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Trout Harvest Begins February 1, 2017

JANUARY 23RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) says trout may be harvested from Rotary Lake in Jackson, Giessing Lake in Farmington and Legion Lake in Perryville beginning Feb. 1.

According to Mike Reed, MDC fisheries management biologist, fishing has been variable this winter due to weather extremes.

“If the lakes don’t freeze, we should have an excellent opener to the trout harvest season at both lakes,” Reed said.

Reed said MDC stocked trout in November at the start of the catch-and-release season.

“These fish provide a tremendous amount of fishing opportunity through the fall and winter months when warm water fishing is at a lull,” Reed said, adding that in addition to catchable-size fish, a few “lunker” trout were also stocked at each lake.

Perryville’s Legion Lake is the newest addition to the popular winter trout fishing locations in Southeast Missouri and has quickly become popular with local anglers reported Paul Cieslewicz, MDC fisheries management biologist.

Reed reminds anglers they must release trout caught now through Jan. 31.

Anglers age 16-64 must have a valid Missouri fishing permit and a trout permit to harvest trout. The limit is four trout and any lure or bait is allowed.

“An amazing number of trout can typically be caught the first week of trout harvest season,” Cieslewicz said.

Many anglers frequently catch limits of trout using light weight or ultra-light fishing tackle or fly tackle. Cieslewicz recommends anglers use 2-4 lb. test line, small hooks and little or no added weight to their line. Popular baits include almost any type of small spinner, small crank baits, natural baits such as worms and cheese and commercially produced dough baits.

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