

# FAX

To: Senke Mastrap From: DAVE FAIRCHILD  
 Fax: 916 653 5040 Pages: 2  
 Phone: 916 653 4899 Date: 2/6/2015  
 Re: Klamath River <sup>Blue</sup> Creek CC:

Urgent     For Review     Please Comment     Please Reply     Please Recycle

**Comments:**

Please review my attached letter concerning possible closure of Sport Fishing near Blue Creek on the Klamath River.

Thanks

Dave Fairchild

February 6, 2015

California Fish and Game Commission  
Resources Building Auditorium  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Members,

An article in the Western Outdoor News, January 30, 2015, indicates that you are considering banning sport fishing from 500 feet above Blue Creek to one-half mile below, on the Klamath River, from June 15 to December 31, of this calendar year.

It seems that members of the Yurok Tribe may have already convinced your commission that there is a high mortality rate among Steelhead, caused by catch and release anglers, in that area. I really doubt that and feel that the members of your commission should look more closely at the issue.

In late August of the past two years, I have been privileged to spend two days each year fly fishing in the area of concern. And because I am very much a novice, my mentors were very careful in training me, and all others in our party, on just how to safely land and release a hooked fish. On both of my days this past year, there were from 30 to 40 anglers present, and all were catching and releasing several fish for each person. In just over six hours of fishing on my last day, I was able to land over 50 wild Steelhead. My fishing position was at the very west end, downstream, from almost everyone on the river, and I only saw two fish float by that were dying, possibly from an injury caused by a catch and release fisherman. However, there were three different groups of fisherman, I think Yuroks, who were drift fishing with a net, which was strung between two boats. They certainly caused a huge mortality rate among the fish, as they were not releasing any of them.

My mentors explained that Native American's are allowed to fish with gill nets to harvest salmon for their own use and for sale. That seems fine, except when one considers the mortality rate of the steelhead in their nets. Even the two fish I saw in distress, would likely have been collected in those nets, and were fresh enough for food. They must kill thousands of the larger steelhead in the gill nets.

My experience was that there is negligible harm done to the fish population by the catch and release fisherman while the use of drift nets is the major cause of decreased fish population. Applying the option of banning sport fishing in the Blue Creek area does nothing to enhance the Steelhead population on the entire Klamath River.

I strongly suggest the commissioners further investigate the reasons for decreased fish population before a final decision is made.

Thank you,

Dave Fairchild  
