

# Idaho Fishing Seasons and Rules

2016-2018

2nd Edition 2017



Photo Boise River, courtesy Erik Cayo

**Free Fishing Day**

**June 10, 2017 & June 9, 2018**





## Who We Are

Idaho Fish and Game is a state executive agency. Our seven-member commission is appointed by the governor. The commission administers the state's wildlife policy and hires the director.

Fish and Game has about 558 full-time employees that include conservation officers, wildlife and fisheries biologists, conservation educators, engineers, information technology, public relations, customer service and administrative professionals.

Our headquarters is located in Boise with seven regional offices and one subregional office throughout the state. We work with hunters, anglers, landowners and wildlife enthusiasts statewide.

## What We Do

We manage, conserve and enhance fish and wildlife resources and provide opportunity for hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife-related activities.

Every year, we:

- Enforce fish and game laws in urban, rural and backcountry environments.
- Provide harvest opportunity for more than 70 wildlife species.
- Provide diverse angling opportunities for about 40 species of game fish.
- Operate 10 fish hatcheries that produce trout for stocking in Idaho waters and 10 salmon and steelhead hatcheries.
- Build and maintain more than 350 fishing and boating access sites.
- Manage habitat on 32 wildlife management areas and assist private landowners and public land managers on 83,000 square miles of habitat.
- Certify more than 11,000 new hunters and bowhunters annually
- Provide educational programs for about 200,000 children and adults annually.

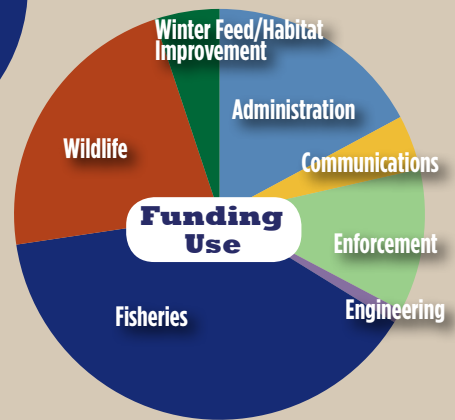
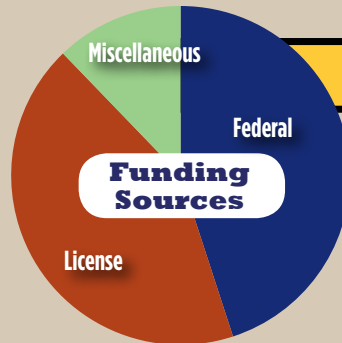
## How You Help

The Idaho Fish and Game *receives no money from State taxes* to manage Idaho's wildlife. Funding relies on the sale of licenses and tags, federal excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment, and federal and private grants and donations.

You provide our agency's funding every time you:

- Buy a hunting, fishing or trapping license.
- Buy wildlife license plates.
- Volunteer.
- Check off the Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund donation box on the Idaho state income tax form.
- Donate to the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation at [www.ifwf.org/donate](http://www.ifwf.org/donate).

[idfg.idaho.gov](http://idfg.idaho.gov)





## **DIRECTOR MOORE'S OPEN LETTER TO THE HUNTERS, ANGLERS AND TRAPPERS OF IDAHO**

Idaho's 2015 hunting season was one for the record books. The white-tailed deer harvest was the highest ever recorded and mule deer and elk hunters had the best success in a decade.

Deer hunters had a 43 percent success rate in general season hunts and 61 percent success rate in controlled hunts.

Elk hunters had a 22 percent success rate in general season hunts and a 46 percent success rate in controlled hunts.

As Idaho Fish and Game director, I am happy for hunters and proud of our staff. We have worked hard to bring predator and prey populations into better balance, and to improve habitat both for wildlife and for fisheries. These goals are outlined in the Idaho Fish and Game 2015 Strategic Plan, designed to better focus on improving hunting, fishing and trapping.

While we enjoy the benefits of healthy wildlife populations, we also have to be mindful that more animals on the landscape can cause problems for many farmers and ranchers whose crops and livelihoods are threatened by wildlife depredation. That is why Idaho Fish and Game is working hard to mitigate wildlife caused damages to private property. In 2016, the agency spent \$450,000 to build 100 stack yards throughout Idaho and another \$360,000 to compensate landowners for damages. We have also increased harvest of antlerless animals and are hiring seasonal staff to help prevent wildlife depredation problems.

Because some of Idaho's most valuable wildlife habitat is located on private land, Idaho Fish and Game is recognizing landowners who conserve habitat by issuing more Landowner Appreciation Program tags. Large landowners are now receiving multiple LAP tags based on their contributions to wildlife conservation.

Resident and nonresident license sales are the strongest they've been since before the great recession, but we simply do not have enough resources to continue to proactively deal with various demands—from responding effectively to crop depredations and providing excellent hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities, to keeping various species off the Endangered Species Act list.

That is why Idaho Fish and Game will bring its Price Lock proposal back before lawmakers in 2017. A dozen years have passed since Idaho residents last saw their license fees increase. None of us like to pay higher fees but most of us recognize how important responsive, professional wildlife management is and we need to be able to keep our momentum going and continue to serve the hunters, anglers and trappers and the citizens of Idaho to the best of our ability.

I invite you to learn more about the Price Lock proposal by visiting the Idaho Fish and Game website at: <https://idfg.idaho.gov/>

Thank you for supporting Idaho Fish and Game and wildlife conservation in Idaho and I wish you great hunting, fishing and trapping in 2017.

  
Virgil Moore  
Director



# Idaho Department of Fish and Game

## Idaho Wildlife Policy

*“All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state of Idaho, is hereby declared to be the property of the state of Idaho. It shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. It shall be only captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.”*

— Idaho Code Section 36-103

## Idaho Fish and Game Commission

- Greg Cameron, Magic Valley
- Brad Corkill, Panhandle
- Daniel Blanco, Clearwater
- Blake Fischer, Southwest
- Lane Clezie, Southeast
- Derick Attebury, Upper Snake
- Jerry Meyers, Salmon

## Idaho Department of Fish and Game

600 S. Walnut St., P.O. Box 25  
Boise, ID 83707

**208-334-3700 • [idfg.idaho.gov](http://idfg.idaho.gov)**

- Virgil Moore, Director
- Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director
- Ed Schriever, Deputy Director

## Regional Offices

- Panhandle Region..... 208-769-1414  
2885 W. Kathleen Ave., Coeur d’Alene ID 83815
- Clearwater Region ..... 208-799-5010  
3316 16th St., Lewiston ID 83501
- Southwest Region ..... 208-465-8465  
3101 S. Powerline Rd., Nampa ID 83686
- McCall Subregion..... 208-634-8137  
555 Deinhard Lane, McCall ID 83638
- Magic Valley Region ..... 208-324-4359  
324 S 417 E; Suite #1, Jerome ID 83338
- Southeast Region ..... 208-232-4703  
1345 Barton Rd., Pocatello ID 83204
- Upper Snake Region ..... 208-525-7290  
4279 Commerce Circle, Idaho Falls ID 83401
- Salmon Region ..... 208-756-2271  
99 Highway 93 N., Salmon ID 83467

Idaho Fish and Game offices are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday except state holidays. Offices in the Panhandle and Clearwater regions are in the Pacific Time Zone; all others are in the Mountain Time Zone.

## To Buy a License, Tag or Permit:

- In person, go to any Idaho Fish and Game office or license vendor.
- By credit card, within the United States call 1-800-554-8685. Outside the U.S., use the Internet or mail.
- From your computer or mobile device, go to [idfg.idaho.gov](http://idfg.idaho.gov). A service fee is added for online and telephone transactions.
- Commercial licenses and tags, duplicate tags, documents that require proof of disability, lifetime licenses, and bear baiting permits may be purchased only at Fish and Game offices.

## To report wildlife crimes, call Citizens Against Poaching at 1-800-632-5999.

*Emergency information can be relayed to Fish and Game personnel through any Idaho law enforcement agency.*



## Other Information Numbers

Rules booklets, nonresident license applications: 208-334-3700

U. S. Forest Service:

Southern Idaho ..... [www.fs.usda.gov/r4](http://www.fs.usda.gov/r4)

Northern Idaho..... [www.fs.usda.gov/r1](http://www.fs.usda.gov/r1)

Bureau of Land Management: ..... [www.blm.gov/id](http://www.blm.gov/id)

Idaho Relay Service (TDD) ..... 1-800-377-3529

For more information on laws in this rule book, visit the Idaho Administrative Procedures Act at <http://adminrules.idaho.gov>.

*Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) adheres to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, disability or veteran’s status. If you feel you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility of IDFG, or if you desire further information, please write to: Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, ID 83707 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance, Mailstop: MBSP-4020, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, Telephone: (703) 358-2156. This publication will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact IDFG for assistance.*

*Costs associated with this publication are available from IDFG in accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code.*

Information in this brochure summarizes rules and is an official proclamation of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission for the taking of wildlife and/or fish. The official rules are available from the Office of Administrative Rules, Department of Administration, Statehouse Mail, Boise, ID 83720, and may be reviewed in some libraries. Maps are for general reference only.

**CONTENTS**

**How to Use This Booklet**.....6

**Proxy Statement**.....7

**Panhandle Region**..... 8 - 11

**Clearwater Region**..... 12 - 15

**Southwest Region**..... 16 - 20

**Magic Valley Region** ..... 21 - 25

    Silver Creek Fishing Guide.....26

**Southeast Region**..... 27 - 30

**Upper Snake Region** ..... 31 - 34

    Henrys Fork (Snake River, North Fork) .....35

**Salmon Region**..... 36 - 38

**Steelhead and Salmon Rules**..... 39 - 44

    River Location Codes.....40

    Steelhead Seasons and Limits ..... 41 - 42

    Salmon and Steelhead Fishing in Boundary Waters .....43

    Permit Validation .....43

    Washington/Idaho Fishing Waters Boundaries .....43

    Threatened and Endangered Species.....44

**General Fishing Information**..... 45 - 59

    Trespass Law .....45

    Methods of Fishing and Equipment..... 46 - 47

    Fish Terms and Limits..... 47 - 48

    Boundary and Water Definitions.....48

    Transport, Release, and Possession of Fish ..... 48-49

    Salvage of Fish.....49

    Salmon and Steelhead Rules.....49

    Fishing in Boundary Waters .....49

    Releasing Fish .....49

    Taking Photographs .....50

    Reasons for Special Seasons .....50

    Reasons for Special Size and Bag Limits .....50

    Navigability and Public Access.....51

    Sturgeon Fishing Rules.....52

    Fish Consumption and Advisory Information .....53

    Official List of Idaho Record Fish..... 54 - 55

    Fish Identification ..... 56 - 59

**Licenses, Tags and Permits** ..... 60 - 63

    To Buy a License, Tag or Permit .....60

    Hunter and Bowhunter Education .....60

    Refund Policy.....60

    Resident Disabled Licenses.....60

    Disabled Hunter/Companion .....61

    Resident Lifetime License Certificates .....61

    Residency Requirements .....61

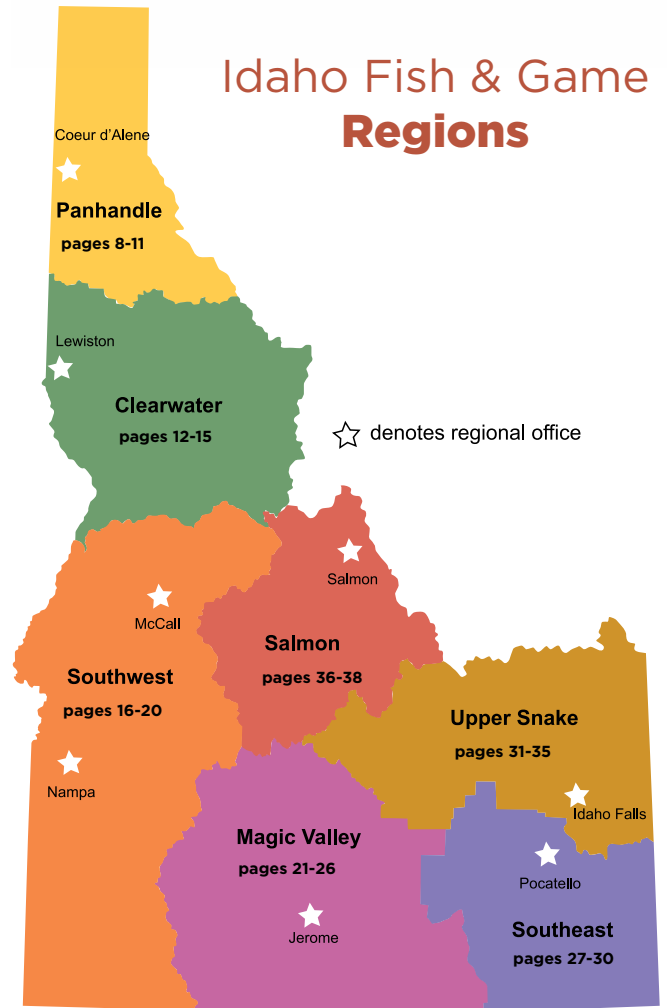
    Hunting Passports.....61

    Idaho Resident Fees.....62

    Nonresident Fees.....63

**WHAT'S NEW**

- You can now possess 3-times the daily bag limit while in the field or in transit after the second day of the season
- Minimum bass length is now 14" in the Southeast Region except where noted
- There is no minimum bass length limit in the Upper Snake Region except where noted
- Includes Steelhead and Salmon Rules





# HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

1. Find the region where you plan to fish →
2. Find the regional fishing season dates →
3. Find your fish species and bag limit →
4. See if the water you want to fish is listed under Special Rule Waters →
5. Turn the page for details on Special Rule Waters

## CLEARWATER REGION

### General Fishing Season for the Clearwater Region

#### All Waters Open All Year

Except as modified in Clearwater Region Special Rule Waters on Pages 14-15. Fishing is not allowed within the posted upstream and downstream boundary of any fish weir or trap.

### Daily Bag Limits for the Clearwater Region

The following daily bag limits apply to all waters of the Clearwater Region except as modified in Clearwater Region Special Rule Waters on Pages 14-15. The possession limit is 3-times the daily bag limit after the second day of the season.

#### Bass (*largemouth and smallmouth*)

- Bass limit is 6, both species combined

#### Brook Trout

- Brook trout limit is 25

#### Bull Trout

- Bull trout limit is 0, catch-and-release
- No bull trout harvest is allowed

#### Kokanee

- Kokanee limit is 25

#### Salmon (*ocean-going*)

- Salmon seasons and limits are set annually by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission and rules are issued in a separate brochure
- Fishing for or targeting salmon is prohibited unless a salmon season is specifically opened for that water

#### Steelhead (*ocean-going*)

- Defined as rainbow trout longer than twenty (20) inches in length in the Snake River drainage below Hells Canyon Dam, the Salmon River drainage (excluding lakes), and the Clearwater River drainage (excluding that portion above Dworshak Dam, and lakes)
- Fishing for or targeting steelhead is prohibited unless a steelhead season is specifically opened for that water (see pages 39-43)

#### Sturgeon

- Sturgeon limit is 0, catch-and-release
- Sturgeon must not be removed from the water and must be released upon landing
- Barbless hooks and sliding sinkers are required, see Page 52 for details

#### Tiger Muskie

- Tiger Muskie limit is 2, none under 40 inches

#### Trout includes cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and trout hybrids (e.g. tiger trout)

- In rivers and streams, trout limit is 2, all species combined
- In lakes, reservoirs, ditches and canals, trout limit is 6, all species combined

**Does not include bull trout and brook trout which are listed separately**

#### Whitefish

- Whitefish limit is 25

#### Protected Nongame Fish includes Pacific lamprey and sand roller

- May not be harvested or possessed

#### All Other Fish Species includes bullfrogs and crayfish

- No bag, size or possession limit

Check for potential fish consumption advisories. See Page 53.

### Special Rule Waters for the Clearwater Region (see Pages 14-15 for details)

Clearwater River	Elk Creek Reservoir	Snake River (Lewiston to Hells Canyon Dam)
Clearwater River, Middle Fork	Fish Lake (Cedars Area)	Spring Valley Reservoir
Clearwater River, North Fork	Kelly Creek and tributaries	Toho Lake
Clearwater River, South Fork	Lake Creek (Cedars Area)	Winchester Lake
Crooked Fork Creek (tributary to Lochsa River)	Lochsa River	
Deyo Reservoir	Mann Lake	
Dworshak Reservoir	Moose Creek Reservoir	
Elk Creek and tributaries (tributary to Dworshak Reservoir)	Salmon River	
	Salmon River tributaries	
	Selway River	

General Information and Definitions pertaining to rules can be found starting on Page 46.

## Who needs a license to fish in Idaho:

- Any person 14 years of age or older must have a valid license or permit to fish for fish, bullfrogs or crayfish in Idaho. No person shall fish without having the proper license on his or her person.
- Resident children under the age of 14 are not required to purchase a fishing license but can purchase a two-pole fishing permit. Resident children may possess their own daily bag limit.
- A resident child under 14 may purchase a salmon or steelhead permit without a license so that he or she may catch his or her own limit of steelhead or salmon.
- Nonresident children under 14 years of age must be accompanied by the holder of a valid fishing license and their fish must be included in the license holder's limit in order to fish without a license, or they may purchase a nonresident license and have their own limit.
- Any license, tag or permit which is defaced, altered or tampered with shall be invalid from the date and time of issuance. It is a violation to use or attempt to use any license, tag or permit that has been defaced, altered or tampered with by means of (but not limited to) erasures and type overs, or tears in the paper.
- Fishing on Indian reservations may require tribal licenses and adherence to tribal regulations.

## Información Importante

Este libro incluye información importante acerca de las leyes de pesca de Idaho. Usted puede ser multado o encarcelado si viola estas leyes. Por favor, encuentra alguien que lea inglés para explicar la información en este libro.



# FREE FISHING DAY!

**EVERYONE WELCOME!**  
(No license required)

- How-to clinics
- Tackle available
- Questions answered
- Skills development

**Saturday, June 10, 2017  
& June 9, 2018**

**For more information, contact the Fish and Game office nearest you.**

## PROXY STATEMENT *(To transport fish taken by another person)*

Angler's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 License No. \_\_\_\_\_ Tag No. \_\_\_\_\_ Permit No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of person transporting \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fish Species	Description & Number Taken	Water Caught	Date

GAME:

Species \_\_\_\_\_ How many \_\_\_\_\_

Species \_\_\_\_\_ How many \_\_\_\_\_