

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 30th, – July 6th, 2006**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Anglers versed in salmon techniques in the gorge are doing well for summer Chinook. Anchored in 10 – 16 feet of water, using spinners and small plugs, salmon fishers are averaging better than a fish per boat. Unmarked Chinook are making up the bulk of the catch. Although current passage indicates the run will be considerably larger than predicted, the sportfishery is nearing its salmon quota. A closure is nearing for anglers downstream of Priest Rapids Dam.

Beach plunkers caught more summer Chinook than steelhead in the weekend creel check between Portland and Longview. The lack of a minus tide series this week will likely slow the bite.

Sturgeon action in the gorge has slowed for oversized fish although dedicated anglers are still landing fish. Shad have saturated the river with over 3.5 million already past Bonneville Dam. Keepers are still hard to come by in the gorge.

Shad fishing remains phenomenal along Ives Island using small spoons or shad darts.

Retention of sturgeon will close to anglers between John Day and McNary Dams beginning July 1st.

As of June 23rd, over 32,000 spring Chinook had crossed at Willamette Falls. If the numbers continue as strong as they have been in recent weeks, the projection of 46,500 may actually be attained. A few are still being caught in the lower river.

Count on consistent, steady action for undersized sturgeon in the lower Willamette. Keepers have been rare here recently.

Shad fishing has been winding down for a while although it still possible to catch a few from Willamette Falls to the mouth of the Clackamas.

The Sandy River is running low and clear. A few springers were taken at the mouth over last weekend but a greater number of summer steelhead were hooked.

Waters of the Clackamas are also low and clear. Upriver areas are producing the best results for summer steelhead.

Springers and steelhead are available throughout the North and South Santiam system but the bite is tough.

Springer fishing on the McKenzie is fair to good although numbers are down from past seasons. Fly fishing is good for large trout with the Caddis hatch underway.

Trout are scheduled to be planted in the Willamette Valley in Trillium Lake.

Northwest – Estuary sturgeon anglers are faring well out of the Astoria area. Anchovies have moved into the lower river and are working well for bait both above and below the Astoria/Megler Bridge. The deeper water on lower Desdemona Sands and the Washington side above the bridge should produce well in the upcoming softer tide series. Lower river anglers are nearing their keeper quota and the season is scheduled to close July 4th. Further, more restrictive opportunities may exist

following the closure, only after fishery managers have a chance to review catch statistics.

The ocean north of Cape Falcon to Leadbetter Point in Washington opens on July 3rd for 2 salmon per day. Only 1 of the 2 salmon may be a Chinook and coho must have an adipose fin missing. Catches will likely be light.

Recreational boats have been restricted out of Garibaldi due to rough bar and ocean conditions. With the minus tide series out of the way and calmer seas predicted by the weekend, anglers may have some opportunity for hatchery coho, bottomfish and ocean crab.

Spring Chinook fishing has dropped off considerably on the North Coast but fishing remains viable for river fishermen on the Wilson, Trask and Nestucca Rivers. Bobber and bait will produce best at first light.

Summer Chinook should become an option on Nehalem Bay in the very near future although catches are generally light until early August.

Crabbing has been poor in Tillamook and Netarts Bays and many of the keeper sized crab are in a soft shell stage.

No trout will be planted until September.

Southwest - Rough seas recently have kept bars closed and recreational boaters trying to scratch out bottomfish along jetties inside the bays.

The offshore hatchery coho season south of Humbug Mountain rewarded anglers with decent catches last week when they could get out. This ocean fishery will remain open through July 4th if the quota doesn't fill. Coast-wide through June 25th, about 250 coho and 84 Chinook have been retained.

Oversized sturgeon fishing is very good in the lower Umpqua. Although the shad run is winding down, anglers caught decent numbers over the weekend. Smallmouth bass fishing is improving.

With numbers down, springer fishing has gone from slow to slower on the Rogue River. Fewer fish were hooked over the weekend at the Hatchery Hole which has been the most productive spot.

Limits of razor clams were taken during the minus tide series at Bailey Beach.

Clearwater #2, Hemlock Lake, Herberts Pond, Lake of the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir, Fish Lake and Section 5 of the Rogue River will be planted with trout.

Eastern - The best fly fishing on the Deschutes is from Trout Creek to Maupin with the river above receiving lots of pressure. The Salmonfly hatch is a wrap but Pale Morning Duns and Caddis are active. The middle Deschutes is producing early and late in the day.

Pro Guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688) reports the trout fishing in Eastern Oregon is improving as the water levels drop and the weather warms up.

The Willowa and Grande Ronde rivers are fishing well under stonefly hatches that are currently progressing up the system. Nymphs in the morning and dry-fly fun later in the day is the rule of thumb for abundant trout looking for egg-laying adults flying each day.

State-raised rainbows will be planted in Ana Reservoir Badger Lake, Campbell Lake, Century Gravel

Pit, Big Cultus Lake, Deadhorse Lake, 2006 Deschutes River, Devils Lake, East Lake, Fall River, Horseshoe Lake, Lake of the Woods, Lost Lake, Ochoco Creek, Olallie Lake, Shevlin Pond, Sprague Gravel Pit, Spring Creek, Thompson Valley, Three Creeks Lake, North and South Twin Lake and Walton Lake.

Southwest Washington- Returns of summer steelhead are up on most SW Washington streams. Summer steelhead action is good on the Cowlitz River in the Blue Creek and Mission Bar areas.

The Wind River and Drano Lake fisheries will close to angling for spring Chinook on July 1st. The lower Wind and Drano Lake will remain open for hatchery steelhead.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Effort and catch has taken fishery managers by surprise this summer Chinook season and as a result, action will likely have to be taken to curb catch in the very near future. ODF&W catch statistics indicate an average of just over 1 Chinook per boat in the gorge- where the bulk of these fish are being harvested. Small spinners in brass and flame red are taking quality Chinook to close to 40 pounds in the swifter flows from 10 to 16 feet of water. Although the river remains high, the best action is coming from shallow gravel bars along and just downstream of Ives Island. It's hard to get a productive spot at the Shad Rack because the shad fishing is so popular right now and once you get hooked up on a Chinook, it's hard to float out with it considering all the traffic in the area. Small plugs are working as well but you have to adjust your dropper lead line appropriately to make sure you plug is fishing at the right depth.

Fishery managers updated the summer Chinook run to a whopping 90,000! With consistent passage at Bonneville, the run easily surpassed the predicted 49,000 fish. Counts at Bonneville are topping 2,500 fish per day with a high of 4,038 on the 26th. The meeting to determine the fate of the sportfishery took place the morning of Thursday, June 29th at which time it was decided to allow the fishery to remain open through July 6th. On that date another meeting will be held to consider "additional management actions" regarding both the commercial and recreational fisheries.

Bill Kremers (541 754 6411) writes, " ... fished the Columbia River by St. Helens on Saturday. Did not see that many salmon caught but we did manage to land one on a spinner with a chartreuse body and a silver body. We were fishing in 20 to 25 feet of water by Frenchmen Bar."

Below is a picture of Bill's client, Bob from Mulino, with the catch of the day.



Kremers continues, "Fishing the Umpqua for smallmouth tomorrow. Will send you a report

afterwards and hopefully with a few pictures."

Steelhead numbers are encouraging at Bonneville. Although sportanglers tallied more summer Chinook in the weekend creel check, passage at Bonneville has topped that magical 200+ fish/day indicating the run is well on its way. As Chinook numbers dwindle into July, steelhead numbers will climb steadily into August.

Sturgeon fishers in the gorge are still working oversized sturgeon to the boat. Shad numbers remain high with over 3.5 million already past the dam. With this great of food source for the broodstock, competing baits is having an impact on the catch. Couple this with the new Marker 85 deadline and a whole new set of challenges need to be overcome. Pro guides are managing to make it work however as it seems a new influx of fish have come in from downriver. **Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)** stated the "new" fish that are showing up are in the 5 to 7 foot range- fish that estuary fishers were interacting with just a little over a week ago. Dan reported the key to success is to fish the freshest bait available and get away from your competition. Alone time is good time although the deadline is producing consistent results.

Estuary sturgeon anglers will be facing a July 4th closure as we near the 16,000 fish quota. The projected catch through the 4th of July is predicted to be 14,600 keepers- the guideline was 15,000 fish. Once managers review the actual catch data, additional time is likely to be allocated in the form of a days/week fishery. Charter boat operators are pulling for a Friday/Saturday opener to coincide with the ocean closure for salmon, due to start on July 3rd.

Fishing for Astoria area sturgeon has been productive. Both the lower river (downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge) and upriver of Tongue Point have been producing good catches. Anchovies have been the best option for deep water anglers while shrimp are taking good numbers of fish above Tongue Point. It seems however that the larger fish are falling to anchovies above Tongue Point more consistently. Both the side channels off of the shipping channel and the North Channel at Marker 3 are producing, albeit inconsistent. The best times of the tide both above and below the bridge are the last hour of outgoing tide and the first 3 hours of incoming. Crab and sculpin are becoming a problem in the water below the bridge.

The Guide's Forecast – With a closure looming, gorge salmon fishers may see an end to a fine (but quick) season for fish in the 20 to 30 pound range. Small spinners and plugs will remain the most effective but the most productive slots will be constantly occupied by the most motivated of anglers. Proper anchors and technique will keep these folks in place where the bulk of the biters travel upstream. These slots may change however with flows but plan on a busy hogline if you pursue salmon this weekend- assuming it's open. Hoglines in the Troutdale area are also taking fish but catch ratios are a fraction of what anglers are experiencing in the gorge.

For beach plunkers, the minus tide series will be wrapped up by the weekend. Softer tides will not concentrate fish close to shore but the following week should prove productive as numbers grow.

Oversized sturgeon will continue to challenge anglers in the gorge. Effort has not been high and will likely continue to drop into July. The freshest of shad and a diversity of presentations will be necessary to produce any consistent results into the near future. Shad fishing should remain excellent into the holiday weekend- a great way to introduce kids into NW fishing (and kill those invasive species too!).

The estuary will be cranking with vacationers this weekend. Folks may make a long weekend of it and stay for festivities through Tuesday. Plan on big crowds and when this happens, short fuses not only exist on those dangerous fireworks! Fishing should be consistent through the weekend from Miller Island to lower Desdemona Sands. With the onset of the weaker tide series, the deeper water

will be the best option as fish will not likely wash onto the shallower sand flats in these conditions. The river below the bridge should offer the best opportunity for weekend anglers. There will be more room in the undefined water and higher concentrations of fish. For anglers wishing to launch out of Tongue Point, bring a stern anchor as weak flows coupled with any wind will wreak havoc on keeping your boat in place. Target fish in the channels on the outgoing tide but like the lower river, the best time will be close to low slack and the first part of incoming tide.

The ocean may lay down for the July 3rd opener for coho in the North of Falcon opener. Anglers out of the mouth of the Columbia aren't all that excited to venture out this early in the season. Fish may be available but catches aren't likely to be all that great. The CR Buoy is the likely starting point for anglers not knowing where to go. The limit is 2 salmon, of which one may be a coho. Coho will likely make up the bulk of the catch.

Clamming was fair along Clatsop County Beaches on the last minus tide series but we will not see another minus tide until the next weekend.

Crabbing remains poor on the lower Columbia River.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Shad fishing remained rewarding in the lower Willamette over the weekend. ODFW reported 20 boats checked over last weekend took 253 fish at Oregon City.

Only the occasional keeper sturgeon is being taken in the lower Willamette. Catch and release fishing for undersized sturgeon is good.

Daily spring Chinook numbers at Willamette Falls improved mid-June, holding up well since then, making the run estimate of 44,600 attainable. Earlier in the season it appeared this forecast number would not be attained. Year-to-date totals were nearly 33,000 on June 24th.

Over 4,000 summer steelhead nearly 1,300 spring Chinook have been counted at Foster Dam on the South Santiam. Numbers are not available from the North Santiam as the trap is not in operation. Despite good numbers of steelhead and springers in both the North and South Santiam, anglers are having to work at it to hook fish.

I (Michael) heard from an old friend who calls himself 'Ferret', who said in part regarding the Santiam prospects, "The fishing on both the north and south has been very slow, a few fish being caught." He did manage this 32 incher, though, which he landed on four-pound monofilament.



The Guide's Forecast – The shad run is winding down so get 'em while you can. This weekend should be fair, but it might be a last-chance opportunity in 2006.

Unless fairly steady action for shakers is what you're after, head to the lower Columbia for the best shot a keeper sturgeon.

Optimistic anglers continue to take a few Chinook in the lower Willamette with Portland Harbor most productive. It may be late in the year for Chinook on the Willamette but a few are being caught every day in the lower river. Try a spinner either on anchor if there's sufficient current or on the troll otherwise. A green dot #7 blade has been working recently. Water temperatures hitting 71 degrees on June 27th may mark the end of this fishery for 2006.

The Corps of Engineers is releasing water from Detroit Reservoir into the North Santiam to compensate for snowmelt, increasing flows and causing variations in the river level. When this is completed, the river will be at good, stable flow with acceptable water temps and anglers should see an improvement in the salmon and steelhead bite.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Historically, this is the time of year for the tributaries to reward anglers with summer steelhead and spring Chinook. The Clackamas has yet to turn on, however, and with the water low and clear, will be a first light opportunity, then only a recreational rafting and swimming hole for the kiddies.

Trollers have picked up a few springers at the mouth of the Sandy. Water temperatures this week are in the mid-50s.

The Guide's Forecast – With the spring chinook run universally late, one can only hope that the Clackamas Salmon are on the same schedule. At no time this year have there been enough numbers of Chinook in the Clack for it to become a reliable fishery. This one's a coin toss.

Trolling inside the mouth of the Sandy may be worthwhile, but with the Columbia closure, don't venture beyond. Steelhead and salmon fishing has been slow upstream with the exception of Cedar Creek. Recent reports indicate the water appears a little murky, which may indicate the beginning of the Sandy turning milky due to its glacial origins. It's unusual that the hoe weather recently hasn't already triggered it.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Spring Chinook fishing is winding down in the Tillamook district. The bay fishery, although open, is not productive. Adults are in the rivers- both the tidewater stretches and above. Low, clear water makes early morning fishing best with small baits and light leaders in the deep holes. Eggs and shrimp will produce the best results with the Wilson, Trask and Nestucca Rivers the best options. Three Rivers closes for spring Chinook on June 30th. Large numbers of springers were culled from Three Rivers from a small group of poachers that snagged the salmon in the early hours of the morning. Keep OSP's phone number handy for situations like this. These poachers are stealing Oregon's resource from you!

Summer steelhead should be an easy target for anglers experienced in stealth tactics on the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers.

Ocean salmon results were dismal out of Garibaldi last week. High winds and swell along with hazardous bar conditions kept most sport anglers in the harbor. To date, catch rates are 1 salmon for every 10 anglers. Coho outnumber Chinook but not by much.

Bay crabbing remains slow and it would take a lot of hard work to take a limit for a person. Ocean crabbing may be a better option when seas calm down.

Sturgeon catch and effort have moved upriver to the Tillamook River. Small crabs have infiltrated much of the bay making the Tillamook River the best option.

The Guide's Forecast – The ocean may once again be a viable option for salmon, bottomfish and crabbers over the weekend. Calming seas and safer bar conditions are forecasted for the weekend. A strong effort should yield results for most species.

River fishers can target both spring Chinook (clipped only) and summer steelhead. Both species will require a stealth approach. Small baits under bobbers or drifted in pocket water or the heads of holes early in the morning.

Bay crabbers should target their quarry near the mouth of the Tillamook Bay with the lack of tide exchange. Netarts Bay is not productive for keeper crab.

Central & South Coast Reports – Summer steelheading is worthwhile on the Siletz with fish scattered from tidewater into the gorge. Low, clear water means the spoils will fall to early-rising anglers.

The spring all-depth halibut fishing of the central coast will continue into summer this year with 30,000 pounds remaining in the generous quota. The next opportunity will be July 6th, 7th and 8th.

Schools of baitfish are in evidence in Winchester Bay, a harbinger of salmon to come. High winds kept the bar closed over the weekend and had bottom fishers try to scratch out a few fish along the jetties. Sturgeon fishing below Reedsport continues to reward anglers with oversized fish but only the occasional keeper. Shad fishing is good as the run winds down and smallmouth bass prospects improve as the water warms. Steelheading is fair on the North Umpqua above Idyllwild.

Large bait balls have been in evidence in the Rogue River estuary over the last week as well, which usually doesn't occur until late July. This has raised the optimism of anglers and local guides regarding the summer Chinook and coho runs to come.

Spring Chinook fishing has been slow and further slowed last weekend, even at the Hatchery Hole which was as near a "hotspot" as anywhere on the Rogue. Wild Chinook retention was cut off with the poor return this year. In addition, July 1st marks the closure above Gold Ray Dam to Elk County Park. A total of 6,139 spring Chinook and 492 summer steelhead have been counted at Gold Ray Dam as of June 19th.

With emergency measures in place and spring Chinook numbers approaching record lows, the ODFW announced on Wednesday, June 28th, that they would implement "non-lethal methods" in an effort to reduce mortality in the lower river due to seal and sea lion predation.

These methods of pinniped control include "modifying moorage and dock structures to eliminate resting areas, reducing a food source by ending the practice of dumping fish carcasses into the estuary, and using non-lethal hazing methods such as high pressure water hoses and wildlife control firecrackers to displace the mammals."

Offshore salmon fishing has been spotty and anglers have had a tough time getting out with rough seas. The exception is the report from Brookings where nearly every angler limited over the weekend. A total of 254 coho and 84 Chinook had been taken coast-wide through June 25th.

Clamming remains open on all Oregon bays estuaries and beaches. It had been nearly four years since entire Oregon coast was open to razor clamming due to high levels of the naturally occurring bio-toxin domoic acid.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro Guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688) reports, "Fishing in northeast Oregon this week is improving as rivers drop and the weather warms up. Wallowa Lake trout and kokanee fishing are doing well. Trout fishing seems to be getting more interest this year with some bigger rainbows being caught. Fish in the 20 inch range are more common this year than in recent years.

"The Wallowa and Grande Ronde rivers are fishing well under stonefly hatches that are currently progressing up the system. Nymphs in the morning and dry-fly fun later in the day is the rule of thumb for abundant trout looking for egg-laying adults flying each day.

"The current hot weather seems to be holding water levels even this week, but the snow pack is disappearing and water levels will ultimately drop again as long as dry weather prevails."

Odell and Paulina are producing fair numbers of smallish kokanee. Crescent Lake has provided many anglers with limits of broad-shouldered kokes.

Following a tough spring where high, muddy water plagued the John Day, smallmouth fishermen are making good catches of bass now although they're running on the small side.

John Day Reservoir closes to sturgeon retention July 1st.

Northwest Trout – Trout are scheduled to be planted in the Willamette Valley in Trillium Lake. The trout planting which took place on June 19th in the Northwest Zone was the last until September.

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. Ereth 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 Okanogan County 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 Rick S. wrote this week to ask, Just a quick question on the prospects for success on fishing for steelhead up the Clackamas River--Three Lynx area/Alder Flats. Are steelhead reaching that far up in the system with any kind of numbers anymore? Thanks for your help."

Pro guide Bob Rees replied, ODF&W has ceased the planting of hatchery summer steelhead above River Mill Dam. This would effectively shut down any opportunity for steelhead in this reach. They did this to protect wild winter steelhead that spawn and rear in this stretch. You'll have to angle below Rivermill for a chance at Clackamas chrome. Good luck.

Subscriber and good-guy Ken Johnson chimes in this week, "Lot's of boats on the water today...Most, however, are pulling a "Tube" or skier behind them and not a single one seems to be trolling at high speed while doing so. Bankers are still pitching CHROME at the mouth of the Clackamas, but it is only one or two diehards trying their luck. Hey, I'm not saying the fish aren't there. They just seem to be a bit scattered in the deeper water. Last weeks counts were fairly impressive FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR...The counts at Willamette Falls are as follows: (2005 Counts for the same day are in "Parens")

Chinook '06 (2005)

June 22, 2006: 509 (286)

June 23, 2006: 467 (196)

June 24, 2006: 366 (234)

Summer Steelhead '06 (2005)

June 22, 2006: 221 (165)

June 23, 2006: 238 (136)

June 24, 2006: 232 (165)

"The numbers are much better this year than last and fish were caught this time of year in 2005...so if I were you, I would put some quality early morning time in , and late evening too, once the skiers head for home...

"Water temperature is hovering around 70-71 degrees as of a couple of days ago so this definitely means introducing some chrome to the fish heading your way. Last year, at this time, I did fairly well anchored in about 18'-20' of water where there was a slight current. I fished primarily a Chrome Alvin out there at about 8'-10' deep.

Everyone around me was long lining it and fishing about 1' off the bottom with a variety of lures, wobblers and what have you. I kept seeing the fish on my fish finder swimming by at about 8'-10' deep so that is where I put the Alvin...It took awhile but time and time again I came up with a fish. Lazy, warm to hot days, and a current of 1-1.5 mph TOPS. The Alvin hardly flopped around and only slightly side to side in the current but eventually it did the trick. Once I brought a fish to the boat everyone around me (3-4 boats) scrambled to find anything in their tackle box resembling an Alvin...Most had a few. I made my lead line only about 6" long. I then put on a 3-4oz. cannonball to basically bring my Alvin almost straight down behind my boat angled away from the stern about 10-15 degrees. Then I tied my "Lure Line" to about 45" so it had plenty of "sway" off a simple 3-way swivel...That was it...I just counted out about 9'-10' of line so the Alvin was fluttering just above where I was marking fish swimming by... They can see straight ahead and up but they can't see DOWN. If your bait is even 6"-1' under them, odds are they'll just swim on by. There seems to be fish out there, all right. There are still a few bankers hanging on at Meldrum Bar for Chinook and I noticed 3-4 guys rigged for Summer Steelhead. That may a good way to do it because, odds are either a Chinook or Steelhead might take the bait. Honestly, I haven't been fishing for the last several days as I'm preparing to move residences, but I think this week will be my "Last Hurrah" to attempt the luck I had this time of year last year. Real early in the morning 'til about 10-11ish should be best before the skiers get out there in force. Then it gets choppy, anchored boats start to turn around and it just isn't fun anymore. Later in the evening is good for a couple of hours just before sundown 'till legal sunset is a good time too. See you out there!?"

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: SailCat@SailCat.com

Random Links

Dungeness Crab Information Page:

<http://www.coos-bay.net/crabbingfacts.html>

Tips and Tricks in Catching Crayfish:

<http://www.terrybullard.com/tips&tricks.html>

Weekly Quote – "The joy of owning fine tackle is so great that it is often difficult to distinguish between basic needs and the urge to possess that which delights the sensitivities. I have preached against indulgence, but in truth I am a sentimental moron when it comes to fishing tackle. How can one find adequate words to describe the sweet feel of a rod that makes casting an esthetic delight, yet which adds little to one's ability to catch fish?" - Harold Blaisdell in [The Philosophical Fisherman](#)

GOOD LUCK!