



# The Almanor Fisherman

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ALMANOR FISHING ASSOCIATION

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## Some Thoughts on Fish, Fishing and Other Stuff

By Bob Kopernik, Fishing Guide  
AKA Lucky Grady

I don't know how many times I have said, "Fishing is always good, but sometimes the catching... not so much." However, the worst day of fishing is always better than the best day at work.

We found Lake Almanor in the late 70's or early 80's and spent our long weekends and yearly vacations camping and fishing here ever since. When we retired in 2004 we bought our first motorhome and set off on a five-year plan to see the entire USA. We had been on a waiting list for a seasonal RV site in Plumas Pines Resort on the west shore of Lake Almanor for many years and three years into our ambitious travel plan we were offered a space that we couldn't pass up. We are still full-time RV'ers and even though we have visited all 49 states (no highway to Hawaii yet) our RV travel is now limited to mid-September through March.

Even though I came from a family of ardent fishermen, and I probably cut my first teeth on the cork handle of an old stainless steel casting rod, my first 20 or 25 years of fishing here were not really all that productive. My wife Alma can attest that it wasn't because of the lack of tackle. I/we spent hundreds if not thousands of dollars always buying the latest stuff trying to improve our fish-catching results. I talked with every fisherman I came across trying to learn what techniques were working or not working for them. It wasn't until I started fishing the lake four or five hours a day five or six days a week that I really learned the lake and developed some techniques that consistently produce quality fish for me. Not that they always work, I still have "skunked days" just like everyone else.

I started my Fishing Guide business at the suggestion of several fishing buddies and another guide friend here at the lake. I wanted to help new-to-the lake serious fishermen and women who wanted to learn how and where to fish this diverse body of water. I knew there were others who after years of fishing here just were not achieving satisfactory results and were seeking a little help. This season will be the sixth year for my guide business and all is pretty much going as planned. There is a lot of satisfaction to me when a former client calls or writes me with feedback that his or her success has greatly improved either here or at another lake. I have written AFA articles for the past five years with the emphasis on sharing my knowledge of the lake and my fishing techniques. Every subsequent year I give mention to the new methods, improvements, and changes that I learned or developed during the previous year. You can find these and other informative articles in the back issues of the Almanor Fisherman on their website at



Bob and Alma Kopernik of Lucky Grady Guide Service  
with a very nice morning's catch

<http://www.almanorfishingassociation.com/documents/Newsletters>.

When I started my business I put up a large bulletin board next to my boat at the Plumas Pines Resort Marina store. Two years ago I started writing a weekly synopsis of what's happening (fishing wise) on the lake. This is appropriately called "The You Should Have Been Here Yesterday Report." I guess the report is well received because I have had quite a few requests to post it on a website. My resistance or problem with websites is that they are counter-productive if you don't maintain them on a regular basis. We will see!

Over the past several years I have come to believe that the water column temperature has a much bigger effect on fish catching results than I ever imagined. Lake water temperature is controlled by the amount of winter snow pack in the local watershed and climatic conditions. I think water temperature affects the amount of natural food available for the fish to feed on. Based on the weather reports and my conversations with area residents it looks like this year the lake will be full, but it will begin warming very early. Perhaps by mid-May?

As the old saying goes "Everything works...Nothing works." The proliferation of insect larvae due to the warmer water column last year, in part, caused me to try trolling meal worms behind my attractors. I was amazed at how many fish I caught as compared to threaded night crawlers which had been my preferred bait. I bought the Giant (size) Meal Worms and threaded a single worm on to a #6 Gamakatsu Bait Holder hook with an 18" long 8-pound test fluorocarbon leader. Solid brass or copper colored dodgers seemed to work as well as any. For the most part, I troll these baits at 0.8 MPH at 25 to 35 feet down or 10 feet off the bottom. Later in the summer, Speedy Shiners seemed to work well. I ended up going to the tackle store to restock my inventory of nickel or copper/fluorescent red lures in the 1/16th ounce size. I trolled these at 2.3 MPH or a little faster and at the same depth as the meal worms above. Always remember that if you don't get a hit after 20 minutes or so - Do Something Different!

Two things that I always believed about fish habits is that all fish are "Object Freaks" in that they tend to be attracted to structure or cover and they tend to "School Up." When you catch one there almost always are others in that same location. Things have changed. Many states including California are now planting "Triploid" or genetically modified fish that have been neutered. To find out how they do this go to:

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Search-Results.aspx?q=Triploid%20trout>

The why part of this issue is contained in "A Synopsis of Recent History of CA Inland Trout Management" at

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=99286>.

More specifically (if you are a lawyer) you can read CA Senate Bill 1148 especially Sec. 12, Sub Sec.1729 paragraph E.

When these fish were originally planted, they were thought to be a

good thing in that they grew faster, fought harder, and tasted better than natural fish. Nothing was said about their behavior. I spent hours on the internet and didn't find anything that supports my thoughts that these neutered fish have a different "social behavior" from normal fish. It makes sense to me that when you neuter a dog or a cat it changes their personality and social being, so what happens to fish? I'm beginning to think that they don't "school up" like natural fish. What that means for us fishermen is that the available population of (triploid) fish in the lake will be spread out over a much larger area and our regular "hot spots" don't hold as many fish as they once did. Just a thought. If anyone has any viable information on this subject or personal experience, I would appreciate hearing from you.

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 larger parties and are well suited for youngsters who do better still fishing. Others offer fly fishing or bass fishing and still others offer trips that include both still fishing and trolling. Note that I specialize only in trolling using downriggers for trout and salmon. I also offer a discounted price for "Catch and Release" trips.

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/GPS unit, selection of rods and reels, basic knots for tying leaders and lures, and how to rig baits. I'm surprised how often clients need help with how to properly 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 in this publication go to: [http://www.almanorfishingassociation.com/lake\\_guides.html](http://www.almanorfishingassociation.com/lake_guides.html)

Good luck and "THINK BIG FISH"

**Bob Kopernik**

**408-515-1503**

[Luckygrady1@att.net](mailto:Luckygrady1@att.net)

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*Steve Dewitt and Tim Powell with a dandy Rainbow caught on "The Lucky Grady"*



*Clients Ben Alexander and Bob Foster with three dinner fish of 13 caught and released on "The Lucky Grady"*

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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.



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# Fly Fishing Lake Almanor

By Lance Gray, Fly Guide

When I was a teenager the place to fish was Lake Almanor. I dreamed about catching huge Brown Trout. Every weekend I would fish the lake. Learning the season and following the water temperature. This is the key for successful fly fishing at the lake.

The lake, like everything in nature, goes up and down in temperature according to the season and water level. Keying on water temperature, just not on the surface but in five-foot increments until you hit the bottom, is very hard for people to achieve. Most anglers can get the surface temperature quite easy by reading their fish finder or just placing a thermometer into the water. To get the five-foot increment readings takes time and patience. But what this will do is find areas of cold water in layers of the lake. Simply, attach a string to your thermometer that has marks at five-foot increments, drop down into the water and hold for a moment. Retrieve the thermometer quickly and read the temperature. If you have a fish finder, mark where the fish are and drop your thermometer in that area to get the reading.

Mixing water temperature and food source is the next step to successful angling. You must have cold water with an adjoining food source. For example, Gerital cove with the Hexagenia Hatch right next to the deep water at the dam. This gives both cold water for the fish to lounge in and a major food source right next to them to feed on. Another example is at Camp 5 with the deep water that is cold with a pond smelt bait ball working the surface.

I have had fly fishers come to me and ask me questions like, “The Hexagenia was hatching all over but there was nothing eating them?” My answer is quick and easy – water temperature. The bugs are still hatching but the fish are gone because the water is too hot for them to be comfortable. Or, they will tell me they only hooked smallmouth which is another indication that the water is too warm.

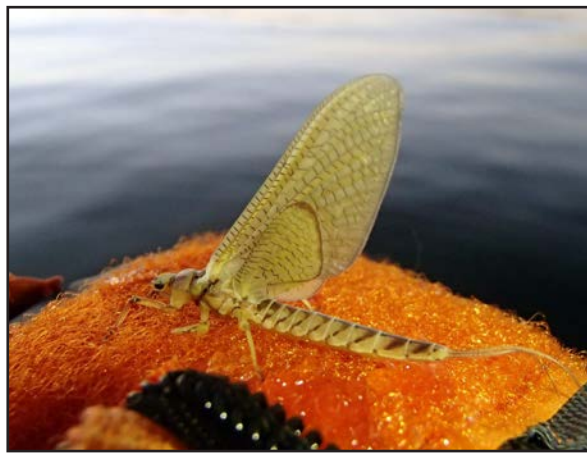
The fly fisher must follow the water temperatures to find fish. At the height of summer, the fish are sitting in cold thermals (layers of cold water within the lake) or around the springs or trying to cool off at Hamilton Branch. The same can be said in colder months – the fish are trying to find warmer water that is comfortable for them. Follow the temperature and you will find the fish.

Lake Almanor has much more than just trout. The lake has a huge healthy population of smallmouth bass. I love fishing for these guys. They eat flies, fight great and every now and then make great fish tacos. For the bass, I like a fishing structure of any kind. From the jetties at Plumas Pines to the rock walls of South Shore or even an underwater knoll at Goose Bay. Bass love structure. A fish finder aids in this task. Looking at the contour of the bottom you will see fish suspended in a pack off of all these structure types. When the bass go on spawn out in the shallows by the Chester Airport you will find very aggressive fish. You will also find some truly huge fish. I believe that the next California Smallmouth Record will be from Lake Almanor.

I have a couple of rigging setups that I use specifically for each fishing situations. I believe in simple rigs that work. There is no need to get too crazy on rigging. You spend more time tying knots than fishing, no good!

For the Hexagenia Hatch, I like fishing nymphs deep down in the water column. For my setup I use a 9' 5-6 weight rods lined with an RIO InTouch Camolux line, this is a sinking line. My leader is a four-foot straight piece of 10lb test. The fly can be a Hexagenia Nymph or even a weighted Woolly Bugger in the Hexagenia color. The flies include Lance's Hex Nymph, Lance's Hex Bugger, Gray's Hex Nymph, Burk's Hexagenia, Milt Jensen Hex Nymph, or just a Woolly Bugger in Olive. All of these flies work. I like size 6 to 8 hook sizes.

For nymph fishing at Hamilton Branch my rig is simple. My rod again is a 9' 5-6 weight lined with an RIO Indicator Line or RIO Gold floating fly line. My leader is a 9' tapered leader in 5x or 6lb pound test. I slide an indicator on the main leader. At the terminal



*Hexagenia Nymph*

end of the leader, I tie on another piece of tippet in 5x. Then I tie my fly on. At the tippet knot, I will place a split shot to sink my nymph down. The indicator will mark your depth by sliding it up or down the leader. Flies to fish are Hogan's S&M in Olive or Brown Size 16, Lance's X-May in Olive or Brown Size 16, Hogan's Red Head Step Child in Size 16, Lance's X-May Red Riding Hood Size 16, Tiger Midge in Black or Red Size 18, also the Blood Midge in Size 12.

For bass fishing, I use a 9'-9 ½' 6- 7 weight rods lined with an RIO InTouch Streamer Tip line. This line is floating and then has a sinking tip at the terminal end of the fly line. I also use a floating fly line like the RIO Indicator Line or the RIO Gold line. I use the Streamer Tip line when I am fishing with streamers in the water column and the floating line when I am fishing floating pond smelt or even gurgler flies. My leaders again are simple. My leader is a four-foot straight piece of 12 lb test. Bass aren't leader

shy. Sinking flies include Woolly Buggers in Black or Olive Size 6-8, Stanley Streamer Rainbow and Lake Almanor Special Size 4, and Clouser Minnows in all white or white/gray in a range of sizes from 1/0 to size 6. I also like fishing Blanton's Flashtail Whistlers in a variety of color combinations with white/gray being my top choice. These flies are tied in 1/0. For the floating fly line, my leader is the same. The flies I fish are Milt Jensen's Pond Smelt, Gray's Cyclops Pond Smelt, and Lance's Pond Smelt Gurgler.

If the fly fisher remembers that water temperature coupled with a food source close by equals fish – they will be very successful at Lake Almanor.

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www.lancegrayandcompany.com

Check out our new online store at  
<http://store.lancegrayandcompany.com/>



*Lance Gray, Fly Guide*



*Kirsten Gray, Fly Guide*

Lance and Kirsten have more than 50 years combined experience in fly fishing. Lance started fly-fishing with his father and brother Lincoln at age seven. In his teens, he began tying flies commercially for shops all around Northern California. At 17, he went to work at Powell's in Chico, working in the fly shop and building rods. He guided for Powell's, conducted fly-tying and fly-fishing schools, and traveled.

In 1993, Lance and Kirsten started Saltwater Innovations, a company that manufactured and distributed products for saltwater fly fishing. Lance's Crystal Popper, Gray's Billfish Fly, the KO Charlie line, and the Raghead Crabs are all Saltwater Innovations products. Kirsten worked behind the scenes, handling the day-to-day operation running the manufacturing floor of the company.

In 2003 they launched Lance Gray & Company, a full-service outfitter offering guided trips, fly-fishing schools, workshops, and a travel agency. Lance conducts presentations at fly clubs and outdoor shows, and supports local groups like Cub Scouts and 4H. He's a signature tier for Solitude Fly Company, pro staff member for Sage and Rio and is a featured writer, with articles published in Angling Trade Magazine, California Fly Fisher, Fly Fishermen, Sierra Fisherman and Northwest Fly Fishing.

Kirsten is a fantastic photographer who's had images published in periodicals and on websites throughout the outdoor industry.



*Happy client fly fishing with Lance and Kirsten Gray,  
Fly Guides*

# Fishing on Lake Almanor

## By John Crotty, Fishing Guide Service

Thank you, Almanor Fishing Association for allowing me the opportunity to submit my second article to your annual newsletter and more importantly for all your efforts towards improving our fishery.

Almanor, like most other lakes, has felt the impacts of California's multi-year drought, little to no snow pack, reduced fish plants and warmer water temps have all played roles in our fishing success or lack of, over the past few years. We are optimistic the record-breaking winter of 2016/17 is the beginning of a return to normal weather patterns.

The million dollar question is, how will this past winter impact fishing on Almanor? To date (March 10th 2017) we have seen water temps ranging from the mid-thirties to most recently approaching the 50 degree mark in the afternoon. PG&E has doubled the outflow from Canyon Dam into the Feather River and the Super Ditch has been flowing for a few months, visibility has been limited, and fishing conditions have been difficult.

Recently we have slowed down our presentation and are targeting fish feeding on Pond Smelt on the surface. White has been the color, with Arctic Fox Trolling Flies becoming our top producer. We have been targeting fish in the top 8-15 feet of water, in water between 12 to 40 feet deep. Last spring when water was clear and fish were hunkered down at the bottom feeding on smelt, we were slow trolling Berkley Gulp's and crawlers five feet off the bottom at 1 MPH. The point I am making is 2017 will be a challenge, adaptation will be key, change baits, alter speeds and in my opinion perhaps the most important ingredient, manage depth's until you consistently find fish.

The one thing we can all be assured of is, Almanor will produce some monster Trout this year, Rainbows and Browns over 5 pounds are not uncommon and can be caught throughout the year in a variety of methods. Bank fishermen, fly fishermen, trollers and those sitting on anchor, fishing their preferred baits, lures and flies, all stand a chance of catching that trophy fish. If/when that trophy ends up in your net, take a few seconds to admire its beauty, take a quick picture or two and return it to the water.

Almanor is a world class fishery, that said, like most fisheries in our State, the quality and quantity of our catches have declined over the years. I am of the opinion that the decline can be attributed to a variety of reasons, increased fishing pressure, decreased fish plants, warming water temps and in Almanor's case, the slaughtering of fish at Hamilton Branch as they seek refuge in cooler water. There are very few lakes that produce the quality of fish caught on Almanor. I consider Almanor a Trophy Lake and the number one issue that I believe needs to be addressed is Almanor's five fish limit. It is easy to sit back and criticize CF&W's reduced plants and lack of enforcement, as fishermen and stewards of this beautiful lake we have to take accountability for our actions. To that end, I will be imposing a three fish limit for fishermen on my boat beginning in 2017. I am fully aware this decision

could impact my business and understand the consequences of this decision.

If you are still reading my article you most likely are a fishermen, if you care about our future get involved. Deb & I are members of AFA and proud supporter's and feeders of the pen project. We are also members of CIFFI, and participated in CIFFI's annual fundraising events at Eagle Lake last year and their annual dinner. We donate our time and energy to both organizations because they support the waters we fish. We can all do more, please become a member, attend fundraisers, or donate raffle items to the non-profits that support your fishery, they are our future.

Recently I began writing weekly fishing reports that are posted in WON, on AFA'S web site, AFA'S Facebook page and Quail Lodge's Facebook page. My reports are intended to prepare you for your next fishing trip to Almanor. I include weather reports, road conditions, lake levels, water clarity, where I did (or didn't) catch fish the past week, and what methods I was using. If you have information that you would like included in my reports or have a specific request please let me know.

Thanks for taking the time to read my article, hope to see you on the water,

John Crotty, Fishing Guide Service  
CA Guide ID# 0011986, USCG Licensed, Bonded & Insured  
Quail Lodge

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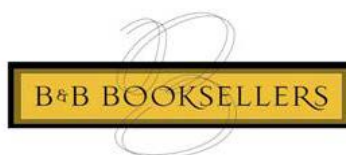
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*Kevin Guess caught this beauty fishing with John Crotty's Fishing Guide Service*



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*Dan Prunell caught these lovely fish while out on Lake Almanor with John Crotty, Fishing Guide Service*

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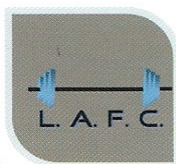


[thenut@citlink.net](mailto:thenut@citlink.net)

## Lake Almanor Fitness Center

160 CEDAR STREET

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Chester, CA 96020



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## New Zealand Mud Snails Invasive Species



The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has confirmed the presence of New Zealand mud snails in the low-flow sections of the Feather River and Yuba River in Butte County, and is asking recreational users of the river to "clean, drain and dry" fishing and recreational gear and watercraft in order to help prevent the spread of these invasive snails.

Boaters, anglers and others who may visit the Feather River are asked to decontaminate equipment and follow the "clean, drain and dry" directive with all equipment used in the river:

- If you wade, freeze waders and other gear overnight (at least six hours).
- After leaving the water, inspect waders, boots, float tubes, boats and trailers or any gear used in the water. Remove any visible snails with a stiff brush and follow with rinsing. If possible, freeze or completely dry out any wet gear.
- Never transport live fish or other aquatic plants or animals from one water source to another.

## 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 one 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.

Doug Neal

(530) 258-6732

Almanor Fishing Adventures



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## 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, supreme unleaded/91 octane 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) 258-3376**

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.



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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*

### **NORTH STATE GROCERY, INC.**

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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.

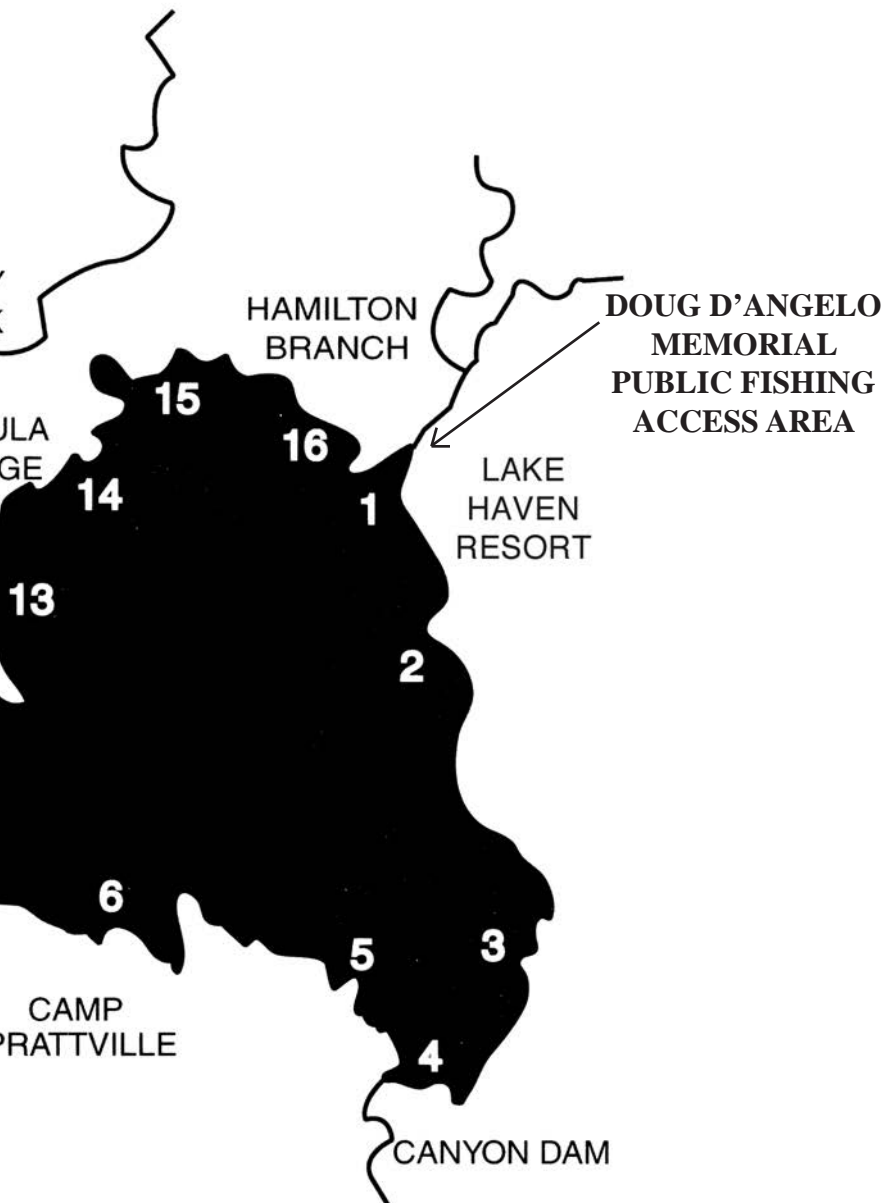
Several deep underwater springs are scattered along this area, and a couple in closer to shore. King Salmon, browns and rainbows all can be found moving around this entire area. Trolling can be very productive, but bait fishing is often the method that produces faster action. Crickets, mealworms, crawlers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



# Boat Ramp Etiquette - Know the Rules and Courtesies

Boat etiquette on and off the water is an important topic. Ask any boater what they perceive to be the biggest issue on the water, and they will inevitably go into a story about an inconsiderate boater. And many times this will occur at the launch ramp before the boater even gets on the water. Some of the problem comes from a boat operators' lack of experience, some from a lack of perception of what is going on around them and unfortunately some from simple disrespect for others.



Most of the rules at boat launches and ramps are not written in stone, they're just common sense. Developing a regular procedure that will allow you to launch quickly and then get out of the way so the next boater/angler can put in is a must and something boaters should embrace. The ramp is not the place to start organizing tackle and tying on lures. Instead, follow a regular procedure of making the boat ready for a quick launch. Also, make sure you're being respectful to others at the boat ramp to avoid harsh words from other boaters.

**Preparation** - Complete as much of the preparation, loading, and unloading in the "staging area" as possible to avoid unnecessary delays and blocking the boat ramp when launching and retrieving your boat. Other people want to launch as well and there is nothing more annoying than watching someone on the ramp doing things they could have done in the parking lot. There are a lot of things to check and re-check before launching your boat. Be sure to check that all required safety equipment and the vessel's registration card are on board. Make sure the trailer coupler is connected securely to the ball hitch and unplug the trailer lights. Check the condition of the battery, the motor, and the angle of the drive unit. Make sure the vessel's drain plug is firmly in place. Turn off your headlights, plug in your graphs - whatever you have to do. Your fellow fishermen will thank you.

**Launching your vessel** - Launching conditions vary with each boat ramp and with different water and tide levels. Launching should progress slowly until you are familiar with the ramp and water levels. Adapt the following common steps as needed for safe launch and retrieval. Check the drive unit prior to backing down the ramp. Run the exhaust blower, if the vessel is so equipped. Back the trailer into the water until the vessel is in sufficient water depth to lower the drive unit. Unhook the winch line, but be sure you have a line to the bow or side cleats to control the boat. Lower the drive unit and start the engine. Once it is running steadily, back the vessel slowly off the trailer. Move the vessel out of the

way. Secure it to a courtesy dock while you pick up your passengers. Quickly move the towing vehicle off the ramp.

**Retrieving your vessel** - Once your day is done, common courtesy is still important. If there are other boaters launching or leaving, be patient. When it is your turn, be ready to move quickly. Start by getting all of your gear ready to take off the boat, and get your boat ready to go on the trailer. If you have the option, let someone off the boat to get the trailer to the water while you float nearby so you don't tie up the courtesy ramp.

Back the trailer into the water so that approximately two-thirds of the rollers or bunks are submerged. Move the vessel onto the trailer far enough to attach the winch line to the bow eye of the vessel. Finish pulling it onto the trailer by cranking the winch. Consider adding an additional bow safety chain to secure the bow eye to the trailer. Shut off the vessel's engine, and raise the drive unit. Tow the vessel off the ramp and out of the way of others. In the staging area, secure the vessel to the trailer with the tie-down straps. Remove the drain plug, and drain all live wells, holds, and the bilge in a location that will not contaminate the waterway.

Trailer boats are a leading cause of the spread of invasive species. Do the environment a favor and make sure your boat is cleaned before you launch again, particularly if you go to a different body of water.

Boaters who practice good launch etiquette, including readying their rigs before backing down the ramp, make life easier and more enjoyable for themselves and the boaters in line behind them.

## A Few Courtesies

**Catch up after your truck is parked** - Fishing is largely about fellowship and camaraderie, so there's nothing wrong with enjoying the time with your buddies but if you're going to chat at the boat ramp, at least chat while loading/unloading. If you stop to have a conversation on the ramp, someone else may have a conversation with you too and those conversations are usually not pleasant. At least make progress while catching up with your friends.

**Turn off your headlights** - Ever tried to back a boat trailer with someone's headlights in your mirrors? It's practically impossible. As soon as your truck goes into reverse, shut off your headlights so people backing their trailers in adjacent lanes will be able to see. This is a major hold-up commonly observed at boat ramps.



**Don't hog the ramp** - A lot of marinas have multiple boat ramp lanes, but no concrete dividers. Essentially, they look like one really wide ramp. When the facility is busy, don't go down the very middle—that just clogs things up for everyone else in line. Dump your boat on the farthest side of the ramp as possible so others can launch next to you. There's no reason one trailer needs to take up four or five lanes. Showing that you're making an effort to hurry makes a huge difference to those waiting.

**Don't block a ramp** - Never block a ramp with an unattended vessel or vehicle. Move the vessel away from the launch lane immediately after removing it from the trailer. Return briefly to pick up the vehicle driver once he or she has parked the vehicle and is back at the ramp.

**If parking lot is empty, give others some space** - Give the other guys a little breathing room by not parking right next to them if you don't have to. When it's time to put his boat back on the trailer, he'll have to do some maneuvering to free himself from the unnecessary bind you put him in. It's hard to back a trailer when you have six inches of wiggle room on one side or the other of your rig.

**Common sense retrieving** - When retrieving, do not pull your vessel into a launch lane until the towing vehicle is at the ramp. The line is formed by vehicles with trailers, not by vessels in the water. Drop off the vehicle driver, and wait offshore and clear of the ramp until he or she arrives with the trailer.

**Experienced helpers** - Use at least two experienced people to launch and retrieve your vessel, one to drive the towing vehicle and one to operate the vessel. If launching and retrieving by yourself, it is recommended to place wheel chocks behind the wheels of the towing vehicle. If you are in line to launch and you see someone having difficulty, offer to assist the boater; it will be appreciated and help things move along faster.



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Owner

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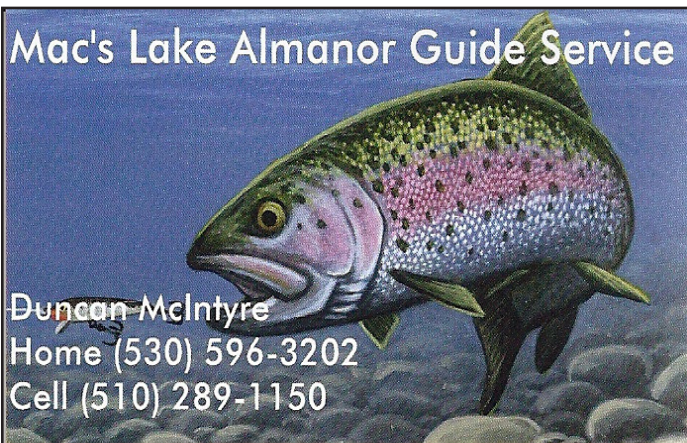
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# Past Year with the Almanor Fishing Association

By Rich Dengler, AFA President

Much has happened with the Almanor Fishing Association since our last Almanor Fisherman Newsletter. In this article I will bring you up-to-date on the fish delivery, cage damage, and budgeting plans.

## Fish Delivery

25,000 Rainbow Trout were delivered the second week of October 2016 by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Deliveries were made via CDFW trucks and then transferred by pontoon boat into AFA pens located at Hamilton Branch. Dedicated AFA volunteers performed the transfer and began feeding the fish daily.

The fish were hardy and thriving in their new environment until January 2017 when Plumas County experienced its first severe winter in years. Our cages in the Branch really took a beating from record-breaking winter storms, more so than most of the members can ever remember happening. We had to have several work parties to make repairs to the cages and the transfer dock, only to have the docks damaged again with the next storm. The final straw came the night of February 9th during a major rain storm when the outflow of Hamilton Branch was so fast and strong that it tore the

two docks holding the cages completely apart. Our transfer dock was damaged so bad it was beyond repair and totally unusable.

The cages had to be removed from the fast current so our dedicated volunteers and Brett Womack's crew move them to Big Cove for safe keeping. Fortunately, during the transferring of the cages, we did not lose any fish. There were many logistical problems with the cages being relocated but our great volunteers worked them out and kept feeding the fish daily. Thanks goes to Brett Womack and his hardworking crew for their support in untangling anchor chains and moving the cages to and from Big Cove for the short term. The cages needed to be removed from Big Cove by April 1st for the start of the new vacation season.



On April 4th the fish were released outside the mouth of Hamilton Branch and the pens were reattached to the anchors in the Branch. In spite of the harsh weather and damaged cages, the hardy fish prospered and we had little die off.

## Harsh Winter Months

The 2016-17 winter was exceptionally wet with record rainfall. Rainfall at Prattville for the year up to the end of March was 56" which is twice the normal to-date rainfall. Snowfall was not so dramatic. As of the end of March snowfall was 169" which is 140% of normal.

The super ditch west of Chester has been running at full strength for several months and the snow melt, at this writing, has not yet started. The lake reached 4,493.07 feet on February 21st before PG&E started to release water down the Feather River in preparation for the snow melt and still more rain fell in March and April. Hamilton Branch was the highest in 40 years reported by a homeowner who has lived in Hamilton Branch that long. The high water coming down the Branch was all from rain run off thus very muddy with a lot of debris coming down with it.





## Cage Damage

In our 2016 Newsletter, I talked about damages to the cage covers from River Otters that were getting into the cages and eating a large number of fish. This past fall the association bought new heavier mesh cover material. A number of AFA volunteers replaced all the cage covers before the fish arrived in early October. To date, we have not had any problems with River Otters breaching the cages.

We removed all the on demand fish feeders on the cages except for one which we store material used to feed the fish. There is also a locker placed on the cage dock to hold bags of food. This allowed for the older feeders to not have to carry 40 lb sacks down the step stairs at the Branch when it is snowing. The storage locker is replenished by AFA volunteers Brett Hurff and John Crotty when necessary. They both were instrumental in keeping the fish fed this past winter with all the damage. I thank both of them plus the other volunteers that helped during the harsh winter months.

I also mentioned in last year's Newsletter about the major damage to several cages that needed to be repaired before we received the fish in October of 2016. Fortunately, CDFW was only able to provide us with 25,000 rainbow trout this year instead of the 50,000 we are allocated. We did have five good cages which could hold that number of fish. CDFW came out in September 2016 with a diving crew and did an inspection of our cages to make sure that we were able to hold the 25,000 fish before releasing them to us.

## Budgeting Plans

Last year also brought a major change to the Almanor Fishing Association's budgeting plans. The Kokanee Power Board of Directors voted unanimously to not fund the Hamilton Branch Fish Rearing Cage Program for the 2016/2017 season. Kokanee Power lost their fundraising derby with "Fish For A Wish" when it was decided to not put on the event any longer. Kokanee Power had provided major funding for the cage program since the CDFW could no longer support the program with funds starting back in 2007 because of their own budget shortfalls. Kokanee Power took on the funding from 2008 thru the end on 2015/2016 season. This left the Almanor Fishing Association with a huge funding void (\$12,000) if we wanted to keep the cage program going. The AFA Board of Directors made the decision to continue the cage program to support the trophy fishing in the lake and also support the local community by the fisherman coming to the lake and spending money.

AFA put out a plea for grant money and for any and all donations that we could get to cover the additional \$12,000 needed to keep the program going from year-to-year. AFA also needed money to make the major repairs to the cages and transfer dock. We received two large grants from the Monroe Schuler Foundation and the Chico Area Fly Fishers, and many members sent in donations. These funds will cover next year's (2017/2018) fish food, insurance, and permits as well as the cost to repair the cages. AFA will need the same commitment to cover the addition \$12,000 every season.

## Release All Brown Trout

The number of Brown Trout being released into Lake Almanor is not getting any better. Just four years ago, CDFW released 45,000 Browns into the lake. The last several years that number has dwindled to just 6,000 Brown Trout being planted in the Lake. The hatchery that has provided the Brown Trout plants for the lake will no longer be raising Browns, instead, they will be raising Heritage Trout. Their reasoning is that the Brown Trout are non-native fish and should not be planted in California waters per California Senate Bill 1148. The Associations keeps pushing the CDFW to increase the Brown numbers.



## AFA Annual BBQ and Fundraiser

Mark your calendar for the AFA 25th Annual Family BBQ and Fundraiser to be held on Saturday, July 29th. The event will take place at the Lake Almanor Country Club, Recreation Area #1 and will start at 4:00 p.m. with dinner served between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m.

## AFA Now on Facebook

AFA is now on Facebook which is a great way to keep in touch all year long and share information - road conditions, fishing reports, AFA updates, etc. Folks that love to visit Lake Almanor will be able to get up-to-date information. AFA hopes to have members share information, post news, reports, and photos. If you don't want to post but want to share information and/or photos, you can email John Crotty and Deb Reynolds of Quail Lodge and they will post for you. This is a work in progress and we are open to sharing any/all information that pertains to AFA and/or Lake Almanor. You can email information to John and Deb at [quaillodgelakealmanor@frontier.com](mailto:quaillodgelakealmanor@frontier.com)



# Make Your Child's First Fishing Trip a Fun Learning Experience

By Jackie Edwards, Freelance Editor and Writer

Herbert Hoover once said "Fishing is much more than fish. It is the great occasion when we may return to the fine simplicity of our forefathers." Fishing is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, and there is nothing quite like fishing with your children. These memories last a lifetime and you'll want to get it started on the right foot.

## The Right Gear for Kids

When fishing with your kids, simplicity is the key. Keeping your gear simple and easy to use will make it easier for kids to learn and have fun. You will probably want to start them off with a bobber, as it'll make it easier for them to see when they catch a fish. It's also more exciting to see the bobber jolt down into the water than to feel it through the pole.



Photo courtesy of  
Janicki Photography

Kids will also have a lot more fun and success with live bait than lures. Lures are more likely to get snagged at the bottom of the water and takes away from valuable fishing time. Instead, opt for live worms. Worms are easy to find, work for most fish you will target, and provide great fun for children. You may even want to go outside and go digging for them yourself. This will be fun for the kids and add an extra element to their overall fishing experience.

If you have very younger children, you may want to start them out with bread as bait. It will help them learn how to hook the bait properly and may help calm the nerves of children unsure about handling worms. Once they are comfortable, you can switch them to worms or crickets.

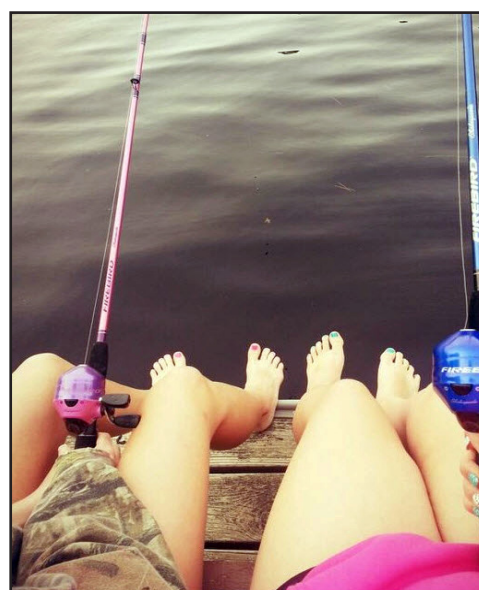
## Choosing the Right Location

Choosing the right location is the most important aspect to having a good time with your kids. Kids must be constantly entertained, or they will get bored and quickly trade their fishing pole for a cell phone or games console. Therefore, it is important that you find a spot that has lots of interesting and big fish to catch. Lake Almanor is home to Rainbow Trout, German Brown Trout, King Salmon, Smallmouth Bass, and Catfish, which are all big, colorful, and interesting fish to keep the children excited. Spring is the best time to fish at the lake and spots on either side of the peninsula and around Big Springs Cove will provide you with lots of bites to keep your little one entertained.

## Conservation and Learning

Children love to learn about the animals that live in the water. Make it a learning experience and teach them as much as possible about the fish they are catching. It is also important that children understand the entirety of a fishing trip. Teach them about conservation and the local catch and release rules. They need to understand why it is important that we throw back certain fish and that we only take as much as we need to survive. This teaches them the value of fishing and the need to conserve our environment.

For more information, please visit:  
<https://outdoorempire.com/children-first-fishing-trip/>





## Keep Your Eyes Open

By Bob Kopernik, Fishing Guide

Last year during the heat of the summer, a number of dead Small Mouth Bass were seen floating in Lake Almanor. All of these Bass had what appeared to be a white latex looking growth coming out from one of its gills.



The California Department of Fish and Wildlife Biologists would like to examine any of these fish to gain an understanding of what it is. They ask that any similar fish (preferably alive) be put into a clean plastic bag and stored (unfrozen) in a suitable cooler filled with (wet) ice. If you find one of these fish, please contact the CDFW directly to arrange for them to pick up the fish. Contact:

Mark Adkison, Ph.D., M.S.  
Research Scientist Supervisor  
Statewide Fish Health Coordinator  
2111 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
916-358-2830  
Mark.Adkison@wildlife.ca.gov

Alternatively, you can drop the fish off at the Plumas Pines Resort Marina and they will contact me to make the necessary arraignments for pick up and delivery. Or, you can contact me directly while you are on the lake using VHF Channel 69 or my cell phone. Please provide any pertinent information such as the location (lat/longs) where you find the specimen.

Thank you for your help,

Bob Kopernik, Lucky Grady Fishing Guide Service  
408-515-1503

**Bob Kopernik**

**408-515-1503**

Luckygrady1@att.net

***Lucky  
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## A Little Picnic Trivia

Year-after-year AFA Annual Family BBQ attendees rave about the special beans that are served with their meal. Do you know the history of Wylde's beans? The recipe is secret but the man behind the beans is not. The recipe evolved over time by former AFA member Mike Wylde. Mike lived in the Almanor basin, worked for California State Parks Guest Services, and was very active in the community. He started cooking up his special beans for local Rotary Club events and then offered to make the beans for AFA's first fundraising event 25 years ago. "Why not" he said, "they are a very hearty staple well suited to outdoor cooking, don't take a lot of effort, just some time, and since it is cooked in one pot – clean up is simple."

Approximately 80 AFA supporters attended the first fundraising event so a big batch of beans was an easy task. The only issue Mike had was when he put the big bean pot on the double burner gas stove, the beans burned on the bottom of the pan. This did not sit well with Mike so he devised a way to avoid burning his beans. He built a special pan, added water to it, placed his bean pot in his special pan, and slow cooked them after preparing all of the other ingredients. Not more burned beans!

As attendance grew and the batch of Wylde's beans increased, Mike went to even bigger pots. Bigger pots demanded bigger stirring spoons! Mike solved this issue as well by purchasing a small boat paddle to stir his beans. The beans are still a big hit with attendees today. Thank you Mike Wylde!





## 24th Annual Family BBQ and Fundraiser Highlights

The AFA Annual Family BBQ and Fundraiser took place Saturday, July 30 in the LACC Recreation Area #1 and was a huge success. There were more than 450 people in attendance enjoying the afternoon and evening festivities. Following dinner there was a silent auction and large raffle drawing for prizes such as overnight stays at casinos, golf packages, coolers, fishing gear (rods, reels, lures, dodgers, etc.), gift certificates, gift baskets, artwork, cash, a big screen smart TV, a kayak, and much more. A special youth drawing also took place to ensure every youngster between the ages of 3 and 14 went home with a prize.

Everyone was served their steak or hot dog dinner in under an hour and a half which was a great feat given we had more than 450 people in attendance. Included with the meal was a fresh garden salad, garlic bread, renowned Wylde's beans, and cookies. The festivities were complete by 8:00 p.m. and AFA netted \$14,000 from the event. Photos courtesy of Laura Kostelac.

Mark your calendar for next year's BBQ and fundraiser which will be held Saturday, July 29th. The event will be held at the Lake Almanor Country Club, Recreation Area #1 and will start at 4:00 p.m. with dinner served between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m.



## *Volunteers and Attendees Having Fun*

*Thank you for making this event so successful!*



# Almanor Fishing Association's 25th Annual Family BBQ and Fundraiser



Saturday, July 29, 2017

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 Plate \$10 Donation

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 Pinecone Lounge***

951 Clifford Drive, Lake Almanor  
(530) 259-5440

***B & B Booksellers***

278 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 2017

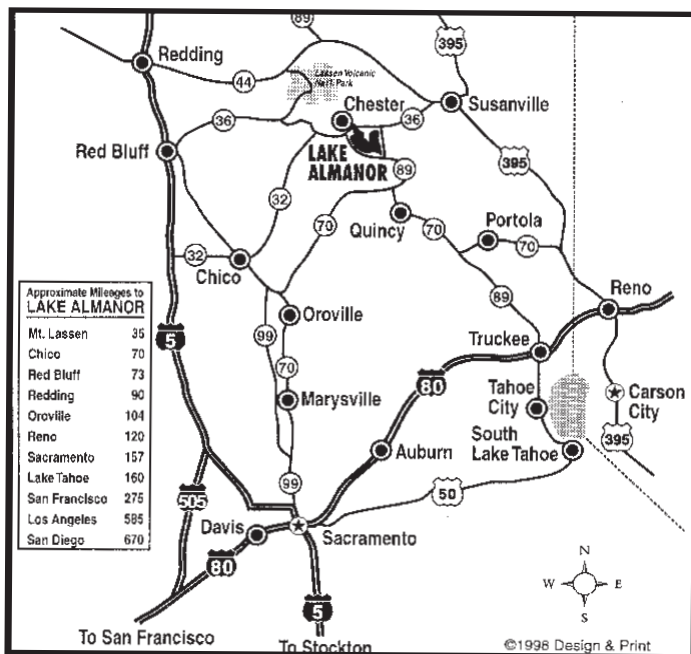
July 1st (Saturday) and  
September 2nd (Saturday)

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 FYI'S

#### SPORT FISHING LICENSE ONLINE NOW

You can now buy your sport fishing license online and 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](http://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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