

Welcoming **Dave Graybill** To The **Nickel Ads** *Classifieds* The Fishin' Magician

Hundreds of anglers have been enjoying good to great trout fishing at the lakes that opened on March 1st, and here comes another opener already. The "April Fools Opener" on April 1st promises to provide anglers with even better fishing than a month ago, as water temperatures have warmed the water and trout should be aggressive. The opener falls on a Thursday, pressure should be light until the weekend. Let's keep our fingers crossed for sunshine and windless days for the first weekend. It should be great!

Once again, Upper and Lower Hampton Lake are pegged as the top prospect of the many lakes that open. For years these lakes have kept anglers more than happy with good catches of big trout. This year Lower Hampton is forecast to edge out the Upper as the one that will produce the best numbers of trout caught. Heavy plants of fry were made on Lower Hampton in the spring and the fall of last year. Very good numbers of fall yearling rainbow of 8 to 10 inches will be abundant, and spring yearling rainbow of 11 to 13 inches are expected to be taken here, too.

Upper Hampton, which has traditionally been very good for both numbers and large rainbow (20 inches plus), has once again been invaded by sunfish and warm water species that are competing for existing feed at the lake. It has also been "discovered" by cormorants, and they have contributed to a dwindling population of trout. There will be rainbow of 12 to 14 inches available in Upper Hampton as a result of a spring fry plant of 5,000 fish. Upper Hampton Lake is reached by

trail, and is best fished from a float tube or other pack-in craft.

Some other lakes that would be worth the effort of packing a float tube are the Pillar-Widgeon Lakes. There are ten lakes in this chain and all of them received fry plants last spring. These are mostly small lakes and an angler can easily hit three or four of them in a days outing. Those who make the effort should be rewarded with very good catches of both yearling and carryover rainbow.

The best trout fishing will be at Dry Falls Lake (north of Soap Lake) on April 1st. This is a "quality" lake, selective gear regulation (single, barbless hooks, no bait) and a one (1) fish daily bag limit. It is very popular with fly anglers. The lake has provided excellent fishing the past couple of seasons for yearling rainbow of 13 to 14 inches and carryovers to 24 inches. It has been planted with both brown and tiger trout, too. Nearly 10,000 rainbow fry and a thousand fry of both brown and tiger trout were added to the lake last year. The warmer weather we have experienced should make for better fishing on the opener than in past years, when cold water put a damper on the action.

Fans of warm water species, particularly largemouth bass and bluegill should head for Hutchinson and Shiner lakes. Since their rehabilitation in 1997 both of these lakes have become excellent warm water fisheries. Only non-motorized boats are allowed on these lakes.

Anglers that are interested in learning about spring walleye and spring salmon fishing should plan on attending the seminar that will be held at Town Ford on Wednesday, April 7th beginning at 6 p.m. Gordon Steinmetz, former owner of Big Wally's and a well-known walleye guide and tournament angler will be talking about spring tactics on our region's waters. He has spent years fishing on Banks Lake, Lake Roosevelt, Potholes Reservoir and the Columbia River, and has provided seminars on the topic of walleye fishing for years at major sport shows.

Shane Magnuson, Upper Columbia Guide Services, grew up in Leavenworth, and no one knows the Icicle River and the spring salmon fishing here. He will be giving a detailed description of how he rigs to fish this stream. This is of particular interest this year as the largest return of spring salmon to the Columbia since 1937 is expected. The Icicle could see three times the number of spring salmon this year than in a typical season. Magnuson will also talk about fishing on the lower Columbia River, where he has been guided the past four years.

Before you head out to go fishing on April 1st, get your new fishing license. When you get your new freshwater license for 2010, and plan to fish for steelhead or salmon be sure to get your Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Stamp. This will be required of anglers who fish for salmon and steelhead on the Columbia River and its tributaries. The cost is \$8.75 for the stamp.



The fees generated by the stamp purchases go into a dedicated fund that can only be used for certain closely defined purposes to allow for the opening of selective fisheries on the Columbia River and its tributaries.

Be sure to check the Fishing TV Page on my web site to see what fishing shows I have lined up for the month of April, and also check out a brand new show I am introducing the first weekend in April, called the FishingMagician Outdoor Cooking Show. Click on Cooking TV and see what I've "cooked up" for dining in the outdoors!

Reach Dave at:
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