

FISHING FORECAST

ODFW continues to stock rainbow trout

EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is continuing to release rainbow trout in many lakes and ponds in Northeastern Oregon.

The agency has recently stocked thousands of rainbow trout, including trophy fish, which are 15 inches or longer.

The majority of the trout released are “legals” — at least 8 inches long, and thus legal for anglers to keep.

The trout stocking schedule, which is subject to change:

Week of July 4-8

- Jubilee Lake: 6,000 legals, 2,000 trophy.
- Fish Lake (north of Halfway): 2,250 legals, 500 trophy.
- Grande Ronde Lake, 5,000 legals, 150 trophy.

Week of July 11-15

- Wallowa Lake: 6,000 legals, 300 trophy.
- Salt Creek Summit Pond: 700 legals, 50 trophy.
- Kinney Lake, 1,200 legals, 100 trophy.
- McGraw Pond, 700 legals, 50 trophy.

Week of July 25-29

- Jubilee Lake: 3,800 legals.

Week of Aug. 1-5

- Wallowa Lake: 5,400 legals, 180 trophy.

Schedules and maps for trout stocking plans later in the year are available at myodfw.com/fishing/species/trout/stocking-schedule.

Fishing conditions and forecast

Phillips Reservoir: Has been stocked with trout throughout the spring. When flying ants have been around, fishing with dry flies has been a good way to catch both rainbow trout and pike-minnows. Perch fishing has



Wallowa County Chieftain, File

Trout fishing should be improving on the Imnaha River. The chinook salmon season ends Sunday, July 10, 2022.

been slow, but some bank anglers have been catching perch.

The reservoir is still low and is currently 24 percent full. Remember that tiger musky and bull trout must be released unharmed.

Unity Reservoir: Reservoir remains nearly full. This spring anglers were successful catching 16- to 17-inch rainbow trout. Anglers have been successful fishing both from shore and from boats. Fishing will likely be best over the next several weeks while the reservoir has a good amount of water in it.

Grande Ronde River: Flows have been dropping and fishing may improve with more moderated flow conditions. Anglers have had success fly-fish-

ing for trout in the Grande Ronde River between the Wallowa River and Troy. As the water warms, bass fishing will become better in the lower Grande Ronde River. Anglers are reminded that bull trout and Chinook salmon may be encountered and must be released unharmed.

Imnaha River: Trout fishing may be good during periods of moderated flows. When the water temperature increases, bass fishing may be good in the lower portions of the river.

The chinook fishery on the Imnaha will close on Sunday, July 10. There will be no extension of the season. The Imnaha River is open for fishing for hatchery spring chinook salmon

from the confluence with the Snake River upstream to the Summit Creek bridge. The daily limit is two adult hatchery chinook salmon and five jack hatchery chinook salmon. Fishing pressure for chinook salmon picked up last weekend with more fish being harvested. Expect conditions to be good through the end of the season on July 10. Chinook are distributed through the fishery area with more fish arriving daily.

Anglers are reminded that bull trout may be encountered in the Imnaha River and must be released unharmed.

John Day River: Conditions for bass and catfish fishing are improving now that we are in a pattern of

drier weather. Flows have been higher than usual for this time of year and floating with a raft or other smaller craft will remain viable for the next few weeks. Recent reports are of excellent bass fishing in the lower sections of the John Day up to the North Fork confluence.

Magone Lake: Magone Lake is an excellent bet for fishing this time of year, and reports have been very good for recently stocked rainbow trout.

Wallowa County ponds: Fishing for trout has been very good recently. Several local ponds have been stocked with rainbow trout including some larger fish over 16 inches. Casting spinners or flies can be effective for catching fish at Marr

Pond. Using bait can also be a productive method for fishing for trout at the local Wallowa County ponds.

Wallowa Lake: Fishing is good for rainbow trout near the south end of the lake. Anglers may have good success from shore casting lures, flies, or bait. Boat anglers will have better access to more of the lake and may find fish near areas where the depth drops off. There are some nice kokanee available this year with some fish around 16 to 18 inches. Jigging and trolling for kokanee can both be productive ways of fishing for them.

Wallowa River: Flows have been steadily dropping, and fishing should be good. Some of the best fishing of the season will occur between now and the end of July. Good hatches of stoneflies and mayflies have occurred including recent hatches of golden stoneflies. Anglers are reminded that bull trout may be encountered in the Wallowa River and must be released unharmed.

The Wallowa River opened for hatchery spring chinook fishing on June 25 from the lower fence of Minam State Park upstream to the confluence with the Lostine River. The daily limit is two adult hatchery chinook salmon and five jack hatchery chinook salmon. The fishery will be open through July 24. However, the fishery may close early so anglers are encouraged to regularly check for regulation updates. For full details of the 2022 spring chinook fishing season on the Wallowa River visit the myodfw website or call the Enterprise field office at 541-426-3279.

Chinook salmon fishing effort has been light on the Wallowa River. However, salmon should be available throughout the river and more salmon continue to make their way up the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

NBA:

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“I started coaching in Eastern Oregon and now I’m coaching NBA players,” Thompson said. “I’ve coached Gary Clark (Pelicans), Alfonzo McKinnie (Bulls) and Matt Mooney (Knicks).”

The Los Capitanes played a shortened season last year in Texas, but will have a 50-game season based out of Mexico City for the 2022-23 season.

Of the 30 NBA teams, 28 have their own G League team. Portland and Phoenix do not, but are allowed to send players to other teams.

“There were more than 100 call-ups from the G League to the NBA this past year,” Thompson said.

In addition to his work, Thompson said he enjoys living in Mexico.

“It’s really cool,” he said. “Not many people get to experience working in another country. I had players from six or seven different countries. It’s a great experience. Mexico City’s cost of living is lower, and it’s a safe city. I’ve enjoyed living there and the food is good.”

Humble beginnings

A 2010 graduate of Hermiston High School, Thompson got his first taste of coaching his senior year of high school.

After playing three years for coach Larry Usher, Thompson suffered a knee injury that derailed his senior year. Usher helped Thompson secure a coaching position at Sandstone Middle School.

“At Hermiston, I was a very average basketball player, but I had a good coach who sent me on that (coaching) path. Larry was a huge part of me getting into coaching. He has been instrumental

in my career path.”

Thompson coached the Hermiston freshmen when he was at Blue Mountain Community College. After he transferred to Oregon State University, he got involved with the men’s basketball program as a student manager for coach Craig Robinson.

After one season, Robinson was fired and Thompson returned home, where he took the reins of the Irrigon boys program.

In two seasons with the Knights, Thompson led the team to a 44-9 overall record, a 17-3 record in the Columbia Basin Conference, and the 2A state title during the 2014-15 season.

He was named the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association Coach of the Year in 2015, and at 23 years old, was the state’s youngest basketball coach to win a championship.

The Knights lost in the state playoffs the following year, and Thompson was on the move again — back to OSU as a graduate assistant with coach Wayne Tinkle.

Thompson also worked with the Milwaukee Bucks G League team in player development before the job in Mexico opened up.

In the midst of the coaching carousel, Thompson and a few of his former Irrigon players and friends started a free bilingual basketball camp, which will celebrate its second year in Irrigon later this month.

“Middle school to the NBA G League,” Thompson said, reflecting on the past 12 years. “The G league has gotten better over the past five years. It’s one of the top five professional leagues in the world. Almost 50 percent of players in the NBA played in the G League. It has its fingerprints all over the NBA.”

If you look closely, you will see Thompson’s prints in the mix.



Samuel Pyke/Contributed Photo

With a bear spotted on a high slope and heading down to water, Lucas Simpson, left, and Gary Lewis had to quickly formulate a plan to close the gap and try to spot the bear again.

Hunt:

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Another way to take advantage of our time in the woods is to pick huckleberries.

On one bear season in Baker County, with half a day left in our hunt, we stopped to pick huckleberries on a forest slope, filling whatever containers we could find with the fresh fruit. It gave me an idea.

Pemmican was the original superfood, a blend of dried meat, dried berries and bear fat (substitute bison fat, beef tallow or coconut oil). I wondered what pemmican tasted like. This was my



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife/Contributed Photo

An Oregon black bear wanders through the woods. Bear hunting season in Oregon starts Aug. 1, 2022.

chance. Following a recipe I found online, I blended mule deer jerky (you could use bear jerky or elk jerky or even beef jerky) to powder and dried huckleberries to powder.

Rendering oil on the stove, I poured it over the powdered jerky and berries. The final step was to press the mixture into a serving dish. In the morning I tried pemmican for

the first time. Break off a chunk, let it disintegrate on the tongue. It’s the ultimate carnivore protein bar.

At this time of year in the Wallows, in the Blues and the Elkhorns, a hunter should prospect for bears in the high meadows and old burns.

When the weather is unseasonably hot, expect to see bear earlier in the day and again later in the evening. But a hunter should commit to the whole of the day; bears feed any time they feel like it.

Gary Lewis is the author of *Fishing Central Oregon and Oregon Lake Maps and Fishing Guide and other titles*. To contact Gary, visit www.garylewisoutdoors.com.

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