

APPENDIX B

Simplification of Statewide Inland Sport Fishing Regulations

Public Outreach Summary

Public Outreach Summary

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) conducted extensive public outreach for the Simplification of Statewide Inland Sport Fishing Regulations Project (Project) prior to submitting the final regulatory package to the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) in June 2020. The Department held a series of public information meetings in 2018 and 2019 to inform stakeholders about the Project and solicit input and suggestions. In addition, the Department regularly provided Project updates at Commission subcommittee and full Commission meetings. This summary describes the stakeholder involvement process and input received.

Statewide Scoping Meetings – 2018

The Department held seven town hall meetings throughout the state in April and May, 2018, to discuss trout management topics with stakeholders. Meetings were advertised through emails to known stakeholders and license sellers, Department announcements, and local radio. One topic was a possible simplification of trout angling regulations statewide. At these meetings, the Department provided a brief presentation and made staff available at stations—which included a visual aid—dedicated to each topic discussed. A questionnaire was provided to capture stakeholder thoughts. In addition, questionnaires were available through the Department’s webpage in an online form related to each topic from April 9 through July 6. The Department received 753 responses to the regulations questionnaire, 21 of which were written on forms provided at meetings.

The forms included questions with categorical responses and free-form comment sections. Questions were directed at forms of fishing regulation (bag limits, minimum sizes, etc.), and one broad comment section. Respondents were supportive of regulation simplification (77%), while disagreement was found on what portions of the regulations were in need of revision. Among those not satisfied with current regulations (45% of all respondents), approximately 60% were non-supportive of current bag, size, and gear restrictions. Twenty-five percent were non-supportive of the current open seasons.

Free-form answers to the comment section were grouped to themes. A summary of the most common themes and their related topics are presented in the table below.

Theme (% of total responses)	Topics (% within theme)
Bag (18%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More catch-and-release waters (41%) • Decrease bag size (50%)
Enforcement (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater presence needed (85%) • Increase fine amount (11%)
Gear (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of barbless hooks (42%) • Increased use of artificial lures (29%) • Increased use of single-hooks (14%)
Season (6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer seasons (35%) • Closed during spawning (20%) • Closed during winter (18%) • Shorter seasons (11%)
Other (51%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reiterated support for simplification (22%) • Unrelated to regulations (21%) • Consolidate regulations (17%) • Improve regulation presentation/website presences (15%)

Statewide Public Input Meetings – 2019

In April and May of 2019, the Department held six town hall meetings across the state. At these meetings, the Department presented an overview of the project and solicited input on the Department’s draft proposed regulation changes. The meetings focused on the following key areas:

- Objectives of the new regulation framework and species management goals;
- Parameters of the regulation standardization and consolidation process;
- Review of specific proposed changes to regulations; and
- Regulation process and the Fish and Game Commission timeline.

Department personnel were available to answer questions and listen to stakeholder interests, needs, and ideas. All stakeholder input was taken into consideration as a regulation simplification package was developed for formal public review through the Commission. Below is a summary of the 2019 public information meetings.

Bishop – A meeting was held on March 20, 2019. 132 people were in attendance.

Redding – A meeting was held on March 27, 2019. 33 people were in attendance.

Fresno – A meeting was held on April 3, 2019. 21 people were in attendance.

Rancho Cucamonga – A meeting was held on April 6, 2019. 78 people were in attendance.

Sacramento – A meeting was held on April 10, 2019. 21 people were in attendance.

Truckee (County) – A meeting was held on April 23, 2019. 51 people were in attendance.

Online Survey/Questionnaire

Public input on the proposed regulation changes was solicited at the statewide town hall meetings held in March and April 2019. In addition, an online questionnaire was posted on the Regulation Simplification Project webpage (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Inland/Trout-Plan/Regulation-Simplification>) to increase opportunity for participation. Public input on the proposed changes closed May 3, 2019. During the public input period, CDFW received approximately 3,500 online questionnaires, 150 emails, 150 phone calls, and 100 letters. The table below shows the top 10 waters with the most suggestions and a summary of the public input.

Area/Body of Water	No. of Suggestions	County	Most Common Suggestions
Hot Creek	348	Mono Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep fly fishing only.
Crowley Lake	186	Mono Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't open to year-round fishing and don't increase the bag limit. • Don't change the regulations.
Kern River	120	Kern and Tulare cos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the area boundary to protect Kern River Trout. • Don't change the regulations.
Golden Trout Wilderness	116	Tulare Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep artificial lure/barbless hook requirement. • Change "All year and no gear restriction" to Saturday preceding Memorial Day through September 30, 0 fish bag, artificial lures with barbless hooks.
Owens River	95	Inyo and Mono cos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't open to year-round fishing. Protect spawning fish. • Don't change the regulations.
Carson River	76	Alpine Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep catch and release fishing only.
McGee Creek	67	Mono Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep closed during fall and spring to protect spawning fish.
McCloud River and tributaries	55	Shasta and Siskiyou cos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't change the regulations.
Merced River	47	Mariposa Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Rainbow Trout and don't open to year-round

			fishing and don't increase the bag limit.
Truckee River	41	Nevada, Placer, and Sierra cos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep catch and release fishing only. • Keep fly fishing only.

Statewide General Input

The Department also received general input on the proposed regulations changes as well as on the proposed Statewide Regulation for trout, which at the time of the meetings, was proposed as open all year, with a five-trout daily bag limit, a 10 trout possession limit, and no gear restrictions. Below are some of the most frequent suggestions.

Proposed Statewide Regulation for Trout

- Against extending the fishing season, increasing bag limits, and reducing gear restrictions on sensitive trout fisheries;
- Propose a bag limit of 2 fish/day with 4 fish in possession limits for the Statewide Regulation; and
- Need to protect trout and keep waters closed during the spawning season.

General Suggestions

- Don't change the regulations;
- Do not allow multiple hooks on trout streams;
- No regulation changes to existing fly-fishing-only waters; and
- No regulation changes to formally designated Wild & Heritage Trout Waters.

California Fish and Game Commission Meetings

Since 2011, the Department has provided information on the Project at several full Commission meetings and Commission subcommittee meetings. In 2019 and 2020, the CDFW provided updates and information on the Project at the following meetings:

- Wildlife Resources Committee Meeting – January 10, 2019 (Trout Menu presented and supported by the WRC)
- Tribal Committee Meeting – Feb 5, 2019 (Trout Menu presented)
- Commission Meeting – February 6, 2019 (Trout Menu presented)
- Wildlife Resources Committee Meeting – September 10, 2019 (timeline update)
- Wildlife Resources Committee Meeting – January 16, 2020 (draft regulation changes presented and discussed)
- Tribal Committee Meeting – January 17, 2020 (Draft regulation changes presented and discussed)
- Wildlife Resources Committee Meeting – March 5, 2020 (Discussion of proposed regulation changes and recommendation by WRC to move the regulatory package to the full Commission)
- Commission Meeting – April 16, 2020 (Update on proposed changes since the March 5, 2020 WRC meeting)

Other Public Outreach Efforts

- Department personnel attended a Mono County Board of Supervisors Town Hall Meeting on June 19, 2019 in Bridgeport. The Department was requested by the Board to attend this meeting to provide more information on the proposed regulation changes to waters in Inyo and Mono counties.
- Public Meeting announcements were posted in local periodicals.
- The Department posted information about the project on Facebook and Instagram.
- Project information was available on the Department's Regulation Simplification Project webpage including a link to the draft proposed regulation changes, meeting dates, and angler questionnaire.
- Numerous emails and phone calls from stakeholders were responded to.