LAKE LENICE OUTING – APRIL 3-5 By Dan Green and Steve Jones

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Head-count: If you plan to attend this outing and catch some of these great fish, please send an email to Dan Green at dgreen066@gmail.com to help us get a fairly accurate head-count for the Saturday evening meal.

Why Go: The lake has hard-fighting, 12 to 20 inch, trophy rainbows. At times you catch one and wait and wait for a repeat performance; other times it’s red-hot action. These trout are the big attraction at Lake Lenice. Also, enjoy excellent camaraderie around the campfire, some stark and wild landscapes during the day, and breathtaking skies at night.

This is a great outing for all levels of experience. If you are new to lake fishing, there is plenty of help available. All you have to do is ask.

When: April 3-5, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Come when you can. Many members will be arriving earlier. Communal supper will be Saturday at about 6:00 PM with Wet Fly Hour at about 5:00 PM.

Meeting Point: We will be camping at the Lake Lenice (primitive) campground. The campground is accessed from the town of Beverly on HWY 243 (about 15 minutes south of Vantage on I-90). From Beverly head east on Lower Crab Creek Road (a gravel road heading east off the main road that may also show up on GPS/mapping programs as Road 17 SW). The CFS signs will guide you to the “campground” which is visible from Lower Crab Creek Road. It’s called a campground, but its really a gravel lot with a vault toilet on one end. The three lakes (Lenice, Mary, Nunley) sit at the western end of a dry coulee that stretches east toward Othello and Pullman. It can be windy. Fishermen are sometimes blown off the lake. Tents are sometimes problematic.
To access via Yakima and the Hanford Reservation, take Hwy 24 from Yakima and continue until you cross the Columbia River at Hanford which is about 50 miles. Immediately after crossing the Columbia, take a left on Hwy 243 and continue north through small towns of Desert Aire and Mattawa, and then to Beverly. Turn right on Crab Creek Road and follow as above.

Motels: Rooms are available 20 minutes away at the Desert Aire Motel and Restaurant, 509-932-4300, in the town of Desert Aire, a few miles south of Beverly on Hwy 243 or in Vantage, WA, at the Vantage Riverston Resort and Motel, 509-856-2800, with a restaurant and campground. Also, there is a state of Washington campground with amenities at Vantage.

Communal Meal: Saturday evening will be a get-together and meal starting with Wet Fly Hour at about 5:00 PM. The club will provide the main dish. If your last name begins with A to M, please bring a side dish. If your name begins with N to Z, please bring an appetizer. All other last names, you don’t need to bring anything. Please bring a beverage or beverages of your choice and chairs for each of your party. You are on your own for all other meals.

Fishery: There are three lakes at this location – Lenice, Nunnally, and Merry. We tend to fish Lenice, although members have pulled nice fish out of the other lakes as well. It is a medium size lake and has provided good fishing in the past. The lake has a good population of trout, and there are plenty of different types of lake areas: reeds, shoals, shallows, and some deep spots. There is a lot of variety for all of us to try many fishing methods. Flies: Chironomid patterns are very popular and productive. Examples are Chromies, Red and Blacks, Frostbites, Zebra Midges, Disco Midges, Bloodworms, Ice Cream Cones, Brassies and probably a couple dozen more I've never heard of. The old standbys Woolley Bugger or micro leeches work when sunk deep and retrieved. Hare’s Ear, Pheasant Tails and other popular wet flies can be effective.

Also at times dry flies such as Griffith’s Gnat or Adams or emergers such as a WD - 40 have worked well.
Methods: You will not find wading opportunities at Lake Lenice. Some sort of watercraft is essential. Kayaks, pontoon boats, and car-top boats are all good options. Float tubes are not safe at this time of year due to the ice-cold water.

One important note: The lake is a little less than half a mile (over 2000 feet) from the campground area and requires you to carry/ handwheel/ hand-trailer your boat from the campground to the lake. We do leave our boats at the lake overnight; they seem pretty safe there.

Equipment: A mid-weight fishing rod with full-sinking, intermediate and floating lines are needed as conditions dictate. We recommend a 6-wt rod to handle the wind and the occasional pig. Pack lines, leaders, and tippets for sinking and floating lines. We have had 4x and 5x tippets break off with larger fish, so be ready to change leaders and tippets as conditions demand.

If you are new to fishing lakes, here’s an approach you might use to get started: Rig and carry two rods when fishing lakes such as Lenice. One rod, say a 6-weight, with a full-sinking line and a short leader (3 to 4 foot) tapering to 3x or 4x, then a leech pattern such as a woolly bugger, or a chironomid, or a streamer. Use this rod when there is no surface activity. The other rod, say a 4 or 5-weight, rig with a floating line and a long leader, say ten feet, ending with 5x or 6x tippet. For this rig, flies can be either emergers or dry flies. Try this rod when there is surface activity.

Another alternative with the floating line, popular at Lenice, is to put a small bobber along the length of the leader so that you can slide it up or down. Then tie on a small, weighted chironomid fly. The fly will sink, the bobber will float, and when the fish hits the fly, the bobber will go down and you set the hook. You can adjust the depth of the fly by sliding the bobber up or down on the leader. You will need to have a long leader, 9 -10 feet or even longer, depending on the depth.

If you don’t own two rods, don’t worry. But, if at all possible, bring both a full-sinking line and a floating line. If you have questions about gear, contact Dan at dgreen066@gmail.com

Boating Equipment: If boating, you are required to carry a life preserver, (a PFD if you please), for each person on your boat, including pontoon boats. You should consider a PFD that you can wear full-time in comfort while on the water. Also, you must carry a whistle or other signaling device. It is highly recommended that you carry a suitable anchor and line. It gets windy, and when it does, you may need to anchor. Internal combustion engines are prohibited on these lakes, but electric motors are allowed.

Weather and Clothing: Plan on cold and windy and we might be pleasantly surprised by better weather. Clothing layers are essential. Evenings and nights will be cold; make sure your camp clothing and bedding will keep you warm.

Fishing Regs: All three lakes are under Selective Gear Rules.

Required to park or camp at the Lenice parking lot is EITHER a state of Washington Discover Pass OR a WDFW Vehicle Access Pass.

Please join us April 3-5 on Lenice Lake.