

No5. Fishing Competitions

Amended 21st August 2004

Background

There is a tendency for fishing competitions to be focused towards promoting commercial or other club interests, and more often than not, the effect is to bring out the worst in human behaviour in regard to fishing. In both respects, it is the fishery plus local anglers, their clubs and landholders that suffer the consequences.

It is acknowledged that fishing competitions may be a means of introducing people to and aiding the development of this great recreational pursuit. It may even be an encouragement for anglers to fish a given waterway and thereby bring tourism to an area. Even so, the NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers is concerned to ensure that the fishery is safeguarded from exploitation, harmful effects to our clubs, the quality of the fishery and the surrounding environment, non-compliance with DPI-Fisheries regulations, and that local landholder rights and privacy are not abused in any way.

Therefore, it is essential that participants be made aware of the appropriate angling ethics, code of conduct and rules associated with the competition. In addition, surveillance to ensure that these essential issues are complied with by one and all is a necessary feature of the competition. The organisers should engage qualified personnel as rangers, the cost of which should be included in the fishing competition registration fee.

To aid the element of control and avoid any intrusion on adjoining landholders to the competition waters, it is recommended that the competition organisers register with the DPI-Fisheries (Manager, Recreational Fisheries, PO Box 21, Cronulla, NSW 2230: or phone 9527 8411) the relevant Club/Society holding the competition, and all the affected landholders. The waterways to be fished and time span involved should be clearly confined to provide adequate patrolling, and allow non-participants freedom to pursue their normal fishing activities.

It is also recommended that clubs registering for a fishing competition which hitherto have channelled surpluses arising from a fishing competitions to non-fishing activities apply all participant fees surplus to the event to restoring the fishery.

Where a stocked impoundment is within the area where a competition is proposed, NSWCFCA recommends that the competition be conducted on the impoundment in preference to rivers. Impoundments provide a more controllable situation for the proper administration of the competition.

No listed threatened or endangered fish species will be permitted to be fished for and should not be included in the individual's scoring for the competition. In all circumstances, with the exception of pest fish such as European Carp which should at all times be killed, catch-and-release fishing is recommended in the method as set down by DPI-Fisheries. NSWCFCA also recommends that a record of the species, size and number of fish caught in the competition be forwarded to DPI-Fisheries.

Policy

The NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers' policy is that all fishing competitions in NSW public waterways should

- Comply in every respect to DPI-Fisheries regulations.
- Promote fishing as a recreational pursuit, involving the highest ideals in fishing ethics.
- Operate as a catch-and-release competition with guidelines for the safe handling and live release of fish (other than pest fish which should be permanently removed from the waterway).
- Involve still water impoundments in preference to rivers.
- Have an organising committee to take responsibility for

- registering the activity with DIP-Fisheries;
- setting an appropriate fee to cover all the associated costs;
- distributing to all competitors written instructions and a map of the competition area;
- informing all participants of the current fishing regulations; - compiling and - - returning to DPI-Fisheries a record of the number, species, size in individual length of fish caught during the competition; and,

<http://www.freshwateranglers.com.au/No5.Competitions.htm>

- planning to safeguard and maintain the fishery, associated environments, and every aspect of landholder interests.

- **Require registration by DPI-Fisheries and that guidelines, such as the above, should be included for distribution by DPI-Fisheries. And that**
- **Organisers apply all registration fee surplus monies to restoring the fishery.**

Copies of NSWCFCA policy on fishing competitions are available upon request from the Secretary, NSWCFCA, GPO Box 84, Sydney NSW 2001.