

Rocky Mountain

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Rocky Mountain National Park



Fishing



Rocky Mountain National Park permits sport fishing balanced with efforts to restore and perpetuate natural aquatic environments. This is general information only. A complete listing of regulations is available at park visitor centers and ranger stations.

Yesterday

Fishing was popular with early settlers and visitors in the Rocky Mountains. Many streams and lakes were stocked with non-native species of trout to improve the sport. Waters that had contained no sport fish were also stocked. Even the National Park Service stocked non-native trout as late as 1969. The only trout native to the park are

the greenback cutthroat and the Colorado River cutthroat.

Efforts to enhance recreational fishing in the park were reconsidered in the 1970s. Since that time, the park has focused on restoring native greenback cutthroat and Colorado River cutthroat trout to park waters.

Today's Fisheries

Populations of at least four species of trout exist in the park: brown, brook, rainbow, and cutthroat. Suckers and sculpin also inhabit streams and lakes. Only 48 of the 156 lakes in the park have reproducing populations of fish. Cold water

temperatures and lack of spawning habitat prevent reproduction in most high altitude lakes. Stocking is done only to restore and maintain native species. Fishing success at high altitudes varies even in waters known to contain fish.

Licenses & Fees

A valid Colorado fishing license is required to fish in Rocky Mountain National Park. No other permit is necessary; however, special regulations exist. It is your responsibility to know and obey these regulations.

	Resident	Non-Resident
Annual (16 years and older)	\$ 26.00	\$56.00
Senior Annual Fishing (64 years or older)	Free	Colorado Residents Only
Five-day license	N/A	\$21.00
One-day license	\$ 9.00	\$ 9.00

Habitat stamps (\$5) required for first two licenses of the year.
No license required the first full weekend in June.

Method of Capture

Each person shall use only one hand-held rod or line. A "second rod stamp" is not honored in park waters. Only artificial lures or flies with one (single, double, or treble) hook with a common shank may be used. "Artificial flies or lures" means devices made entirely of, or a combination of, materials such as wood, plastic, glass, hair, metal, feathers, or fiber, designed to attract fish. This does not include: (a) any hand moldable material designed to attract fish by the sense of taste or smell; (b) any device to which scents or smell attractants have been externally applied; (c) molded plastic devices less than one and one-half inch in

length; (d) foods; (e) traditional organic baits such as worms, grubs, crickets, leeches, minnows, and fish eggs; and (f) manufactured baits such as imitation fish eggs, dough baits, or stink baits. Fly fishers may utilize a two-hook system, where one hook is used as an attractant.

While in possession of any fishing equipment, bait for fishing (insects, fish eggs, minnows, or other organic matter) or worms is prohibited. Children 12 years of age or under, however, may use worms or preserved fish eggs in all park waters open to fishing except those designated as catch-and-release areas.

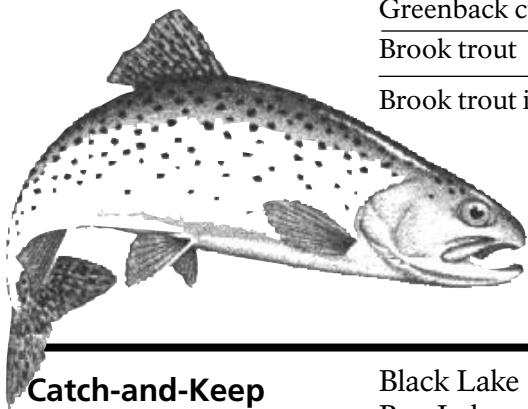
No bait or worms are allowed in catch-and-release waters.

Use of lead sinkers (or other lead fishing materials) is strongly discouraged.

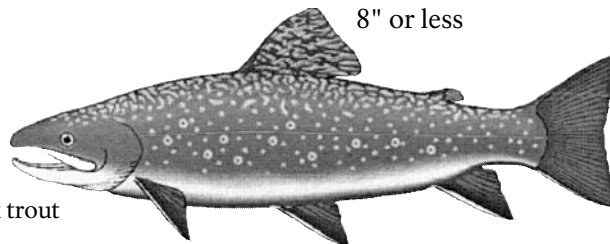
Possession Limit

Possession limit means the numbers, sizes, or species of fish, fresh or preserved, a person may have.

Species	Possession Limit	Length
Rainbow, brown, Colorado River cutthroat & non-native cutthroat	2	10" or more
Greenback cutthroat trout	0 (Catch-and-Release-Only)	
Brook trout	6 (8 if no other species are possessed)	any size
Brook trout in addition to above	10	8" or less



Colorado River cutthroat trout



brook trout

Catch-and-Keep
(lakes known to contain fish populations)

Black Lake	Lake Solitude	Poudre Lake
Box Lake	Lake Verna	Rock Lake
Fourth Lake	Little Rock Lake	Sky Pond
Haynach Lake	Loch Vale	Spirit Lake
Jewel Lake	Lone Pine Lake	Sprague Lake
Lake Haiyaha	Mills Lake	Ten Lakes Park Lakes
Lake Nanita (outlet closed)	Mirror Lake	Thunder Lake
Lake of Glass	Peacock Pool	Ypsilon Lake
	Pettingell Lake	

Closed Waters

Bear Lake , and its inlet and outlet streams, extending 200 yards up and down stream	Lake Nanita Outlet downstream 100 yards
Bench Lake and Ptarmigan Creek above War Dance Falls	South Fork Cache la Poudre River above Pingree Park
Hunters Creek above Wild Basin Ranger Station, as posted	Upper Columbine Creek above 9,000 feet elevation
	Lily Lake east shore from May 1 to June 30

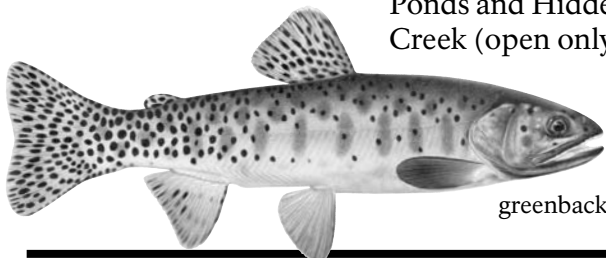
Catch-and-Release

Listed below are areas with restored native fish populations. They are open to catch-and-release fishing all year during daylight hours. Use barbless hooks only. Any and all fish species taken must be immediately returned to the water unharmed (except in areas designated with a #, where a legal limit of brook trout may be kept).

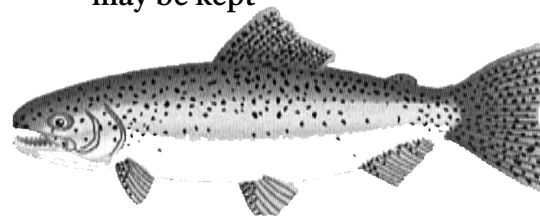
No bait is permitted by any age angler in catch-and-release areas.

Adams Lake **	Hutcheson Lakes*	Odessa Lake *
Arrowhead Lake*	Lake Husted *	Ouzel Creek (above falls #) *
Big Crystal Lake *	Lake Louise *	Ouzel Lake * #
Caddis Lake (Lower Fay Lake)*	Lawn Lake *	Paradise Creek drainage **
Cony Creek (above Calypso Cascades) *	Lily Lake (south, west & north shores; east shore open July 1 to April 30) *	Pear Lake and Creek *
Dream Lake *	Loomis Lake*	Roaring River *
Fern Lake and Creek*	Lost Lake*#	Sandbeach Lake and Creek *
Fifth Lake **	North Fork of the Big Thompson above Lost Falls *#	Spruce Lake *
Forest Canyon (above The Pool)*		Timber Lake and Creek **
Hidden Valley Beaver Ponds and Hidden Valley Creek (open only as posted) * #		West Creek*

*Greenback cutthroat trout
**Colorado River cutthroat
A legal limit of brook trout may be kept



greenback cutthroat trout



rainbow trout

Protect Fish and their Habitats

Park fish are vulnerable to several invasive organisms that can be carried on waders and other gear. Please disinfect gear before entering park waters and when moving between different lakes and streams.

First, remove mud, snails, algae, and additional debris from boots, waders and other equipment.

Then disinfect equipment using one of the following procedures:

- Freeze gear overnight; or
- Soak equipment for more than one minute in 120 degree water; or
- Allow equipment to air dry in warm, direct sunlight.