



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

REFERENCE GUIDE FOR FISHING CONTESTS

Authority: 87-3-121, MCA; 12.7.801 – 12.7.809, ARM; 23-1-106 MCA; Parks Biennial Fee Rule

Thank you for your interest in conducting a fishing contest in Montana. This reference guide provides information on the rules pertaining to fishing contests and the permitting process. Please review this information and submit a completed Fishing Contest Permit Application by the applicable deadline. For additional information please phone (406) 444-2449.

PART I. PERMIT REQUIREMENTS A fishing contest is any event, contest, derby or tournament where an entry fee is charged or where people may win prizes or cash for catching fish in Montana. FWP requires a permit to conduct a fishing contest in Montana. [Exception: Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with all fishing contest regulations.] The terms and conditions of the permit will vary depending on the location of the contest, the number of participants and whether FWP access sites are involved. Please Note: No contests will be permitted for holiday weekends. Contests involving any Montana listed species of special concern are prohibited except for lake/reservoir stocked Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout or Westslope Cutthroat Trout, including upper Missouri Cutthroat Trout. All contests involving wild trout in streams/rivers are prohibited with one exception, contests for Brook Trout that are restricted to anglers 14 years or younger are allowed until July 17, 2017.

PART II. PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS For all contests requiring a permit, the contest organizer must submit a Fishing Contest Permit Application to: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Attn: Fishing Contest Permit Application, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701. Upon receiving a completed application, the fisheries and parks staff will evaluate the proposed event and identify terms and conditions for the permit. FWP will give public notice of all contests and provide an opportunity for public comment.

PART III. FWP SITE SPECIAL USE FEES The contest organizer must pay a permit fee of \$3 per participant if the contest will include 30 or more people and utilize a FWP Fishing Access Site or State Park. The fee is used to off-set the cost of administering the event, including but not limited to site clean-up, latrine pumping, road plowing and maintenance, event monitoring and permit administration. FWP may adjust this fee on a case-by-case basis. Examples that may warrant a fee reduction include contests organized primarily for children under the age of thirteen and contests when proceeds are donated to a nonprofit organization or a charitable cause. The contest organizer is responsible for submitting all owed fees within 30 days after the conclusion of the contest. Organizers will receive a Payment Form with their permit. Failure to comply may result in a \$50 late fee.

IMPORTANT DATES

Applications must be submitted between May 1 & July 1 for winter ice-fishing contests (12/1 – 3/1).

Applications must be submitted between September 1 & November 1 for open-water contests (3/1 – 12/1).

Late Applications WILL NOT be accepted except on a case-by-case basis for benefit fundraising contests.