

The Guide's Forecast - volume 6 issue number 41

Northwest Oregon and Washington's most complete and accurate fishing forecast

Forecasting for the fishing week of **April 15th – April 21st, 2005**

Fisheries Update: Condensed from this week's full length report. To access the full length report as a paid subscriber head here: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/subscriber/> and if you are not a subscriber yet, subscribe now by going here: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/signup.shtml>.

Pro guide Bob Rees (503-812-9036) and Pro Guide Kevin Newell (360-430-2521) report lower Columbia fishing is sporadic but becoming more consistent. Low catch rates and dam counts are jeopardizing this fishery and it could close as soon as the end of the day, April 19th. High slack and the second half of the outgoing are producing the best results.

Pro guide Jay Daly (503-341-9571) reports that St. Helens is producing some quality catches. Jay has had good luck on anchor near St. Helens and backtrolling Kwikfish at Bonneville. Admittedly, this area is not any better than the rest as it too has its ups and downs.

Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511) reports fishing in the I-5 area is also producing sporadically. Trolled herring seems to be the best and the anglers at Bonneville are finding better success too. Backtrollers and anchor anglers are doing about the same which is different than what history dictates. The sealion problem at Bonneville is being addressed.

Pro Guide James Stevenson (503-580-4162) reports slow fishing on the lower Willamette last week with his boat catching and releasing only one native and that he saw only a couple of other anglers land any.

Pro Guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424) reports that the John Day River on the East side has been producing between eight and 15 smallmouth per day with fish taken recently over the 20-inch mark.

Pro guide Jack LaFond (1-800-270-7962) and Washington's Pro Guide Jeff Knots (509) 366-4052 report winds are hampering walleye anglers but catches in the 3 to 8 pound range continue to be the norm. This fishery will likely slow due to these fish entering their spawning stage.

North Coast steelheading remains consistent although slower than in the recent week on the Wilson, Nestucca and particularly the upper Trask. The Nehalem is still too high for productive fishing although the Vernonia area is a possibility.

Clatsop beach clamming was not so good on last weeks tides. The surf was too big.

Sturgeon were stirring in Tillamook Bay on last weeks minus tides. That fishery should go to pot as well as crabbing with all the recent and forecasted fresh water influence.

The Umpqua and Rogue Rivers are in recovery from Southern coastal rain storms and as they drop and clear, the spring chinook fishing continues to improve.

Lower Willamette water temperature are below 50 degrees from the Falls through Multnomah Channel which is putting the chill on the spring chinook movement as well as the bite. A warming trend is expected to turn this situation around. Sturgeon fishing continues to be dismal.

A few springers have been taken from the Sandy but without numbers coming up the Columbia, it'll remain slow. The Clackamas River is in fine shape with good color but without numbers coming up the

Willamette, well, you know

Smallies will be active in the upper Willamette once the water clears somewhat. Walleye fishing is great at John Day where 20 boats found 55 keepers over last weekend.

Vernonia Pond has been stocked for a special kids' event this weekend. In addition, the following lakes and ponds have been planted: Battle Lake, Bay City Reservoir, Cape Meares Lake, Carter Lake, Cleawox Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Cullaby Lake, Devil's Lake, Lytle Lake, Smith Lake, South Lake, Tahoe Lake, Town Lake, Woahink Lake, Haldeman Pond, Foster Reservoir, Freeway Lake East, Green Peter Reservoir, Timber Linn Lake, Waverly Lake. E. E. Wilson, Junction City Pond, Taylor Lake, Rock Creek and Thompson Reservoir.

Soapbox Update: Please join us for our second annual Bounty on the Bay fundraiser to support salmon restoration efforts in the Tillamook area. Last years event was a smashing success and we think the fishing will be even better this year! We will start off the event with a seminar by **pro guide Bob Rees** on how to catch Tillamook Chinook using herring trolling techniques. Follow this with a great tournament and win yourself some great prizes for biggest and most spring Chinook landed on the bay that day!

The biggest catch of the day is the opportunity to fish with **NW legend Buzz Ramsey!** The current high bid of \$200 holds this seat but hopefully you will drive the price up- all in the name of salmon recovery!

Go to www.tbnep.org to register or call the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership at (503) 322-2222 for any questions. You won't want to miss this event!

Paid subscribers will note a significant section on Washington fishing again this week. The Guide's Forecast - Washington edition is coming to fruition as requested by our numerous readers and **pro guide Kevin Newell (360-430-2521)** is doing a bang-up job of making it happen. Enjoy the fruits of his labor and for our free version subscribers, here is a re-cap of the Washington report:

Pro Guide Curt Carlisle (253) 921-3334 reports decent fishing over the weekend on the lower Cowlitz between Longview and Castle Rock. The springers are coming and this may be a good bet if the Columbia closes on Tuesday.

Lewis River fishing is still slow but the Kalama River picked up nicely over the weekend. Kokanee fishing in Merwin Reservoir should also pick up when the nicer weather comes. It is coming, right?

Mike Jamboretz (425) 788-5955 reports that blackmouth fishing is less than impressive. The season did not close with a bang as 4/15 is the last day you can fish. Thankfully, a productive halibut season is on the horizon.

Pat Graham (360) 374-5313 states fishing on the Olympic Peninsula is beginning to slow. Steelhead options are waning but spring Chinook are starting in on the Sol Duc. Nets are again fishing peninsula streams making for even more challenging conditions.

Pro Guide Pat Long (509) 751-0410 reports that warmwater fishing for bass and catfish is picking up with the water temperature. Bass are starting to move into the shallower water and fishing for smallies should improve over the next several weeks.

Pro Guide David Child (509) 962-5523 states the trout fishing on the Yakima is great when the wind isn't blowing. March Browns continue to provide good opportunity and the fishing should improve with spring in the air.

Razor clamming on the Long Beach Peninsula was great during last weeks tides. The next opener won't be until April 23 – 25.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Salmon fishing continues to be the highlighted fishery on the Columbia River. We are in the peak of the season and most are asking, “is this all we have to show for?” With high expectations, anglers and fishery managers are beyond blaming sea-lions for the low production this season. The Columbia River Compact met today to discuss season modifications to the mainstem sport fishery and the result may very well be a river-wide closure come Tuesday, April 19th. If dam counts don't begin to materialize and catch rates increase, we are certainly in for a closure. Most are still asking about the fish viewing predators at Bonneville. Apparently, the Feds have finally taken action and have taken to using fire hoses to “chill” them out. It seems to be working for the time being as fish passage on the first day of the “cleansing” had 25% of the entire seasons passage swing by the fish counter! Where it goes from here will be revealed in the very near future. The next meeting takes place on Tuesday with possible closure happening as soon as the next day! This is a very real possibility so prepare yourself for a reality check!

On to better news.....as if there was any. Catch rates in the lower river continue to be sporadic as one day will be good while the other not very impressive. I fished on Tuesday, April 12th in the Westport area (only my second guided trip in my new boat) and starting at Tenasillahe Island had 4 chances in about 5 hours of fishing, landing 3 hatchery Chinook. Two of the three fish were Columbia River “dusksies” and the third a Willamette bound “snowbellie”. The Willamette fish was the largest of the bunch at about 16 pounds. It seems the Willamette fish are showing in greater numbers now providing some hope that this run will materialize. Guides working the lower river have certainly been seeing mixed results. Brookfield and Jim Crow Sands have produced nicely recently but as expected, sea lions are having a hay day with the limited success. The best bites have been coming on the second half of the outgoing tide for anchor fishers and the second half of incoming tide (especially at high slack) for the herring trollers. In order to have any degree of success, anglers are putting in long days for their fish. We keep expecting the fishing to just break loose (and I still think it is going to happen) but the results from this season will be far less than anticipated. In defense of our natural resource agencies, this sort of mis-prediction is unprecedented- particularly two years in a row! The run is now being managed as if it was a forecast of 100,000 fish instead of 254,000.

Further upriver, **pro guide Jay Daly (503-341-9571)** reports, “I've had decent catches during some tough days lately. Bright spots have been last Friday in the Columbia near St. Helens when we went 3 for 4 fishing sardine wrapped K-15's anchored in 15 ft of water and trolling whole herring during the incoming tide. Here is Jay's end results:



Fished below Bonneville Monday and went 5 for 5 taking home 4 nice keepers in time for lunch. We back

trolled sardine wrapped K-15's. Too bad my digital camera died prior to that trip. I hope to get some underwater shots from the new submersible digital camera I'm getting tomorrow. I'll get some cool shots to you for TGF. See you at Hawgs and Dawgs!

Reports are much the same upriver. Sporadic results with little consistency. Davis Bar does not seem to be producing like it was just a week ago and although Bonneville has seen a recent upsurge in success, it is far from producing the same catch results that we have witnessed in recent years. Backbouncers are starting to produce some good catches but with a 1 fish bag limit, it is far from driving the closure of this fishery- especially due to the drop in effort. **Pure fishing's Jim Martin** reported fair catches at Ridgefield but sea-lions were 100% in their efforts for an easy meal at the jetty he was fishing. One of the better ODF&W checks of the season came from the Bonneville section this weekend with better than one fish per boat counting 9 fish released. As of 4/12, only 200 fish had passed Bonneville Dam.

Sturgeon fishing isn't any better either. Did the sealions eat all of them too? Keeper fishing is just not an option as checks indicate the shakers are certainly present. The keepers must have known there wasn't going to be a smelt run this year and headed for more productive waters to ply. The best action for shakers is taking place in the Columbia River Gorge but anglers are a little conservative on their bait supplies of smelt seeing how there wasn't much to distribute this year.

Walleye fishing remains a big hit for those willing to brave the winds from time to time. **Pro guide Jack LaFond (1-800-270-7962)** reports, "Walleye fishing continues to be favorable when the winds of the west don't send us packing home like a dog with his tail between his legs. :) Fishing the breaklines from 11' to 22' seems to be the most productive and 3 lb. to 8 lb. fish are grabbing chartreuse rigs w/night crawlers. The next 2 - 3 weeks should be the best of the pre-spawn fishery and then you might as well chase a salmon until early June."

The Guide's Forecast – With a closure looming on the horizon, anglers may want to seriously think about a weekend outing if fresh spring Chinook weighs heavy on your mind. Tuesday could be the best day and as to where you should fish? It may be a tough choice. With recent precipitation, the Willamette seems to be a bit colored. This will eventually work its way into the mainstem making for even more challenging conditions. Although significant, it should not last long and the mainstem could actually be fishable over the weekend. Although the weather forecast isn't calling for large amounts of precipitation, rain is forecasted for Friday and Saturday but likely not enough to put the larger river systems out of shape. More consistent catches should start to come from the upper stretches of the lower Columbia such as the Columbia River gorge. Historically, passage really begins to ramp up this week in the Bonneville area which will also make the water below Longview a strong option- especially if the water doesn't go off-color on us. Most of the day can be dedicated to anchor fishing with plugs or spinners but early risers will be able to catch the high slack bite using herring. I have been having my best luck on the larger blue label herring but many folks I have been talking to have been doing better on the smaller green label. I plug cut the larger blue label herring while rigging the green to troll whole. I tip the plug cut herring with a small spinner blade and red/white blades have been working best. The whole rigged herring don't work well with spinner blades attached. The "Blue Magoo" K15 Kwikfish has been working best but a new color (metallic green with chartreuse green head and green tiger stripes) has been working well too. The one I have is a K14. I have been wrapping all of my Kwifish with sardine fillets. The fish have been running shallow so don't be afraid to fish in 8 to 12 feet of water. The stronger tidal flows of earlier in the week will subside so Chinook may not be so inclined to hug the slower currents of the shallow water by the weekend. It was clearly that way most of the week however.

Bonneville anglers will find good success backbouncing eggs towards the deadline and backtrollers working plugs should also find good success. Simple run timing should have that fishery going fast and furious although it is likely the opening day (Sunday) will produce the best results. The sea lions will be angry they got pushed from the fish ladders so be prepared for hungry pinnepedes! Bank anglers in the area have not been a threat to salmon runs this year and low flows in the river coupled with a smaller run will likely keep bank anglers success rates low this week too.

Sturgeon anglers are better off salmon fishing! The best action will take place in the gorge but don't expect to come across many keepers, if any. The pools above Bonneville continue to be the better fisheries and those fisheries likely won't last too much longer- even if only fair results are seen for sportfishers.

Follow Jack LaFond's advice and go check out the walleye options if that ever interested you. Pre-spawn adults are likely to fall to quality presentations and the bite won't be lasting much longer. The Biggs and Rufus areas are the likely hot spots.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Challenging conditions this year include low water temperatures and late, heavy rains which roiled waters. These conditions have combined to delay the springer run, but they are coming.

Willamette anglers scored a few near the St. Johns Bridge and below Meldrum Bar. Trolled, plug-cut herring has been most tempting to Willamette chinook this week. Multnomah Channel has been slower than the main river. Temperatures remain in the high 40s at the Falls to 50 degrees below St. Johns and into Multnomah Channel. Water clarity declined last week with current visibility two feet or less.

Weekend spring chinook checks from the ODFW indicated 15 fish for 77 boats in the Multnomah Channel and 14 for 106 boats near Milwaukie and Sellwood. Only three springers were taken by the 65 boats trying at Oregon City.

Pro Guide James Stevenson (📧) shares his recent experience on the lower Willamette " ... fished one day last week Oregon city, released one wild fish. saw about two caught. Fish tomorrow there again, overall word is slow with very limited glimmers off success."

A few anglers are targeting Springers below the mouth near Kelly Point Park, hoping warmer water from the Willamette will attract chinook. Temperatures are similar, unfortunately, and rain has triggered off-color water periodically in the flows.

Catches by plunkers from Meldrum Bar to the mouth of the Clackamas, while not dazzling, have been encouraging. Enough so that it's beginning to look like springer season along the bank, anyway. Where a few weeks ago only a handful of rods could be seen, numbers are increasing. See the **Reader Email** section, below, for a report from our local spy, Kap'n Ken Johnson for juicy details on the lower Willamette and Clackamas Rivers.

The Guide's Forecast – Springer counts at Willamette Falls remain unimpressive with 10s and 20s per day crossing for a total of 452 as of April 9th. Similarly, the chilly waters have affected summer steelhead which seem in no rush to make the journey as totals on that same date reached just over 600. That's over 3,000 fewer springers and close to 2,000 fewer summers than at this time last year, but the disparity is undoubtedly temperature-related. Just wait 'til the water temps top the 50-degree mark. If you warm them, they will come.

Trolling plug-cut herring with the current can be challenging when the river is really moving, but has been the most effective method. Water in the 12-to-20-foot range has been most productive, often over a sandy bottom. Keep moving to locate scattered fish. Offerings should be within a foot or two of bottom because that's where the springers are.

Fewer fish passed the dams at Stayton last week but more of these are summer steelhead. Marion Forks Hatchery reported as of April 12 that 21 summer steelhead and 338 winter steelhead have been collected at the Minto Trap on the North Santiam . Santiam levels are moderating although these rivers remain between seasons with only a few summers and few springers available. Give it a few weeks, then hit it.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – The occasional springer has been taken from the Sandy River, but it's not yet worth targeting them here. A few summer and winter steelhead are also present.

Conditions on the Clackamas are prime, offering good level and great color although catches remain lackluster.

The Guide's Forecast – When the Willamette temperatures improve, so will the fishing on the Clackamas. There's still time for this one to turn around, offering decent prospects. But it won't be in the upcoming week.

Unlike the Clackamas which gets Willamette springers, the Sandy chinook come from the Columbia so is dependent upon good number in the Big River. It'll remain spotty unless or until Columbia salmon show in force.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Fluctuating river levels in the Tillamook district is allowing for a continuation of good steelhead production in the area. Although the bulk of the run has gone upriver, the dropping condition has allowed anglers to more effectively cover defined holding water on the remaining open waterways. The Wilson in particular has proven a stronghold for steelhead anglers and the fish are well spread throughout the system. Broodstock and wild fish are still being caught and likely will still be an option for another week. The Nestucca is also a good option and boaters have some good opportunity as water conditions will allow for some productive fishing from 6th Bridge downstream. Only experienced boaters should fish this upper stretch as waters can be a bit challenging. The Trask River is a very viable April steelhead option.

Sturgeon fishing in Tillamook Bay was also an option with the recent minus tide series. Action was fair for those using sand or mud shrimp but the tide series is on the way out and likely won't be a great option this upcoming week.

The Guide's Forecast – Look for steelhead success to slow on the Wilson and Nestucca as good migrating conditions have existed for quite a while for determined steelhead on these rivers. The Nehalem will likely continue to flow too high for good success this week but the Trask River (in its upper stretches) should produce well for the next couple of weeks. Drifting conditions are good in the Stone's Camp to Peninsula drift for experienced boaters.

Sturgeon and crabbing options are less than ideal for recreationalists this week. Poor tides and a heavier than usual fresh water influx will keep both "at-bay" (pun intended). Besides, do you really want to witness the carnage of the hatchery out migrating smolts this week? It isn't a pretty sight.

Central & South Coast Reports – Southern Oregon coastal rivers got hit once again by a weather front, pushing them high and off-color over the weekend. There's hope for chinook on the Umpqua and Rogue Rivers in the coming weekend with improving conditions in water clarity and flow. The late winter steelhead runs are winding down and summers are yet to come in most locations. Spring chinook is the prize now, nay, the holy grail of salmon angling and as such, will rightly dominate angler's attention.

Water conditions improved this week as did the spring chinook fishing with several taken in the 20s to low 30s. In addition, the sturgeon are biting below Reedsport with oversize common amidst legal-sized fish. Shorts are a rarity here.

Striped bass are being taken on the lower Coquille, offering an unusual alternative to salmon and steelhead fishing.

The Rogue provided fine spring chinook fishing over the weekend but water temperatures plummeted mid-week to below the magic 50-degree mark. Experienced anglers know the negative effect that sort of

change is bound to have on salmonids. Still, fish are being caught, and with a moderation in weather conditions and accompanying warming of the water, expect the bite to be on for springers in the Gold Beach area. As the chinook run takes off, the catch rate in Grants Pass should take off 'long about this time next week. Look for steelheading results to decline along with angler interest as the spring chinook run takes off.

Washington State has announced 2005 halibut fishing dates which will start in May. Oregon should follow suit shortly. When they do, you'll read it here.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro Guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424) reports from the John Day River, "April 10: Skip Geer took friends Mike Crow (253-639-4346) and Jess Koellermeier (206-510-2015) of Covington and Orting, Wa. They have fished with us before and caught some nice fish. It was 29 in Fossil and the river was flowing 2490 CFS on a clear day. They had 4 fish by lunch, and one of those was a Master Angler Smallmouth 21 1/2" X 15" that Jess boated and released. The picture looked like a pig. They ended up with 17 smallies, and Mike boated a nice 20" X 14", and Skip Geer (541-384-4705) boated another Master Angler Smallmouth (his second this season) of 20 1/1" X 13". They also boated a number of 17" fish. That gives us 9 Master Angler Smallmouth so far this year. Skip still has some days open so give us a call if you would like to get in on the action. The toll free number is 1-888-624-9424. Great day of fishing slow and on the bottom with Smelly Jelly covered baits.

"April 9: Skip Geer took Mike Crow and Jess out today and they boated 5 fish by lunch and 15 for the day. They caught their first fish at 8:15 Am. It was 40 in Fossil, 45 at the river and the water was running 47 degrees, with a 2640 CFS, 8-9 clarity, on a very overcast day. They had 5 fish 16" or better.

"The Old Guide took friends Dean and Lamont Miller, and Mike Barker from the Canby area. Mike boated the first fish at 8:45 AM, and they ended up with 8 fish for the day. It was cold and windy, but they stories were fast and hot. It warmed up to 56 after lunch and the water came up to 49 degrees. Yes, Skip kicked my ass again. "

Brought to you by The Washington Guides Forecast Editor and Pro Guide Kevin Newell (360-430-2521)

Lower Columbia Fishing Report- On again, off again, on again, off again ... is the best way to describe fishing in the Lower Columbia River around Cathlamet and the Clifton channel. Some days anglers are getting 3- 4 fish with several other opportunities (take downs) and other days they are seeing 0-2 fish for a full day's effort. Trolling herring has been very effective at targeting the fish in the Clifton Channel on the incoming tide. Most of the fish that I have seen taken in this area have been on herring.

The Guides Forecast- The water temperature is finally starting to hold around 50 degrees. We are seeing a higher percentage of upriver fish (black lower outside jaw) in the catch and most fish appear to be four-year-old fish. These two factors indicate that the upriver run is starting to enter the river. The upriver and four-year-old fish make up the bulk of the run, so it has definitely started, but how big the run will be is anyone's guess.

The fishing should improve over the next week. Springers travel around 7 miles per day and we have been hearing and seeing some good fishing in the lower river since last Friday. This all indicates that we should have some decent to good fishing in the Vancouver area for Saturday the 16th and Sunday the 17th.

Cross your fingers and hope that we see an increase in the numbers of fish going over Bonneville. There is going to be a meeting next Tuesday to determine whether there will be any closures, and currently if the counts stay where they are, it looks grim for the possibility of the whole lower Columbia remaining open.

Mid Columbia River Fishing Report - Pro Guide Jeff Knots (509) 366-4052 reports that walleye fishing has slowed down due since last week. "The spawn appears to be in full swing with half of the fish appearing to have already spawned."

According to Jeff "May is generally the worst month to fish walleye because it is post spawn and the fish are still in their recovery period." As the fish come out of their spawning stupor many anglers target them using faster techniques such as trolling worm harnesses and deep diving crankbaits.

Smallmouth bass are starting to move into the shallows and many bank anglers in Plymouth Washington have been successful targeting these fish using 3" avocado grubs and crawdad pattern tube baits.

The Guides Forecast- It looks like the walleye are spawning a little earlier than normal so the fishing is probably going to be a little slow from now until mid May.

Smallmouth fishing is just going to get better as the water warms and more and more fish move into shallow water.

Lewis River Fishing Report- Fishing is still very slow on the Lewis River.

The Guides Forecast- We're still a couple of weeks away from decent spring Chinook fishing on the Lewis.

Lewis River Reservoirs Fishing Report- Kokanee are still being caught but no huge numbers as of yet.

The Guides Forecast- We should see the Kokanee fishing really improve as soon as soon as we get a decent stretch of warm weather. Once the water starts to warm up the fish will go on the bite. Anglers that can find the fish and then pattern the Kokanee's movement up and down in the water column will be very successful.

Kalama River Fishing Report- The Kalama fished well over the weekend. Most anglers took a springer home or at least had one on and lost it. Fish are holding in the canyon as well as in all of the usual spots downstream to the mouth. Bobber and eggs/shrimp or just bobber and eggs have worked well for bank anglers. Drift boaters are running bait divers as well as sardine wrapped Kwikfish.

The Guides Forecast- Currently the Kalama is very fishable with visibility around 3 feet. Spring Chinook numbers should continue to climb for the next several weeks. The nice thing about the Kalama is that bank anglers and boat anglers both have a good chance at springers. There is great bank fishing access in the canyon and great drift boat fishing from the red barn downstream to Modrow Bridge.

Cowlitz River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Curt Carlisle (253) 921-3334 reports decent fishing over the weekend on the lower Cowlitz between Longview and Castle Rock. "We have hit them with everything from eggs, sand shrimp, Kwikfish etc. but backtrolling herring has worked the best."

"I'm running 20 foot jet divers on a 1 foot dropper and a 6 foot leader with a cut plug blue label herring" says Curt. Both of the fish Curt caught along with another that didn't stick fell to this setup last Friday.

The Guides Forecast- Steelhead are still available throughout the river but most anglers are turning

their attention to spring Chinook. Back trolling is the most productive method in the lower river below the mouth of the Toutle, but once the fish enter the upper river it is definitely a side drifting game. Side drifting allows you to cover a lot of water to find where the fish are holding. Side drifting is also an effective way to target both springers and steelhead which can often be found in the same areas.

Spring Chinook fishing is just going to improve as we move into May. If the Columbia closes, the Cowlitz will be one of the best opportunities for anglers looking to get into good numbers of spring Chinook.

Puget Sound Fishing Report – Mike Jamboretz (425) 788-5955 or (206) 595-9526. According to Mike Jamboretz, “Blackmouth fishing in our area of Puget Sound will close on Friday April 15th. Fishing has been up and down for us. We did not get out as much as we would have liked.”

The Guides Forecast- Mike says “The good news is that US Halibut will be opening up on May 10th on the Washington coast (areas 3 and 4). The first week of May we will move the boat out to Neah Bay to be ready for some big water fishing. We start fishing the US Halibut first, and then do Canadian Halibut trips and US bottomfish until July 1st, when salmon season opens. We are anticipating another great year of Chinook Fishing, but not too happy about the Sunday-Monday closure. We stay out at the Ocean through August and then return to Puget Sound to intercept the Coho and Pinks in September.



Olympic Peninsula Fishing Report Pat Graham (360) 374-5313. Steelhead fishing on the Olympic Peninsula is starting to slow down. “The rivers have been up and down with some of the recent rains we have been getting, but they are currently clearing” says Pat. “Steelhead are still available but the nets have gone back in the rivers which makes it tough for fresh fish to make it into the river.”

According to Pat, “Were starting to see some spring Chinook showing in the Sol Duc River, not a lot of springers but there are definitely some available.” Spring Chinook in the Sol Duc average 15-20 pounds and in the Hoh River they average 20-30 pounds. Anglers are allowed two hatchery fish per day on the Sol Duc and one wild adult spring Chinook per day on the Hoh.

Fluctuating water conditions determine which techniques Pat uses to target these fish. “If the water is up we will back troll bait divers, but when the water is clear we run floats with shrimp and eggs or sometimes just eggs depending on what the fish are keying into” says Pat.

The Guides Forecast- With the nets in the rivers it is going to be hard to find fresh steelhead but over the last couple of weeks a lot of steelhead have found their way around the nets, so fishing should be decent for the time being.

The number of spring Chinook in these rivers is just going to increase from now until the peak of the season which typically occurs from the second week of May through the second week of June.

Snake River Fishing Report – Pro Guide Pat Long (509) 751-0410 reports “Water temps on the Snake are finally holding in the 47 to 50 degree range throughout the stretch from Little Goose all the way into Hells Canyon. Fishing has been good in the free flowing stretch of the river and the smallies and cats are active in the impounded section of the river (sturgeon fishing in the reservoirs is not good as of late).

The Guides Forecast- The fish are on the bite and with the low flows that we anticipate for the next few weeks, the fishing should be excellent for all species, including sturgeon, bass and catfish.

The local bass club will be holding a tournament on the Snake this weekend, we should see a number of fish in the 5 to 6 lb. plus range and some heavy limits- we'll report on the results next week.

The Clearwater and Snake River springer season opens April 23rd but it doesn't look like it will be much of an event this year, at least for the opening week. We'll have to wait and see what develops on this one. When the fish finally decide to head home we'll start watching their progress a little closer and maybe even polish up the Kwikies!!

Yakima River Fishing Report – Pro Guide David Child (509) 962-5523. The Yakima is fishing great! The mayfly hatches, both March Browns and Baetis have been strong in the afternoons, especially on the cloudy days. Lately the Baetis have been stronger, while the March Brown hatch has been sporadic and fairly intense for short periods of time, when you are in the right zone at the right time. When the dry fly fun is slow we've nymphed and pulled streamers lately to fill in, and have had a lot of success. Today's fishing in the nuclear winds was tough, but we got some nice fish, including a beauty of a cutthroat. 20 to 40mph winds (with gusts over that at times) was what we had to put up with today on the upper YAK, and it stunk because the march brown hatch was fairly intense around 1pm, but the wind never ceased. Ahh another day will come, and the famous Kittitas county wind will calm down.

The Guides Forecast- The next week will see more of the same, with a focus on Caddis as the weather improves. Today (April 12) we had a much later Baetis hatch than earlier on. On the cold days the best activity on the surface will be in the afternoons, sometimes not until 2:30 (like today).

Razor Clam Digging

Currently the WDFW is planning to allow razor clam digging at all five of Washington's razor clam beaches. These digs are scheduled for April 9-11 and April 23-25. Clam digging is always contingent upon low toxin levels. You can visit <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/razorclm/season.htm> to find out more about clam digging opportunities.

Northwest Bass & Panfish - Smallies will be active in the upper Willamette once the water clears somewhat. Walleye fishing would be another option, especially at John Day where 20 boats found 55 keepers over last weekend.

Northwest Trout - From an April 13th ODFW release, "Young people interested in learning to fish will find a great opportunity April 23, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Vernonia Pond in Vernonia.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will stock more than 3,000 rainbow trout for the event as part of the Youth Angling Enhancement Program. ODFW also supplies rods and reels for use by young anglers who do not have their own fishing equipment. Planned activities include a casting contest with

prizes and fish printing."

Trout stocking continued in earnest around Oregon this week with the following areas receiving fresh, cooperative rainbows: Battle Lake, Bay City Reservoir, Cape Meares Lake, Carter Lake, Cleawox Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Cullaby Lake, Devil's Lake, Lytle Lake, Smith Lake, South Lake, Tahoe Lake, Town Lake, Woahink Lake, Haldeman Pond, Foster Reservoir, Freeway Lake East, Green Peter Reservoir, Timber Linn Lake, and Waverly Lake. E. E. Wilson and Junction City Ponds were stocked this week with a mix of legal, larger, and trophy trout. In the Deschutes Watershed, Taylor Lake, Rock Creek and Thompson Reservoirs were planted.

Reader Email

Kap'n Ken Johnson with the 'Blacktop Report' as of Wednesday, April 13th: "FISH ON! Fish are being taken in and around the Clackamas River mouth recently. 2-3 fish per day are being hooked and landed at the infamous "The Black Top" at Dahl Park at Meldrum Bar Park with 7 fish on the beach at Meldrum today! One was 31 pounds. Fishermen on the bank, below "The Black Top" are scoring too. The "bite" seems to be in the generally in the evening time. Water levels have come up from recent and fairly constant rainfalls but the Willamette has cleared enough over the last several days to get the fishing juices flowing in hundreds of boaters and bankers. The Clackamas is PERFECT right now as long as long as this current weather pattern doesn't get too wet and wash everything out. Not too high, not too low, and very fishable. At Meldrum Bar fish are being taken each day. The bank looks like old times again, as there are poles about every 20'-25'. It will get tighter than that in the upcoming days. Bank fishermen are still using primarily Prawn rigs with a Spin-n-Glo's just ahead of it for floatation and attraction. If you're new to fishing in this area, remember, don't crowd in and take over. The fisher folks at Meldrum Bar are a bit territorial but are overall some of the best "teachers" out there. Feel free to walk up to someone who looks like they've been there awhile (They're easy to find!) and just ask "How???" Sometimes these guys will talk your ear off with tons of fishing information. Remember...You can't catch a fish unless your line is in the water! "



Michael Teague responded, "Hey ... 'really appreciate these reports, Dude. I owe you a beer ... or two!"

This week, subscriber Gary D. wrote to ask, "I was just wondering why the Elk river is not on any of the river reports and could it be added? I always see Elk creek."

Michael Teague responded, "I report on the South coast in co-writing The Guide's Forecast with Bob Rees.

"As you're likely aware, the Elk River (and Sixes, for that matter), are small, volatile streams, often swelling to levels unfishable or falling to extreme lows in the absence of precipitation. When the river is fishable or otherwise in season, I do get reports from the area and relate the information in TGF. Earlier in the year when we were suffering from a lack of rain, often the mention was a single line to the effect that it was just too low to fish.

"You won't see the Elk River in any reports for a while, though, because it closed on March 31st for salmon and steelhead along with the Sixes, Chetco, Applegate and several other Southern coastal streams. Most of these will re-open on May 28th and if anybody's catching fish, I'll hear about it and you'll read it in TGF the same week it's happening.

"Write anytime, we're here to help you catch more fish!"

Finally, a special report from long-time subscriber and frequent contributor Marc Davis from late last

week:

Extra! Extra! New Steelhead Species Found

"The little known and hard to find Sandy River Burrowing Steelhead recently and reluctantly came out of their holes and thundered through the gorge not to be seen again until they are headed downriver post spawn. But Wait –There's More! These were not the only fish in the river. Good tides and high water will be calling their later arriving winter buddies and the early summers into the lower river. The Sandy is a little high at this writing but the rains are no longer coming in torrents. The river will remain in a fishable condition as this badly needed water melts off the mountain and filters through the system. The Willamette may be mud but the drift nets are out of the Columbia so everyone should make sure to jump really hard on those springers. Get to the boat launch early and you can launch as you're eating your lunch. On a great day you may actually get two take downs. OR, you can quietly skulk over to the lower Sandy, enjoy the quiet and uncrowded conditions and sneak a couple of silver friends out of an altered tailout."

Write to the TGF staff:

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Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: SailCat@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Astoria Crab & Seafood Festival is a really good time. It's also the Oregon Coast's largest. If you've never been, try to make in April 22, 23 or 24:

*<http://www.oldoregon.com/Pages/crabfestandevents.htm>

If you go to the festival above or just want to visit the area, here's an Astoria/Warrenton Visitor's Guide:

*<http://www.dailyastorian.com/vg05/VG05.pdf>

If you decide to chase springers instead and you'd like to see the right way to rig up, here's how to rig cut plug herring:

http://salmonuniversity.com/ol_htrh_pc1_index.html

It's always a good idea to provide a float plan to leave with someone prior to launch. Here's a fill-in-the-blanks form from the USCG you can print from your computer:

<http://www.uscgaux.org/~floatplan/downloads/USCGFloatPlan.pdf>

Weekly Quote – "Say you are in the country; in some high land of lakes. Take almost any path you please, and ten to one it carries you down in a dale, and leaves you there by a pool in the stream. There is magic in it. Let the most absent-minded of men be plunged in his deepest reveries – stand that man on his legs, set him a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be in all that region ... Yes, as every one knows, meditation and water are wedded forever." - Herman Melville in Moby Dick

GOOD LUCK!