

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **November 4th – November 10th, 2005**

Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- The Columbia River is kicking out quality keeper sturgeon to anglers fishing the gorge. Persistent anglers are taking limits and even the shaker sized fish are of good size. Oversize fish are also present, feeding on spawning salmon eggs near the mouth of Tanner Creek. Although the keeper sturgeon fishery is still going strong, it has tapered from the 10/1 opener.

Salmon season remains open on the mainstem but the quality of fish available is poor. Action remains consistent for Chinook in the Bonneville area for anglers back-bouncing eggs or backtrolling plugs. Bag limits differ depending on the area anglers fish so check regulations carefully when fishing around Bonneville Dam.

As one storm front follows another this week, all the valley rivers will certainly be blown out well into next week. The Willamette should improve for sturgeon when things settle down a bit, possibly by the weekend. High, colored water seem to find favor with Willamette sturgeon.

While the Clackamas has been a disappointment for summer steelhead and coho, with fresh water pushing the level up by several feet, it won't be long until winter steelhead are on the angling menu. Keep in mind however that early hatchery winter steelhead plants aren't what they used to be.

With the Sandy River closed to salmon fishing, it's a waiting game for the winter run here as well.

The North Santiam, running high and swift, will offer little to tempt anglers until the winter steelhead arrive later in the spring.

Mid Columbia/Deschutes River - Deschutes River anglers are finding good success with the fly. Wind can be an issue this time of year however, making angling challenging. Precipitation may affect the White River causing further disdain to fishers. This fishery is winding down quickly and opportunity may switch to the mainstem Columbia for eastern Oregon and Idaho bound steelhead.

This is the time of year when John Day River and John Day Pool steelheading becomes a viable option. Anglers targeting fish in the John Day River itself must employ low water techniques in the low flows. Columbia trollers target steelhead just above the dam using wiggle warts in assorted colors.

North Coast - The top news story is the fact that our fall rains are here! This will temporarily put the Tillamook Bay fishery on hold as high water and wood debris will clog the bay. The current weather pattern coupled with the forecast has caused the cancellation of the North Coast Rendezvous. River forecasts are predicted to fluctuate between high and un-fishable into the weekend making opportunities uncertain for the next several days. When the rivers do stabilize, the North Coast streams will be excellent fishing. The Wilson is a good gauge and you can view updated river levels and forecasts at:

<http://www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/river/station/flowplot/flowplot.cgi?TLMO3>. The smaller North Coast streams like the Necanicum and Kilchis will be the first rivers to fish.

Tillamook Bay fishing did improve as east bay migrating Kilchis and Wilson fish have entered the

estuary. Bay City and the Ghost Hole have been producing good numbers of Chinook in the 20 pound range. A sea-lion showed was credited with landing several of anglers salmon on Friday and Saturday but disappeared for the Sunday bite. It may be the start of a dangerous trend.

Nehalem Bay slowed this week and with the precipitation the coast is experiencing, this fishery is likely done for the season.

Bay crabbing was also very good prior to the rains. The freshwater influx will damper catches for a bit of time. Netarts may be the exception as only a few feeder streams have little effect on bay salinities.

The upcoming minus tide series would give Clatsop Beach clammers ample opportunity to claim their limit of razor clams however, a large ocean surf may pound clams down and make beaches unsafe to clam.

Mid-Coast - It's late in the season for the Siletz to turn on from the freshet. It's been slow, but the place to try is the top of tidewater.

Fresh water may get fish moving, but it'll put the skids to the crabbing, driving Dungeness back to the ocean.

Tahkenitch has started producing decent catches in the limited wild coho fishery. Siltcoos is also open for unclipped coho which run through the lake.

South Coast - Coastal rivers will blow out during this week of heavy precipitation. Opportunities following will occur initially on the smaller streams which will be the first to recover. Some of the South coast rivers are seeing fresh fish enter, a welcome sight in what has been a mediocre Fall chinook season at many locations.

Bank and boat anglers are taking the occasional chinook from the Cove at Winchester Bay as the season winds down here.

About 80% of the chinook in the Coos and Coquille Rivers are dark, although the occasional 40 pound keeper has been landed. Soon the Elk and Sixes will turn on, giving salmon hopefuls a decent shot at fresh, late-season chromers.

Bright Fall chinook entered the Chetco on Halloween day, mixing with the mostly-darkening salmon already present and providing anglers with many opportunities to score.

The Rogue River could use a shot of fresh chinook, but that occurrence is unlikely. Steelheading is best around Grants Pass, which is fair at best. Many of the metalheads present are wild and must be released.

Many South coast lakes closed to trout fishing as of November 1st. Check the regulations.

Eastern Oregon - The Grande Ronde River is forecasted to have a slight rise in river levels through the weekend. This should stimulate steelhead action as this fishery is coming into its peak period.

Pro guide Rick Arnold (541-480-1570) reports, "With the regular season coming to a close as of Oct. 31, the opportunities to fish some of our lakes are limited to just a few including; Prineville Res., Crescent Lake, Suttle Lake and Billy Chinook. These lakes are open year round and would only be restricted by weather conditions.

Trout fishing- This week the ODFW planted eight, 10 and 12 inch rainbows at Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake. Ana River in the Deschutes watershed received several hundred 12 inch fish.

SW Washington- SW Washington rivers enter a period of slow activity this time of year. There are some late coho still available on the Cowlitz River and to a lesser extent the Lewis River. These systems will enter a hiatus until the arrival of winter steelhead in just a few weeks.

Since Oct. 1, sturgeon retention has been allowed Thursday, Friday and Saturday each week from the Wauna power lines near Cathlamet to Bonneville Dam.

Casting for **cutthroat**? On Oct. 21, WDFW planted 872 cutts averaging 1.5 pounds in Battle Ground Lake. Goose Lake got 1,635 cutthroat of the same size during the last week of October.

NFLCC lure and tackle show, Red Lion Hotel, Kelso, Wa. Saturday, November 5th. Room trading the afternoon before. Open to the public, 8AM Saturday. Show chairman: Monte Martinsen, 360-274-8045. Over 50 tables expected from collectors all over the Northwest.

Eastern Washington: Snake River hatchery **steelhead** action is picking up, as usual at this time of year. WDFW enforcement officers report that virtually every stretch of the mainstem Snake and its tributaries is being heavily fished now. Trolling for Lake Roosevelt's big **rainbow trout** is improving with cooler, wetter weather.

North Central Washington: WDFW regional fish program manager Joe Miller of Ephrata reminds anglers who are fishing for **steelhead** on the Methow, Simalkameen, and Okanogan rivers that bait is prohibited and selective gear rules apply. **Walleye** fishing continues to be productive on Moses Lake, Potholes Reservoir, and Sprague Lake.

South Central Washington: The Columbia River from the Highway 395 Bridge upstream to the wooden power line towers at the old Hanford townsite remains open for the retention of **hatchery steelhead** through March 31, 2006. Beginning Nov. 1, any hatchery steelhead (instead of just those with both adipose and ventral fin clips) may be retained in this portion of the Columbia River.

North Puget Sound: North Sound **salmon** fishing has reached a crossroads as the **coho** season winds down and **chum** begin to enter the rivers. Puget Sound **blackmouth** fishing has been slow. A few bright spots were Oct. 29 when a creel check showed 28 anglers with six chinook at Oak Harbor Marina and Oct. 30 when 63 anglers at Seattle's Armeni Ramp were checked with seven blackmouth.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula: Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509.697.7125) tells TGF that fishing was pretty good for Coho on the Chehalis river over the weekend. They caught limits of chrome Coho below the mouth of the Satsop River on the Chehalis.

Thousands of people are expected to descend on coastal beaches for the second **razor-clam** dig of the fall. Much of the prime digging time will be during daylight hours. Low evening tide is at 3:27 p.m. on Nov. 12 (+0.8 feet), 4:20 p.m. on Nov. 13 (0.0 feet), 5:10 p.m. on Nov. 14 (-0.6 feet) and on 5:56 p.m. Nov. 15 (-1.0 feet).

Fishing Report:

Columbia River Fishing Report – Although salmon fishing remains open in the Columbia River mainstem until the end of the year, sturgeon fishing is the go-to fishery now and for the rest of

the season. The salmon are present in good numbers but you would have to cull through a lot of fish before you found catches worthy of tablefare. Backrollers and backbouncers as well as bank anglers fishing the Tanner Creek area continue to witness good action using bait or plugs. This fishery is certainly on its last legs.

Sturgeon effort seemed low this week according to **pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)**. Dan credited the fall hunting seasons along with post season opener excitement for the downturn in effort. Dan has reported limits or near limit fishing but admitted sometimes you catch your keepers quickly or sometimes it takes a better part of the day. "The good news is that even the shakers are providing good sport," said Ponciano. Smelt remains a top bait but squid can often turn on as the winter progresses. Shrimp availability seems to be sporadic so plan ahead if this happens to be your favorite bait. Oversized fish are still in the mix and are often taken backbouncing eggs as they feed on the mainstem spawners future offspring in the faster flows.

Dam counts are slowing at the John Day as numbers dwindled to between 100 and 300 per day at that facility. The counts have ceased for the season and let's just hope that Idaho's Larry Craig does not succeed in cutting off funding for this facility that is so desperately needed to monitor the success or failure of Columbia River salmon recovery. The John Day Pool steelhead troll fishery should be picking up although admittedly, the fishing hasn't been as good in recent years. Effort was low early in the week and it is still a few weeks away from peaking. This fishery takes place in the Biggs area and wiggle warts in various colors are trolled several feet behind the boat. This is a propane heater kind of fishery as wind this time of year can cut through anglers on the water- be sure to dress appropriately.

The Guide's Forecast – Salmon fishing is winding down and anglers should head to the coast if they are in pursuit of fresh, quality fish. The salmon fishing remains open until the end of the year.

Steelhead fishing should be best just upstream of the John Day Dam. The White River has taken out the Deschutes River and angling for steelhead at that river mouth has ceased. Troll deep diving plugs but not excessively large ones. Magnum wiggle warts are often too big for these steelhead although these fish do run larger than the average summer run fish.

Sturgeon anglers should have another decent week of fishing in the gorge but weather and hunting seasons will likely keep angler effort low. Smelt will remain the best bet as bait but anglers may want to diversify with the use of shrimp or squid when available. Faster flows towards the deadline seem to house the larger keepers and oversized fish. Bank angling is faring well on Bradford Island too. Bank anglers are encouraged to size up their gear so as to not harm oversized fish that must be released.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – As one storm front follows another this week, all the valley rivers will certainly be blown out well into next week.

The freezing level is expected to drop this week and with the precipitation, that means snow. This situation has already closed the Old McKenzie River Highway with closure of Highway 46 imminent.

North Santiam flows are swift and high, but normal for this time of year. The level at Detroit Reservoir at the headwaters must still be dropped nearly 50 feet to serve properly as flood control. Trout season closed November 1st.

The Guide's Forecast – The Willamette should improve for sturgeon when things settle down a bit, possibly by the weekend. High, off-colored water seem to find favor with Willamette sturgeon and the folks who chase them.

Typically, steelhead in the high water conditions of the North Santiam will be upriver and that's where hopefuls should target them. Think Minto or better yet, Packsaddle. With few coho entering the system now, steelheaders are likely to hook one occasionally.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – The ODFW reports over 7,500 coho have entered the Hatchery on Eagle Creek, on the Clackamas. That'd represent the bulk of the run with the fish remaining in the swollen system well past their prime. A limited number of winter steelhead will be available here in a few weeks.

The Sandy river rewarded coho anglers over the weekend. A few scored limits below the hatchery and on Cedar creek. The rise of the water level this week from passing storms is likely to empty the system, however, and continued precipitation through the weekend will have anglers tying leaders and sharpening hooks.

North Coast District Fishing Report – The long awaited rain is HERE! Now this is what fall is supposed to look like! Rivers are on the rise but despite the wet weather, north coast rivers fished well on 11/2. Guides and some avid anglers took fish from Mills Bridge through the tidewater sections of the Wilson on this day. Backbouncing and plugs were responsible for most of the take. There wasn't much traffic on the rivers that day so competition was low making for better opportunity. The Kilchis, being a smaller system offered some of the best conditions to fish in. Driftboaters from the logger bridge downstream scored on some fresh Chinook. Equally, driftboaters from Mills Bridge to Sollie Smith also scored and this stretch will be the go-to stretch for driftboaters when the water levels drop into favorable condition.

Larger rivers like the Nestucca and Nehalem are currently high and off colored and not producing good numbers of fish. Precipitation models indicate that conditions may be this way into early next week.

Tillamook Bay was good on Sunday and it was the first day the sea-lion at Bay City was giving anglers a break from stealing fish. I fished with 3 friends and we took 6 fish by noon that day (10/30). All fish came on trolled herring at Bay City and we saw quite a few fish taken. The Ghost Hole was also producing some fish but Bay City seems to be the resting spot for Wilson and Kilchis River bound Chinook before they make their way across Kilchis Flats and into their respective river systems. By Monday, the weather was having an affect on catch rates and we only drew 2 strikes for 5 rods fishing a half of a day. Poor weather didn't keep trollers at home on Tuesday and fish were once again being caught (in smaller numbers) on the east side of Tillamook Bay.

The poor weather has caused the cancellation of the North Coast Rendezvous on November 3rd and 4th. The guides association is rescheduling the event for early March targeting wild steelhead and more predictable weather.

Bay crabbing was good prior to the onslaught of precipitation. Tillamook and Netarts Bay were producing good numbers of keeper, hard-shelled crab.

The Guide's Forecast – As much as anglers can appreciate the incoming precipitation, we have had enough to stimulate some great coastal action for driftboat anglers. Now all we have to do is wait for rivers to clear. Rain was hitting the coast hard on the morning of the 3rd and likely won't let up enough for anglers to witness good results until early next week. The smaller river systems

like the Necanicum and Kilchis will offer anglers the first opportunities to catch bright fall Chinook and be aware that there will be bright, wild coho on these rivers as well. Every year, anglers mistake big, wild coho for wild, harvestable Chinook so brush up on your identification. The bigger systems such as the Wilson, Trask and Nestucca will drop fairly quickly when the rain slows down and anglers can take fish in high, off-colored water. One of the big problems with this situation is the fact there will be a lot of leafy debris in the river systems due to the high winds we are also currently experiencing.

Even when the rivers turn that "steelhead green" we all so often dream about, leafy material will foul plugs and baits where anglers will need to check their gear often if they plan on fishing effectively. When waters are high, fish migrate making anchor fishing almost more productive than backtrolling or backbouncing. I am not an advocate of anchor fishing in these small streams but since I do it myself when the flows are high, I can't be hypocritical. I am however, critical to make sure and anchor out of known, productive drifts and only in water conditions when I know fish are on the move versus holding in classic Chinook water. These river conditions as previously mentioned are when the flows are up (but dropping) and often turbidity is a little less than ideal. Fish just seem to respond better to "intruding" plugs when sitting in one place when they are on the move. Please be respectful of anglers wanting to fish these spots because if we all anchor up when fish are "holed up", nobody gets to fish!

Anglers will have to make a decision as to whether to fish wrapped Kwikfish or not. Unwrapped Kwikfish are easy to shake debris off of versus wrecking the wrap on your plug if you choose to fish sardines or herring. Smaller plugs will work well in the slots and tailouts as you don't want deeper diving plugs hitting the bottom in shallow water- your strike to hook ratio will drop dramatically. I choose tadpolly's or Hot Shots in the tail-outs as Chinook will hold in this water in higher flows as well.

This will be the big push of fish for the season. Conditions are ideal when flows drop and limits can be easily attained if you hit the right day. Monday and Tuesday will be good for smaller rivers while Tuesday and Wednesday will be best for larger river systems- particularly the Wilson and Nestucca when flows drop. That is, of course, assuming river forecasts are accurate.....you didn't think I would talk such nonsense without a scapegoat did you?

Crabbing is out for a while on Tillamook Bay as the influx of fresh water will slow catches but Netarts and the lower Columbia remain viable options for those desperate for keepers.

Clam tides are favorable over the weekend but big surf and high winds will make beach banging for bivalves not just intolerable, but dangerous as well. This trend will likely continue through the minus tide series.

Central & South Coast Reports – The weather forecast sure reads like Fall in Oregon: rain, showers, rain, showers likely, rinse, repeat.

All this welcomed precipitation will send chinook upstream to their ultimate destinations, draw fresh fish in at locations where any remain to be drawn and stall the bountiful harvest of Dungeness in coastal bays and estuaries.

Forget the weekend; it's a washout literally and figuratively. The forecast calls for 36 straight hours of precipitation with six or more inches of rain falling over that short period of time.

Run timing is staggered coastal streams. It's the tail-end of the run on the Siletz but the very top of tidewater will hold a few as the storms abate. One thing's sure; when the rivers are high, fish will be found high in the system.

Salmon fishing has stalled at Yaquina Bay and river. Rains this week will likely force the Dungeness back into the ocean. It was good while it lasted. Alsea anglers have continued to take some chinook this week.

The flies-only section of the North Umpqua has been quite productive for long-rodders targeting summer steelhead on the North Umpqua. Wednesday, November 2nd was described as "great" by a couple of fly fishermen. Numbers of coho are improving in the lower river. A few chinook are being taken daily by both boat and bank anglers in Winchester Cove. Anglers here are gearing up for winter steelheading which should be cranking up shortly.

Numbers of wild coho have improved along with the success rate at Siltcoos and Tahkenitch lakes. A recovery of this once-protected species has allowed anglers to bag one adult and one jack per day with an annual limit of five adults from either or both lakes. Trolling spinners is effective and consequently the nearly exclusive technique practiced here. Boat limits are not allowed. While a quota of 300 native silvers at Tahkenitch and 200 at Siltcoos is enforced, a decent margin remains available for harvest. Rivers blown out? Go get 'em in these lakes.

Bank and boat anglers had been taking the occasional chinook from the Cove at Winchester Bay last weekend with the season winding down here.

About 80% of the chinook in the Coos and Coquille Rivers are dark, although the rivers have recently produced the occasional 40 pound keeper. These fish are predictably far upstream as numbers of mostly-wild coho continue to increase. Bright Fall chinook entered the Chetco on Halloween day, mixing with the mostly-darkening salmon already present and providing anglers with perhaps the last opportunity to score but this flush of fresh fish has moved upriver with the freshet.

There may be sufficient precipitation over the next few days to jump-start the Elk and Sixes rivers. Chinook fishing usually starts up towards the end of November here, but the early fall rains may move the clock up on the late Fall runs.

The Rogue River could use a shot of fresh chinook, but that occurrence is unlikely. The lower river offers nothing to anglers and chinook upstream are boots. Even with rain this week, the Rogue remains low, a situation which will be remedied with heavy rain this weekend.

Steelheading is fair around Grants Pass, better in the upper river where bait is legal, fair to good at its best. Many of the metalheads present are wild and must be released. Steelheaders are scoring with dime-size baits of cured salmon eggs above shady cove where it's legal to fish bait.

Many South coast lakes closed to trout retention as of November 1st. Check the regulations before solidifying fishing plans.

Central and Eastern Oregon – pro guide Rick Arnold (541-480-1570) reports, "With the regular season coming to a close as of Oct. 31, the opportunities to fish some of our lakes are limited to just a few including; Prineville Res., Crescent Lake, Suttle Lake and Billy Chinook. These lakes are open year round and would only be restricted by weather conditions. A fun fishery is targeting the bull trout at Billy Chinook. Bulls from 4-15 LB. are available and we do well working under the kokanee schools with downriggers."

It remains to be seen how well the central Oregon streams hold up and how much the storm fronts effect them. Often, systems don't move clear to the East side.

Recently, Fall River has been fishing well for fly anglers with fish keyed on a number of flies including Blr-Winged Olive, Pale Morning Duns and Cadisses. Crooked River and Fall River are reported as offering decent fishing while the Metolius is only fair. Hosmer Lake fished very well over the weekend with Callibaetis showing.

The middle and upper stretches of the Deschutes are closed to fishing now.

North Puget Sound: North Sound **salmon** fishing has reached a crossroads as the **coho** season winds down and **chum** begin to enter the rivers. Anglers are still catching coho in the upper Snohomish, Snoqualmie and Skykomish rivers, said Chad Jackson, WDFW biologist, but the fish are beginning to turn dark. Chum fishing should peak toward the end of November. The Skykomish is a good bet, especially in the deep pools and sloughs downstream from Gold Bar, Jackson said.

Puget Sound **blackmouth** fishing has been slow. A few bright spots were Oct. 29 when a creel check showed 28 anglers with six chinook at Oak Harbor Marina and Oct. 30 when 63 anglers at Seattle's Armeni Ramp were checked with seven blackmouth. The San Juan Islands (Marine Area 7) closed to blackmouth fishing on Nov. 1 and Admiralty Inlet (Marine Area 9) opened.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula: Pro Guide Bob Barthlow (509.697.7125) tells TGF that fishing was pretty good for Coho on the Chehalis river over the weekend. They caught limits of chrome Coho below the mouth of the Satsop River on the Chehalis. The fish were caught on backrolled K-15's, M-2Sp;s and prawn spinners.

Darrin Simms and his son Chris caught these Coho On Saturday morning 10/29, this was Chris's first salmon ever! (photos from Bob Barthlow)



Thousands of people are expected to descend on coastal beaches for the second **razor-clam** dig of the fall. Five beaches - Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks and Kalaloch - are tentatively scheduled to open to razor clam digging Nov. 12-14 between noon and midnight. A fourth evening of digging is also scheduled Tuesday, Nov. 15, at Twin Harbors and Mocrocks, where last year's harvest fell short of the number of clams available. The digs are contingent on

whether marine toxin tests show that the clams are safe to eat, said Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager. Results will be announced by Nov. 9.

Much of the prime digging time will be during daylight hours. Low evening tide is at 3:27 p.m. on Nov. 12 (+0.8 feet), 4:20 p.m. on Nov. 13 (0.0 feet), 5:10 p.m. on Nov. 14 (-0.6 feet) and on 5:56 p.m. Nov. 15 (-1.0 feet). "Weather depending, it should be great digging," Ayers said. That's always the caveat, that you might get a monster storm. That's November on the coast."

More than 30,000 digger trips were made to the five beaches during the Oct. 15-19 debut, with an average catch of 13.8 clams. The daily limit is the first 15 clams taken, regardless of size or condition. Ayres reminds prospective diggers that a valid license - including any annual shellfish/seaweed license purchased since April 1 - is required for anyone age 15 or older. Meanwhile, salmon anglers are catching **coho** in the Chehalis River system, while **chum** are beginning to pile up at the usual spots. Bank anglers casting spinners at Morrison Park in Aberdeen have been pulling big, bright coho from the Chehalis, said Scott Barbour, a WDFW fish biologist for that area. He recently saw 10 landed there during a two-hour period. "And they're still coming," he said. "It's not red hot, but they're all high-quality fish." Similar success was reported upriver near Montesano, and the Satsop has been plugged with coho. Waves of silvers are also charging up the Wynoochee and Humptulips rivers, but anglers have been more apt to hook **chinook**, which must be released, Barbour said.

Recent rains could finally bring the expected rush of coho up the Dungeness River, which - along with the Elwha and Skokomish rivers - is generally one of the best Puget Sound streams for November coho, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW biologist. Olympic Peninsula river anglers are faring well for coho on the Sol Duc and Hoh. A few native **steelhead** have been caught on the Hoh and Queets and should start showing up in bigger numbers there and in the Bogachiel River and Cook Creek, said WDFW biologist David Low.

Chum are already abundant near the Hoodspout hatchery on Hood Canal, said Mark Cylwick, WDFW hatchery specialist. They began showing up the third week of October. The chum normally peaks just before Thanksgiving. "They're running a little bit early right now, so that indicates we're going to have a giant run or that things might peter out a little early," Cylwick said. He described the chum as semi-dark with some brights mixed in. "Usually the fish are in pretty good shape out here in front of the hatchery because they're still in saltwater," he said. A creel check Oct. 29 on the Hoodspout shore showed 59 anglers with 42 chum. Anglers can call (360) 877-5222 for a recorded message about Hoodspout fishing conditions. To avoid competition with tribal beach nets, Cylwick recommends fishing on days other than Tuesdays and Thursdays, when the Skokomish Tribe has been conducting its fishery. The Port of Hoodspout will host a chum salmon derby Nov. 11-13.

The mouth of Kennedy Creek also is known for attracting chum, but so far the run has been light. "We're seeing a few, but not enough to give us any timing or run size," said WDFW biologist Hal Michael. Other traditionally good November chum rivers are the Satsop, Duckabush and Skokomish, and Minter Creek.

This time of year, anglers have to play the weather as well as the fish, Thiesfeld said. They need to hit the rivers when they're high enough to bring in salmon, but not so high that they're un-fishable. "This is a typical fall pattern," Thiesfeld said. "You watch the weather and stream gauges. If the rivers drop back into shape, you go. If not, you stay home and watch football or go **blackmouth** fishing."

Speaking of blackmouth fishing, there hasn't been a rush to catch them, Thiesfeld said, adding that the opening of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Admiralty Inlet on Nov. 1 might bring more

anglers out. The daily limit is two salmon, which can include one chinook at least 22 inches long. The same rules apply to Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island) and 13 (South Sound). The daily limit in Hood Canal is four, including one chinook.

Southwest Washington: With salmon fishing on the wane and winter steelhead just starting to show, most Columbia River anglers are focusing on **sturgeon**. Boat anglers fishing in the Camas/Washougal area were averaging one fish for every three or four rods in a recent creel survey. Farther upriver, bank anglers fishing just below Bonneville Dam were catching about one fish for every 5.6 rods. "Catch rates for sturgeon have dropped a bit over the past two weeks, but people are still getting some nice fish," said Manuel Fariñas, WDFW regional fish manager.

Since Oct. 1, sturgeon retention has been allowed Thursday, Friday and Saturday each week from the Wauna power lines near Cathlamet to Bonneville Dam. During October, anglers caught an estimated 5,520 fish, compared to 4,980 sturgeon during the seven months before the closure, Fariñas said. If the catch estimate for October bears out, anglers will still be able to catch 2,300 more sturgeon in the weeks ahead under the annual 12,800-fish guideline.

Salmon catches have been light on the lower Columbia, and the section from Beacon Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam closed to salmon fishing Nov. 1. Salmon fishing has also been slow on the Cowlitz River, although boat anglers have been averaging a coho per rod at Lake Scanewa. Bank anglers are also taking some coho near the salmon hatchery on the Lewis River, where a 36 winter steelhead had returned as of Oct. 26. WDFW had no report of angling success on the Klickitat River, where all chinook must be released as of Nov. 1 from the Fisher Hill Bridge upstream.

Casting for **cutthroat**? On Oct. 21, WDFW planted 872 cutts averaging 1.5 pounds in Battle Ground Lake. Goose Lake got 1,635 cutthroat of the same size during the last week of October.

NFLCC lure and tackle show, Red Lion Hotel, Kelso, Wa. Saturday, November 5th. Room trading the afternoon before. Open to the public, 8AM Saturday. Show chairman: Monte Martinsen, 360-274-8045. Over 50 tables expected from collectors all over the Northwest.

Eastern Washington: Snake River hatchery **steelhead** action is picking up, as usual at this time of year. WDFW enforcement officers report that virtually every stretch of the mainstem Snake and its tributaries is being heavily fished now. The most recent creel surveys indicate that steelheaders throughout the drainage are averaging 12 to 17 hours of fishing effort per fish caught. The best catch rates have been measured on the Tucannon River, which has averaged from 2.8 to 6.7 hours of effort per steelhead. The Walla Walla River has maintained a 5.5 hours of fishing per steelhead average. The mainstem Snake above the interstate bridge at Clarkston has averaged nearly four hours of fishing per steelhead. See all the numbers in the latest checks on WDFW's Eastern Region webpage (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/snake/index.htm>).

Trolling for Lake Roosevelt's big **rainbow trout** is improving with cooler, wetter weather. The reservoir is open year-round and some of the best trout fishing is still ahead in the winter months. Many of the rainbows are tagged so that when tags and information about catches are returned by anglers, fish biologists can learn more about their distribution and growth to improve the fishery. To encourage tag returns, cash prizes are available from the Lake Roosevelt Fisheries Evaluation Program, which conducts twice-a-year drawings among tag returns. Funded by the Bonneville Power Administration, the program recently awarded \$1,300 in prizes to 22 anglers who had caught tagged trout and returned the tags from April through September. The next drawing will be April 1, 2006 for tag returns made now through then. For more information call Eastern Washington University Fisheries Research Lab at (509) 359-7498 or see the Lake Roosevelt Forum website (<http://www.lrf.org>).

North Central Washington: WDFW regional fish program manager Joe Miller of Ephrata reminds anglers who are fishing for **steelhead** on the Methow, Simalkameen, and Okanogan rivers that bait is prohibited and selective gear rules apply. "A recent newspaper article incorrectly mentioned bait as an option to anglers on the Methow," Miller said. Before heading out, anglers should check out the details on WDFW's website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/do/newreal/release.php?id=oct0505a>).

WDFW district fish biologist Jeff Korth of Moses Lake says **walleye** fishing continues to be productive on Moses Lake, Potholes Reservoir, and Sprague Lake. As water temperatures in these big, shallow waterways dip, walleye action often picks up. In addition, Potholes has recently been producing some nice-sized **largemouth bass** from the sand dune area of the reservoir. Lake Lenore remains open through the end of the month and the **Lahontan cutthroat** trout there continue to average three pounds each. Korth reminds anglers that Lenore is a selective regulation fishery with a one-trout daily limit.

South Central Washington: The Columbia River from the Highway 395 Bridge upstream to the wooden power line towers at the old Hanford townsite remains open for the retention of **hatchery steelhead** through March 31, 2006. Beginning Nov. 1, any hatchery steelhead (instead of just those with both adipose and ventral fin clips) may be retained in this portion of the Columbia River. WDFW fish biologists say the Hanford Reach steelhead catch and harvest is far below that of the past two years, but that's not unexpected because last year's smolt release was far below typical and 75 percent of these steelhead return as one-ocean fish. **Chinook salmon** can be retained on the mainstem Columbia River from Buoy 10 upstream through the Hanford Reach section. Preliminary summary of the Hanford Reach fall chinook fishery puts the harvest at 7,501 adults, 431 jacks, and five coho. See all the latest details of the Hanford Reach Fishing Reports on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/reg3/>.

The region's many lowland lakes remain open year-round for **trout** fishing and some continued to receive catchable-size hatchery trout just last month. See the full stocking report at on the WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/weekly/>).

Northwest Trout - This week the ODFW planted eight, 10 and 12 inch rainbows at Walling Pond and Walter Wirth Lake. Ana River in the Deschutes watershed received several hundred 12 inch fish.

Reader Email

Subscriber, contributor and good-guy Rich S. sent this photo but was not anxious to reveal where he caught it, He said, in part, "Haven't fished a whole bunch lately but did manage this fish."



Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: SailCat@SailCat.com

Random Links

If you missed the Article in the Oregonian Science section - Tiny snail poses threat to streams:
<http://www.oregonlive.com/search/index.ssf?/base/science/113089473970050.xml?oregonian?scg&coll=7>

This story could be about many places this year. Sea lion problem hurts fishing at Rogue Bay:
http://www.currycountyreporter.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=787

Weekly Quote – "It seemed to me that my good fortune was almost overwhelming when I caught my first fish. ... Since that early day the expectancy and thrill of capture, whether of a trout, a lordly salmon, or a six-inch bluegill, has lessened none in its intensity, and I hardly expect that it ever will." - John Atherton

GOOD LUCK!