



## Drifting the Sandy River

One of the most popular local pastimes is drifting the Sandy River for steelhead.

There's nothing quite like hooking into a bright, steelhead unless it's catching a chinook, which can also be found in the Sandy.

You've got to get up early to beat the crowd and a 6 a.m. start is not unusual. Dabney is as good a place as any to launch a boat and the two-mile trip down to Lewis and Clark State Park is a beautiful one.

The river is fairly tame, especially at this time of year, and there are several notoriously good fishing holes. Fishing has been a little on the slow

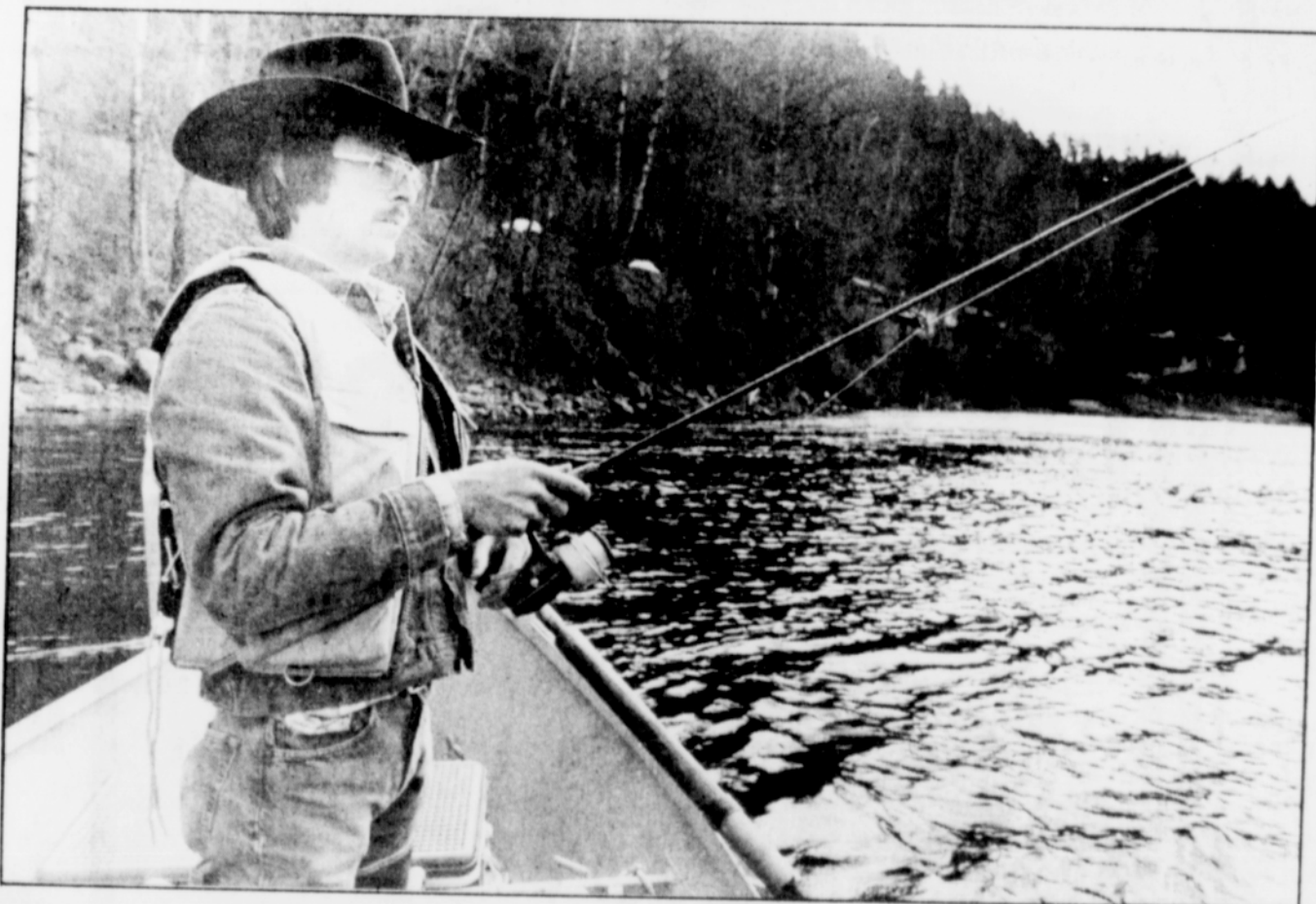
side for the past couple of weeks, according to experts, because the fish have been spooked by the hordes of smelt dippers.

A good rain would also help, launching more steelhead up the river.

If you're lucky enough to be with a thoughtful pilot, the middle of the river is a great place to stop and fry up a little breakfast, especially if the fish aren't biting.

But even if the fishing is slow, the trip is so peaceful and scenic that it's well worth the time and effort.

But when the fish are biting, you'll be hooked in a minute.



A pair of fishermen anchor their drift boat (top) in the Sandy, and try the faster water. Sandy High teacher Randy Hutchinson (center) tries a little angling from his boat then takes a quick break to cook a little breakfast (bottom right). Eggs or shrimp (above) are the most popular baits, but when they aren't biting, there isn't much to do but enjoy the ride as SUHS teacher John Smith will attest (right).



photos by Mark Floyd