Freshwater Fishing

Regulations

Methods and Devices

- Game fish may be caught with only hook and line, fly rod, casting rod, pole and line or hand line. Not more than 2 of these devices may be used by any fisherman at the same time, except when fishing in a boat. An unlimited number of lawful fishing devices may be used if every occupant of the boat (who would normally be required to have a fishing license) possesses a valid fishing license.

- Bows and arrows for taking nongame fish only and cast nets for catching nongame bait fish may be in possession while fishing for game fish. Possession of cast nets is prohibited in Game Zone 1 except on Lake Keowee, Hartwell and Twelve Mile Creek.

- Game fish may be used as bait to catch fish but must be included in daily bag limit.

Seasons

- No closed freshwater game fish season except in the following areas:
  - All watercraft and fishing are prohibited Nov. 1 through Feb. 28 on Caney Bay, Black Bottom and Savannah Branch in Lake Marion.
  - Portions of Howard, Corbin and Devil's Fork Creeks in Oconee County are closed to fishing from Nov. 1–Mar. 30, and a portion of Thompson River in Oconee County is closed to fishing from Nov. 1–Mar. 30. Closed sections will be marked with signs.
  - Hatchery WMA on Lake Moultrie is closed to fishing each Sat. until 12:00 noon and all day the last Sat. of the waterfowl season.

Selling and Importing

- No freshwater game fish may be sold in this state except: 1) DNR permitted aquaculturist. 2) DNR wholesale aquaculture license. 3) DNR aquaculture game fish retail license. 4) Private pond owner selling less than $2,500 in product annually.

- It is illegal to possess, import or sell any fish species that is not native to SC waters without a SCDNR permit.

Prohibited Practices

- Game or nongame fish may not be attracted or taken by explosives, electrical devices, poison or similar means.

Game Fish

- A total of 40 game fish may be kept in any one day. This total shall not exceed more than the limits or exceptions listed below.

- Special limits and regulations apply to DNR managed lakes. See chart on page 18.

- Check with State Parks, City Reservoirs or County Parks for special limits and regulations that apply to those areas.

Black bass (Largemouth, Smallmouth, Redeye & Spotted)

Limit: 10 fish combined total per day, except Slade's Lake, total of not more than 2 Largemouth bass per day and not more than 15 fish combined total per day. It is illegal to harvest largemouth bass in Lake Wallace, Marlboro County.

Size: 12-inch minimum for largemouth bass on Slade's Lake, Lakes Wylie, Marion, Moultrie, and the Georgia waters of the Savannah River and all its reservoirs.

Striped bass and/or hybrids

Limit: 10 fish per day (See exceptions.)

Size limit & exceptions: 5 fish per day and 21-inch minimum size limit in the following areas:
1) Broad River from the lock and dam of the Columbia Canal to its confluence with lower Saluda River;
2) Saluda River from Lake Greenwood Dam to Lake Murray;
3) Lake Murray;
4) Lower Saluda river from the Lake Murray Dam to its confluence with Broad River;
5) Wateree River from the Lake Wateree Dam to its confluence with Congaree River;
6) Congaree River from the confluence of Broad and Lower Saluda rivers to its confluence with Wateree River;
7) Lake Marion, Marion, Lake Moultrie, and the Diversion Canal;
8) the Tailrace Canal from Pinopolis Dam to Cooper River;
9) the east and west branches of Cooper River downstream to the US Highway 17 bridge;
10) Wando River;
11) the Rediversion Canal;
12) Santee River from the lake Marion Dam downstream to the Intracoastal Waterway.

Creeled limit exceptions:

- Lakes Marion, Moultrie, Murray and Congaree River from Gervais Street Bridge seaward, during July and Aug., two of the five striped bass creeled limit may be less than 21 inches.

In the Savannah River and its tributaries and distributaries and the lands immediately adjacent to them from the J. Strom Thurmond Dam downstream to the mouth of the Savannah River Defined by a line from Jones Island, S. C. (also known as Oysterbed Island) point at N. 32° 02' W. 80° 53'’; across Cockspur Island, ”Georgia, point at N. 32° 01' W. 80° 52'” to Lazaretto Creek, Georgia, point at 32° 01' W. 80° 52'” - Unlawful to possess more than 2 striped bass, striped bass hybrids, white bass, or any combination of these species. Any lawfully possessed fish of each of these species must be a minimum of 27 inches.

Cold water trout

Limit: 10 fish per day, 10 in possession. (See exceptions.)

Bait/tackle restrictions:

- Artificial lures and bait can be used when fishing for trout. (See exceptions.)

Bait/tackle exceptions:

- Matthews Creek (from lower boundary of Caesar’s Head State Park) and Middle Saluda River (Jones Gap State Park lower foot bridge to Hwy 276) in Greenville County, Eastatoe River (Heritage Preserve lands) in Pickens County and Whiteriver River in Oconee County - Artificial lures only.

- Lake Jocassee - It is unlawful to fish with corn, cheese, fish eggs or imitations of them as bait on Lake Jocassee.

- Chattooga River from SC 28 upstream to Reid (Big) Creek and Cheohee Creek within the property boundary of Piedmont Forestry Center (as posted) between Nov. 1 and May 14 only artificial lures with single hook may be used.

- Middle Saluda River (Hugh Smith Road upstream to lower foot bridge at Jones Gap State Park) - 0 trout per day, 0 in possession (catch and release year-round).

- Lake Jocassee - 5 trout per day, 5 in possession.

Size limit & exceptions: No size limit, except Lake Jocassee, 15-inch minimum.

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during daylight hours with a special daily permit obtained on-site.

- Cheohee Creek (Forestry Center lands) open to fishing only on Mon., Wed., and Sat. from November 1 through May 14 and June 15 through June 22 of each year during daylight hours.

Crappie, bream (including bluegill, flier, redbreast, warmouth, pumpkinseed and redear, longear and spotted sunfish), white bass, chain pickerel or jackfish, redfin pike, yellow perch, white perch, walleye and sauger

Limit: 30 fish per day. (See exceptions.)

Creel limit exceptions:
- Walleye and sauger - 8 fish per day on Lake Tugaloo, Yonah, Hartwell, Russell, Thurmond and the Chattooga River.

**SCDNR Managed State Lakes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lake*</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Open Days</th>
<th>Boat/Motor</th>
<th>Creel/Size Limits Cat/Min</th>
<th>Creel/Size Limits Bass</th>
<th>Minnows Allowed</th>
<th>Boat Ramp</th>
<th>Fishing Pier</th>
<th>Handicap Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashwood</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>7.5 H.P.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonneau Ferry WMA**</td>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>W, Sat, Sun***</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Brown</td>
<td>Barnwell</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>10 HP (Gas) North of Hospital Rd eastward. Any size south of Rd.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (16' minimum)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherokee</td>
<td>Cherokee</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dargans Pond</td>
<td>Darlington</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>W &amp; Sat. (Apr 1-Sept 30)</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (16' minimum) (2 bass may be under the size limit)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John D. Long</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin Johnson</td>
<td>Spartanburg</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (16' minimum)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonesville</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>M,W,Sat.</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12' minimum</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancaster Resv.</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Thur &amp; Sat</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (16' minimum)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>TRA</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Lake 1</td>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Tue, Thur, Sat, Sun</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 (16' minimum)</td>
<td>10 larger than 5'. No limit on fish under 5', but state limits apply.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Lake 2</td>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tue, Thur, Sat, Sun</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 (16' minimum)</td>
<td>10 larger than 5'. No limit on fish under 5', but state limits apply.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oak Grove</td>
<td>Greenville</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>W &amp; Sat.</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (12' minimum)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliphant</td>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>M,W,Sat.</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14' minimum</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Star Fort Pond</td>
<td>Greenwood</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>W,Fri,Sat, Apr 1 -- Nov. 1</td>
<td>Electric Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (12' minimum)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thicketty</td>
<td>Cherokee</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>6 HP (Gas) No Limit</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Wallace</td>
<td>Marlboro</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>10 HP (Gas) 0 (No harvesting)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Warren</td>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>All Days</td>
<td>10 HP (Gas) 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webb Center**</td>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>78&amp;10</td>
<td>All Days***</td>
<td>Electric Only  No Limit</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunrise</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>M,W,Sat.</td>
<td>Electric Only  3</td>
<td>2 (16' minimum)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Draper WMA***</td>
<td>York</td>
<td>1, 2 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Wed-Mon.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (14' minimum)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The days each impoundment is open can change. Contact your nearest SCDNR office to determine the open days of an individual lake.

** Webb Center and Bonneau Ferry Lakes are closed on deer hunting days. Bonneau Ferry closed Saturdays in April until 11:00 AM.

*** Combined daily creel limits from all ponds. Adult/youth fishing only on Bonneau Ferry. Each youth must be accompanied by no more than two adults 18 years of age or older.

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