

WEST VIRGINIA
DNR

FISHING TOURNAMENTS AND BIG FISH CONTESTS

Section I. General

- 1.01** This agency will require permits for all fishing tournaments and big fish contests on all public waters within the State.
- 1.01.a** All open, club, and Catch-Photo-Release (CPR) tournaments, youth derbies and tournaments whether by boat, kayak, canoe, or from shoreline for all gamefish species will require permits and must meet all guidelines. A tournament is defined as any gathering of anglers where money, points, prizes, or other incentives are given out or awarded.
 - 1.01.b** All permits will be issued on a “first come, first served” basis. Applications not completed in their entirety will not be accepted.
 - 1.01.c** Multiple tournament applications (See Appendix 1 for official tournament application) for the same date and location may be approved if parking and facilities allow.
 - 1.01.d** Approximately 25% of the boat parking lot capacity will be reserved for public.
 - 1.01.e** The WV DNR reserves the right to close any public water for special events and irregular circumstance. (e.g. NH&FD’s, emergency, or unsafe conditions)
 - 1.01.f** Only 5 tournaments can be scheduled per application with a 2-week interval between successive applications from each applicant to allow for equitable use of all locations.
 - 1.01.g** Applications for the upcoming year will not be accepted until December 1st. All applications received prior to that date will be held and combined with the December 1st applications and randomly drawn for order of issue.
- 1.02** All permits issued for tournaments must meet the following guidelines.
- 1.02.a** Tournament directors shall maintain a list of their competitors with contact phone numbers in case of emergency.
 - 1.02.b** Dead or injured fish unable to swim away must not be released back into the waters after weigh-ins.
 - 1.02.c** Fish that are not released because they are dead must be reported as such in the data returned to the DNR Fish Management Section and disposed of in a legal manner. For more details, see [Wanton Waste Law](#).
 - 1.02.d** No tournaments with weigh-ins allowed on waters with No Harvest Regulations.
 - 1.02.e** No day-time tournaments will be permitted on Summersville Lake from Memorial Day until Labor Day.
 - 1.02.f** Permits for all other contests will be issued, providing that the contests do not adversely affect the resource and do not infringe upon non-contest anglers.
- 1.03** All tournaments with weigh-ins must meet the following fish handling requirements.

- 1.03.a** Tournament organizers conducting weigh-ins shall have appropriate equipment to handle, measure or weigh all fish brought to weigh-in. If using dip tanks or holding tanks, they must be properly aerated, and water treated with prophylactic salt treatments as detailed in this policy.
- 1.03.b** Any tournament using a holding tank for weigh-in must have a minimum 200-gallon tank. If holding capacity of tank is reached (1 pound of fish per gallon of water), fish must be released before adding additional fish to the holding tank.
- 1.03.c** All weigh-in tanks must use oxygen applied through micro-diffuser stones at a rate of 0.5 to 1.0 CFH as set on the flow meter. Example of acceptable diffuser stones can be found [here](#). Example of acceptable flow meter model FMR1 can be found [here](#).
- 1.03.d** Oxygen must be used continually beginning 30-minutes prior to weigh-in until 30-minutes prior to release of fish
- 1.03.e** Prophylactic salt treatments are required in all holding tanks. Examples of acceptable salt/water treatments include but are not limited to “**Better Bait**.”
- 1.03.f** Water temperature in holding tanks must be kept within 5 degrees Fahrenheit of the tournament lake/river water temperature. If the holding tank temperatures exceed this temperature requirement, then all fish must be returned to the water body immediately after weigh in.
- 1.03.g** If no holding tank is used, all fish must be transported to weigh-in and back to the water in weigh-in bags or larger, portable containers of water treated with prophylactic salts as outlined in this policy. Weigh-in bags and any other fish transport methods must contain enough treated fresh water to support the fish being released.
- 1.03.h** After tournament is completed, all equipment used to hold, measure or weigh, aerate, or transport the fish shall be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected to prevent transfer of disease and aquatic invasive species. An example of acceptable disinfectant treatments include but are not limited to “**Virkon**.”
- 1.04** All tournaments must collect and submit data.
- 1.04. a** All tournaments must thoroughly complete and submit reporting forms (See Appendix 2 for official data reporting form) for each tournament. Additionally, for tournaments that are held on multiple waterbodies concurrently on the same day(s), reporting forms must be completed and submitted for each waterbody separately. Youth derbies are exempt.
- 1.04. b** All reporting forms must be mailed or emailed to the DNR Fisheries Section no later than 30 days after the event. If completed reporting forms are not received, all future permit applications will be denied.
- Mail forms to:
WV Division of Natural Resources
Attn: Asst. Chief of Fish Management
324 4th Ave
South Charleston, WV 25303
or email to DNRFishTournament@wv.gov

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources Fishing Tournament Application

Please enter all information. Incomplete forms will not be processed.

Name of Applicant: _____

Tournament Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Day

Evening

Email _____

Is this your first request this year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Type of fish for which the tournament will be held: _____

This agency will require permits for all fishing tournaments and big fish contests on all public waters within the State.

Date

Ramp/Location

Time

Number of Boats Expected: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Please Note: Information from this application will be made available to the public.

Mail application to:

WV Division of Natural Resources

Wildlife Resources Section

324 4th Avenue, Rm. 306

South Charleston, WV 25303

Phone 304-558-2771 Fax 304-558-3147

DNRFishTournament@wv.gov

WV Division Of Natural Resources Tournament Report Form

This form must be returned within 30 days of your date - EVEN IF CANCELLED. Failure to do so will result in denial of future tournament requests and revocation of remaining tournament permits.

☐ Check here and complete Section 1 and submit form if cancelled.

Reason for cancellation: ☐ High Water ☐ Weather ☐ Other: _____

Only written application for tournaments will be accepted. No phone applications. Requests to change an approved tournament date must be made at least 5 days prior to the original date. We will accept changes by phone, but late requests will not be considered (Fish Management Office: 304-558-2771).

Instructions: Please complete the sections which apply to your tournament.

- Section 1 - all tournaments even if cancelled
- Section 2 - bass tournaments
- Section 3 - all other tournaments

Section 1

Date: _____ Location: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Organization: _____ Permit #: _____

No. Anglers: _____ No. Hours Fished: _____ No. Released Alive: _____ Water Temp: _____

Section 2

*Weight measured in (CHECK ONE):

☐ Pounds & ounces (ex. 3lbs 5oz) ☒ Hundredths of pound (ex. 2.31 lbs)

**For tournaments that record lengths only. Provide accumulated lengths in inches.

Total Bass over 12 inches			Lunker Bass			Number by Species		
Number Reported	Weight*	Inches**	Species	Weight*	Length	Largemouth	Smallmouth	Spotted

Section 3

Species	Total Number	Total Weight*	Total Length**	Heaviest Weight*	Longest Length
Blue Catfish					
Channel Catfish					
Flathead Catfish					
Musky					
Walleye					
Trout					

Return Report Form to:

WV Division of Natural Resources

Attn: Asst. Chief of Fish Management

324 4th Ave

South Charleston, WV 25303

or email to DNRFishTournament@wv.gov

Tournament Angler Expectations for Fish Handling

- Anglers should land fish and remove hooks quickly to minimize time out of water.
- Fish should be kept off the carpet and bottom of the boat if possible. This can injure the fish and will remove slime coat.
- Wet your hands, measuring boards, etc., before touching the fish.
- Livewells and personal weigh-in bags must be properly cleaned and disinfected before every tournament to prevent transfer of disease or aquatic invasive species.
- When fish are in livewells, the water pumps must run continually. When water temperatures are 75 degrees or more, recirculating pumps need to run continuously.
- Ice should be bagged and ready to put in livewells on hot days to maintain lower temperatures.
- Do not increase or decrease water temperatures more than 5 degrees from the tournament lake/river temperature.
- Livewell lids should be continuously vented or opened regularly throughout the day to allow gas exchange to occur.
- When handling larger fish, use two hands to support the fish horizontally to decrease the chance of injury.
- When nets are used, select net material that is made from rubber or nylon to protect the slime coat.
- Livewell capacity should not be less than 1-gallon of water for every pound of fish contained.
- During weigh-ins, anglers should leave fish in their livewells as long as possible. Do not keep fish in weigh-in bags for extended periods of time because fish can use all the dissolved oxygen in a filled bag in as little as 5 minutes. Use dip tanks provided by the tournament organizers whenever possible.
- Filled weigh-in bags should never be placed on hot surfaces, such as pavement due to the chance of increasing water temperature in the weigh-in bag and causing harm to the fish.