

# 2012-2013 Sportfishing Rule Change Proposals Public Testimony

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# Presentation Outline

- Process timeline
- Proposals with greatest response
- Public testimony

# Process Timeline

- Aug. & Oct. Met with Fish Committee
- October Met with advisory groups  
Notified public (email, press release, website)  
Regional public meetings (4)
- Dec. 2-3 Briefed Commission
- **Jan. 2012** **Public Hearing**
- Jan. – Feb. Meet with Fish Committee
- Feb. 2012 Adopt rules
- May 1 2012 Pamphlet —rules take effect

# Public Comment

- Over 850 comments
- Proposals with greatest comments
  - #1 Northern pike classification
  - #9 Puget Sound sturgeon
  - #10 Coastal stream strategy
  - #12 Roosevelt Lake walleye
  - #14 Kettle River fishery additions

# #1 Northern Pike Classification

- Consistent with native species protection
  - Recognize financial resources expended
  - Allow expanded gear - archery and spearfishing
  - Require mandatory retention
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- Popular “game fish” sport fishing opportunity
  - Impacts to local economy from reduced fishing
  - Rather see a size limit and manage as game fish

# #9 Puget Sound Sturgeon

- Support closure until catch composition known
- Conservation of white sturgeon
- Why if Columbia River fishery allows retention
- Economic impacts to local economies
- Tribal harvest of sturgeon in Puget Sound
- Modifications rather than non-retention

# #10 Coastal Stream Strategy

- General support for rule
- Modifications to specific rivers
  - Willapa steelhead Feb 28 closure
- Comments for no wild steelhead retention
- Selective gear rules in all anadromous waters
- Loss of recreational opportunity

# #12 Lake Roosevelt Walleye

- Support to control walleye population
- Not adequate to address walleye predation
- Keep 8 fish limit and drop 1 over 22" and open lower Spokane River in spring
- No science to justify this proposal
- Will impact a popular sport fishery
- Modification suggested for 8 bonus fish less than 14" or 16"



# #14 Kettle River Fishery Additions

- Petition to remove selective gear rules from entire Kettle River
- Retain current selective gear rules to conserve trout and maintain quality fishery
- Bait fishing opportunities already present in the area
- Consider modification to allow bait for kids only

# Public Testimony

# Northern Pike Classification

- Remove game fish designation
- High potential for negative environmental impacts
- Currently listed as game fish and prohibited species
- Require that fish removed from riparian area be dead
- Retain regulations of no daily limit and no minimum length

# Pend Oreille Two Pole Fishery

- Allow for two-pole endorsement in Pend Oreille River (Box Canyon and Boundary reservoirs)
- Increase Northern Pike harvest
- Provide additional recreation for game fish
- Increase revenue

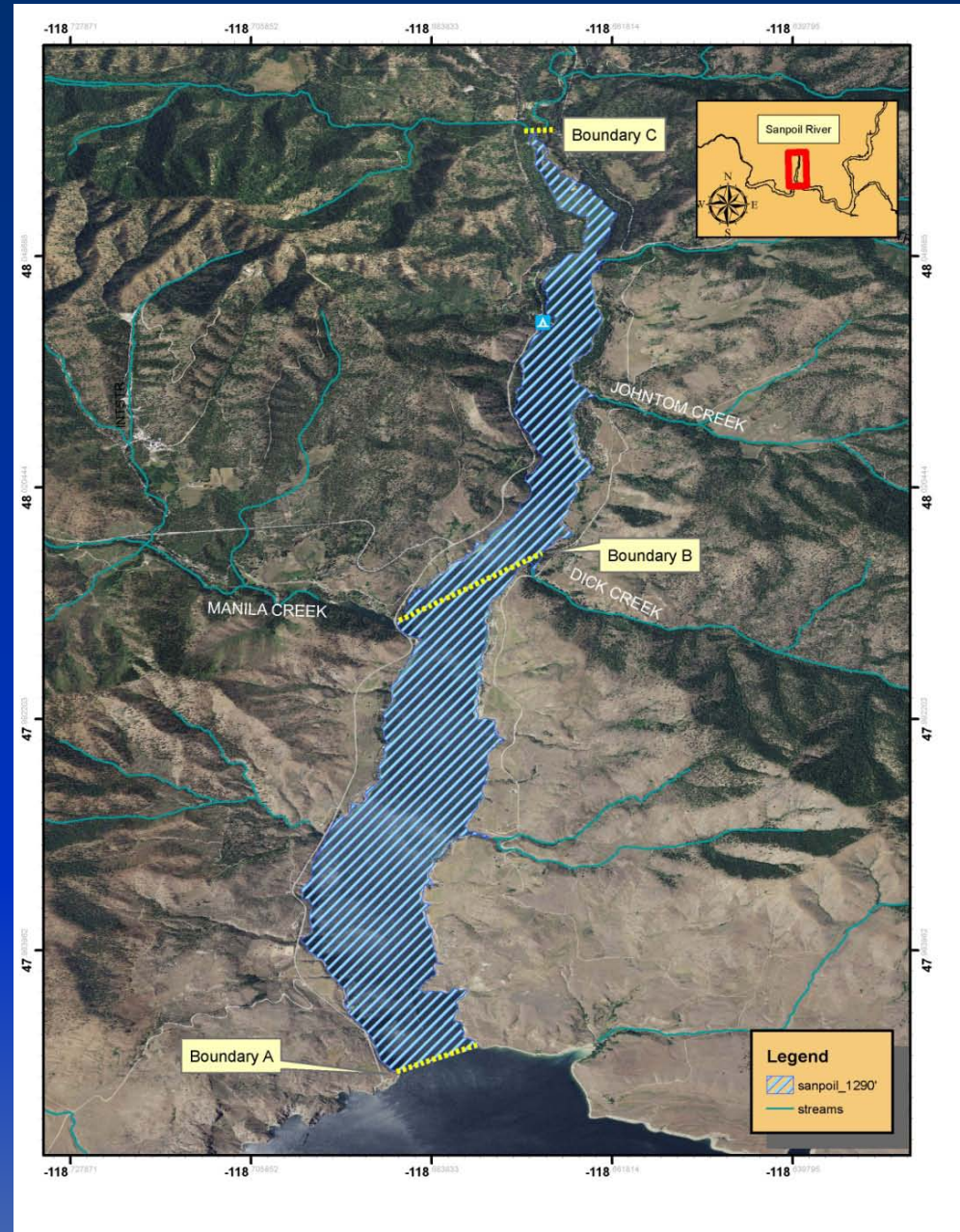
# Lake Roosevelt Walleye

- Increase the daily limit from 8 to 16 per day
  - Reduce predation on fish community and reduce numbers of small walleye in population
  - Staff analysis indicates harvest of 75,000 to 100,000 walleye per year is needed to meet management objectives
  - Currently, harvest is just under 40,000 fish
  - Stimulate increased angler participation and harvest

# San Poil Management:

Lower section --  
mouth to outlet of  
French Johns Lake

Middle section --  
outlet of French  
Johns Lake upstream  
to buoy markers at  
1310 elevation



# San Poil Management

- From year-round season to April 1 – January 30 season, to protect spawning redband rainbow trout
- Lower section
  - Reduce daily limit of kokanee from 6 to 2, reduce fishing mortality of wild kokanee
  - Increase daily limit of walleye from 8 to 16 to reduce predation of native salmonids
- Middle section
  - Closed to fishing for trout and kokanee to protect wild rainbow trout and kokanee
  - Increase daily limit of walleye to 16

# Lower Spokane River – Mouth to Little Falls Dam

- Allow two-pole endorsement
- Increase daily limit of kokanee to 6, no more than 2 with adipose fin
- Increase walleye daily limit to 16 fish no more than 1 over 22 inches



# Lower Crab & Red Rock Creeks (Grant County)

Crab Creek from mouth to Highway 26

Red Rock Creek from mouth to Red Rock  
Reservoir

- Change open time from year-round to April 1 through September 30
- Increase protection for Chinook salmon
  - Genetically unique stock

# South Fork Toutle River

- Close section two weeks early, on March 15
  - Consistent with statewide steelhead management plan and strategy for neighboring streams
  - Protect spawning wild winter steelhead

# Salmon Creek (Lewis County)

- Close above 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE Bridge
  - Habitat restoration efforts underway
  - Protect ESA listed wild steelhead and coho salmon spawning areas

# Swift Reservoir (Lewis County)

- Remove landlocked salmon fishing rules and two-pole endorsement
  - Reintroduction of Chinook and coho salmon in upper Lewis River watershed in 2012

# Puget Sound Wild Steelhead Protection

- Closing Jan. 16 and earlier -- No hatchery steelhead present
  - Samish
  - Puyallup
- Closing Feb. 1 -- Hatchery steelhead available for harvest  
Most hatchery steelhead have returned
  - Nooksack
  - Skagit
  - Snohomish
  - Stillaguamish
  - Strait of Juan de Fuca
- Closing Feb. 16 -- Areas near hatcheries  
Maximize harvest of hatchery steelhead
  - Nooksack
  - Skykomish
  - Wallace
  - Snoqualmie
  - Tokul
  - Stillaguamish
  - Skagit
  - Cascade

# Puget Sound Sturgeon

- Close marine waters and tributaries to retention and allow catch-and-release fishing
  - Columbia and Fraser River populations harvested
  - Abundance has declined over the last decade
  - Columbia River catch guidelines decreased
  - Fraser River sturgeon listed under Canadian SARA
  - No retention of Fraser River Sturgeon in Canada
  - Puget Sound harvest has increased since 1997

# Coastal Stream Strategy

- Close rivers, streams, and beaver ponds to fishing, except as listed in pamphlet
- Modify regulations to meet conservation need
- Present fishing opportunity that is available
- Tables & maps on website

# Lowland Lake Season

- Open the season on fourth Saturday in April
- Currently opens on last Saturday in April
- Provide more opportunity for years where there are 5 Saturdays in the month of April



# Kettle River Fishery Additions

- From Canadian border to Highway 21 Bridge at Curlew, remove selective gear rules and allow fishing with bait
- Currently selective gear rules above Barstow bridge approximately 64 miles (WA and Canada)
- Removes selective gear rules in approximately 9 miles
- Balance opportunity with conservation

# Puget Sound Trout Opportunity

- Open fishing above anadromous barriers or in areas where there are not concerns about anadromous fish:
  - Skagit County
  - Snohomish County
  - Pierce County
- Map on website

# Wind River increased open area

- Open additional 2 mile area for catch-and-release fishing September 16 to November 30.
- 800 yards below hatchery upstream to Moore Bridge
- Wild steelhead are meeting escapement goals in last 10 years
- Catch-and-release fishery has occurred since 2006 in upper river

# Wynoochee River Steelhead

- Currently fishing from boat prohibited
  - Bank access is limited
  - Open 10.5 mile section of river to fishing from a boat
  - Increase harvest of surplus hatchery steelhead

# Lingcod Spearfishing

- Remove minimum size limit
- Unintended constraint of length requirement
- CPUE and harvest dropped
- This regulation change will not have significant impact on population