



## Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

### Final Fishing Regulation Changes for 2012-2015 Approved by the FWP Commission, October 13, 2011

The following fishing regulation changes were approved by the FWP Commission on October 13, 7, 2010. A decision on two of the proposed regulations (Swan Lake bull trout bag limit and Lake Koocanusa bull trout bag limit and line reduction) has been deferred until the November 10 FWP Commission meeting.

*Note: new language is in italics. Deleted language is indicated by strikethrough.*

#### WESTERN DISTRICT

DELETE – page 25

##### ~~BEAVERTAIL POND~~

- ~~• Bass: 3 daily and in possession, none over 12 inches.~~
- 

CHANGE –page 25

##### **BIG CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (tributary to North Fork Flathead River)**

- Closed entire year

##### **Mouth of Big Creek**

- Angling is closed within a 150-yard radius of the stream mouth ~~or as posted~~ June 1 through September 30 *unless posted at a greater distance.*
- 

CHANGE –page 26

##### **BITTERROOT RIVER (note: river flows south to north)**

**Ditches, canals and sloughs between US 93 and east side highway, and between Hamilton and the Florence Bridge.**

- Regulations are the same as the adjacent river section

**Bitterroot River from confluence of the East and West Forks to the mouth, West Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Painted Rocks Dam, and East Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Star Falls.**

- Extended season for northern pike and whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with aquatic insects, maggots and/or artificial lures only.
- *Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout*

~~**West Fork Bitterroot River above Painted Rocks Reservoir**~~

- ~~• Catch and release for cutthroat trout~~

~~**Painted Rocks Dam to the mouth of West Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Painted Rocks Dam**~~

- ~~• Catch and release for cutthroat trout~~

- Combined Trout Limit: 3 ~~rainbow or~~ brown trout daily and in possession. *Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.*

***East Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Star Falls***

- *Combined Trout Limit: 3 brown trout daily and in possession. Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.*

**~~One mile downstream of Darby Bridge to Star Falls on the East Fork Bitterroot River from confluence of East and West Forks to Woodside Bridge~~**

- ~~Catch and release for cutthroat trout~~
- Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

**~~One mile downstream from Darby Woodside Bridge to Como Bridge Florence Bridge~~**

- Catch-and-release for all trout
- Artificial lures only

**~~Como Bridge to Tucker crossing~~**

- ~~Catch and release for cutthroat trout~~
- ~~Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.~~

**~~Tucker Crossing to Florence Bridge~~**

- ~~Catch and release for all trout~~
- ~~Artificial lures only~~

**~~Florence Bridge to mouth of Bitterroot River~~**

- ~~Catch and release for cutthroat trout~~
- Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

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NEW

***BUFFALOHEAD POND***

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 5 trout daily, 10 in possession.*

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DELETE – page 29

**~~CALLAHAN CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Kootenai River drainage)~~**

**~~Includes North Callahan and South Callahan creeks~~**

- ~~Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, none over 10 inches.~~

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NEW

***DRY BRIDGE POND***

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.*
-

DELETE – page 32

**EAST FORK YAAK RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES**

- ~~Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, none over 10 inches.~~
- 

NEW

**EUREKA POND**

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.*
- 

CHANGE – page 33

**FLATHEAD RIVER**

**Flathead Indian Reservation boundary to mouth**

- Open entire year
  - ~~Northern pike: 5 daily and in possession, must be over 24 inches.~~
  - *Bass: Open entire year, 5 daily and in possession, no size limit.*
- 

DELETE – page 34

**FOY LAKE**

- ~~Snagging open for salmon September 15 through November 30~~
- 

CHANGE – page 34

**FRENCHTOWN POND**

- ~~Bass: 3 daily and in possession, none over 12 inches.~~ *Catch-and-release for bass.*
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CHANGE-page 34

**GEORGETOWN LAKE**

**(see special season exception for the South and East Shorelines)**

- Open third Saturday in May through March 31, except for the South and East shoreline area which is only open July 1 through March 31. *South and East shorelines area described as follows: all waters from the shore or within 100 yards of shore in the area extending from a point 200 yards west of Denton’s Point Marina (along the shore, including all of Stuart Mill Bay) to a point 200 yards north from the mouth of North Fork Flint Creek.*
- Salmon: no daily or possession limit
- Combined trout, *includes brook trout: 5 daily and in possession, only two of which may be brook trout of which no more than 2 may be brook trout.*
- ~~Closed to fishing from shore or within 100 yards of the shore April 1 through June 30. The closed area extends from a point 200 yards west of Denton’s Point Marina (along the shore, including all of Stuart Mill Bay) to a point 200 yards north from the mouth of North Fork Flint Creek.~~

**Tributaries to Georgetown Lake (Hardtla, North Fork Flint, and Stuart Mill creeks)**

- Open July 1 through November 30
- Catch-and-release for brook trout

- *Emily Springs: Closed entire year*
- 

NEW

**GERMAN GULCH**

**Mainstem and tributaries**

- *Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout*
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CHANGE – page 36

**KOOTENAI RIVER**

*As per the District Standard, the Kootenai River is closed to angling for bull trout; any bull trout caught must be immediately released.*

**Libby Dam to Highway 37 Bridge, near Fisher River**

- Open June 1 through ~~March 31~~ February 28
- Combined Trout: ~~4~~ 1 daily and in possession, 28 inch minimum length. ~~includes 3 under 13 inches and 1 over 24 inches.~~

**Highway 37 Bridge, near Fisher River to Idaho Border**

- Open entire year
- Combined Trout: 4 daily and in possession, includes 3 under 13 inches and 1 over 18 inches.

**Kootenai Falls to 0.8 miles downstream of Swinging Bridge**

- Snagging: open for salmon September 15 through November 30.
- 

CHANGE – page 36

**LAKE KOOCANUSA**

- *One line per angler*
  - Closed to burbot (ling) fishing January 15 to March 1
  - Salmon: 50 daily and 100 in possession
  - Bull Trout: *Catch-and-release only.* ~~1 daily and in possession from June 1 through February 28, only 1 fish per license year. Catch and release the rest of the year.~~ A Lake Kootenai Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. See Special Licenses requirements for application information. All bull trout must be released immediately ~~or killed and counted as your limit when harvest is allowed.~~ It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.
  - *Rainbow trout: Adipose clipped (shown by a healed scar) fish less than 22 inches must be released.*
- 

CHANGE—page 37

**LAKE MARY RONAN**

- ~~Closed to fishing from midnight to 3 a.m.~~
- Open third Saturday in May through the end of February.
- Open March 1 to third Saturday in May; yellow perch only.
- Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession

- Bass: open third Saturday in May through June 30 – 1 over 22 inches. Open July 1 through the end of February – 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches. Closed March 1 to the third Saturday in May.
- 

CHANGE – page 37

**LITTLE BITTERROOT LAKE**

- Salmon: 20 daily and 40 in possession, no more than ~~10~~ 2 daily and ~~20~~ 4 in possession over 12 inches.
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NEW

**NINEPIPES POND**

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 5 trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches. A Flathead Indian Tribal Permit is required to fish on Ninepipes Pond.*
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CHANGE – page 39

**NORTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER**

- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.
  - Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within a 150-yard radius of the Big Creek stream mouth *unless posted at a greater distance.*
  - Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
  - Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout
  - Montana/Glacier National Park boundary is the middle of the river.
- 

NEW

**PINE GROVE POND**

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.*
- 

NEW

**RACETRACK POND**

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 3 trout daily and in possession.*
- 

CHANGE – page 40

**ROCK CREEK (near Missoula)**

**From the confluence of the East and West forks, near Phillipsburg to the mouth.**

- Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to the third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
- Combined Trout: 3 brown trout daily and in possession. ~~none over 12 inches.~~ Catch-and-release for rainbow trout and cutthroat trout.

- Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may use bait during the general season.
  - Closed to fishing from boats/vessels July 1 through November 30.
- 

NEW

**SHADY LANE POND**

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.*
- 

NEW

**SILVERBOW CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES**

**Mainstem and Tributaries**

- *Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout*
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CHANGE-page 41

**SWAN LAKE**

- Bull trout: *Catch-and-release only. ~~1 daily and in possession.~~ All bull trout must be released immediately ~~or killed and counted as your limit.~~ It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.*
- 

CHANGE – page 41

**SWAN RIVER**

- Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within a 150-yard radius of the Woodward Creek and Lion Creek stream mouths, *unless posted at a greater distance.*
- 

NEW

**TROY POND**

- *Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.*
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CHANGE – page 42

**WARM SPRINGS CREEK (near Anaconda)**

- Open entire year on the Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA). See Warm Springs WMA for additional regulations.
  - Open from the third Saturday in May through November 30 outside the Warm Springs WMA. *Extended season downstream of Meyers Dam: catch-and-release for trout December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures only.*
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## CENTRAL DISTRICT

CHANGE – page 52

### **Daily and Possession Limits for Catfish**

- ~~20 daily and in possession~~ 10 daily, 20 in possession
- 

CHANGE – page 54

### **BEAVERHEAD RIVER**

#### ***Entire River***

- Combined Trout: 5 daily and in possession, 1 over 18 inches, only 1 may be a rainbow trout.

#### **~~Clark Canyon Dam to Anderson Lane~~**

- ~~Combined Trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches and only 1 rainbow trout.~~

#### **Clark Canyon Dam to Pipe Organ Bridge**

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

#### **High Bridge FAS to Henneberry FAS**

- Closed to float fishing by nonresidents and float outfitting on each Saturday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

#### **Henneberry FAS to Pipe Organ Bridge**

- Closed to float fishing by nonresidents and float outfitting on each Sunday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

#### **Downstream from Pipe Organ Bridge**

- Open entire year

#### **Highway 91 South bridge (Tash Bridge) to Selway Bridge**

- Closed to float outfitting from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day

#### **~~Anderson Lane downstream to mouth (near Twin Bridges)~~**

- ~~Combined Trout: 5 daily and in possession, 1 over 18 inches, only 1 may be a rainbow trout.~~
- 

CHANGE – page 57

### **BIGHORN LAKE AND AFTERBAY RESERVOIR**

- Bass: 6 daily and 12 in possession
  - Shovelnose sturgeon: 2 daily and in possession
  - Sauger/Walleye: 5-6 daily (only 2-3 may be sauger) and 10-12 in possession (only 2-3 may be sauger).
  - Catfish: 6 daily and in possession
  - Burbot (ling): 3 daily and in possession
  - Hook and Line: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line on open water and 6 lines with 1 hook per line through the ice.
  - Anglers obtaining live baitfish in Montana may use them only in the Montana portion of the lake.
-

CHANGE – page 57

**BIG SHEEP CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Beaverhead River drainage)**

- Combined Trout: includes cutthroat trout ~~except it is catch and release for cutthroat trout in Meadow, Muddy and Simpson creeks.~~
- 

CHANGE –page 58

**BLACKTAIL DEER CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Beaverhead River drainage)**

- Combined Trout: Includes cutthroat trout ~~except it is catch and release for cutthroat trout in Cottonwood, Jake and Rock creeks, and the two Rock Creek reservoirs on Robb-Ledford WMA.~~
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CHANGE – page 59

**CLARK CANYON RESERVOIR**

- Burbot (ling): 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 28 inches.
  - Combined Trout: 3 daily and in possession, ~~only 1 over 23 inches.~~
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CHANGE – page 62

**HELENA VALLEY REGULATING RESERVOIR**

- Snagging: open for salmon September 1 through October 31, 35 salmon daily and 70 in possession.
  - *Snagging limits also apply to the irrigation canal in the area from the discharge outlet to 400 yards downstream.*
- 

CHANGE – page 66

**MISSOURI RIVER**

**~~Holter Dam to mouth of Dearborn River~~ Cascade Bridge**

- ~~Combined Trout: 1 rainbow trout (any size) daily and in possession, and 1 brown trout (22-inch minimum) daily and in possession. 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches, and only 1 may be a brown trout.~~
- Walleye: No limit.

**~~Craig Bridge to Sheep Creek Bridge~~**

- ~~Spearing open for up to 5 whitefish daily with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged.~~

**~~Mouth of Dearborn River to Cascade Bridge~~**

- ~~Combined Trout: 3 rainbow trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 16 inches and 1 brown trout daily and in possession, 22-inch minimum.~~
  - ~~Walleye: No Limit.~~
- 

NEW

**ROCK CREEK RESERVOIRS (Robb-Ledford Game Range)**

- Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout
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CHANGE –page 69

**RUBY RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES**

**Upstream from Ruby Reservoir**

- Combined Trout: includes cutthroat trout. ~~except catch and release for cutthroat trout in Cottonwood (near Cottonwood Camp), Geyser, Greenhorn, Idaho, Robb, Sweetwater and Whitebear creeks.~~

**Downstream from Ruby Dam**

- Closed entire year just below Ruby Dam (that portion of the Ruby River from its confluence with the Ruby Dam outlet channel upstream to the dam, including the outlet channel).
  - Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
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CHANGE – page 72

**TRAIL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Beaverhead River drainage)**

- Combined Trout: includes cutthroat trout, ~~except catch and release for cutthroat trout on Bear Creek.~~
- 

CHANGE – page 74

**YELLOWSTONE RIVER**

**Yellowstone National Park Boundary to I-90 Bridge at Billings**

- Open entire year
  - Combined Trout: *4 brown trout and/or rainbow trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches. ~~3 under 18 inches and 1 over 26 inches. All fish between 18 and 26 inches must be released.~~* Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
  - Hook and Line: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line all year from the mouth of the Clarks Fork River to the I-90 Bridge at Billings
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**EASTERN DISTRICT**

CHANGE – page 83

**Daily and Possession Limits for Catfish**

- ~~20 daily and in possession~~ *10 daily, 20 in possession*
- 

NEW

**BOXELDER RESERVOIR**

- *Yellow Perch: 25 daily and 50 in possession*
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CHANGE – page 86

**TONGUE RIVER**

***Tongue River Reservoir to Wyoming State Border***

- *Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily (only 1 may be a sauger) and 10 in possession (only 2 may be sauger).*

**Twelve Mile Dam Fishing Access Site (T&Y Dam)**

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line all year.
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CHANGE – page 86

**TONGUE RIVER RESERVOIR**

- Crappie: 30 daily and 60 in possession
  - Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 6 hooks per line through the ice.
  - *Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily (only 1 may be a sauger) and 10 in possession (only 2 may be sauger).*
-