

## **Hundreds of lakes open April 27 for biggest fishing day of the year**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA — Great trout fishing throughout Washington gets under way April 27, when several hundred lowland lakes — stocked with millions of fish — open for a six-month season. Hundreds of thousands of anglers are expected to turn out for the big day. Although many waterways are open year-round, the last Saturday in April marks the traditional start of the lowland lakes fishing season. “The start of the lowland lakes season is the biggest fishing day of the year,” said Phil Anderson, director of WDFW. “Lakes in every county are well-stocked, so families can keep travel costs down by enjoying good fishing close to home.” To participate, anglers must have a current Washington freshwater fishing license valid through March 31, 2014. Licenses can be purchased online at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov>; by telephone at 1-866-246-9453; or at hundreds of license dealers across the state. For details on license vendor locations, visit the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/vendors/>. Freshwater fishing licenses cost \$29.50 for resident adults 16 to 69 years old. Fifteen-year-olds can buy a license for \$10.25, and seniors 70 and older can buy an annual freshwater fishing license for \$7.50. Children 14 years of age and younger do not need a fishing license.

WDFW fish hatchery crews have been stocking 17 million trout and kokanee in lakes on both sides of the Cascades. Those fish include 2.3 million catchable trout, 160,000 jumbo trout weighing up to 11 pounds apiece, 52,000 triploid trout averaging 1½ pounds apiece, and millions of smaller trout that were stocked last year that have grown to catchable size. “Everyone has an excellent chance of catching some nice fish on opening weekend,” said Chris Donley, WDFW Inland Fish Program manager. “Whether fishing from shore or in a boat, casting fly lines or using simple spinning rods and bait, anglers should have great success.” Fish stocking details, by county and lake, are available in the annual stocking plan on WDFW’s website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/plants/statewide/>. Donley encourages anglers to also check the “Fish Washington” webpage at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/washington/> for details on lake fishing opportunities. The map-based webpage includes fishing information by county, lake and fish species throughout the state. Of more than 7,000 lakes, ponds and reservoirs in Washington, nearly 700 have WDFW-managed water-access sites. 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. Water access site locations can be found on WDFW’s website at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/water\\_access/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/water_access/). “With our biggest fishing crowds out on this opener, it’s especially important for everyone to be patient and safe at boat launches and docks,” Donley said. “Everyone in boats, and all children on shore, should use personal flotation devices.” Anglers parking at WDFW water-access sites are required to display on their vehicle the WDFW Vehicle Access Pass that is provided free with every annual fishing license purchased. The passes are transferable between two vehicles. Anglers who use Washington State Parks or Department of Natural Resource areas need a Discover Pass. For more information on the pass, visit <http://discoverpass.wa.gov/>. Before heading out, anglers should check fishing regulations on WDFW’s webpage at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>.