

# TOO FEW OREGON TROUT TOO MANY ANGLERS

## License for the Rod Proposed in Order to Raise Funds to Propagate Game Fish.



A POOL  
IN THE  
CLACKAMAS

OREGON STREAMS THAT  
NEED REPLENISHING WITH TROUT



RAINBOW TROUT  
30 INCHES - 36 INCHES

**D**ID YOU ever accompany a friend on some fishing trip where the trout were said to be leaping out of the water in their anxiety to be caught? And after staying up all night to catch an early train and driving miles through the dust and heat at the end of your railroad journey, did you find that the stream had been fished out?

Burned by the sun, bitten by mosquitoes and covered with dust, did you not return to town filled with the determination never to take a trip from anyone again as to where to fish?

Almost all trout streams tributary to Portland have reached that condition best described by the two words, "fished out." This season the scarcity of fish in the streams is more marked than ever and it is plain that something should be done to re-stock the streams with their finny tribe.

Few devoted to the gentle art of angling are now able to make a fair catch within a day's journey of Portland. A few wise ones know where to go almost any time throughout the season and soon fill their creel with the speckled beauties, but this is only where some farmer keeps a penstock for a few favored ones or in isolated cases where for other reasons the crowd of fishermen does not penetrate.

The trout streams of the territory tributary to Portland have been so persistently fished by ardent anglers that there are but few of the elusive, finny tribe left. The usual week-end attack on the fish throughout the summer months brings out hordes of amateur Isak Walters who do more or less damage to the tribe of the wily trout. With the natural foes of the stream to face, as well as the human destroyers, trout in this state have not a fair chance to maintain their numbers.

Few states can boast of better natural facilities for the propagation of trout and other game fish than the State of Oregon. With its numerous mountain streams, rushing in torrents from snow-covered mountain ranges, with water as clear as crystal, their banks lined with luxuriant vegetation, furnishing an abundance of insect food, with their pebbly and sandy shallows keeping their waters always clear and sweet, Oregon may well rejoice in thankful recognition of Nature's splendid gifts.

But Nature herself will fail to furnish a plentiful trout supply unless she is aided in the work. Her great storehouse of energy will become exhausted unless it is supplied with new material. In no natural phenomena is this more apparent than in the propagation of fish.

Ask the pioneer angler and sportsman to give you a few reminiscences of his early life and he will tell you that years ago, before the lumberman dumped sawdust into the streams, before the mills and factories poured their poisonous refuse into their clear waters and before mining and irrigation engineers constructed their murderous canals and ditches without screens or other protection, these streams were full of fish and angling was truly a royal sport.

**Today's Conditions.**

How is it today? Only in the most remote and inaccessible places can you find a true day's sport. There is the Clackamas River right at Portland's door. The sun never sifts its golden beams upon a fine trout stream anywhere in the world. And yet today you must go 50 or 100 miles to its headwaters if you want anything like the oldtime sport. It is the same way with hundreds of other streams in Oregon.

The multiplicity of fishermen, the un-sportsmanlike slaughter of fish whenever fishermen do get far enough away from civilization to find them plentiful and keen in biting, and the disregard of the law limiting the size of a trout that may be caught to five inches, have done the deadly work. Fingerlings should be thrown back into the stream whenever caught. Those who take small fry cannot expect to catch mature trout if they persist in robbing the streams of immature fish.

Few realize there is a limit to the size of a day's catch. Did you ever hear of a fisherman stopping because he had reached a limit? Such a thing is almost unheard of. And yet the law of Oregon states plainly that not more than 15 trout shall be caught by any one person in a day. The ordinary angler takes pains at some times to reach the headwaters of some stream where he may be free from other fishermen and pursue the gentle art of angling with the best prospects of success. If the fish bite well, no matter if he has his basket filled and running over, the lust of slaughter seems to take possession of the fortunate fisherman and he keeps fishing as long as the fish bite, no matter if he has his basket filled and running over. This depletes the streams and makes the chances of the next fisherman less likely.

**A Proposed Remedy.**

The statement is often made with entire truthfulness that there are too few fish for the fisherman. Ask the next ten fishermen you see coming into Portland on any Sunday night after a day spent in whipping some trout stream and they will tell you that their catch is small because the stream is "fished out."

In view of this condition, some remedy should be found to relieve the situation. If there is any way to increase the finny population of the mountain streams, it should be done, and quickly. There are many remedies suggested, but there is by no means a unanimity of opinion on the best means to arrive at the end desired. Plans suggested by the city sportsmen usually meet with the disapproval of the farmers, for the latter class regards any move on the part of the city chap as intended for his own interest alone and the farmer opposes it on general principles. This lack of co-operation between the city and country fishermen makes it still more difficult to hit upon some plan that will help.

But with all the obstacles in the way of restocking the trout streams and keeping them stocked, there are remedies proposed that seem to be feasible and if once tried would doubtless be successful. Albert E. Gebhardt, secretary of the Oregon Fish and Game Association, an attorney in the office of Williams, Wood &

Linthicum, manifests a spirit of optimism and says that the evil can be corrected.

"Why should we sit idly by and lament when Nature herself has given us the means whereby these ravages may be checked and the old paradise be created anew?" said he. "All that we need is a strict enforcement of existing laws and the constant replenishing of these streams by artificial means. It is astonishing what may be accomplished by the judicious use of small capital and constant and energetic watchfulness and care."

**Federal Aid Not Enough.**

Hasn't the Federal Government been doing something along this line?

"Yes, indeed, it has. The United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries has been doing a splendid work in the propagation of salmon and other food fish, and it has also done much towards the propagation of trout and other game fish; but the demands upon the commission are now so great that it can do but a small fractional part of the work required in each state. Its efforts must necessarily be chiefly along commercial lines, and the propagation of game fish strictly for sport can only be carried on as a sort of supplementary work. Years ago, when we first began the work of stocking Oregon trout streams the United States Commission was able to furnish us annually several hundred thousand trout, but, as the demands upon the Commission have become greater and as Oregon is not the only state in need of such work the number of trout furnished us for distribution has of recent years been comparatively small.

**The Remedy.**

"You ask what is the remedy? Well, I will tell you. I believe the time will come when every state in the Union that has a trout stream worthy of the name will have a game fish hatchery of its own, and I should like to see Oregon one of the pioneers in this work.

"With several well-located game fish hatcheries in this state properly managed and conducted, there is no reason why a million trout and other game fish could not be distributed in the various streams and waters of the state every year. We have several most excellent locations for such institutions with every natural facility, and it only remains for us to take advantage of our opportunities. It will not take a great fortune to build these hatcheries and to maintain them. Fifteen or twenty thousand dollars would make a very good start, and once begun I believe the citizens of our state will never drop the work.

"The benefits to be derived by making Oregon again in fact the fisherman's paradise as it once was will be too apparent to need further argument.

**Will Ask No Appropriation.**

"Are we going to ask the Legislature for an appropriation to build these hatcheries? No, indeed, we are not; that would be quite useless. Appropriations for anything in the line of game or fish propagation, or even protection, are not a great favor with our Legislators. The men from the rural districts are, as a rule, opposed to them, and until the true value and significance of this great work of fish and game protection and propagation is fully understood and appreciated by all our citizens, it will be quite useless to ask for appropriations commensurate with the importance and extent of the work. But we will ask the Legislature to pass a bill which we think will accomplish the purpose desired. This bill, upon which we hope to secure favorable action, provides for the licensing of all fishermen over the age of 16 years in the State of Oregon. These licenses are to cost only \$1 a year, and will give the bearer the privilege of fishing in any of the streams or waters of the state during the open season for the period of one year. The licenses are to be issued by the Secretary of State through the County Clerks of each county. They are

to be numbered and dated and contain a description of the licensee and in many respects are to be similar to the hunter's license now so popular in this state.

"The revenue derived from these licenses is to be used exclusively for the state officers appointed for that purpose in the establishment and maintenance of trout and game fish hatcheries at different points in the state, the locations of which are also to be selected by the state officers. It is provided in the bill that all funds derived from these licenses shall be kept separate and apart from all other funds of the state and shall at all times be subject to the orders of the commission, so that this work may not in any way interfere or come in conflict with the salmon industry and so that the commission may in no way be hampered in its work.

**Commission Will Govern.**

"It has not been definitely decided just how the commission shall be appointed or whether it shall be elected by the Legislature. But that is a detail which can be arranged later. It is, however, settled that the commissioners shall be three residents of the State of Oregon and that they shall serve in terms of two, four and six years respectively; thus insuring experienced men on the commission at all times.

"In connection with the powers and duties of the commission as defined by this proposed bill we shall also endeavor to have the power vested in them to close absolutely for at least two years any stream in which trout or other game fish have been planted. This is an absolute necessity in order to obtain the best results from such plants.

"It is true our present laws prohibit the taking of any trout less than five inches in length, but few people, except true sportsmen, observe this provision of the law and it is one that is most difficult to enforce. It has been our experience that when once it is known that fish have been planted in any considerable numbers in a stream every fisherman within a radius of 50 miles will at once camp on that stream and the merry work of extermination goes on quite as rapidly as that of re-planting. But close such a stream against all fishing for at least two years after a plant has been made and, natural conditions being favorable, you will have the very best results.

"Nor will it do to stock a stream well and then leave it to its fate. If we would keep our trout streams in the best possible condition, this work of stocking and closing the stream every few years must be kept up indefinitely. In this, as in other work, eternal vigilance is the price of success."

**Another Sportsman's Views.**

G. C. Sutherland, a Portland sportsman, who has fished Oregon trout streams for 29 years, was asked what he thought of the plan proposed by Mr. Gebhardt, and said:

"The matter of better protection for our game fish is one which is being given considerable thought by fishermen generally. That something needs to be done is evident, and the sooner it is done the better it will be. During the 29 years or more I have fished the streams tributary to Portland, I have never realized more than this year, the necessity for concerted action. As the state grows, the number of fishermen likewise increases, so that now during the season, our trains and boats out of town on Saturday night and Sunday morning are loaded with fishermen. The number of fishing places does not, of course, grow correspondingly.

"The discovery of bass in our waters in large numbers several years ago was a great help to the trout, and while bass fishing was at its height, trout fishing was at a discount, resulting in

the trout being left alone to a certain extent, which had its effect in an increase of numbers. Someone, whose name I do not recall, started an agitation to remove the bar on bass, which was done by the last Legislature, resulting in the latter fish being practically exterminated by market fishermen, and the fishermen who used to go out after bass again turned their attention to the trout, and this year's scarcity of the latter fish is no doubt mainly the result of this short-sighted policy.

"I am heartily in favor of game fish propagation, and that the cost thereof, outside of Federal aid, should be borne by fishermen. A discussion has started to create a fund by having the state license rods, the same as it has guns. I doubt whether such a move would receive the support of sportsmen generally; on the contrary it is likely it would result in the defeat of both the gun and rod license. As a compromise, and one which would no doubt receive universal support, I would favor a license of \$1 on persons using either a gun or a fish line. This would catch both classes and would add several thousand dollars to the fund.

**License the Rods.**

"The beneficial effect of the license on guns is apparent to all. There was some talk that more money was secured than necessary, and that the balance should be turned into the general fund. With a license on fish lines and guns the increased revenue would create a fund sufficient for both game and fish protection, and, if necessary, some arrangement could be devised to make a fair apportionment and protection.

"If necessary, revise the law defining the duties of the game warden, so that there would be a chief deputy for each county.

"Cut down the limit on the number of trout to be caught in one day. It is now 15, and no one but a game hog would catch that many. There is no necessity for such a limit from the market fisherman's standpoint, as sale of trout is prohibited. Make the limit 10 or less.

"Raise the size of trout that may be caught from five to six inches. No sportsman would retain a five-inch trout. Six inches is a fair average size for our mountain trout.

**Breed Only Oregon Trout.**

"Breed our own species of trout. Of all foreign trout planted in our waters I have seen only one caught, and that was an Eastern brook trout, taken by Arch Parrott in the Clackamas last year. Plant the trout in the waters they inhabit, and, if possible, in the same stream as the trout lived from which the eggs were taken. There is a difference between the fish frequenting larger rivers and those in smaller streams.

"Renew the protection on bass, making it not quite so stringent as formerly, and make the season the same as trout, thus dividing the interest of fishermen between the two."

Mr. Gebhardt has prepared a bill embodying his ideas on the protection of trout and their propagation, which will be presented at the next session of the Legislature. He emphasizes the need for keeping at the work persistently and systematically for spasmodic efforts will do no good. The organization of the Oregon Fish and Game Association years ago was a step in the right direction, for much good work was done in planting trout in Oregon streams. Where the work failed was in the lack of state co-operation and the protection of streams for a number of years after the trout fry was planted.

Mr. Gebhardt states that protection for a short time after the plant will do good, for it does not require long for the fish to reach an age when they will commence to propagate.

to be numbered and dated and contain a description of the licensee and in many respects are to be similar to the hunter's license now so popular in this state.

"The revenue derived from these licenses is to be used exclusively for the state officers appointed for that purpose in the establishment and maintenance of trout and game fish hatcheries at different points in the state, the locations of which are also to be selected by the state officers. It is provided in the bill that all funds derived from these licenses shall be kept separate and apart from all other funds of the state and shall at all times be subject to the orders of the commission, so that this work may not in any way interfere or come in conflict with the salmon industry and so that the commission may in no way be hampered in its work.

**Commission Will Govern.**

"It has not been definitely decided just how the commission shall be appointed or whether it shall be elected by the Legislature. But that is a detail which can be arranged later. It is, however, settled that the commissioners shall be three residents of the State of Oregon and that they shall serve in terms of two, four and six years respectively; thus insuring experienced men on the commission at all times.

"In connection with the powers and duties of the commission as defined by this proposed bill we shall also endeavor to have the power vested in them to close absolutely for at least two years any stream in which trout or other game fish have been planted. This is an absolute necessity in order to obtain the best results from such plants.

"It is true our present laws prohibit the taking of any trout less than five inches in length, but few people, except true sportsmen, observe this provision of the law and it is one that is most difficult to enforce. It has been our experience that when once it is known that fish have been planted in any considerable numbers in a stream every fisherman within a radius of 50 miles will at once camp on that stream and the merry work of extermination goes on quite as rapidly as that of re-planting. But close such a stream against all fishing for at least two years after a plant has been made and, natural conditions being favorable, you will have the very best results.

"Nor will it do to stock a stream well and then leave it to its fate. If we would keep our trout streams in the best possible condition, this work of stocking and closing the stream every few years must be kept up indefinitely. In this, as in other work, eternal vigilance is the price of success."

**Another Sportsman's Views.**

G. C. Sutherland, a Portland sportsman, who has fished Oregon trout streams for 29 years, was asked what he thought of the plan proposed by Mr. Gebhardt, and said:

"The matter of better protection for our game fish is one which is being given considerable thought by fishermen generally. That something needs to be done is evident, and the sooner it is done the better it will be. During the 29 years or more I have fished the streams tributary to Portland, I have never realized more than this year, the necessity for concerted action. As the state grows, the number of fishermen likewise increases, so that now during the season, our trains and boats out of town on Saturday night and Sunday morning are loaded with fishermen. The number of fishing places does not, of course, grow correspondingly.

"The discovery of bass in our waters in large numbers several years ago was a great help to the trout, and while bass fishing was at its height, trout fishing was at a discount, resulting in