

# BPA NEWS

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BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION  
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## **2024 Northern Pikeminnow Sport-Reward Season Begins May 1; Reaches Effort Milestone in 2023**

**Portland, Ore.** – The Northern Pikeminnow Sport-Reward Fishery enters the 2024 season fresh off last year’s historic milestone, when participants surpassed 1 million angling days recorded since the program began in 1991. The Northern Pikeminnow Sport-Reward Program is designed to reduce the native predator’s impact on salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin.

“That milestone is a really big deal as a testament to a very successful, long-lived BPA project that has been helping Pacific Northwest salmonids for the past 33 years,” said Eric Winther, project leader of the Columbia River Predator Control Program through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The program is funded by the Bonneville Power Administration and administered by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, along with the Oregon and Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife.

The Pikeminnow Sport-Reward 2024 season starts at most stations on May 1 and lasts until Sept. 30. Specific start dates and times at each pikeminnow station are available at the stations tab of the Sport-Reward Fishery website at [www.pikeminnow.org/stations-maps/](http://www.pikeminnow.org/stations-maps/). This is the second season in which anglers can register to fish using the Pikeminnow Registration mobile phone app available on both [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices. The phone app eliminates the need to submit a paper registration prior to fishing which gives anglers more time on the water catching northern pikeminnow.

Fishing will take place from the mouth of the Columbia River to Priest Rapids Dam in eastern Washington, as well as in the Snake River, from its convergence with the Columbia to Hells Canyon Dam along the Idaho-Oregon border. These areas represent a substantial portion of the migration corridor of juvenile salmon and steelhead, which are prey to northern pikeminnow.

Northern pikeminnow consume millions of juvenile salmon and steelhead every year, and to mitigate their predatory effects on salmon and steelhead populations, the Northern Pikeminnow Sport-Reward Fishery offers rewards to anglers who remove large, predator-sized northern pikeminnow from the river. This effort aims to reduce northern pikeminnow populations by 10-20% in the Columbia River. Since the Sport-Reward Fishery was implemented in 1991, predation of juvenile salmon and steelhead



by northern pikeminnow has been reduced up to 40% through the removal of more than 5.59 million northern pikeminnow.

This year, rewards for northern pikeminnow catches will range from \$6 to \$10 per fish, and the more fish an angler lands, the more each fish is worth. Anglers receive \$6 for the first 25 fish they catch. After 25, fish are worth \$8 each, and after 200 they are worth \$10 each.

State fish and wildlife biologists have also released tagged northern pikeminnow into the Columbia and Snake rivers, which have their own special reward. These verified external tagged northern pikeminnow are worth \$500, with verified internally tagged fish worth \$200 each. Grant Waltz, project lead for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, emphasized that tagged fish are also valuable to state fish and wildlife biologists, as they help the program estimate if the fishery has met the harvest goal of 10 to 20% of the northern pikeminnow population.

Previously tagged northern pikeminnow that are harvested and subsequently returned to the Northern Pikeminnow Management Program creel stations are critical to the effort to track the exploitation of this predator species. According to Waltz, these tag returns can also provide the program information about movement patterns and growth of northern pikeminnow, which is used to better understand the dynamics of the population.

In 2023, the top-twenty anglers caught an average of 4,005 fish per angler and averaged reward payments of \$40,135 each for the 5-month season. The highest paid angler earned \$107,800.

For more information about the program such as regulations, specific station guidelines, participation instructions, and historical catch statistics, visit [www.pikeminnow.org](http://www.pikeminnow.org) or call 800-858-9015.

## **About BPA**

*The Bonneville Power Administration, headquartered in Portland, Oregon, is a nonprofit federal power marketer that sells wholesale, carbon-free hydropower from 31 federal dams in the Columbia River Basin. It also markets the output of the region's only nuclear plant. BPA delivers this power to more than 140 Northwest electric utilities, serving millions of consumers and businesses in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana and parts of California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming. BPA also owns and operates more than 15,000 circuit miles of high-voltage power lines and 261 substations, and provides transmission service to more than 300 customers. In all, BPA provides nearly a third of the power generated in the Northwest. To mitigate the impacts of the federal dams, BPA implements a fish and wildlife program that includes working with its partners to make the federal dams safer for fish passage. It also pursues cost-effective energy savings and operational solutions that help maintain safe, affordable, reliable electric power for the Northwest. [www.bpa.gov](http://www.bpa.gov)*

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