

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 7th – September 13th, 2007**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Anglers have had a disappointing start to the upriver bright salmon fishery. The stretch of Columbia from Kalama to the mouth of the Sandy is usually producing excellent results now but recent reports indicate otherwise. The river is now only open from Warrior Rock near Sauvie Island upstream to the Oregon/Washington border. Metallic wobblers are producing the best results. Dam passage at Bonneville indicates the best is yet to come.

The lower Willamette remains low, warm and clear. Coho are trickling over the Falls, but it'll take a break in temperatures and the first fall rain to open the floodgates. Fall chinook number fewer than 40 and summer steelhead counts are still shy of the 14,000 mark for the year. Sturgeon fishing is slow, bass fishing is excellent.

Fly anglers are taking fair to good numbers of rainbows and cutthroat on the South Santiam, but steelhead smolts are also hitting. Release with care.

The McKenzie above Leaburg Dam continues to delight fly anglers with a combination of native and hatchery trout.

A few lightly colored summer steelhead are being hooked on mostly early morning forays on the Clackamas. Recycling to Riverside from the trap is ongoing. Coho salmon are available on the lower river although numbers are low this early in the season.

Coho are expected to show in the lower Sandy River over the next week or so although October is the peak month.

Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake and the McKenzie River below Leaburg Lake are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

Northwest – The Buoy 10 fishery is clearly peaking with easy limits falling to anglers in the know fishing bait or hardware above the bridge on the Washington side. Coho are averaging large with frequent keepers running nearly 9 and 10 pounds. Most recently, the fish have been taken in the deepest part of the channel which is over 40 foot deep.

The ocean re-opener was less than impressive but still produced limit fishing. Offshore anglers turned around on Sunday when westerly winds kept tuna fishers from pursuing their quarry. Good weather conditions are common for ocean fishers this month however and opportunities will likely come later in the month.

Lower Columbia River crabbing is sporadic with shorter soak times producing better results. Crab pot buoys are frequently getting run over by sport and commercial traffic so be aware of where you place your gear.

Chinook are being taken in Tillamook but not in any great numbers. The Nehalem showed signs of improvement last week but only for a couple of days. A 46-pounder was weighed in on the 31st. Some chinook are beginning to show in the lower Nestucca as well. Spinner casters are faring best.

The new record Siletz chinook (so far) this season goes to Brad Bemis who landed a 46-pounder on August 28th. It's still slow but action has picked up here over the past week with most fish in the 28 to 30 pound range.

Halibut fishing was rewarding over the past weekend out of Newport with most boats returning to port with limits.

Southwest – Mild minus tides over the weekend will likely delay bar crossings. The surf forecast for Saturday and Sunday is mild as of Tuesday this week.

Albacore were tough to find and halibut was slow offshore out of Winchester Bay this past Saturday. Anglers launching out of the bay on Sunday this week were met with a lumpy ocean and scattered tuna. Trolled, plug-cut herring are picking up a few chinook below Reedsport.

Boaters 18 to 20 miles out of Coos Bay experienced spotty tuna fishing over the weekend, but it was worth the trip.

Anglers continue to pick up chinook daily trolling the Rogue River estuary. It's been steady and improving over the past week. A few chinook have been taken outside the mouth on wobblers. Expect changes in chinook regulations next year as the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission lays plans to double the number of wild chinook spawning in the Rogue system over the next few years.

South coast beaches continue to deliver surf perch limits with pressure from anglers very light.

Offshore salmon fishing wrapped up September 6th south of Cape Falcon. The ocean north of that landmark re-opened September 2nd for an additional 2,000 coho. Brookings anglers get a two-week chinook season in October. Bottom fishing remains excellent with large rockfish and lings rewarding ocean anglers.

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

Eastern – Water conditions are improving as temperatures gradually drop with cooler nights. Steelhead numbers are building on the lower Deschutes and should be receptive to spinners and plugs.

SW Washington – Anglers need to check regulations carefully on the Cowlitz and Lewis Rivers as chinook retention ceased on September 5th. Most anglers are waiting for the later returning coho that should show later in October.

Steelheaders are still taking a fair number of steelhead from the Drano Lake and White Salmon River fisheries. Chinook catches are becoming more common and fishing should improve in coming weeks.

Columbia River Fishing Report – As is often the case, just when fishing in the Buoy 10 fishery gets going, the crowds have gone and interest is waning. Kids are back in school and since Chinook season has closed, interest has headed upriver where anglers still have a chance to keep a Chinook although the fishing is not all that impressive.

For those of us that maintained ourselves down here in the estuary, we're experiencing great fishing and good conditions. The coho bite is the best it's been all season and catching and releasing Chinook really isn't all that bad of a situation. Thankfully, the bulk of the catch is

hatchery coho. The best fishing recently has been taking place on the Washington side with the first part of the incoming tide producing along the 20 to 30 foot line in front of the church, on up to above the bridge. Like always, we're following the fish on the incoming tide and working them over from upriver on a downstream troll when the tide changes. One day, the fish will be running large, the next day maybe a bit smaller- but they all seem to be pretty uniform on the given days we fish.

The spinner bite has really picked up in recent days with the standard red/white or pink/white producing quite nicely. Fresh bait is really hard to come by since effort and demand have dropped. Frozen bait is working just fine however and I am using blue label herring. I also was running fresh jigged anchovies when they were available but in recent days, the schools have become very dispersed and very difficult to target. With the weak tides, the best anchovy jigging has been close to buoys 10 and 12. Look for diving birds and surface activity but you will be challenged to find some bait.

We have been doing our best on the first part of the outgoing tide above the bridge and although the water temperatures have been climbing to around 66 to 67 degrees lately, the fish still seem to respond well to hardware and bait. I have been adamant about keeping my baits fishing deep where we are marking the majority of fish and where I believe the majority of biters actually travel. Other guides are catching fish off of the bottom but it is mostly a matter of confidence. The Oregon side produced nicely during the Chinook retention period and does remain good for Chinook (although many are jacks and you can't keep them anyway). Spinners and bait are also working well on the Oregon side. Buoy 10 itself remains poor.

The ocean re-opener has not been all that productive lately. With the bulk of the returning coho early run fish, it honestly appears as if the bulk of the fish may very well be in the river system. Only a few boats have been going out and they have struggled to get their limits. The ocean has also been a bit rough lately.

Tuna chasers have been pretty disappointed lately with schools well dispersed and hard to target. Catches have been steadily decreasing even though September can be a great month to fish albacore.

Upriver, anchor anglers have had a challenging week given the fact they should be in peak season. Many folks believe the fish are running late and we're due for a large push in coming days. The most productive water is now closed (Cowlitz/Lewis/Kalama areas) so be sure to check your regulations before you head out and fish. It's a confusing year in lower Columbia sportfishing this year. The mouth of the Sandy and Bonneville Dam has not been producing good catches as of late. Many boats are reporting slow fishing having numerous people scratching their heads.

River crabbing is fair around Buoys 20 and 22 but should improve as the fall progresses.

Anglers targeting sturgeon in the gorge are coming up with better catches. Bank anglers tallied nearly a keeper for every 6 rods while boaters took a keeper for about every 3 boats. Smelt is a key ingredient in this region and action should only get better in coming weeks. Sturgeon fishing downstream of the Columbia River Gorge is fair as well with a keeper reported for about every 3 boats in the Portland to Longview stretch.

The Guide's Forecast – Although we've seen some of the best coho fishing of the season, there should still be many more productive days to come. The tides are weakening and we're not sure what that is going to do to the fishing. Today (9/5) had already shown signs of slowing from the previous 2 days when fishing was absolutely stupid good.

With the weaker tides, anglers will want to begin their day by starting down lower in the river system- like around Chinook and just upstream, trolling their way upriver as the tide comes in. Be sure to be upstream of the bridge for high slack however as that has been one of the most consistent bites to date. Keep your baits and lures on the bottom of the river and target depths of 14 to 24 feet to fish in. Red/white, gold with red beads and pink/white spinners have been working best for me. Plug cut herring (blue label) has also been working well and fresh bait may be available if the weekend interest picks up. Be sure to call ahead to check bait availability and make a reservation for the next days fishing needs. Get large anchovies when you can!

Forgo the ocean to target salmon in the river where concentrated numbers mean better results. If you are going to fish the ocean, stick close by the river mouth as "A" run fish are anxious to get into their upstream migrating patterns. Most of the biters have been running on the bottom and don't be afraid to fish in 10 to 14 foot of water.

Although the ocean is not forecasted to be all that friendly over the coming weekend, additional halibut opportunities exist. Here is the press release:

Halibut fishing off Columbia River reopens

NEWPORT, Ore. – Anglers fishing out of the Columbia River can take advantage of additional fishing opportunities for Pacific halibut on Sept. 15.

The fishery will re-open for one day on Sept. 15 and will remain closed after that date unless sufficient quota remains and National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service announce another opening.

The sport halibut season off the Columbia River area – from Cape Falcon, Ore., to Leadbetter Point, Wash. – was last open on Aug. 24-26. The catch limit was expected to be reached by the end of fishing that weekend. However, only 663 pounds were landed, leaving over 1,000 pounds of the quota still available.

On Sept. 4, NOAA Fisheries Service, the International Pacific Halibut Commission, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife met by conference call to discuss reopening the fishery. NOAA Fisheries Service, the agency with authority to make in-season regulation changes, determined there were sufficient pounds remaining in the quota to re-open the fishery.

Sport anglers planning to fish out of Columbia River ports are reminded possession of groundfish species is not allowed when a Pacific halibut is aboard their vessel. The exception is sablefish (black cod) and Pacific cod, which may be retained with halibut. Other non-groundfish species, such as tuna and salmon during authorized seasons, may be possessed with halibut on open Pacific halibut days.

More details on regulations can be found at:
www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/halibut/fishing/seasonmaps/seasonmap_current.asp or in the 2007 Oregon Sport Ocean Regulations for Salmon, Halibut and Other Marine Species booklet. General regulations can be found in the 2007 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations booklet.

Upriver, anglers will have a tough time catching Chinook in the limited water available for fishing. Wobbler fishers will do best at the mouth of the Sandy and catches should improve in coming weeks. Choose metallic colors on sunny days and solid colors like blues and greens on overcast days.

Sturgeon fishing should only get better into November. Both bank and boat anglers will find ample opportunity for keepers with the gorge typically producing the best catches. Smelt will be a top bait but anglers can get the edge by tipping their baits with sand shrimp. This is really the best time to catch a sturgeon from the bank- your peak is fast approaching.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – While flows increased slightly at Willamette Falls September 5th and 6th, it hasn't affected the 72-degree water temperatures. Fall Chinook passage in these conditions is low with only 50 having crossed the Falls so far this season. Only 27 coho have been counted. The YTD spring Chinook count at the Falls mid-August was about 22,000 and adding the Clackamas fish, the run final for 2007 will finish something short of 30,000. Not a good year. The dismal jack counts this season does not bode well for 2008, either.

Remember that overnight shower over the past week? Hardly enough to help local rivers and streams, but enough to have caused the Portland sewer system to overflow - again. They say it may be safe to come in contact with the water in the lower Willamette by Saturday this week. When will 21st-Century technology put a stop to this craptacular, predictable scenario?

Anglers will find increased flows on the North Santiam as water is being released in the seasonal drawdown of Detroit reservoir which will also provide additional spawning habitat for Chinook.

The Guide's Forecast – While sturgeon fishing remains open seven days a week on the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel, it's mostly a shaker show. Use only single-point barbless hooks and be aware that sturgeon hooked inadvertently on terminal tackle of any other description must be released unharmed.

An improved bite has been predicted on the North Santiam this coming weekend and we hope it's true. Fishing has been tough all season and it's overdue to turn on. Bobber and jigs as well as spinners should be effective.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Anglers have been picking up steelhead on the Clackamas over the past week on spinners, jigs and small baits. The first light bite has been decent with bubbly, deeper runs producing after the sun is up. Recycling from the trap to Riverside is ongoing. Spring Chinook are mostly too dark to bother with this late in the season. Coho numbers are pretty thin, but crowds are lining the bank in Gladstone and fish are being spotted up to Riverside. A good coho run is expected on the Clack but it won't get underway until the next decent rain. A few steelhead are available around McIver with conventional gear and fly-rodgers hooking up here. The hatchery recycled another 500 fish to Riverside Park this week. Now that school has started, weekdays will have much lower non-angler usage by youngsters.

Fishing on the Sandy remains low and slow. Low water, low effort and slow fishing. It will take a decent rainfall to kickoff the coho fishery at this point. Pressure at the mouth is increasing but very few fish are being caught.

North Coast Fishing Report – Ocean anglers were reporting wild coho in the catches but with the recent ocean closure, who really cares? It's on to fall Chinook fishing and there are some fish around in the Tillamook district. The weaker tide series over the weekend allowed most anglers to target salmon near the estuaries mouth using plug-cut herring for bait. It's best fished on the outgoing tide making sure you are on the bottom- especially when the tide begins to slow when nearing low slack.

Spinner fishing in the upper bay will likely pick up on the next larger tide series as Trask and Tillamook River fish are likely beginning to show in catchable numbers. Numbers should steadily increase by mid-month.

Nehalem fishers have been reporting better catches but for its reputation, action is not all that good. Regular contributor Rich Riley reports this: "The action is picking up at the Wheeler area on Nehalem Bay. The last two days, while I was fishing the Columbia near the mouth of the Cowlitz, they caught numerous fish in the Wheeler area. This a.m. there were 6 - 8 fish caught early and another 4-5 caught by 9:00 a.m. One tipped the scales at 46#. The action is picking up at the Wheeler area on Nehalem Bay. The last two days, while I was fishing the Columbia near the mouth of the Cowlitz, they caught numerous fish in the Wheeler area. This a.m. there were 6 - 8 fish caught early and another 4-5 caught by 9:00 a.m. One tipped the scales at 46#."

Further south, **pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** reports, "The lower Nestucca bay has a few fall Chinooks available. They are acting shifty, but there are some being taken. Seems that the water temperature is what is keeping a good bite from happening. That's our theory anyway. Mostly spinner guys are catching fish. Very few on bait as of lately. We have some good tides coming, so we should see an improvement soon. Getting some cool nights will certainly help. Crabbing near the mouth of the river is fantastic. Last part of the outgoing and the first part of the incoming is the best time if you can get there safely."

The Guide's Forecast – Many north coast estuaries should begin to see their first significant push of both Chinook and coho (where hatchery fish programs exist) this week. Larger tides coming this weekend should improve opportunities and anglers will have to match technique to water conditions. Spinner fishing in the upper bay will be a stronger option for those targeting Chinook on Tillamook Bay. Stick with the solid colors on overcast days and metallic colors on sunny days. The ocean looks to be a poor option this weekend.

Nehalem anglers will want to try upriver near the town of Nehalem and Wheeler using both herring and spinners to entice fish. Troll or cast smaller spinners if you are trying to entice coho.

Nestucca anglers will be pitching spinners or using bobber and bait but the artificial option may be the best as fast floating baits don't always produce the best results.

North coast crabbing will be a bit challenging with the higher tide exchanges but fair numbers should be present in most estuaries.

Central & South Coast Reports – There are about 130,000 Chinook salmon predicted to return to Oregon coastal rivers to spawn this fall. This is about average, but will provide many anglers a shot at them. Nearly 20,000 Chinook are forecast to return to the Alsea system which would triple the 2006 run. The Siuslaw is expected to see about a 50% increase over last year's run.

According to the ODFW, offshore Chinook catches are down about a third from last year which

should equate to additional numbers entering ocean tributaries.

The coho quota off the central Oregon coast from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain stood at 84% as of September 15th, so it appears this fishery will continue for a while.

Offshore albacore catches outdistanced coho landings this year, another first in a string of jaw-dropping data regarding tuna landings in 2007. While coho numbers were capped at 50,000, over 56,000 tuna have been landed and it isn't over yet. Albacore catches are three times greater than any year in the past. Anglers have been hooking up within four miles of port at times.

The downside of this tuna bonanza out of Oregon ports, along with hookups with an inordinate number of exotics which has included mahi-mahi, is that this may be one of the indicators that the earth is, indeed, changing and may be in a warming trend, altering our climate on a long-term basis. We'll know better when we see what the next few seasons bring.

Rough conditions and spotty fishing rewarded tuna hopefuls out of Depoe Bay over the past weekend. No reports indicated anything better than single digit catches. A flatter ocean will yield better results. Halibut limits were easy over the past weekend for those who know where to go.

Halibut came easily to boats in the know launching out of Newport last weekend, sometimes followed by a foray further offshore for tuna. Those who ventured out had to travel further than in recent weeks and then only a few albacore were found just outside the 125 line. Coho were widely scattered resulting in poor catches but trollers inside have hooked up with a few Chinook. Dungeness limits have come out of Yaquina recently but it has taken several hours and multiple pulls to accomplish. Sorting of soft crab is still required.

Siuslaw anglers experienced a fair hardware bite mid-week as the fall Chinook run starts up here.

On Sunday, September 2nd, charter boats went out over 60 miles offshore out of Winchester Bay, passing the halibut grounds where fishing has had been quite slow, in hope of intercepting albacore. Results were spotty with only a handful of tuna coming over the gunwales. Each angler got a least one fish to take home, however. Fresh fall Chinook are entering the lower Umpqua where trollers using plug-cut herring have intercepted a few below the 101 Bridge. Crabbing is improving in the bay but is still only fair. Steelheaders on the North Umpqua have had a slow week. Smallmouth bass fishing remains red hot on the South and mainstem Umpqua, however, with a variety of bait and lures effective.

Boats launching out of Coos Bay over the past weekend found warm water and tuna. Fishing was fair to very good for those who got into them.

Spinners are taking fall Chinook in Coos Bay and tidewater in the lower river. This fishery is just starting up and will provide action well into October. Chinook are also being taken in the lower Coquille River.

Trollers in the Rogue estuary endured a low week. Spinner/anchovy rigs remained the best option for drawing strikes, but anglers have put in some long days in hopes of a take-down. Time is on their side, however, with plenty of bright Chinook staged outside the bay waiting for water temperatures to drop or rain to encourage the run. Anglers on Rogue Bay are seeing some great days - every so often. More commonly, it's a matter of putting in time and burning gas. Periodically Chinook have turned on and everybody has gotten one - or two. A few Chinook have been taken outside the mouth on wobblers. Expect changes in spring Chinook regulations next year as the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission lays plans to double the number of wild springer spawning in the Rogue system over the next few years. A few fresh steelhead have also been caught below Agness on spinners with early and late-day forays most productive. In the

Grants Pass stretch. plug-pullers have had the most success, although numbers aren't great and Chinook will be coloring up soon. Long rodders are experiencing fair fishing on the upper Rogue which is flies-only since the 1st of September. Conventional tackle users may cast flies with floats but no additional weight is allowed. Chinook fishing is closed above Gold Ray Dam.

Ocean salmon fishing is closed out of Brookings until October 1st when a two-week window allows for offshore Chinook angling. Historically, the October season produces extra-large salmon which will be found in the upper 30 feet of water. Meanwhile, bottom fishing is producing limits of large and varied rockfish as well as good-sized ling cod.

Cindy Carman of Medford was the top anglers at the Slammin' Salmon Fishing Derby last weekend, taking home prize money in the amount of \$5,250 plus a \$2,500 gold ring. Not only had Carman never fished in the ocean previously but hadn't held a fishing rod until about two months ago. Way to show the old-timers, Cindy!

Surf perch fishing is holding up well off southwest beaches, particularly for this late in the season, rewarding long-rodders with limits of a mixed bag of pinkfin and striped surf perch.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Steelheading continues to improve in the Deschutes as better numbers of fish from Maupin downstream to the mouth combine with dropping water temperatures to create positive angling conditions. Despite great counts at the dams, trollers at the mouth are struggling to hook up.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541 754 6411) adds this, " ... fished the Deschutes between Beavertail and Mack Canyon for steelhead the other day - no steelhead. However the fishing should be picking up as steelhead are moving over the dams in good numbers. Salmon and steelhead fishing should also be good off the mouth of the Deschutes in the coming weeks. Had my best luck in this fishery trolling a Fire Tiger Fat Rap. A couple of suggestions for this fishery are to troll slow as the other boats will allow and get you lure as far behind the boat as possible. Was hoping to get out for some halibut fishing, but the ocean forecast is not very favorable for the coming weekend."

Never caught a bass over five pounds? Head to Davis Lake to fish the productive early morning and late evening bite. Launching a conventional boat is challenging in low water levels now, making personal watercraft a good choice. Surface lures add to the excitement but remember - it's fly gear only.

Northwest Trout – The ODFW will stock the McKenzie River below Leaburg Lake with 3,000 legal-sized rainbow trout this week. In the North Willamette Watershed, Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, and Small Fry Lake will be planted with legal-sized hatchery rainbow trout.

Northwest Bass & Panfish - Lower Willamette bass anglers have been having their way with smallmouth, particularly in lower Multnomah Channel where soft plastics have resulted in catches of numerous smallies in the two-to-three-pound class with the occasional five-pound bruiser.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report September 5th – September 18th, 2007

North Puget Sound

The parade of **pink salmon** entering marine waters of Puget Sound has slowed recently. But anglers are beginning to hook a few ocean coho, which are expected to enter the Sound in larger numbers in the coming weeks.

"The pink salmon catch has tapered off considerably in the marine areas," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "But the coho catch recently picked up at Sekiu, so we should see more and more of those ocean fish make their way into Puget Sound in the next couple of weeks."

When they do arrive, Point No Point, Jefferson Head and Possession Bar should be good spots to hook ocean coho, said Thiesfeld. Anglers fishing those areas, or other waters of marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, and must release chinook. Chum salmon also must be released in Marine Area 9 through Sept. 30 and in Marine Area 10 through Sept. 15.

Until those ocean silvers show up in greater numbers, anglers can target **resident coho**, which continue to provide decent fishing in portions of Puget Sound. Anglers are still finding some nice-size resident hatchery coho in marine areas 9 and 10, Thiesfeld said.

Rather catch some shellfish? The **coonstripe** and **pink shrimp** fisheries are open in the region, and shrimpers can fish in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan/Port Gardner), 9 and the northern and central portion of Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands). For more information on shrimp fisheries check WDFW's website at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/shrimpindex.shtml>.

Crabbing in the region is limited, though. Only the northern and eastern portions of Marine Area 7 remain open for **crab** while the other marine areas undergo a catch assessment. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/> for more details on the fishery.

In the freshwater, a portion of the Green (Duwamish) River recently opened for salmon. "Anglers caught mostly pink salmon during the first few days of the fishery," said Steve Foley, another WDFW fish biologist. "But some anglers did find a few chinook and even some coho."

The Green is open from the 1st Ave. South Bridge to the northbound I-5 Bridge. Anglers fishing that stretch have a daily limit of six salmon, only one of which may be a chinook, and no more than three adults. Beginning Sept. 16, anglers can also fish from the I-5 Bridge to the SW 43rd St./S 180th St. Bridge, but must release chinook along that stretch of the river.

Portions of other rivers, such as the Skagit, Stillaguamish, Skykomish and Snoqualmie also are open for salmon fishing. Anglers fishing those four rivers must release chinook. Those fishing the Snoqualmie and Skagit also must release pinks.

Elsewhere, Lake Sammamish is open for salmon fishing, with a daily limit of two salmon measuring at least 12 inches. All sockeye must be released, and salmon fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. Sammamish Lake's larger neighbor, Lake Washington, opens Sept. 16 to coho fishing. Anglers will be allowed two coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) from waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge.

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 salmon season is winding down on the coast, numbers of **coho** are moving through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and into Puget Sound. Anglers will have a chance to catch wild coho off Sekiu later this month or continue to enjoy some river fishing throughout the region.

Although the fishing action is cooling down after a successful season on the south coast, anglers are still finding some salmon — mostly **coho**, said Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist.

“The average catch at Ilwaco and Westport (marine areas 1 and 2) was less than one fish per person over Labor Day,” she said. Results have been better farther up the coast where the average at La Push was one-and-a-half fish per person. Anglers at Neah Bay were getting about one fish each.

The big draw though is the opening of the non-selective coho fishery in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu). From Sept. 16-30 anglers will be able to try for **wild coho**, in addition to **pink** and sockeye. “We’re seeing quite a few coho and I hear people are already gearing up,” Beeghley said. Creel checks show anglers caught 590 coho and 229 pink salmon off Sekiu over the Labor Day weekend.

The salmon fishery in Marine Area 1, which re-opened Sept. 2, will remain open until Sept. 30 or until the quota is met. Salmon fishing in marine areas 3 and 4 (La Push and Neah Bay) is scheduled to continue through Sept. 15 and through Sept. 16 in Marine Area 2 (Westport/Ocean Shores). Beeghley reminds anglers that Willapa Bay will remain open for salmon fishing until Jan. 31.

A portion of Marine Area 3 (La Push) will be open daily Sept. 22 through Oct. 7 for a late-season salmon fishery. See WDFW’s Fishing in Washington pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> for details on boundaries and rules.

In Puget Sound anglers are starting to see the transition from **pink salmon** to **coho**, while **chinook** are tapering off, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist.

“The focus will be on coho in the upcoming weeks,” he said. Thiesfeld suggests anglers try the Quilcene River and Quilcene Bay on Hood Canal. “Anglers generally do pretty well there this time of year.”

Meanwhile, anglers interested in river fishing are finding a mix of chinook, coho and pink salmon in the Puyallup and Carbon rivers. “There’s been plenty of anglers on the water since the rivers opened Sept. 1,” Thiesfeld said. “With the recent rains, folks should be seeing more fish.”

The rain has created some good fishing conditions in other area rivers as well, said Scott Barbour, WDFW fish biologist. “With the rivers dropping back into shape, we’re seeing some decent summer steelhead and silvers in the Hoh and Bogachiel rivers on the Olympic Peninsula,” he said. “People are also catching some nice summer steelhead on the Wynoochee River in Grays Harbor.”

Recreational crabbers who were licensed to fish for **crab** in Puget Sound are reminded they have until Sept. 15 to report their summer’s catch to WDFW — whether or not they fished or were successful in catching Dungeness crab.

Crabbers who file their catch reports by the deadline will be entered in a drawing for one of 10 free 2008 combination fishing licenses, which allow the holder to fish for a variety of freshwater and saltwater species.

Southwest Washington:

Hatchery **coho** are now the name of the game for many anglers fishing the lower Columbia River, where all chinook salmon must be released downstream from the mouth of the Lewis River. Chinook retention is also closed on the Lewis River up to the I-5 Bridge and on the Cowlitz River up to the Highway 4 Bridge in Kelso. In addition, the entire Coweeman River is closed to all fishing in September and October.

While hatchery coho may not draw the near-record crowds that chinook did in recent weeks, the fish are showing up just the same," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "A big bunch" of coho moved into the Buoy 10 area during the first weekend in September and more are entering the estuary every day.

" On Labor Day a friend told me he limited on hatchery coho by 8 o'clock in the morning," Hymer said. "I also heard an account of another boat with 18 fish landed. This fishery will continue to grow and expand into the tributaries over the next few weeks as more fish move in from the ocean."

The hatchery coho fishery in the lower Columbia River usually peaks in mid- to late September, with many of those fish weighing "in the teens," Hymer said.

"Some anglers have been mistaking these fish for chinook salmon," he said. "It's important to know the difference, because anglers are required to release any wild coho they encounter anywhere in the Columbia River and its tributaries from the Hood River Bridge downstream."

The daily limit for hatchery coho is two adults per day in the Columbia mainstem, but "bonus limits" are in effect in several tributaries, Hymer said. Anglers can retain up to four adult hatchery coho in the Grays, Deep, Elochoman, Kalama, Lewis and Toutle rivers. In the Cowlitz River, the limit is six hatchery coho per day.

As of the first week in September, some coho were showing up in the catch in the Lewis, Wind and White Salmon rivers. Most of those rivers also had some catches of chinook and hatchery steelhead, as well.

While those fisheries continue, retention of chinook salmon on the mainstem Columbia River will remain closed until Oct. 1 below the lower end of Bachelor Island (just upstream from the mouth of the Lewis River) to conserve wild "tule" chinook. The river remains open for chinook retention upstream from the boundary marker on the island.

During the last full week of retention fishing below Bonneville Dam, 4,548 anglers were checked with 684 adult chinook, 34 adult coho and 33 hatchery steelhead. During the entire month of August, anglers caught 4,550 adult chinook – the third highest number on record – compared to nearly 5,000 last year at the same time. The highest catch was 5,133 chinook in August 2002.

This year's fall chinook fishery in the lower Columbia River does, however, appear to have set a new record for angler participation, Hymer said. According to preliminary estimates, anglers made approximately 42,600 fishing trips to catch chinook in August, besting the previous record for the month in 2000.

Meanwhile, boat anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool have been catching some chinook, as well as

steelhead, off the mouth of the White Salmon River and Drano Lake. Hymer noted that approximately 160,000 hatchery steelhead, which have crossed Bonneville Dam but not The Dalles Dam, are still available in those fisheries until the mainstem cools and they re-start their journey upstream.

Just below Bonneville Dam, bank anglers have been averaging one legal-sized sturgeon for every 6.3 rods, and boat anglers have been catch some legals near Vancouver and Longview.

Trout anglers should be aware that WDFW recently planted Goose Lake in Skamania County will 1,8000 cutthroats, weighing nearly a pound apiece. Mineral Lake also got 810 rainbows weighing over a half-pound each on Aug. 28. Mineral remains open to fishing through September.

Eastern Washington:

Now is good time to catch **trout** and other fish, since fishing pressure is down considerably after Labor Day and water temperatures begin to moderate in lakes and streams, said Curt Vail, WDFW northeast district fish biologist. "Some waters that have been productive – fishing at 30 feet or less – include Deep, Loon and Waitts lakes in Stevens County and Curlew Lake in Ferry County," he said. "Smaller waters should also start to become active, fish-wise, in September."

Kettle River fishing, on the other hand, is probably not so good now, Vail noted. "It is not very floatable due to lower-than-normal flow, with water temperatures in the 70s," he said.

"**Whitefish** are hanging out near small tributaries in cooler water. The bigger rainbows are not numerous but rainbow in the four- to eight-inch range are available to those willing to wade or fish from the bank." Vail reminds anglers the Kettle is still on selective gear rules and only two trout over 12 inches can be harvested daily.

Vail also notes that a public meeting is scheduled Sept. 18, from 7-9 p.m., at the Agricultural Service Center located at 230 Williams Lake Road in Colville, to discuss WDFW's 2008-09 sportfishing rule fishing regulation proposals. Those proposals, available at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/reggs/rule_proposals/index.htm, include a springtime closure of the upper dozen miles of Lake Roosevelt to protect spawning redband rainbow trout, and a prohibition to possess anything but rainbow trout at Williams and Hatch lakes in Stevens County and Ellen Lake in Ferry County. Public comments on all proposals will be accepted up to Nov. 2, when the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission meets in Chelan to consider adoption.

WDFW enforcement sergeant Dan Rahn of Spokane reports **trout** fishing along the Little Spokane River from Chattaroy to Elk has been good. Rahn recently checked several limits of rainbows from eight to 13 inches. Rahn reminds anglers the limit on the river is two trout with an eight-inch minimum size. Also, when fishing with bait, all trout equal to or greater than the minimum size are counted as part of the daily limit, whether kept or released. Rahn also reports the Spokane River is low, "but **bass** fishermen are doing quite well on the upper river to the state line, which is a catch-and-release section."

North Central Washington:

WDFW district fish biologist Bob Jateff of Omak reports **summer chinook salmon** fishing on the upper Columbia River above Wells Dam in the Brewster/Bridgeport area has slowed down in recent weeks. "A few fish are still being caught off the mouth of the Okanogan River," he said, "and upstream toward Chief Joseph Dam." Jateff reminds anglers there is a non-buoyant rule restriction on the entire summer chinook fishery above Wells Dam. The Okanogan and

Similkameen rivers are also open for summer chinook fishing until Sept.15.

"The Methow River catch-and-release **trout** season has produced some good fishing for resident rainbow and cutthroat in the 16- to 18-inch range," Jateff said. "Selective gear rules are in effect and anglers should be aware of certain sections of the Methow that are closed to all fishing as listed in the sport fishing pamphlet."

Jateff predicts lowland lake **trout** fishing will improve as water temperatures start to cool down during the months of September and October. Selective gear lakes such as Blue on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, Big Twin near Winthrop, and Ell near Tonasket should all start to pick up during this time of year.

South Central Washington:

WDFW fish biologist Joe Hymer reports Columbia River **chinook salmon** fishing in the Hanford Reach near the Tri-Cities is still on the slow side. Fish passage over McNary Dam totaled 5,105 adult and 984 jack fall chinook through Aug. 31. "Incidental **steelhead** catches at Ringold are still on the high side with reports of bright fall chinook being seen the last few days," he said. "River flows have been high during the week with a drop on weekends, making it tough on Ringold bank anglers. Traditionally salmon fishing should start to pick up by the second week in September."

No creel reports are in yet from the Yakima River **salmon** fishery that opened 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. Most of the best fishing is expected later this month. 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.

Trout fishing remains available in many southcentral region rivers and streams, including the Yakima, Naches, Little Naches, and Bumping rivers in Yakima County, and the upper reaches of Taneum Creek, Naneum Creek, Manastash Creek, and the Forks of the Teanaway in Kittitas County. Most rivers and creeks have special regulations like selective gear rules that prohibit bait. Most also have statewide trout catch limits of two trout with an 8-inch minimum size. Anglers should check the regulation pamphlet for all details.

Reader Email

Our pal and regular contributor **Ken Johnson**, apparently content with his recent move to the Northwest coast, sent this brief report, "Salmon are sporadic, here in the Nehalem...One day several fish are caught, then the next everyone come in moanin' and groanin'. Personally, I'm going to focus on the river, HOPEFULLY, starting this week. WE NEED RAIN! Everywhere! I've only been fishing about 3-4 times with zero results...That being said, just being here is enough."

Received from subscriber '**seadog**' last week, this was overlooked for inclusion. Here's his report and great photo: "I took my wife fishing last weekend and we hooked up at the mouth of the D. 6 landed for 7 opp. Friday, 5 native steelhead.,1 dark chinook.3 landed for 5 opp. Saturday ,2 hatchery steelhead and 1 28 # chinook.1 landed for 1 opp. sunday,27# chinook ,fished morning only. All fish kept were nice bright condition. My wife and I were fish for fish even on the count when she evened up the score on Sunday, good job Kim. Thanks for the site and all the info herein."



The following isn't an Email but rather a story by Aaron H. who goes by 'tailwalker' and posted this at ***www.ifish.net**. It is reproduced here with his kind permission: " ... just wanted to post a quick note of a little incident that happened to me this weekend. We were planning a multi family camping trip this weekend on one of the many islands in the Columbia river for Labor day weekend. My mission was to forward deploy with one other guy and our little girls (three total) all under the age of 5. So we load up the sled with everything you could imagine and head out across the river. Anyone who knows the river will let you know that there can be some serious wind at times, and this was one of them. So we get across, land on the island and start to unload our overloaded sled. We managed to get this done barely....as dark set in. I pulled the boat off the sand and anchored out in about 4 feet of water. After we got the little ones to lay in the tent and watch a movie, we relaxed for a few minutes. Before going to bed I took my boat out a little further because there can be a fairly large fluctuation of water level as they make power. So we went to bed.....when I woke up Friday morning I looked out to make sure the boat was still there and to my surprise there she was high and dry and I mean not even touching the water sitting on the sand. Damn! The water was lower then I had ever seen it, and I am up there all summer long. Now I was responsible for forward deployment and for taxi service for the 3 other families that were on the way....I thought to my self the river will come back up in a few hours and we will be fine. Well as time went by the water went out even further!! I was starting to worry to say the least....So I thought I better call The Dalles dam and see what kind of schedule these guys are on. So I called information asked for The Dalles dam they connected me, the receptionist answered, she transferred me to the control room, and I pathetically told him my story. He asked for my number and said there wasn't really a set schedule but he would see what he could do.....I waited.....And about 30 minutes later he called back and said he was going to close his dam and that the lady at the John Day dam was going to open hers and in about two hours the pool would come back up!!!! I was shocked..."really" I responded! In two hours the water came up and I got my boat off the sand! About an hour later the control room at The Dalles dam called me back to see if I had gotten my boat off the sand. I thanked them repeatedly. What great service!!! Thanks to the Bonneville power association for being so helpful!!"

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

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Give a little back to the fishery - CLACKAMAS RIVER CLEAN UP, SUNDAY, SEPT. 9th
<http://www.clackamasrivercleanup.org/>

Map of the Deschutes River:

<http://www.flyfisherman.com/northwest/deschutesmap1.pdf>

Coho are getting large. Be sure you can tell them from Chinook:

<http://swr.ucsd.edu/fmd/identify.htm>

Weekly Quote – "To a fisherman, the sounds of a river are as musical as any symphony and twice as compelling." - AJ McClane

GOOD LUCK!