



Health Advisory and Guidelines for Eating Fish from Success Lake (Tulare 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
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. 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 Success Lake in Tulare 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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A GUIDE TO EATING FISH FROM SUCCESS 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>Survey of Mercury Exposure and Risk in Wildlife in California Lakes and Reservoirs, 2012 – 2013 (SWAMP)</i>	9
<i>Long-Term Monitoring of Bass Lakes and Reservoirs in California, 2015 (SWAMP)</i>	9
FISH SAMPLED FROM SUCCESS LAKE	9
CHEMICAL CONCENTRATIONS	10
<i>Mercury</i>	11
<i>PCBs, PBDEs, and Pesticides</i>	11
<i>Selenium</i>	11
DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR EATING FISH FROM SUCCESS LAKE.....	12
CONSUMPTION ADVICE FOR FISH FROM SUCCESS LAKE	14
<i>Black Bass Species (Largemouth Bass)</i>	15
<i>Common Carp</i>	15
<i>Rainbow Trout</i>	15
<i>Threadfin Shad</i>	15
RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SERVINGS.....	16
REFERENCES	17
APPENDIX I. Advisory Tissue Levels.....	19
Success Lake Fish Advisory	3

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Location of Success Lake	6
Table 1. Fish Samples Evaluated for the Success Lake Advisory.....	10
Table 2. Mercury Concentrations in Fish from Success Lake	12
Table 3. Recommended Maximum Number of Servings per Week for Fish from Success Lake.....	16
Advisory Tissue Levels for Selected Analytes.....	19



Women
(18 – 49 Years)

Children
(1 – 17 Years)

7 TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK

OR

1 TOTAL SERVING A WEEK



Women
(50+ Years)

Men
(18+ Years)

7 TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK

OR

2 TOTAL SERVINGS A WEEK

A GUIDE TO EATING FISH

from SUCCESS LAKE

(TULARE 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.



Rainbow Trout
♥ *high in omega-3s*



Threadfin Shad



Black Bass Species
♥ *high in omega-3s*



Common Carp

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.

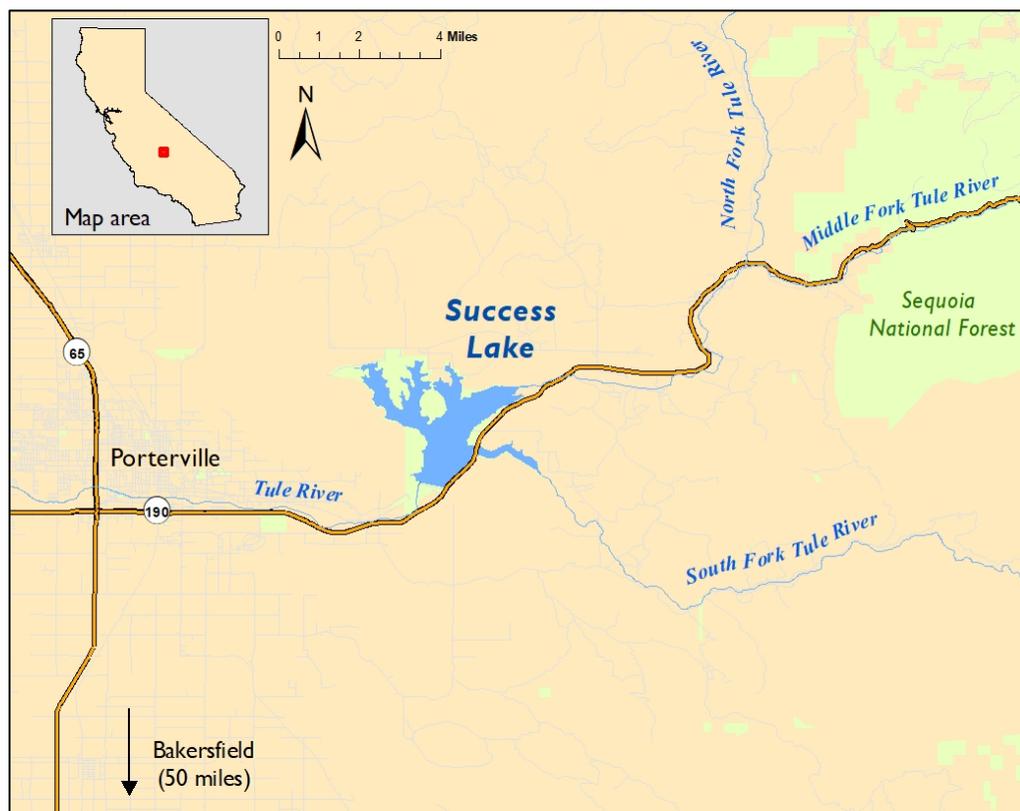
INTRODUCTION

This report presents guidelines for eating black bass species, Common Carp, Rainbow Trout, and Threadfin Shad from Success Lake (Figure 1). Consumption advice is based on levels of mercury found in these species.

LOCATION

Success Lake is located about 8 miles east of Porterville, CA, in Tulare County. The 2,450-acre lake was formed in 1961 by the construction of Richard L. Shafer Dam on the Tule River for flood control, water supply, and recreational purposes.¹ The lake and the dam are owned and managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife plants Rainbow Trout² in Success Lake during winter and spring.

FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF SUCCESS LAKE



¹ Information regarding Success Lake was obtained from the US Army Corps of Engineers. Online at: <https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Success-Lake/>

² CDFW Fish Planting Schedule online at: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FishPlants/>

APPROACH USED

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) used the results from three monitoring studies described in this report to develop the Success 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 mean³) 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 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

³ 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.

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 Success Lake and used in advisory development were analyzed for mercury (as a measure of methylmercury). Common Carp and Rainbow Trout were also analyzed for PBDEs, PCBs, and the legacy pesticides chlordanes (cis-chlordane, trans-chlordane, cis-nonachlor, trans-nonachlor, and oxychlordane), dieldrin, and DDTs (DDT and its metabolites dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane [DDD] and dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene [DDE]). Common Carp were additionally analyzed for selenium. 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 Success Lake are based on the chemicals detected in the fish collected for the three 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 Regional Water Quality Control Board staff, monitors water quality in California's surface waters. As part of a SWAMP statewide sampling effort to survey contaminants in sport fish found in California lakes and reservoirs, the program collected Common Carp and Rainbow Trout from Success Lake in 2007 to analyze for chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, mercury, PBDEs, and PCBs in both species, and selenium in Common Carp (SWRCB, 2010).

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 to estimate mercury concentrations in birds and other wildlife based on mercury levels in fish at different trophic levels. Results of this study were intended to help risk managers understand mercury exposure for wildlife and develop TMDLs for impaired water bodies. This program sampled Largemouth Bass and Threadfin Shad from Success Lake in 2013, which were analyzed for mercury (SWRCB, 2012).

LONG-TERM MONITORING OF BASS LAKES AND RESERVOIRS IN CALIFORNIA, 2015 (SWAMP)

This monitoring study was the first year of a multi-year effort initiated in 2015 to document long-term trends related to mercury contamination in sport fish from California lakes and reservoirs dominated by bass species (Davis et al. 2019). In 2015, SWAMP collected Largemouth Bass from Success Lake, which were analyzed for mercury.

FISH SAMPLED FROM SUCCESS 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 SUCCESS LAKE ADVISORY

Common Name	Scientific Name	Number of Samples	Total Number of Fish	Project	Year Collected	Contaminants Analyzed
Common Carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>	1	15	SWAMP	2007	Chlordanes, DDTs, Dieldrin, PBDEs, PCBs, Se
		3	15	SWAMP	2007	Hg
Largemouth Bass*	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>	7	7	SWAMP	2013	Hg
		4	4	SWAMP	2015	Hg
Rainbow Trout	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>	1	15	SWAMP	2007	Chlordanes, DDTs, Dieldrin, PBDEs, PCBs
		3	15	SWAMP	2007	Hg
Threadfin Shad**	<i>Dorosoma petenense</i>	10	10	SWAMP	2013	Hg

*The minimum legal size for Largemouth Bass from Success Lake is 15 inches (381 mm).

**Threadfin Shad were analyzed as whole organisms, including head, skin, internal organs, muscle, and bones. All other species were analyzed as skinless fillets.

CHEMICAL CONCENTRATIONS

As shown in Table 1, samples were analyzed for one or more of the following: total mercury, selenium, chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, PBDEs (6 – 7 congeners), and PCBs (54 congeners)⁴. Among the chemicals analyzed in fish tissue samples from Success Lake, only mercury levels were sufficiently high to impact consumption advice.

All fish samples were prepared as skinless fillets, except for Threadfin Shad, which were analyzed as whole organisms. Samples were analyzed as individual fish or composites.

⁴ Congeners are related compounds with similar chemical forms. Of the 209 possible PBDE and PCB congeners, 6–7 and 48–54 are generally reported, respectively.

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 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.

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 (≤ 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 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 Success Lake for selenium as composite samples, 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 ICP-MS MDL and RL for total selenium were reported at 150 and 400 ppb.

Concentrations of chlordanes, DDTs, dieldrin, PBDEs, PCBs, and selenium 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.

TABLE 2. MERCURY CONCENTRATIONS IN FISH FROM SUCCESS LAKE

Species from Success Lake	Number of Samples	Total Number of Fish	Mean** Total Length (mm)	Range of Total Lengths*** (mm)	Mercury (ppb)	
					Mean**	Range***
Common Carp	3	15	507	460 – 563	230	163 – 265
Largemouth Bass	11	11	428	374 – 500	422	300 – 575
Rainbow Trout	3	15	309	265 – 350	25	23 – 27
Threadfin Shad*	10	10	44	35 – 52	26	17 – 37

*Threadfin Shad were analyzed as whole organisms, including head, skin, internal organs, muscle, and bones. All other species were analyzed as skinless fillets.

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

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

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR EATING FISH FROM SUCCESS 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 seafood⁸ per week. Young children need less, depending on their age and calorie needs” (MyPlate.gov). According to the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines, “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” (USDA/USDHHS, 2020). 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

⁸ Seafood food as used here refers to fish and shellfish from freshwater and marine environments.

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 should 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 thickness of a hand for fish fillets. 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, the multiple chemical exposure methodology is employed. This may result in advising fewer servings 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 for Common Carp or Rainbow Trout, the only species for which both chemicals were analyzed, due to low PCB concentrations. 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 species⁹ 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 SUCCESS 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 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 Success Lake, the sample size criterion was met for the following species: Common Carp, Largemouth Bass, Rainbow Trout, 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 Success 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.

⁹ Fish species within the same genus are most closely related, and family is the next level of relationship.

BLACK BASS SPECIES (LARGEMOUTH BASS)

The mean mercury concentration in Largemouth Bass from Success Lake was 422 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of one serving a week of black bass species for the sensitive population, and a maximum of two 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.

COMMON CARP

The mean mercury concentration in Common Carp from Success Lake was 230 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of one serving a week of Common Carp for the sensitive population, and a maximum of two servings a week for the general population.

RAINBOW TROUT

The mean mercury concentration in Rainbow Trout from Success Lake was 25 ppb. OEHHA recommends a maximum of seven servings a week of Rainbow Trout for both the sensitive and general populations.

THREADFIN SHAD

The mean mercury concentration in Threadfin Shad from Success Lake was 26 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 Success Lake are shown in Table 3.

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

Fish Species from Success Lake	Women 18–49 years and Children 1–17 years	Women 50 years and older and Men 18 years and older
Black Bass Species	1	2
Common Carp	1	2
Rainbow Trout	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 reference dose¹⁰ 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 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 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) ^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.

¹⁰ 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.