

## Forest Service waives some user fees on Veterans Day

EO Media Group

SALEM — The U.S. Forest Service will recognize the service of America's veterans by waiving standard amenity fees for all visitors to national forest and grassland day-use areas on Veterans Day, Friday, Nov. 11.

"Many veterans spend time with their families and connect with nature while hiking, hunting, boating, and exploring the range of outdoor recreation opportunities national forests and grasslands have to offer," said Tracy Calizon, regional assistant director of recreation for the Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest.

Making Veterans Day a fee-free day gives everyone an opportunity to reflect on the service of the nation's veterans while spending time on America's public lands, Calizon said.

The Forest Service offers fee-free access a few times each year to encourage everyone to explore educational and recreation opportunities available on national forests and grasslands.

On fee-free days, standard amenity fees normally charged for day use sites, such as picnic areas, developed trailheads, and destination visitor centers, are waived. The waiver does not apply to special recreation permits, cabin rentals, or campground reservations, nor does it include expanded amenity fees charged for certain highly-developed sites, service charges, or fees assessed by independent concessionaires operating on National Forest land.

Approximately 98% of national forest land can be enjoyed fee-free, year-round. Where fees are assessed, more than 80% of the money raised is re-invested at the site where they're collected, where they provide for necessary maintenance and services or are saved to pay for future improvements.

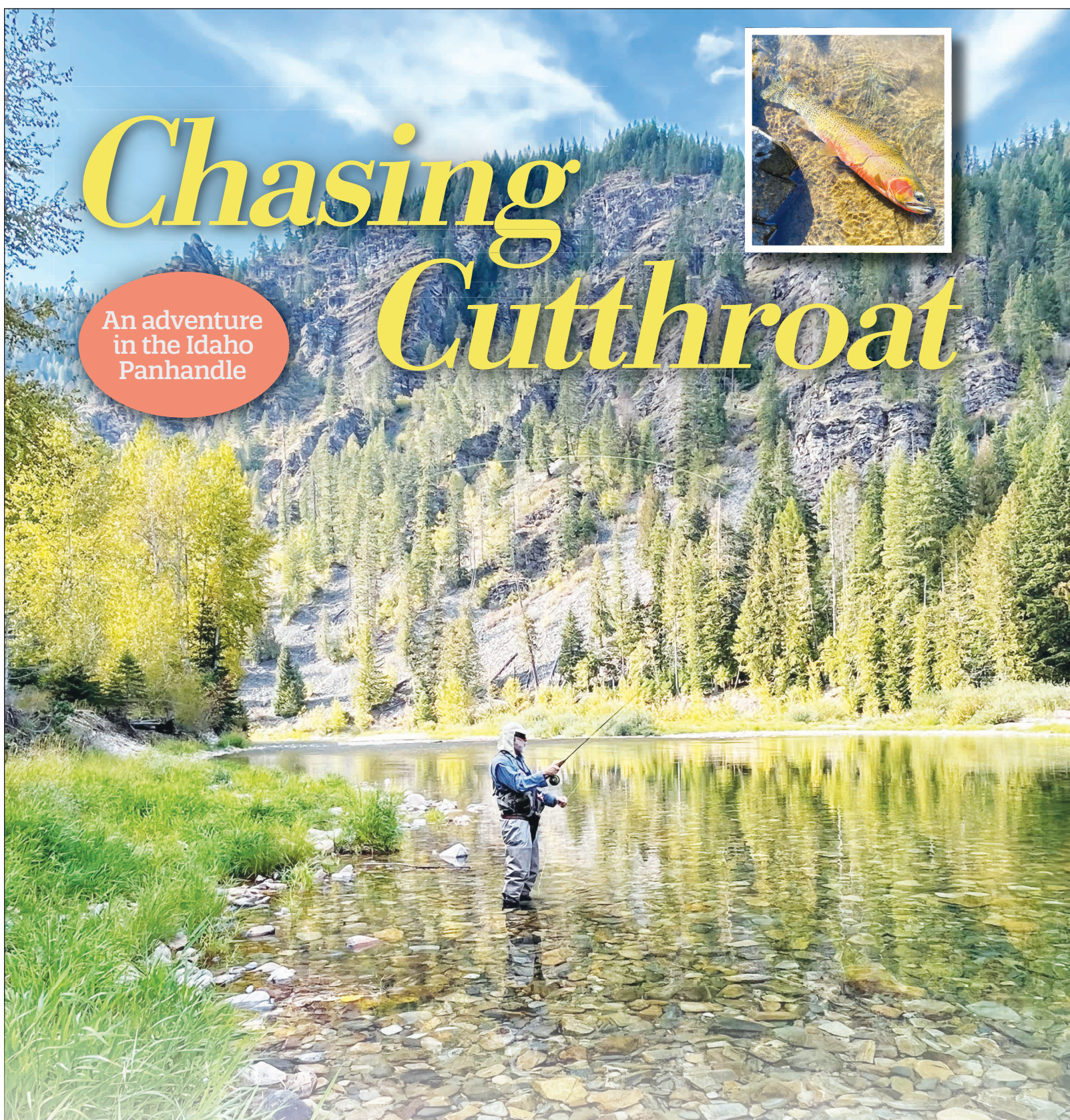
Fee-free public lands access, including access to National Forests and Grasslands, is available year-round to U.S. military service members and their families, veterans, and Gold Star family members.

The Interagency Military Pass is available at no cost to all active-duty military personnel and their families. This pass is honored nationwide at all Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and US Fish & Wildlife Service sites charging standard amenity or entrance fees.

Veterans may present an approved ID at any Forest Service location selling interagency annual passes to receive an Interagency Veterans Pass that is valid for one year from the date of issue. Forms of accepted ID include a valid Department of Defense Identification Card (CAC Card), Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC), Veterans Affairs ID Card, or a Veteran designation on a state-issued U.S. driver's license or identification card. (Veterans presenting proof of disability may also be eligible for a no-cost Interagency Access Pass, which has no expiration date.)

# Chasing Cutthroat

An adventure in the Idaho Panhandle



**DENNIS DAUBLE**  
THE NATURAL WORLD

What a difference five years makes! No more sleeping in a leaky nylon tent, cooking on a cranky camp stove, and washing under a lukewarm solar shower. This quest for cutthroat trout of the Idaho Panhandle will be launched from a time-share on the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene. Blues on satellite radio seem appropriate for a three-hour, pedal-to-the-metal drive through rain-soaked skies – the first significant moisture seen since early June.

The two-bedroom luxury suite is empty, kitchen counter a mess, and toilet seats up when I show. My pals arrive soaking wet and grinning after testing their luck on the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

"It rained all day, but fishing was good once we figured out what trout were eating," Ken said.

Ken often pumps the stomach of trout he catches to improve his odds of matching the hatch. Until then, it's watch for rises, note flying bugs (if any), and make your best guess. On our previous camping trip to the St. Joe River, he con-

fessed trying 16 different patterns.

Variety is not a new concept for serious fly fishers. According to one fly shop website, "must-have" patterns for the St. Joe River include No. 10-14 Hopper (peach, tan and red), No. 14-18 Sparkle Dun, No. 10-14 Stimulator (olive, yellow, orange), No. 16-20 Lightning Bug (purple, red, silver), No. 14-18 Splitsville Caddis (olive, tan) and a No. 14-18 Splitsville Flying Ant (black, red). That's 70 flies over six different patterns. At three bucks apiece retail, you'd better tie your own.

While I warm up a take-out pepperoni pizza and Ted takes a hot shower, Ken unloads a backpack holding a dozen fly boxes stuffed with over 100 flies each of nymphs, beadheads, dries, bucktails, wet hackles, and streamers. "Why so many?" I ask.

"You never know," he replies, as he covers the dining room table with containers opened to let hackles dry out.

I ponder my modest collection of flies. Many I will never use because I always start with one that worked last time out. Then the next favorite fly and so on down the line until I find one that produces results.

Five years earlier we three senior citizens car camped under a cloud of smoke on the upper St. Joe River. Forest fires to the south tickled our nostrils, lowered visibility to a half-mile, and

ABOVE: Although having less roadside access, the scenic North Fork Coeur d'Alene River draws Ted Poston to test his luck. INSET: A late September cutthroat trout from the St. Joe River showcases colors of early autumn.

Dennis Dauble/Contributed Photos

pushed the air quality index into the unhealthy zone. I packed an oversize cot with a 3-inch-thick foam mattress. Ken and Ted's cots had a lower price point, which led to an uncomfortable night's sleep. They got even with me by placing my belongings next to the exit door of the tent. "Zip, zip, zip, zip" all night long. Sleep deprivation often results from excessive libation around the hypnotic glow of an LED lantern.

Idaho Highway 50, a two-lane paved road, parallels most of the upper St. Joe River with regular turnouts every half mile or so. Staying behind guard rails protects from hell-bent logging trucks that thunder by. However, clambering up and down uneven, steep slopes lined with fractured granite and quartz rock is hard work. The thought of a coil of rope to assist descent and ascent comes up.

See **Cutthroat** / B2

## Folding knives a traditional gear option for hunters



**TOM CLAYCOMB**  
BASE CAMP

Truth be known, we outdoorsmen are slow to change. Is it because of nostalgia? Family tradition?

Sure, with some gizmos we're all in but with a lot of gear we're slowww to change. Years ago, I read an article in which the author beseeched the readers to embrace the AR into their hunting world. He said something to the effect of "Come on guys, after WWII the soldiers came home and wanted to hunt with the rifles they'd used overseas and were comfortable with. Our boys used an M16 in Vietnam and are wanting to use it to hunt. And dang guys, Vietnam was back in the 60s. It's not a new rifle. It's going on 50 years old."

Maybe we are slow to change.

I'm going to use the same logic with you on today's topic which is folding hunting knives. When I started using a folding knife to clean my deer 30 to 35 years ago that was a new concept. I didn't know of anyone else that used a folder except one of my early mentors, Mr. CC Teague.

Mr. Teague was the coolest guy I've ever met next to my dad. He took me, dad and my brother deer hunting from the time I was 9 years old on up until he died. If it wasn't for him, we never

could have afforded to deer hunt as grade school kids. He gutted his deer with an old wood, black-handled folder called a Sodbuster. Sixty years ago it was unheard of to use a folder to gut deer.

Maybe it was his influence that caused me to use a Bucklite 110 back in the late 80s/early 90s to gut/skin my deer. That was revolutionary. So, like the author mentioned above while encouraging people to embrace the AR, I'm going to encourage you to try out some of the modern folders. There's a lot of benefits.

- Lightweight.
- Compact.
- Can strap them on your backpack for easy access.
- Safer to carry in case you fall/horse wreck. A straight blade knife might poke through a cheap sheath.

The thing that enhanced the popularity of folders is that now some companies offer them with functional blade designs. Until recently, everything I ever saw had a clip point. About nine years ago I got a Diamond Blade folding Summit. It has a definite drop point and yet the spine is ground down so it has a definite point.

There's a lot of dysfunctional outdoor folders on the market so be careful when buying. Determine what job you want to do.

Let's start off with the EDC knife.



The Buck 110 helped revive folders and put Buck on the map. It is a rough and tumble clip point knife.

Tom Claycomb/Contributed Photo

Daily tasks require stabbing jobs such as cutting holes in leather, opening feed bags etc. so I like a clip point. I favor a 3½-inch blade with a bigger handle so I have a good grip or you may want to carry a more discreet, smaller knife. Not a right or wrong, it's just what you favor.

### Designs

Now let's cover what designs to look for in our hunting/fishing folders. For skinning an animal, a lot of people favor a 3½-inch clip point blade and I've skinned over 100 deer with one. The old Buck 110 is one of the first popular clip point folders. At last count they had sold over 10,000,000 and it's the knife that put Buck on the map.

But if you want to save the hide, you'll want a drop point. The Diamond Blade Summit is the best skinning folder on the market. It has a

drop point but also the spine is ground down so it has a point for cutting the pattern. Then there are smaller folders such as the KOA Featherlight Hunter with a drop point for skinning smaller animals (although you could skin a deer with it).

KOA makes a Featherweight Bird/Trout folder that has a straight cutting edge for breasting out birds and would also work for cleaning your trout when backpacking. If you favor a 6-inch blade for filleting your fish, Smith's Consumer Products makes a folding fillet knife as well as Elk Ridge. Not that this is the best design for the task but last week at Pheasant Land Lodge in South Dakota the guides used 6-inch folding fillet knives.

While on the topic of folding fillet knives, the thought of a folding boning knife has always intrigued me. I tried to get a couple of companies to make one but none ever took me up on the offer. So the only two viable boning knives are straight blades made by KOA and Smith's. Here's a link to a TV show that we did on the KOA boning knife: <https://www.highroadhunting.com/the-high-road/step-up-your-wild-gaming-cooking>

### Opening options

In the old days all folding pocket knives were opened two handed us-

ing a thumb groove on the spine of the blade. You'd dig your thumb nail into the groove to pull it open. Now we have more options.

- The old thumb groove
- Thumb stud
- Assisted open
- Flipper knife
- Spyderco thumb hole
- Auto

### Blade locking options

Lockback folder. The blade locks open by means of a lock on the back of the handle. Some lock in the middle, some on the rear end of the handle.

Liner lock. When the blade is open the liner slides over in the middle of the back of the blade. To close it, push the liner over with your thumb nail which allows the blade to close.

Slide button locks like the KOA Onyx.

### Multiple bladed folders

Here's another twist-interchangeable blades. For an example check out the Elk Ridge XCHANGE folding knife. It offers three blade options.

Another feature to look for, does it provide a good grip? I like a textured handle, finger guard and thumb grooves on the top of the spine stabilize my grip. You're usually skinning your deer in the dark. Add in the blood and you're handling a sharp object in the dark that is cold, wet and slippery.

See **Knives** / B2