DNR boat checks set for Memorial Day weekend

THE JOURNAL STAFF

Beginning Memorial Day weekend and throughout the summer, law enforcement officers with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources will be patrolling the state's waterways and conducting courtesy boat inspections. S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officers will be focused on reducing boating accidents, injuries and fatalities.

DNR boating safety and enforcement officers will perform a quick, but thorough, inspection for items such as required safety equipment and proper boat and motor registration.

Courtesy boat inspections are scheduled for the following area locations over the Memorial Day weekend: May 28 at South Cove Park on Lake Keowee in Oconee County from 10 a.m. to noon; May 30 at Gap Hill Landing on Lake Keowee in Pickens County from 10 a.m. to noon.

Local Freshwater Fishing Trends

LAKE HARTWELL

» ***Catfish: Good.*** Captain Bill Plumley reports that channel catfish are scattered out and feeding well in 5-20 feet of water in pockets, creeks and off points. Cut bait, stink bait and worms will all catch channels.

» ***Black Bass: Good.*** Guide Brad Fowler reports that a few fish are still on the beds, but the bass that have finished spawning have generally stayed shallow with high water levels. Buzzbaits, soft-bodied swimbaits and frogs are all catching fish. The blueback herring spawn has been spotty and with water levels very high bluebacks are not spawning in their typical locations.

» ***Striped and Hybrid Bass: Fair to good.*** Captain Bill Plumley reports the striper and hybrid bite is improving compared to a couple of weeks ago. There is scattered schooling activity both early and late, and when the sun is up fishing off points in 25-30 feet of water has been effective. Free lined live herring and down lines will both catch fish off points.

» ***Crappie: Fair.*** Captain Bill Plumley reports that crappie are being caught under lights at night around bridges and brush piles in 10-20 feet of water. Fishing minnows, casting jigs, or working jigs tipped with minnows will all catch fish.

LAKE JOCASSEE

» ***Trout: Good to very good.*** Captain Steve Pietrykowski reports that Lake Jocassee trout fishing is wide open and fish are feeding across the whole lake. Early and late are the best daytime periods to fish, and the surface down to 50 feet is the most productive zone to troll with spoons or live bait. Early in the morning the bite near the intake towers has been especially good.

» ***Black Bass: Good.*** Captain Pat Bennett reports that the early morning topwater bite is strong, but you have to be on the water early. Fish areas with moving water and around visible cover. Near the mid-points of coves and cuts buck bass can be seen guarding balls of fry – fish shakey heads and drop shot rigs in the vicinity.

LAKE KEOWEE

» ***Largemouth and Spotted Bass: Good.*** Guide Brad Fowler reports a few fish up the lake are still spawning, but the end of the spawn is fast approaching. Topwater lures, flukes and swimbaits will all catch bass off points. A good number of fish can also be found around docks, where they will take soft plastics, Senkos and shakey head worms.

— Courtesy of SCDNR