



Fishing Information and Regulations

Fishing is one of the most popular activities enjoyed in Rocky Mountain National Park. Sport fishing is permitted in balance with efforts to restore and perpetuate natural aquatic conditions. Since the 1970s, the park has worked to restore native cutthroat trout populations.

NPS photo by John Marino

Today's Fisheries

Populations of brown, brook, rainbow and cutthroat (Colorado River, greenback and Yellowstone) trout exist in the park. Suckers and sculpin also inhabit streams and lakes. Not all park lakes have reproducing populations of fish: cold water temperatures and lack of spawning habitat prevent reproduction in most high altitude lakes. Fishing success varies, even in waters known to contain fish.

Licenses and Fees

A valid Colorado fishing license is required to fish in Rocky Mountain National Park. No other permit is necessary; however, special park regulations exist. It is your responsibility to know and obey these regulations. Licenses and Habitat Stamps may be purchased from license agents at shops throughout the state, online at <http://wildlife.state.co.us/ShopDOW/AppsAndLicenses/Pages/totallicensing.aspx>, or by phone, 800-244-5613.

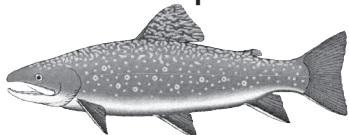
License	Resident	Non-Resident
Annual (16 years and older)	\$26.00*	\$56.00*
Combination Small Game & Fishing	\$41.00*	N/A Colorado residents only
Senior Annual (64 years and older)	\$1	N/A Colorado residents only
Five-Day	N/A	\$21.00*
One-Day <i>Purchasers of a one-day or additional-day license are exempt from a Habitat Stamp fee with the first two of these licenses. A habitat fee is assessed when a third license of this type is purchased.</i>	\$9.00	\$9.00

The Colorado fishing license year is April 1 – March 31.

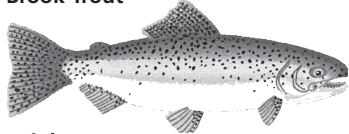
*Individuals over 18 and under 65 are required to purchase a \$10 Habitat Stamp with the first license purchase for the year.

A "Second Rod Stamp" is not honored in park waters.

Method of Capture



Brook Trout



Rainbow Trout



Colorado River Cutthroat Trout

- Each person shall use only one hand-held rod or line; a Second Rod Stamp is not honored in the park.
- Only artificial flies or lures with one (single, double or treble) hook with a common shank may be used for angling in park waters open to fishing. The park allows for fly fishers to utilize a two-hook system, where one hook is utilized as an attractant and is usually a nymph.

• "Artificial fly or lure" means devices made entirely of, or a combination of, materials such as wood, plastic, glass, hair, metal, feathers, or fiber, and designed to attract fish.

This definition does not include: (a) any hand moldable material designed to attract fish by the sense of taste or smell; (b) those devices less than one and one-half inches in length to which scents or small attractants have been externally applied; (c) molded plastic devices less than one and one-half inches in length; (d) foods; (e) traditional organic baits such as worms, grubs, crickets, leeches, minnows and fish eggs; or (f) manufactured baits such as imitation fish eggs, dough baits or stink baits.

• Barbless hooks must be used to protect and maintain the fish populations found in waters designated as catch-and-release.

• **The use of lead sinkers, or other lead fishing materials, is strongly discouraged.**

• Children 12 years of age and under may use worms or preserved fish eggs in all park waters open to fishing and not designated as catch-and-release areas.

• **No bait or worms are allowed in catch-and-release waters.**

Possession Limit

No person may have in their possession more than 18 trout, the combination of which must consist of one of the following:

• **18 brook trout (8 can be any size, but the remaining 10 must be 8 inches or less in size)**

• **16 brook trout (6 can be any size, but the remaining 10 must be 8 inches or less in size), plus 2 additional trout species 10 inches or more in size, which may include rainbow, brown, or cutthroat (other than greenback cutthroat)**

How to Measure Your Fish

Measure fish from the tip of its snout to the end of its tail.

Greenback Cutthroat Trout



All park areas are closed to the possession of greenback cutthroat trout, a Federal and State Threatened Species. As such, when taken, this species must be immediately returned to the water unharmed. In general, waters east of the Continental Divide contain greenback cutthroat, and western waters contain Colorado River cutthroat trout.

Catch-and-Keep Waters	Black Lake	Lake Haiyaha	Mills Lake	Sprague Lake
	Box Lake	Lake Nanita	Mirror Lake	Ten Lakes Park Lakes
	Fourth Lake	(outlet closed)	Peacock Pool	Thunder Lake
	Glass Lake	Lake Verna	Pettingell Lake	All creeks/ivers not
	Haynach Lake	Loch Vale	Poudre Lake	listed as Catch-and-
	Jewel Lake	Lone Pine Lake	Sky Pond	Release or Closed are
			Spirit Lake	catch-and-keep waters

Catch-and-Release Waters

The following waters support populations of greenback and Colorado River cutthroat trout and are open to catch-and-release fishing only. Barbless hooks must be used to protect and maintain the fish populations found in waters designated as catch-and-release.

Adams Lake	Hidden Valley	Odessa Lake
Arrowhead Lake	Creek and Beaver Ponds**	Ouzel Creek above Ouzel Falls**
Bench Lake & Ptarmigan Creek above War Dance Falls	Hutcheson Lakes	Ouzel Lake**
Big Crystal Lake	Lake Husted	Paradise Creek Drainage
Caddis Lake	Lake Louise	Pear Lake and Creek
Cony Creek above Calypso Cascades	Lawn Lake	Roaring River
Dream Lake	Lily Lake - south, west, north shores only (<i>the east shore, as designated by closure signs and extending 20 yards into the lake between the southeast corner of the lake and the northeast corner of the lake, is only open July 1-April 30</i>)	Sandbeach Lake and Creek
Fern Lake & Creek		Spruce Lake (<i>the east & southeast portions of the lake & adjacent wetlands are closed year-round as a Boreal Toad protection area</i>)
Fifth Lake		Timber Lake and Creek
Forest Canyon above The Pool		Upper Hague Creek
Gorge Lakes (Rock Lake & Little Rock Lake) and Gorge Stream (<i>from Arrowhead Lake to the confluence with the Big Thompson River</i>)	Loomis Lake	Upper Onahu Creek
	Lost Lake**	West Creek
	North Fork of the Big Thompson River above Lost Falls**	Ypsilon Creek
		Ypsilon Lake

**A possession limit of brook trout may be retained, but greenback cutthroat trout must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

Closed Waters

Bear Lake, including the inlet and outlet streams (extending 200 yards above and below Bear Lake)
 Hunters Creek
 Kettle Tarn
 Lake Nanita outlet downstream 100 yards
 Shadow Mountain Reservoir below the spillway and to the southern park boundary, including Columbine Bay, is closed from October 1 through December 31
 South Fork of the Cache la Poudre River above Pingree Park
 Upper Columbine Creek above 9,000' elevation, indicated by barrier structure on creek

How to Safely Release Your Catch

Ensure the fish doesn't suffer injury by quickly and carefully removing the hook, and returning the fish to the water. Using wet hands, or while the fish is in the water, use forceps or needle-nosed pliers to back the hook out the way it went in. Do

not wiggle the hook; if the hook is too deep, cut it off as close as possible and let it dissolve inside the fish's body. Gently return a trout to the water head-first, supporting its belly, and pointing upstream. Hang onto it until it starts to revive.

Rocky Mountain National Park Aquatic Disinfection Guidelines

Is this your first time fishing in Rocky Mountain National Park or your first time back after using your gear outside of the park? Are you moving within a drainage to sites that are more than 2.5 miles apart? Are you visiting a new drainage? If you answered YES to any of these questions, the park requests that you disinfect any gear that has had contact with water and/or soil to help control the spread of aquatic threats before entering the park waters and when moving between different lakes and streams.

Starting at the top of a drainage and working your way downstream is highly recommended, as aquatic threats are typically located in lower elevation areas. Don't transfer fish between waters, which can spread these threats. Don't dispose of fish entrails into any waters. **Use of felt wading soles is highly discouraged.**

To disinfect gear, follow these steps:
 1. Remove all mud, snails, algae, and additional debris from nets, boots, waders and other equipment before leaving a lake or stream.
 2. Wash all equipment and tools used to clean equipment with a 10% household bleach solution or a solution of 6 oz. Sparquat per gallon of water, and then soak the equipment in the solution for 10 minutes.
 3. Freeze gear overnight, or soak and agitate equipment for more than 10 minutes in a 1:1 solution of Formula 409 antibacterial household cleaner, or soak equipment for more than one minute in 120°F or warmer water; a dishwasher provides adequate heat.
 4. Dry gear in direct sunlight, at least 84°F, for four hours.
If you do nothing else, clean off your equipment, rinse in tap water, and follow Step 4.

Watercraft

Float tubes and other non-motorized watercraft are allowed on all lakes except Bear Lake; all vessels are prohibited on Bear Lake. The operation of motorized watercraft is prohibited on all park waters.

Ice Fishing

Ice fishing is allowed in the park except in designated Closed Waters. All fishing regulations apply. No mechanical equipment is allowed in designated wilderness, so hand augers only are permitted.

Volunteer Angler Report Cards

The park encourages return of Volunteer Angler Report cards. These cards help biologists monitor the health of fish populations throughout the park. Cards can be obtained online at <http://www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/fishing.htm>; or can be picked up and returned to any park visitor center, entrance station, campground, or the Backcountry Office; or returned by mail.