

September 21, 2006

New fines for recreational access and fisheries offences

Edmonton... Changes to the province's Recreational Access Regulation and General Fisheries Regulation will now allow Albertans to pay fines for certain recreational access and fishing offences, rather than having to appear in court. Effective October 1, 2006, fines ranging from \$150 to \$500 will be an option in place of automatic court appearances.

These fines will apply to offences relating to access of public land under agricultural disposition and the province's new walleye tag licences. Until now, a judge would determine the guilt or innocence of a person charged under these regulations and the amount of the fine. The changes give the person charged the choice to either pay the fine, or challenge it in court, much like a traffic ticket.

"I think the introduction of fines is an effective deterrent for most people and it's also a more efficient use of time for the court, officers and those charged with an offence," said David Coutts, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

Recreational access related offences that will be payable by fine include: not making contact with an agricultural leaseholder prior to accessing the land for recreational purposes, not packing out personal garbage when exiting leased land, and not leaving gates as they were found.

Fisheries fines will be able to be issued for offences relating to the new walleye tag licences, for such things as: keeping a walleye without an appropriate licence, failing to tag a legally caught walleye, removing a tag from a legally caught walleye before it is legal to, or possessing one with tags removed. These fisheries fines are applicable only to Wolf Lake (near Bonnyville), Pigeon Lake and Newell Lake. Fines for these offences will range from \$150 to a maximum of \$700.

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Background information on penalties attached.

Media enquiries may be directed to:

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To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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Proposed New Specified Penalties

Summary of Wording	Proposed Penalty
Recreational Access Regulation	
Unable to make contact and recreational user enters agricultural lease anyway	\$250.00
Litter	\$250.00
Bringing an animal on a lease or disposition without authority or not in control	\$200.00
Parking on a lease or blocking an approach without consent	\$150.00
Lighting fires	\$500.00
Using a building or improvement without consent	\$250.00
Causing damage to a lease, disposition land or property	\$350.00
Not leaving gates and property in the same condition and state it was found prior to recreational use	\$350.00
Not complying with a Recreational Management Plan	\$250.00
Not complying with terms and conditions of a leaseholder.	\$250.00
Not complying with terms and conditions imposed under a Recreational Management Plan, Local Settlement Officer or Director	\$250.00
Not complying with a Director's Order	\$250.00
General Fisheries (Alberta) Regulation	
Unlawfully possess/retain fish whose retention requires a Special Fish Harvest Licence.	\$200 + \$50/fish to a maximum of \$700 (=10 fish over)
Fail to tag fish caught under the authority of a Special Fish Harvest Licence.	\$200
Remove tag/possess fish with tag removed unauthorized.	\$150

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