

Fishing Guide

Weaverville & Big Bar Ranger Stations - Shasta-Trinity National Forest



Lakes and streams in the Weaverville and Big Bar areas provide excellent opportunities for every type of angling enthusiast. Fishing opportunities are numerous and await anyone willing to make an effort to seek them out. Use this guide as a general introduction to fishing in this area.

The Lakes

Trinity Lake

This is the largest man made reservoir in this area. It is 16,400 acres in size and 465 feet deep at maximum capacity. There are several Forest Service boat ramps and campgrounds available.

The previous State record smallmouth bass and the current State record brown bullhead were caught in Trinity Lake. This lake is designated by the Department of Fish and Game as a “Trophy Black Bass” lake. Trout fishing is good at the mouths of large tributaries in the Spring and Summer.

Fishing opportunities are excellent throughout the area for smallmouth and largemouth bass, catfish, Chinook salmon, kokanee, rainbow and brown trout. Just below Lewiston Dam is the Fly Stretch of the Trinity River; a world class fly-fishing area.

Lewiston Lake

This constant level reservoir is located just downstream from Trinity Dam and north of the town of Lewiston. It is 610 acres in size and 70 feet deep at the dam. There are Forest Service campgrounds along the western edge of the lake and one boat launching ramp (Pine Cove) and one undeveloped launch area (Coots Roost) available.

Rainbow trout are abundant. Brown and Brook trout are present. The speed limit for boats is 10 miles per hour. The water is very cold; excellent for fly fishing, and a good lake for a float tube.

Where are they? Bass are found around rock outcroppings and shallow areas with some underwater vegetation. Trout can be found near stream inlets. Trout tend to like cooler water, while bass prefer warmer water. The depth that fish are found at depends on the water temperature and clarity.

Bait and techniques. Bass will take practically any bait resembling live food: crickets, plastic worms, plugs, jigs and night crawlers. In deeper water, trout and salmon can

be caught mostly by trolling. Shore fishing should be done where water is fairly deep. Fish can be caught on night crawlers, spinners and a variety of dry and wet flies.

Wilderness lakes and streams

The Trinity Alps Wilderness has over 100 glacially carved lakes. There are three species of trout that might be found in these high country lakes: rainbow trout, eastern brook trout and brown trout. Many lakes are regularly stocked with fingerling rainbow trout and/or eastern brook trout. It is advisable to allow plenty of time to hike in, set up camp, and still have a couple of days for fishing.

Bait and techniques for fishing the lakes and streams in the backcountry. The trout in these lakes can be caught using a variety of baits. They will take anything from lures to live bait such as grasshoppers. Fly fishing with dry flies has also produced some good sized fish. Fishing is best in the early morning or late afternoon. Fishing in the inlet or outlet streams to these lakes has also yielded some good sized rainbows.

Trinity River

Species present

In the Trinity River above Trinity Lake, there are Rainbow and Brown Trout. In the Trinity River below Lewiston Dam, there will be Steelhead (summer and winter runs), Chinook Salmon (spring and fall runs), Coho Salmon, and Brown Trout.

Seasons

- Trinity River and tributaries above Lewiston Dam. Last Saturday in April to November 15. Bag limit: 5 per day, 10 in possession.
- Trinity River from 250 feet below Lewiston Dam to Old Lewiston Bridge. April 1 through September 15, artificial flies only with barb less hooks. Bag limit: 0 trout and 0 salmon.
- For the remainder of the Trinity River downstream to the confluence with the Klamath River, see current California Fish and Game Regulations. **Note:** all Coho Salmon and Wild Steelhead **MUST** be released.

Access

The Trinity River above Trinity Lake is easily accessed from Highway 3. The fly fishing section between Lewiston

Dam and the Old Lewiston Bridge is well roaded in and above the town of Lewiston. The lower Trinity River is generally paralleled by Highway 299 West.

Bait and Techniques for fishing the Trinity River

Salmon roe, tuna balls and spinners all seem to be effective in the river. Bait seems to be more effective when the water in the river is clear and the fish more easily spooked. Deep holes with good cover often provide for the best fishing. Vary your presentation and baits to maximize your chances of landing a fish. Most of all, experiment!

A Few Reminders

- Be sure to have a valid California fishing license
- Know the local regulations regarding fishing, tackle and boating. Check the California Department of Fish and Game fishing regulations booklet for current, up to date information; *especially for the Trinity River and its tributaries.*
- Make sure to clean up your fishing area before you leave. *If you carry it in - Carry it out!*
- If fishing in the wilderness, make sure and pick up your free wilderness and campfire permits at either the Weaverville or Big Bar Ranger Stations, or at the Forest Service Supervisor's Office in Redding.

Catch and Release Fishing

There is nothing like landing a nice fish for dinner, but sometimes it is necessary to release the fish you've just caught. Here are some pointers to help make sure the fish survives

1. Time is critical. Land the fish as quickly as possible and release it quickly. A fish played too long can be too exhausted to recover.
2. Keep the fish in the water as much as possible. Even a few inches of water can be helpful.
3. Handle the fish as little as possible. Make sure your hands are wet before handling the fish. Be gentle. Do not squeeze the fish or handle it by the gill covers.
4. Remove the hook as rapidly as possible using needle nose pliers. If deeply hooked, cut the leader and leave the hook in.
5. Revive an exhausted fish by holding it upright in the water and moving it forward and backward, forcing water through the gills. When the fish begins to swim freely release it so that it can challenge another angler on another day.

Species of fish available in Trinity and Lewiston Lakes

Species	Trinity Lake	Lewiston Lake
Small mouth bass	P	
Large mouth bass	P	
Kokanee salmon	P	P
Rainbow trout	P	P
Brown trout	P	P
Brook trout		P
Catfish	P	
Chinook salmon	P	

P = Present

All Are Welcome

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