

REEL LIFE

Hot June Report

Page 7

Oh Shad!

Page 9

Planer Boards 101

Page 12

Washington Outdoor Round Up

Page 26

Ten Prime Bass Fishing Destinations

Page 28

COVER STORY

Bank on Summer Steelhead

Page 17

Preseason Fishing & Boating Prep

Page 20





Not just a **base layer.**

GHUnders is years of
thought and perfection;
Base layers that are tough
and lasts you years
beyond any other; a base
layer that works as hard
as you do.



ghunders.com

**We have all your
summer fun essentials!**



**2424 N Division St,
Spokane, WA 99207**

(509) 444-8005



GeneralStoreSpokane.com

@GeneralStoreSpokane  

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

Welcome to the new NWFR Newsletter! We're excited to launch our updated format which will provide our readers with a more organized and easier to read pdf format. It has been a personal goal of mine to see the newsletter evolve into more than just an email list of articles. We can now add a full range of features which will make your reading experience more dynamic and useful. Your "subscription" comes free as a member of NWFR. I'd like to thank the crew at Victory Media for their hard work on making this happen, and special thanks to Rob Holman for sharing my vision and bringing it to life.

We hope you enjoy what you see and share with your angling friends as we work together to grow our online fishing community. Rob, Aaron, and I thank you for being members of Northwest Fishing Reports!



CONTENTS

FOLLOW US:

www.northwestfishingreports.com

[f](#) [@](#) [@northwestfishingreports](#)



07 Hot Reports
Mike Carey

09 Oh Shad!
John Kruse

12 Planer Boards 101
Hannah Pennebaker



17 Bank on Summer Steelhead
Jason Brooks

20 Preseason Fishing & Boating Prep 101
Randy Castello

26 The Washington Outdoors Round Up
John Kruse

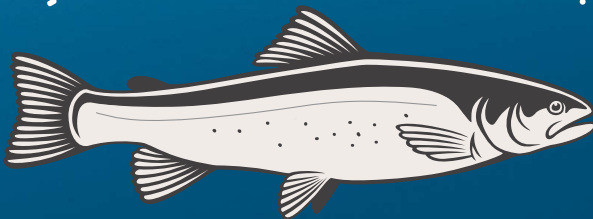


28 10 Prime Bass Destinations
Rick Lawrence

33 Blackened Crappie Tacos
Jason Brooks



FISH FOR TAGGED



RAINBOW TROUT

APRIL 24 → OCTOBER 31



#WATROUTDERBY



100+ STOCKED
LAKES STATEWIDE



OVER 1,000 PRIZES
TOTALING OVER
\$38,000



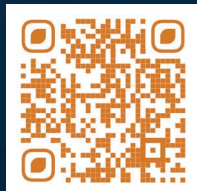
MORE THAN 70
PARTICIPATING
BUSINESSES

NO ENTRANCE FEE OR REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

OPEN TO ANYONE WITH A VALID 2021 WA FISHING LICENSE.

PARTICIPANTS MUST COMPLY WITH ALL FISHING RULES & REGULATIONS.

VISIT [WDFWDERBY.COM](https://wdfwderby.com) FOR MORE INFORMATION



#RECREATERESPONSIBLY MAINTAIN AT LEAST SIX FEET PHYSICAL DISTANCE WHILE FISHING.

**CATCH THE
LATEST FRESH
FISHING
REPORTS,
ARTICLES
& VIDEOS**



**CATCH US ONLINE
WWW.NWFRTV.COM**



NORTHWEST REEL LIFE

A Digital Anglers LLC & Northwest Fishing Reports Publication

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Mike Carey

PUBLISHER

Rob Holman

CONTRIBUTERS

Jason Brooks
Randy Castello
John Kruse
Rick Lawrence
Paul Lewis
Hannah Pennebaker

TEAM NWFR (NWFRTV)

Robby Sy
Hillary Holman
Noah Bettin
Paul Hamilton
John Kruse
Mark Nordahl
Luke Hatfield
Barry Dubnow

PUBLISHED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VICTORY MEDIA

www.govictory.agency

CREATIVE DIRECTOR/ LEAD GRAPHICS

Mary Lefkowski

LAYOUT & DESIGN

Ryane Cass

SALES DIRECTOR

Theresa Helgersen
theresa@govictory.agency | (509)216-4455

ACCOUNTING

Julia Wentz

HOT REPORTS FROM NORTHWESTFISHINGREPORTS.COM

By: Mike Carey

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MONTHLY FEATURE, Hot Reports. Each month we'll look back at some of the great reports posted on northwestfishingreports.com. It's a great way for you to see what locations are heating up and find some new places to fish and explore you may not have heard about. While you're at it we encourage you to sign up at Northwestfishingreports.com and start posting reports. Every week we are giving away great prizes including VISA cash cards! Just post a report on our website, include a picture, and you're entered to win! Here are some reports that caught my eye:



LAKE STEVENS- KING COUNTY

It's been a good spring kokanee season for anglers fishing Lake Stevens. Plenty of fish, reports are ranging in that 10-12" size class typical for this westside kokanee lake. The key most are reporting is to hit the water early – daybreak has always been important for this lake. Here's a report for NWFR member Ben Eggertsen with more information. [CLICK HERE](#)

CASCADE LAKE- SAN JUAN COUNTY

What a beautiful destination to go fishing! Hop on a ferry and take the scenic ride to the island, fish from shore or a boat, there's always good action reports from member CarpMouth. The San Juans are a special place and freshwater fishing is an often overlooked option. Carpmouth's Report: [CLICK HERE](#)

CLEAR LAKE- PIERCE COUNTY

This longtime member Toni's "home waters" and she knows it well. In this report she lets everyone know the trout action is hot! Toni is always generous with her report information and often includes videos and "Hotspots". Hotspots are pinned locations on a map that you can copy and use to start fishing on a body of water you've never been to before. It's a great tool! [CLICK HERE](#)

RIFFE LAKE- LEWIS COUNTY

The word here is "silvers"- not kokanee, rather, land-locked coho salmon that WDFW plants. There are a lot of them and there are some nice fish to be had! Ranging 11-15" they can be caught trolling from a boat. Even better, there is shoreline access by the dam that allows anglers to fish from shore. The preferred method is a slip bobber to a hook with salad shrimp on it. Perfect for the kids and plenty of action to keep them interested! One word of caution to boat anglers, the reservoir is very low currently and the launch is a long backup to get to the water. Bring patience and caution when you come to Riffe. [CLICK HERE](#)

ROCK LAKE- WHITMAN COUNTY

Some nice reports came in on the brown trout action at Rock. This lake is a boating lake only with very limited shore access. The launch itself is rough and there are underwater pinnacles that can come up to make for a bad day with your prop so caution is required. But the rewards can be well worth it! [CLICK HERE](#)

FISH LAKE- SPOKANE COUNTY

I don't even know what to say about this monster trout that NWFR member RussellFrick caught – except – WOW! Eleven pounds and twenty eight inches, amazing! [CLICK HERE](#)

LAKE CHELAN- CHELAN COUNTY

Not exactly a secret here... kokanee action is solid, and the fish are being generally reported as bigger than last year. Remember a few years ago when we were catching 16-19" kokanee? Maybe we are on the road back to big fish. Meanwhile, 11-13". Don't forget the excellent year-round laker fishery. Yakhusker's report is one of many: [CLICK HERE](#)

NorthwestFishingReport.com's Power User Tip – there is a link on each fishing that allows you to go see ALL the reports for that location. "View all reports for this location". It's a quick and easy way to scan through all reports! Just like locations, on each fishing report there is a link that takes you to that fishing location's Charts and Data. Use it to get even more detailed information about a new location! When you register, you can select locations to receive e-mail alerts when a report comes in. It's a great way to keep on top of reports from your favorite locations!



Subscribe to the NWFR YouTube Channel!

 SUBSCRIBE!

June 2021 | 7



SUMMER FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

www.mardonresort.com



**Wild caught Alaskan Seafood
delivered to your door.**



Watch shad fishing
action on NWFRTV #39



WATCH NOW



OH SHAD!

by John Kruse

IT'S PRIMETIME FOR SHAD FISHING ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER! This year's run is about a third less in size so far than the mammoth runs we've seen in recent years but with 40,000 plus shad crossing Bonneville Dam on June 2nd alone, the big push is definitely on and should continue into July.

The American shad is historically a popular food fish along the east coast and was introduced into California's Sacramento River in 1871. Within five years shad, which look like overgrown herring weighing anywhere from one to five pounds, began showing up in the Columbia River. Today, shad numbers in the Columbia river have exploded. The ten-year average run is over three million fish and last year some six million shad came back to the Columbia River to spawn.

Shad are scrappy fighters and ready biters, and it's not uncommon to catch a couple dozen in a morning of fishing. Because of their fighting quality and relatively large size compared to trout and panfish, shad fishing can be a whole

bunch of fun for kids and young at heart anglers who just like to tussle with a bunch of fish.

There are several places to cast for shad on the Columbia. During the month of May some anglers will fish off the docks at

Shad's are scrappy fighters and ready biters- you can easily catch a dozen in the morning!



Washougal. In June and July, the river just below John Day Dam near Rufus is a great place to catch shad. However, the best (and most popular) place to get into a bunch of shad is just below Bonneville Dam. Hundreds of anglers congregate here every morning when the shad are running and the action can be fast and furious with multiple anglers hooking into shad at once.

The nice thing about shad fishing is that you can easily catch them from shore. The standard rig is to attach a singer to a swivel or above the swivel. Depending on the current a $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ ounce weight will work fine. Then tie three feet of leader below the swivel and attach your lure. The most common offering is a shad dart, a uniquely shaped jig head above a hook. $\frac{1}{16}$ th ounce or $\frac{1}{8}$ th ounce jigs work best. No bait is necessary and neither are trailers. The jig head color does matter though. White and red, green and chartreuse or white and green are all effective color schemes. These darts can usually be bought in sporting goods stores or bait shops along the Columbia River. Other lures to try are Shad Killers, available at Gorge Outfitters Supply in Rufus, Oregon by the John Day Dam or Shad Slammers, from Mack's Lure.

Once you are rigged up simply cast out slightly upstream and reel slowly keeping your jig off the bottom. Often the bite will come just as the line starts swinging towards shore. If you don't get a bite, reel in rapidly once the jig is directly downstream and cast again.

Quite often the shad will surge forward upstream in schools and you'll see anglers begin to hook up downstream from you. Be sure to get your line in the water in a hurry because they'll soon be swimming past you!

If you are going to fish from a boat you can launch from Beacon Rock State Park to try for the shad below Bonneville Dam or from Giles French Park on the Oregon side of the Columbia River below John Day Dam.

Marc Bush, the owner of Twisted Waters Guide Service, catches shad out of the boat by rigging up an 18-inch dropper to a Brad's Wiggler Crankbait, then tying 30 inches of leader behind that where a small Dick Nite spoon



entices the shad to bite. As for where to fish, Bush recommends motoring over to the Oregon side of the river below Bonneville Dam by the Shad Rack or just look for where the boats are congregated and the anglers are reeling in the fish and you'll be in the right place.

Then there is the question of what to do with these fish. They are oily; really, really, oily, but some people do keep them to eat. Others harvest shad for sturgeon bait while still others, myself included, keep a dozen or so for crab bait. Whether you keep them or just catch and release them though you'll likely be in for a fun-filled and exciting day of fishing and catching on the Columbia River from now until mid-July!

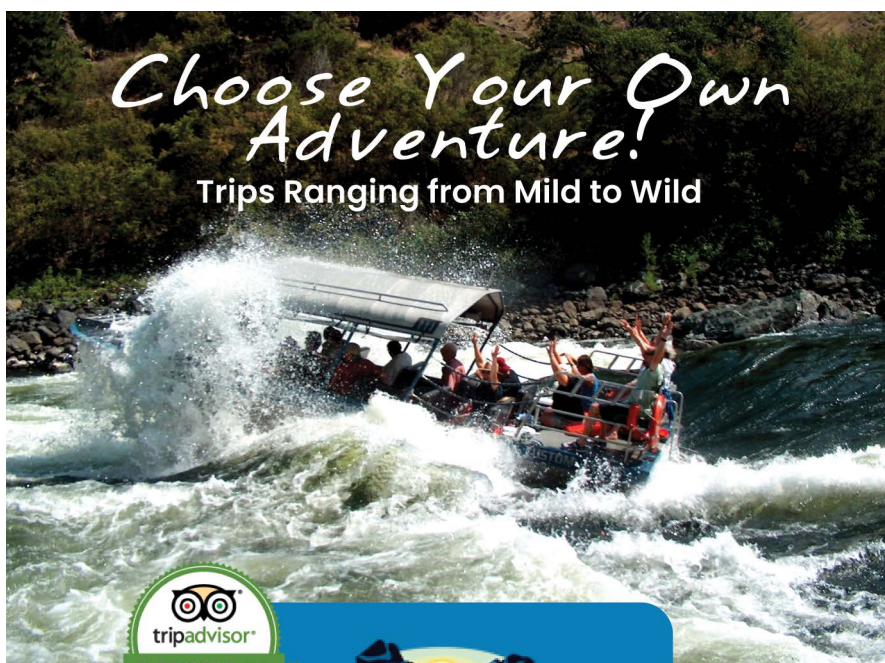
Born out of an interest in the local food movement and the love of a great drink.



**SKIP ROCK
DISTILLERS**
SNOHOMISH, WA

*Choose Your Own
Adventure!*

Trips Ranging from Mild to Wild



SNAKE DANCER
EXCURSIONS

1-800-234-1941 snakedancerexcursions.com

PLANER BOARDS 101

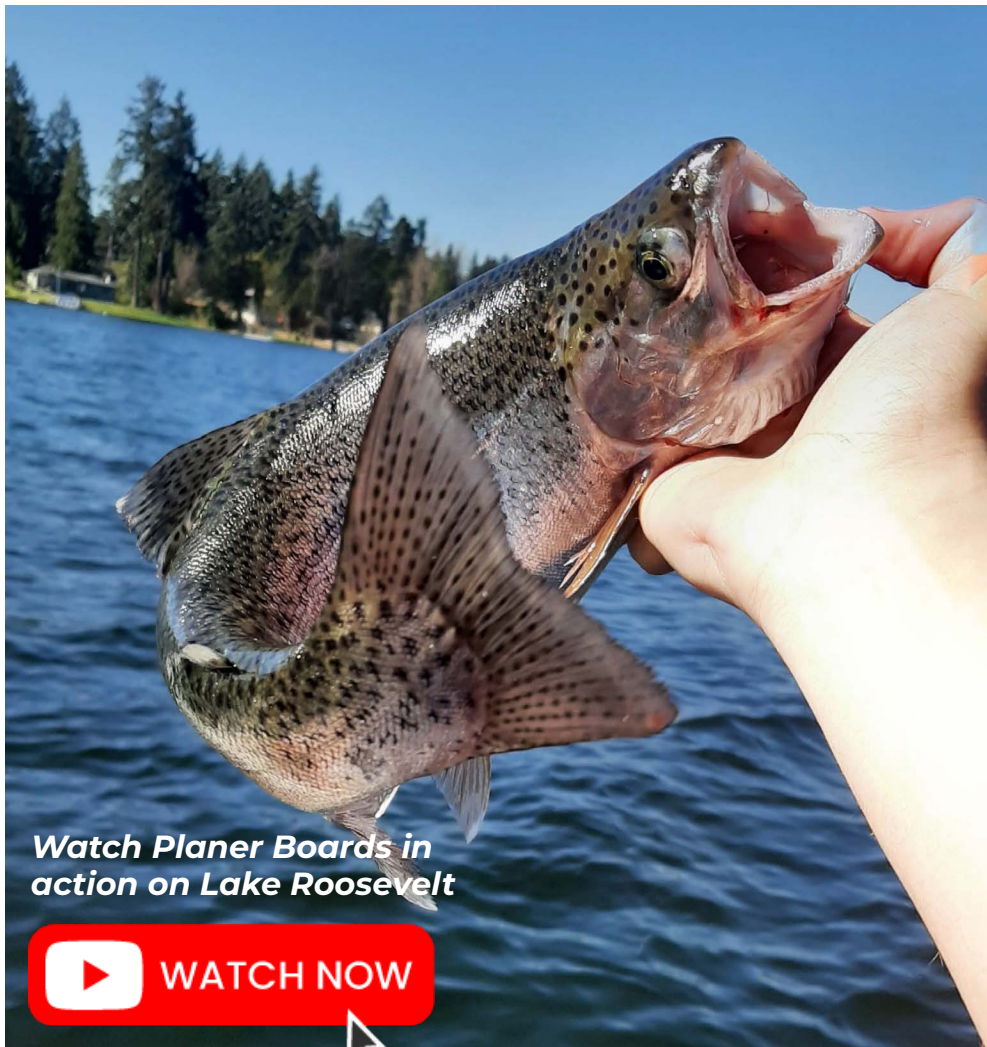
by Hannah Pennebaker

I'LL NEVER FORGET THE FIRST TIME I SAW PLANER BOARDS.

We were in the Cowlitz River, wading up to our chests in freezing cold water and casting our corky/yarn setups all day with no bites. With cold legs and sore arms, we began the long journey back to the truck. On our way back, we saw three fishermen sitting around a fire with their feet up and downing beers. Four beautiful, chrome king salmon graced their stringers. We couldn't help but stop and observe their technique for a moment. Their poles were in rod holders, and their lures were kept in place on the other side of the river by strange orange floats that I thought were bobbers at first glance. The fishermen noticed our curiosity and showed us their setups. They were using plugs wrapped with a strip of herring. They would cast out and their planer boards would slowly carry their plugs all the way to the other side of the river, where the fish were holding. Then they would put the rod in a holder and wait for a bite. In all my

time fishing the Puyallup, Carbon, Humptulips, and Satsop rivers, I had never seen anyone use planer boards. I've been fascinated with them ever since, and they've been a mainstay in my tackle box. Read on to learn why they should be in yours, too.

Planer boards are a great way to vary up your river fishing technique.



Watch Planer Boards in action on Lake Roosevelt



WATCH NOW



Small, lightweight side planers are great for river fishing because they offer less resistance when reeling in a fish. Usually you'll use them with lightweight plugs or spin n glo's, so they don't need to be heavy duty. Run them onto your main line, attach a swivel and sliding weight, then put on your plug or spin-n-glo. There has to be a bit of current where you're fishing, or the side planer won't work correctly. Drop your setup in the river, being careful to avoid tangles. Let out and let the board take your lure until you're right where you want to be fishing. If you don't get any hits, it's a good idea to experiment



with different depths and lures until you find what's working.

The other type of planer board is larger and heavier. These are meant for trolling from a boat. That's right, not only are planer boards great for river fishing, but they are right at home on boats too! On Riffe Lake, we used to struggle with trying to fish 4 poles on our boat. Two downriggers and two straight lines would inevitably tangle up, and when we got sick of untangling lures we would just go back to using two poles. Planer boards were a complete game changer for us. Finally we could fish four poles without headaches! Using planer boards while trolling is very similar to using them

from shore on a river. Simply tie on your bead chain swivel, dodger, and favorite lure as usual. Use as much weight as you need to get down where the fish are at. Make sure to check how much weight your planer board is rated for first, or the planer board might not function correctly. Let out 50-100 feet of line (I highly recommend a line counter reel), then clip on your planer board and let out another 40-60 feet of line. The planer board is designed to pull your gear away from the boat at a forty five degree angle. Boards are designed for port and starboard - they won't work if you mix them up! Finally, put your rod in the rod holder. There's going to be a fair amount of pressure from the board so holding your rod is not a good option. Because of the planer board pressure you'll want a rod with some backbone to it. You're all set!

How do you know when you have a fish on your planer board? Different planer boards have different release styles. Some of them need to be "set", where you pull back a lever and wrap your line 3-4 times around the arm. Others have a simple downrigger clip style release. Some have a flag that gets pulled down when the fish bites. A big fish will even pull your planer board underwater! You'll know when your planer board releases because it will suddenly swing towards the shore or the boat.

Why are planer boards so effective? There have been days out on the boat where the fish don't want anything to do with whatever we throw on our downriggers, but we can't keep them off our planer boards. The style of boards we use are completely clear, so fish don't see them. Fish that are scared

off to the side of the boat by the motor zooming over them often go right to the planer boards. They also allow you to fish a much wider range since they spread out your lures more than straight lining would.

One word on angling etiquette. If you're fishing a big lake with lots of space between boats you can let your planer boards go out farther, but if you're on a small lake or there are more boats around you should keep your planer boards closer. When passing by other boats it's your responsibility to prevent your planer board from getting run over. Not all boat anglers will realize you have a planer board out.

Now that we're right in the swing of kokanee and trout fishing, this is a great time to try out planer boards. Once

you're an expert, you'll be able to use them effectively during the salmon season too! They are an extremely effective way to spread out your presentations, get your lure out to where the fish are holding in the river, and keep from tangling multiple lines. They're a great tool to have in your arsenal!



Ross Outdoor Adventures

Central Washington's Premier Guide Service

BOOK ONLINE

rossoutdooradventures.com



Designed and manufactured lures for
salmon, kokanee, trout, and walleye.



OLD GOAT LURES™



WORK SHARP® SHARPENERS

THE KNIFE SHARPENING COMPANY



SCAN TO WATCH
THE VIDEO 

INTRODUCING THE **KNIFE & TOOL SHARPENER** MK.2

Experience shaving sharp edges on all your knives. The **KNIFE & TOOL SHARPENER Mk.2** is easy to use and delivers best-in-class sharpening for all knives and edged tools. Sharper than the day you bought them.



Learn more at:

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/D614F5FT](https://tinyurl.com/D614F5FT)

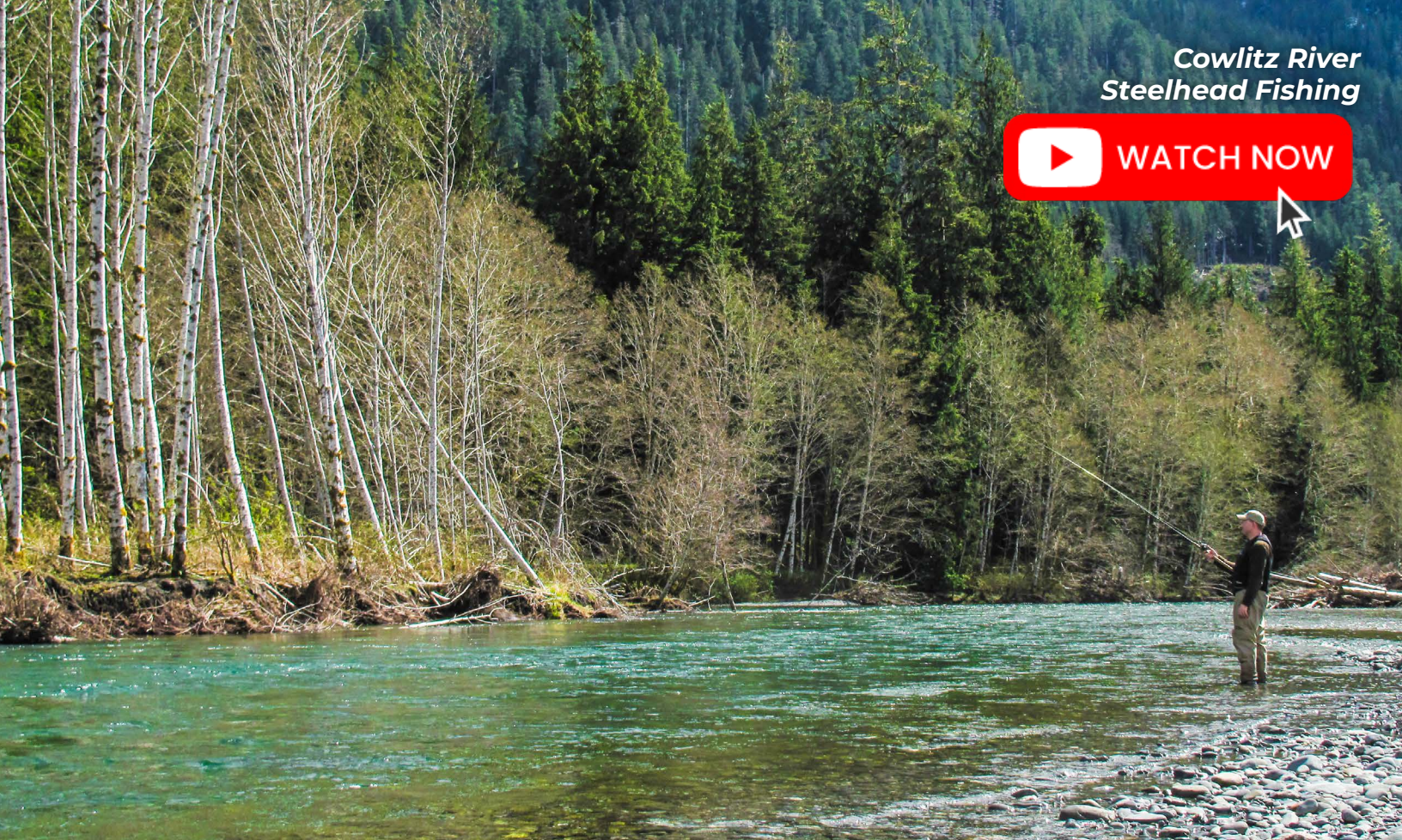


Hell Razor™

SWARM

Switchblade Flasher System

wigglyfin.com



BANK ON SUMMER STEELHEAD

by Jason Brooks

BRIGHT SUNNY SUMMER DAYS are what makes the Pacific Northwest tolerable during the cold and rainy winter months. Summer steelhead are heading upriver in our favorite streams and waterways which often lead high into the Olympic and Cascade mountains. It is hard to beat days like this and they are too few. It was one of these bright and warm days where we found ourselves floating along a drift enjoying a summer's afternoon. The clear water made it almost impossible to determine how deep it was as I watched the gravel bottom go by from my drift boat. Suddenly seeing a steelhead darting across the river scared from the shadow of the boat. A few pulls on the oars slowed me long enough to find the fish hiding in the shadows along the far cut-bank. I pulled the boat to the shore and hiked back up to where I last saw the fish. Keeping some distance from the bank and peering into the river-using a good pair of polarized sunglasses-once again locating the fish. Casting up-stream so as not to spook the already timid steelhead telling myself I was going to catch that fish. It took a couple of casts but eventually I was able to present the small jig in the path leading right to the fish and he took it.

I started off this article by describing a day I had while fishing a river in my drift boat, but it was that very boat that scared the fish in the first place. Rafts and drift boats are great vessels to access summer's low and clear rivers.

To increase your chances at catching fish it is best to get out of the boat and stalk the fish, or not even take the boat at all and hike along the river's edge.

After rowing through rapids pull the boat to the shore and explore the run below before you float through it. This will increase your catch rate as fish will not be pushed out of their holding spots behind boulders or in seams where the water is oxygenated. If you are on a cut-bank then slowly make your way down the river while looking for holding fish. On a low bank, step back a few feet and try to keep your shadow out of the water. The idea here is to walk slowly and find the fish before you cast or at least find holding water. One thing about this technique is that you will learn a lot about the water conditions such as any boulders, seams, or riffles where the fish will be holding.

Sight fishing for summer steelhead is exhilarating but there are a few things to remember that will help you catch more fish. A good pair of sunglasses is necessary, and they must be polarized. I prefer ones with brown, amber, or yellow lenses, finding that using smoke, grey or dark lenses tend to wash out the speckled backs of steelhead using riffles as cover. Along with the sunglasses to see into the water, you must also remember that if you can see the fish then they can see you. Wearing dark or natural colors help conceal you on the bank of the river. But bright yellows and light blues also help you blend into the bright sky. Stay away from bright colors that contrast with the foliage along the riverbank and solid colors that will give you away. Your wading shoes should be dark or natural colors as well and this means the entire shoe. Shoelaces should be black not bright white or other colors



and if you have felt soled wading shoes then re-sole them with black felt, or better yet rubber with spike, as felt can transfer unwanted aquatic vegetation.



Even if you don't spot a fish by walking the bank you will quickly develop a feel for where to cast. Instead of blindly throwing your hook into the river, concentrate on areas that the fish will be resting or where the oxygen is being agitated. Fish downstream from your boat until you get to the end of the run then work your way back upriver all the way past your boat to the head of the run. By the time you get back to the top any fish that you rowed over will have settled down and ready for the bite.

If you have ever thought about fly fishing for steelhead then the summer runs are a great fish to start on. This is because bug activity increases in the summer and you can catch fish on dry flies as well as wet flies. The bright streamers used in winter fishing are hardly used in the summer as the water is low and clear. A bonus local rainbow or sea run cutthroat, and even a few dolly varden are caught while fly fishing for summer steelhead. For gear anglers be sure to downsize the baits, lures and even the line. Most summer steelhead are much smaller than their winter cousins, with a 6 to 8-pound fish being a good average size steelhead. This means you can get away with lighter leaders which is necessary in the clear water.

Floating jigs are one of the most effective ways to fish for summer steelhead.

One reason is because you can float the jig right over the top of those gear-grabbing boulders where the fish will be resting. A clear float of a balsa wood float are good options but do not forget about the old school round cork float as it looks natural and will not scare fish unlike bright colored floats often used in off colored water.

Small jigs from 1/8 to 1/4 ounce in black, red, and peach colors are most popular. When fishing, jigs scent can really help, and Pro-Cure's water-soluble shrimp scent will not ruin the jigs action and draws the bite of a waiting summer steelhead. One wonderful thing about float fishing jigs is that you can take just one rod, a handful of terminal gear and a bottle of scent and fish all day long. This lightens the load for those that are hiking along the river on a hot summer's day.

There are several rivers on the Olympic Peninsula that have runs of summer steelhead. Most of them have a trail system if they lead into the national park. Be sure to have the correct fishing licenses and punch card, as you need the one specifically for the Olympic National Park that is offered through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Other rivers flow into the Columbia, such as the Cowlitz, Lewis, Kalama, and more. Some of them offer public access to the river's edge but remember to respect private property. There are several good smartphone apps available that will show you property lines and even help you find that honey hole where others don't realize there is access to the river. Be sure to tell someone where you plan on fishing that day and just because it is hot out and the water is running low doesn't mean you should throw caution to the wind and wade out in unfamiliar waters without surveying them first. A wading staff is a good idea when crossing rivers or to feel the bottom where you might think it is shallow but not sure. Remember that the downriver side of rocks and stumps tend to be deep holes from the turbid waters and watch your step.

Boats and rafts are used for accessing the far-off gravel bars, rapids, boulder fields and runs where other bank-only anglers can't reach from the parking lot. I rarely fish out of a boat for summer steelhead, instead using it as transportation down the river. By having the right tools such as sunglasses and billed hat, a boat to get me to the fish and subdued clothing you increase your chances at hooking up with a summer steelhead.



*Salmon & Steelhead
Jig Tying Tips*



PRESEASON FISHING & BOATING PREPARATION 101

by Randy Castello

With the standard forecast of sunny weekdays and rainy weekends a fisherman may be nervously cussing out the weather man. If so your energy would be better spent getting ready for this year's kokanee wars. Spend the time making sure everything is tip-top condition. Check out your boat, gear, tackle and develop a game plan for keeping the smoker filled with the delectable mini salmon. Following are some thoughts and ramblings that may help you prepare for this year's lake fishing.



BOAT & MOTOR

It is time to pull the cover off the boat, shovel out the pine needles and drain off that weird bluish green goo that seems to collect below the deck. If you store your boat outside and are a seasonal user, you have some work cut out for you. Garage stored or year around boaters have a task or two to attend to also and now is the time to get at it. Aside from cleaning the boat the number 1 most important item on your pre-season chores list is your fuel system. First get rid of last year's fuel. Drain the filter bowl and pour any gas in the portable tanks into the lawnmower gas can. I have nothing against lawn mowers, but a little SeaFoam will cure many fuel related ailments.

The thing is, even if it doesn't and if the lawn mower dies or is hard starting it is not a big deal. Hey, you won't have to mow the lawn and you can crack open a cool one while you contemplate what's next. If the boat is acting up that is a whole different story. Check all fuel lines and fuel line fittings. Replace anything

that is brittle, cracked or otherwise damaged. If you are a seasonal user and your boat was winterized this task is much easier. Next check hydraulic fluid levels for any steering units or power tilt/trim units. Use your motor manufacturer recommended products and do not top off or mix the various products.

PROPELLER

Pull the propeller and check the shaft for fishing line or damage. Remember to lay all the nuts, washers, sleeves or adaptors out in the same order they came off the shaft. This makes reassembly much easier. Take a look at the propeller, if the blade edges are showing an excessive amount of nicks/dings, now might be the time to send it in to be rebuilt. Even slightly damaged blades will affect performance and running a boat with severely damaged blades can lead to all kinds of shaft/seal problems down the road.

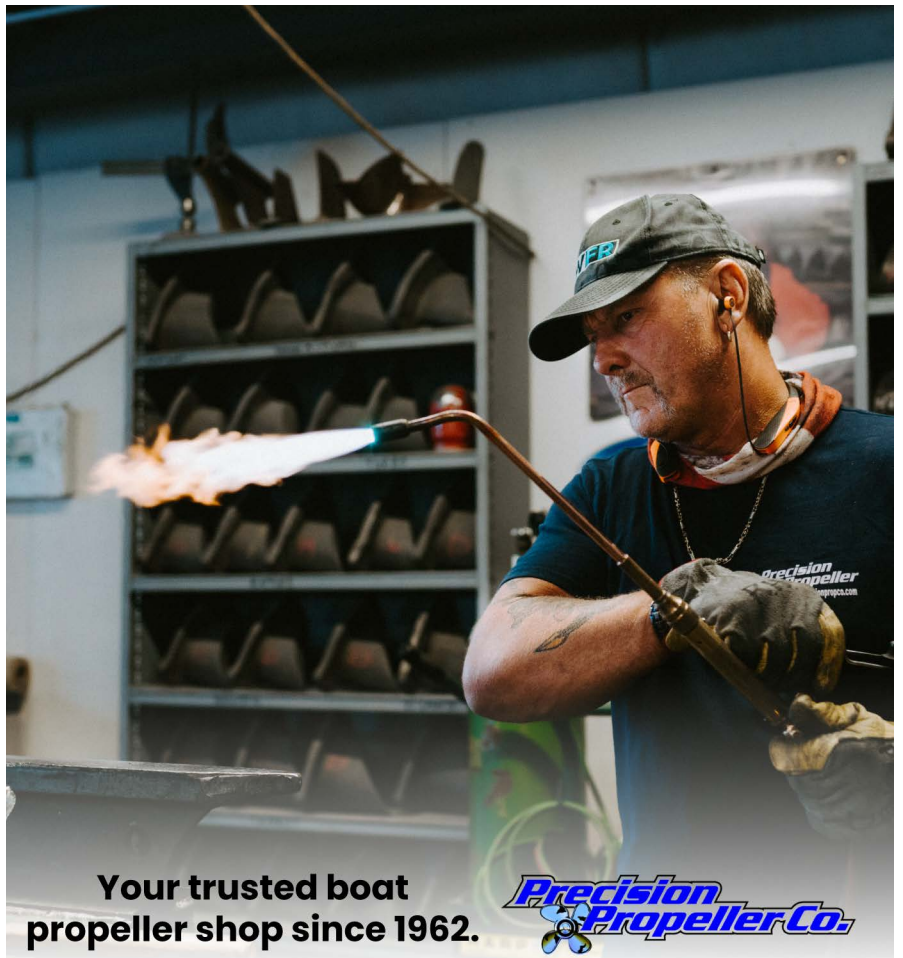
BATTERY & VARIOUS ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS

Each spring one of the first things you should do is to make sure the battery is topped off with distilled water. Then bring it up to full charge. If you find corrosion on the terminals remove the battery from the boat and clean it off



The Northwest's Premier Outfitter offering guided fishing trips in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

f | i Jones Sport Fishing



Your trusted boat propeller shop since 1962.

with a mild solution of baking soda and water. Once everything is clean it is also a good idea to use one of the various corrosion guard offerings. As long as you have 12 volt wiring on the brain you should also go through the rest of your electrical installation and look for loose connections and damaged wiring.

Mice and other rodents can cause a lot of damage during the off season. Check all the switches and breakers to make sure they are working. Then hook up the fish finder, VHF chart plotter, trolling motor and any other major electronics you are running to make sure they have power. Check all the lights to make sure they work. If you did have rodent problems over the winter, better resolved while in the garage or driveway than out on the water.

After all things electrical are functioning as expected, hook the engine up to the garden hose or dunk it in a livestock trough and start your baby up. If your rig has water pressure and temperature gauges check them now. Make sure the tilt and trim are working. Check the steering, especially mechanical steering to see if there are any problems. Also, before you shut the engine off pull the kill-switch to make sure it works. Check all the switches and breakers to make sure they are working.



DOWNRIGGERS

Inspect the condition of the cable. If you are running stainless steel cable and it is rusted or kinked, replace it. If you are running one of the synthetic braids cut off a few feet and re-tie it. You don't want 10-15 pounds of lead to suddenly head for the bottom and potentially take your rod and rod holder with it. Although if it does, it may be an indication that your release clip was a bit too tight. Also check for loose fasteners, worn or missing parts and corroded electrical connections. Fix anything that is even remotely questionable.

TRAILER

Give your trailer the once over. Now is the time to check the trailer lights and trailer brake fluid levels. Also, check the tire pressure on all the tires including the spare. Assure that all bunks and/or rollers are in good condition. Check your safety chain, winch strap or cable and tie down straps and replace them if they are questionable. Check your lights and if they need replacing consider replacing them with the waterproof LED lights. Initially they are more costly but with the increased reliability they will pay for themselves in no time. As an added safety benefit the LEDs are much brighter



Prop Talk: Stainless Steel VS Aluminum



Idaho, Oregon & Washington Fishing Outfitter

Specializing in guided fishing for Steelhead, Salmon, White Sturgeon, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, and Kokanee.

(208) 790-2128 reeltimefishing.com

than the standard 12-volt incandescent lights. Now is also a good time to check and maybe even repack your trailer bearings, better safe than sorry.

Although it wasn't a maintenance issue, 30 years ago a buddy and I were fishing at Alki Point. We had launched at the Don Armeni ramp in West Seattle. At the end of our trip, I dropped him off at the dock and motored back out to wait for him to back the trailer down. Trailer in the water, I drove the boat on the trailer and while doing so thought that something felt funny. There was a long line at the

BOOK YOUR NEXT CHARTER ONLINE TODAY!



We offer family-friendly fishing experiences in the Pacific Ocean and the Columbia River. Our family has been fishing out of Ilwaco for 60+ years, and we are very proud of our family heritage!

**BOOK ONLINE OR CALL
360-642-2300**

seabreezecharters.net

185 Howerton Way SE. Ilwaco, WA 98624

ramp line so I signaled for him to pull out of the water to the staging area. Upon examining the boat and trailer I realized that somebody had unbolted and took ownership of one of my roller assemblies. I had a new 2' long gouge in the bottom of my boat. It is always a good idea to check your trailer every time you launch and retrieve the boat, you never know...

GEAR, RODS AND REELS

I know, all your rods are piled up safe and sound in the corner of the garage and better yet everything worked fine last year so you have nothing to do...wrong! It is the start of what should be a productive fishing season and you don't want to lose the fish of a lifetime because your favorite reel has a case of the herkie-jerkies. Although with most reels it is easy enough to replace the drag washers, sometimes getting the replacement parts can be a challenge. When you disassemble your reels use simple green to thoroughly clean the reel components. Rinse and then dry the parts using the low setting on a blow-drier before reassembly. Once the parts are clean inspect everything, looking for unusual wear and replace anything that is suspect. Use the advanced synthetic lubricants and reel grease sparingly during the reassembly process. If you are running mono, replace it with a new line. Take your reels to a high-volume tackle store (Think Holiday Sports in Burlington) and have them bulk fill your reels. Their line should be fresher and most recycle your old line.

Also give all your rods the once over. Make a point to verify that each line guide is not cracked or worn. You can use a cotton swab and swirl around in each guide. If the guide catches any cotton fibers the guide needs to be replaced.

Years ago, I was fishing offshore for yellowfin tuna on one of my kayaks. After a 3-hour paddle to the area I wanted to fish, I found the temperature break I was looking for and got serious about my fishing. On the way out I drugged a large Rapala type lure and caught a few barracuda but when I got on-site, I opened up the front hatch on the yak and got out a live bait rod and a jig stick. In the chop I had a difficult time getting the jig stick out

of the belly of the kayak but at the time didn't think anything of it.

My typical drill was to troll live bait in and out of the temperature break and have the jig stick rigged and ready to go if I saw breaking fish or a kelp paddy. I had been trolling for about an hour when I saw a huge area of breaking fish. I paddled like a fiend and in about 15 minutes I was sitting in the middle of hundreds of puddling yellowfin tuna. I made the first cast with the jig stick and was instantly into a 30-pound yellowfin. Fish safely tucked into a kill bag I make the next cast, but this time I let the iron sink out before I started winding.

Again after a few cranks instant wammo, but this fish had some serious



shoulders. I fought it for an hour or so and suddenly the line snapped at the rod tip and my line went slack. I was exhausted, my back hurt, my heart was pounding, and I was in a state of disbelief. Thinking what the *#*#, how did that happen? When I examined the rod tip, I saw that the ceramic insert had a hairline crack in it and with the extended fight the guide had sawed through my line. I realized that I must have damaged it when I pulled the rod out of the belly of the kayak.

I don't know how big the fish was, but I would guess that it was in the 40-50# range and would have been a true trophy for a shore based kayak angler. The now 4-hour paddle back in was productive, having caught a couple yellowtail and another yellowfin on the live bait stick. But the time was still spent second guessing my actions and going through the what ifs... Lesson learned; occasionally check your rod guides or any of your gear for damage, you never know when the once in a lifetime fish is going to come calling and if it does your gear should be in top notch condition.

TACKLE

On any given trout or kokanee trip I am packing some 50 plus rigs. After a recent trip to Cavanaugh to fish for cutthroat I was cleaning the boat and noticed that the line on a number of my hand tied Kokanee spinners was frayed at the spinner blade clevis. On closer examination it turned out that most of my lures needed to be retied. We caught a lot of fish the previous year and the 12# fluorocarbon I used to tie gear was pretty frazzled. Look over your gear, retie as required. There's peace of mind in knowing that your gear is in tip top condition.

GAME PLAN

Now is a great time to develop your Kokanee game plan. There are many west side kokanee lakes. My recommendation is that you choose a kokanee lake close to your home, somewhere where you can fish both on the weekend and during the week as your schedule permits. Don't fret about the size of the fish or even the numbers. This will be your learning/confidence building lake. Learn your boat, fish finder, downriggers, trolling speed, lure presentation and generally become the local expert while building confidence in your kokanee angling abilities. Whether you're fishing a new lake or fishing a frequently visited lake, the lessons learned at your home lake will help you catch kokanee with confidence anywhere.

With all your gear and equipment dialed in and the confidence that you gained learning to fish your home lake the kokanee will be lining up to spend time in your smoker.



**HOME OF THE
WEDDING RING®
& SMILE BLADE®**



**Fishing's best
kept secret**

**Shop online at
www.mackslure.com**

THE WASHINGTON OUTDOORS ROUND UP

by John Kruse

June offers lots of low-cost opportunities to fish and play on our public lands. Here's a roundup of what's available.

FREE FISHING & PARKS PLAY

June 12th and 13th are free fishing days in Washington State where no license is required to wet a line. These are also days where no Discover Pass is required to visit a Washington State Park for the day and several state parks offer excellent fishing to include Alta Lake and Pearrygin State Parks in Okanogan County, Curlew Lake State Park in Ferry County, Maryhill State Park in Klickitat County, Sun Lakes State Park south of Coulee City and Potholes State Park at Potholes Reservoir. An additional free day to visit a Washington State Park will take place June 19th, in honor of the newly approved state holiday, Juneteenth. This is the day the Emancipation Proclamation was read and enacted for black slaves in Texas in 1865, the last state to end slavery in the United States at the close of the Civil War.

ICICLE RIVER OPENS TO SALMON FISHING

Despite very low returns of Spring Chinook up the Columbia and Snake Rivers this year, state fisheries biologists believe they will have enough of these hatchery-raised chinook salmon return to the Leavenworth hatchery to provide a fishery. Salmon fishing opens on May 22nd and is scheduled to go until June 30th though it may close sooner than that if the number of returning fish is lower than expected. Traditionally, the end of May and early June provide the best fishing on this small stream. The limit is two hatchery chinook salmon a day with a minimum size of 12-inches.

TROUT STOCKED IN LAKE ROOSEVELT

Speaking of hatchery fish, WDFW along with the Spokane and Colville Tribes are teaming up to plant some 485,000 fish this month in 151-mile-long Lake Roosevelt. The fish are all triploid rainbow trout and they contain an extra set of chromosomes that renders them sterile but turns them into eating machines. Many of the fish are only 8 to 12-inches long right now but within a few months they'll grow to 18-inches. Others being released in the lower third of the lake already weigh around one pound.



POTHOLES BASS FISHING HOT

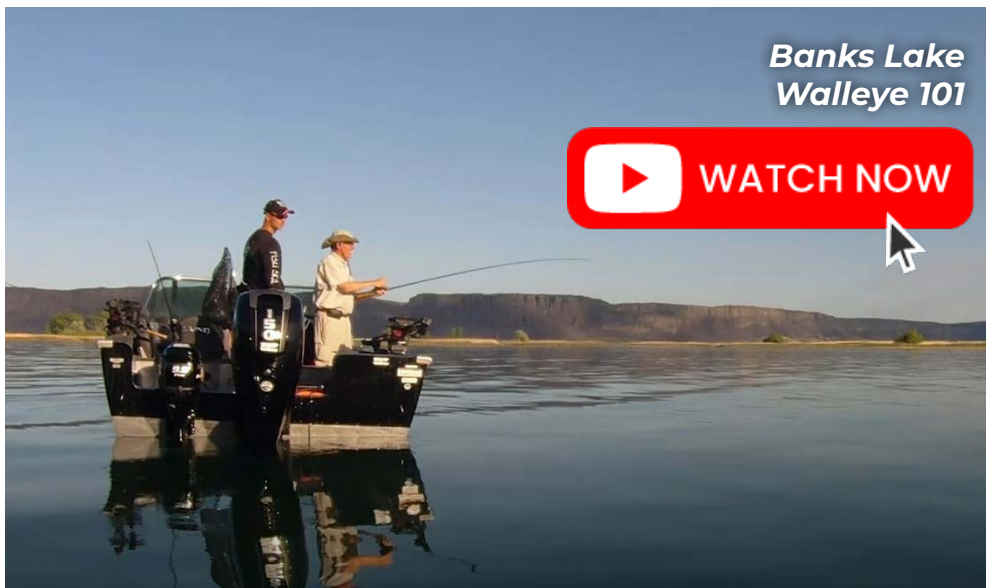
Bass fishing is very good in the sand dunes of Potholes Reservoir right now. Largemouth bass are in shallow water on spawning beds and walleye are also in this area of the lake as well. For the bass fish less than six feet deep with weedless jigs and craw trailers, plastic worms and shallow running or lipless crankbaits. My long-time fishing partner Rusty Johnston and I fished this part of the lake last week and hooked some 20 bass, the vast majority of them between 2 and 3 pounds, along with a bonus 3-pound walleye. If you prefer trout, Pete Fisher at MarDon Resort suggests trolling for them near Perch Point or in front of the state park. If you don't have a boat Medicare Beach on the east side of the lake is the place to go or you can explore some of the seep lakes below Potholes Reservoir which have also been producing good numbers of rainbow

CATFISH ARE BITING IN THE GORGE

According to staff at Gorge Outfitters Supply Catfish catches out of the mouth of the John Day and ponds adjoining the Columbia River near Rufus have been great and there have been lots of big cats caught too.

BANKS LAKE WALLEYE FISHING IS HOT

Two friends, Brett Bostwick and Galen Presler, fishing two different parts of Banks Lake over the last week, had great success catching walleye. Both got limits of fish with the average walleye measuring 18 inches. There were bigger ones too. One walleye caught weighed over nine pounds. One boat was fishing the lower end of the lake near Coulee City while the other was fishing near Steamboat Rock. Their shared secret to success? A Mack's Smile Blade Spindrift Walleye Rig featuring a Smile Blade and a Slow Death Hook that rotates the nightcrawler you thread onto it.



YOU COULD ADVERTISE HERE!

*Contact our sales
team for current
advertising options.*

Theresa Helgersen
509-216-4455

theresa@govictory.agency

TEN PRIME BASS DESTINATIONS IN THE INLAND NORTHWEST

by Rick Lawrence

Here are my top 10 Bass fishing destinations of the inland N.W. Whether you like catching Ditch Pickles (AKA L.M . Bass) or River Turds (AKA Smallies) here are some of the best waters to fish here in the Northwest.



10. ELOIKA LAKE, WA.

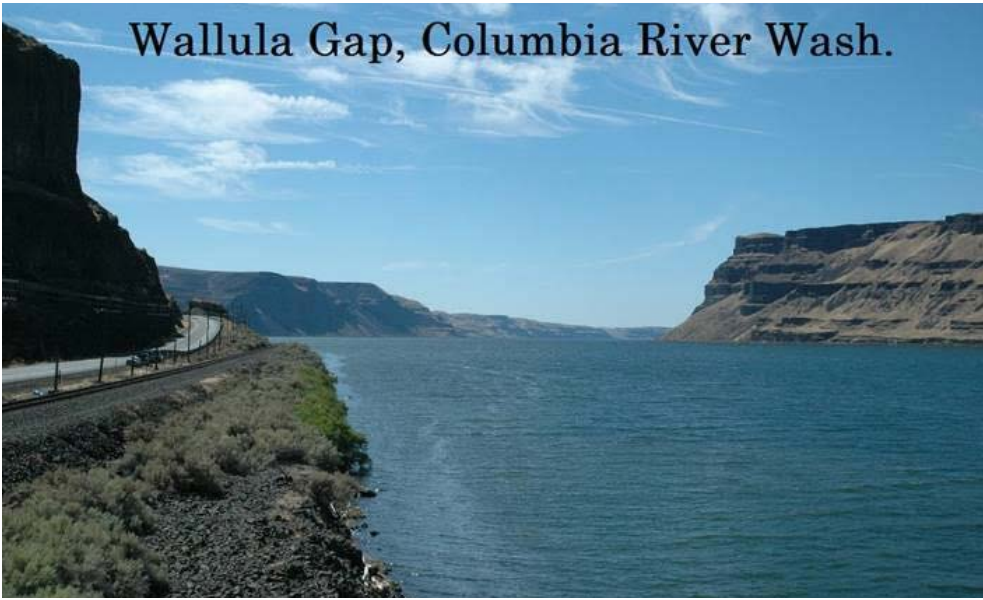
This lake is 629 acres and located seven miles north of Chattaroy off Highway US-2, with a year-round open season. Fishing for Largemouth bass in spring and fall are the best bets. This lake has a reputation as an excellent largemouth bass lake with more than a few 4- to 6-pound bass caught each year. Eloika has a resort with a boat launch and a WDFW boat launch south of Gray's Landing off East Bridges rd.

9. CHAIN LAKES, ID.

These 10 Chain Lakes are off the slow moving and majestic Coeur d'Alene River. From top to bottom they are Rose Lake, Bullrun, Killarney, Medicine, Cave, Swan, Black, Blue, Thompson and Anderson Lakes. The best bass lakes in the chain are Killarney at #1, followed by Thompson, Anderson, and Medicine. All of the lakes have both SM and LM, except Bullrun which only has Largess. There are 2 launches on the river, one near Thompson Lake and one near the channel that leads to Cave and Medicine lakes. There are 2 more launches in Killarney and in Medicine lakes.



Wallula Gap, Columbia River Wash.



8. COLUMBIA RIVER, TRI CITIES AREA, WA.

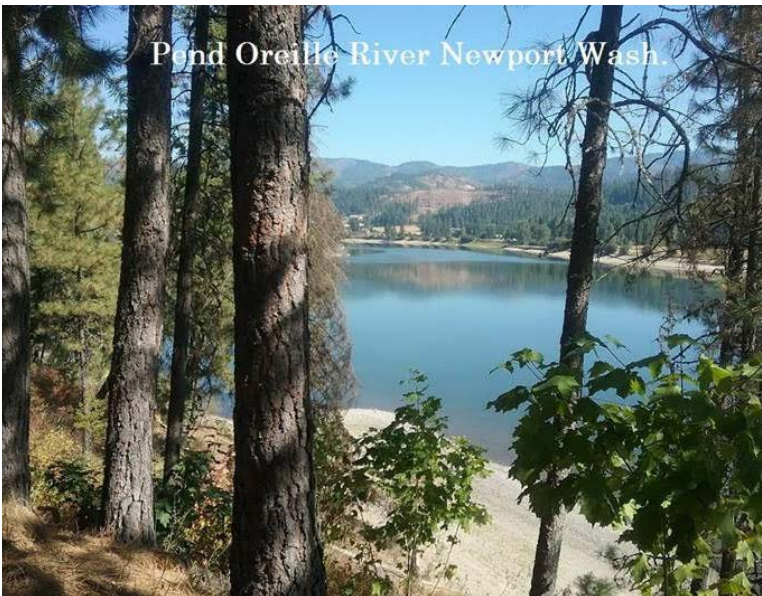
There are hundreds of places in Washington where fishing for smallmouth bass can at times be outrageously good, but the Columbia river is one of the best for giant fish. All of those huge pools behind the dams hold excellent populations of smallmouth worthy of your attention, but Lake Wallula, (McNary Dam Pool) stretching from the Tri-Cities area down to the Oregon state line is often considered among the very best.

7. NOXON RES, MT.

Noxon Rapids Reservoir is considered a top-notch bass lake for both Largemouth and Smallmouth are popular, as well as northern pike. It is a collection of such contrasts - mountainous beauty beyond comparison combined with some of the best bass fishing in the state. Backing up about 34 miles of the Clark Fork River, the reservoir is relatively narrow - only a little over a mile across at its widest point. Yet the warmer waters have proved to be a haven for a species of fish more commonly thought of as only eastern Montana fare - Largemouth and Smallmouth bass. According to Jon Hanson, a fisheries biologist with the Montana Department of Fish and Wildlife, "It's got probably some of the best bass fishing in the Montana, right up there with Fort Peck,"



Pend Oreille River Newport Wash.



6. PEND OREILLE RIVER, ID.

This is where the Junior Big Bass World Champions have been held the last 2 years and it is awesome bass water for sure. It has many sloughs (about 20) along its 25 mile journey from Lake P.O. to the Wash/ID. border. At full pool the LM loads up in these backwaters to spawn which is going on right now. Morton and Cocolalla are 2 of the most popular but I like some of the lesser known sloughs like Gypsy Bay and The sloughs from the Old priest river channels. The Smallies inhabit all the moving water on the river, but there are some good boulder fields down near the town of P.R. that really produce big fish year after year.

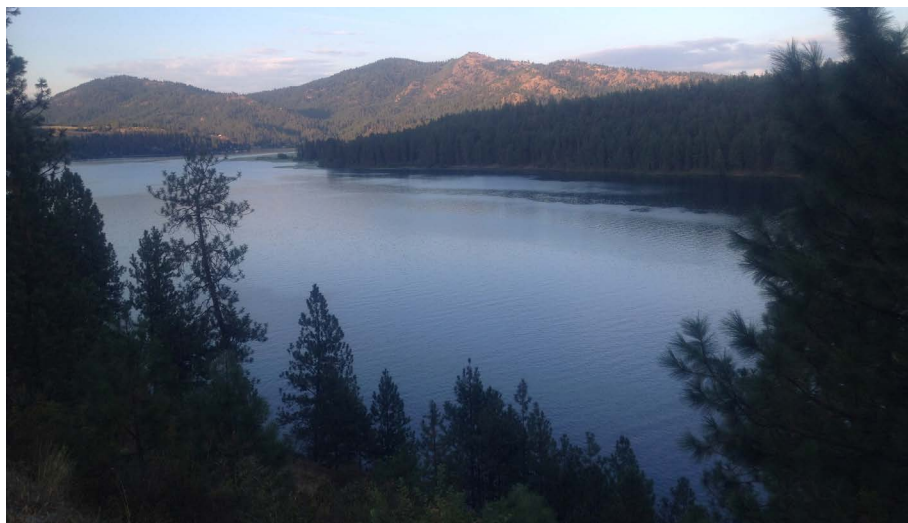


5. DWORSHAK RES., ID.

Dworshak is the #1 place to go west of the Mississippi if you want to catch the biggest Smallie of your life. The 3rd largest Smallmouth ever caught anywhere in the world, was caught here and it has produced many 9 lb. plus fish. However it is not an easy place to learn or catch fish at, as it is a very deep and cold body of water. Typically drop shooting in 80 to 100 feet of water is the norm here, but fish can be found in the shallows at times here also.

4. PEND OREILLE RIVER, BOX CANYON RES. WA

Box Canyon near Newport Wash. is one of my premier Bass fishing waters. It has produced hundreds of giant Smallies for me over the years, as well as my 3 personal best, at 7lb, 6 ½, and 6 ¼. It not only has great Smallmouth fishing, but produces some nice Largemouth as well. I was just out on the river yesterday and had a hay day landing over 15 ditch pickles between 14 to 18" I also got a bonus 16" River Turd .

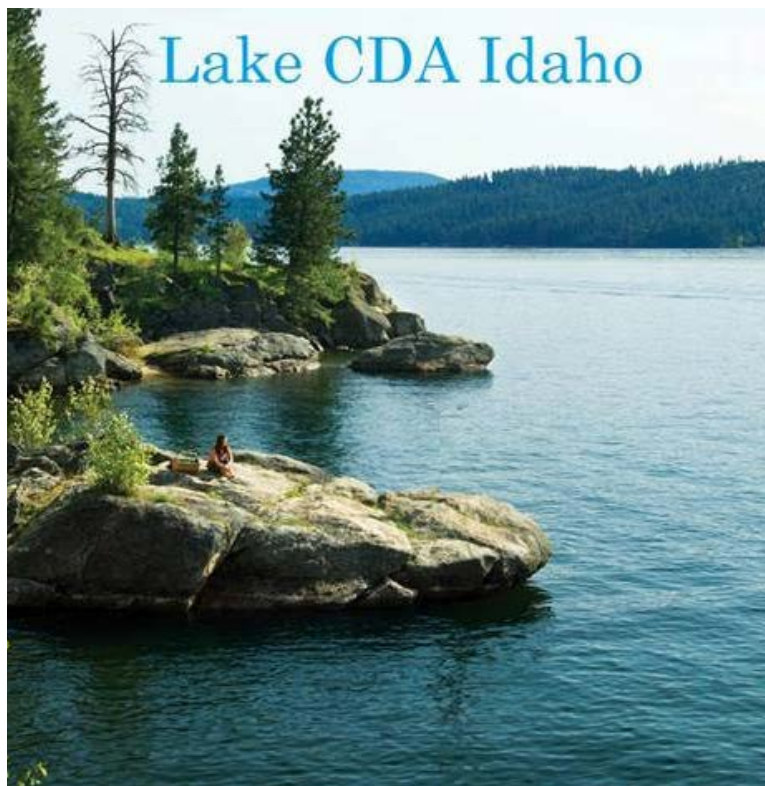


3. LONG LAKE, WA.

Long is one of the best Smallmouth waters in Eastern Wash, and should definitely be on your to do list. The area from Nine Mile Dam down to The State Park produces some good fish and the flat in front of the park is prime Ditch Pickle waters. The rocky area known as "The Cove" at Fisk Park is another prime place to catch them River Turds,

Watch Long Lake Bass Fishing on NWFRTV #67





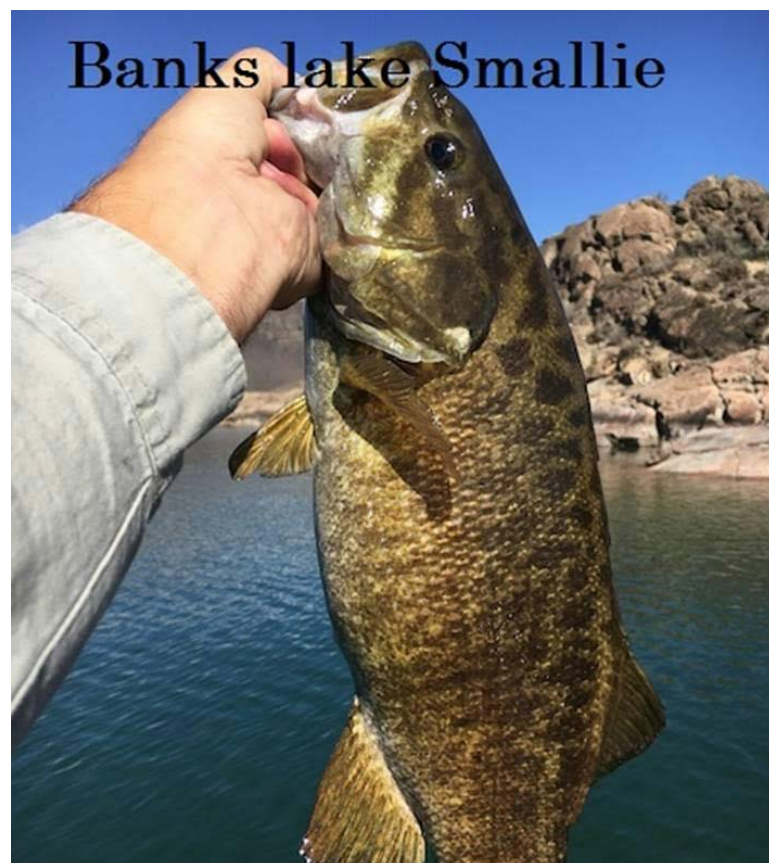
Lake CDA Idaho

2. LAKE COEUR D'ALENE, ID.

One of the best things about Lake Coeur d'Alene, besides the natural beauty and prevalent wildlife, is the fishery's diversity. Professional bass anglers Brandon Palaniuk and Luke Clausen both grew up fishing CDA and it undoubtedly helped shape their fishing styles thanks to the many options the lake provides. There are few places in the country where you have a shot at catching a trophy Largemouth and Smallmouth on the same day, but Coeur d'Alene is one of them. Local tournament results prove that five fish limits over 20-pounds are not uncommon, with many in the mid-20 pounds and sometimes approaching or even exceeding 30-pounds. In general, the lake's northern and middle sections are deeper and rockier, with clear water. In contrast, the northern bays and southern parts are shallower and include water that is a little more stained, with more grass, shallower water, and plenty of backwater lakes in the south.

1. BANKS LAKE, WA.

Banks Lake, part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, was created in 1951 by damming the north and south ends of the Columbia River channel known as The Grand Coulee. This long, skinny, 27,000-acre lake, ringed with basalt cliffs and talus slopes along its 90 miles of shoreline, produces some of Washington's best smallmouth and largemouth bass fishing and it's open year round. The spring largemouth bite begins to heat up in May. The males combine feeding activity with their search for appropriate nesting sites so the successful fisherman will prowl for prime nesting habitat. One of my favorite sections of the lake is the Devils Punch Bowl. It has some shallow coves on the S.W. side that provide good spawning habitat. Also look for smallies in that area on the old submerged road beds that run through it and along the lakeshore. These sites often consist of raised roadbeds with deeper water to each side, which provide good spawning beds and deep-water protection for smallies.



Banks lake Smallie

**Complete Custom Marine Electronics
Installations/Rigging and Electrical
Service and Training. Navico,
Lowrance and Simrad specialists.**



**We are ABYC
and NMEA Certified.**

**(253) 677-9400
taylormarineinstallations.com**

Media. Design. Social.



www.govictory.agency



BLACKENED CRAPPIE TACOS

by Jason Brooks

THIS BLACKENED CRAPPIE TACOS recipe is easily manageable for a weeknight dinner. 'Blackening' is a flavorful technique for cooking fish, and it's fast. The most important thing to know about making blackened fish is that it creates a lot of heat and smoke. An outdoor grill is ideal, but if you're cooking indoors be sure to use a cast iron skillet and turn your exhaust fan to the highest setting. Cast iron is a great choice for high heat cooking.

BLACKENED CRAPPIE TACOS



INGREDIENTS

For the Slaw:

1 cup thinly sliced white onion
1 cup shredded or very thinly sliced red cabbage
1/2 cup sour cream 4 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves plus extra leaves for garnish
4 tablespoons fresh lime juice
3 jalapeño peppers, seeded, deveined and roughly chopped

For the Blackening Spices:

1 1/2 teaspoons paprika
1 1/2 teaspoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon dried oregano
3/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Fish and other ingredients:

4 (6-ounce) skinless fillets of crappie or other firm white fish such as talapia, halibut, or snapper
1 tablespoon light cooking oil
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas
1 ripe avocado, peeled and thinly sliced
4 lime wedges
Cilantro leaves, optional



Pro Tip:

The high heat of the cooking surface creates a fragrant black spice crust on the fish while keeping the inside tender and juicy.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make the Slaw: Combine sour cream, cilantro, lime juice and jalapeños in a food processor or blender; process until smooth. Toss onions and cabbage with the cilantro lime sauce.

2. Make The Spice Mix: Combine paprika, sugar, oregano, garlic powder, salt, cumin and cayenne in a small bowl.

3. Preheat the oven to 350°F Stack tortillas and wrap them in foil. Heat them in the warm oven for 5-10 minutes.

4. Blacken the Fish: Turn on your hood vent. Heat up your cast iron skillet over high heat – on the grill or on the stovetop. Lay fish out on a platter or on waxed paper. Brush the fish with oil or melted butter and sprinkle on the blackening spices: paprika, brown sugar,

oregano, garlic powder, salt, cumin and cayenne. Place 2 fillets, spiced-side down, in the preheated skillet. Then sprinkle the top side of each fillet with 3/4 teaspoon of spice mix. Cook for 2 1/2 – 3 minutes per side or until spices are blackened and fish is cooked through. Transfer fish to a platter and tent with foil to keep warm. Wipe the pan clean to avoid a burnt taste. Repeat with the other two fillets.





Leaded Line for Kokanee and Trout

by Mike Carey

When it comes to trolling there are multiple ways to get your gear in front of your quarry's eyes. Downriggers and dropper lines are very popular for kokanee and trout fishing and are well known to anglers. They are effective and easy to use. There's another way of getting your gear down to the fish that many are less familiar with but can be even more effective. I'm talking about using leaded line for trolling. I remember first seeing leaded line being used and I will admit I was not impressed. It seemed cumbersome and not very sporting, taking away all the fun of the fight. Since that first experience though I've come to appreciate how deadly effective leaded line fishing can be, and learned that it's still a lot of fun to catch fish using leaded line.

Let's look at what leaded line is and how you can add it to your trolling arsenal to help you catch more fish.

**READ FULL
ARTICLE HERE**

36 | NWFR TV.com

DIRECTORY

Destinations

Mardon Resort
(800) 416-2736
mardonresort.com

Liars Cove
(509) 826-1288
liarscoveresort.com

Coulee Playland
(509) 633-2671
couleeplayland.com

Outdoor Gear

Ghunders Performance Base Layers
(360) 612-0506
ghunders.com

Work Sharp Tools
(800) 597-6170
worksharptools.com

Marine Gear

Taylor Marine
(253) 677-9400

Precision Propeller
(509) 489-7765
precisionpropco.com

IFish Solutions
(509) 954-3883
ifishsolutions.com

Guides & Charters

Austin's Northwest Adventures
(509) 668-0298
austinsnorthwestadventures.com

Captain Dave's Guide Service
(509) 939-6727
lakerooseveltffishingguide.com

Chrome Inc.
(425) 591-5108
chromeinc.org

D&H Guide Service
(509) 759-0098
wasalmonfishing.com

Darrell & Dads Family Guide Service
(509) 687-0709
darrellanddads.com

Double M Outdoors
(503) 956-5489
doublemoutdoors.com

Fast Action Guide Service
(425) 753-5772
fastactionfishingseattle.com

Jones Sportfishing
(208) 861-0654
jonessportfishing.com

Mitchell Sportfishing
(509) 480-5945
mitchellsportfishing.com

MoonsGuideService
(509) 860-6497
moonsguideservice.com

Reel Obsession
(888) 855-7335
reelobsession.ca

Reel Time Fishing
(208) 790-2128
reeltimefishing.com

Rising Son GS
(509) 492-8852
risingsonadventures.wixsite.com/fishing

Ross Outdoor Adventures
(509) 750-7763
rossoutdooradventures.com

SJM Guide Service
(509) 435-6486
sjmguideservice.com

Steel Dreams Guide Service
(509) 869-9694
steeldreamsfishing.com

YJ Guide Service
(509) 999-0717
yjguideservice.com

Fishing Tackle

Dutch Fork Custom Lures
(724) 884-3977
dutchforkcustomlures.com

Fish With Gary
(541) 536-1002
fishwithgary.com

Lip Ripper Lures
(907) 599-0331
lipripperlures.com

Mack's Lure
(509) 667-9202
macks lure.com

Mauk's Fishing Stuff
(509) 689-3164
fishingtacklecovers.com

Old Goat Lures
oldgoatlures.com

Superfly Flies
(208) 610-9280
superflyflies.com

Wigglefin Tackle
(208) 388-8539
wigglefin.com

Other

Scuttlebutt
(425) 252-2829
scuttlebuttbrewing.com

Tanners Fresh Fish Processing
(866) 209-4882
tannersfish.com

Skip Rock Distillers
(360) 862-0272
skiprockdistillers.com

SCUTTLEBUTT
BREWING CO

**WORLD CLASS BEER.
HAND CRAFTED LOCALLY.**

