Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth St.
Sacramento, CA 95814

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CALIFORNIA
FISH AND GAME
COMMISSION

2014 FEB -4 PM 1:30 2/4/14

Attn: President + Members

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Your killing us. Your killing local businesses and economies. Your killing our desire to pursue our inborn instincts and heritage for the taking of fish and game.

Your rules, fees, levys, licenses and fines are picking our pockets and giving us less and less in return.

Here is my case in point.

For the last 18 years, I, and my fellow compatriots have fished for steelhead on the Smith Rivers in Del Norte county. This year there are two rules (regulations) in place which address my above comments.

These are, A, barbless hooks only, and B, no taking of wild fish.

Rule A: It is very difficult and challenging to outsmart and gain the prowess to get these marvelous fish to bite. It takes years of continual pursuit and learning to become successful at this activity.

With the barbless hook requirement, ones chances of landing a fish after hooking it are probably reduced by more than 50% in my opinion.

If you have done any research, I would be interested to know your findings.

The small barb on a #4 hook is of little consequence to the fish, or anything else, but it makes a lot of difference between landing or loosing a fish. This requirement has been kicked back and forth over the years, but has now been in place for the last 4 or 5 years.

Rule B: Here is the real rub! No keeping of wild fish. Do you not know that fish which are gill hooked, or swallow a hook are ultimately going to die. Point at hand!

I returned home 1/21/14 from my first trip this year to the Smith River. Low water and no rain have prohibited fishing up til now. However, we had a somewhat successful trip. Out of 8 fish landed, the last 2 were hatchery fish and we each took one home. (We go for the sport and the excellent cuisine. Anyhow, the next to last fish I landed was a wild hen and she was gill hooked, and bled.

We lamented over this and thought of various courses of action, but ultimately complied with your regulation, and returned her to the river. We watched her slowly swim off for about 20 feet, turn belly

up, and die. Such a waste! To your credit though, two sea gulls in the area were well pleased as they circled in, landed, and proceeded to tear open her belly. Hooray for your side!

We fumed, cussed, and lamented about your stupid, destructive rule. There are ways to prevent this from happening without such a wasteful disregard for our resource.

If it is your intent to reduce the numbers of fishermen, you are doing a bang up job. I have watched the numbers fall over the years, along with the guides, markets, motels, restaurants and other businesses which exist to serve this industry on the north coast.

In short, your efforts are disappointing to say the least. Put more thought into it and try to better serve the resource and people.

And by the way, even with the very low and gin clarity of the water, we saw hundreds of steelhead. One school in particular below the forks held at least 1000!

I would welcome and appreciate anyone's reply and comments. Anybody?

Sincerely,

Jim Doyle

cc: State Senator Haines
State Assemblyman Dahl