

Committee Staff Summary for September 10, 2026 WRC

5. Inland Sport Fishing**Today's Item****Information** ☒**Action** ☐

Receive and discuss Department recommended regulatory amendments related to inland sport fishing.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Today's initial vetting | September 10, 2026; WRC |
| • Discussion and potential recommendation | January 13, 2027; WRC |
| • Present recommendation to the Commission | February 10-11, 2027 |

Background

Annually, the Department presents to WRC recommendations for changes to inland sport fishing regulations; when recommended changes are not urgently necessary, they may be held to combine with future recommendations.

Today, the Department will present and discuss its initial recommendations for changes to sport fishing regulations, suggested to become effective in January 2028. Initial recommendations include:

- Barrett Reservoir (also known as Barrett Lake) special regulation removal for black bass to simplify the regulation and increase opportunity
- Silver Creek (Mono County) opening for trout catch-and-release
- Seasonal closure of the Middle Fork Eel River to protect summer steelhead and increase consistency with other forks of the Eel River
- Removal of Sespe Creek from Trout Waters with Special Fishing Regulations due to the determination of the mainstem as anadromous waters for southern California steelhead
- Seasonal closure of the Eel River 1000 feet above and below the Van Duzen mouth to protect Chinook salmon
- South Central Coast District steelhead season adjustment to correct misalignment with peak steelhead run
- Add Manzanita Lake to Special Trout Waters and close Manzanita Creek to create consistency with current special angling regulations
- White sturgeon penalty for reporting non-compliance (consistent with other report cards) and clarification of currently confusing or unnecessary report card text

See Exhibit 1 for further details. The next opportunity to discuss ideas presented or generated during this meeting will be the January 2027 WRC meeting, where WRC will potentially develop recommendations for Commission consideration.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)

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Recommendation (N/A)

Exhibits

1. [Department presentation](#)

Committee Direction/Recommendation (N/A)



Photo Credit: CDFW

SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS

Recommended Changes for 2028



**Presentation to the Wildlife Resources Committee of the
California Fish and Game Commission**

September 10, 2026 | Maggie McCann

Fisheries Branch

Increase Fishing Opportunity

Barrett Lake Special Regulation Removal for Black Bass

- Remove special catch-and-release regulations from Barrett Reservoir
- Limited harvest better supports fishery quality and angler satisfaction
- Increases opportunity and simplifies regulations

Silver Creek (Mono County) Opening

- Major success with the removal of non-native trout from Silver Creek provides opportunity for reopening of Silver Creek
- “Closed to all Angling” → “All year. 0 trout, artificial flies with barbless hooks”



Protective Changes: Eel River and Sespe Creek

Seasonal Closure of the Middle Fork Eel River

- Close the Middle Fork Eel River from April 1st to July 15th
- Protects key populations of North Coast Summer steelhead
- More consistent with the other forks of the Eel River watershed

Remove Sespe Creek from Trout Waters

- The mainstem of Sespe Creek has been determined to be anadromous waters for Southern California steelhead
- Remove Sespe Creek and tributaries above Alder Creek confluence from Trout Waters with Special Fishing Regulations



Protective Changes: Van Duzen Mouth

- California Coastal Chinook aggregate on the Eel River near the mouth of the Van Duzen River during low flow conditions
- Catch and release fishing causes stress while Chinook are in a vulnerable state
- To protect this Endangered Species Act listed species, close the main stem Eel River to fishing 1000 feet upstream and 1000 feet downstream of its confluence with the Van Duzen River during salmon season



Consistency and Clarity: South Central Coast

- South Central Coast District season misaligned with peak steelhead run
- Current regulations for South Central Coast District streams West of Highway 1:
 - Open season Dec. 1 through Mar. 7
 - “Only on Sat., Sun., Wed., legal holidays and opening and closing days”
 - Subject to low flow closures
- Change District regulations and Salmon Waters with Special Fishing Regulations for San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and Monterey to:
 - Open season Jan. 1 through Mar. 31
 - 7 days a week
 - Subject to low-flow closures



Consistency and Clarity: Manzanita Lake

- Under Secretary's Order 3447, the Manzanita Lake and Manzanita Creek special angling regulations at Lassen Volcanic National Park may be terminated
- Manzanita Lake is a CDFW designated wild trout water
- To provide consistency with current special angling regulations:
 - Add Manzanita Lake to section 7.50, Special Trout Waters
 - Open all year
 - Bag 0 (catch and release only)
 - Artificial lures with single barbless hook only
 - Close Manzanita Creek

Consistency and Clarity: White Sturgeon

- Remove obsolete text from the Sturgeon Report Card
- Clarify confusing language
 - Allow limited use of lip gripper devices
 - Clarify when to fill in Sturgeon Report Card while fishing
- Institute a penalty for reporting non-compliance
 - In line with the existing Lobster Report Card and the Steelhead Report Card



Photo Credit: John Kelly, CDFW

Proposed Timeline

- January 13, 2027 Wildlife Resources Committee
- April 14-15, 2027 Commission Meeting – Notice hearing
- June 9-10, 2027 Commission Meeting – Discussion hearing
- August 18-19, 2027 Commission Meeting – Adoption hearing
- January 1, 2028 – If approved, requested effective date

Questions/Contact



Barrett Lake. Photo Credit: Matt Lucero, CDFW

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