

**WSR 24-03-010
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE**

[Order 24-03—Filed January 4, 2024, 8:43 a.m., effective January 4, 2024]

Effective Date of Rule: Immediately upon filing.

Purpose: The purpose of this emergency rule is to close retention of recreationally caught white sturgeon in Bonneville and The Dalles pools.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Repealing WAC 220-312-06000A; and amending WAC 220-312-060.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047.

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds that immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.

Reasons for this Finding: This rule is needed to close recreational sturgeon retention in Bonneville and The Dalles reservoirs. Catch rates in Bonneville Pool and The Dalles Pool have been higher than preseason expectations. For Bonneville Pool, the projected total catch through January 3, 2024, is 650 fish as compared to the harvest guideline of 675 fish. For The Dalles Pool, the projected total catch through January 3, 2024, is 181 fish as compared to the harvest guideline of 190 fish. Therefore, not enough fish remain under the guidelines to allow for additional retention opportunities in these areas. This rule is necessary to remain within allowable harvest guidelines for nontreaty recreational fisheries for each of these pools. These populations are managed under sustainable harvest guidelines. This action is consistent with decisions made by the states of Washington and Oregon during the Columbia River compact hearing on October 31, 2023, and January 3, 2024. There is insufficient time to adopt permanent rules.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 1, Amended 0, Repealed 1.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: January 3, 2024.

Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-312-06000C Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Columbia River. Effective January 4, through April 30, 2024, the provisions of WAC 220-312-060, WAC 220-312-030, and WAC 220-316-010 regarding white sturgeon retention seasons from Bonneville Dam to John Day Dam are as follows. All other provisions of WAC 220-312-060, WAC 220-316-010, and WAC 220-312-030 not addressed herein remain in effect unless otherwise amended by emergency rule:

From Bonneville Dam upstream to John Day Dam, including adjacent tributaries:

White sturgeon: Closed to retention. Catch and release fishing only.

REPEALER

The following section of Washington Administrative code is repealed, effective January 4, 2024:

WAC 220-312-06000A Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Columbia River. (23-247)