

3.4 Wildlife Regulations—State



The Arkansas Game & Fish Commission has been given the mandate to manage and protect the state's fish and wildlife resources. The Commission has very specific regulations regarding hunting and fishing in the State of Arkansas. These regulations are updated yearly. For current versions, visit: www.agfc.com or local convenience stores and supply stores such as Wal-Mart.

Code 32.10 BLOCKING STREAMS PROHIBITED

It shall be unlawful to completely block or dam any stream so as to restrict a sufficient flow of water to maintain fish life downstream from such obstruction.



Bridge allowing sufficient water flow & fish passage.

Code 32.12 RELEASE OF NON-NATIVE WILDLIFE

It is unlawful to release any native or non-native aquatic wildlife, including their eggs, into the public waters of Arkansas. This includes excess baitfish and crayfish. Aquatic species can be released into the waters from which they were taken.

For example, a landowner can spawn trout in his/her own pond, as long as the pond water never escapes out of that pond. A landowner could not dam up a portion of a stream to raise trout, even if that stream is located on property owned by the landowner.

Code 32.11 PUMPING FROM PUBLIC WATERS

It shall be unlawful to withdraw by relift or pump, water from public waters without first securely screening intake pipes of such relifts or pumps so as to prevent entry of any fish or to lower any body of water so as to endanger fish species that you might encounter in our region.

Code 19.12 ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTED

It is illegal to import, transport, sell, purchase, take or possess any endangered species of wildlife or parts thereof. Below are some of the endangered species that you could see in our watershed.

Mammals	Gray bat, Indiana bat, Ozark big-eared bat
Birds	Least tern, Bachman's warbler, Red-cockaded woodpecker
Fishes	Ozark cavefish, Leopard darter
Arthropods	Cave crayfish
Insects	American burying beetle
Mussels	Snuffbox

Wildlife Regulations—Federal

The Federal Government prohibits the hunting, trapping, capturing, or harassing of marine mammals, endangered or threatened species, bald and golden eagles, hawks, and owls without a special permit. In addition, no hunting or trapping of non-game migratory birds (sea birds, songbirds, etc.) is allowed without a special permit. The endangered/threatened species that you might see in our watershed are listed on the previous page. Visit www.agfc.com for more information.



New Endangered Species Named

In 2012, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service named the snuffbox mussel as endangered, citing a 90% population decline. Originally found in 210 streams, it can now be found in only 79 streams in 14 states. This species has been found in small numbers in the Kings River.

The snuffbox is a small- to medium-sized freshwater mussel with a yellow, green or brown shell interrupted with green rays, blotches or chevron-shaped lines. The shell becomes darker and the interruptions less clear with age. Shell shape is typically triangular in females and oblong or ovate in males. Males can grow up to 2.8 inches, with females reaching only up to 1.8 inches. In the photograph, the male is on the left while the female is on the right.

The mussels on the Kings River are being heavily impacted by increased sedimentation and the instability of the gravel bed.



Focus on Invasive Species

It is estimated that there are 30,000 non-native species in the United States. Many of these plants or animals are called invasive because they are able to take over a habitat, outcompeting the populations that already live there. Most invasive species do not have the natural predators or parasites that keep populations in check. The spread of invasive species can have dire consequences to the ecosystem.

One example of non-native/invasive species that has impacted Arkansas is the Asian clam. This species was introduced from its native Asia in the 1900s. It can be found in droves in the Kings River and its tributaries. Originally used as bait, food stock, and in aquariums, the Asian clam can outcompete native clams for both food and space. Its ability to reproduce quickly makes them a nuisance for water suppliers and power plants – where the clams build up dense colonies in intake pipes, causing millions of dollars worth of damage. Visit www.invasivespecies.gov for more information.