

## July 18, 2018 - Slurps, boils and smallmouth

Written by Wayne Gustaveson

Tuesday, 17 July 2018 09:31 - Last Updated Tuesday, 17 July 2018 09:44

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### Lake Powell Fish Report – July 18, 2018

Lake Elevation: 3606

Water temperature: 79 - 84 F

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Lake Powell's water level is declining at the rate of about 1-foot per week. That will slow down slightly in September or level out if the monsoon season provides more inflow to counter that being released. This decline will bring the lake level back down to near the 5 year average of 3590-3600 feet (MSL). That means the Castle Rock Cut will remain open for those boaters launching at the south end of the lake and running upstream. We certainly hope that the winter of 2018 will provide more moisture to the parched southwestern area of the US and allow the lake to remain in this comfort zone.

Fishing continues to be good for smallmouth bass over the length of the lake. The hot spot this past week was the San Juan Arm. Bass there average a 1-2 pounds but they are super aggressive. If looking for a great family fishing trip the San Juan is a good choice.

Over the length of the lake smallmouth bass fishing is consistent, with the best lures being green (crayfish colored) plastic grubs. A wide variety of lures, baits and techniques work well, with time of day being as important as which lures are used. Make sure to get out early and stay out late for the best bass fishing results. While jigging along the 12-25 foot bottom for bass, a few walleye, largemouth bass and catfish will join in the fun. Topwater action at first light in the morning is still the best bass fishing technique.

Striped bass are boiling in the northern lake from The Horn (just upstream from Good Hope Bay) to Trachyte and White Canyon. Boils happen there because the shad crop is larger in size and numbers. It's a long run to launch at Halls or Bullfrog and run to Trachyte but the fishing

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results are quite productive. Boils are performed by a wide range of small to adult size stripers. Adult stripers are only able to stay up in warm surface water for short period of time. They feed quickly on 2-inch shad and then dive down to deep water to cool off before hitting the surface again. This behavior makes stripers vulnerable to topwater lures when fish are boiling. When they are resting, deep trolling with down riggers works well, along with spoons when the striper school is seen on the graph.

From the Horn downstream, stripers are still slurping on the surface because they target the small shad that were recently spawned and have not found a good hiding place. Shad that were spawned last month have to find murky colored water to be able to hide and survive the constant onslaught of juvenile striper predation. These slurps are seen virtually every day in most canyons. A school of stripers finds a shad pod, comes to the surface for 15 seconds and then goes back down. Anglers awaiting the slurpers see the school and rush to get in range to cast. The hard part is trying to predict where the school will resurface for the next 15 second burst. If the boat is in casting range when the school pops back up, a good cast, beyond the school, will likely catch a fish as the lure is retrieved through the surfacing school. If they come up out of range, then the boat has to be repositioned again to hopefully be in range when the school resurfaces. It's a real 'cat and mouse' game with the fish winning most of the time. The visual portion of seeing a lot of fish and catching a few makes for an exciting day.

**[Next week's fish report will be late since Wayne is going on vacation for a week]**