



FRESHWATER CAST · FRIDAY CAST

Don Pedro: Warm Midweek, Spotted Bass & Sierra Foothill Bait

Don Pedro Reservoir · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · bank / kayak / boat · times in PT

Warm weekend · Fri ~93° → Sat–Sun ~95–96° PT

Primary: spotted bass

Verify dam boards before you go

Soft Friday recreational · no named trail event pulled

Don Pedro is still wearing October heat — pack water for the midday glare, fish the first hour on the points, and let the shad tell you which creek arm is alive.

● WEEKEND OUTLOOK

National Weather Service Sacramento's point forecast for Don Pedro Reservoir frames a dry, warm weekend for the **Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026** window. Read every clock in this Cast as **PT**. Friday opens near **93°F** after overnight air near **70°F** (mostly sunny, 0 to 5 mph SW). Saturday climbs to about **95°F / 71°F** (areas of smoke, 5 mph WNW). Sunday holds near **96°F / 73°F** (sunny, 5 mph SSW). No active watches or warnings were highlighted for this pull. Barometer was not logged station-by-station on every arm; treat pressure as steady-fair under this quiet pattern.

For **spotted bass**, that pattern favors a classic early-fall California day: **first light through mid-morning** on shallow shade, points, and bait edges while air is still cool, then a slide to the first break, docks, and any wind-stacked bank once the sun clears the hills. Midday heat will push fish deeper or tighter under cover — slow down, fish shade, and save long runs for the afternoon only if the breeze keeps you cool. Friday is the softer traffic day; Saturday and Sunday recreational pressure builds around popular ramps, and **no named national trail event was pulled** for this water on Oct 2–4.

Carry more water than you think you need on this midweek window — highs climb through Wednesday, and the best fishing still happens when you can stay focused through the heat. A simple three-rod rotation (one faster search bait, one mid-column bait, one bottom bait) covers almost every bank you will fish without cluttering the deck. When a pocket goes quiet, make one short move to the next point or seam that shows bait on the graph rather than a long empty run. That habit keeps you in fish and matches how this water actually turns on in early fall.

FRIDAY OCT 2

~93°F

Low ~70° · dry · 0 to 5 mph
SW

Mostly Sunny

Sunrise ~7:01 AM · Sunset

~6:42 PM PT

*Best bite: first light—~10 AM;
softest weekend traffic*

SATURDAY OCT 3

~95°F

Low ~71° · dry · 5 mph
WNW

Areas Of Smoke

Sunrise ~7:02 AM · Sunset

~6:40 PM PT

*Best bite: first light—~10 AM;
shade and structure after 11
AM*

SUNDAY OCT 4

~96°F

Low ~73° · dry · 5 mph
SSW

Sunny

Sunrise ~7:03 AM · Sunset

~6:39 PM PT

*Best bite: dawn shallow;
mid-day slow under cover*

● LEVEL & FLOW CHEAT SHEET

Turlock Irrigation / Don Pedro recreation notices pages are the live source for pool, gate, and park notices on Don Pedro. Fixed Fri–Sun recreational “generator calendars” are often thin for foothill and SoCal reservoirs — treat any elevation, release, or advisory as live. Failover: check the agency and park page the morning you launch, and call the marina or park desk if you need a same-day condition read. Advisories can change without notice.

WATER	OBSERVED	FLOW / BOARDS	HOW TO FISH IT
Don Pedro Dam / pool	Verify live pool and recreation notices before you launch	No fixed Fri–Sun recreational release calendar pulled	Fish points and timber; verify boards the morning you go

Dam and restricted zones stay off-limits whether flows are quiet or moving. If a local advisory, fire restriction, or temporary closure appears on the park or agency page, that overrides any general weekend outlook here.

● HOW TO FISH IT — BANK / KAYAK / BOAT

BANK

Shore access near **Fleming Meadows**, **Blue Oaks**, and other day-use pockets puts rock, timber, and shade in easy casting range. Fan-cast the first break at light with a spinnerbait or soft plastic, then slow down with a drop-shot or Texas-rig once the sun climbs. Stay on posted public shoreline, give swimming areas room after mid-morning, and skip private banks. If timber or a point shows bait dimpling, stay and rotate a search bait and a bottom bait through that water before you walk to the next pocket.

KAYAK

Launch early at Fleming Meadows or Blue Oaks and paddle onto the nearest point, island edge, or timber line before boat traffic builds. Don Pedro rewards a slow graph-and-cast morning inside one sector more than a reservoir-wide race. Wear a PFD, mind afternoon winds on the main body, and leave room for larger boats near the recreation corridor. Keep a topwater, a small swimbait, and a Texas-rig or drop-shot ready. Fish the bait you mark thoroughly before paddling past in search of new water.

BOAT

Main recreation ramps at Fleming, Blue Oaks, and related nodes put you on points, islands, and creek arms quickly. Start shallow at dawn with a topwater or spinnerbait, then rotate to finesse and jigs on the break and shaded timber once fish short-strike. Midday, slow down on shade and timber rather than making empty long runs. Keep a spotter when running, give ski boats space, and honor dam restricted zones. When wind turns a main-lake point on, fish that blown bank thoroughly before you duck into a protected creek arm.

● PURE-GAS.ORG E0 · THIS WATER

Closest public **ethanol-free (E0)** listings from Pure-Gas.org near Don Pedro. Listings can change — confirm the E0 grade at the pump if that matters for your motor. No pump prices in this Cast.

- Gold Country Gas — Sonora, CA · ~16.9 mi · UNBRANDED · E0 octane 100 · 209-532-6428
- Hunt & Sons — Placerville, CA · ~74.2 mi · UNBRANDED · E0 octane 93, 100 · 530-622-1551
- Yuzty Chevron — Farmersville, CA · ~117.3 mi · CHEVRON · E0 octane 87, 89, 91 · —
- Sonoco — Sonoma, CA · ~119.2 mi · SUNOCO · E0 octane 91, 96, 100 · 800-870-7223

Call ahead when you can — E0 availability changes. Distances are rough estimates to this water.

● LURE BOX

TOP

Walking bait and small popper on points at dawn. Bone and chrome when the surface is calm.

MID

Spinnerbait or small swimbait on wind-blown points; keep a drop-shot ready for the break.

BOTTOM

Drop-shot, shakey head, and compact jig on the first break and shaded rock. Green pumpkin and smoke cover most foothill stains.

Match size to **threadfin shad** and **small bluegill** along points and timber. Size down when fish short-strike; size up when you mark bigger bait. Primary species this week is **spotted bass**.

● SPOTTED BASS LIFE STAGE

Spawn is long over. This midweek window is about **post-summer spotted bass** tracking shad on points and timber edges. Match the bait you mark.

What's on the menu: threadfin shad and small bluegill along points and timber are the most likely menu this week. Public hatch reports are often thin — lead with the forage above, and match the bait you mark on the graph or see dimpling on the surface.

Watch for bait dimpling on calm mornings and for birds working a point or riprap seam. Those clues beat a generic “fish deep” rule this week. If fish short-strike, downsize before you abandon the spot; if they flash and leave, try one size larger or a different profile on the next cast.

● ALSO HOT / ALSO IN SEASON

Largemouth in the backs of creeks and panfish around brush. Spots lead this Cast.

● PRESSURE, CLARITY & BITE WINDOWS

Clarity swings pocket by pocket — wind can stain a bank overnight while the lee side stays clearer. Start with natural colors in clearer water and switch to a darker, slower profile when a pocket turns green or muddy. Decision tree for this midweek: **low light** = shallow shade and faster topwater or swim presentations; **high sun** = docks, breaks, and a slower bottom bait; **building wind** = fish the blown bank before you leave. Weekday recreation is softer than weekend traffic, but rental boats and bank crowds still peak near popular ramps after mid-morning — launch early, fish the plan, and treat crowd pressure as soft weekday recreation unless a named event shows on the calendar.

Heavy Traffic: no named trail event pulled for Mon–Wed on this water. Soft Friday recreational; Saturday–Sunday builds at popular ramps only.

● ACCESS NOTES & SAFETY

Regs change by water and season. Use the live CDFW licensing and regulation pages for bag limits and gear rules before you fish. Mussel inspections and park hours can change — check before you trail in. Wear a PFD when the boat is on plane, keep a spotter in busy lanes, and give swimming beaches and ski courses room. If lightning builds (unlikely under this dry forecast, but still watch the sky), get off exposed water early.

Trailer lights, spare PFDs, and a basic tool kit belong in the truck on any midweek foothill or SoCal hop — small failures cost more fishing time than almost any lure change. Tell someone your launch and return window when you fish alone, and leave the lake with enough daylight for the drive if Wednesday heat runs long.

● Foothill Reservoir Game Plan

Don Pedro midweek rewards points, timber, and creek-arm edges more than open-water wandering. Graph at dawn near Fleming Meadows or Blue Oaks; when you mark shad or see surface activity, rotate topwater, spinnerbait, and a drop-shot or Texas-rig through that water. Spots and largemouth both show — lead with spots on main points and keep a Texas-rig ready for the backs of creeks.

Midday heat pushes fish to shade and the first break. Slow down, fish timber thoroughly, and save long runs for when the graph proves a move is worth it. Afternoon wind can turn a main-lake point on; fish the blown bank while it is honest, then duck into a protected pocket.

Mussel inspections and park hours matter on busy trail mornings. Launch early, fish the nearest productive water first, and match lure size to the bait you mark rather than forcing a single “lake lure” all day.

● Looking Ahead

Next 1–3 weeks: watch the first true cool front of autumn and any weekend tournament calendars that would stack Heavy Traffic on Don Pedro. As nights keep dropping, expect spotted bass to spend more of the morning on bait and edges and less time buried in the deepest shade. Confirm mussel rules, fire restrictions, and park hours as seasons flip.

Keep notes on which bank produced and what the graph showed — early-fall patterns on this water often repeat the next morning if nights stay cool and the wind direction holds. If Wednesday’s heat arrives early, shorten the topwater window and commit to shade and slower presentations sooner. A calm plan beats a rushed one when the thermometer climbs.

● Sources

NWS Sacramento point forecast · Turlock Irrigation / Don Pedro recreation notices · Pure-Gas.org E0 listings. Elevations, advisories, and station lists change — verify dam boards and pump grade before you go.