

# Statewide Freshwater Rules

## Using Freshwater Rules

**1** • • • • • **Read:**

The Statewide Freshwater Rules and Statewide Freshwater Species Rules. Determine seasons and general rules applying to the species for which you intend to fish. Remember to check for emergency rules, which can be found by calling the WDFW Fishing Hotline at (360) 902-2500, by contacting statewide customer service at (360) 902-2700, or by visiting the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov>.

**2** • • • • • **Choose:**

The location you are going to fish and check that area for Special Rule listings. Special Rules are divided into multiple areas: Puget Sound and Coastal Rivers, Columbia Basin Rivers, Westside and Eastside lakes. **RIVERS** lists rivers, streams, and beaver ponds. **LAKES** lists lakes, ponds, and reservoirs. For the purposes of this pamphlet, the COLUMBIA and SNAKE RIVERS are rivers (not reservoirs), and any special rules that apply are listed in the Columbia Basin section. See maps below for additional information.

**3** • • • • • **If your area is listed in a Special Rules section:**

Read Special Rules Instructions on page 14. If your area is NOT listed in the Special Rules for Westside and Eastside lakes (**pages 74-94**), then all the Statewide Rules apply. In the river sections (Puget Sound and Coast, and Columbia Basin rivers), **ALL** unlisted areas are **CLOSED**.

**4** • • • • • **The following terms are used frequently in the Special Rules:**

*Catch-and-release, Chumming, Daily Limit, Fly Fishing Only, Juvenile Only, Landlocked Salmon Rules, Minimum Size (min. size), Maximum Size (max. size), Night Closure, Anti-Snagging Rule, Selective Gear Rules, Internal Combustion Motors Prohibited, Release wild CHINOOK, Release wild COHO, and Release wild CUTTHROAT. Definitions can be found on pages 10-11.*

Freshwater Rules

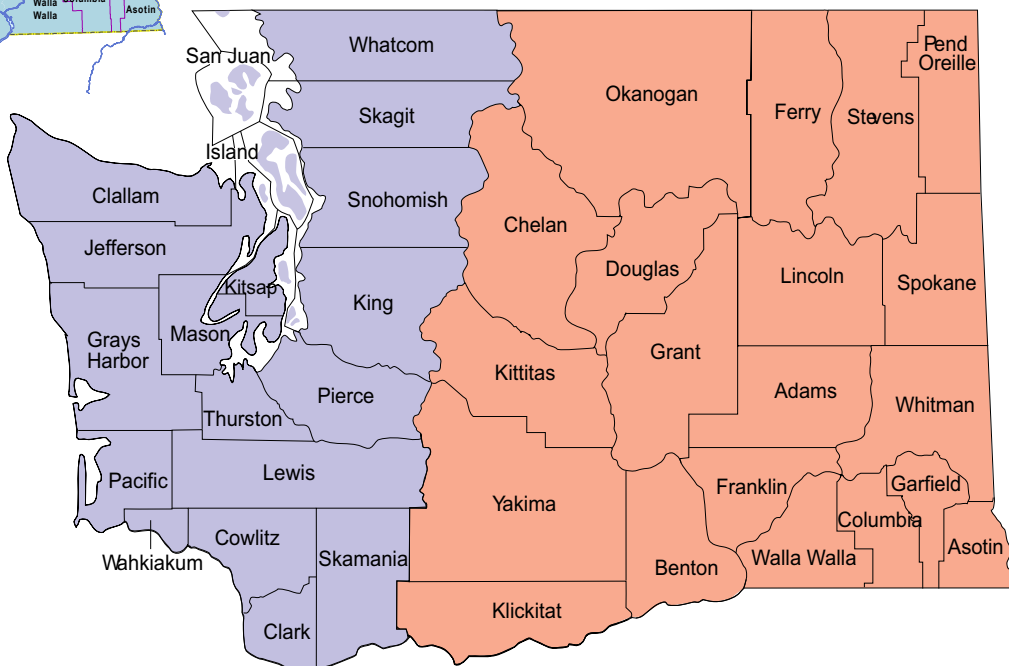
## Rivers



**Refer to large river map and instructions on page 17**

**Eastside Lakes  
Pages 84-94**

**Westside Lakes  
Pages 74-83**



# Statewide Freshwater Rules

★ The following Statewide Freshwater Rules and seasons apply (pages 14-15) unless listed otherwise in the Special Rules (pages 18-94).

## Areas/Seasons

For all Game Fish and SALMON, the Special Rules show **ALL** of the fishing opportunities for each freshwater area listed.

All freshwater areas are **CLOSED** to the harvest of any fish not classified as a Food Fish or Game Fish (see definitions page 10) except for NORTHERN PIKE.

**Freshwater areas are open 24 hours per day when open.**

All FRESHWATER areas are **CLOSED** to fishing for SALMON, DOLLY VARDEN/ BULL TROUT, LAMPREY, and GRASS CARP.

Fishing for COMMON CARP, SHAD, or FORAGE FISH is open only during open Game Fish or SALMON seasons.

**LAKES, PONDS, and RESERVOIRS** are open to fishing for Game Fish (except DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT and GRASS CARP) **year-round**.

**RIVERS, STREAMS, and BEAVER PONDS** are **CLOSED** to fishing unless listed as open. See page 17 for complete information. Beaver ponds located within or connected to streams listed as open to TROUT and Other Game Fish follow the same rules as the stream.

## Tackle

Hook and line angling only. Barbed or barbless hooks may be used, and a hook may be single-point, double, or treble, but not more than one line with up to three hooks per angler may be used.

Single-point barbless hooks are required in areas designated as "fly fishing only" or "selective gear rules."

All fishing gear must be kept in immediate control and may not be left unattended while fishing. Rodholders may be used, but the rod must be easily removed without delay; rod may be left in holder while playing the fish.

A club or dipnet may be used to assist landing a legal fish taken by legal gear. A gaff hook may not be used.

It is unlawful to possess a fish taken from freshwater that was not hooked inside the mouth or on the head. The head is defined as any portion forward of the rear margin of the gill plate.

## Bait Rules

It is unlawful to chum, broadcast, feed, or distribute into freshwater any bait or other substance capable of attracting fish unless specifically authorized in Special Rules.

Where use of bait is prohibited, or where lures or flies are used voluntarily, Game Fish may be caught and released until the daily limit is retained. If any fish has swallowed the hook or is hooked in the gill, eye, or tongue, it should be kept if legal to do so.

It is unlawful to possess or use live aquatic animals as bait, except:

1. Live aquatic animals (other than fish) collected from the water being fished.
2. Live sand shrimp.
3. Live forage fish in the Columbia River (downstream of Rocky Point/Tongue Point).

## Sturgeon

**GREEN STURGEON may not be retained.**

**Catch-and-release fishing ONLY** in the Columbia River from Bonneville Dam downstream, and from Priest Rapids Dam to Chief Joseph Dam, Snake River from Ice Harbor Dam upstream, coastal, and Puget Sound waters including their tributaries.

**Annual WHITE STURGEON limit is 2 fish even if the angler holds both a Washington and Oregon license.**

Catch Record Cards are required statewide.

**WHITE STURGEON** Open for catch-and-release fishing during open Game Fish or SALMON seasons.

Only one single-point barbless hook and bait is allowed when fishing for STURGEON.

In the field, eggs must be retained with intact carcass of fish from which they came.

**Night closure in effect for all STURGEON (except Chehalis River).** Any STURGEON not to be retained must be released immediately. Oversized STURGEON cannot be removed totally or in part from the water.

Anglers may continue to fish catch-and-release after a daily or yearly limit has been retained.

**Tagged STURGEON:** Do not remove tags from fish not of legal size or not to be retained, but record: tag number and color, date, location of catch, fish length, your name and address. If fish is retained, remove tag and send with above information to the address below.

**WDFW Region 5 Office (Vancouver)**  
5525 S 11th St.  
Ridgefield, WA 98642

## Special Rules Instructions

The Special Rules (pages 18-94) list freshwater areas where the Statewide Rules have been modified.

**Unless otherwise listed in the Special Rules, you must follow the Statewide Rules.**

For all Game Fish and SALMON, the Special Rules show **ALL** of the fishing opportunities for each freshwater area listed.

The terms "**TROUT**", "**All Game Fish**", and "**Other Game Fish**" include the TROUT and Game Fish species on the definitions pages 10-11, except DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT and GRASS CARP.

When Landlocked Salmon rules apply, landlocked ATLANTIC, COHO, and CHINOOK SALMON are regulated as TROUT. See definition page 11.

County references after lakes or streams are noted to make it easier to locate the waters listed, or to differentiate between two places with the same name. They do not mean that the rules apply only to the portion of water in that county.

In the Special Rules "motors prohibited" mean that fishing from a floating device equipped with a motor is prohibited. "Internal combustion motors prohibited" means that fishing from a floating device equipped with an internal combustion motor is prohibited. "Equipped with" means the motor is attached to the floating device, regardless of whether the motor is in the water.

In Grant, Adams, Okanogan, and Douglas counties, you may fish up to the base of all man-made dams or other obstructions (in listed and unlisted areas), except Zosel Dam.

Lakes with this icon have a public boat ramp.



Lakes with this icon are excluded from the Two-Pole Endorsement.



Waters annotated with: **Col. R. Salmon/Steelhead Endorsement**, require a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement when fishing for SALMON or STEELHEAD. See: [http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/crss\\_endorsement](http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/crss_endorsement)

Waters annotated with: **Barbless hooks required for Salmon/Steelhead**, require the use of barbless hooks when fishing for SALMON and STEELHEAD within the Columbia River and its tributaries.

Waters annotated with: **Mandatory Hatchery Steelhead Retention**, the catch-and-release of hatchery steelhead is not allowed. These fish must be retained if legal to do so.

# Game Fish **Possession Limit for Game Fish is 2 Daily Limits in any form.**

Game Fish

## LARGEMOUTH BASS:

(See DOH advisory, page 16)  
No min. size. Only LARGEMOUTH BASS less than 12" may be retained, except 1 over 17" may be retained. Daily limit 5. Bass may be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until a daily limit is in possession.

## SMALLMOUTH BASS:

(See DOH advisory, page 16)  
No min. size. Only 1 SMALLMOUTH BASS over 14" may be retained. Daily limit 10. Bass may be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until a daily limit is in possession.

**TIGER MUSKELLUNGE (TIGER MUSKIE):**  
Min. size 50". Daily limit 1.

## WALLEYE:

Min. size 12". Daily limit 8. Only 1 over 22" may be retained. WALLEYE may be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until daily limit is in possession.

## WHITEFISH:

No min. size. Daily limit 15.

**BURBOT (FRESHWATER LING):**

No min. size. Daily limit 5.

## CHANNEL CATFISH:

No min. size. Daily limit 5.

**CRAPPIE, NORTHERN PIKEMINNOW, PEAMOUTH CHUB, PERCH, SUCKERS, SUNFISH, CATFISH (except CHANNEL), ROCK BASS, STRIPED BASS:**  
No min. size. No daily limit.

## BULLFROGS:

(no license required)  
No min. size. No daily limit. Must be taken by angling, hand-dip netting, spearing (gigging), or with bow-and-arrow.

## GRASS CARP:

CLOSED unless otherwise listed in Special Rules.

**TROUT:** The combined daily limit for an angler that fishes in both rivers and lakes on the same day is 5 TROUT. In the combined daily limit, only 2 TROUT may be from rivers, except as provided for EASTERN BROOK TROUT.

**BROWN TROUT, CUTTHROAT TROUT, RAINBOW TROUT, LAKE TROUT, GOLDEN TROUT, KOKANEE, TIGER TROUT, and GRAYLING:**

**In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds:**  
Min. size 8". Daily limit 2. When fishing with bait, all TROUT (except STEELHEAD) equal to or greater than the minimum size are counted as part of the daily limit whether kept or released.

**In lakes, ponds, and reservoirs:** No min. size. Daily limit 5. When fishing with bait, all TROUT (except STEELHEAD) equal to or greater than the minimum size are counted as part of the daily limit whether kept or released.

**EASTERN BROOK TROUT (EBT)**

**In lakes, ponds, and reservoirs:** Count as part of the 5 TROUT daily limit.

**In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds** within section for **Columbia Basin (pages 48-73):** No min. size. Daily limit 5. Anglers may keep up to 5 EASTERN BROOK TROUT, but no more than 5 TROUT total, and no more than 2 can be other TROUT species.

**In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds** within section for **Puget Sound and Coast (pages 18-46):** No min. size. No daily limit.

**STEELHEAD**

**Release all wild STEELHEAD.**

Min. size 20". Daily limit 2. No more than 2 STEELHEAD may be retained as part of TROUT combined daily limit. STEELHEAD may be caught and released until the daily limit is retained unless Mandatory Hatchery Steelhead Retention rule is in effect (see page 14). No annual limit for hatchery STEELHEAD.

**In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds** within section for **Puget Sound and Coast (pages 18-46):** A daily limit of 2 STEELHEAD is open during SALMON, TROUT, or Game Fish seasons unless as otherwise listed.

Freshwater Rules

# Food Fish

Food Fish

## COMMON CARP, SHAD:

No min. size. No daily limit. No possession limit. COMMON CARP (no license required) may also be taken by spear or bow-and-arrow.

## SALMON:

Anglers may not continue to fish for SALMON after the adult portion of the daily limit has been retained. Possession limit - 2 daily limits in fresh form. An additional 40 pounds of SALMON may be possessed in frozen or processed form (see pages 10-11). ATLANTIC SALMON may be retained during any open TROUT or SALMON fishery. There is no size limit or daily limit for ATLANTIC SALMON.

## FORAGE FISH:

No min. size. Daily limit is 10 lbs. in the aggregate with HERRING, SARDINES, SANDLANCE, and ANCHOVIES. Possession limit - 1 daily limit in fresh form. Additional SMELT may be possessed in a frozen or processed form. All SMELT caught must be kept and count toward the daily limit. SMELT may be taken by dip net. **Statewide CLOSURE of EULACHON (Columbia River smelt).** EULACHON may not be retained unless authorized by emergency rule. *Check for announcements in late January.*

## WHITE STURGEON:

**Columbia River from Bonneville Dam upstream to Priest Rapids Dam including tributaries, and Snake River upstream to Ice Harbor Dam**

Min. size 38" fork length in waters downstream of The Dalles Dam, and min. size 43" fork length in waters upstream of The Dalles Dam. Max. size 54" fork length. Daily limit 1. Possession limit: 2 daily limits. Annual limit 2 STURGEON statewide per license year (April 1-March 31). Unless specifically noted in special rules, open only during open Game Fish or SALMON seasons. **Please note rules on page 14.**

**Columbia River from Bonneville Dam downstream, and from Priest Rapids Dam to Chief Joseph Dam, Snake River from Ice Harbor Dam upstream, coastal, and Puget Sound waters including their tributaries.**

**Catch-and-release ONLY.** Open only during open Game Fish or SALMON seasons unless specifically noted in special rules. **Please note rules on page 14.**

## GREEN STURGEON:

CLOSED.

# Other

Other

## LAMPREY:

It is unlawful to take, fish for, or possess PACIFIC LAMPREY, WESTERN BROOK LAMPREY, or RIVER LAMPREY or to use any species of LAMPREY as fishing bait.

## NORTHERN PIKE:

Statewide: No min. size. No daily limit. No possession limit. Must be dead before being removed from riparian area (immediate vicinity of water body).

**Other fish not classified as Game Fish or Food Fish:**

CLOSED. See definitions on page 10.

# "Eat Fish: Advice from Department of Health"



## Eat Fish, Choose Wisely

Washington State Department of Health and the American Heart Association recommend eating at least two seafood meals per week as part of a heart healthy diet. Fish are a nutritious source of protein and Omega-3 fatty acids. It is best to eat fish from a variety of sources and choose fish low in contaminants like mercury and PCBs. **Before you fish, check advisories at [www.doh.wa.gov/fish](http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish) or 1-877-485-7316.**

## Tips to Reduce Contaminants



- Eat a variety of fish from a variety of sources
- Eat younger and small fish (within legal limits)
- Remove skin, organs, and fat before cooking

FISH ADVISORIES		CONSUMPTION ADVICE	
<p>This advice is important for everyone, especially women who are or might become pregnant, nursing mothers, and children. If there is no advisory, Department of Health recommends eating up to 1 fish meal per week. A meal is 8 oz. of uncooked fish for an adult.</p>			
Body of Water	Fish Species	Women (Childbearing Age) and Children	Everyone Else
<b>Statewide (Lakes and Rivers) Mercury Advisory</b>	Northern Pikeminnow	DO NOT EAT	No restrictions
	Bass	2 meals per month	No restrictions
<b>Columbia River</b> • Lower - Former Vanalco Plant • Middle - Bradford Island (Bonneville Dam to Fort Raines) • Middle - Fort Raines to McNary Dam • Upper - Lake Roosevelt (Grand Coulee Dam to Canada Border)	Clams	DO NOT EAT	
	Bass, Bluegill, Carp, Catfish, Crappie, Sucker, Sturgeon, Walleye, Yellow Perch	DO NOT EAT	
	Bass, Bluegill, Carp, Catfish, Crappie, Sucker, Sturgeon, Walleye, Yellow Perch	4 meals per month (any combination)	
	Largescale Sucker	2 meals per month	4 meals per month
	Largemouth Bass	2 meals per month	No restrictions
	Burbot, Longnose Sucker, Mountain Whitefish, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye	4 meals per month (any combination)	No restrictions
<b>Duwamish River (Lower)</b>	All resident fish, Shellfish, Crab	DO NOT EAT	
<b>Green Lake</b>	Carp	1 meal per month	
<b>Lake Chelan</b>	Lake Trout	4 meals per month	No restrictions
<b>Lake Washington</b>	Carp, Northern Pikeminnow	DO NOT EAT	
	Cutthroat Trout	1 meal per month	
	Yellow Perch	4 meals per month	
<b>Lake Whatcom</b>	Smallmouth Bass	DO NOT EAT	No restrictions
	Yellow Perch	4 meals per month	No restrictions
<b>Okanogan River</b> Malott Bridge to Brewster Bridge; Chief Joseph State Park (Lake Pateros)	Carp	1 meal per month	
<b>Olympic National Park</b> • Lake Ozette • Mountain Lakes	Largemouth Bass	DO NOT EAT	No restrictions
	Yellow Perch, Bullhead Catfish	4 meals per month	No restrictions
	Brook Trout, Cutthroat Trout	4 meals per month	No restrictions
<b>Pend Oreille River</b> Newport to Canadian border	Northern Pike (more than 24 inches)	DO NOT EAT	No restrictions
	Northern Pike (less than 24 inches)	2 meals per month	No restrictions
<b>Puget Sound</b>	All species	Visit <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish">www.doh.wa.gov/fish</a> for advice by marine area	
<b>Spokane River</b> • Idaho Border to Upriver Dam • Upriver Dam to Nine Mile Dam • Lake Spokane (Long Lake)	All Species	DO NOT EAT	
	Largescale Sucker	DO NOT EAT	
	All other species	1 meal per month	
	Carp	DO NOT EAT	
	Largescale Sucker, Brown Trout	1 meal per month	
	Mountain Whitefish	4 meals per month	
<b>Walla Walla River</b> (Dry Creek to Columbia River)	Carp	1 meal per month	
<b>Wenatchee River</b> (Icicle Creek to Columbia River)	Mountain Whitefish	DO NOT EAT	
<b>Yakima River</b> (Prosser to Columbia River)	Carp	4 meals per month	