

# FISHING IS A GAS!

Yes, Spoonpluggers really enjoy their fishing! However, recently high gasoline prices (\$4.+ per gallon) have caused concern for many fishermen, and some may be rethinking about their sport. Most sports require the consumption of gas in some manner, either in the sport or getting to the events. Wiser use of gasoline in our fishing will allow us to continue enjoying our recreation. It does not make sense to drop an activity we so thoroughly enjoy and that effectively reduces stress in our daily lives.

Below are some ways for fishermen to reduce gasoline consumption and still get enjoyment. They are listed with the most effective first, although individual equipment and situations can vary that.50% or more savings in your gas use is not impossible if several of these ideas are utilized (think \$2.00/ gallon gas!).

## 1) SHARE A TRIP

If you fish alone much, invite a friend to go fishing. Sometimes members in our club will fish 3 in a boat. Because of higher prices, sharing gas costs on a fishing trip is more widely accepted. Determine what mileage you get towing your boat and divide that into miles traveled to give you the gallons used. Then add the gallons used on the water.

## 2) DRIVE SLOWER

If we slow down on the road from 65mph to 55mph, there is a 20% savings in gasoline. If you normally go 70 or 75mph, the savings will be much greater. Wind resistance at higher speeds really hurts mileage. Remember, fishing is a recreation we are supposed to enjoy. Take some side roads and enjoy the scenery. They may be more direct anyway. Speed can be a factor on the water also. Once you get up on plane, back off on the throttle some to save gas.

## 3) 4-STROKE AND E- TECH OUTBOARDS

These motors have proven 30% and more savings in boat gas. If you have a 2-stroke outboard and are thinking of upgrading, it is definitely recommended. Larger boats and motors especially benefit.

#### 4) SHORTER TRIPS

This can save considerably on towing vehicle gas and many are staying closer to home to fish. However, some regions do not have lakes close by. Also, fishing familiar waters all the time can cause stagnation in our learning and even reduce interest in fishing. Going to other areas can give exposure to better fishing, other species, and a better learning experience. In this case, it is better to go to an area, stay a night or 2, and do short trips from there. Notice, this is exactly what we do for our Spoonplugger outings!

#### 5) CUT DOWN WEIGHT

Any extra weight in the towing vehicle or boat reduces gas mileage. Unused items and tackle should be removed. Using your boat as a “floating tackle store” may not be necessary if you plan ahead on your fishing. Also, consider your boat size and weight. If you fish big waters, you will need a bigger boat. But if most of your fishing is done on inland lakes and rivers, consider downsizing. Safety is most important here.

#### 6) PLAN YOUR FISHING

Always have maps of another lake or 2 in the area you are fishing as an alternate destination if the ramp is closed or has no parking left. Thorough fishing of an area on the lake is recommended over “running and gunning” This includes both casting and trolling. Those who troll most of the time should stop and cast structures that look good. Before you get on the water, go over the lake map and plan your procedures. Have a sequence of spots to check in an orderly manner and troll between these spots to find new areas and save gas. A longer fishing day will be more efficient.

#### 7) MISCELLANEOUS SAVINGS

Keep recommended tire pressure up in both towing vehicle and boat trailer tires. Make sure both the outboard and towing vehicle engines are properly tuned. Your driving habits also help, including coasting more and using your brakes less. Fast jump starts waste considerable gas. If you are waiting for a long stop or train, turn off your engine.

To those who might plan on getting out of fishing because of high gas prices, just consider the current cost of golf green fees, sports club memberships, or tickets to professional sporting events!

Looking back at how Buck Perry did most of his fishing throughout his lifetime (small boat and motor, trolling to cover water and find structure, casting, etc), few of us could ever match his efficiency, both in catching fish and saving gas. His lessons are in his written material for us to learn about and try to emulate. I would guess that his choices and methods were not centered on saving gas, but on efficient and effective fishing.

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