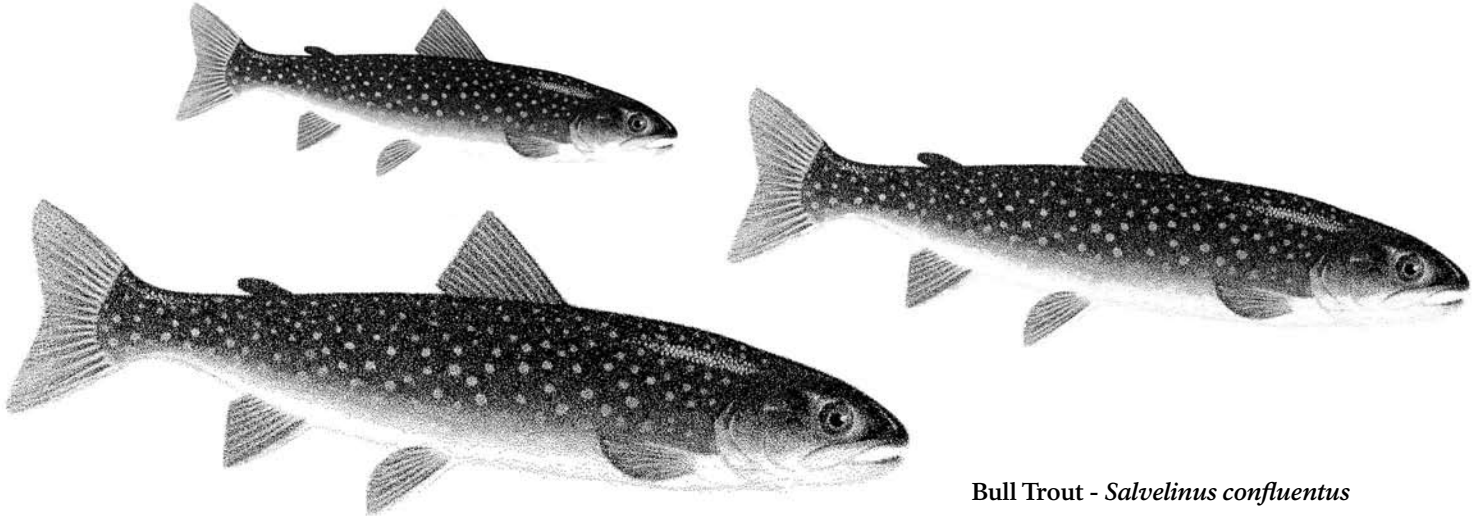




## Fishing Regulations 2008 - 2009



**Bull Trout - *Salvelinus confluentus***

Bull trout are a Federally listed Threatened Species. Fishing for bull trout is prohibited and any bull trout incidentally caught must be immediately released.

### Fishing in Glacier

The primary purpose of Glacier National Park is to preserve natural ecosystems for their aesthetic, educational, cultural, and scientific values. Through the management of fish and aquatic environments, the park hopes to encourage an appreciation for the preservation of native fishes in natural and mostly undisturbed aquatic habitats.

Fishing is permitted when consistent with preservation or restoration of natural aquatic environments. To fulfill these objectives, certain regulations, guidelines, and courtesies must be followed.

### Stocking and Native Fish

Many people wonder why the National Park Service no longer plants fish in park waters after this was done for many decades to enhance sport fishing. The reason is simple. The introduction of exotic game fishes was found to be detrimental to Glacier's native fishes. Predation and competition for space and food adversely affected several native species, and hybridization between indigenous and non-native species of fish also occurred. The native bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout have been all but eliminated from several lakes, where they were once the dominant species.

The National Park Service is currently engaged in fisheries research to determine the extent of damage to native fish populations, and to explore possible means for re-establishing native fishes in some waters where they have been eliminated or replaced by non-native species or hybrid populations. Paramount importance is attached to the goal of ensuring the future survival of Glacier National Park's unique native fishes for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

### Season and Possession Limits

The standard park fishing season for all waters in the park is from the third Saturday in May through November 30, with the following exceptions:

- Lake fishing open all year.
- Waterton Lake season, catch and possession limits are the same as set by Canada. Check Canadian regulations before fishing these waters.
- Lower Two Medicine Lake season, catch and possession limits are set by the Blackfeet Nation. Check Blackfeet Tribal regulations.
- When fishing from park lands along the North Fork of the Flathead River, park catch and possession limits, as well as other park fishing regulations are applicable, with the exception of state regulations pertaining to cutthroat trout.  
**Cutthroat trout caught in the North Fork and Middle Fork of the Flathead River must be released in accordance with state regulations.**
- When fishing from park lands or bridges along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, a Montana fishing license is required and state regulations are applicable.

Daily catch and possession limits will not exceed five fish, including no more than: two cutthroat trout, two burbot (ling), two northern pike, two mountain whitefish, five lake whitefish, five kokanee salmon, five brook trout, five grayling, five rainbow trout, five lake trout (mackinaw).

**EXCEPTIONS: NO limit on lake trout in park waters west of the Continental Divide, and NO limit on lake whitefish in Lake McDonald.**

#### Catch and release fishing:

Fish caught in the following waters must be handled carefully and released immediately back into the water. **No fish of any species may be in possession at any time.**

- Lower McDonald Creek, upstream from the Quarter Circle Bridge and extending into Lake McDonald for a radius of 100 feet.
- Fish caught in Hidden Lake and outlet must be released. Hidden Lake outlet creek and the area extending into Hidden Lake for a radius of 300 feet is closed to fishing during the cutthroat spawning season.

**No bull trout may be retained and any caught incidentally must be immediately released.**

**Fish Consumption Advisory: If you plan on keeping fish to eat, please check the fish consumption guidelines.**

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## Closed Waters

The following areas are closed to fishing:

- Kintla Creek between Kintla Lake and Upper Kintla Lake
- Upper Kintla Lake
- Bowman Creek above Bowman Lake
- Logging Creek between Logging Lake and Grace Lake
- Cracker Lake

- Slide Lake and the impounded pond below the lake
- The following creeks are closed for their entire length: Ole, Park, Muir, Coal, Nyack, Fish, Lee, Otatso, Boulder, and Kennedy Creeks.
- North Fork of the Belly River
- Hidden Lake outlet creek and the area extending into Hidden Lake for a radius of 300 feet is closed to fishing during the cutthroat spawning season.

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## Equipment and Bait

- Fishing is allowed by hook and line only; use of only one pole is permitted.
- The rod or line must be in the anglers immediate control at all times.
- Artificial lures and flies are strongly recommended.
- No bait, including insects and worms, may be collected inside the park.
- Do not deposit fish eggs, roe, food, or other substances in waters to attract fish.
- Fishing with nets, seines, traps, drugs, or explosives is prohibited.
- Snagging fish in park waters or from park lands is prohibited.
- The use of fish or fish parts, including non-preserved fish eggs, of any species is prohibited.

Lower McDonald Creek is restricted to the use of artificial flies or lures only.

### NOTE:

The use of all lead associated with fishing is prohibited within Glacier National Park. This includes weights, lures, jigs, line, etc. The only exception is a fisherman who is using a “down-rigger” may use cannon ball lead weights of 2 to 10 pounds on the down-rigger cable.

Alternatives to lead are nontoxic materials such as brass, steel, bismuth, and tungsten, available at major sporting goods stores.

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## Ice Fishing

- No motorized vehicles (snowmobiles, atv’s, autos) are allowed on any lake, river or stream.
- Power augers are prohibited on all lakes within Glacier National Park.
- Shelters, bait, and all fishing equipment may not be left unattended.
- No open fires are allowed. Self-contained stoves with fuel may be used.

- Undesignated camping is not allowed on lakes or lakeshores.
- Toilets should be used if available. Otherwise, human waste should not be disposed within 100 yards of any water source and all paper burned or packed out.

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## Cleaning Fish

- When cleaning fish, use garbage cans where available for entrail disposal.
- When cleaning fish in the backcountry, fish entrails must be disposed of by puncturing the air bladder and depositing the entrails into deep water at least

- 200 feet from the nearest campsite or trail. Do not bury or burn entrails, as they will attract bears.
- Consider “catch and release” fishing; otherwise, keep only enough fish for a meal. Be a clean fisherman! Leave nothing behind, except a few footprints.

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## Fishing Tips

The success of a fisherman depends on skill, lures used, weather conditions, time of year, whether a boat is used or not, and the body of water fished. Time of day can affect fishing success as well. Fish usually feed in the early morning and evening.

Waterfalls prevent fish from naturally reaching many streams and lakes. If you are going to fish, check before making a long hike.

Fish are on the bottom when the water is high and murky. During this time, they feed on materials dislodged from the bottom. Lures that imitate insect larvae are most successful. Later in the season, when streams are clear, flies are better. The best fly fishing is when a fisherman can match a local insect hatch.

Additional information on fishing in Glacier National Park is available at park bookstores or by calling the Glacier Natural History Association at 406-888-5756. Request the publication *Fishing Glacier National Park* (\$12.95).

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## Bears

Consider yourself lucky to see a black or grizzly bear. But remember...the wilderness is their home. Please be a well-mannered guest. Bears are usually shy; however, make no attempt to approach or startle them. They have been known to attack without warning. When hiking make some noise to alert them of your presence. Never offer food to bears and never get between a sow and cub. As bears have an excellent sense of smell, it is important to avoid the use of odorous food. Backcountry camping regulations require that food, cooking utensils, and

food containers be suspended from the designated food hanging device at all times, except mealtimes. If needed, when not in a designated campground, suspend food and cooking utensils at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet from any tree trunk. In the absence of trees, store food and cooking gear in approved bear resistant food containers. Never leave food unattended.

**Report all bear sightings to a ranger.**



Grizzly bear - Photo by Bob Chin



Black bear - NPS Photo