

Fishing Rodeo Standard Operating Procedures



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Fishing Rodeos

Definitions

Event Coordinator: The local contact person who oversees planning and implementation of a MDWFP-sponsored fishing rodeo. This person is identified during or after the application process and may be a MDWFP employee, local government representative or a private citizen.

Federal Assistance: Grant program with the Department of Interior Fish & Wildlife Service that reimburses MDWFP 75% of the eligible cost expended on fishing rodeos.

Fish Tag: A mark or attachment placed on a fish by hatchery personnel to allow the Event Coordinator to offer prizes when that fish is caught by a registered participant.

MDWFP: Miss. Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks is the state agency offering fish stocking and coordination assistance for sponsored fishing rodeos that comply with these Standard Operating Procedures.

MDWFP Special Projects Officer: The Miss. Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks employee who schedules annual fishing rodeos and works with Event Coordinators and MDWFP staff to help rodeos run smoothly.

MDWFP Fisheries Coordinator: The Miss. Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks employee who assures that the program is in line with established goals and objectives while supervising the Special Projects Officer and fish hatchery operations.

Parent or Guardian: Person related to or having legal relationship with a participant who supervises that participant during a fishing rodeo.

Rodeo: Fishing event intended to introduce participants to fishing and recruit them to be responsible, licensed anglers.

Sponsor: An organization or individual who supports a fishing rodeo financially, with supplies, the use of property or equipment, manpower or other in-kind donations.

Volunteer: Any person approved by the Event Coordinator to plan or perform assigned duties related to conducting a fishing rodeo. This does not include parents or guardians of participants.

INTRODUCTION

These procedures are to be used by Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) staff and local cooperators to conduct fishing rodeos. An important part of the MDWFP mission is to provide and promote recreational fishing.

Fishing has long been a popular outdoor activity but many people, especially children, have limited opportunity to experience fishing. As Mississippi's population increases, the number of fishing-license holders remains static. Various federal, state and local programs such as media campaigns and MDWFP fishing rodeos are attempting to reverse this trend.

Fishing rodeos benefit MDWFP and our society. Anglers are an important support base for MDWFP through license sales and compliance with regulations and conservation programs. Rodeos can also be used to promote agency parks and lakes while building positive relations between the public and MDWFP Conservation Officers. Development of fishing skills can also boost the confidence and self-image of youth while fishing with family or friends reinforces our bonds with each other and with nature.

GOAL

Introduce rodeo participants to fishing and recruit them to be responsible, licensed anglers.

OBJECTIVES

1. Educate participants about fish, fishing and environmental stewardship.
2. Provide controlled events that offer quality fishing experiences and education.



Fishing Rodeos

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following topics should be considered before starting the formal planning process. A rodeo that lacks programmatic design regarding facilities, safety and participation is not worth conducting.

Agency Participation

Primary contributions from MDWFP include fish stocking and coordination assistance. The MDWFP Special Projects Officer is the point of contact for all rodeos. Contact information for this person may be obtained by calling 601-432-2200. The Event Coordinator and designated sponsors are responsible for securing an acceptable site, volunteer workers, supplies and advertising. MDWFP may provide certain supplies (if available) and may contribute manpower and publicity. An Event Coordinator must be established by submitting a rodeo application by November 1 of the year preceding the event. The Event Coordinator will be the primary contact person from time of application until the MDWFP Special Projects Officer gives final clearance within 5-10 days before the event. Final clearance will be based on the Fishing Rodeo Check List in the planning section of this document.

Rodeo Size

For first time applicants, a small event is recommended since it requires fewer resources and less experience from planners and workers. Events tend to grow if repeated each year. Larger events require more manpower, expense and experience to effectively plan and implement.

Location

Sites must offer handicapped accessibility, clear shoreline area, open water, adequate parking and restrooms to accommodate the number of participants expected. The shoreline area must be neatly manicured and have a gentle, even slope to allow stable footing.

The following is a prioritized list of sites that generally provide acceptable rodeo locations:

1. MDWFP lakes and facilities (State Fishing Lakes, State Parks, Turcotte Rodeo Pond)
2. MDWFP Community Assistance Ponds
3. Small ponds owned and operated by local governments for the public
4. Larger public waters owned and operated by local governments requiring a net to concentrate fish

5. Private water approved by the MDWFP Fisheries Coordinator (MDWFP Executive Director must approve fish stocking in private water).

Fish

MDWFP will make all efforts to have waters well stocked to meet the expectations of participants to catch fish. Catfish work well since they are hardy, relatively cheap and can be caught on natural and commercially prepared baits. Other species, such as hybrid bream or crappie may be used as hatchery production allows.

- The number of fish to be stocked will be determined by the MDWFP Special Projects Officer and the MDWFP Fisheries Coordinator primarily based on the number of anticipated anglers.
- Fish will be delivered no later than four days prior to the scheduled event. The Event Coordinator will be contacted and instructed to have a representative present.
- Stocked catfish will be at least 14 inches in length.
- Fish will be concentrated in a small area using a large block net unless the water body is small or narrow allowing all waters to be fished from shore. **Care must be taken to assure that the entire net is in contact with the bottom.**

Scheduling

Applications must be received by the MDWFP Special Projects Officer **prior to November 1** for an event to be considered for the following year. **A Primary and Alternate Date must be requested. Applications received with no requested date(s) will not be considered.** A rodeo schedule will be sent to the person named as the rodeo coordinator when approved by the Executive Director. The application form in Appendix A or a completed Fishing Rodeo Summary Report (Appendix B) from the previous year must be used. Time is required for scheduling and fish production in the state hatcheries.

No rodeos will be scheduled during the months of July and August. More than two rodeo requests for the same day may require MDWFP to adjust the schedule. The MDWFP Special Projects Officer will develop the rodeo schedule and provide fish requests to the MDWFP Fisheries Coordinator by December 1 for the next year.



Rodeo cancellations must be reported immediately to the MDWFP Special Projects Officer so fish can be redistributed. Cancelled rodeos will not be rescheduled.

Safety

The combination of children and flying fish hooks is inherently dangerous and care must be taken to minimize the chance of injury. Some general safety rules include:

- Participants must be supervised by a parent, guardian or volunteer at all times.
- Eliminate crowding by assigning participants to groups and fishing in shifts.
- Notify and request the presence of area emergency personnel (ambulance service, fire department, doctors, law enforcement).
- First aid kits must be readily available.
- Enough volunteer helpers must be available to give assistance when needed (at least one adult volunteer per 10 participants is recommended).
- No treble hooks are allowed.
- Comply with the MDWFP Fishing Rodeo Check List.

Rodeos conducted on MDWFP properties (e.g., State Lakes, State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas, etc.) are subject to *Chapter 3, Policy 14 (2005): Safe Work Environment*: MDWFP Policy Manual.

Reporting

A summary report (Appendix B) is required for each MDWFP sponsored fishing rodeo to meet Federal Assistance guidelines and for internal management of the program. The completed Fishing Rodeo Summary Report must be received by the MDWFP Special Projects Officer within two weeks after the event to avoid jeopardizing the agency's participation in future events.

Fishing Rodeos

MDWFP COORDINATION

MDWFP highly recommends that rodeos be rotated around different sites to reach different participants, spread out available resources and to promote different MDWFP lakes. The MDWFP Special Projects Officer will schedule rodeo applications received by Nov. 1 each year for the upcoming year based on the following prioritized criteria:

1. Feasibility of a site as it relates to the Rodeo Check List, especially safety.
2. Proximity to other events in the same year (consideration given to area population).
3. Commitments from local sponsors for in-kind match donations.
4. Previous success with a particular site and/or Event Coordinator.
5. Greater number of anticipated participants.
6. Proximity of current site to rodeos during previous years (consideration given to area population; new sites may be given priority).



The MDWFP Special Projects Officer is responsible for the following duties:

- Maintain a file of applications and schedule annual rodeos.
- Submit the rodeo schedule for the coming year with fish requests to the MDWFP Fisheries Coordinator by December 1 each year.
- Assist the Fisheries Coordinator develop the project budget. Examples of items to be covered by budget category include:

Travel: meals and lodging for overnight travel

Contractual: repair and service of project vehicle and equipment, publicity

Commodities: office supplies, fuel, film processing, bait and tackle

Equipment: camera, block net, portable public address system.

- Maintain contact with Event Coordinators to confirm schedules and preparedness.
- Conduct final clearance meetings 5-10 days prior to each event to confirm compliance with the Fishing Rodeo Check List.
- At least one month prior to the first rodeo of the year, provide the Assistant Directors of Law Enforcement Field Operations a rodeo schedule and a written

request for at least two Conservation Officers to be present at each event (include location, report time and officer assignments such as license sales, registration, crowd control, children helper, etc.). **MDWFP staff must code their time and purchases related to all fishing rodeos to project 00105 and Sub-Org D5.**

- Maintain a file of all Fishing Rodeo Summary Reports with volunteer and donation documentation and submit copies to the Federal Aid Coordinator in the main office by September 1 each year for the previous fiscal year.

Fishing Rodeos

PLANNING

Planning is the key to success. Below is a suggested outline for planning a fishing rodeo:

- Peruse the general guidelines section of this document to confirm that agency sponsorship is feasible.
- A fishing rodeo application (Appendix A or B) must be received by November 1 for a rodeo to be scheduled for the following year. All applications must have a primary and alternate date listed. Applications submitted without date(s) will not be considered.
- Compliance with the Fishing Rodeo Check List in this section is required. The Event Coordinator should assign the following topics found in the check list to individual volunteers or committees well in advance of the event to assure preparedness:
 1. Safety
 2. Volunteer Recruitment and Duties
 3. Rules
 4. Registration and Reporting
 5. Supplies and Equipment
 6. Prizes, Food and Drinks
 7. Publicity
- Contact the MDWFP Special Projects Officer at least one month prior to the event to confirm that the scheduled date and time is correct.
- Contact the MDWFP Special Projects Officer within 5-10 days of the event for final clearance regarding the Fishing Rodeo Check List.
- A completed Fishing Rodeo Summary Report (Appendix B) must be received by MDWFP within two weeks after the event to avoid jeopardizing the agency's participation in future events.

Fishing Rodeos

MDWFP FISHING RODEO CHECK LIST

1. Safety

- Events conducted on MDWFP properties, regardless of event sponsor are subject to Chapter 3, Policy 14 (2005): Safe Work Environment: MDWFP Policy Manual
- Secure the rodeo area away from automobile traffic.
- Clearly designate the rodeo entrance, parking, registration desk and fishing areas (provide handicapped access). Be sure there is ample space behind the children in the fishing area for casting.
- Rope off access to any unsafe areas such as equipment, buildings, unclear grounds, etc.
- Eliminate ants, wasps and cover for snakes in the rodeo area including piers.
- Check for loose boards, protruding nails or other sharp objects on piers and picnic tables, etc.
- Cut grass and weeds in all areas to be used by participants.
- Clear the water's edge of debris, limbs and brush.
- Clear the fishing area of any obstructions to casting and fishing.
- Designate an area for emergency vehicles in a location for easy exit.
- Contact local ambulance service and law enforcement during the week of the event and request their presence.
- Have at least two first aid kits at the rodeo site.
- Provide parking attendants.
- Eliminate crowded fishing if necessary by assigning children to groups and fishing in shifts.
- Participants must be supervised by a parent, guardian or volunteer at all times.
- At least one additional adult volunteer for every 10 participants must be available to provide assistance when needed.
- All spectators must be placed a safe distance behind the anglers.
- Mark the participants and volunteers with armbands, name tags or ribbons and have rodeo staff wear identifying vest, jackets, hats, etc.

- A sound system is preferred for effective announcements and instructions.

2. Volunteer Recruitment and Duties (Courtesy is critical for success)

- Organizations such as church groups, civic organizations, sporting goods stores and conservation groups may provide volunteers. The Event Coordinator assigns duties in this check list to volunteers.
- At least one additional adult volunteer helper is needed for every 10 participants.
- The Event Coordinator will conduct a meeting(s) with the volunteer workers no less than one month prior to the event.
- The Event Coordinator will assign volunteers to their duty stations during a pre-event meeting and/or the day of the event. The number of volunteers assigned to the following areas will be determined by the number of participants expected:

1. parking
2. registration and reporting
3. fishing education and demonstration
4. one shoreline or pier volunteer for every 10 participants
5. runners to distribute bait, gear, supplies, etc. and pick up trash
6. gear preparation and repair
7. prizes, weigh-in (if applicable), food and drinks
8. publicity

3. Rules (promote organization and reduce confusion)

- General rules in this section along with other specific rules established by the Event Coordinator and the MDWFP Special Project Officer must be posted at the registration desk and in public announcements.
- All events must have liability insurance.
- All children must register at the rodeo before fishing.
- Participants are not allowed in the fishing area prior to the event.
- All participants must be supervised by a parent, guardian or volunteer.
- Rodeos will last approximately three hours.
- Fishing may continue after the event, but all state regulations will be enforced including the State Lake fishing permit requirement.
- Participants are encouraged to bring fishing tackle and bait (worms, liver, hot dogs, etc.). Tackle may not be available at all events.
- One pole or rod per child.

- No treble hooks are allowed.
- Adults are encouraged to accompany children but are not allowed to actively fish.
- 10 catfish per child unless otherwise posted.
- Participants should bring insect spray, sunscreen, fish stringer or bucket.
- Generally there will be no items sold at agency-sponsored rodeos. Groups wishing to sell items (food, drinks, etc) are required to obtain written approval from the MDWFP Executive Director prior to the event (Appendix F).

4. Registration and Reporting

- All participants are required to register (Appendix C) at MDWFP sponsored rodeos to help maintain crowd control and to measure success and effectiveness of the program.
- Registration will open at least one-half hour before the start of the rodeo and continue until one hour prior to the end of fishing.
- Posters/signs must clearly identify location of the registration desk and rodeo rules. Configure rodeo entrance so everyone must enter through the registration desk.
- A separate registration table for 3-4 different age groups is helpful (2 helpers per table).
- Be prepared to explain rules, where children should go next and locations of restrooms, bait table and other provisions.
- Bring plenty of pencils, registration forms, name tags/arm bands, etc.
- Rodeo Report Cards (Appendix D) may be randomly distributed to adults to gain input on strengths and weaknesses of the event.
- A Fishing Rodeo Summary Report (Appendix B) must be received by the MDWFP Special Projects Officer within 2 weeks after the event or future MDWFP sponsorship may be jeopardized.
- Estimated number of fish caught can be obtained by asking participants how many they caught as they leave. The average may be multiplied by the total number of anglers if a total fish count is not made.
- Volunteers must sign in as they arrive at the event. This enables the Event Coordinator to complete page 2 of the Fishing Rodeo Summary Report.
- Signed receipts attached to the Fishing Rodeo Summary Report page 2 are needed to document value of donated supplies.

5. Supplies and Equipment

- MDWFP has a limited supply of rods, reels and other tackle that may be available. **The Event Coordinator must request MDWFP tackle in advance and must return it re-rigged within 5 days.**
- If tackle is available from MDWFP, a sign-out table is required.
- A separate location is needed to repair gear, tie on hooks, etc.
- A good supply of hooks, line, bobbers, sinkers (film containers or small boxes work well), stringers and bait is needed.
- All volunteers need a pair of needle-nose pliers, gloves and a towel.
- Garbage cans and replacement bags must meet the demand of the event.
- A sound system is needed to help communication.

6. Prizes, Food and Drinks

- It is best to provide something for all participants. Awarding prizes is optional and can be handled in different ways:
 1. Everyone gets the same prize: goody bags work well because educational materials are easily included (issue bags at end of the event so children don't play with, lose or discard items before they leave).
 2. Door prizes may be offered.
 3. Prizes can be awarded for catching tagged fish or for the biggest fish as predetermined by the Event Coordinator and the MDWFP Special Projects Officer. Tagged fish work much better than weigh-ins or measuring fish length. **A prize for heaviest total catch is discouraged so as to prevent pooling of fish.**
- Food and/or drinks are optional. Type of food provided determines manpower needs. Bag lunches prepared ahead of time work well.
- Food spoilage is a major concern during hot weather.
- Avoid candy or gum with wrappers and sticks that end up as litter.
- If food is offered, hand sanitizer or soap and water must be available.

7. Publicity

- The current year's rodeo schedule will be posted on the MDWFP website and through other news release formats.
- Public service announcements and fliers should be prepared to start providing general information on rodeo place, time, rules and sponsors around a month prior to the event.
- Specify fish species that will be available so participants can bring the

appropriate tackle (ex. catfish: rod and reel with single hook, small split shot weight, 10-pound test line with bobber is best for young children).

- Registration will be the day of the event. Mention provisions and prizes to be offered.
- All written publicity must be approved by the MDWFP Executive Committee before it is distributed.
- Photo rights and credits must be obtained on all publicity.

Fishing Rodeo Application



Event Name: _____ County: _____

Location: _____ Body of Water _____

GPS Coordinates _____ Date Application Submitted _____

Rodeo Date Request: _____ No rodeos in July or August Time _____ to _____

Applicant/Event Coordinator's Name:

Event Coordinator Phone No: _____

Email : _____

Event Coordinator

Address: _____

Event Address _____

(Give best information for MDWFP to contact Event Coordinator prior to stocking and have a representative present at the time of stocking)

Has MDWFP sponsored a rodeo at this site before? _____ Yes _____ No

Number of Anglers Expected: _____ Block Net Required: _____ Yes _____ No

Tagged Fish: _____ Yes _____ No Number tagged fish requested _____

Enclosed is a copy of special request (example-letter requesting permission to sell)

By submitting this application the event coordinator agrees to furnish Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks all required information as set out in this booklet.

Send completed form by Nov. 1 in the year prior to the rodeo to:

Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks
C/O Sherry Hazelwood, Special Projects Officer
1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211

Email: sherryh@mdwfp.state.ms.us

Phone: 601-432-2200

Fax: 601-432-2203

Email: tomh@mdwfp.state.ms.us



Fishing Rodeo Summary Report

Appendix B – Required of all MDWFP rodeos



Rodeo Date: _____ Site: _____

Event Coordinator's Name: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

No. of Anglers: _____ No. of Fish Stocked: _____ No. of Fish Caught: _____

Date of Fish Stocking: _____

Tagged Fish: ___ Yes ___ No No. of Tags Caught: _____ Block Net Used ___ Yes ___ No

Did a diver check the block net: _____ Yes _____ No

Site sponsored by MDWFP before? ___ Yes ___ No Overall Rating: ___ Poor ___ Average ___ Good

Weather Conditions: _____

Problems/suggestions: _____

Briefly describe education activities provided other than fishing: _____

Briefly describe any prizes or provisions such as food, drinks, etc.: _____

Name of Person Completing this form: _____

Volunteer/Donation Summary (required to match federal funds)

Use back page to list volunteer names and attach signed receipts for all donated supplies.

Total Volunteer Value: \$ _____ (volunteer hours x minimum wage)

Total Donations Value: \$ _____ (supplies documented on attached signed receipts)

By submitting this application the event coordinator agrees to furnish Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks all required information as set out in this booklet.

Send completed form to:
tomh@mdwfp.state.ms.us
sherry@mdwfp.state.ms.us
601-432-2200 fax: 601-432-2203

Mississippi Dept. Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks
C/O Sherry Hazelwood, Fishing Rodeo Supervisor
1505 Eastover Dr.
Jackson, MS 39211

Fishing Rodeo Registration Form

By registering for this event you give MS Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks permission to use any photograph taken during the event for publicity purposes and to enter your child into any door prize drawings.

In consideration of my participation in the Activity, I hereby release, and covenant and agree indemnify and hold harmless MDWFP, its members, sponsors, affiliates, agents and volunteers from any and all losses, costs, claims, damages, injuries, liability, or other causes of action, rising out of or in any way connected with participation in the Activity, for myself and those under my care.

Rodeo _____ Date _____ Participants _____

Angler's Name	Age	Date of Birth	Parent/Guardian Signature	Street	Address Town	Zip code

Information Verified by: _____ Title: _____

RODEO REPORT CARD

Size of Fish Caught:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of Fish Caught:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Availability of Assistants:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Instructions and Rules:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Overall Experience:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

Do you have a fishing license? Yes No

How did you find out about this event? _____

Comments and suggestions for improvement: _____

Name & Address (optional): _____

RODEO REPORT CARD

Size of Fish Caught:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of Fish Caught:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Availability of Assistants:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Instructions and Rules:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Overall Experience:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

Do you have a fishing license? Yes No

How did you find out about this event? _____

Comments and suggestions for improvement: _____

Name & Address (optional): _____

**PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONCENT
AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

In consideration of my participation in the Activity, I hereby release, and covenant and agree indemnify and hold harmless MDWFP, its members, sponsors, affiliates, agents and volunteers from any and all losses, costs, claims, damages, injuries, liability, or other causes of action, rising out of or in any way connected with participation in the Activity, for myself and those listed below.

Date: _____

	NAME	Age
Participant 1:	_____	_____
Participant 2:	_____	_____
Participant 3:	_____	_____
Participant 4:	_____	_____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

Printed Name _____

Address: _____
