



**RECOMMENDED Code of Conduct for  
Organizers of Competitive Fishing Events in  
Ontario**

November 2008

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## **Code of Conduct for Organizers of Competitive Fishing Events in Ontario**

*(Revised April 19, 2007)*

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### **1. BACKGROUND**

- a. *This document has been created by the Ontario Competitive Fishing Council (OCFC) as a tool for organizers. It defines acceptable performance, promotes high standards of practice, and provides a benchmark for CFE Organizers to use for self-evaluation and to establish a framework for professional behavior and responsibilities.*
- b. *A Competitive Fishing Event (CFE) is any angling activity, organized by an individual, a group, a partnership or a for-profit, non-profit or charitable entity, regardless of budget, cost of entry, number of competitors, promotions involved or species of fish, in which participants are solicited and have the opportunity to win cash, prizes, other benefits and/or recognition.*
- c. *An Organizer of a CFE is an individual, group, or organization that executes and is responsible for the operations of a specified competitive fishing event.*

### **2. CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT**

Organizers of competitive fishing events should:

- a. have an obligation, a duty and a responsibility to deliver, administer and manage events that recognize the importance of the fishery and promote conservation, public safety, sportsmanship, shared access to the resource (including other CFE organizers and events) and allow opportunities for other recreational pursuits. CFE organizers should conduct themselves in a manner that is a credit to themselves, fellow organizers, competitors, recreational anglers, the sport, the event, the sponsors of the event, and sportfishing industry and the resource.
- b. comply, in a safe manner, with federal, provincial and local fish, wildlife, conservation, and boating regulations and ensure that competitive anglers do so as well.
- c. avoid spilling, and never dump any pollutants, such as gasoline and oil, into the aquatic environment. Dispose of all trash, including fishing lines, lures, leaders, and hooks, in appropriate containers, and help keep fishing areas litter-free. Take precautionary measures necessary to prevent the spread of invasive species into non-native habitats.

- d. acknowledge that they share in the use of the resource with many other user groups who also value the opportunities that lakes and rivers offer. CFE organizers should ensure that anglers competing in their events practice maximum courtesy, and consideration is expected while boating and angling in the vicinity of other resource users and their property, including docks, boathouses and marine vessels of all types. CFE organizers should ensure that competitive anglers respect property rights, and never trespass on private lands or waters. CFE organizers should take responsibility for any damage or injury they may cause.
- e. ensure that competitive anglers handle fish with care and that anglers promptly release those fish they do not want or must let go. CFE organizers should ensure that competitive anglers maintain fish in livewells with the utmost care to facilitate successful live release
- f. ensure that competitive anglers promptly report illegal or unethical behavior by other competitors to the appropriate authority.
- g. interact with host communities and organizations, the media, the public, the outdoor industry and sponsors with integrity, propriety, honesty and accuracy.
- h. visit and observe different competitive fishing events.
- i. be willing and informative hosts for other CFE organizers.
- j. put in place a method to handle protests or disputes. Any violation of event rules should be reported only to the designated tournament official. The charge must include evidence and additional information to support the charge. The designated tournament official should review the facts and conduct an investigation. If it is determined that a violation occurred, the designated tournament official should act on the charges. In all cases, the designated tournament official and all involved parties should act in a responsible manner so the privacy of individuals investigated and/or charged with ethics violations is protected.
- k. create and distribute a complete, clear set of rules regarding the operation of their event. Items that should be considered are discussed in *“Recommended Guide to Creating Rules for Competitive Fishing Events”*.
- l. use the *“Recommended Code Of Behavior For Competitive Anglers”* created by the OCFC as a template for creating a code of behavior for their particular event.
- m. use the *“Recommended Competitive Fishing Events Guidelines for Organizers of Events in Ontario”* created by the OCFC as a tool to assist in planning, hosting, evaluating and establishing a framework for a successful event.
- n. become involved in, and stay informed about, local and provincial fisheries management decisions and conservation projects, participate with youth fishing activities, and strive to be the best possible “fishing” teachers by sharing fishing knowledge and skills.