

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 22nd – June 28th, 2007**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Gorge fishing for oversize sturgeon remains consistent although shad anglers are becoming more challenged in their pursuit of fresh bait for sturgeon and crab. Fluctuating water levels are to blame as counts at Bonneville reflect.

Salmon anglers in the gorge are still struggling for consistent action but anglers anchored in strategic locations are taking a few fish daily. Counts are hovering around a thousand fish per day and the run is on track for a good return.

Steelhead numbers are also on the climb but weekend tides do not favor productive beach fishing.

Just over 19,000 Springers and 8,300 summers had crossed at Willamette Falls as of June 15th. Water levels are dropping with the temperature rising to the mid-60s. Shad catches have been fair to good but are due to decline soon. Sturgeon are being hooked in good numbers on the lower Willamette but most have been too small to keep.

Water in the upper Willamette is so low it has forced closure of Wheatland Ferry. It is expected to re-open June 30th following dredging.

Steelheading on the Sandy remains spotty with anglers hooking the occasional summer above Dodge Park. Very few summer steelhead have been hooked in the low waters of the Clackamas with no hot spots.

Fishing is very slow on the North Santiam. Steelheading has picked up somewhat on the South Santiam below Foster Dam.

McKenzie fly anglers are doing well for trout on the upper river. Boaters targeting summer steelhead are reporting surprising results for spring chinook. Small offerings are the key.

Northwest – Estuary sturgeon fishing remains good and oversize fish continue to make up a significant portion of the catch. Weekend anglers are having a hard time finding keepers however as it seems even the fish feel the pressure. The bulk of the keepers are coming from the deeper water out of Hammond up to the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Crabbing in the lower Columbia River is poor.

Salmon seekers on the north coast are resigned to call this years run a bust. River and bay fishing remain too challenging for most. Summer steelheaders are taking a rare fish on the Nestucca River reports **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)**.

With softening tides and a favorable ocean swell forecast, bottomfishers may want to make the most out of safe boating this weekend. Garibaldi and Astoria hold the highest promise for NW Oregon ports.

Siletz River steelheaders are taking a few fish in the upper reaches but like most coastal rivers, stealthy tactics are necessary and early mornings and evenings should be targeted times.

While effort is light, recreational Chinook fishers launching out of Newport have been taking some fish. Trips should be even more rewarding starting Saturday, June 23rd when the fin-clipped coho retention season starts. Herring jiggers have had some good days recently in Yaquina Bay where crab nets are

yielding single digits and a mix of hard and soft shells.

The spring all-depth halibut fishery off the central Oregon coast will be open June 21st through 23rd and July 5th through 7th with the possibility of July 19th through 21st if the quota is not met.

Yaquina Bay is productive for herring. Jigging on the incoming tide is most productive reports **pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)**.

Southwest – Umpqua anglers are catching fewer shad as the run winds down. Smallmouth bass fishing remains very good.

Jim Boyer fishing out of the Myrtle Bee reported Friday, June 18th, that he took the first Oregon sport-caught albacore tuna of the season. Unfortunately, he had to travel nearly 70 miles off Heceta Head to accomplish the feat.

Chinook fishing offshore out of Brookings was spotty again this weekend but it's due to heat up. Large balls of baitfish have been seen in the lower bay. Bottom fishing is holding up well for several species of rockfish as well as lingcod.

Crabbing has improved in south coast bays and estuaries but limits are rare. A soft tidal exchange this weekend will create good conditions for crabbing.

Surf perch fishing off southwest beaches continues to yield 15-fish limits. Some charter captains when unable to cross a rough bar for salmon offshore have treated customers to red-hot surf fishing, landing over 100 in a day.

Eastern – Fly fishers have had good results recently for rainbows averaging 16 inches at Crane Prairie. This is good news as Crane has been a tough location this year for most anglers.

The stonefly hatch is winding down on the lower Deschutes. Trout have been hot and cold about responding to artificials.

John Day bass anglers will find challenging boating conditions for driftboats. Rafts are best to use in these low flows but the bass bite is good on most days.

SW Washington – With rivers remaining low, salmon and steelhead anglers are finding challenging conditions on all area streams. Bank anglers are taking a few summer fish at Blue Creek although anglers pulling plugs are taking some fish as well. Overall, hatchery steelhead counts are down about 50% on all river systems.

Columbia River Fishing Report – In the gorge, sturgeon anglers are still doing good for oversize sturgeon using fresh shad for bait. Shad fishing however has become more challenging as it appears the run size won't be of the caliber it has been in years past. None-the-less, put in your time and hope the flows cooperate and you can get fresh bait for sturgeon or crab in the Shad Rack area. Keeper fishing has definitely slowed. West winds will hamper success.

Salmon fishing in the area is gaining in popularity and **pro guide Brandon McGavran (503-607-1327)** reports the fish are certainly there. Flows dictate angler success but Brandon suggests using spinners in 12 to 20 feet of water with the early morning fishing producing the best results. Brandon stresses the importance of being there for the first 4 hours of the morning when the fish are moving the most. Brandon himself is a bit surprised when ideal conditions haven't produced the results he would expect given the amount of fish crossing Bonneville Dam. The season is just getting underway however.

In the estuary, sturgeon action continues to impress most anglers. With the weekends the exception, anglers are scoring good results in the estuary for keeper sized sturgeon. Some quality fish are beginning to show but most fish that anglers retain remain in the 46" to 49" range. As a general rule, anchovies rule the roost in deeper water while sand shrimp is the ticket in the shallower areas. The green line as well as Blind Channel on the Washington side have produced the best results. Lower Desdemona Sands out of Hammond has been consistent near low slack but if you really plan on being successful, bring lots of anchovies and "powerbait" your way through the crab and trash fish as long as you see good numbers of sturgeon on your fish finder.

The water above Tongue Point has not produced great numbers of fish but persistent guides are taking their limits of fish. This area is rater devoid of fish although it can't be overlooked when the estuary s full of anglers.

The Guide's Forecast – The best thing going on the Columbia River is the keeper sturgeon fishing in the Columbia River Estuary. Anglers have been scoring good results in the Hammond area but action is well spread apart up to the Astoria/Megler Bridge and upstream. It has been a personal struggle when it comes time for beach angles to hit the bridge but don't expect great results until the run picks up in number.

Further upstream, guides are beginning to target upstream migrating salmon on a mission. Spinners are taking the majority of fish and most have to be within the running lane but anchor rules the roost on Sundays.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Anglers are an optimistic bunch. Consequently, this report is usually upbeat without compromising accuracy. It's tough to be optimistic about the Willamette spring Chinook run of 2007, however.

Historically, the run at this time of year is within 15% of completion. A projection of the current counts puts the total for the year less than half the projected 52,000. Loss to pinniped predation combined angler catches would bring the total to something over 30,000. Such a finish would still place this year's run in the bottom 10%.

Biologists are at a loss to explain the low numbers at Willamette Falls while the springer run over Bonneville is expected to finish at about 85,000 which is greater than predicted.

As of June 15th, about 19,700 springers had been counted at the Falls. 8,850 summer steelhead had also been counted as the water temperature hovered in the upper-60-degree range with flows dropping.

During the last retention period, keeper sturgeon came from various locations up and down the lower Willamette. Frozen smelt was effective as was herring.

Water in the upper Willamette is so low it has forced closure of Wheatland Ferry. It is expected to re-open June 30th following dredging.

On a brighter note, the number of wild Chinook spawning on the McKenzie has increased significantly over last year. Fly anglers on the river above Leaburg Dam are doing quite well for trout. Summer steelheaders fishing below the dam saw an improvement in catches and experienced a surprising number of Chinook hookups earlier this week.

Fishing is very slow on the North Santiam. Nearly 1,800 summer steelhead and 275 spring Chinook

have been counted at Foster Dam this season. Those numbers are significantly lower than 2006 numbers on the South Santiam although catch rates have improved slightly this week due to improved water temperatures.

The Guide's Forecast – While the spring Chinook fishery is about wrapped up for the year, diehards will want to try the lower river in the Portland Harbor where a couple have been picked up recently. Shad are expected to be available through June with catches rapidly tailoring off into July. No hotspot has emerged for sturgeon, but the river has been more productive than Multnomah Channel. Expect to release some 'shorts' in the pursuit of keepers.

According to the ODFW, "The annual Willamette River Clean-up sponsored by REI and the City of Eugene will be held Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers with boats are needed to help remove debris from areas that are difficult for land-based volunteers to access. The clean-up area stretches from Island Park in Springfield to Beltline board. Lunch, gloves, tools and directions will be provided. The project is not recommended for volunteers under the age of 15. For information about volunteering with your boat, contact Amanda Macleod, amacleo@rei.com or 465-1800."

The North and South Santiam will continue to deliver the occasional fish with only an improvement in the water temperature causing reason for optimism.

Steelhead can be seen moving and holding in the McKenzie below Leaburg Dam but they have been tough to entice this week.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Brandon Glass (503-666-5370)

writes, "I have been at Bonneville, but my dad [**pro guide Jack Glass, Ed.**] has been in the Sandy and it has been extremely slow! The upper end near Marmot has been kicking Springers out and Cedar Creek has been OK for Summer Steelhead." Without significant rain in the forecast to trigger a change in water conditions, catches on the Sandy are likely to remain slow.

The Clackamas has been unpredictable this season, but a few steelhead have been taken this week with fly anglers getting in on the action occasionally. The best bets on the low, clear Clackamas is at McIver and below Rivermill. Expect to find water of decent color with temperatures of 60 degrees or better this week.

North Coast Fishing Report – Traditionally, spring chinook fishing on the north coast begins to wind down for hatchery fish. Although the salmon will continue to be available into July, the focus often turns to upper tidewater stretches or deep holes in the lower stretches of the river. Given the fact the Tillamook spring salmon fishery has been a bust this year, anglers may want to turn their focus on other great north coast opportunities. The fishery will remain open to fin-clipped fish only through July 31st. Bobber and small baits with light leaders will be essential if you take this fishing seriously.

On the Nestucca, **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** reports, "The Nestucca is really low, and getting lower. The fishing is dismal at best, with just an occasional summer steelhead caught. Spring Chinooks are nearly non-existent, and are not going to show as it seems. There are a few being taken out of Three Rivers, by questionable means. We know who these guys are, and we are all watching closely. You know who you are!!! With the low water conditions, look for small groups of fish to move slowly up river, and hold up in the lower part of the river. Stealthy means will produce better results. Small gear, and being sneaky. I have not heard of anyone crabbing in the bay. This time of year it can be good, but you have to sort through the soft ones.

For ocean goers, the weather forecast is favorable until the weekend where saltwater anglers may get

greeted with some westerly winds. Bottomfishing effort has been low but rockfish and lingcod are ripe for the taking.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (503-754-6411) reports from a little south. Bill writes, "mostly fished around Yaquina Bay this past week. The herring are in the bay in big numbers. The hot spot is the green can in front of the Coast Guard Station. Small Sabiki rigs are the ticket. The incoming tide is the best time to jig for herring. Crabbing was slow. Its looking the coho opener will be a good one as the central coast has lots of bait balls near shore and seven to ten pound coho have already been caught by anglers fishing for bottom fish."

The Guide's Forecast – Don't look for any great opportunities on the north coast however anglers may want to prepare for the ocean opener targeting coho. There are rumors of some quality fish already incidentally caught while pursuing other species. Be sure to check ocean conditions before heading out by logging onto: http://seaboard.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_page.php?station=46029 for the buoy report and you can link to the latest National Weather Service web site for the most recent marine weather forecast.

Anglers versed in low water tactics have the option to fish for summer steelhead or bobber fish for spring Chinook salmon. There aren't really that many people that have learned this method but if you take the time, you can produce results.

Central & South Coast Reports – Optimism is high for the opening of the selective ocean coho season starting this Saturday, June 23rd. Incidental catches have been remarkable at times with anglers having difficulty getting gear through the schools of silver to deeper water where Chinook dwell. Ocean coho must have a healed adipose fin clip.

Herring jiggers, heads up. A number of readers have asked when to go. The answer is earlier this week. Seriously, jigging has been productive, producing hundreds of baitfish for some putting in their time in the pursuit, but it's worth it to take a day for a year's supply of bait. This plan is best for those with vacuum packers and freezer space. And large families - take the kids. Crabbing has also picked up in Yaquina Bay.

Boaters launching out of Newport earlier this week found warm water and albacore within 50 miles of port. Boats out of Depoe Bay also returned with tuna this week but had to make a longer trip to locate them.

The mainstem of the Umpqua River is closed to steelhead. Smallmouth bass fishing is very good below Scottsbutg and shad fishing is slow to fair at Sawyer's Rapids with the run starting to wind down. Smallies are also being hooked in good number on the South Umpqua. The North is spotty for summer steelhead and springers.

The last series of minus tides produced sturgeon for anglers in Coos Bay. Shad fishing is slow in the Coos River, Good in the Coquille. As with most shad locations, sunny afternoons seem to produce the better catches

Action has been taken to protect wild Chinook on the Rogue with a disappointing return this year on this legendary river. As of Thursday, June 21st, only fin-clipped springers may be kept. Following are the latest details of the emergency closure from the ODFW.

Mouth upstream to Whiskey Creek Boat Landing: June 21 – July 13 anglers may retain only adipose fin-clipped chinook.

Whiskey Creek upstream to Hog Creek Boat Landing: June 21 – July 31 anglers may retain only adipose fin-clipped Chinook.

Hog Creek Boat Landing upstream to Gold Ray Dam: June 21 – Aug. 14 anglers may retain only adipose fin-clipped chinook.

Gold Ray Dam to the Rogue Elk Boat Ramp: June 21 – June 30 anglers may retain only adipose fin-clipped chinook. This area is closed to spring chinook angling July 1 – Oct. 31.

Rogue Elk Boat Ramp to Cole Rivers Hatchery diversion dam: June 21 – July 31 anglers may retain only adipose fin-clipped chinook.

Spring Chinook angling on the Grants Pass stretch has been slow but is fair in the upper river.

Large balls of sardines and anchovies moving in and out of lower Brookings Harbor has long-time area anglers hoping for the rare opportunity to fish salmon in the estuary. This is a rare occurrence, but has happened in the past when baitfish are thick.

The Chetco has been reliable for sea-run cutthroat trout, which, unlike steelhead or other trout species, prefer dark, boily water without too much current. Another favorite haunt of sea-rum cuts is along shorelines under brushy overhangs. Once located, these feisty fish aren't selective, taking brightly-colored flies or well-placed spinners equally well.

As crabbing picks up in southwest bays, some folks are taking Dungeness off docks and piers. Not limits, mind you, but plenty for dinner. While crabbing in Southwest Bays and estuaries is fairly slow, it has picked up in the ocean.

The waters of Diamond Lake turned opaque olive drab in 2006 due to the lack of zooplankton which devours algae. Now it's sparkling sapphire and the transformation of Diamond Lake appears to be entirely successful. The eradication of millions of invasive and illegally-introduced tui chub last fall eliminated forage competition by the voracious minnows. Anglers are catching trout and lots of 'em with many as large as they've ever had on the end of a line. Nearly 10,000 of the trout stocked this year were over a foot in length with thousands weighting three to seven pounds. One trout 20 inches or longer may be kept per angler per day. And they're thriving. Diamond Lake is an excellent family getaway destination offering lodging, camping and recreation opportunities.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Deschutes fly anglers are hitting redsides which are rising to Caddises. Salmonflies are still hatching just below Warm Springs but it's over lower on the river. Stonefly hatches are about over the lower river. Keep an eye out for rattlesnakes which are becoming active with warmer air temperatures.

Anglers tossing Green Drakes on the Metolius are having some success when the hatch is in full swing afternoons.

Odell Lake has been producing lake trout well over 10 pounds to anglers trolling very deep - over 100 feet - but the action has been on one day, off the next. Kokanee fishing is fair.

Green Peter anglers are hitting kokanee early mornings but the bite has been shutting down as the sun climbs in the sky.

Northwest Trout – The ODFW has listed a lake for a couple of weeks with which we were not

familiar. Henry Miller of the Statesman Journal explains in his BLOG today, "That would be, I believe, Babyfoot Lake on the edge of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness in the Southwest Zone." See **Random Links**, below for more of Mr. Miller.

This week, Cape Mears Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Hebo Lake, Lost Lake in Clatsop County and Town Lake will be stocked with hatchery trout. Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Silver Creek Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Salt Creek and the North Fork Santiam River above Detroit will be planted on the Willamette Zone.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report June 13th – June 26th, 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. Jeremy 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/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

Subscriber Rob M. wrote to ask, "I read your article on fishing with trout dough. I called GI Joes, fisherman's marine, bi-mart, Fred Meyers, rite aid, and Bob's sporting goods, no one sells this stuff. I would like to know where your getting it."

TGF co-editor Michael Teague responded, "Thanks for writing and for reading TGF."

"The product referred to is called 'Berkeley PowerBait.' The 'Gulp' products are good not associated with the dough-type trout baits. You'll find lots of jars on shelves or in bins. All of the locations to which you referred carry so many different colors of it you may get confused choosing. No need to call ahead, just go get the stuff.

"Speaking of colors, while I've sometimes felt that color preference is more that of the anglers than the fish, a good one to start with is the so-called 'Rainbow' which is actually a combination of chartreuse, yellow and orange. If you get a second color, make it solid fluorescent red.

"Here's some detail on technique which should ensure your success. As with any other system, omit any part and the method will be less effective. Try this as described and it's as near a 'sure-fire' method for catching those state-raised rainbows as you'll find. All of the terminal tackle is widely available.

"This system doesn't require any sophisticated tackle, but be aware that spinning (or spincast) tackle is easiest to cast although reels must be full (to within an eighth of an inch of the outside of the spool) with fairly fresh line to cast properly.

"Get some egg sinkers (the ones with the hole through the center) in whatever size might be appropriate to cast easily with your tackle. With spinning gear, this is usually one-quarter ounce, but the fish won't feel it in any case. Run the main line (from the rod) through the slip sinker and tie on a swivel. Whatever you have on hand will work; if you have to buy some, get 'em on the smallish side.

"Trout are one of those fish which are actually a little leader shy, so you want to use a light-weight leader, but four pound is about right if fishing for younger kids who can get excited and break a leader of any lighter test. Tie 24 to 36 inches of leader to the swivel. On the end of the leader, tie on a size 16 treble hook. These usually come four or six to a package in a gold color. Trout prefer a small bait and I've seen a 10-pound trout landed on one of these diminutive hooks. Yes, size 16. Really.

"Now you're ready to fish. Take a pinch of PowerBait and roll it between your palms. The result should be about the size of a pea. Not the petite peas, the regular ones. Mold this around the treble hook so that it's vaguely teardrop-shaped. At this point, you should drop just the baited hook in the water at your feet to be certain that it floats because trout (like all salmonids) can't see downward. This is why you see their tails when they feed in the shallows; they have to tip their bodies to see the bottom. If the bait doesn't float it will be far less effective.

"When using this system, the length of the cast from shore is the depth control. Keep in mind that freshly-planted trout won't venture deeper than six feet (the depth of the tanks in which they're raised) for about two weeks after they're stocked due to discomfort in their air bladder. It takes about that length of time to acclimate to deeper water. Trout that have acclimated may be in different depths, frequently shallower early and late, deeper mid-day. Recently-stocked trout will remain in five- or six-foot depths all day long for 10 days or two weeks.

"Cast this rig out, allow it to sink and then close the bail. Gradually take up slack 'til you can feel the weight of the lead. Then (this is important) set down the rod. Use a forked stick or lean it against your cooler or tackle box. This will put a foot or two of slack in the line and that's what you want.

"Here's what happens that you can't see: The weight lays on the bottom with the colorful, floating bait

wafting a scent trail to attract the fish. When the trout follows the trail he sees the brightly-colored bait and takes it. There's no resistance (because of the slip sinker and slack line), so the fish takes it with complete abandon, swims off and hooks itself. Here's what you see: The rod starts jumping, a youngster (or an adult) gets excited and reels in the pre-hooked fish. This system really works but is not conducive to catch and release.

"Enjoy yourself, keep in touch and let us know how you do out there."

Subscriber Michael V. wrote, "I love reading your report but because I'm a new Oregon resident I figure out where some of the locations are that you talk about. At the moment I have no clue where the estuary is; can you help? "

TGF co-editor and pro guide Bob Rees responded, "An "estuary" is a bay. We most likely were referencing the Columbia River "Estuary" near Astoria but all coastal rivers have estuaries- it's the river's mouth.

"Good luck and thanks for being a subscriber!"

Dept. of we can't please everybody but we print their Emails anyway: This came from reader Charles L. via the Website Contact Form: "In short , tell the truth instead of trying to support tackle shops . 20 yrs. of hooking springers on the Clack.- this year - nothing, They never showed. When we read your reports on that river a lot of us do not know whether to laugh or cry . Tell the truth !!"

Esteemed webmaster Doug Rees responded, "I am sorry that you have found our report(s) to be inaccurate. We do not benefit from inaccuracies and I promise you, we don't lie. If you have something specific that comes up and seems to be false, please call it out to us. We have everything to gain from being accurate and complete in our reporting and this is our primary goal."

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

Henry Miller, the Statesman-Journal's most entertaining outdoor writer has started a BLOG:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=blogs17>

More on the Emergency spring chinook harvest restrictions enacted on Rogue River:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2007/june/061907.asp>

Weekly Quote – "Good roads lead to bad fishing" - Eric Wight, Maine Game Warden

GOOD LUCK!