

# Dept. of Natural Resources: Reminds anglers of new opening day for inland trout harvest season

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**MADISON, Wis.** – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds anglers that the 2026-2027 inland trout season will open on April 4 and run through Oct. 15, 2026, increasing harvest opportunities throughout the state's inland streams, springs and spring ponds.

This year's trout harvest season opens a month earlier than prior seasons. Trout populations are strong across most Wisconsin waters and this additional month of harvest will provide anglers more fishing opportunities during a time of the year when other fishing seasons are generally closed. This season change was strongly supported by the public during the DNR and Wisconsin Conservation Congress 2025 Spring Hearings.

Anyone wishing to participate in this season will need a 2026-2027 general fishing license and inland trout stamp, which are both valid until March 31, 2027, and can be purchased through [Go Wild](#) or at one of many [in-person license sales locations](#).

The DNR reminds anglers that there have been some changes to the trout daily bag and length limits this year, providing additional harvest opportunity on waters where trout populations are abundant and additional harvest is encouraged to meet management goals.

Consult the [Guide to Wisconsin's 2026-2027 Trout Fishing Regulations](#) for specifics. The earlier open harvest season for trout does not apply to inland lakes and ponds. For those waters, the traditional first Saturday in May opener still applies. In 2026, this season opens May 2. No changes have been made to the trout season dates or

bag limits on Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Green Bay or Green Bay tributaries.

As the season kicks off, anglers are reminded to be mindful of [aquatic invasive species](#). To prevent the spread, anglers are encouraged to disinfect their gear and follow these guidelines:

- **Inspect** your waders, boots, watercraft and equipment.
- **Remove** any attached aquatic plants or animals (before launching, after loading and before transporting on a public highway).
- **Drain** all water from boats, motors, waders and other equipment.
- **Never move** live fish away from a waterbody.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.
- **Buy** minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer. It's important to note that anglers may take leftover minnows away from any state water and use them again on that same water, and leftover minnows may be used on other waters only if no lake or river water or other fish were added to their container.