

OPINIONS AND PREFERENCES OF IDAHO ANGLERS

A Report on the 1994, 1999, and 2006 Angler Opinion Surveys

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ABSTRACT

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) has conducted angler opinion surveys (AOS) since 1968. Information obtained from the surveys is used for updating and revising the Department's fisheries management plan and documenting angler satisfaction, opinions, preferences, and expectations over time. Angler opinion surveys were conducted from a random sample of anglers who bought fishing licenses in Idaho in 1994, 1999, and 2005.

Angler demographics in Idaho have remained largely unchanged over the last 30 years. Since the first AOS was conducted in 1968, over one-third of Idaho's population and fishing license buyers have resided in southwest Idaho.

Idaho anglers have consistently preferred to and most often fished for trout. Anglers most often fished for trout in streams/rivers by shore/wading and used bait. The second most preferred species were bass. The majority of anglers were satisfied with trout fishing in streams/rivers and lakes/reservoirs, and fishing experiences in alpine lakes. However, they generally were not satisfied with their fishing experiences when fishing for bass.

Anglers were, for the most part, supportive of increasing quality or trophy trout and bass fishing opportunities. Wild trout management is important to Idaho anglers; management options that restrict the size and/or number of trout harvested received more support than limiting angler use by restricting harvest.

The Department asked anglers several questions regarding steelhead and Chinook salmon fishing in the 2006 AOS. Respondents were generally more in favor of closing the season or reducing the bag limit than having a catch and release fishery for Chinook salmon when excess hatchery fish were not available for harvest. Angler responses indicated that as the bag limit for Chinook salmon and steelhead increased from one to three fish, anglers' likelihood of going fishing also increased.

The 2006 AOS contained questions regarding fisheries management in several Department administrative regions. Angler responses were used to provide feedback to Department staff on contemporary fisheries management issues.

INTRODUCTION

The enabling Legislation for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department), Title 36 of the Idaho Code, states, "All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state of Idaho, is hereby declared to be the property of the state of Idaho. It shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. It shall be only captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping." This legislation further states "Because conditions are changing, and in changing affect the preservation, protection, and perpetuation of Idaho wildlife, the methods and means of administering and carrying out the state's policy must be flexible and dependent on the ascertainment of facts which from time to time exist and fix the needs for regulation and control of fishing, hunting, trapping, and other activity relating to wildlife." As stewards of the resource, the Department strives to provide a diverse range of recreational experiences in harmony within the biological limitations and social expectations of the public.

The objectives of the 1994, 1999, and 2006 Angler Opinion Surveys (AOS) were to: 1) provide the Department with angler opinion, preference, and use data to assist in establishing and/or modifying fishery management goals and programs, and 2) document angler satisfaction, opinions, preferences, and expectations over time. Previous angler opinion surveys were conducted by Gordon (1970), Mallet (1980), and Reid (1989).

METHODS

The Department has conducted angler opinion surveys since 1968. These surveys were conducted to gather the opinions and preferences of anglers fishing Idaho waters in 1994, 1999, and 2005. From the total number of fishing licenses sold during those years, random license buyers were selected to receive a questionnaire through the mail.

To compile a sample of anglers who had purchased a fishing license, all fishing related licenses were extracted from the Department license management system using structured query language (SQL) statements for each type of license and placed into separate comma delimited files. In the sample we included resident and nonresident annual fishing licenses, resident combination and sportsman package licenses, resident junior and senior annual fishing or combination licenses, nonresident junior annual fishing licenses, and 3-day and 1-day fishing licenses. Each record in the delimited files contained at the minimum, information about the license holder, license type, license year, license serial number, date of license issue, county of residence or state of residence if not Idaho, Department region of residence, and license buyer identification number.

The delimited files were then imported to Microsoft SQL Server[®] using Data Transformation Services (DTS). A select-distinct-into statement using the license buyer identification number was then executed to prepare a table of unique license holders. We then added a field for survey control number. The table of unique individuals was sorted by last name, first name, middle initial, city, and state with the resultant information subsequently split into eight strata based on seven Department regions of residence and out-of-state license holders. Using DTS, the field of license buyer identification number from each stratum was exported to a corresponding file format that SYSTAT[®] could utilize.

The actual sample selection was conducted using the SYSTAT Sample Module[®] with the sample size being specified at the time of execution. The execution of the sampling was simple, independent, and random. Using this method, for the 1999 and 2006 AOS, 1,200 license holders were selected from each of the eight strata to ensure a minimum of 600 respondents per strata for statistically valid inference power. This non-proportional sample selection resulted in applying weighting factors (total number of individuals in the strata per number of respondents to the question by strata) in 1999 and 2006 for a valid statewide analysis. In 1994, there was only one stratum and 2,000 license holders were selected. The license holders from outside the state were also sampled in 1994 to achieve a statistically valid representation.

The selected license buyer identification numbers were combined and imported back into the database table. A select-into statement was then executed joining the selected sample of license buyer identification numbers with the table containing the unique license holders. Inserting a survey control number and a field for strata modified the resultant table of the individuals selected to participate in the survey. The fields of control number, first name, middle initial, last name, suffix, address, city, state, and zip code were then exported into an Access 2000[®] database for the 1999 and 2006 AOS for merging with the survey instrument. In 1994, the fields were exported into Ashton-Tate's dBase III+[®].

The AOS utilized similar designs for 1994, 1999, and 2006. However, the 1994 AOS was not stratified, and the 2006 AOS included additional Department region specific questions. Comments were sought from Department personnel on survey design and additional questions of interest. A pre-test of the 2006 survey was conducted on 10 non-Department individuals ranging in age from 17 to 53, with varying educational backgrounds to ensure questionnaire clarity.

Following Dillman's "Total Design Method" (1978) and "Tailored Design Method" (2000), the AOS was mailed to selected anglers with a postage paid return envelope. Three weeks later, a second letter and AOS were mailed to non-respondents. After another three weeks a reminder postcard was sent to the individuals who had not responded to the previous two mailings.

Data entry programs with error checking were written and tested using Clipper templates and a program coding aid, Genifer version 3.0[®] for the 1994 and 1999 AOS. Microsoft Access 2003[®] was used for the 2006 AOS. A trained survey crew entered the responses. All responses were stored in a RDBMS (Relational Database Management System) to ensure referential integrity and to facilitate data analysis.

Data entry errors were minimized by use of error trapping on the data entry screens and industry standard data processing techniques such as double blind entry. Spelling errors in the body of water name, county and species were corrected and subsequently standardized by Department personnel.

Analyses of the responses were conducted using SYSTAT[®], Ashton-Tate's dBase III+[®] (1994 AOS), and Microsoft Excel[®] (1999 and 2006 AOS) utilizing pivot table services, and/or customized scripts. The results for the questions were first summarized by strata. These summarized results were then expanded by the weighting factor (total number of individuals in the strata per number of respondents to the question by strata) to develop the statewide summary, which was converted into percentages where applicable.

1994 RESULTS

Sixty-eight percent of the respondents of the 1994 AOS had purchased a resident fishing license. The 1994 AOS had 1,029 responses and a response rate of 51%. Unless specified, the following results include both resident and non-resident responses based on the type of license purchased.

Angler Information

In 1994, 338,281 individuals had purchased an Idaho fishing license. Anglers were asked if they thought the Department should provide more information to anglers. Approximately 48% of the respondents answered yes, followed by not sure (30%), and no (21%). Respondents chose the following methods in descending order of preference for receiving information (the percentage of respondents that chose each method is in parentheses):

1. Pick up at vendors (50%)
2. Direct mail (42%)
3. Newspaper (31%)
4. Television (14%)
5. Radio (9%)
6. Public meetings (6%)
7. Other (3%)

Anglers stated they would like to receive information on the following topics in descending order of importance (the percentage of respondents that chose each type of information is in parentheses):

1. Fishing regulations (63%)
2. Current fishing conditions (59%)
3. Places to go fishing (54%)
4. Results of fish population surveys (49%)
5. Fishing tips (39%)
6. Environmental issues that affect fish resources (36%)
7. Other (6%)

Approximately 72% of the respondents said they were contacted by a Department employee while fishing in 1994. Approximately 64% of those contacted said their opinion of the Department did not change after the contact, 31% stated their opinion improved, and 5% stated it was worse.

Fishing Habits

Respondents most frequently fished the Snake River, followed by the Salmon River, and Henrys Lake in 1994. Anglers were asked to list the three Idaho waters they would fish most often if the time, distance, and difficulty of getting there were not a factor. The top three bodies of water selected by respondents were the Salmon River, Snake River, and Henrys Lake.

Anglers preferred to fish for the following fish in order of descending preference (the percentage of anglers that selected each fish is in parentheses):

1. Trout (24%)
2. Bass (13%)
3. Rainbow trout (10%)
4. Steelhead (9%)
5. Cutthroat trout (7%)
6. Crappie (5%)
7. Brown trout (5%)
8. Catfish (4%)
9. Kokanee (4%)

In 1994, anglers spent an average of 18.4 days per year fishing in Idaho. The Department also asked anglers to estimate the number of days they took part in different types of fishing. Anglers spent the most days fishing for trout in rivers or streams (mean days fished=6.5), followed by trout in lakes or reservoirs (mean days fished=6.2), and bass in lakes and reservoirs (mean days fished=2.0) (Table 1). Respondents spent an average of six days fishing for trout on waters where special regulations required them to release all or a certain size of the trout that they might catch, and an average of three days fishing for bass where special regulations required them to release bass larger than the 12 inch general size limit.

Table 1. Mean number of days anglers took part in different types of fishing in 1994.

Different types of fishing	Mean number of days spent fishing
Trout in rivers or streams	6.5
Trout in lakes or reservoirs	6.2
Bass in lakes or reservoirs	2.0
Steelhead	1.7
"Anything that bites" in lakes and reservoirs	1.5
Kokanee	1.3
Crappie	1.2
"Anything that bites" in rivers and streams	1.1
Trout in high mountain lakes	1.1
Perch	0.9
Bass in rivers and streams	0.8
Catfish in lakes and reservoirs	0.8
Catfish in rivers and streams	0.5
Bluegill or pumpkinseed	0.3
Sturgeon	0.3
Whitefish in rivers or streams	0.3
Walleye	0.3
Other kinds of fish in lakes and reservoirs	0.3
Landlocked Chinook salmon in lakes and reservoirs	0.2
Northern pike or tiger muskies	0.2
Whitefish in lakes or reservoirs	0.1
Other kinds of fish in rivers and streams	0.1

Fish Management

Habitat conditions have a great influence on fish populations and strongly dictate the species and numbers that can be supported. Lowland lakes and reservoirs and large rivers generally support many kinds of fish including bass, trout, and nongame species. Small, colder streams and high elevation lakes typically only support a few species of fish. Different management strategies involving stocking and special fishing regulations are used to best provide the diversity of fishing that anglers want.

The Department uses regulations to manage fisheries in one of three ways: 1) general statewide regulations with liberal bag limits, no gear restrictions, and long seasons; 2) "special regulations" that restrict sizes and numbers of fish that can be harvested in order to have more and larger fish to catch; and 3) "protective regulations" to protect threatened or sensitive fish populations from overharvest. There are also numerous "non-biological" regulations (e.g., not allowing boats on a specific body of water) that regulate how anglers fish, in order to minimize conflicts with other users.

To assist in providing guidance to the Department in managing Idaho fisheries, the 1994 AOS included a number of questions that asked anglers how they feel about special and protective regulations in fisheries management.

Special Regulations

In waters where angler use is high enough that most fish are harvested at a young age, using special regulations that require some sizes of fish to be released results in more, larger fish to catch but not harvest. Approximately 43% of the respondents preferred to have the same number of trout waters managed for release only, 42% preferred more waters, and 16% preferred less waters. Approximately 50% of the respondents preferred to have the same number of bass waters managed for release only, 34% preferred more waters, and 16% preferred less waters.

Anglers were asked to select one of the following statements that best described their feelings about restrictive regulations for trout where current harvest is not endangering the population:

- 1) I support restrictive regulations if they will result in significantly more and larger fish to catch.
- 2) I support restrictive regulations if they will result in any increase in numbers and size of fish.
- 3) I support restrictive regulations even if they don't change trout numbers or size.
- 4) I don't support restrictive regulations at all where the trout population is not in danger.

Anglers were most supportive of the first statement (37%). Approximately 27% of the anglers selected the second and fourth statements, and 8% selected the third statement.

Protective Regulations

Protective regulations are used to protect sensitive fish populations from overharvest in some areas or during specific times. Placing regulations on numerous specific streams where there is a problem requires several individual regulations which can complicate the regulations brochure. However, simpler drainage-wide or area-wide regulations may needlessly restrict harvest where there is not a problem.

Anglers were asked the following question: "If current research shows that an 8 inch minimum size for trout is needed to protect young steelhead in some areas, how would you like the regulation applied?" Approximately 33% of the anglers chose just the individual streams where there is an overharvest problem. Twenty-nine percent chose all drainages or rivers where young wild steelhead occur. Twenty-four percent chose statewide, and 13% chose entire drainages or rivers which have streams where there is a problem.

By 1994, a reduced bag limit of two trout, with no gear or bait restrictions had been applied to over 3,000 of Idaho's 26,000 miles of rivers and streams to prevent overharvest of wild trout. Approximately 40% of the respondents thought the regulation should be applied only on individual streams where harvest needed to be limited; 30% of the respondents thought the regulation should be applied to entire wild trout drainages which have streams where harvest needed to be limited; and 30% thought the regulation should be applied to all wild trout drainages or rivers.

Regulation Brochure

In 1994, the Department asked anglers questions regarding the regulation brochure in an effort to ensure clarity. The majority of the respondents said that they sometimes have difficulty knowing what the fishing regulations are for the area they want to fish (Figure 1). Anglers ranked the following items, which can make it difficult to understand the regulations, in the following descending order of importance:

1. There are too many different areas with exceptions to the general regulations.
2. It is hard to figure out where the boundaries are for the regulations.
3. There are too many different types of regulations.
4. It is hard to find out what the regulation is where I want to fish.
5. The regulations change so often it is hard to keep them straight.
6. The wording of the brochure is confusing.
7. The way the actual regulations are presented in the tables makes it difficult to figure them out.
8. The brochure is organized poorly.
9. There is too much extra information and ads in the brochure.
10. Other.

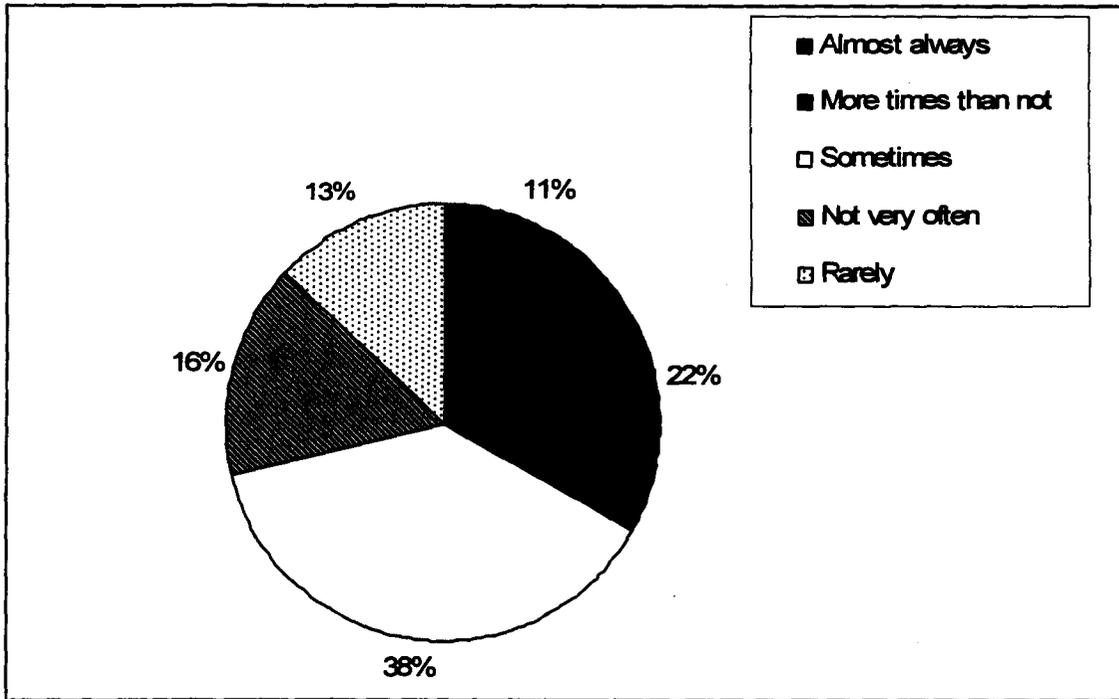


Figure 1. Angler opinions on how often they had difficulty understanding the regulations (1994).

Angler Proposals

The 1994 AOS included questions asking respondents' opinions on fishing regulations that anglers have proposed to the Department in the past. Proposals were acquired through public meetings and general contacts with the public by Department employees.

Anglers in some parts of the state have suggested allowing the use of a second rod. A second rod would allow anglers to cast for bass while sturgeon fishing, improve their odds when trolling, or improve the success when still-fishing for catfish or hatchery trout in reservoirs. Overharvest of wild trout is a concern; however, few people still-fish in streams and a second rod could be prohibited in trout streams. Approximately 47% of the respondents stated they would like to see the use of a second rod legalized if it was done in a manner that did not hurt the future of fish populations. Forty-two percent of the respondents were in opposition of a second rod, and 11% were not sure.

Most trout streams are now open to fishing during the winter because of the whitefish season. The harvest of trout is not legal, but they do get caught and released. Some anglers suggested closing the whitefish season. Others have suggested legalizing a winter catch and release season for trout. Another option would be to restrict the use of bait or allowing only whitefish bait in an effort to reduce trout mortality. More anglers supported to strongly supported (39%) a winter catch and release trout season than opposed to strongly opposed (28%). Approximately 33% of the anglers were not sure.

Some anglers have suggested having a trout stamp or conservation stamp to specifically fund certain fisheries programs. For example, money from the stamp could be used to purchase or acquire easements to property along trout streams, habitat work, construction of new fishing reservoirs, or to help fund expensive hatchery trout programs. More anglers opposed to strongly opposed (48%) a stamp or fee increase to raise money for specific purposes, than supported to strongly supported (36%). Approximately 16% of the anglers were not sure. Of those that were in support, the majority (60%) preferred the money be raised by purchasing a stamp than a license fee increase (40%). Respondents that supported a stamp thought the money should be applied to all anglers (49%). Thirty-five percent thought it should be applied to all trout anglers, and 16% thought it should be applied to anglers who fish for hatchery trout. More respondents that supported a stamp or fee increase thought the money should be spent on rearing and stocking trout (40%); followed by acquiring easements or title to trout streams (25%); building lakes, ponds, or reservoirs for fishing (15%); stream habitat improvements on private land (14%); or other (6%). The mean amount recommended by anglers for the stamp or fee increase was \$4.49.

Salmon Recovery

In 1994, the majority of the respondents stated that the recovery of Chinook and sockeye salmon was important to extremely important (64%); 19% stated it was unimportant to extremely unimportant; and 17% were not sure. Anglers were split on whether or not they would be willing to pay \$5 more per month on their electric bill if it could recover salmon. Approximately 42% answered no to an increase on their electric bill, 41% answered yes, and 17% were not sure.

In the 1994 AOS, the Department described two options that were being discussed to recover salmon. One option was called "the flush" which referred to maintaining the four Snake River reservoirs below Lewiston at full capacity while flushing water (i.e. many millions of acre feet) from Idaho's reservoirs to move salmon smolts through the hydrosystem. "The flush" would have left many upstream reservoirs very low or empty, but would not have impacted barging or hydro-power generation downriver. The other option was called "the drawdown" which referred to drawing down the four reservoirs below Lewiston to create a river effect. This would have increased the water speed that the smolts required to get to the ocean. After several weeks of the draw down, the four reservoirs would have been refilled with less than one million acre feet of water from Idaho reservoirs. "The drawdown" would have minor impact on Idaho reservoirs, but would have impacted barging and hydro-power generation downriver. Most of the respondents did not support either option (50%); 43% supported "the drawdown", and 7% supported "the flush".

1999 RESULTS

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents of the 1999 AOS had purchased a resident fishing license. The 1999 AOS had 5,620 responses and a response rate of 58%. Unless specified, the following results include both resident and non-resident responses based on the type of license purchased.

Angler Information

In 1999, 437,239 individuals purchased an Idaho fishing license. The highest percentage of resident anglers resided in the Southwest (38%) and Panhandle (14%) regions, and the fewest lived in the Salmon Region (1%) (Figure 2). Anglers fished a total of 7,395,983 days in 1999. The mean number of years that anglers estimated to have fished in Idaho was 19 years.

Seventy-two percent of the children under the age of 14 who were living at home fished. In Idaho, resident children under the age of 14 do not need a license to fish, nor do non-resident children under 14 when accompanied by an individual with a valid Idaho license.

Anglers were asked if they feel the Department should provide more information about available fishing opportunities, such as location of lakes, public access areas, or types of fish available. The majority (52%) of the respondents answered yes, followed by no (28%), and no opinion (19%). When asked how they would like to receive information on available fishing opportunities, the majority of the respondents selected brochure, followed by the internet, newspaper, and TV/radio (Figure 3). Approximately 66% of the respondents in 1999 said they had access to the internet.

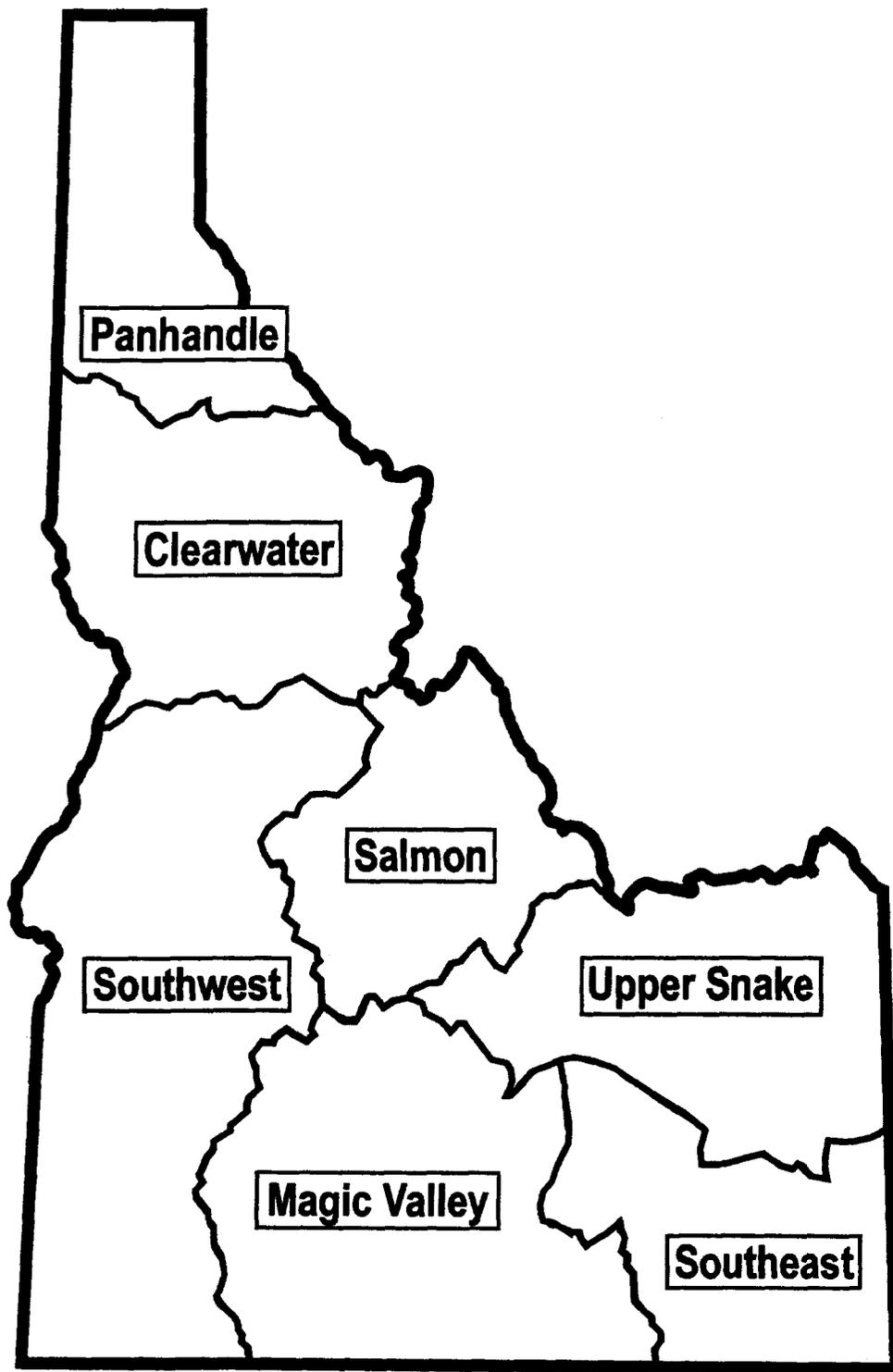


Figure 2. Idaho Department of Fish and Game regional map.

Anglers were asked to list the three waters most frequently fished in 1999. Non-residents and residents combined, most frequently fished the Snake River, followed by Henrys Lake and Lake Coeur d'Alene. Idaho residents most frequently fished Cascade Reservoir, followed by C.J. Strike Reservoir, and Lake Coeur d'Alene. The three most frequently fished waters were broken down by regional respondents (Table 2).

Table 2. Most frequently fished waters in each Department region in 1999.

Department Region	Most frequently fished water body	Second most frequently fished water body	Third most frequently fished water body
Panhandle	Lake Coeur D'Alene	Lake Pend Orielle	Saint Joe River
Clearwater	Clearwater River	Dworshak Reservoir	Snake River
Southwest	Cascade Reservoir	C.J. Strike Reservoir	Little Camas Reservoir
Magic Valley	Magic Valley Reservoir	Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir	Oakley Reservoir
Southeast	American Falls Reservoir	Chesterfield Reservoir	Snake River
Upper Snake	Henrys Lake	Palisade Reservoir	Island Park Reservoir
Salmon	Salmon River	Lemhi River	Mackay Reservoir

Anglers were asked which fish they most preferred to catch. Trout was the most popular followed by bass. Anglers preferred to fish in rivers/streams (53%), followed by lakes/reservoirs (36%), and mountain lakes (11%). More anglers preferred to fish with bait (36%), followed by flies (34%), and lures/spinners (30%). The preferred method of fishing was from the shore/wading (58%), followed by boat (36%), float tubes (5%), and ice fishing (1%).

The top five reasons that anglers used when deciding where to fish in declining order of importance was presence of favorite fish species, natural beauty of the area, avoidance of other anglers, water quality, and chance to catch a large or trophy fish.

Fish Management

To assist in providing guidance to the Department in managing Idaho fisheries, the 1999 AOS included a number of questions about the types of fishing experiences desired by anglers and how they feel about special regulations in fisheries management. Additionally, anglers were asked to weigh in on the issues of trout and bass management.

The 1999 AOS presented anglers with the following hypothetical question: "If you had \$100 to spend on improving Idaho's fishing and protecting the resource, how would you spend it on the following programs?" Anglers allocated various amounts of money to the following seven fisheries management activities which are listed from the greatest amount of money to the least amount of money (the mean amount of money anglers allocated to each activity is in parentheses):

1. Hatchery trout production for streams (\$17.82)
2. Habitat protection (\$17.73)
3. Hatchery trout production for lakes (\$17.29)
4. Protection and enhancement of wild trout (\$17.02)
5. Salmon and steelhead fisheries (\$12.74)
6. Enforcement (\$12.03)
7. Warmwater fisheries (\$5.36)

Methods to Reduce Harvest and Conflict

Anglers were asked about various ways to reduce harvest if trout populations in rivers and streams were being overharvested. Respondents were not in favor (72% opposed) of the Department providing limited entry fisheries to provide a quality fishing experience and/or protect fish.

Trout Management

The 1999 AOS asked anglers several questions regarding quality or trophy trout management and wild trout management. Respondents who fished for trout in Idaho believed the present statewide limit of six trout was about right (67%). Approximately 16% believed the six trout limit was too many, 7% believed it was too few, and 10% did not have an opinion.

Approximately 43% of the respondents stated they would like to have additional streams or lakes managed to provide larger than average trout and increased number of fish caught, even if the methods of fishing, and the number and size of trout could be restricted. Approximately 33% of the respondents did not want additional streams or lakes managed for quality or trophy trout, and 19% of the respondents did not have an opinion. The majority of the respondents (57%) would still continue to fish their favorite trout stream even if they were required to release all of the trout they caught. The majority of respondents (61%) also would fish a stream or lake if it provided the opportunity to catch trophy trout, even if they had to release all the fish they caught.

Anglers were asked "Would you like a portion of the 9 inch hatchery trout production converted into a few trout larger than 12 inches even knowing that one 12 inch trout will replace three 9 inch trout available for stocking in Idaho waters?" Approximately 57% of the respondents opposed the proposed hatchery production modification. Half of anglers rated the quality of trout stocked by the Department as good or excellent (Figure 4).

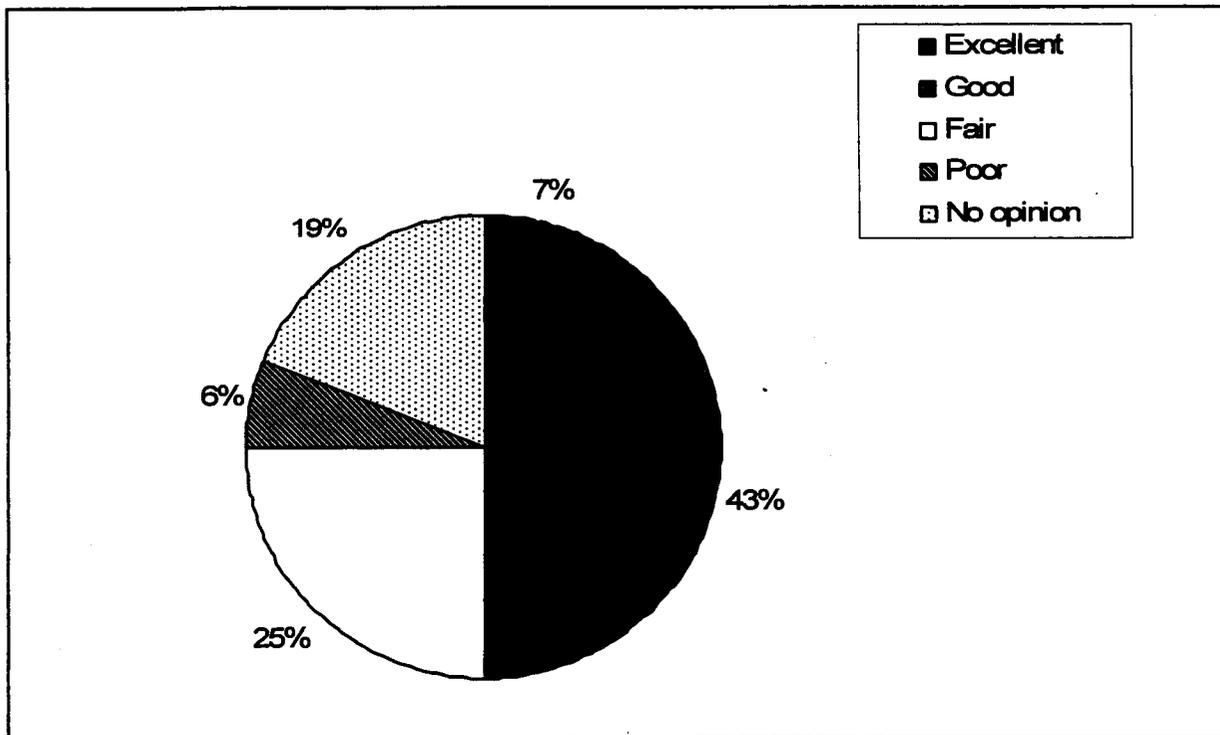


Figure 4. Angler ratings of the quality of trout stocked by the Department (1999).

In an effort to maintain fishable wild trout populations, anglers were in favor of the following management options listed in descending order of support (the percentage of anglers in favor of each option is in parentheses):

1. Restricting the number or size of wild trout that could be kept (53%).
2. Replacing wild trout with hatchery trout (17%).
3. Increasing the number of small fishing ponds (10%).

Twenty percent of the respondents did not have an opinion. Approximately 47% of the respondents thought the Department should continue to spend the same effort on the management of wild species. Approximately 43% thought the Department should spend more effort, and 10% thought they should spend less effort on the management of wild species.

Bass Management

The Department instituted a statewide 12-inch minimum length regulation for bass in 1986 to increase numbers of larger bass. Certain bass fisheries are also managed for quality and trophy options. Restrictive regulations are used at these fisheries to provide better catch rates and larger fish (≥ 16 inches).

Approximately 42% of the respondents would like more lakes or ponds in Idaho managed to provide increased numbers of bass greater than 16 inches in length even if the number and/or size of fish that could be kept would be restricted. Twenty-four percent of the respondents were not in favor and 34% of the respondents did not have an opinion.

Anglers were asked if they fish for bass in Idaho, what is the smallest largemouth and smallmouth bass they would keep if not restricted. The majority of the anglers selected a 12 inch minimum length for both largemouth and smallmouth bass (Figure 5). Anglers were also asked if they fish for bass in Idaho, what would be considered a quality size largemouth and smallmouth bass. The majority of anglers selected 16 inches for both largemouth and smallmouth bass (Figure 6).

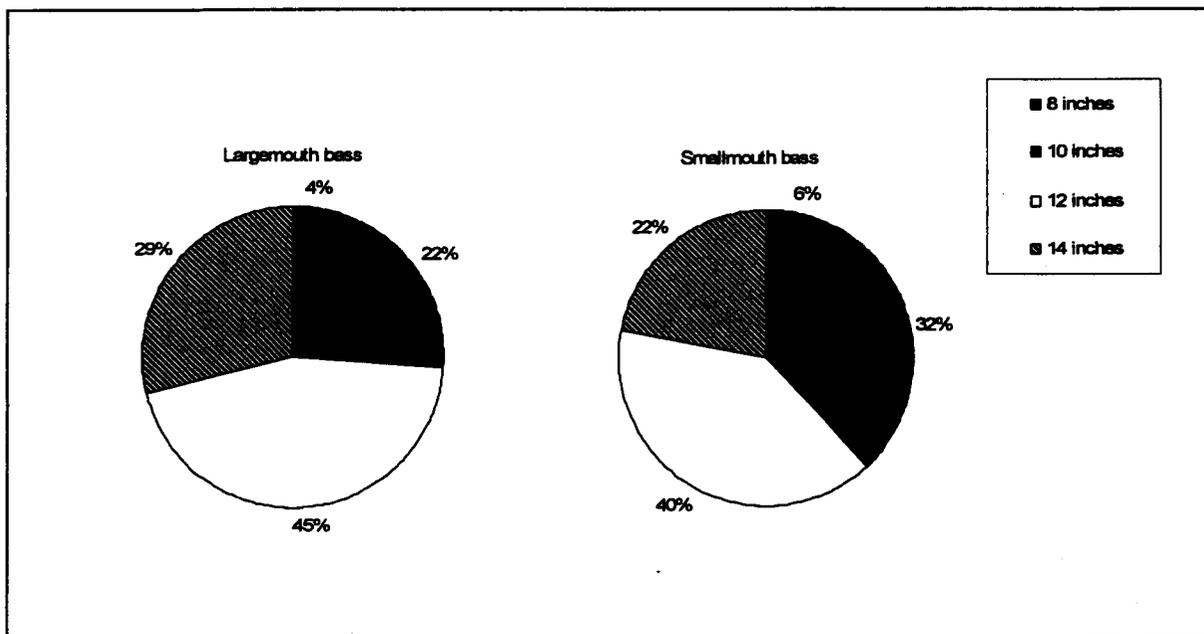


Figure 5. Angler opinions on minimum lengths that largemouth and smallmouth bass would need to be for them to consider harvest (1999).

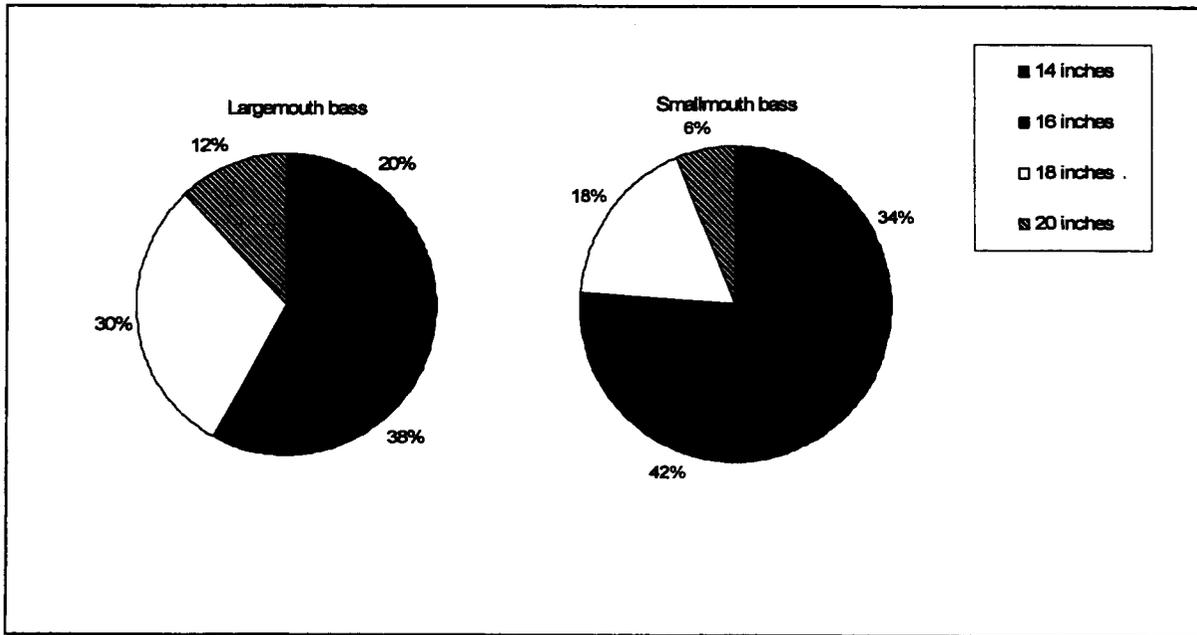


Figure 6. Angler opinions on various lengths that they would consider quality size largemouth and smallmouth bass (1999).

2006 RESULTS

Approximately 86% of the respondents of the 2006 AOS had purchased a resident fishing license in 2005. The 2006 AOS had 4,361 responses. Responses were received from 3,790 residents and 571 non-residents for a 45% and 48% return rate, respectively. Unless specified, the following results include both resident and non-resident responses based on the type of license purchased.

Angler Information

In 2005, 407,731 individuals had purchased an Idaho fishing license. The majority of non-resident anglers resided in Utah and Washington. The highest percentage of resident anglers resided in the Southwest (40%) and Panhandle (15%) regions, and the fewest lived in the Salmon Region (2%), which is consistent with the 1999 AOS results (Figure 7).

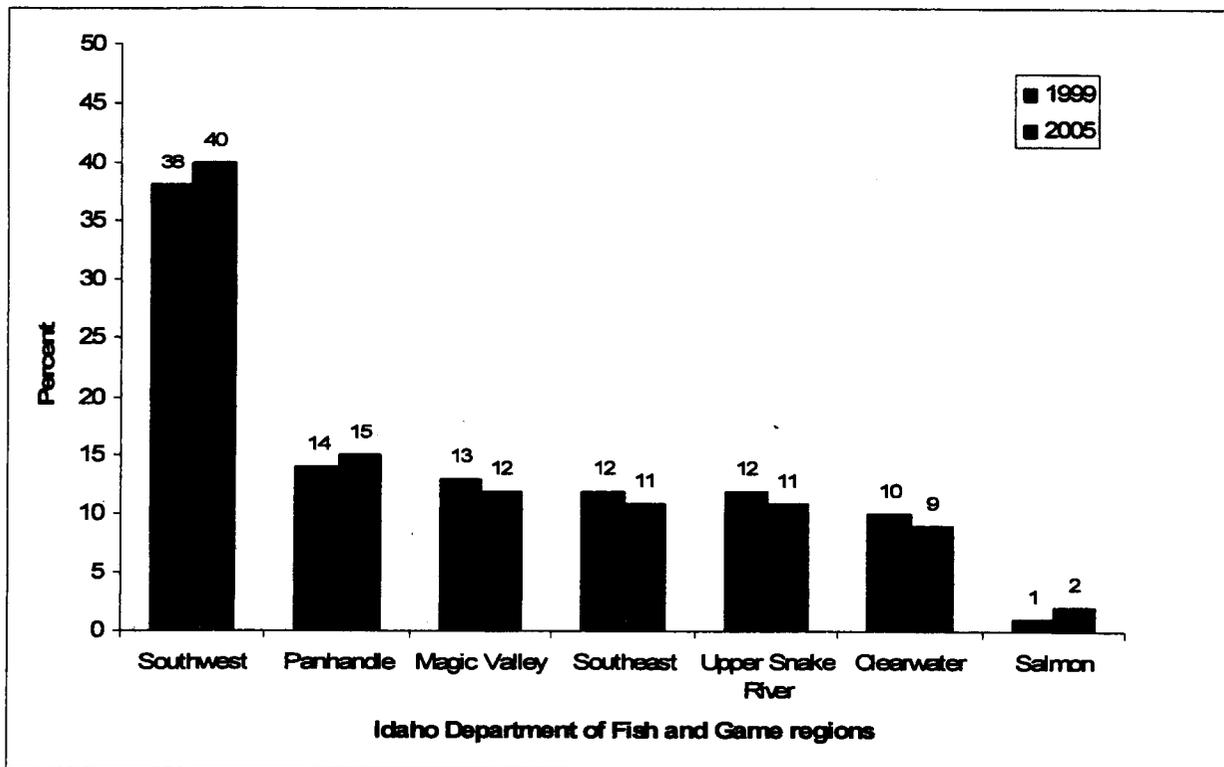


Figure 7. Percent of resident fishing license holders by region in 1999 and 2005.

The mean age of respondents was 49 years and 78% were male. Eighty percent of the children under the age of 14 that were living at home fished. Approximately 50% of the resident respondents have fished more than 20 years in Idaho and 19% had fished one to five years. Most of the respondents lived in small cities (34%), followed by small towns (24%), large cities (22%), and rural areas (21%). Large cities were defined as having more than 100,000 people, small cities were defined as having between 10,000 and 100,000 people, and small towns were defined as having less than 10,000 people. Boise is currently the only large city in Idaho.

Respondents were asked to rank who they most often fish with. Anglers responded they most often fished with a spouse (45%), followed by friends (40%), and children (38%). Other options included father (24%), other family members (21%), grandchildren (19%), grandparents (17%), co-workers (10%), and mother (7%).

Anglers obtained information on fishing most often from friends and family (56%), tackle shops (22%), or newspapers (16%). Less than 5% sought information from Department offices; however, 11% utilized the Department's internet website. Approximately 47% of respondents claimed they used the internet at home to research information on fishing.

Fishing Habits

Anglers were asked how often (never, occasionally, often) they fished for specific fish species over the last five years. Combined, 94% of anglers responded to fishing for trout "occasionally" and "often" (Figure 8). Trout was also chosen as the fish species most fished for in each region.

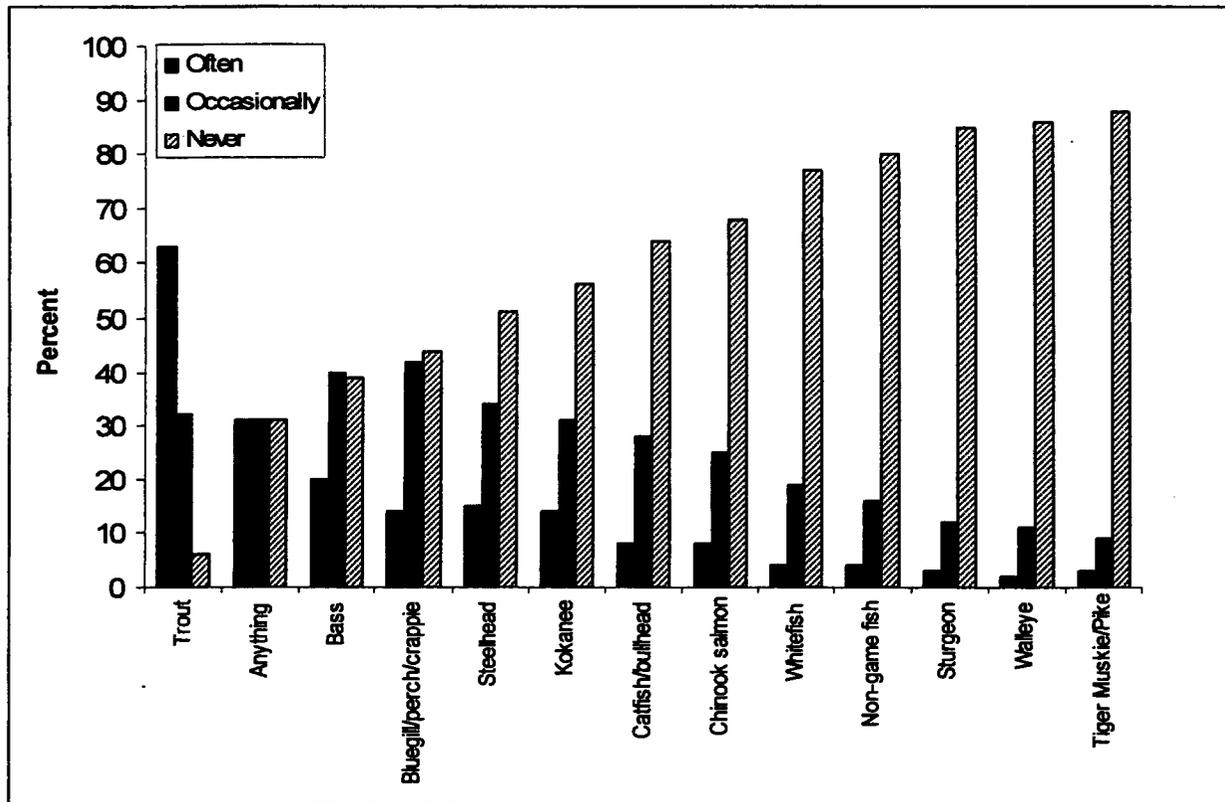


Figure 8. Percentage of surveyed anglers fishing for various fish species (2005).

Respondents most often fished from the bank (54%), and ice fishing was the least common method of fishing statewide (5%) (Figure 9). For Idaho residents, bait (61%) and lures (52%) were the most often used fishing gear, while fishing with flies (32%) was the least common method. The opposite was true for non-resident anglers which responded to using flies (54%) most often, followed by lures (47%), and bait (42%).

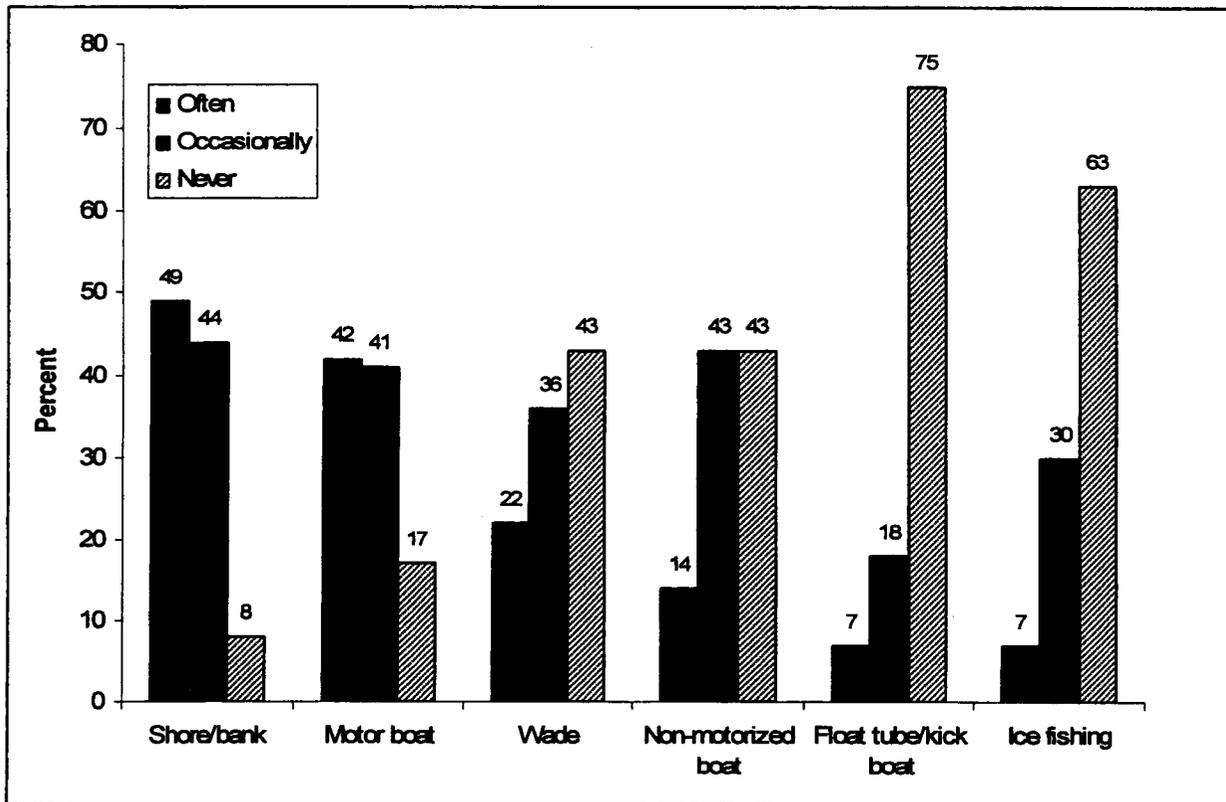


Figure 9. Percentage of surveyed anglers that utilized various methods of fishing (2005).

Respondents were asked to rate their general feeling (i.e. excellent, good, fair, or poor) about the type of fishing experiences they had over the last five years. The question was divided into the following water body types: mountain lakes; ponds, lakes, and reservoirs; and rivers and streams. With the exception of fishing for walleye and Chinook salmon in ponds, lakes, and reservoirs, respondents rated their experiences as excellent, good, or fair. The fishing experience for walleye and Chinook salmon in ponds, lakes, and reservoirs was considered poor.

The top five reasons that anglers used when deciding where to fish in declining order of importance was natural beauty of the area, presence of favorite fish, solitude, chance to catch big fish, and the chance to catch a lot of fish. There were no major differences regarding important reasons for fishing between resident and non-resident anglers.

Fish Management

Fishing rules are a primary tool used by the Department to manage fish populations and provide different types of angling experiences. To assist in providing guidance to the Department in managing Idaho fisheries, the 2006 AOS included a number of questions about the types of fishing experiences desired by anglers and how they feel about special regulations in fisheries management. Additionally, anglers were asked to weigh in on the issues of fishing contests and tournaments, bass management, and anadromous fishery management.

As part of overall responsibilities for fisheries management in Idaho, the Department carries out a number of activities desired by the public. The public was asked how important a

number of these activities are to them. The following ten fisheries management activities were chosen by the respondents to be very important in declining order of importance (the percentage of respondents that selected each management activity is in parentheses):

1. Protecting and improving fish habitat (65%)
2. Enforcing fishing regulations (56%)
3. Managing for native trout fisheries (46%)
4. Maintaining/improving existing fishing access sites and boat ramps (41%)
5. Providing places for family fishing (35%)
6. Managing for quality/trophy trout in rivers and streams (35%)
7. Steelhead fishing in rivers (33%)
8. Managing for quality/trophy trout in lakes and reservoirs (31%)
9. Managing catch-and-keep trout fisheries (28%)
10. Chinook salmon fishing in rivers (25%)

When results were evaluated by region, resident, and non-resident respondents, protecting and improving fish habitat was also selected to be the most important management activity. Overall, anglers believe the Department is doing a fair to good job in a number of fisheries management activities.

Quality and Trophy Size Management

In previous angler opinion surveys, the Department had asked anglers about the use of quality and trophy management to produce more and larger trout and bass to catch but not necessarily harvest. Generally, more anglers supported these rules than not. In the 2006 AOS, the Department again questioned anglers about their opinions regarding quality and trophy management for trout and bass.

When asked if the Department changed regulations on a stream or lake requiring an angler to release all of the fish caught, how likely were they to fish at that location, 47% said they would be very likely to somewhat likely to fish there, while 45% responded they were unlikely to very unlikely to fish there. Resident anglers were much less likely to continue fishing at a stream or lake where the Department changed regulations requiring the release of all fish caught than non-resident anglers (41% vs. 62%). Angler responses differed somewhat when posed with the question, "If a stream or lake was managed by the Department to provide the opportunity to catch trophy size fish, how likely would you fish that stream or lake even if you had to release all of the fish you caught?" Approximately 58% of respondents said they were very likely to somewhat likely to fish a stream or lake under that scenario, while 34% said they were somewhat unlikely to very unlikely to fish. Non-resident anglers were more favorable of this regulation scenario than resident anglers (70% vs. 52%). Sixty-six percent of the respondents strongly favored (35%) to somewhat favored (31%) fishing regulations that produce quality and trophy size fish even if it meant reducing the number of fish that could be harvested.

Methods to Reduce Harvest and Conflict

Anglers were asked about various ways to reduce harvest if trout populations in rivers and streams were being overharvested. Respondents were presented with the following statement

and question. "Harvesting too many trout in rivers and streams can reduce their numbers, decrease average size, and reduce catch rates. To what degree do you support or oppose the following methods to reduce harvest?" Anglers were somewhat to strongly supportive of restricting the number of trout that can be kept (81%), restricting the size of trout that can be kept (76%), and restricting the type of gear that can be used (55%). Anglers were somewhat to strongly opposed to shortening the fishing season (60%) and restricting angler use (51%) (Figure 10). Resident and non-resident angler responses were in agreement with the exception that non-residents (68%) were more supportive of gear restrictions than resident anglers (48%) as a way to reduce harvest of trout.

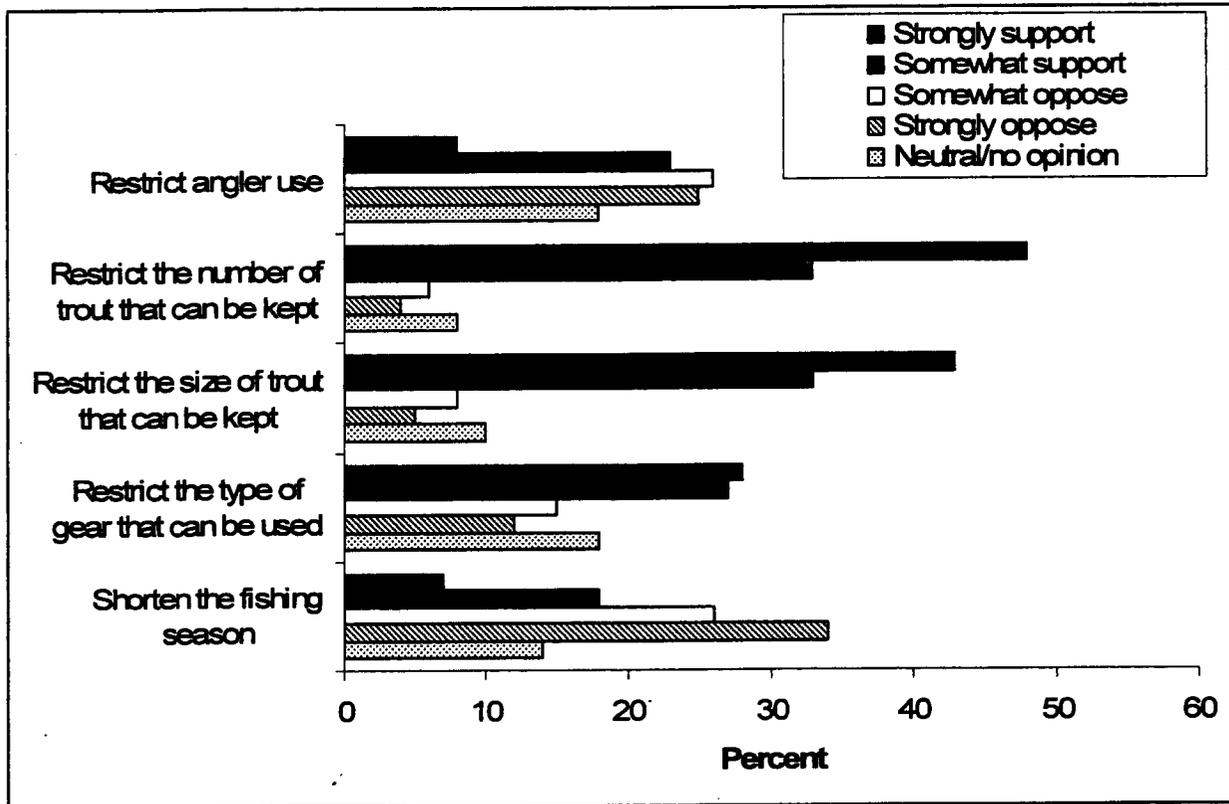


Figure 10. Percentage of anglers in support or opposition to various methods to reduce harvest of trout (2005).

Respondents were very likely (43%) to fish a body of water if the Department were to stock hatchery trout into an existing trout population to provide more desirable size fish to catch or improve catch rates. Only 4% responded as very unlikely.

The Department asked a series of questions regarding potential management actions designed to reduce conflicts among anglers. Anglers were asked "To what degree do you support or oppose the following possible management actions designed to reduce conflict and fairly allocate fishing opportunities among anglers?" Overall, anglers did not favor limited entry permits to limit harvest of trophy size fish where harvest is currently allowed, on specific waters to reduce crowding, or as an alternative to harvest restrictions. However, they were more supportive of special regulations as a method to reduce angler participation and maintain fish populations (Figure 11).

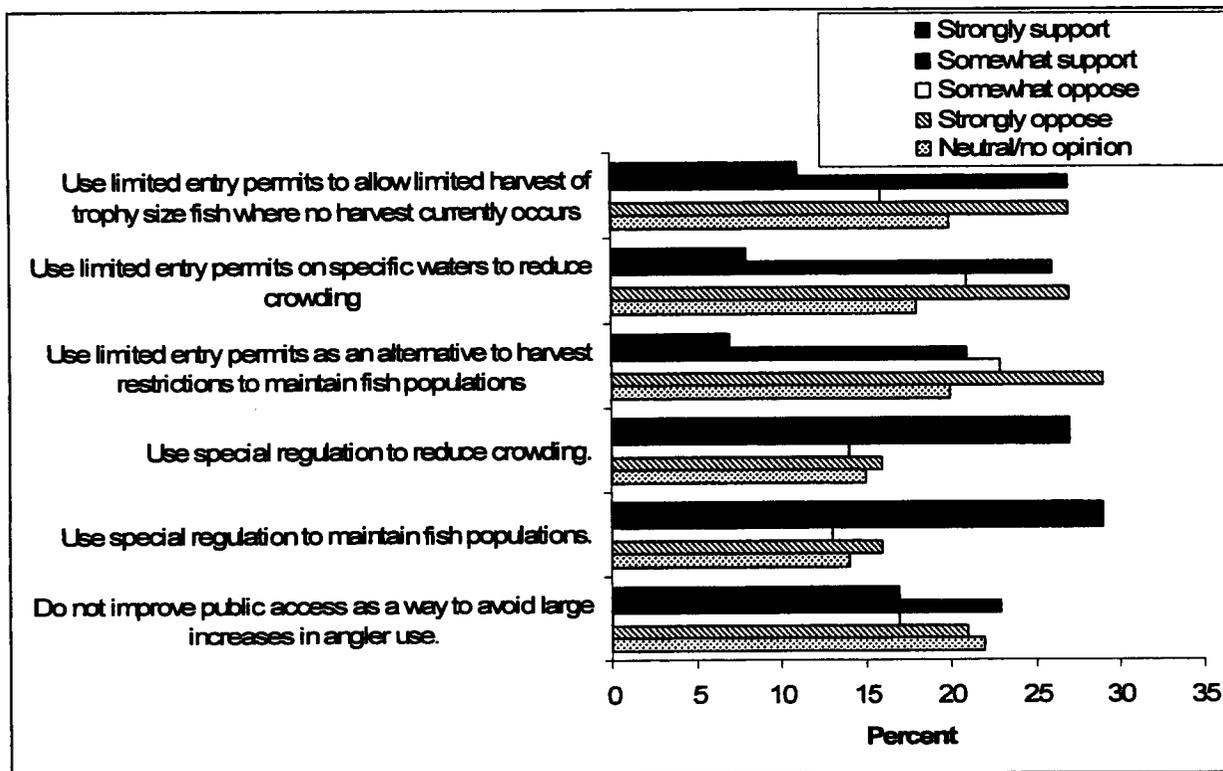


Figure 11. Percentage of anglers in support or opposition to various methods used to reduce conflict and fairly allocate fishing opportunities among anglers (2005).

Bass Management

Fishing for bass in Idaho continues to be very popular, generally ranking second only to fishing for trout. Based on the results of the 2006 AOS, approximately 39% of anglers fished for largemouth bass and 45% fished for smallmouth bass. However, about 63% of the respondents had a future interest in fishing for both species. The Panhandle Region had the highest number of anglers that fished for largemouth bass (57%), and the Clearwater Region had the highest number of anglers that fished for smallmouth bass (63%). The Upper Snake and Salmon regions had the lowest number of anglers that fished for largemouth bass (14%), and the Salmon Region had the lowest number of anglers fishing for smallmouth bass (17%).

Of the anglers that had an opinion (65%) regarding the overall quality of fishing for largemouth bass, most of the respondents (32%) considered it fair. Seventy-three percent of the respondents had an opinion regarding the overall quality of fishing for smallmouth bass. Anglers considered smallmouth bass fishing to be fair (30%) to good (30%) (Figure 12).

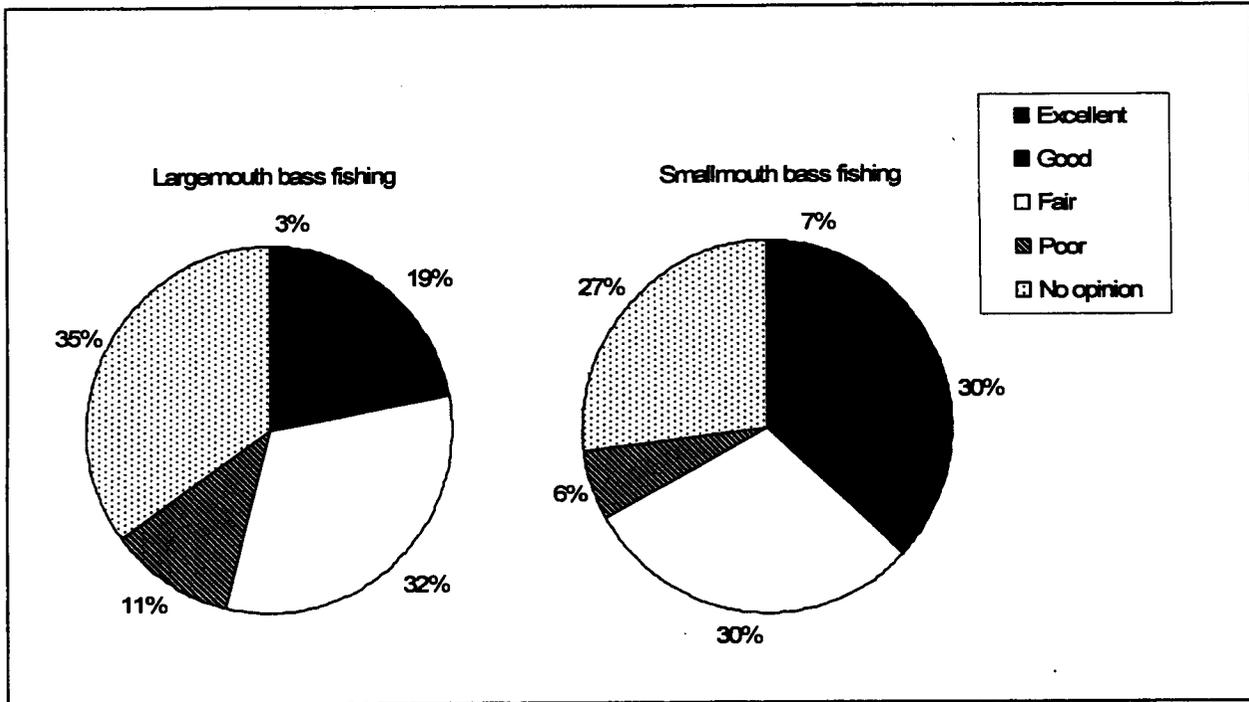


Figure 12. Angler ratings of the overall quality of fishing for largemouth bass and smallmouth bass (2005).

Anglers believe the Department should attempt to develop and manage more largemouth bass waters where feasible. Responses to the survey also indicated that the Department should consider managing largemouth bass differently than smallmouth bass; and managing additional waters for harvest opportunities for bass species with no bait or size restrictions (Figure 13). Results from the survey on the issue of bass management showed no apparent differences between resident and non-resident anglers.

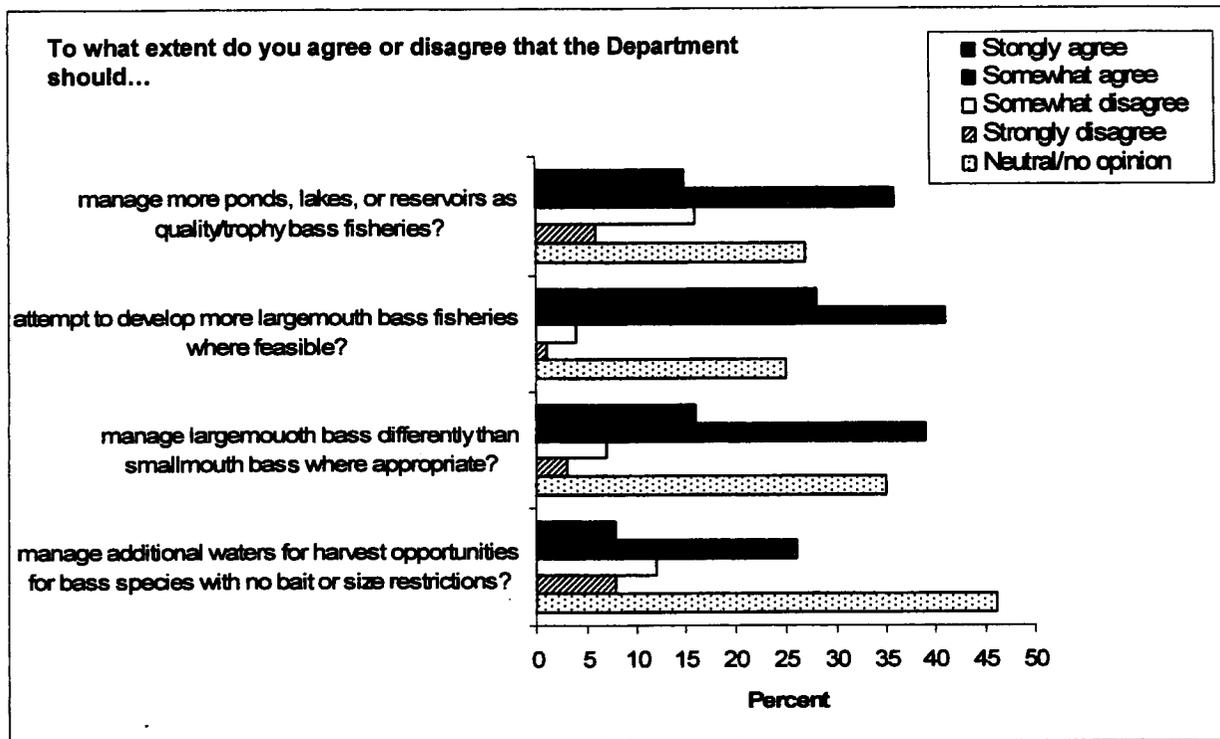


Figure 13. Angler opinions on potential bass management alternatives (2005).

Fishing Contests and Tournaments

The 2006 AOS asked questions regarding angler participation in fishing clubs. Approximately 4% of the resident respondents and 10% of the non-resident respondents belong to a fishing club. No significant differences in the number of anglers that belonged to fishing clubs were observed between regions. Of those that belonged to a fishing club, the majority belonged to trout clubs (25%), fly fishing clubs (25%), and bass clubs (20%). About 48% of the respondents stated that the fishing club with which they were members, sponsored fishing contests/tournaments with prizes based on the number or size of fish caught. Anglers were asked "In which of the past five years have you participated in a fishing contest/tournament in Idaho sponsored by your fishing club(s)?" Approximately 23% of the respondents belonging to a fishing club stated that they had participated in a fishing contest/tournament in 2004 and 2005. This was a small increase from 2001 (17%), 2002 (17%), and 2003 (20%). Almost 39% of the fishing club members had participated in a fishing contest/tournament in Idaho that offered a prize based on the number or size of fish caught over the past five years. Fishing contests for bass (42%), trout (26%), and Chinook salmon (lake) (14%) were the most common.

Anglers were asked questions regarding their opinions on fishing contests and tournaments in Idaho. Approximately 32% of the respondents had been fishing in Idaho while a fishing contest/tournament was taking place that they were not participating in. Of those who answered yes to this scenario, almost 50% stated the contest/tournament being held had no affect on their fishing experience. About 37% felt their fishing experience was somewhat to very negatively affected, and 13% stated their fishing experience was somewhat to very positively affected.

About 54% of anglers told us they were somewhat unlikely to very unlikely to cancel their fishing trip if they knew that a contest or tournament was going to take place on the body of water they planned to fish. Over 70% of anglers told us they would fish somewhere else, and a somewhat lesser majority answered they would either change their fishing time or adjust their boat ramp location (Figure 14).

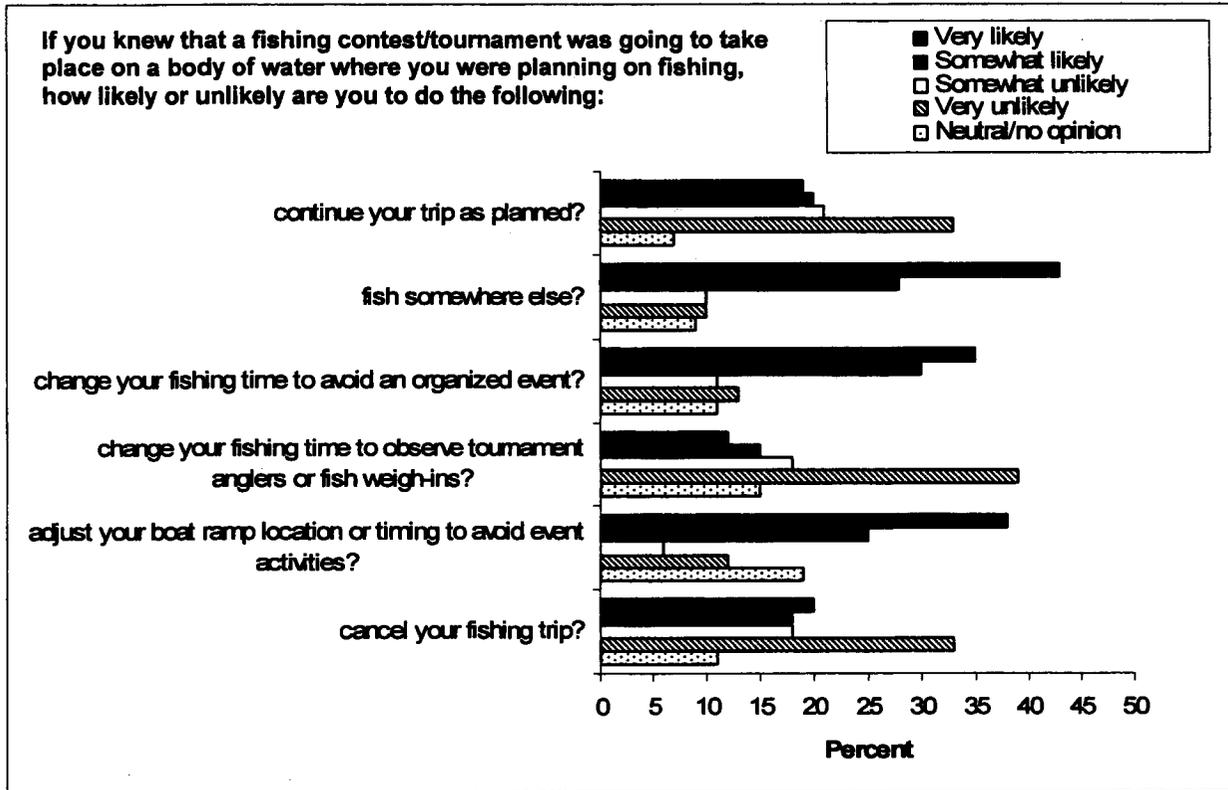


Figure 14. Angler opinions on potential responses to a fishing tournament/contest being held at a body of water where a fishing trip was planned (2005).

The Department asked anglers to express their level of agreement or disagreement with allowing fishing tournaments on various types of fisheries. By a majority, anglers answered that they do not favor fish tournaments on the following types of fisheries:

1. Steelhead on large rivers using boats
2. Steelhead on small rivers
3. Chinook salmon on large rivers using boats
4. Chinook salmon on small rivers
5. Catch-and-release trout waters using float boats
6. Catch-and-release trout waters by wading
7. Quality trout waters using float boats
8. Quality trout waters by wading
9. Backcountry trout waters

Anglers were more supportive of the Department allowing fishing tournaments directed at bass in lakes, and trophy fishing in large lakes, but feel otherwise about permitting tournaments directed at trout, salmon, and steelhead.

The Department currently allows the harvest of non-native trout during a fishing tournament on rivers and streams where there would be a conservation benefit to native trout. Anglers were asked their opinion about "non-profit" versus "for-profit commercial" fishing tournaments that are designed to benefit native trout fisheries. Anglers were largely in favor of non-profit tournaments that benefit native trout fisheries. Approximately 41% either somewhat or strongly disagreed with allowing for-profit fishing tournaments that are designed to benefit native trout fisheries versus about 32% that somewhat or strongly agreed (Figure 15).

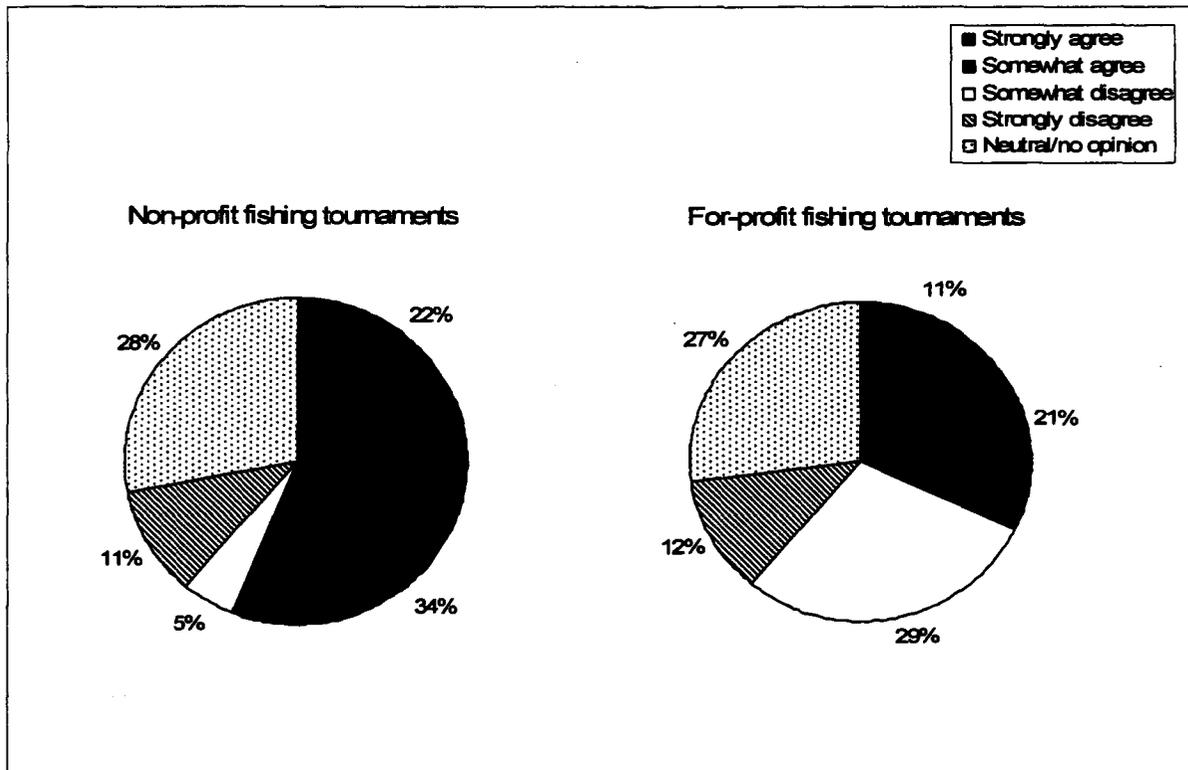


Figure 15. Angler opinions on non-profit and for-profit fishing tournaments that are designed to benefit native trout fisheries (2005).

Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Fisheries

In the 2006 AOS, the Department asked a number of questions regarding fishing for Chinook salmon and steelhead in Idaho. Approximately 27% and 44% of respondents reported fishing for Chinook salmon and steelhead, respectively. Seventy-five percent of the anglers responded that they would have an interest in fishing for Chinook salmon and/or steelhead in the future. Given a choice of management options, when considering whether to offer recreational fisheries for hatchery spring/summer Chinook salmon when excess hatchery fish are not abundant, anglers supported keeping the fishery closed (33%) or managing for a longer season by reducing the bag limit to one fish (21%) (Figure 16). However, when asked how important the daily bag limit was when deciding whether or not to fish for steelhead or Chinook salmon, the majority of anglers told us the daily bag limit was somewhat important to very important for both steelhead (34%) and Chinook salmon (37%) in making their decision. Regarding the bag limits for steelhead and Chinook salmon, 36% and 38% of the respondents reported having no opinion, respectively. Anglers were asked "How likely would you go fishing

for steelhead or Chinook salmon if the bag limits were zero (catch and release only), one, two, or three fish?" Anglers were less likely to go fishing for steelhead or Chinook salmon if the regulation was catch and release (Figures 17 and 18).

Anglers were asked by the Department how important salmon recovery was to them both before and after the significant Chinook salmon fisheries held in Idaho during 2001 and 2002. While a majority of anglers believed salmon recovery was somewhat important to very important before and after the record 2001 and 2002 fisheries, there was not a significant shift in either direction regarding angler beliefs following the fisheries.

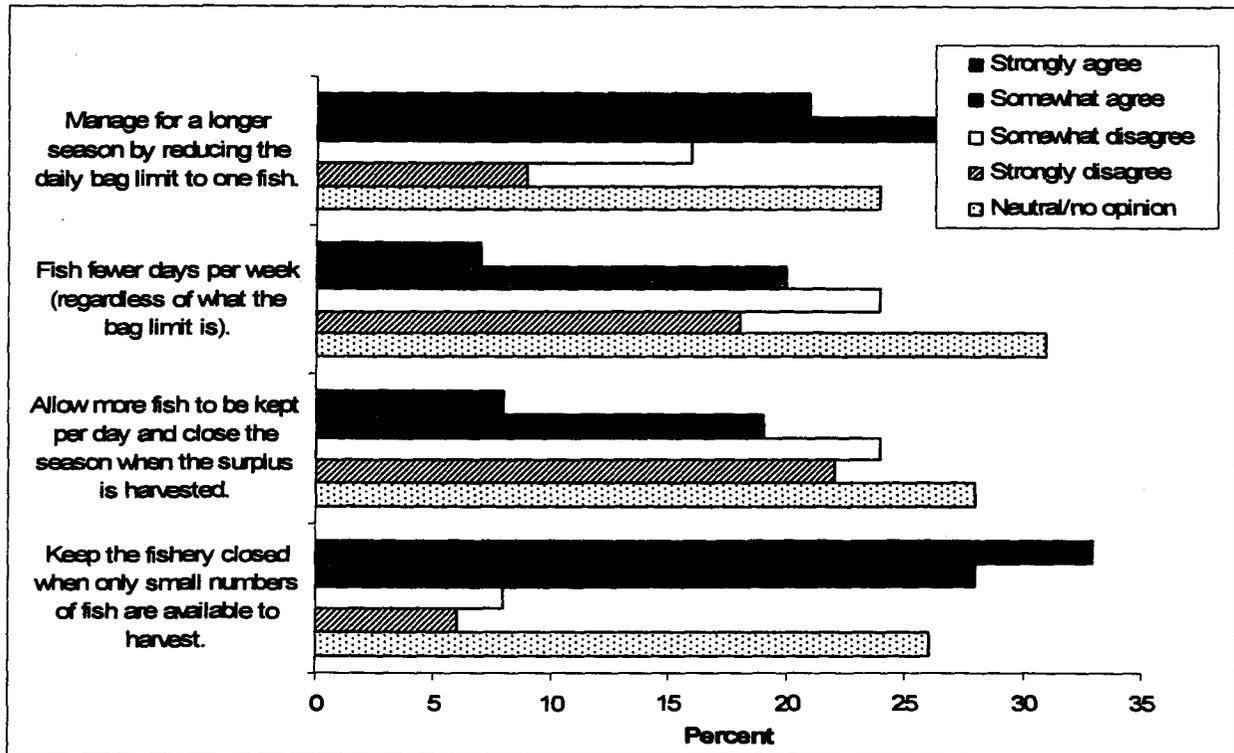


Figure 16. Percentage of anglers in support or opposition to various management options used to reduce harvest when excess Chinook salmon hatchery fish are not abundant.

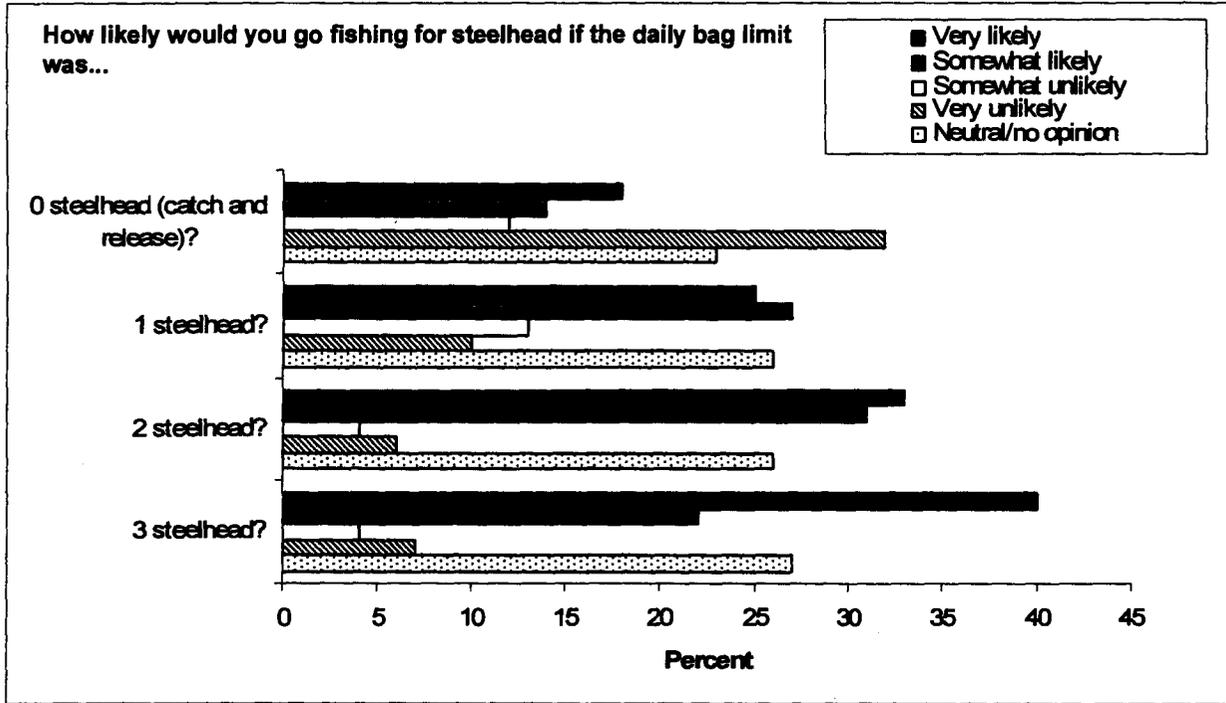


Figure 17. Angler opinions on various bag limits for steelhead fishing (2005).

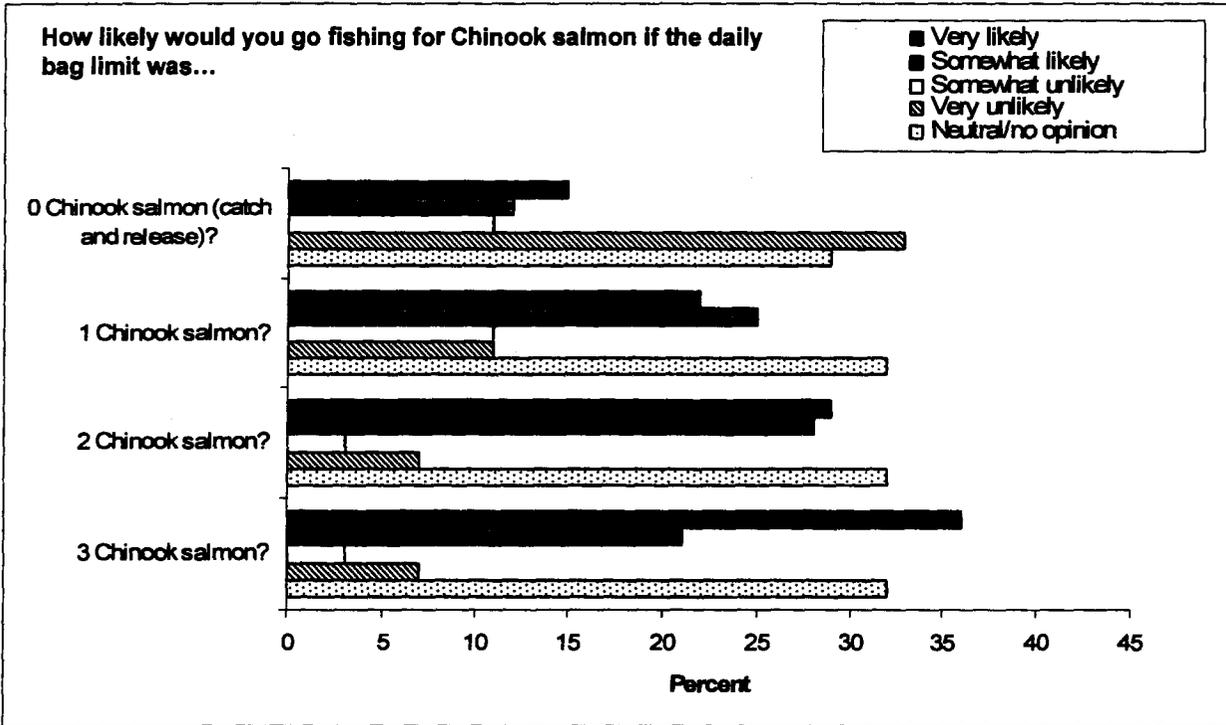


Figure 18. Angler opinions on various bag limits for Chinook salmon (2005).

Steelhead and Chinook Salmon Fishing in the Clearwater River Drainage

The Department asked anglers specific questions regarding the steelhead fishing framework for the Clearwater River drainage. About 8.5% of all respondents had participated in the catch-and-release steelhead fishery. Significantly more of the participants were from the Clearwater Region.

Anglers were asked to what extent they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the following seasonal regulations specific to steelhead fishing on the Clearwater River:

- 1) Harvest of steelhead is allowed from August 1st to April 30th from the mouth to the Memorial Bridge at Lewiston.
- 2) Catch and release is allowed from July 1st to October 14th above the Memorial Bridge at Lewiston.
- 3) Harvest of steelhead is allowed from October 15th to April 30th above the Memorial Bridge at Lewiston.
- 4) It is unlawful to fish for steelhead from a motorized boat upstream of the Orofino Bridge.

Overall, all respondents and Clearwater Region respondents were generally satisfied with the seasonal framework for steelhead angling instituted by the Department on the Clearwater River drainage (Figures 19 and 20). They also were in support of the Department managing additional areas for non-motorized steelhead fishing. The percentage of anglers from the Clearwater Region in support of additional non-motorized areas for steelhead fishing was significantly higher than the other six regions.

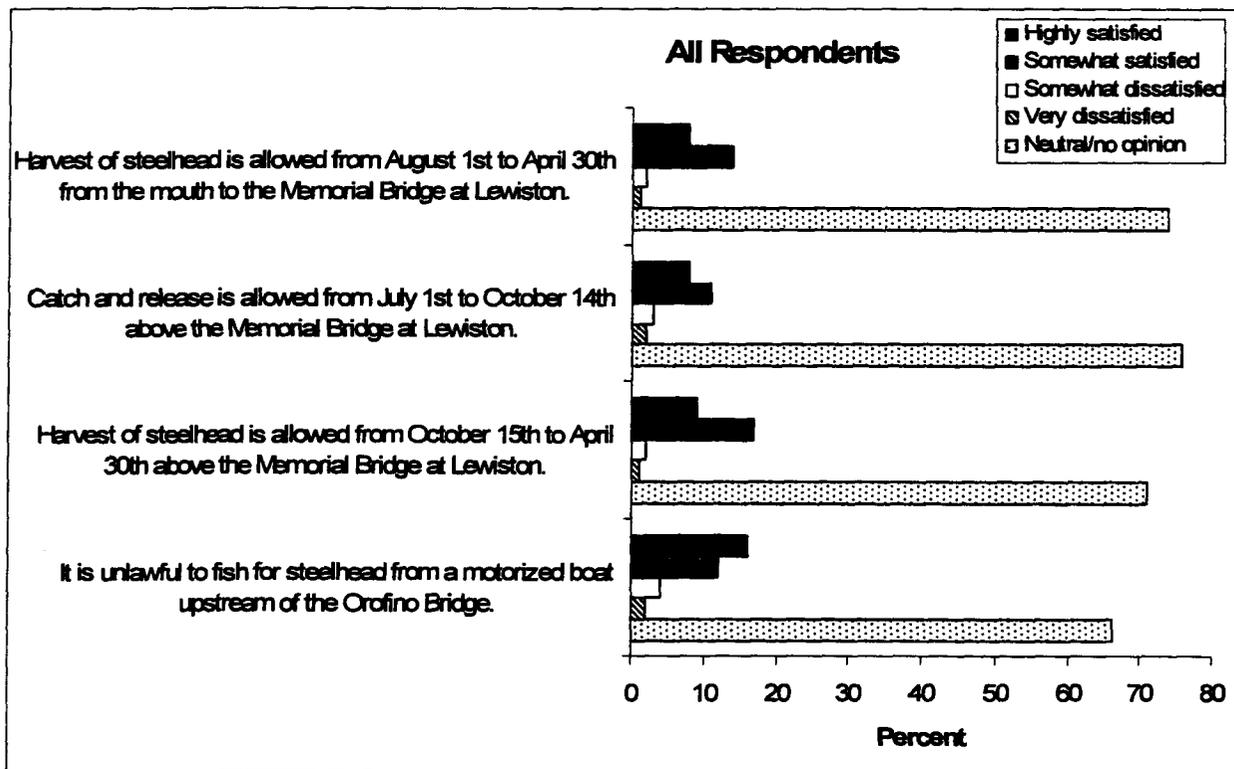


Figure 19. All angler responses to various seasonal steelhead regulations on the Clearwater River (2005).

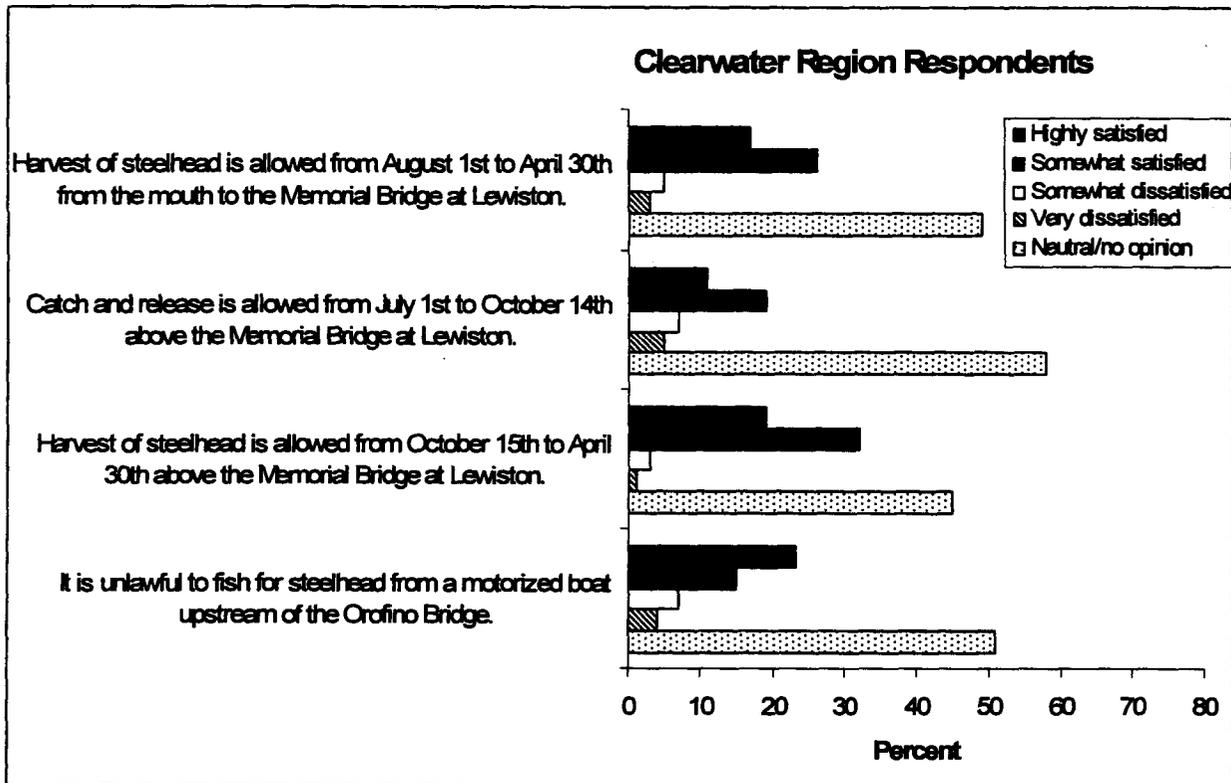


Figure 20. Clearwater Region angler responses to various seasonal steelhead regulations on the Clearwater River (2005).

Chinook salmon seasons on the Clearwater River have been closed on the mainstem Clearwater and North Fork Clearwater Rivers when 80% to 90% of the harvest target is reached to allow longer fishing seasons on the South Fork Clearwater and Lochsa rivers. The majority of the anglers (all anglers and Clearwater Region anglers) somewhat to strongly agree with this management strategy.

Regional Questions

The Department asked a number of questions specific to management regions within the state. Because "neutral/no opinion" was often selected by all respondents for the regional questions, responses will be summarized by all respondents (residents and non-residents) and regional respondents.

Panhandle Region

Anglers were presented with the following two management options for Upper Priest Lake and Priest Lake:

- 1). Manage Upper Priest Lake for native cutthroat and bull trout, and manage Priest Lake for a lake trout fishery.
- 2) Attempt to restore native cutthroat and bull trout, and a kokanee fishery by aggressively suppressing lake trout in both lakes.

Anglers were slightly more in favor of the first management option. Of the Panhandle Region respondents, 55% somewhat to strongly agreed with option one, and 48% somewhat to strongly agreed with option two (13% and 23% somewhat to strongly disagreed, respectively). Of all respondents, 38% somewhat to strongly agreed with option one, and 34% somewhat to strongly agreed with option two (7% and 13% somewhat to strongly disagreed, respectively).

Bonner Lake is currently managed as a quality trout fishery with a two trout limit and no harvest of fish under 14 inches long. The Department asked anglers what type of fishing experience they wanted Bonner Lake to be managed for. The majority of the anglers would like the Department to continue current management; followed by managing for a diverse warmwater fishery (e.g. perch, crappie, bass, and bluegill) and harvest trout; and managing for a harvest trout fishery which will result in smaller trout on average (Figures 21 and 22). Significantly more anglers from the Panhandle Region were in opposition to managing for a harvest trout fishery than anglers from the other six regions.

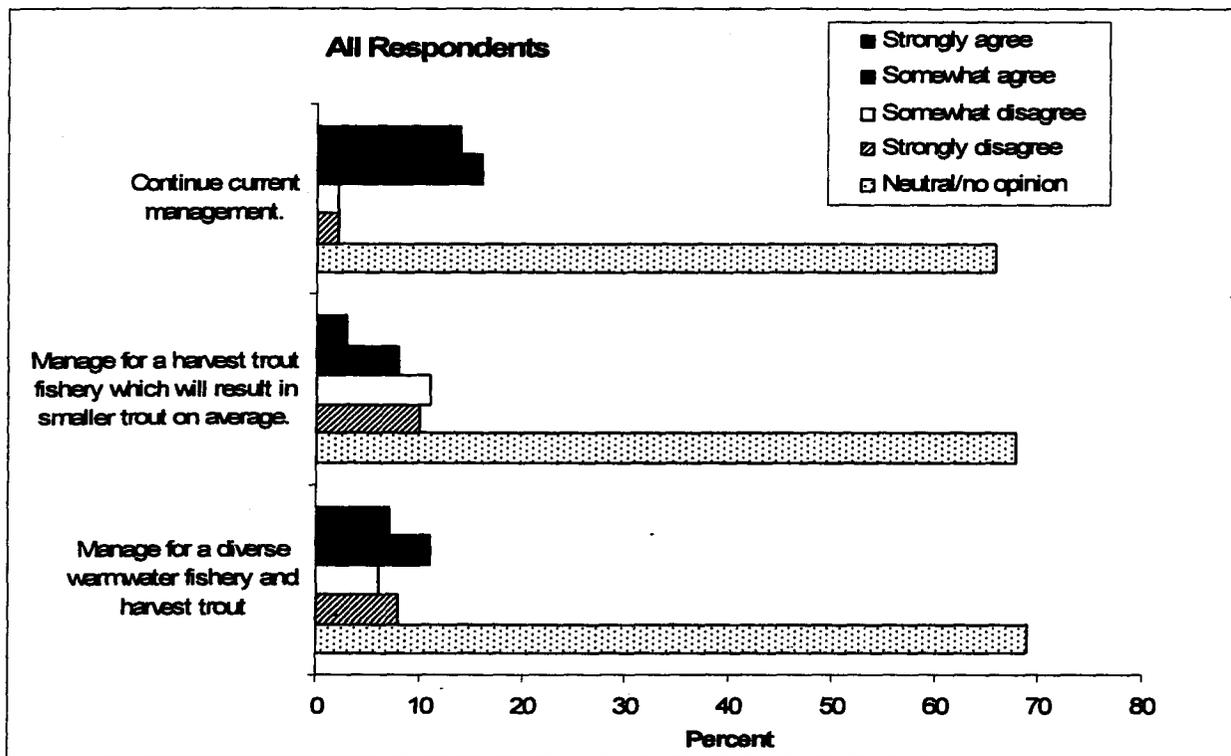


Figure 21. All respondents' opinions on management options for Bonner Lake (2005).

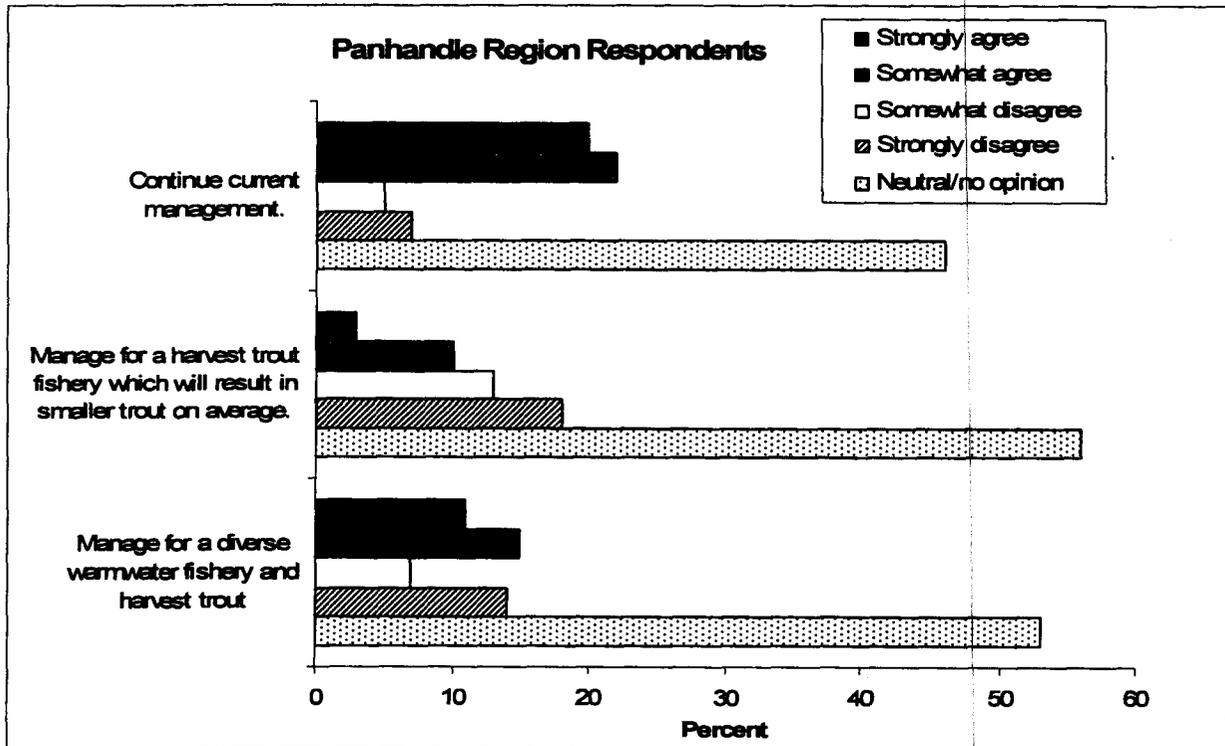


Figure 22. Panhandle Region respondents' opinions on management options for Bonners Lake (2005).

Mirror Lake is currently managed as a harvest trout fishery with a six fish limit. The fishing season is open all year and anglers are allowed to use electric motors only on their boats. Panhandle Region respondents were considerably more in agreement (55% somewhat to strongly agreed) with continuing current management versus managing the lake to produce larger trout, which would require imposing regulations that would limit size and/or the number of trout harvested (33% somewhat to strongly agreed). All respondents were slightly more in agreement (29% somewhat to strongly agreed) with continuing current management versus managing the lake to produce larger trout (24% somewhat to strongly agreed). The percentage of anglers from the Panhandle Region in support of continuing current management was significantly higher than the other six regions.

The Department asked anglers their opinion on options for managing other lowland lakes for larger trout in Idaho's panhandle. The majority of the Panhandle Region respondents did not have a preference for species and would like to "just catch fish" (46% somewhat to strongly agreed) versus managing for larger trout by imposing more restrictive fishing regulations (31% somewhat to strongly agreed). The majority of all respondents were also in favor of managing the lowland lakes to "just catch fish" (33% somewhat to strongly agreed) versus managing for larger trout (28% somewhat to strongly agreed).

Magic Valley Region

The Department asked several questions regarding management of Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir located in the Magic Valley Region. This fishery is frequently fished by anglers from around the state. It is a unique fishery for Idaho anglers, because it is the only body of water in

Idaho where anglers can catch walleye and have a reasonable chance of catching large walleye. In 2005, 63% of the Magic Valley Region respondents, 17% of the Southeast Region respondents, 15% of the Southwest Region respondents, 10% of the Salmon Region respondents, 9% of the Upper Snake Region respondents, and less than 5% of the Panhandle and Clearwater Region respondents had fished at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir over the last six years. Rainbow trout was the species primarily fished for, followed by walleye, and “anything that bites” (Figure 23).

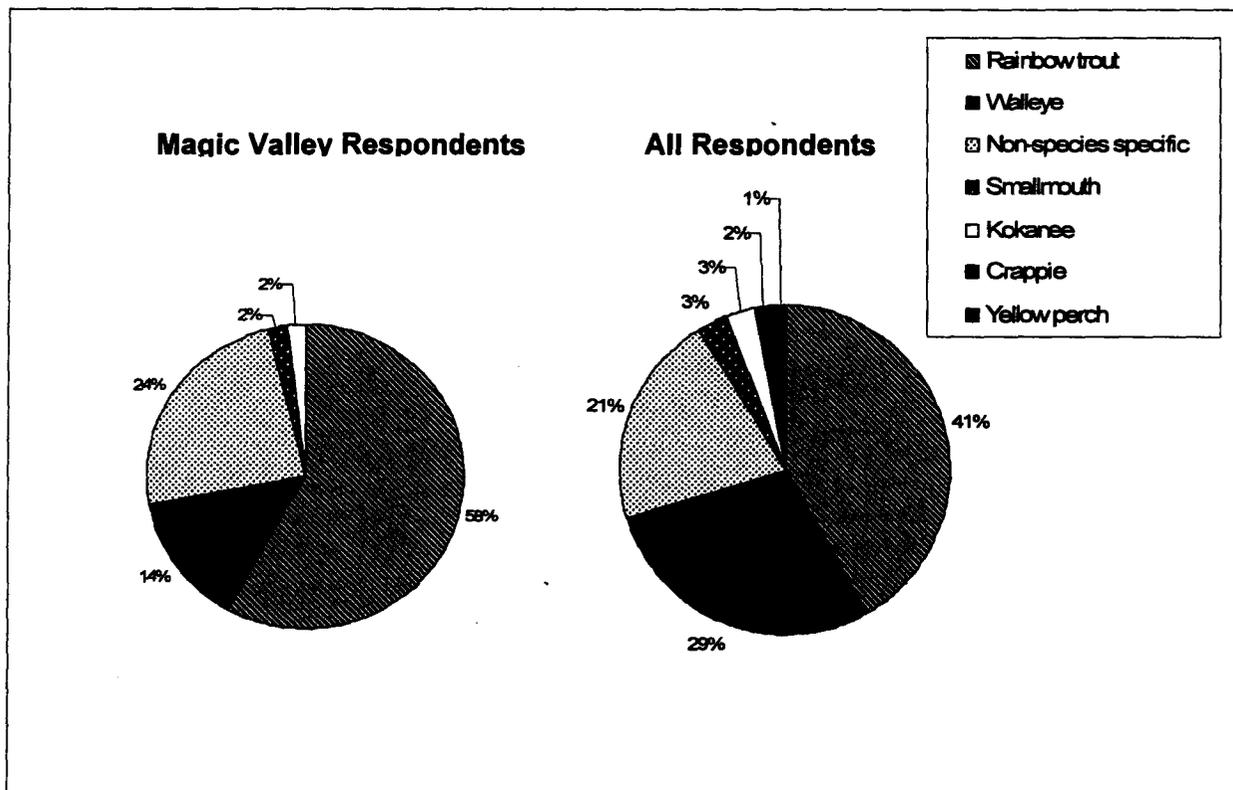


Figure 23. The percentage of anglers that fished for various species in Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir in 2005.

Anglers rated their fishing experience for the various fish species in Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir. More respondents rated their fishing experience good to excellent than fair to poor for rainbow trout. However, more respondents rated their fishing experience fair to poor for walleye, smallmouth bass, kokanee, yellow perch, crappie, and “anything that bites”.

Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir is managed as a harvest fishery with the general season and bag limits for all species. Some anglers would like the Department to manage portions of the fishery as quality or trophy. While fishing rules are not the only method used to control the number of large fish in a fishery, restrictions on the size and number of fish harvested is commonly used as a way to produce more large fish. Anglers were asked to what extent did they agree or disagree with the following possible fishery management directions:

- 1) Manage rainbow trout for harvest under the existing general regulations.
- 2) Manage for quality or trophy rainbow trout by placing limitations on fish size and/or bag limits.

- 3) Manage walleye for harvest under the existing general regulations.
- 4) Manage for quality or trophy walleye by placing limitations on fish size and/or bag limits.

More respondents somewhat to strongly agreed with managing rainbow trout for harvest under the existing general regulations (41% all respondents and 61% Magic Valley Region respondents) than managing for quality or trophy rainbow trout (33% all respondents and 45% Magic Valley Region respondents). More anglers somewhat to strongly agreed with managing walleye for harvest under the existing general regulations (30% all respondents and 44% Magic Valley Region respondents) than managing for quality or trophy walleye (25% all respondents and 33% Magic Valley Region respondents). Even though anglers were more supportive of managing rainbow trout and walleye under the existing general regulations versus a trophy or quality rainbow trout and walleye fishery, they were somewhat likely to very likely to continue fishing at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir if the bag limit was reduced and/or size limit restrictions were put into affect to create a quality or trophy rainbow trout and/or walleye fishery (Figures 24 and 25).

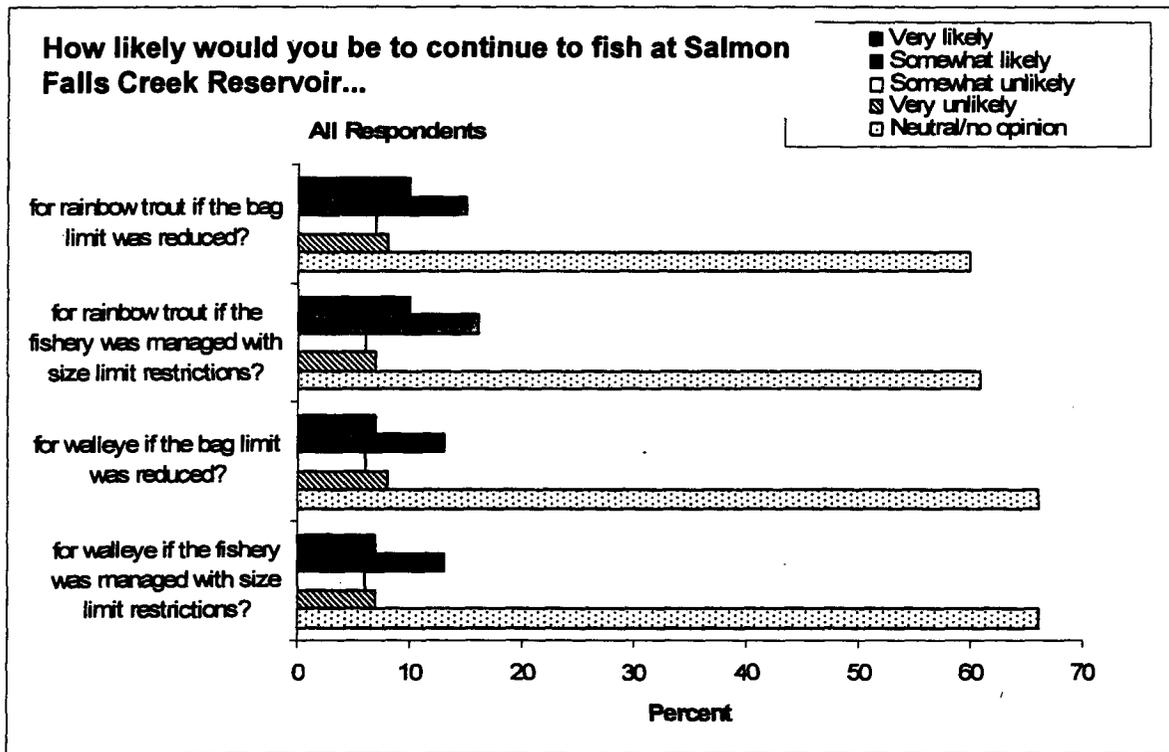


Figure 24. All angler responses to various rainbow trout and walleye regulations on the Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir (2005).

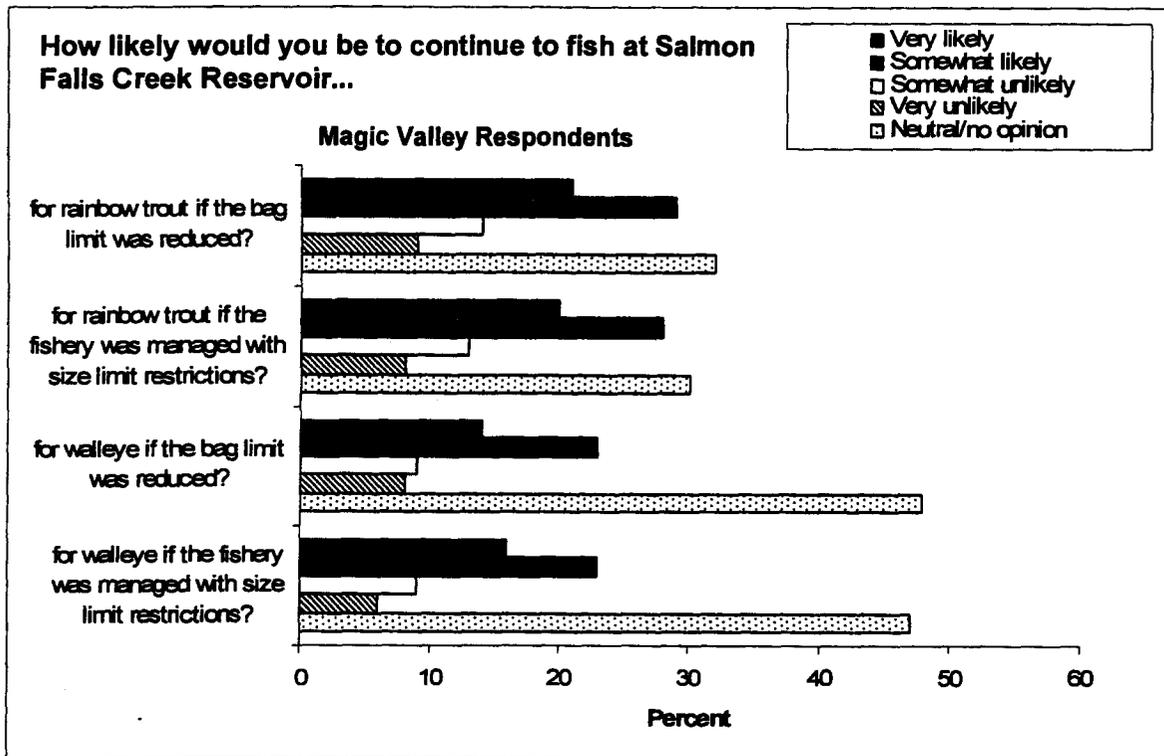


Figure 25. Magic Valley Region angler responses to various rainbow trout and walleye regulations on the Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir (2005).

Southeast Region

Illegal introduction of fish into Idaho waters hamper efforts to manage many lowland lakes as trout fisheries. Largemouth bass were illegally stocked into Devil Creek Reservoir in Oneida County. Largemouth bass introductions reduce the quality of the trout fishery because largemouth bass young compete with trout for food and adult bass are predators of small trout. The Department asked anglers if they want Devil Creek Reservoir managed for both largemouth bass and a reduced trout fishery, or managed for hatchery rainbow trout and eradicate the largemouth bass. More anglers somewhat to strongly agreed with managing for a hatchery rainbow trout fishery and eradicating the largemouth bass (28% all respondents and 45% Southeast Region respondents) than managing for both largemouth bass and a reduced trout fishery (22% all respondents and 29% Southeast Region respondents). The percentage of anglers from the Southeast Region in support of managing for a hatchery rainbow trout fishery and eradicating largemouth bass was significantly higher than the other six regions.

The Department asked anglers what type of smallmouth bass fishing experience they are seeking in the Snake River below American Falls Dam downriver to Lake Walcott. Fishing effort is increasing and increased harvest may cause a decline in the average size of smallmouth bass caught by anglers under current general bass management. Currently much of the smallmouth bass population is inaccessible to anglers due to access restrictions on the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge. The Department is having discussions with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about the potential to open some of the boat closure areas at appropriate times of the year when waterfowl population management goals allow. If more boating access is allowed, and there is an increase in angling effort, harvest of bass could increase and the

average size of bass could decline under the current fishing regulations. More Southeast Region respondents were in favor (46% somewhat to strongly agreed) of the Department continuing current management for smallmouth bass which allows harvest opportunity of six fish with a 12 inch minimum length, versus the Department managing for a quality bass fishery by implementing further size and harvest restrictions (39% somewhat to strongly agreed). The responses of all anglers showed no preference in management of the smallmouth bass fishery. Approximately 31% somewhat to strongly agreed with the Department continuing its' current management and 32% somewhat to strongly agreed with managing for a quality smallmouth bass fishery.

Upper Snake Region

Island Park Reservoir is managed primarily for irrigation storage. Drawdowns of the water in the reservoir and non-game fish limit the trout fishery. Historically the Department managed the fishery by extensive fish stocking as well as occasional chemical treatments to reduce the non-game fish population. Chemical treatments are costly and past treatments have resulted in the unexpected release of sediment into the Henrys Fork Snake River below Island Park Reservoir. However, chemical treatments of the reservoir can result in improved fishing in the reservoir over what currently exists. The Department is evaluating a range of management options including using chemical renovation. The Department asked anglers to what extent do they agree or disagree with the following management options:

- 1) I am comfortable with the Department chemically treating Island Park Reservoir to kill unwanted fish species to improve the fishery of the reservoir.
- 2) I support chemically treating Island Park Reservoir to kill unwanted fish species, but it makes me nervous that sediment was passed in the Henrys Fork in the past.
- 3) I do not support a chemical treatment of Island Park.
- 4) I support stocking predator fish species such as cutthroat trout, splake, or tiger muskie to help control non-game fish.
- 5) Continue stocking trout at current levels but the fishing at Island Park Reservoir will not be as good as in the past.

More anglers somewhat to strongly agreed (41% all respondents and 55% Upper Snake Region respondents) with the Department chemically treating the reservoir, than somewhat to strongly disagreed (20% all respondents and 28% Upper Snake Region respondents). More anglers also somewhat to strongly agreed (40% all respondents and 52% Upper Snake Region respondents) with chemically treating the reservoir but were concerned about sediment being passed into the Henrys Fork, than somewhat to strongly disagreed (17% all respondents and 24% Upper Snake Region respondents). More respondents somewhat to strongly disagreed (28% all respondents and 44% Upper Snake Region respondents) with not chemically treating the reservoir than somewhat to strongly agreed (23% all respondents and 29% Upper Snake Region respondents). Significantly more Upper Snake Region anglers were in opposition to not chemically treating the reservoir than anglers from the other six regions. More anglers somewhat to strongly agreed (48% all respondents and 71% Upper Snake Region respondents) with the Department stocking predator fish to help control non-game fish, than somewhat to strongly disagreed (13% all respondents and 13% Upper Snake Region respondents). More anglers also somewhat to strongly agreed (25% all respondents and 41% Upper Snake Region

respondents) with the Department continuing to stock trout at current levels, than somewhat to strongly disagreed (19% all respondents and 27% Upper Snake Region respondents).

Yellowstone cutthroat trout are currently found in 40% to 60% of their historic range and have been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The Department is considering removing non-native brook trout in small, isolated streams and restocking them with Yellowstone cutthroat trout in an effort to improve the long-term survival of the species. A significant difference was observed between Upper Snake Region anglers and all anglers when asked to what extent did they agree or disagree with removing brook trout in an effort to restore Yellowstone cutthroat trout in all streams possible. More Upper Snake Region anglers somewhat to strongly disagreed (52%) with removing brook trout in all streams possible; approximately 23% somewhat to strongly agreed. Twenty-nine percent of all respondents somewhat to strongly disagreed and 30% somewhat to strongly agreed. Both Upper Snake region respondents and all respondents were more supportive of removing brook trout in a limited number of streams (37% of Upper Snake Region respondents and 36% of all respondents somewhat to strongly agreed). Upper Snake Region anglers were the most supportive of “doing nothing because they like the opportunity to fish for brook trout in streams”; approximately 57% somewhat to strongly agreed and 17% somewhat to strongly disagreed. A significant difference was observed between Upper Snake Region anglers and all anglers. Approximately 35% of all anglers somewhat to strongly agreed with “doing nothing” and 19% somewhat to strongly disagreed (Figures 26 and 27).

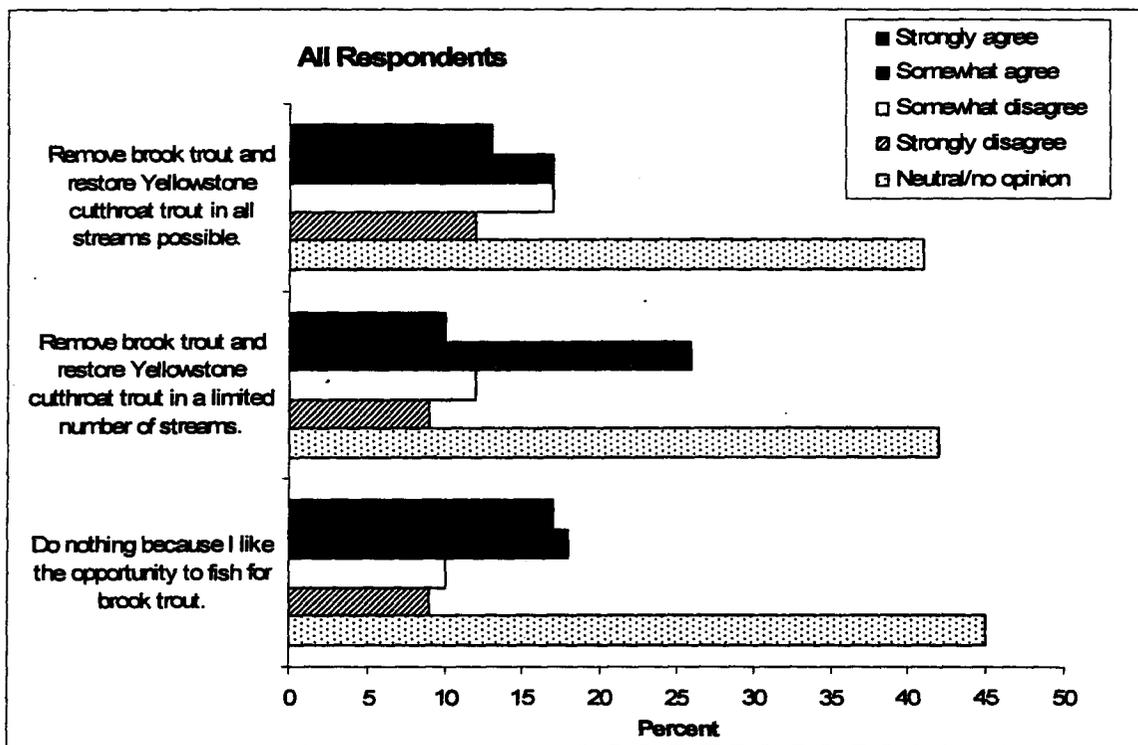


Figure 26. All respondent's opinions on potential management options for Yellowstone cutthroat trout (2005).

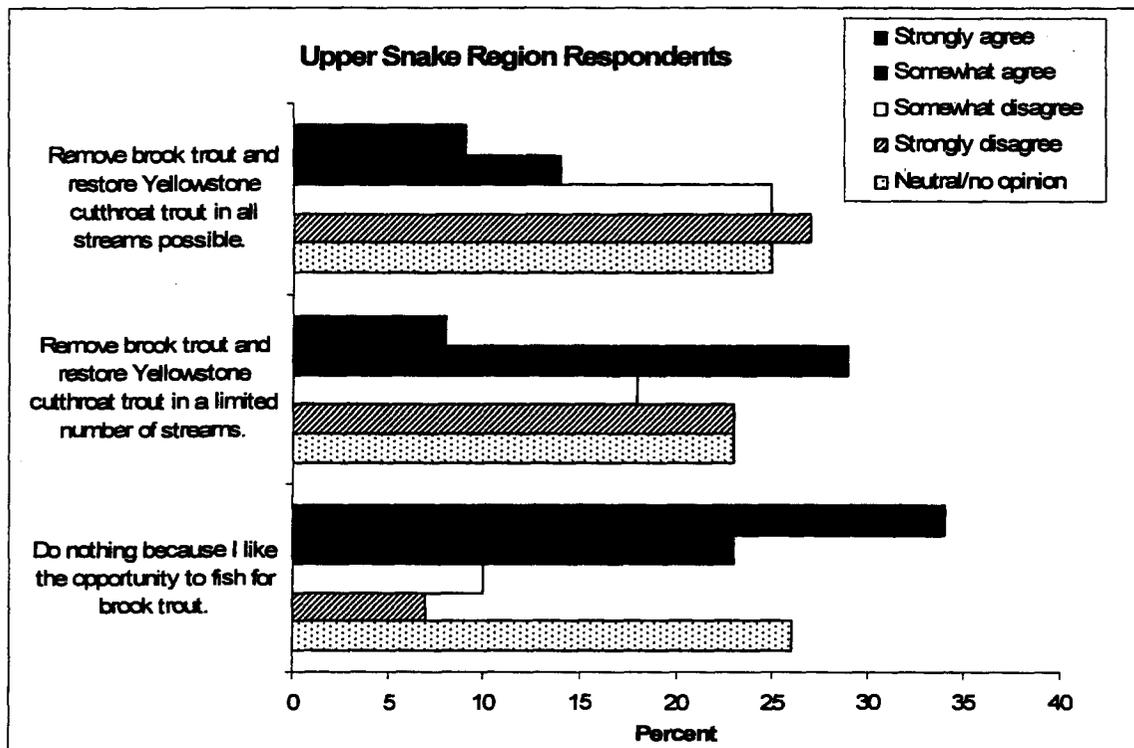


Figure 27. Upper Snake Region respondents' opinions on potential management options for Yellowstone cutthroat trout (2005).

The Upper Snake Region has 40 mountain lakes that offer a range of fishing experiences. These lakes are all managed to allow harvest. Anglers were asked what type of fishing experience they want the Department to manage for in mountain lakes in the Upper Snake Region. More anglers were in support of managing a few lakes to produce larger trout with the understanding that the harvest opportunity would be reduced (52% all respondents and 54% Upper Snake Region respondents somewhat to strongly agreed). Fewer anglers (33% all respondents and 39% Upper Snake Region respondents somewhat to strongly agreed) supported continuing management because they "like the way things are currently".

White sturgeon are native to the Snake River below Shoshone Falls. An experimental population was introduced below American Falls Dam that now provides a fishery. The Department asked anglers their opinion regarding further experimental introductions of white sturgeon in the Snake River near Idaho Falls in an effort to create a white sturgeon fishery. More anglers were supportive (48% of all respondents and 60% Upper Snake Region respondents somewhat to strongly supported) of additional experimental introductions than in opposition (6% of all respondents and 10% Upper Snake Region respondents somewhat to strongly opposed).

DISCUSSION

In an effort to address angler opinions on contemporary fishing related topics, the Department does not necessarily ask the same or related questions during each AOS. Therefore, it is difficult to display or report on genuine trends over time. However, general conclusions can be made about Idaho angler opinions over time. The AOS provides an important basis for compiling angler opinions needed to revise and update the Department

Fisheries Management Plan. A recommendation for future surveys would be to standardize specific questions so that trends can be more accurately captured over time.

The population of Idaho has increased 28.5% between 1990 and 2000; however, Idaho angler demographics have remained mainly static over the last 30 years. Since the first AOS was conducted in 1968 (Gordon 1970) to the 2006 AOS, over one-third of Idaho's population and fishing license buyers reside in southwest Idaho and approximately three-fourths of the anglers are male.

According to the 2006 AOS, the average respondent in 2005 had fished for 20 years and was 50 years old, which implies that new anglers are not being recruited in large numbers. Minimal new angler recruitment is a concern for the Department because it can have a significant impact on funding.

According to respondents to the 2005 AOS, 80% of the children under the age of 14 that were living at home fished, a large increase from 1987 when only 30% of the children under the age of 14 fished, and an 8% increase over the 1999 results. The Department does not know if this represents a real increase in the number of children fishing over time or whether it might be due to the subtly different wording of the question over three AOS (1994, 1999, 2005), or due to the subsequent analyses. This potential increase in participation by children does not carry over into the age 14-19 range. The Department designated Family Fishing Waters in 2003. Each region of the Department has designated Family Fishing Waters which are advertised as great places to take the family fishing. Family Fishing Waters have easy access, year around seasons, are stocked with hatchery trout, and anglers can use all gear types. The designation of Family Fishing Waters and the Department's "Take Me Fishing" campaign that was introduced in the spring of 2005 may have contributed to an increase in the number of children under the age of 14 that fished. The wording of this particular question on future AOS should be standardized to facilitate future analysis.

The majority of the respondents to the 1994 and 1999 AOS thought the Department should provide more fishing related information to anglers. The preferred methods of receiving information changed between 1994 and 1999. Respondents to the 1994 survey preferred to obtain information from vendors, followed by direct mail, and newspapers. The 1999 respondents preferred a brochure, followed by the internet, and newspapers. Anglers appeared to become more interested in utilizing the internet to obtain fishing information. In 2005, 47% of the respondents utilized the internet at home to research information on fishing; however, only 11% of respondents used the Department's website.

Respondents to the 1987, 1994, 1999, and 2006 AOS have consistently preferred to and most often fished for trout. Anglers most often fished for trout in streams/rivers, by shore/wading, and using bait. The second most preferred and most often sought fish was bass. Anglers are generally satisfied with trout fishing in streams/rivers and lakes/reservoirs; and fishing experiences in high mountain lakes. However, they are generally not satisfied with their fishing experiences when fishing for bass. Anglers would like to see more waters managed for bass, and specifically additional waters managed for bass greater than 16 inches. The Department needs to continue to improve its communication with anglers about the difficulties of rearing warm water fishes such as bass in north temperate climates like Idaho. This information is pertinent to the short growing season for largemouth bass where the desire of anglers to have more large fish cannot generally be met.

Respondents were generally supportive of increasing trophy or quality trout and bass fishing opportunities. However, when respondents were asked questions regarding management options for increasing trophy or quality trout and bass fishing opportunities, their support of the proposed management options appeared to be dependent on how the questions were phrased. For example, anglers were generally supportive of management options that restricted harvest and or size, but would increase the number of quality or trophy trout or bass. However, when anglers were asked if they wanted more catch and release trout and bass waters, they were less supportive.

Anglers were in favor of maintaining fishable wild trout populations. They generally supported management options that restricted harvest of wild trout; however, they opposed restricting angler use in an effort to reduce harvest.

Anglers continue to feel that protecting and improving fish habitat is the most important management activity for the Department. Over the years, the Department has attempted to meet this challenge by becoming more actively involved in habitat protection efforts. Due to continued strong support for habitat protection efforts by anglers, the Department will strive to increase our efforts in habitat restoration as well.

In 1994, the Department asked anglers questions regarding the regulation brochure in an effort to ensure clarity. The majority of the respondents said that they sometimes have difficulty knowing what the fishing regulations are for the area they want to fish. Over the years, the Department has made the regulations brochure simpler and easier to read; however, we have also had to balance regulation simplification with the necessity for protecting fish populations.

The 1994 AOS included questions asking opinions on fishing regulations that anglers have proposed to the Department. Anglers in some parts of the state have suggested allowing the use of a second fishing rod. A small percentage of anglers were more in favor of a second rod than opposed. On January 1, 1998 the Fish and Game Commission approved the sale of a two-pole permit. The two pole validation authorizes license holders to use two poles or rods at the same time on waters and during seasons specified by Commission rule. It is valid to use a two-pole permit for all fish including salmon and steelhead. Anglers also proposed legalizing a winter catch and release season for trout. More respondents to the 1994 AOS supported a winter catch and release trout season than those who opposed or strongly opposed a winter catch and release season. On January 1, 2002 the Commission approved a winter catch and release season for trout with exceptions for specific waters. Anglers also suggested having a trout stamp or conservation stamp to specifically fund certain fisheries programs. More anglers opposed to strongly opposed a stamp or fee increase to raise money for specific purposes, than those who supported or strongly supported a stamp or fee increase. Of those that were in support, the majority preferred the money be raised by purchasing a stamp versus a license fee increase. A trout/conservation stamp has not been approved. Anglers that were in support of a stamp or license fee increase preferred to have the money go towards rearing and stocking trout; acquiring easements or title to trout streams; building lakes, ponds, or reservoirs for fishing; and stream habitat improvements on private land.

The number of fishing contests/tournaments held in Idaho has experienced a gradual increase since 2001. The Department is the permitting agency for allowing/disallowing fishing contests and tournaments in the state based on biological parameters. The county sheriffs and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation have regulatory authority over boating safety rules which apply to fishing tournaments. The 2006 AOS was the first time the Department has asked anglers specific questions about their impressions of contests and tournaments. For the most part, the majority of anglers do not appear to be particularly bothered by contests or

tournaments at locations where they plan to fish other than perhaps some modifications to their planned fishing trips. Idaho anglers do not appear to support fishing contests or tournaments for many fish species in most instances. At this time, the Department is not proposing any particular actions dealing with fishing contests or tournaments. However, due to angler concerns, we will continue to monitor contests and tournaments as part of our long-term efforts to seek a balance in permitting these activities on public fishing waters.

Managing Idaho's Chinook salmon and steelhead fisheries is complicated due to both species being listed as threatened under the authority of the federal Endangered Species Act. The Department is continually trying to create a worthwhile fishery for anglers, while at the same time ensuring they are in compliance with the Endangered Species Act. The 2006 AOS respondents were generally more in favor of closing the season or reducing the bag limit than having a catch and release fishery for Chinook salmon when there are no excess hatchery fish available for harvest. Angler responses indicated that as the bag limit for Chinook salmon and steelhead increased from one to three fish, anglers' likelihood of going fishing also increased.

As in past surveys, the Department asked anglers some region-specific questions. The purpose of these questions is to gather information from anglers that can be used by the Department in measuring public support for a contemplated future change in management at a particular water body. If changes to management strategy are made due in part to angler opinions, they are reflected in our Fisheries Management Plan under specific drainage plans. Angler opinions play an important role in assisting regional Department staff in managing public fisheries. Region-specific questions will continue to be a part of future angler opinion surveys in Idaho.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. The survey sent to anglers for the 1994 Angler Opinion Survey.

1994 Angler Opinion Survey

YOUR FISHING HABITS AND PREFERENCES

1. If you fished in Idaho during 1994, please list the three waters you fished the most and your best recollection of the number of days fished. AND 2. Please list the three Idaho waters you would fish most often if the time, distance, and difficulty of getting there were not a factor.

1.
Water: _____ County: _____ Days: _____
Water: _____ County: _____ Days: _____
Water: _____ County: _____ Days: _____

2.
Water: _____ County: _____
Water: _____ County: _____
Water: _____ County: _____

3. Please list the three species you most prefer to fish for (1=most preferred):

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. Please tell us, as well as you can remember, the total number of days you fished in Idaho during 1994 and the number of days you took part in each of the different types of fishing listed below (because you may have done more than one kind of fishing in the same day, it may add up to more than the total number of days fished).

Total number of days you fished in Idaho in 1994 _____

	Number of days you took part in each of the different type of fishing
STEELHEAD	
TROUT IN HIGH MOUNTAIN LAKES	
TROUT IN OTHER LAKES OR RESERVOIRS	
TROUT IN RIVERS OR STREAMS	
BASS IN LAKES OR RESERVOIRS	
BASS IN RIVERS OR STREAMS	
STURGEON	
KOKANEE	
PERCH	
CRAPPIE	
BLUEGILL OR PUMPKINSEED	
WALLEYE	
NORTHERN PIKE OR TIGER MUSKIES	
CATFISH IN LAKES IN RESERVOIRS	
CATFISH IN RIVERS OR STREAMS	
LANDLOCKED CHINOOK IN LAKES AND RESERVOIRS	
WHITEFISH IN LAKES OR RESERVOIRS	
WHITEFISH IN RIVERS OR STREAMS	
OTHER KINDS OF FISH IN LAKES AND RESERVOIRS	
OTHER KINDS OF FISH IN RIVERS OR STREAMS	
NOTHING IN PARTICULAR (ANYTHING THAT BITES) IN LAKES AND RESERVOIRS	
NOTHING IN PARTICULAR (ANYTHING THAT BITES) IN RIVERS AND STRAMS	

5. How many of the days that you fished for trout were spent on waters where special regulations required you to release all or a certain size of the trout that you might catch? _____

6. How many of the days that you fished for bass were spent on waters where special regulations required you to release bass larger than the 12" general size limit? _____

ANGLER INFORMATION

7. Should Fish and Game provide more information to anglers?
Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

8. If yes or not sure, how would you like to get the information?

Newspaper _____
Radio _____
TV _____
Phone "hot line" _____
Pick up at vendors _____
Direct mail _____
Public meetings _____
Other (specify) _____

9. If yes or not sure, what type(s) of information would you like to get more of? (Please check all that apply).

Places to go fishing _____
Current fishing conditions _____
Results of fish population surveys _____
Fishing tips _____
Environmental issues that affect fish resources _____
Fishing regulations _____
Other (specify) _____

10. Were you contacted by any Idaho Department of Fish and Game employee while fishing during 1994?

Yes _____ No _____

11. If yes, how was your opinion of the Department affected by the contact? n=304

It improved _____ It didn't change _____ It was worse _____

MANAGEMENT

Currently, regulations are used to manage fisheries one of three basic ways: 1) **general statewide regulations**; 2) "**special regulations**" that restrict sizes and numbers of fish that can be harvested in order to have more and larger fish to catch; and 3) "**protective regulations**" to protect threatened or sensitive fish populations from overharvest. There are also numerous "non-biological" regulations (no motors, no boats, etc.) that regulate how anglers fish in order to minimize conflicts with other users.

In waters where angler use is high enough that most fish get harvested at a young age, using "**special regulations**" that require some sizes of fish to be released results in more and larger fish to catch (but not harvest).

12. I would like more _____, fewer _____, the same _____, number of waters managed this way for trout.

13. I would like more _____, fewer _____, the same _____, number of waters managed this way for bass.

14. Which best describes your feelings about restrictive regulations for trout where current harvest is not endangering the population? (Choose only one)

I support restrictive regulations if they will result in significantly more and larger fish to catch _____

I support restrictive regulations if they will result in any increase in numbers and size of fish _____

I support restrictive regulations even if they don't change trout numbers or size _____

I don't support restrictive regulations at all where the trout population is not in danger _____

"Protective regulations" are needed to prevent permanent damage to sensitive populations due to overharvest in some areas or at some times. Putting regulations on numerous specific streams where there is a problem requires numerous individual regulations. This complicates the regulation brochure. However, simpler drainage-wide or area-wide regulations may needlessly restrict harvest where there is not a problem.

15. If current research shows that an 8-inch minimum size for trout is needed to protect young steelhead in some areas, how would you like the regulation applied? (Choose only one)

Just the individual streams where there is an overharvest problem _____

Entire drainages or rivers which have streams where there is a problem _____

All drainages or rivers where young wild steelhead occur _____

Statewide _____

16. A reduced bag limit of two trout, with no gear or bait restrictions, has been applied to over 3000 of Idaho's 26,000 miles of rivers and streams. It has been applied to prevent overharvest of wild trout, How do you think the regulation should be applied? (Choose only one)

Only on individual new streams where harvest needs to be limited _____

Entire wild trout drainages which have streams where harvest needs to be limited _____

All wild trout drainages or rivers _____

REGULATION BROCHURE

17. How often do you have difficulty knowing what the fishing regulations are for the area you want to fish?

Almost always _____

More times than not _____

Sometimes _____

Not very often _____

Rarely _____

18. Many things can make it difficult to know what the regulations are. Please rank the following, with 1 being the most important and 10 the least.

- _____ The wording in the brochure is confusing
 - _____ The regulations change so often its hard to keep them straight
 - _____ The way the actual regulations are presented in the tables makes it difficult to figure them out
 - _____ The brochure is organized poorly
 - _____ There are too many different areas with exceptions to the general regulations
 - _____ There are too many different types of regulations
 - _____ Its hard to find out what the regulation is where I want to fish
 - _____ Its hard to figure out where the boundaries are for the regulations
 - _____ There is too much extra information and ads in the brochure
 - _____ Other
- (specify) _____

SOME ANGLERS HAVE PROPOSED.....

19. Anglers in some parts of the state have suggested allowing the use of a second rod. They'd like to cast for bass while sturgeon fishing, improve their odds when trolling, or just improve their success when still fishing for catfish or hatchery trout in reservoirs. Overharvest of wild trout is always a concern, but few people still-fish in streams. The use of a second rod could be prohibited in trout streams. Whether or not to pursue this idea is primarily a matter of angler preference. Would you like to see the use of a second rod legalized if it could be done in a way that did not hurt the future of fish populations?

Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

20. Most trout streams are now open to fishing during the winter because of the whitefish season. The harvest of trout is not legal, but they do get caught and released. Some anglers have suggested dropping the whitefish season. Others have suggested legalizing what is now happening and having an actual winter catch and release season for trout. Research has shown that in cold water the number of released fish that die is very low. Restricting the use of bait or allowing only whitefish bait would essentially eliminate trout mortality. Whether or not to establish a winter catch and release trout season is primarily a matter of angler preference. How do you feel about it? _____

- (1) Strongly support
- (2) Support
- (3) Not sure
- (4) Opposed
- (5) Strongly opposed

21. Some anglers have suggested having a trout stamp or conservation stamp to specifically fund certain fisheries programs. The reasons most often expressed have been to provide money to purchase or get easements to property along trout streams, to do more habitat work, to construct new fishing reservoirs, or to help fund expensive hatchery trout programs. How do you feel about some type of stamp or fee increase to raise money for specific purposes? _____

- (1) Strongly support
- (2) Support
- (3) Not sure
- (4) Opposed
- (5) Strongly opposed

22. If you support it, would you prefer it be done with a stamp _____ or a license fee increase _____ ?

23. If you support a stamp, who do you think it should apply to?

- _____ Anglers who fish for hatchery trout
- _____ All trout anglers
- _____ All anglers

24. If you support a stamp or fee increase, what would you like to see the money spent on ? (fill in the percent)

- _____ Rearing and stocking trout
- _____ Acquiring easements or title to trout streams
- _____ Stream habitat improvements on private land
- _____ Building lakes, ponds or reservoirs for fishing
- _____ Other (specify) _____

25. How much would you recommend for the stamp or fee increase? _____

26. Is the recovery of Chinook and Sockeye salmon important to you? _____

- (1) Extremely Important
- (2) Important
- (3) Not Sure
- (4) Unimportant
- (5) Extremely Unimportant

27. Would you be willing to pay \$5 more per month on your electric bill if it could recover salmon?

Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

28. There are two options being discussed to recover salmon.

One option is called "**The Flush**," which means maintaining the four Snake River reservoirs below Lewiston at full capacity while flushing water (many millions of acre feet) from Idaho's reservoirs to move salmon smolts through the hydrosystem. This would leave many upstream reservoirs very low or empty, but would not impact barging or hydrogeneration downriver.

The other option would be "**The Drawdown**." It would drawdown the four reservoirs below Lewiston to create a river effect, which will increase the water speed that the smolts require to get to the ocean. After several weeks of the drawdown, those four reservoirs would be refilled with less than one million acre feet of water from Idaho reservoirs. This option would have minor impact on Idaho reservoirs, but would impact barging and hydrogeneration downriver. Which option would you favor?

The Flush _____ The Drawdown _____ Neither _____

Appendix B. The survey sent to anglers for the 1999 Angler Opinion Survey.

1999 ANGLER OPINION SURVEY

1. Did you fish in Idaho in 1999? Yes No
(If not, please continue and fill in the survey questions that are pertinent)
2. How many days did you fish in Idaho in 1999? _____
3. How many years have you fished in Idaho? _____
4. How many children under age 14 are there living at your home? _____
How many of them fish? _____
5. Do you own a boat used for fishing in Idaho? Yes No
6. If you fished in Idaho during 1999, please list the three waters most frequently fished:
Water: _____ County: _____
Water: _____ County: _____
Water: _____ County: _____
7. If you fished for trout, do you believe the present statewide limit of 6 trout is:
 Too Many About Right Too Few No Opinion
8. Would you like a portion of the 9-inch hatchery trout production converted into a few trout larger than 12 inches even knowing that one 12-inch trout will replace three 9-inch trout available for stocking in Idaho waters? Yes No
9. How would you rate the quality of trout stocked by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor No Opinion
10. Increased fishing pressure has reduced wild trout populations in some Idaho streams. To maintain fishable populations would you favor:
 Restricting the number or size of wild trout that could be kept?
 Replacing wild trout with hatchery trout?
 Increasing the number of small fishing ponds?
 No Opinion.
11. Should the Idaho Department of Fish and Game spend more less, or the same effort on management of wild species?
12. Should the Idaho Department of Fish and Game provide limited entry fisheries (similar to controlled hunts) to provide a quality fishing experience and/or to protect the fish?
 Yes No
13. Would you like to have additional streams or lakes managed to provide larger than average trout and increased number of fish caught, even knowing that methods of fishing, numbers and size of fish that could be kept would be restricted?
 Yes No No Opinion

14. If you had \$100 to spend on improving Idaho's fishing and protecting the resource, how would you spend it on the following programs?

Hatchery trout production for lakes _____
Protection and enhancement of wild trout _____
Warmwater fisheries _____
Hatchery trout production for streams _____
Habitat protection _____
Salmon and Steelhead Fisheries _____
Enforcement _____

15. If you had to release all of the trout you caught from your favorite trout stream, would you continue to fish that stream? Yes No No Opinion

16. If a stream or lake could provide the opportunity to catch trophy trout, would you fish that stream or lake, even if you had to release all the fish you caught? Yes No No Opinion

17. Would you like more lakes or ponds in Idaho managed to provide increased numbers of bass greater than 16 inches in length, even knowing that numbers and size of fish that could be kept would be restricted? Yes No No Opinion

18. If you fish for bass in Idaho, what is the smallest largemouth bass and smallmouth bass you would keep if not restricted?

<u>Largemouth</u>	<u>Smallmouth</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Inches
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Inches
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Inches
<input type="checkbox"/> 14 Inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 14 Inches

19. If you fish for bass in Idaho, what would you consider a quality-size largemouth bass and smallmouth bass?

<u>Largemouth</u>	<u>Smallmouth</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 14 inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 14 inches
<input type="checkbox"/> 16 Inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 Inches
<input type="checkbox"/> 18 inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 inches
<input type="checkbox"/> 20 inches	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 inches

20. Do you feel the Idaho Department of Fish and Game should provide more information about available fishing opportunities, such as location of lakes and streams, public access areas, or types of fish available? Yes No No Opinion

21. How would you like to receive this information? Internet newspaper brochure TV/Radio

22. Please check in the boxes below (1) all of the fish species you fished for in Idaho in 1999, (2) the types of water you fished, (3) the method of fishing (shore, boat, ice, float tube), and (4) the kinds of fishing gear you used. Please check all appropriate boxes.

<u>Species</u>	Mountain Lakes	Lake/ Reservoir	Stream/ River	Shore/ Wade	Float Boat	Ice Tube	Lure/ Fish	Spin	Bait	Fly	Other
Bluegill/perch/crappie	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Bass	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Walleye/pike/muskie	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Steelhead	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Trout/salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Catfish	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Sturgeon	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Whitefish	<input type="checkbox"/>										
Nongame fish	<input type="checkbox"/>										

23. Please list the three fish species you most prefer to catch (1 = most preferred):

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

24. Please check your preferred water to fish: lake/reservoir river/stream mountain lakes

25. Please check your preferred type of fishing: fly bait lures/spin

26. Please check your preferred method of fishing: boat shore/wade float tube ice fishing

27. Please estimate the number of days spent fishing for each fishery type in 1999 and check the boxes that best describe your satisfaction while fishing the various fishery types listed below:

<u>Fishery Type</u>	Days Fished	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
High mountain lakes	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes and reservoirs for anything that bites	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes and reservoirs for trout _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes and reservoirs for bass _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes and reservoirs for sunfish/crappie	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes and reservoirs for walleye	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lakes and reservoirs for landlocked chinook salmon _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rivers and streams for anything that bites	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rivers and streams for bass	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rivers and streams for trout	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rivers and streams for whitefish	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rivers and streams for steelhead	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rivers and streams for sturgeon	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. What factors are important to you in selecting where you fish? Please list your top five choices, ranking most important = 1 to least important = 5:

Avoid other anglers	_____
Family activity	_____
Avoid other types of recreationists	_____
Nearness to camping facilities	_____
Boat launching/marina facilities	_____
Natural beauty of the area	_____
Water quality	_____
Chance to catch a limit of fish	_____
Nearness to home or cabin (travel distance)	_____
Accessibility	_____
Chance to catch a large or trophy fish	_____
Chance to catch wild fish	_____
Presence of favorite fish (species)	_____
Chance to catch large numbers of fish	_____
Chance to catch a variety of fish	_____
Other	_____

29. Do you have access to the internet? **Yes** **No**



Appendix C. The cover letter and survey sent to anglers for the 2006 Angler Opinion Survey.

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
600 South Walnut/P.O. Box 25
Boise, Idaho 83707

Dirk Kempthorne / Governor
Steven M. Huffaker / Director

May 12, 2006

«FNAME» «MI» «LNAME»
«ADDR1»
«CITY», «STATE» «ZIP»

Dear «FNAME»:

Enclosed is the Idaho Angler Opinion Survey for 2006. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game conducts this statewide survey every six years to gather angler opinions that are necessary for revising and updating our Fisheries Management Plan. As a 2005 Idaho fishing license holder, you were randomly selected to participate in this survey.

Although the attached survey questionnaire is fairly lengthy, it covers a variety of important topics for the future of fisheries management in Idaho. We have attempted to make the survey easy to read, so you should be able to proceed through the questionnaire fairly quickly. Your opinion is valuable in shaping fisheries management at both the local and statewide level.

After completing the questionnaire, return it by mail in the prepaid envelope. All your responses will remain strictly confidential and will only be used by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for statistical purposes. Return your questionnaire by June 2 to be entered into a drawing for one of three gift certificates of \$100.00 each.

Your help in assisting us to manage Idaho's fishery resources is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call our Fisheries Bureau at 208-334-3791.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steven M. Huffaker".

Steven M. Huffaker
Director

Enclosure



2006 IDAHO ANGLER OPINION SURVEY



Section 1.

Your Fishing Background and Participation in Idaho

1. In which of the past 5 years have you fished in Idaho? *Check all that apply.*

- 2001
 2002
 2003
 2004
 2005

2. About how many years have you fished in Idaho?

- 1-5 years
 6-10 years
 11-15 years
 16-20 years
 more than 20 years

3. Over the last 5 years, how often have you fished for the following types of fish?

Type of fish	Never	Occasionally	Often
Bluegill/perch/crappie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walleye	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catfish/bullhead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steelhead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinook salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trout	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kokanee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whitefish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sturgeon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carp/sucker/other nongame fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tiger muskie/pike	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anything that bites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Over the last 5 years, how often have you fished using the following methods?

Method of fishing	Never	Occasionally	Often
Shore/bank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Float tube/kick boat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-motorized boat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motor boat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ice Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Over the last 5 years, how often have you used the following types of fishing gear?

Type of Gear	Never	Occasionally	Often
Lures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bait	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Please tell us your GENERAL feeling about the type of fishing experiences you have had over the last 5 years by checking one box per type of fishing experience.

Type of Fishing Experience	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Did Not Participate
<i>Mountain lakes...</i>					
...for trout/grayling	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Ponds, lakes and reservoirs...</i>					
...for anything that bites	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for trout	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for bass	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for bluegill/ perch/crappie	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for walleye	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for Chinook salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for kokanee	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for catfish/bullhead	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Rivers and streams...</i>					
...for anything that bites	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for trout	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for whitefish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for steelhead	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for Chinook salmon	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for bass	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...for catfish/bullhead	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<i>Rivers and reservoirs...</i>					
...for sturgeon	<input type="checkbox"/>				

7. Please tell us HOW IMPORTANT each of the following items are when deciding where to fish by checking one box per factor.

Possible Factors	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure/No Opinion	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Solitude	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chance to catch native or wild fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chance to catch a lot of fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Avoid other types of recreationists	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chance to catch big fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chance to catch a variety of fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chance to keep some fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Boat ramps and marina facilities present	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Presence of favorite kind of fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of information on fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Nearness to camping facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Opportunity for activities other than fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of licensed fishing guides	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Special regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Vehicle access	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Nearness to home or cabin	<input type="checkbox"/>				
A place my family likes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Natural beauty of area	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Hatchery fish stocked	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 2.

Activities of the Department's Fisheries Management

8. Please tell us HOW IMPORTANT the following Department fisheries management activities are to you by checking one box for each activity.

Management Activity	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Sure/No Opinion	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Developing new fishing access sites and boat ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protecting and improving fish habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steelhead fishing in rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing for quality/trophy bass fisheries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing for native trout fisheries (cutthroat, bull trout, native rainbow trout)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinook salmon fishing in rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing places for family fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing for quality/trophy trout in rivers and streams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing catch-and-keep trout fisheries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing for quality/trophy trout in lakes and reservoirs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing for warm water fisheries (bass, yellow perch, bluegill, crappie, catfish, walleye)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enforcing fishing regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining/improving existing fishing access sites and boat ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conducting classes on how to fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing fisheries information on the Department website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing fisheries information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Please tell us HOW WELL YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT IS DOING in each of the following fisheries management activities by checking one box for each activity.

Management Activity	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Developing new fishing access sites and boat ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Protecting and improving fish habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Steelhead fishing in rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managing for quality/trophy bass	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managing for native trout fisheries (cutthroat, bull trout, native rainbow)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chinook salmon fishing in rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Providing places for family fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managing for quality/trophy trout in rivers and streams	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managing catch-and-keep trout fisheries	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managing for quality/trophy trout in lakes and reservoirs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managing for warm water fisheries (bass, yellow perch, bluegill, crappie, catfish, walleye)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Enforcing fishing regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Maintaining existing fishing access sites and boat ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Conducting classes on how to fish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Providing fisheries information on the Department website	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Providing fisheries information	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3.
Special Regulations in Fisheries Management

Special regulations are most often used to protect wild fish populations. *Special regulations* such as restrictions on species, size or number harvested, or fishing tackle can provide *quality/trophy* fisheries. They are also used to provide fishing experiences desired by anglers. The Department wants your opinion about using *special regulations* to provide *quality/trophy* fishing opportunities to produce more fish 16 inches or greater in length.

10. If the Department changed regulations on a stream or lake requiring you to release all of the fish you caught (not including salmon or steelhead), how likely are you to fish that stream or lake?

- Very Likely Somewhat Likely Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Unlikely Very Unlikely

11. If a stream or lake was managed by the Department to provide the opportunity to catch trophy size fish, how likely would you fish that stream or lake even if you had to release all of the fish you caught?

- Very Likely Somewhat Likely Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Unlikely Very Unlikely

12. If the Department stocked hatchery trout into an existing trout population to provide more desirable size fish to catch or improve catch rates, how likely are you to fish there?

- Very Likely Somewhat Likely Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Unlikely Very Unlikely

13. Do you favor or oppose fishing regulations that produce quality/trophy size fish if it means reducing the number of fish you can keep?

- Strongly Favor Somewhat Favor Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Oppose Strongly Oppose

14. Harvesting too many trout in rivers and streams can reduce their numbers, decrease average size, and reduce catch rates. To what degree do you support or oppose the following methods to reduce harvest?

Methods to Reduce Harvest	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Restrict angler use	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Restrict the number of trout that can be kept	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Restrict the size of trout that can be kept	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Restrict the type of gear that can be used	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shorten the fishing season	<input type="checkbox"/>				

15. To what degree do you support or oppose the following possible management actions designed to reduce conflict and fairly allocate fishing opportunities among anglers?

Methods to Reduce Conflict	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Use limited entry permits (like a controlled hunt) to allow very limited harvest of trophy size fish where no harvest is currently allowed.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Use limited entry permits (like a controlled hunt) on specific waters to reduce crowding.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Use limited entry permits (like a controlled hunt) as an alternative to harvest restrictions to maintain fish populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Use special regulations (catch and release, no motors, no bait, fly fishing only) to reduce crowding.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Use special regulations (catch and release, no motors, no bait, fly fishing only) to maintain fish populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Do not improve public access as a way to avoid large increases in angler use.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 5.
Fishing Contests and Tournaments in Idaho

24. Do you belong to a fishing club?

- Yes No

If you answered no to question 24, please SKIP to Question 29

25. What type of fishing club(s) do you belong to? *Please check all that apply.*

- Bass Walleye Steelhead Fly Fishing
 Trout Chinook (lake) Chinook (river) Other

26. Are you a member of a fishing club that sponsors fishing contests/tournaments with prizes based on the number or size of fish caught?

- Yes No Do not Know

If you answered no to question 26, please SKIP to Question 28.

27. In which of the past 5 years have you participated in a fishing contest/tournament in Idaho sponsored by your fishing club(s)? *Please check all that apply.*

- 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005

28. Over the past 5 years, did you participate in *any* fishing contest/tournament in Idaho that offered a prize based on the number or size of fish caught?

- Yes No

If you answered yes, what type of event did you participate in? Please check all that apply.

- Bass Walleye Steelhead Other
 Trout Chinook (lake) Chinook (river)

29. Have you fished in Idaho while a fishing contest/tournament was taking place that you were not participating in?

- Yes No

If you answered yes, to what extent did the event positively or negatively effect your fishing experience?

- Very Positive Effect Somewhat Positive Effect Neutral/No Effect Somewhat Negative Effect Very Negative Effect

30. If you knew that a fishing contest/tournament or contest was going to take place on a body of water when you were planning on fishing, please tell us how likely or unlikely you would be to do the following:

What Would You Do?	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Continue your trip as planned	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Fish somewhere else	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Change your fishing time to avoid an organized event	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Change your fishing time to observe tournament anglers or fish weigh-ins	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adjust your boat ramp location or timing to avoid event activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cancel your fishing trip	<input type="checkbox"/>				

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that fishing tournaments are appropriate for the following types of fisheries in Idaho?

Types of Fisheries	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Steelhead on large rivers using boats	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Steelhead on small rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chinook salmon on large rivers using boats	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chinook salmon on small rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Catch-and-release trout waters using float boats	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Catch-and-release trout waters by wading	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Quality trout waters using float boats	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Quality trout waters by wading	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Backcountry trout waters	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Bass in rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Bass in lakes/reservoirs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Trophy fishing in large lakes	<input type="checkbox"/>				

32. The Department now allows the harvest of non-native trout during a fishing tournament on rivers and streams where there would be a conservation benefit to native trout (such as cutthroat trout). To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Do you agree or disagree that...	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Department should allow <u>non-profit</u> fishing tournaments that are designed to benefit native trout fisheries.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Department should allow <u>for-profit commercial</u> fishing tournaments that are designed to benefit native trout fisheries.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

38. How likely would you go fishing for steelhead if the daily bag limit was...?

Daily Bag Limit		Very likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
0 steelhead	Catch and Release only	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1 steelhead		<input type="checkbox"/>				
2 steelhead		<input type="checkbox"/>				
3 steelhead		<input type="checkbox"/>				

39. How important is the daily bag limit when deciding whether or not to fish for Chinook salmon?

- Very Important
 Somewhat Important
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Unimportant
 Very Unimportant

40. How likely would you go fishing for Chinook salmon if the daily bag limit was...?

Daily Bag Limit		Very likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
0 Chinook salmon	Catch and Release only	<input type="checkbox"/>				
1 Chinook salmon		<input type="checkbox"/>				
2 Chinook salmon		<input type="checkbox"/>				
3 Chinook salmon		<input type="checkbox"/>				

41. Do you fish the Clearwater River steelhead fishery during the catch and release season (July 1 to October 14)?

- Yes No

42. Currently, the Clearwater River from the mouth to the Memorial Bridge at Lewiston allows harvest of steelhead from August 1 to April 30. To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this season framework?

- Highly Satisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Dissatisfied
 Highly Dissatisfied

43. Currently, the Clearwater River steelhead fishery above the Memorial Bridge at Lewiston includes a catch and release season from July 1 to October 14. To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this season framework?

- Highly Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Dissatisfied Highly Dissatisfied

44. Currently, the Clearwater River steelhead fishery above Memorial Bridge also includes a harvest season from October 15 to April 30. To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this season framework?

- Highly Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Dissatisfied Highly Dissatisfied

45. Currently it is unlawful to fish for steelhead from a motorized boat in the Clearwater River upstream of the Orofino Bridge. To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this rule?

- Highly Satisfied Somewhat Satisfied Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Dissatisfied Highly Dissatisfied

46. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Department should manage additional areas for non-motorized steelhead fishing.

- Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

47. How important did you believe it was to recover Chinook salmon in Idaho *before* the record Chinook salmon fisheries that occurred in Idaho in 2001 and 2002?

- Very Important Somewhat important Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Unimportant Very Unimportant

48. How important do you believe it is to recover Chinook salmon *now* considering the record Chinook salmon fisheries we experienced in Idaho?

- Very Important Somewhat important Neutral/No Opinion Somewhat Unimportant Very Unimportant

Section 7. Regional Water Specific Questions

Questions 49 to 65 relate to specific regional waters. If you are unfamiliar with or do not have an interest in the specific water, please feel free to skip that question.

Panhandle Region

Priest Lake and Upper Priest Lake

49. The increase in the lake trout population since 1990 has resulted in replacing the native bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout fisheries. Current Department management is for a lake trout fishery in Priest Lake and to maintain a non-consumptive native cutthroat and bull trout fishery in Upper Priest Lake by aggressively trying to reduce numbers of lake trout. We are seeking your input on the type of fishing experience you want us to manage for at Priest and Upper Priest lakes. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Manage Upper Priest Lake for native cutthroat and bull trout, and manage Priest Lake for a lake trout fishery.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Attempt to restore native cutthroat and bull trout and a kokanee fishery by aggressively suppressing lake trout in both lakes.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Bonner Lake

50. The Department seeks your opinion on the type of fishing experience you want us to manage for at Bonner Lake. It is currently managed as a quality trout fishery with a 2 trout limit with no harvest of fish under 14 inches long. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue current management. I like it just the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Manage for a harvest trout fishery which will result in small trout on average.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Manage for a diverse warmwater fishery (perch, crappie, bass, bluegill) and a harvest trout fishery.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Mirror Lake

51. The Department seeks your opinion on the type of fishing experience you want us to manage for at Mirror Lake. It is currently managed as a harvest trout fishery with a 6 fish limit and year-round season. Anglers can use only electric motors on their boats. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue current management. I like it just the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Manage the lake to produce larger trout. I understand limited size and/or harvest regulations will be needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Lowland Lakes

52. The Department seeks your opinion on options for managing other lowland lakes for larger trout in Idaho's panhandle. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want more lowland lakes managed for larger trout even if it means more restrictive fishing regulations and/or periodic removal of other fish species.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I do not have a preference for species. I just want to catch fish.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Magic Valley Region

Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir

53. Over the last six years, did you fish at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir?

- Yes No

If you answered yes, what **one** species of fish did you primarily fish for? *Please check only one box.*

- Rainbow trout Smallmouth bass Yellow perch Anything that bites
 Walleye Kokanee Crappie

54. How would you rate your fishing experience at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir for the following fish species?

Species of Fish	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Did Not Fish for this Species
Rainbow trout	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Walleye	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Smallmouth bass	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Kokanee	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Yellow perch	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Crappie	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Anything that bites	<input type="checkbox"/>				

55. Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir is managed as a harvest fishery with the general season and bag limits for all species. Some anglers want the Department to manage portions of the fishery as quality or trophy. While fishing rules are not the only method used to control the number of large fish in a fishery, restrictions on the size and number of fish harvested is commonly used as a way to produce more large fish. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following possible fishery management direction?

Possible Fishing Rules	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Manage rainbow trout for harvest under the existing general regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Manage for quality or trophy rainbow trout. I understand that limitations on fish size and/or bag limits will be necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Manage walleye for harvest under the existing general regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Manage for quality or trophy walleye. I understand that limitations on fish size and/or bag limits will be necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

56. How likely would you be to continue to fish at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir for rainbow trout if the bag limit was reduced?

- Very Likely
 Somewhat Likely
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Unlikely
 Very Unlikely

57. How likely would you be to continue to fish at Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir for rainbow trout if the fishery was managed with size limit restrictions?

- Very Likely
 Somewhat Likely
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Unlikely
 Very Unlikely

58. How likely would you be to continue to fish Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir for walleye if the bag limit was reduced?

- Very Likely
 Somewhat Likely
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Unlikely
 Very Unlikely

59. How likely would you be to continue to fish Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir for walleye if the fishery was managed with size limit restrictions?

- Very Likely
 Somewhat Likely
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Unlikely
 Very Unlikely

Southwest Region

Devil Creek Reservoir

60. Illegal introductions of fish into Idaho waters hamper efforts to manage many lowland lakes as trout fisheries. Largemouth bass were illegally stocked into Devil Creek Reservoir in Oneida County. Largemouth bass young compete with trout for food and adult bass will eat small trout reducing the quality of the trout fishery. The Department is seeking your opinion on the type of fishing experience you want us to manage for at Devil Creek Reservoir. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Manage for both largemouth bass and a reduced trout fishery.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eradicate largemouth bass and manage for hatchery rainbow trout.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Snake River - Lake Walcott to American Falls Dam

61. The Department wants to know what sort of smallmouth bass fishing experience you are seeking in the Snake River below American Falls Dam downriver to Lake Walcott. Fishing effort is increasing and harvest may cause a decline in the average size of bass caught by anglers under current general bass management. Much of this bass population is inaccessible to boat anglers due to access restrictions on the National Wildlife Refuge. The Department is working to open some of the boat closure areas on the refuge at appropriate times of the year when waterfowl population management goals allow. With more boating access and angling effort, harvest of bass could increase and average size of bass could decline under the current fishing regulations. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Department should manage for a quality bass fishery. I understand this may require further size and harvest restriction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Department should continue current management for smallmouth bass which allows harvest opportunity of 6 fish with a 12 inch minimum length.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Upper Snake Region

Island Park Reservoir

62. Island Park Reservoir is managed primarily for irrigation storage and the trout fishery is primarily limited by drawdown. Historically the Department managed the fishery by extensive fish stocking as well as occasional chemical treatment to reduce the non-game fish population. A chemical treatment is costly and during past treatments has resulted in the unexpected release of sediment into the Henrys Fork below Island Park Reservoir. However, chemically treating Island Park Reservoir will result in improved fishing in the reservoir over what currently exists. THE DEPARTMENT is evaluating a range of management options including using chemical renovation. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options for Island Park Reservoir?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am comfortable with the Department chemically treating Island Park Reservoir to kill unwanted fish species to improve the fishery of the reservoir.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I support chemically treating Island Park Reservoir to kill unwanted fish species but it makes me nervous that sediment was passed into the Henrys Fork in the past.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I do not support a chemical treatment of Island Park Reservoir.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I support stocking predator fish species such as cutthroat trout, splake, or tiger muskie to help control non-game fish.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Continue stocking trout at current levels but the fishing at Island Park Reservoir will not be as good as in the past.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Yellowstone Cutthroat Waters

63. Yellowstone cutthroat trout are currently found in 40 to 60% of their historic range. Additionally, they have been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act. One measure the Department is considering to help improve the long-term survival of this species is to remove brook trout in small, isolated streams and then restock them with Yellowstone cutthroat trout. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Remove brook trout and restore Yellowstone cutthroat trout in all streams possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove brook trout and restore Yellowstone cutthroat trout in a limited number of streams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do nothing. I like the opportunity to fish for brook trout in streams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mountain Lakes

64. The Upper Snake Region has 40 mountain lakes that offer a range of fishing experiences. These lakes are all managed to allow harvest. We want to know what type of fishing experience you want us to manage for in mountain lakes in the region. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following potential management options for mountain lakes?

Potential Management Options	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Manage a few lakes to produce larger trout. I am willing to give up some harvest opportunity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do nothing. I like the way things are currently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Snake River - Idaho Falls Area

65. White sturgeon are native to the Snake River below Shoshone Falls. An experimental population was introduced below American Falls Dam that now provides a fishery. The Department is interested in your opinion regarding further experimental introductions of white sturgeon in the Snake River near Idaho Falls. To what extent do you support or oppose introducing an experimental population of white sturgeon to produce a fishery?

- Strongly Support
 Somewhat Support
 Neutral/No Opinion
 Somewhat Oppose
 Strongly Oppose

Section 8. Questions about You

We understand this information is personal. However, it helps us better understand current anglers and those who may be interested in fishing in the future. The information you provide will not be used with any identifying information and is for statistical purposes only.

66. How often do you use the following sources of information to find out where to go when you are planning a fishing trip? *Please check all that apply.*

Source of Information	Never	Occasionally	Often
Tackle shops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department Offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends/Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

67. Do you use the Internet at home to research information on fishing? Yes No

68. In what type of community do you live?

- Large city (more than 100,000 people) Small town (less than 10,000 people)
 Small city (between 10,000 and 100,000 people) Rural/farm

69. What was your age on your last birthday? years

70. What is your gender? Male Female

71. How many children under age 14 are there living in your home?

How many of them fish?

72. Who do you fish with in priority order (1=most often 9=least often)?

Grandchildren	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Grandparents	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Spouse	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>
Children	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Friends	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Coworkers	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>
Mother	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Father	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Other Family members	<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>

Thank you for completing this survey! Your opinions are very valuable to us and will help guide the Department's Fisheries Management for the next six years.

Submitted by:

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Fishery Biologist**

**Tom McArthur
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Approved by:



**Steve Yundt, Chief
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