

MDC encourages anglers to get hooked on Missouri trout fishing

March 1 marks the annual opening of catch-and-keep trout fishing in Missouri at the state's four trout parks: Bennett Spring State Park near Lebanon, Montauk State Park near Licking, Roaring River State Park near Cassville, and Maramec Spring Park near St. James. The catch-and-keep season at the trout parks runs through Oct. 31.

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) operates trout hatcheries at all four parks and stocks rainbow trout daily throughout the season.

Trout anglers need a daily trout tag to fish in Missouri's trout parks. Daily trout tags can only be purchased at each of the four trout parks. Missouri residents 16 through 64 and nonresidents 16 and older also need a fishing permit in addition to the daily tag.

The cost of a daily trout tag to fish at three of Missouri's four trout parks -- Bennett Spring State Park, Montauk State Park, and Roaring River State Park -- is now \$4 for adults and \$3 for those 15 years of age and younger. A daily fishing permit for Missouri residents is \$7 and now \$8 for nonresidents. The daily limit is four trout.

New this year, MDC is conducting a pilot program at Maramec Spring Park where the daily limit has been raised from four to five trout and the cost of a daily trout tag for adults has gone from \$3 to \$5 and from \$2 to \$3 for anglers 15 years of age and younger.

Trout hatcheries are just one way that conservation pays in Missouri. MDC staff stock more than 800,000 trout annually at the state's four trout parks and approximately 1.5 million trout annually statewide. Trout anglers spend more than \$100 million each year in the Show-Me-State, which generates more than \$180 million in business activity, supports more than 2,300 jobs, and creates more than \$70 million dollars in wages. About 30 percent of Missouri trout anglers come from other states, so a substantial portion of trout fishing expenditures is "new money" for the state's economy.

Missouri also offers excellent trout fishing throughout the state on rivers and streams that support naturally reproducing trout. For more information on trout fishing in Missouri, visit MDC online at huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/fishing/where-fish/trout-areas.

Buy Missouri fishing permits from numerous vendors around the state, online at mdc.mo.gov/buypermits, or through MDC's free mobile apps, MO Hunting and MO Fishing, available for download through Google Play for Android devices or the App Store for Apple devices.

REMINDER TO TROUT ANGLERS: To prevent the spread of the invasive alga called didymo or "rock snot," the use of shoes, boots or waders with porous soles of felt, matted or woven fibrous material is prohibited at all trout parks, trout streams, Lake Taneycomo, and buffer areas. Get more information at huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/fishing/protect-missouri-fishing/dont-spread-didymo