

Trout season makes welcome return
by Mike Baxter | Let's Go Fishin'

The third Saturday in April has been a date that marks the spring opening for trout season for decades. But with more privately owned lakes, there is less water regulated by the state and more areas that do not rely on the traditional opening day. The communities that do rely on opening day have been anticipating the opener and have increased stocking programs and set up derbies to bring more visitors.

This year's trout opener fell on April 25, with cold, windy weather. This weather did not discourage the hearty trout anglers. Some were prepared to fish with fly-fishing gear and release the trout. Others use gear and bait as they fish the rivers and lakes that host an opportunity for keeper trout.

Many of the waters that opened had an aggressive trout stocking program, even though a good number of lakes have been banned from the state's trout stocking program. The Mono County Chamber of Commerce, for example, has pumped money and trout into its local waters to help bring more anglers to the area in an effort to boost the local economy. The Chamber of Commerce in Bishop, a Mono County city, had a \$1,000 prize for a big fish. The June Lake Loop had some fantastic trout fishing for those who braved the cold — Silver, June and Gull lakes all kicked out some monster trout. Many weighed in at between 2 and 4 pounds, with a few 6-pound lunkers thrown in!

The Sierra weather during spring can be unpredictable, and roads may still be closed on the higher passes. Checking road conditions and regulations prior to a trip is the best idea.

There will continue to be great fishing opportunities, discounted rates and tournaments at many of the lake resorts in the Sierra. This is a good year for a trout trip, as trout fishing is a favorite pastime and forms great memories.

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