

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 24<sup>th</sup> – August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Although catch and keep sturgeon season has re-opened from Wauna Powerlines to Bonneville Dam, effort remained low but boaters in the gorge averaged a keeper for every 4 boats with high shaker action. Bank anglers averaged nearly a keeper for every 5 rods.

Steelheaders recorded good catches in the gorge this week with boat anglers taking nearly a keeper for every 2 boats, bank anglers a keeper for every 3 anglers. The run is pouring over Bonneville but slow to migrate over the Dalles Dam. Fall chinook numbers are beginning to climb but temperatures are too warm for productive fishing.

Catches of chinook are beginning to climb at the mouths of the Cowlitz and Kalama Rivers. Consistent catches will climb in coming weeks with wobblers taking the lion's share for anglers anchored in the deeper water of the mainstem Columbia.

Willamette water temperatures have held steady at 72 degrees over the past week as 20 to 30 summer steelhead cross daily. Sturgeon fishing is very slow.

The Clackamas has been fair for steelheading from Rivermill Dam down to Dog Creek.

Despite strong numbers of steelhead in the Columbia, trollers at the mouth of the Sandy are blanking. There are a few summers around the mouth of Cedar Creek.

Steelheading has finally picked up on the North Santiam. Historically, the next five weeks will offer the best summer steelheading of the year.

Faraday Lake and North Fork Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

**Northwest –** Anglers are concentrated near the mouth of the Columbia where the offshore coho catch continues to produce easy limits of coho. Action continues great 3 to 5 miles of south of the CR Buoy but the buoy itself is producing nicely. Blue sharks are prevalent on the salmon grounds and anglers are losing an occasional fish to them. The ocean off of the mouth of the Columbia River will close to the pursuit of salmon beginning on Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. The last day to keep ocean salmon (coho and chinook) is Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Chinook retention opened on Wednesday in the Buoy 10 fishery and catches have been good on the afternoon incoming tide. By Saturday, an early morning low slack will likely produce good catches of chinook throughout the day. Coho are beginning to show in the catches although chinook are dominating the catch. Although the overall coho forecast is about the same as last year, the bulk of the return is forecasted to return in the early season. Most of these fish will pass through the estuary by late September.

The all-depth halibut fishery from Cape Falcon to Leadbetter Point will re-open on August 24<sup>th</sup> for 3 days after biologists determined the quota had not been reached. More days may be added if anglers keep their focus on salmon instead of fighting a forecasted westerly swell to reach the offshore grounds.

The hatchery coho bite out of Garibaldi has slowed but tuna chasers are still finding good numbers of fish 28 to 40 miles offshore. The first fall chinook are due back to the estuary later this month. Crabbing has picked up in the bay but is closed offshore.

Tuna were very close to the port of Depoe Bay over the weekend. Coho limits were taken over the weekend and the fish are larger with some pushing 15 pounds.

Crabbing is fair to good at Newport, poor at Waldport.

**Southwest** – Wave action in the ocean off the southwest coast is forecast to be mild but will be building into the weekend. The onshore wind, pushing strong and steady, will probably make a trip across the bar in recreational craft a no-go. Check conditions later this week, however.

During the periods of precipitation earlier this week, the southwest coast welcomed a couple of inches of cooling rain.

A series of mild tides minus will begin mornings over the weekend with the greatest exchange of water occurring on Tuesday next week.

Boats launching out of Florence over the weekend experienced fair to good coho results fishing 20 to 25 feet deep over about 160 feet of water.

Following hot mid-week fishing, action slowed out of Reedsport last weekend. Coho fishing was spotty out of Winchester Bay last Saturday with trollers encountering numerous sharks offshore. Fish are being taken at the 25-foot level over 250 to 300 feet of water on Sunday. Halibut action slowed over the weekend. Boats stayed close to the jaws on Monday this week due to dicey conditions, but experienced better coho action than did weekend anglers.

Fishing has been good for anglers launching out of Coos Bay for those able to locate schools of coho. Hoochie and herring have been effective.

Bottom fishing has remained excellent out of Brookings, with a wide variety of fish returning to port on anglers' boats. Tuna were 29 miles offshore last week and fishing was good. Salmon fishing has been fair.

Section 5 of the Rogue River is scheduled to be stocked with trout this week.

**Eastern** – Nymphs have taken fair to good numbers of trout on the lower Deschutes with cloudy days most productive. Steelhead numbers continue to improve although it's been slow for trollers at the mouth.

Scheduled for trout stocking this week are Badger Lake, Fall River, Rouge River, Shevlin Pond and Spring Creek.

**SW Washington** – The mouth of the Cowlitz is producing fair catches of summer steelhead and Chinook are starting to be taken daily.

Some coho may be showing in area streams but the bulk of the run returns in late October- the late run forecast of coho is not encouraging.

Boat anglers fishing in Drano Lake and the White Salmon River are averaging a steelhead per rod with a few chinook taken in the mix.

**Soap Box Update** – The Sierra Club Clean Willamette Campaign is hosting the 1st Annual Race Against Pollution at Sellwood Riverfront Park to raise awareness of the toxic pollution on the Willamette River that threatens the health of our community. Please join the Sierra Club, kayakers, anglers, families, and community organizations as we gather to celebrate our River and rally for a clean, **toxic-free Willamette**.

When: Saturday, **September 15th**

What: **FREE** Kayak and Canoe "fun race", **FREE** coloring contest, **FREE** live music, **FREE** food **FREE** beer!

Where: Sellwood Riverfront Park

Time: 2 - 5pm; "fun race" starts at 2:30

Register for the race: [emily.bartha@sierraclub.org](mailto:emily.bartha@sierraclub.org), (503) 243-6656 x 301.

Find out more at: [www.raceagainstpollution.org](http://www.raceagainstpollution.org)

And one other this week:

Dear Sportsmen Partners:

Please take one minute to fill out an important (and very short!) survey for your organization at:  
<http://www.targetglobalwarming.org/hunteranglerpledge/>

This survey and pledge was developed by our sportsmen affiliates at our last NWF affiliate meeting to give a powerful voice to local sportsmen groups across the country. We plan to send the results to Congress to show them that: (1) hunters and anglers care about climate change's impact to our resources; and (2) we want our elected representatives to do something about it. Our goal is to have over 1,000 hunter/angler groups nationwide fill this out by December. I know some of you - like Berkley, Mustad, Federation of Fly Fishers, Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, and Association of Northwest Steelheaders - have already done this, but please pass this on to other groups you know.

We've done this before. If you remember last year, I told you about a serious proposal to privatize our public lands nationwide. In response, nearly 1,000 local sportsmen groups across the U.S. took a stand and said no. Seven hours after we sent Congress a statement from these hunters and anglers, the head of the powerful House Resources Committee held a press conference and pulled their proposal "for procedural reasons" (yeah right!). This issue we are facing today is even more important, because climate change threatens the health of these lands, and frankly - everything our organization has fought to conserve alongside our sportsmen partners for more than 70 years.

Please add your voice to this pledge. We are looking for fishing and hunting clubs, guides, manufacturers, and retailers. If you are involved with any of these groups, please ask your leadership to fill out this pledge:  
<http://www.targetglobalwarming.org/hunteranglerpledge/>

Together we can convince Congress to act, and lead the world down the right path towards a better climate for our kids and our resources!

Sincerely,  
Matt  
West Coast and Hawaii Rep for National Wildlife Federation

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – The opening of the Buoy 10 fishery saw mixed results amongst guide boats with guides using fresh bait doing quite well and spinner fishermen catching a few as well. The morning tide had been challenging until the opener when boats working the Washington side did well beginning at the top of the incoming tide and the first part of outgoing. Most anglers were fishing 35 to 50 foot of water and the weaker tides dictated successful anglers targeting fish in the lower portion near Chinook and Illwaco. Recently, the afternoon tide-

beginning with low slack, has been the better tide. **Pro guide Russ Low (503-209-7446)** reported good action on 8/21 (before the opener) on the Washington side landing 4 chinook and 5 silvers of which he was able to harvest 3 of the coho. The season is already shaping up to be much better than last year. Although fresh herring seemed to rule the roost on the opener, spinner fishermen using white/pink and red/white seemed to produce the best results. As the season progresses, spinners may become the ticket of choice.

Offshore, the coho bite remains epic. Anglers working the CR Buoy have been scoring easy limits. On 8/22, we opted for the offshore fishery starting slow when we first got out there but once we hit 190 foot of water just south of the CR Buoy, the fishing got very consistent. The fish were running large this day- my largest of the season and the egg sacks indicated they are getting ready to enter the river. It wasn't that way even the day before although the limit was easy to come by. Anglers fishing 4 to 7 miles south of the CR have reported awesome fishing but one might ask, why run that far south when they are at the CR Buoy? As is often the case, chinook are absent from the ocean catch.

Tuna anglers were still scoring good numbers between 28 and 40 miles offshore. Tuna chasers working swim baits are doing the best but trolled tuna clones are also taking fish. Live bait is coming on line this time of year and anglers are doing all they can to get their hands on it. Most are getting their own but it's not clear to me as if there are fresh anchovies available in Illwaco yet.

All-depth halibut will re-open off the Columbia River August 24th, 25th and 26th, closing thereafter unless sufficient poundage remains in the quota to allow another opener.

Crabbing has picked up in the river but it's by no means a limit fishery. The best crabbing is taking place between Buoy's 20 and 22 in 25 to 35 feet of water. Fresh salmon carcasses are working well but seals are likely to take the bait out of your cages and rings unless they are secured in bait cages. The ocean is closed to crabbing as of August 15<sup>th</sup>.

Summer steelheaders are still getting after some good numbers of fish with Bonneville producing the best results. Both boaters and bank anglers were witnessing good catches this past week with nearly a fish per boat on the best check. Numbers are pouring over the dam and seem to be getting held up in the Bonneville Pool. Over 200,000 steelhead have bypassed Bonneville with only about 70,000 passing The Dalles facility. When waters cool, they will continue upriver to their eastern Oregon, Washington and Idaho destinations.

The re-opening of the sturgeon fishery above Wauna was a nice surprise for most that like to pursue the fish. Although not peak season, catches were fair to good for anglers in the gorge and downriver locations. Effort is low with most folks concentrating on salmon but a nice mix of keepers, shakers and still an occasional oversize was drawing interest for a few guides in the Bonneville stretch. Effort is likely to remain low.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It'll take a small handfull of trips before we establish any patterns to the recently opened Buoy 10 fishery but the tides are going to get better by the weekend. An early morning low slack should make for some good fishing in the lower end of the river. Beginning in the lower ends on both the Oregon and Washington sides of the river, work your way upstream, following the incoming tide until you reach the Astoria/Megler Bridge (and upstream) at high slack. This will obviously be the best week for catching salmon in the lower Columbia and the best news is, the fish seem willing to bite this year! It seems that bait is the preferred technique with fresh herring the ticket. The herring are still running small and although not many folks are using them, anchovies should be great bait for river fish. Some of the anchovies are running larger than the herring! Many folks are using green and blue label herring

if you can find them. Regardless of what day you fish, maximize your time on the water by avoiding the slowest time of the tide to fish- the last half of outgoing tide. The one exception to that is low slack near the mouth of the river where the first chinook of the tide can be intercepted as the salt water wedge flows underneath the still outgoing freshwater on the surface.

Ocean fishing is scheduled to close at mid-night on August 25<sup>th</sup>. In other words, the last day to target salmon in the ocean from Leadbetter Point (the top of the Long Beach Peninsula) to Cape Falcon near Manzanita is Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>. The fishing will likely remain red hot until then and conveniently enough, the coho should start streaming into the river by then. The ocean forecast is certainly likely to change but as of 7:00 p.m. on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the marine forecast reads:

**FRI** N WIND 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

**FRI NIGHT** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS AFTER MIDNIGHT.

**SAT** NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**SAT NIGHT** NW WIND 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 7 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

In weather like this, although it really isn't all that bad, folks may not want to venture too far south- especially when there is plenty of action to be had at the CR Buoy. These fish are on the feed but I find anchovies have proven very effective for me and given the number of bites you get out there, you get more baits for the buck with a pound of anchovies versus a dozen herring. Be sure to call before 3:00 p.m. to reserve your bait for your fishing day- it helps with the bait shop's order and helps ensure you get the bait you need.

For steelheaders, we should begin to see more of the larger "B" run steelhead enter the river in coming weeks. Lower river beach plunkers should take advantage of the nice minus tides next week in the lower Columbia River below Portland to Westport.

Sturgeon lovers should take advantage of the low effort in the gorge and in the Wauna area. There are keepers to be had and shaker action is almost enough to justify the effort alone.

Lower river crabbing will get more challenging as we draw closer to the weekend. The morning minus tides will likely put crab down but numbers are building downstream of Hammond and keepers should only get more plentiful as the month wears on.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Not much has changed in the lower Willamette. The water is very low with visibility pushing seven feet. The water temperature has been steady at 72 degrees. The lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel is open for the retention of sturgeon between 42 and 60 inches in length sturgeon seven days a week. This bonus opener which started on August 18th is due to additional numbers left in the quota from 2006 and will continue through September.

The upper McKenzie is in good shape and has been producing decent catches of trout.

North Santiam flows are stable and are expected to remain that way through September. As steelhead counts push the 4,000 mark, fish continue to enter the trap at Foster Dam on the South Santiam with many recycled downstream to give anglers another shot at them.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Sturgeon fishing has been slow with the vast majority of the fish landed too small to legally retain. Action (what there is of it) is about evenly distributed from Portland Harbor to Oregon City. The challenge is finding a fish that will measure.

Fly anglers on the upper McKenzie are taking a mix of hatchery rainbows and native cuts by deep nymphing pocket water.

As we enter the period on the North Santiam which historically offers the best steelheading of the year, the resident fish are taking bait delicately, making it a challenge to detect the bite. Sand shrimp has been the top producer. This makes a good case for spinners, however, which can be deadly and steelhead take spinners one of two ways; they either stop it dead, as if a snag appeared where there had been none before or nearly yanking the rod out of the angler's hand. Either way there's no doubt about it. Target steelhead in the North Santiam from Mehome upstream. The South Santiam water level has dropped a great deal, making drift boating tough to impossible. Steelhead action has declined dramatically.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Pressure is light on the low waters of the Clackamas and will likely stay that way until the first fall rains and the appearance of coho. A few steelhead are being taken with bank anglers scoring from Dog Creek to the Dam. Below Dog Creek, boaters should exercise caution as obstacles can damage hulls at these water levels.

Despite strong numbers of steelhead in the Columbia, trollers at the mouth of the Sandy are taking only a few, although there have been flurries where both steelhead and Chinook have been landed. Water in the Sandy is a combination of glacial grey and muddy from dam work upstream. Rain will get the fish on the move. Fishing, what there is of it, is extremely slow in the low, murky, 60-degree waters of the Sandy River. There are a few steelhead around, but there are also better options. Almost anywhere else, for instance. At least, as with the Clack, until the coho arrive. They'll bite (if at all) in off-colored water.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Recreational effort for salmon has shifted northward with boats out of Garibaldi seeing more wild coho than hatchery coho as of late. Action remains good and the fishery is scheduled to stay open until early September. Some hatchery coho should still be available as the Trask River, Nehalem River and Salmon River hatcheries should still see returns to them this year.

Tuna action out of Garibaldi is still a favored trip. The tuna are not far offshore with good catches coming from 18 to 25 miles offshore. Swim baits and live bait are becoming more popular.

River fishing effort for summer steelhead is dropping with the challenging conditions but some anglers are beginning to get excited about tidewater fishing for fall chinook. The Nestucca, Nehalem and even Tillamook Bay should begin to produce a few early salmon. Trolled herring or kwikfish should produce fair results in the early season. On Tillamook Bay, herring will produce best on the softer tides and the plugs best on the stronger tides. Trask and Tillamook River fish are the first to show on this estuary.

The annual angling event at Whiskey Creek Hatchery, set this year for September 15th, is seeking volunteers to help. In its 15th year, this event allows mentally and physically challenged youngsters catch trout stocked at the facility, including some very large fish, and is a thrill for the kids. Get in touch with Jerry Dove at 503-812-1572.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Afternoon winds may keep some anglers from getting motivated for the long trek to the tuna grounds this weekend. It may be the best bet going however with the waning of hatchery coho and the absence of chinook in the south of Cape Falcon fisheries.

Sturgeon should be available in the lower Tillamook River tidewater for bank anglers but some may want to get motivated for early chinook in these estuaries. With a nice minus tide series coming this weekend, plugs worked in the upper reaches of Tillamook, Nehalem or Nestucca Bays may produce some fair action. Most NW anglers are focused on the lower Columbia (for good reason too) so you won't have much competition to deal with.

Steelheading conditions will remain challenging.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – The water offshore is 62 to 62 degrees from Coos Bay to the Washington State line but is dropping with wind coming from the northwest. Tuna should will be a little tough this weekend but then again the wind probably won't allow boats to cross the bar. Early morning launch and a return to port before the wind comes up will be the only shot boaters will have.

The ODFW coho landing estimates have not been updated since August 5th, at which time it was about 53%. Catch rates have been good at times; one can only wonder how close we are to filling that quota.

Tuna were very close to the port of Depoe Bay over the weekend and still only 15 miles out on Tuesday this week. This is expected to change (again) with northwest winds this week. Coho limits were taken over the weekend and the fish are larger with some pushing 15 pounds.

Limits of crab are coming out of Yaquina now. Alsea Bay has been poor for Dungeness.

More than 50,000 tuna have been caught so far this year. The best entire season previously was 2004 when 17,200 albacore were taken.

All depth halibut is now open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday until October 31st of fulfillment of the catch limit. Enjoy it while you can. Not only are discussions underway to **cut the quota by as much as 50%**, but the public will **not** be invited to voice their opinions prior to the decision. See **Random Links**, below, for more.

The rockfish season may just go the distance this year, dodging the annual closure bullet. The reason is interesting. Record tuna catches and nearshore fishing opportunities have taken pressure off the bottom fish. Limited numbers of rockfish have caused mid-season cutoffs in past years, but this season anglers who would normally be taking those critters are exploring the warm waters close to shore for albacore.

Chinook action on the lower Siletz slowed somewhat over the past week. Fish here are averaging in the mid-20-pound range. Once, anchor-fishing bait-wrapped Kwikfish reigned almost exclusively here. Now, thanks primarily to versatile guides, one sees trollers and bobber fishers commonly and all methods are effective at times. George Howard's 35-pounder taken on August 11th stands as the biggest fish so far this season, but 50-pounders usually take top honors here.

Chinook have entered the Umpqua estuary, but won't head upriver until the water temps start to fall. Steelheading improved somewhat on the North Umpqua during the cloudy, rainy days earlier this week, but will likely slow as hot weather moves back into the southwest. Fish movement improved at Winchester Dam with the precipitation. Smallmouth bass fishing on the

mainstem and south Umpqua won't mind, though. They'll bite bait and lure reliably all day long.

Tidewater at the Coos and Coquille rivers is producing a few fall Chinook although these fisheries are just starting up. Plug-cut herring trolled behind a flasher has been effective. Fishing will improve into September and Chinook will continue to enter into October. Crabbing has improved at Coos Bay.

Sunset Bay State Park Beach has been added to the list of advisories due to higher-than-normal levels of fecal bacteria in ocean waters. Surf perch fishing is pretty good at this location about 12 miles southwest of Coos Bay but at this time is ill-advised.

Coho have joined Fall Chinook in the Rogue River estuary as catches gradually improve below Agness. Anchovies tipped with a spinner blade are being dragged behind boats as this is the rig fished nearly to the exclusion of all others here. An improvement in tidal exchange starting over the weekend may serve to energize this fishery. With fall Chinook in the Grants Pass stretch on the move now, catches here are starting to improve as well. Plug-pullers rule in this area. Over 3,000 summer steelhead have crossed Gold Ray Dam, and while not an impressive number, these fish will smack all manner of bait or lure.

Pete Peters of Gold Beach once again took top honors at the second annual Salmon B. Jammin' Salmon Fishing Derby, held on August 11 at Lex's Landing with a 34.2 pound Chinook from the Rogue River. Peter's wife, Jill took the women's division with a 25.6-pound chromer. Over 200 anglers competed.

Tuna have been taken 26 to 38 miles out of Brookings recently, but it will be a very long boat ride indeed if the northwest winds cool the ocean as expected. If so, the bottom fishing will remain an alternative and it has been excellent. Even folks in kayaks have been scoring limits of colorful rockfish. Salmon fishing should see some improvement in cooler water temperatures. While salmon are coming into the port of Brookings in lower numbers than in years past, the percentage of Chinook is increasing slightly. In addition, coho are large, averaging 13 pounds, which should equate to 16-pound fish by the end of August.

Catches of sea-run cutthroat trout have dropped off at the Chetco River, but is still good.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – While trout are notoriously tough to catch on the Metolius, this cool, spring-fed river is fishing as well as it ever does. Golden stones will be hatching here through September.

Summer steelhead are streaming over Bonneville Dam in remarkable number. Over 11,000 were counted on August 19th alone with 7,000 to 9,000 crossing most days. The total as of August 30th was nearly 218,000 with fewer than 25% wild. About 74,000 have been counted at The Dalles Dam. This puts a good number of steelhead in the upper river, destined to enter the Deschutes and other upriver tributaries. The Deschutes River has fishable numbers of steelhead from Macks Canyon downstream to the mouth. Mornings and evenings off the best chance of a hookup. Trollers are pulling plugs in the Columbia at the mouth, but results have been spotty. Fly anglers are finding good results with trout by fishing nymphs in deep runs during the hot weather.

**Northwest Trout** – Kokanee fishing has been fair to good at 60 to 70 feet at Green Peter. The fish are large and fat, but get there soon. The kokes are nearing pre-spawn and when that happens, the quality of the flesh suffers.

Trout fishing at Henry Hagg has slowed to a top. Nobody's catching.

Fishing in Detroit reservoir has been quite good for trout to 16 inches. Both trollers and bank anglers are taking good numbers to limits of fish.

Faraday Lake and North Fork Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout in the Willamette Valley. Trout planting will resume in the Northwest Zone in September.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

**From the WDF&W Weekender Report August 22<sup>nd</sup> – September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

#### **North Puget Sound**

**Pink salmon** have arrived and a fleet of anglers has been out on the water to greet them. "We've got a big run of pink salmon pushing its way through Puget Sound right now," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "And anglers - who have been out in force - are taking advantage of it."

While fishing has been good for pink salmon at several sites in Puget Sound, Thiesfeld recommends trolling "Humpy Hollow," a portion of the Sound that stretches from Shipwreck north to Mukilteo.

"Catch rates have been strong along Humpy Hollow, and I expect that to continue for the next couple of weeks," Thiesfeld said. "If there's a friend or a child you've been wanting to take fishing, I'd get them out to Humpy Hollow as soon as possible."

Anglers fishing Humpy Hollow, or other waters of Marine Area 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. All chinook salmon must be released.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers in neighboring Marine Area 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) that they must release chinook, plus all pink salmon.

**Chinook** and **coho** catches in the region haven't been bad either. Anglers are finding some nice chinook in Rosario Strait, along with strong numbers of resident hatchery coho in marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), Thiesfeld said. "It's a good time to be out on the water fishing for salmon," he said.

Meanwhile, the summer **crab** fishery in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10 and the southern portion of Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands) closes for a catch assessment one hour past sunset on Sept. 3. However, the northern and eastern portions of Marine Area 7 will remain open through September. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more details on the fishery.

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>.

Freshwater anglers in the region will have more opportunities beginning Sept. 1, when portions of the Skagit, Stillaguamish, Skykomish and Snoqualmie open for salmon fishing. Anglers fishing

those four rivers must release chinook. Those fishing the Snoqualmie and Skagit also must release pinks.

A portion of the Green (Duwamish) River also opens Sept. 1 for salmon. The Green will be open from the 1st Ave. South Bridge to the northbound I-5 Bridge. Anglers fishing that stretch will have a daily limit of six salmon, only one of which may be a chinook, and no more than three adults.

On the Skykomish, the **steelhead** fishery remains open. Anglers can cast for steelhead along the Reiter Ponds section of the river - 1,500 feet upstream to 1,000 feet downstream of the Reiter Ponds Hatchery outlet.

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**

While the ocean salmon fishery off Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) will close at the end of the day Aug. 25, anglers still have plenty of other opportunities to catch a salmon off the coast and throughout the region. They can also take advantage of three more days of **halibut** fishing, try for **tuna** or get their rods ready for some river fishing coming up Sept. 1.

Although anglers are expected to reach the coho quota by Aug. 25, those fishing along the coast can continue to enjoy an above-average season, said Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist. "The fishing's been great this year and anglers are getting at least one fish per outing at Westport and La Push," she said.

In addition, salmon fishing in marine areas 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) has been extended to seven days a week. "With only a few more weeks left, anglers should get out on the water while they can," Beeghley said.

Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 15 in marine areas 3 and 4 and through Sept. 16 in Marine Area 2, or until quotas are reached. Through Aug. 19, anglers at Westport had landed 48 percent of the 9,400 chinook quota and 42 percent of the 43,510 coho quota. The daily limit is two fish, only one of which may be a chinook. All wild coho must be released.

And if **tuna** strikes your fancy, the fishing's been excellent, said Beeghley. "People are catching quite a few off Westport and if you're looking for a fish with speed and strength, tuna's the one." Fishing for tuna is open year-round with no daily limit.

Meanwhile, anglers have another chance to land a **halibut** along the south coast. Enough halibut remains in the quota for three more days of fishing in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco). The dates are Aug. 24, 25 and 26.

Farther north along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the chinook fishery in marine areas 5 and 6 is now closed. However, both areas remain open to fishing for **pink**, **sockeye** and **hatchery coho** salmon. The fishing for pink salmon is still quite good in the Strait and the number of coho should be increasing, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist.

"With the recent rains, anglers fishing for coho should have some very good days," Thiesfeld said. Recent creel checks off Sekiu show at least two pink salmon per rod and one coho for every two rods.

In southern Puget Sound, fishing has been fair for hatchery chinook, Thiesfeld said. "Anglers are doing well near the Point Defiance boathouse, and pink fishing has been very good off the Dash Point dock in Marine Area 11," he said. For those heading to Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), salmon fishing opens north of Ayock Point on Sept. 1, with a daily limit of four fish, coho only. Dabob and Quilcene bays, also part of Marine Area 12 opened for salmon fishing Aug. 16.

Several rivers around the region open to salmon fishing Sept. 1, including the much-anticipated Puyallup. "Anglers always look forward to this opening when the fish start to move into the river from Commencement Bay," Thiesfeld said. The daily limit on the river is six fish. Up to two adults may be retained, plus two additional pink salmon. Wild chinook must be released.

Other rivers openings include the Carbon River in Pierce County; Copalis River, Van Winkle Creek and Joe Creek in Grays Harbor County; the Bear and Niawiakum rivers in Pacific County; McLane Creek in Thurston County and Clearwater River in Jefferson County.

Also beginning Sept. 1, anglers fishing in the Quillayute system - which includes the Bogachiel, Sol Duc, Calawah and Dickey rivers - can keep two wild chinook as part of their limit of three adult fish. The total daily limit is six fish; all wild adult coho must be released.

On the Hoh River, anglers will be able to fish for salmon seven days a week as of Sept. 1 and keep up to two adult fish as part of their six-fish daily limit.

Anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for specific regulations throughout the region.

Recreational crabbers should be aware that the summer **Dungeness crab** fishery will close for a catch assessment in several areas of Puget Sound after the Labor Day weekend. Areas closing Sept. 3 one hour after sunset include Marine Area 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) and marine Areas 11 and 12 (Tacoma/Vashon and Hood Canal). Crabbing will be open over Labor Day weekend (Sept. 1-3).

Marine Areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) will remain open through Jan. 2, 2008.

For reporting purposes, crabbers are now required to report their crab catch on separate summer and fall/winter catch record cards during the course of the season. The record card for the summer season is due to WDFW by Sept. 15 and should be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season.

Completed catch record cards can be returned to WDFW by mail to the address printed on the card or dropped off at one of WDFW's six regional offices. More information on crabbing rules and reporting procedures is located at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crc.htm>.

### **Southwest Washington:**

Columbia River anglers continue to catch good numbers of hatchery **steelhead** above and below Bonneville Dam, although the focus is now shifting to fall **chinook** salmon in the lower river. The Buoy 10 fishery opens for chinook retention today (Aug. 22) through Sept. 3, and a large percentage of the anglers fishing in the lower mainstem Columbia upstream to Bonneville Dam already have been targeting chinook, said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist.

"Recent creel checks from Oregon show that one in two anglers fishing at Buoy 10 have been catching and releasing chinook salmon," Hymer said. "That, together with the growing number of chinook caught upriver points to some good chinook fishing in the weeks ahead. Right now, catch rates at Buoy 10 are way ahead of last year and in the lower Columbia they're at least as strong as they were a year ago at this time. If that's not enough, ever-increasing numbers of coho should be entering the Columbia."

But anglers hoping to take home a chinook salmon will need to act soon, Hymer said. In an effort to conserve wild "tule" runs, chinook retention will be closed Sept. 5-30 from the lower end of Bachelor Island (just upstream from the mouth of the Lewis River) to a projected line between Tongue Point and Rocky Point near Astoria. Other changes, effective in early September, are noted below.

"The window for chinook retention on the Columbia River and some tributaries is narrower this year," Hymer said. "The good news is that the season appears to be getting off to a good start."

Also starting strong is the "catch-and-keep" fishery for **white sturgeon** between the Wauna power lines and Bonneville Dam, where fishing reopened Aug. 18 six weeks ahead of schedule. Anglers fishing the gorge between Washougal and Bonneville Dam averaged one legal-sized sturgeon for every three rods during the first weekend of retention fishing. The fishery is open seven days per week through September. Bank anglers from the Hamilton Island ramp to the sturgeon deadline below Bonneville Dam are reminded they must stop fishing for sturgeon once the daily limit of one fish has been retained.

But hatchery **steelhead** have been providing most of the action in many areas, particularly above the dam. Boat anglers fishing at Drano Lake and the White Salmon River averaged one steelie per rod during the week ending Aug. 19, while also taking aboard a few chinook. Both waters have been crowded with boats and trailers.

"According to recent counts, more than 200,000 steelhead have crossed Bonneville Dam so far, but only 70,000 have cross The Dalles Dam," Hymer said. "At least theoretically, that leaves 130,000 fish swimming around in Bonneville Pool waiting to move upstream when the big river cools."

More than 11,000 steelhead moved past Bonneville Dam on Aug. 19, the highest number counted on a single day this year and one of the largest daily tally ever recorded (except for a few days in 2001), Hymer said.

Meanwhile, creel checks of 1,745 anglers fishing below Bonneville Dam tallied 182 steelhead, 87 adult fall chinook and one coho. Some chinook, coho and steelhead were caught near the mouth of the Lewis River, while anglers fishing the Cowlitz River caught some chinook at the barrier dam and some steelhead near Blue Creek.

Fishing regulations for each river are described in the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, posted online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

As noted above, the lower Columbia River will close to retention of chinook salmon Sept. 5-30 from a boundary marker on the lower end of Bachelor Island across to the Warrior Rock Lighthouse downstream to a projected line between Rocky Point and Tongue Point. In addition, fishing rules will change in early September for several tributaries to the big river, including:

**Grays River** (including West Fork) - Opens to fishing for hatchery coho Sept 1. The daily limit is six adipose-clipped coho, including no more than four adults. All chinook, chum, and wild coho

must be released.

**Elochoman River** - Opens to fishing for fall chinook and hatchery coho beginning Sept. 1. A bonus limit is in effect for adult hatchery coho through mid-October. All chum and wild coho must be released.

**Coweeman River** - The entire river will be closed to all fishing in September and October to protect spawning fall chinook.

**Mill, Abernathy, Germany and Coal creeks** - The lower portions of these streams will be closed to all fishing in September and October to protect spawning fall chinook.

**Cowlitz River** - Anglers must release all chinook salmon Sept. 5-30 from the Highway 4 bridge in Kelso downstream to protect wild tule fall chinook headed to the Coweeman River.

**Lewis River** - Chinook salmon must be released Sept. 5-30 downstream of the Interstate 5 bridge to protect wild tule fall chinook returning to the East Fork Lewis.

Angling for some **trout**? Bank anglers are catching some rainbows at Mayfield Lake, while those at Riffe Lake are catching a mixture of chinook, coho and steelhead.

### Eastern Washington:

The **steelhead** harvest season on the Snake River system in the south end of the region opens Sept. 1 with a daily catch limit of three hatchery steelhead (rainbow trout more than 20 inches long, marked with a clipped fin). Glen Mendel, WDFW district fish biologist in Dayton, said the best catches usually come later in the season. He reminds anglers to release any wild (unmarked) steelhead and watch for fall **chinook** and **coho** salmon, which are also in the Snake system and cannot be retained.

**Kokanee** fishing remains good at Loon Lake in southern Stevens County, especially at night. Waitts Lake, just up the road from Loon, is also a good evening spot to catch **rainbow** and **brown trout**, plus some **largemouth bass** and **yellow perch**. Lake Roosevelt is still producing catches of kokanee and big rainbows.

"The action at many of our trout lakes throughout the region should start picking up as summer winds down with lower air and water temperatures," said Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist. "Some, like Amber, Badger and Williams lakes in Spokane County have remained pretty good throughout the summer for anglers out really early and late in the day."

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

### North Central Washington:

The Okanogan and Similkameen rivers opened for **chinook** salmon fishing Aug. 15 through Sept. 15, notes Bob Jateff, WDFW district fish biologist in Omak.

"The uppermost boundary of this special fishery for the Okanogan is the Highway 97 Bridge just below Oroville," he said. "For the Similkameen River, it's the Highway 7 Bridge just west of

Oroville." Jateff explained the harvest season is possible because the upper Columbia River summer chinook return at Wells Dam is adequate and the fish stocks are stable and not listed under the Endangered Species Act. "Anglers need to remember there's a non-buoyant rule restriction on the summer chinook fishery from Wells Dam upstream, including the Okanogan and Similkameen rivers, plus a night closure is in effect," Jateff said.

Also by special rule, from Sept. 1-15 anglers can harvest any game fish **except trout** in the Okanogan River upstream of the highway bridge in Malott.

Jateff reports the salmon fishing effort in the Brewster-Bridgeport area of the Columbia River has slowed a bit in recent days. "But with cooler temperatures new fish could be moving into that area," he said. The season continues through Oct. 15.

"**Trout** fishing continues to be good on the Methow River for both rainbows and cutthroat," Jateff said. "Selective gear and catch-and-release rules apply, and anglers should check the regulations carefully since the Twisp, Chewuch, and Methow River above Foghorn Dam sections were closed to fishing Aug. 15. The Methow River from the Lower Burma Road Bridge to Foghorn Dam will be open through Sept 30. Signs are posted along our Methow River access sites with open and closed seasons listed."

Jateff said anglers wanting to catch a few **yellow perch** should try Patterson Lake near Winthrop. **Bluegills** and **crappie** continue to be caught out of Leader Lake near the town of Okanogan along Highway 20. "These are two lakes that provide fisheries throughout the summer when trout fishing has slowed," he said.

### [South Central Washington:](#)

Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist, said it's a great time for hiking anglers to head for the high country and fish the mountain lakes. "The trails are maintained and the bugs are on the decline now," he said. "Fishing for **cutthroat**, **rainbow** and **eastern brook trout** can be rewarding now until the snow falls." Cummins encourages anglers to check out the region's "Primer for High Lakes" for a partial list of lakes and the species of fish in each, available in printed form at WDFW's Yakima office and via the Internet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg3/highlakes.pdf>.

"If you go it's important to be prepared for rapid changes in weather at this time," he warned. There are also some road closures in the Bumping River area that anglers heading that direction can check out before leaving home at [http://www.nachesvalleychamber.com/info/nrd-Road\\_closure\\_1800\\_1808.doc](http://www.nachesvalleychamber.com/info/nrd-Road_closure_1800_1808.doc).

Cummins also suggested checking with Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest ranger districts in Naches and Cle Elum about road and trail conditions (see <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/wenatchee/recreation/report/#cleelum> or <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/wenatchee/about/naches/index.shtml>).

Although Mud Lake, northwest of Naches, is rarely fished at this time of year, anglers should be aware of a recent closure of the Mud Lake Road off the north side of Highway 410. The closure is where the road crosses private land at the highway entrance and public use has been a problem for the landowner. An alternate, albeit much longer route into Mud Lake, is from Highway 410 via Bald Mountain Road (U.S. Forest Service Road 1701) to the top of Cleman Mountain, then east on U.S. Forest Service 1712. Cummins notes Mud Lake is popular for fly anglers in the spring and early summer.

The Yakima River **salmon** fishery opens Sept.1 from the Highway 240 bridge upstream to 400 feet below Prosser Dam and from the Highway 223 bridge at Granger upstream to Sunnyside (Parker) Dam. Daily limit is six salmon, but no more than two adults (24 inches or more if chinook, 20 inches or more if coho) may be retained. All areas of the Yakima River are closed to angling for steelhead, hatchery or wild. Cummins said most of the salmon catching will occur later in September.

"The same goes for the Hanford Reach," he said, referring to that portion of the Columbia River near the Tri-Cities that opened to fishing for salmon Aug.16. "The salmon really don't start biting there until late September."

### **Reader Email**

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

Write to the TGF staff:

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### **Random Links**

ODFW will **NOT** be hosting a meeting to discuss proposed changes to the Catch Sharing Plan for 2008 due to the uncertainty of the 2008 catch allocation, which could be reduced as much as 50% from 2007 levels:

**<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/halibut/management/index.asp#Process>**

THE CLACKAMAS RIVER CLEAN UP (#5) SUNDAY, SEPT. 9th:

**<http://clackamasrivercleanup.org/>** (last year, 300 volunteers picked up four tons of garbage).

**GOOD LUCK!**