

# Steelhead Fishing Report Card

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**1. Why does CDFW ask for the Steelhead Report Cards to be returned?**

- CDFW is responsible for managing and conserving California's fish and wildlife resources and facilitating and enhancing angling opportunities. The Department is required by statute (Fish and Game Code 6900) to monitor and restore steelhead populations, and central to this mandate is obtaining information on angler effort and harvest of both wild and hatchery steelhead. The Steelhead Report Card is the only state-wide program designed to gather such data. Because the majority of California's steelhead populations are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), angling information is even more critical, not only to ensure that angling does not cause further impacts to steelhead populations, but also to demonstrate that impacts due to angling are minimal. This information is necessary to allow angling to continue under provisions of the ESA. Failure to collect these data could result in the closure of steelhead fisheries across the state. The Department's goal is to improve steelhead habitat and populations, and enhance steelhead fishing opportunities and success. This requires accurate and complete data from all steelhead anglers, including those that did not fish ([see #3](#) below).

**2. What is the money used for?**

- Revenue received pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 7380 (Steelhead Report Card) may only be expended to monitor, restore, or enhance steelhead trout resources consistent with Fish and Game Code sections 6901 and 6902, and to administer the Steelhead Report Card program. Typical projects include: assessing angler harvest, restoring spawning and rearing habitat, securing adequate flows, and removing barriers to migration.

**3. I did not fish for steelhead this year. Do I still need to return the Steelhead Report Card?**

- Yes, this information is still valuable as it increases our statistical accuracy and reliability. Please write "Did Not Fish" on your Steelhead Report Card and return it to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife at the address indicated.

**4. I've lost my report card. What do I do?**

- Lost report cards must be reported by email or mail.
  - [shcard@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:shcard@wildlife.ca.gov)
  - PO Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244
- The following information must be included in your report for each fishing day.
  - Location (see [www.dfg.ca.gov/steelheadcard](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/steelheadcard) for help)
    - Year, Month, Day, Hours
    - Wild steelhead released 16" and over
    - Hatchery steelhead kept or released 16" and over
  - Once you have sent this information to the program, your report is complete, and any subsequent trips should be reported on your new card.
  - A duplicate Steelhead Report Card cannot be reissued. Contact your nearest license agent to purchase a new card. [www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing/](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing/)

**5. I did not catch any steelhead or I released all steelhead that I caught. Do I still need to return the Steelhead Report Card?**

- Yes. Please read the Sport Fishing Regulations and the back of your Steelhead Report Card about recording your steelhead fishing efforts. The Report Card is designed for you to record fishing effort, regardless of whether or not you catch a steelhead. It is also designed to record catch and release information, so if you didn't keep any, at least your fishing efforts and releases should be recorded. [Please see #4](#) above regarding reports for lost cards.

**6. I received a reminder post card but I have already sent in my Steelhead Report Card. What do I do?**

- Your Report Card had not arrived in our office at the time the reminder post cards were mailed. Please note that you've already returned the Report Card and return the reminder post card for our records. Sorry for any inconvenience.

**7. I did not purchase a Steelhead Report Card. Why was I sent a post card telling me to return my Steelhead Report Card?**

- If you received a postcard, than our License System indicated that a Steelhead Report Card was purchased in your name. You may call our [License Sales Support](#) if you have questions about this purchase.

**8. My name is not spelled right. It is not me. What do I do?**

- All steelhead angler addresses, phone numbers, etc., are entered from records received from the License Agents. Please contact [License Sales Support](#) for assistance.

**9. The Fishing License and Steelhead Report Card are expensive. Other states are much cheaper to fish for steelhead. Why?**

- Though purchasing a Steelhead Report Card may be an additional expense to fish for steelhead, it is actually an investment into the future of the steelhead resource. Revenue received from the sales of the Steelhead Report Card goes into a dedicated account specifically for funding steelhead habitat restoration and monitoring projects designed to improve steelhead populations, with the goal of providing you greater steelhead fishing opportunities and success. Pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 713, the cost of the Report Card adjusts in response to the Implicit Price Deflator. This index responds to the fluctuation of cost of goods from year to year and accounts for why Report Card revenue has increased when Report Card sales have not.

**10. If I fill-up the Steelhead Report Card. What do I do then?**

- You would need to purchase another Steelhead Report Card.
- Though recording all steelhead fishing efforts may seem inconvenient (and an additional expense), the data you provide are critical to proper management of the steelhead resource. CDFW's goal is to improve steelhead fishing opportunities and success, and this requires accurate data. [See #1](#) above for the purpose of this data, or [See #2](#) for the purpose of the revenue.

**11. Why don't you just ask anglers to return their Steelhead Report Cards? Why a mandatory return?**

- For the first 10 years of the program, return of the Report Card was not mandatory and steelhead anglers were asked to voluntarily return their Report Card (this request was printed on the Steelhead Report Cards). In addition, a random sample of 10,000 steelhead anglers were mailed a survey form every year (with an addressed, postage-paid return envelope) and a request that they return their Report Card. Despite the effort to obtain the Report Card through voluntary compliance, the return rate of the Report Cards was only about 8% annually, which is too small a number for adequate data analysis. That is why the legislation was changed in 2002 to make return of the Report Card mandatory.

**12. Why are you threatening me with a misdemeanor?**

- You are being provided information regarding compliance with the law. Given the need for this information relative to the continued future of the steelhead fishery,

the Department will continue to educate anglers that return of the Steelhead Report Card is necessary for them to be in compliance with the law.

**13. How much does the reminder post card cost the program?**

- Since the implementation of the Automated License Distribution System, the cost to send the reminder post cards is approximately \$15,000 every year. In order to decrease this cost, anglers must return their cards on time and are encouraged to include email addresses when purchasing their cards.
- If the majority of anglers would return their Report Card, as required by law, no additional effort or financial expenditure would be required. Unfortunately, the program does not receive a majority of report cards on time. The data is critical, so the effort is necessary, and the cost is negligible compared to losing the fishery for lack of data.

**14. I want to keep my card for my collection. Can I?**

- Yes. Please provide a quality photo copy of your report card and return that information.

**15. Where can I get the data for the river(s) I fish? How can I get the results of these data?**

- The 1997 and 2000 reports to the Legislature that describe the results and accomplishments of the Steelhead Report Card program are available on this site.
- The next report is due to the Legislature by July 1, 2007. This report will be available once submitted to the Legislature. Annual statistics are being compiled and will be posted upon completion on the Steelhead Report Card web page.

**16. The angler has passed away and I don't know anything about the Steelhead Report Card. What do I do?**

- Please accept our genuine apologies regarding your loss and for any inconvenience, distress or additional sorrow this request for past information may have caused you and your family. Please write this information on the post card you just received and return it to the address provided.