

Issue:

Increasing the opportunities of spearfishing in the state.

Which rule are you seeking to create or revise? Please include a copy of the rule you are proposing to create or change, preferably with the change made in redline format.

4. UNDERWATER SPEARFISHING, ARCHERY, SLINGBOWS AND GIGS, pg 8.

Bow anglers are advised to reference the current State Recreation Lands brochure for more regulations on waters that allow archery fishing.

a. Underwater spearfishing, archery, slingbows and gigs may be used statewide for the taking of carp and northern pike, except as prohibited by these regulations or land management agencies. East of the Continental Divide, gizzard shad and white or longnose suckers may also be taken. **West of the Continental Divide, the daily bag limit is 1 fish per species, per day, and a possession limit following all current state limits. Fish may be taken during the 3-year impact study with no set season for any game fish species or any fish designated as unregulated wildlife under regulations** unless otherwise prohibited in "Special Regulations: Fishing Waters," pages 11–39. Other fish may be taken when authorized for specific waters in the regulation section, **including spearfishing in waters with no bag and possession limits.**

b. **You may not take Black Bass species, Largemouth, Smallmouth, or Spotted; from April 1st to the third weekend in June, unless otherwise posted for waters with no bag and possession limits.**

c. **Spearfishing West of the Continental Divide will be permitted during a 3-year impact Study with a re-evaluation to be conducted at the end of the trial period to have the option to open more bodies of water at a later date. The Department will track and collect information about the number of people who take part in this activity by requiring that all underwater spearfishing anglers report their effort and harvest monthly to the Department.**

d. Archery and slingbows may be used to take kokanee if a water is otherwise open to snagging. In such cases, the following applies:

1. Bows must have reel, fishing line and arrow attached to bow.

2. Bows must have an arrow safety-slide mechanism that keeps fishing

line in front of the arrow at all times

- e. Additional restrictions apply to underwater spearfishing:
 - 1. CO2 guns or cartridge-powered spears are prohibited.
 - 2. Guns must be loaded and unloaded while the gun is submerged.
 - 3. Divers must stay within a radius of 100 feet of a float bearing the National Divers' Symbol, or Alpha Flag.
 - 4. Spears must be attached by a safety line; free shafting is prohibited.
- f. Archery, slingbows and gigs are allowed for taking bullfrogs.
 - 1. It is prohibited to use artificial light while underwater Spearfishing other than within catch and keep orders for nuisance fish species and "no limit" waters.
 - 2. It is prohibited to use artificial breathing apparatus such as Scuba, re-breathers, or the like to take fish while underwater Spearfishing.

Why are you seeking to create or revise this rule? Please include a general statement of the reasons for the requested rule or revision and any relevant information related to the Request.

The impact done to any species in freshwater has been shown in many cases from studies across the nation to have no significant impact to fisheries with impact studies being proposed and implemented under mandatory reporting for size, length and # of fish done over various periods of time in many other states.

Spearfishing has been proven to be one of the most sustainable ways to take fish with the ability to choose what species, what size and how many fish get taken during each trip with no chance of bycatch as mentioned by the National Geographic Society. Spearfishing world records kept by states are on average, around half the size excluding a small percentage that almost always includes Common Carp which are already allowed to be taken in the state.

Some concerns mentioned of the impact to spawning fish within hatchery programs and spearfishing showing no interest in protecting resources. With the above proposal, we are hoping to negate the concern of any major fishery programs in the state being affected. Another concern was limiting anglers' access to fishable waters due to divers being present. Dive flags are already used for both Scuba and Freediving and divers must display the appropriate dive flags signaling a diver in the area and that "Vessels must stay 100 feet away from the diver's flag" but does not restrict boaters from an area. A dive flag just indicates someone in the water and for non-divers to be cautious of the area following current regulations.

Lastly Freshwater Spearfishing is not a large demographic in Colorado, as well as any other states. Tournament participations in neighboring states as well as the most recent study done by Michigan shows that the ratio of rod and reel fisherman vs Spearfisherman is vastly skewed in favor of the rod and reel category. The opportunities available to residents for spearfishing are few and far between with the current spearfishing regulations and outdoorsman participating in spearfishing activities are forced to leave the state to be able to enjoy taking desirable game fish for consumption. There are few participants who enjoy the poor water conditions, lack of visibility and much colder average temperatures, the lack of lake access, and species allowed to be taken within the state. This proposal would allow spearfisherman to use the recourses that the state offers to another sportsman just the same.

The larger lakes that would be in the area mentioned in the proposal that would be accessible to spearfishing are the following; Navajo Reservoir, Blue Mesa Reservoir, Lake Granby, McPhee Reservoir, Twin Lakes, Vallecito Reservoir, Morrow Point Reservoir, Ridgway Reservoir, Rifle Gap Reservoir, to just to name a few that are substantial in size and have more variety in fish species. Some of these lakes have "Catch and Keep" programs for a select species and would allow spearfisherman a better opportunity to take multiple fish instead of just one per day to help mitigate nonnative, out of control, or illegally introduced fish.

Petitioners Name: Austin Rickard

ARTICLE
LEVELED



605

Sustainable Fishing

Sustainable fishing guarantees there will be populations of ocean and freshwater wildlife in the future.

GRADES

3 - 12+

SUBJECTS

Health, Earth Science, Oceanography



1/15



PHOTOGRAPH

Spearfishing

Sustainable fishing ensures that fisheries continue to thrive in marine and freshwater habitats. People have fished sustainably for thousands of years. The Tagbanua people of the Philippines, above, hunt for specific species at different times of the year, which maintains healthy stocks of different fish. They also use sustainable methods such as spears.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KATHERINE JACK, MYSHOT

Leveled by  newsela



Selected text level

Default

ARTICLE

VOCABULARY

This resource is also available in Spanish.

Sustainable fishing guarantees there will be populations of ocean and freshwater wildlife for the future. Aquatic environments are home to countless species of fish and invertebrates, most of which are consumed as food. (Others are harvested for economic reasons, such as oysters that produce pearls used in jewelry.) Seafood is respected all over the world, in many diverse cultures, as an important source of protein and healthy fats. For thousands of years, people have fished to feed families and local communities.

Demand for seafood and advances in technology have led to fishing practices that are depleting fish and shellfish populations around the world. Fishers remove more than 77 billion kilograms (170 billion pounds) of wildlife from the sea each year. Scientists fear that continuing to fish at this rate may soon result in a collapse of the world's fisheries. In order to continue relying on the ocean as an important food source, economists and conservationists say we will need to employ sustainable fishing practices.

Consider the example of the bluefin tuna. This fish is one of the largest and fastest on Earth. It is known for its delicious meat, which is often enjoyed raw, as sushi. Demand for this particular fish has resulted in very high prices at markets and has threatened its population. Today's spawning population of bluefin tuna is estimated at 21 to 29 percent of its population in 1970.

Since about that time, commercial fishers have caught bluefin tuna using purse seining and longlining. Purse seine fishing uses a net to herd fish together and then envelop them by pulling the net's drawstring. The net can scoop up many fish at a time, and is typically used to catch schooling fish or those that come together to spawn. Longlining is a type of fishing in which a very long line—up to 100 kilometers (62 miles)—is set and dragged behind a boat. These lines have thousands of baited hooks attached to smaller lines stretching downward.

Both purse seining and longlining are efficient fishing methods. These techniques can catch hundreds or thousands of fish at a time.

Overfishing

Catching so many fish at a time can result in an immediate payoff for fishers.

Fishing this way consistently, however, leaves few fish of a species left in the ocean. If a fish population is small, it cannot easily replenish itself through reproduction.

Taking wildlife from the sea faster than populations can reproduce is known as overfishing. Purse seining, longlining, and many other types of fishing can also result in a lot of bycatch, the capture of unintended species.

Longlines intended to catch bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), for instance, can ensnare birds, sea turtles, and other fish such as swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*).

Another fish species that has been overfished is Chilean seabass (*Dissostichus eleginoides*), sometimes called Patagonian toothfish. In the 1990s, this fish became extremely popular in restaurants across the United States and other countries, causing an increase in demand. The fish is native to the South Pacific and South Atlantic Oceans, typically caught by longline in international waters. Fishing in this area is regulated by international agreements, which are very difficult to enforce. Illegal fishing—in this case catching fish in numbers high above internationally established limits—became widespread. The number of fish caught and the average size of the fish decreased, leading to even higher prices and greater incentive for illegal fishing. Chilean seabass is a long-lived (up to 50 years), slow-growing fish. Smaller seabass are likely younger, and may not have spawned yet. As fishers caught smaller seabass, healthy replenishment of the population became unlikely.

By the early 2000s, hundreds of American chefs joined a campaign to “Take a Pass on Chilean Sea Bass,” with the hope of giving the fishery time to recover. Today, import of Chilean seabass into the United States is

highly regulated by the National Marine Fisheries Service, but illegal fishing continues.

Overfishing also occurs in freshwater ecosystems. The Caspian Sea, for instance, is home to the beluga sturgeon (*Huso huso*), a large, slow-growing fish. Beluga sturgeon can grow up to 4.5 meters (15 feet) and 1,135 kilograms (2,500 pounds). They take about 20 years to reach maturity, at which point females release their eggs (called roe), although they only do so every three to four years. Beluga sturgeon are best known for roe—also known as caviar. In fact, Caspian Sea sturgeon are the source of about 90 percent of the world's caviar. The fish are slow-moving and easy prey for fishers. When its eggs are harvested, the fish cannot maintain their populations.

Rules regulate the caviar harvest and imports in countries worldwide, but illegal fishing and international demand are huge threats. The fish's population continues to decline.

Sustainable Fishing Practices

There are ways to fish sustainably, allowing us to enjoy seafood while ensuring that populations remain for the future. In many indigenous cultures, people have fished sustainably for thousands of years. Today's sustainable fishing practices reflect some lessons learned from these cultures.

In the Philippines, the Tagbanua people have traditionally employed fishing practices that simultaneously harvest and maintain fish populations. They continue to follow these practices today. Tagbanuas fish for specific species only during certain times of the year, determined by tides and the moon, allowing fish stocks to replenish themselves. They set aside certain areas,

such as coral reefs, as protected spots in which fishing is prohibited. When they do fish, these traditional fishers primarily use hook-and-line methods, catching only what they need to feed themselves and their communities. A 2007 study lauded traditional Tagbanua practices as a way to prevent injury and death to local Irrawaddy dolphins, which become entangled in more modern fishing gear like nets and traps.

Traditional Polynesian cultures of the South Pacific have also always relied on the ocean's resources. Their most common historical fishing practices were hook and line, spearfishing, and cast nets. Hooks constructed of bone, shell, or stone were designed to catch specific species. Fishers would also craft 2-meter (6-foot) spears. They would dive underwater or spear fish from above, again targeting specific animals. Cast nets were used by fishers working individually or in groups. The nets could be cast from shore or canoes, catching groups of fish. All of these methods targeted fish needed for fishers' families and local communities.

Some of these sustainable fishing practices are still used today. Native Hawaiians practice cast-net fishing and spearfishing. Modern spearfishing is practiced all over the world, including in South America, Africa, Australia, and Asia. In many cases, spear guns are now used to propel the spear underwater. Spearfishing is a popular recreational activity in some areas of the United States, including Florida and Hawaii. This fishing method is considered sustainable because it targets one fish at a time and results in very little by catch.

If you have ever gone fishing, chances are you used a rod and reel. Rod-and-reel fishing is a modern version of traditional hook-and-line. Rods and reels come in different shapes and sizes, allowing recreational and commercial

fishers to target a wide variety of fish species in both freshwater and saltwater. The different types of rods and reels, coupled with different locations and bait, mean fishers can catch pelagic fish like sailfish, bottom-dwellers like flounder, and freshwater species such as catfish and trout. Rod-and-reel fishing results in less bycatch because non-targeted species can be released immediately. Additionally, only one fish is caught at a time, preventing overfishing. For commercial fishers, rod-and reel-fishing is a more sustainable alternative to long lining.

Another way to prevent overfishing and bycatch is to simply abstain from eating fish and other seafood. Dr. Sylvia Earle, renowned marine scientist and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence, suggests people need to take a break from eating seafood until we learn better how to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations.

“I personally have stopped eating seafood,” she explained to *National Geographic*. “I know too much. I know that every fish counts at this point. Some more than others, but I can no longer bear the thought of eating tuna knowing in what dire straits they currently are. If we value the ocean and the ocean’s health at all, we have to understand that fish are critical to maintaining the integrity of ocean systems, which in turn make the planet work.”

Fisheries Management

Many individuals, communities, and nations continue to rely on fish and other aquatic life as a source of food and raw materials. To maintain fish stocks, we need to reduce overfishing and bycatch through fisheries management. Managing fish populations is no easy task. It requires

cooperation at all levels of government, from local communities to nations across the globe.

Nations are responsible for regulating fishing in their coastal waters. In the United States, NOAA Fisheries is responsible for fisheries management in waters five to 321 kilometers (three to 200 miles) from land. Local municipalities manage the ocean closer to shore.

Of course, different stakeholders have different perspectives on fishing regulations. Fishers themselves are interested in both maintaining their livelihoods and ensuring that fish populations remain for years to come. Conservationists work to protect marine and freshwater environments, often seeking to prevent fishing and other activities that remove wildlife from their habitats. Regular citizens want to continue to purchase the seafood they love to eat. Scientists focus on ensuring the health of fresh and saltwater ecosystems.

A nation's territorial waters do not encompass much of the huge ocean. The majority of Earth's waters are the "high seas"—international areas that do not belong to one particular nation. Regulating fishing in international waters is tricky; it requires nations with competing agendas and economic needs to agree on management approaches.

There are many international agreements in place, however. There are 17 Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), composed of nations that share economic interests in a particular area. When member nations agree to RFMO regulations, they are bound by these rules, which may include catch limits and specifications on the types of gear used. Evidence suggests these regulations have led to decreased bycatch (such as

dolphins in tuna nets), but maintaining healthy fish stocks has remained a challenge. Enforcing fishing regulations on the high seas is extremely difficult, but member nations have worked to address the problem of illegal fishing and prevent illegally caught seafood from being imported.

One organization that has demonstrated enforcement success is the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC), which exists primarily to preserve salmon stocks. Member nations are Canada, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and the United States. The commission prohibits catching salmon on the high seas, which is primarily accomplished using drift nets. Drift nets float freely in ocean currents, usually near the sea's surface. They are used to catch schooling fish like salmon and sardines. Unfortunately, these nets result in a lot of bycatch, ensnaring seabirds, marine mammals, and other non-targeted species.

The goal of fisheries management is to develop regulations based on scientific data. These regulations may be based on knowledge of species' life histories, migration patterns, or other information.

Fishing for bluefin tuna, for instance, is highly regulated in the United States. Fishers may only catch this species with a rod and reel or hand-thrown harpoon. This regulation ensures they may only catch one fish at a time. To be taken from the ocean, a fish must measure at least 185 centimeters (73 inches). The goal of this rule is to give fish a chance to spawn before being caught. In addition, only a certain tonnage of fish may be caught each year. Once that quota is reached, the fishery is closed for the season. Rules like these take into consideration a fish species' biology and natural history in order to maintain populations for the future.

Consumers

As consumers, we can choose seafood from well-managed, sustainable fisheries. To do so, we should educate ourselves about where our fish comes from and how it is caught. Resources such as [Seafood Watch](#) can help us make the best choices for our ocean's future.

The remaining struggle is that policymakers must consider the needs of consumers, the livelihoods of fishers, and the data of scientists as they look ahead.

FAST FACT

Grandes pesquerías

Según la Organización para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, las pesquerías más grandes del mundo son de las siguientes especies:

1. anchoveta
2. listado
3. arenque
4. abadejo de Alaska
5. caballa del Pacífico

FAST FACT

Mayores productores

Según la Organización para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, los países que capturan la mayor cantidad de peces (sin incluir la acuicultura) son:

1. China
2. Perú
3. Indonesia
4. Estados Unidos
5. India

FAST FACT

Factorías de pescado

Los buques factoría están diseñados para capturar enormes cantidades de pescado. Estos grandes barcos permanecen en el mar durante largos periodos de tiempo y están equipados con tecnología que filetea y congela el pescado inmediatamente después de su captura. Según la NOAA, un buque factoría es capaz de procesar cien toneladas de bacalao en una hora.

FAST FACT

Grandes Bancos y grandes pesquerías

Los Grandes Bancos son un conjunto de mesetas submarinas cerca de Terranova, Canadá. En esta región se cruzan dos corrientes

oceánicas: la fría corriente del Labrador y la cálida del Golfo, lo que contribuye a que allí se encuentren las pesquerías más productivas del mundo, donde predomina el bacalao, el pez espada, la vieira y la langosta.

FAST FACT

Muchos peces en el mar

Según el Servicio Nacional de Pesquerías Marinas de la NOAA, los pequeños peces luminosos de aguas profundas son los más abundantes del océano. De hecho, ¡esta podría ser la especie de vertebrado más abundante de la Tierra! No se consideran una pesquería rentable ya que se suelen capturar a una profundidad aproximada de 500 metros (1,640 pies).

Articles & Profiles

National Geographic Channel: Wicked Tuna—The Global Fish Crisis

Website

Monterey Bay Aquarium: Seafood Watch

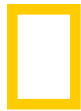
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State	Season ?	Limited by Water?	Species?	Bag and Possession	Restrictions	Stipulations
Colorado	No	Yes except for carp and NPK (statewide) and gizzard shad, white and longnose suckers on east slope.	NPK, Carp, GSD, WHS, LGS	Same		Allowed to harvest catfish and wiper in pueblo reservoir
New Mexico	April 1 - March 31	Slightly	All	Same	Not Allowed in any special trout water, trophy bass water, river or stream	Local ordinances or prohibitions may apply at a specific location or water, and the local managing agency should be contacted prior to bow fishing or spearfishing
Wyoming	No	Slightly	All	Same	Not Allowed in Grand Teton	Special stipulation for Walleye bag limit (2 fish)
Utah	No	Yes	All	Same		All privately owned waters with permission as well as listed waters (16 waterbodies)
Nebraska	July 1 - Dec 31	Yes	All	Same		All privately owned waters with permission as well as listed waters (18 waterbodies)
North Dakota	May 1 - November 30	Yes	All - Except: muskellunge, paddlefish, smallmouth bass and sturgeon	Same	Restrictions on all waterbodies except seven (7)	
South Dakota	May 1 - March 31	Yes	All	Same	Boundary water and river species limitations to NPK and All catfish	9 waterbodies listed which do Not Allow spearfishing
Kansas	No	No - Unless otherwise Posted	Nonsport fish	Same		
Montana	No	No - Non-game Fish Yes - Game Fish	NPK, Walleye, Burbot, Whitefish, and Non-game fish	Same	Underwater spearfishing only open at a few reservoirs	

Oklahoma	No	Yes	white bass, blue cat, channel cat, and Non-game	Same	County restrictions on spearing in ten counties
Arizona	No	carp, buffalofish, mullet, tilapia, goldfish, and shad (statewide). Striped Bass limited to Lake Powell, Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, and Lake Plesant	striped bass,	Same	
Nevada	No	Yes	All unprotected fish	Same	Restrictions only on 4 waterbodies
Idaho	Unclear	No	suckers, carp, minnows, and chub	Same	

*I left off All states in WAFA with ocean access as I think it will be too convoluted

State	Season ?	Limited by Water?	Species?	Bag and Possession	Restrictions	Stipulations
NM	No	No	All	Yes	Not allowed in any special trout water, trophy bass water, river or stream	Local ordinances or prohibitions may apply at a specific location or water, and the local managing agency should be contacted prior to bow fishing or spearfishing
WY	No	No	All	Yes	Not allowed in Grand Teton	Special stipulation for Walleye bag limit (2 fish)
UT	No	Somewhat	All	Yes		
NE	Yes	Somewhat	All	Yes	All privately owned waters with permission as well as listed waters (18 waterbodies)	
CO	No	Very	Few	Yes		Allowed to harvest catfish and wiper in pueblo reservoir
ND	Yes	Yes	All	Yes	Restrictions on all waterbodies except seven (7)	
SD	Yes	Somewhat	All	Yes	Boundary water and river species limitations to NPK and all catfish	9 waterbodies listed which do Not allow spearfishing
KS	No	No	Few	Yes		
Montana	No	Very	Few	Yes	Underwater spearfishing only open at a few reservoirs	
OK	No	Very	Few	Yes	County restrictions on spearing in ten counties	
AZ	No	Very	Few	Yes		
NV	No	Somewhat	Few	Yes	Restrictions only on 4 waterbodies	
ID	No	No	Few	Yes		

No	10
Yes	3
No	4
Somewhat	4
Very	4

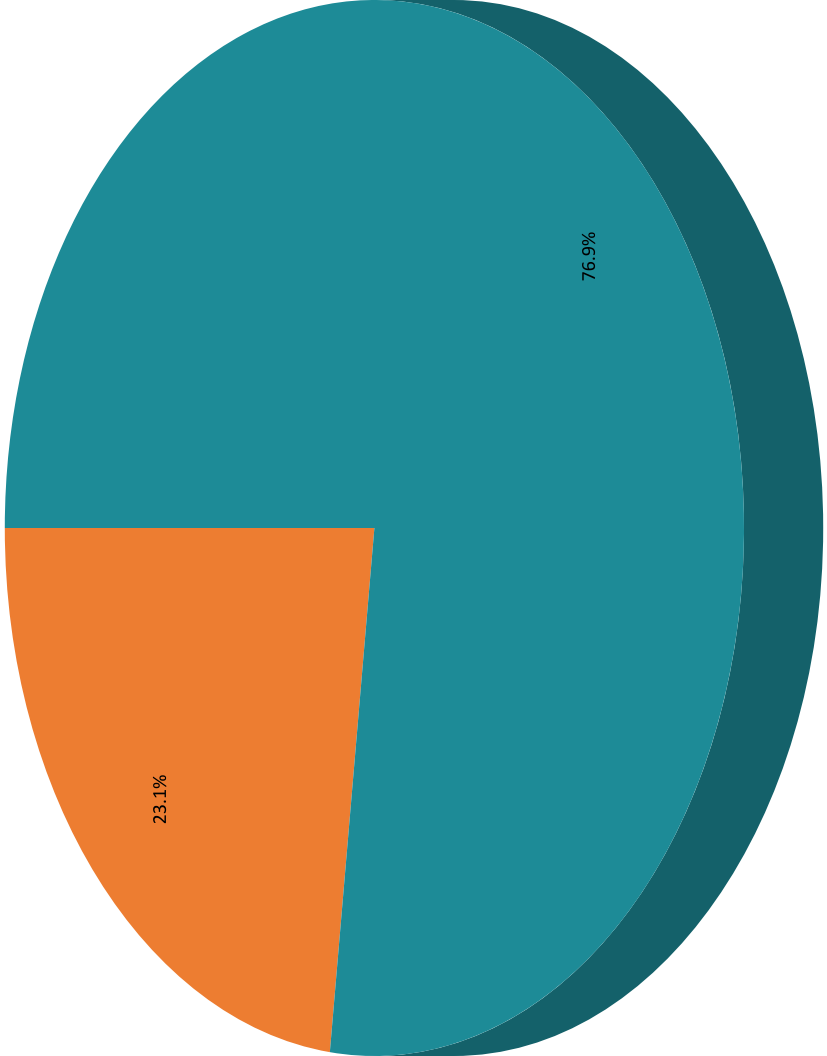
All
Few

6
7

Yes

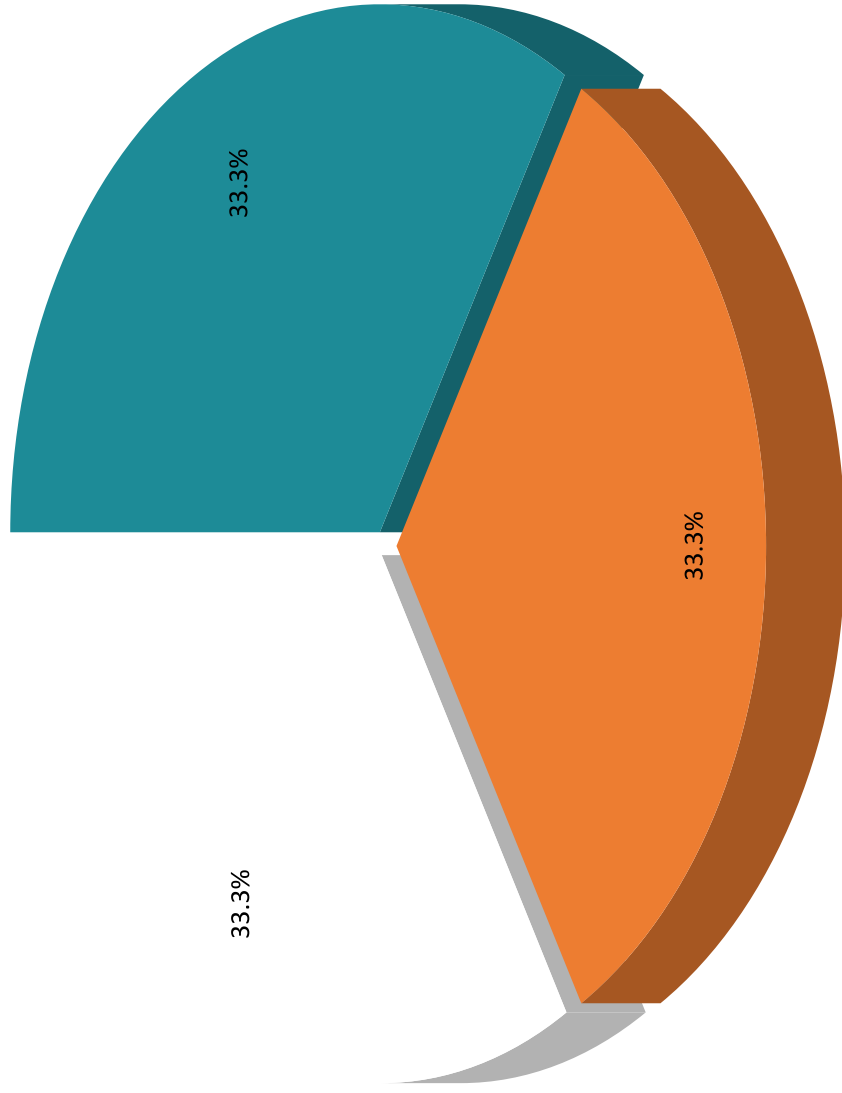
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Are There Spearfishing Seasons in Other Landlocked States



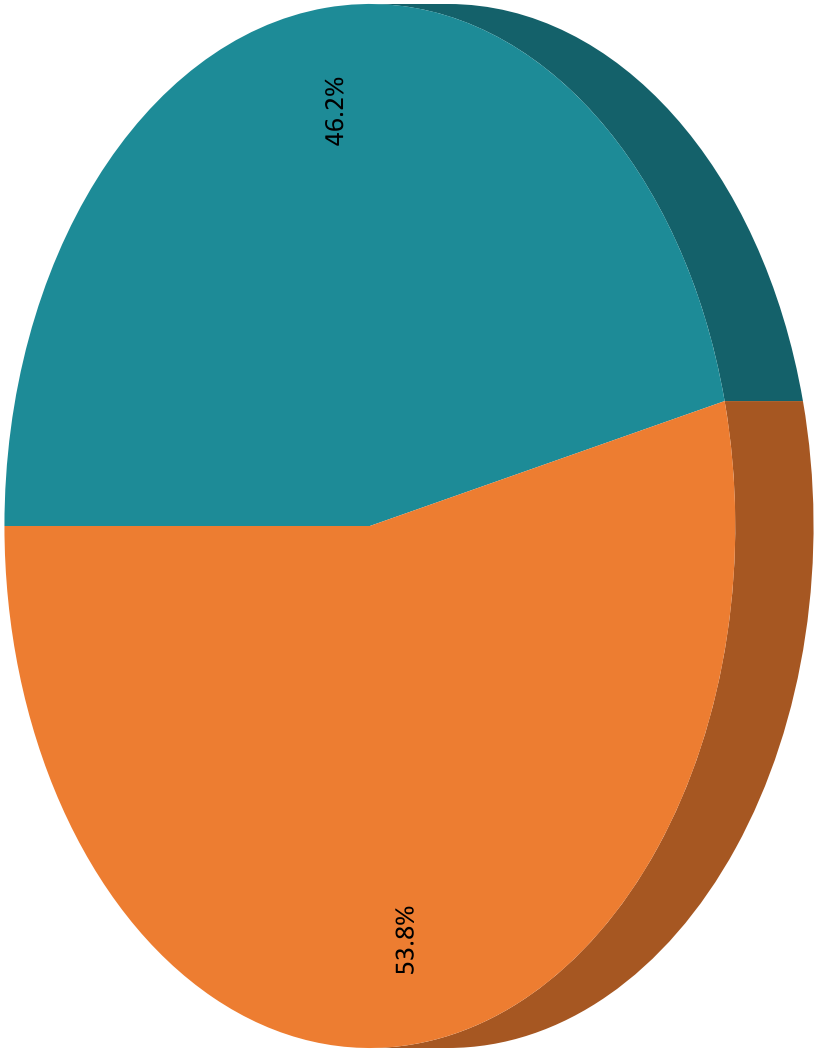
● No ● Yes

Is Spearfishing Opportunity Limited By Waterbody



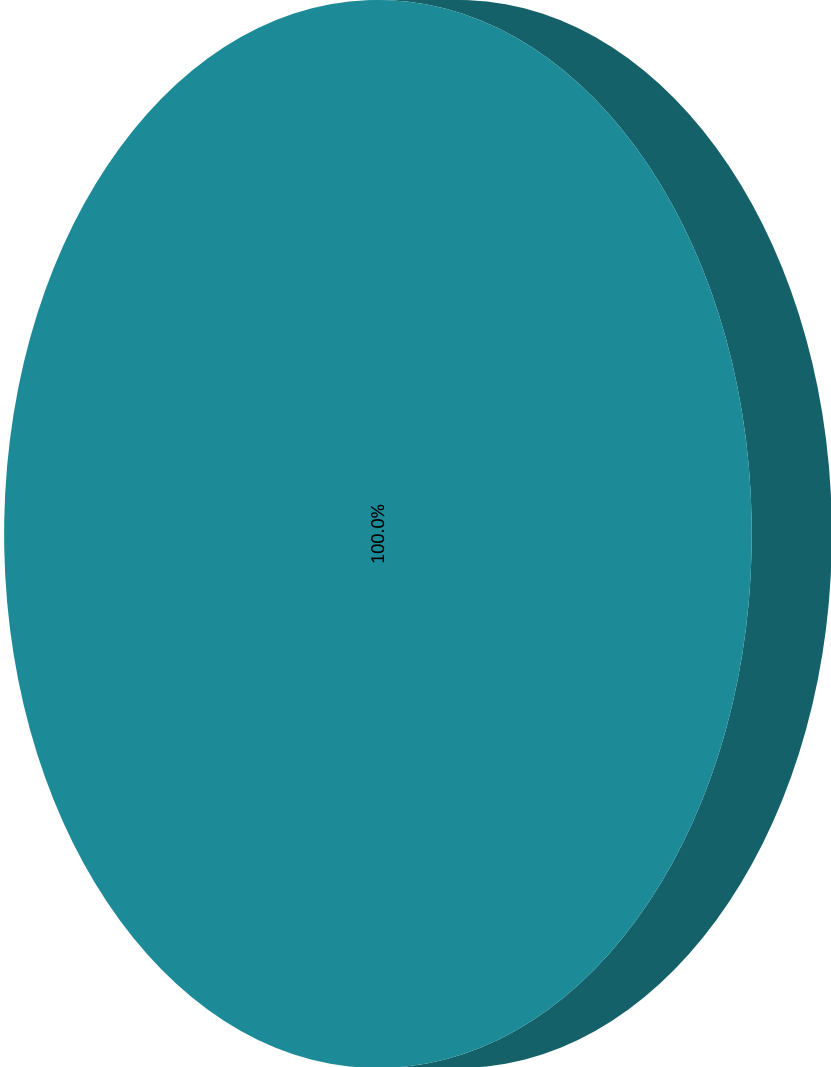
● No ● Somewhat ● Very

What Species are Allowed to be Targeted While Spearfishing



● All ● Few

Are Bag and Size Restrictions the Same as Rod and Reel



Reg Language	States
All possession limits apply, regardless of the angling technique you use.	UT
Game fish must meet the length limit requirements for the water body from which they were harvested, as well as daily bag limits, and possession limits.	NE

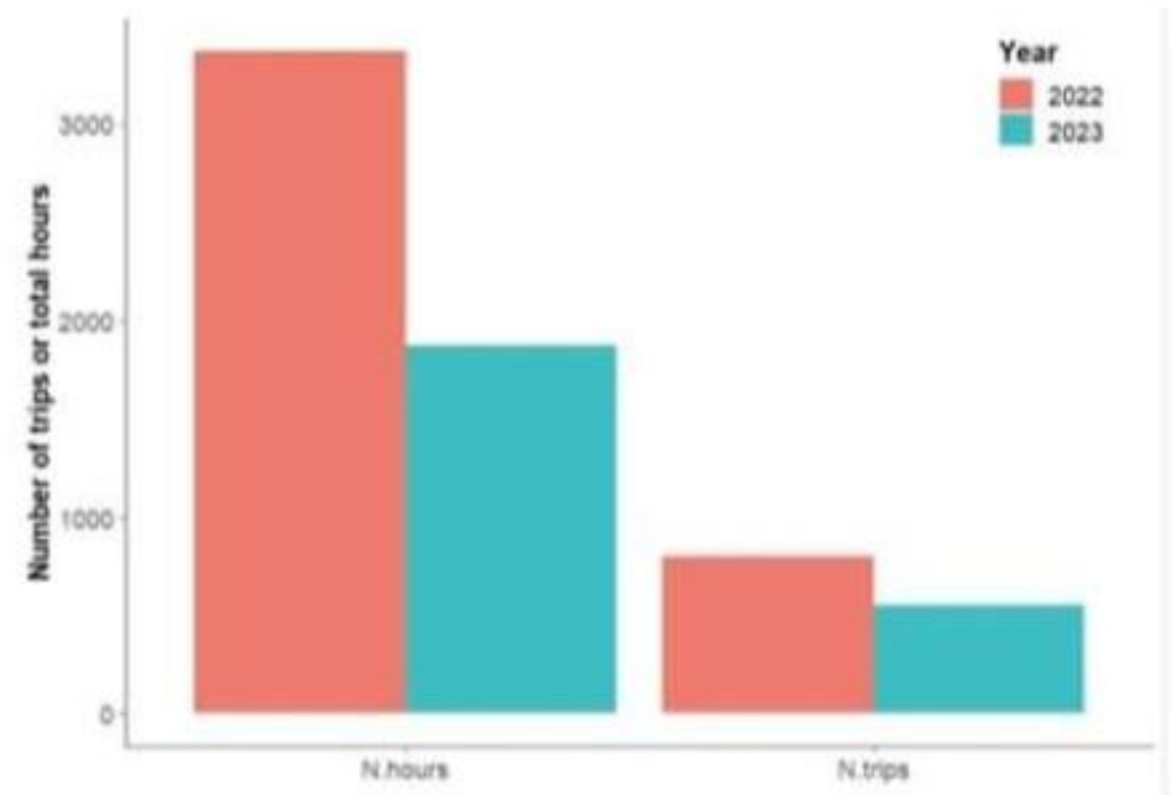
All spears used on powered spearguns must be attached to a shooting line no more than 20 feet long.	NE, WY	No length requirement in NV and CO
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Underwater spearfishing is not permitted within 100 yards of any designated swimming area, boat dock, boat ramp, or spillway	NE, WY, SD	150 feet in ND
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Individuals who underwater spearfish between sunset and sunrise must display a lighted Diver's Down Flag and must carry a hand-held light that is visible from a distance of 150 feet. The hand-held light must be displayed when the diver is at the surface.	ND, SD, NV
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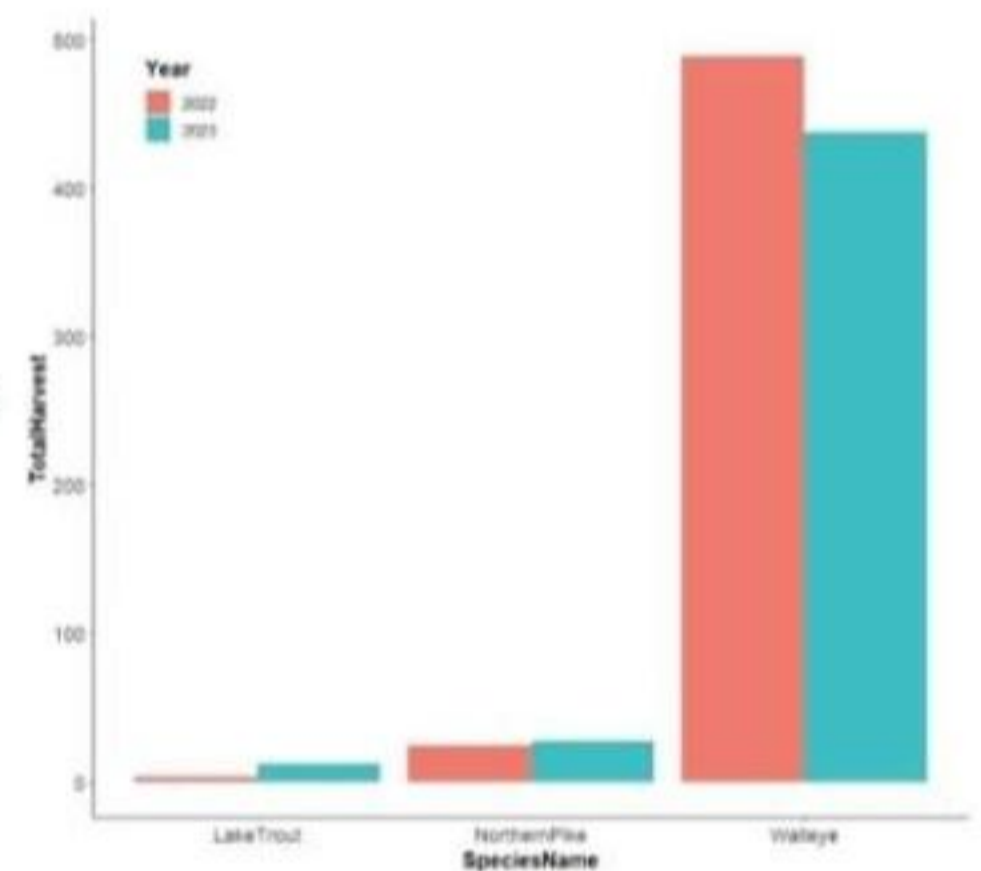
Underwater Spearfishing License Summary

- Total of **8,479 licenses** (4,243/year)
- **430 total licenses reported fishing effort** (215/year)
- 1,351 total trips (676/year)



Underwater Spearfishing Harvest Summary

- 244 total licenses reported harvest of at least one fish (122/year)
- **Walleye** most harvested species (**464 fish/year**)
 - ~70% of harvest from Lake Huron, 30% from Lake Michigan
 - Top ten licensees harvested ~70% of the Walleye
- **Low harvest of Northern Pike (26/year) and Lake Trout (8/year)**
- Other species reported include common carp, freshwater drum, white sucker, catfish



Underwater Spearfishing Reporting

- **Monthly reporting challenging at times**
 - Confusion about reporting requirements
 - Many anglers didn't fish
- **963 licenses voided** between the two years
- **40%** of licensees never reported
 - Most likely those that never fished



Beua Cook

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6/28/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Beau Cook

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Having been in the sport for 24 years I have had the opportunity to gain an understanding of many species of fish and underwater environments in multiple states, both in salt and fresh water. Being submerged in an environment encourages a better understanding of the effects within that environment. Erosion, run off, and the health of the aerobic and anaerobic bacteria along shorelines are all much more evident from the perspective of being in the water.

To be successful, there is a level of dedication and training required in the spearfishing sport, each fish taken represents years of dedication and training often with the guidance of a mentor along the way. Things such as water temperatures, visibility, fish depth and locations are all challenges to overcome. Those of us who have trained the current and next generation of spearfishermen are dedicated to creating a culture of respect and preservation for the sport. It has been demonstrated to be viable by many other states offering spearfishing opportunities in freshwater environments.

We have an increased ability to sustainably collect fish, with reduced risk of causing stress to protected or restricted specimens because we know our target. This proactive approach not only ensures conservation-minded fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries.

This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative interest to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

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Sincerely,

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Darren Cook

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7/8/2024

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Sincerely,

Darren Cook

Greg Hall

gvh574@gmail.com

7/8/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Greg Hall

Matt Wesselink

mwdiving85@gmail.com

254-289-9978

6/15/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Matt Wesselink

Mike McGuire

anywatermike@gmail.com

970-216-5902

6/28/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Mike McGuire

Ryan Koeneke

ko3n3k3@gmail.com

303-710-9281

6/28/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Ryan Koeneke

Ryan Peterson

ryan.peterson91@hotmail.com

7/3/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Ryan Peterson

Rylan Klawiter

rklawiter@mavs.coloradomesa.edu

970-488-0091

6/28/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Rylan Klawiter

Shawn Melnek

970-773-1812

7/2/2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of overexploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Shawn Melnek

TO: COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE
FROM: STEVE PERKINS
1000 BIRD POINT DR
COTOPAXI, CO 81223
(719) 207 8517

This letter is to express support for the update to the Colorado Fishing Regulations for spearfishing proposed by Austin Rickard. I am not a spearfisherman, but very active at fishing and hunting in Colorado. Spearfishing is very technical and difficult. Participation in the state is relatively low, with a culture and commitment to conservation, ethical pursuit, and legal participation.

While the proposed amendment will increase opportunity, it will remain tightly regulated. Expected impact to the resource will be negligible and even potentially beneficial. Please consider moving forward with this proposed amendment.

Respectfully,
Steve Perkins
Lake/River Skipper (Southeast Region)
FishExplorer.com

I'm a nonresident who is interested in spearfishing more in CO. Please consider regulations to allow for this burgeoning activity.

When it comes to spear vs traditional angling my perspective is that spear anglers are more like traditional anglers than might be assumed.

- We kill fish, but I also know a lot of traditional anglers who do that too. Frankly, I'm in that camp of liking to eat fish and it is one of the reasons I like both types of fishing.
- Spearfishing has been happening alongside traditional anglers for years and years in the State of Utah and Wyoming and it hasn't harmed fish populations.
- Spear anglers, like any other anglers have days of success and failure. It's not easy. Sometimes the fish just aren't there. It can be physically taxing especially when the water is cold and murky.
- Some fish are harder than others. Bass and bluegill are pretty easy, trout are almost impossible, carp are pretty easy. Walleye are a good mix of challenging and accessible. Catfish can be tricky.
- Spear anglers are like other sportsmen who are advocates for clean water and healthy fish populations.
- Spearos are subject to limits and regulations.
- Sometimes people complain that spearos don't catch and release. The way that works for a spearfisher is we just don't shoot the fish. It is very common to let fish swim if we've already met our limit or don't want to take any more home.
- There are probably a few bad actors in the community of spearfishermen but I've also seen that from other anglers.

Thanks for your consideration,

Steve Gottfredson
801-440-1188
Salt Lake City, UT

Brett Leable
Marketing@nationalfreshwaterspearfishing.org
970-401-3743
7-4-2024

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to express my full support for the proposed spearfishing regulation change currently under consideration by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. By establishing clear guidelines and limits, we can mitigate the risk of over exploitation and protect the sport of spearfishing. Spearfishers provide valuable underwater feedback in real time, and can be an asset to Colorado DOW.

This proactive approach not only ensures sustainable fishing practices but also fosters a thriving ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. In endorsing the proposed spearfishing regulation change, we prioritize the conservation of Colorado's aquatic habitats and the sustainable management of our fisheries. This proposal reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, balancing the interests of recreational anglers with the imperative to safeguard our natural resources for present and future generations.

The state of Michigan recently changed their rules regarding spearfishing to great success. By enacting these regulations, we take proactive steps toward fostering a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, ensuring the continued health and vitality of our aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you for considering my input on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Brett Leable
NFSA Board Member
Sponsorships and Marketing
@therealbrettleable
970-401-3743