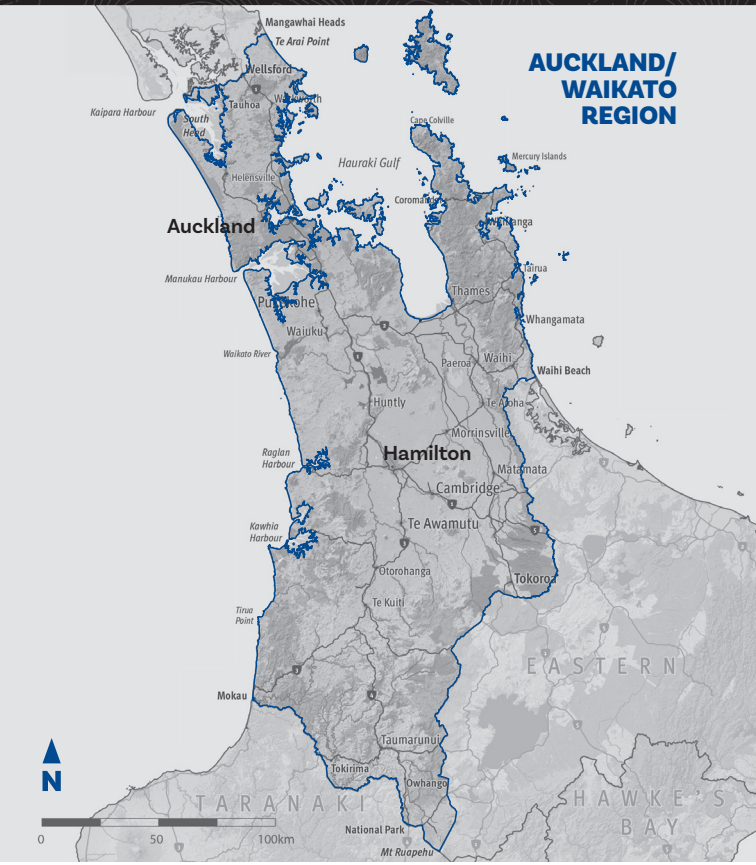
AUCKLAND/WAIKATO

Sports Fishing Regulations 2026/2027

Fish & Game NEW ZEALAND



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SCAN FOR ALL REGIONS REGULATIONS

The Auckland/Waikato Region offers a wide diversity of fishing opportunities with many lake and river fisheries. Three lakes within one hour of Auckland City are regularly stocked with trout, and wild trout are present in the Mangatawhiri and Mangatangi reservoirs. There is also good trout fishing in the Coromandel Ranges with most rivers having easy access and high scenic values. Further south there are numerous spring-fed trout streams in the South Waikato, and many backcountry fisheries throughout the King Country including the headwaters of the Waipa, Whanganui, Whakapapa, and Awakino Rivers. The Waikato River has an abundant brown trout population, and the hydro-lakes provide excellent lake fishing. Coarse fisheries are present in most lakes north of Hamilton, including Lake Pupuke and Hamilton Lake. Good coarse fishing is also available in the lower Waikato and Whangamarino Rivers. Over 100 fishing locations are listed on the interactive map in the Fishing Locations and Access section of the Auckland/Waikato Region's web page.

ACCESS INFORMATION

Over 100 fishing locations in the Auckland/Waikato Region alone are marked on the Outdoor Access Maps page (www.herengaanuku.govt.nz/maps). In addition, there are detailed descriptions of 31 river sections on the Auckland/Waikato Fishing Locations and Access page. The following paper pamphlets are also available from Auckland/Waikato Fish & Game:

- Trout fishing in the Auckland/Waikato Region
- Fishing in the lakes of the Auckland/Waikato Region
- Wanganui Headwaters
- Trout fishing in the Coromandel Ranges
- Trout fishing in South Waikato spring creeks
- Coarse fishing in the Auckland/Waikato Region
- Getting started in freshwater fishing
- Waitomo and Kawhia Trout Fishing
- Trout Fishing on the Mighty Waipa
- Trout Fishing on the Waikato River



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 2026

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

1 Title

This is the Anglers Notice for Fish and Game Regions 2026.

2 Commencement

This notice comes into force on 1 October 2026.

3 Conditions for Sport Fishing Common to all Fish and Game Regions

(1) A person who holds a valid sports fish licence may fish in any region subject to the conditions set out in Schedule 1 of this notice.

(2) This Anglers Notice applies to sports fish which include species of Trout, Salmon, Perch and Tench (and Rudd in Auckland/Waikato Region only).

(3) Perch and Tench (and Rudd in Auckland/Waikato Region only) are also classed as coarse fish in this notice.

(4) Within coarse fishing waters (as defined in this notice), special provisions enable the use of coarse fishing methods that would otherwise be prohibited.

(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.

4 Conditions for Sport Fishing Specific to Particular Fish and Game Regions

(1) A person who holds a valid sports fish licence may fish in a Fish and Game Region subject to the conditions for that region set out in Schedule 2 of this notice.

5 Scope of this notice

(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.

6 Revocation

(1) The Anglers Notice for Fish and Game Regions 2025 (2025-gs3978) that came into force 1 October 2025 is revoked.

Schedule 1

Conditions for Sport Fishing Specific to Particular Fish and Game Regions

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 2026, shall be so defined.

In this notice unless the context otherwise requires,—

Act means the Conservation Act 1987

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

(a) Natural insect

(b) Natural spider

(c) Natural worm or worms

(d) Natural crustacean

(e) Natural fish, excluding fish ova, or any portion of a fish, or shellfish (mollusc), except where stated otherwise in Schedule 2 of this notice

(f) Uncoloured bread dough

(g) Any scented lure, soft bait and other synthetic imitations with chemical attractant properties except where stated otherwise in Schedule 2 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 and 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 2026 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 2026 or 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 2026 in the North Canterbury and Central South Island Fish and 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 1 October in any year and 30 September in the following year

Season bag limit card means a card upon which anglers taking or killing sports fish in Fish and 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 Schedule 1 of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983, namely:

(a) Brown Trout
(b) Rainbow Trout
(c) American Brook Trout or Char
(d) Lake Trout or Char
(e) Atlantic Salmon
(f) Quinnat or Chinook Salmon
(g) Sockeye Salmon
(h) Perch
(i) Tench
(j) Rudd (Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region only)
(k) Any hybrid of the above species

Zero bag limit means fishing is permitted but no fish may be kept

2. Authorised Tackle

(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 Schedule 1).

(2) Nets and gaffs:

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

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

(iii) No angler shall use a gaff to secure or land a sports fish except where provided for in Schedule 2 of this notice.

(3) No angler when fishing for sports fish shall:

(i) Use more than 1 assembled rod and running line.

(ii) Use more than 3 artificial flies or spinners.

(iii) Use more than 1 bait assembly.

(iv) Be more than 15m from the rod being used, except where stated otherwise in Schedule 2 of this notice.

(v) 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 Schedule 2 of this notice.

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

(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

(1) No angler shall attempt to foul hook any sports fish.

(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

(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

(1) No angler shall fish for any sports fish except during an open season.

6 Daily Bag Limit

(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 Schedule 2.

(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

(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 Schedule 2.

8 Authorised Methods

(1) Authorised methods (subject to any regional restrictions specified in Schedule 2) are:

(i) Artificial fly (F).

(ii) Bait (B).

(iii) Spinner (S).

Schedule 2

Conditions for Sport Fishing Specific to Particular Fish and Game Regions

Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region

1. Definitions

The Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Region is the region so defined in the New Zealand Gazette, 24 May 1990, No. 83, page 1861, as amended by New Zealand Gazette, 29 August 1991, No. 129, page 2786, and as further amended by the New Zealand Gazette, 28 January 1993, No. 11, at page 192.

For interpretation of terms, refer to the Schedule 1 of this Notice or the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983.

2. Additional Requirements

Note 1		**Closed waters**
	1.1	The following waterways are designated as closed waters: No licence holder shall take (or attempt to take) sports fish from all rivers, streams and their tributaries which flow into, but not including, Lake Arapuni, Lake Waipapa and Lake Karapiro, and that part of the Waikato River downstream of the Maraetai Dam to upstream of the Karapiro Dam.
	1.2	The closed waters restrictions in note 1.1 for this region do not apply to the Little Waipa Stream, Pokaiwhenua Stream, Mangawhio Stream, Tumai Stream, Waipapa River, or flooded backwaters of Lake Arapuni, Lake Waipapa and Lake Karapiro, and that part of the Waikato River downstream of the Maraetai Dam to upstream of the Karapiro Dam.
Note 2		**Authorised Tackle:** Scented artificial lures may be used in all waters other than fly fishing only waters, when actively fished to imitate a bait fish.
Note 3		**Bait Fishing Waters**
	3.1	No angler, when fishing in bait fishing waters, shall use as bait any fish or clam taken from any water other than where the fishing is occurring.
	3.2	No angler shall transport any water taken from any waterbody, including bait buckets or live wells, to another waterway.
Note 4		**Coarse Fishing Waters**
	4.1	The following waters are designated as coarse fishing waters: Mangatawhiri River from the bridge on State Highway 2 to its confluence with the Waikato River Whangamarino River All lakes and ponds, excluding Karapiro Reservoir, Arapuni Reservoir, Waipapa Reservoir, Mangatangi Reservoir and Mangatawhiri Reservoir.
	4.2	There are no restrictions on the numbers of rods and running lines that a angler fishing for perch, tench or rudd may have, provided only one of which shall be used for fishing at any one time.
	4.3	A roach pole may be used to fish for perch, tench and rudd.
	4.4	It is an offence to kill on any day more than five tench. There is no limit for perch or rudd
Note 5		**Use of Boats:** No angler shall fish for sports fish from any vessel in the upper reaches of Lake Karapiro (upstream from the white marker post, situated 200m below the Huihuitaha Stream mouth) unless the vessel is securely anchored.
Note 6		**Hours of Fishing:** There are no restrictions on the hours of fishing in the Auckland/Waikato Region.
Note 7		**Fish Length:** There are no length restrictions in the Auckland/ Waikato Region.
Note 8		**Tagged fish:** Anglers are required to report the length and if possible, the weight of all tagged fish caught in the Auckland Waikato Region.

3. Open season, Permitted Methods, Daily Bag Limits

Water	Multiple sections	Open season	Authorised fishing methods	Daily bag limit	Refer clause 2 for additional requirements
Lakes					
Mangatangi Reservoir		All year	FS	2	Note 4
Mangatawhiri Reservoir		All year	FS	2	Note 4
All other lakes/ponds		All year	FSB	2	Note 3

Streams	Section of water	Open	Method	Limit	
Awakino River	Upstream of Mahoenui Bridge	1 Oct - 30 Jun	F	2	
Kakahu Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Kaniwhaniwha Stream	Upstream of Quarry Road	1 Oct - 30 Jun	F	2	
Kaniwhaniwha Stream	Downstream of Quarry Road	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Little Waipa Stream	Horahora Road Bridge deemed to be the mouth	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Mangaohae Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Mangatepopo Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Mangatutu Stream	Upstream of Lethbridge Road	1 Oct - 30 Jun	F	2	
Mangatutu Stream	Downstream of Lethbridge Road	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Mangawhio Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Maramataha River		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Moakurarua Stream	Upstream of Honikiwi Road	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Ngakoaohia Stream	Upstream of Pirongia/Kawhia Bridge	1 Oct - 30 Jun	F	2	
Okauaka Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Ongarue River	Upstream of Waimiha Stream confluence	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Piopiotea Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Pokaiwhenua Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Puniu River	Upstream of Seafund Road Bridge	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Tawarau River	Above power station intake	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Tumai Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Waione Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Waipa River	Upstream of State Highway 3 Bridge	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Waipapa River	Above lower falls	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Waitawheta River	Upstream of end of Franklin Road	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Whakapapa River	Upstream of 1 km upstream of Ohinetonga Road	1 Oct - 30 Jun	F	2	
Whakapapa River	downstream from 1 km upstream of Ohinetonga Rd	All year	FS	2	Note 2
Whakapapa-iti Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Whakapapa-nui Stream		All year	FS	2	Note 2
Whanganui River	upstream of Whakapapa River confluence	All year	FS	2	Note 2
All other rivers & streams		All year	FSB	2	Notes 2,3, and 4

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!