

# Currents

## News briefs on sportfishing issues and trends affecting the marketplace

### Gulf of Mexico Alliance Meeting

In August the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, a partnership among Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas formed in 2004, met to discuss the health of the Gulf of Mexico. The alliance's goal is to increase regional collaboration to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. The meeting focused on the recently completed Governors' Action Plan II and discussed ways in which the states and their partners can implement and integrate the plan's action items. For more information about the meeting, go to the [Gulf of Mexico Alliance's Web site](#).

### Southern California Steelhead Recovery Plan

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) released a draft plan that addresses Southern California steelhead recovery. The plan refers to steelhead populations that spawn in watersheds from the Santa Maria River, just north of Point Conception, south to the Tijuana River at the U.S.-Mexico border. Southern California steelhead populations have declined from 55,000 spawning adults to less than 500 due to a variety of human-induced threats. NMFS is seeking public review and comment on the draft plan, which is available [online](#). Comments may be sent to [SteelheadPlan.swr@noaa.gov](mailto:SteelheadPlan.swr@noaa.gov) by 5:00 p.m. EST Sept. 21.

### Oregon Passes Bill to Help Fund Removal of Four Klamath Dams

In July, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski signed a bill that created a funding mechanism to remove four dams on the Klamath River. The bill authorized a surcharge on PacifiCorp's Oregon customers, the utility that owns the four Klamath Dams, to raise \$180 million toward a pool of \$450 million needed to remove the dams. If a federal feasibility study shows the dams can be removed safely, the work would begin in 2020. The Klamath River extends from its upper reaches at Upper Klamath Lake in Oregon to the Pacific Ocean in California. The four most-seaward Klamath River dams have reduced salmon populations to a fraction of their historic levels. The Klamath River was once the third most-productive Pacific salmon river in the United States.

### Florida Saltwater Shoreline Fishing License

Florida has initiated a [shoreline fishing license requirement](#). Effective Aug. 1, resident anglers who fish for saltwater species from shore or a structure affixed to shore must have a \$9 shoreline fishing license or a \$17 regular saltwater fishing license. Nonresident anglers must obtain a standard nonresident saltwater fishing license to fish from shore or from a vessel. Short-term and annual nonresident fishing licenses cost between \$17 and \$47. By creating the shoreline fishing license, the Florida legislature arranged for Florida anglers to be



exempt from a federal angler-registration requirement that will take effect in 2011. The license also will help increase funding for Florida fisheries conservation and provide valuable recreational saltwater angler data.

### Washington Fishing License Fee Changes

The state of Washington's legislature recently approved [several changes](#) in the state's recreational fishing license fees. These changes include:

- 10 percent surcharge on sales of recreational licenses, permits, tags, stamps and raffle tickets
- New license option, allowing anglers to use two fishing poles in designated waters for an additional \$20
- \$7.50 annual fee for anglers who fish the Columbia River and its tributaries for salmon and steelhead

These changes were implemented to help offset a \$30 million cutback in state funding for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. ■