

# 2019

## MONTANA BOATING LAWS



A summary of  
Montana boating  
laws and regulations,  
plus safety and  
environmental tips.



For a complete copy  
of the laws and rules,  
contact Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks.

[fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov)

## Is your boat correctly identified?



### Montana requires two decals to identify your boat:

#### Permanent decal

- Pay a one-time fee to your County Treasurer.
- Decal is valid for as long as you own your boat.
- Display on the left (port) bow behind the boat's identification numbers.



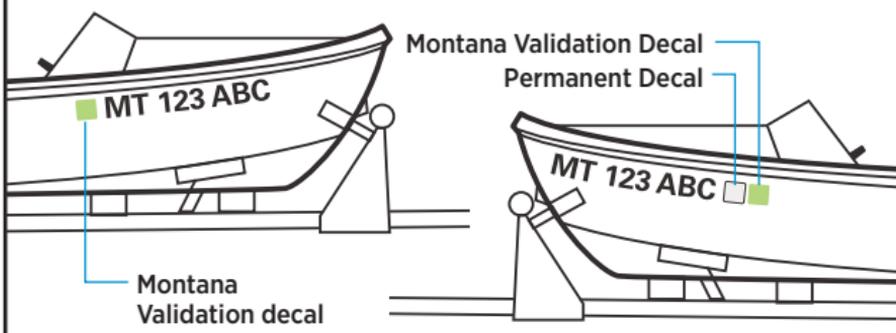
#### Validation decal

- Validation decals are free. Green decals are valid March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2020
- New boat owners can obtain validation decals from their County Treasurer when registering their boat.
- Current boat owners can obtain this decal from any Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks office, or on-line at: [fwp.mt.gov/recreation/permits/boats.html](http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/permits/boats.html)



*Information from your Boat Registration and Payment Receipt are needed in order to get your decal.*

**You will receive two validation decals:** Display one validation decal on each side of your boat's bow, aft of the identification numbers.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS -

## RULES FOR OPERATING A BOAT IN MONTANA

Operator Age Limit .....	2
Rented Boats and Watercraft .....	2
Water Skiing and Using Other Towed Devices .....	2
Personal Watercraft: Jet Skis, Water Bikes, Etc. ....	3
Swimming Areas .....	3
Alcohol and Drug Use .....	3
Negligent Operation .....	3
Aquatic Invasive Species .....	3
Montana Law .....	4
Harassment of Wildlife .....	4
Launching and Mooring .....	4
Discharge of Waste .....	4
Loading Passengers and Gear .....	5
Motor Size .....	5
Noise Limitations .....	5
Races, Regattas and Other Marine Events .....	5
Restricted Areas – General .....	6
Local and Federal Regulations .....	6
Accidents, Collisions and Casualties .....	6
Diver Down Flag Warning .....	7
Enforcement .....	7
Penalties .....	7
<b>REQUIRED EQUIPMENT</b>	
Flotation Devices (Life Jackets) .....	8
Fire Extinguishers .....	9
Backfire Flame Arresters .....	10
Ventilation .....	10
Whistles, Horns and Bells .....	11
Navigational Lights .....	11
<b>RULES OF THE ROAD .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>NUMBERING, REGISTRATION &amp; VALIDATION DECALS</b>	
Boat Registration and Exemptions .....	14
Measuring Boat Length .....	14
How To Register a Boat .....	14
Permanent Registration Decal .....	14
Validation Decals .....	14
Display of Number and Decals .....	15
One-Time Registration Fees .....	16
Sale, Trade or Transfer of a Boat .....	16
<b>AIDS TO NAVIGATION.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>NO WAKE ZONES ON LAKES.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>NO WAKE ZONES - COMMERCIAL MARINAS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>CLOSURES AND USE RESTRICTIONS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Restrictions at Dams .....	18
Boat and Motor Restrictions .....	20
<b>SAFETY TIPS.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS.....</b>	<b>43</b>

# **RULES FOR OPERATING A BOAT IN MONTANA**

## **Operator Age Limit — Motorboats & Personal Watercraft (PWC)**

Children 12 years old or younger may not operate a motorboat or a personal watercraft (PWC) powered by a motor rated at more than 10 horsepower unless accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older.

Youths 13 and 14 years of age may not operate those vessels without possessing a valid Montana motorboat operator's safety certificate or evidence of completing an approved boating safety course, or unless accompanied by someone 18 years of age or older.

## **Motorboat Certificates**

The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks boat safety education program offers a home-study course or internet courses for motorboat and PWC operators. Persons 13 years of age or older who successfully complete the course will receive a motorboat operator's certificate. To obtain a motorboat home-study course packet contact your regional Fish, Wildlife & Parks office or call the state headquarters at 406-444-2535. To view the internet courses visit the [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) website and look under "Education."

## **Rented Boats and Watercraft**

A person must be 18 years or older to rent a motorboat or a PWC powered by a motor rated at more than 10 horsepower. All required equipment, as described in this booklet, and a copy of the rental agreement must be on board rented vessels.

## **Water Skiing and Using Other Towed Devices**

- Anyone towed by a boat (including wake boards) must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- Water skiing and other towed recreation is not allowed between sunset and sunrise.
- There must be at least two people in the towing boat: an operator and a person to observe the skier. If the operator is 12 or younger, the observer must be at least 18.
- Water skiers must not approach within 50 feet of swimmers or enter a designated swimming area.
- Be courteous, minimize repetitive passes on any one portion of shoreline, stay well away from the shoreline & docks, and keep music at reasonable level.

## **Personal Watercraft (PWC): Jet Ski, Wave Runner, Sea-Doo**

- All operators and riders must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- If the PWC is equipped with a lanyard-type cord that shuts off the engine if the operator falls off the craft, the lanyard must be attached to the operator's wrist or life jacket.
- A "no wake" speed must be maintained when within 200 feet of a dock, swimmer, swimming raft, non-motorized boat or anchored vessel.
- Stand-up PWC and PWC towing a waterskier must travel at the minimum speed necessary to operate when leaving from or returning to a dock or shore.
- All rules regarding safe operation of a boat apply to PWC.

## **Swimming Areas**

Designated swimming areas are marked with white and orange buoys. It is unlawful to deface, disturb, remove or relocate any authorized buoys.

## **Alcohol and Drug Use**

It is unlawful to operate or be in actual physical control of a motorboat, PWC, sailboat, water skis, surfboard, or similar device while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

## **Negligent Operation**

Operating a vessel in a manner which may endanger the personal health or damage the property of any person is considered negligent operation. A boat's owner is liable for any injury or damage resulting from negligent operation.

## **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)**

AIS are non-native organisms like mussels, snails, crayfish, clams, plants and pathogens. AIS cause harm to watercraft, fisheries and the environment, and can spread rapidly because there are no natural predators or competitors to keep them in check. All motorized and non-motorized watercraft must stop at all open inspection stations. Areas subject to search include but are not limited to the exterior of the vessel, livewells, bait buckets, bilges, and trailer. Watercraft found with AIS will be decontaminated and must pass a second inspection prior to launching. See back page for more details or visit:

**[www.CleanDrainDryMT.com](http://www.CleanDrainDryMT.com)**

## **Montana law prohibits:**

- Operating a boat in a careless manner including such things as weaving through congested traffic, passing unreasonably or unnecessarily close to another vessel, buzzing or wetting down others, and riding on the bow, gunwales or transom.
- Crossing or jumping the wake of another boat within 100 yards of the vessel or within 100 yards of a water skier being towed by the vessel (except when directly entering or leaving a marina or other watercraft docking/loading area).
- Traveling at a speed which does not permit bringing the boat to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead.
- A reckless approach to, departure from, or passage by a dock, ramp, diving board or float .

Observe all “no wake” and speed-limit signs located on the water. Boaters are responsible for any damage caused by their wake. Check with a local game warden or the Fish, Wildlife and Parks office for additional speed and use restrictions that may apply.

## **Harassment of Wildlife**

Powerboats, PWC, and sailboats may not be used to kill, capture, take, pursue, concentrate, drive or stir up any upland game birds, game or fur-bearing animals. Motor-driven vehicles may not be used to drive, molest, flush or harass any game animal or game bird while hunting.

## **Launching and Mooring**

Boats must be launched from established launching areas if provided. Boat owners should prepare their vessel for launching before parking at the boat ramp, should launch the vessel quickly, and move the tow vehicle so that others may use the area.

Boats may not be left unattended while moored or attached to a public boat dock. Docks are to be used only for loading and unloading unless otherwise posted.

## **Discharge of Waste**

It is illegal to discharge any garbage, refuse, waste or sewage into or near the water. Boats equipped with toilets or porta-potties must dispose of waste properly. Because there are so few marine pumpout stations in Montana, boaters should check on the local availability of waste disposal stations before

using their on-board facilities. A listing of the RV dump sites is available at the [stateparks.mt.gov/camping](https://stateparks.mt.gov/camping) website.

## **Loading Passengers and Gear**

- Do not load a boat with passengers or cargo beyond its safe carrying capacity, taking into consideration weather and operating conditions.
- Distribute the weight of passengers and gear evenly.
- Keep gear low and centered.
- Do not stand or make quick, unbalanced movements in small boats.

## **Motor Size**

It is illegal as well as unsafe to overpower a boat. The U.S. Coast Guard Capacity Plate on each boat provides the recommended horse power for that vessel.

## **Noise Limitations**

Motorboats and PWC may not emit noise in excess of 86 decibels measured at a distance of 50 feet. At idle speed, exhaust noise may not be in excess of 90 decibels measured one meter from the muffler.

More restrictive noise standards are in effect for Flathead Lake (Flathead and Lake Counties), Echo Lake (Flathead County) and Swan Lake (Lake County) because of population density and heavy recreational use. On these waterways, a person may not operate a motorboat or PWC in proximity to the shoreline if the noise emitted is greater than 75 decibels measured at shoreline in accordance with the shoreline sound level measurement procedure. Certain exceptions are made for state-sanctioned regattas or boat races and by special permit.

## **Races, Regattas and Other Marine Events**

Written permission from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is necessary to conduct a boating race, regatta or other marine event on Montana's waters. Letters of application must be sent at least 30 days prior to the scheduled event. Mail to: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Boating Law Enforcement, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701.

## Restricted Areas — General

**(See also: Closures and Use Restrictions on page 18)**

- Do not anchor in a position that obstructs a passageway ordinarily used by other vessels.
- Do not operate or beach your motorboat within a designated swimming area or within 20 feet of the exterior boundary of a swimming area marked by white and orange buoys.
- Do not operate a boat within 75 feet of a person engaged in fishing or hunting waterfowl unless it is unavoidable. If unavoidable travel at no wake speed or at the minimum speed necessary to maintain upstream progress.
- Do not operate a motorboat within 200 feet of a tow-float or buoy displaying a red flag with a white slash indicating a “diver down” except by use of sail or oar. In an emergency or if there is insufficient water on either side to avoid passing through the 200-foot safety zone, do not exceed the “no wake” speed. (Note: the burden of proof of the necessity of passing through the safety zone is on the boat operator.) **See Diver Down Flag Warning on page 7.**
- Do not operate your motorboat within 50 feet of a swimmer in the water except for boats towing water skiers.

## Local and Federal Regulations

In addition to state boating laws, local government and federal agency regulations may apply to boating activities in some areas. Contact the county sheriff’s office or the federal agency for the area where you will be boating to find out if any additional regulations are in effect.

## Accidents, Collisions and Casualties

Boating accident reports are required by law and provide valuable information for use in the prevention of future boating accidents. An accident must be reported immediately to the local sheriff’s office or game warden if it caused:

- The death or disappearance of any person
- An injury requiring medical treatment beyond first-aid
- Property damage in excess of \$100

The operator of a boat involved in a collision, accident or other casualty must:

- Render practical assistance, without putting self or others in danger, to persons affected by the accident.

- Give his or her name, address and identification of the boat in writing to any person injured and to the owner of any damaged property.

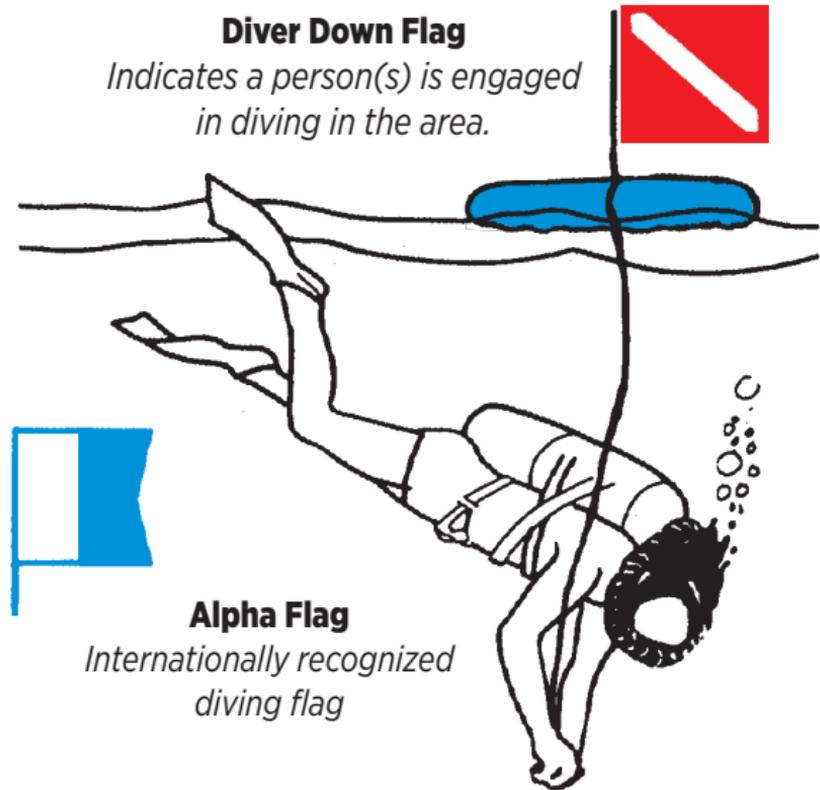
Boating accident report forms are available from game wardens or any Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks office.

## Diver Down Flag Warning

Boaters must stay at least 200 feet away from a “diver down” flag. If a boat must approach this warning flag, it must do so at a “no wake” speed.

The commonly used diver down warning flags are:

- 1) the blue and white International Code Flag “A” (alpha)
- 2) a red flag with a diagonal white stripe



## Enforcement

Authorized officers of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) have peace officer status for enforcement of the boating regulations. Sheriffs, peace officers, and U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement officers also have authority to enforce these provisions. FWP wardens are authorized to stop, halt or inspect vessels in order to enforce the laws of this state.

## Penalties

A person convicted of violating Montana’s boating laws or regulations may be fined up to \$500 and sentenced for up to six months in jail.

## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Montana and federal laws require that basic safety items be on board all boats and stand-up paddle boards (SUP).

### Flotation Devices

- U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) or life jackets must fit the intended wearer, be readily accessible, and be in good condition.
- Children under 12 years of age must wear a life jacket on a boat less than 26 feet in length that is in motion.
- There must be a wearable life jacket (Type I, II, or III) for each person on vessels less than 16 feet long (including canoes and kayaks of any length). A Type IV throwable device may not be substituted for wearable life jackets.
- Vessels 16 feet and longer must have one Type I, II or III life jacket for each person on board. In addition, one U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type IV throwable device must be on board and be immediately available for use.
- A Type V life jacket may be used in place of any life jacket if specifically approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for the activity in which the wearer is engaged. The Type V life jacket must be worn at all times to be acceptable.
- Sailboard operators (wind-surfers) under 15 years of age must wear a life jacket at all times. If two or more persons are occupying a sailboard, each person must wear a life jacket.
- Anyone towed by a boat must wear a life jacket.
- All persons operating or riding on a PWC must wear a life jacket.

### Life Jackets and Type IV Throwable Device

#### Type I: Wearable Off-shore Life Jacket

Best for open, rough or remote waters where rescue may not be immediate. Designed to turn an unconscious person face-up.



#### Type II: Wearable Near Shore Life Vest



Good for calm water where fast rescue is likely. A good choice for children when equipped with a strap to buckle between their legs.

### Type III: Wearable Floatation Aid

Generally the most comfortable to wear for water sports. Available in many colors and styles including vests and float coats. Will not turn an unconscious person face-up.



### Type IV: A Throwable Device — Not Wearable

Includes boat cushions, ring buoys and horseshoe buoys. Designed to be thrown to a person in the water and grasped to the chest, not worn.



### Type V: A Special Use Device

Intended for specific activities. May be used instead of another PFD only if used according to conditions printed on the label. Includes deck suits, pullover vests, work vests and some hybrid life jackets. Not intended for children under age 16.



## Fire Extinguishers

A fire extinguisher is classified by the type of fire it is meant to extinguish and its size. Extinguishers approved for motorboats are hand-portable of either B-I or B-II classification. A type B extinguisher is intended for flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil and grease fires.

Fire Extinguisher Requirements		
Boat Length	Without fixed extinguishing system in machinery space	With fixed extinguishing system in machinery space
Less than 26 feet*	1 B-I	None
26 feet to less than 40 feet	2 B-I or 1 B-II	1 B-I
40 feet to 65 feet	3 B-I or 1 B-II and 1 B-I	2 B-I or 1 B-II

All motorboats must carry on board a U.S. Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher as listed below:

\* Exception: motorboats less than 26 feet long that are propelled by an outboard motor and are completely open construction (no closed spaces where gasoline fumes may be trapped) are not required to have a fire extinguisher.

## Backfire Flame Arresters

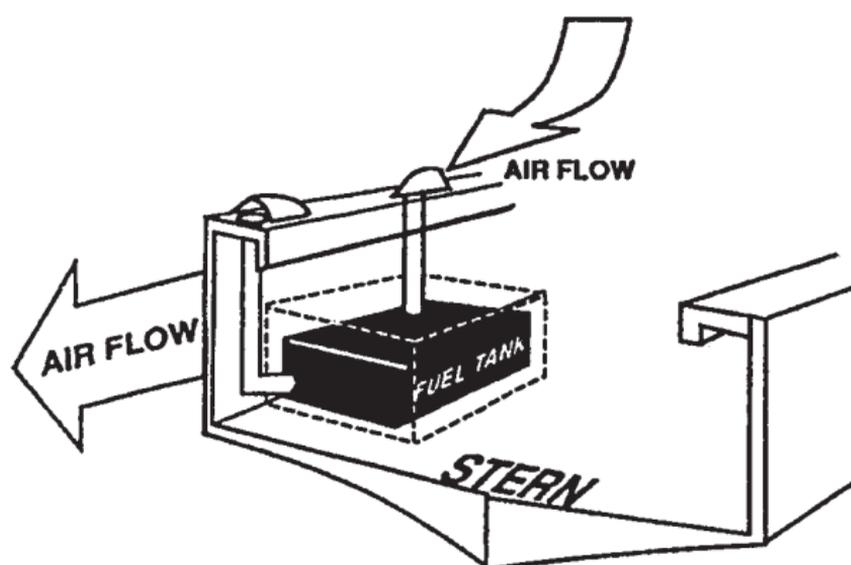
Every inboard gasoline engine must be equipped with a backfire flame arrester that is securely attached to the carburetor and in proper working order.

## Ventilation

All boats of closed construction (the engine or fuel compartments are not open to the atmosphere) and which use gasoline as fuel must be equipped with a ventilation system to remove explosive vapors from the bilges of engine and fuel tank compartments. The explosive vapors are heavier than air and accumulate in the bottom of the boat without proper venting, creating an extremely hazardous condition.

Montana requires at least two ventilation intake ducts fitted with cowls or their equivalent to vent bilges and fuel tank compartments. At least one intake duct must be installed so that it extends to the point at least midway to the bilge, or at least below the level of the carburetor air intake. At least one exhaust duct must be installed so as to extend to the lower portion of the bilge. The duct should not be located so that a normal accumulation of bilge water would obstruct it.

Remember to adequately ventilate your boat before starting it by running your blower for at least 4 minutes — especially after fueling.



## Whistles, Horns and Bells

- Sirens may not be used or installed except on authorized emergency vessels.
- A motorboat 16 to 26 feet long must carry some means of producing an efficient sound signal that is audible for one-half mile, such as a whistle or a horn.
- A motorboat more than 26 feet long must have on board a bell and a whistle or horn capable of making a sound that is audible for one mile.
- It is advised that all vessels carry a whistle or horn or some other sound signaling device to signal your intentions and signal your position during periods of reduced visibility.

### Maneuvering and warning signals:

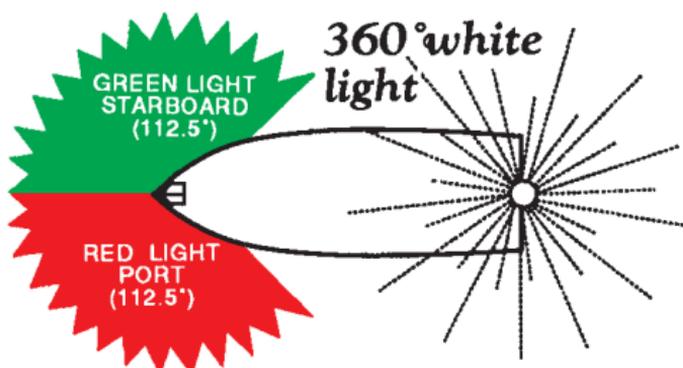
- One Long Blast:** warning signal  
(coming out of a slip)
- One Short Blast:** I will pass you on my port (left) side
- Two Short Blasts:** I will pass you on my starboard (right) side
- Three Short Blasts:** I am in reverse
- Five or More Blasts:** danger signal

## Navigational Lights

Between sunset and sunrise and at other times of restricted visibility, vessels in operation must display navigational lights. All white lights required by the rules must be visible from a distance of at least two miles. All colored lights must be visible for a distance of at least one mile.

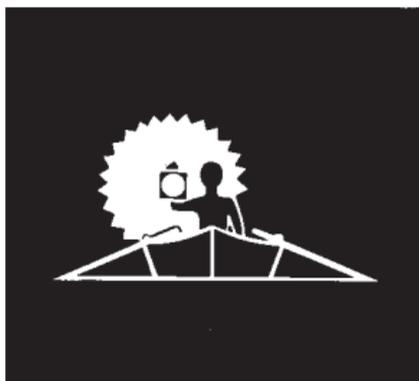
Navigation lights include:

- A green light on the starboard (right) side of the boat
- A red light on the port (left) side of the boat
- A white light that is visible in all directions (usually located on the stern and higher than the red and green lights)



Manually propelled (non-motorized) boats may exhibit navigation lights or instead carry a white light which can be exhibited in time to prevent a collision.

Boats at anchor outside of a designated mooring area must display an all-around white anchor light between sunset and sunrise.



**Manually propelled boat**

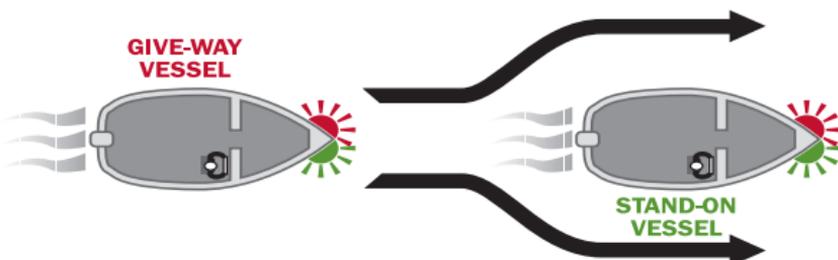
**Motorized Boat**



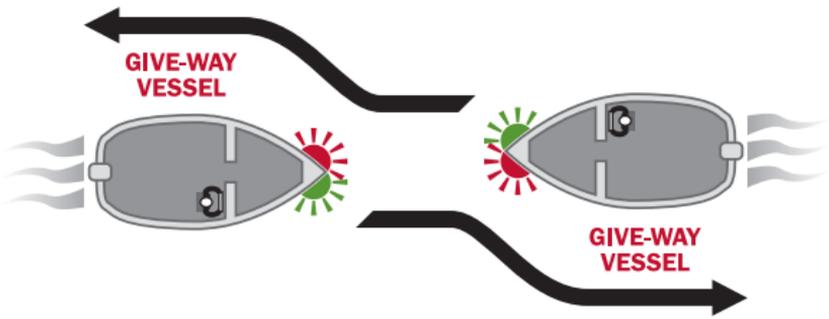
## **RULES OF THE ROAD**

These rules of the road are the traffic laws of Montana's waterways. Like other traffic laws, they are legally binding on vessel operators. The rules dictate who has the right of way when vessels meet in open water and in crowded anchorages.

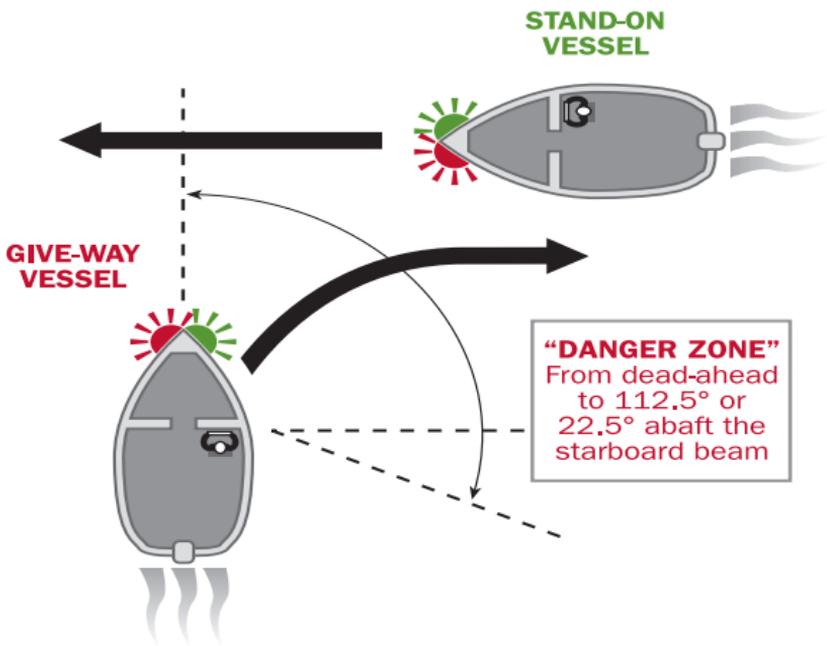
- Sailboats and manually powered vessels have the right of way over motorized boats in nearly all situations. Motorboats generally should stay clear of sailboats and manually powered vessels and not create a wake which may cause them trouble or to be swamped.
- When overtaking another vessel, the boat being overtaken (stand-on vessel) has the right of way and must hold course and speed. The passing boat (give-way vessel) is required to stay clear.
- When meeting head on, keep to the right. Boats going downstream have the right of way over boats going upstream.



- When two boats are meeting at right angles, the boat on the right (stand-on vessel) has the right of way. The give-way vessel on the left must slow down and permit the stand-on vessel to pass.
- Always operate a vessel at a safe speed so that



you are able to stop within the assured visible distance ahead or take proper and effective action to avoid collision.



- Refer to Rules for Operating a Boat in Montana beginning on page 2.

## **NUMBERING, REGISTRATION, & VALIDATION DECALS**

### **Boat Registration and Exemptions**

Sailboats 12 feet long and longer and all motorboats and PWC 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 which will not be in Montana for more than 90 consecutive days.

Out-of-state boats that are within Montana for more than 90 consecutive days must be registered at the County Treasurer's office in the county where the boat will be principally used.

### **Measuring Boat Length**

To determine the length of a boat, measure the distance down the centerline from the foremost part to the aftermost part of the boat. Do not include bowsprits, rudders, outboard motors, brackets, or similar fittings in the measurement.

### **How to Register a Boat**

In Montana, boat owners must obtain a certificate of ownership (title) and certificate of number (registration) and pay all fees to the County Treasurer in the county where the owner resides. The certificate of number must be carried on board the boat and be available for inspection whenever the boat is in operation. Owners of a titled motorboat must notify the county treasurer within a reasonable amount of time when the owners address changes and provide the county treasurer with the new address.

Failure to pay the fee in lieu of tax is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine equal to four times the applicable fee.

### **Permanent Registration Decal**

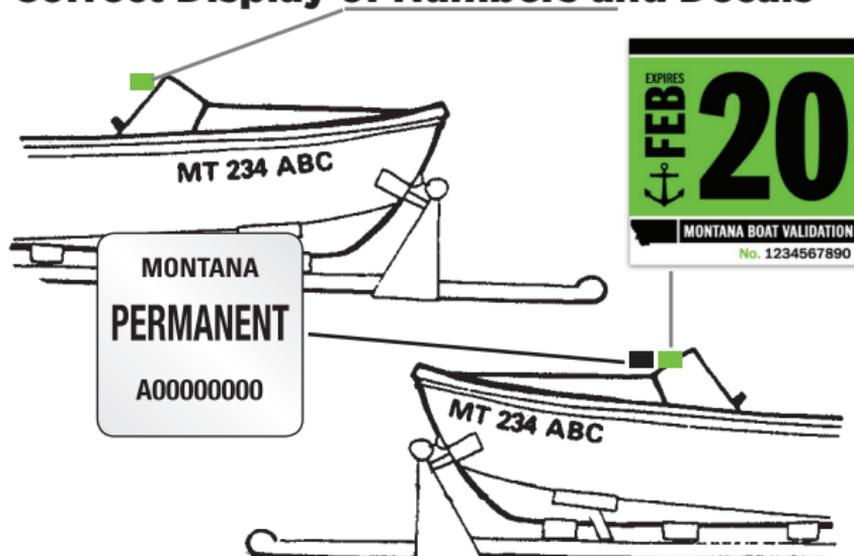
The boat owner will receive one permanent registration decal as proof of payment of fees in lieu of tax. The permanent decal is white in color and is valid until the current owner sells the vessel.

### **Validation Decals**

All motorboats, sailboats or PWC that are registered must display two validation decals. Validation decals

are green in color and are in effect for a 3-year period expiring February 28, 2020. Validation decals may be obtained, free of charge, at any Fish, Wildlife and Parks regional office or at the [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) website.

## Correct Display of Numbers and Decals



## Display of Number and Decals

The boat's registration number must:

1. Be painted on or attached to each outboard side of the bow (forward half) of the vessel;
2. Read from left to right
3. be vertical block letters at least 3 inches in height;
4. Be a color contrasting with the background color of the boat;
5. Be as high above the water line as practical and still be visible;
6. Be maintained in a legible condition;
7. Contain a space or hyphen separating the "MT" from the number/letter suffix.

Example: **MT 234 ABC** or **MT-234-ABC**

- No other numbers or letters may be displayed on the bow of the boat.
- Boat owners receive one permanent registration decal (white) that must be securely attached to the left or port side of the vessel. The decal must be spaced three inches aft (rearward) and directly in line with the boat number displayed on the left side of the vessel.
- Boat owners receive two validation decals. One decal must be attached immediately after (rearward) of the permanent registration decal on the left (port) side and one decal immediately before (rearward) of the identifying number on the right (starboard) side of the boat. Refer to the diagram above.

<b>Certificate of Ownership (title)</b>	\$10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All motorboats, including motorized canoes, motorized rubber rafts, motorized pontoons, and personal watercraft less than 16 feet in length</li> <li>• Sailboats at least 12 feet in length but less than 16 feet in length</li> </ul>	\$65.50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All motorboats, including motorized canoes, motorized rubber rafts, motorized pontoons, and personal watercraft at least 16 feet in length but less than 19 feet in length</li> <li>• Sailboats at least 16 feet in length but less than 19 feet in length</li> </ul>	\$125.50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All motorboats, including motorized canoes, motorized rubber rafts, motorized pontoons, and personal watercraft 19 feet in length or longer</li> <li>• Sailboats 19 feet in length or longer</li> </ul>	\$295.50

## One-Time Registration Fees

### Sale, Trade or Transfer of a Boat Which Must Be Registered

When ownership of a boat changes, the previous owner must sign the back of the certificate of ownership before a county treasurer, deputy county treasurer or notary public.

Within 40 days, the new owner must apply for a change of certificate of ownership (title) and registration and validation decals. If the boat is operated during the 40-day application period, a temporary registration permit issued by the county treasurer must be kept on board and shown upon request.

A boat owner also must contact the county treasurer within a reasonable amount of time when there is a change of address or upon the sale, destruction, abandonment or theft of the boat.

All boats sold or manufactured in Montana must comply with all applicable equipment requirements.

## AIDS TO NAVIGATION

### Hazards

Individuals and non-profit organizations may identify hazards on state waterways by placing a sign or marker at the hazard. Only department approved signs, markers or buoys may be used to mark a hazard. A white plastic milk jug attached by a cord to the hazard may also be used. The sign or marker must:

- Display the name and telephone number of the individual or nonprofit organization that placed it.
- Be maintained or removed by the individual or

nonprofit organization when dictated by changing water conditions or seasonal changes.

- Be placed only to signal a hazard in the waterway. They may not be used to mark swim areas, safe channels, speed limits or water skiing courses.
- Be located on state waterways. They are not allowed on navigable waters with federal jurisdiction.

## **Placement of Water Obstacles**

No person shall place any permanent or anchored water obstacle on the waters of this state without a permit issued by Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) or a federal, state, or county entity with authority. A water obstacle includes a pier, floating dock, platform, shoreline dock greater than 75 feet from shoreline, navigational aid, slalom course, jump/rail or inflatable recreational equipment located more than 75 feet from shoreline. Water obstacles that are permitted by an entity with authority are not required to obtain an additional permit from FWP. Please contact any FWP office for details on the permitting process.

## **NO-WAKE ZONES ON LAKES IN THE WESTERN FISHING DISTRICT**

### **Lakes 35 Acres or Less**

All watercraft operating on public lakes and reservoirs in the western fishing district that are 35 acres or less of surface water are limited to no-wake speed. These lakes have been determined 35 acres or less by means of the 1:100,000-scale hydrography layer within the department's geographic information system (GIS).

The list of lakes can be found on the

**fwp.mt.gov** website or call 406-444-2535.

### **Lakes Greater than 35 Acres**

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.

#### **The exceptions include:**

- PWC which must maintain a minimum operating speed to remain upright and maneuver in the water may travel at that minimum operating speed following the most direct route through the no-wake zone to and from shore.
- Motorized watercraft towing a skier from or to a dock or the shore, except that watercraft must travel the most direct route through the no-wake zone.

- The following lakes located with the Thompson Chain of Lakes in Lincoln county:
  - *Crystal Lake*
  - *Horseshoe Lake*
  - *Loon Lake*
  - *Lower Thompson Lake*
  - *McGregor Lake*
  - *Middle Thompson Lake*
  - *Upper lobe of Upper Thompson Lake*
- Echo Lake in Flathead County is limited to a 200 feet from shoreline no wake speed except for the following areas:(a) the upper three islands in the southwest corner of section 5, approximately 1/4 mile southeast of the entrance of Blackies Bay; (b) the narrow corridor that serves as the entrance and exit to Blackies Bay located in the northwest corner of Echo Lake; and (c) the narrow corridor that serves as the entrance and exit to Causeway Bay located in the northeast corner of Echo Lake.
- Lake Five in Flathead County

## **NO-WAKE ZONES NEAR COMMERCIAL MARINAS**

All watercraft are limited to no wake speed surrounding commercial marinas as buoyed. The no-wake zone may not be more than 300 feet without prior approval from FWP.

**NO WAKE SPEED** is defined as a speed whereby there is no “white” water in the track or path of the vessel or in created waves immediate to the vessel.

## **CLOSURES AND USE RESTRICTIONS**

The following closures and public use restrictions are in effect for reasons of public health, safety or protection of property. Only authorized exceptions such as search and rescue, scientific purposes or special events with the director’s prior written approval are exempt. Some waterways have multiple restrictions that apply, so be sure to check all of the following sections for the body of water you plan to use. Other dams not listed here may also be posted for restricted access.

### **RESTRICTIONS AT DAMS**

The following dams are closed to all boating, sailing, floating and swimming or closed to all public access as marked by boat restraining systems or signs.

<b>Name of Dam</b>	<b>Restriction</b>
<b>Black Eagle Dam</b>	500’ above dam to 100’ below the waterfalls. Closed to all public access below ordinary high-water mark from the dam to 100’ below the waterfalls.

<b>Canyon Ferry Dam</b>	The area immediately above and below the dam is closed to all watercraft as posted or marked.
<b>Cochrane Dam</b>	500' above the dam to 500' below the dam.
<b>Flint Creek Dam</b>	100' above the dam to 150' below the dam.
<b>Hauser Dam</b>	250' above the dam to 600' below the dam. Closed to all public access below ordinary high-water mark from the dam to 100' below the dam from December 1 to April 1.
<b>Hebgen Dam</b>	100' above the dam to 100' below the outlet works.
<b>Holter Dam</b>	150' above the dam to 900' below the dam.
<b>Sèliš Ksanka Qlispè Dam (SKQ Dam)</b>	The area immediately above the dam is closed to all watercraft as posted or marked.
<b>Madison Dam</b>	600' above the dam to 700' below the dam.
<b>Morony Dam</b>	500' above the dam to 500' below the dam.
<b>Mystic Dam</b>	100' above the dam to the dam. Closed to all public access below ordinary high-water mark from the south side of West Rosebud Creek from the powerhouse to the USGS concrete weir.
<b>Rainbow Dam</b>	600' above the dam to 100' below the waterfalls. Closed to all public access below ordinary high-water mark from the dam to 4,400' below the dam to the east end of the Tailrace Island adjacent to the Rainbow dam powerhouse.
<b>Ryan Dam</b>	500' above the dam to 100' below the waterfalls. Closed to all public access below ordinary high-water mark from the dam to the east end of Ryan Island.
<b>Thompson Falls Dam</b>	1,020' above the dam to 500' below the dam.
<b>Toston Dam</b>	Between the dam and 300' downstream and the reservoir between the dam and the boat barrier.
<b>W. Rosebud Dam</b>	100' above the dam to the dam.

Body of Water	County	Motorboat Restrictions				Description & Exceptions *Visit <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov">fwp.mt.gov</a> for updates and changes to these regulations
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed	
All rivers & streams in the following counties:						
Beaverhead County		X				
Broadwater County		X			Exception: Missouri River downriver from Broadwater-Gallatin county line.	
Gallatin County		X			Exception: Missouri River downriver from Headwaters State Park.	
Jefferson County		X				
Madison County		X				
Park County		X			Exception: Yellowstone River downriver from Highway 89 Bridge, near mouth of Shields River.	
Silver Bow County		X				

Alva Lake	Missoula					X	
Alvord Lake	Lincoln					X	
Arapooish Pond	Big Horn				X		
Banana Lake	Lincoln					X	Banana Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Bearmouth Rest Area Pond	Granite				X		
Bearpaw Lake	Hill				X		
Beaver Creek Reservoir	Hill			X		X	
Beaver Lake (near Whitefish)	Flathead					X	5 am through 10 am and 7 pm through 11 pm each day

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions *Visit <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov">fwp.mt.gov</a> for updates and changes to these regulations			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Beaverhead River	Beaverhead, Madison				Commercial operators must comply with the restrictions listed in the information provided with their permit.
Beavertail Pond	Missoula	X			
Big Hole River	Silver Bow, Madison, Deer Lodge, Beaverhead		X		All floaters are limited to a total of 2 launches at or near each official access site each day. Commercial operators must comply with the restrictions listed in the information provided with their permit.
Bighorn River	Bighorn		X		From Afterbay Dam to the Bighorn Fishing Access Site.

Bitterroot River	Missoula, Ravalli			X		From its headwaters to the confluence with the Clark Fork River watercraft powered by 20 horsepower or less are permitted from October 1 through January 31. Floating of any kind, including the use of a tube, raft, vessel, or similar device, is prohibited on Fridays from July 1 through September 15 from Painted Rocks Dam to Applebury Forest Service Site.
Blackfoot River & Tributaries	Lewis & Clark, Missoula, Powell			X		From their headwaters to the confluence with Clark Fork River. Watch for closure between Weigh Station FAS and the confluence of the Blackfoot and Clark Fork River due to bridge construction.
Blanchard Lake	Missoula		X			On Clearwater River
Bootjack Lake	Lincoln				X	Bootjack Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Bozeman Pond	Gallatin			X		

Body of Water	County	Motor Restrictions				Description & Exceptions *Visit <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov">fwp.mt.gov</a> for updates and changes to these regulations
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed	
Branum Pond	Custer		X			
Brown's Lake	Powell					Closed to all boats from April 1 to July 15, that portion of lake as marked or posted.
Brush Lake	Sheridan				X	Brush Lake State Park boat ramp, dock and swimming area as buoyed.
Cad Lake	Lincoln				X	Cad Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.

Canyon Ferry Reservoir	Broadwater, Lewis & Clark		X	<p><b>In Broadwater county</b> controlled no wake speed in the following areas: Within 300 feet of docks or as buoyed at White Earth boat launch. Silos Campground , 300 feet from the shoreline between Gass Bay to Seaman's Bay, or as marked by buoys.</p> <p><b>In Lewis and Clark County</b> controlled no wake speed in the following areas: within 300 feet of docks or as buoyed, in Chinaman's Bay, Maggie Bay, and Shannon Boat Launch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hellgate Bay, 300 feet from boat ramp along southwest shoreline, and extending north to the opposite shore;</li> <li>• Court Sheriff Bay from the mouth of the bay or as buoyed. The mouth of Court Sheriff Bay is identified as the area from the tip of the narrow peninsula that extends southeast from Canyon Ferry Village to the shore directly east.</li> <li>• Kayley Bay is limited to a controlled no wake speed, from approximately 500 yards from the mouth of the stream entering the lake and extending southwest to the point of the bay that narrows at the peninsula at Tranquility Drive on the north side of the bay, to the opposite shore southeast, or as buoyed.</li> </ul> <p>AIS rules restrict launching to certain sites. All watercraft must be inspected/decontaminated when coming off. Visit <b>www.CleanDrainDryMT.com</b> for details.</p>
------------------------	---------------------------------	--	---	--

Body of Water	County	Motor Restrictions				Description & Exceptions *Visit <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov">fwp.mt.gov</a> for updates and changes to these regulations
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed	
Carpenter Lake (Tetrault Lake)	Lincoln	X				
Carter Ponds (Upper & Lower)	Fergus			X		
Castle Rock Reservoir	Rosebud	X				No vessels of any type nor swimming are permitted within 100 yards of the intake structure.
Church Slough (on Flathead River)	Flathead		X			Closed to all watercraft from March 1 to April 10.
Cibid Lake	Lincoln			X		Cibid Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.

Clark Fork River & tributaries	Deer Lodge, Granite, Mineral, Missoula, Powell		X		<p>Exceptions:</p> <p>(1) From Kelly Island (Spurgin Road) Fishing Access Site boat ramp and the Grass Valley Ditch Diversion to Harper's Bridge Fishing Access Site motorized watercraft, except PWC, are permitted May 1 to June 15; and motorized watercraft 20 horsepower or less are permitted October 1 through January 31.</p> <p>(2) From Harper's Bridge Fishing Access Site to St. John's Fishing Access Site motorized watercraft, except PWC, are permitted October 1 to June 15; and motorized watercraft 20 horsepower or less are permitted June 16 through September 30.</p> <p>(3) From mouth of Fish Creek to the Montana border.</p> 
Clearwater Lake	Missoula	X			

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Clearwater River	Missoula			X	From the outlet of Seeley Lake to the first bridge downstream from Camp Paxson swim dock. From Boy Scout Road Bridge north of Seeley Lake to the mouth of Clearwater River at the north end of Seeley Lake.
Cochrane Reservoir	Cascade				Closed to all boating, sailing, floating, swimming, personal watercraft use, and waterfowl hunting.
Colt Lake	Missoula	X			
Cooney Reservoir	Carbon			X	All of Willow Creek arm as buoyed. North Shore and Marshall Cove within 300 feet of dock, as buoyed. Boats pulling, taking off with and landing water skiers will travel in general counterclockwise direction.
Cottonwood Lake	Missoula	X			

Crystal Lake	Fergus	X					
East Gallatin Pond	Gallatin		X				
Elsina Lake	Missoula	X					
Ennis Lake	Madison		X				Kobayashi Bay swimming area as marked by buoys.
Fennon Slough (on Flathead River)	Flathead				X		
Fitzpatrick Lake	Toole		X				
Flathead Lake	Flathead				X		From Bigfork Bay to 100 yards west of Highway 35 bridge; as buoyed. Cromwell Channel at its narrowest section approximately 800 feet in length or as buoyed.
Flathead River - Church Slough	Flathead		X				Closed to all watercraft from March 1 to April 10.
Flathead River - Fennon Slough	Flathead					X	

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Flathead River - North Fork	Flathead	X	X		Closed to motorboats from Canadian border to Camas bridge. Closed to motorboats greater than 10 horsepower from Camas bridge to confluence of Middle Fork.
Flathead River - Middle Fork	Flathead	X	X		Closed to motorboats from Bob Marshall Wilderness boundary to Highway 2 bridge at Essex. Closed to motorboats greater than 10 horsepower from Highway 2 bridge at Essex to confluence of South Fork.
Flathead River - South Fork	Flathead	X	X		Closed to motorboats from Spotted Bear Footbridge to Bob Marshall Wilderness boundary. Closed to motorboats greater than 10 horsepower from Spotted Bear Footbridge to Hungry Horse Reservoir at full pool (3850 feet elevation).
Forest Lake	Meagher		X		
Fort Peck Dredge Cut Trout Pond	Valley			X	

**Description & Exceptions**

\*Visit [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) for updates and changes to these regulations

Fort Peck Reservoir	Garfield, McCone, Valley				X	Rock Creek Marina & Hell Creek Marina within 300 feet of docks or as buoyed. Duck Creek Bay as marked by buoys.
Frenchtown Pond	Missoula			X		
Fresno Reservoir	Hill				X	The area around the Fresno boat club docks, public boat ramp area, swimming and beach area as buoyed and signed.
Gartside Reservoir	Richland		X			
Georgetown Lake	Deer Lodge, Granite				X	From the mouth of Stuart Mill Bay as marked by buoys and continuing to shore.
Harpers Lake	Missoula		X			
Harrison Lake (Willow Creek Reservoir)	Madison				X	All of Willow Creek Arm and Norwegian Arm as buoyed 6 pm - 11 am.

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Hauser Reservoir	Lewis & Clark			X	Lakeside marina and Hauser Lake State Park at Black Sandy beach within 300 feet of the docks or as buoyed. Spokane Creek Bay within 500 feet from mouth of the bay as buoyed. From Canyon Ferry Dam to Riverside boat ramp. Devil's Elbow Campground from the shore to 100 feet into the river channel or as buoyed. Clark's Bay from shore to 300 feet from shore or as buoyed. York Bridge fishing access site within 300 feet of boat ramp and dock area as buoyed. White Sandy Recreation Area within 300 feet of docks and swim area as buoyed.
Hebgen Lake	Gallatin			X	Rainbow Point Bay as buoyed; Loneshamehurst campground within 200 feet of shoreline or as buoyed.
Helena Valley Regulating Reservoir	Lewis & Clark	X			Swimming and wading are prohibited except when launching or removing a vessel from the reservoir. Pets may not occupy the water.

\*Visit [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) for updates and changes to these regulations

Henry Reservoir	Toole				X		
Hidden Lake	Missoula	X					
Holland Lake	Missoula					X	Holland Lake Lodge and the Bay Loop campground within 300 feet or as buoyed.
Holter Lake	Lewis & Clark					X	Bureau of Land Management boat landing as buoyed, Juniper Bay, Log Gulch, Departure Point, and Merriweather Camp.
Holter Lake	Lewis & Clark						No water skiing, tubing, wake surfing on Saturday, Sunday or legal holidays from the mouth of the canyon on upper Holter Lake to Gates of the Mountains near Mann Gulch, as marked.
Hyalite Reservoir	Gallatin					X	
Inez Lake	Missoula						Boats pulling, taking off with and landing water skiers will travel in general counter clockwise direction.
Johnson Reservoir	Dawson	X					
Kilbrennan Lake	Lincoln					X	
Lake Alva	Missoula					X	

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions *Visit <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov">fwp.mt.gov</a> for updates and changes to these regulations			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Lake Dinah	Missoula		X		
Lake Elmo	Yellowstone	X			
Lake Elwell (Tiber Reservoir)	Liberty, Toole				AIS rules restrict launching to certain sites. All watercraft must be inspected/decontaminated when coming off. Visit <a href="http://www.CleanDrainDryMT.com">www.CleanDrainDryMT.com</a> for details.
Lake Five	Flathead				Personal watercraft are prohibited. Boats pulling water skiers, tubers, etc must travel in a counterclockwise direction.
Lake Helena	Lewis & Clark			X	From April 1 to the opening day of waterfowl season.
Lake Koocanusa	Lincoln			X	Cripple Horse Bay within 300 feet of dock or as buoyed.
Lake Marshall	Missoula	X			

Lavon Lake	Lincoln					X	Lavon Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes. To include the channel between Lavon and Crystal lakes.
Leon Lake	Lincoln					X	Leon Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Lilly Pad Lake	Lincoln					X	Lilly Pad Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Little Loon Lake	Lincoln					X	Little Loon Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Little McGregor Lake	Flathead					X	Little McGregor Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Little Rainbow Lake	Lincoln					X	Little Rainbow Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Lost Lake	Lincoln					X	Lost Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Lower Carter Pond	Fergus					X	
Middle Thompson Lake	Lincoln					X	Only the channel between Middle and Lower Thompson lakes.

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Missouri River (see also Canyon Ferry, Fort Peck, Hauser and Holter Reservoirs)	Gallatin, Broadwater, Lewis & Clark, Cascade		X		In Broadwater County the Missouri River is closed to all swimming, boating, sailing and floating in the following areas: between Toston dam and 300 feet downstream of the dam; and the reservoir between the Toston dam and the boat barrier. Closed to the use of motorized watercraft from the Burlington Northern Railway Bridge No. 119.4 at Broadwater Bay in Great Falls to Black Eagle. Vessels are limited to a controlled no wake speed, as defined in ARM 12.11.101, 200 feet from the western shore as buoyed from the Warden Bridge on 10th Avenue to the Burlington Northern Railway Bridge No. 119.4 from May 1 to September 30. Personal watercraft prohibited on the headwaters of the Missouri River downstream to its confluence with Prewett Creek, except in Missouri River reservoirs, and including all tributaries but not their reservoirs.
Missouri River	Lewis & Clark			X	No-wake speed from Hauser Dam downstream to Beaver Creek.
Missouri River	Blaine, Chouteau, Fergus, Phillips				Contact the Bureau of Land Management for seasonal boating restrictions on the “wild and scenic” portion of river from Fort Benton to James Kipp Recreation Area (Fred Robinson Bridge). Phone 877-256-3252 or 406-622-4000.

Morony Reservoir	Cascade						Closed to all boating, sailing, floating, swimming, personal watercraft use, and waterfowl hunting.
Morrell Lake	Missoula				X		
Myron Lake	Lincoln					X	Myron Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Park Lake	Jefferson				X		
Pelican Point Fishing Access Ponds	Cascade				X		
Placid Creek	Missoula					X	From its headwaters to the confluence with Placid Lake.
Rainbow Lake	Lincoln					X	Rainbow Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Rainy Lake	Missoula			X			
Ryan Reservoir	Cascade						Closed to all boating, sailing, floating, swimming, personal watercraft use, and waterfowl hunting.
Salmon Lake	Missoula					X	Clearwater River from Placid Lake Road Bridge to Salmon lake; that portion known as Legendary Lodge Narrows near the south end of lake; and the area south of Salmon Cove Point (Eagle's Nest) to the lake's outlet.

Body of Water	County	Description & Exceptions			
		Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed
Savage Lake	Lincoln			X	During the hours of 5 am - 10 am and 7 pm - 11 pm each day.
Seeley Lake	Missoula			X	Boats pulling, taking off with and landing water skiers will travel in general counterclock wise direction. No wake speed in the northern most portion of lake from where Deer Creek flows into the west side of the lake, following a straight line across the lake to where Rice Creek flows into the east side of the lake and continuing north to shore, as marked.
Silver Lake	Deer Lodge				Closed to all boating, sailing, floating, and swimming within 100 feet of the intake structure as identified by buoys or signs.
Smith River	Cascade, Meagher		X		Requires a recreational float permit.
South Sandstone Reservoir	Fallon			X	

Spook Lake	Missoula	X					
Spring Meadow lake	Lewis & Clark			X			
Summit Lake	Missoula	X					
Swan Lake	Lake				X		Including northern outlet of Swan Lake approximately 3/4 of a mile south to the southern tip of the southern most island or as buoyed.
Swan River	Lake, Flathead					X	No-wake speed from the mouth of Swan Lake upstream to Porcupine Bridge approximately 4½ miles. From July 1 to September 15 no-wake speed or the minimum operating speed necessary to progress upstream from where the Swan River flows out of Swan Lake in Lake County to where Bear Creek enters the Swan River in Flathead County.
Tetrault Lake (Carpenter Lake)	Lincoln			X			
Thompson Lakes	Lincoln					X	Refer to Middle or Upper Thompson lakes for restrictions.
Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell)	Liberty, Toole						AIS rules restrict launching to certain sites. All watercraft must be inspected/decontaminated when coming off. Visit <a href="http://www.CleanDrainDryMT.com">www.CleanDrainDryMT.com</a> for details.

Body of Water	County	Manually powered or electric motors only	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP	Closed to all motorboats	No-wake speed	Description & Exceptions *Visit <a href="http://fwp.mt.gov">fwp.mt.gov</a> for updates and changes to these regulations
Tongue River Reservoir	Big Horn			X	<p>No-wake speed in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From shoreline to 300 feet from shoreline from the south point that forms Corral Creek Bay (DNRC cabin site), north to the face of the dam, west along the dam face, and south along the west shore of the reservoir to the point where the Tongue River enters the reservoir.</li> <li>As buoyed in the marina area at Campers Point, Campers Point Bay, Cormorant Bay, Corral Creek Bay (DNRC cabin site bay), Neck Bay, Pee Wee Point Bay, Rattlesnake Bay, and Tongue River from Wyoming border to the Tongue River Reservoir.</li> </ul> <p>Exceptions: (1) PWC which must maintain a certain minimum operating speed to remain upright and maneuver in the water may travel at the minimum operating speed following the most direct route through the no-wake zone to and from shore; (2) motorized watercraft towing a skier from a dock or the shore.</p>	

Topless Lake	Lincoln					X	Topless Lake is in the Thompson Chain of Lakes.
Upper Carter Pond	Fergus					X	
Upper Thompson Lake	Lincoln					X	Middle and lower lobes.
Upsata Lake	Missoula					X	
Whitefish River	Flathead					X	From its confluence with Whitefish Lake to the bridge on the JP road.
Whitefish River	Flathead	X					From its confluence at the railroad trestle south of Whitefish Lake outlet to the bridge on JP Road.
Whitetail Reservoir	Daniels					X	
Willow Creek Reservoir (Harrison Lake)	Madison					X	All of Willow Creek Arm and Norwegian Arm as buoyed 6 pm - 11 am.
Wood Lake	Lewis & Clark						X

## **SAFETY TIPS**

**Courtesy** — Because many different types of recreators may be sharing a boating area, show respect by operating at safe speeds and keeping an adequate distance from others. Due to their limited maneuverability, give sailboats and other non-motorized craft a wide berth. Remember, you are responsible for any damage your boat, or the wake from your boat, may cause.

**Weather** — It's unpredictable in Montana, so watch carefully for changing conditions. Be prepared to protect your passengers and yourself in case of foul weather.

**Tell somebody** — Make sure a friend, relative or neighbor knows of your boating plans. Leave your destination, time of departure and expected time of return, because this information may save your life in the event of an accident.

**Safety equipment** — The items covered in this booklet cover only the bare essentials. Additional recommended equipment which could allow you an extra margin of safety might include an extra fire extinguisher, extra life jackets, a tool kit, spare parts, a bailing bucket, an anchor and line, a flashlight, a paddle, a radio, a towline, extra fuel and oil, and a first aid kit.

**Cliff and bridge diving** — Look before you jump and check the water for hidden rocks, trees, etc. Make sure the water is deep enough. Always jump feet first; never dive head first.

**Hypothermia** — When a body loses heat faster than it can produce it, the body temperature goes below normal. That's hypothermia, and it can be deadly. Immersion in Montana's cold water (less than 70°F) will cause a body's core temperature to decrease. Symptoms can include shivering, poor coordination, and numb hands and feet. Learning how to treat hypothermia could save a life.

**Dams** — Currents above dams can suck boats into the water going through the dam. The currents and turbulent waters below can swamp boats and drown boaters. Even low head dams, which sometimes seem to have a very small drop, are dangerous, because the water going over the dam circulates back toward the face of the dam and can trap a person or boat.

## DEFINITIONS

**Aft** – at, near or toward the stern; opposite of “fore”.

**Ahead** – in the direction of the vessel’s bow.

**Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)** – a nonnative, aquatic species that can cause harm to the economy, environment, recreational opportunities, or human health. AIS can be plants (Eurasian watermilfoil, curly leaf pondweed) or mollusks (quagga mussels, New Zealand mud snail) or parasites/pathogens (whirling disease, IHN virus).

**Bilge** – the lower part of a boat’s hull.

**Bow** – the most forward part of a vessel.

**Buoy** – a floating signpost for boaters.

**Certificate of Number (Registration)**– the certificate issued by the county treasurer to the owner of a water craft which must be registered.

**Certificate of Ownership (Title)** – the certificate issued by the department of justice identifying the owner of a motorboat or sailboat 12 feet in length or longer.

**Certified Boater** – Program for watercraft owners who primarily recreate on either Canyon Ferry Reservoir or Tiber Reservoir and allows for expedited inspections. Visit [www.CleanDrainDryMT.com](http://www.CleanDrainDryMT.com) to learn more.

**Identifying number** – the boat number set forth in the Certificate of Number and properly displayed on the vessel.

**Fore** – towards the bow; opposite of “aft”.

**Motorboat** – any vessel, including a canoe, kayak, rubber raft or pontoon, propelled by any machinery, motor or engine of any description, whether or not such machinery, motor or engine is the principal source of propulsion. The term includes boats temporarily equipped with detachable motors or engines.

**Operate** – to navigate or otherwise use a motorboat or vessel.

**Operator** – the person who navigates, drives or is otherwise in immediate control of a motorboat or vessel.

**Personal flotation device (PFD)** – a lifesaving device designed to keep your head above water; such as a life jacket, life vest, buoyant cushion, or life preserver ring.

**Personal watercraft (PWC)** – vessels 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 sitting, standing or kneeling on the vessel.

**Port** – the left side of a vessel as you look forward.

**Stand Up Paddle Board (SUP)** – a surfboard-like device, usually thicker and longer than a standard surfboard, where the operator stands upright and propels the board using a long paddle. Unless being used within a designated swimming area, SUP are a “vessel” and are subject to the boating laws.

**Registration decal** – the serially numbered registration sticker, referred to as the permanent decal, issued by the county treasurer and displayed as required by law.

**Starboard** – the right side of a vessel as you look forward.

**Stern** – the rear or back of the boat.

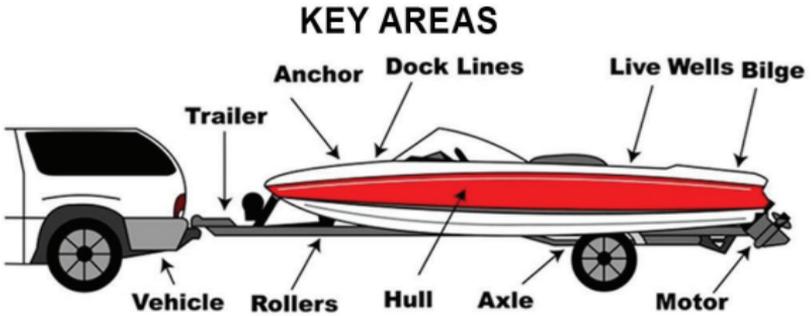
**Validation decals** – the serially numbered validation stickers issued by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and displayed as required by law.

**Vessel** – every description of watercraft, other than a seaplane on the water, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on water; NOT included in this definition are inner tubes, float tubes (belly boats), air mattresses and sailboards when used without mechanical propulsion.

**Wake** – path of disturbed water left behind a moving vessel; “no wake” speed means there is no “white” water in the track or path of the vessel or created in waves immediate to the vessel.

24,000 of copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$0.28 per copy, for a total cost of \$7475.00, which includes \$6675.00 for printing and an estimated \$800 for distribution.

# All watercraft transported in Montana must be **CLEANED, DRAINED & DRIED**



## Tips for a fast watercraft inspection

1. Remove water, mud & vegetation from boat, trailer & anchor.
2. Remove boat plug & drain.
3. Open & towel dry all compartments & live wells.
4. Drain ballasts & bilge, wipe bilge areas dry if possible.
5. Lower engine/motor to allow water to drain.
6. Clear through-hull fittings.
7. Be prepared to assist with the inspection.

**CLEAN. DRAIN. DRY.**



**CleanDrainDryMT.com**

**f** : Protect Our Waters Montana

**☎** : 406.444.2440



**MONTANA FISH,  
WILDLIFE & PARKS**



## **HELP STOP AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES**

**Before leaving any waterbody be sure to:**

### **CLEAN**

- Remove all plants and mud from boats, trailers & gear.
- Remember to clean anchors, lines, live wells & waders.

### **DRAIN**

- Eliminate water from all equipment including bait buckets, livewells, pumps, motors, ballast tanks & bilges.
- Lower & drain your motor and remove the drain plug.
- If possible, flush live wells & ballast tanks between water bodies.
- Kayaks & canoes: ensure all water is drained/sponged out.

### **DRY**

- Allow time for your boat & equipment to dry completely before launching onto another body of water.

## **Montana's AIS Regulations:**

### **When transporting watercraft within Montana:**

- STOP at all open inspection stations as directed by signs.
- When traveling west across the Continental Divide, watercraft must be inspected before launching. Boats with a ballast or bladder, such as wakeboard or wake-surfing boats, must obtain a hot-water decontamination before launching.
- Inspections are required for all watercraft coming off Tiber & Canyon Ferry reservoirs. Hot-water wash may be required.

### **When transporting watercraft into Montana:**

- Watercraft must be inspected before launching.
- Non-resident boats launching on Montana waters will be charged an AIS prevention pass fee. Go to [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov) for more information. Motorized watercraft fee is \$30. Non-motorized watercraft (catamarans, drift boats, kayaks, rafts, and sailboats) fee is \$10.
- Watercraft with a ballast or bladder, such as wakeboards or wake-surfing boats, that intend to launch on Montana waters must receive a hot-water decontamination prior to launching.

# 2019

# FISHING

**FWP** : Montana Fishing Regulations



*Photo by: Jessica Haydahl Photography*

For details on how to use regulations, see page 2

**TURN IN POACHERS:** 1-800-TIP-MONT

# 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 10, releasing fish).

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

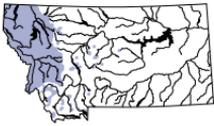
1. Look for white edges on the front of the lower fins. If yes—it may be a Bull Trout.
2. Check the shape of the tail. Bull Trout have only a slightly forked tail compared to the lake trout's deeply forked tail.
3. Is the dorsal (top) fin a clear olive color with no black spots or dark wavy lines? If yes—the fish is a Bull Trout. Carefully release Bull Trout (see page 10, releasing fish).

## MONTANA LAW REQUIRES:

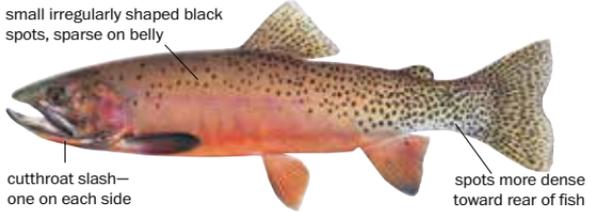
- All Bull Trout must be released immediately in Montana unless authorized. See Western District regulations.
- Cutthroat Trout must be released immediately in many Montana waters. Check the district standard regulations and exceptions to know where you can harvest Cutthroat Trout.

## NATIVE FISH

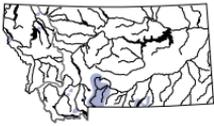
### Westslope Cutthroat Trout *Species of Concern*



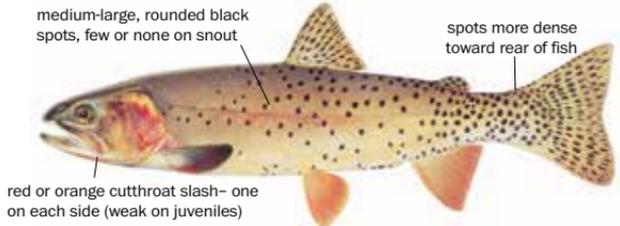
Average Size: 6"–12"



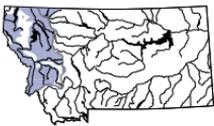
### Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout *Species of Concern*



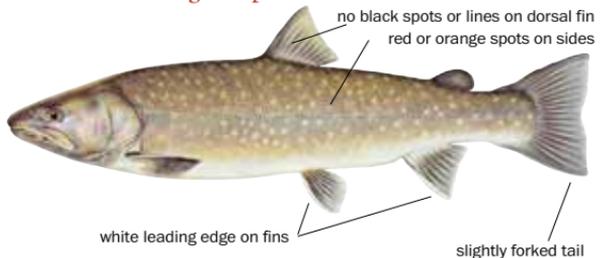
Average Size: 6"–12"



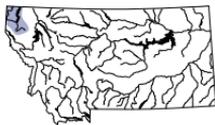
### Bull Trout *A Threatened Species listed under the Endangered Species Act*



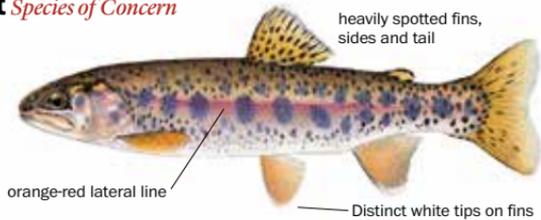
Average Size: 16"–22"



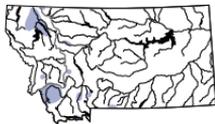
## Columbia River Redband Trout *Species of Concern*



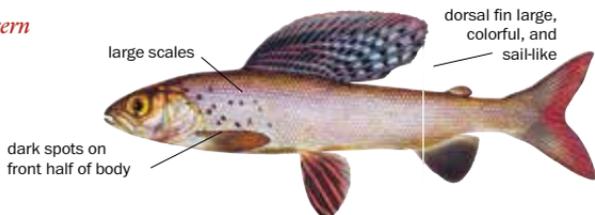
Average Size: 6"-10"



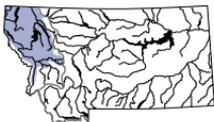
## Arctic Grayling *Species of Concern*



Average Size: 6"-12"



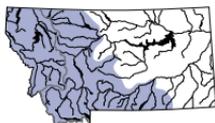
## Northern Pikeminnow



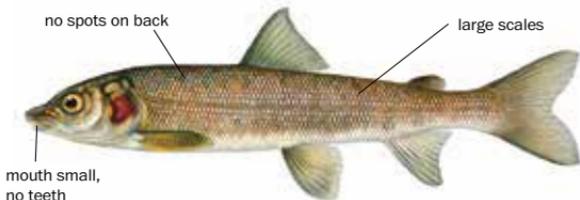
Average Size: 7"-14"



## Mountain Whitefish

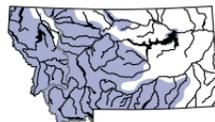


Average Size: 6"-12"



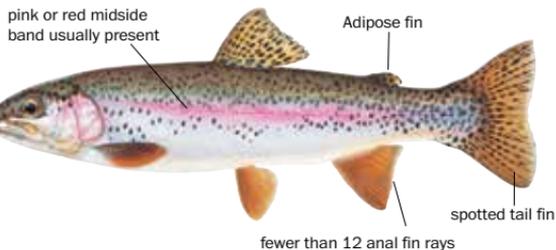
## NON-NATIVE FISH

### Rainbow Trout

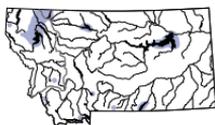


Note: Native populations of Columbia River Redband Trout exist in localized waters of northwestern Montana.

Average Size: 8"-16"

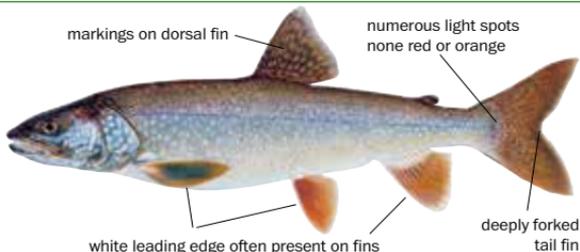


### Lake Trout

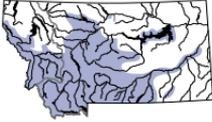


Note: Native populations of Lake trout exist in a few isolated waters of southwestern Montana.

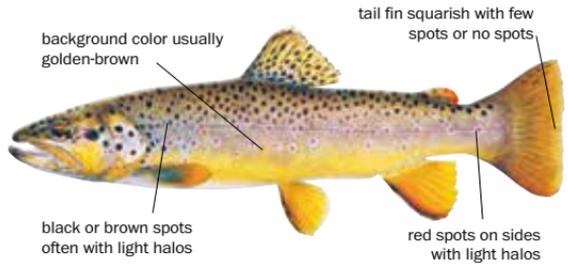
Average Size: 14"-20"



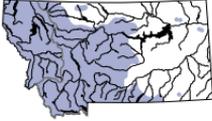
## Brown Trout



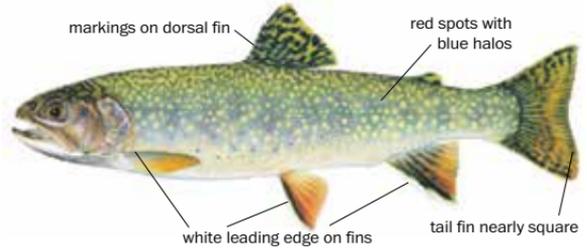
Average Size: 12"-16"



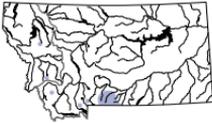
## Brook Trout



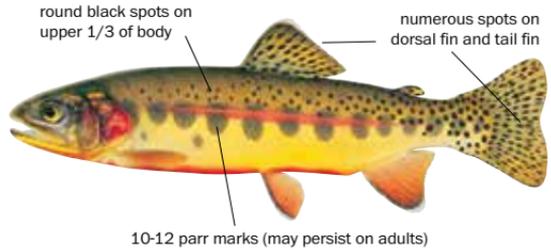
Average Size: 6"-12"



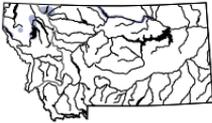
## Golden Trout



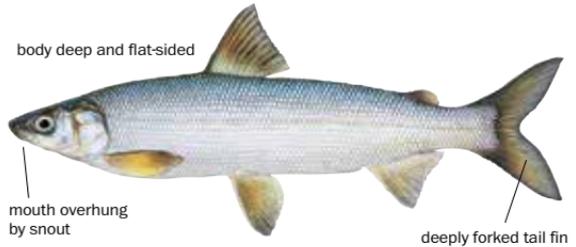
Average Size: 6"-12"



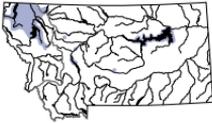
## Lake Whitefish



Average Size: 19"-27"

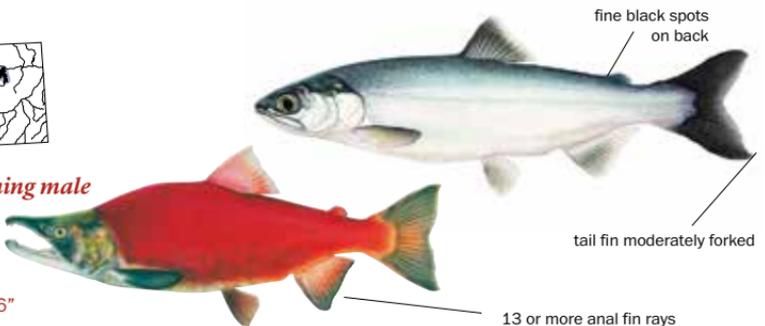


## Kokanee



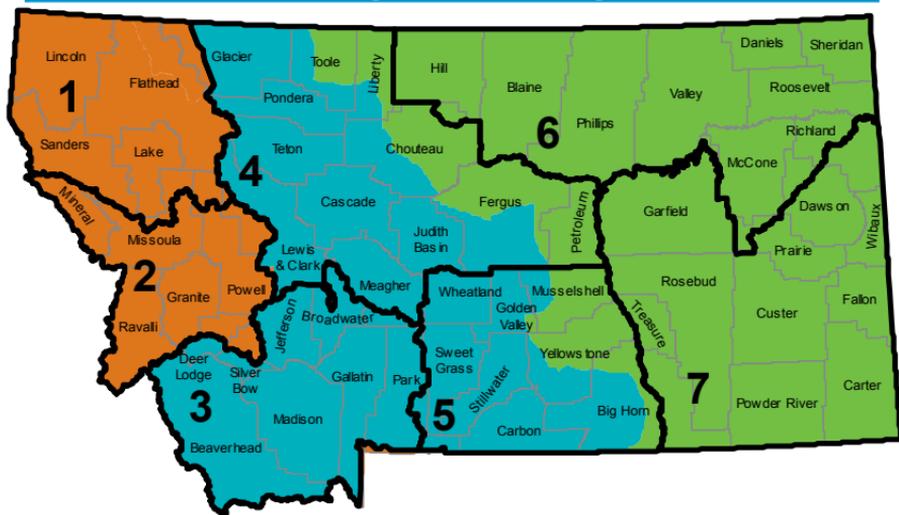
*Spawning male*

Average Size: 8"-16"



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

## FWP Administrative Regions with Fishing Districts in Color



Western District=Orange Central District=Blue Eastern District=Green

### Contact FWP

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

#### STATE HEADQUARTERS

MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1420 East 6th Avenue  
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  
406-994-4042

#### HELENA Area Resource Office (HARO)

930 Custer Ave W  
Helena, MT 59602  
406-495-3260

#### BUTTE Area Office Resource (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

#### INTERNET—

<http://fwp.mt.gov>

A variety of information is available from FWP's award winning World Wide website. Fishing, Hunting, State Parks, Recreation, Wild Things, Habitat, Education, Montana Outdoors magazine and Inside FWP are just a few of the areas filled with helpful information. The site also provides links to various agencies, organizations, and news and weather services.

## 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 & Wildlife Commission (F&W Commission), the seasons, limits, and regulations listed here shall govern the 2019 fishing season (a fishing season runs from March 1 through the following February). These regulations were adopted by the F&W Commission on October 17, 2018 and will be valid March 1, 2019 through the end of February 2020. 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 2019 season will appear on the FWP website <http://fwp.mt.gov>. Emergency regulations/closures are posted at access sites. Anglers must check the web to make sure they are in compliance with fishing regulations.

## How To Use These Regulations

Follow these easy steps:

- 1) Read the first 22 pages of this booklet for general regulations and helpful information.
- 2) 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 23**

**CENTRAL FISHING DISTRICT – page 51**

**EASTERN FISHING DISTRICT – page 78**

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.

**EXAMPLE:** To fish for Sauger on the Missouri River downstream from Fort Benton:

- **Eastern District Standard Regulations:** Pages 78 to 88 tell you when you can fish, standard limits, methods of angling allowed, and special permits that may be needed. The standard regulations also explain the daily and possession limits, including handling and transporting your catch, and provide basic information concerning fishing hours, bait and fishing methods.
- **Eastern District Exceptions to Standard Regulations:** Page 90 identifies exceptions for the Missouri River and says that you are limited to two Saugers per day with a possession limit of four upstream from Fort Peck Reservoir. All Sauger and Walleye must remain whole until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. Daily and possession limits for all other species are standard for the Eastern District.

- 3) 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.

### **4) *New or changed 2019 regulations are displayed in bold italics.***

Or: Check the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) website at

<http://fwp.mt.gov/fish/regulations/>.

## Subject Index

<b>A</b>		<b>I</b>	
Aquatic Invasive Species.....	15, 94	Ice Fishing.....	25, 53, 80
Aquatic Invertebrates.....	6	Ice Fishing Shelter.....	25, 53, 81
Artificial Lures.....	20	Unlawful Introductions.....	13
<b>B</b>		Indian Reservations.....	12, 24
Bait Fish Species Identification.....	8-9	Irrigation Canals and Ditches.....	24, 52, 79
Bait Regulations.....	26, 54, 82	<b>K</b>	
Beaver Ponds.....	24, 52, 79	Knots.....	17
Boat and Motor Restrictions.....	14, 52, 80	<b>L</b>	
Bow and Arrow.....	25, 54, 81	Licenses and Fees.....	4-5
<b>C</b>		Live Bait/Leeches.....	26, 55, 82
Catch-And-Release Angling.....	10, 19	<b>N</b>	
Central Fishing District.....	51	Nets and Traps.....	26, 54, 81
Certified Boater.....	15	<b>O</b>	
Children's Fishing Waters.....	10	Off-Highway Vehicles.....	12
Closed Waters.....	24, 52, 79	<b>P</b>	
Commercial Fishing Licenses.....	6	Paddlefish/Regulations.....	5, 84-87
Consumption Advisory.....	16	Paddlefish drawing.....	86
<b>D</b>		Permits.....	6-7
Dam Closures.....	24, 52, 79	Private Fish Ponds.....	7
Definitions.....	20-22	<b>R</b>	
Disposal of Fish.....	10	River Etiquette.....	12
<b>E</b>		<b>S</b>	
Eastern Fishing District.....	78	Seasons.....	27, 56, 84
Exceptions to Standard		Setlines.....	26, 53, 81
Regulations.....	29, 58, 89	Snagging.....	26, 54, 81
<b>F</b>		Spearing.....	26, 54, 81
Federal Wildlife Refuges.....	11	Sport Fish Restoration.....	17
Fishing Access Sites.....	18	Standard Daily and Possession	
Fish Records.....	96	Limits.....	28, 57, 88
Float Fishing.....	11	Standard Fishing	
Future Fisheries Program.....	16	Regulations.....	24, 52, 79
FWP Foundation.....	17	State Fish Records.....	96
<b>G</b>		Stream Access Law.....	12
General Information for Anglers.....	8	<b>T</b>	
<b>H</b>		Tagged Fish.....	13, 85-87
Handling and Transport		Transporting Live Fish.....	25, 52, 80
of Legally Taken Fish.....	27, 56, 84	Trespass Law.....	12
Hook and Line Limits.....	25, 53, 80	<b>W</b>	
Hoop Nets.....	7, 21, 81	Warm Water Game Fish.....	22
Hours.....	27, 56, 84	Western Fishing District.....	23

## Waterway Map Index

Beaverhead River.....	59	Missouri River.....	71
Big Hole River.....	61	Missouri River Lower.....	93
Bighorn River.....	63	Missouri River Upstream from	
Bitterroot River.....	31	Fort Peck Dam.....	91
Blackfoot River.....	33	Smith River.....	74
Clark Fork River.....	35	Warm Springs WMA.....	49
Georgetown Lake.....	39	Yellowstone & Lower Missouri	
Madison River.....	69	Rivers.....	93
		Yellowstone River.....	77

## What Do I Need to Fish in Montana?

Age	License Specifics	Conser- vation License	AIS Prevention Pass	License Fee	Total Cost
<b>0-11</b>	No license required. Must observe all limits and regulations.				
<b>Resident 12 - 17, 62 and older, or disabled</b>	Resident Sportsman license includes a season fishing license.	\$8	\$2	\$5 for 2 consecutive calendar days	\$15
				\$10.50 for season	\$20.50
<b>Resident 18-61</b>	Resident Sportsman license includes a season fishing license.	\$8	\$2	\$5 for 2 consecutive calendar days	\$15
				\$21 for season	\$31
<b>Nonresident 12 and older</b>	Nonresident Combination license includes a season fishing license.	\$10	\$15	\$25 for 2 consecutive calendar days	\$50
				\$56 for 10 consecutive calendar days	\$81
				\$86 for season	\$111

### Free fishing weekend on June 15-16, 2019.

By Montana law, each year on Father's Day weekend any person (resident or non-resident) 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 and Fishing License. Fishing for Paddlefish also requires a Paddlefish tag. A catch card is required to fish for Bull Trout as described on page 5.

## License/Permit Requirements

**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 two licenses: a Conservation License and a Fishing License, and also an AIS 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 that Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) issues. 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.

**4 Report unlawful fish introductions! Make the call: 1-800 TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668)**

The AIS Prevention Pass is required for all individuals who fish in Montana. This new program initiated by the 2017 Montana Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Steve Bullock is helping 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 the required 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 29, 2018. See page 86 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 One office in Kalispell. Applications for a catch card are available at the FWP Region One office or online at <http://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.

**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 the FWP Human Resources office at 406-444-1289.

- 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 and licenses available to residents only at regional FWP offices.
- Lifetime Fishing License for the Blind - \$10 plus an annual \$2 AIS Prevention Pass.

Contact the Helena FWP Licensing office for information and 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 406-444-2452.

**Legion of Valor:** A Conservation License allows both residents and non-residents, 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 406-444-2452.

Visit <http://fwp.mt.gov> 5

**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.

## Other 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. 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 <http://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.

### **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 <https://myfwp.mt.gov/fwpPub/koiPond> or from all FWP offices. There is no fee for registering a pond.

**Tribal Lands:** Special regulations may apply and special permits may be required to fish on tribal waters. Check with the local Tribal Government.

**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 ALS# attached to it.

## **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.

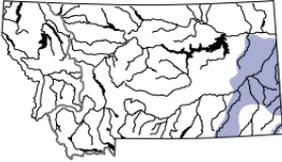
### **It Is Unlawful And A Misdemeanor**

- 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 22).

## General Information For Anglers

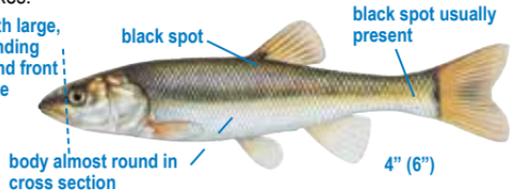
**Bait Fish Species Identification:** there are 10 species of fish that may be used for bait. The following images are for help in identification (for more details see the "Live Bait Fish Identification" brochure available online or at Regional offices). See the regulations concerning bait use in each District (pages 26, 54 and 82).

### CREEK CHUB



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

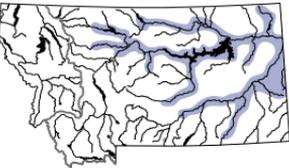
mouth large, extending behind front of eye



body almost round in cross section

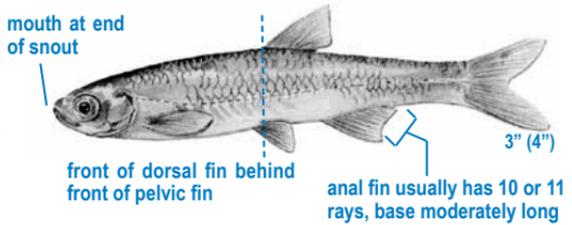
4" (6")

### EMERALD SHINER



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

mouth at end of snout

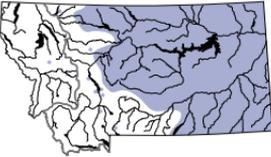


front of dorsal fin behind front of pelvic fin

anal fin usually has 10 or 11 rays, base moderately long

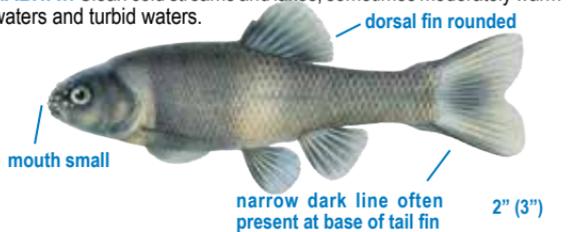
3" (4")

### FATHEAD MINNOW



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

mouth small

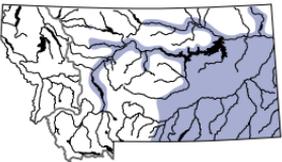


dorsal fin rounded

narrow dark line often present at base of tail fin

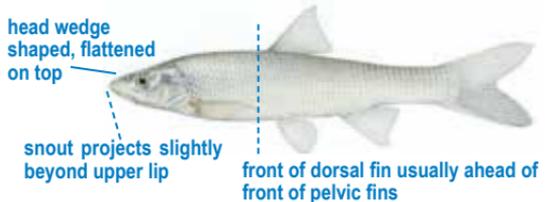
2" (3")

### FLATHEAD CHUB



**HABITAT:** Mostly turbid rivers and streams.

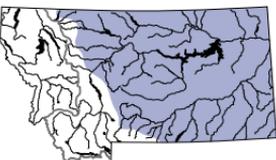
head wedge shaped, flattened on top



snout projects slightly beyond upper lip

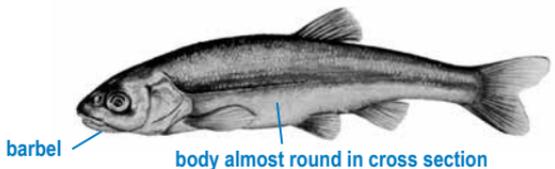
front of dorsal fin usually ahead of front of pelvic fins

### LAKE CHUB



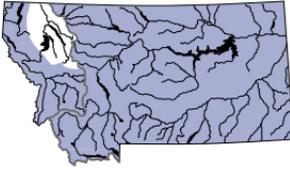
**HABITAT:** Mostly small streams at lower elevations; to a lesser extent, larger streams and lakes.

barbel



body almost round in cross section

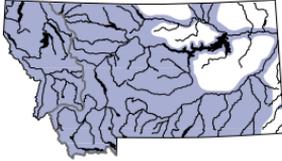
## LONGNOSE DACE



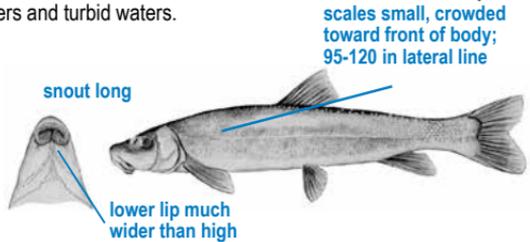
**HABITAT:** Riffle areas of streams and rivers; to a lesser extent, lakes.



## LONGNOSE SUCKER

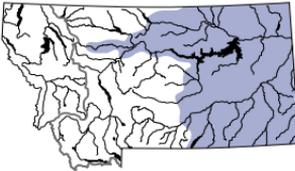


**HABITAT:** Clean cold streams and lakes; sometimes moderately warm waters and turbid waters.

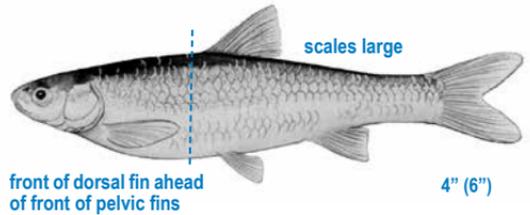


## WESTERN SILVERY MINNOW

## PLAINS MINNOW

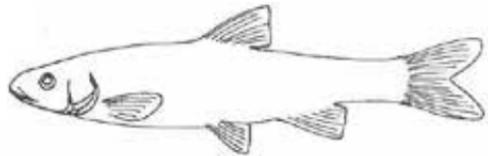


**HABITAT:** Slower portions of medium-sized to larger streams. Sometimes found in creeks and impoundments.

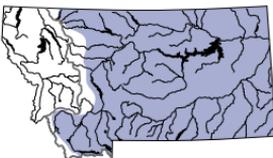


The **Western Silvery Minnow** and the **Plains Minnow** are very similar. The Western Silvery Minnow is more streamlined (see outlines) and has larger scales than the Plains Minnow. Scale counts from lateral line to lateral line under the belly of the fish might be 11 to 17 on the Western Silvery Minnow,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

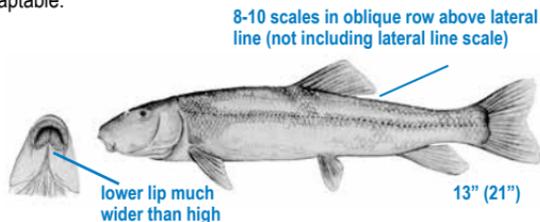
Outline of Plains Minnow



## WHITE SUCKER



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



**Catch-and-Release Angling:** Waters designated catch-and-release for one or more species of fish require that those fish be immediately released alive. 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.

### 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.

**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 64 Family Fishing Waters in Montana, including the waters listed below. Check the FWP website for all Family Fishing Waters.

Blacktail Meadows Pond, Dillon  
Elks Club Pond near Lewistown  
Fairground Pond, Helena  
Fort Peck Kids Pond near Fort Peck  
Gheny Pond near Twin Bridges

Home Run Pond, Glasgow  
Indian Road Pond near Townsend  
Kid’s Pond in the Warm Springs Wildlife  
Management Area near Warm Springs  
Skyline Pond in Butte  
Vigilante Pond near Virginia City

EPA's new How's My Waterway app and website helps users quickly find information on the condition of their local waters using a smart phone, tablet, or desktop computer. This tool provides results within seconds using EPA's water quality assessment data. Check out the condition of your local waterbody today!

Visit <http://www.epa.gov/mywaterway>



**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).

### **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.
- Commercial bait regulations are not valid on Indian Reservation waters. For information, contact local tribal officials.

**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.

**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 25, 53 & 80).

**Good Fishing Depends on Clean Water:** Many of our rivers, lakes, and coastal areas are experiencing algae blooms that cover our favorite fishing spots with green slime and may cause fish kills and "dead zones" where no aquatic life can survive. The cause is usually nitrogen and phosphorus pollution that comes from farm and lawn fertilizers, septic systems, animal waste, and sewage treatment plants. Here's what you can do to keep the water clean:

- Take care not to over fertilize and closely follow package instructions
- Pick up pet waste and properly manage waste from livestock
- Use green practices such as rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable pavements
- Maintain septic systems
- Encourage your community to invest in its wastewater infrastructure

Supporting water quality protection supports great fishing! Learn more at:

[www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/](http://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/)

**Indian Reservations:** Certain waters on Indian Reservations 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.

**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.

**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.

FWP recommends that anglers obtain permission from the landowner before entering private lands. Recreationists are urged to obtain complete rules about this law from any FWP office.

**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). To be used on roads (County, Forest Service, 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. Idaho and North Dakota residents are exempt. Permits are good for one calendar year, cost \$27 and can be purchased from local vendors ([stateparks.mt.gov](http://stateparks.mt.gov), OHV Program) or online at [app.mt.gov/als](http://app.mt.gov/als). Contact Montana State Parks OHV Program at 406-444-3753 or [SMcArthur@mt.gov](mailto:SMcArthur@mt.gov) with questions.

### **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 doesn't violate trespass and stream access laws.

**Safer Fishing Tackle:** Loons, swans, cranes and other waterbirds can die from lead poisoning after swallowing lead fishing sinkers and jigs lost by anglers. Sinkers and jigs do not have to be made of lead. To help protect waterbirds from getting lead poisoning, anglers can use sinkers and jigs made from non-poisonous materials such as tin, bismuth, steel and recycled glass.

### What You Can Do

- Ask your local sporting goods store to stock non-lead fishing tackle.
- Use non-lead fishing weights.
- Discard old lead sinkers and jigs properly.
- Spread the word. Tell other anglers about the problem with lead and encourage them to switch to non-lead sinkers and jigs.

**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 <http://fwp.mt.gov/fish/anglingData/taggedFishForm.html>

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 and address of the angler.

## HELP STOP THE SCOURGE OF UNLAWFUL FISH INTRODUCTIONS

### UNLAWFUL INTRODUCTIONS HURT THE RESOURCE AND YOU THE ANGLER

- Unlawful introductions of fish can displace existing fisheries, resulting in a loss of fishing opportunity.
- Unlawful introductions can lead to the spread of diseases which can kill fish.
- Unlawful introductions can lead to the genetic contamination of native or other important fish species.
- Unlawful introductions can raise fish management costs, and therefore costs to anglers, through increased hatchery operations and chemical treatments.
- Unlawful introductions are made without proper biological analysis and public input meaning that you the angler had no say in an ill-informed action by self-serving individuals.

### PENALTIES

- 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.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Be aware that without FWP authorization, the release of any live fish into any Montana pond, lake, stream or river is strictly unlawful. Anyone who appears to be dumping fish (including bait fish) should be reported immediately by calling 1-800-TIP-MONT — 1-800-847-6668. Anyone providing information leading to a conviction for unlawful fish introductions is eligible for up to a \$1,000 reward. In addition, rewards in excess of \$10,000 may be available from various angling organizations.

## 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.



# Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species are mainly transported by human activities.



All watercraft are required to stop at all boat inspection stations.

## New watercraft inspection regulations:

- All watercraft entering Montana are required to be inspected for aquatic invasive species prior to launching in the waters of the state.
- All watercraft crossing the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin are also required to be inspected prior to launch.
- Due to the detection of invasive mussel larvae in Tiber Reservoir and suspected detection in Canyon Ferry Reservoir, all watercraft exiting those waters are required to be inspected as per MCA 12.5.706.
  - ◆ A Certified Boater program is available for boaters that primarily use Canyon Ferry or Tiber Reservoirs.
  - ◆ For more information see the website [www.CleanDrainDryMT.com](http://www.CleanDrainDryMT.com)

## DO YOUR PART TO PROTECT MONTANA WATERS

**Clean:** Completely remove all mud, water, and vegetation before leaving the access area.

- Inspect your boat, trailer, and all gear. Pay attention to crevices and hidden areas.
- Remove all mud and vegetation
- Dispose of debris in trash or on dry land away from water or ramp.

**Drain:** Drain all water from watercraft and equipment.

- Drain or remove water from boat, bilge, live well, engine, internal compartments and bait buckets by removing drain plugs before leaving the access area.
- Lower motor to ensure all water is drained.

**Dry:** Aquatic invaders can survive only in water and wet areas.

- Dry your watercraft and fishing equipment thoroughly; this will kill most invasive species. The longer you keep your watercraft, trailer, waders and other equipment outside in the hot sun between fishing trips, the better.
- Dry the watercraft and gear completely between trips and allow the wet areas of your watercraft to air dry.

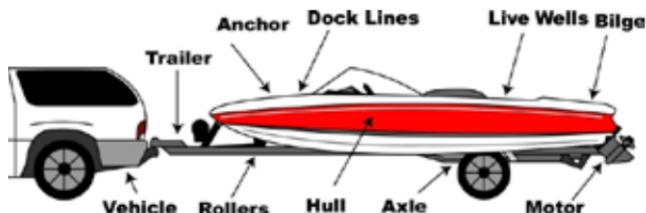
A message from



MONTANA FISH,  
WILDLIFE & PARKS



**STOP AQUATIC  
HITCHHIKERS !**



Symbol indicates the presence of invasive plants, snails or mussels - check the maps.

## 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:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/fwpDoc.html?id=28187>



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: <http://fwp.mt.gov/fwpDoc.html?id=28187>

Alder Gulch	Cooney Reservoir	Lake Frances	Noxon Rapids Reservoir
Bair Reservoir	Crystal Lake	Lake Helena	Petrolia Reservoir
Belt Creek	Dry Fork Belt Creek	Lake Koochanusa	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	

## Future Fisheries Program

For many years, FWP's Future Fisheries Improvement Program has provided funding to restore rivers, streams and lakes to improve and protect Montana's wild fish habitats. About \$650,000 are available each year for habitat projects that revitalize wild fish populations. Any project that would benefit Montana's wild fish will be considered for funding. Applications are considered twice a year and are due December 1 and June 1. An independent review panel

reviews program applications and recommends funding to the Fish & Wildlife Commission for final decisions. Future Fisheries applications and additional information about the program can be found on FWP's webpage:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/habitat/fish/futureFisheries>

## Thank You Anglers And Motorboaters!



The Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) Program provides grant funding to all state fish and wildlife agencies for fishery projects, boating access, and aquatic education. The Program is authorized by the Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950, also known as the Dingell-Johnson Act in recognition of the original bill sponsors. Annually, FWP receives in excess of \$8 million in SFR funds.

The SFR Program was created to assist states with restoration and management of our nations fisheries, and was modeled after the successful Wildlife Restoration Program of 1937. Funding for the Program comes from tax revenues collected from the sale of fishing equipment, motorboat, and small engine fuels.

Every time you purchase fishing equipment or fuel for your boat, you are supporting fisheries management and motorboat access programs in Montana.

The SFR Program represents one of the most successful user-pay, user-benefit programs in the nation.

## Montana FWP Foundation

The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation is a non-profit corporation to provide private financial support for the critical efforts of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and for preserving and enhancing Montana's natural, cultural and recreational resources for future generations.

The Foundation was created to help support new work. It will build an endowment of corporate donations and individual gifts to fund programs that conserve wild places, restore imperiled species, maintain access, protect unique cultural and historic parks and educate kids about the wonders of our world. For more information or if you would like to make a contribution, call 406-444-6759, or write Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation at PO Box 200701, Helena MT 59620-0701.

## Modified Clinch Knot



1) Put the end of the line through the eye of the hook and bring it back toward the line.



2) Make five "S" twists around the line.



3) Take the end back toward the hook and push it through the first loop nearest the eye.



4) Bring the end back through the big loop.



5) Hold the hook and the line, pull the knot tight until it looks like the knot shown.

## Montana Fishing Access Sites

With over 338 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 "Visit a Fishing Access Site" at <https://myfwp.mt.gov/fishMT/explore.html> 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 is 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.

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.

Purchase your fishing license, hunting license(s) and special drawing items online <https://app.mt.gov/als/index/index.html>

# Catch-and-Release Techniques for Trout



## Don't Forget: Keep Them Wet!

The species of fish, water temperature, and angler behavior affect the success of catch-and-release fishing. Trout species are susceptible to angling mortality. Warm water stresses fish more than cold water. How an angler fishes, choice of gear, and how the angler handles the fish affect survival of released fish. Here is what anglers can do to maximize fish survival:

- 1. Land the fish quickly and do not play it to exhaustion.**
- 2. Wet your hands before handling the fish.**
- 3. Keep the fish in the water as much as possible.**  
Minimize the time out of water for photos.
- 4. Remove the hook gently.** Use of artificial lures, single and barbless hooks makes hook removal faster and easier.
- 5. Let the fish recover before release.** If the fish is hooked deeply or bleeding, you may have to snip the line at the fish's mouth, or consider keeping it if regulations allow.

Consider limiting your catch. Even with catch-and-release, fish are stressed and some will die. To best avoid harming the fish, keep it underwater where it can breathe.

Rainbow trout photo by Pat Clayton/Engelbrecht Underwater Photography.

Learn more: [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov)



MONTANA FISH,  
WILDLIFE & PARKS

This message brought to you by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

## 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:** Means 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:** Means 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:** Means 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.
- 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 of 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 four 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 9 or 10 digit ALS # must be attached.

**SNAGGING:** A technique of angling in which a hook or hooks are cast, trolled or lowered 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.

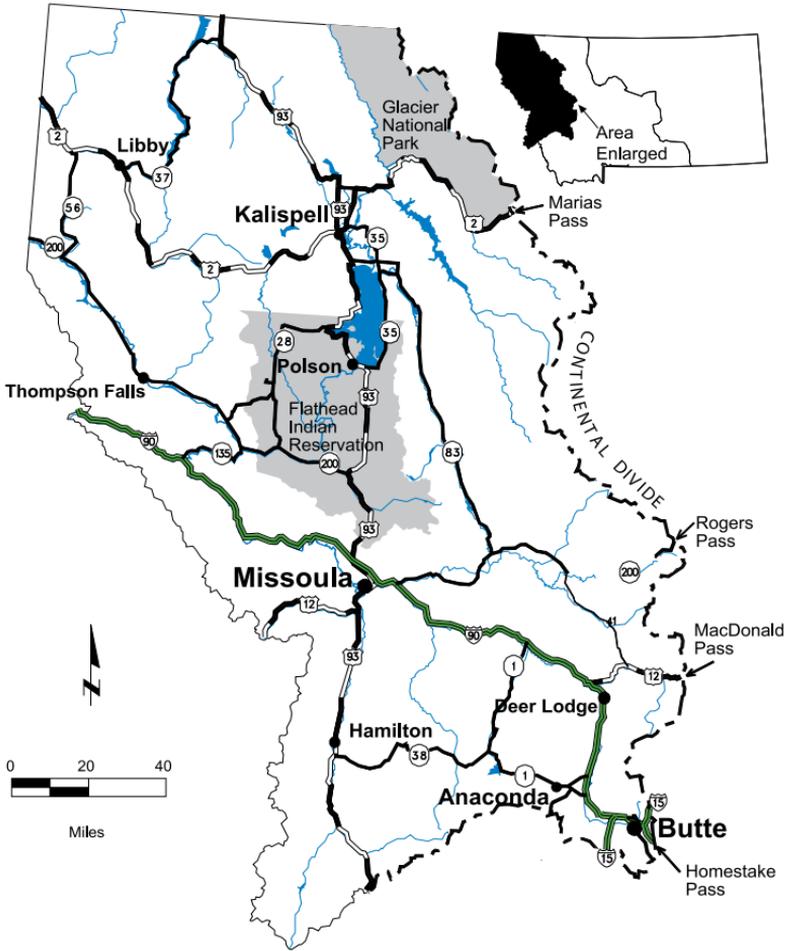
**WASTE OF FISH OR GAME:** To purposely waste any part of a game fish suitable for food by transporting, hanging, or storing the carcass or flesh in a manner that renders it unfit for human consumption; or, to abandon or dispose of, in the field or water, the carcass or flesh of any game fish suitable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



Report unlawful fish introductions!  
Help Protect Montana's Fisheries ...

Make the call: 1-800 TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668)

# 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 flotation 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 and 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 406-444-7885, 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. 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 ALS# 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, 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 9/10-digit ALS number. 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:

- Brown's 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 special 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.

**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.

## Bait Regulations

- Game fish, including Yellow Perch, may not be used as bait except as authorized below under Dead Bait.
- Possession of live fish or use of live fish as bait 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.
- Non-game fish except Sculpins (genus *Cottus*), Carp, Goldfish and Rainbow Smelt may be taken for use as dead bait in the following manner:
  - with hook and line; or
  - with seines no larger than 12 feet by 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 for information on commercial harvest permits.
- All unattended fishing devices (Crayfish traps, Minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and ALS# attached.

### Dead Bait

- Non-game fish that are freshly killed or have been preserved by freezing, salting or pickling may be used whole or in pieces as bait on all waters not restricted to artificial lures only. Sculpins (genus *Cottus*) may not be used as bait, live or dead, in the Western Fishing District.
- Whole game fish may not be used as bait.
- Parts/pieces of Bass, Burbot (Ling), Black Crappie, Northern Pike, or Yellow Perch may be used as bait if edible portions are not wasted.
- 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.

### Live Bait

- Live bait fish may not be imported into Montana without authorization from FWP.
- 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.
- No fish species may be used as live bait in the Western Fishing District.

## 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 10).

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.



### 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.

	<b>Species</b>	<b>Daily and Possession Limits</b>
<b>T R O U T</b>	<b>Brook trout</b>	20 daily and in possession.
	<b>Bull Trout</b>	All waters are closed to angling for Bull Trout and all fish must be immediately released unless otherwise authorized in the Western District Exceptions. See Special License Requirements on page 5. Note: Federal rules prohibit the attempted take of Bull Trout unless specifically authorized by state or tribal regulation.
	<b>Combined trout</b> includes Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Golden Trout and Arctic Grayling	<b>Lakes/Reservoirs:</b> 5 daily and 10 in possession, only 1 over 22 inches daily and in possession. <b>Rivers/Streams:</b> 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 14 inches.
	<b>Cutthroat Trout</b> (see page ii for id key)	<b>Lakes/Reservoirs:</b> 3 daily and in possession, no size limit. <b>Rivers/Streams:</b> 3 daily and in possession, none over 12 inches.
	<b>Lake Trout</b>	20 daily and 40 in possession.
	<b>Bass</b>	5 daily and in possession, no size limit. Third Saturday in May through June 30: 1 daily and in possession, must be over 22 inches.
	<b>Burbot (ling)</b>	2 daily and in possession.
	<b>Kokanee Salmon</b>	20 daily and 40 in possession.
	<b>Northern Pike</b>	15 daily and in possession.
	<b>Sturgeon</b>	0 - All waters are closed to angling for Sturgeon. Captured Sturgeon must be released immediately.
	<b>Whitefish</b>	20 daily and 40 in possession.

### 2019 GENERAL FISHING SEASON

<b>Western District</b>	Rivers and Streams	Lakes and Reservoirs
	Open third Saturday in May through November 30, unless otherwise specified in Exceptions to Standard Regulations.	Open all year
<b>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.</b>		

## 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
-------------------	------------------------------------

### ABBOT LAKE

- Bass: 1 daily and in possession from the third Saturday in May through June 30, must be over 22 inches. 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.

### 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.

### 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 (see definition on page 20) within 100-yard radius of mouth.

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

- Closed entire year.

#### Mouth of Big Creek

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

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

BITTERROOT LAKE (see Little Bitterroot Lake) \_\_\_\_\_

BITTERROOT RIVER (note: river flows south to north) \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 (see definition on page 20), maggots and/or aquatic insects only. All other live/dead bait prohibited.

**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 (see definition on page 20).
- 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 <http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/permits/floating/> and signs on site for more information)**

**West Fork Bitterroot River and upper Bitterroot River**

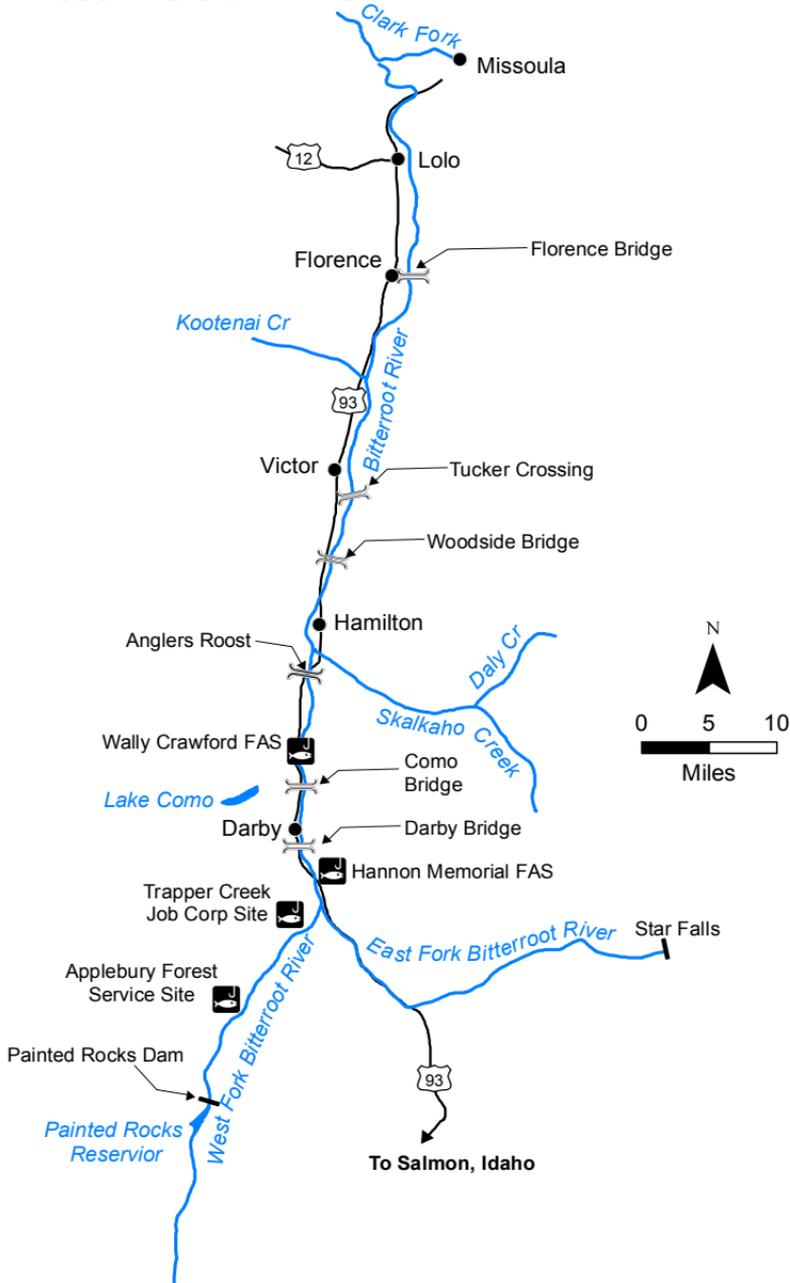
**No commercial floating or fishing June 1 to September 15 from:**

- 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 Corp 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.

# Bitterroot River



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

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**BLACKFOOT RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES****Mainstem and all tributaries except the Clearwater River. During the General Season (third Saturday in May through Nov 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 (see definition on page 20) within 100-yard radius of the mouths of Belmont Creek, Copper Creek, Gold Creek, Monture Creek and North Fork Blackfoot River.

**Mainstem only during the Extended Season (Dec 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 (see definition on page 20) 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)**

- 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 (see definition on page 20) 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.

**CABINET GORGE RESERVOIR**

- Bass: 5 daily and in possession except from June 15 through July 15 only 1 daily and in possession, must be over 22-inches.

**CEDAR CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)**

- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20), including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.

**CHAMBERLAIN CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)**

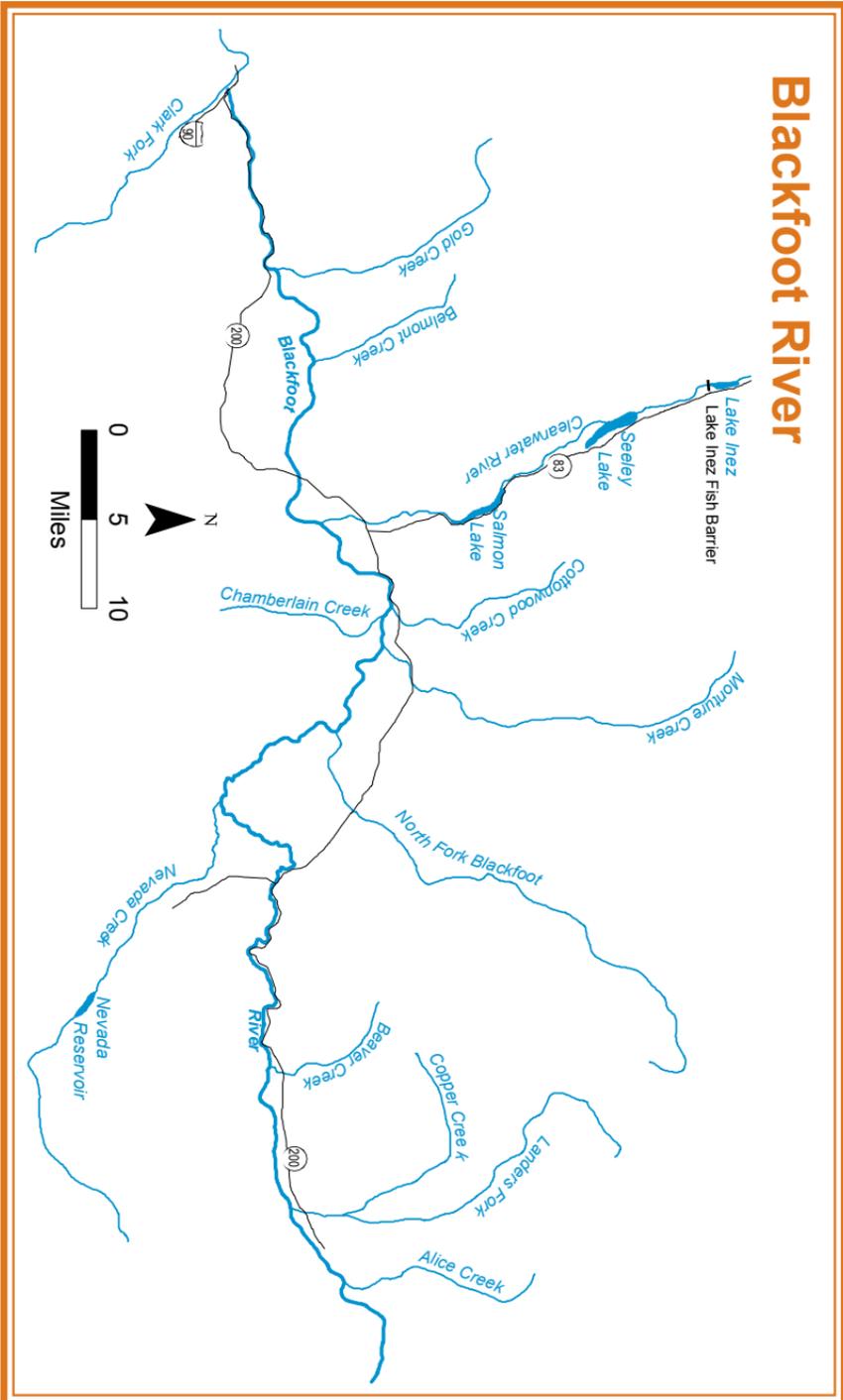
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.

**CHURCH SLOUGH**

- Open entire year.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 22 inches.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Bass: 1 daily and in possession from the third Saturday in May through June 30, must be over 22 inches. 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.
- Hook and Line: 2 rods and/or lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 28.

# Blackfoot River



## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**CIBID LAKE**

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

**CLARK FORK RIVER** **Upstream from Perkins Lane Bridge, near Warm Springs**

- Open entire year.
- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).
- 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 Nov 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 (see definition on page 20) 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.

**During the Extended Season (Dec 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 (see definition on page 20) 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.

**Mouth of Thompson River to Idaho Border**

- Open entire year.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and 10 in possession, only 1 over 22 inches.
- Cutthroat Trout: 3 daily and in possession, no size limit.
- Hook and Line: 2 lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.

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

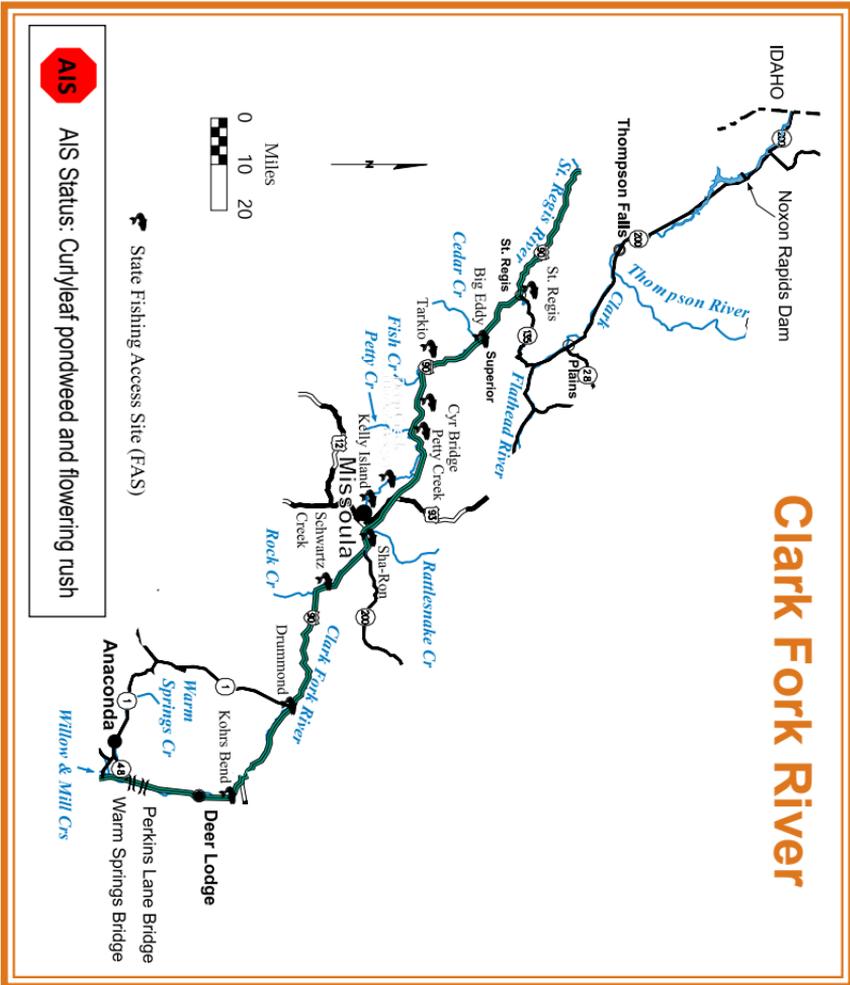
**NOTE:** Clearwater River sections between lakes are closed to fishing from Dec. 1 until the third Saturday in May. This includes the Clearwater River section from outlet of Seeley Lake at Riverview Drive Bridge ("Dogtown") downstream to inlet of Salmon Lake.

**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 Limit: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches.
- Northern Pike: no limit, open to spearing.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p. 28.

## Clark Fork River



### 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 (see definition on page 20), 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.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
<b>DRY BRIDGE POND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>DRY CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20) within 100-yard radius of the mouth.</li> </ul>
<b>DUNHAM CREEK (tributary to Monture Creek, Blackfoot drainage)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.</li> <li>Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.</li> <li>Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>
<b>EAST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER DOWNSTREAM FROM STAR FALLS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout and Cutthroat Trout.</li> <li>Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession.</li> <li>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 (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>
<b>ECHO LAKE (near Anaconda)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open third Saturday in May through March 31.</li> <li>Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, includes Brook Trout.</li> </ul>
<b>ECHO LAKE (near Bigfork)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bass: Third Saturday in May through June 30, 1 daily and in possession, must be over 22 inches. From July 1 to third Saturday in May, 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches.</li> <li>Spawning: open for Northern Pike through the ice only, daily limit of 2.</li> </ul>
<b>ELK CREEK (tributary to Swan River)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed entire year.</li> </ul>
<b>EMILY SPRINGS (tributary to Georgetown Lake)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed entire year.</li> </ul>
<b>EUREKA POND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for trout, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may take 1 trout daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>FENNON SLOUGH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open entire year.</li> <li>Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 22 inches.</li> <li>Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.</li> <li>Bass: 1 daily and in possession from the third Saturday in May to June 30, must be over 22 inches. 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.</li> <li>Hook and Line: 2 rods and/or lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.</li> </ul>
<b>FISH CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Clark Fork River drainage)</b>	
<b>Entire drainage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20), including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.</li> </ul>
<b>Mainstem downstream of the confluence of the South and West forks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.</li> <li>Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.</li> </ul>

**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 (see definition on page 20).

**FLATHEAD LAKE** **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****Flathead Indian Reservation boundary to mouth**

- Open entire year.
- Bass: Open entire year, 5 daily and in possession, no size limit.

**Confluence of the North and Middle forks (near Blankenship Bridge) downstream to Flathead Lake**

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Northern Pike: extended season for Northern Pike from December 1 through February 28, artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Whitefish: 100 daily and in possession.
- Bass: 1 daily and in possession from third Saturday in May through June 30, must be over 22 inches. 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.
- Extended season for Whitefish and Lake Trout, and catch-and-release for other game fish, except Northern Pike, from December 1 through the third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only. From the mouth of the Stillwater River downstream to Flathead Lake, no maggots and no scented artificial lures (infused, saturated or applied).

**FLATHEAD RIVER SLOUGHS****Brenneman, Church, Egan, Fennon, Half Moon, McWennegar, Mill, and Rose Creek**

- Open entire year.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 22 inches.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Bass: 1 daily and in possession from third Saturday in May through June 30, must be over 22 inches. 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.
- Hook and Line: 2 rods and/or lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.

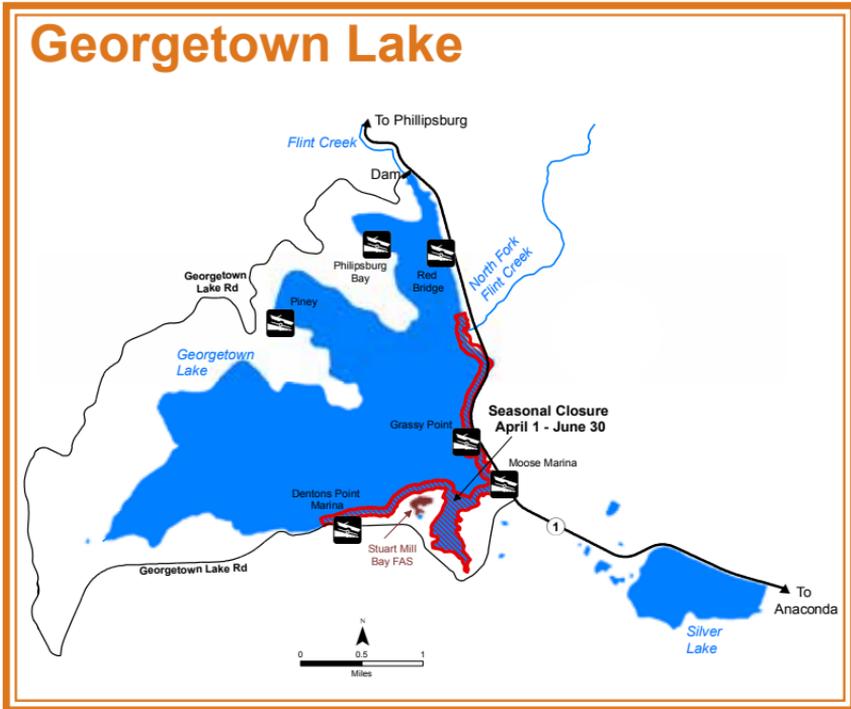
**FLINT CREEK****Downstream from Georgetown Lake**

- Extended season for Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only.

**FRED BURR LAKE (Granite County)****Philipsburg water supply**

- Closed entire year.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
<b>FRENCHTOWN POND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for bass.</li> </ul>
<b>GEORGETOWN LAKE</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Kokanee Salmon: no daily or possession limit.</li> </ul>
<b>Tributaries to Georgetown Lake (Hardtla, North Fork Flint, and Stuart Mill creeks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open July 1 through November 30.</li> <li>Emily Springs: Closed entire year.</li> <li>Catch-and-release for Brook Trout.</li> </ul>
<b>GERMAN GULCH</b>	
<b>Mainstem and tributaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout</li> </ul>
<b>GOAT CREEK (tributary to Swan River)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed entire year.</li> </ul>
<b>GOLD CREEK (tributary to Blackfoot River)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.</li> <li>Combined trout: 3 daily, only 1 Rainbow Trout over 14 inches, any size Brown Trout.</li> <li>Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20), including within 100-yard radius of the mouth.</li> </ul>
<b>GRANITE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed entire year.</li> </ul>
<b>GRAVE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (near Eureka including Clarence Creek and Blue Sky Creek)</b>	
<b>Upstream of Highway 93 bridge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open third Saturday in May through August 15.</li> </ul>
<b>Downstream of Highway 93 to mouth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon from September 15 through November 30.</li> <li>Kokanee Salmon: 20 daily and 40 in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>HANDKERCHIEF LAKE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch and release for Arctic Grayling.</li> </ul>
<b>HARDTLA CREEK (tributary to Georgetown Lake)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open July 1 through November 30.</li> <li>Catch-and-release for Brook Trout.</li> <li>Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>HEIRONYMOUS POND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, includes Cutthroat Trout and Brook Trout.</li> </ul>
<b>HERRIG CREEK (tributary to Little Bitterroot Lake)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed entire year.</li> </ul>



### 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.

### 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 Bull Trout 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.

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**JOB CORPS PONDS (Deer Lodge County)**

- see Warm Springs WMA map on page 49

- Open August 15 through September 30.
- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).
- Motorized boats/vessels prohibited.

**KEELER CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES**

- Open third Saturday in May through August 15.

**KOOTENAI RIVER**

- As per the District Standard Regulations, the Kootenai River is closed to angling for Bull Trout; any Bull Trout caught must be immediately released.

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

- Open entire year.
- 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.
- Catch-and-release for Burbot.
- Combined trout: 4 daily and in possession, includes 3 under 13 inches and only 1 over 18 inches.

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

- Open June 1 through February 28.
- Combined trout: 1 daily and in possession, 28 inch minimum length.
- Brown Trout: All Brown Trout must be killed immediately, kept, and the entire fish turned into FWP. Anglers who catch Brown Trout in the Kootenai River are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501.) Anglers must provide the angler's 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.

**Libby Dam to Kootenai Falls**

- *Brown Trout: All Brown Trout must be killed immediately, kept, and the entire fish turned into FWP. Anglers who catch Brown Trout in the Kootenai River are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501.) Anglers must provide the angler's 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.*

**Kootenai Falls to Idaho Border**

- Brown Trout: no limit.

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

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

**LAKE ALVA**

- 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.

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**LAKE INEZ**

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

**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 front cover of this booklet).
- Bull Trout: 1 fish per license year from June 1 through February 28. Catch-and-release the rest of the year (all Bull Trout must be released immediately). A Lake Kooconusa Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for Bull Trout. See Special 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.

**LAKE MARY RONAN** 

- Kokanee Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
- Bass: 1 daily and in possession from third Saturday in May through June 30, only 1 over 22 inches; 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.
- Northern Pike: no limit.
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike.

**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.

**Mouth of Lion Creek**

- Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within a 300-yard radius of the stream mouth, unless posted at a greater distance.

**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.
- Bass: No daily or possession limit for entire year.

**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 (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only.

**Tributaries**

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

**LODGEPOLE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES****(Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)**

- Closed entire year.

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
<b>LONG CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (Middle Fork Flathead River drainage)</b>	—
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed entire year.</li> </ul>
<b>LOON LAKE (near Ferndale)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined trout: 4 less than 12 inches and only 1 over 22 inches daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>LOST LAKE (Eureka)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open April 1 through November 30.</li> <li>• Combined trout: 1 daily and in possession, 22-inch minimum.</li> <li>• Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>
<b>LOWER STILLWATER LAKE</b> 	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow Perch: No limit, only 10 daily over 10 inches. No possession limit.</li> <li>• Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.</li> </ul>
<b>LOWER THOMPSON LAKE</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.</li> <li>• Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.</li> </ul>
<b>MARSHALL CREEK (tributary to West Fork Clearwater River)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>
<b>MCCORMICK POND aka Silver's Lagoon (Missoula)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age or younger.</li> <li>• Open April 1 through October 30.</li> <li>• Combined trout, including cutthroat trout: 1 fish daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>MEDICINE LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES (near Philipsburg)</b>	_____
<b>Lake</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open July 1 through April 30.</li> </ul>
<b>Tributaries to lake</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open July 1 through November 30.</li> </ul>
<b>MIDDLE FORK FLATHEAD RIVER</b>	_____
<b>Non-wilderness portion</b>	_____
	<p>NOTE: Montana/Glacier National Park boundary is the ordinary high water mark on the park side of the river.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed to angling June 1 through September 30 within a 150-yard radius of the Bear Creek stream mouth.</li> <li>• Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.</li> <li>• Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.</li> <li>• Extended Whitefish season and catch-and release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only.</li> </ul>
<b>MIDDLE THOMPSON LAKE</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.</li> <li>• Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.</li> </ul>
<b>MILL CREEK (tributary to Clark Fork River)</b>	_____
<b>Downstream from the Stewart Street Bridge in Opportunity</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch-and-release only.</li> <li>• Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**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 (see definition on page 20), including within 100-yard radius of the mouth.

**MORRELL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES (tributary to Clearwater River)****Entire drainage**

- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).

**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 (see definition on page 20), including within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.

**From North Fork Falls downstream to Highway 200 bridge**

- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).
- 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**

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

- 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.
- Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.
- Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) 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.

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**NOXON RAPIDS RESERVOIR** **Birdland Bay Bridge to Noxon Rapids Dam**

- Bass: 5 daily and in possession except from June 15 through July 15 only 1 daily and in possession, 22-inch minimum.

**PETERSON LAKE**

- Bass: 1 daily and in possession from the third Saturday in May through June 30, must be over 22 inches. 5 daily and in possession from July 1 to the third Saturday in May, only 1 over 12 inches.

**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 (see definition on page 20) 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**

- 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.

**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 trout daily and in possession.

**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 (see definition on page 20), 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.

**ROCK CREEK (near Missoula)****From the confluence of the East and West forks, near Phillipsburg, to the mouth**

- Combined trout: 3 Brown Trout daily and in possession. Catch-and-release for Rainbow Trout and Cutthroat Trout.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20), except anglers 14 years of age or younger may use bait during the general season.

**Waterbody/Section****Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

- 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 (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only.

**SALMON LAKE**

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

**SEELEY LAKE** 

- 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.

**SILVERBOW CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES****Mainstem and Tributaries**

- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20) 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.
- 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)**

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

## Waterbody/Section

## Exceptions to Standard Regulations

**SOUTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER****Mainstem 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 immediately. It is unlawful to possess a live Bull Trout for any reason.

**Meadow Creek Bridge to Spotted Bear foot bridge and tributaries**

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).

**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.
- Extended season for Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only.

**SQUEEZER CREEK (tributary to Swan River)**

- Closed entire year.

**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 (see definition on page 20) 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.

**SWAN LAKE** 

- Bull Trout: Catch-and-release only. All Bull Trout must be released immediately. It is unlawful to possess a live Bull Trout for any reason.
- Walleye: All Walleye caught must be killed immediately, kept, and the entire fish turned in to FWP. Anglers who catch Walleye in Swan Lake and the Swan River are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501). Anglers must provide the angler's full name, ALS Number, phone number, date and time of capture, and location on lake or river. Anglers are required to turn in the whole walleye to a FWP office during regular business hours and within 10 days of capture.

**Waterbody/Section****Exceptions to Standard Regulations****SWAN RIVER**

- 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.
- Walleye: All walleye caught must be killed immediately, kept and the entire fish turned in to FWP. Anglers who catch walleye in Swan Lake and the Swan River are required to report the catch to FWP within 24 hours (406-752-5501). Anglers must provide the angler's full name, ALS Number, phone number, date and time of capture, and location on lake or river. Anglers are required to turn in the whole walleye to a FWP office within 10 days of capture during regular business hours.

**Piper Creek Bridge downstream to Swan Lake**

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout and Rainbow Trout.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).

**Swan Lake outlet downstream to the Highway 35 Bridge**

- Open entire year.
- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

**TALLY LAKE**

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

**THOMPSON RIVER****Entire river**

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout and Rainbow Trout.
- Brown Trout: 3 daily and in possession, any size.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20), except anglers 14 years of age or younger may use bait.

**Upstream from mouth of Little Thompson River**

- Closed to fishing December 1 to third Saturday in May.

**Mouth of Little Thompson River to the confluence with the Clark Fork River**

- Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots only.

**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)**

- Artificial 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**

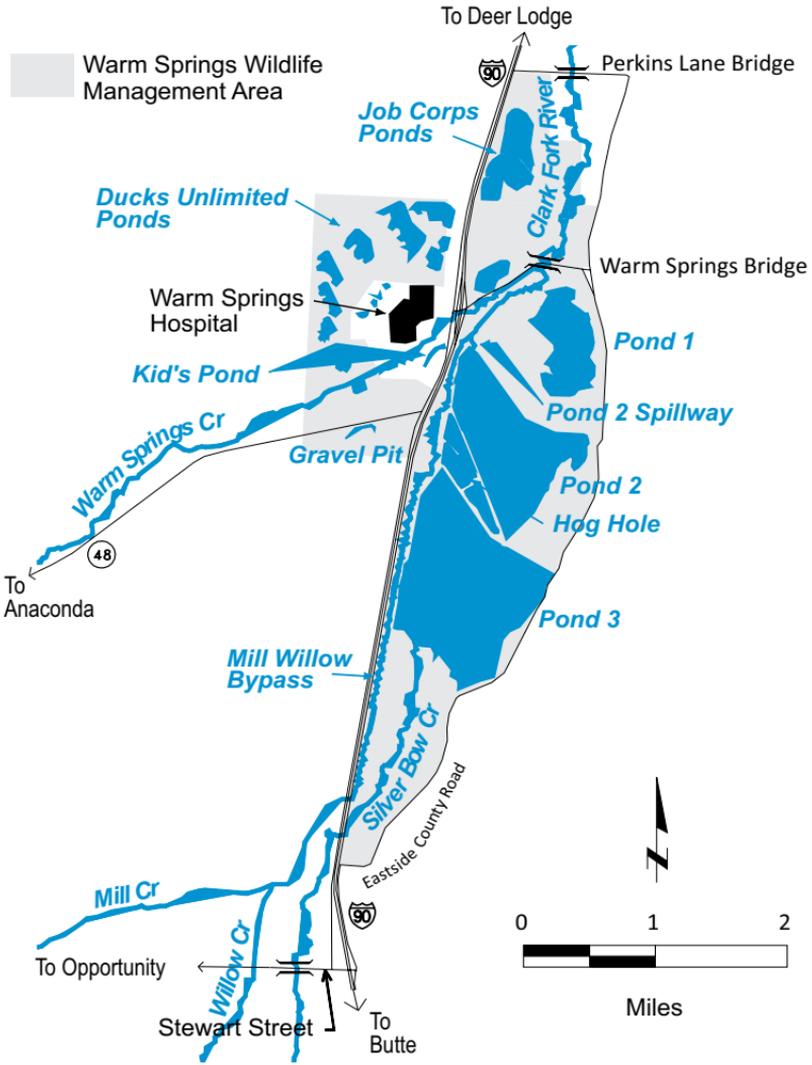
- Spearing: open for Northern Pike through the ice only.

**UPPER THOMPSON LAKE**

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

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
<b>UPSATA LAKE</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch-and-release for bass.</li> <li>• Northern Pike: no limit.</li> <li>• Spearing: open for Northern Pike.</li> </ul>
<b>WARM SPRINGS CREEK (near Anaconda)</b>	
<b>Upstream of Myers Dam</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open from the third Saturday in May through November 30.</li> </ul>
<b>Myers Dam to Warm Spring Wildlife Management Area (WMA)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Extended season: catch-and-release for trout December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>
<b>Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open entire year on Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA). See Warm Springs WMA for additional regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>WARM SPRINGS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA)</b>	
<b>All waters</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ponds and canals open August 15 through September 30 including Job Corps Ponds and Ducks Unlimited Ponds.</li> <li>• Catch-and-release only. See Kid's Pond and Gravel Pit Pond for exceptions.</li> <li>• Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20). See Kid's Pond and Gravel Pit Pond for exceptions.</li> <li>• Motorized boats/vessels prohibited.</li> </ul>
<b>JOB CORPS PONDS (Deer Lodge County)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open August 15 through September 30.</li> <li>• Catch-and-release only.</li> <li>• Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> <li>• Motorized boats/vessels prohibited.</li> </ul>
<b>Kids pond at WSWMA headquarters</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open entire year.</li> <li>• Combined trout: 2 daily and in possession.</li> <li>• Bait may be used.</li> <li>• Open to fishing by anglers 14 years of age or younger only. One rod per child.</li> </ul>
<b>Gravel Pit Pond adjacent to Highway 48</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open entire year.</li> <li>• Combined trout: 2 daily and in possession.</li> <li>• Bait may be used.</li> </ul>
<b>Hog Hole</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open May 25 through September 30. No trespassing on islands.</li> </ul>
<b>Pond 3</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open May 25 through November 30 to fishing from non-motorized vessels.</li> </ul>
<b>Mill-Willow Bypass, Warm Springs Creek and Clark Fork River</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open entire year.</li> <li>• Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.</li> </ul>

# Warm Springs WMA



If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p. 28.

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 (see definition on page 20).

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

#### West Fork Bitterroot River and upper Bitterroot River (see map page 31)

**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 Corp 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 (see definition on page 20).

#### 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 (see definition on page 20).

### 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)

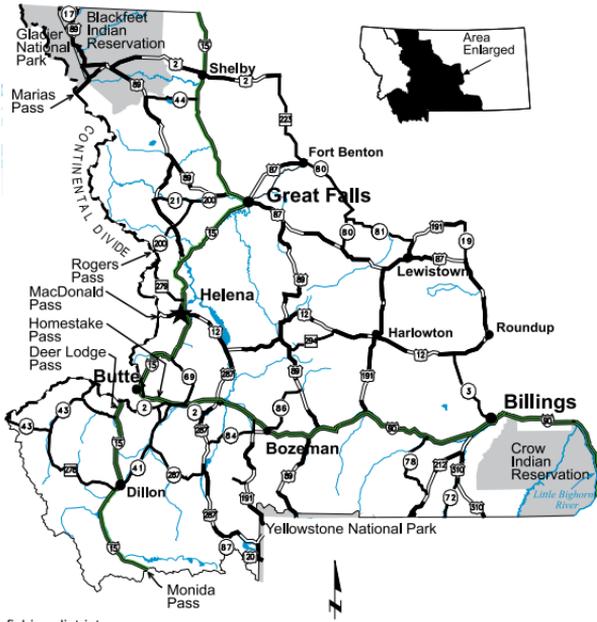
#### From Stewart Street Bridge to the Warm Springs WMA

- Catch-and-release only.
- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).

### WOODWARD CREEK

- Closed to angling within a 150-yard radius of the stream mouth June 1 through September 30, unless posted at a greater distance.

# Central Fishing District



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

Central District

**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.....406-994-4042
- 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 and 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 406-444-7885, 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 County)  
Canyon Ferry Dam (BOR, Lewis & Clark County)  
Clark Canyon Dam (BOR, Beaverhead County)  
Cochrane Dam (NWE, Cascade County)  
Hauser Dam (NWE, Lewis & Clark County)  
Hebgen Dam (NWE, Gallatin County)  
Holter Dam (NWE Lewis & Clark County)  
Madison Dam (NWE, Madison County)

Morony Dam (NWE, Chouteau County)  
Rainbow Dam (NWE, Cascade County)  
Ruby Dam (DNRC, Madison County)  
Ryan Dam (NWE, Cascade County)  
Tiber Dam (BOR, Liberty County)  
Yellowtail Dam (BOR, Bighorn County)  
Yellowtail Afterbay Dam  
(BOR, Bighorn County)

**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 24 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. It is unlawful to possess or transport any live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken without authorization from FWP with the following exceptions:

- 1) transportation of fish for authorized commercial purposes (eg. Baitfish Seining Permit, Commercial Fish Ponds, Commercial Fishing, etc.);
- 2) use as live bait subject to restrictions imposed by the F&W Commission for the taking, transport and use of live baitfish (see "Bait Regulations" below); or
- 3) it is unlawful to possess or transport live fish, other than authorized baitfish, on roadways that form the boundary between the Eastern and Central fishing districts.

52 **Report unlawful fish introductions! Make the call: 1-800 TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668)**

## 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 ALS# 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 9/10-digit ALS number. Attended shelters at Clark Canyon Reservoir, Deadman's Basin, Hauser Reservoir, Lake Francis 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.

## Setlines

- Setlines may be used only on waters specified in District Exceptions.
- Setlines must be checked by the fisherman at least once every 24 hours.
- The angler's name and phone number or name and 9/10-digit ALS# must be attached to each setline.
- Setlines shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices.

**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 below for use of nets to harvest bait fish.

**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.

## Bait Regulations

- Game fish, including Yellow Perch, may not be used as bait (live or dead) except as authorized below under Dead Bait.
- Possession of live non-game fish is prohibited on waters closed to using live fish as bait.
- It is unlawful to release live bait of any kind into Montana waters; do not empty any live bait containers at your fishing site.
- Where live fish may be used as bait (see list below under Live Bait), legal non-game fish may be taken for use as bait in the following manner:
  - with hook and line; or
  - with seines no larger than 12 feet by 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).
- Legal non-game fish, except Sculpins (genus *Cottus*) which must be killed prior to transport, may only be transported live to or from:
  - waters where live non-game fish may be used as bait in the Central Fishing District, or
  - anywhere within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District.
- 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.]
- See Commercial Fishing License (page 6) requirements for information on commercial harvest permits.
- All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and ALS# attached.
- Areas within the Central Fishing District that have been identified as contaminated with Eurasian watermilfoil have additional bait restrictions as described on the next page.

## Dead Bait

- Non-game fish 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, Tiger Muskie, Walleye, or Yellow Perch may be used as bait if edible portions are not wasted.
- The eggs of Char, Cisco, Arctic Grayling, Salmon or Trout may be used as bait. Parts/pieces of Salmonids 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.
- 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.
- Fish species that may be collected 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. These approved bait species 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

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 10).

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 51 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
T R O U T	<b>Brook Trout</b>	20 daily and in possession.
	<b>Combined trout</b> includes Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Golden Trout, Cutthroat Trout and Arctic Grayling	<b>Lakes/Reservoirs:</b> 5 daily and 10 in possession, includes Cutthroat Trout.  <b>Rivers/Streams:</b> 5 daily and in possession, only 1 over 18 inches, only 1 can be a Cutthroat Trout. All Arctic Grayling must be released immediately.
	<b>Lake Trout</b>	3 daily and in possession.
<b>Bass</b>		5 daily and in possession.
<b>Burbot (Ling)</b>		5 daily and in possession.
<b>Channel Catfish</b>		10 daily and 20 in possession.
<b>Northern Pike</b>		10 daily and in possession.
<b>Pallid Sturgeon</b>		None - this is an endangered species and all fish must be released immediately. All waters are closed to fishing for Pallid Sturgeon.
<b>Salmon (Kokanee &amp; Chinook)</b>		10 daily and in possession.
<b>Sauger/Walleye</b>		5 daily and 10 in possession.
<b>Shovelnose Sturgeon</b>		5 daily and in possession, none over 40 inches.
<b>Tiger Muskie</b>		1 daily and in possession, must be over 40 inches.
<b>Whitefish</b>		20 daily and 40 in possession.

Central District

2019 GENERAL FISHING SEASON		
	Rivers and Streams	Lakes and Reservoirs
Central District	Open all year unless otherwise specified in Exceptions to Standard Regulations.	Open all year
<b>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.</b>		

## 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 (see definition on page 20).

### 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 nongame 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

**Entire river**

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

**Clark Canyon Dam to Pipe Organ Bridge**

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

**High Bridge FAS to Henneberry FAS**

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

**Henneberry FAS to Pipe Organ Bridge**

- Closed to float fishing by nonresidents and float outfitting on each Sunday from the third 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.

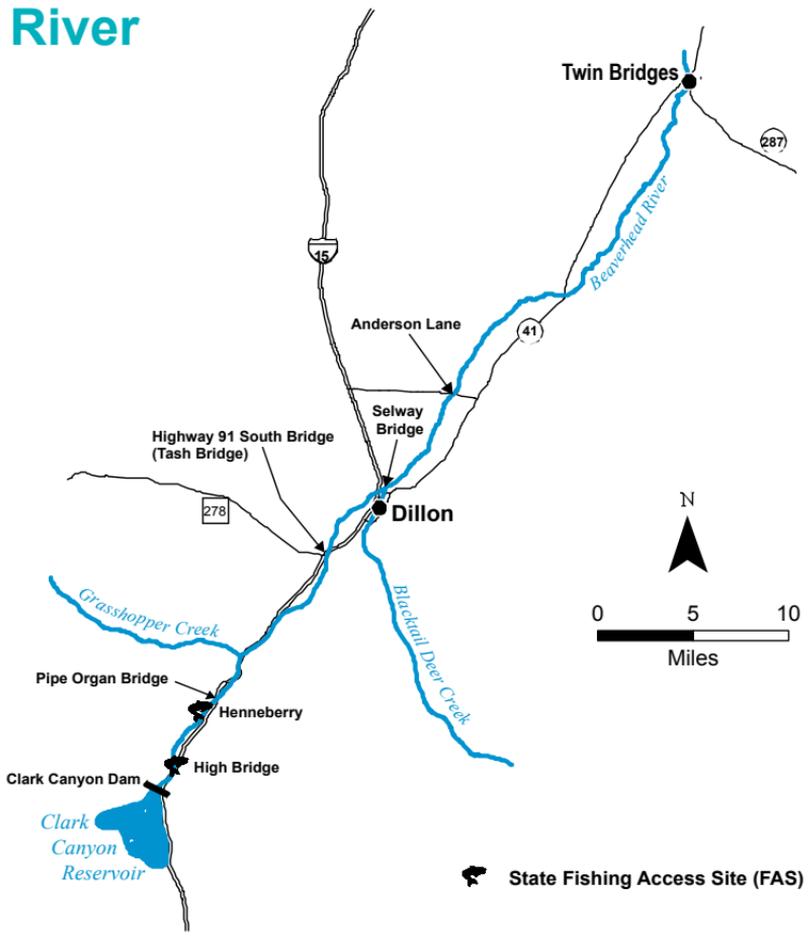
### BIG COULEE CREEK (tributary to Highwood Creek, near Great Falls)

- Closed entire year.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 57.

# Central District

## Beaverhead River



**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 Melrose Bridges (Salmon Fly FAS)**

- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).
- Extended season for Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to the third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots.

**Melrose Bridges (Salmon Fly FAS) to the mouth**

- Extended season for Whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to the third Saturday in May with artificial lures (see definition on page 20) and/or maggots.

**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.

**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 Bridges (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 Bridges (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 (bridges) to Notch Bottom FAS**

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

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

- Combined trout: All may be Cutthroat Trout.

**BIG SPRING CREEK (near Lewistown)** 

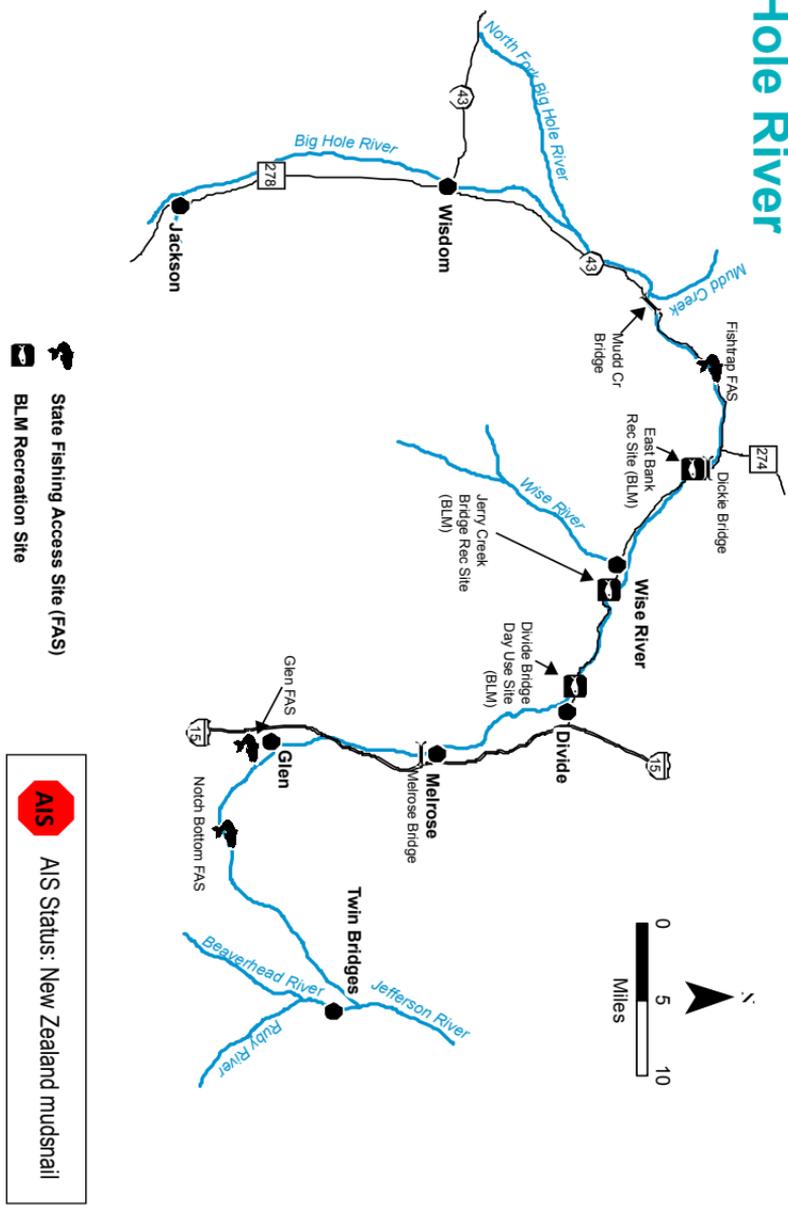
**Upstream of the US Highway 191 bridge, including East Fork Big Spring Creek downstream from the Reservoir**

- Catch-and-release only for all trout.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 57.

# Central District

## Big Hole River



-  State Fishing Access Site (FAS)
-  BLM Recreation Site

 AIS Status: New Zealand mudsnail

**Waterbody/Section**

**Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

**BIGHORN LAKE AND AFTERBAY RESERVOIR** 

- 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**

**Entire river**

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be Sauger.
- 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 nongame bait fish (as identified in standard district regulations).

**Cable 600 feet below Afterbay Dam to Bighorn FAS**

- Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).

**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.

**BOULDER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES (near Big Timber)**

**River and Tributaries from the mouth upstream to Hawley Creek**

- Combined trout: Only 1 fish over 14 inches.

**River and Tributaries upstream of Hawley Creek**

- Combined trout: Only 1 fish over 14 inches; may include 3 Cutthroat Trout.

**BYNUM RESERVOIR** 

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

**CANYON FERRY RESERVOIR**

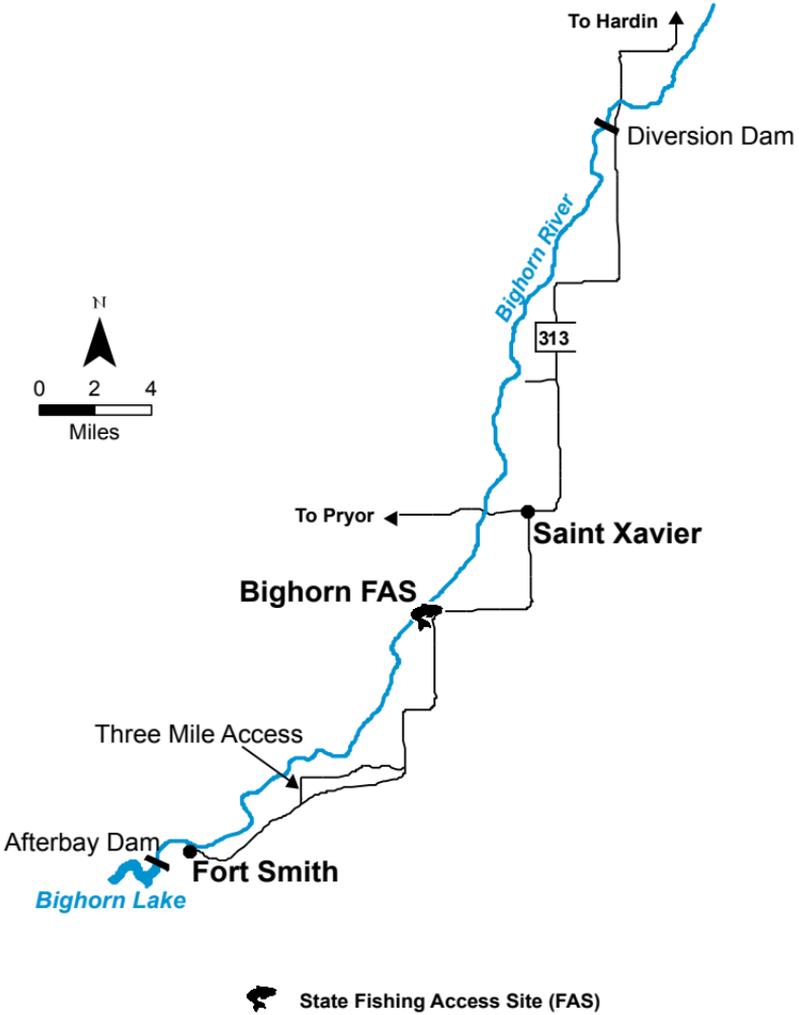
- **All watercraft must be inspected prior to leaving.**
- Catch-and-release for Brown Trout, except anglers 14 years of age or younger may take 1 Brown Trout daily and in possession any size.
- Walleye: 20 daily, only 1 over 20 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession.
- Northern Pike: No limit
- 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.

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 57.

# Bighorn River



Central District

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
<b>CHESSMAN RESERVOIR (Tenmile Creek drainage, near Helena)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed to fishing (City of Helena water supply).</li> </ul>
<b>CLARK CANYON RESERVOIR</b> 	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burbot (ling): 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 28 inches.</li> <li>• Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES</b>	_____
<b>Mainstem downstream from the bridge at Bridger</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hook and Line: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line all year.</li> </ul>
<b>CONFEDERATE GULCH (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)</b>	_____
<b>Mouth to Highway 284</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open June 15 through September 30.</li> </ul>
<b>COTTONWOOD CREEK (10 miles SW of Martinsdale)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined trout: limit includes 2 Cutthroat Trout daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>CULVER POND (Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Closed to angling from November 30 to April 15.</b></li> <li>• <b>Artificial lures only.</b></li> </ul>
<b>CUT BANK CREEK</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open entire year downstream of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation boundary in T33N, R6W, S2.</li> </ul>
<b>DEADMANS BASIN RESERVOIR</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined trout: 10 daily and in possession.</li> <li>• Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 1 through December 31, 35 daily and 70 in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>DEARBORN RIVER</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open third Saturday in May through November 30.</li> </ul>
<b>Upstream from Highway 434 Bridge in T18N R6W, Section 29</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches.</li> </ul>
<b>DEEP CREEK (tributary to Missouri River, near Townsend)</b>	_____
<b>Mouth to North Fork of Deep Creek</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open June 15 through November 30.</li> </ul>
<b>DICKENS LAKE (Sun River Wildlife Management Area)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open May 15 at 12:00 noon through November 30.</li> </ul>
<b>DIVERSION LAKE (Sun River drainage)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch-and-release for Arctic Grayling.</li> <li>• Combined trout: 5 daily and in possession.</li> </ul>
<b>DRY CREEK (tributary to Missouri River, near Townsend)</b>	_____
<b>Mouth to Flynn Lane</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open June 15 through September 30.</li> </ul>
<b>DUCK CREEK (tributary to Hebgen Reservoir)</b>	_____
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open third Saturday in May through November 30.</li> </ul>
<b>EAST FORK BIG SPRING CREEK (near Lewistown)</b> 	_____
<b>Downstream from the Reservoir</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch-and-release only for all trout.</li> </ul>

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

- 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

- 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

**Entire river**

- Northern Pike: No limit

**Yellowstone National Park to East Gallatin River**

- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

### 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.

### GOOSE LAKE (Madison County)

- Open June 15 through November 30.

**Waterbody/Section**

**Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

**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** 

**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: 20 daily, only 1 over 25 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Yellow Perch: 10 daily and in possession, except from April 1 through June 30, only 1 fish daily and in possession, 14 inch minimum.
- 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**

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

- 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.

**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: 10 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: 50 daily and no possession limit.
- Northern Pike: No limit
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.



**Waterbody/Section**

**Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

**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** 

**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 (see definition on page 20).
- 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 (see definition on page 20).

**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 (see definition on page 20).

**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 (see definition on page 20).
- Closed to fishing from boats/vessels.

**Ennis Dam to the mouth**

- Northern Pike: No Limit

**MAGPIE CREEK (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)**

- Open June 15 through September 30.

**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.
- Mountain Whitefish: 35 daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with up to 2 hooks per line all year.

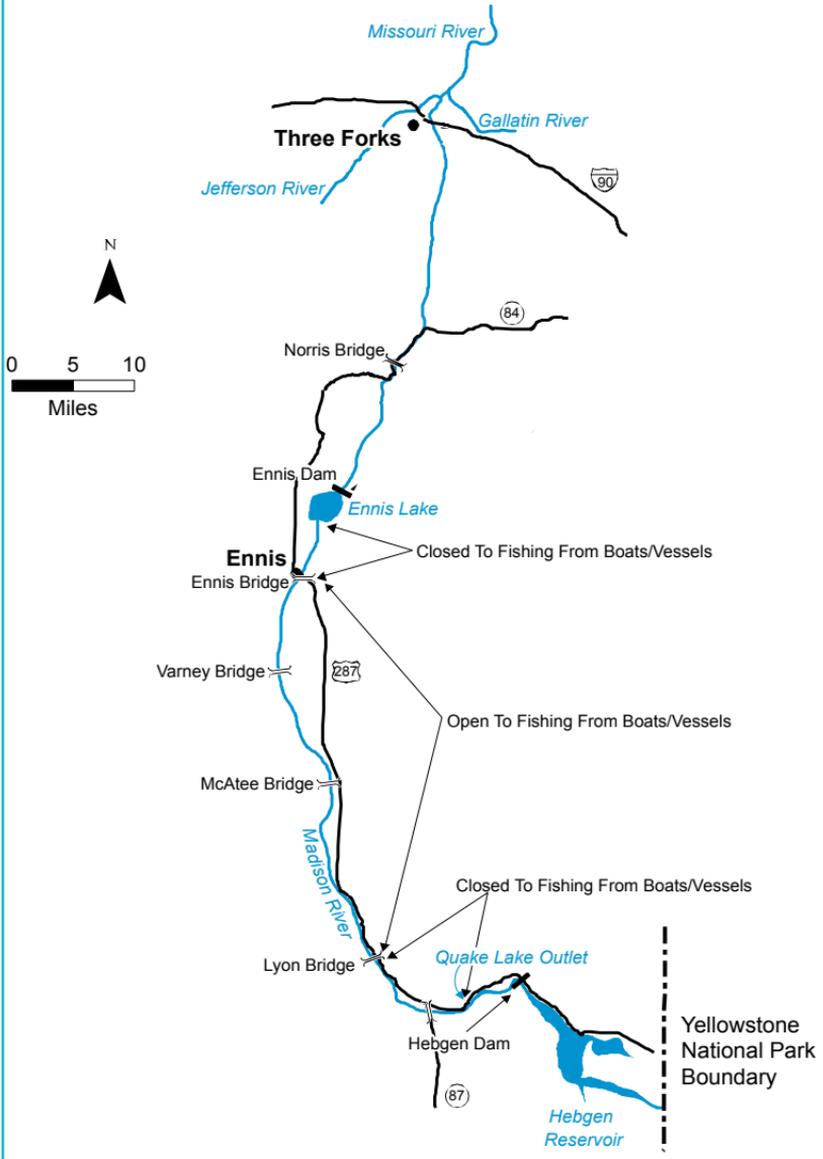
**MIDVALE CREEK (Blackfoot Reservation)**

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

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 57.

# Central District

## Madison River



 AIS Status: Eurasian watermilfoil and curlyleaf pondweed

**Waterbody/Section**

**Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

**MISSOURI RIVER** 

**Confluence of Madison and Jefferson Rivers to Holter Dam**

- Northern Pike: No limit.

**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: 20 daily, only 1 over 20 inches. Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Northern Pike: No limit

**Canyon Ferry Reservoir**

- **All watercraft must be inspected prior to leaving.**
- 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: 20 daily, only 1 over 20 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.

**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, except from April 1 through June 30, only 1 fish daily and in possession, 14 inch minimum.
- Walleye: 20 daily, only 1 over 25 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: 10 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: 10 daily and 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: 50 daily and no possession limit.
- Northern Pike: No limit
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

**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: No limit.

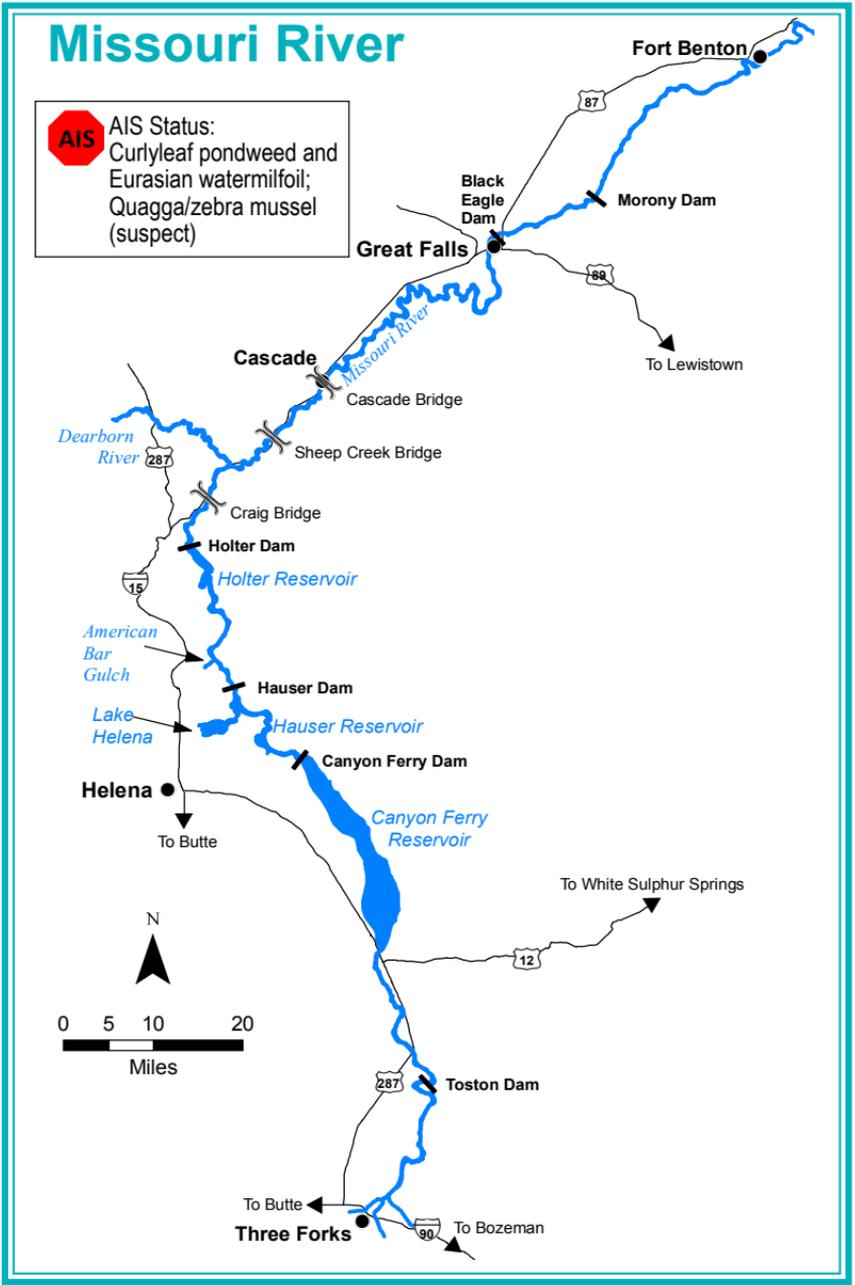
**Cascade Bridge to Black Eagle Dam**

- Walleye: 20 daily and 40 in possession.

**Waterbody/Section**                      **Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

**Morony Dam to Fort Benton**

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.
- Smallmouth Bass: 10 daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 6 hooks per line all year.



Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
<b>MUSSELSHELL RIVER</b>	
<b>From the Highway 3 bridge at Lavina downstream to Fort Peck Reservoir</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.</li> </ul>	
<b>Downstream from where North and South forks meet</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channel Catfish: 10 daily and in possession.</li> </ul>	
<b>NELSON SPRING CREEK</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release only.</li> <li>Artificial lures only (see definition on page 20).</li> </ul>	
<b>NEWLAN CREEK RESERVOIR</b>	
<b>(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.)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Snagging: open for Kokanee Salmon October 1 through October 31; 15 daily and 30 in possession.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>NORTH FORK SUN RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES</b>	
<b>Upstream from the point where the North and South forks of the Sun River meet, regardless of reservoir level</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches, all may be Cutthroat Trout.</li> </ul>	
<b>NORTH FORK TETON RIVER DRAINAGE (near Choteau)</b>	
<b>Within the National Forest</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.</li> </ul>	
<b>NORTH WILLOW CREEK (near Harrison)</b>	
<b>Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open June 15 through November 30.</li> </ul>	
<b>NORWEGIAN CREEK (near Harrison)</b>	
<b>Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open June 15 through November 30.</li> </ul>	
<b>O'BRIEN CREEK (near Neihart)</b>	
<b>Above intake to the Neihart public water supply</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closed entire year.</li> </ul>	
<b>ODELL CREEK (Red Rock River drainage)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined trout: All may be Cutthroat Trout.</li> </ul>	
<b>OSTLE RESERVOIR aka Antelope Butte Lake (Teton County)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open May 15 at 12:00 noon through November 30.</li> </ul>	
<b>OTTER LAKE (Madison County)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open June 15 through November 30.</li> <li>Combined trout: 1 Rainbow Trout daily and in possession.</li> </ul>	
<b>OUR LAKE aka Hidden Lake (Teton County)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined trout: 3 daily and in possession.</li> </ul>	
<b>PARSONS SLOUGH</b>	
<b>Downstream from Loomont Lane</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open June 15 through September 30.</li> </ul>	

Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
-------------------	------------------------------------

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

- Northern Pike: No limit.

**PISHKUN RESERVOIR** \_\_\_\_\_

- Sparring: 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 15 through June 14.
- Cutthroat Trout: No harvest of Cutthroat Trout.
- 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** \_\_\_\_\_

**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)** \_\_\_\_\_

- Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

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

**Downstream from I-15 bridge near Helena**

- Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

**Waterbody/Section**

**Exceptions to Standard Regulations**

**SLOUGH CREEK (Yellowstone River drainage)**

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

**SMITH RIVER**

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.

**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 (see definition on page 20), 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.

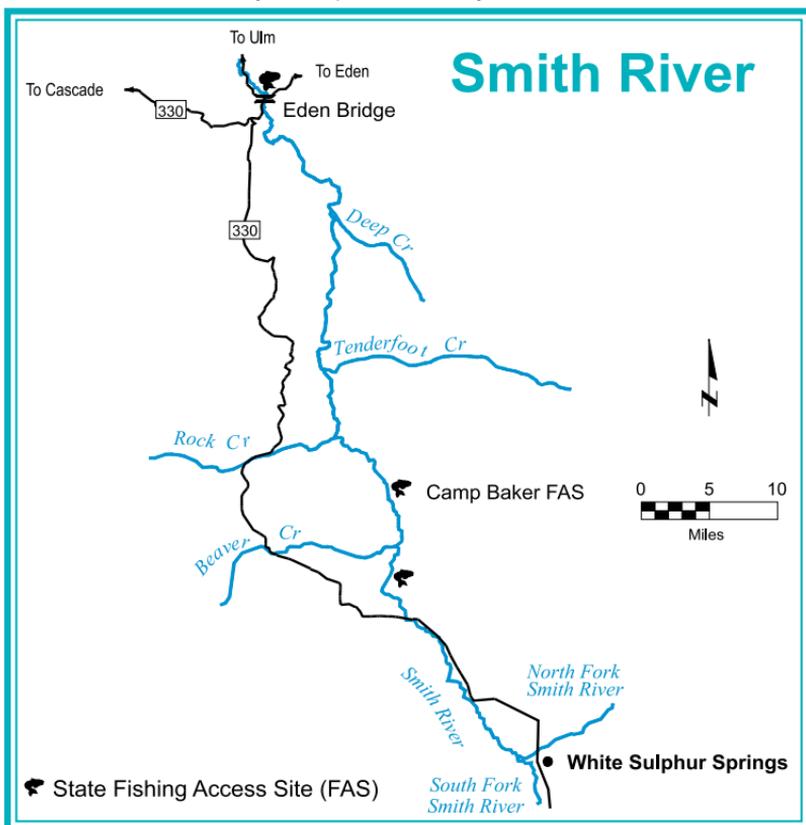
**SOUTH FORK MADISON RIVER (tributary to Hebgen Reservoir)**

- 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.





Waterbody/Section	Exceptions to Standard Regulations
-------------------	------------------------------------

### 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 Sulphur 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.

### YELLOWSTONE RIVER

**Entire River**

- Smallmouth Bass: 10 daily and in possession.

**Yellowstone National Park Boundary to Pine Creek Bridge**

- Catch-and-release for Cutthroat Trout.

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

- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be Sauger, includes tributary streams.

### YELLOWSTONE RIVER TRIBUTARIES

**Helroaring, 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**

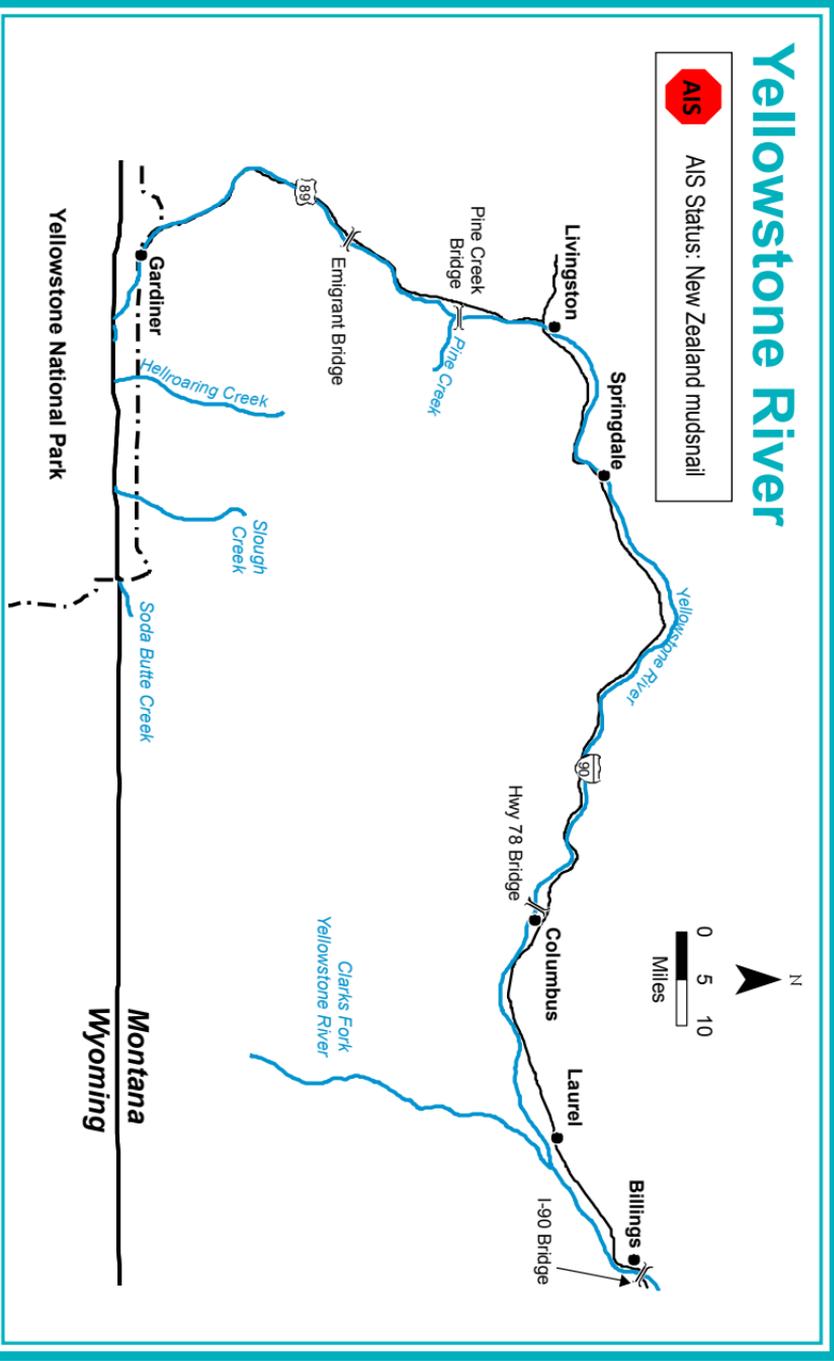
- Combined trout: All may be Cutthroat Trout (unless indicated otherwise in exceptions).

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 57.

# Central District

## Yellowstone River

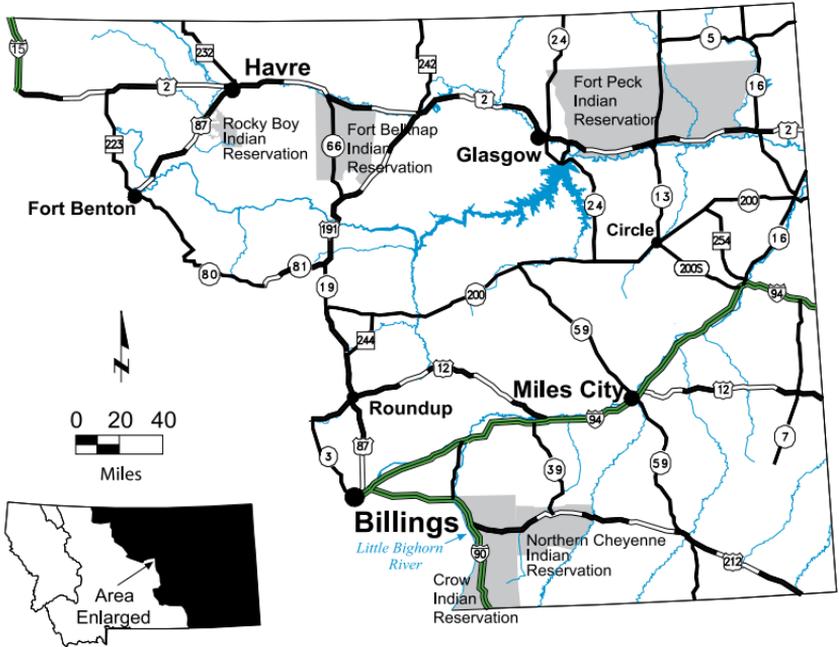
 AIS Status: New Zealand mudsnail



Waterbody/Section

Exceptions to Standard Regulations

## Eastern Fishing District



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 51.**

**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 of this district, please call the following regional headquarters Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.:

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

## Eastern District Standard Regulations

### Closed Waters

Waters operated as fish hatcheries and rearing ponds by FWP and the US Fish and 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 406-444-7885, or contact the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) at 406-247-7296 or the Army Corp 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 license number. 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 24 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 of 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. It is unlawful to possess or transport any live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken without authorization from FWP with the following exceptions:

- 1) Transportation of fish for authorized commercial purposes (eg. Baitfish Seining Permit, Commercial Fish Ponds, Commercial Fishing, etc.);
- 2) Use as live bait subject to restrictions imposed by the F&W Commission for the taking, transport and use of live baitfish (see **"Bait Regulations"** for Eastern Fishing District) below; or
- 3) Within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District. It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish, other than authorized baitfish, on roadways that form the boundary between the Eastern and Central fishing districts.
- 4) Transport of live baitfish 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 minnows 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 ALS# 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 below.

##### **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 below.

#### 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 on next page.

**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 9/10-digit ALS number. 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 within five days from receipt of notification from FWP to remove the shelter.

### 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 9/10-digit ALS# must be attached to each setline.
- Setlines shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices.

**Bow and Arrow:** All waters open to angling are open to taking Paddlefish and non-game fish by 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 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.

**Snagging:** Snagging non-game fish is allowed on all open waters in the Eastern District except on the Missouri River downstream from Fort Benton to the North Dakota border, and on the Yellowstone River downstream from the mouth of the Bighorn River, where only Paddlefish may be snagged by anglers with a valid Paddlefish tag. All waters open to angling are open to snagging Paddlefish during the open Paddlefish season by anglers with a valid tag (see Special Paddlefish Regulations for additional important Paddlefish information). Snagging Chinook Salmon is allowed on Fort Peck Reservoir only from October 1 through November 30.

**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.
  - Possession of live bait fish is prohibited on waters closed to using live bait.
  - It is unlawful to release live bait of any kind into Montana waters; do not empty any live bait containers at your fishing site.
  - Where live fish may be used as bait (see list below under Live Bait), legal non-game fish may be taken for use as bait in the following manner:
    - with hook and line; or
    - with seines no larger than 12 feet by 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).
  - Legal non-game fish, except Sculpins (genus *Cottus*) which must be killed prior to transport, may only be transported live:
    - to or from waters where live fish may be used as bait in the Central Fishing District, or
    - anywhere within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District.
- Note: Sculpins (genus Cottus) may not be used for bait in the Western District.*
- Landowner permission is required to capture live bait from privately owned ponds.
  - See Commercial Fishing License (page 6) requirements for information on commercial harvest permits.
  - All unattended fishing devices (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or name and ALS# 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 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, Tiger Muskie, Walleye, or Yellow Perch may be used as bait if edible portions are not wasted.
- The eggs of Char, Cisco, Arctic Grayling, Salmon or Trout may be used as bait. 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.
- 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.
- Fish species that may be collected 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. See pages 8-9 for live bait fish identification.

- These species may be used as live bait only in the following waters:

**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.

**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

**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 (see Disposal of Dead Fish and Fish Entrails on page 10).

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.

## Special Paddlefish Regulations

All Paddlefish anglers must purchase a paddlefish tag, a conservation license, and the required fishing license (see License Requirements pages 4-5). All licenses must be in the angler's immediate possession while fishing.

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

- Upper Missouri River, upstream from Fort Peck Dam to Fort Benton - **White Tag**
- Fort Peck Dredge Cuts (west of Park Grove Bridge and Nelson Dredge) on the Missouri River - **Blue Tag**
- Yellowstone River and Missouri River downstream from Fort Peck Dam - **Yellow Tag**

## General Paddlefish Regulations for ALL Areas

- It is unlawful for an individual to sell any portion of a paddlefish including eggs (processed or unprocessed) as prescribed by the F&W Commission.
- Anglers harvesting a paddlefish anywhere in Montana (Yellowstone River, Missouri River or Ft Peck Dredge Cuts) are required to report harvested paddlefish within 48 hours of harvest.
- Reporting options include: on-site where fish was harvested (in some instances fisheries staff will be available to assist with reporting), phone hotline (1-877-FWP-WILD or 406-444-0356, or MyFWP.)
- Anglers reporting a harvested paddlefish will be required to 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).
- Instructions for reporting will be included when the paddlefish tag is sold.
- Anglers not reporting a harvested paddlefish will not be eligible to purchase a paddlefish tag the following year.
- All waters open to angling are open to snagging paddlefish during the open paddlefish season by anglers with a valid tag, except the Ft Peck Dredge Cuts Archery section.
- Snagging non-game fish is allowed on all open waters in the Eastern District except on the Missouri River downstream from Fort Benton to the North Dakota border and on the Yellowstone River downstream from the mouth of the Bighorn River.
- 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.
- 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 tagged. Gaffs may not be used to land a paddlefish that will be released.
- Any 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.
- It is unlawful to possess an untagged paddlefish or part of one. If anglers cut up 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.
- Tags must remain with processed fish until consumption.
- 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).

### 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. You must have your conservation and Paddlefish license in your possession to fish for or/and take Paddlefish.



## 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
<b>FAS = Fishing Access Site</b>			<b>C&amp;R = Catch-and-release</b>		

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

**Upper Missouri Paddlefish Drawing:** Paddlefish harvest only tags will be available via lottery draw for the Upper Missouri River paddlefish season (White Tag) only. Anglers need to apply individually or as a party (up to five people). Applications can be submitted either on-line at <http://fwp.mt.gov>, at an FWP office (see page 1 for addresses) or mailed.

- Applications must be received by FWP no later than 5:00 PM March 29, 2019.
- Unsuccessful applicants can still catch-and-release paddlefish with their Conservation License, Fishing License, and paddlefish tag. Successful applicants will be allowed to fish from May 1 to June 15. Harvested paddlefish must be immediately tagged and reported within 48 hours (phone hotline **1-877-FWP-WILD** or **406-444-0356**.)
- All paddlefish caught during the catch-and-release season must be released immediately and may not be gaffed or lifted out of the water. Captured fish must remain at least partially submerged in water at all times (to avoid injury to the fish).
- Paddlefish anglers can participate in only one Paddlefish season per year. For example, if an angler is unsuccessful in drawing a paddlefish tag for the Upper Missouri River paddlefish season (White Tag) he/she cannot purchase a tag to fish the Yellowstone River paddlefish season (Yellow Tag).
- Paddlefish Snagging: open to harvesting paddlefish from May 1 to June 15 from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM (MST) daily.
- Catch-and-release snagging for paddlefish is open from May 1 to June 15. Proof of purchase of a white paddlefish tag on your fishing license is required for catch-and-release fishing. All paddlefish must be released immediately and may not be gaffed or lifted out of the water. Captured fish must remain at least partially submerged in water at all times (to avoid injury to the fish).

### **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.

### **Yellowstone River and Missouri River downstream from Fort Peck Dam (Yellow Tag)**

- The paddlefish fishery is managed under a harvest target so annual harvest will not exceed 1,000 fish. FWP will announce closure of the harvest season with a 24 hour notice to prevent exceeding the harvest target, and immediately at the Intake FAS and downstream to Cottonwood Creek, when it is estimated that the target will be reached. For current information on harvest status call the Miles City FWP office at 406-234-0900.
- 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.

### **Missouri River downstream from Fort Peck Dam and Yellowstone River from the mouth of the Bighorn River to Intake Dam (not including Intake Fishing Access Site) and downstream of Intake Fishing Access Site to North Dakota State Line (Yellow Tag)**

- Paddlefish Harvest snagging: 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; closed Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays - catch-and-release snagging for paddlefish is not permitted in these areas.
- An unused yellow paddlefish tag is required to fish for paddlefish. The tag must be properly placed on the first paddlefish caught and landed.

### **Intake Fishing Access Site (Yellow Tag)**

- Paddlefish Harvest Snagging: 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.
- An unused yellow paddlefish tag is required to fish for paddlefish. The tag must be properly placed on the first paddlefish caught and landed. It is unlawful to release a paddlefish except on designated catch-and-release days during the open season for Paddlefish.
- FWP will announce closure of the harvest season with a 24 hour notice to prevent exceeding the 1,000 fish harvest target, and immediately at the Intake FAS and downstream to Cottonwood Creek, when it is estimated that the target will be reached. Following 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.
- Paddlefish Catch-and-Release Snagging: 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.
- Evidence of a current year yellow paddlefish tag must be in possession to catch-and-release snag for Paddlefish. All paddlefish must be released immediately and may not be gaffed or lifted out of the water. Captured fish must remain at least partially submerged in water at all times (to avoid injury to the fish).

### **Intake Diversion Dam to 1/4 mile downstream (Yellow Tag)**

- *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
<b>T R O U T</b>	<b>Brook trout</b>	10 daily and in possession.
	<b>Combined trout</b> includes Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Golden Trout and Arctic Grayling	<b>Lakes/Reservoirs:</b> 5 daily and 10 in possession, includes Cutthroat Trout.  <b>Rivers/Streams:</b> 5 daily and in possession.
	<b>Cutthroat Trout</b>	<b>Lakes/Reservoirs:</b> included in the "Combined Trout" daily and possession limit.  <b>Rivers/Streams:</b> all Cutthroat Trout must be released immediately.
	<b>Lake Trout</b>	3 daily and 6 in possession.
<b>Bass</b>		5 daily and in possession.
<b>Burbot (Ling)</b>		5 daily and in possession.
<b>Channel Catfish</b>		10 daily and 20 in possession.
<b>Crappie</b>		15 daily and 30 in possession.
<b>Northern Pike</b>		10 daily and in possession.
<b>Paddlefish</b>		1 per season and in possession. Tag required.
<b>Pallid Sturgeon</b>		None - this is an endangered species and all fish must be released immediately. All waters are closed to fishing for Pallid Sturgeon.
<b>Salmon (Kokanee &amp; Chinook)</b>		5 daily and 10 in possession.
<b>Sauger/Walleye</b>		5 daily and 10 in possession.
<b>Shovelnose Sturgeon</b>		5 daily and in possession, none over 40 inches.
<b>Tiger Muskie</b>		1 daily and in possession, must be over 40 inches.
<b>Whitefish</b>		20 daily and 40 in possession.

### 2019 GENERAL FISHING SEASON

<b>Eastern District</b>	Rivers and Streams	Lakes and Reservoirs
	Open all year	Open all year
<b>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.</b>		

## 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 1 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be Sauger.

#### BOXELDER RESERVOIR aka Bolster Dam (Sheridan County)

- Yellow Perch: 25 daily and 50 in possession.

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

- 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 Rainbow 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 KIDS POND (near Downstream Campground)

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

#### FORT PECK RESERVOIR

##### 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.

#### HOLLECKER LAKE

- Bass: only 1 over 15 inches daily and in possession.

#### 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

- Bow 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)

##### All lakes

- Hook and Line/Setlines: 6 lines with 6 hooks per line during the applicable open season.

##### Medicine Lake

- Open November 15 through September 15.

##### Gaffney Lake and Lake 10

- Open August 15 through March 31.

##### Lake 12

- Open November 15 through March 31.

*If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p. 88.*

**Eastern District**

**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**

- Paddlefish snagging: open for harvesting Paddlefish from May 1 through June 15 from 6 AM to 9 PM, MST, daily unless closed earlier by FWP.
- Catch-and-release snagging for Paddlefish is open from May 1 through June 15 from 6 AM to 9 PM, MST, daily. See Special Paddlefish Regulations (pages 84-86) for additional important Paddlefish information.
- Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 2 may be a Sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 4 may be Sauger.

**Downstream from Fort Peck Dam**

- Catch-and-release snagging for Paddlefish is not permitted.
- Paddlefish snagging: open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays May 15 through June 30 from 6 AM to 9 PM, MST, unless closed to harvest earlier by FWP. Paddlefish snagging is closed on Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays. See Special Paddlefish Regulations (pages 84-86) for additional important Paddlefish information.

**Fort Peck Dam to the mouth of the Milk River**

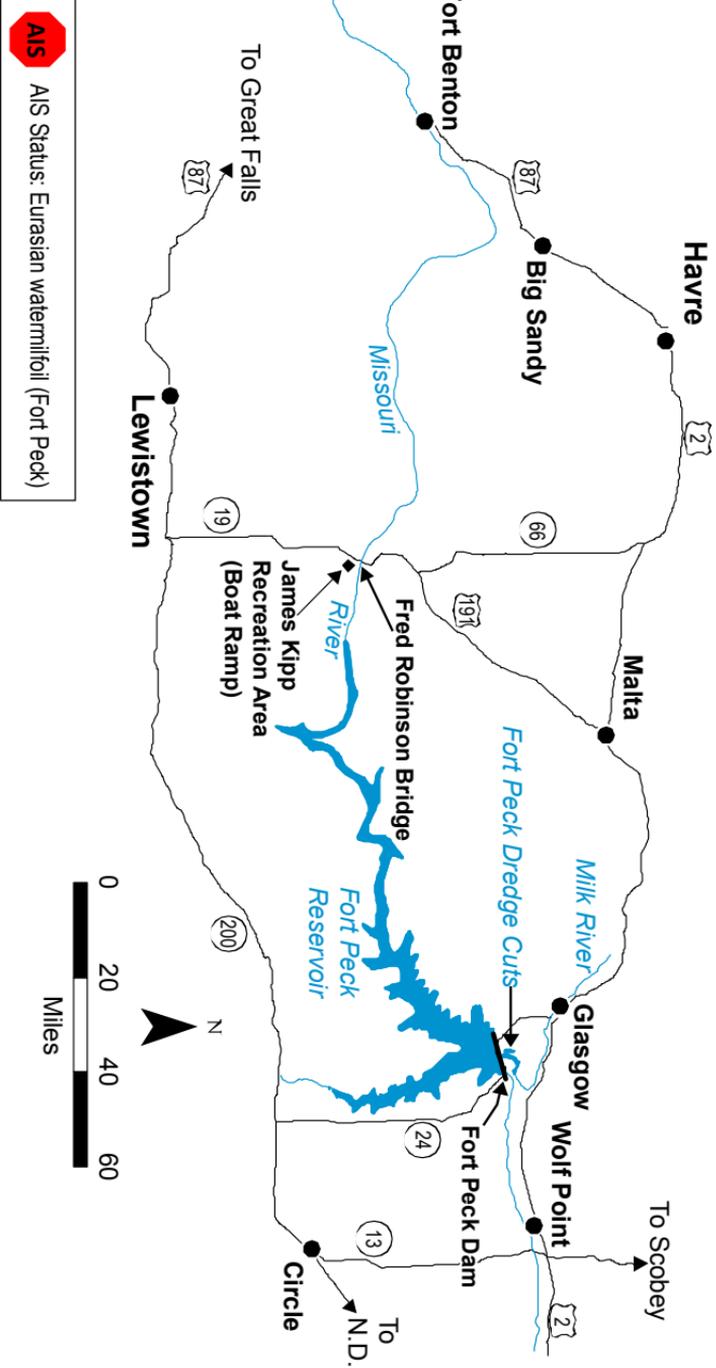
- Combined trout: 2 Rainbow Trout daily and in possession.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line on open water and 6 lines with 6 hooks per line through the ice.

**Downstream from Fort Peck Dam near Duck Island as posted**

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

If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 88.

Missouri River Upstream from Fort Peck Dam



**ROSS RESERVOIR (Blaine County)**

- Open third Saturday in May through November 30.

**SPOTTED EAGLE POND (Miles City)**

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

**TONGUE RIVER****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.
- Crappie: 30 daily and 60 in possession.
- 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.

**YELLOWSTONE RIVER****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 1 may be a Sauger and 10 in possession only 2 may be Sauger.

**Mouth of the Bighorn River to Cartersville Diversion Dam at Forsyth**

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

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

- Catch-and-release snagging for Paddlefish is not permitted.
- Paddlefish Harvest Snagging: Open May 15 through June 30 from 6 AM to 9 PM MST, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays only, unless closed earlier by FWP. Paddlefish snagging closed on Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays. See Special Paddlefish Regulations (pages 84 - 87) for additional Paddlefish information.
- Snagging: It is unlawful to snag for fish other than Paddlefish.

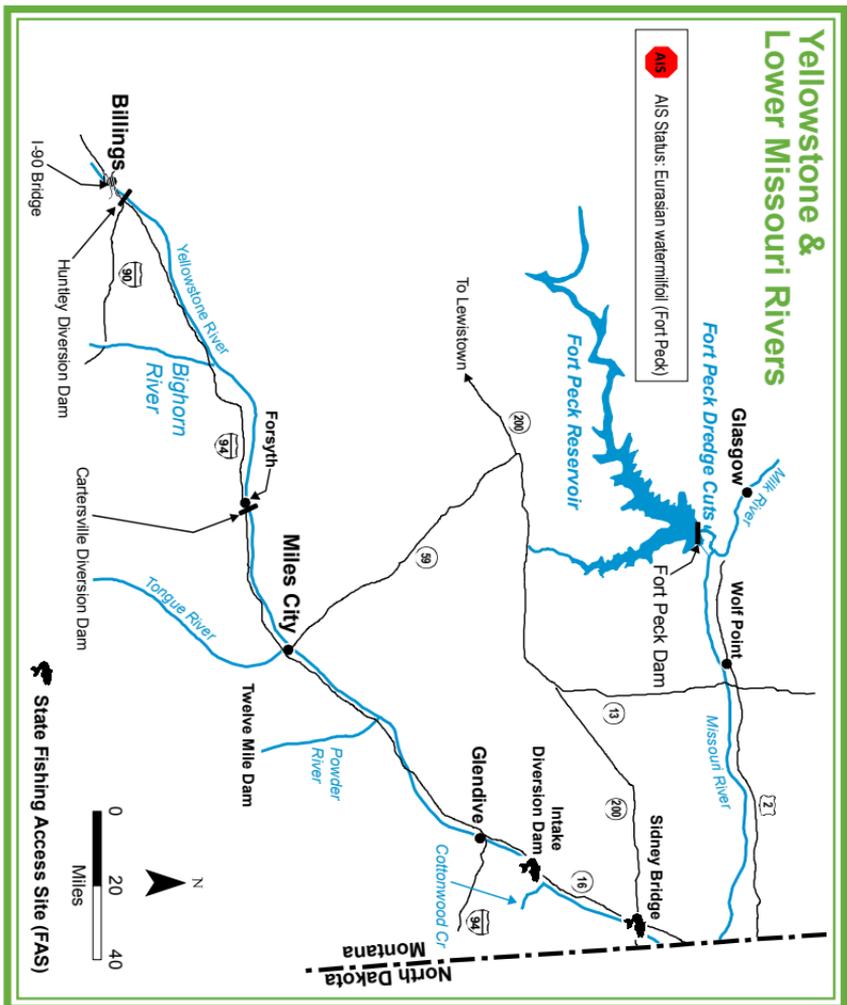
If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p 88.

**Intake Fishing Access Site**

- Snagging: It is unlawful to snag for fish other than Paddlefish.
- Paddlefish Harvest Snagging: open May 15 through June 30 from 6 AM to 9 PM MST, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays unless closed earlier by FWP.
- Paddlefish Catch-and-release snagging: open May 15 through June 30 from 6AM to 9PM MST, on Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays. Following the harvest closure, catch-and-release snagging will be allowed for 10 consecutive days or through June 30, whichever comes first. See Special Paddlefish Regulations (pages 84 - 87) for important Paddlefish information.
- Hook and Line/Setlines: 2 lines with 2 hooks per line all year.

**Intake Diversion Dam to 1/4 mile downstream of dam**

- Closed to fishing, snagging or landing fish from boats/vessels during the open Paddlefish season (May 15 through June 30 - may end earlier as posted on site).



*If you don't find the water you are looking for, use the Standard Daily & Possession Limits on p. 88.*

# Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) include clams, fish, mussels, plants, snails, crayfish and pathogens.

## AIS in Montana



Zebra mussel

Quagga mussel



Eurasian Watermilfoil



Curlyleaf pondweed

## AIS we don't want



VHS virus



Silver carp



Hydrilla

## **Remember:**

1. **DO NOT** transport invasive species in Montana...it is the **LAW**.
2. **ALL** watercraft **MUST** stop at encountered inspection stations, including canoes, kayaks, drift boats, etc.

For more information on AIS identification and much more, visit:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/species/ais/>

## Montana Fish Records

Visit <http://fwp.mt.gov/fish/anglingData/records/> for a complete list of Montana fish records – or call 406-444-5594.

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, 2019. 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	32.56	11.56	Milk River	Dean Armbrister	5/14/14
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		29	Wade Lake	E.H. "Peck" Bacon	1966
Bull Trout (Dolly Varden)	37	25.63		James Hyer	1916
Burbot	39	17.08	Missouri River	Jeff Eugene Iwen	4/18/89
Channel Catfish	41.75	34.8	Fort Peck Reservoir	Dan Davenport	7/26/13
Chinook Salmon	38	31.13	Fort Peck Reservoir	Carl L. Niles	10/2/91
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	8.80	Noxon Rapids Reservoir	Darin Williams	5/2/09
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
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	21	7.51	Fort Peck Reservoir	Mike Dominick	9/23/17
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	35	17.75	Tiber Reservoir	Robert Hart	11/18/07
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	14.0	1.62	Ninepipes Reservoir	Frank Tepp	2/5/15
Yellow Perch	14.375	2.39	Lower Stillwater Lake	Josh Emmert	2/19/06

# 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 and on next two pages):

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 10).
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:

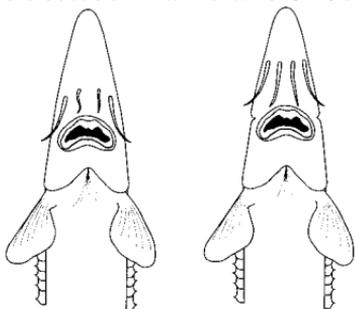
- All Pallid Sturgeon must be released immediately and all sturgeon longer than 40 inches must be released immediately.
- Only two Sauger may be kept on the Missouri River upstream from Fort Peck Reservoir, on Fort Peck Reservoir, and on the Yellowstone River upstream from Forsyth at the Cartersville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

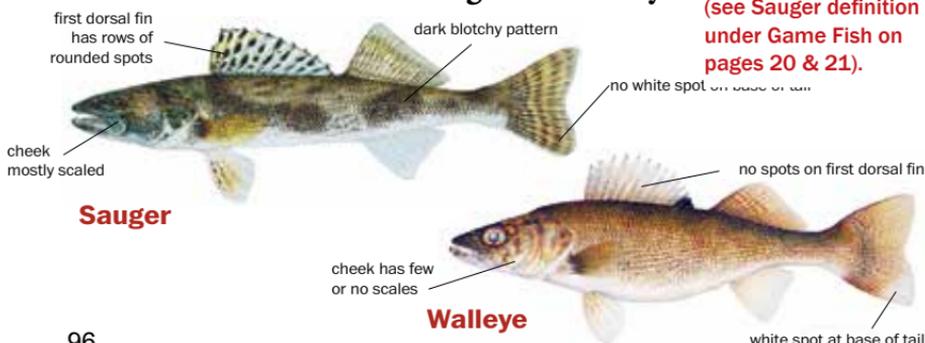
Outer barbels barely longer than inner barbels.

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 gravelly 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.

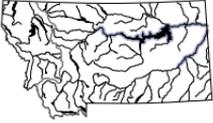
## Know the difference between sauger and walleye:

(see Sauger definition under Game Fish on pages 20 & 21).



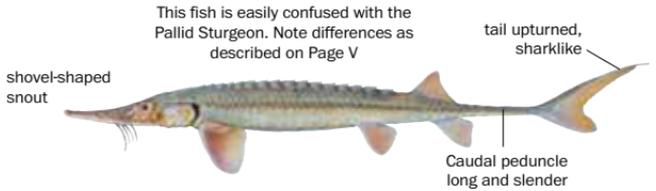
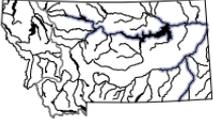
# NATIVE FISH

## Pallid Sturgeon *An endangered Species listed under the Endangered Species Act*



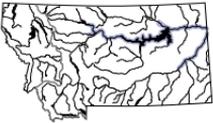
Average Size: 60"

## Shovelnose Sturgeon



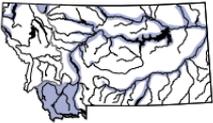
Average Size: 20"-32"

## Paddlefish *Species of Concern*



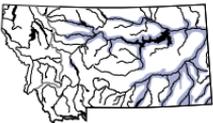
Average Size: 55"-65"

## Burbot



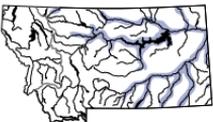
Average Size: 16"-24"

## Channel Catfish



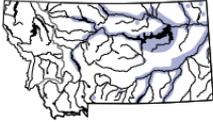
Average Size: 14"-20"

## Sauger *Species of Concern*



Average Size: 10"-16"

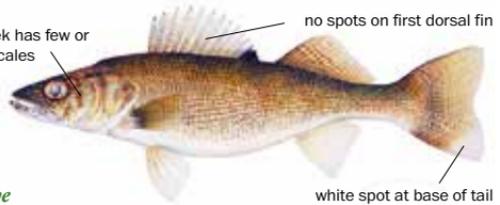
# NON-NATIVE FISH



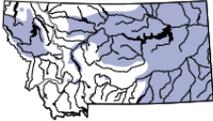
Average Size: 14"-18"

## Walleye

cheek has few or no scales

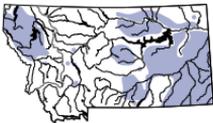
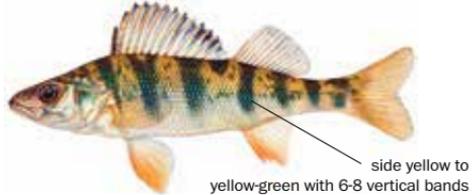


*Know the difference between Sauger and Walleye*



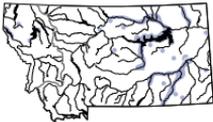
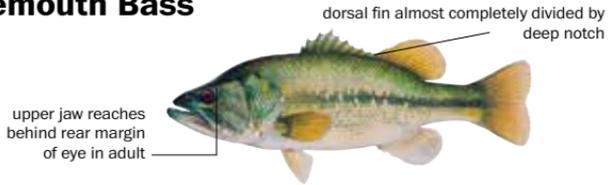
Average Size: 6"-10"

## Yellow Perch



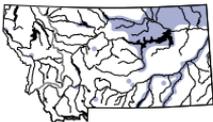
Average Size: 10"-16"

## Largemouth Bass



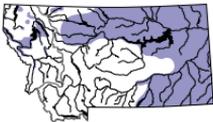
Average Size: 8"-14"

## Smallmouth Bass



Average Size: 6"-12"

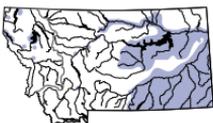
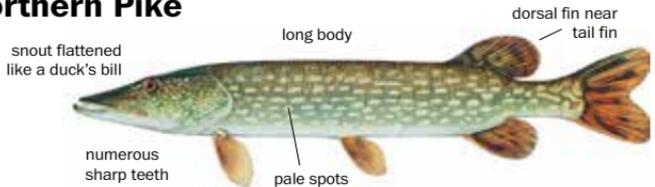
## Black Crappie



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

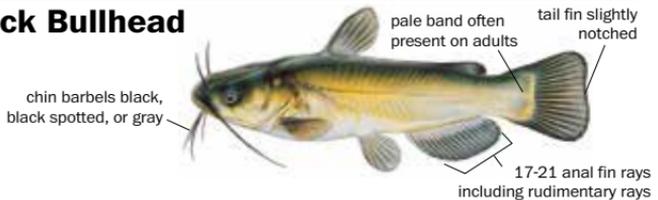
Average Size: 18"-26"

## Northern Pike



Average Size: 7"-10"

## Black Bullhead



# CLEAN. DRAIN. DRY.



**New watercraft inspection regulations are in effect for 2019.** See page 15 for more information.

---

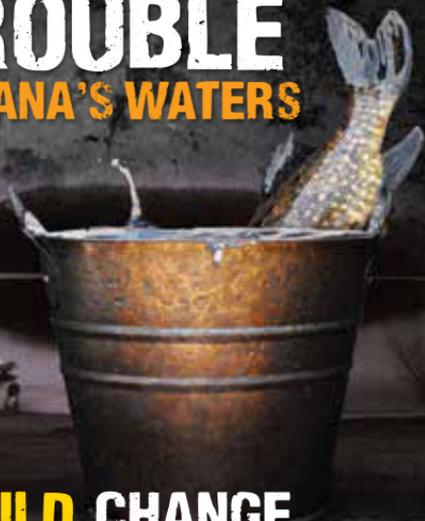
## Protecting Montana's waters: **We're in this together.**



**Clean, drain,**  
and **dry** your boat,  
gear and equipment  
when you are done  
recreating on a  
waterbody.



**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**

**REWARDS UP TO**

**YOUR IDENTITY WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.**  
**YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A REWARD.**

**\$19,750**

TIP-MONT rewards plus pledges from Invasive Species Action Network, Walleyes Unlimited of Montana, Montana Catfish Association, Montana Trout Unlimited, Bass Nation, Bass Federation, Montana Pikemasters, & Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana.

**PROTECTING MONTANA'S WATERS:**  
**WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER.**



**MONTANA FISH,**  
**WILDLIFE & PARKS**

**2019 GENERAL FISHING SEASON**

	Rivers & Streams	Lakes & Reservoirs
<b>Western District</b>	Open third Saturday in May through November 30, unless otherwise specified in Exceptions to Standard Regulations.	Open all year
<b>Central District</b>	Open all year, unless otherwise specified in Exceptions to Standard Regulations	
<b>Eastern District</b>	Open all year	

- Fishing is allowed at all hours during open fishing seasons unless otherwise specified in District Exceptions to Standard Regulations.
- Fishing regulations valid March 1, 2019 through February 28, 2020

295,000 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$0.203 per copy, for a total cost of \$59,983.53, which includes \$59,983.53 for printing and \$0.00 for distribution.

# Montana Code Annotated 2019

TITLE 2. GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION  
CHAPTER 15. EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICERS AND AGENCIES  
Part 17. Department of Labor and Industry

## Board Of Outfitters

**2-15-1773. Board of outfitters.** (1) There is a board of outfitters.

(2) The board consists of the following seven members to be appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate:

- (a) one outfitter licensed to provide big game hunting services;
- (b) one outfitter licensed to provide fishing services but not hunting services;
- (c) two outfitters licensed to provide fishing and hunting services;
- (d) two sportspersons; and
- (e) one member of the general public.

(3) A favorable vote of at least a majority of all members of the board is required to adopt any resolution, motion, or other decision.

(4) A vacancy on the board must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(5) The members shall serve staggered 3-year terms and take office on the day they are appointed.

(6) The board is allocated to the department of labor and industry for administrative purposes only as prescribed in **2-15-121**.

(7) Each member of the board is entitled to receive compensation and travel expenses as provided for in **37-1-133**.

**History:** En. 82A-2005 by Sec. 57, Ch. 511, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 63, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 82A-2005; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 192, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 2-15-3403, MCA 1985; redes. 2-15-1883 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 501, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 543, L. 1999; amd. Sec. 17, Ch. 483, L. 2001; Sec. 2-15-1883, MCA 1999; redes. 2-15-1773 by Sec. 221(2), Ch. 483, L. 2001; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 328, L. 2011; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 56, L. 2015; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 341, L. 2015.

# Montana Code Annotated 2019

## TITLE 37. PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS

### CHAPTER 47. OUTFITTERS AND GUIDES

#### Part 1. General

#### Part 2. Board of Outfitters

#### Part 3. Licensing

#### Part 4. Relative Duties of Outfitters, Guides, and Participants

## Part 1. General

### 37-47-101 Definitions

**37-47-101. Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Accompany" means to go with or be together with a participant as an escort, companion, or other service provider, with an actual physical presence in the area where the activity is being conducted and within sight or sound of the participant at some time during the furnishing of service.
- (2) "Board" means the board of outfitters provided for in **2-15-1773**.
- (3) "Business entity" means any version of a proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or limited liability company.
- (4) "Consideration" means something of value given or done in exchange for something of value given or done by another.
- (5) "Department" means the department of labor and industry provided for in Title 2, chapter 15, part 17.
- (6) "Emergency" means an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action.
- (7) "Guide" means a person who is employed by or who has contracted independently with a licensed outfitter and who accompanies a participant during outdoor recreational activities that are directly related to activities for which the outfitter is licensed.
- (8) "License year" means the period indicated on the face of the license for which the license is valid.
- (9) "Net client hunter use" or "NCHU" means the number of clients authorized to be served by an outfitter on private and state land and on any federal land where an outfitter's use of the federal land is not limited by some means other than NCHU.

(10) "Outfitter" means any person, except a person providing services on real property that the person owns for the primary pursuit of bona fide agricultural interests, who for consideration provides any saddle or pack animal, facilities, camping equipment, vehicle, watercraft, or other conveyance, or personal service for any person to hunt, trap, capture, take, kill, or pursue any game, including fish, and who accompanies that person, either part or all of the way, on an expedition for any of these purposes or supervises a licensed guide or outfitter's assistant in accompanying that person.

(11) "Outfitter's assistant" means a person who is employed or retained by and directed by a licensed outfitter to perform the tasks of a guide when a guide's license cannot be readily attained prior to or during the service of a participant due to an emergency. The person may not represent to the public that the person is an outfitter or guide.

(12) "Participant" means a person using the services offered by a licensed outfitter.

**History:** Ap. p. Sec. 1, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 37, Ch. 511, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 17, Ch. 9, L. 1977; Sec. 26-908, R.C.M. 1947; Ap. p. Sec. 69, Ch. 173, L. 1917; re-en. Sec. 3748, R.C.M. 1921; re-en. Sec. 3748, R.C.M. 1935; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 173, L. 1949; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 184, L. 1951; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 223, L. 1955; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 16, Ch. 9, L. 1977; Sec. 26-904, R.C.M. 1947; R.C.M. 1947, 26-904(1), 26-908; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 170, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 410, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-101, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-101 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 565, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 38, Ch. 16, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 543, L. 1999; amd. Sec. 142, Ch. 483, L. 2001; amd. Sec. 97, Ch. 467, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 241, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 341, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 16, Ch. 55, L. 2015; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 217, L. 2017.

## Part 2. Board of Outfitters

37-47-201 Powers and duties of board relating to outfitters and guides

37-47-202 Executive director

# Powers And Duties Of Board Relating To Outfitters And Guides

**37-47-201. Powers and duties of board relating to outfitters and guides.** The board shall:

- (1) cooperate with the federal government in matters of mutual concern regarding the business of outfitting and guiding in Montana;
- (2) enforce the provisions of this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to this chapter;
- (3) establish outfitter standards and guide standards;
- (4) adopt:
  - (a) rules to administer and enforce this chapter, including rules prescribing all requisite qualifications for licensure as an outfitter or guide. Qualifications for outfitters may include training, testing, experience, and knowledge of rules of governmental bodies pertaining to outfitting.

- (b) any reasonable rules, not in conflict with this chapter, necessary for safeguarding the public health, safety, and welfare, including evidence of qualification and licensure under this chapter for any person practicing or offering to practice as an outfitter or guide;
- (c) rules specifying components and standards for review and approval of operations plans. Operations plans must:
  - (i) be updated at least annually if there has been a substantive change; and
  - (ii) report all forms of use of private land acreage where licensed outfitters are authorized by the landowner to operate, except for the use of private lands that allow unrestricted public access and are managed under cooperative agreements with adjacent public lands.
- (d) rules establishing outfitter reporting requirements. The reports must be filed annually and report:
  - (i) client names or automated licensing system numbers;
  - (ii) names or license numbers of outfitters, guides, and outfitter's assistants providing client services; and
  - (iii) dates of client services.
- (e) rules specifying what constitutes an emergency for which an outfitter's assistant may be hired, standards for outfitter's assistants, and documentation standards for proof of employment or retention required of outfitter's assistants. The rules must also identify data that may be collected regarding use of outfitter's assistants.
- (5) hold hearings and proceedings to suspend or revoke licenses of outfitters and guides for due cause; and
- (6) maintain records of net client hunter use.

**History:** En. Sec. 4, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 38, Ch. 511, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-911; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 490, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 277, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-104, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-201 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 543, L. 1999; amd. Sec. 98, Ch. 467, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 45, Ch. 44, L. 2007; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 328, L. 2011; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 241, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 341, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 217, L. 2017; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 236, L. 2019

## Executive Director

**37-47-202. Executive director.** The department may hire an executive director to assist the board in carrying out its duties under this chapter.

**History:** En. Sec. 1, Ch. 183, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 32, Ch. 492, L. 2001; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 100, L. 2011.

## Part 3. Licensing

37-47-301 License required -- services performed -- standards

37-47-302 Outfitter's qualifications

37-47-303 Guide's qualifications

37-47-304 Application

37-47-305 Outfitter's examination

37-47-306 Fees

37-47-307 Investigation of applicant -- issuance or denial of license

37-47-308 Kinds of licenses

37-47-310 Transfer or amendment of outfitter's license -- transfer of river-use days to new owner of fishing outfitter business

37-47-311 Limit one license

37-47-313 Shuttle and rental services -- exemption

37-47-325 Outfitter's assistants -- exemption from licensing

37-47-341 Grounds for denial, suspension, or revocation of license

37-47-343 Appeal procedure

37-47-344 Penalties -- disposition of fines

37-47-345 Enforcement

37-47-351 Investigators

## License Required -- Services Performed -- Standards

**37-47-301. License required -- services performed -- standards.** (1) A person may not act as an outfitter or guide or advertise or otherwise represent to the public that the person is an outfitter or guide without first securing a license in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(2) Whenever an outfitter is engaged by a participant, the outfitter shall keep and submit records as required by the board.

(3) Outfitters, guides, and other employees of an outfitter may not shoot, kill, or take big game animals for or in competition with those employing them while acting as outfitters, guides, or employees of an outfitter.

(4) Outfitters utilizing lands under the control of the United States government shall obtain the proper permits required by the government office responsible for the area in which the outfitter intends to operate and shall comply with all applicable rules and regulations established for these lands.

(5) Outfitters may not willfully and substantially misrepresent their facilities, prices, equipment, services, or hunting or fishing opportunities.

(6) Outfitters and their contractors, employees, agents, and representatives shall take every reasonable measure to provide the outfitter's advertised services.

(7) An outfitter may not hire or retain a guide who does not hold a current license as provided under this part.

**History:** En. Sec. 7, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 20, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-914; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 545, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-121, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-301 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 565, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Outfitter's Qualifications

**37-47-302. Outfitter's qualifications.** An applicant for an outfitter's license or renewal of a license must meet the following qualifications:

(1) be 18 years of age or older, be physically capable and mentally competent to perform the duties of an outfitter, and meet experience, training, and testing requirements as prescribed by board rule; and

(2) own, hold under written lease, or contract for or represent a business entity who owns, holds under written lease, or contracts for the equipment and facilities that are necessary to provide the services advertised, contracted for, or agreed upon between the outfitter and the outfitter's clients. All equipment and facilities are subject to inspection at all reasonable times and places by the board or its designated agent.

**History:** En. Sec. 8, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 94, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 21, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-915(3)(a) thru (3)(k); amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 239, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-122, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-302 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 39, Ch. 109, L. 2009; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 179, L. 2011; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Guide's Qualifications

**37-47-303. Guide's qualifications.** An applicant for a guide's license must:

(1) be 18 years of age or older and be physically capable and mentally competent to perform the duties of a guide;

(2) be endorsed and recommended by an outfitter with a valid license, unless otherwise qualified under guide standards established by the board pursuant to **37-47-201**(4); and

(3) have been issued a valid wildlife conservation license.

**History:** En. Sec. 8, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 94, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 21, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-915(4), (5); amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 545, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-123, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-303 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 172, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Application

**37-47-304. Application.** (1) Each applicant for an outfitter's or guide's license shall apply for a license on a form furnished by the department.

(2) The application for an outfitter's license must include:

(a) the applicant's full name, address, [wildlife] conservation license number, and telephone number;

(b) the applicant's years of experience as an outfitter or guide; and

(c) components of the outfitter's operations plan as required by board rule, which may include:

(i) an affidavit by the outfitter to the board that the amount and kind of equipment that is owned, leased, or contracted for by the applicant is sufficient and satisfactory for the services advertised or contemplated to be performed by the applicant; and

(ii) a description of any land, water body, or portion of a water body that will be utilized by the applicant while providing services. A description is not required for the use of private lands that allow unrestricted public access and are managed under cooperative agreements with adjacent public lands.

(3) An application for an outfitter's license must be in the name of an individual person only. An application involving a business entity must be made by one individual person who qualifies under the provisions of this part. A license issued pursuant to this part must be in the name of that person. Any revocation or suspension of a license is binding upon the individual person and the business entity for the use and benefit of which the license was originally issued.

(4) Application must be made to and filed with the board.

(5) Only one application for an outfitter's license may be made in any license year. If an application is denied, subsequent applications by the same applicant for the license year involved are void, except as provided in **37-47-308**. (*Bracketed language in subsection (2)(a) effective March 1, 2020--sec. 21, Ch. 221, L. 2019.*)

**History:** En. Sec. 8, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 94, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 21, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-915(1), (2), (13); amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-124, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-304 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 565, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 196, L. 2003; amd. Sec. 99, Ch. 467, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 179, L. 2011; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 341, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 221, L. 2019; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 236, L. 2019

## Outfitter's Examination

**37-47-305. Outfitter's examination.** Each applicant for an outfitter's license, after meeting the experience and training specifications and other qualifications set by this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter, is entitled to take and must pass a standard examination administered by the

board or its agent. The examination must require general and sufficient knowledge displaying and indicating ability to perform the services contemplated with efficiency and with safety to the health and welfare of participants. The examination must test the applicant's knowledge of subjects that apply to the type of license applied for and may include the following subjects:

- (1) federal and state fish and game laws and regulations;
- (2) federal and state regulations as applicable to outfitting;
- (3) boat safety; and
- (4) water safety.

**History:** En. Sec. 8, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 94, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 21, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-915(3)(I); amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-125, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-305 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Fees

**37-47-306. Fees.** (1) The board shall establish fees commensurate with costs as provided in **37-1-134**.

(2) Applications must be accompanied by a license fee as specified by board rule.

(3) The license fees must be deposited in the state special revenue fund and must be used by the board to investigate the applicant, to enforce this part, and for administrative costs, subject to **37-1-101(6)**.

**History:** Ap. p. Sec. 8, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 94, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 21, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; Sec. 26-915, R.C.M. 1947; Ap. p. Sec. 10, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 23, Ch. 9, L. 1977; Sec. 26-917, R.C.M. 1947; R.C.M. 1947, 26-915(8) thru (11), 26-917; amd. Sec. 14, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 192, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-127, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-306 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 543, L. 1999; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Investigation Of Applicant -- Issuance Or Denial Of License

**37-47-307. Investigation of applicant -- issuance or denial of license.** (1) The department shall investigate each applicant for an outfitter's or guide's license. The board shall determine the applicant's qualifications.

(2) The board may deny or refuse to issue any new license or to renew any previous license if the applicant does not meet the qualifications stated in this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter. In the event that any application for a license is denied or refused, the board shall immediately notify the applicant, setting forth in the notice the grounds upon which the denial or refusal is based.

(3) A licensee in good standing is entitled to a new license for the ensuing license year upon complying with the provisions of this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter and upon completing an application for license renewal on a form provided by the board.

(4) This section may not be interpreted to conflict with **37-1-138**.

**History:** En. Sec. 8, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 94, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 21, Ch. 9, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-915(12); amd. Sec. 15, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 239, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-128, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-307 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 100, Ch. 429, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 46, Ch. 271, L. 2003; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Kinds Of Licenses

**37-47-308. Kinds of licenses.** (1) When all the conditions of licensure have been satisfied, the board shall issue a license stating the outfitter or guide functions that the applicant is qualified and approved to perform.

(2) The license must be in the form prescribed and is valid for the licensing year in which issued.

(3) If the application is denied, the board shall notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for the denial, and if the reasons are corrected, a license must be issued upon reapplication.

**History:** En. Sec. 9, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 22, Ch. 9, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-916(1); amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-129, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-308 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 220, L. 1993

## Transfer Or Amendment Of Outfitter's License -- Transfer Of River-Use Days To New Owner Of Fishing Outfitter Business

**37-47-310. Transfer or amendment of outfitter's license -- transfer of river-use days to new owner of fishing outfitter business.** (1) An outfitter's license may not be transferred.

(2) An individual person may, upon proper showing, have that person's outfitter's license amended to indicate that the license is being held for the use and benefit of a named business entity.

(3) Subject to approval by the board, a person designated by the family of an outfitter who is deceased or incapacitated due to physical or mental disease or injury or who is unable to carry out the responsibilities of an outfitter due to the outfitter's status as an active member of the military may continue to provide outfitting services for the outfitter's unexpired license year, or until the family sells the outfitting business, until the designee obtains an outfitter license.

(4) (a) When a fishing outfitter's business is sold or transferred in its entirety, any river-use days that have been allocated to that fishing outfitter through the fishing outfitter's historic use of or activities on restricted-use streams are transferable to the new owner of the fishing outfitter's business. Upon the sale or transfer of a fishing outfitter's business, the outfitter who sells or transfers the business shall notify the new owner that the use of any transferred river-use days is subject to change pursuant to rules adopted by the fish and wildlife commission and that a property right does not attach to the transferred river-use days.

(b) Any transferred river-use days on the Smith River are subject to change pursuant to rules adopted by the state parks and recreation board pursuant to **23-2-408**.

**History:** En. Sec. 9, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 22, Ch. 9, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-916(4); amd. Sec. 17, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-131, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-310 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 220,

L. 1993; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 91, L. 2003; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 197, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 100, L. 2011; amd. Sec. 20, Ch. 235, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Limit One License

**37-47-311. Limit one license.** (1) An individual may not hold more than one outfitter's license either for the individual's own benefit or for the use and benefit of a business entity. However, the name of a business entity may appear on more than one current outfitter's license.

- (2) Subsection (1) does not prevent a licensee from:
  - (a) owning or operating more than one business entity under one license; or
  - (b) filing more than one operations plan with the board.

**History:** En. Sec. 9, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 22, Ch. 9, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-916(5); Sec. 87-4-132, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-311 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 197, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 341, L. 2013

## Shuttle And Rental Services -- Exemption

**37-47-313. Shuttle and rental services -- exemption.** (1) Nothing in this chapter prohibits the furnishing of shuttle or rental services as long as those services do not include in-field assistance to a customer.

- (2) In-field assistance includes but is not limited to:
  - (a) setting up a camp;
  - (b) field instruction for the activity to be conducted by the customer; or
  - (c) other services considered to be services of an outfitter, as defined in **37-47-101**.

**History:** En. Sec. 2, Ch. 328, L. 1995.

## Outfitter's Assistants -- Exemption From Licensing

**37-47-325. Outfitter's assistants -- exemption from licensing.** (1) An outfitter may hire or retain an outfitter's assistant.

- (2) An outfitter's assistant is not required to obtain a license under this chapter.
- (3) The outfitter's assistant must carry proof of employment as required by the board by rule.
- (4) (a) An outfitter who employs or retains an outfitter's assistant is responsible for ensuring that the outfitter's assistant:
  - (i) safeguards the public health, safety, and welfare while providing services; and
  - (ii) is qualified and competent to perform the tasks of a guide.
- (b) The board shall hold an outfitter who employs or retains an outfitter's assistant responsible under the provisions of **37-1-316**, **37-47-341**, and **37-47-402** for any acts or omissions by the outfitter's assistant in the ordinary course and scope of duties assigned by the outfitter.

(5) The outfitter's assistant may not be employed or retained by an outfitter for more than 15 days in a calendar year unless the outfitter's assistant is actively obtaining a guide's license pursuant to this part and the board determines that the license application is routine for purposes of **37-1-101**.

(6) An outfitter may use more than one outfitter's assistant in a calendar year.

(7) An outfitter's assistant may be employed or retained by an outfitter on more than one occasion in a calendar year if:

(a) the outfitter's assistant is not employed or retained for more than 15 days as an outfitter's assistant in that calendar year; or

(b) the outfitter's assistant is actively obtaining a guide's license and the board determines that the license application is routine for purposes of **37-1-101**.

**History:** En. Sec. 1, Ch. 241, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 217, L. 2017

## Grounds For Denial, Suspension, Or Revocation Of License

**37-47-341. Grounds for denial, suspension, or revocation of license.** A license or right to apply for and hold a license issued under this part may be denied, suspended, or revoked or other disciplinary conditions may be applied upon any of the following grounds:

(1) having ceased to meet all of the qualifications for holding a license, as required under this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to this chapter;

(2) fraud or deception in procuring a license;

(3) fraudulent, untruthful, or misleading advertising;

(4) having pleaded guilty to or been adjudged by a court guilty of a felony, including a case in which the sentence is suspended or imposition of the sentence is deferred, unless civil rights have been restored pursuant to law;

(5) one conviction or bond forfeiture for a violation of the fish and game or outfitting laws or regulations of any state, the United States, or other jurisdictions;

(6) a substantial breach of a contract with a participant provided that the breach is established as a matter of final judgment in a court of law;

(7) the willful employment of or contracting with an unlicensed guide by an outfitter;

(8) negligence or misconduct while acting as an outfitter or guide that causes an accident or injury to the person or property of a participant;

(9) misconduct as defined by board rule; or

(10) any violation of this chapter or a rule adopted pursuant to this chapter.

**History:** En. Sec. 11, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-918; amd. Sec. 18, Ch. 545, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-141, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-341 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 565, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 22, Ch. 502, L. 2007; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

# Appeal Procedure

**37-47-343. Appeal procedure.** A person who feels aggrieved by a final order of the board denying issuance of a license or suspending or revoking a license as an outfitter or guide may petition for judicial review as provided in Title 2, chapter 4, part 7.

**History:** En. Sec. 13, Ch. 221, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 541, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 417, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 26-920; amd. Sec. 20, Ch. 545, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 528, L. 1987; Sec. 87-4-143, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-343 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

# Penalties -- Disposition Of Fines

**37-47-344. Penalties -- disposition of fines.** (1) A person who violates any provision of this chapter or rule adopted under this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor and is punishable, unless otherwise specified, by a fine not exceeding \$500.

(2) Fifty percent of all fines paid under this section must be deposited in the general fund of the county in which the conviction is obtained, and 50% must be deposited in the state special revenue fund for the use of the board in enforcing this chapter. All investigation, preparation, and trial costs paid under this section must be deposited in the state special revenue fund for the use of the board in enforcing the provisions of this chapter. The board may reimburse other agencies for costs reasonably incurred in the enforcement of this chapter.

**History:** En. Sec. 8, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 445, L. 2007.

# Enforcement

**37-47-345. Enforcement.** Investigations and arrests for violations of this chapter or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter may be made by any peace officer; warden of the department of fish, wildlife, and parks; or federal agency enforcement personnel.

**History:** En. Sec. 9, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 14, Ch. 328, L. 1995.

# Investigators

**37-47-351. Investigators.** The department may hire investigators to assist the board in investigations and inspections authorized by this chapter.

**History:** En. Sec. 20, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 100, L. 2011.

# Part 4. Relative Duties of Outfitters, Guides, and Participants

37-47-401 Purpose

37-47-402 Duties of outfitters and guides

37-47-403 Duties of participants

37-47-404 Responsibility for violations of law

37-47-405 Duties of outfitter's assistants

## Purpose

**37-47-401. Purpose.** It is recognized that some activities conducted by outfitters, guides, and outfitter's assistants within the scope of their authorized services are inherently hazardous to participants regardless of all feasible safety measures that may be taken. It is the purpose of this part to define those areas of responsibility and affirmative acts or omissions for which outfitters, guides, and outfitter's assistants are liable for loss, damage, or injury and those risks for which the participant expressly assumes or is considered to have voluntarily assumed the risk of loss or damage.

**History:** En. Sec. 2, Ch. 170, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-161, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-401 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 15, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 241, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 14, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Duties Of Outfitters And Guides

**37-47-402. Duties of outfitters and guides.** An outfitter or guide offering professional services in this state shall:

- (1) act as would a reasonably prudent member of the profession while engaging in providing the services authorized to be performed by a licensed member of the profession;
- (2) comply with all standards adopted by board rule.

**History:** En. Sec. 3, Ch. 170, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-162, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-402 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 15, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 16, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 15, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Duties Of Participants

**37-47-403. Duties of participants.** (1) A participant shall:

- (a) act as would a reasonably prudent person when engaging in the activities offered by a licensed outfitter or guide or by an unlicensed outfitter's assistant in this state;
- (b) receive permission from the outfitter or guide prior to embarking on any self-initiated activity and inform the outfitter or guide of the participant's plans and intentions upon receiving permission to engage in the self-initiated activity.

(2) A participant may not:

- (a) interfere with the running or operation of an outfitter's, guide's, or outfitter's assistant's activities when those activities conform to the standards of care set forth in **37-47-402** or **37-47-405**;
- (b) use the outfitter's, guide's, or outfitter's assistant's equipment, facilities, or services unless the participant has requested and received permission from the outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant;

(c) knowingly, purposely, or negligently engage in any type of conduct that contributes to or causes injury to the participant or any other person.

**History:** En. Sec. 4, Ch. 170, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-163, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-403 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 17, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 241, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 16, Ch. 341, L. 2013.

## Responsibility For Violations Of Law

**37-47-404. Responsibility for violations of law.** (1) A person accompanying a hunting or fishing party as an outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant is equally responsible with any person or party engaging the person as an outfitter for any violation of fish and game laws unless the violation is reported to a peace officer by the outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant and the outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant was not an active participant. An outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant who willfully fails or refuses to report any violation of fish and game laws is liable for the penalties provided in this chapter. If a guide or outfitter's assistant violates the laws or applicable regulations relating to fish and game, outfitting, or guiding with actual knowledge of an outfitter engaging the guide or outfitter's assistant, the outfitter is legally responsible for the violation for all purposes under the laws or regulations if the outfitter fails to report the violation to the proper authority.

(2) An outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant shall report any violation or suspected violation of fish and game laws that the outfitter, guide, or outfitter's assistant knows has been committed by the employees, contractors, agents, representatives, clients, or participants in the outfitting or guiding activity. The violation or suspected violation must be reported to a peace officer at the earliest possible opportunity.

(3) A person may not hire or retain an outfitter unless the outfitter is currently licensed in accordance with the laws of the state of Montana. A person may not use the services of a guide, and a guide may not offer services unless the services are obtained through an endorsing outfitter.

(4) An outfitter may not place a hired or retained outfitter's assistant in a position of providing services to participants until the outfitter has documentation as specified by board rule under **37-47-201(4)(e)**.

**History:** En. Sec. 71, Ch. 173, L. 1917; re-en. Sec. 3750, R.C.M. 1921; re-en. Sec. 3750, R.C.M. 1935; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 173, L. 1949; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 184, L. 1951; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 223, L. 1955; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 541, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 26-906; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 545, L. 1981; Sec. 87-4-103, MCA 1985; redes. 37-47-404 by Sec. 11, Ch. 528, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 16, Ch. 220, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 18, Ch. 328, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 40, Ch. 109, L. 2009; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 241, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 17, Ch. 341, L. 2013; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 217, L. 2017.

## Duties Of Outfitter's Assistants

**37-47-405. Duties of outfitter's assistants.** An outfitter's assistant shall:

(1) act as would a reasonably prudent member of the profession while engaging in providing the services authorized to be performed while employed or retained by a licensed outfitter; and

(2) comply with all standards adopted by board rule.

**History:** En. Sec. 2, Ch. 241, L. 2013.

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

---

#### **24.171.101 BOARD ORGANIZATION**

(1) The Board of Outfitters hereby adopts and incorporates the organizational rules of the Department of Labor and Industry listed at chapter 1 of this title of the Administrative Rules of Montana.

(2) It is the policy, intent, and purpose of the Board of Outfitters to provide quality regulatory functions and services to the profession it regulates and the public in order to promote, maintain, and preserve an ever-improving high degree of competence in the profession, satisfaction in the public, and an everlasting environment in which the profession operates.

**History:** [2-4-201](#), MCA; [IMP, 2-4-201](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1988 MAR p. 46, Eff. 1/15/88; [AMD](#), 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324.

---

#### **24.171.201 PROCEDURAL RULES**

(1) The Board of Outfitters hereby adopts and incorporates the procedural rules of the Department of Labor and Industry as listed in chapter 2 of this title of the Administrative Rules of Montana.

**History:** [2-4-201](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP, 2-4-201](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1988 MAR p. 46, Eff. 1/15/88; [AMD](#), 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324.

---

#### **24.171.202 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RULES**

(1) The Board of Outfitters hereby adopts and incorporates the citizen participation rules of the Department of Commerce as listed in chapter 2 of Title 8.

(2) Dates, times, and places for meetings and other activities of the Board of Outfitters may be obtained by contacting the board office.

(3) Communications to the Board of Outfitters may be made to: Board of Outfitters, Department of Labor and Industry, 301 S. Park, P.O. Box 200513, Helena, Montana 59620-0513.

(4) In addition to any other means provided by law or rule, a person wanting to receive notice of board activities of significant interest to that person may contact the board office, in writing, and request that his or her name, address, and phone number be placed on the board's "mailing list" and designate those activities of interest. The request shall be effective until January 1 of the following year, at which time it may be renewed by written request annually.

**History:** [2-3-103](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP, 2-3-103](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1988 MAR p. 46, Eff. 1/15/88; [AMD](#), 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; [AMD](#), 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324.

---

#### **24.171.401 FEES**

(1) Fees for outfitters, operations plan, guide, or use of outfitter assistants shall be as set forth below. The following fees are nonrefundable.

(a) New outfitter application and license. \$1300

This fee includes the following costs, but does not include fees related to operations plan.

(i) application processing 350

(ii) examination 150

(iii) investigation 400

(iv) license 400

(b) Application for amendment to outfitter license. 450

This fee includes the following costs:

(i) application processing 300

(ii) examination 150

(c) Renewal of outfitter license

(i) outfitter annual license 210

(ii) outfitter inactive status 100

(d) New operations plan

(i) review and processing 125

(ii) equipment inspection 375

(e) Fee per outfitter assistant employed or contracted 25

(f) Renewal guide license 50

(g) Initial guide application 150

(h) Fee for transfer of NCHU from each outfitter involved in the transfer 50

(i) Fee for each set of two replacement watercraft

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

identification tags 5

(j) Additional standardized fees are specified in ARM [24.101.403](#).

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-1-134](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-306](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-134](#), [37-1-141](#), [37-47-304](#), [37-47-306](#), [37-47-307](#), [37-47-308](#), [37-47-310](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; [AMD](#), 1994 MAR p. 2823, Eff. 10/28/94; [AMD](#), 1995 MAR p. 2388, Eff. 11/10/95; [AMD](#), 1996 MAR p. 909, Eff. 3/8/96; [AMD](#), 1997 MAR p. 1178, Eff. 7/8/97; [AMD](#), 1998 MAR p. 2560, Eff. 9/25/98; [AMD](#), 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; [AMD](#), 2001 MAR p. 843, Eff. 5/25/01; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, & [AMD](#), 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; [AMD](#), 2006 MAR p. 1583, Eff. 7/1/06; [AMD](#), 2007 MAR p. 298, Eff. 3/9/07; [AMD](#), 2008 MAR p. 2055, Eff. 9/26/08; [AMD](#), 2009 MAR p. 1406, Eff. 8/14/09; [AMD](#), 2010 MAR p. 1889, Eff. 8/27/10; [AMD](#), 2010 MAR p. 2384, Eff. 10/15/10; [AMD](#), 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; [AMD](#), 2013 MAR p. 671, Eff. 4/26/13; [AMD](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; [AMD](#), 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; [AMD](#), 2019 MAR p. 850, Eff. 6/22/19.

---

#### [24.171.402](#) EFFECT OF FEE FOR EXPANSION OF NET CLIENT HUNTER USE

This rule has been repealed.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-316](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2003 MAR p. 1193, Eff. 6/13/03; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324; [REP](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### [24.171.403](#) NONROUTINE APPLICATIONS

(1) A nonroutine application means an application submitted to the board in which the applicant has one or more of the following:

(a) past convictions or pending charges of state or federal laws relative to fish, wildlife, or parks, but only if those convictions:

(i) ever resulted in the loss of privileges to hunt or fish;

(ii) totaled two or more for which the applicant was sentenced no earlier than five years before the board received the application; or

(iii) total more than three regardless of when the applicant was sentenced;

(b) a total of three or more currently pending charges or past convictions of misdemeanor crimes if the applicant was sentenced for the past convictions no earlier than five years before the board received the application;

(c) a diagnosis or other information indicating physical or mental impairment by mental illness or chronic physical illness that may adversely affect the applicant's ability to provide services safely, but only if either the treatment for which is ongoing or the symptoms of which currently exist;

(d) a pending charge of any felony crime or a past conviction of any felony crime for which the applicant was either sentenced no earlier than ten years before the date the board received the application or for which the sentence has not been fully satisfied and discharged;

(e) traffic-related convictions if the applicant is deemed a habitual offender on or after the date the board first received the application; or

(f) an outfitter or guide license in this or any other state that was ever suspended, revoked, surrendered, or subjected to restrictions or other sanctions of a similar gravity.

(2) The department may, but is not required to, submit any routine application for board review if the department finds inconsistencies, irregularities, or other matters of concern in the application or in the documentation related to the application.

(3) For the purposes of this rule, any reference to "pending charges" shall include, but not be limited to, deferred prosecutions that have not been dismissed as of the date that the application is first submitted to the board.

(4) Applications that are nonroutine for an outfitter license for the same reason that they were nonroutine as a guide license are, nonetheless, nonroutine for the outfitter license, which is a privilege to practice at a higher level of public trust.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-101](#), [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### [24.171.404](#) MILITARY TRAINING OR EXPERIENCE

(1) Pursuant to [37-1-145](#), MCA, the board shall accept relevant military training, service, or education toward the requirements for licensure as an outfitter or guide.

(2) Relevant military training, service, or education must be completed by an applicant while a member of either:

(a) United States Armed Forces;

(b) United States Reserves;

(c) state national guard; or

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

(d) military reserves.

(3) An applicant must submit satisfactory evidence of receiving military training, service, or education that is equivalent to relevant licensure requirements as an outfitter or guide. Satisfactory evidence includes:

(a) a copy of the applicant's military discharge document (DD 214 or other discharge documentation);

(b) a document that clearly shows all relevant training, certification, service, or education the applicant received while in the military, including dates of training and completion or graduation; and

(c) any other documentation as required by the board.

(4) The board shall consider all documentation received to determine whether an applicant's military training, service, or education is equivalent to relevant licensure requirements.

**History:** [37-1-145](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-145](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2014 MAR p. 2653, Eff. 10/24/14.

---

#### **[24.171.405](#) BOOKING AGENTS AND ADVERTISING**

(1) Any person authorized by the outfitter may schedule trips, provide clients with information regarding refunds and services, receive client fees on behalf of the outfitter, secure a guide who is employed by or with whom the outfitter has an existing contractual relationship, and take other steps to establish contracts for services, as long as these activities are at the direction of the outfitter and as long as the terms and conditions of the contracts are directly between the outfitter and the client.

(2) Outfitters may enter into an arrangement with a person whereby the outfitter's services are advertised by or at the direction of that person or whereby clients are referred to the outfitter, but the outfitter is accountable to the board for the appearance and propriety of all such advertising and for all interactions between the other person and the clients and potential clients. All advertising regarding outfitting services must comply with the rules applicable to outfitters.

(3) Guides advertising to outfitters using media or methods that the general public may also view shall include a clear and conspicuous disclaimer that advises the general public that the advertisement is for outfitters only, not the general public.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2015 MAR p. 269, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### **[24.171.407](#) INSPECTION**

(1) Inspections of outfitter and guide operations may be made by a representative of the board at all reasonable times. The purpose of the inspection is to periodically examine the premises, equipment, and/or procedures of a licensed individual to determine whether the individual's practice is being conducted in a manner consistent with the laws and rules of the board, and the public health, safety and welfare.

**History:** [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-302](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324; [AMD](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### **[24.171.408](#) OUTFITTER RECORDS**

(1) Outfitters shall maintain current, true, complete, and accurate records, submit the records to the board as required by administrative rule, and make the records available at all times at the outfitter's main base camp or business office:

(a) to enforcement or investigative personnel authorized or appointed by the board;

(b) upon subpoena or order of a court;

(c) upon written request of the board; or

(d) upon written request of a state or federal agency for law enforcement purposes.

(2) Outfitter records shall be maintained on forms prescribed by the department and shall contain information as required by the board. The information required, in addition to information for operations plans under ARM [24.171.520](#) and employment records relative to outfitter assistants under ARM [24.171.410](#), shall include:

(a) the outfitter's name and license number;

(b) each client's name and/or unique identifier assigned to the client by the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks;

(c) dates of service to clients;

(d) big game animals taken by clients, specifying the species and sex of each big game animal and stating for each big game animal whether it was taken on public or private land within the outfitter's operations plan;

(e) districts hunted and water bodies, including section of a river or stream, fished by clients;

(f) category of NCHU applicable for each client; and

(g) the name of the outfitter assistant or the name and license number of the guide who accompanied the client.

(3) Amendments to records shall be made immediately when errors are discovered. Amendments that only supplement records with information that arose after license renewal are always proper. However, cases of

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

amendments to records for any other reason shall be brought to the screening panel for a decision as to whether an investigation should follow.

(4) In general, outfitter records, including, but not limited to the operations plans, shall be maintained as confidential information and shall not be released to any person or organization without written permission of the outfitter, subpoena or order of a court, or written request of a state or federal agency for law enforcement purposes. A specific outfitter's number of NCHU is confidential information, but whether an outfitter has NCHU of a particular category is public information. Also, while total acreage of private lands where any outfitter is authorized to operate is a matter of public record, where a particular outfitter is authorized to operate is a confidential matter between the landowner and the outfitter. The Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks or the Private Land/Public Wildlife Council may use board data to create a map depicting all private land where any outfitter is authorized to operate. All inquiries for outfitter records shall be reviewed and considered in relation to this rule and the competing interests between the public's right to know and the rights of privacy involved in the particular records requested.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 1989 MAR p. 1192, Eff. 8/18/89; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; **AMD**, 2013 MAR p. 671, Eff. 4/26/13; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; **AMD**, 2019 MAR p. 850, Eff. 6/22/19.

---

#### **[24.171.409](#) GUIDE TO HUNTER RATIO**

This rule has been repealed.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-402](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2010 MAR p. 651, Eff. 3/12/10; **REP**, 2013 MAR p. 671, Eff. 4/26/13.

---

#### **[24.171.410](#) OUTFITTER'S ASSISTANTS**

(1) An outfitter may only employ or contract with an outfitter's assistant in an emergency. Emergency, as defined in [37-47-101](#), MCA, includes unforeseen staffing shortages, not caused by the outfitter's action or inaction, for which employing or contracting with an outfitter's assistant is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare while serving a client.

(2) Before an outfitter's assistant serves a client, the outfitter shall:

- (a) disclose to each client that the outfitter's assistant is not a licensed guide or outfitter;
- (b) explain the emergency causing the need to employ or contract with the outfitter's assistant; and
- (c) disclose whether the outfitter's assistant has received first aid certification.

(3) For each outfitter's assistant employed or contracted with by an outfitter, the following documentation procedures shall be followed:

(a) An outfitter shall document the employment or retention of each outfitter's assistant. The outfitter's assistant shall keep a copy of the employment documentation at all times during the service period. Within 15 days of the first date the outfitter's assistant serves a client, the outfitter shall submit to the department a copy of the employment documentation and fee required in ARM [24.171.401](#). The employment documentation shall include:

- (i) the name, license number, address, phone number, and, if available, e-mail address of the outfitter;
- (ii) the signature of the outfitter;
- (iii) the name, date of birth, address, telephone number, and, if available, e-mail address of the outfitter's assistant; and
- (iv) the beginning and ending dates of the service period.

(b) Within 15 days of the first date the outfitter's assistant serves any client, the outfitter shall submit the following information to the department:

- (i) an explanation of the emergency causing the need to employ or contract with the outfitter's assistant;
- (ii) an explanation of why the outfitter's assistant could not obtain a guide license before serving a client;
- (iii) a statement indicating whether the outfitter's assistant has applied for a guide license;
- (iv) confirmation that the outfitter properly disclosed to the client information required by this rule; and
- (v) an affidavit by the outfitter that the outfitter has complied with all laws and rules relating to outfitter's assistants.

(c) Outfitters shall maintain a copy of this documentation and make the records available at all times in accordance with ARM [24.171.408](#) following the provision of services by the outfitter's assistant.

(4) Unless otherwise authorized under ARM [24.171.405](#), regarding booking agents and advertising, an outfitter's assistant may not:

- (a) make agreements with participants concerning monetary consideration of services provided; or
- (b) advertise outfitting services.

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from [The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.](#)

(5) Except where an outfitter's assistant's conduct is further limited by statute or rule, the standards of conduct set forth in ARM [24.171.2301](#) applicable to guides shall also be observed by the outfitter's assistant.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-47-101](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-325](#), [37-47-404](#), [37-47-405](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2018 MAR p. 1731, Eff. 8/25/18.

---

#### **[24.171.412](#) SAFETY AND FIRST AID PROVISIONS**

- (1) Outfitters and guides are required to hold a current basic first aid card at all times actively licensed.
- (2) Basic first aid certification must be obtained through a provider and course approved by the department based upon the following minimum criteria:
  - (a) The provider must require written and practical tests and participants are to receive completion certificates.
  - (b) The provider program must include, at a minimum, universal precautions for self-protection and training specific to the following types of injuries:
    - (i) shock;
    - (ii) bleeding;
    - (iii) poisoning;
    - (iv) burns;
    - (v) temperature extremes;
    - (vi) musculoskeletal injuries;
    - (vii) bites and stings; and
    - (viii) medical emergencies.
  - (c) Instruction in the principles and first aid intervention of injuries must refer to body extremities.
- (3) For purposes of initial licensure, only basic first aid certification that involves the direct, hands-on application of first aid materials and techniques is acceptable. An applicant for an outfitter license who was previously licensed as a guide must hold current certification from a hands-on first aid course.
- (4) A list of approved providers and courses shall be maintained on the board web site.
- (5) An applicant may also meet basic first aid certification if the applicant provides proof of a certification, license, or other credential that is equivalent to or greater than basic first aid certification, approved on a case-by-case basis by the department. The board may also maintain on its web site a list of certifications, licenses, and other credentials that will be routinely accepted as equivalent to or greater than basic first aid.
- (6) Whenever guests are present, each watercraft; vessel; vehicle; primary, secondary, and temporary base of operations must possess a serviceable basic first aid kit.
- (7) Each watercraft or vessel shall contain a serviceable U.S. Coast Guard approved personal floatation device for each person onboard. Children under 12 are required to wear a personal floatation device. Watercraft 16 feet and longer are required to be equipped with a throwable Type IV floatation device.
- (8) All watercraft or vessels are required to carry onboard a supplementary means of power, such as an extra motor or extra oar that will adequately motivate the craft.

**History:** [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-201](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1992 MAR p. 439, Eff. 3/13/92; **AMD**, 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; **AMD**, 1999 MAR p. 809, Eff. 4/23/99; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2010 MAR p. 1889, Eff. 8/27/10; **AMD**, 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17; **AMD**, 2019 MAR p. 850, Eff. 6/22/19.

---

#### **[24.171.413](#) WATERCRAFT IDENTIFICATION**

- (1) A person holding a valid outfitter or guide license who utilizes any type of watercraft while providing services shall prove evidence of licensure by displaying, at all times services are being provided, board-issued watercraft identification tags.
- (2) The tags shall display the outfitter or guide license number for identification purposes.
- (3) An unlicensed outfitter assistant shall display board-issued watercraft identification tags on each watercraft to be occupied by the outfitter assistant.
- (4) One tag shall be affixed to each side of the watercraft at the bow, oarlock, or stern of the watercraft and be of a size approved by the board so that they may be easily seen from another watercraft or from shore.
- (5) Each tag shall be affixed to the watercraft or on a removable plaque or in such a way that if the craft is sold or is not being used by the licensee while the licensee is providing services, the tag may be removed or concealed to prevent misidentification of the occupant(s) as licensees.

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

(6) Licensees may be provided with one set of two watercraft identification tags at the time of application for licensure or renewal, at no charge, upon request. A fee will be assessed for any replacement in accordance with ARM [24.171.401](#).

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-134](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-302](#), [37-47-303](#), [37-47-325](#), [37-47-405](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1998 MAR p. 740, Eff. 3/27/98; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; **AMD**, 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17.

---

#### **[24.171.501](#) APPLICATION FOR OUTFITTER LICENSE**

(1) An application for an outfitter license shall be on forms prescribed by the department and shall be accompanied by the required fee.

(2) A complete application, which is required prior to being allowed to take the examination, shall consist of two parts:

(a) the department's license application form, including all supporting documentation as required by that form; and

(b) an operations plan application form, accompanied by a NCHU transfer request form, if applicable.

(3) The license issued shall designate, and thereby authorize the outfitter to conduct those functions of an outfitter that the applicant has qualified for. Functions of an outfitter to be indicated on the license application and license issued, if qualified for, shall be one or more of the following:

(a) hunting services (big game);

(b) hunting services (upland game birds, waterfowl, and non-big game);

(c) fishing services; and

(d) if applicable to the services provided in (1)(a) through (c), and qualified for, one or more of the following:

(i) saddle or pack animal; or

(ii) boat or other floating craft, or motorized watercraft.

(4) An outfitter license shall be issued to an applicant who has demonstrated to the board that he or she has:

(a) met the qualifications to provide those services of an outfitter indicated on the license application;

(b) filed an outfitter license application with the board office;

(c) filed an operations plan that has been approved by the board;

(d) successfully passed the required examinations pertaining to those categories described in ARM [24.171.507](#);

and

(e) received an approved equipment inspection.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-101](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-302](#), [37-47-305](#), [37-47-307](#), [37-47-308](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### **[24.171.502](#) OUTFITTER QUALIFICATIONS**

(1) An applicant for an outfitter license shall have the qualifications to provide all services and use all equipment necessary to provide the functions of an outfitter that the license will authorize the applicant to provide. In addition, the applicant shall have:

(a) for a fishing outfitter applicant:

(i) a minimum of three years and 120 days of verified experience as a licensed guide working for a licensed outfitter in this state, guiding clients and using methods for pursuing fish, reduced by no more than 50 experience days for any waiver or combination of waivers; or

(ii) a minimum of three years and 120 days of verified experience as a licensed outfitter, a licensed guide, or equivalent experience in another state guiding clients and using methods for pursuing fish reduced by no more than 50 experience days for any waiver or combination of waivers. All experience in this subsection is subject to board approval; or

(b) for all other applicants:

(i) 100 days of verified experience as a licensed guide working for a licensed outfitter in this state, guiding clients in pursuing the types of game and using methods for which licensure is sought by the applicant; or

(ii) 100 days of verified experience as a licensed outfitter, a licensed guide, or equivalent experience in another state guiding clients in pursuing the types of game and using the methods for which licensure is sought by the applicant. All experience in this subsection is subject to board approval.

(2) For purposes of this rule, verified experience includes:

(a) an affidavit by the outfitter attesting to the guiding experience claimed by the applicant and subject to confirmation by the outfitter client logs;

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

- (b) client logs submitted by the applicant, signed by the sponsoring outfitter for whom services were provided;
  - (c) outfitter log book entries; or
  - (d) sources of information with board acceptable guarantees of reliability which may include, but are not limited to, federal land agency records, client affidavits or letters.
- (3) Three days of experience may be waived by the board for every day of training completed by the applicant at an outfitter or guide school approved by the board provided that the training was in the category of licensure being sought (e.g., hunting or fishing). The maximum number of days of experience that may be waived is 30. All experience waivers shall be contingent upon the applicant completing the board's one-day education program at the time specified by the board.
- (4) The board may waive up to 50 days of experience for an applicant purchasing an existing outfitter operation provided that:
- (a) the applicant receives preapproval from the board for a training and instruction plan documenting how and in what capacity the applicant will work with the licensed outfitter from whom the business is obtained;
  - (b) the applicant has entered into a sales agreement with the selling outfitter for the purchase of the operation and the sales agreement provides supervision of the applicant by the selling outfitter during the 12-month period following board approval of the application;
  - (c) the selling outfitter has a current, approved operations plan on file with the board;
  - (d) the applicant files an operations plan that is approved by the board; and
  - (e) the applicant has completed the board's one-day education program.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-302](#), [37-47-304](#), [37-47-307](#), [37-47-308](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 1991 MAR p. 999, Eff. 6/28/91; **AMD**, 1992 MAR p. 2376, Eff. 10/30/92; **AMD**, 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2009 MAR p. 1406, Eff. 8/14/09; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 1756, Eff. 10/16/15; **AMD**, 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; **AMD**, 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17.

---

#### **24.171.503 OUTFITTER APPLICATION**

This rule has been repealed.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-201](#), [37-47-304](#), [37-47-307](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; **AMD**, 1998 MAR p. 2560, Eff. 9/25/98; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **REP**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### **24.171.504 SUCCESSORSHIP**

(1) A successorship is the permission granted to a person to renew the license of a deceased or incapacitated outfitter for a limited period of time for the purposes of operating or selling the business. Only a successor may renew the license of an outfitter who has deceased.

(2) A successor acceptable to the board must be designated by the family of a deceased outfitter within six months of the date that the outfitter becomes deceased. If a successor for a deceased outfitter is not designated within those six months, then no successor will be approved.

(3) The family of an outfitter designates a proposed successor by submitting an application completed by the proposed successor on a form provided by the department; a sworn statement by the proposed successor explaining how the proposed successor has been involved with the outfitting industry, in general, and how the successor has been involved with the outfitting business for which the successorship is sought, in particular; and a sworn statement by someone on behalf of the family of the deceased or incapacitated outfitter, affirming the person's authority and how the authority was obtained to designate a successor on behalf of the family, and that the person so acting is at least 18 years of age. A successorship application must specify whether the successor will operate the business or will only seek to sell it.

(4) When a successorship is approved for the purpose of selling the business, the outfitter license is placed on inactive status and may be renewed only on inactive status and only until the successorship terminates or until the business sells, whichever occurs earlier. No clients may be contracted with or served under authority of an inactive license. All requests for successorship for the sole purpose of selling the business shall be routinely approved by staff upon the board's receipt of all the required information.

(5) An application for the purpose of operating the business shall require the same information that is required of an outfitter applicant. The decision of whether to approve a successorship for the purpose of operating the business shall be processed by the department unless the application is nonroutine under ARM [24.171.403](#), in which case the matter will be brought to the board.

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

(6) Prior to approval, a successor must meet all qualifications for licensure aside from the experience and testing requirements. Approval may be granted upon the condition that documentation of licensure requirements will be received by the board no later than a specified date. If the documentation of licensure requirements is not received in a timely manner, board staff shall immediately place the license on inactive status and all outfitting under that license shall immediately cease until the board is able to reconsider the approval.

(7) A successor stands in the shoes of the outfitter for purposes of the board's power to administer and enforce the statutes and rules applicable to outfitters. Notwithstanding any agreement to the contrary, a successor and the original licensee, or the estate if the original licensee is deceased, are jointly and severally liable and responsible for all conduct affecting the outfitter license occurring during that successor's service as the successor. The successor may operate the license subject to the authority of the board to the same extent as if the successor were the outfitter. An action addressing unprofessional conduct may be taken against an outfitter license regardless of the status of the successorship, and regardless of whether the conduct was that of the deceased or incapacitated outfitter or of one or more successors. Each living outfitter and successor who is alleged to be responsible for misconduct may be made a party to the action.

(8) A successor shall report to the board each year at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the renewal period. To report, the successor shall either personally appear for the meeting or shall submit a written report to the board no less than 15 days before the meeting. The report shall inform the board of the progress made toward licensure of an outfitter for the business, or of the progress made toward sale of the business.

(9) If the board wishes to revoke a successorship for unprofessional conduct or for failing to appear or report, the public health, safety, or welfare is more likely to imperatively require emergency action because a successor is presumed to be less qualified than an outfitter and to be less invested in the protection of the public. If a successorship is revoked, then the outfitter license status becomes the status applicable to it as if the original licensee had deceased or become incapacitated on the date of the revocation. A successor shall not perform any outfitter functions if the successorship or the license is suspended or revoked.

(10) A successorship terminates the earlier of the date that is five years from the date that the successorship was approved under this rule, or the date that the successorship is revoked or voluntarily surrendered, or the date that the successor becomes a licensed outfitter.

(11) While operating the business as a successor, the successor may accumulate verified experience days in the same manner that a guide accumulates experience days to satisfy the requirements of ARM [24.171.502](#). In the discretion of the board, and in addition to all other waivers that a successor may qualify for, a successor may request a waiver of up to 50 days of experience for each license function (hunting and fishing) by sufficiently documenting the successor's past experience and involvement with the particular outfitting business that occurred prior to the date the successorship was approved.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-131](#), [37-47-310](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; [AMD](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; [AMD](#), 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17.

---

#### [24.171.505](#) FISHING OUTFITTER OPERATIONS PLAN

(1) A fishing outfitter may include in a proposed or an existing operations plan, a general reference to "all surface waters governed by the Montana Stream Access Law, [23-2-302](#), MCA, and accessible by public access points not requiring a permit restricting commercial use issued by a state or federal agency(ies)." Alternatively, the outfitter may include in a proposed or existing operations plan specific surface waters governed by the Montana Stream Access Law and accessible by public access points not requiring a permit issued by a state or federal agency, by including detailed descriptions of those specific waters as provided in [37-47-304](#)(2)(c)(ii), MCA.

(2) Surface waters accessible only by private land or access points requiring a permit issued by a state or federal agency(ies) may only be included in a fishing outfitter's proposed or existing operations plan by describing the waters in detail as provided in [37-47-304](#)(2)(c)(ii), MCA. Description and submission of private land access permission and permit(s) issued by the appropriate state or federal agency(ies) shall be governed by ARM [24.171.520](#).

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-304](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2009 MAR p. 1406, Eff. 8/14/09; [AMD](#), 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; [AMD](#), 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17.

---

#### [24.171.507](#) OUTFITTER EXAMINATION

(1) Applicants for the outfitter examination shall submit a completed license application accompanied by the required fee.

(2) The following list is not intended to be exhaustive in detail. A wide range of issues and subtopics exist within each broad topic. The examination categories include:

- (a) general knowledge of outfitting and guiding;

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

- (b) hunting;
- (c) fishing; and
- (d) packing.

(3) All applicants must obtain a passing score of 75 percent or more on each examination category taken.

(4) An applicant who fails the written examination may, within 15 days of notification of failure, review his or her examination at the board office. During this review, the applicant may review only questions answered incorrectly. Correct answers to those questions will be furnished to the applicant. No representative of the board shall discuss the substance of the examination with the applicant. The applicant will not be allowed to record any information from examination during the review.

(5) Before taking the outfitter examination, an applicant must submit a complete application, as defined in ARM [24.171.501](#). An applicant may not repeat any failed portion of the outfitter examination sooner than 30 days from the date of failing.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-305](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; [AMD](#), 1991 MAR p. 999, Eff. 6/28/91; [AMD](#), 1993 MAR p. 343, Eff. 3/12/93; [AMD](#), 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, & [AMD](#), 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; [AMD](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; [AMD](#), 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16.

---

#### [24.171.508](#) INCOMPLETE OUTFITTER AND GUIDE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

(1) Applications received by the board will be reviewed for completeness. If an application is not complete when first received by the board, the applicant will be mailed a letter stating that the application is incomplete. The board may indicate which documents or information is missing in this letter. However, the applicant remains responsible for ensuring all required information and documents are timely submitted. If the application is not completed within one year from the date the incomplete application first arrived, the application expires, and the applicant shall be required to submit a new application and fees before being considered for licensure.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-304](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2013 MAR p. 671, Eff. 4/26/13.

---

#### [24.171.509](#) INSURANCE FOR OUTFITTERS

(1) An outfitter, other than an outfitter licensed on inactive status, shall have liability insurance, as a named insured, in effect at all times during the license year, and shall submit proof of such insurance with an application for renewal. Liability insurance must cover bodily injury to clients at all times services are being provided, including while the outfitter or employed or retained guides are transporting clients. Minimum amounts of liability insurance shall meet or exceed minimum requirements of state or federal regulator agencies for outfitters operating on state or federal lands, but in no case may minimum amounts be less than \$10,000 for property damage, \$100,000 for personal injury to one person and a total of \$300,000 for personal injury to more than one person.

**History:** [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-304](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, & [AMD](#), 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; [AMD](#), 2019 MAR p. 850, Eff. 6/22/19.

---

#### [24.171.512](#) INACTIVE LICENSE

(1) An outfitter may submit a written request to have the outfitter's license placed on inactive status at the time of renewal. Such request must be submitted with a completed application for renewal and all required renewal fees.

(2) Outfitters whose licenses are inactive more than three years and who choose to become active must take the parts of the outfitter test related to outfitter laws and rules and fish and game laws and rules. An inactive outfitter who wishes to reactivate his or her license must update their operation plan.

(3) Outfitters on inactive status may not book or serve clients, and are subject to all requirements applicable to outfitters licensed on active status, other than those relating to insurance and current basic first aid card.

**History:** [37-1-319](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-319](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; [AMD](#), 1997 MAR p. 1178, Eff. 7/8/97; [AMD](#), 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324; [AMD](#), 2007 MAR p. 298, Eff. 3/9/07; [AMD](#), 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11.

---

#### [24.171.513](#) OUTFITTER ACTING AS GUIDE

(1) A licensee holding a current and valid outfitter's license may act as a guide without a guide's license if such licensee:

- (a) possesses the qualifications of a guide under these rules;
- (b) works for only one outfitter at any given time;

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

- (c) acts as a guide only within the services and area of operation of this particular outfitter; and
- (d) is reported as a guide in the client logs of the outfitter whose clients are being served.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-301](#), [37-47-302](#), [37-47-303](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06.

---

#### **24.171.520 OPERATIONS PLANS AND AMENDMENTS**

(1) An operations plan is prepared by the outfitter and submitted to the board and consists of the following:

- (a) an affidavit by the outfitter to the board that the amount and kind of equipment that is owned, leased, or contracted for by the applicant is sufficient and satisfactory for the services advertised or contemplated to be performed by the applicant;
- (b) for fishing outfitters, a summarization of the boundaries of the outfitter's operation, provided in the following terms, except as otherwise provided in ARM [24.171.505](#):
  - (i) the name of each water body, including the section of each river or stream, that may be utilized by the applicant while providing services;
  - (ii) a description of private land, by name of ranch and county where located, over which access is allowed; and
  - (iii) an affidavit by the outfitter to the board that the outfitter is in possession of any public land permits or licenses properly executed for federal or state public property where the outfitter is authorized to operate;
- (c) for hunting outfitters a summarization of the locations and boundaries of the outfitter's operation, which is where the outfitter is authorized to operate, provided in the following terms:
  - (i) the name of each public land agency;
  - (ii) all information necessary to fulfill statutory requirements for reporting of private land acreage;
  - (iii) total acreage on a per-owner basis of the private land where the outfitter is authorized to operate for any duration of time and for any species of game; and
  - (iv) the legal description of the private acreage where the outfitter is authorized to operate, either by geo-code number assigned by the Montana Department of Revenue, or by aliquot parts. If less than the entire section or parcel is reported, then the boundary shall be described down to the quarter-quarter section or the government lot number;
- (d) the number of NCHU per category; and
- (e) an affidavit by the outfitter to the board that the outfitter possesses public land permits or licenses properly executed for federal or state public property where the outfitter is authorized to operate.

(2) An outfitter may amend the operations plan on record by adding or subtracting any additional or replacement information and submitting the updated plan to the board, except that when adding a service identified in (5), the outfitter must apply for an amendment to the outfitter's operations plan by stating in writing the proposed changes and submitting it to the board, along with the fee required in ARM [24.171.401](#).

(3) As part of renewal, each outfitter shall attest that all lands information required as part of the outfitter's operations plan on file with the board is current and accurate.

(4) Whenever the outfitter gains permission to use additional private or public property, the outfitter shall update the operations plan the earlier of:

- (a) the end of the license year during which the outfitter first became authorized to use it, and
- (b) before actually using it.

(5) All amendments will be considered by the board using the same criteria as new applicants, including being required to take those parts of the outfitter examination that apply to the proposed amendment, if an outfitter is applying to add the following to the operations plan:

- (a) hunting;
- (b) fishing;
- (c) watercraft used for fishing or hunting;
- (d) upland game bird;
- (e) waterfowl; or
- (f) saddle or pack animal use.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-304](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; **AMD**, 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17.

---

#### **24.171.601 GUIDE QUALIFICATIONS**

(1) An applicant for a guide license shall have:

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

(a) not less than one season of experience of hunting or fishing for the type of game for which the applicant will guide or have worked for the outfitter that signs the license for a period of at least six weeks and in the area to be guided in, or have successfully completed a school licensed by a state, approved by the board, and that trains persons to be a guide or professional guide;

(b) knowledge of hunting and fishing techniques to provide the particular services contracted to the client by the endorsing outfitter; and

(c) knowledge of equipment, terrain and hazards to competently provide a safe experience for those persons he or she guides.

(2) An outfitter whose license is currently suspended or revoked is not qualified for a guide license.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-101](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-303](#), [37-47-307](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; **AMD**, 1998 MAR p. 2560, Eff. 9/25/98; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### **24.171.602 GUIDE LICENSE**

(1) An applicant may apply for a guide license on forms provided by the department, and accompanied by the required fee. The application must include a signature of the endorsing outfitter confirming that, to the knowledge of the outfitter, the guide meets all the qualifications of a guide.

(2) An applicant must submit proof of current basic hands-on first aid certification with the application.

(3) Each outfitter who uses the services of the guide during the license year shall sign and date the guide's license before allowing the guide to accompany a client.

(4) An applicant for a guide license who delivers a completed application and application fee to the board office will receive the license at that time.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-101](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-303](#), [37-47-307](#), [37-47-308](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2010 MAR p. 651, Eff. 3/12/10; **AMD**, 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2019 MAR p. 850, Eff. 6/22/19.

---

#### **24.171.604 EMERGENCY GUIDE LICENSE**

This rule has been repealed.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-303](#), [37-47-307](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2008 MAR p. 2055, Eff. 9/26/08; **AMD**, 2010 MAR p. 651, Eff. 3/12/10; **REP**, 2010 MAR p. 1889, Eff. 8/27/10.

---

#### **24.171.605 PROVISIONAL GUIDE LICENSE**

This rule has been repealed.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-1-319](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-1-319](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-301](#), [37-47-303](#), [37-47-307](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2010 MAR p. 1889, Eff. 8/27/10; **REP**, 2013 MAR p. 671, Eff. 4/26/13.

---

#### **24.171.701 NCHU CATEGORIES, TRANSFERS, AND RECORDS**

(1) NCHU categories are as follows:

(a) Category 2, consisting of all clients served in the pursuit of upland game birds and big game under combination licenses or in the pursuit of big game; and

(b) Category 3, consisting of all clients served in the pursuit of upland game birds, water fowl, and turkeys.

(2) In cases where a federal agency limits an outfitter's use of federal lands by some means other than NCHU, an outfitter is not required to have NCHU to perform services on those lands.

(3) NCHU owned by a licensee is part of the operations plan and may be transferred only with notice to the board. Transfers between or among licensees are routinely processed by the department unless the department has received a complaint against the licensee who is the transferor in a NCHU transfer request. If the transferor is a respondent to a complaint, the request will not be processed until after the case is resolved. In addition, a license that has expired may not be part of a NCHU transfer, and any NCHU that is recorded as part of the operations plan of a license that terminates or is revoked ceases to exist upon termination or revocation.

(4) Each outfitter entering into a transfer of NCHU with one or more other outfitters must do so by completing a transfer request form prescribed by the department. Prior to being processed by the department, a NCHU transfer request is not complete or valid for any purpose and may be cancelled by any licensee that is a party to it.

(5) The records of the board comprise the official records of NCHU and each purported transfer of NCHU is invalid and void that is not reflected in the board's records.

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

(6) NCHU allocated to a deceased outfitter may be transferred only by a successor if an approved successorship has not terminated under ARM [24.171.504](#). NCHU will expire and shall not be revived if it is not transferred the earlier of the date that the license terminates from nonrenewal, or the date that a successorship terminates, or, if no successor has been designated, the date that is one year following the death of the outfitter unless an extension is approved by the board based upon good cause appearing in a written request received by the board within one year. In cases where the outfitter dies and no successor is designated, someone authorized by the estate or the family of the outfitter must submit a NCHU transfer request form to the board within one year following the death of the outfitter. Authorization by the estate is shown by a certified copy of letters of appointment as a personal representative or by any other procedure allowed under Title 72, MCA, for the transfer of intangible personal property.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-316](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1996 MAR p. 145, Eff. 3/15/96; **AMD**, 1998 MAR p. 2267, Eff. 8/28/98; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **AMD**, 2003 MAR p. 1193, Eff. 6/13/03; **TRANS**, from Commerce, 2006 MAR p. 324; **AMD**, 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; **AMD**, 2013 MAR p. 671, Eff. 4/26/13; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15.

---

#### [24.171.702](#) TRANSFER OF RIVER-USE DAYS

This rule has been repealed.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-47-201](#), [37-47-310](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2007 MAR p. 298, Eff. 3/9/07; **REP**, 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16.

---

#### [24.171.2101](#) RENEWALS

(1) The provisions of ARM [24.101.408](#) and [24.101.414](#) apply.

(2) License renewal applications for outfitters shall be made on forms provided by the department and shall be accompanied by:

- (a) the required renewal fee;
- (b) a copy of the licensee's valid and current first aid certification;
- (c) a copy of the licensee's current insurance certificate with the licensee as the named insured;
- (d) complete client report logs; and
- (e) an attestation that all lands information required as part of the outfitter's operations plan on file with the board is current and accurate as required by ARM [24.171.520](#).

(3) An outfitter or guide must submit a completed renewal application with the required fee on or before the date set by ARM [24.101.413](#) of each license year.

(4) Outfitters who provide services during the late hunt seasons may submit amended client logs reflecting services from December 1st through December 31st separately as long as they are received by the board no later than January 31st of the following year.

(5) License renewal applications for guides shall be made on forms provided by the department and shall be accompanied by:

- (a) the required renewal fee; and
- (b) a copy of the licensee's valid and current first aid certification.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-104](#), [37-1-141](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-302](#), [37-47-304](#), [37-47-306](#), [37-47-307](#), MCA; **NEW**, 1988 MAR p. 1666, Eff. 7/29/88; **AMD**, 1992 MAR p. 2376, Eff. 10/30/92; **AMD**, 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; **AMD**, 1999 MAR p. 809, Eff. 4/23/99; **AMD**, 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; **TRANS**, from Commerce, & **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; **AMD**, 2006 MAR p. 1583, Eff. 7/1/06; **AMD**, 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11; **AMD**, 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; **AMD**, 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; **AMD**, 2017 MAR p. 1900, Eff. 10/14/17.

---

#### [24.171.2104](#) ACTIVE DUTY STATUS FOR LICENSEES IN THE MILITARY

(1) The board recognizes that the nation relies on members of the National Guard and the reserve branches of the armed forces for the nation's security, and that the members of the National Guard and reserve forces are subject to call to active duty on short notice. In consideration of that service to the nation, the board finds that it is appropriate to defer the licensing renewal obligations of such individuals called to active duty status, provided that the individual is not required by the armed forces to maintain current professional or occupational licensing as a condition of serving in the armed forces.

(2) An activated reservist, as defined in [37-1-138](#), MCA, upon submission of appropriate evidence, is entitled to the following privileges:

(a) The activated reservist is not required to timely pay a renewal fee for license renewal that comes due while the person is in active duty status. The renewal fee is payable within six months following the activated reservist's

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

discharge from active duty status. Unless otherwise relieved from the renewal application requirements, the activated reservist must timely apply for license renewal.

(b) If the activated reservist provides proof to the board of the reservist's active duty status before the reservist's license expires, the reservist is relieved from having to timely submit a renewal application and any related documents or information during the period while the reservist is on active duty status. The reservist has six months following discharge from active duty status to submit to the board such renewal applications and any related documents or information that came due during the period of the reservist's active duty status.

(3) In order to gain the benefits of this rule, the activated reservist must provide the board with proof of active duty status, including the date upon which the reservist was called to active duty status. The board may require the activated reservist to periodically provide information to the board regarding the reservist's active duty status or the date of the reservist's discharge from active duty status.

(4) A license that has not lapsed continues in the same status as existed the day before the reservist was called to active duty status, and remains in that status until the reservist renews the license or six months have elapsed from the reservist's discharge from active duty status, whichever comes first.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-1-138](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-138](#), [37-47-307](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06.

---

#### **24.171.2301 UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND MISCONDUCT**

(1) A violation of (1) or (3) by an outfitter, or (2) or (3) by a guide or outfitter's assistant is misconduct, specified as a basis for disciplinary action under [37-47-341](#), MCA. Such violation is also determined by the board to be unprofessional conduct, as provided in [37-1-319](#), MCA, specified as a ground for disciplinary action under [37-1-312](#), MCA. A violation of this rule may result in any sanction provided by [37-1-312](#) or [37-47-341](#), MCA. Unprofessional conduct by an outfitter's assistant is grounds for disciplinary action against the outfitter who employed or contracted with the outfitter's assistant. An outfitter shall:

(a) not violate any law, rule, or policy of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks concerning the certification of nonresidents for procuring hunting licenses;

(b) not conduct any services or allow services to be conducted by a supervised guide or outfitter's assistant on private or public land, except legal transportation across such lands, without first having obtained written permission from the landowner or written authorization from the agency administering public land, unless the landowner or agency does not require such permission;

(c) not provide services or allow services to be conducted by a supervised guide or outfitter's assistant to clients outside the boundaries of the outfitter's approved operations plan;

(d) not endorse a guide license until the outfitter has made reasonable inquiry and determined that the guide is qualified for licensure;

(e) not interfere, by solicitation or otherwise, with a contract between another outfitter and client, including certifications for game license or permits, when it is known or reasonably should be known that a contract to provide services exists between that other outfitter and a client;

(f) furnish each client with a current and complete rate schedule, which shall include all charges, a deposit policy, and deposit refund policy, all in writing, for services offered;

(g) specify in writing, when offering services to a nonresident hunting client, the refund policy for failure by the prospective client to draw a license required to participate in the service offered;

(h) not change the rates and/or policies from those published without the written consent of the client after the outfitter receives and accepts the deposit from the client;

(i) set all contract terms and conditions with clients;

(j) personally collect, or designate an agent to collect, all fees from clients. The outfitter is solely responsible for complying with the outfitter's deposit and deposit refund policy;

(k) maintain current, true, complete, and accurate records;

(l) make all client records available at the outfitter's main base camp or business office in accordance with ARM [24.171.408](#);

(m) obtain and maintain a reasonable degree of supervision over each guide and outfitter's assistant to ensure that the services offered are being provided in accordance with the laws and rules, with particular regard to those laws and rules pertaining to the health, safety, and welfare of the participants, the public, and landowners;

(n) not employ or retain a guide without first confirming that the guide has current basic first aid certification;

(o) not exceed the licensee's NCHU;

(p) not use a guide prior to ensuring that the guide license is fully signed and dated;

(q) not use a guide with an inactive license;

(r) comply with all laws and rules relating to outfitter's assistants; and

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from [The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.](#)

(s) when advertising services, clearly designate the outfitter's registered business name or personal name and the outfitter's license number.

(2) Guides shall:

(a) not advertise services to the general public, but may advertise their services directly to outfitters;

(b) only make agreements with clients concerning monetary consideration or services offered, or collect fees from clients, with the express consent of the supervising outfitter, and only as expressly provided in ARM [24.171.405](#);

(c) not provide services to clients who have not been specifically referred to the guide from the endorsing outfitter; and

(d) not act as a guide under a guide license, unless and until the guide and the outfitter have first signed and dated the guide license.

(3) All licensees shall:

(a) provide services with respect for the rights of others, private and public property, and provide for the health, safety, and well-being of their clients, employees, and the general public;

(b) provide services on public land in a manner such that they do not interfere with the general public access to public land or waterways or access to wildlife on public land;

(c) provide their services in such a manner as not to be detrimental to the wildlife or the environment where they operate;

(d) report to the board office, at their earliest opportunity, any violation of fish and game laws or outfitter, guide, and outfitter's assistant laws of which they have knowledge;

(e) not use alcohol to the extent that the use impairs the user physically or mentally, while engaged by a client;

(f) not charge any fee for certifying or aiding or assisting any nonresident in procuring or attempting to procure a hunting license;

(g) not harass, assault, or abuse clients, employees, outfitters, guides, or outfitter's assistants, or members of the general public, verbally or otherwise;

(h) not abuse livestock;

(i) produce their current license or employment documentation required by ARM [24.171.410](#) at the request of law enforcement or a representative of the board;

(j) carry the licensee's current license at all times when providing services;

(k) not have hunting or fishing privileges suspended, revoked, placed on probation, or voluntarily surrendered in the state of Montana or any other jurisdiction;

(l) not act beyond the scope of activities for which the individual is licensed;

(m) not offer for use by an unlicensed individual any watercraft identification identifying another licensee as the occupant of the watercraft;

(n) not intentionally misrepresent board laws or rules;

(o) not fail to respond to board inquiries and requests;

(p) not remit a "nonsufficient fund check" or a check on a closed account for board fees or fines; and

(q) comply with the statutes and rules applicable to licensees of the board.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-1-319](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [37-1-312](#), [37-1-316](#), [37-1-319](#), [37-47-201](#), [37-47-325](#), [37-47-341](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 1996 MAR p. 668, Eff. 3/8/96; [AMD](#), 1999 MAR p. 809, Eff. 4/23/99; [AMD](#), 2000 MAR p. 730, Eff. 3/17/00; [TRANS](#), from Commerce, & [AMD](#), 2006 MAR p. 324, Eff. 2/10/06; [AMD](#), 2007 MAR p. 347, Eff. 3/9/07; [AMD](#), 2008 MAR p. 2055, Eff. 9/26/08; [AMD](#), 2010 MAR p. 651, Eff. 3/12/10; [AMD](#), 2010 MAR p. 1889, Eff. 8/27/10; [AMD](#), 2015 MAR p. 58, Eff. 1/30/15; [AMD](#), 2016 MAR p. 1960, Eff. 10/29/16; [AMD](#), 2018 MAR p. 1731, Eff. 8/25/18.

---

#### **24.171.2305 WEB SITE POSTING OF LICENSE DISCIPLINE**

(1) For purposes of ARM [24.101.404](#), each first-time violation of the following acts constitutes a failure to file or complete in a timely manner a minor administrative requirement that is in rule or law:

(a) lack of first aid card if no client is served during the lapse;

(b) an outfitter's failure to ensure that a guide has a first aid card if no client is served during the lapse;

(c) failure to display required information on a water vessel;

(d) incomplete or faulty log book entries;

(e) failure to maintain insurance if no client is served during the lapse;

(f) use of a nonsufficient funds check;

(g) failure to carry current guide or outfitter license while providing services;

(h) failure to carry a current fishing license; and

(i) failure to have a current conservation license.

The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publishes the administrative rules promulgated by state agencies. Administrative rules are developed under a process outlined in the [Montana Administrative Procedure Act](#). That process requires state agencies to provide notice to the public when they wish to adopt, amend or repeal administrative rules. The notices are compiled in the Montana Administrative Register (MAR). Once adopted, administrative rules are published in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) and have the force of law. The following ARM related to the Montana Board of Outfitters is directly from The Montana Secretary of State's Administrative Rules Services publication as of November 1, 2019.

(2) No conduct is a failure to file or complete in a timely manner a minor administrative requirement that is in rule or law if the board determines that the conduct constitutes fraud, dishonesty, or a careless or intentional disregard for the rules, statutes, or standards applicable to the licensee.

(3) If an applicant is denied a license only because of an incomplete application or because the applicant lacks the required days of verified experience, a first aid card, an ALS number, the proper amount of fees, or other similar item or requirement, then the denial is based solely on the applicant's failure to meet minimum licensure qualifications, and not based on competence to practice issues.

(4) No license denial is based solely on the applicant's failure to meet minimum licensure qualifications, and not based on competence to practice issues if the board determines the application involves the applicant's fraud, dishonesty, or a careless or intentional disregard for the rules, statutes, or standards applicable to the applicant.

**History:** [37-1-131](#), [37-47-201](#), MCA; **IMP**, [37-1-131](#), [37-1-311](#), MCA; **NEW**, 2011 MAR p. 2149, Eff. 10/14/11.

---