



DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>
Sacramento Valley-Central Sierra Region
1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
(916) 358-2900



March 15, 2002

Mr. Gary Flanagan
8459 Lakeland Drive
Granite Bay, CA 95746

Dear Mr. Flanagan:

I appreciate your frustration over "catch and release" or "zero limit" fishing for salmon on the Feather River. The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) attempts to protect the important spring-run Chinook salmon resource with regulations that sometimes appear ambiguous. The original intent of our regulation was to protect spring-run salmon that congregate in that section of the Feather River between the Highway 70 Bridge and the green bicycle bridge at the Feather River Hatchery in Oroville. The fish are unusually vulnerable there as they are frequently massed in dense, highly visible and unfeeding schools. In the past, spring run salmon have been in great jeopardy.

The issue at question is "Does the Code of California Regulations (CCR) Title 14, Section 7.50 (a) (5) (68) (B) specifically prohibit salmon fishing in this area from January 1 through August 30? The answer is "No." The regulations specify a zero fish bag limit on salmon, which means targeting salmon for catch and release fishing is legal. Having this in mind, our wardens, during the months when this portion of the River is open, will treat the area as a catch and release salmon fishery. Please note that all other laws and regulations in this area will be enforced and that salmon taken there must be immediately unhooked and released unharmed.

I apologize for any misunderstanding, and I hope this letter has clarified the situation. If you have any questions, please call Captain Ken Nilsson at 916 358-44356 or email knilsson@dfg.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Grima
Regional Patrol Chief