



# Health Advisory and Guidelines for Eating Fish from Antelope Lake (Plumas 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
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EPA	eicosapentaenoic acid
FDA	United States Food and Drug Administration
Hg	mercury
MDL	method detection limit
MeHg	methylmercury
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
RWB5	Regional Water Board 5 (Central Valley)
Se	selenium
SWAMP	Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
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.<sup>1</sup> 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 Antelope Lake in Plumas 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 the List of Figures and Tables.

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<sup>1</sup> Sport fish includes all fish and shellfish caught from California waters for non-commercial purposes (e.g., recreational, tribal/cultural, and subsistence practices).

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**Women**  
(18 – 49 Years)

**Children**  
(1 – 17 Years)



**Women**  
(50+ Years)

**Men**  
(18+ Years)

## A GUIDE TO EATING FISH

### from ANTELOPE LAKE

(PLUMAS COUNTY)

**7** TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK

OR

**2** TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK

**7** TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK

OR

**6** TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK



**Bullhead Species**



**Golden Shiner**



**Sunfish Species**

Photo credit: New York Department of Environmental Conservation

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**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](http://www.oehha.ca.gov/fish)  
 email [fish@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:fish@oehha.ca.gov)  
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**Eat only the skinless fillet**



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

**Eat only the meat**



**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.

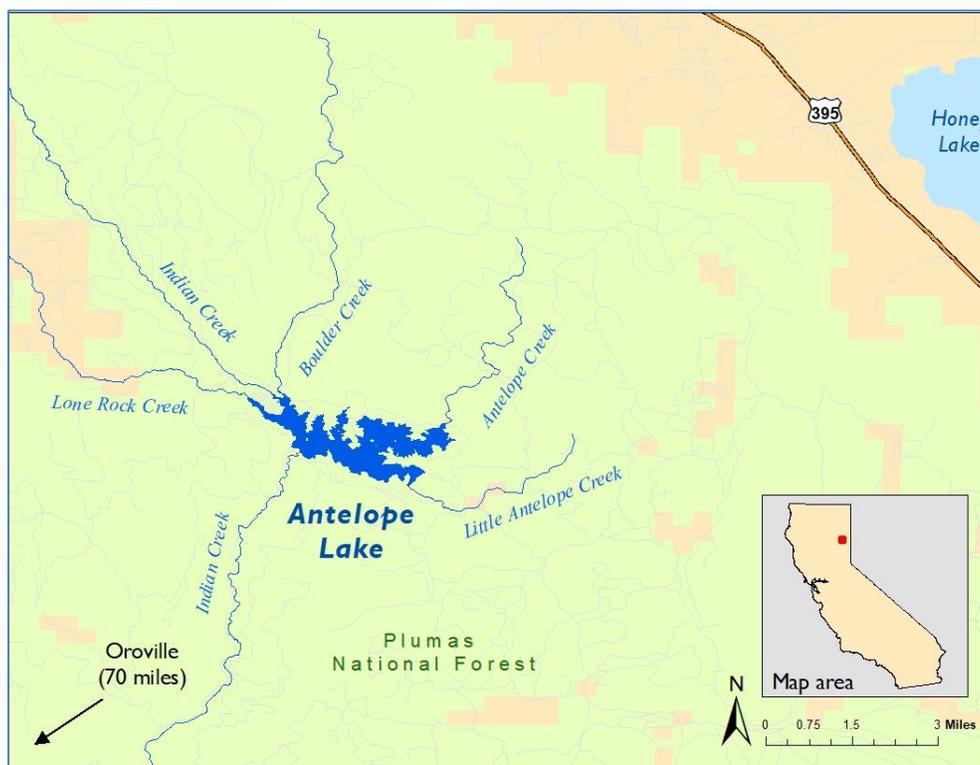
## INTRODUCTION

This report presents guidelines for eating black bass species, bullhead species, Golden Shiner, and sunfish species from Antelope Lake (Figure 1). Consumption advice is based on levels of mercury found in these species.

### LOCATION

Antelope Lake is located about 70 miles northeast of Oroville, CA, and sits at 5,000 feet of elevation in Plumas National Forest. Antelope Lake was formed in 1964 by the construction of an earthen dam on Indian Creek, a tributary of the East Branch North Fork Feather River. The California Department of Water Resources owns and operates Antelope Lake, and the United States Forest Service operates the surrounding Antelope Lake Recreation Area.<sup>2</sup>

FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF ANTELOPE LAKE



<sup>2</sup> Information regarding Antelope Lake was obtained from the Department of Water Resources. Online at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/State-Water-Project/SWP-Facilities> and <https://water.ca.gov/What-We-Do/Recreation/Upper-Feather-River-Lakes>.

### *APPROACH USED*

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) used the results from four monitoring studies described in this report to develop the Antelope 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 mean)<sup>3</sup> 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 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 an element found in some rocks 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

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<sup>3</sup> Means are an arithmetic average of individual values and/or composites weighted by number of fish. 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.

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, whose brains are still developing.

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

Selenium is an element 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.

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.

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.

A 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 Antelope Lake and used in advisory development were analyzed for mercury. Some fish were analyzed for PCBs, PBDEs, selenium, and legacy pesticides as indicated in Table 1. Fish species that do not typically accumulate PCBs or other organic chemicals were not analyzed for these contaminants.

## DATA SOURCES

The guidelines for eating fish from Antelope 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.

*MERCURY CONTAMINATION IN FISH FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA LAKES AND RESERVOIRS, 2000 – 2001 (DWR)*

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) collected fish from twenty lakes and reservoirs in northern California during the spring and summer of 2000 and 2001 (DWR, 2007). This study provided an initial summary of the mercury contamination in northern California. Largemouth Bass were collected from Antelope Lake for this study in 2000 and analyzed for mercury.

*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 Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWB5), monitors water quality in California’s surface waters. This survey of inland water bodies was the State’s largest survey of chemical contaminants in sport fish. The survey sampled popular fishing sites at 272 lakes and reservoirs from 2007 to 2008 (SWRCB, 2010). The SWRCB used the data from this survey to characterize statewide water quality conditions. The program collected Brown Bullhead and Largemouth Bass from Antelope Lake in 2008, which were analyzed for mercury. Brown Bullhead were also analyzed for PBDEs, PCBs, selenium, and legacy pesticides.

*SURVEY OF MERCURY EXPOSURE AND RISK IN WILDLIFE IN CALIFORNIA LAKES AND RESERVOIRS, 2012 – 2013 (SWAMP)*

SWAMP conducted a bird, prey fish, and sport fish sampling survey at lakes and reservoirs throughout California in 2012 and 2013 to support the development of a tool to estimate mercury exposure and risk to sport fish and piscivorous wildlife using mercury concentrations in prey fish at a water body (Ackerman et al., 2015). This program sampled Golden Shiner and Largemouth Bass from Antelope Lake in 2013, which were analyzed for mercury.

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

The purpose of this study was to identify and characterize lakes with low concentrations of mercury and other contaminants in fish tissue in order to improve understanding of the conditions and factors that contribute to these lower concentrations (Davis, 2018). The program collected Brown Bullhead, Largemouth Bass, and Pumpkinseed from

Antelope Lake in 2014, which were analyzed for mercury and PCBs (Brown Bullhead and Pumpkinseed only).

## FISH SAMPLED FROM ANTELOPE LAKE

The fish sampling data used in this advisory were retrieved from the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN),<sup>4</sup> 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, 2022). 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 ANTELOPE LAKE ADVISORY

Common Name	Scientific Name	Number of Samples	Total Number of Fish	Project	Year Collected	Contaminants Analyzed
Brown Bullhead	<i>Ameiurus nebulosus</i>	1	5	SWAMP	2008	Chlordanes, DDTs, Dieldrin, PBDEs, PCBs, Selenium
		2	10	SWAMP	2008	Hg
		1	2	SWAMP	2014	Hg, PCBs
Golden Shiner	<i>Notemigonus crysoleucas</i>	10	10	SWAMP <sup>a</sup>	2013	Hg
Largemouth Bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	2	6	DWR <sup>b</sup>	2000	Hg
		7	7	SWAMP	2008	Hg
		10	10	SWAMP	2013	Hg
		7	7	SWAMP	2014	Hg
Pumpkinseed	<i>Lepomis gibbosus</i>	1	10	SWAMP	2014	Hg, PCBs

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

<sup>a</sup> Samples were analyzed as whole organisms, including head, skin, internal organs, muscle, and bones.

<sup>b</sup> Study report did not specify whether skin was removed from fillets prior to tissue analysis.

<sup>4</sup> Online at: <http://ceden.waterboards.ca.gov/AdvancedQueryTool>.

## CHEMICAL CONCENTRATIONS

As shown in Table 1, samples were analyzed for one or more of the following: total mercury, selenium, chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, PBDEs (7 congeners), and PCBs (50–54 congeners).<sup>5</sup> Among the chemicals analyzed in fish tissue samples from Antelope Lake, only mercury levels were sufficiently high to impact consumption advice.

All fish samples were prepared as skinless fillets, except for Golden Shiner, which were analyzed whole bodied due to their small size. The fillet preparation method for Largemouth Bass collected for the DWR study was not recorded. Samples were analyzed as individual fish or composites.

For this advisory, OEHHA used the weighted (by the number of individual fish) average (arithmetic mean) 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 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 length,<sup>6</sup> as well as mercury concentrations in each fish species. The DMA method detection limits (MDLs)<sup>7</sup> for total mercury were reported at 4 or 12 parts per billion (ppb), depending on the study. The reporting limit (RLs)<sup>8</sup> for each study was 12 ppb. The MDL and RL for mercury were not reported for the DWR study.

### *PCBs, PBDEs, AND PESTICIDES*

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. Because the MDLs or RLs were relatively low ( $\leq 5$  ppb), individual congeners or metabolites with concentrations reported as non-detects were assumed to be zero. This is a standard method of handling non-detect

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<sup>5</sup> Congeners are related compounds with similar chemical forms. Of the 209 possible PBDE and PCB congeners, 6–7 and 48–54 are generally analyzed, respectively.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> The MDL is the lowest quantity of a chemical that can be distinguished (as greater than zero) in a sample.

<sup>8</sup> The RL is the lowest quantity of a chemical that can be accurately quantified in a sample.

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 Brown Bullhead collected from Antelope Lake for selenium as a composite sample, using inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry (ICP-MS). The ICP-MS method uses desolvation, atomization, and ionization with ion separation based on a mass-to-charge ratio to detect the total selenium concentration in a sample. The MDL and the RL for total selenium were reported at 150 and 400 ppb.

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

TABLE 2. MERCURY CONCENTRATIONS IN FISH FROM ANTELOPE LAKE

Species from Antelope Lake	Number of Samples <sup>a</sup>	Total Number of Fish	Mean <sup>b</sup> Total Length (mm)	Range <sup>c</sup> of Total Lengths (mm)	Mercury (ppb)	
					Mean <sup>b</sup>	Range <sup>c</sup>
Brown Bullhead	3	12	363	337 – 381	31	24 – 38
Golden Shiner	10	10	71	65 – 80	20	17 – 23
Largemouth Bass	26	30	360	306 – 494	105	40 – 247
Pumpkinseed	1	10	130	111 – 156	23	n/a

<sup>a</sup>Samples were prepared as skinless fillets, except as noted in the footnotes to Table 1.

<sup>b</sup>Means are an arithmetic average of individual values and/or a weighted average of composites.

<sup>c</sup>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 ANTELOPE 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 beneficial omega-3 fatty acids, docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) (USDA/USDHHS, 2020; Weaver et al., 2008).

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends “including at least 8 ounces of cooked seafood<sup>9</sup> per week. Young children need less, depending on their age and calorie needs.”<sup>10</sup> According to the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines (USDA/USDHHS, 2020), “women who are pregnant or lactating should consume at least 8 and up to 12 ounces of a variety of seafood per week from choices that are lower in methylmercury.” Additionally, “based on FDA and EPA’s advice, depending on body weight, some women should choose seafood lowest in methylmercury or eat less seafood than the amounts in the Healthy U.S.-Style Dietary Pattern” (USDA/USDHHS, 2020). For more detailed information, see USDA/USDHHS (2020) and other USDA MyPlate.gov materials. 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).

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 safely, for each species and from 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 of age, 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

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<sup>9</sup> Seafood as used here refers to fish and shellfish from freshwater and marine environments.

<sup>10</sup> Online at: <https://www.myplate.gov/>

Sport Fish: Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs)” (OEHHA, 2011). A list of the ATLS used in this report is presented in the Appendix.

For each fish species in this advisory, OEHHA compared the mean chemical concentrations detected in the fillet to the corresponding ATLS to establish the maximum number of servings per week that could be consumed (see Appendix). For fish fillets, a serving size is considered to be 8 ounces, prior to cooking, or about the size and thickness of a hand. Children should be given smaller servings. For smaller fish species, several individual fish 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, multiple chemical exposure methodology involving hazard index calculations is employed. This may result in advising fewer servings per week than would be the case for the presence of either chemical alone, in a similar concentration. The potential effect of multiple chemical exposures (mercury and DDTs) was assessed in Brown Bullhead and did not affect advice. 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,<sup>11</sup> 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. When noted, OEHHA’s consumption advice for a particular fish species can be extended to other closely related fish species<sup>12</sup> known to accumulate similar levels of contaminants.

Consumption advice should not be combined. That is, if a person chooses to eat a serving of 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 serving of fish from the “two-servings-per-week” category, they can combine fish species from that category, or eat one serving of 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.

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<sup>11</sup> Online at: <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>

<sup>12</sup> Fish species within the same genus are most closely related, and family is the next level of relationship.

## CONSUMPTION ADVICE FOR FISH FROM ANTELOPE LAKE

OEHHA's advisory protocol (OEHHA, 2022) 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 to develop advice for species that are commonly caught and consumed from a given water body but where available data may be limited. Generally, this practice applies when the advice supports no consumption of that species. For Antelope Lake, the sample size criterion was met for the following species: Brown Bullhead, Golden Shiner, Largemouth Bass, and Pumpkinseed. There were not sufficient data to evaluate other species that may be found in this water body. For fish species found in Antelope Lake that are not included in this advisory, OEHHA recommends following the Statewide Advisory for Lakes and Reservoirs without Site-specific Advice.<sup>13</sup>

The following advice is based solely on mercury concentrations. The sensitive population is defined as women ages 18 to 49 years and children ages 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)*

Black bass species are one of the most targeted species of freshwater game fish in California. OEHHA groups black bass species because they have similar predatory diets which suggests a comparable chemical uptake (Long and Fisher, 2000). They are also known to hybridize (Pierce and Van Den Avyle, 1997), largely due to species introductions for angling purposes and weak genetic barriers between members of the genus (Thongda et al., 2020). OEHHA has also 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.

Based on the mean mercury concentration of 105 ppb in Largemouth Bass, OEHHA recommends a maximum of two servings of black bass species from Antelope Lake for the sensitive population, and a maximum of six servings a week for the general population.

### *BULLHEAD SPECIES (BROWN BULLHEAD)*

Black and Brown Bullhead are benthic, opportunistic omnivores, with adults feeding primarily on plants, invertebrates, and small fish. They can tolerate a wide range of

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<sup>13</sup> Online at: <https://oehha.ca.gov/advisories/statewide-advisory-eating-fish-californias-lakes-and-reservoirs-without-site-specific>.

conditions, including waters with low oxygenation and high pollution levels. Bullhead species are bottom-dwellers which can expose them to chemical contaminants in bottom sediments. The species are also known to hybridize in some water bodies where they are co-located (Cingolani et al., 2007). Although there are not sufficient data to state conclusively, due to their similar diet and habitat preferences, it is expected that Black and Brown Bullhead would have similar levels of contaminant uptake. OEHHA has evaluated mercury concentrations in Black Bullhead and Brown Bullhead in water bodies in California and has found a similar range of mercury concentrations when both of these species were caught from the same water body. These two species also have similar statewide mean mercury concentrations. For these reasons, OEHHA extends the consumption advice for Brown Bullhead to Black Bullhead.

The mean mercury concentration in Brown Bullhead from Antelope Lake was 31 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of Brown Bullhead for both the sensitive and general populations.

#### *GOLDEN SHINER*

The mean mercury concentration in Golden Shiner from Antelope Lake was 20 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of Golden Shiner for both the sensitive and general populations.

#### *SUNFISH SPECIES (PUMPKINSEED)*

OEHHA groups sunfish species due to a known ability to hybridize (Avisé and Smith, 1974) and extensive dietary overlap (Kirby, 1982), which suggests a similar contaminant uptake. 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 Pumpkinseed to other sunfish species, including Bluegill, Green Sunfish, and Redear Sunfish.

The mean mercury concentration in Pumpkinseed from Antelope Lake was 23 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of sunfish species for both the sensitive and general populations.

**RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SERVINGS**

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

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

Fish Species from Antelope 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	6
Bullhead Species	7	7
Golden Shiner	7	7
Sunfish Species	7	7

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## APPENDIX. ADVISORY TISSUE LEVELS

Advisory Tissue Levels (ATLs; OEHHA, 2008 and 2011) 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 reference dose<sup>14</sup> on an average daily basis 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 risk level 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 are followed, exposure to chemicals in fish 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) <sup>a</sup> 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 ≥ 50 and men ≥ 18)	≤ 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

<sup>a</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> 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.