

# Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

## The Fishin' Magician

I hope you all had a great Christmas Holiday, with lots of family around. I didn't get out and do any fishing last weekend, but I still hope to break out my recently sharpened ice auger and find a local lake to give it a test in the next few days. I'll be watching the overnight temperatures closely to see if the ice will be thick enough.

I wouldn't be surprised to see an announcement about the closure to steelhead fishing on some of the rivers in our region very soon. The early closures may be necessary as the catch rates on wild steelhead approach the mortality quota for the season. There are several reasons that this is occurring so early this year. One is that there was a very high return of wild steelhead this season. That is good news and bad news, as I have mentioned before. It is good news in terms of recovery of wild stocks of steelhead. The bad news is that anglers have been catching and releasing more wild fish than ever this year, and that means we get to the mortality quota faster.

Last year we had a good number of wild fish, too. If you remember, though, we had a very cold November and fishing was shut down due to ice on our rivers for a good portion of the season. That helped extend the season. We just couldn't fish. We've had good weather, with very few days of restricted fishing due to icy conditions this year. Anglers have pretty much been able to fish every day since steelhead season opened. It seems odd that it would work against us, but that is the case.



I'm not saying that steelhead season is over for the year. I anticipate closures on certain waters but not all of them. I think that there will be some announcement this week with the closure taking affect around the first of the year. I will be sharing what I learn in my reports in local newspapers and my broadcast reports. I will also get word out through my Blog and to my E-Letter subscribers. I'll be checking the Department of Fish and Wildlife web site for the news release, too.

This is the time of year that many anglers turn their attention to fishing at Rufus Woods, and I anticipate traffic to this reservoir to take a big spike in January and February. I took a look at the extended weather forecast for Bridgeport and although there is some rain and snow expected there aren't any sub-freezing days. It is not unusual for temperatures to be in single digits at this time of year, so anglers should be happy to be fishing on Rufus Woods in such balmy weather.

Fishing on Rufus Woods in the winter can be inconsistent. There are good days and bad days, often for no apparent reason. What I do expect this winter season is to see larger than normal triploids taken. Many of the fish that were released earlier this summer were either 2 to 4 pounds or 4 to six pounds, and these guys do nothing but eat. Don't be surprised to hear about many fish in the 10-pound class being caught fairly often this winter. There could be some really big boys taken as well. This could be the most exciting, in terms of the potential for big fish, on Rufus Woods in years.

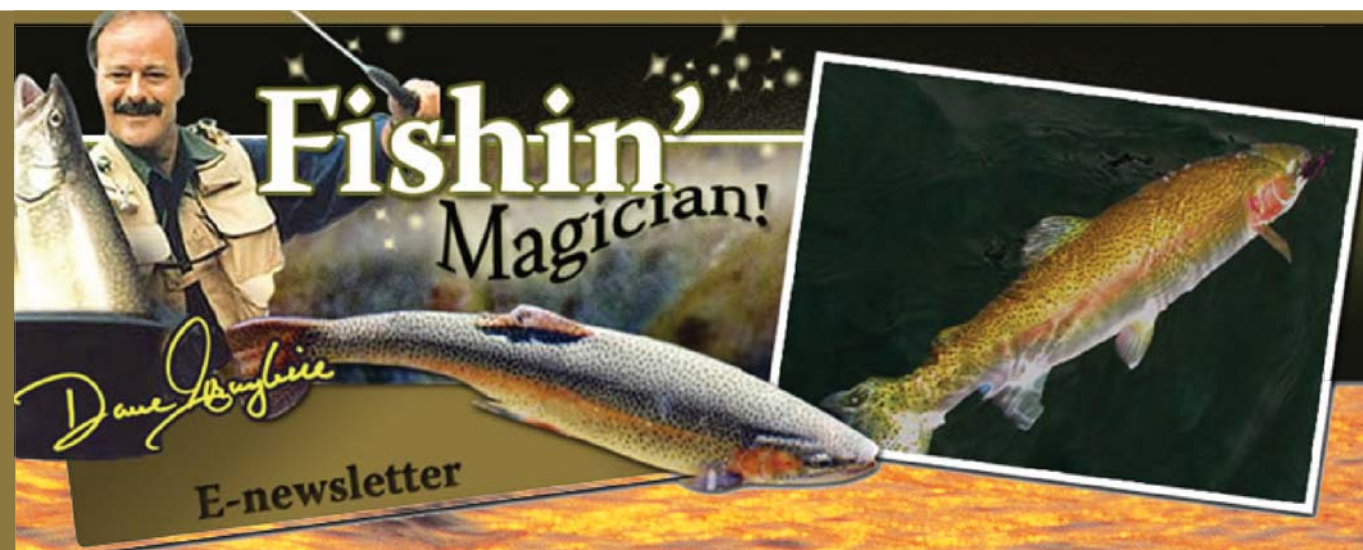
This will be my last column prior to the launch of my new cable television show. The first one will air on Charter Cable channel 19 on Thursday, January 5th at 9 a.m. It will also be shown again at 5 p.m. that same day. If you are getting your cable through Local Tel or Genext, you will see the shows at the same time on channel 12. This show will be different from the Fishing TV Show that has been on the air on the weekends for over three years. The "Outdoor Insider Show" will be an hour long, with the

first half hour at times dedicated to instruction on the details of a certain fishery. This "tutorial" will be done with a guide or local expert. The second half hour will often be on the water, using the techniques that were described in the first session. I hope you will all find the new show educational as well as entertaining.

The new shows will be archived, and that's what convinced me to take on the new project. People will be able to go to my web site, then to the new Outdoor Insider TV Page, and click on the title of the show they want to watch and see it immediately on their computer. New shows will be added as they are broadcast each week. I was busy in December getting the news shows ready and I have some good ones coming up. The first one will be with Shane Magnuson, on steelhead fishing on the Upper Columbia River. The next show is with Keith Roe, on bobber and jig fishing on low and clear water in cold weather conditions. The following week I will be with Kevin van Bueren, and the subject will be fly fishing for steelhead on the Methow River. The last show of the month will be with Anton Jones, on fishing for lake trout in the winter months on Lake Chelan. The show schedule and titles will be posted on my web site right after the first of the year.

The next column you see will be in the New Year, and there are some things coming up in January and February that I will be reminding you about. Until then, have a safe and happy New Year celebration!

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