



2026 NLF Season 'NLF Pro Kayak Fishing League' Rules

ELIGIBILITY

All anglers must hold a valid Texas Saltwater Fishing License and comply with all Texas Parks and Wildlife regulations as they apply to kayak fishing. Participants must be 18 years of age or older.

The NLF Pro Kayak Fishing League will conduct a draft period in which a limited number of athletes may enter the league by committee vote. In the event of a tie, the League Director will cast the deciding vote.

Select anglers may bypass the draft by purchasing an official league entry packet; however, all applicants are still subject to a mandatory screening process.

HOW TO ACTIVATE WHEN READY TO FISH

All anglers must notify the League Director no later than two (2) days prior to their intended fishing date in order to self-activate. Once an angler has activated, the decision is final and may not be withdrawn.

If an activated angler is unable to fish on the declared date, they will be awarded tie-breaker value only.

Upon activation, anglers will be issued an official identifier on the evening prior to fishing. This identifier must be clearly visible in all required photos, including while handling fish and during the official weigh-in process.

LAUNCHING & LANDING RESPONSIBILITIES

Anglers may fish **Texas coastal state waters only**. Launch is permitted at first light, provided the angler is legally equipped with properly functioning navigation lighting in accordance with Texas

Parks and Wildlife regulations for both motorized and non-motorized kayaks. This includes green and red navigation lights or a 360-degree white light, as required by law.

Any angler operating a motorized kayak without compliant green and red navigation lights will be **disqualified**. Electric motors allowed (not gas), not to exceed 3HP or equivalent.

Must have **PFD on at all times**. Must have **VHF Radio**. Must have **manual bilge pump**.

Upon landing, anglers are solely responsible for properly caring for their catch, including maintaining fish on ice. All fish will be inspected for freshness, aging, and overall edibility. Fish exhibiting hazed eyes, discolored gills, unhealthy skin, or abnormal odor will **not be accepted**.

BAITS & RODS ALLOWED

Anglers may use any TPWL **legal bait** dead or alive. No culling species will be allowed as bait. Artificial lures are allowed. Scented baits are allowed. Any type of FAD or chum is illegal for this event. No current restrictions on number of rods anglers can fish with at once.

WEIGH SCORING DEPLOYABLES

Angler activation codes must be clearly visible and present when fish are being photographed, recorded on video, verbally referenced during recording, or presented at weigh-in. This documentation will serve as official evidence for scoring and verification.

All fish must be free of sand, debris prior to arriving at the weigh-in location. Fish containing swallowed lures or leaders will be inspected by weighmaster and make all proper inspections before allowing it to become part of the fish.

Once all this is complete, weighmaster will begin the scoring process by using a score sheet. This score sheet will be left with weighmaster but we encourage anglers to take pictures of it for their own record.

Scoring species cull per activation are as followed:

Eligible Species (on left) & Culling #'s (on right).

1. King Mackerel – **x1**
2. Cobia – **x1**
3. Snapper – **x1**
4. Trigger Fish – **x2**
5. Jack Crevalle – **x2**
6. Spade Fish – **x5**
7. Spanish Mackerel **x5**

CVR SCORING (Capture Video Release) DEPLOYABLES

Anglers may earn points for select species using the **CVR (Capture Video Release)** method. A leader length of **no more than six (6) feet** is permitted. Anglers are not required to use leader although scoring will be much easier as touching leader after video evidence is recorded will land you quicker and safer points. Only one of each species is allowed to score per activation.

5 Eligible CVR Species & Point Values: Only one of each species per activation.

1. Tarpon – **25 points**
2. Sailfish – **25 points**
3. Mahi Mahi – **25 points**
4. Overslot Redfish – **5 points**
5. Snook – **5 points**

During the fight, the recorded video must clearly capture species and include the following three verbal confirmations:

1. **The angler's name**
2. **The angler's activation code**
3. **The time of recording**

To validate and finalize scoring, the angler must successfully record the fight, clearly touch the leader, and safely release the fish. Video of bringing in a slack fish to the side of the kayak will not be acceptable. Each angler must be prepared to record at the time of the fight.

We ask that anglers keep final weight pictures/video private until inspected by director or assigned official. Once all evidence and questioning are cleared, we will make an official announcement. Anglers are allowed and encouraged to go live on any activation, although in order to respect those who would rather remain silent, this event will honor those requests.

NLF LEAGUE OPERATIONS

The **NLF Pro Kayak Fishing League** isn't just a season, it's a grind to a championship built on pressure, performance, and must-win moments. Season is open for Pro-Am & Bluewater BIG 10 scoring March 14th – June 30th 2026. Invitational Championship July 4th – October 31st. Pro Championship will be held LIVE late August announced before the season start.

Each year begins by bringing together **returning pros and invited challengers** for the **Pro-Am Seeding process**. At this stage, the entire field is unified under one banner and one mission: **stay above the Cut Line**. Finish above the **50th percentile**, or risk being pushed into survival mode.

Every angler is given **two opportunities to earn points** (weight) through what we call **Activations**.

- **Activation 1** establishes your **primary Pro-Am seeding rank**.
- **Activation 2** is your **Protection Point Activation**, your insurance policy if things don't go according to plan.

After the first activation, the decision is in the angler's hands. Do you sit comfortably above the Cut Line (50 percentile), or do you need protection?

That answer determines who enters the **Bluewater BIG 10**.

The **Bluewater BIG 10** is a middle-of-the-pack, inner-league tournament designed to answer one brutal question:

Do you belong with the top pros, or the rising invitational field?

Only **ten anglers** earn entry:

- The **bottom five** from the Pro rankings
- The **top five** from the Invitational rankings

Once inside the BIG 10, the slate is wiped clean. **Activation 1 points do not carry over.** This is a true **elimination tournament**, where your **final activation** determines your fate.

- **Top 5 'Activation 2' scores** advance to the **NLF Pro Championship**
- **Bottom 5 'Activation 2' scores** are sent to the **NLF Invitational Championship**

At this point, the field is locked and split.

Two Championships. Two Paths.

- The **NLF Pro Championship** is a **live, single-day event**, where everything is on the line in real time.
- The **NLF Invitational Championship** allows anglers to choose their fishing windows, but with a twist: **two activations**, with only the **best day counting** toward their final championship weight.

When championship time arrives, **all previous points are erased.**

No seeding advantages. No safety nets.

Just you, your kayak, and one final chance to prove where you belong.

NLF Commissioner,

Chris Castro