

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 8<sup>th</sup>, – September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro** - The current minus tide series is dovetailing nicely with run timing for the upriver bright Chinook run on the lower Columbia River. Metro anglers are scoring excellent results from the mouth of the Sandy River to Longview using chrome and rainbow wobblers fishing near the shipping channel ledges. With a 5-foot leader and nearly as long of a dropper lead line, working the 35 to 52 foot depths, multiple opportunities are likely on the outgoing tides this upcoming week. The last part of the outgoing tide has been productive using Kwikfish to draw strikes reports **pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)**. Brandon has been one of the most consistent guides in this fishery. The limit remains one Chinook salmon per angler but fin-clipped steelhead or coho are also allowed but making up only a fraction of the catch. This will be the peak week for the lower Columbia River below Bonneville Dam.

Although tens of thousands of Chinook are crossing Bonneville Dam daily, steelhead numbers are quite respectable as well. Tributary mouths like the Deschutes are putting out good catches and should continue to do so in the coming weeks. Fish passage at The Dalles Dam is some of the best of the year. Trolling plugs or small spinners at these tributary mouths will produce the best results.

Coho are starting to move on the lower Willamette with half a dozen counted at the Falls as of September 2nd.

Coho have been reported in the lower Clackamas but no catches of adults have been confirmed. Predictions are for a respectable run this year with silvers running large.

Coho are due on the Sandy River anytime now but the water level and flows remain extremely low.

Trout will be stocked at Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir and Small Fry Lake.

**Northwest** – Buoy 10 anglers continue to struggle to find consistent results. The Chinook bite in the estuary still eludes anglers targeting these fish although the main channel above Tongue Point produced good catches over the holiday weekend. Coho should be the main event the next few weeks in this fishery but the best opportunities are coming only near high tide. The Washington side above the bridge is producing the best results using spinners in the shallow water flats.

Last week's soft tide series allowed Tillamook Bay herring trollers to take a few Chinook at the mouth. Tillamook and Trask River bound salmon enter the earliest and spinner trollers in the upper bay should have a good shot at fish on the early morning outgoing tide.

Nehalem Bay has become more consistent with some large Chinook in the catches. The holiday weekend produced well at the jaws and Wheeler. Herring produces best below the Highway 101 bridge while spinners work best upriver. Fin-clipped coho may be kept and should begin to show in larger numbers this week.

NW winds are keeping much of the smaller recreational fleet from participating in offshore albacore tuna opportunities. Last weekend, boats traveled 35 to 50 miles for mediocre results. Mid-month often offers a period of calm seas and productive fishing for this species and live bait will fishing is a productive method. Live bait has been hard to come by however but anglers may be able to jig their own in the Columbia and Tillamook estuary.

Chinook fishing has been slow in tidewater on the Siletz, although 14-year-old Austin Griffey caught a 51-pounder on Tuesday, August 29th

The ocean was rewarding Friday out of Depoe Bay but was tough on Saturday with tuna and Halibut action slowing and an afternoon wind that made the return trip rough. A conference call will determine whether or not sufficient poundage remains in the quota to allow another three-day all-depth fishery. A few boats returned with salmon limits, although coho outnumbered Chinook.

Crabbing has slowed in Yaquina Bay but still remains worthwhile.

Chinook are entering tidewater at the Alsea. Early catch rates are low but this fishery will improve in the coming weeks.

**Southwest** – The central coast has reopened and the South coast remains open for razor clamming

Like most rivers, the lower Coos was crowded with boats over the weekend. Chinook fishing was slow.

Salmon fishing out of Reedsport was easy with decent weather conditions over the long weekend. Unfortunately, catches were off from the relatively hot action the previous week. Chinook varied in weight from 20 to over 40 pounds. Winchester Bay produced a few fish with spinners. The North Umpqua is producing about one steelhead a day to persistent anglers seeking fish in deeper, rocky runs. Smallmouth bass fishing continues to deliver numbers on the mainstem and South Umpqua. Soft plastics have been most effective.

Soft tides and a flotilla of boats jamming the Rogue River estuary over the long weekend slowed salmon fishing. With Labor Day passed, crowds will thin and trolling in the bay will again produce decent Chinook catches. The middle Rogue is starting to produce Fall Chinook although action is spotty.

Boats launching out of Brookings and Gold Beach over the weekend took good numbers of tuna 30 to 35 miles offshore. Fog was persistent on Saturday.

**Eastern** - Cooler weather has encouraged steelhead to enter the Deschutes with fair to good numbers upriver through Maupin. Fly fishing for trout has been productive with the best action of the day at first and last light. Nymphs in caddis and mayfly patterns are productive throughout the day. Action for trout on the middle Deschutes has picked up as well as the weather cools with Pale Morning Duns and Blue-Winged Olive patterns effective under cloud cover. Break out the nymphs when the sun emerges.

Sprague Gravel Pit is scheduled to be planted with rainbow trout.

**Southwest Washington** - Many SW Washington streams are producing catches of coho, steelhead and fall Chinook. In the low water, bank anglers have good access on the Kalama and Cowlitz Rivers.

On the North Fork of the Lewis, it's a little early for consistent coho action but some fish are being taken near the salmon hatchery.

Drano Lake is still producing good catches of steelhead- both wild and hatchery fish. Anglers averaged a steelhead per rod.

**Soapbox Update** – The Whisky Creek volunteer Salmon Hatchery near Netarts could use some extra hands in hosting 400 disabled kids at their facility Saturday, September 9th. This is the 15th year for this event where special kids can catch all the large trout they want. There's always room for more, as well, so let parents of differently-abled children know, just bring them along or come to help and enjoy the free barbeque at noon. Email [jdovetillanglers@tillanet.com](mailto:jdovetillanglers@tillanet.com) or call 503-842-6519 for information or directions.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Guides and anglers alike are packing up and heading out. It's just a little too late to keep using the term, "this fishery is going to break loose at any time....." Although I still believe Buoy 10 anglers will witness some great coho fishing ahead, I'm not going to stick around to see if it happens. Guides working the lower Columbia have left the Rice Island/Miller Island area and are once again targeting coho around the bridge on the shallow flats. Catches still haven't been great but top guides in the area are averaging about 6 to 10 opportunities and landing less than half of those. Spinners are still the key ingredient and the top part of the incoming tide is producing the best. The last trip I conducted on the lower Columbia was Labor Day where we took 2 hatchery coho and lost another larger one. The 3 bites all came on the same spoon- a pink/black dot egg wobbler that of course is impossible to find right now. Sunday was the last day the upriver bite out of Tongue Point produced any measurable results.

Upriver, I went bite chasing on the 6<sup>th</sup> as I heard anglers fared quite well for the URB's (Upriver Brights) in the Longview area. Well, it appears I not only have the capability to shut off a bite in a specific area, but river-wide. Although we did see some fish caught, action dropped off dramatically. Most guides had limited opportunities and were lucky to get their hands on a single fish. With poor fishing in the Astoria area over the last few days, hope of better fishing ahead is not high. Now realistically, we are just entering the historical peak of the mid (lower river) Columbia anchor fishery with this week one of the highest. But since when are the fish paying attention to history this year? Most of us aren't holding out high hopes for near future high success rates although they are likely to occur in this fishery from the mouth of the Cowlitz to the mouth of the Sandy River. Gorge anglers are taking a few fish but one would think with 10,000+ fish/day passing the Bonneville facility, action would be great. The problem is, by the time these URB's get to the gorge, they will be focused on passing the dam and getting on their way upstream. Success in the gorge doesn't usually take off until water temperatures cool and migration rates slow. This is typically in the month of October.

For those wishing to really bear down and seek success, the ocean is still a very viable option. More than once, we have found ourselves outside seeking easy action on a body of water where fish are actually STILL feeding. I had one friend go outside on 9/6 and for 2 rods, he had about 8 chances for fish but only stuck 1 in the fish box. He was fishing around the CR Buoy and only saw another handful of boats but witnessed consistent action throughout the morning. He took off at first light and managed a simple bar crossing despite a large outgoing tide. Often times, the bar can be dangerous on a minus tide series but if the ocean swell isn't big and coming directly from the west, bar crossings can be simple when tucking behind the Clatsop Spit and hugging the south jetty on the way out. You must be very careful of Clatsop Spit however as it will sink boats. On foggy mornings, it is a tricky place to negotiate.

Dam passage at Bonneville and The Dalles is still on the rise. The Dalles passage is at an all-season high and action in the Deschutes and at the mouth is picking up significantly. Salmon are available but steelhead are making up the bulk of the catch. Plug trollers at the mouth are taking both species with some regularity. Steelhead are making their way up the mainstem Deschutes to "take a breather" from the warm water of the Columbia. Double-digit opportunities exist for those keyed into productive areas on the Deschutes.

In the estuary, crabbing is picking up with the waning crowds. Less competition means more crab

for those soaking quality bait in the right spots. Crabbers should be aware of where the strong outgoing tides will effect catch rates and target areas like lower Desdemona Sands where flows don't impact how your pots are fishing.

It'll be another month before catch and keep fishing for sturgeon resumes on the Columbia. If history repeats itself, it should be a good October for both bank and boat anglers in the gorge. Are you ready?

The waters off the Columbia from Cape Falcon in Oregon North to Leadnetter Point in Washington State will remain closed for halibut fishing fir the remainder of 2006 as this area has met its quota.

**The Guide's Forecast** – With baited breath we wait.....and wait.....Will the September coho ever show? Since starting TGF over 7 years ago, never have I been so reluctant to predict "what might happen next week". This fishery has been such a disappointment that I really don't know what to expect anymore. Historically, (haven't I been using that word a bit too much lately?) this is a fantastic week for in-river salmon fishing- particularly coho. Some guides and anglers have reminded me that large catches of Chinook are still possible in the lower river but I gave up on that some time ago.

The tides are not in our favor for productive in-river fishing this week. If there is one thing we can count on, it is a shortening of the window of opportunity for salmon in the estuary. There is no low slack bite at Buoy 10, there is no consistent first part of incoming tide bite at the Buoy 10 line for coho or lower Desdemona Sands either. There is no consistent first part of outgoing tide bite for coho or Chinook on the Washington or Oregon sides. Why would you come down here then? Well, there is a very consistent high tide bite on the Washington side above the bridge and the coho are only getting larger. And who knows, significant numbers of fish may actually show up this year in the estuary- but this writer is no longer going to hang himself!

Anglers will be faced with full morning outgoing tides by the weekend and high slack won't be until late afternoon. And how about those afternoon NW winds.....everyone's favorite! We sometimes get a break this time of year from that wind but it has been the most consistent element on the coast this season!

Upriver, (and now you want me to make a prediction on this too? What do you think, I'm some kind of weatherman or something?) Action should pick up as this is typically the peak week for anchor anglers working wobblers on the outgoing tide. We'll have the outgoing tides this week, but will we have the fish? Good numbers of Chinook should still be pouring in as only 1/5 of the run has passed Bonneville Dam to date. Even if there is another 100,000 fish still in the river, if the prediction comes through, we still have over half of the run due into the mouth of the river! They've got to come through sometime and counts look good enough to have managers not so worried their predictions will come through.

This makes the Cowlitz River mouth to the Sandy River mouth one of the best options in the state for consistent Chinook action this week. Wobblers worked about 5 feet of the bottom should entice strikes fairly consistently this week. Work the tributary mouths but if you can find a significant drop-off beside the shipping channel (not in it!) anchor to have your wobblers working that edge. The last part of the outgoing tide has been productive using Kwifish to draw strikes reports **pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)**. Brandon has been one of the most consistent guides in this fishery.

The mouth of the Deschutes should begin to produce catches of steelhead and Chinook more consistently now. Anglers will target the steelhead by trolling plugs and spinners for the salmon. There are some pretty well-defined steelhead lanes going into the mouth of the Deschutes and

steelhead are the more likely target.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Water temperatures in the lower Willamette have fallen to the high 60s thanks to cooler nights. Flows are very low and the visibility is greater than seven feet. Counts have not been updated since September 2nd when a total of six had been tallied so far this year. Sturgeon retention closed in the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel on the 1st of August. Catch and release is allowed but fishing has been dismal.

The schedule of water flow increases on the North Santiam has been stepped up to a daily event through September 7th when it will reach 1,500 cfs at Niagara and will remain at that level until Fall rains.

Trout fishing is fair in the McKenzie River but steelheading is slow despite good numbers of fish present.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The lower Willamette at the mouth of the Clackamas holds some promise with coho entering now. The plunkers on the back downstream may intercept a few as they tent to hug the shoreline on their migration.

Steelhead are concentrated in the North Santiam from Packsaddle Park down to Stout Creek. It's time to upsize baits and lures slightly in order to entice these fish which is always the case when foliage begins to color up. Flies, jigs and plugs will all take metalheads here but change lure colors to determine the daily preference. Fishing will be good here into October.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – A total of 13 (all wild) coho have traveled up the Clackamas clear to the Faraday Dam near Estacada. Well over 500 steelhead have been counted there as well.

A large school of coho is holding outside the mouth of the Sandy River. While it's possible they'll nose in with tidal influence, factors for this occurring aren't positive. The water temperature of the Sandy remains high, the water level is extremely low and it has been running gray as glacial streams are wont to do. Rain would turn around all these situations.

**North Coast District Fishing Report** – Things are about to get interesting on the North Oregon Coast. Although Labor Day could be a traditional "kick-off" for coastal fall Chinook, not many people take advantage of the opportunities that exist on the Nehalem and Tillamook Bays. I have had some good success as early as Labor Day in the upper bay for fall returning fish, mostly bound for the Tillamook and Trask Rivers. In the larger tides that we are now in, fish will certainly flush up the bay and enter the lower stretches of tidewater. Adults were caught along the jaws just prior to the minus tide series that is now upon us. The ocean has been friendly enough to justify some effort outside but most anglers are still focused on the lower Columbia River. Well, we know how that is turning out so what really, do you have to lose?

Despite a small tidal exchange over the weekend, the Nehalem fishery turned on with over 50 salmon taken a couple of hours into the ebb on Labor Day just inside the jaws and immediately outside, including some jumbo coho and Chinook.

Imagine launching at Garibaldi, crossing the bar and catching a halibut minutes later in 40 feet rather than over 40 fathoms (240 feet) of water? That's what's occurred recently as the 'dead zone', an expanse of water low in oxygen, has 'buts seeking more comfortable conditions in shallow water by the bell at the T-Bay entrance according to Sherry Lyster of Lyster's Bait & Tackle in Rockaway

Beach.

The Nestucca is a good early season option as well and the larger tide series should bring fish into the lower stretches of tidewater, even above Woods. Bobber fishing in the low flows will be the best way to access these fish and a boat is the best tool for doing it. Trollers will take some fish in tidewater on spinners and the jaws may fish favorably on some days targeting the incoming and first part of outgoing tide.

The Nehalem has shown signs of improvement when many anglers scored good results last weekend at the jaws and Wheeler. Herring still dominates the bait of choice but as anglers work waters upstream of the Hwy. 101 bridge, spinners become a valuable tool. The action has since slowed on Nehalem Bay and chrome jumping salmon intimidate bobber pitchers above the town of Nehalem. They are present but reluctant to bite.

Crabbing continues to improve in Tillamook and Netarts estuaries. The tides will remain a bit intense through the weekend so place your pots accordingly where they won't get sanded in. Break out that frozen shad!

Tuna anglers working the waters off of Astoria are taking between 15 and 40 tuna per boat. Fishing has been better in previous years but the fish have been closer to shore also. Angler success is dictated by willingness to hunt the schools and that may mean traveling as far as 50 miles offshore.

The ODFW opened beaches South of Tillamook head to razor clamming on August 30th with natural bio-toxins returning to safe levels. Only Clatsop County beaches will remain closed until October 1st to protect juvenile clams. We guess baby razors elsewhere on the coast have to fend for themselves.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Motivated anglers may wish to take advantage of the minus tide series on Tillamook Bay. Back trolled Kwikfish or anglers working plugs on anchor may score some fair results. The tidewaters of the Tillamook and Trask Rivers should have fishable numbers of Chinook available. The boat ramp at Memaloose will be closed through September 15th so the 5<sup>th</sup> street ramp will provide the best access. Anglers should work the hardest as the tide gets close to low slack as fish will be "holed" up until incoming tide provides some reprieve. There will be fish present (coho too) in upper Tillamook Bay this weekend. Check your regulations on the retention of jack salmon before you head out.

The Nestucca River may also provide some good opportunity for Chinook seekers. A good low slack bite is likely to happen in the lower tidewater section near the Boat Ramp Hole and Guard Rail Hole. Bobber anglers above Woods Bridge also stand a chance of getting into nice, chrome fish. Always tip your eggs with shrimp as the combo seems too much for some to resist.

Nehalem anglers will want to fish tidewater above Nehalem for the best opportunity. Bobber and bait may take off when the tide nears low slack in the mid-morning on this stretch. Don't be too disappointed if you just can't get them to bite- it is quite customary on this body of water along with other North Coast streams.

After the weekend, crabbing should get much better and anglers will want to re-locate to the lower stretches of estuaries to target salmon on the softer tides. This begins early next week.

The weekend weather forecast for the ocean looks favorable:

**FRI** W WIND 10 KT... BACKING TO SW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS IN THE AFTERNOON.

**FRI NIGHT** SW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT. SHOWERS LIKELY.

**SAT** W WIND 10 TO 15 KT...VEERING TO N 10 TO 20 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT. SHOWERS LIKELY IN THE MORNING...THEN SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS IN THE AFTERNOON.

**SUN** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

**MON** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Uncommon occurrences have become commonplace in a year with dead zones (see halibut in North Coast section, above), wild winds and extended periods of hot, dry weather.

Tuna are within reach of recreational boaters, occasionally within 12 or 15 miles one day and 40 miles or more the next as the warmer water preferred by Albacore has been ephemeral. Fishermen out of Depoe Bay recently had a heckuva time keeping large squid from taking their albacore lures.

A 117 pound halibut was taken by two anglers while fishing rockfish and ling cod two weeks ago just 3/4 of a mile outside the whistle buoy at the mouth of the Rogue.

A Great White Shark made an appearance in the lower Rogue long enough to eat the Chinook one unlucky angler was fighting. It was described as 15 feet long with the diameter of a 55-gallon barrel. One gulp took hook, line, sinker and salmon. The event was witnessed by Mark Lottis of the Sea Lion Patrol, giving solid credence to the story. But it's strange and more than a little scary. Following this occurrence, the shark dropped out of sight and has not been seen again. See **Random Links**, below, for more.

The total ocean salmon catch, coho and Fall Chinook combined for all Oregon ports was just over 38,000 as of August 27th. A respectable number but one-third that of 2004 on the same date. The good news is that all the runs are late this year so the season is really just starting.

Yet the fishing goes on, and it's not all bad (or strange) news.

Abundant feed in the form of huge schools of herring, anchovies and sardines have boosted growth rates of salmon. Coho are being taken regularly in the mid-teens. Chinook are running large and a few topping the 50 pound mark are being caught every week.

While numbers of Chinook in the Alsea River remain low, this is historically an early performer in a year with late runs. Catches will improve rapidly.

With over 28,000 pounds remaining in the quota, halibut fishers will be able to retain fish **every** Friday, Saturday and Sunday through September. It's not that catches haven't been good, quite the contrary. Rather, wind and rough seas have kept boaters from getting out to the halibut grounds to take advantage of the fine fishing on the allowable days. In addition to extra day of opportunity and due to the surplus in the quota, anglers may keep **two** halibut per day for the rest of the month. Go get 'em.

The ocean is open inside the 40-fathom line are open seven days a week for halibut retention.

**Pro Guide Bill Kremers (541-754 6411)** reports, "Crabbing was not as good at Yaquina today as it has been for the last two week. With the holidays over and the kids back in school there were only a few boats out crabbing today, which give everyone lots of space. We tried chinook fishing by

the Oyster Farm, one strike that was it. Did not see any fish caught from the four or five boats in the area."

It's quite common to catch 100 smallmouth bass in a day on the mainstem Umpqua River above Scottsburg, but anything over three pounds could be considered a lunker. Fish deep for larger fish, but use no more lead than absolutely necessary to get offerings down to the bottom where they can drift naturally with the current's Soft plastic crawfish, grubs (such as Kalin's) and lizard imitations will all take fish now. Try various colors to determine the fish's preference which can change a few times during the day. Steelheading is fair to good on the North Umpqua although action in the flies-only stretch has fallen off. While sturgeon fishing below Reedsport held up well later into the year than normal, it has slowed sufficiently that it is no longer worthwhile. Chinook fishing remains spotty in Winchester Bay with most fish falling for spinners and coho showing up in catches for trollers working the river below the 101 Bridge.

The steelhead run on the Rogue River is expected to continue with the possibility of a this year being one of the top three in history. Over 6,600 have been counted at Gold Ray Dam with that number expected to at least triple. The ODFW seining operation being conducted at Huntly Park is finding healthy steelhead and lots of them. While steelheading in the upper, flies only stretch has slowed recently, egg patterns fished below spawning salmon has been effective. Fall Chinook are moving through Gold Beach en masse now as they make their way to the Grants Pass stretch. The lower river is fishing very well for salmon now with catches at Agness through the middle river improving daily. Trollers in the Rogue River estuary have seen fishing catch fire this week, rewarding may with Chinook limits. A fine run of coho is expected this month which should provide solid fishing through October.

The last hurrah for Diamond Lake was Tuesday, September 5th. Supposedly, 20-pound Williamson River rainbows lurked in the dwindling remnants of the lake. A 32-incher turned up dead, apparently of natural causes, but no one reported catching any trout larger than 10 pounds, let alone filling the 20-fish limit allowed this year. Diamond Lake will be cleansed of tui chub and all other fish later this Fall. It will reopen in spring, 2007, restocked with hatchery rainbows which are expected to reach an average size of six pounds, just like the good ol' days.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Trout fishing is good early and late on the lower Deschutes, offering fair results for nymph fishers throughout the remainder of the day. Look for mayflies to start hatching soon as well as early October Caddis. Steelheading on the lower 40 miles of the river is improving almost daily.

**Pro Guide Bill Kremers (541-754 6411)** sent this report on September 7th, "ran a trout trip on the Deschutes last Friday (Warm Springs to Trout Creek). Not much was hatching, but we catch some nice trout on small flatfish during the day and then switched to a small brown caddis emerger for the evening caddis hatch and caught a couple more nice redsides right at dusk."

**Northwest Trout** – Detroit Reservoir, stocked heavily earlier in the year, is producing fair to good trout catches. Kokanee fishing is fair and the occasional stocked chinook is being taken, but both the species are deep, requiring downriggers for trolling.

Trout will be stocked in the Willamette Valley at Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir and Small Fry Lake.



**Bass & Panfish** - The shift into the Fall feeding spree has started with catches on the upper and lower Willamette improving. Each year around this time, as days grow shorter and nights cooler, both largemouth and smallmouth bass start to build fat reserves to sustain them over the winter. Only pre-spawn spring fishing is arguably any better with many preferring the fine Autumn experience. Try soft plastics near drop-offs. Look for rocky cover at current breaks to hold smallies while largemouth prefer slower water or sloughs with wood or vegetation for cover. In the next week or two, bass will get more aggressive, chasing spinner baits and crank baits.

Since we can't get enough pictures of fish, I'll include this unusual specimen from a forum out of Connecticut.



#### **Washington fishing reports:**

As supplied by the WDF&W web site, the Weekender Report:

**North Puget Sound** Saltwater anglers continue to hook **coho salmon** in portions of Puget Sound, but the wait is on for an anticipated run of ocean silvers.

"About now is when we normally expect to see a big push of coho from the ocean into Puget Sound," said Tim Flint, WDFW salmon resource manager. "The coho catch has picked up some in Sekiu and Port Angeles, so we should start to see those ocean fish make their way into the Sound in the next couple of weeks. "Hopefully they will be biting."

In marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) the coho catch has been fair. Creel checks at the Everett boat ramp showed 466 anglers hooked 36 coho Sept. 2, while 472 anglers hauled in 67 silvers the following day.

Anglers fishing in Marine Area 8-1 and outside the Tulalip Bay "bubble" salmon fishery in Marine Area 8-2 have a daily limit of two salmon and must release **chinook**. Anglers fishing the Tulalip bubble, which is open each week from Friday through noon Monday, also have a two-salmon daily limit but can keep chinook measuring at least 22 inches.

Salmon fishing has tapered off a bit in Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), but anglers dropping a line in the area are still finding some nice coho, said Flint. Creel checks at the Armeni boat ramp indicate 66 anglers hooked eight silvers on Sept. 1, while 82 anglers were checked with 11 coho the next day.

In Marine Area 10, anglers fishing outside the boundaries of the Sinclair Inlet fishery have a daily limit of two salmon, with no minimum size limit, and must release chinook and **chum** salmon. Anglers fishing the Sinclair Inlet fishery also have a daily limit of two salmon and must release chum,

but can keep chinook measuring at least 22 inches. Anglers in both areas can keep chum beginning Sept. 16.

Flint reminds anglers to check out the regulations for each fishery in WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Crabbing has closed in all but one marine area in the region. Only the eastern and northern portions of Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands) remain open while the other marine areas undergo a catch assessment. In early October, WDFW will announce the reopening of waters where the catch has not met area quotas. In the meantime, crabbers can drop pots in the two open portions of Marine Area 7 Wednesday through Saturday each week through Sept. 30. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

To participate in the fishery, all crabbers age 15 or older must obtain and carry a current Washington fishing license. In addition, all crab fishers – regardless of age – must obtain and carry a catch record card and a crab licensing endorsement to fish for crab in Puget Sound. The crab endorsement costs \$3 for crabbers age 15 and over, but is free to fishers under age 15.

**Coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** fishing also remains open throughout the region, and shrimpers can drop a pot in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, the northern and central portions of area 7 and a portion of area 9. Details on the fishery are available on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/>.

Portions of the Stillaguamish, Snoqualmie, Skykomish and Skagit rivers recently opened for salmon fishing. Anglers might be able to find some early coho but those freshwater fisheries aren't expected to heat up until the end of the month.

Anglers fishing the Skykomish, Snoqualmie and Stillaguamish rivers have a daily limit of two salmon measuring at least 12 inches and must release chinook and pink. Anglers fishing the Skagit River are allowed three salmon daily measuring at least 12 inches, and must release chinook. Additional stretches of the Skagit River open to salmon fishing Sept. 16. Anglers should check WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for more information on those and other river fisheries in the region.

Elsewhere, Lake Sammamish is open for salmon fishing, with a daily limit of two salmon measuring at least 12 inches. All sockeye must be released, and salmon fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. Sammamish Lake's larger neighbor, Lake Washington, opens Sept. 16 to coho fishing. Anglers will be allowed two coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) from waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge.

**South Sound/Olympic Peninsula** As **salmon** fishing begins to wind down along most of the ocean coast, the hot spot continues to be south end, according to Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist. Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) anglers were catching an average of about one fish per person during through the week of Sept. 3. "Fishing was good over the holiday weekend while effort was high," she said. "The day after Labor Day, however, only 26 boats went out." Fishing remains open in Marine Area 1 through Sept. 30.

In Westport (Marine Area 2), the count ranged from half to less than three-quarters of a fish per angler. Marine areas 2, 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) will be open for salmon fishing through Sept. 17. However, a portion of Marine Area 3 (LaPush) will open Sept. 23 through Oct. 8 for a late season salmon fishery. It is open daily with a two-fish combined limit. See WDFW's *2006/2007 Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for details on boundaries and

rules.

In nearby Willapa Bay, the numbers of **chinook** have been multiplying. Based on WDFW catch counts, 18 chinook were caught on Aug. 12. On Aug. 20, the count was 37 and jumped to 62 on Sept. 2. "Anglers are having good success there," said Tim Flint, WDFW statewide salmon manager. "The waters are generally calm and it makes for a nice day of fishing." Also, a **coho**-only fishery will open in Grays Harbor from Sept. 16 through Sept. 30. The daily limit is two fish, with a minimum size of 12 inches.

A good sign of the coho's movement was anglers' success in Sekiu, noted Flint. The catch count for Sept. 2-3 found one in three anglers reeling in a fish.

The next two weeks should also be good for coho fishing in Puget Sound, according to Flint. "Mid-September through early October is traditionally when these fish are heading from the ocean to the rivers," he said. Salmon fishing also open in marine areas 11 (Vashon Island to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge), 12 (Hood Canal), 13 (South Puget Sound) and 10 (Bremerton), with a daily limit of two fish.

The Puyallup River system is a popular fishing spot right now for chinook and coho, according to Hal Michael, WDFW fish biologist. While the catch is fair, the anticipation high, he said. "We're waiting for some rainfall to drive more fish into the rivers," he said. "The general belief is, they should be moving soon. They just need an environmental push."

The Skokomish River chinook fishery is seeing plenty of action, Michael said. He noted anglers who wear polarized glasses tend to be hitting well because they can see lots of fish in the water. "The glare on the water's surface can make you think they aren't there," he said. Anglers fishing the Skokomish River are reminded that terminal gear (hooks, weights, lures or baits) and lines must not come within 25 feet of tribal gillnets. This fishery closes Sept. 13.

Recreational **crab** fishing remains open in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu and Pillar Point) and 13 (South Puget Sound) seven days a week through Feb. 28. In early October, WDFW will announce if crab fishing will reopen in other waters where the catch has not met area quotas.

The Kids Fishing Catch and Release Pond will open at the Puyallup Fair on Sept. 8 and run all three weekends, Fri.-Sun. The pond will be open from noon to 6 p.m. with a one-hour break around 3 p.m. Kids 12 and under can drop a line for catchable-sized **rainbow trout** provided by the Puyallup hatchery. The pond is located in the "Go Play Outdoors" building, southwest of the fairground's Blue Gate.

**Southwest Washington:** Columbia River anglers who find the fishing slow at Buoy 10 might want to test the action a bit further upriver. In August, sportfishers caught nearly 5,000 adult **chinook salmon** below Bonneville Dam – the second highest catch on record. (The record is 5,100 fish in 2002.) And with fall chinook counts at Bonneville now nearing their peak, anglers can expect more good fishing in the lower Columbia River in the coming weeks, said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist.

"For whatever reason, the fish didn't stop at Buoy 10 this year," Hymer said. "It's happened before, but it's still disappointing for anglers who fished that area. On the other hand, a lot of those fish have been showing up in the catch above Tongue Point."

Based on creels survey conducted during the first three days of September, boat anglers fishing the Columbia mainstem did best from Woodland to Vancouver, averaging an adult chinook for every three rods. Overall, boat anglers averaged an adult chinook for every 4.7 rods on the lower river while bank anglers landed one chinook for every 39 rods.

The largest chinook checked in early September weighed “in the upper 40s, with a lot of fish in the 30s,” Hymer said. “Some fish caught as far upriver as Kalama still had sea lice on them. They obviously hadn’t spent much time in freshwater.”

Although some mainstem anglers have also been catching good-sized hatchery coho and hatchery **steelhead**, Hymer said most are targeting chinook in deep water with wobblers and large gear. He cautioned boat anglers anchoring in the mainstem Columbia to avoid the ship channel and be alert for large vessel traffic. Also, with coho running large this year, anglers should check twice before securing their catch, he said.

“We’re seeing a substantial number of unmarked coho in anglers’ creels this fall,” said Hymer, noting that those fish are now listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act. All wild coho must be released from the mainstem Columbia and its tributaries from Buoy 10 upstream to the Hood River Bridge.

On the Cowlitz River, anglers have been taking home a mixed bag of fall chinook, hatchery coho, summer steelhead and **cutthroat trout**. Thirty-six boat anglers recently contacted from the Interstate 5 bridge downstream had 11 chinook, 11 hatchery steelhead and one adult coho. Anglers checked on the Kalama and Lewis rivers had a similar array of fish.

Although more than 10,000 chinook salmon are now moving past Bonneville Dam each day, Hymer said salmon fishing in the lower Columbia River should remain good through September. Then the action will shift to the Bonneville Pool, its tributaries and the Hanford Reach.

**Trout** anglers may want to bear in mind that Skate Creek and the Tilton River were each planted with 1,400 half-pound rainbows Aug. 29. In addition, hatchery sea run cutthroats are biting on the Cowlitz River.

**Eastern Washington:** Snake River **steelhead** fishing is under way in the south end of the region, and at least a few big fish have been landed. Glen Mendel, WDFW district fish biologist, said the best catches usually come later in the season, but diligent steelheaders with time to try many spots will not be disappointed. The daily catch limit is three hatchery steelhead (rainbow trout over 20 inches marked with a clipped fin). Any wild (unmarked) steelhead, or chinook and coho salmon must be released.

Steelheaders and others out in southeast Washington are bound to deal with smoky conditions as the Columbia Complex Wildland Fires continue to burn through the Umatilla National Forest and surrounding land. For information about road closures and other restrictions due to the wildfires, check <http://inciweb.org/incident/443/> or call the Fire Information Office at 509-337-6059.

With dry conditions throughout the region, open fires are currently prohibited on all WDFW owned and managed water access sites. Anglers are urged to be extra careful with anything that could start a fire.

**North Central Washington:** Cooler nights are slowly making for cooler water temperatures in the region’s Columbia Basin, and that means fish are biting. **Walleye** action at Moses Lake and Potholes Reservoir is picking up, along with **smallmouth** and **largemouth bass**. The third annual Mar Don Resort Marathon Dock Fishing Tournament on Potholes Reservoir is Sept. 22-24. Cash prizes from the \$30 per angler entry fee will be awarded for top catches of **perch, crappie, bluegill, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, trout, walleye, catfish, channel catfish, bullhead and carp**. See <http://www.mardonresort.com> for more information and entry forms.

Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist, said fishing on the open section of the Methow River has been good for both **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** up to 18 inches. Those fish are being caught on both flies and spinners, he said. Jateff reminds anglers it's a catch-and-release fishery with selective gear rules, and it closes Sept. 30.

Jateff also said the **salmon** season on the upper Columbia River system, including the Okanogan and Similkameen rivers, has been spotty with fish in the 10- to 15-pound range still being caught. The area from the first Hwy. 97 Bridge upstream of the mouth of the Okanogan River to the Hwy. 97 Bridge just below the town of Oroville, and the Similkameen River from the mouth to the Hwy. 7 Bridge in Oroville, closes to salmon fishing Sept. 15.

"Fishing this month and next should pick up as water temperatures in some of the selective gear lakes start to cool down," Jateff said. "Big Twin, near Winthrop, and Blue in the Sinlahekin should both be good."

Davis Lake near Winthrop opened Sept. 1 with catches of rainbows up to 14 inches. Both Cougar and Campbell lakes were also set to open on Sept. 1, but have restricted access due to wildfires. Contact the U.S. Forest Service Methow Ranger District at 509-996-4000 for further information about access to these fishing lakes.

Jateff noted alpine lake fishing for cutthroat trout is usually good at this time of the year, but anglers planning backcountry trips should first check for wildfire access closures. See <http://inciweb.org/state/49/> for the latest on northcentral Washington fires.

**South Central Washington:** South Central region rivers and streams continue to provide good **trout** fishing, including the Yakima, Naches, Little Naches, and Bumping rivers in Yakima County, and the upper reaches of Taneum Creek, Naneum Creek, Manastash Creek, and the Forks of the Teanaway in Kittitas County. Most rivers and creeks have special regulations like selective gear rules that prohibit bait. Most also have statewide trout catch limits of two trout with an 8-inch minimum size. Anglers should check the regulation pamphlet for all details.

No creel reports are in yet from the Yakima River **salmon** fishery that opened Sept. 1. The fishery is open from the Highway 240 bridge upstream to 400 feet below Prosser Dam and from the Highway 223 bridge at Granger upstream to Sunnyside (Parker) Dam. Most of the best fishing is expected later this month. Daily limit is six salmon, but no more than two adults (24 inches or more if chinook, 20 inches or more if coho) may be retained. All areas of the Yakima River are closed to angling for steelhead, hatchery or wild.

Late September is also the best bet for salmon fishing on the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River near the Tri-Cities.

### Reader Email

Kaptn' Ken Johnson is moving to the Nehalem River so he sent his first report on September 4th, "Right now the fishing sucks on the Nehalem River...Normally this is the best time to fish there....It is one of those "You should have been here yesterday..." kind of fisheries. I was there last weekend with Pete Peterson and fished pretty hard for 2 days...NADA...Actually, Pete had one take-down on a trolled WHOLE herring in about 25' of water, trolling about 12'-15' down. Pulled the bait in after the "hit" and the entire tail section was shredded, just about 1/16th of an inch BELOW the tail hook. It was stripped off so we moved our hooks back a bit further. Still nothing. We trolled Spinners, Flatfish, Alvin's and mostly herring...There were probably 40 boats on the river from Wheeler up 4-5 miles upriver from the city of Nehalem....We saw fish jump, one with a bright red wobbler in the side of his face, and only "heard" of one caught that was about 17 pounds...I hear the Columbia is a bit slow now too...Global Warming??? Dead Zone??? Remember, I rented that space in Goble

September 1st through the 30th a couple of years ago and fished 17 times for 17 Chinook.....I hear it is going to be a late season, but it may take a bunch of rain to kick the fish into the system.....I do believe that is true!"

Reader Jon G. wrote again after asking advice on the North Santiam last week, "I went up to Minto Brown yesterday. It looks like a great holding area but I didn't see anything. Just ended up fishing for trout on the fly. Are you familiar with any of the flies that will work well for Steelhead in that area? Thanks again for getting back to me."

TGF co-editor Michael Teague responded in part, "Regarding the Santiam, I'm surprised you didn't at least **see** a steelhead or two. It is estimated that over 10,000 summer steelhead have entered the Santiam system and with the warm water of the lower river driving them upstream, these fish are concentrated in the upper stretches (see report, above, for particulars).

"As far as patterns are concerned, purple is a traditional favorite here with patterns like the Purple Matuka, leeches and marabou spey flies producing well. The color choices on the North Santiam make an interesting transition getting into this time of year, however, with hues following the change in foliage. Fall favorites will be predominately the spectrum from brown to orange to red and combinations of these colors. In waters more heavily fished, get down to reach steelhead which have moved into deeper, faster runs. Around the first week in September, increase the size of patterns slightly for a meatier silhouette.

"Thanks again for writing and please do so again anytime. Let me know how you do ... I'll keep quiet about the specifics .... "

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

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: [brees@pacifier.com](mailto:brees@pacifier.com)

Doug Rees: [drees@TheGuidesForecast.com](mailto:drees@TheGuidesForecast.com)

Michael Teague: [SailCat@SailCat.com](mailto:SailCat@SailCat.com)

### **Random Links**

Great White Shark takes anglers' catch

[http://www.currycountyreporter.com/news/results.cfm?story\\_no=1631](http://www.currycountyreporter.com/news/results.cfm?story_no=1631)

Ken Tanksley of Medford displays his derby winning 44.1-pound Chinook that he caught Sunday afternoon, which earned him the \$5,000 grand prize in the fourth annual Slam'n Salmon Derby out of Brookings over the holiday weekend. Tanksley also took home a gold ring valued at \$1,000 for besting the rest. Only two of the fish taken during the three-day derby topped 40 pounds, although over 5,000 pounds were taken overall. The biggest fish of the day on Friday, a 32.7 pounder, was brought in by 10-year-old Sam Christensen of Brookings. There were 779 fishermen from 11 different states taking part. Complete story

[http://www.currypilot.com/news/story.cfm?story\\_no=13455](http://www.currypilot.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=13455)



Angler, 14, caught a 52-pounder on the Siletz Tuesday last week

<http://www.coyote-rock.com/images/Images06/AUSTIN%20GRIFFEY%208-29-06%20%2051%20LBS.JPG>

Here are the waypoints for the 40 fathom line offshore

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/regulations/sport\\_fishing/40fmwaypts041306.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/regulations/sport_fishing/40fmwaypts041306.asp)

**Weekly Quote** – "Salmon are crazy fish, and once they get into a man's blood he's never quite the same." - Lee Wulff

**GOOD LUCK!**