



EL CAMINO SIERRA

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF INYO

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April 7, 2020

Director Charlton H. Bonham  
State of California – Natural Resources Agency  
Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)  
1416 Ninth Street, Room 125  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Via Email**

**Re: Postponement of Regular Fishing Season and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Fish Stocking in Inyo County**

Dear Mr. Bonham,

On behalf of the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, Inyo County Sheriff Jeff Hollowell, and Inyo County Public Health Officer, Dr. James Richardson, we are writing to request the postponement of the opening of trout fishing season scheduled for April 25, 2020. Attached is a previously sent request from Dr. James Richardson.

On April 7, 2020 the Inyo County Board of Supervisors considered the possible impacts of the annual Fishing Opener the weekend of April 25-26, 2020, on the public health and safety of local residents, communities and visitors.

Within Inyo County there is an insufficient quantity of critical healthcare infrastructure, including hospital beds, ventilators, and health care staff capable of adequately treating mass numbers of patients. For this reason, recreational travel to this area has been discouraged, developed recreation sites have been closed, and recreational short term lodging (including short-term rentals, vacation rentals, timeshares, hotels, motels, campgrounds, RV parks, and any other facility or property offering accommodation to renters for less than 30 days) throughout Inyo County has been prohibited.

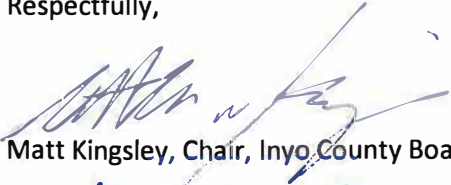
The annual fishing opener is one of Inyo County's most popular recreational events. Though the opener is a major driver of our local tourist economy and is beloved by locals and visitors alike, the event annually draws thousands of people into our small communities, potentially bringing disease into the area and burdening our health care system. We believe that Governor Newsom's March 19 "Stay-At-Home" Executive Order requiring all Californians to stay in their place of residence through April 30, 2020 prohibits all non-essential visitation to the Eastern Sierra. Further, all non-essential businesses in Inyo County are closed, including dining, lodging, and camping options. The Bureau of Land Management and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power have recently announced that their land is closed to recreation. In essence, should the fishing opener be held as scheduled, there will be no place for visitors to eat, sleep, or recreate.

We believe, based on these facts, that the Fishing Opener will draw significant numbers of people from throughout the state and beyond to fish in our region. This will exacerbate the transmission of COVID-19 and put additional strain on our already taxed health care services. We have begun seeing an increase in COVID-19 cases and have extremely limited resources to manage them. It is likely that by the time of the fish opener our medical system will simply be overwhelmed.

Again, we respectfully request that the Fishing Opener and the CDFW fish stocking schedule for the opener be postponed until the Governor's Stay-At-Home Order is lifted for the protection of public health and safety.

Please let us know if we can take any further action to expedite this request. Thank you in advance for your understanding and consideration of our situation.

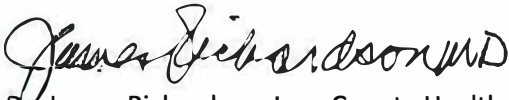
Respectfully,



Matt Kingsley, Chair, Inyo County Board of Supervisors



Sheriff Jeff Hollowell



Dr. James Richardson, Inyo County Health Officer

**CC Via Email:** Governor Gavin Newsom  
Senator Andreas Borgeas  
Assemblyman Devon Mathis  
California Fish and Game Commission  
Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director, California Fish and Game Commission  
California Department of Natural Resources  
California Department of Public Health  
Mono County Board of Supervisors  
Town of Mammoth Lakes Council  
City of Bishop Council  
Karen E. Mouritsen, California State Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Stafford Lehr, Deputy Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Nora Rasure, Regional Forester Region 4, United States Forest Service  
Randy Moore, Regional Forester Region 5, United States Forest Service  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power



*County of Inyo*

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

James Richardson, M.D.  
Public Health Officer, Inyo County  
760-873-7868

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April 3, 2020

CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Bonham,

I am writing to request that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife prioritize public health and safety by postponing the scheduled April 25, 2020 Eastern Sierra fishing opener in Inyo County.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious and potentially fatal disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus which leads to respiratory illness. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. COVID-19 can also live on surfaces for days, leading to the spread of the disease through public facilities such as restrooms, recreational equipment, food service, and retail. As of April 1, 2020, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a total of 186,101 cases of COVID-19 nationwide with almost 9,640 cases in California alone.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. As a result, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. California has seen rapid community spread of the virus. As a result, the Governor of California issued on March 19<sup>th</sup> Executive Order N-33-20, which directs all individuals living in the state to stay home or at their place of residence. These requirements were implemented to preserve the public health and safety, and to ensure the healthcare delivery system is capable of serving all residents.

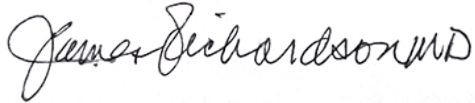
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The annual fishing opener is one of Inyo County's most popular recreational events. Though the opener is a major driver of our local tourist economy and is beloved by locals and visitors alike, the event annually draws thousands of people into our small communities, potentially bringing disease into the area and burdening our health care system. Further, all non-essential business in Inyo County is

closed, including dining, lodging, and camping options. The Bureau of Land Management and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power have recently announced that their land is closed to recreation. In essence, should the fishing opener be held as scheduled, there will be no place for visitors to eat, sleep, or recreate.

Again, for the sake of the health and safety of the people of Inyo County, I ask that in accordance with the Governor's Order and local Health Officers Orders, the Fishing Opener be rescheduled to take place only after California Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-33-20 is rescinded.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Richardson MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

James Richardson, MD  
Inyo County Health Officer