



Idaho Fish and Game NEWS

Fishing—Summer 2010

Idaho Anglers Enjoy Another Strong Run of Chinook

Anglers have taken up their spots along the Little Salmon River and boaters have been catching salmon in all the other open waters where runs have shown up in strength.

Shortly after seasons opened, however, Mother Nature threw a dash of cold water on the fishing party with cool, heavy rains across most of Idaho. Some rivers were blown out, stalling further fishing success until the return of lower water levels.

The Chinook salmon run this year may not reach the levels forecast earlier this year, Fishery Bureau Chief Ed Schriever told the Idaho Fish and Game Commission recently, but it still represents as robust a return as Idaho has seen in the past few years.

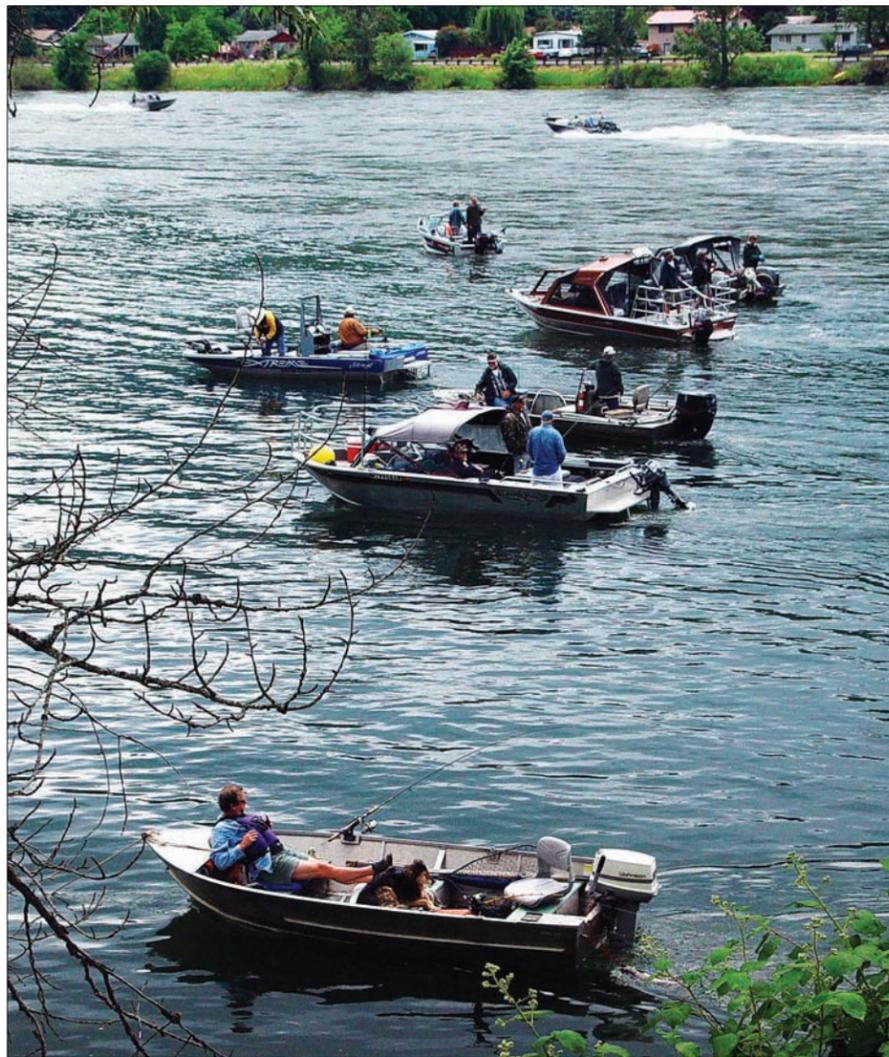
“It’s not bad news, it’s just not as good as we thought,” Schriever said.

The updated forecast predicts a recreational fishery harvest share of about 17,000 Chinook salmon – about 5,000 in the Clearwater drainage, about 10,000 in the lower Salmon and Little Salmon rivers, and about 2,000 in the Snake River from Dug Bar to Hells Canyon Dam.

It is still too early to predict the numbers expected in the South Fork Salmon and the upper Salmon River, Schriever said.

With the promise of a sizeable run again this year, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission has raised the Chinook limits in the lower Salmon and the Little Salmon rivers. Commissioners also raised the statewide annual limit to 40 adult Chinook.

Chinook salmon fishing is open in the Clearwater River, Snake River,



The Clearwater River at the mouth of the North Fork In Orofino attracts a gathering of Chinook anglers for another good fishing season.

IDFG photo by Mike Demick

Little Salmon and the lower Salmon River. Additional seasons are open in the Lochsa River; and June 19 in the lower Salmon River from Short’s Creek upstream to Vinegar Creek. In addition, this year Fish and Game opened a new section of the lower Salmon River from Rice Creek to Short’s Creek, during the same time as the other sections of the lower Salmon.

In the Clearwater River drainage the daily limit is three Chinook, only one may be an adult 24 or more inches long, and the possession limit is nine,

only three may be adults. In the Snake River from Dug Bar to Hells Canyon Dam the daily limit is four Chinook, only two of which may be adults. The possession limit is 12, only six adults.

Fishing hours are found in a table in the 2010 Chinook salmon rule brochure.

Chinook seasons also are open from June 12 on part of the upper Salmon and South Fork Salmon rivers. But this year, fishing in the Stanley area will open only for the Fourth of July weekend.

The Stanley reach from the posted boundary about 20 yards upstream of Valley Creek in Stanley, upstream to the posted boundary 100 yards downstream of the weir at Sawtooth Hatchery.

While other Chinook salmon stocks are returning to Idaho hatcheries in significant numbers, few fish are returning to the Sawtooth Hatchery on the upper Salmon River this year. Chinook salmon fisheries are supported mainly by 4-year-old fish. But

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Panhandle

Water No Problem for North Idaho

By Jim Fredericks
Regional Fisheries Manager

Like most of Idaho, the Panhandle experienced a remarkably mild winter this year. Unlike regions elsewhere in the state, low water years, for the most part, are not necessarily a bad thing for fish or fishing in the Panhandle.

True, streams will likely reach uncomfortably low flows by mid-late summer, but the mild runoff and absence of spring floods will benefit many of our river and lake fish populations.

For anglers, it means spring fishing conditions beginning one to two months earlier than the previous two years. Lakes lost their ice cover while rivers became accessible in February and March, resulting in only the briefest interruption between fall and spring fishing conditions.

This should be a great year in the Idaho Panhandle for all types of anglers. Between the hundreds of miles of streams, the large natural lakes, the more than 40 small lowland lakes, and the dozens of mountain lakes, there’s something for every type of angler. Here’s an overview of what anglers can expect to find in 2010 and where to look.

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Free Fishing Day June 12

Fish for free on Saturday, June 12. Free Fishing Day in Idaho is an annual no-license-required event that provides first time fishermen to get outdoors and learn to “cast a line.”

Anglers 25 and older do not need to have a fishing license on this day. Limits and all other rules do still apply.

Special events are planned around the state to teach angling skills. Those events are listed on page 6.

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Hatchery Trout

More than 150,000 catchable rainbow trout 9 to 11 inches long will be stocked in the region's small lakes and ponds this year. Because of the early spring, we began stocking in March. We will continue planting fish, generally once a month through September except when surface water temperatures are too warm (usually July and August). Trout fishing is great throughout the year, though anglers will have to fish a bit deeper during the heat of the summer. Some of the most frequently stocked lakes include Round, Kelso, Fernan, Robinson, Smith, and Hauser. In addition to catchable size fish, we stock thousands of fingerling trout in lakes where survival and growing conditions are good. Cocolalla, Hayden, and Spirit lakes all produce catches of trout ranging from a few inches to several pounds.

Best bet for kids: All of the lakes stocked with catchable trout provide a good opportunity for kids to hook some fish. The larger lakes (Mirror, Spirit, Cocolalla, Hauser) are ideal for anglers with a canoe or small boat, but for those fishing from the bank, the smaller lakes (Kelso, Round, Smith, Brush, Jewel) are generally best. For beginning anglers, the small ponds stocked with catchable trout are a great bet, such as Post Falls Park Pond, Bull Moose Lake (by Priest Lake), Dayrock Pond (near Wallace), Steamboat Pond (near Enaville). Check out the Family Fishing Waters brochure for details.

Wild Trout

The best-known wild trout stream fishing in the Panhandle is in the St. Joe and Coeur d'Alene rivers, and for good reason. Both rivers are characterized by crystal clear waters and abundant populations of cutthroat trout.

Anglers should enjoy a fantastic year in 2010. The density of cutthroat over 12 inches is nearly the highest recorded in 30 years. Furthermore, the light snow pack means runoff won't affect the fishing for long. Both rivers will likely be in fishable shape by early June. Anglers should be aware that all cutthroat trout in the St. Joe and Coeur d'Alene drainages must be released. Anglers will find some harvest opportunity on rainbow trout in the lower reaches of the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River.



Both rivers offer plenty of whitefish as well, which not only make for fun fishing but are tasty when smoked. Although the Kootenai, Moyie, and Clark Fork Rivers don't have the high trout densities that more well-known rivers do, they all produce some exceptional rainbow trout—generally without the crowds.

Best bet for kids: Though not the place to take kids looking to harvest fish, the St. Joe and Coeur d'Alene Rivers are perfect streams for teaching kids to fly fish. Both streams are easy to wade and are full of cutthroat eager to take a dry fly.

Warmwater Fish

A feature of the Panhandle Region that sets it apart from other parts of the state is the tremendous variety of warm water fish.

There are more than 40 natural low-elevation lakes in the Panhandle that collectively provide great opportunities for largemouth and smallmouth bass, crappies, perch, bluegill, channel catfish, northern pike, and

tiger muskies. Though not necessary, most warmwater fishing is done from a boat or canoe. The best time for most of these species is May and June, when water temperatures rise and spawning takes place, making them most aggressive. Following spawning, most of these species will move to slightly deeper water. Though the fish may not be as easy to find in summer and fall, anglers can still catch plenty.

Best bet for kids: For fast action and nice variety of great eating fish, some of the best lakes in the region are Rose, Shepherd, Kelso, and Robinson. With a worm and a bobber, a rubber jig, or poppers on a fly rod, kids can catch bluegill, crappie, and yellow perch. In May and June, bluegills spawn near the shoreline, so not only are they aggressive, they are visible, which helps hold a young angler's interest. For kids with a slightly longer attention span northern pike are not a particularly difficult fish to catch, though it may take two or three hours and a willingness to keep

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May and June are great times in the Panhandle to go for warm water fish.

IDFG photo by Jim Fredericks

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Commissioner's Corner

They're Coming!

By Fred Trevey, Commissioner Clearwater Region

"They're coming!" "I looked on the computer this morning and over 110,000 have crossed Bonneville so far!" "There are over 5,000 over Lower Granite!" "They will be here soon! Hope the river doesn't blow out when they get here!"

Get any two spring Chinook fishermen together in the Lewiston area and you will hear these phrases repeated with each daily update. The 2010 Spring Chinook season set by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission opened April 24.

Although the run started as a trickle into Idaho, the excitement is mounting. The 2010 run promises to rival bountiful runs early in the decade. Excellent fishing opportunity will be available on portions of the Snake, Clearwater and Salmon Rivers. The portion of the run returning to Rapid River near Riggins on the Salmon River could be truly exceptional. This reverse "flood" of fish migrating upstream against the spring flood is one of the wonders of nature.



Fred Trevey

Spring Chinook are not only strong fighters but also excellent table fare. They are a determined breed. After hatching and spending time as juveniles in the cold waters of Idaho; they "smolt" and answer the call of the ocean and its abundant food by riding the gathering spring runoff down the Columbia River system to the Pacific. Becoming mature and robust in the salt water environment, they answer the call to return to Idaho and start the cycle over again.

All Pacific salmon die after completing their spawning run.

Hot on the heels of the spring Chinook are their cousins the summer Chinook. These fish are generally headed for the South Fork of the Salmon River and extend fishing opportunity well into the summer. But this is not the end of Idaho's Chinook salmon story. Come fall, the mighty fall Chinook make their return call to Idaho. Fall Chinook run numbers, however, do not provide sport fisheries harvest opportunity like the spring and summer runs. State, tribal and federal fisheries agencies are working hard to facilitate and improve runs of all Pacific salmon species to Idaho, including sockeye and coho.

Idaho's connection to the sea via anadromous fish is not limited to Pacific salmon. The sea run rainbow trout or "steelhead" also makes this remarkable journey. Unlike Pacific salmon, the steelhead does not die upon spawning. In fact, as tracking technology of individual fish improves, researchers have documented wild fish born in Idaho that have made the journey to and from the ocean twice.

This is a remarkable feat considering the hazards inherent in the journey. Steelhead provide Idaho sport fishing opportunities from catch-and-release as early as July and catch-and-keep from mid-October through April. Idaho offers angling for anadromous fish throughout the calendar year. Idaho's "connection to the sea" through anadromous fish is remarkable and fascinating.

Visit <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/> or pick up a printed copy of the fishing regulations to stay abreast of the latest information and changes.

Panhandle

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angling. Coeur d'Alene Lake and the lateral chain lakes are great places to catch northern pike as well as large-mouth bass and crappies.

Kokanee

The outlook for kokanee in the Panhandle is much improved from three or four years ago. Populations in Coeur d'Alene and Pend Oreille continue to rebound from floods and predation, and Spirit Lake has been providing a consistent fishery. Though kokanee will remain closed-to-harvest in Pend Oreille in 2010, anglers should find plenty of 8- to 11-inch fish in Coeur d'Alene and Spirit lakes. The limit will remain at six in Coeur d'Alene Lake through 2010, though

anglers can look forward to more liberal harvest rules in 2011. The limit is 15 in Spirit Lake. Kokanee are also stocked in Brush, Lower Twin, Smith, and Mirror lakes to add to the fishery. Most are caught by trolling and, though anglers probably won't find many kokanee in these lakes, they do tend to be larger.

Best bet for kids: Trolling for kokanee can provide some fast action that will keep a kid's attention. The gear is fairly simple, typically consisting of leaded line, cowbells, a rubber snubber, and a wedding ring spinner. In Spirit Lake jigging for kokanee can also be fast and furious in early summer. Kokanee trolling is generally good throughout the summer.

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Another Idaho Chinook netted.

IDFG photo by Mike Demick

Salmon Season

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this year's return of 4-year-old fish is coming from a release of only 174,000 smolts in 2008. More than one million smolts would be released from the Sawtooth Hatchery in a typical year. In order to ensure that as many as possible returned to the hatchery, none had their adipose fin clipped. Therefore, this year, the fishery in the Salmon river above the Pahsimeroi River will be supported exclusively by a few 5-year-old fish and jacks.

On the Upper Salmon River, the Ellis reach is open from the cable car crossing at the USGS flow gauging station about 150 yards downstream of Island Park in Salmon, upstream to the posted boundary about 20 yards above the mouth of the Pahsimeroi River in Ellis.

The South Fork Salmon River will be open in two sections. The lower South Fork Salmon River is open from the U.S. Forest Service bridge on Forest Service Road 48 – East Fork South Fork Road-Lick Creek Road – that crosses just upstream from the confluence with the East

Fork South Fork Salmon River – upstream about 16 miles to a posted boundary about one mile upstream from Fournile Campground. (About two miles downstream from Poverty Flat Campground)

The upper South Fork Salmon River from a posted boundary about one mile from Fourmile Campground, upstream about 17 miles to a posted boundary about 100 yards downstream from the Idaho Fish and Game South Fork Salmon River weir and trap.

Limits are five Chinook per day, only three of which may be adults; the possession limit is 15 in possession, only nine of which may be adults.

For additional rules and restrictions, please refer to the 2010 Spring Chinook Salmon Seasons and Rules brochure. All salmon anglers 14 years old and older must have a 2010 Idaho fishing license and salmon permit.

Limits and open seasons can change on short notice. Please consult the Fish and Game Web site at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/fish/salmon/>, for the latest updates.

Commission Calendar

July 7, 8, 9 / Quarterly Meeting

Location: Kellogg, ID

Public Hearing: July 7

Routine Agenda Items: Rules: nonbiological for all game animals; Rules: nonresident deer and elk tag quotas; nonresident deer and elk tag outfitter set-aside; Briefing for 2011-2012 fishing seasons; Consider release of bighorn sheep and wolf tags for auction and lottery; Commission direction on the expenditure of Animal Damage Control funds; legislative proposals; Migratory game birds briefing; FY 12 Preliminary Budget to Commission.

August (Week of 16-20 - TBD) / Special Meeting or Conference Call

Location: Boise, ID

Routine Agenda Items: Season setting: Wolf Quotas; Migratory game birds (waterfowl seasons and limits for firearms and falconry); Season setting: Sage-grouse seasons; FY 12 budget approval.

October 28 or 29 (TBD) / Conference Call

Location: Boise, ID

Routine Agenda Items: Ratification of rules.

November 17,18,19 / Quarterly Meeting

Location: Jerome, ID

Public Hearing: November 17

Routine Agenda Items: Season setting: 2011-2012 Fishing Seasons; Appoint Commission representative to WAFWA.

Clearwater



Westslope Cutthroat Trout – Fishing for Idaho’s State Fish in the Clearwater Region

By Robert Hand
Regional Fisheries Biologist

Goodrich had caught half a dozen very fine trout and a number of both species of the white fish. These trout are from sixteen to twenty three inches in length, precisely resemble our mountain or speckled trout in form and the position of their fins, but the specks on these are of a deep black instead of the red or gold color of those common to the [Eastern] U. States. These are furnished long sharp teeth on the pallet and tongue and have generally a small dash of red on each side behind the front ventral fins; the flesh is of a pale yellowish red, or when in good order, of a rose red.”

With those words in 1805, Merriweather Lewis unknowingly became the first European to describe the Westslope cutthroat trout, and thus began a story that has led to it becoming an immensely popular sport fish in the state fish of Idaho. This “discovery” even resulted in the fish receiving the scientific name *Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*, in honor of the famous expedition’s two leaders, William Clark and Merriweather Lewis.

Today, the westslope cutthroat trout is much sought after by fishermen. They are found throughout hundreds of miles of small, cool streams and rivers and numerous lakes in northern and north-central Idaho, western Montana, and the southern parts of British Columbia

and Alberta in Canada. They can be identified by the spots on the posterior half of the fish, its beautiful silver and yellowish-to-reddish coloration, and the intensely colored red slash on its throat, for which it was named. Their diet is composed primarily of aquatic and terrestrial insects, though fish that live in lakes will also eat crustaceans. On occasion they have been known to eat other fish, but this is generally rare. Their preference for insects over fish is attributed to westslope having coevolved with two other highly predatory fish species, the bull trout and northern pikeminnow. Because of their predominantly insect diet, they are a smaller subspecies of cutthroat trout, generally reaching up to 9 inches in small streams and 18 inches in large streams and rivers. The maxi-

The westslope cutthroat trout is one of the most popular game fish in Idaho

mum size for these fish is around 24 inches and 5 pounds.

The westslope cutthroat trout is one of the most popular game fish in Idaho. Fishermen use a variety of techniques including fly fishing and spinning gear.

A 4- or 5-weight fly rod is perfect for cutthroat trout. They will eat just about anything that a fly angler

can present quietly, so choosing the right fly is not too difficult. Basically, when fly fishing for cutthroat, try to match the hatch as best you can; but more importantly, just get a fly out in front of these fish and see if you get any response. A selection of elk hair caddis, parachutes, blue wing olive’s, Wulff’s, hoppers, and stimulators, in sizes from 12 to 16 will serve you well.

If you are going to be fishing for westslope in the early spring, the resident aquatic insects will have just begun emerging, so using nymphs can be an effective technique. Stoneflies and caddis are usually some of the best for early fly fishing action. One thing to note is that insects are generally darker in the spring months, so use darker color patterns. As we move

into summer, the insects will become lighter in color and smaller in size. Your best bet in the heat of summer is to use dry fly patterns. Cutthroat trout love dead-drifted flies and watching fish rise to your fly makes for a great day on the water. The crystal clear waters of Idaho’s rivers and streams usually will let you follow the action from when the fish first begins to move for the fly all the way to when it strikes. Because these fish are opportunistic, they’re often willing to take flies on top throughout the day, whether there’s a hatch on or not.

For those who prefer to use spinning gear, light or ultralight gear with 4-8 pound test works well. Small

spoons and spinners in silver, copper, and darker colors such as brown or black have proven effective.

Some of the best cutthroat trout fishing in the state of Idaho occurs in the Clearwater Region. There are hundreds of miles of rivers and streams in the Clearwater Region where one can expect to catch numerous cutthroat trout from 6 to 18 inches in length. Some of the more popular rivers include the North Fork Clearwater River and the Lochsa River. Both of these rivers have relatively easy access, as a paved road parallels most of their length; and numerous areas can be found to camp.

Most people like to fish these rivers from July through September when the weather is nice the rivers are easy to wade. However, great fishing can be had in June if you are not afraid of higher water. If you want to get away from the crowds and do a little hiking, try Kelly Creek or Weitas Creek, both tributaries of the North Fork Clearwater River. Finally, there is the Selway River, which flows through the rugged Selway-Bitterroot wilderness area. The best way to access this river is by raft or by foot. Before July, you need a permit to float this river and after July low flows can make floating difficult. If you are lucky enough to draw a permit, you can expect some fabulous fishing.

Most cutthroat trout waters in the Clearwater Region are regulated under catch-and-release or other restrictive regulations such as two fish with none allowed less than 14 inches.

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Southwest

Crappie are Big Draw in Region that Offers Wide Variety

By Jeff Dillon
Southwest Region
Fisheries Manager

C.J. Strike Reservoir

If early spring fishing is any indication, C.J. Strike is shaping up to be one of Idaho's top fishing spots for the year.

Close to the Treasure Valley, and with great camping and boating facilities, Strike offers something for every angler from novice to expert. A huge boom in the crappie population started in 2006 and has been providing great kid fishing, high catch rates, and lots of fish dinners. The estimated crappie harvest in 2009 was more than 230,000 fish, and the harvest this year could be just as impressive. Crappie populations will naturally cycle over time – something that has little to do with fishing pressure or harvest—so anglers should feel free to take advantage when it is good. Just remember to keep only what you're willing to clean and eat. During late spring and early summer, crappie can be found in shallow near-shore areas and can be caught from bank or boat. Use standard crappie jigs, and try different spots and depths until you find fish. If you find one, chances are there will be a school nearby. Fishing should remain good through June. Later in the summer, crappie will generally move offshore and suspend in deeper water.

While crappie are the big draw, C.J. Strike has a mix of other game fish including smallmouth and largemouth bass, yellow perch, bluegill, channel catfish, and rainbow trout. To top it off, the Snake River arm of the reservoir has good fishing for white sturgeon.

Brownlee Reservoir

A true destination for dedicated warm-water anglers, Brownlee is among the top waters in the state for smallmouth bass, crappie, and catfish. There is good camping and boating access at both ends of the more than 50-mile

long reservoir. On the south end, Steck Park can be reached via Weiser. Farewell Bend, Spring Recreation Area, and other less developed accesses are available on the Oregon side. To reach the north end, take highway 71 out of Cambridge to the excellent camping and boating facilities at Woodhead.

Bass fishing has been a little tough of late, but late spring fishing can be great as fish move close to shore and really begin to feed after the spawn. Try a variety of soft plastics, jigs, and crankbaits, and try some topwater plugs morning and evening on calm days. Crappie are booming here too, with lots of four-year-old fish in the 10-inch range. And Brownlee (and the Snake River above) is probably the best channel catfish fishery in the northwest. Focus on the upper (southern) part of the reservoir, find any gently sloping bank, plunk out some worms, shrimp, or cut bait, and hang on to your fishing rod. Brownlee catfish are real bruisers with lots of fish over five pounds and occasional fish well past the 10-pound mark.

South Fork Boise River

Southwest Idaho's premier wild trout fishery, the South Fork below Anderson Ranch Dam offers great fishing for both wade- and float-anglers. Easiest access is off Highway 20 north of Mountain Home. Fishing season opens on May 29. Rainbow trout are managed with trophy regulations (two fish limit, none under 20 inches) and angling is restricted to lures and flies with single barbless hooks. Trout populations remain strong in this river with a good percentage of fish over 16 inches, and mountain whitefish are also quite abundant. Expect flows to be up around 1,600 or 1,800 cubic feet per second for the opener, which will mean good floating conditions but tough wading. There is good road access along the river for about 12 miles below the dam, including several developed campgrounds and boat ramps. Below this reach is about 17 miles of roadless river, one of the premier whitewater float and fish trips in the state.

Note: this is not a float trip for inexperienced boaters; it's best to take a trip or two with someone who knows the river before trying it on your own.

Lucky Peak Reservoir

Close to the Treasure Valley, and with lots of good facilities for boat or bank anglers, Lucky Peak offers a mix of cold and warm water species. Kokanee have become a popular part



Big crappie are huge fun for fishing families in the Southwest. Crappie are great table fare and abundant.

IDFG photo by Jeff Heindel

of the fishery in recent years with fish running 15 to 18 inches by summer. The kokanee fishery is supported entirely by a stocking program of about 200,000 fingerlings each year. During early summer most kokanee are found at depths of 15 to 30 feet, moving deeper as surface waters warm. Boat fishing is a must, and anglers have success trolling a variety of wedding rings and spinners using leaded line or downriggers. Shoreline anglers have a good chance at rainbow trout and an occasional smallmouth bass. Fish shallower shorelines in the early summer with worms or other bait. By

While crappie are the big draw, C.J. Strike has a mix of other game fish including smallmouth and largemouth bass, yellow perch, bluegill, channel catfish, and rainbow trout

mid-summer, fishing is best in morning and evening, and you'll want to focus on areas with steeper banks and deeper water.

Sage Hen Reservoir

Great camping, great scenery, and a great place for a limit of trout. This can be good bank fishing with the usual worm-and-marshmallow combo. Trolling and float tubing are also effective. Note that the tributaries to Sage Hen are closed to fishing until June 15 to protect the wild spawners. These wild fish make up about 20 percent of the reservoir population.

Urban Fisheries / Lower Boise

If the weather chases you off the big lakes, if the mountain streams are too high to fish, or if you just don't have time for a long trip, the lower Boise River and local ponds are the perfect solution. The ponds are all easy to get to, most are stocked regularly with trout, and almost all have bass, bluegill, and other panfish, too. There are more than 20 ponds to choose from. In Boise, these include Park Center, Quinns, Riverside, and McDevitt ponds. In Eagle are Merrill Park and Eagle Island State Park ponds. In Meridian is Settlers Park Pond. And in the west valley are the Wilson, Caldwell Rotary, Redtop, and Marsing ponds (see our family fishing waters brochures, or call the regional office for more information). The lower Boise River from Barber Dam to Star offers close-to-home stream fishing for a mix of wild and hatchery trout and abundant whitefish.

With greenbelt access along most of this reach, you can even do a little walking to escape the crowds. Try fishing with bait in the slower water and pools, or tossing spinners in pockets and runs. For fly anglers, there are occasional hatches and surface feeding, but nymph fishing can be productive anytime.

As an added bonus, we'll likely stock surplus hatchery Chinook salmon in the river this summer. Watch for announcements in your local paper or on the Fish and Game website, and don't forget to pick up a salmon permit before you go.

Clearwater

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These restrictive regulations are in place to prevent too much harvest, which would quickly result in greatly reduced populations of this easily caught fish. While most cutthroat waters are under no bait and barbless hook regulations, we encourage fishermen to use single barbless hooks everywhere when fishing for these fish to ease the removal of hooks and reduce the damage they do to a fish's mouth and jaw.

McCall

Lake Cascade Perch Fishery: Is It Back?

By Dale Allen
Regional Fishery Manager, McCall

Maybe it's time to put Lake Cascade back on your fishing to-do list.

Fish and Game has continued working on yellow perch restoration and we are seeing the yellow perch population rebounding. What we are not seeing is the fishermen numbers rebounding. When a fishery drastically declines as Cascade did in late 1990s, there is a tendency for fishermen to assume that it is gone and not worth fishing again, ever. Let's see if I can pique your interest in spending some of your hard-earned fishing recreation time on Cascade this year.

Yellow Perch

Did you hear about the two-pound, fifteen-plus-inch yellow perch caught this winter? Did you hear about the really nice catches of perch eleven to fourteen inches last fall?

These big fish were young produced from the first groups of yellow perch we stocked in 2004 as part of our restoration efforts. These first fish had tremendous growth and finally showed up in fishermen's creels in the last couple of years. The numbers aren't huge lake-wide and you may have to keep moving around until you find a pod of these big fish, but it doesn't take many to make a nice meal.

Fish and Game biologists also have documented a huge group of two-year-old fish that should remind everyone of the good old days when they show up in the catch in 2011 and beyond.

In Lake Cascade it seems we see two good fishing peaks for yellow perch--spring and fall. The end of May is good because the fish have completed spawning and recovery and go on a feeding period. The other prime time is late summer as soon as we get the first cooler storm front come through the area when the fish are responding to some seasonal signal to eat hearty.

Rainbow Trout and Coho

The department stocks many rainbow trout at about nine inches and coho salmon at about four inches annually. The best salmon fishing is from ice out until about the first of July.

Cascade is relatively shallow and heats up as summer temperatures set in, which tends to slow trout fishing in

the summer. Trout fishing picks up in late September when the waters cool.

Anglers typically fish the beaches south of the Cascade city boat ramp all the way down to the Blue Heron Campground. Another good area is from the Sugarloaf boat ramp north to the point closest to Sugarloaf Island. Many people park at the old abandoned highway that goes into the water (a half-mile or so before you get to Sugarloaf boat ramp) and walk up over the hill to the west and fish these beaches. These areas can be productive during and just after ice-out. Baits include marshmallows and worms, powerbait, salmon eggs, and cured egg clusters. Trollers seem to concentrate their efforts off the City Golf Course up to the west side of Sugarloaf Island. Typical trolling rigs are large pop gear with worms; another good method is to use a small perch trolling plug.

Kokanee

In the past few years we've been stocking kokanee fingerlings in Cascade and they have done fairly well. We have seen 20-inch kokanee in our sample gear the past few years, but few in the angler's creel. Most trout anglers are using a pop gear that is too heavy and the kokanee won't stay on because of their soft mouths. So add a rubber snubber and either target kokanee or lighten up your gear some and catch a few kokanee, they're waiting.

Smallmouth Bass

Cascade has not been known as a top producer of smallmouth bass but now there is a reason to consider fishing for them. While the perch numbers were down, the lack of predation on young bass allowed more favorable recruitment of smallmouth. There are good numbers of smallmouth bass larger than 12 inches currently in the reservoir. This current peak won't last many years because of the increasing predation pressure from the yellow perch population. Lake Cascade doesn't have the typical rocky shoreline commonly associated with smallmouth habitat; you need to also search the weed bed edges and deeper areas of the North Fork Payette River submerged channel.

This year may be a good year to rediscover the Lake Cascade fishery. The reservoir is not crowded and the fish populations have improved considerably. Tight lines.



Anglers are finding some big perch like this one again after years of restoration work at Cascade. Better numbers of big perch should show up in 2011 and beyond.

IDFG photo

Free Fishing Day Events Listed in Regions

Fish and Game personnel and volunteers will be on hand to help first time anglers discover the joys of fishing at the following free events. For details contact the regions listed here:

Panhandle Region - Pete Gardner, 208-769-1414.

- **Bonnars Ferry** - Snow Creek Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Calder** - Calder Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Clark Fork** - Clark Fork Lodge Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Coeur d'Alene** - Ponderosa Springs Golf Course, 7 to 11 a.m.
- **Enaville** - Steamboat Ponds, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Harrison** - Harrison Marina, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Mullan** - Lucky Friday Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Post Falls** - Post Falls Park Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Priest Lake** - Priest Lake Golf Course, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Rathdrum** - Rathdrum City Park, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Sandpoint (near Sagle)** - Round Lake State Park, 9 a.m. to noon.

Clearwater Region - For information 208-799-5010. All events 9 a.m. to noon.

- **Elk City** - Carolyn's Pond.
- **Grangeville** - Wilkin's Pond.
- **Headquarters - Pierce/Weippe** - Deer Creek Reservoir.
- **Kooskia** - Fenn Pond, 5 miles

from Lowell on Forest Service Road 223.

- **Lewiston** - Mann Lake.
- **Moscow/Troy** - Spring Valley Reservoir.
- **Riggins** - Box Canyon Pond (Long Gulch Pond).

Southwest Region - Evin Oneale, 208-465-8465.

- **Boise** - Parkcenter Pond, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Cascade** - Fischer's Pond, 10 a.m. to 2:30p.m.
- **Eagle** - Merrill Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Emmett** - Ed's Pond, 9 a.m. to noon.
- **Lowman** - 10-mile Ponds, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **McCall** - Rowland (Scout) Pond, 9 a.m. 2 p.m.
- **Nampa** - Nampa Hatchery, 8 a.m. to noon.
- **New Meadows** - Kimberland Meadows Pond, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Idaho City** - Visitor Center Pond, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Weiser** - Weiser Community Pond, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Magic Valley Region - Kelton Hatch, 208-324-4350.

- **Hagerman** - Hagerman Fish Hatchery 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Picabo** - Gavers Lagoon at Hayspur Fish Hatchery, 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Southeast Region - Jennifer Jackson, 208-232-4703.

- **Aberdeen/Springfield** - Mc-Tucker Ponds, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Grace** - Grace Fish Hatchery, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Children 14 and under may fish, but age 8 and under must be accompanied by an adult.
- **Pocatello** - Hawkins Reservoir, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Soda Springs** - Kelly Park Pond, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Children 13 and under may fish, but age 8 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Upper Snake Region - Gregg Losinski, 208-525-7290. Events run from 9 a.m. to noon and loaner poles and worms will be available.

Teach fundamental skills and attitudes to make new hunters safe, confident, and responsible.




HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS NEEDED



- Give back
- Set a good example
- Pass on the tradition

Get Involved Today!

Contact your nearest Fish and Game office for more information



photo courtesy IDFG

Magic Valley



Brown drakes (mayflies) hatching on Silver Creek make a fishing event that draws anglers from a world away. The big bugs are seen hovering below the fishing rod. IDFG photo

Famed Trout Streams, Rivers and Fish-filled Reservoirs

By Doug Megargle,
Regional Fisheries Manager

Any fishing forecast in semi-arid southern Idaho must first start with the snow pack.

Snowpack and the water stored in the snow is what drive stream and reservoir conditions in the region. Generally speaking, things could be worse.

We have about 50-60 percent of average snow water equivalent in the northern part of the region (Boise, Big Wood, Little Wood, Fish Creek drainages) and about 50-75 percent in the Southern mountains (Oakley and Salmon Falls Creek basins).

The below average snow pack in the northern mountains will likely result in relatively low reservoir conditions in Magic Reservoir, Mormon Reservoir, and Little Camas Reservoirs as well as low summer stream flows in the Boise, Big Wood, Little Wood and Fish Creek drainages.

Irrigation companies are still forecasting drought conditions for these reservoirs which means they will likely become low in late summer months.

The exceptions in the North include Anderson Ranch Reservoir and Little Wood Reservoir which will likely hold decent water levels into late summer and fall months. Additionally, the below average snow pack in the southern mountains means some potentially low water conditions in Oakley, Salmon Falls Creek, and Roseworth Reservoirs.

Spring has come late this year so we still may see delayed high spring runoff in a lot of the larger streams as well as delayed reservoir recharge. Most warm water fish spawning has been delayed about three weeks including bass and bluegill.

What's Hot

If you're new to the area, wanting to come for a visit, or just wanting to know what's going to be the hot spot this year then you should consider the following.

Urban Fisheries

There are a few places around major cities that provide easy access and generally pretty good fishing. Consider Filer Ponds, Dierkes lake, Oster Lakes and Anderson Ponds (Hagerman Wildlife Management area), Crystal Lake (Niagara State Park), Emerald Lake (Burley), Connor Pond (Burley), and the Fairfield Kids Pond. Give the Regional Office a call or use the Fishing Planner to get more information about these or other fishing opportunities.

Lakes and Reservoirs

Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir has been producing a great opportunity over the past few years. Most boat anglers access the fishery at Lud Drexler Park (at the dam) or the unimproved launch at Greys Landing (about half-way down the reservoir on the east side). An angler can find themselves hooked up with crappie, smallmouth bass, walleye, rainbow trout hybrids and the occasional yellow perch. Trout fishing has been great with folks catching 16-20 inch trout since the ice came off. The ice-out walleye bite was pretty slow with folks catching a few fish in the 14-17 inch range and a few over 20 inches. Walleye spawn at around 48 degrees

(April-May) and then the bite comes on strong when the water reaches about 56-58 degrees.

Magic Reservoir should be pretty good despite the repeated low water years. Magic is not expected to fill but it will likely hold water slightly longer than last year, but anticipate low water conditions around the end of July or early August. Magic Reservoir is expected to have good catch rates of hatchery rainbow trout and wild brown trout. The department documented increased numbers of spawning brown trout (16-25 inches) in the lower Big Wood River which means they're available in Magic this summer. Smallmouth bass numbers have been increasing with many in the 14-16 in range.

Anderson Ranch Reservoir should produce decent catch rates of 10-13 inch kokanee. Fish relatively shallow (top 15 feet) until the dog days of summer when they are to be found much deeper (20-35 ft). Downriggers with weighted lines are best during that time. The use of snubbers will greatly increase your chance of landing the kokanee. Bass fishing can be productive particularly in the spring months along the shoreline in the Lime Creek and Falls Creek area (aka narrows).

Milner Reservoir has traditionally produced a great smallmouth bass fishery. It is one of the top three most popular tournament fisheries. This busy fishery is mainly a boat fishery with three or four public ramps available. Don't forget to try for some of the channel catfish stocked annually.

Lake Walcott has been reportedly producing a great spring fishery with many anglers catching 18 inch trout from the shoreline. Bass fishing in the main reservoir produces high catch rates of smaller sized bass mainly on the north shoreline. Small boats and float tube bass anglers should definitely explore the upper area of the lake (Gifford and Smith Springs) during the spring and early summer months. Sixteen to eighteen inch bass are common.

Be aware of the US Fish and Wildlife Refuge boating restrictions on the refuge.

Rivers and Streams

The Big Wood River always produces. This highly accessible freestone trout stream is great for the learner as well as the pro. We've had a relatively cool and wet spring so far which may result in better stream flows into early summer months. There are camping options north of Ketchum which makes it real convenient to spend some time on the river.

Silver Creek is perhaps one of the most renowned fisheries in the Region (see photo). This spring fed wild trout fishery allows for an angler to target rainbow and large brown trout. The unique atmosphere of the

area is worth the trip. Be prepared since the fish are well educated and easily spooked. It's not uncommon to see an angler leave for the day with their wool patch covered in flies that failed to produce. The regulations are fairly complicated so review them carefully before fishing.

Anglers who desire small, isolated trout streams consider the upper Goose Creek drainage (and its tributaries), upper Little Wood River (above the Reservoir), Big Cottonwood Creek, Jarbidge River, and the upper Big Wood River. These areas require a bit more effort to find and access, but the small streams can make for a great day fishing. Anglers can target the native Yellowstone Cutthroat trout in the Goose and Big Cottonwood drainages.

What's Not

Some fisheries reliant upon hatchery stocking did not carry over trout stocked the previous year. All fisheries will be stocked this spring, however numbers will likely be reduced based on storage forecasts. Little Camas and Mormon Reservoir will be stocked this year, but don't expect to find many trout over 12 inches. Low water and poor over-winter survival essentially eliminated fish stocked in previous years. Thorn Creek Reservoir did not fill this spring.

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Southeast Lunker Rainbows Still Here

By Dave Teuscher
Southeast Region
Fisheries Manager

Quest for Record

Last June, a surprising number of large rainbow trout were caught in American Falls Reservoir and the Snake River. During a two-week period, three fish over 18 pounds were caught. The last fish reported broke a long-standing state record for rainbow trout. Do more lunker trout remain to be caught in 2010 and beyond? The short answer is yes.

This year may produce even more big rainbow trout than 2009. A couple of factors likely contributed to the recent big trout frenzy. First, good water years increase fish survival for all age classes of trout. The past two water years have been good. In fact, last fall's remaining storage in American Falls Reservoir after the irrigation season ended was 34 percent. That is well above the average fall storage from the previous nine years of six percent.

A second factor that may be contributing to larger trout is a statewide management shift to stocking only sterile rainbow trout. The sterile rainbow trout program, implemented in 2001, was started to reduce hybridization with native cutthroat trout. However, studies were also completed to determine sterile fish survival and growth potential. Interestingly, the research studies showed that sterile trout don't necessarily grow faster but they may live longer, giving them extra years to grow.

Spawning stress is a major cause of mortality in fertile trout. Since 2001, the majority of trout stocked in



American Falls Reservoir yielded this behemoth rainbow trout last year to Michelle Larsen-Williams. This fish was not the only one of its size to be found in the Southeast reservoir.

Photo courtesy of Michelle Larsen-Williams

American Falls Reservoir have been all-female sterile trout. The sterile females do not attempt to spawn and do not put energy into egg development. Life expectancy for fertile trout stocked in southeast Idaho reservoirs was four to five years. Some of the big trout caught last year could have been from the first sterile fish released in 2001 and would have been nine years old in 2009. The sterile fish may be living longer and the extra pounds and length observed in recent catches could benefit local anglers seeking to catch a trout over 20 pound. This year, regional fisheries biologists will be aging trout from the reservoir to determine if older fish are contributing to the recent big fish phenomenon.

Edson Pond: A New Fishery in Pocatello

A community fishing pond in Pocatello will soon be a reality. Our goal is to provide a great fishing experience for families, kids and first-time an-

glers. The pond will cover about three acres and will have a maximum depth of 15 feet. Fish species to be planted include rainbow trout, bluegill, and bass. The pond and surrounding lands will include fishing docks and piers, perimeter trails with benches, and some additional native landscaping to enhance and beautify the natural setting. Fill from the pond excavation will be used to build a berm along the property boundary to visually screen and muffle sounds from the nearby railroad. The pond will also be handicapped-accessible and meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Tag, You're It

Over the next several years, anglers fishing the southeast region may catch tagged fish. The purpose of the tagging program is to collect data on the hatchery trout stocked in local waters. In 2010, we will be focusing on hatchery trout returns from fish stocked in the Snake River and American Falls Reservoir. If you catch a tagged trout,

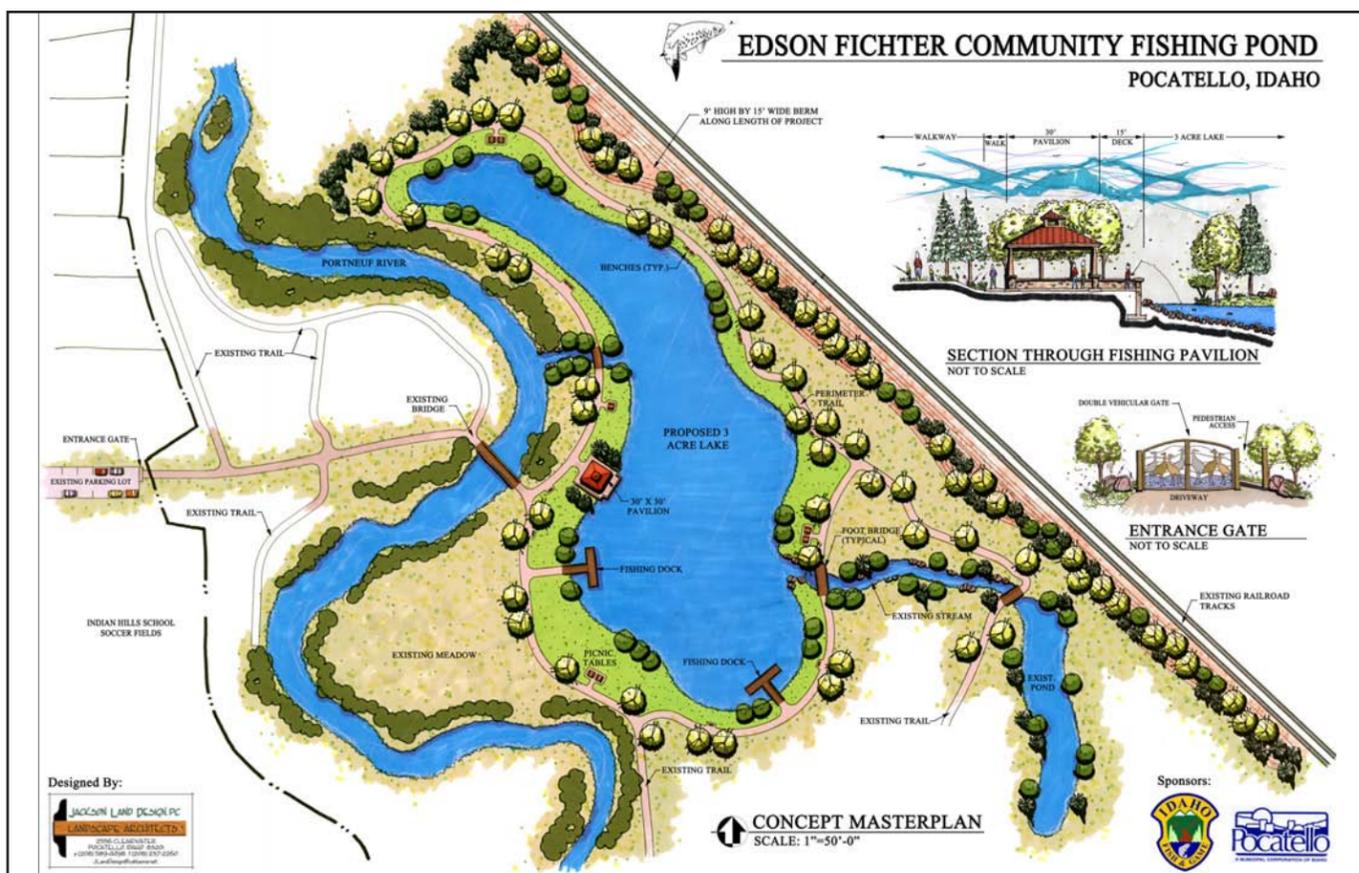
you can report your catch by calling this toll free number at 1-866-258-0338 or fill out a form on the Internet at (<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/fishtag/>). The data we collect will help determine the best place and time to stock hatchery fish. Your participation will improve future fishing.

Rivers and Streams

Similar to the good news on overwinter storage in American Falls Reservoir, river and stream fisheries have enjoyed abundant flows the last two years. Those water conditions result in better than average trout survival, which enhance stream fish populations and angler catch rates. Unlike the previous two winters, current snow pack is below normal. The short-term impact to anglers is positive. Frequently, early occurs when flows from melting snow are still high. That is not likely to occur this spring. Current snowpack is running 40-70 percent of normal. June should be a great time to get out and enjoy river and stream fishing. Places to consider include: Tincup Creek, the upper Portneuf River, and the Cub River.

Take Me Fishing Trailer

The Take Me Fishing Trailer will be making a stop at one of your favorite fishing spots this summer; and, when it does, be ready for some great fishing fun. Those who register at the trailer will have access to poles and other fishing equipment at no charge, and can fish without a license during the time the trailer is onsite. Those new to the sport can even receive assistance with basic fishing skills. It is Fish and Game's hope that this traveling trailer will recruit new anglers, especially youth, and perhaps reconnect one-time anglers with a pastime they forgot they enjoyed. A fishing trailer schedule is available on Fish and Game's Web site.



Upper Snake

Famous Fishing Joins Spectacular Scenery

By Greg Schoby
Upper Snake
Regional Fisheries Biologist

Going fishing means different things to different people. For some, a fishing trip might entail driving to the water's edge and helping the kids cast from the bank with different tackle, while others might want to hike to a secluded mountain lake or stream to enjoy the scenery and maybe catch a few fish for the frying pan.

Other anglers might define a fishing trip as a float on their favorite river, casting flies to rising trout, while others might want to wet a line after jet-boating upstream to a deep eddy or run. While all of the above can be summarized as fishing trips, they are different and distinct opportunities, every one of which can be found throughout the Upper Snake Region, making eastern Idaho a destination for anglers of all types.

Henry's Fork

The Henry's Fork Snake River is one of the most famous and diverse trout streams in the United States, and is known for its prolific insect hatches and large trout. The river flows approximately 150 miles through a variety of habitats and provides a wealth of angling opportunity for wild trout, including some of the most famous fly fishing water in the United States.

The Henry's Fork begins as the outlet of Henry's Lake, but its most famous reaches begin below Island Park Reservoir. The Box Canyon stretch of the Henry's Fork, immediately below Island Park Dam, is famous for the large rainbow trout that inhabit this 4 mile section of tumbling pocket water. Surveys in this reach estimate nearly 3,000 rainbow trout per mile, averaging about 14 inches, and about a third all the trout are over 16 inches.

After tumbling through the Box Canyon, the river slows and widens as it flows gently through the abundant weed beds that shape the classic

dry fly water of the Harriman Ranch. Known as the Ph.D. of fly fishing, the Ranch resembles a giant spring creek, and its abundant aquatic insect life provides ample food to grow large rainbow trout. Extensive caddis and mayfly hatches, and the large, wary trout that feed on them, have made the Harriman Ranch section of the Henry's Fork world famous.

Below the Harriman Ranch, the Henry's Fork provides anglers with a diversity of opportunity as it courses its way downstream. Pocket water abounds above Mesa Falls in the lightly pressured Cardiac Canyon, while classic riffles, runs, and deep pools dominate the river below the confluence with the Warm River. Moving downstream, anglers can expect healthy populations of rainbow trout and brown trout in the waters below Ashton Dam down to the town of St. Anthony. The number of brown trout increases the farther downstream one fishes, and the average size of fish is actually larger than in the more famous, upper reaches of river.

The Henry's Fork Snake River is a spectacular fishery that provides a variety of habitats and opportunity for anglers. Whether you are looking to cast small dry flies to large, selective rainbows or throw spoons and spinners to oversized brown trout, the Henry's Fork is the place for you.

South Fork

The South Fork Snake River flows from Palisades Reservoir at the Idaho/Wyoming border to where it meets the Henry's Fork Snake River near Menan Buttes. The upper section from Palisades Dam down through Swan Valley runs 15 miles through a mountain valley, and is easily accessed from several boat ramps and numerous wadeable areas at lower flows. The middle 25 miles is referred to as the canyon section, and is limited to boat access for those not willing to hike. No roads are found in the upper 10 miles of the canyon section. Below

Anglers will find plenty of lake trout (mackinaw) in Priest Lake again in 2010. Most anglers fish by jigging or by trolling. Jigging typically involves a ¾ - 2 oz. jig fished with a non-stretch line at depths of 120-200 feet, whereas most trollers use plugs or a dodger/squid or flasher/fly combo off downriggers.

Though jiggers tend to have higher catch rates, often catching a limit of six fish in a couple of hours, the bigger fish are more often caught by trollers.

Efforts to reduce the number of lake trout in Pend Oreille using commercial netting equipment and the angler incentive program are making a difference. Kokanee have continued



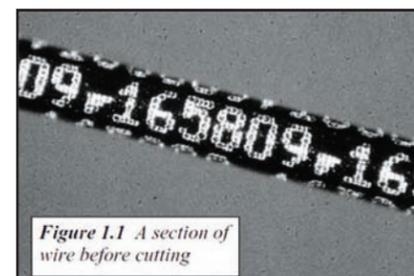
A tiny wire tag (magnified below) inserted into a rainbow's nose marks it as a money fish—in the effort to encourage anglers with chances at a cash reward to catch and keep the species on the South Fork of the Snake River. Native cutthroat trout are under pressure from a large rainbow population.

IDFG photos

this scenic canyon, the lower river flows for about 20 miles from Heise to the confluence with the Henry's Fork. The lower river is not bounded by mountains or canyon, and it spreads out across the Snake River valley with numerous side channels. The entire South Fork is bordered by one of the largest cottonwood galleries in Idaho, and the cottonwood riparian along the lower river can be miles wide.

The South Fork provides excellent habitat for Yellowstone cutthroat trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, and mountain whitefish. Cool water releases from Palisades Reservoir and the productive nature of eastern Idaho streams combine to support excellent growth rates for all trout species. The South Fork currently supports one of the last strongholds for Yellowstone cutthroat trout throughout their native range. These large cutthroat migrate between the main river and tributaries to spawn, and are what the South Fork is famous for. Recently, non-native rainbow trout have threatened the persistence of Yellowstone cutthroat trout in the South Fork, which has translated into more fishing opportunity for the angling public as limits on South Fork rainbow trout have been removed.

Boat anglers will find 10 as part developed access areas with boat ramps along the South Fork and at least two undeveloped boat access sites. There are also two developed campgrounds on the South Fork and



numerous dispersed camping sites. In the roadless part of the canyon section, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management has 13 undeveloped camp sites identified for boaters wishing to spend multiple days on the river, and the abundant public land along the South Fork further downstream provide dispersed camping opportunities.

The fishing season on the South Fork is open all year. Harvest of Yellowstone cutthroat trout is not allowed, but there is no limit on rainbow trout. Anglers may harvest two brown trout over 16 inches. With an excess of 2,000 trout per mile, and trout averaging nearly 14 inches, the South Fork Snake River supports a great fishery. Besides the excellent numbers and size of fish, the variety of opportunity and access for anglers of all types is truly what makes the South Fork special. Now add the amazing scenic qualities the South Fork offers and the wildlife that call the river home, and this makes for a great fishing experience no matter how you define it.

continued on 10

Panhandle

Continued from 9

Chinook salmon, lake trout, Kamloops

The growing kokanee population in Coeur d'Alene Lake bodes well for the Chinook fishery. Fish and Game resumed Chinook stocking in 2009, and the abundance of kokanee as prey fish means better Chinook growth. Already in 2010, a few Chinook approaching 20 pounds have been caught, which is exceptional for the spring fishery. Though Chinook densities are not high, anglers should see a fair number of fish in the 10- to 20-pound range this summer.

to increase, which is great news as we look forward to rebuilding the trophy Gerrard rainbow trout fishery.

The rainbow trout fishing was remarkably good in the fall of 2009. Catch rates were good, and anglers caught fish over 20 pounds, which hasn't happened for several years. Despite the encouraging improvements in kokanee survival, we still have a weak age-class of yearling kokanee. Until we have four healthy age-classes of kokanee, we are still encouraging anglers to harvest both rainbow and lake trout. Every lake trout and every rainbow trout more than 13 inches caught from Pend Oreille is worth \$15. (Details on how

to participate in the program can be found on the Fish and Game website <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov> on the "Fishing" page.)

Best bet for kids: It's not every kid who can handle hours of trolling the big lakes for big fish. The time between bites can try most kids' (and many adults') patience. Catch rates in Priest Lake can be good, either by jigging or trolling, though the average size of the catch is generally two to four pounds. Patience aside, hooking and fighting a 10- to 20-pound Chinook in Coeur d'Alene or rainbow trout in Pend Oreille could be a lifetime memory for a child.



Five fishing trailers travel Idaho, often stopping at neighborhood fishing ponds, equipped and staffed by Idaho Fish and Game. New anglers, especially youngsters, are encouraged to try fishing for the first time. Experienced anglers who might have fallen away and want to try fishing again are invited as well. There is no charge for the service. IDFG photo

There was a time when learning to fish was a rite of passage for every kid.

Now with all the competing interests, many families have lost touch with this simple and inexpensive pleasure. But reviving fishing skills has never been easier. Idaho Fish and Game has five new fish trailers stocked with gear and run by experts coming soon to a pond near you.

“The ultimate goal of this trailer is to get more people exposed to fishing, to start as a hobby or bring it back into their life,” said Brenda Beckley, Fish and Game Aquatic Education Coordinator.

Beckley calls fishing the “gateway

to the outdoors.” She said that, even when the fishing’s slow, kids will find things to do: wade, swim, skip rocks or watch wildlife.

“It just gets you there and the rest you discover on your own. The more kids and families go, the more accustomed to going outside they are. It becomes routine and fun.”

The trailer is stocked with rods, reels, tackle and bait. It even has magnetic lures for

teaching casting to kids. Some experts are available to get them started.

Susan Grady, a grandmother with a couple of little anglers along, said “We just sort of happened upon it. We drove up into the parking lot and saw the trailer. Then to have the people be so welcoming” it was just wonderful.”

For kids, especially little ones, fishing at an urban pond can seem like the great outdoors. It may be the first

step to bigger adventures. “With more experience fishing, people might want to start venturing out of town. That’s when we’ve done our job,” Beckley said.

But for Beckley it is more than just a job. “I want kids to have what I had. I got to do those things and my kids get to do those things. A lot of people want to take their kids out and this is a step. This is the step, this is how you do it,” Beckley said.

The schedule for the five fish trailers can be found on the Idaho Fish and Game website <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov> in the fishing section and watch for local announcements.

It may be the first step to bigger adventures

Upper Snake

continued from 10

Aside from world famous rivers like the Henrys Fork and South Fork, the Upper Snake Region offers a multitude of angling opportunities. Henrys Lake is known as one of the best stillwater trout fisheries in the United States for anglers looking to catch trout measured in pounds rather than inches. Island Park, Palisades, Mackay, and Ririe Reservoirs provide opportunities for a variety of species such as rainbow trout, brown trout,

Yellowstone cutthroat trout, kokanee salmon, yellow perch, and smallmouth bass. Smaller rivers such as the Big Lost, Little Lost, Fall, and Warm Rivers can provide anglers with an excellent fishing experience away from the crowds found on more famous waters. The Upper Snake Region also is home to nearly 50 alpine lakes and several family-friendly fishing ponds. For additional information on specific angling opportunities in the Upper Snake, call the regional office at 208-525-7290.



Nice catch is shown off by a young angler in southeast Idaho where a fishing trailer visited a local fishing hold last summer. IDFG photo



Citizens Against Poaching
To report wildlife violations in Idaho telephone:
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Aquatic Education

It's spring and students everywhere are restless, making it a challenge for teachers to hold their attention. Yet, sixth-graders at Kimberly Middle School are excited about science class. The main attraction is "Trout in the Classroom."

Trout in the Classroom is an Idaho Fish and Game program that gives students and teachers the opportunity to raise trout in a classroom aquarium. The trout arrive in the classroom as tiny eggs and, over the course of several months, develop into 1- to 2-inch fry. The students will release the fish in nearby waters. Many classes also go fishing—introducing kids to yet another system, a fish's habitat.

Sixth grade Science teacher Aaron Bryer said, "They learn a ton of stuff about life, about their life and the fish's life and the environment. The kids get so excited about it. It's so much more real. Not something they have to read about to learn about it, it's right in their face and they have to deal with it."

Students learn about healthy aquatic ecosystems, including the role of fish in nature and the importance of clean water systems. Participating teachers are provided with introductory workshops and the Trout in the Classroom curriculum. The cur-



"Trout in the Classroom" introduces students to practical biology and concepts of habitat. The program is offered by Idaho Fish and Game through its aquatic education program and has proven so popular in Idaho schools that joining the

IDFG photo

riculum is correlated with Idaho State Education Standards.

This program is open to Idaho classes in grades 4 through 12. How

can your school be involved? Complete the Trout in the Classroom application online at <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>. Please note that this

program is extremely popular and typically has a waiting list to add new schools.

Salmon

Streams and Lakes Should Be Productive This Summer

By Tom Curet
Salmon Region Fishery Manager

Lemhi and Pahsimeroi rivers: Snowpack for both these watersheds was well below normal so fishing conditions looked good for early fishing until late spring moisture rised and muddied streams. After streams clear, fishing should be productive.

Rainbow trout populations in both the Pahsimeroi and Lemhi rivers are still rebounding from earlier declines resulting from drought conditions. Fish and fishing will be most active early in the season when cooler water temperatures prevail. Later in the summer as water temperatures get progressively warmer, fish and fishing will be most active early in the morning when water temperatures are coolest. Remember that both of these rivers run through largely private lands and most fishing locations require permission for access. Consult your fishing rules book prior to fishing the Lemhi or Pahsimeroi as size and species restrictions apply.

Williams Lake

Fishing in Williams Lake should be good until temperatures increase late in the summer. Excellent quality rainbows in the 12- to 15-inch range should be readily caught. Float tubes and boats provide anglers access

throughout the lake and are recommended but not necessary. Good bank angling and easy angler access can be found on the northwest portions of the lake near the public boat dock.

Middle Fork Salmon River and tributaries

The upper and mid portions of the Middle Fork and tributaries should provide good to excellent catch and release fishing for 10- to 14-inch cutthroat trout and smaller rainbow trout. Spring rains can make the river difficult to fish on Memorial Day weekend season opener, but with the current low snowpack there may be little disruption in fishing conditions. Anglers venturing into the Middle Fork must be properly prepared as the country is rugged, remote, and unforgiving.

Upper Salmon River – Salmon Upstream to Headwaters

River fishing conditions should be ideal during the late spring and early summer. Decent to good catch-and-release fishing for cutthroat and wild rainbows can be found on the mainstem Salmon River from the Pahsimeroi River to East Fork Salmon River stretch. Fishing in this reach remains ideal until water temperatures warm later in the summer. Upriver towards Stanley Basin, adipose clipped hatchery rainbow trout support good

fishing in the deeper pools and runs along Highway 75. Be aware that the only legal trout (other than brook trout) that can be kept along the entire length of the main-stem Salmon River are hatchery raised adipose fin clipped rainbow trout. Stocking in this reach will begin once spring runoff subsides.

This year it is likely that a Chinook salmon fishery may open on the mainstem Salmon River from the City of Salmon to the mouth of the Pahsimeroi River at Ellis. It is unlikely there will be a fishery upstream of Ellis due to small returns destined for Sawtooth Hatchery. If a Chinook salmon fishery is offered upstream of the Pahsimeroi River, likely it will be brief with conservative bag limits. If preseason predictions are accurate, 9,000 excess hatchery Chinook salmon destined for Pahsimeroi Hatchery are expected to arrive in the upper river beginning in late June or early July.

Jimmy Smith, Herd, and Carlson lakes

Some hiking is required to access all of these lakes in the East Fork Salmon River drainage, but anglers typically can be rewarded with good catch rates and exciting fishing. Anglers should take proper hiking equipment and carry water and lunches. These lakes are good choices in the spring and early summer when river and stream

fishing conditions can be poor due to muddy runoff conditions.

Bayhorse, Iron, Meadow, and Wallace lakes

These lakes will likely be inaccessible because of snow and road conditions early in the season. However in mid-to late June these lakes are excellent choices for weekend excursions. These lakes are stocked throughout the summer to provide angler opportunity.

Stream Fishing – Regionwide

Stream fishing offers a variety of opportunities throughout the region. Many streams in the Salmon Region, excluding the Middle Fork Salmon River, offer great fishing and harvest opportunity for rainbow trout, cutthroat, and brook trout (see separate fishing opportunity for the Middle Fork above).

There are hundreds of miles of fishing opportunities to be found on creeks in the Lemhi, Pahsimeroi, East Fork Salmon River, Yankee Fork, and upper Salmon River country. Fishing conditions will improve throughout the summer and should be excellent throughout the summer and fall months. The upper portions of the mainstem Salmon River upstream of Sawtooth City offer excellent fishing for brook trout.

Blast from the Past

*By Mick Hoover, Mackay Hatchery
Sharon Clark, HQ Fisheries*

Woman May Be Game Warden

Warden Barber Considering Proposal to Give Woman a Place.

“State Game Warden O.H. Barber is seriously considering a proposition to appoint a woman as a deputy game warden in the vicinity of Island Park, where it has been reported many sportswomen of Idaho have been violating the fish and game laws. During last summer there were many reports brought to the department that women campers and hunters had exceeded the game limit and had used seines to catch fish.”

“It is thought by the warden if he had a woman on the job in that section of the state she could learn whether or not women had bagged more deer than the law allows or whether they had secured the great strings of fish, which they exhibit in pictures by unlawful means. There has also been many complaints that women from outside the state have been securing resident hunting and fishing licenses.”

“Warden Barber intends to break up the practice of permitting women to break the game laws while the men who do so are punished. A man deputy game warden is at a disadvantage in quizzing women as to their game bags and fish catches, and it has been figured out better protection could be secured by the appointment of a woman who would not be affected by tears of a female game law violator.”

Idaho Statesman, March 9, 1913

Woman Deputy Game Warden

“Mrs. Mabel Avery is the first woman to be appointed deputy game warden in the state. She is now wearing that star in connection with her badge of police woman.”

Idaho Statesman, July 12, 1913

Dynamite Explosion: A Fatal Ending to a North Idaho Fishing Trip.

A special from Kendrick to the Spokane Spokesman-Review says: “Brief information reached here today of a fatal explosion of dynamite on the Clearwater River near Snell’s mill. Henry James and two other men had gone out in a small boat to kill fish with explosives. They had five sticks of dynamite. One had been exploded successfully and James was holding a second, lighted and ready to cast into the water. He became excited over the appearance of some large fish, and forgot to throw the dynamite, and it exploded in his hand. The shock at the same time exploded the three other sticks of dynamite lying in the bottom of the boat. The explosion shattered the boat and threw the three men into the rapid river. A raft was coming down the stream at the time and the two other men were rescued. James came to the surface about eight feet from the raft, but before he could be rescued he sank. A portion of his hand was found afterward. It is believed his arm was blown to pieces. One of the rescued men is supposed to be fatally injured, and the third man is badly hurt.”

Idaho Statesman, April 8, 1898

Blaine County Court, August 5, 1909

Complaint: “J.C. Mc Nichols, Deputy Game Warden, Blaine County, vs. John Doe, Richard Roe, Mike Hoe, and Jonathan Moe, Blaine County or near the Cottonwood Dam, did commit the crime of a misdemeanor, as follows, to-wit: That the said John Doe, Richard Roe, Mike Hoe, and Jonathan Moe, at the time and place aforesaid, did willfully and unlawfully kill fish, to-wit; trout, by the use of an explosive substance, to-wit; powder, and did explode or cause to be exploded such powder, for such purpose.”



Mabel Avery

