

Introduction

A triennial review of the Anglers Notice (fishing regulations) for the Otago Region has commenced. At their February meeting the Otago Fish and Game Council indicated they intend to make changes to the nine regulations outlined the table below. The Council is looking for feedback on the proposed changes.

All other matters raised by submitters are proposed to remain unchanged although the Council intend to seek further information on a number of them with a view to revisit them in future. Further details on submissions that will not be changed in this review are provided in the appendix of this report.

| Regulation |
|---|
| That the Glenorchy lagoons be open to fishing all year. |
| That the fishing season for Hore's Control Pond be changed to November 1 to April 30 and that boat fishing be prohibited. |
| That the lower Greenstone River be open to fishing all year. |
| That the lower Manuherekia River be open to fishing all year. |
| That the restriction that prevents adult anglers from fishing Mill Creek above Waterfall Park be removed. |
| Simplify the regulations for the Clutha and Taieri rivers by rationalising the number of sections. |
| Clarify current rule regarding multiple hook prohibition in back country fisheries. |
| Simplify the region-wide boat fishing regulations. |

* 1. Your Details

Full Name

Email Address

Licence Number

Glenorchy lagoons open year-round.

The Glenorchy lagoons are a small series of shallow lagoons, lying just north of the Glenorchy Township (Figure 1). The lagoons are not highly utilised, their highest usage estimate on record was 210 angler days in the 2014/15 fishing season (Unwin, 2016). Usage is likely to be limited due to the lagoon's shallow depth, difficulty of access due to riparian trees, isolated nature, and proximity to more widely esteemed fisheries. Satellite maps suggest that there is little spawning habitat available, so a potential lack of fish may have also contributed to low angler usage.

Figure 1: Location of Glenorchy lagoons at the head of Lake Wakatipu

The fishery currently has a season of October 1 to April 30 and a bag limit of one trout. Submitters have requested that the fishery is open to fishing year-round to help move angling away from more pressured waterways nearby.

Future monitoring of the effects of regulation changes will be difficult as the National Angling Survey is the only source of reliable usage for this fishery and is not due for around six years after any changes to the regulations are made. The National Angling Survey also only provides rough estimates for fisheries with very low usage.

Despite issues around monitoring and potentially low numbers of trout available to anglers, any changes to the regulations are unlikely to have a significant effect on the fishery due to low usage and a large proportion of the lake being unfishable due to poor access.

Opening the fishery to year-round angling will provide some opportunity to a small number of anglers and potentially transfer a small amount of pressure from nearby fisheries.

* 2. Council has indicated they want to open the Glenorchy lagoons to angling year round.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

3. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Hore's Control Pond open November 1 to April 30.

Hore's Control Pond is an approximately 6-hectare irrigation pond located in the Maniototo near Patearoa (Figure 2). The pond is located on private land as part of Stonehenge Station. Access to the pond is at the goodwill of the landowners.

Figure 2: Location of Hore's Control Pond.

The regulations for Hore's Control Pond in the Anglers Notice do not align with landowners' understanding or with the signage. Fish & Game signage at the pond currently states that there is no access until November and that there is no boating permitted, however, the Fish & Game regulations state a year-round open season, and that boating is allowed.

The landowners have requested that the regulations reflect the signage and that the fishing season is not opened until November and closed at the end of April, so anglers do not interfere with lambing.

Fishing from boats should be prohibited as it is likely a health and safety issue for the farm and contradicts the signage.

* 4. Council has indicated they want to change the open season for Hore's Control Pond to November 1 to April 30

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

* 5. Council has indicated they want to prohibit boat fishing on Hores Control Pond.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

6. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding these changes?

Lower Greenstone River open year-round.

The Greenstone River is a world-renowned fishery known for its clear water and abundant fish. Due to the river's popularity, angling pressure in the upper reaches is monitored as a Back Country Fishery and regulated as a Controlled Fishery. The upper river is also recognised as an important spawning stream for Lake Wakatipu, particularly for rainbow trout. The upper Greenstone fishery relies on a proportion of the spawning run remaining in the river throughout summer, as the fishery generally only restocks during the winter/spring, conserving these upper river fish maintains the fishing for the rest of the season.

The lower Greenstone River (downstream of the Greenstone Station Road car park swing bridge) is approximately two km long and runs into the northwest shore of Lake Wakatipu. The lower Greenstone River is currently open from November through to the end of May and has a bag limit of one trout. Bait fishing is not allowed.

Submitters have requested that the lower river is opened year-round to allow for a "Tongariro style" winter fishery for spawning run fish. Staff believe that very few fish spawn in the lower reaches of the river and that they move quickly through the section on their way to spawn in the upper river. Potential usage of this proposed season is likely to be low due to the remoteness of the area.

As the section is only two km long and the fish are migrating through the area quickly, they are only likely to be vulnerable to angling pressure for a short time period.

Trout mortality due to catch and release is likely to be low due to low water temperatures in winter and the elevated average catch & release skill level of anglers likely to fish a remote spot in winter. Study of steelhead (sea-run rainbow trout) suggests that trout that survive catch & release have no statistically significant change to reproductive success compared with trout that weren't caught (Pettit, 1977).

Opening the lower river in winter would provide for fly fishing in flowing water at a time of year when very little of that style of fishing is available.

The key issue for the Upper Greenstone fishery is the fishing pressure due to high numbers of anglers. A large number of anglers practising catch & release can reduce the catchability of trout in a waterway (Young & Hayes, 2004). Catch and release in the lower section is likely to peak in September, coinciding with the main run of spawning rainbows. Most fish will still have a month to spawn undisturbed before the November opening of the main river. This should prevent catch & release in the winter season significantly affecting catchability in the upper river during the main season.

Although opening the lower river is unlikely to significantly affect further up the river, the sustainability of the upper river fishery should take precedence over the potential increase in opportunity. However, because the Greenstone is a relatively well understood fishery in terms of participation and experience, staff have a good foundation for further monitoring programmes. If it is suspected that the upper river fishery has declined due to this change, it should be investigated further to try and confirm, or the change could be reversed.

* 7. Council has indicated they want to open the Greenstone River downstream of the Greenstone Station Road car park swing bridge to fishing year-round.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

8. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Lower Manuherekia River open all year.

The entire Manuherekia and its tributaries are currently open to all angling methods from October 1 to April 30. The bag limit is one trout. The fishery contains both resident trout and migrants from the Clutha River and Lake Roxburgh.

Submitters have requested that the lower Manuherekia is open to fishing year-round. The section that submitters have suggested is from the Clutha confluence to Shaky Bridge; around 400 – 1,000 metres depending on the height of the Clutha. This change in regulations will allow anglers to target Clutha River resident trout on their run to spawn in the upper Manuherekia and its tributaries. Staff and submitters believe there is little to no spawning activity in this reach.

The lower river winter fishery is not expected to be highly utilised but could provide some opportunity for anglers to fish relatively small flowing water over the winter months.

The Manuherekia faces issues of warm water temperatures, senescent algae and fish passage issues over the summer months. A small number of fish being caught, most of which will be released, is unlikely to affect the sustainability of the fishery.

There would be a slight increase in complexity of the regulations as the river would need to be split into two rows. There would also be the need to update signage in the area. Due to the fact that Shaky Bridge is not on a named road there is also an increased risk of people fishing out of season due to not knowing the exact location of the delineation.

* 9. Council has indicated they want to open Manuherekia below Shaky Bridge to fishing year-round.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

10. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Mill Creek above Waterfall Park open to all anglers

Mill Creek is an important spawning tributary to Lake Hayes near Arrowtown. The creek is divided into three sections (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Mill Creek sections.

Section 1 is open year-round. Section 2 is closed to all angling as it contains the majority of spawning activity for Lake Hayes and Section 3 is open from October to the end of April but only to anglers with junior or child's licences.

At the base of Section 3 is a large waterfall that prevents upstream migration, meaning the section contains lower trout numbers than the bottom two sections. There is no marginal strip and very few legal roads on the upper section of the stream, which means that angling is only available to landowners or people that have been granted access. It is currently not clear if the landowners provide access to the general public.

Submitters and staff feel that the upper section is underutilised by junior anglers and that opening it to all anglers would provide a small increase in opportunity.

* 11. Council has indicated they want to open Mill Creek above Waterfall Park to all anglers.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

12. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Reduce sections of Clutha River

Currently the Clutha River has a total of six sections (Table 2) which leads to confusion for anglers, especially those that are not local to the area. As the largest river in the country, the Clutha River can comfortably handle the significant angling pressure placed on it due to a large proportion of it being difficult to access or difficult to fish. Staff believe that an easing of restrictions on methods and boat use would have no effect on the sustainability of the fishery.

Table 2: Current Clutha River sections.

Staff have proposed a change to three sections (Table 3) that aims to recognize; the sea run salmon fishery below the Roxburgh Dam and the Deans Bank section.

Table 3: Proposed Clutha River sections.

* 13. Council has indicated they want to change the Clutha sections to the ones outlined above.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

14. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Reduce sections of Taieri River

The Taieri is currently broken down in to four sections (Table 4). The sections have relatively similar regulations with the most significant variance the winter closure of the river above Silverstream.

Table 4: Current Taieri River sections

Staff have proposed a set of two regulations for the river. The key change is that the river would be open to winter fishing in the section between Silverstream and Outram. This was chosen as anglers have a harder time knowing where the Silverstream confluence is, particularly while out on the river. It is recognised that there is some spawning activity in this section, but it is not significant.

Table 5: Proposed Taieri River sections.

* 15. Council has indicated they want to change the Taieri sections to the ones outlined above.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

16. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Review rule regarding multiple hooks in Back Country fisheries

Discussions with submitters, rangers and Fish & Game staff has revealed confusion on the meaning of Otago note 13.2 – 'The use of any legal lure with multiple hooks in a backcountry fishery is prohibited'.

The intent of the rule is to prevent the use of treble hooks and lures with more than one hook in waterways where catch and release is commonly practiced.

The Back Country fisheries that allow spin fishing and are most likely to be affected by this rule clarification are: the Dingle burn and the Hunter, Pomahaka, Wilkin and Young rivers.

Council has suggested some wording to clarify the intent of this rule: The use of any legal lure with more than one hook with one point in a Backcountry Fishery is prohibited.

* 17. Council has indicated they want to change note 13.2 of the Otago regulations to "The use of any legal lure with more than one hook with one point in a Backcountry Fishery is prohibited."

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

18. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Clarify boat rules

Currently there are eight regulations that Otago boat anglers need to familiarise themselves with. Compounding this there are also five additional subsets where two of the eight regulations are applied to one waterway.

Staff have proposed a set of three regulations below in Table 6. These regulations cover the region well and make only minor changes to the current regulations. The key affect of this regulation change is that it allows boat fishing in the tidal reaches of all coastal waters.

Table 6: Proposed Otago region boating regulations

The waterways under each new regulation are listed below.

Waterways falling under note 2 (Licence holders may fish from any boat, canoe, pontoon or flotation device.)

Blakelys Dam, Butchers Dam, Coal Pit Dam, Conroys Dam, Diamond Lake, Falls Dam, Fraser Dam, Glenorchy Lagoons, Hamiltons Dam, Hoffmans Dam, Ida Burn Dam, Knights Dam, Lake Dunstan, Lake Hawea, Lake Mahinerangi, Lake Onslow, Lake Roxburgh - from the Highway Bridge at Alexandra downstream to the Roxburgh Dam, Lake Sylvan, Lake Tuakitoto - including outlet channel and inlet channel, Lake Waihola - including outlet and waterways connected with Lake Waipori, Lake Waipori, Lake Wakatipu, Lake Wanaka, Logan Burn Dam, Manorburn Dam Lower, Manorburn Dam Upper, Mathias Dam, McAtamney's Head Pond, Molyneux Pond, Nenthorn Pond, Perkins Pond, Pinders Pond, Poolburn Dam, Rutherfords Dam, Styx Weir Pond, Tomahawk Lagoon, Victoria Dam, Von Lake, and Waipori River - downstream of the Contour Channel to the Taieri River confluence.

Waterways falling under note 3 (Licence holders may fish from any boat, canoe, pontoon or flotation device provided it is not being propelled by a motor.)

Kawarau River - from its source at Lake Wakatipu to Lake Dunstan, Lake Dispute, Lake Hayes, Lake Johnson, Matukituki River - Between Glenfinnan Stream confluence and Motatapu confluence, Matukituki River - downstream of Motatapu confluence, Moke Lake, and Reid Lake

Waterways falling under note 4 (No licence holder may fish from any boat, canoe, pontoon or flotation device except in the tidal reaches of this waterway if applicable.)

All lakes, rivers and streams within the Clutha River catchment lying upstream of Clyde Dam not mentioned elsewhere, All lakes, rivers and streams within the Clutha River catchment lying downstream of Clyde Dam and any other catchments flowing to the sea not mentioned elsewhere, Akatore Estuary, Albert Burn, Arrow River, Caples River - Backcountry Fishery and tributaries, Cardrona River, Careys Creek - Upstream from rail line Bridge, Careys Creek - downstream of the rail line Bridge, Catlins Estuary - downstream of State Highway 92 Bridge, Catlins River, Contour Channel, Dart River, Dart River Tributaries - not mentioned in clause 3 for this region, Deep Stream, Diamond Creek, Dingle Burn - Backcountry Fishery upstream of the bridge on the Dingle Burn Station access road, Dingle Burn - downstream of the bridge on the Dingle Burn Station access road, Fraser River - downstream of dam, Fraser River Upper - upstream of Dam, Greenstone River - and tributaries upstream of Sly Burn, Greenstone River - Controlled Area and tributaries upstream of Sly Burn, Greenstone River - Backcountry Fishery and tributaries, including the Caples river, between the Sly Burn confluence and the swing bridge at the car park end of Greenstone Station Road, Greenstone River - downstream of the Greenstone Station Road car park swing bridge, Hawea River, Hore's Control Pond, Hunter River - Backcountry Fishery and tributaries, Kaihiku Stream, Kaikorai Estuary - downstream of Abbots Creek confluence, Kaikorai Stream, Kuriwao Stream, Kye Burn, Lake Kirkpatrick, Lake Tewa, Lee Stream, Lindis River, Lochy River - and tributaries downstream of Disputed Creek confluence, Lochy River - and tributaries upstream of Disputed Creek confluence, Maclennan River, Makarora River - and tributaries, Makarora River - downstream of Wilkin River confluence, Manuherikia River - Above Shaky Bridge, Matukituki River - and tributaries above Glenfinnan Stream, Meggat Burn, Mill Creek (a tributary to Lake Hayes) - above Waterfall Park, Mill Creek (a tributary to Lake Hayes) - downstream of Speargrass Flat Road Bridge, Motatapu River - and tributaries, Nenthorn Stream, Nevis River - and tributaries, Owaka River, Owaka River - downstream of State Highway 92, Pleasant River, Pomahaka River - upstream of Park Hill Bridge at Switzers Road, Pomahaka River - Downstream of Park Hill Bridge on Switzers Road to Swans Bridge on Clydevale Road, Pomahaka River - downstream of Swans Bridge (Clydevale Road), Puerua Estuary - downstream of State Highway 92 Bridge, Puerua Stream, Rees River - and tributaries, Rees River - downstream of Muddy Creek, Route Burn - and tributaries, Shag River - Waihemo - upstream of State Highway 1 Bridge, Shag River - Waihemo - downstream of State Highway 1 Bridge, Shotover River, Silver Stream, Southern Reservoir, Sullivans Dam, Sutton Stream, Tahakopa River - upstream of Maclennan River confluence, Tahakopa River - downstream of Maclennan River confluence, Teviot River, Three O'Clock Stream, Timaru River - and tributaries, Timaru River - downstream of Timaru Road Bridge, Tokomairiro River - above Coal Gully Road Bridge, Tokomairiro River - downstream of Coal Gully Road Bridge, Tuapeka River, Von River - and tributaries, Waikouaiti River - upstream of State Highway 1 road bridge, Waikouaiti River - downstream of State Highway 1 road bridge, Waipahi River, Waipori River - upstream of the Contour Channel, Waitahuna River, Waitati River - upstream of Orokonui Stream confluence, Waitati River - downstream of Orokonui Stream confluence, Waiwera River, Waters of Leith - downstream of Lindsay Creek confluence to the Leith Street Foot Bridge, Waters of Leith - downstream of Leith Street Foot Bridge, Wilkin River and tributari

* 19. Council has indicated they want to change the boat regulations to the ones outlined above.

- I agree with this change
- I neither agree nor disagree with this change
- I disagree with this change

20. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns regarding this change?

Addendix

Council have decided that the following topics will remain unchanged although the Council intend to seek further information on a number of them with a view to revisit them in future:

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| Regulation | Reasoning |
|--|--|
| Allow drift boating on the Hawea River, the Makarora River and the Dean's Bank section of the Clutha River | Council is seeking further consultation with anglers and angler groups over the next year on this potential change. |
| Closure of Quartz Creek and Twelve Mile Creek | Council felt this deserved further investigation by staff to determine the significance of spawning in all the small tributaries of the Southern Lakes. |
| A combined sports fish bag limit for southern lakes | Council requested that staff investigate alternative solutions to anglers misidentifying their catch. |
| Introduce beat system on upper Pomahaka. | Council recognised the difficulty in running a beat system on a fishery with very few public accesses. |
| Region wide bag limit. | Otago currently has highly variable bag limits throughout the region. It is believed there is not enough desire from anglers for simplification to justify such a major shift. |
| Introduce minimum size for trout. | Research shows that in general anglers tend not keep smaller fish. Having no minimum size allows harvest from beginner anglers and in fisheries with large numbers of small fish. |
| Separate bag limits for rainbow/ brown trout. | This regulation would be likely to cause more issues with angler identification of fish. |
| Upper Rees River to fly only and zero bag. | It's thought that this fishery is not currently subject to unsustainable harvest levels. |
| Align open season for Poolburn, Manorburn and Idaburn dams. | Council decided that the current seasons provide a spectrum of opportunities that takes in to account the different species present and access limitations. |
| Daily limit on catch & release. | Council recognised the difficulty in enforcing this regulation and felt it was best dealt with through angler education on best practice catch and release. |
| Rules regarding guides | |
| Rules regarding non-resident access to fisheries | Council decided this was best dealt with nationally through the development of a guides licence and the currently pressure sensitive fisheries management review that is currently underway. |

References

Pettit, S. W. (1977). Comparative Reproductive Success of Caught-and-Released and Unplayed Hatchery Female Steelhead Trout (*Salmo gairdneri*) from the Clearwater River, Idaho. *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society*, VOL. 6, NO. 5, 431-435.

Unwin, M. J. (2016). Angler usage of New Zealand lake and river fisheries; Results from the 2014/15 National Angling Survey. Christchurch: National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research Ltd.

Young, R. G., & Hayes, J. W. (2004). Angling Pressure and Trout Catchability: Behavioral Observations of Brown Trout in Two New Zealand Backcountry Rivers. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, 24:4, 1203-1213. doi:10.1577/M03-177.1

21. Do you have any further comments regarding the Anglers Notice review?