



FRESHWATER CAST · FRIDAY CAST

Lake Shasta: Warm Midweek, Spotted Bass & Arm-by-Arm Bait

Lake Shasta · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · bank / kayak / boat · times in PT

Warm weekend · Fri ~88° → Sat–Sun ~90–90° PT

Primary: spotted bass

Verify dam boards before you go

Soft Friday recreational · no named trail event pulled

Shasta's September ridge is still warm — pack water for the long runs, fish the first hour on the nearest bait mark, and let the arms tell you which creek mouth is alive.

● WEEKEND OUTLOOK

National Weather Service Sacramento's point forecast for Lake Shasta 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 **88°F** after overnight air near **64°F** (mostly sunny, 1 to 5 mph ESE). Saturday climbs to about **90°F / 64°F** (sunny, 1 to 6 mph ENE). Sunday holds near **90°F / 64°F** (mostly sunny, 1 to 6 mph W). 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

~88°F
Low ~64° · dry · 1 to 5 mph
ESE
Mostly Sunny
Sunrise ~7:08 AM · Sunset
~6:48 PM PT
*Best bite: first light—~10 AM;
softest weekend traffic*

SATURDAY OCT 3

~90°F
Low ~64° · dry · 1 to 6 mph
ENE
Sunny
Sunrise ~7:09 AM · Sunset
~6:46 PM PT
*Best bite: first light—~10 AM;
shade and structure after 11
AM*

SUNDAY OCT 4

~90°F
Low ~64° · dry · 1 to 6 mph
W
Mostly Sunny
Sunrise ~7:10 AM · Sunset
~6:45 PM PT
*Best bite: dawn shallow;
mid-day slow under cover*

● LEVEL & FLOW CHEAT SHEET

Reclamation Shasta / USBR lake notices pages are the live source for pool, gate, and park notices on Shasta. 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
Shasta Dam / pool	Verify live pool and USBR notices before a long run	No fixed Fri–Sun recreational unit calendar pulled for anglers	Fish points and creek mouths; verify dam boards before 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 **Bridge Bay**, **Packers Bay**, and day-use pockets on the Sacramento and McCloud arms puts rock, bluffs, and shade in casting range without a full day on the water. Fan-cast points and riprap at first light with a spinnerbait or small swimbait, then slow down with a drop-shot or shakey once the sun climbs. Stay on public or permitted shoreline, give marina traffic room, and skip posted private banks. If one point shows bait on the surface or graph, stay and rotate search and finesse baits before hiking to the next pocket.

KAYAK

Launch at a quiet morning ramp on the nearest arm — Sacramento, McCloud, or Pit — and paddle onto points and creek-mouth breaks before ski traffic builds. Shasta rewards fishing the arm you are on more than chasing the whole map. Wear a PFD, respect afternoon winds on the main body, and have a bailout cove when chop builds. Keep a topwater, a small swimbait, and a drop-shot on the deck. Mark bait first, then fish the break thoroughly instead of paddling past every point “just to cover water.”

BOAT

Major ramps put you on bluffs, points, and creek arms quickly. Start shallow on bait at dawn with a topwater or spinnerbait, then rotate to drop-shot, shakey, and small swimbaits on the break once fish slide deeper. Midday, fish shade and deeper transitions on the same arm rather than empty long runs across the main body. Keep a spotter when running, give ski boats space, and stay clear of the dam restricted zone. Make one deliberate move to the next creek mouth if the graph stays empty — not a full-lake tour that burns the morning bite.

● PURE-GAS.ORG E0 · THIS WATER

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

- Hunt & Sons, Inc. — Redding, CA · ~8.8 mi · UNBRANDED · E0 octane 93 · 530-243-1217
 - Covelo Airport — Covelo, CA · ~83.0 mi · UNION 76 · E0 octane 100 · 707-463-4363
 - Thunderhill Raceway Park — Willows, CA · ~83.8 mi · VP RACING · E0 octane 91, 93, 100 · 530-934-5588
 - Renner Petroleum — Garberville, CA · ~89.3 mi · UNBRANDED · E0 octane 91 · 707-923-3380
- 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 bait along points, bluffs, and creek mouths**. 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 creek mouths. Morning fish show higher; midday fish slide to the break. Match the bait you mark arm by arm.

What's on the menu: threadfin shad and small bait along points, bluffs, and creek mouths 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, **smallmouth** on cleaner rock, and **king salmon / trout** in season for anglers who switch gears. 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 fire restrictions are common — 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.

● ARM-BY-ARM GAME PLAN

Shasta is too big to fish as one lake on a three-day midweek window. Pick an arm — Sacramento, McCloud, or Pit — and fish points, bluffs, and creek mouths thoroughly before you relocate. Graph at dawn; when you mark shad, rotate topwater, spinnerbait, and a drop-shot through that water. Spots often show high early and slide to the break under high sun.

Long runs feel tempting when one pocket is quiet, but empty mileage burns the morning bite. Make one deliberate move to the next creek mouth rather than a full-lake tour. Afternoon winds on the main body can get serious — finish exposed points before the chop builds, then duck into a protected pocket for finesse.

Keep mussel inspections and fire restrictions in the pre-launch checklist. A delayed ramp puts you on the water after the best shallow window. Match lure size to the bait you mark arm by arm; what works on the Sacramento Arm may need a size change on the McCloud.

● 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 Shasta. 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 · Reclamation Shasta / USBR lake notices · Pure-Gas.org E0 listings. Elevations, advisories, and station lists change — verify dam boards and pump grade before you go.