WV DNR News Release

Stephen S. McDaniel, Director

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Governor Jim Justice announces a month of free fishing for West Virginians

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.VA. — Governor Jim Justice today announced that West Virginia residents can enjoy a month of free fishing. Beginning today through Friday, April 24th, the requirement to possess a fishing license to fish in state-regulated waters has been waived for state residents. Anglers must practice safe social distancing.

DNR Law Enforcement will continue to patrol all state waterways. Officers may require proof of West Virginia residency, a valid driver's license, or a state-issued ID. Existing license and stamp requirements for non-residents will remain in place. All fishing regulations remain in effect both for residents and nonresidents; these include bag limits, slot limits, catch-and-release areas, and fly-fishing-only areas.

This waiver of the license requirement applies only to fishing licenses. It also includes a waiver for trout and conservation stamps. All requirements for hunting licenses remain in effect.

The DNR announced earlier this week all regular trout stockings will continue in frequency as set forth in the 2020 Fishing Regulations, but the DNR will no longer provide updates to its trout stocking hotline or online trout stocking report. Gold Rush stockings, originally scheduled to begin March 27, have been postponed. To make sure no crowds interfere with trout stocking personnel and that anglers maintain a safe distance from hatchery staff, a DNR Law Enforcement officer will join each stocking run.

To learn more about fishing in West Virginia, visit wvdnr.gov.

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