

MONTANA *fishing* REGULATIONS

2002-2003

Second Printing



Shovelnose Sturgeon

Paddlefish

Bull Trout

Mountain Whitefish

Help Protect Native Fish

Montana's native fish adapted to life here over thousands of years. They've carved out a life in Montana's streams by adapting to wild spring floods, summer's drought, and those long and bitter-cold winters. They're survivors and Nature's keepers.

All 56 of Montana's native fish still exist in Montana waters. Eighteen native fish are classified as Montana "Species of Special Concern" and three others—the threatened bull trout, and the endangered pallid sturgeon and white sturgeon—are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Montana is a big place with lots of different fishing opportunities. Of the 60 fish listed as official Montana-record catches, 30 are Montana natives. FWP is committed to providing a wide variety of fishing opportunities and to helping everyone interested in the Montana fishing experience learn more about our native fish and their habitats.



1420 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59621-0701
406-444-2535

fwp.state.mt.us



Sauger

Westslope Cutthroat

Channel Catfish

Arctic Grayling

MAKE THE CALL 1-800-TIP-MONT — 1-800-847-6668

TURN IN POACHERS — 1-800-TIP-MONT — 1-800-847-6668

Help Protect Native Species If you don't know, let it go!

Key to Identification:

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 may not be legally harvested (see page 11).

BULL TROUT are frequently mistaken for brook trout or lake trout (see pictures below):

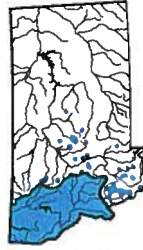
1. Look for white edges on the front of the lower fins. If yes—it may be a bull trout.
2. Check the shape of the tail. Bull trout have only a slightly forked tail compared to the lake trout's deeply forked tail.
3. Is the dorsal (top) fin a clear olive color with no black spots or dark wavy lines? If yes—the fish is a bull trout. Carefully release bull trout (see page 11).

MONTANA LAW REQUIRES:

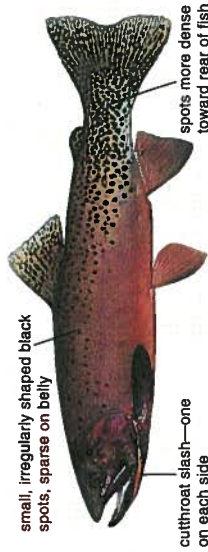
- All bull trout must be released immediately in Montana waters except Swan Lake.
- Cutthroat trout must be released immediately in many Montana waters. Check the district standard and special regulations to know where you can harvest cutthroat trout.

Native Sport Fish

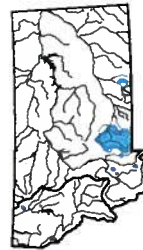
Westslope Cutthroat Trout—Species of Special Concern



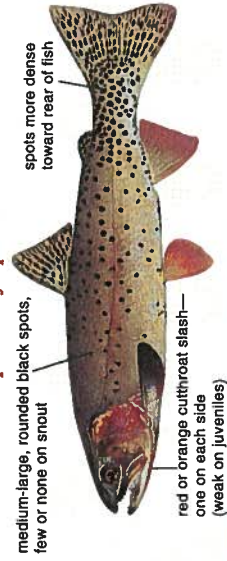
Average Size: 6" - 12"
MT Record: 16lb
Red Eagle Lake, 1955



Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout—Species of Special Concern

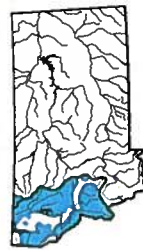


Average Size: 6" - 12"
MT Record: 16lb
Red Eagle Lake, 1955

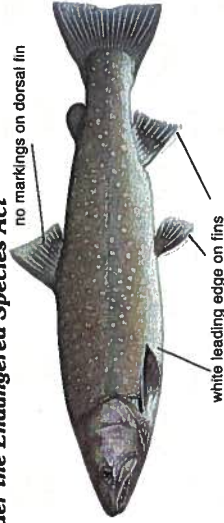


Bull Trout—Species of Special Concern

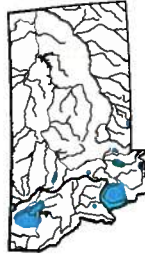
A Threatened Species listed under the Endangered Species Act



Average Size: 16" - 22"
MT Record: 25.63 lbs., 37"
Location unknown, 1916



Artic Grayling—Species of Special Concern



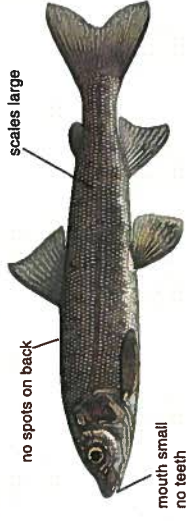
Average Size: 6" - 12"
MT Record: 3.21 lbs., 20.9"
Handkerchief Lake, 1994



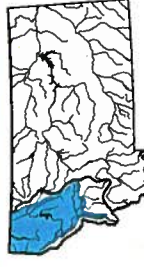
Mountain Whitefish



Average Size: 6" - 12"
MT Record: 5.09 lbs., 21.14"
Kootenai River, 1987



Northern Pikeminnow

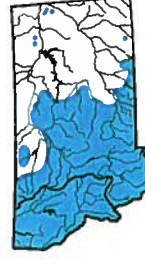


Average Size: 7" - 14"
MT Record: 7.88 lbs., 27.125"
Noxon Rapids Reservoir, 1991

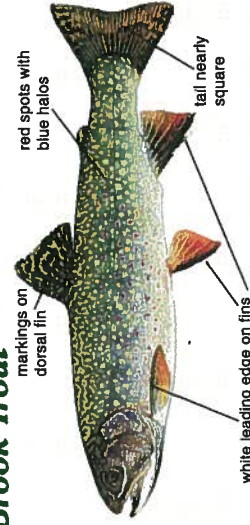


Non-Native Sport Fish

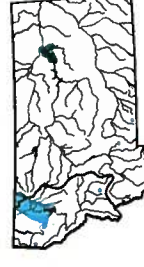
Brook Trout



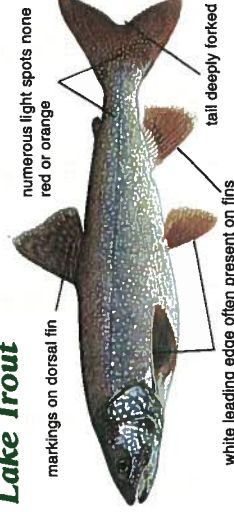
Average Size: 6" - 12"
MT Record: 9.06 lbs.
Lower Two Medicine Lake, 1940



Lake Trout



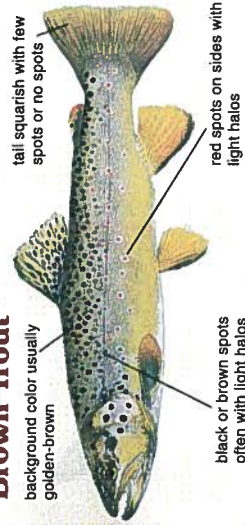
Average Size: 14" - 20"
MT Record: 42 lbs., 44"
Flathead Lake, 1979



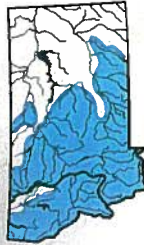


Average Size: 12" - 16"
MT Record: 29 lbs.
Wade Lake, 1966

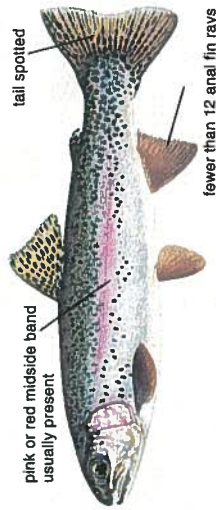
Brown Trout



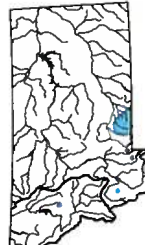
Rainbow Trout



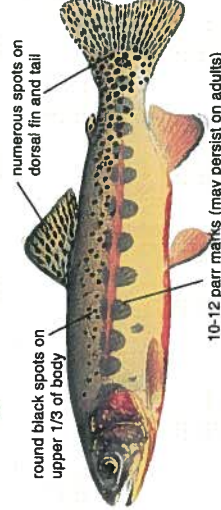
Average Size: 8" - 16"
MT Record: 33.1 lbs., 38.62"
Kootenai River, 1997



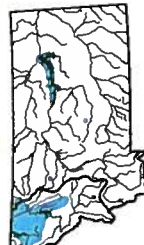
Golden Trout



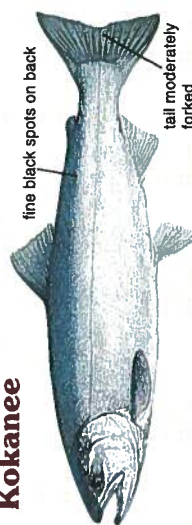
Average Size: 6" - 12"
MT Record: 5.43 lbs., 23.5"
Cave Lake, 2000



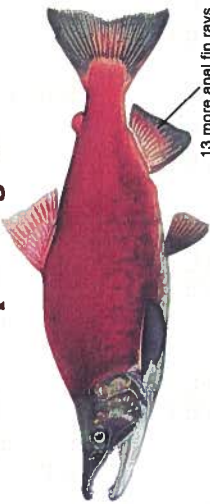
Kokanee



Average Size: 8" - 16"
MT Record: 7.52 lbs., 25.125"
Hauser Lake, 2001



Kokanee—Spawning Male



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

HOW TO USE THESE REGULATIONS

Follow these three easy steps

1. Read the statewide regulations first, they apply to fishing anywhere in Montana and provide basic regulation information – page 8
2. Determine the fishing district you'll be in, read the district's standard regulations and seasons in case they are different from the statewide standard regulations.
WESTERN FISHING DISTRICT – page 15
CENTRAL FISHING DISTRICT – page 41
EASTERN FISHING DISTRICT – page 71
3. Check if the specific water you'll be fishing is listed in the district's special regulations (these are listed alphabetically). If listed there, the special regulations apply for the species or area specified. If not listed, the district standard regulations apply.

EXAMPLE:

To fish for sauger on the Missouri River downstream from Fort Benton:

- **Statewide Regulations:** Pages 8 to 14 explain the daily and possession limits, including handling and transporting your catch and provide basic information concerning fishing hours, bait and fishing methods. To transport sauger and walleye filets, a square-inch shoulder patch of skin with scales must remain attached to each filet.
- **Eastern District Standard Regulations:** Pages 71 to 76 tell you the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District, when you can fish, standard limits, methods of angling allowed and special permits that may be needed.
- **Eastern District Special Regulations:** Page 79 limits you to one sauger per day with a possession limit of two. All sauger and walleye must remain whole until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. All other daily and possession limits are as listed for the eastern district.
- **Boating Regulations:** Pages 85 to 87 provide a quick reference for general boating restrictions.

*New
regulations
for
2002-2003 are
in bold italics.*

OR: Check the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Web Page (www.fwp.state.mt.us). You select the river, stream, lake, reservoir or pond you wish to fish and the special regulations for this water will be provided.

Emergency Fishing 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 Web Page, your local newspaper or call your local FWP office to find out about emergency closures.

REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY FWP COMMISSION

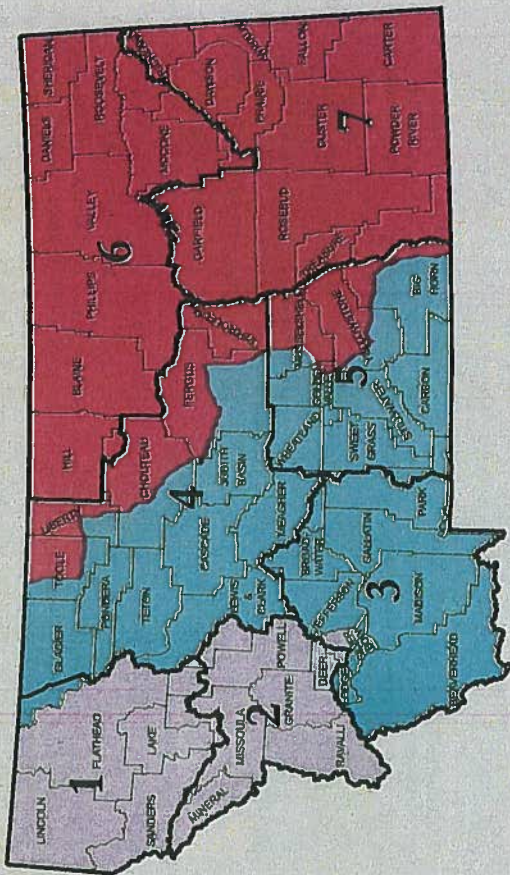
By order of the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission (FWPC), the seasons, limits, and regulations listed here shall govern the 2002-2003 fishing seasons. These regulations were adopted by the FWPC on November 8, 2001.

The FWPC will formally adopt any revisions to these fishing regulations. Any changes adopted prior to December 1, 2002 will appear in the second printing of these regulations and subsequent changes will either be posted at the location affected or will appear in an addendum sheet available at all Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) offices and from FWP license agents. It is the responsibility of each angler to obtain an addendum sheet to make sure they are complying fully with fishing laws.

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FWP ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS WITH FISHING DISTRICTS IN COLOR



Western District=Violet, Central District=Teal, Eastern District=Red

STATE HEADQUARTERS

MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East 6th Avenue
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-2535

TELEPHONE DEVICE FOR THE DEAF

406-444-1200

REGION 1

490 North Meridian Rd
Kallispell, 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 Res Office (HARO)

930 Custer Ave W
Helena, MT 59620
406-495-3260

BUTTE Area Res Office (BARO)

1820 Meadowlark Ln
Butte, MT 59701
406-494-1953

REGION 4

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

LEWISTOWN Area Res Office (LARO)

2358 Airport Rd
Lewistown, MT 59457
406-538-4658

REGION 5

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

REGION 6

Route 1 - 4210
Glasgow, MT 59230
406-228-3700

HAVRE Area Res Office (HVARO)

2165 Hwy 2 East
Havre, MT 59501
406-265-6177

REGION 7

PO Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301
406-232-0900

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

To fish in Montana, most anglers need two licenses: a Conservation License and a Fishing License.

A Conservation License is needed before you can buy any fishing or hunting license that FWP issues. Conservation license applicants are required to provide 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 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.

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 or a valid Montana driver's examiner's identification card. If unsure of your residency status, contact a regional FWP office.

What License(s) Do I Need To Fish In Montana?

Age	Resident	Nonresident
1-11	No license required. Must observe all limits and regulations.	No license required IF accompanied by an adult that holds a valid Montana fishing license. The combined daily and possession limit for the two anglers cannot exceed the legal limit for one licensed angler. To catch his or her own legal limit, the youth must purchase a fishing license. See nonresident 15-62+ years of age.
12-14	Conservation License only - \$4.00	
15-61	Conservation License (\$4.00) + Fishing License (\$5 for 2 consecutive days or \$13.00 - season, \$6.50 - season for anglers 15-17). Resident Sportsman's and Youth (12-17) Combination Sports Licenses also include a season fishing license.	Conservation License (\$7.00) + Montana Fishing License (\$15.00 for 2 consecutive days or \$60.00 - 2 consecutive days or \$60.00 - season). Nonresident Deer A Combo or Nonresident Big Game Combo licenses also include a season fishing license.
62+	Conservation License only - \$4.00	

Special Licenses

Warm Water Game Fish Stamp

The 1999 Montana Legislature passed a bill to require the purchase of a Warm Water Game Fish Stamp to help fund construction of a warm water fish hatchery planned near Fort Peck. The stamp is required for anglers to possess any warm water fish caught in designated waters. An angler who is required to be licensed to fish in Montana and who possesses any warm water game fish (including, but not limited to, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, burbot, walleye, sauger, black crappie, white crappie, channel catfish, yellow perch, northern pike, and tiger muskellunge) on waters listed in each district must purchase a warm water game fish stamp. Resident youth under 15 years of age, residents 62 years of age and older, and resident disabled anglers are exempt.

Resident and Nonresident \$5.00

See the Central and Eastern District Standard Regulations for the waters that require this stamp.

Paddlefish

A resident or nonresident of any age must purchase a tag to fish for paddlefish. Paddlefish anglers must also possess a valid Conservation License and Fishing License if required. Limit of two tags per person.

Resident - \$2.50 each Nonresident - \$7.50 each

Montana Resident With Disability

Resident Person with a Disability Conservation License* - \$4.00

*Must be permanently and substantially disabled. Applications and licenses available only at FWP offices. NOT available at FWP license agents. Not available to nonresidents. Allows the holder to fish.

Veterans Administration Patients

Permits are available for patients of VA Hospitals and residents of State institutions, except the State penitentiary. These permits are available on site at the VA hospital or State institution.

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.

Education Exemptions

Free fishing license exemptions are available to qualified educational events and fishing clinics. For information on these free educational exemptions call 406-444-9736.

State Park Entrance Fees

Most Montana State Parks require an entrance fee, and anglers fishing in park waters or accessing water via a STATE park must pay this fee. For the frequent user a state park passport vehicle sticker, good for the entire fishing season, is available from any FWP office, from some license agents and through the FWP Web Page (www.fwp.state.mt.us). The occasional user pays a daily entrance charge per vehicle at the park's entrance. Primitive Parks do not require Montana residents to pay an entrance fee, although non-residents must pay the user fee.

Recreational Use of State School Trust Lands

A State Lands Recreational Use License, which is available from FWP license agents, is required to conduct most recreational activities (including hunting and fishing) on state school trust lands. Pamphlets giving information regarding the rules, regulations and restrictions governing these recreational activities on state school trust lands are available from FWP offices, license agents and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Trust Lands Division, PO Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620.

HELPFUL INFORMATION for ANGLERS

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 allow them to enter posted lands bordering those streams or to cross private lands to gain access to streams. 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 agent; or
 - when the landowner has failed to post a no-trespassing notice.
- The recreationist must obtain permission from the landowner before entering posted lands. Montana hunters must always obtain permission to access private land. Recreationists are urged to obtain complete rules about this law from any FWP office.

BOAT AND MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

The use of boats and motors may be restricted on some waters. Please refer to the boat and motor restrictions described at the back of this booklet. 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.

ILLEGAL INTRODUCTIONS

It is illegal to import and release any wildlife in Montana without FWP authorization. Introduced fish, aquatic invertebrates (insects, crayfish, etc.) and noxious weeds pose a threat to our valuable fish and aquatic resources because they:

- compete with native or other desired species for food and space;
- interbreed with established species or disrupt spawning; and/or
- carry and spread new diseases and parasites.

Help prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species. For more information contact your local FWP office.

- Don't move live fish, aquatic invertebrates or plants from one body of water to another.
- Don't release any live aquarium fish or bait fish.

Angler Alert - New Zealand Mudsnaills

New Zealand mudsnails have found their way into Montana. To prevent spreading this nuisance species elsewhere in the state, wash your waders, shoes, boots and especially your boats carefully before heading to the water.

- Clean all vegetation and mud off your boat, trailer (check axle, rollers and hitch), motor and equipment before leaving the water.
- Drain and clean your live well, bait containers and engine cooling system after being out on the water.



Prevent the Spread of Noxious Weeds
Noxious weeds are everyone's problem. Weed infestations cause increased runoff to our rivers and streams, and threaten critical habitat for trout and other fish. Please do your part to help prevent the spread of weeds.

- Learn to identify noxious weeds.
- Avoid parking, walking or driving through weed infestations.
- Wash vehicles before and after trips afield.
- Feed weed-free forage to livestock before and during backcountry trips.
- Keep clothing, equipment and pets weed-free.

Help Prevent the Spread of Whirling Disease

Whirling disease is a bacterial parasite now found in many waters in Montana that causes deformities and increased mortality in trout.

- Remove all mud and aquatic plants from your vehicle, boat, anchor, trailer and axes, waders, boots, and fishing gear before departing a fishing access site or boat dock;
- Drain all water from your boat and equipment—including coolers, buckets, and live wells—before departing a fishing access site or boat dock;
- Dry your boat and equipment between river trips.
- Do Not transport fish from one body of water to another;
- Do Not use any parts of trout, salmon, or whitefish for bait;
- Do Not collect or use sculpins for bait.

FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has issued advisories for the consumption of fish from certain Montana waters. Fish from some Montana waters contain levels of chemicals that may be harmful to young children, nursing mothers, and childbearing women or persons frequently consuming fish. Informing advice and additional details about fish consumption is available from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Food and Consumer Safety Section, Helena, Montana, 59620; telephone (406) 444-3986 or on the Internet (www.dphhs.state.mt.us).

In General:

- Keep smaller fish for eating. They 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 fewer 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.

TAGGED FISH

If you catch a tagged fish, please report the following information to any FWP office:

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. if the fish was kept or released; and
7. the name and address of the angler.

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 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 nongame fish may be treated like fish entrails for disposal purposes (puncture the air bladder first so the fish will sink).

STATEWIDE FISHING REGULATIONS

IMPORTANT STATEWIDE REGULATION CHANGES

Know the Law and Avoid Violations

Following are some of the important changes that were made from the 2000-2001 fishing regulations. Please read the 2002-2003 regulations thoroughly to avoid unintentional violations.

- Sauger are defined as any sauger/walleye with multiple small, distinct black spots on the spiny (first) dorsal fin ray membranes.
- The Kids Pond in the Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area near Warm Springs has been added to the list of waters designated for kids fishing only.
- Crayfish may not be harvested commercially for any purpose.
- In areas where it is necessary to distinguish sauger from walleye, all sauger and walleye must remain whole while you are on the water and fishing. When you are off the water and done fishing for the day and where no size limits apply, you may fillet the fish, but a one-square inch shoulder patch of skin must remain attached to each fillet for transport.

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 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 FWP Commission regulations.
- To leave or dump any dead animal, fish, garbage or litter in or on any state 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 at the end of this booklet).

GAME FISH - Defined

Most species of the family Salmonidae (trout, salmon, grayling, char and whitefish); all species of the genus *Stizostedion* (sauger and walleye); all species of the genus *Esox* (northern pike and tiger muskellunge); 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); 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 except Swan Lake.)

- Sauger are defined as any *Stizostedion* (sauger/walleye) with multiple small, distinct black spots on the spiny (first) dorsal fin ray membranes.

FISHING HOURS

Fishing is allowed at all hours during open fishing seasons unless otherwise specified in district special regulations.

SEASONS

All dates given for seasons are inclusive dates. Where dates specify an open season, fishing is closed for the rest of the year. An open season is for all species unless otherwise noted.

Rivers & Streams Lakes & Reservoirs

Western District	Open third Saturday in May through November 30 unless otherwise specified in the district	Open all year.
Central District	Special Regulations.	
Eastern District	Open all year.	

DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

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 illegal 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). Mobile recreational vehicles, travel trailers, tents or *storage/freezer lockers* do not qualify as permanent residences.

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 specifies a different limit. "Legally taken" means fish caught and not immediately released alive. Where catch and release is allowed, fish 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.
- For a species of fish where size limits apply, all fish in possession must be whole with head, skin, fins and tail attached. Gills and entrails may be removed.

Fish may be dressed and filleted for immediate consumption.

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 filets 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, grayling, char and whitefish): the entire skin must be attached to the fillet for identification.
- Non-salmonids: a minimum of one inch by one inch square shoulder patch of skin with scales must remain attached to each fillet for identification.
 - In areas where it is necessary to distinguish between sauger and walleye, fish must be kept whole for identification while on the water. Gills and entrails may be removed. Sauger and walleye may be filleted unless size limits apply, only when you are off the water and done fishing for the day.

TRANSPORTING LIVE FISH

It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken except for:

- 1) transportation of fish for permitted commercial purposes;
- 2) for use as live bait subject to any further restrictions imposed by the FWP Commission; or
- 3) within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District.

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.

FISHING METHODS

Hook and Line Limits

- A hook is a single, double, or treble point attached to a single shank. A lure with multiple hooks is still deemed a single hook.
- Only a single line with up to 2 hooks, with or without a pole, may be used for fishing unless otherwise specified in district regulations (see ice fishing regulations). The pole or line must be attended and in the angler's immediate control.
- Two lines with up to 2 hooks per line may be used on lakes and reservoirs in the Central and Eastern Fishing districts.
- Where multiple lines are permitted, the number of allowable lines includes the combined total of attended lines, unattended lines (setlines), spears, or other units of fishing gear.
- These provisions also apply to commercial whitefish fishing as provided under district regulations.

Unattended Lines (Setlines)

- Unattended lines (setlines) may be used on waters specified by district regulations. Unless otherwise specified, an unattended line (setline) must be checked by the owner at least once every 24 hours.
- The owner's name and address must be attached to each unattended line (setline).
- Unattended lines (setlines) shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices.

Bow and Arrow

A fishing license is required to take fish with a bow and arrow as specified under individual fishing district regulations. See Western, Central, and Eastern District regulations.

Snagging

Snagging is a form of angling in which hooks are cast, trolled, or lowered into the water and moved to snag them in the bodies of fish. Snagging fish is unlawful, except for paddlefish, chinook salmon, kokanee salmon and nongame fish as provided under district regulations. Where snagging is allowed, any number of hooks may be used. If you accidentally snag a game fish not legal for snagging, you must release it immediately.

Spearing

Spears or gigs may be used for taking fish as specified under individual fishing district regulations. See Western, Central, and Eastern District regulations. Rubber or spring-propelled spears may only be used when swimming or submerged in the water and may only be used for designated species in designated waters.

Nets and Traps

- Landing nets may be used for landing hooked fish.
- In the Central and Eastern Fishing districts, in waters where use of live fish is allowed for bait, nongame species (except sculpin, carp, goldfish, all species in the sunfish family, bullheads (catfish family), yellow perch and rainbow smelt) may be taken in the following manner:
 - with seines no larger than 12 feet by 4 feet; or
 - with minnow traps (the dimensions shall not exceed 24 x 12 x 12 inches); or
 - with cast nets (maximum of 6-foot radius) and dip nets (no larger than 3' X 3').
- Hoop nets may be used only in the Eastern Fishing District (see Eastern District).

Bait

- No portion of sculpins or salmonids (trout, salmon, grayling, char and whitefish) may be used as bait except eggs. All nongame fish or parts thereof may be used as bait if the heads and entrails are removed, or if they have been preserved or frozen, except in water limited to artificial lures only.
- Live fish may not be used for bait, except as provided under Bait as listed in the Central and Eastern district regulations. Possession of live bait is prohibited in waters closed to using live fish for bait. Only nongame species may be taken for bait and only in waters where live fish may be used as bait.
- Carp, goldfish, all species in the sunfish family, bullheads (catfish family), yellow perch, and rainbow smelt may not be used for live bait at any location in the state.
- The taking and/or use of sculpins (genus Cottus), or salmonids (trout, salmon, grayling, char, and whitefish) as fishing bait is prohibited in all waters in the state because they may transmit whirling disease.
- Live fish may not be imported into or exported from the State of Montana except by a permit issued by FWP. Permits may be obtained by contacting 406-452-6181 or by mailing a request to 4801 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405.
- Leeches from approved sources, worms, aquatic insects and maggots may be used as bait except in waters limited to artificial lures only.

Artificial Lures

- Artificial lures include any lure (including flies) that imitates natural bait. Artificial lures do not include: fish eggs, any natural or artificial food, any products that are derivatives of natural foods, nor any chemically treated or processed natural bait.

Ice Fishing

Number of Rods/Lines

- Two rods and/or lines may be used to fish through ice on all lakes, reservoirs, or ponds open to fishing in the Western and Central districts. Six rods and/or lines may be used to fish through ice on lakes, reservoirs, and ponds open to fishing in the Eastern District. See a particular fishing district's special regulations for exceptions to this restriction.

Size of Hole

- The maximum size hole that may be used for ice fishing is 144 square inches (12 inches by 12 inches) in waters not open to spearing.
- There is no size limit for a hole used for fishing with a spear.

Shelters

- Use: It is illegal to use any ice-fishing shelter not conforming to these rules.
- Shelter definition: Any hut or enclosure constructed of any material, except ice or snow, for the purpose of ice fishing.
- Shelter identification: Identification must be painted on (or permanently affixed to) all unattended shelters in legible, 2-inch letters plainly visible at a distance of 100 feet. For fabric shelters or tents, identification must be placed on a sign attached to the outside of the shelter. Identification must include the owner's name, address, and/or phone number.
 - All unattended or attended shelters on the following bodies of waters must be marked as above:

Bearpaw Lake	Georgetown Lake
Beaver Creek Reservoir	Hauser Lake
Brown's Lake	Lake Francis
Clark Canyon Reservoir	Lake Helena
Deadman's Basin	
- 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.

• Shelter removal:

Daily removal of shelters is required on the following waters:
 Browns Lake (near Ovando)
 Georgetown Lake
 Deadmans Basin
 Helena Valley Regulating
 Echo Lake (near Anaconda)
 Reservoir

Shelters may not be placed on the ice prior to sunrise and must be removed prior to sunset each day on the following waters:

Hauser Reservoir
 Lake Helena

- **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; within seven days after the close of ice-fishing season; or within five days from receipt of notification from FWP to remove the shelter.

Catch-and-Release Fishing

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

Use of proper handling techniques will improve the chance of survival for any fish released. A fish that is released may still die from deep hooking injury, internal organ damage from being squeezed, bacterial infections resulting from loss of slime in the handling process, effects of physical stress from being played too long, and heat shock, or lack of oxygen from being held in warm or poorly oxygenated water.

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 use of barbless hooks makes releasing fish easier.
- If the fish is deeply hooked, cut the line. Do not pull the hook out. Most fish survive with hooks left in them. The use of circle hooks reduces deep hooking.
- 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 eye. 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.

- Boat live well pumps should be run continuously to maintain adequate oxygen levels at all times. A fish's metabolic rate (and stress level) doubles with every 10 degrees Fahrenheit increase in water temperature. Any fish intended for release should be released quickly, as soon as it gains its equilibrium.

IRRIGATION CANALS AND DITCHES

Man-made irrigation canals and ditches are open year round unless stated otherwise in district regulations. The same daily and possession limits apply to them as for rivers and streams.

BEAVER PONDS

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

RESERVOIRS

Reservoirs are artificially-impounded water behind a man-made dam extending upstream to the mouth of its inlet stream(s). Under normal operations, reservoir pool elevation, surface acreage, and the mouths of the inlet stream(s) are expected to vary throughout the year. The inlet stream(s) are often managed under seasons, limits and special regulations that differ from the reservoir regulations. Stream regulations apply to water upstream from the mouth on the reservoir. Streams are defined by a sloped streambed that results in a defined current flow between two discernable stream-banks.

CHILDREN'S FISHING WATERS

Waters posted as Children's Fishing Waters are open to fishing during the entire year to persons 14 years of age and younger. Children's Fishing Waters are *Kid's Pond in the Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area near Warm Springs, Elks Club Pond near Lewistown, the Fairground Pond in Helena, Gheny Pond near Twin Bridges, Indian Road Pond near Townsend and Vigilante Pond near Virginia City.*

Home Run Pond - Glasgow adding Fort Peak Pond - Dillon Blacktail Pond - Dillon

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. Please check for fishing regulations specific to the Flathead Reservation by calling the FWP regional office in Kalispell at 406-752-5501, or the Tribes at 406-675-2700.

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.

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.

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.

AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES

Crayfish

A valid fishing license is required to harvest crayfish for personal use. Crayfish may be taken in traps no larger than 24x12x12 inches.

- *Crayfish may not be commercially harvested for use as bait. Commercial harvest of crayfish for any purpose is prohibited.*

Mussels

In accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM), Section 12.2.501, it is unlawful to take or possess freshwater mussels or their shells for sale or commercial distribution.

Collecting Aquatic Invertebrates Commercially

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.

PRIVATE FISH PONDS

License Requirements

A person who owns or lawfully controls a private fish 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. No fishing license is required to fish on licensed, privately stocked fish ponds. Applicable fishing license requirements apply to private ponds that are stocked by FWP.

COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSES

Commercial Whitefish Fishing

A permit is required to sell whitefish. Contact a FWP regional office for a permit and a list of waters open to the commercial harvest of whitefish.

Commercial Bait Fish Seining and Sale of Bait Fish

Nongame bait fish (except carp, goldfish and rainbow smelt) may be harvested commercially in accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM), Section 12.7.201.-12.7.206. Carp, goldfish, sculpin, all species in the sunfish family, bullheads, (catfish family), yellow perch and rainbow smelt may not be used for live bait in Montana. Any person taking nongame fish for sale or commercial distribution must have a commercial license for seining bait-fish. Live bait fish or bait may not be imported into or exported from Montana for commercial or other purposes unless authorized by the department. Contact regional FWP offices for a permit and list of waters open to commercial seining.

Commercial bait regulations are not valid on Indian reservation waters. For information, contact local tribal officials.

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES

An off-highway vehicle must have a current Off-Highway decal displayed in a conspicuous place to be used for off-road recreation on public lands in Montana (including frozen lakes and reservoirs). Decals are available from county treasurers. Owners of unregistered and unlicensed OHVs from other states must purchase a temporary use permit through FWP regional offices in person or by mail through the Helena FWP office. Nonresidents who operate licensed machines for more than 30 days in Montana must also obtain the temporary use permit.

FISHING CONTESTS

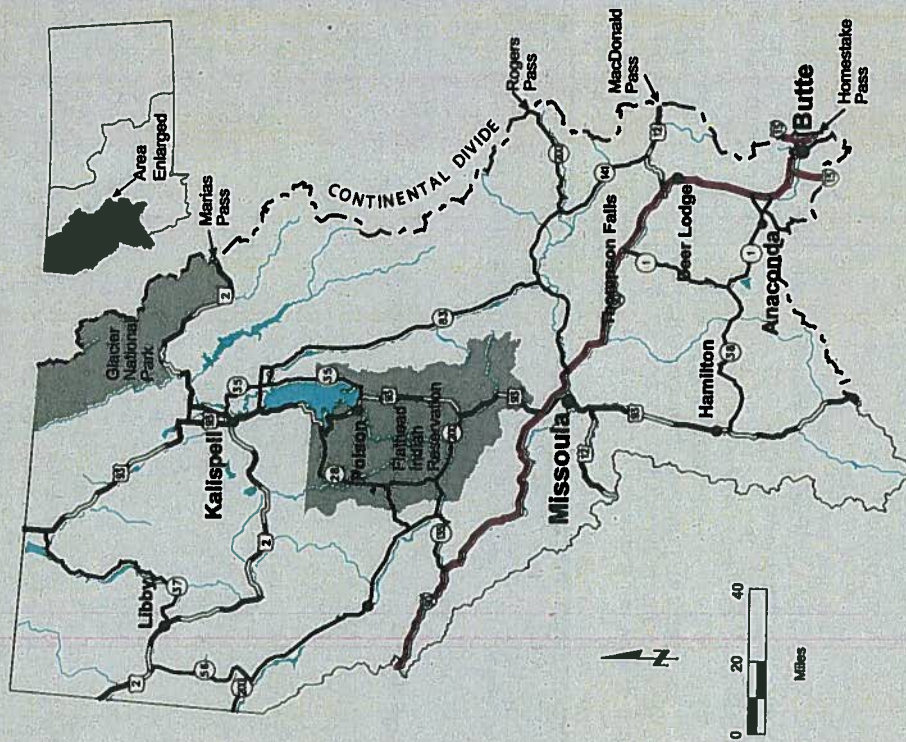
A permit from FWP is required for most fishing contests. Contact your local FWP office for information and an application.

For More "Need to Know Information" ...

Review the rest of this booklet to learn about:

- Identifying game fish, see inside of front and back covers.
- Boating restrictions and regulations, page 85.
- Your license dollars at work, page 88.
- Basic fishing line knots, page 93.
- How to get additional information, page 94.
- Definitions, page 94.

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.

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

Kalispell 406-752-5501
Missoula 406-542-5500
TDD (Telephone Device for the Deaf) 406-444-1200

IMPORTANT WESTERN DISTRICT REGULATION CHANGES

Know the Law and Avoid Violations

- Stream anglers may only keep 3 cutthroat trout which must be less than 10 inches as part of their daily limit.
- Following are some specific waters with important changes that were made from the 2000-2001 fishing regulations. Please read the 2002-2003 regulations thoroughly to avoid unintentional violations. **New regulations are in bold italics.**

Anaconda Settling Pond System	Lake Inez
Belmont Creek	Libby Creek
Bitterroot River	Little Blackfoot River
Blackfoot River	Middle Fork Flathead River
Blanchard Lake	North Fork Flathead River
Cedar Creek	Petty Creek
Clark Fork River	Placid Creek (tributary to Placid Lake)
Echo Lake	Placid Lake
Fish Creek (Mineral County)	Rattlesnake Creek and tributaries
Fisher River	Rock Creek (near Clinton)
Flathead Lake	Salmon Lake and tributaries
Flathead River and Sloughs	Seeley Lake
Flint Creek	South Fork Flathead River
Frenchtown Pond	Drainage
Gold Creek	St. Regis River
Horseshoe Lake (near Ferndale)	Swan River
Kootenai River	
Lake Alva	

BOAT AND MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

The use of boats and motors may be restricted on some of the waters within this fishing district. Please refer to the boating regulations at the back of this book. A complete, updated, copy of the Montana Boating Laws can be obtained from 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 LONG. A wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be available for each occupant of any boat.

STANDARD FISHING SEASONS

Rivers and Streams

Open third Saturday in May through November 30. See Western Fishing District Special Regulations for exceptions.

Lakes and Reservoirs

Open entire year. See Western Fishing District Special Regulations for exceptions.

STANDARD FISHING REGULATIONS

A valid fishing license is required for all types of fishing.

Flathead Indian 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.

Transporting Live Fish

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 commercial purposes.

Bow and Arrow

All waters are closed to bow and arrow taking of fish, except as noted under special regulations. Crossbows are illegal.

Snagging

All waters are closed to snagging of game and nongame fish, except as noted under special regulations.

Spearing

All waters are closed to spearing of game and nongame fish, except as noted under special regulations.

Bait (Live)

- Live fish may not be imported into or exported from the State of Montana except by permit issued by FWP.
- It is illegal to use or capture live bait fish (trout, salmon, grayling, char and whitefish) in any waters of the Western Fishing District.
- It is illegal to use sculpins or any portion of salmonids except eggs as bait.

Ice Fishing

All lakes and reservoirs in the Western Fishing District open to fishing are open for fishing through the ice with up to 2 attended lines and 2 hooks per line.

STANDARD DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

- includes all tables below. Refer to Statewide Regulations for additional regulations concerning limits.

- Each angler may take all of the limits listed in each chart, unless noted in the Special Regulations. 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 only the limit of fish allowed for the water on which they are currently fishing.
- Irrigation Canals and Ditches - the same daily and possession limits apply as for rivers and streams.

Western District Standard Daily and Possession Limits Rivers & Streams

Species	Daily and possession limits
Combined Trout Limit (includes the following in any combination): Brown trout Rainbow trout Golden trout Grayling Cutoffthroat trout	5 daily and in possession, no more than 3 may be cutoffthroat trout . Only one fish (brown, golden, rainbow trout or grayling) over 14 inches and no cutoffthroat trout over 10 inches .
Bull trout	All waters of the Western District, except Swan Lake are closed to the taking and/or intentional fishing for bull trout.

Wilderness Limits

All waters (rivers, streams and lakes) in the South Fork Flathead River Drainage from Hungry Horse Dam to the wilderness boundary and all waters within the boundaries of the Bob Marshall, Great Bear and Scapegoat Wilderness areas, unless otherwise specified under the Special Regulations.
Combined Trout Limit: Rainbow trout Cutoffthroat trout Grayling
Daily and possession limits 3 daily and in possession Rivers and streams: no fish over 12 inches

Rivers, Lakes, Reservoirs & Streams

Species	Daily and possession limits
Bass	5
Brook trout	20
Burbot (ling)	5
Lake trout	10
Northern pike	15
Salmon	20 daily and 40 in possession
Whitefish	100
White sturgeon	0
	it is unlawful to take or possess white sturgeon

Lakes & Reservoirs

Species	Daily and possession limits
Combined Trout Limit (includes the following in any combination): Brown trout Golden trout Rainbow trout Cutoffthroat trout Grayling	5 daily and 10 in possession

WESTERN FISHING DISTRICT SPECIAL REGULATIONS

Check the following list of waters for the body of water you intend to fish. If the body of water is not found in the listing of Special Regulations, all of the standard seasons, daily/possession limits, and statewide regulations apply. Standard regulations apply for species not listed in the special regulations. **For waters listed under the Special Regulations, the possession limit is the same as the daily limit, unless a different possession limit is specified.**

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
ABBOT LAKE		Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily, only 1 over 12 inches.
ALICE CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutoffthroat trout.
ALVORD LAKE		Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily, only 1 over 12 inches.
ANACONDA SETTLING POND SYSTEM		See Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area.
ASHLEY CREEK	(near Kalispell)	Open entire year downstream from Smith Lake.
ASHLEY LAKE		Salmon: 35 daily and 70 in possession. Closed entire year.
BASIN CREEK	(tributary to Silver Bow Creek, Silverbow County)	Closed entire year from lower Butte water supply reservoir dam to its source, including all reservoirs and tributaries.
BASIN CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(Yaak Drainage)	Open July 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 10 inches.
BEAR CREEK	(tributary to Middle Fork Flathead River)	Angling is closed within 100-yard radius of the stream mouth June 1 through August 30.
BEAVER CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutoffthroat trout.
BEAVER LAKE	(near Whitefish)	Snagging: Open for salmon from September 15 through November 30.
BELMONT CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutoffthroat trout. Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of mouth.

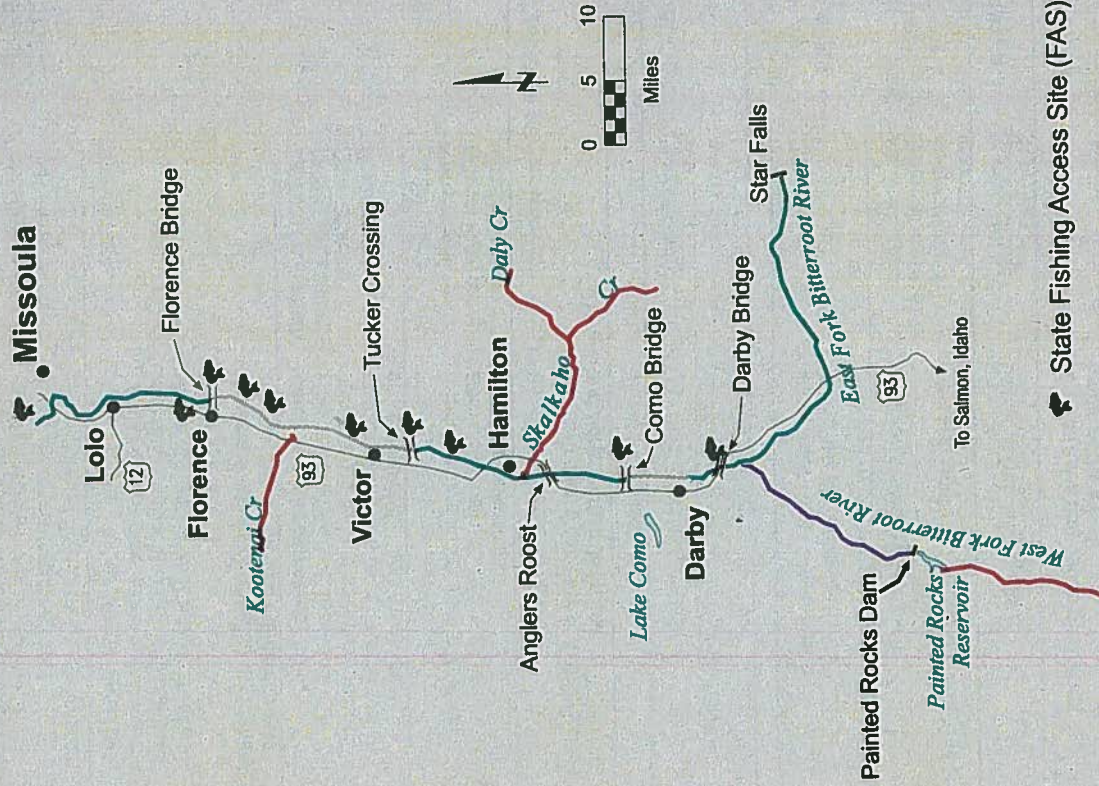
Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutoffthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

BIG CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to North Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year. Angling is closed within 100-yard radius of the stream mouth or as posted June 1 through August 30.
BITTERROOT LAKE	aka Little Bitterroot Lake	Combined trout limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 22 inches.
BITTERROOT RIVER See Map	Bitterroot River to the mouth, West Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Painted Rocks Dam, and East Fork Bitterroot River downstream from Star Falls	Extended season for northern pike and whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with aquatic insects, maggots and/or artificial lures only.
	West Fork Bitterroot River above Painted Rocks Reservoir	Catch-and release for cutthroat trout.
	Painted Rocks Dam to mouth of West Fork Bitterroot River	Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
	one mile downstream of Darby Bridge to Star Falls on the East Fork	Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout, 1 over 14 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
	one mile downstream from Darby to Como Bridge	Catch-and-release for all trout. Artificial lures only.
	Como Bridge to Tucker Crossing	Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout, 1 over 14 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
	Tucker Crossing to Florence Bridge	Catch-and-release for all trout. Artificial lures only.
	Florence Bridge to mouth of Bitterroot River	Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout, over 14 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
BITTERROOT VALLEY	between U.S. 93 and the East Side Highway between Hamilton and Buckhouse Bridge (ditches, canals, and sloughs)	Extended season for northern pike and whitefish and catch-and-release for trout December 1 to third Saturday in May with aquatic insects, maggots and/or artificial lures only.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Bitterroot River Map



State Fishing Access Site (FAS)

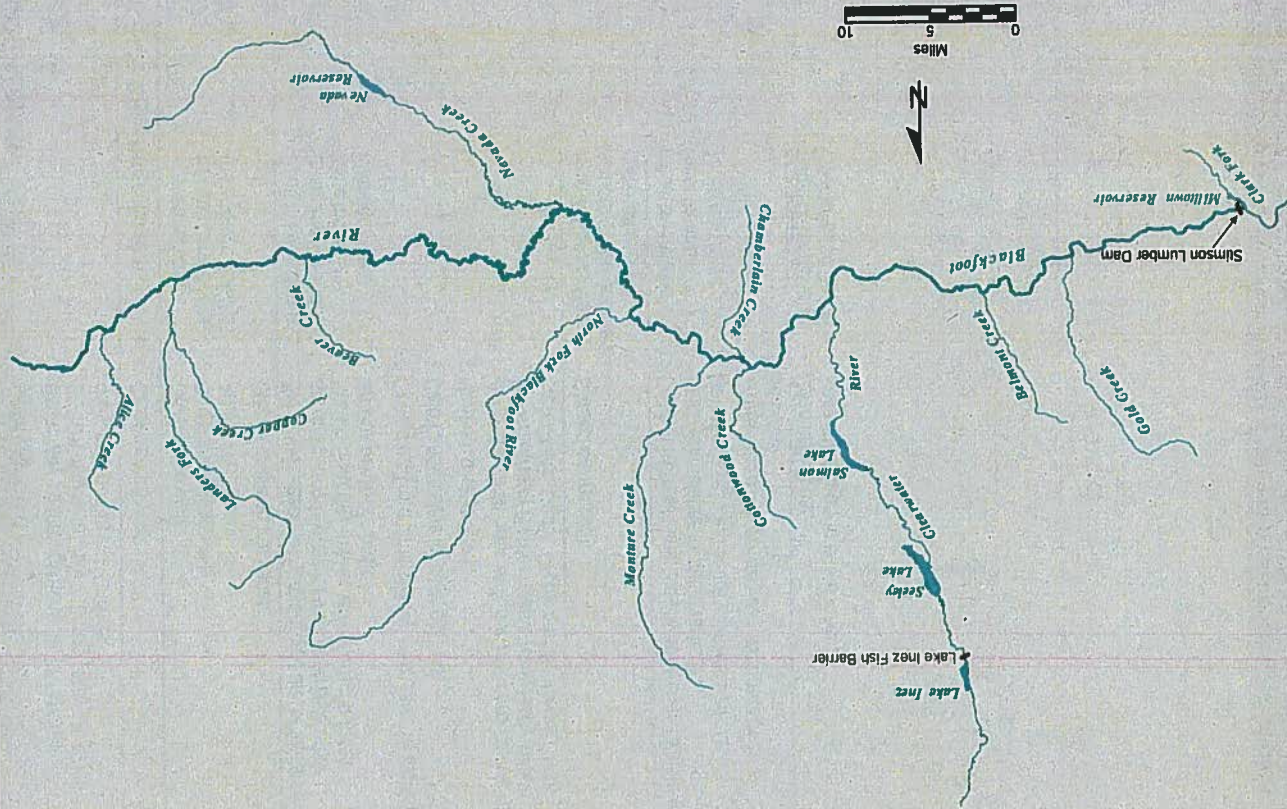
Note: The Bitterroot River flows from south to north; downstream is toward the north.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
BLACKFOOT RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES See Map	entire river and tributaries except the Clearwater River	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. (see Clearwater River Drainage for exception)
	mainstem only	Extended season for northern pike and whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only . Tributaries are closed to fishing.
		Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouths of Gold and Belmont creeks.
	Landers Fork mouth to Stimson Lumber Dam (Milltown Reservoir)	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.)
	Stimson Lumber Dam downstream to Milltown Reservoir (Clark Fork River)	Extended season for northern pike from December 1 to third Saturday in May, with artificial lures only Northern pike: no limit
	BLANCHARD LAKE (near Whitefish)	Catch-and-release for bass Northern pike: 5 daily, 4 less than 28 inches and 1 greater than 36 inches.
	BLUE SKY CREEK	Closed entire year.
	BOOT/JACK LAKE (near Whitefish)	Open April 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 1 daily, 22-inch minimum. Artificial lures only.
CALLAHAN CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(Kootenai River Drainage)	Closed to fishing within 100-yard radius of the stream mouth June 1 through August 30. Open July 1 through November 30.
	tributaries, including North Callahan and South Callahan creeks	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 10 inches. Open July 1 through November 30.
		Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 10 inches.
CARPENTER LAKE	aka Tetrauit Lake (near Eureka)	Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily.
CEDAR CREEK		Artificial lures only within a 100-yard radius of the mouth.
CHAMBERLAIN CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Blackfoot River Map



Waterbody Description Special Regulations

CHURCH SLOUGH

Open year round.

Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily, only one over 12 inches.

CLARENCE CREEK (near Eureka)

Closed entire year.

CLARK FORK RIVER

See Map

Open entire year.

Catch-and-release only.

Artificial lures only.

Closed to fishing from boats.

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

Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 15 inches.

Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.

Northern pike: no limit.

Artificial lures only within a 100-yard radius of the mouths of Rattlesnake Creek, Petty Creek, Fish Creek, Cedar Creek and St. Regis River.

Noxon Rapids Dam structure and adjacent water as posted

Closed entire year.

mouth of Flathead River to mouth of Thompson River

Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 15 inches.

Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.

Northern pike: open entire year with bait or lures.

Whitefish: open entire year with maggots or lures.

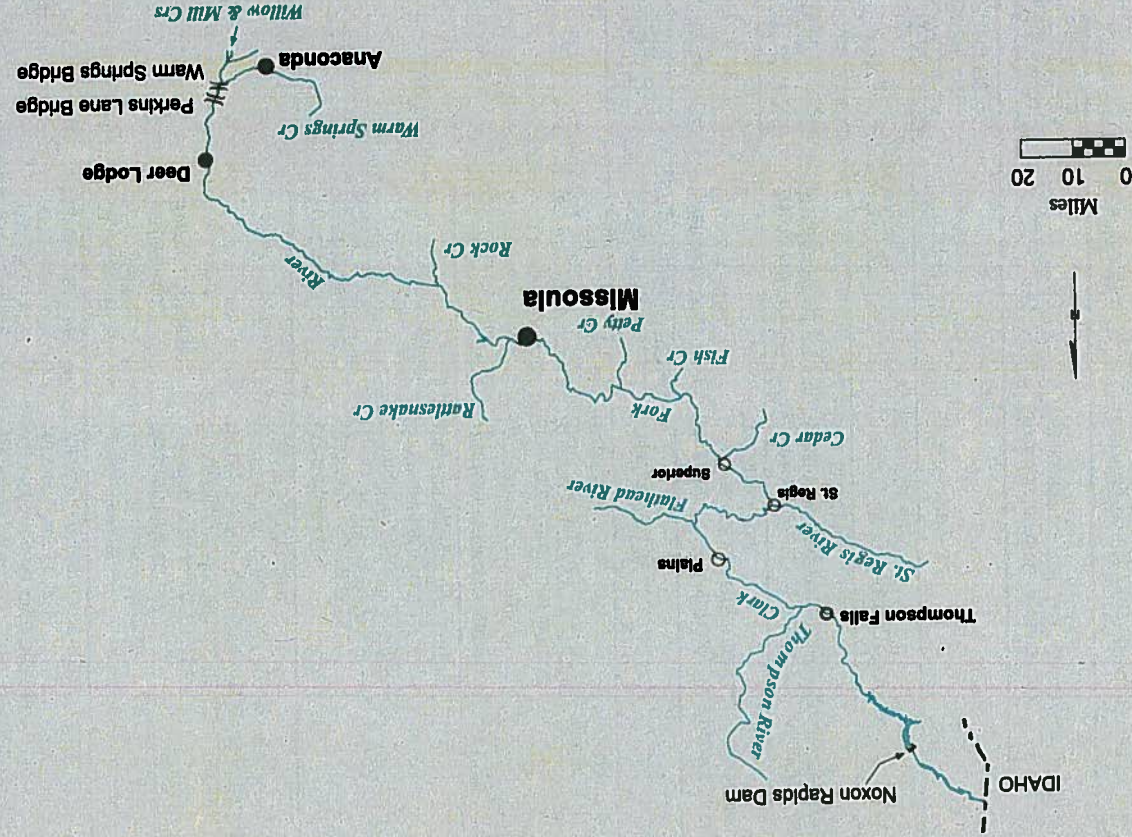
mouth of Thompson River to Idaho Border

Open entire year.

Lake limits apply to entire reach.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Clark Fork River Map



Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
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CLEARWATER RIVER DRAINAGE	Clearwater River upstream from Lake Inez Fish Barrier and tributaries of Clearwater River	Catch-and-release for bass. Combined trout limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Northern Pike: no limit. Spearing: open for northern pike.
	Clearwater River from Lake Inez fish barrier to Salmon Lake outlet	Open entire year. Catch-and-release for bass. Northern Pike: no limit. Spearing: open for northern pike. Snagging: open for salmon from Lake Inez Fish Barrier to Seeley Lake from September 15 through November 30. Closed to snagging from Seeley Lake to Salmon Lake.
	Clearwater River from Salmon Lake outlet to mouth	Open entire year. Catch-and-release for bass. Combined trout limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Northern Pike: no limit. Spearing: open for northern pike.
	Lakes	Catch-and-release for bass. Northern Pike: no limit. Spearing: open for northern pike. Salmon: see individual waters for special regulations.
COAL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to North Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year.
COPPER CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
COTTONWOOD CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
CRYSTAL LAKE	(Thompson Chain of Lakes)	Snagging: Open for salmon September 15 through November 30. Closed entire year.
DONALDSON CREEK AND DRAINAGE	(tributary to Lake Mary Ronan)	Open July 1 through November 30. Combined trout limit: 3 daily, none over 10 inches.
EAST FORK YAAK RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES		
ECHO LAKE	(near Anaconda)	Open third Saturday in May through March 31. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, includes brook trout.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
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ECHO LAKE	(near Big Fork)	Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily, only 1 over 12 inches. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only, <i>daily limit of 2</i> .
ELK CREEK	(tributary to Swan River)	Closed entire year.
EMILY SPRINGS	(tributary to Georgetown Lake)	Closed entire year.
FENNON SLOUGH		Open entire year. Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily and in possession, only 1 over 12 inches.
FISH CREEK	mainstem downstream of confluence of the South and West forks (Mineral County)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout in any combination, none over 15 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. <i>Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.</i>
FISHER RIVER		Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May <i>with artificial lures and/or maggots only</i> .
FISHTRAP CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	excluding Fish Trap Lake (Thompson River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily none over 10 inches. Artificial lures only.
FLATHEAD LAKE		Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Lake trout: 16 daily, 15 under 30 inches and 1 over 36 inches. Up to 2 attended lines with no more than 2 hooks per line.
FLATHEAD RIVER	confluence of the North and Middle forks to Flathead Lake	Extended season for whitefish and lake trout, and catch-and-release for other game fish open December 1 through the third Saturday in May <i>with artificial lures and/or maggots only</i> . Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Lake trout: 15 daily.
	Flathead Indian Reservation boundary to mouth	Open entire year. Northern pike: 5 daily, must be over 24 inches.
FLATHEAD RIVER SLOUGHS	Brenneman, Egan, McWenegar, Rose Creek and Half Moon Church and Fennon	Open entire year. <i>Standard lake and reservoir limits apply.</i> See individual listings.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
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FLINT CREEK		Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
FOY LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily. Snagging: open for salmon from September 15 through November 30. Closed entire year.
FRED BURR LAKE	(Philipsburg water supply, Granite County)	Closed entire year.
FREELAND CREEK AND DRAINAGE	(tributary to Lake Mary Ronan)	Closed entire year.
FRENCHTOWN POND		Bass: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
GEORGETOWN LAKE	entire lake except for the South and East shorelines South and East shorelines	Open third Saturday in May through March 31. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, includes brook trout. Salmon: no daily or possession limit. Closed to fishing from the shore or within 100 yards of the shore April 1 through June 30. The closed area extends from a point 200 yards west of Denton's Point Marina (along the shore, including all of Stuart Mill Bay) to a point 200 yards north from the mouth of North Fork Flint Creek.
GOAT CREEK	tributaries to Georgetown Lake (North Fork, Flint, Stuart, Mill and Hardtla creeks) (tributary to Swan River)	Open July 1 through November 30. Closed entire year.
GOLD CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.
GRANITE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to Middle Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year.
GRAVE CREEK	(near Eureka)	Snagging: open for salmon from Highway 93 bridge downstream to mouth September 15 through November 30.
HARDTLA CREEK	(tributary to Georgetown Lake)	Open July 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, includes brook trout.
HERRIG CREEK	(tributary to Little Bitterroot Lake)	Closed entire year.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
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HORSESHOE LAKE	(near Ferndale)	Catch-and-release for bass.
HORSESHOE LAKE	(Thompson Chain of Lakes)	Western one-third of lake closed to fishing February 1 through May 15 as posted. Spearing: open for nongame fish.
HUNGRY HORSE RESERVOIR AND TRIBUTARIES		Wilderness Limits apply. See Western District Standard Wilderness Limits.
JOB CORPS PONDS	(Deer Lodge County) see Warm Springs WMA Map	Open August 15 through September 30. Catch-and-release only. Artificial lures only.
KEELER CREEK		Open third Saturday in May through July 15.
KOOTENAI RIVER	Libby Dam and adjacent waters Libby Dam to Highway 37 Bridge (near Fisher River)	Closed to fishing as posted. Closed within 100-yard radius of Callahan, O'Brien and Quartz creek stream mouths June 1 through August 30. Open June 1 through March 31. Closed April 1 through May 31. Combined Trout Limit: 4 daily, 3 under 13 inches and 1 over 24 inches. All trout between 13 and 24 inches must be released.
	Highway 37 Bridge (near Fisher River) to Idaho Border	Closed within 100-yard radius of the Callahan, O'Brien and Quartz creek stream mouths June 1 through August 30. Open entire year. Combined Trout Limit: 4 daily, 3 under 13 inches and 1 over 18 inches. All trout between 13 and 18 inches must be released.
	Kootenai Falls to 0.8 miles downstream of Swinging Bridge	Snagging: open for salmon from September 15 through November 30.
LAKE ALVA		Catch and release for bass. Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike.
LAKE BLAINE		Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily.
LAKE CREEK	(near Troy)	Snagging: open for salmon from September 15 through November 30.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
LAKE INEZ		Catch and release for bass. Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike.
LAKE KOOCANUSA		January 15 through February 28: closed to burbot (ling) fishing. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 22 inches.
LAKE MARY RONAN		Closed to fishing from midnight to 3 a.m. Open third Saturday in May through February 28. Open March 1 to third Saturday in May: yellow perch only. Bass: third Saturday in May through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through February 28 - 5 fish daily. Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession.
LANDERS FORK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
LIBBY CREEK		Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout open from December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
LION CREEK	(tributary to Swan River)	Closed entire year.
LION LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily.
LITTLE BITTERROOT LAKE	aka Bitterroot Lake	Combined trout limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 22 inches.
LITTLE BLACKFOOT RIVER		Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
LITTLE LOON LAKE	(Thompson Chain of Lakes)	Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily.
LODGEPOLE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to Middle Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year.
LONG CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to Middle Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year.
LOON LAKE	(Thompson Chain of Lakes)	Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
LOST LAKE	(Eureka)	Open April 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 1 daily, over 22 inches. Artificial lures only.
LOWER STILLWATER LAKE		Lake trout: 15 daily. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only.
LOWER THOMPSON LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 22 inches. Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily. Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only.
MCGREGOR LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 22 inches. (Does not include lake trout, see standard regulations for lake trout.)
MEDICINE LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES	(near Philipsburg)	Open July 1 through April 31.
	tributaries to Medicine Lake	Open July 1 through November 30.
MIDDLE FORK FLATHEAD RIVER DRAINAGE	all streams within the wilderness	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily and in possession, no fish over 12 inches. Includes rainbow trout, cutthroat trout and grayling.
	non-wilderness portion	Angling is closed within 100-yard radius of the Bear Creek stream mouth June 1 through August 30. Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Lake trout: 15 daily. Montana/Glacier National Park boundary is the ordinary high water mark on the park side of the river.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

MIDDLE THOMPSON LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 22 inches. Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily. Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only.
MILL CREEK	downstream from the Stewart Street Bridge in Opportunity	Catch-and-release only. Artificial lures only.
MILLTOWN RESERVOIR	Milltown Dam to Stimson Lumber weir (Blackfoot arm) and Milltown Dam to Milwaukee Bridge abutments (Clark Fork arm)	Northern pike: no limit, extended season December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures only. Combined trout limit: 3 daily, none over 15 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
MONTURE CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
MORRISON CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to Middle Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year.
NEVADA CREEK	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
NORTH FORK BLACKFOOT RIVER	(tributary to Blackfoot River)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no rainbow trout over 12 inches, any size brown trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
NORTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER		Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only. June 1 through August 30: angling is closed within 100-yard radius of the Big and Coal creek stream mouths. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
NORTH FORK FLINT CREEK	(tributary to Georgetown Lake)	Lake trout: 15 daily. Montana/Glacier National Park boundary is the middle of the river. Open July 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, includes brook trout.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

NOXON RAPIDS RESERVOIR		Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily.
O'BRIEN CREEK	(Kootenai River Drainage)	June 1 through August 30: closed to angling within 100-yard radius of the stream mouth.
PETERSON LAKE		Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22-inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily, only 1 over 12 inches.
PETTY CREEK		Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 15 inches. Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.
PLACID CREEK	(tributary to Placid Lake)	Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession. Snagging: open for salmon October 15 through December 31, 20 salmon daily and 40 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike.
PLACID LAKE		Catch-and-release for bass. Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession. Snagging: open for salmon October 15 through December 31, 20 salmon daily and 40 in possession.
QUARTZ CREEK	(Kootenai River Drainage)	Spearing: open for northern pike. June 1 through August 30: closed to angling within 100-yard radius of the stream mouth. Open third Saturday in May through July 15.
RATTLESNAKE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	entire river downstream from the mouth of Beeskov Creek to 100 yards downstream of Mountain Water Company Dam.	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 15 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Artificial lures only, including within 100-yard radius of mouth. Closed to fishing from the mouth of Beeskov Creek to 100 yards downstream of Mountain Water Company Dam.

Knew Your Fish - Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
ROCK CREEK	from its mouth to the confluence of the East and West forks (near Clinton)	Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with <i>artificial lures and/or maggots only</i> . Combined Trout Limit: 3 brown trout, none over 12 inches. Catch-and-release for rainbow trout and cutthroat trout. Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may use bait. Closed to fishing from boats July 1 through November 30.
ROGERS LAKE	spawning inlet	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only one may be a grayling. Closed to angling entire year.
SALMON LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES		Catch-and-release for bass. Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike.
SEELEY LAKE		Catch-and-release for bass. Salmon: 5 daily and 10 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike. Snagging: open for salmon October 15 through December 31, 20 salmon daily and 40 in possession.
SKALKAHO CREEK (tributary to INCLUDING DALY Bitterroot River) CREEK)		Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
SOUTH FORK CALLAHAN CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(Yaak River Drainage)	Open July 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 10 inches.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
SOUTH FORK FLATHEAD RIVER DRAINAGE	all waters upstream from Hungry Horse Dam, including Hungry Horse Reservoir and tributaries. Meadow Creek Bridge to Spotted Bear foot bridge and tributaries. Hungry Horse Dam downstream to Devil's Elbow and tributaries.	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, no fish over 12 inches in rivers and streams. Includes rainbow trout, cutthroat trout and grayling. Catch-and-release only. Artificial lures only. Closed entire year.
	Devil's Elbow downstream to mouth and tributaries	Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with <i>artificial lures and/or maggots only</i> . Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Lake trout: 15 daily.
SQUEEZER CREEK (tributary to Swan River)		Closed entire year.
ST REGIS RIVER		Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout in any combination, none over 15 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. <i>Artificial lures only within 100-yard radius of the mouth.</i>
STILLWATER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES		Open entire year from mouth of Sunday Creek to lower Stillwater Lake. Lake whitefish: 50 daily. Lake trout: 15 daily.
STUART MILL CREEK	(tributary to Georgetown Lake)	Open July 1 through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, includes brook trout.
SWAN LAKE		Bull trout: 1 daily and in possession. Upon catching a bull trout, an angler must either kill it at once and count it as the limit or release it immediately. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.
SWAN RIVER		Closed to angling within a 100-yard radius of Woodward Creek June 1 through August 30.
	Piper Creek Bridge downstream to Swan Lake	Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout and rainbow trout. Artificial lures only.
	Swan Lake downstream to the Highway 35 Bridge	Open entire year. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

TETRAULT LAKE	aka Carpenter Lake (near Eureka)	Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily.
THOMPSON RIVER	entire river	Combined Trout Limit: 3 less than 10 inches or 2 less than 10 inches and 1 over 18 inches. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout. Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may use bait.
TOBACCO RIVER	upstream from mouth of Little Thompson River	Closed to fishing December 1 to third Saturday in May.
TRAIL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	confluence with the Clark Fork River to the mouth of Little Thompson River	Extended season for whitefish and catch-and- release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
TRIANGLE POND		Snagging: open for salmon September 15 through November 30. Closed entire year downstream from mouth of Thoma Creek.
UPPER STILLWATER LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily. Lake trout: 15 daily. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only.
UPPER THOMPSON LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only one over 22 inches. Bass: May 15 through June 30 - 1 fish daily, 22- inch minimum. July 1 through May 14 - 5 fish daily. Salmon: 10 daily and 20 in possession. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only.
UPSATA LAKE		Catch-and-release for bass. Northern pike: no limit. Spearing: open for northern pike.

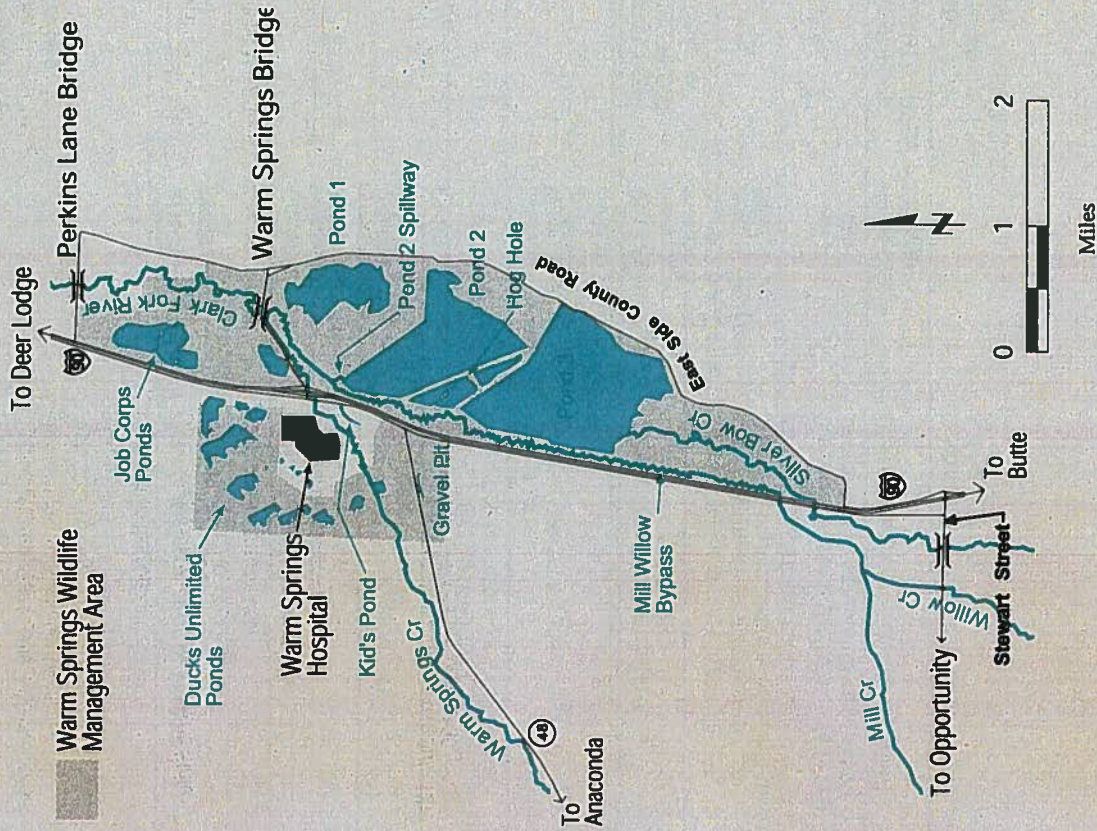
Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout and grayling.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

WARM SPRINGS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA	(also see Job Corps Ponds)	All ponds and canals open August 15 through September 30 including Job Corps Ponds and Ducks Unlimited Ponds. Catch-and-release only. See Kid's Pond and Gravel Pit Pond for exceptions. Artificial lures only. See Kid's Pond and Gravel Pit Pond for exceptions. Motorized floating craft prohibited.
See Map		
Kids Pond at WSWMA Headquarters		Open to fishing by anglers 14 years of age and younger only. Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily. Bait may be used.
Gravel Pit Pond adjacent to Highway 48		Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily. Bait may be used.
Hog Hole		Open May 25 through September 30. No trespass on islands.
Pond 3		Open May 25 through September 30 to fishing from non-motorized floating craft and from north and west dikes except where posted closed.
Mill-Willow Bypass, Warms Springs Creek and Clark Fork River within the WMA		Open entire year. Closed to fishing from boats.
WEST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER	above Painted Rocks Reservoir	Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
	Painted Rocks Dam to mouth of West Fork Bitterroot River	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. Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow or brown trout, any size. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
WEST FORK QUARTZ CREEK	(Kootenai River Drainage)	Open third Saturday in May through July 15.
WEST FORK THOMPSON RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES		Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily under 10 inches. Artificial lures only.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

Warm Springs Wildlife Management Area Map



WESTERN

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

WHALE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to North Fork Flathead River)	Closed entire year downstream from Whale Creek Falls.
WHITEFISH LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 2 cutthroat or 2 rainbow trout (or 1 each) only 1 over 14 inches. Lake trout: 15 daily under 30 inches and 1 over 36 inches. Lake whitefish: 50 daily.
WHITEFISH RIVER		Open entire year from Whitefish Lake to State Highway 40 Bridge.
WIGWAM RIVER	(Kootenai River Drainage)	Catch-and-release for trout. Artificial lures only.
WILLOW CREEK	from Stewart Street Bridge to the Wildlife Management Area (near Warm Springs)	Catch-and-release only. Artificial lures only.
WOODWARD CREEK		Closed to angling within a 100-yard radius of the stream mouth June 1 through August 30.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify bull trout and cutthroat trout.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- ▶ If asked, you must allow a FWP game warden or officer to inspect your catch, license and fishing gear.
- ▶ Check the daily and possession limits in the area you are fishing.
- ▶ It is illegal to preserve fish in the field.
- ▶ Check the regulations for field dressing and transporting your fish. Page 9.
- ▶ Opening and closing dates are inclusive.
- ▶ Regulations are subject to change. It is your responsibility to know the regulations for the area you are fishing.

CATCH TIPS

If you plan to keep your legal catch, kill it immediately so that it keeps its freshness and flavor. Clean the fish as soon as possible by removing the entrails and gills, and keep it in a cool place out of the sun. An insulated cooler filled with ice is an inexpensive, convenient way to keep the fish cool and moist for the trip home.

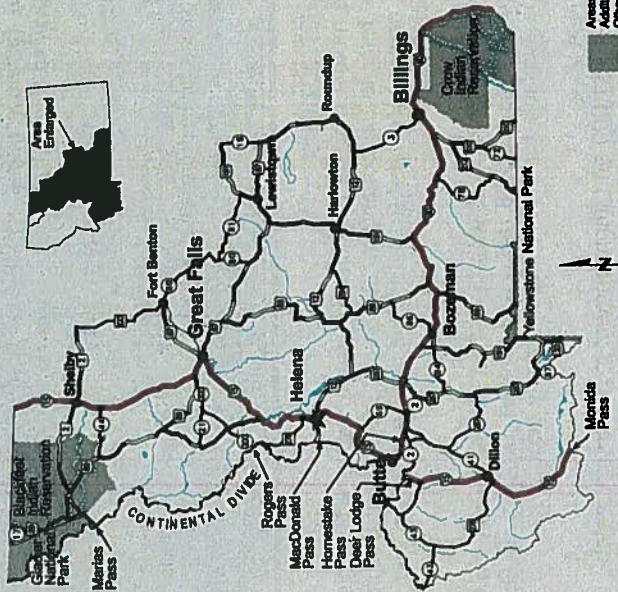
PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW

Most Fish and Game violations are misdemeanors that are punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000 and imprisonment in the county detention center for not more 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 grayling, white sturgeon, and paddlefish restitution is \$300 per fish.

A person who intentionally imports, introduces, or transplants fish in violation of state law is guilty of an offense punishable by a fine of not more \$5,000 and imprisonment for up to one year. The person is also liable for the amount necessary to eliminate or mitigate the effects of the violation. Upon conviction or forfeiture of bond or bail the person shall forfeit any current hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and the privilege to hunt, fish and trap in this state for not less than 24 months. If the effects of the violation cannot be eliminated or mitigated, a person may be required to forfeit the privilege to hunt, fish or trap in Montana for the rest of their life.

CENTRAL FISHING 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. Highway 191, then northeasterly along U.S. Highway 191 to its junction with State Route 19, then south on State Route 19 to its junction with U.S. Highway 87 at Grassrange, then south on U.S. Highway 87 to its junction with U.S. Highway 12 at Roundup, then west on U.S. Highway 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 8:00-5:00:

Billings	406-247-2940
Bozeman	406-994-4042
Butte Area Office	406-494-1953
Great Falls	406-454-5840
Helena Area Office	406-444-4720
Lewistown Area Office	406-538-4658
TDD	406-444-1200

(Telephone device for the deaf)

IMPORTANT CENTRAL DISTRICT REGULATION CHANGES

Know the Law and Avoid Violations

Following are some of the waters with important changes that were made from the 2000-2001 fishing regulations. Please read the 2002-2003 regulations thoroughly to avoid unintentional violations. **New regulations are in bold italics.**

Beaverhead River	Missouri River
Big Horn Lake and Afterbay Reservoir	Rat Lake
Canyon Ferry Reservoir	Red Rock River
Charles Fork Yellowstone River and tributaries	Shields River
Darlington Ditch	Smith River
Habgen Reservoir tributaries	Warm Springs Creek
Jefferson River	Yellowstone River

BOAT AND MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

The use of boats and motors may be restricted on some waters within this fishing district. Please refer to the boating regulations at the back of this book. A complete, updated, copy of Montana Boating Laws can be obtained from any FWP office or 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. A wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD must be available for each occupant of any boat.

STANDARD FISHING SEASONS

Rivers and Streams

Open third Saturday in May through November 30. See Central Fishing District Special Regulations for exceptions.

Lakes and Reservoirs

Open entire year. See Central Fishing District Special Regulations for exceptions.

STANDARD FISHING REGULATIONS

A valid fishing license is required for all types of fishing.

Transporting Live Fish

It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken **except** for:

- 1) transportation of fish for authorized commercial purposes;
- 2) use as live bait subject to any further restrictions imposed by the FWP Commission; or
- 3) within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District. It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish on roadways that form the boundary between the Eastern and Central fishing districts.

Warm Water Game Fish Stamp

The 1999 Montana Legislature passed a bill to require the purchase of a warm water game fish stamp. See page 5 for details regarding this new stamp. The warm water game fish stamp is required to possess warm water fish on the following waters in the Central Fishing District:

Big Casino Creek Reservoir, Fergus County
Bighorn Lake, Carbon & Big Horn County
Bynum Reservoir, Teton County
Coorley Reservoir, Carbon County
Dailey Lake, Park County
Deadmans Basin Reservoir, Wheatland County
Kolar Reservoir #1, Judith Basin County
Kolar Reservoir #2, Judith Basin County
Kolar Reservoir #8, Judith Basin County
Lake Frances, Pondera County
Lake Josephine, Yellowstone County
Lower Carter Pond, Fergus County
Morony Dam Lake, Cascade County
Schoonover Reservoir #1, Chouteau County
Silvan Pond, Chouteau County
Tunis Reservoir, Chouteau County
Wadsworth Reservoir, Cascade County
Warm Springs Creek, Fergus County

Hook and Line Limits

- On lakes and reservoirs, two attended lines with up to 2 hooks per line may be used.
- On streams and rivers a single line with up to 2 hooks may be used.
- Anglers may use unattended lines (setlines) only in those waters noted in the Special Regulations for this district. Unattended lines (setlines) must be clearly identified with the owner's complete name and address and shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices. Use of unattended lines through the ice requires that you are in the vicinity and within visual contact of the line or rod.

Ice Fishing

All lakes and reservoirs in the Central Fishing District open to fishing are open for fishing through the ice with up to 2 attended lines and 2 hooks per line. More than 2 lines are permitted on some waters as specified under the district's Special Regulations.

Bow and Arrow

All waters open to angling are open to taking nongame fish with bow and arrow. Crossbows are illegal.

Snagging

All waters open to angling are open to snagging of nongame fish. (See Statewide Regulations.)

Spearing

In all waters open to fishing, nongame fish may be taken with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged.

Bait

- Live fish may not be imported into or exported from the State of Montana except by permit issued by FWP.
- No portion of sculpins or salmonids (trout, salmon, whitefish, cisco) may be used as bait except eggs. All nongame fish or parts thereof may be used as bait if the heads and entrails are removed, or if they have been preserved or frozen, except in water limited to artificial lures only.
- Live nongame fish (except sculpins, carp, goldfish, all species in the sunfish family, bullheads (catfish family), yellow perch, and rainbow smelt) may be taken or used for 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 — downstream from the bridge at Bridger
 - Manias River and tributaries downstream from I-15
 - Missouri River downstream from Morony Dam
 - Muddy Creek Drainage near Vaughn, including all streams and drainage canals
- Streams and ditches in the Yellowstone River Drainage downstream from the mouth of the Clarks Fork (except the section of the Bighorn River listed above)
- Teton River and tributaries downstream from I-15
- Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell), Toole and Liberty counties

STANDARD DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

- includes all tables below. Refer to Statewide Regulations for additional regulations concerning limits.
 - Each angler may take all of the limits listed in each chart unless noted otherwise in the Special Regulations. 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 only the limit of fish allowed for the water on which they are currently fishing.
 - Irrigation Canals and Ditches — the same daily and possession limits apply as for rivers and streams.

Central District Standard Daily and Possession Limits

Lakes & Reservoirs

Species	Daily and possession limits
Combined Trout Limit (includes the following in any combination):	5 daily and 10 in possession
Brown trout	
Golden trout	
Rainbow trout	
Cutthroat trout	
Grayling	

Rivers, Lakes, Reservoirs & Streams

Species	Daily and possession limits
Bass	5
Brook trout	20
Burbot (ling)	10
Catfish	20
Cisco (lake herring) (see Special Regulations for Tiber Reservoir and Marias River)	no limit
Lake trout	3
Northern pike	10
Pallid sturgeon	0
Salmon	10
Sauger/Walleye	5 daily and 10 in possession
Shovelnose sturgeon	5, none over 40 inches
Tiger muskellunge	1, 30-inch minimum length
Whitefish	100

it is unlawful to take or possess a pallid sturgeon.

Rivers & Streams

Species	Daily and possession limits
Combined Trout Limit (includes the following in any combination) Brown trout Golden trout Rainbow trout	5 daily and in possession, only one fish over 18 inches
Grayling	0 all grayling taken in rivers and streams must be released.
Cutthroat trout	0 all cutthroat trout taken in rivers and streams must be released unless otherwise noted in special regulations (see below for additional information)

Missouri River Drainage

- Cutthroat trout must be released in all rivers and streams except where otherwise noted in the special regulations.

Yellowstone River Drainage

- Mainstem Yellowstone River
- Yellowstone National Park Boundary to the Highway 78 Bridge at Columbus
- Cutthroat trout must be released.

- Highway 78 Bridge at Columbus to the I-90 Bridge at Billings
- Cutthroat trout may be harvested as part of the Combined Trout Limit.

Tributaries to Yellowstone River

- Yellowstone National Park boundary downstream to Springdale (approximately 18 miles east of Livingston)
- Cutthroat trout must be released in all rivers and streams except where otherwise noted.
- Springdale downstream to the I-90 Bridge at Billings
- Cutthroat trout may be harvested in all rivers and streams as part of the Combined Trout Limit.

CENTRAL FISHING DISTRICT SPECIAL REGULATIONS

Check the following list of waters for the body of water you intend to fish. If the body of water is not found in the listing of Special Regulations, all of the standard seasons, daily/possession limits, and statewide regulations apply. Standard regulations apply for species not listed in the special regulations. **For waters listed under the Special Regulations, the possession limit is the same as the daily limit, unless a different possession limit is specified.**

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
ABSAROKA BEARTOOTH WILDERNESS LAKES		Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily.
ALDER GULCH CREEK AND DREDGE PONDS	Virginia City to mouth	Open entire year.
ANTELOPE BUTTE LAKE	aka Osile Reservoir (Teton County)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
ARMSTRONG SPRING CREEK		Open entire year. Catch-and-release only. Artificial lures only.
AROD LAKES	aka Eyraud Lakes	6 unattended lines (setlines) with 2 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice only. Spearing: open for northern pike and nongame fish through the ice only.
AXOLOTL LAKES		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, catch-and-release for grayling.
BAD CANYON CREEK		Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
BADGER CREEK DRAINAGE	downstream from confluence of North Badger and South Badger creeks within National Forest (near Heart Butte)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches, includes cutthroat trout.
BEAN LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, only 1 over 18 inches.

*Closed
Reopened April 1*

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

BEAR LAKE	(Sun River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
BEAVER CREEK	mouth to US Highway 12 (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)	Open June 15 through September 30.
BEAVER CREEK	(tributary to Missouri River below Hauser Dam)	Open June 15 through November 30.
BEAVERHEAD RIVER	Clark Canyon Dam to Anderson Lane	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, only 1 over 18 inches and only 1 rainbow trout.
See Map	Clark Canyon Dam to Pipe Organ Bridge	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
	High Bridge FAS to Henneberry FAS	Closed to float fishing by nonresidents and float outfitting on each Saturday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.
	Henneberry FAS to Pipe Organ Bridge	Closed to float fishing by nonresidents and float outfitting on each Sunday from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.
	downstream from Pipe Organ Bridge	Open entire year.
	Highway 91 South Bridge (Tash Bridge) to Selway Bridge	Closed to float outfitting from the third Saturday in May through Labor Day.
	Anderson Lane to mouth	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, 1 over 18 inches, only 1 may be a rainbow trout.

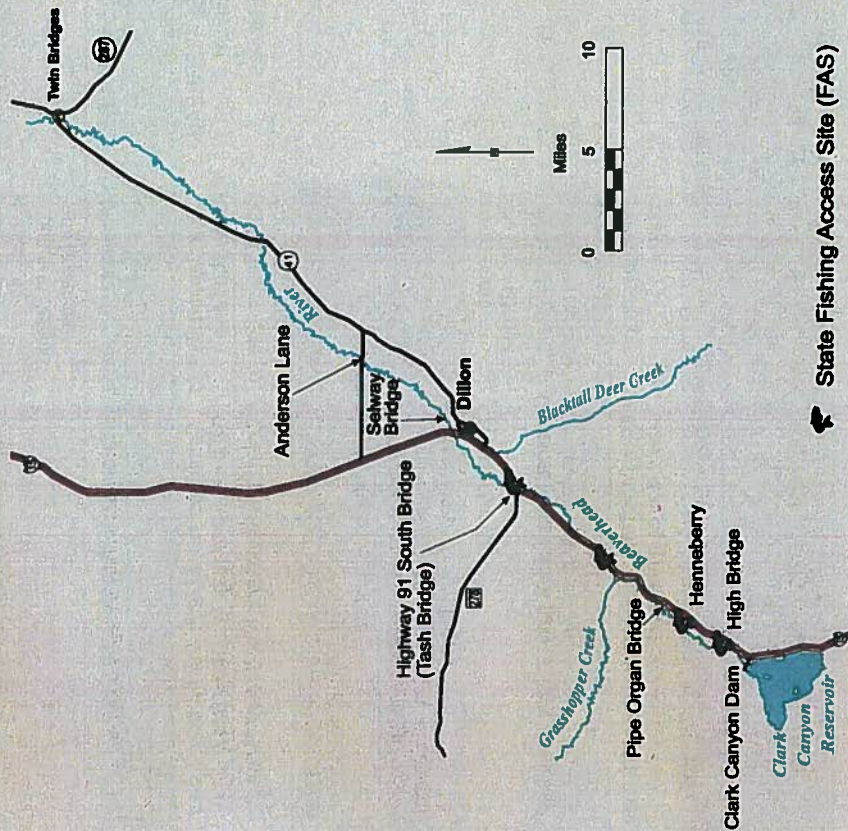
Note: The shaded sections of river are regulated under a biennial rule in effect through May 1, 2003. The FWP Commission may readopt these regulations or make changes to them. A Beaverhead/Big Hole River addendum will be available at all FWP Offices, License Providers and on the FWP website. It is the responsibility of each angler to obtain an addendum to make sure they are complying fully with fishing laws after May 1, 2003.

BELT CREEK

Open entire year downstream from bridge at Riceville.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Beaverhead River Map



State Fishing Access Site (FAS)

Waterbody

Description

Special Regulations

BIG HOLE RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES
See Map

entire river and tributaries

Catch-and-release for grayling and cutthroat trout. 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 Fishtrap FAS

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

headwaters to Dickie Bridge

Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout from December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.

Fishtrap FAS to Jerry Creek FAS

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

Dickie Bridge to Divide Dam (Butte Water Diversion)

Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout from December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only. Artificial lures only.

Jerry Creek 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 Dam to Melrose Bridges (Salmon Fly FAS)

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

Combined Trout Limit: 4 daily, 3 under 13 inches and 1 over 22 inches. All trout between 13 and 22 inches must be released.

Artificial lures only.

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

Brook trout: open entire year.

tributaries upstream from Divide Dam

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

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

Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout from December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.

Melrose Bridges (Salmon Fly FAS) to mouth

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

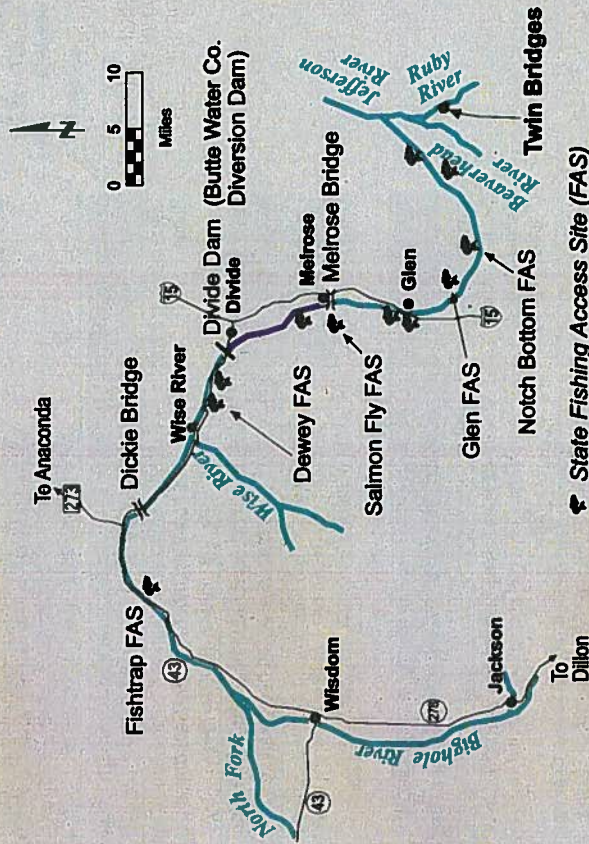
Glen FAS (bridges) to Notch Bottom FAS

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

Note: The shaded sections of river are regulated under a biennial rule in effect through May 1, 2003. The FWP Commission may readopt these regulations or make changes to them. A Beaverhead/Big Hole River addendum will be available at all FWP Offices, License Providers and on the FWP website. It is the responsibility of each angler to obtain an addendum to make sure they are complying fully with fishing laws after May 1, 2003.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Big Hole River Map



CENTRAL

CENTRAL

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

BIG SHEEP CREEK (Beaverhead River AND TRIBUTARIES Drainage)

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

BIG SPRING CREEK (near Lewistown)

Open entire year.

BIGHORN LAKE AND AFTERBAY RESERVOIR

Bass: 6 daily.

Catfish: 6 daily.

Sauger/Walleye: 6 in any combination.

Anglers obtaining live bait fish in Montana may only use them in the Montana portion of the lake. Up to 6 attended lines, with 1 hook per line allowed through the ice only.

BIGHORN RIVER
See Map

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

Open entire year.
Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 18 inches and only 1 rainbow trout.
May use live nongame bait fish (as identified in standard district regulations).

cable 600 feet below Afterbay Dam to Bighorn FAS

Open entire year.
Combined Trout Limit: 5 brown trout, only 1 over 18 inches, catch-and-release for rainbow trout.
Artificial lures only.

BLACK SANDS SPRING CREEK (tributary to South Fork Madison River)

Open June 15 through November 30.

BLACKTAIL DEER CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES

(Beaverhead River Drainage)

Combined Trout Limit: includes cutthroat trout except it is catch-and-release for cutthroat trout in Cottonwood, Jake and Rock creeks, and the two Rock Creek reservoirs on Robb-Ledford WMA.

BLUEWATER CREEK

Open entire year.

BOULDER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES
(entire river and tributaries (near Big Timber))

Open entire year.
Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.

Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.

Natural Bridge to Two-Mile Bridge (first crossing, 5 road miles upstream from Natural Bridge)

Artificial lures only.

BOULDER RIVER

mouth to bridge (4 straight-line miles upstream in T2N, R3W, S24) (near Cardwell)

Open third Saturday in May through September 30.

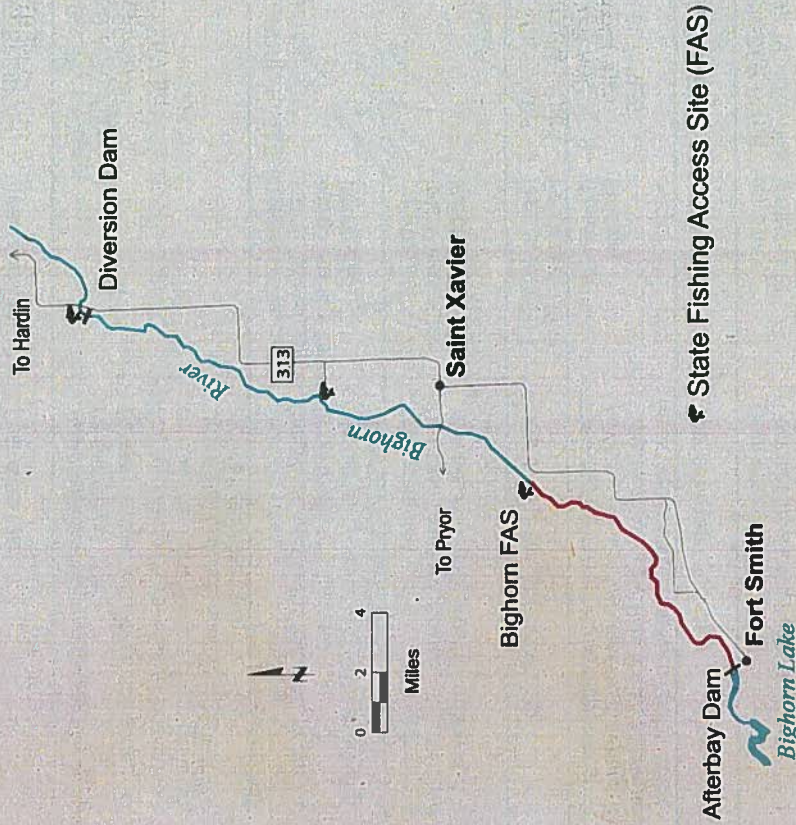
BRIMSTONE CREEK

(tributary to Hidden Lake, Madison County)

Open third Saturday in June through November 30.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Bighorn River Map



CENTRAL

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

BUFFALO CREEK	(fork of Slough Creek)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, includes up to 3 cutthroat trout (none over 12 inches), only 1 rainbow trout over 18 inches.
BYNUM RESERVOIR		Open entire year for up to 2 unattended lines (setlines) with no more than 2 hooks per line, except 6 lines with 6 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice. 6 unattended lines (setlines) with 2 hooks per line may be used through the ice. Walleye: 20 daily and 40 in possession, only 1 over 28 inches . Yellow perch: 50 daily and no possession limit. Closed (as posted) March 1 through June 14. Closed as posted.
CANYON FERRY RESERVOIR		Magpie Bay Canyon Ferry Dam Structure springs entering the reservoir at its south end, near Red Rock River Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Closed as posted.
CLARK CANYON RESERVOIR		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Closed as posted.
CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES	entire river and tributaries mainstem downstream from the bridge at Bndgr	Open entire year. Fishing is allowed the entire year with up to 2 attended lines and up to 2 hooks per line.
CLIFF LAKE	(Madison River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
CONFEDERATE GULCH	mouth to Highway 284 (tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)	Open June 15 through September 30.
CROOKED CREEK	(Carbon County)	Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
CULVER POND	aka Widow's Pool (Beaverhead County)	Open July 15 through September 30. Brook trout: 5 daily, 4 under 12 inches and 1 over 18 inches. All brook trout between 12 and 18 inches must be released. Artificial lures only.
CUT BANK CREEK		Open entire year downstream of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation boundary in T33N, R6W, S2.
DAILEY LAKE	(Yellowstone River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

CENTRAL

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

DARLINGTON DITCH	aka Darlington Spring Creek on Cobblestone FAS (near Three Forks)	Closed to fishing from a point 500 yards above the northern boundary of Cobblestone FAS, as posted, downstream approximately 1.5 miles, as posted. Open entire year except the section closed to fishing at Cobblestone FAS Catch-and-release for trout. Artificial lures only. Open entire year. entire ditch outside of Cobblestone FAS boundaries
DEADMAN'S BASIN RESERVOIR		Combined Trout Limit: 10 daily. Snagging: open for salmon through the ice only, 35 daily and 70 in possession.
DEARBORN RIVER	upstream from Highway 434 Bridge in T18N R6W, Section 29	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, only 1 over 12 inches, includes cutthroat trout.
DEEP CREEK	mouth to North Fork of Deep Creek (upper Missouri River tributary near Townsend)	Open June 15 through September 30.
DICKENS LAKE	(Sun River Wildlife Management Area)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
DIVERSION LAKE	(Sun River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Catch-and-release for grayling.
DRY CREEK	mouth to Flynn Lane (upper Missouri River tributary near Townsend)	Open June 15 through September 30.
EAST BOULDER RIVER		Open entire year. Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.
EAST FORK BOULDER RIVER		Open entire year. Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.
EAST FORK HYALITE CREEK		Open third Saturday in July through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: standard limits, includes cutthroat trout.
EAST GALLATIN RIVER		Open entire year downstream from the mouth of Bozeman (Sourdough) Creek.
EAST ROSEBUD CREEK		Open entire year Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

ELK LAKE	(Beaverhead County)	Catch-and-release for lake trout. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
ELKS CLUB POND	(Lewistown)	Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age and younger only.
EYRAUD LAKES	aka Arod Lakes	6 unattended lines (setlines) with 2 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice only. Spearing: open for northern pike and nongame fish through the ice only.
FAIRGROUNDS POND	(near Helena)	Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age and younger only.
FERGUSON LAKE	(Big Hole River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
FISHTAIL CREEK		Open entire year. Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.
FOOLHEN LAKE	(Big Hole River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
GALLATIN RIVER	entire river Yellowstone National Park to East Gallatin River	Open entire year. Closed to fishing from boats.
GHENY POND	(near Twin Bridges)	Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age and younger only.
GIANT SPRINGS	(near Great Falls)	Closed to fishing 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 levels	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Catch-and-release for grayling.
GOOSE LAKE	(Madison County)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
HARRISON RESERVOIR AND TRIBUTARIES	aka Willow Creek Reservoir (Madison County) Willow Creek arm, as posted	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Open third Saturday in May through February 28.
	tributaries to reservoir: North Willow, South Willow and Norwegian creeks - from the Highway 287 Bridges to reservoir (near Harrison)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

HAUSER RESERVOIR	including Canyon Ferry Dam tailwater and Lake Helena	Closed to fishing from midnight to 3 a.m. Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 28 inches. Yellow perch: 50 daily and no possession limit. Combined Trout and Salmon Limits: 5 trout and salmon daily in any combination and 10 trout and salmon in possession in any combination. Catch and release for brown trout. 6 unattended lines (setlines) with 2 hooks per line through the ice only. Closed entire year.
	Hauser Dam structure and adjacent water as posted	
HEBGEN RESERVOIR	aka Hebgen Lake	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
HELENA VALLEY REGULATING RESERVOIR		3 unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line through the ice only. Snagging: open for salmon September 1 through October 31, 35 salmon daily and 70 in possession.
HELLROARING CREEK	(Yellowstone River Drainage)	Cutthroat trout: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
HELLS CANYON CREEK	(Jefferson River Drainage)	Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.
HIDDEN LAKE	(Madison County)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
HIDDEN LAKE	aka Our Lake (Teton County)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
HOLTER RESERVOIR		Closed to fishing from midnight to 3 a.m. Open entire year. Catch-and-release for brown trout. Walleye: 6 daily, 5 under 20 inches and 1 over 28 inches. All walleye between 20 and 28 inches must be released. Combined Trout and Salmon: 5 rainbow trout and salmon daily in any combination and 10 rainbow trout and salmon in possession in any combination. Yellow perch: 50 daily and no possession limit. 6 unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line through the ice only. Closed entire year.
	Holter Dam - Abutment and spillway structures below the dam	

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

HYALITE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	above Hyalite Reservoir including East Fork Hyalite Creek and West Fork Hyalite Creek	Open third Saturday in July through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: standard limits, includes cutthroat trout. Open third Saturday in May through the end of November. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
HYALITE RESERVOIR	below Hyalite Reservoir	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Catch-and-release for grayling.
INDIAN ROAD POND		Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age and younger, holders of a "Resident Person with a Disability Conservation License" and holders of a "Permit to Hunt From a Vehicle" with the proper prerequisite fishing license.
JEFFERSON RIVER	entire river	Open entire year.
	confluence of Beaverhead and Big Hole rivers to Williams Bridge FAS	Combined Trout Limit: 3 brown trout, only 1 over 18 inches. Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.
	Williams Bridge FAS to confluence with Missouri River	Combined Trout Limit: 5 brown trout, only 1 over 18 inches. Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.
KIYO CRAG LAKE	(Pondera County)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
LAKE ELWELL	aka Tiber Reservoir	Catch-and-release for whitefish and cisco. Must be immediately released upon capture. 2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice-free period. 6 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 6 hooks per line may be used through the ice. Spearing: open for nongame fish, northern pike, walleye, sauger and burbot (ling) through the ice and by persons swimming or submerged.
LAKE FRANCES		Closed entire year around the water supply outlet as posted. Open entire year for up to 2 unattended lines (setlines) with no more than 2 hooks per line, except 6 lines with 6 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice. Spearing: open for northern pike, walleye, sauger, burbot (ling) and nongame fish through the ice only.

Know Your Fish — Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

LAKE HELENA

Closed to fishing from midnight to 3 a.m.
 Catch-and-release for brown trout.
 Combined Trout and Salmon Limits: 5 trout and salmon daily in any combination and 10 trout and salmon in possession in any combination.
 Yellow perch: 50 daily and no possession limit.
 Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 28 inches.
 6 unattended lines (setlines) with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

LAKE LEVALE

Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily and 10 in possession, only 3 may be grayling.

LIGHTNING CREEK

(Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness)

LITTLE PRICKLY PEAR CREEK

(tributary to Missouri River near Craig)
 Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day downstream from the I-15 Bridge near Sieben (T13N, R4W, Section 4).

LYMAN CREEK

(near Bozeman)

Closed entire year from the city water supply intake to a point 1,000 feet upstream as posted.

MADISON RIVER
See Map

Yellowstone National Park boundary to Hebgen Reservoir
 Open Saturday of Memorial Day weekend through November 30.
 Catch-and-release for rainbow trout, standard limits apply for other trout.

Hebgen Dam to Quake Lake

Open entire year.

Quake Lake outlet to McAtee Bridge

Open third Saturday in May through the end of February.

Quake Lake outlet to Varney Bridge

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

Quake Lake outlet to Lyon Bridge

Closed to fishing from boats.

McAtee Bridge to Ennis Bridge

Open entire year.

Varney Bridge to Ennis Lake

Combined Trout Limit: 5 brown trout, only 1 over 18 inches. Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.

Ennis Bridge to Ennis Lake

Open third Saturday in May through the end of February.

Closed to fishing from boats.

Ennis Dam to the mouth

Open entire year.

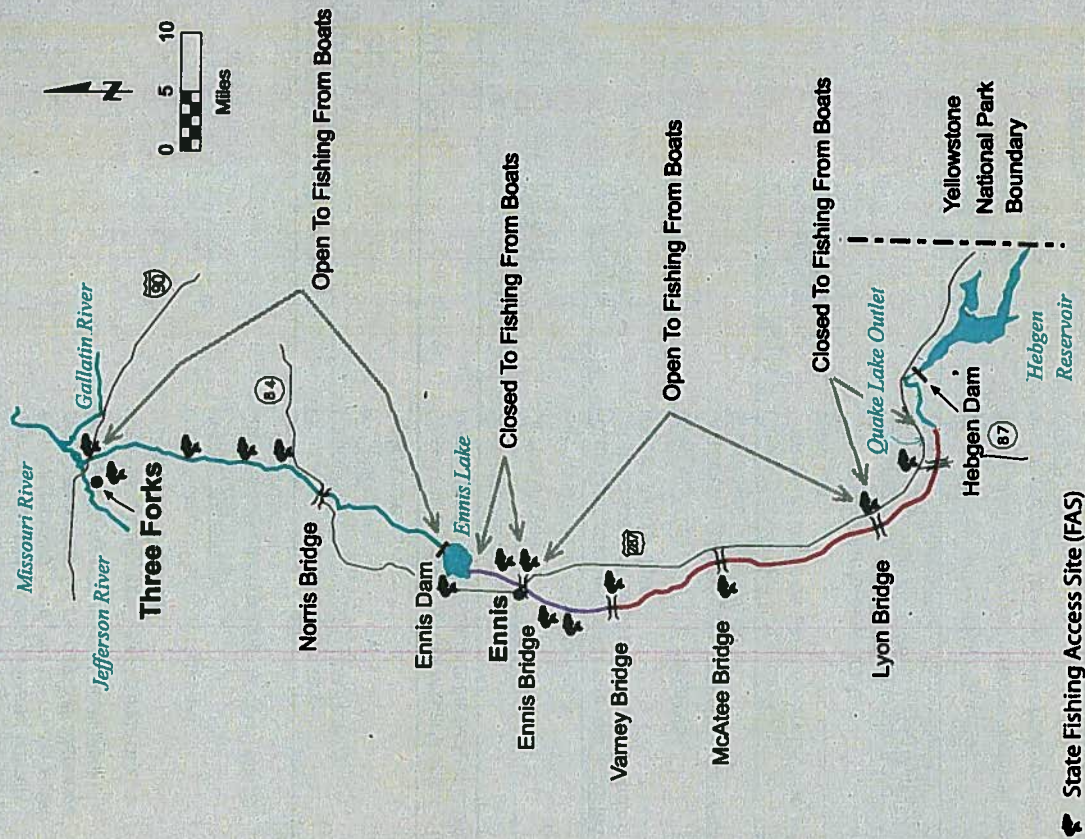
(tributary to Canyon Ferry Reservoir)

Open June 15 through September 30.

MAGPIE CREEK

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
 Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Madison River Map



State Fishing Access Site (FAS)

CENTRAL

CENTRAL

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

MARIAS RIVER

Open entire year downstream from I-15 Bridge.
 Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily only 1 may be a sauger.
 Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be sauger. *All fish must be kept whole, gills and entrails may be removed, until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. See Statewide Regulations for transport requirements.*
 Whitefish: 35 daily, must be killed upon capture or released immediately.
 Cisco: must be killed upon capture or released immediately.
 2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line.

MCDONALDS POND (Beaverhead County)

Open July 15 through September 30.
 Combined Trout Limit: 1 rainbow trout over 20 inches.
 Artificial lures only.

MIDVALE CREEK

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

MILL CREEK (near Sheridan)

Open entire year.

MISSOURI RIVER

See Map

Toston Dam to Canyon Ferry Reservoir
 Toston Dam structure closed entire year as posted.
 Localized spawning areas closed as posted from March 1 through June 15.

Walleye: 20 daily and 40 in possession.

Combined Trout Limit: catch-and-release for brown trout between 18 and 24 inches.

Canyon Ferry Dam to Hauser Reservoir, including the Reservoir

Closed to fishing from midnight to 3 a.m.
 Posted area just below Canyon Ferry Dam closed entire year.

Catch-and-release for brown trout.

Combined Trout and Salmon Limit: 5 trout and salmon daily in any combination and 10 trout and salmon in possession in any combination.

Walleye: 10 daily, only 1 over 28 inches.

Yellow perch: 50 daily and no possession limit.
 6 unattended lines (setlines) with 2 hooks per line through the ice only.

Missouri River continued on next page.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
 Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

MISSOURI RIVER continued

Hauser Dam to Holter Reservoir

Hauser Dam structure and adjacent waters as posted are closed entire year.

Catch-and-release for brown trout.

Walleye: 6 daily (5 under 20 inches and 1 over 28 inches). All walleye between 20 and 28 inches must be released.

Waters from Hauser Dam to American Bar Gulch T12N, R3W, Section 11) approximately 4.6 miles downstream are considered Missouri River for the purpose of fishing regulations.

Holter Dam to mouth of Dearborn River

Holter Dam abutment and spillway structures below dam closed entire year.

Combined Trout Limit: 1 rainbow trout, any size, and 1 brown trout, 22-inch minimum.

mouth of Dearborn River to Cascade Bridge

Combined Trout Limit: 3 rainbow trout, only 1 over 16 inches and 1 brown trout, 22-inch minimum.

Morony Dam to Fort Benton

Morony Dam structure and adjacent waters closed entire year as posted.

Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 may be a sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be sauger. All fish must be kept whole, gills and entrails may be removed, until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. See Statewide Regulations for transport requirements.

6 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 6 hooks per line.

MUSSELSHELL RIVER

downstream from where the North and South forks meet

Open entire year.

NELSON SPRING CREEK

Open entire year.
 Catch-and-release only.
 Artificial lures only.

NORTH FORK BIRCH CREEK DRAINAGE

within National Forest (near Dupuyer)

Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.

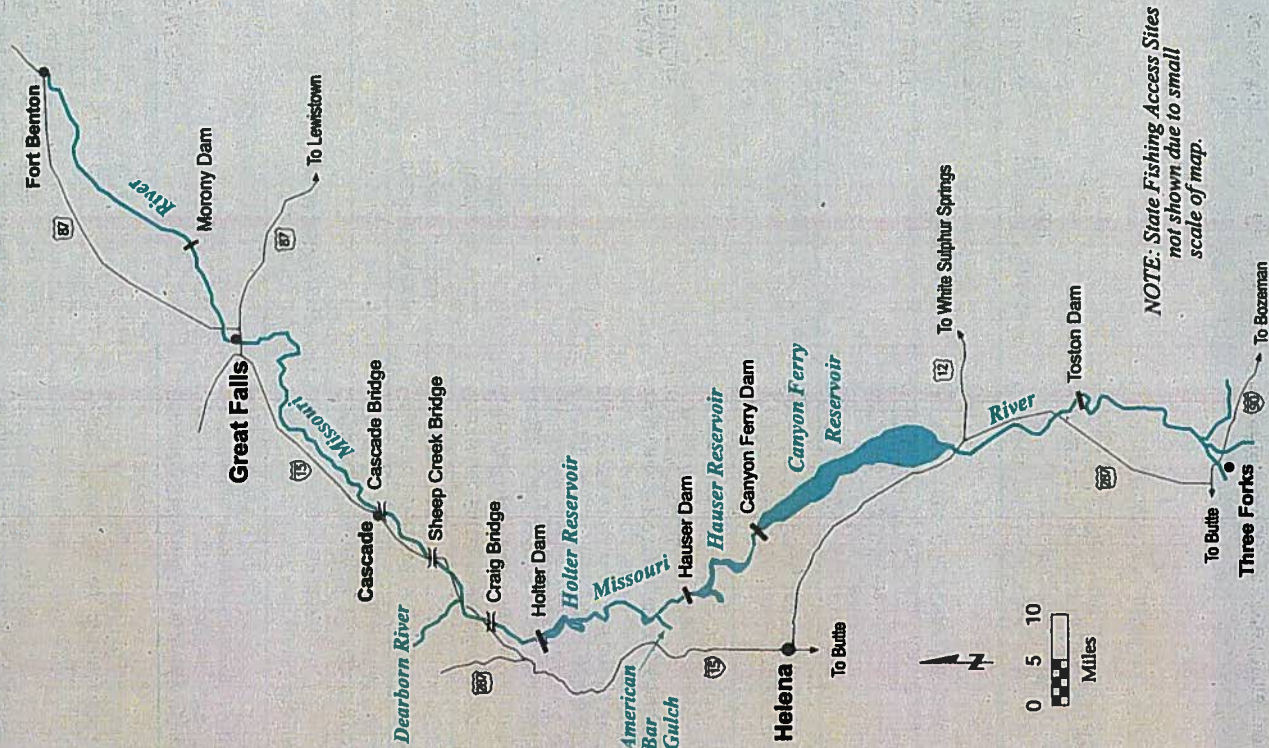
NORTH FORK SUN RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

upstream from Gibson Reservoir

Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, only 1 over 12 inches, includes cutthroat trout. (This limit applies upstream from the point where the North and South forks of the Sun River meet, regardless of reservoir level.)

Know Your Fish — Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Missouri River Map



CENTRAL

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

NORTH FORK TETON RIVER DRAINAGE	within the National Forest (near Choteau)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
NORTH WILLOW CREEK	Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir (near Harrison)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30.
NORWEGIAN CREEK	Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir (near Harrison)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30.
O'BRIEN CREEK	above intake to the Neilhart public water supply	Closed entire year.
ODELL CREEK	(Red Rock River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: includes cutthroat trout.
OSTLE RESERVOIR	aka Antelope Butte Lake (Teton County)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
OTTER LAKE	(Madison County)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30. Combined Trout Limit: 1 rainbow trout daily.
OUR LAKE	aka Hidden Lake	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily. (Teton County)
PINEY CREEK		Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
PISHKUN RESERVOIR		6 lines with 2 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only. Snagging: open for salmon September 1 through December 31, 35 daily and 70 in possession.
POINDEXTER SLOUGH		Open entire year. Catch-and-release: December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures only.
PRIEST BUTTE LAKE		Open June 15 through September 15 and December 1 through the end of February.
PRYOR CREEK		Open entire year.
QUAKE LAKE	(Madison River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
RAT LAKE	(Gallatin River Drainage)	The unnamed tributary to the lake, <i>Inlet and outlet</i> , is closed entire year. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

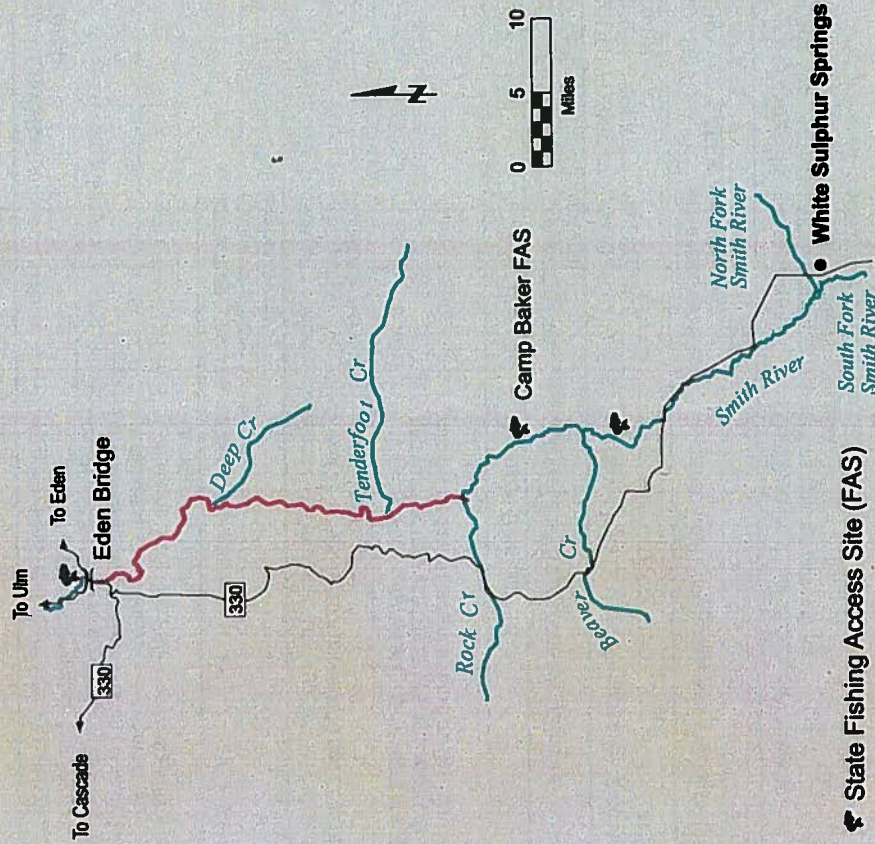
Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
RATTLESNAKE CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(near Dillon, Beaverhead County)	Closed entire year from city water supply intake to a point 1,000 feet upstream as posted. Combined Trout Limit: includes cutthroat trout, except catch-and-release for cutthroat trout on Cat Creek.
RED ROCK CREEK	(Beaverhead River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: includes cutthroat trout.
RED ROCK RIVER	Lima Dam to Clark Canyon Reservoir	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, only one over 18 inches.
RENSHAW LAKE		Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
ROCK CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	(tributary to Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone)	Open entire year. Also see West Fork Rock Creek.
RUBY RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES	upstream from Ruby Reservoir downstream from Ruby Dam	Combined Trout Limit: includes cutthroat trout except catch-and-release for cutthroat trout in Cottonwood (near Cottonwood Camp), Geyser, Idaho, Robb, Sweetwater and Whitebear creeks. 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).
		Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, only 1 over 15 inches.
		Extended whitefish season and catch-and-release for trout from December 1 to third Saturday in May with maggots and/or artificial lures only.
SAGE CREEK	(Pryor Mountains)	Open entire year.
SAWTOOTH LAKE	(Beaverhead River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 1 golden trout.
SCOTT LAKE	(Beaverhead River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
SHIELDS RIVER		Extended season for whitefish and catch-and-release for trout open December 1 to third Saturday in May with artificial lures and/or maggots only.
		Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.
		Catch-and-release.
SILVER CREEK	from Gold Sil Mine to Green Meadow Drive (near Marysville) downstream from I-15 bridge near Helena	Open third Saturday in May through Labor Day.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
SLOUGH CREEK	(Yellowstone River Drainage)	Cutthroat trout: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
SMITH LAKE	(Madison River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
SMITH RIVER See Map		Floating on the Smith River between Camp Baker and Eden Bridge is strictly limited. Mandatory registration, floaters 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.
	downstream from confluence of North and South forks	Open entire year.
	confluence of Rock Creek to Eden (Huntsberger) Bridge	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily under 13 inches and 1 over 22 inches. All trout between 13 and 22 inches must be released. Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may use bait all year and maggots may be used from December 1 to third Saturday in May.
SOCK LAKE	(Sun River Drainage)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily
SODA BUTTE CREEK	(Yellowstone River Drainage)	Cutthroat trout: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
SOUTH FORK BIRCH CREEK DRAINAGE	within National Forest (near Dupuyer)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
SOUTH FORK DUJUYER CREEK DRAINAGE	within National Forest (near Dupuyer)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
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 Limit: 3 daily, only 1 over 12 inches, includes cutthroat trout.
SOUTH FORK TWO MEDICINE RIVER DRAINAGE	within National Forest	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily, none over 12 inches.
SOUTH WILLOW CREEK	(near Harrison)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30 from the Highway 287 Bridge to Harrison Reservoir.

Know Your Fish – Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Smith River Map



CENTRAL

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

SPLIT ROCK LAKE	6 lines with 2 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice. Spearing: open for northern pike through the ice only.
SPRING MEADOW LAKE	Bass: 1 daily. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily. Open to fishing with hook and line only.
STILLWATER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES	Open entire year. Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.
SUN RIVER	Open entire year downstream from Gibson Dam.
SUNNY SLOPE CANAL	downstream from Pishkun Reservoir Catch-and-release for grayling. Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
SWAZEE LAKE	(Sun River Wildlife Management Area) Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
TAHEPIA LAKE	(Wise River Drainage) Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
TETON RIVER	downstream from Highway 89 Bridge Open entire year.
TIBER RESERVOIR	aka Lake Elwell Catch-and-release for whitefish and cisco. Must be immediately released upon capture. 2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice free period. 6 attended or unattended lines with up to 6 hooks per line may be used through the ice. Spearing: open for nongame fish: northern pike, walleye, sauger and burbot (ling) through the ice and by persons swimming or submerged.
TOSTON DAM	Dam structure Closed entire year as posted.
TRAIL CREEK AND TRIBUTARIES	Beaverhead River Drainage, near Horse Prairie Combined Trout Limit: includes cutthroat trout. Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout on Bear Creek.
TUNNEL LAKE	(Teton County) Combined Trout Limit: includes 1 grayling.
TWIN LAKES	(upper Big Hole River Drainage) Catch-and-release for lake trout. Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
VIGILANTE POND	(near Virginia City) Open to fishing for anglers 14 years of age and younger only.

CENTRAL

Know Your Fish -- Be sure you can identify sauger and cutthroat trout.

Waterbody

Description

Special Regulations

WADE LAKE (Madison County) Spawning channel and channel inlet closed as posted.

Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.

Open entire year.

Open June 15 through September 30.

Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.

Open entire year.

Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.

Open third Saturday in July through November 30.
Combined Trout Limit: standard limits, includes cutthroat trout.

Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.

Closed entire year.

Open entire year.

Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.

Open entire year.

Combined Trout Limit: 2 daily, only 1 over 13 inches.

Open July 15 through September 30.

Brook trout: 5 daily, 4 under 12 inches and 1 over 18 inches. All brook trout between 12 and 18 inches must be released.

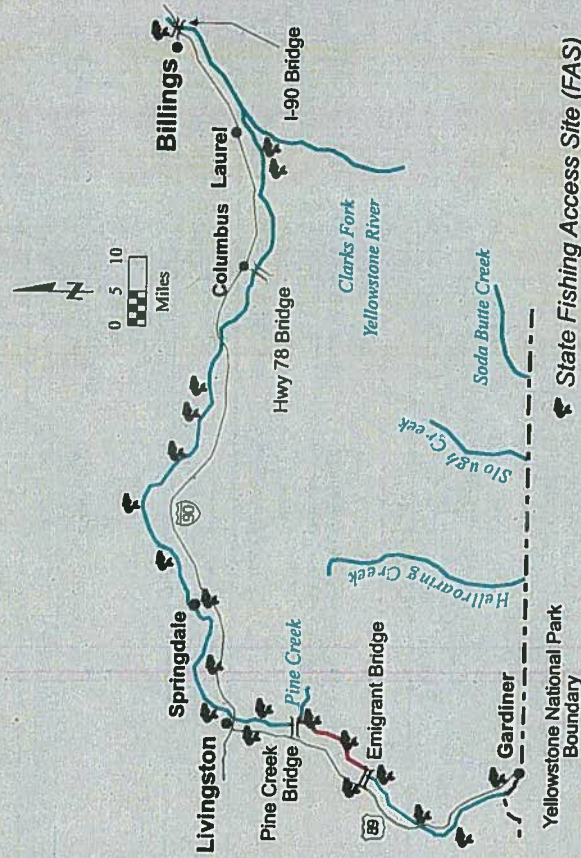
Artificial lures only.

Closed entire year.

WILLOW CREEK White Sulphur Springs public water intake to its source (Meagher County)

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

Yellowstone River Map



State Fishing Access Site (FAS)

Not all Fishing Access Sites are shown. Contact a regional MFWP office for a list of all Fishing Access Sites and their locations.

Waterbody

Description

Special Regulations

WILLOW CREEK RESERVOIR AND TRIBUTARIES

aka Harrison Reservoir (Madison County)	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily.
Willow Creek arm, as posted	Open third Saturday in May through February 28.
tributaries to reservoir: North Willow, South Willow and Norwegian creeks - from the Highway 287 Bridges to reservoir (near Harrison)	Open third Saturday in June through November 30.

WILLOW SPRINGS CREEK

Catch-and-release for rainbow trout.

YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

See Map

Open entire year.

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 and/or maggots only.

Combined Trout Limit: 5 brown and rainbow trout, 4 under 13 inches and 1 over 22 inches. All brown trout and rainbow trout between 13 and 22 inches must be released.

Artificial lures only, except anglers 14 years of age and younger may use bait.

Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily only 1 over 18 inches, includes cutthroat trout.

Live fish (except sculpin, salmonids, carp, goldfish, all species in the sunfish family, bullheads (catfish family), yellow perch, and rainbow smelt) may be used as bait (including feeder streams and ditches).

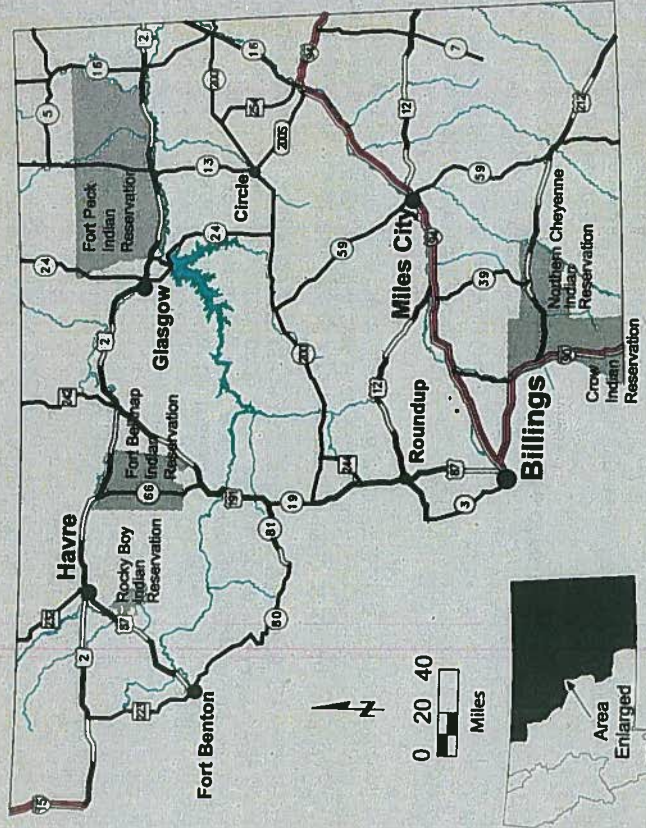
Open entire year for up to 2 attended lines with up to 2 hooks per line.

Catch-and-release for cutthroat trout.

all tributaries to the Yellowstone River between the Yellowstone National Park boundary and Springdale, approximately 18 miles east of Livingston, including the Shields River and its tributaries

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes brown, rainbow and golden trout in rivers & streams, and also cutthroat trout and grayling in lakes.

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 41.

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 8:00-5:00:

Billings	406-247-2940
Glasgow	406-228-3700
Great Falls	406-454-5840
Havre Area Resource Office	406-265-6177
Lewistown Area Office	406-538-4658
Miles City	406-232-0900
TDD	406-444-1200

(Telephone device for the deaf)

IMPORTANT EASTERN DISTRICT REGULATION CHANGES

Know the Law and Avoid Violations
Following are some of the waters with important changes that were made from the 2000-2001 fishing regulations. Please read the 2002-2003 regulations thoroughly to avoid unintentional violations.

(New regulations are noted in bold italics throughout the regulations.)

Bear Paw Lake
Beaver Creek Reservoir
Ft Peck Reservoir
Missouri River
Tongue River Reservoir
Warm Springs Creek (Fergus County)
Yellowstone River

BOAT AND MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

The use of boats and motors may be restricted on some waters within this fishing district. Please refer to the boat and motor regulations at the back of this book. 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.

STANDARD FISHING SEASONS

All waters open entire year. See Eastern Fishing District Special Regulations for exceptions.

STANDARD FISHING REGULATIONS

A valid fishing license is required for all types of fishing.

Transporting Live Fish

It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish away from the body of water in which the fish were taken except for:

- 1) transportation of fish for valid commercial purposes;
- 2) for use as live bait subject to any further restrictions imposed by the FWP Commission; or
- 3) within the boundaries of the Eastern Fishing District. It is unlawful to possess or transport live fish on roadways that form the boundary between the Eastern and Central fishing districts.

Hook and Line Limits

- Two attended lines with up to 2 hooks per line may be used on lakes and reservoirs in the Eastern Fishing District.
- All streams in the Little Missouri, Milk, Missouri, Musselshell and Yellowstone drainages are open entire year to 6 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 6 hooks per line (see exceptions, Eastern Fishing District Special Regulations and Missouri River (below Fort Peck Dam)).
- Lines shall not be attached to jugs or other floating devices.
- Unattended lines (setlines) must be clearly identified with owner's complete name and address.

Ice Fishing

Anglers may use up to 6 lines, attended or unattended, with up to 6 hooks per line through the ice in all lakes and reservoirs, except as specified under the Special Regulations for this district.

Bow and Arrow

All waters open to angling are open to taking paddlefish and nongame fish by bow and arrow. Crossbows are illegal.

Snagging

All waters open to angling are open to snagging paddlefish. Snagging chinook salmon is allowed on Fort Peck Reservoir only from October 1 through November 30. Snagging nongame fish is allowed on all open waters, except the Missouri River and portions of the Yellowstone River, as specified under the district Special Regulations.

Spearing

In all waters open to fishing, nongame fish, northern pike and burbot (ling) may be taken with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged.

Spears may be used through the ice for northern pike, walleye, sauger, burbot (ling), and nongame 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 and Glasgow.

Warm Water Game Fish Stamp

The 1999 Montana Legislature passed a bill to require the purchase of a warm water game fish stamp. See page 5 for details regarding this new stamp. The warm water game fish stamp is required to possess warm water fish on the following waters in the Eastern Fishing District:

Anita Reservoir, Yellowstone County
Bailey Reservoir, Hill County
Baker Lake, Fallon County
Bearpaw Lake, Hill County
Beaver Creek, Wibaux County
Beaver Creek Reservoir, Hill County
Box Elder Creek Reservoir, Sheridan County
Castle Rock Lake, Rosebud County
Catfish Reservoir, Fergus County
Conter's Bass Pond, Yellowstone County
Cow Creek Reservoir, Blaine County
Dry Fork Reservoir, Blaine County
Engdahl Cottonwood Reservoir, Garfield County
Ester Lake, Phillips County
Ft Peck Reservoir
Ft Peck Dredge Cut Pond, Valley County
Fresno Reservoir, Hill County
Gartside Lake, Richland County
Haughian Res. (Dan Haughian Res.), Custer County
Hollands Reservoir, Fergus County
Homestead Reservoir, Prairie County

Hopalong Reservoir, Fergus County
Illiad Reservoir, Chouteau County
Johnson Dam, Dawson County
Lake Elmo, Yellowstone County
Little Warm Reservoir, Phillips County
Maier Reservoir, Fallon County
Nelson Reservoir, Phillips County
Payola Reservoir, Petroleum County
Petrolia Reservoir, Petroleum County
Schlesinger Reservoir #1, Rosebud County
Silvertip Reservoir, Prairie County
South Fork Dry Blood Reservoir, Petroleum County
South Sandstone Reservoir, Fallon County
Talcott Pond, Carter County
Tongue River Reservoir, Big Horn County
Trumbo Pond, Garfield County
Upper Wolf Coulee Reservoir, Fergus County
Wapiti Reservoir, Phillips County
Warm Springs Creek, Fergus County

Bait

- Live fish may not be imported into or exported from the State of Montana except by permit issued by FWP.
- No portion of sculpins or salmonids (trout, salmon, grayling, char and whitefish) may be used as bait except eggs. All nongame fish or parts thereof may be used as bait if the heads and entrails are removed, or if they have been preserved or frozen, except in water limited to artificial lures only.
- Live nongame bait fish (except sculpins, carp, goldfish, all species in the sunfish family, bullheads (catfish family), yellow perch, and rainbow smelt) may be used in all streams and rivers in the Eastern Fishing District except:
 - Milk River and its tributaries upstream from Fresno Dam.
 - Streams south of Highway 2 (which originate in the Bears Paw Mountains) and Beaver Creek and Big Sandy Creek upstream from the Highway 87 Bridge.
- Live nongame fish (except sculpins, carp, goldfish, sunfish, bullheads (catfish family), yellow perch, and rainbow smelt) may be used for bait only in the following ponds, lakes, reservoirs and impoundments:

Anita Reservoir:

Yellowstone County

- Bailey Reservoir; Hill County
- Bainville Railroad Ponds, Roosevelt County
- Baker Lake, Fallon County
- Beaver Creek Reservoir; Hill County
- Box Elder Reservoir; Sheridan County
- Buxbaum West Reservoir, Richland County
- Castle Rock Lake, Rosebud County
- Cole Ponds, Phillips County
- Doug Gardner #2 Reservoir, Carter County
- Dry Fork Reservoir (Schwarz), Blaine County
- Engstrom Reservoir, Sheridan County
- Ester Reservoir; Phillips County
- Flat Lake, McCone County
- Fort Peck Dredge Cut Trout Pond, Valley County
- Fort Peck Reservoir, Frenchman Reservoir, Phillips County
- Gartside Reservoir; Richland County
- Hedstrom Reservoir; McCone County
- Johnson Reservoir; Dawson County

- Kuester Reservoir; Richland County
- Lame Steer Reservoir; Wibaux County
- Lee (Sam) Reservoir; Dawson County
- Lindsay Reservoir; Dawson County
- Little Warm Reservoir, Phillips County
- Lyons Reservoir; Blaine County
- McChesney Reservoir, Phillips County
- Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge; Sheridan County
- Milk River and its impoundments downstream of Fresno Dam
- Nelson Reservoir; Phillips County
- Petrolia Reservoir; Petroleum County
- Raymond Reservoir; Sheridan County
- Schlesinger Perch Pond, Rosebud County
- South Sandstone Reservoir; Fallon County
- Spotted Eagle Pond, Custer County
- Talcott Pond, Carter County
- Tongue River Reservoir, Big Horn County
- Valley Reservoir; Valley County
- Whiteside Reservoir; Garfield County
- Whitetail Reservoir; Daniels County

STANDARD DAILY AND POSSESSION LIMITS

- includes all tables below. Refer to Statewide Regulations for additional regulations concerning limits.
- Each angler may take all of the limits listed in the chart, unless noted in the Special Regulations. 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 only the limit of fish allowed for the water on which they are currently fishing.
- Irrigation Canals and Ditches – the same daily and possession limits apply as for rivers and streams.

Eastern District Standard Daily and Possession Limits

Rivers & Streams	Daily and possession limits
Species Combined Trout Limit (includes the following in any combination): Trout (except lake trout) Salmon Grayling	10

Rivers, Lakes, Reservoirs & Streams	Daily and in possession
Species Bass	5
Burbot (ling)	10
Catfish	20
Crappie	15 daily and 30 in possession
Lake trout	3
Northern pike	10
Pallid sturgeon	0
Sauger/Walleye	It is unlawful to take or possess a pallid sturgeon.
Shovelnose sturgeon	5 daily and 10 in possession
Tiger muskellunge	5, none over 40 inches
Whitefish	1 over 30 inches no limit

Lakes & Reservoirs	Daily and possession limits
Species Combined Trout Limit (includes the following in any combination): Trout (except lake trout) Salmon Grayling	5

Paddlefish - see next page

Paddlefish

Daily and Possession limits

- 2 paddlefish per season per angler. Paddlefish Tags required. Only 1 paddlefish per person may be taken from the population in the Yellowstone River and Missouri River downstream from Fort Peck Dam. One or both paddlefish may be harvested from the Missouri River upstream of Fort Peck Dam

General Paddlefish Regulations for ALL Areas

- All paddlefish anglers, regardless of age, must purchase the proper prerequisite conservation license, fishing license and paddlefish tags. All licenses must be in the angler's immediate possession while fishing.
- Each angler must cast for, hook and reel in his or her own paddlefish. It is unlawful for another person to do so.
- Anglers must immediately tag paddlefish with their own tag. Once a paddlefish tag(s) has been validated, anglers may not snag for paddlefish.
- Any tag locked shut prior to attachment to a paddlefish shall be void.
- Any altered or modified tag shall be void.
- It is unlawful to possess an untagged paddlefish or a part of one. If anglers cut up a paddlefish, they must keep the part of the back and dorsal fin (back fin) where the tag is attached and sealed to the fish. Tags must remain with processed fish until consumption.

Yellowstone River and Missouri River downstream from Fort Peck Dam

- The paddlefish fishery is managed under a harvest cap in conjunction with North Dakota. Montana has set regulations so that annual harvest will not exceed 1000 fish. FWP may close the season within 48 hours notice in any year if it appears that the harvest target may otherwise be significantly exceeded. Call the Miles City FWP office at 406-232-0900 for current information on harvest status.
- It is unlawful to release paddlefish except in accordance with the catch-and-release regulations on the Yellowstone River at the Intake Dam Fishing Access Site.

To Tag A Paddlefish

- Cut a small hole behind the base of the anterior ray 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.

IMPORTANT: Do not seal your plastic self-locking tag prior to attachment to fish. They cannot be reopened and will be void if sealed prior to attachment.

EASTERN FISHING DISTRICT SPECIAL REGULATIONS

Check the following list of waters for the body of water you intend to fish. If the body of water is not found in the listing of Special Regulations, all of the standard seasons, daily/possession limits, and statewide regulations apply. Standard regulations apply for species not listed in the special regulations. **For waters listed under the Special Regulations, the possession limit is the same as the daily limit, unless a different possession limit is specified.**

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
BEARPAW LAKE		
BEAVER CREEK	upstream from Highway 87 Bridge (Bears Paw Mountains)	Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily. Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
BEAVER CREEK RESERVOIR		Northern pike: no limit. Combined Trout Limit: 3 daily.
BIG SANDY CREEK	upstream from Highway 87 Bridge (Bears Paw Mountains)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
CLEAR CREEK	south of Highway 2 (Bears Paw Mountains)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
COW CREEK	(Bears Paw Mountains)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
EAGLE CREEK		Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
ESTER RESERVOIR	aka Ester Lake	2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice-free period.
FORT PECK DREDGE CUTS		2 unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice-free period.
FORT PECK RESERVOIR	aka Fort Peck Lake Fort Peck Dam to Beauchamp Creek and CMR Trail 837	Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 may be a sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be sauger. All fish must be kept whole, gills and entrails may be removed, until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. See Statewide Regulations for transport requirements. 2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice-free period. Spearing: open for walleye, northern pike, burbot and nongame fish to spearing with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify sauger.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
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FRESNO RESERVOIR	(Hill County)	Northern pike: no limit. 2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice-free period.
LITTLE BOXELDER CREEK	south of Highway 2 (Bears Paw Mountains)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
MARIAS RIVER		Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 18 inches. Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily only 1 may be a sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be sauger. <i>All fish must be kept whole, gills and entrails may be removed, until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. See Statewide Regulations for transport requirements.</i> Whitefish: 35 daily. Whitefish must be killed upon capture or released immediately. Cisco: must be killed upon capture or released immediately.
MEDICINE LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	(Sheridan County)	All lakes are open to 6 unattended lines (setlines) with up to 6 hooks per line.
	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.

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified.
Combined Trout Limit includes salmon, grayling and all trout except lake trout.

Waterbody	Description	Special Regulations
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MISSOURI RIVER See Map	entire river	Snagging: it is illegal to snag for nongame fish from Fort Benton downstream to the North Dakota border.
	upstream from Fort Peck Dam to Fort Benton	Paddlefish: open entire year. See Eastern District standard regulations for limits and important information. Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 may be a sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be sauger. <i>All fish must be kept whole, gills and entrails may be removed, until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. See Statewide Regulations for transport requirements.</i>
	downstream from Fort Peck Dam	Paddlefish: open entire year or until closed by FWP. See Eastern District standard paddlefish regulations for more information.
	downstream from outlet tunnels of Fort Peck Dam	Closed entire year as posted.
	Fort Peck Dam to the mouth of the Milk River (includes Dredge Cuts)	Combined Trout Limit: 2 rainbow trout daily. Open entire year for up to 2 attended or unattended lines with no more than 2 hooks per line, <i>except up to 6 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with 6 hooks per line may be used to fish through the ice.</i>
	downstream from Fort Peck Dam near Duck Island as posted	Closed from March 1 through July 31 to fishing and wading as posted.

NELSON RESERVOIR

(Phillips County)

Northern pike: no limit.
2 attended or unattended lines (setlines) with up to 2 hooks per line may be used during the ice-free period.

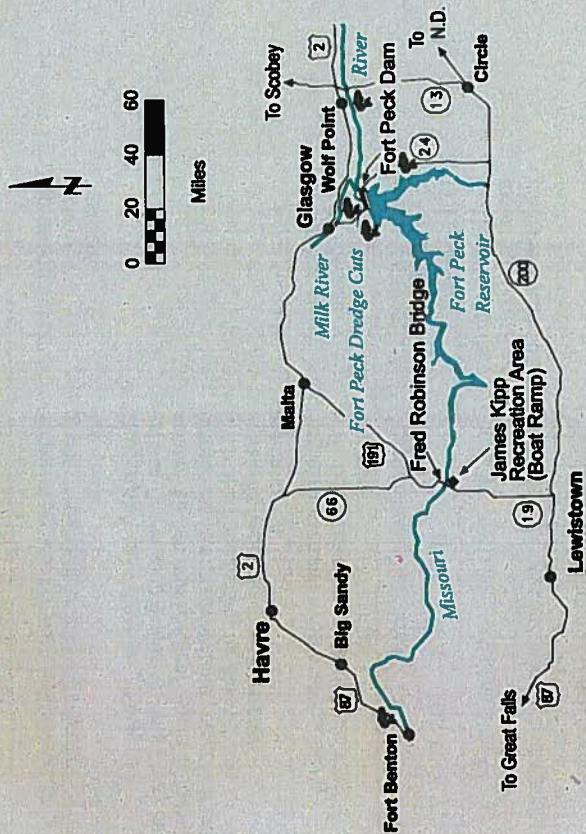
Spearing: open for walleye, northern pike, burbot and nongame fish to spearing with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged.

POWDER RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

Bow and Arrow: open for catfish.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify sauger.

Missouri River upstream from Fort Peck Dam



State Fishing Access Site (FAS)

Waterbody Description Special Regulations

ROSS RESERVOIR	aka Ross Lake (Blaine County)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
SNAKE CREEK	(Bears Paw Mountains)	Open third Saturday in May through November 30.
TONGUE RIVER	12-Mile Dam Fishing Access Site (T&Y Dam)	Open entire year for up to 2 lines with no more than 2 hooks per line.

TONGUE RIVER RESERVOIR

Crappie: 30 daily and 60 in possession.

Up to 6 lines with 6 hooks per line may be used to fish through ice, but the angler must be in the vicinity and within visual contact of the line(s) or rod(s) at all times.

Spearing: open for walleye, northern pike, burbot and nongame fish to spearing with rubber or spring-propelled spears by persons swimming or submerged.

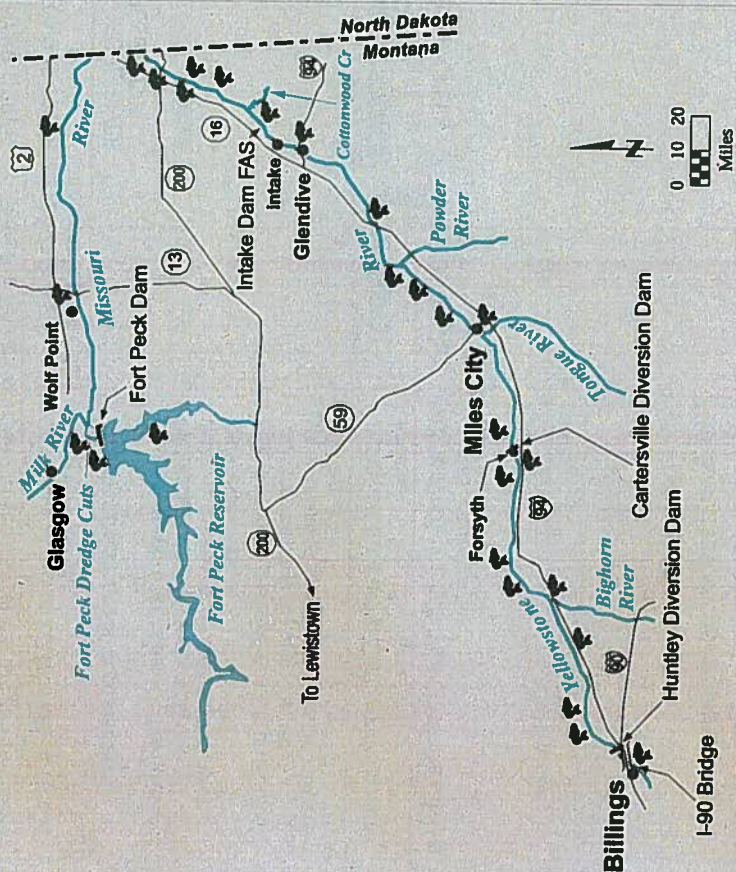
WARM SPRINGS CREEK (Fergus County)
Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 18 inches.

WIND CREEK (Blaine County)
Closed entire year from Clear Creek road crossing to Ross Reservoir Dam.

EASTERN

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify sauger.

Yellowstone & Lower Missouri Rivers



State Fishing Access Site (FAS)

Possession limit is the same as daily limit unless a different possession limit is specified. Combined Trout Limit includes salmon, grayling and all trout except lake trout.

Waterbody

YELLOWSTONE RIVER
See Map

Description

Special Regulations

I-90 Bridge at Billings to the mouth of the Bighorn River	Combined Trout Limit: 5 daily, only 1 over 18 inches.
I-90 Bridge at Billings to Huntley Diversion Dam	Open entire year to 2 attended lines with up to 2 hooks per line.
I-90 Bridge at Billings to Carlsville Diversion Dam at Forsyth	Sauger/Walleye: 5 daily, only 1 may be a sauger. Possession limit is 10, only 2 may be sauger. All fish must be kept whole, gills and entrails may be removed, until you are off the water and done fishing for the day. See Statewide Regulations for transport requirements.
downstream from the mouth of Bighorn River	Snagging: May 1 through June 30 it is illegal to snag for nongame fish.
mouth of Bighorn River to mouth of Cottonwood Creek (4 miles downstream from Intake Diversion Dam)	Snagging: prohibited for nongame fish. Open for paddlefish May 15 through June 30 or as posted. See Eastern District Standard Regulations for more important paddlefish information.
Intake Fishing Access Site	Closed May 15 through June 30 to fishing or snagging from boats.
	Paddlefish: all fish caught on Wednesdays and Sundays between 3 PM and 9 PM (Mountain Daylight Time) must be released. Anglers must show evidence of current year paddlefish tag to fish. Use of gaffs is prohibited during the catch-and-release periods.
	Open entire year for up to 2 lines with no more than 2 hooks per line.
	Snagging: open for paddlefish May 15 through June 30 or as posted. See Eastern District Standard Regulations for limits and other important information.
mouth of Cottonwood Creek (4 miles downstream from Intake Diversion Dam) downstream to the North Dakota border	Paddlefish: open for snagging May 1 through June 30 or as posted. See Eastern District Standard Regulations for limits and important information. Snagging: prohibited for nongame fish May 1 through June 30.

Know Your Fish - Be sure you can identify sauger.

MONTANA FISH RECORDS

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

- 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.

FISH (partial list)	LENGTH	WEIGHT	DATE	SITE
Arctic Grayling	20.9"	3.21 lbs.	5/17/94	Hardkerchief Lake
Black Bullhead	15.5"	2.33 lbs.	4/4/94	Lower Flathead River
Black Crappie	16.7"	3.13 lbs.	1973	Tongue River Reservoir
Bluegill	11"	2.64 lbs.	6/3/83	Peterson's Stock Dam
Brook Trout		9.06 lbs.	1940	Lower Two Medicine Lake
Brown Trout		29 lbs.	1966	Wade Lake
Bull Trout (Bolly Vardian)	37"	25.63 lbs.	1916	Missouri River, Wolf Point
Burbot (Ling)	39"	17.08 lbs.	4/18/89	Castle Rock Lake
Channel Catfish	34.2"	27.17 lbs.	4/26/98	Fort Peck Reservoir, Face of Dam
Chinook Salmon	38"	31.13 lbs.	10/2/91	Below Ft Peck Powerhouse
Cisco	17.25"	1.75 lbs.	5/19/01	Fort Peck Reservoir, Face of Dam
Coho Salmon	25.5"	4.88 lbs.	5/29/73	Red Eagle Lake
Cutthroat Trout		16 lbs.	1955	
Golden Trout	23.5"	5.43 lbs.	7/16/00	Cave Lake
Goldeye		3.18 lbs.	7/4/00	Nelson Reservoir
Green Sunfish	8.6"	0.56 lbs.	6/19/91	Castle Rock Reservoir
Kokanee Salmon	25 1/8"	7.52 lbs.	7/24/01	Hauser Lake
Lake Trout	44"	42 lbs.	6/24/79	Flathead Lake, East Shore
Lake Whitefish	26 3/8"	10.08 lbs.	6/24/95	Lower St. Mary Lake
Largemouth Bass	22"	8.29 lbs.	6/11/99	Many Lakes
Mountain Whitefish	21.14"	5.09 lbs.	9/15/87	Kootenai River, Below dam
Northern Pike		37.5 lbs.	1972	Tongue River Reservoir
Northern Pike minnow	27 1/8"	7.88 lbs.	5/28/91	Noxon Rapids Reservoir
Paddlefish	6'5"	142.5 lbs.	5/20/73	Missouri River, Near Kipp Park
Pallid Sturgeon		60 lbs.	5/13/79	Yellowstone River, Near Sidney
Rainbow Trout	38.62"	33.1 lbs.	8/11/97	Kootenai R., David Thompson Bridge
Sauger	28.2"	8.805 lbs.	12/12/94	Fort Peck Reservoir
Shorhinose Sturgeon	39.5"	13.72 lbs.	4/19/86	Missouri River, Near Virgelle
Smallmouth Bass	20.25"	6.45 lbs.	9/25/01	Fort Peck Reservoir
Tiger Muskellunge	45.25"	27 lbs.	10/2/94	Lebo Lake
Walleye	31.5"	16.63 lbs.	1/21/00	Fort Peck Reservoir
White Bass	16.25"	2.25 lbs.	9/29/98	Missouri River, South of Bainville
White Crappie	18.5"	3.68 lbs.	5/10/96	Tongue River
White Sturgeon		96 lbs.	1968	Kootenai River
Yellow Perch	14.5"	2.37 lbs.	3/31/88	Ashley Lake
Yellow Bullhead	11.8"	0.93 lbs.	5/24/98	Tongue River Reservoir

NOTE: Native species are highlighted in red.

Records are accurate as of October 4, 2001. For a complete list of Montana's record fish, call or email: 406-444-3188. lkarwaski@state.mt.us

BOAT AND MOTOR RESTRICTIONS

All motorboats, sailboats (unless non-motorized and under 12 feet long) and personal watercraft (except canoes and kayaks) must be registered and numbered. Properly registered boats from out of state or country that will not be in Montana for more than 90 consecutive days are exempt, however, a temporary permit may be required by a county for operation of a boat. Check with the appropriate county treasurer's office.

Children 12 years of age or younger may not operate a motorboat or a personal watercraft 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 boat course is available from FWP.

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 the federal agency for the area where you will be boating to find out if any additional regulations are in effect.

General Restrictions

- Do not anchor a vessel in a position that obstructs a passageway ordinarily used by other vessels.
- 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.
- Upland game birds, furbearers and game animals may not be pursued, taken or killed from a powerboat or sailboat or any floating device in tow.
- All passengers under the age of 12 must wear a PFD at all times if the boat is less than 26 feet long. Wearable, U.S. Coast Guard approved PFDs must be available for each occupant of any boat. Boats longer than 16 feet (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 vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- All boats must carry equipment as required by the Montana Boating Laws.

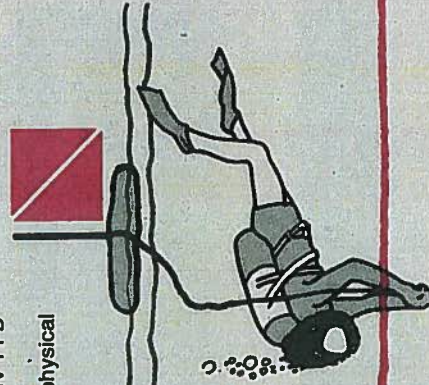
BOATERS: This flag means there are scuba divers in the area.

Montana law requires that boats 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

Boat and Motor Restrictions

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.



No-Wake Zones on Lakes - Western Fishing District Only

All watercraft operating on public lakes and reservoirs 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. See the Montana Boating Laws for exceptions.

Use 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:

Black Eagle Dam, Canyon Ferry Dam, Cochrane Dam, Flint Creek Dam, Hauser Dam, Hebgen Dam, Hotter Dam, Kerr Dam, Madison Dam, Milltown Dam, Morony Dam, Mystic Dam, Noxon Rapids Dam, Rainbow Dam, Ryan Dam, Thompson Falls Dam, Toston Dam, W. Rosebud Dam.

Boat and Motor Restrictions on Major Fishing Waters

The following list includes only the more popular fishing waters in the state. For a complete list of restricted waterways you may obtain the Montana Boating Laws booklet from your local FWP office or check the FWP Web Page www.fwp.state.mt.us.

- 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 craft 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.
- The following closures and restrictions are accurate as of January 1, 2002. Changes made in the ARM rules subsequently will be posted on individual waters or may be obtained from any FWP office.

Body of Water	County	Boat and Motor Restrictions
All rivers and streams in counties in southwest Montana except:	Beaverhead, Broadwater, Gallatin, Jefferson, Madison, Park, Silver Bow	Closed to motorboats over 10 HP
• Missouri River downriver from Headwaters State Park		
• Yellowstone River downriver from Hwy 89 Bridge, near mouth of Shields River.		
Ackley Lake	Judith Basin	No special restrictions.
Belt Creek	Cascade	No special restrictions.
Big Hole River	Silver Bow, Madison, Deer Lodge, Beaverhead	Closed to all motorboats.
Big Horn Lake and Afterbay Reservoir	Big Horn	No special restrictions.
Big Horn River	Big Horn	Closed to all motorboats from Afterbay Dam to the Big Horn FAS
Bitterroot River	Missoula	Closed to all motorboats except May 1-June 30 from Florence Bridge downstream to the Clark Fork River; and October 1-January 31 for motors under 15 hp anywhere on the river.
Blackfoot River and tributaries	Lewis & Clark, Missoula, Powell	Closed to all motorboats above Stimson Lumber Mill Dam at Bonner. No-wake speed on Blackfoot River downstream
Boulder River	Sweet Grass	No special restrictions.
Canyon Ferry Reservoir	Broadwater, Lewis & Clark	No-wake speed - White Earth, Goose Bay, Yacht Basin, Cave Bay, Little Hellgate, Magpie Bay, Carp Bay, and from Canyon Ferry Dam to Riverside boat ramp.

Body of Water	County	Boat and Motor Restrictions
Clark Canyon Reservoir	Beaverhead	No special restrictions.
Clark Fork River	Mineral, Missoula	Closed to all motorboats in specified sections. Check boating regulations for details.
Cooney Reservoir	Carbon	No-wake speed - as buoyed. Boats pulling, taking off with and landing water skiers will travel in general counterclockwise direction.
Flathead Lake	Flathead	No-wake speed - Bigfork Bay as buoyed.
Flathead River	Flathead	No motorboats above Camas bridge.
• North Fork		Camas bridge to the confluence of the Middle Fork motorboats may not exceed 10 hp.
• Middle Fork		No motorboats above Bear Creek. Bear Creek to South Fork motorboats may not exceed 10 hp.
• South Fork		Motorboats allowed only from Spotted Bear to Hungry Horse Reservoir. Motors may not exceed 10 hp.
Flt Peck Reservoir	Gallatin	No-wake speed - as buoyed.
Fresno Reservoir	Hill	No-wake speed - as buoyed and signed.
Georgetown Lake	Granite, Deer Lodge	No special restrictions.
Hauser Reservoir	Lewis & Clark	No-wake speed - as buoyed. Closed to all watercraft from October 15 to December 15 from Canyon Ferry Dam to below Brown's Gulch as marked.
Hebgen Reservoir	Gallatin	No special restrictions.
Hotter Reservoir	Lewis & Clark	No-wake speed - as buoyed. No water skiing on Saturday or Sunday and on all legal holidays from the mouth of the canyon on upper Hotter Reservoir to Gates of the Mountains near Mann Gulch, as marked.
Hyalite Reservoir	Gallatin	No-wake speed
Kootenai River	Lincoln	No special restrictions.
Lake Frances	Pondera	No special restrictions.
Lake Helena	Lewis & Clark	No-wake speed - from April 1 to the opening day of waterfowl season.
Lake Koocanusa	Lincoln	No-wake speed - as buoyed.
Lake Mary Ronan	Lake	No special restrictions.
Martinsdale Reservoir	Wheatland, Meagher	No special restrictions.
Missouri River	Gallatin, Broadwater, Clark, Cascade	Closed to motorboats in specified Lewis & Clark sections. Check boating regulations for details. No-wake speed - Hauser Dam to Beaver Creek.
Nelson Reservoir	Phillips	No special restrictions.
Niangua Reservoir	Lewis & Clark	No special restrictions.
Noxon Rapids Reservoir	Sanders	No special restrictions.
Rock Creek	Missoula, Granite, Carbon	No special restrictions.
Ruby River and Reservoir	Madison	No special restrictions.
Stillwater River	Stillwater	No special restrictions.
Swan Lake and River	Flathead, Lake	No wake speed from Swan Lake upstream to Porcupine Bridge.
Thompson River	Sanders	No special restrictions.
Tiber Reservoir (Lake Etwell)	Liberty, Toole	No special restrictions.
Tongue River Reservoir	Big Horn	No-wake speed - as buoyed and within 300 feet from shoreline. See boating regulations for details.
Yellowstone River	Carbon, Custer, Dawson, Richland, Prairie, Rosebud, Stillwater, Yellowstone	No special restrictions.

YOUR LICENSE DOLLARS AT WORK

Highlights of 2000-2001 Fisheries Program

Providing diverse angling opportunities is important to FWP. Montana continues to rely almost exclusively on wild, naturally-reproducing trout to replenish its rivers and streams. In lakes and reservoirs where natural reproduction is not adequate, management objectives are accomplished with hatchery-reared fish.

FWP also continues to emphasize the preservation of native fish and habitat protection with special efforts aimed at habitat that has been damaged.

Among our many accomplishments during 2000-2001 were the following:

Fisheries Management

FWP completed a new federal aid agreement to provide funding for sport fish management including survey and inventory work for the next six years.

FWP fisheries personnel inventoried fish populations in over 450 waters in 2000-2001 to monitor health of our aquatic ecosystems and evaluate various management activities such as fish stocking, special angling regulations, and habitat improvement projects.

Research

Montana continues to be recognized as the leader in dealing with the whirling disease problem. The Whirling Disease Task Force provides an ongoing focus on this issue. Whirling disease poses very real threats to native species, to wild non-native trout, and to recreational fishing.

All water recreationists are reminded that we still do not know enough about how whirling disease spreads to rule out many possible vectors. Although we believe that the movement of fish and fish parts is the major source of spreading the disease, it is still possible that fish-eating birds and animals, as well as anglers and other water recreationists can also move the parasite. Consequently, precautions still make sense. This continues to be an area where more research is needed.

Habitat Protection/Improvement

The Future Fisheries Improvement Program began in July of 1995 and provides funding for projects that restore and enhance habitats for wild fish populations in streams, rivers, and lakes. Typical projects include restoration of riparian areas and stream channels to a natural condition, improving fish passage, preventing loss of fish into diversions, securing stream flow for in-stream use, and improving physical habitat features to enhance spawning and survival of fishes.

Montana's two stream protection laws, the Stream Protection Act (administered by FWP) and the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act (administered by county Conservation Districts), regulate activities that affect the beds or banks of Montana streams. FWP biologists or our representatives inspect nearly 2000 projects annually and recommend or require permit conditions that protect fish habitat.

Species of Special Concern

The fluvial Arctic grayling recovery program continued to make progress towards restoration of this Montana native species. In addition to working to maintain the native Big Hole River grayling population, fluvial grayling have been reintroduced into the North and South Forks of the Sun River, the upper Ruby River, the Beaverhead River

near Twin Bridges, and the Missouri River near Three Forks. This is part of our effort to establish self-sustaining fluvial grayling populations in each of these rivers.

Efforts to conserve native cutthroat trout have been ongoing throughout this fish's range in Montana under the guidance of a conservation agreement that was developed for westslope cutthroat trout. The goal of the conservation agreement is to protect existing populations and ensure the long-term persistence of westslope cutthroat trout within their historic range in Montana. In part, as a result of the ongoing conservation efforts in Montana, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded that westslope cutthroat trout were not warranted for federal listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Fish Stocking

Montana's nine state-operated hatcheries annually stock about 33 million warm water fish and 8.4 million cold water fish into waters across the state. Warm water species reared at state hatcheries include walleye, largemouth and smallmouth bass, northern pike, channel catfish and tiger muskie. Seven strains of rainbow trout, westslope and Yellowstone cutthroat trout, brown trout, golden trout, Arctic grayling, chinook salmon, and kokanee salmon are reared in Montana. These fish are stocked in publicly or privately owned reservoirs and lakes that have public access. State hatcheries provide large, "catchable-size", fish for the department's Family Fishing Program that facilitates easily accessible fisheries near population centers across Montana.

The state hatchery program also assists with the recovery of native fish species such as pallid sturgeon, Yellowstone and westslope cutthroat trout, and Arctic grayling by developing fish culture techniques to rear these species and providing healthy, genetically compatible fish for restoration work.

Increased Access Opportunities

There are currently 320 fishing access sites statewide. A brochure is available that identifies the location and facilities available at most sites. These brochures are available at Regional FWP offices. On average, four to six new sites are added to the program each year. A new pilot program was funded by the Legislature in 2001 to obtain additional access from private landowners.

In 2001, FWP controlled weeds on over 825 acres at a cost in excess of \$44,000. The work was accomplished in cooperation with private contractors, county weed districts, and FWP maintenance crews. FWP has made it a priority to stop the spread of weeds. You can help by driving only on designated roads and parking areas, and by giving us a call if you find a weed infested area so that we can take steps to control them.

Vandalism is a serious problem. Each year FWP spends thousands of dollars to repair damage at FAS's as a direct result of vandalism. Please call 1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668) if you observe vandalism taking place.

Enforcement

Montana wardens contacted over 50,000 anglers in 2000 to ensure compliance with regulations and protect Montana's fisheries resources. Over 1,000 citations were issued to anglers/recreationists in addition to 400 courtesy citations and approximately 1,400 verbal warnings.

Saturation patrols aimed at protecting species of special concern and detecting over limits of fish were conducted during 2000. These efforts are integral to the overall success of FWP's fisheries programs.

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.

Understand that there are going to be instances when the wading angler should yield to floaters, because 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 laws.

ANGLER EDUCATION

Montana's Angler Education Program has good things happening. Fishing clinics and educational events are held around the state, and often sponsored in cooperation with groups such as Walleyes Unlimited and Trout Unlimited. About 20,000 people take part in these events in Montana every year. In Montana schools, students are learning about Montana fishing and aquatic resources in FWP's "Hooked on Fishing", a program which encourages teachers to use fish and fishing as a classroom theme throughout the year.

Finally, thousands of Montana's youngest anglers are provided free subscriptions to the Montana Angling Youth, or M*Y Club newsletter. Children aged 12 and under can join the M*Y Club by sending their name and address to MAY Club, 490 North Meridian Road, Kalispell MT 59901.

FISHING LOG PROGRAM

If you fish regularly in Montana, help us gather fishing information by keeping a fishing log. Write or call for a Fishing Log. Include your name, address and phone number with all written requests.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, MSU Campus, PO Box 173230
Bozeman, MT 59717-3230, 406-994-6838.

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.



THANK YOU, ANGLERS AND MOTORBOATERS!

Every time you purchase a fishing rod, reel, tackle box, lure, fishing line, an electronic fish finder, or boat gasoline, you are financially assisting many fisheries programs and motorboat access in Montana. This support is in addition to what FWP receives when you purchase a fishing license.

In 1950, the U.S. Congress passed a bill creating the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. The legislation, supported by conservationists, anglers, tackle manufacturers, and many others throughout the nation, was modeled after the highly successful Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1939.

The Sport Fish Restoration Act created a 10 percent federal excise tax on certain fishing equipment, with proceeds to be used at the state level to improve sport fisheries. The main Congressional sponsors of the bill were Senator Dingell from Michigan and Representative Johnson from Colorado. Hence, the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program came to be known as the "Dingell-Johnson" Act.

In 1984, Congress passed significant amendments to the bill, adding motorboat fuel, fish finders and other products to the list of taxed goods. Many of these products sport the Federal Aid logo. The 1984 amendments more than tripled the funding for state sport fisheries programs. Because the sponsors of that legislation were Senator Wallop from Wyoming and then-Representative Breaux from Louisiana, the Federal Aid program is now referred to as "Wallop-Breaux" or "W-B". In 1992 and again in 1998, Congress further amended the W-B program. The amendments added more money and provided for more motor boating projects.

The excise tax is initially paid by manufacturers and is ultimately passed along to the consumer in the price of the fishing products purchased. The "user pay" concept is very important: as a condition of receiving the Federal Aid funds, states cannot use their state license dollars for any purpose other than sport fisheries or wildlife management. The penalty for "diverting" license dollars to other uses is severe — any state doing so would lose its Federal Aid funds! This is one reason why state legislatures have not used license dollars to fund other government functions.

Each year, the excise tax is collected by the U.S. Treasury and then turned over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They return it to the states on the basis of a formula. Forty percent of the funds received are based on the land and water area of the state. Sixty percent of the funds received are based on the number of people who have purchased one or more fishing licenses. So, people who buy a fishing license contribute much more than the actual amount of license dollars they pay. FWP receives about \$5 in Federal Aid funds per paid fishing license holder, which currently amounts to over \$5 million a year. Since 1952, Montana has received more than \$84 million in Sport Fish Restoration funds.

With revenue received from license sales and the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program, FWP funds a number of important programs and projects. Most of FWP's field biologists performing fisheries management work are funded with Sport Fish Restoration funds. Most of Montana's fish hatchery personnel, along with many of the major hatchery renovation projects, are also funded with Federal Aid. Other important projects include aquatic education, research, habitat protection, and angler surveys.

In addition, over 140 Fishing Access Sites throughout Montana have been maintained, improved, or originally purchased with Federal Aid. You may have noticed the Federal Aid logo on signs at these sites throughout the state.

Motor boaters also benefit from their "user-paid" Federal Aid dollars. The Act now mandates that 15 percent of the funds be used to develop and maintain motorboat use facilities. So far, 14 of Montana's water-based State Parks and many of the fishing access sites have been improved or maintained with Federal Aid motorboat access funds.

So, remember, each time you purchase that rod, reel, or other piece of fishing equipment, or put gas in your boat, you are contributing toward the conservation of sport fisheries in Montana.

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, FWP joins the U.S. Department of the Interior and its bureaus in prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex (in educational programs). If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility please write to FWP, Personnel Office, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620 or to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Diversity and Civil Rights-External Programs, 4040 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 130, Arlington, VA 22203.

MONTANA FWP FOUNDATION

The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation is a non-profit corporation that has received tax-exempt status from the IRS. The mission of the Foundation, created in 1999, is to provide private support for the critical efforts of the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Department and to take a leadership role in preserving and enhancing Montana's natural, cultural and recreational resources for future generations.

Many are aware of our story. Elk, trout, bighorn sheep and more were harvested to near extinction for food or furs a hundred years ago. Then hunters and anglers stepped forward, with the support of landowners, and paid license fees, and later excise taxes on equipment, to fund the greatest fish and wildlife restoration program on earth.

New questions and challenges now confront us. Can we do for other species what we have done for animals that provide hunting and fishing opportunities? Will we have the access necessary to enjoy our wild creatures? Can we reclaim damaged habitats, maintain our open spaces and preserve our wild places? Are historic and cultural remnants of this past century going to be preserved through the next?

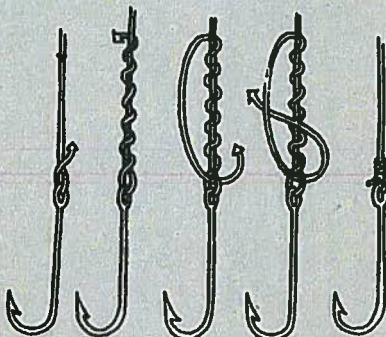
Hunters, anglers and park users have and will continue to pay their fair share. The Foundation was created to help support new work. It will build an endowment of corporate donations and individual gifts to fund programs that conserve wild places, restore imperiled species, maintain access, protect unique cultural and historic parks and educate kids about the wonders of our world.

It is time for this generation to think about the legacy we will leave for the next century. When wildlife calls ... who will answer? Please consider becoming a partner in keeping the "Magic of Montana" alive for future generations.

For more information or to make a contribution, call 406-444-6759, or write Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation at PO Box 200701, Helena MT 59620-0701.

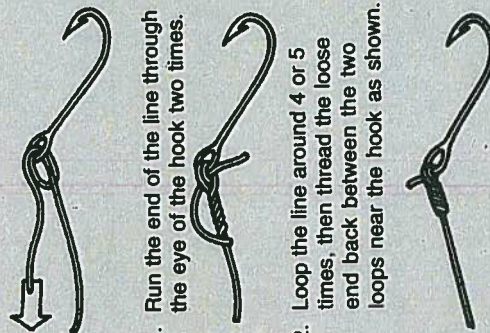
Basic Fishing Line Knots

CLINCH KNOT



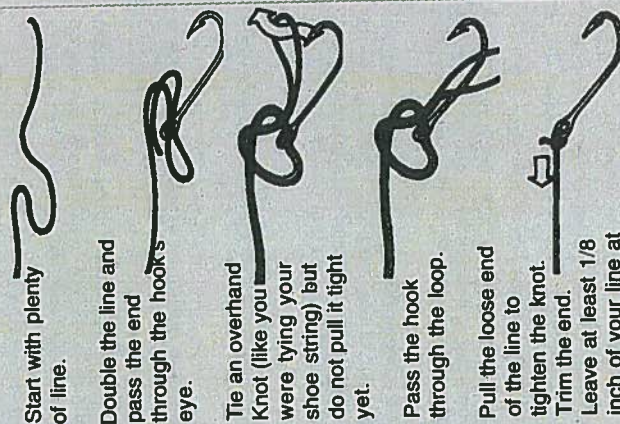
1. Put the end of the line through the eye of the hook and bring it back toward the line.
2. Make five "S" twists around the line.
3. Take the end back toward the hook and push it through the first loop nearest the eye.
4. Bring the end back through the big loop.
5. Hold the hook and the line, pull the knot tight until it looks like the knot shown.

TRILENE KNOT



1. Run the end of the line through the eye of the hook two times.
2. Loop the line around 4 or 5 times, then thread the loose end back between the two loops near the hook as shown.
3. Pull tight. Trim the loose end.

PALOMAR KNOT



1. Start with plenty of line.
2. Double the line and pass the end through the hook's eye.
3. Tie an overhand Knot (like you were tying your shoe string) but do not pull it tight yet.
4. Pass the hook through the loop.
5. Pull the loose end of the line to tighten the knot. Trim the end. Leave at least 1/8 inch of your line at the knot.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

1-800 Hotline - 1-800-225-5397

Our information hotline offers comprehensive details to callers on a wide variety of recreation topics. The line is operational Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm MST. A \$1.50 per minute charge is assessed and callers must be at least 18 years old.

Fax and Customer Service

Customers can send a fax to FWP at 406-444-4952 or call 406-444-2535 for general information. To seek nonresident hunting license information call 406-444-2950.

Internet—<http://fwp.state.mt.us>

Internet surfers can catch a wave of information from FWP's award winning World Wide Web site. Eight areas are covered—Fishing, Hunting, Wildlife, Parks, News, Education, *Montana Outdoors* magazine and inside FWP. Within these areas are FWP hunting and fishing regulations, FWP Talk, parks information and comment areas. The site provides links to various agencies, organizations, and news and weather services.

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

Artificial lures include any lure (including flies) that imitates natural bait. Artificial lures do not include, however, fish eggs, any natural or artificial food, nor any chemically treated or processed natural bait.

ATTENDED LINE

A fishing line, which is hand-held or where the angler has immediate control.

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, which contribute to the water supply of the watershed.

DRESSED FISH

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

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Species in imminent danger of extinction throughout their range.

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.

FLOAT FISHING

Includes both fishing from a boat and wade fishing when access is by boat.

FLOAT OUTFITTING

The operation of any boat for commercial purposes by a fishing outfitter or guide.

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 net trap designed to capture fish moving within a body of water. Hoop nets are permitted for use in certain locations in the Eastern Fishing District. A permit is required for fishing with a hoop net.

LANDING NET

A net attached to a frame and handle, which is used to capture fish which have been hooked by an angler.

LEGALLY TAKEN

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

LEGAL RESIDENT

To be a legal resident eligible to purchase hunting, fishing or trapping licenses, 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. You must show a valid Montana Driver's License or a valid Montana Identification Card when purchasing a license. If unsure of your residency status, contact a regional FWP office.

LENGTH

Fish length is measured from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail fin.

MAINSTEM

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

NONGAME FISH

Any wild fish not otherwise legally classified by statute or regulation of this state.

PERMANENT RESIDENCE

The physical abode or structure you maintain as your principal, legal residence. A person may only have 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

An artificially impounded body of water behind a man-made dam extending upstream to the mouth of its inlet stream(s).

SALMONID

Any species of trout, salmon, grayling, char or whitefish. All salmonid fish have an adipose fin (small, fleshy fin on the back near the tail).

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.

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 are hand-propelled or propelled with a spring, rubber band, or compressed gas.

SPECIES OF SPECIAL 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.

THREATENED SPECIES

Species that are likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

TRIBUTARY

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

UNATTENDED LINE (Setline)

Any line extended into the water and supporting one or more hooks where the angler is not in immediate control of the line. Setlines may be used on those waters specified by district regulations. All setlines must be clearly identified with the owner's complete name and address.

VESSEL

Every description of watercraft capable of being used as a means of transportation on water except inner tubes (motor vehicle type), float tubes (belly boats), air mattresses and sailboards when used without mechanical propulsion by one individual.

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 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.

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 11).
2. Sturgeon are difficult to distinguish. The shovelnose sturgeon is smaller and more common. We recommend 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 one 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 Carterville Diversion Dam.

Pallid Sturgeon

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

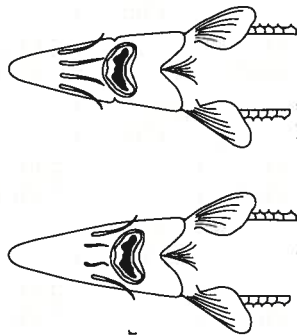
Barbels attached close to mouth, about 1/3 the distance between mouth and tip of snout.

Shovelnose Sturgeon

Outer barbel barely longer than inner barbel.

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

The pallid sturgeon is a fish of special 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. Since the sturgeon are hard to identify, we recommend that all sturgeon be released if you're unsure of the species.



black spots

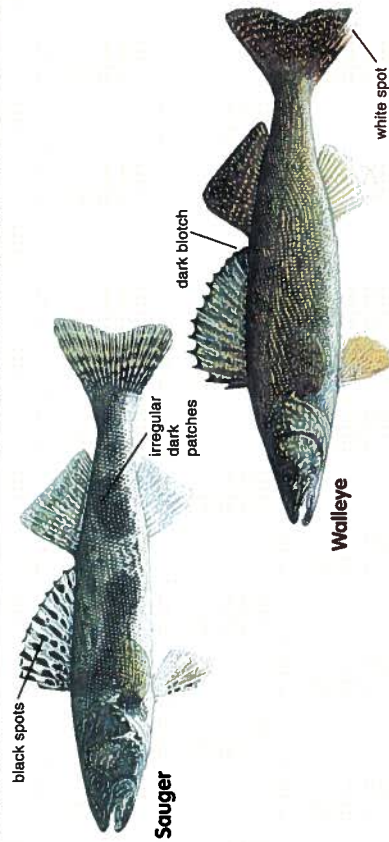
Sauger

irregular dark patches

dark blotch

Walleye

white spot



KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SAUGER AND WALLEYE