



Proposed Changes to Park Fishing Regulations

Glacier National Park is proposing the following changes to fishing regulations within the park. The objective of these regulation changes is to help the park better manage native fish resources consistent with Glacier's conservation mandate.

1. Catch and release for cutthroat trout west of the Continental Divide.

Exception: Catch and possession limit of two cutthroat trout from Hidden, Evangeline, and Camas lakes.

Justification: Native westslope cutthroat trout would benefit from additional protection to maintain strong populations in the park in the face of expanding non-native species, and they are extremely vulnerable to angling. The proposed change would result in increased consistency between GNP and the State of Montana westslope cutthroat trout fishing regulations on the west side of the park. Hidden, Evangeline, and Camas lakes contain non-native Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations which may pose a genetic risk to downstream native westslope cutthroat trout populations. Allowing harvest of Yellowstone cutthroat from these waters allows for continued angler harvest opportunity for non-native fish.

2. Place lower McDonald Creek under the general park fishing season dates, limits, and methods of fishing.

Justification: Continuing a special catch and release regulation limited to the use of artificial flies or lures on lower McDonald Creek is not likely to have a measurable impact on westslope cutthroat trout abundance in the McDonald Lake system, and this change would simplify the regulations. Allowing anglers to catch and harvest non-native fish species such as lake and rainbow trout from lower McDonald Creek would also be consistent with park fisheries management direction.

3. Modify and clarify the regulations for Hidden Lake and outlet. The outlet of Hidden Lake and an area extending 100 yards into the lake would be closed to fishing through July 31 to protect spawning cutthroat.

Justification: Hidden Lake supports a population of non-native Yellowstone cutthroat trout that can provide a harvest opportunity for anglers, however the current regulation permits only catch and release fishing. Clarifying open dates of fishing in and near the outlet of the lake will provide clarity for anglers using the fishery.

4. Increase the daily catch and possession limit for brook trout to 20 fish park-wide.

Justification: A "no limit" regulation on brook trout is biologically justifiable as they compete and hybridize with native fish species, but it is possible for anglers to confuse brook trout with

juvenile bull trout. Twenty fish is more than the average angler is likely to catch, and would serve to limit any potential adverse impacts to bull trout populations should anglers incorrectly identify juvenile bull trout as brook trout. This change would improve consistency with State of Montana fishing regulations.

5. Modify language regarding the use of lead downriggers to read that a “cannon ball” style lead weight greater than 2 pounds may be used when attached to the downrigger cable.

Justification: To clarify the intent of the fishing regulation regarding the use of lead downrigger balls.

6. Catch and release fishing only on Midvale (Two Medicine drainage) and Wild (Hudson Bay drainage) creeks.

Justification: To protect remaining genetically pure populations of westslope cutthroat trout east of the Continental Divide in GNP.

Public comment is invited on these regulation change proposals. Comments may be submitted in writing to:

Superintendent,
Attn: New Fishing Regulations
Glacier National Park
PO Box 128
West Glacier, MT 59936

Comments may also be submitted electronically at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/glac>, and then select the draft fishing regulation changes project.