

# 2019 ELEPHANT BUTTE LAKE KAYAK FISHING TOURNAMENT RULES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

## Participation and Eligibility:

Participation is open to anyone that will fish from a “no-motor” watercraft, such as a Kayak, Paddleboard, Canoe, Rowboat, or any other human propelled vessel (hereafter referred to as “kayak”). Minors are eligible with a parent or legal guardian signature on the Entry Form. All participants must have a valid New Mexico Fishing License and adhere to all New Mexico Department of Game and Fish rules and regulations.

<http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/recreation/fishing/>

## Pre-Registration and Captain’s Meeting:

Each participant should pre-register (Complete the Entry Form) and pay before 5pm on Friday, May 3, 2019. Those who submit early, will be part of a special prize drawing! So get your Entry Forms in as soon as you can.... Entry Forms will be accepted until the starting time of the Captain’s Meeting at 7:00pm on Friday, May 17, 2019 in the Elephant Butte Community Center, 313 Rio Grande Circle, Elephant Butte, NM 87935 (off Rock Canyon Road – behind Fire Department- watch for the overhead lights).

Attendance at the Captain’s Meeting is **MANDATORY** for all participants. If a participant is unable to attend, they must prearrange their eligibility with the Tournament Director before being allowed to take part in this tournament. Uniform measuring devices will be distributed at the Captain’s Meeting along with a Captain’s Bag containing t-shirt(s), a State Park Day Pass, and sponsor giveaways. All entry fees are **NONTRANSFERABLE** and **NONREFUNDABLE** unless event is canceled. At this meeting the Tournament Director will go over the following:

- Review of the rules
- Potential hazards when on the water
- Medical emergencies, communications and safety procedures
- Explanation of CPR and scoring
- Demonstration of measuring device usage
- The tournament clock will be synchronized
- Participants must have their own boat, bait, tackle & camera.

## Morning Check-in:

Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, between 6:30am & 7:00am, all participants **MUST** meet with the Tournament Director at the right side, upper parking lot area inside the Main Entrance of the Elephant Butte Lake State Park at Marina del Sur. After ‘head count’, participants will be released to launch their kayaks at any Elephant Butte Lake location of their choosing and begin fishing.

- Purpose of head count is to know exactly who is on the water so that at day’s end all participants can be accounted for; thus, resulting in no need of Park Rangers searching for missing participants.

- Participants fishing in tandem kayaks must indicate to the Tournament Director that two participants are competing in one boat.
- The tournament will be conducted rain or shine. But in the case of dangerous conditions, the tournament will be postponed to the following day or to a later date.
  - The decision to shorten or cancel will be left totally to the discretion of the Tournament Director. If cancelled or rescheduled, participants have the choice to be refunded or have their fee applied to a future scheduled event.
  - Should there be a decision to shorten the event, a 4-hour period shall constitute a day of fishing.

### **Start Time & Ending Time:**

Starting time of the Elephant Butte Lake Kayak Fishing Tournament is scheduled to begin after Morning Check-in at 7:00am. The Ending time for fishing is 3:30pm exactly. The Official Time is determined by the timepiece of the Tournament Director. No other watch or cellphone time will be treated as a valid time for this tournament. All participants may fish as late as they wish, just so long as they are able to get to shore and travel to Zia Kayak Outfitters at 310 Rock Canyon Road, Elephant Butte (across from the Fire Department; watch for the overhead lights) in time to be checked in and deliver their photo files for downloading into the official computer no later than 4:30pm. Participants, at their choosing, are allowed to bring their photo files in at any time during the day prior to the 4:30pm final deadline.

- Participants must gage their own Ending Time to allow for returning to shore, getting kayak out of the water, onto their vehicle or trailer and driving to Zia Kayak Outfitters in time to be clocked in by the Tournament Director no later than 4:30pm.
- If a participant has not checked in with the Tournament Director at Zia Kayak Outfitters by 4:30pm, that participant will be disqualified. No exceptions!

### **Tournament Format:**

Elephant Butte Lake Kayak Fishing Tournament is operating in CPR (Catch - Photo – Release) format. Fish are not to be brought in to Final Check-in. Participants must use their own digital cameras with removable memory (i.e. SD card) to document the overall length of the fish caught. The ruler showing length (aka Hawg Trough) will be provided at the Captain's Meeting, must be clearly visible in every picture. Length is measured to the nearest half of an inch from tip of lower jaw to the tip of the un-pinched tail. Each participant will be marked with a black Sharpie on their fish-holding hand or provided a unique visual. While holding the fish when taking a photo, the Sharpie mark or the unique visual will be photographed along with the fish to prove photo was taken on this day. All photos not showing the Sharpie mark or unique visual will be disqualified.

## **Permitted Fishing Methods:**

Participants should make every effort to release all fish alive after catching and photographing. Participants may not fish more than one rod at a time, and a cast must be fully retrieved before the angler may pick up another rod. All fish must be caught via a fishing rod, line and hook using live or dead bait or artificial lure on the day of the tournament during tournament hours. All fish must be caught via kayak. Wade/shore fishing is allowed provided the kayak was the sole means of transportation to the fishing location and provided that the kayak is within sight and a safely reachable distance of the angler at all times. Participants may not catch fish that have been caught, caged or confined in a given area prior to the tournament day. During the tournament, a participant may not obtain assistance from a non-participant, including, but not limited to the non-participant placing markers, or providing electronic, voice or data communication helpful to the participant in locating fish.

## **Fishing Locations:**

Elephant Butte Lake has over 200 miles of shoreline. The tournament boundaries are Elephant Butte Dam/Ash Canyon in the south and the area called Chalk Bluffs in the north. All fishing locations must be in waters accessible to the public at all times.

## **Prohibited:**

No Ferrying (i.e. the use of a boat or motorized vehicle to transport your kayak while on the water is prohibited). All motors of any power, electric or combustion are prohibited. Kayaks designed to be paddled, pedaled or sailed are permitted.

## **Safety:**

Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times. Participants must wear a PFD when on the water and be in possession of a sounding device to be in compliance with state laws.

Plan ahead and come prepared. Be certain to have food, snacks and water/beverages. It is advisable to bring sun protection/sunscreen. Extra batteries for your camera and dry bag/boxes for anything that shouldn't get wet.

## **Tandems / Sharing:**

Two participants are allowed to fish in the same boat if notice is given to the Tournament Director at Morning Check-in. The boat must be the type of boat that is generally recognized as being safely capable of carrying two participants. In this situation, all people in said boat must be registered participants (no non-participants are allowed in the boat). Participants fishing in the same boat must score their fish individually using their own measuring device and digital camera, or, if sharing a camera, each must record photos on a separate SD memory card.

## **Communications:**

All types of communication between participants are allowed. Participants may even share information of where the fish are biting with the other participants, if they wish. Should there be a need of an Emergency call, when possible, also contact the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director's phone number will be given out at the Captain's Meeting and again at the Morning Check-in.

## **Sportsmanship:**

Participants are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regards to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-participants who may be on the tournament waters. Any act of a participant deemed by the Tournament Director that gives an angler an unfair advantage not specifically covered under this set of rules, shall be grounds for disqualification.

## **Species:**

Elephant Butte Lake has many species of fish. In no special order, there are Walleye, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Striped Bass, White Bass, Crappie, Bluegill, White Drum, Catfish, and Carp. Plus, while very rare, some have caught Northern Pike and Trout. For the sake of this tournament, all game fish caught, with the exception of Catfish and Carp, are eligible and may be submitted. **New this year, bag limit has changed from best 3 fish to best 5 fish! However, only 1 walleye and only 1 striped bass will be counted in the bag of 5 fish.**

## **Catch - Photo - Release:**

Tournament is a Catch-Measure-Photo-Release event using the length of the fish in inches to determine a score. Participants may submit a total of 5 fish on their digital camera's memory card. Fish must be photographed in or on the boat, on the provided measuring device (Hawg Trough). The fish's lip must be touching the upright vertical end of the Hawg Trough. Participant's Sharpie marked hand must be placed on top of the fish when taking the picture. All pictures must be taken with the upright vertical end of the Hawg Trough on the left-hand side of the picture frame. This is to ensure all photographs are done in a standardized manner for judging and to keep the same fish from being submitted twice. The participant's hand must be in photo securing the fish and displaying the Sharpie marking or unique visual while shooting the photo as long as the mouth and the tail are visible and hand does not excessively cover the markings of the fish. No devices other than a hand shall be used to secure the fish to the Hawg Trough. Participant must "cull" (delete) all unwanted photos of fish other than the 5 fish that are to count toward scoring and participant may only submit one picture per fish.

- Each participant's photo memory card, when submitted, must contain only as many as 6 photos... 1 of the kayak and up to 5 of fish.
- Preparing memory card must be done prior to handing memory card to the Tournament Scorekeeper for measurement.

## **Digital Photography:**

Participants may only use digital cameras for recording fish. Cellphones, while not recommended, may be used. Best for us, is if cellphone has a removeable SD Card. While the newer cellphones have excellent cameras, some are difficult from which to transfer the photos. Also, most cellphone users keep many photos shot over time and wouldn't want to prepare their phone as needed. Please try to have an empty memory card in your camera or cellphone to begin the day. The first photo on the memory card is to be a photo of the participant's kayak at launch time. Cameras may not be shared by participants unless participants in a tandem kayak use their own individual memory card. Images may not be digitally altered or enhanced in any way. Participants should shoot images at the maximum resolution possible. Participants must bring the memory card from their camera or the entire phone to the Final Check-in. The Tournament Scorekeeper will download memory cards/cellphone into the official tournament computer. The official computer will be able to read most standard memory cards, however participants should bring a USB cable for their camera and their cellphone to ensure their photos can be downloaded.

## **Scoring:**

The event uses Catch-Photo-Release scoring determined by the length of each fish. Length is determined from the forward most point of the fish (fish must be facing to the left) to the natural un-pinched top of the tail. Participants may submit a maximum of 5 fish for scoring. The combined total length of eligible fish submitted (up to a maximum of 5 fish consisting of a maximum of 1 walleye or 1 striped bass) will count as the participant's aggregate score. A prize will be awarded for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>th</sup> top aggregate scores.

- Participants must understand that a single fish length, or a combined length of 2 fish, that is longer than the combined length of any other participant's 5 fish will win the "aggregate" prize.
- The Hawg Trough has a maximum fish size of 30 inches. The maximum number of inches will be 30. Should two fish larger than 30 inches be submitted that affects the outcome of the tournament, the Tournament Director will review the photos and choose the winner based on the fish that is the visually larger, heavier fish.

In addition to the Tournament Scorekeeper tracking aggregate scores, the Tournament Scorekeeper will also track the LARGEST Largemouth/Smallmouth Bass, White Bass and Walleye (in total length) in order to determine a "Big Fish" winner for each of these 3 species.

- Should there be a tie for the "Big Fish," the participant's second largest fish will be used as the tie breaker and if needed, the participant's third submitted fish will be used to break the tie.

This means there can be a total of SIX potential winners.

## **Final Check-in:**

Final Check-in is located at Zia Kayak Outfitters 310 Rock Canyon Road, Elephant Butte (across from the Fire Department; watch for the overhead lights). All participants must physically Check-in with the Tournament Director and be clocked in no later than 4:30pm. The Tournament Director will be in front of Zia Kayak Outfitters wanting to be assured all participants are safely off the water.

Submission of your digital camera's memory card is done inside Zia Kayak Outfitters on the official tournament computer. The Tournament Scorekeeper will download your photos and hand you back your memory card. It is the participant's responsibility to make sure the Tournament Scorekeeper can view the participant's images. Therefore, bring your camera or cellphone with its USB cable, just in case.

- The deadline for arriving at the Final Check-in is 4:30pm. If a participant has not checked in with the Tournament Director at Zia Kayak Outfitters by 4:30pm, that participant will be disqualified.

## **Prize Structure:**

Bragging rights and a big picture of you on several websites and Facebook pages (for at least a week) is priceless, but in addition.....

The Tournament Scorekeeper will be seeking the event's largest "virtual" stringer of fish. Using aggregate scoring of a total of 5 submitted fish, there will be a 1<sup>st</sup> place, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prize.

- Should there be a tie, the Tournament Director will review the photos and choose the winner based on the fish that are the visually larger and heavier.

A "Big Fish" prize will be awarded in three species categories: Largemouth /Smallmouth Bass, White Bass and Walleye will be awarded prizes.

- Should there be a tie, the Tournament Director will review the photos and choose the winner based on the fish that are the visually larger and heavier.

Sponsors may provide additional awards to participants fishing using their product(s) at their own discretion.

## **Awards Meeting:**

Sunday, May 19th, at 11:00am, all participants expecting to take home prizes and everyone who wants to view the final results are to meet at Sierra Del Rio Golf Course located in Elephant Butte, off Warm Springs Blvd., in the Club Restaurant outside patio area. Treats will be provided.

It is expected that in addition to you, family members of participants, the Tournament Director, the Tournament Scorekeeper, sponsors and media may be in attendance. Prizes will be given out and pictures will be taken.

**Protest:**

All protests must be submitted in writing along with a \$100 cash deposit, within 30 minutes of Final Check-in time to the Tournament Director. If the Tournament Director, who has sole discretion in deciding the validity of the protests, upholds the protest, the cash deposit shall be returned to the participant submitting the protest. Protests may be made with regards to the fairness of the rules or enforcement of the rules. Scoring of photos is subject to the discretion of the Tournament Director, or his/her assigns, and not subject to protest. Allegations of cheating by other participants are not protests, but should be reported to the Tournament Director.

**Cheating & Bans:**

Cheating is a disgrace to the fun-spirited purposes for which the Elephant Butte Lake Kayak Fishing Tournament is organized. Any participant found cheating will face punishment, as determined by the Tournament Director. Punishment is likely to include a lifetime ban from Elephant Butte Lake fishing events and the names of cheater(s) prominently displayed in public. There is not an appeals process for bans or other punishment and the Tournament Director has final discretion on these matters. Any participant who sees or suspects another participant of cheating should attempt to photograph said actions. Whether or not the participant is able to photograph the alleged cheating, it should be reported to the Tournament Director at Final Check-in, or via phone during tournament hours so that justice may be served. Alleging cheating is not a protest and does not require a \$100 deposit.

**Release of Liability:**

A waiver, release of liability, and covenant not to sue is required to participate. It is required that all participants take responsibility for themselves while participating in the varied Elephant Butte Lake Kayak Fishing Tournament activities. Participants must accept that kayak, canoe, etc. fishing is inherently dangerous - safety and individual responsibility must be exercised at all times.

**Photo Releases:**

Scoring photos and other photos downloaded to the official tournament computer remain the sole ownership of Zia Kayak Outfitters and its sponsors. Participants grant Zia Kayak Outfitters and sponsors the unconditional right to use their name, voice, photographic likeness and biographical information in connection with the Elephant Butte Lake Kayak Fishing Tournament and production, promotion, and/or articles and press releases, and shall not be entitled to receive any royalties or other compensation in connection with such use. This includes photographs taken by Zia Kayak Outfitters and the sponsors or media.

## **Rule Changes:**

These written rules become finalized at the end of the Captain's Meeting. Rules interpretation is exclusively left to the Tournament Director. Rules can be changed and will be left exclusively to the Tournament Director.

## **Feedback:**

Zia Kayak Outfitters wants to conduct a Kayak Fishing Tournament annually and desires ever increasing numbers of participants. Please take a moment to send an email to [EBkayakT@gmail.com](mailto:EBkayakT@gmail.com) offering your suggestions of how we might make improvements. Compliments are also acceptable!

## **General Information:**

Contact the Elephant Butte Chamber of Commerce to learn of places to stay, eat and area attractions. [www.elephantbuttechamberofcommerce.com](http://www.elephantbuttechamberofcommerce.com) (575) 744-4708 Entrance to State Park requires a Day Pass costing \$5.00 per vehicle, or \$40 for an annual pass. Tournament participants will be provided a Day Pass in their Captain's Bag at the Captain's Meeting.

Fishing licenses can be obtained online using this web address <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/> . Zia Kayak Outfitters is a New Mexico Fishing License Vendor.

Tournament quality fishing tackle is available at Zia Kayak Outfitters 310 Rock Canyon Rd., Elephant Butte.

Maps of Elephant Butte Lake are available online at <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SPD/BOATINGWeb/documents/ElephantButteLakeMap000.pdf> and viewing Google Maps at <https://maps.google.com/maps?ie=UTF8&q=elephant+butte+lake+state+park&fb=1&gl=us&hq=elephant+butte+lake+map&cid=4554388603399255697&ei=KoyiUoiTBITM2AXZ5IDIBw&sqi=2&ved=0COEBEPwS>  
Printed maps are available the Guest Office at the State Park Main Entrance of Marina del Sur.

Kayak launching spots include Marina del Sur, Rock Canyon, Dam Site Marina and shoreline areas known as Dirt Dam, Lions Beach, Rattlesnake Island, Hot Springs Landing Cove, Long Point, Lost Canyon, Three Sisters and Monticello South Point. Be aware of soft sand areas to avoid getting stuck even with 4-wheel drive.

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