

# Local Information

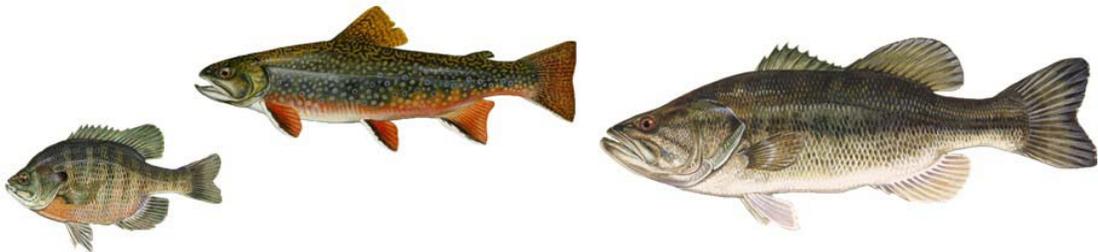
*One of six Stations in the Passport Program: An Introduction to Fishing and Boating*

## Read before the Event

### Objectives:

At the end of this station participants will:

- ✓ Understand there are fishing and boating regulations and know where to get them,
- ✓ Know places to go fishing and boating nearby,
- ✓ Be able to identify some local fish,
- ✓ Know there are courses in boating safety and fishing skills available and where to locate them,
- ✓ Understand respect for private landowners and their property benefits access to public waters.



# Background for the Volunteer:

Why have rules? When the Europeans first colonized America they relied heavily on hunting and fishing for food supplies. Within just a few years colonists had depleted the wildlife within a day's walk of their settlements. At the time they had two choices: either move to a place where the wildlife population had not been depleted, or begin to rely more on domestic animals and limit the numbers of wildlife taken. In a continuing effort to have both people and wildlife in America, we have set up rules that both conserve wildlife and still allow us to connect with our wildlife heritage and catch some of our food.

Fishing regulations protect fish, help managers control and improve fish populations, and distribute the catch among anglers. Boating regulations specify safety equipment, identify watercraft, and provide basic rules of the road to operate on public waters. It is your responsibility to know about the rules in your state.

Both fishing and boating regulations can specify at what age licenses are needed for various activities. Usually children are not required to have a fishing license but may be required to fish with a licensed adult. Operation of personal watercraft (WaveRunner®, Jet Ski®, Sea-Doo®, etc.) sometimes requires a special exam and certification. State rules vary widely: be sure you are informed about yours. Check with your state fish and wildlife agency or [www.WaterWorksWonders.org](http://www.WaterWorksWonders.org).

Where to go fishing and boating is an important thing to know. States issue lists or maps of lakes, streams and other waters open to these activities and designate special areas where they have acquired public access. Reaching public water through private lands for fishing or boating may be an issue in your state. Participants should be told where good areas are located and access is allowed. Respecting landowners' rights by leaving gates in the position you find them, moving quietly past homes, staying on the path provided and picking up litter assures continued access to these special areas.

The locations of public boat ramps for launching and taking out boats are also necessary pieces of information. Canoe, kayak, or fishing boat rental information is also valuable. Distributing information to make these steps easier is one of the simplest ways to promote participation. An easy and comprehensive source for this information is the website: [www.WaterWorksWonders.org](http://www.WaterWorksWonders.org).

It's easy to learn to boat responsibly by completing a boating safety course sponsored by your state, U.S. Coast Guard, BoatU.S. Foundation, or the U.S. Power Squadron.

Make sure your course is certified by NASBLA (National Association of State Boating Law Administrators). Some states require a course before you operate your new boat or personal watercraft. Even if the course isn't required, it's a good idea for every member of a boating family to take this course either in person or online.

BoatU.S. Foundation sponsors over 300 nationwide sites where children's life jackets may be borrowed for a day or weekend, free of charge. The law requires an appropriately-sized life jacket for every person on a boat. Families with fast-growing children will find this program very helpful. To find out where the Life Jacket Loaner Program for Kids is located, go to [www.boatus.com/foundation/LJLP](http://www.boatus.com/foundation/LJLP) and click on the map of your state. Marinas, state parks, fuel docks and other waterfront businesses participate in this program. With so many sites it is likely that one will be near you.

At over 550 sites in 34 states, volunteers staff the Fishing Tackle Loaner Program sponsored by the Future Fisherman Foundation. The sites are operated by civic clubs, libraries, community centers, schools and others, to provide entry-level equipment to borrowers at no charge. Sites are located across the country. To find out about your area, look on the website: [www.futurefisherman.org](http://www.futurefisherman.org).

For classes to show you how to improve your fishing skills, find information at your local fishing tackle store or state aquatic resources education program. Boating courses can be found at local retailers, online, or through your state agency that regulates boating.

A simple Handout for the participants with these local resources listed is very helpful. A template page where you, or your Event Host, can list your local resources is in the Overview Packet and available on the CD in the *Passport Materials Kit* or can be downloaded from [www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org](http://www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org) (so you can fill in your information electronically). Check with your Event Host to see if this feature will be included for your Event. Make copies and send home with each participant. The template page includes a picture of the Palomar Knot and Basic Rig Poster, one of the pieces of take-home information most requested by participants. Participants can also find the Palomar Knot and Basic Rig Poster and information on where and how to fish and boat in your area on the website, [www.WaterWorksWonders.org](http://www.WaterWorksWonders.org).

It is impossible for this national program to cover all of the richly diverse and popular regional ideas for fishing and boating. Your area has special customs and activities that other areas don't have, such as saltwater fishing or crabbing, that may require special equipment. We have provided time in the second part of this station to include these regional activities. Making the program relevant to your area is of the utmost

importance, so time is built in for the Event Host to customize to your local needs. He/She might consider inviting a special guest to make the program relevant locally. Some states have seasons and specific methods for capturing crabs, crayfish, bullfrogs, snapping turtles, lobsters, oysters, eels and clams; just to mention a few. When special methods and equipment are required, it is a good idea to include a demonstration so participants can see firsthand what is involved. Your invited specialist should be informed of the length of presentation that will fit into the designated timeslot (10 minutes) and that hands-on activities are recommended. For a special boating demonstration, a boat dealer could be invited to demonstrate to participants the use of fish finders and other special equipment. This is an opportunity to reach out to lots of different segments of your community.

On the other hand, if a local topic cannot be set up, we have included a fish identification activity you might want to continue this activity in that timeslot. Identifying fish gets easier with experience but fish, like all animals, have characteristics that vary a little from individual to individual. Look for clues by comparing the fish to the pictures by general shape, fins, color, and patterns (stripes, spots, and other identifying marks). Artists' illustrations sometimes make all of the fish on a page the same size for convenience, assuming that we all know that an adult channel catfish is not the same size as a bluegill. This can be confusing for a beginner. Fish do have wide ranges in size but still have maximums and minimums. Channel catfish can be up to 58 pounds but are more typically 5 to 10 pounds: Bluegill can be up to 4 pounds but are typically much less than a pound.

The program to be presented at this Station follows the Materials section below. It appears in two forms, a script and an outline, so you can choose the one that will help you most with your presentation. If you feel more comfortable using a script, the part directly following the Materials section is for you. Those presenters who would rather read through the script and then use an outline as a guide will find a suggested outline following the script. Ten minutes of this station is intended for your own local emphasis with a topic important in your area. If you do not want to use this time for a special local topic, then you may want to add the Fish ID activity we have provided after the program script and outline. Have fun.

# Teaching Tips for Local Information:

Local Information requires some concentration and an opportunity to look through your state regulations (or proclamation or digest) booklet. Although this Program was written with 10-year-olds as a target audience, it is intended for families of all ages to share these experiences. The regulations booklets are usually printed in tiny type and require searching to find a specific answer. Parents need to assist with this activity. As soon as they arrive at your station, invite them to sit down with their kids get involved. Seat your audience on the ground or on a tarp, facing you.

Sometimes the regulation booklets have tables of contents. If you are going to have the participants search through the booklet, point out where the table of contents is and help them decide where to look for the answer.

You might have a map of your state as part of the information about where to go fishing and boating. It would be helpful to approach this topic assuming that your audience has never used a map before. That way, even the youngest in the group can participate.

- The easiest way to handle the map is to place it on the ground in the middle of where everyone is sitting. If that isn't possible, then enlist a couple of participants to help you hold the map so everyone can see.
- Do not hand out individual maps to kids. Unfolding and folding become a major task, and a distraction.
- If your map is on the ground, orient it so north points north.

It is tempting to give the participants copies of maps, booklets, and special materials as you are talking about them at this Station. Unfortunately, it is very cumbersome to haul these items around while visiting the remaining Stations. Most programs distribute "goodie bags" at the end so participants can take home special giveaways. If you tell the participants they will get a free copy later, it will satisfy their need to collect.

If you distribute anything to use in your activity, do it one item at a time. Kids get overwhelmed with too many things at once.

Make sure all of the needed teaching tools and equipment are handy. Lay them out so you can find them easily. Prepare in advance. If you need the script for the first couple of times through you might want to put it on a clipboard with a rubber band to keep it from flapping in the wind. Have some rocks or weights on hand to anchor your props in case a breeze comes up.

A simple Handout for the participants listing local resources is very helpful. A template page for you, or your Event Host, to list your local resources is available on the CD in the *Passport Materials Kit* (so you can fill in your information electronically) or can be downloaded from [www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org](http://www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org). Check with your Event Host to see if this feature will be included for your Event. Make copies to send home with each participant at the end of the event. The template page includes a picture of the Palomar Knot and Basic Rig Poster, one of the pieces of take-home information most requested by participants. Participants can also find the Palomar Knot and Basic Rig Poster and information on where and how to fish and boat in your area on our website, [www.WaterWorksWonders.org](http://www.WaterWorksWonders.org). You may want to include some or all of the following information on the Handout:

- Boating Education Courses
- Angler Education Courses
- Boating Safety Courses
- Boating/Fishing license requirements and where to obtain the licenses
- Fishing Tackle Loaner Program sites
- Life Jacket Loaner Program sites
- Local rental sites for boats or fishing
- Disabled access sites
- Local clubs sponsoring novices
- Local places to participate in boating and fishing

# Materials needed:

- Comfortable and attractive life jacket for the presenter to wear throughout the program

## Rules for Fishing and Boating

- 12 copies of your state's rules booklet (or regulations, digest, proclamation, or whatever your state happens to call it) for fishing. There may be 2 booklets: one for freshwater, one for saltwater
- 12 copies of your state's boating regulations or handbook
- State fish identification poster/s or 12 fish species identification booklets from your state fish and wildlife agency
- Make up 2 or more questions to ask participants to find answers in the rules booklets. Customize these questions for your booklets. Note the page number of the answers so you can give hints later if needed. You might ask:
  - How old should I be before I need to buy a fishing license?
  - How old do I need to be to operate a boat with a motor? What about a personal watercraft?
  - How many (select species of fish) can I keep if I fish on the (fill in) River?
  - Are there legal lengths for the fish I catch from the (fill in) River?
  - Do you need to wear a life jacket in a boat?
  - Are there any Free Fishing Days?
  - Are there special programs I can sign up for?
- Current fishing license from your state
- State map showing local access to fishing and boating
- Handout you or your Event Host has made with Boating Safety Courses, Fishing Instruction Classes and other resources available in your area
- Use one laminated fish cutout from the *Passport Materials Kit*, or download to print and laminate from [www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org](http://www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org), to identify with your rules booklet or state fish identification poster or species booklet. Two species are available both small and large to assist you with the activity to

determine if the fish is large enough to keep. Choose a common fish kids might catch in your area from this list of the available fish images:

Bluegill – 7 inches

Brook Trout – 6.5 inches

Largemouth Bass – 6 inches

Channel Catfish – 18.5 inches

Spotted Sea Trout – 15 inches

Bluefish – 15 inches

Walleye – 17 inches

Brook Trout – 12 inches

Largemouth Bass – 14.5 inches

Red Drum – 18.5 inches

Striped Bass – 22 inches

The laminated fish and fish images look like this:



- Guest Presenter or Fish ID Materials (see materials list, p. 18)

# SCRIPT STARTS HERE

Estimated time for the **Rules for Fishing and Boating** section: 5 minutes

**Presenter says the words in bold, participants answers appear in italics;**  
Presenter and participants do the actions in the boxes.

Watch for check marked “√ **Objectives**” in the left column to see that you are covering the essential information

Tips, Objectives,  
Your notes, etc.:

► **Teaching Tip:**

If you cannot spread your map on the ground, either have two participants hold it up so the group can see it, or tape it to a tree or table edge where everyone can see.

√ **Objective:**  
**Know places to go fishing and boating nearby**

## SCRIPT:

**We have lots of places to fish and boat in this area. I'm (your name) and I'll help you figure out where to go and what you need to know to have fun.**

**Take a look at this map to see if there are places close to where you live where you could try fishing or boating.**

Spread your state map on the ground in the middle of the participant group.

**The map key will show us what the symbols on the map are about. What color would a lake (or river or ocean) be on this map?**

**Where are we on this map?**

Put a big "X" where we are.

**What color was the lake (or river or ocean)?**

**Can you find a lake (or river or ocean) near where we are?**

**What do you think people do at that lake?**  
*swimming, boating, fishing, etc.*

If you know of special activities at that body of water, talk about them. Is it a life jacket Loaner site? Can you rent fishing equipment, a canoe or a fishing boat?

**Can you see other places on this map where you could go fish and boat?**

**I will show you some places with what we call “public access.”**

**Sometimes you must cross private land to get to public waters. These places are called “public access” points.**

✓ **Objective:**  
**Understand that respect for private landowners and their property benefits access to public waters**

**Landowners have made agreements with our wildlife agency so we can get to the water by crossing their land. They should be treated with respect.**

**What would you do when crossing other people’s land to treat the landowner and the landowner’s property with respect?**

*Stay on the path*

*Leave the gate in the same position you find it*

*Don’t litter. We call that “Carry in, carry out!”*

*Go quietly if there are homes nearby*

**What’s this? *fishing license***

Show your fishing license and how it should be displayed in your state

**When you buy a license, you support the programs that put fish into the water and protect their habitats.**

✓ **Objective:**  
**Understand that there are fishing and boating regulations and know where to get them**

- Possible Questions:**
- How old do I need to be before I must buy a fishing license?
  - How old do I need to be to operate a boat with a motor? What about a personal watercraft?
  - How many (select species of fish) can I keep if I fish on the (fill in) River?
  - Are there legal lengths for the fish I catch from the (fill in) River?
  - Do you need to wear a life jacket in a boat?
  - Are there any Free Fishing Days?
  - Are there any special programs I can sign up for?

**When you buy fishing and boating equipment there are special taxes that support fishing and boating programs too.**

**Here are copies of our state rules for fishing and boating.**

- You will get them for your tackle box before you leave today but we're just going to refer to these for a few minutes.
- We'll use both of these to answer some questions.

**If you want to know if your hair is green don't look in these booklets.**

**But, if you want to know**

- How long a fish needs to be before you keep it
- How old you must be to operate a personal watercraft

**Then you look for the answers in these booklets.**

**Just for fun, let's look up something. When you find the answer put your finger on it and show me that you have it.**

**Ask 2 questions (one fishing, one boating)** (from your customized questions or from the list at left)

Watch the clock. Ask only as many questions as you need to fill the time allotted.

**Did you notice that there were pictures of fish in the fishing rules booklet?** (Or show your state's separate identification guide)

Display your state's fish poster or ID booklet if your rules booklet does not have fish identification information

✓ **Objective:**  
**Be able to identify  
some local fish**

Show one of the laminated fish. Choose one that is a common fish that kids might catch in your area

**Look at this fish.**

- **Look in the booklet and decide what kind of fish it is.**
- **When you have the answer, put your finger on the picture of the fish and show it to me.**
- **Look at:**
  - **the fins**
  - **the colors**
  - **the patterns**
  - **the shape of the fish**

**See if you can match it up with one of these pictures.**

Participants try to match the fish with the identification materials

**Good. Next we are going to look at an activity that is popular in our area. We have (*invited presenter*) to demonstrate (*local activity*) so you can see how it is done.**

### **Customize Here: Estimated time for this section: 10 minutes**

Your Event Host may set up an activity to demonstrate a popular pastime related to fishing and boating in your area. He/She might select from the Ideas List in the Overview Packet or pursue another topic that is relevant in your community. Talk to your Event Host to see if this special feature will be organized for your event and should be inserted here.

**If you do not have a customized presentation, insert Fish ID (see p. 18) here.**

## Continue:

Tips, Objectives,  
Your notes, etc.

## SCRIPT:

Thank you (guest presenter).

Add something about the presentation.

**We are just about finished with the Local Information station.**

**Do you think you know everything about fishing and boating in this area now? *No!***

**If you want to learn more here is a list of places to find classes about fishing and boating.**

**Before you go boating:**

- **Take a boating safety course given by the Coast Guard or our State. These classes are low-cost or free and will make you a better boater.**
- **You can also learn more about fishing. There are classes offered through (fill in).**
- **You will get one of these handouts in your “goodie bag” at the end of the Passport Program to help you find places to learn about fishing and boating.**

If you have time, give details but at the very least, show the Handout

**It's been great getting to see you. Your Group Guide will ask you some questions and then you can go to the next station. Bye.**

✓ **Objective:**  
**Know that there are courses in boating safety and fishing skills available and where to locate them**

## **Group Guide's Questions**

**Where can I find out what the rules are for fishing and boating?**

*(Regulations booklet or proclamation or digest or whatever state rules are called)*

**What should I look for on a fish when I'm trying to identify what kind it is?** *(General shape, fins, color, special patterns like dots or stripes)*

**Where are you going to go fishing and boating?** *(Lots of different answers)*

# OUTLINE STARTS HERE

Introduce yourself and the Local Information Station

We will help you figure out where to go fishing and boating and how to have fun there

Where to go fishing and boating.

Look at map of state

- Find map key. Ask: What color would a lake be on this map?
- Where are we on this map? Put a big X where we are.
- Can you find a lake near where we are?

What do you think people do at that lake?

Can you see other places to go fishing and boating?

✓ **Objective:**  
**Know places to go fishing and boating nearby**

✓ **Objective:**  
**Understand that respect for private landowners and their property benefits access to public waters**

Public access – crossing private land to get to public waters  
Respect the landowners who let you cross their private property

How would you show respect?

- Stay on path
- Leave gates as you found them
- Don't litter (We call this "Carry in, carry out.")
- Go quietly if there are homes nearby

Show fishing license and how it must be displayed in your state  
License supports programs that put fish into the water and protect habitats

Special taxes on fishing and boating equipment also go to support programs

✓ **Objective:**  
**Understand there are fishing and boating regulations and know where to get them.**

Copies of state rules for fishing and boating

You will get one for your tackle box later

If you want to know:

- If your fish is legal
- If you are old enough to operate a personal watercraft

Let's look something up.

- Put your finger on the answer when you find it

✓ **Objective:**  
**Be able to  
identify some  
local fish**

- Find the table of contents (or help find page #)
- Ask the two questions you made up
- Did you notice there were pictures of fish in the booklet?

I will show you a fish.

Try to identify it by looking at:

- fins
- colors
- patterns
- shape of the fish

What do you think it is?

**Introduce custom local presentation and skip box below  
or go to box below to extend the program and skip local presentation**

**Add this part (Fish ID) if there is no local presentation:**

Continued: Copies of state rules for fishing and boating

Ask three more questions that you have made up and they must find in booklets

Fish ID

I have 5 fish and 10 people. Get a partner and identify the fish I give you from your booklet (or the state poster)

When you find yours come tell me what it is

Great job – Where should you keep your ID Booklet? (In tackle box)

How big should my fish be to keep it?

Look in rules booklet to find out if you caught this fish (*fill in species*) on the (*fill in River or Lake*) how long it needs to be to keep it.

Have someone measure fish

Is it a keeper?

You could C-P-R (catch-photograph-release)

They measure the rest of the laminated fish and find places in the booklet where it says they can be kept or should be released

**Continue after local presentation:**

✓ **Objective:**  
**Know that there are courses in boating safety and fishing skills available and where to locate them**

So you think you know everything about fishing and boating?

You can learn more by:

- Taking a Boating Safety Course
- Fishing Instruction (State Angler Education)
- Show handout they will get later

It's been great getting to see you.

Group Guide will ask some questions and take you to the next station. Bye

Group Guide asks questions

# If you do NOT have a local presentation, continue with: Fish ID

## Materials needed:

- Make up 3 additional questions to extend the time spent for the Rules for Fishing and Boating:
  - Possible Questions:**
    - How old do I need to be before I must buy a fishing license?
    - How old do I need to be to operate a boat with a motor? What about a personal watercraft?
    - How many (select species of fish) can I keep if I fish on the (fill in) River?
    - Are there legal lengths for the fish I catch from the (fill in) River?
    - Do you need to wear a life jacket in a boat?
    - Are there any Free Fishing Days?
    - Are there any special programs I can sign up for?
- Use the laminated fish cut-outs from the *Passport Materials Kit* (either freshwater, saltwater or both depending on your location) **or** download fish images to print and have laminated from:  
[www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org](http://www.NationalFishingandBoatingWeek.org)  
Choose a couple of different sizes of the same species so one will be too small and should be released
- Tape measure
- State fish identification poster/s or 12 fish species identification booklets from your state fish and wildlife agency.

Estimated time for the **Fish ID** section: 8 minutes

Tips, Objectives,  
Your notes, etc.

## SCRIPT:

**I have 5 fish and there are 10 of you. That's two people per fish.**

Use the laminated fish of species that the participants are most likely to catch in your area.

✓ **Objective:**  
**Be able to identify  
some local fish**

**Take one with a partner and see if you can figure out what kind of fish this one is by matching it to your booklet (or poster).**

- **Look at the fins**
- **the general shape of the fish**
- **spots and special markings**
- **the color**

**See if you can find one that is the same or almost the same as your fish.**

**Does anyone know what your fish is? How could you tell? Let's match them up with our booklet.**

When they have identified the fish, trade with someone else and try another one. Watch the time. Trade until you have used the allotted time for this activity.

**Great job, now you'll know how to figure out what kind of fish you are catching.**

**Where do you keep the identification booklet? (*In my tackle box*)**

► **Teaching Tip:**

Use one of the smaller versions of either the Bass or Trout, whichever is more common in your area or has length restrictions for a nearby fishing area.

**You might need to know something else. How big must your fish be to keep it?**

**We want to put the small ones back so they can grow and be caught again some other day.**

**Let's look in the rules booklet again and pretend we are fishing:**

- **On the (fill in name) River**
- **For (local fish with size limit)**
- **You caught this one.**

**Look on page ( ) for the regulations for the River.**

✓ **Objective:**  
**Understand that there are fishing and boating regulations and know where to get them**

**How big should the (fill in fish type) be for you to keep it?**  
*(Participants supply the length from the booklet)*

**Here is a measuring tape. Who wants to measure our catch? Then we'll decide if it is a keeper or we should let it go.**

Choose a volunteer to measure your fish  
The participant gives the length of the fish.

**You might want to let it go no matter what size it is.  
It's a good idea to carry a camera so you can catch-photograph-release (CPR) too.  
We should keep only the fish we are going to eat.**

**But, if you keep it, make sure it is of legal length.**

**Fish biologists limit the sizes so they can help us have a healthy fish population.**

**Is that one to keep or let go? *(Participants decide)***

Have the others measure their fish and decide if they would be legal to keep or they would put them gently back into the water.

**Return to page 13 to finish the station.**