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Summer kicks off with major Cherokee trout tourney

CHEROKEE, N.C. - This year, Cherokee's Memorial Day Trout Tournament will take place May 27–29, offering a weekend of outdoor fun and \$10,000 in prizes for tagged fish caught in tribal waters. The tournament is open to all ages and all legal fishing methods. The entry fee is \$11.

Participants can register at the Cherokee Welcome Center, 498 Tsali Blvd., or anywhere fishing licenses are sold. Anglers can win cash prizes ranging from \$20 to \$500 based on the color of the tag.

The Qualla Boundary boasts 30 miles of freestone streams, and only 2.2 miles of catch-and-release waters are excluded from the Memorial Day event.

Prize redemption for tagged fish will be at the Water Beetle Stage next to the Cherokee Welcome Center. Register to redeem cash prizes anywhere fishing licenses are sold. Nearly 250,000 rainbow, brown and brook trout are released annually into Cherokee waters, which are stocked twice each week and include many trophy sizes. The river system comprises the longest privately owned and stocked waters east of the Mississippi. The tribe operates its own fish hatchery.

For further information, visit <http://www.fishcherokee.com> or call 828-359-6110, or contact Michael LaVoie, EBCI Fisheries and Wildlife Management, at 828-359-6113.

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The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is a sovereign nation with more than 15,000 enrolled members and is the only federally recognized Native American tribe in North Carolina. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians makes its home on the 56,600-acre Qualla Boundary in five Western North Carolina counties about an hour west of Asheville and at the entrance to Great Smoky Mountains National Park.