

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **November 9th – November 15th 2007**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Got eggs? We'll **GIVE** them to you **FREE!** That's right. Starting after Thanksgiving, come down to the coast and enjoy a night or two at The Guide's Guesthouse in Bay City, Oregon. Centrally located, The Guide's Guest House, brand new construction completed in May of 2007, can comfortably sleep up to 4 people with full kitchen and bathroom. Keep your driftboat safe and sound and with every night booked, you'll receive a jar of Bob Rees' personally cured Tillamook Bay chinook roe for your fishing needs! Prices start as low as \$37.50/person for a group of 4! It's a deal! Call Bob or Nancy at (503) 377-9696 or email brees@pacifier.com.



Willamette Valley/Metro- Anglers seeking keeper sturgeon in the gorge are having a hard time finding legal fish. The shaker action is great for anglers willing to sacrifice premium bait. Using a half a smelt is still quite effective. Squid is also producing well. Downriver however, action is picking up below the mouth of the Willamette to Longview with a few more keepers taken on smelt. The lower Multnomah Channel is also a fair bet this time of year.

The upper Willamette is producing smallmouth bass on soft plastics with water temperatures in the mid-fifties. Sturgeon are still biting lightly with shakers easy and keepers more of a challenge. Fish in water 50 to 70 feet for larger fish.

Coho angling closed on the Clackamas at the end of October but the river remains open to steelhead. Fishing is slow to fair.

Salmon fishing is closed on the Sandy though a few late-season steelhead remain available. One winter steelhead has been confirmed but the winter run won't be worthwhile until December with the better fishing in January and broodstock fish running in February. The Sandy is currently low and clear but that will change by the weekend.

Detroit Reservoir will continue draining into the North Santiam until the first week in December which, combined with rainfall, will keep the level up. Bright hatchery summers are still available and fall native steelhead have started entering the Little North Fork.

Northwest – Anglers will flock to Tillamook Thursday and Friday for the 23rd annual North Coast Rendezvous which has 38 guides volunteering and 76 anglers participating in the event. Money raised will go to north coast salmon and steelhead enhancement projects.

Salmon fishing on Tillamook remains uncharacteristically slow for this time of year. Chinook are biting throughout the lower bay, including the west channel but anglers are having to work for consistent success. The ocean was calm at midweek but expected to pick up by the weekend. Stronger tides through the weekend should bring better numbers into the bay.

The upper bay is slow but a few fish are being taken in the Trask and Tillamook tidewater with the Wilson producing slightly better results. Only a select few holes on the Wilson are producing for bobber fishers and those premium spots are taken early in the morning.

North coast rivers are expected to jump late in the weekend but if predictions are correct, it won't be enough precipitation to put the rivers out. It won't take much to stimulate a significant push of fish however as the region hasn't had rain for 2 weeks. The Nestucca remains slow for fresh fish.

Astoria crabbing is excellent but higher numbers of crabbers are taking interest so limits require more effort.

Crabbing at Yaquina Bay has slowed under heavy pressure. A few Chinook are being taken in the lower bay out of Newport.

A handful of chinook and coho were taken at the jaws of the Alsea over the past weekend. That's been the only place with enough water to fish. Good catches of Dungeness have come out of Alsea Bay.

Crabbing has been fair to good in the Siuslaw estuary.

Southwest – High wind and wave action are predicted to create rough conditions offshore this weekend. On a bright note, the fall rains arriving this week and should relieve low, clear conditions on southwest Oregon rivers.

Winchester Bay has been fair for crabbing.

The Elk and Sixes will again produce chinook by the weekend. These small streams can go from too low to too high and back in a flash, so get on the river when it's hot.

Chinook have been entering the Rogue estuary recently and numbers should improve with rain this week. Steelhead fishing is holding up for side-drifters in the Shady Cove stretch.

Chetco anglers should see fresh chinook entering on mid-day flood tides with fall rains this coming weekend further stimulating the bite.

Eastern – Lower Deschutes anglers are doing well for trout and while steelheading has improved slightly, it remains very slow.

The Metolius is fishing well for trout due to constant water temperatures. Anglers should be aware that the river is closed from Allingham Bridge upstream until June next year.

John Day anglers are entering their peak season for steelhead. Trollers working the John Day Pool can score good results using plugs with some larger "B" run fish still showing in the catches.

Grand Ronde steelheading is also underway with catch rates likely to improve in coming weeks. River levels remain low making bank angling the better choice.

SW Washington – Anglers are mostly targeting coho with the North Fork of the Lewis high on the priority list. The first steelhead of the winter season returned to the Kalama Falls Hatchery the last week of October.

The Klickitat River remains a fair option for anglers wishing to target coho. A few steelhead remain in the mix.

Columbia River Fishing Report – It's still a sturgeon show on the Columbia River. The salmon have all but gone with the exception of the Hanford Reach upriver brights where a still viable fishery is yielding some results. Backtrollers are taking chinook using Kwikfish and the fishery has performed better than expected given the run size.

Sturgeon anglers in the gorge experienced fair fishing for keepers this weekend with over a keeper per boat reported in the creel census. Bank anglers also fared decent although the creel indicated a keeper for nearly every 10 rods. Oversized fish are still showing up in the catch with boat anglers handling most of them (11 in last weeks creel for 8 boats). Squid was the top bait for **pro guide Bill Kremers (541-602-0881)**. Bill reports this from the gorge, "We went sturgeon fishing just below The Fishery on the Columbia. Keepers were harder to come by this time, but we had lots of action on shakers. Once again was the hot bait was squid." The gorge sturgeon bite often begins to taper this time of year with the cooling of the water temperatures. It will likely be no different this year and temps should begin to drop soon.

Keepers will begin to show in better numbers in the Portland to Longview stretch. **Pro guide Joe Salvey (503-349-1411)** reported that action is beginning to pick up in the Scappoose area. The Multnomah Channel is also getting more attention as water temperature in the Willamette remain warmer than the Columbia through the winter months. Smelt will be a key bait here but injecting baits with additional scent is never a bad idea.

Upriver, steelhead trollers are beginning to gain momentum in their fishery in the John Day Pool. Plug pullers are taking fish in the upper 12 feet of the water column in this no-brainer fishery. Although color selection is important, how hard is it to really troll plugs in a circle on a large body of water? Weekend creel checkers counted six adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept and two unclipped steelhead released for 28 bank rods; and 52 adipose fin-clipped steelhead and one chinook jack kept, plus 24 unclipped steelhead released for 71 boats.

State trooper Trygve Klepp had this to report about Astoria crabbing on the lower Columbia: "Crabbing out of Hammond is seeing lots of boats with the nice weather. With that many boats it's having an impact on the size of the crab. So, it's taking some folks both tides to catch say, four limits of crabs. Those that are being kept are just legal size. Few Jumbo's. For those who really know how to get by fishing the deep for the best hour of the exchange, they are rewarded with the nicer crab."

The Guide's Forecast – Although it appears action in the gorge may continue to be strong, with the number of keepers getting culled from this fishery, coupled with cooler water temperatures on the way, action here should begin to slow down in the coming weeks. Smelt and squid will remain a top bait but anglers may have to move around to find more consistent success for keepers. Shaker action will be great however. Try shrimp if you don't want to burn up all your expensive smelt. Anglers knowledgeable in the Portland to Longview stretch should continue to see their fishery improve. Don't overlook the Multnomah Channel.

Steelheaders in the John Day Pool and Arm are entering their peak season right now. Trollers

and bobber and jig tossers in the arm itself should have ample opportunities with the numbers of adult steelhead passing The Dalles Dam this fall. There will be a mix of both smaller "A" run fish and larger "B" run fish in the catches.

Crabbers will continue to be rewarded on the lower Columbia but limits may be harder to achieve with all the nice weather we've been having and larger numbers of people taking part of the bounty on the lower river. Larger keepers are already becoming harder to find. A stronger incoming tidal push may make crabbing at peak incoming a bit challenging but those willing to work for limits should not have too tough a time getting it done.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The coho run at Willamette Falls historically peaks in the first two weeks of October and with daily count insignificant in the first week of November this year, this one looks to be done. With a total of fewer than 1,000, it's one of the poorest showings ever.

The upper McKenzie can offer some worthwhile trout fishing, but this river can blow out quickly and this is likely to happen if the upcoming precipitation is significant.

A mix of wild native and hatchery summer steelhead are in the North Santiam. Water levels will be on the rise for at least the next three weeks. Wild steelhead are bound for the Little North Fork.

The Guide's Forecast – Anglers on the lower Willamette are taking lots of shakers and a few keepers above and below the Fremont Bridge. Squid and sand shrimp have been drawing plenty of very light biters. Deep holes in the lower river below St. Johns to the mouth has produced some keeper-sized sturgeon as has Multnomah Channel below Coon Island. Upper Willamette smallmouth fishers have continued to make good catches of larger fish as the bass feed in preparation for winter. The action will taper as water temperatures drop.

While some of the summer steelhead in the North Santiam remain in good enough condition to be kept, in late November into December the Catch-and-release fishery in the Little North Fork will be of greatest interest to anglers who just enjoy wrestling with these large, powerful fish.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Coho fishing closed on the Clackamas as of November 1st. Summer steelhead are still available but catches have tapered off. Eagle Creek is low and clear with only a few dark coho evident.

With coho closed on the Sandy, there's little here of interest to anglers for a while. Anglers trolling the mouth have experienced very little action. Salmon may be seen spawning now at Oxbow Park.

North Coast Fishing Report – The November fishery on Tillamook continues to disappoint anglers in what historically has been a great time to fish. Anglers are searching far and wide with lots of opportunities to fish almost anywhere in the lower watershed in pursuit of large fall chinook. The ocean was even an option and the weather.....well, sun blisters on my nose is just something I can't tolerate too much longer. The mornings the last few days have even been comfortable to jet around the bay in! It's November, BRING ON THE RAIN, MAN!

It may just take a weather change to stimulate this run but many of us are starting to believe that they just aren't coming. Up and down the coast, returning numbers of fall chinook are clearly down and although we had a fairly good early season, it seems the later running Wilson

and Kilchis fish, which we've had ample access to in the previous years, are coming in a bit "under the weather" this year. It's just simply getting too late to have high expectations at this point.

Recently, on Tuesday, there was a decent bite at first light in the calm ocean but it died until another flurry at high slack. The ocean fishing is a moot point since the ocean is scheduled to pick up and will likely be done as the Tillamook season winds down.

On Wednesday, the best bite was in the west channel with a handful of fish being taken before 9:00 a.m. After that, the bite died and bay-wide, only a rare fish was taken until the first part of outgoing tide when in the west channel, a few more fish were taken.

The upper bay has been slow with only an occasional fish being taken at the mouth of the Wilson near high slack and just upstream of the mouth of the Tillamook where plug plunkers are taking a few fish on both the incoming and outgoing tides.

Bobber fishing in the Wilson tidewater has been sporadic even though fish are clearly present. Some anglers fishing the lower portion of tidewater are watching fish from a high bank as they are reluctant to bite in the low, clear water. Some flyfishers however are doing quite well in these conditions. There are bobber holes like Makinster's that are producing consistent action but you had better be up early in the morning to get these holes.

The Nehalem remains poor with very light effort.

Crabbing seems to have picked up in Tillamook Bay recently. Although limits are still a pipe dream, keepers are coming at a much more steady rate. Crab harbor and just upstream are producing the best. Stronger tides this weekend may hamper incoming tide success however.

The Guide's Forecast – It's pretty clear at this point that there are not a lot of fish coming on the back half of the Tillamook fall run. A good incoming tide push however should keep fish in the bay and the on-coming weather and small rainstorm could stimulate the bite. If push comes to shove, fish will come into the river systems even on a slight rise. Only a slight rise of about 1 foot is predicted for many north coast systems. Not the best conditions for drifting a river.

Incoming tide has been the best time to target chinook in the bay system however. There seems to be a fair first light bite in the west channel and a few fish in the Ghost Hole and Bay City. Results are very inconsistent and most days, it's a roll of the dice which way to turn. Higher winds predicted for this weekend may keep more boats off the water.

Herring continues to be the go-to bait but some guides are beginning to take fish consistently on spinners on the outgoing tide. Blue label herring seems to be working the best.

Tidewater action may be pretty good over the weekend. Strong tides and cloud cover could produce some fair catches in the lower Wilson. Be sure to use shrimp or sardine fillets with your eggs.

Central & South Coast Reports – Rain and high wind is forecast to start on Friday this week on the south coast and is predicted to get slammed with heavy precipitation early next week.

Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754 6411) reports about his trip out of Depoe Bay, "The ocean was flat, the sun was out and fish were biting. Once again we targeted ling cod using jigs rigged with large curly tail chartreuse worms and a herring. The boat was limited out in lings over

twenty-seven inches in less than two hours. Then we fished for some rock cods for a couple hours as it was too nice to go back in. For the rock cod we were using shrimp flies and an 10 oz lead ball. Oh we clean the fish in Newport by Rogue Brewery. Naturally a cold Rogue beer really top off the day."



Anglers are marking a good number of fish and hooking a few Chinook in lower tidewater on the Siuslaw River. It'll only get better with rain this week. Trolling plug-cut herring has turned the trick.

The lower Umpqua and Winchester Bay is slow for Chinook anglers. Crabbing has been improving, however, with some taking limits of hard Dungeness. Chinook and steelhead fishing is slow to fair on the North Umpqua.

Until (And if) enough precipitation turns it around, Chinook fishing in the Coquille is not worthwhile. The Coos has delivered the occasional large, bright salmon but it is extremely slow.

While fresh Chinook are entering the lower Elk and Sixes on high tides, these rivers are at summer low and clear conditions so the exit with the outgoing.

Half-pounders and a few adult summer steelhead are being taken near Agness on the lower Rogue. Coho fishing is fair to good with spinners and plugs taking fish in the Grants Pass stretch. Steelhead are also being caught here. The upper Rogue is fair to good for summer steelhead with nearly 5,400 counted at Gold Ray Dam.

Boat and bank anglers have been taking a mix of Chinook jacks and adults in tidewater on the Chetco River. Rain this week will not only bring fresh fish into tidewater, but also encourage Chinook to venture upstream, expanding the action and spreading out the crowds. The majority of Chinook in the lower Chetco are dark or turning.

Diamond Lake is now closed to fishing.

Central and Eastern Oregon – The stretch of the Deschutes along the Warm Springs Reservation closed as of November 1st but remains open north of the reservation to the mouth, Trout fishing on this stretch is fair to good and steelheading has improved slightly this week with

spinners taking some fish. B-run steelies are entering now and available below Macks Canyon.

Trollers are making good catches of lake trout at Crescent Lake. Wobblers are drawing strikes.

Pro guide Rick Arnold (541-480-1570) adds this, Crescent lake kicked some smaller browns and one killer hookjaw brown weighing in at over 10 Lb. as the larger fish come in to false spawn. Work the shoreline area's for browns and Lakers until the first snow closes the ramp.

Got a report from a friend that they did well on kokanee before the Metolius Arm closed at LBC at the end of Oct. The (4) anglers took around 75 kokanee over a couple of days. Bull trout fishing will be coming into the winter pattern in both the Crooked and Deschutes Arms. Target bulls off the graph under kokanee balls with downriggers. This can be exciting and effective if you locate them.

Northwest Trout – Henry Hagg Lake is producing fair catches of trout on the troll in extremely low water conditions. The 'C' ramp is usable at any water level but the lake closes the weekend before Thanksgiving to re-open the first weekend in March.

Detroit trout fishing is fair to good on trolled wedding rings with or without bait.

No trout planting is scheduled anywhere in Oregon this week.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report October 31st – November 13th, 2007

North Puget Sound

Anglers fishing for **coho salmon** in the region's rivers and streams are still finding some silvers, but **chum** will soon be taking center stage. Meanwhile, some anglers on the saltwater have been reeling in **blackmouth** and will soon have the option of also dropping a pot, as the **crab** fishery re-opens in select areas in November.

Starting Nov. 1 at sunrise, marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal) will reopen for **sport crabbing** seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2008. Crab fishing will also remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), and 13 (south Puget Sound), where the fishery has continued uninterrupted since June 18.

Two other marine areas – 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) – will reopen for crab fishing on a daily basis Nov. 22-25 during the Thanksgiving holiday. The late season in those areas is limited to four days, because annual catch quotas for those areas were nearly reached during the summer season, said Rich Childers, WDFW crab policy coordinator.

Sport crabbing will not reopen this year in Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), where the summer catch slightly exceeded the annual quota.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. In addition, fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

While on the Sound, why not fish for **blackmouth**? Effort has been low, but recent creel checks in the region indicate decent fishing for blackmouth – resident chinook – in Marine Area 10. At Shilshole Ramp, 30 anglers were checked with a total of 18 chinook Oct. 27, while 34 anglers brought home 10 chinook the following day. Anglers in marine area 10 are allowed to keep one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit.

Beginning Nov. 1, opportunities for blackmouth will increase, as marine areas 8-1, 8-2 and 9 open for chinook. Anglers in Marine Area 9 will be allowed to keep one chinook as part of two-salmon daily limit for that area. Those fishing in marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 will have a two-salmon daily limit and can keep up to two hatchery chinook per day. Wild chinook salmon, which have an intact adipose fin, cannot be brought aboard the boat in areas 8-1 and 8-2.

Anglers are reminded that Marine Area 7 closes to salmon retention Nov. 1. In the rivers, the coho season is winding down and chum salmon will soon be showing up. "We're in a transition period," said Chad Jackson, WDFW fish biologist. "I'm sure river anglers are still finding some coho, but we should start to see more and more chum in the coming weeks."

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 **chum** season is taking off throughout Puget Sound, anglers can troll area rivers for **coho** or take advantage of the late-season recreational **crab** season.

Starting Nov. 1, recreational crab fishing will reopen in five marine areas of Puget Sound, including marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal). Crab fishing in those areas will be open seven days a week through Jan. 2.

Crab fishing will also remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), and 13 (south Puget Sound), where the fishery has continued uninterrupted since June 18.

Those fishing for crab in Puget Sound this fall and winter are required to fill out a winter catch card to record their catch. These winter cards are valid until Jan. 2 and due to WDFW by Jan. 15, 2008. Crabbers can mail in their cards or report their catch on the WDFW website, which will be available Jan. 2, 2008.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. In addition, fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

Meanwhile, anglers fishing the waters near Hoodsport in Hood Canal are starting to reel in some of the nearly 600,000 returning wild and hatchery **chum**. Over the Oct. 27 weekend, 37 anglers caught 25 chum near Hoodsport. Also, starting Nov. 1, anglers will have more opportunity to target chum in area streams when the Dosewallips and Duckabush Rivers in Jefferson County, and Minter Creek in Pierce/Kitsap counties open for fishing.

For those in search of **blackmouth**, a new non-selective fishery opens Nov. 1- 30 in Marine Area 5 off Sekiu, where the daily limit is two salmon (combined) and one chinook may be retained.

The one-chinook retention rule also applies in marine areas 11 and 13 starting Nov. 1, when the single-point barbless hook restriction will be lifted in Marine Area 13.

Anglers planning to fish for **coho salmon** in the Grays Harbor area should be aware that the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet erroneously shows several rivers closing early. As stated in the errata sheet on the WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>), the fishery for coho salmon will continue through November on the Chehalis river, and anglers may retain wild coho on the Elk, Hoquiam, Johns, Satsop Wishkah, and Wynoochee rivers, as well as Joe Creek. Anglers also may retain wild coho on the Newaukum and Skookumchuck rivers through Nov. 30.

"The pamphlet had already been distributed by the time we caught these errors," said Ron Warren, regional WDFW fish program manager. "We notified the news media and posted the errata on the website, but we want to flag the correction again for salmon anglers who want to continue fishing those rivers."

Coho fishing was "spotty" on many – but not all – of those rivers through October, said Scott Barbour, a WDFW biologist. During the last Saturday of the month, anglers aboard 30 boats pulled in 37 coho and one chinook fishing the Chehalis River near Fuller Bridge. Fishing has been even better where the Johns River flows into Grays Harbor, he said.

Anglers fishing the Quillayute river system on the Olympic Peninsula can retain two wild coho as of Nov. 1, but both hatchery and wild coho have been scarce so far, said Brian Russell, Sol Duc hatchery manager. "It's similar to last year's late show when we didn't get hatchery returns until the second week in November," Russell said. In addition, the numbers were lower than usual. "We typically get about 17,000 returning coho, but in 2006 the number dropped to 5,000," he said. "Hopefully the returns will be better this year." On the positive side, more jacks are showing up in recent weeks. "That's encouraging," he said.

Meanwhile, anglers looking for some late-season **trout** fishing, should head to Black Lake in Thurston County, where 3,500 one-pound rainbows are being planted this week and in preparation for the Nov. 3 weekend.

Trout anglers headed to Mason County should note that the WDFW boat launch on Lake Kokanee, will not be available for two weeks starting Nov. 5. The lake, which is maintained by Tacoma Power, is being lowered for maintenance at the Cushman Dam.

About 20,000 **razor clam** diggers took home their 15-clam limit during the season opener at four ocean beaches Oct. 25-29. The next weekend dig is tentatively scheduled for Nov. 23-26, subject to the results of marine toxin tests.

Southwest Washington:

The bite has dropped off a bit for **sturgeon**, but **hatchery coho** have been coming on strong from the North Fork Lewis River to the mouth of the Klickitat River. At both of those locations, boat anglers averaged about one coho per rod during the last week of October.

"This is prime time for hatchery **late-stock coho**," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist in the Vancouver office. "The conditions are right, the fish are moving into the tributaries and anglers are catching some nice, bright fish."

Some of the best fishing was near the salmon hatchery on the North Fork Lewis, where 42 boat anglers checked had 42 hatchery silvers and reported releasing 11 wild fish and 24 chinook. Ninety-six bank anglers took home 16 more hatchery fish from the Lewis River.

Boat anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool at the mouth of the Klickitat River also did well. "Those fish are clearly staging at the mouth of the Klickitat, and should start moving into the river soon," Hymer said.

No creel checks were conducted on the Cowlitz River during the last week of October, but lots of fish have been showing up at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery. Tacoma Power employees released 885 coho adults into Riffe Lake at the Taidnapam North boat launch; 400 coho adults into Lake Scanewa at the Day Use Site; 152 coho adults into the Cispus River above the mouth of Yellow Jacket Creek; 150 coho adults into the upper Cowlitz River at the Skate Creek Bridge in Packwood; and 46 coho adults and 39 **fall chinook** adults into the Tilton River at Gust Backstrom Park in Morton that week.

The first hatchery **steelhead** of the season arrived at Kalama Falls Hatchery the last week of October, with more expected to follow, Hymer said. He noted that the daily limit for hatchery steelhead on the Cowlitz River reverts to two fish (from four) on Nov. 1.

Cooling water has slowed the **sturgeon** catch below Bonneville Dam, where 305 bank anglers checked 35 legal-size fish during the last full week of October. That's about one fish for every 8.7 rods, roughly the same odds as for boat anglers. In mid-October, bank anglers averaged about one legal-size fish for every three rods.

Mike Wall, with the WDFW Sturgeon Project, said the wind may also have something to do with the lower catch rate. "Veterans of the fishery say a west wind is best, an east wind catches the least," Wall said. "There's been an east wind blowing lately."

Walleye fishing has also slowed in the Camas/Washougal area, but Silver Lake near Castle Rock has been very good for **crappie** and **trout** fishers have several good options. Rowland and Spearfish lakes have both been producing some nice rainbows, and WDFW recently stocked Battle Ground Lake with 1,055 rainbows weighing from 1.8 pounds apiece and larger.

Eastern Washington:

Snake River hatchery **steelhead** fishing continues to improve as air and water temperatures drop. Latest creel surveys show the best catch rate is in the mid-Snake River, above the interstate bridge near Clarkston, where anglers are averaging about five hours of effort per steelhead caught. Steelheaders in that stretch need to be careful about drifting into the Clearwater River across the state line into Idaho, and continuing to fish without an Idaho license. No part of the Clearwater River can be legally fished with a Washington license only.

Other stretches of the Snake River are yielding steelhead at slower but steady rates. From Little Goose to Lower Granite dams, steelheaders have been averaging about 12 hours of effort per fish. The Wallula area, from the Oregon state line to the mouth of the Walla Walla River, has seen about 13 hours of angling per steelhead. For the complete creel survey summary, see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/creel/snake/index.htm>.

Rainbow trout fishing on Lake Roosevelt has been outstanding for the last few weeks, according to Jeff Lombard, WDFW Spokane Fish Hatchery specialist. "With the water cooling down, the fish are hitting and limits of one-and-a-half to three-pound rainbows are the norm," he said. The best fishing has been down river from the Seven Bays area, near Whitestone and Lincoln.

Many fishing lakes are closed in the region, but WDFW Regional Access Manager Scott Young said there are some areas with public access sites that remain open. Waitts Lake, four miles west

of Valley along Highway 395 in Stevens County, is open through February and produces nice rainbow and **brown trout**. Eloika Lake, seven miles north of Chattaroy off Highway 2 in Spokane County, is open year-round and has decent **largemouth bass, perch** and **crappie** fishing. Newman Lake, near the Idaho border in eastern Spokane County, is open year-round with largemouth bass, **bluegill**, crappie, **perch, catfish**, plus some rainbow, brown and **eastern brook trout**, and **tiger muskies**. Silver Lake, a mile east of the town of Medical Lake in southwest Spokane County, is open year-round and also has a little bit of everything, including **tiger trout** and tiger muskies. Rock Lake, a mile north of Ewan in Whitman County, is open year-round and is now providing good action on brown trout.

Portions of some rivers in the region also remain open year-round for fishing. The Pend Oreille River, which has net-pen-reared rainbow trout, plus some brown trout, crappie, perch and bass, is open year-round and WDFW maintains a primitive access site near Ruby Creek, about 15 miles south of Ione. The uppermost portion of the Spokane River, from Upriver Dam to the Idaho border, is catch-and-release only through March 15. The rest of the river is open year-round, but check the rules pamphlet for catch limits and other regulations.

The **whitefish** season opens Nov. 1 on the Kettle River in Ferry and Stevens counties. Fishing gear is restricted to one single point hook, maximum hook size 3/16 inch point to shank (hook size 14). Catch limit is 15 whitefish.

North Central Washington:

On Oct. 22, for the first time in 10 years, the Wenatchee River opened to **steelhead** fishing, and as WDFW district fish biologist Art Viola of Cashmere said, "fishermen were overjoyed." Some 175 anglers were checked on the opener and almost half caught fish, Viola said. The average catch rate was about 4.8 hours of angling per fish. Forty percent of all the steelhead caught were adipose fin clipped and kept; the 60 percent with unclipped adipose fins were released.

"Crowds have thinned since the opening day, with only about 35 to 40 anglers on the river each day last weekend," Viola said. "The average catch rate has fallen to about a fish for every 10 hours of effort, but it's still good fishing. The river remains lower than normal, water clarity is good and water temperatures have fallen into the high to mid-forties – excellent water temperatures for steelhead fishing."

Viola said the Wenatchee River steelhead season, which runs through March 31 from the mouth upstream to Icicle Road Bridge west of Leavenworth, is not only a special opportunity to catch steelhead, but also a way for anglers to assist in wild steelhead recovery efforts. "Removing some of the hatchery steelhead in excess of spawning escapement needs will allow more spawning and rearing habitat for wild fish and thus increase natural production," he explained.

WDFW district fish biologist Bob Jateff of Omak reports that steelhead fishing has slowed a bit in recent weeks on the upper Columbia River system, where anglers were averaging a fish every 10-12 hours of effort. "On the Methow River, stonefly nymphs with an egg pattern trailer are popular," he said. "On the Okanogan River, anglers are using mostly spoons and jig and bobber combinations. The mainstem Columbia near the docks in Pateros continues to produce fish for anglers using a jig and bobber setup tipped with a whole shrimp."

Jateff reminds anglers that bait is only allowed within the mainstem Columbia and that the Methow and Okanogan Rivers are under selective gear rules with no bait allowed. Fishermen can retain their daily limit of two adipose-fin-clipped steelhead, but any fish with intact adipose fins must be released immediately and not taken out of the water.

The Similkameen River will open to steelhead fishing Nov. 15. The open section will be from the

mouth to the Railroad Trestle Bridge, which is one mile upstream of the Highway 7 Bridge in Oroville. Selective gear rules apply on the Similkameen River for the duration of the steelhead fishery. "There seems to be some confusion among anglers about these rules, so I encourage them to check out the emergency rule change on all the upper Columbia tributaries on our website," he said. (See <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.)

Jateff also noted that while most lowland **rainbow trout** lakes in Okanogan County closed to fishing Oct. 31, year round waters continue to provide good fishing opportunities. Little Twin near Winthrop, Big and Little Green near Omak, and Rat near Brewster all have split seasons, providing catch-and-release fishing with selective gear rules now, and then catch-and-keep fishing with standard gear starting Dec. 1.

WDFW district fish biologist Jeff Korth of Moses Lake reports that rainbow trout fishing at Dry Falls Lake in Grant County has been very good. "Spring fingerlings stocked there have already reached 12 inches," he said, noting that "there are plenty of 15 to 18-inchers, and more than the occasional fish runs up to 20 inches."

Korth also suggests fishing Lake Lenore, which has **cutthroat** averaging two to three pounds and up to five or six pounds. Dry Falls Lake and Lake Lenore, along with the other selective gear fisheries Lenice, Nunnally, and Dusty lakes, are open through the end of November.

"**Walleye** numbers in Potholes Reservoir and Moses Lake are up," Korth said, "and these fish become more active with fall and cooler water temperatures. Most fish range in size from 15 to 24 inches." Anglers at these big year-round waters in the Columbia Basin can harvest eight fish daily with a minimum size of 12 inches and only one fish over 22 inches.

South Central Washington:

The fishery for **hatchery steelhead** in the Ringold area of the Columbia River has been slow, but is likely to get a lot better starting Nov. 1, said Paul Hoffarth, WDFW fish biologist. That's because, starting Nov. 1, anglers will be able to keep any hatchery steelhead with a clipped adipose fin, as opposed to those with both a clipped adipose fin and a clipped right ventral fin.

"The dual clippings identify fish reared in the Ringold Hatchery," Hoffarth said. "Until Nov. 1, we target those fish exclusively to make sure we get enough fish above Priest Rapids Dam to meet escapement goals."

The problem this year is that returns to the Ringold Hatchery have been relatively low, Hoffarth said. "But there's lots of other hatchery steelhead with adipose clips in the river that anglers will be able to catch and keep."

The fishery is open through March 31, 2008 from the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco/Kennewick upstream to the wooden powerline towers at the old Hanford town site.

Meanwhile, WDFW fish biologist Eric Anderson of Yakima reminds **rainbow trout** anglers that many catchable-size trout were recently stocked in Yakima and Kittitas county year-round lakes. "Although these fish are smaller than our spring planted trout, they still provide good angling opportunity in our year-round lakes," Anderson said. "Some of these fish carry over through the winter to a larger size in the lake without tying up valuable rearing space in the hatchery."

Reader Email -

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

Task force leans toward killing nuisance sea lions in Oregon:

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/6600AP_WST_Sea_Lions.html

ODFW hosts 58th Annual NW Fish Culture Conference:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/hatchery/NWFCC.asp>

GOOD LUCK!