Anyone fishing for anadromous salmon and/or steelhead, except those expressly exempt, must have a valid fishing license and salmon and/or steelhead permit(s) on his/her person. These license and permit requirements also apply when fishing for hatchery salmon or steelhead stocked by Idaho Fish and Game in the Boise River or Hells Canyon Reservoir.

Any person who does not qualify as a resident (see Page 61) must purchase either a nonresident season fishing license and a full-season salmon and/or steelhead permit or a nonresident 3-day salmon/steelhead license/permit.

Children (including nonresident children) under the age of 14 are exempt from purchasing salmon and steelhead permits. They may fish without permits if they are accompanied by a valid permit holder, provided that any fish caught must be recorded on the permit holder’s card and counted in the permit holder’s legal bag, possession and season limit. A resident child under 14 may purchase permits without a license so that they may catch their own limit(s) of salmon and/or steelhead.

Any non-resident under the age of 18 may purchase a junior non-resident fishing license and appropriate permit so they may catch their own limit of salmon or steelhead.

Methods of Take

- Any angler, who has attained the bag, possession, or season limit on those waters with salmon or steelhead limits, must cease fishing for salmon or steelhead including catch-and-release fishing.

- Only single-pointed barbless hooks are allowed when fishing for salmon or steelhead in the South Fork Clearwater River.

- No person shall kill or retain in possession any salmon or steelhead which has been hooked other than in the mouth or jaw. Any salmon or steelhead hooked other than in the mouth or jaw must be released. See snagging definition on Page 46.

- Salmon and steelhead may be taken with barbed hooks in the Boise River and the Snake River between Hells Canyon and Oxbow dams.

- Only barbless hooks with a maximum 5/8 inch gap between shank and point may be used when fishing for salmon or steelhead in the Salmon and Clearwater river drainages and the Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam. Bending the barb(s) down to the shank of a single, double, or treble hook will meet this requirement.

Please Note

- Fishing for or targeting salmon or steelhead is prohibited unless a season is specifically opened for the species on that water.

- Steelhead with an intact adipose fin cannot be reduced to possession and must be released.

- Anglers should refer to season proclamations to determine if Chinook Salmon and Coho Salmon with an intact adipose fin can be retained.

- Any anadromous salmon or steelhead that is being reduced to possession must be killed immediately. Otherwise, the fish must be released upon landing.

- All fish that are hooked, landed, and reduced to possession shall be counted in the limit of the person hooking the fish. Daily and possession limits for adult Chinook Salmon (24 or more inches in length) and jack salmon (less than 24 inches in length) may differ and unless specifically stipulated otherwise by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Commission for a season or waters, jack salmon are not included in the season limit and need not be entered on the angler’s permit.

- No person shall have in the field or in transit any salmon or steelhead from which the head or tail has been removed unless: 1) the angler is ashore and done fishing for the day; 2) the salmon or steelhead is properly recorded on the angler’s permit; and 3) the fish is processed or packaged with the skin naturally attached to the flesh including a portion with a healed, clipped adipose fin scar or the adipose fin. The fish must be processed or packaged in a manner that the number of fish harvested can be readily determined. Processed salmon and steelhead cannot be transported by boat.

- Steelhead harvest and angler participation are estimated by a telephone survey conducted within a few weeks after the season closes. You may be called and asked about your effort and success. Please save your permit until three months after the season has closed or until you are contacted by Idaho Fish and Game.
RELEASING WILD SALMON AND STEELHEAD

Please help ensure the survival of released wild salmon and steelhead by:

• Using proper sized gear and keeping fight time to a minimum
• Not pulling fish onto rock, sand, or dirt banks—instead, use a net or "tail" the fish
• Minimizing the time out of water
• Not handling the fish by the gills
• Reviving the fish by gently holding it in the water, if necessary

River Location Codes

Snake River
Snake River, downstream from Salmon River ..................01
Snake River, from Salmon River to Hells Canyon Dam .......02
Snake River, Hells Canyon Dam to Oxbow Dam ..............27

Clearwater River
Clearwater River, downstream from Orofino Bridge ..........03
Clearwater River, upstream from Orofino Bridge ............04
North Fork Clearwater River .....................................05
Middle Fork Clearwater River ....................................06
South Fork Clearwater River .....................................07
Lochsa River .........................................................08

Salmon River
Salmon River, downstream from Whitebird Creek ..........10
Salmon River, Whitebird Creek to Little Salmon ..........11
Salmon River, Little Salmon to Vinegar Creek ..............12
Salmon River, Vinegar Creek to South Fork ..................13
Salmon River, South Fork to Middle Fork ....................14
Salmon River, Middle Fork to North Fork .....................15
Salmon River, North Fork to Lemhi River ....................16
Salmon River, Lemhi River to Pahsimeroi River ..........17
Salmon River, Pahsimeroi River to East Fork ............18
Salmon River, upstream from the East Fork ..........19

Other
Little Salmon River ..................................................20
South Fork Salmon River ............................................21
Panther Creek ..........................................................24
Boise River ..............................................................28

Permit Validation

When a steelhead or salmon has been hooked, landed and reduced to possession, the angler hooking the fish must immediately:

• Completely remove one numbered notch (*) from the permit in correct season column;

• Look up the number code from the River Location Code list and write it in the space provided; and

• Enter the month and day the fish was harvested.
## Steelhead Seasons and Limits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>River Section</th>
<th>Spring Season 20 fish per season</th>
<th>Fall Season 20 fish per season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clearwater River</strong> from its mouth upstream to the Memorial Bridge of U.S. Highway 12 at Lewiston.</td>
<td>Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Jul 1 - 31 Catch-and-Release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Aug 24 - Dec 31 <strong>None &gt; or =28 inches 3 in possession</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clearwater River: Mainstem and Middle Fork Clearwater River</strong> from the Memorial Bridge of U.S. Highway 12 at Lewiston upstream to Clear Creek.</td>
<td>Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Jul 1 - Oct 14 Catch-and-Release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Oct 15 - Dec 31 <strong>None &gt; or =28 inches 3 in possession</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Closures: Fishing is **prohibited** between posted boundaries about 100 yards upstream and downstream from the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery Ladder and extending into the river channel about 50 yards. Fishing from the shoreline or wading along the perimeter of Dworshak National Fish Hatchery is **prohibited**. Fishing from motorized watercraft is **prohibited** from the Clearwater River Bridge at Orofino upstream to the confluence of the Selway and Lochsa rivers from Sep 1 - Apr 30.

| North Fork Clearwater River from the mouth (defined as a straight line between the posted signs located at the Clearwater Hatchery outlet culvert on the west side and at the tip of land below the upstream to Dworshak Hatchery on the east side) upstream to Dworshak Dam. | Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession | Sept 1 - Dec 31 1 per day, **None > or =28 inches 3 in possession** |

Closures: Fishing from the shoreline or wading along the perimeter of Dworshak National Fish Hatchery is **prohibited**. Fishing from any watercraft or wading is **prohibited** between the posted line about 150 yards upstream from the mouth of the North Fork Clearwater River and the Ahsahka Highway 7 Bridge. When fishing from the Ahsahka Highway 7 Bridge, it is unlawful to take or attempt to take any fish downstream of the railroad bridge. Fishing from the railroad bridge is **prohibited**.

| South Fork Clearwater River from its mouth upstream to the confluence of American and Red rivers. | Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession | Jul 1 - Oct 14 Catch-and-Release. |
|                                                                                           | * Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession | Oct 15 - Dec 31 1 per day, **None > or =28 inches 3 in possession** |

**Note:** Only single-pointed barbless hooks are allowed when fishing for steelhead or salmon.

| Salmon River from its mouth upstream to the Lake Creek Bridge (about 6 miles upstream from the mouth of the Little Salmon River). | Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession | Closed to steelhead fishing |
|                                                                                           | * Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession | Aug 1 - Aug 31 Catch-and-Release. |

| Salmon River from the Lake Creek Bridge to Long Tom Creek (3/4 mile upstream from the Middle Fork Salmon River). | Jan 1 - Mar 31 3 per day, 9 in possession | Closed to steelhead fishing |
|                                                                                           | * Jan 1 - Mar 31 3 per day, 9 in possession | Aug 1 - Aug 31 Catch-and-Release. |

**Note:** Seasons and bag limits may be changed by Commission or Director action. Please consult our webpage, license vendors, or regional offices for changes to rules published in this document.
**Salmon Seasons and Bag Limits Will Be Set Annually by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Commission.**

**Note:** Seasons and bag limits may be changed by Commission or Director action. Please consult our webpage, license vendors, or regional offices for changes to rules published in this document.

### Steelhead Seasons and Limits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>River Section</th>
<th>Spring Season 20 fish per season</th>
<th>Fall Season 20 fish per season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salmon River</strong> from Long Tom Creek (3/4 mile upstream from the Middle Fork Salmon River) to posted boundary 100 yards downstream of Sawtooth Hatchery.</td>
<td>Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Sep 1 - Dec 31 1 per day, 3 in possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Little Salmon River</strong> from its mouth upstream to the U.S. Highway 95 bridge near Smokey Boulder road.</td>
<td>Jan 1 - May 15 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Snake River</strong> from the Washington State line at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater Rivers upstream to Hells Canyon Dam.</td>
<td>Jan 1 - Apr 30 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Snake River</strong> from Hells Canyon Dam to Oxbow Dam</td>
<td>Jan 1 - May 31 3 per day, 9 in possession</td>
<td>Not present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Boise River** from its mouth upstream to Barber Dam.

Adult steelhead are only present in the Boise River and the Snake River above Hells Canyon Dam when stocked by Idaho Fish and Game. Check with regional offices to determine if steelhead have been released that year. A steelhead permit is required to fish for and keep steelhead (Rainbow Trout longer than 20 inches with a clipped adipose fin). Limits are 2 per day and 6 in possession when steelhead are present. Barbless hooks are not required.

### When and Where you are expected to see Salmon and Steelhead in Idaho

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sockeye Salmon</th>
<th>Spring &amp; Summer Chinook Salmon</th>
<th>Fall Chinook/Coho Salmon</th>
<th>Steelhead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July - September</td>
<td>April - September</td>
<td>August-December</td>
<td>July-May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam</td>
<td>Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam</td>
<td>Snake River below Hells Canyon Dam</td>
<td>Snake River &amp; Tributaries below Hells Canyon Dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon River</td>
<td>Salmon River &amp; Tributaries</td>
<td>Clearwater River</td>
<td>Clearwater River &amp; Tributaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alturas Lake and Creek, Pettit Lake and Creek, Redfish Lake and Creek</td>
<td>Clearwater River &amp; Tributaries (not listed but protected under state law)</td>
<td>Lower Salmon River</td>
<td>Salmon River &amp; Tributaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Salmon & Steelhead Fishing in Boundary Waters**

The Snake River between Idaho, Oregon, or Washington: The holder of a valid Idaho fishing license and salmon or steelhead permit may fish for those species provided the season is open in the Snake River where it forms the boundary between the states of Idaho and Oregon or Washington, subject to the fish and game laws of Idaho, but may not fish from the shoreline, including wading, and may not fish in sloughs or tributaries on the Oregon or Washington side. Any Oregon or Washington license holder has the same rights and restrictions with reference to the Idaho side. Any angler who fishes on the Snake River or any other water forming an Idaho boundary is entitled to have in possession only the limit allowed by one license regardless of the number of licenses in possession.

**Permit Validation**

*See page 40 for example.*

When an adult salmon (24 or more inches in length) or steelhead (20 or more inches in length) has been hooked, landed, and reduced to possession (must be killed immediately), the angler hooking the fish must immediately:

1. Completely remove one numbered notch from the permit.
2. Look up the number code from the River Location Code list and write it in the space provided.
3. Enter the month and day the fish was harvested.

However, when a salmon or steelhead is released rather than reduced to possession, the angler is not required to make an entry on the permit.

Unless otherwise stipulated by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Commission, jack Chinook Salmon (less than 24 inches in length) are not included in an anglers season limit and need not be entered on their permit.

**Unclipped Adipose Fin**

Steelhead with an unclipped adipose fin must be released. Anglers should refer to season proclamations to determine if Chinook Salmon and Coho Salmon with an intact adipose fin can be retained.

**Clipped Adipose Fin**

Hatchery steelhead or salmon may be kept if the adipose fin has been clipped as evidenced by a healed scar.

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**Washington/Idaho Fishing Waters Boundaries**

A Washington license is required to fish the Snake River downstream (west) of boundary waters.

An Idaho license is required to fish the Clearwater River.

An Idaho or Washington license is required to fish the Snake River ID/WA boundary waters.

An Idaho license is required to fish in the Clearwater River.

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Several of Idaho’s fish species have been listed or have been petitioned for listing under the 1973 federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Species are listed when population levels drop so low that they are at a high risk of extinction. Species listed under the ESA as either “Threatened” or “Endangered” are protected to reduce “take.” While over-harvest has been a factor for some resident species, for the most part, these fish are in trouble because their habitat has been damaged or destroyed. Idaho Fish and Game encourages land and water management agencies to make decisions that will benefit fish and wildlife. However, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission’s authority is restricted to either regulating harvest or stocking fish, so these are the only tools Idaho Fish and Game has to restore depleted populations or, in some cases, preserve future options.

### Anadromous Salmon and Steelhead

Most of Idaho’s naturally-produced anadromous (ocean-going) salmon and steelhead are listed as “Threatened” or “Endangered” under the ESA. Naturally-produced spring/summer and fall Chinook Salmon and steelhead are listed as “Threatened”. Snake River Sockeye Salmon in the Sawtooth Valley Basin, Idaho are listed as “Endangered”. They are protected to provide further declines in abundance. Snake River Coho Salmon were declared extinct in the mid-1980s but Coho Salmon have since been re-introduced into the Clearwater River. Natural spring/summer Chinook Salmon were also extirpated in the Clearwater River. Neither natural spring/summer Chinook Salmon nor Coho Salmon in the Clearwater drainage are listed under the federal ESA, but both are protected by state law.

### Angler Be Aware!

Idaho steelhead harvest is restricted to only steelhead with a clipped adipose fin (ad-clipped) to help maximize harvest opportunity for hatchery produced fish without causing unacceptable loss of naturally produced steelhead. This approach began in 1987 and has allowed anglers to keep an annual average of 64,000 hatchery steelhead for the last 10 years. This approach is also used for hatchery Chinook Salmon. Fin clipping allows anglers to differentiate between hatchery produced and wild salmon. This tool allows limited angling opportunity for hatchery Chinook Salmon in Idaho while protecting naturally produced fish. Idaho has not had a fishery for wild Chinook Salmon since 1978.

You may encounter “Threatened” and “Endangered” salmon and steelhead in Idaho’s anadromous waters. Avoid fishing or boating in riffle areas where salmon and steelhead are seen or are likely to spawn. Carefully and quickly release any wild anadromous salmon or steelhead. Please help preserve “Threatened” and “Endangered” salmon and steelhead and also preserve your privilege to fish for other fish in waters used by federally protected anadromous salmon and steelhead.

### Know the Difference

Refer to the illustrations starting on page 56 to make sure you can distinguish between a small salmon (which may not be harvested) and a juvenile Rainbow Trout. Small Sockeye Salmon will be bright silver when found in the Salmon River in the spring or early summer and must be released immediately. Because of their similarity to resident Rainbow Trout, most streams with populations of wild, juvenile steelhead have special rules to protect them, such as catch-and-release rules in the Middle Fork of the Salmon River drainage.

### What to do if you catch a tagged fish:

- Tag number(s)
- Did the fish have two tags?
- What day you caught the fish
- What species it was
- Fish length
- Did you keep or release the fish?
- Did you keep the fish only because it was tagged?

- If you released the fish, did you leave the tags on it?
- What did you think of the quality of this fish?
- What did you think of the quality of your fishing experience the day you caught this fish?
- Your name, address and phone number

Report tags to: Tag.idaho.gov
Hotline (toll free): 1-866-258-0338