

Angler Ethics

Leave
No Trace

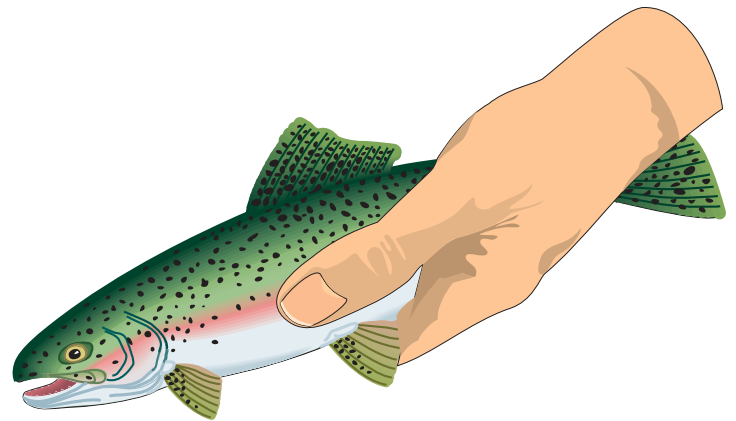


SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST

HEADQUARTERS

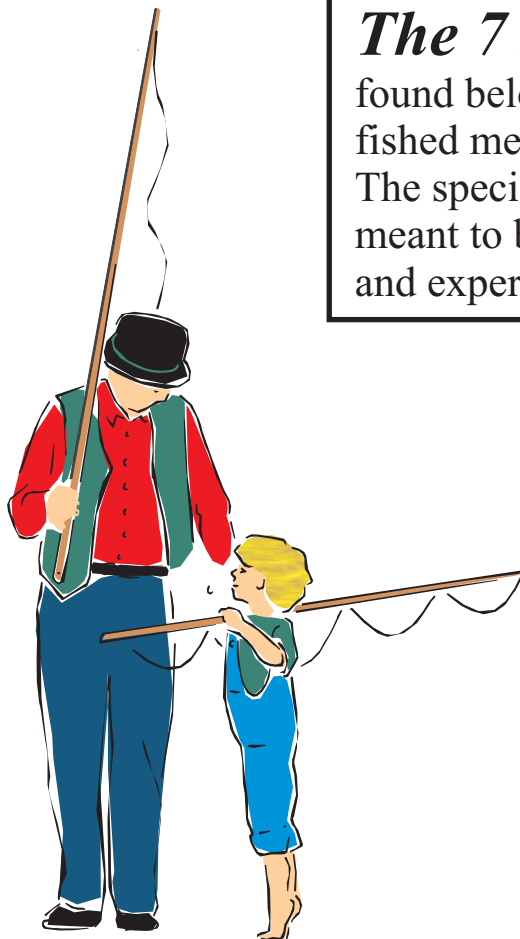
DULUTH, MINNESOTA

We all realize that healthy fish populations depend on clean water, healthy forests, and especially on the wisdom of those who fish. You can make a difference by learning, practicing, and passing on the leave no trace skills and ethics listed inside. The focus of Leave No Trace is awareness and attitude, not rules and regulations.



The 7 Leave No Trace Principles

found below can be applied anywhere, from a heavily fished metro lake to a wild North Shore trout stream. The specific techniques you use are flexible, and meant to be tempered by your own good judgement and experience.

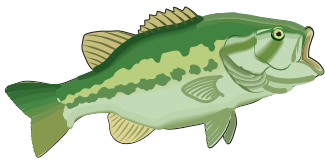


Thank you for joining the national Leave No Trace effort and for helping to promote the responsible use of our natural resources.



The 7 Leave No Trace Principles

1 Plan Ahead and Prepare



Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you plan to fish.

Did you bring:

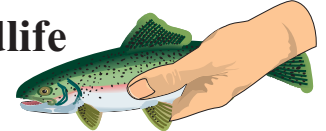
- Fishing license and trout stamp
- Boat registration
- Life jackets
- A good map
- Large, strong, plastic litter bag
- If you plan to keep fish, did you bring ice to preserve them?
- Are you ready for extreme weather and emergencies?

Do you know:

- Fish size and possession limits?
- If live bait is allowed?



3 Respect Wildlife



*Care for the fish, their aquatic habitat, and their terrestrial neighbors.
Regulations are meant to ensure sustainable fish populations and healthy lakes and rivers.*

Respect fish:

- Practice catch and release, even when you are within the allowable catch.
- Handle fish gently, quickly, and in the water.
- Keep fish horizontal for pictures.
- If you plan to keep a fish, kill it right away.
- Be prepared to keep the gutted fish on ice.
- Don't kill fish you find undesirable - what's trash to you may be treasure to somebody else, and an important part of the ecosystem.

Protect aquatic environments:

- Choose lead-free tackle. Lead poisoning from ingesting lead sinkers and jigs is a significant cause of death among loons, there may be other adverse effects on aquatic ecosystems.
- When ice fishing, never use anti-freeze on or near lakes or waterways.
- Don't refuel outboard motors over water.

Respect all animals:

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Give a wide berth to nesting birds, such as eagles, ospreys, loons, herons, and shorebirds.
- Never feed wild animals. Leaving fish remains out along shore is feeding wildlife, which can damage health, alter natural behaviors, expose animals to predators, cause stress, and even cause unnatural fluctuations in numbers, as with increased gulls in some areas.

2 Travel and Camp On Durable Surfaces

Durable surfaces include established landings, trails, campsites, rock, gravel, and ice.



- Use established trails, campsites, and landings** to get to water, for shore lunches, rest stops, and overnight camping. This will help cut down on erosion problems that damage soils and vegetation.
- Cut speed when close to shore.** Remember that wakes can erode shorelines and damage habitat.
- Don't motor through wild rice or Spawning beds.**

4 Minimize Campfire Impacts

When camping or having shore lunches, keep in mind that campfires can cause lasting impacts.



- Use a campstove if possible.**
- Be aware** of campfire restrictions and risks of wildfire.
- Use established** fire grates, fire rings, or fire pans. In the BWCAW and some other Areas, fires are allowed only within firegrates during the ice-free season.
- Keep fires small.** Use sticks smaller than your wrist from wood that's dead and down.
- Don't use** driftwood, snags arching over water, or wood from beaver dams and lodges.
- Burn all wood and coals **to ash.**

5 Dispose of Waste Properly



Fish remains:

- If possible, take your fish home to clean, And dispose of entrails there.
- If you clean fish during your trip, pack remains out, or bury them. To bury, choose a spot far from landings, campsites and trails, and back from the shoreline. Dig a shallow hole and cover with ground debris.
- Do not throw remains in the lake or river (prohibited by Minnesota state law.)
- Do not leave remains out for scavengers. This has the same undesirable effects as feeding wildlife, and may end up a smelly mess for others to suffer with.

Human waste:

- Use existing latrines or dig a cathole. To make a cathole, choose a spot at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Dig the hole 6 - 8 inches deep and deposit solid human waste. Cover and disguise cathole when finished.

Pack it in - Pack it out:

- Pack out all trash. Inspect your rest areas for empty bait containers, cigarette butts, spilled food, cans, and litter. Do not burn food packaging and other trash.
- Pack out unwanted live bait.

Pocket waste monofilament line:

- Divers report jungles of tangled line clogging the mouths of streams. Every year anglers report loons tangled in line. Even short lengths of line carelessly discarded are significant, when multiplied by tens of thousands of anglers.

6 Be Considerate of Other Visitors



- Prevent congestion.** Yield to other boaters boaters and anglers. Load and unload watercraft quickly at landings. Take breaks away from landings, and from other visitors. Consider space around other craft a no-wake zone.
- Remember that sound carries very well Across water.** What you yell over motor noise can be heard by others.

7 Leave What You Find



Leave rocks, plants, and other Natural objects as you find them.

- Don't build** rock fish pens, furniture at camp or rest sites, or other structures.
- Preserve the past:** leave historic or Prehistoric structures or artifacts as you find them.

Thanks for helping to protect and conserve natural resources!

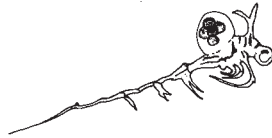
Invasion of the Aliens!

The addition of non-native, or exotic species has changed entire aquatic ecosystems. To avoid adding to the problem, learn about the habits and appearance of these plants and animals.

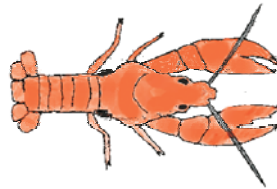
Zebra mussel eggs can travel unnoticed in bait buckets or live wells.



Spiny water fleas can live for days out of water, even on fish line



Rusty crayfish are moved from lake to lake by eggs or as bait.



Eurasian watermilfoil can sprout from small fragments of stems and leaves.



Boats

- **Inspect** boat and all equipment. Remove any plants and animals.
- **Drain** water from motor, live well, bilge, and transform wells on land. Never transport any water between lakes.
- **Rinse** your boat and any equipment that normally gets wet in hot (at least 40 C or 104 F) tap water; spray with high-pressure spray, or
- **Dry** for at least 5 days, before visiting another body of water.



Bait

- **Never release live bait** into a body of water or carry living animals from one water body to another.
- **Worms** should not be dumped on shore. Believe it or not, non-native worms are devastating soils around many fishing lakes.
- To avoid introducing rusty crayfish, don't use **crayfish** for bait unless you catch them from the lake you are fishing in.

Need more information?

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