

## **ODFW Collects and Transfers Bass from Davis Lake**

For a few nights during the weeks of May 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, ODFW will again conduct its annual effort to collect and transfer adult largemouth bass from Davis Lake.

The bass were illegally introduced into Davis in the mid-1990's and have since thrived, initially by feeding on an abundance of tui chub, another species not native to the Cascade lake. However, the predaceous largemouth have essentially eliminated the chub and the adult fish now subsist primarily through cannibalism of their smaller kin.

To collect the fish, the department uses a method commonly used in sampling called electrofishing. Using a specially modified boat, an electric current is applied to an area at the bow creating a complex electrical field in the water. Fish in and near this field are drawn toward the surface where they can be netted and transferred to a livewell on the boat. This is conducted at night when the bass move into shoreline areas to forage and in the shallower water are more accessible to the sampling gear.

The number of fish collected each year from Davis has varied due to a number of factors including changing lake levels and natural cycles within the bass population. The variable springtime weather, however, can have the greatest impact because the warmwater project and its boats are able to spend only a few days each year at Davis, so a cold spell or series of windy nights can thwart that year's effort.

The department's annual removal of largemouth from Davis began in 1996 and has since transferred nearly 10,000 adult bass to more than 30 ponds, lakes, and reservoirs throughout the state managed to provide bass fisheries. In these, they can boost or augment an existing bass population or perhaps even create a

new fishery. However, the effort in conjunction with angler harvest also helps to reduce the level of bass predation so the abundance of native trout in Davis Lake can increase. It's an effort that benefits both bass and native trout fisheries.

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