

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 14th – September 20th, 2007**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Chinook fishing near the mouth of the Sandy River is fair at best. This is peak season for this section but most salmon are motivated to head upriver. The gorge is also poor for salmon but continues to pick up for sturgeon anglers.

North Santiam steelheaders saw some decent action over the past week. Fishing is good and with the river at a favorable level and flow, it's expected to hold up.

The lower Clackamas is yielding a few coho to anglers throwing spinners and drifting corkies in the morning hours. Plugs trolled in the Willamette just outside the mouth of the river have also accounted for a few.

Anglers hitting the Sandy at first light and again in the evening have taken a few coho in the lower river. This fishery will improve in coming weeks as water levels and temperature improve.

Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir and Small Fry Lake are scheduled to be stocked with trout.

Northwest – The Buoy 10 fishery is still going strong with anglers taking advantage of a strong return of hatchery coho. The best fishing is close to high slack with incoming tide producing on the Washington side. The first part of outgoing is producing good results on the Oregon side above the Astoria Bridge but the bite is coming late in the day. Coho are starting to respond to spinners with pink and white a top choice. Chinook jack counts at Bonneville indicate better returns in coming years and high numbers are still being encountered in the estuary.

Although most of the effort near Astoria remains in the river, some anglers are still venturing out to the ocean in search of easy limits. The coho are large but many anglers are traveling south to Gearhart to catch the fish. They are down deep with 40 to 50 feet producing the best results using fresh anchovies and herring for bait. Check your bait options before going out as many bait shops are not stocking fresh bait due to a drop in angler effort but anchovies are available near the Hammond Harbor entrance to those that wish to jig their own.

Ocean halibut off of the Columbia opens for one day, Saturday. The fishing on the last opener was challenging. Tuna may be another option but plan on traveling nearly 50 miles offshore to get into consistent schools. The ocean forecast for the weekend looks favorable.

Crabbing on the lower Columbia is picking up and so is the effort.

Tillamook Bay is off to a productive start with good catches reported in the middle of last week. The early run fish are destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers so upper bay catches should begin to improve. Some sturgeon are also available near Memaloose.

Nehalem Bay fishing remains poor and crabbing has also dropped off.

In the last scheduled planting for 2007, Cape Mears Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Lost Lake in Clatsop County, Sunset Lake and Town Lake will receive hatchery trout.

Herring jiggers managed to score several dozen over the past weekend on Yaquina Bay.

Herring trollers scored good numbers of chinook at the Alsea Bay entrance on Tuesday. The season is just getting underway.

Southwest – Ocean fishing appears to be an option this weekend for recreational boaters according to offshore forecasts but crossing early and returning to port before the afternoon wind kicks up is suggested.

With over 32,000 pounds remaining in the quota, the all-depth halibut fishery bag limit has been increased to two fish per day starting Friday, September 14th. The halibut limit inside the 40-fathom line remains one per day Mondays through Thursdays but two per day will be allowed during the all depth openers Fridays through Sundays. With the increase in limits, the quota is expected to fill by the end of September.

Ocean crabbing closed mid-August but bay crabbing will continue to improve into the fall months as crab grow, harden and enter coastal estuaries in greater number.

Wind hampered fishing efforts in Winchester Bay over the past weekend. A few coho and fewer chinook were landed. Crabbing was fair. North Umpqua steelheaders have experienced an improvement in action with the water temperature hovering in the mid-50s and exhibiting a little color. Smallmouth bass are still on the bite on the south and mainstem Umpqua.

Chinook fishing is fair and improving in the Coos River. The Eighth Annual Coos Basin Amateur Salmon Derby will be held this weekend, September 15th and 16th. Entry is only \$20 per angler for two days with tickets available at local merchants.

Periodic flurries of activity have occurred in the Rogue estuary where the chinook bite has turned on - and off just as quickly - often at the turn of the tide. Catches of coho have been fair to good as well. Fishing in the Grants Pass stretch has been poor.

Offshore coho angling will remain open from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain through September 16th, or fulfillment of the quota allowing for the possibility of some halibut/salmon combo trips.

Ocean salmon fishing has closed south of Humbug Mountain for both chinook and coho although bottom fishing is a rewarding option. The Chetco River Terminal Area Fall Chinook Salmon Fishery opens for two weeks starting October 1st when large fall fish are traditionally taken in the upper 30 feet of the water column.

No trout stocking is scheduled this week in the Southwest Zone.

Eastern – Sporadic passage numbers at The Dalles Dam has trollers at the mouth of the Deschutes excited. They saw an improvement in action over the past weekend. Spinner casters have been doing well upriver.

SW Washington – Some coho are showing on the Cowlitz and Kalama Rivers but anglers fishing the Lewis River averaged a coho per rod over the weekend.

Drano Lake is producing good numbers of steelhead with an occasional "B" run fish in the catch. Fall chinook are also being taken with some regularity.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Effort has dropped off dramatically but the fishing just keeps

on keeping on! I'll run my last trip on Thursday but I fished on Tuesday, September 11th with Jim Trollinger and his crew of 5. We just scheduled a half day trip so we started at a comfortable 11:30 a.m. (These are my kinda hours!). With coho on the mind, we started our first pass on the Washington side with the tide well underway. Targeting 20 to 30 foot of water, I was running 3 spinner rods and 3 anchovy rods with results nearly equal between the two offerings. In the first pass, we landed 3 fish letting one go back to its native river. It was a first good pass (and actually a repeat from the day before). We started another pass in the same area- from the church to the bridge but came up empty until we got above the bridge. From there, we fished the shallows finding a good number of willing participants. We took another 3 or 4 keepers and a few wild ones- mostly on spinners. The red/white and pink/white spinners have been producing the best. Now noticing the anchored ship on the Oregon side beginning to turn in the outgoing tide, we headed over to the Oregon side to take part in one of the more consistent bites of the week. The first part of outgoing tide had been producing good numbers of jack chinook and coho right in front of Astoria in about 22 to 30 foot of water. On our first pass, we had 2 or 3 bites that materialized into another keeper coho and a jack chinook. We ended the day landing 12 fish, keeping 8 of them. The average size coho has not been all that large with most of the fish in the 7 to 9 pound range.

With fresh bait hard to come by, we have been jigging fresh anchovies right in front of the Hammond Boat Basin with some ease. We can usually see the birds working the bait and clearly see them on the fish finder with most of them just under the surface at 10 to 30 feet deep. They are plentiful and in no time, you can get all the bait you need for the time that you fish. Just keep the baits on ice and run the green or red beaded Piscator jigs put out by Mustad.

The bite elsewhere in the lower river has been non-existent although a rare fish is being hooked in front of Hammond in the mid part of the incoming tide. Effort has dropped off significantly. In the ocean, effort is also low but the few boats that are going out are having a hard time targeting coho. One guide boat that fished on the 11th reported only landing a single chinook with only a few other chances. There was rumor of quality sized coho being taken south near Gearhart and Seaside but they have been very deep at 40 and 50 strips. Fresh herring and anchovies will take these fish but numbers are clearly more concentrated in the river so why go anywhere else?

Another halibut opportunity will greet anglers on the very north coast but on the last opener, the few boats that participated did not do all that well. It will likely be challenging fishing on this one-day Saturday opener as well.

Tuna is still on the minds of many as September seas can often be very friendly and inviting. One boat reported catching 12 nice albacore on the 11th but they had to go out nearly 50 miles to get them. The light catch is still an indicator that fish are well distributed and not taking trolled jigs very well. Live bait is still hard to come by.

Crabbing out of Hammond is picking up nicely with some quality sized keepers coming in. It will only improve as fall progresses.

Upriver, the URB (Upriver bright) program should be in full swing. Heavy restrictions are keeping anglers off of the most productive stretch of river but even the mouth of the Sandy River is not producing all that well. There are fish being caught but the catch for the amount of effort is not that impressive. Wobblers are taking the majority of fish and they are of quality size- there just aren't many of them falling for the amount of effort out there.

Bonneville passage is quite impressive with jack chinook making up nearly 20% of the run! This bodes well for the near future and although we may not reach the record of 70,000 jacks, it should end up an impressive return of jacks which is great news for next year.

Even further upriver, trollers at the mouth of the Deschutes River are scoring good results for steelhead and a few chinook. Plugs are taking the majority of fish but spinners are accounting for a few as well. This is peak season for this fishery and dam passage is picking up momentum so this is the week to go.

The Guide's Forecast – The coho season is due to wind down although action should still be good into the weekend. With softening tides, target coho in the deeper water- 20 to 30 foot on the Washington side and 20 to 30 feet deep in the shipping channel on the Oregon side. Of course you still have to be cautious when fishing in the channel. Keep you eyes peeled for ship traffic as they have the right-of-way. The Washington side should continue to produce the best on incoming tide although the gillnet fleet reported poor results in Young's Bay on their most recent opener indicating there may be gobs of coho yet to come back to this terminal fishing area. That would make the Oregon side and particularly the water in front of Young's Bay, most productive. With the amount of cormorants diving in front of Young's Bay every spring however, they may have well got gobbled up on the out migration.

The tides will soon shift to early morning incoming- beginning late in the weekend. Although I will be starting my trip on Thursday at noon, it may be wise to pay closer attention to the a.m. tides by the weekend. The most productive time all season has been from the middle of incoming tide through the first few hours of outgoing tide. The Oregon side has recently been the better place to fish on the outgoing although Washington has been productive above the shipwreck this season. Although it may still be a productive weekend for those that work at it, this fishery is due to slow down and when it does, it crashes quickly so don't be too disappointed if you don't come home with a limit of fish. Bring the crab pots down to ensure a bounty but keep in mind you may compromise good salmon fishing opportunity to pick your crab pots down by Buoy's 20 and 22. You don't want your pots soaking on the maximum ebb tide- your buoys will go under water and you'll have to wait for slack to retrieve them- that's a long wait!

At this point, don't waste your time on the ocean unless you plan on doing a combo tuna or halibut and salmon trip. If you do head west, fish south of the river entrance and if you don't find fish near the surface, particularly early in the morning, send your baits down deep- the coho should be large. But, you also have to keep in mind that we're focusing our effort on "A" run fish- most of which should be in the river by now. The later returning "B" run coho are not going to return in strong numbers if predictions hold up. That also makes the ocean a poor option.

Upriver, although it may still be worth pursuing chinook above the lower deadline, don't have high expectations as catch rates are not all that good. When water temperatures continue to cool and migration slows down, action at Bonneville could pick up but that usually starts in October.

Sturgeon fishing in the gorge will be a good option as more keepers should begin to filter into the area. Success rates were fair for both bank and boat anglers on last weekend's catches but should improve as temperatures drop and numbers rise. Smelt will be a top bait here.

Action at the mouth of the Deschutes should peak this week for both salmon and steelhead. Both can be taken on plugs and the stand-by is the black with silver glitter, AKA the "Michael Jackson" *without the inappropriate touching.*

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – With the water temperature at Willamette Falls returning to 72 degrees following a warm week, counts of anadromous fishes remain negligible. It'll take rain to get salmon and steelhead on the move and there's a hopeful change early next week. Without mitigating meteorological events, however, fishing in the lower river will remain rewarding only for warmwater anglers. Retention of legal-sized sturgeon is

allowed in the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel seven days a week through the end of September.

Water conditions are good for steelheading on the North Santiam. Over 4,000 summer steelhead have been counted at the Foster Dam facility on the South Santiam.

The Guide's Forecast – A few keeper sturgeon are available in the lower Willamette, but anglers trying for them are encountering primarily shorts. With largemouth and smallmouth bass on their fall feeding binge to fatten up for the winter months, fishing will remain quite good for the coming weeks.

North Santiam steelheaders have reason for optimism in the coming week with water flows steady, the color good and temperatures in the low- to mid-50-degree range. Fish are concentrated in the stretch from Stayton Island to Packsaddle Park. Bank anglers stand a good chance of a hookup at any of the parks along the river. A decent number were recycled down stream on the South Santiam September 11th although steelheading remains quite challenging here due to extremely low water conditions.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – While the lower Clackamas is certainly getting a lot of attention now with coho showing, only a very few anglers are actually hooking up. We hate to sing the same song repeatedly, but this is one species which will not only charge upstream following a rain shower, but will also actually start to bite. Time your trips accordingly and hang on.

Boats are getting fairly thick at the mouth of the Sandy for a little action as anglers are experiencing here. Coho are in the lower Sandy with a few scattered as high as Cedar Creek, but flows are too low for fish to travel up the creek. Therefore, anglers concentrating on the lowermost portion of the river stand the best chance of intercepting a coho at first and last light, but until we get some rain, hooking up will be a long shot.

North Coast Fishing Report – It's clearly chinook time on the north coast. Effort has been high on Tillamook Bay lately- likely due to Columbia River restrictions but certainly due to the good reports that have been coming from the area. **Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377)** has been fishing the lower bay and ocean recently. Chris reported 2 opportunities on Wednesday (9/12) landing 2 fish in the 20 pound class. Chris noted a bit of a slower day than the one previous but still saw about a dozen fish caught for 20+ boats. The fish bit throughout the day but typically, the morning produces the best results.

There has been some decent action in the Ghost Hole as well but it is much more sporadic than the ocean when conditions allow for anglers to cross the bar. If there are biters to come into the bay, they often get culled in the ocean before they reach the upper bay. Some coho are showing in the catch and anglers can still keep hatchery coho until the end of October on Tillamook Bay. The South Channel would be the place to target these fish but the hatchery run isn't expected to be all that large.

Nehalem Bay is picking up slightly with the bulk of the effort taking place from Wheeler to the Jaws. Although still a bit slow for Nehalem standards, it has certainly picked up from previous weeks. Herring on the bottom are working the best but spinners are taking a few fish upstream of the Highway 101 Bridge.

The Nestucca should also be coming on line although tides are waning when tidewater holding fish will not be all that motivated to bite. There should still be decent tides into the weekend so plan on

some frustrating salmon fishing until we get better tide swings again.

The Alsea River has been producing good catches lately. Herring trollers working the mouth have been doing well although this too can be a sporadic fishery. There aren't a lot of boats that participate but the action can be worth the trip. Crabbers dominate the estuary so watch for crab buoys! The bobber fishing upriver is NOT underway but should improve in coming weeks.

Crabbing is fair at best in Tillamook and better in the Nestucca estuary. Nehalem and Netarts are only producing a few keepers.

The 16th Annual fishing day for children with disabilities is this Saturday, September 16th at the Whiskey Creek Hatchery just outside of Netarts. As many as 300 youngsters are expected to turn out, so volunteers are needed to work with the kids. Just show up to lend a hand. Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9 AM and the kids fishing day starts at 10 AM.

The Guide's Forecast – Trask and Tillamook River fish are entering the system but weaker tides dictate better action in the lower portion of the bay or in the ocean itself. The ocean forecast calls for:

FRI

S WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO SW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 3 FT.

FRI NIGHT

SW WIND 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 3 FT.

SAT

S WIND 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 4 FT.

SAT NIGHT

W WIND 5 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 4 FT.

SUN

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 5 FT.

MON

NW WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

This should bode well for ocean angling over the weekend. In this fishery, the early bird gets the chinook. Spinner trollers in the upper bay may take a few fish and coho could be present in fair numbers here. Bobber fishers in the lower Trask and Tillamook may take a few fish but stealthy tactics are necessary. Tides will play an integral part in success.

Although run timing dictates the Nehalem should be improving, tides won't help anglers all that much. Fish should be available from the jaws to the mouth of the North Fork and some coho may come in the catches.

Anglers versed in targeting chinook at the Nestucca jaws may find fair action this weekend using herring as bait. Bobber tossers also stand a fair chance but frustration will be a much more likely scenario as fish may be more reluctant to bite in the smaller tide exchange.

The Alsea is also a good option and the Siletz is beginning to produce good numbers of chinook.

The fresher the bait, the better the crabbing- no matter what estuary you are after the eight-legged creatures.

Central & South Coast Reports – Chinook fishing has been very slow over the past week in Siletz tidewater.

As of late Thursday, September 13th, the ocean remains open for the taking of fin-clipped coho from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain through Sunday, September 16th or fulfillment of quota. Since the ODFW is unlikely to shut this fishery down mid-weekend, it should go the distance.

Tuna were scattered about 20 miles offshore out of Depoe Bay on Tuesday this week with ocean conditions deteriorating during the day. Recreational boats running out of Newport found water in the mid-60s and decent albacore action. With halibut grounds 22 to 23 miles west of Depoe, a combo trip should be possible this weekend if the ocean lays down.

Night fishers targeting rockfish off the jetties at Newport have been returning with good catches. Use caution as it's easy to slip on rocks. Talk to someone with experience in this area in advance if possible but results after sundown are much better than during the day. Crabbing has been gradually improving in Yaquina Bay. Unfortunately the salmon fishing has not.

Regarding the two-fish-per day bag limit on Halibut starting September 14th off the central Oregon coast, the wording at the ODFW Pacific Halibut Sport Seasons page online has not changed, indicating possession of six halibut for the three day fishery should be legal: "Possession limit is 1 daily limit at sea and 3 daily limits on land."

Boats working just outside the entrance to Alsea bay have been scoring decent Chinook catches periodically on plug-cut, trolled herring. Be sure to drop crab traps or pots in the bay on the way out as Dungeness catches have turned on recently.

Trolled spinners have been most effective in Coos Bay and on the lower Coquille River where Chinook fishing is heating up and has provided some decent catches.

Where warm water is keeping salmon offshore on the northwest coast, anglers launching out of south coast ports are trying to find warmer water. Traveling 14 to 15 miles to fish in deep water has yielded marginal results. According to offshore temperature charts mid-week, it will be a very long run to warm water and tuna out of southwest ports this weekend, prohibiting most recreational boats from fishing albacore.

Chinook fishing is heating up as pressure increases on Winchester Bay and the lower Umpqua. Salmon have been landed this week to 35 pounds. Wind hampered fishing efforts in the bay over the past weekend. A few coho and fewer Chinook were landed. Crabbing has been fair. North Umpqua steelheaders have experienced an improvement in action with the water temperature hovering in the mid-50s and exhibiting a little color. Smallmouth bass are still on the bite on the south and mainstem Umpqua.

The Rogue estuary has become a worthwhile destination as scores of Chinook are being landed daily by trollers although the bay is under surprisingly light pressure. Green spinner/anchovy combos have been most effective lures but then are used almost to the exclusion of all others in Rogue Bay. Bright-colored blades - red or pink - are most effective for coho and while catches have been low, will improve into October. Salmon trollers are picking up large surf perch with surprising regularity. The Chinook bite was 'on' again Tuesday this week. Thanks to the local sea lion patrol, loss to pinniped predation is negligible. Anglers at Agness are seeing a mix of fall Chinook and summer

steelhead but action is only fair. In the Grants Pass stretch, plug-pullers are taking the better numbers with fishing reported as slow but steady with Chinook passing through daily. Steelheading on the upper Rogue has slowed. It's flies-only above Gold Ray dam and Chinook angling is closed in this stretch.

Increasingly poor spring Chinook returns on the Rogue River resulted in studies and proposals which have spanned the past three years. Decisions have been made with regard to protecting wild stocks and habitat, but the final plan, adopted earlier this week will have the following effect on anglers starting in 2008:

"Anglers may keep only adipose fin clipped (marked) chinook salmon from Jan. 1 – May 31 on the Rogue River mainstem upstream to Hog Creek boat landing, including tidewater. During June 1 – Dec. 31, zone rules would allow anglers to keep two marked or unmarked chinook salmon per day.

"Anglers may keep only adipose fin clipped (marked) chinook salmon from Jan. 1 – May 31 from Hog Creek to Gold Ray Dam. During June 1 – Sep 30, zone rules would allow anglers to keep two marked or unmarked chinook salmon per day.

"Anglers may keep only adipose fin clipped (marked) chinook salmon from Jan. 1 – June 30 from Gold Ray Dam to Dodge Bridge. During July 1 – Aug. 31, zone rules would allow two non-adipose fin clipped chinook salmon may be harvested daily in this area. This area is closed to all chinook salmon angling from Sept. 1 – Dec. 31.

"Anglers may keep only adipose fin clipped (marked) chinook salmon from Jan. 1 – July 31 from Dodge Bridge to Cole Rivers Hatchery Diversion Dam. This area is closed to chinook salmon angling from Aug. 1 – Dec. 31. In addition to the hook and weight regulations, any attached weight may be no more than six feet above the lowermost hook for sections one through three of the Rogue River (from the mouth to Cole Rivers Hatchery Diversion Dam). "

Those interested in obtaining more information on the Rogue River Spring Chinook Conservation Plan will find it at the ODFW web site: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/nfcp/rogue_river/

Although the fishery is usually winding down as fall closes in, surf perch fishing of southwest beaches continues to reward long-rodders with consistent limits.

Bottom fishers out of Gold Beach are doing well for bottom fish are scoring the highest success rate on the coast for large ling cod.

Brookings anglers had a great ocean season (when they could get out) and are hoping for an even more generous coho quota in 2008. River catch rates of fin-clipped silvers will need to be tabulated before any such determination is made, but it's shaping up to be a banner year.

Central and Eastern Oregon – With numbers approaching 290,000, the steelhead counts at Bonneville Dam have exceeded the 10-year average. Anglers on the east side are anticipating good numbers of fish entering Columbia tributaries upstream although most of the steelhead are holding between Bonnie and The Dalles Dams, a situation which will change when water temperatures and flows improve. Sporadic passage numbers at The Dalles Dam has trollers at the mouth of the Deschutes excited. They saw an improvement in action over the past weekend. Spinner casters have been doing well upriver. There are certainly fishable numbers of steelhead in the lower Deschutes at this time and it will only get better. Fly anglers are hooking up using dark patterns.

Metolius anglers are witnessing quite a caddis show evenings on the river. The trick is to find just

the right offering that will fool the crafty local trout. There are some good-sized fish in residence here.

Northwest Trout – The ODFW stocked McKenzie below Leaburg Lake in the South Willamette Watershed with 3,000 legal-sized rainbow trout the week of Sept 10th. The next stocking is scheduled for the week of Sept. 17.

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/regs/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

Reader Roger N. wrote to ask, about launching at Dayton and also inquired "Do you know any good areas to fish for small mouth closer to Newberg?"

Michael replied, "That's a nice boat but you'd be risking the trailer launching a craft that size at Dayton. As I understand it, the run to the mouth is still easy, but the drop-off at the ramp remains a problem. You are better off (and safer) to launch at Roger's Landing [in Newberg - Ed.]."

"That said, bass fishing in that stretch can be quite good although it seems to run hot and cold; on one day, off the next. You're picking a good time of year, however, as bass are feeding in an effort to pack on weight for the long winter months ahead. In addition to the soft plastics, there is often a crankbait bite in that area.

"You probably know the smallmouth routine, but I'll mention it here briefly. Smallies don't hold around wood or weeds, preferring hard cover like gravel or rock. Drop-offs or points which create current breaks are ambush points are prime spots which should be worked thoroughly. Start near the ramp as many bass fishers return to Roger's Landing for photos and release their bass right there."

Roger wrote a couple of days later to say, "I just got back from fishing the mouth of the Yamhill. We had a good trip. We caught and released 5 smallmouth, approx 1.5 lb each and 1 large chub. The current has really slowed down but it was fishable. We talked to a person who had navigated from Newberg to the mouth area and said the water was fine at this time. We didn't have any trouble with the jet. I really appreciate your tips on that new technique. I fished that all day and it paid off. It is nice to have a fishery 30 minutes or less from my house."

That's what we're here for, Roger.

Subscriber Roger K. wrote to ask, "I have fished Tillamook Ghost Hole for number of years, but have never ventured out to the North Jetty. Must one use 8-10 oz. lead to fish bottom or do you fish shallower...also, is it 35-40' out there or what?? "

"The depth will vary with the tides as will the amount of weight required. It will depend upon how strong the current is running as well as whether you're running with or against it. Carry an assortment of lead to match the conditions. The most important thing is to keep your offering on the bottom. The weight range you mention is common but it's sometimes necessary to move up to 12 ounces. The lead should be very near (within inches) of the floor of the bay with the length of lead dropper determining the depth at which your bait is working. Generally, a lead dropper of 24 inches is used with plug-cut herring on a 60-inch leader. You'll see droppers from 18 inches to three feet, but 24 inches is a good starting point.

"The stretch of jetty near the Coast Guard tower has been productive recently and the Ghost Hole has given up a few. Expect plenty of company and keep an eye out for those who aren't so alert.

"If you have any question about rigging plug-cut herring, see the Random Links in TGF.

""Hope this helps!"

Kapt'n Ken Johnson reports from the north coast, ""Catching" results remains spotty here in the Nehalem River area. Fish are being caught but still not in the numbers to be expected by this time of year. The bait of choice, so far, is primarily Plug Cut Herring with a variety of presentations being used. Above the Highway 101 bridge, herring is still being used but trollers are pulling hardware just about as much as pulling herring presentations. Water temperature is hovering around 58-60 degrees at the forks between the South Fork and the North Fork Nehalem. Cooler temperatures might help the action, but what we really need, and I hate to say it because I live in the area, is RAIN! Catches outside the jaws has been fair to good. The Ghost Hole in Tillamook Bay is starting to look like its old self again....Can't quite walk across the water, boat to boat, yet but the fishermen are going to be on the water no matter what! Fish are being caught there yet but still not in the numbers we would all like to see. Personally, I haven't been fishing there yet but my boat is heading in that direction in a week, or so! Over and over again!!! Maybe see you there, or here, or???"

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

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

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Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Broken rod repair - Putting It Back Together:

<http://www.flyangleronline.com/features/rodrepair/index.html>

Realistic and Artistic Fly Tying - Amazing stuff:

<http://www.solarexpert.com/fishing/more-fly-tying.html>

How to rig cutplug herring:

http://www.salmonuniversity.com/ol_htrh_pc1_index.html

Fishing update on KATU with **Pro Guide Bob Rees**:

<http://www.katu.com/news/outdoors/9680772.html?video=YHI&t=a>

Weekly Quote – "The finest gift you can give to any fisherman is to put a good fish back, and who knows if the fish that you caught isn't someone else's gift to you?" - Lee Wulff

GOOD LUCK!