

CDFW introduces web-based Angler Survey platform

March 12, 2025



The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is excited to announce the launch of a web-based platform called the California Inland Recreational Angler Survey, or CIRAS, that will provide the public with helpful fishing information driven by data submitted by anglers. The platform can be found at CIRAS.wildlife.ca.gov.

CIRAS is powered by anglers for anglers. It allows anglers to submit data regarding their fishing trips and provides immediate access to aggregated sport fishing data through an interactive “Ready to Fish” dashboard. As a crowdsourcing platform, CIRAS requires a high level of participation among the full spectrum of California inland anglers’ fishing interests to drive the quality of fishing information it provides.

CIRAS exponentially expands the reach of CDFW’s Angler Survey Boxes (ASB), a network of more than 200 metal angler survey boxes located throughout the state where anglers can record their fishing experiences on paper survey slips. While the ASB system is typically used to evaluate trout fisheries, the modern CIRAS platform will provide anglers with an opportunity to submit and interact with information about any sport fish from any fishable inland or anadromous water in the state. This means data on additional

locations and fish species will be more accessible to the public than ever before. Historic data from ASBs will also be uploaded into CIRAS providing immediate utility for those fisheries while anglers begin to populate new locations and species data.

The web platform debuts its first phase for waters within CDFW's North Central Region and will later be expanded statewide. While the new survey can be accessed using mobile devices, the platform currently requires internet connectivity to submit angling data. However, CDFW plans to incorporate off-line functionality in future phases.

"The CIRAS project represents a new opportunity for CDFW to better understand angler preferences and performance of fisheries, while also allowing anglers to access information to plan their next fishing trip," said CDFW Fisheries Branch Chief Jay Rowan. "By giving access to information that other anglers have entered into CIRAS, people will be able to see what species are present, catch rates, size distributions, and the time of year others are out catching fish. CIRAS also provides an opportunity for anglers to contribute directly to scientific work at CDFW, which will help us better manage the lakes and streams and improve fishing opportunities."

CDFW uses fishing survey data submitted by anglers to inform management actions to protect fisheries and improve angling opportunities. These surveys collect data directly from anglers about the fish they catch (or don't catch). Data collected from angler surveys can include the species of fish caught, general fishing location, and overall angling experience from a single fishing trip. This information can also serve as an alert for CDFW scientists when more robust surveys are necessary. CIRAS will complement, rather than replace, more intensive assessments conducted by trained staff.

CDFW encourages anglers fishing in CDFW's North Central Region to contribute their catch information using this new platform. CDFW's North Central Region encompasses all or parts of 17 counties, including Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Lake, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento (east of Interstate 5), San Joaquin, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo (north of Interstate 80), and Yuba. Helpful resources about CIRAS are available on the CIRAS website under "Resources."

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Questions and comments regarding CIRAS can be submitted to CIRAS@wildlife.ca.gov.