



Health Advisory and Guidelines for Eating Fish from Lopez Lake (San Luis Obispo County)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATL	Advisory Tissue Level
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
DDT(s)	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) and its metabolites dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane (DDD) and dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE)
DHA	docosahexaenoic acid
EPA	eicosapentaenoic acid
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
Hg	mercury
MDL	method detection limit
MLML	Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
mm	millimeters
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
PBDEs	polybrominated diphenyl ethers
PCBs	polychlorinated biphenyls
ppb	parts per billion
RL	reporting limit
RWB3	Regional Water Board 3 (Central Coast)
Se	selenium
SWAMP	Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TSMF	Toxic Substances Monitoring Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDHHS	United States Department of Health and Human Services
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency

PREFACE

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), a department in the California Environmental Protection Agency, is responsible for evaluating potential public health risks from chemical contamination of sport fish. This includes issuing fish consumption advisories, when appropriate, for the State of California. OEHHA's authorities to conduct these activities are based on mandates in the:

- California Health and Safety Code
 - Section 59009, to protect public health
 - Section 59011, to advise local health authorities
- California Water Code
 - Section 13177.5, to issue health advisories

The health advisories are published in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Sport Fishing Regulations in the section on public health advisories.

This report presents guidelines for eating fish from Lopez Lake in San Luis Obispo County. The report provides background information and a technical description of how the guidelines were developed. The resulting advice is summarized in the illustrations after the Table of Contents and List of Figures and Tables.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A GUIDE TO EATING FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE	5
INTRODUCTION	6
<i>Location</i>	6
<i>Approach Used</i>	7
CHEMICALS OF POTENTIAL CONCERN.....	7
DATA SOURCES.....	9
<i>Contaminants in Fish From California Lakes and Reservoirs, 2007–2008 (SWAMP)</i>	9
<i>Long-Term Monitoring of Bass Lakes and Reservoirs, 2017 (SWAMP)</i>	9
<i>Study Of Lakes And Reservoirs With Low Concentrations of Contaminants In Sport Fish, 2014 (SWAMP)</i>	9
<i>Toxic Substances Monitoring Program (TSMP)</i>	10
FISH SAMPLED FROM LOPEZ LAKE.....	10
CHEMICAL CONCENTRATIONS	11
<i>Mercury</i>	11
<i>PCBs, PBDEs, and Pesticides</i>	12
<i>Selenium</i>	12
DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR EATING FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE	13
CONSUMPTION ADVICE FOR FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE.....	15
<i>Black Bass Species (Largemouth Bass)</i>	16
<i>Brown Bullhead</i>	16
<i>Crappie</i>	16
<i>Inland Silverside</i>	16
<i>Sacramento Sucker</i>	17
<i>Sunfish Species (Bluegill, Redear Sunfish)</i>	17
Lopez Lake Fish Advisory	3

Threadfin Shad 17

RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SERVINGS..... 18

REFERENCES 19

APPENDIX I. Advisory Tissue Levels..... 22

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES


Figure 1. Location of Lopez Lake 6

Table 1. Fish Samples Evaluated for the Lopez Lake Advisory 10

Table 2. Mercury Concentrations in Fish from Lopez Lake 13


Table 3. Recommended Maximum Number of Servings per Week for Fish from Lopez Lake..... 18

Advisory Tissue Levels for Selected Analytes..... 22



Women
(18-49 Years)

Children
(1-17 Years)



Women
(50+ Years)

Men
(18+ Years)


A GUIDE TO EATING FISH

from LOPEZ LAKE

(SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY)


Eat the Good Fish

Eating fish that are low in chemicals may provide health benefits to children and adults.




Avoid the Bad Fish

Eating fish with higher levels of chemicals like mercury or PCBs may cause health problems in children and adults.




Choose the Right Fish


Chemicals may be more harmful to unborn babies and children.




Inland Silverside




Sunfish Species




Threadfin Shad




Brown Bullhead



Crappie



Sacramento Sucker




Black Bass Species
♥ high in omega-3s


Serving Size

A serving of fish is about the size and thickness of your hand. Give children smaller servings.

For Adults




For Children




California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

web www.oehha.ca.gov/fish
 email fish@oehha.ca.gov
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Eat only the skinless fillet



Eat only the meat



Some chemicals are higher in the skin, fat, and guts.

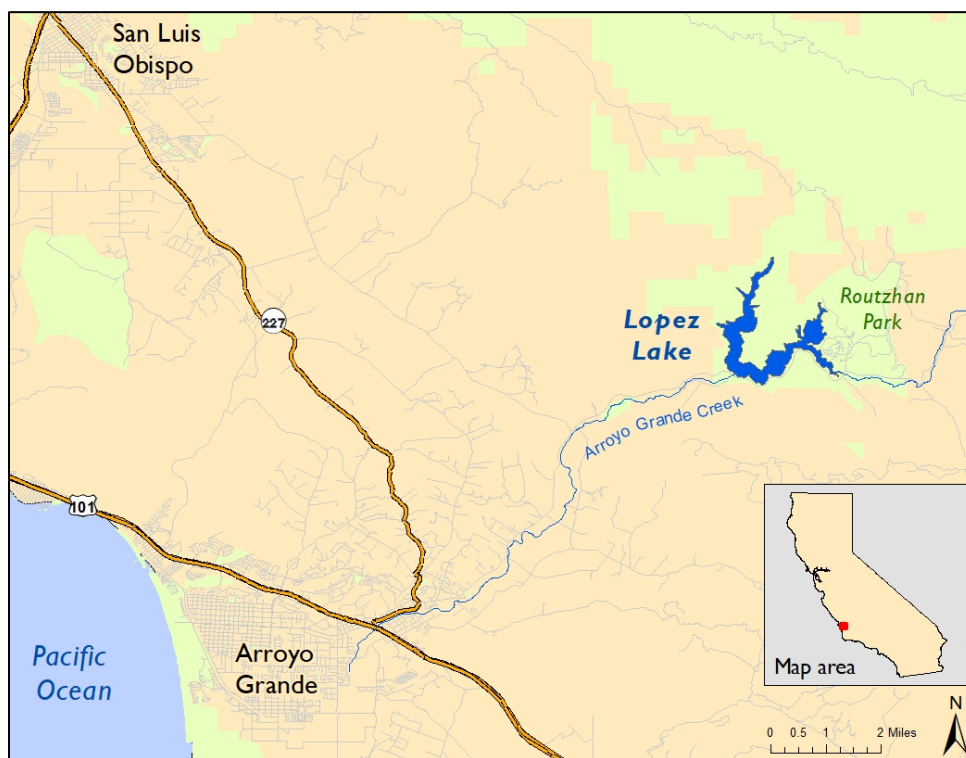
INTRODUCTION

This report presents guidelines for eating black bass species, Brown Bullhead, crappie, Inland Silverside, Sacramento Sucker, sunfish species, and Threadfin Shad from Lopez Lake (Figure 1). Consumption advice is based on levels of mercury found in these species.

LOCATION

Lopez Lake is a reservoir located approximately ten miles northeast of Arroyo Grande, in San Luis Obispo County. The lake was impounded by the construction of Lopez Dam in 1968 to provide the Arroyo Grande basin with drinking water, and for agricultural, recreational, and flood control purposes. The lake covers approximately 950 surface acres and is owned and operated by the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.¹

FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF LOPEZ LAKE



¹ Further information on Lopez Lake can be found online at: <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Forms-Documents/Water-Resources/Groundwater-Reports/2002-Hydrologic-Report.aspx> and http://www.arroyogrande.org/DocumentCenter/View/3120/36-East-Cherry_DEIR_Hydrology-PDF?bidId=

APPROACH USED

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) used the results from four monitoring studies described in this report to develop the Lopez Lake Advisory. OEHHA uses the following general process in developing consumption advice for sport fish:

- 1) Evaluation of all fish contaminant data available from a water body and selection of appropriate data that meet data quality criteria and sampling plan guidelines.
- 2) Determination of fish species for which adequate data are available to issue fish consumption advice.
- 3) Calculation of an appropriate measure of central tendency (often a weighted arithmetic mean²) and other descriptive statistics of the contaminant data, as appropriate, for a chemical of potential concern for the selected fish species.
- 4) Comparison of the chemical concentrations with the OEHHA Advisory Tissue Levels (ATLs) for each chemical of potential concern.
- 5) Development of final advice based on a thorough review of the data and best professional judgment relating to the benefits and risks of consuming a particular fish species.

The ATLs (discussed further in a subsequent section of this report) are chemical levels in fish tissue that are considered acceptable, based on chemical toxicity, for a range of consumption rates. Development of the ATLs also included consideration of health benefits associated with including fish in the diet (OEHHA, 2008). The ATLs should not be interpreted as static “bright lines,” but one component of a complex process of data evaluation and interpretation used by OEHHA in the assessment and communication of the benefits and risks of consuming sport fish.

CHEMICALS OF POTENTIAL CONCERN

Certain chemicals are considered to be of potential concern for people who eat fish because of their toxicity and their ability to accumulate in fish tissue. The majority of fish consumption advisories in California are issued because of mercury (Hg), followed by polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and, in a few cases, selenium (Se), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), or some legacy pesticides (pesticides that are no longer used but remain in the environment).

Mercury is a natural element found in some rock and soil. Human activities, such as burning coal and the historical use of mercury to mine gold, also add mercury to the environment. If mercury enters waterways, it can be converted to a more toxic form

² Means are an arithmetic average of individual values and/or a weighted average of composites. A weighted average of composites is calculated by multiplying the chemical concentration in each composite by the number of fish in that composite for each species. Products are then summed and divided by the total number of fish in all composites for that species, combined.

known as methylmercury – which can pass into and build up in fish. High levels of methylmercury can harm the brain, especially in fetuses and children.

PCBs are industrial chemicals previously used in electrical transformers, plastics, and lubricating oils, often as flame retardants or electrical insulators. Their use was banned in the 1970s, but they persist in the environment because they do not break down easily and can accumulate in fish. Depending on the exposure level, PCBs may cause cancer or other health effects, including neurotoxicity, in humans.

Selenium is a naturally occurring metalloid and at low doses is an essential nutrient for many important human health processes, including thyroid regulation and vitamin C metabolism. Higher doses cause selenium toxicity, which can include symptoms ranging from hair loss and gastrointestinal distress to dizziness and tremors.

Chlordanes, dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), dieldrin, and toxaphene are pesticides that were banned from use in 1973 (DDT), the late 1980s (chlordanes and dieldrin) and 1990 (toxaphene), but are still found in some fish in certain California water bodies. Depending on the exposure level, these chemicals may cause cancer or adverse effects on the nervous system.

PBDEs are a class of flame retardants historically used in a variety of consumer products including furniture, textiles, automotive parts, and electronics. The use of PBDEs in new products was largely phased out by 2013 but, due to their wide usage and persistence in the environment, they are still being detected in fish tissues. PBDEs may affect hormone levels or learning and behavior in children.

Detailed discussion of the toxicity of these chemicals and references are presented in “Development of Fish Contaminant Goals and Advisory Tissue Levels for Common Contaminants in California Sport Fish: Chlordane, DDTs, dieldrin, methylmercury, PCBs, selenium, and toxaphene” (OEHHA, 2008) and “Development of Fish Contaminant Goals and Advisory Tissue Levels for Common Contaminants in California Sport Fish: Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs)” (OEHHA, 2011).

All fish species collected from Lopez Lake and used in advisory development were analyzed for mercury (as a measure of methylmercury). Some species were further analyzed for PBDEs, PCBs, selenium, and/ or the legacy pesticides chlordanes (cis-chlordane, trans-chlordane, cis-nonachlor, trans-nonachlor, and oxychlordane), dieldrin, DDTs (DDT and its metabolites dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane [DDD] and dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene [DDE]) and toxaphene. Fish species that do not normally accumulate PCBs or other organic chemicals may not be analyzed for those contaminants in a particular monitoring study. Additionally, some studies do not analyze these chemicals and instead focus only on mercury.

DATA SOURCES

The guidelines for eating fish from Lopez Lake are based on the chemicals detected in the fish collected for the four monitoring studies described below. These studies met OEHHA's data quality criteria, including adequate documentation of sample collection, fish preparation methods (e.g., skinning or filleting), chemical analyses, quality assurance, and sufficiently low detection limits. "Sample," as used in this report, refers to an individual fish or a composite of multiple fish for which contaminant data were reported. "Sampling" or "sampled" refers to the act of collecting fish for chemical analysis.

CONTAMINANTS IN FISH FROM CALIFORNIA LAKES AND RESERVOIRS, 2007–2008 (SWAMP)

The Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP), operated by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), in cooperation with the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWB3), monitors water quality in California's surface waters. In 2007 and 2008, SWAMP conducted a two-year screening survey to initiate a statewide sampling effort to identify and quantify contaminants in sport fish found in California lakes and reservoirs (SWRCB, 2010) to examine exposure and risk to humans and wildlife. The program collected Largemouth Bass and Sacramento Sucker from Lopez Lake in 2008 to analyze mercury in both species, and chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, PBDEs, PCBs, and selenium in Sacramento Sucker.

LONG-TERM MONITORING OF BASS LAKES AND RESERVOIRS, 2017 (SWAMP)

This SWAMP study was part of a multi-year effort to document status and trends related to contamination in sport fish from California lakes and reservoirs dominated by black bass species (Davis et al. 2019). In 2017, Largemouth Bass were collected from Lopez Lake for the study and were analyzed for mercury and selenium.

STUDY OF LAKES AND RESERVOIRS WITH LOW CONCENTRATIONS OF CONTAMINANTS IN SPORT FISH, 2014 (SWAMP)

This SWAMP study was part of a statewide sampling effort to identify and better characterize low-contaminant California lakes and reservoirs. The program collected Bluegill, Brown Bullhead, crappie, Inland Silverside, Largemouth Bass, Redear Sunfish, and Threadfin Shad from Lopez Lake in 2014 to analyze for mercury. Inland Silverside and Threadfin Shad were additionally analyzed for selenium, and Brown Bullhead were additionally analyzed for PCBs.³

³ Information on SWAMP's Low Concentration of Contaminants in Sport Fish study may be found online at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/lakes_study.html

TOXIC SUBSTANCES MONITORING PROGRAM (TSMP)

The TSMP operated from 1976 to 2003 as a state water quality-monitoring program managed by SWRCB (SWRCB, 2007 and 2013). Its objective was to provide statewide information on the occurrence of toxic substances by monitoring water bodies with known or suspected water quality impairment. Staff from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), then known as the California Department of Fish and Game, collected Largemouth Bass from Lopez Lake, which were analyzed for chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, mercury, selenium, and toxaphene.

FISH SAMPLED FROM LOPEZ LAKE

The fish sampling data used in this advisory were retrieved from the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN), the state's repository for environmental data. Samples were excluded when the fish were not legal size to take or did not meet OEHHA's criteria for minimum "edible" size based on species size at maturity, and professional judgment (as described in OEHHA, 2005). A summary of all fish species evaluated for this advisory is shown in Table 1, including the name of the species, number of samples collected, total number of fish, project name, year sampled, and contaminants analyzed.

TABLE 1. FISH SAMPLES EVALUATED FOR THE LOPEZ LAKE ADVISORY

Common Name	Scientific Name	Number of Samples	Total Number of Fish	Project	Year Collected	Contaminants Analyzed
Bluegill	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>	2	10	SWAMP	2014	Hg
Brown Bullhead	<i>Ameiurus nebulosus</i>	2	10	SWAMP	2014	Hg
		1	10	SWAMP	2014	PCBs
Crappie	<i>Pomoxis spp.</i>	2	10	SWAMP	2014	Hg
Inland Silverside	<i>Menidia beryllina</i>	1	20	SWAMP ^b	2014	Hg, Se
Largemouth Bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	1	6	TSMP ^a	2001	Chlordanes, DDTs, Dieldrin, Hg, Se, Toxaphene
		8	8	SWAMP	2008	Hg
		7	7	SWAMP	2014	Hg

Common Name	Scientific Name	Number of Samples	Total Number of Fish	Project	Year Collected	Contaminants Analyzed
		7	7	SWAMP	2017	Hg
		1	5	SWAMP	2017	Se
Redear Sunfish	<i>Lepomis microlophus</i>	2	10	SWAMP	2014	Hg
Sacramento Sucker	<i>Catostomus occidentalis</i>	1	5	SWAMP	2008	Chlordanes, DDTs, Dieldrin, PBDEs, PCBs, Se
		2	10	SWAMP	2008	Hg
Threadfin Shad	<i>Dorosoma petenense</i>	1	20	SWAMP ^b	2014	Hg, Se

Samples were analyzed as skinless fillets, with the following exceptions:

^aStudy report did not specify whether skin was removed from fillets prior to tissue analysis.

^bSamples were analyzed as whole organisms, including head, skin, internal organs, muscle, and bones.

CHEMICAL CONCENTRATIONS

As shown in Table 1, samples were analyzed for one or more of the following: total mercury, selenium, chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, toxaphene, PBDEs (6 congeners), and PCBs (50–54 congeners)⁴. Among the chemicals analyzed in fish tissue samples from Lopez Lake, only mercury levels were sufficiently high to impact consumption advice.

The fillet preparation method for Largemouth Bass was not recorded for the TSMP study, but all other fish samples were prepared as skinless fillets except Inland Silverside and Threadfin Shad that were analyzed as whole bodies. Samples were analyzed as individual fish or composites.

For this advisory, OEHHA used the weighted (by the number of individual fish) arithmetic mean (average) of the chemical concentrations (in wet weight) for each fish species to estimate average human exposure.

MERCURY

Samples were analyzed for total mercury, as either individual fish or composite samples, using a direct mercury analyzer (DMA) at the CDFW Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML). The DMA method utilizes thermal decomposition and atomic

⁴ Congeners are related compounds with similar chemical forms. Of the 209 possible PBDE and PCB congeners, 6–7 and 54–55 are generally reported, respectively.

absorption. OEHHA assumed all mercury detected was methylmercury, which is the most common form found in fish and is also the more toxic form (Bloom, 1992). Table 2 shows the averages and ranges for total length⁵, as well as mercury concentrations in each fish species. The DMA method detection limit (MDL)⁶ and the reporting limit (RL)⁷ for total mercury were reported at 4 or 12 and 12 parts per billion (ppb), respectively, depending on the study. Although mercury was detected at commonly found concentrations in the TSMP study, the MDL and RL for mercury were not reported. The RL for Inland Silverside and Threadfin Shad collected in 2014 by SWAMP was 9 ppb; the MDL was not reported.⁸

PCBS, PBDES, AND PESTICIDES

Some composite samples were analyzed for PCBs, PBDEs, and the legacy pesticides (chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, and toxaphene). Pesticides, PBDEs, and PCBs were analyzed by gas chromatography at the CDFW Water Pollution Control Laboratory. For chlordanes, DDTs, PCBs, and PBDEs, each of the concentrations presented was the sum of the detected parent compound, congeners, or metabolites, where applicable. Since the MDLs or RLs were relatively low (≤ 5 ppb, with the exception of Largemouth Bass analyzed for toxaphene), individual congeners or metabolites with concentrations reported as non-detects were assumed to be zero. This is a standard method of handling non-detect values for PCBs and other chemicals with multiple congeners or metabolites in a given sample when detection levels are adequate (US EPA, 2000a).

SELENIUM

The CDFW MLML analyzed species collected from Lopez Lake for selenium, as composite samples, using inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry (ICP-MS). The ICP-MS method utilizes desolvation, atomization and ionization with ion separation based on a mass-to-charge ratio to detect the total selenium concentration in a sample. The ICP-MS method detection limit (MDL) and the reporting limit (RL) for total selenium were reported at 150 and 400 ppb, respectively.

Concentrations of chlordanes, dieldrin, DDTs, PBDEs, PCBs, selenium, and toxaphene were lower than the corresponding ATL threshold values for daily consumption (OEHHA, 2008 and 2011). These chemicals were therefore not considered further for developing consumption advice and are not shown in this report.

⁵ Total length is the maximum length of the fish, measured from the tip of the closed mouth to the tip of the pinched tail fin.

⁶ The MDL is the lowest quantity of a chemical that can be distinguished (as greater than zero) in a sample.

⁷ The RL is the lowest quantity of a chemical that can be accurately quantified in a sample.

⁸ The RL for SWAMP'S 2014 Study of Lakes and Reservoirs with Low Concentrations of Contaminants in Sport Fish study can be found in the Final Quality Assurance Program Plan. Online at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/docs/lakes_study/bog_low_conc_qapp_rpt_only.pdf

TABLE 2. MERCURY CONCENTRATIONS IN FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE

Species from Lopez Lake	Number of Samples ^a	Total Number of Fish	Mean* Total Length (mm)	Range of Total Lengths** (mm)	Mercury (ppb)	
					Mean*	Range**
Brown Bullhead	2	10	363	330 – 392	40	24 – 56
Crappie	2	10	182	166 – 194	39	36 – 42
Inland Silverside	1	20	90	71 – 99	21	n/a
Largemouth Bass	23	28	370	309 – 498	138	59 – 361
Sacramento Sucker	2	10	426	398 – 460	87	85 – 88
Sunfish Species	4	20	196	126 – 246	23	16 – 27
Bluegill	2	10	161	126 – 202	27	26 – 27
Redear Sunfish	2	10	230	216 – 246	18	16 – 20
Threadfin Shad	1	20	87	81 – 98	15	n/a

^aSamples were prepared as skinless fillets, except as noted in the footnotes to Table 1

*Means are an arithmetic average of individual values and/or a weighted average of composites.

**Range of individuals and/or range of the composites.

n/a = not applicable due to a single sample

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR EATING FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE

The OEHHA fish advisory process considers the health benefits of fish consumption as well as the risk from exposure to the chemical contaminants found in fish. Benefits are included in the advisory process because there is considerable evidence and scientific consensus that fish should be part of a healthy, well-balanced diet. Fish contain many nutrients that are important for general health and, in particular, help promote optimal growth and development of babies and young children, and may reduce the incidence of heart disease in adults (FDA/US EPA, 2017; American Heart Association, 2016; OEHHA, 2008; Institute of Medicine, 2007; Kris-Etherton et al., 2002). Fish are a significant source of the specific omega-3 fatty acids, docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), thought to be associated with these beneficial health effects (USDA/USDHHS, 2015; Weaver et al., 2008).

The 2015–2020 US Dietary Guidelines recommend that 1) the general population “consume eight or more ounces per week (less for young children)” of a variety of

seafood⁹ “for the total package of nutrients that seafood provides, including its EPA and DHA content” and 2) “women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should consume at least eight and up to twelve ounces of a variety of seafood per week from choices that are lower in methylmercury” (USDA/USDHHS, 2015). The particular fish that people eat is an important factor in determining the net beneficial effects of fish consumption. For example, studies have shown that children of mothers who ate low-mercury fish during pregnancy scored better on cognitive tests compared to children of mothers who did not eat fish or ate high-mercury fish (Oken et al., 2005 and 2008). Accordingly, because of the high mercury content of certain fish species, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the US Environmental Protection Agency recommend that women who are pregnant (or might become pregnant) or breastfeeding, and young children avoid consuming shark, swordfish, tilefish (Gulf of Mexico), bigeye tuna, marlin, orange roughy, and king mackerel (FDA/US EPA, 2017).

In order to address the potential health concerns associated with exposure to contaminants in sport fish, OEHHA has established ATLS for chemicals that are known to accumulate in the edible tissues of fish. ATLS consider both the toxicity of the chemical and potential benefits of eating fish. OEHHA uses the ATLS to determine the maximum number of servings per week that consumers can eat, for each species and at each location, to limit their exposure to these contaminants. Consumers can use OEHHA’s guidance when choosing which fish and how much to eat as part of an overall healthy diet.

There are two sets of ATLS for methylmercury in fish because of the age-related toxicity of this chemical (OEHHA, 2008). The fetus and children are more sensitive to the toxic effects of methylmercury. Thus, the ATLS for the sensitive population, including women who might become pregnant (typically 18 to 49 years of age) and children 1–17 years, are lower than those for women 50 years and older, and men 18 years and older. The lower ATL values for the sensitive population provide additional protection to allow for normal growth and development of the brain and nervous system of unborn babies and children. Detailed discussion about the toxicity of common fish contaminants and health benefits of fish consumption, as well as derivation of the ATLS, are provided in “Development of Fish Contaminant Goals and Advisory Tissue Levels for Common Contaminants in California Sport Fish: Chlordane, DDTs, Dieldrin, Methylmercury, PCBs, Selenium, and Toxaphene” (OEHHA, 2008) and “Development of Fish Contaminant Goals and Advisory Tissue Levels for Common Contaminants in California Sport Fish: Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs)” (OEHHA, 2011). A list of the ATLS used in this report is presented in Appendix I.

For each fish species in this advisory, OEHHA compared the mean mercury and PCB concentrations detected in the fillet to the corresponding ATLS to establish the maximum number of servings per week that could be consumed (see Appendix I). A serving size is considered to be 8 ounces, prior to cooking, or about the size and

⁹ “Marine animals that live in the sea and in freshwater lakes and rivers. Seafood includes fish, such as salmon, tuna, trout, and tilapia, and shellfish, such as shrimp, crab, and oysters” (USDHHS/USDA, 2015).

thickness of a hand for fish fillets. Children should be given smaller servings. For smaller fish species, several individuals may be required to yield a serving.

The consumption advice for a fish species is initially based on the chemical with the lowest allowable number of servings per week. Because some chemicals, such as mercury and PCBs, are known to have similar adverse effects, additivity of toxicity is assumed in such cases and may be assessed using multiple chemical exposure methodology (US EPA, 1989 and 2000b). If two or more chemicals with similar adverse effects are present in fish tissue at levels above the corresponding ATL values for daily consumption, multiple chemical exposure methodology is employed. This may result in advising the sensitive population to consume fewer meals per week than would be the case for the presence of one chemical alone, in a similar concentration. The potential effect of multiple chemical exposures (mercury and PCBs) was not assessed in Brown Bullhead or Sacramento Sucker because PCB levels were sufficiently low to allow for daily consumption for both species. Advice for all species in this advisory was based solely on mercury concentrations.

OEHHA recommends that individuals strive to meet the US Dietary Guidelines seafood consumption recommendations, while also adhering to federal and OEHHA recommendations to limit the consumption of fish with higher contaminant levels. The advice discussed in the following section represents the maximum recommended number of servings per week for different fish species. People should eat no more than the recommended number of servings for each fish species or species group. OEHHA's consumption advice for a particular fish species can be extended to other closely related fish species¹⁰ known to accumulate similar levels of contaminants.

Consumption advice should not be combined. That is, if a person chooses to eat a fish from the "one-serving-a-week" category, then they should not eat any other fish from any source (including commercial) until the next week. If a person chooses to eat a fish from the "two-servings-per-week" category, they can combine fish species from that category, or eat one fish from that category and one from a category that recommends more than two-servings-per-week (if available), for a total of two servings in that week. Then they should not eat any other fish from any source (including commercial) until the following week.

CONSUMPTION ADVICE FOR FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE

OEHHA's advisory protocol requires at least nine fish of a species to be collected from a water body before an advisory can be developed for the primary contaminant of concern. This is to ensure the sample dataset is representative of the fish species population in the water body. In some cases, an exception is made for species that are commonly caught and consumed from a given water body but where available data may be limited. For Lopez Lake, the sample size criterion was met for the following species:

¹⁰ Fish species within the same genus are most closely related, and family is the next level of relationship.

Bluegill, Brown Bullhead, crappie, Inland Silverside, Largemouth Bass, Redear Sunfish, Sacramento Sucker, and Threadfin Shad. There were not sufficient data to evaluate other species that may be found in this water body. For fish species found in Lopez Lake that are not included in this advisory, OEHHA recommends following the [statewide advisory for lakes and reservoirs without site-specific advice](#).

The following advice is based solely on mercury concentrations. The sensitive population is defined as women 18 to 49 years and children 1 to 17 years, and the general population is defined as women 50 years and older, and men 18 years and older.

BLACK BASS SPECIES (LARGEMOUTH BASS)

The mean mercury concentration of Largemouth Bass from Lopez Lake was 138 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of two servings a week of black bass species from Lopez Lake for the sensitive population and a maximum of four servings a week for the general population.

OEHHA has evaluated mercury concentrations in black bass species in many water bodies in California and has found a similar range of mercury concentrations when two or more of these species were caught from the same water body. Therefore, OEHHA extends the consumption advice for Largemouth Bass to other black bass species, including Redeye, Smallmouth, and Spotted Bass.

BROWN BULLHEAD

The mean mercury concentration in Brown Bullhead from Lopez Lake was 40 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of five servings a week of Brown Bullhead for the sensitive population and a maximum of seven servings a week for the general population.

CRAPPIE

The mean mercury concentration in crappie from Lopez Lake was 39 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of five servings a week of crappie for the sensitive population and a maximum of seven servings a week for the general population.

INLAND SILVERSIDE

The mean mercury concentration in Inland Silverside from Lopez Lake was 21 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of Inland Silverside for both the sensitive and general populations.

SACRAMENTO SUCKER

The mean mercury concentration in Sacramento Sucker from Lopez Lake was 87 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of two servings a week of Sacramento Sucker for the sensitive population and a maximum of seven servings a week for the general population.

SUNFISH SPECIES (BLUEGILL, REDEAR SUNFISH)

The mean mercury concentration in sunfish species from Lopez Lake was 23 ppb. Mercury concentrations for individual sunfish species were 27 ppb (Bluegill) and 18 ppb (Redear Sunfish). OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of sunfish species for both the sensitive and general populations.

OEHHA has evaluated mercury concentrations in sunfish species in many water bodies in California and has found a similar range of mercury concentrations when two or more of these species were caught from the same water body. Therefore, OEHHA extends the consumption advice for sunfish species (Bluegill and Redear Sunfish) to other sunfish species, including Green Sunfish and Pumpkinseed.

THREADFIN SHAD

The mean mercury concentration in Threadfin Shad from Lopez Lake was 15 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of Threadfin Shad for both the sensitive and general populations.

RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SERVINGS

The recommended maximum numbers of servings per week for fish from Lopez Lake are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3. RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SERVINGS PER WEEK FOR FISH FROM LOPEZ LAKE

Fish Species from Lopez Lake	Women 18–49 years and Children 1–17 years	Women 50 years and older and Men 18 years and older
Black Bass Species	2	4
Brown Bullhead	5	7
Crappie	5	7
Inland Silverside	7	7
Sacramento Sucker	2	7
Sunfish Species	7	7
Threadfin Shad	7	7

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APPENDIX I. ADVISORY TISSUE LEVELS

Advisory Tissue Levels (ATLs) guide the development of advice for people eating sport fish. ATLs are levels of contaminants found in fish that correspond to the maximum numbers of recommended fish servings. OEHHA uses ATLs to provide advice to prevent consumers from being exposed to:

- More than the average daily reference dose¹¹ for chemicals not known to cause cancer, such as methylmercury, or
- For cancer-causing chemicals, a risk level greater than one additional cancer case in a population of 10,000 people consuming fish at the given consumption rate over a lifetime. This cancer endpoint is the maximum acceptable risk level recommended by the US EPA (2000b) for fish advisories.

For each chemical, ATLs were determined for both cancer and non-cancer risk, if appropriate, for one to seven eight-ounce servings per week. The most health-protective ATLs for each chemical, selected from either cancer or non-cancer based risk, are shown in the table below for zero to seven servings per week. When the guidelines for eating fish from Lopez Lake are followed, exposure to chemicals in fish from Lopez Lake would be at or below the average daily reference dose or the cancer risk probability of one in 10,000.

ADVISORY TISSUE LEVELS FOR SELECTED ANALYTES

Contaminant	Consumption Frequency Categories (8-ounce servings/week) ^a and ATLs (in ppb)							
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Chlordanes	≤ 80	>80–90	>90–110	>110–140	>140–190	>190–280	>280–560	>560
DDTs	≤ 220	>220–260	>260–310	>310–390	>390–520	>520–1,000	>1,000–2,100	>2,100
Dieldrin	≤ 7	>7–8	>8–9	>9–11	>11–15	>15–23	>23–46	>46
MeHg (Women 18–49 and children 1–17)	≤ 31	>31–36	>36–44	>44–55	>55–70	>70–150	>150–440	>440
MeHg (Women > 49 and men)	≤ 94	>94–109	>109–130	>130–160	>160–220	>220–440	>440–1,310	>1,310
PBDEs	≤ 45	>45–52	>52–63	>63–78	>78–100	>100–210	>210–630	>630
PCBs	≤ 9	>9–10	>10–13	>13–16	>16–21	>21–42	>42–120	>120
Selenium	≤ 1000	>1,000–1200	>1,200–1,400	>1,400–1,800	>1,800–2,500	>2,500–4,900	>4,900–15,000	>15,000
Toxaphene	≤ 87	>87–100	>100–120	>120–150	>150–200	>200–300	>300–610	>610

^a Serving sizes (prior to cooking, wet weight) are based on an average 160-pound person. Individuals weighing less than 160 pounds should eat proportionately smaller amounts.

¹¹ The reference dose is an estimate of the maximum daily exposure to a chemical likely to be without significant risk of harmful health effects over a lifetime.