

Exploring the waters of north central Washington's Okanogan Country

# FISHRAPPER

A Supplement to The Okanogan County Chronicle

April 12, 2023

**FREE**





The Columbia River is a popular fishing destination in north central Washington.

# Anglers flock to Okanogan County

**A** NGLERS WILL START hitting Okanogan County waters in earnest the weekend of April 22, as the state general fishing season opens that day.

Most waters have a general annual fishing season — opening the last Saturday in April (April 22 this year) to Oct. 31.

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife's "Fish Washington" mobile app is one way to keep track of what fish and regulations apply to lakes, rivers and streams managed by the state. If there are changes - state rules change in July - it's a good idea to check with the app, online or through the printed fishing pamphlet for any changes.

The annual fishing pamphlet comes out in mid- to late April online with the hard-copy version available at department offices and retailers all over the state in early May.

The app also features downloadable updates and offline capacity designed for those who may not have cell

service in remote areas or on the water.

As of press time in late March, there was no word as to when the North Cascades Highway (Highway 20) would open.

Many popular lakes should be ready for anglers for the general opener, including Spectacle, Alta, the Conconully lakes and Pearygin.

Salmon and steelhead regulations/seasons change during the summer, depending on counts over dams and federal agreements on the Columbia River. The department will put out notice as changes are announced.

Anglers must possess a current Washington freshwater fishing license, valid through March 31, 2024. Licenses can be purchased online at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov>, by telephone at 866-246-9453, at the nearest Department of Fish and Wildlife regional office or from about 700 license dealers across the state.

License vendor locations can be found on the Department

of Fish and Wildlife website, <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/vendors/>.

Those fishing boundary waters with the Colville Indian Reservation may need a tribal license along with a state license. (See separate story on reservation waters.)

Anglers can dip their lines into 67 lowland lakes managed by the state in Okanogan County. They represent about 18 percent of the state's managed lakes. The county also contains 110 alpine lakes above 4,500 feet elevation.

Ferry County sports about a dozen highland lakes that boot out nice fish once the waters warm up later in the season. (See separate story.)

The Colville Indian Reservation includes many lakes and creeks usually open to non-members that hold brook, brown, cutthroat, triploid, Lahontan cutthroat, rainbow and tiger trout, as well as bass, bluegill, crappie, catfish, kokanee and triploids.

(See separate story.)

It's best to check with the tribe, [www.colvilletribes.com](http://www.colvilletribes.com), before setting out for a reservation destination.

Okanogan County coverage is split into Okanogan Valley, Methow Valley, Highland and selective fisheries. A few nearby waters — including Jameson Lake near Mansfield in Douglas County and Banks Lake south of Grand Coulee in Grant County — also are included.

Your best bet is to fish lowland lakes early, then move to higher-elevation lakes as the water warms and fishing improves.

**Fishrappier 2023:** © 2023

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# Pristine waters await in Okanogan Valley

**Beaver Lake** — The eight-acre lake, which is open all year off Highway 20 west of Okanogan, will receive 300 catchable rainbows in May.

To reach Beaver Lake, a couple miles north of the Loup Loup Ski Bowl southwest of Okanogan, turn off Highway 20 and go north past the ski hill to a trailhead. The lake, which is fun to fish from a float tube, is an easy hike of a couple miles.

**Blue Lake** — The 16-acre lake in the Limebelt north of Omak (west of Riverside) is open year-round and has been popular for big trout with a few brown trout thrown in. The lake will receive 1,000 catchable tiger trout plants in October and 225 rainbows.

To reach the lake, travel west from Okanogan or Omak to Conconully Highway and head north to the sign pointing to the lake. The four-mile dirt road can be impassable in the spring because of rain.

Although there is no boat ramp, anglers can carry canoes or small rowboats to the lake at the south end or navigate a steep hill on the north end.

**Columbia River** — There is a year-round season for all game fish except salmon, steelhead and sturgeon.

About 84,800 upper Columbia River summer Chinook salmon are forecast to return in 2023, representing about 120 percent of the 10-year average return and higher than last year's 78,500 fish.

Total return of fall Chinook to the Columbia is expected to be similar to the recent three-year returns, said the department. That includes about 272,400 "upriver bright" fall Chinook expected to return to areas of the Columbia above Bonneville Dam.

In 2022, 254,880 returned.

Forecasts for Columbia River coho prior to fisheries occurring for the ocean and Columbia River are expected to show slight improvement compared to the past two years' returns, with more than 886,000 early and late coho predicted to return in 2023, said the department. The 2023 forecast is nearly double the 10-year average and an increase from the 2022 abundance of 685,000 coho.

Meanwhile, 234,500 sockeye are predicted to return to the Columbia this year. That's more than last year's forecast but below the actual return of nearly 665,000 fish.

Colville tribal summer fisheries typically occur on the main stem Columbia River upstream of Wells

Dam. In recent years, Colville tribal fisheries have used hook and line, tangle net and purse seine gear.

Steelhead and salmon fishing often is open along specific stretches of the river for short seasons announced under emergency openers.

The river undergoes constant changes, so be sure to check the latest regulations at the state's website, [wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations).

Any sturgeon caught must be released.

There are no size restrictions or daily limits for bass, channel catfish and walleye.

Walleye fishing is predominant from January to June. Walleye limits are different for Lake Roosevelt (above Grand Coulee Dam) than the rest of the river.

Walleye fishing has become popular on the stretch of river bordering Douglas County. Walleye can be caught below Chief Joseph Dam, as well as in most of Lake Rufus Woods above the dam.

Rufus Woods is always the best place to fish in mid-April as the triploids from net pen operations are big and easy to catch for even novices.

Kokanee fishing is also best during that time frame before they move into deeper water to avoid warming water temperatures.

The river also has become a favorite for smallmouth bass, though largemouth bass also resides in its waters.

The Okanogan County side of the lake is within the reservation.

There are good boat launching facilities at Brewster, Pateros and Bridgeport.

**Conconully Lake** — The upper (Salmon Lake), with a general season of April 22 to Oct. 31, contains jumbo trout in the

one-pound range along with rainbows in the 11- to 13-inch range with carryovers to 16 inches. The 313-acre lake is also gaining in popularity for kokanee fishing.

Conconully Lake includes a graveled state boat launch with toilets and a wheelchair-accessible dock. A fee is required to use the launch for boats on trailers.

A state park is in town next to Conconully Reservoir.

**Conconully Reservoir** — Anglers can expect rainbow trout averaging 10-12 inches with a few carryovers up to 15 inches at the 450-acre reservoir.

The reservoir is located south of Conconully and is open April 22 to Oct. 31.

There are a couple resorts and a state park.

Reservoir planting includes 5,000 catchable size rainbow trout and 15,000 fry in May.

**Conner Lake** — Located near Forde Lake, this 25-acre lake (sometimes called Connors Lake) in the Sinlahekin will be planted with 500 fry in May.

The lake, which is open April 22 to Oct. 31, could also contain eastern brook that propagate naturally in Sinlahekin Creek.

Anglers can expect fish in the 9- to 13-inch range.

Travel south from Loomis five miles on Sinlahekin Road. There is a small, gravel boat launch, with the lake best fished from a small boat, canoe or float tube in May and June.

Access gets difficult in mid- to late summer because of weed and brush growth.

**Fish Lake** — This 102-acre lake, located four miles northeast of Conconully and open April 22 to Oct. 31, has traditionally been one of the county's more popular lakes. It will be stocked with 22,000 rainbow fry in June.

There are two public access areas with launches and toilets available.

The lake boots out rainbows in the 10- to 12-inch range with carryovers to 15 inches.

Anglers can reach the lake by traveling either 4.5 miles northeast from Conconully on a dirt road past the upper lake and Sugarloaf Lake or going on Highway 97 for 5.5 miles north from Riverside, then west on Pine Creek Road for about nine miles.

**Forde Lake** — The nine-acre lake in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area is not planted but does contain naturally reproducing eastern brook trout in the 8- to 10-inch range.

The nearby three-acre Reflection Lake was planted with triploid eastern brook a couple years ago and could hold a few carryover tiger trout. It will be planted with 250 trout fingerlings in May.

Forde, built as an impoundment pond in 1949 and which could see higher water levels this year, is open April 22 to Oct. 31.

Although there is a small, public boat-launching area next to the road, the lake is best fished early before weed growth increases.

A small boat or float tube works best at the lake, located about six miles south of Loomis on Sinlahekin Road.

**Green Lakes** — The lakes with split seasons - the larger lake at 45 acres and to the south nine-acre Little Green - were eliminated during the rule simplification of 2018 so anglers are getting used to the selective gear restrictions year-round on those lakes and enjoying being able to harvest two trout more than 14 inches year-round as opposed to winter only.

The bigger lake will be stocked with 5,250 catchable-size rainbow trout in May and 4,000 fry in June.



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### Young anglers reel in success on Conconully Lake last year.

History at the upper lake finds fish in the 11- to 13-inch range with carryovers to 15 inches.

Big Green Lake includes a state Department of Fish and Wildlife public access area with campsites and a concrete boat launch.

Little Green Lake normally boots out 11- to 13-inch rainbow trout and some carryover rainbows to 15 inches. It will get 1,750 rainbow fry in May.

Both lakes are nestled in a steep valley where it gets dark an hour before normal.

The larger lake is somewhat ADA-accessible, though access is steep. The lower lake has a dirt path.

The lakes can be reached by following Salmon Creek Road northwest out of Okanogan for 4.5 miles, then a mile north on Green Lake Road. Anglers also can access the lake by taking Green Lake Road off the Conconully Highway about

five miles northwest of Omak. Travel past Brown Lake to reach Big Green.

**Jasmine Creek** — This is a juvenile-only water open year-round in the south end of Omak. The creek runs from the Omak Fish Hatchery to the Okanogan River

Anglers must be age 14 and younger to fish the creek, which holds a few rainbows.

**Leader Lake** — Leader, open year-round, is seven miles west of Okanogan off Highway 20.

The popular, 159-acre lake should provide good fishing April through June for yearling rainbow trout up to 14 inches and larger carryovers.

The lake will receive 1,000 catchable rainbows in May.

Department of Natural Resources campgrounds, with toilets, are at both sides of the lake. Boats can be carried in or launched at a launching facility.

**Okanogan River** — The river

flows from Lake Osoyoos near Oroville and the Canadian border south to the Columbia River near Brewster. It can be good for steelhead when an emergency opener occurs; such openers have been after approval from

approximately October to early the following year.

Because steelhead are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, fisheries have been modified substantially for all fish species in the river.

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A steelhead fishery is dependent upon run size that exceeds natural-origin escapement requirements.

There has been a summer Chinook season.

Check the state site, [wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations), for latest changes in seasons.

Smallmouth bass is the best bet, with fish averaging 10-12 inches. Some can exceed three pounds.

There are no size restrictions or daily limits for bass, channel catfish or walleye.

Boat launches include a large one in Brewster on the Columbia, a rough launch at the west end of the Monse bridge and launches in Okanogan and Riverside. Most shorelines are privately owned, so float trips offer the best fishing opportunity.

Watch for a tribal weir south of Malott.

**Osoyoos Lake** — Open year-round, the lake is a mile north of Oroville and spans the U.S.-Canadian border. Of the lake's 5,723 acres, 2,036 acres lie in the U.S.

Anglers can expect smallmouth and largemouth bass, a few rainbow, kokanee and perch.

A few naturally occurring populations of rainbow trout up to 14 inches reside in the lake, as do kokanee in the 10- to 12-inch range.

The lake also offers good smallmouth bass fishing. Yellow perch can be caught through the ice if winter conditions get cold enough.

A boat launch is near the outlet to the Okanogan River.

There also is a park with a boat launch at Boundary Point about four miles north of town off Highway 97.

**Palmer Lake** — The 2,100-acre lake, open year-round, contains a variety of fish, including naturally spawning rainbow trout, largemouth bass (one- to three-pound range), bluegill, yellow perch (6-10 inches, best fished through the ice), crappie, pikeminnows, a few burbot (freshwater ling, primarily a winter



Fish Lake is a popular spot on opening day.

fishery) and a few channel catfish.

An effort to re-establish kokanee at the lake started with the planting of fry in 2018.

This year, the lake will receive more than 21,000 trout fry.

Palmer, along with Washburn Island Pond and Leader Lake, are some of the most popular for warmwater species in Okanogan County.

The lake is best fished in May and June.

Burbot anglers must comply with the statewide rule of one line with up to three hooks (unless other, more restrictive rules are in effect).

There is a U.S. Bureau of Land Management access site with

concrete boat launch on the south end of the lake and a DNR launch site with gravel launch and camping areas on the north end. One resort with cabins, RV spots and small boat rentals is available.

**Rat Lake** — This 62-acre lake, located five miles north of Brewster off Paradise Hill Road, is under selective gear rules.

The split season at the lake was changed in 2018 to a year-round fishery with a limit of two trout more than 14 inches.

Trout in the lake are averaging 11-15 inches and fishing has been good.

Drive 3.5 miles north from Brewster up Swamp Creek, and then

take a dirt road two miles north up Whitestone Creek.

There is a state concrete boat launch, but access may be a problem in winter since the road is not plowed.

Rat will receive 500 catchable tiger trout plants this May and 2,000 rainbow trout fry in June.

**Reflection Pond** — The three-acre water, sometimes also referred to as Reflection Lake, is in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area six miles south of Loomis near Forde Lake.

It is open only to juvenile anglers under age 15, seniors 70 and older, and anglers with a disability who have a designated harvester companion card. The year-round



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The Similkameen River winds west of Oroville.

lake will be stocked with more 250 trout fry in May.

**Rock Lakes** — This open-year-round system of two lakes (five-acre upper lake and four-acre lower lake), which are on state land, is managed for cutthroat and rainbow trout. Fish are a bit bigger in the upper lake than the lower lake.

There is a DNR campsite above the lakes with a short, steep trail leading down to the waters.

Fishing is best from shore or from a small raft or float tube.

The lakes are 11 miles northwest of Okanogan. Drive west on state Highway 20, then north on Rock Lake Road.

**Rufus Woods Lake** — The 51-mile-long lake, which is open year-round, is a reservoir behind Chief Joseph Dam on the Columbia River just upstream from Bridgeport. It was stocked by the Colville

Confederated Tribes Department of Fish and Wildlife in late March with more than 2,000 triploid rainbows that weighed around 1.5 pounds each. Another group of 10,000 smaller triploid rainbows was released a week later.

These fish can be identified by the absence of an adipose fin and some have plastic anchor tags. If you catch one with a tag, contact the tribal Department of Fish and Wildlife and provide tag number and information related to the catch (i.e. date, location, length and the approximate size) or log on to [www.cctfwfishtags.com/report-a-tag](http://www.cctfwfishtags.com/report-a-tag) to report a tagged fish electronically.

The information assists biologists in managing annual fish releases into Rufus Woods Lake.

Anglers enjoy fishing for triploid rainbows up to 12 pounds near net pens adjacent to the Colville Indian

Reservation (downstream from Nespelem River) and Columbia River Road.

There is a two-trout fish limit, and kokanee count as part of the trout

limit on the water that forms the border between Douglas County and Colville Indian Reservation in Okanogan County.

Other species include walleye

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(best caught near Elmer City), kokanee, yellow perch and a few smallmouth bass.

It's illegal to fish for sturgeon. Anglers should check wdfw.wa.gov for latest rule changes concerning the stretch of the Columbia River from Bridgeport to south of Pateros.

The state has an agreement with the tribe to accept tribal or state licenses if the angler is on the water. Anglers must have a state license if fishing on the Douglas County side from the shore.

On the Okanogan County (reservation) side, anglers can possess either a state or a tribal license when fishing from shore at marked, designated tribal fishing areas. Otherwise, a tribal license is required to fish from the shore on the reservation.

Consult the tribe's sport fishing pamphlet for all regulations concerning boundary waters and what licenses are required. Boundary waters include Lake Rufus Woods (Chief Joseph Dam pool), Crawford Lake, Lake Pateros (Wells Dam pool), Washburn Island Pond, Okanogan River and Lake Roosevelt (Grand Coulee Dam pool).

Steelhead are unable to reach the lake because there is no fish ladder over Chief Joseph Dam.

Marked, designated launching areas include Seaton's Grove Corps of Engineers site two miles downstream from Elmer City, Bridgeport State Park near the lower end, and the Army Corps of Engineers' site upstream of Chief Joseph Dam on the Douglas County side.

Anglers can travel 22 miles south from Okanogan on Highway 97, then east for eight miles on state Highway 17 to a boat launch near Chief Joseph Dam.

**Salmon Creek** — Salmon Creek from the Conconully Reservoir to the Okanogan River is closed to protect spawning steelhead.

Salmon Creek's north and west forks, which flow into Conconully

Reservoir, have a season that runs from Saturday before Memorial Day through Oct. 31.

Statewide minimum size and daily limits apply, as do selective gear rules. Bait is not allowed.

**Schalow Pond** — This seven-acre lake is located on a path (watch out for sunning rattlers) about a 10-minute walk from the Fish Lake parking area at the lake outlet.

The lake should be good for eastern brook trout carryover from last year and will be stocked with 50 catchable rainbow trout in May.

Heavy weed growth during the summer makes it difficult to fish by midsummer at the lake, where float tubes work best. There's limited shore access.

Open year-round, the pond is 4.5 miles northeast of Conconully in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area.

**Silver Nail Lake** — The tiny, five-acre lake that is open year-round to juveniles only (14 years old and younger) and disabled anglers with a reduced fee license, lies four miles north of Oroville off Highway 97.

It is best fished from a small boat or float tube for trout in the 9- to 10-inch range.

There is a state Department of Fish and Wildlife parking area. Boats will need to be hand carried to the lake edge. It will be stocked with 100 rainbow fry in June.

**Similkameen River** — Located west of Oroville, this river extends into Canada and offers fair fishing for winter whitefish in a season of Dec. 1 to the end of February from Enloe Dam to the mouth.

There is no minimum size for whitefish, with a daily limit of 15 whitefish only; whitefish gear rules apply.

The river enters the U.S. from British Columbia six miles north of Palmer Lake and flows about 18 miles south and east to Oroville, dropping over Enloe Dam before entering the Okanogan River.

Fishing is closed for all species

from 400 feet below the dam to 400 feet upstream of the dam.

Steelhead fishing seasons are open through emergency regulation only as the fish are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Anglers should check the state Department of Fish and Wildlife's website at wdfw.wa.gov for opening dates and restrictions.

When steelhead can be taken, the river is open from the Okanogan River to 400 feet below Enloe Dam. A steelhead fishery is dependent upon run size, which must exceed natural-origin escapement requirements.

A road from Oroville follows the river most of its length to Nighthawk. The Similkameen Trail runs from Oroville to the dam.

**Sinlahekin Creek** — Anglers with gumption and guts — rattlesnakes like to slither among the trees and willows — will find a few rainbow trout in this north-running stream.

The creek runs parallel to Sinlahekin Road from Blue Lake to Palmer Lake in the Sinlahekin Valley.

From Palmer Lake to Cecile Creek bridge, there is short season from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Oct. 31 for all game fish. Statewide minimum size and daily limits apply. Selective rules are in effect.

There is a whitefish season Dec. 1

to the end of February, with no minimum size and daily limit of 15 whitefish only. Whitefish gear rules apply.

From Cecile Creek upstream to all tributaries there is a season for all game fish from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31. Statewide minimum size and daily limits apply.

**Smith Lake** — This 10-acre lake in the Chilliwest south of Malott can be accessed via Olema Road for small rainbows.

It's best fished from a small boat or float tube for trout in the 8- to 10-inch range from May to June and September to October.

The lake is on state Department of Natural Resources land.

**Spectacle Lake** — This 315-acre lake, formed as a reservoir for area orchards, currently is open April 1 to Sept. 30.

One of the more popular lakes in Okanogan County, Spectacle will be stocked with 35,000 rainbow trout fry in May.

Anglers can expect rainbow trout in the 10- to 13-inch range with holdovers up to 15 inches at the lake nine miles northwest of Tonasket and 2.5 miles east of Loomis off Loomis-Oroville Road.

The lake also contains large-mouth bass, bluegill in the 6- to 8-inch range (best fished May to July) and yellow perch.



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Conconully Lake is a popular spot on opening day.

There are two resorts with boat launching facilities, plus a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access site with a concrete boat launch and toilets.

**Starzman Lakes** — There are three small lakes open year-round on U.S. Bureau of Land Management land near Brewster off North Star Road. Upper Starzman will get 500 eastern brook trout fry in May, while Middle Starzman will 250 in June.

The middle five-acre lake and the upper eight-acre lake are best fished from a float tube or from shore.

The lower 4.3-acre lake contains largemouth bass and bluegill.

A poor access road often means having to hike to the lakes, which can be reached by going north of Brewster on Old Highway 97 for 1.5 miles and turning left to follow

Starzman Creek eight miles to the south end of lower Starzman Lake.

**Sugarloaf Lake** — This six-acre lake north of Conconully Lake has carryover triploid eastern brook trout in the 8- to 11-inch range.

There is a U.S. Forest Service campground with a gravel launch site for small boats. The campground is a favorite of fall deer hunters.

**(Big) Tiffany Lake** — This walk-in lake holds cutthroat trout, which cannot be kept and must be released if caught.

The 20-acre lake, which is fished hard early and open year-round, is about 12 miles northwest of Conconully.

Little Tiffany Lake, which is about four acres and holds cutthroats, which must be released, is 0.7 mile

south of Big Tiffany.

**Wannacut Lake** — This 412-acre lake north of Whitestone Lake often lags warmer, lower-elevation lakes by a few weeks, but continues to be a good fishing lake for rainbow trout in the 10- to 12-inch range with a few carryovers up to 14 inches. It will be stocked with 1,500 catchable rainbow in May and 38,000 fry.

The lake, which has an April 22-to-Oct. 31 season, contains saline water (magnesium sulfate) that makes fish taste especially good.

Anglers can go north from Tonasket on the west side of the Okanogan River for 4.5 miles, then west for another 4.5 miles on Loomis-Oroville Road before going north four miles to the south end of the lake.

Another route is 2.5 miles south of Oroville on the west side of the Okanogan River, then west three miles past Blue Lake to the north tip of Wannacut on Wannacut Lake Road.

The lake is best fished from a boat because of limited shore access.

A resort and public access with toilets and launch are available.

**Washburn Island Pond** — Among the weed beds, anglers catch largemouth bass, bluegill (some good-sized ones) and channel

catfish at this 130-acre diked area off the Columbia River five miles east of Brewster off Highway 17.

Internal combustion engines cannot be used in this water body.

The pond, located on the Colville Indian Reservation, has a season of April 1 to Sept. 30. It is considered a boundary water for purposes of licensing.

Anglers must possess both state and Colville tribal fishing licenses if fishing from shore on reservation property. A state license is required for fishing from a boat.

Statewide minimum size and daily limit rules apply.

Largemouth bass run up to three pounds at the pond 22 miles south of Okanogan. From Okanogan, travel south on Highway 97 to the truck weigh station and travel east on Highway 17 for about a mile to a southbound road to the pond.

A Douglas County Public Utility District boat launch has been upgraded, with toilets and parking available.

**Washburn Lake** — Expect a short hike to reach triploid eastern brook trout and an occasional tiger trout in this 13-acre lake on Palmer Mountain two miles northeast of Loomis. It will be stocked with 500 eastern brook trout fry in June.

The lake, which is on U.S. Bureau

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of Land Management land, is open April 22 to Oct. 31.

There is a one-fish limit for trout.

A BLM campground offers boat access limited to craft that can be carried a short distance to the lake.

Go north and then west from Loomis on an unimproved road starting near the west end of Spectacle Lake.

**Whitestone Lake** — Open all year, this 173-acre lake is considered one of the most important warm-water fisheries in the county.

The lake is about five miles northwest of Tonasket, with trophy largemouth bass (from two to seven pounds) biting well from May through early summer.

There is a largemouth bass slot limit with a daily catch limit of five fish less than 12 inches or over 17 inches. No more than one fish can be more than 17 inches.

Bluegill in the four-inch range are in the lake, too.

Drive north from Tonasket on the west side of the Okanogan River for 4.5 miles, then west for three miles to the lake.

There is a well-developed state Department of Fish and Wildlife public access that includes handicapped access along with a launch and toilets.

Camping is allowed.

## Okanogan Highlands

**Beaver Lakes** — These lakes of 30 and six acres, which lie at 2,700 feet elevation, are open from the fourth Saturday in April (April 22 this year) to Oct. 31 and are located near Beth Lake southeast of Chesaw.

The lakes — the smaller is 1,100 feet east of the big lake — will be planted with 300 catchable rainbow trout in May. Carryover from stocking last May will mean fish in the 10- to 13-inch range. Fishing, especially with a fly, picks up again in September and October.

Go east on Highway 20 from Tonasket for about 18 miles, then north 12 miles past Bonaparte Lake.

From Oroville, drive east on the county road through Chesaw and take Forest Road No. 9480 to reach Beaver Lakes and Beth Lake. Signs along the way also will direct travelers to Lost and Bonaparte lakes.

The main Beaver Lake features a U.S. Forest Service campground and a gravel boat launch. Another campground is at the smaller lake.

**Beth Lake** — The third in a string of three lakes, along with Big and Little Beaver lakes, this 13-acre lake is open year-round. Beth hasn't been stocked in a couple years.

Take County Road No. 9480 from Little Beaver to Beth Lake. There are



A youngsters shows his catch from the Conconully Reservoir.

a boat launch and Forest Service campground.

**Bonaparte Creek** — The creek, which flows from Bonaparte Lake to the Okanogan River through Tonasket, is closed from the mouth to the falls, about a mile upstream, to protect steelhead spawning and rearing. The closure is a cooperative effort with the Colville Confederated Tribes.

Above the falls, the creek carries the typical stream season of the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31.

**Bonaparte Lake** — This 159-acre scenic lake that is open year-round is a diverse, state-managed lake with kokanee, rainbow, eastern brook and tiger trout and lake trout, and smallmouth bass.

The lake was stocked last fall with 1,750 large tiger trout, which should be an impressive size this spring, and is slated for 3,000 more in October 2023.

Anglers can expect kokanee in the 10- to 13-inch range, brookies up to 12 inches and decent-sized tiger trout.

The lake also holds smallmouth bass and rainbows.

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## The Methow River is home to a variety of fish species.

The state encourages anglers to retain smallmouth bass to reduce their population and balance species in the lake.

Bonaparte, popular in both winter and summer, is about 20 miles east of Tonasket and north off Highway 20.

There is a resort with cabins, camping and boat launch, plus a national forest campground with a boat ramp and fishing pier.

The lake also can be reached from Oroville via a scenic route through Chesaw. Follow signs to Bonaparte or Lost Lake.

**Crawfish Lake** — Crawfish, which is open April 22 to Oct. 31, is partially on state land and partially on Colville tribal land (southern half) about 12 miles east of Riverside.

A state license is required when fishing from a boat. A tribal permit is required when fishing from shore on tribal land.

Anglers can expect rainbows in the 10- to 12-inch range and brookies in the 10-inch range.

There is a U.S. Forest Service campground with a boat launch at the lake.

Internal combustion motors are prohibited.

The 80-acre lake at 4,475 feet elevation can be reached by

traveling northeast 18 miles up Tunk Valley out of Riverside or by going north from state Highway 155 on the Lyman Lake-Moses Mountain Road to Crawfish Lake Road.

**Fancher Dam Pond** (also known as Fancher's Dam Reservoir) — This 20-acre reservoir that's open year-round offers rainbow trout about 11 miles northeast of Tonasket.

The reservoir has dramatic draw-downs related to irrigation needs. It can be reached off Havillah and Swanson Mill roads.

Expect fish in the 10- to 12-inch range that can be reached with a small boat or float tube.

**Long Lake** — This 17-acre lake has a state Department of Fish and Wildlife public access area.

Long will be stocked with catchable rainbows in May. Be prepared to carry a boat a short distance to the lake, where you expect rainbows in the 10- to 11-inch range

Take Highway 20 east from Tonasket to Aeneas Valley Road, then east seven miles to the lakeshore. Less than one-quarter mile away is Round Lake. Access is available to both lakes, which lie on private property.

**Lost Lake** — This lake, which is open year-round, is north of Bonaparte Lake.

Internal combustion motors are prohibited. The state minimum size and

daily limit applies. It's unlawful to use lead weights or lead jigs measuring 1.5 inches or less along the longest axis.

The lead restriction is to protect nesting loons at the lake.

The 47-acre lake is best fished in the spring and fall. Warm, summer waters cause brookies to become night feeders at the lake, located at an elevation of 3,817 feet.

A Forest Service campground with graveled boat launch is available at the north end and there is good shoreline fishing access along the roadway and from the USFS campground

Take Highway 20 east out of Tonasket for 15 miles to Bonaparte Lake Road, then north 13 miles to the lake.

**Lost Creek** — This is one of several creeks in the Highlands offering naturally spawning eastern brook in the six- to eight-inch range with a few 10-inches. Other Highlands creeks include Toroda, Bonaparte and Myers.

Anglers should check on when the creek opens, as it was not listed in the state's online pamphlet this spring.

Lost Creek, which may hold a few rainbows, is mostly surrounded by private land. Anglers should get permission from landowners before fishing.

Lost Creek is about 24 miles southeast of Tonasket on Aeneas Valley Road. The creek is a tributary of the

San Poil River's west fork.

A road one mile west of Aeneas leads south up the creek for about 10 miles. There is a Forest Service campground about two miles up the creek.

**Lyman Lake** — This four-acre lake is located near the Aeneas Valley.

The lake, which can suffer from algae blooms, is located off Aeneas Valley Road on U.S. Forest Service property. A campsite is offered, along with shore access for small boats or float tubes at the lake, elevation 2,880 feet.

**Molson Lake** — The 20-acre lake, which is open year-round, can suffer summer kills but also has a good winter fishery

Molson, which is located near Sidley Lake, was planted with 600 catchable rainbows last October and will be planted again with 500 more in both May and October of this year. The lake, which has fish in the 10- to 12-inch range, can be reached by taking Tonasket Creek Road for eight miles east of Oroville, then north five miles through Molson to the lake.

**Myers Creek** — Although access is limited because most of the creek travels through private land, local anglers enjoy fishing for rainbow and brooks up to 10 inches.

The creek, best fished in the fall on

the lower end, does not appear in the state fishing pamphlet, so it's best to check to see if it is open.

Take Havillah Road, then Nealey Road from Tonasket northeast for about 20 miles.

The creek runs adjacent to the road for several miles.

**Round Lake** — This lake of less than 20 acres is very popular on opening day. It is located next to Long Lake in Aeneas Valley.

The lake, which is open April 22 to Oct. 31, has rainbows in the 11- to 12-inch range.

It will be stocked with 250 catchable rainbows this spring.

Round is reached by taking Highway 20 east from Tonasket to Aeneas Valley Road, then east seven miles to the lakeshore.

**Sidley Lake** — The 109-acre lake located near Molson at 3,675 feet is open year-round for rainbow trout in the 11- to 13-inch range.

The state planted more than 4,000 catchable rainbows last fall and will stock fingerlings this spring.

The lake includes an aerator operated jointly by a local property owner, the Oroville Sportsmen's Club and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Sidley and nearby Molson (if it does not summer kill) are popular winter fisheries. An annual fishing derby is done through the ice in January. Sidley will be stocked with 3,000 catchable rainbows in May.

There is a state access site with a gravel boat launch.

Sidley, which has good shore access from a road that parallels the lake, is located one mile south of the U.S.-Canadian border and 0.7 mile from Molson.

From Oroville, take the Chesaw Road up Tonasket Creek for eight miles then north five miles on Molson Road through Molson and past Molson Lake.

**Summit Lake** — This 11-acre lake, 5.5 miles southeast of Oroville near Mount Hull, is at 4,320 feet and offers good fishing for fish of 10-13 inches through the summer.

There are several campsites at the lake, which is best fished with a float tube or pontoon boat.

## Methow Valley

**Alta Lake** — The 187-acre lake pumps out rainbow and kokanee trout.

This year's planting will include more than 1,000 catchable rainbows in May, in addition to more than 35,000 rainbow fingerlings last April, which will make for some nice size holdovers this spring.

This lake is one of the state Department of Fish and Wildlife's

Trout Derby lakes so if you catch a tagged fish, look up "Trout Derby" at [wdfw.wa.gov](http://wdfw.wa.gov) and follow the instructions to claim a prize, say department officials.

There is a state park with camping and a concrete boat launch, a private resort that can launch larger boats and an 18-hole golf course on the road to the lake, located two miles southwest of Pateros.

The lake, which is ideal for small boats and canoes, has a season that runs April 22 to Oct. 31.

Alta is reached by driving 1.5 miles west of Pateros on state Highway 153, then south about a mile.

**Andrews Creek** — Open from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31, Andrews offers native rainbows.

There is a two-fish limit. Fish must be at least eight inches long.

Depending on the snowpack, the creek is best fished in late June.

Andrews is 19 miles north of Winthrop on Chewuch River Road. The U.S. Forest Service maintains a campground next to the creek.

**Aspen Lake** — This shallow, six-acre lake, which is open year-round, is in the Methow Wildlife Area. The semi-remote lake, 0.7 mile southwest of Moccasin Lake (a private lake), holds tiger and brook trout. It will receive 50 catchable-size rainbow trout this May.

Anglers, who can expect fish in

the 10- to 11-inch range, can park at the end Frost Road and walk about a mile to the lake, which is best fished with tubes or from shore.

**Big Buck Lake** — also called Shaw or Frost lake - is not highly fished by anglers. Located in the Methow Wildlife Area, it has a year-round season. The lake will receive 300 catchable rainbows in May; 750 fry were planted last summer and should be of nice size for catching this spring.

The 20-acre lake is due south of Moccasin Lake (a private lake) on state Department of Fish and Wildlife land. The easiest way to reach the lake is follow the same directions as to reach Aspen Lake off the Twisp River Road.

**Big Hidden Lake** — The lake, located in the Pasayten Wilderness Area, is for those looking for a bit of an adventure.

Big Hidden, about 34 miles northwest of Winthrop, annually produces decent-sized rainbows in the 10- to 14-inch class.

The 71-acre lake lies at about 4,300 feet elevation and sees a lot of action from backpackers and horse packers.

Travel about 20 miles from Winthrop on the Lost River Road past Mazama on the Mazama Road. A one- to two- day hike to the lake starts at the head of Lost River at the Billy Goat Corral.

**Black Pine Lake** — This 19-acre scenic lake that is open all year is

located on U.S. Forest Service property six miles southwest of Twisp at 3,900 feet.

It features west slope cutthroat trout in the 10- to 13-inch range, plus as brook and regular cutthroat trout.

There is a Forest Service campground at the lake with a dock and gravel boat launch.

A snowmobile will be needed to access the lake during winter.

To reach the lake, travel northwest on Libby Creek Road, off Highway 153 south of Carlton, to Black Pine Lake Road to the lake. Alternatively, travel west on Twisp River Road out of Twisp to Poorman Creek Road, then southwest to the lake.

**Chewuch (Chewack) River** — This river that flows from the Pasayten Wilderness Area south past Winthrop and into the Methow River has a catch-and-release season for all game fish the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31. Internal combustion motors are prohibited.

**Buck Lake (Chewuch)** — The lake, which has fish in the 11- to 12-inch range, is on U.S. Forest Service land eight miles north of Winthrop within the Chewuch River drainage. It will receive 300 catchable trout in May.

There is a gravel launch site and Forest Service campground.

**Cougar Lake** — Cougar Lake moved to a year-round fishing season a few years ago, just like nearby Davis and Campbell lakes.



Methow Valley Fly Fishers Club

An angler turns a fish loose in a catch-and-release water.



Methow Valley Fly Fishers Club

**An angler shows off a beauty caught in the Methow Valley.**

This nine-acre lake contains rainbow and cutthroat trout. There is a daily limit of two trout with a minimum size of 14 inches.

Check with the state for any future changes.

The 80-acre lake will receive 150 catchable rainbows in May. Cougar, with a nearby campground, is south of Winthrop in the Methow Wildlife Area at about 3,400 feet elevation. Cougar gets little pressure because only snowmobilers have access during winter months.

Travel 2.5 miles south of Winthrop on the Twisp-Winthrop Eastside Road, go east about a mile on Bear Creek Road to the Davis Lake turnout, then north 1.5 miles and east for a mile on County Road No. 3514.

Crater Lakes — Open year-round, this high-mountain lake chain at 6,900 feet elevation includes a 15.8-acre lake managed for cutthroat.

Located in the Sawtooth Ridge area on the north side of Whiskey Mountain, Crater Lakes offer cutthroat to walk-in anglers.

Go northwest 18 miles on

Highway 153 from Pateros to the mouth of Gold Creek. A Forest Service road follows Gold Creek for eight miles. A good trail of five miles leads to the lakes.

**Dibble Lake** — This five-acre lake on private land off Wandling Road near Twin Lakes Road will be planted with 500 rainbow fingerlings in May.

The shallow lake, which is open year-round through an agreement with the property owner, requires a quarter-mile walk from a parking area down a driveway to a public fishing area.

The lake, which is best fished from a float tube, can contain trout in the 11- to 13-inch range, especially if they survive the winter.

**Duffy Lake** — The nine-acre, cutthroat trout lake that is open year-round is situated at 6,500 feet elevation. It is not ice-free until July.

Take Forest Service Road No. 4420 for 10 miles west of Twisp up Oval Creek to the Oval Creek Trail. Hike 4.5 miles south, then cross country eastward for a mile.

**Eightmile Creek** — This creek,

which contains a fair number of eastern brook trout, is eight miles north of Winthrop and currently has two seasons, depending on the fish being sought.

Eightmile Creek is open above the Forest Service bridge. Take the Chewuch River Road north for eight miles to the mouth of the creek.

**Gold Creek** — The creek south of Carlton off Highway 153 is closed under new simplified rules.

Foggy Dew Campground is at the junction of the north fork of the creek and Foggy Dew Creek.

**Lost River** — The river, which drains into the Methow River about five miles northwest of Mazama, is closed from its mouth to Monument Creek.

From Monument Creek to the outlet of Cougar Lake, there is a season from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31.

For Dolly Varden/bull trout there is a 14-inch minimum size and the fish may be retained as part of the trout daily limit.

For trout, there is a 14-inch minimum size and a two-fish daily limit. For other game fish, statewide minimums and daily limits apply.

A well-marked trail starts just past the bridge for the lower portion of the river.

The upper section of the river is

accessed on the same route as to Hidden Lakes.

**Louis Lake** — This 27-acre lake, which receives a lot of pressure, contains mostly cutthroat, although a few rainbows roam the water.

To reach the 5,300-foot elevation lake, travel 22 miles west of Twisp along the Twisp River to South Creek Campground, then hike two miles up South Creek to Louis Creek Trail and another three miles to the lake. Louis Lake is open year-round, although ice usually is not off until June.

**Methow River** — The river provides good opportunities during selected seasons on certain portions of the river.

There has been a catch-and-release season for resident rainbow and cutthroat trout under selective gear rules the Saturday before Memorial Day through Sept. 30 from Gold Creek to Foghorn Dam, a mile upstream from Winthrop.

A whitefish season runs on the stretch Dec. 1 to the end of February, with no minimum size and a daily catch limit of 15 whitefish. Whitefish gear rules apply.

There is a catch-and-release season with selective gear rules from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Sept. 15 from County Road No. 1535 (Lower Burma Road) bridge to Gold Creek.

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Methow Valley Fly Fishers Club

### A fly-caught fish.

selective gear rules runs from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Aug.15 from the Foghorn Dam to the Weeman Bridge (eight miles upstream of Winthrop). Check the fishing pamphlet because there are different possession sizes and limits depending what is caught — eastern brook trout, all other trout, all other game fish.

Selective gear rules apply, with no internal combustion motors allowed on all tributaries not listed by the state under specific regulations for Okanogan County.

The river starts high on the east Cascade crest at the head of the Methow Valley and runs to the Columbia River.

There are several access areas along Highway 153, which intersects with Highway 20 south of Twisp and

parallels the river to its mouth. Five Forest Service campgrounds with toilets border the upper reaches of the Methow River above Mazama.

**Patterson Lake** — This 160-acre lake, which is open year-round, is a mixed-species fishery 3.5 mile west of Winthrop.

The lake will get 5,000 tiger trout stocked in October of 2023.

The lake, which also contains largemouth and smallmouth bass, can be reached by following Patterson Lake Road from Twin Lakes.

There is a state access site, which includes public toilets, with a gravel boat launch plus a resort with cabins and small boat rentals.

**Pearrygin Lake** — This popular 192-acre lake, which has a season of April 22 to Oct. 31, will be planted with

almost 1,900 catchable rainbow trout in May and 55,000 fry in June.

The lake, which has a resort, state park with hook-ups and a state boat launch, is located 1.5 miles northeast of Winthrop on a road from the center of town. Toilets, campsites and a fishing pier are handicapped-accessible.

**Tungsten Lake** — This small lake, which contains cutthroat trout, is about 55 miles north of Winthrop. Anglers, starting at the trailhead at the end of the Chewuch River Road, will hike several days to the lake, located near Aspen Mountain.

Alpine lakes are open year-round unless listed in special rules. Anglers have best success in mid-summer after the ice is off.

**Twisp River** — A large tributary of the Methow River, the river is open for all game fish from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Aug. 15 from its mouth to War Creek and all tributaries from the mouth to Twisp River North Fork.

There is a catch-and-release season for rainbows and cutthroat with selective gear restrictions in effect, including barbless hooks and no bait.

For the Twisp River North Fork above the falls, the season is the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31 with the statewide minimum and daily limit applying.

For the North Creek above the Twisp River Road bridge, the season is Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31, with statewide minimum and daily limit applying.

Twisp River Road follows the river from Twisp for 25 miles

upstream, with numerous campsites available.

**Varden Lake** — This small lake at 6,191 feet contains cutthroat trout.

A 5.2-mile trail with an elevation gain of 3,700 feet is in the Silver Star Mountain area west of Mazama.

From Winthrop take state Highway 20 west to Forest Road 5310-200 and park in the gravel pit. The unsigned trail to the lake is about 200 feet on the right of the Cedar Creek Trail. The unmaintained trail climbs steeply uphill then follows the ridge top to tiny Mudhole Lake (no fish).

From there to Varden Lake there is no trail, just a scramble route to the top of the ridge (with a majestic view of Silver Star Mountain) and a steep descent to the lake.

Varden, which is off the beaten path and away from crowds, is best fished July through October.

**War Creek** — The creek is open from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Oct. 31 with the statewide minimum and daily limit applying.

Like all creeks in the Methow Valley watershed, War Creek contains small rainbow (six to nine inches). It is catch and release only.

This creek is only for hardy anglers able to fight through the brush to reach fish. Selective gear rules are in effect and no motors allowed.

The creek joins the Twisp River at the U.S. Forest Service's War Creek Campground about 15 miles west of Twisp.

A road follows the creek for two miles and a trail runs parallel to the creek for another 10 miles to its headwaters at War Creek Pass.



The Chronicle

Palmer Lake offers mountainous views.

# Plenty of tournaments await anglers

Folks who like a little competition with their fishing will find several contests and tournaments in Okanogan Country this season.

Dates	Water	Sponsor/event	Who can enter
April 15-16	Spectacle Lake	Okanogan Valley Bass Club	members
April 15-16	Whitestone Lake	Okanogan Valley Bass Club	members
April 29-30	Lake Osoyoos	Central Washington Bass Club	open to all
May 13-14	Lake Osoyoos	May Day Bass Tournament	open to all
June 3	Palmer Lake	Okanogan Valley Bass Club	members
June 10-11	Lake Osoyoos	Coastal Bassmasters	members
July 16	Lake Pateros	Central Washington Bass Club	members
July 22-23	Lake Osoyoos	Okanogan Valley Bass Club	members
Aug. 4-6	Columbia River	Brewster King Salmon Derby	open to all
Aug. 5	Lake Osoyoos	Kayak Fishing Northwest	members
Aug. 19-20	Lake Pateros	Northwest Bassmasters	members
Sept. 9-10	Lake Osoyoos	Central Washington Bass Club	open to all
Sept. 16	Palmer Lake	Okanogan Valley Bass Club	members
Oct. 28-29	Lake Osoyoos	Okanogan Valley Bass Club	members

(See individual clubs or tournament sites for membership and registration information)

—Source: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



# Great fishing awaits on Colville Indian Reservation

**T**HE COLVILLE INDIAN Reservation includes nearly two dozen lakes and streams, most open year-round to the public, that are stocked by the tribe's fish hatchery near Bridgeport.

That hatchery, which opened about 30 years ago, produces at least 50,000 pounds of trout annually, said Jill Phillips, Colville tribal fish hatchery manager.

Anglers are asked to contact the department at 509-634-2110 for up-to-date information and for questions regarding regulations or access. Tribal fishing regulations can be found on the department's website, [www.cct-fnw.com](http://www.cct-fnw.com).

Non-tribal anglers should also be aware that in addition to a fishing permit, a

reservation use pass (\$80 annually or \$20 per day) is also required, as well as a boat launch fee (\$80 annually or \$10 per day) if launching a boat.

The tribal fish and wildlife website includes a downloadable stocking plan (numbers also are included in this story).

The tribe's triploid rainbows average around two to three pounds but some "jumbos" also are planted in some lakes and average more than seven pounds. Some can go up to 10 pounds, providing a unique opportunity for anglers to encounter trophy-size fish, said the tribe.

For the larger triploids, anglers should consider trips to Bourgeau, Buffalo, Twin Lakes, Rufus Woods, Little Goose and Summit lakes.

An abundant wild kokanee population can be found in Buffalo Lake

Lake Roosevelt also contains a great kokanee fishery, with native kokanee larger than 22 inches frequently caught.

Largemouth bass more than nine pounds have been caught at Twin Lakes. Prime largemouth bass fishing opportunities also exist on Buffalo, Rebecca and Twin lakes, and at Washburn Island Pond.

Omak Lake is planted with large numbers of Lahontan cutthroat trout. While the average length of cutthroat trout caught by anglers has been about 16-18 inches in recent years, trout longer than 25 inches are commonly caught.

The tribe has seen Lahontan cutthroat of more than 30

inches during annual spawning. Anglers do need to be aware of special restrictions and regulations on Omak Lake, including a special catch-and-release only season from April 1 to May 31, along with area closures.

Brook trout of good size can be found at McGinnis and Summit lakes.

The triploid rainbow trout fishery on Rufus Woods Lake frequently produces fish more than 10 pounds. Much of this catch can be attributed to the tribe's stocking strategy over the past several years. Note that only adipose-clipped rainbow trout (hatchery fish) can be kept in Rufus Woods Lake.

Anglers should know the Sanpoil River is not open to non-tribal members within



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Left: Legion Park which borders the Okanogan River, is a beautiful park to relax and stay awhile.

Middle: Boat launch, public fishing access and RV dump, 51 Tye Street.

Right: Public fishing access by the South Bridge.

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the reservation. Several other stocked lakes, such as Owhi and Round lakes, also are closed to non-members.

All non-members fishing from the reservation shoreline boundary waters - Crawfish Lake, Lake Pateros (Wells Pool), Washburn Island Pond, Rufus Woods Lake (except at the designated fishing area), Columbia River above Grand Coulee Dam or the Okanogan River - must have in their possession a valid reservation fishing permit.

All non-members fishing by boat on reservation boundary waters or from the shore of Rufus Woods Lake at the designated fishing area must have in their possession either a valid reservation fishing permit or valid state fishing license.

Licenses must be purchased online at <https://colville.nagfa.net/online/>. Those who qualify for discounted permits (tribal

descendants, non-member spouses, disabled veterans, etc.) may purchase those at tribal Fish and Wildlife offices in Nespelem, Omak and Inchelium, or Bridgeport at the salmon hatchery.

Reservation waters open to non-members include:

**Bourgeau Lake** — The 22-acre lake, located 4.5 miles south of Inchelium, offers catchable triploid rainbows and large jumbo triploids with a year-round season. This lake, where general limits apply is easiest to access during the spring using smaller boats or by ice fishing during the winter. The lake was slated to get 400 nearly two-pound rainbows in late April and 30 seven-pound triploids between April and May.

**Buffalo Lake** — This popular lake, which contains abundant, self-propagating kokanee, large rainbow trout, largemouth bass and black crappie, could get even more popular with seven-plus-pound triploid rainbow trout again being planted this spring.

Buffalo Lake, which is open

year-round, was targeted to receive 2,000 1.5-pound triploid rainbows in mid-April and 250 of the large jumbo triploids between April and May. The lake is also scheduled to receive 5,000 trout (half-pound each) in October.

Kokanee in Buffalo Lake are averaging more than 14 inches. Bass average about two pounds, with tribal fish biologists observing bass bigger than eight pounds. No more than two bass longer than 17 inches may be kept.

Non-members may fish for crayfish July 1 through Sept. 15. Only non-native northern crayfish have been found in the lake recently.

There is a public ramp and at Reynolds Resort, which also has RV hookups on the northwest end of the lake. Additional permitted camping sites are available at the lake.

**Columbia River above Grand Coulee (Lake Roosevelt)** — The Colville and Spokane tribes, along with the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, jointly manage Lake Roosevelt.

Lake Roosevelt runs from Grand Coulee Dam, which lies at the junction of state highways 155 and 174, and extends east and then north past Kettle Falls.

Fishing for white sturgeon is

prohibited on Lake Roosevelt, except when opened by special regulation, which is likely to occur later this fall (see state regulations for details, bag limits and dates). In Lake Roosevelt (excluding the inundated and free-flowing reaches of the Sanpoil River), anglers can keep five rainbow trout that do not have an adipose fin.

Harvest of rainbow trout with an adipose present is prohibited. The rule is meant to help conserve and protect native redband trout.

Any invasive northern pike that are caught must be dead before being returned to the water or transported. There is a reward program for every northern pike head returned to drop-off locations managed by the tribal Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Anglers can reel in walleye (16, no size restriction), smallmouth bass (10, no size restriction), kokanee (two, no size restrictions) and Chinook (part of the trout limit and must be less than 24 inches). The lake is stocked with triploid rainbows from 28 net pen rearing projects, including Keller Marina, Hunters, Kettle Falls, Hall Creek and Seven Bays.

The river is considered a boundary water.

Columbia River from Chief Joseph



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Dam to Grand Coulee Dam (Rufus Woods Lake) - The portion of the river from Grand Coulee Dam downstream to state Highway 155 is closed to all fishing from boats but may be fished from shore (on the reservation side) during daylight hours. The river is a boundary water.

Below the dam in Rufus Woods Lake, anglers will find walleye, smallmouth bass (general limits), trout (two adipose clipped fish, no length limit), kokanee (part of trout limit), and several other game fish species. Tribal limits on walleye are unlimited with no size restrictions (see state regulations).

Other game fish include burbot (ling cod). Burbot limits are consistent with state regulations - five fish with no minimum size and possession being two daily catch limits.

The lake stretches 51 miles downstream from Grand Coulee Dam to Chief Joseph Dam in Bridgeport. It contains triploid rainbow trout, which are planted by the tribe and are frequently caught in excess of 10 pounds.

Anglers are asked to notify Colville tribal fish and wildlife if a northern pike is caught in Rufus Woods Lake. It is prohibited to return northern pike to the waters alive.

There is one marked fishing site and improved campground and boat launch next to the main Pacific Aquaculture facility on Columbia River Road. Either a state fishing license or tribal permit is accepted if fishing from shore at this designated fishing access site, though anglers should be aware that a reservation access pass is still required to access the site.

Other areas, if fished from shore on the reservation side, such as at Bridgeport State Park, require a reservation license. Either license works if fishing from a boat.

There are other improved boat launch sites near Chief Joseph Dam and Seaton's Grove. There's also unimproved access off Columbia River Road near the Timm Ranch.

**Crawfish Lake** - Crawfish lies partly on tribal land and partly on state land. Its season matches the state's usual general fishing season from the last Saturday in April (April 22 this year) to Oct. 31 (see state regulations). The tribe's regulations match state regulations, including not allowing internal combustion engines.

The state manages the lake for rainbow and triploid eastern brook trout.

**Duley Lake** - This 110-acre lake is located east of Okanogan and

eight miles south of Little Goose Lake on upper Cameron Lake Road. Here anglers may encounter Lahontan cutthroat in the 10- to 18-inch range. A small number of fry have been planted in recent years.

Only boats that can be launched by hand are recommended. The lake is open year-round. General limits apply.

**LaFleur Lake** - LaFleur Lake, which is open year-round, is to be planted with 400 two-pound triploid rainbows in May and 20 jumbo triploid trout (seven pounds) between April and May. This 25-acre lake, nine miles north of Inchelium, sports a few small largemouth bass (up to two pounds) and rainbows.

The lake is best fished with smaller boats because of difficult launching conditions. General limits apply.

**Lake Roosevelt** - See entry for Columbia River above Grand Coulee Dam. Be aware of the 16-walleye limit with no size restrictions, 10-bass limit with no size restrictions, rainbow trout regulations, and a northern pike reward program.

**Rufus Woods Lake** - See entry for Columbia River below Grand Coulee Dam. In February, the tribe released over 25,000 triploid rainbow trout that were about one and a half pounds each; additional

fish releases are also planned for later this spring.

**Little Goose Lake** - This small lake east of Okanogan, which is open year-round, can suffer from low water and may summer kill. Little Goose was scheduled to receive 250 two-pound triploid rainbows in early April and 20 of the large (seven-plus-pound) jumbo triploids between April and May.

The lake, which has extensive shoreline fishing access, is nine miles east of Okanogan on Cameron Lake Road. Only boats that can be launched by hand are recommended. General limits apply.

**Lost Creek** - Redband trout and small brook trout, which are not stocked, live together in the creek in the north central part of the reservation and starting near the headwaters of Crawfish Lake northeast of Riverside. Fishing on Lost Creek generally is open from April 1 to Oct. 31.

The creek flows east, staying mostly in the reservation, and feeds into the west fork of the Sanpoil River north of the reservation's boundary. Some of the creek flows through private land, so anglers should seek permission before fishing.

The creek, which falls under general limits, can be reached via

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state Highway 155 through the Lyman Lake-Moses Mountain Road.

**McGinnis Lake** — Fishing is open year-round on this 115-acre lake located a mile south of Buffalo Lake and 9.5 miles southeast of Nespelem. The lake was planted with 3,500 brook trout (around one pound each) in April. Most brookies are in the one-pound range, though good numbers of larger hold-over fish are also present in the lake.

The best time to fish this brook trout-only lake, the only one like it open to non-tribal members on the reservation, is when it is cool — before June and after September. Flies, such as a royal coachman, work well in the lake that includes carryovers exceeding 18 inches.

Larger boats can be launched at the improved access on the lake.

**Okanogan River** — The river, which forms the western edge of the reservation, contains bass, walleye and channel catfish with unlimited catch limits. Tribal and state regulations close the river to the taking of trout, salmon and steelhead above the Highway 97 bridge (see listing with state waters).

For other game fish, the season runs year-round upstream to the bridge at Malott, and from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Sept. 15 above that. A special steelhead, trout or salmon season may be opened by emergency authorization by several agencies, including the Colville tribal Department of Fish and Wildlife and state Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Omak Creek** — This off-limits creek located east of Omak is closed to non-member fishing because of a summer steelhead program.

**Omak Lake** — The 3,000-acre lake seven miles southeast of Omak offers great fishing for Lahontan cutthroat. Anglers

should be aware of several rules for this lake that's open year-round. There is a daily limit of three cutthroat with only one being more than 18 inches.

Special restrictions from April 1 through May 31 call for catch-and-release only. Also, the north embayment (Mission Bay) is closed to non-member fishing during the catch-and-release only season. Fishing is permitted only from dawn to dark using only artificial lures and flies with barbless hooks. Bait fishing is not allowed.

The boat launch in Mission Bay is closed because of damage from flooding. The shoreline at the south end of the lake, including Baines Beach, is closed to non-members all year. The south end of the lake is open for boating and fishing only to non-members who access the lake's south end by boat.

Boats may be launched at Cowpie or Nicholson Beach off Columbia River Road. Anglers are required to furnish creel census information, which is important to the tribe's management efforts.

A state record 18-pound Lahontan was caught in the lake in 1993. The lake was planted with 40,000 Lahontan cutthroat (0.1 pound each) in March.

**Rebecca Lake** — This largemouth bass lake is open all year. It's about eight miles north of Nespelem and 1.5 miles southwest of Buffalo Lake. The lake is best fished with a small boat, but floating weeds can block the unimproved boat launch. Internal combustion engines are prohibited.

**Sanpoil River** — The river itself from Boundary C to the north reservation boundary, including the West Fork and Sanpoil River main stem, is closed to fishing.

All tributaries to the Sanpoil River also are closed. The inundated reach of the river, which

can be seen in the tribal fish regulation map, is open year-round, but closed for trout and kokanee fishing from Feb. 1 to May 30. Anglers need to check demarcation lines and follow regulations carefully (check for regulation addenda online).

Anglers can fish for smallmouth bass (no daily catch, possession or length limits), walleye (no daily catch, possession or length limits), rainbow trout (daily limit of five fish with no size limit for adipose fin-clipped trout, and catch-and-release only for adipose-present rainbow trout) and kokanee (daily catch limit of two fish with no size limit).

Fishing for white sturgeon is prohibited.

Walleye and bass are affecting the fishery by eating trout fry trying to escape to Lake Roosevelt. That leaves fewer fish to return when they are adults ready to spawn.

**Stranger Creek** — This tiny creek is closed to all fishing downstream from the Inchelium-Gifford Road but is open through Oct. 31 upstream of that road. The creek contains naturally spawning brook trout and some rainbow trout. Anglers should get permission before fishing on private property bordering the creek.

**Summit Lake** — This small lake six miles east of Disautel and 11.5 miles northwest of Nespelem around 3,500 feet elevation is open year-round. Rainbow and brook trout are found in the lake, which is planted sometime in April or May once the ice is off with 200 one-pound brook trout and 40 of the large (seven-pound) jumbo triploid rainbows.

While shore access is plentiful, it is recommended that only hand-launched boats be used because of steep or muddy access. General limits apply.

Twin Lakes — These lakes (covering about 2,000 acres), the most popular within the borders of the reservation, opened April 8,

2023, and will be open through the remainder of the year.

"There are not a lot of lakes in Washington where you can catch rainbow trout and largemouth bass, where either fish can hit the scales over five pounds," said tribal biologists, who noted both lakes can be ice fished, too.

The lakes, eight miles west of Inchelium, offer excellent largemouth bass fishing, with some bass exceeding eight pounds. There are no largemouth bass daily catch limits at the lakes for bass less than 12 inches and a daily limit of two bass more than 17 inches. No bass between 12 and 17 inches may be kept.

Any smallmouth bass caught must be killed.

Rainbow and brook trout also inhabit Twin Lakes. Each lake's rainbow planting schedule includes 7,500 (1.5 pounds each) in mid-April, 500 of the jumbo triploid rainbows (seven pounds each) between April and May, and 5,000 rainbow (half pound each) in October. The daily trout limit is five fish.

There are two resorts and a public access at North Rocky Point and a fee access at Rainbow Beach Resort on North Twin Lake.

**Washburn Island Pond** — The tribe co-manages this 130-acre pond with the state. The pond supports largemouth and smallmouth bass which can grow quite large, and good-sized catfish. A state rule change allows boat to have a combustion engine, but use of the engine is prohibited (anglers don't have to take the motor off the boat to fish the lake).

The season runs April 1 to Sept. 30 at Washburn, located four miles east of Brewster off Highway 17. Anglers must possess a Colville tribal fishing license if fishing from shore. A tribal license or state license is required when fishing from a boat.

A boat launch area includes toilets and parking. General limits

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**Wells Reservoir** — Often called Lake Pateros, the pool is formed on the Columbia River behind Wells Dam and extends to Chief Joseph Dam in Bridgeport. The reservoir is open all year with a few exceptions.

The tribe asks that those who catch a northern pike notify Colville tribal Department of Fish and Wildlife. It is prohibited to return northern pike to the waters alive. Salmon populations will be at greater risk if northern pike establish a population in this reservoir.

Closures include the taking of

salmon and steelhead by non-members unless opened by emergency authorization of tribal fish and wildlife and state Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The portion of Wells Reservoir from the base of Chief Joseph Dam and Highway 17 bridge is closed to all fishing. The portion of Wells Reservoir downstream of Chief Joseph Dam from the boundary marker to the Corps of Engineers' safety zone marker is closed to fishing from a floating

device.

Fishing for white sturgeon is prohibited. Non-members may retain adipose-clipped trout from July 1 to Aug. 15. All trout with intact adipose fins must be released. Bass and walleye also live in the reservoir, where there is no limit on their catch.

**Wilmont Creek** — This small creek is closed to all non-members downstream of Silver Creek Road to protect spawning rainbows. General limits apply upstream of Silver Creek Road, and the fishery is open from April 1 to Oct. 31.

The creek, 20 miles south of Inchelium, contains a few native redband rainbows and naturally spawning brook trout. The creek, which gets little pressure from area anglers, is best fished after spring runoff. Bigger fish, which can exceed 13 inches, can be found in backed-up water behind beaver dams.

The lower two-thirds of the creek borders private land, so anglers should seek landowner permission before fishing.

# Mid-summer is the time for Ferry County

**M**ID-SUMMER IS THE time to take advantage of Ferry County's high-altitude lakes.

The fishing season for most lakes in Ferry County runs from the fourth Saturday in April (April 22 this year) through Oct. 31. State officials note that new fishing rules will be implemented in July, as they are each year, so be sure to check the new fishing pamphlet when it comes out to make sure you are doing everything legally.

For streams, the general season starts the Saturday before Memorial Day (May 27 this year) and runs through Oct. 31.

Anglers in Ferry County can expect to find rainbow and eastern brook trout at lakes, whitefish in rivers, plus largemouth bass and big tiger muskies, along with trout and perch, in Curlew Lake.

Lead weight restrictions are in place to protect nesting loons on Swan, Ferry and Long lakes. Lead cannot be used in flies at Long Lake, a fly fishing-only lake.

Several high-elevation lakes lie within the Colville National Forest.

Major lakes within the county are:

**Curlew Lake** — The 989-acre lake that's open year-round continues to produce rainbow trout and yellow perch, along with largemouth bass and tiger muskies. It's about four miles northeast of Republic along Highway 21 North and very popular for fishing.

Early season fishing is best for rainbows, many of which have been net pen-raised.

Trout roam the lake in the 9- to 12-inch range.

In October, the state planted more than 85,000 rainbow fingerlings and 80,000 put, grow and take rainbows.

Credit for much of the success at the largest lake in the county

lies with the Curlew Lake Association, which raises rainbows in net pens and releases them in the fall. Net pen trout enter the fishery by spring at around 9-11 inches.

"The Curlew Lake Association has done a spectacular job," said Bill Baker, state Department of Fish and Wildlife District 1 fish biologist. "It's the primary reason the trout fishing has continued to be good, despite expansion of the perch population over the past few years."

Fingerling plants generally begin showing up in the creel

around mid-summer to early fall. Both contribute to carryovers, which are caught the following year at 12-plus inches.

Angers are encouraged to harvest as many yellow perch as they can catch.

"Yellow perch were illegally introduced to Curlew Lake around 2011, and the population has grown exponentially," Baker said. "While the perch have had a substantial negative impact on the trout population, the perch fishery has developed quite a following and currently provides a good fishing opportunity."



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## Little Goose Lake is among the Colville Indian Reservation waters open to non-members.

Tiger muskies must be released unless they are 50 inches or longer. There is a one-fish-per-day limit.

"Curlew Lake produces some of the best-quality tiger muskies in the state," said Baker. "If I was looking for large tiger muskies, that is the water I would go fish. We plant them into Curlew Lake every year with a relatively low-density stocking."

Tiger muskies were first introduced to Curlew in 1998 to control northern pikeminnow in the lake.

You will want to wait for the water to warm up before targeting muskie, though; they don't start biting until the water warms up, usually around June or early July to

September.

The current state record tiger muskie came out of Curlew in July 2014. It was caught by David Hickman of Richland, and was 50.38 inches long and weighed 37.88 pounds.

Many anglers targeting muskies in Curlew are catch-and-release anglers not interested in harvesting the fish or seeking a state record, Baker said.

Largemouth bass, like tiger muskies, become more responsive as the water gets warmer. Your best bet to catch them is later in the summer.

Curlew Lake State Park offers camping, picnicking and boat access. The lake, at 2,333 feet elevation, has three resorts.

**Davis Lake** — This 17-acre, high-elevation lake with a season through Oct. 31 is stocked with cutthroat fry.

Anglers can expect to catch good numbers of trout in the 9- to 12-inch range from previous plants.

Lake Ellen — Rainbow trout fishing should be good for the first few weeks of the season at this 78-acre lake 14 miles north of Inchelium at 2,300 feet elevation in the Colville National Forest.

In April, the state will plant 4,000 put-and-take-sized fish; last



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May and June, 5,000 fry were planted.

The lake also includes largemouth bass and green sunfish.

Anglers can expect trout in the 11-inch range with holdovers up to 20 inches at the lake, which is open to fishing from the fourth Saturday in April (April 22 this year) through Oct. 31.

The lake boasts a developed U.S. Forest Service campground.

**Empire Lakes** — Anglers can expect eastern brook trout fry plants at around 8 inches, along with some carryovers of larger size at these three small Colville National Forest lakes totaling six acres. They are 11 miles north of Republic at 3,600 feet elevation.

The lakes, which are remote and don't get a lot of pressure, are planted annually with 3,000 eastern brook fry.

Best fishing is with a float tube. Empire Lakes are open to fishing from the fourth Saturday in April (April 22) through Oct. 31.

**Ferry Lake** — The 19-acre lake that's open year-round will receive 2,500 catchable rainbows in April, in addition to 25,000 fry planted in June 2022.

Anglers can expect fish in the 11-inch range. If the lake does not winter kill, carryovers can reach 14 inches or larger.

There is a lead restriction, with no lead allowed in jigs, and weights of less than 1.5 inches prohibited to protect nesting loons.

To reach the lake, go south for nine miles from Republic and west on state Highway 21 before heading up Forest Service Road No. 53/Scatter Creek.

The lake, at 3,329 feet, includes a Forest Service campground.

**Fish Lake** — This tiny, four-acre lake will receive 450 catchable rainbows in the 11-inch range in April and almost 500 catchable-sized rainbows in May 2022.

The lake, which is open year-round, is at 3,300 feet and located about a mile south of Ferry Lake on a county road.

**Kettle River** — The river, which contains rainbow and brown trout along with whitefish, has limited public access.

The Kettle is closed to fishing for all species except whitefish from Nov. 1 until the last day of February. All fisheries are closed from March 1 until the Saturday before Memorial Day (May 27 this year) above the Lake Roosevelt boundary (Barstow bridge).

The river, which is accessible at the Midway bridge, offers decent fishing for rainbow and brown trout once the season opens for them.

Sturgeon fishing is closed at all times.

Children age 15 and younger can fish with bait from the Curlew bridge downstream to the Canadian border, which is a good stretch for browns. (The river flows northward at that point.)

Check the latest regulations pamphlet for gear restrictions on whitefish.

Selective gear rules are in effect during the Saturday before Memorial Day through Oct. 31 season.

**Lake Roosevelt** — See entries with Okanogan County and Colville Indian Reservation waters.

**Long Lake** — This 14-acre Colville National Forest lake, which contains some very nice cutthroat up to 17 inches, is 11 miles southwest of Republic in the Scatter Creek drainage.

The state plants 14,000 cutthroat fry annually.

Anglers are reminded that flies cannot contain lead to protect nesting loons.

This fly fishing-only lake at 3,250 feet is open this year through Oct. 31.

The best time to fish is in the summer and fall after the cutthroat have fattened.

No motors of any type are allowed on the lake, which includes a Forest Service campground and boat launch.

**Renner Lake** — Fishing for eastern brook and brown trout should be decent at this 9.6-acre Colville National Forest lake. Renner receives 3,000 brook trout fry annually in the spring. In addition, 500 brown trout are planted every other year.

The lake, which is open from the fourth Saturday in April (April 22 this year) through Oct. 31, is two miles west of Barstow and six miles south from Orient at 2,525 feet.

Internal combustion engines are prohibited on the lake by Ferry County ordinance. Anglers can walk about a half-mile to the lake, which sports a small Forest Service campground and a primitive boat launch.

**Swan Lake** — The 52-acre lake offers rainbow trout, with 25,000 fry planted in May and June last year.

There is a lead restriction, with no lead allowed in jigs, and weights of less than 1.5 inches prohibited to protect nesting loons.

Swan is about 10 miles southwest of Republic in the Colville National Forest's Scatter Creek drainage just a few miles east of the Okanogan County line.

The lake, open year-round, is at 3,641 feet elevation.

An improved Forest Service campground is on the east shore.

**Trot Lake** — This eight-acre lake does well in late spring for rainbow trout in the 10- to 11-inch range. Internal combustion engines are prohibited by county ordinance on the lake eight miles west of Kettle Falls.

Trout is in the Colville National Forest at 3,200 feet elevation in the southeast end of Hoodoo Canyon.

The state planted 2,000 rainbow fry in May 2022 at the lake, which is open this year from April 22 through Oct. 41.

There is a primitive boat launch at a Forest Service campground.

**Ward lakes** — These two small Colville National Forest lakes of seven total acres are about 9.5 miles north of Republic at 3,625 elevation in the Bacon Creek drainage.

The lakes, which are open from the fourth Saturday in April (April 22 this year) through Oct. 31 and are sometimes prone to winter kill, are stocked with eastern brook trout. Last May and June, 1,000 fry were planted.

Anglers can expect fish in the 8- to 10-inch range and carryovers



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The 27-mile-long Banks Lake runs along Highway 155 south of Grand Coulee and north of Coulee City.

up to 12 inches; similar to those at Empire Lakes.

Internal combustion engines are prohibited by county ordinance.

### Nearby waters

Look south to find a couple waters just outside Okanogan and Ferry counties, including Jameson and Banks lakes in Douglas County and Banks Lake in Grant County.

**Jameson Lake** — The lake is eight miles south of Mansfield and offers campsites, toilets and boat launching at both the north and south ends.

The 457-acre lake is best fished

from the opener in April to early July and then again in October.

The lake will be stocked with 5,500 catchable-size rainbow trout in April and almost 106,000 fry/fingerlings in May.

Jameson has good carryover rainbow trout available from plants last fall.

Located at 1,785 feet, Jameson is 20 miles west of Coulee City off Highway 2 and north on Jameson Road for 6.5 miles to a resort and about a half-mile to an access area.

**Grimes Lake** — A selective fishery (see selective fishery story), Grimes is

north of Jameson. It is open June 1 to Aug. 31.

Grimes offers excellent fishing through August for Lahontan cutthroat trout averaging 18 inches, with occasional fish longer than 20 inches. It will be stocked with 8,000 Lahontan fry/fingerlings in October.

**Banks Lake** — The 26,888-acre, 27-mile-long Banks Lake runs along Highway 155 south of Grand Coulee and north of Coulee City.

Banks is managed for warmwater fish and contains smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye (for which it is very popular), whitefish, black

crappie, bluegill, burbot, carp, channel catfish, yellow perch, kokanee and rainbow trout.

A cooperative net pen rearing project between the state and local communities releases several hundred thousand rainbow trout each year into the lake.

Banks can freeze in the winter, providing an ice fishery. The lake offers a resort, a community park in Coulee City and Steamboat Rock State Park, along with six state access areas.

Fishing closures and openings happen constantly throughout the year, so best check for any changes.

# Selective fisheries reel 'em in

**I**F SELECTIVE GEAR FISHING is your thing, Okanogan County is your place.

It's known for some of the state's finest lakes for selective gear fishing, with lakes such as Chopaka, Big Twin and Aeneas being legend among fly anglers.

Chopaka, with impressive rainbows up to 18 inches, and Aeneas are the county's only fly fishing-only lakes, and both are also known for their beautiful scenery.

Okanogan County's selective or fly fishing-only lakes include:

**Aeneas Lake** — This popular 53-acre lake about three miles southwest of Tonasket is a fly fishing-only lake open April 22 to Oct. 31.

Minimum size trout is 18 inches with a daily limit of one fish.

Motors, including electric ones, are prohibited. Anglers must use barbless hooks.

The water level at the lake remains relatively stable.

Car-top boats can be launched on a gravel access and vault toilets are available at a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access.

The lake is best fished with a pontoon boat, small rowboat or float tube. There is very limited shore access. Rattlesnakes can be found along the shoreline, especially to the north, in warmer weather so be vigilant.

A plateau on the south end overlooking the lake is available for camping and offers panoramic views (especially powerful at sunset and sunrise) of the lake and surrounding hills.

Best fishing months are May and June, along with September and October. Aeneas was stocked with 2,000 decent-sized rainbow trout last October.

From Tonasket, travel south a

half-mile on county Highway 7 on the west side of the Okanogan River, then travel west 3.5 miles.

**Big Twin** — The popular, selective gear, 65-acre lake south of Winthrop benefits from a winter aerator program.

Rainbows can be landed in the 10- to 18-inch range at the lake, which has a one-fish limit. It was stocked with almost 1,300 good-sized rainbows this time last year so carryover catches could be great.

The lake, which has a season of April 22 to Oct. 31, is best fished early in the season and then again in the fall.

During hot summer months, anglers can use weighted lines to reach fish at cooler depths.

Gas-operated motors are prohibited, but electric motors are allowed. Selective gear rules apply.

A state Department of Fish and Wildlife access area includes a gravel boat launch for smaller boats and a vault toilet. There is a resort (a good place to check on fishing

conditions) with camping and a boat launch.

Big Twin is two miles south of Winthrop off Highway 20. There are marked turnoffs near Winthrop and Twin Lakes Road near Liberty Bell High School.

**Black Lake** — This underused, 66-acre lake lies at 4,000 feet and holds rainbow trout.

The lake, which is open year-round, can be reached on a 5.5-mile trail in the Pasayten Wilderness that starts on Lake Creek, off the Chewuch River Road about 20 miles north of Winthrop.

It is not a fly fishing-only lake or a trophy-fishing lake, but rather a lake falling under the selective fishery rules where bait is illegal because of threatened bull trout.

Bull trout (Dolly Varden) must be released if caught and cannot be removed from the water.

Black is usually the first Pasayten-area lake to become ice-free.

Two nearby lakes, Halfmoon (16

acres) and Kidney (13 acres), contain cutthroat.

**Blue Lake (Sinlahekin Wildlife Area)** — The 186-acre lake, which falls under selective gear rules and is about eight miles north of Conconully, continues to be one of the best fishing lakes in the county for impressive trout in the 12-inch range with carryovers up to 15 inches and brown trout up to 18 inches

It was stocked with large brown trout in late 2022. Internal combustion motors are prohibited, although electric motors can be used. There's a one-fish daily limit, with no minimum size for trout.

It's unlawful to use lead weights or lead jigs measuring 1.5 inches or less along the longest axis. To get a fly down, use a weighted fly line.

Blue, which is open April 22 to Oct. 31, is four miles north of Fish Lake in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area.

There is a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access site with camping, vault toilets and gravel boat launch at the handicapped-accessible lake that lies at an elevation of 1,686 feet.

To reach the lake, go north about 10 miles from Omak on Highway 97 and then west on Pine Creek Road for about nine miles. Continue past Fish Lake and go another four miles north to Blue on Sinlahekin Road.

**Blue Lake (near Wannacut Lake)** — Selective gear rules apply to the 111-acre, alkaline lake, where Lahontan cutthroats can be landed in the 12- to 18-inch range (up to three pounds). The lake is a mile north of Wannacut Lake and three miles southwest of Oroville.

Internal combustion motors are prohibited, but electric motors are allowed.

A state Department of Fish and

Wildlife access site with a campsite and graveled boat launch is available.

**Buzzard Lake** — The small, 16-acre lake is located five miles southwest of Okanogan on Buzzard Lake Road off Highway 20.

Buzzard contains rainbows up to 16 inches but sometimes experiences winter kill, so carryover from the previous year isn't always great

The lake, which includes a selective gear-only rule and one-fish limit, is open April 22 to Oct. 31. It is regularly planted with catchable rainbows prior to the season opener because of winter kill.

There is a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access site with an unimproved boat launch and camping area.

**Campbell Lake** — This 11-acre lake, which contains trout, changed to a year-round fishery in 2018. It is three miles east of Winthrop in the Methow Wildlife Area.

Internal combustion motors are prohibited.

Best fishing usually is with a small boat or float tube.

Campbell received 825 catchable tiger trout this time last year.

To reach the lake, take Twisp-Winthrop Eastside Road from either Winthrop or Twisp before going east on Bear Creek Road and continuing on Lester Road and then taking a short road to the lake.

**Chopaka Lake** — Long considered one of the premier fly-fishing lakes in the state, the popular 149-acre lake also provides some of the best camping scenery in the county.

The fly-fishing-only lake, located at the 2,900-foot mark on Chopaka Mountain about six miles north of Loomis, has a one-fish limit. Motors of all kinds are prohibited. The season

runs April 24 to Oct. 31.

Chopaka received a plant of jumbo rainbows last summer.

Rainbows, which munch on mayflies and are in the 12- to 18-inch range, are best fished when it warms up in the spring and again in the fall.

The first part of the road to the lake is steep and can be extremely rough in April, although improvements were made in 2021. The road often is impassable to large trailers and recreational vehicles.

A state Department of Natural Resources campground at the lake offers 15 sites and includes picnic tables, fire pits, a fishing pier and toilets, plus there is a Bureau of Land Management campground and two small, graveled boat launches.

**Davis Lake** — This popular Methow Valley lake, located near Campbell and Cougars lakes near Winthrop, is open to catch and release; selective gear rules apply year-round.

Combustion engines are not allowed on the lake. Electric motors are allowed only during summer season.

The popular, almost 40-acre lake is very popular on opening day each year, as well as on Labor Day weekend.

Davis received more than 1,100 large rainbow trout at this time last year, so holdover fish from last year should be in the 10- to 14-inch range this spring. The lake has a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access site with a graveled boat launch.

Travel 2.5 miles south of Winthrop on Twisp-Winthrop Eastside Road, then go east about a mile on Bear Creek Road before heading south a mile to the lake.

**Ell Lake** — Selective fishery rules apply. Internal combustion motors are prohibited. There is a one-fish

limit. The season is April 23 to Oct. 31.

Because of low water levels in recent years, Ell Lake is not stocked regularly.

There is a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access area, but boats or tubes must be carried to the shoreline.

A camping area and toilet are available.

Take state Highway 20 east from Tonasket for about 12 miles, and then go south on Aeneas Valley Road for about five miles.

**Grimes Lake** — The private, 186-acre lake in northern Douglas County is leased by the state and open to the public.

Selective gear rules apply. Internal combustion motors are prohibited, while electric motors are allowed.

The lake, which is consistently good for Lahontan cutthroat trout up to 18 inches, is north of Jameson Lake and about five miles southeast of Mansfield.

Access is via a rough, dirt road off Wittig Road south from Mansfield. Parking is limited for the opener. There is good shore fishing access on the eastern half of the lake.

**Little Twin Lake** — This 19-acre lake south of Winthrop has a season of April 22 through Oct. 31 for rainbows.

It is a selective gear lake (one-fish limit) with excellent rainbow fishing.

The lake, which is susceptible to winter kills, has a state Department of Fish and Wildlife access area, with toilet and a small, steep, graveled boat launch. It was stocked with 500 large brown trout last fall.

The lake is best fished with tubes or small boats carried to the lake.

Little Twin lies two miles south of Winthrop with marked turnoffs from state Highway 20.

# Lookout for invasive plants, animal species

**T**HE STATE DEPARTMENT of Fish and Wildlife and Colville Confederated Tribes urge anglers to be on the lookout for invasive plant and animal species during and after their fishing trips.

State officials say people are encouraged to report possible invasive species through the Washington Invasive Species Council, the WA Invasives app, or departmental aquatic

invasive species hotline, 888-WDFW-AIS or ais@dfw.wa.gov.

The department and council also offer clean, drain, dry and dispose (CD3) stations at various boat launches in eastern Washington and at some events.

In general, folks are advised to:

- Search for aquatic invasive species.
- Know about invasive

species of great concern. They include European green crab, zebra/quagga mussels, northern pike and non-native crayfish. Eurasian watermilfoil is a plant species of concern.

- Prevent the spread of invasive species.
- Schedule a free boat inspection.

Additional information is at [wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive](http://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive).

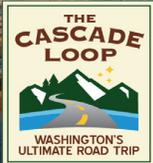
The tribe urges people to

inspect and remove all plants and animals from their boats, motors and trailers, and discard them in the trash before launching and removing their boats from reservation waters.

Anglers are asked to contact the tribal Department of Fish and Wildlife, 509-634-2110, if they see Eurasian milfoil, New Zealand mud snail or zebra mussels.

A northern pike reward program is offered by the tribe.

# Brewster Washington



## Fishing • Water Sports • RV Park • Dining • Lodging • Shopping • History

### MAY

May 13th - Mother's Day Festival  
"el dia de la madres"

### JULY

4th of July parade 10:00am and vendors all day at the park, ending with the City Fireworks over the river at dark.

### AUGUST

August 4, 5, 6th the city's largest event  
The Brewster King Salmon Derby  
(1st full weekend in August)

### SEPTEMBER

Labor Day weekend,  
Hydroplane races, and more.

### OCTOBER

October 31st  
Annual Halloween Costume Contest  
at Legion Park and  
Trick or Treating on Main Street.

### NOVEMBER

November 25th  
Small Business Saturday shopping  
all day downtown with  
Santa ringing in the Christmas season  
at 4:00pm with our City and Tree Lighting  
Ceremony at the Legion Park  
and our "Best of the Best" Brewster Awards  
Ceremony at the Senior Center at 5:00pm.

### DECEMBER

Annual Chamber of Commerce meeting,  
2nd Wednesday of the month at the senior  
Center at 6:00pm.



The City of Brewster offers family friendly events, natural beauty and many different ways to have fun. We're just off Hwy. 97, easy on, easy off. We invite you to join us!



## Columbia Cove RV Park

Conveniently located across from the boat launch.

Minutes from great fishing!  
29 Full Hookups, 5 Power Only

WIFI, Bathhouse,

Public Restrooms and Laundry

Reservations

509-733-0540

cityofbrewsterwashington.org

brewsterrvpark@brewsterwa.us

604 W. Bruce Ave. Brewster, WA



## 17th Annual Brewster King Salmon Derby

August 4, 5, 6th at Columbia Cove Park,  
a fun, family-friendly fishing event

\$20,000 in cash and prizes. Tickets on sale December 6th 2022 deadline August 1, 2023. Buy tickets online at [brewstersalmonderby.com](http://brewstersalmonderby.com), no tickets will be sold at event. For more information visit [brewstersalmonderby.com](http://brewstersalmonderby.com) or call 509-686-1184. Hosted by the Brewster Chamber of Commerce, [brewsterwachamber.com](http://brewsterwachamber.com).



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