

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
2025–2026 New Mexico
FISHING
RULES & INFO

Trout, Bass, Catfish, Crappie, Perch, Pike, Salmon,
Sunfish, Tiger Muskie, Walleye



wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations

A Message from the Director



New Mexicans have enjoyed the opportunity to join friends and family in the great outdoors for generations, and there are few better ways to do so than to take a fishing trip to one of the state's treasured streams, rivers or lakes. We at the Department share in that passion, and have teamed with various partners to help improve these opportunities for generations to come, thanks to funds raised from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, fishing gear and habitat stamps.

Your contributions to conservation go far beyond just buying your license every year, however.

By “Recreating Responsibly,” you can help ensure that these outdoor opportunities are there for your children, their children and their children's children to enjoy well into the future. It can be something as simple as picking up any stray fishing line or hooks that you see or making sure you dispose of empty bait containers properly. This will keep wildlife from becoming entangled or wounded by these objects, helping preserve nature's delicate balance. Please keep “Breaking Bad Habits” by keeping litter and trash from harming the environment.

Staying on designated trails is also crucial. “Know Before You Go” and make sure you have all the necessary safety equipment before hopping on your off-highway vehicle to reach some of New Mexico's most remote waters.

By doing your part to keep New Mexico clean, you can help the Department achieve its goal of conserving New Mexico's wildlife for future generations. We thank you for your help and wish you the best of luck as you drop your lines in the water across our great state.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michael B. Sloane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael B. Sloane, Director – New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

New Mexico Fishing Rules and Information 2025–26 is published by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, One Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507 © 2025.

Cover: A juvenile Rio Grande cutthroat trout (RGCT) from the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish's Seven Springs Hatchery. (NMDGF photo: Eric Arce) The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish operates Seven Springs Hatchery for the production of RGCT for conservation and recreational purposes. Broodstock kept at Seven Springs are genetically pure RGCT sourced from populations throughout the state. These fish produce offspring used to establish and maintain wild RGCT populations throughout New Mexico.

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Our Mission

To conserve, regulate, propagate and protect the wildlife and fish within the state of New Mexico, using a flexible management system that ensures sustainable use for public food supply, recreation and safety—and to provide for off-highway motor vehicle recreation that recognizes cultural, historic and resource values while ensuring public safety.

New Mexico State Game Commissioners

Commissioner email addresses available online: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov>

- Richard Stump, Chair, Santa Fe
- Sharon Salazar Hickey, Vice Chair, Santa Fe
- Fernando Clemente, Jr., Sunland Park
- Gregg Fulfer, Jal
- Tirzio J. Lopez, Cebolla
- Dr. Sabrina Pack, Silver City

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

One Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507 **1-888-248-6866**
Michael B. Sloane, Director

Regional Offices

- Northwest Office:** 7816 Alamo Rd. NW, **505-222-4700**
Albuquerque, NM 87120
- Southwest Office:** 2715 Northrise Drive, **575-532-2100**
Las Cruces, NM 88011
- Northeast Office:** 215 York Canyon Road, **575-445-2311**
P.O. Box 1145, Raton, NM 87740
- Southeast Office:** 1615 West College Boulevard, **575-624-6135**
Roswell, NM 88201

Conservation Officer Contact Information

<https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/enforcement/law-enforcement-contact-information/>

Online Licenses, Applications and Harvest Reporting

<https://onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us>

Important Telephone Numbers

- General Information, License Sales and Harvest Reporting **1-888-248-6866**
- Bear and Cougar Zone Closure and Harvest Hotline **1-877-950-5466**
- Hunter Education Program Information **505-222-4731**
- Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Information **505-222-4728**
- Operation Game Thief (OGT)** **1-800-432-4263**
- 24-hour Depredation Hotline **1-888-727-4883**

This booklet is only a summary of the laws and rules for fishing in New Mexico. For a complete and specific list of the laws and rules that govern hunting, fishing, trapping and other outdoor activities, view the appropriate statutes in Chapter 17, Chapter 30 and Chapter 66 NMSA 1978 and rules in 19.30.1 through 19.36.3 NMAC.

Important Reminders

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

IN MARCH 2022, the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled that the Landowner Certification of Non-Navigable Water Rule (19.31.22 NMAC) was unconstitutional. By means of this Court order, all watercourses in the state, that can be legally accessed, are open for public recreational use. Public recreationists are reminded that private property damage remains illegal.

See page 8 for information on criminal trespass.

BUY A LICENSE ONLINE, BY TELEPHONE OR AT LICENSE VENDORS:

Licenses and stamps can be purchased online: onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us beginning March 24, 2025. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) Information Center is open Monday–Friday from 8 a.m.–5 p.m., except holidays, to answer questions and sell licenses: **1-888-248-6866**. Licenses and stamps also may be purchased at local vendors or any NMDGF office.

IT'S ILLEGAL TO POSSESS, TRANSPORT AND STOCK LIVE GAME FISH:

It is illegal to possess, transport or stock live game fish into any water (except in the water where legally caught) without a permit from the NMDGF.

See page 6

BAITFISH RULES: Baitfish species approved by drainage. Shad added as approved baitfish species in the Pecos River drainage.

See page 7

NEW MEXICO TROUT AND BASS

CHALLENGE: Catch the five species of trout to complete the New Mexico Trout Challenge or four species of bass to complete the New Mexico Bass Challenge. For more information go to <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/fishing/fishing-challenges/>

KOKANEESALMON SNAGGING: New kokanee snagging season dates at Heron Lake and Willow Creek, Nov. 11 — Dec. 31. Abiquiu Lake closed to kokanee snagging.

See page 15

Special Trout Waters

Designations for Special Trout Waters are easy to identify. Signs are posted at each location with bag limits and tackle restrictions for Red Chile Water, Green Chile Water and Xmas Chile Water.

See page 16-19

What's New

FREE FISHING WEEKENDS

JUNE 7-8: New Mexico Free Fishing Day. No license required (all other fishing rules apply).

SEPTEMBER 27-28: National Hunting and Fishing Day. No license required (all other fishing rules apply).

TROT LINES: Waters open to trotlines defined by river drainage.

See page 25

WALLEYE AND SMALLMOUTH LENGTH

LIMITS: No length limit on walleye statewide. No length limit on smallmouth bass in the upper Rio Grande mainstream within Rio Arriba and Taos Counties.

See page 26

CABALLO LAKE: Hybrid striped bass (wipers) have been stocked into Caballo Lake. Bag and possession limits for hybrid striped bass are the same as white bass.

See page 26

NEW SPECIAL SUMMER CATFISH WATERS:

Harris Pond and Trees Lake added as Summer Catfish Waters.

See page 27

AGE-RESTRICTED WATERS: Age-restricted waters categorized into three new categories.

Estancia Pond now open to all anglers. New youth fishing opportunity at Rock Lake Hatchery Ponds and Alto Kid's Pond.

See page 33

Boating Regulations and Registration

BASIC BOATING REGULATIONS:

<https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/spd/activities/boating-2/> or call: **1-888-667-2757**.

BOATER REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

www.mvd.newmexico.gov or call: **1-888-683-4636**.

See page 34

License Fees

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Licenses, stamps and validations may be purchased online:

<https://onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us>, by phone: **1-888-248-6866**, and over the counter at any license vendor or New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) office.

License Type	Resident	Nonresident
Annual Fishing	\$25.00	\$56.00
One-Day Fishing	\$12.00	\$12.00
Five-Day Fishing	\$24.00	\$24.00
Junior Annual Fishing (age 12–17)	\$5.00	\$15.00
Senior Annual Fishing (age 65–69)	\$8.00	NA
70 Years and Older Annual Fishing	\$0.00	NA
A free license is available to New Mexico residents only and does not require a Habitat Stamp, Habitat Management and Access Validation or Second Rod Validation. If obtained at a license vendor, a \$1 vendor fee may apply.		
Handicapped Annual Fishing	\$8.00	NA
Second Rod Validation	\$4.00	\$4.00
Game-Hunting and Fishing Squirrel, game birds (other than turkey) and fishing	\$30.00	NA
Junior Game-Hunting and Fishing Squirrel and game birds (other than turkey) and fishing	\$15.00	NA
Senior and Handicapped Game-Hunting and Fishing	\$20.00	NA
Disabled Veteran Game-Hunting and Fishing	\$10.00	NA
Habitat Stamp Mandatory on all U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management properties.	\$10.00	\$10.00
Habitat Management and Access Validation (HMAV)	\$4.00	\$4.00
Not required for individuals 17 years of age and younger or in conjunction with any free fishing license or privilege (page 3). HMAV does not replace the Habitat Stamp.		
Gila Trout Fishing Permit	\$0.00	\$0.00
Required for select locations only. Page 4.		
Free Foster Family Fishing License	\$0.00	\$0.00
Free annual fishing license is available in person at NMDGF offices for foster parents and children in their custody, young adults enrolled in the Fostering Connections program, and children in C.Y.F.D or tribal custody. Proof of eligibility must be provided.		
OTC License Reprint (if license is lost or destroyed)	\$0.00	\$0.00

If obtained at a license vendor, a \$1 vendor fee may apply.

► A vendor fee of \$1 per transaction applies for all purchases.

NA = Not Available.

License Information

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Licenses, Stamps and Validations:

While fishing in New Mexico, anglers 12 years and older must possess a valid New Mexico Fishing License or Game-Hunting and Fishing License. Licenses are valid April 1 through March 31 of the following year. A New Mexico Fishing License is not required on tribal reservations and Class-A lakes.

Licenses are not required for resident and nonresident anglers 11 years of age or younger.

Junior Fishing Licenses are available to resident and nonresident anglers 12–17 years of age.

Senior Fishing Licenses are available to New Mexico resident anglers 65–69 years of age.

Free Fishing Licenses for New Mexico residents 70 years and older are available online, by phone and at license vendors and all NMDGF offices. Free fishing licenses are not available to nonresidents. Free licenses for 100%-disabled resident veterans (page 4) are available by application through the NMDGF Headquarters in Santa Fe, NM (page iv). Free fishing licenses do not require a Habitat Stamp, Habitat Management and Access Validation or a Second Rod Validation. Foster Family fishing licenses are available only through NMDGF offices (page 2).

Handicapped Fishing Licenses are available to New Mexico residents with a permanent disability in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Applicants must have one or more disabilities that substantially limit major life activities. Handicapped fishing licenses require a Habitat Stamp, if applicable, and Habitat Management and Access Validation.

Habitat Management and Access Validation (HMAV)

In addition to a New Mexico Fishing License or Game-Hunting and Fishing License, once each license year (April 1–March 31) anglers must purchase a Habitat Management and Access Validation. The HMAV is not required for anglers 17 years of age or younger, or in conjunction with any free fishing license. The HMAV will automatically be added to the shopping cart with your first purchase of a fishing, hunting or trapping license for persons 18 years of age and older.

Habitat Stamp

To fish on U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in New Mexico, anglers 12 years of age and older must purchase a Habitat Stamp. Stamps are valid for one license year (April 1–March 31). This stamp is not required for anglers 11 years of age or younger or in conjunction with any free fishing license. Funds from the sale of the Habitat Stamp are used for improvement projects, including building fish cover, removing sediment from reservoirs and ponds, monitoring and improving water quality, preventing erosion and restoring lakes and trout streams.

Second Rod Validation

To fish with two rods, anglers 12 years of age and older must purchase a Second Rod Validation. This validation is not required in conjunction with any free fishing license. All other license regulations, such as bag and possession limits, remain the same. Three rods cannot be used at anytime.

License Information

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Gila Trout Fishing Permit (Free)

A Gila Trout Fishing Permit is required to fish Black Canyon, Gilita Creek, Mineral Creek, Mogollon Creek, Sapillo Creek, West Fork Gila River (headwaters to East Fork confluence), Whitewater Creek and Willow Creek (including tributaries). This permit is free and available online: <https://onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us/>, by phone, and at all license vendors and NMDGF offices. **Please do not obtain this permit unless planning to fish in one of the waters listed above.**

New Mexico Residency Requirements

To qualify for New Mexico resident fees, an individual must meet one of the following criteria.

1. A United States citizen who has been domiciled in New Mexico for a period of not less than 90 days immediately preceding the date of application for a license and who does not claim residency elsewhere for any purpose. Temporary or seasonal residents, who maintain a primary residence outside of New Mexico, do not qualify for resident licenses.
2. A citizen of another country who is legally in the United States and can verify residence in New Mexico for 90 days immediately preceding his/her license application.
3. A student who has attended an educational institution in New Mexico while residing in the state for at least one full term preceding the application for a license. Students also must present a certificate or letter from the institution verifying their enrollment and attendance.
4. A member of the U.S. Armed Forces who is assigned permanently to a military installation located within New Mexico and who presents with his/her application a certificate or letter that verifies the military assignment and is signed by the commanding officer. The spouse or dependent of such person, living within the same household and similarly certified by the person's commanding officer may also purchase resident licenses.

Military and Veteran Licenses

50% Discount for Resident Active Military and Veterans

50% discounts on all licenses, permits and stamps are available to New Mexico residents who are active duty military or veterans. The discount may be claimed by applying for or purchasing any license, permit or stamp online, by telephone or at any license vendor. Residents claiming this discount must be able to provide proof of active duty military or veteran status upon request. **Discount does not apply to:** license vendor fees or the Resident Disabled Veteran Game-Hunting and Fishing license. For specific eligibility requirements, see Glossary, pages 44–46 or visit wildlife.dgf.nm.gov.

Free License for 100% Disabled Veteran New Mexico Residents

New Mexico residents who are 100% disabled veterans of the armed services are eligible for a free lifetime Game-Hunting and Fishing License. Disabled veterans may apply to NMDGF for a Disabled Veteran card, which allows the holder to fish, hunt small game and obtain a free deer hunting license. Card holders do not need to buy or possess a Habitat Stamp when fishing.

Disabled Veteran Game-Hunting and Fishing License

Residents who are disabled veterans of the armed services, but do not meet the 100%-disabled qualification, are eligible for a \$10 Game-Hunting and Fishing License. Disabled Veteran Game-Hunting and Fishing Licenses are available online: <https://onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us/>, at local vendors and NMDGF offices and by telephone. A Habitat Management and Access Validation and Habitat Stamp, if applicable (page 3), are required with the Disabled Veteran Game-Hunting and Fishing License.

Military Rehabilitation Fishing License

Members or veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces in rehabilitation programs that include the learning and practice of fishing skills are eligible for free fishing licenses. The rehabilitation program must be sponsored by the federal government or a nonprofit organization authorized by the federal government and it must be under the direction of a military or federal Veteran's Administration rehabilitation center. The Habitat Management and Access Validation and the Habitat Stamp are not required.

Fishing Licenses Nonrefundable

All New Mexico fishing licenses are nonrefundable. For more information, telephone the NMDGF Information Center toll-free: **1-888-248-6866**.

License Information Is Public Record

Pursuant to the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act, Sections 14-2-1 et. seq. NMSA 1978, all information provided when applying for licenses and permits is public record and must be disclosed to anyone when properly requested except as provided by law.

Parental Responsibility Act

The Parental Responsibility Act requires the New Mexico State Game Commission to revoke the recreational and professional licenses of anyone who does not comply with court-ordered child support obligations. The purpose is to discourage parental neglect of children. Hunting and fishing privileges are suspended until failure to pay court-ordered child support has been corrected and a \$25 reinstatement fee has been paid. For more information, telephone NMDGF Field Operations: **505-476-8065** or toll-free: **1-888-248-6866**.

Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program

Boaters and anglers make fish and wildlife conservation possible. Their purchases of licenses, sporting equipment and fuels provide funds essential to sport fish and wildlife management. Through the US Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish and Wildlife Conservation Investment Office, excise taxes for fishing equipment, motorboat fuel, sporting arms and archery equipment support important projects, including native trout restoration, boat facility maintenance, fish hatchery operations, lake renovations, waterfowl-habitat maintenance and much more.



General Regulations

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

It is illegal to:

- Pollute streams, lakes, banks and other waters.
- Fish, hunt or trap on private land without possessing valid written permission from the landowner.
- Fish without possessing a license if 12 years of age or older.
- Use a license that has been issued to another person.
- Fish with more than one rod without a Second Rod Validation if 12 years of age or older or fish with more than two rods at any time.
- Sell, offer for sale, or purchase game fish or parts.
- Possess game fish without a valid license, possession (donation) certificate or other evidence the fish were legally taken (Possession Certificate, page 41).
- Stock fish or fish eggs in any waters without a permit from NMDGF.
- Import live fish or fish eggs into New Mexico without a permit from NMDGF.
- Possess or transport any live game fish away from the water where they were caught.
- Take game fish by net, seine, trap, grappling or other means not permitted by regulations.
- Use mechanical or electrical devices capable of catching or killing game fish, except as permitted by regulation.
- Take game fish by snagging, except kokanee salmon during Special Kokanee Snagging Season.
- Fish with more than two flies on a single line when fishing the Special Trout Water of the San Juan River (page 17).
- Fail to return and release immediately all threatened and endangered species of fish, except Gila trout, in waters where designated (pages 16–19).
- Disturb the bottom to attract fish in Special Trout Water.
- Leave a fire unattended or improperly handle fire.

Further information and complete Laws of New Mexico for hunting and fishing are available online: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/enforcement/>

Bow Fishing and Spearfishing

Bow fishing and spearfishing are legal means of take for game fish species in lakes and reservoirs open to angling. Bag and size limits for bow fishing and spearfishing are the same as angling. Bow fishing and spearfishing for game fish are not allowed in any river, stream, Special Trout Water or Trophy Bass Water (for largemouth bass). Unprotected fish species, such as common carp, may be taken by bowfishing and spearfishing in all waters open to angling. Arrows for bow fishing must be attached by a line, string or rope to enable retrieval of fish. Crossbows can be used for bow fishing. Legal means of take for spearfishing include spears, arrows with barbs and gigs. Spears can be discharged above or below the water surface. Local ordinances and/or prohibitions may apply at specific locations or waters, and the local managing agency should be contacted prior to bow fishing or spearfishing. Snorkelers and SCUBA divers should consult New Mexico State Park regulations prior to spearfishing.

Possessing, Transporting and Stocking Live Game Fish

Each year, NMDGF expends considerable time and resources to control and eradicate unwanted fish and Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Rules have been adopted to address the spread of unwanted fish species.

It is illegal to release any live fish into any water in New Mexico without a permit issued by NMDGF (except fish caught legally in the same waterbody). It is also illegal to possess or transport any live game fish away from the water where caught.

It is the responsibility of the angler to be certain that all fish harvested and taken home are dead before leaving the fishing water area. Please help us protect your aquatic resources by stopping the spread of unwanted fish species.

Bait and Baitfish

Possession of and use of any baitfish while fishing is illegal, except as defined below. Baitfish may not be used in Special Trout Waters, Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge or Bottomless Lakes State Park. Bluegills and sunfish (genus *Lepomis*) taken legally by angling may be used as live or dead bait in the water where taken.

Commercially packaged and processed dead fish are not considered baitfish and are approved for use in all waters where the use of bait is legal. Roe, viscera and eyes of game fish taken legally may be used in all waters where the use of bait is legal. Chumming is allowed in all waters, except Special Trout Waters. Goldfish or bullfrogs (including larval stages, i.e. tadpoles) may not be used as live or dead bait in any waters. Salamander larva (waterdogs) may be used in all waters where the use of bait is legal.

Live and dead baitfish use exceptions

Live and/or dead baitfish are approved for the drainages and waters listed in the table below. This includes all waters (for locations in table only) where the use of bait is legal.

Approved live and/or dead baitfish locations

Rio Grande Drainage	Fathead minnow, red shiner and shad
Elephant Butte and Caballo reservoirs	Fathead minnow, red shiner, shad and golden shiner
Canadian River Drainage	Fathead minnow, red shiner, white sucker and shad
San Juan River Drainage	Fathead minnow and red shiner
Gila River and San Francisco River Drainages	Fathead minnow only
Pecos River Drainage (excluding Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge and Bottomless Lakes State Park)	Fathead minnow, red shiner and shad

Approved dead-only baitfish (cutbait) locations

Statewide	Common carp
Heron Reservoir	White sucker

Taking Baitfish (minnows)

Baitfish may only be taken for personal use and only by anglers who are currently licensed or 11 years of age or younger. Permitted methods for taking minnows include: angling, dip nets, cast nets, traps and seines. Seines may not be longer than 20 feet, and the mesh size may not be larger than 3/8-inch square. All protected species of fish (including endangered and threatened species) taken with seines, nets and traps must immediately be returned to the water.

Criminal Trespass

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Criminal Trespass 30-14-1 NMSA 1978

- A. Criminal trespass consists of knowingly entering or remaining upon posted private property without possessing written permission from the owner or person in control of the land. The provisions of this subsection do not apply if: 1). the owner or person in control of the land has entered into an agreement with the Department of Game and Fish granting access to the land to the general public for the purpose of taking any game animals, birds or fish by hunting or fishing; or 2). a person is in possession of a landowner license given to him by the owner or person in control of the land that grants access to that particular private land for the purpose of taking any game animals, birds or fish by hunting or fishing.
- B. Criminal trespass also consists of knowingly entering or remaining upon the unposted lands of another, knowing that such consent to enter or remain is denied or withdrawn by the owner or occupant thereof. Notice of no consent to enter shall be deemed sufficient notice to the public and evidence to the courts, by the posting of the property at all vehicular access entry ways.
- C. Criminal trespass also consists of knowingly entering or remaining upon lands owned, operated or controlled by the state or any of its political subdivisions, knowing that consent to enter or remain is denied or withdrawn by the custodian thereof.
- D. Any person who enters upon the lands of another without prior permission and injures, damages or destroys any part of the realty or its improvements, including buildings, structures, trees, shrubs or other natural features, is guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be liable to the owner, lessee or person in lawful possession for civil damages in an amount equal to double the value of the damage to the property injured or destroyed.
- E. Whoever commits criminal trespass is guilty of a misdemeanor. Additionally, any person who violates the provisions of Subsection A, B or C of this section, when in connection with hunting, fishing or trapping activity, shall have their hunting or fishing license revoked by the state game commission for a period of not less than three years, pursuant to the provisions of Section 17-3-34 NMSA 1978.
- F. Whoever knowingly removes, tampers with or destroys any "no trespass" sign is guilty of a petty misdemeanor; except when the damage to the sign amounts to more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be subject to imprisonment in the county jail for a definite term less than one year or a fine not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or to both such imprisonment and fine in the discretion of the judge.

Posting Requirements for Trespass 30-14-6 NMSA 1978

- A. The owner, lessee or person lawfully in possession of real property in New Mexico, except property owned by the state or federal government, desiring to prevent trespass or entry onto the real property shall post notices parallel to and along the exterior boundaries of the property to be posted, at each roadway or other way of access in conspicuous places, and if the property is not fenced, such notices shall be posted every five hundred feet along the exterior boundaries of such land.
- B. The notices posted shall prohibit all persons from trespassing or entering upon the property, without permission of the owner, lessee, person in lawful possession or his agent. The notices shall: 1). be printed legibly in English; 2). be at least one hundred forty-four square inches in size; 3). contain the name and address of the person under whose authority the property is posted or the name and address of the person who is authorized to grant permission to enter the property; 4). be placed at each roadway or apparent way of access onto the property, in addition to the posting of the boundaries; and 5). where applicable, state any specific prohibition that the posting is directed against, such as "no trespassing," "no hunting," "no fishing," "no digging" or any other specific prohibition.
- C. Any person who posts public lands contrary to state or federal law or regulation is guilty of a petty misdemeanor.

Operation Game Thief

wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/enforcement/operation-game-thief-overview/

What is poaching? Poaching is any illegal act relating to the taking of fish or wildlife. It can be as simple as using bait in a Red Chile Water or as egregious as killing an endangered species. Game wardens depend on honest, ethical people like you to report any suspected illegal activity as soon as you can.



Who should be reported? Any activity you believe or suspect is illegal that relates to fish or wildlife can be reported to Operation Game Thief (OGT), and all crimes will be investigated. Many cases are solved each year because someone cared enough about wildlife and ethical fishing, hunting or trapping to report something they didn't think was right. Most of these cases would never have been solved, if someone hadn't cared enough to report them.

Who reports poaching? Nearly all poaching is reported by other hunters, anglers or trappers, though everyone enjoying New Mexico's outdoors is encouraged to report suspicious activity.

What is Operation Game Thief? OGT is a reporting hotline to help stop poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking. OGT is funded strictly through donations from individuals and organizations (not from tax or license dollars). To contribute a tax-deductible donation please call **1-800-432-4263**. Rewards of up to \$750 are paid for information leading to the arrest of poachers. OGT's toll-free hotline, **1-800-432-4263**, is available 24-7-365. You can remain anonymous, and every call or report will be investigated. Violations can also be reported online at: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/enforcement/operation-game-thief-overview/>

Open Gate Program

<https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/hunting/maps/open-gate-program/>

More Places to Fish and Hunt

Open Gate is a voluntary access program available to landowners statewide. It provides sportsmen/women more places to fish and hunt.

Fishing and hunting is only allowed on leased lands during the seasons and dates that the landowner specifies in his/her lease agreement. Information and locations of Open Gate leases can be found online: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/hunting/maps/open-gate-program/>. Some properties may have special rules for certain activities. These rules will be posted on the property. It is the responsibility of the sportsman/woman to know and obey posted rules. Citations can be issued for violation of any rules or regulations.



Landowners Can Earn Extra Cash

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is interested in leasing more lands with good habitat for fishing or hunting. Landowners can sign an agreement with NMDGF and receive a per-acre payment. Under some circumstances, NMDGF will pay for right-of-way across the property of a landowner, so anglers and hunters can access larger tracts of State Trust and Federal lands. The State of New Mexico provides liability protection to landowners who participate. Funding for Open Gate is provided from a portion of annual Habitat Management and Access Validation sales. To learn more about the Open Gate program, visit: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/hunting/maps/open-gate-program/> or by phone: **505-476-8043**.

Cold Water Game Fish

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Rainbow Trout

N.M. Record: March 13 '99, Santa Cruz Lake

Weight: 31 lb., 12-1/2 oz.

Length: 33-1/2" Girth: 24-1/4"

Numerous black spots on a light body

Pink streak along sides



Brown Trout

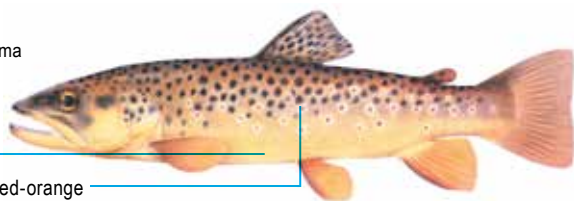
N.M. Record: July 9 '46, Rio Chama

Weight: 20 lb., 4 oz.

Length: 34-1/2" Girth: 21"

Abdomen usually yellow

Large black spots and smaller red-orange spots with halos on sides



Brook Trout

N.M. Record: September 23 '96, Hidden Lake / Simms

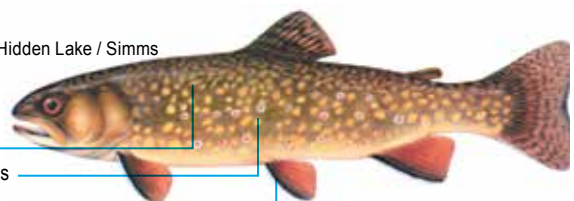
Weight: 5 lb., 0 oz.

Length: 21" Girth: 14-1/2"

Light wavy lines on back

Yellow spots and small red spots with halos on sides

White edge on front of lower fins



Lake Trout

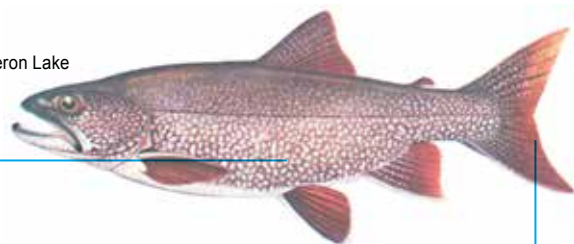
N.M. Record: February 24 '99, Heron Lake

Weight: 31 lb., 6 oz.

Length: 41-1/2" Girth: 26"

Light to dark green with white, irregular spots on head, body, and most of tail

Indented tail fin



Life-size reproductions of New Mexico's record game fish are on public display at the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish headquarters in Santa Fe.

Cutthroat Trout

N.M. Record: June 27 '81, Latir Lakes

Weight: 10 lb., 2 oz., Length: 24-5/8" Girth: 18-1/2"

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout (Native, state fish)

Large, dark irregular spots
Red slash mark below jaw



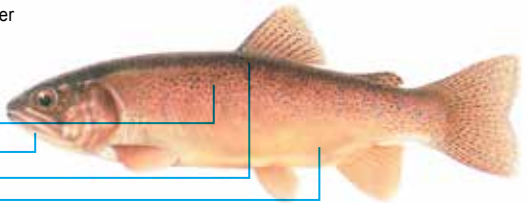
Gila Trout (Native)

N.M. Record: November 23 '07, Gila River

Weight: 4 lb., 8 oz.

Length: 20" Girth: 13-3/4"

Small black spots
Yellow slash mark below jaw
Dark olive-green along back
Golden-yellow belly



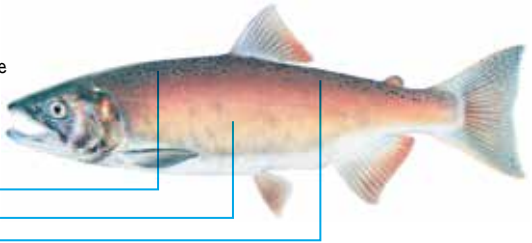
Kokanee Salmon

N.M. Record: July 1 '21, Eagle Nest Lake

Weight: 5 lb., 0 oz.

Length: 22" Girth: 12 5/8"

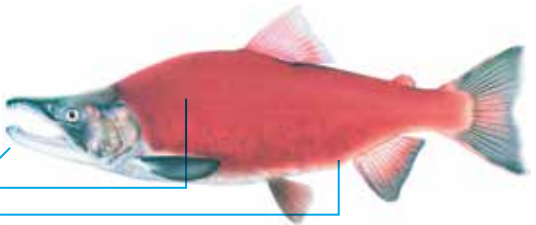
Female and non-spawning male:
Blue-green along back
Silvery sides
Few spots



Kokanee Salmon

Spawning Male:

Long snout
Arched back
Sides turn pink-red to orange



Cold Water Game Fish

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Where To Find Cold Water Species

Rainbow Trout

NMDGF stocks rainbow trout in a variety of waters to provide angling opportunities. The Albuquerque area drains and Tingley Beach are stocked weekly during the winter months. The Red River, San Juan River and Fenton Lake, as well as Monastery Lake, provide great opportunities for rainbow trout.

Brown Trout

Numerous wild populations of brown trout occur throughout New Mexico. The Rio Grande Gorge supports a thriving population of brown trout in a wild setting. Other waters include the Pecos River, San Juan River, Rio Guadalupe in the Jemez and the Cimarron River below Eagle Nest Dam.

Gila Trout

A number of streams in southwest New Mexico are open to Gila trout angling. Whitewater Creek at the Catwalk Recreation Area near Glenwood is easily accessible and an excellent location to spend a day fishing for native Gila Trout. For anglers ready to hike, Mineral Creek near the town of Mogollon, Mogollon Creek in the mainstem Gila watershed, and upper Whitewater Creek provide opportunities to catch a wild Gila trout while enjoying beautiful scenery. Gila trout are also stocked in Sapillo Creek below the Highway 15 bridge and in the Gila Forks area during cooler months of the year.

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

Anglers can pursue native Rio Grande cutthroat trout in many of New Mexico's streams, rivers and lakes. Streams including Comanche Creek and Rio Costilla in the Valle Vidal, Jack's Creek in the Pecos watershed, and Alamitos Creek in the Rio Pueblo watershed are easily accessible from roads. For the adventurous angler, hiking up the Rio de las Vacas, El Rito or the upper Pecos watershed provides great fishing in some of the most beautiful landscapes in New Mexico. Rio Grande cutthroat trout are also stocked in the state's high mountain lakes, such as the Trampas Lakes and Horseshoe Lake, and in rivers including the Rio Grande and Rio Chama.

Kokanee

Navajo lake provides great opportunities for kokanee trolling. Eagle Nest and Heron lakes are also stocked with kokanee. In the fall kokanee snagging is a popular activity at these waters.

Brook Trout

Brook trout are uncommon in New Mexico. Most brook trout populations occur in smaller and more difficult to access streams around the state. Cabresto Creek above Questa is an easily accessible place to catch brook trout. Brook trout may also be found at Cabresto Lake, Hopewell and Cruces Basin Wilderness.

Lake Trout

In the 1980s, lake trout were introduced at Heron Lake. Since that time, a self-sustaining population has become well established. Fishing is best during spring and fall months.

Cold Water Regulations

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

General Information

In New Mexico cold water species include trout and salmon. Catchable-size trout that have been reared at hatcheries are stocked in more heavily fished waters. Smaller trout and salmon are stocked where waters can better support their growth. Some waters suit native Rio Grande cutthroat trout populations, while other waters are better suited for naturally reproducing non-native brown trout, and still others that may be too warm during summer are cool enough in winter to be stocked with hatchery-raised rainbow trout.

License Information (pages 2–5)

Baitfish

Rules and regulations for bait and baitfish are listed on page 7.

Free Gila Trout Fishing Permit (page 4)

Gila Trout Permit Waters: A Gila Trout Fishing Permit is required to fish Black Canyon, Gilita Creek, Mineral Creek, Mogollon Creek, Sapillo Creek, West Fork Gila River (headwaters to East Fork confluence), Whitewater Creek and Willow Creek (including tributaries). This permit is free and available online:

wildlife.dgf.nm.gov, by phone: **1-888-248-6866** and at all license vendors and NMDGF offices. **Please do not obtain this permit unless planning to fish in one of the waters listed above.**

Help Stop the Spread of AIS and Fish Diseases

Clean, Drain and Dry

Cleaning, draining and drying are the most effective methods to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and fish health diseases.

Clean: Remove all plants, mud and biological material using a stiff bristled brush until clean.

Drain: Drain all water from equipment.

Dry: Air and sun dry all equipment.

If feasible, have a second set of equipment to alternate between uses.

More information about how to stop the spread of whirling disease and AIS, including zebra and quagga mussels and didymo (aka. rock snot), is provided on page 35.



Cold Water Regulations

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Bag Limits for Trout and Kokanee Salmon

Brown trout, brook trout, rainbow trout, Gila trout or kokanee salmon	5 per day	10 in possession
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- ▶ Bag limit of 5 fish is considered any combination of trout and/or salmon with the exception that no more than 2 lake trout and/or 2 cutthroat trout may be included in the limit.
- ▶ Trout bag is 3 trout at Laguna del Campo.
- ▶ Possession of kokanee salmon is not permitted at Heron Lake and Willow Creek during the closed season, Oct. 1–Nov. 10.
- ▶ Bag limits may be different for Special Trout Waters. See pages 16-19.
- ▶ Gila trout bag limits are reduced or are strictly catch-and-release in several waters. See pages 16-19.

Lake trout	2 per day	4 in possession
Cutthroat trout	2 per day	4 in possession

- ▶ Bag limit is 5 cutthroat trout at Seven Springs Hatchery Kid's Pond. No more than 5 trout, including cutthroat, may be harvested at Seven Springs Kid's Pond.
- ▶ Any trout with red slash marks below the jaw is considered a cutthroat.

Winter Trout Waters

When water temperatures are cool, between Nov. 1–March 31, Winter Trout Waters are stocked with hatchery-reared rainbow trout.

Streams and Rivers: Black River (1 mile upstream to 1 mile downstream of Higby Hole); Pecos River (from the southeast boundary of Villanueva State Park downstream to Santa Rosa Lake); Rio Grande (Elephant Butte Reservoir to Caballo Lake).

Lakes: Alumni Pond, Bataan, Bear Canyon, Bill Evans, Bosque Redondo, Bottomless Lakes State Park, Carlsbad Municipal, Carrizozo, Chaparral, Corona, Dennis Chavez, Escondida, Eunice, Greene Acres, Grants Riverwalk Pond, Green Meadow, Harry McAdams Ponds, Jal, Lake Van, Liam Knight Pond, Ned Houk, Oasis State Park, Perch Lake, Rancho Grande Ponds, Sumner Lake Stilling Basin, Roswell Kid's Pond (Spring River Park), Tingley Beach and Young Pond.

Drains: Albuquerque, Belen Riverside, Bernalillo, Corrales and Peralta.

Kokanee Salmon

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season

Kokanee are land-locked sockeye salmon. Although not native to the Southwest, kokanee thrive in some of New Mexico's deeper and colder plankton-producing lakes. In late fall, large schools of four-year-old kokanee gather to spawn and die.

A popular method for catching kokanee is snagging, the intentional taking of fish by hooking the body rather than the mouth. Kokanee are the only fish that may be legally snagged, and only during Special Kokanee Snagging Season. If another species is caught by snagging, it must be immediately returned to the water.

Each autumn NMDGF collects millions of kokanee eggs and milt to fertilize eggs and hatch fry. The young fry are used to stock Heron Lake, Navajo Lake and Eagle Nest Lake. The success of these collection operations is essential to maintain vibrant and healthy fisheries for anglers to enjoy. As a result, Heron Lake, Willow Creek and designated no-wake areas at Navajo Lake have seasonal closings (see listing below), and no kokanee salmon may be in possession while fishing during these closures at Heron Lake and Willow Creek.

Snagging Season Dates by Location

Oct. 1–Dec. 31: Open at Rio Chama (El Vado Lake to west boundary of Rio Chama Wildlife and Fishing Area), Navajo Lake (bouyed no-wake areas and shoreline within the no-wake areas at the Pine River Boat Ramp and Simms Boat Ramp at Navajo Lake are closed to kokanee snagging throughout the snagging season.), Pine River, El Vado Lake and Eagle Nest Lake.

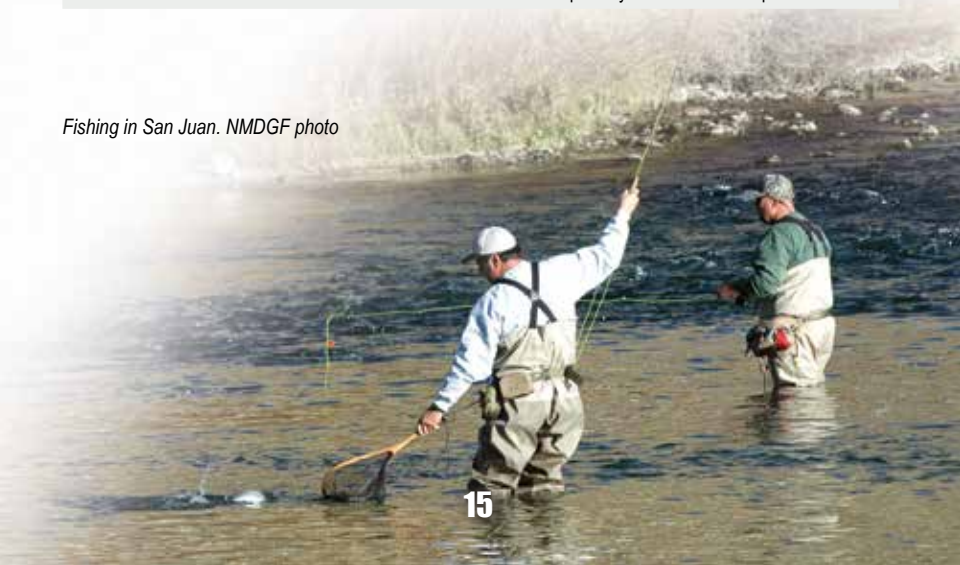
Oct. 1–Nov. 10: Closed at Heron Lake and Willow Creek.

Nov. 11–Dec. 31: Open at Heron Lake and Willow Creek.

Bag Limit (during Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season)

Kokanee salmon	12 per day	24 in possession
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Fishing in San Juan. NMDGF photo



Special Trout Waters

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

General Information

Special Trout Waters (STW) are managed to enhance the unique angling opportunities available in New Mexico. Regulations vary for STWs — some are managed to produce trophy-size trout, some to improve conservation of native trout, and others to enhance the overall trout population structure and density. Regulations are tailored to each water and may include reduced bag limits, catch-and-release for native Gila trout and Rio Grande cutthroat trout or increased harvest for nonnative fish species. Many STWs require artificial flies and lures with a single, barbless hook. It is illegal to **disturb** rocks, plants or sediment to attract fish. Chumming and baitfish use are not allowed in any STW. More than one fly or lure (dry and dropper combination) can be used on a single line in STWs. By following these regulations anglers help to conserve healthy fisheries in New Mexico and promote high-quality fishing experiences for everyone.

Designations of Special Trout Waters (STW)

There are three designations for STWs: Red Chile Water, Green Chile Water and Xmas Chile Water. Each designation is easy to remember, and signs with symbols are posted at STWs with bag limits and tackle restrictions.



Red Chile Water

Catch-and-release
with tackle restrictions



Green Chile Water

Two (2) trout daily bag limit
with tackle restrictions



Xmas Chile Water

Two (2) trout daily bag limit
with any legal tackle

Locations of chile waters are listed on pages 17–19.

Native Trout Conservation Waters

Several STWs have been established to help protect and conserve Gila trout and Rio Grande cutthroat trout. Nonnative trout species can outcompete or hybridize with native trout species. In order to protect native trout species, unlimited bag limits in some waters have been established for nonnative trout species (rainbow, brown and brook trout). These waters are listed on page 18 under Red Chile (Native Trout Conservation).

General Bag and Possession Limit Restrictions

All fishing in STWs must stop when the daily bag limit for that water has been taken. Anglers may not continue to fish another STW with a similar or lower bag limit, but may continue to fish in waters with a higher bag limit. Anglers must count those STW fish toward their overall daily bag limit. If fishing STWs where the bag limit is zero, anglers must not possess any trout.



Red Chile Water

Tackle restrictions: artificial fly or lure with a single, barbless hook.

Catch and release only.

Capulin Creek from the confluence with the Rio Grande to its headwaters.

Cimarron River from the east end of Tolby Campground downstream 1.4 miles to the first U.S. Highway 64 bridge.

Jack's Creek from the waterfalls located 0.25 miles downstream of N.M. Highway 63 crossing upstream to its headwaters.

Mogollon Creek from barrier at waterfalls near U.S. Forest Service Trail 153 upstream to confluence of Trail Canyon. Open from July 1–October 31.

Nabor Creek and **Nabor Lake** on the Sargent Wildlife Management Area.

Pecos River in the Pecos Wilderness above Pecos Falls.

Rio Chama from U.S. Geological Survey gauging station located below Cooper's Landing to the Rio Nutrias confluence.

Rio Costilla from its confluence with Latir Creek upstream 2.4 miles to the Valle Vidal boundary.

Rio Las Animas within Gila National Forest, Black Range District.

Rio Valdez in the Pecos Wilderness from the waterfall barrier 0.8 miles below U.S. Forest Service Trail 239 upstream to its headwaters.

San Juan River from Navajo Dam downstream 3.75 miles to the Crusher Hole Day Use Area. It is illegal to fish with more than 2 flies or lures on a single line when fishing the STW of the San Juan River.

Tingley Beach South Pond within the Albuquerque Conservancy Park.

Valle Vidal All streams. Open July 1–Dec. 31.

Catch and Release Tips

Many game fish in New Mexico have restricted bag and/or size limits that require immediate live release back into the water where taken. To ensure healthy release, follow these suggestions:

1. Land the fish quickly and don't play it to exhaustion.
2. Use a landing net whenever possible.
3. Keep the fish in the water.
4. Do not squeeze or grab any part of the fish. Wet your hands first if you must handle the fish.
5. Gently remove the hook (barbless hooks are easier).
6. If the hook is swallowed deeply, cut the leader. A fish's body fluids will dissolve the hook in a matter of days.
7. Let a tired fish recover. Hold it by the tail in the water with one hand and gently support it from below and just behind the head until it swims away.
8. Never toss or throw a fish back into the water.

Special Trout Waters

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**



Red Chile Water (Native Trout Conservation)

Tackle restrictions: Artificial fly or lure with single, barbless hook.

Catch-and-release only for Rio Grande cutthroat trout and Gila trout.

Bag limit unlimited for rainbow trout, brown trout and brook trout.

Black Canyon from Forest Service Road 150 (North Star Mesa Road) crossing upstream to its headwaters. Open July 1–Oct. 31.

Cabresto Creek upstream from Cabresto Canyon to headwaters, not including Lake Fork or Cabresto Lake.

Canada Tio Grande within the Carson National Forest, excluding private land.

Columbine Creek from its confluence with the Red River upstream to its headwaters.

Frijoles Creek (Taos County) from its confluence with Rito de la Olla upstream to its headwaters.

Gavilan Creek from its confluence with the Rio Hondo upstream to its headwaters.

Italianos Creek from its confluence with the Rio Hondo upstream to its headwaters.

Leandro Creek within the Valle Vidal. Open July 1–Dec. 31.

Palociento Creek from its confluence with Rito de la Olla upstream to its headwaters.

Rio Cebolla from the Seven Springs Day Use Area upstream to the headwaters, including McKinney Pond.

Rio de Las Vacas from the fish migration barrier located 0.2 miles upstream of U.S. Forest Service Road 70 crossing to its headwaters.

Rio Santa Barbara from the West Fork and Middle Fork confluence upstream to its headwaters, including the East Fork.

Rito del Padre from the fish migration barrier located about 0.3 miles upstream of the confluence with the Rito Sebadilloso to its headwaters, including Rito de los Chimayosos and Rito Maestas.

South Fork Rio Hondo (Taos County) from its confluence with the Rio Hondo upstream to its headwaters.

Tanques Creek from U.S. Forest Service Road 93 crossing upstream to its headwaters.

West Fork Luna Creek from the Carson National Forest property boundary upstream to its headwaters.

Yerba Creek from its confluence with the Rio Hondo upstream to its headwaters.





Green Chile Water

Tackle restrictions: Artificial fly or lure with single, barbless hook.

Bag limit two (2) trout only.

Pecos River in the box canyon 0.5 miles upstream of its confluence with the Mora River to 0.2 miles downstream of the bridge crossing at Cowles.

Red River from its confluence with Goose Creek 1.1 miles upstream to the Carson National Forest boundary.

Rio Chama within the boundaries of the Rio Chama Wildlife and Fishing Area from Heron Reservoir outlet 2.9 miles upstream to Cottonwood Flats.

Rio de Los Pinos from U.S. Forest Service Road 284 and 87A, 2.5 miles upstream to the private property boundary.

Rio Guadalupe from its confluence with Deer Creek Landing upstream 6.0 miles to Stable Canyon.

Rio San Antonio from the San Antonio Hot Springs pedestrian bridge upstream 2.0 miles to the Valles Caldera National Preserve boundary.

Sargent Wildlife Management Area for all waters within or adjacent to the WMA including the Rio Chamita, Sixto Creek and Rio Chama, excluding Nabor Creek and Nabor Lake.

Shuree Ponds on the Valle Vidal. Open July 1– Dec. 31.

Valles Caldera National Preserve all waters within preserve.



Xmas Chile Water

Any legal tackle

Bag limit two (2) trout only.

Gilita Creek and Willow Creek from its confluence with Snow Creek upstream to its headwaters including Little Turkey Creek.

Mineral Creek from its confluence with San Francisco River to its headwaters.

Red River from its confluence with the Rio Grande upstream to the lower walking bridge at Red River State Fish Hatchery.

Rio Chama from the river-crossing bridge on U.S. Highway 84 at Abiquiu upstream 7.0 miles to the base of Abiquiu Dam.

Rio Grande from the Colorado state line downstream to the Taos Junction Bridge at N.M. Highway 567.

Rio Ruidoso from Fridenbloom Drive upstream to the Mescalero Reservation.

Whitewater Creek from the Catwalk National Recreation Trail parking area upstream to the headwaters, including all tributaries.

Warm Water Game Fish

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Smallmouth Bass

N.M. Record: March 31 '06, Ute Lake

Weight: 7 lb., 3 oz.

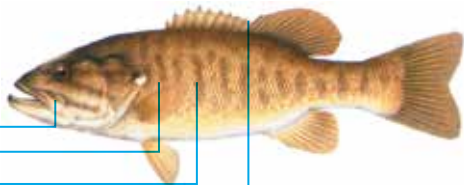
Length: 24" Girth: 16-1/2"

Upper jaw extends to eye

Uniform olive-brown color

Vertical barring

Shallow notch between dorsal fins



Largemouth Bass

N.M. Record: March 24 '95, Bill Evans Lake

Weight: 15 lb., 13 oz.

Length: 26-1/2" Girth: 24-3/4"

Upper jaw extends beyond eye

Scales on cheeks smaller than on body

Horizontal stripe on side

Deep notch between dorsal fins



Bluegill

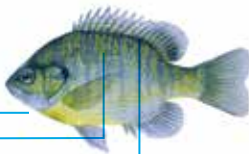
N.M. Record: 1963, Lovington Lake

Weight: 3 lb., 1-1/2 oz.; Length: 11-3/4"

Deep bodied, large lower jaw

Olive or dark green back

Two dorsal fins joined, appearing as one



Crappie

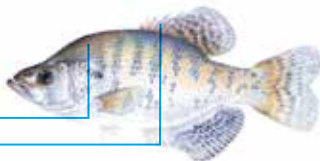
N.M. Record: March 2 '83, Black River

Weight: 4 lb., 9 oz., Length: 16" Girth: 13-1/2"

Deep bodied, large lower jaw

Olive or dark green back

Two dorsal fins joined, appearing as one



Channel Catfish (Illustrated)

N.M. Record: April 12 '99, Stubblefield Lake

Weight: 36 lb., 8 oz.

Length: 38" Girth: 26"

Blue Catfish

N.M. Record: June 20 '05, Elephant Butte

Weight: 54 lb., 1/4 oz.

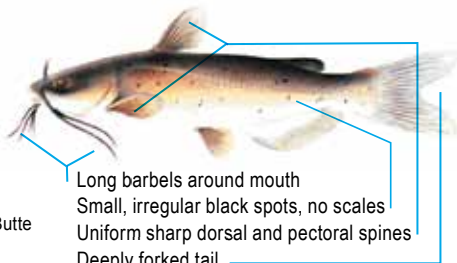
Length: 43-1/2" Girth: 30-1/4"

Flathead Catfish

N.M. Record: June 7 '79, Ash Canyon/Elephant Butte

Weight: 78 lb. 0 oz.

Length: 47-1/2" Girth: 31-1/2"



Long barbels around mouth

Small, irregular black spots, no scales

Uniform sharp dorsal and pectoral spines

Deeply forked tail

Handle with Care!

Life-size reproductions of New Mexico's record game fish are on public display at the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish headquarters in Santa Fe.

Striped Bass

N.M. Record: April 1 '92, Elephant Butte Lake

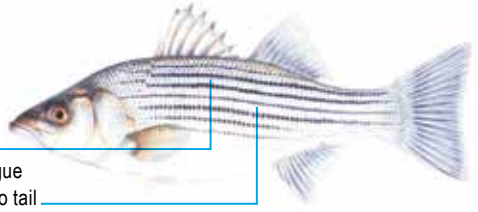
Weight: 54 lb., 8 oz., Length: 45" Girth: 34"

Slender body, up to 55 pounds

Olive or blue back

Teeth in two parallel patches on back of tongue

Silvery sides with 7 to 8 stripes that extend to tail



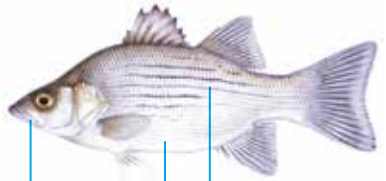
Hybrid striped bass (wipers)

Only in Caballo Lake; Not pictured

Teeth in two parallel patches on back of tongue

Distinct, horizontal stripes, usually broken, but several extend to tail

Deep body, up to 15 pounds



White Bass

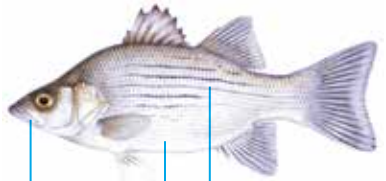
N.M. Record: June 8 '83, Bill Evans Lake

Weight: 4 lb., 13 oz., Length: 19-1/2" Girth: 18-1/4"

Teeth in a single patch on back of tongue

Deep body, seldom exceeds 3 pounds

Horizontal stripes are less distinct on bottom half of body



Walleye

N.M. Record: Sept. 19 '89, Clayton Lake

Weight: 16 lb., 9 oz., Length: 32" Girth: 21"

Milky eye corneas

Large canine teeth

Two fins on back, dark area on first fin



Tiger Muskie (only in Bluewater Lake and Quemado Lake)

N.M. Record: Aug. 23 '12, Bluewater Lake

Weight: 38 lb., 2 oz.

Length: 50-1/2" Girth: 24-1/2"

Similar to Northern Pike, except sides have dark vertical bars

Tail and fins are spotted



Northern Pike

N.M. Records: Nov. 21 '74, Miami Lake / March 7 '78, Springer Lake

Weight: 36 lb., 0 oz.

Length: 53" Girth: 29"

Large mouth with sharp teeth

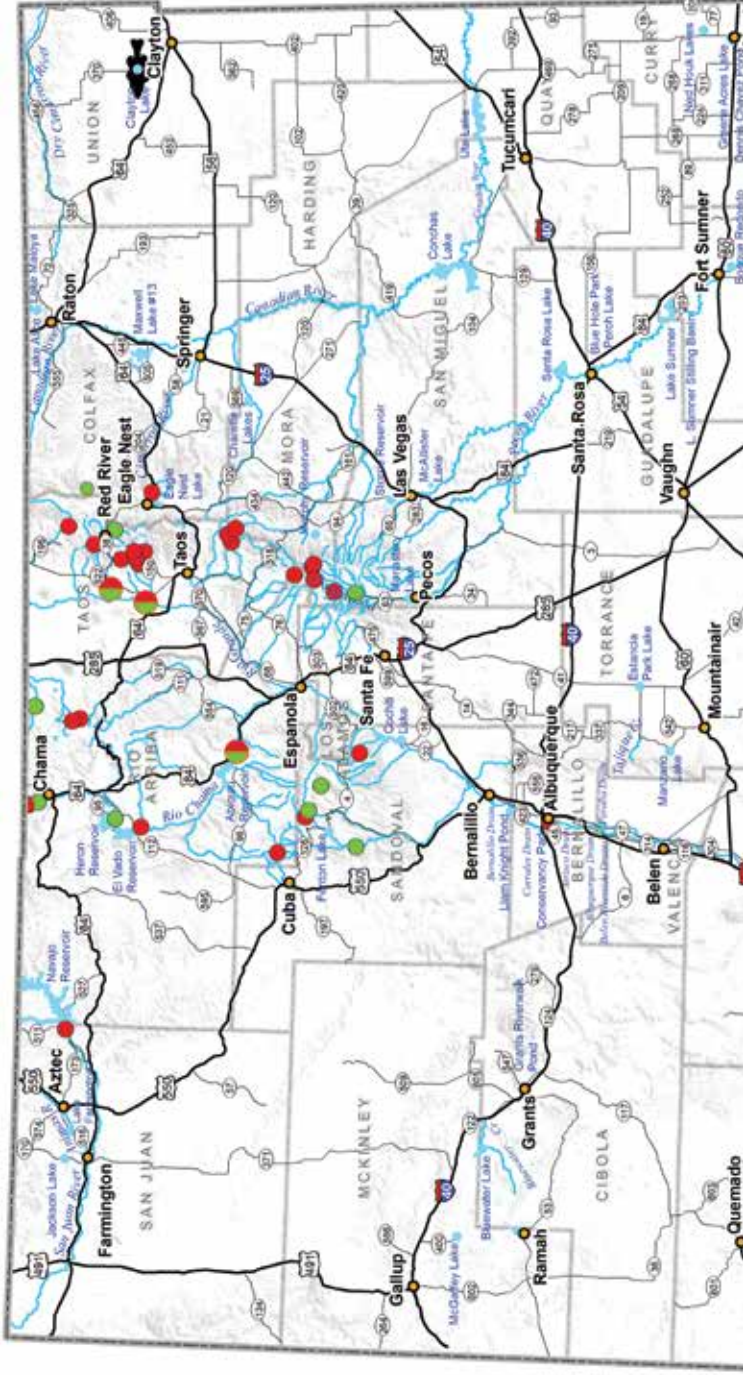
Sides are gray-green with rows of yellow and white spots

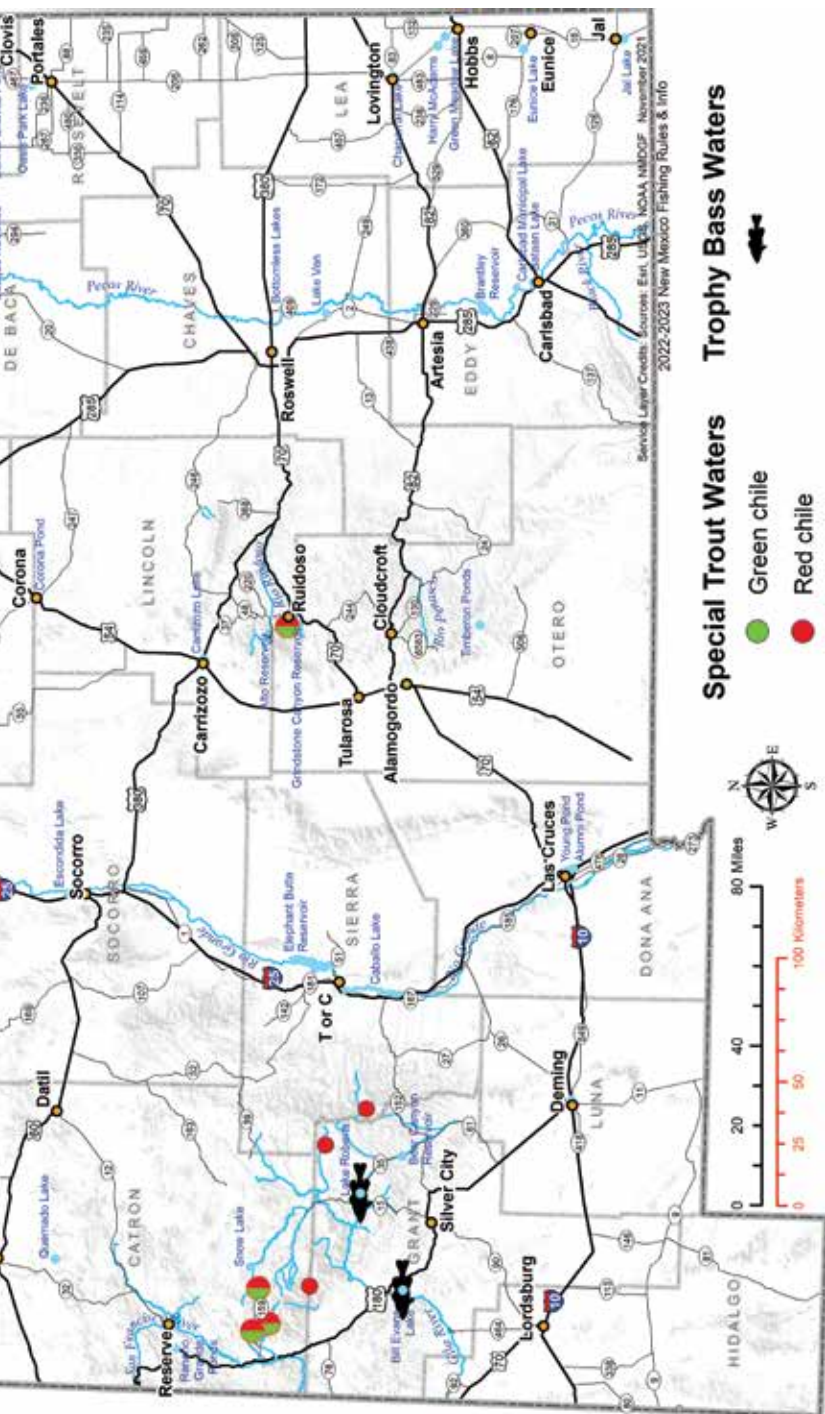
Top fin at the rear of body



New Mexico Fishing Waters

Licenses and General Information: [1-888-248-6866](tel:1-888-248-6866) or wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

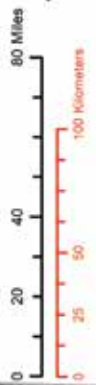




Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA, NHDODG, November 2021
 2022-2023 New Mexico Fishing Rules & Info

Special Trout Waters **Trophy Bass Waters**

- Green chile
- Red chile
- Xmas



Plan your fishing trip with our interactive map!
<https://wildlife.dfg.nm.gov/fishing/fishing-conditions-trip-planner/>

Warm Water Game Fish

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Where To Find Warm Water Species

Largemouth Bass

Some of the best largemouth bass fishing in New Mexico is found in the smaller lakes. Bill Evans Lake offers opportunities for trophy-sized fish. Conchas and Ute lakes provide good fishing opportunities. Concentrate on structure wherever available.

Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass populations are very good at Navajo Lake, Ute Lake and Conchas Lake—and though more abundant at Navajo, any of these lakes provide good opportunities to catch large fish. Smallmouth bass typically gravitate near rocky areas and ledges. Fishing around these locations spring through fall is suggested.

Walleye

Ute, Caballo Lake and Conchas lakes provide good walleye numbers. Fishing is usually best from April through May, after fish have spawned.

Catfish

Catfish populations and sizes are highest in New Mexico's larger reservoirs. Blue catfish up to 40 pounds are common at Elephant Butte Lake. Very good populations of large channel catfish can be found at Conchas, Caballo, Storrie and Ute lakes. Shallow murky water near inlets provides good fishing during late evening and night.

White Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass (Wipers)

White bass fishing is outstanding at Elephant Butte Lake and Ute Lake. Brantley, Conchas and Sumner lakes also provide good opportunities for catching white bass. From late spring to early summer, exciting opportunities occur in areas where shad or other forage fish congregate. Hybrid striped bass (wipers) have been stocked into Caballo Lake since 2022. Wipers are expected to be about 15 inches this year, with much larger fish possible.

Tiger Muskie

Tiger muskies are a crossbreed of northern pike with muskellunge. Bluewater Lake currently supports a high-density population of tiger muskies. Above average catch rates at this lake for most of the summer are common.

General Information

Warm-water fish, also known as spiny-ray fish, include species such as largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, walleye, catfish, sunfish, white bass and striped bass. Many of these fish occur wild in self-sustaining populations throughout New Mexico. Some of these populations depend on supplemental stocking. Each year, NMDGF stocks thousands of largemouth bass and channel catfish and millions of walleye fry to increase and improve angling opportunities.

Leave No Trace. Keep New Mexico Beautiful.

Pack It In, Pack It Out! Fishing line, hooks and other debris left onshore can become deadly hazards to fish, birds and other wildlife. Help protect our wildlife by keeping our lakes, streams and waterways clean. Pick up all trash and properly dispose it or pack it out!



Warm Water Regulations

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Trotline or Set Line Use

A trotline (throw line, limb line, set line, jug line or "Yo-yo" line) is a line without a rod or reel attached. It does not need to be handheld nor closely attended. Trotlines are limited to 25 hooks. Trotlines belonging to two or more people may not be joined or tied together. Anglers may not fish with more than one trotline. Anglers may not check, pull up or tamper with the trotline of another person. Any person using a trotline must attend it personally at least once every calendar day and remove or release all game fish that are caught. A Second Rod Validation is not required to fish with a trotline. A trotline does not count toward an anglers limit on rods. Anglers may fish with a trotline and a rod or a trotline and two rods (with Second Rod Validation) at the same time.

A person fishing with a trotline must attach an identification tag that is visible above the water line. The identification tag must list the angler's Customer Identification Number (CIN). Anglers 11 years of age and younger must list their Customer Identification Number (CIN) or their name and date of birth on the identification tag.

Trotlines may be used to take game fish only in the river reaches and lakes listed by drainage in the table below.

	Rivers	Lakes
Rio Grande drainage	Rio Grande mainstem from its confluence with the Chama River downstream to New Mexico/Texas state line and Chama River mainstem from the northern boundary of the Monastery of Christ in the Desert downstream to Abiquiu Lake	Abiquiu Lake, Cochiti Lake, Elephant Butte Lake and Caballo Lake
Pecos River drainage	Pecos River mainstem downstream of I-25 (excluding Villanueva State Park) to the New Mexico/Texas state line and all tributaries within Chavez, De Baca, Eddy, Guadalupe and San Miguel (downstream of I-25) Counties	Santa Rosa Lake, Sumner Lake, Lake Avalon, Brantley Lake, Six Mile Lake, Ten Mile Reservoir and Red Bluff Reservoir
Canadian River drainage	Canadian River mainstem and all tributaries downstream and east of I-25 to the New Mexico/Texas state line	Stubblefield Lake, Laguna Madre, Maxwell Lake 14, Springer Lake, Conchas Lake and Ute Lake
San Juan River drainage	San Juan River mainstem from U.S. 64 bridge at Blanco downstream to the Navajo Nation boundary at the Hogback canal diversion	Navajo Lake
Gila River and San Francisco River drainage	Gila River mainstem from its confluence with the east fork downstream to the New Mexico/Arizona state line and San Francisco River mainstem from U.S. 180 bridge at Alma downstream to the New Mexico/Arizona state line	None

Bait and Baitfish

Rules and regulations for bait and baitfish are listed on page 7.

Warm Water Regulations

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Warm Water Size and Bag Limits

Black Bass	5 per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Largemouth and spotted: 14-inch minimum size limit▶ Smallmouth: 12-inch minimum size limit▶ Smallmouth at Conchas Reservoir and Ute Reservoir: 14-inch minimum size limit▶ Smallmouth bass in Rio Grande within Taos County and Rio Arriba County: no minimum size limit	
Catfish (all species, except bullheads and Special Summer Catfish)	15 per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ In the Animas River and San Juan River, in San Juan County, there are no bag or possession limits.	
Crappie	20 per day
Striped Bass	1 per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ In the Animas and San Juan Rivers, in San Juan County, there is no bag or possession limit.	
Northern Pike	10 per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ In Eagle Nest Lake, there are no bag or possession limits. Northern pike may not be returned intentionally to the lake.	
Tiger Muskie	1 per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 40-inch minimum size limit. Found only in Bluewater Lake and Quemado Lake.	
Walleye	5 per day
White Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass (Wipers)	25 per day
Yellow Perch	30 per day
All other warmwater game fish (bluegill, sunfish, bullheads, freshwater drum)	20 per day

Possession Limits

The possession limit for each species is twice the daily bag limit.

Special Warm Waters

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Special Summer Catfish Waters

Many small lakes and ponds are stocked from May–Sept. with 17-inch or longer channel catfish. These waters offer great opportunities throughout the summer to catch big catfish. To make these unique angling opportunities possible, reduced bag limits have been established on these waters. Trotlines may not be used in Special Summer Catfish Waters.

Special Summer Catfish Waters

2 per day

- **Special catfish limit applies to:** Alto Lake, Alumni Pond, Bataan, Blue Hole Park Pond, Bosque Redondo, Carrizozo, Chaparral, Conoco Lake (Loco Lagoon), Corona, Dennis Chavez Pond, Escondida, Estancia Park Lake, Eunice, Grants Riverwalk Pond, Greene Acres, Green Meadow, Harris Pond, Jal Lake, Lake Van, Liam Knight Pond, McGaffey Lake, Ned Houk, Oasis State Park, Pecos River within Villanueva State Park, Perch Lake, Rancho Grande Ponds, Roswell Kid's Pond (Spring River Park), Timberon Ponds, Tingley Beach, Trees Lake and Young Pond.

Trophy Bass Waters

Lake Roberts, Clayton Lake and Bill Evans Lake are Trophy Bass Waters. These fisheries provide ideal conditions for largemouth bass weighing five pounds or more. Since these lakes are small, in order to maintain sustainable trophy fisheries the bag limit for largemouth bass is reduced. Legal length is a minimum size of 14 inches. Spearfishing and bow fishing for largemouth bass in these lakes is prohibited.

Trophy Bass Waters

2 per day

- Largemouth bass, 14 inches or longer. Bill Evans, Clayton Lake and Lake Roberts.

Possession Limits

Special Summer Catfish Waters: The possession limit is four fish.

Trophy Bass Waters: The possession limit is two fish 14 inches or larger.



Regulations for Specific

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

- Alto Lake:** Shore fishing hours: 5 a.m.–11 p.m.; Boat hours: Sunrise to sundown; Restricted to boats without motors only; City boating permit required; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines; Smaller pond open only to anglers 11 years of age and younger.
- Alumni Pond:** Winter Trout Water; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.
- Animas River (San Juan Co.):** No bag or possession limit for channel catfish or striped bass (page 26).
- Bataan Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Bear Canyon Lake:** Winter Trout Water; No trotlines; Boats restricted to oars or electric motor only.
- Big Dry Creek (Catron Co.):** Closed to fishing from Golden Link Cabin upstream through its headwaters.
- Bill Evans Lake:** Trophy Bass Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines; Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only.
- Black Canyon Creek (Grant Co.):** Closed to fishing Nov. 1–June 30 from Forest Service Road 150 (North Star Mesa Road) crossing upstream to its headwaters; Special Trout Water; Gila Trout Permit (free) required.
- Black River:** Winter Trout Water.
- Blue Hole Park Pond (Santa Rosa):** Open only to anglers 11 years of age or younger, 65 years and older and individuals with disabilities (Handicapped Fishing License); Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.
- Bluewater Reservoir:** One tiger muskie, 40 inches or longer.
- Bonito Lake:** Open to fishing during daylight hours 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset. No boats or floating devices allowed; Ice fishing is not allowed.
- Bosque Redondo:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Bottomless Lakes State Park:** Winter Trout Water; No trotlines; Fishing with baitfish is illegal.
- Cabresto Creek:** (Cabresto Canyon to the headwaters, not including Lake Fork or Cabresto Lake) Special Trout Water.
- Capulin Creek:** (Bandelier/Dome Wilderness, Sandoval Co.) Special Trout Water.
- Canada Tio Grande:** Special Trout Water.
- Carlsbad Municipal Lake:** Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Carrizozo Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Chaparral Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Charette Lakes (upper and lower):** Open to fishing from noon March 1–noon October 31; Boats may be used only during fishing seasons and are restricted to trolling speeds.
- Cimarron River:** Special Trout Water.
- Clayton Lake:** Trophy Bass Water; Open to fishing from noon March 1–noon Oct. 31; Boats may be used only during fishing season and are restricted to trolling speeds.

Waters

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

- Cochiti Lake:** Boats restricted to trolling speeds; Spillway closed to fishing.
- Columbine Creek:** Special Trout Water.
- Conchas Lake:** Smallmouth bass less than 14 inches must be released.
- Conoco Lake (Loco Lagoon):** Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.
- Corona Pond (Silver Pond):** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Cowles Pond (smaller of the two ponds):** Open only to anglers 11 years of age and younger, 65 years of age and older, or anglers/individuals with disabilities (Handicapped Fishing License).
- Dennis Chavez Pond:** Winter Trout Water; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.
- Eagle Nest Lake:** Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season, Oct. 1–Dec. 31; Day use only, camping available at Eagle Nest Lake State Park; Posted portion near dam is closed to fishing. There are no bag or possession limit for northern pike. All northern pike caught must be kept in possession. No pike may be intentionally returned to the lake.
- El Vado Lake:** Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season, Oct. 1–Dec. 31.
- Escondida Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Estancia Pond:** Winter Trout Water; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.
- Eunice Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Fenton Lake:** Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only; Parking area open to vehicles from 6 a.m.–9 p.m. May 1–Oct. 31 and from 7 a.m.–7 p.m. Nov. 1–April 31.
- Frijoles Creek:** (Taos County) Special Trout Water.
- Gavilan Creek:** Special Trout Water.
- Gillita Creek:** Special Trout Water; Gila Trout Permit (free) required.
- Glenwood Hatchery Brood Pond:** Open during daylight hours from 30 minutes before sunrise until sunset.
- Grants Riverwalk Pond:** Open to all anglers. Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Greene Acres Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.
- Green Meadow Lake:** Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines; Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only.
- Grindstone Lake:** Shore fishing hours: 5 a.m.–11 p.m.; No boats allowed within fenced or buoyed areas near intake and water diversion structures; City boat permit required; Boat hours: Sunrise to sundown; Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only; Boats restricted to trolling speeds.
- Harris Pond (Las Vegas):** Special Summer Catfish Water; open only to anglers 11 years of age and younger. No trotlines.
- Harry McAdams Park Ponds (Hobbs):** Open to anglers 11 years of age and younger,

Regulations for Specific

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

65 years of age and older or anglers/individuals with disabilities (Handicapped Fishing License); Winter Trout Water.

Heron Lake: Boats restricted to trolling speeds; Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season opens Nov. 11 (Veteran's Day)–Dec. 31.

Hopewell Lake: Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only.

Iron Creek (Catron Co.): Closed to fishing upstream of the constructed waterfall barrier.

Italianos Creek: Special Trout Water.

Jack's Creek: Special Trout Water.

Jackson Lake: Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only.

Jal Lake: Special Summer Catfish Water and Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.

Laguna Madre (Maxwell Lakes): Posted area within 150 feet of the outlet is closed to fishing.

Laguna del Campo: Open to fishing May 1–Oct. 31 during daylight hours from 30 minutes before sunrise until sunset; Open to anglers 14 years of age and younger and up to two parents or guardians directly supervising youth angler(s); Open to anglers 65 and older or anglers/individuals with disabilities (Handicapped Fishing License); No boats or flotation devices allowed.

Lake Farmington: Restricted to non-motorized watercraft April 11–Oct. 25; Open Sunrise to Sunset; Shoreline fishing year round.

Lake Maloya/Lake Alice (Sugarite State Park): Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only; Open during daylight hours only.

Lake Roberts: Trophy Bass Water; Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only. No trotlines.

Lake Van: Special Summer Catfish Water and Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.

Liam Knight Pond (Corrales Community Pond): Special Summer Catfish Water and Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.

Little Creek (Catron Co.): Closed to fishing from the barrier upstream through all tributaries.

Main Diamond Creek: Closed to fishing above the confluence with South Diamond Creek.

Maxwell Lakes 13 and 14: Open to fishing at noon March 1–October 31; Boats restricted to trolling speed.

Mineral Creek (Catron Co.): Special Trout Water. Gila Trout Permit (free) required.

Mogollon Creek (Grant and Catron Co.): Closed to fishing year-round upstream of Trail Canyon; Open to fishing, July 1–Oct. 31 downstream of Trail Canyon to FS Trail 153; Special Trout Water; Gila Trout Permit (free) required.

Monastery Lake: Open during daylight hours 30 minutes before sunrise until sunset; No boats or floating devices allowed; Ice fishing is not allowed.

Morphy Lake: Open to fishing March 1–Oct. 31 (weather permitting); Boats restricted to oars or electric motors.

Nabor Creek and Nabor Lake: Special Trout Water.

Waters

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Navajo Lake: Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season Oct. 1–Dec. 31. Designated no-wake areas closed to kokanee snagging.

Ned Houk Pond: Winter Trout Water; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.

Oasis State Park: Special Summer Catfish Water and Winter Trout Water; No trotlines; Boats and flotation devices are not allowed.

Palociento Creek: Special Trout Water.

Pecos River: Special Trout Water and Winter Trout Water; Summer Catfish Water in Villanueva State Park.

Perch Lake: Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water. No trotlines.

Pine River: Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season, Oct. 1–Dec. 31.

Quemado Lake: Bag limit for tiger muskie is one fish 40 inches or longer; Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only.

Rancho Grande Ponds: Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.

Red River: Special Trout Water.

Red River City Ponds: Middle pond is open only to anglers 11 years of age and younger, 65 years of age and older, and anglers/individuals with disabilities (Handicapped Fishing License); Large pond is open with no age restrictions; Ponds are open to fishing March 1–Nov. 15.

Red River Hatchery Pond: Reserved for anglers 11 years of age and younger, 65 and older, and anglers/individuals with disabilities (Handicapped Fishing License); No boats or flotation devices are allowed; Open daylight hours 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset.

Rio Cebolla: Special Trout Water.

Rio Chama: Special Trout Water; Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season, Oct. 1–Dec. 31 from El Vado Lake to the western boundary of Rio Chama WMA.

Rio Costilla: Special Trout Water; Camping allowed in designated areas only with permission from Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association.

Rio de las Vacas: Special Trout Water.

Rio de los Pinos: Special Trout Water.

Rio Grande: Special Trout Water; Winter Trout Water downstream of Elephant Butte Reservoir; No length limit on smallmouth bass in Rio Arriba and Taos counties.

Rio Guadalupe: Special Trout Water.

Rio las Animas: Special Trout Water.

Rio Ruidoso: Special Trout Water.

Rio Santa Barbara: Special Trout Water.

Rio Valdez: Special Trout Water.

Rito del Padre: Special Trout Water.

Rock Lake Hatchery Kid's Ponds: Open only to anglers 11 years of age and younger. Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Roswell Kid's Pond (Spring River Park): Open only to anglers 11 years of age and younger; Special Summer Catfish Water; Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.

Regulations for Specific

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

San Antonio River: Special Trout Water.

San Gregorio Lake: Restricted to boats without motors only.

San Juan River (below Navajo Dam): No bag or possession limit for channel catfish or striped bass (page 26); Special Trout Water, only two flies per line may be used. (page 17)

Santa Cruz Lake: Open Thursdays through Mondays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. starting March 1 and Thursdays through Mondays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. starting May 15. Santa Cruz Lake is closed on Thanksgiving Day, December 22–26, and New Year's Day.

Sapillo Creek (Grant Co.): Gila Trout Permit (free) required.

Sargent Wildlife Area: Special Trout Water.

Sheep Corral Creek (Grant Co.): Closed to all fishing.

Seven Springs Hatchery Kid's Pond: Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. to anglers 11 years of age and younger.

Shuree Ponds: Special Trout Water; Open to fishing July 1–Dec. 31; Daylight hours from 30 minutes before sunrise until sunset; One pond is posted for anglers 11 years of age and younger; Restricted to boats without motors only.

Snow Lake: Boats restricted to oars or electric motors only.

South Diamond Creek and Tributaries (Catron and Sierra Co.): Closed to fishing.

South Fork Rio Hondo (Taos County): Special Trout Water.

Springer Lake: Motorboats are only allowed when water levels are at or above 2,000 acre feet; Ice fishing is not allowed.

Stubblefield Lake: Posted area within 150 feet of the outlet is closed to fishing.

Spruce Creek (Catron Co.): Closed to all fishing.

Sumner Lake (Stilling Basin): Winter Trout Water.

Tanques Creek: Special Trout Water.

Timberon Ponds: Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.

Tingley Beach Kid's Pond: Open sunrise to sunset; Special Trout Water, South Pond only; Winter Trout Water; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines; No boats or flotation devices; Children's pond open to anglers 11 years of age and younger.

Trail Canyon Creek (Catron Co.): Closed to all fishing.

Trees Lake: Open sunrise to sunset; No boats allowed. Special Summer Catfish Water and Winter Trout Water; No trotlines.

Ute Lake: Smallmouth bass less than 14 inches must be released.

Valle Vidal: Special Trout Water; Open to fishing July 1–Dec. 31 during daylight hours from 30 minutes before sunrise until sunset.

Valles Caldera National Preserve: Special Trout Water; Fishing permits are available at the Valle Grande Entrance Station and can be obtained upon arrival on the date fishing will take place. For further information visit:

<http://www.nps.gov/vall>.

Waters

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

West Fork Gila and All Tributaries (Catron Co.): All tributaries to West Fork of Gila closed to fishing; Headwaters to East Fork confluence Gila Trout Permit (free) required.

West Fork Luna Creek: Special Trout Water.

Whitewater Creek (Catron Co.): Special Trout Water; Gila Trout Permit (free) required.

Woodrow Canyon Creek: Closed to all fishing.

Willow Creek: (Rio Arriba Co.) Special Kokanee Salmon Snagging Season open Nov. 11 (Veterans Day)–Dec. 31.

Willow Creek (Catron Co.): Special Trout Water; Gila Trout Permit (free) required.

Yerba Creek: Special Trout Water.

Young Pond: Winter Trout Water; Special Summer Catfish Water; No trotlines.

Age Restricted Waters

Several waters have age restrictions to provide angling opportunities for youth and elderly anglers and anglers with disabilities. These waters are only open to anglers as listed in the table below.

	• 11 years and younger	• 65 years and older • Individuals with disabilities	• 14 years and younger • Parents / guardians supervising children 14 and younger may fish (up to two adults per child)
Alto Kid's Pond	●		
Blue Hole Park Pond	●	●	
Cowles Pond	●	●	
Harris Pond	●		
Harry McAdams Park Pond	●	●	
Laguna del Campo	●	●	●
Rock Lake Hatchery Ponds	●		
Red River City Kids Pond	●	●	
Red River Hatchery Pond	●	●	
Seven Springs Brood Pond	●		
Shuree Kid's Pond	●		
Spring River Park Pond	●		
Tingley Kid's Pond	●		

Boating Regulations

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Basic Boating Regulations

1. All motorized and sail-powered vessels 10 feet or longer in length require a title. All motorized vessels of any length must be registered. Title and registration must be obtained from the New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division online: www.mvd.newmexico.gov, by telephone: **1-888-683-4636** or by visiting a New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division office.
2. The vessel registration number must be affixed permanently to both sides of the vessel's bow with block letters that measure 3 inches in height and are clearly visible. A valid registration decal must be placed on the port side 6 inches behind (aft) the registration number.
3. Proof of boater education must be carried by all operators born on or after January 1, 1989.
4. All persons in canoes, kayaks or rafts must wear a personal flotation device at all times.
5. Children 12 years and younger, must wear a personal flotation device while the vessel is underway.
6. Vessels while operating must carry: a personal flotation device of good condition for each person on board; one U.S. Coast Guard approved throwable device; oar/paddle, bailing bucket and stout rope at least one boat length; whistle/horn, fire extinguisher and navigation lights if operating at night. Vessels may be inspected for required equipment.
7. Boating while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is prohibited and strictly enforced.

For additional information and boating-safety classes offered statewide by the New Mexico State Parks Division visit online: www.emnrd.nm.gov/spd or telephone: **1-888-667-2757**.

- Wear your personal flotation device! The majority of anglers who drown were not.
- Use caution when a red flag is displayed above a stopped boat! It indicates a water skier is down in that area.
- Clean, drain and dry your boat and gear to stop aquatic invasive species (see page 35).

Waters with Special Restrictions

Waters restricted to boats without motors include: Alto Lake, Bernardo Waterfowl Area, Jackson Lake, La Joya Waterfowl Area, McGaffey Lake, San Gregorio Lake and Shuree Ponds.

Waters restricted to boats with oars or electric motors include: Bear Canyon Lake, Bill Evans Lake, Conoco Lake, Fenton Lake, Green Meadow Lake, Grindstone Lake, Hopewell Lake, Lake Maloya, Lake Roberts, Morphy Lake, Quemado Lake, Snow Lake and Tucumcari Wildlife Area.

Waters where no boats or flotation devices are allowed include: Bonito Lake, Laguna del Campo, Monastery Lake, Oasis State Park, Red River Hatchery Pond, Tingley Beach and Trees Lake.

Waters restricted to boats at trolling speeds only include: Charette Lakes, Cochiti Lake, Clayton Lake, Heron Lake, Maxwell Lakes 13 and 14, and Springer Lake when water level is less than 1,000 acre feet.

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Personnel

NMDGF personnel and persons authorized by the NMDGF Director may use motor boats while performing duties on lakes where use may be prohibited otherwise.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are any nonnative plants, animals or pathogens that can harm our aquatic environment and the economy. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish works with state, federal and private partners to stop the spread of AIS, and you can help.

How You Can Help:

- Remove all mud and aquatic plants from boats, trailers and gear, including waders and wading boots.
- Pull all drain plugs and empty live wells.
- Air and sun dry boat compartments and equipment.
- Do not transfer live gamefish from one waterbody to another (see page 6).
- Do not transfer water from one location to another when using live bait. Make a water change.
- Report suspicious watercraft or AIS sighting immediately to the AIS Coordinator: **505-629-9867**, Operation Game Thief: **1-800-432-4263** or the NMDGF Information Center: **1-888-248-6866**.



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Catch and Release or ...

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Are My Fish Safe to Eat?

Tests have shown many of New Mexico's waters are contaminated with mercury, PCBs and in some instances DDT. To help anglers make informed choices about what can be safely eaten, the following consumption advisories by region are provided on the pages 36–40. Occasional consumption of fish from these waters does not constitute a substantial health risk, however higher consumption over a longer period of time could result in health problems. These advisories are guidelines only and do not suggest any health risks from camping, swimming or boating in these waters. Also, handling fish will not result in exposure to dangerous contaminants.

How To Use the Consumption Advisory Chart

Determine the species and length (inches) of the fish and find the lake or river where it was caught. Match the species (row) and size (column) of your fish to determine the number of meals (8 ounces) that can be safely eaten each month. No advisory (NA) indicates an advisory is unnecessary, and 0 (zero) indicates it is recommended not to eat that species and size of fish. If blank, the species and size of fish at that location has not been analyzed.

For questions about these advisories, contact the New Mexico Environment Department—Surface Water Quality Bureau at: **505-827-0187**. For questions about health concerns relating to consumption of contaminants, contact the New Mexico Department of Health—Environmental Health Epidemiology Bureau at:

1-888-878-8992. Further information is also available online at:

<https://nmtracking.doh.nm.gov/environment/contaminants/FishConsumption.html>

www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/

<https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/fish-consumption-advisories/>

The following table is a consumption advisory only. Some listings may be under the legal minimum length limit (such as largemouth and smallmouth bass). Legal length limits for all species apply when fishing.

WATER	SPECIES	SIZE							CONTAMINANT
		<10"	10–14"	14–18"	18–22"	22–26"	26–30"	30"+	
Abiquiu Lake	Brown trout		4	2	2				Mercury
	Carp			1	1				Mercury
	Channel catfish		3	2	2	1			Mercury
	Rainbow trout		NA*		3				Mercury
	Smallmouth bass		2	1					Mercury
	Walleye			.5	1				Mercury
	Crappie	2							Mercury
Bluewater Lake	Tiger muskie					2		1	Mercury
Canjilon Lakes	Brook trout	NA*	NA*						Mercury
	Rainbow trout	NA*	NA*						Mercury
Cochiti Lake	Bluegill	3							Mercury
	Carp				2	2			Mercury, PCBs
	Channel catfish		4	3	2	1			Mercury
	Crappie	2							Mercury
	Northern pike					3	2	1	Mercury

Catch and Eat?

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

WATER	SPECIES	SIZE							CONTAMINANT
		<10"	10-14"	14-18"	18-22"	22-26"	26-30"	30"+	
(Cochiti Lake cont.)	Walleye			1	½	½			Mercury
	White bass		1						Mercury
El Vado Lake	Brown trout		NA*	NA*					Mercury
	Kokanee salmon	NA*	NA*	NA*					Mercury
	Rainbow trout		NA*						Mercury
	White sucker		4						Mercury
Heron Lake	Channel catfish	3	3						Mercury
	Kokanee salmon	NA*	3	NA*					Mercury, DDT, PCBs
	Lake trout		NA*	NA*	NA*		4		Mercury
	White sucker		4	2					Mercury
Lake Farmington (Beeline Lake)	Channel catfish		3						Mercury
	Carp				NA	4			Mercury
	Largemouth bass		4	3					Mercury
	Northern pike							3	
	Smallmouth bass	NA*	NA*						
	White bass		2						
Navajo Lake	Bluegill	3							Mercury
	Channel catfish	4	4	4	2		½		Mercury
	Common carp				2				Mercury
	Crappie	4	4	1					Mercury
	Kokanee salmon	NA*	NA*	NA*					Mercury
	Largemouth bass		2		½				Mercury
	Northern pike					1	1	1	Mercury
	Rainbow trout			4					Mercury
	Smallmouth bass	3	2	1					Mercury
	White sucker		NA*						Mercury
Yellow Perch	3								
Rio Grande (Otwi Bridge to Rio Chama)	Channel catfish				4	4	4		Mercury
	River carpsucker				3				Mercury
Rio Grande (Cochiti Lake to Otowi Bridge)	Carp			4	4	4			Mercury
	Channel catfish			4	4				Mercury
Rio Grande (US I-25 to 550)	Channel catfish			NA*					Mercury, PCBs
	White bass	1	1						Mercury, PCBs
Rio Grande (Embudo Creek to Rio Pueblo de Taos)	Brown trout	NA*	NA*						
	Rainbow trout		NA*						
	Smallmouth bass	NA*							
San Juan River (Cañon Largo to Navajo Dam)	Rainbow trout		NA*	NA*	NA*				Mercury

NA* No Advisory; ⁽¹⁾ Cold water bag and possession limits are listed on pages 14-15 and 16-19.

Catch and Release or ...

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Northeast Consumption Advisory⁽¹⁾ (How to Use the Chart, page 36)

WATER	SPECIES	SIZE							CONTAMINANT
		<10"	10-14"	14-18"	18-22"	22-26"	26-30"	30"+	
Cabresto Lake	Brook trout	4							Mercury
	Cutthroat trout	4							Mercury
Charette Lakes	Black bullhead		1						Mercury
	Rainbow trout		NA*						Mercury
	White sucker		4	4					Mercury
	Yellow perch		1	1					Mercury
Clayton Lake	Bluegill	1							Mercury
	Channel catfish				4		1		Mercury
	Walleye				2	2	½		Mercury
Conchas Lake	Bluegill	3							Mercury
	Channel catfish			2	1				Mercury
	Largemouth bass		3	2	1				Mercury
	Smallmouth bass		3	2					Mercury
	Walleye		4	4	1	1	½		Mercury
Eagle Nest Lake	Kokanee salmon		NA*	NA*					Mercury
	Northern pike					4			Mercury
	Rainbow trout		NA*	NA*	4				Mercury
	White sucker		4						Mercury
	Yellow perch		3						Mercury
Lake Maloya	Rainbow trout	NA*	NA*						Mercury
	White sucker	NA*	4						Mercury
Maxwell Lakes	Channel catfish				NA*				Mercury
	Rainbow trout			NA*	NA*				Mercury
Pecos River (Pecos NH Park to Headwaters)	Brown trout	NA*	NA*	4					Mercury
	White sucker	NA*							Mercury
Rio Grande (Rio Chama to Embudo Creek)	Carp				3	3			DDT
	Channel catfish			NA*	NA*				Mercury, DDT, PCBs
	White sucker			4					Mercury
Shuree Ponds	Rainbow trout			NA*	NA*	NA*			Mercury
Springer Lake	Black bullhead	4							Mercury, PCBs
	Carp			NA*	NA*				
	Channel catfish			NA*	NA*	NA*	2	½	Mercury
	Northern pike					4	2	2	Mercury
	Yellow perch	4	4						Mercury
Storrie Lake	Carp		NA	NA*	NA*	1			Mercury
	Channel catfish		NA	1	1	1			Mercury, PCBs
	White Crappie		1						Mercury
	White sucker		NA*	4					Mercury

Catch and Eat?

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Northeast Consumption Advisory—continued⁽¹⁾

WATER	SPECIES	SIZE						CONTAMINANT
		<10"	10-14"	14-18"	18-22"	22-26"	26-30"	
Stubblefield Lake	Black bullhead		4					Mercury
	Channel catfish				4	4		Mercury
	Walleye				2	2		Mercury
	White sucker			NA*				Mercury
	Yellow perch		4					Mercury
Ute Lake	Bluegill	3						Mercury
	Channel catfish			4	2			Mercury
	Largemouth bass		2	1	1			Mercury
	Smallmouth bass		2					Mercury
	Walleye			1	½	½	0	Mercury
	White bass		3	1				Mercury

Southwest Consumption Advisory⁽²⁾ (How to Use the Chart, page 36)

WATER	SPECIES	SIZE						CONTAMINANT
		<10"	10-14"	14-18"	18-22"	22-26"	26-30"	
Bear Canyon Dam	Bluegill	4						Mercury
	Channel catfish		4	4				Mercury
	Crappie	½						Mercury
	Largemouth bass		4	3				Mercury
Bill Evans Lake	Bluegill	4						Mercury
	Largemouth bass			2				Mercury
Caballo Lake	Blue catfish		4	3	3			Mercury
	Channel catfish			3	2	2		Mercury
	Crappie		3					Mercury
	River carpsucker			4	4			Mercury
	Smallmouth buffalo				2	2	1	Mercury
	Walleye		4	2	1	1	1	Mercury
	White bass		1	½				Mercury
Elephant Butte Lake	Blue catfish		3	2	2		.5	.5
	Carp			4	3			Mercury, PCBs
	Channel catfish		1	1	1	½		Mercury
	Crappie		2					Mercury
	Largemouth bass	2	2	1	1			Mercury
	Smallmouth bass		2	1				Mercury
	Striped bass				1	1	1	Mercury
	White bass	2	1	½				Mercury
Lake Roberts	Bluegill	NA*						Mercury
	Largemouth bass			3	2			Mercury
Quemado Lake	Tiger Muskie					2		1

NA * No Advisory ⁽¹⁾ Cold water bag and possession limits are listed on pages 14-15 and 16-19. ⁽²⁾ Warm water bag and possession limits are listed on page 26-27.

Catch, Release or Eat?

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Southeast Consumption Advisory⁽²⁾ (How to Use the Chart, page 36)

WATER	SPECIES	SIZE							CONTAMINANT
		<10"	10-14"	14-18"	18-22"	22-26"	26-30"	30"+	
Brantley Lake	Channel catfish		4	4	2	½			Mercury, DDT
	Largemouth bass		2	2					Mercury, DDT
	White bass	½	½	1					Mercury, DDT
Carlsbad Municipal Lakes (Lake Carlsbad and Bataan Lake)	Carp			4	4				DDT, PCBs
	Channel catfish			1	2				DDT
	Spotted bass			NA*					Mercury, DDT, PCBs
Pecos River (North boundary of Brantley WMA to US 70)	Carp		NA*	NA*					DDT, PCBs
	Channel catfish		NA*	NA*	NA*				DDT, PCBs
Pecos River (Brantley WMA)	Channel catfish		4	4	2	½			Mercury, DDT
	Largemouth bass		2	2					Mercury, DDT
	White bass	½	½	1					Mercury, DDT
Pecos River (Texas border to Carlsbad Municipal Lakes)	Carp		NA*	NA*	NA*				DDT, PCBs
	Channel catfish			4					DDT, PCBs
Santa Rosa Lake	Bluegill	3							Mercury
	Channel catfish		3	2	2	2	1		Mercury
	Crappie	3	3						Mercury
	Smallmouth bass		2						Mercury
	Walleye			3	1	1	1		Mercury
Sumner Lake	Carp		4	4	4				Mercury
	Channel catfish	4	3	3	2				Mercury
	Flathead catfish		4		2				Mercury
	Walleye			3	1	½	0		Mercury
	White bass	3	2						Mercury

NA * No Advisory

⁽²⁾ Warm water bag and possession limits are listed on page 26-27.

Possession Certificate



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Use this certificate if you give game fish to a person or organization.

I, _____,
Full name of license holder. Please print.

residing at: _____ tel.: (____) _____-_____
Address and telephone of license holder required. Please print.

on this day: ____/____/____ at: _____
Date of transaction Place of transaction

hereby convey to: _____ the following fish:
Full name of person receiving game fish.

_____ ,
Detailed description of the kind and number of fish donated. (Ex: one channel catfish weighing 3 lbs.)

taken in _____
under my valid license number: _____ and taken on: ____/____/____.
(County)

Donor: _____ Recipient: _____
(Signature of license holder) (Signature of recipient)

By signing we understand and acknowledge to postdate, predate or otherwise falsify a Possession Certificate is illegal.



Title VI Funding: Certain programs of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of the Interior. These programs are therefore subject to requirements of the New Mexico Human Rights Act and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibit discrimination because of ancestry, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age or physical or mental handicap. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, please send a detailed description of the incident by certified mail to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. If you desire further information on Title VI, write: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, ADA Coordinator, One Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507 or Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Washington, DC 20240. The Department of Game and Fish will schedule public meetings and operate facilities that are accessible to physically impaired persons. Reasonable accommodations will be made for other impairments, including hearing and sight. If special aids are required, call 505-476-8027 or write to 1 Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507 at least three working days prior to the meeting date. To initiate a complaint, write to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Diversity and Inclusive Workforce Management, Public Civil Rights Accessibility and Disability Coordinator, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041; (703) 358-1724.

Fondos de Título VI: Ciertos programas del New Mexico Department of Game and Fish reciben fondos federales del U.S. Department of the Interior. Estos programas son subyugados a requisitos de la ley de New Mexico Human Rights Act and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, que prohíben la discriminación por razones de ascendencia, sexo, raza, color, religión origen nacional, edad o impedimento físico o mental. Si usted cree que ha sufrido discriminación en cualquier programa, actividad o comodidades, por favor envíe por correo certificado una descripción detallada al Department of Game and Fish. Si desea mas información sobre Título VI, por favor escriba a: Department of Game and Fish, ADA Coordinator, One Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507 or Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Washington, DC 20240. Al programar sus reuniones públicas, el Department of Game and Fish operará en facilidades que proveen acceso para personas con incapacidades físicas. Las personas con otras incapacidades, inclusive del oído y de la vista, recibirán acceso razonable a las reuniones. Si usted necesita algún auxiliar o ayuda especial, por favor llame al número 505-476-8027 o escriba a 1 Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507, por lo menos tres días antes de la reunión. Para iniciar una queja, escriba a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Diversity and Inclusive Workforce Management, Public Civil Rights Accessibility and Disability Coordinator, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041; (703) 358-1724.

Family Fishing and Education

Licenses and General Information: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov

Family Fishing Statewide

Locations and information about fishing opportunities across the state are available online: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/fishing/fishing-conditions-trip-planner/>

Free Fishing Camps and Clinics

The Fishing Skills Program offers free camps and clinics with experienced professionals and seasoned volunteers to train students of all ages basic skills, including: tackle, knots, fly-fishing and fly-tying (basic to intermediate), fish handling and cleaning, aquatic outdoor safety, New Mexico fishing rules and regulations, and more.



To schedule a fishing camp or a clinic in your community or at your school and learn more about angling opportunities in New Mexico, contact the Sport Fishing Education Coordinator: **505-222-4727**.

Fish Hatchery Tours

More than 2 million game fish are raised from eggs at our state's fish hatcheries and released each year in the lakes and streams of New Mexico. Hatcheries offer opportunities for students to view fish at each stage of development, to learn firsthand about aquatic conservation, and to fish at nearby facilities. Educational kits are available to prepare students before they visit. Kits are designed for grades 4–8 with lesson suggestions that use academic skills such as mathematics, history, literacy, technology and art. Educators, youth group leaders and homeschoolers can schedule a tour, reserve an educational kit and learn more about student fishing opportunities by contacting their local hatchery.

Glenwood Hatchery, Glenwood, NM: 575-539-2461

P.O. Box 67 – 9 Hatchery Road, Glenwood, NM 88039
Fishing pond. Raises Gila trout.

Lisboa Springs Hatchery, Pecos, NM: 505-757-6360

HCR 74, P.O. Box 61 – 26 Fish Hatchery Road, Pecos, NM 87552
Show pond with large rainbow trout. Raises rainbow trout. Monastery Lake is nearby for fishing.

Los Ojos Hatchery, Los Ojos, NM (closed to public): 575-588-7307

29 Hatchery Road, Los Ojos, NM 87551
Laguna del Campo (Burns Canyon Lake) nearby. Raises kokanee and rainbow trout.

Red River Hatchery, Questa, NM: 575-586-0222

P.O. Box 410 – State Route 515 #185, Questa, NM 87556
Show pond. Raises rainbow trout.

Rock Lake Hatchery, Santa Rosa, NM: 575-472-3690

1025 Hatchery Road, Santa Rosa, NM 88435
Kid's fishing ponds on-site. Raises rainbow trout, walleye and largemouth bass.

Seven Springs Hatchery, Jemez Springs, NM: 575-829-3740

346 Forest Road 314, Jemez Springs, NM 87025
Kid's fishing pond on-site. Raises Rio Grande cutthroat trout.

Off-Highway Vehicles

OHV Permits and Information: <https://ridenm.dgf.nm.gov>

Know the Laws, Operate Safely and Enjoy!

New Mexico laws for off-highway vehicles (OHV) are designed to protect all citizens, while ensuring responsible and safe OHV use. OHVs include all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), recreational off-highway vehicles (ROVs), motorcycles and snowmobiles. Anglers who use an OHV must ensure their vehicle is properly registered or permitted and equipped with a U.S. Forest Service-approved spark arrester. Nonresidents may register an OHV in their home state or purchase a New Mexico nonresident permit at <https://ridenm.dgf.nm.gov>.

All youth operators and passengers 17 years of age or younger must wear a DOT approved helmet and goggles or safety glasses. Whether young or old, it's every rider's responsibility to know and observe the laws. Before riding on public land, visit <https://ridenm.dgf.nm.gov>.

New Mexico OHV Code of Ethics

- Learn about the area in which you will ride. Contact public-land managers or private-property landowners to understand area restrictions and receive permission before you ride. Get maps of the area(s) and stay on trails and/or areas designated for OHV use.
- Be courteous on the trail. Allow right-of-way to hikers and horseback riders, and when encountering horses—pull off of the trail on the low side, stop your engine, remove your helmet, and speak to the rider. Wait until all horses have passed and moved beyond 50 feet before restarting your engine.
- Minimize your impact on other hunters and anglers using the trail. Respect seasonal closures and avoid operating at peak-hunting hours. If retrieving game with an OHV, do it at midday to minimize disturbance to others. Cross streams where designated and at a 90-degree angle wherever possible.
- Leave gates and fences as you found them, and remember it's illegal to travel or fish on private property without the owner's permission.
- Leave areas cleaner than found. A plastic trash bag and bungee cords can be helpful tools to keep land clean.
- Obey trail markers and closure signs. If it's posted closed, stay out!
- Keep your OHV quiet. Excessive sound stresses wildlife and annoys property owners and other recreational users. It also contributes to your own riding fatigue. Less sound allows you to ride more comfortably and others to enjoy their outdoor experience.
- Approach livestock or wildlife on the trail slowly. Sometimes, range cattle will pass the afternoon under shade trees along the trail. If you startle them, they may run directly into your path. Give them time to react and as wide a berth as possible, and remember, it is illegal to pursue or harass livestock.
- Never mix riding with alcohol or drugs. It's not only illegal, it's dangerous.
- Familiarize yourself with all of New Mexico's laws and requirements for OHV use by visiting: <https://ridenm.dgf.nm.gov> or telephoning: **505-222-4728**.

Glossary of Terms

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

Active Duty Military (N.M. Resident): Current active duty in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard for a minimum period of 90 days. Members of the National Guard or Military Reserve Component and commissioned officers of the U.S. Public Health Service or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who have completed a minimum of six years of continuous honorable service.

Angling: To take or attempt to take fish by using hook and line with the line either held by hand or attached to a pole, rod or other device that is held in the hand or attended.

Artificial Fly or Lure: A lure is made of wood, metal or plastic. A fly is made with fur, feathers or man-made materials to resemble or simulate insects, baitfish or other foods. Live or dead arthropods and annelids are not included.

Artificial Light: Artificial light may be used to take all species of game fish. However, it is illegal to shine light where game or livestock may be while in possession of a sporting arm which includes bows. Violators face loss of license privileges as well as criminal prosecution. Therefore, if lights are used the possession of a firearm or bow is not recommended.

Aquatic Invasive Species: Nonnative harmful and undesirable plants, animals, insects or organisms (page 35).

Bag Limit: Number of fish that may be caught and kept in one day.

Baitfish: Live or dead nongame fish species used as bait. Nongame fish species include: common carp, fathead minnow, golden shiner, shad, red shiner and white sucker. Goldfish, dead or alive, cannot not be used as bait in any water. Commercially packaged and processed fish that are dead are not considered baitfish. See page 7

Bow Fishing: Taking or attempting to take game fish with barbed arrows discharged by a bow or crossbow from above the surface of the water. Arrows must be attached by string, line or rope to facilitate the retrieval of fish. Game fish may be taken by bow fishing only in lakes and reservoirs open to fishing. Bag and length limits for bow fishing and angling are the same. Bow fishing is not allowed in any Special Trout Water, river, stream or Trophy Bass Water (for largemouth bass). Local ordinances or prohibitions may apply at a specific location or water, and the local managing agency should be contacted prior to bow fishing.

Chumming: Attracting fish with organic materials that will not injure aquatic life. Chumming is allowed in all waters, except Special Trout Waters. In any Special Trout Water it is illegal to disturb aquatic plants, rocks or sediment to attract fish or to angle in the immediate vicinity of such disturbance.

Dead Bait: Sometimes called 'cutbait,' portions of some species may be used only in designated waters (see page 7).

Disabled Veteran License: Annual reduced-fee game hunting and fishing licenses or lifetime free privileges are available to residents who are disabled veterans of the armed services (page 5).

Drainage: All waters within a watershed including tributaries, headwaters, lakes, ponds and other water bodies.

Game Fish: Bass (largemouth, smallmouth, striped, white), bluegills, catfish, crappie, perch, pike, salmon, sunfish, tiger muskie, trout and walleye.

Game-Hunting and Fishing License: An annual combination Game-Hunting and Fishing License is valid for fishing in addition to hunting small game. Licenses may be purchased at license vendors statewide, including all NMDGF offices, toll-free: **1-888-248-6866** and online: onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Habitat Management and Access Validation: A Habitat Management and Access Validation must be purchased and possessed each license year by anglers, trappers and hunters. This fee is used to: lease private lands for public use; provide public access to landlocked public land and provide improvement, maintenance, development and operation of property for fish and wildlife habitat management. This fee is not required for anglers, hunters and trappers 17 years of age and younger or in conjunction with any free fishing license or privilege.

Habitat Stamp: All anglers 12 years of age and older and all hunters must have a current Habitat Stamp to use U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service (where fishing is allowed), and Bureau of Land Management lands in New Mexico. Only one stamp is required each license year (April 1–March 31) to fish or hunt on these lands. The stamp is not required on other public property (such as state, county or municipal lands and parks), other federal lands (such as the Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers and military reservations) or on private property. Funds from the stamp are used to maintain and improve wildlife habitat. This fee is not required for anglers 11 years of age or younger, or in conjunction with any free fishing license or privilege.

Handicapped Fishing Licenses: See License Information, page 3.

Ice Fishing: Ice fishing is allowed on all lakes during open-season hours, except Monastery Lake, Santa Cruz Lake and Springer Lake. Commission-owned or managed lakes may be closed to ice fishing during unsafe conditions. For conditions and information, visit online: wildlife.dgf.nm.gov.

License Year: April 1, 2025 and ending March 31, 2026. A new license is required every April 1.

Landowner Permission: It is illegal to fish on private land without possession of valid written permission from the landowner whose property the angler is fishing, unless otherwise allowed by rule. The landowner's signature including date and telephone number on a valid license, landowner authorization or other paper shall constitute valid written permission.

Native American Lands: Permission from the tribal government for each reservation must be obtained before fishing. A New Mexico fishing license is not required on reservation waters (Cochiti Lake requires a fishing license). However, official tribal documentation showing lawful possession must accompany all fish or game taken on a reservation.

Glossary of Terms

Licenses and General Information: **1-888-248-6866**

NMDGF: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

Over-the-Counter (OTC) License: A license available from vendors, NMDGF offices and online: onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Possession Limit: Total number of fish an individual may possess while in camp, vehicle or home.

Resident: See New Mexico Residency Requirements, page 4.

Second Rod Validation: Allows anglers to use two fishing rods in all waters. Bag and possession limits remain the same (page 3).


Single Barbless Hook: A single hook manufactured without barbs or which has any or all barbs removed or bent completely closed.

Snagging: Taking fish by hooking the body rather than the mouth. Kokanee salmon are the only fish that may be legally snagged, and only during Special Kokanee Snagging Season (page 15). If another species is caught by snagging, it must be immediately returned to the water.

Spearfishing: Bag and length limits for spearfishing and angling are the same. Legal means of taking include spears, gigs and arrows with barbs. Scuba divers and snorkelers may spear fish only in impoundments (reservoirs, lakes and ponds) open to fishing. Spearfishing is not allowed in any Special Trout Water, river, stream or Trophy Bass Water (for largemouth bass).

U. S. Military (N.M. Resident): Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, or their Reserve Components, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, and commissioned members of the U.S. Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Veteran (N.M. Resident): New Mexico resident veteran with a minimum of 90 days active duty service in the U.S. Military, or six continuous years in the National Guard, Military Reserve Component, or U.S. Public Health Service or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Veterans must have been honorably discharged from military service.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a Rio Grande cutthroat trout. The fish is held horizontally, showing its side profile. It has a brownish-gold body with numerous dark spots and a lighter, almost white, patch on its side. The background is a blurred white surface, possibly a bucket or a boat's interior.

*Rio Grande cutthroat trout, Jack's Creek.
NMDGF photo*

Make a Difference . . .

<https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/home/contact/wildlife-conservation-volunteer/>

Become a Wildlife Conservation Volunteer!

Volunteers play an important role to help the Department provide programs and services across the state. From wildlife conservation and aquatic education to off-road vehicle safety and habitat restoration, volunteers share their time and talent to help provide programs and support initiatives that otherwise might not be possible.

If you enjoy New Mexico's great outdoors, value and support wildlife conservation and would like to give back to your community, consider becoming a Wildlife Conservation Volunteer.

For information about the variety of volunteer opportunities available, visit us online: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/home/contact/wildlife-conservation-volunteer/> or telephone: 505-222-4704.



Want the best spot for your next fishing trip?



**Check out our new interactive
fishing waters map and fishing planner.**

- ▶ Fishing locations throughout New Mexico
 - ▶ Fish species available
 - ▶ Facilities, accessibility, boat ramps
 - ▶ General regulations
- ▶ Best times to catch fish by species and water

Go to <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/fishing/fishing-conditions-trip-planner/>



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations