



Fishing for Regs

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<p>Objectives Participating youth and adults will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become familiar with their state/regional fishing regulations guidebook. 2. Use a regulations booklet to determine specific regulations and information (i.e. seasons, size restrictions, bag limits, closed/open bodies of water, license requirements, where to get more information, etc.) for a given fish or other aquatic species. 3. Describe specific regulations (bag limit, slot limit, lawful fishing methods, unlawful activities, etc.). 4. Explain why and how regulations are used as a management tool. 5. Describe the difference between laws and ethics. 6. Have fun while learning. <p>Roles for Teen and Junior Leaders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist with locating regulations and information in the state/region/local guide booklet. 2. Assist with describing the regulations vocabulary to younger members. <p>Potential Parental Involvement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See “Roles for Teen and Junior 	<p>Best Time: While planning a fishing trip</p> <p>Best Location: Any</p> <p>Time Required: 1 hour</p> <p>Equipment/Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your state/local fishing regulations booklet. • The U.S. Dept. of the Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program booklet, <i>Restoring America’s Sport Fisheries</i> (optional) <p>Safety Considerations: None</p> <p>References:</p> <p>Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (Dingell-Johnson and the Wallup-Breaux Amendment). 1998. http://www.fsw.gov/r9fedaid/sfr/fasfr.html</p> <p>Kohler, C.C., and W.A. Hubert, eds. 1993. <i>Inland fisheries management in North America</i>. American Fisheries Society, Bethesda, MD.</p> <p>Schmidt, B. 1997. <i>Advanced sport fishing and aquatic resources handbook</i>. American Sportfishing Assoc., Kendall/Hunt. Dubuque, IA. 135 pp.</p> <p>Staton, R.D. Jr. 1992. <i>Basic fishing:</i></p>
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<p>Leaders” above.</p> <p>2. Describe regulation changes, which have occurred in their lifetime and assist with a discussion about why regulations have changed and continue to need modification.</p> <p>Youth Development Objectives: Participating youth will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice referencing skills. 2. Develop planning skills, which can help them enjoy future fishing and outdoor activities. 3. Enhance their vocabulary. <p>Evaluation Activities/Suggestions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Quiz” youth on their knowledge and understanding of the state fishing regulations by conducting mini-versions of this activity (i.e. while out fishing). <p><small>¹ Kelly S. Carter, Graduate Research Assistant Michigan State University, Dept. Of Fisheries & Wildlife, East Lansing MI 48824-1222</small></p>	<p><i>Conservation education series.</i> The Missouri Department of Conservation, Jefferson City, MO 90 pp.</p> <p>Western Regional Environmental Education Council. 1992. <i>Project WILD</i>. Bethesda, MD.</p>
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<p>Background Information:</p> <p>The following glossary of fish and regulations terms may help teach fishing regulations:</p> <p>Adipose Fin - a fleshy fin situated on the back of certain fishes (trout, salmon, whitefish, smelt and catfish) behind the dorsal fin.</p> <p>Allocation - assignment of aquatic resources for fish production and other water uses. This includes providing sufficient numbers of fishes to escape harvest to perpetuate the fishery as well as assigning a portion of the annual allowable yield to a group or individual.</p> <p>Anal/Ventral Fin - the fin situated behind the anus or vent.</p>	<p>Marsh - this is a broad wetland area that supports a wide variety of aquatic plant life, has less open water than true ponds, is shallow with most having no visible outlet. A wide variety of warm and cool water fishes may be found. The marsh is a step from a pond, to marsh, to swamp, to eventual solid land and possible forest emergence.</p> <p>Marine - the saltwater environment including both plant and animal organisms.</p> <p>Maximum Size Limit - a size limit which prohibits fish larger than the size specified to be harvested. These limits are rare, and are usually used when there are relatively few</p>
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<p>Angler - any person who fishes.</p> <p>Annual Creel/Bag Limit - a maximum amount of total harvest of specific species by individual anglers.</p> <p>Artificial Bait - man-made baits that tend to resemble minnows, baitfish, crayfish, frogs, insects, worms, mice, birds, or other assorted fish food.</p> <p>Bag Limit - a term used by some fisheries agencies to tell the number of fish by species that can be legally caught in one day. Bag (or creel) limits may also have size or weight restrictions on particular species as well.</p> <p>Bait - an item/substance used to entice fish to bite a hook.</p> <p>Barb - the spur found on the point of most fish hooks that serves to increase the holding power of the hook.</p> <p>Catch and Release - regulations which require the angler to release caught fish live back to the body of water immediately. Used to reduce fishing mortality, assist declining fish populations to recover to sustainable levels, to maintain high catch rates and increase the catch of larger fish.</p> <p>Caudal Fin - the tail fin of a fish, primarily used for forward motion.</p> <p>DNR - an abbreviation for the Department of Natural Resources, the agency in many states responsible for fisheries management and conservation.</p> <p>Dorsal Fin - the main fin on the dorsal (back) surface of fishes, used for balance, steering and positioning.</p> <p>Estuaries - part of the wide lower course of</p>	<p>sexually mature adults or where large numbers of smaller fish exist. Another reason for maximum size limits is to maintain a certain number of large predator species (such as northern pike). Predator species help to control smaller prey fish as well assure enough large fish for breeding.</p> <p>Minimum Size Limit - a size limit which prohibits fish smaller than the size specified to be harvested. For example, a 14” size limit on large mouth bass means that fish under 14” may not be harvested.</p> <p>Native Species - self-producing plant or animal species indigenous to a particular ecosystem, region or area.</p> <p>Natural Bait - bait that is organic or common to fish’s habitat.</p> <p>Net - a mesh woven material used to capture fish.</p> <p>Open Season - the period of time when fishes may legally be caught.</p> <p>Paired Fins - equal but opposite small fins on most fish, located on the ventral (belly) side or up to about the lateral line.</p> <p>Panfish - a small fish such as a bluegill, sunfish, or crappie which fits into a frying pan.</p> <p>Pelvic Fins - a pair of ventrally situated fins located in some species below the pectoral fins or in other species between the pectoral fins and anal fins.</p> <p>PFD - an abbreviation for Personal Floatation Device, the technical term for a life vest.</p> <p>Poacher - a person who deliberately takes fish or game in violation of the law for personal use or profit.</p> <p>Ponds - ponds are shallow water collecting</p>
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<p>a river where its current is met and influenced by the tides. Water is saline-brackish to moderately fresh at varying times.</p> <p>Exotic Species - animal and plant species that are not naturally occurring in an area that have been introduced either accidentally or on purpose.</p> <p>Fisheries Management - the effort to use wild populations for human use without destroying them.</p> <p>Fresh Water - water that contains little or no salt.</p> <p>Gear Restrictions - regulations which limit the type or size of gear which may be used to catch fish. Flies-only and net mesh size limits are examples of restrictions on angling gear. Gear restrictions are also imposed to enforce principles of fair chase (by assuring that fish are captured individually and with sufficient difficulty), to prevent the spread of bait species into waters where they may be undesirable, and to reduce mortality of fish that may not be legally harvested.</p> <p>Closed Season - the period of time when fishes may not legally be caught. Closed seasons are often used when one or more of the following conditions occur: when harvesting spawning fish may prevent saturation of habitat with young fish; when fish populations are subject to excessive harvest during spawning concentrations; when regulating mixed populations; or to protect the angler from danger.</p> <p>Commercial Fishing - catching fish to sell for a living.</p> <p>Conservation - the wise use of resources.</p> <p>Creel - a fish basket or personal fish carrier</p>	<p>bodies with depths above the maximum sunlight penetration zone. Most do not have a major outlet.</p> <p>Pool - water of considerable depth in proportion to the size of the stream. Pools generally have slowly flowing water, smooth surface, but can often have a swift turbulent area where the water enters them.</p> <p>Possession Limit - the angler must stop fishing after reaching the allowed limit (often one-two times the daily bag or creel limit). Possession limits provide a target for anglers expectations, help distribute the catch more equitably, and may prevent over harvest. Aids in the enforcement of daily limits (especially when anglers fish all night).</p> <p>Predator Fish - a fish which feeds on other fish.</p> <p>Prey Fish - a fish eaten by another fish (or animal).</p> <p>Quota - maximum allowable catch of a certain species, based on a sustained harvest.</p> <p>Reservoir - impoundment. A lake where water is collected and stored for use, usually behind a dam.</p> <p>Resident Sportfishing License - a license required by most state residents. Ages vary with state and provinces.</p> <p>Salt Water - water with salt in it, such as the ocean or the sea. See Marine.</p> <p>Sanctuary - an area that is closed to all fishing for a given period of time, usually to allow fish to spawn or stocked fish to establish a self-sustained population. Sanctuaries also are set up to protect research projects.</p> <p>Season - the period of time during a year that a</p>
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<p>used to carry fish when fishing on or near shore.</p> <p>Creel Limit - a term used by some fisheries agencies to tell the number of fish by species that can be legally caught in one day. Creel (or bag) limits may also have size or weight restrictions on particular species as well. See bag limit.</p> <p>Dip Nets - nets without walls, which are lifted vertically.</p> <p>Gill Net - a commercial net that has a mesh size designed to catch fish by the gills, preventing them from backing away and escaping. Different mesh sizes are used for different fish species and sizes.</p> <p>Habitat - the local environment in which a plant or animal lives; includes the food, water, space and shelter necessary for survival.</p> <p>Habitat Rehabilitation - the restoration of degraded fish habitat to its former condition so that fish and other animals can survive and reproduce.</p> <p>Hybrid - an organism resulting from the crossing of two species.</p> <p>Impoundment - a natural or artificial place where water is collected and stored for use. See reservoir.</p> <p>Impoundment Gear - nets that catch/ keep fishes alive.</p> <p>Lakes - somewhat similar to a pond, one variance is the size - lakes are bigger and usually have a distinct outlet. Another distinction, lakes are deeper with areas below the sunlight penetration line.</p> <p>Landing Net - a small net on a frame and</p>	<p>particular species of fish may be harvested (caught).</p> <p>Seasonal Creel/Bag Limit - a maximum amount of total harvest of specific species by individual anglers.</p> <p>Slot Size - a regulatory technique which protects fish of a certain (usually prime breeding) size from harvest. Fish smaller or larger than the slot may be caught.</p> <p>Snagging - casting a heavy sinker and large treble hook with no bait. The angler tries to hook the body of a fish by making strong pulls on the rod.</p> <p>Spaghetti Tag - a long, thin tag, resembling spaghetti, used to mark fish for migration and other studies.</p> <p>Spawning - the act of depositing eggs or discharging milt (sperm).</p> <p>Spawning Grounds - the area where spawning occurs.</p> <p>Species - a biological classification of plants & animals.</p> <p>Sport Fishing - fishing for recreation and not for profit or commercial reasons.</p> <p>Subsistence Fishing - fishing for food rather than for sport.</p> <p>Tackle - a name given to fishing equipment or gear.</p> <p>Tagging - attaching a permanent identification marker to a fish with the intention of gathering information on the movement, growth rate and/or size of fish populations and stocking success. See marking.</p> <p>Terminal Tackle - the hooks, weights,</p>
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<p>handle that is used to land hooked fish.</p> <p>Lateral Line - a linear series of sensory pores and tubes extending along the sides of a fish and certain other aquatic animals.</p> <p>Length Limit - a minimum or maximum size of fish that can legally be kept.</p> <p>Live Bait - a bait that is fished while the bait is alive, such as minnow, worms, and crayfish.</p> <p>Live Well - an aerated container, oftentimes built into a boat, that is used for storing fish to keep them alive.</p> <p>Lure - artificial bait; sometimes called a “plug.”</p> <p>Marking - attaching a permanent identification marker to a fish (such as ink or fin clip) and then releasing the fish with the intention of gathering information on the movement, growth rate and/or size of fish populations as well as fish stocking success. See tagging.</p>	<p>swivels, and the fishing tackle attached on or near the end of your fishing line.</p> <p>Test - line strength as stated on the label.</p> <p>Trapnet - a fully-enclosed, square net bag with a funnel opening that is used to catch and hold fish without killing them.</p> <p>Treble - a hook with three points used on many lures and for bait fishing.</p> <p>Tributaries - smaller streams which feed into larger streams or rivers.</p> <p>Trolling - a method by which lures/ bait are trailed on the end of fishing line, behind or to the side of a moving boat.</p> <p>Weir - a channel or fencing of stones or sticks placed in</p>
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<p>Lesson Outline</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>I. Discuss your next fishing outing</p>	<p>Application</p> <p>When you begin planning for your next fishing outing, DISCUSS with the group what type of fishing you will be doing, what fish species you will target and where you will fish. The group will be getting excited and soon you will likely find yourself talking about what type of gear and tackle you will need.</p> <p>REMINDE the group that their first consideration when making fishing plans is to CHECK THE REGULATIONS to assure that the season is open for the particular species of fish they are targeting.</p>
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<p>- Ask about regulations</p>	<p>ASK “what’s a regulation?” ASK youth why we need to think about regulations - “what’s the point?”</p> <p>TELL A STORY about problems associated with not knowing what the regulations are (getting fined, for example. Feeling badly that you may have harmed the resource by inadvertently neglecting regulations or infringed upon another anglers rights--hint, try to think BEYOND just poaching, consequences of fines, but how it affects how others view violators and how it may affect public opinion of anglers and the tradition or sport of fishing. See angling ethics for more ideas and information)</p> <p>ASK youth what type of fishing regulations they are going to need to adhere to during their outing.</p> <p>ASK youth if they know what the creel/bag limit is for the fish species they plan to fish for; ask what the size limits are and any other regulations they may be aware of.</p>
<p>- Discuss Regulations</p>	<p>After determining how much youth already know about the specific regulations in the area, begin a DISCUSSION about the purpose of regulations. You may want to read the lesson narrative to them at this time.</p>
<p>II. Read Narrative</p>	<p>READ the lesson NARRATIVE, or begin quizzing youth to determine if they know the definitions of specific regulations (such as limits, seasons, etc.). <i>See Glossary in Background Information section of this activity.</i></p>
<p>- list examples of regulations</p>	<p>Have them try to LIST as many regulations as they can think of (see narrative and your state/regional fishing regulations guide for specific information) and ask youth to define these regulations in their own terms.</p>

<p>- Define regulations as needed</p> <p>II. Responsibility to know and obey regulations.</p> <p>- Ask how they'd act.</p> <p>- States publish regulations.</p> <p>IV. Ethics versus Regulations</p>	<p><i>etc</i></p> <p>Some states DEFINE many of the regulations in their guidebooks. Help youth to define regulations by having them use the book to look up the answers in the guide books. Refer to the glossary located in the background of this activity for more assistance in defining and understanding regulations.</p> <p>When finished reviewing the regulations, be sure to explain to the group that it is the RESPONSIBILITY of every person to know the rules and regulations that apply to fishing and protecting our resources.</p> <p>Emphasize that even though the members may not need to purchase a fishing license due to their age, it is still necessary that they know, understand and comply with the law.</p> <p>ASK how they might handle a situation where another angler did not know or obey regulations.</p> <p>Explain that each year, your local fisheries regulations agencies PUBLISH a synopsis of the fishing regulations. In order to manage the fish populations and food webs of our waters, biologists need all of us to follow and support these rules. Fishing regulations are not just made up.</p> <p>They are the product of research. As well as paying close attention and following the regulations, it is also our responsibility to encourage others to do so too.</p> <p>EXPLAIN how personal ethics may be different from Regulations. Explain that anglers sometimes find themselves in a circumstance where the regulations do not always pose the <i>most right</i> answer. Though one should always make every attempt to comply with the law, oftentimes we have a responsibility to go beyond the law —</p>
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	<p>(beyond, not necessarily <i>above</i> it!) considering what is <i>most right</i> for the resource, sport of fishing and to our own personal values. For example, the law may provide for keeping 6 of a particular species. Yet, you know that population numbers are down this year. Moreover, you're not interested in eating more than a couple of fish. Do you take a full creel or do you choose to practice catch and release fishing or do you stop fishing altogether? In this manner, laws are often considered to be the lowest common denominator — they set the ground rules, the bottom line for fishing — while ethics often provide for higher considerations and more critical decision-making. See the 4-H Sportfishing “Angling Ethics” activities for more detailed information about teaching angling ethics.</p>
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Lesson Narrative

Generally, the purpose of fishing regulations is to protect and enhance a fishery and help all anglers enjoy success. The fact that most anglers must have a fishing license is an example of a fishing regulation. In most states, those who are under or over certain ages do not need a license (and some states do not require a license for salt-water fishing). The sale of annual and daily licenses provides revenue for the agency and a means to collect information from anglers. Special stamps and licenses may be issued for certain bodies of water or species, such as trout stamps and wilderness permits. This “user pay” principle means that the sale of special licenses and stamps can help to pay for specific programs which may cost the management agency more to provide, trout stocking, for example. These fees usually are ear-marked to directly benefit programs, such as a trout stamp fee designated for trout stocking or trout habitat improvement projects.

Other regulations may:

- Set a limit on how many fish of a certain species you can take in one day (bag/creel limit).
- Set a starting and an ending date for a fishing season (open/closed seasons).
- Set a limit on the number of fishing lines and hooks that you are allowed to use (gear limit).
- Set size limits for fish (minimum, maximum, slot).

Some states have fishing regulations that apply throughout the state. Other states may have different regulations for different bodies of water. No matter where you fish, you are responsible for knowing what the regulations are for the areas you are fishing.

There are good reasons for fishing regulations. All are intended to conserve and improve fish populations. Regulations are used to protect fish populations from over-exploitation. In fact, fisheries biologists often study bodies of water and suggest a new regulation if it will help keep the fish population healthy. For example, if there is a fishing season in your state, it may have been introduced to protect fish during spawning or as a way of limiting the number of fish caught on heavily fished waters. Size limits are also meant to protect fish of spawning size before they are caught. Enabling them to spawn at least once before they are large enough to keep.

Fishing regs are also intended to make it possible for more people to share in a fishery. Daily fish limits are meant to keep people from taking too many fish at one time. This helps to distribute or allocate the catch among anglers. Those who do take more fish than the regulation allows or take fish out of season are considered poachers. Conservation officers work to enforce them. You can help conservation officers protect your fish, forests, and wildlife by obeying the regs and reporting any violations that you see. Some states have a special telephone number for reporting fish and game violations. Check your regulation guidebook to see.

As the dynamics of fish populations and communities are better understood, regulations are accepted as a means of enhancing, as well as protecting fish stocks. Size limit restrictions, for example, are often used to regulate fish harvest and can be used to adjust size composition of fish stocks so more fish are in the desirable size range. For example, bluegill and other panfish are often quite abundant. When populations are too dense, the bluegill can become stunted (which can occur when population densities and competition for food are high), resulting in many small fish. Predator species can help to control abundant prey populations. Large size limits on predators such as pike can help to ensure that there are enough large pike to prey upon the abundant panfish. Also, anglers are more likely to enjoy success in catching large pike and panfish alike.

Knowing the purpose of fishing regulations is important to the conservation of our resources. A lack of conservation practices by only a few can affect the beauty of the outdoors, the pleasure received from all water-related sports, and the quality of the angling experience.

Financing Our Aquatic Resources

Do you know who pays for most of the research and other efforts to improve sport fisheries? Anglers do — the same people who use and enjoy them. Some money comes from the sale of fishing licenses and special-use stamps. Other money comes from a special government program, called the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. Some people refer to this program as “Dingell-Johnson” or “Wallup-Breaux” after the legislators who helped to pass and amend this legislation (D-J in 1950 and W-B in 1984).

When an angler buys fishing tackle and a boater buys fuel, a special excise tax (currently at 10%) has been figured into the price by manufacturers (not at the sales counter). This money is then collected from the manufacturer or importer and is paid to the U.S. Department of Treasury and transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for distribution among the states. The fund has helped finance building fishing and boating access sites, managing fisheries, fisheries research, or for teaching people about the environment, conservation, water safety, and fishing. In 1997, over a quarter of a billion dollars (\$273 million) were distributed for such purposes.

Summary Activity

Participating youth will review their state/local fishing regulations by conducting a regulations/information “scavenger hunt” using the state regulations guide book. Youth will become familiar with using the guidebook and will be able to define different regulations (e.g., minimum size limits, seasons, size restrictions) and describe why regulations are useful for fisheries management.

Exhibit or Sharing Suggestions

1. Create a “dictionary” of fishing regulation terminology and display at a fair or distribute among your group.
2. Create a display or model using various fish species to illustrate specific regulations pertaining to different species (i.e. size restrictions for different species).
3. Create a display which describes the process of establishing fishing regulations in your state. Contact your local fisheries regulation agency for more information.

Community Service and Giving Back Activities

1. Be lawful, purchase a fishing license if required!
2. Report regulation violators to the proper authorities such as your local law enforcement agencies (resource agency conservation officers, police, or sheriff).
3. You can do your part to protect and conserve aquatic populations and habitat by knowing and obeying state/local regulations.
4. If you catch a tagged or fin-clipped fish, report it to your state’s natural resources agency.
5. Attend an agency or legislation open-forum meeting, get involved and support good conservation laws and programs.
6. Participate in a fish population study (see 4-H Sportfishing Curricula “Estimating Fish Populations” for more detailed information).
7. After fishing, leave the fishing spot cleaner than you found it. Never litter and do your best to remove any trash left by others (see 4-H Sportfishing Curricula “Limit Your Litter”).

Extensions or Ways of Learning More

1. Interview a biologist responsible for recommending regulations or a conservation officer responsible for enforcing regulations. Conduct the “Fishing for Stories” activity located in the People and Fish section of the 4-H Sportfishing Curricula. Remember to

take photographs and tape-record the interview and write up an article for your local newspaper or to display at a fair.

2. Invite a local conservation officer to a meeting to discuss fishing regulations.

Encourage the officer to share some interesting stories from his/her experience.

Encourage members to ask how they can help.

3. Participate in a fish population study (see 4-H Sportfishing Curricula “Estimating Fish Populations” for more detailed information).

4. Conduct the Angling Ethics activities (“Know Your Code”; “Dilemma Exercises”; “Take Home Your Limit of Litter”) in the 4-H Sportfishing Curricula. Ask youth to describe the differences between regulations and ethics.

Links to Other Programs

4-H Sportfishing Curricula: “Estimating Fish Populations”; “The Commons Dilemma”; “Fishing for Stories”; Angling Ethic “Dilemma Exercises,” “Know Your Code,”; and “Take Home Your Limit Your Litter”

Project WILD: “Know Your Legislation”; “Who Pays For What”