



Connecticut

Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

Changes to Inland Sportfish Regulations – effective 12/27/2022

The following is a simple summary of the key changes to the regulations for sport fishing in the inland district. The full version of the regulations is available on the [Secretary of State's web page](#). Questions may be sent to mike.beauchene@ct.gov

Seasons

- Removes the closed season for fishing on all lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams. (Legal access still required).
- Establishes a statewide "Catch and Release" season for trout and kokanee from March 1 to 6:00 am on the second Saturday of April (Opening Day of harvest).
- Extends the season on trout management lakes from March 31 to 6:00 am on the second Saturday of April (Opening Day of harvest).
- Retains thermal refuge closures to protect trout seeking refuge in cold-water tributaries as indicated by signs posted by CT DEEP.

Species

- Revises the statewide daily creel limit for trout and kokanee to be 5 trout daily AND 5 kokanee daily (previously 5 of either, 8 in aggregate).

Waterbodies

- Establishes the following special trout regulations on East Twin Lake and Lake Wononskopomuc: During the period from 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April through the last day of February the daily creel limit for trout shall be five, not more than one of which may be a brown trout, and the minimum length for brown trout shall be twenty-two inches. During the period from March first through 6:00 a.m. on the second Saturday in April, inclusive, the daily creel limit for trout shall be one and the minimum length limit shall be twenty-two inches.
- Adds Long Pond (North Stonington) and Lake Wononskopomuc to the list of Trout Management Lakes.

- Prohibits ice fishing on Factory Pond (Salisbury), Lake Chamberlain (Bethany), Lake Saltonstall (Branford, East Haven), Maltby Lakes (Orange, West Haven), Lake McDonough (New Hartford, Barkhamsted) and Shenipsit Lake (Ellington, Tolland, Vernon).

Gear

- Establishes a limit of two devices per person when ice fishing on East Twin Lake or Lake Wononskopomuc. This may be two (2) tip ups, two (2) jigging rods or one of each.

Definitions

- Establishes a definition for Cast Net, Inline Circle Hook and Culling.
- Revises the definition of Closed Season to conform with the definition provided in state statute

2022 Inland Sport Fishing Regulation Changes - Plain English summary by regulation reference

Regulation Reference and Summary	The proposed change in plain English
Section 1. Amends sec. 26-112-39 RCSA. Updates provisions concerning behavior in easements/leased properties and provisions concerning use of state boat launches to conform with current Boating regulations.	Revised Easements and Leased Properties: This section was last amended in 1977 and several provisions require updating. Specifically the requirement for anglers to remain within 10 feet of the shoreline in certain fishing easements. This requirement actually may be different as there is not a standard distance in many current easements or leased properties. Revised Use of Boat Launches: Deleted the obsolete language concerning the mooring of boats at state boat launches, eliminating a conflict between two department regulations, and avoiding any confusion concerning regulations addressing activities at state boat launches.
Section 2. Amends sec. 26-112-43 RCSA. Revises the existing definition of a closed season from a closure of an area to all fishing to a period during which fishing for specific species is prohibited; establishes definitions and restrictions for “culling” and “cast nets”; and clarifies that an angler in the inland district may continue to fish (catch-and-release) once they reach their creel/possession limits.	Added: Definition for cast net, culling, and inline circle hook. Revised: Definition of “closed season” revised to conform to definition in state statute. Definition of Daily Limit and Possession Limit. Done to clarify that a person can continue to fish once the daily limit/possession limit has been met, providing any additional fish are released immediately upon catch.

Section 3. Amends sec. 26-112-44 RCSA. Eliminates the current closed seasons at all lakes and ponds and for all rivers and streams (with exceptions for closures intended to protect fish health).	Removed: Closed seasons for fishing at all lakes and ponds and rivers and streams. NOTE: Closures for specific areas and dates are allowed to protect the health of the fish and the overall fishery. Thermal Refuges, which are cold water tributaries that enable trout to survive through elevated water temperatures in the main river during the summer.
Section 4. Amends sec. 26-112-45 RCSA. Amends trout seasons to conform with provisions of PA 21-12 prohibiting closed seasons for trout; revises statewide trout and kokanee creel limits (establishing a five fish limit for trout and a five fish limit for kokanee); and establishes a catch-and-release only requirement for trout and Kokanee during the proposed open season from March 1 to 6 am on the second Saturday in April.	Removed: Closed seasons for trout at all lakes/pond and rivers/streams. Revised: Statewide daily creel Limit for Trout to 5 per day and Kokanee 5 per day (from 5 of either species 8 total fish in aggregate). Added: Statewide Catch and Release fishing only for Trout and Kokanee from March 1 to the 6:00 am on the second Saturday of April. Except in Trout Management Lakes where harvest (one fish) is allowed (per specific waterbody rules) during this time period; and in certain Sea-run Trout streams and in the designated tidal waters and tributaries
Section 5. Amends sec. 26-112-46 RCSA. Updates provisions of several subsections to conform with provisions of sections 2, 3 and 4 concerning seasons, closed areas and trout creel limits; amends trout regulations at East Twin Lake and Lake Wononcopomuc to better manage brown trout populations; adds two lakes to the list of Trout Management Lakes; and adds a new special management area ("tidal waters and tributaries", formerly "rivers and streams open year-round" in sec. 26-112-44).	Revised: language to be consistent with proposed changes described above. Revised: East Twin Lake and Lake Wononskopomuc; Five trout per day, only one of which, may be a Brown trout and the minimum length for Brown Trout is 22" (from 6:00 am on second Saturday of April until the last day of February). Daily limit of 1 trout 22" minimum length (from March 1 to 6:00 am on second Saturday of April). Add: Long Pond (North Stonington), and Lake Wononskopomuc as Trout Management Lakes Revised: The list of "Rivers and Streams Open Year-Round" is renamed to be "Tidal Waters and Tributaries" to support the existing regulations for Alewife, Blueback Herring, American Shad, and trout, and methods of take (snagging, cast nets). These regulations differ from the general statewide regulations and the current name for this list of waters is no longer appropriate due to the elimination of closed seasons.

Section 6. Amends sec. 26-112-48 RCSA.

Eliminates the closed season at Quassapaug Lake; and establishes a prohibition on ice fishing at several lakes and ponds (Factory Pond, Lake Chamberlain, Lake Saltonstall, Maltby Lakes, Shenipsit Lake and Lake McDonough).

Removes: Closed season on Quassapaug Lake (no public access)

Add: Prohibition on ice fishing on Factory Pond (Salisbury), Lake Chamberlain (Bethany), Lake Saltonstall (Branford, East Haven), Maltby Lakes (Orange, West Haven), Lake McDonough (New Hartford, Barkhamsted) and Shenipsit Lake (Ellington, Tolland, Vernon). The current regulations, by default, preclude ice fishing (due to the waters being closed on a particular date), so this proposal can increase shore fishing opportunity until ice forms.