

# Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb - April 2020

## **STAY ALERT DEER MIGRATION**

**CalTrans and the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife** urge drivers to be alert during the start of deer migration into their summer environment. Points to consider when traveling. 1) Be extra alert when driving near areas wildlife frequent, streams, rivers and reduce speed so you can react safely. 2) Pay extra attention during the morning and evening when wildlife are often most active. 3) If you see an animal on or near the road know that another may be following. 4) Don't litter, trash odors attract animals to roadways. 5) Pay attention to road shoulders and watch for movement or reflecting eyes. Slow down and honk your horn if you see an animal on or near the road.

## **Weather Conditions - Spring storms**

Winter in the high country hung on by finger nails with scattered spring showers and a dusting of snow at the upper elevations. The Sierra motto is if you don't like the weathers just wait 10 minutes and it will change. The regular opening weekend that was postponed to June 1st was beautiful and anglers would have been happy with the conditions. Not many times do you get that kind of weather at high elevations for that weekend.

Most lakes above 8500 foot elevation still wear a neckline of ice with some open water around the edges, inlets and outlets. Stay alert and stay safe.

## **Fly-Fishing Apps**

### **"Fish Head Nervous Water Apps LLC, \$6.99, iPhone, Android"**

Not only the best app for steelhead rivers, but surf, and also helpful in most any trout-fishing situation around the country. It has a river directory with flows and where and when to find the best windows of action. It's handy when you're actually packing to go fishing; it's quick, organized with the most pertinent information available.

### **Yampa411 (High Bar Digital, \$6.99, iPhone, Android)**

Yampa411 provides seriously specific details for a single fishery. The app was developed by a Colorado fly fisher Ben Russell who put a lot of time and effort into seeing that every detail is accurate and relevant. If you fish Colorado or plan to this might be the best guide around.

### **Orvis Fly Fishing Green Mountain digital, FREE, iPhone, Android**

- This is the grand-daddy of fly-fishing apps that is packed with tons of general interest fly-fishing news, advice, discussion, and entertainment you'll never be able to digest it all. It has Tom Rosenbauer's podcasts; casting videos for every stream, flats, or surf situation; knot-tying instruction; fishing reports; up-to-date news feeds; fly pattern descriptions and recommendations with built-in links so you can buy flies you're interested in. It's sort of geared toward beginners, but its solid information and we could all use a little tune-up now and again. --Loren Elliott

### **"The Pocket Fisherman by Magic Mobile"**

This app will help you find out more about the specific species of fish, as well as regulations and records of 49

Continental states regarding fishing in their deep waters. The app also comes with a GPS map that tracks the nearest tackle shops and marinas. You can easily identify the fish by either searching for its name or looking at the gallery of fish images. It's the most comprehensive fisherman app so far as it comes with a summary of each type of fish, description of appearance, weight, natural habitat, and its average length.

## **Legislative News:**

*March 6, 2020 - The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) released its Statewide R3 Implementation Strategy. Notably, the Strategy reverses past DFW objections to a 365 day fishing and hunting license option as well as an auto-renewal option, now endorsing it, improving the chances for the eventual passage of Assembly Bill 1387.*

*R3 stands for Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation. R3 plans are meant to bolster falling fishing and hunting participation rates. License and permit sales are fundamental to wildlife management, critical sources of funding for the DFW.*

*This development has supporters of a 365-day license cautiously optimistic. As the sponsor of Assembly Bill 1387 (Wood), the California Sportfishing League could not be more pleased that the Department has unveiled an R3 Plan that recommends a 365-day fishing license," Said Marko Mlikotin, executive director of the CSL.*

*"This achievement sends a strong signal to the California State Legislature that there is a real plan to reform the state's antiquated and costly licensing program, and this was accomplished with the hard work of many fine hunting and angler organizations.*

*The DFW R3 Strategy documents lay out several Department priorities. Among them, it seeks to shift license pricing and product mix authority from the Legislature to the California Fish and Game Commission by 2023, a move many fishing and hunting advocates favor in hopes it will improve license marketing and rationalize price-setting.*

*"Finally, there is a real plan to make the great outdoors even more accessible to future generations of Californians."*

## **CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

A comprehensive evaluation of the sport fishing regulations is underway. CDFW has worked to develop a process to revise sport fishing regulations guided by five tenets:

1. Maintain or increase angling opportunity;
2. Improve regulatory consistency across waters;
3. Align sport fishing regulations with CDFW's current fisheries management goals and objectives;
4. Reduce complexity and confusion; and
5. Protect the resources.

CDFW is scheduled to submit the final regulatory package to the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) in

June 2020. The FGC will consider the proposed regulations and take public input at its meetings in June, August, and October of 2020. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Notice Hearing: June 24-25, Santa Ana
- Discussion Hearing: August 19-20, Fortuna
- Adoption Hearing: October 14-15, Oakland

The 45-day formal public comment period will begin soon after the Notice Hearing, around July 1. Additional information will be placed on this page as it becomes available. Visit the [FGC website](https://fgc.ca.gov/) to follow meeting dates and agendas (<https://fgc.ca.gov/>)

#### **Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):**

**Fish Planting Schedule - Dear California Anglers,**  
*California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has removed the Fish Plant Schedule from their website in order to slow the spread of COVID-19 by preventing public crowding at water bodies. Fishing is still open and CDFW will continue stocking trout at locations where social distancing by anglers and physical distancing of Hatchery Staff can be maintained. All Fishing in the City stocking events have been canceled through April 30th. We ask that members of the public avoid interacting with Hatchery Staff while fish are being stocked, and to please continue to implement social distancing. PLEASE NOTE: Local CDFW offices will not have access to the Fish Plant Schedule. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.*

*Updated trout releases will be on their web site (<http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FishPlants/>) or call their specific region (Inland Deserts 855.887.1275)*

#### **Feather River Salmon Evacuation pays dividends**

Oroville - In February 2017, damage to the Oroville Dam's spillways prompted the evacuation of more than 180,000 people living downstream along the Feather River. The raging muddy waters also triggered an emergency decision to relocate millions of young salmon from the Feather River Hatchery to the Thermalito Annex Hatchery to be raised and held until river water conditions improved.

Most, if not all, of the young salmon would have otherwise died when mud from the raging river overwhelmed the hatchery waters.

About 2 million spring-run Chinook and 5 million fall-run Chinook were evacuated during the two-day floor event. Those fish survived and were later released to the wild - helping fuel a record-class salmon harvest in the ocean two years later.

Last year, most of the rescued salmon had matured in the ocean and were ready for their migration home to the Feather River. Their survival helped power strong ocean fisheries with one of the largest commercial catches in decades. According to data collected by the DFW, approximately 272,000 salmon were harvested in the commercial fishery along with a catch of 88,500 in the

recreation ocean fishery, while returns to the Feather River basin exceeded 70,000 in 2019.

On March 20, 2017, the first salmon to be released after the evacuation were 1 million state and federally listed threatened spring-run Chinook salmon. They were released successfully into the Feather River. In all, a total of 2 million spring-run Chinook and 5 million fall-run Chinook were released.

Their work did not go unnoticed. Team members received a letter of appreciation from then Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom, and were later presented with the DFW Director's "Team Award" for their ingenuity and dedicated work to save the salmon and steelhead eggs.

**CDFW has an updated free downloadable app for**  
Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations application at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/regulations>. It tracks your current GPS location and will tell you the regulations of the water where you are standing and regulations for waters within a designated area or approximately a five-mile radius.

#### **Phase-Out of Printed Regulations Books**

As part of a broader effort by the department to go paperless, CDFW is in the process of transitioning to online regulations books and will be decreasing the number of printed books shipped to license agents and CDFW offices in 2019 and beyond. The cost to print and ship regulations books is significant, and money saved will be put toward fish and wildlife conservation. This year's booklets will also be returning to the smaller, mostly black-and-white format.

**CDFW's License Sales Office** - CDFW's new License Sales Office in Fairfield will open to the public Friday, June 15 at 8 a.m. Licenses can also be purchased anytime online ([www.ca.wildlifelicense.com/InternetSales](http://www.ca.wildlifelicense.com/InternetSales)) The new address is 2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100, Fairfield, CA 94534, (707) 428-2002.

#### **AT THE BENCH**

Will return in May - So keep your fingers nimble and tying.

#### **Fishing Report**

##### **Open Waters thru May 31st - Mono, Inyo, Alpine**

Below is the link that provides exact waters that are currently open.

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=178544&inline>

All waters currently open to trout fishing will remain open. All of these waters have a reduced bag limit of 2 trout and a possession limit of 4 trout, except the Owens River from Pleasant Valley Dam downstream to the footbridge at the lower end of Pleasant Valley Campground. Has a 0 bag limit and only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used.

The Owens River, Section 7.50(b)(134)(E) From footbridge at lower end of Pleasant Valley Campground

east (downstream) 3.3 miles along Chalk Bluffs Road to the redwood sport fishing regulations sign, is currently open to fishing with a 0 bag limit.

**LOWER OWENS** Few reports as guides and locals are not getting out much. Flow is  
<http://wsoweb.ladwp.com/Aqueduct/realtime/norealtime.htm>

LADWP has closed access to the Owens River Gorge and the climber's parking lots on Chalk Bluff Road.  
Recommended Flies: DRIES: Large dry with #22-26 midge emergers and adults, Hi-Vis Baetis #16-20, Stimulator #6-10. NYMPH: Pheasant Tail #14-22, Hares Ear #16-22, Zebra Midge #18-22, Olive Hot Spot Jig #18, Barr's Flashback BWO #16-18, Jigged hares ear #12, B/H Prince #10-14. STREAMERS: Woolly Bugger Olive & Black #10-12, Mini Sculpin Olive & Black #10-12.

**ROCK CREEK LAKE** - Trout season opens June 1, 2020.

**UPPER OWENS – Flow is 67cfs as of 4/28 above the Confluence.** Fishing conditions are good - Very few reports as guides and locals are not getting out much.  
DRIES: Stimulator #16-18, Griffiths Gnat #20-24, Para Adams #20-24, Para Extended Body BWO #20-22, Elk Hair Caddis #18-20, Brook's Sprout Baetis #18-22.  
NYMPHS: Barr's Uncased Caddis #14-16, Zebra Midge #18-22, WD-40 black #18-24, Prince Nymph #12-16, Red Copper John #14-16, San Juan Worm #12-14, Egg Patterns #12-16, Pheasant Tail #18-22, Tungsten Peacock #14-18, Tungsten Jig Baetis #18-20,  
STREAMERS: Shock Collar Leech #10, Woolly Bugger White, Olive & Brown #6-14

**CROWLEY LAKE** – The lake is really full now. DWP has not taken the level down. Trout season opens June 1, 2020.

**HOT CREEK** - Fair to Good, showing 22cfs as of 4/28. Very few reports as the guides and locals are not getting out much.  
DRIES: Stimulators #16-18, R.P. Emerger #22, Real Midge #24, Stillborn Midge #20-22, Extended Body BWO #16-20, CDC Baetis Dun #20-24.  
NYMPHS: Bottom Roller Phsyco #10-14, T Midge #24, Zebra Midge #18-22, Grey/Olive Scud #16-18, Medallion Midge #22-24, Harroup's Surface Emerger Brown/Olive #16-18, Tungsten Phsyco Baetis #18-20, Tailwater Scud Tungsten #14-18.  
STREAMERS: BH Bopp Leech Olive & Brown #12-16, Woolly Bugger Olive & Brown #12-10

**CONVICT LAKE** – Trout season opens June 1, 2020

**MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN SAN JOAQUIN**  
Trout opener starts June 1, 2020

**JUNE LOOP** - Trout season opens June 1, 2020.  
All lakes thawed early March.

**LUNDY LAKE** – Trout opener starts June 1, 2020

Lake thawed in early March.

**VIRGINIA LAKES** – Trout season opens June 1, 2020  
Still frozen with a small amount of water at the outlet.  
All lakes are frozen but have a lot of dark bluish spots.

**BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR** - Trout season opens June 1, 2020. The Res is full and will be lowered anticipating run-off especially with the amount of rain and snow that's been hitting the high country during late March and April.

**EAST WALKER** – The order for postponement states that waters that are open now will remain open but with regular winter regulations to remain in effect, this means that the East Walker and the winter section of the West Walker will still be open for catch and release, artificial barbless hooks.

The East Walker is running at about 576 cfs 4/28 and the flows have been going up and down this past week but it hasn't hurt the fishing much. Not too many reports from the river lately but the ones reported have been pretty good. There has started to be a little bit of streamer action and even a fish caught here and there on dries but it remains mainly nymphing. The weather is getting warmer so it's good to be out there a little earlier than during the winter and there has been some good action late in the evening as well.

Patterns to try: WD-40, rainbow warrior, scud, top secret midge, Psycho Prince, soft hackle, Squirmy Wormy, San Juan worm, Zebra Midge, Red-headed Stepchild, Silver Streak, Flashback Emerger, Zuddler, Moal leech, Seal Bugger, Sculpzilla, Chubby Chernobyl, Stimulator, BWO, Blue Dun, Parachute Adams.

**HONEYWELL POND** - We haven't had anyone on the pond lately but it should be pretty good out there. The Ranch has an aquaculture license to operate so it is not affected by the trout opener delay.

**SCEIRINE RANCH** – The ranch has been very good lately and is starting to get booked up earlier than normal so if you want to spend some time down there be sure to call ahead of time to see if there's any room on the calendar. They're still hitting some stoneflies on the ranch as well as most of the usual nymphs and midges. Courtesy of Ken's Sporting Goods

**TIOGA PASS** closed from Crane Flat to 4 miles east of the US 395 (County has plowed to the Gate and waiting for the Park Service to plow their side.

**KIRMAN LAKE** - Trout season opens June 1, 2020.

**WEST WALKER** – Trout season is open with a Zero bag limit catch and release. River is running at 576cfs as of 5/28 with flat water just below the bridge for about half a mile starting at the BRIDGE with a lot of rough water then flat water near Chris Flat campground. I drove along the river on the 23rd and saw only two

anglers trying their luck. With all the rain, snow and light hail this past week the West is again high and dirty right now it looks like Chocolate Mousse. The Sierra District general regulations (5 fish limit/10 in possession) will be in affect Starting June 1st.

**Check with Inyo National Forest for road and trail closures in Mammoth Lakes, White Mountains, Buttermilk and Mt. Whitney.**

**Tioga Pass (SR 120 West) Closed**

**Roads that are currently open:**

SR 120 East from Mono Lake to Benton is open (watch out for deer and wild horses!)

Burcham Flat road

Green Creek road

Dunderberg Meadows road (almost done)

**Roads currently closed:**

SR 270 to Bodie State Historic Park

Reds Meadow road to Devils Postpile

Aurora Canyon road to Masonic to Bodie

**2020 CalTrans Road construction**

**Olancho-Cartago 4-lane project update US 395**

Caltrans is in the final stages of design and right-of-way acquisition for the project which will upgrade 12.6 miles of the current two-lane highway to a four-lane access-controlled expressway. The new alignment will begin four miles south of Olancho to four miles north of Cartago and will close the gap between the existing four-lane sections to the north and the south. The new expressway will feature wider shoulders, a class-III bike route, a non-motorized multi-use undercrossing, and intersection improvements that will benefit pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

Some preconstruction activities beginning soon include utility verification and relocation, vegetation removal and/or relocation, staking the new alignment, installing desert tortoise exclusion fence, and other preliminary items. This \$83 million-dollar project is jointly funded by Inyo, Mono counties' Transportation Commissions, Kern County of Governments, and Caltrans with State Transportation Improvement Program funds and a tentative completion date of late 2023.

**Entertainment for the house-bound weary!**

*A match made in Heaven by Peter Holtet*

A few years ago, I had a female colleague who had been through a rather messy divorce, but now she was getting back on her feet, and she was trying to find a new man. She told me she had been on the Internet, which had brought her a sorry collection of geeks, pervs and spongers. She asked me what to do.

She was a fine looking woman with a nice personality, but I already have a wife and I am very attached to her--there is a bag limit of one, as everyone knows. I told her that I thought that she should join a fishing club. She looked at me with disbelief, saying that I must be joking.

"Not at all", I answered. "Where else would you meet a nice selection of eligible men in a safe environment. Most of them will be divorced, but that shouldn't bother you at all." "I don't even know how to fish", she said, her disbelief lessening.

"That will be the least of your problems. The guys in the club will be falling over each other to help you."

"But everybody knows what fishing guys are like. They're smelly, they're away all the time, and they have one-track minds. What would I want with someone like that?"

"Well, there is no getting away from the smell, but you can get used to it. Besides, it helps to keep off the competition. As for being away, you can go with him or at least you'll know where he is, and if you cannot provide him with an alternative track from time to time, you don't know how to strut your stuff." I could see that she was starting to get interested.

"How will I know which one to choose? In waders all men look more or less the same."

"There are a couple things to look for and also some to walk away from. Go on a weekend trip with the boys. You want to look for the guy who does the cooking. And if he also brings a clean sheet and a toothbrush, he's the one you want. The guy who only brings one messy fly box and always has to borrow things that he should have thought to bring himself is the sort you want to steer clear of."

"How will I know if he is a keeper?" she asked, now definitely into the jargon.

"There is no legal minimum size and no closed season, so you'll just have to listen to your heart. However, don't forget to use your brain and your past experience. I have to warn you that catch-and-release is generally frowned upon in a club context."

"Will I have to pretend to love fishing?"

"No, my dear. You will never have to pretend. And no woman ever has to ask, 'does my bum look big in these waders?' The question is completely superfluous."

"I'll think it over. Thanks for the advice."

However, shortly afterwards she left for another job and I lost touch with her. I can't conceal that I was curious as to how she had got on, but since we had no mutual acquaintances, I might never have known, had I not run into her on the corner of some secret coast line, fishing rod in hand, dressed in her full fish-fighting regalia. She was on her own. We chatted about the fishing for a few minutes, as I would have done with any other angler on a chance meeting, but eventually I couldn't help myself any longer and I blurted out, "How did you make out? Did you take my advice? Did you manage to snag a man you were after?"

"Oh yes", she sighed, looking at the horizon, "snagged the chairman of the fishing club. A lovely man he was. And not too smelly. He taught me how to make a reversed snake-roll-cast. He cooked like a chef at a Michelin star restaurant. So sad, really; I had to let him

go in the end. He was taking up far too much of the time  
I wanted to spend fishing."

Note: I can only sympathize with her, too many waters  
and not enough time to fish them all, husbands do  
require a little time, darn it! You just don't get a good  
one without the other. cj

See you on the water; keep 'em wet CJ 20/4