

California Department of Water Resources NEWS

August 3, 1999

CONTACTS:

- [Pete Weisser](#), Office of Water Education - (916) 653-9712
 - [Chris Erickson](#), DWR Environmental Specialist - (916) 653-1154
 - Mike Giusti, Department of Fish and Game Biologist - (909) 765-5706
-

DWR STARTS FIRST PHASE OF SUPPLEMENTAL FISHERY RESTORATION PLAN AT SILVERWOOD LAKE

The Department of Water Resources has begun implementing a mitigation plan to revitalize the bass fishery at Silverwood Lake in northern San Bernardino County, starting with removal of undesirable fish species from the lake.

A seining boat has begun netting fish from the lake. Less desirable fish--such as carp, goldfish and Sacramento blackfish--will be removed while gamefish, including bass and trout, will be returned unharmed to the lake. Removing less desirable fish is expected to encourage expansion of bass and panfish populations by reducing predation and competition for food.

The seining, which began July 26 and continues during August, marks the opening phase in a multi-step program to revive bass fishing opportunities at this State Water Project lake.

“We are confident that the new fishery restoration effort designed cooperatively by DFG, DWR and regional bass anglers can create a thriving bass fishery in Silverwood Lake,” said DWR Director Thomas M. Hannigan.

Upcoming actions during August, September and October include placing of tree and brush

habitat into the lake to improve the fish environment by providing more cover for juvenile largemouth bass and panfish, plus stocking of thousands of Florida strain largemouth bass.

Stocking will include 2,000 adult Florida strain largemouth bass between 12 and 20 inches in length, and 5,000 juvenile bass.

Brush habitat to be placed in the lake shallows to improve fish cover will include 300 brush piles of approximately 64 cubic feet each. The brush will come from an old lemon grove slated for removal at Chino Hills State Park. Citrus limbs will be used because they last longer than most wood when exposed to water.

The goal is to enhance bass populations and revitalize the lake's bass fishery under a plan cooperatively designed by DWR and regional bass anglers, represented by the Southern California Bass Council and approved by a San Bernardino County Superior Court.

The newly modified fishery restoration program is the most recent development to improve recreational fishing at this lake since an earthquake-resistant intake tower structure was built in recent years. That construction project, which provided more assurance of an uninterrupted water supply for Southern California in event of major earthquakes, necessitated lowering of Silverwood Lake between 1995 and 1997. This action impacted fishing access and reduced fish populations at the lake. The construction project was successfully completed in 1997. The lake has returned to normal operating levels since the summer of 1997.

Fish surveys by DFG showed that the largemouth bass population has not yet recovered to pre-1995 levels.

The supplemental mitigation plan for the fishery stems from an order by Judge John W. Kennedy of the San Bernardino County Superior Court. He ordered that the three groups most concerned with the fishery's recovery DWR and the Southern California Bass Council--meet and design a restoration plan. The groups met and developed the new plan, which Judge Kennedy approved in June.

DWR fish biologists are working with DFG fish biologists to ensure that the plan is effectively implemented and that largemouth bass stocking helps boost bass populations.

DFG will continue to monitor the fish populations and fish recovery efforts at Silverwood Lake. DWR is bound under its 1995 mitigation plan and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission rules to recover the fishery by the year 2002. Recovery will be achieved when the number of largemouth bass reaches pre-project levels.

While many fish removed during the seining will be disposed in landfills, some will go to market.

###

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs. The State Water Project provides water to two-thirds of California's population.

For more on-line information, see [Find DWR Info](#) or return to the [DWR California Water Page](#)