

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 3rd – August 16th, 2007**

Please note – The Guide's Forecast will be out of the office the week of August 12th. This means that there won't be support responses or a forecast next week. There will be the usual short version in The Oregonian but no member's update.

Thanks and have a great week!

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Water at Willamette Falls is up to 74 degrees. The Willamette and the mainstem Columbia is now closed to the retention of sturgeon until October 1st. Catch and release fishing will remain open river-wide but it's mostly a shaker show in this region.

Clackamas steelheaders are taking the occasional fish as they move higher in the system. Steelhead are being recycled from the hatchery.

While the Sandy has been unproductive, anglers can look forward to a good coho season in September with strong numbers of fish offshore.

Fishermen's Bend remains the most productive area for steelhead on the North Santiam. As daily counts decline, nearly 3,700 summer steelhead and 900 springers have been counted at Foster Dam on the South Santiam.

The Leaburg hatchery on the McKenzie River reports 580 summer steelhead have returned to the hatchery facility.

Waters scheduled for trout planting this week include Breitenbush River, Clear Lake, the McKenzie River above Leaburg and the North Fork Santiam River above Detroit.

Northwest – Salmon fishing out of Astoria was excellent over the weekend with easy limits coming for most boats fishing as close as Buoy 4 and 2. The coho still have some weight to put on but as long as the water temperature is consistently under 62 degrees, fish seem to be concentrated in good numbers. Fresh herring are still running small making anchovies the best bait.

Seabass fishing is great on the sunken jetty at the mouth of the Columbia but boaters must pay close attention to ocean conditions as this can be a dangerous place to fish. Tide changes are the ideal time to target these plentiful fish when the ocean swell is small.

Albacore catches out of the mouth of the Columbia have picked up as well. Boats fishing 19 to 22 miles out found good catches of fish 20 to 30 pounds but 35 to 45 miles west, larger numbers of tuna were present although smaller in size.

Unfortunately, windy conditions are forecast for the weekend making for hazardous and uncomfortable boating conditions out of most coastal ports.

Garibaldi catches of salmon had also improved before the southerly influence crept back in. Tuna were reported as close in as 7 miles with higher concentrations further offshore. Ocean crabbing has recently improved while estuaries remain only fair.

A return to low, clear conditions once again challenges steelheaders on the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers.

Chinook are being taken daily in lower tidewater on the Siletz but there are far more boats trying than fish bring landed.

Tuna were caught at 20 miles out of the port of Depoe Bay on Saturday, July 28th.

Anglers found albacore out of Newport at 30 miles over the weekend. Quick coho limits came over 220 feet of water.

Southwest – August 3rd marks the beginning of the summer all-depth halibut season off the central and southern Oregon coast. Fishing is expected to be good and will remain open every other Friday through Sunday until the quota fills or September 30th, whichever comes first.

Be sure to fish for tuna or halibut first on a multi-species trip. Once salmon are on board, only barbless hooks are allowed on any rods.

Boaters launching out of Winchester Bay late last week found Chinook offshore about 50 feet deep over 300 feet of water. The bay opens to salmon fishing on August 1st. Tuna were taken anywhere from 23 to 40 miles out. Crabbing is poor in the bay, fair in the ocean. Steelheading is fair in the flies-only stretch of the North Umpqua, slow downstream.

Water temperatures over 70 degrees in the lower Rogue have stalled the chinook fishery in the estuary. Summer steelhead fishing is fair to good on the upper Rogue.

Tuna fishing out of Brookings has held up again over the past week with boats coming in loaded with albacore. Some of these fish are topping the 30-pound mark and one angler took a big-eye tuna which was nearly 90 pounds. A few yellow fin and even dorado have been taken in the near-tropical offshore waters.

Loon Lake and Section 5 of the Rogue River are scheduled to be planted with trout.

Eastern – Steelhead catches on the Deschutes River are better this year than the previous two. The bulk of the catch consists of natives with early run hatchery fish averaging 5 to 8 pounds. Windy conditions call for side-planers and plugs but spinners can also be effective during the morning hours. Tim Robinson of Portland landed 4 wild steelhead in 2 days with the bulk of the fish coming on #5 Blue Fox spinners with a blue body. Water temperatures are around 65 degrees and climbing and boaters need to be aware that the lower 15 miles of the Deschutes are the most hazardous to navigate.

Plug-pullers are picking up steelhead at the mouth of the Deschutes River. Caddis patterns will dominate for trout on the lower Deschutes for weeks to come.

Spring Creek and Walton Lake are scheduled to be stocked this week.

SW Washington – Although steelheading improved with the recent weather change, low, clear and warm water has returned to most SW Washington streams. The exception is Drano Lake where good counts of steelhead at Bonneville and the opportunity to safely fish at night can produce good results for trollers and plunkers.

The Klickitat continues to run colored with glacial silt making it unfishable most days.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The big news for most anglers is the great catches of coho off the

mouth of the Columbia. Friday, Saturday and Sunday of last week, many boats had easy and early limits of salmon fishing between Buoy 4 and the CR Buoy. Anchovies are making the best bait since fresh herring are exceptionally small this year. It's pretty easy fishing with most anglers targeting the shallower running coho near the surface. Don't be afraid to troll just a few feet under the surface- especially early in the morning. Bait balls are concentrated in large numbers near the river entrance so motivated anglers can easily jig enough anchovies for personal use. Don't get greedy and take more than you'll use however- they're better off feeding our fish than our landfills.

Tuna fishers poised to fish from the mouth of the Columbia shouldn't have much trouble finding the fish. Albacore are concentrated in good numbers anywhere from 30 to 45 miles offshore but we had pretty good luck on Wednesday (7/24) from 18 to 22 miles offshore. Although we didn't hit large number of fish and doubles were far less frequent than the week before out of Garibaldi, we landed 25 fish between 20 and 30 pounds. Most of the fish came within the first 3 hours of fishing. We caught the bulk of the tuna on green and blue combination tuna clones but we did take a few fish on cedar plugs and metal jigs (as in, buzz-bomb style). Boats that went out further than us found higher numbers but smaller fish. The tuna appeared to be feeding on small hake so I am not clear if fresh, live bait like anchovies would prove effective in catching these fish. The last 3 hours of tuna fishing produced poorly for us. We likely only caught 3 or 4 fish during this time frame for reasons we couldn't explain. We varied our trolling speed, location and even changed up our color scheme. At this point, we did change out a few tuna clones to Rapala's and cedar plugs. Ironically the last 2 fish came on these devices.

And the big news.....we even saw dorado out at 20 miles! We found a couple of kelp patties that had dorado cruising by them in search of bait fish wanting to hide out under the kelp. We cast to them several times but drew no strikes.

After we had our fill of tuna fishing, the seas were calm enough to justify bottomfishing at the sunken jetty- this sunken jetty begins at the west tip of the south jetty at the mouth of the Columbia and extends westward to the 2SJ buoy. We started on the river side of the jetty and drifted south with the wind and current. Using metal jigs for lures, we took our limit of seabass in no time along with a single lingcod and a kelp greenling. We hit the dock at Hammond at about 4 p.m.

Crabbing in the river is picking up slightly but remains best in the ocean. Competition in the ocean by both commercial and sport interests is on the increase with the more friendly weather and the pending mid-August closure.

Mainstem steelhead counts are impressive and the tide series was ripe for good fishing this week.

The Guide's Forecast – Most anglers will be looking west for their fishing opportunities this weekend but the forecast isn't looking promising for comfortable fishing conditions:

FRI NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

FRI NIGHT NW WIND 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SAT NW WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

SUN NW WIND 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT.

These waves in short succession will make running out to the grounds, not all that fun. If you head north out of the mouth of the Columbia, the ride home will be tolerable and oftentimes, these winds don't actually happen until the late morning or early afternoon. Still ample enough time to get some quality fishing in before the wind kicks up. It's also a good thing to get the colder water influence of the

NW wind, which is much more likely to concentrate salmon although, draw albacore further, offshore.

As August progresses, coho should continue a south to north migration. Most of the coho off the Oregon coast are bound for the Columbia River so southerly ports should begin to drop off in coho success. Coincidentally, fishing off of the mouth of the Columbia should continue to improve.

Expect to find tuna further offshore this week as the trade winds cool the ocean water closer to the shoreline. Numbers should still be building into late September.

Catch and release fishing may become more challenging in the lower Columbia as effort in the upcoming gillnet openers for salmon and sturgeon should be intense with prices higher for salmon and a 12 fish sturgeon limit for each gillnet boat. Please photo-document any dead floating sturgeon that you see on the lower Columbia when these nets fish the 70 degree water and send them via email to: brees@pacifier.com. They make for a great conversation piece to our Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions.

Nice tides through Saturday for steelhead plunkers on the lower Columbia River. Hot colored spin-n-glos will take fish close to shore off of steep sloping beaches. Another series starts mid-week, next week. This is the peak of the season.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel closed to sturgeon retention on August 1st. It will be catch-and-release only until October 1st.

North Santiam steelhead have remained elusive despite a slight improvement in water temperature.

Trout fishing has been fair on the McKenzie over the past week.

The Guide's Forecast – Sturgeon catch rates are likely to remain low, with only a few shakers coming from Multnomah Channel and Portland Harbor. It's a kick for kids and may thrill out-of-state relatives, but boat carefully in the low water conditions.

Anglers stand a better a better chance of hooking up a steelhead on the South Santiam than on the North, even though a few have been taken as high as Packsaddle Park.

Fly and bait methods will both be productive, particularly in the evening over the coming weekend on the McKenzie as trout fishing will improve with the cooling weather. Leaburg Lake will also be a worthwhile destination.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas anglers continues to take steelhead over the past week. While it's not hot fishing, this is the most productive steelheading water in Willamette Valley. The key is to get on the water before the happy splashers take over, which is a daily occurrence in summer months. Bank fishing opportunities exist above Dog Creek to the dam. The ODFW would like to remind anglers about the new(er) deadline below Rivermill, that it's bright yellow and not to cast above that point. The coppers will getcha if you do. Boaters launching at that Dog Creek are fishing from there to Feldheimers with some success. Drift carefully in low water conditions and wear shoes you won't mind getting wet.

Scratch the Sandy off your list for a while. Fishing is poor in water with hardly any visibility.

North Coast Fishing Report – Garibaldi anglers finally got into good numbers of coho nearshore when NW winds cooled waters enough to concentrate fish. Some anglers were fishing for both salmon

and tuna last week when the albacore were within 7 miles of Twin Rocks. Higher concentrations were further offshore but double digit catches were reported for most boats trolling tuna clones and cedar plugs. Five to 7 miles per hour is the range of trolling speed that draw the most strikes. Look for water warmer than 64 degrees.

Bank casters will find challenging conditions once again on north coast streams for summer steelhead (Wilson and Nestucca) and sea-run cutthroat trout (catch and release only). Trout should begin to respond to flies more readily but the bigger cutthroat are more meat eaters at this stage in their life-cycle. Using sculpin or zonker patterns should produce the most strikes until the spring chinook spawn happens later in the year.

Sturgeon fishing in the Tillamook River typically picks up this time of year. Fresh herring are often jigged off the handicap dock in tidewater and will make excellent bait for these fish in this stretch.

The Guide's Forecast – Watch the bar and ocean conditions as the forecast is calling for not-so-friendly seas. The early morning will be the best time to pursue salmon nearshore as NW winds will make offshore tuna fishing more challenging.

Whether steelhead or trout fishing, you'll have to use stealthy tactics to catch stream bound salmonids this weekend. Small offerings are your best choice.

Bank anglers may have good opportunities for sturgeon in the Tillamook tidewater. Close to low slack typically produces the best.

Central & South Coast Reports – Steelheading is fair to good above Moonshine Park on the Siletz, but be aware that the road upstream is open weekends only.

With the all depth halibut season from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain opening August 3rd, the every-other-weekend schedule puts the next Friday-through-Sunday opener at August 17th through 19th. But, if 60,000 pounds or better remains in the quota after the first three days, this fishery could go to every week. Since anglers are going into the weekend with a 95,000 pound quota, and it's highly unlikely coho fishers will land 35,000 the extra days are probable. Regardless, this fishery will continue through September 30 unless the catch limit is met. All-depth halibut is open seven days a week out of Curry County beaches south of Humbug Mountain.

It's a banner year for tuna. Perhaps that goes without saying, but so far this year anglers have taken twice the number of tuna of any full season in the past and there will be tuna available for at least six more weeks, perhaps longer. North and northwest winds have moved warm water further offshore, making for some long boat rides in the neat future, however.

Coho were deep out of Newport on Wednesday this week with anglers hook up at 50 feet or better. The water temperature is predictably lower this week.

South coast beaches, closed earlier for high levels of naturally occurring toxins, have re-opened. Razor clams taken here may safely be eaten.

Anglers targeting coho offshore from Winchester Bay south saw an improvement in catch rates with over half taking a fish over the past week.

Anglers out of Winchester have had some success with Chinook by dropping tackle 50 to 70 feet deep over 300 feet of water but Chinook numbers are down offshore this year. Wind has kept boats in port since Sunday, but when it eases up, coho fishing will be excellent offshore. Off the south coast, the

Sunday forecast looks like a possibility but if accurate, seas should be friendly on Monday. Fall Chinook have started entering the bay.

Umpqua river anglers report excellent fishing for smallmouth bass in the mainstem and South Fork. With the water dropping, it'll only get better. This is one of those locations where anglers actually catch 100 or more smallies per day. Steelheading is spotty on the North Umpqua which is not surprising as the current run is the lowest in 40 years. The problem in summer is exacerbated when warm water in the afternoon can stress fish sufficiently to kill them if hooked. As a consequence, the ODFW is asking steelheaders to voluntarily refrain from fishing afternoons, containing that activity to the cooler morning hours.

With coho fishing so good this year, a number of savvy anglers are investing 12 bucks in a hatchery tag which allows the taking of ten fin-slipped fish without impacting their regular Harvest Card. Smart move, that.

Night fishing is producing a few striped bass on the Coos and Coquille rivers, mostly to experienced local anglers. Fall Chinook have started hitting trolled spinners in the lower Coquille River. The Coos Chinook fishery is due to start up shortly.

Wild Chinook may once again be retained on the Rogue River from Whiskey Creek to the Hog Creek Boat Ramp which will reward anglers with additional opportunities to take fish this weekend. The emergency restriction has been in place since June 21st due to low spring Chinook returns, but fall fish are now entering the system and there are more of them. The restriction remains in place above. The upper river contains decent numbers of summer steelhead and fishing is fair to good. Steelheading is fair in the Grants Pass stretch with all manner of lures drawing strikes periodically. The Rogue River estuary has flurries of action, most recently mid-day on Wednesday this week at which time several anglers experienced take-downs on spinner/anchovy combos.

Chetco anglers have seen a slowing of sea-run cutthroat catch rates.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Over 5,000 steelhead crossed at Bonneville on August 1st, pushing the year-to-date total over 76,000. Thousands have been crossing daily, destined for tributaries upriver. Many have entered the Deschutes as action improves there daily. Trollers at the mouth have seen a marked improvement over the past week.

The cool waters of the spring-few Metolius is fishing well now. At least as well as this tough stream ever fishers. Golden stones are the hatch du jour.

Because irrigation from Thief Valley Reservoir north of Baker City has reduced levels to "a few small pools" at which fish are threatened, all bag and length limits have been temporarily lifted. Heck, they'll even let you use a dip net. Or grab 'em with your bare hands.

Northwest Trout – Trout fishing is fair to good at Detroit Reservoir although the water level is down eight feet. At that level, some ramps may not be useable

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report July 25th – August 7th, 2007

North Puget Sound

For the first time since the mid-90's, anglers can catch and keep **chinook salmon** during the summer fishing in central Puget Sound. Mark-selective fisheries for hatchery chinook recently got under way in marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) and anglers got off to a strong start.

"The catch rates were outstanding during the first few days of the fishery, especially in Marine Area 9, where we saw an average of one fish for every two anglers," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "Once the weekend rolled around, the catch slowed a bit. But it's still good fishing."

The chinook mark-selective fisheries run through Aug. 15, or until the quota is reached, said Thiesfeld, who urged anglers to check WDFW's Fishing Hotline (360-902-2500) and the *Fishing in Washington* rules webpage (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for more information.

"We're monitoring the catch daily, and if we continue at this rate the mark-selective fisheries in marine areas 9 and 10 should last through the end of July," Thiesfeld said. "But I've been encouraging anglers to get out on the water while they still have the opportunity."

Anglers in marine areas 9 and 10 are allowed to keep **hatchery chinook** - marked with a clipped adipose fin - as part of a two salmon daily limit, plus two additional **pink salmon**. Anglers must release wild chinook and are required to use single-point barbless hooks.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that regulations vary for inner Elliott Bay, Sinclair Inlet and public fishing piers in marine areas 9 and 10. Check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> for more information.

When releasing salmon, anglers should keep the fish in the water and avoid using a net, Thiesfeld said. If a net is needed, use a rubber net or a soft knotless nylon or cotton net. Thiesfeld also suggests that anglers:

- Look for the adipose fin while playing the fish, and use polarized sunglasses to reduce glare.
- Avoid the use of light tackle and play the fish quickly to reduce exhausting the fish.
- Modify tackle to reduce potential injury to the fish. For example, use circle hooks when mooching and only one hook on hoochies and bucktails.
- Use a dehooker to remove the hook.
- Cut the leader if the fish has swallowed the hook.
- Avoid touching or handling the fish, especially around the eyes and gills.
- Support the entire length of the fish if it must be lifted out of the water. Do not lift the fish by the tail or jaw.
- Gently place the fish back in the water.

Anglers can find information on selective fishing and selective fishing techniques, as well as streaming video on how to properly release salmon, on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/selective/techniques/>.

Elsewhere, Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands) is open, while salmon fisheries in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) get under way Aug. 1. Once those two fisheries open, anglers in marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 must release all chinook. Those in marine area 8-1 also must release all pink salmon.

Meanwhile, the **crab** fishery is going strong in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, and the southern and eastern portion of 7. Fisheries in those areas are 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.

The **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** fisheries also are open in the region, and shrimpers can drop a pot in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9 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>.

In the rivers, the Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish opened early this year for **steelhead**. That section of the river (1,500 feet upstream to 1,000 feet downstream of the Reiter Ponds Hatchery outlet) opened July 21 after the hatchery collected enough steelhead broodstock to meet egg-take goals.

However, salmon opportunities on the Skykomish, as well as the Skagit and Baker, are winding down. The chinook fishery on the Skykomish and sockeye fisheries on the Skagit and Baker come to a close at the end of the day July 31.

Farther south, a sockeye fishery this summer on Lake Washington looks "very unlikely," said Kyle Adicks, another WDFW biologist. As of July 17, about 50,500 sockeye salmon had been counted at the Ballard Locks, where the fish make their way into Lake Washington from Puget Sound. That tally is well below the necessary spawning escapement goal of 350,000 salmon, which must be reached before state and tribal co-managers can consider opening a sockeye fishery in the lake.

"We've already passed the peak of the run," Adicks said. "So with numbers this low it doesn't look like there will be a sockeye fishery in Lake Washington this year."

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

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Despite recent stormy weather, the salmon season is gaining momentum from Ilwaco to southern Puget Sound where anglers are finding **chinook**, **coho** and an abundance of **pink salmon**. On area rivers, cooler temperatures and an influx of fresh water are proving beneficial for anglers pursuing **summer chinook**, **steelhead** and **cutthroat trout**.

Salmon fishing at Ilwaco and Westport (marine areas 1 and 2) yielded fair results for anglers over the July 21 weekend said Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist. "Even though we had one day of bad weather, the catch was about 1.4 fish per rod in both areas," said Beeghley. "In Ilwaco, people were mainly catching coho, while the catch at Westport was about one-third chinook." The coho are in the six-pound range and the chinook are averaging 18 pounds, she said.

On the north coast (marine areas 3 and 4) anglers were also catching a majority of coho. While the effort was low at La Push, people fishing at Neah Bay were averaging about 1.2 fish per rod.

"Hopefully, the weather will be better in upcoming days and bring out more fishers," Beeghley said. "If the weather cooperates there could be some fantastic fishing. Saturday looks good so far and we're hoping for some high success rates."

Ilwaco is open daily for salmon fishing; Westport is open Sundays through Thursdays; and La Push and Neah Bay are open Tuesdays through Saturdays. Coastal salmon fishing rules will remain as specified in the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>), or until quotas are met.

On the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers are taking advantage of the biennial return of pink salmon - an estimated three million of them. Recent creel reports from Sekiu in Marine Area 5 show fishers catching

at least one pink apiece.

"The pink salmon have definitely moved in and are also showing up in Hood Canal," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. As for chinook and coho, the catch rate along the strait has been about one fish for every two rods. "Fishing has been fair so far," said Thiesfeld. "Coho are showing up in Marine Area 6 where they were rare last year. Hopefully they'll increase throughout the season."

Marine Areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu/Pillar Point and eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) are open daily with a two-fish daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. Anglers must release wild coho and wild chinook. Handling rules are in effect and single-point barbless hooks are required.

Meanwhile, fishing near Point Defiance and Narrows Marina in Marine Area 11 has picked up a bit, with anglers catching more chinook so far than coho and averaging about one fish for every two rods. With better weather anticipated, now's the time for people to get out on the water, Thiesfeld said.

"The peak of the season is coming up soon and anglers shouldn't wait around much longer," he said. "Hardcore fishers will always be out there, but casual anglers looking for salmon should take advantage now."

The fishery runs seven days a week, with a limit of two salmon a day. As in other areas, selective fishing rules are in effect this year, requiring anglers to use single-point, barbless hooks and release any wild chinook they encounter. Starting Aug. 1, Commencement Bay will be open for salmon fishing.

Now that recent storms have given way to better weather, north coast anglers should have a good chance of catching **spring chinook** and **summer coho** in the Sol Duc River. Prospects have also improved for catching some hefty **summer steelhead** in the Bogachiel and Calawah rivers.

"While the recent rains put the rivers out of shape, they should also bring some summer coho to the Sol Duc," said David Low, WDFW fish biologist. "Now that we're having better weather, most rivers are fishable and should be busy. Conditions are near perfect in the Bogachiel and Calawah and people are catching pretty big steelhead - some weighing up to 18 pounds."

Anglers have also been finding **sea-run cutthroat**, which are following salmon up the rivers as they return to spawn. Up until last weekend's storm, anglers were doing fairly well on the Hoh, but it likely won't be fishable again until the last weekend in July, said Low. Low reminds anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for retention rules before heading out.

The influx of water and cooler temperatures should also draw more **summer steelhead** into the Wynoochee and upper Chehalis rivers, and may perk up the **spring chinook** action in the mainstem Chehalis above Porter Creek as well, said Rick Ereth, WDFW fish biologist.

"The recent rainfall should also improve fishing for **sea-run** and **resident cutthroat trout** in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor streams," he said. Ereth reminds anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for retention and gear rules. Salmon fishing on the Chehalis closes July 31 and will reopen October 1; the Skokomish River in Mason County opens for salmon fishing on Aug. 1.

Anglers will get another chance to catch **halibut** starting Aug. 3 when Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) opens for Pacific halibut fishing three days per week - Friday, Saturday and Sunday - until the remaining quota is reached, or Sept. 30, 2007, whichever comes first.

Recreational **crab** fishing is open Wednesdays through Saturdays in marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet),

10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal) through Sept. 3. Crabbing is open seven days a week in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) through Jan. 2.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five male Dungeness crab with a shell width measuring at least 6¼ inches, plus six red rock crab of either sex with a shell width of at least 5 inches. All undersized crab, female Dungeness crab and all softshell crab of either sex must be returned to the water.

Southwest Washington:

Catch rates for summer-run **steelhead** are picking up on the Columbia River and its tributaries where a number of fall salmon fisheries are scheduled to open Aug. 1. Meanwhile, anglers will be required to release any **sturgeon** they catch in the Bonneville Pool and from the Wauna power lines to Bonneville Dam after July 29. The latter area is scheduled to re-open for sturgeon retention Oct. 1.

Boat anglers fishing the Columbia River estuary averaged a **steelhead** per rod during the week ending July 22, while those fishing Drano Lake and the White Salmon River 150 miles inland were catching about one fish for every two rods. Bank anglers have also been reeling in hatchery steelhead on the White Salmon, Klickitat and a number of rivers below Bonneville Dam, where more than 3,000 steelhead are now moving up the fish ladders each day.

"Summer steelhead fishing is right on track and should continue to improve well into August," said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. "The bite tends to improve with large tidal movements, and we're going to see some of those in the days ahead."

The mouth of the Lewis River should be an especially good bet, said Hymer, noting that a good number of fish appear to be "dipping in" to the cooler waters there to beat the heat. (Recent temperatures in the mainstem Columbia have reached 70 degrees.) Heavy siltation has slowed fishing near the mouth of the Cowlitz River, although anglers fishing upriver at Blue Creek averaged about one steelhead for every three rods.

Hymer cautioned anglers fishing near the mouth of the Cowlitz to be mindful of shallow sandbars at the downstream end of Cottonwood Island near the entrance of Carroll's Channel and at the boat launch at Gearhart Park in Longview.

As in past years, only steelhead with a clipped adipose or ventral fin and a healed scar at the location of the clipped fin may be retained. Through July 31, anglers must release any adult salmon intercepted on the Columbia River downriver from Priest Rapids Dam.

But that's about to change Aug. 1 with the official start of the fall fishery. Among the waters opening to salmon retention that day is the popular Buoy 10 fishery, from the mouth of the Columbia River upstream to the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line.

However, unlike past years, anglers will not be allowed to retain **chinook salmon** intercepted in the Buoy 10 fishery until Aug. 22. That change, along with several others adopted this year, is designed to conserve wild "tule" populations of fall chinook salmon that spawn in tributaries below Bonneville Dam, said Cindy LeFleur, WDFW Columbia River Policy Coordinator.

"During the past year, the National Marine Fisheries Service directed us to reduce exploitation rates on tule stocks, which are listed for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act," LeFleur said. "Delaying chinook retention in the Buoy 10 fishery is a step, along with changes in the ocean fishery, in our efforts to comply with that directive."

When the Buoy 10 fishery opens Aug. 1, anglers will still be allowed to catch two adult hatchery **coho** - along with two hatchery steelhead - per day. This year's chinook-retention period (one adult per day) is scheduled from Aug. 22 to Sept. 3 and from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31.

Other changes in salmon-fishing rules taking effect Aug. 1 include:

- **North Jetty** - Salmon fishing open seven days per week when the Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) or Buoy 10 areas are open for salmon. Barbed hooks are allowed. The daily limit and minimum size restrictions follow the most liberal regulations of either of these areas.
- **Lower Columbia River** - Upriver from the Buoy 10 fishery, salmon fishing opens from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to Bonneville Dam. The daily limit will be six fish, including no more than 2 adults - only one of which may be an adult chinook. Any chinook, adipose fin clipped or not, may be retained. Anglers must release wild coho, sockeye and chum. To help conserve tules, anglers will also be required to release all chinook Sept. 5-30 downstream from a line from a boundary marker on the lower end of Bachelor Island across to the Warrior Rock Lighthouse.
- **Bonneville Dam to the Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco** - Anglers will be able to retain six salmon, of which no more than two can be adults. Any chinook, adipose fin clipped or not, may be retained. Anglers must release any wild coho they encounter from Bonneville Dam to Hood River Bridge and any chum intercepted downstream from The Dalles Dam. Night closure and non-buoyant lure restrictions will be in effect in the Bonneville Pool through Oct. 15.
- **Columbia Tributaries** - Anglers will be able to retain chinook salmon, adipose clipped or unclipped, on the Deep, Green, Toutle (including North Fork), Washougal, Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, (including North Fork), Wind, White Salmon and Klickitat rivers plus Drano Lake. Wild coho must be released on all these tributaries except for the Klickitat. Non-buoyant lure restrictions will be in effect on the Wind, White Salmon, Klickitat rivers and Drano Lake.
Bonus daily limits will be in effect for hatchery adult coho on the Lower Cowlitz, Deep, Green, Kalama, Lewis (including North Fork), and Toutle (including North Fork) rivers. All salmon other than chinook or coho must be released on the lower Cowlitz. Camas Slough will be open when adjacent mainstem Columbia or Washougal rivers are open to fishing for salmon. The daily limit follows the most liberal regulation of either area.

For more information on all of these fisheries, anglers are advised to consult the **Fishing in Washington** rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>). Current fishing rules are also posted on the Fish Hotline at (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg5/hotline.htm>). For information on the ocean fishery, see the South Sound/Olympic Peninsula report above.

Eastern Washington:

Warm weather usually brings good fishing for warmwater fish species, such as **yellow perch**. Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist in Spokane, said perch are abundant at many waters throughout the region. Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County and Downs Lake in southwest Spokane County are good perch fisheries, he said. The Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake and Deer and Waitts lakes in Stevens County also are good. "But fish deep for those fish this time of year," Donley said. "They're not along the shorelines like they were during spring spawning. You have to jig for them at 25 feet or deeper."

Donley also recommends **trout** fishing during early morning hours or at night in the region. "Rainbows are really active now at night," he said. "Lake Roosevelt continues to produce them, and a lot of the smaller lakes up north and around Spokane are still a good bet." The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, and is much better fishing this year. Donley reminds river anglers to comply with the catch and gear restrictions listed in the fishing rules pamphlet.

Nighttime fishing for **kokanee** at Loon Lake in Stevens County is very good now, Donley said. "Use

your fish finder to locate kokanee, then anchor over the top and fish for them," he said.

Curt Vail, WDFW district fish biologist in Colville, said the Pend Oreille River continues to produce good catches of large **northern pike**. The river is also a good bet for **largemouth bass**, especially from Ione to Box Canyon Dam, and **smallmouth bass** in the Metaline Falls area.

North Central Washington:

Fishing has been hot lately at the Potholes Reservoir. Fishing for **walleye** early in the morning and top water **bass** in the evening has been good. Trolling for walleye with a spinner and crawlers or dragging leeches has been producing walleye in the sand dunes area of the reservoir. Trolling 90 to 125 feet behind the boat at about two miles an hour in 20 feet of water is working effectively. Some big **crappie** have been caught in the dunes area, but more are hitting jigs tipped with bait at the Mardon Resort dock during early morning hours. **Bass, perch** and **catfish** are coming in on night crawlers.

Early morning and evening are also the best times to fish lakes in the Okanogan district of the region during the heat of summer. Both Conconullys, Spectacle, Wannacut, Alta, and Pearrygin are still producing **trout**. Fishing for **bluegill** and **crappie** continues to be good at Leader Lake and **yellow perch** have been caught at Patterson Lake.

South Central Washington:

Recent hot weather has been discouraging lowland lake fishing and encouraging anglers to head for the mountains. Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist in Yakima, said mountain trails are snow free, except at the very highest elevations. "But bugs are abundant," he said. "So in most areas insect repellent is a necessity." Cummins said alpine lakes should be producing **cutthroat, rainbow** and **eastern brook trout** "until the snow flies this fall." For information on high lake fishing check "Trout Fishing in Washington's High Lakes" at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/outreach/fishing/highlake.htm> or the southcentral region's recent fish stocking records for high lakes at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg3/highlakes.pdf>. "Just remember that many lakes have natural reproduction and do not require stocking, so don't limit your fishing choices to the stocking list alone," he said.

Reader Email

Kapt'n Ken Johnson wrote on Thursday this week, chiding me (Michael) that I wrote last week that he resided in Manzanita. He reminded me that his new(er) home is actually North of Nehalem by about a mile. He further wrote, "Wow~! Razor Clamming was great today, Tuesday July 31st, with a -1.1 tide. I clam in the dryer sand and got my limit in about 1 hour...Hawg's, they were too!!! Can't remember the name of the beach I went to.....I do know it was SOUTH of Tillamook Head!!!.....I've tried to get out in the salt to fish for about 3-4 weeks now but because of mechanical troubles with the big 41' boat (not mine!) and trouble's with ex's (not mine!) and all kinds of basic "life" stuff, I just never have made it yet. So, everyone else is enjoying the Tuna and Halibut fishery's out there.....Bah Humbug, feel sorry for ME! Or, don't! Fall Chinook fishing, so far, on the Nehalem is still going slow. Water temperatures are hovering around 64 degrees+/- . I check in daily with my neighbor and river guide, Paul Jones, and he is seeing 1-2 fish caught per day, but he's out there for 10+ hours at a time. Every day. Not bad numbers, actually, considering there are only 10-15 boats on the river at any given time, during mid-week fishing. This will change shortly.....We hope! Riggings are primarily herring trolled at about 2mph and it is basic. Because the river bottom sneaks up on you here, most are using about a 1' lead line and just keeping things in the 10'-15' range. The deepest parts of the river, in the most popular trolling channels, are around 20'-25' deep so 10'-15' seems to work good, for me too. Yes, there are some very deep holes, upriver, on the Nehalem too! Because I'm kind of new around these

parts, I'm using some Willamette River set ups like a brined fluorescent orange, pink or red prawns mounted on a prawn rig made by Oregon Tackle Mfg. They're really neat set ups. I put a large "Rainbow" Mylar wing ahead of it...So far, it is all a fish story for me and I keep telling them! You can put a Spin-n-Glo, spinner blade, corky, Cheaters, whatever, ahead of these prawn rigs for added ziiiiing. I just can't imagine it not working here too, but time will tell. I am also using herring but every hour, or so, I switch to the Prawn rig. Like I said last week, the herring supply around these parts is still a bit low the last time I checked. So, call ahead to see if the stock is back up, especially if you're heading this way without bait. Bud's RV, South of Warrenton on Highway 101, had a fair supply of them last week. So did Lyster's in Barview. I would still call ahead to be safe! So, if you're trolling around in the Nehalem River, any time soon, and see an 18' Black and Gold Jet Craft with the name "Fishful Thinking" on the side, give me a shout! See you there/here!?"

Ken went clamming again on Wednesday, but clammed up about the location, "Went to a top secret clamming beach with my neighbor, Vince, today., It is located about 4-5 miles SOUTH of Tillamook Head today, which is closed to Razor Clamming North of there. Thank goodness we did. I have NEVER clammed on a beach and had it all to myself. But, today I/we did. We got there about 1.5 hours BEFORE low tide and when we got to our special little spot, we found exactly 19 "holes" dug into the sand.

The beach was empty now, though. No people, anywhere. 19 holes. Hmmmmm...I told Vince that most likely, someone got there and hour or so before we did and already limited out...So, the limit is 15...The guy before us had to work very hard by digging an additional '4' times to get his or her limit. "Nuf said about that...We were "Hot to Trot." We started Gunnin' for Razors almost immediately. Shows were few and far between but because we were the absolute ONLY diggers on the beach, it was easy to find enough of them to keep us busy. The shows were varied, as to their appearance, so you couldn't trust the traditional rules of finding Razors. About 35 minutes after starting our digging, we were done. DONE! I "won," of course, and got my limit about 3.28 minutes before Vince got his 15th clam. Razor Clamming has been pretty phenomenal for me, at least. My only question is...Why in the heck does "Mother Nature" plan just about all MINUS tides so damned early in the morning??? Who cares.....I can hardly wait for the next one! The next decent tides are August 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and the 14th, at least for me. And, of course, the clam tides are early in the morning. Actually, I'm looking forward to the 2:30am, or so, minus tides so I can test my new underwater LED strobe I just bought. I put it on the dash, turn it on and off I go. You can see it from a mile+ away. You see...last year I clammed at Gearhart where I could drive right on the beach and walked so far I literally lost my truck trying to find it when I was done clamming. It was still very very dark! There are no "Beach Street Lights" you know!!! I was totally tired and I walked right on past my truck maybe twice. It took me an extra half hour, or so, to find it. This year I'm ready! See you there! "

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

Write to the TGF staff:

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Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

All about bay clams from the ODFW:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/bayclams/index.asp>

Could Oregon be next? Huge, Hungry Squid Invade California Waters:

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,290667,00.html>

Weekly Quote – "It is the constant - or inconstant - change, the infinite variety in fly fishing that binds us fast. It is impossible to grow weary of a sport that is never the same on any two days of the year." - Theodore Gordon

GOOD LUCK!