



PRESS RELEASE

2018 Fishing License Sales Analysis: Modest Increase in Sales Long-term slide continues, underscoring need for reforms

February 8, 2019 (Sacramento, CA) – Today, California’s leading advocate for California anglers, released the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) end of year 2018 fishing license sales data report.

Since January of 2017, annual resident license sales revenue increased 3.25% and sales increased .37%. The slight uptick from 2017 was not sufficient enough to reverse a long-term trend. Annual resident fishing sales have declined 55% since 1980, while the population has increased over 60%. In 1980, 2.2 million annual sport fishing licenses were sold compared to only 1 million today.

“Developing real solutions to declining fishing participation rates is long overdue,” said Marko Mlikotin, executive director of the California Sportfishing League. “Growing fishing participation is critical to a state that depends on recreational fishing for outdoor tourism and jobs. We were pleased that former Governor Jerry Brown recognized the need to address declining fishing participation rates and we are hopeful that newly elected Governor Gavin Newsom will too.”

During Governor Jerry Brown’s eight years in office (2011-18) annual resident fishing license sales marginally increased 1.58% while revenue increased 12.94%. The increase in revenue can be attributed in large part to the State increasing the price of licenses five times in eight years. During Brown’s term in office, annual fishing license prices increased 11.18% percent.

Today, California’s fishing license program remains among the costliest in the country, second only to the State of Washington. With permits, California is the costliest state in the country and [according to an outdoor economist](#), California’s fishing license structure is financially unsustainable.

“Increasing the price of fishing as sales decline is not a long-term solution to California’s declining fishing participation rate. In fact, increasing costs have sales in a death spiral as the state’s population has increased significantly,” said Mlikotin. “This trend will continue during Governor Gavin Newsom’s term in office unless the state restructures its licensing program and adopts new policies that remove barriers to recreational fishing.”

As part of a national movement, the CSL is working closely with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and other stakeholders to increase fishing participation rates by developing an [R3 Action Plan](#) focused on the Recruitment,

Retention and Reactivation of California hunters and anglers, referred to nationally as an R3 Plan.

The California Sportfishing League (CSL) is a nonprofit coalition of recreational anglers, and small business owners devoted to protecting access to recreational fishing. California's 2.6 million recreational anglers contribute over \$4.6 billion annually to California's economy, a major contributor to outdoor tourism and jobs.

Over the years, CSL has sponsored legislation that aims to increase fishing license sales and participation rates.

To learn more, visit www.savefishing.com or Twitter [@CASportfishing](https://twitter.com/CASportfishing)

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