

**WSR 25-02-122
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE**

[Order 24-285—Filed January 2, 2025, 10:12 a.m., effective January 2, 2025, 10:12 a.m.]

Effective Date of Rule: Immediately upon filing.

Purpose: This emergency rule is needed to set recreational fishing closure dates for Grays Harbor and central coast tributaries.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Repealing WAC 220-312-02000Q; and amending WAC 220-312-020.

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 will provide additional protection for wild steelhead stock by closing fisheries during the peak of wild steelhead migration. Although there has been a recent increase in coastal steelhead stocks, returns are still below long-term averages and a precautionary approach to steelhead management is necessary. The rules contained in this filing are expected to result in a reduction of wild steelhead encounters relative to permanent rules in place.

Enacting these rules follows an extensive public engagement process, which included a two-part virtual town hall series during fall 2024. Hundreds of people joined the Washington department of fish and wildlife (department) fishery managers during these virtual meetings, and many provided feedback on the department's coastal steelhead management web page through an online portal.

Tribal comanagers along the coast have also taken similar steps alongside the department to advance recovery of wild steelhead.

The department continues to operate under its statewide steelhead management plan, which requires the department to prioritize the sustainability of wild coastal steelhead runs by focusing on healthy levels of abundance, productivity, diversity, and distribution.

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Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.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 2, 2025.

Amy H. Windrope
for Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION**WAC 220-312-02000S Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—**

Coast. Effective immediately, through April 30, 2025, the following provisions of WAC 220-312-020, regarding open fishing seasons, gear and hook restrictions, and trout retention for central coast and Grays Harbor tributaries shall be modified as described in the areas and during the time periods contained herein. All areas described as Closed Waters in WAC 220-312-020 remain Closed Waters. All other provisions of WAC 220-312-020 not addressed in the areas and during the time periods described herein, or unless otherwise amended by emergency rule, remain in effect:

(1) Chehalis River (Grays Harbor Co.):

(a) From the mouth upstream to the confluence of Skookumchuck River:

(i) Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(A) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(B) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(ii) Effective March 1 through April 15, 2025: Closed waters.

(b) From the confluence of Skookumchuck River upstream, including all forks: Effective immediately through April 15, 2025: Closed Waters.

(2) Clearwater River (Jefferson Co.), from the mouth to Snahapish

River:

(a) Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(i) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(ii) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(b) Effective March 1 through April 15, 2025: Closed waters.

(3) Cloquallum Creek (Grays Harbor/Mason Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(4) Copalis River (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(a) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(b) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(5) Elk Creek (Lewis/Pacific Co.): Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(6) Elk River (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(7) Hoquiam River including West Fork (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(8) Hoquiam River, East Fork (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(9) Humptulips River (Grays Harbor Co.):

(a) From the mouth to Highway 101 Bridge including all channels, sloughs, and interconnected waterways:

(i) Effective immediately, through February 2, 2025:

(A) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(B) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(ii) Effective February 3 through March 31, 2024: Closed waters.

(b) From Highway 101 Bridge to confluence of East and West forks: Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(10) Humptulips River, West Fork (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(11) Johns River (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(12) Moclips River (Grays Harbor Co.), from the mouth to Quinault Indian Reservation boundary: Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(a) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(b) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(13) Newaukum River, including South Fork (Lewis Co.): Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(14) Newaukum River, Middle Fork (Lewis Co.): Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(15) Newaukum River, North Fork (Lewis Co.): Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(16) Quinault River (Grays Harbor/Jefferson Co.), from the mouth at upper end of Quinault Lake upstream to Olympic National Park boundary:

(a) Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025:

(i) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(ii) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(b) Effective April 1 through April 15, 2025: Closed waters.

(17) Salmon River (Jefferson Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(a) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(b) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(18) Satsop River and East Fork (Grays Harbor Co.), from mouth to Bingham Creek Dam:

(a) Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(i) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(ii) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(b) Effective March 1 through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(19) Satsop River, Middle Fork (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(20) Satsop River, West Fork (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(21) Skookumchuck River (Lewis/Thurston Co.): From mouth to 100' below outlet of TransAlta WDFW steelhead rearing pond located at the base of Skookumchuck Dam:

(a) Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(i) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(ii) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(b) Effective March 1 through April 30, 2025: Closed waters.

(22) Stevens Creek (Grays Harbor Co.):

(a) From the mouth to cable crossing downstream of WDFW hatchery outlet:

(i) Effective immediately, through February 2, 2025:

(A) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(B) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(ii) Effective February 3 through March 31, 2024: Closed waters.

(b) From WDFW hatchery outlet to Highway 101 Bridge: Effective immediately, through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(23) Van Winkle Creek (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through January 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(24) Wishkah River (Grays Harbor Co.): Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025: Closed waters.

(25) Wynoochee River (Grays Harbor Co.):

(a) From the mouth to 7400 Line Bridge:

(i) Effective immediately, through February 28, 2025:

(A) All species: Selective Gear Rules in effect, except only 1 single-point barbless hook is allowed.

(B) Trout: Statewide minimum size and daily limit, except cut-throat trout minimum size 14 inches. Release wild rainbow trout.

(ii) Effective March 1 through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

(b) From 7400 Line Bridge upstream, effective immediately through March 31, 2025: Closed waters.

Reviser's note: The typographical errors in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appear in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.

REPEALER

The following section of Washington Administrative Code is repealed, effective immediately:

WAC 220-312-02000Q Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Coast. (24-275)