

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 15<sup>th</sup> – June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Water temperatures in the lower Willamette have moderated but only 18,300 Chinook have accompanied about 7,500 summer steelhead over the Falls so far this season. Shad are being taken in good numbers now, showing a marked preference for chartreuse lures. Sturgeon fishing was fair for keepers over the retention period last week. Effort and catch rates for springers and steelhead is low.

Oversized sturgeon fishing is fair at the Marker 85 deadline with fresh shad, shad strips or parts as bait. Shad fishing at Bonneville can be challenging at times- returns are on track for another bountiful year. A few keepers are still being taken in the gorge and they are of quality size. Salmon fishing in the gorge is marginal- even with the slight climb in dam counts. **Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)** is reporting fair catches of oversized sturgeon using fresh shad or parts thereof.

Summer steelhead and springer catches are low in the Clackamas. The river remains low and a hazard to jet sleds. An occasional springer is being taken at McIver Park.

A few springers are being taken daily from the Sandy River but about half the fish caught have been natives. Summer steelhead is likely the best prospect and anglers targeting both salmon and steelhead are faring better upstream of Dodge Park.

The North Santiam has been fair for summer steelhead and slow for springers. On the South Fork, over 1,250 summer steelhead and 150 spring Chinook have been counted at Foster Dam.

With the water level of the McKenzie dropping this week, anglers are picking up summer steelhead and spring Chinook,

Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above and below Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek and North Santiam River above Detroit are scheduled to be planted with trout this week.

**Northwest –** Estuary sturgeon fishing near Astoria is well underway but keeper sized fish are not running large this year. Sand shrimp is working well in shallow water while anchovies dominate in the deeper water. The oversize handle in the estuary rivals the gorge. The most consistent fishing is taking place near downtown Astoria.

**Pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)** reports hooking 4 for 6 chances on a mix of spring and summer Chinook below Bonneville on Tuesday this week.

Spring salmon fishing in Tillamook Bay continues to disappoint. Effort continues to dwindle. Salmon have been moving through the lower Trask River but the river remains too low to have high expectations. Good tides this weekend may make spinner trolling in the upper bay the best option. **Pro guide Dave Johnson (503-201-4292)** has had some good days recently trolling spinners on the upper bay.

Although the weekend outlook for ocean conditions is favorable, a minus tide series may make bar crossings hazardous. It's best to wait after the peak ebb before navigating the bar. Rockfish action

should be great and nearshore halibut is also an option.

Razor clam diggers should take advantage of the excellent tides this weekend. Clatsop Beaches should produce the best but other coastal beaches are rumored to have a good seeding.

Crabbing at Yaquina Bay is slow and sorting of softshells is necessary and the same holds true for most north coast estuaries.

Access to Lost Lake in Clatsop County will not be possible from June 13 – 17 for road improvements. Both routes to the popular lake will be temporarily closed.

**Southwest** – Smallmouth bass fishing is very good on the Umpqua with some boats hitting the 100 a day mark.

Offshore Chinook salmon fishing has picked up a little out of southwest ports. With anglers finding very large sardines in fish stomachs, rapid growth is expected. The offshore Chinook fishery will be heating up in the next week or two.

Coho continue to be caught and released by ocean anglers targeting Chinook with many pushing 10 pounds. This means some nice fish will be awaiting anglers at the opener on June 23rd.

Surf perch fishing remains red hot off ocean beaches. Angers are using prawns to take limits. Bottom fishing offshore continued to yield good catches of rockfish and lingcod.

Morning minus tides this weekend will provide razor clam opportunities at Bailey Beach and Meyers Creek.

The Rogue is producing very few springers although a pod of fresh fish moved in over the weekend to provide a little action to anchovy-spinner fishers in the lower river.

**Eastern** – Redsides are taking salmonfly imitations on the Deschutes around Mecca.

Kokanee and mackinaw fishing is fair at Odell. Jigs have been more effective than trolling for the kokanee. Wickiup has been very slow.

Waters receiving hatchery trout in the Deschutes watershed include Ana Reservoir, Lake of the Woods, Olallie Lake, Spring Creek and Thompson Valley.

**SW Washington** – Catches of salmon and a few steelhead are beginning to improve at the mouth of the Cowlitz for boat anglers fishing spinners. The fishery should improve and good tides this weekend should produce better results for bank anglers. Green spin-n-glos work best for salmon, the hot colors for steelhead.

Area rivers continue to be challenging for salmon and steelhead fishers due to low, warm water conditions. There is no reprieve in sight. The Lewis River may be the best bet for steelhead.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Sturgeon fishing in the estuary is about as good as it gets. Keepers-o-plenty are coming across the docks although some days are better than others. It's pretty clear however that there are a lot of fish present in the lower Columbia River. Recently, the lower river has been producing the better results as the minus tide series is pushing large numbers of fish to the lower end of the estuary. Charter boats recently took advantage of the water just outside of Illwaco using anchovies for bait. There will be times where an angler will have to battle crabs and bullheads but

if fish are marking on the screen and you are getting fairly consistent action on sturgeon, it'll pay to show some tolerance towards these pesky critters.

Upriver, in front of Astoria, action is still good- especially on incoming tide. The green line and the water directly in front of Astoria (hugging the Oregon shore) is producing nicely for many. In this deep water, anchovies and an occasional smelt are taking fair numbers of fish. I have had my best luck seeking keepers in the shallower water using shrimp however. Upstream of the bridge, it hasn't been too challenging finding productive, trash fish free water but downstream, it's a bit more of a grind. Oversize sturgeon are a real issue again this year as my customers are having a good time with them but it's a rare day when we don't have to throw anchor to go chase a large fish. Many of these fish are just over legal size. Please handle with care!

Upriver for sturgeon, **pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)** is reporting fair catches of oversized sturgeon using fresh shad or parts thereof. Respecting the Marker 85 deadline has not been a real issue but the deadline itself is producing some fair catches. Dan remarked shad fishing is not all that easy some days but the run is on line to be another good one. Keepers are also available for those seeking but it takes a concerted effort to find a keeper or maybe two. Shad strips are working well but the standard smelt or shrimp is also producing some fish.

Salmon fishing in the area is less than impressive- marginal as Dan puts it. Effort is not all that high but fish are taken on occasion at the Oak Tree Hole. Spinners are responsible for the bulk of the fish but anglers are having to do battle with oversized sturgeon on a frequent basis. Dam counts are picking up and some fair catches have been reported in the Cowlitz area so gear up for fair action but educate yourself on proper anchoring techniques. Somewhat contrary to this information, near Bonneville, **pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)** reports, "On Tuesday we were 4 for 6. We caught a mix of spring and summer fish while anchored with spinners. There are good numbers crossing the dam each day. Fishing will remain strong through the end of the month. Concentrate your fishing effort in 10 to 18 feet anchored with spinners. Fish solid colored blades in the morning, brass or gold after the sun gets on the water." Be sure to check out Brandon's big catch on our home page this week! What a great story!

Downriver, salmon and steelhead fishing is just now getting underway. Beginning with steelhead fishing, the minus tide series we are currently on should bode well for some of the best beach catches of summer steelhead of the season. Hot colored spin-n-glos work best in this fishery keeping in mind that the stronger the flow, the closer to the beach these fish are going to travel. Don't be afraid to fish water that is only 3 to 5 feet deep- the fish are there. Also, plunking these lures is really the only technique we use here in the NW where the fish have to come to you. It would behoove you to utilize scents in this fishery to give yourself the edge over your competition. I can't think of any better advice that retired chief of fisheries Jim Martin has to contribute. Jim writes, "I have a gear tip for you and your readers. Have them take the "Gulp challenge" where they fish a standard spin-n-glow with or without shrimp and or eggs, and have them compare that standard rig to a spin-n-glow with a small mesh bag of the new Berkley Gulp! trout dough. This is just like the standard Berkley Powerbait that is often used for trout, but is much more effective in field testing and in lab tests compared to our standard trout dough." Jim continued, "I know from some of the locals in the lower Columbia River that their "secret weapon" for summer steelhead while plunking is putting trout dough in conjunction with the spin-n-glow in a mesh bag, or just molded around the treble hook. I think this new Gulp! dough will be even better, based on our field tests. I am encouraging folks to take the Gulp! challenge and try it side by side with their standard gear. Buzz and I have also been spreading powerbait on the hammered inside of our blades for both summer steelhead and summer Chinook for a while. Works great!" Folks should seriously consider this additional edge when sitting on anchor or on the beach- it's sound advice!

The Columbia summer Chinook season starts Saturday, June 16th through the 30th from Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam and from June 16th through July 31 from Bonneville Dam upstream to the

Oregon/Washington border. Both clipped and non-clipped Chinook may be retained.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Sturgeon fishing seems to be showing no signs of slowing up. The estuary is clearly the place to go and fish seem to be plentiful for most anglers. It's not a slam dunk however, you'll still have to work for them. As a general rule, anchovies in deeper water, shrimp in shallower. The extreme tides this week should direct anglers downstream of the bridge for the best action. The green line and the lower end of the Washington channel should continue to produce the best results although Tongue Point shouldn't be ruled out if one is comfortable fishing in that water. You'll need more bait if your fishing downriver of the bridge because you'll be sacrificing some to trash fish and crabs.

The oversized fishery should continue to produce good catches for anglers using fresh shad for bait. If you want to target keepers in this area, cut your fresh shad into strips of use smelt for bait. Oversized fish however will also readily take these baits. Be prepared.

Salmon fishers should be gearing up for the summer Chinook run. Spinners will take the lion's share of the fish and take Brandon's advice by anchoring in 10 to 18 feet of water- just do it safely. Bonneville will be the best producer but the mouth of the Cowlitz and Kalama will also produce results.

Steelhead anglers should take advantage of the great minus tides this week- beach plunking will produce results although July will be a better month. As dam counts near 300 fish per day, the action will be in full swing.

Crabbing is poor in the estuary despite the fact you'll get eaten alive if you're sturgeon fishing. Bar crossings may be hazardous for anglers seeking a bottomfish bounty out of the mouth of the Columbia.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Water temperatures at Willamette Falls are in the low 60s which isn't encouraging fish movement. Spring Chinook numbers remain disappointing. Summer steelhead totals are also below average. Shad are keeping boat and bank anglers busy, a good thing with Chinook and steelhead fishing in the doldrums. Sturgeon fishers managed to find a few keepers during the last retention period, but the better fishing on the Big River is luring gator anglers to greener pastures.

While a few summer steelhead have been taken on the North Santiam to above Mehama, cold water upriver has shut down the bite, The water gets progressively cooler as one moves upstream. Springer catches are low but a few have been taken between Stayton and Green's Bridge.

The Leaburg Dam facility on the McKenzie reports counting nearly 1,800 Chinook so far this year, but fewer than 10% of those were of hatchery origin. The vast majority of the 230 summer steelhead counted have been fin-clipped, however.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The best bet on the lower Willamette remains shad although the run will be winding down toward the end of June. Start with a three-foot lead dropper and a four-foot leader attached to either a 'wee' Dick Nite or a 1/32 oz jug head a chartreuse curly-tail grub. Sturgeon angling should be worthwhile with the better results coming from the Oregon City stretch. Use care if boating above the Falls.

Fishing in the McKenzie is fair, but is expected to slow as the weather warms. Several thousand summer steelhead being planted by the ODFW this week should boost catches this weekend, however.

Drift boaters on the North Santiam are seeing good numbers of fish, getting an occasional strike but achieving very few hookups. Summer steelhead fishing should improve as the water continues to warm.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Much of the Clackamas River is accessible only by drift boaters and bank anglers, putting jets out of the game due to low water conditions. Springers and summer steelhead are scattered and fishing is spotty. The water temperature should be improving over the coming week, making early mornings the best chance for a hookup.

Fishing on the Sandy has been slow recently with most of the (few) springers hooked of non-hatchery origin. Try higher on the system for the best chance for a summer steelhead.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – There is still not a lot to report from this area of our state. Springer action has been fair at best- depending on who you talk to. **Pro guide Dave Johnson (503-201-4292)** has the best reports stating, "I've hit the upper bay twice lately and we've hooked six plus had a couple other takedowns. Haven't seen much other action but then again there's very little pressure. One guide reported that last year, the run didn't really show up until the middle of June but most anglers have written off this season. The rivers remain too low to expect any good action although some folks are reporting fish are moving in the lower stretches of the Trask River."

The ocean may be friendly enough to take advantage of good bottomfishing prospects. Be sure to exercise extreme caution when crossing and take your crab gear with you- it's really the only productive place to get those crustaceans.

It'll be another productive clam digging tide this week but the first half of the tide always produces better than the last half. Limits should still be feasible but go ASAP for your best chance.

The fin-clipping party where 100,000 Chinook smolts will be processed is Saturday, June 16th, starts at 8 AM at Rhodes Pond on Highway 22 southeast of Hebo. A barbecue lunch and soft drinks will be served following the fin-clipping around 12:30 PM. This is an entirely volunteer-driven project which receives no support from State or Federal funds. The Nestucca Anglers pay for the operations at Rhoades Pond, so give 'em a call to give 'em a hand. Call 503-392-4269 for information.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The extreme tide series should go well for upper Tillamook Bay spinner trollers. Although most are very discouraged, there should still be some fair numbers of fish coming through. Use solid greens in the mornings and switch to brass green tipped spinners when you can use the sun to your advantage. Don't bother drifting the river unless you have a rubber raft.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Herring are being taken in Yaquina Bay, although jigging has been inconsistent. Chinook fishing offshore has been challenging but the coho opener looks promising. Both commercial and recreational boats are releasing many silvers in the pursuit of elusive Chinook.

Most halibut anglers launching out of Depoe Bay and Newport are taking halibut Thursdays through Saturdays when the ocean is open beyond the 40-fathom line. With 65,000 pounds remaining on the spring quota remaining, the next all-depth opening will be June 21st through the 23rd. Additional dates of July 5th through 7th and 19th through 21st until or unless the quota is met.

Crowds at Sawyer's Rapids and Yellow Creek continue to catch good numbers of shad. The best sports fishing on the Umpqua currently is for smallmouth bass on the Elkton stretch. Chinook and steelhead numbers are low making for insignificant catches.

The Coos River is a good bet this weekend for anglers wishing to stock up on decent numbers of shad.

Despite fresh spring Chinook moving into the lower Rogue over the weekend, numbers remain too low

to provide the sort of fishery for which this ocean tributary is renowned. Anglers are frustrated river wide with low catch rates in the lower and middle stretches. The upper Rogue is probably the better choice this coming weekend as anglers are averaging a little better numbers in this stretch than any other. The latest counts show fewer than 6,000 springers have crossed Gold Ray Dam. Summer steelheading, just beginning here, has been slow to fair.

Chetco anglers are experiencing fine sea-run cutthroat trout fishing which is expected to continue through the summer months. Sea-run cuts are very aggressive and will smack spinners readily. Fly anglers can generally draw strikes on any bright pattern such as a spruce fly.

Chinook catches will continue to improve out of south coast ports in the coming weeks. While currently averaging 12-13 pounds, large sardines - eight to nine inches - offshore which comprise the bulk of their feed in the ocean will pack on weight rapidly. These oily baitfish will also cause rapid growth of the coho which have been so thick recently, Chinook anglers have been challenged to get through them to reach their target quarry. Most of the incidental coho catch have been natives, but many hatchery fish are being caught and released as well. The ocean coho retention period for most of the Oregon coast starts Saturday, June 23rd.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – The salmonfly hatch is about wrapped up for 2007 around Maupin but with fewer of the natural big bugs available, trout can be susceptible to large, dry imitations. The river has offered some good days recently. Shearer's is producing a very few Chinook and some jacks as the action winds down here.

**Northwest Trout** – Trout limits remain the rule for both boat and bank anglers at Diamond Lake but the spots that produce the best are those less crowded.

The health advisory issued earlier this month on Detroit Reservoir due to the presence of toxic blue-green algae was lifted Wednesday this week. The water has tested safe, so go fishing!

Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek and North Santiam River above Detroit are scheduled to be planted with eight-to-10-inch hatchery trout this week. Leaburg Lake will receive 150 larger trout in addition to over 1,000 legal size trout. McKenzie River below Leaburg Lake will receive approximately 3,300 summer steelhead and over 1,500 larger rainbow trout.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

**From the WDF&W Weekender Report June 13<sup>th</sup> – June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

#### **[North Puget Sound](#)**

As summer approaches, anglers have their pick of several different saltwater and freshwater fishing opportunities. Shrimp fisheries are open in the region, and a few days remain to hook lingcod and halibut. In some rivers, fisheries are open for hatchery chinook salmon, which are showing up in greater numbers.

**Spring chinook salmon** fishing on the Skagit and Cascade rivers is going strong. "Overall, catch rates are up this year and anglers are doing really well for springers on both rivers," said Brett Barkdull, a WDFW fish biologist.

The Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River, while the Cascade is open from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road bridge. The daily limit on both rivers is two hatchery chinook at least 12 inches in length.

Barkdull reminds anglers that **bull trout** and **Dolly Varden** retention is prohibited on the Cascade and Sauk rivers, and on the Skagit River from Rockport to the Gorge Dam.

Out on the saltwater, the Tulalip Bay "bubble" salmon fishery started slow, but the catch rate is expected to pick up in the coming weeks, said Steve Thiesfeld, another WDFW fish biologist. "The bubble always seems to get off to a slow start," Thiesfeld said. "But the fishery does tend to pick up later in June and in early July, and that could be the case again this year."

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that the bubble fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday and runs through Sept. 24, except for a one-day closure on June 23. There is a two-salmon daily limit and chinook must be 22 inches in length to retain.

"The fishery might be slow now, but it's a great opportunity for anglers to get their boat on the water and get back into the swing of things before other marine areas open for salmon," Thiesfeld said.

Meanwhile, anglers can participate in the catch-and-release fishery in the northern portion of Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). Fishing is allowed north of a line from Point Monroe to Meadow Point. Handling rules are in effect for this fishery and single-point barbless hooks are required.

**Lingcod** and **halibut** fisheries in the region are winding down. The lingcod season closes June 15, while the halibut fishery ends June 16. During the lingcod hook-and-line season, there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, which must be a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 40 inches. For halibut, there's a daily limit of one fish and no minimum size limit.

While out on Puget Sound, why not drop a pot? The **spot shrimp** fishery in the southern portion of Marine Area 7 will re-open June 20 and run through June 23. Elsewhere, **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** fisheries are under way in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and the northern and central portion of Marine Area 7. For more information on the shrimp fisheries check WDFW's website at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/shrimpindex.shtml>.

**Crab** fishing is just around the corner. The fishery opens July 4 in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, and the southern portion of 7. Fisheries in those areas will be open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

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**

Summer fishing seasons for **crab** and **salmon** are coming up fast, but sport fishers still have a chance to catch late-season **halibut** on the north coast and **shrimp** in a number of areas of Puget Sound, including Hood Canal. Salmon anglers have been doing fairly well in Marine Area 11 (Tacoma), but fishing is still slow for **steelhead** and trout in coastal rivers.

Recreational **halibut** anglers will get three more days of fishing off the north coast in June - and possibly a fourth - if sufficient quota remains. Fishing in marine areas 3 (La Push) and 4 (Neah Bay) will be open June 19, June 21 and June 23. On the first two dates - June 19 and 21 - fishing must take

place shoreward of the 30-fathom line.

"This is the first time we've had a nearshore fishery, so we don't know how much halibut will be caught," said Carol Henry, WDFW fish biologist. "We expect more people out on the water June 23, when fishing is open on all waters on the north coast." If sufficient quota remains after that day, the fishery may reopen toward the end of June.

Coordinates for the 30-fathom line are included in the 2007-08 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/halibut/>.

While halibut fishing will close June 16 from Port Angeles to Puget Sound (marine areas 6-11, 13), anglers will still be able to fish five days a week in Marine Area 5 (Seiku) week through Aug. 3. Jeromy Lauffman of Shelton caught an 85-pound halibut at the 12th annual Sekiu Halibut Derby over the June 9 weekend, winning the \$10-per-pound purse. More than 220 people signed up for the event and a WDFW creel check showed one halibut for every 3.5 rods. The daily limit for halibut is one fish.

**Lingcod** fishing closes June 15 throughout Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, but remains open through mid-October on the coast.

Those not fishing for halibut June 23, can travel south for an extra day of **shrimp** fishing in Hood Canal. According to Therese Cain, WDFW shellfish biologist, sufficient quota remains to extend the shrimp season one more day. All species of shrimp, including spot shrimp, can be fished. Hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Shrimp fishing remains open daily in marine areas 4, 5, 6 and 13, while fishing for non-spot shrimp is under way in Marine Area 11. All spot shrimp caught in that area must be released.

Dungeness crab fishing starts June 18 in three marine areas, with more to follow. Here's the summer line-up:

- Marine Areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) will be open June 18 through Jan. 2, 2008, seven days a week.
- Marine Area 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) will be open June 27 through Sept. 3, Wednesdays through Saturdays, plus Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Areas 11 and 12, (Tacoma/Vashon and Hood Canal) will be open July 4 through Sept. 3, Wednesdays through Saturdays, plus Labor Day weekend.

Crab fishers should be aware of several changes in this year's catch-reporting system, designed to improve catch estimates and make the reporting process more convenient for sport crabbers:

- Two-card reporting system: All sport crabbers fishing in Puget Sound will be required to report their Dungeness crab catch on separate summer and fall/winter catch record cards during the course of the season.
- On-line reporting: For the first time, sport crabbers will have the option of reporting their catch via the Internet in lieu of mailing in their catch cards. The website address will be printed on the catch cards along with the reporting deadlines.
- No coastal reporting: Catch record cards are no longer required to fish for Dungeness crab on the Washington coast (marine areas 1-4).

The new catch record cards are available from license dealers throughout the state. Fishers who have already purchased a 2007 Puget Sound crab endorsement will receive their cards by mail before the first opening on June 18. Those who have changed their address since purchasing their endorsement should contact WDFW at (360) 902-2464 to make sure they get their cards. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>, or <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex.shtml>.

Another much-anticipated fishery begins in July when a number of areas in Puget Sound and on the coast open for **salmon** fishing. Starting July 1, salmon fishing will open off Westport and Ilwaco (marine areas 1 and 2), as well as Sekiu/Pillar Point, the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca and Hood Canal (marine areas 5, 6 and 12). Salmon fisheries off, Neah Bay and La Push (marine areas 3 and 4) will get under way July 3.

Salmon anglers had a fair opening-day outing June 1 in Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island/Tacoma), with one fish for about every seven rods. "Some folks are doing pretty well, but we expect better results when the main run comes in about mid-July," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. The fishery runs seven days a week, with a limit of two salmon a day. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches, but there is no minimum for other species. Commencement Bay is closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 1.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that selective fishing rules are in effect this year, requiring anglers to use single, barbless hooks and release any **wild chinook**. "Even with the new rules, anglers are catching about the same number of fish as last year, which is good," he said. WDFW creel checks in the area showed one fish for every 7.5 rods.

He also noted anglers will have an opportunity to take advantage of an abundant return of pink salmon this year. About 3.3 million pink salmon are expected to come back to Puget Sound streams, nearly 1.3 million more fish than forecast in 2005. Pinks return every other year.

Details on rules and regulations are in the 2007-08 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, or online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

Meanwhile, **steelhead** and **trout** fishing in area rivers, which opened June 1, has been slow in starting up, according to Rick Ereth, WDFW fish biologist. "Even though the fish are there, not much is going on." According to Ereth, people are getting some steelhead in the lower Wynoochee, and anglers might want to check out their favorite stretches of the Humptulips. "But right now you have to put the time in to get a bite," Ereth said. "The longer your lure or bait is in the water, the better your chances. In my experience, the fishing really gets going in July and August."

Ereth suggests giving small-stream **cutthroat** fishing a try or - in larger rivers - exploring pockets of woody debris pockets and brushy corners. "Check out the Chehalis river sloughs from Porter to Oakville that connect to the main river." For summer hatchery steelhead, Ereth suggests fishing from the town of Pe Ell downstream to the confluence with South Fork Chehalis. "This is also a good time to explore new waters and scout for fishing later in the season."

### **Southwest Washington:**

**Spring chinook** season ends June 15 on the Columbia River, but the **summer chinook** fishery picks up the next day, June 16. Anglers are already starting to reel in hefty "summer hogs" - some running 30 to 40 pounds - in the lower river, and springers remain fair game after the transition to summer rules. Meanwhile, charter boat anglers fishing for **sturgeon** out of Chinook and Ilwaco have been averaging two fish for every three rods.

The summer salmon-fishing rules that take effect June 16 allow Columbia River anglers to retain both marked and unmarked **chinook** from Rocky Point/Tongue Point all the way upriver to Priest Rapids Dam. But anglers should bear in mind that chinook-retention rules change again July 1 in the lower river, so they should check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) in planning a trip.

"It's all part of the transition between the spring fishery and the summer fishery," said Steve Vigg, a WDFW fishery manager. "We're seeing that transition on the water, too. One angler fishing in the

Vancouver area reportedly caught and released a fish weighing in the mid-40s." Besides their size, summer chinook salmon bound for the upper Columbia basin can be distinguished from springers by their bright chrome coloring, Vigg said. Reopened in 2002 after being closed for nearly three decades, the summer chinook fishery is "a real success story and a great addition to the summer fishing line-up," he said.

While summer chinook have been showing up in anglers' creels with increasing regularity, spring chinook still made up the majority of the catch through June 13. Creel surveys conducted the previous week found that the 664 anglers surveyed below Bonneville Dam had caught 66 adult chinook salmon along with 48 **summer-run steelhead**.

Including fish released, boat anglers averaged one adult chinook for every 7.8 rods while bank anglers averaged one chinook for every 10.8 rods. Most adult chinook were caught upstream from the Kalama River, whereas most of the steelhead were taken downstream from Longview.

The catch limit for summer steelhead on the Cowlitz River is now six fish per day, and anglers are already starting to see some action. Thirty-one anglers fishing near Blue Creek reported catching 12 fish during the week ending June 10. While the catch limit for chinook salmon on the Cowlitz River is two fish per day, few have been turning up in recent creel surveys. Hatchery steelhead were also the main attraction at the Lewis River through the second weekend in June.

Anglers should be aware that, beginning June 16, night closure and non-buoyant lure restrictions are in effect on the Kalama River from the mouth to the lower salmon hatchery intake pipe. Only fish hooked inside the mouth may be retained.

Above Bonneville Dam, anglers should start seeing increasing numbers of both summer chinook salmon and summer steelhead by late June, Vigg said. "Summer fishing really takes off above Bonneville in July," he said. Anglers are still catching spring chinook in The Dalles Pool, mostly between river miles 215-216.

Meanwhile, **sturgeon** fishing is already good and getting better in the Columbia River estuary. Anglers chartering boats out of Chinook and Ilwaco during the week ending June 10 averaged two-thirds of a fish per rod while private boaters averaged one fish for every four rods. Those fishing from the Deep River/Knappton ramps and the stretch between Knappton and Fort Columbia averaged better than half a legal-sized fish per rod.

During a June 10 flyover, fishery managers counted 469 private sturgeon boats, 24 charters and about a hundred bank anglers fishing below Bonneville Dam - the majority in the estuary. Few fish were sampled between the Wauna Powerlines and Marker 85, and sturgeon fishing is now closed from Bonneville Dam upriver to John Day Dam.

Boat anglers targeting **shad** from Vancouver upriver to Bonneville Dam have been averaging 5.8 shad per rod. Bank anglers fishing the area from Washougal to just below the dam averaged 2.6 shad per rod. Those catch rates are based on surveys of 38 shad boat and 247 bank anglers during the week ending June 10.

Boat anglers fishing the John Day Pool averaged 1.3 **walleye** and nearly four **bass** that week. Bank and boat anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool also caught some bass, although no effort was observed for walleye.

A number of rivers and creeks opened for trout fishing June 1. A number of waters around the region - including Canyon Creek in Clark County, Spring Creek in Klickitat County and Little White Salmon River in Skamania County - have been planted with catchable-sized **rainbow trout**. Other anglers may

prefer rivers that are managed for wild trout, such as the Big White Salmon River and the north fork of the Lewis River.

### **Eastern Washington:**

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

**Perch, crappie** and **bluegill** have been moving into deeper water and providing some action at several waters, including Spokane County's Clear, Eloika, Long and Silver lakes. Eloika Lake is also good for largemouth bass fishing. Bonnie Lake, off Rock Creek near the Spokane-Whitman county line, has good crappie and bass fishing, but access can be an issue. To get there, anglers must travel by small boat up a creek channel. Donley urged anglers to respect the private property surrounding the lake.

The harvest of **tiger muskies** in Curlew Lake in Ferry County is prohibited from June 13 through July 20 while WDFW biologists conduct a study on the fish.

Snake River **bass** fishing is picking up as trout fishing slows. So far, the Snake River **hatchery chinook salmon** fishery remains open through the end of the month from Texas Rapids boat launch upstream to the Corps of Engineers boat launch a mile upstream of Little Goose Dam on the south bank.

### **North Central Washington:**

**Chinook salmon** fishing on the Icicle River in Chelan County continues with a daily catch limit of two salmon, minimum size 12 inches. The river is open from the closure signs 800 feet upstream of the mouth to 500 feet downstream of the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery rack. Art Viola, WDFW Chelan district fish biologist in Cashmere, said depending on catch rates, the season could remain open through July. Anglers are reminded that a night closure and non-buoyant lure restrictions are in effect.

Leader Lake in Okanogan County continues to produce large catches of **bluegill** and **crappie**. However, the rivers have been running too high for good fishing.

Jeff Korth, WDFW Columbia Basin district fish biologist, said **walleye** fishing has been slow recently at Potholes Reservoir and Moses Lake. "The fish are there and when the bite has been on, everyone gets fish," he said. "Be prepared to keep trying different means of enticing fish to grab the bait. Water temperatures are still in the mid- to high 60's, so there's plenty of time to get out there before things warm up too much."

### **South Central Washington:**

Recent reports from WDFW enforcement officers indicate decent fishing for nice-sized **channel catfish** and **smallmouth bass** in several locations along the Yakima and Columbia rivers, from the Tri-Cities to Yakima.

Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist, said rivers and streams are dropping rapidly, and should be in great fishing condition by the end of the month, if not sooner. Smaller creeks should be in the best condition now, and the larger rivers, such as the Naches and Rattlesnake Creek will continue to drop as the last

of the snow melts, and should be producing good fishing by the end of June.

"The Naches and Rattlesnake will be good for both **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** that average eight to 10 inches, but larger fish are caught, particularly in the Naches," Cummins said. "Nanuem and Taneum Creeks are also good bets. Rattlesnake Creek and part of the Naches are catch and release only and have other special regulations. Anglers should check all the regulations before heading out."

Leech, Dog and Lost lakes in Kittitas County have been stocked with triploid rainbows. Leech, a popular fly-fishing only lake is producing both **eastern brook trout** and triploids. According to the U.S. Forest Service, the campgrounds are not open at Leech and Dog lakes, but access areas to those lakes are open for fishing.

Cummins said that although it's a little early to hike into the high lakes for fishing, some lakes are "ice free." But snow will be encountered on many trails above 4,000 feet, he warned. "And most of the region's high lakes are located at elevations above 4,000 feet," he said.

The Naches and Cle Elum Ranger Districts of the U.S. Forest Service are reporting that access to some trails may be blocked because of downed trees and road damage caused by November's floods. Two roads that lead to popular trailheads and high mountain lakes are temporarily closed in the Bumping Lake area. For more information see the following websites:

- [http://www.nachesvalleychamber.com/info/nrd-Road\\_closure\\_1800\\_1808.doc](http://www.nachesvalleychamber.com/info/nrd-Road_closure_1800_1808.doc)
- <http://www.nachesvalleychamber.com/info/NRDJuneRecreationReport.doc>
- <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/wenatchee/recreation/report/#cleelum>

Cummins said he hasn't received any specific reports yet, but **kokanee** fishing should be picking up on Yakima River reservoirs. Although Rimrock Reservoir is muddy, he said.

### Reader Email

Reader Janean D. wrote to TGF co-editor Michael Teague this week to share a story and photos. When asked to elaborate and whether she had higher-resolution pics, this was her reply: "Unfortunately, I was using my cell phone to take pictures. I was afraid that would be a problem. RATS!

"Rick Fuller, my dad, the mate and I went out

"Well, we pulled our crab pots just south of the rock and got about 14 very nice ones out of the four pots. Then we ran up north of Cape Kiwanda and brought in two nice 8 lb ling cod and 8 bass. We moved back in between the buoy and the cape and were going to try to catch a few more bass before we called it quits for the day. So we were all using light poles and bass jigs. Rick had the wounded herring on and he was using an old pole of my dads. Dad had pounded all the barbs down on the bass hooks because bass don't fight that much and it's easier to get the hooks out of their faces when you get them in the boat. We never thought we would run into the salmon.

"When Rick hooked it, none of us thought he could land it. No barb on the hook, 10 pound test line on that little cheapo pole. Every time that salmon saw the boat he would run and peel the line off the reel. We could see it flashing near the surface; it was SUCH a beautiful fish! Then she would take off again. To Rick's credit, he was very patient in playing that salmon. The rest of us in the boat were encouraging him to get it close to the boat so my dad could Gaff it, but he was trying to be easy on the line.

"He finally got it up to the boat and we could see she was bleeding pretty good. The mate grabbed the line to pull her up close enough for the gaff hook to reach and as soon as the line touched the side of the boat, it snapped. Looking at the bare end of that line drifting in the air, we all got that "deer in the headlights" look; all that work and now she's GONE! But my dad struck out like lightning with the hook and when he brought it up over the side, THERE She was, on the end of the gaff! When she hit the

floor boards and started flopping we were just cheering like we'd won the world series! It was SO cool!! She dressed out at 8 lb.s so was probably 10 lb.s when she came out of the water.

"I do have a couple of pictures of the boat and some others I'd like to share with you; I don't know if you can use them or not, they don't have the actual fish in them. They were taken by Sandy Weidman. My father is Terry Learned of Learned's Boat Shop. He builds the Pacific City Dorries and built the one we were in (The Showboat) a couple of years ago. He is a master fisherman (been doing it for 50 years!) and boat builder and he said this catch was just an amazing miracle. Just kept shaking his head and saying "Wow!""



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

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### **Random Links**

New world record rainbow trout - 43+ pounds on six-pound test mono

**<http://www.trophytroutguide.com/gallery/displayimage.php?album=2&pos=60>**

New World Record carp

**[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in\\_article\\_id=456929&in\\_page\\_id=1770](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=456929&in_page_id=1770)**

**Weekly Quote** – "Fishing simply sent me out of my mind. I could neither think nor talk of anything else, so my mother was angry and said that she would not let me fish again because I might fall ill from such excitement." - Sergei Aksakov

**GOOD LUCK!**