



5. Learn to Fish Lakes – Lakes are excellent thermal (heat) reservoirs meaning that as the sun pours its summer heat into the lake, the water temperature changes very little. Even though water levels may drop during drought, in most lakes there is still ample depth for trout to stay active and vibrant, offering the angler excellent fly action!

Drought conditions don't mean we need to hang up our fly rods this summer. Join me in smarter fishing by following these 5 guidelines so we can all enjoy a great season on the water!

Team Building Potluck

Last month W&A gathered at the Conifer Ranch for a team building potluck. We enjoyed good weather, great food, and the chance to socialize outside of the office. What a great afternoon it was!



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Fly of the Month · August 2021

5 Tips for Trout Fishing During a Drought



All winter long, anglers across the western US watched the weather channel seeing clouds full of promise hanging over the mountains, but never delivering the snow we hoped for. Come spring, there was still the chance for April precipitation, but that too failed to accumulate. The severe drought that is now blanketing most of the western US brings with it very serious consequences for trout and we, as fly fishers, need to adapt in order to prevent further harm and help preserve trout populations until wetter days return.



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FLY OF THE MONTH • HEATHEN • SIZE 16

The Heathen is a no-frills midge emerger pattern tied with the sole purpose of matching a greater number of midge species and bringing more fish to the net. Tied with a dab of foam off the back, the unique buoyancy and action of this pattern as it drifts down the river or across the pond expertly imitates the natural midge or chironomid pupa on their jerky ascent to the surface. Tied in several colors and sizes, this pattern can be used to match almost all the 17,000 midge species found in our North American waters.



Dry/Wet: Wet | **Fly Category:** Generalist Pattern

Family: Midges & Chironomids

Species: N/A | **Life Stage:** Pupa, Emerger

5 Tips for Trout Fishing During a Drought

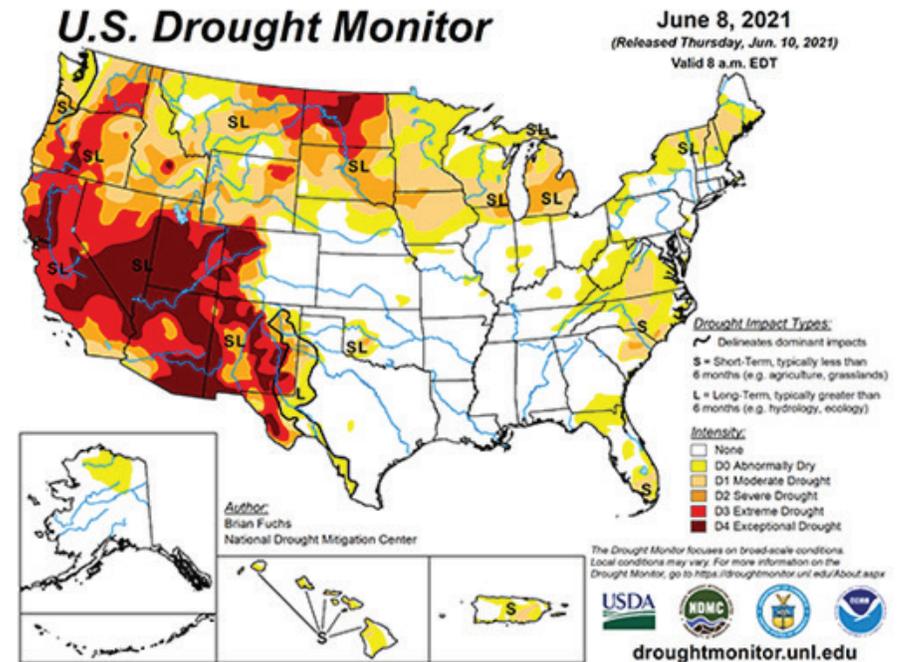
By: Peter Stitcher - Ascent Fly Fishing

Here are a few guidelines to help us fish responsibly and still have fun during a drought.

1. Know your Limits – Trout and other Salmonids (fishes including salmon, trout, char, whitefish, and grayling) thrive in water temperatures below 63° Fahrenheit, they do moderately well up to 65°, and begin to deteriorate rapidly and die in sustained water temperatures above 67°. Lower river levels across the west means we are going to see water temperatures in many trout bearing waters regularly reach these dangerous levels, causing fish to gather in the few remaining deep pools, trying to survive while waiting for cooler nighttime temperatures. Trout go into survival mode as they try to draw limited oxygen out of the warm water and are sluggish to feed. **The responsible angler should wear a fly-fishing thermometer in their boot to keep an eye on water temperatures. As the sun rises overhead and the water temperatures edge towards 67°, we need to get off the water so that we don't start killing fish.**



2. Time to Go – While some states enforce mandatory river closures at a certain time of day due to rising water temperatures, it is prudent to plan our summer fishing trips during the drought during the cool of the morning. Try to get to the river as early as possible, fish to noon or 1pm and then head home for a little afternoon siesta to give the fish a life saving break through the heat of the day.



3. Quick to Hand & Quick to Release – Overplaying fish in warmer water temps is a death sentence for many. Try to get the fish to hand as quickly as possible, skip the photo-op and hold the fish gently in the light current until it revives and takes off under its own power. Seeing trout drifting belly up down the river isn't very picturesque, so keep em' wet and let them go quickly!

4. Head for the Hills – Seasons of drought are a great motivator to go out and explore, get off the beaten path, and head up into the mountains in search of cooler waters. Colder nights and proximity to snowpack keeps higher elevation creeks and lakes in the optimal temperature range for happy, healthy, and hungry trout. If you want long days full of fish and tight lines, head for the hills!

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