

2021-2022 Sport Fishing Regulation Proposals

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Overview

- Review 15 proposals submitted by department
 - Intended to address conservation needs or clarify rules
 - Staff proposals; some generated from public input
- Written public comment timeframe 10/5 - 12/4/21
 - All comment received through December 4 are summarized here; in total 219 comments (27 new, since 12/4 PPT).
 - Overview of additional comments will be provided verbally
- Commissioner Questions?
- Commission Decision.



1. Remove Char species from trout definition

Short Description

Remove Bull Trout, Dolly Varden, Eastern Brook Trout, and Lake Trout from trout definition; create separate definitions for “trout” and “char”.

Explanation

Removing these four species from the "Trout" definition will default them to statewide rules; clarifies management intent by more closely aligning rules with WAC.

Comments in Support (22):

More clearly defines management and intent, will reduce confusion

Comments Opposed (19):

Is going to make the regulation pamphlet more confusing. Special Rules should list species explicitly.



2. Clarifying Single Hook definition for Selective Gear Rule, Whitefish Gear, and Fly Fishing

Short Description

Clarify intent of “single point hook” as listed in definitions for Selective Gear Rules, Whitefish Gear Rules, or Fly Fishing Rules.

Explanation

Rules states "single hook"; intent of rules is to require use of a single-point hook, not a double or treble hook.

Comment in Support (17):

Treble hooks should not be allowed except to target bottomfish in the ocean. Single hooks are more effective and less damaging.

Comment Opposed (3):

Treble hooks should be allowed on some lures, and specified areas.



3. Require separate containers for each smelt limit

Short Description

Proposal would require each smelt (any species) fisher to have a separate container. This rule would apply to smelt fisheries in both freshwater and marine waters and all methods of harvest, i.e. dipnet and jig.

Explanation

This proposal would be applied statewide to aid in enforcing daily catch limits and tracking harvest.

Comments in Support (12):

Consistent with many separate containers daily limit rules (particularly shellfish).

Comments Opposed (0):

None



4. Sea Cucumber recreational dive harvest area

Short Description

Close Marine Areas 8-1, 8-2, 10 and part of 9 to recreational dive harvest of sea cucumber and establish a statewide seasonal spawning closure for recreational sea cucumber harvest from March 1 – June 30.

Explanation

Based on conservation concerns, will allow populations to rebuild specifically in MA 8-1, 8-2, 10 and a portion of 9 (District 3); meanwhile statewide spawning closure will further protect sea cucumber reproduction.

Comments in Support (6):

General support; especially for spawning closure.

Comments Opposed (2):

Opposition to year-round closure of recreational harvest.

Recommendation for adoption of bag limit changes instead of closures.



5. Shellfish possession limit language

Short Description

Clarify possession limits of shellfish through consistent language.

Explanation

Definitions of shellfish possession limits differ across WACs. Change will clarify by adding “while in the field or in transit”.

Comments in Support (6):

General support.

Comments Opposed (1):

Rule already says 1 limit in fresh form.



6. Puget Sound spot shrimp head retention

Short Description

Modify the daily bag limit for shrimp after May 31 to no longer require the retention of spot shrimp heads when only spot shrimp are retained.

Explanation

When open for spot shrimp, most shrimpers target only spot shrimp. Current rule requires all shrimp heads to be retained after May 31, which count towards the 10 lb total shrimp daily limit. This change will eliminate the requirement to retain shrimp heads when only spot shrimp are retained since daily limit is the number of spot shrimp.

Comments in Support (16):

General; strong support for the bag limit change.

Comments Opposed (0):

Commenters expressed support for the bag limit change but further suggested we do away with all weight-based bag limits for shrimp (non-spots).



7. Billy's Pond (Yakima Co.)

Short Description

Return this small, artificial pond in Yakima to Statewide Rules.

Explanation

Rule-making associated with 2SHB1579 liberalized bass, catfish, and walleye retention rules – these were inadvertently applied to Billy's Pond. The pond is on city of Yakima property with no public access. Reversion to Statewide Rules will remove the water from the pamphlet. The City will continue to prohibit access regardless of fishing rule.

Comments in Support (4):

Agree with proposal; but suggest that area should have public access.

Comments Opposed (0):

None



8. Lake Wenatchee kokanee fishing closure

Short Description

Close kokanee fishing / disallow kokanee retention in Lake Wenatchee.

Explanation

There are no kokanee, just Sockeye and ESA listed spring Chinook, Bull Trout and steelhead. Anglers fishing for "kokanee" encounter mostly listed species.

Comments in Support (8):

Shouldn't be rules for species not present. Open other selective gear fisheries as opportunities are limited.

Comments Opposed (0):

None



9. Bogachiel Hatchery Pond South Closure

Short Description

Revert status of this pond from “open for fishing” to “Closed Waters”.

Explanation

In recent years this hatchery rearing pond has been open for fishing. Changes in production now more fully utilize the pond for hatchery rearing.

Comments in Support (5):

General support / agreement

Comments Opposed (0):

None



10. Carlisle Lake (Lewis Co.) season change

Short Description

Open Carlisle Lake to year-round angling, with landlocked salmon rules.

Explanation

Prior to 'simplification', was open 'fourth Saturday in April through last day in February', changed to 'the fourth Saturday in April through October 31'. Owner of all adjacent uplands is a non-profit community organization interested in offering additional recreational opportunity.

Comments in Support (12):

Provide year-round access for kids and community. Best use of resources.

Comments Opposed (0):

None



11. Release cutthroat and wild rainbow trout in select rivers in Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, and Thurston counties.

Short Description

Select rivers in Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, and Thurston counties would require release of all cutthroat trout and wild rainbow trout.

Explanation

Release requirement is intended to provide additional protection for smaller waters.

Kitsap County: Blackjack, Burley, Dogfish, Eglon (Silver), Gorst, Grovers, Illahee, Kitsap, Little Scandia, Olalla, Salmonberry, and Wildcat creeks.

Mason County: Mill Creek and Tahuya River - from Belfair Tahuya Road Bridge upstream.

Pierce County: Chambers Creek - from Boise Cascade Dam to Steilacoom Lake

Thurston County: McAllister and Woodland creeks.

Comments in Support (13):

These populations shouldn't be fished, what about North Sound waters?

Comments Opposed (5):

Might as well just close the rivers. Keep as-is, never catch fish above 14" anyways. Keep current rules, there isn't enough angling pressure now.



12. Align Snake River Steelhead Rules with Idaho in concurrent waters

Short Description

Align steelhead rules with Idaho in concurrent waters of the Snake River.

Explanation

Aligns fishing regulation (season, daily limits, etc.) for steelhead fishing with Idaho in concurrent waters of the Snake River

Comments in Support (6):

Having both states on the same page makes sense.

Comments Opposed (3):

Idaho doesn't care about steelhead. Make rules based on areas/population needs, not because waters are connected to other states.



13. Close Methow River to Steelhead fishing

Short Description

Add “Steelhead: Closed to fishing” to all sections of the Methow River.

Explanation

Both hatchery (conservation program) and wild steelhead in the Methow River are ESA listed, rule would explicitly remove ambiguity related to steelhead catch and released provision under the "all Gamefish" listing.

Comments in Support (5):

Would support if there were no hatchery steelhead released into the Methow.

Comments Opposed (9):

Not enough steelhead opportunity in the area. Are we saving fish by ending selective fishery? Increase hatchery output.



14. Increased angling opportunity in the Muddy River (Lewis River tributary)

Short Description

Increases angling opportunity by moving the Muddy River to the statewide stream rules, with selective gear and release of all fish.

Explanation

This rule change would align Muddy River regulations with the mainstem and tributary reaches upstream, which also have selective gear rules and a requirement to release all fish.

Comments in Support (3):

General support

Comments Opposed (0):

None



15. Adding jointly managed off-channel selected areas to WAC/Pamphlet

Short Description

Adds jointly managed (by Oregon and Washington) off-channel waters in the Columbia River to WAC/Pamphlet. These locations are Blind Slough and Knappa Slough.

Explanation

This rule would create defined waters that allow Catch Record Card areas to be created in order to improve catch accounting.

Comments in Support (2):

Aligning with Oregon would be a good thing to do.

Comments Opposed (0):

None





Questions?



Commission Decision