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This pamphlet is a summary of the applicable laws and regulations governing sport fishing in West Virginia. The West Virginia Code and the West Virginia Code of Rules contain the details of these laws and regulations. Both publications are available for review in the Director’s Office and Division of Natural Resources District Offices. Copies of the official regulations may be obtained from the West Virginia Secretary of State. Year-round fishing is in effect unless otherwise noted.

New for 2020

1. The Candy Darter was listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and regulations were passed to protect this small species of fish. If you fish in the Forks of the Greenbrier, Cranberry, Williams, Cherry, or Upper Gauley rivers, Glade Creek of Manns Creek, or Camp Creek, please see page 11 for more details.
2. Changes to walleye and sauger regulations were approved. If you fish on the Bluestone, Coal, Elk, Greenbrier, Gauley, Kanawha (upstream of Winfield Locks and Dam), New and Ohio rivers, please see page 8 for more details.
3. The daily creel limit for musky, tiger musky, northern pike and all pickerel is now one fish per day.
4. For striped bass, hybrid striped bass, and white bass, Beech Fork, Bluestone, and R. D. Bailey lakes were changed to a 15” minimum size limit, with a daily creel in aggregate of four fish.
5. A wanton waste law was established with penalties. See page 13 for details.



Jim Justice, Governor
 State of West Virginia

Stephen McDaniel, Director
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Landowner – Sportsmen Relations

West Virginia anglers are indebted to local landowners throughout the state. Without their consent and generosity, fishing would be restricted to state and federal lands. The opportunity for continued use of private property is largely dependent upon anglers’ attitudes and conduct. Most stream closures are the result of disrespect for private property.

Statement of Policy Relative to Public Use of Facilities

It is the policy of the Division of Natural Resources to provide its facilities, accommodations, services and programs to all persons. Complaints should be mailed to: Director, Division of Natural Resources, 324 Fourth Avenue, Room 341, South Charleston, WV 25303, or to the Office of Human Resources, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Hadley, MA 01035-9589. The Division of Natural Resources is an equal opportunity employer.