

# Favorite Fishing Holes on the Stanislaus National Forest

ROG 16-71 3/2020

You've got your license, your pole and a couple of days off. So where are the fish? This guide suggests some of the more popular fishing areas on the Stanislaus National Forest.

The forest is home to more than 800 miles of rivers and streams, which contain 18 fish species. Some common species you'll find are salmon, rainbow, Eastern brook and German brown trout.

Forest recreation maps can help you find your new favorite fishing spot. They are available at the front desks in the Supervisor's Office in Sonora and on Calaveras, Groveland and Summit Ranger districts.

You will need a valid California fishing license. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife manages the forest's fish resources and licensing. Licenses are sold at sporting goods outlets and in department and retail stores, or at [www.wildlife.ca.org](http://www.wildlife.ca.org). Be sure to pick up the current fishing regulations when you get your license. They contain valuable information on fishing seasons and catch limits.

Streams and rivers, including all tributaries of the Tuolumne and Stanislaus rivers, may be fished from the last Saturday of April to mid-November.

Fishing can be a relaxing way to pass the time, but it can be dangerous if you aren't careful while fishing in undeveloped areas. Drowning is a leading cause of forest fatalities for adults and children.

- Resist the temptation to climb on slippery streamside rocks to get to that "perfect spot."
- Do not wade in swift spring streams when the snowmelt is at its peak.
- Keep pets on a leash when next to high flowing rivers.
- Don't let children fish without supervision. Make sure that everyone in your group respects the power of nature's running water.

Remember, you are responsible for your own safety. Fishing, swimming and hiking, when you are off-trail, are done at your own risk.

## Summit Ranger District

### South Fork Stanislaus

Easy to moderate access; stocked in season with catchable trout. Camping options include Pinecrest and Meadowview campgrounds, as well as



dispersed camping sites where appropriate.

### Middle Fork Stanislaus

Easy to rough access, depending upon the site; regularly stocked with catchable trout in season. Camping options include Clark Fork and Sand Flat campgrounds, all upper Hwy 108 corridor campgrounds, as well as dispersed camping sites, where appropriate.

### Clark Fork Stanislaus

Accessible via a short hike from Clark Fork Road; stocked with trout plants in season. Camping available on Clark Fork Road. No dispersed camping.

### Herring Creek

Easy to moderate access; native trout populations - no trout stocking at this site. Camping available at the Herring Creek Campground and at permissible dispersed campsites.



## Favorite Fishing Holes (page 2)

ROG 16-71; 3/2020

### Beardsley Reservoir



Access is via a paved road, 12 miles to dam; boat launch and day use area are not available during the 2020 summer season due to road damage. Fishing from shore or in the afterbay is still available. Stocked with trout plants all season. Camping facilities available at Beardsley and TeleLi puLaya campgrounds, Pinecrest Lake and along highway 108, or in approved dispersed camping areas.

### Relief Reservoir

A rough, three-mile hike through the Emigrant Wilderness, but worth it for true anglers. Native trout populations only - no stocking at this location. Camping facilities available at Baker and Deadman campgrounds near Kennedy Meadows, before the trailhead. Dispersed camping is available near the lake, accessible by foot only.

### Pinecrest Lake

Easy access via paved road to both day-use area and marina; boat launch available (20 mph limit on lake). Native trout populations supplemented by trout stocking during season. Camping facilities available at Pinecrest and Meadowview campgrounds. No dispersed camping allowed within a mile of Pinecrest.

### Herring Creek Reservoir

Rough dirt road provides access (4-wheel drive advisable); native trout populations only; camping in dispersed locations is allowed, other sites are located at Herring Creek Campground.

## Mi-Wok Ranger District

### Middle Fork Stanislaus

Secluded fishing locations can be found up and down the Middle Fork. The trail between Beardsley Reservoir and Sand Bar Flat campground provides many great fishing holes. There is a two-fish limit on the Middle Fork Stanislaus River, from New Melones Reservoir upstream to the Spring Gap footbridge about three miles above Sandbar Flat

Campground. From the Spring Gap footbridge upstream to the Beardsley Reservoir afterbay, anglers may only use artificial lures with barbless hooks and are limited to two fish that must be at least 14 inches long. Refer to the California Sport Fishing 2018 Regulation Guidebook for site-specific area regulations at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Inland>.

### South Fork Stanislaus

To get to these sites you'll need to traverse trails that are undeveloped and negotiate difficult terrain. Trout planting occurs during fishing season. Camping facilities may be found at Fraser Flat Campground or in any area where dispersed camping is permitted. Accessible fishing piers are located at Fraser Flat Campground.

### North Fork Tuolumne

Undeveloped trails and difficult terrain characterize this part of the forest, but the fishing is great. Native rainbow trout populations abound and are supplemented by catchable trout stocked during the season. Campsites are located in River Ranch Campground and at some public and private sites.

### Bourland Creek

There are rough trails and sloping terrain, but good stream fishing when you arrive. Native rainbow trout population only; no trout stocking at this site. Dispersed camping provides the best camping opportunity in this area.

### Clavey River (wild trout stream)

Cold mountain streams feed into the Clavey River, creating great fish breeding habitats. Trails are rough and terrain is difficult, but it's worth the effort once you get there. Native rainbow trout population; dispersed camping sites are available near the river.





## Favorite Fishing Holes (page 3)

ROG 16-71; 3/2020

### Basin Creek

This is another tough spot to get to, but that's why you won't find much competition for the fish once you get there. Native rainbow trout population is not supplemented by trout stocks. River Ranch Campground offers the closest camping, although dispersed camping is also an option.

### Groveland Ranger District

#### Main Fork Tuolumne

Lumsden road offers access down a steep, narrow dirt road. Fish stocking occurs during the fishing season. The nearest camp-ground is Lumsden Campground; no dispersed camping is allowed in this area.



#### South Fork Tuolumne

Access via Hwy 120 or Carlon Day Use Area; fish stocking during season. There is no overnight camping permitted in day use areas.

#### Middle Fork Tuolumne

Good access via Evergreen Road; trout is stocked during fishing season. Adjacent Dimond O Campground is the most convenient campground; otherwise, dispersed camping is permissible.

#### Cherry Lake

Easily accessible via Cottonwood Road (Forest Road 1N04, also known as Cherry Lake Road). Rainbow trout and salmon are stocked during fishing season; camping at Cherry Valley Campground. Dispersed camping sites are nearby.

#### Rainbow Pool

Easily accessible from Hwy 120; rainbow and brown trout are supplemented by plantings during fishing season. There is no overnight camping permitted in day use areas.

### Calaveras Ranger District

#### Mosquito Lake

This small picturesque lake is located along Highway 4. It is seasonally stocked with trout. Mosquito Lakes Campground is located just across the highway.

### Lake Alpine

A popular fishing destination, Lake Alpine receives frequent seasonal plantings to add to its native trout population. A boat ramp, dock and parking are located near the Alpine Lodge. Boat speed limit is 10 mph. Campgrounds and day use areas are located near the lake and in the Lake Alpine Recreation Area.

### Sourgrass Recreation Complex

The North Fork of the Stanislaus River is easily accessed from Boards Crossing Road (5N02) in Dorrington. Native fish population is supplemented by regular seasonal stocking. The nearest campground is Waka Luu Hep Yoo, located on the North side of the road just before the bridge. The Sourgrass Day Use Area is across the river from the campground.

### Spicer Reservoir

Easily accessible from Spicer Road (7N01) and located off of Hwy 4, Spicer Reservoir is a popular fishing area. Rainbow and other trout species and catfish populate the reservoir. Seasonal stocking supplements the population. Spicer Campground is located at the reservoir. There is a paved boat ramp, ample parking and turnaround area. Motorized boat traffic is prohibited on the eastern half of the reservoir, but kayaks and canoes are permitted. There is a 10 mph speed limit on the reservoir. Hobart Creek feeds into Spicer, but is closed to fishing until July 1 to protect spawning trout.

### Utica and Union Reservoirs

Union Reservoir is located off Forest Road 7N75 from Spicer Road. It has two campgrounds near the water and is seasonally stocked with trout. There is an unimproved boat ramp, day use area and vault toilets. Boat speed is limited to 5mph.

Utica Reservoir is located on Forest Road 7N17 off of 7N75. Two campgrounds and a day use area are near the water. At the boat launch area you can hand-launch non-motorized boats. This reservoir is not stocked.





# Favorite Fishing Holes (page 4)

ROG 16-71; 3/2020

## Mokelumne River

The Mokelumne River winds through Hermit Valley and adventurous anglers may work their way down the river. Dispersed camping is available at Hermit Valley. Bloomfield Campground is located farther upriver, near Highland Lakes Road.

## Highland Lakes

These small lakes are at about 8,600 feet. Access is roughly five miles down Highland Lakes Road, located near Ebbetts Pass. The road is only open for a limited season. Camping is available at nearby Highland Lakes Campground. Recommended for shoreline fishing and non-motorized boats.

### Temperature Activity Table for Trout Fishing

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#### If water temperature is:

**(80 degrees and above)** Water is much too warm; fish will be inactive, dwelling near spring holes or very deep. Fishing, generally, will be poor. Best bet - bait fished deep.

**(70-80 degrees)** Water is too warm; fish will be mostly passive with some activity. Fishing will be fair, although the fish will be at lower depths, in spring holes, brook mouths or shaded streams; best bets - fish with live baits, streamer flies, nymphs, spoons or spinners.

**(60-70 degrees)** Water is just right; fish will be very active and near the surface; fishing will be excellent using wet or dry flies, streamer flies, nymphs, spoons or spinners.

**(50-60 degrees)** Water is almost ideal; fish will be active and near the surface; fishing will be good with wet flies, streamer flies, nymphs, spoons or spinners.

**(40-50 degrees)** Water is almost too cold for anything but passive fish and only fair fishing; fish will be at deep levels or along shorelines and riffles where the water is warmer; live bait, spoons or spinners, nymphs or streamer flies are the best bet.

**(Freezing to 40 degrees)** Water is much too cold; fish are basically inactive, hiding very deep in lakes and ponds; fishing will be poor, at best, but if you must fish, use live baits fished deep.

For more information about fishing in the Stanislaus National Forest, contact one of our Forest Service offices

#### Forest Supervisor's Office

19777 Greenley Road  
Sonora, CA 95370  
(209) 532-3671

#### Summit Ranger District

#1 Pinecrest Lake Road  
Pinecrest, CA 95364  
(209) 965-3434

#### Calaveras Ranger District

5519 Hwy 4  
(PO Box 500)  
Hathaway Pines, CA 95233  
(209) 795-1381

#### Groveland Ranger District

24545 Hwy 120  
Groveland, CA 95321  
(209) 962-7825