

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 14th – July 20th, 2006**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Summer Chinook passage remains stable at over 1,000 fish per day passing Bonneville Dam. The bite remains fair with early morning producing the best results reports **pro guide Brandon McGavran (360 607-1327)**. The salmon that are being landed are averaging 25 pounds or better.

Summer steelhead counts are climbing rapidly at Bonneville and catches have become more consistent. The lack of a good tide series will make the gorge fishery the best option.

Sturgeon effort is waning with only a few anglers still pursuing oversized sturgeon in the gorge reports **pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)**. Fresh shad are becoming difficult to catch so floater shad has become an optimum bait.

On the Willamette, spring salmon season is over and shad are few. Only shaker sturgeon have been caught recently in the lower river.

The Faraday trap on the Clackamas near Estacada reported 187 springers and 429 summer steelhead as of July 10th. Fishing on the upper river was fair last week but has slowed.

Sandy River anglers are finding fully glacial water conditions with the water opaque and milky. A few fish are being hooked on bait.

Steelheading on the North Santiam is fair but improving. As of June 26th, over 4,000 summer steelhead and nearly 1,300 spring Chinook have been counted at Foster Dam. Most of these have been recycled downstream to give anglers another shot at them. A large tree a couple of miles downstream of Sweet Home is a new hazard on the South Santiam. Boaters beware.

McKenzie River trout fishing is very good- especially in the morning before the sun hits the water reports **pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)**.

Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River, Quartzville Creek, North Santiam River and Trail Bridge Reservoir will be stocked with trout.

Northwest – Estuary anglers came within 400 fish of meeting a 16,000 fish quota on the lower Columbia River. Additional opportunity for keepers in the estuary is not going to happen. Catch and release fishing remains an option and fishing should remain productive. Anchovies and fresh herring will be the best baits available.

Ocean salmon catches out of the mouth of the Columbia slowed on Sunday. Most anglers are targeting coho at the CR Buoy. Bottomfishing remains an option along the south and sunken jetty when seas are friendly. Ling cod are making up the bulk of the catch but most fall short of the minimum 24-inch keeper size.

Few ocean coho were falling to Garibaldi anglers. Ocean temperatures remain cool close to shore so target the 52 degree water near the 200 foot line. A moderate ocean is forecasted for the weekend so use caution in offshore waters.

Summer steelheading is fair to good on the lower Nestucca and Wilson Rivers and recent weather has contributed to catches. Small baits of eggs or crayfish tails remain the rule early in the morning reports **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)**.

Crabbing is best in offshore waters but Tillamook Bay is producing the best catches on the North Coast.

This just out: Razor clamming on Clatsop Beaches is NOW closed. Domoic acid levels have risen to where the clams are toxic for consumption. It was regularly scheduled to close on July 15th.

Fishing slowed during the last Spring all depth halibut fishery July 6th through 8th out of Depoe Bay and Newport.

Southwest - The summer all-depth halibut season off the central Oregon coast allowing retention beyond the 40-fathom line, Thursdays through Saturday, will begin August 4th.

Offshore salmon fishing has been good for both Chinook and coho. Trollers using an assortment of lures and baits are finding fish at 270 to 350 feet of water. Offshore salmon fishing is closed South of Humbug Mountain.

Umpqua anglers are taking scores of smallmouth bass now that the water is warming.

Anglers fishing the Rogue River estuary may once again retain wild Chinook starting Saturday, July 15th. Wild fish have dominated catches in the past few weeks, so this rule change will make for additional limits. Anglers are taking summer steelhead on the upper Rogue.

The last decent minus tide in the current series will occur Friday, July 14th. Brighton beach has been the South coast hotspot.

Section 5 of the Rogue River will be planted with trout again this week.

Eastern - Grande Ronde River fly casters are finding rainbows to 16 inches close to banks and susceptible to bright attractor patterns. Smallmouth bass fishing is good in the lower river wrote **pro guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688)**.

Steelhead are entering the lower Deschutes though numbers remain low. Trout fishing is fair to good with the Caddis just starting to show.

Scheduled for trout planting this week are Campbell Lake, Deadhorse Lake, Fall River, Miller Lake, Shevlin Pond and Spring Creek.

Southwest Washington - The Cowlitz River remains the shining star for summer steelhead anglers. Boat anglers are witnessing success rates of nearly 2 fish per rod. Fishing should continue to be productive in the coming weeks.

The Kalama and North Fork of the Lewis River are producing inconsistent results.

The Klickitat has dropped and cleared enough for productive fishing but success rates were not encouraging. Cooler weather should keep this river in fishable shape.

Soapbox Update – Check your guns.

ODFW officials meeting in McMinnville last week decided that, to help reduce damage to razor

clams, clam guns used in the pursuit have a minimum diameter of 4 inches; 3 X 4 inches for elliptical devices. Commercially-produced clam guns meet these specs so the impact of this rule change which goes into effect on January 1st, 2007, will be on do-it-yourselfers.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Although summer Chinook remains the main topic of discussion, catches have slowed. Some of the best catches occurred over the last 2 weeks and the fish have been running large. **Pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)** states, “Target these fish in 12 to 18 feet of water along Ives Island, the oak tree, and the Washington shoreline above the oak tree. Use solid colors first thing in the morning (red/white, lemon lime, etc.), then switch to brass with green or red tip as soon as the sun gets on the water.” Brandon has had consistent results over the last 2 weeks employing these methods. Counts at Bonneville have declined with the first day under a 1,000 count happening on the 11th. The flows have dropped so fish may not be as concentrated as they were when they were higher.

Summer steelhead are next on tap and numbers at Bonneville are increasing enough to make things interesting. Nearly 2,000 fish per day are crossing and that should spell good action for gorge anglers. Despite the great tide series for bank plunkers in pursuit of steelhead, catches were poor. July is typically the peak month for steelhead catches along the Rainier area beaches.

Oversized sturgeon are still on the menu for a few anglers. Floater shad are becoming more readily available and guides have turned to this premium baits. Fresh shad are hard to come by but sturgeon are still responding to them when available. Fresh floaters or freshly harvested shad out-produce frozen shad handily. Marker 85 remains the deadline and although anglers have to hunt for productive grounds, they do exist downstream of Marker 85- but don't tell WDF&W, they'll likely close that fishery down too!

Downriver, managers decided on July 12th to keep catch and keep fishing closed in the waters from Wauna powerlines to Buoy 10. Sportanglers nearly attained the 16,000 fish quota in just a few weeks and the remaining 400+ keepers will be rolled into next years estuary quota. Catch and release opportunities should remain great out of Hammond over the next several weeks.

Salmon fishing out of Astoria has dramatically slowed. Catches were decent late last week but after the weekend closure, they became difficult to locate. The CR Buoy was the likely point of interception and we took 3 hatchery coho for 2 anglers last Thursday. Seas were flat and the fish were biting anywhere from 12 to 18 strips. I did run one deep rod with some of those huge fresh herring that were available on the 5th. The results were a far better strike to land ratio (which goes against all logic when trolling for coho with big baits) fishing my line counter reels at 55 to 70 feet with 12 ounces of lead. We fished from about 7:30 to 11:30 before heading off to pursue another species but boats that limited that day, had to work for them.

Seas were so calm that day that we decided to head for the sunken jetty in pursuit of a keeper ling cod. We got a 26 incher right off the bat, and yes, we “batted” it. We released another 3 or 4 lings using those large, leftover herring and took a cabezon and black rock fish on the smaller anchovies. We finished up the day with an oversized sturgeon, 2 or 3 keeper sized fish that were also released and a small handful of shakers.

Crabbing remains poor on the lower Columbia but the ocean is producing catches but many are softshell. Clamming was great over the recent tide series but closes to digging north of Tillamook Head on July 15th.

The Guide's Forecast – Summer Chinook catches should slow down with a waning run. Anglers still bent on pursuing salmon, should target their efforts from Troutdale to Bonneville Dam. Spinners are the best bet with early morning producing the best catches as that is when salmon are most

likely on the move.

Steelhead anglers should also focus their efforts in the gorge as a weak tide series will make beach plunking ineffective. Small spinners in selected slots will produce fair catches of an increasing run. Action should be fair to good for those anchored in the right spot.

Oversized sturgeon will remain a viable fishery well into August. We are still a few weeks away from the opening of the sanctuary so anglers will have to grind it out below Marker 85. Floater shad will be the best bait and don't get stuck just fishing the deeper water. These oversized fish lurk in the shallows as well.

Downstream towards Astoria, catch and release sturgeon fishing will remain productive using anchovies and fresh herring. The lower Desdemona Flats out of Hammond should produce the best catches as crab are not the challenge they normally are in this area.

Ocean catches should improve from poor results earlier in the week. Anglers should not expect limits however but that could change from day to day. Target coho near the surface if you get out there early but drop those baits down to 16 to 30 strips as the sun rises higher in the sky. Anchovies are an anglers best bet unless the herring are smaller than they have been. Blue or green label size is best.

Bottomfishing may be an option- especially if targeting ling cod. Hopefully, seas will cooperate with anglers.

This just out:

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Contact: Matthew Hunter 503-325-2462
Internet: www.dfw.state.or.us Fax: (503) 325-8227

For Immediate Release Thursday, July 13, 2006

Domoic acid levels close Clatsop Beach to razor clamming

ASTORIA – State fishery and agricultural officials today announced that Clatsop Beach is closed to razor clamming effective immediately.

The closure is due to recent testing of domoic acid levels by the Oregon Department of Agriculture which revealed amounts above the 20 parts per million (ppm) level that triggers a closure.

Domoic acid is a natural toxin produced by algae blooms that can remain in razor clams' edible tissues for many months before being purged.

Clatsop Beach would have closed July 15 for a seasonal summer conservation closure, which runs from July 15 through Sept. 30 annually.

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

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

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Counts, flows and water temperature for Willamette Falls are unavailable this week. For days the Web page has been broken and there's no answer at the telephone number - 503-657-2059 - supposedly dedicated to that purpose. This we do know: The springer fishing is over and there are darned few shad remaining in the lower Willamette. Sturgeon fishermen can find a keeper very rarely although cat-and-release for shakers - great entertainment for the youngsters - is good.

As TGF readers know, the majority of salmon and steelhead, however many that might be, that have crossed Willamette Falls are destined for the Santiam system. While no counts are taken on the North Santiam, as of June 26th, over 4,000 summer steelhead and nearly 1,300 spring Chinook have been counted at Foster Dam on the South Santiam. These numbers were last updated June 26th. Most of these fish have been recycled downstream to give anglers another shot at them.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541 754 6411) sent this warning to boaters, "This tree is on the South Santiam between the popular run of Foster Dam and Sweet Home and has already eaten a couple of inflatables. We are working on this hazard removed thru the Albany Steelheaders. So far we have talked with Linn County Marine Department, State Marine Board, ODF & W and State Forestry Department. We are hoping to have it removed by next week."

Kremers also reports, "On Monday I ran a trout trip on the upper McKenzie River. Trout fishing was very good in the morning with the overcast and then slowed down in the afternoon when sun came out. We were swinging flies (coachman streamer and Prince nymphs)."

This obstacle will only become more hazardous as water levels drop. Visit <http://www.boatoregon.com> for updates on the status of removal.

The Guide's Forecast – The best, and one might surmise only, option on the lower Willamette, assuming as we must that the water temperature is approaching the mid 70s, is for bass. Smallies are being taken in current breaks on rocky cover. If the guess about the water temp is correct, event steelhead will be unlikely to take bait or lure.

The mainstem and South Santiam are worth consideration for those hoping to take a springer. Water conditions are good and improving and it's got to break loose soon. The North Santiam has, in seasons past, been one of the premier summer steelhead rivers in Oregon. Here again, conditions are very good and approaching excellent. Bill Sanderson who has guided on the North Santiam for decades, estimates there are currently 200 fish per river mile. Steelhead will congregate below challenging rapids located at Minto and Packsaddle Park. These locations are challenging to navigate by boat, but offers fine access for bank fishermen. Downsize baits and lures to entice metalheads. It may take time to draw a strike, but you're not catching any sitting there in front of your computer.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Sandy River anglers are finding fully glacial water conditions with the water opaque and milky. This is an annual occurrence as warm weather melts the ice at Mt. Hood. A few fish are being hooked on bait. Trolling at the mouth has been mostly unproductive.

The hatchery trap on the Clackamas at Faraday had counted 429 hatchery summer steelhead and 187 finclipped spring Chinook as of July 10th. Fishing here is very slow.

The Guide's Forecast – The Sandy has actually improved, although at this time of year it's against the odds for this to occur. It may be possible to tempt a steelhead, but also wise to use bait. A decent rainfall will do wonders for the water conditions as well as the fishing prospects

Clackamas hopefuls trying to score a summer steelhead or spring Chinook should try hitting Dog Creek at first light. This is not a secret spot, so get there early for best position and opportunity.

North Coast District Fishing Report – Ocean salmon fishers don't have much to write home about in the Garibaldi district. Despite friendly seas over the weekend, hatchery coho were hard to come by. Most anglers concentrated north of the bay entrance and found coho anywhere from 190 to 300 foot of water. Catches of Chinook are nearly non-existent but that is typically the case this time of year. Cooler water seems to be closer to shore so look for 52 to 56 degree water as that is where salmon prefer to range. Frozen herring is all that is available to use for bait in the area. Ocean crabbing is great however, making a combo trip a worthwhile event.

Chinook is on the radar in Nehalem Bay this month. The run will build well into August but avid angler and friend Rich Riley reports, "I fished most mornings last week with two other boats (locals)... The first fish i saw caught was yesterday a.m. (7/9) in front of Kahrs Dock (just south of Wheeler) it was a 11# native Chinook. the word must have spread as there were about 12 boats this a.m.... but no fish caught... (6 A.M. to about 8:30 a.m.)... I did have a "take down" about 8:00 a.m., again in front of Karhs dock. I was holding the rod and he gave it a couple of good yanks and i think i was a little too quick with the "yank back"... wish my reflexes were that good when I am bass fishing!" Thanks Rich for that great report!

Spring Chinook fishing has all but wound down but **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** reports on summer steelhead. He writes, "The Nestucca is at summer low. We are having a great season on summer steelhead. They really like small baits of eggs, and crawdad tails. There are plenty of Chinooks around, but good luck finding a biter. We are just leaving them alone and going for the steelhead. Super light gear has been the trend. Some are doing quite well with small spinners in the morning and the late evening. Look to the lower river for the best results, and checking mid river with a pontoon raft or from the bank is a good bet too. We are pretty much done for the summer, and are getting ready for the fall. We will have our fresh sardines here soon, and fresh eggs to follow. Have a good week, and give us a note to say hello or if you have any questions." <http://www.fishhouseguideservice.com>

Sturgeon effort has switched to the Tillamook tidewater and a few anglers are taking some fish (mostly shakers) using mud shrimp for bait. There are too many small crab in the bay for successful sturgeon fishing.

Women interested in learning more about harvesting bivalves are encouraged to attend "Clamming in the Northwest, the next in the "Becoming an Outdoors Woman" series, a "national award-winning outdoor skills program that teaches a variety of outdoor skills in a supportive and non-threatening atmosphere." The clamming workshop takes place in Netarts at a cost of \$40, which includes activities, harvest, cleaning and cooling techniques. Contact Chris Willard at (503) 947-6017 or Stephanie Byrd at (503) 947-6025 or visit http://www.dfw.state.or.us/outdoor_skills/bow/ for more information.

The Guide's Forecast – Ocean salmon catches should improve in the coming week however a great return of Columbia River bound coho is not forecasted. Columbia River coho make up a large percentage of the catch off of Tillamook Bay. Troll baits shallow anywhere from 200 to 300 foot and follow the current direction- whichever way it predominates. Seas are forecasted to be moderate this weekend so use caution at all times. This season will last until the end of this month as sportanglers haven't even attained half of the quota yet.

Nehalem Bay will likely remain slow but the weaker holdover tides will favor herring trollers at the mouth of the bay. Blue label herring slow trolled on the bottom will produce the best results. Although the Wheeler area has produced limited catches recently, the weak tides will not push biters

into this area this week.

Summer steelhead remain a good option given the cloud cover and precipitation greeting coastal anglers this week. Small baits will still be required as river levels won't fluctuate much in this showery condition.

Central & South Coast Reports – The all-depth halibut window opened decently enough on July 6th but catch rates waned on the 7th and 8th. Some anglers got lucky but limits were no longer a given. While there may be one more opportunity in the spring fishery, anglers will need to wait no longer than August 4th through 6th when the summer all-depth halibut season opens. Those seeking tuna far offshore found anywhere from a few to scores with albacore running 18 to 30 pounds or better. Tuna results fell off Saturday along with the halibut bite. Since tuna prefer water near the 60-degree mark, it's a shorter trip off the South coast where warmer water is closer to shore. Boats need to travel 50 to 60 miles to find albacore out of Garibaldi or Depoe Bay where they're about 30 miles out of Charleston.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541 754 6411) adds this, "I have mostly been halibut fishing out of Newport at the south end of the Rockpile. Fishing was very good when it opened last Thursday as we limited out in a couple of hours. Saturday the fish were harder to come by, as this area has become a very popular. On Saturday we teamed up with Phil from Pro Cure. We were using shad and the Pro Cure Butt juice with garlic. Salmon fishing remain very slow out of Newport."



About 17% of the coho quota remained available as of July 9th from Cape Falcon to the California border. The quota hasn't been dented yet North of Cape Falcon.

The Siletz is producing Fall Chinook with some regularity now, as the collection of July pictures at Coyote Rock will attest. It seems early for fall fish, but this will become a reliable fishery in August. Summer steelhead fishing is fair to good above the lower 17 miles of tidewater from Moonshine Park upstream.

Boaters launching out of Newport in hopes of finding a coho offshore were disappointed over the weekend, but it won't be long; they're coming!

Offshore salmon fishing heated up over the weekend out of Winchester Bay as pleasant ocean

conditions and light winds allowed easy bar crossing. The fishing has held up since with one party of eight on a charter boat hooking 32 salmon in 3 1/2 hours on Thursday, July 13th, taking home a 16-fish limit. Both Chinook and coho have been taken on a variety of baits and lures with Chinook running from 15 to over 30 pounds. Many anglers said it didn't seem to matter what they used as the salmon were hitting everything equally well. Productive depths have been from 270 to 320 feet of water with the fish shallow. Chinook have occasionally hit right on the surface as lines were being put out. Strikes have come regularly at 25 to 35 feet. Recently, a couple of Chinook were taken inside the bay.

The occasional springer has been taken on the North and mainstem Umpqua but there are better fisheries available. Smallmouth bass fishing continues to improve near Scottsburg with warmer water temperatures. Summer steelheading is also benefiting from improved water conditions. Shad catches are on the wane as the run winds down. Sturgeon fishing below Reedsport has slowed with only the occasional oversized fish hooked.

Ocean crabbing was decent off the South coast as well with good numbers of keepers and only a few softshells showing in the mix.

Surf perch fishing has been hot and cold. Some days they seem to disappear, but when anglers get into them, 15-fish limits are coming easily.

Boaters trolling the Rogue River estuary will once again be able to retain wild Chinook starting Saturday, July 15th. Anglers have started trolling the bay, but only a few are being taken this early and most of those are not finclipped. Due to the water conditions in the Rogue, most Chinook entering with the tide will be keged up in the bay to the advantage of trollers. This is shaping up to be a very promising fishery which will only improve as the season wears on. Not so the spring Chinook run, where few anglers continue to try for them on the upper Rogue. The 8,250 which had crossed at Gold Ray Dam as of the 5th of July is a poor showing. Anglers who continue to hammer the Hatchery Hole are catching springers with some regularity, but get there early for the best chance of a hookup. Over 2,000 summer steelhead have been counted at Gold Ray as of July 5th, an impressive number for this early in the season. As a consequence, steelheaders on the upper river are doing well.

Trollers scored well with salmon offshore South of Humbug Mountain prior to the July 5th closure. Anglers remarked about the fish being stuffed with large sardines, anchovies or krill. Prolific offshore feed will ensure rapid growth and a good season as the run moves north to enter bays, estuaries and tributaries.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro Guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688) reports, "The Willowa and Grande Ronde rivers in northeast Oregon are finally receding to something similar to summer flows and the trout smallmouth bass fishing is improving at approximately an inverse rate to the water level. This week we are raising a couple hundred fish a day and landing 40 to 50 of them, with the majority coming to dry flies. It's fun fishing with a lot of anticipation when a nice trout or smallie comes up eyeing your bug at the surface. Sometimes the folks can outwait the fish!"

Anglers have taken several steelhead in the lower Deschutes and with the numbers heading up the Columbia, this fishery looks promising. Fly fishing has improved on the lower Deschutes as the river shifts to summer patterns. That means Caddis and Mayflies will be the dominant insects on which the trout will be keyed. Carry midge dries and Stonefly nymphs in your arsenal.

Northwest Trout - Green Peter has been spotty for kokanee. Keep moving and mix it up to catch

fish. Odell remains slow with trolling 'first thing in the morning the best approach. The kokes that have been landed are running large.

Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, Leaburg Lake, Upper McKenzie River, Quartzville Creek, North Santiam River and Trail Bridge Reservoir will be stocked with trout in the Willamette Valley. Trout planting on the North coast will resume in September.

Reader Email

Got a story to tell or information to share? We'd love to hear from you!

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: drees@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: SailCat@SailCat.com

Random Links

Ocean temperatures from the US Navy:

http://www7300.nrlssc.navy.mil/altimetry/images/modas_images/today/pwc_sst.gif

Do-it-yourself shrimp gun:

<http://www.limestonemedia.com/fishing/how-to-make-ghost-shrimp-pump.html>

Weekly Quote – "Creeps and idiots cannot conceal themselves for long on a fishing trip." - John Gierach

GOOD LUCK!