# POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION

## 2022

### SPORT FISHING IN THE TIDAL POTOMAC RIVER

**LEGAL SIZES, LIMITS AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS**

A Sport Fishing License is Required • Possession of Fillets is Prohibited • Any Fish Caught with Hook and Line May Not Be Sold or Offered for Sale (except by commercial license) • Any Fish Whose Size is Prohibited, Season is Closed, or is in Excess of the Possession Limit Must be Immediately Released to the Waters Where Found • No High-Grading Allowed • It Shall be Unlawful to Possess a Live Snakehead Fish or to Return, Release, or Otherwise Discard Any Living Snakehead Fish to the Potomac River. (See Order #2022-01)

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All sizes are total length (TL) and all restrictions are subject to change.

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**Stripped Bass (Rockfish)**

- **Season Open:** May 1 through May 15
- **Season Closed:** N/A
- **Open Area:** Below Harry W. Nice Bridge (RT. 301)
- **Minimum Size Limit:** 35"
- **Possession Limit:** 1 per person/day (inc. charter capt.)
- **Bait Restrictions:** No live eel. No more than 2 hooks.

**Summer/Fall Season**

- **Season:** May 16 – July 6 and Aug. 21 – Dec. 31
- **Open Area:** Below Woodrow Wilson Bridge (I-95) 20"
- **Possession Limit:** 2 per person/day
- **Bait Restrictions:** No more than 2 hooks or set of hooks per rod or line.

Special Note: Non-Offset Circle Hooks Required when fishing for striped bass during the closed season using cut or whole natural bait. (See Order #2022-01)

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**Black Bass (Largemouth Bass)**

- **Season:** 15” Mar. 1 – June 15
- **Minimum Size Limit:** 12”
- **Possession Limit:** 5 per person

**Black Drum**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 16"
- **Possession Limit:** 1 per person

**Catfish – Bullhead**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 6"
- **No Possession Limit**

**Catfish – Blue**

- **Season:** Year Round
- **No Minimum Size Limit**
- **No Possession Limit**

**Cobia**

- **Season:** June 15 – Sept. 15
- **Minimum Size Limit:** 40"
- **Possession Limit:** 1/person or 2/vessel

**Crappie**

- **No Minimum Size Limit**
- **Possession Limit:** 10 per person

**Croaker (Hardhead)**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 9” min.
- **Possession Limit:** 25 per person

**Snakehead**

- **No Minimum Size Limit**
- **No Possession Limit**

**Shad – American**

- **Season Closed – Moratorium**

**Shad – Hickory**

- **Season Closed – Moratorium**

**Spotted Sea Trout**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 14”
- **Possession Limit:** 10 per person

**Summer Flounder**

- **Season:** Year Round
- **Minimum Size Limit:** 16”
- **Possession Limit:** 4 fish/person/day

**Tautog**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 14”
- **No Possession Limit**

**Weakfish (Sea Trout)**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 12”
- **Possession Limit:** 1 per person

**Yellow Perch**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 9”
- **Possession Limit:** 10 per person

**Spot**

- **Possession Limit:** 50 per person

**Sturgeon**

- **Season Closed – Moratorium**

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**Eel**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 9”
- **Possession Limit:** 25 per person

**Pike (Chain Pickerel)**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 14”
- **No Possession Limit**

**Red Drum (Puppy Drum)**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 18”
- **Maximum Size Limit:** 25”
- **Possession Limit:** 5 per person

**Spanish Mackerel**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 14”
- **Possession Limit:** 15 per person

**Catfish – Bullhead**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 6”
- **No Possession Limit**

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**Bluefish (Taylor)**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 8”
- **Recreational Possession Limit:** 3 per person
- **Charter/“For Hire” Possession Limit:** 5 per person

**Cobia**

- **Season:** June 15 – Sept. 15
- **Minimum Size Limit:** 40”
- **Possession Limit:** 1/person or 2/vessel

**Crappie**

- **No Minimum Size Limit**
- **Possession Limit:** 10 per person

**Croaker (Hardhead)**

- **Minimum Size Limit:** 9” min.
- **Possession Limit:** 25 per person

**Snakehead**

- **No Minimum Size Limit**
- **No Possession Limit**

**Shad – American**

- **Season Closed – Moratorium**

**Shad – Hickory**

- **Season Closed – Moratorium**

**River Herring – Moratorium**

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**CREDITS:** Illustrations by Duane Raver, Jr., in *Fishes of the Southeastern United States* by Charles S. Manooch, III, used with permission. For the most current information contact: Potomac River Fisheries Commission (804) 224 7148 • www.prfc.us
POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION
SPORT FISHING LICENSE RECIPROCITY GUIDELINES

NOTICE – While PRFC fishing licenses are valid in MD & VA areas listed here, the seasons, sizes and creel limits for each species may be different. Check MD & VA rules before fishing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bodies of Water</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>PRFC Sport Fishing License</th>
<th>Maryland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh Water</td>
<td>Salt Water</td>
<td>Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potomac River (Tidal)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waters of the District of Columbia (DC license required)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main stem of the Potomac River above Rt. 301 bridge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main stem of the Potomac River below Rt. 301 bridge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD tributaries above Rt. 301 bridge up to demarcation lines (listed below)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD tributaries below Rt. 301 bridge up to demarcation lines (listed below)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD tributaries upstream of demarcation lines (listed below)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA tributaries above Rt. 301 bridge up to demarcation lines (listed below)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>VA tributaries below Rt. 301 bridge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA tributaries upstream of demarcation lines (listed below)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chesapeake Bay</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD portion of Chesapeake Bay and its other tidal tributaries</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA portion of Chesapeake Bay and its saltwater tributaries</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patuxent River</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above MD Rt. 214 bridge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below MD Rt. 214 bridge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rappahannock River</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Above Rt. 360 bridge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main stem below Rt. 360 bridge</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tributaries below/dowstream of Rt. 360 bridge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Ocean – Including ocean tributaries</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demarcation Lines (Boundary Lines) between Tidal and Non-Tidal or Saltwater and Freshwater

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maryland</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tidal waters of the Potomac River tributaries between the border with District of Columbia along its southeast quadrant line and the Chesapeake Bay are downstream of the highway bridges of the following:</td>
<td>Virginia waters between the District of Columbia and Rt. 301 bridge downstream of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breton Bay - MD Rt. 243; Henson Run - Oxon Hill Rd.; Mattawoman Creek - MD Rt. 225; Nanjemoy Creek - Trappe Bridge on MD Rt. 6; Piscataway Creek - MD Rt. 224 (Livingston Rd.); Port Tobacco Creek - MD Rt. 6; St. Clements Bay - MD Rt. 234; St. Mary's River - MD Rt. 5, (Great Mills Rd.); Wicomico River - MD Rt. 234; Other tidal bays and tributaries thereof.</td>
<td>Accotink Creek - Rt. 1 bridge; Aquia Creek - 1st bridge above Aquia Harbor Marina; Choptawmsic - Rt. 1 bridge; Choptank - Causweay; Dogue Creek - Rt. 235, Mt. Vernon Memorial Parkway; Four Mile Run - Rt. 1 bridge; Hunting Creek - Rt. 1 bridge; Little Hunting Creek - Rt. 1 bridge; Neabsco - Rt. 1 bridge; Occoquan River - fall line; Pohick Creek - Rt. 611 (Colchester Rd.); Potomac Creek - Rt. 608 bridge; Powells Creek - Rt. 1 bridge; Quantico Creek Rt. 1 bridge; Unnamed bays &amp; tributaries accessible by gas powered boats.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>