

# **Sport Fishing Regulations Revision and Simplification Project**



Photo by Mike Mamola

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# Problem

- Too many special fishing regulations
- Some regulations are too complex
- Many regulations are not monitored for effectiveness

# Current Special Fishing Regulations

- 212 waters with special fishing regulations
- 431 separate defined special regulations for inland trout and salmon
  - 88 different seasons
  - 13 different size limits
  - 10 different gear restrictions
  - 6 different bag/possession limits

# Key Areas for Change

- District Regulations, Title 14, Section 7.00
- Special Fishing Regulations, Title 14, Section 7.50(b)
- Separate inland waters from anadromous waters and create two booklets
- Create a “statewide” regulation for trout
- Reduce number of seasons, gear restrictions, and size limits

# Goals

- Maintain or increase angling opportunity
- Improve regulatory consistency across waters
- Align sport fishing regulations with the Department's current fisheries management goals and objectives
- Reduce complexity and confusion
- Protect the fishery resources

# Trout Regulations Menu

- Foundation of the project
- Statewide Department collaborative effort
- Comprehensive review of current regulations
- Evaluate frequency and magnitude of regulations
- Identify valid and invalid regulations
- Consolidate valid regulations into a suite of biologically justifiable regulations

# Statewide Regulation for Trout

**Open year-round, 5 fish bag limit, 10 fish possession limit, no gear restrictions =**

Robust, self-sustaining and stocked fisheries with maximum sustainable harvest with emphasis on high natural yield and or elevated stocking rates

# Trout Seasons

- **All year** = Most liberal and focused on maximizing opportunity
- **Closed to fishing all year** = Most conservative and used to protect populations that are state or federally listed under either Endangered Species Act or imperiled populations that angling could have a significant negative effect
- **September 1 through November 30** = Fall season to either protect fall spawning fish aggregations or allow angling during the fall when summer temperatures make angling impacts more significant



# Trout Seasons Cont.

- **Saturday preceding Memorial Day through September 30** = Summer season where both spring and fall spawning fish aggregations occur
- **Saturday preceding Memorial Day through the last day in February** = Spring fishing closure to protect spring spawning fish
- **October 1 through the Friday preceding Memorial Day** = For use in conjunction with a summer season to implement more restrictive bag limits and gear restrictions during spring and fall spawning.

# Bag and Possession Limits and Gear Restrictions

- **5 trout, no gear restrictions** = (most liberal) Robust, self-sustaining fisheries with low to moderate angling, or stocked fisheries with maximum sustainable harvest
- **2 trout per day, 4 trout in possession, no gear restrictions** = Limited daily harvest but with additional possession, set for limited effect to hatchery supplemented or productive self-sustaining fisheries to allow some harvest. Moderate concern regarding harvest with no threat to total population or target catch rate.

# Bag Possession Limits and Gear Restrictions Cont.

- **2 trout, artificial lures with 14” minimum** = Limited selected harvest with protection for smaller age classes. Allows most individuals to spawn prior to entering the fishery.
- **2 trout, artificial lures w/18” min** = Limited selected harvest with protection for smaller age classes in high productivity systems that can produce large fish. Allows individuals to spawn prior to trophy sized harvest.
- **0 trout, barbless artificial lures** = (most conservative) Reduce angling impacts to listed or sensitive populations, mitigate high use areas, seasonally eliminate harvest of spawning fish, or to achieve fast action or trophy fisheries.

# Summary

- Menu was developed by DFW fisheries managers and fisheries biologist statewide
- Menu is foundation of this project
- The menu allows for flexibility in the face of change or efficacy

# Next Steps

- Department requests WRC recommend Commission endorse proposed menu
- Establish a standardized suite of management approaches
- Begin work with stakeholders to assess and select the most appropriate suite of regulations for inland trout waters

# Questions / Thank You

