

WSR 24-21-054
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE

[Order 24-225—Filed October 9, 2024, 2:35 p.m., effective October 16, 2024]

Effective Date of Rule: October 16, 2024.

Purpose: This emergency rule will open coho and hatchery steelhead seasons in portions of the upper Columbia River and Methow River.
Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 220-312-060 and 220-312-050.

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 emergency rule is necessary to open hatchery steelhead and coho seasons in portions of the upper Columbia River and Methow River.

Hatchery steelhead returning to these areas of the Upper Columbia River and Methow River are in excess of spawning escapement and broodstock needs. This conservation fishery will help remove excess hatchery steelhead while increasing the proportion of wild steelhead on the spawning grounds. Returns of coho to the Upper Columbia River [and] Methow River are sufficient to allow recreational angler harvest in-kind with steelhead retention.

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Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 2, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.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: October 9, 2024.

Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-312-06000Y Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Columbia River. Effective October 16, 2024, until further notice, the provisions of WAC 220-312-060 regarding recreational salmon and steelhead seasons from the Beebe Bridge (Highway 97) to the Highway 173 Bridge at Brewster, shall be modified as described below, except in

areas closed to fishing for salmon and steelhead year-round in WAC 220-312-060. All other provisions of WAC 220-312-060 not addressed herein remain in effect unless otherwise amended by emergency rule:

Beebe Bridge (Highway 97) to Highway 173 Bridge at Brewster:

Salmon and steelhead:

- (a) Daily limit 2 salmon or 2 hatchery steelhead or 1 of each. Release all salmon other than coho. Release wild steelhead.
- (b) Mandatory retention of hatchery steelhead.
- (c) Selective gear rules, except use of bait is allowed.
- (d) Night Closure.

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-312-05000A Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Eastside.

Effective October 16, 2024, until further notice, the provisions of WAC 220-312-050 regarding recreational salmon and steelhead seasons for Methow River from the mouth to County Road 1535 (Burma Road) Bridge, shall be modified as described below. All other provisions of WAC 220-312-050 not addressed herein remain in effect unless otherwise amended by emergency rule:

Methow River from mouth to County Road 1535 (Burma Road) Bridge:

Salmon and steelhead:

- (a) Daily limit 2 salmon or 2 hatchery steelhead or 1 of each. Release all salmon other than coho. Release wild steelhead.
- (b) Mandatory retention of hatchery steelhead.
- (c) Selective gear rules.
- (d) Night Closure.
- (e) Fishing from a floating device is prohibited from the second powerline crossing (1 mile upstream from the mouth) to the first Highway 153 Bridge (4 miles upstream from the mouth).