



Fishing Scenario ID # 211

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# Moses Lake Yellow Perch



Photo by Joseph Haerber [haeber/photography/](http://haeber/photography/)

"One of the attractions to perch fishing here at Moses Lake is that the fishing technique required is pretty simple, and success can be very high--20 to 30 fish per person in a three to four hour period, even for inexperienced anglers. When populations are at their peak, there are literally thousands of fish concentrated in just a few acres..."

"There is no better time than to take the whole family fishing and enjoy a big fish fry at the end of the day "

*Dave Graybill, [The Fishin' Magician](#),*

Every spring spawning schools of yellow perch provide terrific action for one of the tastiest freshwater fish that swim. That's true in many Northwest waters, but at one of Dave Graybill's favorites, Moses Lake, beginning anglers and kids can expect to catch scores of these voracious predators. It isn't unusual for anglers to catch 30 or more per person per day during the peak of the perch action on Moses Lake. Even better, perch here are typically larger than the average size found elsewhere, 10 to 11 inches, with a chance for a fish of 15!

Of course, such excellent prospects bring crowds, especially on weekends, so while this scenario *can* be fished from shore, boats are recommended. Also recommended...*restraint*. Moses Lake will remain a great scenario *only* if anglers limit their take.



## Moses Lake Perch

# Timing Details

- 1. **February 16 to March 4**
- 2. In spring, perch bite all day: begin fishing at 7 or 8 a.m. if it's warm and clear, between 9 and 10 a.m. if it's cold and overcast. There may be lulls in the perch bite because schools move. You can also, in boat on along shore up. Or just choose to be patient -- they will be back!
- 3. Cold fronts and rain can make fishing from shore or boats uncomfortable, but typically won't hamper the bite. Snow and ice may have an impact, however, and create dicey footing on the rocky, rip-rap bank.
- 4. **Don't go to Moses when:**
  - a. The lake's down, if you plan on shore fishing, because low water pushes fish too far out. A dropping lake level also tends to scatter the schools.
  - b. A big rise in water temperatures ends the spawn.
  - c. Skim ice has formed with unseasonably low temperatures.
  - d. If high winds are forecast (in excess of 20 miles per hour).
  - e. Check weather conditions for Moses lake on the Internet at (Zip Code 98837), or call Mike's Bait and Tackle in Moses Lake for reports (509) 764-4416.



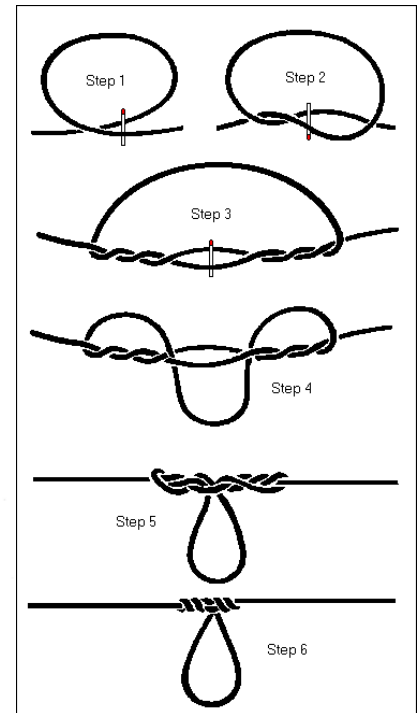
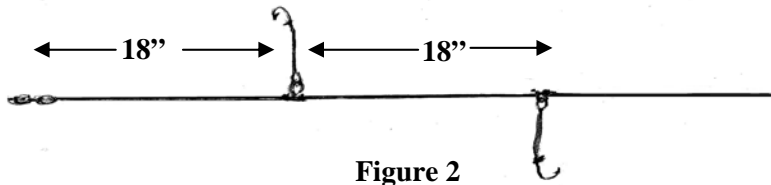
Dave Graybill photo

# Equipment

- 1. A boat or float tube provides an advantage at Moses, but excellent fishing can often be accessed from shore, although weekend crowds can become a problem. Note: boats should have two anchors.
- 2. An 8 1/2-foot medium-action spinning or spin-casting outfit, reel spooled with 6- to 8-pound test line. Tip: to better detect light perch bites, Dave Graybill loads 100 to 150 feet of Stren Hi-Vis Gold™ line then adds 10 feet of clear 6- to 8-pound mono leader.
- 3. Size #9 split shot, size 6 and 8 snelled Eagle Claw™ or Danielson™ bait holder hooks, needle nose pliers, a bucket for fish. SHORE ANGLERS add bobbers, sand spike style rod holders, seating appropriate for cold riprap rock banks.
- 4. One or more of these baits: night crawlers, "Euro-worms," red worms or maggots (spikes).
- 5. A **sharp** knife and a cutting board for preparing strip or chunk perch baits (and filleting fish!)
- 6. A fish scent oil or paste: This is important. While there are many "flavors" available – consider crayfish or anise --Dave Graybill prefers Graybill's Guide Formula, developed by brother Rick.
- 7. An electronic fish finder (recommended).

# Moses Lake Perch Rigging

- 1. At the *end* of the leader material cramp on one or two #9 split shot (more if long casts from shore required). Rigged this way, if your shot snag on the rocky bottom it will simply slip off, usually saving you hooks, leader, and the time it takes to re-tie. (Some anglers will tie on a swivel and attach a small piece of surgical tubing and use pencil lead as weight.)
- 2. Tie a loop in your leader 18 inches above the weight(s) (see Figure 1, from [www.fishsa.com/kntiesdl.php](http://www.fishsa.com/kntiesdl.php) )
- 3. Loop through this a snelled Eagle Claw™ hook in size 6 or 8. Note that perch are not leader shy, and that the stiff nylon snell material will help keep your hooks from fouling around your leader when you cast.
- 4. Repeat this process with a second snelled hook 18 inches above the first. (see Figure 2)



- 5. Some anglers favor redworms or spikes, and some use maggots. Dave suggests pieces of nightcrawlers (1/4 to 1/3 of a worm), but also recommends cutting small strip or chunk baits from the first perch you catch. The larger the piece, the more likely it will interest a large fish. (Figure 3)





## Moses Lake Perch Techniques

### From a boat or float tube:

- 1. Launch at ramp in State Park near I-90 Bridge. (See "Location Details")
- 2. Perch are often close to shore. Row, paddle, or motor slowly looking for schools on your fish finder. When you find one, drop the anchor! (You may want to anchor fore and aft, to avoid swinging.) Drop bait and keep a tight line. Be sure to stay out of casting range of shore anglers.
- 3. If you don't have a fish finder, look for gathered boats. Observe how far apart they are from each other, then anchor at a similar distance.
- 4. When you catch a fish, cast right back to the same spot.
- 5. If fish are small, *move on* to find a school of larger perch.



Dave Graybill photo

### From shore:

- 1. From shore:
- 2. Fish the rip rap shore to the east and west of the I-90 Bridge on the north shore. (See "Location Details").
- 3. Make initial casts close to shore, about 20 feet. Leave a bit of a bow in line or allow slight slack to lie on top of the water to make light strikes more obvious.
- 4. If first casts don't produce, cast farther out. Also try raising bait above bottom with a bobber, in case school is suspended.
- 5. If still no strikes, move down bank!
- 6. Add scent frequently when checking bait.



## Moses Lake Perch

# Location Details

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- 1. BOAT ANGLERS: To reach prime fishing grounds for this Moses Lake Yellow Perch scenario, take Highway I-90 to the town of Moses Lake and exit at Mae Valley Road. Take the Frontage Road on the north side of the highway east to the Moses Lake State Park. For maps to the park, click on [Moses Lake State Park](#), at Maptech
  - a. Launch at the park ramp, where the daily fee is \$5.00. Tip: If you drive through the park toward the highway, you'll find a free parking area close to the prime fishing zone.
  - b. Boats often anchor near the I-90 Bridge, and some even tie up under the bridge itself.
- 2. SHORE ANGLERS follow the same road that leads to the State Park and that takes boaters to the launch in the State Park, but head back toward the freeway to the right and past the restrooms. You will find the road heading to the left and there is ample parking near the path that leads to the shore and the I-90 Bridge.
  - a. From the path that leads to the lake shore, and along the guard rail along the highway, pick a spot along the rip rap rock bank within 100 yards east or west of the I-90 Bridge on the north shore.
  - b. TAKE CARE climbing down from the path: rip-rap rocks can be slimy slick, or slippery with frost in the morning.

### Services and Facilities:

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- 1. Moses Lake is a town of about 15,000 people with a full range of lodging, restaurants and other services. For more information, contact the Moses Lake Chamber of Commerce and Grant County Tourism, [www.moseslake.com](http://www.moseslake.com), Grant County Tourism [www.tourgrantcounty.com](http://www.tourgrantcounty.com), or the Moses Lake Parks and Recreation Department, [www.mlrec.com](http://www.mlrec.com)



Dave Graybill photo



# Moses Lake Perch Perch Recipes

## Pan Fried Perch

Serves Four

### Ingredients:

6 sm	Yellow perch 7-9 " long
4 tb	Bacon fat or lard Salt and pepper
4 tb	Butter Cornmeal
1	Lemon (opt.)



### Instructions:

Dress, scale, and wash the fish, pat dry, [salt and pepper](#), then dredge them in the meal or meal-flour combination. Heat the fat until it is hot enough to [cook](#) at once, but not burning, sputtering hot.

Lay in the fish, turn heat down to barely a medium flame, and begin to brown the fish.

Keep the fish loose from the pan bottom with a thin metal spatula.

Taking 8-10 minutes to a side (turn heat low if it seems to fry too fast), brown the fish slowly until crisp.

Do not overcook.

When the flesh is opaque the fish is done; one hopes it's all browned by then.

Add 4 Tbs.

butter to the skillet after removing the fish and squeeze in the juice of a lemon, stir the fat and juices to loosen the dredgings, and pour over the browned fish.

VARIATION: After removing the fish from the skillet, toss about 1/3 cup of chopped black walnuts.

Brown lightly with the remaining butter and sprinkle over the fish before serving. From [www.search.yummy.com](http://www.search.yummy.com)

## Yellow Perch, Cocktail Style

water

salt

1/4 of a lemon, sliced

1 pound of perch fillets, cut into bite sized pieces

seafood cocktail sauce

Boil water with salt and lemon added in a 3-quart pan. Reduce the heat to about medium and add the perch pieces. Cook for several minutes, until fish is opaque and beginning to curl up. Remove the fish and drop it into iced water. When fish has cooled completely, drain and serve with cocktail sauce as you would shrimp.

From <http://www.walleyecapital.com/>