



June 10, 2021

RE: Draft EA for Arizona's Sport Fish Stocking Program - Support

Dear Mr. Weedman,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment for Arizona's Sport Fish Stocking Program. The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) respectfully urges that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) support the "Proposed Action; issuance of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) funding to Arizona Game and Fish Department."

Since 1989, CSF has maintained a singleness of purpose that has guided the organization to become the most respected and trusted sportsmen's organization in the political arena. CSF's mission is to work with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting and trapping. The unique and collective force of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus, and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses, including the Arizona Legislators for Wildlife Caucus, working closely with CSF, and with the support of major hunting, recreational fishing and shooting, and trapping organizations, serves as an unprecedented network of pro-sportsmen elected officials that advance the interests of America's hunters and anglers.

Funding from the WSFR Program is critical to the Arizona Game and Fish Departments (AZGFD) mission and continued operation of Sport Fish Stocking Program. Support for the "Proposed Action" would allow AZGFD to continue its stocking program for the next 10 years and includes conservation measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts on federally listed species, sensitive native aquatic species, and semi-aquatic species.

Recreational fishing is a key economic driver and time-honored pastime for many Arizonans. According to the 2013 Economic Impact of Fishing in Arizona by Responsive Management (the last year such a survey was completed), recreational fishing created a statewide economic impact of more than \$1.47 billion with 6,009,716 angler use days. In fiscal year 2020, AZGFD sold 273,902 fishing licenses, generating revenue of nearly \$14 million which is critical for state-based conservation efforts. Without the monetary support of the WSFR Program, Arizona's angling community, economy, and state-based conservation efforts will suffer.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EA for Arizona's Sport Fish Stocking Program. The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation respectfully requests that the USFWS support the "Proposed Action; issuance of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program funding to Arizona Game and Fish Department."

Sincerely,

Ellary TuckerWilliams
Rocky Mountain States Senior Coordinator

The Sportsmen's Voice in the Nation's Capitols