

On the Bite

A WEEKLY FISHING REPORT FOR THE LOCAL REGION

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NORTH COAST LAKES:

Nehalem Hatchery released 200 surplus winter steelhead into Vernonia pond, 57 into Lost Lake and 60 into Lake Lytle. These fish get fairly active in the lake and offer a unique fishing experience, especially when the rivers are blown out. Once in the lake they are considered “trout” and do not require a Combined Angling Tag.

Anglers are reminded, however, that only one trout per day over 20 inches may be retained, and these fish will almost all be in that size range.

Trout stocking is complete in the other North Coast lakes, but there are still hold over trout available and winter can be a great time to fish for them as these trout will be larger now, and getting hungry. The trout stocking schedule for 2017 is available online, and printed versions will be out soon.

SIUSLAW RIVER:

Chinook, steelhead
The Siuslaw River and Lake Cr. are open for hatchery winter steelhead. Fishing is slow. Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

MID COAST LAKES:

The trout stocking schedule for 2017 is available online and trout have been stocked in some lakes. Fishing for the various warm water fish species will slow as water temperatures cool. There are numerous lakes in the Florence area that can provide good opportunity.

ALSEA RIVER AND BAY: Steelhead

Steelhead fishing is open on the Alsea River and listed tributaries. The river is shaping up after last week’s rain. Fishing is slow. Alsea Hatchery is having a below average return to the hatchery.

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

SALMON RIVER: Steelhead

The Salmon River is open for wild and hatchery steelhead. Fishing is slow.

Wild winter steelhead can be retained on the Salmon River. Daily and annual bag limit on wild winter steelhead are 1/day and 3/year.

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

SILETZ RIVER: Steelhead

The river is shaping up after last week’s rain. Steelhead fishing is fair. Drift boaters are having fair success from Moonshine Park to Siletz and bank anglers are catching hatchery fish in the Siletz gorge.

Casting spinners, drifting bait or using a bobber and jig can be effective.

WILSON RIVER: Steelhead

Fishing was slow on the Wilson last weekend due to high water and marginal conditions. It should be dropping into prime shape by the end of the week and through the weekend. There should be plenty of broodstock hatchery and wild steelhead around, and there have been some big fish coming off the Wilson

See FISHING 3B

Forest officials prepare for solar eclipse crowds

Siuslaw National Forest officials are working on plans to accommodate the large numbers of visitors anticipated to be coming to Oregon this summer to view the solar eclipse. Recreation managers expect the high meadows of Marys Peak and Mt. Hebo to be of great interest to community members and visitors who are looking for prime viewing locations along the ‘path of totality’; the swath of land where viewers will witness a total eclipse.

By mid-March, the forest expects to release full details regarding viewing opportunities on Marys Peak and Mt. Hebo for the Aug. 21 eclipse, which some consider a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Access to Marys Peak and Mt. Hebo will be managed to provide a unique viewing experience, while ensuring public safety, clear access for emergency vehicles, and protection of sensitive meadows.

Additional details will be available in mid-March, but eclipse viewers starting to make plans now can anticipate the following:
For Marys Peak, private vehicle access for day use will be available by reservation up to the capacity of parking areas via Recreation.gov.

Trailhead parking may be by reservation only or, in some cases, unavailable.
The forest is also in discussions with a potential recreation event permittee that may offer shuttle service to the peak, camping, and enhanced services. The road up Marys Peak will remain open to bicycles, though cyclists should anticipate significant congestion on area roads.

For Mt. Hebo, private vehicle access for day use will be available up to the capacity of parking areas by reservation via Recreation.gov.
Access will also be open to those arriving by foot and bicycle, though trailhead access may be unavailable or extremely limited.
For other forest areas, many Siuslaw National Forest campgrounds are available by reservation and are already booked for the nights leading up to the eclipse.

Some areas of the forest are available for dispersed camping, yet the steep slopes and dense forests of the Coast Range limit the availability of suitable camping locations.

While access to other forest recreation sites will be available as usual, standard recreation fees may apply and crowding and congestion should be anticipated.

“We love how excited people are to witness this natural phenomenon and it is our intent to welcome them to the national forest to do so,” said Jerry Ingersoll, forest supervisor. “We also know that viewing opportunities on the Siuslaw will be limited by the terrain, the tall trees, and our need to protect safety and resources in a few special places.”

“We’re encouraging folks to plan ahead so they’ll have a memorable eclipse experience.”
With the amount of visitors expected in western Oregon for the eclipse numbering in the hundreds of thousands, it is likely roadways will be congested the weekend prior to and on the day of the eclipse.

Emergency personnel will stretched thin and response times may be slow.

Visitors to the national forest should plan their visit well ahead of time, expect limited or no cellphone service, and have eye protection that is certified as safe for viewing a solar eclipse.

Many events are being planned throughout western Oregon.

For information on events and viewing opportunities near you, contact your local chambers of commerce or tourism outlets.

For more information on viewing the eclipse on the Siuslaw National Forest, contact Lisa Romano, public affairs officer, at 541-750-7075.

CELEBRATE ART, WINE AND JAZZ AT FLORENCE FEST DEBUT

Seven jazz acts, including rapidly-rising international star Halie Loren, will complement 12 wineries of regional and global renown, and an invitational juried art show, to lure aficionados of discerning tastes to Florence for FlorenceFest ‘17.

The two-day event takes place at the 21,000-square-foot Florence Events Center from 2 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 31, and noon to 8 p.m. on Saturday, April 1.

Pre-event tickets are \$20 online and available at www.florencechamber.com, or \$25 at the door.

Admission is restricted to adults age 21 and over.

“We’re excited to launch this event in Florence for the wine, art and jazz aficionados throughout Oregon,” says organizer Jon Thompson.



“The quality of the wine, art, food and music is critical to the overall success of the event and will appeal to a discerning audience. We know attendees will be delighted.”

Wineries from the Columbia Gorge to the Rogue Valley will offer free tastings as part of the admission price. Wineries include Gelardi Vineyard/Poco Collina, Hanson Vineyards, Benton — Lane Winery, Panache Cellars, Youngberg Hill, Iris Vineyards, Rivers Edge, Season Cellars, Cathedral Ridge, Naked Winery, Sineann and J Scott Cellars. Wineries will sell their product by the glass or bottle.

On Friday, The Michael Anderson Jazz Trio and Michelle and Dave Van Handel, will precede headliner Toni Glausi and his 9-piece Funk Band.
On Saturday, headliner Halie Loren and her quintet will take the stage after performances by The Paul Biondi and Gus Russell Quartet, The Miles To Go Quartet and Don Latarski and D’Trio.
The juried art show and sale, conducted by Robert Canaga — artist, appraiser and gallery owner/curator — will include 60-plus finalists out of more than 100 entries from Seattle to Bandon, including many Lane County locals. Prizes range up to \$1000. The event is coordinated by the Florence Regional Arts Alliance.
Thompson says that throughout the two days, a

tapas-style menu will be available from a variety of providers.

“Florence is so centrally located on the coast, and springtime is amazing here,” adds Thompson, owner of Coast Radio KCST/KCFM in Florence, which is producing FlorenceFest ‘17.

“Florence bills itself as ‘Oregon’s coastal playground,’ and this event at this venue is a great part of all the fun Florence has to offer.

We want to fill the town with people who appreciate fine art, fine wine, and international caliber jazz,” Thompson said.

For more information, visit www.FlorenceFestOregon.com or call Coast Radio at 541-997-9136 or the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce at 541-997-3128.

Siltcoos River Trail remains closed due to poor conditions

In early February, the Dune City Council voted to close the popular Siltcoos River Trail due to safety concerns.

Citing the potential liability issues associated with kayakers and canoers using the area of the river that approaches the ramp the decision was made to

close the trail.

Dune City owns the recently repaired portage that allows for safe passage over the Siltcoos River Dam. The state has

responsibility for keeping the river navigable but has been unable to access the area for the last three years.

The dam is located on private property and the owners, Dune City and the state have been unable to reach an agreement to correct the problem.

Until such time as an agreement on transfer of ownership of the ramp or on an agreement between the state and the property owner is reached the trail will remain closed.

Boaters: use extra caution on waterways

With the potential for more flooding as rain continues, debris flows with trees, root wads and other material can impact the safety of boaters on the water. The Oregon Marine Board and marine law enforcement strongly urge boaters to take the following precautions:

- Make sure the boat ramp is open for launching.
- Scout the river before running it. Rivers are dynamic, and don’t stay the same over time. Boulders and logs move, trees fall and currents shift.

- Wear a life jacket. Given the water temperature and equally cold air temperature, boaters are encouraged to wear a properly fitting life jacket on the outside of their cold weather attire.
- Boat with others and stay within sight of one another.
- Know your limits and how to self-rescue.

Visit www.boatoregon.com for more safety tips.

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