

# DAILY NEWS NEWS

## Tehama County to send letter opposing lead ban in fishing

By [Julie Zeeb](#), *Daily News*

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Red Bluff >> The Tehama County Board of Supervisors Tuesday approved sending a letter of opposition to the California State Assembly regarding Assembly Bill 2787, which proposes prohibiting all lead fishing weights and sinkers.

The vote came following a presentation by members of the Tehama County Fish and Game Commission.

Phil Warner, chairman of the commission, spoke, along with Paul Reynolds, who owns Red Bluff Sporting Goods and Reynolds Ranch and Farm Supply, and Greg Gutierrez, owner of Frenzy Baits.

“Fish and Game opposes ending the use of lead weights and sinkers and has always stressed making decisions based on science, not emotion, which this basically is,” Warner said.

The banning of lead is one that would be disastrous for local fisherman as well as businesses in the industry, Reynolds said.

“My store alone has \$150,000 in inventory, which is certainly in jeopardy if this passes,” Reynolds said.

His store has already weathered a bad salmon season that resulted in a 20 percent loss in recent years even before the damage this bill could do, Reynolds said. Bait and tackle account for about 59 percent of his sales and there are no viable, economical alternatives to lead.

Three alternatives have been mentioned but are too expensive, Reynold said, including tungsten, which he said is eight times more expensive than lead.

Gutierrez originally designed lures for others, but has since opened his own company, has been paid to speak about tackle and represented the United States in fishing tournaments, he said. He spoke to the economic impact of the fishing industry, noting that California has the longest coastline, has three of the top 12 lakes in the country and about 3,000 lakes and reservoirs.

There are about 2.6 million anglers and about 1.6 million come to visit California to do so, Gutierrez said. The law as proposed would affect all but a very small amount of tackle available.

Several other members of the audience weighed in. Ken Reiders of Red Bluff said he is for the bill, as reducing the amount of lead in water would reduce the risk for cancer. Martha Klaykamp was for the bill as it would reduce heavy metals polluting waterways when left behind.

Donna Will said she favors the bill, as she is concerned about the lead causing issues with the fish and the ability to eat them.

Supervisor Burt Bundy said the only reason he knew of for fish caught in Tehama County not being edible had to do with mercury levels — mercury being a naturally occurring element.

Jesse Sisneros, president of the Red Bluff Bass Anglers, said there was no evidence in the United States showing that either fish or birds had died in connection to lead. The study used for the bill came from England.

“There’s no evidence,” Sisneros said. “The true factor is now that lead bullets are gone, they’re going after fishing.”

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