

# Martha Lake Concerns

Two years ago, Martha Lake (near Warm Beach) received a rules change that required the use of selective gear and allowed the harvest of two fish over 14". This change had been requested by all of the local fly fishing clubs through the State's rules change process. Although Martha was not our first choice, it was one of the lakes that WDFW put forward as a choice they would support. We committed to make an assessment of the resulting fishery a couple of years after conversion to see how the lake would "fish" under the new rules. WDFW also committed to conducting a test fishery using nets. See results of both efforts below. Additional results from Lone and Pass Lake sampling are also listed for comparison.

Martha Lake is one of just a few selective gear lakes in the northern part Region 4 (Lone on Whidbey Island and Chain east of Monroe are the other two lakes). It is stocked annually with rainbow, brown, and cutthroat trout. Recent stocking levels are listed below the test fishery data. Note that no cutthroat, very few browns, and very very few 2017 RB were captured in the test fisheries.

## Rod & Reel Test Fishery Results (after 2018 stocking date)

Lake	Date	# Fish	# Hours	Fish/Hr	Avg Length
Martha	S 2018	22	47	0.47	12.3
Martha	F 2018	4	16.5	0.18	13.9
Lone	S 2011	51	41	1.24	15.8
Lone	S 2012	90	51	1.76	16.6
Pass	S 2014	195	131.75	1.48	14.9
Pass	S 2015	292	230.5	1.27	14.5
Pass	S 2016	107	118.5	0.90	16
Pass	S 2017	219	187.5	1.17	15

## WDFW Net Sampling Results

WDFW fished Martha by fishing five variable-mesh gill nets overnight twice from March 12-13 and April 9-10. Most fish were captured in April (Table 1), likely because water temperatures were below 45 degrees F in March.

## Net Sampling Results

Species	No.	*Avg Catch Rate	%> 14"	Ln Range (inches)
March (before 2018 stocking)				
Brown Trout	1	0.2	100	25
Rainbow Trout	2	0.4	100	17
Yellow Perch	3	0.6	0	7 - 9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1.2</b>		
April (after 2018 stocking)				
Black Crappie	1	0.2	0	11
Brown Trout	6	1.2	50	12 - 18
Largemouth Bass	1	0.2	100	15
Rainbow Trout	158	31.6	1.3	8 - 17
Yellow Perch	21	4.2	0	4 - 11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>37.4</b>		

\*Avg Catch Rate (no./net-night)

## Trout Stocking in Martha Lake

	RB (catchables)	Per acre (63 acre lake)	RB (triploids)	Brown	Cutthroat
2018	3000	48		6300	10,000
*2017	1518	24		2470	10,016
2016	3000	48		2000	8776
2015	4002	63		4500	10,000
2014	2800	44	291	2500	10,282

\*2017 – Plan called for 2000 RB

For comparison, Lone is typically stocked at 30 catchable RB/acre. Pass is stocked with fingerlings at varying densities.

## **The reason for the meeting is to see if we can figure out why the fishing is so poor, and what can we do to make it better.**

Possible reasons to be discussed include -

- Water Quality Issues (see Snohomish County Lakes Monitoring Data)
- Lake Productivity Issues (see above)
- Stocking Densities
- Lake Escapement Issues
- Poaching Issues (see WDFW Enforcement Reporting)
- Catch Mortality from Fishing Pressure/Fish Handling

## **Potential Action Items**

- Change Stocking Densities
- Add Triploid RB to Stocking Plan
- Fin Clip (WDFW study based on Lone study)
- Additional Gill Net Surveys (WDFW study based on Lone study)
- Additional Catch and Measure (Fly Clubs study)
- Additional Creel Surveys (Fly Clubs led study based on Lone study)
- Remove Selective Gear Rules and fight for a potentially more suitable lake for S G Rules