



PLAN YOUR FISHING TRIP AHEAD!

By Capt. Rich Santos-FFF Certified Casting Instructor

By all means I'm no fishing rocket scientist or forecaster for fish bits but I figure if the weather man can get away with it....so could I! I want to share what I practice when trying to plan a good day on the water. You really need take a good hard look at what the conditions are going to be like before you set out. It could make or break a trip! By now I'm sure your thinking this is no brainer! Right! Well Just in case you have forgotten this might help. Especially with any beginners that are not aware of how conditions affect fishing.....and yes they do. There is more to look at than you might think. ...so here we go.

I start finalizing my trip about 2-3 days ahead of the outing. At this point and time it seems to be where you can actually see and believe what the weather conditions, etc. are going to do. For me it boils down to several things which include tide heights and wind direction, wind speed, cloud cover, time of day when the best tide height occurs with active fish, quantity of bait in the water, water temperatures and amount of time you have to fish. Some last minute changes might also be needed in order to find the best spot to fish for your day out. Check with the wife on this!

This might include changing your location somewhere much further away, changing your fishing tackle, fishing method meaning by boat, wade, kayak, etc. and fish species depending on conditions.

Some questions I ask myself are:

What has the wind direction and speed been starting 2-3 days before your outing?

How much bait has been around?

What is the water clarity?

Is there much fishing pressure before and on the day to go for the area you're going to?

What is the status of recent fishing reports?

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The photo above shows an extreme low tide that will push fish off a mud flat. When the flat is covered with shallow water you can sight fish the Reds which often actively feed on it and readily take flies. This extreme low tide puts them into the deeper holes making it possibly tougher to catch on fly. A good bet might be to fish at the end of the slough (shown above) that drops off into deeper water. It could be a good staging area for fish when the current is running.



Often cloudy conditions can sometimes trigger fish to aggressively feed any time during the day. I believe they become less shy and wary on days like this!

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The point of this article is that **good planning ahead** yields better results and to share some **website resources** I use to figure this all out. Hope it helps!

Here's a link to check on any *high/low Pressures* and approaching *fronts*.

<http://www.wunderground.com/US/Region/Southeast/2xpxFronts.html>

Here's a link that gives you a complete weather picture every 3 hours through the day. I especially like to pay attention to the *Cloud Cover %* and *Precipitation* here!

<http://www.wunderground.com/cgi-bin/findweather/getForecast?query=mayport%2C+florida>

Here's a link for your *Marine Forecast*.

<http://www.wunderground.com/MAR/AM/454.html>

Here's a REAL important link giving you the current actual *Wind Direction* including the past 24 hours. Includes water temperatures, etc. Just click on the buoy location.

<http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/maps/Florida.shtml>

Here's a link giving the *Predicted* and *Observed Tide Heights*. It will give you a good idea of the actual difference between the two.

[http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/data_menu.shtml?stn=8720218%20Mayport%20\(Bar%20Pilots%20Dock\),%20FL&type=Tide%20Data](http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/data_menu.shtml?stn=8720218%20Mayport%20(Bar%20Pilots%20Dock),%20FL&type=Tide%20Data)

Here's a link for *Tide* and *Current Predictor*.

<http://tbone.biol.sc.edu/tide/tideshow.cgi?site=Mayport%2C+FL&units=f>

Here's a link for *Interactive Weather* showing live weather.

http://www.weather.com/weather/map/interactive/32216?from=36hour_map_large&animation=true&zoom=7&interactiveMapLayer=radar

Tight Loops and Lines to all!

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<http://www.flyfishjax.com/>



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