

## DFG Seeks Public Input To Improve Efficiency of State's Fish Hatchery System

Contact: Mike Wintemute – Deputy Director, Communications, (916) 651-6443

As part of a long-term effort to improve the efficiency of the state's fish hatchery system, the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is asking anglers and other members of the public to help identify which waters and types of trout they value for recreational purposes. The DFG will use the information to develop a plan to maximize the hatchery system's output.

"The state's budget shortfall, and the loss of state and federal funds earmarked for hatchery operations, may require drastic measures to bring spending in line with revenues in the next couple of years," said DFG Director Ryan Broddrick. "However, with the public's help and good planning, we can develop a more efficient system that meets Californians' demand for hatchery-raised fish."

As a result of a recent court ruling, the DFG did not receive \$4 million in Tidelands Oil Trust revenue dedicated for hatchery operations in the 2004-05 state budget. Additionally, the DFG expects to lose \$1.2 million in federal Sport Fish Restoration Act revenue in the 2006-07 fiscal year. Broddrick says the DFG can minimize the impact of these reductions by insuring that the hatchery system focuses on raising and stocking fish where the demand is greatest.

Between now and Aug. 31, members of the public who wish to comment on the hatchery system or fish stocking program can do so by:

- E-mailing comments to DFG Director Ryan Broddrick at [director@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:director@dfg.ca.gov)
- Submitting comments to the DFG Web site at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/fh/hatcheryplan.html>
- Posting a letter to DFG Director Ryan Broddrick at 1416 Ninth Street, 12" Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814
- Participating in four regional public meetings to be held during the Summer of 2005 (Dates and locations TBA)

Based in part on public input, the DFG will prepare a plan to make the hatchery system more efficient and responsive to angler demand. The plan also will incorporate aspects of the DFG's *Strategic Plan for Trout Management*, available online at [www.dfg.ca.gov/fishing/assets/publications/StrategicPlanNov03.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fishing/assets/publications/StrategicPlanNov03.pdf). Although the DFG welcomes public comment on any aspect of the state's hatchery system, it is primarily interested in learning where hatchery-raised fish are in demand, and which types of trout are most desirable.

Broddrick noted that new technology and transport equipment can help the DFG deliver fish virtually anywhere in California, regardless of where individual hatcheries are located. "The measure of our success will not be in the number of hatcheries we operate, but how effectively we can serve anglers with the limited funding and resources available," Broddrick said.

To learn more about the DFG's public outreach effort to improve the hatchery system, visit the DFG hatchery Web page at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/fh/hatcheryplan.html>.