

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **May 25^h – May 31st, 2007**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- The spring chinook re-opener on the Columbia produced just over a salmon for every 10 boats in the Portland to Longview stretch. Nearly an equal mix of steelhead and chinook were caught by anglers fishing in the same stretch with nearly 1 in 10 bank rods scoring results. A large minus tide series contributed to the catch which will not be the case this weekend.

Sturgeon anglers in the Portland to Longview stretch scored a keeper for every other boat with lots of shaker action as well.

Shad fishing in the Bonneville stretch is excellent and the oversize fishery has taken off as well. Keepers are also being taken with 17 legals taken for 27 boats during a weekend check.

As the water temperature at Willamette Falls hit 60 degrees on May 18th, spring Chinook counts approached 14,000 adults. Biologists now believe the run will come in over-predicted. Summer steelhead passage has topped 3,200 fish indicating fair numbers headed for the Santiams. Spring Chinook fishing remains slow in the Willamette with the Columbia backing up into the lower river further restricting flow. Prawn spinners are taking a few, as are wobblers. Sturgeon fishing has produced mostly shakers. Shad fishing has been good for those anchored in the migration lanes. Shad travel nose-to-tail in a weaving line.

The Clackamas has been spotty for summer steelhead but has shown improvement recently. It is expected to be fair this weekend with spinners a good choice. A drop in water temperature has shut down the marginal springer fishery in the lower river.

Sandy anglers are having a tough time on the lower river with sand filling holes which had served as fishing areas in previous seasons. The 100 anglers fishing the springer derby held May 19th turned in only 11 fish.

Summer steelheading is fair in the North Santiam. A few springers have been taken from Stayton to the mouth.

Henry Hagg Lake, Huddleston Pond, Sheridan Pond, Silver Creek Reservoir, Timothy Meadows, Trillium Lake, West Salish Pond, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, and Junction City Pond are scheduled for trout planting.

Northwest – The excellent minus tide series on Tillamook Bay produced poor results over the weekend. The upper bay produced the best for anglers using spinners. Rivers remain too low for good action but stealthy boaters are finding a few opportunities.

Crabbing remains best in the ocean but bottomfishing success has dropped off at dinner reef just outside of Tillamook Bay. Gerry Orahod of Garibaldi scored a 25-pound halibut in Lyster's corner inside Tillamook Bay on Tuesday. Offshore anglers did well on the last opener as well but effort was down.

Sturgeon anglers in the Tongue Point area near Astoria are having to work hard for their keepers. Fish are well distributed in the estuary with sand shrimp producing the best results. Anchovies are only available for the weekends but are making for a productive bait. Anglers can take them on herring jigs in the river around Hammond.

Halibut fishing was rewarding on Thursday and Friday, May 17th and 18th with boat limits coming to most anglers fishing about 25 miles out of Newport. By Saturday, ocean conditions kept most recreational boaters inshore. Charter boats fishing Saturday did not do so well.

Big Creek Reservoir # 1 and #2 and Olalla Creek Reservoir are scheduled for trout planting.

Southwest – Shad fishing is good and improving on the Umpqua with crowds building at Yellow Creek. With shad running upstream, it's possible to catch them at many other locations where the bank is not so jammed with anglers.

Cold ocean temperatures seem to be discouraging spring Chinook from entering south coast rivers. Salmon are holding 20 miles or more offshore.

Rogue River anglers have scratched out a few springers and jacks below Gold Ray Dam.

An exception is the Klamath. Subject to serious concern regarding declining chinook numbers last year, is providing very good early springer action now.

When ocean conditions have allowed safe bar crossing, bottom fishing remains excellent for various species of rockfish and decent numbers of ling cod remain in the mix. It's National Safe Boating Week - be careful out there and wear those Personal Flotation Devices.

South coast beaches have provided outstanding catches of surf perch over the past week.

Scheduled for trout planting this week are Clearwater #2, Hemlock Lake, Lake of the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir, Loon Lake, Reinhart Park Pond, Rogue River(Sec.5) and Spaulding Pond.

Eastern – The salmonfly hatch is underway on the lower Deschutes with dries and nymphs producing very well. Most productive results are coming close to the riverbank near cover.

Fly angling on Cascade lakes was very good over the weekend, best when the wind held off.

Bass fishing near Celilo is productive for anglers pitching crankbaits and spinnerbaits. The average is around 10 fish per angler.

Eastside streams open for trout on Saturday, May 26th. Scheduled to be stocked are Century Gravel Pit, Clear Lake, Cottonwood Meadows, Big Cultus Lake, Deschutes River, East Lake, Fall River, Holbrook Reservoir, Kingsley Reservoir, Lake of the Woods, Lofton Reservoir, Malheur Reservoir, Ochoco Creek, Pole Creek Reservoir, Shevlin Pond, Sprague Gravel Pit, Spring Creek, North and South Twin Lake, Walton Lake and Walton Lake.

SW Washington – All SW Washington streams are producing catches of salmon and steelhead. The Kalama and Lewis Rivers are still providing the best action but effort has dropped from previous weeks.

The Wind River and Drano Lakes fisheries are also witnessing a decline in success with nearly 40% of the fish being jacks. A few fish are being taken in the lower Klickitat River.

Reminder - While you'd never know it with boats down offshore, in the Columbia and Clackamas rivers recently, it's **National Safe Boating Week**. Be careful out there and **wear** those Personal Flotation Devices.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Salmon fishers on the Columbia likely didn't expect much when the river re-opened last week. Well, they got what they expected with mediocre results but optimum fishing conditions. Some of the best fishing took place from the Portland to Longview stretch with a mix of salmon and steelhead showing in the catches. Beach plunkers fared well with the strong minus tide series as the migrating fish hug the shore to preserve valuable calories on their upstream migration. Effort was spread throughout the system but with the I-5 deadline, anglers (and managers for that matter) weren't expecting high impacts.

Counts at Bonneville have certainly peaked but managers are still confident that their pre-season prediction will fall into place. Numbers should be consistent at around 400 to 800 fish per day passing the facility. Jack numbers continue to pile up giving anglers some reprieve that we'll see improved fish returns in our future.

Sturgeon anglers are seeing some good success rates below the mouth of the Willamette River. Portland to Longview anglers witnessed another good week of keeper and shaker action with most anglers using smelt for bait. Further downstream estuary fishers are still struggling to find consistent results for keepers. Action is fair with most boats landing between 1 and 2 dozen fish per day. Sand shrimp is the key bait and the one that is most readily available. Anchovies are only available on the weekends until effort increases justifying more bait runs by the commercial bait collectors. The area out of Tongue Point is the most productive.

In the gorge, anglers are finding favor with shad action and the oversize fishery is improving daily as well. Shad can be had in the faster flows using small green rubber grubs and shiny spoons like Dick Nites. Stick with solid colors (like green) in the morning until the sunlight hits the water and then switch to the metallic colors. The oversize bite is entering its peak period.

The Guide's Forecast – With a waning tide series, don't look for great action for salmon or steelhead over the weekend. Bank anglers will be challenged to find many fish until the next tide series and the run is beginning to slow anyway.

Columbia River anglers should focus their efforts on sturgeon as opportunities abound. From the estuary where keepers are most likely onto the Longview to Portland stretch, keepers seem to be plentiful for anglers willing to work for them. Use sand shrimp in the Tongue Point area and anchovies where available downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge. The weaker tides favor anglers fishing in the deeper water in pursuit of keepers. The main shipping channel may be the place for good action if you don't find fish on the shallower flats. You may get lucky enough to jig your own bait downstream of Hammond.

With the weak tide series, crabbing may be a good option for folks out of Hammond.

Shad chasers should have the time of their lives this weekend in the gorge. Action should be ample for those in search of crab bait or oversized sturgeon bait. Oversize seekers are still restricted to the Marker 85 deadline.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Daily counts over Willamette Falls are slow but steady as the YTD total approached 15,000. That's quite a ways from the prediction of 78,500 but the next three or four weeks will make or break these numbers. Jack counts had a little surge pushing the total to 124 as of that date. It remains to be seen if the low jack count reflects a poor return in 2008. Summer steelhead have improved, topping 3,600 so far this season. Counts of winter steelhead ceased on May 15th, freezing the total at 5,494. Shad fishing reports are all over the map, with some reporting three, others three dozen. Shad fishing will be reliable although finding the proper

location is imperative to success. Incidentally, Chinook seem to favor tiny lures like Dick Nite spoons during shad season, so it's best to fish a little heavier than required to land a three-pound shad and be prepared for the unexpected. Sturgeon fishing was spotty during the last retention period with plenty of shakers but few keepers.

The Guide's Forecast – That the Falls water temperature has dropped a couple of degrees to 58 bodes well for spring Chinook hopefuls on the lower river. It had been 60 degrees since Friday last week and catches have been few.

It's early yet for shad, but worthwhile if anglers get right on top of their traffic lane. Shad swim upstream in a 'ribbon' pattern, veering back and forth but remaining in a tight, nose-to-tail formation. Just a few feet off this path can result in poor catches. If action is slow, try moving toward one bank or the other or line up with another boater who's hitting them (without crowding). The best spots for shad include the stretch of the Willamette from above the mouth of the Clackamas to below Meldrum Bar and in Multnomah Channel at Coon Island. In a few weeks shad will be thick but so will boat and bank anglers chasing them. Late reports indicate an improvement in the ratio of keeper sturgeon with anglers taking some fatties on Thursday this week. Most springer hookups this week have come to shad fishers. There's no effective technique which has emerged for targeting them, but logic dictates spinners and wobblers in 58 degree water.

Summer steelhead numbers are improving on the South Santiam with over 400 counted at Foster Dam and as of May 22nd and a couple of spring Chinook made it up to the facility. South Santiam steelheaders have been challenged by cold water which has prevented the steelhead bite from taking off and spring Chinook numbers remain too low to target them. Springers are on the move, though so expect to see some improvement as the water warms a little. North Santiam prospects are somewhat better. The water is warmer and while the river is stable, it's a little low. Summer steelhead fishing is fair and spring Chinook hookups have mostly been incidental as few anglers are deliberately targeting them. Small baits and lures are most effective in these conditions.

The McKenzie has started to produce spring Chinook although reports indicate a high percentage of these are unclipped fish.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas steelheaders are catching fish on spinners with fish scattered throughout the system. Catches have improved this week providing reason for optimism this weekend. Spring Chinook catches have showed improvement as well with the chilly water beginning to warm and springers showing a preference for good-quality, cured salmon eggs.

Sandy River anglers will find better numbers of spring Chinook available this weekend along with improving water temperatures which will improve the odds of a hookup, even though sand in the traditional holding areas will increase the challenge. Summer steelhead continue to enter and will be easier to entice than the Chinook. Spinners have had some success recently, but don't overlook drifted bait as an option.

North Coast Fishing Report – With such a magnum minus tide this week, anglers had high expectations for spring chinook on Tillamook Bay. Overall, the week was a bust with poor catches reported bay wide. The 4th annual Bounty on the Bay fundraiser yielded only 8 fish for nearly 140 rods. Action was best in the upper bay as the strong outgoing only allowed for a small window of opportunity for lower bay trollers. One guide, Jon Winters, netted 4 fish for his crew in the Cap Johnson stretch- all on spinners available at BC Angling post. The hot style is Jon's FCF (fish catching fool) blade with the color green on it. It proved an excellent choice for Jon! More results will be posted on our home page- watch for them and thanks to all who participated and our critical sponsors!

Fishing still hasn't picked up on the bay. Lower bay action is still spotty with anglers focusing their efforts in a calm ocean mid-week. The low slack "bite" has kept anglers interested along the inside of the north jetty as well but success has been slow. A small pack of sea-lions is working the jetty but I am not aware of any fish taken yet.

I got so desperate for action that I took my crew north to the mouth of Nehalem Bay on Wednesday in search of halibut. Armed with Garibaldi Marina Jeff's brined herring, I rigged them whole and slow trolled them on the bottom in about 71 feet of water picking up a single biter of about 15 pounds. There have been other reports of halibut in the area and one even caught inside of Tillamook Bay early this week!

Sturgeon effort continues to decline in the bay and crabbing remain poor as well. In the ocean, the crabbing has been fair at best with an average of 6 to 12 keepers for 4 pots and long soak times. Fresh shad would be ideal but I don't have any.....

River fishers are still plagued with low water but drifters are getting a few fish. So few anglers can approach the holes stealthily enough to produce results but bobber fisherman have the best chance. The Nestucca, Trask and Wilson Rivers are the only options.

Nearshore bottomfishers did not have an overall productive week but charter boats traveling farther fared well in the calm seas. One boat, the Bullfrog did sink on Saturday but all anglers on board were rescued.

Catch and release trout fishing opens May 26th for north coast streams but bait is allowed only on a select few systems so check your local regulations.

The Guide's Forecast – Effort has been down for halibut this year. High gas prices are likely a cause but a rough ocean and intense tides likely kept many away for the previous 2 openers. That may change this weekend as friendlier tides is in the forecast- and the fact it's Labor Day weekend. Be watchful of the ocean forecast however as that is not so friendly looking over the weekend. That can certainly change in a matter of just a few days.

Those seeking salmon will want to take advantage of the weak tide series by focusing their efforts in the lower bay and ocean if weather permits. Take advantage of the first part of outgoing tide but especially the last 2 hours of outgoing along the inside of the north jetty. Although it looks like this run will suffer the same consequences of the other regional spring chinook returns, we are in peak season and good numbers of fish are still overdue to show up. Upper bay trollers will not have favorable tides to work with but that shouldn't stop fishers from trying as run timing does favor a good effort.

Driftboaters will not be impressed with the weather forecast as low water conditions will continue to hamper river success. The Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers however are options for bank anglers and those willing to work for their catches.

A rough ocean may keep most anglers inside but halibut, bottomfish and crab are all options if the ocean doesn't do what it is forecasted to do.

Central & South Coast Reports – Halibut fishers working inside the 40-fathom line have experienced extraordinary catches this year. While many of these have been smaller than the deep water variety, some real 'barn doors' have been caught on occasion and these are much easier to boat from 200 feet than from 600 feet or better. All of the halibut fisheries - Columbia and central coast all-depth Thursdays through Sundays and inside 40-fathom which is open every day - have plenty of

poundage left in the quotas so fishing should remain open in the weeks to come.

While north coast beaches have not been so productive for surf perch, those to the south are producing some of the best surf fishing in memory. Pinkfin and striped perch are hitting various baits with abandon, so anglers are using deli shrimp, squid and clam necks as these baits will stay on the hook longer than sand shrimp and still provide 15-fish limits. When surf fishing, it's best to check out potential locations at low tides. Beaches that are steep are preferred to those having a shallow slope. Depressions will also attract perch once covered with water.

Yaquina Bay has been slow to fair for crabbing and the Alsea Bay is poor. Ocean crabbing has slowed dramatically. A couple of reports have indicated that commercial crabbing operations have been averaging only a single crab per pot.

Spring Chinook fishing is in the doldrums on the Umpqua with the better - albeit sparse - catches coming from the lower mainstem. Summer steelheading has just started but has yet to generate much interest. Shad fishing is good and improving on the Umpqua with crowds building at Yellow Creek. With shad running upstream, it's possible to catch them at many other locations where the bank is not so jammed with anglers. While sturgeon fishing is spotty, striped bass catches are improving. Smallmouth bass catches are also picking up around Elkton and action will improve as the water warms. The South Umpqua opens May 26th.

The Shad run on the Coos River is getting underway and will be rewarding as numbers increase over the next week or two.

Plunkers have taken the occasional spring Chinook on the lower Rogue but with few fish entering, interest and catch rates are low. It's somewhat better on the Grants Pass stretch. A few anglers had taken salmon earlier this week below the dam but conditions similar to 2006 have Oregon fish managers discussing an emergency closure again this year. The 1,300 Chinook which had crossed Gold Ray as of May 15th is even fewer than on the same date last year. An announcement one way or the other will follow a meeting next week. The July 1st closure in 2006 allowed sufficient numbers of wild Chinook to ensure adequate numbers for a successful spawn. Despite low numbers, the two Chinook daily limit allows one of those to be unclipped. About 13,000 steelhead have been counted at Gold Ray.

Brookings Harbor is seeing good numbers of Chinook now but cool water and a large number of baitfish has combined to make for slow fishing. When the wind has subsided and the ocean has flattened off the southern Oregon coast, bottom fishing has been as good as it gets. According to reports, boaters heading out of port any direction have encountered various colorful rockfish and good numbers of ling cod which seem to have recovered from post-spawn blues. Blacks are averaging three pounds while a few 30-pound lings have been taken.

Klamath is delivering springers even on 'slow' days. Anglers fishing Rogue River Rigs have seen the greatest degree of success. What a dramatic recovery this has been and a reassuring success story the Klamath has been this year following the cutbacks and predictions of doom in 2006.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Odell is producing scores of fair-sized kokanee despite being so overcrowded that a 25-fish daily limit is in place. Crescent lake has been producing limits of kokanee averaging 14 inches. Wickiup remains very slow.

Avid angler 'Dobe' adds this, "Bill, Winston and I fished Odell Lake last Tuesday thru Friday. When we put in on Tuesday the lake was blowing up some two foot rollers and we spent most of the afternoon getting our bearings, only bringing 3 kokanee to the net. Wednesday morning we hit the water about 5:45. The two foot rollers were still pounding the breakwater at Sunset Cove and coupled

with a strong wind and dense fog, made for shoreline navigation down to Princess Creek. We set up in the area of a couple of other boats and proceeded to jig. Nobody seemed to be catching anything so we headed back for breakfast and stayed ashore till afternoon. Tried trolling and finally found the combination of night crawler/corn behind a string of cowbells which started hooking kokes. Finished up the day with 20. Next day, same thing, without the fog. All in all, trolling produced the best catches using flashers, night crawlers tipped with white shoepeg corn trolled with 1oz weight, 100 feet back. The fog never returned, but the times when the lake wasn't kicking up a two foot chop was measured in minutes "

Salmonflies are hatching en masse on the Deschutes with the highest concentration from Mack's Canyon down to Maupin. Trout weren't looking up over the weekend, though, so nymphs were far more effective. It should be good for large dries over the first weekend in June if the weather holds.

Northwest Trout – With the trout stocking at Diamond Lake at 80,000 for the year, catches continue to be good. Both boat and bank anglers are taking good numbers of fish averaging 27 inches with the occasional five to seven pounder creating excitement.

In last week's stocking report, North Fork Reservoir was stocked, which was accurate, but it doesn't open until this Saturday, May 26th. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Trout stocking has been very heavy in the past two weeks in anticipation of the holiday weekend. In addition, this week Henry Hagg Lake, Huddleston Pond, Sheridan Pond, Silver Creek Reservoir, Timothy Meadows, Trillium Lake, West Salish Pond, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Foster Reservoir, and Junction City Pond are scheduled for trout planting in the Willamette Zone. Big Creek Reservoir # 1 and #2 and Olalla Creek Reservoir are scheduled for trout planting in the Northwest Zone.

Northwest Bass & Panfish - About half the smallmouth bass caught in the Columbia recently have already spawned which means prime fishing still remains available for the holiday weekend.

The upper Willamette River is producing worthwhile catches of both large- and smallmouth bass. Smallies will be around rocky cover that provides a break in the current while largemouth will be in backwaters and sloughs near softer structure such as wood or weeds. Water temperature in the Willamette Valley will have largemouth bass forming beds now in preparation for spawning. The full moon is coming up at the first of June at which time the actual spawn will take place.

Those making the road trip to Brownlee Reservoir may expect to find good numbers of smallmouth bass, decent sized crappie and lots of channel cats available. Yellow perch and bluegill are also hitting well. It's a good idea to catch and release the bass and limit panfish to what you can consume in the near future. Freezing doesn't preserve fish in good condition for more than a few months.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report May 16th – May 29th, 2007

[North Puget Sound](#)

Anglers have their pick of a number of spring-fishing opportunities throughout the region. On Puget Sound, halibut, rockfish and lingcod fisheries are under way, while out on the lakes, trout fishing continues.

More **trout** will be added this month to some of the region's lakes, including Green Lake in King County, Mountain Lake in San Juan County, Pass Lake in Skagit County, Roesiger Lake in Snohomish County and Terrell Lake in Whatcom County.

"Angler success has increased at several local lakes as water temperatures rise," said Kirt Hughes, regional fish program manager for WDFW. "Trout anglers should continue to do well over the next few weeks, especially after several of the region's lakes are stocked with some nice-size fish."

Under statewide rules, anglers have a daily limit of five trout on most lakes. Released legal-sized trout, caught with bait, count toward the daily bag limit. Complete information on stocking schedules for **rainbow, cutthroat** and **triploid trout** is available on WDFW's website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/index.htm>).

Out on the saltwater, anglers are finding some **lingcod**. Catch counts at the Coronet Bay public ramp indicate 80 anglers hauled in 14 lingcod May 11, and 254 anglers checked 40 lings the following day. Elsewhere, 12 anglers at the Bellingham ramp brought home six lingcod May 13. During the hook-and-line season (May 1-June 15), there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 40 inches.

Anglers also can drop a line for other bottomfish, such as **halibut, rockfish** and **cabezon**. The halibut season is open five days a week, Thursday through Monday, with a daily limit of one halibut and no minimum size limit. For rockfish, there is no minimum size and anglers must keep the first legal rockfish caught. Anglers fishing for cabezon have a daily limit of two fish, and there is no minimum size limit.

Shrimp season started strong. So strong, in fact, that most of the region's marine areas have already reached their harvest quotas. Marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) and 9 (Admiralty Inlet) are closed, while Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) closes today (May 16). However, shrimpers can still drop a pot in Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), which remains open Wednesdays through Saturdays until the quota is reached. Details are available on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shellfish/crabreg/>.

Before heading out, anglers should check the rules and regulations for freshwater and saltwater fisheries in WDFW's 2007/2008 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Harvest quotas for shrimp and halibut are going fast in some areas, although there's still time to bring home limits of both species from waters still open to fishing. Meanwhile, freshwater anglers have a good chance of catching spring chinook salmon in several Olympic Peninsula rivers, trout in area lakes and also - starting June 1 - in dozens of rivers throughout the region.

Today (May 16) is the fourth - and last - scheduled day of the Hood Canal **shrimp** season, although it appears shrimpers will get an additional day to fish the 60-mile-long fjord. "We don't expect to reach the available quota today, and may be able to announce a fifth day of fishing within a day or two," said Theresa Cain, WDFW shellfish biologist. She recommended that shrimpers check the WDFW Fishing Hotline (360-902-2500) or website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/>) for an update on the fishery.

Cain noted that calm weather and good fishing have brought out thousands of shrimpers during the past four days of shrimping on the canal. "We counted 1,407 boats on the water last Saturday, which was up from last year," Cain said.

Four other marine areas -- 4, 5, 6 (excluding the Discovery Bay Shrimp District) and 13 - remain open for shrimp fishing on a daily basis. Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island to the Narrows Bridge) had a one-day shrimp season on May 5. All areas still open for spot shrimp will close Sept. 15, or when the quota is reached.

Halibut fishers have also had to keep a sharp eye on area openings and closings in recent days.

The fishery off Westport and Ocean Shores set a record pace, prompting the closure of the Marine Area 2 halibut season after just six days of fishing. More people on the water, great weather and larger fish all contributed to anglers reaching the quota allocated for the area, said Carol Henry, WDFW fish biologist. The Westport fishery, which opened May 1, ran five days a week.

Meanwhile, halibut fishing in Marine Area 1 off Ilwaco is still holding steady seven days a week. "Anglers are generally catching their daily limit, with fish averaging 14 pounds," Henry said.

Father north, halibut anglers fishing off La Push and Neah Bay (marine areas 3 and 4) were on the water in force for opening day on May 15. "The little boats were blown around a bit, but after the wind died down, the weather was pretty nice and the fishing for both halibut and lingcod picked up," Henry said.

Halibut fishing in marine areas 3 and 4 will be open Tuesdays, Thursday and Saturdays until the May portion of the quota is reached. The fishery will then reopen on June 19 and 21 within certain boundaries. Coordinates are published in the 2007-08 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>. Henry reminds anglers that, starting May 21, recreational fishing for rockfish and lingcod in marine areas 3 and 4 is not allowed in waters deeper than 20 fathoms, except on days the halibut fishery is open. Coordinates can be found under Emergency Rule Updates at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

On the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers fishing near Port Angeles have been averaging one halibut for every four rods. Halibut fishing opens May 24 in Marine Area 5 (Seiku) and runs five days a week - Thursday through Monday - through Aug. 3.

Feeling competitive? Top prize in the 7th annual Port Angeles Halibut Derby on May 27-28 is \$5,000. Ticket information is available at <http://www.swainsinc.com> or (360) 452-2357.

River fishing for **trout** opens June 1 statewide, with plenty of angling options throughout the region. Anglers are advised to check the 2007-08 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> for regulations that apply to specific rivers.

Meanwhile, WDFW continues to stock area lakes with **rainbow** and **triploid trout**, giving anglers a good chance to catch some nice fish in the weeks ahead. The best fishing occurs between opening day and the end of May, said Hal Michael, WDFW district fish biologist.

"As the weather warms up, fish are feeding more and apt to bite," Michael said. "But when it gets too warm as summer comes on, they start to go deeper looking for cooler water. That's when you see fishing for warm-water species such as bass pick up."

Michael added that kokanee stocked in 2005 for this year's season are also showing up in area lakes. "Kokanee fishing at Summit and American lakes has come on early and should be good for the next few weeks," he said.

Michael reminds anglers that information on stocking schedules is available on WDFW's website at

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/weekly/>.

May 19 is Kids' Fishing Day at American Lake, where youngsters can try for a trout or two. American Lake, which has produced good numbers of rainbow and kokanee this spring, will be stocked with some good-sized trout so everyone is sure to get a catch. Pre-registration for the popular event is required. Call (253) 798-4176.

On the Olympic Peninsula, **spring chinook** are returning to the Sol Duc hatchery and good numbers are anticipated through May and early June for anglers fishing the Quillayute and Sol Duc rivers, according to Mike Gross, WDFW fish biologist. Springer season also opens on the Hoh May 16, running Wednesdays through Sundays with a limit of one adult chinook per day.

Gross recommends fishers check conditions before heading out. "The snow melt is causing the river to run pretty milky right now, making for poor visibility and difficult fishing." Gross reminds anglers fishing the Quillayute and Sol Duc to release all unmarked wild chinook.

Southwest Washington:

Areas of the lower Columbia River open May 16 for spring chinook salmon, summer steelhead and shad, but anglers may think twice about moving to the big river from the tributaries. "Catch rates for spring chinook have been pretty darned good on the Lewis, Kalama and several other rivers for the past couple of weeks," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "This is a good time to be out there."

Some of the best action has been on the North Fork Lewis River, where boat anglers have been averaging better than one hatchery **spring chinook** for every two rods. In all, 166 boat anglers reported catching 83 adult springers and releasing another 16 in a weeklong creel check ending May 13. Bank anglers caught 10 spring chinook and release five more on the north fork that week.

Next in line was the Kalama River, where 56 boat anglers averaged one springer for every three rods and bank anglers averaged one in five. Catch rates have been lower on the Cowlitz River, Hymer said.

Farther east, anglers have been averaging one adult spring chinook for every four rods at Drano Lake and one in six on the Wind River, where the bag limit was raised to two springers or **hatchery steelhead** (or one of each). The upper river has been open to fishing since May 5. But fishing has generally been slow on the White Salmon River and the Klickitat River.

"This year's spring chinook run has been a little late crossing Bonneville Dam," Hymer said. "Not as late as last year, but late enough to affect fisheries upriver."

Even so, fishery managers from Washington and Oregon have sufficient confidence in this year's upriver run to reopen the spring chinook fishery in the lower Columbia River starting May 16. Through May 31, anglers can catch and keep six hatchery salmon - including two adult fish - from the Interstate 5 bridge downstream to the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line. Wild chinook and steelhead, as well as all chum and sockeye salmon, must be released.

That fishery had been closed since April 16 while fishery managers watched the counts at Bonneville Dam to determine if the upriver run will reach the preseason forecast of 78,500 fish. "We're now fairly confident the run will be pretty close to that by the time the returns tail off in mid-June," said Cindy LeFleur, WDFW Columbia River policy coordinator. "The peak of the run is over, but there are still a lot of spring chinook available for harvest."

Other options include **summer-run steelhead** and **shad**, which also opened for fishing May 16 in the lower Columbia. The hatchery steelhead fishery overlaps the area open to spring chinook fishing, from

Interstate 5 bridge downstream to the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line. The daily limit is two marked hatchery fish.

Shad fishing is open from Bonneville Dam to the mouth of the Columbia, with no bag limit and no minimum size. More than 17,000 shad were counted May 15 at Bonneville Dam. "The best time to hit them is when the counts start running to 20,000 to 50,000 per day," said Hymer, noting that information about catching and preparing shad is available on the WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/outreach/fishing/shad/shad.htm>).

Sturgeon opened to retention fishing May 12 downriver from the Wauna powerline crossing near Cathlamet and catch rates have been slowly improving in all areas. **Bass**, on the other hand, have practically been leaping into anglers' boats, especially in the John Day Pool. Sixteen boat anglers fishing there during the week ending May 13 reported catching a total of 232 bass and releasing 187 of them. Thirty-eight boat anglers fishing the same waters also reported catching 50 walleye and releasing 16.

With dozens of rivers around the region set to open June 1 for trout fishing, anglers continue to pull **rainbows, triploids** and **browns** from lakes throughout the area. At Kline Pond, bank anglers have been averaging over 1.5 trout per rod, mostly rainbows and browns. Mayfield Lake was stocked with 6,375 half-pound rainbows May 4, Sacajawea Lake was planted with 2,900 catchable-size rainbows May 7 and Fort Borst Park Pond got 3,000 catchables May 8.

Kress Lake will be closed to the public May 18-20 for a boating-safety event, involving more than 600 children and adults. The lake will reopen to public fish at 6 p.m. May 20.

A top prize of \$400 is up for grabs in the **kokanee derby** this Sunday, May 20th at Lake Merwin in southern Washington. Advanced registration is \$20 or \$25 the day of the derby. Call 360-619-8522 or Email fishing.derby@hotmail.com for information.

Eastern Washington:

Hatchery **spring chinook salmon** fishing has been good since the special season opened May 9 in the Snake River, from Texas Rapids boat launch upstream to the Corps of Engineers boat launch (about a mile upstream of Little Goose Dam on the south bank). Glen Mendel, WDFW district fish biologist in Dayton, said catch rates initially were very good because of low water, "but stay tuned for how it goes."

The special season, which is not listed in the fishing rules pamphlet, is slated to run through June 30. The daily catch limit is one adipose-fin-clipped chinook of at least 12 inches; possession limit is two daily catch limits. All chinook with the adipose fin intact, and all steelhead, must be immediately released unharmed. Anglers fishing that portion of the Snake River must use barbless hooks no larger than 5/8 inch from point of hook to shank.

Mendel noted that this is the seventh consecutive special season for Snake River hatchery spring chinook salmon.

Rainbow and **cutthroat** trout fishing in the central district's well-stocked and good fish-growing lakes remains excellent. Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist in Spokane, said Lincoln County's Fishtrap Lake and southwest Spokane County's Badger, West Medical, and Williams lakes are all maintaining at least four-trout-per-angler catch averages. Anglers at Spokane County's Clear Lake should be reaping the benefits of extra catchable-size rainbows recently stocked in the lake.

Two northeast district trout lakes that have been maintaining three-plus trout catch averages will shift to catch-and-release and selective gear rules on June 1: Starvation Lake, 10 miles southeast of Colville, and Rocky Lake, three-plus miles south of Colville.

June 1 is also when many streams and rivers open to fishing, including the Spokane, San Poil, and Kettle arms of the Columbia or Lake Roosevelt. These fisheries open later than lakes to allow fish to spawn. See the regulations pamphlet for all details at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

North Central Washington:

"Now's the time to fish **walleye** in the big waters of the Columbia Basin," said Jeff Korth, WDFW district fish biologist in Moses Lake. "That includes Potholes Reservoir, Sprague, Banks, and Moses Lake. The fish are done spawning and are back on the feed. Mid-May to early June is always the best walleye fishing of the year here."

Korth said this is also a good time to fish for **bass**, especially smallmouth. He said regulations were liberalized for smallmouth on Moses, Potholes, and Banks, with a 10-fish daily catch limit, but only one over 14 inches.

Rainbow trout fishing at Blue and Park lakes in Grant County is very good, Korth said. Both lakes are maintaining the catch rate of about two trout per angler.

Burke Lake, on the Quincy Wildlife Area southwest of the town of Quincy, is also still producing fair catch rates, Korth said. Burke is in its prime now, having been rehabilitated in 2005. Open since the first of March, it closes at the end of July.

South Central Washington:

Paul Hoffarth, WDFW fish biologist in Pasco, said the harvest picked up during the second week of the **spring chinook salmon** bank fishery on the Columbia River at Ringold. "I estimate 21 adult hatchery chinook and one jack were harvested," he said. "One wild chinook was caught and released. Total for the season is 23 adults, three jacks with four wild (non-clipped) chinook caught and released." Hoffarth noted the sampling is roughly 50 percent of the Ringold fishing effort.

Walleye and **bass** fishing on the Columbia is also picking up. A recent creel check at the John Day Dam Pool, including fish released, showed boat anglers averaging 1.3 walleye and 14.5 bass per rod. Bank anglers were also catching bass.

"There's good fishing in all the region's lowland trout lakes," said Eric Anderson, WDFW district fish biologist in Yakima. He reminds **trout** anglers to check the latest hatchery fish stocking on WDFW's southcentral region website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/reg/region3.htm>.

The stocking includes the first this year for Wenas Lake - about six miles north of Naches - which recently reopened for public access. Anderson said 4,500 catchable rainbows went into Wenas on May 11 and another 4,400, including 400 jumbos, will be added in early June. Anderson noted that efforts are under way to work out a long-term public access agreement with the Wenas Irrigation District this fall.

Fishing at Clear Lake in upper Yakima County (off Highway 12 in the White Pass area) also has been hot. Anderson said Clear was recently stocked with 6,500 triploid (sterile) rainbow trout, ranging in size from 3/4 to 1.5 pounds. Clear was also stocked back in April with 8,500 catchable rainbow trout (1/3 pound each) and will receive another 10,000 catchable-sized rainbows before June 1.

Reader Email

Subscriber Wayne E. wrote to ask, "Roslyn Lake, your report on Thursday. said it was planted so did ODFW the week of 4-30-07 with 2000 fish which would make 4000 this season. Well I fished it Sunday with my Grandkids 8 of us total along with about 50 other people and there kids from 11am to 2:30pm

not one bite not one fish. talking with other people there no ones catching fish. Are they planting it ? I would e-mail them but they almost never answer any way. Its hard to get kids hooked on fishing when there is no fish."

TGF co-editor Michael Teague responded, "You're right. It's tough to keep kids interested when nothing's happening. We always promote events geared to youngsters. You'll find three such events in this weeks TGF alone.

"As is always the case, freshly-planted trout, having been raised in a shallow environment, will remain in water no deeper than six or eight feet for about two weeks. They'll school up and travel the shoreline during that period, creating flurries of activity as they travel. Trolling is generally ineffective for newly-stocked trout but Power Bait will take 'em.

"You didn't mention how you were fishing, but kids and Power Bait go together like peanut butter & jelly. Have you read my Power Bait tutorial. It's got techniques targeted at parents with kids. Please let me know is you haven't; I'll try to track down a copy and get it to you.

"Trout planting occurs at various times during the week. While it's likely that the bodies of water listed above have been stocked by the time you read about it in TGF, there's a sure way to find out and to discover if any plantings have been detoured to a different location. Call 971-673-6000 after 2 PM for a list of water bodies stocked on any particular day. The drivers report in to personnel available at that number.

"We're here for you, Wayne, and it really is our intent to help you (and your kids) catch more fish!"

Reader Vivian B. wrote to ask, "What is the best source for tracking the herring run in Yaquina Bay?"

TGF co-editor Michael Teague replied, "I don't know if we're the best source, but we sincerely try to be reliable. That said, here's the weekly ODFW report: <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/RR/> which is usually updated Thursdays or Fridays and they really try but often the verbiage one week to the next is exactly the same.

"The herring run at Yaquina this year is similar to the spring Chinook run on the Willamette - dismal. The numbers just haven't shown. A few were taken as early as February with catches expected to improve in March, then theories that they're late and will show in April and so on. None who has tried and actually found some herring took enough to pay for the trip; most reports have been of a dozen or 15. While I've mentioned the herring - or lack of them - a couple of times this year, there hasn't been anything to report on. Even commercial netter have done poorly which has resulted in the Green Label shortage this year and retail prices exceeding \$5.00 a dozen.

"I know this isn't much help in getting bait for you, but it is accurate. Please write again on this or any other fishy subject.

"Oh ... and if the herring should show I promise it'll be in the weekly report."

Got a question, story to tell or information to share? Shoot us an Email!

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Shad over nine pounds? Yes!

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/press/33943.html>



Bone-free shad fillets:

http://www.talkabouthunting.com/fishing_videos/filleting%20shad.wmv

Smithsonian Giant Squid Exhibition opens at Oregon Coast Aquarium:

<http://aquarium.org/InSearchOfGiantSquid.asp>

Note: Aquarium summer hours starting Saturday, May 26th are 9 AM to 6 PM.

Weekly Quote – "Calvin Coolidge's exploits as a fisherman are well known. One of his favorite angling places was the River Brule. Once a newspaper reporter asked him how many fish approximately were in the Brule, and the President answered that the waters were estimated to contain about 45,000 fish. 'I haven't caught them all yet,' he said, 'but I've intimidated them.'" - John McKee

GOOD LUCK!