

# Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

## Fishing tip:

*The Eastern Sierra weather pattern this past winter was similar to 2005 with one minor exception, that the snow pack was higher over the crest. We were lulled by the 23 days of warmth from early January into February when the big blast hit the Sierra, and hit again with a record snowfall in March (20 days). April had been unstable with high winds, snow, rain and it finally started warming by the 18<sup>th</sup>, only to get a blast of snowy-rain just before the opener. Warming is in the forecast and I'm ready for spring.*

*Why do we rely on a furry rodent to predict our last vestiges of winter? I've purchased a hunting license for "large rodents" and Punky Phil better not show his lard butt next February, because I'll be ready.*

*Spring run off has started in some places and the flows are up, West Walker, East Walker and Owens are running fairly fast with good clarity. Bridgeport Reservoir is full but release won't increase until full-on thaw starts. There's always a bright side, we'll have high water through most of the summer and fish food will be plentiful.*

*If you plan to fish the Eastern Sierra within the next few weeks, bring extra layers of clothing as weather is never predictable up here, and if you plan to fish the Bishop area, bring bug juice, they are hungry.*

*Be safe if you walk in and around snow, it can be crusty in the morning, and overly soft in the afternoon. Take care in your footing around snowy edges of lakes, it can be deceiving. The water is extremely cold this time of year, don't take chances unnecessarily.*

## Legislation

*On April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Dept. of Finance released a finance letter in which they have requested to increase the amount of General Fund. Originally \$6 million was set aside to backfill the DFG for implementing AB 7. The finance letter requests to increase that amount by \$3 million, bringing the total to \$9 million. \$9 million will be sufficient for implementing Ab7 as it was signed into law. The trailer bill language that was proposed will NOT be pursued. There will be one very slight, minor change to allow them to use federal funds. Other than that, everything that was in AB 7 will remain as it was when the Governor signed it.*

## Fishing Report:

*Remember to check the regulations prior to fishing unfamiliar water new to you that you are unsure as to limits, size, etc.*

*ROCK CREEK road was started on the 17<sup>th</sup> and they are at the lake already. Lake is similar to a large ice cube.*

*HOT CREEK – water is high and clear, and temperatures are perfect for any number of bugs to start hatching. Bring a bevy of flies to be prepared. San Juan worms, birds nest, and tiny zebra midges should get tugs. The breezy afternoons may prevail on and off so come prepared for everything. Please stay out of the water to prevent the spread of the New Zealand mud snail. Gate is expected to be open soon.*

*CROWLEY has been primed and ready for the opener and will be hit hard; nymphing will get you a blue ribbon if you try some large zebra and tiger midges around 10-12 feet. There's a new guide fly pattern I found in Mammoth called a "gillie". Stop in and see me during the summer and I'll save you one. CONVICT was also stocked with some heavyweights and things are looking great for the 29<sup>th</sup>.*

*MAMMOTH BASIN still under snow and ice and the Lake Mary Road should be open in the near future. Prayers needed. SAN JOAQUIN ROAD plowing may not start on May 10<sup>th</sup> as usual, due to heavier snow pack and the number of skiers taking advantage of the great snow.*

*JUNE LAKE is ice free and has been most of the winter and the loop road opened 4.25.6. June Lake marina cage culture program will be releasing some great fish for this opener. Tubing will be short lived with long hot-chocolate/coffee breaks, and of course bladder breaks.*

*GULL LAKE is 40% ice free.*

*SILVER LAKE is thawing fast and 50% ice free.*

*GRANT LAKE is ice free and lake is the fullest I've ever seen. Tubers try the bays and inlets and south shore.*

*TIOGA PASS ~ in 2005 the snow depth at the gate was 12 feet, same time this year, it's 22 feet. So don't look for them to get this finished too soon. CalTrans took two snow blowers and have been instructed to stop at little blue slide, and the Park is working from their side, but watching conditions.*

*LUNDY ~ Road is open, water is low and Edison is working on a huge leak in the pipe below the dam, they were hoping to be done by opening.*

*VIRGINIA LAKES road was started on April 17<sup>th</sup>, and they are in all the way, just need to widen it.*

*EAST WALKER is slated to get fingerling browns this summer in the 3" range, approx. 50,000. Flows are running at 361cfs mark. I scouted the area and found bugs, hugging the bushes; with "no-see-ums" galore. Does anyone know how to tie a #40 adult midge? Weighted nymphs should be used to get your bugs down, and "show your stuff". Some dries should work in the afternoon for the dry fly addicts who have waited all winter. Wear a cap with bug spray to keep the piranha out of your hair.*

*BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR is ice free and the water is high and off color due to run-off. Water has been stocked heavily with sub-catchable DFG bows from '05 and recently with trophy DFG and Alpers to test your tippets.*

*WEST WALKER flows are 480cfs but it's early, it will get higher probably closer to 650cfs plus in late May when night temperatures increase. Use the same strategy in getting your bugs down to the bottom; they are getting gorged with food so your best skills are needed to entice them to your offering.*

*SONORA PASS road crew is nearing Kennedy Meadows (west) and has equipment issues with more equipment being sent in. East side is also moving slowly.*

*CARMEN (Kirman) was stocked last fall with 5000-8000 fingerling brookies to help revive the brook population.*

*MONITOR PASS opened late on the 24<sup>th</sup>.*

*See you on the water, CJ*