

# FRESHWATER FISHING SYNOPSIS 2005-2006



All anglers of any age must comply with all regulations set out in this Synopsis as well as any in-season changes as made public by the Ministry. The regulations described in this Synopsis do not apply to tidal waters.



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### PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS

#### Region 1 VANCOUVER ISLAND

#### Region 2 LOWER MAINLAND

#### Region 3 THOMPSON - NICOLA

#### Region 4 KOOTENAY

#### Region 5 CARIBOO

#### Region 6 SKEENA

#### Region 7 OMINECA - PEACE

#### Region 8 OKANAGAN

### You and the law.

The British Columbia Freshwater Fishing Regulations Synopsis is intended for general information purposes only. Where there is a discrepancy between this Synopsis and the Regulations, the Regulations are the final authority. Regulations are subject to change from time to time and it is the responsibility of an individual to be informed of the current Regulations.

#### In-season Regulation Changes posted on the Web

For an on-line copy of this Synopsis or to check for in-season regulation changes, go to:  
<http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/fw/fish/regulations/intro.html>



Please refer to Page 4 "How to Use This Synopsis" before looking up fishing regulations in this booklet.

NEED HELP? Refer to page 4.

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## Minister's Message

Welcome to another extraordinary year of freshwater fishing in British Columbia. Our natural heritage, with its incredible diversity of aquatic ecosystems, supports rich fisheries resources offering unsurpassed angling experiences. Imagine over 20 species of game fish in a single province with tens of thousands of lakes and streams!

To support this world-class resource, a heightened responsibility for providing stewardship is needed, meeting today's demands and those of generations to follow. All levels of society – from individuals to landowners, businesses and finally government – play a unique role in the conservation and management of fisheries resources. As individual anglers, you contribute by complying with regulations that are designed to protect fish and their habitats and to ensure long-term sustainability of the stocks.

While individual anglers contribute greatly to the conservation of fish, my Ministry has also

had the pleasure of partnering with many interested groups, businesses and industries on projects where we share the common goals of protecting essential fish habitat and maintaining a diversity of angling opportunities. These partnerships have led to many successes, such as improving water flow for fish, preserving critical habitat and protecting high-quality fishing opportunities. These successes can be attributed to highly dedicated and motivated individuals whose efforts go far beyond the call of duty. My sincere thanks to all of those people.

Our government recently committed \$7 million over the next five years to protect and restore B.C.'s rivers and waterways, including vital fish habitat, through our Living Rivers initiative. Beyond providing support for enhancement, research and restoration projects, the funding will be used to strengthen partnerships and enhance the effectiveness of community organizations.

Finally, with great pride, I'd like to give special recognition to the **100th anniversary of British Columbia's Conservation Officer Service** (see page 13). The Service has provided tremendous leadership and dedication over the past 10 decades by ensuring that anglers, hunters and other resource users understand and comply with regulations which govern fishing and hunting and protect B.C.'s spectacular natural environment. Thank you, and congratulations on your centenary!

Sincerely,



Bill Barisoff  
Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection



## Major Regulation Changes for 2005/2006

**NOTE: New regulations and amendments are highlighted in GREEN.**

**Region 1:** Parts of Nitinat River are closed from Aug. 25 to Dec. 31 to protect spawning salmon.

♦ Courtenay River and parts of Puntledge River are now open from Oct. 1 to Nov. 30 for salmon fishing.

**Region 2:** The use of natural bait is prohibited year-round in Pitt River upstream of Pitt Lake.

**Region 3:** The following waters have new quotas and/or no fishing dates: Adams Lake, Adams River, "Morgan" Lake (near Pat (Six Mile) Lake), and Tumtum Lake.

**Region 4:** The following streams and ALL their tributaries are now Classified Waters: Bull, Elk, Kootenay (upstream of White River), St. Mary, White and Wigwam rivers and Skookumchuck Creek; a Classified Waters Licence is now required to fish these waters.

♦ The following waters have new quotas and/or no fishing dates: Cottonwood Lake, Echoes Lakes (near Kimberly), Gibson Lake, Larchwood Lake, "McClain" Lake (near Mitten Lake), Moyie River and tributaries, Pend d'Oreille River, Plaid Lake, Waldie Lake, and Wilbur Lake.

♦ Barbless hooks are now required in the main body of Kootenay Lake.

♦ The Upper West Arm of Kootenay Lake will only be open to kokanee fishing from April 1-8 and from May 14-31 in 2005.

**Region 5:** The following waters have new quotas and/or no fishing dates: Bella Coola River, Big Lake, Bishop Lake, Boar Lake, Bridge Lake, Canim Lake, Cook Lake, Donnelly Lake, Earle Lake, Forest Lake, "Little Bishop" Lake, "Pigeon Lake #1," and Sulphurous Lake.

♦ The lower end of Dean River is now Classified from June 1 to Sept. 30.

**Region 6:** Fishing for lake trout is no longer permitted in Maxan Lake.

♦ Wahla Lake has a new quota for rainbow trout.

**Region 7A (Omineca):** Part of Nation Arm (Williston Lake) is seasonally closed to fishing and has a new quota for bull trout when open.

**Region 7B (Peace):** The following waters have new quotas, no fishing dates, and/or gear restrictions: Dinosaur Lake, Gwillim Lake, Lower Blue Lake, Moberly Lake, Monkman Lake, and Swan Lake.

**Region 8:** The following waters have new quotas and/or no fishing dates: Spring Lake and Square Lake.

**Please refer to the Regional Water-Specific tables for details.**

**Regulation changes of a more local significance and not cited above are included in the Regional Water-Specific Tables and highlighted in green.**

## NOTICE TO ANGLERS

### Province-Wide Changes to Bait Regulations in Streams Proposed for 2006-2007

A growing number of fisheries can only be maintained by regulations that restrict the harvest of certain species, or the size of fish that can be retained. This means that a growing proportion of the catch must be released. To improve the survival rate for released fish, the province is proposing to generally prohibit the use of bait in streams except for specific situations where the use of bait is consistent with management and conservation objectives. This is a change from the current system where bait restrictions are applied on a stream by stream basis. Lake fisheries are not affected by this proposal. **Please refer to page 19 for more details and background.**

**We welcome your suggestions.**

Please send comments to: The Synopsis, Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, Fish & Wildlife Recreation & Allocation Branch, PO Box 9363 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, BC V8W 9M2



# SALMON REGULATIONS



The management of salmon fisheries in B.C., in both tidal and fresh water, is the responsibility of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). **The regulations for salmon fishing in fresh water are not included in this Synopsis**, but are available from any DFO Office or through the on-line Freshwater Salmon Supplement at DFO's website ([www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish)).

**To fish for** salmon in fresh water, a provincial Non-Tidal Angling Licence is required.

**To retain** any salmon caught in fresh water, your provincial Non-Tidal Angling Licence must be validated with a Salmon Conservation Stamp (see page 7 for details).

**Please note that when fresh waters are closed to fishing or have gear restrictions outlined in this Synopsis, these regulations apply to fishing for salmon as well as for non-salmon species.**

## REPORT SALMON VIOLATIONS...

Please call 1-800-465-4336



For information on salmon regulations, please contact your nearest DFO office (listed on the Regional Maps in this Synopsis).

■ Visit DFO's website, <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish>, for updated salmon regulations.

■ DFO's website also has information on salmon identification and packaging salmon for transport.

## Salmonid Sport Head Recovery Program

*Is one of your salmon or steelhead missing its adipose fin?*

Heads from salmon or steelhead with a missing adipose fin should be submitted to the nearest Sport Head Recovery Depot. The heads may contain implanted coded-wire tags with information important for management and research.

For more information on this program and the locations of the recovery depots, please refer to DFO's website (see above) or call collect: 604-291-6401.

1. Check any sport caught salmon or steelhead that you retain to see if the ADIPOSE fin is missing.

2. If so, please bring the head to a Sport Head Recovery Depot.



**By participating in the Sport Head Recovery Program, you will be entered into a prize draw which takes place annually. You will also receive information on the origin of your fish.**

## Exotic Alert: Atlantic Salmon in B.C.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection encourages anglers to report the catch of Atlantic salmon in lakes and streams near the west coast of the province. Anglers are asked to pay special attention to salmon with unusual spotting and eroded fins.

**Atlantic salmon can be identified by:**

- 8-11 anal fin rays (Pacific salmon have 11-13 rays)
- very noticeable, large, black spots on the gill cover (not common on native salmon)
- large scales and black spots on the back
- may have very noticeably eroded or worn fins from containment in net-pens



2 - 3 Large Black Spots on Gill Cover

8-11 Anal Fin Rays

**Report any captures or sightings of Atlantic salmon to the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo, 1-800-811-6010.**

The entire fish (including entrails) should be saved, preferably frozen, for positive identification and biological sampling, with as much information as possible regarding date, location and method of capture.

# HOW TO USE THIS SYNOPSIS



**1<sup>st</sup>** Read and understand the **PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS** beginning on page 6. All anglers must abide by these province-wide regulations on all waters in B.C.

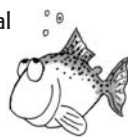
In this section you will find information on:

- ▶ Licencing Requirements
- ▶ Definitions you should know
- ▶ Allowable fishing methods
- ▶ Rules on bait usage
- ▶ Quotas and size limits
- ▶ Protected species
- ▶ "No Fishing" Areas
- ▶ Cleaning, transporting & exporting fish
- ▶ Reporting illegal guiding and angling violations
- ▶ Examining your licence, gear, and catch
- ▶ Penalties for breaking fishing laws

**2<sup>nd</sup>** Read and understand the **REGIONAL REGULATIONS** for the region in which you wish to fish (see Regional Boundaries map below).

The Regional Regulations are listed on the first page of each regional chapter in this Synopsis. In these sections you will find information on regulations which apply region-wide, such as:

- ▶ Regional Daily Catch Quotas, Possession Quotas and Annual Quotas



- ▶ Other General Restrictions which apply region-wide, including:
  - Spring closures
  - Species closures
  - Catch and release periods
  - Bait and tackle restrictions, and
  - Special Notices (such as for Steelhead and Bull Trout fishing)

**3<sup>rd</sup>** LOOK UP THE LAKE OR STREAM which you plan to fish in the **Regional Water-Specific Tables** following the **Regional Regulations**:

**IF YOUR LAKE OR STREAM DOES NOT APPEAR IN THE REGIONAL WATER-SPECIFIC TABLES, NO SPECIAL REGULATIONS ARE IN EFFECT. THEREFORE, YOU MUST ONLY FOLLOW:**

- ▶ The Provincial Regulations and
- ▶ The Regional Regulations for the Region you will be fishing in

**IF YOUR LAKE OR STREAM DOES APPEAR IN THE REGIONAL WATER-SPECIFIC TABLES, YOU MUST FOLLOW:**

- ▶ The Provincial Regulations,
- ▶ The Regional Regulations for the Region you will be fishing in, AND
- ▶ Any EXCEPTIONS or ADDITIONS listed for your water in the Table

Note: EXCEPTIONS to regional trout/char size limits or quotas DO NOT APPLY to species of trout or char to be released.



**PLEASE DO NOT OVERLOOK REGULATIONS ON TRIBUTARIES AND WATERSHEDS!**

There are regulations on some waters that are not specifically listed by name in the tables. **Watch for:**

\* - an asterisk indicates that a regulation applies to all tributary streams that flow into the named body of water, including tributaries of tributaries;

"watershed" - a regulation on a watershed applies to all of the lakes and streams whose water eventually flows into the named waterbody (eg. Fraser River watershed).

Determine whether your stream is a tributary subject to special regulations.

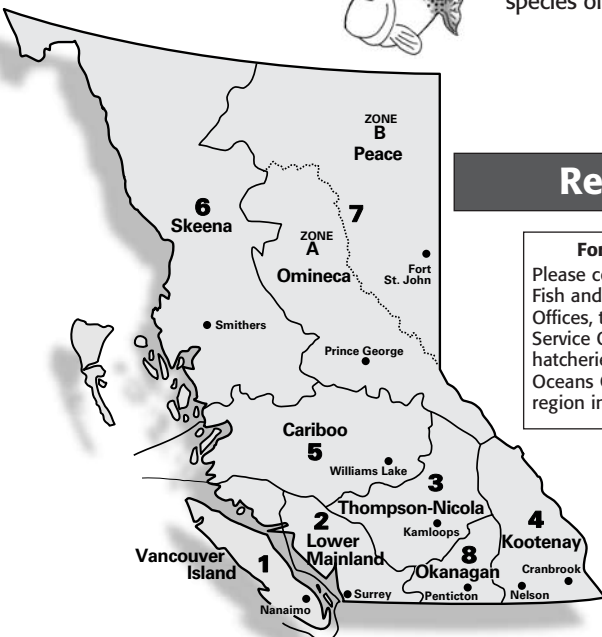
If you do not know which watershed the lake or stream you are fishing in is a part of, consult the B.C. Recreational Atlas, 5th edition or check with a Fish and Wildlife Regional Office or DFO Office.

**4<sup>th</sup>** **IN-SEASON REGULATION CHANGES** are not included in this Synopsis and will be listed on the Fisheries web site, or on Fishing Notices posted in the field.

## FIND IT ON OUR WEB SITE

Go to the **Fisheries web site** at <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/fw/>, click on "Fishing" tab at the top, scroll down to "In-Season Regulation Changes", then click on the appropriate region. Any special regulations listed there were adopted after this Synopsis was published and remain in effect for the period indicated. If you need assistance, please call the appropriate Fish and Wildlife Regional Office listed below.

## Regional Boundaries in British Columbia



### For more information

Please contact any of the various Fish and Wildlife Regional Offices, the Conservation Officer Service Offices, provincial hatcheries, or the Fisheries and Oceans Canada Offices listed by region in this Synopsis.

### Fish and Wildlife Regional Offices

- Nanaimo:** 2080A Labieux Rd., V9T 6J9 .....250-751-3100
- Surrey:** 10470-152<sup>nd</sup> St., V3R 0Y3 .....604-582-5200
- Kamloops:** 1259 Dalhousie Dr., V2C 5Z5 .....250-371-6200
- Nelson:** 401-333 Victoria St., V1L 4K3 .....250-354-6333
- Cranbrook:** 205 Industrial Rd. G, V1C 6H3 .....250-489-8540
- Williams Lake:** 400-640 Borland St., V2G 4T1 ...250-398-4530
- Smithers:** 3726 Alfred Ave., V0J 2N0 .....250-847-7303
- Prince George:** 4051 18th Ave., V2N 1B3 .....250-565-6135
- Fort St. John:** 10003-110th Ave., V1J 6M7 .....250-787-3411
- Penticton:** 102 Industrial Place, V2A 7C8 .....250-490-8200

# HOW TO READ THE REGIONAL WATER-SPECIFIC TABLES



The Regulations listed in the Water-Specific Tables are EXCEPTIONS or ADDITIONS to the Regional Regulations. What follows is an explanation of the information in each column of the tables (up to 10 columns):

## REGION (SAMPLE)

Management Unit  
No Fishing  
Catch & Release  
Exempt, Spring Closure  
Special Quota  
Gear Restriction  
Boating Restriction  
Other

## Special Restrictions/Notes

①

### ① Column 1

This column lists waters with restrictions not covered by the Regional Regulations. An **asterisk (\*)** means the regulation applies to tributary streams as well. A fish symbol (🐟) means the lake is stocked by BC Fisheries. **Not all stocked lakes are listed in the tables**; see page 80. A **CW** symbol means that this is a Classified Water; see page 7.

### ② Management Unit (MU)

This column lists one or more Management Units as a reference to help you locate your target lake or stream. **Not all applicable M.U.'s may be listed.** Consult the B.C. Recreational Atlas or Regional maps for Management Unit boundaries.

### ③ No Fishing

All forms of sport fishing are prohibited for all species in the waters with a dot in this column. Look for more details about closure dates and areas in the "Special Restrictions/Notes" column.

### ④ Catch & Release

You may fish for the species named in the "Special Restrictions/Notes" column, but you must release any that you catch. You must return your fish to the water as quickly and carefully as possible (see "Releasing Fish", page 11).

### ⑤ Exempt, Spring Closure

Some regions have a closure during the spring on all streams to protect spawning fish. Where possible, we have created fishing opportunities in sections of these streams by exempting them from the general spring closure. Exempted streams have a dot in the column titled "Exempt, Spring Closure". Look for additional information in the "Special Restrictions/Notes" column.

### ⑥ Special Quota

If a species of fish has quotas or size limits that differ from the regional restrictions for that species, a dot will appear in this column. The species name will appear in the "Special Restrictions/Notes" column with more information.

②

③

④

⑤

⑥

⑦

⑧

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### ⑦ Gear Restrictions

A dot in this column is always followed by at least one of the following messages in the "Special Restrictions/ Notes" column: single hook, single barbless hook, artificial fly only, fly fishing only, or bait ban (see definitions, pages 8 and 9).

### ⑧ Boating Restrictions

Boating restrictions are adopted for either fisheries management or public safety reasons. A dot in this column will be followed by one of these messages in the "Special Restrictions/Notes" column:

**No angling from boats...** you may use a boat or other floating device for transportation in these waters but you may not angle from that boat.

**No angling from power boats...** you are not allowed to angle from a power boat on these waters.

**No power boats...** you are not allowed to use a boat powered by any type of motor on these waters for any purpose.

**Electric motors only...** you may use only battery-powered electric motors. In addition, wind or human propelled craft may be used. Boats may not be equipped with internal combustion or steam engines.

**Engine power restrictions...** do not exceed the engine power (given in kilowatts) listed in "Special Restrictions/Notes" when boating in these waters.

**Speed Restriction...** do not exceed the speed limit listed in "Special Restrictions/Notes" when power boating in these waters.

**No towing...** do not tow a person on water skis, a surf board or other water toy.

**No vessels...** you are not allowed to use a boat or raft of any type.

**Please note:** most boating restrictions are the responsibility of the **Transport Canada Marine**. They are published here as a courtesy to anglers but, due to space limitations, may not be complete. For more information please write to the Transport Canada Marine, Office of Boating Safety, 25 Huron St., Victoria, B.C. V8V 4V9, or call 250-480-2790.

### ⑨ Other

This column is used to draw your attention to additional information in the "Special Restrictions/Notes" column.

### ⑩ Special Restrictions/Notes

This column clarifies dots in other columns or provides additional information such as:

**Age restricted...** you may fish in these waters only if you are less than 16 years of age (residents under 16 do not need a licence to fish - see page 6), or are in possession of a valid Non-Tidal Angling Licence indicating either B.C. Senior or B.C. Disabled.

### ☉ - Denotes age restriction

**Classified water...** a Classified Waters Licence is required either all year or for some shorter period of time (see Classified Waters Licences, page 7).

**No fishing for...** you may not deliberately fish for the species named even if your intention is to release any fish that you may catch. If you accidentally catch a fish of the species named, you must release it as quickly and carefully as possible (see "Releasing Fish", page 11).

**Dates...** restrictions may apply for all or part of the year. **When no date is listed, the restriction applies all year.** When a date is listed, the restriction applies only for that period of time. Start and end dates are inclusive.

**Fish consumption advisory...** in waters where fish consumption may present a human health hazard.

**Parts of waters...** many restrictions, particularly in streams, only apply to a portion of the named body of water. In these cases, the part to which the restriction applies is described.

**Tributaries...** when all restrictions cited apply to both the named body of water and its tributaries, an asterisk is placed in the first column. When only some restrictions apply to the tributaries then an asterisk is placed after the relevant restriction cited in this column.

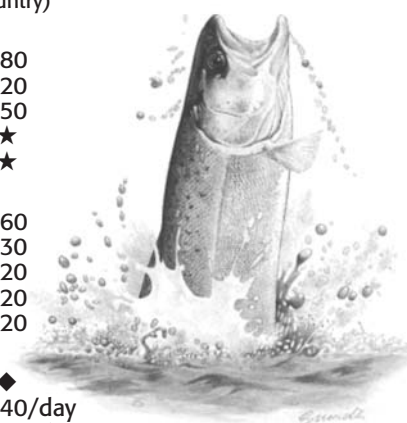


# LICENSING REQUIREMENTS



All annual licences are valid for the current licence year, April 1, 2005 - March 31, 2006, commencing on date purchased. Licences are not transferrable and are not valid unless signed by the licence holder. Note: G.S.T. not included in fees listed below.

Licence Type	Resident <sup>+</sup> (B.C. Residents)	Non-Resident <sup>+</sup> (Residents of Another Province or Territory)	Non-Resident Alien <sup>+</sup> (Residents of Another Country)
<b>Basic Licences</b>			
Annual Angling Licence	\$ 36	\$ 55	\$ 80
One Day Angling Licence <sup>①</sup>	\$ 10	\$ 20	\$ 20
Eight Day Angling Licence <sup>①</sup>	\$ 20	\$ 36	\$ 50
Annual Licence for Disabled	\$ 1	★	★
Annual Licence for Age 65 Plus	\$ 5	★	★
<b>Conservation Surcharges (see page 7)</b>			
Steelhead	\$ 25	\$ 60	\$ 60
Salmon	\$ 15	\$ 30	\$ 30
Kootenay Lake Rainbow Trout	\$ 10	\$ 20	\$ 20
Shuswap Lake Rainbow Trout	\$ 10	\$ 20	\$ 20
Shuswap Lake Char	\$ 10	\$ 20	\$ 20
<b>Classified Waters Licences (see page 7)</b>			
Classified Waters Licence (annual)	\$ 15	◆	◆
Class I Waters Licence	◆	\$ 40/day	\$ 40/day
Class II Waters Licence	◆	\$ 20/day	\$ 20/day



- ① You may buy as many One Day and Eight Day Licences as you need, but only one Annual Licence.
- + See definitions of "resident", "non-resident" and "non-resident alien" on page 8. Members of the armed services and students returning to B.C. may be eligible to purchase licences at the Resident rate. For more information, contact a Government Agent. See below \*
- ★ Fee reduction not available. Regular licence required.
- ◆ Not available. See "Classified Waters Licences", page 7.

**Note: Most licence fees include a surcharge for the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund. For information on HCTF programs, refer to centrefold.**

## If you are 16 years of age or OLDER:

- ▶ you must have a valid basic licence to sport fish for any species of fish in non-tidal waters (including salmon) - see definition of "fish" on page 8.
- ▶ you must purchase appropriate supplementary licences and stamps.
- ▶ you must carry your licence while sport fishing and, if asked, produce it for inspection by a Conservation Officer, Fishery Officer, RCMP constable, Park Ranger in a park, or an Officer under the *Wildlife Act*.
- ▶ basic and supplementary licences and stamps are not valid in National Parks (except for Pacific Rim National Park and the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve during the 2005-06 season).

## If you are UNDER 16 and a resident of B.C.+:

- ▶ you may sport fish without any licence or stamp.
- ▶ you do not need to be accompanied by a licence holder.
- ▶ you are entitled to your own quota of fish.

## If you are UNDER 16 and not a resident of B.C.+:

- ▶ you do not require any licence or stamp to sport fish, but you must be accompanied by a person 16 years or older who holds the appropriate licences and stamps.
- ▶ any fish you keep must be counted as part of the catch and possession of your accompanying licence holder.

- ▶ if you want to catch and keep your own quota of fish, you must buy a licence and any necessary supplementary licences and stamps.

## If you are a resident of B.C.+ and disabled:

you may qualify for a reduced fee licence.

- ▶ To get an application form, contact any Government Agent Office\*, visit our web site\* and click on "BC Disabled Fee Reduction", or write to: BC Fisheries, PO Box 9363 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9M2

Note: no refunds will be made on licences purchased at the full price.

## If you are an Indian as defined in the Indian Act (Canada) AND a resident of B.C.+:

- ▶ you are not required to obtain any type of fishing licence or stamp to sport fish in non-tidal waters.

## What to do if you lose your licence:

- ▶ A duplicate licence must be obtained prior to resuming fishing.
- ▶ Do not attempt to buy a new licence. You are only allowed one annual angling licence per year.
- ▶ Go into any provincial Government Agent Office\* or angling licence vendor and request a Statement of Loss form.
- ▶ Complete the Statement of Loss form, certifying: (i) that the licence has been lost or destroyed; and (ii) the number and species of fish retained under the authority of all Conservation Surcharge Stamps attached to the lost licence.

- ▶ Pay the fee for a duplicate licence (\$10 for a basic annual licence, Classified Waters Licence or Conservation Surcharge Stamp for steelhead or non-tidal salmon; \$1 for a basic annual licence for a senior citizen or person with a disability).
- ▶ Note that duplicate licences are **NOT AVAILABLE** for the One or Eight Day Licences, or Conservation Surcharge Stamps for Kootenay Lake rainbow trout, Shuswap Lake rainbow trout or char.

## Where to buy a licence:

- ▶ Non-tidal licences are available from nearly 1300 vendors and 58 Government Agent offices throughout the province. Many vendors are retail outlets which provide a wide range of angling advice, gear and services.
- ▶ A complete list of vendors, including several outside the province, is on our web site\*.
- ▶ Licences are also available by mail from one of the Government Agent offices. For a list of these offices and for an application package, refer to our web site\*. Please do not place an order without obtaining more information from one of these offices.

- + See definition of "Resident", page 8.

\* Go to the Ministry's web site <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/fw/> and click on "Fishing" at the top of the page, and then on "Licence Vendor Search".

# CONSERVATION SURCHARGES



The front of the basic licence contains boxes for up to five annual Conservation Surcharge Stamps described in detail below. These stamps are valid for the licence year, (i.e. to March 31). **Anglers who purchase more than one short-term licence (i.e. One Day or Eight Day Licences) should keep the current licence and the original licence with its Conservation Surcharge Stamps together while angling.** Moving the stamps to the new licence will invalidate them.

## Steelhead

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp **if you intend to fish for steelhead anywhere in B.C. (whether you intend to keep or release your catch)**. In addition, a steelhead stamp is mandatory when fishing **on most classified waters** during certain specified periods, even when fishing for species other than steelhead. Refer to the regional tables for dates and exceptions.

This stamp is available with all annual and short-term basic licences, but you are **limited to one stamp per year**, regardless of how many short-term licences you buy. Follow the recording instructions on the back of your angling licence after catching and keeping a steelhead. Please retain your basic licence for the entire licence year as you may be requested to complete an annual steelhead survey.

**Note: The ANNUAL province-wide quota for steelhead is 10, whether hatchery or wild in origin.** Most wild steelhead must be released - check the Regional Water-Specific Tables for details.

## Non-Tidal Salmon

Your basic licence must be validated with a Salmon Conservation Surcharge Stamp **to keep a salmon of any legal size or species** (other than kokanee) **from non-tidal waters**. A stamp is not required if you intend to release all salmon caught. You must record your retention of **adult chinook** salmon on the back of your basic angling licence.

Note: "Adult Chinook" are defined in the **Freshwater Salmon Supplement** published by DFO (see page 3 of this Synopsis).

## Kootenay Lake Rainbow Trout

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp **to keep rainbow trout over 50 cm from the main body of Kootenay Lake**. You must record your retention on the back of your basic angling licence.

No Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required if you release all Kootenay Lake rainbow trout over 50 cm.

## Shuswap Lake Char

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp **to keep char over 60 cm caught in Shuswap Lake\***. You must record your retention on the back of your basic angling licence.

No Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required if you release all Shuswap Lake char over 60 cm.

## Shuswap Lake Rainbow Trout

Your basic licence must be validated with a Conservation Surcharge Stamp **to keep rainbow trout over 50 cm from Shuswap Lake\***. You must record your retention on the back of your basic angling licence.

No Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required if you release all Shuswap Lake rainbow trout over 50 cm.

\* Shuswap Lake includes the main body of Shuswap Lake, Little Shuswap Lake, South Thompson River between Shuswap Lake and Little Shuswap Lake, Seymour, Anstey and Salmon Arms and Mara Lake.

# CLASSIFIED WATERS LICENCES



The classified waters of B.C. are highly productive trout streams. These streams are classified as either **Class I** or **Class II** and are listed in the Water Specific Tables for each Region. The Classified Waters Licensing System was created to preserve the unique fishing opportunities provided by these waters, which contribute significantly to the province's reputation as a world class fishing destination.

**All anglers required to buy a basic angling licence must also purchase a Classified Waters Licence before fishing on a stream during the period when it is classified:**

This licence is required in addition to the basic angling licence and any other stamps required by regulation. Also note that a Steelhead Conservation Surcharge Stamp is required at all times when fishing for steelhead, or when fishing classified waters

during the period when steelhead are known to be present. The specific times when a Steelhead Stamp is mandatory are listed in the Water Specific Tables for each Region.

### **If you are a B.C. resident:**

Your Classified Waters Licence may be purchased from a provincial licence vendor. It is an annual licence. This means you can fish on any Class I or Class II water in the province during the year the licence is valid.

### **If you are a non-guided "Non-Resident" or non-guided "Non-Resident Alien" angler:**

Your Classified Waters Licence for Class I or Class II waters may be purchased from a provincial licence vendor. It is sold on a per diem basis and is date and water specific. Although anglers may purchase as many Classified Waters Licences as they wish, each licence must not exceed 8 consecutive days.

### **EXCEPTION: Non-Resident Aliens may only purchase one Classified Waters Licence for the Dean River.**

*Note: Non-guided Non-Resident Aliens wishing to fish the classified section of the Dean River should refer to page 54 of this Synopsis.*

### **If you are a guided "Non-Resident" or a guided "Non-Resident Alien" angler:**

Your Classified Waters Licence for Class I or Class II waters must be purchased directly from a licensed angling guide. It is sold on a per diem basis and is date and water specific. Although anglers may purchase as many Classified Waters Licences as they wish, each licence must not exceed 8 consecutive days.

### **EXCEPTION: Non-Resident Aliens may only purchase one Classified Waters Licence for the Dean River.**

**Non-Guided, "Non-Resident Aliens" wishing to fish the Classified section of the Dean River please see page 54 for more details.**

# DEFINITIONS YOU SHOULD KNOW



**adipose fin** ... see diagram on page 88.  
**adult chinook salmon** ... defined in the Freshwater Salmon Supplement (see page 3 in this Synopsis)  
**anadromous**... swimming up rivers from the ocean to spawn (for example, steelhead)  
**above** ... when used in reference to a lake or stream means “upstream from”.  
**angle** ... see page 9  
**angler** ... a person who angles.  
**annual** ... the licence year, beginning April 1 and ending on March 31.  
**artificial fly** ... a single-pointed hook that is dressed only with fur, feathers, hair, textiles, tinsel and/or wire, and to which no external weight or external attracting device is attached. Two or more hooks tied in tandem not permitted. Where gear is restricted to artificial flies, floats and sinkers may be attached to the line.  
**bait** ... see page 9.  
**barbless hook** ... a hook without a barb on any part of the hook, including both the point and shank. Existing tackle may be modified by completely removing the barb, or by crimping the barb down so that its point is flush against the shaft.  
**below** ... when used in reference to a lake or stream means “downstream from”.  
**bull trout** ... any bull trout that you catch and keep must be counted as part of your Dolly Varden quota  
**char** ... any fish of the genus *Salvelinus* (brook trout, lake trout, Dolly Varden and bull trout).  
**chumming** ... see page 9.  
**Classified Waters** ... see page 7.  
**confluence** ... a place where two streams meet  
**creek** ... see streams.  
**day** ... a legal fishing day runs from midnight on one night to midnight on the following night.  
**down-rigging** ... see page 9.  
**fish** ... means fin fish, shellfish and crustaceans (such as crayfish) in any life stage, including eggs.  
**fly fishing** ... angling with a line to which only an artificial fly is attached (floats and sinkers may not be attached to the line).  
**hatchery trout** ... in many waters, hatchery trout may be harvested but wild trout must be released. Hatchery trout are marked before stocking by removal of their adipose fin (see illustration, page 88). Therefore, hatchery trout must have a healed scar in place of the missing fin.  
**ice fishing** ... see page 9.  
**kokanee** ... a land-locked sockeye salmon.  
**landed immigrant** ... a permanent resident of Canada (as defined in federal statute).

**length** ... to determine whether your fish is of legal size, measure from the tip of the fish’s nose to the fork (near the centre) of the tail.  
**management unit** ... a management unit is a subdivision of a region. For detailed maps of management units, the British Columbia Recreational Atlas is available at many bookstores.  
**max** ... abbreviation for maximum.  
**min** ... abbreviation for minimum.  
**non-resident** ... means **you are not a “resident”**, but (a) you are a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant, **OR** (b) your **primary residence is in Canada**, AND you have resided in Canada for the immediately preceding 12 months.  
**non-resident alien**... means you are neither a “resident” nor a “non-resident”.  
**ordinary residence** ... a residential dwelling where a person normally lives, with all associated connotations including a permanent mailing address, telephone number, furnishings and storage of automobile; the address on one’s driver’s licence and automobile registration, where one is registered to vote. A motor home or vessel at a campsite or marina is not considered to be an ordinary residence.  
**possession quota** ... the number of fish of any species that an angler may have in his/her possession at any given time, EXCEPT at place of **ordinary residence** (see above). In most instances, the possession quota is two times the daily quota. See tables for exceptions.  
**power boat** ... a boat driven by an electric, steam or internal combustion engine.  
**resident** ... means **your primary residence is in British Columbia, AND** (a) you are a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant, **AND** have been physically present in B.C. for the greater portion of each of 6 calendar months out of the immediately preceding 12 calendar months, **OR** (b) you are **NOT** a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant, but have been physically present in B.C. for the greater portion of each of the immediately preceding 12 calendar months.  
**quotas** ... see page 10.  
**river** ... see streams.  
**roe** ... see page 9.  
**set line** ... see page 9.  
**single hook** ... a hook having only one point. (In contrast, a treble hook is a hook having three points on a common shaft).  
**Note:** use of a treble hook is permitted unless “single hook” is specified.  
**slough** ... a stagnant channel or backwater.

**snagging (foul hooking)**... hooking a fish in any other part of its body than the mouth. Attempting to snag fish of any species is prohibited. Any fish willfully or accidentally snagged must be released immediately.  
**spear fishing** ... see page 9.  
**sport fishing** ... fishing for recreation and not for sale or barter. Sport fishing includes angling, spear fishing, set lining and crayfish trapping.  
**steelhead** ... a rainbow trout longer than 50 cm in waters where anadromous rainbow trout are found. Both hatchery and wild steelhead may be found in B.C. waters.  
**streams** ... flowing waters (rivers, sloughs and creeks). Note that standing water behind a beaver dam on a stream is considered part of the stream.  
**stream mouth** ... the point at which the surface elevation of a stream and the water body into which it flows are the same, except as posted by signs or markers, or otherwise defined.  
**tributaries** ... all streams that contribute to a larger stream or to a lake.  
**trout** ... all regulations that apply to trout (as a group) also apply to char unless char are specifically excluded.  
**watershed** ... all the streams and lakes that drain the land into a named waterbody, including the named waterbody itself.  
**wild trout** ... trout not marked as hatchery fish. Look for a normal adipose fin (see illustration, page 88) or an unhealed scar in place of that fin, if missing.  
**year** ... the period beginning April 1 and ending March 31 (the licence period).

## Freshwater game fish are defined as follows:

Trout	Other
➤ rainbow trout	➤ kokanee
➤ steelhead	➤ Arctic grayling
➤ cutthroat trout	➤ burbot (ling)
➤ brown trout	➤ white sturgeon
<b>Char</b>	➤ black crappie
➤ Dolly Varden	➤ northern pike
➤ bull trout	➤ yellow perch
➤ lake trout	➤ walleye
➤ brook trout	➤ goldeye
<b>Whitefish</b>	➤ inconnu
➤ lake whitefish	➤ crayfish
➤ mountain whitefish	
<b>Bass</b>	
➤ largemouth bass	
➤ smallmouth bass	



## Allowable Fishing Methods

Although angling is the most popular form of sportfishing in British Columbia, there are other methods that you can use to take fish. Your basic fishing licence entitles you to:

**angle** ... fish (with or without a rod) with one fishing line to which only **one hook, one artificial lure OR one artificial fly is attached.**

**down-rig** ... angling with a downrigger is permitted, provided the fishing line is attached to the downrigger by a quick release mechanism.

**ice fish** ... with one line and one lure, artificial fly or other terminal attractor. It is your legal responsibility to warn other people of the existence of your ice hole and remove your ice hut before ice breakup.

**set line** ... you may only fish with a set line (an unattended line) in lakes of Region 6 & in lakes of Zone A of Region 7. You are allowed to use only one line with one hook (**no smaller than 3 cm** from point to shank - see below). **Any game fish that you catch other than burbot must be released.** Set lines must be marked with angler's name, address and telephone number.

Set Line Hook  
(shown 1/2 size)



**spear fish** ... means to fish with a spear or an arrow that is propelled by a spring, an elastic band, compressed air, a bow or by hand. No spear fishing for "game fish" (see definition, page 8) or salmon, except burbot may be spear fished in Regions 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8. No spear fishing of any kind in Region 1.

**trap crayfish** ... with any number or size of traps for personal consumption. You must release all fin fish caught in your trap. To help sustain crayfish populations, you should release any crayfish that are less than 9 cm in total length as well as those bearing eggs or young.

**All other methods of taking fish are illegal.**

## It Is Unlawful To....

- ▶ **use barbed hooks** or a hook with more than one point in any stream in B.C.
- ▶ **angle with a fishing line to which more than one artificial fly is attached** (i.e., use "dropper flies").
- ▶ **use a light** in any manner to attract fish, unless the light is submerged and attached to the fishing line within 1 m of the hook.
- ▶ **fish with nets**, including dip nets, minnow nets, gill nets or cast nets.
- ▶ **snag (foul hook) fish** (see definition, page 8). Any fish willfully or accidentally snagged must be released immediately.
- ▶ **use more than one fishing line, EXCEPT** a person who is **alone in a boat on a lake** may angle with two lines.
- ▶ **place any fishing gear in any water during a closed time** ("no fishing" period).
- ▶ **angle with a fishing line to which more than 1 kg of weight is attached** (this does not apply to the down rigger weights).



- ▶ **waste the fish you catch.** If your fish is not suitable for eating or if possession is illegal because of quotas, size limits or closed seasons, return the fish quickly and gently to the water.
- ▶ **release fish in a harmful manner** if you are not going to keep your catch. Follow the catch & release tips outlined on page 11.
- ▶ **buy, sell or barter** or attempt to buy, sell or barter any fish caught by sport fishing.
- ▶ **damage or interfere with a trap set for furbearers.** If you believe the trap has been set illegally, report it to a Conservation Officer.
- ▶ **have any live fish in your possession in the wild,** or move any live fish or live aquatic invertebrates around the province or transplant them into any waters of B.C. Do not keep angled fish alive in a "livewell" or other device, or on stringers, and never use live fish as bait or release your aquarium fish to the wild.
- ▶ **enter or cross cultivated land, posted land, private land or Indian Reserve land without proper permission.**
- ▶ **...please refer to additional restrictions and requirements on pages 10-12.**



## Rules on Bait Usage

### Definitions

**"Bait"** is any foodstuff or natural substance used to attract fish, other than wood, cotton, wool, hair, fur or feathers. It does not include finfish, other than roe. It includes roe, worms and other edible substances, as well as scents and flavourings containing natural substances or nutrients.

**Roe**... you must not have more than 1 kg of roe (fish eggs) in your possession for use as bait unless the roe was obtained from a commercial source that lawfully obtained that roe, or you have in your possession the freshly dressed fish from which the roe in excess of 1 kg was taken. Carry a receipt with you if you purchased roe from a commercial source.

**Aquatic invertebrates**... you may use freshwater invertebrates (eg. aquatic insects and crayfish) in streams as bait unless a bait ban applies. **When fishing at a lake, you may not possess or use freshwater invertebrates for bait.**

**Chumming**... attempting to attract fish by depositing any substance in the water, is prohibited.

**Fin fish... the use of fin fish (dead or alive) or parts of fin fish other than roe is prohibited throughout the province, with the following exception:** You may use the head of fin fish or the headless body of fin fish as bait, **only:**

- (a) when sport fishing for sturgeon in Fraser River (Regions 2 and 7 only), or
- (b) when set lining in lakes of Region 6 or in lakes of Zone A of Region 7.

**Use of LIVE bait is strictly controlled...**

to limit the spread of undesirable and non-native species.



## Quotas

**For all game fish, there is a quota or limit on the number of fish you may keep.**

**Refer to the Regional Chapters for Regional Daily Catch Quotas and to the Regional Water-Specific Tables for special quotas on some individual waters.**

**Daily catch quota** ... the maximum number of fish of a given species, group of species, or size class that you may keep in one calendar day.

**Possession quota** ... no more than twice the daily quota unless otherwise specified (see definition, page 8).

**Monthly catch quota** ... the maximum number of fish that you are allowed to keep in one calendar month.

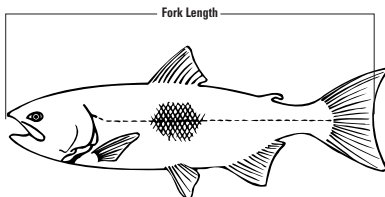
**Annual catch quota** ... the maximum number of fish that you are allowed to keep in one licence year (April 1 to March 31).

**Quotas are not cumulative:** you cannot take a quota from each region that you fish. A good rule of thumb is this: never have in your possession while at or near any lake or stream, more fish than the allowable quota for that lake or stream. Check the regional regulations and tables for daily catch quotas for B.C. sport fish.

## Size Limits

**Size limits protect fish of certain sizes.**

Measure your fish from the tip of the nose to the fork of the tail to determine its legal length.



Size limits are listed with quotas in the regional regulations and in the Regional Water-Specific Tables. If you catch a fish protected by a min. or max. size limit, release it as quickly and carefully as possible (see "Releasing Fish," page 11).

**Minimum size limits** allow fish to spawn at least once before they can be caught and kept.

There is no general **minimum size limits for trout/char in lakes**, EXCEPT where specifically indicated in the Regional Daily Catch Quotas or for waters listed in the Regional Water-Specific Tables.

**Maximum size limits** allow larger fish to be released to provide future fishing opportunities.

## Protected Species

**It is illegal to fish for or catch and then keep any of the protected fish listed below.** If you accidentally catch one, you must release it right away where you captured it. The fish on this list are considered to be at risk in Canada. Their status has been determined by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Charlotte Unarmoured Stickleback</b> | <b>Giant Stickleback</b> |
| <b>Enos Stickleback</b>                 | <b>Lake Lamprey</b>      |
| <b>Green Sturgeon</b>                   | <b>Salish Sucker</b>     |
| <b>Nooksack Dace</b>                    | <b>Speckled Dace</b>     |
| <b>Shorthead Sculpin</b>                |                          |
| <b>Umatilla Dace</b>                    |                          |



Cowichan Lake Lamprey, formerly "Lake Lamprey"

For information on any of these species, please enter its common name (given here) on Environment Canada's web site: [http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/search/default\\_e.cfm](http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/search/default_e.cfm)

## "No Fishing" Areas

Most waters in B.C. are open to fishing for some species 24 hours of the day, every day of the year.

**There are five basic exceptions:**

- ▶ "no fishing" areas (see regional tables);
- ▶ within Ecological Reserves (this page);
- ▶ within 23 m below the lower entrance to any fishway, canal, obstacle or leap;
- ▶ within a 100 m radius of any government facility operated for counting, passing or rearing fish (e.g. fishway, fish hatchery, aeration system) unless otherwise designated; and
- ▶ within National Parks unless a specific location is identified as being open (see "National Parks" on this page).

Not all "no fishing" areas are posted with signs. Make sure you read the regional regulations for the area in which you will be fishing. If you have any questions, call or write the local Fish and Wildlife Regional Office.

## Ecological Reserves

Fishing is prohibited in Ecological Reserves in B.C. A complete list of ecological reserves is available from BC Parks headquarters at: PO Box 9398, STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9M9, or on the BC Parks web site: <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks>

## Provincial Parks & Recreational Areas

Individuals visiting a Provincial Park or Recreation Area should be aware that the *Park Act* and its regulations apply, as do the sport fishing regulations in this Synopsis.

NOTE: the use of horses, motor vehicles, motorcycles, snowmobiles, other self-propelled vehicles or bicycles is generally prohibited in Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas except where specifically authorized. All motor vehicles on parks roads must be licensed. Use of aircraft to arrive at or depart from some parks is restricted.

## National Parks

The seven National Parks within British Columbia are: Kootenay, Yoho, Glacier, Revelstoke, Pacific Rim, Gwaii Haanas and Gulf Islands.

**Freshwater fishing is prohibited in National Parks unless opened** under the National Parks Fishing Regulations. Where open, anglers require a National Park fishing permit to fish in National Parks.

**A provincial angling licence is not valid unless otherwise stated for any fresh water within National Parks or National Park Reserves.**

**National Park fishing permits and regulations** are available at park visitor centres and at some local commercial outlets. The National Parks Fishing Regulations may be also viewed on the internet under the "Legislation and Regulations" button at <http://parksCanada.pch.gc.ca>, or contact Parks Canada at 1-800-748-7275.

For the 2005-06 fishing season only, the provincial freshwater regulations in this Synopsis will be in effect for the non-tidal waters in **Pacific Rim National Park and the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve** and a provincial angling licence will be required. Also note that all fresh waters within **Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve** are closed to fishing throughout the year.



## Transporting and Exporting Fish

In order to enforce quotas and size limits, our officers must be able to count, measure and identify your catch.

If you caught the fish yourself you must:

- ▶ keep your angling licence handy while travelling.
- ▶ transport no more than your legal limit.
- ▶ ensure your fish can be identified, counted and measured if necessary (see "Now Wrap it Right", below).

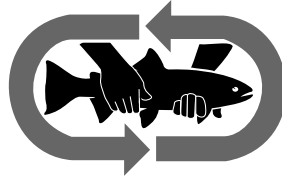
If you are transporting fish for someone else:

- ▶ obtain and carry a signed letter from that person with the following details: the angler's name, address, telephone number and fishing licence number; when and where the fish were caught; the date and place at which you were given the fish; the number, species and size of the fish that you have been given and the name and address of the person to whom the fish are to be delivered.
- ▶ if you will be exporting the fish from B.C., carry the letter and insure that it is available for inspection by fishery enforcement and/or customs officers if requested to do so.

If someone else caught the fish and gave it to you for your personal consumption:

- ▶ keep in your possession a signed letter from the angler until you have eaten the fish.
- ▶ the letter should list the name, address and telephone number of the angler who gave you the fish; the number, species and size of the fish; and when and where the fish were caught.

## Releasing Fish - The Gentle Way



*There is a growing trend among anglers to catch and release, unharmed, a part of their allowable catch. As well, more restrictive regulations on specific waters can severely limit the angler's allowable harvest. A fish that appears unharmed may not survive if carelessly handled, so please abide by the following:*

1. Play and release fish as rapidly as possible. A fish played for too long may not recover.
2. Keep the fish in the water as much as possible. A fish out of water is suffocating. Internal injuries and scale loss is much more likely to occur when out of water.
3. Rolling fish onto their backs (while still in the water) may reduce the amount they struggle, therefore minimizing stress, etc.
4. Ideally, you should carry needle-nose pliers or haemostats (surgical pliers). Grab the bend or round portion of the hook with your pliers, twist pliers upside down, and the hook will dislodge. Be quick, but gentle. **Single barbless hooks are recommended**, if not already stipulated in the regulations.

5. Fish that are deeply hooked, hooked around the gills or bleeding profusely have a much lower chance of survival once released. If such a fish is of legal size and in-season, it should be retained as part of your quota. On the other hand, if the fish cannot be retained legally, you can improve its chances for survival by cutting the leader and releasing it with the hook left in.

6. If a dip net is used for landing your catch, it should have fine mesh and a knotless webbing to protect fish from abrasion and possible injury.

7. If you must handle the fish, do so with your bare, wet hands. Keep your fingers out of the gills, and don't squeeze the fish or cause scales to be lost or damaged. If you want pictures of a fish then support the fish by cradling one hand behind the front fins and your other hand just forward of the tail fin. Have the camera ready so the fish is only momentarily out of the water. Take the time to hold the fish in the water to recover. If fishing in a river, point the fish upstream while reviving it. When the fish begins to struggle and swim normally, let it go.



Photo: Scott Blewett

## GREAT CATCH! NOW WRAP IT RIGHT!

A guide to cleaning and canning your catch in non-tidal waters (for all species except salmon)

To comply with the law, follow these simple guidelines when you clean and transport your fish.

- ▶ **Do not can, bottle or fillet fish** caught by sport fishing in non-tidal waters **except at your permanent residence (commercial canning of these fish is not permitted).**
- ▶ **Leave the head, tail and all fins on your catch** until you

- get them to your permanent (ordinary) residence. We suggest you immediately remove the gills and internal organs of any fish you keep to reduce spoilage.
- ▶ Do not freeze fish together in an unrecognizable block.
- ▶ Please refer to the fish cleaning guidelines in "Angling Safety in Bear Country" on page 20.

# ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE



Provincial Regulations

## Report – Don't Support Illegal Guiding

Anyone who assists or transports anglers for compensation or reward without the proper licence commits an offence. If you use the services of an illegal guide, you may be convicted as well.

If you are hiring a guide, you can be certain that person is licensed by asking to see the guide's licence or checking with the local Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection office.

## Penalties for Breaking Fishing Laws

The penalty for fishing offences against the *Fisheries Act* is a **fine of up to \$100,000, a prison term of up to 12 months, or both**. If an enforcement officer finds any fish illegally caught or held, or any equipment, vehicle, vessel or other item used in the commission of an offence, the officer may seize them without a warrant. Depending on the severity of the offence, you may be issued a fine by ticket or required to attend court.

## Advertising

## Inspection

If asked, you must allow a Conservation Officer, Fishery Officer, RCMP Constable, Park Ranger in a Provincial Park, Park Warden in a National Park or an Officer under the *Wildlife Act* to examine your fishing licence, gear and catch.



Photo: Vance Hannah



## REPORT ALL POACHERS AND POLLUTERS

*British Columbia's fish, wildlife and natural environment are the common property of the people of the province. Everyone who uses or enjoys the outdoors has a responsibility to protect and maintain it.*

The Conservation Officer Service, Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection has established a partnership with the Provincial Emergency Program Call Centre

**Available 24/7  
Use This Number to Report:**

**Starting in 2005, look for this sign along highways  
and forestry roads in British Columbia**

**What you can do:**

**Violations of Fisheries, Wildlife or Environmental Protection Laws**, except salmon related violations which should be reported to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada at 1-800-465-4336

**Wildlife/Human Conflicts** where public safety is at risk.

**R.A.P.P.**  
Report All Poachers  
and Polluters  
Conservation Officer  
Service (24 HRS.)  
**1-877-952-7277**

- 1. Familiarize** yourself with current regulations.
- 2. Note down relevant details** of suspicious activities, such as: time, date, location, descriptions of violators and/or vehicles and licence plate number. Photographs are useful.
- 3. Report** any fish, wildlife or environmental offences as soon as possible **to the Provincial Emergency Program Call Centre.**

Report all Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) operates in cooperation with the B.C. Wildlife Federation. The B.C.W.F. pays rewards up to \$2000 for information leading to charges being laid against persons doing wanton damage to wildlife, wildlife or fish habitat or the property of companies or individuals who allow hunters and anglers access to property they control.

## 2005 - The Centennial Year of the Conservation Officer Service



July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the appointment of the first **Provincial Game and Forest Warden**, Arthur Bryan Williams. For the first few years he had no budget and his staff consisted only of volunteer Deputies. By 1918 there were thirty-three paid Deputies with many more honorary Deputies located around the Province.

In 1918 the Provincial Police assumed administration of the *Game Act*, while an appointed Game Commission made decisions on seasons and regulations. Mr. Williams and all but three of the former deputies were discharged.

On June 1, 1929, the B.C. Game Department was re-established, again headed by A. Bryan Williams as Game Commissioner. Forty-five members of the Provincial Police formed the nucleus of the Game Department, while several of the former Deputy Game Wardens were re-hired.

In 1934, a new Game Commission, made up of A.G. Bolton, James Cunningham and Frank Butler, replaced Williams. When the Game Department became the Fish and Game Branch of the Department of Recreation and Conservation in 1957, Mr. Butler became its Director. Game

Wardens were renamed Conservation Officers in 1961.

Charles E. Estlin was appointed as the first Chief Conservation Officer in 1962 and the Fish and Game Branch became the Fish and Wildlife Branch in 1966.

In 1980, Conservation Officers formed their own branch within the new Ministry of Environment, separate from Fish and Wildlife. This branch became the field enforcement and public safety arm of the Ministry.

In 2002 the Conservation Officer Service and the position of Chief Conservation Officer, who has complete supervision over the Service, were officially created in legislation. Conservation Officers now wear their own unique uniform, have their own coat of arms and operate distinctively marked patrol vehicles. There are currently just over 120 COs within the Service in 44 locations province-wide.

For more information on the history of the Conservation Officer Service, please go to <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/cos>



**Game Wardens Neil Cameron and Len Washburn in Fernie, 1932**

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# STEELHEAD RECOVERY PLAN



## The Greater Georgia Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan

Wild and hatchery steelhead in 58 of the largest watersheds in the Greater Georgia Basin (from Juan de Fuca Strait north to Johnstone Strait) have experienced serious declines in the last decade, and a majority have been classified at “conservation concern” or “extreme conservation concern” by provincial biologists.

In September, 2002, the Greater Georgia Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan was announced to deal with this major conservation issue.

### Causes of the Decline

Declines in steelhead abundance have been caused by reduced freshwater habitat productivity combined with sharply reduced ocean survival during the marine portion of their life cycle. Many wild stocks will likely not recover unless freshwater rearing conditions can be significantly improved to compensate for persistently poor ocean conditions which are beyond our influence.

Since the magnitude of this problem was first identified in the late 1990s, provincial fisheries biologists have worked closely with non-government partners, like the BC Conservation Foundation, in developing recovery plans for individual watersheds and steelhead populations. The culmination of this work was the release of the Greater Georgia Basin Steelhead Recovery Action Plan, in 2002, by A.F. Lill and Associates Ltd., working with the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection under sponsorship of the Pacific Salmon Foundation.

### Recovery Objectives

The action plan’s primary objective is to “stabilize and restore wild steelhead stocks and habitats to healthy self-sustaining levels.” A secondary objective is to “maintain and restore angling opportunities, which benefit both local communities and the provincial economy.”

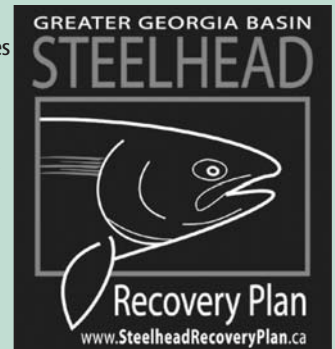
## Recovery Strategies

In 2004/05 steelhead recovery activities on Vancouver Island and in the Lower Mainland received about \$1.3M in direct funding support. An increasing share of annual budgets is being directed to habitat restoration projects including nutrient enrichment, rearing habitat complexing, spawning gravel placements, flow augmentation and erosion/sediment control. Research from the Keogh River on northern Vancouver Island has previously demonstrated the value of a holistic approach to watershed restoration in stabilizing and rebuilding wild steelhead, salmon and trout populations. The Keogh experience, and growing evidence from elsewhere, suggests that remediation of freshwater limiting factors is an effective conservation strategy for the whole fish community, not just steelhead as the target species.

### More Support Needed

In the coming months, provincial staff and their BCCF partners will work closely with the South Coast Steelhead Coalition, conservation organizations, First Nations and industry to increase investments in steelhead recovery projects for priority waters within the Greater Georgia Basin. We encourage anglers and non-anglers to support this work which is critical to the preservation of this magnificent species on the south coast.

For more information on the Greater Georgia Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan, visit our web site at [www.steelheadrecoveryplan.ca](http://www.steelheadrecoveryplan.ca) or contact regional fisheries staff in Nanaimo (250-751-3100) or Surrey (604-582-5200).



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## ANGLING ETHICS

Over 400,000 anglers enjoy fishing on lakes, rivers, and streams throughout British Columbia. If we are not careful, the popularity that recreational freshwater fishing enjoys may compromise not only the experience anglers are seeking, but also contribute to decline of some fish stocks, impact fish habitat and increase conflicts between anglers unless special care is taken.

### Respect fish and treat them humanely.

Keep fish immersed in water until you identify the species and its size. Help us look after our fisheries by limiting your catch to your needs and never exceeding the legal limit. "Let them go, let them grow," and practice "catch and release" when appropriate or required (see page 11).

### Practise courtesy toward other anglers and respect their rights.

Share the water with other users. Practise good angling etiquette by:

- ✓ moving around a water body in patterns appropriate to your gear and local conditions;
- ✓ when in a boat give a wide berth to wading anglers, other boaters and swimmers;
- ✓ leaving adequate room between other anglers and yourself, especially flyfishers.

### Respect public and private property.

Always ask permission before entering private property, including Indian Reserve land. Leave natural areas as you found them, keep campsites clean and be careful with campfires.

## ROTATIONAL ANGLING

### Courtesy and Common Sense - Enjoying the Experience and sharing the Opportunity.

As angling pressures increase because of population growth, expanding recreational time and improved access to our rivers and streams, the need for courtesy and an angling code of conduct has become more evident.

"Rotation angling" is a system designed to encourage everyone on a stretch of river to fish sequentially through it, whether wading or from a boat. It was designed to allow each angler an equal opportunity to spend some time in the prime pools and riffles. Simply stated, it means starting at the head of a pool or run and following the immediate downstream angler at a courteous distance, with everyone progressing at a reasonable pace.

While rotation angling is not applicable to all waters and conditions, it has become an accepted practice on many of our Classified Waters.

#### THE BASIC RULES ARE:

- ✓ Avoid entering the water downstream of another angler who is already fishing, unless invited to do so;
- ✓ Leave adequate room between the downstream angler and yourself but do not remain stationary unless no one is following you;
- ✓ After catching a fish, step out of the line and return to the head of the pool, or start of the line;
- ✓ If you are not sure about the local etiquette, avoid any problems by first inquiring about the procedures from the anglers already on the water.

*Rotational angling is a system which can work well regardless of gear type, so long as each angler respects the others' methods.*



## Co-existing with Spawning Salmon

Angling opportunities provided for some species of fish (e.g., trout, char, whitefish) may have negative impacts on holding or spawning salmon in the same river system. In many cases, angling for salmon is prohibited during times when angling for other species remains open. Anglers can minimize incidental hooking of salmon by adopting a cooperative approach to their angling activity. Some simple voluntary measures which will minimize the likelihood of hooking or disturbing spawning salmon include:

### Gear Selection:

Use fishing gear which will effectively avoid hooking salmon. For example, use fly fishing gear with a floating line and a dry fly. Sinking lines or spoons are not recommended as spawning salmon can be easily foul hooked. If the target species is smaller than the spawning salmon, use of a light tippet is a good added measure.



### Bait Selection:

If use of bait is allowed, avoid using bait types which aggressively attract salmon. Using bait such as worms, grasshoppers or other insects will effectively avoid salmon yet attract other species such as trout and whitefish.

### Wading the River:

Concentrate angling activity in areas of the river where salmon may be less prevalent. For example, avoid deep pools where salmon are

holding prior to spawning. Also, avoid areas of shallow water where you observe concentrations of spawning salmon and their redds (gravel "nests"). Salmon redds are generally between 1-2 square meters in size and may be recognised by the appearance of clean looking gravel which is loose and soft underfoot, as opposed to firmer and darker gravel nearby. When newly formed, redds will appear to be a depression with a mound of gravel on the downstream side. Eggs will be buried in the mound of gravel and for several metres downstream. Walking on the redds may kill buried eggs, so please avoid them entirely.

With the cooperation of knowledgeable anglers, it is often possible to maintain angling opportunities which might otherwise be eliminated to protect vulnerable fish. Please adjust your angling techniques accordingly.

# Help Protect Our Aquatic Habitats From Alien Invaders!



The introduction of alien species is the second greatest threat to biodiversity globally after habitat loss. Alien species are species not native to a particular ecosystem. In B.C., they have been introduced through various means, including intentional introductions and accidental transfers on equipment, in water and as parasites. These aliens often flourish in new environments because they have no natural enemies. Already, alien aquatic species have devastated some of our freshwater ecosystems and sport fisheries through habitat degradation and negative interactions with native species (including competition, predation and interbreeding).

## Examples of harmful alien species spreading in B.C.'s aquatic ecosystems

Yellow perch and bass proliferate quickly and compete with and feed on native fish, possibly diminishing sport fisheries for native species (e.g. rainbow trout).

Bullhead feed on native fish species and degrade habitat. The introduction of brown bullhead into Hadley Lake on Lasquiti Island resulted in the global extinction of a stickleback species pair (see page 76).

Eurasian water milfoil spreads quickly, degrading fish habitat and impairing boating, swimming and fishing

activities. This plant has been identified as a major threat to sockeye in Cultus Lake.

Bullfrogs proliferate quickly and compete with or feed on native amphibian species, birds and fishes. They are implicated in the decline of some native frog populations in southern B.C.

## You can help!

**1. Do not move live fish** – Moving any aquatic animal or plant between waterbodies can impact biodiversity. Movement includes deliberate transfer as well as unintentional movement of microscopic organisms (e.g. parasites and diseases). It is *illegal* to possess or move live fish without a permit. It is also *illegal* to use live fish for bait or hold live fish in a “live well” on your boat. See “Rules for Bait Usage” on page 9.

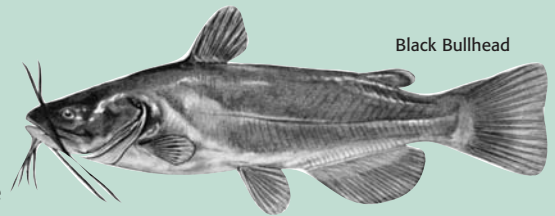
**2. Do not move fish parts** - Don't use parts of fish caught in one waterbody as bait elsewhere. Furthermore, dispose of all fish guts and non-consumable parts appropriately (see “Angling Safety in Bear Country” on page 20 for disposal suggestions).

**3. Report illegal activities** – If you see any activities associated with the intentional or accidental movement of

live fish and other aquatic organisms, please report these activities to 1-877-952-7277.

**4. Thoroughly wash all boating and fishing gear** – Transfer of aquatic alien species may occur through the movement of unwashed equipment from one waterbody to another. You can reduce this threat by cleaning your gear every time you visit a new waterbody in case your gear has been exposed to infested waters. Before you leave the boat launch: (1) drain the water from motors, bilges, transom wells and other containers; and (2) remove plant parts, mud and other organisms from all gear (e.g. boots, boat, anchor and trailer). In addition, wash and sun dry your boat, tackle, nets, waders and other equipment prior to use in another waterbody.

*Alien Invaders ....continued on page 87*



Black Bullhead

Courtesy U. Kansas Natural History Museum and Biodiversity Research Center

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# BOATING INFORMATION



## Fluctuating Lake & Reservoir Levels

Water levels in lakes and especially reservoirs can fluctuate over the year. These fluctuations result in a change in the location of stream mouths (please check the definitions of "streams" and "stream mouths" on page 8). Note that a stream flowing through the drawdown portion of a reservoir basin is not considered to be part of the reservoir. Anglers are reminded that because lake and stream regulations may differ, care must be taken to ensure that the proper regulations are followed.



## Boating Safety

For important information on regulations related to boating safety, including:

- Operator competency requirements;
- Horsepower restrictions related to the age of operators;
- Universal Shoreline Speed Restrictions; and
- Proper use of Personal Flotation Devices (including Inflatable PFDs).

Please contact the Transport Canada Marine's Office of Boating Safety toll-free at 1-800-267-6687, or visit their web site at <http://www.boatingsafety.gc.ca> and click on "The Safe Boating Guide."

Many B.C. waters have boating restrictions in place. Please refer to the Regional Water-Specific Tables in this Synopsis for boating restrictions on individual waters and page 5 for an explanation of the various types of restrictions.

## Eurasian Watermilfoil Alert

**Eurasian watermilfoil and other non-native aquatic plants can create, environmental, recreational and economic problems in our waters.**



### **Important:**

**Thoroughly inspect your boat and trailer and remove all aquatic plants before launching and after leaving the water.**

**New infestations can develop from even small plant fragments.**

An on-line brochure on Eurasian Watermilfoil is available at: "<http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/brochures/milfoil.html>".

For further information on aquatic plants and weeds go to "[http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/wq\\_aquatic.html](http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/wq_aquatic.html)", or one of the many other websites on Eurasian Watermilfoil.



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## River Boating Etiquette and Safety

**For your safety and the enjoyment of everyone using the river, please:**

Keep boat launch areas clear so that all boaters have equal access.

Don't mix alcohol and boating. You will need your best reflexes to keep you, your boat and other stream users safe. It's illegal to operate a boat while impaired.

Limit your speed (particularly when entering corners) to avoid collisions with other boaters, anglers, swimmers and hidden obstacles.

Respect the Universal Shoreline Speed Restriction (10 km/hr within 30m of the shore).

Be careful when boating at dawn and dusk, or in other conditions of limited light or visibility.

Refrain from running your boat through water being fished by others. Go slowly or drift by anglers along the shoreline. Be considerate of others.



Avoid sensitive habitats such as shallow water, spawning areas, and nesting or foraging areas of wildlife.

Give animals crossing the river the space and time to do so. It's illegal to harass wildlife.

Pack out your garbage. Old fishing line, litter, fuel and oil waste damage fish habitat, endanger aquatic life and reduce water quality.

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### Does my boat need to be registered?

All recreational vessels under 15 gross tons and powered by an engine 10 horsepower (7.5 kilowatts) or more must be licenced. The licencing process is free of charge through **Canada Customs and Revenue Agency** (refer to the blue pages in your telephone directory for the telephone number of the nearest office).



Photo: Brian Chan

## Province-Wide Changes to Bait Regulations in Streams Proposed for 2006-2007

Restrictions on the use of bait in freshwater sport fisheries throughout the province are founded on the principle of reducing the risk of injury and death to fish that are required to be released to sustain populations at acceptable levels of abundance. The scientific literature demonstrates that fish caught with bait experience significantly higher mortality rates when released than those caught with artificial lures or flies. Mortality is also influenced by factors such as high water temperatures, handling techniques, and age/size of fish. Higher catch rates associated with bait use, combined with higher mortality rates, lead to higher total impact in catch and release fisheries. The incidental capture of juvenile fish and non-target species also increases with bait use.

Apart from conservation, there are other reasons for restricting the use of bait. For example, reduced catch rates are desirable to extend the opportunity to catch fish to more anglers or to expand it over a longer season.

Currently, the use of bait is restricted on a stream by stream basis, as required to meet conservation objectives. Angling regulations on many B.C. streams include provisions that require the release of specific sizes of fish or, in some cases, prohibit the harvest of certain species. To improve the survival rate for released fish, the Ministry is proposing to generally prohibit the use of bait in streams for the 2006-2007 season except for specific situations where the use of bait is consistent with management and conservation objectives. This proposal is expected to:

1. conserve fish resources,
2. maintain as many angling opportunities as possible, and
3. help harmonize angling regulations across the province.

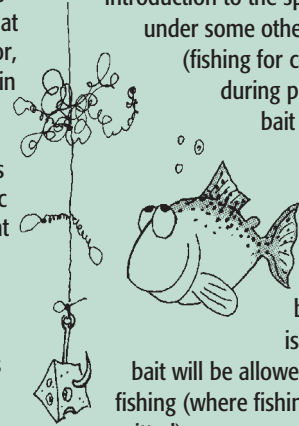
Along with the existing province-wide single barbless hook restriction, the bait ban will bring a further measure of simplicity and uniformity to angling regulations for all streams in the province.

It is recognized that for many young anglers, fishing with bait forms the basis of their introduction to the sport, and that under some other circumstances

(fishing for certain species during parts of the year) a bait ban may not be warranted. In situations such as these, exceptions will be considered on a water-specific basis. One example is that the use of

bait will be allowed for sturgeon fishing (where fishing for sturgeon is permitted).

If you have comments or concerns regarding this proposal, please contact the Fish and Wildlife Recreation and Allocation Branch at the address on page 2 or e-mail us at "[fish.web@gems9.gov.bc.ca](mailto:fish.web@gems9.gov.bc.ca)".



"Catch and Release fishing is a lot like golf. You don't have to eat the ball to have a good time."

Author Unknown

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# ANGLING SAFETY IN BEAR COUNTRY



Bears are found throughout B.C., frequently near streams. Black bears and grizzlies have a keen sense of smell, which may attract them to freshly-caught fish, fish guts, spawning grounds and bait such as fish eggs. Here are some simple precautions to help you avoid bear encounters and conflicts:

**Clean your fish** a good distance away from camp.

**Dispose of fish guts** at the same location the fish was caught by puncturing the bladder and dropping in deep or rushing water, well away from heavily used shoreline areas. Avoid disposal in shallow water or where likely to wash up on the beach, bank or boat launch. Burial or burning is not recommended and please **do not place in garbage receptacles!**

**Remember not to wipe your hands** on your clothing after cleaning fish or handling fish or bait such as fish eggs.

**Bears can be drawn to many types of food** – not only fish and bait, but also groceries or garbage. Take precautions both while fishing and at your camp. Keep fish eggs in well-sealed and secure containers.

**Make your presence known** by talking loudly or making noise, particularly along streams and in areas where there is bear sign such as droppings, tracks, or claw or bite marks on trees.

**While fishing, if a bear approaches** within 50 m (or 100 m for a female with cubs), reel in your line or cut the line and leave the area immediately.

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