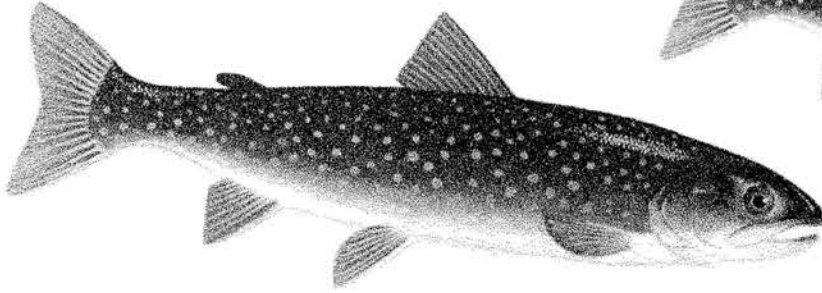




## Fishing Regulations 2017



### Bull Trout, *Salvelinus confluentus*

Bull trout are a federally listed Threatened Species. Fishing for bull trout is prohibited and any bull trout incidentally caught must be immediately released.

The primary purpose of Glacier National Park is to preserve natural ecosystems for their aesthetic, educational, cultural, and scientific values. Through the management of fish and aquatic environments, the park hopes to encourage an appreciation for the preservation of native fishes in natural and mostly undisturbed aquatic habitats.

Fishing is permitted when consistent with preservation or restoration of natural aquatic environments. To fulfill these objectives, certain regulations, guidelines, and courtesies must be followed.

### Closed Waters

The following areas are closed to fishing:

- Akokala Lake
- Kintla Creek between Kintla Lake and Upper Kintla Lake
- Upper Kintla Lake
- Bowman Creek above Bowman Lake
- Logging Creek between Logging Lake and Grace Lake
- Cracker Lake
- Slide Lake and the impounded pond below the lake
- The following waters are closed: Ole, Park, Muir, Coal, Nyack, Fish, Lee, Otatso, Boulder and Kennedy drainages.
- North Fork of the Belly River
- North Fork of the Flathead River within 200 yards of the mouth of Big Creek.

### Season and Possession Limits

The standard park fishing season for all waters in the park is from the third Saturday in May through November 30, with the following exceptions:

- Lake fishing open all year.
- Waterton Lake season, catch and possession limits are the same as set by Canada. Check Canadian regulations before fishing these waters.
- Lower Two Medicine Lake season, catch and possession limits are set by the Blackfoot Nation. Check Blackfoot Tribal regulations.
- Hidden Lake outlet creek and an area extending into Hidden Lake for a radius of 300 feet is closed to fishing during the cutthroat spawning season in order to protect spawning cutthroat trout, and to reduce the potential for bear-human conflicts.
- When fishing from park lands along the North Fork of the Flathead River, park catch and possession limits and other park fishing regulations are applicable.
- When fishing from park lands or bridges along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, a Montana fishing license is required and state regulations are applicable.
- From May 1–June 15 an area extending 400 yards from shore between the Bowman Lake Ranger Station and the outlet of Bowman Lake is closed to fishing to protect congregating westslope cutthroat trout.

### Catch and Release Fishing:

All waters west of the Continental Divide (as well as Midvale Creek in the Two Medicine River drainage and Wild Creek in the St. Mary River drainage) are subject to catch and release fishing only for cutthroat trout. Cutthroat trout must be handled carefully and released immediately back into the water. However, two cutthroat trout may be harvested from Hidden, Evangeline, and Camas Lakes in accordance with park fishing regulations.

Daily catch and possession limits will not exceed five fish, including no more than: two cutthroat trout (see 'catch and release fishing' above), two burbot (ling), one northern pike, two mountain whitefish, five lake whitefish, five kokanee salmon, five grayling, five rainbow trout, and five lake trout.

### Exceptions:

NO limit on lake trout in park waters west of the Continental Divide, NO limit on lake whitefish in Lake McDonald, and the parkwide brook trout daily catch and possession limit is 20 fish.

**No bull trout may be retained. Any caught incidentally must be handled carefully and immediately released.**

**Fish Consumption Advisory: If you plan on keeping fish to eat, please check the fish consumption guidelines.**

### Equipment and Bait

- Fishing is allowed by hook and line only; use of only one rod per person is permitted.
- The rod or line must be closely attended at all times.
- Only artificial flies and lures are permitted in order to reduce harm/mortality to native fish.  
*Exception:* bait permitted when fishing in the Two Medicine drainage upstream of the Two Medicine bridge at the Running Eagle Falls parking lot as well as in the Many Glacier Valley upstream of the falls at the outlet of Swiftcurrent Lake.
- Fishing with nets, seines, traps, drugs, or explosives is prohibited.
- Do not deposit fish eggs, roe, food, or other substances in waters to attract fish.
- Snagging fish in park waters or from park lands is prohibited.
- The use of felt-soled wading boots are prohibited in order to prevent the introduction of Aquatic Invasive Species to park waters.

**The use of all lead associated with fishing is prohibited within Glacier National Park. This includes weights, lures, jigs, line, etc. The only exception is a fisherman who is using a "down-rigger" may use cannon ball lead weights of 2 pounds or larger on the down-rigger cable.**

**Alternatives to lead are nontoxic materials such as brass, steel, bismuth, and tungsten, available at major sporting goods stores.**

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## Stocking and Native Fish

Many people wonder why the National Park Service no longer stocks fish in park waters after this was done for many decades to enhance sport fishing. The reason is simple. The introduction of exotic game fishes was found to be detrimental to Glacier's native fishes. Competition for food and space, as well as hybridization with non-native species currently threatens native species populations in many areas of the park. Native bull trout have undergone dramatic reductions in abundance in many lakes on the west side of the park where lake trout have invaded.

The National Park Service is currently engaged in fisheries research to assess the status of native fish in the park and to develop programs to protect and enhance native fish populations. Ensuring the future survival of Glacier National Park's unique native fishes for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations is a key mandate of the National Park Service.

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## Aquatic Invasive Species

A concern we must all address is the spread of harmful aquatic invasive species (AIS). These are non-native species that can harm native aquatic ecosystems as well as negatively impact visitor use and enjoyment of park waterways. AIS such as lake trout have been extremely detrimental to native bull trout populations, replacing them as the top aquatic predator in the many of the large lakes on the west side of Glacier. AIS can come in many other forms including other animals such as zebra and quagga mussels, plants such as Eurasian watermilfoil, or pathogens such as whirling disease. These species can hitch a ride on boats, trailers, and float tubes, as well as on waders and wading boots. AIS have devastating impacts on native aquatic ecosystems.

Park waters are closed to privately owned motorized/trailer watercraft as a precaution.

You must clean, drain, and dry all of your boating, wading, and fishing equipment before coming to the park.

A free launch permit is required to launch all hand-propelled watercraft such as rafts, kayaks, and canoes in Glacier National Park. In order to qualify for the permit, all such boats must be inspected for AIS by NPS staff.

The free launch permits are available during normal business hours at backcountry permit stations and Apgar Public Boat Ramp. Dates and times of operation for permit stations can be found in the Waterton-Glacier Guide.

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## Fish Identification

Native fish such as bull and westslope cutthroat trout can be identified from other species in a number of ways:

- **Cutthroat trout** have a characteristic red 'slash' under their lower jaw.
- **Bull trout** have pink or orange spots on their sides and pale yellow spots on their backs.
- **Lake trout** have a deeply forked tail and numerous white (light) markings on their body. They do not have pink or orange spots on their sides.
- **Brook trout** have black markings on their back and dorsal fin, along with red or orange spots surrounded by blue halos on their sides.

Don't assume because a fish is small, it can't be a bull trout. Juvenile bull trout rear in small streams and can be confused with brook trout.

### If you don't know, LET IT GO.

For help, pick up the Fish in Glacier brochure at visitor centers and ranger stations. Further information on fishing in Glacier National Park is available at park bookstores or by calling the Glacier National Park Conservancy at 406-888-5756. Request the publication *Fishing Glacier National Park* (\$12.95).

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## Cleaning Fish

When cleaning fish in the backcountry, fish entrails must be disposed of by puncturing the air bladder and depositing the entrails into deep water at least 200 feet from the nearest campsite or trail. Do not bury or burn entrails, as they will attract bears.

When cleaning fish, use garbage cans where available for entrail disposal.

- The skin must remain attached to any fish harvested while in the park for staff identification purposes.

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## Ice Fishing

- No motorized vehicles (snowmobiles, ATVs, autos) are allowed on any lake, river, or stream.
- Power augers are prohibited on all lakes within Glacier National Park.
- Shelters, bait, and all fishing equipment may not be left unattended.
- No open fires are allowed. Self-contained stoves with fuel may be used.

- Undesignated camping is not allowed on lakes or lakeshores.
- Toilets should be used if available. Otherwise, human waste should not be disposed within 100 yards of any water source and all paper must be packed out.

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## Bears

Consider yourself lucky to see a black or grizzly bear. But remember...the wilderness is their home. Please be a well-mannered guest. Bears are usually shy; however, make no attempt to approach or startle them. They have been known to attack without warning. When hiking, make some noise to alert bears of your presence. Never offer food to bears and never get between a sow and cub. As bears have an excellent sense of smell, it is important to avoid the use of odorous food. Backcountry camping

regulations require that food, cooking utensils, and food containers be suspended from the designated food hanging device at all times, except mealtimes. If needed, when not in a designated campground, suspend food and cooking utensils at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet from any tree trunk. In the absence of trees, store food and cooking gear in approved bear resistant food containers. Never leave food unattended.

**Report all bear sightings to a ranger.**