

Eastern Sierra Focus

By CJ Webb

Fishing tip:

My last Eastern Sierra weather pattern statement has turned me into a fabricator in the largest sense of the word. April started out great with a lot of areas above 8000 feet starting to show large amounts of water, but mid month brought in a series of spring storms dumping much needed moisture (snow, rain, and slush). The snow pack has not increased due to the added moisture and most of it went right into the ground due to warm temperatures.

Spring has finally hit the Sierra and temperatures hit record highs for opening weekend. Spring run off has been slow with low cfs on both West Walker and East Walker rivers. Hot Creek and Owens are fair with good clarity. Bridgeport Reservoir is almost full but flows won't increase until full-on thaw starts.

Eastern Sierra weather can be unpredictable so come prepared and bring extra layers of clothing, and don't forget to buy extra stock in DEET; you'll need their aerosol dividends by the case.

Be safe if you walk in and around desert brush, watch for snakes, I walked almost 2 miles along Hot Creek yesterday and only saw hordes of bugs in and out of the water. Rocks are treacherous, slimy and lots of scuds hiding under them.

Legislation

The Department of Fish and Game press release regarding the mud snails in Hot Creek Hatchery has been working overtime to reallocate and reorganize where the added 40,000 pounds of fish will come from to stock the mud snail negative waters in Mono County, and a bit of juggling is being done to accommodate the anglers for the 2007 season.

Richard Rogers was appointed the new Fish and Game Commission President recently and will be playing catch up on Eastern Sierra Catch and Release regulation changes.

Remember to check the regulations prior to fishing unfamiliar water that is new to you concerning limits, size, etc.

ROCK CREEK is frozen and you can get to within 175 yards of the water. There is a small section of open water. Try the stream near US 395 where it's accessible with standard nymphs or dries for the best action until more snow melts.

CONVICT is simply beautiful and I saw 2 really nice fish under the bridge just sticking their snouts out waiting for brunch. Trails are clear for almost 2 miles and they are ready for a full swing opener. Try some streamers with rubber legs and don't overcast too far, just enough to drift into their nose. Fish the inlet and outlets and keep your line tight, the hawks are spooky but game.

HOT CREEK – water is very clear, flows are not really high, but it is producing when the temps are at their peak. I walked it about 2 miles today and only saw 3 fly fishermen with 2 fish to their names. It's a stealth approach to get into some pounds and knowing how to throw a good drift. Bring small midges

Please stay out of the water to prevent the spread of the New Zealand mud snail. Fish between 18 to 20" were taken last week with sub surface flies, zebra, micro midges and rock worms (spotty). It's been an unusual year. If you give it your finest, you will be rewarded.

CROWLEY is will be ready for the opener

MAMMOTH BASIN road crew will hit the asphalt soon, as it was not open as of this writing. Lake Mary was open and there were a few rises when I did my inspection.

SAN JOAQUIN is projected to open by May 11 with Reds Meadow road to Devils Postpile by the 29th.

JUNE LAKE loop road is open, and June Lake cage culture program released some great fish for the opener. Tubing will be great as water temps have increased but bladder breaks and short hot-chocolate/coffee breaks weren't as frequent. Streamers in dark patterns and quick action near weedy areas by the west end of the lake might see more action. There are a lot of deer in the area already, so stay alert as they are everywhere.

GULL LAKE iced out early and was stocked for the opener. Fish streamers, buggers and try a dropper near west end of reeds.

SILVER LAKE also iced out early and stocked but I'd hit the smaller areas of the inlet and outlet for browns cruising for larger morsels to fill whet their appetites...

GRANT LAKE is on the low side, but that's still a lot of water to fish, try the south shore or the inlet for fish cruising for smaller fish.

LUNDY ~ Road is open and DFG stocked from Fish Springs for the opener. Try the ponds for some great dry fly action, or the inlet on the mountain side of the resort. Water is down.

VIRGINIA LAKES road was plowed 16th of March, a record for my 32 years of operation. The lakes were free of snow but have about 4 or 5 inches from the last series of storms. Dark sparks are once again showing and Little Virginia has water at the inlet and outlet. Trumbull has the most open water at the south shore in two sections. Tubers, it's perfect if you just want to sit and fish or enjoy the scenery and a brew.

EAST WALKER flow is at 58cfs and coming up slowly, and the reservoir will rise so the flows can increase on a moderate scale instead of flushing everything down the pike. I scouted the area and found midges everywhere. Bring some shorts and light t shirts for comfort as the reports say warmer weather. San Juan worms, and birds nests, but tiny zebra midges, WD40's, and Tail-water Tiny.

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR is fairly high and clear. Water has been stocked and DFG bows are ready. A huge load from the hatchery hit the water last Wednesday and more are expected to be stocked before Saturday.

WEST WALKER flow is 161cfs but it's early, it will get higher as the temps increase and run-off kicks in.

TIOGA PASS ~ The Park Service started on April 15th, and they are moving fast. The road may be open to the park entrance or farther by opening weekend, but the weather and road condition is the main factor.

SONORA PASS opened the 26th of April.

MONITOR PASS is open, but report was unconfirmed.

See you on the water, CJ (7.4)