Using Freshwater Rules

1. **Read:**
   The Statewide Freshwater Rules and Statewide Freshwater Species Rules (pages 14-15). Determine seasons and general rules applying to the species for which you intend to fish.

2. **Check Special Rules for your location:**
   Special Rules (pages 17-94), list areas where the Statewide Rules have been modified. These 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.
   If a freshwater area is not listed in Special Rules, follow the Statewide Freshwater Rules.

3. **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 [https://wdfw.wa.gov](https://wdfw.wa.gov).
Statewide Freshwater Rules

The following Statewide Freshwater Rules and seasons apply (pages 14-15) unless listed otherwise in the Special Rules (pages 17-94).

Areas/Seasons

Areas listed within Special Rules (pages 17-94), show ALL Game Fish and SALMON fishing opportunities for the specific 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 COMMON CARP, SHAD, or 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, LAMPREY, and GRASS CARP).

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

RIVERS, STREAMS, and BEAVER PONDS are OPEN to fishing for Game Fish (except DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT and GRASS CARP) YEAR-ROUND.

Special Rules

The Special Rules (pages 17-94), list freshwater areas where the Statewide Rules have been modified.

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

Areas listed within Special Rules, show ALL Game Fish and SALMON fishing opportunities for the specific area listed.

Common regulation terms and definitions can be found on pages 10-11.

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 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: https://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/css_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.

Sturgeon

GREEN STurgeon may not be retained.

WHITE STurgeon open for catch-and-release fishing during open Game Fish or SALMON seasons.

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.

Anglers may continue to fish catch-and-release after retaining a daily limit.

After an annual limit has been retained, catch-and-release fishing is allowed only in waters of the Columbia River forming the Oregon/Washington boundary.

Catch Record Cards are required statewide.

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.

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.

**Instructions**

**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.

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).

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.

WDFW Region 5 Office
5525 S 11th St.
Ridgefield, WA 98642
# Statewide Freshwater Species Rules

## Game Fish

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

**BASS** (See DOH advisory, page 16)
May be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until a daily limit is in possession.

- **LARGEMOUTH BASS:**
  - No min. size. Only LARGEMOUTH BASS less than 12” may be retained, except 1 over 17” may be retained. Daily limit 5. No size restriction/daily limit in waters of Columbia River downstream of Chief Joseph Dam including all tributaries and their tributaries.

- **SMALLMOUTH BASS:**
  - No min. size. Only 1 SMALLMOUTH BASS over 14” may be retained. Daily limit 10. No size restriction/daily limit in waters of Columbia River downstream of Chief Joseph Dam including all tributaries and their tributaries.

**WALLEYE:**
Min. size 12”. Daily limit 8. Only 1 over 22” may be retained. May be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until daily limit is in possession. No min. size/daily limit in waters of Columbia River downstream of Chief Joseph Dam including all tributaries and their tributaries.

**CHANNEL CATFISH:**
No min. size. Daily limit 5. No min. size/daily limit in waters of Columbia River downstream of Chief Joseph Dam including all tributaries and their tributaries.

**BURBOT** (FRESHWATER LING):
No min. size. Daily limit 5.

**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.

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

**GRASS CARP**:
CLOSED unless otherwise listed in Special Rules.

**KOKANEE**:
No min. size. Daily limit 10.

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

**WHITEFISH**:
No min. size. Daily limit 15.

### STEELHEAD:
Release all wild STEELHEAD.
Min. size 20”. Daily limit 2. Open during SALMON or Game Fish seasons unless as otherwise listed.

**TROUT**:
The combined daily limit for an angler that fishes in both rivers and lakes on the same day is 5 TROUT, no more than 2 may be from rivers.

**EASTERN BROOK TROUT** do not count towards TROUT daily limit unless as otherwise listed.

When fishing with bait, all TROUT equal to or greater than the minimum size are counted as part of the daily limit whether kept or released.

- **BROWN TROUT**, **CUTTHROAT TROUT**, **RAINBOW TROUT**, **LAKE TROUT**, **GOLDEN TROUT**, **TIGER TROUT**, and **GRAYLING**:
  - In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds:
    - Min. size 8”. Daily limit 2.
  - In lakes, ponds, and reservoirs:
    - No min. size. Daily limit 5.

**EASTERN BROOK TROUT (EBT):**
No min. size. No daily limit.

**DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT**:
CLOSED unless otherwise listed in Special Rules.

## Food Fish

### COMMON CARP:
No license required.
No min. size. No daily limit. No possession limit. May also be taken by spear or bow-and-arrow.

**SHAD**:
No min. size. No daily limit. No possession limit.

**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

**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**:
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, 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.**

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### FISH ADVISORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body of Water</th>
<th>Fish Species</th>
<th>Women (Childbearing Age) and Children</th>
<th>Everyone Else</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statewide (Lakes and Rivers) Mercury Advisory</strong></td>
<td>Northern Pikeminnow</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>2 meals per month</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Columbia River</strong></td>
<td>Clams</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lower - Former Van Alco Plant</td>
<td>Bass, Bluegill, Carp, Catfish, Crappie, Sucker, Sturgeon, Walleye, Yellow Perch</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Middle - Bradford Island (Bonneville Dam to Fort Raines)</td>
<td>Bass, Bluegill, Carp, Catfish, Crappie, Sucker, Sturgeon, Walleye, Yellow Perch</td>
<td>4 meals per month (any combination)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Middle - Fort Raines to McNary Dam</td>
<td>Carp, Sturgeon, Mt. Whitefish, Bridgelp Sucker, Walleye, Smallmouth Bass</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 meals per month</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper - Lake Roosevelt (Grand Coulee Dam to Canada Border)</strong></td>
<td>Largescale Sucker, largemouth Bass, Burbot, Longnose Sucker, Mountain Whitefish, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye</td>
<td>2 meals per month</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 meals per month</td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duwamish River (Lower)</strong></td>
<td>All resident fish, Shellfish, Crab</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green Lake</strong></td>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lake Chelan</strong></td>
<td>Lake Trout</td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lake Washington</strong></td>
<td>Carp, Northern Pikeminnow</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cutthroat Trout, Yellow Perch</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lake Whatcom</strong></td>
<td>Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Okanogan River</strong></td>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Malott Bridge to Brewster Bridge; Chief Joseph State Park (Lake Pateros)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Olympic National Park</strong></td>
<td>Largescale Sucker, Northern Pikeminnow, Yellow Perch, Bullhead Catfish, Brook Trout, Cutthroat Trout</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lake Ozette</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mountain Lakes</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pend Oreille River</strong></td>
<td>Northern Pike (more than 24 inches)</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport to Canadian border</td>
<td>Northern Pike (less than 24 inches)</td>
<td>2 meals per month</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Puget Sound</strong></td>
<td>All species</td>
<td>Visit <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish">www.doh.wa.gov/fish</a> for advice by marine area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spokane River</strong></td>
<td>All Species</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Idaho Border to Upriver Dam</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Upriver Dam to Nine Mile Dam</td>
<td>Largescale Sucker</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All other species</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lake Spokane (Long Lake)</td>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Largescale Sucker, Brown Trout</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mountain Whitefish</td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Walla Walla River</strong></td>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>1 meal per month</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Dry Creek to Columbia River)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wenatchee River</strong></td>
<td>Mountain Whitefish</td>
<td>DO NOT EAT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Icicle Creek to Columbia River)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yakima River</strong></td>
<td>Carp</td>
<td>4 meals per month</td>
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</tbody>
</table>