



PRESS RELEASE

California Anglers Oppose State Raid on Fishing License Funds

Proposed Bait and Switch Illegal

November 24, 2014 (Sacramento): Today, one of California's leading recreational fishing organizations announced its opposition to the State of California raiding the Fish and Game Preservation Fund as a potential source of funding for nongame protection programs.

"California anglers pay costly licenses fees in order to fund recreational fishing programs," said Marko Mlikotin, Executive Director of the California Sportfishing League. "Raiding this special fund for an alternative use is simply a bait and switch scheme that threatens hunting and fishing programs. It is not honest for the state to ask anglers to pay for one thing, only to use it for another."

In July of this year, the State's Ocean Protection Council introduced the [Marine Protected Area Management Plan](#) (the "Plan"), a plan that proposes diverting funds from hunting and fishing programs for Marine Protection Act management.

In a letter to the California Department of Resources, CSL stated that diverting monies from the [Fish and Game Preservation Fund](#) is prohibited by statute, as the monies are designated to fund department activities like trout hatcheries, fishery management plans and enforcement.

Fish and Game Code § 711(a)(1):

"711. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature to ensure adequate funding from appropriate sources for the department. To this end, the Legislature finds and declares that:

(1) The costs of nongame fish and wildlife programs shall be provided annually in the Budget Act by appropriating money from the General Fund, through nongame user fees, and sources other than the Fish and Game Preservation Fund to the department for these purposes."

The administrative record of the implementation of the [Marine Life Protection Act](#) (MLPA) clearly shows that the primary purpose for Marine Protected Areas is nongame and not about fishery management.

Furthermore, the Department of Fish and Wildlife's reference [manual](#) states:

"The costs of nongame fish and wildlife programs ... shall be provided annually in the Budget Act by appropriating money from the General Fund and sources other than the [Fish and Game Preservation Fund] to the Department for these purposes."

“During the implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act, MPAs were touted as ecosystem protection,” said Mlikotin. “It is inappropriate to argue that MPA management is anything but a nongame program and, therefore, Fish and Game Preservation Fund monies are not available for MPA management. The OPC’s Partnership Plan must be amended accordingly.”

The California Sportfishing League (CSL) is a nonprofit coalition of fresh and saltwater anglers, and small business owners devoted to protecting access to recreational fishing. Recreational fishing contributes over \$4.9 billion annually to California’s economy, a major of outdoor tourism and jobs.

To learn more visit www.SportfishingConservation.org or @CASportfishing

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