



Fishing

Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the local fishing and boating regulations for the area where you'll fish. Obtain licenses and stamps and have them with you.
- Use a personal flotation device where required and/or appropriate.
- Learn to identify the different species of fish in the area where you'll be fishing.
- Obey the limits on the size and quantity of fish you are allowed to keep. Abide by regulations concerning types of bait and tackle permitted where you are fishing.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Plan your trip to avoid times of high use.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include rock, gravel, water, established trails and campsites, sand, or snow.
- Concentrate use on existing trails, campsites, and boat launches.
- Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- Avoid trampling aquatic vegetation when wading. Refrain from wading in spawning areas when possible.
- Enter and leave water sources at places where the banks are low or where there are gravel bars.
- In pristine areas disperse use to prevent the creation of new campsites and trails.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, Pack it out. Inspect your camp and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all monofilament fishing line, leftover live bait, and bait cups.
- Avoid using lead sinkers and jigs. If lead sinkers are found, pack out for proper disposal.
- Use established bathrooms when available. If not available, deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep and 200ft away from water sources.
- Check with local land managers for regulations on the disposal of fish entrails. Pack out entrails when possible. If not possible, burial, deepwater deposition, or moving water deposition are acceptable options in most areas.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

- When practicing “catch and release”, use barbless hooks and be sure to not injure the fish. Do not fight a fish to exhaustion, use a rod and line of sufficient strength, and avoid suspending fish out of the water by the fishing line. Keep fish in water when handling for release and do not touch gills.
- Carry and use needle-nose pliers or hemostats for hook removal.
- Take care not to introduce non-native species to water sources and surrounding areas. Pack out all unused bait and dispose of it properly (e.g. worms, minnows, leeches) and properly wash all equipment between fishing trips.
- Avoid transferring fish from one watershed to another.
- Preserve the past: observe, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts. Use a lightweight stove for cooking when possible.
- Where fires are permitted use established fire rings, mound fires, or fire pans, and consider bringing your own firewood.
- Keep fires small and use only dead and downed wood that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and charcoal to ash. Ensure that fire is completely out and properly dispose of cold ashes by scattering or packing out.

Respect Wildlife

- Respect fish by humanely dispatching catches you are keeping with a quick blow to the back of the head with a rock or other solid object.
- Refrigerate or eat fish quickly to avoid wasting them. Check local regulations on using stringers.
- Use caution when cooking fish in bear country.
- Never feed wildlife. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Control pets or leave them at home.

Be Considerate of Others

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Non-motorized crafts usually have right-of-way over powerboats: slower boats should keep to the right.
- If using a radio keep volume low or wear headphones, let nature’s sounds prevail.
- Pick campsites that are away from shorelines or trails and avoid crowding other visitors.