

texas parks & wildlife news

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78744

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TPWD, CONSERVANCY TO ACQUIRE CADDO LAKE LAND

AUSTIN--The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Nature Conservancy are joining forces to expand one of the nation's premier wildlife areas, Caddo Lake State Park and Wildlife Management Area in northeast Texas.

TPWD and Conservancy staff plan to acquire about 7,000 acres of land on the upper reaches of Caddo Lake in Harrison and Marion counties. On March 26, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission voted to authorize the department to allocate funds for the project. The Conservancy will provide \$600,000 worth of donated land. The remaining \$1.9 million will come from a federal matching grant approved earlier in March through the North American Wetlands Conservation Council.

"This acquisition will dramatically contribute to the economy of northeast Texas by increased tourism to the Caddo Lake area," said Andrew Sansom, TPWD executive director. "It also preserves one of the nation's most significant wetlands ecosystems."

Land acquisition experts with TPWD and the Conservancy, a private, nonprofit organization that helps buy land to preserve natural areas, are negotiating with private landowners adjacent to the current park. So far the Conservancy has options to purchase 3,493 acres and has donations and bargain sales of another 1,060 acres.

"By helping to bring special natural areas like the upper reaches of Caddo Lake into public ownership, we create opportunities for all Texans to enjoy and learn about our natural world," said David Braun, Conservancy state director. "This kind of partnership between the Conservancy and TPWD also ensures that areas of high biological diversity, like Caddo Lake, are preserved."

Caddo Lake, which straddles the Texas-Louisiana border, is home to more fish species than any other Texas lake area, as well as otters, beavers, alligators and a variety of ducks, herons and other water birds. Department wildlife biologists said the lake is the best wood duck breeding ground in the state, and is also home to 44 endangered or threatened plants and animals.

Much of the land involved is under water. Habitat in this region is referred to as Cypress-Tupelo swamp, an extremely rich but rapidly vanishing wildlife haven. The department's federal grant application for the land was ranked over dozens of others in the annual funding cycle.

The Texas Nature Conservancy is the state chapter of an international organization devoted to protecting the diversity of native plants, animals and ecosystems. The Texas chapter has been responsible for the protection through acquisition of more than 280,000 acres of important areas, and it works cooperatively with private landowners of an additional 290,000 significant areas throughout Texas. The Texas chapter has 19,000 individual, corporate and foundation members.

TPWD and the Conservancy hope to finish buying land for the Caddo Lake project within one year. Initial purchases should commence in early spring or late summer.

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COMMISSION AMENDS REGULATIONS PROPOSAL

AUSTIN--The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission approved the staff's proposed hunting and fishing regulations changes but will allow the public more time to comment. Final adoption will come at the May public meeting here.

In the wildlife branch, an amendment has been made to add one day to the end of the 1992 archery deer and turkey season, giving bowhunters five complete weekends in the woods. If approved, the 1992 season will run Oct. 1-Nov. 1.

An experimental muzzleloader season has been proposed for Oct. 17-25. Bowhunters will have the first two weeks and the last week to themselves. If approved, muzzleloader hunting would be allowed in 14 counties in the Edwards Plateau and South Texas where hunting pressure is not a problem.

On the fisheries side, commissioners proposed that the flathead catfish minimum length limit be increased from the current 9 inches to an 18-inch minimum length in 1992. The legal minimum length will increase to 24 inches in 1993. They also agreed to increase the daily bag limit on largemouth bass from three to five on lakes Brownwood and Coleman, which will have a new experimental 16-inch minimum length limit.

The department also is proposing to regulate mussel harvesting, an increasingly popular fishery. The proposal will limit sport musselers to 50 pounds a day and allow commercial harvest only on weekdays and during daylight hours. It will limit harvesting techniques to hand and hand held non-mechanical devices.

For the first time, there is a recommendation to set size limits on mussels. The four most common species will have individual size limits while all other species will have a 2.5-inch minimum length. The common mussels and their limits include washboard (4 inches), threeridges and mapleleaf (2.75 inches) and Tampico pearlymussel (3.5 inches). To be legal, mussels cannot pass through a ring with an inside diameter of that size.

The coastal fisheries branch is suggesting changes to provide for safer operations in the trotline fishery. Based on input from commercial saltwater finfish fishermen, TPWD is proposing to allow for the suspension of trotline removal requirements when small craft warnings issued by the National Weather Service are in effect at specified times. Currently, trotlines must be picked up at 1 p.m. on Friday and cannot be reset until 1 p.m. on Sunday.

A housekeeping measure to allow effective law enforcement of current regulations on stone crab claws has been proposed. The law now reads that a stone crab's left claw may not be removed. The new measure would make it illegal to remove or possess on board a vessel on public waters a stone crab's left claw.

All hunting and fishing regulations will be finalized during the May 21 public meeting. Public hearings are being scheduled for 22 sites. Those scheduled so far include:

* Brownsville, April 27 Cameron County Courthouse, Central Jury Room

- * Galveston, April 28, Galveston County Courthouse, Jury Assembly Room
- * Beaumont, May 1, Jefferson County Courthouse, Jury and Panel Room
- * Corpus Christi, April 27, Corpus Christi State University, 6300 Ocean Dr

Room 117

- * Victoria, April 27, Town Plaza Mall, 1502 E. Airline
- * Longview, April 28, Gregg County Courthouse
- * Athens, April 29, Henderson County Courthouse, County Court Room

Other cities that will have hearings include San Angelo, Johnson City, Ozona, Carizzo Springs, Freer, Rocksprings, Fredericksburg, Kerrville, Junction, Cotulla, Llano, Tilden, Mason, Sonora and Laredo. All meetings will begin at 7 p.m.

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TYPE I AND II PROGRAMS MAY BE CONSOLIDATED

AUSTIN--The Type I and II public hunting programs could be consolidated by Sept. 1, 1993, if a proposal by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's wildlife branch is approved by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission in May.

Herb Kothmann, public hunts coordinator, briefed the commission on several proposed changes in the public hunting program proclamation during a public meeting March 26 here. After receiving comments from the public, the changes will be voted on at the May commission meeting.

"Consolidation into one public hunting program is desired to eliminate unnecessary duplication in regulations, Kothmann said. "The change also will reduce confusion by the general public over the programs."

Some proposed changes which pertain to both Type I and Type II WMAs include:

- * Allow holders of an annual public hunting permit (\$35 Type II permit) to participate in additional hunting opportunities on many Type I WMAs.
- * Promote participation of youth by broadening the definition of adult sponsors and waiving most fees for youths under 17 years old.
- * Transfer the Black Gap, Matador and Richland Creek WMAs from Type II to Type I.

- * Investigate the addition to the public hunting program of Cooper Reservoir, White Oak Creek mitigation lands, Alazan Bayou, Aquilla Lake, portions of Lake Whitney and selected units of the state park system.

- * Prohibit the use of all terrain vehicles on all areas, except as necessary for a disabled person.

Some other proposed changes include:

Type I

- * Require an annual public hunting permit (\$35) for people 17 and older to participate in hunts that previously were free under permission by registration.

- * Establish an application fee required to accompany each individual person's application for a hunt by special permit. The fee is recommended to be \$20 per person for desert bighorn sheep hunts and \$5 per person in all other drawings for hunts by special permit.

Type II

- * Delete certain lands (Panhandle and Trans-Pecos) that have not proved cost efficient and on which public use has been minimal.

The department presently operates 27 Type I WMAs containing 227,495 acres where hunting and fishing is provided in addition to use for research, refuges, preservation of natural areas, demonstrations and other public use. There are 760,000 acres for hunting and fishing in the Type II program, lands which are predominantly leased from other agencies, corporations or private landowners.

A full list of proposed changes will be available for public comment in April. If approved in May, the changes (except for consolidating Type I and II) will go into effect Sept. 1.

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ADVISORY GROUPS TO OFFER INPUT TO TPWD

AUSTIN- Two new citizen advisory panels have been named to offer input to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The Parks Advisory Board and the Private Lands Advisory Board will make recommendations to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission and department staff on issues facing the department, and act as a liaison between the department and the citizens of Texas.

The primary objective of both boards is to allow greater public participation in TPWD decision making.

'We're interested in hearing as many voices as possible, said Andrew Sansom, TPWD executive director. "These boards will give us the opportunity to utilize expertise from around the state.

Commission Chairman Ygnacio Garza invited the members to volunteer their services for the panels. "We're very pleased with the caliber of these groups. They represent a broad diversity of interests and talent."

The Parks Advisory Board is composed of 13 members:

- * Billy Allen, Minority Search, Inc., Dallas
- * Richard Allison, Amarillo Visitors and Convention Bureau, Amarillo
- * Dede Armentrout, National Audubon Society, Austin
- * Glenda Barrett, Houston Park People, Inc., Houston
- * Mary Barrett, community volunteer, San Antonio
- * Antonio Garza, Cameron County Judge, Brownsville
- * Jody Hamilton, Texas Recreation and Parks Society, Austin
- * Jean Mollard, Palestine Chamber of Commerce, Palestine
- * Manuel Mollinedo, Parks and Recreation Director Austin
- * Don Olson, Parks and Recreation Director Houston
- * Ken Pagans, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Corpus Christi
- * Ty Probasco, Lower Colorado River Authority, Austin
- * John Sproul, Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition, El Paso

One of the board's first tasks will be to examine park funding for state and local facilities. Capital funding for parks will be a major issue during the next legislative session.

The Private Lands Advisory Board initially is composed of 12 people:

- * J. David Bamberger, San Antonio
- * Mickey Burleson, Temple
- * Dan Butler, Brownsville
- * John Cliburn, Victoria

- * Debbie Slator Gillan, Llano
- * Enrique Guerra, Linn
- * Felix Jackson (tentative acceptance), Anahuac
- * John Kritser, Amarillo
- * Steve Lewis, San Antonio
- * Arthur Nagle, Boerne
- * W.B. Osburn Jr., San Antonio
- * Dr. Jim Teer, Sinton

The Private Lands Advisory Board will offer input to the department on major issues affecting private landowners, wildlife habitat concerns and the information needs of landowners.

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NO FINAL DECISIONS MADE YET ON BIG BEND RANCH

AUSTIN--A final plan for the Big Bend Ranch State Natural Area should be completed by early 1993. Until then, no management changes will take place.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department officials have said that no changes will be made until the public has had time to comment and the draft plan is finalized. That includes the cattle operation, which numbers about 150 longhorns, horses and mules.

"Nothing will happen to the cattle right now," said Jim Carrico, project manager. "That decision will be made after the plan and public comments are analyzed."

TPWD planners said there appears to be some public misperception about the purpose of the preliminary document.

"This is not the final plan for what we're going to do out there," said Ron Holliday, public lands division director. "It's a preliminary scoping document to determine what the issues are. Perhaps that was not made as clear as it should have been.

"The hunting and cattle grazing issues also may not have been as clear as they should have been. We'll address those issues in the coming months."

The deadline for public review of the initial planning document has been extended to June 1 in response to an overwhelming public request for the document. Almost 1,000 planning documents have been handed out or mailed to the public and another 1,000 are being printed.

The department will analyze public comments and prepare a draft plan in early fall. The public will have a chance to review the plan before a final plan is approved by early 1993.

Using public comments to construct a draft plan is a completely different approach than in the past.

"This process is designed to hear all the voices," said Andrew Sansom, TPWD executive director. "No long-term decisions have been made.

Currently the department's largest acquisition is open for limited use through bus tours and some hiking trails. The department acquired the area in 1988. Its 265,000 acres doubled the size of the state park system. The department has since acquired almost 50,000 additional acres there.

Copies of the draft plan are available by writing to TPWD Regional Office, P.O. Box 1058, Fort Davis, Texas 79734, or by calling toll-free 1-800-352-4406. Written comments on the plan may be directed to the same address.

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FIGURES SHOW 13 HUNTING FATALITIES IN 1991

AUSTIN--Thirteen hunting fatalities were among the 81 total accidents reported during 1991, up five from the previous year.

Texas has averaged just more than 12 hunting deaths a year since 1985, lower than the 26-year average of more than 18. The five fatalities in 1990 was the lowest on record. The 81 accidents is slightly higher than the 26-year average of 77 per year and up from 53 in 1990.

"For the most part, accidents have gone down since we instituted hunter education in 1972," said Terry Erwin, recreation programs coordinator.

Rifles were involved in 32 of the accidents, shotguns in 42 and handguns in 7, according to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department figures. Once again, most accident occurred while deer (rifle) and dove (shotgun) hunting. White-tailed deer hunters accounted for 32 accidents and dove hunters 18.

Nine of the 13 fatalities came while hunting deer. The others involved squirrel, dove, turkey and goose hunters.

Hunter judgment, such as out of sight of shooter, and victim covered by shooter swinging on game accounted for 22 of the accidents. Victim mistaken for game made up 10 more. Nineteen accidents fell into the safety and law violation category, which includes removing or placing the firearm in a vehicle, discharging a firearm in a vehicle, improper crossing of an obstacle and horseplay.

Skill and aptitude - shooter stumbled and fell, trigger caught on object and loading/unloading a firearm - accounted for six accidents. There were 20 miscellaneous category accidents, 15 of which involved careless handling.

Only five of the accidents involved someone who had successfully completed the hunter education course. For next fall's hunting season, anyone born during the period of Sept. 2, 1971, to Aug. 31, 1976, must complete the hunter education course to hunt legally in Texas. As of Sept. 1, 1993, anyone at least 12 years old and born after Sept. 2, 1971, must have successfully completed the course to hunt legally in Texas.

For more information on hunter education call 1-800-792-1112, ext. 4999, or (512) 389-4999.

One-third of victims were shot by hunters older than 40, a group that is not required to take a hunter education course. "I would recommend that everyone take hunter education, regardless of age," Erwin said.

Although there were no spring turkey accidents in 1990 or 1991, hunters need to take certain precautions during the April 4-May 3 season. Erwin, who is a member of the Wild Turkey Hunting Safety Task Force initiated by the National Wild Turkey Federation, said studies show that more than 75 percent of turkey hunting accidents are caused by hunters shooting other hunters, thinking they are shooting wild turkeys.

Four tips that will help avoid any accidents in the woods, he said, are to be absolutely sure of the target and what lies beyond before pulling the trigger; know the location of hunting companions; never wear colors (blue, red, white or black) that send out the wrong visual clues; and always assume the call you have heard is a hunter until you are sure it is a turkey.

"I recommend that hunters wear blaze orange. Even if they don't wear it while hunting, they should at least wear it while going to and from hunting sites," Erwin said. "Also, if you shoot a turkey, carry it wrapped in hunter orange material."

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CLUES SOUGHT IN DOLPHIN DIE OFF

ROCKPORT--Almost 60 bottlenose dolphins have died in four Texas bays during March, leaving Texas Parks and Wildlife Department again puzzled as to the cause of the seemingly annual event.

About 35 dolphins have been found washed ashore in Mesquite, Copano and Aransas bays from the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge south to Aransas Pass. Another 15 to 20 dolphins have been reported in San Antonio Bay. These numbers continue to climb.

"We don't know what's killing them. There's no real theory," said Karen Meador, conservation scientist with the Rockport Marine Lab and an active member of the Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network.

TPWD staff are investigating the strandings by identifying the species, determining sex, obtaining length measurements, counting teeth and collecting various tissue samples. The dead animals have been male and female, young and older. Tissue samples have been sent to the University of Texas Marine Science Institute for analysis. The National Marine Fisheries Service has been notified and will join the investigation.

"There is no evidence of foul play," she said. "They're not washing ashore fresh. Most have been dead two to three days."

Department scientists are putting orange surveyors tape on the tail and a flipper of stranded dolphins as a marker that it's already been counted. "We don't have enough manpower to collect them all. Most have been in isolated areas," Meador said. "The majority of dolphins were reported from March 16-27 and most were in bad shape. In those cases tissue samples won't help.

The Stranding Network has monitored strandings since 1980 and, historically, March has the highest number of dolphin strandings. However, Meador said the number of strandings is higher this year than any other year.

"That's why reporting strandings is important," she said. "The quicker we can get there the better samples we can collect and, hopefully, find out the cause of death.

Anyone seeing a stranded dolphin or other marine mammal should contact a local TPWD office or Stranding Network office.

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HARTWELL NAMED PROJECT WILD TEACHER OF YEAR

AUSTIN--Penny Barton Hartwell, a Brownsville teacher was recognized as Project WILD Teacher of the Year during the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission public meeting March 26.

Hartwell, an environmental science and biology teacher at Rivera High School, has been a project WILD workshop facilitator since October 1986. She was runner-up for the award in 1991

"She's not just a flash in the pan. She does this year after year after year " said Ilo Hiller, Project WILD coordinator.

In addition to integrating WILD activities into her regular course work at the school, Hartwell designed and taught a special 13-week challenge program on ecology at Pan American University in Edinburg for gifted and talented students. The lesson plan included 26 WILD activities, several of which could be incorporated into local environmental happenings such as Arbor Day, Earth Day and Recycle Day.

Hartwell also drafted a proposal to include environmental education into her school district's five-year plan and she participated in a strategic planning session at the North American Association for Environmental Education conference.

"By studying ecology, we learn that everything is interrelated and everyone is important," Hartwell said. "The ecosystem is only as stable as its resource that is in the least supply. Survival on earth will ultimately depend upon how well we and our children care for even the tiniest creature or commodity."

Project WILD, implemented in Texas by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, stresses a balanced, science-based approach designed to allow young people to form strong values, Hiller said. The international program began in Texas in 1985 as a school supplement. About 20,000 educators and 250 facilitators have been trained during the six-hour workshops.

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RECENT FISH STOCKINGS

AUSTIN--The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recently stocked two lakes with fish.

Stillhouse Hollow was stocked March 26 with 58 adult smallmouth bass. The surplus brooders averaged about 3 pounds.

Purtis Creek State Park Lake received 14,000 channel catfish averaging about 5 inches long.

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(NOTE: This column runs monthly in the news packet. It deals with common responses and concerns from comments received in the Texas Statewide Angler Survey. The information in the column was provided by Robin Riechers, TPWD economist, and Dr. Robert B. Ditton of Texas A&M University.)

WHAT FISHERMEN (AND WOMEN) TELL US!

By Lyndal Waldrip
TPWD News Editor

Several respondents to our angler survey commented negatively about not being able to buy a fishing license and have it expire a year from the date of purchase. Others were concerned about exactly who had to purchase a fishing license.

Here are some comments about the current license year (Sept. 1 through Aug. 31).

"I don't like the fact that if you buy a license in July it will expire in August. Your fishing license should be good for one year from the date of purchase. The game warden has to look at it anyway. He might as well look at the date on it instead of just the color of the license. "

"Make the fishing license good for one year. You are cheating the public for the sake of a little money.

"Fishing licenses should be prorated. If I only have time to go fishing the last two weeks of August and my license expires Aug. 31, I feel I shouldn't have to pay for a year long license and have it good for only two weeks."

"I do not like the system where all fishing licenses expire on one date. In the other two states where I lived and had a resident's license, that license expired one year after purchase."

David Palmer, director of field operations for the law enforcement division at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, said in addition to using the state's fiscal year, licenses are color coded by year, allowing game wardens to check licenses from a distance and not disturb fishermen.

The department tried year-to-date licenses from 1975-78 with negative results, said Paul Israel, license section supervisor. Many fishermen who were used to the consistent Aug. 31 expiration date were ticketed for not having a valid license, having forgotten to renew it. These fishermen preferred the consistent license renewal date to reduce confusion. The department also lost 4 percent of its revenue each year of the experiment.

The department has accommodated those fishermen not wanting to purchase a 12-month license by offering a resident 14-day license. The license is available for \$5, and as many as needed can be bought during the year.

* * * * *

A few survey respondents were confused about exactly who must purchase a license.

"Children shouldn't need a permit to fish (under 16). "

"Yeah, how come I had to get a fishing license this past year when I was only 16?"

Well, you didn't. A fishing license is not needed if you are under 17 years old; are 65 or older; are mentally disabled (see page 14 of Texas Recreational Fishing Guide); or hold a valid combination license, 14-day license, special resident license or lifetime license.

* * * * *

About purchasing stamps:

"I bought my fishing license, my regular fishing license, but I can't fish without purchasing a fresh or saltwater stamp. I strongly disagree on purchasing my fishing license and having to buy a stamp. There is no need for doing this. I think the only reason you do this for is to rip us off."

No stamp is required for fishing in fresh water, except a \$7 stamp when fishing for trout. A \$7 saltwater stamp is needed to fish in salt water. Both stamps are needed in addition to a valid Texas fishing license. The stamps were created by the 69th Legislature in 1985 to provide support for fisheries management.

The saltwater stamp was enacted for the department to collect additional revenue for management and enforcement of the coastal fisheries. Officials also use the data to determine how many saltwater fishermen there are in the state. This information is vital because federal funding is based upon the number of saltwater fishermen, and the department needs it to estimate the number of fishermen in an area and to determine the amount of fish harvested.

Funds from the freshwater trout stamp go to support the popular trout stocking program. The money is used to purchase fish and take them to the stocking sites.

The anonymous questions and comments were provided by respondents to the 1991 Texas Statewide Angler Survey conducted cooperatively by Texas A&M University and TPWD. Statewide angler studies have been conducted by TPWD since 1986 to understand angler opinions and management preferences. Dr Robert B. Ditton of the department of wildlife and fisheries sciences at Texas A&M served as the principal investigator for this study.
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STATEWIDE HUNTING AND FISHING REGULATIONS

(Final approval due at May commission meeting)

INLAND FISHERIES

Statewide Changes

1. Remove the bag and possession limit on yellow bass.
2. Place an 18-inch minimum length limit on flathead catfish beginning Sept. 1, 1992, and increasing to 24-inch minimum on Sept. 1, 1993. Daily bag limit is five.
3. Prohibit the use of gill, trammel or hoop nets in all public freshwater (effective Sept. 1, 1993).

Exceptions to Statewide for Black Bass

1. Change black bass from 18-inch minimum to 14- to 21-inch slot length at Joe Pool. Remain at three fish daily bag limit.
2. Place a 12- to 15-inch slot length and three fish daily bag limit on small mouth bass at Lake Meredith.

Exceptions to Statewide for Crappie

1. Reduce the crappie bag limit from 25 to 15 per day at Choke Canyon.

State Parks and Small Urban Lakes (Urban Fishing Enhancement Program)

1. Allow anglers at Purtil Creek State Park Lake to retain one bass longer than 22 inches in a live well or other aerated device for transportation to a park weigh station. After weighing, the bass must be immediately released back into the lake or donated to the department's Operation Share A Lone Star Lunker program.
2. Designate Lakeview City Park Lake in Corpus Christi and Lake Burke-Crenshaw in Pasadena as freshwater for regulations purposes.
3. Make Nelson Park Lake in Abilene and Buck Lake in South Llano River State Park a catch-and-release only lake for largemouth bass.

4. Place a 14- to 18-inch slot length on black bass at Burke-Crenshaw.
5. Place a 14-inch minimum length, five fish daily bag limit on channel and blue catfish at Bright Lake in Round Rock, Burke-Crenshaw and Nelson Park.
6. Prohibit the use of trotlines, juglines and throwlines at Burke-Crenshaw and Bright Lake.

Devices, Means and Methods Statewide

1. Allow nongame fish taken by legal means and methods (shad trawl, seine, cast net, minnow trap and umbrella net) to be used for any purpose.
2. Remove size restriction on dip nets.

Experimental Regulations

1. Place a 12-inch minimum length limit on white bass in lakes Conroe, Livingston, Limestone, Palestine and Somerville and the rivers above these lakes.
2. Place a 14-inch minimum length limit, 15 fish daily bag limit on channel and blue catfish in lakes Choke Canyon, Cooper, Fairfield and O.H. Ivie.
3. Place a 7-inch minimum length limit, 25 fish daily bag limit on sunfish in Purdis Creek State Park Lake.
4. Place a 16-inch minimum length limit, five fish daily bag limit on largemouth bass at Lake Brownwood and Lake Coleman.

COASTAL FISHERIES

1. Change possession limit on all fish to twice the daily bag limit for simplification. This proposal affects possession limits for greater amberjack, cobia, king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, sharks and red snapper.
2. Increase the Spanish mackerel bag limit from three per day to seven per day.
3. Permit the use of sail lines to take sharks.

WILDLIFE

- 1 Clarify the rule allowing hunters to possess both archery equipment and firearms in camp or a vehicle during archery only seasons.
2. Amend the late South Texas antlerless season to begin on a weekend (Jan. 16-31, 1993).

AUSTIN: Here is the weekly fishing report as compiled by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for April 2:

CENTRAL

BASTROP: Water clear, 66 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 6 pounds on worms, jigs and jerk worms; crappie are fair at night on minnows; catfish are good to 4 pounds on Bill's Sponge Baits and red wigglers.

BELTON: Water clear, 60 degrees, spillway level; black bass are good to 5 pounds on spinners and buzz baits; striper and hybrid striper are good to 9 pounds on Don's 1 ounce Bananahead jigs in the spillway below the dam; crappie are slow; white bass are good on jigging spoons; catfish are good to 7 pounds in the spillway and in the main lake on prepared stink baits.

BROWNWOOD: Water muddy, 68 degrees, 6 inches above spillway; black bass are fair to 5 1/2 pounds on deep running lures; hybrid striper are fair to 3 pounds at night on jigs; crappie are slow, most are undersized on minnows; white bass are fair to 2 pounds on jigs and minnows at night under lights; yellow catfish are fair to 22 pounds on live shad; a few channel catfish to 3 pounds caught on worms from the bank.

BUCHANAN: Water clear, 65 degrees, lake full; black bass are good through 7 pounds, 9 ounces on chartreuse spinners; striper are excellent through 14 pounds on live bait; crappie are slow; white bass are good with daily limits on slabs and jigs under the birds; catfish are good in baited holes with rod and reels with stinkbait; yellow catfish are excellent through 25 pounds on trotlines baited with live bait.

COLORADO BEND: Water murky, 68 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 2 1/2 pounds on purple and white worms; striper are good to 8 pounds on cranks and jigs; crappie are poor; white bass are good with some limits, mostly males, on chartreuse Roadrunners and all colors of crappie jigs; channel catfish are good to 2 1/2 pounds on worms and cut bait; yellow catfish are good to 15 pounds on live perch.

FAYETTE: Water clear, 68 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 7 1/2 pounds on chartreuse or chartreuse and white spinners, Rattle Traps and live bait; crappie are fair to 10 fish per string on minnows; catfish are good on rod and reel in the rocks to 5 pounds on shrimp and small minnows.

GIBBONS CREEK: Water clear, 65 degrees, 18 inches low; black bass are good with some over 21 inches, most are in the slot, on black and blue lizards; crappie are picking up on minnows in 15 feet of water; catfish are good in the 3-5 pound range on crawfish, cut shad and worms.

INKS LAKE: Water murky, 68 degrees, 6 inches; black bass are fair to 3 pounds on chartreuse worms and buzz baits; striper are fair to 15 pounds on live bait; crappie are fair on the piers to 2 pounds on minnows; white bass are good below the dam on minnows and shad; catfish are fair to 6 pounds on trotlines baited with shrimp and minnows.

LBJ: Water clear, 65 degrees, lake full; black bass are good through 6 pounds, 2 ounces on black worms; striper are slow; crappie are good on docks with structure on minnows; white bass are fair in the mid lake area under birds on slabs and jigs; catfish are good in baited holes on shrimp and stinkbait.

LIMESTONE: Water murky to muddy, 65-68 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow but improving on Strike King Spinners and Jawtec Lizards in black and blue; crappie are good sized in shallow water with minnows; white bass are slow; catfish are slow.

SOMERVILLE: Water a little muddy, 18-20 feet above normal level; black bass are slow; few fishermen on the lake; the temporary boat ramp is closed until Friday because of maintenance.

SQUAW CREEK: Water clear, 65 degrees, normal level; black bass are good in the 3-5 pound range in 17 to 41 feet of water on jigs, minnows and cranks; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are good to 10 pounds in 17-41 feet of water on minnows and bloodbait.

STILLHOUSE: Water a little murky but clearing, 65 degrees, 42 feet above normal level; black bass are fairly good in the 2-3 pound range on minnows; striper are good in the 7-8 pound range on minnows; crappie are fairly slow; white bass are good around stripers; catfish are smaller in the freshwater areas near the shore; the dock will be open on weekends only; boat ramps are under water but there is limited access by using the old roads.

TRAVIS: Water clear, 63 degrees, 2 feet above normal level; largemouth bass are good to 5 pounds on chartreuse spinners, Baby Slug-Gos and Tom's Miners; Guadalupe bass are good to 15 1/2 inches on same lures; striper are slow; crappie are good to 1 1/2 pounds on minnows, jigs, Tom's Minners and grubs; white bass are fair and scattered, best at night under lights on jigs and grubs; catfish are slow.

WACO: Water muddy, 70 degrees, 5 feet above normal level; black bass are slow; catfish are good to 10 pounds on trotlines baited with live bait; all other fishing has been slow.

WHITNEY: Water clear, 60 degrees, 3 1/3 feet above normal level and falling; black bass are good to 7 pounds on Rattle Taps and worms; smallmouth bass are fair to good to 6 pounds on orange and white spinners in shallow water; striper are good to 23 pounds on shad and shiners; crappie are improving, barge fishing is good with crappie to 1 pounds with minnows; white bass are good to 2 pounds up the lake on spoons and slabs; catfish are slow in the lake, good in the rivers, most fish are small.

NORTHEAST

ATHENS: Water clear, 64 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 8.36 pounds on lizards; crappie are beginning to move into shallow water, best baits are minnows, Roadrunners and crappie jigs; white bass are schooling near the bottom; catfish are slow.

BOB SANDLIN: Water clear, 61 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 6 pounds on Carolina rigged lizards; white bass are slow; crappie are fair to 14 inches on minnows; catfish are fair to 3 pounds on minnows and

bloodbait.

BRIDGEPORT: Water murky, 59 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 5 1/2 pounds on gold spinners in shallow water; striper are slow, river is muddy; crappie are good in shallow water on minnows and jigs; white bass are slow; catfish are fair on shrimp and worms.

CADDO: Water clear, 52-53 degrees, 6 inches above normal level; black bass are slow; striper are slow; crappie are fairly good but most are small; white bass are fair trolling spinners; catfish are fair in the 10-12 pound range on live bait, some smaller catfish also caught.

CEDAR CREEK: Water clear, 63 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 9 pounds, 2 ounces on chartreuse spinners and black lizards in shallow water; hybrid striper are slow; crappie are good in the shallows, spawning is in progress; white bass are good at night and during the day slabbing around sandy points and beneath bridge pilings; catfish are slow.

CYPRESS SPRINGS: Water clear, 63 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 11 1/2 pounds on spinners; crappie are good to 1 1/2 pounds on minnows and jigs; catfish are good to 15 pounds on shrimp and night crawlers.

FAIRFIELD: Water fairly clear, 65-70 degrees, 8 inches above normal level; black bass are good to 8 pounds on Slug-Gos; striper are good to 15 pounds on shad; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are good to 12 pounds on natural baits; redfish are good to 20 pounds on cranks.

FORK: Water clear, 61-63 degrees, normal level; black bass are fairly good to 14 pounds on Slug-Gos, gold and orange Long As and spinners; crappie are fairly good but are hard to find right now near the bridges at night; catfish are slow; bream are still low.

LAKE O THE PINES: Water clear, 62 degrees, 1 foot above normal level; black bass are fair to 6 1/2 pounds on Rogues and Fliptail floating lizards and Slug-Gos; crappie are fair on minnows along the creek channels and around the marinas; white bass are slow; catfish are good to 7 3/4 pounds on trotlines baited with nightcrawlers.

LAVON: Water clear, 59 degrees, 8 1/2 feet above normal level; black bass are slow; crappie are fair to 1 1/2 pounds in 10 to 12 feet of water on minnows over brush piles; white bass are slow; catfish are fair to 6 pounds in 18-20 feet of water on shad.

MONTICELLO: Water clear, 70 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 11 pounds on black and blue worms; crappie are slow; channel catfish are good to 8 pounds on Canadian nightcrawlers and shrimp.

MOSS LAKE: Water clear, 55 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow; crappie are good on minnows and jigs; white bass are slow; catfish are slow.

MURVAUL: Water a little murky, 60 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 12 pounds, 1 ounce with many in the 6-8 pound range, on black worms, cranks and spinners; crappie are very good in the 2-3 pound range on minnows, the best fishing in 15 years on shiners in 5 feet of water; yellow catfish are slow to 43 pounds on trotline with live bait; channel catfish are improving; sunfish are beginning to hit worms.

PALESTINE: Water a little murky, 6 inches high; black bass are fair

to 7 pounds on jigs; striper are slow; crappie are good to 2 1/2 pounds on minnows with a few limits caught; white bass are good on spoons, a few limits caught; catfish are good to 35 pounds on trotlines with chicken blood and cut bait.

PURITS CREEK: Water clear, 66 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 12 pounds on spinners; crappie are good on minnows and jigs; catfish are slow.

RAY HUBBARD: Water clear, 60 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 4 pounds on spinners and Rattlin' Spots; crappie are excellent to 2 1/2 pounds on minnows; white bass are excellent to 2 1/2 pounds on L'il Georges and Rattlin' Spots; catfish are fair to 22 pounds on minnows on a rod and reel.

RAY ROBERTS: Water a little murky, 61 degrees, 1 foot high; black bass are good to 7 pounds on chartreuse and white spinners, red shad lizards and some Rattle Traps; white bass are good to 2 1/2 pounds on slabs spoons; crappie are fair on minnows; catfish are fairly good to 22 pounds around 922 bridge on cut shad.

RICHLAND-CHAMBERS: Water clear, 62 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 7 pounds on worms and spinners; white bass are fairly good on minnows; crappie are excellent in shallow on minnows; catfish are good to 15 pounds.

TAWAKONI: Water clear, 62 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 7 1/4 pounds on spinners; striper are poor; crappie are good to 2 pounds with limits on minnows and jigs; white bass are good to 3 pounds on slabs; catfish are excellent to 11 pounds on trotlines and tight lines with stinkbait and bloodbait.

TEXOMA: Water clear, 56 degrees, 6 inches low; black bass excellent to 5 pounds, 6 ounces on Chatter Box, Slug-Gos, Long As, Fish Sticks; striper are good to 13 pounds on deep diving redfins trolling, Sassy Shad and live baits; crappie are fairly good to 2 1/4 pounds on minnows and jigs; white bass are excellent to 2 1/2 pounds on Sassy Shad and Rattle Traps; catfish are fair to 30 pounds on live bait.

WRIGHT PATMAN: Water muddy to murky, 60 degrees, 6 feet high; black bass are fair in number; crappie are poor but seem to be improving; catfish are fair and seem to be improving.

SOUTHEAST

CONROE: Water murky, 70 degrees, 4 inches above normal level; black bass are good numbers of fish but most are small early in the morning on spinners; white bass are good in shallow water trolling spoons behind Hellbenders; crappie are good, best fishing in several water, under 1097 bridge and around boat docks in brush with minnows; catfish are fair to good in shallow water, no great numbers of catfish out.

HOUSTON COUNTY: Water a little off color, 65 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 9 1/4 pounds on water dogs; crappie are good near the marina and off piers in 2 feet of water on minnows; white bass are good off major points on minnows and cranks; catfish are fairly good to 6 pounds, 6 ounces around the islands on water dogs with rod and reel.

LIVINGSTON: Water clear, 62 degrees, 1 1/4 inches below pool;

black bass are fairly good to 8 1/2 pounds, several limits; striper and white bass are up the river still; crappie are very good with several limits in less than 3 feet of water on minnows under brush piles; channel catfish are fairly good to 6 pounds in deep waters of the river channel catfish; blue catfish are good to 45 pounds and yellow are good to 70 pounds on trotlines baited with live perch.

RAYBURN: Water clear 62 degrees, 7 feet above normal level; black bass are fairly good to 8 1/2 pounds on 8 inch black worms with blue tails; crappie are fairly good off the barges on minnows; white bass are fair only; catfish are good to 50 pounds and several in the 8-10 pound range on trotlines with live baits.

SHELDON: Water cloudy, 65 degrees, normal level; all fishing slow due to weather.

TOLEDO BEND: Water clear, 62 degrees, normal level; black bass are slow to 5 1/2 pounds on spinners worms and topwaters; striper are good to 16 pounds near the generators with live bait; crappie are fair but spotty to 2 pounds on spinners and crappie jigs, schools hard to find; catfish are fair to 15 pounds on trotlines with live bait.

SOUTH

AMISTAD: Water clear, 59 degrees, 4 feet above normal level; black bass are good to 8 pounds on worms, spinners and topwaters in 30-4 feet of water around the beds; striper are fair to 20 pounds around the dam or up in the marker 18 area on white Ponyhead jigs; crappie are slow; white bass are good up the Pecos and Rio Grande; catfish are picking up in the 2-5 pound range on shrimp in 10-30 feet of water.

BRAUNIG: Water murky, 68 degrees, 10 inches above normal level; black bass are good in number to 8 pounds on home made cranks; striper are good in number to 9 1/4 pounds on chicken livers, cranks and Rattle Traps; channel catfish are good in the 3-4 pound range on chicken livers and shrimp; blue catfish are good in the 6 to 15 pound range on shad; redfish are good to 18 pounds on crawfish and spoons from the bank and trawling.

CALAVERAS: Water murky, 62 degrees, 18 inches above normal level; black bass are fair to 6 pounds on artificials from the bank; striper are fair to 8 1/2 pounds on shad, perch and artificials; channel catfish are good to 1 pound on cheese bait, shad; redfish are fair to 15 pounds on shad, perch, crawfish and artificials.

CASA BLANCA: Water murky, 72 degrees, 3 1/3 feet below spillway level; black bass are good to 12 pounds on black worms; crappie are slow; catfish are good in the 2-8 pound range on trotlines with live bait.

CHOKE: Water clear, 73 degrees, 1 3/4 feet low; black bass are fair to 9 3/4 pounds on spinners in 1-4 feet of water; crawfish colored and chartreuse colored cranks are catching bass in 8-15 feet of water along 72 roadbed, tank dams and humps; some bass caught around the willows and around the big trees in the river channel; some topwater activity early; striper are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are slow, a few caught in San Miguel Creek channel; catfish are good with limits caught on rod and

reel with cheese bait in 5-15 feet of water using a slip cork; most are males from 1-3 pounds; most areas of the lake are producing, but Salt Creek, Possum Creek, Elm Creek and the river around 99 bridge have been good on trotline and jug lines with many fish caught in the 3-50 pound range on cut bait and live bait.

COLETO CREEK: Water muddy, 74 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair and small on plastic worms and spinners; striper are fair to 19 inches on minnows and crappie jigs; crappie are poor on minnows, no keepers; catfish are fair on shrimp and cheese baits.

CORPUS CHRISTI: Water clearing, 67 degrees, lake full; black bass are slow on lures, a few fish to 2 1/2 pounds caught by crappie fishermen on minnows; striper are slow; crappie are good to 1 1/2 pounds in the coves of Lake Shore Garden and Hochs Marina on minnows in 2 feet of water; white bass are good off state park piers under lights on minnows; blue catfish are good to 26 pounds in 2-3 feet of water on trotlines baited with cut shad and lyesoap; channel catfish are good to 2 1/2 pounds in the release waters on worms and cut shad.

FALCON: Water clear, 74 degrees, 2 feet above normal level and rising; black bass are good to 12 1/2 pounds on bubble gum colored floating lizards; striper are good in number but most are small on jigs; crappie are slow; white bass are good in number but most are small; catfish are good in the 4-5 pound range on trotlines baited with shrimp.

MEDINA: Water clear in the main lake, the river area is off color due to rains, 1 foot above normal; black bass are fair to 3 pounds on Berkley Power Worms; striper are slow; crappie are slow; white bass are fair to 1 pound on L'il Georges; catfish are good to 6 pounds on nightcrawlers and liver.

TEXANA: Water muddy in the main lake, fairly clear in the jungle area, 72 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 4 pounds in the jungle area on spinners; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are fair to 30 pounds on trotlines with cut bait.

WEST

FORT PHANTOM HILL: Water murky, 63 degrees, 6 inches above normal; black bass are poor; striper are fair to 8 1/2 pounds on live shad; crappie are fair to 2 pounds on jigs and minnows; white bass are fair to 1 3/4 pounds on Rattle Traps; blue catfish are good to 26 pounds on live shad and minnows; yellow catfish are good to 45 pounds on trotline with live shad.

GRANBURY: Water clear, 59 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 5 pounds on white spinners; striper are slow; crappie are good to 10 fish per string on minnows; white bass are slow; catfish are good in the 5-7 pound range on shrimp.

HUBBARD CREEK: Water clear, 48 degrees, normal level; black bass are good to 8 pounds, 6 ounces; crappie are good in the shallows on minnows; white bass are slow; catfish are slow.

MEREDITH: Water clear, 47 degrees, 6 inches low; largemouth bass are slow; smallmouth are good to 2 pounds on Rattle Traps; crappie are slow; white bass are very good on Rattle Traps; catfish are slow; walleye are fair on minnows and shad.

O.H.IVIE: Water clear, 59 degrees surface, lake full; black bass are excellent in the 18-19 inch range in 15 to 20 feet of water on jigs, chartreuse spinners, cranks, Rat-L-Traps, buzz baits, dark worms and live minnows; crappie are fair in number on minnows, Roadrunner jigs with spinners and white and yellow jigs in 3-12 feet of water; channel and blue catfish are fair in number with strings to 12 fish in the 1-4 pound range on Catfish Charlie, live minnows and nightcrawlers; most catfish are caught in 5-40 feet of water in the main channel of the Concho River, Gatlin and Grape Creeks.

SPENCE: Water clear, 59 degrees, 30 feet low; black bass are fairly good to 4 1/2 pounds on worms; striper are fairly good to 24 1/4 pounds on live shad; crappie are slow; white bass are slow; catfish are fairly good to 20 pounds on shad or bass minnows.

STAMPFORD: Water a little murky, winds fairly high midweek, 55 degrees, normal level; black bass are fair to 4 1/2 pounds on Rattle Traps and worms; hybrid striper are fair to 12 pounds on live bait or slabs; crappie are good to 1 1/2 pounds on minnows; catfish are good from 2 1/2 to 3 pounds on worms and chicken livers; yellow catfish are good to 28 pounds on trotline with live bait.

COASTAL

NORTH SABINE LAKE: Redfish have been fair to good; weather has been fair to good; drum have started to bite; some sheepshead and scattered flounder have been caught; good sized croaker also landed; no live bait shrimp available; mud minnows are scarce.

SOUTH SABINE LAKE: Front came through on Monday; some specks caught Saturday with several limits caught on the reef with strawberry tout tails and Gillraker worms; redfish are good with hot pink and white touts and mud minnows in the keeper range, many oversized fish caught; best fishing is where the river runs into the lake in 15 feet of water; no live bait shrimp available; minnows available.

GALVESTON: A 9 3/4 pound speck caught at the Texas City Dike Pier on a 6 inch live mullet; a 8 1/4 pound speck caught at Seawolf Park on a live shrimp; a 7 1/2 pound speck caught in West Bay on a diving lure; a good number of 4-5 pound specks caught in East and West Bays on artificials; very few limits caught; Spanish mackerel and jack fish caught at the jetties and at Seawolf Park; big gafftops caught in the same area; good numbers of large sheepshead at the jetties along with good numbers of keeper drum; live bait shrimp are available.

FREEPORT: Good numbers of snapper caught 40-45 miles offshore; most fish range in the 1 1/2 to 5 pounds, with a few sows to 20 pounds; a few ling caught, a 70 pound ling caught; a few amberjack and warsaw also caught.

PORT OCONNOR: Good numbers of big black drum caught at the jetties and around Bird Island on crabs, frozen or dead shrimp; good numbers of gafftop caught in the same area on dead shrimp and squid; good numbers of trout in the 7 1/2 pounds ranges, with several in the 3-6 pound range on live shrimp; good redfish numbers at the jetties; good numbers of trout at the Cedars and at the Cattle Pens; a few redfish and

trout caught in Pringle Lake and in Boggy Bayou; live bait shrimp available at \$8.50 per quart.

PALACIOS: Heavy rains fell over the weekend which kept fishing to a minimum; back bays are fairly fresh; some redfish and trout caught in Oyster Lay and Palacios Bayous; good numbers of trout and redfish caught along shoreline of Matagorda Peninsula, mainly around Green's and Cotton Bayous; best baits are Hogies Strawberry Swimming Shad with white tails; good sized trout 27 inches or 6 1/4 pounds at the long jetty of the Palacios Turning Basin on Jumping Minnows and black, gold and orange Cordell's Broken Backs.

ROCKPORT: Fishing has been fair; fair numbers of 22-24 inch sized fish ad Stedman and Ransom on soft plastics and Cordell's; redfish are good at Allan's Bight, Mud Island and some in South Bay Gut on red or purple Cacao minnows; in the East Flats a small silver spoon is the best bait for redfish. Live bait shrimp available at \$8 per quart.

PORT ARANSAS: Fishing has been slow, some limits and some good sized redfish caught on live shrimp behind Hog Island in Lydia Ann Channel; live bait shrimp available at \$7.50 per quart. Offshore seas are running from 2-4 feet; on one trip, 1800 pounds of amberjack, snapper, several grouper over 40 pounds, big scamp, sow snapper in the 18-25 pound range, some shark in 7-15 pound range, also blackfin tuna in the 12-15 pound range were caught; best catches about 40 miles offshore.

CORPUS CHRISTI: Good numbers of specks in the 15 to 27 inch range along the Causeway on live shrimp or speck rigs; good numbers of drum caught by the old railroad tracks in Nueces Bay; good numbers of drum and large specks along the Portland shoreline. Live bait shrimp are available at 15 cents each. Nueces River has had a lot of incoming fresh water which crested Tuesday afternoon.

PORT MANSFIELD: Good numbers of specks south of the East Cut in the 18 inch range on live shrimp; good numbers of redfish in very shallow water on the East Side, best bait is live shrimp; live bait shrimp abundant at \$12 per quart.

SOUTH PADRE: Good numbers of specks to 6 pounds on shrimp in Airport Cove, behind three island, Submarine Bar, Brownsville Ship Channel around the Y, some redfish mostly undersized behind Three island and around Stovers Reef; from the jetties, fishermen are catching flounder and sheepshead; in the Brownsville Channel fishermen are catching good numbers of black drum and good numbers of trout; night pier fishermen are catching good numbers of specks to 20 inches on live shrimp and chartreuse worms along with whiting and sandtrout; bonito and jack fish caught offshore when boats can get out; live bait shrimp plentiful at \$10 per quart.

PH 4/1/92

