

NONTIDAL — Fishing Hours for Trout

What is being considered?

The department would like to change the start time for trout fishing on the opening day of trout season from 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. in all of the Closure 1 and Closure 2 put-and-take trout areas. Other areas – which are not subject to closure – would not be affected.

Why is this change necessary?

Currently, with daylight saving time in early March, the sunrise is approximately 7:00 a.m., with twilight beginning at approximately 6:35 a.m. A number of constituents have voiced concern about the start time of 5:30 a.m. being too dark for fishing in some very crowded streams on opening day. The crowding, which typically only exists in areas which have been closed for a period and are opening on opening day (Closure 1 and Closure 2 areas), also may cause safety concerns in the darkness. Even if the Sunshine Protection Act of 2021 were to be passed by the current U.S. Congress and in place in November 2023, the projected sunrise time for March 30, 2024 (currently scheduled Opening Day) would be 5:51 a.m.

Who will this affect?

Recreational trout anglers.

When will this be effective?

The department expects this change to be effective in the spring of 2023. The department will follow our normal scoping and proposal procedures.

Has this change been discussed with advisory commissions?

The change was discussed at the July 2022 meetings of the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission and the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission. Both commissions recommended moving forward with scoping.