

FISHING IN NONTIDAL WATERS — Trout

What was proposed?

The Department has proposed changes to the Put-and-Take trout stocking program. The changes include:

- Modifying the areas managed as Put-and-Take areas.
- Modifying the areas managed as Closure 1 areas.
- Eliminating the Closure 2 designation.

Areas

The Department has proposed the following changes to the areas managed for Put-and-Take Trout Fishing:

Addition:

- Extend the Patapsco River Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Area (Baltimore and Howard County) upstream by approximately 0.61 miles. The additional area is public property with good access for both stocking and anglers. The new area encompasses the stretch of the Patapsco River from the previous site of Bloede Dam upstream to Ilchester Road.

Deletions:

- Jones Falls below Lake Roland (Baltimore County) — This area has poor/difficult access for stocking; the available water is limited in size and has not been stocked since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Beaver Run (Carroll County) — This area is entirely on private property, primarily within the Beaver Run Fish and Game Club property, with little public participation. The stream is very shallow, provides limited holding habitat for trout, and has not been stocked for several years.

Closures

The Department has proposed simplifying the way it closes certain bodies of water during the spring trout stocking season. To achieve this, the Department proposes modifying the list of areas affected by this closure and eliminating the Closure 2 management option. There would no longer be the potential for confusion about different closures. Many of the Closure 2 areas would be redesignated as Closure 1; the remainder would be designated as Closure 0. Closure 1 areas are closed from the first Sunday after March 4 to the last Saturday in March. Closure 0 areas are not closed but are managed under the Put-and-Take rules (daily creel of 5 fish per person per day, possession limit of 10, no brook trout harvest allowed).

The following Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Areas would be removed from the Closure 2 list and added to the Closure 1 list:

- Cotton Cove Pond (Allegany County)
- Farm Museum Pond (Carroll County)
- Hamburg Pond (Frederick County)
- Jennings Run mainstem downstream of the confluence of North Jennings Run (Allegany County)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Pond (Montgomery County)

- North Jennings Run Watershed (Allegany County)
- Pine Lake (Montgomery County)
- Rainbow Lake (Frederick County)
- Savage River mainstem from Savage River Reservoir upstream to Poplar Lick (Garrett County)
- Whiskey Springs Pond (Frederick County)

The following Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Areas would be removed from the Closure 2 list and added to the Closure 0 list:

- Frank Bentz Pond (Frederick County)
- Indian Springs Pond (Washington County)
- Izaak Walton Pond (Montgomery County)
- Northwest Branch watershed upstream of Maryland Route 410 to Norwood Road (Montgomery County)
- Westminster Pond (Carroll County)

The Department would also add a number of areas currently on the Closure 0 list to the Closure 1 list in order to enhance the Youth Trout Fishing Day program. The Youth Trout Fishing Day program occurs in all waters designated as Closure 1 on the Saturday before the traditional Opening Day; by moving these areas from Closure 0 to Closure 1, the Department is increasing opportunities to participate in that program. The following Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Areas would be moved from the Closure 0 list and added to the Closure 1 list:

- Accident Pond (Garrett County)
- Calvert Cliffs Pond (Calvert County)
- Dans Mountain Pond (Allegany County)
- Hughesville Pond (Charles County)
- Hutchins Pond (Calvert County)
- Warfield Park Pond (Howard County)

Why is this change necessary?

The Department continuously evaluates stocking and management programs to maximize recreational opportunities and experiences for anglers, including adjusting stocking locations and closures. These proposed changes will also reduce the complexity of the Department's regulations by creating a single closure period for those waters that are closed during the spring stocking season.

Who will this affect?

This action will affect youth (under 16 years of age) and adult nontidal trout anglers that fish in the designated waters.

What is the specific regulatory action?

Amend Regulation .01 under COMAR 08.02.11 Fishing in Nontidal Waters.

Has this change been discussed with advisory bodies or interested individuals?

- This idea was scoped with the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission and the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission at their meetings in July 2024.
- This idea was scoped with the general public July 29, 2024, through August 13, 2024.

Regulatory Process

The Department will follow our normal [procedures](#) as this concept moves forward.

At the conclusion of the scoping process, the Department determined that the action is necessary and appropriate. The rules are being promulgated following the Administrative Procedures Act described in Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the State Government Article Annotated Code of Maryland.

- The General Assembly's Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review Committee reviews the regulatory proposal for fiscal and legal analysis.
- The proposal is printed by the Division of State Documents in the Maryland Register.
- A 30 day public comment period begins on the day of publication.
- After review of the comments, the Department may adopt the changes.
- If the Department adopts the changes, they become effective after a notice is published in the Maryland Register that announces approval and the effective date.

When will this be effective?

The Department projects that this change could be effective in January of 2025, however the exact date cannot be determined at this time.