



**For immediate release  
May 11, 2009**

## **Restocking of Caples Lake will begin in May before Memorial Day weekend**

**Placerville, CA...** The El Dorado Irrigation District (District) board of directors approved an amendment to the Caples Lake fish restocking plan during the board's May 11 meeting. The action cleared the way for the California Department of Fish and Game to deliver fish to the lake before Memorial Day.

"This is an important part of our commitment to restore a trophy fishery in the lake," said board president George Wheeldon. "We had to draw the lake down last year for emergency repairs to the Caples main dam outlet works, and Fish and Game was not sure any fish would survive in the small amount of water left. The good news is that some fish did make it through the winter. Now they'll be joined by many more. And the lake level has risen beyond expectations, to the point that the fish should have a good start."

Dan Corcoran, the District's environmental division manager, told the board that "according to the plan, intensive restocking will continue through the 2009 fall season. Then EID will continue to plant fish over the next nine years in coordination with our partners in the area."

Corcoran reported that the initial restocking plan approved last year had to be modified because, according to Fish and Game, one of two hatcheries contracted to restock the lake tested positive for the parasite that causes whirling disease. This disease, named for the rapid tail-chasing behavior exhibited by some species of trout, poses no threat to humans. However, the disease has the potential to threaten wild fish populations. Therefore, Fish and Game will restrict release of fish from the hatchery to areas where whirling disease has been confirmed. Because the South Fork American River watershed is not known to be infected, no fish from the hatchery will be released into Caples Lake. This unanticipated development will also have region-wide effects, since the hatchery holds stocking contracts throughout the state.

"Fish and Game has been extremely helpful in assisting EID through this challenging situation," Corcoran said. "They will bring in fish from their own hatcheries. In exchange, the hatchery where the parasite was discovered will stock fish originally intended for Caples Lake in waters approved by Fish and Game. The goal is to restore the sport fishery at Caples Lake. The amendment the board adopted today does that with minor adjustments to the initial plan related to the proportions of species and sizes to be stocked. In addition, 9,000 pounds of trophy fish will be stocked by an out-of-state hatchery in June."

Concurrent with the drawdown of the lake level, Fish and Game led two fish rescues last fall, moving more than 26,000 fish and fingerlings to Silver and Red lakes. Volunteers organized by the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance and Sacramento/Sierra Chapter of Trout Unlimited were instrumental in the success of the rescues.

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For more information, contact Deanne Kloepfer at 530-622-4513.

REMEMBER: EID declared a Stage 1 drought in late March until further notice. Visit the District's website at [www.eid.org](http://www.eid.org) for more information or call **530-622-4513** or **916-965-0930**.