

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 30th – October 6th, 2005**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Columbia River - Not exactly a great amount to report here. Catch and keep sturgeon fishing resumes on October 1st on the mainstem between Wauna and Bonneville Dam. The best results will likely be in the gorge and bank anglers have good history this time of year.

The Columbia remains open to fin-clipped coho and steelhead but closes to the retention of Chinook on 10/1. Another downgrade in run size is forthcoming.

Tuna seekers are having to travel further west and results vary. Big schools were reported about 50 miles west of Tillamook Head on Wednesday- a tough ride in rough seas.

Crabbing in the lower river is picking up as scheduled. Limits can be had but you still may have to work for them. And speaking of shellfish, clamming on Clatsop Beaches is going to re-open on 10/1. There are some good tides ahead as well. Target the middle part of the week but you'll need to bring your camping lantern.

Mid Columbia/Deschutes River -

Some steelhead are all the way up to Mecca Flats. Fly anglers on the upper river are doing best matching the ongoing caddis hatch.

The fishery at the mouth went from great to mediocre as can often be the case this time of year. Hopefully, the gillnets will cease fishing, stimulating more consistent results in this fishery.

North Coast - Tillamook continues to be the bright spot on much of the Oregon Coast. Consistent results came from the lower bay and ocean as weak tides allowed for favorable conditions for herring trollers. Seaweed is still an impediment and likely will be that way for a while longer. The precipitation that is forecasted for the weekend likely won't raise river levels enough to drift but may stimulate migration into the estuaries. Spinners will be the technique of choice for weekend anglers with a rough ocean in the forecast.

Tidewater anglers are having mixed results with more bad days than good. The Trask does have fish but better tides may bring in better numbers to the Nestucca, Salmon and Nehalem Rivers too.

Mid-Coast - Chinook fishing on the Siletz is a crapshoot with everything taking chinook every so often. Spinners, bobber 'n' eggs or soaking bait-wrapped Kwikfish have all been effective on occasion over the last week. Crabbing in Yaquina Bay has been good although only a few chinook have been landed. Chinook are being taken on the Alsea by anglers using trolled spinners as well as those fishing bobber 'n' eggs. Plug cut herring is taking some salmon out of the Siuslaw River.

South Coast - Umpqua steelheading is fair to good in places. Smallmouth fishing remains great. Winchester Bay is providing chinook action on the troll. Seals are a problem and at least one angler was the victim of an unprovoked, outright pinniped attack. Rogue River Chinook remain scattered with fishing is slow overall, best around Grants Pass. Steelheading is fair to

good in the fly fishing only stretch.

Willamette Valley/Metro- Streams and rivers are low and clear. Most would benefit from s flushing rain. Not much is likely to change regardless of the weather on the North Santiam. Fish are scattered and action is spotty. Sandy River coho anglers are seeing fish occasionally clear to Cedar Creek but fishing is slow. Plug-pullers are taking a few at the mouth. There are good numbers of coho staging at the mouth of the Clackamas as well. Only a few are being caught. This one will break loose of the precipitation that's in the forecast amounts to anything.

Trout fishing- Twelve-inchers have been stocked this week at Alder Lake, Buck Lake, Dune Lake, Georgia Lake, North Georgia Lake, Perkins Lake and Siltcoos Lagoon. In the Willamette Valley, West Salish Pond, Detroit Reservoir and Foster Reservoir were planted. The last planting of 2005 for Henry Hagg Lake took place on Monday.

After subscribing to the full length version, Bill J. wrote: "First time I've seen this, what a fantastic report!!!!"

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula:

Razor clam season scheduled to open Oct. 15

MONTESANO – The fall razor-clam season will get under way Oct. 15 at all five ocean beaches if tests continue to show the clams are safe to eat, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Olympic National Park announced today.

Southwest Washington:

From **Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509.697.9694)** - URB action in the gorge above Bonneville has been good, but Coho fishing remains on the slow side. They're catching nice bright URB's everyday and it should continue for the next few weeks, as the Coho run builds.

Cowlitz River - A mixture of fall chinook, coho, and sea run cutthroats are being caught from the I-5 Bridge downstream.

Toutle River - No report on angling success. A total of 1,151 adult fall chinook had been counted at the hatchery/trap through Sept. 18.

Kalama River - Bank anglers are catching fall chinook and some coho.

Washougal River - Bank anglers are catching fall chinook.

Wind River - Boat anglers are catching coho.

Klickitat River - Lower river was good at times for fall chinook.

Yakima River - Angler effort continues to increase.

Lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam - Some coho are being caught near the mouth of the Cowlitz.

Bonneville Pool - Limited sampling. 25 boats were counted at both the White Salmon and Klickitat mouths on Sunday.

Hanford Reach - Fishing has picked up but not at full force yet. Catch rates were an adult chinook per every 15 pole hours.

Eastern Washington: Jeff Knotts of **JB's GUIDE SERVICE (509-366-4052)** fished all week with clients between Ringold and 12 mile hole. They did best on either eggs or herring. Fish seemed to be on the bite as long as flows were good and the water was up.

Columbia River anglers must release chinook downstream from Pasco starting Oct. 1

Columbia River Fishing Report – The Oregon and Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife have made our job easier this week. For example:

Chinook salmon fishing on the Columbia: Closed

Keeper sturgeon season on the Columbia: Closed until 10/1

Here is the official press release for the Chinook closure (the good news is that coho and steelhead angling is still allowed):

Columbia River closes to chinook retention Saturday
River remains open to coho and steelhead angling

CLACKAMAS - Oregon and Washington fishery managers announced the main-stem Columbia River recreational fishery for retention of chinook salmon will close Oct. 1.

The closure affects angling from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon-Washington border and from Buoy 10 to the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line. The fishery will remain open for coho and steelhead through the end of the year.

"This action is needed to remain within conservation guidelines and allocation agreements," said Curt Melcher, a biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. "The higher-than-expected catch rates in the recreational fishery, combined with a run size about 20 percent smaller than forecasted, have brought us to this point."

Oregon anglers are reminded of the following regulations:

* The Buoy 10 area is defined as that part of the Columbia River from Buoy 10 upstream to a line projected from Rocky Point on the Washington bank through red buoy 44 to the navigation light at Tongue Point on the Oregon bank.

* Salmon fishing in the Buoy 10 area remains open through December for adipose fin-clipped coho and adipose fin-clipped steelhead under permanent angling regulations.

* Salmon fishing from the Rocky Point-Tongue Point line to Bonneville Dam remains open for adipose fin-clipped coho and adipose fin-clipped steelhead under permanent regulations through Dec. 31.

* The Columbia River from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon-Washington remains open for coho and adipose fin-clipped steelhead under permanent regulations through Dec. 31.

So, what other good news do we have coming from this reporting area? Well, clamming is going to open back up on Clatsop Beaches! This is very good news for fall diggers. The clams should be plentiful and some decent tides should allow for diggers to take advantage later in the week. Diggers don't need a minus tide to get ample quantities of razor clams. October 4th – the 8th will offer the best opportunities this week. Bring your lanterns but beware of high surf! High surf will

also put the clams down making them difficult to harvest so use your judgment. Here is the official press release on clamming:

Razor clamming to open on Clatsop and Gold beaches

NEWPORT - Razor clamming will reopen Oct. 1 opening along the 18 miles of Clatsop beach and Gold Beach. Other beaches around the state still have domoic acid levels too high to allow digging.

Recent testing by the Oregon Department of Agriculture found domoic acid levels less than 8 parts per million at all the sampling sites on the Clatsop beach from Tillamook Head to the mouth of the Columbia River, well below the 20 ppm that would trigger a closure. Razor clam harvesting will also open from the north spit of the Rogue River to the California boarder due to declining toxin levels.

Other Oregon beaches remain closed because of high domoic acid levels. Oregon Department of Agriculture officials said the beaches at Newport tested at 45 ppm, Waldport at 36 ppm and Coos Bay at 40 ppm - too high to open for clam digging.

Shellfish harvesting areas are closed to all harvesting when toxins exceed an alert level. Alert levels, 20 ppm for domoic acid provides a margin of safety and halt harvest before toxins reach a higher level that may cause illness.

ODFW staff recently completed the 2005 Clatsop Beach Razor Clam Assessment project. Preliminary results show an overall larger clam population than in 2004. But this year's survey shows the number of clams larger than 3 1/2 inches is lower than last year. A significantly larger number of smaller recruit clams bodes well for future seasons.

The 18 miles of Clatsop Beach from the mouth of the Columbia to Seaside produce more than 90 percent of Oregon's harvested razor clams and associated effort. On average, the annual recreational harvest is 551,000 clams a year from 48,000 digger trips.

A razor clam reaches maturity in its second year of life. A harvestable size of 3 1/2 inches is obtained in the first year of the clam and about 4 1/2 by the second year. Growth slows after the second year as energy is used for reproduction rather than accelerated growth.

A shellfish license is required to harvest all shellfish. The daily limit for razor clams is the first 15 taken regardless of size or condition.

For additional information please visit the Oregon Department of Agriculture website at http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/FSD/shellfish_status.shtml or call their shellfish hotline at 503-986-4728 or 1-800-448-2474.

Those in pursuit of tuna tried a repeat of last week. Weather conditions were ideal for those aboard the F/V Scorpion. Captain Ron reported the fish were present and other boats were getting them but they seemed to consistently spook the schools. Some boats reported over 30 fish but the boat only took 3 and lost 4 others. Captain Ron also stated they had to run about 50 miles out to get into the schools of tuna. They went to the 125'13 line. I am discovering there really is an art to this tuna fishing.

Crabbing is picking up in the lower estuary as well. With nets or pots in a productive spot, some crabbers have scored full limits or better in a single pull. Most of these are large, the majority are males and high percentages are hard-shelled.

With the Columbia still closed to the retention of sturgeon for sport fishermen, the gillnetters limit for sturgeon was raised from seven per day to 15. Go figure. And this just prior to the Columbia re-opener for sturgeon anglers to keep one fish a day on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays starting October 1st from Wauna Powerlines to Bonneville Dam.

The Guide's Forecast – The best thing going on the Columbia is the re-opener of the river for the retention of sturgeon. If history is any indication, the most productive stretch should be the gorge. There has been next to NO effort during the catch and release season so it is hard to gauge how the results will be. Historically, this fishery is one of the best chances for bank anglers to get into keeper fish and as a result, a large amount of poaching has taken place in the bank fishery at Bonneville. This is your resource and we encourage anglers to report any inappropriate activity to the Oregon State Police. Put the poaching hotline TOLL FREE number into your phone bank: 1-800-452-7888.

For anglers in pursuit of keeper sturgeon, smelt will top the list of preferred baits but squid and shrimp will also be sought after offerings. In the low flows of the Columbia, anglers will want to target active fish in the current. The closer that one gets to the dam itself (while staying in legal water, of course), the swifter the current and the more likely you will find willing biters. Be sure to keep your bait on the bottom and be prepared from anything to a shaker to an oversized fish this time of year.

Those that may be considering tuna over the weekend may want to think again. The offshore waters forecast is calling for big swells and south winds- not a friendly sea for those looking for a good tuna experience. But the fact remains, there were fish available about 40 to 50 miles west of Tillamook Head. It's a long ways to go and fuel is expensive!

Although it's not too early to crab in the Columbia River estuary, there are too many other opportunities while crabbing can wait! Maybe wait until the clamming opens and try for a shellfish grand-slam!

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The Willamette River including Multnomah Channel will also open for sturgeon retention three days a week on October 1st. One single-point barbless hook is a requirement and with the Columbia closed to chinook fishing, expect plenty of company on the opener. Coho are being taken near the mouth of the Clackamas by trollers pulling plugs or spinners but the action is slow. Dragging lures behind a boat here is a simple affair, however, as lures are fished without additional weight, divers or flashers. Bank anglers at Meldrum Bar are sometimes taking as many as a fish per hour if the bite is on.

Fly anglers on the McKenzie are experiencing some fair trout fishing.

Not much is likely to change regardless of the weather on the North Santiam. Late in the season as it is, steelhead are scattered and high up in the system; think Packsaddle or Minto. Below there, numbers will thin out. Action remains spotty even when the better numbers of fish are located.

The Guide's Forecast – Look for plenty of participants on for the next few weeks to sturgeon on the lower Willamette since smaller craft can navigate here when they might be intimidated by the Columbia or actually be unsafe on the larger river. Fair to good results are expected since these fish have been under almost no pressure for a while. Low on Multnomah Channel would be a good place to start.

McKenzie fly fishers will find the most effective patterns are terrestrials and caddis imitations.

North Santiam steelhead are high; think Packsaddle or Minto. Drift tiny baits of cured salmon eggs in hopes that the spawning chinook have given them a taste for them. Use the lightest possible weight to just tick the bottom occasionally. Size 2 or 3 spinners may tempt fish at first light but bait will have to carry you through the day. Carry a rabbits foot. Enjoy the solitude. Think about where you'll fish next time.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Streams and rivers are suffering from low water which has stalled chinook runs. With rain in the forecast, things may change rapidly.

Sandy River coho anglers are seeing fish occasionally clear to Cedar Creek, but water levels, especially in the creek, are very low for this time of year. Fishing is slow for the few fish in the system but a few are being caught with the best prospects low on the system. Spinners are the weapon of choice in the battle to entice a strike from coho but plug-pullers favor Wiggle Warts and are intercepting a few silver salmon outside the mouth of the Sandy.

The good numbers of coho staging at the mouth of the Clackamas are anxious to get on with their run upstream. Often these fish can be seen rolling and cavorting as if to taunt onlookers but they're not anxious to take bait or lure as few are being caught. The Clack will break loose if the upcoming precipitation amounts to anything.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Tillamook fishing remains consistent with the majority of Chinook being taken in the lower bay. With the low tide exchange we are currently experiencing, not many fish get motivated to the upper bay. With calm ocean conditions over the last few days, this has made for some great opportunity in the ocean and at the jaws. Low tide exchange also offers bay anglers a bit of a reprieve in troublesome seaweed.

Fishing on 9/28, I started our group in the upper bay due to the fact this is where my boat is moored and the fog was so dense on the low tide, I was a little reticent to truck my way across the bay. We headed for the deepest water we could find along the picket fence and trolled spinners there until the tide was in enough to pray my way across the bay (that should be a song.....). We managed one nice buck Chinook on a white/lemon-lime size 8 KAW spinner with yellow beads. We saw 3 others taken and one lost in short order. When the tide really started cranking in, the bite seemed to slow and stayed that way for the remainder of the day.

We headed to the ocean in the fog laden estuary but managed to scoot through the west channel to the south tip of the south jetty. When we arrived, we were greeted by about 50 boats (and that is just the ones we could see in the dense fog) and witnessed a great bite for the first 1.5 hours we were out there. It seemed to be the "mom & pop" show as the non-professionals were showing the pros how to catch 'em! We finally got another fish and one other bite late in the outgoing tide. Our action came at the tip of the north jetty at about 3:00 in the afternoon on the 28th. The previous day, there was a great bite on the second half of the outgoing in the same area. We had 6 quick opportunities near Lyster's Corner but only got 3 of the fish. Of course all fish taken in this area are biting herring and it should be fished close to the bottom. There have been sporadic bites in the Ghost Hole at the first part of incoming tide but these bites are not lasting long. These tides are increasing and the forecast for the ocean is to become much bigger making the lower bay less and less of an opportunity as we enter the weekend.

Bobber tossers in the tidewater of the Trask scored big above the 5th street ramp on Sunday. The word got out quick and the biters has already been culled by Monday. This fishery remains sporadic as usual for this time of year.

Nehalem Bay has slowed from previous week's success. More Nehalem guides were fishing Tillamook this week than I have seen in quite some time. The Nehalem guides were taking good numbers of Chinook on the jetty using herring earlier in the month. A larger tide series and a little precipitation may inspire some migration into the Nehalem area this weekend. It may also be one of the few weather friendly areas to fish!

Pacific City has been slow this week with the poor tides. Like the Nehalem, the increase in tidal fluctuations coupled with some precipitation may change things for tidewater anglers in this area.

A drive by the Salmon River looks like someone is giving away fishing tackle. The crowds are crushing and the problem this season has been exacerbated by the fish concentrating above the Highway 101 bridge and that's where everyone wants to elbow in. There are few fish to be had below the bridge, severely limiting bank space. To top it off, the fishing is only fair with very few coho making a showing this year.

The Guide's Forecast – Most people are concentrating on the weather forecast. It appears that the weather will not make for such pleasurable fishing conditions but it may spur some good fishing depending on how much precipitation that we actually get. This doesn't appear to be the "gullywasher" that we really need to stimulate some migration upstream and alleviate the bay of all its seaweed issues but a little rise in the river level may bring in some additional fish. Couple this with a stronger tide influence and the likelihood of an ocean and bar closure and we could see fishing pick up on the bay quite significantly this weekend. Anglers fishing lower Tillamook Bay with herring may find challenging conditions if the present weed problem persists (and it will). The Ghost Hole and West Channel may hold good prospects over the weekend. Spinner trollers however will likely have the advantage as they can whip their rods to rid themselves of the vegetation and keep fishing. Green spinners have recently come on strong for me but the standard red/white blade performs well in cloudy conditions. We may not have a lot of use for the metallics over the weekend with the predicted cloud cover. The upper bay from the Oyster House to the picket fence has produced the best recently and seaweed seems to be at a minimum in this area. We should start to see some better results come from the middle bay however- if we can just keep control of the seaweed issue. From the looks of things, don't count on the ocean as an alternative for weekend fishing.

The Nehalem may also become a good option as fall fish should be in full migration on the next good tide series in this river system. Spinners near the town of Nehalem have good history for this time of year. Bobber anglers should also be scoring fish unless we get a significant enough rain event to send fish upriver.

A good flood tide over the weekend will put more chrome fish into the Nestucca and Salmon Rivers. Herring trollers at the mouth of the Nestucca should see good results if the seaweed isn't too bad. Anglers plunking plugs at the guardrail hole and the flat between the guardrail and boat ramp holes should also produce some results. The flood will be greater than 7 foot on Saturday! Although the system pushing through this weekend is not expected to dump vast amounts of precipitation in the NW corner of the state, it won't take much to get fish upriver on many of the coastal tribs. Top prospects if we get a rise in river levels are the Trask, Nestucca and Nehalem Rivers. Coho will be available on the Trask and North Fork of the Nehalem but it is quite clear by now that there won't be many of them. I don't think I would get my driftboat ready.....just yet.

Central Coast Reports – Streams and rivers are suffering from low water which situation has stalled salmon runs.

Without precipitation to encourage chinook and coho upstream, they'll stack outside the mouth of their home river, or in the case of coastal streams, in tidewater. While rain is in the forecast for the next few days, it remains to be seen if enough precipitation will fall to get these fish moving and biting. A couple of days of decent rainfall will make things change rapidly. And for the better.

The dark side of this sort of situation has occurred in the past when heavy rain came late in the Fall season. Several inches of precipitation will allow salmon to run the length of the river without giving worthy anglers an opportunity to harvest a few.

Decent tidal exchanges will occur in October but the timing doesn't favor the fisherman. Low slack minus tides will occur after dark. Without rain or strong daylight tides, it'll be a tough month.

Chinook fishing on the Siletz is a crapshoot with everything taking chinook every so often. Try spinners, bobber 'n' eggs or soaking bait-wrapped Kwikfish as all have been effective on occasion over the last week. The chinook are lock-jawed and numbers are low - just like the water level.

Crabbing in Yaquina Bay has been good although only a few chinook are being landed. It's not a bad way to spend a day, though. Drop pots or nets in the bay, then run upstream to troll for chinook. It'll be a feast if a salmon falls for your offering but you'll still have a crab feed even if you go fishless.

The further South one goes on the coast, the higher the percentage of soft Dungeness. Chinook are being taken on the Alsea by anglers using trolled spinners as well as those fishing bobber 'n' eggs. Plug cut herring is taking some salmon out of the Siuslaw River.

Healthy and stable populations of local wild coho have allowed state and federal fishery managers to open Siltcoos and Tahkenitch lakes to sport fishing starting Oct. 1st. Siltcoos will see greater numbers of these migrating silver salmon and is also the better bet for the opener. It's an unusual opportunity that has been quite rewarding in the two previous years this fishery has been available to sportsmen.

South Coast Reports – Winchester Bay is providing chinook action on the troll and it's sometimes possible to get them to the boat before a sea lion spots it. Try the lower river at the power lines or down to markers 21 and 21. Sea lions are often the recipients of a salmon dinner as a result of hookups at Winchester and many other bays. Coho are being taken from upper tidewater by bank and boat anglers using spinners. Steelheading has been fair on the upper river. Smallmouth fishing remains great.

Use caution as the voracious animals often take advantage of the hooked fish right at the net. One angler was actually attacked while wading the Umpqua between Winchester Bay and Scottsburg. Imagine 400 pounds of sea lion coming at you while you're armed only with a fishing rod - and you're hip-deep in his element. Some kind of action really needs to be taken to control the pinniped overpopulation problem.

Hard-shelled Dungeness limits are possible on Coos Bay for those willing to sort out the soft ones.

Chinook fishing remains slow on the Rogue River where a good flushing rain is needed to improve the situation. Steelheading is fair in the fly-fishing-only stretch. Chetco River fishermen are landing chinook on plug-cut herring. Salmon are scattered up to Loeb State Park.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Steelhead fishing of late has been spotty on the Deschutes for anglers fishing from Maupin down to Macks Canyon. Recent clearing from the aptly-named White River has improved conditions downstream. Some steelhead are all the way up to Mecca Flats and many fish taken are over 10 pounds although over half have been released as they're

unclipped. Look for steelhead numbers to improve over the next week which will result in fewer uses of the word "scattered." The occasional chinook has shown up in the mix though numbers are low in the Deschutes. Fly anglers on the upper river are doing well matching the ongoing various caddis patterns emerging with dries and pupae patterns taking good numbers of trout.

The Metolius, Fall and Crooked River are all fishing well for long-rodders. Crane Prairie has been a fine producer with trout finding the channels in the warmer water. Check with local fly shops or shoot a note to Michael at TGF for effective patterns at any single location but count on caddis patterns to be on any list. Dries, emergers and pupae should be in every line thrower's arsenal.

Northwest Trout – Foot-long trout have been stocked this week in the Northwest Zone at Alder Lake, Buck Lake, Dune Lake, Georgia Lake, North Georgia Lake, Perkins Lake and Siltcoos Lagoon. In the Willamette Valley, West Salish Pond, Detroit Reservoir and Foster Reservoir were planted. The last planting of 2005 for Henry Hagg Lake consisting of 8,000 eight-to-10-inch rainbows took place on Monday this week. Hagg closes for the year **in November the weekend before Thanksgiving.**

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula:

Razor clam season scheduled to open Oct. 15

MONTESANO – The fall razor-clam season will get under way Oct. 15 at all five ocean beaches if tests continue to show the clams are safe to eat, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Olympic National Park announced today.

Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks and Kalaloch beaches are all scheduled to open for the first dig of the season Oct. 15-17 on evening tides.

A fourth evening of digging is also scheduled Oct. 18 at Twin Harbors and Mocrocks, where last year's harvest fell short of the number of clams available.

"Our experience last year showed that we have enough clams on those two beaches to provide some additional days of digging," said Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager.

Subsequent digs tentatively planned in November and December will follow the same pattern, Ayres said. All five beaches are scheduled to open for evening digging Nov. 12-14 and Dec. 30-Jan. 1, with additional digging opportunities Nov. 15 and Jan. 2 at Twin Harbors and Mocrocks.

The National Park Service has scheduled the proposed digs at Kalaloch Beach, which is located within Olympic National Park, to coincide with those at other coastal beaches. Final approval for digs at all beaches is contingent on the results of final marine toxin tests, which will be announced approximately one week before each proposed opening. Although fewer clams will be available for harvest coastwide than last season, Ayres said the tides should provide a good year of digging.

"We're especially pleased that we'll be able to offer folks the opportunity to dig their way into the New Year, with the low tide on New Year's Eve, Ayres said.

Olympic National Park superintendent Bill Laitner added a safety note for evening clam diggers, especially at Kalaloch. "Kalaloch is considerably more remote than the other clamming beaches, and visitors should be prepared for primitive conditions. With no streetlights or lighted buildings in the area, flashlights or lanterns are a necessity."

Ayres noted that the idea of adding an extra day to razor-clam openings at Twin Harbors and Mocrocks was one of several proposals made by diggers during a series of public meetings conducted this month to plan the 2005-06 season.

Besides the openings announced through Jan. 2, there should also be enough clams on most beaches to allow for harvesting later in January, February, March and April, Ayres said.

Digging during the three scheduled openings will be allowed between noon and midnight. The best time to start is an hour or two before low tide, said Ayres, who recommends taking a lantern for evening digs.

Harvesters are allowed to take no more than 15 razor clams and must keep the first 15 they dig, regardless of size or condition. Each digger's clams must be kept in a separate container.

A license is required for anyone age 15 or older. Any 2005 annual shellfish/seaweed license is still valid. Another option is a "razor-clam-only" license available in annual and 3-day versions. Descriptions of the various licensing options are available on the WDFW website at fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov.

Southwest Washington:

From **Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509.697.9694)** - URB action in the gorge above Bonneville has been good, but Coho fishing remains on the slow side. They're catching nice bright URB's everyday and it should continue for the next few weeks, as the Coho run builds.

We're getting most of our kings on Trolled spinners, a few plugs and eggs, fished off the bottom. Pro Guide Pete Grace (888.688.4386) says that a few silvers being caught at the B-dam along with pretty good size sturgeon. He's waiting for the opener OCT 1.

Salmon/Steelhead -

Elochoman River - Light effort and catches. Through September 18, a total of 2,694 adult fall chinook had been counted at the hatchery/trap. The natural spawn goal (433 fish) has been met and the hatchery brood stock goal (1,426) will likely be reached.

67 adult early stock coho had returned to the hatchery/trap through Sept. 22. It's too early to tell if the hatchery brood stock goal of 800 adults will be met.

Cowlitz River - A mixture of fall chinook, coho, and sea run cutthroats are being caught from the I-5 Bridge downstream. During the past week, Tacoma Power employees recovered 692 fall chinook adults, six jacks, 1,130 coho salmon adults, 115 coho jacks, four spring chinook adults, 41 summer-run steelhead, 12 cutthroat trout and one sockeye salmon adult during five days of separator operations at Tacoma Power's Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery. Tacoma Power employees released 898 coho salmon adults, 54 jacks and four spring chinook adults into the upper Cowlitz River at the Lake Scanewa Day Use site above Cowlitz Falls Dam during the week.

During the week Tacoma Power employees recycled seven steelhead adults, nine cutthroat trout and one sockeye salmon downstream to the I-5 boat launch.

During the week 272 fall chinook adults, two jacks, six coho adults and one jack were released into Mayfield Lake at Ike Kinswa State Park boat launch. Also during the week, four cutthroat trout were released into the Tilton River at the Bremer Bridge.

Through September 21, a total of 832 adult late stock coho have returned to the salmon hatchery. At the same point last year, 3,416 fish had returned. Last year's total hatchery return was 44,500 adults.

River flows at Mayfield Dam are currently at 3,510 cubic feet per second (cfs) on Monday, September 26. Flows are expected to remain steady. Water visibility at Mayfield Dam is over 14 feet.

Toutle River - No report on angling success. A total of 1,151 adult fall chinook had been counted at the hatchery/trap through Sept. 18. The run should peak this week or next. The natural spawn and hatchery brood stock minimum goals are 500 and 1,600 adults, respectively. Through Sept. 22, a total of 614 adult early stock coho had returned to the hatchery/trap. The run is meeting expectations. The hatchery brood stock goal is 800 adults.

Kalama River - Bank anglers are catching fall chinook and some coho. Through Sept. 18, a total of 3,247 adult fall chinook had been counted at the hatchery/trap. The natural spawn escapement goal (500 fish) should be met; the hatchery brood stock goal (2,300) will likely be reached.

60 adult early stock coho had returned to the hatchery/trap through September 22. It's too early to tell if the hatchery brood stock goal of 500 fish will be met.

Lewis River - Bank anglers near the salmon hatchery are catching coho although most fish are dark. Boat anglers are catching primarily fall chinook.

Through September 22, a total of 3,128 adult early stock coho had returned to the hatchery/trap. The run is meeting expectations. The hatchery brood stock goal is 1,600 fish.

Washougal River - Bank anglers are catching fall chinook. Through Sept. 18, a total of 106 adult fall chinook had returned to the hatchery. Pre-season over 20,000 fish were expected to return. Though it's too early to predict, the minimum escapement goals (3,000 natural spawners and 2,090 hatchery brood stock) may not be met.

Wind River - Boat anglers are catching coho.

Klickitat River - Lower river was good at times for fall chinook.

Yakima River - Angler effort continues to increase. Catch rates remain low with 1 chinook harvested for every 45 angler hours. An estimated 23 adult chinook and 11 jacks were harvested last week.

Lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam - Some coho are being caught near the mouth of the Cowlitz. Overall, angler effort has dropped way off since the chinook restriction took effect September 18. Only 71 boats and 8 Washington bank anglers were counted during the Thursday Sept. 22 flight.

During August 1-September 17, an estimated 17,500 Chinook were landed from 74,000 angler trips in the Tongue Point-Bonneville area. Preseason expectations were for a Chinook catch of 16,600 fish.

Bonneville Pool - Limited sampling. 25 boats were counted at both the White Salmon and Klickitat mouths on Sunday.

Hanford Reach - Fishing has picked up but not at full force yet. Catch rates were an adult chinook per every 15 pole hours. Fish condition was better than average for the month of September.

Sturgeon -

Lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam - Effort remains light during the current catch and release only fishery. From the Wauna powerlines to Bonneville Dam, sturgeon may be retained Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays only beginning October 1.

Columbia River anglers must release chinook downstream from Pasco starting Oct. 1

OLYMPIA – Starting Saturday (Oct. 1), anglers will be required to release any chinook salmon they catch on the mainstem Columbia River from the mouth to the U.S. Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) announced today.

The announcement follows an agreement between fisheries managers from Washington and Oregon to close two sections of the Columbia River where the sport fishery has taken its portion of the allowable impact on fall chinook salmon protected under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The two areas affected by that agreement extend from the mouth of the Columbia to the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line – the so-called Buoy 10 fishery –and from Bonneville Dam upstream to the U.S. Highway 395 bridge in Pasco. Both states had already ended chinook retention from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line to Bonneville Dam as of Sept. 18.

"This year's Columbia River fall chinook run is smaller than expected," said Tim Flint, WDFW salmon manager. "That requires a corresponding reduction in allowable impacts on wild chinook salmon protected under the ESA."

Through the third week in September, anglers had caught approximately 27,500 chinook salmon from the mouth of the Columbia River to the U.S. Highway 395 bridge. The new chinook-release rules, which take effect at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, do not affect fishing for other species of salmon or steelhead in the lower river, Flint said. Fishing regulations for other salmon species are listed in the 2005-06 "[Fishing in Washington](#)" <https://fortress.wa.gov/dfw/erules/efishrules/index.jsp> rules pamphlet, posted on WDFW's website.

Eastern Washington: Jeff Knotts of JB's GUIDE SERVICE (509-366-4052) fished all week with clients between Ringold and 12 mile hole. They did best on either eggs or herring. Fish seemed to be on the bite as long as flows were good and the water was up. The week-end found them faced with extremely crowded conditions and low slow water. Pretty tough out there for most guys, they managed only two fish Saturday and three on Sunday and they were one of lucky boats. Most were skunked and frustrated.

Reader Email

Subscriber "Laura" wrote this week asking, "WHAT IS THE FORCAST FOR FISHING DIAMOND LAKE SEPTEMBER 29TH. THROUGH OCTOBER 3RD.? THANK YOU "

Michael responded, "Trout fishing is improving as it usually does with the onset of Fall. Try fishing deeper, often to 30 feet. Powerbait will work well and trolling small spoons or spinners is popular and effective there. Be sure to try where you find any creeks that feed the lake as those are often hotspots. You can keep five fish per day there, eight inches or better. If you get a really big one, though, be aware that you can only keep one trout over 20 inches per day.

"Please let us know how you do!"

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: OregonFishing@charter.net.com

Random Links

Henry Miller penned a fine tribute to John Erickson for the Statesman-Journal on September 22nd:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050922/COLUMN0401/509220352/1075/OUTDOORS>

Scientists Photograph Giant Squid (AP):

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/asiapcf/09/27/japan.squid.ap/index.html>

Cap'n Ken Johnson, a regular contributor sent this story of an engineering marvel:

http://bridgepros.com/projects/Millau_Viaduct/

Weekly Quotes – "Releasing a fish is an act of faith, the same as planting a tree. It requires faith that the seed will take, and that our own progeny will want and will deserve and will in their turn protect and pass on the things - the walnut trees and the wild rivers and the wild fish - that we preserve and pass on to them." - Dave Hughes

"The finest gift you can give to any fisherman is to put a good fish back, and who knows if the fish that you caught isn't someone else's gift to you?" - Lee Wulff

GOOD LUCK!