

The department has adopted both of the regulatory changes for brook trout described below.

1.) Require catch-and-release only in all put-and-take waters statewide [COMAR 08.02.11.01](#) (Figure 1). This requires the release of all brook trout caught from any water designated as a put-and-take trout fishing area. A person would not be allowed to have any brook trout in possession while fishing in these areas. A person may still fish for brook trout in these waters but must immediately release them if caught. All other put-and-take regulations specific to the waterbody you are fishing are still applicable, including any tackle restrictions and/or creel limits.

2.) Require catch-and-release only in all waters east of Interstate 81 (I-81) [COMAR 08.02.11.01](#) (Figure 1). This requires the release of brook trout caught from all waters east of I-81. A person would not be allowed to have any brook trout in possession while fishing anywhere east of I-81. All brook trout caught are required to be immediately released. Given the declining populations in central Maryland, the department believes catch-and-release regulations will help to minimize population impacts from harvest of the largest most fecund adults, afford additional years to spawn, maintain genetic diversity and increase recreational opportunities by increasing the probability of catching a brook trout more than once.

It is necessary that trout anglers can properly identify Maryland's trout species while fishing put-and-take areas. Please use this guide before harvesting trout.



Brook Trout

- Red spots with blue halos
- Orange fins with white/black edge
- Typically less than 14"



Brown Trout

- Dark spots on brown/yellow background
- Brown fins
- May reach lengths over 25"



Rainbow Trout/Cutthroat Trout

- Small dark spots on silver background
- Red stripe along flanks
- Cutthroat with red stripe on underside of jaw (see inset picture, *only found in North Branch of the Potomac River*)
- May reach lengths over 25"

Figure 1. Map of affected waters where brook trout must be released and cannot be in possession.