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MDC Stocks Trout in Southeast Missouri Lakes as Winter Trout Season Approaches

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Trout will arrive in Jackson, Perryville and Farmington lakes before the Nov. 1 opener.

CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo. – The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) will stock rainbow trout in three southeast Missouri lakes, kicking off the annual winter trout program. Perryville’s Legion Lake, Jackson’s Rotary Lake and Farmington’s Giessing Lake, are all locations for the very popular fishing program.

According to MDC fisheries management biologists, approximately 3,760 rainbow trout will be stocked in Legion Lake, about 1,900 trout will be stocked in Rotary Lake and 1,200 in Giessing Lake prior to the opener, Nov. 1. In addition, a number of ‘lunkers’ will be stocked into each lake. The cities of Jackson, Farmington, Perryville and Perry County, the Perry County Sportsmen’s Club, and the Missouri Department of Conservation funded the trout stocking.

Beginning Nov. 1, Anglers can fish for this popular cold-water fish through the fall and winter months on a catch-and-release basis, harvesting trout as of Feb. 1, 2019. Rainbow trout are cold-water fish living in water temperatures less than 70 degrees. They do well in local impoundments during the colder months.

“Although this fall has been unseasonably warm, recent cool weather has rapidly cooled water temperatures making the local lakes suited for trout,” said Paul Cieslewicz, MDC fisheries management biologist.

Cieslewicz cautions anglers to remember that from Nov. 1 through Jan. 31, all trout must be released unharmed immediately. During this time, anglers may only fish with flies, artificial lures, and unscented plastic baits. In addition, they may only use one fishing rod at a time and chum is not permitted. Starting Feb. 1, any bait may be used and four trout may be kept regardless of size. All anglers between the ages of 16 and 64 must have a valid Missouri fishing permit and any angler harvesting trout must possess a trout permit as well.

Trout can be caught on a wide variety of lures, according to Cieslewicz.

“Flies imitating aquatic insects are popular with fly fishers,” he said, “but spinners, small spoons, and other small lures are also good choices.”

Light line and tackle will typically produce more fish. Successful anglers typically use 2-6 pound test line when fishing with lures and add little or no additional weight to the line. Set the drag light as a trout often hits hard and makes strong runs which can break weak or frayed line.

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