

Washington Anglers can fish for free June 12-13

Local News

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OLYMPIA – Each year, thousands of Washingtonians go fishing – legally – without a license. How? By taking advantage of Free Fishing Weekend, scheduled June 12-13. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the 600 water-access sites maintained by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

In addition, anglers will not need a Two Pole Endorsement to fish with two poles on thousands of lakes statewide, nor will they need a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement, otherwise required to fish for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River and its tributaries.

“Free Fishing Weekend is a great time to revive an old hobby or to introduce friends and family to fishing,” said Craig Burley, fish division manager for WDFW. “Adults can introduce kids to fishing on a wide variety of waters around the state.”

Anglers have been catching daily limits of trout at lakes for the past month, and many rivers will open to trout fishing June 5 throughout the state. Other options available on Free Fishing Weekend include:

Hatchery chinook salmon in Washington’s ocean waters.

Lingcod on the coast and Puget Sound.

Bass, crappie, perch and other warmwater fish biting in lakes throughout eastern Washington.

Shad and sturgeon on the Columbia River.

Spring chinook salmon on tributaries to the lower Columbia River.

Hatchery steelhead on the mainstem Columbia River and on rivers on the Olympic Peninsula.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead or sturgeon they catch.

Catch record cards and Fishing in Washington 2010/2011 sportfishing rules pamphlets are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state. See <http://wdfw.wa.gov/lic/vendors/vendors.htm> on the WDFW website to locate a license dealer.

The sportfishing rules pamphlet also is available on WDFW's website at

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>