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Water Activities Rules and Regulations in Yoho and Kootenay National Parks



For more and all up to date information, visit parks.canada.ca/mountain-AIS

What is happening?

All waterbodies in Yoho and Kootenay national parks are closed to watercraft and angling until March 31, 2026 to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS), including whirling disease. The closure applies to all lakes, streams, and rivers in Yoho and Kootenay national parks.

Important Information



Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native plants, animals and diseases, including the parasite causing whirling disease that affects trout, salmon and whitefish.

In some cases, fish develop a black tail, skeletal deformities in the spine and head, and a whirling swimming behaviour.

Whirling disease mortality rates can reach 90 per cent in young fish.

There is no treatment for whirling disease in fish. Once established, it is very difficult to eradicate.



Report AIS sightings by emailing ReportAIS-SignalerEAE@pc.gc.ca with a description of the organism, photos and a precise location (GPS coordinates preferred).

What does this closure mean for visitors?

Prohibited activities



- **Paddling:** The closure applies to all watercraft such as canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, kiteboards, rowboats and inflatable boats and toys (e.g., donuts, unicorns, etc.). Motorized boats are not permitted in Kootenay and Yoho national parks.
- **Angling:** Angling equipment such as fishing rods, waders, boots, gloves, nets and other gear that comes into contact with the water.
- Violators face fines up to \$25,000 under the Canada National Parks Act.

Permitted activities

- **Swimming:** Use of swimming aids and safety equipment, such as personal flotation devices, wetsuits, snorkel equipment, throw bags, water wings and other equipment to assist with swimming.
- **Beach and shoreline access:** Includes beach toys and pets on leash.
- **Hiking and camping:** Designated trail crossings and fords, collecting water for treatment.
- **Some commercial operations:** Commercial operators that meet the strict requirements of the AIS Prevention Program and pose a low risk of introducing aquatic invasive species may be permitted to operate in Yoho and Kootenay national parks. These businesses follow rigorous protocols, including mandatory cleaning, decontamination and drying measures to ensure watercraft remain free of invasive species.
- Visitors must CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY all equipment that comes into contact with water.

How to Clean Drain Dry?



- **Clean** all mud, sand, plant, and animal materials from your watercraft, gear and angling equipment.
- **Drain** all watercraft, gear, and angling equipment before leaving the waterbody.
- **Dry** for at least 48 hours when last used within AB, BC, NWT, or YT; and at least 30 days when last used outside of AB, BC, NWT, or YT.