

Fly Fishing Etiquette by Steve Hofmann

Our rivers and lakes are for everyone's enjoyment. Simple courtesy between boaters and anglers is all it takes to assure a pleasant experience for all. The challenge we face today is to experience the pleasures of trout fishing without infringing on the experience of others.

RULES FOR ALL ANGLERS:

The **first** rule is the most **important** and **easiest** to follow. Never trespass on private property. It is the angler's responsibility to know where the public land is and stick to it. If fishing in a different state than Arizona, learn the rules of that state. Rules on rivers or lakes vary greatly from state to state. It probably worth the price of a "good guide" to avoid a load of "buck-shot" in your "rear end" when fishing out-of-state. Local guides usually know public and private water boundaries like the back of their hand. Some guides even have special permission to fish "private water".

Secondly, know and obey the laws and rules of the river or lake you are fishing. These differ from state to state also. Example; Green River Utah, one must have a life preserver on and inflated at all times when float fishing on the river.

Third, leave your dog home. Dogs are our best friends, but they are not always our best fishing buddies. Unless, of course, your dog is protection from bears or other wild animals. Example, Greybull river WY, a guides dog spotted a Grisly Bear long before we would spotted it.

RULES FOR SHORE ANGLERS:

- Give other anglers a wide berth
- Avoid areas commonly used by boaters for access, launch, or overnight stops.
- Watch your casting as boaters go by to avoid hooking someone on your back cast.
- Realize that sometimes boats can only safely go one way, which might crossing the pool you are fishing. Move out of the way if possible.

FLOAT FISHERS AND BOATERS:

- If you are float fishing, refrain from fishing as you near wade anglers.
- Avoid floating directly through an area of river being fished by a wade angler. If possible, go well out of casting distance or behind an angler—or ask which they'd prefer.
- Stay safe from flying hooks: alert the angler to your presence.
- If you must float through a pool being fished, explain it's your only option and apologize as you pass.
- Keep passengers quiet as you float by. Try not to spook fish by hitting rocks with your oars.
- If going ashore near an angler, avoid the area they're fishing and land well above or below.
- All of the above applies when overtaking a float-fishing craft as well.

This article was adopted from information from various web sites and the Federation of Fly Fishers International code of ethics.

