



West Walker River - Pickel Meadows





West Walker River

Suggested Flies :
Eastern Sierra Hatch Selection

- West Walker River

Streamer Flies:

 - Woolly Bugger #6-8
 - Marabou Muddler #6-8

Nymphs:

 - Hare's Ear Nymph #12-14
- Pheasant Tail Nymph #12-14

Bird Nest #12-14

A.P. Nymph #12-14

Drys:

 - Olive Caddis #12-16
 - Yellow Humpy #14-16
 - Royal Wulff #12-14
 - Chernobyl Ant #12-14
- Kirman Lake and other local Lakes

Streamer Flies:

 - Woolly Bugger #6-8
 - BH Mini-leech, #8-10
 - Marabou Muddler #6-8
 - Mohair Leech #8-12

Nymphs:

 - Hare's Ear Nymph #12-14
 - Pheasant Tail Nymph #12-14
- Midge Flies:

 - Copper John, #16
 - Zebra Midge, #16
 - Serendipity, #18

Scuds:

 - Scud
 - Zug Bug

Directions:

Elevation is 6,800' at Sonora Bridge. From Sonora Bridge at Hwy 108 to Hwy 395, fishable for 2 miles. Otherwise accessed from the highways taking care not to trespass. Pickle Meadow is reached by going 4 miles on Hwy 108 from the Hwy 395 turnoff. Turn left and go one mile further to the meadow. A parking area is available with a trail to the river. Kirman Lake is accessed by a 3 mile trail from Hwy 108. An orange ladder on Hwy 108, about 1/2 mile from Hwy 395 junction, marks the access point.

Wolf Creek: Turn left to the Marine Mountain Warfare Training base off Hwy 108. Go up to the guard station and tell the guard you are going up to Wolf Creek. The guard will wave you on with a few directions.

East Fork Carson Directions

Notes:

The **West Walker River** is relatively small and resembles a stream in many places. It's headwaters lie in the mountains south of Sonora Pass, on the eastern crest. The water flows down to Leavitt Meadows at Highway 108. This area has lots of riffles with large boulders and pools. Pickle Meadows is in this area containing **Brooks**, **Rainbows**, **Browns**, and Mountain Whitefish. It is a classic freestone stream with easy wading. The fish tend to be small averaging about 8". An attractor dry such as a Royal Wulff with a PT nymph or Hare's Ear dropper is an effective rig. Midge larva patterns also work well in the deeper pools. The West Walker turns northward through a canyon at the junction of Hwy 108 and 395. It flows along Hwy 395 through this canyon. The West Walker usually clears by late June where fishing is productive using large weighted nymphs. Also effective are muddler minnows size 8-12 on a sink tip. Fishing is best when flows reach 150 cfs or less. Dry Fly fishing is usually during the last 2 hours of light, using an Elk Hair Caddis in tan, green, or brown. Another good pattern is the Royal Trude to imitate caddis. A Hopper with a dropper (BH Nymph) rig is a good mid-summer choice. The season is the last Saturday of April to Nov. 15th. 5 fish limit and 10 in possession in most areas. Special regulations apply to Kirman Lake, Lane Lake, and Roosevelt Lake.

The **Little Walker River** is a smaller version of the West Walker. It consists of **Rainbows**, **Brookies**, and **Browns** of generally a smaller size than found on the West Walker. The stream is a freestone type with some deep pools. It gets less fishing pressure than the West Walker.

Silver Creek is closed to fishing as the Walker-strain of Lahontan Cutthroat are re-introduced to these streams. These streams may be opened to fishing once the population can sustain angling pressure.

Wolf Creek is within the ancestral region for Lahontan Cutthroats. Wolf Creek was poisoned with rotenone in 1991 and 1992. Surveys in 1993 found an absence of fish but an abundance of aquatic invertebrates. Later that year, a total of 289 Lahontan cutthroat trout were transplanted from Slinkard Creek to Wolf Creek. Annual trout population surveys conducted through 1998 indicate that Lahontan cutthroat trout have greatly expanded their distribution in the stream. Reproductive success was indicated by the presence of multiple year classes and young-of-the-year. Fish appeared to be in excellent condition with a few specimens up to 14 inches in length. The creek was off limits for fishing until 2013 when populations of Lahontans were deemed stable to resume fishing. Today, Wolf Creek is now open all year with artificial flies and barbless hooks, catch & release only. There is an Angler Survey box at the crossing. It is hoped that the creek might be considered for Wild Trout Stream status. Contains Walker-strain **Lahontan Cutthroats** 6 to 12 inches. The head of **Wolf Creek Lake** remains closed to fishing.

Nearby lakes to note are:

Kirman Lake (45 acres) at 7,200' containing **Brookies** and **Lahontan Cutthroats**. Kirman Lake was named after Richard Kirman, a wealthy banker who owned much of the land within this area during the late 1800's. Most of the Brookies are in the 14-16" range with some monsters up to eight pounds. They are usually within the deeper portions of the lake. Kirman is a trophy trout lake with special regulations of flies or lures only, 18" minimum, and 2 trout limit. Tributaries of Kirman are available for fishing with the same restrictions as the lake. The shoreline is thick with weedbeds and reeds, so it is best float tube or hike into Kirman, a 3 mile walk from the Sonora Campground Trailhead. It is a fairly flat dirt road that winds up into the foothills. From there, it gets then drops into a small valley that holds the lake. Good patterns for Kirman are: Green Scuds 10-16, Olive Leeches 10-12, Zug Bugs 14-18, BH Prince Nymph 18, Palomino Midges 14-18 and BH Hare's Ear 12-16. The large size of the fish in Kirman is due to the immense population of Gammarus scuds that reside in the lake. The fish feed through thick concentrations of these scuds and gorge themselves into girthy football-sized fish. Try Scud patterns in orange, green and black colors.

Across from the Marine Corps Training Center on Hwy 108 is the trailhead through Leavitt Meadow to a number of fine lakes. These lakes are about a two mile drive from the trailhead.

Poor Lake (77 acres) at 7,214' is a trophy **Brookie** Lake similar to Kirman with fish up to 5 lbs. It is about a 3 mile hike from the Leavitt Trailhead. Take the fork just south of Secret Lake. At Poor, use Mohair Leech patterns and Marabou Muddlers which have red and gold coloration to the flies. The Brookies tend to be on Lahontan Redside suckers in the early and late parts of the days within the shallows. These streamer patterns do an excellent job representing the bait fish in the lake is relatively shallow in the upper reaches and deepens towards the dam to about 85 feet. During midday and throughout the summer, fishing the lower end of the reservoir is generally better. Poor also has a number of hatches that come off, particularly along the eastern shoreline during the evening hours. Try Callibaetis and Adams in size 14-16.

Roosevelt Lake and **Lane Lake** (8 acres each) sit at about 7,300'. These two lakes are connected by a narrow creek. They are about 3.2 miles from the inlet. Roosevelt is particularly good at both the inlet and the outlet. They are part of the Catch & Release program with the State of California with a 2 trout limit. rocky shoreline but fishes well along the western side where a channel extends to about a 30' depth. Each lake contains **Brookies** in the 10-12" range as **Lahonton Cutthroats**. Since the lakes are at relatively low elevations, the best time for fishing is early and late season. There are good dry fly opportunities at inlets and outlets, particularly during the evenings.

Secret Lake (7 acres) is difficult to fish without a float tube as the shoreline contains dense weedbeds. About 2 miles from trailhead. The lake contains **Rainbow Trout** the 13-16" range.

Leavitt Lake (ele. 9,500') covers about 58 acres and contains both **Kamloops** and **Brookies**. Fishing is good from either the west or eastern banks. The lake is iced over until early July. The lake is deep but there are shallower areas at the inlet near the parking area. About 2/3's the way around the western shore of the inlet, is an underground spring which provides some excellent fishing opportunities. The brookies tend to be close to shore and can be sight cast for nymphs, such as Copper Johns or Flashback Pheasant Tails. Most of the fish average about 10 inches. Nearby Koenig Lake (7 acres), **Latopie** and **Ski Lake** reached by trail. **Koenig** and **Latopie** are fishless while **Ski Lake** has pure **Goldens**. *Click Map for detail.*

Fishing Regulations (Effective March 1st, 2021)

West Walker River:

From the last Saturday in April through November 15, 5 trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession; and, from November 16 through the Friday preceding the Saturday in April, 0 trout bag limit, artificial lures with barbless hooks only and trout must be released unharmed and not removed from the water.

West Walker River (Mono Co.) from the confluence with the Little Walker River (Hwy. 395 bridge at mile marker 96) downstream (north) to the inlet of Lake.

From the last Saturday in April through November 15, 5 trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession; and, from November 16 through the Friday preceding the Saturday in April, 0 trout bag limit, artificial lures with barbless hooks only and trout must be released unharmed and not removed from the water.

Silver Creek (Mono Co.) tributary to West Walker River and tributaries upstream from Silver Falls.:

Closed to all fishing all year

Wolf Creek and tributaries (tributary to West Walker River, Mono Co.):

Open all year. Artificial flies with barbless hooks only. 0 trout.

Wolf Creek Lake (Mono County) :

Closed all year.

Junction Lake and tributaries (Mono Co.), including the lake's outlet stream to Highway 108.:

Closed to all fishing all year.

Kirman (Carmen) Lake (Mono Co.):

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. Minimum size limit: 18 inches total length. Only artificial lures may be used. 2 trout.

Kirman (Carmen) Lake tributaries (Mono Co.):

Last Saturday in Apr. through Nov. 15. Minimum size limit: 18 inches total length. Only artificial lures may be used. 2 trout.

Lane Lake and Roosevelt Lake (Mono Co.):

Open all year. Artificial lures only. 2 trout limit.

Leavitt Lake:

Open all year. No restrictions. 5 trout per day. 10 trout in possession.

All other Streams:

From the last Saturday in April through November 15, 5 trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession; and, from November 16 through the Friday preceding the Saturday in April, 0 trout bag limit, artificial lures with barbless hooks only and trout must be released unharmed and not removed from the water.

All Lakes and Reservoirs in Inyo and Mono Counties (except Bridgeport Reservoir and tributaries; Convict Lake; Crowley Lake; George Lake; Grant Lake; Horseshoe Lake; June Lake; Lundy Lake; Mamie Lake; Mary Lake; Rock Creek Lake; Sabrina Lake; Silver Lake; South Lake; Twin Lakes (Mammoth); Twin Lakes (Lower and Upper (Bridgeport); Virginia Lake, Lower and Upper):

Open all year, 5 trout daily bag limit, 10 trout in possession.