



Department of Environmental Conservation

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ANNUAL FREE FISHING DAY IN NEW YORK STATE SET FOR VETERANS DAY, NOVEMBER 11

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today announced that Veterans Day, November 11 is now a designated annual free fishing day in New York State. No license is required to fish in any of the state's 7,500 lakes and ponds or 50,000 miles of rivers and streams during state-designated free fishing days. In addition to the annual free fishing weekend in June, new legislation now allows for an increase in the number of authorized yearly statewide free fishing days.

"In recognition of Veterans Day, a day intended to honor and thank all military personnel who served the United States, residents and visitors now can fish for free and without a license in New York's waters one November 11," said DEC Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos. "Free fishing days offer a great opportunity for people to learn about this popular sport or invite a friend or relative from out of the state to enjoy the abundant fishing the state has to offer."

On this new date, saltwater anglers may also fish in marine waters or for migratory marine fish species without enrolling in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry. Anglers are reminded that although the requirement for a license and enrolling in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry has been waived during free fishing weekend, all other regulations remain in effect.

Legislation signed in 2013 expanded the number of free sportfishing clinics allowed to be held in New York State. Now groups and organizations other than DEC may, with DEC authorization, conduct free fishing events provided the events have an educational focus. Participants at these events do not need a license to fish and are not required to enroll in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry.

Since 2013, DEC has approved more than 350 free fishing clinics, approximately 200 in 2015 alone, with an estimated 30,000 or more participants. A vast majority of these events were held in urban areas throughout the state, including the Capital District, New York City, Long Island, Rochester, Syracuse, Poughkeepsie, and Buffalo. In addition to learning about local fishing opportunities, participants are also taught about the fish they can catch, how to cast a fishing rod, fishing safety, aquatic resource stewardship and fishing regulations. For information on conducting a fishing clinic, visit DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/89811.html>.

The Free Fishing Days program began in 1991 to allow all people the opportunity to sample the incredible fishing New York State has to offer. New York's sport fishing industry generates an estimated \$1.8 billion in economic activity annually, supporting nearly 17,000 jobs.

NY's Open for Fishing and Hunting Initiative is an effort to improve recreational opportunities for sportsmen and women and to boost tourism activities throughout the state. This includes streamlining fishing and hunting licenses, reducing license fees, improving access for fishing and increasing hunting opportunities in New York State. In support of this initiative, last year \$10 million in NY Works funding has

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been dedicated to fish hatchery repairs and 50 new land and water access projects such as boat launches, hunting blinds, trails and parking areas.

Under the initiative, the 2015-16 Enacted Budget included an additional \$8 million for state land access projects and an additional \$4 million for the state's hatcheries in NY Works funding. The Budget also creates a new capital account which along with federal Pittman-Robertson funds will be used to manage, protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat, and to improve and develop public access for fish and wildlife-related recreation.

For a listing of free fishing events, visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27123.html> on DEC's website. The public is advised to check back regularly as new events are regularly added to the list.

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