

NC FISHING REGULATIONS



HATCHERY SUPPORTED WATERS

These waters make up over half of all trout waters in North Carolina. They cover approximately 1,100 miles of streams. Most of these streams receive at least one stocking per year of catchable size fish. Here is a breakdown of the Hatchery Supported Regulations:

- Season is open from August 1, 2010 to February 28, 2011
- No fishing allowed from March 1, 2011 to April 1, 2011
- Then from 7:00am April 2, 2011 to February 28, 2012 the season is open
- There is no bait or lure restriction
- There is no size limit restriction
- There is a seven (7) fish per day creel limit



WILD TROUT, NATURAL BAIT WATERS

Here is a breakdown of the Wild Trout, Natural Bait Waters Regulations:

- Season is open year-round
- You can use a single hook artificial lure (or)
- You can use a single hook with natural bait
- You can only keep four (4) fish
- The four fish must be at least seven (7) inches long
- It is unlawful to use more than one line per person
- It is unlawful to fish from one-half hour after sunset, to one-half hour before sunrise
- It is unlawful to take fish bait or bait fish from "Wild Trout, Natural Bait Waters"
- It is unlawful to place hatchery-reared fish into a wild trout stream or move wild fish from one stream to another on game lands without prior written authorization from the NCWRC



WILD WATERS

Here is a breakdown of the Wild Waters Regulations:

- Season is open year-round
- You can only use a single hook artificial lure
- You can only keep four (4) fish
- The four fish must be at least seven inches long
- It is unlawful to possess natural bait while fishing
- It is unlawful to use more than one line per person
- It is unlawful to fish from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise
- It is unlawful to take fish bait or bait fish from "Wild Waters"
- It is unlawful to place hatchery-reared fish into a wild trout stream or move wild fish from one stream to another on game lands without prior written authorization from the NCWRC



DELAYED HARVEST WATERS

These are stocked trout waters open to fishing year-round, but trout caught between October 1 and the first Saturday in June must be immediately released. You cannot keep or have in your possession any trout while fishing these waters during this time. Single-hook, artificial lures or flies are required during the October-June period. Beginning the first Saturday in June, harvest of trout from these waters is allowed, and anglers can use natural bait. “Hatchery Supported” trout regulations apply during this time. Beginning October 1, these waters revert back to “Delayed Harvest” trout regulations. Harvest of trout is again prohibited and anglers must use single hook artificial lures or flies. Here is a breakdown of the Delayed Harvest Regulations:

From October 1, 2010 to June 3, 2011:

- You may only use single hook artificial lures
- No fish may be harvested or possessed
- No fishing allowed AT ALL between 1/2 hour after sunset on June 3, 2011 and 6:00am on June 4, 2011
- At 6:00am, June 4, 2011, these waters open to fishing for youths under 16 years old under Hatchery Supported Regulations
- At 12:00pm on June 4, 2011, these waters open for all anglers under Hatchery Supported Regulations
- No bait restrictions
- No minimum length limit
- Seven trout per day creel limit



CATCH & RELEASE, ARTIFICIAL LURES ONLY WATERS

Fish may be caught but you must release them back and you can only use artificial lures in doing so. Here is a breakdown of the Catch and Release, Artificial Lures Regulations:

- Season is open year-round
- No fish may be harvested or possessed
- Only artificial lures having one single hook may be used
- It is unlawful to possess natural bait on your person while fishing
- It is unlawful to use more than one line per person
- It is unlawful to fish from one-half hour after sunset, to one-half hour before sunrise on any Catch and Release stream located on Game Lands
- It is unlawful to take fish bait or bait fish from “Catch and Release Waters”
- It is unlawful to move wild fish from one stream to another on game lands without prior written authorization from the NCWRC



CATCH & RELEASE, ARTIFICIAL FLIES ONLY WATERS

You must release fish once caught and you can only use artificial flies in doing so. Here is a breakdown of the Catch and Release, Artificial Flies regulations:

- Season is open year-round
- No fish may be harvested or possessed
- Only artificial flies having one single hook may be used
- It is unlawful to possess natural bait while fishing
- It is unlawful to use more than one line per person
- It is unlawful to fish from one-half hour after sunset, to one-half hour before sunrise on any Catch and Release stream located on Game Lands
- It is unlawful to take fish bait or bait fish from “Catch and Release Waters”
- It is unlawful to move wild fish from one stream to another on game lands without prior written authorization from the NCWRC