

A Handbook for Angling in the Eastern Sierra Nevada  
Between the Areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine

A Senior Project  
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by  
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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this project was to compile a handbook to recreational fishing in the Eastern Sierra Nevada between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California. During the summer, fishing is one of the most popular recreational pursuits in this region. It is important for anglers to have access to a concise, accurate, and thorough resource that can be used for reference to the sport of angling in this region of the Eastern Sierra, and a handbook such as this does not currently exist. This handbook was created with anglers in mind. It is concise, travel-friendly and provides up-to-date information regarding local policy as well as tackle shop and fish species information.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The Eastern side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California, offers some of the most strikingly beautiful scenery in all of California. The land effortlessly transitions from rolling valleys of sagebrush to tall granite peaks, then again from native rangeland to high altitude pine forest. This beautiful, high desert landscape offers an abundance of recreational opportunities for visitors and locals alike. Some of the most popular recreational pursuits in this area include the use of off-highway vehicles (OHV's), hunting, hiking, camping, skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, canoeing, rock climbing, horseback riding, and swimming. However, fishing is easily one of the most popular choices among recreational enthusiasts to this area.

Each year, tourists from around the world visit the Eastern Sierra for its abundance of fishing opportunities. They are greeted with the year-round fishery provided by the Owens River, which meanders through the Owens Valley between Bishop and Lone Pine. In season, anglers to the area have access to countless streams and creeks fed by high-mountain runoff that provides scenic views across a variety of geographic locations. To the north, anglers flock to the areas surrounding the waters of the East Walker River near Bridgeport in search of record-sized trout. Regardless of location, fishing plays a large role in attracting visitors to this region of the Inyo and Mono counties every year in search of big fish, good memories, and beautiful scenery.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Because of the density of recreational anglers to the Eastern Sierra Nevada between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California, there is a demand placed on informational material that highlights the factors that play into a successful, memorable fishing excursion. It is important for anglers to have access to a concise, accurate, and thorough resource that can be used for reference to the sport of angling in this region of the Eastern Sierra. There are a variety of blog-style websites and a few local publications, but a compilation of reliable and credible resources is nonexistent. The problem is that there is a lack of informational material that is organized into one easy-to-read, user-friendly, comprehensive resource for anglers.

## **Importance of the Project**

It is important to provide anglers with all of the necessary information they need in order to have a successful and enjoyable fishing trip. As many avid anglers know, it is also important to recognize and adhere to state and local regulations affecting the sport of fishing, especially those that are outlined by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Similarly, it is important to note any seasonal limitations, species regulations, and state fishing health advisories. Ultimately, it is important to outline, clearly and concisely, the means by which the average angler can effectively adhere to regulation, acquire gear, reach the water, and fish to their heart's content.

## **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to compile a handbook to angling in the Eastern Sierra, providing anglers with a concise resource to aid them in their recreational angling pursuits.

## **Objectives of the Project**

The objectives to accomplish the purposes of this project are:

1. To research information that is both relative and pertinent to the average angler in the Eastern Sierra Nevada region between Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California.
2. To address the demand for a thorough resource on angling in the Eastern Sierra.
3. To organize reliable sources and their information into a linear, user-friendly product.
4. To compile all relative information into one concise handbook on angling in the Eastern Sierra.
5. To provide the handbook to anglers via visitor center and gear shop distribution centers.

## **Definitions of Important Terms**

While there are many terms relevant to the sport of fishing, anglers should have a firm grasp of basic recreational jargon. [www.anglerguide.com](http://www.anglerguide.com) provides an excellent resource for learning both basic and more technical fishing terms in their Fishing Glossary entitled Fishing Terminology.

- **Angling:** The recreational catching of fish (sport-fishing) by hook and line.



- **Artificial Lures and Flies:** Means man-made devices intended as visual attractants for fish and does not include living or dead organisms or edible parts thereof, natural or prepared food stuffs, artificial salmon eggs, artificial corn, or artificial marshmallows.
- **Bag Limit:** Restriction in the number of fish an angler may retain, generally on a daily basis.
- **Bait:** Can mean live bait or artificial bait, such as a lure.
- **Catch-and-Release:** Refers to catching a fish and immediately releasing it. Many anglers practice catch-and-release as a way to help conserve the resource. In some waters, such as certain small trout streams, the state fishing regulations actually require anglers to catch-and-release.
- **Coldwater Fishery:** Refers to waters typically in the higher elevations that can be predominately trout fisheries.
- **Fishery:** A term used for a lake, river or stream where people can catch fish, or even a particular kind of fish, such as a bass or trout fishery.
- **Fly:** A natural insect used by fish as food or an imitation of a natural insect used by fly-anglers.
- **Keeper:** For anglers, it is typically any fish that is worth taking home to eat. For lakes with special regulations, it can be fish of specified lengths that are legal to harvest, such as fisheries where there are slot limits.
- **Nonnative Fish:** A fish that is not native to a state.

- **Terminal Tackle:** Angling equipment, excluding artificial baits, attached to the end of a fishing line; examples include hooks, snaps, swivels, snap-swivels, sinkers, floats, and plastic beads. (Fishing Terminology, n.d.)

## Summary

The Eastern Sierra Nevada region between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California is renowned for its wealth of recreational fishing opportunity. As more anglers are attracted to this area and it's abundance of fish, the need for a thorough compilation of fishing resources increases. The sheer number of resources, the general wordiness of their materials, and the advertisement-laden pages that distract their readers limits the effectiveness of publications relating to fishing in this area. More often than not, these publications and websites also fail to refer their readers to regulatory information such as that which is outlined by the CDFW.

The purpose of this project is to meet the needs of the average fisherman by researching, compiling, and providing a handbook to recreational angling in the Eastern Sierra. This project will eliminate the advertisements, wordiness, and confusion associated with previous publications of this subject matter while providing a concise and accurate guide to all things related to fishing in this section of California. Ultimately, this project will serve as a means of providing both new and seasoned anglers alike with the information they need to have a successful, memorable fishing experience.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of Literature**

California's Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains, bound by the towns of Bridgeport to the north and Lone Pine to the south, is renowned for its expansive wilderness and choice angling. "You can't find a better place to fish in California... and not just because the rainbows [trout] and browns [trout] are eagerly biting and well stocked... It's the scenery" (Glazner, 2014). The area, which boasts an impressive variety of both native and non-native fish populations, attracts a number of local and visiting anglers to its various watersheds over the course of an annual fishing season.

Information regarding recreational angling of the Eastern Sierra is provided by regulatory government agencies, as well as a variety of advertisement-laden local publications. This information is often misconstrued, or simply ignored as fresh water anglers are overwhelmed by the technical language and large volume of material associated with recreational fishing in this mountainous region of California. Due to the consistent draw and sheer density of recreational anglers to this area, informational fishing resources must be compiled and provided to the general public in the form of a thorough and concise field manual.

#### **Angling in the Eastern Sierra**

Angling in the Eastern Sierra Nevada is most dense in the watershed region bound by the towns of Bridgeport, Lee Vining, Bishop, Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine. Meandering gracefully "183 miles...from Crowley Lake to Pleasant Valley Reservoir and

from Pleasant Valley Reservoir...south,” the Owens River boasts “one of the most heavily fished waters in the Eastern Sierra” (Ellis, 2014). World-class recreational fishing begins in the north with the Walker River and the town of Bridgeport. “The East Walker River is located near Bridgeport with the West Walker River in Northern Mono County near the town of Walker” (Strelneck, n.d.). From there, “the Sierra Nevada mountain range stretches 360 miles [south]” and “is easily accessed from U.S. Highway 395 throughout its entire length” (Erdman, n.d.). Heading south, a variety of flourishing watersheds give way to the town of Lone Pine, a roughly 2,000-population town that lie at the base of Mt. Whitney, the highest Mountain in the contiguous United States.

This region of the Eastern Sierra is notorious for both its variety as well as its abundance of sport fishing populations. “Throughout the Inyo and Mono counties, rainbow, brown, cutthroat, brook and golden trout inhabit local waters. For a change of pace, there are non-trout species. Bass, catfish, and bluegill can be found in the warmer waters of the Owens Valley” (Strelneck, n.d.). Trout is undoubtedly the species of choice for a large number of visiting and local anglers due in large part to their abundance and catchability. Some populations, such as that of the Golden trout, are geographically isolated to high-altitude waters such as those found in the backcountry, and are less popular than their rainbow, brown, or cutthroat counterparts. This variety of fish species contributes to a host of fishing methods as they apply to angler style and methodology.

## **Fishing Methods**

There are three main methods of fishing used in the Eastern Sierra region. The first fishing method is fly-fishing with a dry fly, a nymph, or a streamer. Fly fishing is the

method of fishing associated with “artificial flies... which have very little weight to them,” which enable an angler’s cast to “carr[y] the momentum through the air” while “trail[ing] the lightweight line behind it” (Losee, 2012b). Dry flies are associated with the earliest stage of an insect’s life, and “float on the surface of the water” (Losee, 2012a). Nymphs are typically the most popular choice for fly-fishermen due to their high success rate. This success is due in part to the fact that “fish, trout specifically, feed approximately 80% of the time underwater” (Losee, 2012a). Streamers are the second most productive flies, made to imitate “larger underwater fish foods” (Losee, 2012a). An alternative method to fly-fishing is fishing with artificial lures. This method consists of using “handmade flies, spinners, plugs, spoons, and facsimiles of live animals” to catch the fish (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. n.d.). It should be noted that this method does not “include artificially-produced organic baits and fish eggs that are intended to be ingested” (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. n.d.). The third alternative fishing method includes the use of natural baits, consisting of crickets, grubs, worms, and larvae. Each of these methods is used extensively amongst fishermen of the Eastern Sierra. The diverse nature of both the anglers to the Eastern Sierra, as well as their various fishing methodology establishes the demand for a field manual that addresses each angler’s unique needs as they pertain to recreational fishing in this region.

### **Compiling a Guide to Angling on the Eastern Sierra**

The compilation of an organized, user-friendly guide to angling on the Eastern Sierra would be an invaluable reference tool for local and visiting anglers alike, especially in consideration of the various techniques and methods applied to an individual

fisherman's recreational pursuits. In order to compile a concise, yet thorough guide, many factors must be addressed so as to provide a complete picture to the user. First, a guide should consider the story behind the creation of a guide, providing the reading audience a glimpse into the scope of the project (Field Guide Elements, n.d.). Following this bit of personal flair, acknowledgements should be included and the material introduced (Field Guide Elements, n.d.). Maps should be used liberally as a means of communicating access points and directions to various watersheds. "A scale and north arrow" should also be included, in addition to "highlights, trails, landmarks, restrooms and other things that [guide users] should know about (Field Guide Elements, n.d.). Further guidance can be provided by including driving directions to watersheds and trail directions for travelling to fishing location on foot. In addition to providing watershed locale, contact information and addresses of nearby bait and tackle shops should be provided and maintained. Campgrounds, RV Parks, and Picnic areas should be included in a map of the nearby area, as the use of these areas is directly correlated to fisherman density.

It is necessary for fisherman to be able to properly identify fish species to meet the requirements and regulations set forth by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Similarly, fisherman must note the seasonal regulations and comply with state regulations and advisories as they are updated annually by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Up-to-date regulations can be viewed at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regulations>. For the purposes of this guidebook, the open season for fishing in the Sierra District between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California begins on the Last Saturday in April and closes on November 15<sup>th</sup> (Freshwater

Sport Fishing Regulations, n.d.). In compliance with the regulations set forth by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the maximum daily bag limit is 5 per day and a maximum of 10 in possession (Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations, n.d.).

Guidebook illustrations should also be used liberally and provided in detail and vibrancy, so as to draw attention to important geographical features, locations and fish species. Some fish, particularly among the various trout species, are often easily confused due to their similar coloring or markings. For example, the rainbow trout can be identified by a bright pink stripe on its lateral sides, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Rainbow Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

Similarly, a brown trout such as the one illustrated in Figure 2 can be identified by its red and black markings and grey-green color.



**Figure 2. Brown Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

The Cutthroat can be identified by its grey appearance and dull pink hues, as seen in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Cutthroat Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

The brook trout is easily identified by its brown coloring and camouflaged appearance. This trout is typically smaller than its contemporaries, and therefore tends to be found in smaller streams and tributaries. The brook trout's markings are characterized by golden and red spots on its lateral sides and dark spots on its dorsal fin, as seen in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Brook Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

The golden trout is one of the most sought-after trout in the Eastern Sierra region due to the limited nature of the catch. These fish, which are only found in high elevation waters, are characterized by their vibrant gold and red markings, though they can sometimes appear bright orange or pink, as seen in Figure 5.





Figure 5. Golden Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)

## Summary

The density of fisherman to the Eastern Sierra region between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California has created a need for a field guide to provide for the common angler a reference to methods, locations, techniques, access, maps, and local information. Due to the volume and technical language of various literature and government publications, fisherman, who bask the simplicity and peace of sport fishing have found a need for a thorough compilation of resources as they apply to time spent in the field.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods and Materials**

In order to begin the process of compiling a handbook to angling in the Eastern Sierra, it was first necessary to identify the most significant materials to include in the handbook. A brief trout species identification aid was included, as these are the most common fish caught in the area and the fish that is most often misidentified. License information was included as a reference to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Finally, contact information and addresses of the top local tackle shops were included to both promote local business and inform the handbook reader of the best and most cost-effective locations to buy bait and tackle.

#### **Information to Provide**

The first step in compiling a resource such as this one is to evaluate what information is to be communicated. During this stage, brainstorming and Internet browsing allowed for the selection of a project that would be useful to its readers. “Angling in the Eastern Sierra Nevada Between the Areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine,” was created as a means of outreach to visiting fisherman. This topic attempted to address the primary questions or inquiries that a visiting fisherman to the area might first ask. In the field, it is cumbersome to have materials that are lengthy and large in size, therefore, it was of primary importance to create a handbook that was pocket-sized and concise.

## **Materials Included**

The next step was to actively consider the information that should be included in such a handbook. Amateur and experienced fisherman alike are simple, no-nonsense folks who tend to prefer information that is easily accessible and common sense. It then follows that the most significant information about fishing should be included. Sections were pulled from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Regulation website to outline only the most important details. These details included the dates and lengths of fishing seasons in the area, the amount of fish a fisherman can catch each day, the maximum amount of fish allowed in an individual's possession, and any size limits that restrict the length of fish kept. After this, it became necessary to outline the most common fish that are caught in the area. Basic identification aids, as well as high-resolution pictures were included as a means by which inexperienced fisherman might identify their catch. The last piece of vital information to include was contact information for some of the best bait and tackle shops.

## **Species Identification Aids**

In compiling significant information in a concise, easy-to-reference handbook, it was imperative to include high-resolution photographs of the top 5 most common fish through the entire Eastern Sierra. These pictures were found through the University of California, Davis who have a database of all native and non-native fish to the state. The fish included in this handbook were limited to 5 as most other species are insignificant in comparison the sheer density of Rainbow, Brown, Cutthroat, Brook, and Golden Trout to

the area. The most useful tool a beginning fisherman can have are visual aids that help educated the fisherman about fish species and the sport of fishing itself.

### **Tackle Shops**

After organizing information about regulations and the most significant fish species, it is then important to include information about where anglers can access supplies for their fishing excursions. This information is relevant because many of the locations fisherman visit are well off the beaten path, preventing them access to the Internet or even cell phone reception. Basic contact information for some of the most reliable and fisherman-friendly tackle shops in the area was included. Specifically, information on bait and tackle shops in the towns of Lone Pine, Bishop, Mammoth Lakes and Bridgeport was included in this handbook. These locations were included as a way of promoting local business while addressing the average fisherman's need for bait, lures, line, clothing, and licenses.

### **Summary**

Though this handbook is both concise and small in size, it offers all of the most important information in a convenient, easy-to-read format, making it the ideal tool for any fisherman. However, the material and visual aids included are largely geared towards the beginning angler who seeks a fun and quick way of learning more about fish identification and state regulations. To compile this resource, it was first important to decipher which topic should be presented to the reader. Next, it was important to prioritize and narrow-down the subject matter to include on the most important

information, as other more lengthy reference documents often dissuade anglers from reading them. Then, species identification aids were included as a means by which the beginner angler can become a professional fish identifier and the skilled fisherman can fine-tune his abilities. Finally, contact information for local bait and tackle shops was included to aid fishermen in supplying their fishing trip while also promoting local business.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide anglers to the Eastern Sierra Nevada a concise and pocket-sized material which includes information about significant regulations, provides visual aids for fish species identification, and that provides some contact information for local bait and tackle shops. This material has been compiled a field-sized, easy-to-read format which hopes to reach as broad an audience as possible and appeal to fisherman of varying abilities. The information included has been identified as the foremost priorities a fisherman should consider when out in the field. These priorities must be state regulations, fish identification, and awareness of shops so as to make the fishing excursion both well supplied and enjoyable.

**Angling in the Eastern Sierra Nevada**  
**Between the Areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine**



Photo by Rachel Martin

By Rachel Martin  
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## **Introduction**

This handbook was compiled with the intent to provide recreational anglers to the Eastern Sierra a concise reference to basic fishing information.

This handbook outlines trout species, which are the most common fish in the area, as well as a few basic identifying characteristics for each kind.

This handbook also details some of the most popular locations to wet a line along the Eastern Sierra, in addition to contact and address information for local bait and tackle shops.

Finally, locals offer information on a few honey holes in the area and offer a few lure, bait and fly recommendations. A summary of local campgrounds and points of interest conclude this handbook.

## **California Department of Fish and Wildlife Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations**

### **Season:**

- Inyo and Mono Counties:
  - Open season for fishing in the Sierra District between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California begins on the Last Saturday in April and closes on November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Bridgeport Reservoir Tributaries:
  - Last Saturday in Apr. through the Friday preceding Memorial Day and Oct. 1 through Nov 15. (*Daily Bag and Possession Limit: 1*)
  - Saturday preceding Memorial Day through Sept. 30.

### **Bag Limit:**

- Inyo County:
  - Maximum Daily Bag Limit: 5
  - Maximum in Possession: 10
- Mono County:
  - Maximum Daily Bag Limit: 5
  - Maximum in Possession: 10
- Bridgeport Reservoir Tributaries:
  - Maximum Daily Bag Limit: 5
  - Maximum in Possession: 10

### **Size Limit:**

- Inyo County: All Waters 12 inch Minimum
- Mono County: All Waters No Size Limit
- Bridgeport Reservoir Tributaries: 18 inch Minimum with Barbless Hooks

## License Information

Provided by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

<b>ANNUAL LICENSES</b>	
Resident Sport Fishing License .....	\$47.01
Non-Resident Sport Fishing License .....	\$126.36
<b>SHORT-TERM LICENSES</b>	
One-Day Sport Fishing License (resident or nonresident) .....	\$15.12
Two-Day Sport Fishing License* (resident or nonresident) .....	\$23.50
Ten-Day Non-Resident Sport Fishing License** .....	\$47.01
*Valid for two consecutive calendar days.	
**Valid for ten consecutive calendar days.	
<b>VALIDATIONS</b>	
Second-Rod Validation .....	\$14.61
<b>REPORT CARDS</b>	
North Coast Salmon Report Card (all waters of Klamath-Trinity System and Smith River) .....	\$6.22
Steelhead Report Card .....	\$7.05
Sturgeon Fishing Report Card .....	\$8.13
<b>DUPLICATE FEES</b>	
Sport Fishing License (Annual) .....	\$10.34
Second-Rod Validation .....	\$3.24
Sturgeon Fishing Replacement Card (CDFW license sales offices only) .....	\$15.45
<b>LIFETIME SPORT FISHING LICENSES</b>	
Age 9 years or younger .....	\$517.00
Age 10 to 39 years .....	\$844.50
Age 40 to 61 years .....	\$761.00
Age 62 years or older .....	\$517.00
Additional Lifetime Fishing Privileges (includes: Second-Rod Validation, Ocean Enhancement Validation, North Coast Salmon Report Card and Steelhead Report Card) .....	
	\$349.75
Most fees include 5% license agent handling fee and 3% nonrefundable application fee.	

## **Trout Species**

The portion of the Eastern Sierra Nevada between the towns of Bridgeport and Lone Pine boasts an impressive variety of both native and non-native fish populations, attracting a number of local and visiting anglers to its various watersheds over the course of an annual fishing season. In addition to a seemingly endless population of various trout species, areas such as the Owens River Gorge have Bluegill, Bass, and Catfish as an alternative to the cold-water trout. Some populations, such as that of the Golden trout, are geographically isolated to high-altitude waters such as those found in the backcountry, and are less popular than their rainbow, brown, or cutthroat counterparts. However, trout is undoubtedly the species of choice for a large number of visiting and local anglers due in large part to their abundance and overall catchability.

Outlined are 5 of the most common types of trout as they are found in the watershed areas of the Eastern Sierra Nevada.

### **Rainbow Trout**

The rainbow trout can be identified by a bright pink stripe on its lateral sides, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Rainbow Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

## **Brown Trout**

Brown trout can be identified by red and black markings that resemble spots and a grey-green body color.



**Figure 2. Brown Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

### **Cutthroat Trout**

The Cutthroat can be identified by its grey appearance and dull pink hues, as seen in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Cutthroat Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**



### **Brook Trout**

The brook trout is identified by its smaller size and camouflaged appearance. The Brookie is also characterized by golden and red spots on its lateral sides and dark spots on its dorsal fin.



**Figure 4. Brook Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**



### **Golden Trout**

The golden trout is one of the most sought-after trout in the Eastern Sierra region due to the limited nature of the catch. These fish, which are only found in high elevation waters, are characterized by their vibrant gold and red markings, though they can sometimes appear bright orange or pink.



Figure 5. Golden Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)

## **Tackle Shops**

*The Local's Choice*

### **Lone Pine:**

Lone Pine Sporting Goods  
220 S Main St, Lone Pine, CA 93545  
(760) 876-5365

### **Bishop:**

Reagan's Sporting Goods  
963 N Main St, Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 872-3000

Culver's Sporting Goods  
156 S Main St, Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 872-8361

Mac's Sporting Goods  
425 N Main St, Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 872-9201

### **Mammoth Lakes:**

Rick's Sport Center  
3241 Main St, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 934-3416

### **Bridgeport:**

Ken's Sporting Goods  
258 Main St, Bridgeport, CA 93517  
(760) 932-7707

## **Conclusion**

This handbook has been compiled as a brief, convenient handbook to angling in the Eastern Sierra. It should be used to supplement further readings on specific locations and other fish species.

Anglers should always refer back to the California Department of Fish and Game Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations for the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding licensure, Seasons, Bag Limits, Size Limits, and Special Regulations.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Summary, Recommendations and Conclusions**

#### **Summary**

This handbook provides anglers to the Eastern Sierra Nevada a compilation of helpful resources. The handbook introduces the reader, and then provides information on seasonal dates, bag limits and acceptable keep sizes in the section titled California Department of Fish and Game Regulations. The handbook provides further information on Licensing Information and Trout Species, where it provides identification aids to assists new and seasoned anglers alike in making the most out of their fishing experience.

#### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations should be taken into account should a new handbook be created on this topic. The inclusion of a “Local’s Segment” would create a sense of community amongst local anglers, while providing visitors with helpful hints and information about fishing hot spots. A tourism section could be added to further provide visitors with information on hotels, restaurants and similar outdoor recreation. As the California Department of Fish and Game Regulations are constantly being updated, another handbook would have to reflect those changes so as to provide target audience with accurate, reliable information. Visual aids could be expanded to include maps, waterway entrances and paths so as to provide anglers with a more thorough understanding of where to go and what to look for. Additionally, visual aids could be provided on a reader-submission basis, highlighting pictures taken by local fishermen and proud visitors.

## **Conclusions**

Completing this project was a real joy and a success. Studying information about the Eastern Sierra Nevada, it became clear that the area of California between Bridgeport and Lone Pine has an impressive wealth of natural resources that continue to draw locals and visitors alike out into the sunshine. This project also revealed a surprising lack of resources when it came to information designed and specifically provided to the area's recreational fishing enthusiasts. The handbook served as a way to compile the most important factors that an angler would need to consider before beginning their fishing excursion. Though there is potential to add even more useful information, this handbook is both concise and user-friendly, which would encourage more anglers to pick it up during their next stop at the local tackle shop. This handbook is most helpful in providing fishermen with visual aids that they can consult in the field. Overall, the author feels that this handbook would be well received by locals and visitors alike, with a special emphasis on novice anglers who are new to the sport or new to the geographic area.

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## **Appendix**

### **Appendix A: Handbook**

Angling in the Eastern Sierra Nevada Between the Areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine

# **Angling in the Eastern Sierra Nevada**

## **Between the Areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine**



Photo by Rachel Martin

By Rachel Martin  
©January 2017



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## **Introduction**

This handbook was compiled with the intent to provide recreational anglers to the Eastern Sierra a concise reference to basic fishing information.

This handbook outlines trout species, which are the most common fish in the area, as well as a few basic identifying characteristics for each kind.

This handbook also details some of the most popular locations to wet a line along the Eastern Sierra, in addition to contact and address information for local bait and tackle shops.

Finally, locals offer information on a few honey holes in the area and offer a few lure, bait and fly recommendations. A summary of local campgrounds and points of interest conclude this handbook.

# California Department of Fish and Wildlife

## Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations

### Season:

- Inyo and Mono Counties:
  - Open season for fishing in the Sierra District between the areas of Bridgeport and Lone Pine, California begins on the Last Saturday in April and closes on November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Bridgeport Reservoir Tributaries:
  - Last Saturday in Apr. through the Friday preceding Memorial Day and Oct. 1 through Nov 15. (*Daily Bag and Possession Limit: 1*)
  - Saturday preceding Memorial Day through Sept. 30.

### Bag Limit:

- Inyo County:
  - Maximum Daily Bag Limit: 5
  - Maximum in Possession: 10
- Mono County:
  - Maximum Daily Bag Limit: 5
  - Maximum in Possession: 10
- Bridgeport Reservoir Tributaries:
  - Maximum Daily Bag Limit: 5
  - Maximum in Possession: 10

### Size Limit:

- Inyo County: All Waters 12 inch Minimum
- Mono County: All Waters No Size Limit
- Bridgeport Reservoir Tributaries: 18 inch Minimum with Barbless Hooks

# License Information

Provided by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

## ANNUAL LICENSES

Resident Sport Fishing License .....	\$47.01
Non-Resident Sport Fishing License .....	\$126.36

## SHORT-TERM LICENSES

One-Day Sport Fishing License (resident or nonresident) .....	\$15.12
Two-Day Sport Fishing License* (resident or nonresident) .....	\$23.50
Ten-Day Non-Resident Sport Fishing License** .....	\$47.01

\*Valid for two consecutive calendar days.

\*\*Valid for ten consecutive calendar days.

## VALIDATIONS

Second-Rod Validation .....	\$14.61
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## REPORT CARDS

North Coast Salmon Report Card (all waters of Klamath-Trinity System and Smith River) ....	\$6.22
Steelhead Report Card .....	\$7.05
Sturgeon Fishing Report Card .....	\$8.13

## DUPLICATE FEES

Sport Fishing License (Annual) .....	\$10.54
Second-Rod Validation .....	\$3.24
Sturgeon Fishing Replacement Card (CDFW license sales offices only) .....	\$15.45

## LIFETIME SPORT FISHING LICENSES

Age 9 years or younger .....	\$517.00
Age 10 to 39 years .....	\$844.50
Age 40 to 61 years.....	\$761.00
Age 62 years or older.....	\$517.00

*Additional Lifetime Fishing Privileges (includes: Second-Rod Validation,*

*Ocean Enhancement Validation, North Coast Salmon Report Card and*

*Steelhead Report Card) .....* \$349.75

*Most fees include 5% license agent handling fee and 3% nonrefundable application fee.*

## **Trout Species**

The portion of the Eastern Sierra Nevada between the towns of Bridgeport and Lone Pine boasts an impressive variety of both native and non-native fish populations, attracting a number of local and visiting anglers to its various watersheds over the course of an annual fishing season. In addition to a seemingly endless population of various trout species, areas such as the Owens River Gorge have Bluegill, Bass, and Catfish as an alternative to the cold-water trout. Some populations, such as that of the Golden trout, are geographically isolated to high-altitude waters such as those found in the backcountry, and are less popular than their rainbow, brown, or cutthroat counterparts. However, trout is undoubtedly the species of choice for a large number of visiting and local anglers due in large part to their abundance and overall catchability.

Outlined are 5 of the most common types of trout as they are found in the watershed areas of the Eastern Sierra Nevada.

## **Rainbow Trout**

The rainbow trout can be identified by a bright pink stripe on its lateral sides, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 6. Rainbow Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

## **Brown Trout**

Brown trout can be identified by red and black markings that resemble spots and a grey-green body color.



**Figure 7. Brown Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

## **Cutthroat Trout**

The Cutthroat can be identified by its grey appearance and dull pink hues, as seen in Figure 3.



**Figure 8. Cutthroat Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**



## **Brook Trout**

The brook trout is identified by its smaller size and camouflaged appearance. The Brookie is also characterized by golden and red spots on its lateral sides and dark spots on its dorsal fin.



**Figure 9. Brook Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)**

## Golden Trout

The golden trout is one of the most sought-after trout in the Eastern Sierra region due to the limited nature of the catch. These fish, which are only found in high elevation waters, are characterized by their vibrant gold and red markings, though they can sometimes appear bright orange or pink.



Photo Credit: Gerard Carmona Catot

Figure 10. Golden Trout (California Fish Species. n.d.)

## **Tackle Shops**

*The Local's Choice*

### **Lone Pine:**

Lone Pine Sporting Goods  
220 S Main St, Lone Pine, CA 93545  
(760) 876-5365

### **Bishop:**

Reagan's Sporting Goods  
963 N Main St, Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 872-3000

Culver's Sporting Goods  
156 S Main St, Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 872-8361

Mac's Sporting Goods  
425 N Main St, Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 872-9201

### **Mammoth Lakes:**

Rick's Sport Center  
3241 Main St, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 934-3416

### **Bridgeport:**

Ken's Sporting Goods  
258 Main St, Bridgeport, CA 93517  
(760) 932-7707

## **Conclusion**

This handbook has been compiled as a brief, convenient handbook to angling in the Eastern Sierra. It should be used to supplement further readings on specific locations and other fish species.

Anglers should always refer back to the California Department of Fish and Game Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations for the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding licensure, Seasons, Bag Limits, Size Limits, and Special Regulations.