

Dave Graybill

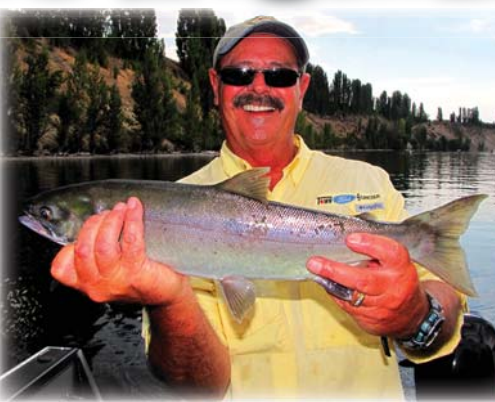
The Fishin' Magician

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The wild fires raging in Central Washington have dominated the news this past week. I have friends that live in the Pateros and Brewster areas, as well as the Methow Valley. Unfortunately some have lost their homes. Anglers are back fishing the Brewster Pool for sockeye, and businesses are opening with services that should be available this week. Lake Wenatchee opened to sockeye fishing, and there is good fishing here, when the wind allows.

My wife Eileen and I fished the Brewster Pool last Monday. On our way into Pateros we saw a big lightning bolt, which may have been the one that started the fire. It was the only one we saw so we went ahead and launched. I got off to a slow start. The rigs that had worked for me at Wells Dam weren't doing the job. I switch to bright pink and shorten up my leaders, and my luck improved. Eileen was doing a great job with the net and we had four fish in no time. Then it got tougher. We began losing fish before they even got close to the net. We had six when the bite died at about noon. I noticed that most everyone was getting fish. Those that were having trouble were using leaders that were way too long, is my guess. Ours were only about ten inches.

Since I wasn't going to Brewster for a few days, and the Lake Wenatchee opener was a couple of days away, I grabbed my fly rod and headed for the Teanaway River. I fished up from where I had been last week to find some new water. I did try a hole or two that had been productive on my last trip and got nothing. I was getting worried. They just weren't biting. I came to a very deep hole along a steep wall, but nothing with my Madame X on the surface. Letting the current sweep my fly deep and stripping it back worked though. I got a rainbow that was bigger than the



cutthroat I caught the week earlier. It was at least 15 inches and really ran me around the hole before I could get it in to release. Every time I go to the Teanaway I get a fish that really makes the trip worth while.

Last Saturday the sockeye season opened on Lake Wenatchee. It was not certain that anyone, other than those that lived on the lake could even get there due to the road closures. Fortunately, the Chumstick road opened the day before, so I was able to get to Rollie Schmitt's house, which is on the lake. We have fished the opening day here for many years now, and we were joined by Dennis Beich, who is the retired director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Region 2. He has fished with us before on the opener, so we all knew the drill. Fishing was pretty good, but the wind was terrible. We had one in the boat and then ran across the lake to find calmer water. One more

fish wound up in the cooler here, but we just weren't seeing many fish on the finder. Back we went to the windy side and one more fish came to the net. The wind was just too much by now, and breakfast sounded really good. We had lost a few and had some bites that just didn't hook up. When the wind settles down fishing is going to be excellent. There were just 62 boats we could see fishing on this opener, which is very low for Lake Wenatchee.

In my last e-letter I included a story on how to fish for sockeye, and also one on the efforts to recover the sockeye returns up the Columbia River. The Okanogan Native Alliance, which is a group of Confederated tribes have completed a new hatchery near Penticton, which could release as many as 5 million sockeye fry every year. In addition to the tribe's contributions both Grant and Chelan county PUDs were financial partners. I mentioned Douglas County PUD for their contribution of a Water Management Tool, but have since learned how significant this was to the future of the sockeye recovery on the Okanogan River system. Anyone that is interested in sockeye fishing on the Columbia River will want to watch the short video that was produced that explains the Water Management Tool and what it means to recovery. To watch the video just go to my Facebook page, at FishingMagician.com. There you will be able to click on the web address and view the video on your computer. You can also go to the Douglas County PUD web site and click on Your PUD, and then District Videos.

The Wenatchee River Salmon Derby took place last Friday and Saturday. Seventy anglers participated. The winner for biggest fish was Mike Irvine with a 24.57-pound

king. He won \$2,000.00. The second place winner was Brendon Collins with a fish weighing 16.51 pounds. It was worth \$1,750.00. Third place was taken by Roger Elvigan with a salmon weighing 16.43 pounds. He got a check for \$1,500.00. The first place team landed 114 pounds of salmon and won \$1,750.00. The second place team netted 108 pounds and took home \$1,500.00. The third place team boated 88 pounds and took a check for \$1,250.00.

You should plan on fishing the Budweiser-Lowrance King Salmon Derby in Brewster the first weekend in August. Things will have settled down up there well in advance of the derby. Anglers are already back fishing for sockeye with good success, and the thermal barrier that keeps both the sockeye and kings in the Brewster Pool has been in place for a couple of weeks now. This is the area's favorite derby, with tons of prizes and the community turns out to be sure everyone has a great time. It would be especially important to attend the derby this year to support the community that has supported the derby for so many years. They could sure use the business.

My fishing plans include getting back up to Brewster for sockeye. I am going to stop in Pateros and buy ice and snacks, and also in Brewster to just buy some things at the local businesses. Pateros and Brewster have provided us anglers many great services over the years, and now they need us more than ever. To help those who have lost their homes in the area, please contact the American Red Cross. They are the best agency for distribution of donations.

Reach Dave at:
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