



### **I. PURPOSE**

Willow Creek Reservoir is in Lewis and Clark County, seven miles northwest of Augusta. Central Fishing District regulations apply, except the trout limit is 5 trout daily only one over 20 inches. Sportfish present in the reservoir include rainbow trout, brook trout, and tiger muskie. The rainbow trout and tiger muskie fisheries are maintained by stocking by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (department).

The department was notified the by the Bureau of Reclamation and Greenfields Irrigation District that they will be drawing down Willow Creek Reservoir for dam repairs. Water levels are expected to be drawn down below levels that can sustain aquatic life. The department is proposing to lift all fishing restrictions during the drawdown to provide the public an opportunity to harvest and consume fish that are not expected to survive the drawdown. Drawdown of the reservoir has already begun with total water evacuation anticipated by late August 2019. It is currently unclear when the reservoir will be re-filled and when rehabilitation of the fishery can occur.

### **II. AUTHORITY**

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (commission) sets policies for the management of fish and establishes the fishing regulations of the department. §87-1-301, MCA. The commission may “fix seasons, bag limits, possession limits, and season limits.” §87-1-304 (a), MCA.

### **III. PROPOSED ACTION**

The department proposes to remove all fishing restrictions for Willow Creek Reservoir (near Augusta). This action removes all daily bag limits, possession limits, and gear restrictions for Willow Creek Reservoir. Movement of live fish from Willow Creek Reservoir is unlawful.

### **IV. EFFECTIVE DATE AND EXPIRATION OF THIS RULE**

This rule will take effect upon passage by the commission and expire December 31, 2019.

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Shane Colton  
Chairman  
Fish and Wildlife Commission