

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

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

Fisheries Update: Columbia River **sturgeon** fishing in the estuary came to a close on the 10th of July. It will re-open from the 15th through the 17th for fish in the 45 to 60 inch range. Best fishing will be above the Astoria/Megler Bridge and the tides (incoming) will work in the favor of fishermen. Sturgeon fishing in the Bonneville area continues to be challenging for keepers but the oversize fishery remains fair to good for anglers using floater shad for bait.

Columbia River **salmon** fishing is poor in the gorge and only fair for down-river plunkers. Poor tides will limit success this week on the lower river. The bulk of the summer run Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam and the temperature is running around 65 degrees.

Ocean fishing out of **Astoria/Ilwaco** has been fair for those anglers willing to travel several miles offshore to get these salmon. A mix of fin-clipped coho and a few Chinook are present but be prepared to fish the 280 to 320 foot water SW of the CR Buoy to get into fish.

Ocean fishing out of **Garibaldi** has slowed from the previous week but the storm front could be to blame for scattered fish. Chinook may be as equal an opportunity as coho but you will have to modify your technique to target them. Details in the full-length version of this newsletter. Some summer steelhead and sea-run cutthroat may be willing after the cool down and cloud cover from previously in the week. Bottom fishing is strong when the seas are friendly.

Chinook fishing remains fair with coho catches very low out of **Depoe Bay**. Bottom fishing is excellent, which has led to this:

Beginning Saturday, July 15th, the bag limit for **rockfish** will be five instead of eight fish per day according to an ODFW release dated July 13, 2005. This decision was made to protect the groundfish species and avoid a total closure.

Salmon trollers using downriggers have been most successful as the fish have been running deep out of **Winchester Bay** for chinook averaging in the teens with a few topping the 20-pound mark. Tuna are being caught far offshore.

A few Fall fish have been taken by trollers in **Rogue Bay** but it's still early for this fishery.

The lower **Willamette** is drawing less angler interest as steelhead and chinook counts at the Falls dwindle. The shad run is just about over.

The **Sandy** is slow for steelhead. A few springers remain available in the system. The occasional spring chinook has been taken from the nether regions of the Clackamas River but fish upstream remain reluctant to take bait or lure. North Santiam steelheaders are encountering fine river conditions and catching summer steelhead in many places.

Bass fishing is good for those trying very early or late in the day.

Kokanee fishing is good at Odell and Green Peter for those using the right techniques.

Trout have been planted in the following locations this week: Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River, Badger Lake, Lake of the Woods, Fall River, Shevlin Pond and Spring Creek.

SW Washington – Pro Guide Pete Grace (888.688.4386 / 888.out 4 fun) is out fishing for summer steelhead though the counts are down and the fishing slow.

Cowlitz River - Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509.952.9694) sends in this report - The bite on the Cowlitz is still on the slow side, with some nice 2 and 3 salt steelhead in the river.

SE Washington – Pro Guide Jeff Knotts (509.547.7450) tells TGF that the fishing has been slow. The shad continue to decrease and the spilling at McNary is causing inconsistent walleye fishing.

NW Washington – Pro Guide Mike Jamboretz (206.595.9526) said that fishing has been tougher this year than others but they have consistently gotten their limit of chinook.

Soapbox Update: **Washington and Oregon States Move to Weaken Wild Salmon Protections**

Sports Anglers Cry Foul, Urge Voluntary Release of Wild Summer Chinook in waters shared by Oregon and Washington

PORTLAND, ORE – June 29, 2005 – Northwest sport fishing organizations are calling on Columbia River anglers to voluntarily release wild summer Chinook, following a broadly opposed regulation change allowing the harvest of wild chinook salmon.

Typically, regulations have required all wild summer Chinook be released back into the river unharmed, west of Bonneville Dam. But in controversial decision made on Tuesday, Washington and Oregon fisheries managers are now allowing anglers to catch and keep wild summer Chinook.

Bill Tweit, Columbia River Policy Coordinator for the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, insisted on the non-selective fishery, citing pressure by the Washington Fish & Wildlife Commission.

In response, numerous organizations are calling on anglers to voluntarily release any wild fish they catch. Norm Ritchie, co-president of the Association of Northwest Steelheaders, said he is “personally appealing to the conservation ethic of my fellow Northwest Steelheaders – and all other anglers – to release all wild summer Chinook unharmed.”

Sport fishing interests were nearly unanimous in their opposition to the weakening of wild salmon protections. These groups included the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, Southwest Washington Anglers, Vancouver Wildlife Federation, Northwest Guides Association, Association of Northwest Steelheaders and members of the business community.

“This is the worst possible situation for the fish and sport anglers,” said Liz Hamilton, executive director of the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association. “Our businesses need consistent fish regulations, and sustainable wild populations. This decision creates uncertainty, and runs counter to the selective fishery ethic that sport fishers are known to support throughout the region. It’s bad for our economy and bad for the future of salmon and fishing.”

The summer Chinook run begins in June and peaks late in the month, and includes both wild and hatchery fish. This provides anglers the opportunity for catch-and-keep of hatchery fish and catch-and-release of wild fish.

Hamilton commented on how fortunate we are to have any wild summer Chinook given the severe habitat limitations they face.

In addition, sport anglers are concerned about the accuracy of this year's run estimates. The Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife has consistently overestimated the number of wild fish returning to spawn this year, according to Jim Harmon, president of Southwest Washington Anglers.

"It's disappointing that our own state didn't listen to its constituents who wanted the most protection for our summer Chinook," Harmon said.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Catch and keep season has temporarily shut down in the estuary. The "bonus" week of keeper fishing worked out well for the few anglers taking advantage of the time. I fished the last day of the opener (7/10) and had a hard time getting on keepers. Recent history directed me to the lower river out of Hammond for an early morning opportunity but for the latter half of the season, the last half of outgoing tide had produced few results. It wasn't any different this day as we only managed to land one shaker up until about 11:00 a.m. We decided to head upstream in search of some keepers but the only luck we had was bad. The one fish we thought was surely a keeper broke the stainless steel clasp while heading east on a strong line screaming tear. After that, we bounced around to numerous places only hitting an occasional shaker. Decent but concentrated bites took place in the deep water at Tongue Point but limits were scarce this day. We now head into a 4 day closure as the departments evaluate recent catch statistics. The season will open for a short 3 day window on Friday 7/15 through Sunday 7/17. More on where to fish in The Guide's Forecast section of this report.

Pro Guide Jordan Smith (360-910-2104) writes, "Estuary sturgeon fishing has really turned on and the season has been extended!! Don't miss your chance to hook into these fat, feisty, ocean fresh fighters. The fish we're seeing in July have all been very healthy and aggressive and we only expect them to get bigger and better later in the month. Anglers come from all over the USA and world to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity!! The sturgeon fishing remains open & hot in Astoria through August, but will return to catch and release after Sun, July 17."

Salmon fishing out of the mouth of the Columbia has been hampered recently by poor weather conditions. Prior to the early part of the week, anglers that had been headed to the deeper areas of the ocean had been scoring fair results. Anglers targeting fish in the 260 to 300 foot of water SW of the CR Buoy have been doing fairly well. Anywhere from 12 to 21 strips have been productive for hatchery coho and a few Chinook. The Chinook are hard to target out of the Columbia but early birds tend to get a few quality fish when they are feeding closer to the surface at first light. The bait seems to be higher in the water column in the morning making the ocean fishery more productive for those trained in coho technique. We talked with 2 different boats that fished the deeper water- one boat with 2 anglers took their 4 keeper coho while the other boat of 4 anglers had 2 Chinook between 19 and 21 pounds and 4 coho between 6 and 9 pounds. Fresh herring are taking most of the fish out of Astoria/Illwaco. At last tally only 1% of the quota has been taken and by the lack of pressure, this quota could last a while. The ocean is unusually warm for this time of year and while some anglers are calling it an el Nino occurrence, it may likely may be just a small band of warm current close to shore.

Crabbing has been slow on the lower Columbia. On Tuesday (07/12) soaking pots overnight with quality bait near Buoy 22 resulted in only 10 keepers. Hauling the pots out to the ocean and resulted in 18 keepers in about a 3 hour soak- south off the south jetty.

Salmon fishing on 07/12 was really poor. We fished in about 280 to 300 foot of water for about 2 hours, never getting a bite! I never heard of a boat getting a bite by mid-morning yesterday from the CR Buoy to where I was (SW or the CR Buoy).

Ocean bottom fishing was a bit challenging this week as the minus tide series made for rough bar conditions. The ocean hasn't exactly been flat enough to comfortably fish along the jetty either. Hopefully, the upcoming weather change will have a positive impact. Ocean crabs remain plentiful but mostly of the soft shelled variety.

Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511) foolishly answered his phone while in Mexico just now. He'll be back at Bonneville on Thursday but fished on 7/8 in the gorge stating that the oversize fishing is holding good. Dan reported between 3 and 5 big fish/day with floater shad being the bait of choice. As we enter the summer months, this bait will be more readily available. Fresh shad is getting extremely hard to come by. Keeper fishing in the gorge has also slowed and Dan stated if a boat gets a couple of keepers in a day's effort, they are doing quite well. Smelt continues to be the bait of choice for gorge keepers but shad strips will still take a biter.

River salmon fishing has turned challenging up and down the mainstem. In the gorge, it is termed as slow for both salmon and steelhead. Anglers are targeting fish in the deep using spinners but dam passage for summer Chinook is beginning to wane and people are beginning to notice it. Receiving a report from avid angler and friend **Jim Martin of Pure Fishing** from the Bonneville area, he had out a reporter and NSIA's **Liz Hamilton** fishing 13 foot of water with spinners in pursuit of salmon and/or steelhead. The group not only did not have any opportunities for either species but didn't see a boat drop out all day! The water temperature was 65 degrees but this fishery is clearly floundering. In the estuary, salmon and steelhead fishing was mediocre for this last tide series. Some of the more popular spots put out some fair numbers of steelhead. It is peak season for this fishery however and it too is responding how most would anticipate considering the downturn in fishing success.

The Guide's Forecast – For sturgeon, anglers will be fishing on rested sturgeon when the quick, three day opener begins on Friday, July 15th. Estuary anglers will have incoming tide for the bulk of the morning which happens to be the more productive time of the day. The earlier the start, the better the results. Fortunately the last half of the outgoing will be so late in the day, it will have little impact on angler success. The best area will likely remain upstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge on either side of the river. On the incoming tide, target the shallower areas as they begin to cover up on the incoming tide. The deeper water that you fish, the more bait you will go through and this time of year, fish seem to be favoring the deeper water a bit more. Anchovies are still the bait of choice but fresh herring has become available and is an excellent alternative when getting hit by trash fish and crab. The anchovies are small, making for better sturgeon bait than salmon bait. Buoy 50 produced some results on the last day (above Tongue Point- main channel) but the way it has been going this year, anglers can't bank on consistent results for the next opener.

Upriver, the best option for sturgeon anglers will be oversized fish using floater shad. Swifter water will provide the best action and fresh shad are becoming a harder bait to come by. Keeper sturgeon in this section is also becoming a false hope but steadfast anglers should use smelt or shad strips if they are interested in taking home a keeper.

Although numbers are still PRELIMINARY, it appear we may have better than 4,000 sturgeon left on the table for the estuary fishery. More extensions may happen so stay tuned to THE GUIDE'S FORECAST!

Salmon anglers may need to remain prepared to travel to find some ocean fish. The fish are

clearly scattered but going deep seems to be the rule. Anglers may want to start near the CR Buoy and troll SW but be prepared to run further out to 260 to 300 foot of water to find fish. Don't spend a lot of time in the morning searching shallow as the a.m. bite is always the best. Fresh herring will be the ticket out of the Columbia but anglers down south are drawing good results from flashers and hoochies. As the day progresses, you will need to drop your baits deeper to find biting fish. 12 to 20 strips seems to be providing the best action for coho but if you have a few extra anglers on board, it may pay to drop some baits down to 40 to 60 strips in hopes of catching some Chinook.

In-river salmon anglers shouldn't get too excited about summer Chinook results as that fishery is winding down. Bonneville will remain the best place to target these fish but the results will likely be poor. A poor tide series this week will keep lower river spin-n-glo plunkers from achieving much success as well.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – As the year-to-date Willamette Falls totals push the 13,000 mark, summer steelhead numbers have started to dwindle. Since the Santiam system is about a two-week trip for these fish, look for plenty of fresh fish to join the thousands present for a steelheadin' good time.

The disappointing 2005 spring chinook run is also on the decline with daily counts dwindling to double digits. About 35,000 had crossed as of the latest data on July 11th.

The Guide's Forecast – Catch rates will reflect the spring chinook and summer steelhead numbers declining in the lower Willamette.

Shad fishing will attract fewer participants as this run is also on the wane.

North Santiam steelhead fishing had been hot and cold during the periods of unsettled weather, but now that meteorological conditions have stabilized, anglers will find plenty of fish on prime condition. The North Santiam will remain stable until Fall rains set in.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – The occasional bright chrome spring chinook has been taken at the mouth of the Clackamas but upstream fishing for both springers and summer steelhead remains very slow.

Sandy steelheaders are managing the occasional summer, but it's scratch fishing. Expect spinners and bobber 'n' jig rigs to be equally effective in the coming week.

As the weather becomes truly summer-like, take advantage of the productive morning hours, particularly at first light. If the magic is going to work, this is the most likely time for it to happen.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Subscriber Rich R. reports, "I fished in the Nehalem bay at Wheeler July 5, 6, 8, 10th. NO FISH. I saw one (1) caught for these 4 days. Only a few boats (2 or 3) each day ... apparently all others realize that I am "jumping the gun" at Wheeler. A good friend killed them Wednesday, west of twin rocks... 150' water, fishing 50' down with plug cut's. 2 men hooked something like 18 fish.

"I called the wheeler marina this a.m., where I have my little 16' smokercraft moored now, and Jim said that the fish were in now.... apparently they had a good day yesterday and even though they continue to fish that area at first light for the most part, two guys limited late yesterday

afternoon so I think I will take Myrna [Mrs. R., Ed.] late this afternoon...(that should improve my chances but it sure hurts my pride when she constantly beats me)... "

A rather slow week out of Garibaldi as weather hampered ocean salmon fisheries early in the week. Guides were turned back due to rough weather although Sunday was pleasant enough to get out after them. The fishing however was less than impressive and the one guide I talked to only landed a single hatchery 5 pound coho. The previous week, one guide (**Chris Vertopoulos**) did quite well off of Twin Rocks in 200 foot of water- he landed 3 Chinook and 9 coho of which only 1 was a hatchery fish. In a year like we're having, this fishery will be volatile so don't plan on slam dunk fishing like we've seen in the past. There are really more Chinook available than coho but us Oregonians aren't well versed in how to pursue them in the deep salt. It's pretty intimidating as there is a lot of ocean out there and the commercial operators go pretty far offshore to get their needs met. Chris did fairly well on the green dodgers with green/glow hoochies anywhere from 40 to 60 strips deep.

The water appears to be quite warm as reports of salmon trollers getting into tuna are a bit more common. One boat was reported to have landed 2 albacore while in pursuit of salmon. This is another fishery that most of us Oregonians are not necessarily dialed into. The way our salmonid trends are headed, it may be one that we should become familiar with.

A slight rise in our river levels may offer some better fishing for summer steelhead and spring Chinook in Tillamook area streams. Although not significant, the fact that we had cloud cover early in the week makes a big difference. Three Rivers is not closed to salmon fishing but there was a pile of cars at the deadline the day before the closure. The return was down from previous years but more fish than the hatchery needed returned offering this additional opportunity on the small Nestucca tributary. Sea-run cutthroat trout is also open and not many sportanglers pursue these fish since it went to catch and release fishing about a decade ago.

Crabbing remains fair in the Tillamook estuary- better than the ocean really but sturgeon fishing was fair at best on the last tide series. This time of year, the sturgeon focus turns to the Tillamook River where mud shrimp is a popular bait.

The Guide's Forecast – The marine weather forecast doesn't look too good for ocean going anglers over the weekend. As you may guess however, the seas are even harder to predict than the weather so don't count it out just yet. Ocean coho and Chinook will be the best thing going on the North Oregon coast for weekend fishing. Bottom fishing is holding up really good too and much of the ocean pressure is geared towards that fishery. If you do go out over the weekend, it will be safe to advise a trip out to 180 to 240 foot west of Garibaldi in search of your salmon. With Chinook prominent in the area, it would be wise to fish at least one rod deep (40 to 60 strips) to target these fish. Keep one rod within 12 strips of the surface however (especially in the morning) to target hatchery coho. Be aware, it seems this fishery is currently weighted towards wild coho so be prepared for catch and release fishing. Also be prepared for a reality check as limits are not quite the rule.

For bank anglers, the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers will offer the best opportunity for summer run steelhead and sea-run cutthroat trout. Spring Chinook will also be available but a good portion of the fish present are wild. Bank anglers can also take advantage of the sturgeon fishing in the Tillamook River. Bring mud shrimp or lots of sand shrimp to entice these fish. Fresh anchovies or herring will also be a good bait but will be hard to find in the local Tillamook area.

Crabbing remains fairly good in Tillamook and Netarts Bay. Nehalem Bay also offers some decent crabbing but pressure remains high and it's a small estuary.

Central & South Coast Reports – Steelheaders on the Siletz have been taking a few summers but it's been slow.

Bottom fishing remains excellent out of Depoe Bay. A few tuna are being caught within four or five miles of port but it's early yet for this fishery to be productive. Many venturing 30 or 40 miles out are doing no better for tuna. Yet.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541 754-641) reports, " ... been fishing out of Depoe Bay when the weather allows. There was a good salmon bite last week Thursday, but it has slowed back down as warm water is still holding off of Depoe Bay and Newport. We did manage 1 small chinook on Monday before we got tired of the battling a sloppy ocean and trying to keep our lines on the downriggers. This salmon was caught 80 feet down in 180 feet of water on a cut plug herring. Tuna fishing has been very good, with tuna any where from just a few miles out to as far as you want to go. Cedar plugs trolled 90 feet behind the boat has been far away our best lure.

Important note: Beginning Saturday, July 15th, the bag limit for rockfish will be five instead of eight fish per day according to an ODFW release dated July 13, 2005. This decision was made to protect the groundfish species and avoid a total closure. See **Random Links** for details.

Sturgeon fishing in the lower Umpqua has garnered little interest of late, but one fisherman found himself a bonus. Angler Steve Towns (on left) landed the striper pictured below while fishing sturgeon in the Dean Creek area with his brother-in-law, local guide Bob Cobb. This bruiser measured 48 inches and scaled at 38 pounds.



Photo is courtesy Larry Moore at www.Fish-Works.com.

Salmon trollers using downriggers have been most successful as the fish have been running deep out of Winchester Bay over the last week. Fishing 100 feet deep over 300 to 350 feet of water has been most productive for chinook averaging in the teens with a few topping the 20-pound mark. Coho catches remain low.

Mild tides this weekend will be conducive to crabbing while a more aggressive tidal exchange will begin the middle of next week.

Hardy fishermen and charters venturing the 50 miles or so offshore to Haceta Banks are finding tuna with most specimens over 20 pounds.

Steelhead fishing on the upper Rogue River is fair. A few Fall fish have been taken by trollers in the bay but it'll be a while before it's worth making a trip for them.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro Guide Jack LaFond (1-800-270-7962) reports, "The lower Deschutes River has some steelhead in it now and although the counts are not quite as good as last year to date, there are some fish biting. The river level is good, the color of the water is good and the pressure is low. Fishing will only improve within the next few weeks and we're off to a start on what is hopefully a good season of summer steelhead!"

For more information and inside tips on fishing the lower Deschutes River, be sure to catch **pro guide Bill Kremers (541 754-641)** at the Johnson Creek G.I. Joe's on Saturday, July 23 at 1:00 P.M. He'll talk about the best techniques for taking steelhead on the lower Deschutes.

Northwest Bass & Panfish - Bass anglers will find quarry in summer patterns now, so hit the lakes, ponds and rivers at first light or in the evening hours for best results. Largemouth are being caught at Hagg Lake with smallies tough to come by. The upper and lower Willamette have been producing a few decent smallmouth bass along with lots of dinks.

Northwest Trout - Jig fishermen are taking limits of kokanee averaging 14 inches at Odell. Trolling seems to be the effective technique at Green Peter where kokes are fat and sassy.

Trout have been planted in the following locations in the Willamette Zone this week: Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam Rive and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

In the Deschutes watershed, Badger Lake, Lake of the Woods, Fall River, Shevlin Pond and Spring Creek were stocked.

Washington State

NW Washington – Pro Guide Mike Jamboretz (206.595.9526) said that fishing has been tougher this year than others but they have consistently gotten their limit of chinook. They have had to fish 25 miles offshore from Cape Flattery to do so. Most fish are in the high 20 pound range with some over 30. Tuna is being caught closer into shore and coho as close as six miles offshore. This should continue to be the case over the next week.

North Sound - The region's two "bubble" fisheries for **chinook** salmon are under way in Tulalip and Elliott bays. The fishery on Tulalip Bay has been open on weekends since early June, and the downtown Seattle waterfront fishery just got started July 8, but neither has been red-hot. "We've been at the boat ramps that provide access to both bubbles from dawn to dusk, and there just aren't many fishing coming in," said Patrick "Slim" Simpson, a WDFW fish sampler in the region. "Most of the catches in the Elliott Bay bubble were resident blackmouth, and the fishing was pretty good during the first two days of the opening weekend. But by the third day of the opener, only a handful of fish were caught," Simpson said. "The Tulalip bubble has never really taken off, although a few of the chinook we've checked have weighed in the mid 20s." Simpson said the largest fish out of Elliott Bay checked in at about 22 pounds. Fishing has been best early in the morning for anglers slowly trolling large spoons or whole herring off a downrigger. As the day progresses, it's best to move to deeper water and get the gear closer to the bottom.

South Sound - Although fishing for **chinook salmon** generally improved during the second weekend of fishing on the coast and in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the season's slow start left most anglers glad to bring the occasional **hatchery coho** or **pink salmon** into their boat, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW Puget Sound recreational salmon fishery manager. "Most anglers are working pretty hard for their fish," Thiesfeld said. The selective chinook fishery from Sekiu to Port Angeles is a prime example, he said. This year, anglers caught 125 chinook during the first four

days of fishing, compared to 775 last year. The story was much the same on the coast, where coho and pink salmon have been showing up in increasing numbers, but chinook are few and far between. Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) had the highest catch rates through July 10, averaging 1.3 fish per rod - but only one in five of those fish were chinook. In Marine Area 2, anglers were averaging 0.6 salmon per rod with chinook making up about two-thirds of the catch. Catch rates in marine areas 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) were running about half a salmon per rod, split 50-50 between hatchery coho and chinook. (As in years past, anglers must release any unmarked coho they catch.) Noting that the chinook fishery normally peaks around Aug. 1, Thiesfeld said those catch rates should pick up in the weeks ahead.

SE Washington – Pro Guide Jeff Knotts (509.547.7450) tells TGF that the fishing has been slow. The shad continue to decrease and the spilling at McNary is causing inconsistent walleye fishing. The spilling may be the cause for good oversize sturgeon fishing going on this long into the year though. Jeff will be heading to fish "The Reach" next week.

Eastern Washington - WDFW District Fish Biologist Chris Donley of Spokane reports good **walleye** fishing continues throughout Lake Roosevelt, "at least for the persistent angler." Donley also said that local **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** lakes, including Badger, Clear, Williams, West Medical and Fishtrap, are still very good in early morning and late evening hours. "The trick to catching the big ones by this time of year is to downsize your gear," Donley said. "The bigger trout have seen the bigger baits or lures at least once, touched them twice and won't come near them again at this point. Try something different, like crawfish tails, something they haven't seen, and you're more likely to hook a good-sized trout." Donley also noted that anglers are doing well on **channel catfish** at Sprague Lake, most using chunk baits of some kind. Catfish and **bass** fishing continues to be productive throughout the Snake River system in the southeast district of the region. WDFW district fish biologist Glen Mendel of Dayton says that although no measurable checks have been made recently, he suspects that trout fishing is slow, due to warmer temperatures.

North Central - Opportunities to catch chinook **salmon** expand in eastern Washington on July 16 when summer chinook season opens on the Columbia River from Priest Rapids to Chief Joseph dams, and on part of the Okanogan River from the mouth to Highway 97 bridge. The daily catch limit is six, including no more than two adults (at least 24 inches long). All coho and sockeye salmon must be released. Chinook anglers should watch for signs at water access points on these river stretches about cash rewards for returns of newly tagged fish, which are part of a Colville Confederated Tribes' study, in cooperation with WDFW fish researchers. The Methow River resident **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** fishery that opened last month is going well, reports WDFW District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff of Omak. "Our below-average snowpack and runoff has put the Methow in fishing shape early this year, so fishing should be good through July for both rainbows and cutthroat," Jateff said.

SW Washington – Pro Guide Pete Grace (888.688.4386 / 888.out 4 fun) is out fishing for summer steelhead though the counts are down and the fishing slow. Oversized fishing above Beacon Rock will be busy at the opener.

Warm water in the mainstem Columbia River, combined with the normal transition between summer and fall-timed fish, has created a lull in the action for **salmon** and **steelhead** anglers. "We're getting to the end of the early run of fish, and the water is getting warmer, so the fish are probably moving through the lower river quickly or hanging out in the tributary mouths where the water is cooler," said Pat Frazier, WDFW regional fish program manager. Bank anglers going after steelhead in the lower Columbia below Longview have been averaging one steelhead for every 10 rods, while the action has been much slower for boat-based anglers in the same area. "This is a good time to hunt around for summer-run steelhead in the lower Columbia tributaries,

such as the Cowlitz or Lewis rivers," Frazier said, adding that a dozen boat anglers checked on the Cowlitz during the first week of July took home five summer-run steelies. Bank anglers on the Lewis were averaging one steelhead for every four rods. "The guys on the Lewis are catching some really nice fish in the 6- to 12- pound range," Frazier said. Above Bonneville, the place to try for steelhead is Skamania County's Drano Lake, where eight bank anglers kept one steelhead and 18 boat anglers hooked 16 and kept 10 summer-run fish. Angler effort and success for steelhead are both on the rise on the White Salmon River, Frazier added. Catch-and-release **sturgeon** fishing has been good in the lower Columbia, particularly below the Wauna powerlines, where anglers on charter boats were outpacing anglers on private boats.

Salmon/Steelhead -

Cowlitz River - Anglers are catching some hatchery summer run steelhead between Mission Bar and Blue Creek.

Lewis River - Bank anglers are catching hatchery summer run steelhead from the salmon hatchery downstream.

Drano Lake - Effort and catch for summer run steelhead is increasing. Boat anglers averaged nearly a fish per rod when including fish released. 11 boats were counted here last Saturday (July 9) morning.

White Salmon River - Effort and catch for summer run steelhead is also increasing here. 18 boats were counted here last Saturday (July 9) morning.

Lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam - Bank anglers averaged a steelhead kept/released per every 9.4 rods. Fishing from boats was slow. Most of the steelhead catch was from Longview downstream. Summer chinook catches declined.

During yesterday's flight (Sunday July 10), 258 boats were counted, 57 of which were observed at the mouth of the Cowlitz. 300 bank anglers were counted along the Washington shore with over half found from Longview downstream.

Sturgeon -

Lower Columbia from the mouth to the Wauna powerlines -

Ports of Chinook and Ilwaco - Charter boat anglers averaged 0.64 legal white sturgeon kept per rod while private boaters averaged 0.19 per rod

Deep River and Knappton ramps - Boat anglers averaged 0.28 legals kept per rod. 250 private and 1 charter boat were counted during the Sunday July 10 flight.

Lower Columbia from the Wauna powerlines to Beacon Rock - Boat anglers are catching some legals in the Kalama area.

John Day Dam to McNary Dam - Catch and release only through the end of the year beginning today, July 11.

Warm water species -

Swofford Pond - Producing some bluegills and bass plus some rainbows for bank anglers.

Lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam - 8 boats fishing for walleye were observed from Camas upstream to the gorge during yesterday's (July 10) flight. No report on angling success

other than Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife sampled 15 walleye kept for 5 boats the previous week.

John Day Pool - Including fish released, boat anglers averaged nearly a walleye per rod. The few bass fishers sampled had several dozen bass per rod.

Trout -

Mayfield Lake - Producing some rainbows.

Riffe Lake - Primarily producing landlocked coho along with some chinook, steelhead, yellow perch, and bass.

Shad -

Lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam - No effort was observed during yesterday's (July 10) flight. Counts at Bonneville and The Dalles dams are down to a few thousand fish per day.

Cowlitz River - Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509.952.9694) sends in this report - The bite on the Cowlitz is still on the slow side, with some nice 2 and 3 salt steelhead in the river. The river is very clear, and the flow was @ 2750 cfs this morning. @ 2750 cfs use some caution, as the tailouts are getting kinda skinny, and you can cut many corners in a jet sled or driftboat.

We averaged 2-4 Summer steelhead a day this last week, with 2/3's of our catch being 2 salts in the 6-10# range and the rest were 3 salts, our largest being 37" and 17#.

Our catch is still coming on side drifted cokys and yarn and back trolled chrome 1/2 oz. Fatfish.

This photo is from Bob Barthlow of a fish junkie:



South Central Washington - Summer **salmon** fishing begins July 16 when the Columbia River opens from Priest Rapids Dam upstream to Chief Joseph Dam. The daily limit is six salmon, no more than two of which can be adults, and the minimum length is 12 inches. Coho and sockeye salmon must be released. WDFW Fish Biologist Jim Cummins of Yakima says **kokanee** fishing at Bumping Reservoir is good now. "The fish are typically small and run from just seven to eight inches," he said, adding that Rimrock Reservoir continues to be good for kokanee in the eight- to 10-inch range. Cummins also reports that river and stream fishing for **trout** is generally productive throughout the region. "Good bets for trout are the Naches River, Rattlesnake Creek, Naneum Creek, Taneum Creek, and the upper Yakima River catch-and-release fishery," he said.

Reader Email

We were delighted to hear from long-time subscriber and author Louis G. Terkla who wrote following Bob Rees' mention last week of six years producing TGF, "This is just a note of congratulations to all of you on your sixth anniversary from a grateful subscriber. I have enjoyed and benefited immensely from The Guides Forecast for many years, and I appreciate deeply the unselfish amount of time and effort that you and your fellow guides spend in sharing accurate and instructive information on the great sport of fishing in our area and elsewhere. Your reports and forecasts reflect exceptional veracity and a deep dedication to your readers. The cost of my subscription is small compensation to you for the wealth of knowledge that comes to me from the people who are plying the waters every day of the year. I wish you many more years of success with your forecast."

Thank you, Mr. Terkla, for your delightful Email, the stories you have contributed and to the wealth of knowledge you have shared. It is a genuine pleasure to provide this information to our subscribers every week.

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com
Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com
Michael Teague: OregonFishing@charter.net

Random Links

A story regarding a disturbing trend in the offshore ecology from the big brains at NPR (audio link):

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4750600>

ODFW reduces limits on bottomfish:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2005/july/007.asp>

Panama Black Marlin Attacks Angler:

<http://www.marlinnut.com/dcforum/DCForumID3/2178.html>

Weekly Quote – "The fisherman has a harmless, preoccupied look; he is a kind of vagrant, that nothing fears. He blends himself with the trees and the shadows. All his approaches are gentle and indirect. He times himself to the meandering, soliloquizing stream; he addresses himself to it as a lover to his mistress; he woos it and stays with it till he knows its hidden secrets. Where it deepens his purpose deepens; where it is shallow he is indifferent. He knows how to interpret its every glance and dimple; its beauty haunts him for days." - John Burroughs, 1886

GOOD LUCK!