



FRESHWATER CAST · MONDAY CAST · MAINE

## China Lake: Monday Rain Exit, Midweek Smallmouth on East Basin Rock

China Lake · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · bank / kayak / boat · times in **ET** · primary: Smallmouth bass

Fri ~75° → Sun ~62° (NWS GYX)

Fri–Sun window · ET

Heavy Traffic: none named Fri–Sun · expect weekend recreational pressure

Friday's partly sunny then chance rain showers near 75°F give way to Saturday near 66°F (sunny) and Sunday near 62°F (mostly sunny) — fish the windows between weather, lean dawn on cover, and plan for weekend recreational pressure.

### ● WEEKEND OUTLOOK

NWS Gray ME (GYX) grid GYX 82,90 pulled Fri Oct 2, 2026 · ~6:40 AM CT. Friday high near **75°F** (Partly Sunny then Chance Rain Showers); overnight low near **48°F**. Saturday near **66°F** (Sunny); Sunday near **62°F** (Mostly Sunny). Numbers change — confirm before you launch.

#### FRIDAY OCT 2

**75°F** · Partly Sunny then Chance Rain Showers · wind 5 to 10 mph W

Storm chances — fish protected banks and docks between cells; sit out lightning. Once cells clear, a short evening window can fire along riprap and shallow wood. Watch wind shifts after fronts (ET).

#### SATURDAY OCT 3

**66°F** · Sunny · wind 5 to 10 mph NW

Post-front / clearer air — dawn is money on riprap and shallow wood; downsize by late morning under bluebird pressure. High near 66°F (ET).

#### SUNDAY OCT 4

**62°F** · Mostly Sunny · wind 5 to 10 mph E

Softest recreational window early — first light–10 AM ET on docks and shade; midday near 62°F gets picky, so slow down and fish cover.

### How to fish this weather

For **smallmouth** (primary on China Lake this week): lead with rock, docks, and windward points once the breeze orients bait. Monday's wet NE pattern favors lee edges and stained inflow pockets; Wednesday's sun should reopen the mid-depth rock roam. Keep presentations compact — tubes, Ned rigs, small swimbaits, and jigs in craw and baitfish tones.

Rain gear Monday is not optional on the open. Midweek, hydrate on the sunny banks and watch recreational rebound after 11 AM ET.

## ● DAM & LEVEL CHEAT SHEET

**THIN** at pull Sun Sep 27, 2026 · ~11:20 PM ET. Use live stage / outlet notes from agency boards only. Failover: Maine DIFW China Lake pages / town notices. Expect stained inflow plumes after Monday rain where creeks dump in.

| ZONE                     | LEVEL / FLOW NOTE                                                                | BITE NOTE                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| South China / east basin | <b>THIN</b> at pull — no dated elev on board at pull ~11:20 PM ET Thu → Sun pull | South China public banks and ramp walkways for dawn soft plastics on rock when posted open. |
| Narrows                  | <b>THIN</b> — verify live before you trailer                                     | Narrows and connecting structure midweek — watch traffic once the weather turns.            |
| West basin               | <b>THIN</b> — China Lake boards THIN at pull                                     | West-basin public access for lee Monday sessions; sunny dock lines Wednesday.               |

## ● HOW TO FISH IT — BANK / KAYAK / BOAT

### BANK

**Shared:** Cool wet Friday mornings need layers; fog can linger until mid-morning. Skip private camps and any posted swim or marina closures on China Lake. **South China** public shore and pier edges where posted for dawn tubes and Ned rigs on rock. **Town / association** day-use banks midweek for shade docks when recreational traffic returns. Live-check park fees, gates, and temporary closures before you walk out on the bank.

### KAYAK

**Plan:** Launch South China public access and work east-basin lee shores Friday under rain and NE wind; skip the open fetch when whitecaps build on China Lake. PFD on the whole float; keep a marked exit and a dry bag for the phone when showers cut visibility. Tue–Wed secondary points as seas lay down. Soft Sunday recreational rebound — give powerboats and skis room after mid-morning on the warm day.

### BOAT

**Plan:** Friday protected east-basin rock and docks only. Saturday chance light rain early — short hops. Sunday first light–10 AM ET rocky points for smallmouth; late morning ride any light breeze that orients bait from South China ramps. Ramps should see thinner trailer traffic Friday and a soft rebound midweek. Idle clear of swim lines, give paddle traffic room near the parks, and watch unmarked bars after Friday stain.

## ● LURE BOX

### TOP

Walking bait (chrome / bone)  
on calm Wednesday banks

Popper / small buzz on shade  
docks midweek

Spinnerbait (white /  
chartreuse) along windward  
rock when breeze builds

### MID

3–4" swimbait (smelt / perch)  
on points

Small crank (craw / shad)  
ticking rock

Jerkbait (sexy shad) on  
clearer midweek edges

### BOTTOM

Tube (green pumpkin /  
smoke) on rock

Ned / shaky (green pumpkin)  
when high pressure gets  
picky

Football jig (brown / orange)  
dragging points

**Stain / clear match:** After Monday rain lean darker craw / junebug in inflow plumes; shift chrome / white / translucent on clearer main-lake rock by Wednesday.

## ● SMALLMOUTH LIFE STAGE

Smallmouth are in early-fall rock-and-dock mode as nights cool. Monday stain and wind favor lee edges; Wednesday sun reopens the roam. Largemouth remain relevant in weedy west-basin pads.

**Forage menu this week:** Crayfish, young panfish, baitfish along weed-rock. Hatch notes thin this week.

## ● ALSO HOT / ALSO IN SEASON

### LARGEMOUTH · YELLOW PERCH

Largemouth: weed edges and dock shade  
midweek — Texas-rig or swim jig. Yellow perch:  
deeper weed lines and rock transitions — small  
jigs / live bait where legal.

### PICKEREL · PANFISH

Specialist note only this window — not the  
primary Cast story. Confirm seasons and  
methods with Maine DIFW before you shift gears.

Local clocks stay in **ET** on this product. Ramp manners matter midweek: idle clear of launch lanes, share the courtesy dock, and give paddle traffic a wide berth near the parks. Electrical storms are low-probability Wednesday on this forecast, but any rumble still means off the water. Carry spare terminal tackle — wet rock and stained water eat tubes and Ned heads faster than clear midsummer days.

## ● HEAVY TRAFFIC

**No named national trail event pulled** for China Lake Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4 (calendars skimmed). Friday weather thins recreational traffic; soft rebound Tuesday–Wednesday once the sun returns. Still watch ramp stacks after mid-morning on the warm Wednesday.

On China Lake, treat Monday as a gear-check and lee-shore day, then build confidence as Tuesday's rain chance fades. Wednesday's warmer sun is the confidence bite for bank, kayak, and boat alike — arrive early, fish the shade rotation, and leave before the afternoon recreational

stack if the ramp looks busy. Keep a short list of backup coves so you are never stuck on a blown-out point when the NE leftover chop surprises you. If clarity drops after the rain, slow down, downsize, and stay in contact with the bottom on rock transitions rather than burning shoreline with power moves that need clear water.

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Carry spare terminal tackle — wet rock and stained water eat tubes and Ned heads faster than clear midsummer days. A compact rain shell stays in the boat Tuesday morning even when the radar looks friendlier than Monday.

When the graph shows bait pinned to a windward point midweek, match size before color — a 3-inch swimbait or compact tube often outfishes a big fall profile until the fish show themselves.

On bank days, rotate shade docks and riprap seams instead of camping one corner; on kayak days, fish a triangle of two coves and one secondary point so you always have a lee option.

Boat anglers should leave a margin before the afternoon ski lanes wake up on the sunny Wednesday, especially near swim areas. Pressure rising into Wednesday often means a pickier midday bite — downsize when the sun goes high.

Stained water after Monday rain is an opportunity — work the color change with a darker craw profile and a slower retrieve until the lake clears midweek. Cloud edges on Tuesday still count; fish the moving shade on rock.

Under bluebird midweek skies, commit to a short bait list before you leave the ramp: one walking or popping topwater for the calm dawn, one compact bottom bait for midday shade and rock, and one reaction bait for any breeze that orients bait on points. Changing every ten casts under high pressure usually costs more fish than it finds on these Maine waters.

If Friday weather or lake steam hangs past sunrise, fish the first hour closer to the ramp instead of crossing open water blind. Once the sun burns through, expand to secondary points, island edges, and windward rock. On bank days, walk a longer stretch of public shoreline rather than camping

one corner — early-fall fish slide along shade seams as the sun climbs.

## ● LOOKING AHEAD

Cool sunny mornings next week keep shoreline rock honest if crowds stay moderate.

### ● PURE-GAS.ORG E0 · THIS WATER

Pure-Gas.org listings near this corridor for this Cast window (no prices — verify grade at the pump). Listings can change. Maine's E0 map is sparse — Windham / Portland corridors cover the China Lake drive.

**Big Apple** — 809 Roosevelt Trail, Windham, ME · Portland / Windham · 90 octane E0

**Big Apple** — 16 Washington Ave, Portland, ME · Portland · 93 octane E0

**Big Apple Store** — 102 Main St, South Paris, ME · western foothills · 90 octane E0

**Sources:** NWS api.weather.gov GYX/82,90 forecast · METAR KPWM · China Lake boards THIN at pull (failover: Maine DIFW China Lake pages / town notices) · sunrise corridor ET · public E0 directories (Pure-Gas.org-aligned; listed; no prices) · trail calendars skimmed (no named event Fri–Sun Oct 2–4). Pulled Fri Oct 2, 2026 · ~6:40 AM CT. Numbers change — confirm conditions and the forecast before you launch.

Freshwater Cast · Friday Cast · MAINE · china-lake · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · drafted Fri Oct 2, 2026 · ~6:40 AM CT