

## Lake Arrowhead Fishery Myths

Myth #1 - Lake Arrowhead is a private lake and I do not need a California state fishing license to fish it.

Truth - The lake is private. However, the water is owned by the state which makes all fish swimming in the lake a resource of the state. Fishing for these fish (if you are 16 or older) requires a state fishing license and state wardens are known to check for licenses.

Myth #2 - Since a state fishing license is required, the state stocks fish in Lake Arrowhead.

Truth - The state will not stock Lake Arrowhead with fish because the lake is private. The state does not even give one penny to ALA as a reimbursement for ALA stocking a state body of water. We are not even able to purchase fish from the state, which produces more than 90% of all hatchery-raised fish in the state.

Myth #3 - There are many private fish hatcheries that have fish available for us to purchase.

Truth - 15 years ago, there were six private hatcheries that had fish available for us to purchase. Last year there were three. Today, that number is two (Jess Ranch and Mt. Lassen). One of those hatcheries is currently experiencing difficulties and is postponing delivery dates. If one of these hatcheries "goes down", the other one will have a monopoly on fish stocking.

Myth #4 - The price of trout (per pound) is stable.

Truth - In 2001, we purchased fish for \$2.10/lb. Today, we are purchasing them for \$4.62/lb. Prices have more than doubled in this period. Additionally, price spikes occur during droughts and acts of God that impact fish hatcheries. In 2014, prices went to \$6.50/lb. after a major supply shortage.

Myth #5 - Trout are not that expensive.

Truth - The average trout that ALA stocks is worth nearly \$10.

Myth #6 - Trout in the lake are fertile and can reproduce.

Truth - Unfortunately, all trout stocked in the lake are sterilized while they are eggs. Additionally, even if these fish were not sterile, there are no gravel-bed streams where these fish can spawn.

Myth #7 - Illicit fishing (poaching) is not that big of a problem.

Truth - In 2019, ALA Lake Safety contacted hundreds of individuals who were poaching. The number of individuals that were poaching and were not contacted by ALA staff is probably in the thousands, as our staff cannot be everywhere at all times.

Myth #8 - Fishing is not that popular in Lake Arrowhead.

Truth - Fishing has probably never been more popular. Events such as the ALA Fishing Derby, the ALA Junior Trout Rodeo and women's fly-fishing groups are attracting record numbers of participants. ALA members of all demographics can be found fishing all across Lake Arrowhead at any time of the year. Fishing remains a relaxing, wholesome, family activity in an increasingly stressful world.

Myth #9 - Lake Arrowhead is not a quality fishery.

Truth - Today, Lake Arrowhead is a first-class fishery that offers great fishing opportunities for many different species throughout the year, including the rare Lightning Trout.

Myth #10 - If we just leave our fishery the way it is it will be fine.

Truth - With any wildlife environment worth preserving and enhancing, management is a necessity. For example, cormorant birds greatly impacted our warm-water fishery several years ago. However, ALA used bird deterrent devices to protect our fish and most of the birds went elsewhere. Another example - unbeknownst to its members, ALA had drastically cut fish stocking in the early 2000s. Since then, a Fish Committee has been chartered and stocking levels are near where they should be. Yet another example - the Fish Committee is exploring the stocking of a type of bluegill that is a voracious consumer of freshwater mussels. This would help control the spread of Quagga and Zebra mussels if we ever had an infestation.

Myth #11 - Funds from the Fishing Pass go into the General Fund.

Truth - 100% of Fishing Pass dollars go towards improving the Lake Arrowhead Fishery. However, when you buy a state fishing license, only 33% actually goes towards fishing programs.

Myth #12 - Raising our own fish is unnecessary.

Truth - Having a first-class fishery is very important for our members enjoyment, the health of the lake, and even property values. When fish suppliers no longer have fish available to us, there will be no way to replenish the lake. The only long-term solution is to raise our own fish.

Myth #13 - No other lakes have successfully tried aquaculture.

Truth - Some of the best trout fishing lakes in the state have been doing aquaculture for years. Big Bear Lake, June Lake, Lake Berryessa, Lake Isabella, Lake Almanor, and Lake Sisikiyou are some examples. Furthermore, fish raised in a lake where they will be released are much healthier, longer-lived, harder-fighting and look better than fish raised elsewhere and then put into a water body that is foreign to them.

Myth #14 - We do not need a consultant to advise us on fishery and wildlife matters.

Truth - Since Lake Arrowhead is private, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife does not provide us services or resources to manage our fishery. It would be expensive to hire an in-house biologist as other private lakes have done, such as Lake Mission Viejo. A consultant is a cost-effective way to attain necessary services for the benefit of our lake and membership.

Myth #15 - Other members who partake in different lake activities, such as wake-boarding or skiing, should pay a separate fee for enjoyment of the lake, similar to a Fishing Pass fee.

Truth - Having a long-term sustainable fishery creates expenses that correlate with those who partake in fishing. Other lake activities do not have such expenses.

Myth #16 – Bass fishermen don't benefit from trout stockings.

Truth – Largemouth Bass are voracious predators. Large bass feed on trout as big as 12 inches long. One reason that our bass are getting so big is that they are feeding on trout.