



## OVERVIEW

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) operates a First Catch Center (FCC) trailer in the Sacramento metro area, in support of their Fishing in the City program to improve angling opportunities for California’s growing urban population.

“The FCC provides a center of operations for whatever site we are at, and it solves logistical and transportation challenges” said CDFW’s Richard Muñoz. “It’s a visual notifier for participants as well,” added Lacey Carlson. Our community really knows when they see the FCC trailer that ‘oh! Fishing in the City is here.’ It provides us the opportunity to mobilize our education and move around to all different urban ponds.”

The trailer is one of two in California. It is staffed by CDFW technicians, outreach coordinators, and scientific aides; events are typically supported by 3-5 volunteers.



## PARTNERSHIPS

One of CDFW’s key partnerships is with Hooked on Fishing, Not on Violence (HOFNOV), whose mission is to use sport fishing as a vehicle to mentor to children and create real moments of truth between mentors and participants. While they had worked together before, the pandemic formalized their partnership with the shared goal to keep kids connected and outside.

Several of HOFNOV’s youth participants have gone on to become active anglers and mentors as they age into adulthood.

“It was always the goal of both programs to create meaningful connections with the outdoors to communities that have been historically marginalized from outdoor spaces,” says Muñoz. “These participants have a voice in what we do together, and we want to be informed by the voice of the communities we are trying to reach out to.”

CDFW also works with the City of Sacramento, and the Cordova, Fulton-El Camino, Sacramento, Cosmunes, and Southgate Recreation and Parks districts.

# First Catch Centers California Department of Fish and Wildlife

## RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REACTIVATION FOCUS

Leveraging the reach of partners is a key component of CDFW's outreach strategy. "Outside of word of mouth, it's great to have a partnership for advertising because we can only use social media to advertise statewide, but the local groups help us get out into each of those specific targeted communities," said Carlson. When a local park posted information about Fishing in the City's upcoming clinic there, "all of a sudden we had so many different community members coming out to this program who were specific to the Elk Grove community, who had never even heard of this program before."

## CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

Muñoz noted the time involved in making sure the trailer was fully designed and equipped for CDFW's specific use cases. The Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation provides the trailer/trailer wrap and essential fishing gear, but fully setting up the interior with cupboards, shelving, and gear storage takes additional time to achieve.

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

Because of Fishing in the City's impact with the FCC and with HOFNOV, Sacramento began to stock a new urban pond with fish. "Southside Park is in downtown Sacramento and close to a lot of the folks from their program," said Muñoz. "Previous to this partnership we weren't stocking that pond at all, but now we can reach a whole new community that we hadn't before. The mobility and the infrastructure that comes from the FCC allowed us to focus more on partnerships, on new waters, and new communities."

Carlson also notes that the Fishing in the City program supported by the FCC has created opportunities for new anglers to get the equipment they need to get started. "A lot of community members have donated fishing equipment to us as well, like fishing poles, and more. We clean those up, get them prepped and send the donated gear back out into the community. I worked with a family whose kids came to one of our clinics and suddenly became so passionate, and we were able to set both their kids up with a fishing rod, tackle boxes, and everything they needed to get out there and go fishing again and again."



**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
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