



THE FISHIN' INSIDER

by I.B. Hooked
Member Outdoor Writers Association of America and
The Texas Outdoor Writers Association

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Adios to double ought cinco and a hearty welcome to double ought six which happens to rhyme with my most favorite past time. The only problem with odd numbered years in Tejas is that the electrons, protons, neutrons and the morons convene the pachanga from hell in and around Sodom on the Colorado. When the Lege is in session ain't nobody safe, not even the finned critters. But the last orgy was shocking in that the above and their bankrollers actually accomplished something remarkable.

A thought that the dearly departed Don "Big Daddy" Crawford had in the latter 90's finally got discussed, cussed, dissected and signed into law by Guv Goodhair. I 'spect this happened cuz he and some buddies own and operate the largest grave diggin' operation this marble's ever seen, and fund a tribe of lobbyists with enough largess to make Jack Abramoff look like a small town piker.

Ya see, back in the mid 90's we had a major cold snap and a bunch of yahoos around these parts took serious advantage of the stunned finned critter

population. Big Daddy was a serious trout aficionado and one of the best big trout specialists ever to drift these waters. Hell, had he been able to wade these waters he probably would've been the first to crack the fifteen pound barrier, but alas there ain't no way this mud bottom could support his frame even in snow shoes. Soooo, that honor went to the ex-carpet king Bud Roland.

Anyhow, after a pogrom that lasted three or so days durin' that cold snap and the game wardens inability to do anything about it other than write tickets for over limits, he got on his horse or actually the phone and got the ball rollin' toward protecting the finned critters when they became vulnerable to wholesale slaughter by us two legged critters. The result was a bill passed in the last session that allows game wardens with the approval of a member of the Parks & Wildlife Commission to close a section of the Texas Gulf Coast to fishing when conditions warrant. In future cold snaps ya wont be able to harvest thirty-plus inch trout with a dip net like they did ten years ago. Tennessee Mike

I'm sure is appalled by the new regs cuz he netted three ice chests full of snook out of the Sea Ranch Marina and sold 'um to a local eatery; it made for a fat winter for him and some serious good chow as in fish specials for those in the know.

The federal bureaucrats that ministrates the fishing regs are still locked into their perpetual periods. Ask a simple question like how much was the recreational harvest of red snapper last year and your met with a serious pregnant pause. They opened the commercial season for the entire month of December to fill the quota and they still didn't come close. The recreational quota wasn't met either but they still closed the fishery in federal waters. If you're of a mind to give them a piece of your mind you can do it to the full Gulf Council this week at the Omni Bayfront Hotel in Corpus on Wednesday the 11th from 8:45 till noon. That is the public comment session but the council will meet from the 9th through the 12th on a bunch of different matters. If ya don't wanna go that far there will be a public hearing at Four Points by Sheraton in Brownsville on the 23rd of this month beginning at 7:00 in the evening.

We welcome your fishin' photos. Drop them by 2600 Padre Boulevard on the Island, or mail them to I.B. Hooked, c/o Coastal Current Weekly, P.O.Box 2429, South Padre Island, Texas 78597. Be sure to include the name of the angler, weight and type of fish, where caught, and name of boat if applicable. Photos with SASE will be returned.