



STANISLAUS COUNTY  
PARKS & RECREATION

# Koi Herpes Virus Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: What's causing the Carp to die at Woodward Reservoir?**

**A:** Pending results, tests indicate the Carp die offs may be the result of Koi Herpes Virus, a virus that is now common in California water, such as Clear Lake State Park, and affects common Carp and ornamental fish known as Koi. The virus suppresses the fish's immune system.

## **Q: Is Koi Herpes Virus harmful to humans or other fish?**

**A:** Koi Herpes Virus is not harmful to people. Care should be taken in removing dead or dying Carp because they also may contain potentially harmful bacteria that multiply in warm weather conditions. Health and safety experts recommend the use of gloves to handle any dead or dying fish.

## **Q: When will the Carp die off end?**

**A:** Koi Herpes Virus is most active when water temperatures are between 71-79 °F

## **Q: What is the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife doing to help?**

**A:** CDFW fish biologists are monitoring the Carp fish deaths to determine where the virus is present and whether it is spreading.

## **Q: Is it safe for humans to swim in waters affected by Koi Herpes Virus?**

**A:** The Koi Herpes Virus commonly associated with Carp is not known to be pathogenic in humans or pets. The CDFW asks the public to exercise good judgement in deciding to participate in recreational water activities in areas where dead fish have accumulated. It is reasonable to suggest that the public avoid direct skin contact with dead or dying Carp and it is never a good idea to swim or wade among large numbers of dead fish, particularly in stagnant areas of water. As a precaution, people who handle dying or dead fish or swim and wade in water should wash thoroughly with soap and clean water. Pets should be rinsed thoroughly with fresh water after swimming. These precautions should always be followed not just when Koi Herpes Virus is present.

## **Q: Is there a treatment for Koi Herpes Virus?**

**A:** There is no treatment for Koi Herpes Virus. Antiviral drugs are not available to treat Koi Herpes Virus or any other viral diseases in wild fish.

## **Q: Can I still eat the fish I catch from Woodward Reservoir?**

**A:** Yes. Anglers can continue to enjoy fishing and eating their catch. Koi Herpes Virus does not affect humans. Fish can be infected, carry and shed Koi Herpes Virus without showing signs of disease. Such fish are safe to eat if the fish are fresh, properly handled, and cooked. Never eat fish that you find dead, decomposing or that appear sick, regardless of the cause.