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## P R E S S                      R E L E A S E

### **DEEP Designates Father's Day, Sunday, June 19 as "FREE-FISHING LICENSE DAY" in Connecticut**

#### ***Try Before You Buy and You Will Be "hooked"***

Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has designated Father's Day, this Sunday, June 19, as the first of two "Free Fishing License" days scheduled for 2016. A second "Free Fishing License Day" is scheduled for Saturday, August 13.

#### **How to Obtain "Free Fishing License**

As a result of legislation passed in 2014 (Public Act 14-201) DEEP can designate up to two dates per year as "Free Fishing License Days." To fish on these days, anyone -- resident or non-resident -- can obtain a free one-day fishing license good for both the inland and marine districts, a perfect time to "try before you buy." DEEP encourages all anglers to "cast it forward," by inviting someone who has never fished or someone who has not fished in a long time to accompany them on a fishing trip.

The free license to fish on this Sunday is now available through the mobile friendly DEEP online sportsmen licensing system ([www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing](http://www.ct.gov/deep/sportsmenlicensing)). The free license to fish on August 15 will be available on July 27, three weeks prior to the second "Free Fishing License Day."

"Free Fishing License days are just one of DEEP's initiatives developed to connect people with outdoor activities and Connecticut's natural resources. People who are thinking about going fishing can do so on Father's Day without the added expense of a fishing license. Studies have shown that people who are hesitant about trying fishing often cite the license fee as a primary

reason,” said Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner of DEEP. “Free Fishing License Day encourages and makes it easy for anyone to fish for one day and enjoy the experience. We’re confident that as people try fishing, they’ll experience the many benefits fishing offers and will be hooked on the sport.”

“We believe that once people try fishing and visit our many lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and Long Island Sound they will be amazed at how much they have been missing. Connecticut has just about every type of fishing within 25 miles of just about every resident,” said Peter Aarrestad, Director of DEEP’s Inland Fisheries Division. “Connecticut has it all -- trout, bass, pike, panfish, or saltwater species like striped bass, fluke, scup or bluefish – to “lure” you in for an incredible experience.”

This day also provides families the opportunity to plan a family outing focused around fishing together as each family member 16 years of age or older can obtain a free one-day fishing license. “We thought that Father’s Day would be a good choice to offer a free chance to fish. It’s a great opportunity for experienced anglers to get a family member, friend or acquaintance outdoors and introduce them to the sport of fishing,” said Deputy Commissioner Whalen.

In 2015, the inaugural year, 1,034 people obtained their 1-day free license. Overall, people rated the fishing as excellent, enjoyed spending time with friends and family outdoors, and potentially found a new hobby.

### **Youth Fishing Passport**

There are also a number of other fishing opportunities available for youngsters. For those 16 or 17 years of age, licenses for the entire season are 50% off of the regular adult price. Those who are 15 or younger do not need a fishing license but can register using the same on-line system to obtain a “Youth Fishing Passport”. The “Youth Fishing Passport” provides access to two fishing related activities and a list of sponsors who are offering discounts or free items to passport holders. Visit [www.ct.gov/deep/yfp](http://www.ct.gov/deep/yfp) for details.

## **To Learn More**

Need to find a place to fish? Check out our listings of Lakes & Ponds, Rivers & Streams, and Coastal Access points in the *2016 Connecticut Angler's Guide* or call us at 860-424-FISH (3474). Anglers can also find fishing regulations in the *2016 Connecticut Angler's Guide*.

The *Guide* can be found online at [www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide](http://www.ct.gov/deep/anglersguide) and print versions are available at more than 350 locations statewide, including many town halls, bait & tackle shops and other vendors selling outdoor equipment, DEEP facilities, and commercial marinas and campgrounds, or by contacting DEEP's Inland Fisheries Division (860-424-FISH). Additional fishing and fisheries related information can be found on the DEEP web site at: [www.ct.gov/deep/fishing](http://www.ct.gov/deep/fishing), and on Social media, Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ctfishandwildlife](http://www.facebook.com/ctfishandwildlife) and Twitter @ctfishinginfo.

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