



The Almanor Fisherman

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION

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Already this year, fish we caught have just been thicker than you would expect coming out of winter, another indicator that there's no "winter smelt" shortage here. Healthy, as they should be, feeding on smelt all winter, and then for months on aquatic insect hatches. Thick strong fish are fish that fight, and by September they look like they have been at the gym and doing PEDs.

With the spring season underway, and throughout summer and fall, that's the time more big fish are caught here. Spring and summer aquatic insect hatches have provided the required protein. Protein that converts to energy quickly, making fights much more energetic and fun. By mid-summer the majority of insect reproduction events have wrapped up, and smelt are now rotated back to the top of the fish food menu.

2012 smelt fry hatches had another huge successful season. The largest amount of bait fish I have ever seen over the course of a single season! Fish we checked were packed with them. Birds are picking off the floaters, as we troll by, collateral damage from feeding attacks below.

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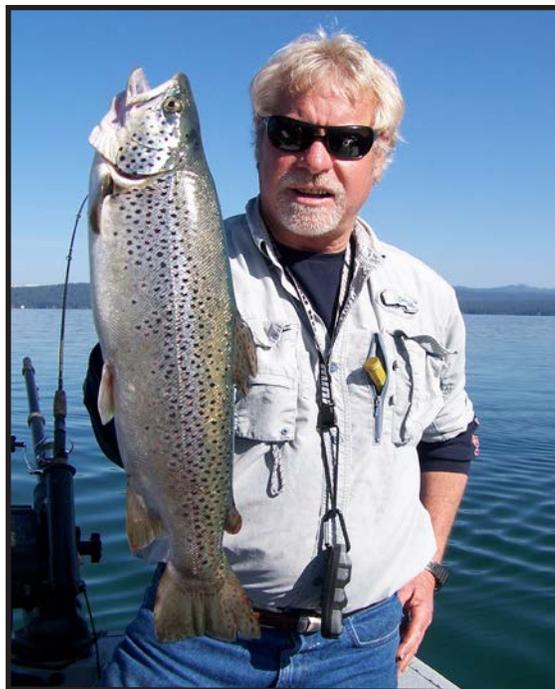
Fishing Lake Almanor

By Doug Neal

Lakeside and another cool mountain morning, man the vibe is good! Just twenty feet away a fish rises slowly, revealing large shoulders, "Oh he's big" I hear myself saying in a low voice, to nobody. Then another rise. Visions of eye candy, forever burning the image into the very fabric of our memories. The peace and quiet is like a tranquilized moment of time stopped. Welcome to Lake Almanor, my name is Doug Neal, local resident and fishing guide.

Fishing pressure around the lake is always light during the late winter months. As surface temps begin to slowly climb, the "Big Bite" ramp up is just moving into the starting blocks.

While the Almanor winter bite is good, it really takes off in spring, and through summer, peaking in fall. It starts this spring. The fish get active and the bite holds strong during the early morning. It becomes more evident as larger, quality fish now begin to show more often.



The Trolling Bite:

By mid summer, downriggers and lead core rigs are necessary to get baits down deeper. Surface temps will still be warm enough to keep fish down, lead core can be effective till the sun gets high, after that the bite is at 35 to 45 ft. deep, or about 12 ft. off the bottom. Deeper the fish, the darker the water. Attractors are often employed. Dodgers or flashers help bring fish over for a lookie loo and then, Ka-Pow!

Last year we ran the Seps "Strike Master Dodger" in Charreuse, with a threaded 1/2 crawler, 14" back, on a #6 hook, with eyebrow raising success.

Fast action trolling lures like Needlefish, Speedy Shiners, Pin minnows, Strike Pros, Rapalas, all make terrific smelt patterns, and most of us have these proven lures in our arsenal anyway.



The Jig Bite:

They appear to be fearless. As 2 to 5 lb. browns chase jigs right to the boat, before flaring back to the darkness. When that happens, its just a matter of time before you're setting the hook.

I have had a 6 lb. brown take it right at the boat, actually crashing into the boat with only about a couple feet of line left out. Browns like crushing jigs, they are the baddest predators in this lake, and smaller fish move out when these big guys move in. Most times when they hit jigs they're just feeding, but later in September, during the spawn, the hits will be more territorial aggression hits. This is the time when brown pre-spawn activity begins and deeper areas below are patrolled by the largest males staking claims to nesting hens.

Jigging techniques differ, from vertical jigging right under the boat, or casting them way out and allowing it to sink to the bottom, then working them back quickly with a double pumping action...that's when you will sometimes see browns chasing your stuff... big dark shadows following that jig. That double pump action is intended to look like the evasive maneuvers of a panicked baitfish that has been separated away from the safety of the others, darting around scared, it's an easy and exciting stimulating target for a big lazy browns to pick up.

Some of the best jigging areas are also some of the best bait fishing areas, making spots like these double productive. Big Springs, The A-Frame, Spar Buoy, the Snag and the mouth of The Hamilton Branch are all productive bait fishing spots that can be jigged, and can be found on fishing maps sold in the local shops. We often get a couple baits set ups going just off the bottom, and start jigging just before the sun hits the water. Browns rolling in the top water is a no-brainer; they are chasing small groups of bait fish right to the surface. A good jigging bite can go on all morning and into the afternoon. Chartreuse, white and yellow jigs are excellent colors that hold their true color value in deeper, darker water.

The Bait Bite:

The more casual but effective approach is bait fishing on anchor. Just a hook, line and sinker. That's right, basic fundamental 101 fishing. Often this application is the most consistent method to catching large fall trout and salmon. I troll and bait fish equal amounts of time all year, and the biggest fish have come off a variety of different baits suspended off the bottom.

Rainbows and browns will take crickets and mealworm this time of year, and baits should be about 6 to 10 ft. up off the bottom. Bait scents added to your offering will help fish find the hook. It's always going to be darker down that deep, and fish may not even see it as they come through. With a scent on it, that works like an invisible balloon of aroma with your bait sitting center. As fish pass thru, they taste it through their gills and slow down for what I call a "Look and a Hook." Pro-Cure bait scents work best and I have tried them all. Trophy Trout Super Gel scent and Garlic plus work best on meal worm/cricket combos and crawlers.

Targeting salmon? Anchovy tail fillets and a #8 baitholder. You need to add the Super Herring Gel, or the Bloody Tuna Scent to the meat side of the fillet. Use a small brush as a applicator to make sure your scent adheres to the baits that you're sending down. Fact is, a # 8 Gamakatsu baitholder is the only hook I use all season when bait fishing on anchor. Crickets, anchovy, mealworms and crawlers all fit on this size hook. If the crickets are small, we will go to a #10, but not too often.

If you're looking to improve your fishing, increase your catch rate or just want to learn the lake, call me and book a trip. It's a good way to start your vacation. Guided trips are like floating seminars. I show you the spots and methods used to catch more fish.

Come up and fish! Check out the "Almanor Fishing Report and Lake Status" at www.almanorfishingadventures.com.

Doug Neal, Almanor Fishing Adventures
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Almanor Fishing Adventures

 Guide Service
www.almanorfishingadventures.com



ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION

The Almanor Fishing Association is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the Lake Almanor Basin Sport Fishing. We encourage the practice of true sportsmanship, the enjoyment of the sport of fishing and the responsible use and management of our natural resources. Take the number of fish you need for yourself but please don't take in excess of your need or legal limit.

It it concerns fishing -- we're concerned!



New Members Welcome
 Please help support the Almanor Fishing Association. Thank you!

ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION
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Successfully Trolling Lake Almanor

By Bob Kopernik

Although this is only my second year of providing Fishing Guide services on Lake Almanor, I have been fishing the lake since the late 70's. In 2006, we took a seasonal space on the west shore in Plumas Pines Resort and I have been fishing five or six days a week from early May until mid September ever since. Last year, the hour meter on my trolling motor registered 320 hours for the 2012 fishing season. When you spend that much time on the water, you not only develop a network of resource information with other serious fishermen, but you learn what works and what doesn't. I'll try to share some of what I believe are some useful tips to help newcomers or others who struggle to consistently put a few quality fish in the box.

The Lake

Before Great Western Power put the dam in (1927), this area was developed into dairy farms and called "Big Springs/Big Meadows." The main sources of water are the north fork of the Feather River, Hamilton Branch, Benner and Last Chance creeks. Depending on whether it is a wet or dry winter there are lots of lesser creeks and springs that also provide water to the reservoir. When full, the lake offers 44 square miles of water with more than 52 miles of shoreline. The deepest river channel is about 90 feet off the face of the dam. The water clarity is very good and in mid July the visibility seems to be about 15 feet on an average year. As you would think, these "big meadows" offer large expanses of nearly flat bottom pastures with small creek beds meandering about, but there are lots of other areas with underwater features that attract and hold fish - lots of quality fish.

Everything Works - Nothing Works

Every boat and all fishing tackle fish differently so what works for you may not work for me, and I think no one individual has all the answers all the time. So, every day that I go out on the water, I hope to learn something that will help me catch bigger fish more frequently.

Be Prepared

Treat every minute that you have on the water as precious. Have your boat, motor(s) and tackle in tip top shape and ready to fish. Do some homework by checking recent fishing reports or talking with other successful fishermen. Have a pre-conceived plan of where you will start, what bait(s) you think will work and what depth you will start out fishing. If after 20 or 30 minutes you are not getting any hits, do something different! Always keep in mind that if your bait isn't in the water, you can't catch fish. Another thing that I can't stress enough is that before I bait up a rod, I check the first 3 or 4 feet of the main line for knot strength and any nicks or scrapes that may allow that "trophy fish" to break off. The same thing goes for the leaders; I check them every time I re-bait the hook.

Electronics

The first "fish finder" I owned was a Heath Kit flasher unit that a fishing buddy and I put together on our kitchen table in the late 60's. On our first trip out it became evident that this new technology was a real game changer. Over the past five decades this technology has evolved and without question improved the chances of catching fish. That is if you take the time to learn how to use it and know what to do with the information that it provides. A couple of years ago, my aging unit died and I researched and purchased what I thought would suit my needs best. I ended up buying a Hummingbird Model 889SI. This model has side imaging and more importantly the Navionics lake maps. Now I can actually "see" why over the years certain areas have produced fish for me. I'll go on record to say that I think the most important fishing equipment you can invest in is your electronics.

Where to Fish

Even as a new comer to the lake, it is easy to see where the "hot spots" are. Just look for four or five boats working a given area. Big Spring, Hamilton Branch, the East Shore of the Peninsula, Almanor West, etc. These are all good places, but I try to avoid them for two reasons. First, I don't like the congestion and second is my logic tells me that because of the constant pressure the population of bigger fish has been diminished. My preference is to find remote underwater weed beds or bottom structure that attracts and holds fish. Over the last seven years I have come to the conclusion that schools of big fish (especially salmon) move from day to day and my hot spots from yesterday or last year too often are not producing fish right now.





These memories will last a lifetime!
06/26/12

How to Fish

Almost exclusively, I troll using down riggers. For years I thought that still or bait fishing produced bigger fish, but having won the largest trout category in the last two lake tournaments has changed my mind. Having down riggers allows me to present my bait offering at any depth I want with precision accuracy. Without question, my most productive fish catching depth is 25 to 35 feet or 10 feet off the bottom, early May through mid-September. I always have at least one rod rigged with a half a threaded night crawler trolled at 1.7 mph behind some trolling blades. My second choice would probably be to change out the night crawler for a #2 needle fish lure. Two years ago the Brown Trout color pattern worked exceptionally well-last year it didn't. The most important thing to remember is that if what you are doing isn't producing- do something different!

A quick note: Because I offer a "Catch and Release" fishing option, I tried using barbless hooks for two solid weeks last year. I well remember when DFG imposed barbless hooks when trolling for salmon in the ocean. Everybody whined and complained at first, but after five years it caused everyone to sharpen their skills and the catch rate (for me at least) really didn't change. These lake fish are a lot different and I have to confess that I never boated one quality fish in my two week experiment of using barbless hooks!

Some final thoughts

There are two different reasons to hire a professional fishing guide service. The first is just to get out on the water and catch some fish without a big capital investment and/or a lot of effort. The second reason is to learn how, where and which fishing techniques work best on a particular body of water.

Like many of you, my wife and I worked all of our lives and raised a couple of great kids. Our vacation time and discretionary cash was spent prudently. Most all of our vacations ended up on or near water for family fishing fun

and although I sometimes thought that learning the local fishing techniques from a fishing guide would really be beneficial, I/we never made it a reality. Regardless of how many fish (if any) a guide can help you catch, the more important and rewarding outcome will be what you can learn. When you actually consider how much time and money every professional guide has invested in equipment and learning what works and more importantly what doesn't, the cost of a half day guided trip is truly a bargain. There are 6 or 7 guides who list with this AFA publication at http://almanorfishingassociation.com/lake_guides.html, give one of them a try. It just might be the best investment that you can make to improve your success and enjoyment of the sport. There is nothing more satisfying to me than to get a phone call from a client who is having fantastic success applying the techniques that he/she learned while fishing with me here at beautiful Lake Almanor.

THINK BIG FISH!

Bob Kopernik
Lucky Grady Fishing Guide Service
(408) 515-1503



Alex is one happy fisherman with his 5.5 # Brown Trout! 06/27/12

Bob Kopernik

408-515-1503

Luckygrady1@att.net

Lucky Grady

Fishing Guide Service

Specializing in trolling Lake Almanor

Fish For a Wish

By A.J. Casella

As the founder and executive director of Fish For A Wish, an annual fishing tournament held on the first Saturday of every August, I'd love to share a story of a wish that was granted at last year's Fish For A Wish tournament. This story highlights a four-year-old boy's passion for fishing and shows the true power that a wish has on a child suffering from a life threatening illness.

When you go to Kyle's house, it's immediately clear where his interests lie. His walls and bed are decorated with fish, sharks and whales, and he shares his home with four fish tanks. When asked what he wished for, it didn't take long to decide on fishing. Said Kyle, "I want to go fishing on a small or big river or lake to catch a huge fish, shark or flounder, and fly fish! "If you're asked to dream, you might as well dream big, right?"



Catching a single fish in a vast lake is emblematic for a boy whose hope of surviving his aplastic anemia, a condition that prevents his body from regenerating blood cells, depends on finding a one-in-40-million bone marrow match. Kyle is half Caucasian and half Chinese, and so his donor must be the same. Because of his parents' heroic efforts to attract potential bone marrow donors of mixed ethnicity, over 2,500 people have registered as donors so far, and thankfully, two have been deemed a match. For now, the immune suppression treatment he's been undergoing and medicine he's been taking means that Kyle has been able to hold off on the bone marrow transplant, and has more energy.

And energy was what Kyle had on August 3rd when he stood by the shore of a private lake stocked late the night

before with fish, junior sized fishing rod in hand, waiting to finally land his elusive prey. But after an interminable fifteen minutes without a bite, the property owner realized that the smaller sized rod couldn't cast far enough out into the lake to reach the fish. So the Make-A-Wish team presented Kyle with his own bigger-sized customized rod and that made all the difference—his first cast landed in the middle of the fish and the bobber went crazy! Kyle began reeling in his catch and "squealing with joy" according to Make-A-Wish executive director, Patricia Wilson, who was there to witness it all. As the assembled adults took photos of Kyle with his prize, Kyle's mom, Angela, buried her head in her hands, sobbing tears of joy. The rest of the adults couldn't help but do the same; meanwhile Kyle kept on fishing, yelling "net!" as he reeled in one after another fish.

Kyle's luck continued the next day when he collected third prize in the junior fisherman category at the Fish For A Wish tournament which was being held nearby. Promoters of the benefit (the same people who took Kyle fishing the day before) made Kyle their guest of honor. According to Kyle's dad, David, instead of thinking of his illness that night, he slept with his fishing trophy!

Fish For A Wish Update

Fish For A Wish has now granted over 25 wishes just like Kyle's and has raised more than \$350,000 in the last eight years thanks to the help of all of our generous donors, sponsors, and participants. Kyle, along with the other wishes that I've had the pleasure of sponsoring, act as a reminder of how powerful a wish can be and continue to drive my passion for the Make-A-Wish foundation.

This year's Fish For A Wish tournament is currently scheduled for Saturday, August 3rd at Big Cove Resort. Cash prizes will be awarded to the team that catches the largest bag limit of three trout or salmon, with additional cash prizes for the biggest fish caught. The tournament will begin at 6:00 a.m. and will conclude at noon with a weigh-in, lunch and raffle.

Entry forms and tournament rules will be available at Big Cove Resort starting on June 1st. For more information, entry forms, donation forms or updates, please phone us at (530) 596-3349 or visit our website at www.fishforawish.com. You can also contact me at ajcasella@gamil.com. In closing, remember to follow Fish For A Wish on Facebook and Twitter at #fish4awish.

Thank you for your past support in previous tournaments and we look forward to seeing you in August!



~ Smallmouth ~ ~ Rainbows ~ ~ Browns ~

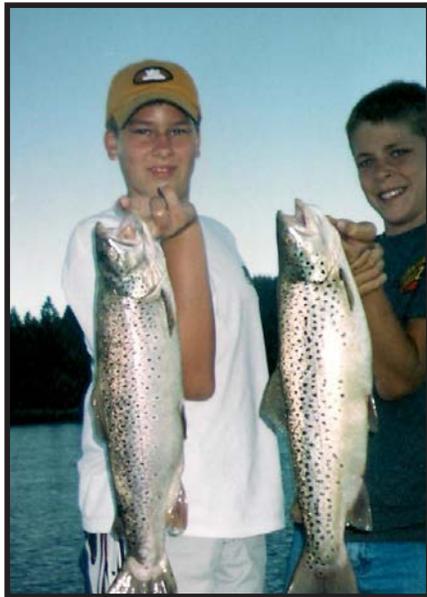
Rick's Guide Service

~ Light Tackle Fishing ~
Lake Almanor

Cell: 530-394-7170 rtadder@yahoo.com Home: 530-284-6005



Steve with one of many nice smallmouth bass he caught with Rick's Guide Service



Two proud young men with fish they caught while fishing with Rick's Guide Service

Services on Lake Almanor

West Shore of Lake

Plumas Pines Resort (530) 259-4343

Marina, Gas, Boat & Jet Ski Rentals. Store with Tackle, Bait and other Food and Beverage items. Lakeside at The Pines – serving Lunch, Dinner. Courtesy dock available as well.

Camp Prattville

Cabins, R.V. Sites, Marina. Store with Tackle, Bait and other food and beverage items. Carol's Cafe and West Shore Deli serving Breakfast & Lunch daily and Dinner on Sunday. Take-out available. Courtesy dock available.

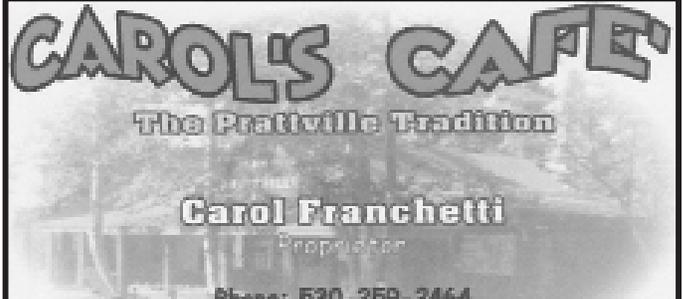
North Cove - East Side of Lake

Big Cove Resort (530) 596-3349

R.V. Sites, Marina, Mid Grade Gasoline & Propane. Store with Bait & Tackle, Clothing, Snacks, Cold Beer, Soda and Ice. Boat Rentals-Pontoon Boats, Fishing Boats, and Water-bikes. Boat launch facilities and courtesy slip as well.

Knotty Pine Resort (530) 596-3348

Cabins, Guest House, Marina with Snack Bar, Cold Beer, Soda, Gas, Bait, Tackle, Boat Rentals - Pontoon Boats, Paddleboats, SeaDoo's and other water toys.

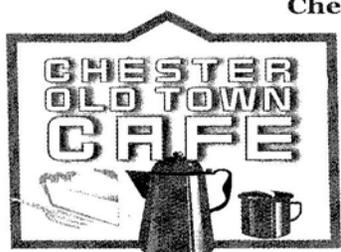


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Almanor - The Good Old Days

By Roger Keeling

My first trip to Lake Almanor was approximately 1967 when a friend and I rented an old fiber glass boat from Plumas Pines Resort. We trolled the west shore and I caught two large rainbows. There were no houses at that time on Almanor West, and after moving to Chester in 1969 we often launched our boats off the west shore line approximately where the recreation area is now. It was rare to see a water skier and Almanor did not have the publicity that it has now days. It was once considered off the beaten path and little did we know, it would become as popular as it is today.

One of the more popular fishing areas was near the old Chester boat landing which became a KOA campground. It is now North Shore Campground. The north fork of the Feather River channel was directly across from the campground and provided easy access to the fishing area. There was a long deep channel extending into the lake for approximately one mile that provided a smorgasbord of fishing opportunities including bait fishing, fly fishing and trolling. The food supply was ample in the area – insect hatches, water boatman, snails and seasonal terrestrials. Pond smelt, a type of forage fish, were not present in the lake at that time. Before the introduction of pond smelt, it was not unusual to find large planted trout in the stomachs of mainly large brown trout. We still occasionally do but it seems they are content with the available food source.

High tech fish finders weren't available then and really weren't needed to fish the area. We rarely fished in water over ten feet deep and many that fished used long poles to feel for a hard bottom and gravel which indicated they were over the old stream bed. The amount of fish working through the area mornings and evenings was phenomenal and this was a favorite fly fishing spot for locals and visitors. This area has since silted in and only provides limited opportunities today. I personally haven't fished it in years, preferring the Bailey Springs area instead.

When I first moved to Chester, we lived on the edge of the meadow near the old Catholic church and we had a beautiful view of the west end of Lake Almanor. Many of us fished for catfish at night on catfish beach or the old "gould swamp" area and you could see sometimes 15 to 20 lanterns or campfires on a spring night. Access to this area is now blocked off.

I started guiding in 1972 and the fishing was so good on the west end that I rarely fished anywhere else. Most of our trips we limited so quickly fishing the old Feather River channel that the sun hadn't come up over the hill we now call Johnson Grade so we would sometimes run over to

Bailey Springs and try for bass. The bass fishing was just taking off about that time and it was rare to see many people fishing for them. About the only bass boats I can remember were the "Mon-Ark" and "Ouachita" but many of us started installing electric motors and giving more attention to the bass fishing.

Fish finders were mainly the old revolving sonars and the one I used was the Lowrance green box manufactured by Lowrance in Oklahoma. Even after more high tech models came out, I still preferred this fish finder on the bow of my boat for bass fishing and jig fishing. I once guided Fred Lowrance on Lake Almanor when he was visiting a friend who lived in Chester.

I've seen many changes in the cold water fishery on Almanor over the years but my personal feelings are that the brown trout and rainbows should be the main focus. Almanor has sometimes been used as a dumping ground for surplus king salmon and at one time in the 90's, over a million and a quarter were planted in three years. It was hard to get your lure or bait past these little runts and I personally believe they stressed the food base. The salmon seem to do better when planted in moderation. They are fun to catch but the eating quality is poor as they are soft and oily tasting. I don't keep any for personal use and I warn my clients about this.

At one time, Almanor had a thriving kokanee "land locked sockeye" fishery and also co-ho or "silver salmon," but this was before the introduction of pond smelt which is the primary bait fish today. Almanor has a very diverse food base and even though the smelt are cyclic, the fish seem to adapt very well to whatever is available.

The water quality is very good for a lake that receives so much recreation traffic due to the constant flushing from the inflow and outflow. One thing I would like to mention is the need for respect for each other no matter how we are enjoying this great resource – whether fishing or participating in different water sports.

A few years ago, I moved to Red Bluff on the bank of the Sacramento River where I guide for fall and late fall run salmon, and I also fish Shasta Lake all winter for trout and bass. It's nice to take a break from the sometimes harsh winters at Almanor and take advantage of the warmer weather only 70 miles away. For some reason, I don't miss shoveling snow even a little bit after 40 years of dealing with it.

I now return to the Almanor area around late April and stay until the salmon run on the Sacramento River in September. I sometimes return to Almanor for the great late fall fishing.

The 2012 salmon run on the Sacramento River was the best in years and almost all trips produced limits. The weather also cooperated and no trips were cancelled.

The forecast for the 2013 fall run is even better and up to 850,000 salmon are expected to return with more four-year salmon which are larger fish. If you are interested, book early for best dates!

My salmon charters are limited to two people per trip and my policy is to stay away from heavily congested fishing areas so you can enjoy the experience. The area I fish is from Battle Creek to an area below China Rapids called Iron Canyon. Wildlife is abundant and this section of river above Red Bluff is considered hardpan and the river below Red Bluff is flood plain. The difference is the section I fish is narrower with more rock canyon rims and more picturesque.

Roger's Guide Service specializes in fishing Lake Almanor, Butt Valley Reservoir, Eagle Lake, Antelope Lake, Sacramento River, and Shasta Lake. The number one guide service for custom family trips. We go where the fishing is best. All equipment is furnished and fish are cleaned and packaged on board.

Lake fishing is from a wide and stable 21' Alumaweld vee sled. Sacramento River salmon trips are limited to charters of two people and we fish from a North River Scout jet boat. This is a very roomy walk-around boat.

Let more than 41 years of guide experience work for you! Children are always welcome and the techniques I use for lake fishing requires no special skill so relax and have fun. Just bring lunch or snacks and personal items such as cameras and sunglasses.

Happy Fishing,
Roger Keeling, Roger's Guide Service

Year round phone: (530) 528-0525
Almanor Area May 1 – November 1: (530) 284-6429
California Fish & Game Guide License #079



Roger Keeling with a typical Lake Almanor brown caught and released on the east shore near Dorado Inn



Mike Semas from Martinez, CA with rainbows and small mouth bass caught around the Bailey Creek area

The Sports Nut
Lowell & Kathy Blake

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2012 - A Year of Ups and Downs

By Richard R. Mason, Dick's Guide Service

My wife and I spend the winter months, January, February and March, at Shasta Lake. It gets us out of the snow and breaks up the winter for us. I do a little guiding at this time, but not much. It's kind of a vacation. I have friends and family come and fish, and it is a time to kick back and enjoy fishing without the pressure of making a big catch every day.

I got back to Almanor in early April. I had some good trips trolling for browns in shallow water, 10 to 12 feet in stumpy areas. Clown colored rapalas, fast troll works for me. About the middle of April I got a call from a good friend, Ron Rodrick. Ron said he had a good salmon bite and invited me to fish with him. When Ron calls, I listen. The day I fished with him, we had limits by 10 a.m. This bite lasted almost a month, with real nice fish. And they averaged 19 to 22 inches.



Craig and Eric Sharp fishing with Dicks's Guide Service - a good salmon bite in April 2012

When the salmon bite slowed down, I started trolling the north shore flats in May and early June. It was easy fishing with lots of limits. But, all good things come to an end. As the water warmed and the fish were moving to deeper water, I kind of lost track of the bite. Then I started running all of my trips on Eagle Lake.

I really prefer to fish Almanor, as you have a better chance of catching bigger fish. But, Eagle Lake has two things going for it in the summer months. The biggest plus is no water skiers. The second is the fish are easier to catch. As the fish on Almanor settled into their summer deep water pattern, I started to make some good catches on the east shore of the peninsula, trolling 35 to 40 feet deep.

This was all the up-side of 2012. Then came the down side, the "smoke." No one wanted to fish Almanor in the smoke.

It seemed to last forever. People on the west shore were getting nervous with good cause. I was really concerned about Butt Lake as all the reports sounded so bad. I do a lot of trips on Butt Lake when there is a wind forecast. It kind of sets down in a hole and doesn't get quite as rough as Almanor. I can just about always salvage a trip when Almanor gets too rough to fish or the bite on Almanor gets a little cranky.

If I could pick a month to troll on Almanor, it would be October when you get that perfect fall day and the lake stays flat all day, and there are fish dimpling everywhere. As I am trolling, I cast a small smelt invitation, to the dimples with an ultra-light spinning rod. The fish we catch this way are just the icing on the cake. When you are on the lake, and everything is just perfect, the fish are biting, and the weather is perfect, it just makes you think there isn't any place else in the world you would rather be.

The smoke finally cleared and I was able to fish Butt Lake after they opened the area to the public. I held my breath as I approached the lake, fearing the worst, but it wasn't as bad as I had anticipated. It wasn't good but it could have been worse. I had several good trips on Butt Lake in October. I feel lucky that it didn't end up like Antelope Lake, where the fires have just devastated the area around the lake.

More down side last year. In November and December of 2011, I had the best vertical jig bite that I've had in years. It was pretty close to as good as it gets. I had people lined up to fish the 2012 jig bite. I could hardly wait, but it didn't happen. I caught a few, but it wasn't good enough to book trips. Fishing changes every year. I guess that's what makes it so challenging.

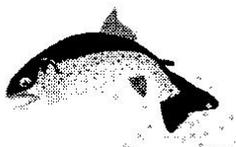


Peter Righero - We got these fish jigging smelt imitation in 40 feet of water in November 2012

Every year I get calls from people that would like to catch a big brown trout. I catch a lot of browns every year, but I don't target them and they just come when they come. I get more rainbows than browns. I refer these people to Rick's Guide Service, phone 530-284-6005. Rick runs his trips in July and August. He starts at 4 p.m. and fishes until dark. If you want to have a good chance of catching a big brown, I don't think you can go wrong by giving Rick a call.

So, in closing, 2012 had its ups and downs, but you always remember the ups and that's the way it should be.

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Not Wanted Quagga and Zebra Mussels

By James Ray, Sierra Institute



Zebra and Quagga mussels remain a concern to Lake Almanor and other lakes within the region. This is why it's never too early to start spreading the word about these aquatic invaders and ways that we can help prevent them from infiltrating the waters we enjoy.

The discovery of Quagga mussels in the Lahontan Reservoir in 2011 and the establishment of Zebra mussels in San Benito County in 2008 help to emphasize that we must be diligent in the inspection of our watercraft and communicating the threat of these mussels to others so that we are able to prevent the spread of these aquatic hitchhikers.

Even though water samples from Lake Almanor have been classified as "Low Risk", there is still much to learn about the habitat requirements of Zebra and Quagga mussels. This fact will only become more evident with a changing climate, which is predicted to continue increasing the temperature of Lake Almanor, fostering a more favorable environment for Zebra and Quagga mussels.

Now is the time to conduct activities that will halt their spread into waters that form the heart of our community. If the community can be effective through proactive measures, we will prevent more intrusive actions, such as ordinances, from being necessary.

We propose a three-pronged approach: understanding boater behavior, creating more visibility of the issue, and adding more monitoring. Most of these activities will begin in May and we hope to engage the community in these efforts.

To do so, we hope to speak directly to community groups and homeowners associations and solicit input on our plans. We are currently setting up presentations in preparation for this summer around Lake Almanor. If you have any questions, I can be reached at sierrainstitute.james@gmail.com or (530) 284-1022.

FLATS/MOUTH FEATHER RIVER

9. Mouth of the Feather River.

Again extreme caution, stump fields & very shallow, lots of grass and other vegetation can stop your prop. Fish the stumps for smallies.

10. Chester Causeway / North Shore Campground.

Both sides of the causeway good for rainbows, browns, & bass. Bass anglers work the stumps on the east side of the campgrounds. Parking is along the causeway.

PENINSULA/WEST SIDE

11. Bailey Creek.

This seasonal creek can flow from May into mid July. Good trolling area in front of the mouth, & south to Bailey Springs & back. Shallow area around the mouth & close to shore, watch for hazards. Browns, rainbows, & bass from Bailey Creek to Rec. Area #2.

12. Almanor Peninsula (Recreation Area #2).

Good trolling from Rec Area #2, north to Bailey Creek, or south to the tip of the peninsula. A couple small springs just outside the log boom hold browns & rainbows almost all year. Bait fish on anchor or drift crickets, mealworms, or night crawlers 5 ft off the bottom.

NORTHEAST SIDE OF PENINSULA

13. Almanor Peninsula (Recreation Area #1).

Excellent fishing opportunities, troll close to shore early and move out to deeper water later in the morning and afternoon. Dodgers with a nightcrawler, or flashers for deeper darker water. Good area for trolling deep with downriggers, the bottom is consistent with few very few snag possibilities. Small mouth bass are abundant along rocky shore line areas.

14. The A-Frame.

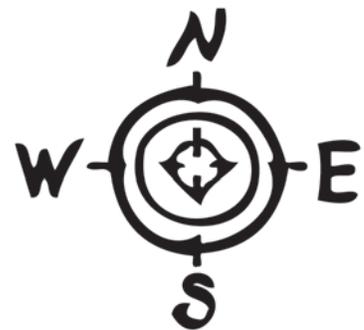
Some have said that this is the best spot on the Lake! A deep water cold spring located just off the shoreline brings them in. The A-Frame is a local land mark, it's easy to spot that aqua marine green roof. This area is famous for some really big fish and limits of browns, rainbows and King Salmon from time to time. Bait fish off the bottom or troll along the shore, both can be productive.

15. Big Cove Resort Marina,

Boat gas, boat rentals, bait/tackle/worms and other retail services are located at Big Cove Resort Marina. Good trolling from the marina South past the A-Frame, & down to Rec Area #1 and back or work the shoreline toward Big Springs.

16. Big Springs.

Several deep underwater springs are scattered along this area, and a couple in closer to shore. King Salmon, browns & rainbows all can be found moving around this entire area. Trolling can be very productive, but bait fishing is often the method that produces faster action. Crickets, mealworms, crawlers are effective for trout. Salmon like anchovy tails 5 ft off the bottom.



Lake Almanor

EAST SHORE FISHING

Designed by: Jason Pleau



1. Hamilton Branch Area and Powerhouse.

Probably the best bank fishing at Almanor. Bait, jigs and spinners all can be effective. Fisherman's access, parking, picnic tables and restrooms at the intersection of A13 and Hwy 147. Provided by the Almanor Fishing Association.

2. East Shore.

Trolling from the Hamilton Branch into Lake Cove and on to Canyon Dam. The east shore offers great rainbow and brown trout action. Try rainbow runners, speedy shiners, needle fish, or z-rays. Threaded night crawlers are good also. Troll top water early, deeper later in the day.

3. The Snag.

While trolling the east shore beware of the "Snag". It's a point that juts out and it get shallow there quickly, hence the name. Many a downrigger ball and tackle have been lost here; keep your eye on your depth finder. Deep salmon hole on the south side of the snag, use anchovy.

4. Canyon Dam also known as "Geritol Cove".

Another good bank fishing area is in Geritol Cove. For browns and rainbows use inflated nightcrawlers or powerbait off the bottom. Trolling can be great right from the ramp to the east shore and back. Public boat ramp, parking, handicap access, restrooms, picnic tables.

WEST SHORE FISHING

5. Rocky Point Campgrounds.

Good trout and bass fishing right off the point. Crickets, inflated crawlers, powerbait, or spinning tackle.

6. Prattville.

A good place to start you trolling or have breakfast. Head west toward the jetties for browns and rainbows.

6A. USFS Public Boat Ramp.

West of Prattville, in the old town of Almanor. Offers easy access with plenty of parking, 2 ramps with dock, and restrooms. Very good spring and summer time trolling from Prattville to the tip of Almanor West peninsula. Browns and rainbows will hit threaded crawlers, lures, behind blades or a dodger, or just by themselves.

7. Almanor West.

Excellent spring time trolling for rainbows and browns, close to shore or out in deeper water. Lead core or down-rigged threaded night crawlers are recommended. Good bass fishing later in the summer along rocky areas and around docks. Lots of hex activity beginning late June and through July.

8. Goose Bay - West Shore area.

Extreme caution shallow areas, stump fields, and grassy bottom. Rainbows and browns. One of Almanor's best bass areas, largemouth bass, and small mouth bass. From Goose Bay back into the airport flats. Best early morning and late evening. Use plugs lures bait or white jigs for trout. For bass use crank baits, rattletaps, or plastic worms.

Almanor

Map Details Provided By Doug Neal

Chester High School's Trout Hatchery

By Caitlin Dalby

Chester Jr/Sr High School, located in Plumas County in Northern California, is one of the only high schools in California which offers a full-function industrial level trout hatchery. Started up by Chester science teacher (now retired) Dave Bradley, the school's Aquaculture program has served hundreds of students over the last 12 years since its original establishment in 2000. What started out as a hatchery program done in a classroom within the school building with a 500 pound capacity for trout has turned into a commercial-type operation, having repurposed the old auto-shop that was no longer being used, to have over a 3000 pound trout capacity.

The goal of the Chester High School fish hatchery program, also known as the Almanor Research Institute, is to educate students on environmental stewardship while utilizing local resources from the upper Feather River watershed. Each year, students in the program learn about freshwater ecosystems, water analysis, fisheries biology, aquaculture systems and management, nutrition and reproduction, and laws and regulations. The other courses offered at CHS that benefit from our fish hatchery program are AP Environmental Science, a junior high and senior high Natural Resources class, biology, and 7th grade life science. These students get hands-on experience utilizing tools the professionals use to raise beautiful rainbow trout.

The Almanor Research Institute breeds and raises local native trout species for planting into the Lake Almanor Basin, as guided by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. These fish are either given to us by the department to raise from fingerlings or we go out and get our own. Our students take a few trips each early spring to the local streams that feed into Lake Almanor to collect eggs and milk for fertilization. These streams are seasonal and so any rainbow trout that would be spawning in them would doom their offspring. So instead we collect their eggs and spawn them out on site, take the fertilized eggs back to our hatchery, and incubate them. The students study embryo development during this time and get to watch as the fry hatch out and button up. We not only run the fish hatchery and spawn trout each spring, we also take our students on several other field trips each year to do water testing at different sites in the upper Feather River Watershed, habitat restoration where it is needed.

Our program has partnered with the following groups during the life of its operation so far: Feather River College Fish Hatchery, US Forest Service - Lassen and Plumas National Forests, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Almanor Fishing Association, PG & E, Trout Unlimited, Feather River Land Trust, Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Committee, Kokanee Power, and many more. We also have occasional personal donations from community

members who love what we are doing for our students at CHS. We are very appreciative of the support we are getting from our community and the broader fisheries community. For example, we recently ordered a new piece of equipment, a larger water chiller, to keep our water cool in the summertime. An upgrade was needed because of our much larger system and need for energy efficiency. Our local Fish and Wildlife Commissioners donated nearly \$15,000 to make it possible to order this very expensive but necessary equipment. The Almanor Fishing Association often donates food or supplies when they have a surplus or have a change in inventory, it is a great working relationship and we are happy to have them so supportive of our students and our program.

We are currently making preparations for our annual fish spawning trip. We must disinfect our incubating jars and trays and prepare the hatchery for a new set of eggs to rear. The fry will hatch out near the end of the school year, then student volunteers and I will raise the fish over the summer. In the fall, with a new set of students in the aquaculture class and a few students returning as laboratory technicians, we will continue to raise the trout until they are ready to be released back into Lake Almanor.



Our students truly get a hands-on experience in environmental education and stewardship by becoming integrated with this process from start to finish. They take pride in what they are doing and are proud of what they do for the water ecosystem of the upper Feather River watershed and Lake Almanor Basin. We feel so strongly about our program because we have turned out students who have gone on to pursue careers in fisheries, wildlife biology, environmental engineering, game warden, hydrology, forestry, botany, and biology. I attended CHS when the hatchery first started and then went on to UC Davis to graduate with a degree in Biotechnology. I then returned to CHS as a science teacher. We encourage any visitors who wish to see the facility or learn more about the Almanor Research Institute at Chester Jr/Sr High School email me at cdalby@pcoe.k12.ca.us.

The Lake Almanor Basin

By Rich Dengler



The Lake Almanor basin is a crossroad where the granite of the Sierra Nevada meets the lava of the Cascades. The Basin and surrounding area offer world class fishing in lakes and streams, family fun on skis, wakeboards, tubes and jet skis; quiet mountain adventures in camping, hiking, biking, kayaking and horseback riding. There are also a number of nice golf courses to sweeten the attraction for those who like to pursue the small white ball.

I'm a fisherman so I know first-hand that there are out-of-the-way fishing holes, secret places you keep to yourself and lakes that everyone knows about. At one time, Lake Almanor was recognized as a rather quiet destination for a summer vacation but that is no longer the case. Today, it is a getaway for anglers looking for pristine mountain surroundings in spring or fall to catch trophy size trout. The summer months bring a large population of vacationers with ski boats and jet skis so anglers need to get on the water as early as 5:30 a.m. and back at the dock by 9:30 a.m. or fish late in the day, like at dusk. During the summer months, the lake usually experiences afternoon winds that can come from nowhere. These winds can be very dangerous for new comers to the lake that are caught out in a small boat.

Lake Almanor was built in 1914 in the shadow of Mt. Lassen and is surrounded by snow covered mountains for many months of the year, and covered in pine and fir trees. It was built over a large meadow and is relatively a shallow lake with no or little structure outside of the shoreline. The advantage of Almanor is that it offers 28,000 acres of surface water, more than 52 miles of shoreline, and is among California's largest man-made lakes. It is ridged by resorts offering cabin rentals, boat-rentals and several ramps, but also has many miles of natural shoreline with few or no cabins.

There are good numbers of rainbow and brown trout as well as king salmon in the lake. There is also a smallmouth bass fishery that is mostly underutilized. Trout are the main attraction at the lake with trophy size trout caught year around. Brown trout fishing is best in winter and early spring; rainbows usually kick in about April or May with June the best month. Quality is the attraction for many trout fisherman with rainbows to 4 and 5 pounds, abundant king salmon that sometimes get as big and browns that can get into the double digits; trophy fishing is not out of the question. I know because I caught and released a 14 lb, 12 oz brown in 2011!

The Almanor Fishing Association helps replenish fish by raising and releasing 50,000 catchable rainbow trout each year from their cage program with the help of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to supply the fry and Kokanee Power who provides the fish food. This year the fish were delivered to the ten fish rearing cages in early November and have been fed by volunteers of the association throughout the winter. The fish will be released in spring as catchable trout.

This year, because of new state legislation, the association raised 20,000 Shasta rainbow trout that are called N3 triploids, which are sterile fish. The balance of 30,000 fish are the same as those raised in prior years which are an Eagle Lake strain of trout called diploids. These fish are fertile and can reproduce. The Department of Fish and Wildlife, through new state legislation that went into effect January 2013, has been required to produce almost all N3 triploid fish in their hatcheries for release into California lakes and streams. The new law is intended to keep hatchery fish from breeding with wild fish in the state. The triploid fish have an extra set of chromosomes as a result of pressure treatment, combined with carefully monitored temperature and time precision during egg fertilization. The N3 fish perform for anglers like a diploid (fertile) fish, and many grow larger than the fertile fish. N3 trout are increasingly being produced for recreational stocking in many states throughout the country as well.

In recent years, due to the popularity of bass fishing, Almanor has become known as a top notch smallmouth bass lake. Though the fishing pressure has grown, the bass seem to continue to do well at the lake. The king salmon, introduced in 1982, have grown successfully, and add very much to the fishery.

From my experience, trolling is the favored way to catch all of Almanor's cold water species, though jigging and bait fishing can be great at times.

Plumas Audubon Society

By Nils Lunder, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Plumas Audubon Society

Greetings Almanor Enthusiasts! Soon the lakes of our region will be welcoming the return of Western and Clark's grebes as they arrive to their favorite fishing grounds. In fact, we would love to hear from you as soon as you see these birds back on Lake Almanor. Grebes are large water birds that have distinctive red eyes and are quite common in our part of the state. Their raspy calls travel across the water with ease and can be heard from a great distance. They nest on lakes and swamps that support healthy fish populations from here all the way out to the Midwest and from Mexico up into Canada. The grebes in northeastern California are important, however, because about 30% of the nesting colonies nation-wide occur in Northern California.



Grebes mainly winter along the Pacific Coast or on warm inland lakes such as the Salton Sea in Southern California. They subsist on small fish; adult birds may consume a pound of fish per day. Their migration is a phenomenon that is poorly understood by biologists; many people believe that they fly under the cover of darkness and rely on numerous stop over lakes along the way. The fact that these water birds can even make the trip is an incredible accomplishment. They have small wings and do not fly well. Once the grebes reach their destination they shed all of their flight feathers and become flightless for a period of time. This causes their flight muscles to atrophy and they remain flightless until the availability of food becomes scarce in the late fall or early winter.

The Plumas Audubon Society has been monitoring the grebes of our region on Lake Almanor, Eagle Lake, Antelope Lake, Mountain Meadows Reservoir and Lake Davis for the past three years. We have also been conducting extensive outreach and education activities throughout the area in an attempt to increase awareness of these amazing birds. Funding for this work comes from damages resulting from a series of oil spills on the Pacific coastline that has killed grebes in their winter grounds. The more we are

able to teach the public about the grebes, the more respect and appreciation these birds receive from us - the folks who love these lakes. If we are able to work together to ensure the success of grebe reproduction on our mountain lakes, then there is a better chance that the grebes will continue to thrive and delight us all for generations to come.

Grebes have some of the most elaborate courting rituals of all birds. Their displays seem to correspond to the progression of the breeding season. Early on they can be seen pairing off and performing a dance where they preen themselves and bob their heads at one another. Later as they are about to build their nests they can be seen diving and returning to the surface with vegetation that they present to their mate. The most remarkable part of these courting rituals is called the rushing display. Maybe you have seen it. The grebes rear up in a near vertical position; they tuck their stubby wings and throw their heads back while running across the surface of the water. It is quite a sight. Some grebes can cover up to 100 feet during this display.



The grebe has adapted to pursuing prey under water. They have a slender body, dense bones and lobed toes that allow them to travel under water with surprising agility. Their legs are set far back on their body, which increases their ability to propel themselves underwater. These physical traits may help the grebes in the water but it makes them quite ungainly on land where they are rarely seen.

Grebe pair's team up to construct their floating nests which they prefer to build in 2-6 feet of water. The nests are made by weaving plant material into rooted aquatic vegetation. This anchorage is necessary in order to prevent the nest from floating away during times of high winds and waves. These

nest platforms allows the grebes easy access to their hunting grounds and it also reduces the threat from terrestrial predators such as raccoons, skunks, dogs, and cats. Once the nests have been completed they use them to copulate, which can begin long before the eggs are laid. Once the eggs are in the nest the birds take turns incubating them, which takes around 30 days.



Our observations indicate that the greatest threat to the grebes on Lake Almanor is from aerial predators such as Gulls and Ravens who prowl the nesting areas and swoop onto nests that have been vacated by the grebes; the eggs are the target of these hungry scavengers. Predation usually occurs when the grebes are disturbed by humans. We have seen kayakers, canoers, and carp hunters in or near active nest colonies. As a result, we advocate that recreationists avoid nest colonies during the nesting season. The grebes usually are nesting between July and September. The Plumas Audubon Society posts nest colony warning signs near active colonies. If the grebes are not disturbed by humans, the probability of them losing their eggs to predators is greatly reduced.

Unlike many other birds, the grebes leave their nest for good once their young have hatched. The fuzzy hatchlings are shuttled onto one of the parent's backs and they begin their aquatic lives. During this time one of the parents dives for food and brings it back to share with the family. The grebes carry their young for the first 6-7 weeks until they are ready to learn how to swim and dive for their own food.

If you are out on the lakes and you see grebes carrying young on their backs please to try to steer clear of them. The newly hatched babies cannot swim or dive for their first few weeks. Also be sure to dispose of tangled fishing line or other garbage properly because numerous birds die each year due to entanglement.

Once the young birds have learned to forage and their bodies have developed they begin to learn how to fly. The whole family builds the strength of their flight muscles together through a series of exercises; once they are ready they disappear from these lakes before the cold weather descends

upon the mountains. Then our lakes are quiet once again until next spring when the grebes return and announce their arrival with their rusty call kreek kreek.



Mac's Lake Almanor Guide Service

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Responsible Boating

By Otto Brackett, Plumas County Sheriff's
Boat Patrol Supervisor

Please do your part to make boating on Lake Almanor a safe, enjoyable pastime. Become an educated, responsible boater. To help you, following are a few reminders.

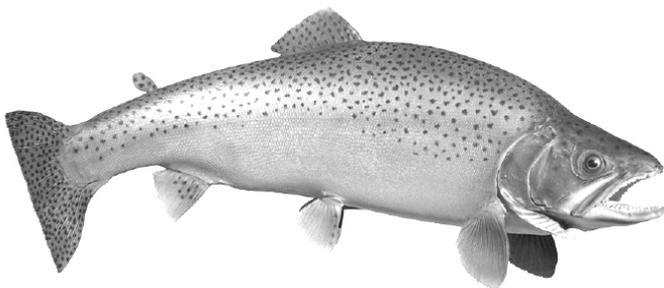
First, make sure your boat is registered and keep your registration on the boat. Every year I see boats without current registration, and I'm usually told, "It's at home on the refrigerator." At home won't do you any good out on the lake!

Check out all of your equipment at the beginning of the season and keep it maintained while you are at the lake. This includes your trailer! Check your battery, plugs, fuel and trailer tires. If you are coming up from the valley, be mindful of the altitude change because it can affect how your boat runs. Make sure you are using high grade fuel or an octaine booster. The last thing you want is a dead boat on the water.

To ensure you have a safe day, make sure you bring along an anchor, rope, life jackets (wearable) for each person on board, fire extinguisher, paddle, lights, signal device like a horn, whistle or bell.

Let's not forget about good common sense. Bring along a blanket, first aid kit, sunscreen, extra drinking water, flashlight, matches, hat, sunglasses, and protective clothes. Remember, Lake Almanor weather changes quickly. If it looks like a weather change, dress appropriately.

One last reminder - a few of the laws. Remember, any child under the age of 12 must wear a life jacket while the boat is in motion. From the shoreline to 200 feet, the speed limit is 5 mph and that includes your skier or a person behind your boat. From sunset to sunrise, you may not exceed 5 mph!



Thermal Curtain Update

By Wendi Durkin

Save Lake Almanor is dedicated to protecting the cold water fisheries here in Lake Almanor as well as Butte Valley Reservoir. To this end, we are asking our local fishing experts a series of questions that we will compile to use as part of our discussions with State Water Resources Control Board, with regards to the proposal of cold water removal from Lake Almanor. Most notably, the Thermal Curtain. We appreciate your time and input. Please feel free to contact us or add any additional information you deem useful. Thank you for your time.

1. What native species do you fish for and in what waters?
2. Have you or any of your clients/fishing companions have concern for the mercury levels in the lake or in the fish?
3. Do you notice the fishery reacting to temperature changes with the lake during either wet or dry years?
4. What percentage of the fish you catch are native versus non-native fish?
5. Do you have historical data, or photographs you can share with us regarding the history of fishing in Lake Almanor and/or Butte Valley Reservoir?

At this time no additional information has been released to Plumas County from the State Water Resources Control Board to know what steps they are considering for Lake Almanor. The fight is not over, just on hold until more information is released. Please return your information to Save Lake Almanor
PO Box 1356
Chester, CA 96020

If you would like to become involved with Save Lake Almanor, please call Wendi Durkin at 530-228-2683.

Thank you,
Wendi Durkin, Broker/Owner
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The Merits of Catch and Release

By Tom Maumoynier

When I started this article I wanted to be sure I wasn't saying that you should not eat what you catch, rather use a little sensibility and take only what you can eat. Fish that have been frozen lose their taste and we both know that frozen fish from the store are much cheaper. We are blessed in the Almanor area with fish that we measure in pounds not inches. A four pounder will easily feed a family of four and the stories of the day's fishing makes it taste even better.

Mounting a fish of a lifetime is fine but they also make nice fiberglass replica mounts now days. I had a large Rainbow mounted and had some critics tell me I should have let it go, but when you are standing there with a fish that you have been after for a long time, it's easier said than done.

Try to practice CPR with fish, (catch, photograph and release). Barbless hooks are a good basic for releasing fish; smashing the bar down with a pair of needle nose pliers is the easiest way. Barbless hooks will also help you to become a better fisherman. They teach you to keep constant pressure on the fish, which in return will help you land bigger fish and more of them. If the pressure is not constant the fish will quickly let you know, this is helpful when you have that big one on. The added benefit of a barbless hook is that they come out of you easier than a barbed hook, a little discomfort if you get hooked but not the end of the days fishing.

Always handle the fish as little and gently as possible. Fish have a protective slime that helps stop fungus; it can easily be removed by handling a fish. Wet your hands first before handling and revive fish fully before releasing. If the fish is hooked, deeply it is sometimes better to cut your line short and release; if you use standard not stainless hooks they will rust out quickly.

With the current economic situation of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, I can only imagine that the fish plant will suffer. For this reason, when fishing around pre-spawning fish, extra care should be given.

There is no comparison between a native and a planter. The native has the ability to survive in its environment much better because it has been there since birth, not just days.

I'm proud to be a fly fisherman and I know some fly fishermen are known to have unrealistic views toward releasing fish. We need to keep kids and seniors involved and what better way than to enjoy your catch. Just think of everything in moderation and protect our local resources for the future. We should all pitch in.

Tight Lines, Tom Maumoynier

THE LAKE ALMANOR FLY FISHING COMPANY

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Tom Maumoynier

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Almanor Fishing Derby Draws a Crowd

Article Courtesy of Feather Publishing

The Almanor Fishing Association (AFA), in partnership with Kokanee Power, hosted its inaugural Lake Almanor Trout and Salmon Fishing Derby July 7, 2012.

“We had 41 teams, consisting of two to three fisherman and nine juniors (up to age 16 years) join in the derby,” spokesperson Paul Garrido said.

Sign-ups were held Friday evening, July 6, 2012, and again the morning of the derby. Fishing began at 5:30 a.m. and the weigh-in took place between 1 and 2 p.m. at the AFA Public Fishing Access Area in Hamilton Branch.



The derby, with its trout and salmon format, allowed for the weighing in of three total fish from the species of rainbow, German brown and king salmon. After the weigh-in, the AFA served a lunch of pulled pork, coleslaw, chips, water and soft drinks.

The Kokanee volunteers operated the prize drawings for the participants. Included among the prizes were fish-nets, lures, trout bait, lure boxes, backpacks and hats.

“The AFA and Kokanee Power plan to make the derby an annual event. It was very successful for its first year – we really thought it would take two to three years to build,” Garrido said.

All proceeds from the event will go toward the purchase of fish food for the 50,000 Eagle Lake trout the AFA nurtures in their Hamilton Branch cage program.

This outstanding program greatly benefits the Lake Almanor fishery and the surrounding communities and businesses.

The cost to feed the fish over the winter is \$8,000 - \$9,000. Dedicated AFA volunteers spend months braving the elements to ensure the health of the fish, whether in sun, rain, wind or snow.

Winning Teams Weigh In

The award design of the derby was very generous to participants with dollar awards going to the first 15 teams as well as biggest trout and biggest salmon.

The “Big Salmon” award and \$150 went to Allen Sheppard. The team of F. Dollar, K. Nunes and J. Shaw placed second.

The “Big Trout” award and \$150 went to Robert and John Kopernik. Doug Neal and Rod Overstreet placed second. In the derby weigh-in of three fish per team, \$500 was awarded to first place, \$400 to second and \$300 to third.

Robert and John Kopernik took first place with the weight of 173.44 ounces. Second place went to Doug Neal and Rod Overstreet with a total of 152 ounces. Fish for a Wish Tournament coordinator A.J. Casella and his team members G. and R. Salzmann placed third with a fish weight of 131.84 ounces.

Five out of nine juniors received Kokanee Power hats and trophies for their three-fish weigh-in. First place went to Garret McClean for his total of 32.90 ounces. Second place went to Eric Papas for his weight of 18.45 ounces. Kailynn Dollar claimed third at 16.80 ounces. Jenna Smith hooked fourth at 16.20 and John Cuanawana drifted into fifth place with a catch weight of 15.05.

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Notice to Fishermen

Cedar Lodge Motel is offering 10% discount off room rates when guests use a fishing guide from the Lake Almanor area



KOKANEE POWER & THE ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION PRESENT THE:

LAKE ALMANOR TEAM TROUT & SALMON DERBY

Saturday, June 15, 2013

Heaviest Team Limits Win

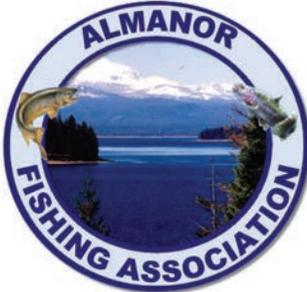
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Derby Chairman

Gary Coe: 916-985-4943
coekanee@att.net

Derby Co-Chair

Wes Hamasaki: 916-402-5274

KOKANEE POWER

P.O. Box 3857
Merced, Ca 95344
"a 501(c)3 Non-profit
Organization since
1998"

www.kokaneepower.org
info@kokaneepower.org

TEAM ENTRY FEES:

- (per participant)
 - \$45.00 (member) / \$55 (non-member)
 - Open to any age
 - **THREE** fish weigh-in per team
 - Rainbow, Brown Trout and/or King Salmon
 - A TEAM is one or more anglers.
- All team members must be in the same boat
- One boat per team. One team per boat

All California Fish & Game laws apply. At age 16, a Junior will be required to possess a valid adult fishing license.

TEAM SIDE POTS

- Blind Bogy: \$20.00 per team (Heaviest Limit + Lightest Limit Divided By 2)
- Big King Salmon: \$20.00 per team
- Big Trout: \$20.00 per team
- All 3 Side Pots: \$50.00 per team

JUNIOR DIVISION INFO

JUNIOR DIVISION MEMBERS FISH FREE !!!!
(with paid adult)

- Open to anglers under age 16
 - **ONE** fish weigh-in per junior
- Must weigh-in separate from team.
 - Junior Division Prizes
- Anglers under age 16 cannot participate in Junior Division if they fish as part of a team
- All Junior Division Anglers must register to enter

FOR INFORMATION ON PLACES TO STAY AT LAKE ALMANOR CHECK OUT:

www.plumascounty.org

Check-In, Registration, Weigh-In, Lunch:

Almanor Campground / USFS Ramp —
Almanor Dr. West off HWY 89

Go to the Kokanee Power Web site for more information and directions to the location

- Payouts down to 15th Place
 - 1st Place: \$600 (based on 125 paid anglers)

Important Information

Registration: by mail, by phone, or at the Check-In (see below)	Mail completed registration no less than 7 days prior to the derby date, call the derby chairperson to register by phone or register at Check-In.
Check-In: Almanor Campground / USFS Ramp — Almanor Drive West off HWY 89	Friday June 14, 2013, 4:30pm-7:00pm and Saturday June 15, 2013, 5:00am-5:30am All anglers must check-in prior to fishing.
Derby Start Time:	5:30am (no exceptions)
Weigh-In: Almanor Campground / USFS Ramp — Almanor Drive West off HWY 89	Starts: 1:00pm Ends: 2:00pm * You must be in weigh-in line by 2:00pm NO EXCEPTIONS
Lunch: (included with entry fee & begins at 1:00pm)	Lunch Only (not fishing): \$15.00

Past BBQ Attendees Having Fun

ALLEN SHEPARD
Fishing Guide

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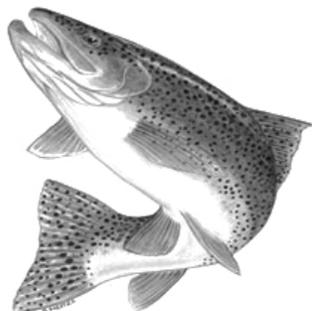
Ray Miles with his catch. Picture courtesy of Quail Lodge Lake Almanor



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Karen Kemp **Ralph Neuman**



**JOIN THE ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION
TO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FISHERY**

Almanor Fishing Association's 21st Annual Family BBQ



Saturday, August 17, 2013
4 to 9 p.m.
Lake Almanor Country Club
Recreation Area #1

Dinner served from 5 - 6:45 p.m.

New York Steak Dinner \$22 Donation
Hot Dog Plate \$5 Donation

Buy your dinner tickets early for \$20 and SAVE \$2
Pre-sale tickets available from the following businesses:

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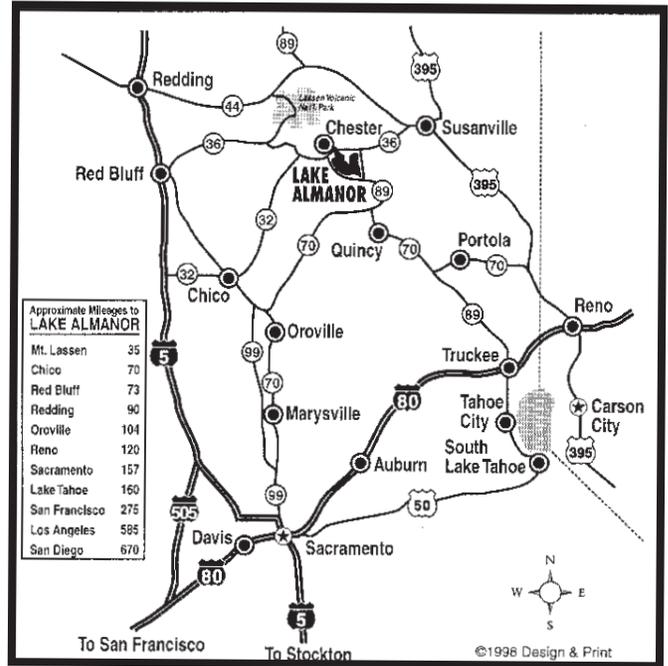
Fish Plants D.F.G. 2012

65,000	Salmon
53,000	Eagle Lake Rainbows
10,000	Browns
50,000	Rainbows (AFA Cages)
178,000	Total

Projected Fish Plants 2013

65,000	Salmon
53,000	Eagle Lake Rainbows
10,000	Browns
50,000	Rainbows (AFA Cages)
178,000	Total

Estimates May Vary Due to Availability of Fish



CALIFORNIANS TURN IN POACHERS AND POLLUTERS

1 888 DFG-CALTIP(888 334-2258)

A Confidential Secret Witness Program

Californians Turn in Poachers and Polluters (CALTIP) is a confidential secret witness program that encourages the public to provide California Department of Fish and Wildlife Services with factual information leading to the arrest of poachers and polluters.

CALTIP was introduced in California in 1981 in order to give Californians an opportunity to help protect the state's fish and wildlife resources. The toll free telephone number operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You do not have to give your name.

FISHING FYI'S

SPORT FISHING LICENSE ONLINE NOW

You can now buy your sport fishing license online & print them with internet access.

Licenses are required of any person 16 years of age or older.

To get your fishing license online go to www.dfg.ca.gov.

You can print a temporary document for immediate use which will be valid for 15 days. The original will be mailed to you.

Must use a Visa or MasterCard for secure purchasing.

FREE FISHING DAYS FOR 2013:

July 6th (Saturday) and

Sept 7th (Saturday after Labor Day)

On Free Fishing days, Californians can fish any freshwater lakes without a fishing license. All fishing regulations remain in effect.

ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS

Rich Dengler, President
Eric Rudgers, Vice President
Tommy Gaither, Treasurer
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Gary Spence, Board Member
Robert Gonzalez, Board Member
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If it concerns fishing, we're concerned!

Visit the AFA WebSite at
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almanorfishing@frontiernet.net