Earn cash and save salmon - pikeminnow season is here

Local News

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Portland, Ore. - It’s time to get hooked on the Northern Pikeminnow Sport Reward Fishery Program, which kicks off Saturday, May 1, in the lower Columbia and Snake rivers. Media are invited to check out the “aquarium truck” to get a live look at these salmon predators, talk to expert pikeminnow anglers and learn the best fishing techniques and locations.
The Northern Pikeminnow Sport Reward Fishery Program provides cash for catching pikeminnows, a large member of the minnow family in the Columbia and Snake rivers. These fish chow down on millions of young salmon and steelhead every year. Research shows that reducing the number of these voracious predators helps salmon and steelhead survival.

What: Pikeminnow season kick-off featuring aquarium truck with live pikeminnows.

When: Saturday, May 1 from 1 to 4 p.m.

Where: M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp on the Columbia River. Take exit 307 off of I-5, head east on NE Marine Drive. The boat ramp is across from Portland International Airport at 15475 Ferry Road.

Who: Expert pikeminnow anglers, the Bonneville Power Administration, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.
Anglers get paid $4 to $8 for northern pikeminnow nine inches and larger caught in the lower Columbia (mouth to Priest Rapids Dam) and Snake (mouth to Hells Canyon Dam) rivers. The more pikeminnow an angler catches, the more the fish are worth. The first 100 are worth $4 each; the next 300 are worth $5 each, and, after 400 fish are caught and turned in, they are worth $8 each. As an added incentive, specially tagged fish are worth $500. The annual program starts May 1 this year and goes until Sept. 30, 2010.

Since 1991, more than 3 million pikeminnow have been removed from the Snake and Columbia rivers through the sport reward program. Last year, anglers caught approximately 142,000 pikeminnow. As a result of these efforts, pikeminnow predation on juvenile salmon is estimated to have been cut by 40 percent.

The program is administered by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and is funded by the Bonneville Power Administration.

For more information about the program, call 800-858-9015 or visit www.pikeminnow.org.

BPA is a not-for-profit federal electric utility that operates a high-voltage transmission grid comprising more than 15,000 miles of lines and associated substations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. It also markets more than a third of the electricity consumed in the Pacific Northwest. The power is produced at 31 federal dams operated by the Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation and one nuclear plant in the Northwest and is sold to more than 140 Northwest utilities. BPA purchases power from seven wind projects and has more than 2,800 megawatts of wind interconnected to its transmission system.