2022 FISHING

FWP Montana Fishing Regulations

Photo: BJ Corpron

For details on how to use regulations, see page 10

TURN IN POACHERS: 1-800-TIP-MONT

Letter from the Director

Even though the drought of 2021 caused challenges for our fisheries, it also demonstrated what Montanans working together can accomplish.

2021 was one of the worst drought years for Montana in recent history. Fishing restrictions occurred earlier, in more waters, for longer and were more comprehensive than ever. Ponds and reservoirs across the state even dried up. There were fish kills from low water and high temperatures and we anticipate some fish kills through the winter.

But it wasn't all bad news. Rivers didn't run dry. Part of the reason rivers such as the Big Hole, which ran dry during the drought of 1988, kept flowing was a shared sacrifice among landowners and anglers and their commitment to keep the fishery healthy.

To reduce stress on fish, anglers followed fishing restrictions including hoot owl hours, which prohibit fishing between 2 p.m. and midnight. Ranchers worked with each other and FWP to maintain a steady flow of water in threatened rivers and healthy fish habitat.

Even with the drought, fishing was good in many places. Fort Peck has been producing some phenomenal walleye fishing, the kokanee salmon fishery in Georgetown continues to improve and channel cat fishing on the lower Yellowstone has been outstanding.

It's no wonder use continues to increase on our waters. It's good to see families spending time on the water, passing down traditions and, in many cases, creating new ones.

I encourage everyone to enjoy and protect what we are so lucky to have in Montana – great fishing. Grab a rod, a friend, or someone who has never fished before and share the experience.

Hank Worsech

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT

FISHMT?

FWP's new site is a **"one-stop shop"** for all things fisheries related.

The new page contains recent fishing news, interactive maps, fishing access sites, waterbodies with photos, species information and so much more!

Regulations • Fish Stocking • Licenses
Catch Reporting • Species Information
Waterbodies • Fisheries Data

visit today

fwp.mt.gov/fish

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

THERE'S A
BUCKET FULL
OF TROUBLE
IN MONTANA'S WATERS
AND IT COULD
CHANGE MONTANA FISHING
FOREVER
YOU HAVE A SAY!
REPORT OUTLAW FISH INTRODUCTIONS:
1-800-TIP-MONT
YOUR IDENTITY WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL
REWARDS UP TO $1000
FROM TIP-MONT
ADDITIONAL REWARD
UP TO $13,850*
*Additional rewards totaling up to $13,850 are also offered by Montana Trout Unlimited, Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana, Walleyes Unlimited of Montana, Montana Wildlife Federation, Montana Pikemasters, Montana Catfish Association, Invasive Species Action Network, Montana Bass Federation Nation, and Montana Bass Federation.
Protecting
Montana's
Waters:
We're in this
together.
MONTANA
FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Protect the waters you love to fish!

Stop the transport of Aquatic Invasive Species

When transporting watercraft WITHIN Montana:

- All watercraft are required to stop at all open watercraft inspection stations. Failure to stop could result in a fine of up to $500.
- All watercraft crossing the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin or into the Flathead River Basin must be inspected before launching.
- Boats with ballasts or bladders, such as wakeboard or wake-surfing boats, crossing the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin must obtain a decontamination before launching.

When transporting watercraft INTO Montana:

- All watercraft entering Montana are required to be inspected before launching, including residents returning to Montana.
- Boats with ballasts or bladders, such as wakeboard or wake-surfing boats, that intend to launch on Montana waters must obtain a decontamination before launching.
- Nonresident boats (motorized and non-motorized) launching on Montana waters must purchase the Vessel AIS Prevention Pass. Motorized fee = $30. Non-motorized fee = $10. Pass is valid thru Dec. 31, 2022. Learn more and purchase at **CleanDrainDryMT.com.**

It is illegal to:

- Transport AIS into or within Montana.
- Transport live fish and bait fish into Montana.
- Transport surface water.
- Move live fish, aquatic plants or invertebrates from one waterbody to another without FWP authorization.
- Release unwanted bait fish into water.

MONTANA FWP

PROTECT OUR WATERS

To find a watercraft inspection station

Visit CleanDrainDryMT.com

Call 406-444-2440

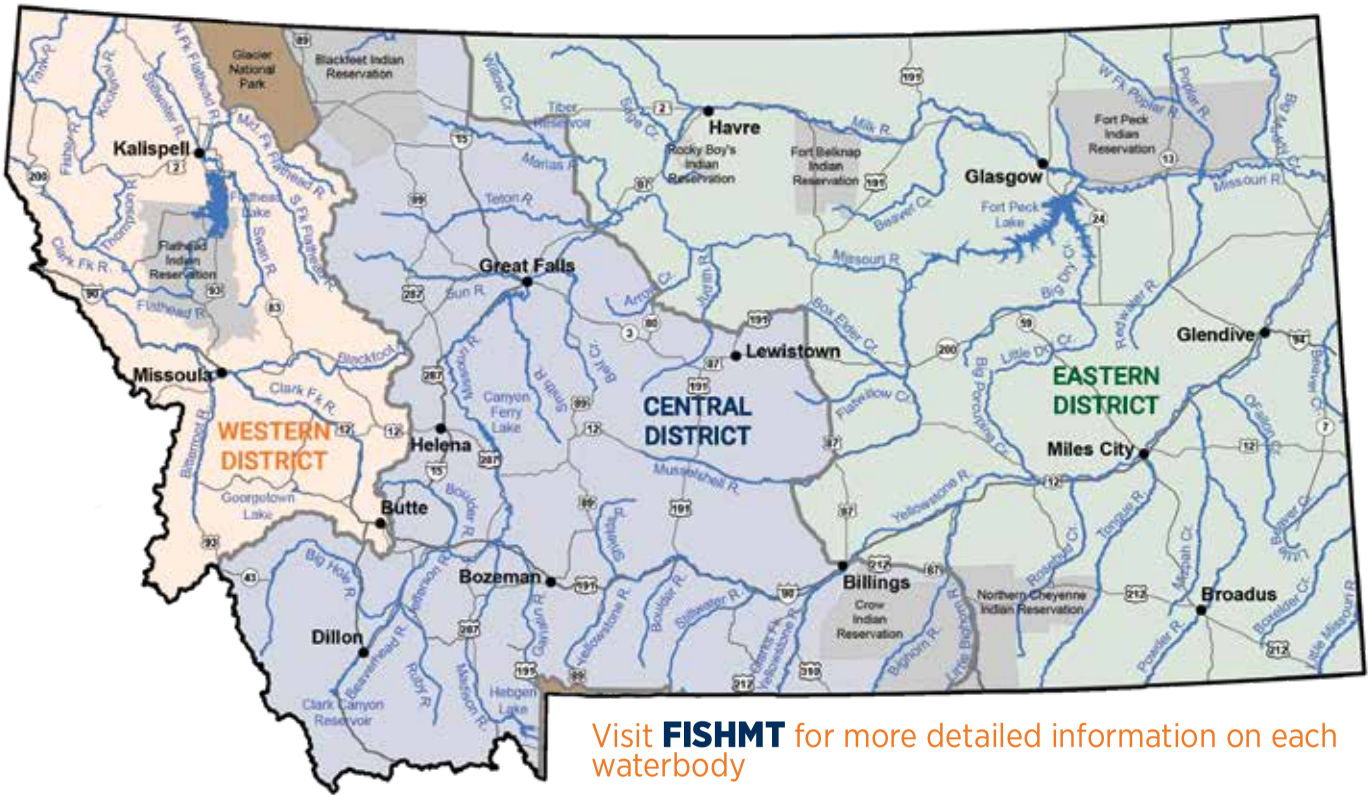
AIS Waterbody Monitoring

FWP annually monitors waterbodies statewide to detect invasive aquatic plants and invertebrates. The table below summarizes all waterbodies where AIS have been detected. When boating, fishing, or recreating on any waterbodies in Montana, always **CLEAN, DRAIN, AND DRY** all watercraft, trailers, and gear to stop the spread of AIS.

Waters with Aquatic Invasive Species present and are listed in exceptions to the standard fishing regulations are identified with an AIS stop sign symbol.

	Western District	Central District	Eastern District	
Asian Clam	Lake Elmo			
Curlyleaf Pondweed	Bitterroot River	Beaverhead River	Holter Reservoir	Rainbow Dam Reservoir
	Blackfoot River	Bozeman Creek	Jefferson River	Sheep Creek
	Cabinet Gorge Reservoir	Big Sheep Creek	Lake Helena	Shields River
	Clark Fork River	Canyon Ferry Lake	Lower Glaston Lake	Slip And Slide Creek
	Flathead Lake	Clark Canyon Reservoir	Madison River	Smith River
	Flathead River	Deadman's Basin Reservoir	Marias River	Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell)
	Kicking Horse Reservoir	East Gallatin River	Missouri River	Upper Holter Lake
	Kootenai River	Ennis Lake	Musselshell River	Wayne Edsall Pond
	Noxon Rapids Reservoir	Gallatin River	Newlan Creek	Missouri River
	Pablo Reservoir	Hauser Reservoir	Newlan Reservoir	Ester Lake
	Post Creek	Hebgen Lake	Pond 4 Canyon Ferry WMA	Fort Peck Reservoir
	Thompson Falls Reservoir	Helena Valley Regulating Reservoir	Quake Lake	-
Eurasian Watermilfoil	Beaver Lake	Jefferson River	Fort Peck Dredge Cuts	Missouri River
	Cabinet Gorge Reservoir	Jefferson Slough	Fort Peck Powerhouse Tailrace	Nelson Dredge
	Clark Fork River	Pond 4 Canyon Ferry WMA	Fort Peck Reservoir	-
	Noxon Rapids Reservoir	Missouri River	Fort Peck Trout Pond	-
Faucet Snail	Browns Lake	Lost Coon Lake	Smith Lake	Lake Frances
	Georgetown Lake	McWenneger Slough	Upsata Lake	-
Flowering Rush	Cabinet Gorge Reservoir	Flathead Lake	Noxon Rapids Reservoir	Thompson Falls Reservoir
	Clark Fork River	Flathead River	-	-
Fragrant Waterlily	Beaver Lake	Elbow Lake	Lake Mary Ronan	Seeley Lake
	Blanchard Lake	Harpers Lake	Loon Lake	Upsata Lake
	Browns Lake	Holland Lake	Placid Lake	-
	Clearwater River	Lake Alva	Salmon Lake	-
	Duck Lake	Lake Inez	Savage Lake	-
Goldfish	Laurel Pond	Boxelder Lake	Hollecker Lake	Tongue River
	-	Willow Creek (near Glasgow)	-	-
New Zealand Mudsnail	Beavertail Pond	Clark Canyon Reservoir	Madison River	Rainbow Dam Reservoir
	Hamilton Hatchery Ponds	Darlington Ditch 1	Marias River	Ruby Reservoir
	Mitchell Slough	Ennis Lake	Missouri River	Ruby River
	Beaverhead River	Gardner River	Nelson Spring Creek	Upper Holter Lake
	Bighorn River	Hauser Reservoir	Odell Creek	Yellowstone River
	Big Sheep Creek	Holter Reservoir	Poindexter Slough	Bighorn River
	Bluewater Creek	Jefferson River	Quake Lake	-
Red-rimmed Melania	Gardner River	Warm Spring by Beaverhead State Park		Powder River

Montana Waterways Map



Visit **FISHMT** for more detailed information on each waterbody

Montana Fishing Access Sites

With over 339 fishing access sites to choose from across the state, anglers enjoy good access to the state's streams and rivers, lakes and reservoirs. You may download a field guide to fishing access sites located on Montana's streams, rivers, and lakes, or you may use the interactive FWP Fishing Access Site Search at myfwp.mt.gov/fishMT/explore to find a fishing access site.

The field guide describes the Fishing Access Sites (FASs) located on Montana's streams, rivers and lakes that vary in size from less than one acre to several hundred acres. Montana's FAS program provides public access to high quality waters for angling, boating, rafting, and other recreation opportunities. In addition, FASs are often popular areas for hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, bird watching, picnicking, etc. The funding to purchase, develop, and maintain these important sites comes from the sale of sportsman's licenses, state motorboat registration fees, and federal Sport Fish Restoration fees.

Fees

There are no day use fees for Montana's FAS program; however, where overnight camping is allowed, a camping fee may be charged. The revenue from the camping fees are used to offset the additional expenses involved in operating and maintaining these higher use sites.

Commercial Use

A permit is required to conduct commercial activities at fishing access sites. Please contact the Regional FWP administrative office or the FWP website for more information.

Camping

Many of the FASs are managed as day use only, but camping is allowed at 97 locations. An overnight camping fee is charged at many of the sites and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

FASs are primitive or semi-primitive sites. They do not have electricity, running water, or dump stations. Not all sites are designed for access by larger recreational vehicles. It may be necessary to physically inspect the facility before pulling in if the parking area is not visible from the access road.

Additional camping opportunities with higher levels of development are available at Montana's State Parks and at other locations throughout the state. Please refer to the State Parks brochure for a list of state parks with campgrounds.

Subject Index

A
Aquatic Invasive Species 6, 5, 103
Aquatic Invertebrates 89
Artificial Lures 91

B
Bait Fish Species Identification 94-95
Bait Regulations 21, 50, 78
Beaver Ponds 19, 48, 75
Boat and Motor Restrictions 19, 48, 76
Bow and Arrow 20, 49, 77

C
Catch–And–Release Angling 15
Central Fishing District 47
Closed Waters 19, 48, 75
Commercial Fishing Licenses 89
Consumption Advisory 17

D
Dam Closures 19, 48, 75
Definitions 91-93
Disposal of Fish 16

E
Eastern Fishing District 74
Exceptions to Standard Regulations 24, 54, 85

F
Family Fishing Waters 16
Federal Wildlife Refuges 16
Fishing Access Sites 8
Fish Records 102
Float Fishing 15

G
General Information for Anglers ... 15

H
Handling and Transport of Legally Taken Fish 22, 52, 80
Hook and Line Limits 20, 49, 76
Hoop Nets 77, 89
Hours 22, 52, 80

I
Ice Fishing 20, 49, 76
Ice Fishing Shelter 20, 49, 77
Unlawful Introductions 14
Indian Reservations 89
Irrigation Canals and Ditches. 19, 48, 75

L
Licenses and Fees 12-13
Live Bait/Leeches 21, 51, 78

N
Nets and Traps 21, 49, 77

O
Off–Highway Vehicles 90

P
Paddlefish/Regulations 13, 81-83
Paddlefish Drawing 82
Permits 89-90
Private Fish Ponds 90

R
River Etiquette 15

S
Seasons 22, 52, 80
Setlines 21, 49, 77
Snagging 21, 50, 77
Spearing 21, 50, 78
Standard Daily and Possession Limits 23, 53, 84
Standard Fishing Regulations 19, 48, 75
State Fish Records 102
Stream Access Law 14

T
Tagged Fish 16, 81-83
Transporting Live Fish 20, 48, 76
Trespass Law 15

W
Western Fishing District 18

Waterway Map Index

Beaverhead River 55
Big Hole River 57
Bighorn River 59
Bitterroot River 24
Blackfoot River 26
Clark Fork River 28
Flathead River 32
Georgetown Lake 33
Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River 36
Madison River 64
Missouri River 66
Missouri River Lower 88
Missouri River Upstream from Fort Peck Dam 86
Smith River 70
Warm Springs WMA 45
Yellowstone & Lower Missouri Rivers 88
Yellowstone River 73

Emergency Fishing Regulations/Closures

FWP may announce short-term emergency fishing closures in response to biological or environmental conditions. Sport fishing regulations in this booklet for the designated waters will be suspended, and fishing may be curtailed or disallowed for the duration of the emergency period announced by the department. In recent years, many Montana streams have experienced drought conditions. Low stream flows can force trout to congregate in pools, making them more susceptible to anglers. Warm water temperatures can cause considerable stress to trout and can be fatal to fish handled by anglers. Check the FWP website, your local newspaper or call your regional FWP office to find out about emergency regulations/closures.

Regulations Adopted by the F&W Commission

By order of the Fish and Wildlife Commission (F&W Commission), the seasons, limits, and regulations listed here shall govern the 2022 fishing season (a fishing season runs from March 1 through the following February). These regulations were adopted by the F&W Commission on October 28, 2021, and will be valid March 1, 2022, through the end of February 2023. The F&W Commission may formally adopt changes to these fishing regulations, including emergency regulations/closures or corrections. Any changes to these regulations for the 2022 season will appear on the FWP website **fwp.mt.gov**. Emergency regulations/closures are posted at access sites. Anglers must check the website to make sure they are in compliance with fishing regulations.

Discriminition Prohibited-This program receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you need more information, please write to: Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW Washington, DC 20240.

How To Use These Regulations

Follow these easy steps:

1) Determine the fishing district that you will be in and read the district's standard regulations. These are the regulations and limits that apply to a majority of waters in the district.

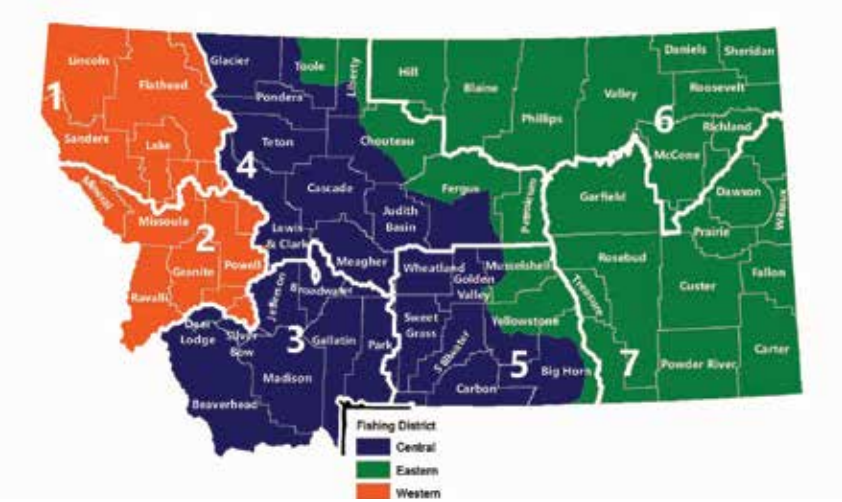
   WESTERN FISHING DISTRICT – page 18
   CENTRAL FISHING DISTRICT – page 47
   EASTERN FISHING DISTRICT – page 74

   Check if the specific water you will be fishing is listed in the District Exceptions to Standard Regulations (waters are listed alphabetically). If the water you plan to fish is identified, the exceptions take the place of the standard regulations for those items listed (i.e. season, daily limits, etc.). If not listed, the District Standard Regulations apply.

2) If you don't find the water you are looking for listed in the district exceptions, use the standard regulations for the district you are fishing in. If you don't find a species you are looking for in the exceptions for your water, use the standard regulations for the district.

3) New or changed 2022 regulations are displayed in bold italics.
Or: Check the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) website at:
fwp.mt.gov/fish/regulations/

FWP Administrative Regions with Fishing Districts in Color



Contact FWP

TELEPHONE DEVICE FOR THE DEAF – 711 or 1-800-253-4091

STATE HEADQUARTERS
MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East 6th Ave
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-2535
FAX: 406-444-4952

REGION 1
490 North Meridian Rd
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-752-5501

REGION 2
3201 Spurgin Rd
Missoula, MT 59804
406-542-5500

REGION 3
1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-577-7900

HELENA Area Resource Office (HARO)
930 Custer Ave W
Helena, MT 59602
406-495-3260

BUTTE Area Resource Office (BARO)
1820 Meadowlark Ln
Butte, MT 59701
406-494-1953

REGION 4
4600 Giant Springs Rd
Great Falls, MT 59405
406-454-5840

LEWISTOWN Area Resource Office (LARO)
333 Airport Rd
Lewistown, MT 59457
406-538-4658

REGION 5
2300 Lake Elmo Dr
Billings, MT 59105
406-247-2940

REGION 6
1 Airport Rd
Glasgow, MT 59230
406-228-3700

HAVRE Area Resource Office (HvARO)
2165 Hwy 2 East
Havre, MT 59501
406-265-6177

REGION 7
352 I-94 Business Loop
PO Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301
406-234-0900

What Do I Need to Fish in Montana?

Age	Conser-vation License	AIS Prevention Pass 16 & Older	License Fee	Total Cost
0-11	No license required. Must observe all limits and regulations.			
Resident 12 - 15	$4.00	No Fee	$5.00 for 2 consecutive calendar days	$9.00
			$10.50 for season	$14.50
Resident 16 - 17, 62 and older	$4.00	$2.00	$5.00 for 2 consecutive calendar days	$11.00
			$10.50 for season	$16.50
Resident Disabled 18-61	$8.00	$2.00	$10.50 for season	$20.50
Resident 18-61	$8.00	$2.00	$5.00 for 2 consecutive calendar days	$15.00
			$21.00 for season	$31.00
Nonresident 12-15	$10.00	No Fee	***$14.00*** for 1 calendar day	***$24.00***
			$56.00 for ***5*** calendar days	$66.00
			$100.00 for season	***$110.00***
Nonresident 16 and older	$10.00	$7.50	***$14.00*** for 1 calendar day	***$31.50***
			$56.00 for ***5*** calendar days	$73.50
			$100.00 for season	***$117.50***
Nonresident Motorized Vessel Prevention Pass		$30 per vessel good through December 31 of each year		
Nonresident Non-Motorized Vessel Prevention Pass		$10 per vessel good through December 31 of each year		
Resident Sportsman and Nonresident Combination Licenses include a Season Fishing License.				

A valid Fishing License (see license requirements table above) is required for all types of fishing on state waters. To fish in Montana, most anglers need a Conservation License and a Fishing License, and also an AIS Prevention Pass, see table above. You must have your Fishing License in your possession while fishing. A license on your smart phone is acceptable.

A Conservation License is needed before you can buy any fishing or hunting license. Conservation License applicants are required to provide the last four digits of their social security number in addition to the information usually requested. A valid driver's license or a valid photo ID is required to purchase a license.

A Fishing License allows a person to fish for and possess any fish or aquatic invertebrate authorized by the state's fishing regulations. It is nontransferable and nonrefundable. The license enables one to fish from March 1 through the end of February of the following year.

The AIS Prevention Pass is required for all individuals who fish in Montana. This program initiated by the 2017 Montana Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Steve Bullock helps fund the fight against aquatic invasive species in Montana.

Resident Licenses: To qualify for a resident license, a person must meet the criteria set out in MCA 87-2-102 and 202. To be a legal resident eligible to purchase a resident Fishing License, you must have physically been living in Montana for at least 180 consecutive days (six months) immediately before purchasing any resident license; you must file Montana state income tax returns as a resident, if you are required to file; you must have registered your vehicles in Montana; if you are registered to vote, you must be registered in Montana; and you may not possess or apply for any resident hunting, fishing or trapping privileges in another state or country. At the time of purchase, a person must present a valid Montana driver's license, a valid Montana driver's examiner's identification card, or a tribal identification card. If unsure of your residency status, contact a regional FWP office.

Special Fishing Licenses

Paddlefish: All anglers must purchase a Paddlefish tag to fish for Paddlefish. To purchase a tag, all anglers must have a valid Conservation License, an AIS Prevention Pass and a Fishing License. Limit of one Paddlefish tag (one fish) per person:
Resident - $6.50 each **Nonresident - $15 each**

Paddlefish harvest only tags will be available via lottery draw ($5 drawing fee) for the Upper Missouri River Paddlefish season (White Tag) only. Anglers need to apply individually or as a party (up to five people) before 5pm March 25, 2022. See page 82 for specifics on the Upper Missouri Paddlefish drawing.

Bull Trout: Hungry Horse Reservoir, Lake Koocanusa and part of the South Fork Flathead River are open for a regulated and experimental Bull Trout angling season. When fishing for Bull Trout each angler must have in possession a valid Bull Trout Catch Card for the specific water he/she is fishing. Anglers may select only one of the following areas: A) Lake Koocanusa, or B) Hungry Horse Reservoir and South Fork Flathead River. Swan Lake is open to angling for Bull Trout without a special permit but no harvest is allowed. All other waters are closed to intentional angling for Bull Trout year around.

Catch Cards are free of charge and are available at the FWP Region 1 office in Kalispell and at the US Forest Service Spotted Bear Ranger Station. Applications for a catch card are available at the FWP Region 1 office or online at fwp.mt.gov/fish/license/. Completed applications must be presented at the regional headquarters or mailed to FWP Bull Trout Permit, 490 North Meridian, Kalispell MT 59901.

Free Fishing Mother's Day and Father's Day Weekends May 7-8 and June 18-19, 2022.

By Montana law, each year on Mother's Day and Father's Day weekends any person (resident or nonresident) may fish for any fish within this state without obtaining a Fishing License as long as they abide by the seasons, restrictions and bag limits listed in these Fishing Regulations. The two exceptions to this are Paddlefish and Bull Trout fishing, both of which require the purchase of a Conservation, Fishing, and AIS Prevention Licenses. Fishing for Paddlefish also requires a Paddlefish tag. A catch card is required to fish for Bull Trout.

Montana Resident With Disability: Montana FWP seeks to ensure that its programs, services and activities are accessible to persons with disabilities. Montana FWP provides many representative recreational opportunities. To learn more or to request modifications or accommodations relative to a disability, contact FWP at 406-444-2449.

- Resident Person With a Disability must purchase a **Conservation License - $8,** an **AIS Prevention Pass - $2** and a **Fishing License - $10.50**. To qualify a person must be permanently and substantially disabled. Applications are available on the FWP website however, they can only be certified at a regional FWP office or by mail.
- Lifetime Fishing License for the Blind - **$10 plus an annual $2 AIS Prevention Pass**. Visit the FWP website for an application.

Veterans Administration Patients: Permits are available for patients residing at VA Hospitals and residents of State institutions, except the State penitentiary. These free permits are available on-site at the VA Hospital or State institution. Contact Enforcement 406-444-2452.

Legion of Valor: A Conservation License allows both residents and nonresidents, regardless of age, to fish. Legion of Valor membership card required to qualify. Available only at FWP offices.

Care Facility: The manager or director of an eligible facility licensed in Montana may apply for permission to take supervised residents fishing during activities approved by the facility. Licensed facilities include long-term care, personal care, home for persons with developmental disabilities and home for persons with severe disabilities. Contact Enforcement 406-444-2452.

Education Exemptions: Free Fishing License exemptions are available for qualified educational events and fishing clinics. For information on these free educational exemptions, call 406-444-9943.

Purple Heart: Residents who have been awarded a Purple Heart, regardless of age, may fish and hunt upland game birds with a Conservation License issued by the Department.

- Nonresidents who have been awarded a Purple Heart, regardless of age, may fish and hunt upland game birds with a Conservation License issued by the Department during expeditions arranged by a nonprofit organization that uses fishing and hunting as part of rehabilitation.
- Verification of Purple Heart and DD 214 Form required to qualify. Residents only available at FWP offices. Nonresidents only available at FWP Headquarters in Helena.

Penalties for Violations of the Law

Most fish and game violations are misdemeanors that are punishable by a fine not to exceed $1,000 and imprisonment for not longer than six months. The court may also order the forfeiture of any current hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and the privilege to hunt, fish and trap, or use state lands for recreational purposes for a period set by the court.

Taking an over limit of fish will result in a fine plus restitution to the state for each fish over the limit. Restitution for Bull Trout may be up to $500 per fish and for river Arctic Grayling, White Sturgeon, and Paddlefish restitution is $300 per fish.

It is Unlawful and a Misdemeanor:

- To violate any regulations listed in this booklet.
- To introduce any fish or viable fish eggs into any waters without FWP permission.
- To refuse to show one's Fishing License upon demand.
- To refuse to show one's fish upon demand.
- To loan or transfer your Fishing License or tags to any person.
- To sell game fish except as prescribed by F&W Commission regulations.
- To leave or dump any dead animal, fish, garbage or litter in or on any state, federal or private property where public recreation is permitted.
- To stun or kill fish by using any carbide, lime, giant powder, dynamite, or other explosive compounds, or any corrosive or narcotic poison. To possess these substances within 100 feet of any stream where fish are found is unlawful.
- To hire or retain an unlicensed outfitter or guide.
- To waste any part of game fish suitable for food (see Waste of Fish or Game definition on page 93).

Penalties of Unlawful Introductions

- Fines of $2,000 up to $10,000 and imprisonment for up to one year.
- Liability for all costs to eliminate or mitigate the effects of the violation.
- Loss of hunting, fishing and trapping privileges for at least 5 years.

Montana Stream Access Law: Under the Montana Stream Access Law, the public may use rivers and streams for recreational purposes up to the ordinary high-water marks. Although the law gives recreationists the right to use rivers and streams for water-related recreation, it does not give them the right to enter private lands bordering those streams or to cross private lands to gain access to streams without landowner permission.

FWP recommends that recreationists obtain landowner permission to cross private land to access a stream. Complete rules are available at any FWP office.

Montana Trespass Law: Montana's trespass law states that a member of the public has the privilege to enter private land only:

- With the explicit permission of the landowner or his/her agent, or
- When the landowner has failed to post a no-trespassing notice or mark legal accesses with 50 square inches of orange.

General Information For Anglers

Catch–and–Release Angling: Waters designated catch-and-release for one or more species of fish require that those fish be released alive promptly, with little or no delay. Before you start fishing in these waters, consider the following in order to give the fish you release the best possible chance to survive: 1) Artificial lures are preferred over bait to reduce deep hooking and catch-and-release mortality; 2) Single hooks are preferred over treble or multiple hooks because they are easier and quicker to remove; 3) Barbless hooks are recommended over barbed hooks because they are easier to remove and reduce release time; 4) Heavier gear is preferred over lighter gear because it makes it easier to land fish; and 5) Rubber or neoprene nets are preferable because they are less likely than nylon nets to catch hooks which increases release time.

Fishing From Boats/Vessels, Float Fishing and Float Outfitting are regulated on some rivers and streams (see District Exceptions for regulated waters). These regulations apply as follows:

- When a water is closed to **"Fishing From Boats/Vessels,"** an angler may not fish while on any boat or vessel. However, an angler may use a boat or vessel to access wade fishing opportunities. The angler must be completely out of the boat or vessel while wade fishing.
- When a water is closed to **"Float Fishing,"** an angler may not fish from a boat or vessel, and may not wade fish in the river or stream, or from the bank or shoreline of the river or stream, when fishing access is gained by boat or vessel.
- When a water is closed to **"Float Outfitting,"** the operation of any boat or vessel for the commercial purpose of float fishing by a fishing outfitter or fishing guide is prohibited.

River Etiquette

- Be aware that boat access areas can be busy places; you may wish to fish in a location that is less congested.
- Do not encroach on another angler's space. Use the "visual rule of crowding" and attempt to keep out of sight of other anglers, if at all possible.
- Try not to monopolize a good fishing spot on the river. Fish for a while, then move on.
- Boats should always yield to wade anglers, however, there are instances when the wading angler should yield to floaters, such as when there is no other channel for the floaters to navigate.
- When possible, avoid using the streambed as a pathway. This type of foot traffic can cause damage to the fragile aquatic habitat. Anglers should use the shoreline to travel from one point to the other, if doing so does not violate trespass and stream access laws.

Fishing Methods: Fish may be taken only by hook and line or other approved methods. Regulations for the taking of fish are listed in the standard regulations for each fishing district (see pages 20, 49 & 76).

Releasing Fish

To ensure a released fish has the best chance for survival:

- Play the fish as rapidly as possible. Do not play it to total exhaustion.
- Keep the fish in water as much as possible when handling and removing the hook.
- Remove the hook gently. Do not squeeze the fish or put your fingers in its gills. There are release devices available from most sporting/fishing stores to assist you, and the use of barbless hooks makes releasing fish easier.
- Set the hook quickly to avoid deep hooking the fish. If the fish is deeply hooked and must be released by regulation, cut the line inside the mouth opening. Do not yank the hook out, as some fish will survive with hooks in them. Anglers should strongly consider keeping fish deeply-hooked in the throat or gills if allowed by regulations on that waterbody.
- Release the fish only after it has gained its equilibrium. If necessary, gently

hold the fish upright in the current facing upstream and move it slowly back and forth.

- Release the fish in quiet water close to the area where it was hooked.

Lake/Reservoir fishing from boats:

- Fish caught from deep water may be unable to vent their air bladder and may "bloat." Puncturing the air bladder or "fizzing" is not recommended because it may cause infections. A simple release tool will facilitate releasing the fish in deep water and recompressing it quickly. All you need is a 50-foot cord, a weight and a hook. Dull the hook, flatten the barb and attach the hook inline just above the weight with knots at the hook eye and bend. The hook should be pointing down toward the weight. Place the hook over the lower jaw of the fish and let the weight drop, pulling the fish down rapidly. A tug on the cord will release the fish.

Disposal of Dead Fish and Fish Entrails: When you are in a boat on the water and fishing, it is acceptable to dispose of fish entrails in deep water in the lake, reservoir or river. When you are near or on the shore or bank, it is recommended that you bag all fish remains and dispose of the bag in an appropriate garbage receptacle. Help keep the shoreline clean for others. It is unlawful to discard game fish; however, dead non-game fish may be treated like fish entrails for disposal purposes (puncture the bladder first so the fish will sink).

Check Stations: Anglers and hunters are required to stop as directed at all designated check stations on the way to and from fishing and hunting areas, even if they have no fish or game to be checked.

Family Fishing Waters: Numerous waters across the state provide excellent fishing opportunities for young anglers. A few waters have been set aside exclusively for the use of young anglers. Waters posted as Family Fishing Waters are open to fishing during the entire year to persons 14 years of age and younger only with the exception of Indian Road Pond near Townsend (see District Exceptions). One rod allowed per child. There are 70 Family Fishing Waters in Montana. All Family Fishing Waters are listed under the Fish tab on the FWP website (see Additional Angling Resources).

Federal Wildlife Refuges: Certain waters on Federal Wildlife Refuges may have special rules. Specific information may be obtained from the headquarters of the federal refuge involved.

Measuring Fish: Measure the greatest length from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail. Place the fish on a flat surface and squeeze the lobes of the tail fin together so as to achieve the greatest length. Do not measure over the curve of the body.

Tagged Fish: It is legal to harvest a radio tagged fish, however, the radio tag must be returned to FWP. If you catch a tagged fish, please report the following information to any Fish, Wildlife & Parks office or online at **fwp.mt.gov/fish/report-your-catch**

1. The tag's number and color;
2. The date the fish was caught;
3. The species of the fish;
4. The fish's length and weight (close as possible);
5. Location of the catch (the body of water and distance from nearest landmark);
6. Whether the fish was kept or released; and
7. The name, address, and email address of the angler.

Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) has issued advisories for the consumption of fish from certain Montana waters. Fish from some Montana waters contain levels of chemicals that may be especially harmful to young children, nursing mothers, and childbearing women or persons frequently consuming fish. Information, advice and additional details about fish consumption is available from the DPHHS, telephone 406-444-2837. This information is also available in a brochure titled "Montana Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines" which can be obtained at any FWP office and many license providers, or on the FWP website at: fwp.mt.gov/fish

Waters with a fish consumption advisory and an exception to the standard fishing regulations are identified with a fish icon to help you identify places to pay special attention to when harvesting fish.

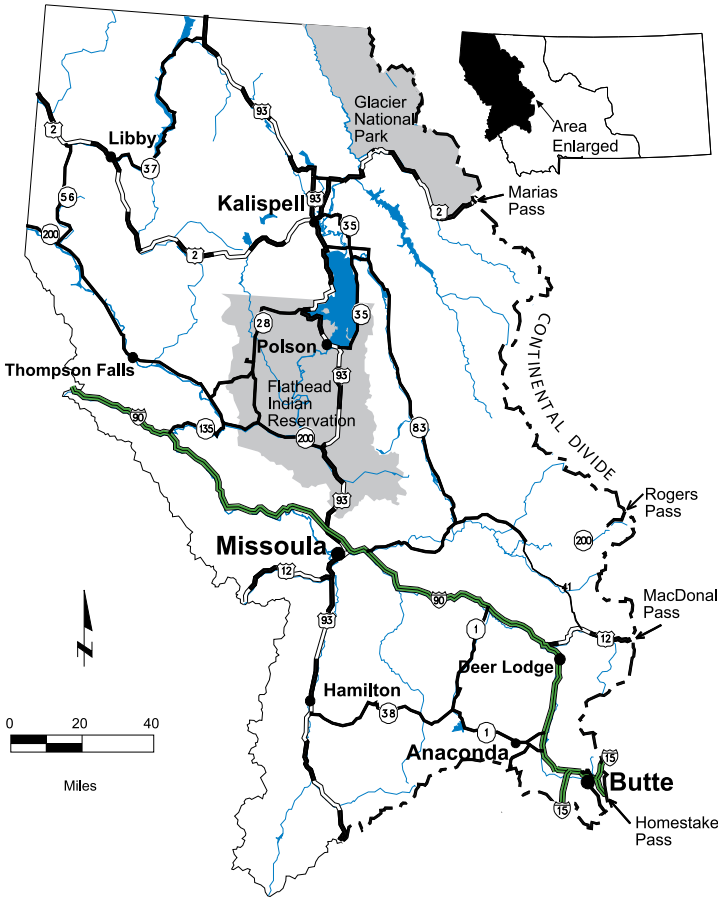
General Guidelines to Reduce Your Health Risk

- **Keep smaller fish for eating.** They typically taste better and have had less time to accumulate contaminants than older, bigger fish.
- **Eat smaller meals when you eat big fish and eat them less often.**
- **Eat fish that are less likely to be contaminated.** Contaminants such as mercury and PCBs build up in large predatory fish such as Walleye and Lake Trout. Their prey, such as Yellow Perch and Rainbow Trout, have less contaminants.
- **Clean and cook your fish properly.** Trim fish to remove fatty portions. Cook fish in a way that drains juices away from the meat.

The following waterbodies contain fish species with consumption advisories. More detailed information is available on the FWP website: fwp.mt.gov/fish

Alder Gulch	Cooney Reservoir	Lake Frances	Noxon Rapids Reservoir
Bair Reservoir	Crystal Lake	Lake Helena	Petrolia Reservoir
Belt Creek	Dry Fork Belt Creek	Lake Koocanusa	Pishkun Reservoir
Big Spring Creek	East Fork Reservoir	Lake Marlin	Prickly Pear Creek
Bighorn Lake and Afterbay Reservoir	Firehole River	Lake Mary Ronan	Seeley Lake
Blacktail Creek	Flathead Lake	Lake McDonald	Silver Creek
Boulder River	Flint Creek	Lee Metcalf Pond NWR	Snow Creek
Bowman Lake (Glacier NP)	Fort Peck Reservoir	Leigh Lake	South Sandstone Reservoir
Browns Gulch	Fred Burr Creek	Libby ponds	St. Mary Lake
Bynum Reservoir	Fresno Reservoir	Lower Stillwater Lake	Swan Lake
Cabinet Gorge Reservoir	Georgetown Lake	Lower Willow Creek Reservoir	Thompson Falls Reservoir
Canyon Ferry Reservoir	Gibbon River	Madison River	Tongue River Reservoir
Carpenter Creek	Harrison Lake (Glacier NP)	Martinsdale Reservoir	Upper Two Medicine
Castlerock Lake	Hauser Reservoir	Medicine Lake NWR	Waterton Lakes
Cataract Creek	Hebgen Reservoir	Missouri River	Whitefish Lake
Chrome Lake	Holter Reservoir	Mountain View Lake	Yellowstone River near Powder River
Clark Canyon Reservoir	Island Lake	Mystic Lake	
Clark Fork River	Lake Elwell aka Tiber Reservoir	Nelson Reservoir	
Clear Lake		Ninepipes Pond NWR	

Western Fishing District



Areas excluded from fishing districts.
Additional regulations may apply.
Other federal or tribal permits may be required.

The Western Fishing District includes all waters in Montana west of the Continental Divide.

Columbia River Basin – Inspection Prior to Launch: All watercraft crossing the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin are required to be inspected prior to launch.

For additional information about fishing in this district, please call the following regional headquarters Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.:

Kalispell **406-752-5501**
Missoula **406-542-5500**
FWP Headquarters **406-444-2449**
Hearing Impaired (use Montana Relay) ..... **7-1-1 or 1-800-253-4091**

Western District Standard Regulations

Beaver Ponds: Beaver ponds on streams are governed by the same regulations that govern the streams.

Boat and Motor Restrictions: All passengers under the age of 12 must wear a personal floatation device (PFD) at all times when the boat is in motion if the boat is less than 26 feet long. A wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be available for each occupant of any boat.

Closed Waters: Waters operated as fish hatcheries and rearing ponds by FWP and the US Fish & Wildlife Service shall be closed to fishing at all times. Waters in which FWP operates fish traps and other structures are closed to fishing as posted. Certain water-supply lakes, streams and hazardous areas are also closed as posted.

Dam Closures and Use Restrictions: In the interest of public health and safety, certain areas above and below most dams are closed to the public. These restrictions include areas where no public access is allowed below the ordinary high-water mark. The restricted areas are identified and delineated by signs and/or boat restraining systems.

The following dams are closed to all boating, sailing, floating, swimming, fishing or other recreational activity as marked by boat restraining systems or as posted to restrict access. Other dams not listed here may also be posted for restricted access. For more information call the FWP Fishing Access Coordinator at 406-444-2449, or contact the Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) 406-293-7751, x255, AVISTA 1-800-227-9187, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) 406-387-5241, CSKT 406-883-2888, Northwestern Energy (NWE) 888-467-2669 or PacificCorp Energy 503-813-6666.

Big Fork Dam (PacifiCorp, Lake County)	Libby Dam (ACOE, Lincoln County)
Hungry Horse Dam (BOR, Flathead County)	Noxon Rapids Dam (AVISTA , Sanders County)
Kerr Dam (CSKT, Lake County)	Thompson Falls Dam (NWE, Sanders County)

Flathead Indian Reservation: A tribal permit is required to fish on waters within the boundary of the Reservation. Call tribal headquarters at 406-675-2700 for information.

Irrigation Canals and Ditches: Man-made irrigation canals and ditches are open to fishing year round unless stated otherwise in exceptions to standard regulations. The same daily and possession limits apply to them as for rivers/streams. Anglers need to be aware that the Montana Stream Access Law does not apply to canals and ditches. Under Montana's trespass law, permission to access these waters is implied if the land is not posted, but that implied permission may be revoked at any time. It is best to obtain the explicit permission of the landowner. Where ditches cross land belonging to others, rights of the ditch owner versus those of the landowner vary. Therefore, always obey any sign clearly marking the ditch as closed to public access or fishing.

Reservoirs: Under normal operations, reservoir pool elevation, surface acreage and the mouths of the inlet stream(s) are expected to vary throughout the year. An imaginary line connecting the reservoir shoreline across the mouth of the stream marks the boundary between reservoir and stream/river, and the boundary will move as reservoir levels change. Streams are defined by a sloped streambed that results in a defined current flow between two discernible stream banks. Stream regulations apply upstream from the mouth of the reservoir and often are managed under seasons, limits and special regulations that differ from the reservoir regulations.

Sloughs: Sloughs with surface water connecting to a river at any time during the year fall under the river regulations for that river, unless listed under the

exceptions. Sloughs with no surface water connecting to a river at any time during the year fall under standard lake limits unless listed under the exceptions.

Transporting Live Fish: An import permit is required to bring live fish into Montana (see page 89). It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken except for transportation of fish for valid (approved) commercial purposes or as authorized by FWP.

Methods of Taking Fish

- A valid Fishing License is required for all types of fishing.
- Spears and bows count as lines for purposes of determining line limits.
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and an individual identifying number issued by the department.

Hook and Line Limits

Open Water

Rivers and Streams

- 1 line with 2 hooks per line, with or without a rod. The rod or line must be attended and in the angler's immediate control.

Lakes and Reservoirs

- 2 lines with 2 hooks per line, with or without a rod. Each line must be attended and in the angler's immediate control.

Ice Fishing

Lakes and Reservoirs

- 2 lines with 2 hooks per line on all lakes and reservoirs open to fishing. When a line is used through the ice, the angler need not be in immediate control but must be in the vicinity and in visual contact with the line.

Size of Hole

- In waters not open to spearing, the maximum size hole that may be used for ice fishing is 144 square inches or 12 inches in diameter.
- There is no size limit for a hole used for fishing with a spear.

Shelters: It is unlawful to use any ice fishing shelter not conforming to the following rules:

Definition/Use: Any hut or enclosure constructed of any material, except ice or snow, for the purpose of ice fishing.

Identification: Identification must be painted on or otherwise affixed to all unattended shelters in legible, 2-inch letters plainly visible at a distance of 100 feet. Identification must include the owner's name and address, name and phone number, *or* ***an individual identifying number issued by the department.*** Attended shelters at Brown's Lake and Georgetown Lake must also be identified.

Inspection: Each closed shelter shall have a door that an officer may readily open from the outside for inspection when it is occupied.

Waste and Rubbish Disposal: Owners and occupants of shelters are required to keep their shelters (and the area immediately around them) free from rubbish and trash. Anglers must remove waste materials before they leave for the day.

Removal: Daily removal of shelters is required on:

Browns Lake (near Ovando)

Echo Lake (near Anaconda)

Georgetown Lake

Removal After the Season: The owner of an ice fishing shelter shall remove it from the ice before it becomes irretrievable at the end of the season, or within five days from receipt of notification from FWP to remove the shelter.

Bow and Arrow: All waters are closed to bow-and-arrow taking of game and non-game fish, except as noted under District Exceptions.

Crossbows: Unlawful.

Nets and Traps: Landing nets may be used for landing hooked fish. See Bait Regulations for use of nets to harvest bait fish.

Setlines: Setlines (unattended lines) are not allowed in the Western Fishing District.

Snagging: All waters are closed to snagging of game and non-game fish, except as otherwise noted under District Exceptions.

Spearing: All waters are closed to spearing of game and non-game fish except as otherwise noted under District Exceptions.

Use of Attractor: ***A bead fixed on a line or leader two inches or less from the eye of a bare hook is considered an artificial lure. Fishing with a bead more than two inches from the eye of a bare hook or artificial fly is considered snagging and is unlawful.***

Bait Regulations

- ***No fish species may be used as live bait in the Western Fishing District. Possession of live bait fish or use of live bait fish is prohibited in the Western Fishing District.***
- It is unlawful to release live bait of any kind into Montana waters; do not empty any live bait containers at your fishing site.
- ***Only non-game fish native to the Western Fishing District (Large Scale Sucker, Longnose Sucker, Northern Pikeminnow, Peamouth Chub, Redside Shiner, Longnose Dace)*** may be captured and used as dead bait and may be taken for use as dead bait in the following manner:
  - with hook and line; or
  - with seines no larger than 12 feet x 4 feet; or
  - with minnow traps (the dimensions shall not exceed 24 inches x 12 inches x 12 inches); or
  - with cast nets (maximum 6-foot radius) and dip nets (no larger than 3 feet x 3 feet).
- See Commercial Fishing License requirements ***(page 89)*** for information on commercial harvest permits.
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and an individual identifying number issued by the department.

Dead Bait

- ***Trout, Salmon, Whitefish, and Sculpins may not be used whole or in parts/pieces as dead bait.***
- ***The eggs of Char, Cisco, Arctic Grayling, Salmon or Trout may be used as bait. Other parts/pieces of Salmonids may not be used as bait.***
- ***Only non-game fish native to the Western Fishing District (Large Scale Sucker, Longnose Sucker, Northern Pikeminnow, Peamouth Chub, Redside Shiner, Longnose Dace) may be captured and used as dead bait. All other non-game fish caught or purchased must be preserved by freezing, salting or brining.***
- Parts/pieces of Bass or Yellow Perch may be used as bait if edible portions are not wasted.

Live Bait

- ***No fish species may be used as live bait in the Western Fishing District. Possession of live bait fish or use of live bait fish is prohibited in the Western Fishing District.***
- Live animals such as meal worms, red worms, night crawlers, leeches, maggots, crayfish, reptiles, amphibians and insects may be used as bait on all waters not restricted to artificial lures only.
- Leeches may only be imported into Montana from FWP-approved leech dealers. Anglers who import leeches must have in their possession a bill-of-sale (a receipt) from the approved out-of-state leech dealer when fishing with leeches in Montana. A list of approved out-of-state leech dealers may be obtained from FWP by calling 406-452-6181.

General Regulations

Possession limit means the number of fish that you may possess at any time in any form: fresh, stored in freezers or lockers, salted, smoked, dried, canned or otherwise preserved. It is unlawful to preserve fish (salted, smoked, dried, canned, or otherwise preserved) before taking them to your permanent residence (the physical abode or structure you maintain as your principal, legal residence) unless those fish can be counted. Mobile recreational vehicles, travel trailers, tents or storage/freezer lockers do not qualify as permanent residences. No person may sell or take for the purpose of sale any fish except as authorized in commercial fishing regulations.

Daily limit means the number of fish you may legally take during a calendar day. It is unlawful to exceed the standard daily limit unless the regulations for the water body where you are fishing specify a different limit. "Legally taken" means fish caught and not immediately released alive. Where catch-and-release is allowed, fish immediately released alive are considered not taken. A fish when landed and not immediately released becomes part of the daily limit of the person originally hooking the fish, even if the fish is donated to another person. If you receive fish from another angler, those fish also become part of your daily limit. You may possess the daily limit allowed only for the body of water on which you are fishing.

Handling and Transporting Legally Taken Fish

While a person is fishing, or while on the water or on the ice:

- All fish in possession must be visibly identifiable to species.
- All fish in possession must be whole with head, skin, fins and tail attached. Gills and entrails may be removed (see Disposal of Dead Fish and Fish Entrails on page 16).
- This doesn't prohibit the consumption of fish on the ice or water. However, the fish consumed are part of your daily limit.

Once off the water or ice, fish may be dressed and filleted for transport to your permanent residence, unless size limits apply, under the following conditions:

- All fish can be counted and identified. Two fillets will be counted as one fish. If the catch is frozen prior to transport, each fish or fillet must be packaged so it can be counted.
- Salmonids (Trout, Salmon, Arctic Grayling, Char and Whitefish): the entire skin must be attached to the fillet for identification.

General Fishing Seasons and Hours

Fishing Hours

- Fishing is allowed at all hours during open fishing seasons unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Fishing Season: Rivers and Streams

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30 unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Fishing Season: Lakes and Reservoirs

- Open entire year unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

2022 GENERAL FISHING SEASON		
	Rivers and Streams	Lakes and Reservoirs
Western District	Open third Saturday in May through November 30, unless otherwise specified in Exceptions to Standard Regulations.	Open all year
If you don't find the water you are looking for listed in the district exceptions, use the standard regulations for the district you are fishing in.		

Western District Standard Daily and Possession Limits

Each angler may take all of the limits listed in the chart, unless otherwise noted in the Western District Exceptions. For species not listed, there are no limits on the number of fish that may be taken or possessed. Check for exceptions to the standard regulations in the following pages.

Anglers who move from one fishing water to another may possess the limit of fish allowed only for the water on which they are currently fishing.

	Species	Daily and Possession Limits
TROUT	**Brook Trout**	20 daily and in possession.
	Bull Trout	All waters are closed to angling for Bull Trout and all fish must be released promptly, with little or no delay unless otherwise authorized in the Western District Exceptions. See Special License Requirements on page 13. Note: Federal rules prohibit the attempted take of Bull Trout unless specifically authorized by state or tribal regulation.
	Combined Trout includes Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Golden Trout, and Arctic Grayling	Lakes/Reservoirs: 5 daily and 10 in possession, only 1 over 22 inches daily and in possession. Rivers/Streams: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.
	Cutthroat Trout (see page 96 for ID key)	Lakes/Reservoirs: 3 daily and in possession, no size limit. Rivers/Streams: 3 daily and in possession, none over 12 inches.
	Lake Trout	20 daily and 40 in possession.
Largemouth Bass		5 daily and in possession, only 1 greater than 12 inches. Third Saturday in May through June 30: 1 daily and in possession, must be over 22 inches.
Smallmouth Bass		15 daily and in possession, no size limit all year.
Burbot (Ling)		2 daily and in possession.
Crappie		No limit.
Kokanee Salmon		20 daily and 40 in possession.
Northern Pike		15 daily and in possession.
Sturgeon		0 - All waters are closed to angling for Sturgeon. Captured Sturgeon must be released immediately.
Whitefish		20 daily and 40 in possession.
Walleye		All Walleye caught must be killed immediately, kept and the entire fish turned into FWP. Anglers who catch Walleye in the Western Fishing District are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501). Anglers will be asked to provide location, date, and time of capture and may be asked to provide their full name, ALS number, and phone number. Anglers are required to turn in the whole Walleye to a FWP office within 10 days of capture (frozen is allowed) during regular business hours. Does not include Clark Fork Reservoirs downstream of Thompson Falls Dam, see Exceptions for the Clark Fork River (page 29).

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Western District Exceptions To Standard Regulations

Check the following list of waters for the body of water you intend to fish in the Western District. If the body of water is not found in the listing of Exceptions, all of the Western District standard seasons, daily/possession limits, and standard regulations apply. Standard regulations apply for species not listed in the Exceptions.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

ALICE CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

ANACONDA SETTLING POND SYSTEM

- See Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area.

ASHLEY LAKE

Entire lake

- Salmon: 35 daily and 70 in possession.

Inlet tributaries

- Closed entire year.

BASIN CREEK RESERVIOR

- ***Cutthroat Trout: 1 daily and in possession, artificial lures only.***

BEAR CREEK (tributary to Middle Fork Flathead River)

- Angling is closed within 150-yard radius of the stream mouth June 1 through September 30.

BEAVER CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

BELMONT CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of mouth.

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

- Closed entire year.

BITTERROOT LAKE (see Little Bitterroot Lake)

BITTERROOT RIVER (note: river flows south to north) AIS

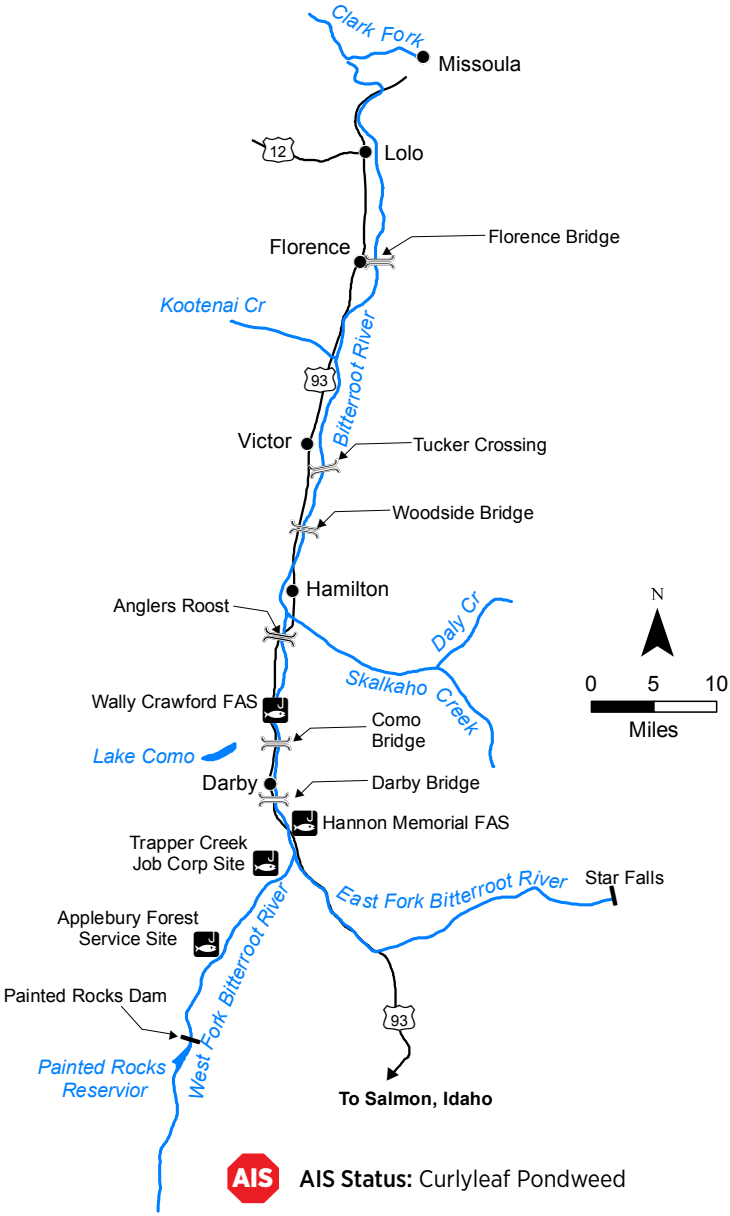
Fishing Regulations

The ENTIRE Bitterroot River to include the East Fork (downstream from Star Falls) and the West Fork (downstream from Painted Rocks Dam) to the mouth of the river near Missoula. During the Extended Season (December 1 to the third Saturday in May)

- Extended season for Northern Pike and Whitefish and catch-and-release for all trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May.
- Artificial lures, maggots and/or aquatic insects only. All other live/dead bait prohibited.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Bitterroot River



Note: The Bitterroot River flows from south to north; downstream is to the north.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

West Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Painted Rocks Dam. During General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30).

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout and Rainbow Trout.
- Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession.

East Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Star Falls. During General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30).

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout and Rainbow Trout.
- Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession.

Bitterroot River from confluence of East and West Forks to the north boundary of the Woodside Bridge FAS. During General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30).

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 Rainbow or Brown Trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

North Boundary of Woodside Bridge FAS to Florence Bridge. During General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30).

- Catch-and-release for all trout.
- Artificial lures only.
- Live/dead bait prohibited.

Florence Bridge to mouth of Bitterroot River. During General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30).

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 Rainbow or Brown Trout daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

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.

Recreation Rules (see fwp.mt.gov/buyandapply/fishinglicenses/commercial-fishing-and-floating and signs on site for more information)

West Fork Bitterroot River and upper Bitterroot River

No commercial floating or fishing June 1 to September 15 from:

- Painted Rocks Dam to Applebury Forest Service Site on Fridays.
- Applebury Forest Service Site to Trapper Creek Job Corps site on Saturdays.
- Trapper Creek Job Corps Site on to Hannon Memorial FAS on Sundays.
- Hannon Memorial FAS to Wally Crawford FAS on Mondays.

No floating of any kind July 1 to September 15 from:

- Painted Rocks Dam to Applebury Forest Service Site on Fridays.

BLACKFOOT RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES AIS

Mainstem and all tributaries except the Clearwater River. During the General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30)

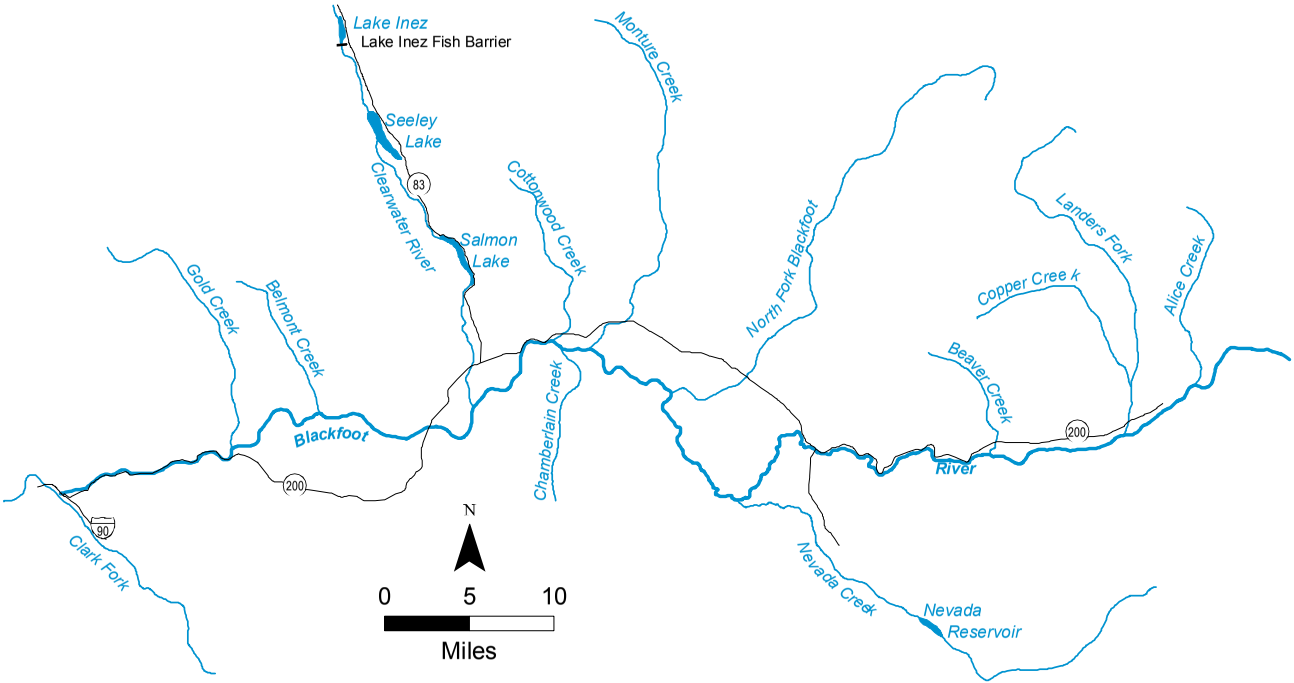
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches long, any size Brown Trout. (See Clearwater River Drainage for exception.)
- Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouths of Belmont Creek, Copper Creek, Gold Creek, Monture Creek and North Fork Blackfoot River.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section | Exceptions to Standard Regulations

AIS **AIS Status:** Curlyleaf Pondweed

Blackfoot River



If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Mainstem only during the Extended Season (December 1 to the third Saturday in May)

- Extended season for Mountain Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May. Tributaries are closed to fishing during the extended season.
- Artificial lures and/or maggots only.
- All other live/dead bait prohibited.

Mainstem from Landers Fork mouth downstream to the confluence with the Clark Fork River

- Catch-and-release for Brook Trout. (This regulation is a result of Bull Trout being misidentified and harvested as Brook Trout. Brook Trout are very rare in this section of river whereas Bull Trout are common.)

BLANCHARD LAKE (near Whitefish) AIS

- Northern Pike: 5 daily and in possession, 4 less than 28 inches and 1 greater than 36 inches.
- Bass: 1 daily and in possession, must be over 22 inches.

BOOTJACK LAKE (near Whitefish)

- Open April 1 through November 30.
- Combined trout: 1 daily and in possession, 22 inch minimum.
- Artificial lures only.

BUFFALOHEAD POND

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

BULL LAKE (near Troy)

- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

CABINET GORGE RESERVOIR AIS

- (See Clark Fork River Mouth of Thompson River to Idaho Border)

CEDAR CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)

- Artificial lures only, including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.

CHAMBERLAIN CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

CIBID LAKE

- Combined trout: 4 under 12 inches and only 1 over 22 inches daily and in possession.

CLARK FORK RIVER AIS

Upstream from Perkins Lane Bridge, near Warm Springs

- Open entire year.
- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.
- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

Perkins Lane Bridge, near Warm Springs, to mouth of the Flathead River

During the General Season (third Saturday in May through November 30):

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches long.
- Artificial lures only within a 100-yard radius of the mouths of Rattlesnake Creek, Petty Creek, Fish Creek, Cedar Creek, Dry Creek, Trout Creek and St. Regis River.

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

During the Extended Season (December 1 to the third Saturday in May):
- Extended season for Northern Pike and Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May.
- Artificial lures and/or maggots only.
- All other live/dead bait prohibited.

Mouth of Flathead River to mouth of Thompson River

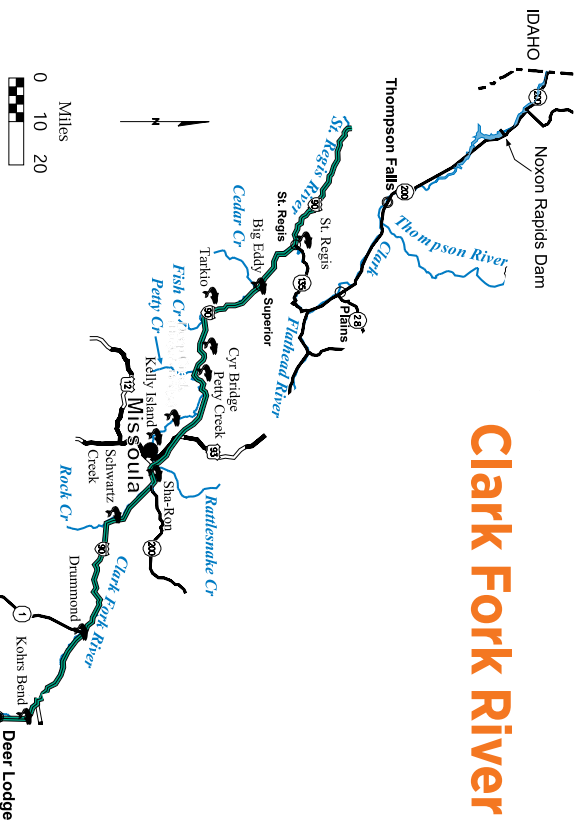
- Open entire year.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Bass: open entire year, 5 daily and in possession, no size limit.

Mouth of Thompson River to Idaho Border (includes Thompson Falls, Noxon Rapids, and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs)

- Open entire year.
- Combined trout: standard lake daily and possession limits apply.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Bass: 5 daily and in possession; except June 15 through July 15 only 1 daily and in possession, 22 inch minimum.
- Hook and Line: 2 lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.

Thompson Falls Dam to the Idaho border

- Walleye: no limit. Catch, keep, and report of Walleye not required (see pg 23).



AIS Status: Curlyleaf Pondweed, Eurasian Watermilfoil, and Flowering Rush

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

CLEARWATER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES (lakes not included, see exceptions for individual lakes elsewhere) AIS

Clearwater River upstream from the Salmon Lake inlet and all tributaries of the Clearwater River except the West Fork and Marshall Creek

- Closed to fishing from Rainey Lake fish barrier downstream for 100 yards.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Northern Pike: no limit, open to spearing.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon from Lake Alva outlet to Lake Inez inlet and from Lake Inez outlet to Seeley Lake inlet from September 15 through November 30. Closed to snagging from Seeley Lake outlet to Salmon Lake inlet.

NOTE: Clearwater River sections between lakes are closed to fishing from December 1 until the third Saturday in May. This includes the Clearwater River section from outlet of Seeley Lake at Riverview Drive Bridge ("Dogtown") downstream to inlet of Salmon Lake.

Clearwater River from Salmon Lake outlet to mouth of the Clearwater River, including Blanchard Lake and Elbow Lake

- Open entire year.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined Trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches.
- Northern Pike: no limit, open to spearing.

COAL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (tributary to North Fork Flathead River)

- Closed entire year.

COPPER CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only, including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.

COTTONWOOD CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

DALY CREEK (tributary to Skalkaho Creek)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

DRY CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)

- Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

DRY BRIDGE POND

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

DUNHAM CREEK (tributary to Monture Creek, Blackfoot drainage)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only.

EAST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER DOWNSTREAM FROM STAR FALLS

- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout and Cutthroat Trout.
- Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession.
- 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.

EAST FORK RESERVOIR

- Cutthroat Trout: 2 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

ECHO LAKE (near Anaconda)

- Open third Saturday in May through March 31.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, includes Brook Trout.

ECHO LAKE (near Bigfork)

- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only, daily limit of 2.

ELK CREEK (tributary to Swan River)

- Closed entire year.

EMILY SPRINGS (tributary to Georgetown Lake)

- Closed entire year.

EUREKA POND

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

FISH CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Clark Fork River drainage)

Entire drainage

- Artificial lures only, including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.

Mainstem downstream of the confluence of the South and West forks

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

FISHTRAP CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Thompson River drainage)

Excluding Fish Trap Lake

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, none over 10 inches.
- Artificial lures only.

FLATHEAD LAKE AIS

Flathead Lake north of Flathead Indian Reservation boundary

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Lake Trout: 100 daily and in possession, only 1 over 36 inches, and all fish 30 to 36 inches must be released.
- Lake Whitefish: 100 daily and in possession.
- Yellow Perch: no limit, only 10 daily over 10 inches. No possession limit.
- NOTE: A Flathead Indian Reservation Tribal Permit is required to fish on the southern portion of the lake. Check Tribal Fishing regulations for the south portion of the lake.

FLATHEAD RIVER AIS

Mainstem Flathead and tributaries, from confluence of North and Middle Forks to Highway 2 Bridge upstream at Teakettle FAS

- Single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.

Mainstream Flathead from confluence of North and Middle Forks to Flathead Lake

- Open entire year.
- No intentional fishing for Bull Trout.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Northern Pike: February 28 to third Saturday in May closed to intentional fishing for Northern Pike.
- Rainbow Trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Whitefish: 100 daily and in possession.
- From December 1 to third Saturday in May, maggots and artificial lures only, no artificial lures can be scented (infused, saturated, or applied).

Flathead Indian Reservation boundary to mouth

- Open entire year.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

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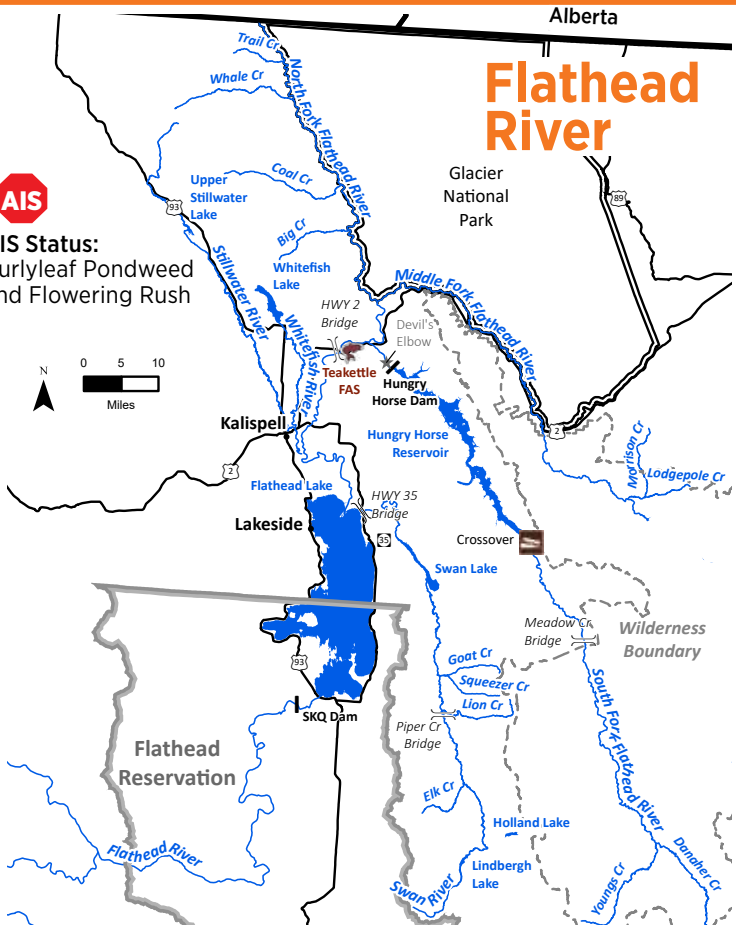
Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations



FLATHEAD RIVER SLOUGHS

Brenneman, Church, Egan, Fennon, Half Moon, McWennegar, Mill, and Rose Creek

- Open entire year.
- Rainbow Trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Hook and Line: 2 rods and/or lines with up to 2 hooks per line; Western District bait regulations apply.

FLINT CREEK

Downstream from Georgetown Lake

- 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.

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

FRED BURR LAKE (Granite County)

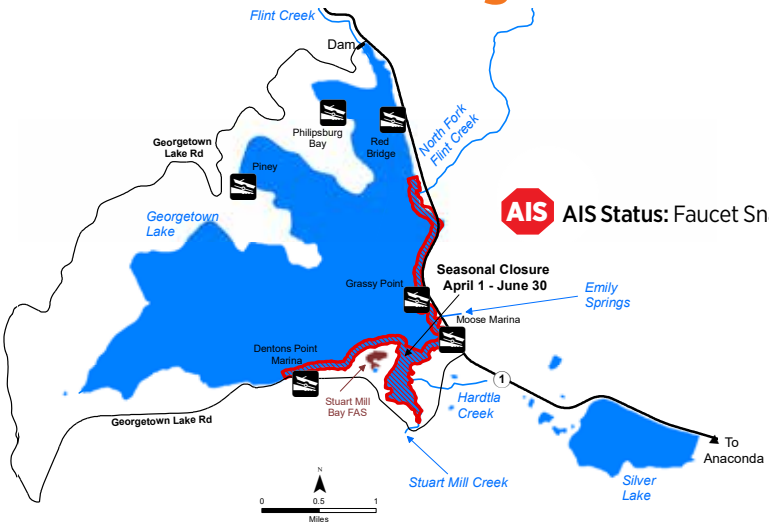
Philipsburg water supply

- Closed entire year.

FRENCHTOWN POND

- Catch-and-release for bass.

Georgetown Lake



GEORGETOWN LAKE

- 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 shoreline areas 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.
- Combined trout, includes Brook Trout: 5 daily and in possession, of which only 1 may be a Brook Trout. Only Brook Trout over 16 inches can be kept.

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

- Open July 1 through November 30.
- Emily Springs: closed entire year.
- Catch-and-release for Brook Trout.

GERMAN GULCH

Mainstem and tributaries

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout

GOAT CREEK (tributary to Swan River)

- Closed entire year.

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If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

GOLD CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only, including within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

GRANITE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)

- Closed entire year.

GRAVE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (near Eureka including Clarence Creek and Blue Sky Creek)

Upstream of Highway 93 bridge

- Open third Saturday in May through August 15.

Downstream of Highway 93 to mouth

- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon from September 15 through November 30.
- Kokanee Salmon: 20 daily and 40 in possession.

HANDKERCHIEF LAKE

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.

HARDTLA CREEK (tributary to Georgetown Lake)

- Open July 1 through November 30.
- Catch-and-release for Brook Trout.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.

HEIRONYMOUS POND

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, includes Cutthroat Trout and Brook Trout.

HERRIG CREEK (tributary to Little Bitterroot Lake)

- Closed entire year.

HOLLAND CREEK

Mouth on Holland Lake upstream to the Falls

- Closed entire year.

HORSESHOE LAKE (near Ferndale)

- Catch-and-release for bass.

HORSESHOE LAKE (Thompson Chain of Lakes)

- Tiger Muskie : 1 daily and in possession, must be over 40 inches. ***There are no Northern Pike in the lake.***

HUNGRY HORSE RESERVOIR

Dam to Crossover Boat Ramp

- Bull Trout: 1 daily and in possession from the third Saturday in May through August 15, maximum of 2 fish per license year. Catch-and-release the rest of the year with a Hungry Horse/South Fork Flathead permit validation on Fishing License. A Hungry Horse/South Fork Flathead 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.

HUNGRY HORSE RESERVOIR TRIBUTARIES

- See South Fork Flathead River Drainage regulations.

 If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

JOB CORPS PONDS (Deer Lodge County)
- see Warm Springs WMA map on page 44

- Open August 15 through September 30.
- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.
- Motorized boats/vessels prohibited.

KEELER CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES

- Open third Saturday in May through July 15.

KOOTENAI RIVER (AIS)

Libby Dam to Idaho Border

- Bull Trout: As per the District Standard Regulations, the Kootenai River is closed to angling for Bull Trout; any Bull Trout caught must be released promptly, with little or no delay.
- Brown Trout: No limit. All Brown Trout caught between Libby Dam and Kootenai Falls must be killed immediately, kept, and the entire fish turned into FWP. Anglers who catch Brown Trout upstream of Kootenai Falls are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501). Anglers may be asked to provide their full name, ALS number, phone number, date and time of capture, and location on the river. Anglers are required to turn in the whole Brown Trout to a FWP office during regular business hours and within 10 days of capture.
- Burbot: Catch-and release.

Libby Dam to Highway 37 Bridge, near Fisher River

- Open June 1 through February 28.
- Rainbow Trout: 1 daily and in possession, 28 inch minimum length.

Highway 37 Bridge, near Fisher River, to Idaho Border

- Open entire year.
- Rainbow Trout: 4 daily and in possession, includes 3 under 13 inches and only 1 over 18 inches.
- Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within 150-yards upstream and downstream of the Quartz Creek stream mouth unless posted at a greater distance.

Kootenai Falls to 0.8 miles downstream of Swinging Bridge

- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon from September 15 through November 30.

LAKE ALVA (AIS)

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.

LAKE CREEK (near Troy)

- Open to fishing all year, except 150-yards upstream of Keeler Creek to Chase Cutoff Bridge: Closed to angling from July 15 through October 31.
- Brown Trout: no limit.
- Snagging: Downstream of Troy Dam open for Kokanee Salmon from September 15 through November 30.

LAKE INEZ (AIS)

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.

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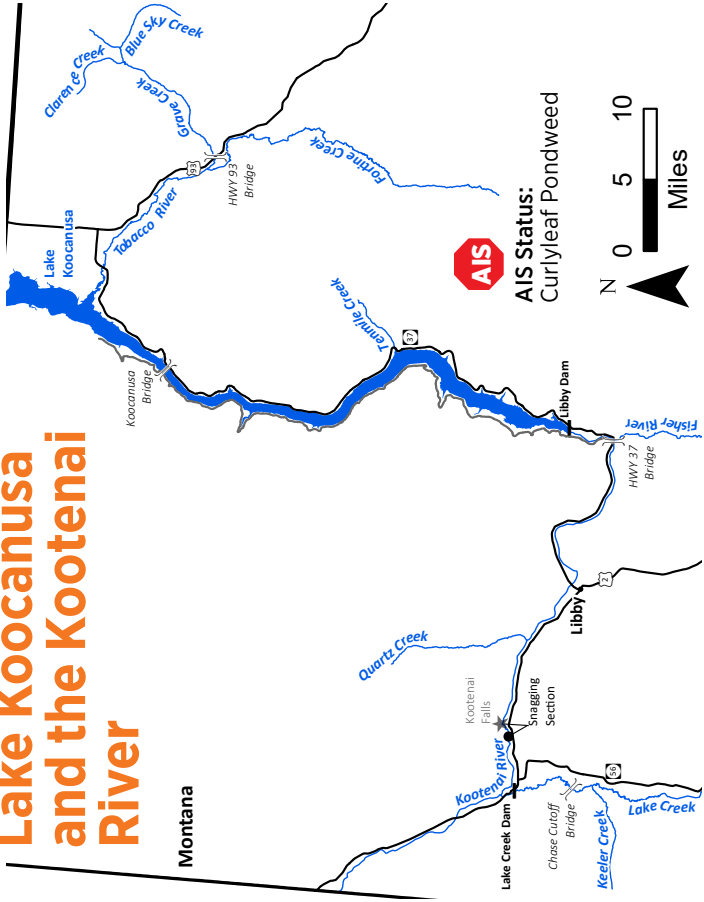
Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River

Montana



LAKE KOOCANUSA

- Rainbow Trout: Adipose clipped fish less than 22 inches must be released (see location of adipose fin on the Rainbow Trout color plate at the back of this booklet).
- Bull Trout: Catch-and-release only (all Bull Trout must be released immediately). A Lake Koocanusa Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for Bull Trout. See Special Fishing Licenses requirements for application information. It is unlawful to possess a live Bull Trout for any reason.
- Kokanee Salmon: 50 daily and 100 in possession.

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

LAKE MARY RONAN AIS

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.
- Northern Pike: all Northern Pike caught must be killed immediately, kept and the entire fish turned in to FWP. Anglers who catch Northern Pike in Lake Mary Ronan are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501). Anglers must provide their full name, ALS number, phone number, date and time of capture, and location on the lake. Anglers are required to turn in the whole Northern Pike to a FWP office within 10 days of capture during regular business hours. Edible portions of the fish may be returned to the angler upon request.

LANDERS FORK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

LIBBY POND

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

LION CREEK (tributary to Swan River)

- Closed entire year.

LITTLE BITTERROOT LAKE aka Bitterroot Lake

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

LITTLE BLACKFOOT RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

Mainstem River

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Extended Whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.

Tributaries

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

LODGEPOLE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)

- Closed entire year.

LONG CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)

- Closed entire year.

LOON LAKE (near Ferndale) AIS

- Combined trout: 4 less than 12 inches and only 1 over 22 inches daily and in possession.

LOST LAKE (Eureka)

- Open April 1 through November 30.
- Combined trout: 1 daily and in possession, 22-inch minimum.
- Artificial lures only.

LOWER STILLWATER LAKE

- Yellow Perch: no limit, only 10 daily over 10 inches. No possession limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

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Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

LOWER THOMPSON LAKE

- Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

MARSHALL CREEK (tributary to West Fork Clearwater River)

- Artificial lures only.

McCORMICK POND aka Silver's Lagoon (Missoula)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger, holders of a "Resident with a Disability Conservation License" and holders of a "Permit to Hunt from a Vehicle" with the proper prerequisite Fishing License. One rod per angler.
- Open April 1 through October 30.
- Combined trout, including Cutthroat Trout: 1 fish daily and in possession.

McGREGOR LAKE

- Crayfish: 20 daily and in possession; females with egg clusters ***or attached juveniles*** must be released.

MEDICINE LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES (near Philipsburg)

Medicine Lake

- Open July 1 through April 30.

Tributaries to Medicine Lake

- Open July 1 through November 30.

MIDDLE FORK FLATHEAD RIVER

Middle Fork Flathead River including headwaters to confluence with North Fork Flathead River (near Blankenship Bridge)

- Single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.

Non-wilderness portion

NOTE: Montana/Glacier National Park boundary is the ordinary high-water mark on the park side of the river.

- Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within a 150-yard radius of the Bear Creek stream mouth.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Rainbow Trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Extended season open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.

MIDDLE THOMPSON LAKE

- Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

MILL CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)

Downstream from the Stewart Street Bridge in Opportunity

- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.

MONTURE CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only, including within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

 If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

MORRELL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (tributary to Clearwater River)

Entire drainage

- Artificial lures only.

Mainstem from Cottonwood Lakes Road (USFS Rd 477) bridge upstream to Pyramid Pass Road (USFS Rd 4381) bridge

- Closed entire year.

MORRISON CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)

- Closed entire year.

NEVADA CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

NINEPIPES POND

- Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age or 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.

NORTH FORK BLACKFOOT RIVER (tributary to Blackfoot River)

Downstream from the North Fork Falls

- Artificial lures only, including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.

From North Fork Falls downstream to Highway 200 bridge

- Artificial lures only.
- Single point barbless hook lures only.

Entire river

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

NORTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER

North Fork Flathead River including headwaters to confluence with Middle Fork Flathead River (near Blankenship Bridge)

NOTE: Montana/Glacier National Park boundary is the middle of the river.

- Single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.
- 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.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Rainbow Trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Extended season open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.

NORTH FORK FLINT CREEK (tributary to Georgetown Lake)

- Open July 1 through November 30.
- Catch-and-release for Brook Trout.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.

NOXON RAPIDS RESERVOIR

AIS

Birdland Bay Bridge to Noxon Rapids Dam

- (See Clark Fork River Mouth of Thompson River to Idaho Border)

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Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

PETTY CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

PINE GROVE POND

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

PLACID CREEK (tributary to Placid Lake)

- Kokanee Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 15 through December 31; 20 daily and 40 in possession.

PLACID LAKE AIS

- Catch-and-release for bass.
- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 15 through December 31; 20 daily and 40 in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit. All Northern Pike caught must be killed immediately, kept and the entire fish turned in to FWP. Anglers who catch Northern Pike in Placid Lake are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-542-5500). Anglers must provide their full name, ALS Number, phone number, date and time of capture, and location on the lake. Anglers are required to turn in the whole Northern Pike to a FWP office within 10 days of capture during regular business hours. Edible portions of the fish may be returned to angler upon request.

QUARTZ CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Kootenai River drainage including West Fork)

- Open third Saturday in May through August 15.

RACETRACK POND

- Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 3 combined trout, including Cutthroat Trout, daily and in possession.
- Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may use bait.

RATTLESNAKE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (near Missoula)

Entire river

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only, including within 100-yard radius of mouth.

Downstream from the mouth of Beeskove Creek

- Closed to fishing from the mouth of Beeskove Creek to 100-yards downstream of Mountain Water Company Dam.

RIVERS EDGE POND

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

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

ROCK CREEK (near Missoula)

From the confluence of the *Middle* and West forks, near Philipsburg, to the mouth

- Combined trout: 3 Brown Trout daily and in possession. Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout and Cutthroat Trout.
- Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may use bait during the general season.
- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels July 1 through November 30.
- 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.

SALMON LAKE AIS

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.

SEELEY LAKE AIS

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Bass: no daily or possession limit for entire year.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 15 through December 31; 20 daily and 40 in possession.

SHADY LANE POND

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

SILVER LAKE (near Anaconda)

- Closed to fishing July 1 through September 30 within a 50-yard radius of the mouth of Storm Lake Creek.

SILVER BOW CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES

Mainstem and Tributaries

- Artificial lures only in Silver Bow Creek and German Gulch.
- Blacktail Creek is open all year from its mouth near Montana Street in Butte, upstream to Four Mile Road crossing.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout

SILVER'S LAGOON aka McCormick Pond (Missoula)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger, holders of a "Resident with a Disability Conservation License" and holders of a "Permit to Hunt from a Vehicle" with the proper prerequisite Fishing License. One rod per angler.
- Open April 1 through October 30.
- Combined trout, including Cutthroat Trout: 1 fish daily and in possession.

SKALKAHO CREEK (tributary to Bitterroot River)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout, includes Daly Creek.

SKYLINE POND (in Butte)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger. One rod per child. 1 trout daily and in possession.

SMITH LAKE (near Kalispell) AIS

- Yellow Perch: no limit, only 10 daily over 10 inches. No possession limit.
- Northern Pike: 50 daily and 100 in possession.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

SOUTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER

South Fork Flathead River and tributaries, including headwaters to confluence with Flathead River (does not include Hungry Horse Reservoir)

- Single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.

South Fork Flathead River upstream from Hungry Horse Reservoir (from Crossover Boat Ramp south and upstream to the confluence of Youngs and Danaher creeks)

- Bull Trout: catch-and-release from the third Saturday in May through July 31. A Hungry Horse/South Fork Flathead Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for Bull Trout. See Special License Requirements for application information. All Bull Trout must be released promptly, with little or no delay. It is unlawful to possess a live Bull Trout for any reason. Angling for Bull Trout is not allowed in South Fork Flathead River tributaries or Big Salmon Lake.

Meadow Creek Bridge to Spotted Bear foot bridge and tributaries

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Artificial lures only.

Hungry Horse Dam downstream to Devil's Elbow and tributaries

- Closed entire year.

Devil's Elbow downstream to mouth and tributaries

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Rainbow Trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Extended season open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.

SQUEEZER CREEK (tributary to Swan River)

- Closed entire year.

ST REGIS COMMUNITY PARK POND

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger; one rod per child.
- Combined trout, including Cutthroat Trout: 1 fish daily and in possession.

ST REGIS RIVER

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.
- Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

STILLWATER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES (Flathead River drainage)

- Open entire year from mouth of Sunday Creek to lower Stillwater Lake.

STORM LAKE CREEK (tributary to Silver Lake near Anaconda)

- Closed to fishing July 1 through September 30 from the Silver Lake diversion structure located near the stream mouth down to where the stream enters Silver Lake.

STUART MILL CREEK (tributary to Georgetown Lake)

- Open July 1 through November 30.
- Catch-and-release for Brook Trout.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

SWAN RIVER

- No intentional fishing for Bull Trout.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within a 300-yard radius of the Woodward Creek and Lion Creek stream mouths, unless posted at a greater distance.

Piper Creek Bridge downstream to Swan Lake

- Artificial lures only.

Swan Lake outlet downstream to the Highway 35 Bridge

- Open entire year.

TALLY LAKE

- Lake Trout: 1 daily and in possession, must be over 42 inches.

THOMPSON FALLS RESERVOIR (AIS)

- (See Clark Fork River Mouth of Thompson River to Idaho Border)

THOMPSON PARK POND

- Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession; one rod per angler.

THOMPSON RIVER

Entire river

- Open to fishing entire year.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout and Rainbow Trout.
- Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession, any size.
- Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may use bait.

TOBACCO RIVER

- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon September 15 through November 30.
- Kokanee Salmon: 20 daily and 40 in possession.

TRAIL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Yakinikak, N. Fork Flathead River drainage)

- Closed entire year downstream from mouth of Thoma Creek.

TROUT CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)

- Artifical lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

TROY POND

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

UPPER STILLWATER LAKE

- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

UPPER THOMPSON LAKE

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

UPSATA LAKE (AIS)

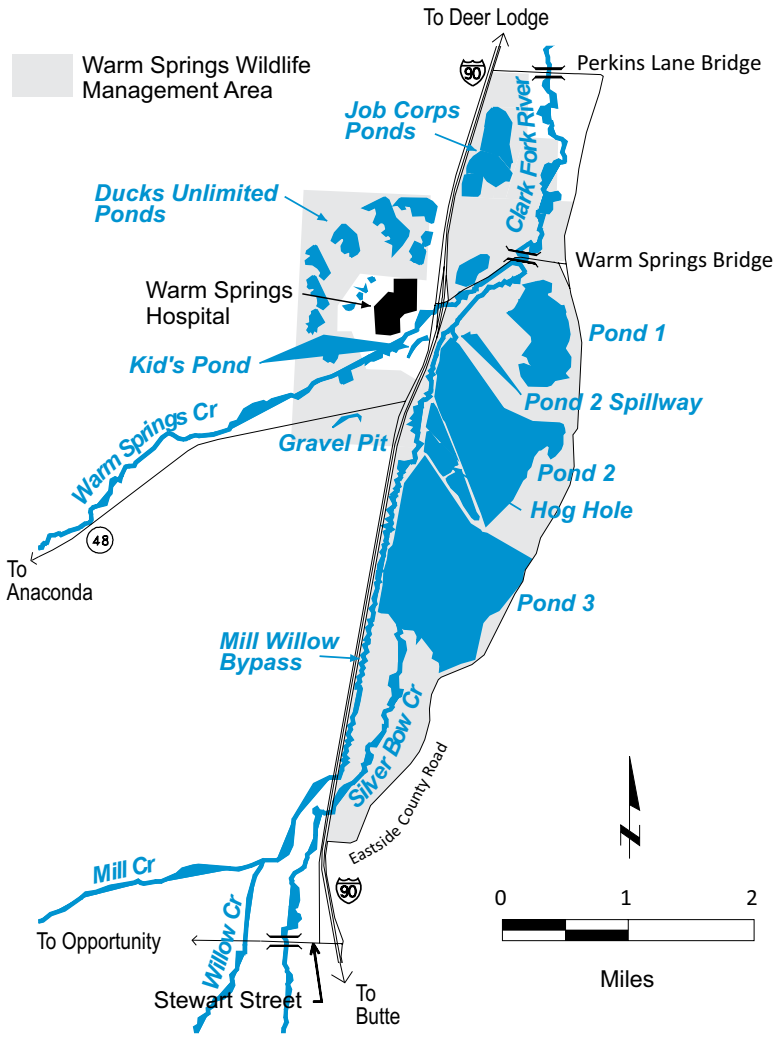
- Catch-and-release for bass.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Warm Springs WMA



 If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

WARM SPRINGS CREEK (near Anaconda)

Upstream of Myers Dam

- Open from the third Saturday in May through November 30.

Myers Dam to Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

- Open from the third Saturday in May through November 30 except for the section from Myers Dam downstream 50 yards which is closed to fishing July 1 through September 30.
- Extended season: catch-and-release for trout December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures only.

Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

- Open entire year on Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA). (See Warm Springs WMA for additional regulations.)

WARM SPRINGS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA)

All waters

- All ponds and canals open August 15 through September 30 including Job Corps Ponds and Ducks Unlimited Ponds.
- Catch-and-release only. (See Kid's Pond and Gravel Pit Pond for exceptions.)
- Artificial lures only. (See Kid's Pond and Gravel Pit Pond for exceptions.)
- Motorized boats/vessels prohibited.

Job Corps Ponds (Deer Lodge County)

- Open August 15 through September 30.
- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.
- Motorized boats/vessels prohibited.

Kids Pond at WSWMA Headquarters

- Open entire year.
- Combined trout: 2 daily and in possession.
- Bait may be used.
- Open to fishing by anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.

Gravel Pit Pond adjacent to Highway 48

- Open second Friday in June at 5 pm through November 30.
- Combined trout: 2 daily and in possession.
- Bait may be used.

Hog Hole

- Open May 25 through September 30. No trespassing on islands.

Pond 3

- Open May 25 through November 30 to fishing from non-motorized vessels.

Mill-Willow Bypass, Warm Springs Creek and Clark Fork River

- Open entire year.
- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 23.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

WEST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER DOWNSTREAM OF PAINTED ROCKS DAM

Fishing Regulations

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout and Rainbow Trout.
- Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession.
- Extended season for Northern Pike and Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout from December 1 to third Saturday in May with aquatic insects, maggots and/or artificial lures only.

Recreation Rules (see fwp.mt.gov/recreation/permits/floating/ and signs on site for more information)

West Fork Bitterroot River and Upper Bitterroot River (see map page 25)

No commercial floating or fishing June 1 to September 15 from:

- Painted Rocks Dam to Applebury Forest Service Site on Fridays.
- Applebury Forest Service Site to Trapper Creek Job Corps Site on Saturdays.
- Trapper Creek Job Corps Site on to Hannon Memorial FAS on Sundays.
- Hannon Memorial FAS to Wally Crawford FAS on Mondays.

No floating of any kind July 1 to September 15 from:

- Painted Rocks Dam to Applebury Forest Service Site on Fridays.

WEST FORK CLEARWATER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

Entire drainage

- Artificial lures only.

West Fork Clearwater River upstream of confluence with Marshall Creek

- Closed entire year.

WEST FORK THOMPSON RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, none over 10 inches.
- Artificial lures only.

WHALE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (North Fork Flathead River drainage)

- Closed entire year downstream from Whale Creek Falls.

WHITEFISH LAKE

- Lake Trout: 20 daily and in possession, only 1 over 36 inches. All fish 30 to 36 inches must be released.

WHITEFISH RIVER

- Open entire year from Whitefish Lake to State Highway 40 Bridge.

WILLOW CREEK (near Warm Springs) AIS

From Stewart Street Bridge to the Warm Springs WMA

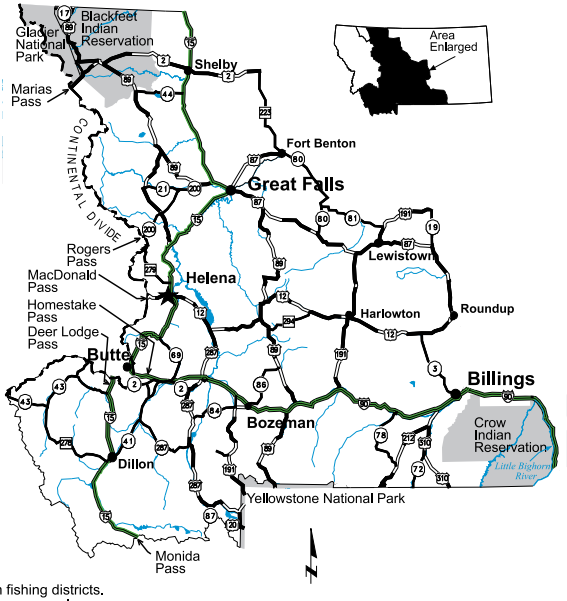
- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.

WOODWARD CREEK

- Closed ***entire year.***

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Central Fishing District



Areas excluded from fishing districts.
Additional regulations may apply.
Other federal or tribal permits may be required.

0 20 40
Miles

The Central Fishing District includes all waters in Montana east of the Continental Divide, (including the Belly and St Mary's River drainages) and west of the following described boundary: Interstate 15 from the Montana-Canada border south to its junction with Hwy 2 at Shelby, then east on Hwy 2 to Chester, then south on Hwy 223 to State Route 80 at Fort Benton, then southeasterly along State Route 80 to its junction with State Route 81, then easterly on State Route 81 to its junction with U.S. Hwy 191, then northeasterly along U.S. Hwy 191 to its junction with State Route 19, then south on State Route 19 to its junction with U.S. Hwy 87 at Grassrange, then south on U.S. Hwy 87 to its junction with U.S. Hwy 12 at Roundup, then west on U.S. Hwy 12 to its junction with State Route 3 at Lavina, then south on State Route 3 to its junction with Interstate 90 at Billings, then easterly and southerly on Interstate 90 to the first crossing of the Little Bighorn River, then southerly along the west bank of the Little Bighorn River to the Montana-Wyoming border.

Note: Roadways that are used as boundaries between the Central and Eastern Fishing Districts are interpreted to be in the Central Fishing District.

For additional information regarding the boundaries in this fishing district, please call the following regional headquarters Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.:

Billings **406-247-2940**
Bozeman **406-577-7900**
Butte Area Office **406-494-1953**
Great Falls **406-454-5840**
Helena Area Office **406-495-3260**
Lewistown Area Office **406-538-4658**
FWP Headquarters **406-444-2449**
Hearing Impaired (use Montana Relay).....**7-1-1 or 1-800-253-4091**

Central District Standard Regulations

Beaver Ponds: Beaver ponds on streams are governed by the same regulations that govern the streams.

Boat and Motor Restrictions: A complete, updated, copy of Montana Boating Laws can be obtained from any FWP office or FWP license providers. All passengers under the age of 12 must wear a PFD at all times when the boat is in motion if the boat is less than 26 feet long. A wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be available for each occupant of any boat.

Closed Waters: Waters operated as fish hatcheries and rearing ponds by FWP and the US Fish & Wildlife Service shall be closed to fishing at all times. Waters in which FWP operates fish traps and other structures are closed to fishing as posted. Certain water-supply lakes, streams and hazardous areas are also closed as posted.

Dam Closures and Use Restrictions: In the interest of public health and safety, certain areas above and below most dams are closed to the public. These restrictions include areas where no public access is allowed below the ordinary high-water mark. The restricted areas are identified and delineated by signs and/or boat restraining systems.

The following dams are closed to all boating, sailing, floating, swimming, fishing or other recreational activity as marked by boat restraining systems or as posted to restrict access. Other dams not listed here may also be posted for restricted access. For more information call the FWP Fishing Access Coordinator at 406-444-2449, or contact the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) 406-247-7298 or DNRC 406-444-2074 or Northwestern Energy (NWE) 888-467-2669.

Black Eagle Dam (NWE, Cascade Co.)	Morony Dam (NWE, Chouteau Co.)
Canyon Ferry Dam (BOR, Lewis & Clark Co.)	Rainbow Dam (NWE, Cascade Co.)
Clark Canyon Dam (BOR, Beaverhead Co.)	Ruby Dam (DNRC, Madison Co.)
Cochrane Dam (NWE, Cascade Co.)	Ryan Dam (NWE, Cascade Co.)
Hauser Dam (NWE, Lewis & Clark Co.)	Tiber Dam (BOR, Liberty Co.)
Hebgen Dam (NWE, Gallatin Co.)	Yellowtail Dam (BOR, Bighorn Co.)
Holter Dam (NWE Lewis & Clark Co.)	Yellowtail Afterbay Dam (BOR, Bighorn Co)
Madison Dam (NWE, Madison Co.)	

Irrigation Canals and Ditches: Man-made irrigation canals and ditches are open year round unless stated otherwise in exceptions to standard regulations. The same daily and possession limits apply to them as for rivers/streams. Please refer to "Irrigation Canals and Ditches" on page 19 for more details.

Reservoirs: Under normal operations, reservoir pool elevation, surface acreage and the mouths of the inlet stream(s) are expected to vary throughout the year. An imaginary line connecting the reservoir shoreline across the mouth of the stream marks the boundary between reservoir and stream/river, and the boundary will move as reservoir levels change. Streams are defined by a sloped streambed that results in a defined current flow between two discernible stream banks. Stream regulations apply upstream from the mouth on the reservoir and often are managed under seasons, limits and special regulations that differ from the reservoir regulations.

Transporting Live Fish: An import permit is required to bring live fish of any kind into Montana (see page 89). It is unlawful to possess or transport any live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken with the following exceptions:

1) Possession and transport of live fish for authorized commercial purposes (e.g. Commercial Bait Seining Permit, Commercial Fish Ponds, Commercial Fishing, permitted Fishing Contests);
2) Use of live bait subject to restrictions for the taking, possession, transport and use of live bait (see "Bait Regulations" on page 50);
3) It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish, other than live non-game bait fish, on roadways that form the boundary between the Eastern and Central fishing districts.

Methods of Taking Fish

- A valid Fishing License is required for all types of fishing.
- Spears and bows are counted as lines for purposes of determining line limits.
- When multiple lines are allowed on a body of water, the maximum number of lines allowed shall not exceed the greater of either the attended lines or the setlines. For example, if an angler wants to spear for Northern Pike on Lake Frances in the winter (where the limit is 2 attended lines all year or 6 setlines through the ice), he/she may have a maximum of only 5 setlines in use if he/she is using one spear, for a total of 6 lines.
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name, date-of-birth and an ***individual identifying number issued by the department*** attached.

Hook and Line Limits

Open Water

Rivers and Streams

- 1 line with 2 hooks per line, with or without a rod. The rod or line must be attended and in the angler's immediate control.

Lakes and Reservoirs

- 2 lines with 2 hooks per line. All lines must be attended and in the angler's immediate control.

Ice Fishing

Lakes and Reservoirs

- 2 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice on lakes, reservoirs, or ponds open to fishing. When a line is used through the ice, the angler need not be in immediate control, but must be in the vicinity and in visual contact with the line.

Size of Hole

- In waters not open to spearing, the maximum size hole that may be used for ice fishing is 144 square inches or 12 inches in diameter.
- There is no size limit for a hole used for fishing with a spear.

Shelters: It is unlawful to use any ice fishing shelter not conforming to the following rules:

Definition/Use: Any hut or enclosure constructed of any material, except ice or snow, for the purpose of ice fishing.

Identification: Identification must be painted on or otherwise affixed to all unattended shelters in legible, 2-inch letters plainly visible at a distance of 100 feet. Identification must include the owner's name and address, name and phone number, or ***an individual identifying number issued by the department.*** Attended shelters at Clark Canyon Reservoir, Deadman's Basin, Hauser Reservoir, Lake Frances and Lake Helena must also be identified.

Inspection: Each closed shelter shall have a door that an officer may readily open from the outside for inspection when it is occupied.

Waste and Rubbish Disposal: Owners and occupants of shelters are required to keep their shelters (and the area immediately around them) free from rubbish. Anglers must remove waste materials before they leave for the day.

Daily Removal: Daily removal of shelters is required on Fitzpatrick Lake, Deadmans Basin and Helena Valley Regulating Reservoir.

Removal After the Season: The owner of an ice fishing shelter shall remove it from the ice before it becomes irretrievable at the end of the season, or within five days from receipt of notification from FWP to remove the shelter.

Bow and Arrow: Waters open to angling are open to taking non-game fish with bow and arrow unless otherwise noted in the exceptions to the standard regulations.

Crossbows: Unlawful.

Nets and Traps: Landing nets may be used for landing hooked fish. See Bait Regulations on page 50 for use of nets to harvest bait fish.

Setlines

- Setlines may be used only on waters specified in District Exceptions.

- Setlines must be checked by the angler at least once every 24 hours.
- The angler's name and phone number or ***an individual identifying number issued by the department*** must be attached to each setline.
- Setlines shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices.

Snagging: Snagging of fish is allowed only on waters specified in District Exceptions.

Spearing: In all waters open to fishing, non-game fish may be taken with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged. Game fish species may be taken with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged but only from designated waters. Spearing may be used through the ice for designated species in designated waters.

Use of Attractor: ***A bead fixed on a line or leader two inches or less from the eye of a bare hook is considered an artificial lure. Fishing with a bead more than two inches from the eye of a bare hook or artificial fly is considered snagging and is unlawful.***

Bait Regulations

- Game fish, including Yellow Perch, may not be used as bait except as authorized below under "Dead Bait". See "Game Fish" in definitions (page 92) for complete list of game species.
- It is unlawful to release live bait of any kind into Montana waters; do not empty any live bait containers at your fishing site.
- Collection methods: Non-game fish may be taken for use as live bait in the following manner:
  - with hook and line; or
  - with seines no larger than 12 feet x 4 feet; or
  - with minnow traps (the dimensions shall not exceed 24 inches x 12 inches x 12 inches); or
  - with cast nets (maximum 6-foot radius) and dip nets (no larger than 3 feet x 3 feet).
- See "Dead Bait" and "Live Bait" sections below for details on possession and use non-game bait fish.
- Collection Locations: Non-game fish for use as live bait may be taken from waters where live fish may be used as bait (see water list under "Live Bait"). Non-game fish may be collected from water open to angling in the Central District but must be dead before transporting.
- On waters within the Central Fishing District that do not allow the use of live bait and are not restricted to artificial flies and lures, Sculpins (genus Cottus) may be collected and used as dead bait. Collection screens or nets may not exceed four (4) feet in length on any side. Sculpins must be killed immediately upon collection and may not be used as live bait. [Note: Sculpins (genus *Cottus*) may not be used for bait in the Western Fishing District.]
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and ***individual identifying number issued by the department*** attached.
- Areas within the Central Fishing District that have been identified as contaminated with Eurasian watermilfoil have additional bait restrictions as described below.

Dead Bait

- Non-game fish (see "Collection methods" above) that are freshly killed or have been preserved by freezing, salting or pickling may be used as bait on all waters not restricted to artificial lures only. Heads and entrails of non-game fish may also be used as bait.

- Whole game fish may not be used as bait. Parts/pieces of Bass, Burbot (Ling), Channel Catfish, Crappie, Northern Pike, Paddlefish, Sauger, Shovelnose Sturgeon, Walleye, or Yellow Perch may be used as bait if edible portions are not wasted.
- The eggs of Salmonids (Char, Cisco, Arctic Grayling, Salmon or Trout) may be used as bait. Other parts/pieces of may not be used as bait.

Live Bait

- Live bait fish may not be imported into Montana, except by permit for use in Bighorn Lake and Afterbay Reservoir.
- Bait fish collected in the Bighorn River drainage of Wyoming may be imported under a permit issued by FWP for use only in Bighorn Lake. For a permit, contact the FWP Fisheries Division at 2300 Lake Elmo Drive, Billings, MT 59105 or call (406) 247-2940.
- Live animals such as meal worms, red worms, night crawlers, leeches, maggots, crayfish, reptiles, amphibians and insects may be used as bait on all waters not restricted to artificial lures only. Transport of invasive species is unlawful.
- Leeches may only be imported into Montana from FWP-approved leech dealers. Anglers who import leeches must have in their possession a bill-of-sale (a receipt) from the approved out-of-state leech dealer when fishing with leeches in Montana. A list of approved out-of-state leech dealers may be obtained from FWP by calling 406-452-6181.
- Non-game fish species that may be collected and possessed and used as live bait in the Central Fishing District include only the following: Fathead Minnow, Flathead Chub, Western Silvery Minnow, Plains Minnow, Emerald Shiner, Longnose Dace, Lake Chub, Creek Chub, Longnose Sucker, and White Sucker. All other non-game fish species (not listed above) must be released immediately at the collection site or killed prior to transporting away from the collection site (see "Dead Bait" page 50). See pages 94-95 for live bait fish identification. Be proactive, bait fish that cannot be positively identified should not be used as live bait.
- The non-game fish species listed above may be used as live fish bait only in the following waters:
  - Bighorn Lake and Afterbay Reservoir
  - Bighorn River—Afterbay Dam to the cable 600 feet downstream, and downstream from the Bighorn FAS
  - Clarks Fork Yellowstone River and tributaries, except the Rock Creek drainage—downstream from the bridge at Bridger
  - Marias River and tributaries downstream from I-15
  - Missouri River downstream from Morony Dam
  - Muddy Creek Drainage near Vaughn, including all streams and drainage canals
  - Teton River and tributaries downstream from I-15
  - Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell), Toole and Liberty counties
  - Yellowstone River and all streams and ditches in the drainage downstream from the mouth of the Clarks Fork (except the section of the Bighorn River between the cable 600 feet downstream from Afterbay Dam and the Bighorn FAS).

Bait restrictions in Eurasian watermilfoil contaminated areas

Eurasian watermilfoil is an invasive aquatic plant that has become established in some Montana waters. This plant is easily spread from one body of water to another primarily by people transporting plant fragments. Anglers shall inspect all bait buckets, live wells, anchors and gear to ensure that NO PLANT FRAGMENTS are present when leaving a body of water. It takes only a small fragment of Eurasian watermilfoil to start a new plant and infest a body of water.

Areas within the Central Fishing District that have been identified as contaminated with Eurasian watermilfoil are:

- Jefferson River
- Lower Madison River north of I-90
- Missouri River from the confluence of the three forks to the headwaters of Canyon Ferry Reservoir
- Toston Reservoir (small Missouri River impoundment above Toston Dam)

Additional bait restrictions within the contaminated areas are:

- The collection of bait animals, including commercial seining is not permitted.
- Transport of live aquatic bait animals to and from these contaminated areas is allowed only in clean water (e.g. transport minnows and leeches in well water).

General Regulations

Possession limit means the number of fish that you may possess at any time in any form: fresh, stored in freezers or lockers, salted, smoked, dried, canned or otherwise preserved. It is unlawful to preserve fish (salted, smoked, dried, canned, or otherwise preserved) before taking them to your permanent residence (the physical abode or structure you maintain as your principal, legal residence) unless those fish can be counted. Mobile recreational vehicles, travel trailers, tents or storage/freezer lockers do not qualify as permanent residences. No person may sell or take for the purpose of sale any fish except as authorized in commercial fishing regulations.

Daily limit means the number of fish you may legally take during a calendar day. It is unlawful to exceed the standard daily limit unless the regulations for the water body where you are fishing specify a different limit. "Legally taken" means fish caught and not immediately released alive. Where catch-and-release is allowed, fish immediately released alive are considered not taken. A fish when landed and not immediately released becomes part of the daily limit of the person originally hooking the fish, even if the fish is donated to another person. If you receive fish from another angler, those fish also become part of your daily limit. You may possess the daily limit allowed only for the body of water on which you are fishing.

Handling and Transporting Legally Taken Fish

While a person is fishing, or while on the water, or on the ice:

- All fish in possession must be visibly identifiable to species.
- All fish in possession must be whole with head, skin, fins and tail attached. Gills and entrails may be removed (see Disposal of Dead Fish and Fish Entrails on page 16).
- This doesn't prohibit the consumption of fish on the ice or water. However, the fish consumed are part of your daily limit.

Once off the water or ice, fish may be dressed and filleted for transport to your permanent residence, unless size limits apply, under the following conditions:

- All fish can be counted and identified. Two fillets will be counted as one fish. If the catch is frozen prior to transport, each fish or fillet must be packaged so it can be counted.
- Salmonids (Trout, Salmon, Arctic Grayling, Char and Whitefish): the entire skin must be attached to the fillet for identification.

General Fishing Seasons and Hours

Fishing Hours

Fishing is allowed at all hours during open fishing seasons unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Fishing Season: Lakes and Reservoirs

Open entire year unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Fishing Season: Rivers and Streams

Open entire year unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Central District Standard Daily and Possession Limits

See map on page 47 to make sure you are in the Central District. Each angler may take all of the limits listed in the chart, unless otherwise noted in the Central District Exceptions. For species not listed, there are no limits on the number of fish that may be taken or possessed.

Anglers who move from one fishing water to another may possess the limit of fish allowed only for the water on which they are currently fishing.

Species		Daily and Possession Limits
TROUT	**Brook Trout**	20 daily and in possession.
	Combined Trout includes Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Golden Trout, Cutthroat Trout and Arctic Grayling	Lakes/Reservoirs: 5 daily and 10 in possession, includes Cutthroat Trout. Rivers/Streams: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches, only 1 can be a Cutthroat Trout. All Arctic Grayling must be released immediately.
	Lake Trout	3 daily and in possession.
Bass		5 daily and in possession.
Burbot (Ling)		5 daily and in possession.
Channel Catfish		10 daily and in possession.
Crappie		15 daily and 30 in possession.
Northern Pike		10 daily and in possession.
Pallid Sturgeon		None - this is an endangered species and all fish must be released immediately. All waters are closed to fishing for Pallid Sturgeon.
Salmon (Kokanee & Chinook)		10 daily and in possession.
Sauger/Walleye		5 daily, only 2 may be Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.
Shovelnose Sturgeon		5 daily and in possession, none over 40 inches.
Tiger Muskie		1 daily and in possession, must be over 40 inches.
Whitefish		20 daily and 40 in possession.

2022 GENERAL FISHING SEASON		
Central District	Rivers and Streams	Lakes and Reservoirs
	Open all year unless otherwise specified in Exceptions to Standard Regulations.	Open all year
If you don't find the water you are looking for listed in the district exceptions, use the standard regulations for the district you are fishing in.		

Central District Exceptions To Standard Regulations

Check the following list of waters for the body of water you intend to fish in the Central District. If the body of water is not found in the listing of Exceptions, all of the Central District standard seasons, daily/possession limits, and standard regulations apply. Standard regulations apply for species not listed in the Exceptions.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

ABSAROKA-BEARTOOTH WILDERNESS LAKES

- Combined trout: 10 daily and in possession.

ANTELOPE BUTTE LAKE aka Ostle Reservoir (Teton County)

- Open May 15 at 12:00 noon through November 30.

ARMSTRONG SPRING CREEK

- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.

AROD LAKES aka Eyraud Lakes

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike and non-game fish through the ice only.

AXOLOTL LAKES

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.

BADGER CREEK DRAINAGE (near Heart Butte)

Downstream from confluence of North Badger and South Badger creeks within National Forest

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, none over 12 inches.

BEAVER CREEK (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)

Mouth to US Highway 12

- Open June 15 through September 30.

BEAVER CREEK (tributary to Missouri River below Hauser Dam)

- Open June 15 through September 30.

BEAVERHEAD RIVER AIS

Entire river

- ***Rainbow trout: 1 daily and in possession.***
- ***Brown Trout: Catch-and-release only.***
- ***Artificial lures and single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.***

Clark Canyon Dam to Pipe Organ Bridge

- Open third Saturday in May through ***October 31***.

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 Sunday in May through Labor Day.

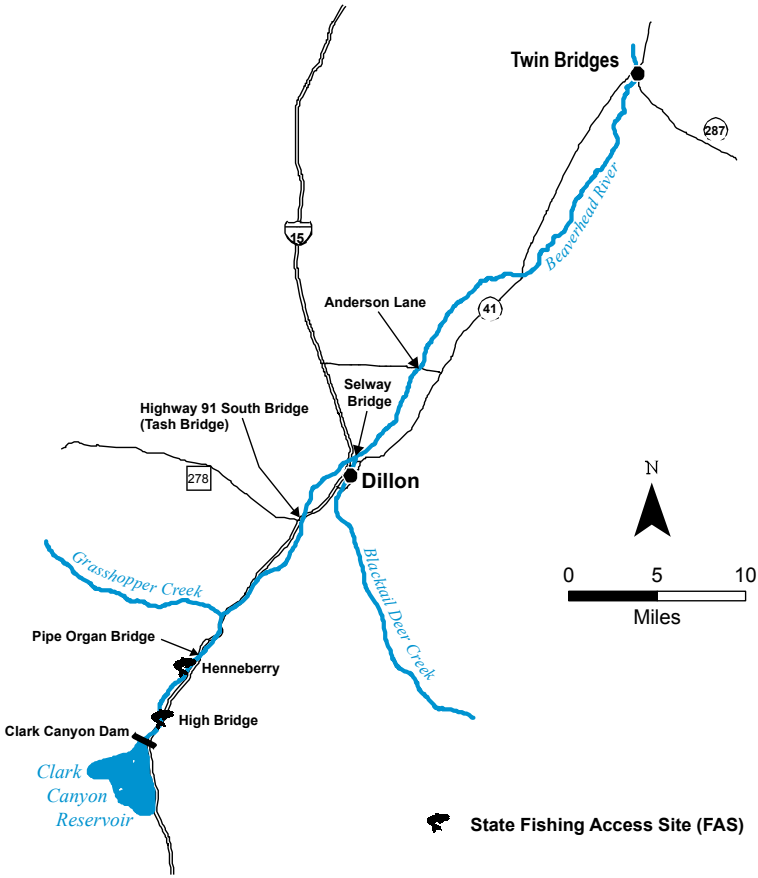
Highway 91 South Bridge (Tash Bridge) to Selway Bridge

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

If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 53.

Beaverhead River



AIS Status: New Zealand Mudsnail and Curlyleaf Pondweed

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

BIG HOLE RIVER

Fishing Regulations

Entire river

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.

Headwaters to Dickie Bridge

- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, no size restriction.

Dickie Bridge to *BLM Maiden Rock*

- ***Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout December 1 to third Saturday in May.***
- ***Brown Trout: Catch-and-release only.***
- ***Artificial lures and single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.***

BLM Maiden Rock to Brownes Bridge FAS

- ***Open April 1 through September 30.***
- ***Brown Trout: Catch-and-release only April 1 through September 30.***
- ***Artificial lures and single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.***

Brownes Bridge FAS to the mouth

- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout December 1 to the third Saturday in May.
- ***Brown Trout: Catch-and-release only.***
- ***Artificial lures and single-pointed hooks only. No treble or double hooks. Anglers may remove treble or double hooks from the lure and replace them with a single hook, or the shanks may be cut off the other hook points to leave a single hook. Lures with multiple hook attachments may still be used but any treble hook must be replaced by a single hook.***

Recreation Rules

Entire river

- All float users are limited to a total of 2 launches at or near each official access site each day. See Big Hole River map for official access sites

Headwaters to Mudd Creek FAS

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

Mudd Creek FAS to Fishtrap FAS

- Closed to float outfitting on each Tuesday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

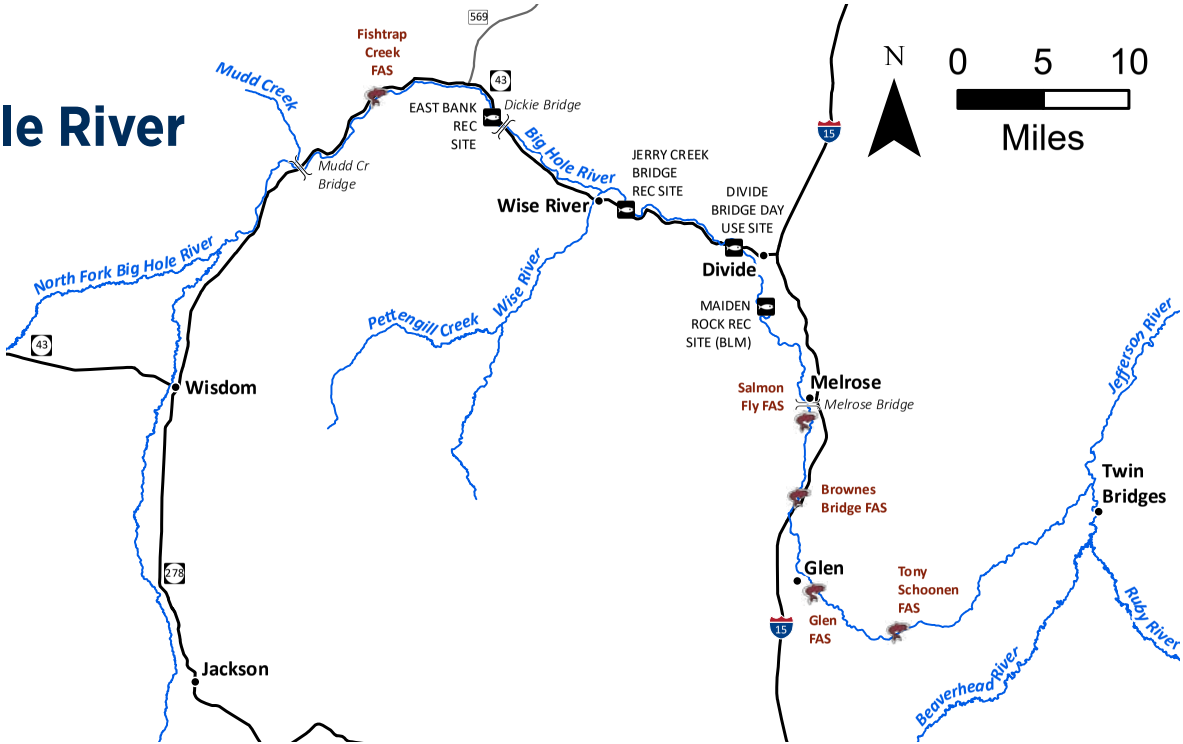
Fishtrap FAS to East Bank BLM FAS

- Closed to float outfitting on each Thursday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section | Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Big Hole River



Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

East Bank BLM FAS to Jerry Creek FAS

- Closed to float outfitting on each Wednesday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

Jerry Creek BLM FAS to Divide FAS

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

Divide Bridge to Melrose Bridge (Salmon Fly FAS)

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

Melrose Bridge (Salmon Fly FAS) to Glen FAS (bridges)

- Closed to float outfitting on each Monday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

Glen FAS (bridge) to Tony Schoonen FAS (Notch Bottom)

- Closed to float outfitting on each Friday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

BIG SHEEP CREEK (Beaverhead River drainage) AIS

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

BIGHORN LAKE

- Bass: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Shovelnose Sturgeon: 2 daily and in possession.
- Sauger/Walleye: 6 daily (only 3 may be Sauger) and 12 in possession (only 3 may be Sauger).
- Channel 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 bait fish in Montana may use them only in the Montana portion of the lake.

BIGHORN RIVER AIS

Entire river

- A State of Montana Fishing License is required for all anglers to fish on the Bighorn River within the boundaries of the Crow Reservation. A tribal permit is not required.

Afterbay Dam to cable 600 feet downstream and downstream from Bighorn FAS

- May use live non-game bait fish (as identified in Standard District Regulations).

Cable 600 feet below Afterbay Dam to Bighorn FAS

- Artificial lures only.

BLACKTAIL DEER CREEK (Beaverhead River drainage)

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

BLACKTAIL MEADOWS POND (Dillon)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.

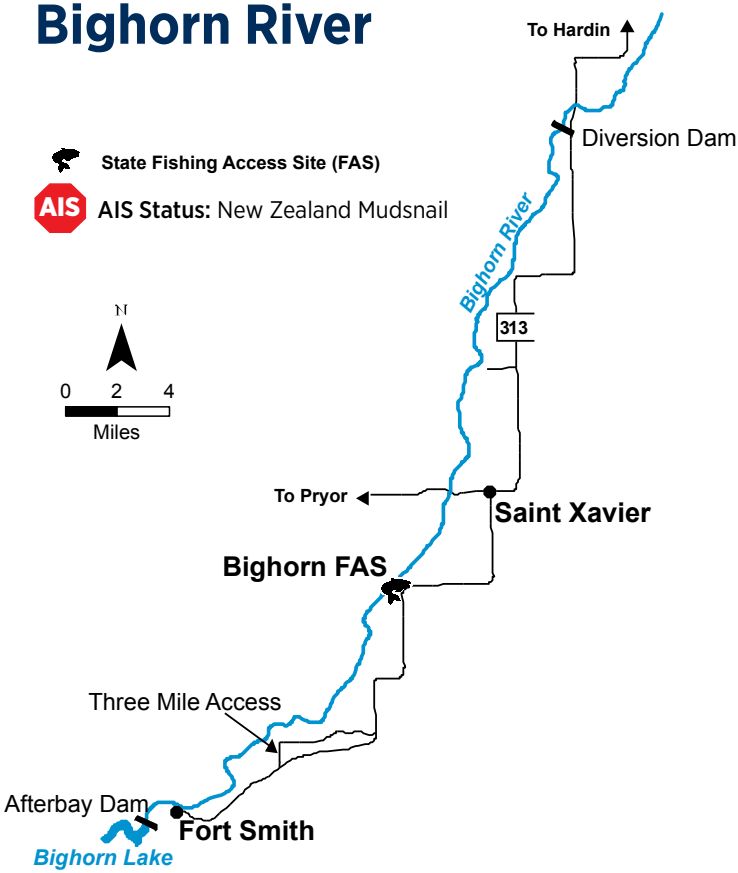
BOULDER RIVER (tributary to Jefferson River, near Cardwell)

Mouth upstream to the bridge on Boulder Cut-Off Road (mile 14.4)

- Open January 1 through September 30.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 53.

Bighorn River



BYNUM RESERVOIR

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice.

CANYON FERRY RESERVOIR

- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession any size.
- Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 15 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

Magpie Bay

- Closed (as posted) March 1 through June 14.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

CHESSMAN RESERVOIR (Tenmile Creek drainage, near Helena)

- Closed to fishing (City of Helena water supply).

CLARK CANYON RESERVOIR AIS

- Burbot (Ling): 3 over 23 inches daily and in possession.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession.

CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

Mainstem downstream from the bridge at Bridger

- Hook and Line: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line all year.

CONFEDERATE GULCH (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)

Mouth to Highway 284

- Open June 15 through September 30.

COTTONWOOD CREEK (10 miles SW of Martinsdale)

- Combined trout: limit includes 2 Cutthroat Trout daily and in possession.

CULVER POND (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)

- Closed to angling from November 30 to April 15.
- Artificial lures only.

CUT BANK CREEK

- Open entire year downstream of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation boundary in T33N, R6W, S2.

DEADMANS BASIN RESERVOIR AIS

- Combined trout: 10 daily and in possession.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 1 through December 31, 35 daily and 70 in possession.

DEARBORN RIVER

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

Upstream from Highway 434 Bridge in T18N R6W, Section 29

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches.

DEEP CREEK (tributary to Missouri River, near Townsend)

Mouth to North Fork of Deep Creek

- Open June 15 through November 30.

DICKENS LAKE (Sun River Wildlife Management Area)

- Open May 15 at 12:00 noon through November 30.

DIVERSION LAKE (Sun River drainage)

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.

DRY CREEK (tributary to Missouri River, near Townsend)

Mouth to Flynn Lane

- Open June 15 through September 30.

DUCK CREEK (tributary to Hebgen Reservoir)

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

EAST FORK HYALITE CREEK

Above Hyalite Reservoir including East Fork Hyalite Creek and West Fork Hyalite Creek

- Open July 15 through November 30.
- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

Below Hyalite Reservoir

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

EAST FORK RESERVOIR (near Lewistown)

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice.
- Spearing: open for non-game fish and Northern Pike through the ice and by persons swimming or submerged.

EAST GALLATIN RIVER AIS

- Northern Pike: no limit.

ELK LAKE (Beaverhead County)

- The Narrows Creek spawning channel is closed to angling.
- Catch-and-release for Lake Trout and Arctic Grayling.

ELK SPRINGS CREEK (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)

- Closed to angling from May 15 to June 15.
- Artificial lures only.

ELKS CLUB POND (Lewistown)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.

ENNIS RESERVOIR aka Ennis Lake AIS

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.

EYRAUD LAKES aka Arod Lakes

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through ice only.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike and non-game fish through the ice only.

FAIRGROUNDS POND (Helena)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger only.

GALLATIN RIVER AIS

Entire river

- Northern Pike: no limit.

Yellowstone National Park to East Gallatin River

- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

Porcupine Creek Road to West Fork Gallatin River

- ***Open third Saturday in May through November 30.***

GHENY POND (near Twin Bridges)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.

GIANT SPRINGS (near Great Falls)

- Closed entire year where enclosed by concrete walks and masonry work.

GIBSON RESERVOIR

Gibson Dam upstream to the point where the North and South forks of the Sun River meet, regardless of reservoir level

- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession. Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

GOOSE LAKE (Madison County)

- Open June 15 through November 30.

GRAYLING CREEK (tributary to Hebgen Reservoir)

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

HARRISON LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES

Willow Creek arm, as posted

- Open third Saturday in May through the end of February.

Tributaries to reservoir - North Willow, South Willow and Norwegian Creeks - from the Highway 287 bridges to reservoir

- Open June 15 through November 30.

HAUSER RESERVOIR AIS

Including Canyon Ferry Dam tailwater and Lake Helena

- Combined trout and Kokanee Salmon: 5 trout and Kokanee Salmon daily and in combination and 10 trout and Kokanee Salmon in possession in any combination.
- Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 15 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession July 1 through March 31; 1 daily and in possession, 14 inch minimum, April 1 through June 30.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

HAYMAKER CREEK

- Cutthroat Trout: 2 daily and in possession.

HELENA VALLEY REGULATING RESERVOIR AIS

Including irrigation canal in the area from the discharge outlet to 400 yards downstream

- Manually operated watercraft and watercraft powered by electric motors only.
- During ice cover: no fires, all-terrain vehicles, off highway vehicles, snowmobiles, or any other vehicles allowed on the ice. Powered ice augers are permitted.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon September 1 through October 31; 35 daily and 70 in possession.

HELLROARING CREEK (Yellowstone River drainage)

- Cutthroat Trout: 3 daily and in possession, only one over 14 inches.

HELLS CANYON CREEK (Jefferson River drainage)

- Open June 15 through September 30.
- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout.

HIDDEN LAKE aka Our Lake (Teton County)

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession.

HIDDEN LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES (Madison County)

- Open June 15 through November 30.

 If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

HOLTER RESERVOIR

Up to American Bar Gulch (approximately 4.6 miles downstream from Hauser Dam)

- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 over 25 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Combined trout and Kokanee Salmon: 5 Rainbow Trout and Kokanee Salmon daily in any combination and 10 Rainbow Trout and Kokanee Salmon in possession in any combination.
- Yellow Perch: 25 daily and in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

HYALITE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES

Above Hyalite Reservoir including East Fork Hyalite Creek and West Fork Hyalite Creek

- Open July 15 through November 30.
- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

Below Hyalite Reservoir

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

HYALITE RESERVOIR

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.

INDIAN ROAD POND (Townsend)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger, holders of a "Resident Person with a Disability Conservation License" and holders of a "Permit to Hunt From a Vehicle" with the proper prerequisite Fishing License. One rod per angler.

JEFFERSON RIVER

Entire river

- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches and only 1 may be a Rainbow Trout.

Hells Canyon Creek and Willow Springs Creek

- Seasonal spawning closure at tributary mouths: Closed to fishing 100 yards upstream and downstream from the creek mouths from April 1 through April 30 and from September 30 through November 30.

LAKE ELWELL aka Tiber Reservoir

- Cisco and Whitefish: all fish must be released immediately or killed and counted as part of your limit. It is unlawful to possess live Cisco or Whitefish for any reason.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.
- Spearing: open for non-game fish, Northern Pike, Walleye, and Burbot (Ling) through the ice and by persons swimming or submerged.

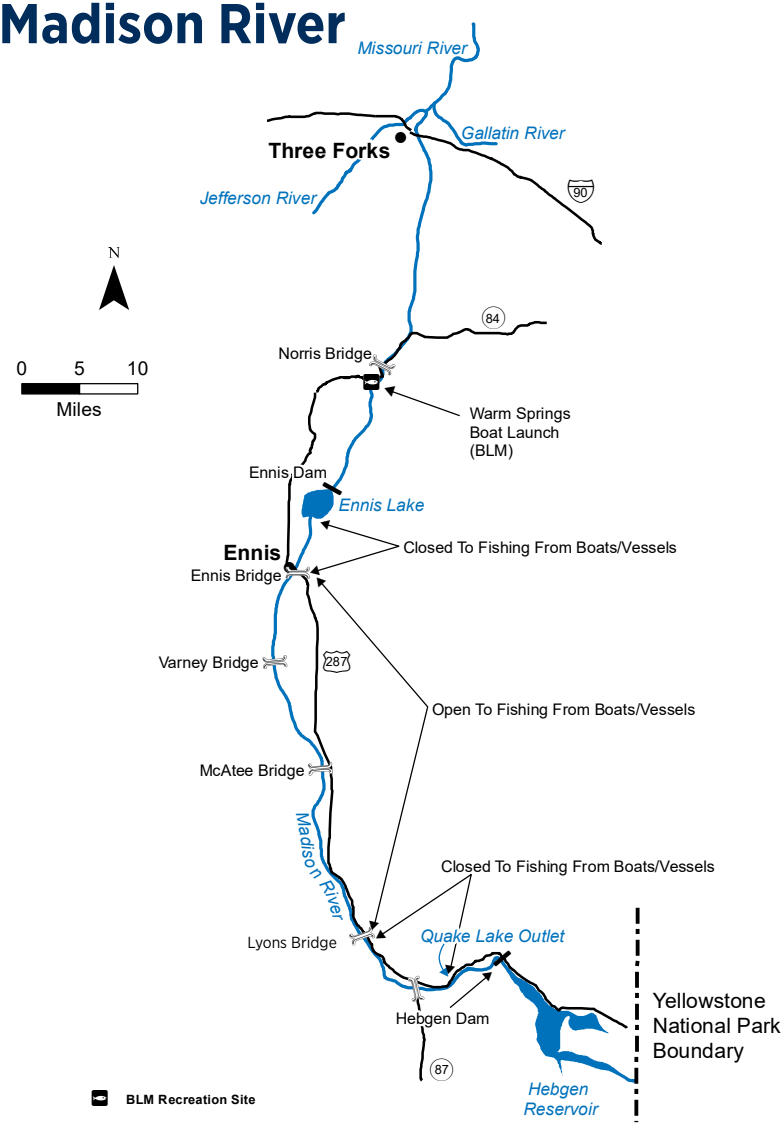
LAKE FRANCES

- Closed entire year around the water supply outlet as posted.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.
- Spearing: open for non-game fish, Northern Pike, Walleye, and Burbot (Ling) through the ice.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 53.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Madison River



AIS Status: Curlyleaf Pondweed

If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

LAKE HELENA (AIS)

- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession July 1 through March 31; 1 daily and in possession, 14 inch minimum, April 1 through June 30.
- Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 15 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Combined trout and Kokanee Salmon: 5 trout and Kokanee Salmon daily and in combination and 10 trout and Kokanee Salmon in possession in any combination.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

LAKE SUTHERLIN

Including inlet areas on state land

- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 1 through December 31, 35 daily and 70 in possession.

LITTLE PRICKLY PEAR CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (tributary to Missouri River)

Mouth to Big Sheep Creek

- Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

LYMAN CREEK (near Bozeman)

From the City water supply intake to a point 1,000 feet upstream

- Closed entire year as posted.

MADISON RIVER (AIS)

Yellowstone National Park boundary to Hebgen Reservoir

- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Rainbow Trout daily and in possession, any size.

Quake Lake outlet to Lyons Bridge

- Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Artificial lures only.
- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

Lyons Bridge to Varney Bridge

- Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Artificial lures only.

Varney Bridge to Ennis Bridge

- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Rainbow Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Artificial lures only.

Ennis Bridge to Ennis Lake

- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Rainbow Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Artificial lures only.
- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

Ennis Dam to the mouth

- Northern Pike: no limit.

Warm Springs Day Use Area to confluence with Jefferson River

- No fishing between 2 pm and midnight from July 15 through August 15.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 53.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

MAGPIE CREEK (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)

- Open June 15 through September 30.

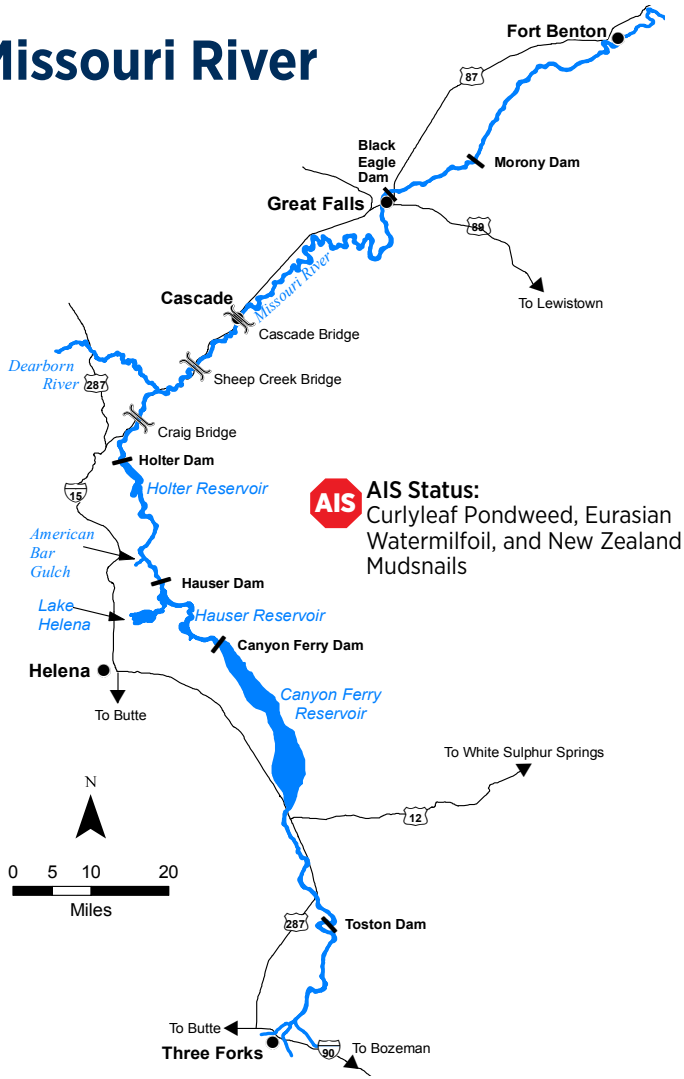
MARIAS RIVER (AIS)

- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches.
- Mountain Whitefish: 35 daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.

MIDVALE CREEK (Blackfeet Reservation)

- Closed entire year from intake of Glacier Park Hotel Company water supply to the park boundary.

Missouri River



 If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

MISSOURI RIVER

Confluence of Madison and Jefferson Rivers to Holter Dam

- Northern Pike: no limit.

Toston Dam Reservoir (Toston Dam to approximately 1 mile upstream)

- Northern Pike: no limit. Spearing allowed through the ice only.

Toston Dam to Canyon Ferry Reservoir

- Localized spawning areas closed as posted from March 1 through June 15.
- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 15 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Northern Pike: no limit.

Canyon Ferry Reservoir

- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession.
- Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 15 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Northern Pike: no limit. Spearing allowed through the ice only.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

Canyon Ferry Dam to Hauser Dam (includes Hauser Reservoir, Lake Helena and Canyon Ferry Tailwaters)

- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Combined trout and Kokanee Salmon: 5 trout and Kokanee Salmon daily and in combination and 10 trout and Kokanee Salmon in possession in any combination.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession, July 1 through March 31; 1 daily and in possession, 14 inch minimum, April 1 through June 30.
- Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 15 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

Hauser Dam to Holter Reservoir (Hauser Dam downstream to American Bar Gulch approximately 4.6 miles)

- Combined trout: standard river/stream limits apply, except catch-and-release for Brown Trout.
- Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 over 25 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Northern Pike: no limit.

Holter Reservoir (American Bar Gulch downstream to Holter Dam)

- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession, any size.
- Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 over 25 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Combined trout and Kokanee Salmon: 5 Rainbow Trout and Kokanee Salmon daily in any combination and 10 Rainbow Trout and Kokanee Salmon in possession in any combination.
- Yellow Perch: 25 daily and in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 53.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Holter Dam to Cascade Bridge

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches, and only 1 may be a Brown Trout.
- Walleye: 20 daily and 40 in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.

Cascade Bridge to Black Eagle Dam

- Walleye: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Northern Pike: no limit.

Morony Dam to Fort Benton

- Smallmouth Bass: 10 daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 6 hooks per line all year.

NELSON SPRING CREEK (AIS)

- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only.

NEWLAN CREEK RESERVOIR (AIS)

(Including a 400-yard reach of inlet stream from the mouth up to a concrete water weir, and a 120-yard reach from the dam outlet down to Secondary Highway 259 culvert crossing.)

- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 1 through December 31; 35 daily and 70 in possession.

NORTH FORK SUN RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

Upstream from the point where the North and South Forks of the Sun River meet, regardless of reservoir level

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches, all may be Cutthroat Trout.

NORTH FORK TETON RIVER DRAINAGE (near Choteau)

Within the National Forest

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

NORTH WILLOW CREEK (near Harrison)

Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir

- Open June 15 through November 30.

NORWEGIAN CREEK (near Harrison)

Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir

- Open June 15 through November 30.

O'BRIEN CREEK (near Neihart)

Above intake to the Neihart public water supply

- Closed entire year.

ODELL CREEK (Red Rock River drainage) (AIS)

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

OSTLE RESERVOIR aka Antelope Butte Lake (Teton County)

- Open May 15 at 12:00 noon through November 30.

OTTER LAKE (Madison County)

- Open June 15 through November 30.
- Combined trout: 1 Rainbow Trout daily and in possession.

(AIS) If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

OUR LAKE aka Hidden Lake (Teton County)

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession.

PARSONS SLOUGH

Downstream from Loomont Lane

- Open June 15 through September 30.

PELICAN POINT POND #1 (largest pond on Pelican Point FAS - near Cascade)

- Northern Pike: no limit.

PISHKUN RESERVOIR

- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.
- Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon September 1 through December 31; 35 daily and 70 in possession.

RAT LAKE (Gallatin River drainage)

- The unnamed tributary to the lake, inlet and outlet, is closed all year.

RATTLESNAKE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (near Dillon, Beaverhead County)

- Closed entire year from city water supply intake to a point 1,000 feet upstream as posted.
- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

RED ROCK CREEK (Beaverhead River drainage)

- Open entire year except ***May 1*** through June 14.
- Artificial lures only.

RED ROCK RIVER

Lima Dam to Clark Canyon Reservoir

- Open third Saturday in May through the end of November.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches.

ROCK CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (tributary to Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River)

- West Fork Rock Creek is closed to fishing from the Red Lodge water intake to 1,000 feet upstream.

ROCK CREEK RESERVOIRS (Robb-Ledford Game Range)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

RUBY RIVER AIS

Upstream from Ruby Reservoir

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

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).

SAGE CREEK (Pryor Mountains)

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

SAWTOOTH LAKE (Beaverhead River drainage)

- Combined trout: 1 Golden Trout daily and in possession.

SCOTT RESERVOIR

- Closed to fishing (City of Helena water supply).

SHEEP CREEK (tributary to Missouri River south of Cascade) AIS

- Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

SHIELDS RIVER (AIS)

Upstream from Chadbourne Diversion

- Smallmouth Bass: All Smallmouth Bass caught must be killed immediately, kept and the entire fish turned into FWP. Anglers who catch Smallmouth Bass in the Shields River above the Chadbourne Diversion are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-577-7900). Anglers will be asked to provide location, date, and time of capture and may be asked to provide their full name, ALS number, and phone number. Anglers are required to turn in the whole Smallmouth Bass to a FWP office within 10 days of capture (frozen is allowed) during regular business hours.

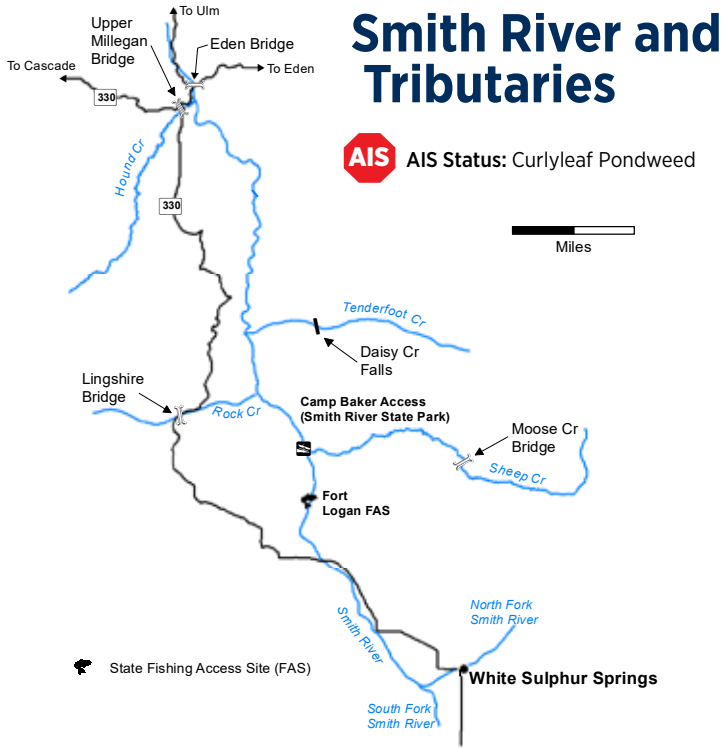
SILVER CREEK aka D2 Ditch (tributary to Prickly Pear Creek)

Downstream from the I-15 bridge near Helena

- Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

SLOUGH CREEK (Yellowstone River drainage)

- Cutthroat Trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.



SMITH RIVER (AIS)

NOTE: Floating on the Smith River between Camp Baker and Eden Bridge is strictly limited. Mandatory registration, floater's fee and other regulations apply. A drawing for launch dates is held in February with remaining launches filled on a first-come basis. Contact the Great Falls FWP office at 406-454-5840 for more information.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

Sheep Creek from bridge upstream of Moose Creek to the mouth, Rock Creek from bridge at Lingshire Road to the mouth, Tenderfoot Creek from falls just upstream of Daisy Creek to the mouth, and Hound Creek from Upper Millegan Road bridge to the mouth.

- Open third Saturday in May to November 30.

Camp Baker Bridge to Eden Bridge

- Combined trout: 3 under 13 inches daily and in possession and only 1 over 22 inches daily and in possession.
- Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may use bait.

SODA BUTTE CREEK (Yellowstone River drainage)

- Cutthroat Trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

SOUTH FORK MADISON RIVER (tributary to Hebgen Reservoir)

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

SOUTH FORK SUN RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

Upstream from the point where the North and South Forks of the Sun River meet, regardless of reservoir level

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession only 1 over 12 inches.

SOUTH FORK TETON RIVER (near Choteau)

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

SOUTH FORK TWO MEDICINE RIVER DRAINAGE

Within National Forest

- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, none over 12 inches.

SOUTH WILLOW CREEK (near Harrison)

Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir

- Open June 15 through November 30.

SPLIT ROCK LAKE

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

SPRING MEADOW LAKE

- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Bass: 3 daily and in possession, none over 10 inches.
- No spear fishing or bow fishing allowed.

SUNNY SLOPE CANAL

Downstream from Pishkun Reservoir

- Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.

SWAZEE LAKE (Sun River Wildlife Management Area)

- Open May 15 at 12:00 noon through November 30.

TIBER RESERVOIR aka Lake Elwell

- Cisco and Whitefish: all fish must be released immediately or killed and counted as part of your limit. It is unlawful to possess live Cisco or Whitefish for any reason.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.
- Spearing: open for non-game fish, Northern Pike, Walleye, and Burbot (Ling) through the ice and by persons swimming or submerged.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

TROUT CREEK (Tributary to Missouri River)

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

TUNNEL LAKE (Teton County)

- Combined trout: includes 1 Arctic Grayling.

TWIN LAKES (Big Hole River drainage)

- Catch-and-release for Lake Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession.

VIGILANTE POND (near Virginia City)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.

WADE LAKE (Madison County)

- Spawning channel and channel inlet closed as posted.

WARM SPRINGS CREEK (tributary to Missouri River, near Townsend)

- Open June 15 through September 30.

WEST FORK HYALITE CREEK

Above Hyalite Reservoir including East Fork Hyalite Creek and West Fork Hyalite Creek

- Open July 15 through November 30.
- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

Below Hyalite Reservoir

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout.

WEST FORK MADISON RIVER

- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout.

WEST FORK ROCK CREEK

Red Lodge water intake to 1,000 feet upstream

- Closed entire year.

WIDGEON POND (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)

- Closed to angling from November 30 to April 15.
- Artificial lures only.

WILLOW CREEK (Meagher County, near White Sulpur Springs)

White Sulphur Springs water intake to its source

- Closed entire year.

WILLOW CREEK RESERVOIR (near Augusta)

- 5 trout daily, only 1 over 20 inches.

WILLOW CREEK RESERVOIR AND TRIBUTARIES (near Harrison)

Willow Creek arm, as posted

- Open third Saturday in May through the end of February.

Tributaries to reservoir - North Willow, South Willow and Norwegian Creeks - from the Highway 287 bridges to reservoir

- Open June 15 through November 30.

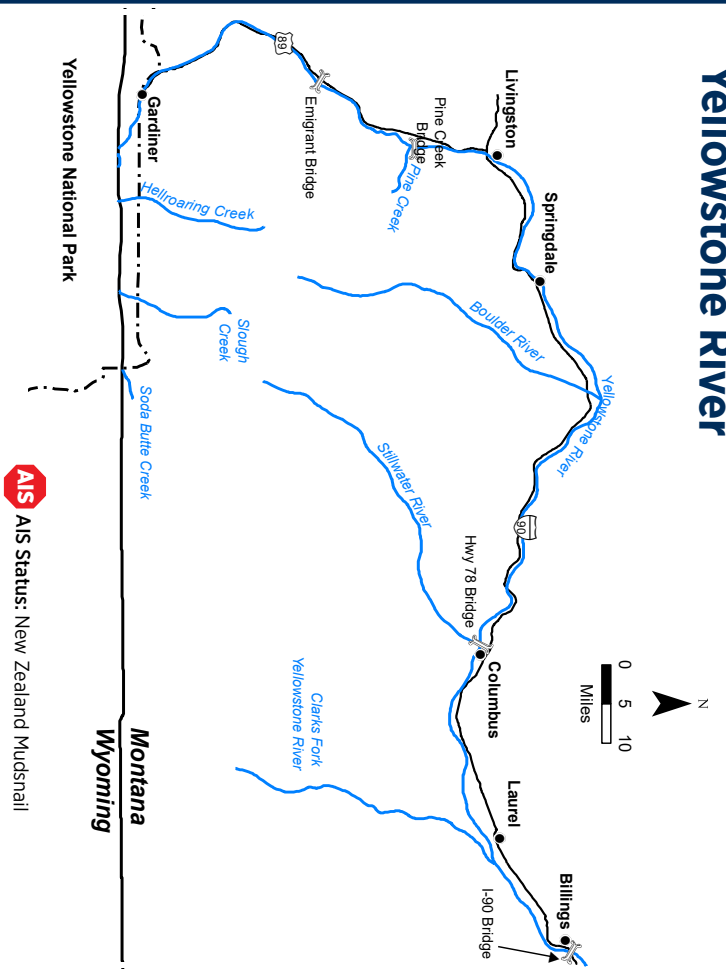
WILLOW SPRINGS CREEK (tributary to Jefferson River)

- Open June 15 through September 30.
- Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout.

AIS If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 53.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations



AIS **AIS Status:** New Zealand Mudsnail

YELLOWSTONE RIVER (AIS)

Entire river

- Smallmouth Bass: 10 daily and in possession.

Yellowstone National Park Boundary to Pine Creek Bridge

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

YELLOWSTONE RIVER TRIBUTARIES

Hellroaring, Slough and Soda Butte creeks upstream from YNP Boundary

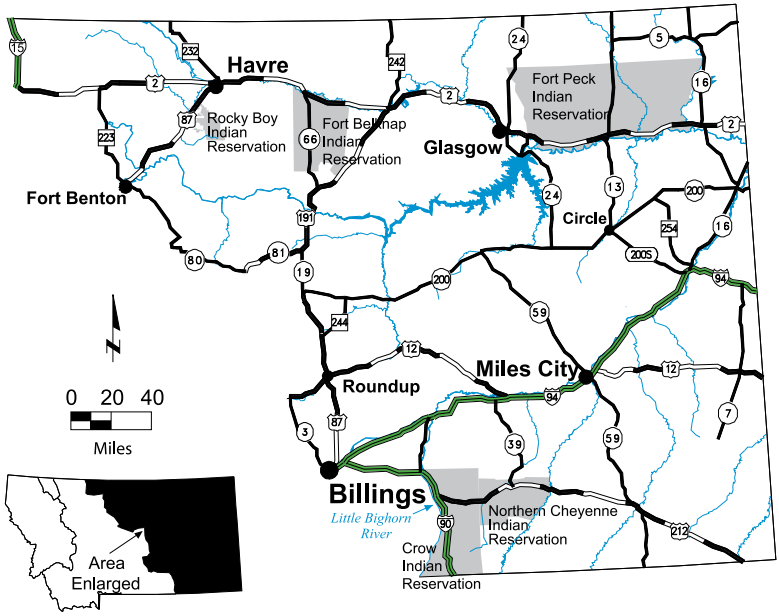
- Cutthroat Trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.

All tributaries between YNP Boundary and Pine Creek Bridge

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

All tributaries downstream from Springdale

- Combined trout: all may be Cutthroat Trout (unless indicated otherwise in exceptions).



Areas excluded from fishing districts.
Additional regulations may apply.
Other federal or tribal permits may be required.

The Eastern Fishing District includes all waters lying east of the Central Fishing District. For the boundary description, see Central Fishing District, page 47.

Note: Roadways that are used as boundaries between the Central and Eastern Fishing Districts are interpreted to be in the Central Fishing District. See description of the Central and Eastern Fishing District boundary on page 47.

For additional information regarding the boundaries of this district, please call the following regional headquarters Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm:

Billings 406-247-2940
Glasgow 406-228-3700
Great Falls 406-454-5840
Havre Area Resource Office 406-265-6177
Lewistown Area Office 406-538-4658
Miles City 406-234-0900
FWP Headquarters 406-444-2449
Hearing Impaired (use Montana Relay) ..... 7-1-1 or 1-800-253-4091

Eastern District Standard Regulations

Closed Waters: Waters operated as fish hatcheries and rearing ponds by FWP and the US Fish & Wildlife Service shall be closed to fishing at all times. Waters in which FWP operates fish traps and other structures are closed to fishing as posted. Certain water-supply lakes, streams and hazardous areas are also closed as posted.

Dam Closures and Restrictions: In the interest of public health and safety, certain areas above and below most dams are closed to the public. These restrictions include areas where no public access is allowed below the ordinary high-water mark. The restricted areas are identified and delineated by signs and/or boat restraining systems.

The following dams are closed to all boating, sailing, floating, swimming, fishing or other recreational activity as marked by boat restraining systems or as posted to restrict access. Other dams not listed here may also be posted for restricted access. For more information call the FWP Fishing Access Coordinator at 406-444-2449, or contact the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) at 406-247-7296 or the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) 406-293-7751.

Anita Dam (BOR, Yellowstone County)
Fort Peck Dam (ACOE, Valley County)
Fresno Dam (BOR, Hill County)
Tongue River Reservoir (DNRC, Big Horn County)

Beaver Ponds: Beaver ponds on streams are governed by the same regulations that govern the streams.

Fort Peck Reservation - Tribal Boundary Water Regulations: Non-tribal members licensed through the State of Montana and/or Fort Peck Tribes that are fishing in waters that form the exterior boundaries of the Reservation -- Big Muddy Creek, Missouri River and/or Milk River -- are permitted to harvest the following limits:

Burbot (Ling)	5 daily and in possession
Channel Catfish	10 daily and 20 in possession
Northern Pike	10 daily and in possession
Paddlefish	1 per season and in possession
Sauger/Walleye	5 daily and 10 in possession
Pallid Sturgeon	0 (all waters are closed to fishing for Pallid Sturgeon)
Shovelnose Sturgeon	5 daily and in possession

These harvest limits cannot be exceeded, even if the angler possesses both tribal and state licenses, and fishes on and/or off the reservation on the same day.

Non-tribal members licensed through the State of Montana and/or the Fort Peck Tribes, that are fishing in exterior boundary waters — Big Muddy Creek, Missouri River and/or Milk River — are limited to a maximum of 6 lines with 6 hooks per line. Unattended lines are required to be identified with the angler's name and/or an individual identifying number issued by the department. Setlines shall not be attached to jugs or floating devices.

Irrigation Canals and Ditches: Man-made irrigation canals and ditches are open year round unless stated otherwise in exceptions to standard regulations. The same daily and possession limits apply to them as for rivers/streams. Please refer to "Irrigation Canals and Ditches" on page 19 for more details.

Reservoirs: Under normal operations, reservoir pool elevation, surface acreage and the mouths of the inlet stream(s) are expected to vary throughout the year. An imaginary line connecting the reservoir shoreline across the mouth of the stream marks the boundary between reservoir and stream/river, and the boundary will move as reservoir levels change. Streams are defined by a sloped streambed that results in a defined current flow between two discernible stream banks. Stream regulations apply upstream from the mouth on the reservoir and often are managed under seasons, limits and special regulations that differ from the reservoir regulations.

Eastern District Standard Regulations

Transporting Live Fish

An import permit is required to bring live fish of any kind into Montana (see page 89). It is unlawful to possess or transport any live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken with the following exceptions:

1) Possession and transport of live fish for authorized commercial purposes (e.g. Bait Seining Permit, Commercial Fish Ponds, Commercial Fishing, permitted Fishing Contests).
2) Use of live bait subject to restrictions for the taking, possession, transport and use of live baitfish (see "Bait Regulations" on page 78);
3) Within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District. It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish, other than live non-game bait fish, on roadways that form the boundary between the Eastern and Central fishing districts; or
4) Possession and transport of live non-game bait fish to and from areas contaminated with Eurasian watermilfoil (Fort Peck Reservoir, Fort Peck Dredge Cut Ponds, and the Missouri River from Fort Peck Dam to the mouth of the Milk River) is allowed ONLY in clean water (e.g. transport bait fish in well water).

Boat and Motor Restrictions: A complete, updated, copy of the Montana Boating Laws may be obtained by contacting any FWP office or any FWP license agent. All passengers under the age of 12 must wear a PFD at all times when the boat is in motion if the boat is less than 26 feet long. A wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be available for each occupant of any boat.

Methods of Taking Fish

- A valid Fishing License is required for all types of fishing.
- Spears and bows are counted as lines for purposes of determining line limits.
- When multiple lines are allowed on a body of water, the number of lines shall not exceed the combination of attended lines, setlines, or spears. For example, while spearing for Northern Pike on Tongue River Reservoir in the winter (where the limit is 6 lines through the ice), an angler may only have 5 setlines in use.
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and an individual identifying number issued by the department attached.

Hook and Line Limits

Open Water

Rivers and Streams

- 6 lines with 6 hooks per line. The line(s) must be attended and in the angler's immediate control unless they are used as setlines. See regulations for Setlines on page 77.

Lakes and Reservoirs

- 2 lines with 2 hooks per line or as noted under Exceptions to Standard Regulations. All lines must be attended and in the angler's immediate control unless they are used as setlines. See regulations for Setlines page 77.

Ice Fishing

Lakes, Reservoirs, Rivers and Streams

- 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice. When a line is used through the ice, the angler need not be in immediate control but must be in the vicinity and in visual contact with the line unless they are used as setlines. See regulations for Setlines.

Size of Hole: There is no size limit for a hole used for ice fishing or with a spear.

Shelters: It is unlawful to use any ice fishing shelter not conforming to the following rules:

Definition/Use: Any hut or enclosure constructed of any material, except ice or snow, for the purpose of ice fishing.

Identification: Identification must be painted on or otherwise affixed to all unattended shelters in legible, 2-inch letters plainly visible at a distance of 100 feet. Identification must include the owner's name and address, name and phone number, or ***an individual identifying number issued by the department.*** Attended shelters at Bearpaw Lake and Beaver Creek Reservoir must also be identified.

Inspection: Each closed shelter shall have a door that an officer may readily open from the outside for inspection when it is occupied.

Waste and Rubbish Disposal: Owners and occupants of shelters are required to keep their shelters (and the area immediately around them) free from rubbish and trash. Anglers must remove waste materials before they leave for the day.

Removal After the Season: The owner of an ice fishing shelter shall remove it from the ice before it becomes irretrievable at the end of the season, or by March 1. Shelters may remain on the ice after March 1 but must be removed daily if not occupied overnight.

Setlines

- Number of lines is the same as for Hook and Line Limits. Setlines may be used in all waters unless prohibited in the District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.
- Setlines (unattended lines) must be checked by the owner at least once every 24 hours.
- The angler's name and phone number or name and ***an individual identifying number issued by the department.*** must be attached to each setline.
- Setlines shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices.

Bow and Arrow: Unless otherwise noted in the exceptions to the standard regulations, all waters open to angling are open to taking non-game fish by bow and arrow. Paddlefish can be harvested by bow and arrow anglers with a valid Paddlefish tag and during an open Paddlefish harvest day (see General and Standard Paddlefish Regulations).

Crossbows: Unlawful.

Nets and Traps: Landing nets may be used for landing hooked fish. See Bait Regulations for use of nets to harvest bait fish.

Hoop Nets

- The use of hoop nets is permitted in certain areas of the Eastern Fishing District.
- The use of hoop nets is limited to licensed resident anglers.
- A permit is required. Permit applications and rules are available at FWP offices in Billings, Miles City and Glasgow.
- Closed statewide March 1 through May 15.

Snagging allowed for: 1) Chinook Salmon on Fort Peck Reservoir only from October 1 through November 30; 2) Paddlefish by anglers with a valid Paddlefish tag/license during an open Paddlefish season (see General and Standard Paddlefish Regulations); and 3) non-game fish on all open waters in the Eastern District except on the Missouri River downstream from Fort Benton to the North Dakota border, the Yellowstone River downstream from the mouth of the Bighorn River, and Powder River downstream of Highway 10 bridge.

Spearing: In all waters open to fishing, non-game fish, Northern Pike, Burbot (Ling), Walleye and Whitefish may be taken with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged. Spears or gigs may be used through the ice for non-game fish, Northern Pike, Walleye, Sauger and Burbot (Ling).

Bait Regulations

- Game fish, including Yellow Perch, may not be used as bait except as authorized below under Dead Bait. See "Game Fish" in definitions (page 92) for complete list of game species.
- It is unlawful to release live bait of any kind into Montana waters; do not empty any live bait containers at your fishing site.
- Collection Methods: Non-game fish may be taken for use as live bait in the following manner:
  - with hook and line; or
  - with seines no larger than 12 feet x 4 feet; or
  - with minnow traps (the dimensions shall not exceed 24 inches x 12 inches x 12 inches); or
  - with cast nets (maximum 6-foot radius) and dip nets (no larger than 3 feet x 3 feet).
- See "Dead Bait" and "Live Bait" sections below for details on possession and use of non-game bait fish.
- Non-game fish may be taken from:
  - waters where live fish may be used as bait (see water list below under "Live Bait");
  - all rivers and streams;
  - all irrigation ditches, canals and associated infrastructure; or
  - public and private ponds with fathead minnows.
- Landowner permission is required to capture live bait from privately owned ponds or irrigation systems for personal use. A Commercial Fishing License (page 89) and a Commercial Pond License is required to sell bait from a privately owned pond.
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and an individual identifying number issued by the department attached.
- Areas within the Eastern Fishing District that have been identified as contaminated with Eurasian watermilfoil have additional bait restrictions as described below.

Dead Bait

- Non-game fish (see "Collection Methods" above) that are freshly killed or have been preserved by freezing, salting or pickling may be used as bait on all waters not restricted to artificial lures only. Heads and entrails of non-game fish may also be used as bait.
- Whole game fish may not be used as bait.
- Parts/pieces of Bass, Burbot (Ling), Channel Catfish, Crappie, Northern Pike, Paddlefish, Sauger, Shovelnose Sturgeon, Walleye, or Yellow Perch may be used as bait if edible portions are not wasted.
- The eggs of Salmonids (Char, Cisco, Arctic Grayling, Salmon or Trout) may be used as bait. Other parts/pieces of Salmonids may not be used as bait.

Live Bait

- Live bait fish may not be imported into Montana.
- Live animals such as meal worms, red worms, night crawlers, leeches, maggots, crayfish, reptiles, amphibians and insects may be used as bait on all waters not restricted to artificial lures only. Transport of invasive species is unlawful.

- Leeches may only be imported into Montana from FWP-approved leech dealers. Anglers who import leeches must have in their possession a bill-of-sale (a receipt) from the approved out-of-state leech dealer when fishing with leeches in Montana. A list of approved out-of-state leech dealers may be obtained from FWP by calling 406-452-6181.
- Non-game fish species that may be collected, possessed, and used as live bait in the Eastern Fishing District include only the following: Fathead Minnow, Flathead Chub, Western Silvery Minnow, Plains Minnow, Emerald Shiner, Longnose Dace, Lake Chub, Creek Chub, Longnose Sucker, and White Sucker. All other non-game fish species (not listed above) must be released immediately at the collection site or killed prior to transporting away from the collection site (see "Dead Bait" on page 78). See pages 94-95 for live bait fish identification. Be proactive, bait fish that cannot be positively identified should not be used as live bait.
- The non-game fish species listed above may be used as live bait only in the following waters:

Lakes, Reservoirs, Ponds and Impoundments (listed by County):

Big Horn Co. – Tongue River Reservoir (see exceptions to standard regulations)
Blaine Co. – Cow Creek Reservoir, Dry Fork Reservoir, Anita Reservoir, Reser Reservoir
Carter Co. –Doug Gardner #2 Reservoir, Talcott Pond
Custer Co. – Spotted Eagle Pond, Haughan Pond
Daniels Co. – Whitetail Reservoir
Dawson Co. – Hollecker Pond, Johnson Reservoir, Lindsey Reservoir
Fallon Co. - Baker Lake, South Sandstone Reservoir
Garfield Co. – Fort Peck Reservoir, Whiteside Reservoir
Hill Co. – Beaver Creek Reservoir, Bailey Reservoir
McCone Co. – Flat Lake, Fort Peck Reservoir, Hedstrom Reservoir
Petroleum Co. – Fort Peck Reservoir, Petrolia Reservoir
Prairie Co. – Grants Reservoir, Homestead Reservoir
Phillips Co. – Bison Bone Reservoir, Big McNeil Slough, Cole Ponds, Ester Reservoir, Fort Peck Reservoir, Frenchman Reservoir, Little Warm Reservoir, McChesney Reservoir, Nelson Reservoir, Wildhorse Reservoir
Richland Co. – Buxbaum West Reservoir, Gartside Reservoir, Kuester Reservoir
Roosevelt Co. – Bainville Railroad Ponds
Rosebud Co. – Castle Rock Lake, Lee Pond
Sheridan Co. – Box Elder Reservoir, Engstrom Reservoir, Medicine Lake Nat. Wildlife Refuge, Raymond Reservoir
Valley Co. – Fort Peck Dredge Cut Trout Pond, Fort Peck Reservoir, Grub Reservoir, Gut Shot Reservoir, Shoot Reservoir, Triple Crossing Reservoir, Valley Reservoir, VR2 Reservoir, Wards Res., and all BLM reservoirs in the Willow Creek Drainage
Wibaux Co. – Wibaux Pond

Rivers and Streams: All streams and rivers in the Eastern Fishing District except:

Milk River and its tributaries upstream from Fresno Dam.
Beaver Creek upstream from Beaver Creek Reservoir.

Bait restrictions in Eurasian watermilfoil contaminated areas

Eurasian watermilfoil is an invasive aquatic plant species that has become established in some Montana waters. This water weed is easily spread from one body of water to another primarily by plant fragments. Areas within the Eastern Fishing District that have been identified as contaminated with Eurasian watermilfoil are:

- Fort Peck Reservoir
- Fort Peck Dredge Cut Ponds
- Missouri River from Fort Peck Dam to the mouth of the Milk River

The additional bait restrictions within the contaminated areas are:

- Commercial collection of bait animals is not permitted.
- Transport of live aquatic bait animals to and from these contaminated areas is allowed only in clean water (e.g. transport minnows and leeches in well water).

Anglers shall inspect all bait buckets and live wells to ensure that NO PLANT FRAGMENTS are present when leaving a body of water. It takes only a small fragment of Eurasian watermilfoil (less than 2 inches) to start a new plant and infest a body of water.

General Regulations

Possession limit means the number of fish that you may possess at any time in any form: fresh, stored in freezers or lockers, salted, smoked, dried, canned or otherwise preserved. It is unlawful to preserve fish (salted, smoked, dried, canned, or otherwise preserved) before taking them to your permanent residence (the physical abode or structure you maintain as your principal, legal residence) unless those fish can be counted. Mobile recreational vehicles, travel trailers, tents or storage/freezer lockers do not qualify as permanent residences. No person may sell or take for the purpose of sale any fish except as authorized in commercial fishing regulations.

Daily limit means the number of fish you may legally take during a calendar day. It is unlawful to exceed the standard daily limit unless the regulations for the water body where you are fishing specify a different limit. "Legally taken" means fish caught and not immediately released alive. Where catch-and-release is allowed, fish immediately released alive are considered not taken. A fish when landed and not immediately released becomes part of the daily limit of the person originally hooking the fish, even if the fish is donated to another person. If you receive fish from another angler, those fish also become part of your daily limit. You may possess the daily limit allowed only for the body of water on which you are fishing.

Handling and Transporting Legally Taken Fish

While a person is fishing, or while on the water or on the ice:

- All fish in possession must be visibly identifiable to species.
- All fish in possession must be whole with head, skin, fins and tail attached. Gills and entrails may be removed. This doesn't prohibit the consumption of fish on the ice or water. However, the fish consumed are part of your daily limit (see Disposal of Dead Fish and Fish Entrails on page 16).

Once off the water or ice, fish may be dressed and filleted for transport to your permanent residence, unless size limits apply, under the following conditions:

- All fish can be counted and identified. Two fillets will be counted as one fish. If the catch is frozen prior to transport, each fish or fillet must be packaged so it can be counted.
- Salmonids (Trout, Salmon, Arctic Grayling, Char and Whitefish): the entire skin must be attached to the fillet for identification.

General Fishing Seasons and Hours

Fishing Hours

- Fishing is allowed at all hours during open fishing seasons unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Fishing Season: Lakes/Reservoirs and Rivers/Streams

- All waters open entire year unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.

Paddlefish Season Summary by River and River Section

River	River Section	Color	Season Dates	Harvest Days	C&R Days
Missouri River	Ft Peck Dam to Ft Benton	white	May 1 - Jun 15	all	all
	Ft Peck Dredge Cuts - no snagging	blue	July 1 - Aug 31	all - bow & arrow harvest only	none
	Ft Peck Dam to ND Line	yellow	May 15 - Jun 30	Tue,Wed,Fri,Sat	none
Yellowstone River	Big Horn R to Intake Dam	yellow	May 15 - Jun 30	Tue,Wed,Fri,Sat	none
	Intake FAS	yellow	May 15 - Jun 30	Tue,Wed,Fri,Sat	Sun, Mon, Thur
	Downstream of Intake FAS to ND Line	yellow	May 15 - Jun 30	Tue,Wed,Fri,Sat	none
FAS = Fishing Access Site				C&R = Catch-and-Release	

General Paddlefish Regulations for ALL Areas

- All Paddlefish anglers must purchase a Paddlefish tag, a Conservation License, and the required Fishing License (see License Requirements pages 12-13). All licenses must be in the angler's immediate possession while fishing.
- Each angler must cast for, hook and reel in his or her own Paddlefish. It is unlawful for another person to do so. It is unlawful to loan tags or use another angler's tag.
- It is unlawful to snag Paddlefish via boat trolling; casting from an anchored or drifting boat is lawful.
- Any fish other than Paddlefish caught while Paddlefishing must be immediately released alive.
- Bow and Arrow: lawful on harvest days in sections of river open to harvest or in a bow fishing only area; unlawful for catch-and-release.
- Hook size is limited to 8/0 and smaller for all Paddlefish snagging.
- Gaffs, no longer than 4.5 feet in length, may be used to land a Paddlefish that will be harvested. Gaffs may not be used to land a Paddlefish that will be released.
- Any angler tag locked shut prior to attachment to a Paddlefish shall be void and is not replaceable. Any altered or modified tag shall be void. **Voided or lost tags are not replaceable.**
- Paddlefish must be tagged immediately upon harvest.

Tagging a Paddlefish

- Cut a small hole in the base of the dorsal fin.
- Insert the metal loop portion of the plastic self-locking tag through this hole and seal tag.
- The metal loop must penetrate the fish so as to make the plastic self-locking tag non-removable when tag is sealed.
- The plastic self-locking tag must be completely sealed so it cannot be reopened. Any fish not tagged in accordance with these instructions shall be considered to be untagged.

- When a Paddlefish is captured and tagged, the fish must be removed from the river by the end of the day (9:00 pm MST).
- Anglers are required to report the harvest of any Paddlefish within 48 hours of harvest.
- Reporting options include on-site at fisheries check station or roving crews, phone hotline (1-877-FWP-WILD or 406-444-0356), or online at myfwp.mt.gov.
- Anglers reporting a harvested Paddlefish will provide the following information: Angler tag number, jaw tag number (if present), length (eye-tail fork), sex, date of harvest and harvest location. Additional information that may be collected on-site includes weight and age structure (jaw section).
- Anglers not reporting a harvested Paddlefish will not be eligible to purchase a Paddlefish tag the following year.
- It is unlawful to possess an untagged Paddlefish or part of one. If anglers fillet a Paddlefish, they must keep the part of the fish back and dorsal fin (back fin) where the tag is attached and sealed to the fish.
- Angler tag must remain with processed fish until consumed.
- It is unlawful for an individual to sell any portion of a Paddlefish including eggs (processed or unprocessed) as prescribed by the Fish & Wildlife Commission.

Standard Paddlefish Regulations

Daily and Possession Limits and Tags: One Paddlefish per season per angler. Anglers may select only one of the following three areas, and may only fish in the area selected:

1) Missouri River upstream from Fort Peck Dam to Fort Benton (White Tag)

Upper Missouri Paddlefish Drawing: Paddlefish harvest tags will be available via lottery draw for the Upper Missouri River Paddlefish season (White Tag). Anglers need to apply individually or as a party (up to five people). Applications can be submitted either on-line at fwp.mt.gov or at an FWP office. You may purchase one bonus point per year; either at the time of application or between July 1 and September 30 of the current year. If you do choose to purchase a bonus point at the time of application, you may not purchase one from July - September.

- Applications must be received by FWP no later than 5:00 PM March 25, 2022.
- Unsuccessful applicants can still catch-and-release Paddlefish with their Conservation, Fishing and Paddlefish Licenses.
- Paddlefish Snagging: open May 1 to June 15 from 6:00 AM to 9:00 pm (MST) daily.
- Catch-and-release snagging: open May 1 to June 15 from 6:00 AM to 9:00 pm. Proof of purchase of a white (or Upper Missouri River) Paddlefish License is required for catch-and-release fishing.
- All Paddlefish caught while catch-and-release fishing must be released immediately, may not be gaffed, and must remain at least partially submerged in water at all times (to avoid injury to the fish).

***2)* Fort Peck Dredge Cuts (west of Park Grove Bridge and Nelson Dredge) (Blue Tag)**

- Bow and Arrow: open July 1 through August 31 for Paddlefish. One Paddlefish per angler. An unused blue Paddlefish tag is required to fish for Paddlefish.
- Snagging: no snagging allowed, this is an archery only season.

3) Yellowstone River from Bighorn River confluence to Intake Dam (not including Intake Fishing Access Site), downstream of Intake Fishing Access Site to North Dakota state line, Powder River downstream of Highway 10 bridge, and Missouri River downstream of Fort Peck Dam (Yellow Tag)

- Fishery is managed under a harvest target so annual harvest will not exceed 1,000 Paddlefish. FWP will announce a 24-hour closure of the harvest season through a public news release. Closure can be immediate at Intake FAS (Intake Dam to ½ mile downstream) to prevent exceeding the estimated harvest target. Other yellow tag areas will close as noted in the 24-hour notice. For current information on harvest status call the Miles City FWP office at 406-234-0900.
- Following announcement of the harvest closure, catch-and-release snagging will be allowed, at Intake Fishing Access Site only, for 10 consecutive calendar days or through June 30, whichever comes first.
- The Montana nonprofit corporation designated to accept Paddlefish egg donations in exchange for a free fish cleaning service, in accordance with guidelines developed and implemented through the annual Memorandum of Understanding, is authorized to accept and transport lawfully taken and tagged Paddlefish donated by the angler. Paddlefish harvested on the Yellowstone River between the Burlington Northern Railroad Bridge at Glendive and the North Dakota state line are eligible for donation to the cleaning station at Intake FAS.
- **Paddlefish Harvest Days:** open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from May 15 through June 30 from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm (MST) daily, unless closed earlier by FWP.
- It is unlawful to release a Paddlefish on a harvest day during the Paddlefish season.
- An unused yellow Paddlefish tag is required to fish for Paddlefish. The tag must be properly placed on the first Paddlefish caught and landed.
- Paddlefishing closed Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays (see exception under Intake Fishing Access Site below).

Intake Fishing Access Site (Intake Dam to ½ mile downstream)

- **Paddlefish Catch-and-Release Days:** open Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays from May 15 through June 30 from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm (MST) daily, unless closed earlier by FWP.
  - -All Paddlefish caught on catch-and-release days must be released immediately, may not be gaffed, and must remain at least partially submerged in water at all times (to avoid injury to the fish).
  - -Evidence of purchasing a current year yellow Paddlefish tag must be in possession to catch-and-release snag for Paddlefish.
  - -Bow and arrow fishing unlawful on catch-and-release days.
- **Paddlefish Harvest Days:** open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from May 15 through June 30 from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm (MST) daily, unless closed to harvest earlier by FWP.
  - -It is unlawful to release a Paddlefish on a harvest day during the Paddlefish season.
  - -An unused yellow Paddlefish tag is required to fish for Paddlefish. The tag must be properly placed on the first Paddlefish caught and landed
  - -Closed to fishing, snagging or landing Paddlefish from boats/vessels during the open Paddlefish season (i.e. May 15 through June 30 or earlier as posted on site).

Eastern District Standard Daily and Possession Limits

Each angler may take all of the limits listed in the chart, unless otherwise noted in the Eastern District Exceptions. For species not listed, there are no limits on the number of fish that may be taken or possessed.

Anglers who move from one fishing water to another may possess the limit of fish allowed only for the water on which they are currently fishing.

Species		Daily and Possession Limits
TROUT	**Brook Trout**	10 daily and in possession.
TROUT	**Combined Trout** includes Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Golden Trout and Arctic Grayling	Lakes/Reservoirs: 5 daily and 10 in possession, includes Cutthroat Trout. Rivers/Streams: 5 daily and in possession.
TROUT	**Cutthroat Trout**	Lakes/Reservoirs: included in the "Combined Trout" daily and possession limit. Rivers/Streams: all Cutthroat Trout must be released immediately.
TROUT	**Lake Trout**	3 daily and 6 in possession.
	Bass	5 daily and in possession.
	Burbot (Ling)	5 daily and in possession.
	Channel Catfish	10 daily and 20 in possession.
	Crappie	15 daily and 30 in possession.
	Northern Pike	10 daily and in possession.
	Paddlefish	1 per season and in possession. Tag required.
	Pallid Sturgeon	None - this is an endangered species and all fish must be released promptly, with little or no delay. All waters are closed to fishing for Pallid Sturgeon.
	Salmon (Kokanee & Chinook)	5 daily and 10 in possession.
	Sauger/Walleye	5 daily and 10 in possession.
	Shovelnose Sturgeon	5 daily and in possession, none over 40 inches.
	Tiger Muskie	1 daily and in possession, must be over 40 inches.
	Whitefish	20 daily and 40 in possession.

2022 GENERAL FISHING SEASON		
Eastern District	Rivers and Streams	Lakes and Reservoirs
	Open all year	Open all year
If you don't find the water you are looking for listed in the district exceptions, use the standard regulations for the district you are fishing in.		

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 84.

Eastern District Exceptions To Standard Regulations

Check the following list of waters for the body of water you intend to fish in the Eastern District. If the body of water is not found in the listing of Exceptions, all of the Eastern District standard seasons, daily/possession limits, and statewide regulations apply. Standard regulations apply for species not listed in the exceptions.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

BIGHORN RIVER (east of Billings)

Entire river

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.

BOXELDER RESERVOIR aka Bolster Dam (Sheridan County) AIS

- Yellow Perch: 25 daily and 50 in possession.

FORT PECK DREDGE CUTS (west of Park Grove Bridge and Nelson Dredge) AIS

- Bow and Arrow: open July 1 through August 31 for Paddlefish. 1 per season and in possession. An unused blue Paddlefish tag is required to fish for Paddlefish.
- Combined trout: 2 Trout daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line on open water and 6 lines with 6 hooks per line through the ice.
- Snagging: no snagging allowed.

FORT PECK RESERVOIR AIS

Fort Peck Dam to Beauchamp Creek and CMR Trail 837

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.
- Spearing: Chinook Salmon and Lake Trout may be taken by spear or gig through the ice December 1 through March 31.
- Snagging: allowed only for Chinook Salmon from October 1 through November 30.

HOME RUN POND (Glasgow)

- Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.

JUDITH RIVER (from Hwy 81 downstream to mouth)

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.

LAKE ELMO AIS

- Bow and arrow fishing prohibited.

MARIAS RIVER

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily only 2 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches.

MEDICINE LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (Sheridan County)

- Refuge open to fishing year-round.
- Consult refuge specific regulations available at the office, informational kiosks, or online: fws.gov/refuge/Medicine_Lake/visit/rules_and_regulations.html

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 84.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 84.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

MISSOURI RIVER

Entire river

- Snagging: it is unlawful to snag for fish other than Paddlefish on the Missouri River downstream from Fort Benton; any fish other than Paddlefish must be immediately released alive.

Upstream from Fort Peck Dam to Fort Benton

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.

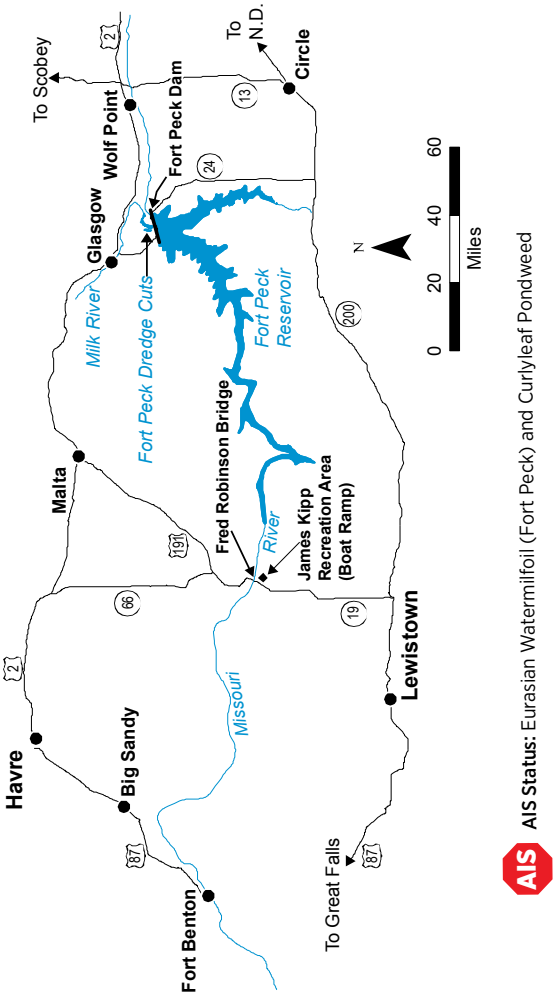
Fort Peck Dam to the mouth of the Milk River

- Combined trout: 2 trout daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line on open water and 6 lines with 6 hooks per line through the ice.

Downstream from Fort Peck Dam near Duck Island as posted

- Closed from March 1 through July 31 to fishing and wading as posted.

Missouri River Upstream from Fort Peck Dam



AIS Status: Eurasian Watermilfoil (Fort Peck) and Curlyleaf Pondweed

If you see this icon, turn to page 17 for information on Sport Fish Consumption Guidelines.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations

MUSSELSHELL RIVER

Downstream from where North and South forks meet to confluence with Fort Peck

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.
- Channel Catfish: 10 daily and in possession.

POWDER RIVER

Downstream from Highway 10 Bridge

- Snagging: unlawful to snag for fish other than Paddlefish; any fish other than Paddlefish must be immediately released alive.

ROSS RESERVOIR (Blaine County)

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

SPOTTED EAGLE POND (Miles City)

- 5 daily and in possession, any combination of species.

TONGUE RIVER AIS

Tongue River Reservoir to Wyoming State Border

- Fish species allowed for use as live bait are: Fathead Minnow, Flathead Chub, Longnose Dace, Lake Chub, Creek Chub, White Sucker, and Longnose Sucker.
- 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.

TONGUE RIVER RESERVOIR

- Fish species allowed for use as live bait are: Fathead Minnow, Flathead Chub, Longnose Dace, Lake Chub, Creek Chub, White Sucker, and Longnose Sucker.
- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily only 1 may be a Sauger and 10 in possession only 2 may be Sauger.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 6 hooks per line through the ice.

WARM SPRINGS CREEK (Fergus County)

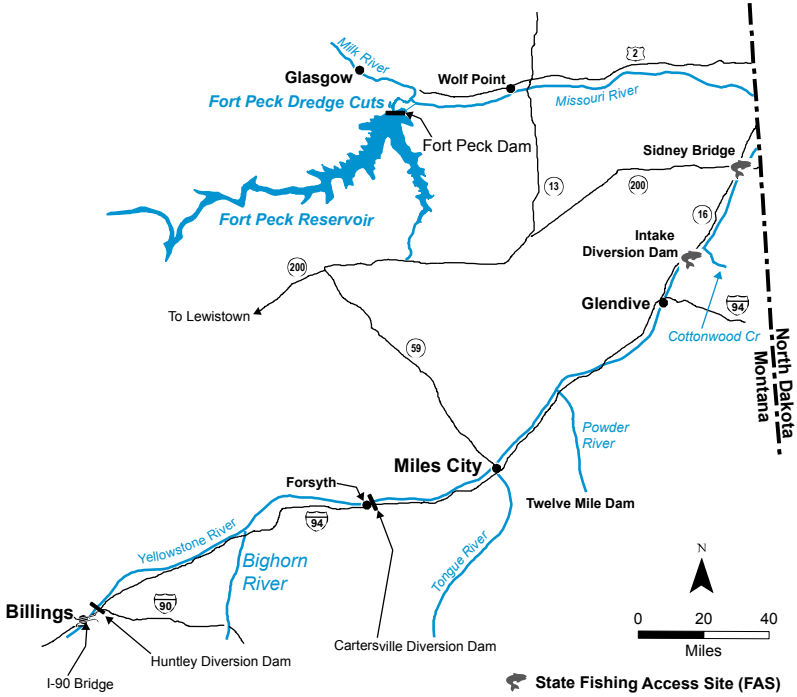
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches.

WIND CREEK (Blaine County)

- Closed entire year from Clear Creek road crossing to Ross Reservoir Dam.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 84.

Yellowstone & Lower Missouri Rivers



AIS Status: Eurasian Watermilfoil below Fort Peck Dam on the Missouri

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 84.

YELLOWSTONE RIVER (AIS)

Entire river

- Smallmouth Bass: 10 daily and in possession.

I-90 Bridge at Billings to the mouth of the Bighorn River

- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches, all may be Cutthroat Trout.
- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily only 2 may be a Sauger and 10 in possession only 4 may be Sauger.

Mouth of the Bighorn River to Cartersville Diversion Dam at Forsyth

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily only 2 may be a Sauger and 10 in possession only 4 may be Sauger.

Downstream from the mouth of the Bighorn River, not including Intake Fishing Access Site

- Snagging: unlawful to snag for fish other than Paddlefish; any fish other than Paddlefish must be immediately released alive.

Intake Fishing Access Site

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

(AIS) If you see this icon, turn to page 6 for specific AIS information.

Other Statewide Permit Requirements and Laws

State School Trust Lands: Your Conservation License provides anglers, hunters and trappers access to legally accessible State School Trust Lands for fishing and hunting. Other recreational activities such as hiking and bird watching still require the $10 State Lands Recreational Use Permit. These activities cannot, by federal statute, be covered by the Conservation License. Additional information regarding the rules, regulations, and restrictions governing these activities is available from FWP or contact DNRC at 406-444-2074.

- On lands outside designated campgrounds there is a 2-day camping limit.
- Motorized travel is only allowed on public roads or on designated roads.
- No open fires are allowed except in designated campground fire pits. Contained mechanical heat sources are allowed.

Aquatic Invertebrates - Crayfish/Mussels: A valid Fishing License is required to harvest crayfish for personal use (see "License/Permit Requirements" for specific license requirements). Crayfish may be taken in traps no larger than 24x12x12 inches. Freshwater mussel harvest or possession is prohibited in the Western and Central Fishing Districts. Mussels may be harvested for personal use in the Eastern Fishing District only. No Fishing License is required to harvest mussels.

Commercial Collection of Aquatic Invertebrates and Mussels: Persons wishing to collect aquatic invertebrates (such as leeches and aquatic insects) for sale or commercial distribution should contact their regional FWP office for information. In accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana, Section 12.2.501, it is unlawful to take or possess freshwater mussels or their shells for sale or commercial distribution.

Commercial Fishing Licenses

Bait Fish Seining: Commercial Harvest, $10 Fee

- Contact regional FWP offices for a Bait Fish Seining License and a list of waters open to commercial seining: $10 fee per year.
- A Bait Fish Seining License is required:
  - For persons 15 years of age or older to seine for or trap and transport bait fish for commercial purposes in Montana;
  - For any person who seines or traps for or has in his/her possession more than 24 dozen non-game bait fish.
- Non-game bait fish (Fathead Minnow, Flathead Chub, Western Silvery Minnow, Plains Minnow, Emerald Shiner, Longnose Dace, Lake Chub, Creek Chub, Longnose Sucker, and White Sucker) may be harvested commercially and transported in accordance with Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) Section 12.7.201-12.7.206. See pages 94-95 for live bait fish identification. Live bait fish or leeches may not be imported into Montana for commercial or other purposes unless authorized by FWP. Bait fish may not be exported without FWP authorization. Call 406-452-6181 or go online at **fwp.mt.gov** for more information.

Commercial Whitefish Fishing: A permit is required to sell Whitefish.

- **Hook and Line Permits:** Whitefish may be taken by hook and line for sale in the following waters--Flathead Lake north of the Flathead Reservation boundary, Flathead River north of Flathead Lake, Fisher River, Kootenai River, and Whitefish Lake.
- **Net/Seine Permits:** Whitefish may be taken from the Kootenai River and tributaries (within one mile of the Kootenai River). Application required; fee is $200 plus a $1,000 bond per year.

Fishing Contests: A permit from FWP is required for most fishing contests. Contact your local FWP office for information and an application or download an application from the FWP website.

Hoop Net Fishing Permit: A permit is required to use hoop nets. Permits are only available in the Eastern Fishing District. Contact FWP offices in Billings, Glasgow or Miles City for information.

Import Permits for Fish: A permit is required to import live fish into Montana. Contact the FWP Fish Health Lab in Great Falls at 406-452-6181 or download an application from the FWP website.

Indian Reservations and Tribal Lands: Certain waters on Indian Reservations and Tribal Lands may have special rules and permits. Specific information should be

obtained from Reservation headquarters.

- The State of Montana and Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes have entered into a cooperative agreement on the Flathead Reservation. A tribal permit is required to fish on waters within the exterior boundary of the Reservation. Call tribal headquarters at 406-675-2700 for information.
- The State of Montana and the Fort Peck Tribes have entered into a cooperative agreement on the Fort Peck Reservation. A tribal permit is required to fish on waters within the exterior boundary of the reservation. Call tribal headquarters at 406-768-5305 for information.
- A State of Montana Fishing License is required to fish on the Bighorn River inside the boundaries of the Crow Reservation. A tribal permit is not required.

National Parks: Certain waters within National Parks have special rules. Specific information may be obtained from the park headquarters. For Glacier National Park, call 406-888-7800 and for Yellowstone National Park, call 307-344-7381.

Off–Highway Vehicles (OHVs): Residents – OHVs (ATV, UTV, Dirtbike) must be registered and display a current Off-Highway decal to be used for off-road recreation on public lands (trails, frozen lakes, reservoirs) and a two year $20 Resident Trail Pass for use on designated roads and trails. To be used on roads (County, state highways, etc.), an OHV must have a license plate and street-legal modifications. Register your OHV with the County Treasurer. **Nonresidents –** OHVs registered in another state must purchase a nonresident permit to operate (anywhere) in Montana. Permits are good for one calendar year, cost $35 and can be purchased from local vendors (fwp.mt.gov/activities/off-highway-vehicles) or online at ols.fwp.mt.gov. Contact Montana State Parks OHV Program at 406-444-3750 with questions.

Private Fish Ponds – License Requirements, $10 application fee: A person who owns or lawfully controls a private fish or ornamental pond may obtain a license from FWP to stock the pond with fish. Only lawfully purchased fish may be planted. Contact your local FWP office for more information and an application or download the application from the FWP website. No Fishing License is required to fish on licensed, privately stocked fish ponds. Fishing License requirements apply to all other ponds and/or waters on private land.

Koi and Goldfish Ponds: must be registered with FWP. Registration forms are available online at **myfwp.mt.gov/fwpPub/koiPond** or from all FWP offices. There is no fee for registering a pond.

Unattended Fishing Devices: Any unattended fishing device (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or an individual identifying number issued by the department attached to it.

Motorboat and Vessel Restrictions

The use of vessels and motors may be restricted on some waters. A complete, updated, copy of the Montana Boating Laws is available from any FWP office, or by calling 406-444-2535. Additional restrictions may be posted at access points to specific waters. Contact the County Sheriff's office or federal agency where you will be boating to find out if additional restrictions are in effect.

All passengers under the age of 12 must wear a personal floatation device (PFD) at all times when the motorboat or vessel is in motion if the motorboat or vessel is less than 26 feet long. A wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be available for each occupant. Children 12 years of age or younger may not operate a motorboat or a personal watercraft (jet skis, water bikes, etc. that use a motor or engine to power a water jet pump as the primary source of propulsion and that is designed to be operated by a person standing or kneeling on the vessel) powered by a motor rated at more than 10 horsepower unless accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older. Youths 13 and 14 may not operate those vessels without possessing a valid Montana Motorboat Operator's Safety Certificate or evidence of completing an approved water safety course, unless accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older. A home-study boating course is available from FWP.

Sailboats 12 feet long and longer, and all motorboats and personal watercraft must be registered and numbered. Non-motorized sailboats less than 12 feet long and manually propelled boats, regardless of length, are exempt from registration and taxation. Also exempt are a vessel's lifeboat, government-owned boats, and properly

registered boats from out-of-state or country that will not be in Montana for more than 90 consecutive days.

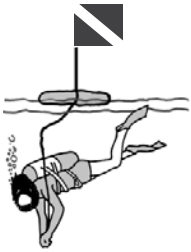
No-Wake Zones on Lakes – Western Fishing District Only

All watercraft operating on public lakes and reservoirs of 35 surface acres or less within the Western Fishing District are limited to no-wake speed. The Montana Boating Laws booklet contains a complete list of these lakes. Contact your local FWP office for a copy.

All watercraft operating on public lakes and reservoirs greater than 35 surface acres within the Western Fishing District are limited to no-wake speed from the shoreline to 200 feet from the shoreline. No-wake speed is defined as a speed whereby there is no "white" water in the track or path of the vessel or in waves created next to the vessel.

General Boating Restrictions

- Do not anchor a vessel in a position that obstructs a passageway ordinarily used by others.
- Do not operate a vessel within:
  - 20 feet of a designated swimming area marked by white and orange buoys.
  - 50 feet of a swimmer in the water except for boats towing water skiers.
  - 75 feet of an angler or a waterfowl hunter unless it is unavoidable. If unavoidable, travel at no-wake speed or at the minimum speed necessary to maintain upstream progress.
  - 200 feet of a diver's flag.
- Motorboats and vessels 16 feet and longer (except canoes and kayaks) must also have a throwable type IV PFD on board.
- It is unlawful to operate or be in actual physical control of a motorboat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- All motorboats and vessels must carry equipment as required by the Montana Boating Laws.



Boaters: This flag means there are scuba divers in the area. Montana law requires that motorboats stay at least 200 feet away from a **DIVER DOWN** flag. Violators may be subject to a fine of $500 or 6 months imprisonment, or both. MCA 23-2-525.

Definitions

ANGLING/FISHING: Angling or fishing means to capture or attempt to capture fish, or the act of a person possessing any instrument, article or substance for the purpose of taking fish in any location that a fish might inhabit.

ARTIFICIAL LURE: Any man-made lure (including flies) that imitates natural bait. Artificial lures may have a scent infused or applied. Artificial lures do not include fish eggs, any natural or artificial food such as corn and marshmallows, any products that are derivatives of natural foods, any chemically treated or processed natural bait such as salted minnows, nor any artificial dough, paste or edible baits.

ATTENDED LINE: A line with/without a pole held in hand or under immediate control. When used through the ice, the angler need not be in immediate control but must be in the vicinity and in visual contact with the line.

CALENDAR DAY: A 24-hour period from midnight to midnight.

DAILY LIMIT: The number of fish that may be legally taken during a calendar day. A fish when landed and not immediately released becomes part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking the fish even if the fish is donated to another person. If you receive fish from another angler, those fish also become part of your daily limit.

DRAINAGE: All of the waters comprising a watershed, including tributary rivers, streams, sloughs, ponds and lakes that contribute to the water supply of the watershed.

DRESSED FISH: A fish which has been cleaned by removing the entrails. Dressed fish also may be filleted and/or have their head, gills and scales removed.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: Species in imminent danger of extinction throughout their range and listed by state or federal regulation.

FISHING ACCESS SITE (FAS): An area adjacent to a stream or lake which has been acquired by FWP to allow anglers access to a water body. Fishing access sites are funded in part by Fishing License fees.

FISHING FROM BOATS/VESSELS: Fishing while on any boat or vessel. When a water is designated as closed to fishing from boats/vessels, anglers may not fish from a boat or vessel, but may use a boat or vessel to access wade fishing opportunities. An angler must be completely out of the boat or vessel while wade fishing.

FLOAT FISHING: Any fishing from a boat or vessel, or wade fishing when fishing access is gained by boat or vessel. When a water is designated as closed to float fishing, an angler may not fish from a boat, and may not wade fish in the river or stream, or from the bank or shoreline of the river or stream, when access is gained by boat or vessel.

FLOAT OUTFITTING: The operation of any boat or vessel for the commercial purpose of float fishing by a fishing outfitter or fishing guide.

GAFF: A hook attached directly to a pole (metal or wooden shaft) or other device. Use of gaffs is permitted only to help land a fish that was lawfully hooked.

GAME FISH: All species of the family Salmonidae (Trout, Salmon, Arctic Grayling, Whitefish, Cisco and Chars); all species of the genus Sander (Sauger and Walleye); all species of the genus Esox (Northern Pike and Tiger Muskie); all species of the genus Micropterus (Bass); all species of the genus Polyodon (Paddlefish); all species of the family Acipenseridae (Sturgeon); the genus Lota (Burbot or Ling); the species Perca flavescens (Yellow Perch); all species of the genus Pomoxis (Crappie); and the species Ictalurus punctatus (Channel Catfish).

Bull Trout are defined as any trout with white leading margins on the lower fins and no markings on the dorsal fin. (Note: it is unlawful to intentionally fish for Bull Trout in any waters unless specifically authorized in the Western Fishing District Regulations.)

Cutthroat Trout are defined as any trout with a red or orange stripe under its jaw. See the inside cover for an identification (ID) key (page 96).

Sauger are defined as any Sander (Sauger/Walleye) with multiple small, distinct black spots on the spiny (first) dorsal fin ray membranes.

HOOK: A hook is a single, double, or treble point attached to a single shank. A lure with multiple hooks is still considered a single hook.

HOOP NET: A cylindrical or conical net distended by a series of hoops or frames, covered by web netting. The net has one or more internal funnel-shaped throats whose tapered ends are directed inward from the mouth

LEGALLY TAKEN: Any fish caught using legal methods and not immediately released alive.

LENGTH: Measure the greatest length from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail. Place the fish on a flat surface and squeeze the lobes of the tail fin together so as to achieve the greatest length. Do not measure over the curve of the body.

LIVE BAIT: Live bait are animals such as meal worms, red worms, night crawlers, leeches, maggots, crayfish, reptiles, amphibians and insects, which may be used as live bait on all waters not restricted to artificial flies and lures. Live bait includes fish only as specified in Live Bait sections for the Central and Eastern Fishing Districts. No live fish can be used as live bait in the Western Fishing District. Sculpins may not be used as bait live or dead in the Western Fishing District.

MAINSTEM: In a drainage, the mainstem is the primary stream or river into which most tributaries flow.

MOTORBOAT: A vessel, including a personal watercraft or pontoon, propelled by any machinery/motor/engine of any description, whether or not the machinery/motor/engine is the principal source of propulsion. The term includes boats temporarily equipped with detachable motors/engines.

NON-GAME FISH: Any wild fish not otherwise legally classified by statute or regulation.

NOODLING: A technique for catching fish by hand. It is unlawful to catch fish by hand in any district.

PERMANENT RESIDENCE: The physical abode or structure you maintain as your principal, legal residence. A person may have only one permanent residence.

POSSESSION LIMIT: The number of fish that may be possessed at any time in any form: fresh, stored in freezers or lockers, salted, smoked, dried, canned, or preserved.

RESERVOIR: A body of water artificially impounded behind a man-made dam that extends upstream to the mouth of its inlet stream(s) or river. Reservoirs do not include waters incidentally impounded on a stream or river by a structure such as a check dam for irrigation, a headgate to divert water for irrigation, or similar structures.

Under normal operations, reservoir pool elevation, surface acreage and the mouths of the inlet stream(s) are expected to vary throughout the year. An imaginary line connecting the reservoir shoreline across the mouth of the stream marks the boundary between reservoir and stream/river, and the boundary will move as reservoir levels change. Streams are defined by a sloped streambed that results in a defined current flow between two discernible stream banks. Stream regulations apply upstream from the mouth on the reservoir and often are managed under seasons, limits and special regulations that differ from the reservoir regulations.

SALMONIDAE: Any species of Trout, Char, Salmon, Arctic Grayling, Cisco, or Whitefish. Wild salmonids possess an adipose fin (small fleshy on the back near the tail); hatchery-reared fish sometimes have had this fin intentionally removed.

SEINE: A net, usually suspended between two poles, which is pulled through the water to capture fish for bait. Seines used for this purpose must not exceed 12 feet in length and 4 feet in width.

SETLINE: A line or lines with or without a pole set to catch fish without the angler being present or within immediate control. The angler's name, phone number, or ***an individual identifying number issued by the department.*** must be attached. ***Setlines are not allowed in the Western Fishing District.***

SNAGGING: A technique of angling in which a hook or hooks are cast into the water and manipulated to embed the hook or hooks into the body of the fish. You have snagged a fish if: (a) you are fishing in a manner that the fish does not voluntarily take the hook in its mouth, or (b) if you accidentally hook the fish in a part of the body other than the mouth.

SPEAR: Any sharp-pointed instrument, with or without barbs, used to capture and/or kill fish by penetrating the body. Usually a spear consists of a shaft with a sharp head or point. Spears may be hand-propelled or propelled with a spring or rubber band.

SPECIES OF CONCERN: Native Montana species with limited habitats and/or limited numbers in the state. Such species are at risk of becoming threatened.

STREAM MOUTH: The downstream point defined as a straight line running from the most downstream extremity on one stream bank to the most downstream extremity on the other stream bank or a point defined and marked by FWP (also see Reservoir definition).

THREATENED SPECIES: Species that may become endangered within the foreseeable future without conservation measures.

TRIBUTARY: Any watercourse that flows into a body of water, including tributaries to a tributary.

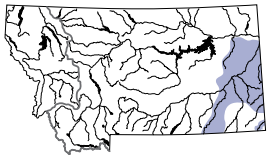
VESSEL: Every type of watercraft or boat capable of being used as a means of transportation on water except devices that are propelled entirely by kicking fins and the floater sits in the water, such as inner tubes (motor vehicle type), float tubes (belly boats), air mattresses and sailboards when used without mechanical propulsion by an individual. Contact your local warden for more information.

WASTE OF FISH OR GAME: To purposely waste any part of a game fish suitable for food by transporting, hanging, or storing the carcass or flesh in a manner that renders it unfit for human consumption; or, to abandon or dispose of, in the field or water, the carcass or flesh of any game fish suitable for food; or, to use the carcass or flesh of any game fish as bait except as authorized in the bait regulations.

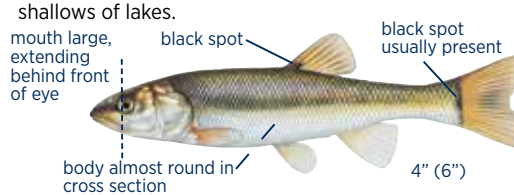
Bait Fish Species Identification

There are 10 species of fish that may be used for bait ***in the Central and Eastern Fishing Districts.*** The following images are for help in identification (for more details see the "Live Bait Fish Identification" brochure available online or at Regional offices). See the regulations concerning bait use in each ***Fishing*** District (pages 21, 50 and 78).

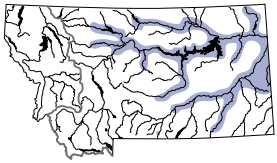
Creek Chub



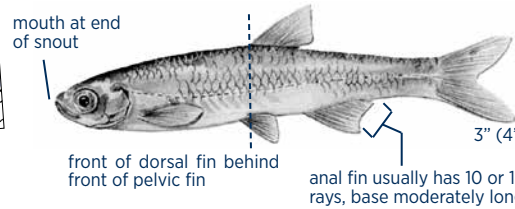
HABITAT: Typically creeks. Less common in rivers and shallows of lakes.



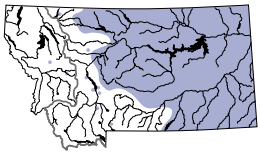
Emerald Shiner



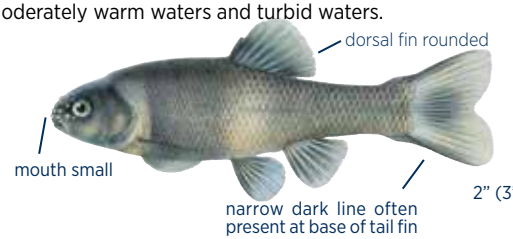
HABITAT: Open water of large streams, reservoirs and lakes.



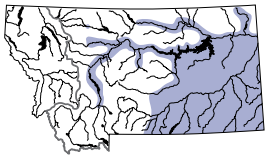
Fathead Minnow



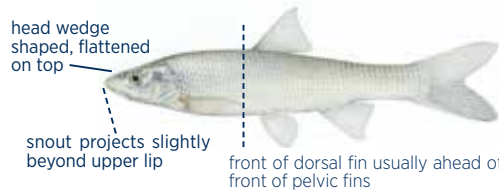
HABITAT: Clean cold streams and lakes; sometimes moderately warm waters and turbid waters.



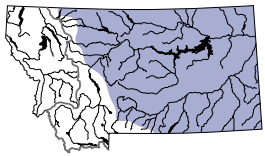
Flathead Chub



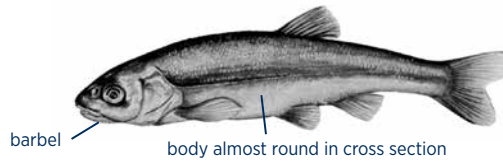
HABITAT: Mostly turbid rivers and streams.



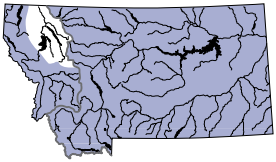
Lake Chub



HABITAT: Mostly small streams at lower elevations; to a lesser extent, larger streams and lakes.

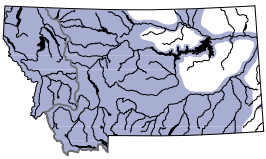


Longnose Dace

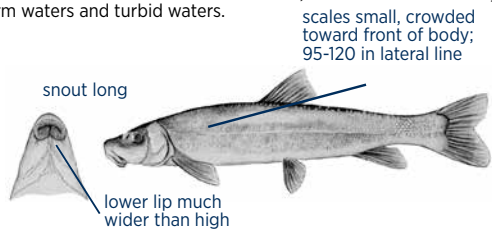


HABITAT: Riffle areas of streams and rivers; to a lesser extent, lakes.

Longnose Sucker

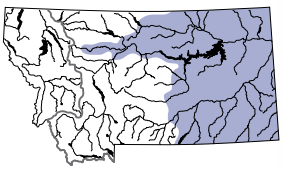


HABITAT: Clean cold streams and lakes; sometimes moderately warm waters and turbid waters.

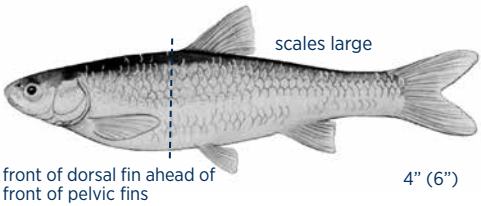


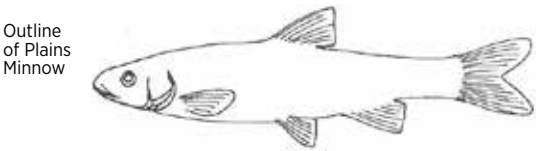
Western Silvery Minnow

Plains Minnow



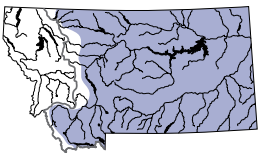
HABITAT: Slower portions of medium-sized to larger streams. Sometimes found in creeks and impoundments.



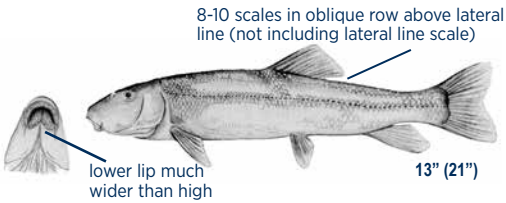


The **Western Silvery Minnow** and the **Plains Minnow** are very similar. The Western Silvery Minnow is more streamlined (see outlines) and has larger scales than the Plains Minnow. Scale counts from lateral line to lateral line under the belly of the fish might be 11 to 17 on the Western Silvery Minnow, and 15 to 22 on the Plains Minnow. Distinguishing these species when live is understood to be very difficult.

White Sucker



HABITAT: All kinds of lakes and streams but avoids rapid current-very adaptable.



FISH IDENTIFICATION KEY If you don't know, let it go!

CUTTHROAT TROUT are frequently mistaken for Rainbow Trout *(see pictures below)*:

1. Turn the fish over and look under the jaw. Does it have a red or orange stripe? If yes—the fish is a Cutthroat Trout. Carefully release all Cutthroat Trout that cannot be legally harvested (see page 15, releasing fish).

BULL TROUT are frequently mistaken for Brook Trout, Lake Trout or Brown Trout *(see below)*:

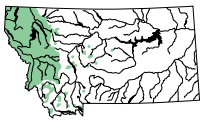
1. Look for white edges on the front of the lower fins. If yes—it may be a Bull Trout.
2. Check the shape of the tail. Bull Trout have only a slightly forked tail compared to the lake trout's deeply forked tail.
3. Is the dorsal (top) fin a clear olive color with no black spots or dark wavy lines? If yes—the fish is a Bull Trout. Carefully release Bull Trout *(see page 15, releasing fish)*.

MONTANA LAW REQUIRES:

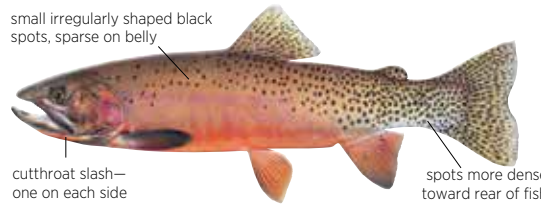
- All Bull Trout must be released promptly, with little or no delay, in Montana unless authorized. See Western District regulations.
- Cutthroat Trout must be released promptly, with little or no delay, in many Montana waters. Check the district standard regulations and exceptions to know where you can harvest Cutthroat Trout.

NATIVE FISH

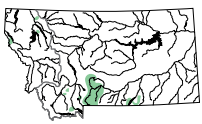
Westslope Cutthroat Trout Species of Concern



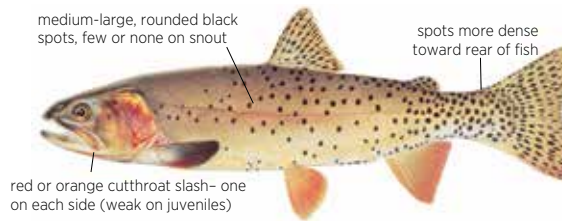
Average Size: 6"–12"



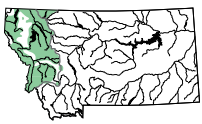
Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout Species of Concern



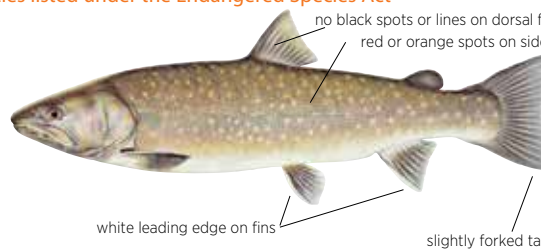
Average Size: 6"–12"



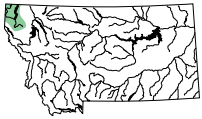
Bull Trout A Threatened Species listed under the Endangered Species Act



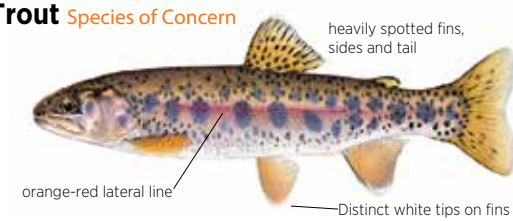
Average Size: 16"–22"



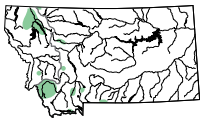
Columbia River Redband Trout Species of Concern



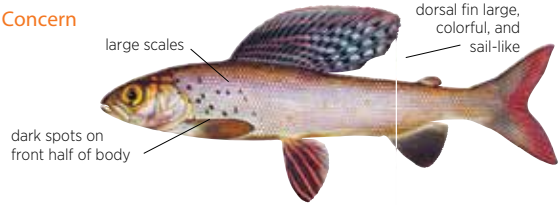
Average Size: 6”–10”



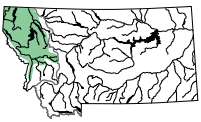
Arctic Grayling Species of Concern



Average Size: 6”-12”

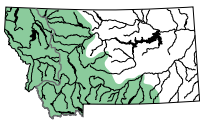


Northern Pikeminnow



Average Size: 7”–14”

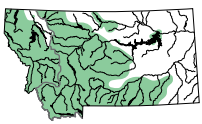
Mountain Whitefish



Average Size: 6”–12”

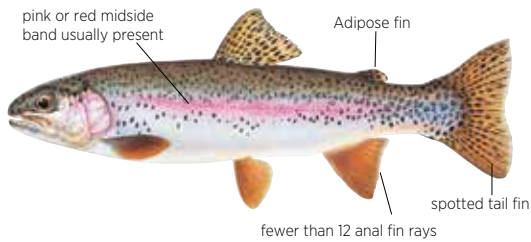
NON-NATIVE FISH

Rainbow Trout

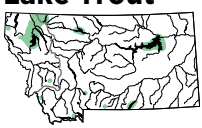


Note: Native populations of Columbia River Redband Trout exist in localized waters of northwestern Montana.

Average Size: 8”–16”

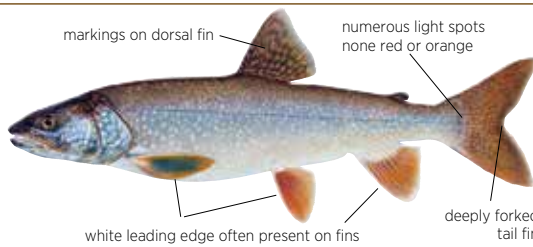


Lake Trout



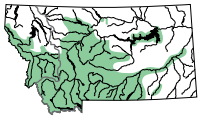
Note: Native populations of Lake trout exist in a few isolated waters of southwestern Montana.

Average Size: 14”–20”

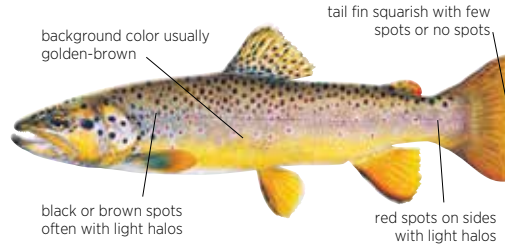


NON-NATIVE FISH

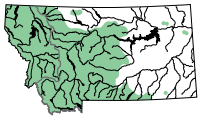
Brown Trout



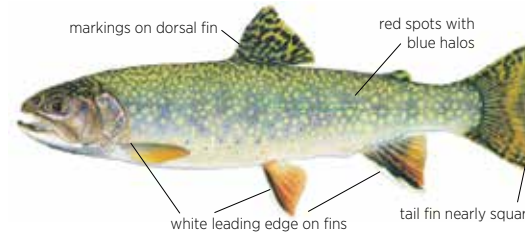
Average Size: 12”–16”



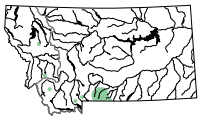
Brook Trout



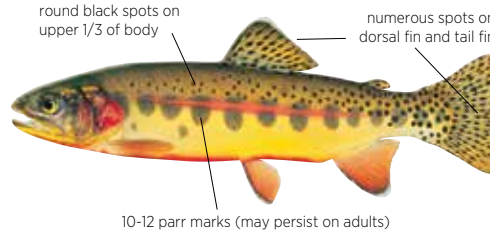
Average Size: 6”–12”



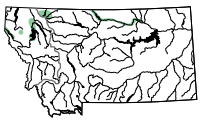
Golden Trout



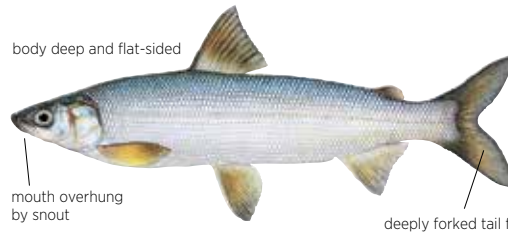
Average Size: 6”–12”



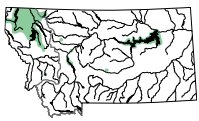
Lake Whitefish



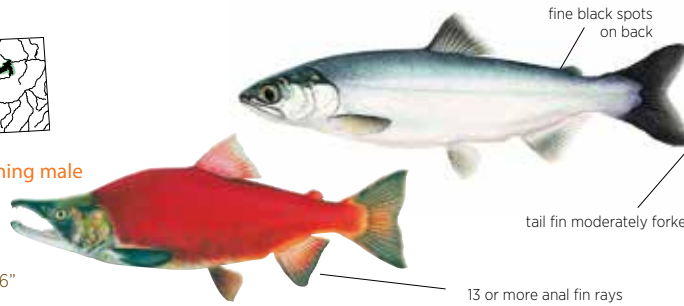
Average Size: 19”–27”



Kokanee



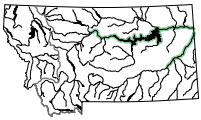
Spawning male



Average Size: 8”–16”

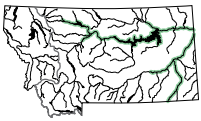
Species of Concern: see definitions. Fish illustrations by Joseph Tomelleri. Fish are not shown to scale.

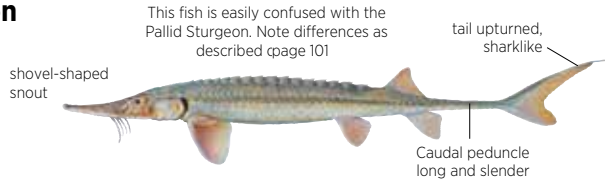
Pallid Sturgeon An Endangered Species listed under the Endangered Species Act



Average Size: 60”

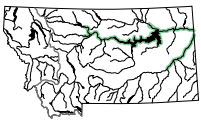
Shovelnose Sturgeon





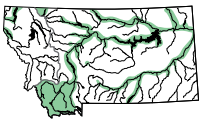
Average Size: 20”–32”

Paddlefish Species of Concern



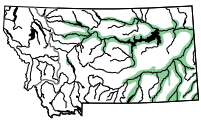
Average Size: 55”–65”

Burbot



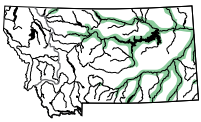
Average Size: 16”–24”

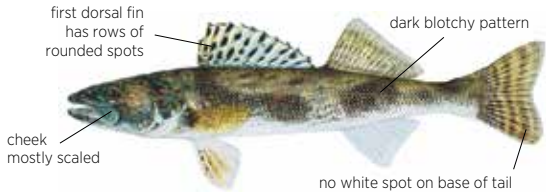
Channel Catfish



Average Size: 14”–20”

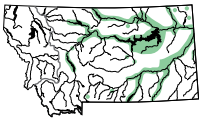
Sauger Species of Concern





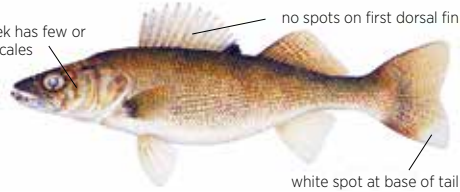
Average Size: 10”–16”

NON-NATIVE FISH

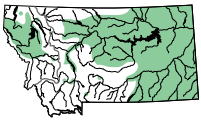


Walleye

Average Size: 14”–18”

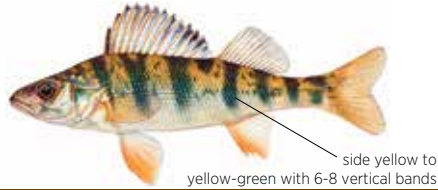


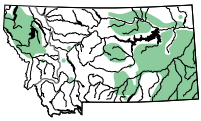
Know the difference between Sauger and Walleye



Yellow Perch

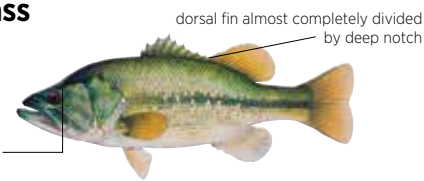
Average Size: 6”–10”

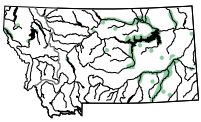




Largemouth Bass

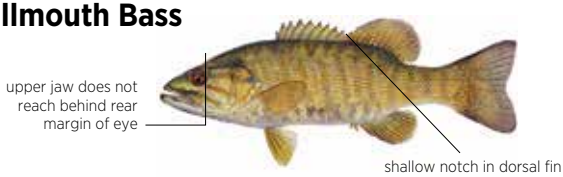
Average Size: 10”–16”

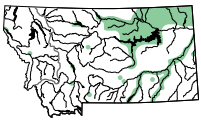




Smallmouth Bass

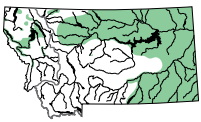
Average Size: 8”–14”





Black Crappie

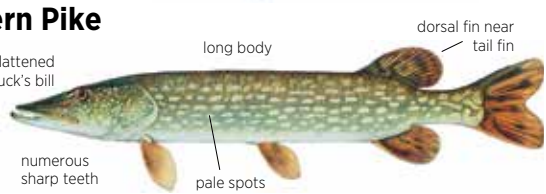
Average Size: 6”–12”

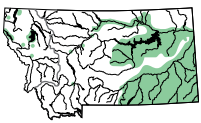


Note: Native populations of Northern Pike may exist in localized waters of north-central Montana.

Northern Pike

Average Size: 18”–26”





Black Bullhead

Average Size: 7”–10”

Help protect native species

If you don't know, let it go!

Key to identification:

PALLID STURGEON are frequently mistaken for Shovelnose Sturgeon *(see pictures below)*

1. Look to see if the outer barbels are more than twice the length of the inner barbels. Are the barbels attached closer to the mouth than to the tip of the snout? If yes—the fish is a Pallid Sturgeon. Carefully release all Pallid Sturgeon *(see page 15)*.
2. Sturgeon are difficult to distinguish. The Shovelnose Sturgeon is smaller and more common. Montana FWP recommends that all sturgeon be released if you are unsure of the species.

SAUGER are frequently mistaken for Walleye *(see pictures below)*:

1. Look for multiple small, distinct black spots on the spiny dorsal fin *(first fin on top)*. If yes—it is a Sauger.

MONTANA LAW REQUIRES:

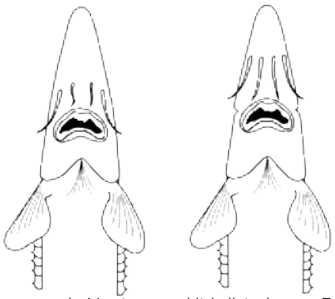
- All Pallid Sturgeon must be released immediately and all sturgeon longer than 40 inches must be released immediately.
- Only two Saugers may be kept on the Missouri River upstream from Fort Peck Reservoir, on Fort Peck Reservoir, and on the Yellowstone River upstream from Forsyth at the Cartersville Diversion Dam.

Know the difference between Pallid and Shovelnose Sturgeon:

Pallid Sturgeon

Outer barbels 2 times the length of the inner barbels. (Be alert for broken barbels).

Barbels attached close to mouth, about 1/3 the distance between mouth and tip of snout.



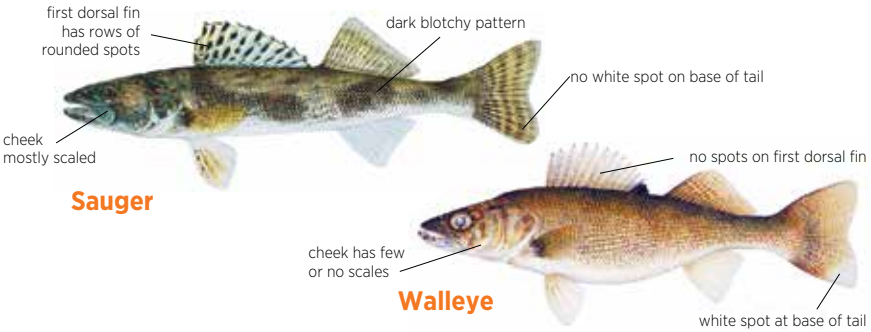
Shovelnose Sturgeon

Outer barbels barely longer than inner barbels.

Barbels attached about 1/2 the distance between mouth and tip of snout.

The Pallid Sturgeon is a fish of concern in Montana and it is listed as an Endangered Species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Pallids are a bottom-dwelling fish of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, preferring strong currents flowing over a sandy or gravely river bottom. Learn to distinguish the Pallid from the Shovelnose Sturgeon, a smaller and more common species. Because the sturgeon are hard to identify, Montana FWP recommends that all sturgeon be released if you're unsure of the species.

Know the difference between Sauger and Walleye:



Montana Fish Records

Visit fwp.mt.gov/fish/report-your-catch/fish-records for a complete list of Montana fish records – or call 406-444-2449.

If you think you have legally caught a fish in Montana that may be a state record:

- To prevent loss of weight, don't clean or freeze the fish. Keep the fish cool – preferably on ice. Take a picture of the fish.
- Get the fish weighed as soon as possible on a certified scale (found in grocery or hardware stores, etc.) and witnessed by an observer. Get an affidavit from the store if no FWP official is present. Measure the length.
- Contact the nearest FWP office to have the fish positively identified and to determine if it is a state record.

Records as of January 1, 2022. Native fish species are shaded.

FISH	Length	Weight lbs.	SITE	ANGLER	DATE
Arctic Grayling	20	3.63	Washtub Lake	Glenn Owens	6/28/03
Big Mouth Buffalo	40.7	57.75	Nelson Reservoir	Craig D. Grassel	6/4/94
Black Bullhead	14.37	2.60	Smiley Slough	Birrell White	6/20/09
Black Crappie	16.7	3.13	Tongue River Reservoir	Al Elser	1973
Blue Sucker	34.56	13.29	Marias River	Jason Karls	4/19/19
Bluegill	11	2.64	Peterson's Stock Dam	Brent Fladmo	6/3/83
Brook Trout	-	9.06	Lower Two Medicine Lake	John R. Cook	1940
Brown Trout	37	32.42	Marias River	Robbie Dockter	3/3/21
Bull Trout (Dolly Varden)	37	25.63	Unknown	James Hyer	1916
Burbot	39	17.08	Missouri River	Jeff Eugene Iwen	4/18/89
Channel Catfish	38.75	35.18	Colstrip Surge Pond	John D, Smith	7/7/19
Chinook Salmon	38.125	32.05	Fort Peck Reservoir	Greg Haug	8/16/20
Coho Salmon	25.5	4.88	Fort Peck Reservoir (Face of Dam)	Irven F. Stohl	5/29/73
Cutthroat Trout	-	16	Red Eagle Lake	Wm. D. Sands	1955
Golden Trout	23.5	5.43	Cave Lake	Mike Malixi	7/16/00
Goldeye	-	3.18	Nelson Reservoir	Don Nevrivy	7/4/00
Kokanee Salmon	26. 8	7.85	Hauser Lake	John Bomar	9/23/03
Lake Trout	42.5	42.69	Flathead Lake	Ruth Barber	6/23/04
Lake Whitefish	27	10.46	Flathead Lake	Swan McDonald V	8/26/06
Largemouth Bass	22.5	9.58	Lake Elmo	Brandon Wright	4/24/21
Longnose Sucker	19.50	4.21	Holter Lake	Austin Wargo	5/17/21
Mountain Whitefish	23	5.11	Hauser Reservoir	Walt Goodman	10/10/07
Northern Pike	-	37.5	Tongue River Reservoir	Lance Moyer	1972
Northern Pikeminnow	27.125	7.88	Noxon Rapids Reservoir	Darrel Torgrimson	5/28/91
Paddlefish	77	142.5	Missouri River	Larry Branstetter	5/20/73
Pallid Sturgeon		60	Yellowstone River	Gene Sattler	5/13/79
Rainbow Trout	38.62	33.1	Kootenai River	Jack G. Housel, Jr.	8/11/97
Rainbow Smelt	7.1	0.08	Fort Peck Dredge Cuts	Nathan Cooper	2/18/20
Sauger	28.2	8.805	Fort Peck Reservoir	Gene Moore	12/12/94
Shovelnose Sturgeon	39.75	14.125	Missouri River	Chad Buck	5/21/10
Smallmouth Bass	22	7.84	Fort Peck Reservoir	Theron Thompson	10/3/20
Smallmouth Buffalo	38	38	Nelson Reservoir	Brady Miller	4/28/07
Tiger Muskie	50	38.75	Deadmans Basin Reservoir	Leo Cantin	9/2/12
Walleye	32.25	18.02	Holter Lake	Trevor Johnson	05/10/21
White Bass	17	2.80	Missouri River	Vernon Pacovsky	10/13/07
White Crappie	18.5	3.68	Tongue River	Gene Bassett	5/10/96
White Sturgeon	75	96	Kootenai River	Herb Stout	1968
Yellow Bullhead	15.5	1.91	Tongue River Reservior	Roberta Legge	12/17/20
Yellow Perch	14.375	2.39	Lower Stillwater Lake	Josh Emmert	2/19/06

CLEAN. DRAIN. DRY.

Nonresident watercraft must have inspection and Vessel AIS Prevention Pass.

Pass is not transferable between vessels & expires Dec. 31.

$10 non-motorized vessels | $30 motorized vessels

Buy pass online at *fwp.mt.gov*

Protect the waters you love to fish! When leaving the water always:

CLEAN mud and plants off boat, trailer and fishing gear.

DRAIN all water. Drop motor. Pull drain plug.

DRY waders, fishing gear and watercraft.

DISPOSE unwanted bait in the trash, not in the water.

Learn more at *CleanDrainDryMT.com*. **Ph:** 406-444-2440

2022 FWP Kids' Fish Art Contest

WINNER:

Torah Stoppa, Age 10

Pumpkinseed - *Lepomis gibbosus*

The pumpkinseed was introduced to Montana in the early 1900s and is the state's most widely distributed sunfish. Pumpkinseed are vigorously attracted to a variety of lures and baits, and as a result they are often the first fish caught by new anglers.

Josie Thomas 406WildFlower Photography

Typically, pumpkinseed are around 6-inches long but can reach a size of 11-inches and 1-pound. They are appreciated for their table fare. This colorful fish is distinguished by its olive barring punctuated with green, yellow, orange, and blue speckles. Pumpkinseed are also noted for the red spot on the margin of their operculum (gill cover). During late-spring, adult males will defend small circular nests and will keep these areas clean of silt and debris to attract females for spawning.

Anthony Licata

Take a kid fishing.

It's a rite of passage. A quintessential Montana experience. For both kids and adults, fishing creates memories that will last a lifetime.

FREE FISHING!

May 7-8 &
June 18-19, 2022

On Mother's and Father's Day weekends anyone can fish without a fishing license. All other restrictions in these Fishing Regulations still apply. See page 12 for more details.

LET'S GO CATCH SOME FISH!

A basic guide to take kids fishing.

fwp.mt.gov/fish/kids

Family Fishing Waters

Montana has 70 Family Fishing Waters managed exclusively for youth or family fishing. Check the **FishMT** tab on the FWP website for all Family Fishing Waters.

fwp.mt.gov/fish

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