

NEWS RELEASE

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION



Gifford Pinchot National Forest

10600 N.E. 51st Circle, Vancouver, WA 98682

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/giffordpinchot>
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/mountstheles>

Contact: Chris Strebig 360-891-5005
Ken Sandusky 360-891-5007

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Get Outdoors and Catch your Limit of Fun

VANCOUVER, WA – Thousands of people spent two amazing days on June 11 and 18 with the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and various partners at a series of events meant to help kids and their families learn about fishing and outdoor activities.

National Get Outdoors Day – Vancouver 2011 attracted over 2000 visitors to the Vancouver Water Resources Education Center for fun in the sun learning about fishing, disc golf, hurling, bow and arrows, cooking outdoors, hiking, biking and much, much more.

Gifford Pinchot National Forest Recreation Program Manager Robin Rose who helped lead planning of the event in cooperation with the City of Vancouver and other partners said, “Our Third Annual National Get Outdoors Day in Vancouver, Washington was truly outstanding! I am pleased that so many families were able to attend this year and enjoy boating on the river, fishing, the climbing wall and the other forty plus booths of great information and fun outdoor activities.”

Forest Service employees from the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and Mt. Hood National Forest spoke with visitors about what they can do to enjoy their public lands.

Gifford Pinchot National Forest Supervisor Janine Clayton spent the day enjoying the event as a visitor. “We are very pleased the community was so excited about coming out to see what they can do on their public lands,” Clayton said. “I am happy we could participate in this great event with all our invaluable partners. Even the weather cooperated so everybody could share the wonderful natural landscape in which we are all so privileged to live.”

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest also provided a fire water tank with trout for kids to catch and take home for dinner. Young people got to catch fish from the tank with some waiting due to this activity’s popularity. While they waited, they had the opportunity to answer questions to win a fishing rod, one of many donated prizes for the day.

Partners are instrumental in everything the Gifford Pinchot National Forest does, but we could not do any of these exciting events without the help of local organizations and communities. The Gifford Pinchot and Vancouver Branch NAACP Urban Youth were also integral to the success of GO Day, as well as the free fishing days.

"The fish derbies were a great success once again and really brought the local communities together in a unique and positive community-based way," said Forest Fisheries Biologist Dave Hu. "It is nice that so many partners, such as WDFW, really step up to contribute to our fishing message over the years. Our fishery program is very appreciative of our partners' energy and leadership, as well as that of our own invasive species, recreation, law enforcement, engineering and administration staff who make these events bigger and better every year."

Girl Scout Troop #40337 was very important in the successful kid's fishing event at Cowlitz Valley, along with Lewis PUD, Lewis County Weed Board. Here kids had a chance participate in numerous activities as well as catch fish, some as big as 6.5 pounds according to Cowlitz Valley District Fisheries Biologist Ken Wieman.

"Six pounds might be pouring buck-shot down his belly, but there were some big fish caught at Merwin also," said Forest Natural Resources Data Steward Ken Meyer about the biggest fish caught at the free fishing event at Mount St. Helens. "

At Merwin Lake day-use area in Ariel Washington, 345 kids were registered to fish in a netted-off section of the lake for rainbow trout. They also enjoyed free food, t-shirt and fish-print painting, storytelling, educational information and a whole lot more.

The Mt. Adams Ranger District Kid's Free Fishing Derby occurred on Saturday, June 18 from 9 a.m. until noon in Guler County Park in Trout Lake, WA. WDFW provided over 2000 fish for the day's event.

Skamania County Noxious Weed Control Program and GPNF Invasives program co-hosted a booth that engaged the public on invasive species, including the dreaded Zebra and Quagga mussel, with information and interactive activities.

Other partners from USFWS helped clean fish and provide educational activities and representatives from the White Salmon Steelheaders, Skamania County Sheriff and Northwest Service Academy also helped to complement the day's activities. 250 kids registered for the day.

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