

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 16th – June 22nd, 2006**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Oversize sturgeon fishing remains steady in the Columbia River Gorge with fresh shad readily available for sport and sturgeon bait. The keeper bite in the gorge continues to slow as fish migrate downstream to take advantage of better feeding conditions.

Salmon fishing in the gorge has also drawn the attention of experienced anglers. Multiple hook-ups are possible for anglers using spinners along the shallow gravel bars upstream of Beacon Rock reports **pro guide Joe Salvey (503-349-1411)**. Summer Chinook passage is exploding at Bonneville Dam. Plugs are also a viable option but action remains best during the week when stable river flows bring a consistent bite.

Beach plunkers should be taking advantage of a predicted strong run of summer steelhead and an occasional fin-clipped summer Chinook on Sauvies Island and the lower Columbia Beaches. Favorable tides will run through the weekend.

Willamette Falls spring Chinook counts have picked up from fewer than 100 to over 300 a day, pushing the YTD total as of June 2nd to 25,739. This figure is still far short of the 46,500 projection. Steelhead counts are strong with over 9,000 having crossed.

Water temperature at the Falls was 61 degrees on June 12th with flows moderating. The lower river and Multnomah Channel have improved for those dragging spinners. Shad fishing remains good from the Falls to Oregon City. Sturgeon fishing is slow.

Clackamas springers are providing some entertainment now. Summer steelhead action is also picking up.

The Sandy River was fair for spring Chinook prior to the weekend but has slowed dramatically since. The fish are scattered but the upper river has been most productive recently.

North, South and mainstem Santiam anglers, whether targeting springers or steelhead, should see catches improve as the water levels moderate here.

Detroit Reservoir is producing limits of foot-long kokanee. Sheridan Pond will be planted with 2,500 trout for a youth fishing event on Saturday, June 17th from 9:30 AM to 2 PM.

Scheduled for stocking this week are Timothy Meadows, Big Cliff Reservoir, Blue River Above Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, Hills Creek, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River, Middle Fork Willamette River, Salt Creek, North Santiam River, Sunnyside Park Pond, and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

Northwest – Sturgeon anglers did well on estuary sturgeon over the weekend. The best bite took place out of Hammond on the green buoy line. There are numerous oversized sturgeon in the area as well. Anchovies are fishing well in the deeper water and crab and sculpin are not the problem they have been in years past.

Anglers fishing near Tongue Point are also getting good results but larger fish seem to be available downriver. Shrimp are producing but the anchovy bite picked up here as well. Extreme tides open up more opportunity in the shallow water areas.

Extreme tides brought salmon success to upper Tillamook Bay spinner trollers this week. More success is likely through the weekend when anglers can take advantage of extended outgoing tides in the morning.

Limits of rockfish, cabezon and ling cod are being taken out of Depoe and Yaquina Bays. Offshore crabbing is fair but poor at Yaquina.

Scheduled for trout planting this week are Big Creek Reservoir # 1 & #2, Cape Mears Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Eckman Lake, Hebo Lake, Loren's Pond, Lost Lake (Clatsop County), Olalla Creek Reservoir, South Lake, Thissel Pond, Town Lake.

Southwest - Many coho have been hooked by offshore trollers targeting Chinook. The ocean coho fishery off the central and South coast opens Saturday, June 17th.

Surf perch fishing remains excellent off Southern beaches.

With the waters of the North Umpqua dropping and warming, smallmouth bass and shad fishing is heating up. Spring Chinook fishing has shown slight improvement but remains only fair.

Rogue Chinook anglers are advised to ply the upper river for the limited number of fish available.

Bottomfishing is good out of Brookings with limits of large rockfish the rule. Offshore salmon trollers have seen catches improve when ocean conditions allow safe passage.

Clearwater, Hemlock Lake, Lake of the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir and Section 5 of the Rogue River will be planted with hatchery trout this week.

Eastern - Fish dry Salmonfly and Golden Stone imitations near the banks from Warm Springs to Maupin on the lower Deschutes this week. Fishing is excellent with lots of insects in the air and trout keyed on them.

Fly fishers are doing very well on the Owyhee River now that levels have fallen to normal.

Crane Prairie is fair to good for largemouth. Davis Lake, a fly-fishing only resource, is producing jumbo largemouth bass to eight pounds.

Ana Reservoir, Lake of the Woods, Miller Lake, Olallie Lake and Spring Creek in the Deschutes Reservoir will be planted with rainbows this week.

Southwest Washington- Spring Chinook action on the Cowlitz and Kalama Rivers has dropped off but summer steelhead are beginning to show in good numbers for Cowlitz River bank anglers.

Lewis River anglers are also taking some summer steelhead.

The Wind and Drano Lake fisheries are tapering with ripening fish making up the bulk of the catch. The upper reaches of the Wind is producing the best catches.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With the good tide series that we are currently on, there are many options for Columbia River anglers this weekend. Beginning with sturgeon, gorge anglers will be targeting oversized fish using fresh shad for bait. The shad are in full force and anglers are taking advantage of the ample supply to replenish their crab bait and sturgeon bait. The best action is taking place from Cape Horn and upstream. Keep your fresh shad on the bottom in the heavy flows and some guides are slicing their shad vertically to simulate a swimming (but wounded) shad on the bottom. Shad gills are also an option for an occasional keeper or oversized fish.

On the lower Columbia, sturgeon anglers are still scoring good sized keepers with the best action coming from downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Oversized sturgeon are making up a significant part of the catch with some boats landing upwards of 3 to 5 fish/day. Anchovies have recently entered the river and the sturgeon are taking advantage of the food source. The fish are thick through the middle and are biting best on the outgoing tide. The green line has been consistent all week but recently the Washington side of Desdemona Sands has become productive. With the extreme tide series that we are currently on, heavy lead has been necessary and weeds have been a bit of a problem on maximum ebb tide.

Sturgeon action above Tongue Point has also been decent. Keepers seem to be smaller however but the shaker action is good too. The anchovy bite has picked up recently with about half of our fish coming on them. Shrimp is still a very good bait above Tongue Point and you don't have to fight the crab. Sculpin have not been a big issue this year- likely due to higher freshwater flows. The fish have been washing through the shallow water on the higher tides opening up more opportunities for anglers knowing the feeding flats.

Salmon anglers will have expanded opportunity with the June 16th opener for summer Chinook. It's not going to matter whether your Chinook has an adipose fin on it or not, you can keep it. Like last year, this is a non-selective sportfishery (which I personally have some issues with as I can hardly believe with a run of 49,000 fish, that there are enough wild fish to propagate the run and conduct such a fishery.) The states will meet tomorrow to discuss summer Chinook gillnet opportunities later this month.

Fishing for Chinook has picked up at Bonneville. **Pro guide Joe Salvey (503-349-1411)** reports he went 7 for 12 in the area on June 8th. Joe netted 4 quality hatchery fish for his customers with the largest going over 30 pounds. Spinners were the ticket for Joe as well as most gorge anglers this time of year.

The Guide's Forecast – Sturgeon fishing remains one of the best options on tap for Columbia River fishers. Oversized fish in the gorge using fresh shad for bait is tops for metro anglers. The keepers have steadily dropped out of the area and shouldn't return until the fall although some guides are picking up fish using fresh shad gills or strips. Shad fishing is awesome in the Shad Rack area at Ives Island.

For estuary anglers, Hammond is the port of choice for large keepers and a fair number of oversized fish. Anchovies are the bait most anglers are using when fishing the green line between Hammond and the mouth of the Skipanon. We're working our way downriver the farther out the tide gets and the bite seems to be switching over to the Washington side when tide change happens. There are not many fish present in the middle slot. Upriver, anglers fishing upstream of Tongue Point are scoring fair numbers of smaller keepers on shrimp and anchovies. Tides will still be strong over the weekend with an extended period of outgoing flow in the morning. Every day can be different in this area as one day you can sit on top of them and the next, they are just not there.

Summer Chinook action should continue to produce results into the early part of next month. Passage at Bonneville is quite impressive for this time of year and anglers should be able to take advantage of it. Red and chartreuse spinners work best, fishing in 8 to 11 foot of water. Flows are fast so you should keep your gear working close to the bottom. This fishery is still several weeks away from peaking.

Steelheaders still have some great tides over the weekend to work lower Columbia River Beaches. Small, hot colored spin-n-glos will take the majority of fish but small Kwikfish will work as well. Don't be afraid to fish close to the beach as the intensity of the tide grows, the closer you should be fishing at your feet. Sauvies Island and Jones Beach near Westport will be favorites this weekend.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Spring Chinook daily counts at Willamette Falls are fluctuating but Monday, June 12th was the best day so far this month at 376, but this brings the YTD total to fewer than 27,000 fish. A total of 10,695 summer steelhead have crossed the Falls.

While Coon Island in Multnomah Channel is normally a popular and productive location for anglers to take the prolific shad at this time of year, it's been slow to spotty this year.

Sturgeon fishing has been slow for keepers with the best results coming from the Falls to Oregon City.

The McKenzie should have a decent steelhead fishery at this time of year but fluctuating water levels have frustrated anglers here.

The Guide's Forecast – Late season springer hopefuls might try Portland Harbor or the head of Multnomah Channel. Trolling or anchor fishing with spinners or wobblers will be most effective as the season winds down.

Shad catches are likely to remain best from the Falls to Oregon city. Get out there soon for this effective crab, crawfish and sturgeon bait. The Willamette run will only last another week or two.

Many of the hundreds of Chinook and steelhead crossing daily at Willamette Falls are destined for the Santiam system. Flows have moderated, catches are improving and it looks promising for the week ahead. Nearly 2,800 summer steelhead and 800 spring Chinook have entered the traps at Foster dam. Recycling of these fish back downstream is occurring every three or four days.

The one location which is producing reliably on the McKenzie is where the crowd of bank anglers gather below Leaburg Dam. They have been doing pretty well.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – With over 1,100 springers having returned to the hatchery on the Clackamas, anglers have seen some good days lately. Steelheading is fair with 235 showing up in the traps. The best results are coming to boaters working deep holes. Bank anglers at Dog Creek have had some action with summer steelhead. Start early as swimmers and rafters will be on the river every halfway decent day. The water level has been dropping over the last week.

Sandy River anglers are taking summer steelhead and springers at Cedar Creek and in the

stretch below the mouth of the creek. Some days have produced good catches. Levels have dropped a little from last week and the water is fairly clear. Snowpack should keep plenty of water flowing for fishers.

The Guide's Forecast – Spinners are effective in drawing strikes from both salmon and steelhead on the Clackamas.

Steelheaders and springer fishermen will likely to best in the upper Sandy River over the next week. The time is near for the Sandy to demonstrate its glacial origin, turning milky as the weather warms. Get 'em while you still can.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Spring Chinook fishing on Tillamook Bay is more hit and miss than previous weeks. The fishery is nearing the end of its peak but the current minus tide series should have the upper bay fishing well for spinner trollers. With the dark days we have been experiencing, chartreuse has been a good color for most of the day but the red/white blade has worked well in the early morning. Fish are beginning to move well into the river systems but precipitation levels have not been conducive to drifting the district streams.

Sturgeon fishing was fair at best on this tide series but small crab have moved into the estuary in good numbers for the summer with waning fresh water levels. The sturgeon bite will move into the Tillamook River where bank anglers will have better access to the population.

Crabbing has improved slightly in Tillamook Bay but the best crabbing remains in the ocean. Head north for the highest success and use fresh bait when available- shad is hard to beat!

Summer steelhead are beginning to concentrate in fishable numbers in the upper Wilson River. With the low water, stealth tactics are already necessary to produce any consistent results. The cloudy skies that we have been experiencing have been a bonus to area steelheaders.

The Guide's Forecast – Although we are headed on the downside of the minus tide series, fishing should remain good with ample outgoing tide opportunity for all of the morning. Be sure to be fishing productive techniques and water within the last hour of outgoing tide as that is when the majority of the fish will be taken. Wild fish may begin to make up more of the catch but hatchery fish will certainly remain available. Tidewater bobber fishermen should also take advantage of the low tides as lower Trask tidewater can produce excellent results this time of year. Quality adults will also be available in the few deep holes in the driftable sections of the Trask and Wilson but light line and small bait combos of shrimp and eggs may be required to produce some results. Plan on dragging as much as drifting in these conditions.

Sturgeon fishers will want to move up into the Tillamook tidewater and mud shrimp will endure better than sand shrimp. Crabs will move into the upper bay hampering sturgeon success but most of the quality keepers will be in the salt or close to it.

Perch anglers fishing the surf should fare well in the smaller seas. Shrimp with brightly colored small bobbers to keep your bait just off the bottom.

Central & South Coast Reports – From a late ODFW News Release Thursday, June 15th:

"The all-depth Pacific halibut sport fishery between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mountain will be open June 22, 23 and 24. If sufficient quota remains after June 24, the fishery may be open on one or more days in July."

About 30,500 pounds or 17% of the quota remains available in the spring fishery.

Siletz steelheaders have taken a few summer at the top of tidewater. This fishery will only improve into June.

Coho salmon generally frequent fairly shallow depths, but many have been hooked by offshore trollers targeting Chinook at 100 to 150 feet recently. This lends promise to the ocean coho fishery off the central and South coast opening Saturday, June 17th. Normally the kickoff is very slow but this year appears to be different. Catches are expected to be good right from the get-go.

Limits of 15 surf perch are being taken daily of the central and South coast beaches. The catches are primarily striped sea perch but redtails are also being caught. Either or both are excellent table fare.

Crabbing in bays and estuaries is very slow and softshells are starting to show in catches.

The South Umpqua smallmouth bass bite is improving. While not yet the 100-bass-per-day fishery it will become in a few weeks, it's still worthwhile. Shad fishing is hot on the lower Umpqua. Spring Chinook fishing on the North Umpqua remains lackluster. Sturgeon fishing below Reedsport is very good although retention rates are low as most fish hooked are too large to be kept legally.

Shad fishing is good on the Coos and Coquille rivers.

As of June 10th, only 4,547 spring Chinook had been counted at Gold Ray Dam, a very good showing for this late in the season. Small wonder, then, that catches are low. The Hatchery Hole is jammed with anglers in the early hours, but that has been the most productive location and at that time, scores of Chinook hit the banks. Egg imitations are most effective here. While a few Chinook are trickling into the lower river, catch rates are very low with only three in ten salmon being fin-clipped keepers. The Grants Pass stretch is spotty for springers.

Diamond lake has started to deliver some 20-fish limits of trout to 18 inches. The water level is down and will become lower in preparation for rotenone treatment this Fall to eliminate the illegally introduced tui chub.

Trollers are catching sea-run cutthroat in tidewater on the Chetco River.

Central and Eastern Oregon – On sunny, hot days from Warm Springs to Maupin on the Deschutes, Golden Stones on the wing. Salmonflies are winding down but imitations will be effective this weekend, then it's likely to be over. Pale Morning Duns are active anytime there's cloud cover or showers. Fly fishing action is excellent on the lower Deschutes.

Crane Prairie is fair to good for largemouth. Davis Lake, a fly-fishing only resource, is producing jumbo largemouth bass to eight pounds.

An event designed specifically for young people looking for a fishing opportunity is scheduled for June 17 at Sprague Pond, west of Sun River. The ODFW is sticking 500 trout and will

provide fishing equipment and angling instruction from 9 AM to 2:30 PM.

Northwest Trout – A youth fishing event has been scheduled on Saturday, June 17th from 9:30 AM to 2 PM at Sheridan Pond located off Highway 18 at Exit 33. ODFW will provide young anglers with loaner rods and reels, bait and tackle, and volunteers will be available to help the kids develop their fishing skills and care for their catch. This is a great opportunity to introduce a youngster to the sport.

Good-sized kokanee are being taken by trollers as well as jig fishermen at Wickiup. Detroit Reservoir is producing limits of foot-long kokanee.

A new area serving picnickers and anglers will open at noon on Friday, June 16th at Detroit Reservoir. The Upper Arm Day Use site which used to be a campground features a fishing dock and handicapped accessibility but no boat ramp. Heavily stocked with trout again this week, Detroit has been producing kokanee limits as well.

Other Northwest Zone locations scheduled for stocking this week are Timothy Meadows, Big Cliff Reservoir, Blue River Above Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Breitenbush River, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, Hills Creek, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River, Middle Fork Willamette River, Salt Creek, North Santiam River, Sunnyside Park Pond, and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

In the Northwest Zone, Big Creek Reservoir # 1 & #2, Cape Mears Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Eckman Lake, Hebo Lake, Loren's Pond, Lost Lake (Clatsop County), Olalla Creek Reservoir, South Lake, Thissel Pond, Town Lake will be planted with hatchery rainbows.

North Puget Sound

As summer approaches, anglers have their pick of saltwater or freshwater fishing opportunities throughout the region.

Out on the saltwater, the Tulalip Bay "bubble" **salmon** fishery started off slow, but the catch rate is expected to pick up in the coming weeks, said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "This fishery usually starts slow, but it tends to improve as we move into July," Thiesfeld said. "So it's still early, but it's a great opportunity for anglers to get their boat on the water and try out their gear before the fishery heats up."

According to WDFW creel checks at the Everett Ramp, a total of 336 anglers accounted for only six chinook during the first three days of the fishery (June 2-4). During the following opening (June 9-11), a total of 233 anglers checked in only four chinook.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that the bubble fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday and runs through Sept. 25, except for a one-day closure on June 17. There is a two-salmon daily limit and chinook must be 22 inches in length to retain.

Anglers also can drop a line for salmon in the northern portion of Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). The marine area remains open through June 30 to catch-and-release fishing for salmon, which is allowed north of a line from Point Monroe to Meadow Point. Handling rules are in effect for this fishery.

Meanwhile, **lingcod** and **halibut** fisheries in the region are winding down. The lingcod season closes June 15, while the halibut fishery ends June 18. During the lingcod hook-and-

line season, there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, which must be a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 40 inches. For halibut, there's a daily limit of one fish and no minimum size limit.

The **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** seasons are under way in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), the northern and central portions of 7 (San Juan Islands) and a portion of 9 (Admiralty Inlet). The daily limit in all of these fisheries is 10 pounds, heads and tails, of all shrimp species combined. Shrimp heads can be removed, but the heads must be retained while in the field. Details, such as the required minimum mesh size and maximum fishing depths, are available on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/>.

Crab fishing is just around the corner. The fishery opens July 1 in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, and the southern portion of 7. Fisheries in those areas will generally be open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, although the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission recently added extra fishing days around the Fourth of July. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

On freshwater, the Skagit, Skykomish and Cascade rivers are open for **spring chinook** fishing. On the Skagit, springers are scattered throughout the river and fishing has been steady when river flows are about normal, said Brett Barkdull, WDFW fish biologist. "Anglers should check the Marblemount and Bacon Creek stream gauges before heading out to the Skagit," Barkdull said. "If flows are about normal, fishing should be decent." Barkdull reminds anglers that the Skagit River is open to hatchery spring chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River. The daily limit is two hatchery chinook at least 12 inches in length.

On the Cascade River, anglers can fish from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road bridge, with a daily limit of two hatchery chinook at least 12 inches in length. On the Skykomish, hatchery springer fishing is open from the Lewis Street Bridge in Monroe to the Wallace River. The Skykomish fishery also has a daily limit of two hatchery chinook at least 12 inches in length.

Trout fishing continues on the lakes and several of the region's rivers and streams. Under the statewide rule for trout, there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches in rivers and streams. However, some of the region's rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to retain. For more rules and details on trout fishing, anglers can check out WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

As opportunities for catching **halibut** and **shrimp** wind down, the start of summer is stirring anticipation for crab and coastal **salmon** fishing. Meanwhile, lake and river fishing is in full swing, with anglers reeling in **trout** and **steelhead**.

Signs of the upcoming sport-crabbing season will begin appearing in the next few weeks at boat ramps and beaches throughout the Puget Sound area. The metal signs will list requirements for participating in the recreational **crab** fishery that begins June 18 in some areas of Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Crab fishing in three areas of Puget Sound will get under way June 18. Those waters - which include marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) - will be open seven days per week through Feb. 28.

Eight areas will open to crab fishing July 1, including marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de

Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal). Crab fishing in those four areas will be open daily from July 1-8 before switching to a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule. The fishery will be open the entire Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2-4, before closing for a catch assessment. Fishing will resume in areas where the catch quota has not been met, on dates to be announced by WDFW.

See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

Another much-anticipated summer fishery begins June 30 when waters off Neah Bay and La Push open for **salmon** fishing. The Sekiu/Pillar Point, eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca and Hood Canal (marine areas 5, 6, and 12) salmon fisheries open July 1, while the fisheries at Ilwaco and Westport (marine areas 1 and 2) open on July 3.

Salmon fishing opened a bit slower than expected in Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) on June 1. "It wasn't the big bang to start with, but some fish were caught, and people got out and had fun. The closer we get to July, the better the fishing should get," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. The fishery runs seven days a week, with a limit of two salmon a day. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches, but there is no minimum for other species. Commencement Bay remains closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 12.

Anglers will get two more days in June to fish for **Pacific halibut** off the state's north coast. Marine areas 3 (La Push) and 4 (Neah Bay) will be open for halibut fishing June 22 and again June 24. A 20-fathom depth restriction in place in marine areas 3 and 4 will not apply on June 22 and 24. The restriction, which runs through September 30, 2006, applies only on days when halibut fishing is closed. On those days, anglers may not fish for, retain, possess or land any rockfish or lingcod caught seaward of a line approximately 20 fathoms offshore. The coordinates for the 20-fathom line are available on WDFW's website (http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/bottomfish/20fathoms_may06.htm) and on the recreational hotline (360-902-2500).

Halibut anglers have four more days to fish - June 15-18 - in marine areas 6 (East Strait of Juan de Fuca), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island), 13 (South Puget Sound), and 9 (Admiralty Inlet) before the season closes in those areas.

"It's been a good season overall" for halibut fishing on the strait, said Larry Bennett, WDFW fish biologist based in Port Angeles. "The fish tend to be big up here and anglers don't have to fish so deep as in the ocean areas." The halibut fishery remains open in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu/Pillar Point) through Aug. 5. The daily limit for halibut is one fish. Lingcod fishing in Marine Area 6 closes tomorrow (June 15).

Fishing for coonstripe and other non-spot opened June 1 in several areas of Puget Sound including marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island) and 9 (Admiralty Inlet), with a 150-foot depth restriction. The fishing is open daily. While most waters have now closed to spot shrimp fishing, those still open include marine areas 4, 5, 6, and 13.

River fishing, which opened June 1, is a sure sign that summer's around the corner. Flows on most of the rivers are still normal to slightly high for this time of year due to recent rains, according to Rick Ereth, WDFW fish biologist. "The summer-run steelhead catch has been fair on the Wynoochee River, with most effort concentrated below White Bridge," Ereth said. "There's a mix of steelhead in the Wynoochee right now. Although most fish caught and retained have been fresh summer runs, small numbers of late winter-run fish are still moving

in to spawn, and also a fair number of spawned-out kelts are still moving downstream."

Anglers have also been fishing the Satsop and Chehalis rivers. A few chinook were picked up last week in the Chehalis mainstem upstream of the Fuller Bridge. The pursuit of trout in local creeks and streams is also offering good results. Erath reminds anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) pamphlet before going out for specific regulations on the waters they are fishing.

On the Olympic Peninsula, occasional warm days continue to keep the Hoh River high and murky, said David Low, WDFW fish biologist. Creel counts between June 8 and 10 found 25 anglers catching seven chinook and four summer steelhead. Low said the fishing on the Sol Duc River has been slow. "The river has been low and clear, and the fish have been holding in pools, not biting well. Hopefully the recent rains will move some fish," he said.

While the weather remains cool, trout continue to grow in area lakes, according to Hal Michael, WDFW fish biologist, who says this is a good time for anglers to consider fishing for pan fish. "Bluegill, pumpkinseed, rock bass, warmouth, large and smallmouth bass, and other sunfish are all actively spawning now in shallower waters and should be more accessible to anglers, particularly those fishing from shore," Michael said. Yellow perch have already spawned. "We've had several reports of fish kills. It's the male yellow perch - they just don't survive spawning. It's an annual thing we see," he said.

Two lakes in the region are currently closed to fishing due to water conditions. Anderson Lake near Chimacum was closed by the State Parks Department and the Jefferson County Health Department. Wapato Lake, a juvenile-anglers-only lake in Pierce County, was closed by Tacoma Metro Parks.

Southwest Washington

As spring comes to an end, summer steelhead are beginning to show up in the lower Columbia River tributaries, and summer chinook are starting to return in greater numbers to the Columbia's mainstem. Meanwhile, sturgeon anglers continue to do well on the Columbia, particularly at the mouth of the river.

On the lower Columbia's tributaries, bank anglers casting for steelhead are having the most success on the Cowlitz River, while anglers along the Kalama and Lewis rivers are doing fairly well. A recent creel survey found 27 bank anglers kept 16 adipose-clipped steelhead on the Cowlitz River, while 56 bank anglers brought home eight steelies on the Kalama River, and 30 anglers kept seven steelhead on the Lewis River.

"The steelhead fishery is just getting started," said Wolf Dammers, a WDFW fish biologist. "Over the next few weeks, look for these rivers to become more and more productive."

Trout fishing also continues on several of the region's lakes, rivers and streams. After a recent stocking of trout, anglers are expected to do well at Kidney, Lacamas and Battle Ground lakes, Mayfield Reservoir and Kline Pond, said Dammers.

Before heading out, anglers should check fishing regulations in the *2006-07 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) on the WDFW website.

On the lower Columbia's mainstem, summer chinook are starting to arrive, and the hot spot for anglers is just below the Bonneville Dam. A recent creel check in that area found 42 bank anglers kept eight hatchery chinook and released 34. "That's pretty good bank fishing," said

Dammers, who reminds anglers that only adipose-clipped chinook can be retained through June 15. Beginning June 16 - the official start of the summer chinook fishery - anglers fishing from Tongue Point near Astoria to the Priest Rapids Dam can keep chinook with or without an adipose fin, he said.

Shad continue to show up in large numbers to the lower Columbia River. Bank anglers are having the most success just below Bonneville Dam, where shad stack up before passing upstream. "Because the river is running higher than normal, the fish are forced toward the banks of the river," Dammers said. "So bank anglers are finding a lot of shad nearby and are doing very well."

Recent catch counts gave some indication of angler success. A total of 129 bank anglers interviewed just below the dam kept 1,653 shad.

A record six million shad returned to the Columbia River in 2005 and biologists are predicting another strong return this year. For shad recipes, see the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/outreach/fishing/shad/shad.htm>.

Want to hook a sturgeon? Head out to the Columbia River estuary, where anglers continue to pick up an increasing number of legal-sized fish. Charter anglers checked at Ilwaco and Chinook were averaging one legal-size sturgeon for every 1.4 rods, while anglers in private boats were averaging one keeper for every 3.2 rods.

Eastern Washington:

When summer officially arrives and drier and warmer weather settles in throughout the region, fishing options should increase. "If the Spokane River ever recedes," said WDFW District Biologist Chris Donley, "it should have some good trout fishing. And when it warms up, Loon Lake will again be good for kokanee night fishing. Some folks have already been trolling for kokanee at Loon and catching a few."

Meanwhile, Donley says the region's many trout-stocked lakes are still a good bet, especially early mornings and late afternoons, between rainstorms. "Fly fishing for cutthroat and rainbows at Amber Lake is still good," he said, "but you've got to fish deeper now, 15 to 20 feet deep, with wet lines."

Post-spawn perch, crappie and bluegill have been moving into deeper water and providing some action at several waters, including Spokane County's Clear, Eloika, Long and Silver lakes. Eloika Lake is also good for largemouth bass fishing now. Bonnie Lake, off Rock Creek near the Spokane-Whitman county line, has good crappie and bass fishing, but access is up a creek channel by small boats only and the private property surrounding the lake must be respected.

Whitman County's Gilchrist Pond, southwest of Colfax, will be closed to fishing June 14 until the start of a kids' fishing clinic on Saturday, June 17, to protect catchable-size trout stocked specifically for the event. For more information contact Whitman County 4-H at 509-397-6290.

Sprague Lake has decent action on rainbows and perch and some walleye. The Spokane arm of Lake Roosevelt and the upper stretches of the reservoir above Kettle Falls, from Gifford to China Bend, are producing lots of walleye catches now. Tag returns on Roosevelt's rainbow trout are steady.

"Fishing the free-flowing reach of the Columbia River from Northport to the Canada border

could be a real adventure," Donley said. "We don't conduct any creel census in that area, but I know there are some nice fish in that big water."

In the other end of the region, smallmouth bass fishing should be good now on the lower stretch of the Grand Ronde River, from its mouth at the Snake River in Asotin County. The Snake's spring chinook salmon season in the Little Goose dam area continues slow but steady. Be sure to follow gear restrictions, including barbless hooks, for that special season.

North Central Washington:

The special fishing season for spring chinook salmon on Chelan County's Icicle River has been closed until further notice because of last week's theft of broodstock at Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery. Two hundred of the 250 chinook collected towards the hatchery's need for 1,000 broodstock were stolen. Until the hatchery collects 950 more fish, the season will remain closed. Based on the most recent run counts over Rock Island and Rocky Reach dams on the Wenatchee River, WDFW District Fish Biologist Art Viola estimates about 1,250 fish are heading up the Icicle River. "At the rate these fish are now coming up river we might be able to re-open this fishery after the broodstock goal is met," he said. "The run was later than we expected, but fishing was picking up and more consistent than past years." Viola reported recreational anglers had harvested about 150 fish when the theft occurred. The season on the portion of the Icicle River 400 feet upstream of the mouth at the Wenatchee River to 500 feet downstream of the hatchery fish rack originally was scheduled to run through July 31.

WDFW District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff of Omak reports rivers in the Methow Valley of Okanogan County are still too high to fish effectively. "But there are some lakes in county that are still producing good catches of trout," he said. "Both Rat Lake near Brewster and Davis Lake near Winthrop are good bets for rainbow trout 11 to 13 inches. Both of these lakes are catch-and-release with selective gear rules in effect at this time." Jateff also reported Leader Lake has good fishing for bluegills and crappie, with some rainbow trout in the catch, too. "Sidley Lake near Oroville is also a good prospect," he said, "with rainbows running to 15 inches." Sidley is a year-round open lake with a two-fish daily catch limit.

WDFW enforcement officers report many anglers have been going after triploid rainbow trout, walleye and kokanee at Rufous Woods Lake, the Columbia River reservoir on the Okanogan-Douglas county line.

Walleye continue to be the fish to catch at Moses Lake reports WDFW District Fish Biologist Jeff Korth of Moses Lake. The recent Moses Lake Walleye Classic tournament yielded one 10.8-pound fish and one 9.08-pound fish. "Remember the new regulations for walleye," Korth said. "It's now an eight-fish daily catch limit with a 12-inch minimum and no more than one fish over 22 inches."

Continued rain and wind have slowed action at Potholes Reservoir, but as water levels drop and conditions settle into summer, catches will improve. Walleye fishing has already improved in the sand dune area and post-spawn largemouth bass are moving into deeper water.

South Central Washington:

With continued rain, rivers and streams throughout the region are not dropping into good fishing condition as quickly as expected after recent flooding from snowmelt runoff. But water levels are dropping, said WDFW Fish Biologist Jim Cummins, and sooner or later most waterways will provide some good action on trout and other fish. "The Naches River remains

a little high for fishing," he said, "but smaller streams are fishable."

Rimrock Reservoir kokanee are biting now, mostly by chumming or trolling. WDFW district fish biologist Eric Anderson reports that although the fish are only running seven to nine inches, many anglers are catching limits of 16 kokanee a day from boats and south shoreline areas. Cummins noted that recent wind, rain and cold weather has made Rimrock kokanee fishing "challenging," especially for those with small boats. "Be extra careful out there," he advised.

Fishing at smaller trout lakes has been easier. Anderson reported plans to stock more triploid rainbow trout this week in Yakima County's Clear, Leech and Dog lakes, now that they're all free of snow. Lost Lake in Kittitas County will be stocked after June 20. Meanwhile, Leech Lake anglers are catching some 8- to 13-inch brook trout and some carryover triploid rainbows in the 17- to 19-inch range. Anderson reminds anglers that Leech Lake is fly-fishing only. Occasional lake trout up to 12 pounds are being caught in Cle Elum Lake by trolling or jigging about 100 feet deep.

WDFW enforcement officers recently checked high numbers of shad fishermen with good success on the Columbia River. Lots of bass, catfish, walleye and **sturgeon** anglers have also been out on the Columbia, Yakima and Snake rivers. Several nice bass and walleye were checked on the Columbia in the Paterson area of Benton County.

Reader Email

Subscriber and regular contributor Kapt'n Ken Johnson reports from the banks of the lower Willamette: "Not too much happening in "The Blacktop" or Meldrum Bar neighborhood. Bankers are tossing various kinds of spinners on both sides of the mouth of the Clackamas hoping for a Chinook to grab their offerings. I've seen several different types from homemade to Metrics and the like. Even a mid-sized RED Rooster Tail...Hey, why not??? A few fish are being taken. I've been out of town for 5 days and just got back so not sure what the latest really is. There is an absence of boats in the Willamette River I've noticed. Water is still high and what Shad are out there are scattered a bit. My guess is the Shad run is almost, if not, over. A few Chinook are still being taken but with the high water, they too are scattered and not following their "normal" paths upriver. Sturgeon anyone???"

Write to the TGF staff:

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Michael Teague: SailCat@SailCat.com

Random Links

Free Women's Fly Casting Clinic in Fairview June 17th:
<http://www.stoneflymaidens.org/PDFs/2006ClinicFlyer.pdf>

Willamette level showing tides:
<http://ahps2.wrh.noaa.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=pqr&gage=orco3&view=1>

Weekly Quote – "Fish are strange creatures. They're even more unpredictable than women - and that's going some." - R.V "Gadabout" Gaddis

GOOD LUCK!