

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 31<sup>st</sup> – September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Chinook counts are starting to climb at Bonneville Dam and anglers near the mouths of the Kalama, Cowlitz and Sandy Rivers are entering peak season right now. Wobblers fished deep will take the majority of the fish. The river section from Warrior Rock to Bachelor Island will close for chinook retention from September 5<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>.

Gorge anglers are having more luck with steelhead than salmon and it may continue that way until October when water temperatures cool and migration slows where anglers can fish on more localized stocks of chinook.

Willamette Falls water temperature has dropped to 70 degrees. Coho have started to cross the Falls in single digits. Sturgeon fishing is still in the doldrums for shorter-than-legal fish. Smallmouth bass fishing is improving on the Willamette, both upper and lower, and will only get better as water temperatures drop into September.

Summer steelhead continue to trickle into the Clackamas River, providing anglers with occasional first-light hookups. The Sandy still isn't worth the trip.

Steelheading is slow in the warm water of the North Santiam. The water of the South Santiam remains extremely low, which is making for tough fishing conditions.

Waters scheduled for trout planting include Faraday Lake, Harriet Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Roslyn Lake, Small Fry Lake, Trillium Lake, West Salish Pond, the McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake and Salmon Creek.

**Northwest –** Buoy 10 anglers are finding fair numbers of chinook but coho are beginning to make a stronger showing in recent days. The best fishing remains close to high slack when cooler ocean temperatures are more likely to trigger a fish's feeding instinct. Herring and fresh jigged anchovies are responsible for the majority of strikes. John Partin of Bend took a 26-pound upriver bright on Tuesday fishing a plug-cut herring in 14 feet of water on lower Desdemona Sands.

Fishery managers met on Wednesday to access the Buoy 10 catch of chinook. **What action?**

Although ocean salmon fishing out of the Columbia closed last Saturday, the South of Falcon fishery remains open at least through Labor Day. Effort has dropped off and wild fish are making up a larger percentage of the catch. As of Sunday, the fishery had exhausted 81% of its quota.

Albacore anglers are having a harder time finding concentrated schools of fish but most northern Oregon ports remain good options into mid-September. The weekend weather forecast may make for some productive fishing.

Nehalem Bay anglers continue to struggle but many regional anglers are getting excited for the annual fall return of large chinook due back to these estuaries in the coming weeks. The Nestucca, Nehalem and Tillamook Bays are top picks in coming weeks with some of the largest fish returning the earliest.

**Southwest** – Mild tides and mid-morning lows may help boaters launching to cross the bar early in the morning this weekend but afternoon winds should motivate anglers to get back to port as soon as possible.

Surf conditions are predicted to be mild this week, building once again into the weekend, but wind forecasts look problematic for offshore anglers.

Given the fine offshore catch rates for coho, count on end-of-day September 4<sup>th</sup> to be the final day for ocean salmon fishing south of Cape Falcon to the California border.

Tidewater on the Siuslaw produced a couple of chinook over the past weekend but it's still early. Anglers who crossed into the ocean caught decent numbers of coho but only 25% were fin-clipped keepers.

Chinook catches have been slow inside Winchester Bay for most anglers but knowledgeable locals have been hitting fish averaging in the mid-twenties trolling the Umpqua River tidewater.

A few Chinook have been hitting trolled, plug-cut herring inside lower Coos Bay. Some hot pinkfin action has been reported off the ocean beaches near Coos Bay, but rewarding surfperch fishing is not limited to this stretch. Anywhere the beach drops off or features a low spot should hold fish.

Anglers are experiencing slow fishing in the Rogue River estuary with water temperatures above 70 degrees at times. The good news is that coho are entering the bay in good numbers now. When the temperature of the Rogue River begins to drop - either seasonally or with a decent rain - the fish will be on the move and on the bite. This is historically the time of year that steelhead and half-pounder action heats up in the lower Rogue near Agness. Bank anglers do well here.

Bottom fishing for rockfish remains excellent out of Brookings. Some very large ling cod are also showing in catches with several going well over the 20-pound mark.

Section 5 of the Rogue River, Clearwater #2, Hemlock Lake and Lomolo Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

**Eastern** – Numbers of steelhead on the lower Deschutes are increasing daily, and with the water temperature dropping recently, results should improve as well. For fly anglers targeting trout, the caddis hatch is winding down to be replaced by mayflies. Carry an assortment to match the hatches.

Deschutes River 5, Devils Lake, East Lake, Fall River, Lake of the Woods, Pinehollow Reservoir, Rouge River, Sprague Gravel Pit, Spring Creek, Taylor Lake, Three Creeks Lake and Walton Lake are scheduled to be planted this week.

**Pro guide Mac Huff (1-800-940-3688)** reports that steelhead will soon be entering the Grande Ronde.

**SW Washington** – Most rivers remain too low for productive fishing but the mouths of the Cowlitz and Kalama are picking up for upper Columbia bound chinook and steelhead.

Drano Lake and the White Salmon River remain fair for summer steelhead and building numbers of fall fun chinook.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – High on the list of priorities to talk about is the question as to whether anglers in the lower Columbia will continue to get to angle for Chinook in the Buoy 10 fishery. Fishery managers answered our question on Wednesday and it is YES! Managers decided to continue the fishery as catch rates for Chinook have slowed coupled with some leftover quota from the ocean. With such a small quota for the Buoy 10 fishery in the first place, we didn't have a lot to work with. As it stands now, the fishery will continue as scheduled with the closure to Chinook beginning on September 4<sup>th</sup>. After that, only adipose fin-clipped coho and steelhead may be retained.

And, the coho are coming in! Catch rates have steadily increased for coho over the last several days with large fish being taken throughout the incoming tide. Anglers holding at the Buoy 10 line- a traditional hot spot for targeting coho have been gravely disappointed. It seems, until the cooler ocean water penetrates into the upper estuary, the fish are reluctant to bite. Beginning about half way into the incoming tide, anglers fishing the shallower water in the middle of the river have been scoring results. Some of the best fishing has been taking place in water shallower than 20 feet. Although my technique may not have much application by the time anglers are fishing on the weekend, I have been starting my day on the first part of the incoming tide near Buoy 12 or wing jetty 1 on the Washington side. While I am getting the rods rigged for the day, I'll have one of my customers jig up a couple of dozen of the hordes of anchovies that are in the river, selecting the largest ones to fish whole. For the 6 rods I have been fishing, half get anchovies, half get plug cut herring. They have both been producing equally well and my customers are having a great time catching their own bait! The Mustad Piscator rigs have been working the best in green or red. You won't have any problem finding the schools of bait if you are looking in the lower river at the first part of incoming tide.

I have been starting my guide trips at around 10:00 a.m. the last few days to target the incoming tide when water temperatures are near their coolest of the day. Following the tide upstream, we have consistently been getting coho and Chinook through high slack. Once the outgoing tide begins, I have been focusing on the deeper channels above the bridge in 30 foot of water drawing strikes close to the shipwreck and just upstream. This is when we have been getting the bulk of our Chinook and the crowds seem to be non-existent. In many cases, I have been the only boat fishing this water. Look to The Guide's Forecast section of this report for detailed information on what to expect next week!

Upstream, the upriver bright season is well underway. Catches dramatically improved this week with ample catches coming from deep water wobblers in the Longview to Gresham area. Although the lower in the mainstem you fish, the better the results last week, this may slightly shift in the coming week due to run timing and the regulation modification coming to anglers fishing this popular stretch. The new regulation reads:

***Effective August 1 through December 31, 2007 this section of the Columbia River is open to angling for fall Chinook, adipose fin-clipped coho, and adipose fin-clipped steelhead: however, Chinook retention is prohibited downstream from a line projected from Warrior Rock to the bottom of Bachelor Island during September 5 – 30. The daily bag limit is two adult salmonids, only one of which may be an adult Chinook salmon, and five jack salmon. Jack salmon are Chinook less than or equal to 24 inches and coho less than or equal to 20 inches.***

Some days, anglers fishing these waters are reporting an average of at least a Chinook per boat while other days, it isn't that good. None-the-less, the season is well underway and if this is what you like to do, now is the time to do it! Be cautious as to where you drop your anchor- ship traffic has the right of way.

Dam passage at Bonneville continues to improve for Chinook and steelhead numbers remain impressive. In the gorge itself, anglers are having a much easier time catching steelhead than salmon at this point as it seems once the fish hit the Columbia River Gorge east of the mouth of the Sandy, they are most interested in getting themselves upstream, and quick. Bank steelheaders are getting about a fish for every 2.5 rods while boaters are not even doing that well.

Sturgeon fishing is picking up in the gorge already with fair numbers of fish coming close to the Bonneville Dam itself. One legal for every 4 rods was reported while boaters didn't do nearly that well. This fishery will only build as we enter the fall months.

Better numbers of steelhead are beginning to cross The Dalles Dam which would indicate some good opportunities for Deschutes River trollers. Although it is picking up, action is not consistent with some mornings way out-producing others. Trolled plugs take the lion's share of the catch here.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Crowds have been somewhat tame in Hammond this week but the weekend will bring a lot of motivated anglers to the area. Traditionally, coho are a high menu item and they will certainly make up the bulk of the catch this Labor Day. Chinook will remain open and anglers may have a good crack at these fish by the weekend as an early morning high tide should allow anglers a few short hours of outgoing tide where the water temperatures won't be too extreme for fish to remain motivated to bite. Although we have been catching fish in 66-degree water on bait, I much prefer fishing in water cooler than 59 degrees. Hardware is garnering more attention lately but I remain confident with bait- both herring and fresh jigged anchovies as I have not got bit on a spinner yet this year. However, some guides are reporting great success fishing hardware so half of the issue is just fishing something you have confidence in. If this is the weekend you are going to put an all-out effort out on, be sure to get on the river early to take advantage of this short-lived bite as once the river water takes over the bulk of the estuary, the bite is going to shut down. From there, you may have to wait a while until the tide starts flooding in again (which will be quite late in the afternoon) but coho should be present in good numbers- they have been running large.

Rumors of a possible ocean re-opener are actually a possibility. Fishery managers are looking closely at the numbers to see if enough fish remain on the quota to justify a short opener off of the mouth of the Columbia. Anglers will have to check the ODF&W home page to really find out before they get heading off to the fishing grounds. Keep in mind however that the coho are really beginning to show strongly in the river and "B" run coho numbers are way down so the bulk of the run may indeed be in the river by the weekend.

Upriver, anglers should still be in the fish as the bulk of the run migrates upstream in the coming 10 days. Be aware of the upcoming closures (see above) but anglers have their best kept spots for these quality fish and this will be the week to target them.

Anglers wanting to drop crab pots will face a variety of issues this weekend. Traffic will be the #1 killer of crab pots as both sport and commercial vessels will be mowing down buoys in or out of the shipping channel. The tides will be outgoing for the bulk of the day but should be weakening which should be making for better crabbing conditions. Effort is picking up and catches have been fair.

**Last-minute Columbia update!** Offshore fishing re-opens for a limit of 1 Chinook and 1 clipped Coho or 2 clipped coho offshore out of the Columbia (from Leadbetter Point in Washington to Cape Falcon) on Sunday, September 2nd. **The Guide's Forecast** is for good fishing, ocean conditions allowing.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – While there is no mention as to the reason on the ODFW Willamette Falls Fish Passage website page, the counts for spring Chinook and jacks were rewound to start at zero on August 15th. If memory serves, they started counting these as fall Chinook on that date. If this is the case, the final count for 2007 spring Chinook, forecast at 52,000, would finish at a dismal 22,818.

As summer steelhead totals approach 14,000 for the year a 14 coho have joined the upstream migration. Daily coho counts will take off when fall approaches and the water begins to cool.

For readers getting a '404' when checking the Willamette Falls info page, the ODFW changed it, but didn't tell anybody. The new one is in 'Random Links,' below.

The upper McKenzie continues to reward fly anglers with rainbows and cutthroat trout.

Steelhead numbers are very good in the North Santiam from Mehama up to Packsaddle Park. Drifting from Mehama to Fishermen's Bend has been productive for some anglers.

**The Guide's Forecast** – The only game in the lower Willamette is sturgeon and smallmouth bass. While the bass fishing has been good, sturgeon fishing has remained spotty and is producing mostly shakers. The marginally good news is that a couple of keepers were reported this week but being on the river beats sitting at the computer keyboard. Anglers can keep one 42 to 60 inch fish per angler seven days a week in the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel. Look for improvement with rain.

Caddis and Mayflies are hatching on the upper McKenzie and matching patterns will take trout. Deep-fishing nymphs will occasionally dredge up larger fish.

Steelhead have been responding to baits of sand shrimp but the bite has been so soft as to be difficult to detect. Alternately, spinners have been drawing strikes about which there is no doubt.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – The Clackamas is low continuing to offer challenging conditions to boaters and deterring angling efforts. With steelhead still entering, there are fish to be caught, however, with the best chance for a hookup from Rivermill Dam down to Barton. Use of the river this weekend by swimmers and happy splashers on raft, tube and inflatable seahorse will be heavy during daylight hours. Have faith; school is starting soon and with coho crossing at Willamette Falls, it's a sure bet that a few are entering the lower Clack. **Update** - A report late Thursday, August 30th confirms that coho are being caught in the lower river.

Fishing is very slow on the Sandy, although water clarity has improved. Expect construction on Marmot Dam to muddy the water periodically. A handful of steelhead have been taken recently between Dodge Park and Dabney. There are better options.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Although anglers will still have the option to fish in South of Cape Falcon waters through Labor Day weekend, the fishery may not last much longer than that. To date, this area has reached over 80% of its quota. However, with hatchery fish becoming more challenging to find, it could go a while longer. If the quota is not met by September 16<sup>th</sup>, the fishery will automatically shut down. Anglers reported nearly a keeper for every other rod on

board.

Trollers working Tillamook Bay for coho have seen an improvement in catches of coho over the past week and recently a couple of early fall Chinook have been taken. Crabbing remains only fair but is showing signs of improvement and will only get better into fall. The ocean outside of the bay was pleasant Monday this week, but salmon fishing was very slow.

Anxious anglers awaiting early returning fall run fish should begin to get excited in the coming weeks. Most estuaries have yet to post great catches of Chinook but some coho and Chinook should be available in many watersheds. The Tillamook and Nehalem systems should boast the best results. Regular contributor Rich Riley reports this from Nehalem Bay; "Hi Bob: I continue to join the handful of avid fishermen every day at Wheeler in the Nehalem Bay and still have yet to put anything on my harvest card."

Rich continues, "With all the secret herring brines, scents, attractors, electronics, "super-duper" rods and reels at the "ready", we continue to pull hearing, spinners, plugs, with nothing yet to post on the "Bragging Board" at Wheeler. But I think I have finally found the "Secret"... its called a KAYAK , YES SIR A SIMPLE, ONE MAN, KAYAK.

The other morning we had a good chuckle as we watched a young man pull a Kayak out of the back of his station wagon along with his paddle, life jacket, net and fishing rod. He proceeded to paddle back and forth between Wheeler and the Kahrs dock. We all got a good laugh, as it was quite a sight. All the time making sly comments to our fellow "expert" anglers. Comments like "He will resemble a jet ski if he ever hooks one" or "He will no doubt end up in the Ocean before he could ever land one in that!"

However, our laughter quickly turned to "silence" and we watched this young man, promptly land two nice Chinook which he tied to the side of his Kayak for the trip back to the boat launch... no doubt he was thinking about the old adage "He who laughs last.....Do you know where a fellow could find a Kayak cheap?"

Thanks for a great chuckle Rich!

Surf perch fishing is good off steep ocean beaches for anglers using sand shrimp, clam necks or mole crabs. The latter is available right on the beach in many locations.

The Nestucca tidewater should also begin to turn on in the coming weeks. Crabbing in the lower Nestucca has been good with mostly hard keepers reported.

**The Guide's Forecast** – For the few motivated anglers fishing the coastal tidewaters, the weak tides coming over Labor Day weekend will be most suited for trolling herring in the lower bay. Don't expect great results but both Chinook and coho should be present.

According to sea surface temperature charts, warm water should put albacore within reach of well-equipped recreational craft this week, but these conditions can change rather quickly so it remains to be seen if these conditions persist through the weekend. Then there's the wind and wave conditions to take into account. Tuna have been scattered recently with concentrations difficult to locate.

Chinook usually enter the Salmon River earlier than the Nestucca, but since nobody talks about it, there have been few reports. Only one Chinook has been confirmed and crowds are yet to form on the banks. It may be worth a look for those who don't mind fishing amidst surly anglers.

Crabbing should be a good option as well on many north coast rivers.

Friendly seas in the weekend forecast may motivate tuna anglers to get offshore for albacore. Catches seem to be most productive out of northern ports at this time.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Only a handful of Chinook have been taken by anglers fishing the lower Siletz with Hannah Yellas setting the bar for biggest fish of the season so far with a 36 pounder landed on August 25th.

Plenty of albacore were available to sports anglers on Monday this week about 25 miles out of Depoe Bay. It remains to be seen if the warm water is a longer run this weekend and how ocean conditions will shape up for the trip. As of mid-week, Saturday looks most promising. Coho limits have come to many boats fishing out of Depoe recently. Fish are being taken at 22 to 26-foot depths over about three hundred feet of water.

Boaters launching out of Newport have reported a marked slowing of coho action over the past week. Undaunted, many are planning combo halibut/salmon runs this weekend. While crabbing at Newport has improved, limits are rare with about half the crab too soft to keep.

The ODFW has indicated the summer all-depth halibut season from south of Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain will continue every Friday, Saturday and Sunday until the catch limit is met with no alternate closing date. Anglers surveyed in the area from Bandon north indicated very nearly 100% success for halibut. As of the last all-depth halibut fishery ending August 25th, 1,083 pounds remained in the 6,190 pound quota.

Ocean coho fishing slowed on Tuesday this week out of Florence. Boats averaged one or two silvers each, disappointing following a the recent period of easy limits.

Last chance. The 11th annual Labor Day salmon derby out of Winchester Bay is September 1st through 3rd. Entry is only \$10 per angler, \$25 per boat for a chance at prizes from \$150 to \$500. Tickets are available at Ace Hardware & Turman Tackle in Reedsport and at the Stockade Market in Winchester Bay.

On a similar note, the Fort Umpqua Days Bass Tournament out of Elkton is this Saturday, September 1st. A team of three fishing out of a driftboat pays a \$100 entry fee and will be provided a portable live well. Top prize is \$500. Call 643-6258 or 584-2555 for information.

Smallmouth remains the hot ticket on the South Umpqua, delivering fish all day long. A few Chinook are showing up in catches on the North Umpqua with summer steelheading improving. A few fall Chinook have entered Winchester Bay and the lower Umpqua, but water temperatures will have to drop before they venture upstream. Green sturgeon have been caught in the estuary but no whites. Crabbing is fair but has been improving recently.

Northwest winds are pushing warm water further off the southwest coast, possibly putting off tuna excursions until the southerlies return.

For anglers targeting Chinook, there's about a 60% chance of landing one off the south coast. Comparatively, about 30% of anglers targeting ling cod have been successful recently.

Catches of fall Chinook picked up over the past week on the lower Coquille River with trolled spinners effective recently. Chinook continue to trickle in to the lower Coos river with trolled

herring and spinners taking a few recently.

Pressure is light as with Chinook fishing on the upswing in Rogue Bay although onshore winds have been troublesome. Bank fishing opportunities are available for half-pounders at Quosatina Campground. Adult steelhead are also in the mix, and while not numerous, the fish are large chromers. Plug-pullers have been doing the best in the Grants Pass stretch and Chinook catches are decent. Fishing above Gold Ray Dam, closed for all Chinook angling, will become flies-only starting Sunday, September 2nd. While conventional as well as fly gear may be used in this stretch, no additional weight (other than a casting bubble) may be used.

**Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro guide Mac Huff (1-800-940-3688)** reports, "Here in northeast Oregon we're waiting for the steelhead that will soon enter the Grande Ronde. Water temperatures dropped dramatically during the last two weeks, thanks to some rainy days and much lower daytime and nighttime air temperatures. With the arrival of cooler water temps in our river- 58 degrees last week - fish have started moving in the Columbia and Snake rivers. Trout fishing is good now in the Grande Ronde and steelhead will be here on schedule."

The YTD count of summer steelhead at Bonneville was 242,450 as of Monday this week. Of those, only about 68,500 were unclipped. Warm water upriver on the Columbia has kept steelhead keged between Bonneville and The Dalles Dams. As of August 27th over 156,000 summers were holding between the dams. Cooler water temperatures will have these fish charging upstream. While the Bonneville Pool is producing some good catches now, steelheading will improve dramatically at the Deschutes when the Columbia cools.

**Northwest Trout** – Deep trolling has been effective for taking good numbers of hatchery trout at Detroit Reservoir. The water level is 13 feet below full pool.

Only the Thistle Creek boat ramp remains usable due to low water at Green Peter Reservoir. Kokanee fishing is fair for large kokes, but as fish enter spawning stage, the quality will deteriorate.

Paulina has been fishing well for kokanee and while fish are starting to show signs of the spawning phase, should be decent table for the next week or two.

In the South Willamette Watershed, the ODFW will stock McKenzie above Leaburg Lake with 6,750 rainbow trout and Salmon Creek near Oakridge with 900 legal-size rainbow trout this week.

In the North Willamette Watershed, ODFW will stock Faraday Lake, Harriett Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Roslyn Lake, Small Fry Lake, Trillium Lake and West Salish Pond with rainbow trout. North Fork Reservoir will receive over 16,000 legal-size rainbow trout. Harriet Lake and Trillium Lake will receive a combination of legal and trophy-size fish. West Salish Pond will be stocked with 400 trophy-size trout.

Stocked lakes are great places to take kids for a rewarding experience over the Labor Day Weekend.

**Northwest Bass & Panfish** - The upper Willamette is producing scores of smallmouth per day in the two to three pound class to anglers using soft plastics. Keep an eye on the non-fishing recreational craft, the number of which should thin out following Labor Day. Bass fishing will be

great into October as large- and smallmouth bass feed heavily in anticipation of winter.

### **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/reggs/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%20closure%201800%201808.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**

New Willamette Falls Fish Passage link:

**[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/fish\\_counts/willamette%20falls.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/fish_counts/willamette%20falls.asp)**

Check here for the latest Action Notices on the Columbia River:

**<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/crc/crcindex.htm>**

It's whale watching time again off the Oregon coast:

**<http://www.whalespoken.org/>**

**Weekly Quote** – Fishing is not so much getting fish as it is a state of mind and a lure for the human soul into refreshment. - Herbert Hoover

**GOOD LUCK!**