

# Idaho Fishing

## 2019 – 2021 Seasons & Rules

2nd Edition 2020



**Free Fishing Day**

June 13, 2020 • June 12, 2021

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

## Craig Mountain



### Preserving and Sustaining Idaho's Wildlife Heritage



Idaho Fish & Wildlife  
FOUNDATION

For over 29 years, we've worked to preserve and sustain Idaho's wildlife heritage. Help us to leave a legacy for future generations, give a gift today!

- Habitat Restoration
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- Public Access

For more information visit [IFWF.org](http://IFWF.org) or call (208) 334-2648

## IDAHO'S TRESPASS LAW *changed July 1, 2018.*

# ASK FIRST

*Know before you go!*



Note - if private property adjoins or is contained within public lands, the fence line adjacent to public land should be posted with "no trespassing signs" or bright orange/fluorescent paint at the corners of the fence adjoining public land and at all navigable streams, roads, gates and rights-of-way entering the private land from public land and posted in a way that people can see the postings.

It is illegal for anyone to post public land that is not held under an exclusive control lease.

Private posting at navigable streams shall not prohibit access to navigable streams below the high-water mark as allowed by Idaho law.

A property owner may revoke permission at any time. Any person must leave private property when asked to do so by the owner or agent.

A first conviction of trespass on private property carries a mandatory one-year revocation of hunting/fishing/trapping licenses in addition to misdemeanor fine and seizure of animals taken on private property. Federal law prohibits unauthorized trespass on Indian-owned reservation lands for hunting, fishing, or trapping purposes.

**Refer to Idaho Code 36-1603 and I.C. 18-7008.**

**Please visit: <https://idfg.idaho.gov/askfirst>**

### Permission Form

Permission given to (print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Dates permission is valid:

from: \_\_\_\_\_

to: \_\_\_\_\_

General Description of Property:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Landowner Name (print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Owner or Agent Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

*A property owner may revoke permission at any time.*

**All persons must have written permission or other lawful form of permission to enter or remain on private land to shoot any weapon or hunt, fish, trap or retrieve game.**

A person should know land is private and they are not allowed without permission because:

- The property is associated with a residence or business;
- OR cultivated;
- OR fenced or enclosed in a way that delineates the private property;
- OR unfenced and uncultivated, but is posted with conspicuous "no trespassing" signs or bright orange/fluorescent paint at all property corners and boundaries where the property intersects navigable streams, roads, gates and rights-of-way entering the land and posted in a way that people can see the postings.



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

Whether you've lived in Idaho your whole life, or you're new to the area, I'm betting that one of the things you love about Idaho is the diversity of outdoor opportunities. That's true with hunting, and it's most definitely true with fishing. Idaho is graced with 26,000 miles of streams and rivers, more than 3,000 natural lakes, and a quarter-million acres of ponds and reservoirs with over 40 species of game fish ranging from 10-foot white sturgeon to palm-sized panfish.

I hope you, as an angler, appreciate the role you play in maintaining our outstanding fisheries. Your fishing license dollars are a critical piece of the funding for fish population surveys that allow the Commission to make science-based decisions when setting fishing seasons and bag limits. But it doesn't stop there. Fishing licenses help fund hatcheries, boat ramps, fishing docks, and new fishing ponds. All of these activities are critical to maintaining and improving fishing opportunities.

The past year brought even more great programs and fishing opportunities. For the first time since 1991, anglers were allowed to harvest burbot (ling) on the Kootenai River. The fishery is the result of years of effort and cooperation between biologists with Fish and Game, the Kootenai Tribe, University of Idaho, and British Columbia – a collaboration that has successfully brought the population back to harvestable levels.

The new "catch-and-release" state record fish program – first launched in 2016 – continues to provide a unique challenge for anglers. We saw seven new catch-and-release records just in 2019, including a 9-foot, 11-inch sturgeon and a 37 ½ inch rainbow trout. In 2019, Fish and Game also developed new access sites on the North Fork Coeur d'Alene and Snake rivers, improved boat ramps on the Payette, Teton and Henrys Fork rivers, improved access facilities on Williams Lake and Horsetheif Reservoir, and finished pond renovations at Gavers Lagoon, South Butte Pond and Scotts Pond. Finally, fish passage was restored to nearly 30 miles of stream, and habitat was restored in more than 3 miles of stream in five drainages.

But I am well aware that news hasn't all been good with Idaho fisheries. It would be an understatement to call the last three salmon and steelhead seasons disappointments. Poor returns of hatchery fish have resulted in minimal, or non-existent, harvest fisheries. I caught my first Chinook salmon in Idaho in 1998. That fish, at 42-inches long and over 20 pounds, hooked me on Idaho salmon fishing. Since that time, I've spent hundreds of hours on my boat fishing for salmon and steelhead in the Snake, Salmon and Clearwater rivers. I know how important these fisheries are to Idaho, culturally, recreationally and economically. A significant portion of my career has been focused on anadromous fish, and I care deeply about restoring healthy runs of wild salmon and steelhead for future generations of Idahoans.

The causes of the recent declines, and hence the actions needed to reverse them, are many and complex. Fish and Game plays a direct role in managing two of the "4-Hs" (Hatcheries, Harvest, Habitat and Hydropower) that are often identified as causes of anadromous fish declines. I strongly believe allowing anglers to interact with salmon and steelhead through fishing is vital to retaining the connection between people and the fish. With few exceptions, harvest by sport anglers is restricted to hatchery salmon or steelhead. Without hatcheries, Idaho would have little ability to provide fishing opportunity.

The reality is that salmon and steelhead management in Idaho involves balancing conservation of wild populations with fishing opportunity provided by hatcheries. I have every confidence in our ability to responsibly manage that balance. Through management of seasons, area restrictions and hatchery release strategies, our fisheries are designed to minimize angler encounters with wild fish. Fully 85 percent of the spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead in Idaho is reserved for wild fish, which means no hatchery fish are released in those areas, and no steelhead fishing is allowed. That percentage is even larger for spring Chinook.

The road ahead for salmon and steelhead, and for those who treasure them, won't be easy or short. Fish and Game will continue to provide the science to help develop policies that will restore abundant, sustainable and well-distributed populations of salmon and steelhead in Idaho for present and future generations.

Thank you for supporting Fish and Game. Idaho's fish and wildlife conservation, and our ability to provide hunting and fishing opportunity, depends on you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Schriever". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

**Ed Schriever**, Director  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game



# 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

- Brad Corkill, Panhandle
- Bradley Melton, Clearwater
- Tim Murphy, Southwest
- Greg Cameron, Magic Valley
- 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)

- Ed Schriever, Director
- Scott Reinecker, Deputy Director
- Paul Kline, 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  
15950 N. Gate Blvd., Nampa ID 83687
- 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/buy](http://idfg.idaho.gov/buy). 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.

## Other Information Numbers

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

U. S. Forest Service:

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

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

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

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

## 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.



*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.*

Information in this brochure summarizes rules and is an official proclamation of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission for the taking of wildlife. The official rules are available at [adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current](http://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current) or 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.

Idaho Department of Fish & Game  
**Fishing Rules 2019-2021**

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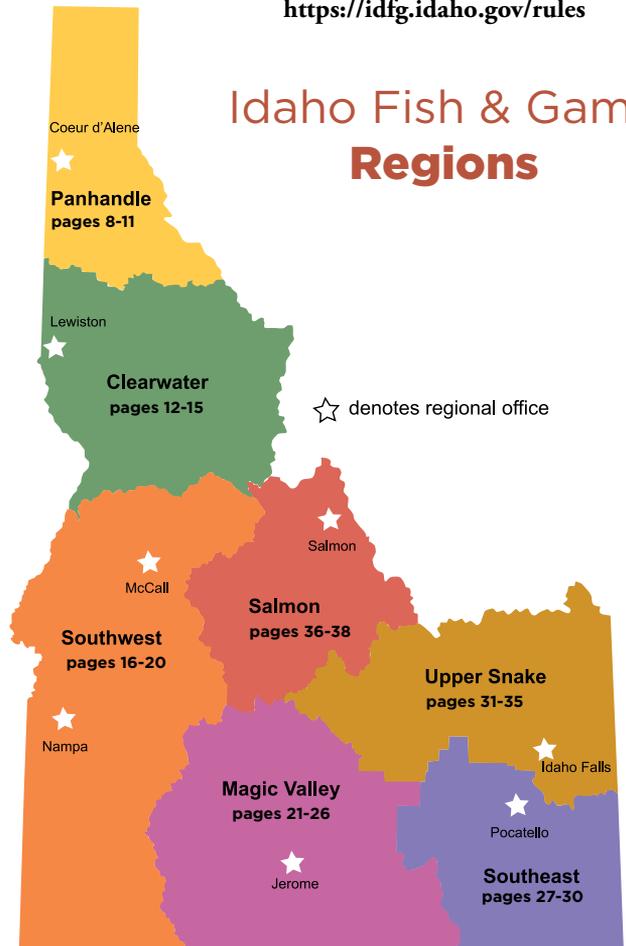
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**WHAT'S NEW**

- New and improved maps throughout booklet
- Bullfrogs are now classified as unprotected fish
- Changes to bass regulations in rivers and streams with anadromous salmon or steelhead
- New Burbot harvest fishery in the Panhandle Region
- More Lake Trout harvest opportunity in Upper Priest Lake
- New bag and length limits for Tiger Trout in Deer Creek Reservoir
- Reduced daily bag limit for kokanee at Deadwood Reservoir
- Expanded winter catch-and-release fishing season on some sections of Silver Creek
- Changes to bass regulations on Deep Creek and Weston Reservoirs.
- Removal of Brown Trout length limits on the South Fork Snake River
- Sometimes seasons and rules change after the booklet is printed. You can find changes or corrections at

<https://idfg.idaho.gov/rules>



**Idaho Fish & Game  
Regions**

☆ denotes regional office

# 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.

<p><b>Bass</b> (<i>largemouth and smallmouth</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bass limit is 6, both species combined</li> </ul> <p><b>Brook Trout</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brook trout limit is 25</li> </ul> <p><b>Bull Trout</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bull trout limit is 0, catch-and-release</li> </ul> <p><b>Kokanee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kokanee limit is 25</li> </ul> <p><b>Salmon</b> (<i>ocean-going</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salmon seasons and limits are set annually by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission and rules are issued in a separate brochure</li> <li>• Fishing for or targeting salmon is prohibited unless a salmon season is specifically opened for that water</li> </ul> <p><b>Steelhead</b> (<i>ocean-going</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Fishing for or targeting steelhead is prohibited unless a steelhead season is specifically opened for that water (see pages 41-45)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sturgeon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sturgeon limit is 0, catch-and-release</li> <li>• Sturgeon must not be removed from the water and must be released upon landing</li> <li>• Barbless hooks and sliding sinkers are required, see Page 54 for details</li> </ul> <p><b>Tiger Muskie</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiger Muskie limit is 2, none under 40 inches</li> </ul> <p><b>Trout</b> includes <i>Cutthroat Trout, rainbow trout, and trout hybrids (e.g. tiger trout)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In rivers and streams, trout limit is 2, all species combined</li> <li>• In lakes, reservoirs, ditches and canals, trout limit is 6, all species combined</li> </ul> <p><b>Does not include bull trout and brook trout which are listed separately</b></p> <p><b>Whitefish</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whitefish limit is 25</li> </ul> <p><b>Protected Nongame Fish</b> includes <i>Pacific lamprey and sand roller</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not be harvested or possessed</li> </ul> <p><b>All Other Fish Species</b> includes <i>bullfrogs and crayfish</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No bag, size or possession limit</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Check for potential fish consumption advisories. See Page 67.</i></p>
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**Special Rule Waters for the Clearwater Region (see Pages 14-15 for details)**

Clearwater River Clearwater River, Middle Fork Clearwater River, North Fork Clearwater River, South Fork Crooked Fork Creek (tributary to Lochsa River) Deyo Reservoir Dworshak Reservoir Elk Creek and tributaries (tributary to Dworshak Reservoir)	Elk Creek Reservoir Fish Lake (Cedars Area) Kelly Creek and tributaries Lake Creek (Cedars Area) Lochsa River Mann Lake Moose Creek Reservoir Salmon River Salmon River tributaries Selway River	Snake River (Lewiston to Hells Canyon Dam) Spring Valley Reservoir Tolo Lake Winchester Lake
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*General Information and Definitions pertaining to rules can be found starting on Page 47.*

## 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)

**Saturday,  
June 13, 2020,  
June 12, 2021**

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

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

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

Taker's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Taker's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Taker's Address \_\_\_\_\_

License No. \_\_\_\_\_ Tag No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fish Species	Description & Number Taken	Water Caught	Date

**Other Game:**

Species \_\_\_\_\_ #Taken \_\_\_\_\_ Date Killed \_\_\_\_\_