Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery Fishing Plan

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery
345 Clay Young Road
Burnet Texas, 78611

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Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery Fishing Plan

I. Introduction

National Fish Hatcheries are guided by the mission and goals of the Fish and Aquatic Conservation program (FAC), the purposes of an individual hatchery, Service policy, and laws. Relevant guidance includes the Strategic Plan for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program: FY2016-2020 and selected portions of the Code of Federal Regulations and Fish and Wildlife Service Manual.

In 1938, the Public Work Administration, established for the purpose of constructing dams along the Colorado River, proposed the construction of a federal fish hatchery to provide fish for the newly created lakes. Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson arranged an agreement between the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and the National Youth Administration (NYA) to construct the hatchery in 1938, with production facilities to be completed by 1940. The original purpose of the hatchery was to meet the demands for warm water sport fish in the newly created highland lakes. This purpose changed as the hatchery moved on to the farm pond program. The current mission of the hatchery is to provide fish for Native American tribal treaty obligations on behalf of the U.S. Government as well as conduct an aquatic species conservation program that assists in the restoration and recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species.

The mission and work of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS):

“... improves recreational and public use of aquatic resources, recovery of federally listed threatened or endangered species, restoration of imperiled species...and fulfillment of tribal partnerships and trust responsibilities.”

National Fish Hatchery System propagation addresses top priorities such as:

- Enhancement of recreational fishing
- Enhancement of public use of aquatic resources
- Recovery of federal protected species
- Restoration of imperiled species
- Fulfillment of tribal partnerships and trust responsibilities

Therefore, it is a priority of the Service to provide for wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities, including hunting and fishing, when those opportunities are compatible with the purposes for which the hatchery was established and the mission of the National Fish Hatchery System.

II. Statement of Objectives

The objectives of a fishing program at Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery (NFH) are to provide:
● The public with an opportunity to experience wildlife on hatchery lands and increase opportunities for anglers.
● Wildlife-dependent public recreation as mandated by and according to Service law and policy.

III. Description of Fishing Program

A. Areas Open to Fishing

Fishing occurs on approximately one and a half miles of waterfront, facility, lands.

All fishing will be regulated by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Public access is available from 7:00am to 3:30pm every day except federal holidays. Management of State regulations will consist of State law enforcement and Federal regulations from Federal law enforcement. The area is such that it will not entail any additional management personnel other than patrol by TPWD Officers. The Service will only be allowing access to hatchery lands.

Figure 1. Google Earth View of Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery Burnet Texas, 78611. The blue border outlines the Fish hatchery. Public access is granted during 7:00am to 3:30pm seven days a week. Inks Dam is closed on federal holidays. Yellow indicates access by automobile. Anglers are allowed to walk all along lake/river front.
B. Species to be Taken, Fishing periods, Fishing Access

A partial list of fish species that can be taken are as follows:
- *Micropterus salmoides* sp. (Largemouth bass)
- *Morone chrysops* sp. (White bass)
- *Ictalurus punctatus* sp. (Channel catfish)
- *Lepomis macrochirus* sp. (Bluegill)

A more complete list and all fishing rules and regulations determined by the TPWD can be found in the annually published “Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual Hunting, Fishing, and Boating Regulations”. Rules and Regulations are annually developed by TPWD and are subject to revision. Public access is granted during 7:00am to 3:30pm seven days a week. Inks Dam NFH is closed on federal holidays.

C. Fishing Permit Requirements

Appropriate permits and licenses as determined by TPWD and will be applicable.

D. Consultation and Coordination with the State

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to continue to provide public access to open fishing opportunities for covered fish species in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual Hunting, Fishing, and Boating Regulations.

E. Law Enforcement

Enforcement of all Federal laws and regulations are enforced by current Fish and Wildlife Service Agents. State laws and regulations are enforced by The State of Texas.

F. Funding and Staffing Requirements

No cost will be incurred by staff from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

IV. Conduct of the Fishing Program

A. Fishing licenses, Application, Selection, and/or Registration Procedures (if applicable)

All license requirements will be at the discretion of TPWD.

B. Hatchery-Specific Fishing Regulations

No specific Fishing regulations exist.
C. Relevant State Regulations

All license requirements and sport fishing regulations will be determined by TPWD.

D. Other Hatchery Rules and Regulations for Fishing

Fishing will only be permitted on lands designated specifically for that purpose. Appropriate fencing and signage will be posted to prevent the public from entering Service lands designated for the propagation of aquatic species.

V. Public Engagement

A. Outreach for Announcing and Publicizing the Fishing Program

Fishing has been allowed on this property since the Hatchery was constructed in 1938. Routine and regular fishing occurs on a daily basis. Based on past pressure it is apparent that the fishing community is aware of this fishing opportunity since before the construction of the hatchery. Additional information can be obtained from Inks Dam NFH directly.

B. Anticipated Public Reaction to the Fishing Program

It is anticipated that continuing to allow access to this property for the purpose of fishing will be well received by the public since this activity has been ongoing since 1938.

C. How Anglers Will Be Informed of Relevant Rules and Regulations

General information regarding fishing can be obtained through TPWD and annual rules and regulations are published by TPWD. Station specific information can be obtained from Inks Dam NFH directly.

VI. Compatibility Determination

Fishing and all associated activities proposed in this plan are not detrimental to the propagation and distribution of fish or other aquatic wildlife.