



FRESHWATER CAST · FRIDAY CAST · OREGON

Fern Ridge: Cool Partly Sunny Weekend, Settled High & Dawn Pad Edges

Fern Ridge Reservoir · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · bank / kayak / boat · times **PT**

Highs ~66° Fri → ~66° Sat → ~67° Sun (NWS MFR middle band)

KEUG ~30.01 inHg · KCVO ~30.02 (Fri ~4 AM PT)

Pool 368.08 ft · Long Tom Monroe ~66 cfs (USGS)

Soft weekend recreational · no named Fern Ridge trail event

West Eugene's flatwater keeps early-October cool — pack a shell for the mid-50° dawn, fish the first pad and grass line before the sun climbs over Orchard Point, and let bluegill and crappie chatter tip which Coyote Creek pockets still hold honest Fern Ridge largemouth.

● WEEKEND OUTLOOK

NWS Medford (MFR) middle-band corridor forecast (MFR 77,148), pulled early Friday morning, keeps the window under a quiet dry pattern with cool nights and mid-60s days. **Friday** opens partly sunny with a high near **66°F** after an overnight low near **54°F**, north wind 6–12 mph, and no rain in the forecast; Friday night settles near **53°F**. **Saturday** repeats near **66°F** / overnight low near **53°F**, partly sunny, north breeze 5–10 mph. **Sunday** nudges to near **67°F** / overnight low near **53°F**, partly sunny, north wind 5–9 mph. No active NWS watches or warnings for the corridor at the early-Friday pull. Nearby Willamette Valley METARs around 4:05 AM PT Friday: **KEUG ~30.01** and **KCVO ~30.02 inHg** — a settled high, not a storm-edge drop.

For largemouth: lean the low-light weed edges, pad pockets, and dam-face rock hard while nights stay in the mid-50s, then expect a morning-shallow / midday-slide pattern as highs work the mid-60s under partly sunny skies. Cool air should keep bait and bass honest on the first grass line, Coyote Creek / Long Tom backs, and shaded wood before the sun climbs. North breeze favors a light windward rip along thicker grass after late morning — protect the dawn window, then slide to lee pads and deeper weed edges. Soft recreational pressure expected — **no named trail tournament pulled** for Fri–Sun on Fern Ridge.

FRIDAY OCT 2

~66°F

Low ~54° overnight / ~53° night · ~0% storms · N 6–12 mph

Partly sunny

Sunrise **7:11 AM** · Sunset **6:53 PM PT**

Best bite: first light—9:30 AM PT on weed edges and the dam face; midday thicker grass and shaded wood

SATURDAY OCT 3

~66°F

Low ~53° · ~0% storms · N 5–10 mph

Partly sunny

Sunrise **7:12 AM** · Sunset **6:51 PM PT**

Best bite: dawn in Coyote / Long Tom backs; midday grass edges and shaded docks once park traffic builds

SUNDAY OCT 4

~67°F

Low ~53° · ~0% storms · N 5–9 mph

Partly sunny

Sunrise **7:13 AM** · Sunset **6:50 PM PT**

Best bite: first light—mid-morning on lee pads; midday windward rip along thicker grass if the breeze stacks bait

BITE TIE-IN

Cool nights + dry high = morning largemouth on weed edges, pad pockets, and the first channel cuts where bluegill and crappie mark, then a midday slide to thicker grass and shaded wood as the sun climbs. Keep a compact swim jig or creature ready when panfish chatter tips active pads — that is still Fern Ridge's honest early-October menu.

● DAM & CURRENT / GENERATOR SCHEDULE CHEAT SHEET

Fern Ridge is a USACE Portland District (NWP) flood-control / multi-purpose lake on the Long Tom River west of Eugene. Top of conservation / multi-purpose pool is **373.5 ft** NGVD29; winter minimum sits near **353.0 ft**. There is **no public hour-by-hour hydropower unit board** — this is a flood-control / multi-purpose lake. Live numbers below are USGS instantaneous values from the early-Friday pull; pool and releases can change.

SOURCE	LIVE PULL (FRI OCT 2 EARLY PT)	WHAT IT MEANS THIS WEEKEND
Pool elevation USGS 14168000 Fern Ridge Lake near Elmira	368.08 ft ~4:10 AM PT Oct 2 Top of conservation 373.5 ft	About 5.4 ft under summer full pool — late-season drawdown is normal here. Orchard, Richardson, and Perkins were listed open on the last ODFW note; confirm Lane County Parks before you trailer if the pool keeps easing.
Outflow context USGS 14170000 Long Tom River at Monroe	~66 cfs · gage ~4.32 ft ~4:15 AM PT Oct 2	Modest early-October release through the Long Tom below the dam — soft current near the dam face / spillway neighborhood, not a sweeping generation push.
Inflow context USGS 14166500 Long Tom River near Noti	~15 cfs · gage ~1.13 ft ~4:10 AM PT Oct 2	Upstream Long Tom contribution stays low — classic early-fall valley flow. Coyote Creek and Amazon Diversion side water should fish clearer than after a rain pulse.

Failover before launch: USACE Fern Ridge water page (water.usace.army.mil · NWP / FRN) · USGS 14168000 / 14170000 / 14166500 · Lane County Parks (541) 682-2000 for whether ramps are open. Dam restricted zones stay off-limits. Soft pool → bite only — lower late-season pool concentrates fish on remaining grass, channel cuts, and dam-face rock.

DAM FACE / LOWER LAKE

With pool near 368.1 ft, fish the dam-face rock, first deep weed edge, and the Long Tom outlet neighborhood with a safe buffer from restricted water. Largemouth and panfish both show where grass meets harder bottom on that south / dam end.

COYOTE CREEK & MID-LAKE PADS

Coyote Creek arm, Perkins Peninsula south shore, Gibson Island neighborhood, and the Long Tom backs fish a classic early-fall Fern Ridge pattern: bluegill and crappie in the pads early, then bass sliding to thicker edges and channel cuts as the sun climbs. Calm dawn pockets favor quiet topwater; the north breeze favors a windward rip along grass after mid-morning.

● HOW TO FISH IT — BANK / KAYAK / BOAT

BANK

Shared: Cool Friday–Sunday mornings reward a shell and PFDs on any wet rock; dam restricted zones stay off-limits. Start on **Perkins Peninsula** day-use shoreline and the south-shore rest stops before picnic traffic, then rotate to **Richardson Park** and **Orchard Point** walking water where pads and wood still reach the bank. Dawn walking a shadowed weed edge with a buzzbait or compact frog covers water under the partly sunny high; once the sun climbs Saturday–Sunday, slow down with a green-pumpkin creature or Texas-rig worm along visible grass holes and dock edges near the park day-use lanes.

KAYAK

Launch **Perkins Peninsula** or **Richardson Park** when you want short paddles to Coyote Creek cuts and mid-lake pad fields without a long open-water crossing. On calmer dawn pockets Friday–Sunday, work the lee side of Gibson Island and the first grass line with a $\frac{3}{8}$ -oz swim jig or squarebill, then slide a soft stickbait through bluegill pockets if fish are sipping. Give bigger boats the main-lake lanes around Orchard Point after late morning, especially once weekend recreational traffic and the light north breeze stack up on the open flats.

BOAT

Orchard Point, Richardson Park, and **Perkins Peninsula** put you closest to classic fall Fern Ridge transitions: pad fields, creek-channel swings, and the dam-face rock where panfish pull largemouth. Idle the first hour on a frog or waking bait along grass edges, then slide to thicker mats and 4–10 ft weed lines with a punch rig or flipping stick as the sun climbs. Confirm USGS pool if trailer depth looked skinny last trip — late-season 368 ft still fishes, but ramps and creek backs change feel week to week. Weekend recreational and park traffic builds by late morning even without a trail blast-off.

● LURE BOX

TOP

Compact frog (black / white) over pads

Buzzbait on shaded grass edges

Walking bait in slick dawn pockets

MID

$\frac{3}{8}$ oz swim jig (green pumpkin / bluegill)

Squarebill along wood and grass holes

Spinnerbait (white/chart) if the north breeze stacks a rip

Soft stickbait for pressured pads

BOTTOM

Texas-rig creature in grass holes

Punch rig / flipping stick in thicker mats

Ned or light jig on dam-face rock

Wacky stickbait when fish suspend off edges

Stain / clear match: Darker profiles in muddy Coyote backs after any leftover runoff; translucent bluegill, green-pumpkin, and black/blue on clearer main-lake grass. Tie colors to bluegill / crappie and crawfish first.

● BASS LIFE STAGE

Early-fall transition on Fern Ridge. Cooler nights in the mid-50s and a dry high should pull largemouth onto weed edges, pad pockets, and the first channel cuts while keeping them honest around wood and dam-face rock. Fish are not locked on a winter deep stack yet — treat this as a morning-shallow, midday-slide pattern as highs sit in the mid-60s. Skip the spawn talk; that chapter is closed.

What's on the menu: Dated hatch reports for this exact window are thin. Most-likely forage this weekend is **bluegill and crappie** in the pads and weed edges (ODFW's Fern Ridge warmwater note still points anglers there), with crawfish on harder bottom and dam-face rock once the sun climbs, and leftover juvenile baitfish wherever birds tip a school. Start on bluegill-profile swim jigs and creatures; keep a craw-colored jig ready for rock transitions midday.

● ALSO HOT / ALSO IN SEASON

CRAPPIE · BLUEGILL

Fern Ridge's calling card when the pads still hold schools — keep a small jig or soft plastic ready along weedy south-shore edges and Perkins. Soft language only; confirm seasons and creel on the live ODFW page before you keep fish.

BROWN BULLHEAD · PANFISH MIX

Bullhead and mixed panfish matter on soft-bottom edges and night bites for mixed bags, especially after dark Friday. Same access rules as bass — legal bank and ramp water only.

CROWD / HEAVY TRAFFIC

No named Oregon club / trail event pulled for **Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4** on Fern Ridge. Weekend traffic elsewhere: Sat Oct 3 at Siltcoos Lake (Tenmile Bass Club); Sat–Sun Lower Columbia 2-day (Central Oregon Bass Club); Sat–Sun Columbia River John Day Pool championship (Drain Raider Series) — not here. Expect normal weekend recreational traffic at Orchard / Richardson / Perkins — earlier launch still beats the picnic crowd.

LOOKING AHEAD

NWS trend stays dry into early next week with highs near the mid-60s — classic early-October Fern Ridge mornings if nights stay cool and the pool keeps easing. Heavy Traffic this weekend stays on other OR waters (Siltcoos / Lower Columbia / John Day Pool) — **none named Fern Ridge** at the early-Friday pull. Next Cast: Monday window.

● PURE-GAS.ORG E0 · THIS WATER

Ethanol-free stations near the Veneta / west Eugene / Fern Ridge corridor (no pump prices).

- **Pacific Pride** — 88241 Huston Rd, Veneta, OR (~5 mi) · ethanol-free UNBRANDED 91 on Pure-Gas.org — verify grade
- **Veneta Town Pump** — 24927 Hwy 126, Veneta, OR (~5 mi) · ethanol-free UNBRANDED 92 on Pure-Gas.org — verify grade

- **Pacific Roads** — 2340 Irving Rd, Eugene, OR (~6.5 mi) · ethanol-free CHEVRON 92 on Pure-Gas.org — verify grade
- **Tyree Oil Pacific Pride Cardlock** — 2340 Irving Road, Eugene, OR (~6.5 mi) · ethanol-free PACIFIC PRIDE 92 on Pure-Gas.org — verify grade

Stations from Pure-Gas.org OR list (saved for this water). Listings move — verify literal E0 / ethanol-free grade at the pump. No pump prices published in this Cast.

Sources: NWS Medford (MFR) middle-band corridor forecast grid MFR 77,148 · METAR KEUG / KCVO · USGS 14168000 pool elevation, 14170000 Long Tom at Monroe, 14166500 Long Tom near Noti · USACE Portland / Fern Ridge project info · orbass.com Oregon master schedule · Pure-Gas.org ethanol-free station directory · ODFW Willamette Zone recreation report (live regs). Schedules change — confirm pool, ramps, and the forecast before launch.

Freshwater Cast · Friday Cast · Fern Ridge Reservoir · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · drafted Fri Oct 2, 2026
~4:30 AM PT