
2022-23 Sportfishing Regulation Engagement

Regulation Changes Summary

From January 10 to February 7, 2022 Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) invited public feedback through an online survey. The objectives of this engagement included:

- Obtain public feedback on options to address impacts to fisheries from high temperatures, low flows and angling, such as closing fishing during afternoon periods,
- Obtain public feedback on fishing regulation options for 9 waterbodies (consultation items),
- Inform the public of proposed fishing regulation changes at 10 waterbodies (notification items), and
- Provide updates on previously engaged upon items, including harvest slot limits, the pilot for electronic special harvest licence tags, gear regulation (barbless hooks), and the walleye stocking program.

In Fall 2021 and during the 2022-23 Sportfishing Regulation Engagement, AEP communicated regulatory changes associated with licensed **competitive fishing events** in Alberta. Implementation of these changes will not occur in the 2022-23 fishing season. Implementation of the **angling guide licence** will also not occur on April 01, 2022. Based on feedback received from angling guides, the province will continue to collect feedback on licensing needs to inform the development of the new program. More information can be found on these items on [My Wild Alberta](#).

This table summarizes the regulation changes (both notification and consultation items) and provides information as to why each change was made. For a full report on feedback received during the engagement, please visit the [2022-23 Sportfishing Regulation Engagement Webpage](#).

Fisheries Management Zone	Waterbody	2021/2022 Regulation	Options provided for public feedback	2022/23 Regulation	Explanation
ES1	Bow River from Banff to Bassano, in all of ES1 flowing waters and in the lower St. Mary River below the reservoir	N/A – new regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed period time-of-day angling closure (2:00pm to 12:00am from July 1 to Aug. 31) Semi-fixed time-of-day angling closure (2:00pm to 12:00am from July 1 to Aug. 31 with potential to re-open based on flow and temperature conditions) No time-of-day angling closure 	<p>Based on feedback, a new option has been selected to allow greater flexibility. Time of day angling restrictions will be based upon environmental thresholds for trout. There will be no fixed annual regulation.</p> <p>AEP will monitor real-time flow and temperature conditions on the Bow River at the monitoring station near Carseland, Alberta, to determine when time of day angling restrictions are necessary. If conditions exceed the following environmental thresholds, then AEP will implement time of day angling restrictions (i.e., closed to fishing from 2:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. daily):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20°C for three or more days, River flows below the 25th percentile, and Weather forecasts indicating the same or worsening conditions (hot and dry). <p>Restrictions Begin: when environmental threshold criteria are met, time of day angling restrictions go into effect for a minimum of 14 days.</p> <p>15th day: If hot and dry conditions persist, time of day angling restrictions will remain for another 14 days.</p> <p>If environmental threshold conditions are no longer met, time of day angling restrictions will be removed.</p> <p>30th day: If environmental threshold conditions are no longer met, time of day restrictions will be removed.</p> <p>If time of day angling restrictions are not removed on the 30th day and hot and dry conditions persist, time of day angling restrictions will remain until Aug. 31.</p> <p>Communications: Fisheries Management will notify anglers of restrictions and removal of restrictions using various means including My Wild Alberta and social media. Anglers should always check the regulations before going out.</p>	<p>Overall, 49% of survey question respondents were in support of time of day closures (fixed or semi-fixed). The main theme of these comments (over 40%) centered around the desire for greater flexibility in implementing a time of day closure—suggesting using thresholds and observed conditions, versus fixed periods (July 1- August 31). This response signals support for AEP to use thresholds and observed conditions to regulate time of day closures, which is more popular than fixed period closures.</p>
ES1	Pine Coulee Reservoir	Open all year, bait and baitfish allowed, five trout any size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain current regulations Open Apr. 1–Oct. 31; No bait; one trout over 50 cm 	Open Apr. 1–Oct. 31; No bait; one trout over 50 cm	Public support through engagement supported managing as a Quality Stocked Fishery.

Fisheries Management Zone	Waterbody	2021/2022 Regulation	Options provided for public feedback	2022/23 Regulation	Explanation
ES2	Clearwater River (Mainstem from Forestry Trunk Road – bridge at 5-35-09-W5 – downstream to the North Saskatchewan River)	Bait ban except maggots allowed during Aug. 16 to Oct. 31	Notification	Bait ban during Aug. 16 to Oct. 31	Aligns regulations with the East Slope management zones; adds protection to high risk bull trout populations; aligns with the Alberta Bull Trout Recovery Plan.
ES2	North Saskatchewan River (Mainstem from Bighorn Dam downstream to Hwy 22/39)	Bait ban except maggots allowed during Aug. 16 to Oct. 31	Notification	Bait ban during Aug. 16 to Oct. 31	Aligns regulations with the East Slope management zones; adds protection to high risk bull trout populations; aligns with the Alberta Bull Trout Recovery Plan.
ES3	Minnow Lake	Walleye Special Harvest Licence (SHL) tags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One walleye of any size • One walleye over 50cm 	One walleye over 50cm	Public support through engagement supported managing as a stocked put, grow and take fishery.
ES3	Shiningbank Lake	10 lake whitefish any size	Notification	Zero possession limit lake whitefish (catch and release)	Addresses conservation concern; lake whitefish abundance is very low and a recovery action is required.
ES4	Smoke Lake	Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release) • Special Harvest Licence (SHL) 	Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release)	Public support through engagement supported continuing recovery actions with catch and release.
ES4	County Sportplex Pond	Open all year, 5 trout any size	Notification	Open Apr. 1 to Oct. 31, zero possession limit trout (catch and release)	Addresses a health concern following a hydrocarbon spill that entered the pond and Alberta Health recommendation of a zero limit.

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PP1	Crawling Valley Reservoir	Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release) • Special Harvest Licence (SHL) • One walleye over 50cm 	Walleye Special Harvest Licence (SHL)	Engagement results showed almost equal preference for competing management objectives. The Walleye Special Harvest License (SHL) offers a balanced approach to managing the walleye population. The SHL provides some harvest of walleye with a goal of maintaining sustainable numbers to ensure overall quality fishing experiences and high catch rates.
PP1	Clear Lake	One Northern pike over 100 cm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero possession limit Northern pike (catch and release) • One Northern pike over 63cm 	Zero possession limit Northern pike (catch and release)	Public support through engagement supported managing as an Old Growth/ Trophy fishery.
PP1	Sherburne Reservoir	Three walleye over 50 cm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release) • One walleye over 50cm • Special Harvest Licence (SHL) 	One walleye over 50cm	Public support through engagement supported continuing managing as a Sustainable Harvest fishery.
PP1	Forty Mile Coulee Reservoir	Three Northern pike over 63 cm	Notification	Zero possession limit Northern pike (catch and release)	Addresses a conservation concern; Northern pike status is very high risk and a recovery action is required.

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NB2	Lesser Slave Lake	One walleye over 43 cm (May 15 to Oct. 31) Two walleye over 43 cm (Nov. 1 to Mar. 31)	Walleye size: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish over 50cm Fish between 45-50cm Fish between 50-55cm Possession limit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One fish in open water and winter seasons (May 15-Mar. 31) One fish in open water (May 15 to Oct. 31) and two fish in winter season (Nov. 1 to Mar. 31) 	One 45-50 cm walleye during both seasons	Public support through engagement supported managing walleye with a slot harvest limit.
NB2	Lesser Slave Lake	Three Northern pike over 55cm	Notification	Zero possession limit Northern pike (catch and release)	Addresses a conservation concern; Northern pike status is very high risk and a recovery action is required.
NB2	Lesser Slave Lake tributaries (South Heart, East Prairie, West Prairie, Driftpile, Sucker, Arcadia/ Boggy Slough, Swan, Travers, Strawberry, Assineau, Lesser Slave, Salteaux, Sawridge, Otawau, Fawcett rivers)	Multiple regulations for Walleye (default flowing waters regulation, as well as specific regulations for East Prairie R; Lesser Slave R; South Heart R; Strawberry Ck; West Prairie R.	Notification	One walleye 45-50cm	Alignment with Lesser Slave Lake regulations following public support through engagement which supported managing walleye with a one fish 45-50 cm slot harvest limit.

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NB2	Lesser Slave Lake tributaries (South Heart, East Prairie, West Prairie, Driftpile, Sucker, Arcadia/ Boggy Slough, Swan, Travers, Strawberry, Assineau, Lesser Slave, Salteaux, Sawridge, Otawau, Fawcett rivers	Multiple regulations for Pike (default flowing waters regulation, as well as specific regulations for East Prairie R; Lesser Slave R; South Heart R; Strawberry Ck; West Prairie R.	Notification	Zero possession limit Northern pike (catch and release)	Addresses a conservation concern and aligns regulations to Lesser Slave Lake; Northern pike status is very high risk and a recovery action is required.
NB3	Wadlin Lake	One walleye over 50 cm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero possession limit walleye (catch and release) • Special Harvest Licence (SHL) 	Walleye Special Harvest Licence (SHL)	Public support through engagement supported the use of Special Harvest License as a recovery regulation.
NB3	Gods Lake	Open June 16- Mar. 31	Notification	Open June 1-Mar. 31	Alignment of regulations with surrounding lakes simplifies the regulations and provides additional angling opportunities.
NB3	Talbot Lake	Three Northern pike over 63 cm	Notification	One Northern pike over 70 cm	Northern pike status is high risk and a recovery action is required. Given the lakes remoteness a passive management action with a protective regulation was selected.
NB3	Wadlin Lake	One Northern pike 63-70 cm	Notification	Zero possession limit Northern pike (catch and release)	Addresses a conservation concern; Northern pike status is high risk and a recovery action is required.