



STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

Fisheries Division

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MEMORANDUM

September 24, 2016

To: Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife, and Interested Publics

From: Jon Sjöberg, Administrator, Fisheries Division

Title: **Commission Regulation 16-02, Amendment #1 – Fishing Seasons and Bag Limits for the Two Year Period March 1, 2016 through February 28, 2018 –For Possible Action/Public Comment Allowed**

Description: The Commission will consider amending Commission Regulation 16-02 to modify the harvest limit for fish in portions of the Truckee River and the harvest limit for trout in Lake Mohave and the Colorado River below Davis Dam.

Presenter: Fisheries Division Administrator Jon Sjöberg

Agenda No: 23

Summary:

The Commission will consider Amendment #1 of the Fishing Seasons and Bag Limits for the Two Year Period March 1, 2016 through February 28, 2018. The Department is proposing an amendment to change the harvest limit for fish in that portion of the Truckee River from 1,000 feet below Derby Dam to the boundary of the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation to be 3 game fish of which zero (0) may be trout (catch and release only) from February 1 through May 31, in Storey and Washoe Counties, and change the harvest limit for trout in Lake Mohave and the Colorado River below Davis Dam to be 5 trout, in Clark County.

Harvest limits for trout from 1,000 feet below Davis Dam to the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation Boundary:

Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) is native to many areas of Nevada including Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River. It is listed as a Threatened species under the Federal Endangered Species Act. As water conditions in Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River have improved, increasing numbers of large LCT migrate from the lake to the river during the spawning season. After spawning, these fish typically return to Pyramid Lake. LCT cannot move up the Truckee River

past Derby Dam, located about 8.5 miles upstream from the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (PLPT) reservation boundary, because the fish ladder is not operational. As increasing numbers of large LCT are anticipated to collect below Derby Dam during the annual spring spawning season, these fish may become vulnerable to overharvest or serious injury and death from angling under the current regulation allowing harvest of three fish of any species during this period. This may have negative impacts to recovery efforts for LCT by NDOW, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the PLPT, which depend on post-spawning LCT returning to Pyramid Lake.

The proposed fishing regulation allowing no harvest of trout from February 1 to May 31 is to protect cutthroat trout that migrate to the lower Truckee River to spawn. Rainbow and cutthroat trout reside together in the Truckee River during the spawning season (February through May) and since they can be difficult to visually differentiate, all trout will be protected from angler harvest during this period.

The Department is also proposing an amendment to NAC 503.504 to require the use of only artificial lures with single barbless hooks on the Truckee River from 1,000 feet downstream of Derby Dam to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation boundary from February 1 through May 31 each year (CGR 469). That proposed regulation is intended to work in companion with this proposed amendment to CR-16-02 to further reduce incidental mortality of spawning adult Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Harvest limits for trout in Lake Mohave and the Colorado River below Davis Dam:

The Colorado River system in Nevada is made up of Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, and the Colorado River below Davis Dam, which is shared with Arizona. The Department, in cooperation with Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), is recommending reducing the trout harvest limit in Lake Mohave and the Colorado River below Davis Dam. This is prudent since fewer trout have been stocked throughout the Colorado River system, especially since the closing of Lake Mead Hatchery. However, Willow Beach NFH on Lake Mohave is anticipated to begin trout stocking again in 2017 and AGFD is stocking trout in the Colorado River below Davis Dam so the proposed regulation will assist in protecting this limited resource from overfishing and allow a more equitable harvest among anglers.

Current trout harvest limits differ between Lakes Mead (5 trout) and Mohave (10 trout), and the Colorado River below Davis Dam (10 trout). This proposed change to CR 16-02 will make the trout limit the same for the entire Colorado River system in Nevada.

AGFD has indicated intent to reduce the trout harvest limit on Lake Mohave and the Colorado River to 5 fish beginning in January 2017. A differential harvest limit for that species on shared interstate waters would create confusion for anglers and make enforcement of harvest limits more difficult for both AGFD and NDOW.

Recommendation:

The Department recommends Commission adoption of proposed amendment #1 to CR 16-02.

**STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS**

**FISHING SEASONS
CR 16-02
Amendment #1**

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners, under the authority of 501.181 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, does hereby adopt the following regulation for the management of the fisheries resource:

**FISHING SEASONS
MARCH 1, 2016 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2018**

LIMITS

“Limit” means the maximum number of game fish that may be lawfully taken and reduced to possession by a person in one day. The limit includes fish caught in Nevada which have been processed or preserved and are stored at any location. Fish that are caught and immediately released back to the water alive are not considered to be reduced to possession or part of the limit.

A person shall not reduce game fish to possession if he already has the number of that fish in possession which equals or exceeds the limit of the water being fished.

General limits are listed by county as all waters, all lakes and reservoirs or all streams and rivers. Exceptions to general limits and special regulations are listed by individual water.

CLARK COUNTY

All regulations in Clark County are proposed to remain the same with the exception of the following (changes are delineated in boldface type):

Lake Mohave

Existing Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Lake Mohave	Open year around	10 trout, 6 black bass, 25 catfish, and 15 crappie. No limit on striped bass less than 20 inches total length (unlimited possession). The limit on striped bass 20 inches total length or longer is 20 fish. No limit on other game fish	Any hour of the day or night
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Proposed Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Lake Mohave	Open year around	10 5 trout, 6 black bass, 25 catfish, and 15 crappie. No limit on striped bass less than 20 inches total length (unlimited possession). The limit on striped bass 20 inches total length or longer is 20 fish. No limit on other game fish	Any hour of the day or night
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Description and Rationale:

Change the harvest limit regulation from 10 trout to 5 trout in Lake Mohave.

The Colorado River system in Nevada is made up of Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, and the Colorado River below Davis Dam, which is shared with Arizona. Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), in cooperation with Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), is recommending reducing the trout harvest limit in Lake Mohave. This is prudent since fewer trout have been stocked throughout the Colorado River system, especially since the closing of Lake Mead Hatchery. Lake Mohave is popular for angling and tourism and the proposed regulation is meant to protect this resource from overfishing and allow a more equitable harvest among anglers.

Current trout harvest limits differ between Lakes Mead (5 trout) and Mohave (10 trout), and the Colorado River below Davis Dam (10 trout) which complicates regulations. A similar regulation is proposed for the Colorado River below Davis Dam, which has the same issues, making the trout limit the same for the entire Colorado River system in Nevada.

AGFD has indicated a desire to reduce the trout harvest limit in Lake Mohave to 5 fish beginning in January 2017. A differential harvest limit for that species on a shared water would create confusion for anglers and enforcement of harvest limits more difficult for both AGFD and NDOW.

Colorado River below Davis Dam

Existing Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Colorado River below Davis Dam	Open year around	10 trout, 6 black bass, 25 catfish, and 10 striped bass. Minimum size for black bass is 13 inches total length. No limit on other game fish	Any hour of the day or night
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Proposed Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Colorado River below Davis Dam	Open year around	10 5 trout, 6 black bass, 25 catfish, and 10 striped bass. Minimum size for black bass is 13 inches total length. No limit on other game fish	Any hour of the day or night
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Description and Rationale:

Change the harvest limit regulation from 10 trout to 5 trout in the Colorado River below Davis Dam.

The Colorado River system in Nevada is made up of Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, and the Colorado River below Davis Dam, which is shared with Arizona. Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), in cooperation with Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), is recommending reducing the trout harvest limit in the Colorado River below Davis Dam. This is prudent since fewer trout have been stocked throughout the Colorado River system, especially since the closing of Lake Mead Hatchery. The Colorado River below Davis Dam is popular for angling and tourism and the proposed regulation is meant to protect this resource from overfishing and allow a more equitable harvest among anglers.

Current trout harvest limits differ between Lakes Mead (5 trout) and Mohave (10 trout), and the Colorado River below Davis Dam (10 trout) which complicates regulations. A similar regulation is proposed for Lake Mohave, which has the same issues, making the trout limit the same for the entire Colorado River system in Nevada.

AGFD has indicated a desire to reduce the trout harvest limit in on the Colorado River below Davis Dam to 5 fish beginning in January 2017. A differential harvest limit for that species on a shared water would create confusion for anglers and enforcement of harvest limits more difficult for both AGFD and NDOW.

STOREY COUNTY

All regulations in Storey County are proposed to remain the same with the exception of the following (changes are delineated in boldface type).

Truckee River

Existing Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Truckee River	Open year around except for closed areas	3 game fish	Any hour of the day or night
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Proposed Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Truckee River	Open year around except for closed areas	3 game fish except in that section 1,000 feet downstream of Derby Dam to the boundary of the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, only 3 game fish of which zero (0) may be trout (catch and release only) from February 1 through May 31.	Any hour of the day or night
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Description and Rationale:

Approve the special regulation for the lower Truckee River: Limit is 3 game fish except in that portion 1,000 feet downstream of Derby Dam to the boundary of the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, only 3 game fish of which zero (0) may be trout (catch and release only) from February 1 through May 31.

Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) is native to many areas of Nevada including Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River. It is listed as a Threatened species under the Federal Endangered Species Act. As water conditions in Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River have improved, increasing numbers of large LCT migrate from the lake to the river during the spawning season. After spawning, these fish typically return to Pyramid Lake. LCT cannot move up the Truckee River past Derby Dam, located about 8.5 miles upstream from the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (PLPT) reservation boundary, because the fish ladder is not operational. As increasing numbers of large LCT are anticipated to collect below Derby Dam during the annual spring spawning season, these fish may become vulnerable to overharvest or serious injury and death from angling under the current regulation allowing harvest of three fish of any species during this period. This may have negative impacts to recovery efforts for LCT by NDOW, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the PLPT, which depend on post-spawning LCT returning to Pyramid Lake.

The proposed fishing regulation allowing no harvest of trout from February 1 to May 31 is to protect cutthroat trout that migrate to the lower Truckee River to spawn. Rainbow and cutthroat trout reside together in the Truckee River during the spawning season (February through May) and since they can be difficult to visually differentiate, all trout will be protected from angler harvest during this period.

WASHOE COUNTY

All regulations in Washoe County are proposed to remain the same with the exception of the following (changes are delineated in boldface type).

Truckee River

Existing Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Truckee River	Open year around except for closed areas	3 game fish	Any hour of the day or night
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Proposed Regulation:

OPEN WATERS:	Truckee River	Open year around except for closed areas	3 game fish except in that section 1,000 feet downstream of Derby Dam to the boundary of the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, only 3 game fish of which zero (0) may be trout (catch and release only) from February 1 through May 31.	Any hour of the day or night
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Description and Rationale:

Approve the special regulation for the lower Truckee River: Limit is 3 game fish except in that portion 1,000 feet downstream of Derby Dam to the boundary of the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, only 3 game fish of which zero (0) may be trout (catch and release only) from February 1 through May 31.

Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) is native to many areas of Nevada including Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River. It is listed as a Threatened species under the Federal Endangered Species Act. As water conditions in Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River have improved, increasing numbers of large LCT migrate from the lake to the river during the spawning season. After spawning, these fish typically return to Pyramid Lake. LCT cannot move up the Truckee River past Derby Dam, located about 8.5 miles upstream from the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (PLPT) reservation boundary, because the fish ladder is not operational. As increasing numbers of large LCT are anticipated to collect below Derby Dam during the annual spring spawning season, these fish may become vulnerable to overharvest or serious injury and death from angling under the current regulation allowing harvest of three fish of any species during this period. This may have negative impacts to recovery efforts for LCT by NDOW, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the PLPT, which depend on post-spawning LCT returning to Pyramid Lake.

The proposed fishing regulation allowing no harvest of trout from February 1 to May 31 is to protect cutthroat trout that migrate to the lower Truckee River to spawn. Rainbow and cutthroat trout reside together in the Truckee River during the spawning season (February through May) and since they can be difficult to visually differentiate, all trout will be protected from angler harvest during this period.