

Exhibit (D)

**2023 Oregon Sport Fishing
Regulations**

**Supplemental
Public Correspondence received
as of August 3, 2022**

From: [James Fraser](#)
To: [COMMISSION ODFW * ODFW](#)
Cc: [GAUVIN Michael W * ODFW](#)
Subject: TU Comments for August 5th Meeting, Agenda Exhibit D
Date: Tuesday, August 2, 2022 5:05:39 PM
Attachments: [Trout Unlimited Support for Regulations - 20220802.pdf](#)

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Zarnowitz, and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of Trout Unlimited, please accept the attached comments for consideration during the August 5th Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting, regarding Agenda Exhibit D.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

James Fraser



James Fraser / Oregon Policy Advisor
james.fraser@tu.org
971-278-8085

Trout Unlimited
<http://www.tu.org>



August 2, 2022

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302
ODFW.Commission@odfw.oregon.gov

**Re: Support for Certain 2023 Regulation Changes
(August 5, 2022 Meeting, Agenda Exhibit D, Attachment 4)**

Dear Chair Wahl, Vice-Chair Zarnowitz, and Members of the Commission,

Trout Unlimited supports Proposal Numbers 1 and 17 in the Draft 2023 Regulation Changes (described in Exhibit D, Attachment 4). Each of those proposals will allow increased removal of invasive, non-native bass from coldwater fisheries, while also streamlining the recreational angling regulations. We have no objection to the other regulations proposed in Attachment 4, and provide this letter in support of certain Proposals only to emphasize their importance in conserving native salmonid populations.

For the reasons detailed below, TU respectfully requests that the Commission approve Proposals 1 and 17, and relatedly, reject Proposal Number 6 (because Proposal 6 is only necessary if Proposal 1 is not approved).

Proposal Number 1

Proposal Number 1 would remove the size and bag limits for “bass” in all streams. ODFW regulations define “bass” as largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass; the definition does not include striped or hybrid bass. TU supports this Proposal because removing bag limits on bass in Oregon streams will allow anglers to remove more bass from Oregon rivers.

Bass are spreading through Oregon and increasingly pressuring salmon, steelhead, and trout in those economically and culturally valuable fisheries. Recent examples include the Coquille and Deschutes Rivers. Further, numerous river-specific regulations already allow unlimited harvest of bass (as an exception to otherwise applicable zone-specific regulations that allow harvest of only a certain number and size of bass per day).

A new statewide stream regulation allowing unlimited harvest of bass will (1) authorize anglers to alleviate the pressure on salmon, trout, and steelhead populations, and (2) streamline the agency’s regulations, thereby making the recreational angling rules easier to understand for the public.

Proposal Number 17

Proposal Number 17 would provide that bass, catfish, and other warmwater fisheries in the John Day River are open year-round (rather than only open during trout, salmon, or steelhead seasons). As under Proposal Number 1, this will authorize anglers to increase efforts that target and remove non-native warmwater fish species that use the same habitat and prey on native coldwater species.

We are cautious about this regulation change because it will likely cause some incidental catch of trout, salmon, and steelhead. It will also allow anglers to fish the John Day during closed salmon, steelhead, and trout seasons, thereby presenting the risk of enforcement issues for Oregon State Police. For example, under the proposed change, OSP will need to exercise discretion on whether someone fishing during a closed steelhead season is legally fishing for warmwater species or illegally targeting steelhead. That presents the need for nuanced but important judgment calls by law enforcement. TU believes the proposed change is in the best interest of salmonid populations so long as OSP has capacity to monitor the John Day warmwater fisheries during the times of year that the river is closed under the current rules, and actively enforces the new regulations.

Thank you for considering these comments, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

James Fraser
Oregon Policy Advisor
Trout Unlimited
james.fraser@tu.org