

Public-comment deadlines extended on proposed 2010-12 fishing rules

Local News

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Olympia, WA - The public will have more time to review changes in state sportfishing rules proposed for 2010-12 under an extended comment period announced today by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Under the new timeline, WDFW will accept written comments through Dec. 1 on more than 100 proposed regulations - nearly a month longer than previously announced.

In addition, the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission has postponed a public hearing on the proposals until its Dec. 4-5 meeting in Olympia. Written testimony can also be submitted during that meeting.

The commission, which sets policy for WDFW, is scheduled to take action on the proposed rule changes in February of 2010.

"We've received a large number of proposals this year, and we want to give the public an adequate chance to review them," said Craig Burley, WDFW fish division manager.

"As a cost-saving measure, the department is adopting sportfishing rules for some species on a two-year cycle, which has no doubt contributed to the number of proposals available for review."

Proposed changes for various 2010-12 fishing seasons are posted on WDFW's website at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/rule_proposals/index.htm. Printed copies of the proposals are available by contacting WDFW's Fish Program at (360) 902-2700.

Included on the list are two recent additions that would set new rules for spearfishers fishing for lingcod in Puget Sound and for rockfish in a portion of the Strait of Juan de Fuca (Marine Area 5). Meanwhile, WDFW has scheduled seven public meetings around the state to discuss the new fishing rules proposed by the department, the commission and the public. Those meetings begin at 6 p.m. at all locations except Port Angeles, where the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. Dates and locations include:

Sept. 28 - WDFW's Ephrata Office, 1550 Alder St. N.W., Ephrata

Sept. 29 - WDFW's Spokane Office, 2315 North Discovery Place, Spokane Valley

Sept. 30 - Carpenter's Hall, 507 Third St., Yakima

Oct. 6 - WDFW's Mill Creek Office, 16018 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek

Oct. 7 - Peninsula College, 1502 E. Lauridsen Blvd., Room J47, Port Angeles

Oct. 8 - WDFW's Vancouver Office, 2108 Grand Blvd., Vancouver

Oct. 13 - WDFW Headquarters, Natural Resources Building, Room 172, 1111 Washington St. S.E., Olympia

During the meetings, the public will have an opportunity to discuss the proposals with WDFW staff and submit written comments. Comments also can be submitted by mail to WDFW Rules Coordinator Lori Preuss at preuslmp@dfw.wa.gov or 600 Capitol Way N., Olympia, WA, 98501.