

Tools of the trade: Electrofishing

Biologists may use electrofishing equipment to **survey** fish **populations**. This equipment can be used by a biologist wading in a stream or from a boat. An electrical current from a generator passes through electrodes in the water. Fish near the electrodes are actually attracted, like a paper clip to a magnet. Others are temporarily stunned. Biologists net the fish and later identify, count and measure the fish. Fish are then released unharmed.

For more information on electrofishing, go to www.fishandboat.com/education/catalog/electrofishing.pdf.

Backpack Electrofishing

Backpack electrofishing is used in streams and rivers. One biologist wears a special backpack that has a control box and either a generator or battery to produce the power. Then, the electricity is transmitted to the water with electrodes held by the biologists. One or more biologists collect the stunned fish with nets. They work their way upstream, capturing fish as they move through the water.



Boat Electrofishing

Boat electrofishing is used on larger rivers and lakes where wading would be difficult. One biologist operates the boat, control box and generator. The two electrodes are mounted from the front of the boat. Another biologist then stands on the bow (front) of the boat and nets the stunned fish.

