



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

FISHING CONTEST APPLICATION (Revised June 2019)

****Versions of Previous Application Forms WILL NOT be accepted****
****Late Applications WILL NOT be accepted****

Any event where an entry fee is charged or where people may win prizes for catching fish in Montana is considered a fishing contest. Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with all fishing contest regulations. All other contests must be permitted. No contests will be permitted for holiday weekends. Contests involving any Montana listed **species of special concern*** are prohibited except for lake/reservoir stocked Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout or Westslope Cutthroat Trout, including upper Missouri Cutthroat Trout. All contests involving wild trout in streams/rivers are prohibited with one exception, contests for Brook Trout that are restricted to anglers 14 years or younger are allowed until July 17, 2017. For more information, please review the Reference Guide.

***Species of special concern include White Sturgeon, Blue Sucker, Shortnose Gar, Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Paddlefish, Pygmy Whitefish, Bull Trout, Native Lake Trout, Sauger, Pallid Sturgeon and Artic Grayling.**

New in 2018: Fish Wildlife and Parks Aquatic Invasive species rule 12.5.706 requires inspection before launch for all watercraft entering the state and crossing the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin. Fishing contest organizers are required to ensure participants adhere to all Montana legal requirements.

Application Requirements (Please use the checklist below for full consideration):

Important Dates:

Winter Ice-Fishing Contests (12/1-3/1): Applications must be submitted between May 1 and July 1.

Open Water Fishing Contests (3/1-12/1): Applications must be submitted between September 1 and November 1.

- Mail completed fishing contest application form (pages 2-5) to:
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Attn: Fishing Contests
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
Or email application to: fwpfsh@mt.gov

You must include the following with your contest application form:

- A copy of the draft contest rules
- A copy of the contest registration form
- Page 5 of the fishing contest application form if a FWP site will be used for the event:
 - Fishing Access Sites and/or State Parks
- **NON-FWP Site Authorizations:** All applicants must obtain authorization for the use of any NON-FWP sites. Documentation of the authorization must be attached to the application. These may include the following:
 - Bureau of Reclamation – 406-247-7300
 - US Army Corps of Engineers - 406-526-3411 Ext. 4276 (Updated 9/15/2016)
 - Federal, State, County and City agencies
 - Private landowners, including private marinas

- Please ensure all portions of application have been completed:
 - Indicate 1st and 2nd choice dates for your contest

Part I. Contact Information

***Fishing contest permits will be issued to the listed sponsor (permittee). If no sponsor is listed, the permit will be issued to the contest organizer. No future permits will be issued to the sponsor and/or organizer until all reports and payments are submitted to FWP.**

Sponsor Info (Permittee)	Sponsor of Contest:	_____
	Sponsor ALS #:	_____
	Sponsor Address:	_____
	Sponsor Phone Number:	_____
	Sponsor Email Address:	_____
Organizer Info	Contact Person:	_____
	Contact Person ALS # or DOB:	_____
	Contact Person Address:	_____
	Contact Telephone Number:	_____
	Contact Email Address:	_____

Part II. Derby Information

- Name of contest:

- List all waterbodies where contest activities will be held:

- Designated boundaries for the contest, if any: _____
- Dates and hours contest will be held (including start/stop times). You must list 1st and 2nd date choices for your contest. Competing applications for the 1st choice date will be evaluated using the criteria listed in Montana statute 87-3-121 and established Waterbody Management Plans.

	Date(s)	Start Time(s)	Stop Time(s)
1 st choice			
2 nd choice			

5. List ALL specific fish species to be included in the contest (e.g. Rainbow Trout, Smallmouth Bass; not trout and bass):

6. List ALL Fishing Access Sites or State Parks that will be used for fishing access or contest functions such as registration and awards:

7. Entry fee to be charged:

Per Angler: _____ Per Team: _____ # on a team: _____ Other Fees (specify): _____

8. Estimated number of participating anglers: _____

Estimated number of participating watercraft: In state: _____ Out of state: _____

9. Is there a cap of the # of anglers or angler teams that can participate in the event? _____ Yes _____ No

9a. If yes, what is the cap: # of teams _____ Total # of Anglers: _____

10. Estimated total number of persons involved in the event (anglers, organizers, & spectators): _____

11. Is this a catch and release event? Yes _____ No _____

12. What measures are proposed to decrease fish mortality during the fishing contest and how will they be enforced?

13. Location name and address of starting and check-in points:

14. Location name, date and time of rules meeting:

15. Location name, date and time of weigh-in:

16. Requirements for participation (e.g. MT fishing license, live wells, safety equipment, proof of inspection for out of state watercraft):

17. Description and value of prizes (including amounts of cash prizes):

PART III. Other

1. Describe contest format including basis for awarding prizes (Be specific: longest or heaviest individual or combination of fish, etc.):

2. What measures are proposed to avoid or reduce conflict with other waterbody and site users?

3. What measures are proposed to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species and how will they be enforced? How is proof of inspection going to be verified for participants where proof of inspection before launch is required?

4. Other comments or information:

If FWP sites are NOT involved, please sign below. If an FWP site is involved, please continue to Part IV.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

I am authorized to serve as a representative for this event. I certify that the information given by me in this application is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions listed on the permit. I understand that failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the event or failure to submit records within 30 days of the conclusion of the event may result in loss of future opportunities to obtain a permit.

Applicant Signature

Date

PART IV. SPECIAL USE PERMIT FEES

This page MUST be completed for contest with 30 or more people and involving FWP fishing access sites or state parks.

FWP assesses a special use permit fee of \$3 per participant for all fishing contests with 30 or more people using FWP administered fishing access sites or state parks. The fee is used to off-set the cost of administering the event, including but not limited to site clean-up, latrine pumping, road plowing and maintenance/monitoring. FWP may adjust this fee on a case-by-case basis. Examples that may warrant a fee reduction include: contests organized primarily for children under the age of 13; contests conducted by nonprofit organizations; and contests when proceeds are donated to a nonprofit organization, a charitable cause, or educational programs. Fee adjustment decisions are the responsibility of FWP and are based on the information provided in this permit application. Please complete the remainder of this page to help FWP determine the fee amount. The contest organizer is responsible for submitting all owed fees within 30 days after the conclusion of the contest. Organizers will receive a Fee Payment Form with their permit.

1. Names of FWP Fishing Access Sites or State Parks that would be utilized or affected by contest:

Name of site: _____ Name of site: _____
Name of site: _____ Name of site: _____

2. Estimated number of participating anglers in contest: _____

3. Check those that apply:

Contest organized by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. You must include a copy of your IRS tax-exempt status with your application.

Proceeds from this event will be donated to a nonprofit organization or charitable cause.

Name of nonprofit organization or charitable cause: _____

Percentage of proceeds that will be donated (check one):

100% 75% 50% 25% Other: _____

Contest is organized primarily for children under the age of thirteen (majority of participants are children).

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

I am authorized to serve as the representative for this event. I certify that the information given by me in this application is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions listed on the permit. I understand that permit fees may apply to this event. I understand that failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the permit or failure to submit records and fees, if applicable, within thirty days following the conclusion of the event may result in loss of future opportunities to obtain a permit.

Applicant Signature:

Date

MONTANA FISHING CONTEST LAWS AND RULES

MONTANA STATUTES

87-3-121. Conditions for award of prizes.

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or club to offer or give any prize, gift, or anything of value in connection with or as a bag limit prize for the taking, capturing, killing, or in any manner acquiring any game, fowl, fur-bearing animals, or any bird or animal now or that shall be hereafter protected in any way by the fish and game laws of the state of Montana.

(2) The commission shall adopt rules to regulate contests by a person, firm, corporation, association, or club that intends to offer or give a prize, gift, or anything of value in connection with or as a prize for the taking, capturing, killing, or in any manner acquiring fish that are protected under Title 87. The commission's rules must be based on the commission's duty under Title 87 to protect, preserve, and propagate fish in the state.

(3) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the award of prizes for any one game bird or fur-bearing animal on the basis of size, quality, or rarity.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 82, L. 1935; re-en. Sec. 3744.1, R.C.M. 1935; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 48, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 26-809; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 346, L. 1987.

FWP Rules for Regulation of Fishing Contests

12.7.801 DEFINITION

(1) "Fishing contest" is any event, contest, derby or tournament where an entry fee is charged or where people are expected to compete to win prizes or cash based on the capture of an individual fish or combination of fish. Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with the provisions of this subchapter.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.802 APPLICATION

(1) Any individual, club, organization or business wishing to sponsor a fishing contest on a body of water open to public fishing must submit an application to the department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks as specified in this rule.

(2) Applications must be submitted between September 1 and November 1 for open water contests proposed for the following March 1 through December 1;

(a) applications for benefit fundraising contests received later than November 1 may be accepted.

(3) Applications must be submitted between May 1 and July 1 for ice fishing contests proposed for the following December 1 through March 1;

(a) applications for benefit fundraising contests received later than July 1 may be accepted.

(4) Contest sponsors must provide documentation that they have approval to use each fishing access site not under the ownership or control of the department that is listed in the application.

(5) Contest sponsors are responsible for notifying participants of any public safety concerns associated with the contest.

(6) Contest sponsors are responsible for notifying participants that boats and trailers must be cleaned before and after the contest to prevent transport and introduction of aquatic nuisance species.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.803 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

(1) The department will evaluate the application based on the following criteria:

a) impacts of the contest on the fish population of the host body of water, the aquatic ecosystem and the immediate area;

b) Compatibility of the contest with fisheries management objectives for the water;

(c) purse or participation limits (limits may or may not be imposed depending upon public comments received or

potential conflict with other users);

- (d) conflicts with other contests proposed for a body of water;
- (e) compliance with contest rules, conditions or reporting requirements for previously sponsored contests;
- (f) environmental conditions (such as relevant historic high water temperatures) and compatibility of check-in format with successful release of live fish for catch and release contests; and
- (g) contest boundaries.

(2) The department will give public notice of all contests and provide an opportunity for public comment on each application.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.804 COMPETING APPLICATIONS

- (1) When two or more contests are proposed on a single body of water the department will approve applications which:
- (a) offer the best opportunities for public benefits by furthering knowledge of angling ethics and aquatic ecology;
 - (b) have been approved historically;
 - (c) have had good participation; and
 - (d) have a good record of compliance.

(2) The department may request that applicants competing for a permit on the same or consecutive weekends resolve conflicts and allocate limited dates among themselves.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.805 DEPARTMENT DECISION

(1) The department will issue a decision regarding applications no later than February 1 for open water contests or October 1 for ice-fishing contests. The department may approve an application as submitted, approve an application with modifications or deny an application. When an application is approved with modifications, the applicant must respond to the department within 20 days of receipt of the department's written decision if the modifications are unacceptable. Failure to do so will constitute acceptance of the decision.

- (2) An application may be denied if in the opinion of the department any of the following are found to exist:
- (a) the contest will have detrimental impacts on fish populations, the aquatic ecosystem or the surrounding area;
 - (b) the contest would conflict with management goals for the host water;
 - (c) the contest conflicts with other proposed contests or intended uses of the host water;
 - (d) the proposed contest would be held during a period of heavy recreational use on the host body of water, increasing the likelihood of conflicts with other users; and
 - (e) there is significant public opposition to the proposed contest based on biological or recreational conflict concerns. Public comments will be provided to the sponsor on request.

- (3) Conditions may be placed on contests to:
- (a) minimize fish mortality in catch and release contests;
 - (b) regulate harvest;
 - (c) reduce user conflicts; or
 - (d) require supplemental trash removal, restroom facilities, or other maintenance at department access sites when routine facilities and maintenance are inadequate for the contest.

(4) Contests may not be scheduled and approved for consecutive weekends on any body of water less than 100,000 surface acres in size.

(5) Contests may not be scheduled on holiday weekends, including but not limited to Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day.

(6) The department will notify the applicant of its decision by mail. The department shall notify the public with an announcement released to all major state newspapers and through notice published on the department website.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA
IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.806 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

(1) Within 30 days after an approved fishing contest, the sponsor shall report to the department information on the success of contest participants on forms provided at the time of contest approval.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.807 PROHIBITED CONTESTS

(1) Contests involving any Montana listed species of special concern are prohibited except the following:

(a) Contests are allowed for lake/reservoir stocked Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki bouvieri*) or Westslope Cutthroat Trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*) including upper Missouri Cutthroat Trout.

(2) All contests involving wild trout (*Salmo Onchorynchus* or *Salvelinus*) in streams/rivers are prohibited. Contests for Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) that are restricted to anglers 14 years or younger are allowed until July 17, 2017.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.808 WAIVER

(1) Upon a showing of good cause, the department may waive the application of any rule except where waiver is precluded by statute.

(2) During approved catch-and-release fishing contest hours, fish caught for contest purposes and released alive by contest participants are not considered part of their daily limit. Contest participants may not have more than the daily limit in their possession at any time. All fish must be released alive at the end of the day unless the fish died as a result of handling during the contest.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.809 APPEAL TO THE COMMISSION

(1) The applicant or any person supporting or opposing an application may appeal the decision of the department to the commission. An appeal may be made on any grounds or arguments made to the department during the department's evaluation and consideration of the application. A notice of appeal must be filed with the commission within 20 days of written notice of the department's decision.

(2) The commission's decision to approve the application as submitted, to approve the application with modifications or to deny the application will be made on the criteria of ARM [12.7.805](#). The commission's decision will be final. (History Sec. 87-2-121 MCA; IMP, Sec. 87-3-121 MCA; New, 1995 MAR p. 367, Eff. 3/17/95.)

12.5.706 IDENTIFIED AREAS THREATENED WITH AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES AND APPLICABLE QUARANTINE MEASURES

(1) Because of the known existence of aquatic invasive mussels in the areas defined in ARM [12.5.707](#), the department has identified all other areas of the State of Montana as an invasive species management area because of the threat of infestation of aquatic invasive mussels.

(2) The department has determined the following quarantine measures are necessary to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive mussels:

(a) vessels and equipment approaching a department inspection station must stop for inspection as directed;

(b) vessels and equipment entering the state that do not approach a department inspection station must be inspected for aquatic invasive species prior to launching in any Montana water body, unless previously approved by the department for local use only;

(c) vessels and equipment traveling across the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin that have been used on waters outside of the Columbia River Basin must be inspected at a

department inspection station prior to launching within the Columbia River Basin. The department will post approved inspection stations and operating hours at fwp.mt.gov;

(d) upon removing a vessel from any surface waters and before leaving the associated boat launch or parking area, all aquatic vegetation must be removed from the vessel, trailer, and equipment;

(e) transport of surface water is prohibited unless authorized by the department;

(f) live aquatic bait and fish must be transported in clean non-surface water where allowed in current public fishing regulations;

(g) reasonable measures must be taken to dry or drain all compartments or spaces that hold water, including emptying bilges, applying absorbents, and ventilation; and

(h) areas subject to inspection include but are not limited to:

(i) the exterior of the vessel;

(ii) livewells;

(iii) bait buckets;

(iv) ballast tanks;

(v) bilge areas; and

(vi) trailer transporting vessel.

(3) Any vessel at an inspection station found with invasive species, or any vessel containing residual water that has been in infested water in the last 30 days, will be decontaminated by AIS staff as arranged by the department. Infested waters that contain microscopic AIS species are identified on the map titled "Mussel-Infested States and Waterbodies" available at fwp.mt.gov. AIS staff shall refer to the map or to the most current known information.

(4) Decontamination methods on vessels subject to (3) may include hot water washing, hot water flushing, and drying time, including interior portions of complex engine systems and pumps. A decontamination order may be issued that requires a drying period as directed by the department. The drying time will depend on weather conditions. During the drying period, the department may lock the vessel to the trailer to prevent launching. The department will be responsible for arranging the time and location to unlock the vessel when the drying time is complete. It is prohibited for anyone other than authorized department staff to remove the lock during the drying time. If a vessel requires a drying period as part of the decontamination process, then the vessel must pass a second inspection prior to launching in Montana waters in order to be considered decontaminated.

(5) Upon inspection and/or decontamination, proof of compliance on any requirements will be provided and must be shown upon request.

(6) Emergency response vehicles and equipment engaging in emergency response activities are exempt.

(7) Violation of this rule is subject to penalty under [80-7-1014](#), MCA.

12.5.707 IDENTIFIED BODIES OF WATER CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE MUSSELS

(1) The department has identified the following bodies of water as invasive species management areas because they are infested with confirmed or suspected aquatic invasive mussels:

(a) Canyon Ferry Reservoir; and

(b) Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell).

(2) The department has determined the following quarantine measures are necessary to prevent further spread of the species from these bodies of water:

(a) all vessels and equipment launched or having otherwise entered the water bodies listed in (1) must be inspected and, if directed by the department, decontaminated at a department decontamination station as required in ARM [12.5.706](#)

prior to leaving the water body. The following are exempt:

(i) vessels approved by the department for local travel only (vessels approaching a department inspection station must still stop as directed pursuant to ARM [12.5.706](#));

(ii) emergency response vehicles and equipment engaged in emergency response activities.

(b) when an approved or decontaminated vessel leaves the water bodies listed in (1), all aquatic bait and fish must be transported without water.

(3) Any rules or regulations for boat ramps or boat launching on the water bodies listed in (1) operated by the Bureau of Reclamation are considered rules adopted pursuant to the authority of the department for enforcement of these sites.

(4) Upon inspection and/or decontamination, proof of compliance on any requirements will be provided and must be shown upon request.

(5) Violation of this rule is subject to penalty under [80-7-1014](#), MCA.



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS

All watercraft are required to be Cleaned Drained and Dry before launching in the waters of Montana. Tournament organizers and participants are asked to do their part to help protect the waters of Montana from Aquatic Invasive Species.

AIS Requirements:

- 1) All participants shall comply with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' (FWP) tournament requirements.
- 2) Each individual participant shall ensure their watercraft are clean, drained, and dry prior to participating in the tournament.
- 3) All watercraft entering the state of Montana and watercraft crossing west over the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin are required to be inspected prior to launch.
- 4) All participants shall be inspected by FWP personnel when applicable.*
- 5) Tournament organizers are required to inform all participants of these requirements prior to launching.
- 6) Tournament organizers are required to verify proof of inspection for all watercraft where inspection is required.

AIS Background and Impacts:

Aquatic invasive species are a threat to our aquatic resources. Zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, New Zealand mudsnails, and whirling disease are just a few of the destructive and aggressive invaders that threaten Montana waterways. Aquatic invasive species have few natural predators or control agents, they can reproduce and grow rapidly and threaten the ecological stability, diversity and abundance of native species. Aquatic invasive species also threaten commercial, agricultural, aquaculture, and recreational activities. Aquatic invasive species can be introduced into new areas by the movement of water; they can also be transported to new sites attached to boats, trailers, and equipment. Many of the invasive species that threaten Montana have the ability to survive extended periods of time out of water or in live wells or bilge water, making their transport to new locations possible.

Protecting the waters of Montana from AIS can only be successful if all boaters do their part to clean drain and dry their watercraft and gear. Tournament organizers and participants are a big part of that effort. Thank you again for your cooperation and we look forward to working with you during the tournament season.

Please contact FWP for further information 406-444-2449 or visit our website for more information:
www.CleanDrainDryMT.com

*FWP personnel will carry out boat inspections at some tournaments. The inspection will involve checking outside surfaces of the boat for the presence of any aquatic weeds or animals and will involve inspecting the live well, anchor and interior of the boat for the presence of any unlawful live bait, other aquatic animals, or standing water. All water should be drained from the boat away from waterbodies. If necessary, the exterior of the boat will be washed with hot water to remove any aquatic plant parts or animals, and any unlawful live bait or other aquatics will be confiscated and citations may be issued. Tournament organizers are required to advise all participants of the clean drain dry and inspection requirements prior to the tournament.

