

By practicing the Tread Lightly! principles you not only protect the outdoors but you protect access to recreation opportunities for years to come.

Tread Lightly!® is a national nonprofit organization with a mission to proactively protect recreation access and opportunities in the outdoors through ethics education and stewardship initiatives. Not only is Tread Lightly! the nation's signature ethics message for outdoor enthusiasts that use motorized vehicles while enjoying the outdoors, Tread Lightly! offers unique training and restoration programs strategically designed to instill an ethic of responsibility in a wide variety of outdoor enthusiasts and the industries that serve them.

**T**RAVEL RESPONSIBLY  
**R**ESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS  
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**A**VOID SENSITIVE AREAS

**D**O YOUR PART

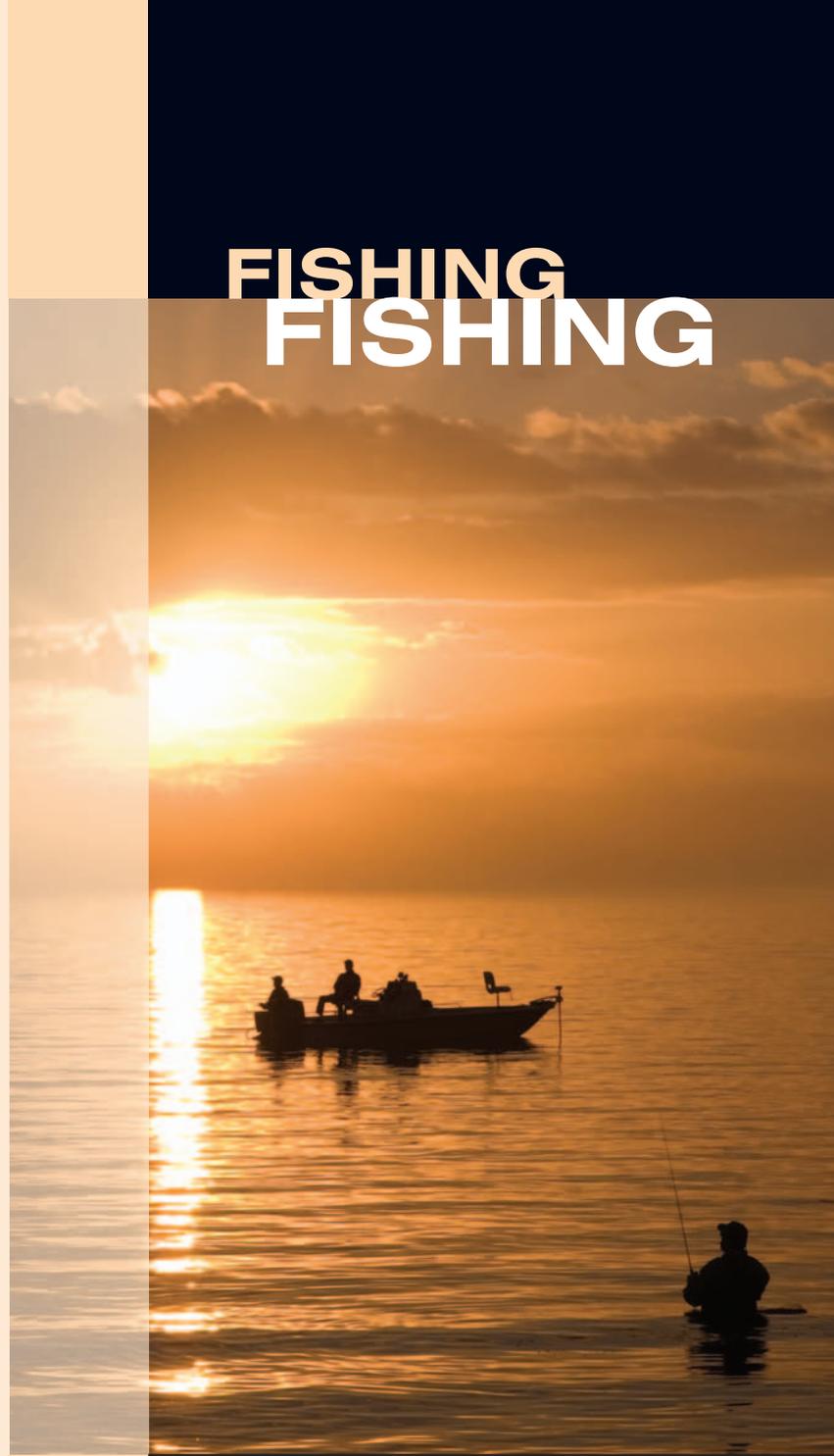


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Thanks to our partners!



# FISHING FISHING



**TREAD LIGHTLY!'S**  
RESPONSIBLE RECREATION TIPS

## TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY

Travel responsibly on designated waterways and launch your watercraft in designated areas.

- ✔ Travel only in areas open to your type of watercraft.
- ✔ Carry a Coast Guard approved life vest (PFD) for each person on board.
- ✔ Always maintain your watercraft at a manageable speed.
- ✔ Keep an eye out for other boaters, objects, and swimmers.
- ✔ If traveling on land, stay on designated roads, trails or permitted areas.
- ✔ Follow best practices for negotiating terrain for you type of travel.
- ✔ Don't create new routes or expand existing trails.
- ✔ Cross streams only at fords where the road or trail crosses the stream.
- ✔ Comply with all signs and barriers.
- ✔ Buddy up with two or three anglers. Traveling solo can leave you vulnerable if you have an accident or breakdown.

## RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Respect the rights of others including anglers, swimmers, skiers, boaters, divers and others to allow them to enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed.

- ✔ Show consideration to all recreationists on and around waterways and on the roads and trails to fishing spots.
- ✔ Be courteous to other boaters while in boat ramp areas. Launch and retrieve your watercraft as quickly as possible.
- ✔ Be a sportsman; conserve fisheries and catch only what you need.
- ✔ Leave ample room for other anglers so as not to disturb their fishing experience.
- ✔ If fishing by boat, don't crowd other anglers or watercrafts.
- ✔ On roads and trails, horses always have the right of way, and when driving yield to hikers and bikers as well.
- ✔ Keep the noise down especially around shore and other anglers.
- ✔ Be considerate of others on the road or trail.
- ✔ Leave gates as you find them.
- ✔ If crossing private property, be sure to ask permission from the landowner(s).

## EDUCATE YOURSELF

Educate yourself by learning rules and regulations, planning for your trip, taking recreation skills classes, and knowing how to use and operate your equipment safely.

- ✔ Obtain a map or chart of your destination and determine which areas are open to your type of travel.
- ✔ Make a realistic plan, and stick to it. Always tell someone of your travel plans.
- ✔ Contact the land manager for area restrictions, closures, and permit requirements.
- ✔ Check the weather forecast for your destination. Plan clothing, equipment, and supplies accordingly.
- ✔ Know your local fishing laws and regulations.
- ✔ Know catch limits and legal length/size of fish you intend to keep.
- ✔ Be prepared with alternative fishing locations if you arrive at an over-crowded area.

## AVOID SENSITIVE AREAS

Avoid sensitive areas and operating your watercraft in shallow waters or near shorelines at high speeds.

- ✔ In the backcountry, be mindful of damaging fragile vegetation and soils along shorelines and stream banks. Choose access to fishing spots wisely.
- ✔ Other sensitive habitats to avoid unless on designated routes include cryptobiotic soils of the desert, tundra, and seasonal nesting or breeding areas.
- ✔ Avoid disturbing historical, archeological, and paleontological sites.
- ✔ Avoid "spooking" livestock and wildlife you encounter and keep your distance.
- ✔ Motorized and mechanized vehicles are not allowed in areas designated Wilderness.

## DO YOUR PART

Do your part by leaving the area better than you found it, properly disposing of fuel, oil and waste, avoiding the spread of invasive species, restoring degraded areas, and joining a local enthusiast organization.

- ✔ Pack out what you pack in.
- ✔ Carry a trash bag and pick up litter left by others.
- ✔ Never discard fish entrails in lake shallows or any area where others might come across it. It is unacceptable to bury it near the lake or stream or burn it in camp. Suitable alternatives include, bagging and packing out entrails, disposing of it in water at least 25 feet deep, or burying it 100 yards away from any lake, trail, or camp.
- ✔ Avoid using lead weights which, if ingested, are toxic to wildlife.
- ✔ Use only artificial lures. Live bait has the potential to accidentally introduce exotics and cause more damage to fish when being released, as they often take live bait deeper.
- ✔ If practicing catch and release use barbless single hooks to make release easier. Return fish quickly, handling them with a wet hand to minimize affects to the protective coating on fish skin.
- ✔ Minimize fishing during spawning periods.
- ✔ Release smaller fish as they are forage for many residents of the ecosystem. Larger and older fish are often the best producers, collect more contaminants, and are less healthy to eat—also making them good choices for release.
- ✔ Observe proper sanitary waste disposal or pack your waste out.
- ✔ Protect the soundscape by preventing unnecessary noise created by a poorly tuned vehicle or revving your engine without need.
- ✔ Following a trip wash your gear, watercraft, and support vehicle to reduce the spread of invasive species. Make sure to remove all plant material from watercraft, motor, trailer, and other gear and dispose on dry land in a garbage container and drain livewells, bilge water, and transom wells at the boat launch prior to leaving.