver ponds to fishing, except as listed in the Fishing in Washington Sport Fishing Rules Pamphlet. Rivers, streams, and beaver ponds listed in the pamphlet as "open to fishing" will be identified for areas where stocks are robust and can support fishing pressure, as well as in areas where reasonable recreational opportunity exists.

Explanation

With various fish populations across the state being listed under the Endangered Species Act, a more conservative approach to the regulation of fishing in rivers, streams, and beaver ponds is essential and requires WDFW to provide the appropriate level of protection to these populations, in particular rearing juvenile anadromous salmonids. The difficulty is how to provide protection for these stocks of fish while also offering reasonable recreational opportunity. Throughout the Columbia River basin, the standard stream rule opens rivers, streams, and beaver ponds to fishing for game fish from the first Saturday in June through October 31, with an 8" minimum size and two fish per day limit. Consequently, much of the juvenile rearing habitat for resident trout, as well as for anadromous salmon, steelhead, cutthroat, and Dolly Varden/bull trout, is currently open for fishing. As a result, juvenile anadromous salmonids are at risk of incidental catch and may not survive improper handling and release, especially if bait is used. A more conservative management strategy to protect these stocks is to close all rivers, streams, and beaver ponds to fishing, except as listed in the Fishing in Washington Sport Fishing Rules Pamphlet. Rivers, streams, and beaver ponds listed in the pamphlet as "open to fishing" will be identified for areas where stocks are robust and can support fishing pressure, as well as in areas where reasonable recreational opportunity exists. The primary goal is to protect stocks at certain time of the year and in areas where they are most susceptible to mortality associated with recreational angling. This strategy has been successful in Puget Sound, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the Coast and now is being proposed for streams in the Columbia River basin. The tables and maps present the fishing opportunity that will be available in the Columbia basin. Areas open to fisheries are presented by river systems. All salmon seasons listed are last year's seasons and are subject to change. Since the basic rule in these areas would be "closed unless listed" there are "closed water" areas that will

no longer be highlighted. Some of these closed areas are still listed in the tables to clarify the intent of the proposals. The last column in each table is a letter listing, from A-F. These are the reasons for the proposed changes. Rules that remain unchanged will not have a letter in this column. Descriptions of the A-F listing are shown in the Code Table.

Proposal 5. Stream Strategy Code Table

Code	Steelhead Status	Trout Rules	Fishing/Conservation
A	Resident zone	8" 10" or 12" minimum size, daily limit 2 or 5, bait allowed	Fishing: resident fish opportunities usually above anadromous zone, hatchery steelhead may be available
			Conservation: allows most resident trout to spawn at least once before harvest. Minimum size and daily limits are based on trout origin; hatchery or wild.
B	Resident zone/resident fish concerns	8", 10" or 12" minimum size, daily limit 2 fish, selective gear rules	Fishing: resident fish opportunities usually above anadromous zone, hatchery steelhead may be available
			Conservation: allows most resident trout to spawn at least once before harvest minimum size and daily limits are based on trout origin; hatchery or wild.
C	Status good or anadromous fish juvenile presence low	10", 12" or 14" minimum size, daily limit 2, bait allowed	Fishing: resident trout, sea-run cutthroat, salmon, hatchery steelhead
			Conservation: minimum size protects overwintering SH, allows resident trout and sea-run cutthroat to spawn once before retention. Minimum size is based on stream size, productivity and life history of the trout.
D	Status bad or steelhead anadromous fish juveniles present	10", 12" or 14" minimum size, daily limit 2, selective gear rules	Fishing: resident trout, sea-run cutthroat, salmon, hatchery steelhead
			Conservation: minimum size protects overwintering SH, allows resident trout and sea-run cutthroat to spawn once before retention. Minimum size is based on stream size, productivity and life history of the trout.
E	Status bad	Selective gear rules and catch and release, except may retain 2 hatchery steelhead	Fishing: opportunity for harvest of hatchery steelhead, often includes catch & release opportunity for trout, sea-run cutthroat and wild steelhead.
			Conservation: selective gear rules reduce the catch & release mortality associated with the use of bait. Protection provided for all trout life history stages.
F	Status bad	Catch & release, selective gear rules	Fishing: no hatchery steelhead present, catch & release opportunity for trout, which may include wild steelhead.
			Conservation: selective gear rules reduce the catch & release mortality associated with the use of bait. Protection provided for all trout life history stages.

Written Testimony (107 total comments, 102 online plus 5 email)

Support: Examples of comments that support this proposal include: a) encourage WDFW to consider a total bait ban even in Code C areas as a means of preventing such areas from slipping to Code D or F areas; b) any river with wild steelhead should be catch and release for all resident trout; c) support this comprehensive regulation change to protect juvenile and adult salmonid populations, while still providing angling opportunity in areas not critical to juvenile rearing; d) the Okanogan River tributaries need more protection from the river to the barrier falls because these small streams provide the best chance for wild steelhead recruitment in the Okanogan system; e) extend the same status given to lower Bonaparte Creek to Loup Loup Creek, Johnson Creek, Tunk Creek, and Antoine Creek; f) Add bull trout to the ranking criteria because fishing and harassment can occur at times when these fish need energy for spawning; g) WDFW

must enforce these new regulations; h) increase daily bag limit of hatchery steelhead to maintain current fishing opportunity, angler effort, associated economic benefits and remove more hatchery fish.

Oppose: Examples of comments that oppose this proposal include: a) greater focus on production from hatchery systems would make these restrictions unnecessary; b) disagree with mandatory hatchery steelhead retention because do not want to drive a few hours to fish and then have to keep a mature (spawning or spawned out) hatchery steelhead; c) modify the proposal to allow the release of spawning or spawned out steelhead; d) not being able to fish close to home waters where the water volume provides prime fishing is disappointing; e) request for catch and release only and/or fly only water; f) this approach destroyed small stream trout fishing in the high country of Puget Sound, where areas not accessible by anadromous fish were still cut off; g) this assumes only salmonids exist in the Columbia River and greatly restricts fishing opportunities; h) the regulations make a simple system complicated, make them selective gear or fly only; i) enforcement of this rule is a problem; j) prefer fewer hatchery fish be released into the Grande Ronde to lessen the impact on wild fish and maintain existing rule; k) if proposal to keep the hatchery fish on the lower Grand Ronde (county bridge to the mouth) is enacted, it will ruin the fishing for fly fishermen because gear and fly fishing are not compatible.

Public Hearing (5 people testified)

All 5 people that testified at the public hearing commented on this proposal and specifically on the lower portion of the Grande Ronde, where we propose catch and release with mandatory hatchery steelhead retention.

Grande Ronde: Most commenters expressed concern that opening the river to catch and release will result in conflict between people that fly fish and those that use other methods. Two people supported the proposal as it is now written. Three people requested that instead of opening the lower portion to catch and release, it remain fly fishing with mandatory hatchery steelhead retention, and one additionally requested that no fishing from a floating device be allowed. One person suggested that in addition to the option of making the area fly fishing only, we consider leaving the current regulation in place or that we reduce hatchery smolt plants to reduce the number of returning steelhead adults.

Other areas: One person requested that all non-clipped trout be released throughout the Columbia River, as well as in Asotin Creek and tributaries for the Methow River that were not mentioned in the stream strategy proposal.

Modification:

All regions

1. The CR102 WAC documents have been revised to accurately reflect the changes described in the stream strategy maps and tables.
2. Increase the daily limit from 2 to 3 hatchery steelhead in most waters where mandatory steelhead retention is required. Increasing the bag limit will encourage anglers to harvest more steelhead as they newly arrive back to natal streams/release sites prior to over-maturing or spawning. The increase in the hatchery steelhead daily limit is to provide additional fishing opportunity before the daily limit is achieved.

Region 1

A. Grande Ronde River (Asotin County)

Based on public comment, the following options are suggested:

1. Do not adopt the proposed changes for the Grande Ronde River; maintain the current regulations.
2. Adopt the proposal as submitted, including allowing steelhead retention of up to 3 hatchery (adipose clipped) fish from the mouth to the County Road Bridge (lower river management zone). Also requires mandatory steelhead retention from the County Road Bridge (located 2.5 miles upstream

from the mouth of the Grande Ronde River) upstream to the Oregon State Line (upper management zone) and all tributaries within this management zone except the Wenaha River.

3. Adopt a modified proposal, with mandatory steelhead retention of up to 3 hatchery (adipose clipped) fish from January 1 through April 15 for both management zones.

B. Snake River

Remove mandatory hatchery steelhead retention for the mainstem Snake River. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Idaho Department of Fish and Game use a concurrent fishing regulations strategy for Snake River boundary waters. Not imposing mandatory hatchery steelhead retention will lessen confusion on boundary water regulations. Catch and release angling for steelhead on the mainstem Snake is not as prevalent as observed in terminal area fisheries. Emphasize mandatory hatchery steelhead retention in terminal area fisheries (tributaries) for effectiveness in removing hatchery steelhead.

Region 5, Kalama River (Cowlitz County)

Open the area "Kalama Falls upstream to source" under general statewide season, minimum size, and daily limit rules. This area is above anadromous waters and provides opportunity for resident trout fishing. This was inadvertently included as closed waters.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as modified and select one of the options listed for the Grande Ronde River.

Commission Action:

Adopted as modified and selected Option 3 for the Grande Ronde River.

6. Statewide General Walleye Rules

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Change the statewide walleye rules to a minimum size of 12 inches and a daily limit of 8 fish.

Explanation

Scientific data indicates that 12-21 inch walleye can support increasing angler exploitation. This rule will provide additional angling opportunity for walleye in many popular waters and simplify walleye fishing regulations.

Written Testimony (19 comments)

Support: Comments in support of this proposal include: a) change the minimum length but not the daily limit; b) allow unlimited take because walleye are predators of listed fish and inhibit their recovery; c) simplifying rules where it meets conservation objectives is always a good idea and it would be nice to see the WDFW take this approach with other regulations.

Oppose: Comments opposing this proposal include: a) this is a regulation without science; b) the limits are already too liberal; c) it is time we learned to live with this species since we cannot eliminate it; d) suggest no bag limits, no minimum size restriction, and mandatory retention of all walleye; e) set the minimum length at 14 or 15 inches to provide enough meat for a meal.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

7. Modify some year round lakes to a March 1 opener**Type of Rule Change Proposal**

Recreational

Short Description

Change from year round to a March 1 to October 31 or December 31 open season with the exception of Powerline Lake. Powerline is a walk in lake, and has an end date of the first Sunday in October due to water fowl hunting and potential parking conflicts.

Explanation

These small ponds offer limited fishing after October 31 into the late fall/winter months until they are restocked in late February or early March. Changing these waters to a March 1 opening day helps direct anglers to these waters when fishing is best. March 1 is when weather conditions often improve and the public is looking for outdoor opportunities. This has become the default opening day in SE WA ponds because of weather moderation and hatchery stocking schedules. Provides a consistent and promotable annual date when the lakes will be stocked and open to fishing for trout and other gamefish species. Anglers can schedule their fishing trip to the lake and include their friends and family. Spring planting dates vary from year to year. Anglers with flexible schedules are able to target on lake plantings but most anglers do not have the ability to fish on the days fish are planted and so are not provided similar opportunity. Lakes are located in the following counties: Asotin; Franklin; Kittitas; Yakima; Walla Walla.

Proposal 7. Lakes converting to March 1 opener with proposed open and close dates.

Lake Name (County)	Proposed Open Date	Proposed Close Date
Dalton (Franklin)	March 1	October 31
Fio Rito Lakes (North & South) (Kittitas)	March 1	December 31
Golf Course (Asotin)	March 1	October 31
Granger Pond (Yakima)	March 1	December 31
I-82 Ponds, 1-7 (Yakima)	March 1	December 31
Jefferson Park Juvenile Fishing Pond (Walla Walla)	March 1	October 31
Lions Park Juvenile Fishing Pond (Walla Walla)	March 1	October 31
Mattoon Lake (Kittitas)	March 1	December 31
McCabe Pond (Kittitas)	March 1	December 31
Myron Lake (Yakima)	March 1	December 31
Powerline (Franklin)	March 1	First Sunday in October
Quarry Pond (Walla Walla)	March 1	October 31
Rotary Lake (Yakima)	March 1	December 31
Sarg Hubbard Park (aka Reflection) Pond (Yakima)	March 1	December 31
West Evans (Asotin)	March 1	October 31
Woodhouse Ponds (Kittitas)	March 1	December 31

Written Testimony (20 comments)

Support: Comments in support of this proposal include that a consistent threshold date for stocking is welcomed.

Oppose: Most comments oppose this proposal and include: a) there are already very few opportunities for ice fishing in the state; b) these are not natural lakes so this type of management is unnecessary; c) this change will take away the opportunity for families to enjoy the water during the winter months and there are already too many restrictions; d) this will make the lakes empty faster of fish and this will mean less opportunity in the summer months.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Based on public comment opposing eliminating year-round fishing, do not adopt.

Commission Action:

Did not adopt.

REGION 1

8. Snake River Sturgeon

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Conservation

Short Description

Closes harvest while maintaining catch and release fishing for sturgeon in the lower Snake River reservoirs, from Ice Harbor Dam upstream to the Oregon State border, including all tributaries of the Snake River above Ice Harbor Dam.

Explanation

Limited stock assessments indicate that the sturgeon populations within these impoundments suffer from sporadic and limited natural production and that abundance may be declining or at least not rebuilding under the current fishery management (that allows for year-round retention). Eliminating retention will assist in rebuilding of these populations.

Written Testimony (17 comments)

Support: Comments in support of this proposal agreed and this will allow the sturgeon population to recover and that it is a good change to allow catch and release only.

Oppose: Comments opposing this proposal include: a) before eliminate retention do a population study and work to eliminate poaching; b) close the season entirely for a few years so that the population can rebound and then open to catch and release for a few years to see how the sturgeon fare; c) fishermen do not affect the fishery with a two per year limit; d) increased regulations for the protection of these valuable fish has effectively shut down guiding opportunities; e) urge WDFW to seek other management and sustainable methods rather than closing one of the very few areas left for sturgeon retention.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

9. Spring and Blue lakes year round season

County or Location Information

Columbia Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Change from March 1-October 31 season to year-round to provide additional late fall opportunity

Explanation

This proposal will provide additional recreational opportunity for hunters and others that would like to fish these lakes in late fall when they are visiting the Wooten Wildlife Area. These lakes are managed with hatchery trout with some trout available for harvest after October 31.

Written Testimony (7 comments)

Support: All comments support this proposal and include: a) this may spread out the pressure on the lake; b) any hatchery stocks should be open to fishing all year to reduce pressure on wild species; c) this offers some late fall and early spring fishing opportunities for those with disabilities; d) suggest the lakes be stocked again in late October because there are few fish left after mid-summer.

Oppose: There are no opposing comments.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

REGION 2

10. Extend fishing opportunity through the month of October

County or Location Information

Okanogan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Extend fishery through the month of October to provide additional fishing opportunity.

Explanation

Increase trout fishing opportunity in Long, Pearrygin, Round, and Alta lakes. Converts the closing date regulations so that they are consistent with other lakes in the same area.

Written Testimony (7 comments)

Support: All comments support this proposal. One person commented, “*The water starts to cool down a bit providing for better fishing opportunities and the weather is still decent enough to camp with my family, bringing extra revenue to the State Parks and the local communities in general.*”

Oppose: There are no opposing comments.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

11. Eastern Brook trout limit removed**County or Location Information**

Chelan and Okanogan counties

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Remove Eastern Brook Trout daily limit for specific lakes. Also allows the retention of two cutthroat trout for Big Tiffany Lake

Explanation

The proposed regulation is intended to reduce the Eastern brook trout population in Big Tiffany (Okanogan Co.) and Merritt, Myrtle, and Schaefer lakes (Chelan Co.). Formerly, Big Tiffany had a catch and release rule for Cutthroat in an attempt to focus harvest on the brook trout population. We haven't seen any benefits from the liberal brook trout limit, while releasing all Cutthroat.

Written Testimony (9 comments total, 8 online plus 1 email)

Support: Most comments support this proposal and include: a) remove the brook trout limit from all lakes and streams because this fish is a non-native invasive and outcompetes native populations while overpopulating the waters they reside in, resulting in stunted and unusable fish; b) a way to increase populations of native cutthroat trout; c) recommend that the catch limit be removed for brook trout for all waters; d) maintain catch and release of cutthroat but increase limits on brook trout.

Oppose: One person commented that the proposal does not go far enough, because brook trout should be removed from regulatory control completely.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

12. Upper and Lower Green lakes season adjustment

County or Location Information

Okanogan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

The fishery opens one month earlier (from March 1 through November 30, instead of April 1 through November 30) and the second season closes one month earlier (December 1 through the last day of February, instead of December 1 through March 31).

Explanation

These lakes are popular for ice fishing and the ice is typically melted the last month (March) of the season. To provide recreational opportunity at the optimal time for fishing this lake, the season will open one month earlier (March 1) and close one month earlier (last day in February) than the current season.

Written Testimony (2 comments)

Comments for this proposal include: a) might be best to rehabilitate the lakes first because they have been illegally planted with spiny ray fish; b) warming of the region will further reduce ice levels.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

13. Molson Lake daily limit reduced from 5 to 2 fish

County or Location Information

Okanogan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Conservation

Short Description

Daily limit reduced from five to two fish for consistency with adjacent lake.

Explanation

Molson and Sidley lakes are adjacent to one another. This rule provides a more appropriate limit (two fish) for this small lake and creates consistency with neighboring Sidley Lake.

Written Testimony (2 comments)

Support: One person stated, "*Sidley and Molson rely on catchable trout plants. Both lakes tend to get fished out fairly soon. A two fish limit on each lake would provide consistency, as well as contributing to a lengthier season.*"

Oppose: No comments oppose this proposal.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

14. Implement year-round season and statewide general rules for selected lakes to manage for mixed species populations

County or Location Information

Adams and Grant counties

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Convert regulations to statewide general rules (year-round) to increase fishing opportunity on mixed species.

Explanation

These lakes are no longer managed intensively for trout and are managed as mixed species fisheries. Seasonal to year-round regulation: Brookies Lakes (Grant Co.); Dot Lake (Grant Co.); George Lake (Grant Co.); Herman Lake (Adams Co.); Lower Caliche Lake (Grant Co.); Lyle Lake (Adams Co.); Mirror Lake (Grant Co.); Thread Lake (Adams Co.); and West Caliche Lake (Grant Co.). Special Rules to Statewide General Rules: Alkali Lake (Grant Co.).

Written Testimony (4 comments)

Support: All comments support this proposal. One person stated that mixed species lakes should be year round waters.

Oppose: No comments oppose this proposal.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

15. Big Beaver, Beth, and Little Beaver lakes fishery enhancement

County or Location Information

Okanogan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Conservation

Short Description

Adjust season from year-round to 4th Saturday in April – Oct. 31 season.

Explanation

Adjusting the season maximizes available hatchery trout production. These lakes are in a chain and require

spring and fall catchable plants to sustain a yearlong fishery. A shortened season will conserve some of the larger catchable fish for other lakes in Okanogan County that typically suffer winterkill.

Written Testimony (3 comments)

Support: Two comments support this proposal with one person stating that even though these three lakes provide a winter fishery, changing the season to opening day waters should have the beneficial effect of providing carryover fish.

Oppose: One comment opposes this proposal because it reduces fishing opportunity.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

16. Rufus Woods Lake—Eliminate chumming

County or Location Information

Douglas and Okanogan counties

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Eliminate chumming rules on Lake Rufus Woods.

Explanation

This change aligns the regulations with the Colville Tribal regulations. Chumming is an old practice allowed when significant numbers of kokanee were being entrained to Rufus Woods and this no longer occurs.

Written Testimony (8 comments)

Support: Two comments support this proposal.

Oppose: Most comments oppose this proposal, with one person stating that it would be nice to continue chumming for triploid trout as they are non-native to the system.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

17. Upper Wheeler Reservoir

County or Location Information

Chelan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Open Upper Wheeler Reservoir to fly fishing only, Trout Catch and Release, motors prohibited 4th Sat. in Apr- Oct 31.

Explanation

The department has an agreement with the Wenatchee Heights Reclamation District to allow this fishery on previously closed water.

Written Testimony (4 comments)

Support: All comments support this proposal and include: a) fly fishing only lakes are at a premium, so any additional waters are welcome; b) more opportunities mean more spending by the sports people in local areas; c) suggestion that the season open March 1 with the rest of the Eastern Washington lakes.

Oppose: No comments oppose this proposal.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

18. Wapato Lake

County or Location Information

Chelan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

This rule removes the selective gear rule. The seasons will be: Trout - 4th Sat. in April –July 31 – statewide minimum size/daily limit. All Other Gamefish – 4th Sat. in April to October 31 – statewide minimum size/daily limit.

Explanation

This proposal provides additional recreation opportunity on the healthy warmwater fish population in Wapato Lake.

Written Testimony (4 comments)

Support: All comments support this proposal and include: a) mixed species fisheries should be under standard gear rules; b) removing the restrictions allows more fishing days and increase opportunities to get kids outdoors; c) recommend modified versus complete removal of selective gear; d) forcing anglers to use barbless single hooks severely limits the lures that can be used to target warmwater gamefish.

Oppose: No comments oppose this proposal.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

19. Washburn Lake Eastern Brook Trout Fishery

County or Location Information

Okanogan Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

This rule reduces the trout daily limit from 2 to 1, adds selective gear rules and prohibits internal combustion motors.

Explanation

This proposal is designed to create a quality Eastern Brook Trout fishery.

Written Testimony (5 comments)

Support: Comments that support this proposal include: a) in most years, this lake can produce exceptional size in brook trout and a quality brook trout fishery under selective gear rules will be well received; b) great little lake that has difficult access, the experience is about quality as well as tranquility.

Oppose: Comments that oppose this proposal include: a) Why are we protecting non-native species? ; b) oppose any rule that encourages the non-native eastern brook trout because people transport these non-native fish to other waters in the area where they compete with native steelhead young for food and shelter; c) if an "exotic" fish is needed then tiger trout can be used, because they will not reproduce if illegally transplanted, and so lessen the impact.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

REGION 3

20. Two-pole fishing opportunities

County or Location Information

Multiple

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Allow two-pole fishing in waters where opportunities exist consistent with conservation objectives.

Explanation

The use of two poles will provide additional recreational opportunity.

Proposal 20. Two-pole opportunity for all species except sturgeon.

Area/ Section	Season
Bumping Lake	Year-round
Columbia River from Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco to Old Hanford townsite wooden powerline towers	October 23 through June 15
Columbia River from wooden powerline towers to Vernita Bridge	February 1 through June 15
Columbia River from Vernita Bridge to Priest Rapids Dam	October 23 through June 15
Rimrock Lake	Year-round
Yakima River from Highway 240 Bridge to 400 feet below Prosser Dam	March 1 through August 31

Written Testimony (13 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal and include suggestions to provide more two-pole fishing opportunities.

Oppose: One comment stated, "If *"management"* is so poor that we need to reduce numbers by adding a second pole then a rule change is the least of the issue." Another comment was that WDFW should not allow two-pole fishing where endangered species are present, because just one person can decimate a population of a few individuals.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

21. Cle Elum Lake adjust size limit and daily limits for Kokanee and remove daily limit for Lake trout, brown trout and eastern brook trout

County or Location Information

Kittitas Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Reduces kokanee daily limit from 16 to 5 (i.e. kokanee included in statewide trout daily limit for lakes) and sets a slot limit (Min. size 9", Max. size 15"), and removes the daily limit for non-native trout (lake, brown, and eastern brook).

Explanation

This regulation is associated with efforts to reintroduce sockeye salmon into the Cle Elum basin and is intended to improve likelihood of success.

Written Testimony (23 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal with comments that include: a) removing limits to more aggressive species will help improve salmonid fitness; b) restoring the ecosystem should be a priority for WDFW; c) applaud WDFW staff for having the courage to propose unlimited harvest of brown trout and non-native chars.

Oppose: One opposing comment was that the slot change may result in the release of many dead kokanee and that this proposal conflicts with proposal #23. The person recommends a 10 fish limit to be compatible with the other nearby kokanee lakes.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

22. McCabe Pond

County or Location Information

Kittitas Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Allow non-motorized personal flotation devices to increase fishing opportunities and help protect sensitive riparian habitat.

Explanation

This small pond has limited shoreline fishing access due to vegetative cover. Allowing non-motorized personal flotation devices would allow increased fishing opportunities at this popular fishing location and help protect sensitive riparian habitat.

Written Testimony (5 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal and its value for riparian habitat. One suggestion was to also make this a catch and release pond so that when the Yakima River is high or unfishable, this can be a back-up location.

Oppose: Comments that oppose this proposal include: a) McCabe Pond is so small in size that non-motorized flotation devices would greatly interfere with bank fishers and create recreational fishing conflicts; b) there are numerous opportunities within a few miles of this site for such activity.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

23. Kachess and Keechelus Kokanee daily limit

County or Location Information

Kittitas Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Conservation

Short Description

Reduces daily bag limit of kokanee to 10 fish consistent with kokanee fisheries statewide and to conserve kokanee in these waters.

Explanation

These populations are supported by stocking hatchery fry on an annual basis. The 16 kokanee daily limit is appropriate in waters which have abundant natural reproduction and are not dependent on stocking hatchery fry.

Written Testimony (3 comments)

Support: Support for this proposal includes: a) large limits encourage wasteful behavior; b) not having kokanee count toward the daily trout limit is a major positive; c) request to retain 16 kokanee limit lakes when possible.

Oppose: One comment recommends the development of a no-fishing area near the mouths of bull trout spawning tributaries in these lakes as well as bait restrictions to gear such as circle hooks to reduce the potential that the hook will capture a bull trout in the eye.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

24. Naches River: increase catch and release opportunity

County or Location Information

Yakima Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Additional recreation opportunity requiring catch and release for trout on the Naches River from Rattlesnake Creek upstream.

Explanation

Require catch and release for trout from Rattlesnake Creek upstream. This will provide additional catch and release opportunity on the Naches River while maintaining some harvest opportunity below the confluence of the Tieton River.

Written Testimony (313 total comments, with 308 unique comments and one comment received via email)

This proposal received by far the most public comment of all the Columbia Basin proposals, with most supporting it regardless of residency.

Support: Comments in support of this proposal include: a) this will make the Naches a quality, easily accessible fishing vacation similar to Idaho's Saint Joe River; b) recommendations to extend catch and release to the entire river, the tributaries, and other rivers; c) this will also cut down on fish mortality among the natural population of trout that migrate up river to reproduce; d) fishery has improved since the hatchery plants were discontinued in 1993; e) fishing is better in the current catch and release section of the Naches River; f) provides the ability to fish the river each year, observe the growth and stability of the fishery, and ensure that children and grandchildren can enjoy the resource; g) this will translate into longer term annual license revenue as well as long-term economic interest in local communities; h) data and publications definitively show that resident and anadromous *O. mykiss* life-history forms are members of a single, reproductively-mixed population when they coexist within the same geographic location.

Oppose: Opposing comments include: a) prefer a one trout daily limit; b) there are too many regulations on the river and keeping track of where and when things change is a task in itself; c) special interest groups want the very lower portion of the Naches River to be designated for the retaining of fish but this area has the least amount of access to the river and there are no campgrounds along the river; d) fishery biologists have recently stated that their creel census revealed that 90% of those fishing in the upper portion of the Naches River release their fish anyway; e) there is no biological basis for this rule change and this proposal will reduce opportunity.; f) perhaps a more important issue is whether this regulation will be enforced; g) allow for a 2 fish limit for youth under the age of 16.

Public Hearing (1 person testified)

One person requested that the entire Naches River be changed to mandatory trout release.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

REGION 5

25. Cowlitz two-pole and barbed hooks fishery

County or Location Information

Cowlitz and Lewis counties

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Allow the use of two poles and barbed hooks June 1 – July 31 in Cowlitz River up to the boundary at the barrier dam.

Explanation

Beginning June 1 through July in Cowlitz River up to the boundary at the barrier dam, barbed hooks and two-pole fishing will be allowed. This will focus on returning hatchery summer steelhead.

Written Testimony (38 comments)

Support: Comments from those supporting this proposal include: a) agree with two-pole idea but prefer barbless hooks; b) barbed hooks should never be used in any water where wild fish release is required; c) recommend extending this rule from May 1st until July 31st; d) the Cowlitz River has no true wild fish left or very few so the Cowlitz River shouldn't have a barbless hook restriction at all; e) recommend including the North Fork of the Lewis; f) extend this fishery to August 15th; g) this will lower impacts on the river and result in less time on the river, less pollution, and less hatchery fish --all plusses; h) a common sense proposed rule change that would not appreciably affect listed species because the primary targeted species during this time period is an out of basin, segregated, hatchery stock (Skamania Summer Steelhead) released primarily for sport harvest; h) increase the daily limit; j) in the Cowlitz River use the Lexington Bridge as the lower boundary to reduce the interception of non-Cowlitz fish.

Oppose: Opposing comments include: a) simplify the rules; b) this will increase "snagging" and "flossing" which are already problems in this fishery; c) allowing two rods per person creates more problems than it is worth for bank anglers because there is only so much bank access and some folks are getting pushed out due to lack of space; d) a number of fish are lost due to tangling with the second unattended rod when fishing two rods.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Modification:

Modify the lower boundary for two-pole and barbed hook fishing for hatchery summer run steelhead during June and July on the Cowlitz River: make the lower boundary the Lexington Bridge instead of the Cowlitz River mouth. This modification aligns this new two-pole opportunity with the current boundary for two-pole fishing and protects non-target stocks in the lower Cowlitz River.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as modified.

Commission Action:

Adopted as modified.

26. Elochoman River opener

County or Location Information

Wahkiakum Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Open the last Saturday in May to Friday before the first Saturday in June. Catch and release except 2 hatchery steelhead allowed.

Explanation

The proposed rule increases harvest opportunity on hatchery summer run steelhead.

Written Testimony (8 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal with comments that include: a) this along with mandatory hatchery steelhead retention will allow more angling opportunity and actual harvest of hatchery steelhead; b) open the river up to Beaver Creek Hatchery or slightly above to allow a fishery on summer steelhead while maintaining the integrity of wild fish that are in the system.

Oppose: One person commented that catch and release is not a good idea because it takes all the fight out of a fish and the fish is likely to die. They suggest adopting this proposal only if barbless hooks are required, since most anglers do not handle a fish correctly while releasing it.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

27. Lake Scanewa**County or Location Information**

Lewis Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Increases the season to start March 1 and go through August 31.

Explanation

Provides additional harvest opportunity for hatchery Steelhead and hatchery Rainbow Trout in Lake Scanewa.

Written Testimony (4 comments)

Support: There is a suggestion to also include spring Chinook salmon for added fishing opportunity.

Oppose: There are no opposing comments.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

28. Little Klickitat River**County or Location Information**

Klickitat Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Adjust rules on river in city limits 4th Sat. in April- May 31 to allow Seniors (70+ years) to fish and to open June 1 – Oct. 31 to all anglers.

Explanation

Provides angling opportunity for Seniors (70+ years) within the city limit 4th Sat. in April- May 31, and additional opportunity for all anglers June 1-Oct. 31.

Written Testimony (4 comments)

Support: Most comments support this proposal.

Oppose: One opposing comment that this river should be closed to all fishing for the benefit of wild steelhead populations.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

29. Open South Rowland Lake year round**County or Location Information**

Klickitat Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Open South Rowland Lake year-round.

Explanation

South Rowland Lake is managed for warmwater species and this will provide additional opportunity throughout the year.

Written Testimony (2 comments)

Support: Both comments support this proposal.

Oppose: There were no opposing comments.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

30. Elochoman, South Fork Toutle and Green rivers – remove barbless hook requirement seasonally

County or Location Information

Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Allow the use of barbed hooks from the first Saturday in June through July 31 in these basins when only hatchery summer steelhead are available for harvest.

Explanation

No natural origin summer steelhead populations are found in these basins; however, they receive hatchery summer steelhead smolt plants. Wild winter run adult steelhead and smolts are unlikely to be in the area from the first Saturday in June through July 31 and no salmon would be expected until mid-August.

Written Testimony (12 comments)

Support: One comment urges WDFW to also consider mandatory retention during these fisheries, because these fish are created solely for harvest opportunity.

Oppose: Most comments oppose this proposal and include: a) barbless hooks should be the norm; b) if we have to have barbless hooks in the Columbia River, then should not allow barbed hooks anywhere; c) removing the barbless hook rule will further confuse fishers as to where barbed hooks are illegal; d) compounds enforcement issues; e) barbed hooks are not needed to play and land fish successfully; f) these rivers still contain wild salmon and steelhead year round, many of which are caught as juveniles in sport fisheries; g) barbless single point hooks should be a state wide regulation for all species where their release is required.

Public Hearing (0 comments)

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

31. Salmon Creek – expand area available to fishing for hatchery steelhead from 72nd Avenue Bridge to 182 Avenue Bridge

County or Location Information

Clark Co.

Type of Rule Change Proposal

Recreational

Short Description

Extends the sportfishing boundary upstream by more than 2 miles, so that the fishery occurs from the mouth to 182nd Avenue Bridge.

Explanation

This rule takes advantage of increased numbers of stocked hatchery steelhead and provides additional fishing opportunity for hatchery winter steelhead.

Written Testimony (5 comments)

Support: Comments supporting this proposal included: a) implement with the associated stream strategy requiring mandatory retention of hatchery steelhead; b) add protection measures and identity awareness to avoid impacts to wild populations.

Oppose: There are no opposing comments.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Staff Recommendation:**

Adopt as proposed.

Commission Action:

Adopted as proposed.

32. Swift Reservoir

Type of Rule Change Proposal
Conservation

Short Description

Adjust maximum size limit for trout and landlocked salmon.

Explanation

This proposal adjusts maximum size limit for trout and landlocked salmon to 15" to protect wild salmon and steelhead being reintroduced into the basin.

Written Testimony (8 comments)

Support: Comments that support this proposal include: a) improve trophy fishing at Swift Reservoir by reducing the size limit of steel head from 20 inches to 15 inches, implementing a fin clip rule for trout over 15 inches, and including the daily limit as part of the normal limit; b) better enforcement is needed for vandalism and illegal fishing in this area; c) provide better signage that can't be destroyed as easily.

Oppose: Comments opposing this proposal include: a) suggestions that the maximum length be changed to 15", 18", or 21"; b) adipose fin clip the hatchery fish (like at Curlew and Roosevelt lakes) and require release of wild, non-adipose fin clipped trout; with an adipose fin clip rule, we could again plant excess Merwin Hatchery derby trout into Swift and protect unmarked adult steelhead.

Public Hearing (0 comments)**Modification:**

Replace current proposal with "release all trout except hatchery (adipose clipped) trout may be retained." This modification simplifies the regulation because all hatchery trout released in the reservoir are adipose fin-clipped.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt as modified.

Commission Action:

Adopted as modified.