



State of Washington  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia WA

August 27, 2012

Mr. Mike Daharsh  
Oroville Sportsmen's Club  
PO Box 2382  
Oroville, Washington 98844

Dear Mr. Daharsh:

Thank you for your comments on behalf of the Okanogan Sportsmen Club (OSC) regarding the proposed rehabilitation of Little Beaver Lake in Okanogan County. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) also appreciates the OSC's support of the Department's efforts to eradicate yellow perch illegally introduced into Little Beaver Lake. Public outreach and education from groups like the OSC can help inform the general public on how illegal fish introductions can negatively affect recreational trout fishing. I will respond to your questions and comments in the order in which you wrote them in your letter.

The Department believes we have fully complied with our legal obligations for public notification of the Little Beaver Lake and all other lake rehabilitations proposed for 2012. The Department issued a news release on July 13<sup>th</sup> listing all public meeting times and locations for each proposed lake rehabilitation (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/news/jul1312b/>). The Omak-Okanogan County Chronicle printed our news release in their July 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> newspapers for the public meetings in Twisp (7/24) and Tonasket (7/31), respectively.

The general public who attended the meetings in Twisp and Tonasket should not have been told there would be a 30-day SEPA comment period starting August 1<sup>st</sup>. This was incorrect, and I apologize for any confusion. For the last three years, the SEPA comment period on all proposed lake rehabilitations has been 21 days. The Department news release stated that written comments would be accepted through August 31st and those should be addressed to me. That is simply an additional means of soliciting for and considering public comments on lake rehabilitations. Public input is important to the Department and has influenced our decision to rehabilitate lakes in the past.

The impression that Little Beaver Lake was not the primary lake rehabilitation proposal in Okanogan County is probably confused by the Department's retraction of the proposed

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rehabilitation of Spectacle Lake, which is a larger body of water. Initially, both Little Beaver and Spectacle Lakes were proposed lake rehabilitations for Okanogan County, and neither was considered "primary." Upon further investigation and consultation with resort owners, the Department decided to put off the Spectacle Lake rehabilitation proposal for one to two years. You should not be concerned that Little Beaver Lake will be put on a five to seven year rehab cycle. The last time it was rehabbed was in 1980 to eradicate invasive minnows. Unless illegal introduction of yellow perch or other species reoccur, there should be no reason to rehabilitate Little Beaver Lake again in the future. However, lake rehabilitations typically last between five to ten years and average around seven years, and thus may explain why several lakes seem to be on a rotation of five to seven years. The more frequent the illegal introductions, the shorter the lifespan post-rehabilitation is.

The pre rehabilitation planning addresses the treatment of inlet and outlet streams. Inlet waters are treated to the upstream point where the undesirable fish can ascend. Outlet streams are also treated if waters below are to be treated, or they are detoxified if downstream waters do not require treatment. The outlet to Toroda Creek was sub-surfaced in July, and we expect it to be dry during the fall. If not, we would neutralize the water coming out of Little Beaver Lake so we do not kill any fish in other waters. That is standard procedure.

For each approved lake rehabilitation, the Department issues an emergency regulation lifting the current fishing regulations and allows anglers to harvest as many fish from the lake as possible. Unfortunately, due to the process and timeline for final approval, lifting the regulations cannot occur until the second week in September. Granted, three to five weeks is not a lot of time for anglers to harvest fish prior to the lake rehabilitation, but it is an opportunity that we provide as part of our process and protocols.

The lake rehabilitation documents handed out at the public meeting may be "old" in terms of when they were printed, but the information provided is still accurate and relevant today, especially the Q&A section and information. Your comment about the handout's appearance and perception of being outdated is duly noted and the Department will look into updating them for future public meetings. The Department has a staff member in Olympia that sits on the American Fisheries Society (AFS) Fish Management Chemicals Subcommittee and is recognized as one of the country's experts in the use of rotenone. This staff member also co-authored the current AFS Rotenone SOP Manual that the Department staff use today. Furthermore, Department staff members who perform lake rehabilitations have completed AFS and state training courses on rotenone and aquatic pesticide treatment methods and keep abreast of the latest research.

The National Institute of Health study you cite in your letter says "Rotenone directly inhibits the function of the mitochondria, the structure responsible for making energy in the cell." Inhaling powder or liquid or coming in contact with one's skin does not deliver the chemical to the cellular level in any significant amount. As stated in the response to your letters last year, in

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order for rotenone to “induce Parkinson-like symptoms,” liquid rotenone would need to be injected directly into the bloodstream. We have protective equipment and clothing that protects us very effectively from rotenone exposure. We truly appreciate your concern for our safety.

Thank you again for your comments, and if I can be any further assistance please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bolding". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

Bruce Bolding

Inland Fish Program

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