

Double-crested Cormorant Information Sharing Interviews

Topic Guide

6-21-18

Name:

Date:

Hello, my name is Phil Seng, with DJ Case & Associates. I am working on contract for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to interview fish and wildlife agencies about the extent to which double-crested cormorants are preying on free-swimming fish within your jurisdiction. You have been identified as someone who would be particularly knowledgeable about this issue in your agency. Would you be willing to provide information on this important issue? The interview will take roughly 40-60 minutes, depending on how much you have to say. [Schedule a call in the future or proceed.]

I'm not recording this call, but I'll be taking notes to be sure I capture your thoughts correctly. My report from these interviews will contain aggregated information from all participants, but your name and agency name will not be attached to any specific comments. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Quantify the Conflict/Impacts (biological and social)

1. How would you "rate" your agency's (Tribe's/organization's) concern about the degree to which cormorants are causing conflicts in your state? (I'm just looking for a general sense of it. Let's say 1 = no problem and 10 = the biggest problem we face as an agency.)
2. Please give me a brief overview of the range of biological conflicts that cormorants are causing in [state]. [prompt as needed: threatened & endangered fish, gamefish, hatchery fish, aquaculture, nesting birds, etc.]
3. How are cormorants perceived by your various recreational user groups? [prompt as needed: angler satisfaction, user perception of quality of recreational activity (fishing,

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501) to inform nationwide Cormorant management decisions. Your response is voluntary. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB has reviewed and approved this survey and assigned OMB Control Number 1090-0011.

Estimated Burden Statement: We estimate it will take you 10 minutes to complete the survey, including time to read instructions, gather information, and complete and submit the questionnaire. You may submit comments on any aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: BPHC, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or via email to Info_Coll@fws.gov.

boating, wildlife viewing, swimming, etc.) when cormorants are seen, catch per unit effort, etc.]

4. Do you have any information on direct economic losses that can be attributed to cormorants? [prompt as needed: license sales, resort visitation, reduced fishery, loss of property (hatchery fish), success of commercial anglers, etc.]

Management Actions

5. What non-lethal management actions have your agency employed? [prompt as needed: education, outreach, hazing, capture-relocation, etc.]. Were those methods successful? By what measure?
6. What lethal management actions have your agency pursued for managing cormorants? For instance, did you previously manage them under the vacated depredation orders? Did the management improve the situation for free-swimming fish? What information (e.g., data/evidence) do you have that the situation improved through lethal management?
7. Has your agency attempted to balance competing values on cormorant management amongst recreational users? For instance, do you have to balance the interests of those who want more fish against those who want more birds? How do you currently handle that?

Information Sharing

As I mentioned at the top, the Service is trying to locate as much empirical data as it can find on this topic from across the country. The Service is confident that agencies like yours have data on this topic, and they would be grateful if you are willing to provide this information.

With that in mind, does your agency have information you can share on any of the elements of cormorant management we've been discussing? [I'm not looking for details right now, just whether you have some that you can share.] What form is the information you have in? Is it published in peer-reviewed journals, exist in internal technical reports, or is it mostly anecdotal, etc.? (All of it will be helpful, but we're especially interested in information that includes measurable objectives, such as reduction in depredation, economic loss, number of complaints, population size, etc. We need the kind of information that could withstand rigorous scientific scrutiny.)

If you have such information, [provide directions for how to submit it].