

General Regulations



A single pointed hook is the best choice for fishing in Yellowstone. Treble hooks (3 points) can severely injure fish and are often constructed with toxic lead solder.

Tackle, lure, and hook restrictions

Each angler may use only one rod which must be attended at all times and used for angling only—intentional snagging of fish is not allowed.

Only lead-free artificial lures (e.g. spoon or spinner) or flies may be used. Leaded fishing tackle such as leaded split-shot sinkers, weighted jigs (lead molded to a hook), and soft lead-weighted ribbon for nymph fishing are not allowed.

Hooks must have points that are barbless, or the barbs must be pinched down by pliers. Lures may have only one hook with a single, double, or treble configuration.

Each fly may have only one hook. Up to two flies may be used on a single leader (commonly referred to as “dropper,” “dry and dropper,” or “hopper and dropper”).

Except for feathers and other typical fly-tying materials, the hook must be bare. No organic or inorganic baits are allowed. *Organic baits* include

fish or fish parts, minnows, salmon eggs, worms, insects, or foodstuffs such as bread or corn. *Inorganic baits* include rubber worms and plastic “twister” tails. Scented attractants (liquid and solid baits) are illegal. Putting any substance in the water for the purpose of attracting fish (chumming) is illegal.

Exceptions

Non-toxic split-shot, sinkers, and jig heads molded with bismuth-tin, molybdenum, or tungsten are allowed. Lead core line and heavy (> 4 lb.) downrigger weights used to fish for deep-dwelling lake trout are permissible because they are too large to be ingested by wildlife.

Artificial lures are not allowed on the Firehole River, Madison River, and lower Gibbon River (below Gibbon Falls), these streams are flyfishing only.

Possession limits

All native fish must be released unharmed. Natives include cutthroat trout, mountain whitefish, and Arctic grayling.

Native Trout Conservation Area

No possession limit for nonnative fish, including brown, brook, rainbow, and lake trout (see pages 6–13).

- All rainbow trout, brook trout, and identifiable cutthroat/rainbow hybrids caught in the Lamar River drainage (including portions of Slough and Soda Butte creeks) and the Yellowstone River drainage