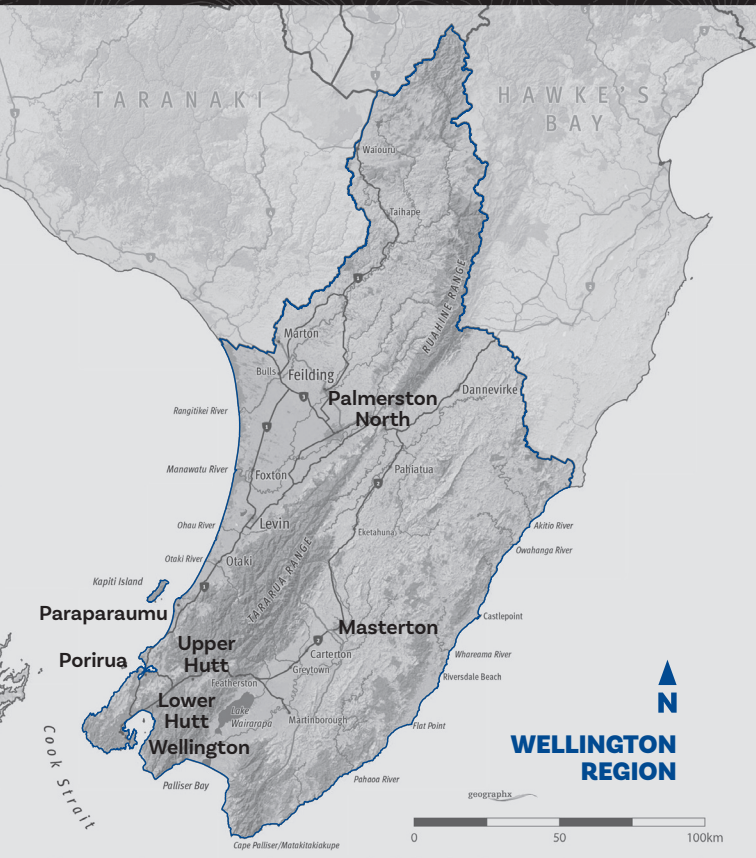


WELLINGTON

Sports Fishing Regulations 2025/2026



Wellington Office: 292 Featherston Street,
Palmerston North 4410

Postal Address: PO Box 1325, Palmerston North 4440

Phone: (06) 359 0409

Email: wellington@fishandgame.org.nz



SCAN FOR
ALL REGIONS
REGULATIONS

The Wellington Region encompasses the area roughly from Waiouru, across to Norsewood and south to Cook Strait. It includes four large river catchments: the Rangitīkei, Manawatū, Ruamāhanga, and Te Awa Kairangi (Hutt) which provide great opportunities for principally brown trout river fishing. An extensive range of local angling opportunities ranges from spectacular wilderness backcountry streams in the Kaimanawa, Ruahine, or Tararua Forest Parks to highly productive rivers on the doorstep of urban centres of Wellington, Masterton, and Palmerston North.

For more information on angling access, scan the QR code.



UPPER RANGITĪKEI RIVER DESIGNATED WATERS LICENCE

This licence is available to all anglers with a Whole Season or Family Season fishing licence. The Designated Waters licence can be obtained online www.fishandgame.org.nz, whereupon an individual licence will be issued. The Designated Waters licence must be carried with you at all times while fishing, along with your Whole Season or Family Fishing licence. For further information phone 06 359 0409.

Lake Waitawa Fishing Access:

To access Lake Waitawa (Forests Lakes), please contact Forest Lakes Camping and Conference Centre (06) 364 8218 for permission.

National Regulations

The Sports Fishing Regulations

These regulations are set to ensure that:

- Fish populations are maintained and that the number of fish caught does not threaten the sustainability of the fishery.
- The quality of the fishing experience is maintained.
- Spawning areas are protected.
- Angling opportunities are not unnecessarily restricted.
- Incompatible methods of fishing are kept separate.
- Anglers use sporting methods.

The main angling rules and catch limits are shown in this booklet, but there are other rules in the Conservation Act, Freshwater Fisheries Regulations and other legislation which affect sports fishing. For example, a current fishing licence is required to fish for the species listed in the First Schedule, and it must be carried with anglers at all times when fishing. The licence is to be produced upon demand by a Fish & Game Ranger.

If you are in any doubt about sports fishing regulations, please contact your local Fish & Game office.

These regulations are approved by the Minister for Hunting and Fishing on the advice of the 12 regional Fish & Game Councils. The Fish & Game licence allows an angler to fish New Zealand wide (except Taupō).

Anglers Notice

Fish & Game Regions 2025

Conservation Act 1987

Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983

Pursuant to section 26R(3) of the Conservation Act 1987, the Minister for Hunting and Fishing approves the following Anglers Notice, subject to the First and Second Schedules of this notice, for the following Fish & Game Regions:

Northland	Taranaki	North Canterbury
Auckland/Waikato	Wellington	Central South Island
Eastern	Nelson/Marlborough	Otago
Hawke's Bay	West Coast	Southland

Notice

This notice revokes all previous Anglers Notices and shall come into force on 1 October 2025.

1. Application of this Notice

- 1.1** This Anglers Notice sets out the conditions under which a current sports fish licence holder or a person named on a family whole-season licence may fish for sports fish in the area to which the notice relates, being conditions relating to:
 - (a)** The size and limit bag for any species of sports fish;
 - (b)** Any open or closed season in any specified waters in the area, and the sports fish in respect of which they are open or closed;
 - (c)** Any requirements, restrictions, or prohibitions on fishing tackle, methods, or the use of any gear, equipment, or device;
 - (d)** The hours of fishing; and
 - (e)** The handling, treatment, or disposal of any sports fish.
- 1.2** This Anglers Notice applies to sports fish which include species of Trout, Salmon, Perch and Tench (and Rudd in Auckland/Waikato Region only).
- 1.3** Perch and Tench (and Rudd in Auckland/Waikato Region only) are also classed as coarse fish in this notice.
- 1.4** Within coarse fishing waters (as defined in this notice), special provisions enable the use of coarse fishing methods that would otherwise be prohibited.
- 1.5** Outside of coarse fishing waters an angler may fish for coarse fish wherever sports fishing is permitted, subject to the general provisions in this notice that apply for that region.

First Schedule:

Fishing conditions generally common to all Fish & Game Regions.

Second Schedule:

Regional specific fishing conditions, bag limits, closed and open waters, and the like.

First Schedule

1. Interpretation

Words and expressions in this notice, which are defined in the Conservation Act 1987, the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983, or the Sports Fish Licences, Fees, and Forms Notice 2025, shall be so defined.

“assembled rod” means a rod that is assembled from butt to tip, together with a line and lure attached.

“all methods” means any artificial fly, or spinner or bait.

“artificial fly” means any lure of feather, fur, wool or other material of any kind customarily used in the making of artificial flies.

“bait” means:

- Natural insect.
- Natural spider.
- Natural worm or worms.
- Natural crustacean.
- Natural fish, excluding fish ova, or any portion of a fish, or shellfish (mollusc), except where stated otherwise in the Second Schedule of this notice.
- Uncoloured bread dough.
- Any scented lure, soft bait and other synthetic imitations with chemical attractant properties, except where stated otherwise in the Second Schedule of this notice.

“bait assembly” means either a hook rigged with a number of baits or a single bait rigged with a number of hooks.

“bait fishing” means to fish for sports fish with bait.

“boat” means any manned flotation device.

“closed” means no fishing is permitted.

“coarse fish” means Perch, Tench (all New Zealand) and Rudd (Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Region only).

“coarse fishing waters” means named locations where anglers can fish for coarse fish with:

- (a) A rod which has either a fixed or running line.
- (b) No restriction on the type or number of baits in use.
- (c) No restriction on the use of preparations to attract fish.

“controlled fishery” means a controlled fishery described in the Sports Fish Licences, Fees, and Forms Notice 2025 and for which a controlled-period licence is required when fishing during a controlled period.

“daily bag limit” means the total number of sports fish that may be taken or killed by any one person during any one day.

“designated waters” means a designated waters fishery described in the Sports Fish Licences, Fees, and Forms Notice 2025 and for which a designated waters licence is required when fishing.

“fishing” and “fish” in this notice means:

the catching, taking or harvesting of sports fish; and includes any:

- (a) Other activity that may reasonably be expected to result in the catching, taking or harvesting of sports fish.
- (b) Attempt to catch, take or harvest sports fish.
- (c) Operation in support of, or in preparation for, any activity described in this definition.

“freshwater” means

- (a) All waters of rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, lagoons, wetlands, impoundments, canals, channels, watercourses, or other bodies of water whether naturally occurring or artificially made.
- (b) All waters of estuaries or coastal lagoons.
- (c) All other fresh or estuarine waters where freshwater fish indigenous to or introduced into New Zealand are found.
- (d) All waters in the mouth of every river or stream, and the mouth of every river and stream shall be deemed to include every outlet thereof and the seashore between those outlets and the waters of the sea or lying within a distance of 500 metres from any place where at low tide the waters of a river or stream meet the waters of the sea.

“fly fishing” means to fish for sports fish with fly rod and fly reel and fly line and artificial fly.

“foul hook” means to hook a sports fish other than from within the mouth.

“junior fishery” means a named location where only a child or junior angler may fish.

“landmark” means a black, yellow and white ringed post or buoy.

“length” is the measurement from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail.

“legal lure” means any authorised artificial fly or spinner or bait.

“sea-run Salmon waters” means sea-run Salmon waters described in the Sports Fish Licences, Fees, and Forms Notice 2025 in the North Canterbury and Central South Island Fish & Game regions and for which a sea-run Salmon licence is required when fishing for Salmon and to which the Sea-run Salmon Season Bag Limit Notes apply.

“season bag limit” means the total number of sports fish that may be taken or killed by any one person between the 1 October and 30 September.

“season bag limit card” means a card upon which anglers taking or killing sports fish in Fish & Game regions that have a season bag limit must legibly record the date, name of water, sex (as can best be determined by the angler), weight in kilograms and length in centimetres of the fish, and whether it was fin clipped.

“spin fishing” means to fish for sports fish with a spinner.

“spinner” means any artificial lure other than an artificial fly.

“sports fish” means those freshwater fish described in the First Schedule of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983, namely:

- Brown Trout.
- Rainbow Trout.
- American Brook Trout or Char.
- Lake Trout or Char.
- Atlantic Salmon.
- Quinnat or Chinook Salmon.
- Sockeye Salmon.
- Perch.
- Tench.
- Rudd (Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game Region only).
- Any hybrid of the above species.

“zero bag limit” means fishing is permitted but no fish may be kept.

2. Authorised Tackle

2.1 No angler shall fish for Trout or Salmon except by using a rod and running line and authorised method (as defined in clause 8 of this First Schedule).

2.2 Nets and gaffs:

2.2.1 When playing a sports fish, a landing net may be used to secure or land that fish.

2.2.2 For keeping coarse fish alive, a keep net may be used in the water from which the fish was caught.

2.2.3 No angler shall use a gaff to secure or land a sports fish except where provided for in the Second Schedule of this notice.

2.3 No angler when fishing for sports fish shall:

2.3.1 Use more than 1 assembled rod and running line.

2.3.2 Use more than 3 artificial flies or spinners.

2.3.3 Use more than 1 bait assembly.

2.3.4 Be more than 15m from the rod being used, except where stated otherwise in the Second Schedule of this notice.

2.3.5 Use in waters other than those where bait fishing is permitted any lure treated with any chemical preparation other than that used solely to control the buoyancy of an artificial fly, except where stated otherwise in the Second Schedule of this notice.

2.3.6 Use any preparation not attached to a lure to attract fish except when fishing for coarse fish in coarse fishing waters.

2.4 No person shall fish for sports fish by using felt-soled waders or footwear incorporating or having attached a sole of felted, matted or woven fibrous material when sports fishing.

3. Foul Hooking of Fish

3.1 No angler shall attempt to foul hook any sports fish.

3.2 Any angler who foul hooks a sports fish shall return it immediately to the water with as little injury as possible.

4. Fish Length

4.1 Every angler who catches a sports fish which does not exceed the specified minimum length, or exceeds the specified maximum length, shall immediately return it with as little injury as possible into the water from which it was taken.

5. Open Season

5.1 No angler shall fish for any sports fish except during an open season.

6. Daily Bag Limit

6.1 No angler shall continue to fish for a particular species of sports fish on any day in which the angler has already killed the limit bag for that species except where provided for in the Second Schedule.

6.2 It shall be permissible to make up the difference between a lesser limit bag prescribed in one place and a higher limit bag prescribed in another if the extra fish are taken in the area with the higher bag limit.

7. Season Bag Limit

7.1 No angler shall continue to fish for sports fish in any season in which the angler has already killed the season bag limit for that species, except where provided for in the Second Schedule.

8. Authorised Methods

8.1 Authorised methods (subject to any regional restrictions specified in the Second Schedule) are:

- Artificial fly (**F**).
- Bait (**B**).
- Spinner (**S**).

Second Schedule

Wellington Fish & Game Region

The Wellington region is defined here: *New Zealand Gazette*, 24 May 1990, No. 83, page 1861

1. Definitions

For interpretation of terms, refer to the First Schedule of this notice.

2. Additional Requirements

Note 1 1.1 Except in the case of Perch, for which there is no daily limit, no angler shall on any one day take and kill or be in possession of more than the prescribed daily limit from the waters specified in the schedule.

1.2 Scented artificial lures may be used in fly fishing and spin fishing waters, when actively fished so as to imitate a bait fish.

Note 2 **Coarse Fishing Waters:** The following waterways are designated as coarse fishing waters:

2.1 Lake Waitawa (Forest Lakes) (catch and release).

2.2 Upper and Lower Whitby Lakes (catch and release).

2.3 Wairarapa Moana.

Note 3 **Designated Waters:**

3.1 No angler may fish in a designated water unless they are the holder of an appropriate designated waters licence or are named on such a licence.

Note 4 **Size Limits**

4.1 Akatarawa River, Te Awa Kairangi (Hutt) River, Kiriwhakapapa Stream, Makuri River, Managakoheke Stream, Mangaroa River, Mangatainoka River, Mikimiki Stream, Ohau River, Ōtaki River, Pakuratahi Stream, Pohangina River, Pourangaki River, Tokomaru River, Waikanae River, Waipoua River, Wainui Stream, Whakatikei River, Whakaurekou River. Maximum 450mm

4.2 Hautapu River (upstream of the road bridge numbered 741/1096 on State Highway 1 by the Taihape Golf Club), Mangaohane Stream, Rangitikei River (upstream of Mangaohane Road Bridge), Waingawa River, Wainuiomata River. Maximum 550mm

Note 5 5.1 Bait fishing in the Te Awa Kairangi (Hutt) River is permitted by Child anglers only.

Note 6 6.1 Wairarapa Moana means the waters within the Lake Wairarapa Wetland Conservation Area, the Owhanga Landing Reserve, the Matthews & Boggy Pond Wildlife Reserve, the Ruamāhanga Cut-off Wildlife Reserve, the Allsops Bay Wildlife Reserve and the Wairarapa Lake Domain management reserve.

3. OPEN SEASON, PERMITTED METHODS, DAILY BAG LIMITS

Water	Section of water	Open Season	Authorised Fishing Methods	Daily bag limit	Refer Clause 2 For Additional Requirements
All other waters not listed below		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FSB	4	
All coastal dune lakes		All year	FSB	4	
Akatarawa River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1

Hautapu River	upstream of the road bridge numbered 741/1096 on State Highway 1 by the Taihape Golf Club	1 Oct - 30 Apr	F	1	Note 4.2
	downstream of the road bridge numbered 741/1096 on State Highway 1 by the Taihape Golf Club	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	4	
Henley Lake		All Year	FSB	4	
Hokowhitu Lagoon (also known as Centennial Lagoon)		All Year	FSB	Rainbow or Brown Trout 2	
Te Awa Kairangi (Hutt) River		All year	FSB* (see Note 5)	2	Notes 4.1, 5
Kahuterawa Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	4	
Kawhatau River		All year	FSB	4	
Kiriwhakapapa Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Kōpuaranga River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FSB	2	
Kourarau Dam (Upper) Reservoir, except all inflowing streams		All year	FSB	Rainbow or Brown Trout 1 Tench 4	
Lake Waitawa (Forest Lakes)		All year	FSB	Tench 0	Note 2.1
Mākākahi River	upstream of the road bridge at Eketahuna	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	4	
	downstream of the road bridge at Eketahuna	All year	FSB	4	
Makiekie River (Coal Creek)		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	2	
Makuri River	upstream of the township bridge	1 Oct - 30 Apr	F	1	Note 4.1
	downstream of the township bridge	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Manawatū River	upstream of the Maunga Road Bridge (upstream of Dannevirke)	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	
	downstream of the Maunga Road Bridge (upstream of Dannevirke)	All year	FSB	2	
Mangakokeke Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Mangaohane Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.2
Mangahao River	upstream of Marima Reserve Bridge	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	4	
	downstream of Marima Reserve Bridge	All year	FSB	4	
Mangaone River (a tributary of the Tiraumea River)		All year	FSB	4	
Mangaroa River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1

Mangatainoka River	upstream of Scarborough Konini Road Bridge	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	2	Note 4.1
	downstream of Scarborough-Konini Road Bridge	All year	FS	2	Note 4.1
Mangatarere Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FSB	1	
Mangatoro River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FSB	1	
Mikimiki Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Moawhango River		All year	FSB	4	
Ohau River		All year	FS	2	Note 4.1
Oroua River	upstream of Ruahine Forest Park boundary, including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	
	downstream of Ruahine Forest Park boundary and upstream of Oroua Valley Road Bridge	All year	FSB	1	
	downstream of Oroua Valley Road Bridge	All year	FSB	4	
Ōtaki Winstone Quarry lakes		All year - weekends only	FSB	1	
Ōtaki River	upstream of Tararua Forest Park boundary, including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
	downstream of Tararua Forest Park boundary	All year	FSB	1	Note 4.1
Pakuratahi Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Pohangina River	upstream of Piripiri Bridge	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
	between Totara Reserve Bridge and Piripiri Bridge	All year	FS	1	Note 4.1
	downstream of Totara Reserve Bridge	All year	FSB	2	Note 4.1
Pohangina River tributaries		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	2	Note 4.1
Pourangaki River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Rangitikei River	Designated Water Rangitikei River upstream of Ohinewaione Stream confluence (about 9 river kilometres upstream of the Springvale Bridge), including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Notes 3, 4.2
	between Matawhero Road Bridge (commonly called the Mangaohane Bridge) and the Ohinewaione Stream confluence	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	2	Note 4.2
	downstream of the Matawhero Road Bridge (commonly called the Mangaohane Bridge)	All year	FSB	4	
Ruamāhanga River	upstream of State Highway 2, including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	

	downstream of State Highway 2	All year	FSB	2	
Tauwharenikau River	upstream of State Highway 2, including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	
	downstream of State Highway 2	All year	FSB	2	
Tauweru River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	2	
Tiraumea River		All year	FSB	4	
Tokomaru River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Turitea Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	4	
Waikanae River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Waipoua River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Waingawa River	upstream of State Highway 2, including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.2
	downstream of State Highway 2	All year	FSB	2	Note 4.2
Wainui Stream		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Wainuomata River	downstream of the main township bridge	1 Oct - 30 Apr	F	1	Note 4.2
Waiohine River	upstream of State Highway 2, including tributaries	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	
	downstream of State Highway 2	All year	FSB	2	
Wairarapa Moana		All year	FSB	4	Notes 2.3, 6
Whakatikei River		1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Whakarekou River	upstream of Rangitikei River confluence, including tributaries within the Ruahine Ranges	1 Oct - 30 Apr	FS	1	Note 4.1
Whitby Lakes		All year	FSB	Tench: 0	Note 2.2

Code of Conduct

Please consider the rights of others and observe the anglers code of conduct

- Always ask permission from the land occupier before crossing private property unless a Fish & Game access sign is present.
- Do not park vehicles so that they obstruct gateways or cause a hazard on the road or access way.
- Always use gates, stiles or other recognised access points and avoid damage to fences.
- Leave everything as you found it. If a gate is open or closed leave it that way.
- A farm is the owner's livelihood and if they say no dogs, then please respect this.
- When driving on riverbeds keep to marked tracks or park on the bank and walk to your fishing spot.
- Never push in on a pool occupied by another angler. If you are in any doubt have a chat and work out who goes where.
- However, if agreed to share the pool then always enter behind any angler already there.
- Move upstream or downstream with every few casts (unless you are alone).
- Fish being returned to the water should be released as carefully and quickly as possible. Ideally leave the fish in the water and remove the hook with long-nosed pliers without handling the fish.
- While catch and release fishing is widely promoted by some as a conservation minded approach to angling it remains the angler's choice. However, the catching of large numbers of fish in a day can impact on individual fish and also on the angling experience for others. Fish & Game advocate hooking and landing a limited number of fish per day.
- Fish being retained should be killed as quickly as possible, ideally by spiking or stabbing the brain slightly behind and above the eye (also known as iki jime - pronounced "iki jimi").
- Always respect the environment, wildlife, other anglers and members of the public.
- Remove waste nylon and personal litter from the river banks and parking places.
- The only way we can protect our rivers in the long term is to CHECK, CLEAN and DRY all your gear before entering another river or lake anywhere in New Zealand.

Remember to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself!