

Your Help is Needed to get more Selective Gear Lakes

Our Goal:

We wish to have one selective gear quality trout lake in each of the 12 counties of Puget Sound.

Need:

Currently, there are only 9 quality trout lakes located in 6 of 12 counties in the Puget Sound region.

Selective Gear Rules:

Would you like to have quality lake fly fishing closer to home? If your answer is YES, join us in attempting to get the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to change their rules. Selective Gear Rules include such things as year-round fishing, catch and release or one fish limit, single barbless hooks, fly fishing only, etc. Their Sport Rule Adoption Process will take at least a year, and our first opportunity to enter this “rule making” cycle will be in March 2014. To be successful, we need to work together, be well organized, and have representatives from as many fly fishing clubs in the Puget Sound region as possible.

Quality Lake Fly Fishing:

So far, we have defined quality trout lakes as having 16+ inch fish with a large population so anglers can catch several fish per day. Our draft criteria for determining a quality trout lake are: biologically productive lakes that support rapid fish grow and healthy fish populations; no increase of non-native species; minimal adjacent land development; easy public access; broad public support; long-term agreement with any non-governmental landowner; WDFW regulations apply and new rules will maintain a quality fishery; and adaptive management to evaluate success. Examples of quality “Eastside Lakes” include Big Twin, Dry Falls, and Lenice to mention just a few ... and they have one fish limits per day.

Current Selective Gear Lakes:

Of the 315 “Westside Lakes” managed by WDFW, only 13 lakes are fly fishing only or catch and release, or both: Blue and Merrill Lakes (Cowitz Co.); Cady and Prices Lakes (Mason Co.); Ebey (Little) and Monte Cristo Lakes (Snohomish Co.); Munn and Susan Lakes (Thurston Co.); Pass and Vogler Lakes (Skagit Co.); Rattlesnake Lake (King Co.); Squalicum Lake (Whatcom Co.); and Symington Lake (Kitsap Co.). Of these, at least four lakes (Ebey, Monte Cristo, Squalicum, and Vogler) do not qualify as quality fisheries because of inadequate fish habitat, poor public access, or inadequate WDFW rules based upon our draft criteria. The two lakes in Cowitz Co. are not in the Puget Sound region, so now we have only nine quality lakes ... and these are located in 6 of the 12 counties of Puget Sound. These few lakes and their uneven distribution do not meet public demand for a better recreational opportunity of year-round trout lake fishing. It also limits the business growth in fishing supplies and is costly for WDFW.

Need Your Help NOW:

Our collective lake and fishing recommendations will need to be compelling information in order to have WDFW make rule changes. You can help us by gathering more information, selecting lakes with the potential to become quality trout catch and release (or limited catch) fisheries, developing rationales, gaining political support, gaining support from fly shops, etc.

If you and your club are interested in helping to get more quality trout fishing in our Puget Sound lakes through WDFW rule changes, please come to the meeting. Our next joint committee meeting will be on Wednesday, October 2nd, 2013 beginning at 6:30 pm at the Commons area near The Avid Angler fly shop and Third Place Books in Lake Forest Park.