

Dave Graybill

The Fishin' Magician

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There are still people out fishing for summer run salmon. There were over 71,000 of them that passed over Priest Rapids Dam this year, so there are still plenty of them around to catch. The big news now though is the number of fall salmon headed our way. It looks like an all-time record year for fall runs, with projections for as many as 800,000 entering the Columbia River. Many of them are headed for our region.

To help you prepare for their arrival in the Hanford Reach and further up stream is a free seminar at Town Ford in East Wenatchee. It's scheduled for Wednesday, September 25th, and the presenter is going to be Rick Graybill, who was a premier guide in this stretch of the river for many years. He developed many of the highly effective techniques for catching fall salmon, and anglers will be learning methods that they may not be familiar with. You will want to bring a notebook to this seminar, to help you remember all the details of these techniques. The seminar will take place at the dealership in East Wenatchee at 6 p.m., and there will be light refreshments and drawings for door prizes. I will be there, too, with information on the upcoming steelhead season.

On Saturday, September 21st the 23rd annual Wenatchee River Salmon Festival will take place at the National Fish Hatchery in Leavenworth. This free event is the best one for families in the region. There are too many hands on activities for kids to list here; they all focus on the environment and the life cycle of salmon. They also get the opportunity to paddle a kayak, shoot

a bow and arrow, target shoot with a pellet gun, and try out a climbing wall in the Outdoor Recreation area. The Main Stage will be busy, with two appearances of the Reptile Man among other shows that can be seen here. The annual festival is open to the public just on Saturday this year, so families will want to be there early to take make sure you see and try everything. The gates open at 10 a.m.

Everyone is packing up their gear and heading to the Hanford Reach to catch fall kings. Call me crazy, but my last fishing trip was for perch at Park Lake, which is just north of Soap Lake. There is nothing better than a fresh perch fry, and I wanted to get a mess. My brother Rick, Steve Goodfellow and his wife Tomar and I pulled the Kingfisher to Park Lake, and searched around until we found a good school. We put our offerings down and began to get bites. Many of the bites, as it turned out were sculpin or bullheads as we call them. There is a very healthy population of them in Park Lake. There is also a good population of perch, and we caught a bunch. Some of them were over 11 inches, too. We caught a range of sizes but sorted out about 20 or so that we filleted. I also know that there is a very good perch fishery at Blue Lake, which just down the road from Park. I hope to make a trip there soon, too. Before I do, though, I want to tangle with some of the big fall kings at Vernita. I am off to Fish Camp this week, but when I get back, look out!

Coming up on Thursday, September 26th is the twelfth annual Fish and Wildlife Roundtable



in Brewster. The roundtable gives local anglers an opportunity to discuss fish and wildlife issues with the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Director Phil Anderson and other staff. Joining Phil Anderson at the meeting will be Deputy Director Joe Stohr, and the newly appointed Northcentral Regional Director Jim Brown. The meeting will take place at the Columbia Cove Recreation building in Brewster, and will run from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. These meetings are known for lively and pointed discussions and are well worth attending.

The Chelan County PUD has contacted me to help make anglers aware of the fishing boundary below Rocky Reach Dam. Anglers are not always clear on where they are able to fish here, and they have provided me with a clear description. To view the information and map of the boundary area, just go to my web site at fishingmagician.com and then go to Links of Interest. Scroll down until you see the category for River

Information. Click on Rocky Reach Boundary, and it will open a PDF. This will include a description of the area, and even a very good map that clearly shows in detail where anglers can fish below Rocky Reach Dam.

I am going to be at Fish Camp near The Dalles, Oregon for most of the week. I have been invited to come down again and fish for a variety of species available in the Columbia River, here, and also meet outdoor product manufacturers. I will be taking Eric Granstrom along on this trip, as it is a great opportunity for us to get video footage of the many great fishing opportunities in this area, but also get video of products that we can use in our new Fishing TV Show called "How To and What's New". The new show will be available to you through to my web site beginning this fall, and will feature many how-to segments on things anglers want to know, as well as products that I have used and recommend as well as new products that will become available. Look for announcements about the new show in this column and through my radio broadcasts and web site.

I don't think I have ever been as excited about fall fishing as I am this year. We have a record return of fall salmon. We continue to have great weather to take advantage of a wide range of great fisheries on our local lakes, plus steelhead season isn't that far away. It's going to be a busy fall, that's for sure!

Reach Dave at:
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