Yellowstone National Park

Fishing Regulations 2019

Know the fish, know the rules

Precious habitat • Special protection • Exceptional fishing

Purpose of Yellowstone Fishing Regulations

Fishing regulations in Yellowstone National Park are structured to strongly support native fish conservation goals. Cutthroat trout are the sole, native trout of the park and were the dominant fish species here prior to Euroamerican settlement. Cutthroat trout, Arctic grayling, mountain whitefish, and other native fishes are important to the ecology of Yellowstone.

Introduced nonnative fish cause loss of native fish

The abundance of native fish has been reduced because of impacts by introduced nonnative fish, including brook, brown, lake, and rainbow trout. These nonnative species continue to contribute to the decline in the park's native fish population by competing for food and habitat, preying on native fish, and degrading the genetic integrity of native fish through hybridization.

Anglers assist with native species conservation

Angling is one way that the nonnative fish can be selectively removed from an area without damaging the native fishery. Within the Native Trout Conservation Area, anglers are strongly encouraged, and in some cases required, to harvest nonnative fishes. This harvest will help to conserve the native fish and the natural ecosystems they support.

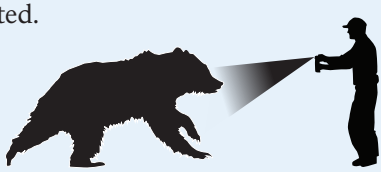
Stay Safe and Legal

You are responsible for following all park regulations. Consult Yellowstone's park newspaper, *Backcountry Trip Planner*, or rangers at visitor centers and backcountry offices to learn more.

- Stay on established trails in thermal areas for your safety and to protect these fragile areas.
- Do not discard fish carcasses or entrails along stream banks or the lake shore as they will attract bears.
- Do not feed any animals, including birds, squirrels, and coyotes.

Bear Warning • Bears and other wildlife may appear in areas frequented by people—even on trails, boardwalks, and along roads. Do not approach wildlife and remain at least 100 yards (92 meters) away from bears and wolves, and 25 yards (23 meters) away from all other wildlife.

- **Be alert**—watch for bears and bear sign, like fresh tracks or scat.
- **Make noise** in areas where visibility is limited.
- **Carry bear spray** and know how to use it.
- **Avoid hiking or fishing alone**. Try to stay with a group of three or more people.
- **DO NOT RUN** if you encounter a bear.



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General Regulations

Fishing

Fishing/angling is defined as any activity using an attended single rod or line for the purpose of attempting to attract, capture, or possess any fish from waters within Yellowstone National Park. All other methods to attract, capture, or possess fish are prohibited.

Fishing hours and season dates

The season begins the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend (usually the last weekend in May) and extends through the first Sunday in November. Exceptions are listed in regional regulations (p. 8–15).

Hours are daily from sunrise to sunset. Fishing with an artificial light is prohibited. Some areas are closed to human entry, have trail or seasonal closures, off-trail travel and daylight hour limitations, or party size recommendations. See the Bear Management Area restrictions in the Backcountry Trip Planner for specific rules and information.

Streams may be temporarily closed due to low water levels and high water temperatures to protect fish populations.

Fishing permits

Anglers 16 years of age or older must be in possession of a valid Yellowstone National Park fishing permit to fish in the park.

Park rangers may check permits and inspect tackle, fish, creels, or other containers where fish or tackle may be stored.

Anglers 15 years of age or younger have two options:

1. Children 15 or younger may fish without a permit if they are fishing under the direct supervision of an adult who has a valid park fishing permit.

2. Children 15 or younger may obtain a free permit that must be signed by a responsible adult; with this permit, a child can fish without direct adult supervision.

With either option, the accompanying adult is responsible for the child's actions and must ensure the child complies with all fishing regulations and provisions.

Gear restrictions

Each angler may use only one rod, which must be closely attended at all times and used for angling only—intentional snagging of fish is prohibited.

Only lead-free artificial lures (e.g. spoon or spinner) or flies may be used. Leaded fishing tackle such as leaded split-shot sinkers, weighted jigs (lead molded to a hook), and soft

General Regulations

A single pointed hook is the best choice for fishing in Yellowstone. Three-point hooks can severely injure fish and are often constructed with toxic lead solder.

lead-weighted ribbon for nymph fishing are not allowed.

Hooks must have points that are barbless, or the barbs must be pinched down by pliers. Lures may have only one hook with single, double, or triple points.

Each fly may have only one hook. Up to two flies may be used on a single leader (also called "dry and dropper," or "hopper and dropper").

Except for feathers and other typical fly-tying materials, the hook must be bare. No organic or inorganic baits are allowed. *Organic baits* include fish or fish parts, minnows, salmon eggs, worms, insects, or foodstuffs such as bread or corn. *Inorganic baits* include rubber worms and plastic "twister" tails. Scented attractants (liquid and solid baits) are illegal. Putting any substance in the water for the purpose of attracting fish (chumming) is illegal.

FAQ: Why is fishing lead-free in Yellowstone?

Lead is a toxic environmental contaminant. It accumulates in fatty tissue, eventually causing lead poisoning. Wildlife such as waterfowl, cranes, and shorebirds are vulnerable because of their largely fish-based diets.

FAQ: Why are barbless hooks required?

Barbless hooks reduce injuries and the time needed to handle fish, and improve the overall condition of trout in heavily-fished waters of the park.

Felt-soled Footgear Prohibited

To reduce the potential for introduction or spread of aquatic invasive species, footgear with absorbent felt or other fibrous material on the soles are prohibited.

Tackle exceptions

Non-toxic split-shot, sinkers, and jig heads molded with bismuth-tin, molybdenum, or tungsten are allowed. Lead core line and heavy (> 4 lb.) downrigger weights used to fish for deep-dwelling lake trout are permissible because they are too large to be ingested by wildlife.

Artificial lures are not allowed on the Firehole River, Madison River, and lower Gibbon River (below Gibbon Falls), these streams are fly fishing only.

General Regulations

Possession limits

All native fish must be released unharmed. Natives include cutthroat trout, mountain whitefish, and Arctic grayling. See pages 16–17 for photos and further descriptions.

Each angler must be able to correctly identify various fish species.

ALL NATIVE FISH MUST BE RELEASED UNHARMED

General Regulations

Native Trout Conservation Area

All native fish must be released unharmed. No possession limit for nonnative fish, including brown, brook, rainbow, and lake trout (p. 6–13).

- All rainbow trout, brook trout, and identifiable cutthroat x rainbow hybrids caught in the Lamar River drainage (including portions of Slough and Soda Butte creeks) and the Yellowstone River drainage below Lower Falls and above Knowles Falls ***must be killed—it is illegal to release them alive (p. 8.)***

- All lake trout caught from Yellowstone Lake ***must be killed—it is illegal to release them alive.***

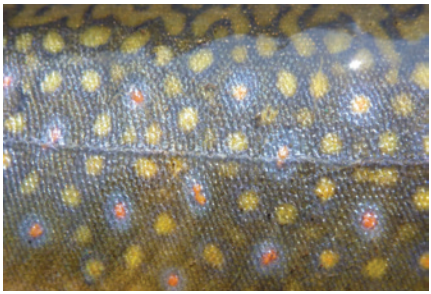
Nonnative Trout Tolerance Area

All native fish must be released unharmed. Possession limits exist for nonnative fish in this area. An angler must cease fishing in the area immediately after filling the possession limit. (p. 7 and 10.)

- Firehole River, Madison River, lower Gibbon River (downstream of Gibbon Falls)—possession of up to five brook trout is allowed. Catch and release all rainbow and brown trout. Whitefish are an important native species in the Madison River and they must be released.

- Lewis River system above Lewis Falls, including Lewis and Shoshone lakes and their tributaries—possession of five combined brook, brown or lake trout; only one of which may be a brown trout.

It is the responsibility of the angler to be able to identify fish by species. Unintentionally killed fish should be returned to the water so they can be consumed by wildlife.



Brook trout markings.

Evidence of species in possession

Skin must remain attached so the fish species can be visibly identified. Gills and entrails may be removed in the field, but must be discarded only within the waters where the fish were caught.

Disposal of fish and entrails

Dispose of fish and/or fish entrails within the waters where the fish was caught but not within 100 feet (30.5 m) of boat ramps, docks, or backcountry campsites. Fish can also be disposed of in park trash cans.

Bridge and boat dock restrictions

No fishing from any road bridge or boat dock. Accessible fishing platforms and ramps are located near Madison Junction (p. 8) and at Grant Village boat launch (p. 14).

General Regulations

All vessels, including float tubes, require an inspection and a permit.

Boating

Vessel inspections & permits

Boating season operates on the same dates as fishing season. All vessels—including float tubes—require a boat permit, a life vest for each passenger, and an emergency sound device such as a whistle or air horn. All vessels must be checked by National Park Service inspectors to ensure that they are free of aquatic invasive species before entering any park waters. See Yellowstone's Boating Regulations or the park website for more details.

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Be A Good Steward. Clean. Drain. Dry.

StopAquaticHitchhikers.org

Aquatic invasive species jeopardize the ecological, recreational, and economic values of the entire Yellowstone area. Please protect Yellowstone waters by:

1. **CLEAN** water, mud, plants, fish, and all other foreign material from your boats, trailers, and other equipment—**including waders, boots, clothing, and nets**—use high-pressure, hot (>140°F) water to treat all gear before you enter Yellowstone National Park.

2. **DRAIN** your boat hull and live well in a safe location (a flat, paved, dirt, or gravel area) away from all park surface waters. Do not dump water from other sources into Yellowstone waters.

3. **DRY.** Ensure all gear is clean and **completely dry for 5 days**—including waders, boots, clothing, and nets—before fishing another stream or lake in the park.

4. **DO NOT BRING BAIT** into Yellowstone National Park. No natural or organic bait such as minnows, salmon eggs, worms, insects, or foodstuffs—alive or dead—are allowed.

5. **NEVER MOVE** water, fish, other animals, or plants from one stream or lake to another. It is illegal to transport live fish within the park.

See Yellowstone's aquatic invasive species brochure or the park website for additional details.

Releasing Fish

Hold the fish with wet hands, beneath the belly, behind the pectoral fins. Use forceps or small pliers to remove the hook.

For all native fish and any nonnative fish you intend to release, bring the fish in as quickly as possible. Do not play the fish to exhaustion.

Unhook the fish in quiet water such as an eddy or slow spot. Do not drag the fish across land. Use forceps or small needle-nosed pliers to quickly remove the hook.

Always make sure your hands are wet if you must handle the fish. Dry hands damage a fish's protective mucous film. Hold the fish with one hand around the tail section and the other beneath the belly, just behind the pectoral fins. Never grab or hold a fish through the gills unless it is already dead.

If you want a photo of the fish, make sure the photographer is ready before you handle the fish. Make it quick.

Never just throw a fish back into the water. If a fish becomes passive, it is probably close to exhaustion. Gently remove the hook within calm water, then lightly cradle the fish with your hands to see what it does. If it struggles to keep itself upright, hold the fish around its tail and beneath its belly with its head facing upstream into the current. Move the fish gently back and forth toward and away from the current. You should notice the gills opening and closing due to the rush of water. This is like giving a fish mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. When the fish has recovered, it should swim away on its own.

Tackle, lures, and hooks

Hooks and lures typically have barbs when purchased. With small pliers you must pinch down the barbs. Without barbs, more skill is required in landing and bringing in fish, but hook removal is easier and less traumatic to the fish.

Spinning lures typically have three hooks called treble hooks. With wire cutters you can snip off one of the hooks or snap one off with pliers; you also must pinch down all the barbs. Two hooks are still effective, easier to remove, and less traumatic.

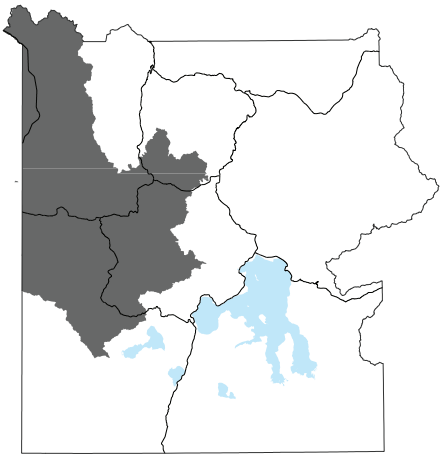
If the fish is deeply hooked, cut the line, do not pull out the hook. Most fish can survive with hooks left in.

Regional Regulations

If a stream or lake is not listed by name or as a tributary, general regulations apply. You must follow bear management and hydrothermal area restrictions listed in the Backcountry Trip Planner, which is available in backcountry offices or at **www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/publications.htm**.

Northwest Region:

Includes the Madison and Gallatin river drainages, including Firehole and Gibbon rivers and tributaries.



Permanently closed to fishing:

- Firehole River from road bridge .5 mile (.8 km) upstream of Old Faithful to road bridge at Biscuit Basin, 200 yards (182 m) either side of Midway footbridge.
- Madison River from Seven Mile Bridge upstream 250 yards (226 m).

Fly fishing only: Madison River, Firehole River, Gibbon River below Gibbon Falls (not including their tributaries). Use only artificial flies regardless of the type of rod or line.

Possession limits

Native Trout Conservation Area:

- Catch and release all native fish.
- No possession limit on nonnative fish.

Nonnative Trout Tolerance Area:

- Limit of 5 brook trout.
- Catch and release all rainbow and brown trout.

Where to take young anglers

Norris: Gibbon River at Virginia Meadows or other meadows; Solfatara Creek near Norris campground.

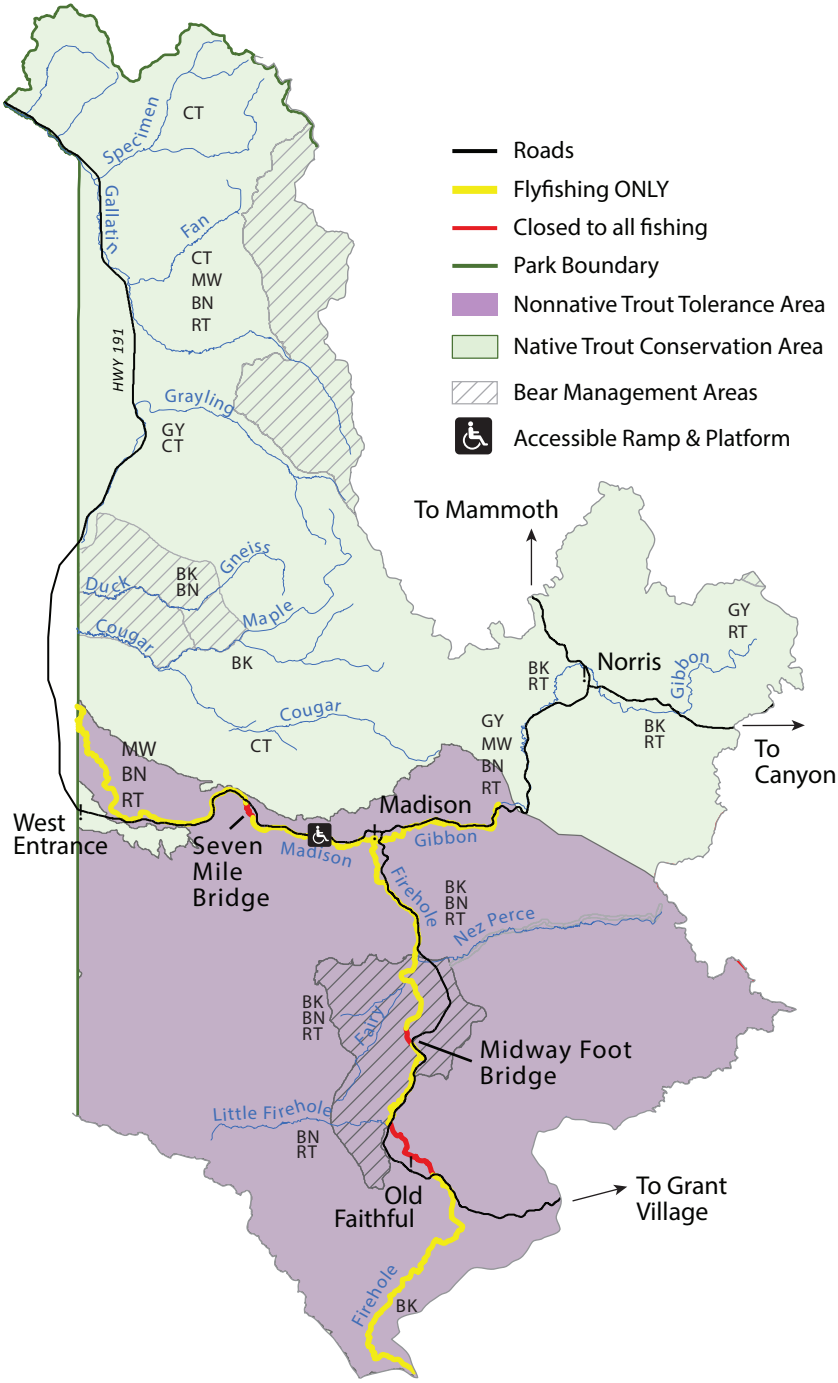
Madison: Gibbon River near Tuff Cliffs; Large meadow areas of the Firehole, Gibbon, and Madison rivers near Madison Junction.

Old Faithful: Firehole River at picnic areas; Nez Perce Creek.

♿ Accessible ramp & platform

At the Mount Haynes Overlook, approximately 3.5 miles (5.6 km) west of Madison Junction. Please see the *Yellowstone Accessibility Guide* or **www.nps.gov/yell** for more information.

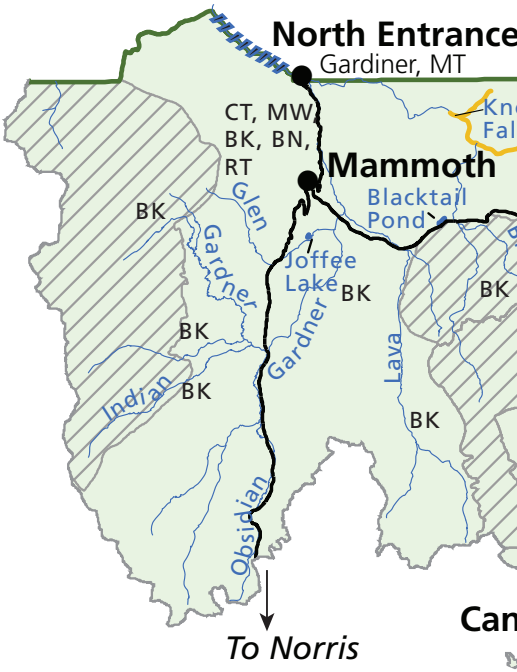
Northwest Region Regulations



Northeast Region Regulations

Northeast Region:

Includes the Yellowstone and Lamar rivers and tributaries between the north park boundary and Chittenden Bridge near Canyon.



- Blacktail Pond area is closed to public use and travel, including angling, until **July 1** to protect nesting birds and sensitive vegetation.
- Only a State of Montana fishing license is required to fish the Yellowstone River, downstream of Gardiner, Montana.

Permanently closed to fishing:

- Trout Lake inlet stream is permanently closed to fishing to protect spawning cutthroat trout.
- Yellowstone River, from Chittenden Bridge near Canyon downstream through the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone to a point directly below Silver Cord Cascade, is permanently closed to fishing to ensure angler safety.

Possession limits

Native Trout Conservation Area:

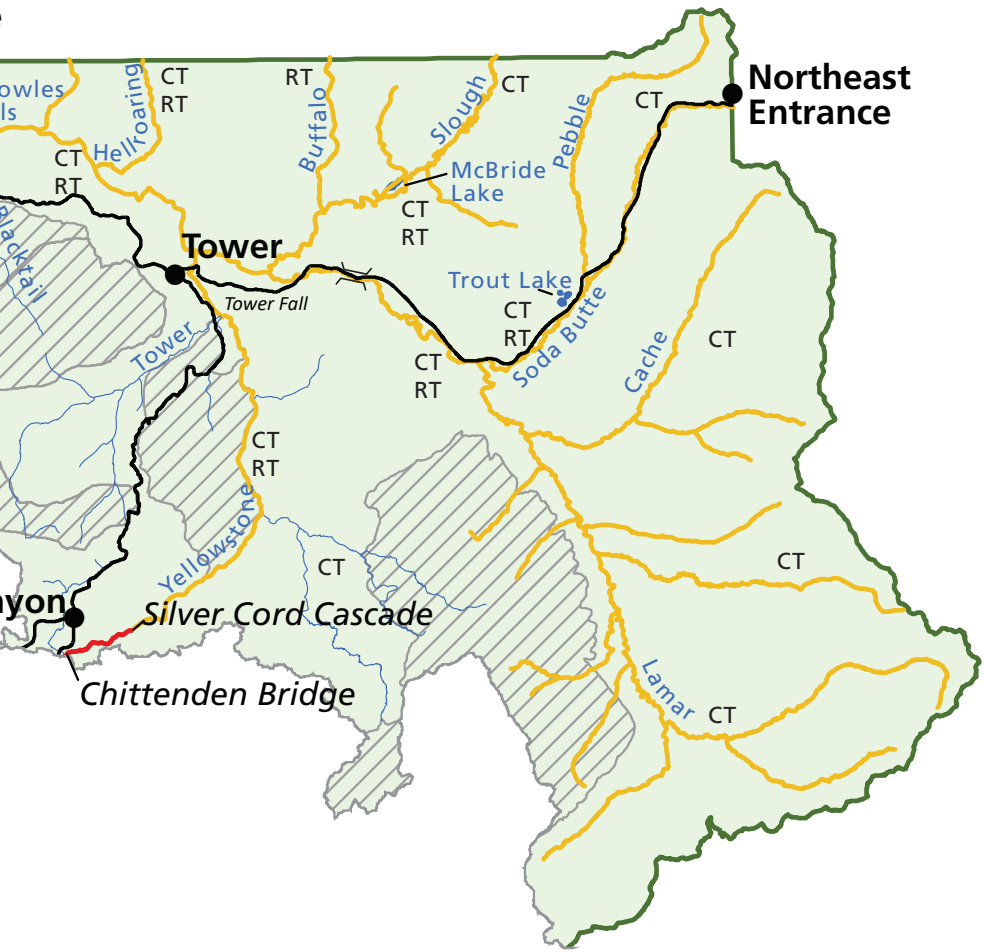
- Catch and release all native fish.
- No possession limit on nonnative fish.

All nonnative fish, including rainbow trout, brook trout, and identifiable cutthroat x rainbow hybrids must be killed in these areas:

- Lamar River drainage including all tributaries and lakes.
- Yellowstone River below Lower Falls and above Knowles Falls, including north side tributaries

In areas downstream of these locations, killing of nonnative fish is recommended.

Northeast Region Regulations



- Roads
- Park Boundary
- Bear Management Areas
- Native Trout Conservation Area
- Closed to all fishing
- ***All rainbow trout, brook trout, and identifiable cutthroat x rainbow trout hybrids must be killed.***
- Yellowstone River downstream of Gardiner, MT: *Only a State of Montana fishing license required.*

Southwest Region Regulations

Southwest Region:

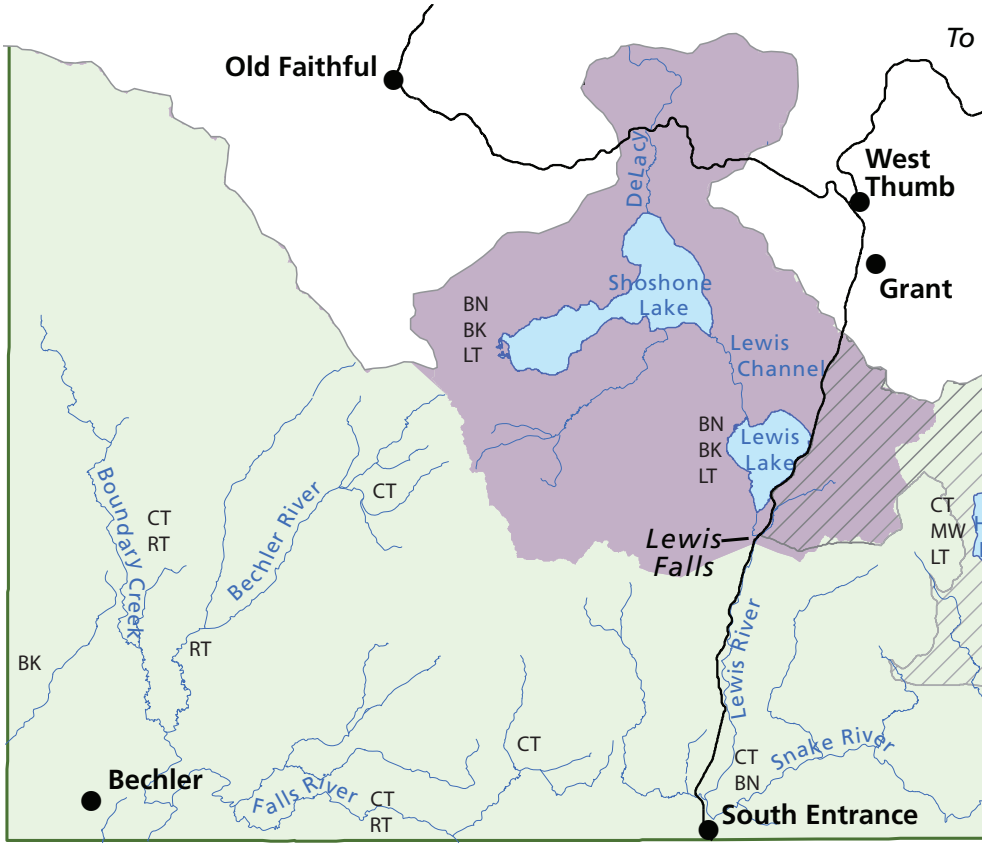
Includes the Snake and Lewis rivers and tributaries; Heart Lake; Lewis and Shoshone lakes; Falls and Bechler rivers and tributaries.

***Heart Lake opens* July 1**

Possession limits

Nonnative Trout Tolerance Area:

- Waters above Lewis Falls, including Lewis and Shoshone lakes and the Lewis Channel—possession limit of five nonnative fish in combination, only one of which can be a brown trout.



- Do not discard lake trout carcasses along the lake shore as they will likely attract bears.

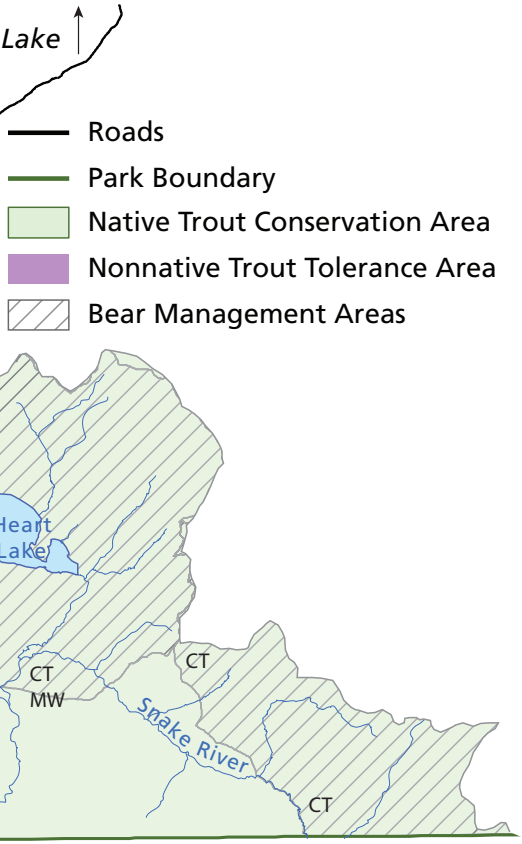
Native Trout Conservation Area:

- Catch and release all native fish.
- No possession limit on nonnative fish.

Where to take young anglers

Grant: Aster Creek near Lewis Falls; Lewis Lake shoreline; pullouts along the South Entrance Road.

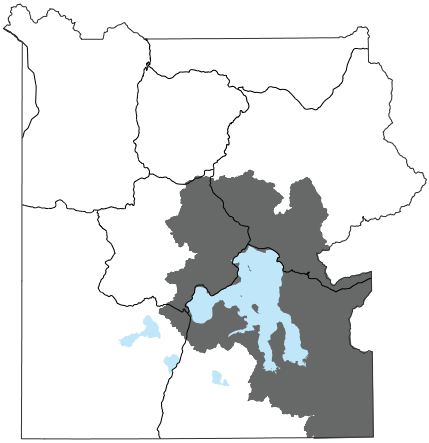
Western shore of Shoshone Lake.



Southeast Region Regulations

Southeast Region:

Includes the Yellowstone River upstream of Chittenden Bridge near Canyon, Yellowstone Lake and its tributaries, Middle Creek of the North Fork Shoshone River.



Yellowstone River opens July 15.

Permanently closed to fishing on the Yellowstone River:

- Fishing Bridge and an area one mile (1.6 km) downstream (toward Canyon) and 1/4 mile (.4 km) upstream (toward Yellowstone Lake) from the bridge.
- The Yellowstone River 100 yards (91 m) up- and downstream of LeHardys Rapids.
- The Yellowstone River and its tributaries in Hayden Valley from the confluence of Alum Creek upstream to Sulphur Cauldron.

Yellowstone Lake opens with the general season

Streams flowing into Yellowstone Lake, its tributaries, and areas within 100 yards (91 m) of each stream's outlet open **July 15**. Access to many areas is restricted by Bear Management Area Closures, see the Yellowstone Backcountry Trip Planner for details.

Permanently closed to fishing along Yellowstone Lake:

- The shoreline of Yellowstone Lake from West Thumb Geyser Basin to Little Thumb Creek is closed to protect fragile thermal resources.
- Bridge Bay Marina/Harbor and Grant Village Marina/Harbor and their channels to the lake.
- Pelican Creek from its mouth to a point two miles (3.2 km) upstream.

Possession limits

Native Trout Conservation Area:

- Catch and release all native fish.
- No possession limit on nonnative fish. All lake trout must be killed.

Where to take young anglers

Lake Village: Along Gull Point Drive or at Sand Point.

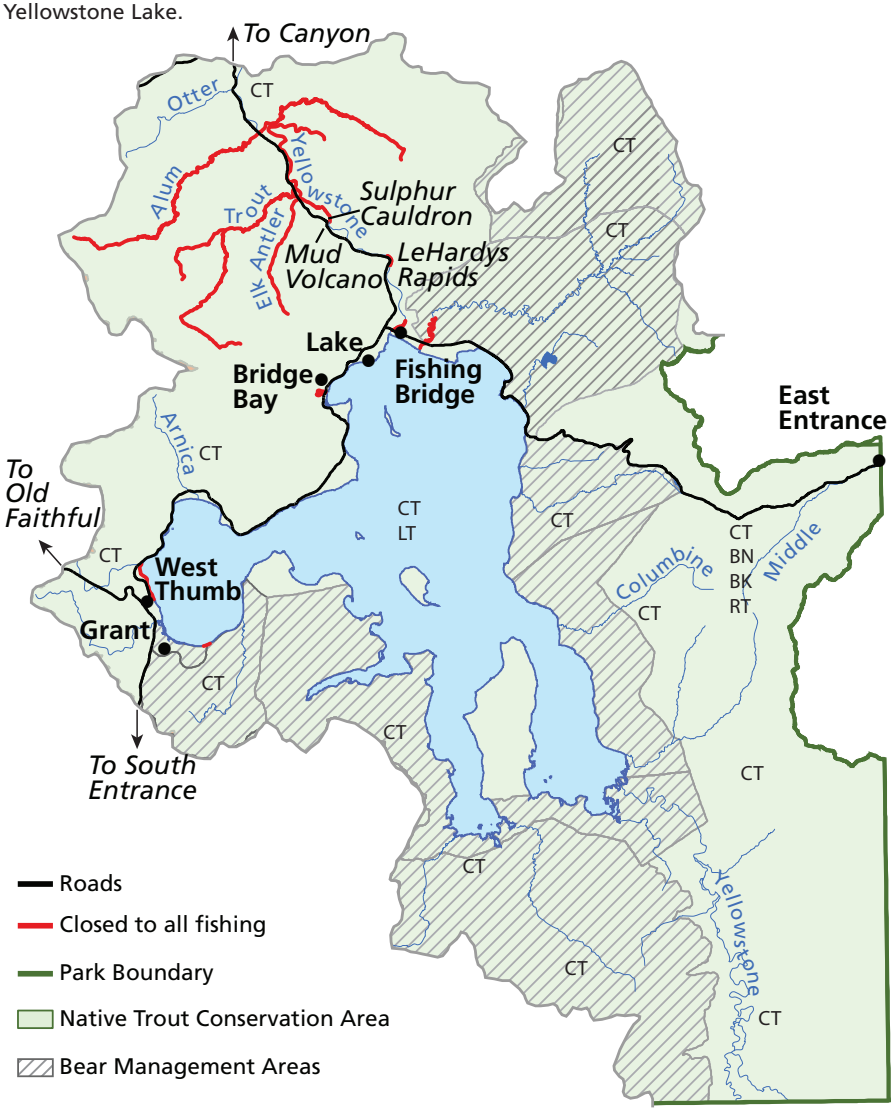
Grant: Aster Creek near Lewis Falls; Lewis Lake shoreline; Yellowstone Lake shoreline near Grant Marina.

♿ Accessible ramp & platform

An accessible fishing area is located at the Grant Village boat launch.

Southeast Region Regulations

Yellowstone Lake.



Fish Identification—Native

Each individual angler must be able to correctly identify various fish species and comply with appropriate rules and regulations.

ALL NATIVE FISH ARE CATCH-AND-RELEASE ONLY

Cutthroat Trout—CT

Widely distributed in many drainages.

Cutthroat trout subspecies

Two subspecies of cutthroat trout are found in Yellowstone: the westslope cutthroat and the Yellowstone cutthroat (which has both large- and finespotted varieties).

Westslope cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi*).

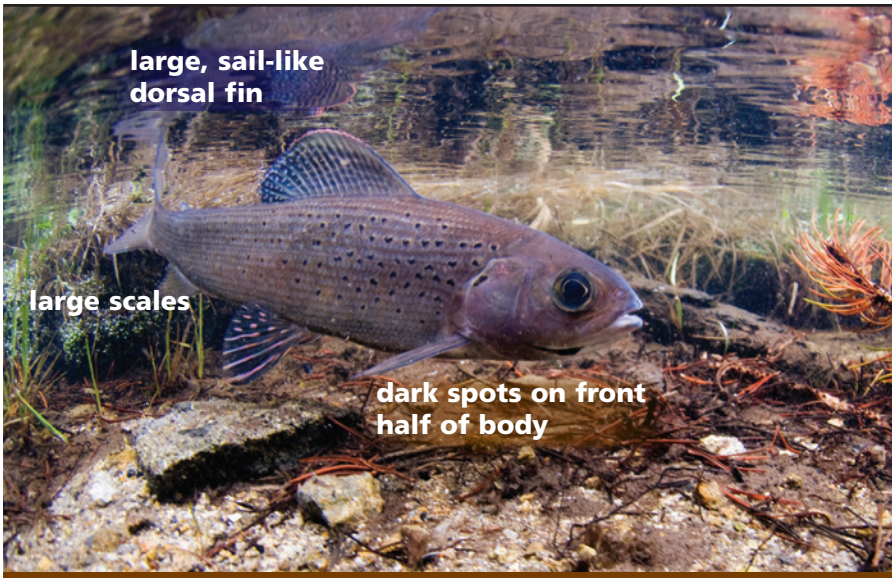
Yellowstone cutthroat trout (large-spotted form; *Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri).*

Fish Identification—Native

Mountain Whitefish—MW

Distributed throughout Snake and Lewis rivers, other areas as noted on map.

Arctic Grayling—GY



Distributed throughout Gibbon River, sometimes in Madison and Firehole rivers.

Fish Identification—Nonnative

Rainbow Trout—RT

Widely distributed due to historic stocking. Not present in Yellowstone Lake, Yellowstone River above the Upper Falls, or the Snake River.

Cutthroat trout x rainbow trout hybridization

In waters where rainbow trout have been introduced, there has been a serious degradation of the cutthroat trout population through interbreeding. Presently, hybridized cutthroat trout exist throughout the Bechler, Falls, Gallatin, Gardner, and Lamar rivers, and the Yellowstone River below the Upper Falls.

Hybrids will have characteristics consistent with both species, often making identification difficult. However, rainbow trout and cutthroat *x* rainbow trout hybrids have white tips on the anal and paired pelvic fins.

Combating hybridization

Once hybridization occurs, a cutthroat population can only be restored to genetic purity if all fish are removed from a stream and genetically pure cutthroat are reintroduced. To reduce hybridization in cutthroat trout habitat, anglers are encouraged to harvest nonnative trout in the Native Trout Conservation Area.

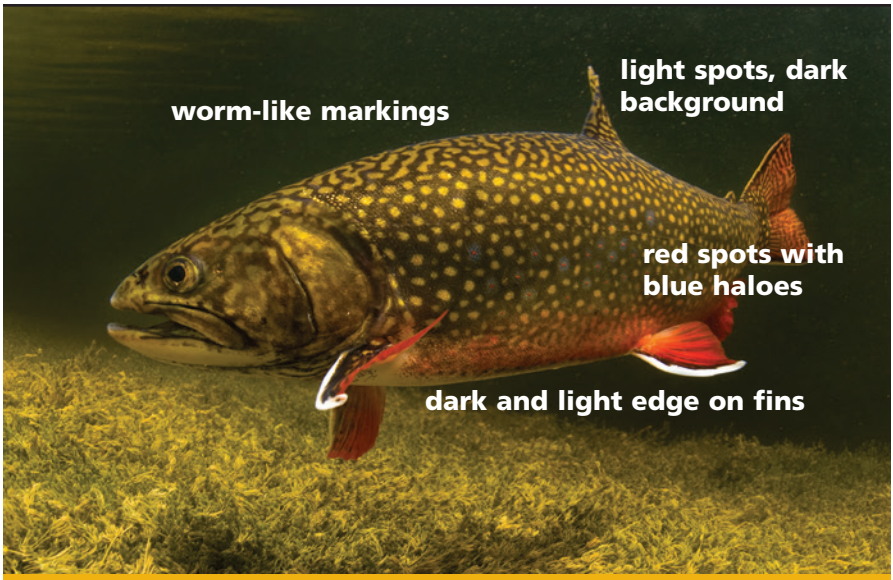
Fish Identification—Nonnative

Brown Trout—BN

Distributed in Gallatin, Gibbon, Firehole, Madison, Lewis, Snake, Gardner, and the Yellowstone rivers. Not present in Yellowstone Lake, Bechler or Falls rivers.

©BIG SKY ANGLERS

Brook Trout—BK



Widely distributed due to historic stocking. Not present in Yellowstone Lake, Yellowstone River above the Upper Falls, or the Gallatin River.

Fish Identification—Nonnative

Lake Trout—LT

Distributed in Heart, Lewis, Shoshone, and Yellowstone Lakes.

All lake trout MUST BE KILLED in Yellowstone Lake

If you do not want to keep the fish, puncture the air bladder and drop it into water as deep as possible. In the backcountry, dispose of fish entrails and remains in fast moving or deep water. Do not discard trout carcasses along streams as they will attract bears.

Angler Etiquette

Yellowstone hosts tens of thousands of anglers each year, concentrated in just a few months. For your own enjoyment, the enjoyment of those around you, and the protection of our aquatic resources, please remember to be courteous and observe the following behavior.

- Use established trails and avoid sensitive wetland vegetation such as bogs and seeps. Heavy trail use in these areas causes erosion and loss of habitat essential to many of Yellowstone's wildlife.
- Anglers must stay on established trails in thermal areas and must not cross these areas or approach thermal features.
- Avoid using the streambed as a pathway. Your footsteps can damage aquatic habitats and kill eggs and fry in the gravel.
- Do not overfish a good fishing area. Fish for a while, and then move on.

Walking in stream beds can damage delicate aquatic habitats.

- Do not encroach on another angler's space and keep out of sight of other anglers, if possible.
- During late July and August, when water temperatures can be high, do most of your fishing early and late in the day. Allow fish to rest during the heat of the day.

These actions are illegal and destructive.

- Possessing a native cutthroat trout, or any other native fish.
- Releasing a nonnative fish alive within a mandatory kill area.
- Moving any live fish, water, sediment (mud), fish eggs, fish parts, or other aquatic animals or plants within the park—whether intentional or not.
- Bringing any aquatic invasive species, water, mud, plants, or bait (live or dead) into the park.

If you witness a violation please report it immediately to a law enforcement ranger, or call 307-344-7381 and press "0" to immediately reach park dispatch.

Frequently Asked Questions

Fishing is a long-standing tradition in Yellowstone's waters.

Early park managers transplanted fish to stock the park's fishless waters.

Why are the same fish species regulated differently in different areas of the park?

Park fishing regulations are designed to protect native fish and aquatic ecosystems, provide recreational opportunities, and also preserve the tradition of angling in Yellowstone.

Cutthroat trout, Arctic grayling, mountain whitefish, and other native fishes are important to the ecology of Yellowstone. Nonnative trout are important to the angler experience in Yellowstone, and angling is an important part of the park's cultural history.

In Yellowstone, bald eagles, ospreys, pelicans, otters, grizzly bears, and other wildlife take precedence over humans in using fish for food. Park management and regulations reflect this priority. For example, some waters are closed to fishing to protect threatened and endangered species, and sensitive nesting birds. Regulations ban lead tackle because the lead concentrates in aquatic environments, posing a risk of lead poisoning to waterfowl that might ingest it. Only non-toxic alternatives to lead are allowed. (see p. 3, for one exception.). Of particular concern in Yellowstone are the alarmingly low populations of trumpeter swans and loons.

Yellowstone is making a substantial, on-the-ground effort to conserve native fish in several areas. These actions, which are currently focused in the Lamar and Grayling Creek drainages and Yellowstone Lake, are described in the park's native fish conservation plan. The goals of the plan are to reduce the risk of extinction, restore and maintain the ecological role, and create sustainable angling and viewing opportunities for native fish.

Where did the nonnative fish come from?

When Yellowstone became a national park, more than 40 percent of its waters were barren of fish—including Shoshone Lake, Lewis Lake, and the Firehole River above Firehole Falls. Early park managers transplanted fish into new locations, produced more fish in hatcheries, and introduced

Frequently Asked Questions

Cutthroat trout are the sole, native trout of Yellowstone National Park.

nonnative species. By the mid-20th century, more than 310 million fish had been stocked in the park.

The ranges and densities of the park's native fish species have been substantially altered during the past century, mostly because of introduced nonnative fish.

What are the ecological impacts of cutthroat trout conservation?

Cutthroat trout are the sole, native trout of Yellowstone National Park and were the dominant fish species here prior to Euroamerican settlement.

Because cutthroat trout inhabit relatively shallow waters, many animals depend on them as a food source, especially during spring when the cutthroat are spawning in small inlets and tributary streams. In many cases, nonnative fish cannot serve as a substitute for cutthroat trout because they occupy different habitats. For example, lake trout live deep in Yellowstone Lake and are not generally accessible to the park's native fish-eating animals.

More than sixteen species depend on cutthroat trout as a food source.

Why can't we fish from Fishing Bridge?

Fishing Bridge, situated over a cutthroat trout spawning area, was once a popular place to fish. Declining numbers of cutthroat trout caused park officials to close the bridge to fishing to protect the spawning fish.

Preserving cutthroat trout will help to preserve all of the animals that depend upon them as a food source; will ensure that visitors can continue to see them spawning near Fishing Bridge, LeHardy Rapids, and other places; and that future generations will be able to experience them by angling in the many wild, scenic waters the park has to offer.

Glossary

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Artificial Fly—a hook, in which a minimum of half the shank of the hook is dressed with conventional natural or synthetic material in a common method known as fly tying. This includes dry flies, wet flies, streamers, egg patterns, and nymphs. Hair, feathers, metallic colored tape, tinsel, mylar, bead eyes, dumbbell eyes, beads (metal, glass or plastic), foam, rubber and lead-free metal wire, tape or body wrap may be used as an integral part of the design and fly pattern.

Artificial Lure—a man-made or artificial device, complete with a hook, intended to attract and entice a fish for the purpose of taking them; excludes artificial flies and attractors.

Attractor—a hook-less device attached to a fishing line between the end of a rod and an artificial fly or artificial lure or that provides additional motion or other visual attraction. Typical attractors include but are not limited to dodgers, lake trolls, such as Ford fenders, willow leaf, or cowbell flashers, artificial rubber or molded plastic (soft or hard beads). A strike indicator is not considered an attractor.

Bait—all dead or live organisms or edible parts thereof; natural or artificial food or products thereof; chemically treated or processed fish eggs or animal products; artificial dough, paste or edible lures; and rubber worms, rubber leeches, or twister tails. This definition does not apply to hair or feathers used as fly-tying material.

Barbless Hook—a hook manufactured without a barb or a hook on which barbs have been filed off, closed (point of the barb has been crimped or pinched so the barb touches the hook shank), or has otherwise been completely removed.

Catch-and-Release—a fish must be carefully and immediately returned alive to the water from which it was caught.

Closely Attended—a person fishing must be able to immediately control their line or rod at all times in order to react to a potential strike.

Drainage—the stream proper and area of land which includes all streams, lakes and tributaries that drain into that stream.

Dropper—an artificial fly being used as a second artificial fly on a two artificial fly rig. A dropper is commonly attached to a primary fishing line or artificial fly by means of tippet or other fishing line.

Fly Fishing—artificial flies may only be attached to a line for the purpose of attracting and enticing fish for take, regardless of the type of rod or line used.

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Hook—a bent wire device, for catching fish, to which a single, double or treble point is attached to a single shank.

- **Single Point**: a hook with only one point.
- **Double Point**: a hook with two points on a common shank.
- **Treble (triple) Point:** a hook with three points on a common shank.

Invasive (nonnative) Species—a species that:

- Does not naturally occur or is alien to the ecosystem under consideration.
- Cause, or are likely to cause, economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.
- Invasive species can be plants, animals, and other organisms (e.g. microbes).

Lake—a body of standing water in a depression of land and includes reservoirs and ponds (excluding ponds created by beavers).

Scented Attractants—any substance that has been added, infused or applied to an artificial fly, artificial lure, line, or hook for the purpose of attracting fish by scent; excludes non-scented materials or chemicals specifically designed and produced to cause flies to float or sink.

Snagging—taking or attempting to take a fish by the use of an artificial fly or artificial lure in any manner or method that the fish does not voluntarily take the hook in its mouth. Fishing only by means of a bare hook that is not an artificial fly or artificial lure, regardless of manner or method, will be considered snagging.

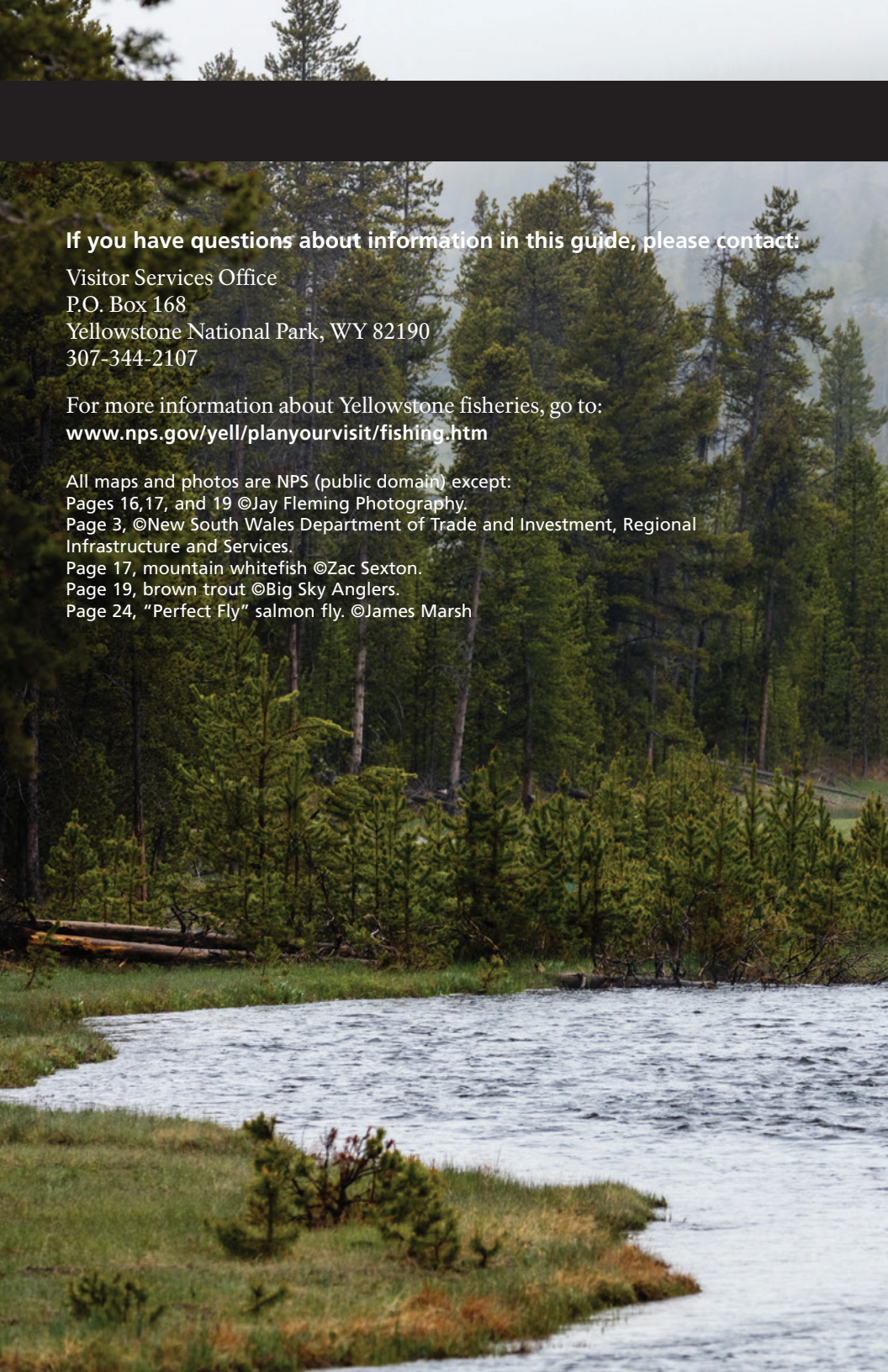
Stream—water in a permanent or seasonal bed or channel with a current that is usually continuous in one direction and included creeks, rivers, ditches, sloughs and ponds created by beavers. Streams may not flow continuously during low-flow periods. Ponds or puddles in a stream channel during low-flow periods shall be considered to be a stream.

Strike indicator—a hook-less, unscented floating device attached to a line or leader to signal a strike at an artificial fly or artificial lure.

Tributary—a stream that flows into a larger stream, river or lake.

Upgrading—the practice of substituting captured fish for fish in possession.

Yellowstone Native Fish Species—a species that is endemic or indigenous to Yellowstone National Park.



If you have questions about information in this guide, please contact:

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For more information about Yellowstone fisheries, go to:
www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/fishing.htm

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