



Fishing and Boating



Mount Rainier National Park isn't known for its fishing, so don't be disappointed if you fail to catch fish, or if the fish are small! Only experienced anglers do well and then only during limited times of the season. Rivers and streams are open from late-May or early-June through late-October, and most lakes are ice-free July through October.

Several species of fish listed under the Endangered Species Act are present in park streams. Native resident trout are also found in park streams. Therefore, we encourage you to use barbless hooks and artificial lures and to release uninjured fish. No fishing license is required in the park. However, if you plan to overnight in the backcountry, you will need a wilderness permit.

Regulations

Park fishing limits and seasons generally follow those of Washington State. Anglers should be familiar with the differences and specific closures listed here.

Fishing for bull trout, Chinook, and steelhead, federally listed species under the Endangered Species Act, is strictly prohibited.

Limits

Lakes: no limits.

For all other waters: daily catch is 6 pounds of fish (plus 1 additional fish) not to exceed 12 fish.

No minimum size

Possession: 1 day's limit

Protect Your Park

For the protection of the park and for the enjoyment of others, the following activities are strictly prohibited:

- Fishing for bull trout or Dolly Varden
- Fishing for chinook or coastal cutthroat
- Possession or use of live or dead bait fish, amphibians, non-preserved fish eggs, or roe
- Chumming or placing any substance (fish

eggs, food, drugs, etc.) in waters for the purpose of attracting or feeding fish

- Fishing with nets, seines, traps, drugs or explosives, or any means other than hook and line with rod or line being closely attended
- Digging for bait
- Placing refuse of any kind in park waters

Boating

Motorized boating is prohibited in the park. Non-motorized boating is permitted on all

lakes except **Frozen Lake, Reflection Lakes, Ghost Lake, Shadow Lake, and Tipsoo Lake.**

Closed Waters

The following areas are closed to fishing:

- Klickitat Creek above the White River entrance water supply intake
- Ipsut Creek above the Ipsut Creek campground water supply intake
- Laughingwater Creek above the Ohanapecosh water supply intake
- Frozen Lake
- Reflection Lakes
- Shadow Lake
- Tipsoo Lake

- Ghost Lake
- Edith Creek basin above the Paradise water supply

The Ohanapecosh River and its tributaries are open to **fly fishing only**. Using bait or lures (other than artificial flies) is not permitted.

To protect sensitive vegetation and soils, **off-trail travel is prohibited** in the Paradise, Sunrise, and Tipsoo Lake areas.

Native and Non-native Fish

Park lakes didn't support a fish population prior to stocking in the early 1900s. The NPS stopped stocking in 1973 because of the negative effect non-native fish had on natural aquatic ecosystems including effects on local amphibian populations. However, at least 27 lakes still contain reproducing populations of introduced fish, including eastern brook trout, rainbow trout, and cutthroat trout.

Salmon such as coho and chinook were historically present in park waters. However, fish passage is now blocked by dams on the Cowlitz, Nisqually, Puyallup, and White Rivers. Fish are trucked around some of these dams. The Carbon River is the only major drainage in the park without constructed dams blocking fish passage.

Checklist of Fish

A checklist of fish found in the park include the following:

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| • Bull trout | <i>Salvelinus confluentus</i> |
| • Dolly Varden | <i>Salvelinus malma</i> |
| • Eastern brook trout | <i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i> |
| • Cutthroat trout | <i>Oncorhynchus clarkii</i> |
| • Kokanee salmon | <i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i> (Mowich Lake only) |
| • Rainbow or steelhead trout | <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> |
| • Pink salmon | <i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i> |
| • Coho salmon | <i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i> |
| • Chinook salmon | <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> |
| • Mountain whitefish | <i>Prosopium williamsoni</i> |
| • Sculpin | <i>Cottus spp.</i> |



Bull trout