CENTRAL WASHINGTON OUTING
By Jack Whitney

Outing Leader: Carol Whitney
Assistant Leader: Jack Whitney, recreationman@iinet.com, 360-910-7867

For those who are planning to be at this outing, now is the time to make reservations. Let me know if you are going, where you will be staying, your email address, and cell phone numbers. I can be reached at email or phone given above.

Accommodations:
CSF members and friends can make motel reservations at the Best Western in Ephrata up until one week before the event and receive a group rate of $129.00 plus tax for either a double queen or a single king room.

To make a reservation, call 509-754-7111 and tell them that you are with the Clark Skamania Fly Fishers. Arrival is the afternoon of Sunday May 3 and departure is May 7. When you have picked your accommodations, please let Jack know.

If you are camping or hauling an RV, there is the Oasis Resort RV Park and Golf course just 2 miles south of the Best Western. The Oasis RV has full hookups, showers, tent sites, and an RV dump. Contact them at 509-754-5102, oasisrvandgolfcourse. There are other RV and camping sites north of Soap Lake. For more information about these other sites, call Jack at 360-910-7867.

Fishing: To learn about fishing in Grant County, go to bit.ly/2TaAI2N on your web browser.

Popular Fishing Places

Rocky Ford is just a hop and a skip south of Ephrata. If you haven’t been there before and need directions, get hold of someone who fishes it regularly. The upper section is the premiere spring creek fishing spot in Washington. You can’t wade it, but fish are within a casting length from the shore. Expect to see and maybe catch rainbows that run from 12 to 24 inches. These fish are a challenge as they are fished over 12 months out of the year. If you are up to the challenge, it is a great fishery according to those who fish it.

Blue Lake is north of Soap Lake right off highway 17. In the past we have used a pull-off at the south part of the lake and paddle towards the rock on the other side. At times this lake has had a good supply of rainbows that were planted in the fall. They were 12 to 14 inch in size and full of fight. Blue lake is heavily fished but it is also heavily planted.

Deep Lake is in the Sun Lakes State Park. You can have 50+ fish days there some days and on other days the lake will break your heart.

Coffee Pot Lake has been very popular in the past. It has selective gear rules and is a favorite lake for the Spokane fly fishermen. It has very nice size trout, bass, perch, and rattle snakes. You won’t be bored spending a day here. It is an hour drive from Ephrata. There is a small BLM campground at the boat launch that has a pit toilet but no water. Odessa is close to supply you with groceries and gas, but doesn’t have much in the way of restaurants and motels.
Pacific Lake is 10 miles north of Odessa. It dried in 1990, but it now gets enough water, and fish have been added by the WDFW.

Jameson Lake (south end) will only be open eight days before we start our outing. It has always been good when you find a school of trout. The wind direction seems to be different than the other lakes that we fish, so sometimes it is the preferred lake to kick a pontoon boat around. At the end of the day, be sure to visit the resort restaurant and order a piece of freshly baked pie with a scoop of ice cream on it. If you time it just right, the pie will still be warm from the oven. If you are going to Jameson Lake, check with your assistant leader for the best route to the south end.

Quincy Wildlife Area – Quincy, Stan Coffin and Burke Lakes

Quincy Lake has fished very well in the past. There are no special regulations on this lake so you are competing with the hook-and-kill crowd. Most of the fishing is done from the south shore, so launch your boat and go up the north shore to the arm. Start there and fish to the east end of the lake. At times we have caught rainbows that ran from 14 to 18 inches long.

Stan Coffin Lake is a good warm water lake with largemouth bass, bluegill, and channel catfish. See Roger Cox for directions to where the bluegills hang out. To find the bass, paddle to the east end of the lake. Last year, we were there at the end of the good bass fishing and those anglers that were familiar with the lake were doing very well.

Burke Lake I don’t know anyone who has fished Burke Lake, but past write-ups claimed that anglers have had good success fishing it in the spring.

Other Lakes to consider

Lake Lenore used to be the lake we always fished when there were Lahontan Cutthroats being caught that ran from 18 to 28 inches. Then, nevermore. The word was that a cell of foreign fish terrorists ascended onto the lake and conducted a covert commercial fishery. Still it is worth checking out, but I suspect what you will find is “Tis the wind and nothing more.”

Dry Falls Lake used to consistently produce good fishing. A few years ago, the lake had shrunk and fishing slowed down. Last year the lake was back up but those who fished it had a boring day. Still, it wouldn’t hurt to see if it has returned to its former self.

Jameson Lake (north end) is a bit more of a trip to get to as you have to go through Mansfield and then head south. Last year a member reported he had fished out of the north end campground and it was good. If you are going to try this lake, look over Grimes Lake on the way. It is not open until June 1, but WDFW states that it is loaded with 18 inch to over 20 inch Lahontan Cutthroats. Rumor has it that it is also loaded with rattlesnakes. It might be a fun place to try in June.

Additional Notes:
There are two good Mexican Restaurants in Ephrata: Don’s Restaurant in Soap Lake has reopened and is now called Lakeside Bistro.
Get a weather report with predicted wind speed and direction on the water you plan to fish.
Know how to use your fish finder. It is a waste of time casting to areas that don’t contain fish.
Windknot avoidance:
Renew your fishing license.
Bring your Discover pass.
Don’t get bit by a rattle snake.
Keep your rods inside your vehicle when traveling at highway speeds.