



The Almanor Fisherman

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION

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Fishing Lake Almanor

By John Crotty Fishing Guide Service

This is my first contribution to the AFA Annual Newsletter and I am honored to have this opportunity yet humbled by the years of experience and information provided by past contributors. I will begin by attempting to explain how I ended up in Canyon Dam.

I was born and raised in Fortuna, California, grew up fishing the Eel and Van Duzen Rivers for Salmon and Steelhead, and partaking in the bounties provided by Humboldt Bay and the Pacific Ocean - Salmon, Snapper, Cod, Perch, Clam's, Scallop's, Crab and Abalone were regularly a part of my diet. As a youth I would spend weekends riding my bicycle to the Eel River chasing fish from the old 12th Street hole down to Fernbridge. Family out-

ings to Eureka were my opportunity to fish the King Salmon and Lazio's docks for perch.

Eventually my bike was traded in for a vehicle and an 8 foot pram, which made fishing opportunities unlimited - fly, drift and tidal waters were all on my radar screen. As fishing options increased I began fishing still waters. A friend introduced me to Eagle Lake so on a cold November weekend 20 plus years ago my son and I rented a cabin and a 14 foot aluminum boat at Stone's landing. We fished all weekend and caught a total of six Eagle Lake Trout. I was officially hooked - from the beauty of the mountains, serenity of the lake, to the spectacular fighting/eating Eagle Lake Trout.

My annual Eagle Lake weekend soon turned into multiple fall trips. Weekends expanded into weeks and I began exploring other lakes. We would bookend outings on Antelope; Almanor and Bucks between our multiple day stays on Eagle. My passion for lake fishing obviously required the addition of a larger vessel so I purchased a used 15 foot aluminum with a 40 horse outboard that I confidently stated would fit my fishing needs indefinitely - purely illusions of grander. Anyone that has ever owned a boat knows your current boat is just a stepping stone to your next bigger, faster, state of the art equipped and more expensive boat.

My significant other (and better looking) Debbie Reynolds and I began searching for an opportunity to move closer to the spectacular lakes we had grown to love. After a multi-year search, in July 2014 we purchased Quail Lodge in downtown Canyon Dam. It's a small seven room lodge that previous owners Allen and Susan



Two of my most demanding clients who just had to catch a big, big, big BIG fish!

Shephard were transforming into a hunting and fishing lodge. A major factor in our decision to purchase Quail Lodge was it's short one mile drive from the year round Canyon Dam boat launch. The rest, as they say, is history. Deb and I are on our way to "Making Memories" with old and new friends.

Prior to purchasing Quail Lodge, I secured my USCG OUPV License and CA DFW Guide License. Deb and I purchased a 20 foot alumaweld Intruder, aptly named "Memory Maker" fully equipped with 150 and 9.9 Honda outboards, Cannon Downriggers, Lowrance 9 inch touch GPS/fish finder/down scan combination and a Minn Kota I-Pilot trolling motor.

While I have been fishing Almanor sporadically the past 15 years, for the last year and a half the majority of my fishing time has been spent on Almanor. Soon after moving to Canyon Dam I was fortunate to spend a day on the water with Roger Keeling, local fishing guide with more than 40 years of guiding experience. Roger shared some of his insight into guiding clients and fishing Almanor for which I am extremely grateful.

My fishing methods are typical for Almanor, I troll with hardware, Speedy Shiners, Mooselooks, Needlefish and Rapala's. Seventy-five percent of my time on the water is with lead core. I have found lead core out-fishes downriggers (not all the time but certainly the majority). I like the action on the rod tip when fishing lead core. I know when a lure is working and when it isn't. How many times have you trolled around the lake thinking you are fishing only to find out a lure is tangled and not performing properly?

I make most of my rods. I started building rods more than 35 years ago. I love experimenting with blanks, actions and lengths. I recently purchased two 10-foot 5-weight fly blanks and converted them to trolling rods. They are first in the water and go in the side rod holder. The advantages to the longer rods include getting line away from the boat, less tangles, more forgiving when fighting a fish, easier to control around the motors and, most importantly, my clients love fighting fish on these rods. I use ABU and Shimmano reels. My lead core reels are set up with 40-foot of backing, 3 to 5 colors of 18-pound lead core, 75-foot of 10-pound Maxima, a quality 3 barrel swivel, 5-foot of 8-pound Maxima, a small interlock snap followed by lure of choice. I attach my lead core with a nail knot. If you struggle with tying a nail knot, don't get frustrated, stop by the Chester Fly Shop and ask Tom Maumoynier for a Tie-Fast, you will be amazed at how easy the tool is to use and how secure a properly tied nail knot performs. I also experiment with my lures, I put a bend in to alter the wobble, use various scents, add a color or lightly sand a new lure to dull the shine. One thing I highly recommend is to purchase a multiple rod license and experiment with the "bonus" rod, it can be a cluster when you and a partner have four rods out and you hook a fish. I would caution if you and your spouse are fishing four rods and lines get tangled or hung up while fighting a fish, the outcome can be hazardous to your health. Have an extra rod or two available on the boat so when you do get hung up or have a rod/reel malfunction you don't lose precious fishing time.

The best advice I can give is use quality equipment, tie good knots, check your line throughout the day, re-tie knots if in doubt, don't lose that trophy to laziness or faulty equipment, don't panic when you hook the "big one," take your time and let your guide net it (I have seen far too many fish escape as a result of poor netting techniques). You can fire your guide, not so easy with your best friend, or worse, your spouse. When you do catch that "once in a life time fish," get measurements, take a picture, and release it, especially our Browns, which is not always easy. You will be glad you did, a wall mount can be created with the information acquired.

Almanor is a year round (weather permitting) world-class fishery, and fishing can be spectacular. It can also be challenging. The guides I have met are knowledgeable, professional and friendly. I can assure you they will make every effort to put you on fish; we want you to have a memorable fishing trip and turn that day on the water into a lifelong friendship.

While being a fishing guide may seem like an enviable profession, we take our jobs seriously. It becomes personal when fishing is slow. We can do everything "right" and if the fish aren't interested in playing, a poor attitude can make for a long day for you and your guide. If you decide to hire a guide, call and ask questions. Find one you are comfortable speaking with and could enjoy spending a day on the water with. If we are not available or you chose to fish with someone else, we will happily refer you to other guides in our area.

Thanks for reading my article, hope to see you on the water,

John Crotty
CA Guide ID# 0011986,
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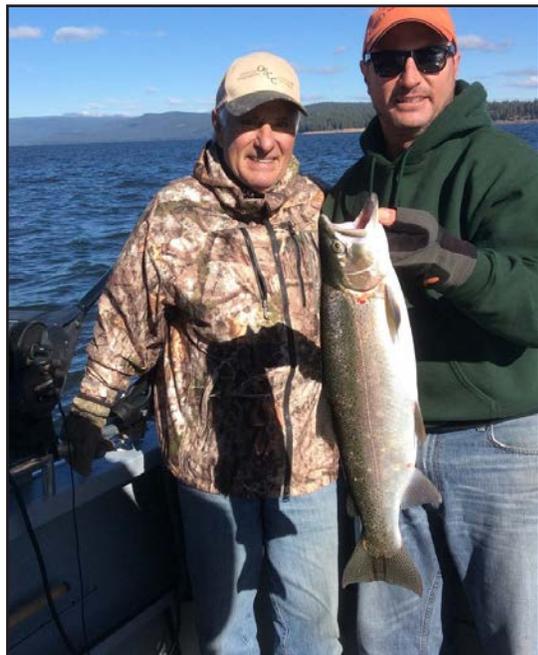
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Father and son outing with John Crotty in 2015



Father and son outing with fishing guide John Crotty in 2015

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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 their 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.



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

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Almanor Opportunities - Second to None

By Roger Keeling, Rogers Guide Service

I would like to welcome each of you to the beautiful Lake Almanor area. The outdoor opportunities in this portion of Plumas County are second to none, and Lake Almanor itself can be considered a world class fishery containing warm and cold water species with trophy potential for both. After fishing this area for nearly fifty years and guiding professionally for 44 years, I would like to share just a few common sense fishing tips that may add to your fishing success.

Sometimes we get too technical and entwined in modern electronics that we fail to notice what is going on around us - like bird movement, hatches with rising fish, or just floating hatch casings that indicate a recent hatch has occurred. One common sense approach to your fishing technique is adjusting the speed of presentation of your bait or lure to the degree of the fishes activity level. If there is little surface activity and water temps aren't conducive to the trout's or bass's comfort zone, you may try slowing your presentation down. Usually a sure indicator of active or inactive fish is the way they bite. If the bite is soft, slow down; if the bite is vicious, usually a faster presentation will work better.

Weather will also dictate the correct presentation. I've had hundreds of days on Lake Almanor and other lakes when the weather was clear and calm and hundreds of fish were rising on midge or flying out hatches, and the only presentation that would work was to run the lures extremely fast or, as I call it, "speed trolling." What this does is to excite a reaction strike and doesn't allow the fish as much time to be negative.

One other thing that is extremely important is to use baits and especially bait sizes that meet existing conditions. Midge emergers are very small and to use a large bait like a night crawler, for example, at the time they are feeding on small emergers is probably not going to be productive very often so try scaling down bait sizes. It's also very important to make your bait look as natural as possible and the first thing to focus on is hook size. The least visible hook will always work better and there is a great selection of super sharp, fine wire hooks available. When bait or jig fishing is slow, presentation techniques and, of course the type of line used, can be the difference between success and failure. The newer invisible fluorocarbons are so reasonably priced and available in almost all sporting goods shops that use them is a no-brainer.

A brief rundown on last years fishing - almost all my spring fishing took place on the west end of Lake Almanor. Hundreds of fish were rising on blood midge hatches and 95 percent of the catch was rainbows in super condition. Most of my summer fishing took place on the east side of the lake and more large browns were in the catch. They were in super condition and felt like lead in the net. We finished a lot of our trips off with Smallmouth Bass fishing.

Almanor is an amazing bass fishery and it should stay that way if we release the bigger females. Trips to Antelope Lake were fan-

tastic as always. Never a dull moment there and the drive through Indian and Genesse Valley is beautiful.

Rogers Guide Service specializes in family and custom fishing trips on Lake Almanor and other lakes that require about one hours driving time that normally provide spectacular fishing.

I provide boat and all fishing gear and fish are cleaned and packaged on board free of charge. All you need is lunch and drinks and a decent sized cooler to transport your catch back home.

The fishing techniques I use are basically simple for the novice and children are always welcome as they have been for over 40 years.

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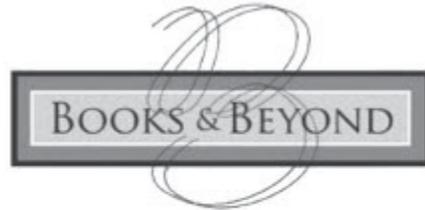
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How Climate Change Affects Fish Catching On Lake Almanor

By Bob Kopernik, Lucky Grady Fishing Guide Service

Due to the lack of any appreciable snow pack in the Lake Almanor watershed for the past three years, (my) fish catching results have been dramatically reduced. After countless sleepless nights pondering the dilemma of not catching as many fish as I think I should, this is what I now believe. It should be noted that I always told family, friends and clients that the best fishing here was the last two weeks of May until the end of June. Now I qualify that statement with "On a normal snow year".

For the first 30 years that I fished this lake I believed (like others) that as the water warmed up in mid to late July the fish went deep and/or quit feeding. My observations over the past three years have changed my mind into believing that a warm water column and especially a warm muddy bottom gives rise to the proliferation and over-abundance of natural food for the fish to feed on. With all the insect larva and pond smelt readily available the trout and salmon are not as interested in feeding on the baits and lures presented by us fishermen.

We normally arrive at the lake during the first week of May and depart sometime in mid-September. Last year we arrived early and I was fishing by April 18th only to learn that the "early" bite happened in mid-March. By mid-May most of the "Lake Regulars" were struggling to consistently put a few quality fish in their ice chests. Another observation that I noted was that the fish that were taken, were caught virtually all over the lake not just in the deeper (cooler) water. I also noted that when boating and/or cleaning a fish their gullets were almost always packed full of either insects or pond smelt.

A long time very successful Lake Almanor fisherman who jigs most of the time, confided in me that he believed that all the trout and salmon had left the west shore because after weeks of fishing there he had not caught a single fish! Another friend who fly fishes every day for a month at a time three times a year went for days without a fish. Our "Float Tube" specialist out of Plumas Pines Resort went for many days and possibly weeks without catching his first fish! My point is that all fishing methods experienced vastly reduced catch rates for the past couple of years. That being said, there were a few fish being caught, even big fish in the 6, 7 and 8 pound range, just not as many as during a normal (snow) year.

Why? About 70% of the water that feeds the lake comes from natural springs located in the bottom of the lake. When there is little or no snow providing icy cold water to these springs the lake bottom and water column warm up much faster and provide an environment that allows the insect larva to hatch earlier in the spring. The warmer water column also promotes the growth of alga which is the food our pond smelt feed on. This also explains the reduced water clarity for the past several years.

So the big question is...what works? And what doesn't?

I'm not convinced that any particular combinations of attractors, baits, lures, bait scents, boat speed, depth or time of day or night consistently produced better results. The only thing that produced more fish for me was to spend more time on the water fishing and that in itself is not a bad thing.

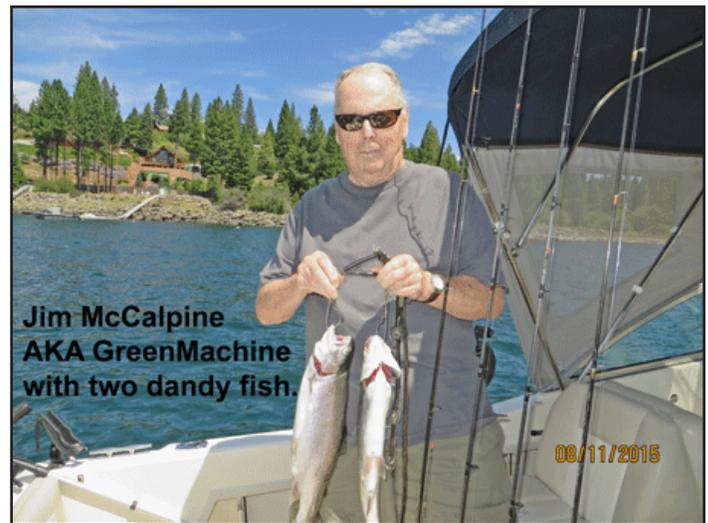
Last year I fished with a new friend who has an interesting concept. Like myself he enjoys fishing by himself and mostly trolls. After he catches a fish he puts that particular rod and set-up on the port side of his boat. He then continues experimenting different tackle combinations and depths on his starboard rod until he catches two fish on it. If the port rod has not produce another fish he switches the rod positions and starts the experimentation process all over again. Interesting.

A couple of other interesting observations - In previous AFA articles, (see <http://www.almanorfishingassociation.com/documents/Newsletters/>) I mentioned that I often get hits and or catch fish while dropping my downrigger ball. This past year I got a lot more fish while bringing the ball up. If I'm trolling at 25 to 35 feet I'll bring my bait up 10 or 12 feet and let it troll there for a minute or two. For a variety of reasons I use a 4 inch leash for my line release clip. Especially when I'm trolling in an area that has been productive, I'll take my rod out of the rod holder and let my bait fall back the 40 inches or so. I might do this two or three times before returning the rod to its holder. About every "151" times of doing this a following fish will be enticed to take the bait. It doesn't happen often but what else do you have to do out there when fish catching is a bit slow?

A couple years ago I bought a Fish Hawk TD water temperature instrument which I clip onto to my down rigger cable near the ball. While drifting over the area that I want to check I lower the instrument to the bottom and then retrieve it. It records the water column temperature at 5 foot intervals. I was surprised how homogenous the entire lake water column temperature is. What was even more surprising was that after the lake surface reached its highest temperature (72.2F) last year, the entire top 25 feet of the water column was exactly the same! As the surface temperature cooled towards the end of the summer, the top 25 feet dropped along with it. I'll put these data points into a graph and post it on my bulletin board at Plumas Pines Marina. If you are interested come and take a look.

Another tidbit of useful information for folks who dock or moor their boat in the water all summer, if you hate the spiders that seem to crawl or drop out of nowhere (especially onto your wife or teenage granddaughter), catch a frog or two and put them into your boat. Within a week all the spiders and bugs will be gone. The only drawback is when frogs eat, they also poop. And after they run out of food they sometimes abandon ship and need to be replaced. Last year my two frogs stayed all summer and it was amusing when they would start croaking.

We have all seen the "Don't Move A Mussel" signs posted by our State and Federal Agencies. And, many of us have grouched about the mussel fee or tax that our state imposes on us when registering our boats. While chatting with a Park Ranger at Lake Mead last fall, he showed my wife Alma and I a tennis shoe that was in their lake for only four months! During the course of our conversation he described the horror story of equipment damage and cost to tax payers that I never thought of or knew about. I guess I came away with a whole new perspective on the problem. See photo of the tennis shoe below. Please be careful if you move your boat from lake to lake especially if you launch your boat here at Lake Almanor.



One last suggestion that I offer, if you are discouraged by not catching very many quality fish or just want to gain a wealth of knowledge about fishing this wonderful but sometimes frustrating body of water, consider hiring a fishing guide. This publication lists a number of them offering a variety of options. Some have patio boats for large parties and are well suited for youngsters who do better still fishing. Others offer fly fishing or bass fishing and others offer trips that include both still fishing and trolling. Note that I (normally) specialize only in trolling for trout and salmon.

I and at least one other guide, offer a "Learn the Lake" outing that actually takes you to and explains where, how and why to fish five or six different areas of the lake. On this trip, I spend significant time on how to use a sonar unit, rods, reels, basic knots for tying leaders, lures and how to rig baits. I'm surprised how often clients need help in how to set the hook, play a big fish and coax it into the net. Be sure to clearly communicate with the guide that you choose what your needs, desires and expectations are, being aware that even the most experienced fishing guides can't guarantee that you will catch fish. (That's really why we call this sport "Fishing" instead of "Catching".) To see the guides listed with this publication go to..

http://www.almanorfishingassociation.com/lake_guides.html

Good luck and "THINK BIG FISH".

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Almanor Spring Bite is Always Good

By Doug Neal, Almanor Fishing Adventures

My wife and I bought a house here on the Almanor Peninsula in 1999. Being a year round Lake Almanor resident has its advantages. I catch fish every month of the year. Winter fishing can be excellent and the best times are just starting. The "big ramp up" is just moving into the starting blocks. While the Lake Almanor spring bite is always good, it holds through the summer and deep into fall. Locals that fish often, and all year long, will tell you that springtime is the very best of the fishing seasons. While others will argue that late summer and fall are better months. I think they are all good; however, as springtime begins, the abundance of Lake Almanor becomes more evident as activity levels rise and larger fish begin to show up in greater numbers turning their attention from feeding on smelt, back to the prolific insect hatches.

The amount of insect activity Lake Almanor can produce is beyond some people's comprehension; it lasts from April into October. There's no shortage of fish food here, and that's why the fish are healthy and big. Insect protein converts quickly to energy, and springtime hook ups usually deliver a good battle from even the smaller fish. Spring and summer insect hatches will take some pressure off the pond smelt, allowing time for them to start their own reproduction cycles.

As spring begins, fish will be in closer to the surface; however, as we get into late spring and early summer they begin to go down deeper. Rising surface temps gradually begin driving fish from the warming surface down into the deeper cooler water, closer to the bottom, or into the vicinity of springs. Downriggers or lead core line is required here to get your presentations down deeper where the bite is better. Most boats that fish Almanor are equipped with downriggers to get trolled offerings to required depths with precision depth control. Some old school guys prefer lead core rigs, but that limits how deep you can get. I prefer downriggers, and last season caught fish from 12 inch planters to 9 lbs. monsters, and everything in between.

Another way to get your baits down deep is to consider bait fishing on anchor, on the drift, or jigging. Being able to do these things is just as important as trolling. Being diversified allows you to open the entire play book because some days it's better to troll and some days it's not. I bait fish about 50 per cent of the year and some of our best days and biggest fish have been on anchor suspending baits, or jigging. Jigs are often used here to mimic an injured minnow or give the look of the evasive maneuvers of a panicked bait fish that has been separated from the safety of the school.

We often start jigging just before the sun hits the water. Browns' rolling in the top water is a no-brainer. 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 darker deeper water. We had several Browns over 8 lbs. last season just jigging one rod, while the other was drowning a crawler. Mealworms, crickets, and nightcrawlers are all great for trout; they are target areas known for springs. Most local fishing maps

will have these spots marked and are not too hard to find.

Get a #8 hook, choose your bait of choice and send it to the bottom, and then bring it up 3 to 5 cranks up off the bottom, or about 4 to 6 ft. up. Being diversified can only help fill that bottom line, and the.

Looking to improve? Need some advice? Call a guide; you'll be glad you did.

We are starting our 17th season fishing Lake Almanor.

Doug Neal, www.almanorfishingadventures.com
(530) 258-6732

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Photo courtesy of Almanor Fishing Adventures



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You Can Stop Them! Quagga/Zebra Mussels Ruin Boats and Destroy Waters

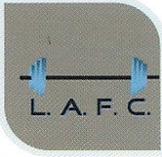


Quagga/Zebra mussels may be tiny, but they are highly destructive in freshwater systems because they can:

- Reproduce quickly and in very large numbers, up to 1 million larvae per spawning season.
- Colonize on both hard and soft surfaces, from the water's surface to more than 400 feet down, including boat hulls, propellers, anchors, docks, and boat trailers.
- Coat submerged surfaces such as piers, pilings, rocks, cables, boat ramps, docks, lines, pipes and fish screens, increasing maintenance costs.
- Infiltrate and damage boat engines, bilges, live wells, and steering components.
- Threaten the state's water treatment plants, hydroelectric plants, and reservoirs.
- Clog municipal water intake structures and obstruct the flow of drinking water.
- Cost taxpayers millions of dollars to repair damaged pipes and water transport facilities.
- Wreak havoc on the environment by disrupting the food chain by filtering the water column of phytoplankton and out-competing other species, including sport fish and endangered species.
- Change water conditions, causing heavier aquatic plant growth, oxygen loss, and fish kills.
- Result in infested waters being closed to boating and fishing together.

Lake Almanor Fitness Center

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Almanor Smallmouth Bass Fishing

By Ben Williams, Fishdog Outdoors

The Smallmouth Bass fishing on Almanor is so good it's a wonder to me why more anglers don't take advantage of it. On a week-day during the summer months almost all of the boats I see every morning are trout fishermen. I may see five bass boats on the whole lake on a given day. And by 10 o'clock most of the trout anglers have headed home.

On an average half day trip my client's and I routinely catch 20 plus fat smallmouth before noon. Hard fighting and acrobatic these fish are my absolute favorite! That's why from April to October I make Almanor my home. For a fisherman, especially a bass fisherman, it's paradise.

There are many techniques that can be used to catch smallmouth here: Plastic worms, jigs, swim baits, spinner baits, rip baits, crank baits, even topwater poppers. And if all that sounds like a foreign language don't despair because catching smallmouth on Almanor can be quite simple. All one really needs is one technique - the drop shot!

The drop shot is a simple setup that consists of a weight at the bottom with a small hook 12" up the line from the weight. Attached to the hook is a small worm 3-4" in length. Spinning rods with light action are perfect for drop shotting. Simply cast it out and let it hit the bottom. Then tighten the line and shake it gently to give the worm a vibrating action. Bass can't resist it!

Here is a specific list of my typical drop shot setup:

Rod - Powell 6101L Spinning rod

Reel - Okuma Avenger 2500 or 2000

Line - #10 fluorocarbon

Weight - 1/4 oz. dropshot weight

Hook - #6 Owner mosquito hook

Worm - Any 3-4" plastic worm will do. I like shad colors in clear water and also greens and browns. Berkley gulp minnows also work very well.

Put your hook through the tip of the worm leaving the tip of the hook exposed. As you shake the worm pay close attention. Often it will just feel a bit heavy when a fish has it. SET the HOOK!

This technique works well all year round and is my go to method. it is deadly on Almanor Smallmouth.

Good fishing! And remember to catch and release!

Ben Williams, Guide

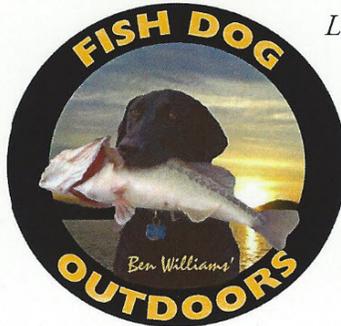
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Photo courtesy of Fishdog Outdoors



Photo courtesy of Fishdog Outdoors

Are Brown Trout in Lake Almanor an Endangered Species?

By Rich Dengler, Almanor Fishing Association President

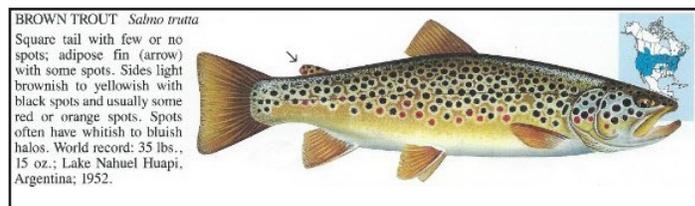
Brown Trout, better known as German Browns, have been in Lake Almanor since the beginning. They were introduced to the lake by the Department of Fish & Game, aka Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFW), as a sport fish as well as the Rainbow Trout. Both have become the reason Lake Almanor is known as a great fishing lake with trophy fish being caught every year.

That may change in the future. The number of Brown Trout DFW have planted in a single year has been as high as 65,000 fish. Five years ago that number was as low as 45,000. The 2016 allotment of Brown Trout to be planted in Lake Almanor by DFW is only 6,000 fish. Of the 6,000, all will be sterile which cannot reproduce to support the Brown Trout population in future years. How far DFW will cut the delivery of Brown Trout in the future is unknown, but I guarantee the numbers will not increase from what I'm seeing from the hatcheries and their lack of funding from the state. Last year we were told the number of all fish plants in the state would be reduced by 50% based on the lack of state funding. This was caused by the Sacramento legislators not releasing funds to the hatcheries. In fact, legislation Bill SB1148 calls for all non-native fish to not be planted in any California waters. This bill took effect January 1, 2013 and Brown Trout are non-native to California waters.

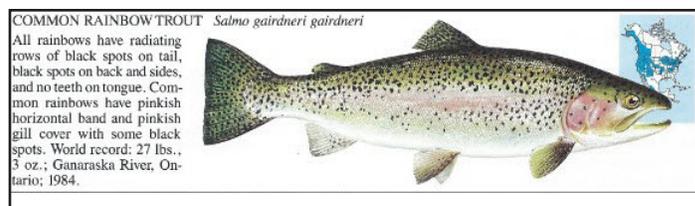
We have a new threat to the lake in the form of River Otters. There appears to have been a population explosion of Otters here at Lake Almanor in the past several years. Some say they are cute but don't be miss-lead, they are very destructive to fish populations. Otters need to eat their weight in food every day to survive, and an adult male otter can weigh as much as 35 pounds. As many as 11 River Otters were seen at one time on the banks at Big Springs this past winter. Five River Otters were observed on our cages in Hamilton Branch. In fact, they breached several cages and ate all the fish in those cages. We know they have taken as many as 10,000 fish from our cages, possibly more, over a five month period. These are fish that can't be released for your enjoyment to catch during the year! If River Otters are in Big Springs in the winter, can you imagine what will happen in the summer months when the trout need to gather around the springs for colder water? The dinner table will be set, not only at Big Springs but at all the other springs around the lake! The only thing that can be done at this point is to have DFW trap the otters sating depredation problems to our cages. How likely is that to happen? We have asked DFW if they can help by trapping and relocating them, but that only moves the problem from one lake to another so not very likely to happen.

Where can we go from here? I don't have an answer but strongly suggest anglers who want to see Brown Trout in Lake Almanor adopt Catch and Release of ALL Brown Trout. I'm suggesting that ALL Brown Trout be released – don't keep any to eat! I recommend you take a picture then return the fish to the water as quickly as possible. This may sound like a drastic move but looking down the road, what are the alternatives?

How do you recognize a Brown Trout? The best way is in the tail. It can be difficult to recognize a young Brown Trout but the tail is a sure fire identification. A Brown Trout has a square tail with few or no spots while all the other trout, even the salmon, have spots on their tails.



Brown Trout



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Trolling On Lake Almanor

By Cliff Spediacci, Hook & Ladder Guide Service

As I am writing this article it has been a very good winter so far. We've had lots of rain and snow and are looking at a good snow pack in the mountains. It does bring a smile to people's faces after the terrible winter's we've had. We can only hope this winter will continue with a lot more rain and snow. We all want to see the lakes full of water!

We started fishing Lake Almanor in March of last year with very good results. The Rainbows and Browns were biting on most days; they were full of fight and looked great. This time of the year I was trolling and continued trolling through June with a lot of good days and a few not so good days. The fish were running from about 2-4 pounds with a few 5 pounders.

People sure enjoy catching German Brown Trout at Lake Almanor. I encourage the fishermen on my boat to catch and release these beautiful fish, especially since California Fish & Wildlife does not plant as many as they have in the past.

A big thank you to the Almanor Fishing Association for all their hard work with the pen project. They feed and take care of the Rainbow Trout all winter than release them in the spring.

We did not do very well on the King Salmon last year and talking to other fishermen and guides, it wasn't a good year for them either. Hopefully it will be better this year!

As the middle of summer and fall came, the fishing really slowed down. I believe the biggest reason was how much water was being released from Lake Almanor. We had some good days, but it sure wasn't like earlier in the season.

One thing fishermen need to remember when trolling is to always check their bait and lures. I try to reel in every 15-20 minutes on slow days to make sure there are no weeds on the hook and keep fresh bait on. We all get a little lazy on the slow days so checking will give you a better chance to pick up a fish or two. Don't forget to use some scent on your presentation, it helps keep the human scent off of your lures and bait.

With the winter we are getting so far, we are really looking forward to getting back on the water in March or April, weather permitting!

Please call or email me if you would like to book a trip or just go out with me to find out how to fish Lake Almanor. Our boat has plenty of room for up to 6 fishermen.

My wife and I will be staying at Lake Haven RV Resort in our 5th wheel. Depending on launching conditions, I will also be fishing Eagle Lake, which is where our permanent residence is. Good luck fishing and be safe on the water!

Check out our website at www.hookandladderguideservice.com

Cliff Spediacci, Hook & Ladder Guide Service



*Phillip's Family from Susanville, CA
Fishing with Hook & Ladder
July 2015*



*Mark Whipple from Fresno, CA caught this 4-pound
German Brown with Hook & Ladder
March 2015*

Hook & Ladder Guide Service

Cliff Spediacci

EAGLE LAKE
Eagle Lake
Rainbows

LAKE ALMANOR
Rainbows
German Brown
King Salmon

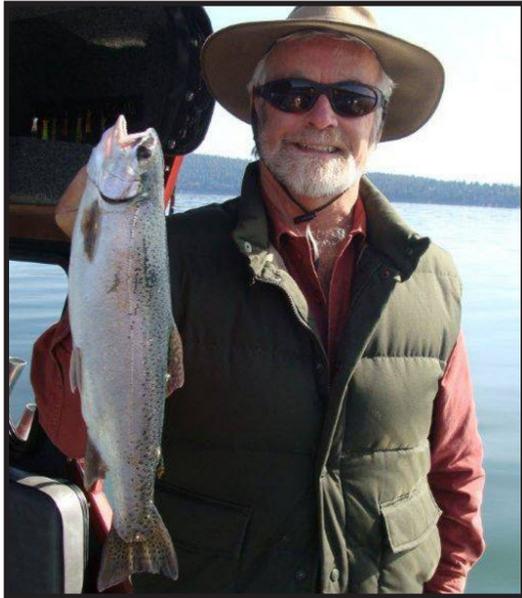
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Mark Whipple from Fresno, CA caught this 4-pound German Brown with Hook & Ladder
March 2015



Brody Phillips from Susanville, CA caught this beautiful 3-pound rainbow with Hook & Ladder
July 2015

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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



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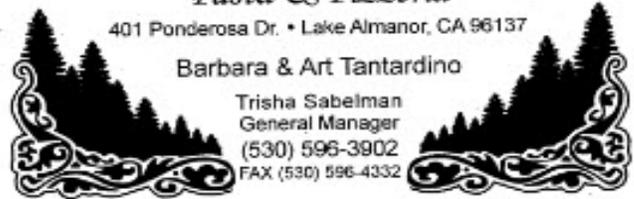
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FLATS/MOUTH FEATHER RIVER

9. Mouth of the Feather River.

Again extreme caution, stump fields and 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, and 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.

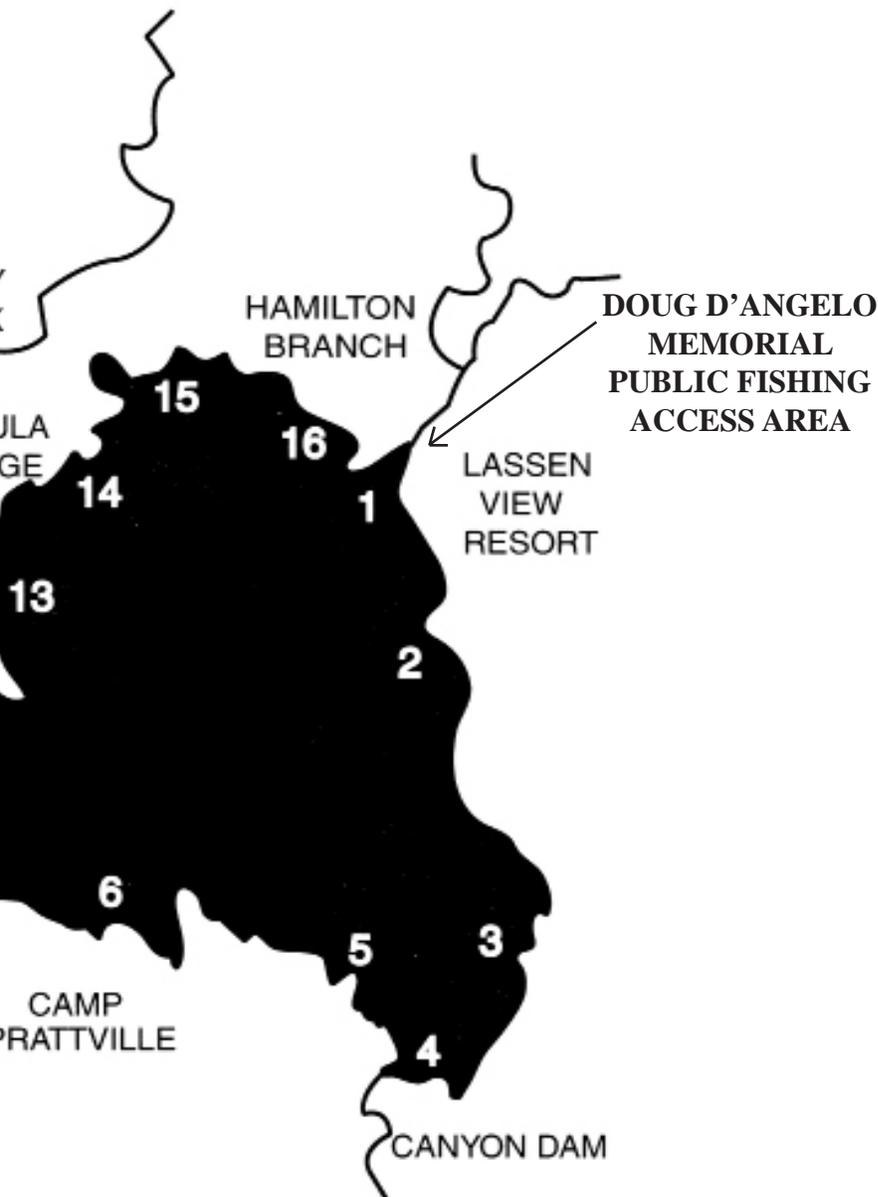
Several deep underwater springs are scattered along this area, and a couple in closer to shore. King Salmon, browns and rainbows all can be found moving around this entire area. Trolling can be very productive, but bait fishing is often the method that produces faster action. Crickets, mealworms, crawlers 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 your 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

Catch a Trout - Leave a Trout at Hamilton Branch

By Allen Shephard, Almanor AI's Guide Service

Although California suffered an extreme drought in 2015, Lake Almanor summer water levels remained steady. This allowed for an extremely abundant Trout spawn at Hamilton Branch. It began in June, lasting until late September as the waters subsided.



*Hamilton Branch Trout Spawn July 2015
Photo by Susan Shephard*

This year I saw more anglers lining the banks of Hamilton Branch than in the past 5 years. I witnessed many fishermen carrying out daily Trout limits and more. Some were to return the same day to catch more limits and bring more people to haul off the fish.

I for one know the excitement of catching a nice Lake Almanor Trout. The hook up is thrilling. The reeling, the spooling and netting the prize catch. This is what fish stories are made of.

With the decline of fertile trout plants in our lake we must all conserve the taking of excessive Trout limits from Lake Almanor. Please have a discussion with your friends, children and grandchildren. "Catch a Trout," enjoy the exhilaration, tell the fishing story. Don't take more than is legal, don't take more than your family will eat. "Leave a Trout," so that it will grow to be 10 pounds or more. We need to "Leave a Trout" for the next generation to tell their fishing story.



Terry and family caught these beautiful Lake Almanor Trout with Lanier Brothers Guide Service, March 27, 2015 at Lake Almanor. The Lanier family visit annually and stay at our Hamilton Branch Vacation Rental.



*Max, Allen, Hudson, and Paul fishing Lake Almanor with Almanor AI's Guide Service
June 5, 2015*

A business card for "Almanor AI's Guide Service" with a blue background and a photo of a boat on the water. The text on the card includes:

Almanor AI's Guide Service
Trout Fishing Specialties

Allen Shephard
Licensed Fishing Guide
Lake Almanor, CA

Phone: 530-996-3236 Cell: 530-816-2364
Email: ashephard@frontiernet.net
Facebook: Almanor AI's Guide Service



Allen Shephard with a big catch

Lake Almanor Loses Another Friend

Lake Almanor Basin resident and well respected fishing guide Dick Mason passed away in 2015. He was born in Iowa and came to Westwood when he was 11 years old. He started fishing at the age of eight. Dick worked for Collins Pine Lumber Company for 38 years and was fortunate enough to be able to retire at the age of 55. He started guiding full time in 1997 on Lake Almanor, Butt Lake, Eagle Lake and Antelope Lake. He used to fish on the Sacramento River for Salmon in the 60's through the early 90's but then decided to fish up in the Almanor area for trout. Dick married his high school sweetheart Carol and was married for 55 years at the time of his passing.



Being an avid fisherman, Dick bought his first boat when he was around 20 and owned a total of four in his lifetime. The last boat he bought was from Roger Keeling, another respected local fishing guide. According to his wife Carol, "Dick loved that boat. It was comfortable to fish in and easy to get up and walk around in. Dick met many wonderful people while he was guiding and some became lifelong friends. He loved every one of his clients because they all had the love of fishing in common. He especially loved the little kids. He would let them drive the boat, reel up the down riggers, and reel in their lines just to check the bait."

Dick would bring his clients home after fishing to clean their fish and put them in a small cooler with ice to take home. Carol would download the pictures he took while out on the lake and print a glossy 8x10 for them. According to Carol, "Dick's clients loved their pictures! One client has all his pictures on a wall and he calls it his 'wall of shame.' Many times Dick would deliver the fish and the pictures to his clients in the Lake Almanor area where they were staying. We would also e-mail clients their pictures so they could share them with their friends and family. Dick would get a lot of referrals that way! He had many repeat clients; some would come three or four times a year."

The Mason family has many precious memories of family outings – camping, fishing and catching chipmunks (and then let them go), singing around the camp fire with aunts, uncles and cousins, and roasting marshmallows. Dick shared most of his fish – fresh, smoked or canned. He often took his grandchildren with him in the boat and taught them how to fish. His grandchildren treasure their memories of fishing with their grandpa.

One of Dick's granddaughters shared, "When we were little, grandpa would play fishing with us. He would tie a plastic bag on his line and toss it from the kitchen to the living room. The bag was always filled with goodies and we had to eat whatever was in the bag. Sometimes he would put weird things in it and sometimes good things. Sometimes he would even put some money in the bag. Memories all five of his grandchildren will have forever!"

Dick was an avid Almanor Fishing Association supporter and could always be counted on to write articles for *The Almanor Fisherman* Newsletter every year. According to friends Paul and Wanda Garrido, "Early on, Dick used to worry about writing an article for the Almanor Fishing Association's newsletter. The first year he and Carol didn't know how to even start an article so we invited them to come over to our house to help him craft the article. After that, as soon as Dick decided what he was going to write about, it became an easy task. Dick wrote an article every year after that until 2015 when he became ill."

Dick has been described as a very quiet man except when it came to fishing. He enjoyed sharing his many fishing stories with friends, clients, and family. Carol shared, "When he retired and started guiding, he couldn't believe people would pay him to go fishing. He spent his last 20 years doing what he loved best – fishing."

Farewell Friend, you will be greatly missed!



Happy clients of fishing guide Dick Mason - fishing Lake Almanor

Boating Season 2016 - Be Safe on and in the Water

By Otto Brackett, Boating Supervisor

Heading to the lake anytime soon? Is your boat ready and safe for everyone on board? Are you thinking about swimmers and their safety? Please take the time to read this article, it will help make your boating and swimming experience this season be safe. I'm going to share some very important rules and safety tips.

First and foremost, ensure you have proper personal flotation devices (PFD). The law states that every boater under the age of 13 must be wearing a PFD while the boat is in motion. The law also states there must be a PFD for every person in the boat. The PFD's come in all sizes; make sure that all of them are labeled as US Coast Guard Approved, it will be marked on the inside of the device. Be sure each person has one that fits. If a PFD is too large for a small child when they go into the water they can slip through or become hidden from view. Make sure these are in good condition with no breaks or tears and the strap is present. For infants and small children make sure their PFD has a strap that goes between the legs so they can't slip/fall through. I would suggest that all people who can't swim or are poor swimmers wear a PFD.

One last thing about PFD's is that some stores sell PFD's that look just like the US Coast Guard Approved ones, but are lighter in weight. These can also be a name brand, however still not approved by the Coast Guard. Skiers and boarders like them because they are more comfortable. People will pay \$100 or more for them not knowing they are illegal. You can be cited if you are wearing them not knowing they are illegal.

If you are swimming in the lake, know these important rules: No person is allowed to swim in designated boat launching areas where such areas are designated boat launching areas and where such areas are posted or buoyed. For open and main channels of lakes, no person is allowed to swim unless accompanied by a boat commanded by a competent operator. In the boat shall be a PFD for the swimmer. This is in regard to people swimming 300 feet from shore.

May I remind you of your boating preparedness: Every time start out with new gas, get new spark plugs, check wiring, make sure your fuel container is clean, and shake the tank to make sure the gas and oil mix properly. Before you leave home, start your motor before you go, this way if you have a problem you won't be out on the water away from help. Also, check the blower in the boat; it can save your life. Gas in your bilge is very dangerous and it doesn't take much gas in the bilge to have an explosion.

The next item I would like to discuss is the Quagga/Zebra Mussel. They are native to Eastern Europe. The mussel was introduced to the Great Lakes from Russia. They have migrated to the West. The states of Nevada, Arizona, and California have been infected. These mussels will attach themselves to your boat or trailer and migrate from one lake to another. They cause damage to your boat, trailer, docks, etc. They also can get into boat water pumps. In some areas people have had to wear shoes on the beaches because

of infestation. At some lakes in California, boats will be turned away if they have not been inspected. Lake Tahoe requires a boat inspection before you can put your boat in the lake and there is a charge. Some lakes you can be cited if your boat has not been inspected and you are on the lake. Boaters should anticipate inspections at launch ramps around the state. Inspected boats are given a tag to prove inspection. I could talk with you all day on this subject however I do suggest you go to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife where you can find a wealth of information about it. You also may want to check if you are going to other lakes as far as policy regarding this problem.

Remember between the hours of sunset to sunrise the speed limit for boats on the lake is 5 MPH. Please be sure your boat lights are all working. Take a little time when you are getting your boat ready to check your lights, don't wait until you need them to get a surprise. Wave runners and jet skis CAN NOT be on the lake between sunset & sunrise.

Courtesy on the lake at all times is very important. For instance, observing the speed limit when traveling within 200 feet of shore which is 5 MPH. This will keep boats from banging on the docks, etc. Be aware of people swimming in the water, the speed within 100 feet of a swimmer is 5 MPH. When you go by people who are fishing please slow down as well. Give the people a break. Treat everyone on the lake the way you would want to be treated.

The last topic I would like to cover is getting help in time of need. If you see someone having boat problems please stop and offer assistance. Remember you could be in that situation yourself. By stopping you can make a boater feel better knowing that someone knows of their problem and is there to help. I know when I come upon a boat that is broke down, the people are so relieved. I always get the warmest thank you. If you have a cell phone, help is but a call away. You can call the Sheriff Office Dispatch # at (530) 283-6300 and get an immediate response. Upon receiving your call they will contact the boat patrol deputy on the lake and he will respond. If you don't have a cell phone you may have to tow their boat in.

Have a safe boating season, catch lots of fish or just enjoy one of the most beautiful lakes in the state! Oh... and one last thing, don't forget your boat plug; make sure it is plugged in!

Lake Almanor Hex Hatch - The Hexagenia Limbata Mayflies

By Doug Neal, Almanor Fishing Adventures

Every year at Lake Almanor a phenomenon happens, simply put, its the hex hatch. The Hexagenia Limbata Mayfly begins its nymphal emergence usually about the third week in June and goes into early July; however, it can go on into August!

Hexagenia Limbata Mayflies have a three year life cycle. The eggs settle into the muddy bottom areas of Lake Almanor. Surveys have shown that in ideal conditions there may be 500 nymphs per square foot with as many as 33% of those hatching in a given year. That's 166.6 bugs per square foot. This tremendous amount of activity is almost beyond comprehension.



This phenomenon is responsible for drawing more anglers to Lake Almanor than any other event as fishing can be very good. I say, "can be" because in the early part of the hatch the fish are very casual in their feeding as a result of the great number of ascending nymphs.

There is a lot of food down there and sometimes it can be frustrating when you don't get a hit. The best way to fish with all these ascending nymphs is to cut about 1.25 inch of a night crawler and thread it on a #10 hook with a round split shot 22 inches above. Use a little Pro-Cure garlic scent. Get the split shot down on the bottom and then come up three cranks. That should get the bait 44 inches off the bottom. My reels are about 22 inches per crank; yours may differ. Anyway, you want your bait just off the bottom.

The theory is, this piece of crawler is about the same color, and length of the merger. The garlic scent is just a bonus attraction. There's a lot of fish right down on the bottom picking up these mergers as they kick their way out of the mud and head toward the surface. I've had a lot of action using this approach early in the morning and into the afternoon.

The mergers that make it to the surface become Adult Mayflies, and they will still be targets as their wings need to dry before they can fly, mate, and drop their eggs into the lake. The eggs sink to the bottom of the lake and the whole process starts over again.



In the late afternoon and early evening, adult Mayflies will have the fish feeding on the surface. The fly fishing float tube guys are having a blast, some boasting of 20 fish hook-ups per evening.

Most fly fishermen are using the dry or dun pattern. When I fly fish the hatch, I like the cripple merger pattern and believe that it is the best day in and day out because this pattern incorporates characteristics of both the nymph and dun and is intended to imitate a struggling dun attempting to escape the nympl schuck. At this stage, these bugs are in their most vulnerable stage and the fish are quick to learn this. You will see causally rising fish everywhere on the surface taking these bugs. When the hatch begins depends on mother nature. It could start early or late but when it goes off you might want to be here. I have caught Salmon, Brown, Rainbows, Bass and Catfish all in the same hour and in the same spot. I will be reporting hatch activity as it happens and will be posting Lake Almanor fishing reports on my website: www.almanorfishingadventures.com



Short History about the Fish Rearing Cage Program

By Rich Dengler, Almanor Fishing Association President

The Lake Almanor Fish Rearing Cage Program, one of the largest and most successful pen projects in the State, is located in the Hamilton Branch area at the intersection of Hwy. 147 and County Road A-13 at the northeast corner of Lake Almanor. This area is one of the most popular bank fishing areas for anglers and their families. The facilities at the public access area are maintained by the association which hosts parking, picnicking, and toilets.

The Fish Rearing Cage Program was established in 1985 in the Hamilton Branch area by two local fishermen, Jim Pleau and Reuben Chavez with assistance of Ron DeCoto, a biologist with the Department of Fish & Game (DFG). They started with two nylon net pens which were located at Lassen View Resort that was owned Jim and Reuben. The DFG provided the fish via hatcheries to rear during the winter months. DFG also provide food to feed the fish, acquired the necessary permit from PG&E to have the nylon nets in the waters of Lake Almanor, and took responsibility for maintenance of the net cages.

The cage program was very successful; so much so that DFG decided to provide two aluminum cages which were a much sturdier structure than nylon nets. It was at this time that the Almanor Fishing Association (AFA) was established.



Size of our aluminum cages.

In 1988 DFG provide eight more aluminum cages from a failed Lake Orville cage program. That brought the number of cages up to ten which is what AFA has today. Each cage can hold up to 5,000 fish. In addition, stairs were installed by the Screen Shop, out of Redding, CA. and paid for by DFG. The stairs lead down from the top of Hamilton Branch to a transfer dock used to get to the cages. DFG continued to cover cost for all the cage maintenance, delivery of fish, and fish food. The Almanor Fishing Association continued to be responsible for feeding the fish during the winter months (October – April). The Association did minor maintenance to the cages, docks and pontoon boats during those early years.



The installation of stairs leading down from Hamilton Branch to the transfer dock.

In the fall of 2007 DFG transferred ownership and maintenance of the 18 year old fish rearing cage program to California Inland Fisheries Foundation Inc. primarily because the state could no longer afford to pay for the maintenance and the fish food. In 2009 Kokanee Power was granted ownership to cover the fish food, insurance liability and permit from PG&E for the project. AFA took ownership for the maintenance and continued responsibility for feeding the fish. This same year the cage program appeared to be in danger of ending because of the condition of the cages. After 22 years in the water, they badly needed repairs; the supporting timber and floats were water-logged and looked like one big storm away from breaking apart. The AFA Board of Directors and membership were very concerned and wanted to keep this program moving forward. In 2010 and 2011 repairs on the pens were done by volunteers with financial support from CIFFI, Kokanee Power, and the Plumas County Fish and Game Commission. Brett Womack of Almanor Dock Supply was also instrumental with the platform work that was needed. In the end the five wooden platforms and ten aluminum pens were successfully repaired!

Historically, 50,000 Eagle Lake trout are delivered each year by the DFG (aka DFW when they changed their name in 2013). It takes 15,000 pounds of fish food during time the fish are in the cages until they are released into the lake. To date the Jim, Reuben and the association have released more than 3.2 million Eagle Lake trout into the lake for the enjoyment of anglers.

Fish get delivered to Lake Haven via DFW trucks and are unloaded to a transfer cage and then to the aluminum holding cages in Hamilton Branch where they remain for the winter. AFA volunteers feed the fish on a daily basis throughout the winter and early spring. When the fish are delivered, they average 4-6 inches long. When they are released starting in April or May, they are usually 10 to 13 inches long. After the release of fish, the cages remain anchored in the Hamilton Branch to await next year's delivery. They are cleaned several weeks before the next fish arrive in late October or early November depending on the weather.



Fish are being unloaded from the DFW truck to the AFA transfer cage.



Volunteers attaching the transfer cage to the pontoon boat.

AFA coordinates delivery of fish two to three days in advance to give the hatchery notice. The transfer day needs to be a day where there is little or no wind so forecasted weather reports are



AFA volunteers transferring fish food.

ing upon the number of trucks DFW utilizes. Kokanee Power schedules delivery of the fish food so this has to be taken into consideration as well. The food gets delivered and transferred from truck by AFA volunteers to a metal cargo shed located at Hamilton Branch where it is stored for use. On feeding days, 40-pound sacks of fish food are taken from the shed, carried down the stairs to the pontoon boat, and then pulled over to the pen docks to feed the fish.

This year has been a disappointing year for the program. There have been a number of factors that resulted in a poor year. It actually started in December 2014 when the Almanor Basin experienced a severe wind storm. Three cages were damaged and the fish found their way into the lake. In March 2015 Darrah Springs Hatchery was quarantined because of the Whirling Disease and shut down. This hatchery is the sole supplier of the fish for our cage project. AFA was told by DFW that they would not be providing any fish for the 2015/2016 cage program. The AFA Board of Directors then made the decision to not repair the cages given we would not be receiving fish and the cages would sit empty for the year. We kept pursuing DFW to see if they could find us fish, but with no luck. In late September the Shasta Hatchery, also quarantined with the Whirling Disease, was removed from the closure and delivered 30,000 Shasta Lake Trout on October 12. At that time we had six cages that could hold 5,000 fish per cage. We, in fact, received more than 30,000 fish and had to utilize a marginal cage which was damaged in the 2014 wind storm. Unfortunately, during one of the 2016 winter storms this damaged cage failed and the fish again slowly found they way out into the lake. This was not a bad thing, just an early release into the lake.

The next major problem came in the form of River Otters. Some people think they are adorable creatures but they are very destructive. They breached several cages and ate the fish. One cage is completely empty while two have few fish still remaining. Obviously these fish are gone and not in the lake, but are in Otter's fat bellies. The Otters have also severally damaged a number of cage covers and these will need to be repaired.



Cage covers damaged by River Otters.

considered. AFA recruits approximately 20 volunteers to do the transfer which may take up to two days to complete depend-

Next came floating debris from the PG&E power house. All this material came down from Walker Lake as it was overflowing and washing down all the dry debris from when the lake was drained. The water was so muddy you couldn't see into the cages to determine how many fish we had left.



Floating debris removed from the cages.

DFW is still providing the fish for this project; however, the number of fish delivered continues to decline. Last year it was 30,000 plus because of the Whirling Disease that affected the hatchery where we normally receive the fish.

This year our allotment is scheduled to be only 25,000 fish due to the lack of funding for the state's hatchery programs.

The association is in the process of writing grants to obtain funding to get the cages and covers repaired this summer to be ready for the fish in October. Let's hope we get more than the allotment of 25,000 fish, we obtain the necessary funding for the repairs, and we don't have the problems we experienced the past several years.

A big thanks goes to Jim Pleau, Reuben Chavez and Ron DeCoto for their foresight and initiative; PG&E for their long-standing support; California Inland Fisheries Foundation Inc. and Kokanee Power for their financial support; Brett Womack and Almanor Dock Supply for helping in a time of need; the many, many volunteers for their eagerness to do good and be personally motivated to support the pen project regardless of need – install cage pens and docks, build stairs and parking lots, transport fish and fish food, feed fish throughout winter and early spring come rain, sleet, snow, or ice; and, most importantly, to Paul Garrido for his many years of devotion and unselfish desire to keep the pen program alive.



Science in Wildlife Management ENDANGERED

Science has always been the basis for wildlife management for fishing and hunting regulations throughout the United States. Except for California, where anti-fishing, anti-hunting, animal rights groups have all but eliminated science based regulations for our state's outdoor sports. The left-leaning, big city-centered population base has elected more big-city centered politicians who know little or nothing about wildlife, and unfortunately, they are being bought and paid for by animal rights groups to sponsor legislation that is turning wildlife management over to the legislators instead of the Department of Fish & Wildlife, where the science is.

Because of the American System of Conservation Funding, anglers and hunters are the very reason we have such abundant fish and wildlife populations today – because we put our money where our mouth is. The anti-fishing, anti-hunting, animal rights groups on the other hand, contribute nothing to wildlife or the environment and in fact take millions of dollars away from the programs through lawsuits.

As it has for the last 100 years, the future of wildlife conservation depends on science-based management and anglers play an active role in its success. The anti-groups simply undermine the future of fishing and hunting in California.

Mac's Lake Almanor Guide Service
Duncan McIntyre
Home (530) 596-3202
Cell (510) 289-1150

BRETT WOMACK
ALMANOR
DOCK SUPPLY
CUSTOM DOCKS • REPAIR & SUPPLY
461 Firehouse Road (530) 596-3358
Lake Almanor, California 96137 Cell (530) 518-3625
brettwomack@citlink.net Fax (530) 596-4404

California Fishing License Sales on the Decline

The sales for fishing licenses has continued to decline over the past years and so have the non-resident license sales. Also on the decline are the one-day and two-day license sales. The total sales declined 10 percent in 2015. The ocean enhancement validation stamps were up last year because of the spectacular ocean fishing season that was seen in recent memory. If it were not for the ocean fishing program, the sales decline would have been even more dramatic. From 1981 the peak of the fishing license sales in California was 2,296,107, the sales have declined down to just 265,533 in 2015. That's an incredible down turn in the past 35 years. If you factor in the population growth in the state over the past 35 years the number of decline is unbelievable. One of the major factors is the cost of today's license versus 1981 when the cost of a general license was only \$5.75. With today inflation figured in, the cost of a state license would be \$24.15. It would appear that the Department of Fish & Wildlife is not concerned with the decline in the number of sales because the revenue has increased each year because of legislative mandated built-in annual increases and the addition of new stamp and punch cards. The basic cost of a 2016 state fishing license is \$47.01.

There was a strong push last year to make the state fishing license a 12 month license. Meaning if you bought a license on June 20th of 2015, it would be valid until June 19th of the following year. The state decided they would continue with the current policy. Meaning if you bought a license on December 20, 2015 it would expire on December 31, 2015 at the full price of \$43.50 for a 12 day period.



Charles Bluth
Owner

541 Catfish Beach Rd. Phone: (530) 258-3376
P.O. Box 1102 Fax: (530) 258-2838
Chester, CA 96020 charles@northshorecampground.com

Services on Lake Almanor

West Shore of Lake

Plumas Pines Resort (530) 259-4343

Marina, gas, boat and 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 (530) 259-2267

Cabins, RV sites, marina. Store with tackle, bait, and other food and beverage items. Carol's Cafe and West Shore Deli serving breakfast and 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 and 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, paddle boats, seadoos, and other water toys.

North Shore Campground (530) 250-3376

Campground with cabins, tents and RV space. RV and boat storage. Boat slip, kayak and canoe rentals. General store, laundry and showers. Fun outdoor activities and local attractions.



Rob Hart
Guest Relations

Ph: (530) 596-3348 x 13
Fax: (530) 596-4404
Cell: (530) 258-6559

430 Peninsula Drive Lake Almanor, CA 96137
Email: kprob@frontier.com
Website: www.knottypine.net

**Cabins Guest House
Boat Rentals Marina**



**GARY CASELLA
PAUL CASELLA
530-596-3349**

R.V. • BOAT RENTALS • DOCKAGE • MARINA

442 Peninsula Drive • Lake Almanor, CA 96137
Website: www.bigcoveresort.com

Lake Almanor Fish-For-A-Wish Team Tournament



Anglers celebrate the well-attended Fish For A Wish Tournament, held August 1, 2015 at Big Cove Resort and Marina. “It looks like everyone is having a lot of fun,” noted tournament director and event organizer AJ Casella. “We have over 120 fishermen competing for prizes, and at least another 300 people came for the catered lunch. I think everyone is excited to offer their support.” The tournament raised money from entry fees, a drawing, and a silent auction to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the Almanor Fishing Association, and Kokanee Power. In the Adult Division, first place went to the four-member team led by Wes Morgan; the second place, three-member team, was led by Jack Schultz; and David Raven won third place. In the Junior Division, Frankie Giovannetti, 14, from Reno, NV., won first place; Derek Beckman, 13, from Susanville won second place; and Dylan Cox, 14, from Sparks, NV., won third place. Reprinted with permission from Chester Progressive. Photo courtesy of Stacy Fisher, Chester Progressive.





KOKANEE POWER & BIG COVE RESORT PRESENT THE 11TH ANNUAL:

LAKELAKE ALMANOR FISH FOR A WISH TEAM TOURNAMENT

Saturday, August 6, 2016



bigcoveresort.com



almanorfishingassociation.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Derby Chairman

Gary Coe: 888-744-8150
coekanees@att.net

or
AJ Casella: 415-367-5035

FISH FOR A WISH

442 Peninsula Drive
Lake Almanor, Ca
96137
www.fishforawish.org

KOKANEE POWER

P.O. Box 3857
Merced, Ca 95344
"a 501(c)3 Non-profit
Organization since
1998"
www.kokanee-power.org
info@kokanee-power.org

TEAM ENTRY FEES:

- (per participant)
- \$45 (member (KP or AFA or Age 65+) / \$55 (non-member)
 - THREE fish weigh-in per team
- Rainbow, Brown Trout and/or King Salmon at least 12" in length
 - A TEAM is one or more anglers
- All team members must be in the same boat
 - One boat per team
 - One team per boat

TEAM SIDE POTS

- Blind Bogey: \$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 ANGLERS FISH FREE !!!!
(with paid adult)

- Open to anglers under age 16
- ONE Trout or Salmon 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 derby

Big Raffle Event

- Raffle Tickets: \$5.00 each or 5/\$20.00
- 2 free tickets if you register before July 20th!

Check-In, Registration, Weigh-In, Awards & Big Raffle Event At:

BIG COVE RESORT
Lake Almanor

Derby Registration forms available online
www.kokanee-power.org



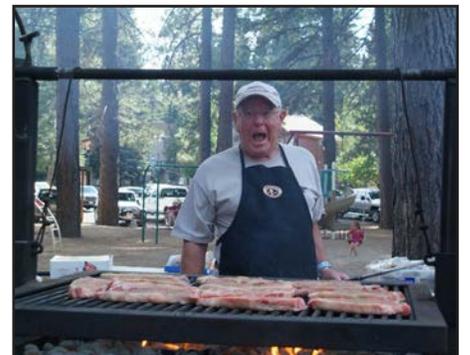
Team Payouts to 10th Place

- 1st Place: \$600 (min payout) (based on 125 paid participants)
- 11th to 15th Place receive free entry to 2017 Almanor Derby!

Important Information

Registration: by mail, by phone, online 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 at BIG COVE RESORT Only unpaid or late registrations must check-in.	Friday August 5, 2016, 4:30pm-7:00pm
Derby Start Time:	5:30am (no exceptions)
Weigh-In: BIG COVE RESORT	Starts: 12:00pm Ends: 1:00pm * You must be in weigh-in line by 1:00pm NO EXCEPTIONS
Lunch: (included with entry fee & begins at 12:15pm)	Lunch Only (not fishing, includes 2 drink coupons): \$15.00 Adults \$ 5.00 Kids

Last Years 23rd Annual Family BBQ Attendees Having Fun



Almanor Fishing Association's 24th Annual Family BBQ and Fundraiser



Saturday, July 30, 2016

4 to 9 p.m.

Lake Almanor Country Club

Recreation Area #1

Dinner served from 5 - 6 p.m.

New York Steak Dinner \$25 Donation

Hot Dog Dinner Plate \$10 Donation

All kids receive a raffle gift!

Buy your Steak dinner tickets early for \$20 and SAVE \$5

Pre-sale tickets available from the following businesses:

Big Cove Resort

442 Peninsula Drive, Lake Almanor

(530) 596-3349

LACC Restaurant

951 Clifford Drive, Lake Almanor

(530) 259-2026

Books & Beyond

140 Main Street, Chester

(530) 258-2150

Lots of Raffle and Door Prizes

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.



FREE FISHING DAYS FOR 2016

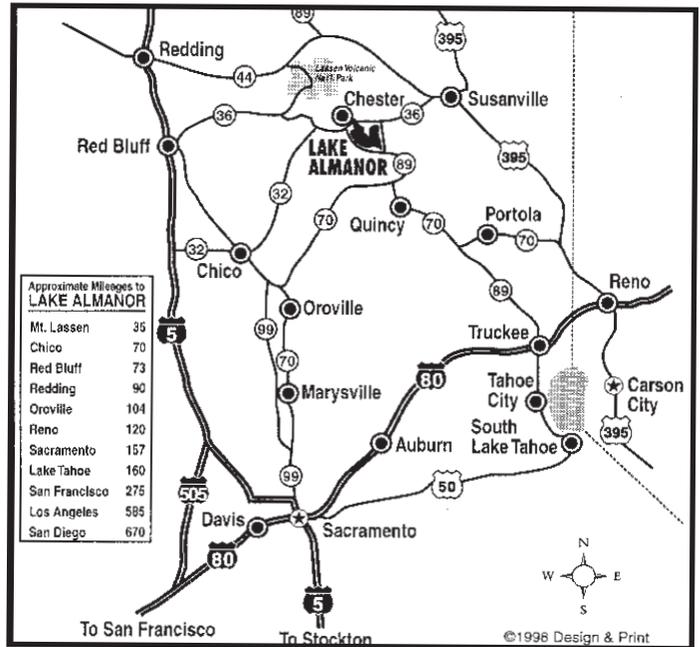
July 2nd (Saturday) and
September 3rd (Saturday)

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

Have you ever felt the excitement of watching your bobber suddenly jiggle, then dive out of sight? Or feeling the tap-tap-tap of a bass as it tastes the worm on the end of your line? Or having a salmon practically tear the rod out of your hands as it smashes your lure? What's that? You say you never learned to fish?

If you are new to the sport of fishing, and not sure if you will enjoy it, a great opportunity awaits you. CDFW offers two Free Fishing Days each year. On these days, you can fish without a sport fishing license. Free Fishing Days provide a great, low-cost way to give fishing a try. Some CDFW Regions offer a Fishing in the City program where you can go fishing in the middle of major metropolitan areas perhaps just a few blocks from your home. Fishing in the City and free fishing day clinics are designed to educate novice anglers about fishing ethics, fish habits, effective methods for catching fish, and fishing tackle. You can even learn how to clean and prepare your catch so you can enjoy it for dinner that night.

While all fishing regulations, such as bag and size limits, gear restrictions, report card requirements, fishing hours and stream closures remain in effect, there are two days each year when anyone can fish without purchasing a fishing license.



FISHING FYT'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.



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