

April 4, 2011

Spring is actually here according to the calendar, and it is starting to feel a little closer every day. The rivers are getting muddier, and they were spilling water over Chief Joseph Dam Sunday. Steelhead has closed for 2011 see the final report below. I do not fish as much for any one species, and do a lot of fun fishing until Salmon starts on July 1. I guess I can also get the yard half way in shape, so I can ignore it until next spring.

Steelhead,

The last couple of years the March bite has been really spectacular for main stem Columbia Steelhead. Just prior to and after my last report the bite turned on and went absolutely crazy. Excluding the last day of the 2010-11 season we averaged just over 13 Steelhead boated per trip. A few of those trips were half days. To me that is fun fishing and great catching no matter where you are. One of my clients was fortunate to catch a hugely powerful 10lb hatchery hen. She took 140 yards of line to the reel backing, and I had to chase her with the boat. Had we not been in a boat she either would have spooled him or broke off. There was no doubt in my mind it was a 15-16lb monster until the first time we could see her. I still chuckle thinking about the client and I looking at each other in total disbelief as she took off again. I asked if he saw what I saw, and he just said "has to be tail hooked". After netting the fish she was clearly fair hooked, and they say hatchery fish are weaker than non-hatchery. Over all for March we held very steady at about 40% of the fish being hatchery keepers. Even though it was about two weeks late (Sound familiar for last year?) March came through as predicted.

The last day of the season is a story in itself. I did not have any clients scheduled, and a couple others just could not swing a mid-week trip. I was going to go anyway, so I called a couple friends to see if they wanted to go. Finally they committed to actually going the night before, and one offered to use his boat. I was all for just bringing myself and fishing. One of the people had never fished for or caught a Steelhead before. The four of us leave the launch at 6:30am for the last day. We are not very long before the first Steelhead is boated. A short time later we get our first double, and I send off the obligatory photo/text to torment a few people who could not go. We are getting a pretty consistent number of Steelhead to the boat, and everyone is catching quite a few. We are getting some keepers and they are in good shape with some decent size. Add in the missed hits, and lost fish we were continually active and having a great time.

The best drift was like it was a video game. We had four bobbers in a row about 10 yards apart, and they start going down one after the other. The second bobber went down just as the first fish was hooked, then the third (mine) before the second was hooked, then the third and I missed, then before I could get reeled in to re-cast, the fourth is down and fish hooked. I tried but could not get another bite before time to start netting the first fish. So leave it to me to mess up the one chance at a QUAD I have ever seen or had. Regardless we boat the second triple for me this year. So the day goes with multiple doubles, and one guy leaves at 2:00pm for a HS Softball practice (coach), and at that time we were at 27 Steelhead for the day! We take some pictures drop him off back at the launch and head out. We are still catching a consistent number of fish. I have to leave at 4:00pm for Softball practice also (I coach U16 league team), and we were then at 32 Steelhead boated for the day!

I called to check how the day ended when practice is over, and the last two guys were done and cleaning fish at 7:00pm. The total for the day is 46 (yes 46) Steelhead boated with 10 keepers. Mother Nature allowed us to have the day of a lifetime on the last day of the 2010-11 season. We also told the first timer Steelhead fishing is...well.....has never been this good ever. I don't know if he believed us or not, but it was an amazing day of fishing for sure.

\*\*\* Please call to get your Salmon trip reserved. We are already starting to book dates for this upcoming season. \*\*\*

Rufus Woods, Chelan.

Both are staying pretty much the same as before without a huge increase in fish being caught. Both are still producing fish on a fairly consistent basis for those who have a little experience on both waters.

NOTICE:

Please see the fishing report on Triploids. There is some important information all anglers need to know about how these fish are damaging the Salmon and Steelhead fishery.

The Triangle Shell (Best Place in the area for fishing equipment and information) is now the Triangle Exxon. The brand/name change was not the owners choice, and you can be assured nothing has changed other then the name.

Ron