

## **Time to have fun again - Lowland lakes officially open for fishing April 24**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA - The state's single biggest fishing season opens April 24, with lakes throughout the state stocked with millions of hatchery-reared fish by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Although many lakes are open year round, the last Saturday in April marks the traditional start of a four-to five-month-long lowland-lakes fishing season.

"This is our biggest fishing season opener and it traditionally draws more than 300,000 anglers of all ages," said WDFW Director Phil Anderson. "It's a good time to gather family and friends at local waterways to cast off winter and celebrate spring."

With lakes in every county of the state well stocked, anglers can keep travel costs down by enjoying good fishing close to home.

"This may be the best time ever for those who used to fish to get back into it with family and friends," said WDFW Inland Fish Program Manager Jim Uehara. "Our hatchery stocking is at a peak and the cost of a fishing license remains low."

This year's opener offers an exciting new opportunity for lake fishers. Anglers may purchase a 2-pole endorsement which allows them to fish with two rods in most of Washington's lakes. Gear rules and daily limits still apply. Many anglers will see the use of two poles as a way to double their fun by using two different types of tackle, or fishing at two different depths. Go to <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/twopole/lakes.php> for a list of lakes where two poles are not allowed.

Uehara reports more than 20.5 million trout are stocked in lakes and streams throughout the state for this year's fishery, including those planted in waters that opened earlier this spring or are open year-round. Most trout will be stocked before the lakes season opens.

Fish awaiting anglers in the lowland lakes include:

58,117 triploid (sterile) trout - each averaging 1-1/2 pounds - being stocked this spring in 105 lakes;

203,009 two-year-old "jumbo" and surplus hatchery broodstock trout being stocked this spring in 178 lakes.

More than 7.4 million trout that were planted last year as 2- to 3-inch fry into nearly 500 lowland lakes and 100 highland lakes and are catchable-size now (8-to 12-inch);

More than 10 million kokanee fry, expected to show in this year's catch, stocked in 35 lakes;

More than 3.4 million "catchable-size" (8- to 12-inch) trout stocked this spring in 334 lowland lakes, including lakes opening April 24.

Fish stocking details, by county and lake, are available in the 2010 Hatchery Trout Stocking Plan on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants> .

Of Washington's nearly 4,500 lakes, ponds and reservoirs, more than 600 have WDFW-managed water access sites. Their locations can be found at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife\\_areas](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas) .

Among those sites are approximately 275 access points on lakes that will be open for fishing from April 24 through September or October. These sites include boat launches, docks and shorelines, including areas accessible for people with disabilities. Other state and federal agencies operate hundreds more such facilities.

"With our biggest fishing crowds out on this opener, it's especially important for everyone to be patient and safe at these boat launches and docks," Anderson said. "Everyone in boats, and all children on shore, should use personal flotation devices."

Visitors parking at WDFW fishing access sites are required to display a WDFW vehicle use permit on their car or truck. Every person who buys an annual fishing license receives a free vehicle use permit. The permits are transferable between two vehicles. Additional permits are available to recreational license buyers for \$6 each and to other users of the areas for \$12.

A Washington freshwater fishing license, valid April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011, costs \$26.00

for resident adults (16-69 years old). Fifteen-year-olds and persons with disabilities can buy a license for \$11, and seniors (70 years and older) can buy an annual fishing license for \$8.00. Children 14 years and younger do not need a fishing license. The two-pole endorsement costs an additional \$24.50 for adults; \$6.50 for seniors.

All licenses can be purchased on the Internet ( <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov> ), by telephone (1-866-246-9453), or at hundreds of license dealers across the state (listed on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/vendors> ).

Tips on fishing areas, listed by county and water, can be found in "Washington Fishing Prospects: Where To Catch Fish In the Evergreen State," available on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects> .

Copies of WDFW's annual "Fishing In Washington" sport fishing rules pamphlet are also available from license dealers, WDFW offices and on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> . The current rules are in effect through April 30, 2010; the rules for May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 will be posted and available in printed form by May 1.

Anglers should note that some new fishing rules go into effect on May 1 and will be highlighted on the "What's new for 2010" page of WDFW's 2010-2011 sport fishing seasons and rules pamphlet.