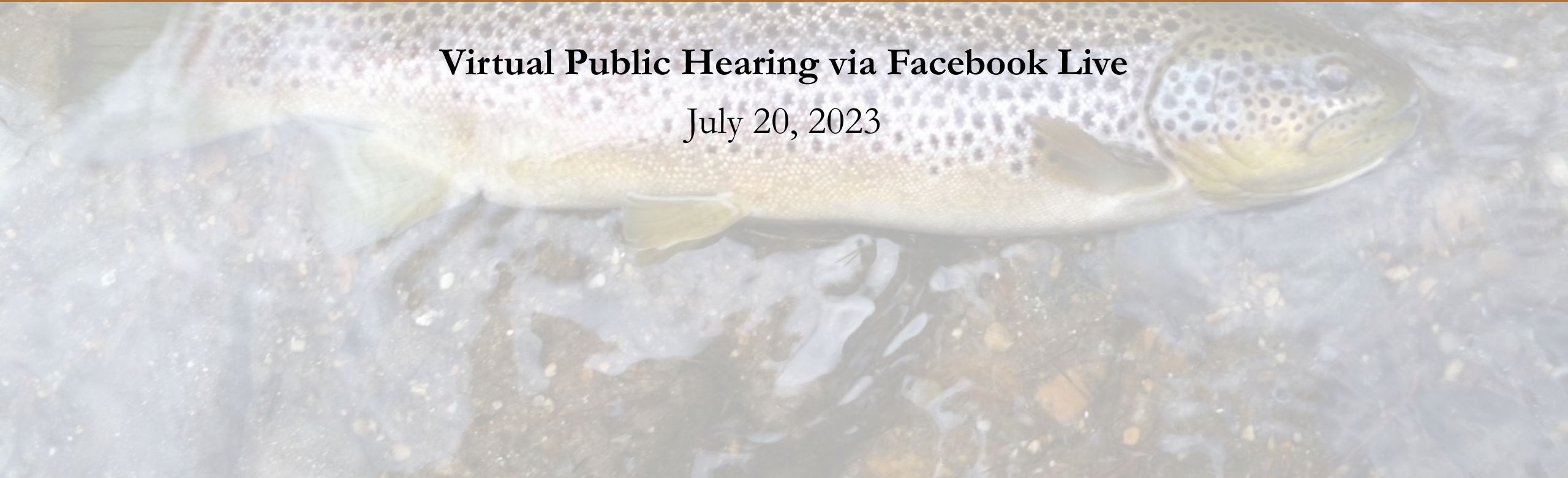




Trout Delayed Harvest Regulation Proposals

Virtual Public Hearing via Facebook Live

July 20, 2023



Trout Delayed Harvest Regulation Proposals Virtual Public Meeting

The powerpoint discussed in this Virtual Public Meeting can be viewed and downloaded from the Georgia DNR website at:

GeorgiaWildlife.com/regulations/meetings



GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION



Trout Delayed Harvest Regulation Proposals

Official Comments must be submitted via email to:
fm.comments@dnr.ga.gov

Delayed Harvest Proposal

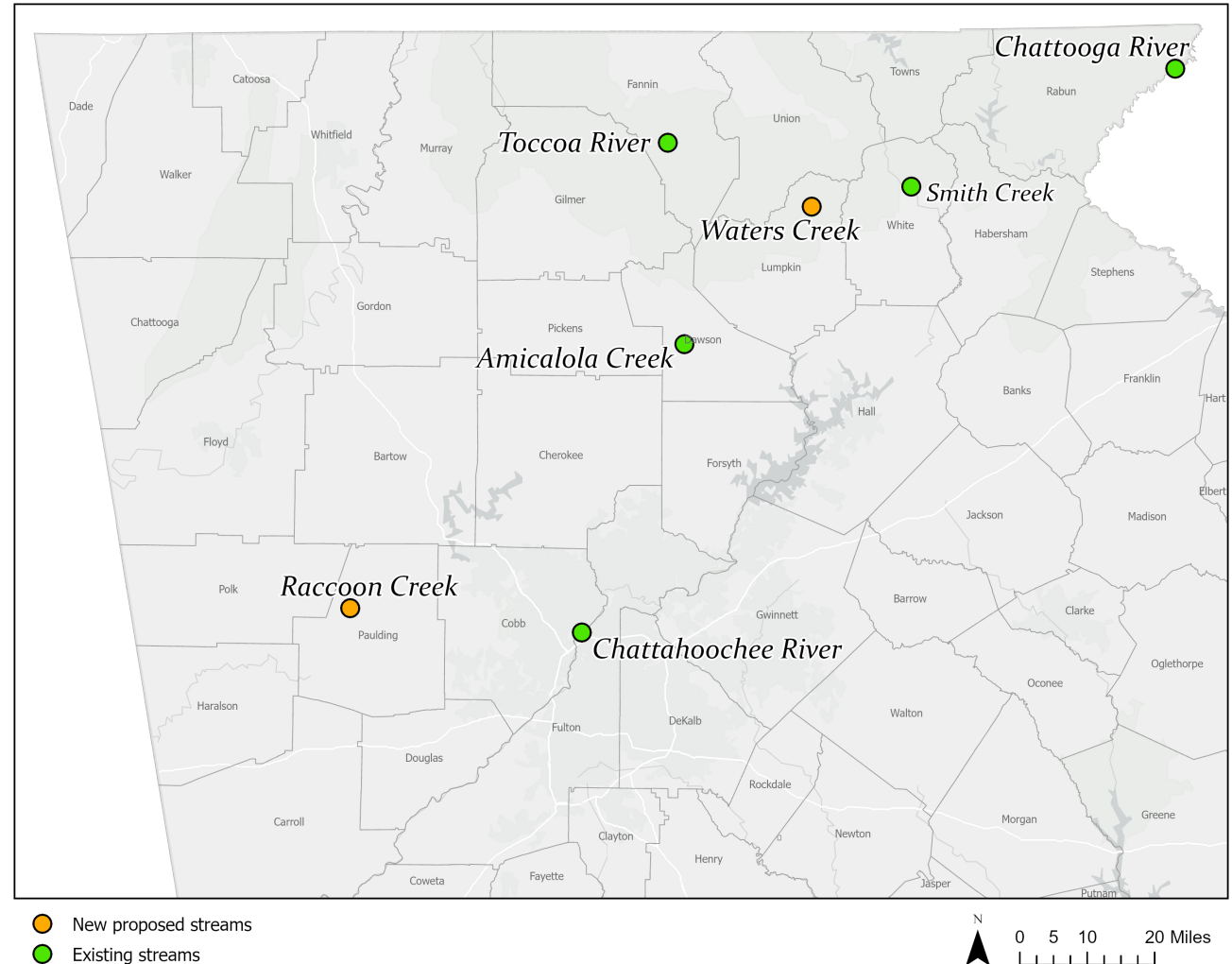
1. Designate two new streams as Delayed Harvest.
2. Change the dates of the Delayed Harvest Season.
3. Remove size limits for trout in Waters Creek.

Designate Two New Streams as Delayed Harvest

1. Waters Creek
(Lumpkin County)
2. Raccoon Creek
(Paulding County)

Our Rationale: To expand the Delayed Harvest program.

Proposed Delayed Harvest Trout Streams



Change the Dates of the Delayed Harvest Season

Opening Date: Change from November 1 to October 15.

Our Rationale:

- ✓ Provide more angling opportunities during leaf season.
- ✓ Reduce hatchery inventory during the stressful late-summer and fall water quality periods.

SEPTEMBER 2023

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OCTOBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 COLUMBUS DAY	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 HALLOWEEN	1	2	3	4

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CALENDAR 2023

Change the Dates of the Delayed Harvest Season

Closing Date: Change from May 14 to April 14.

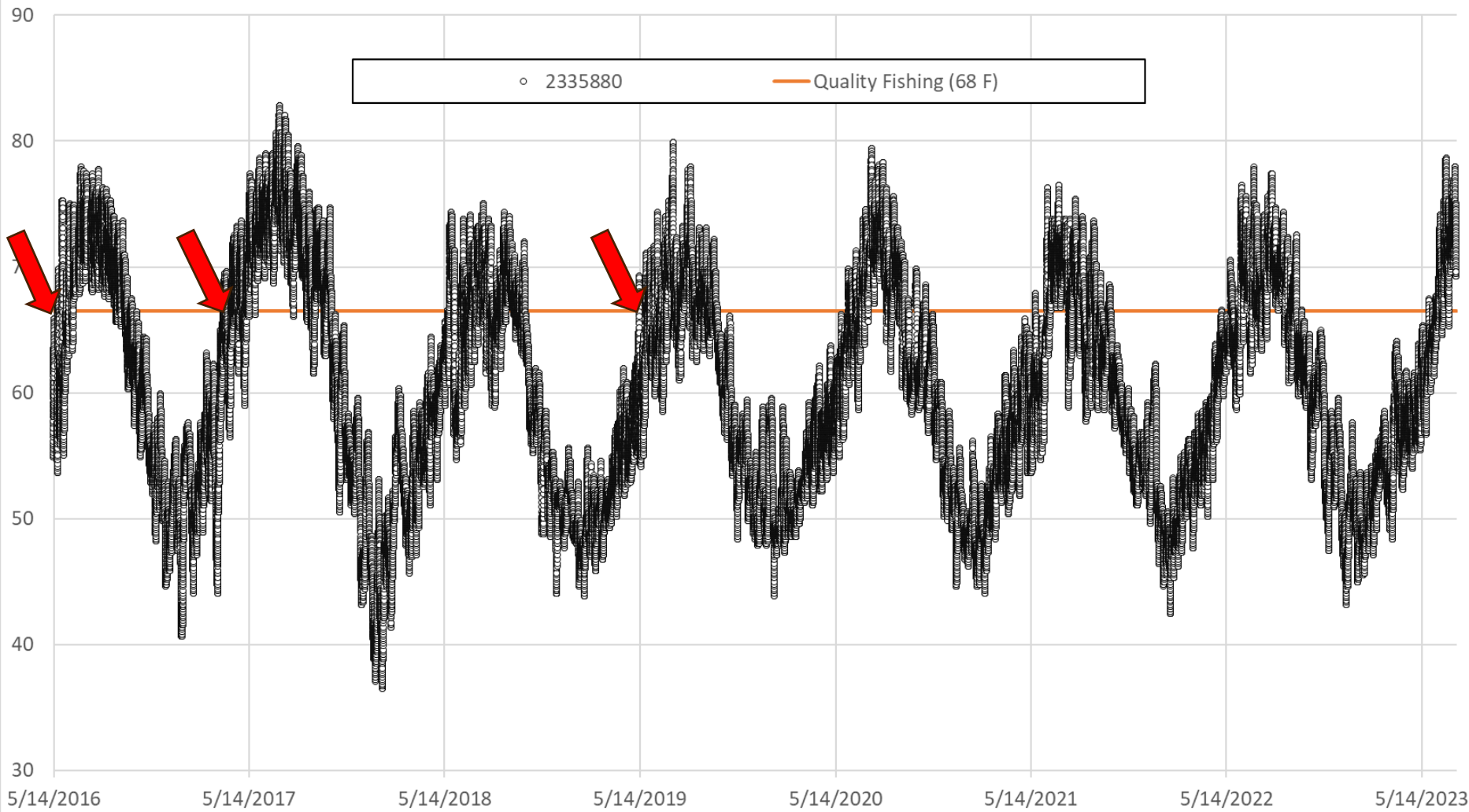
Our Rationale:

- ✓ Reduce the density of trout in the stream to a more sustainable level, especially in streams that can warm early (ex: Morgan Falls DH).
- ✓ Benefit harvest-oriented trout anglers, which make up 77% of trout anglers.



Temperature Effects on Delayed Harvest

Water Temperature (F) at USGS Gauge 2335880 (Chattahoochee River at I-285 & Powers Ferry; within DH) from 5/6/2016 - 7/18/2023



Warm temps in late-winter and early-spring coupled with low flows make for challenging fishing conditions in the Morgan Falls DH section. (2016, 2017, 2019)

Water Temperature Trends in the Chattahoochee DH during May

Year	First Day in May > 62°F	No. Fishing Days > 62°F	Peak Temperature before May 14
2016	May 8	10	69
2017	May 1	30	77
2018	May 3	20	64
2019	May 6	13	71
2020	May 4	8	64
2021	May 2	10	66
2022	May 1	28	67
2023	May 9	13	64

Change the Size Limits on Waters Creek

Current Regulation

- 8 fish creel limit
- No tackle restrictions
- ~~Minimum size limit for:~~
 - ~~Brook Trout (18-inches)~~
 - ~~Rainbow Trout (22-inches)~~
 - ~~Brown Trout (22-inches)~~

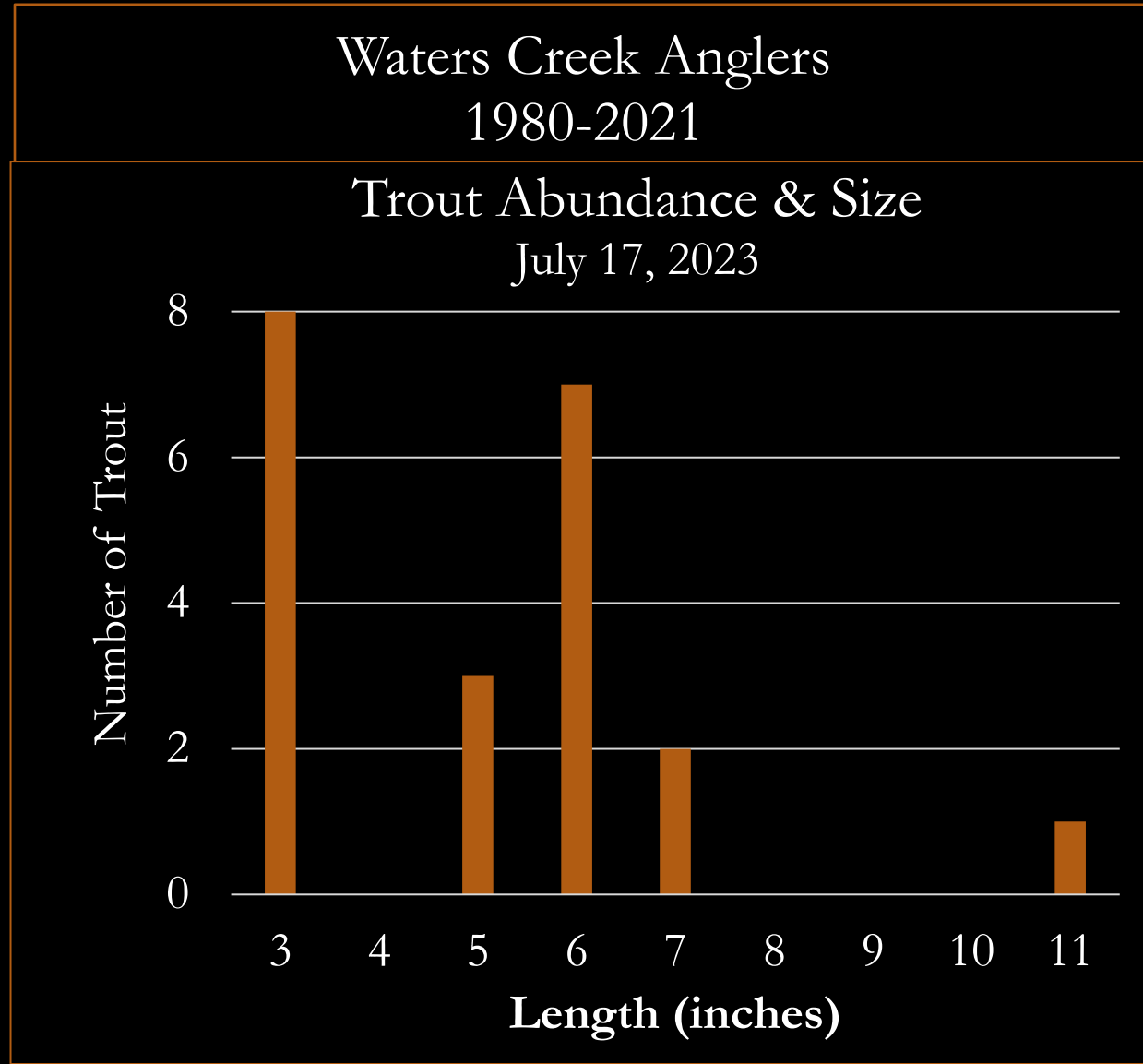
Proposed Regulation :

No size limit.

Our Rationale: To allow harvest of stocked fish after the DH season.

Current Status of Waters Creek Trout Fishery

- Not managed for trophy trout for past 20+ years.
- Fishing pressure has declined over the years.
- No trophy-sized trout in the population.



Chattooga River Delayed Harvest Regulation

- Some confusion among respondents about the Chattooga River DH.
- Clarification is needed to indicate that the Chattooga River DH section will be exempt from the proposed regulation change.
- **Our Rationale:**
 - ✓ SC-DNR is responsible for stocking the DH section.
 - ✓ SC-DNR's regulations are set by the state legislature.



Trout Delayed Harvest Regulation Proposals

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July 28th to:**

fm.comments@dnr.ga.gov

Public Feedback on Delayed Harvest Proposal

Proposal	Public Support	Public Opposition	Comments
Total Proposal	59%	41%	
Add Two New Streams (Waters & Raccoon creeks)	96%	4%	16% wanted us to add more than two streams
Change Opening Date to October 15 th	96%	4%	
Change Closing Date to April 14 th	71%	29%	Concerned about missing the 'best fishing' of the year.
Remove Waters Creek Size Limits	81%	19%	Concerned about losing the trophy trout population.