



ATTENTION ANGLERS

Questions and Answers about the Fin Clip Fishery in Hills Creek Reservoir

Effective January 1, 2004, ODFW instituted a fin-clip only fishery in Hills Creek Reservoir. Only fin-clipped trout and salmon may be harvested from the reservoir. Regulations for non-salmonid game fish remain the same as previous years. Consult the 2004 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations for further information.

Why did the regulations change to a fin-clip only fishery?

To protect native cutthroat, rainbow, and bull trout using the reservoir, biologists implemented a hatchery-only harvest regulation. The adipose fin-clip makes it very easy for anglers to differentiate between hatchery and native fish.

Why do we need to protect native trout?

Angling pressure tends to increase in stocked waters, which has a corresponding impact on native fishes. By eliminating the harvest on native trout and salmon, the impact on these native fish should decrease. In addition, by imposing a fin-clip only fishery, anglers are not required to differentiate between protected and unprotected trout and salmon species.

How will this regulation protect native trout?

An adipose fin-clip is a very easy way for anglers to identify hatchery fish available for harvest. Any salmon or trout with an intact adipose fin must be released, allowing it to continue its lifecycle in the Middle Fork Willamette River.

How many fin-clipped hatchery trout have been stocked recently?

Clipped hatchery trout have been stocked into Hills Creek Reservoir since 2002. Over 94,000 fingerlings were stocked in 2002, and over 42,000 fingerlings were stocked in 2003. In addition, 2003 saw the stocking of 60,000 marked juvenile spring Chinook salmon. In 2004, 4,500 legal-sized rainbow trout (8-inch minimum) were stocked into Hills Creek Reservoir in April and another 115,000 fingerlings were stocked in May to become available as legal fish in the 2005 fishery. This is a total of 315,500 adipose fin-clipped fish stocked in Hills Creek Reservoir since 2002. Typically hatchery fingerlings rear one year in the reservoir before reaching 7-9" in length. Thus, it won't be long before larger clipped trout will be available for harvest.

Can I keep a partially fin-clipped trout?

The 2004 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations define an "adipose fin-clipped fish" on page 11 as "a hatchery salmon, steelhead or trout with a clipped adipose fin and having a healed scar at the location of the fin. The adipose fin is the small fatty fin on salmon, steelhead and trout located between the dorsal fin and the tail." Therefore a fish with a partial fin-clip and a healed scar is considered a hatchery fish and is available for harvest if it is of legal size.

Can I harvest spring Chinook from the Reservoir?

Any legal sized trout or salmon with a healed adipose fin-clip is available for harvest from the Reservoir.

Who can I contact for more information?

Contact your local ODFW office or State Police Fish and Wildlife Division for more information.