

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

The proposed rule for these regulations was published in the **Federal Register** on Mar. 31, 1994, at 59 FR 15142.

*Background***Fishing Regulations**

The present Glacier National Park fishing regulations are codified in 36 CFR 7.3 (a), (b) and (c). They permit fishing in selected waters of the park with a variety of regulations covering specific lakes and streams.

Technical fishery assistance has been provided to Glacier National Park by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its predecessors for 45 years. The present objectives have evolved since 1976 and are consistent with the park's primary purpose, which is to "preserve natural environments and native plant and animal life, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in ways that maintain natural conditions". Thus, the specific objectives of the park's fishery program are:

1. To manage the fishery as an integral part of the park's ecosystem.
2. To restore and preserve native species and aquatic habitats.
3. To provide recreational fishing for the enjoyment of the park visitors when consistent with the two previous objectives.

Attainment of these objectives requires that angler harvests not alter native species natural replenishment rates or age structure, or significantly reduce numbers, biomass, or sizes from those occurring in un-fished populations. This management objective necessitates both a philosophical and literal distinction between recreational angling and removing fish for consumption. Protective policies of the NPS that have prevented significant degradation of that aquatic habitat have also restricted the use of maintenance stocking in park waters. Given these constraints, special angling regulations have become the primary means to accomplish park fishery objectives.

Regulations used to protect fish and maintain angling quality have included manipulating season dates, bait and terminal gear restrictions and the use of creel limits, including catch and release. Additionally, various waters have been closed to anglers in order to protect threatened and endangered species, nesting birds and for visitor protection.

Because of the introduction of non-native fish in the past, the invasion of non-native fish from outside the park at present, the recognition of the westslope cutthroat and bull trout as species of special concern by the State of Montana,

and fishing pressure in selected waters within the park, park management must be able to respond rapidly to changes that occur in a dynamic ecosystem resulting from human and natural conditions.

The new park fishing regulations will allow the Superintendent the ability to make routine changes in the regulations locally and in a timely manner, using discretionary authority provided by NPS general regulations found at 36 CFR 1.5. This procedure will afford greater protection to the park's aquatic resources, be more responsive to public needs and allow the park managers greater flexibility in responding to specific situations.

Public notice of restrictions established by the Superintendent will be provided through signs, maps, brochures, newspaper notices and other appropriate methods as required by 36 CFR 1.7. Detailed information pertaining to the nature and extent of fishing restrictions will be readily available to anglers in the park.

The park's fishing regulations will be reviewed annually and made a part of the Superintendent's compendium.

**Motorboat Regulations**

The present Glacier National Park motorboat regulations are codified in 36 CFR 7.3(f). They limit motorboats and motor vessels to ten (10) horsepower or less on Kintla, Bowman and Two Medicine Lakes. This restriction does not apply to sightseeing vessels operated by an authorized concessioner on Two Medicine Lake. They also prohibit all motorboats and motor vessels on Swiftcurrent Lake, except for authorized concessioner sightseeing vessels.

The issue of motorboat use in wilderness is addressed in chapter 6:8 of the NPS Management Policies. It is stated that "the Wilderness Act authorized continuation of motorboat and aircraft use under certain circumstances where those activities were established prior to wilderness designation. The National Park Service will limit authorization for the continued use of any motorized equipment in wilderness to situations where such use has been specifically authorized by Congress and determined by Congress or the Park Service to be compatible with the purpose, character, and resource values of the particular wilderness area involved".

The 1974 Glacier Environmental Statement/Wilderness Recommendation included Kintla and Bowman Lakes in recommended wilderness and indicated that if Congress designated these areas as wilderness, motorboating—a

traditional activity on Kintla Lake—would be eliminated. The original recommendation was modified in 1984 to permit motorboats of up to ten (10) horsepower on both lakes. Congress has not yet acted on the NPS wilderness recommendation and boats with motors up to 10 horsepower have continued to be allowed on Kintla Lake over the past 15 years. The need for motorboating on Kintla Lake and the potential impacts of continuing or prohibiting this use was assessed in the 1992 North Fork Management Plan.

The 1992 Plan calls for the elimination of motorboats on Kintla Lake. Kintla Lake would thus become the only road-accessible lake in the park where motorized watercraft are not permitted, and it would provide opportunities for users of non-motorized watercraft to enjoy solitude and quiet without the disruption of motor noise.

An NPS patrol boat would be kept in the Kintla Lake boathouse for emergency use only. Routine patrols would be made by non-motorized watercraft.

The following goals and objectives, developed by the NPS to guide use and management of the North Fork, relate directly to this rule change. They are based on public use surveys and general perceptions of the area and are included in the North Fork Management Plan:

**Goal:**

- \* "To maintain the dynamic natural ecosystem."

**Objectives:**

- \* "To continue to manage the portion of the North Fork area that has been recommended for wilderness according to NPS wilderness management policies."

- \* "To maintain the quality and natural flow of park waters."

- \* "To minimize man-made noise."

**Goal:**

- \* "To maintain the area's value as a wilderness threshold."

**Objectives:**

- \* "To maintain a primitive atmosphere associated with an earlier point in time and to provide facilities, services, and programs in keeping with that atmosphere."

- \* "To retain a sense of solitude, require a high degree of visitor self-reliance and ensure freedom from constraint."

**Goal:**

- \* "To provide quality, diversity, and safety in the visitor experience."

**Objectives:**

- \* "To provide a visitor experience that is different from those in more developed and accessible parts of the park."

The new motorboat regulations will allow the Superintendent to manage the