

# Trout waters recreational fishing guide (Central)

## Introduction

Our State's Fisheries are a community-owned resource. We all have a responsibility to protect and safeguard this natural asset for present and future generations.

Fishing regulations are in place to protect and conserve our fish stocks and aquatic habitats to ensure that fishing activities remain sustainable.

Central NSW waterways provide many fishing opportunities for fishing enthusiasts. This guide will give you an idea of the fishing on offer and the closures and restrictions that apply to this great region.

The central region offers excellent lake, river and boat fishing opportunities and anglers have the chance of catching a wide variety of fish including Murray Cod, Golden Perch, Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout.

NSW DPI Fisheries Officers regularly patrol waterways and impoundments ensuring compliance with NSW fishing regulations and distributing freshwater fishing guides and sticky fish measuring rulers. Fishcare Volunteers can also be found at boat ramps and on the water in dedicated

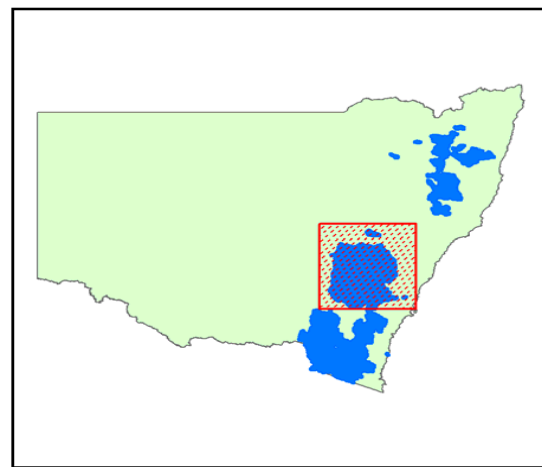


Figure 1. The Central NSW waterways region

Fishcare vessels, advising anglers about responsible fishing practices and distributing fisheries advisory information.

Information on bag and size limits, fishing closures and legal fishing gear can also be obtained free of charge from the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries), or by visiting your local NSW DPI fisheries office.

To report illegal fishing activity, call your local fisheries office or the Fishers Watch Phoneline on **1800 043 536**. All calls will be treated as confidential and you can remain anonymous.

## Recreational Fishing Fee

When fishing in NSW waters, both freshwater and saltwater, you are required by law to pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee and carry a receipt showing the payment of the fee.

All money raised by the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee is spent on improving recreational fishing in NSW. Some projects include:

- Angler Facilities such as fishing platforms
- Stocking of freshwater fish in dams and rivers.
- Essential research on popular recreational fish species.
- Enhancing compliance with fishing rules.
- Restoring important fish habitat.
- Research stocking of mulloway and prawns in estuaries.
- The installation of fish aggregating devices (FADs) to enhance fishing opportunities for Mahi Mahi (Dolphinfish) or even Tuna and Marlin.
- Creation of recreational fishing havens.
- Angler education and advisory programs such as the Fishcare Volunteer program, fishing workshops, Get Hooked. It's Fun to Fish and fishing guides.
- Building artificial reefs in offshore areas such as Sydney Reef and Shoalhaven River and in inshore areas such as Lake Macquarie, Botany Bay, St Georges Basin, Lake Conjola and Merimbula Lake.

You can pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee from hundreds of agents throughout NSW such as over the counter at most fishing tackle shops. You can also pay the fee at some caravan parks, service stations, many Kmart stores, online at [www.licence.nsw.gov.au](http://www.licence.nsw.gov.au) or by calling **1300 369 365**.

If you pay for a one year or three-year period online, over the phone or at a Touch agent or if you renew your licence using your renewal letter, you will receive a plastic receipt in the post. For all other payment methods, you will receive a paper receipt.

Some exemptions apply to paying the fishing fee, including people under the age of 18 and holders of pensioner concession cards. For further information on exemptions visit the NSW DPI website or call 1300 550 474.

You may not need to pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee if you are fishing on a charter boat under the supervision of a fishing guide. Please check with the charter operator, or guide, before you go fishing. If they do not hold a Recreational Fishing Fee Exemption Certificate you will need to pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee.

## Trout and salmon fishing rules

### General trout streams

The following waters are general trout streams and are closed to the taking of all species of fish by any method, from the Tuesday after the June (Queen's Birthday) long weekend until midnight on the last Friday before the start of the October (Labour Day) long weekend (inclusive) in each year.

The following fishing rules apply during the fishing season:

- a) a fisher may use two attended rods and lines with not more than 2 hooks attached and with not more than 3 treble hooks, or 3 double hooks, attached to any lure;
- b) a fisher may possess four rods and lines rigged with flies / lures only (with only 2 in use at any time);
- c) a fisher may use a landing net as an ancillary for retrieval of fish lawfully taken and
- d) bait fishing is permitted.

When taking Atlantic Salmon, Brook Trout, Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout in general trout streams, the maximum quantity that a person may take on any one day is 5 and the maximum quantity that a person may have in their possession is 10, consisting of any single species or a combination of species.

**Bell River** (Figure 2). (*Macquarie & Central Tablelands districts*). The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Bell River, its creeks and tributaries upstream from its junction with, and including, Molong Creek.

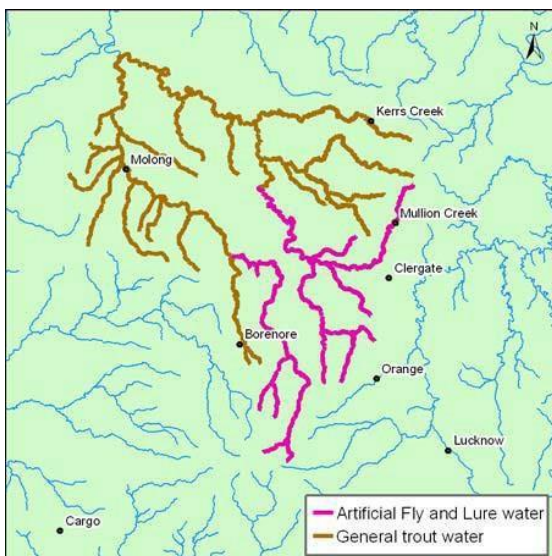


Figure 2. Bell River and Molong Creek

**Belubula River** (Central Tablelands district) The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Belubula River, its creeks, and tributaries upstream from the Cherry Tree Falls low level road bridge near Canowindra.

**Boree Creek.** (Central Tablelands district) The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Boree Creek and its tributaries upstream from its junction with, but not including, Mandagery Creek.

**Coxs River** (*Central Tablelands district*). The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Coxs River, its creeks and tributaries upstream from its junction with, but not including, the Little River.

**Cudgegong River** (*Macquarie & Central Tablelands districts*). The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Cudgegong River, its creeks and tributaries downstream of the wall of Windermere Dam and upstream from the Lawson Park Weir at Mudgee.

**Guinecor Creek** (*South West Slopes & Central Tablelands districts*). The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of Guinecor Creek and its tributaries upstream from its junction with, but not including, the Wollondilly River.

**Kowmung River** (*Central Tablelands district*). The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Kowmung River, and its tributaries upstream from its junction with, and including, Morong Creek.

**Lachlan River** (*South West Slopes & Central Tablelands districts*) The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Lachlan River and its tributaries upstream from the Cowra–Young road bridge.

**Macquarie River** (*Central Tablelands district*). The following waters are general trout waters: All tributaries of the Macquarie River (but not including the Macquarie River), upstream of its junction with, and including, Lewis Ponds Creek.

**Turon River** (*Central Tablelands district*). The following waters are general trout waters: the whole of the waters of the Turon River and its tributaries upstream of the Upper Turon Road crossing, Green Point.

### Artificial fly and lure trout streams

The following fishing rules apply during the fishing season.

- a) a fisher may use one attended rod and line with not more than 2 hooks attached, artificial flies and lures only and with not more than 3 treble hooks, or 3 double hooks, attached to any lure;
- b) a fisher may possess three rods and

lines rigged with flies / lures only (with only 1 in use at any time)

- c) a landing net can be used as an ancillary for retrieval of fish lawfully taken and
- d) bait fishing is not permitted.

When taking Atlantic Salmon, Brook Trout, Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout the maximum quantity that a person may take on any one day is 2 and the maximum quantity that a person may have in their possession is 4, consisting of any single species or a combination of species. The following waters are artificial fly and lure streams: The following waters are artificial fly and lure trout streams and are closed to the taking of all species of fish by any method, from the Tuesday after the June (Queen’s Birthday) long weekend until midnight on the last Friday before the start of the October (Labour Day) long weekend (inclusive) in each year.

**Bell River** (Figure 2) (*Macquarie & Central Tablelands districts*). the whole of the waters of the Bell River, its creeks and tributaries upstream from the Belgravia Road crossing.

**Molong Creek** (Figure 2) (*Macquarie & Central Tablelands districts*). the whole of the waters of the Molong Creek and its tributaries upstream from its junction with, but not including, Borenore Creek.

**Wildes Meadow Creek** (*Illawarra district*). the whole of the waters of Wildes Meadow Creek (including its creeks and tributaries, from a point where its visible flow merges with the backed-up waters of the Fitzroy Falls Reservoir, upstream to its source).

**Artificial fly and lure trout dams**

The following dams are artificial fly and lure trout dams which are open to fishing all year round. The whole of the waters of the Mill Pond and Thompsons Creek Dam. At Thompsons Creek Dam, fishing is only permitted 1 hour before sunrise to 4 hours after sunset and is shore based only.

The same fishing rules as artificial fly and lures streams apply except up to 3 hooks attached per line may be used, where those hooks are artificial flies / lures. When taking Atlantic Salmon, Brook Trout, Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout the maximum quantity that a person may take on any one day is 2 and the maximum quantity that a person may have in their possession is 4, consisting of any single species or a combination of species.

Dam	Town
The Mill Pond	Portland
Thompsons Creek Dam	Wallerawang

**General trout dams**

The following waters are general trout dams. These waters are open to fishing all year round. When fishing in general trout dams, up to two attended rods each with a line may be used with not more than 2 hooks attached per line or up to 3 hooks attached per line, where those hooks are artificial flies or lures. A fisher may possess up to four rods and lines rigged with flies / lures only (with only 2 in use at any time). An artificial fly or lure is considered to be a single hook. A landing net may be used as an ancillary for retrieval of fish lawfully taken. Bait fishing is permitted. **Note.** The bag and size limits for general trout dams are the same as the bag and size limits for general trout streams

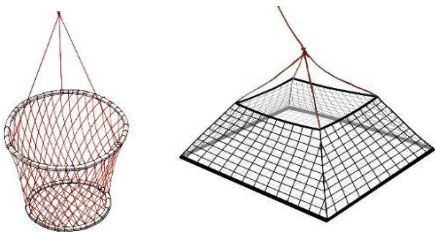
Dam	Town
Ben Chifley Dam	Bathurst
Carcoar Dam	Carcoar
Fitzroy Falls Reservoir	Fitzroy Falls
Gosling Creek Reservoir	Orange
Lake Canobolas	Orange
Lake Lyell	Lithgow
Lake Pillans	Lithgow
Lake Wallace	Wallerawang
Oberon Dam	Oberon
Wentworth Falls Lake	Wentworth Falls

## General freshwater fishing rules

### Permitted fishing gear and methods

**Lines.** A fisher may use 2 attended lines and possess four lines rigged with flies / lures only in non-tidal waters (with only 2 in use at any time), excluding trout waters (which have different rules). Attended lines must be within 50 m, in your sight and have no more than 2 hooks per line with up to 3 treble hooks attached to any lure perline, other than in some trout waters. A lure is considered a single hook.

**Traps and nets.** You may use up to 5 hoop / open pyramid lift nets or hoop nets (**Figure 3**) and 1 shrimp trap to take Yabbies and freshwater Shrimp, other than in trout waters where the use of traps and nets is prohibited (except when using up to 5 hoop / open pyramid lift nets in Googong Dam or Lakes Lyell, Wallace, Eucumbene or Jindabyne to take yabbies).



**Figure 3. Open pyramid lift net and hoop net**

All nets and traps must be tagged with the user's initial, surname, year of birth and postcode. Persons must not set traps or nets for longer than 24 hours without lifting those traps or nets. Fishers are encouraged to regularly check set fishing gear, to ensure that any unwanted catch is returned to the water safely, unharmed.

**Bowfishing.** Bowfishers may take carp from selected inland waters under the following circumstances: (a) not bowfish outside of 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset (b) no use any bowfishing equipment aided by lights (c) not bowfish within 100 metres of a: place or residence where someone lives, picnic area, boat ramp or campsite,

(e) not bowfish within 500m of a caravan park. Bowfishing equipment means an upright bow and arrow with the arrow attached to the bow by means of line and a reel of no more than 30 metres of line attached to the bowfishing reel and a flightless (un-fledged) bowfishing arrow with barbs attached (fishing head).

### Species restrictions

**Freshwater Catfish – Eel Tailed.** (*Tandanus tandanus*). May not be taken by any fishing method in western flowing rivers. May be taken from the backed up waters of listed western impoundments, eastern rivers and eastern dams.

**Silver Perch** (*Bidyanus bidyanus*). May not be taken by any fishing method in any rivers. May be taken from the backed up waters of listed impoundments. See the NSW Freshwater Recreational Fishing Guide for further details.

**Murray Cod** (*Maccullochella peeli*). May not be taken from the whole of the inland waters of NSW. From 1 September to 30 November (inclusive) in each year (except Copeton Dam).

**Murray Crayfish** (*Euastacus armatus*). May not be taken in any waters at any time other than between June and August (inclusive) in the following specified waters:

(a) Murrumbidgee River between the Hume Highway road bridge, Gundagai and 100 m upstream of the weir face at Berembed Weir near Ganmain and,

(b) Murray River from 130 m below Hume Weir near Albury to the Newell Highway road bridge, Tocumwal

**Note:** The specified waters include all tributaries, lakes, lagoons, dams, reservoirs, ponds, canals, channels or waterways of the main channels of the above rivers, except Old Man Creek, which is a tributary of the Murrumbidgee River.

**Australian Bass and Estuary Perch.** May not be taken in rivers, except rivers above impoundments from 1 May to 31 August

(inclusive) in each year other than by catch and release fishing, where any fish caught must be returned to the water safely, unharmed.

### Prohibited fishing methods

- You cannot use setlines, spearguns (except bowfishing equipment to take carp), spears, gaffs, chemicals, poison, explosives or firearms to take fish. You must not jag or foul hook fish, use frogs, live finfish (including carp), live birds or live animals as bait or to sell your catch.
- It is illegal to remove heads, tails and claws from crayfish or possess tails and or claws when you are in, on or adjacent to the water. This rule does not apply if the crayfish are being prepared for immediate consumption, are being prepared for immediate use as bait, if the crayfish are being cleaned at a fish cleaning facility or at a boat ramp. It is also illegal to keep crayfish with eggs or to remove those eggs.
- It is illegal to use a light or a hand to take trout or salmon. The use of salmon roe or products containing them is also prohibited. You cannot use traps, nets or bowfishing equipment in trout waters.
- You must not alter the length of a fish which is subject to a minimum or maximum size limit whilst you are in, on or adjacent to any waters in any manner other than by gutting, gilling and scaling. You cannot remove the head or tail. It is illegal to keep prohibited size fish – they should be returned to the water immediately with as little harm as possible. This rule does not apply if the fish are being prepared for immediate consumption, are being prepared for immediate use as bait, if the fish are being cleaned at a fish cleaning facility or a fish cleaning table at a boat ramp, or for fish that do not have a legal length.

## Fishing safely

Remember these basic safety tips.

- Observe first, fish later. Always check weather and water conditions before you start fishing. Make sure you are aware of local weather. Listen to weather forecasts or call the weather information line on 1900 937 107.
- Be aware that conditions may change dramatically in a short period of time.
- Never fish alone and always inform others of your fishing plans. Let friends or family know where you are going and when you will be back.
- Care for your own safety and never take undue risks when fishing, even when fighting fish. Never enter the water to retrieve lost tackle or snagged fish. If the location looks dangerous, don't fish there.
- Wear a lifejacket or buoyancy vest when boat fishing or when fishing in hazardous locations such as those located near areas of fast-moving water. Always wear appropriate non-slip shoes. Cleats, sandals and sandshoes with non-slip soles suit different surfaces. Carry ropes and torches as an additional precaution
- If someone falls into the water, look for something that floats and throw it to the person in the water. Alert emergency services by dialling 112 from a mobile phone or 000 from a landline.
- When boat fishing, wear light clothing. Light clothing such as shorts and a spray jacket will let you swim easily if you fall overboard. Jumpers may be heavy and difficult to take off.
- Ask for advice from locals who know the area – they can advise you of good fishing locations and areas to be cautious around.

## Wader Safety

Take extra care when wearing waders. Transport for NSW recommends that waders should not be used in boats in case of capsizing or swamping.

Basic wader safety tips include the following.

- To restrict the amount of water that can enter waders, fasten a belt around your waist. This must be as firm as possible but always comfortable. The belt will also trap air inside and provide some buoyancy but caution is needed as you could end upside down if you fall into the water.
- If you fall into the water immediately assume a tuck position, then roll on to your back while keeping the knees tucked. Use your arms to balance. Do not try to swim but either tread water or float. Always remember not to panic. If swept into a fast-flowing stream always face downstream and go with the current feet first while working to a safe shore position.

## Responsible fishing

- Observe all bag and size limits as well as any other restrictions for the area you are fishing. Carefully release all undersize or unwanted fish and take only what is sufficient for your immediate needs.
- Take home any rubbish from the fishing spot, especially plastic bags, old line, and fishing hooks. Take home any left-over bait or fish discards and ensure you clean away any residue. Use environmentally friendly tackle where possible.

## Catch and release

Catch and release fishing has increased in popularity in recent years. Research has shown that most fish survive using current catch and release fishing techniques. The following improved fishing practices are suggested to maximise fish survival.

- If a fish is deeply hooked, do not try to remove the hook – cut the line as close to the mouth as possible and release the fish. It is likely to survive if handled carefully.
- Use artificial lures or non-offset circle hooks when using bait to reduce deep hooking of fish.
- Barbless hooks can be used to make hook removal easier and minimise hook damage. Minimise the length of time the fish is out of the water. Ideally, unhook the fish while it is still in the water. Needle-nosed pliers or unhooking devices can greatly reduce the time spent unhooking a fish.
- Use fish-friendly landing nets with soft, knotless mesh.
- Avoid dropping the fish on hard or hot surfaces and do not hold the fish by the gills or eyes.
- Use wet hands or gloves to handle fish before release. If you are going to take photos of your fish before release, support your fish properly.

## Penalties

Penalties apply to persons who take or possess fish (including invertebrates, shells, etc.) taken in contravention of fishing closures.

## Further information

If you would like more information about fishing restrictions that apply to northern trout waterways and impoundments, please contact the relevant fisheries office.

Central Tablelands District (02) 6331 1428,  
Macquarie District (02) 6881 1208, South West Slopes District (02) 6941 1404,  
Illawarra District (02) 4220 8499

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