

PROS & CONS

BASS
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The PROS & CONS section of B.A.S.S. TIMES is intended as a reader forum for comments, concerns and opinions. All letters, which are subject to minor editing, must include the author's name, address and home telephone number for verification by the editorial staff. All letters sent to the publication are presumed to be for publication unless writers specify otherwise. B.A.S.S. TIMES reserves the right to reject any letter that contains inappropriate or libelous material. Please address correspondence to Editor, B.A.S.S. TIMES, P.O. Box 17141, Montgomery, AL 36141.

Appreciates The Effort

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Keep up the good work.

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I have listed below my own thoughts concerning these issues:

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I am a concerned "life member" of B.A.S.S. I have been a member of a federated bass club since 1984, and I am serving my fifth term as an officer in the Mississippi B.A.S.S. State Federation (Northern District Board of Directors).

I don't believe that anyone at B.A.S.S. realizes what is made from chlorine. A lot of lure manufacturers use PVC in the production of these lures. Plastic worms are made from PVC, which is made from chlorine. If it were not for chlorine, bass fishing would still be back in the "dark ages," because almost every fishing-related manufacturer uses plastic either to make their lures or in the packaging of their product.

Boat seats are made from PVC, depthsounders, electric-wire coating — just about everything we use while fishing or almost everything we touch is made from PVC, which is made from chlorine.

I have worked at Vista Chemical in Aberdeen, Miss., for over 20 years. The air in this plant is monitored by sophisticated electronic sampling equipment. This equipment will alarm the control room operator if it detects a leak of 3 parts per million. This amount is like comparing a baseball to the moon. This plant has been regulated by the EPA since the mid-'70s.

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There may be some chemical companies that pollute our streams and lakes, but don't close all chemical plants down. I believe B.A.S.S. should reconsider its stand on the ban of chlorine and get on the bandwagon to regulate the discharge of chemicals from our chemical plants.

Please, let's save bass fishing and keep it the sport I love so well. Don't support a ban on chlorine.

John Ray Hamilton
 Aberdeen, MS

Weighty Issue Of Lead

Dear B.A.S.S. TIMES,

As you indicated in the April issue of B.A.S.S. TIMES, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is moving ahead with a plan to ban the manufacture of lead-based fishing lures and weights.

The apparent reason for this ban is legal action by certain conservation/wildfowl groups concerned that some individual specimens of certain species of waterfowl have been found to have ingested lead. While I understand the need to regulate lead shotgun pellets, I fail to see how a 1-ounce weight, a 1/2-ounce flapping jig or a spinnerbait could represent a serious threat to waterfowl. I don't remember the last time I fished a Carolina rig or Texas-rig lure in a wildfowl marsh, let alone in the shallow depths at which waterfowl feed. And in the north Mississippi and TVA lakes where I fish out of Memphis, I've never seen any sort of swan, crane or loon, so it's a little difficult to understand why I need to stop fishing with lead-based tackle.

If lead is a problem in a marsh on the eastern shore or in Yellowstone, ban it where it is causing the problem. But don't tell me that a small-mouth jig in 25 feet of water on Pickwick Lake or a Texas-rig worm on Sardis Lake in Mississippi is a threat to waterfowl. That just won't pass reasonable logic. Once again, Washington's answer to a local or regional concern is to pass a federal law. We should wonder why they want to ban lead fishing weights — while they won't ban gill netting or enforce water pollution laws already on the books!

B.A.S.S. has long been a champion when it comes to fighting ridiculous regulations affecting our interests. This has got to rank right up there with "user fees" imposed by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers. Please let the membership know what we need to do to fight this regulation. Once again, there's strength in our numbers.

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"I have talked with city officials and with Richard Harvey, director of Water Facilities, Florida Department of Environmental Protection. They all have assured me that municipal water in Perry is safe and free of industrial contamination."

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If your writers have questions about our operation, I encourage them to contact me.

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Keep up the good work.

Fred Bonner
 Garner, NC

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be able to force their ideas and opinions on the majority?

● Some legislators and radical conservationists want all species of fish and all ecosystems put back in their original state, which will ultimately kill millions of fish and destroy millions of acres of wildlife habitat. Would you like your reservoir system drained? Do you readers in Oregon like your smallmouth bass fishing?

● Bass and other game fish are being blamed as the main cause of decline in native fishes and endangered fish, especially Oregon's Columbia River and in the river systems in the Rockies. These game fish do play a role in this, but dams on these systems have affected the environment of these rivers much more than bass and catfish have. Smallmouth bass don't stop salmon from going up the Columbia and Snake rivers — dams do. All fish are equally important in this world. Bass are no more important than salmon, but one species shouldn't be eradicated from an ecosystem to save another. What will your readers in Oregon do when the gamefish industry in your state is gone?

● Finally, there comes one of the worst problems facing our future: the loss of the money that is used to manage it. It is not the fishermen's or hunter's responsibility to balance the budget. We pay income taxes, gas taxes, use taxes, etc. for government programs such as welfare and highway maintenance. We, the fishermen and hunters, also pay license fees, boating fees and parking fees as well as special taxes on fishing tackle and equipment to keep our resources clean and usable. I don't want my state park money to go to welfare, just as I am sure you don't. I'm also confident in saying that senior citizens don't want their money going to my lakes. So how can we let the government do this with our money?

Get involved! If not for you, for your children or grandchildren. Help protect the American heritage of using the outdoors. Call or write the environmental department at B A S S for further information on how you can get involved.

John B. Coovert
 Muncie, IN

The Chlorine Issue

Dear B A S S TIMES

After reading your article — "Pollution legislation gathers steam," I felt compelled to write (BT March/94).

First of all, I should let you know that I am a union employee in the pulp-and-paper industry and that I also chair a labor-based political action council in Oregon, namely the Pulp and Paper Workers' Resource Council. The chlorine issue has been one of many topics that has been under consideration in our organization. Information that we can provide to your readers may help them when it comes to making a decision on the merits of Congressman Bill Richardson's bill (H.R. 2898), known as the Chlorine Zero Discharge Act.

When it comes to dioxin and the pulp-and-paper industry, there have been many movements in the past 10 years to improve effluent standards. Local governments in the Pacific Northwest have led the nation when it comes to air and water quality, and we demanded that the dioxin issue be addressed.

In response, major changes in the production processes were undertaken that enabled mills in Washington, Oregon and Idaho to achieve non-detectable levels of dioxin. The answer was to replace the use of elemental chlorine — a reactive chemical that can bond with other compounds which can lead to the byproduct dioxin — with that of chlorine dioxide. This new chemical reduces the chlorine molecule's ability to bond with organic material and thus minimizes the effects of effluent on the environment.

The capital cost to the Pacific Northwest's pulp producers averages between \$12 to \$20 million per mill site and showed that by being chal-

lenged they could address the dioxin issue. Even with this, the changes to these mills would not meet the requirements of H.R. 2898 and its call for zero-chlorine discharge.

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