

# Dave Graybill

## The Fishin' Magician

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Trout and walleye fishing continues to be very good here in North Central Washington, and there are anglers heading south. They are after spring Chinook, which are returning in good numbers this year. This first run of salmon up the Columbia attracts huge traffic to the lower river.

I traveled to Hood River last week to meet a good friend of mine, Herb Good. Good is a legend in salmon fishing on just the Columbia, but many Alaskan rivers as well. He was a guide for over 30 years, and although retired for five years now, is a familiar site on the lower river. He is frequently called upon by manufacturers of fishing equipment for his opinion on the construction and design of everything from premium rods to reels. Good also does cooking demonstrations at the major sport shows in the Pacific Northwest.

Joining us for a day of fishing was Dub Burnam, who traveled from Canby, south of Portland, where he has been fishing the Willamette River. He and Good often fish together and Burnam is an expert angler on the Columbia River. We ran over to the Klickitat River, where Good has taken me before, and it is one of the most scenic spots I have ever visited on the water. After a bit of exploring it was determined that there were no fish in the area yet, so we moved further up stream.

Launching above The Dalles Dam we ran to one of Good's favorite spots for early season springer fishing. There were several other boats in the area and all were trolling close to shore. Good rigged two rods with herring and Burnam put out a wrapped plug. We found that there were some small smolt in the area and we released several.



Good had a rod-bending hit on his rod that somehow avoided the hooks. I got a nice fish up to the boat, but it turned out to be an unclipped fish. The wind was beating us up pretty good by then, so we packed it in.

I really appreciated Herb's invitation to come down and putting me up at his home, even feeding me way too much of his home-cooked delights. Spending time with him and Dub is something very special and I look forward to seeing them again this fall.

That evening I caught up with Shane Magnuson, of Upper Columbia Guide Service. I have fished with him several times on the lower river and have shot a lot of video of the trips for my Fishing TV Show. One of which can be seen right now by going to my FishingMagician.com web site.

The day before Magnuson and his clients had started early, took a break at about ten, and then went back for the afternoon and evening. They got three fish late in the day, so the plan was to meet at the ramp the next morning at 11:00 a.m. This was quite a change from earlier trips, when we got up a 3 a.m. to find decent parking and a spot on the bank to rig the boat. We slept in, had breakfast and took it easy.

We did have to park in the next county when we got to the launch at the Wind River, but Magnuson's strategy paid off. We started with two rods trailing the new 3.5 Mag Lip Flatfish, and had the other rods rigged with prawn spinners. We were out in the pack, behind the island off the Wind River in a stiff breeze. Fishing was tough, but Magnuson put on a show. We got four fish on the 3.5 Map Lips and two more on the prawn spinners. Most anglers were getting blanked on this particular day. We had two jacks in our catch, and the other fish ranged from 10 to 15 pounds. We didn't get to the dock until about 8:30 that evening but we had a load of fish, thanks to Magnuson.

Speaking of Spring Chinook, there are some season openers closer to home. There are 3,500 spring Chinook estimated to return to the Yakima River this year. A season is already underway on the lower river and on May 17th the Yakima from the Highway 82 Bridge at Union Gap up river to the Railroad Bridge below Roza Dam will open. This stretch has been very productive in past seasons. The bag limit is two clipped salmon. All unclipped salmon and steelhead must be released. For all the details on this fishery please visit the Washington Department of Fish and

Wildlife web site and look under "Latest News" on the Home Page.

Trout fishing remains very good at many of our area lakes. We haven't had enough really hot days to warm up the water, so the trout are still very active. Eric Granstrom visited Conconully Lake recently, and he reported that the lake is full of planted rainbow, and he caught several 15- to 16 inch rainbow as well. Anglers should expect excellent fishing at both of the Conconully lakes and there are plenty of facilities available here.

Fly fishers will be happy to hear that Upper Wheeler Reservoir will open to fishing on May 17th. Through an arrangement with the Wenatchee Heights Irrigation District, the WDFW and the Wenatchee Valley Fly Fishers the lake has been open to catch and release, fly fishing only. The lake will remain open through September 12th.

I am very anxious to get back out after walleye. I continue to get reports of phenomenal fishing at Potholes Reservoir, and now Moses Lake has kicked into gear. Banks Lake is also producing some good catches of walleye now. All three of these lakes also offer terrific pre-spawn fishing for smallmouth bass.

I hope to make my next fishing trip to Moses Lake. I want to get a mess of walleye and also do some smallmouth bass fishing. Can't wait!

Reach Dave at:  
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