

How to Use the Freshwater Fishing Regulations Synopsis

When fishing in B.C., you must follow:

1. PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Find these general regulations on [pages 5-10](#)

2. REGIONAL REGULATIONS

Find these regulations at the beginning of each Regional chapter.

REGION 1: Vancouver Island	12
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3. WATER-SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

There may or may not be special regulations which apply to a specific lake or stream. Here's how to find out:

Look in the Water-Specific Tables in the region where the lake or stream is located.

A. If the lake or stream you plan to fish **does not appear** in the Water-Specific Tables, no special regulations are in effect. Therefore, you must only follow:

- The Provincial Regulations AND
- The Regional Regulations for the Region.

B. If the lake or stream you plan to fish **does appear** in the regional Water-Specific Tables, you must follow:

- The Provincial Regulations,
- The Regional Regulations for the Region, and/or
- The Water-Specific Regulations.

Regulations on Tributaries: If the ✱ symbol is listed next to a lake or stream listed in the Water-Specific Regulations Tables, then those regulations also apply to any tributary streams that flow into that lake or stream (see [page 4](#)).



4. IN-SEASON REGULATION CHANGES

In-season regulation changes may have been adopted after this synopsis was published.

These will be:

- posted on the Ministry of Forests/ Freshwater fishing regulations in B.C. website, www.gov.bc.ca/FishingRegulations.
 - will be listed under "Regional Synopsis Information and In-Season Changes"
 - click on the appropriate Region, any in-season changes will be listed in the table for that particular region.

YOU AND THE LAW

The British Columbia Freshwater Fishing Regulations Synopsis is for general information purposes only. Where there is a discrepancy between this Synopsis and the Regulations, the Regulations are the final authority. Regulations are subject to change, such as in-season regulation changes described above, and it is the responsibility of an individual to be informed of the current regulations.

Receive Notifications of Regulation Changes

To receive notifications about in-season regulation changes as well as other important notices about fishing in B.C., visit www.gov.bc.ca/FishingRegulations and subscribe to the page(s) you are interested in. The RSS feed is no longer being used.

Angling, Hunting, and Trapping Public Engagement

The public can review and provide feedback on proposed changes to angling, hunting, or trapping regulations through the provincial Angling, Hunting and Trapping Public Engagement Website, online at apps.nrs.gov.bc.ca/ahte/.

Questions? Contact any of the following, listed on the first page of each Regional chapter:

- Provincial Fish and Wildlife Regional Office
- Conservation Officer Service
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Q Looking for a definition? See [page 80](#)

REGION 1 - VANCOUVER ISLAND

- November 1 to April 30 bait ban for all streams on Haida Gwaii (Management Units 6-12 and 6-13).
- Tsitika River – Closed to fishing (this regulation was changed in 2022 and has been continued).
- Heber River – Closed to fishing (this regulation was changed in 2021 and has been continued).
- Gold River – Downstream of the Muchalat River closed to fishing Dec. 1 to Aug 15 (this regulation was changed in 2021 and has been continued).

REGION 2 - LOWER MAINLAND

- Region-wide prohibition on the retention of char (bull trout, Dolly Varden, or lake trout) under 60 cm, with the exception of Chilliwack, Pitt, Chehalis, Lillooet, Harrison and Cultus Lakes where 1 bull trout over 60 cm can be retained.
- Morris Lake – Implementation of single barbless hook and bait ban.
- Sumas River – Increased hatchery steelhead quota from one to two.
- Windsor, Dodd, Ireland, Nanton and Horseshoe Lakes - Implement single barbless hook and reduce wild trout daily quota from four to two, none over 40 cm.
- Kartoum and Lois Lakes – Increase the rainbow trout/hatchery steelhead daily quota from two to six; no more than two may be wild and no wild trout over 40 cm. Wild char daily quota = 1, none under 60 cm (regional regulation).
- Brem River – Year round bait ban for the entire river and artificial fly only upstream of the second set of falls, approximately 2.5 km upstream of the confluence with Hillis Creek.

REGION 3 - THOMPSON

- Lynn Lake - Removal of the ice fishing prohibition.
- Placid and Smith Lakes – Replacement of water specific regulations (No Ice Fishing, trout quota 2, bait ban, single barbless hook) with regional regulations (trout quota = 5, no gear restrictions).
- Scuitto Lake – Increase trout quota from 2 to 5.
- Little Gun (Lajoie) Lake - Reduce quota for bull trout (Dolly Varden) daily quota from 1 (none under 60 cm) to zero (catch and release only).
- Adams River - No Fishing between boundary signs posted in the vicinity of the public salmon viewing platforms (this regulation was changed in 2022 and has been continued).

REGION 4 - KOOTENAY

- Slocan River – Change the July 15-Aug 31 No Fishing regulation to a time-of-day closure: July 15-Aug 31 from 12:00 pm to midnight.
- Fussee Lake – Re-open Fussee Lake to angling.
- Summit Lake (MU 4-23) - Remove water specific regulations (no ice fishing, trout/char daily quota = 2, bait ban, single barbless hook) and revert to regional regulations.
- Whatshan Lake/Reservoir – Prohibition on the retention of bull trout under 60 cm.
- Kootenay Lake - Increased daily quota for bull trout and rainbow trout and increased annual quota for rainbow trout over 50 cm.

REGION 5 - CARIBOO

- Reduction of the regional lake trout quota from three to two.
- Big Lake – Prohibition on the retention of lake trout over 50 cm.
- Bridge Lake – Reduction in the lake trout quota from three to one.
- Sulphurous Lake – Restriction of the lake trout quota from one (no size restriction) to one (none over 50 cm).
- Tyee Lake – Reduction in kokanee quota from 10 to 5 (this regulation was changed in 2021 and has been continued).

REGION 6 - SKEENA

- Year round bait ban on the Skeena River, including all tributaries, and Nass River, including all tributaries.
- Upper Morice River – Year round angling closure from Morice Lake to signs posted approximately 2 km downstream (the dunes).

REGION 7A - OMINECA

- NO CHANGES

REGION 7B - PEACE

- Peace River – Kokanee quota of 10 (this regulation was changed in 2021 and has been continued).

REGION 8 - OKANAGAN

- Martins and Chapman Lakes – Reduction in rainbow lake quota from five to two.
- Okanagan Lake – Removal of barbless hook regulation.
- Similkameen River - Extend current trout release between Hwy 3 bridge at Princeton and Hwy 3 31 km downstream of Princeton to the entire river, including tributaries.
- Wood Lake - Reduction in kokanee quota from 5 to 3 (this regulation was changed in 2022 and has been continued).

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REGIONAL REGULATIONS

Each of the following Regional sections contains regional contact information, region-specific regulations, Management Unit boundary maps and tables detailing water-specific regulations.

Regulations that have changed from the previous version of the printed synopsis are highlighted in **blue**.

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For an online copy of this synopsis or to check for in-season regulation changes go to:
www.gov.bc.ca/FishingRegulations



We welcome your suggestions.
Please send comments to:
The Synopsis, Fish and Wildlife Branch
Email: fishandwildlife@gov.bc.ca

How to Read the Regional Water-Specific Tables

The Regulations listed in the Water-Specific Tables are **EXCEPTIONS** or **ADDITIONS** to the Regional Regulations. What follows is an explanation of the information in each column of the tables:

1		2	3
WATER BODY MGMT UNIT		EXCEPTIONS TO THE REGIONAL REGULATIONS	
ALICE LAKE	* ➡	2-7	No powered boats Bull trout (char) release
ALOUETTE LAKE		2-8	No vessels in swimming areas, as buoyed and signed; speed restriction (8 km/h) at S. end of lake, S. of a line drawn from the BC Parks boat ramp to signs on the E. side of the lake

1 Water-Specific Regulations

This column lists waters with restrictions not covered by the Regional Regulations.

An asterisk symbol (*) means the regulation applies to tributary streams as well.

A fish symbol (➡) means the lake is stocked. Not all stocked lakes are listed in the Water-Specific Regulations Tables. For a complete list of stocked lakes in B.C. go to <https://www.gofishbc.com/Where-to-Fish.aspx>

A (cw) symbol means that this is a Classified Water; see page 7.

2 Management Unit (M.U.)

This column lists one or more Management Unit's only as a reference to help you locate your target lake or stream and to distinguish waters in a region with the same name. Not all applicable M.U.'s may be listed. Consult the B.C. Recreational Atlas or Regional maps for Management Unit boundaries.

3 Exceptions to the Regional Regulations

Catch and Release: You may fish for the named species, but you must release any that you catch. You must return your fish to the water as quickly and carefully as possible (see "Proper Fish Handling", page 75).

Tributaries: when all regulations cited apply to both the named body of water and its tributaries, an asterisk (*) is placed in the first column. When only some regulations apply to the tributaries then a asterisk is placed after the relevant regulation cited in this column.

No fishing for: you may not deliberately fish for the species named even if your intention is to release any fish that you may catch. If you accidentally catch a fish of the species named, you must release it as quickly and carefully as possible (see "Proper Fish Handling", page 75).

Bait Ban: the use of natural bait (see definition of bait on page 8) is prohibited in waters with a bait ban. Bait may be banned

year round or seasonally. During the period when bait is banned it is banned for all angling and for all species.

Single Hook: it is prohibited to angle with a hook with more than one point on waters that are subject to a single hook regulation. Single hook regulations may be in place year round or seasonally. Where single hook regulations are in place on a water body it applies to angling for all species. Often single hook regulations are combined with barbless hook regulations and termed "single barbless hook".

Barbless Hook: it is prohibited to use a hook with a barb on waters subject to a barbless hook regulation. Barbless hook regulations may be in place year-round or seasonally. Where barbless hook regulations are in place on a water body, it applies to angling for all species. Often barbless hook regulations are combined with single hook regulations and termed "single barbless hook".

Dates: regulations may apply for all or part of the year. **When no date is listed, the regulations apply all year.** Start and end dates are inclusive.

✳ Youth/Disabled Accompanied Waters

Authorized Angler: A person that is under 16 years of age or a disabled resident.

Companion: A person who accompanies and attends an authorized angler. A person must not angle in a Youth/Disabled Accompanied Water unless the person is an authorized angler or a companion to an authorized angler. An authorized angler can be accompanied by up to two companion anglers.

Boating Regulations

Boating regulations are adopted for either fisheries management or public safety reasons. The various regulations include:

- **No angling from boats:** you may use a boat or other floating device for transportation in these waters, but you may not angle from that boat.
- **No angling from powered boats:** you are not allowed to angle from a boat equipped with a motor on these waters.
- **No powered boats:** boat motors of all types (internal combustion, steam and electric) are prohibited on these waters.
- **Electric motor only :** you may use only battery-powered electric motors - **max 7.5 kW**. All other types of motors (internal combustion, steam) are prohibited on these waters. In addition, wind or human propelled craft may be used.
- **Engine power regulations:** boat motors cannot exceed the engine power (given in kilowatts) listed in the "Exceptions" column.
- **Speed regulations:** boats equipped with motors cannot exceed the speed limit listed in the "Exceptions" column.
- **No towing:** do not tow a person on water skis, a surf board or other water toy.
- **No vessels:** boats and rafts of all types are prohibited.

Please note: most boating regulations are the responsibility of Government of Canada, **Marine Transportation**. They are published here as a courtesy to anglers but, due to space limitations, may not be complete. For more information:

Marine Transportation
Office of Boating Safety
700-800 Burrard St
Vancouver BC V6Z 2J8
or call 604-666-2681

All anglers of any age must comply with all regulations set out in this Synopsis as well as any in-season changes as made public by the Ministry. The regulations described in this Synopsis do not apply to tidal waters.

Licence Fees

All annual licences are valid for the current licence year, April 1st to March 31st, commencing on the date purchased. Licences are not transferrable. Taxes not included in fees listed below.

LICENCE TYPE	RESIDENT*	NON-RESIDENT*	NON-RESIDENT ALIEN*
Basic Licences			
Annual Angling Licence	\$39.56	\$60.44	\$87.92
One Day Angling Licence	\$10.99	\$21.98	\$21.98
Eight Day Angling Licence	\$21.98	\$39.56	\$54.96
Annual Licence for Disabled	\$1.10	\$60.44	\$87.92
Annual Licence for Age 65 Plus	\$5.50**	\$60.44	\$87.92
Conservation Surcharge Stamps (see page 7)			
Steelhead	\$27.48	\$65.94	\$65.94
Non-Tidal Salmon	\$16.49	\$32.97	\$32.97
Kootenay Lake Rainbow Trout	\$10.99	\$21.98	\$21.98
Shuswap Lake Rainbow Trout	\$10.99	\$21.98	\$21.98
Shuswap Lake Char	\$10.99	\$21.98	\$21.98
White Sturgeon Conservation Licences (see page 7)			
Annual	\$27.48	\$65.94	\$65.94
One Day	\$8.79	\$16.49	\$16.49
Eight Day	\$16.49	\$32.97	\$32.97
Classified Waters Licences (see page 7)			
Classified Waters Licence (annual)	\$16.49	★	★
Class I Waters Licence	★	\$43.96/day	\$43.96/day
Class II Waters Licence	★	\$21.98/day	\$21.98/day

There will be a 4% increase to angling licence fees on April 1, 2024. See in-season changes in April 2024: www.gov.bc.ca/FishingRegulations

* See definitions of “Resident”, “Non-resident”, and “Non-resident Alien” on page 80. Members of the Canadian armed services and students returning to B.C. may be eligible to purchase licences at the Resident rate. For more information, contact FrontCounter BC.

** BC resident anglers aged 65 and over have the option to purchase an annual basic licence at the reduced rate of \$5.50 or at the full BC resident rate of \$39.56. 100% of license sales revenue goes to the Freshwater Fisheries Society of B.C. and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation; purchasing your licence at full cost supports these organizations and can help with the conservation of the provinces freshwater fish resources and improve future angling opportunities. There is no difference in the angling opportunities available for the full price and reduced rate licences.

★ Not available. See “Classified Waters Licences”, page 7.

NOTES: You may buy as many One Day and Eight Day Licences (covering 8 consecutive days) as you need, but only ONE Annual Licence.

Most licence fees include a conservation surcharge administered by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.



Proof of Identity and Authorization

When fishing, you must produce your angling licence and photo ID, on the request of an officer. Electronic licences are acceptable however paper licences are required when retaining hatchery steelhead, chinook, Shuswap Lake char or rainbow trout, or Kootenay Lake rainbow trout.

If you are 16 years of age or older:

- You must have a valid basic licence to sport fish for any species of fish in non-tidal waters (including salmon) - see definition of "fish" on [page 80](#).
- You must purchase appropriate supplementary licences and stamps.
- You must carry your licence while sport fishing and, if asked, produce it for inspection by a Conservation Officer, Fishery Officer, RCMP constable, Park Ranger in a park, or an Officer under the *Wildlife Act*.
- Basic and supplementary licences and stamps are not valid in National Parks.

If you are under 16 and a resident of B.C.:

- You may sport fish without any licence or stamp (but must abide by the regulations).
- You do not need to be accompanied by a licence holder.
- You are entitled to your own quota of fish.

If you are under 16 and not a resident of B.C.:

- You do not require any licence or stamp to sport fish, but you must be accompanied by a person 16 years or older who holds the appropriate licences and stamps.
- Any fish you keep must be counted as part of the catch and possession of your accompanying licence holder.
- If you want to catch and keep your own quota of fish, you must buy a licence and any necessary supplementary licences and stamps.

If you are a resident of B.C. and disabled:

You may qualify for a fee reduction on your basic licence. To get an application form contact any Service BC or FrontCounter BC office or write to:

Fish and Wildlife Branch
PO Box 9363 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9M2

NOTE: Refunds will not be issued for licences already purchased at the full price.

Indigenous Fishing in Non-tidal Waters

First Nations have established aboriginal rights to harvest fish from non-tidal waters for food, social and ceremonial purposes in their traditional areas, and that treaty First Nations have treaty rights in relation to harvesting fish in non-tidal waters. Such uses of fish from non-tidal waters must be sustainable, and harvesting methods must not jeopardize safety or the use and enjoyment of property. Any fishing from non-tidal waters for sale or barter, in whole or in part, is not legal, except as authorized by regulation or where there is a demonstrated aboriginal or treaty right to do so.

Under the *Wildlife Act* "Indian" means a person who is defined as an Indian under the *Indian Act* (Canada).

If you are an Indian and a resident of B.C., you are not required to obtain any type of fishing licence or stamp to sport fish in non-tidal waters.

Indians who are residents of B.C. and wish to fish in non-tidal waters outside their traditionally used areas must do so in accordance with the Freshwater Fishing Regulations.

If an individual is in doubt regarding traditional fishing in a non-tidal water, they should be in contact with the appropriate First Nations officials and the regional Fisheries Program staff to discuss specific situations.

Métis:

A reminder that all Métis individuals intending to sport fish in non-tidal waters are required, under the *Wildlife Act*, to hold appropriate angling licences and stamps, and comply with all angling regulations.

Purchasing a Licence

Non-Tidal Angling Licences are available online. The Non-Tidal (Freshwater) Fishing E-Licensing system allows anglers to register to obtain an Angler Number and purchase their basic Non-Tidal Angling Licence, Classified Waters Licences, White Sturgeon Conservation Licences and Conservation Surcharge Stamps, at any time.

Where To Buy A Licence

To purchase your non-tidal angling licence on-line or for further information, please go to www.gov.bc.ca/fish-licence.

Anglers may also obtain electronic licences from their local Service BC or FrontCounter BC office or any licence vendor who may offer this service. For a listing of Service

BC, FrontCounter BC, and licence vendors locations, go to www.gov.bc.ca/fish-licence.

Lost licences

You must be in possession of a valid licence prior to resuming fishing.

- Do not buy a new licence. You are only permitted one annual angling licence per year.
- If you lose the licence that you purchased on-line, you can:
 - Reprint it from the Internet,
 - Get a Service BC or FrontCounter BC office to reprint it for you, or
 - Get a licence vendor to reprint a copy (there may be a fee).
- Your retention record (see below) must be transferred to the new copy.

Conservation Surcharges

Your basic angling licence can be validated with up to five annual Conservation Surcharge Stamps described in detail below, plus a White Sturgeon Conservation Licence.

The stamps are valid for the licence year (April 1 to March 31).

If a copy of your basic licence is reprinted, all your retention records must be transferred to the new copy.

Steelhead

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp if you fish for steelhead anywhere in B.C. (whether you keep or release your catch). In addition, a Steelhead Stamp is mandatory when fishing on most Classified Waters during certain specified periods, even when fishing for species other than steelhead. Refer to the regional tables for dates and exceptions.

This stamp is available with all annual and short-term basic licences. The steelhead stamp is valid for a licence year. You must immediately record your retention of hatchery steelhead on your basic angling licence. Please retain your basic licence for the entire licence year as you may be requested to complete an annual steelhead survey.

NOTE: The annual province-wide quota for hatchery steelhead is 10. All wild steelhead must be released. See definition of "hatchery trout" and "wild trout" on [page 80](#).

Non-Tidal Salmon

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp to keep a

salmon of any legal size or species (other than kokanee) from non-tidal waters. A stamp is not required if you release all salmon caught. You must immediately record your retention of adult chinook salmon on your basic angling licence.

For definition of adult chinook see [page 77](#).

For regulations related to angling for salmon in B.C. visit the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website at <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.htm> or by email: info@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Kootenay Lake Rainbow Trout

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp to keep rainbow trout over 50 cm from the main body of Kootenay Lake. You must immediately record your retention on your basic angling licence.

No Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required if you release all Kootenay Lake rainbow trout over 50 cm.

Shuswap Lake Char

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp to keep char over 60 cm caught in Shuswap Lake. You must immediately record your retention on your basic angling licence.

No Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required if you release all Shuswap Lake char over 60 cm.

Shuswap Lake Rainbow Trout

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp to keep rainbow trout over 50 cm from Shuswap Lake, Little Shuswap Lake, South Thompson River between Shuswap Lake and Little Shuswap Lake, Seymour, Anstey and Salmon Arms and Mara Lake. **You must immediately record your retention on your basic angling licence.**

No Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required if you release all Shuswap Lake rainbow trout over 50 cm.

White Sturgeon

You must purchase a **White Sturgeon Conservation Licence**, in addition to your basic licence, if you fish for white sturgeon in the Fraser River Watershed (including tributaries) from the CPR Bridge at Mission to and including Williams Lake River in the Cariboo. This is a catch-and-release only fishery - all sturgeon must be released. See Guidelines for Angling White Sturgeon in

B.C. at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/sports-recreation-arts-and-culture/outdoor-recreation/fishing-and-hunting/freshwater-fishing/ws_guidelines.pdf

Please note that this is the only white sturgeon fishery in the province's non-tidal waters.

Classified Waters Licences

The classified waters of B.C. are highly productive trout streams. These streams are classified as either **Class I** or **Class II** and are listed in the Water-Specific Tables for each Region. The Classified Waters Licensing System was created to protect the unique fishing opportunities provided by these waters, which contribute significantly to the province's reputation as a world-class fishing destination.

All anglers required to buy a basic angling licence must also purchase a Classified Waters Licence before fishing on a stream during the period when it is classified.

This licence is required in addition to the basic angling licence and any other stamps required by regulation. Also note that a **Steelhead Conservation Surcharge Stamp** is required at all times when fishing for steelhead, or when fishing classified waters during the period when steelhead are known to be present. The specific times when a Steelhead Stamp is mandatory are listed in the Water-Specific Tables for each Region.

If you are a B.C. resident:

Your Classified Waters Licence is valid for the licencing year. This means you can fish on any Class I or Class II water in the province during the year.

If you are a non-guided "Non-Resident" or non-guided "Non-Resident Alien":

Your Classified Waters Licence for Class I or Class II waters is sold on a per diem basis and is date and water-specific. Although anglers may purchase as many Classified Waters Licences as they wish, **each licence may not exceed 8 consecutive days. A first-come-first-serve booking system is in place for these Kootenay Class II waters: Michel Creek, Skookumchuck Creek, and the Wigwam River.**

If you are a GUIDED "Non-Resident" or a guided "Non-Resident Alien":

Your Classified Waters Licence for Class I or Class II waters is sold on a per diem basis and is date and water-specific. If guided confirm with your angling guide before

purchasing your licence. Although anglers may purchase as many Classified Waters Licences as they wish, **each licence may not exceed 8 consecutive days.**

EXCEPTION: Non-Resident Aliens (whether GUIDED or NON-GUIDED) may only purchase one Classified Waters Licence for the Dean River per licence year.

NOTE: Non-guided Non-Resident Aliens wishing to fish the Class I - Main Section of the Dean River should refer to [pages 43 and 45](#) for details.

Is Your Angling Guide Licenced?

Anglers who use the services of an **unlicenced** angling guide risk being convicted of an offence.

Anglers securing the services of an Angling Guide can be certain that person is licensed by:

- Asking to see their current Angling Guide Licence (or Assistant Angling Guide Licence); OR
- Confirming their status by contacting FrontCounter BC (FCBC) at one of the following:
 - By Phone: Toll free at 1-877-855-3222, from outside North America ++1-778-372-0729
 - By Email: FrontCounterBC@gov.bc.ca

Family Fishing Weekend

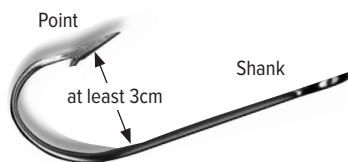
An annual celebration of fishing that coincides with Father's Day weekend each year. The provincial government waives the requirement for residents of Canada to buy or carry a non-tidal (freshwater) basic licence during the third weekend in June, and the Friday immediately prior. The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which manages tidal waters, also offers the opportunity to go saltwater fishing for free. This is a great opportunity to get together with family and friends and try fishing!

Anglers must still adhere to catch quotas and regulations. And if you plan to fish for species that require a conservation surcharge stamp (steelhead, Shuswap Lake rainbow trout and char, Kootenay Lake rainbow trout, white sturgeon, and salmon in both tidal and non-tidal waters); or angle Classified Waters (highly productive trout streams; listed as Class I or Class II waters in the water-specific tables of the fishing regulations) you are still required to purchase the appropriate licence(s) and conservation surcharge stamps.

Allowable Fishing Methods

Your basic fishing licence entitles you to:

- angle with one fishing line to which only one hook, one artificial lure OR one artificial fly is attached.
- angle with a downrigger, provided the fishing line is attached to the downrigger by a quick-release mechanism.
- ice fish with one line and one lure, artificial fly or other terminal attractor. It is your legal responsibility to warn other people of the existence of your ice hole and remove your ice hut before ice breakup.
- fish with a set line. You may only fish with a set line (an unattended line) in lakes of Region 6 and Region 7A. You are allowed to use only one line with one hook (no smaller than 3 cm from point to shank - see below). **Any game fish that you catch other than burbot must be released.** Set lines must be marked with angler's name, address, and telephone number.
- **Set Line Hook** (shown 1/2 size)



- fish with a spear or an arrow that is propelled by a spring, an elastic band, compressed air, a bow, or by hand. Only non-game fish (such as carp) may be speared, except burbot, which may also be speared in Regions 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8. No spear fishing of any other game fish (as defined on [page 80](#)), Pacific salmon or protected species ([page 9](#)) is permitted anywhere in B.C. No spear fishing of any kind is permitted in Region 1, 2, and 4.
- trap crayfish with any number or size of traps for personal consumption. You must release all fin fish caught in your trap. To help sustain crayfish populations, you should release any crayfish that are less than 9 cm in total length as well as those bearing eggs or young.

All other methods of taking fin fish and crayfish are illegal.

It Is Unlawful To....

- **Use barbed hooks** or a hook with more than one point in any river, stream, creek or slough in B.C. (Note: the use of barbed hooks in lakes is permitted, unless noted in the Regional Water-Specific Tables).
- **Angle with a fishing line to which more than one artificial fly is attached** (i.e., to use "dropper flies").
- **Use a light** in any manner to attract fish, unless the light is submerged and attached to the fishing line within 1 m of the hook.
- **Fish with nets**, including dip nets, minnow nets, gill nets or cast nets.
- **Snag (foul hook) fish** (see definition, [page 80](#)). Any fish willfully or accidentally snagged must be released immediately.
- **Angle with more than one line, EXCEPT** a person who is **alone in a boat on a lake** may angle with two lines.
- **Place any fishing gear in any water during a No Fishing period.**
- **Angle with a fishing line to which more than 1 kg of weight is attached** (this does not apply to downrigger weights).
- **Waste the fish you catch.** If your fish is not suitable for eating or if possession is illegal because of quotas, size limits or closed seasons, return the fish quickly and gently to the water.
- **Release fish in a harmful manner** if you are not going to keep your catch. Follow the catch and release tips on [page 75](#).
- **Buy, sell or barter** or attempt to buy, sell or barter any fish caught by sport fishing.
- **Damage or interfere with a trap set for furbearers.** If you believe the trap has been set illegally, report it to a Conservation Officer.
- **Have any live fish in your possession in the wild**, or move any live fish or live aquatic invertebrates around the province, or transplant them into any waters of B.C. Do not keep angled fish alive in a "livewell" or other device, or on stringers, and never use live fish as bait or release your aquarium fish to the wild. **"High-grading" is illegal.**
- **Enter or cross cultivated land, posted land, private land, or Indian Reserve land without proper permission.**

- **Please refer** to additional restrictions and requirements on [pages 8-10](#).

Rules on Bait Usage

"Bait" is any foodstuff or natural substance used to attract fish, other than wood, cotton, wool, hair, fur or feathers. It does not include fin fish, other than roe. It includes roe, worms and other edible substances, as well as scents and flavourings containing natural substances or nutrients.

Roe... you must not have more than 1 kg of roe (fish eggs) in your possession for use as bait unless the roe was obtained from a commercial source that lawfully obtained that roe, or you have in your possession the freshly dressed fish from which the roe in excess of 1 kg was taken. Carry a receipt with you if you purchased roe from a commercial source.

Aquatic invertebrates... you may use freshwater invertebrates (e.g., aquatic insects and crayfish) in streams as bait unless a bait ban applies. No person shall use as bait or possess for that purpose any freshwater invertebrate (this includes the aquatic stage of any insect, such as dragonfly nymphs or caddisfly larvae) at a lake.

Chumming... attempting to attract fish by depositing any substance in the water, is prohibited.

Fin fish... means all fish other than crustaceans, echinoderms, molluscs, shellfish, and marine mammals. The use of fin fish (dead or alive) or parts of fin fish other than roe is prohibited throughout the province, with the following exceptions: You may use the head of fin fish or the headless body of fin fish as bait, only:

- (a) when sport fishing for sturgeon in Region 2 only on the Fraser River, Lower Pitt River (CPR Bridge upstream to Pitt Lake), Lower Harrison River (Fraser River upstream to Harrison Lake), or
- (b) when set lining in lakes of Region 6 or in lakes of Zone A of Region 7.

Quotas

For all game fish, there is a quota or limit on the number of fish you may retain.

Refer to the Regional Chapters for additional information on regional and water-specific quotas.

Daily quota... the maximum number of fish of a given species, group of species, or size class that you may retain in one calendar day.

Possession quota... no more than twice the daily quota unless otherwise specified (see definition, [page 80](#)).

Monthly quota... the maximum number of fish that you are allowed to retain in one calendar month.

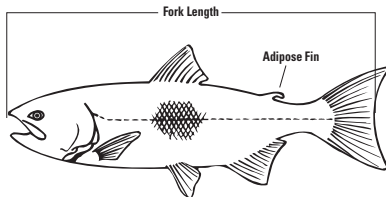
Annual quota... the maximum number of fish that you are allowed to retain in one licence year (April 1 to March 31).

Quotas are not cumulative: you cannot possess a quota from each region that you fish. As a general guideline, never have in your possession while at or near any lake or stream, more fish than the allowable quota for that lake or stream. Check the Regional Regulations and Tables for daily catch quotas for B.C. sport fish.

Size Limits

Size limits protect fish of certain sizes.

Measure your fish from the tip of the nose to the fork of the tail to determine its legal length.



Size limits are listed with quotas in the Regional Regulations and in the Regional Water-Specific Tables. If you catch a fish protected by a min. or max. size limit, release it as quickly and carefully as possible (see "Proper Fish Handling," [page 75](#)).

Minimum size limits allow fish to spawn at least once before they can be caught and kept. **There is no general minimum size limits for trout/char in B.C. waters, EXCEPT** where specifically indicated in the Regional Daily Catch Quotas or for waters listed in the Regional Water-Specific Tables.

Maximum size limits allow larger fish to be released to provide future fishing opportunities.

Protected Species

It is illegal to fish for, or catch and retain any of the fish listed below. If you accidentally catch one, you must release it right away where you captured it. The fish on this list are considered to be at risk in Canada and are legally protected by federal statutes.

Cultus Lake Sculpin

Enos Lake Stickleback

Misty Lake Stickleback

Nooksack Dace

Paxton Lake Stickleback

Rocky Mountain Sculpin

Shorthead Sculpin

Salish Sucker

Vananda Creek Stickleback

Vancouver Lamprey

Western Brook Lamprey (Morrison Creek population)

White Sturgeon (Nechako, Upper Fraser, Kootenay and Columbia populations)

For more information on protected species, please visit Environment Canada's website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry.html>.

Fluctuating Lake & Reservoir Levels

Water levels in lakes and especially reservoirs, can fluctuate over the year. These fluctuations result in a change in the location of stream mouths (please check the definition of "streams" and "stream mouths" on [page 80](#)). Note that a stream flowing through the drawdown portion of a reservoir basin is still considered to be a stream, not part of the reservoir. Anglers are reminded that lake and stream regulations may differ.

No Fishing Areas

Most waters in B.C. are open to fishing for some species 24 hours of the day, every day of the year.

There are five basic exceptions:

- No fishing areas: See Regional Tables. No Fishing in the water specific tables apply to all species, are year round and apply to the entire water body (unless otherwise noted);
- Within Ecological Reserves (this page);
- Within 23 m downstream of the lower entrance to any fishway, canal, obstacle or leap;
- Within a 100 m radius of any government facility operated for counting, passing or rearing fish (e.g., fishway, fish hatchery) unless otherwise designated; and
- Within National Parks unless a specific location is identified as being open (see "National Parks" on this page).

Not all No Fishing areas are signed in the field. Make sure you read the Regional Regulations for the area in which you will be fishing. If you have any questions, contact the local Fish and Wildlife Regional Office.

Ecological Reserves

Fishing is prohibited in Ecological Reserves in B.C. A complete list of ecological reserves is available from BC Parks headquarters at:

PO Box 9398, STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9M9

or on the BC Parks website:

<https://bcparks.ca/about/types-parks-protected-areas/ecological-reserves/>.

BC Parks

Individuals visiting a Provincial Park, Conservancy, Recreation Area or Protected Area should be aware that the *Park Act* and its regulations apply, as do the sport fishing regulations in this Synopsis.

NOTE: The use of horses, motor vehicles, motorcycles, snowmobiles, other self-propelled vehicles, or bicycles is generally prohibited in Provincial Parks, Conservancies, and Recreation Areas except where specifically authorized. All motorized vehicles on park roads must be licensed. The use of aircraft to arrive or depart from some parks is restricted. Activities in parks may be regulated by signs posted on site. More information can be found at BC Parks website <https://bcparks.ca/>

National Parks

The seven National Parks within British Columbia are: Kootenay, Yoho, Glacier, Mount Revelstoke, Pacific Rim, Gwaii Haanas and Gulf Islands.

Freshwater fishing is prohibited in National Parks unless opened under the National Parks Fishing Regulations. Where open, anglers require a National Park Fishing Permit to fish in park waters.

A provincial angling licence is not valid unless otherwise stated for any fresh water within National Parks or National Park Reserves.

National Park Fishing Permits and Regulations are available at park visitor centres and at some local commercial outlets. The National Parks Fishing Regulations may also be viewed at www.pc.gc.ca by selecting a park and clicking on "Activities," then "Fishing," or by contacting Parks Canada at 1-888-773-8888.

All fresh waters within **Pacific Rim National Park Reserve**, **Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve** and **Gulf Islands National Park Reserve** are closed to fishing throughout the **2023-2025** season.

For information about the **2023-2025** season, contact Parks Canada or visit <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/restricted-restraint-eng.html>.

Keeping and Transporting Your Catch

To comply with the law, follow these simple guidelines when you clean and transport your fish in non-tidal water (for all species except salmon).

- **Do not can, bottle or fillet fish** caught by sport fishing in non-tidal waters except at your permanent residence (commercial canning of these fish is not permitted).
- **Leave the head, tail, and all fins on your catch** until you get them to your permanent (ordinary) residence. We suggest you immediately remove the gills and internal organs of any fish you keep to reduce spoilage.
- **Do not freeze fish together in an unrecognizable block.**
- Please refer to the fish cleaning guidelines in “Angling Safety in Bear Country” on page 76.
- The management of salmon fisheries in B.C., in both tidal and freshwater, is the responsibility of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). Information about packaging and transporting salmon is available at <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/salmon-saumon-eng.html>.

Transporting and Exporting Fish

In order to enforce quotas and size limits, our officers **must be able to count, measure and identify your catch.**

If you caught the fish yourself you must:

- Keep your angling licence handy while travelling.
- Transport or possess no more than your legal limit.
- Ensure your fish can be identified, counted and measured if necessary (see “Wrap it Right”).

If you are transporting fish for someone else:

- Obtain and carry a signed letter from that person with the following details: the angler’s name, address, telephone number and fishing licence number; when and where the fish were caught; the date and place at which you were given the fish; the number, species and size of the fish that you have been given and the name and address of the person to whom the fish are to be delivered.
- If you will be exporting the fish from B.C., carry the letter and ensure that it is available for inspection by fishery enforcement and/or customs officers if requested to do so.

If someone else caught the fish and gave it to you for your personal consumption:

- Keep in your possession a signed letter from the angler until you have eaten the fish.
- The letter should list the name, address and telephone number of the angler who gave you the fish; the number, species and size of the fish; and when and where the fish were caught.

Angling Guides in British Columbia

Who Needs an Angling Guide Licence?

In British Columbia, a person commits an offence if a person does not hold a valid angling guide or assistant angling guide licence and acts as a “**guide for fish**” or offers to do so.

A person acts as a “**guide for fish**” when a person does one or more of the following activities for compensation or reward (either received or promised):

1. Accompanies another person and assists that person to angle; OR
2. Attends another person at or near an angling site in a way that directly or indirectly assists that person to angle; OR
3. Transports another person to and from an angling site, or between angling sites, for the purpose of angling.

It is also an offence for an angling guide to employ another person to “**guide for fish**” if that person does not hold an assistant angling guide licence.

NOTE: There are **exemptions** from the angling guide licensing requirements for certain uses of aircraft and motor vehicles for commercial purposes. There are also exemptions for some fishing school operations. For more information about angling guide requirements and exemptions, please contact a Fish & Wildlife Regional Office.

How to Become an Angling Guide

Information on basic eligibility, the Angling Guide Exam, and the subsequent steps to obtaining a new Angling Guide Licence is available on the FrontCounter BC website www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca/info/.