

## FISHING REPORT

### GRANDE RONDE RIVER

Flows are very low. Fishing for bass should be good from the state line upstream into the roadless section. High temperatures will likely make fishing for cold water species difficult.

### IMNAHA RIVER

The lower stretches of the river should fish well for bass this time of year. In the upper stretches, fishing for large whitefish and trout can be good. Remember, Chinook salmon are present in the system and are not to be targeted by anglers. Bull trout are also present and should be released immediately and unharmed.

### UMATILLA RIVER

Trout fishing on the upper Umatilla River should be fair for anglers using lures and flies.

### JOHN DAY RIVER

Smallmouth bass fishing has been good. River flows are considerably lower than normal.

### WALLOWA LAKE

Fishing for rainbow trout has been good. Some surplus production of rainbow trout resulted in additional fish being released into the lake. Expect fishing to remain good through the end of summer.

Kokanee fishing has improved recently and large fish are being caught. A reduction in the population size has allowed for fish to grow larger and anglers are catching fish up to 20 inches with the average around 13 inches.

### WALLOWA RIVER

The Wallowa is running very low and warm. While fish will still be caught fishing will be more difficult. Please use proper catch and release techniques while conditions may be more harsh for the fish.

### WALLOWA COUNTY PONDS

Kinney Lake is currently very warm with heavy algae. Fishing will be difficult as the reservoir warms and is drawn down for irrigation. Look for fishing to improve in the fall when the reservoir begins to refill.

Marr Pond repairs are complete and it has been stocked with legal and trophy trout. Drawing down the pond for repairs killed a lot of aquatic vegetation, which makes fishing easier.

### ADVISORY ON ALGAE BLOOMS

Oregon sees an increase in algae blooms in lakes, rivers and reservoirs during the summer. Not all algae blooms are harmful, but blooms caused by cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) can cause serious illness in pets and humans.

Source: ODFW



Jeff Green/Dynamic Photography

Jeff Green dives into a deep hole in the Little North Santiam River.

# Riverdance? No, RiverDIVE

By Zach Urness

Salem Statesman Journal

The Little North Santiam River is one of Oregon's most beautiful streams, with waterfalls, old-growth forests and mossy canyons.

But that is just the view from land. Dive below the surface with a snorkel and fins, and you will discover an entirely new side of the Little North. It is an emerald world teeming with wildlife, hidden caverns and no shortage of surprises.

River snorkeling is a somewhat under-the-radar form of outdoor recreation in Oregon. But it does seem to be growing in popularity, said avid river snorkeler Conrad Gowell, who helps manage a Facebook and Instagram group that highlights pictures and trips.

"It seems to be gaining momentum," he said. "More and more people are reaching out for gear recommendations and trip reports."

I decided to get into river snorkeling after hearing the stories of wildlife biologists, who use snorkels to count fish in Oregon's rivers and creeks. Coming nose to nose with a steelhead or salmon seemed like a lot

of fun. And, as a whitewater kayaker, I have long wondered what lay below my boat.

I purchased my first snorkel setup (mask, breathing tube and fins) in July and was ready for action.

The Little North was the first place to visit, because I have always loved its clear water and glorious deep pools for swimming. But I knew there was more to see.

And so, on one of those boiling hot days last week, I loaded the snorkel and fins into my backpack and headed out.

I was joined by Salem adventure photographer Jeff Green, a certified scuba diver. Our plan was to hike into some of the larger, less-traveled and more interesting pools along the Little North Santiam Trail.

Call it snorkel hiking, or "snorking." I'm still working on the name.

From the trailhead, Jeff and I carried our gear a little more than a mile before we found a hole worth exploring, right below a small waterfall.

I had practiced setting up the equipment beforehand, which was nice, because it did not take much

time or effort to get in the water. That is actually one of the things I have enjoyed about river snorkeling so far — it is pretty simple to get started.

Jeff wore a wet suit, and I wore my kayaking dry suit, but that is not necessary. In the heat of the day, the Little North swimming holes are the perfect mix of refreshingly cool without being frigid, and you could go in a swimming suit.

From the first moment I dove into the water, I wondered why I did not pick up snorkeling sooner.

My view below the surface was emerald glass, with numerous trout darting among giant boulders. The best part was below the waterfall, where I was enveloped in so many bubbles it felt as though I was inside a freshly cracked can of soda.

But that was just the beginning.

After the first hole, we headed to a wider section of the river and swam out into a canyon filled with deep pools. Some of the holes were shockingly deep, as though a grand canyon was spreading out below the water.

We continued up the canyon, climbing above waterfalls and jumping

into the pool above, each new pool bringing something unique.

Our favorite moment was swimming into a small cave, deep in the canyon.

"You could take a picture of this place and tell somebody that it's from Tahiti," Jeff said. "But it's right here in our backyard."

The worst part was coming across trash at the bottom of what feels like a pristine river. Jeff picked up a long, plastic hose, and I nabbed a few beer cans.

Gowell, also a conservationist with the Native Fish Society, said river snorkeling provides a real window into the health of a river system.

"I've snorkeled some of the most degraded watersheds in Oregon trying to figure out how to restore them," he said. "And I've been fortunate enough to see fully functioning rivers complete with species some people have never heard of."

"For me, it's a way to go to the river without needing to extract something from it, a way to figure out what's below the water's surface and learn to coexist better within my environment."

## Backpacking in order to get away

I've been super busy lately and have a new project coming up which will require more traveling and busyness. So what's a guy to do? Take off on a backpacking (BP) trip for a few days, of course! I had a lot of articles to get in so I whipped them out and then put together all my BP gear. That takes a while due to all of the little gizmos that BP requires.

I wanted to leave early enough to get in and set up camp and still have a few hours to fish before dark so I could hit the evening hatch. I got to my spot and hadn't seen a soul. Good. I slugged up camp and then rigged up my fly rod and trotted down the trail to the first hole.

Oh no! There was a massive log jam in it. Logs had pretty much jammed up the whole hole. It was unfishable.



### BASE CAMP

TOM CLAYCOMB

About five years ago on a trip with Kolby there'd been a huge snow slide that pushed a ton of dead trees into the river a few miles upstream. I guess they had finally made it down to this hole. Or maybe there'd been a new slide, although I hadn't seen one while hiking in.

We've got to stop and ponder something a minute. Remember the Jarbridge Shovel Brigade in Nevada? If you remember, the over-reaching Feds refused to let them repair a road because a few piles of dirt may fall in the river and hurt the bull trout. When they refuse to fight forest fires which results in miles of burned/

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## Female guides band together

By Peter Madsen

WesCam News Service

As the raft surged through the rapids, frothy white water sprayed the six paddlers. They each wore wetsuits, flotation devices and helmets as they paddled through the Big Eddy, a section of Deschutes River that features Class III rapids.

"Forward paddle! Forward two!" the guide shouted from the stern, steering the raft's course with a paddle. Jen Kjellesvik's voice was loud, deep and calm.

That Kjellesvik and the six-person crew were women shouldn't surprise anyone, they said.

Women are increasingly drawn to male-dominated outdoors sports such as river rafting. And several women on this recent rafting trip have set goals greater than coursing through challenging river rapids at the beck and call of someone else. Women

are acquiring the skills that will allow them to become professional raft guides themselves.

"I think women make better guides," Kjellesvik said. "We're not trying to out-muscle the river like some male guides. We're paying closer attention to the river, reading it better."

Kjellesvik, 43, has guided for 25 years. She owns and operates Adventure Fitness in Bend. She wants to change the notion that women can't be excellent river guides and began leading several female-centered rafting trips last month — so far, free of charge. She wants to help women invest in their rafting game and become professional guides who go on to work for rafting companies. Kjellesvik, certified by The American Canoe Association as an instructor, is considering making this word-of-mouth clinic a permanent one.

Melanie Feltmate, who has guided since 2014, heard of Kjellesvik through coworkers at the Colorado rafting company where she got her start. Kjellesvik had previously guided crews on the Arkansas River for the same company. When Feltmate told them she was moving to Bend, "They said, 'You have to meet this woman named Jen,'" Feltmate said.

### A heightened camaraderie

Kjellesvik invited Feltmate to join this recent rafting trip with four additional women. They would run Big Eddy after a discussion on safety and technique. Throughout the day, Kjellesvik and Feltmate spoke about various rafting companies they'd worked for and rivers they had guided on, slipping in and out of jargon. They agreed that too many men, ranging from some raft company owners

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