

**STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS**

Commission Policy Number 31

Number: P-31
Title: Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Management Guidelines
Reference: NRS 501.105, 501.181
Effective Date: March 22, 1996
Reviewed Date: 2002
Amended Date: November 18, 2016

PURPOSE

The Commission establishes policies necessary to preserve, protect, manage, and restore wildlife and its habitat. The Lahontan cutthroat trout is one of six native salmonids currently found in Nevada. Historically, this fish existed in eleven lacustrine populations and an estimated 400 to 600 streams and rivers. Currently it exists in about 159 streams and 6 lakes and reservoirs in Nevada, California and Oregon. The Lahontan cutthroat trout was federally listed as "threatened" in 1975 under the Endangered Species Act. In Nevada, the Lahontan cutthroat trout is classified as a "game fish" by action of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

POLICY

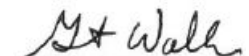
The Commission does hereby establish the following policy to provide for the preservation, protection, management, and restoration of the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

1. The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Recovery Plan approved in January 1995 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in combination with guidelines developed in cooperation with individual species Geographic Management Unit (GMU) implementation teams, will be used as the guidance for the Nevada Department of Wildlife's species management planning and implementation with the objective of recovery and delisting of the species as rapidly as is biologically possible.
2. Distinguishable races of Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) will be managed separately within the major drainage basins of historic Lake Lahontan. The three basin population segments include the Western Lahontan basin GMU, Northwestern Lahontan basin GMU, and the Upper Humboldt River basin GMU.
3. In order to accomplish recovery objectives, the Department will participate in cooperative efforts with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; all land management agencies; other state agencies; willing private land owners and local governments that are working toward the recovery of LCT and their habitat.
4. Stream habitat restoration and management is a necessity on many waters before reintroductions can take place. On some streams, competing nonnative trout will have to be controlled or eliminated and/or physical barriers constructed to prevent competition or introgression with LCT.
5. Private landowner cooperation is essential to the development of connected populations needed to ensure the survival and recovery of LCT within the Northwest Nevada and Upper Humboldt GMUs. To protect private landowners who currently have LCT on their property, or who through conservation efforts may attract LCT to their property, there are two Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreements (SHA) available (Northwest Nevada and Upper Humboldt SHAs). The Department will actively work to enroll willing private landowners into Cooperative Agreements under the SHAs which will provide regulatory assurances that future property use restrictions will not be imposed if they improve, restore, create or maintain habitat for LCT.

6. Currently occupied and potential habitats as identified in the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Recovery Plan are to be dedicated to cutthroat recovery efforts. No competing salmonids will be stocked into occupied LCT recovery waters. Sterile (triploid) rainbow trout may be used on a short-term basis in potential LCT recovery waters to address angler use and demand until LCT reintroductions are deemed appropriate.
7. Where deemed necessary to assist in the recovery of the species, specific waters or specific areas within individual waters may be subject to restrictions or closed to angling by the Wildlife Commission. In most cases, sportfishing for Lahontan cutthroat trout has no negative impact on recovery progress.
8. The Truckee, Carson, and Walker rivers are important salmonid recreational fisheries for rainbow and brown trout, both in Nevada and California. These streams support extensive angler use and are stocked annually with hatchery salmonids to support the high angler use and demand. Experimental releases of catchable size Lahontan cutthroat trout are encouraged to evaluate their contribution to the sport fishery and encourage angler interest and opportunity for catching native trout.
9. Because of social, economic and environmental constraints, the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners considers it impractical to fully recover in the near future, the Lahontan cutthroat trout in the main stems of the Truckee, Carson, and Walker River systems, thus annual stockings of other salmonids are authorized. The use of sterile (triploid) rainbow trout is encouraged in all historic and potential recovery LCT waters. In the Truckee River, only sterile (triploid) rainbow trout and hatchery reared LCT will be used for recreational stocking, and the use of hatchery reared LCT will be emphasized to the extent they are available for stocking in the size, quality and timing needed to maintain recreational fishing objectives.
10. The Department of Wildlife will actively pursue solutions to maintaining suitable water levels and water quality in Walker Lake in order to enhance this important Lahontan cutthroat trout sport fishery. Only solutions consistent with the final decree entered in United States of America, Plaintiff vs. Walker River Irrigation District, et al., Defendants in the United States District Court for the District of Nevada (C-125) will be pursued. Any proposed redistribution of water shall be on a voluntary basis.
11. The Department of Wildlife may maintain brood stocks of pure strain Lahontan cutthroat trout both for use as recreational sport fish and, if needed, recovery stocks of selected races of cutthroat for reintroduction into recovery streams.
12. As the recovery objectives for the restoration of populations within a GMU are met, the Department of Wildlife will work closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify options and strategies for delisting of the species in that portion of its range.

This policy shall remain in effect until amended, repealed, or superseded by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS IN REGULAR SESSION, November 18, 2016.



Grant Wallace, Chairman
Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners