

## **Record-setting payoff hooks pikeminnow anglers**

### **Local News**

Posted by: David Haviland

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Portland, OR - Lower, warmer water conditions are likely contributing to the bumper crop of pikeminnow caught during this year's Northern Pikeminnow Sport Reward Fishery Program. [Watch a video with fishing tips and program details.](#) Compared to this time last year, the 2010 season numbers are ahead by 30,000 fish. The program provides cash for catching pikeminnow, a large member of the minnow family, in the Columbia and Snake rivers. These voracious predators chow down on millions of young salmon and steelhead every year. Research shows that reducing the number pikeminnow helps salmon and steelhead survival. One lucky angler has broken the individual record for catching specially tagged fish that are worth up to \$500. He has hooked 12 tagged fish and earned \$6,000 in the process. Thousands of tagged fish are still available. With nearly two months to go in the season, another angler has earned more than \$51,000, nudging the record of nearly \$58,000 for individual earnings.

"People are making serious money with this program," said Russell Porter, senior program manager for the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. "And they're having fun fishing while helping save young salmon. I encourage folks to come out with their families and give it a try. Even beginners can earn cash catching pikeminnow." So far this season, 115,878 pikeminnow have been caught, with more than \$650,000 in payoffs to anglers. 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 started May 1 and was originally scheduled to close Sept. 30. Program managers have extended the season by 10 days this year, allowing rewards through Oct. 10, 2010. Some program stations will close and hours will change for others, so be sure to check out [www.pikeminnow.org](http://www.pikeminnow.org) or call 800-858-9015. Some of the best fishing is still ahead — September is typically the best month for catching pikeminnow in the Snake River. Since 1991, more than three 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. *The Bonneville Power Administration, headquartered in Portland, Ore., 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.*