

“THE IMPORTANCE OF WEATHER”



Grand River pike and smallmouth bass

Fished the Grand River from the Rogue launch today (**November 15, 2003**) and had an incredible time! I decided to go fishing after looking at the **weather report**, which was **for dark cloudy stable conditions all day, light drizzle, and little or no wind**. For those unfamiliar with Spoonplugging Guidelines, these conditions are **near ideal**. A white lure could be seen down about **3 feet** which is **good water color**. Only a few boats were fishing steelhead as it was the opening of firearm deer season (I wore my brightly colored hat!). **Trolling** was done **until noon** with **no steelhead** and 2 smallmouth bass. I inquired of other boats and only one reported a lost steelhead that morning. It was then **decided to move to a different area** and **do some casting** on **previously mapped structures**. This time of year a **slower jump spoon** is usually more effective, although casting crankbaits (Spoonplugs) was tried several times to check speeds. A **school of flathead catfish was located** off the first bar that was cast. **14 flatheads** were hooked and **landed in less than an hour**, the **largest** being **18 pounds and 34 inches**. 5 were over 8 pounds. Half again as many were hooked and lost. **2 northern pike** were **also** caught, the largest being 31 inches. This experience reinforced the **importance of using a baitcasting reel, stiff rod, and heavy line** when casting lures, as stated in Buck Perrys' book. **Light spinning equipment is not recommended for catching adult gamefish, the goal of Spoonpluggers.**

After checking a couple other structures, **a school of smallmouth bass was found from another anchored casting position. 21 smallmouth bass were hooked and landed on jump spoons here in a little over an hour.** The **largest was 17 inches**, with 6 being 16 inches or larger. Most were above 14 inches. Smallmouth bass are one of the most **exciting gamefish to catch**. Those who get into a school of them on the cast have an experience of a lifetime! **Also** caught here was a **17 inch walleye and a 20 inch white sucker**. The spoon had to be **fished fairly slowly, jumped, then watch the line as the lure settles back**. Often there was **no "hit" noticed**, but a **fish would be on at the next jump**. **½ ounce jump spoons were used** and worked well in the reduced current.

It might be asked: **why didn't I catch any steelhead** if the fish were so active? I cannot say for sure except that they are migratory fish. **Maybe they just weren't there**. That is one reason why **Spoonpluggers target structure rather than a certain species of fish**.

The weather on this day was near perfect, producing fish activity from noon to about 3:30PM. I have **fished these structures** many times in the past **often with little or no results**. Most of the time fish activity periods last only a matter minutes, and there is less chance of getting into a school of fish. **Knowledge of fish behavior, weather and water conditions, structure, and depth and speed control (Spoonplugging) helps to increase the odds greatly.** **When that "perfect weather" comes along, take advantage and go fishing!!**

Chase Klinesteker