

A FISHERY MANAGER'S CHALLENGE

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Fisheries management is increasingly defined by changes in human populations, loss of access to public waters, native fish management and the struggle to maintain aquatic habitat in the face of both climate change and physical alterations. Angling pressure has not kept pace with population growth and combined with the decline of rod and gun clubs and the increase in special interest groups threatens both funding and social and political support for aquatic resource management. Changes in land-ownership funnels that increases numbers through fewer access sites results in conflicts. Changing land ownership also leads to increasing applications and violations for fish ponds and streambank alterations and old financial constraints do not always apply. Many anglers do not have a good grasp of biological principles that leads to illegal fish introductions and challenges to management programs. Today's biologists are better trained than ever but recruitment and retention is an increasing problem for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Many management tools have not changed but new technologies offers greater understanding if we use them intelligently. Native fish management increasingly drives management through statutes, policies and funding priorities. Suppression of unwanted species is the latest strategy but not always applied well. The angling public has not been educated well on the need for native fish management and often challenges programs. Climate change and a growing demand for energy development could trump many of today's programs.