

Sportfishing Regulations 2015-2016



Fish Program

Presentation Outline

- Process
- Timeline and public involvement
- Regulation Proposals
- Commission Discussion

Process

- New 3 Year Schedule,
 - Columbia Basin 2014
 - Puget Sound and Coast freshwater 2015
 - Marine finfish, forage fish and shellfish 2016
- Accept Public Proposals
 - Critical conservation need
 - Recreational opportunity

Timeline and Public Involvement

- May 1-30 Accept Proposals
(email, press release, website)
- August 21-October 16 Public comment on proposals
- August & September Regional public meetings (5)
- September 26-27 Brief Commission
- November 7-8 Public Hearing
- December 12-13 Commission Action
- July 1, 2015 Rules take effect

Regulation Proposals

- Received 166 proposals
- 32 recommended proposals
 - Columbia Basin Wide – Chris Donley
 - Region 1 – John Whalen
 - Region 2 – Jeff Korth
 - Break
 - Region 3 – John Easterbrooks
 - Region 5 – Cindy LeFleur
- Notebook materials

Columbia Basin Wide Proposals



Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Technical changes

- Recommend 11 technical fixes to:
 - Reflect rule adoptions made by the Commission
 - Correct errors in spelling, dates

Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Remove internal combustion motors prohibition on small streams

- 2010 Selective Gear Rules definition was modified
 - Separated Internal combustion motors prohibited
- Simplify and reduce language in pamphlet



Columbia Basin Wide Proposals



Black Friday trout opener

- Modify current rule - open select lakes the Friday after Thanksgiving
 - Adjust regulations on five eastern Washington lakes.
 - Builds upon original concept in southwest Washington
 - Fish Washington Strategic Initiative

Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Tenkara fly fishing gear

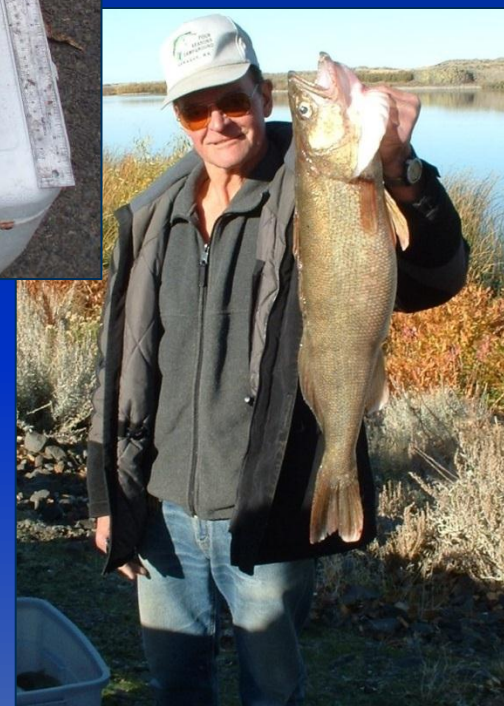


- Address petition to the Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Modify definition of “fly fishing only” waters
- Technique is gaining in popularity that is not legal to use under the current "fly fishing only" rules
- Uses a long limber rod with a braided Tenkara fly line.

Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Statewide general walleye rules

- Eliminate waters with rules differing from the statewide regulations
- Simplify regulations
- walleye can support increased angler exploitation



Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Modify some year round lakes to a March 1 opener

- Small ponds offer limited fishing after October 31 until they are restocked in early spring
- Changing to a March 1 opening day helps direct anglers to these waters when fishing is best
- March 1 has become the default opening day in SE WA ponds because of weather moderation and hatchery stocking schedules
- Lakes are located in the following counties: Asotin; Franklin; Kittitas; Yakima; Walla Walla

Columbia Basin Wide Proposals



Stream Strategy for the Columbia Basin

- Closes rivers, streams, and beaver ponds to fishing, except as listed
- Adjust rules based on conservation need
- Completes statewide implementation of strategy
- Implement mandatory steelhead harvest where appropriate
- Specific changes will be highlighted in regional briefings



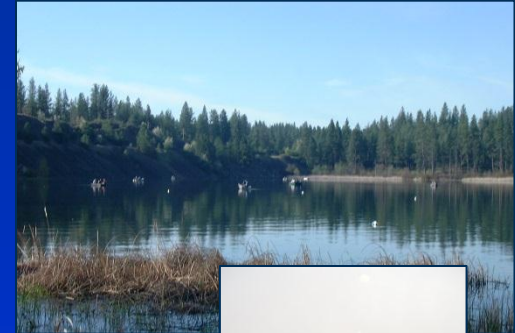
Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Code	Steelhead Status	Trout Rules	Fishing/Conservation
A	Resident zone	8" 10" or 12" minimum size, daily limit 2 or 5, bait allowed	Fishing: resident fish opportunities usually above anadromous zone, hatchery steelhead may be available
			Conservation: allows most resident trout to spawn at least once before harvest. Minimum size and daily limits are based on trout origin; hatchery or wild.
B	Resident zone/resident fish concerns	8", 10" or 12" minimum size, daily limit 2 fish, selective gear rules	Fishing: resident fish opportunities usually above anadromous zone, hatchery steelhead may be available
			Conservation: allows most resident trout to spawn at least once before harvest minimum size and daily limits are based on trout origin; hatchery or wild.
C	Status good or anadromous fish juvenile presence low	10", 12" or 14" minimum size, daily limit 2, bait allowed	Fishing: resident trout, sea-run cutthroat, salmon, hatchery steelhead
			Conservation: minimum size protects overwintering SH, allows resident trout and sea-run cutthroat to spawn once before retention. Minimum size is based on stream size, productivity and life history of the trout.
D	Status bad or SH anadromous fish juveniles present	10", 12" or 14" minimum size, daily limit 2, selective gear rules	Fishing: resident trout, sea-run cutthroat, salmon, hatchery steelhead
			Conservation: minimum size protects overwintering SH, allows resident trout and sea-run cutthroat to spawn once before retention. Minimum size is based on stream size, productivity and life history of the trout.
E	Status bad	Selective gear rules and catch and release, except ,may retain 2 hatchery steelhead	Fishing: opportunity for harvest of hatchery steelhead, often includes catch&release opportunity for trout, sea-run cutthroat and wild steelhead.
			Conservation: selective gear rules reduces the catch&release mortality associated with the use of bait. Protection provided for all trout life history stages.
F	Status bad	Catch & release, selective gear rules	Fishing: no hatchery steelhead present, catch&release opportunity for trout, which may include wild steelhead.
			Conservation: selective gear rules reduces the C&R mortality associated with the use of bait. Protection provided for all trout life history stages.

Columbia Basin Wide Proposals

Questions

Region 1



Region 1 - proposals



**Snake River Sturgeon - Expand
Catch and Release Only**

**Spring and Blue Lakes - Year
Round Season (Columbia Co.)**

Region 1 Stream Strategy

- **Brief Overview**
- **Highlighted Elements**

Region 1

Snake River Sturgeon



- Above Ice Harbor Dam goes to catch and release only – no retention
- Eliminating harvest will assist in rebuilding populations
- Aligns with rest of Columbia River and other Snake River impoundments

Region 1



Spring and Blue lakes fishing season (Columbia Co.)

- Change from March 1 - October 31 to year-round season
- Additional opportunity for hunters and others visiting the Wooten Wildlife Area
- Managed with hatchery trout

Region 1

Stream Strategy Orientation



Region 1

Region 1 Stream Strategy

Brief Overview

Highlighted Elements

- **Tucannon River Mouth Definition Change**
- **Hatchery Steelhead Mandatory Retention**
 - Lower Grande Ronde River – Promote SH Harvest
- **Palouse River – 2 pole opportunity**
- **Sullivan Creek – cutthroat trout conservation**

Region 1

Tucannon River Mouth Definition



Region 1

Hatchery Steelhead Mandatory Retention



Reason: Reduce pHOS
Primary Emphasis – Segregated Programs

- Snake River
- Walla Walla River
- Touchet River
- Grande Ronde River
(upper) / (lower)*
- Tucannon River *

Region 1

Palouse River 2 - Pole Opportunity

River mouth to base of Palouse Falls – June 16 to August 31

- **Provides new fishing opportunity**
- **Promotes removal of predators: Bass, Channel Catfish, Walleye**
- **Low seasonal interaction with juvenile / adult steelhead & salmon**



Region 1

Sullivan Creek - Cutthroat Trout Conservation

(Pend Oreille Co.)



Lower Sullivan Creek from Mouth to Mill Pond Dam

- Require barbless hooks
- Increase limit on Eastern brook trout
- Release all cutthroat trout

Region 1

Questions

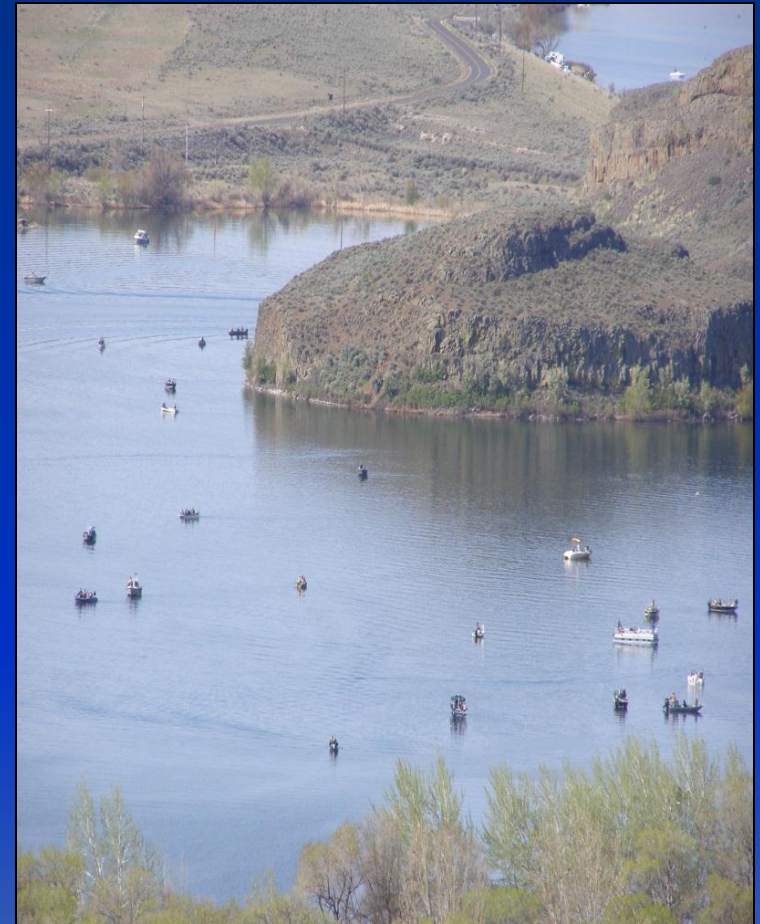
Region 2



Region 2

Extend fishing opportunity through the month of October (Okanogan Co.)

- Lakes: Long, Pearrygin, Round, and Alta
- Provides consistent closing dates with other lakes in the same area
- Adds one month trout fishing opportunity



Region 2

Eastern brook trout limit removed (Chelan and Okanogan counties)

- Reduce Eastern brook trout in
 - Big Tiffany (Okanogan Co.)
 - Merritt, Myrtle, Schaefer (Chelan Co.)
- Allow retention of 2 cutthroat trout for Big Tiffany Lake



Region 2



Upper and Lower Green lakes season adjustment (Okanogan Co.)

- Open SGR/C&R fishery March 1 (1 month earlier)
- Reduces ice fishing season to 3 months (December through February)
 - Aligns season type (quality vs ice fisheries) with climate conditions
 - Lakes are popular for ice fishing, but ice is typically melted in March



Region 2

Molson Lake daily limit reduced to 2 fish (Okanogan Co.)

- Provide a more appropriate limit on this small lake
- Better quality fishery
- Create consistency with neighboring Sidley Lake



Region 2

Implement year round season for 11 lakes and align 2 with statewide general daily limit/minimum size (Adams and Grant counties)

- Trout-only management no longer feasible
- Manage as either mixed species or warmwater fisheries.



Region 2

Big Beaver, Beth, and Little Beaver lakes fishery enhancement (Okanogan Co.)

- Adjust season from year round to 4th Saturday in April through October 31
- Lakes are in a chain structure and season change will improve overall management and public understanding of lakes in the area.



Region 2

Rufus Woods Lake

(Douglas and Okanogan counties)

- Eliminate chumming on Lake Rufus Woods
- Align regulations with Colville Tribe regulations; reduce triploid fishery impact
- Chumming an artifact of past kokanee fishery on Rufus Woods.



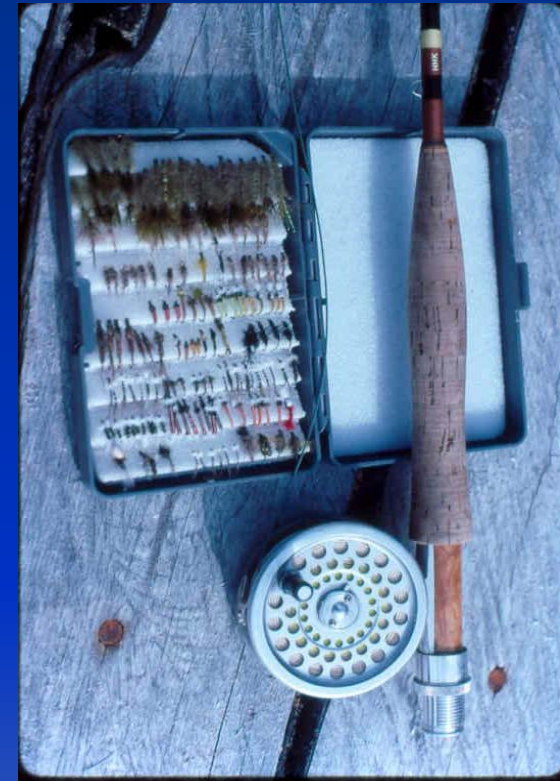
Region 2

Upper Wheeler Reservoir

New Permanent Fishery (Chelan Co.)

- Agreement with Wenatchee Heights Reclamation District and Wen Valley Fly Fishers
- Temp last 3 years; long term agreement possible, so permanent status warranted
- Fly fishing only, C&R

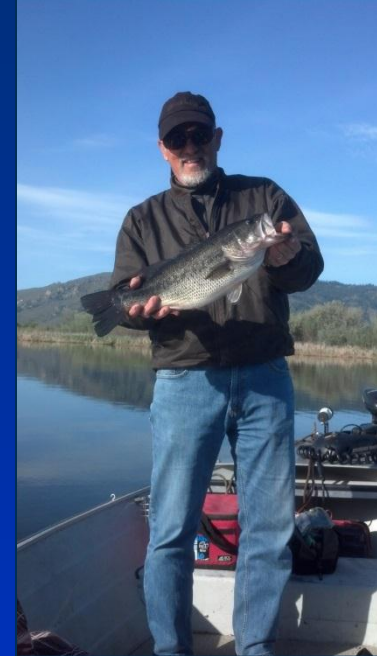
4th Saturday in April through October 31.



Region 2

Wapato Lake (Chelan Co.)

- Remove selective gear rule
(was post July)
- Provide better opportunity for spiny ray fishery (bass, catfish, bluegill, crappie)
- Trout season:
4th Sat. in April to July 31
- All other gamefish season:
4th Sat in April to October 31



Region 2

Washburn Lake Eastern Brook Trout Fishery (Okanogan Co.)

- Create a quality Eastern Brook Trout fishery
 - Stock triploid eastern brook trout
 - Reduce trout daily limit from 2 to 1
 - Add selective gear rules
 - Prohibit internal combustion motors

Region 2

Region 2 Stream Strategy

- Opportunity to review ALL Reg 2 stream regulations
 - Conservation and increased angling opportunity
- Overall increased SGR and C&R opportunity
 - On waters formerly closed
 - On waters with inappropriate stwd rules
- Eastern Brook Trout more aggressive removal

Region 2

Questions

Region 3



Region 3

2 pole fishing opportunities

- Allow 2 pole fishing for gamefish where opportunities exist consistent with steelhead and bull trout conservation goals
- Provide additional recreational opportunity
- Lower Yakima River (below Prosser Dam), Hanford Reach, Bumping Lake and Rimrock Lake

Region 3



Cle Elum Lake adjust size limit and daily limits for Kokanee and remove daily limit for Lake Trout, Brown Trout, and Eastern Brook Trout (Kittitas Co.)

- Assist with reintroduction of sockeye into Cle Elum Basin
 - Reduce kokanee limit from 16 to 5
 - Set a kokanee slot limit (minimum 9" and maximum 15")
 - Remove daily limit for non-native trout species



Region 3

Kachess and Keechelus Kokanee daily limit (Kittitas Co.)

- Reduce daily limit from 16 to 10 kokanee
- Align with statewide kokanee fisheries
- Conserve kokanee in these waters
- These populations are supported by hatchery stocking and 16 is typically only used when waters have abundant natural production

Region 3

McCabe Pond (Kittitas Co.)



- Allow non-motorized flotation devices
 - Increase fishing opportunity
 - Protects riparian habitat on this small pond with limited shoreline fishing access because of vegetation

Region 3

Naches River: increase trout catch and release opportunity (Yakima Co.)



Photo credit: Kaitlyn Bernauer/Yakima Herald-Republic

- Extend catch-and-release trout fishery from Rattlesnake Creek (river mile 28) upstream 16.6 miles to Naches R. origin (r.m. 44.6) at Bumping R. / Little Naches confluence.
- Maintain existing harvest opportunity below the confluence of the Tieton River (lower 17.5 river miles)

Region 3

Region 3 Stream Strategy

- Primary change is an increase in trout min. size for retention from 8" to 10" to protect juvenile steelhead
- Reduction or elimination of winter whitefish seasons to provide greater protect for overwintering adult steelhead and bull trout (ESA listed)

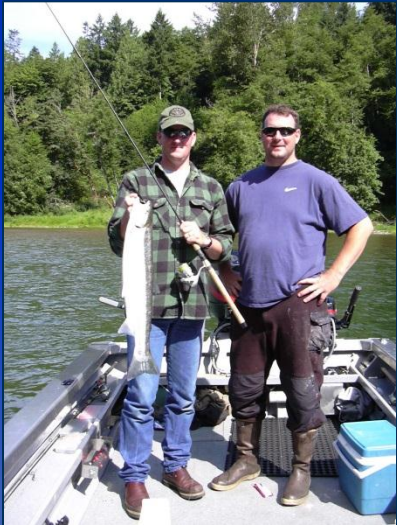
Questions?



L. Cle Elum "Slot Limit" Kokanee/Sockeye

Photo Credit: Mike Carey

Region 5



Region 5

Cowlitz 2 pole and barbed hooks allowed (Cowlitz and Lewis counties)

- Increase harvest on hatchery steelhead
- June 1 – July 31
- Cowlitz River up to the boundary at the barrier dam.

Region 5

Elochoman, South Fork Toutle and Green rivers—remove barbless hook requirements seasonally (Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties)

- Allow barbed hooks when only hatchery summer steelhead are available for harvest
 - No natural origin summer steelhead present
 - Salmon not expected until mid-August
- First Saturday in June through July 31 in these basins



Region 5

Elochoman River opener

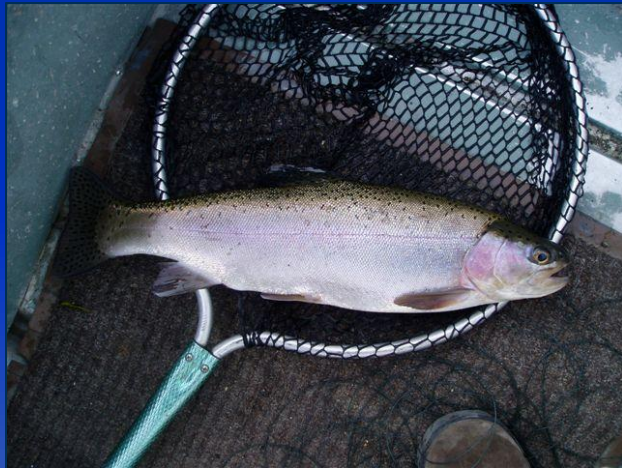
- Open the lower river the last Saturday in May to the Friday before the first Saturday in June
- Increase harvest opportunity on hatchery summer run steelhead
- Catch and release except 2 hatchery steelhead allowed

Region 5



Lake Scanewa (Lewis Co.)— trout season extended

- Season from March 1 through August 31
- Provides additional harvest opportunity for hatchery Steelhead and hatchery Rainbow Trout



Region 5

Open South Rowland Lake year round (Klickitat Co.)

- Managed for warmwater species
- This will provide additional opportunity throughout the year



Region 5

Salmon Creek—expand area available to fishing for hatchery steelhead (Lewis Co.)



- Extends the sportfishing boundary upstream by more than 2 miles, so that the fishery occurs from the mouth to 182nd Avenue Bridge.
- Provides harvest opportunity on increased numbers of stocked hatchery winter steelhead

Region 5

Little Klickitat River (Klickitat Co.)—expanded opportunity for seniors

- Provide additional opportunity
- In addition to juvenile anglers, allows seniors to fish 4th Saturday in April to May 31

Region 5

Swift Reservoir (Skamania Co.)—establish a maximum size for trout

- Reintroduction program for anadromous salmonids
- Adjust maximum size limit for trout to 15" to protect wild steelhead



Region 5

Region 5 Stream Strategy

- Many small creeks are closed to fishing
- Mandatory hatchery steelhead retention

Region 5

Questions

Timeline

- **Sept. 26-27** **Brief Commission**
- **Oct. 16** Written public comment deadline
- **Nov. 7-8** Public Hearing
- **Dec. 12-13** Rule adoption
- **July 1** Pamphlet —rules take effect

Questions

