

The Fishin' Magician

Welcoming

Dave Graybill

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would not have been opened to sport angling without the funds generated through the endorsement stamp program. Anglers can also buy a two-pole permit again this year. It's pricey, but worth it to many.

You'll need that new license tomorrow if you plan to fish one of the many lakes in the National Columbia Wildlife Refuge, which are scattered from O'Sullivan Dam to almost the city of

Othello. Known as the April Fools Opener it offers the first shot at rainbow trout and other species that have been growing through the fall and winter.

Always a top prospect is Upper and Lower Hampton lakes. Last year Lower Hampton produced good catches of yearling rainbow of 12 to 14 inches with some carryovers that were 16 to 17 inches. Upper Hampton Lake offered slow fishing on last year's opening day, but the fish were large, all over 16 inches. It is advised that anglers take the short trail that leads from the parking area to Upper Hampton to start their day, and then finish at Lower Hampton. Both lakes received plants of fry rainbow last spring.

The Pillar-Widgeon Chain of Lakes offers a quality experience and the possibility of catching some large

rainbow, over 18 inches. There are ten lakes in the chain and they are only reached via a trail, and the pressure on these small lakes is light. The trail is not steep at all, and you can make your way from one lake to other with easy walking. It is suggested that anglers pack a float tube along to increase their ability to really cover the water on these lakes.

Not to be overlooked are the warm water lakes that open on April 1st in this area, too. Traditionally, the best opportunities for good catches of largemouth bass, and big bluegill are Hutchinson and Shiner lakes. I have also heard that there is some nice crappie in Shiner. Only non-motorized boats are allowed these lakes. Other options include the Coyote, Bobcat, and Hayes creek ponds located just south of Morgan and Halfmoon lakes. These ponds are fairly shallow and warm up quickly and offer good fishing for largemouth bass. Another option for warm water anglers might be Deadman Lake located just off McManamon Road next to Halfmoon Lake.

Anglers should also be aware that there is excellent fishing for big trout happening right now on Potholes Reservoir. Every spring the rainbow go on the bite and are caught from the docks at MarDon Resort and along the shore. Trout over 3 pounds are not uncommon, and there are some even bigger ones taken at Potholes. The fishing is also very good at Corral and Blythe lakes, which can be reached by road just across the highway from MarDon Resort. If you are not familiar with the lakes in this area, it is a good idea to stop at the MarDon store and pick up a map. The folks there will also steer you in the direction of the best fishing in these "seep lakes", too. Anglers should also know that the walleye can be

caught in Lind Coulee in the spring as well.

Anglers that look forward to spring perch fishing will be interested in learning that there are some being taken now in the Marina at Coulee City. Water temperatures are still very cold on Banks Lake, so the action is inconsistent. One day is pretty good and the next awful. I am getting similar reports from Moses Lake. The perch fishing at the Marina can be fast and furious, but really big perch are at taken at Moses Lake. I'll try to stay on top of this and let you know when these fisheries are in full swing.

I am getting quite a few e-mails from folks thinking they have not received my E-Letter for Spring Fishing. I will begin writing the e-letter very soon, and people should have it in the mailboxes in the next couple of weeks. If you are not a subscriber and do not receive my quarterly e-letters that detail fishing opportunities in our region, you should sign up. It's free and it's easy. Just click the button on the home page of my web site to see how to be added to the mailing list. Also, don't forget to check my web site for the line up of Fishing TV and Cooking TV Shows for the month of April.

I am encouraged to see some weather forecasts for temperatures in the 60s. This should really help get our spring fishing rolling. I'm ready to get out and not only try some of my favorite spring waters, but try some new ones, too!

Reach Dave at: www.FishingMagician.com
or Fishboy@nwi.net

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