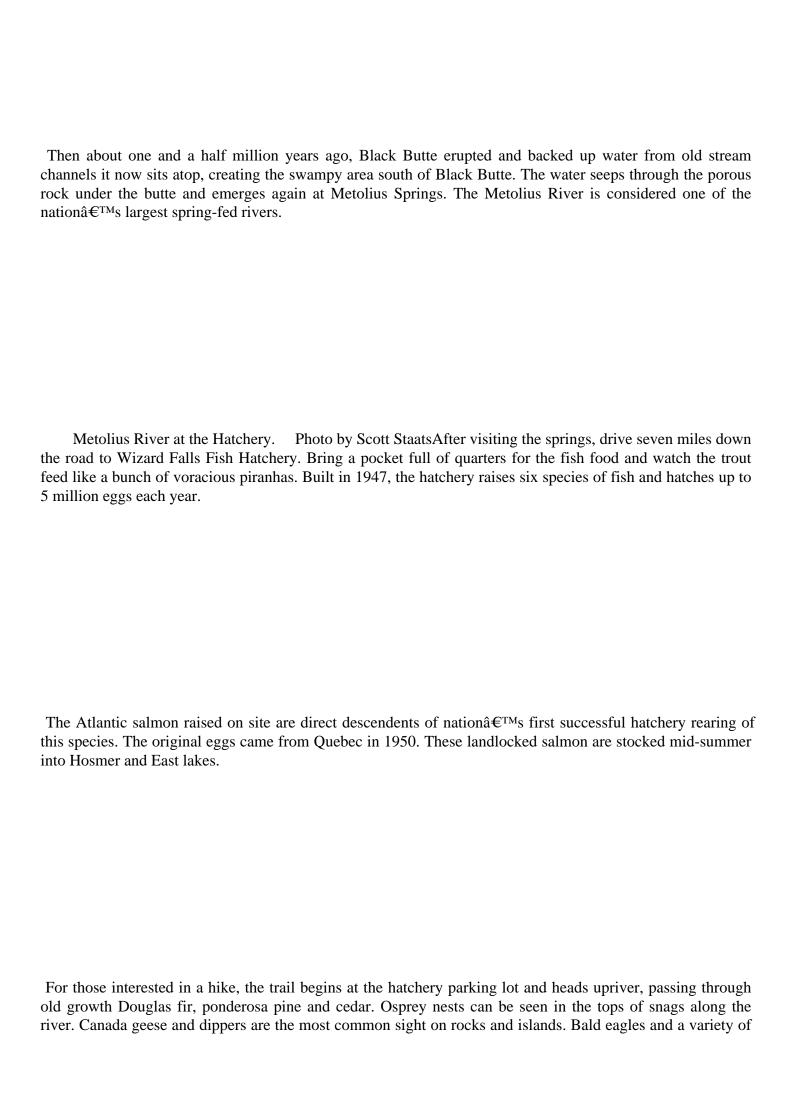
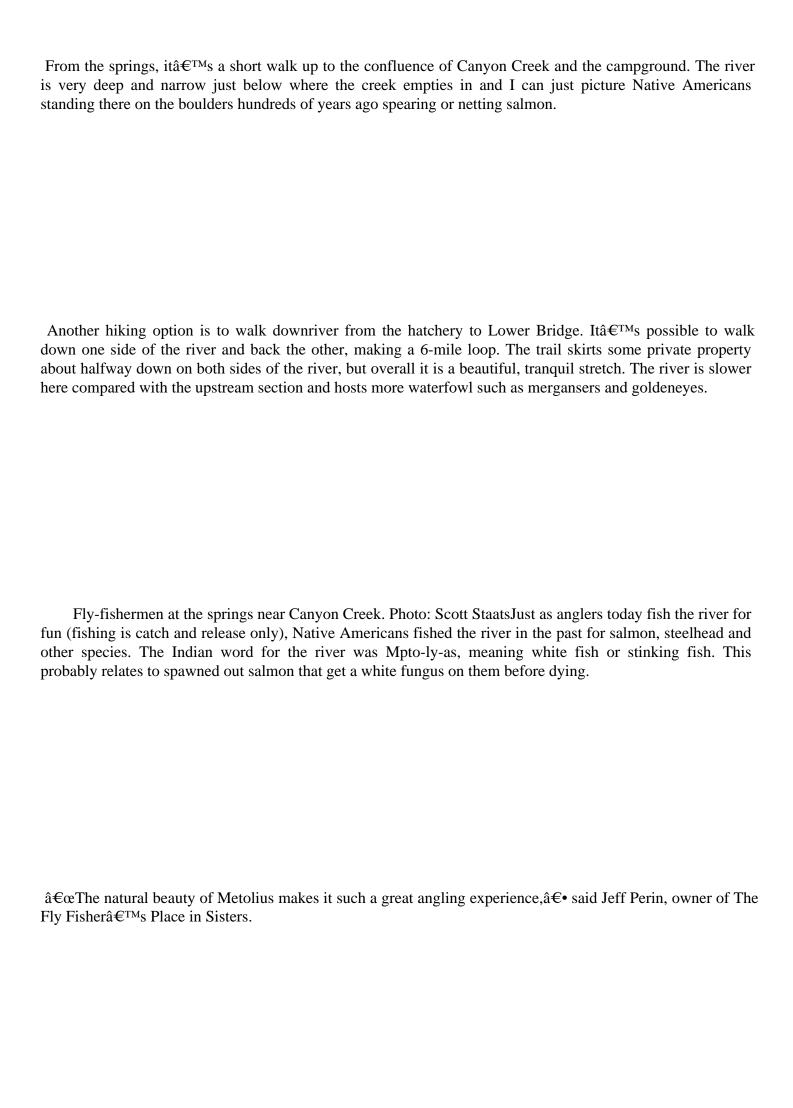
## Metolius River: Great Hiking And Fishing by Scott\_Staats Here's the dilemma: you want to hike and you want to fish, but many of the area's rivers are flowing high and many of the trails in the high country are still muddy or under snow. What do you do? The answer is the Metolius River. The natural beauty and the geologic history keep drawing me back to the Metolius. My favorite hike is from Wizard Falls Fish Hatchery up to Canyon Creek, a five-mile roundtrip. Before starting the hike, be sure to stop in at the Head of the Metolius to view the birth of this river. Most rivers usually have their beginnings from small springs that turn into small streams that turn into larger streams and finally form a river, but the Metolius skips that process and boils out of the ground into a full blown river.

The entire Metolius River basin was formed from past earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and glaciation. About 5 million years ago, the basin didn't exist; the land was at the same elevation as the top of Green ridge, which now rises abruptly nearly 2,000 feet above the valley floor.



songbirds can also be seen darting in and out of the riverside vegetation.
About a quarter mile before reaching Lower Canyon Creek Campground, a series of large springs flow into the river from the opposite bank. These springs drain the western slopes of Green Ridge. It's easy to see why parts of the Metolius are managed under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
This section of the Metolius River Canyon remains fairly natural and wild. Where the river drops over bedrock shelves, the water takes on blue and green colors, while the many rapids add some white to the scene.
A lot of small islands can be seen in this section of river. They appear to be formed from past logjams that catch sediment and other debris until plants take hold. Look close in the crystal clear water and you can see kokanee, rainbow trout or even some of the larger bull trout in the river this time of year.



Perin offers these tips to fly anglers on the Metolius: use light tippets and long leaders, study the hatches or ask local fly shops. He also suggests using emergers and cripple patterns, something in transition. Photos in his shop of 26-inch redband and a 32-inch, 15-pound bull trout are enough to get any angler excited to grab their fly rod. Perin notes that the Metolius River is challenging for both the novice and the expert.

Besides redbands, bull trout, and whitefish, the river also supports populations of kokanee, brown and brook trout. Kokanee come up the river from Lake Billy Chinook the end of August through the end of October to spawn. Angling is restricted to catch and release for all fish.

Getting there: Go west from Sisters on Hwy 20 for 10 miles, turn right at sign for Camp Sherman on Forest Service Road 14. In a few miles, follow the signs to "Head of the Metolius.― Wizard Falls Fish Hatchery is another 7 miles on the left.

Scott Staats is a fulltime outdoor writer who has lived in Central Oregon the last ten years. His articles have appeared in local, regional and national publications.

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