

## Important Regulation Changes For 2016

Western District	Central District	Eastern District
North Fork Blackfoot River Lake Kookanus Swan Lake and River	Rivers and Streams open all year Cutthroat harvest	Live Bait Paddlefish lottery Paddlefish mandatory reporting

### What License(s) Do I Need to Fish in Montana?

Age	Resident	Nonresident
0-11	No license required. Must observe all limits and regulations.	
12 - 17, 62 and older, or disabled	Conservation License (\$8) plus a Fishing License: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$10.50 for season</li> <li>Resident Sportsman licenses include a season fishing license</li> </ul>	Conservation License (\$10) plus a Montana Fishing License: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$25 for 2 consecutive calendar days, \$56.00 for 10 consecutive calendar days or \$86 for season</li> <li>Nonresident Combination licenses include a season fishing license</li> </ul>
18-61	Conservation License (\$8) plus a Fishing License: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$5 for 2 consecutive calendar days or \$21 for season</li> <li>Resident Sportsman licenses include a season fishing license</li> </ul>	

### Free fishing weekend on June 18-19, 2016.

By Montana law, each year on Father's Day weekend any person (resident or non-resident) may fish for any fish within this state without obtaining a fishing license as long as they abide by the seasons, restrictions and bag limits listed in these Fishing Regulations. The two exceptions to this are Paddlefish and Bull Trout fishing, both of which require the purchase of a Conservation and Fishing License. Fishing for Paddlefish also requires a Paddlefish tag. A catch card is required to fish for Bull Trout as described on page 5.

## License/Permit Requirements

**A valid fishing license (see license requirements table above) is required for all types of fishing on state waters.** To fish in Montana, most anglers need two licenses: a Conservation License and a Fishing License, see table above. *You must have your fishing license in your possession while fishing.*

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

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

4 [Report illegal fish introductions! Make the call: 1-800 TIP-MONT \(1-800-847-6668\)](#)

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

## Special Fishing Licenses

**Paddlefish:** *All anglers must purchase a Paddlefish tag to fish for Paddlefish. To purchase a tag: All anglers must have a valid Conservation License and the required Fishing License.* Limit of one tag (one fish) per person:

**Resident - \$6.50 each      Nonresident - \$15 each**

Paddlefish harvest only tags will be available via lottery draw for the Upper Missouri River Paddlefish season (White Tag) only. Anglers need to apply individually or as a party (up to five people) before April 1st. See page 86 for specifics on the Upper Missouri Paddlefish drawing.

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

Catch Cards are free of charge and are available at the FWP Region One office in Kalispell. Applications for a catch card are available at the FWP Region One office or online at <http://fwp.mt.gov>. Completed applications must be presented at the regional headquarters or mailed to FWP Bull Trout Permit, 490 North Meridian, Kalispell MT 59901.

**Montana Resident With Disability:** Montana FWP seeks to ensure that its programs, services and activities are accessible to persons with disabilities. Montana FWP provides many representative recreational opportunities. To learn more or to request modifications or accommodations relative to a disability, contact the FWP Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at 406-444-5653.

- Resident Person With a Disability must purchase a **Conservation License** - \$8 and a **Fishing License** - \$10.50. To qualify a person must be permanently and substantially disabled. Applications and licenses available to residents only at regional FWP offices.
- Lifetime Fishing License for the Blind - \$10

Contact the Helena FWP Licensing office for information and an application.

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

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

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

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

## Purple Heart

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

## Other Permit Requirements and Laws

**State School Trust Lands:** Your conservation license provides anglers, hunters and trappers access to legally accessible State School Trust Lands for fishing and hunting. Other recreational activities such as hiking and bird watching still require the \$10 state lands recreational use permit. These activities cannot, by Federal statute, be covered by the conservation license. Additional information regarding the rules, regulations, and restrictions governing these activities is available from FWP or contact DNRC at 406-444-2074.

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

**Aquatic Invertebrates - Crayfish/Mussels:** A valid fishing license is required to harvest crayfish for personal use (see "License/Permit Requirements" for specific license requirements). Crayfish may be taken in traps no larger than 24x12x12 inches. Commercial harvest of crayfish or mussels is prohibited.

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

## Commercial Fishing Licenses

### Bait Fish Seining: Commercial Harvest, \$10 Fee

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

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

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

6 Report illegal fish introductions! Make the call: 1-800 TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668)

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

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

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

### **Private Fish Ponds – License Requirements, \$10 Fee for 10 years**

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

Koi and goldfish ponds must be registered with FWP. Registration forms are available online at <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishing/regulations/koiGoldfishPondRegistrationForm.html> or from all FWP offices. There is no fee for registering a pond.

**Unattended Fishing Devices:** Any unattended fishing device (crayfish traps, minnow traps, fish traps, setlines, etc.) must have the angler's name and phone number or ALS# attached to it.

## **Penalties for Violations of the Law**

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

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

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

- To violate any regulations listed in this booklet.
- To introduce any fish or viable fish eggs into any waters without FWP permission.
- To refuse to show one's fishing license upon demand.
- To refuse to show one's fish upon demand.
- To loan or transfer your fishing license or tags to any person.
- To sell game fish except as prescribed by F&W Commission regulations.
- To leave or dump any dead animal, fish, garbage or litter in or on any state, federal or private property where public recreation is permitted.
- To stun or kill fish by using any carbide, lime, giant powder, dynamite, or other explosive compounds, or any corrosive or narcotic poison. To possess these substances within 100 feet of any stream where fish are found is unlawful.
- To hire or retain an unlicensed outfitter or guide.
- To waste any part of game fish suitable for food (see Waste of Fish or Game definition on page 22).

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