

Backcountry angler survey 2021

In mid-June 2021, Southland Fish & Game staff conducted a backcountry angler survey to assess angler use and satisfaction on the upper Oreti River. One hundred and forty-three anglers answered the Southland backcountry angler survey. The questions asked related to angler usage, effort, satisfaction, angler encounter rate and fishing challenge. Questions are below:

Approximately how many times did you fish the upper Oreti this season?

Which of these sentences best represents your fishing effort on the upper Oreti this season?

I fished the upper Oreti more this season than previous seasons.

I fished the upper Oreti less this season relative to previous seasons.

I fished the upper Oreti about the same number of times as previous seasons.

This is the first season I have fished the upper Oreti.

***Anglers were asked to explain their answer.**

Which of these sentences best represents your fishing satisfaction on the upper Oreti this season?

I enjoyed my fishing on the upper Oreti more this season.

I enjoyed my fishing on the upper Oreti less this season.

My enjoyment of the upper Oreti fishery was comparable to previous seasons.

This is the first season I have fished the upper Oreti.

***Anglers were asked to explain their answer.**

How many other anglers did you encounter when fishing on the upper Oreti this season?

I encountered more anglers than usual when fishing on the upper Oreti this season.

I encountered less anglers than usual when fishing on the upper Oreti this season.

I encountered about the same number of anglers as previous seasons when fishing on the upper Oreti this season.

How challenging were the fish to catch relative to previous seasons?

The fish were easier to catch this season.

The fish were harder to catch this season.

The catchability of the fish was comparable to previous seasons.

This is the first season I have fished the upper Oreti.

Results

On average, survey respondents visited the upper Oreti on 2.5 occasions during the 2020/21 season.

Of the 106 anglers who answered the survey question on fishing effort, 42 anglers (40%) fished the Oreti more this season relative to previous seasons, 16 anglers (15%) fished less this season and 26 anglers (25%) fished a comparable number of times. Twenty-two anglers (21%) fished the Oreti for the first time. Of those anglers who fished the Oreti more this season and provided a reason why (n = 37), 27 (73%) stated that reduced pressure/crowding was the reason for their increased fishing effort.

Eighty-two respondents answered the satisfaction question. Forty-two (51%) enjoyed their fishing on the Oreti more this season relative to previous seasons. Six (7%) enjoyed their fishing less this season and the satisfaction of 34 (42%) respondents was comparable to previous seasons. Of those anglers who enjoyed their fishing more this season and provided an explanation as to why, reduced fishing pressure/crowding was mentioned by 30 anglers (71%). Fishing related factors (fish condition, weather etc) was mentioned by 13 anglers (31%) and personal factors were mentioned by one angler (2%).

Eighty anglers answered the question relating to angler encounters whilst fishing. Fifty-eight anglers (73%) stated they encountered less anglers than usual, three anglers (4%) stated they encountered more anglers than usual, and 19 anglers (24%) stated they encountered about the same number of anglers as usual.

Seventy-eight anglers answered the question pertaining to fish catchability. Twenty-four anglers (31%) believed the fish were easier to catch this season whilst nine anglers (12%)

believed the fish were harder to catch this season. Forty-five anglers (58%) believed fish catchability was comparable to previous seasons.

Results summary

- 1.) Over one third of surveyed anglers fished the Oreti more frequently this season relative to previous seasons and the main reason for increased fishing effort was less pressure/crowding.
- 2.) Over half of the surveyed anglers enjoyed their Oreti fishing more this season relative to previous seasons and the main reason for increased enjoyment was less pressure and crowding.
- 3.) When fishing on the Oreti, a substantial majority of surveyed anglers encountered less anglers this season compared to previous seasons.
- 4.) Reduced fishing pressure this season did not overly affect the perceived catchability of Oreti trout.