

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Headlining the metro opportunities is the summer chinook season only open briefly through Saturday. Catches are good with surprising numbers of adults passing Bonneville Dam indicating a larger than predicted return this year. Boaters plunking spinners and plugs in the Columbia River gorge should continue to find success until the closure reports **pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)**. The river upstream of Bonneville will remain open until July 31<sup>st</sup> or until the catch guideline is met.

**Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** reports fair to good summer Chinook fishing on spinners below Bonneville.

Summer steelhead fishing is also improving and anglers are now allowed to retain sockeye salmon as part of their daily bag limit.

Shad numbers are also climbing rapidly making for good action for boat and bank anglers alike. Oversized sturgeon are readily taking fresh shad fished with heavy lead in the gorge. Boaters must exercise extreme caution when anchoring in the higher flows.

A few large hatchery steelhead have been taken in the lower Willamette recently. Fair shad fishing is slow to fair for boat and bank anglers in Oregon City but fishing has been poor in the Multnomah Channel. A few keeper sturgeon have been taken amongst scores of shakers.

Anglers are hooking summer steelhead and the occasional spring chinook on the Sandy below Cedar Creek.

The Clackamas has been improving as the water temperature rises and the water drops. Steelhead hookups are most common in the McIver Park stretch. Bobber and jig rigs are drawing strikes.

Water conditions and temperatures are improving this week on the North Santiam and may allow fishing by the weekend. The South Santiam is producing limits of trout 12 inches or better above Foster Dam.

McKenzie water level and flows have been gradually dropping over the past week. Water temperatures are low but improving. The upper river has been producing on both dries and nymphs with the better fishing in afternoons as the water warms.

Scheduled to be planted with trout this week are Trillium Lake, Blue River above the Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Detroit Reservoir, Fall Creek, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above and below Leaburg Lake, Salmon Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit, Smith Reservoir, and the Middle Fork Willamette River above Hills Creek Reservoir.

**Northwest –** The estuary sturgeon fishery closed on the scheduled date of June 24<sup>th</sup>. Fishery managers will look at a brief re-opener after updated catch estimates are complete. Catch rates improved with the warming water temperatures and success is similar from Hammond to upstream of Tongue Point. Catch and release remains open but fresh bait will be hard to come by

until consistent demand exists.

South of Cape Falcon near Manzanita, the ocean coho season opened on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Success rates were low however and anglers are reminded that all chinook must be released. North of Cape Falcon, the daily bag limit for chinook has increased to 2 adults per day and coho with a healed over adipose fin clip may be retained starting on Sunday. Beginning Sunday, this fishery will only be open Sundays through Thursdays. Anglers are reporting fair catches of both species in the current chinook-only fishery.

A few hatchery spring chinook were caught in upper Tillamook Bay this week but estuary catches should taper while river and tidewater fishing should pick up. Low flows will give bank anglers the edge.

**Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** reports slow coho fishing but great results for bottom fish out of Depoe Bay.

**Southwest** – New fall chinook regulations will effect several coastal bays and rivers. Changes are available online: <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2008/june/061908.asp>

A bright spot has been ocean crabbing which has been worthwhile in 80 to 100 feet of water.

Fresh spring chinook are entering Winchester Bay although fishing has been slow.

Minus tides start Monday of next week. Clam digging will be good in Coos Bay.

A few springers are being taken on the Rogue and a couple of anglers have limited recently. While the fall chinook run is predicted to be about average, it is expected to provide a much better fishery than the spring season has this season.

Ocean beaches in the Brookings and Gold Beach areas have continued to provide excellent results for surf perch.

Diamond Lake trout fishing has been rewarding bait fishers and trollers with limits of large rainbows with peak fishing getting underway.

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

**Eastern** – Warmer water has bigger numbers of John Day bass on the bite reports **pro guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424)**. Assuming the current weather trend continues, this fishery will become white hot in the coming weeks.

The Deschutes fished well for trout with Salmonflies and Golden Stones still on the water above South Junction but it is evident the hatch is winding down.

Hosmer Lake is producing large brook trout and the boat ramp has re-opened.

**SW Washington** – District rivers have recently experienced a surge in both spring chinook and summer steelhead. Fishery managers may soon consider a re-opener of spring Chinook and an increase in the daily bag limit of steelhead may also come into effect.

The Cowlitz, North Fork Lewis and Kalama Rivers are all good bets for steelhead in the coming weeks.

The disappointing Wind River and Drano Lake fisheries will close for spring chinook on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Both systems will remain open for steelhead in select downriver areas so check regulations before participating in this fishery.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Just as effort and success was ramping up on the lower Columbia River for sturgeon, fishery managers have decided that they need to take a look at catch numbers before considering any additional time for recreational fishers. Managers will decide the fate of the remaining quota on Friday, June 27<sup>th</sup> on a compact call with press releases to follow soon afterwards.

Effort has been on the increase with improving catch rates. I have been spending more of my time in the above Tongue Point fishery with better results than downriver. Other anglers have been finding good fishing out of Hammond however with some quality fish in the catch. River temperatures have been on the increase with the improvement in weather conditions. The temperature recently hit 60 degrees.

I've noticed a significant increase in fish coming on anchovies in recent days. The sturgeon sure seem to be keying in more on anchovies in the deeper water. Downstream of Tongue Point, sand shrimp in deeper water is simply not an option. Out of Hammond, the best catches recently have been coming on the green line with anglers working the downtown Astoria area over pretty well on the incoming tide and last part of outgoing. Most boats were concentrating their effort in the deepest water to the Oregon side of the shipping channel in front of Bornstein's seafood plant.

These reports are a bit of a moot point until we figure out what the remainder of the sturgeon season is going to be. Recent fact sheets indicate we were not even half way through the quota on June 16<sup>th</sup> although catch rates have improved recently. Managers will likely try and offer up some time for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend.

Offshore, rumors of improved catches in the Chinook only season are unfounded but not unreasonable. One charter captain reported fair catches of both Chinook and coho although coho must be released. Most effort is taking place in "The Cove" near Seaside with boats working the 40 to 80 foot lines fishing near the bottom of the ocean. Spoons are the favored "bait". The bag limit was recently increased to 2 fish/day (Chinook only until the coho opener).

Upriver, anglers were certainly excited about the summer Chinook and steelhead openers with favorable tides to boot. I heard one local boat landed 3 salmon on opening day but that report also is unsubstantiated. Boaters working the islands around Westport, specifically Tenasillahe, found some fair fishing over the weekend on the morning minus tides. Plunking spin-n-glos proved productive in the higher than normal flows for this time of year. Dam passage at Bonneville has surpassed the magical 200 adults/day that locals look to for good success in the downriver bank fisheries. Numbers of steelhead have hovered around 700 adults/day passing the Bonneville facility. Also in the run are higher than anticipated sockeye salmon. Fishery managers recently opened up sockeye salmon for legal retention as they are most likely to be intercepted in bank fisheries for steelhead. Be sure to be able to properly identify the species that are present so you know what you're catching.

**Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** reports, "Last week Thursday I pre fished for summer chinook below Bonneville with Jim Martin. Jim had anchored up in the "sweet spot" and saving the location by sleeping in his boat. Four other boats had the same idea. In the five hours I had to fish, we hooked three summers, all on spinners. We were fishing in nine feet of water. The other boats also hooked several salmon, with the inside boat at seven feet hooking

the most. Knowing that it was impossible to get that location we fishing out of Chinook Landing on Sunday. Fishing was considerably slower as we only saw a couple of fish caught around the mouth of the Sandy. Later in the day we did finally landed a jack and missed two other hard strikes. The spinners that were most effective were the mid size ( sizes 4- 5) ones. Some the spinners had copper blades, some were gold blades and the others were a variety of the rainbow blades. For the bodies we are using, red, green/chartreuse and purple beads."

**Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)** reports that the gorge salmon fishery started off decent with some boats getting 4 to 6 fish for a good days effort. Success has since tapered somewhat but if you are anchored in the right spot, you can still expect some fair fishing for these prized fish. Dan stated to target these fish on the humps and current seams and warned the water is swift so be sure to anchor safely. Dan also reported the sturgeon fishing remains steady with 4 to 6 oversized sturgeon falling to fresh shad on a daily basis aboard his vessel. Although shad numbers have significantly increased, success rates haven't necessarily followed suit. Dan recommended fishing shallow for the shad, in 7 to 8 foot of water in areas where the river makes a slight bend.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Starting with the summer Chinook fishery, it remains open below Bonneville Dam through Saturday. Fishing should remain fair up until the closure and motivated anglers still have the opportunity to harvest these fish above Bonneville Dam (to McNary Dam) through July 31<sup>st</sup> or until the harvest guideline is met. Spinners are taking the majority of Chinook but plugs will take biters as well. The fish are well distributed in the higher flows but target them in 8 to 16 feet of water keeping your gear really near the bottom where flows are not quite as intense as they are in the upper water column.

This weekend, steelheaders wont' have the good tides they had last week when targeting the shore-hugging returning adults. Great tides return next week however and they're screamers which should put fish right up on the beach in easy access for most plunkers. Hot colored spin-n-glos work best for these fish in reds, oranges and pink variations. Don't cast too far into the river as these calorie-counting fish are likely to be in 2 to 4 foot of water in the fast water. July is peak month for A run summer steelhead.

Stand by for additional time for estuary sturgeon. We're hopeful for 7 to 10 additional days including the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. The decision will come down on Friday the 27<sup>th</sup> and should be well publicized; hopefully with decent time to plan for successful fishing. Both the Tongue Point and Hammond fisheries should produce fair results in the warming water. Anchovies and sand shrimp should be working equally well in the coming weeks. Be sure to call your favorite bait location to check availability for bait before you venture down.

Ocean fishers may not be too excited about the wind forecast coming to a port near you. Sea swell looks to be tolerable and anglers may be able to get some decent fishing in during the morning hours before the afternoon blow. The ocean coho season opens on Sunday and although there will be some participation for the small salmon, action likely won't be all that good. If anglers have a handle on how to target the Chinook, it's time better spent given the difference in size and anglers are also allowed to retain 2 Chinook in this fishery. Coho, of course, must have a healed over adipose fin-clip. This is in the North of Falcon (near Manzanita) fishery. For clarification, here is the official press release:

Ocean coho salmon season opens June 22

**Date:** June 20 , 2008

**Contact:** Craig Foster (971) 673-6026 or Steve Williams (503) 947-6209 / (541) 673-0372

Salem, Ore. – Summer ocean salmon fishing kicks into gear when a recreational coho salmon fishing season for Oregon coastal waters south of Cape Falcon opens Sunday, June 22.

In the ocean from Cape Falcon to the Oregon/California border, the salmon season is open seven days-per-week, June 22 – Aug. 31, or until attainment of a 9,000 coho salmon quota is reached. The allowed bag limit is two adipose fin-clipped coho per day.

In the ocean from Cape Falcon north to Leadbetter Point in Washington (Columbia River Ocean Area) the season is currently open seven-days-per-week for chinook only. Effective June 21, the daily bag limit will increase from one chinook to two chinook. Beginning June 29, this area will open for all salmon species. This season for chinook and adipose fin-clipped coho will extend until September 30 or until either the 10,180 coho quota or the 5,300 chinook quota is reached.

Fishing will be allowed Sunday through Thursday with a two salmon per day limit. The limited salmon seasons were approved by the Pacific Fishery Management Council in April. At that meeting, the Council voted for the first time in history to close all commercial salmon fishing off the Oregon coast due to a dramatic decline in the number of Sacramento River chinook expected to spawn.

Despite the closure, managers from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife were able to secure a limited recreational fishing opportunity for coho salmon off the Oregon coast. Season updates, regulations, and other ocean salmon fishing information are available on-line at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/salmon/>.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Summer steelhead counts are over 12,000 as of June 23rd, making this a very respectable run. The water at Willamette Falls is in the low 60s with visibility over seven feet. Shad fishing at Oregon City has been spotty. While anglers took plenty of shakers during the sturgeon retention period, keepers were few and far between.

The McKenzie is at good level and color with trout and steelhead catches improving.

North Santiam level and flow will remain high through the weekend. The level of the South Santiam has been dropping. About 350 summer steelhead were recycled from the Foster trap on Tuesday this week.

**The Guide's Forecast** – If the daily spring Chinook numbers were to continue at the current level through the third week in July (a very unlikely scenario), YTD totals would still fall short of 20,000. Summer steelhead counts are a different story, however. Now is the time to target summers on the Middle Fork Willamette and lower McKenzie. The water level of these rivers has dropped and clarity is excellent. Numbers of fish available are good as are recent catches.

Skip the North Santiam this week due to high water, but we'll take another look next week as conditions are due to improve. Summer steelheading on the South Santiam has been slow this week.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Improving water conditions have led to better summer steelhead catches on the Clackamas but spring Chinook catches remain rare.

The Sandy has been in good shape with excellent color. Bobber and jig rigs are drawing strikes from summer steelhead but the number of hookups have been far higher than the number of landings.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – With freshwater fisheries winding down, anglers are once again focused on the ocean to provide for their recreational needs. Although Chinook season will NOT open in the ocean (with the exception of some bubble fisheries), coho retention is allowed beginning the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. Catch rates in the opener were not that impressive, as would be expected. The two top producing ports for coho catches were Winchester Bay and Garibaldi with .16 and .12 kept coho per rod.

In freshwater, there are still some spring Chinook available as local angler Pat Vining proved last week. Pat took 2 quality salmon in upper Tillamook Bay over the weekend utilizing the minus tides that often concentrate fish in the deeper slots. Effort is decreasing but fish are still available. Effort and success will divert to the tidewater and upriver areas as adults begin to stage for the long summer soak until the spawn in the early fall. Bobbers and bait are the most effective way to target these fish in the lower flows of the Wilson, Trask and Nestucca Rivers. Summer steelhead are also available in the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers.

Anglers may want to pick and choose their ocean adventures as the NW wind is likely to rear its ugly head with inland temperatures reaching into the 90's, we've entered a weather pattern that is more common for this time of year. Bottomfishers should have some brief periods of morning opportunity this week and limits should come easy over your favorite reefs. The ocean forecast is as follows:

**THU NIGHT** N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT.

**FRI** N WIND 15 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 3 FT.

**FRI NIGHT** N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 5 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

**SAT** N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

**SUN** N WIND 15 KT TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Most north coast effort will likely be westward for ocean coho. It's really just a matter of planning your trip for when the ocean will be its friendliest. Mornings will be best for weather and the bite and fish won't be too picky when it comes to offerings. Trolled herring worked near the surface should produce results. It's a big ocean with a smaller coho return this year so you may have to travel a lot to find any consistent results. Bring your bottomfishing gear! Crabbing should also pick up with commercial crabbing ramping down.

Still some decent spring Chinook opportunities for fresh water anglers. Although hatchery fish should still be available to Tillamook Bay anglers, the bulk of the fish will move upstream where bobber and bait tossers have access to them in their traditional deeper haunts. A combination of eggs and shrimp often offers the best chance in this hatchery only fishery. The salmon should be well distributed throughout the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers but the best biters will be lower in the river and come on the good tide series we'll be witnessing beginning early next week.

Clamming for all species should be excellent starting Sunday. Razor clams to the north and bay clams inland. Be sure to check shellfish closures as mussel harvest is currently restricted. The latest:

Recreational shellfish harvesting status as of 06/12/2008 [Oregon coast beaches closed to mussel and scallop harvesting from Columbia River to Gold Beach](#)

- **Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) levels have risen above the alert level on the North, Central and South Oregon Coast**
- **Domoic acid results continue to be in safe range**
- **Harmful algae bloom monitoring: Elevated levels reported**

Please note: when shellfish toxin levels exceed the "alert" level, and a new shellfish closure must be issued, the ODA web pages may not be updated as quickly as the shellfish closures recording. Please check ODA's shellfish safety hotline at 1-800-448-2474 or (503) 986-4728 outside of Oregon for current information.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Boaters will want to make a last-minute check of offshore conditions prior to launching this weekend but forecasts at this time (mid-day Thursday, June 26th), indicate friendly waves and swell but as is often the case, hot weather inland will have the wind kicking. South coast predictions are for milder conditions than central Oregon ports, but an early morning launch will allow safe return before it gets too breezy.

**Pro guide Bill Kremers (541-754-6411)** reports, "Went fishing out of Depoe Bay on Tuesday with hopes of catching some coho. We had to go out about ten miles (380 feet) to find water over 52 degrees. Trolled around for awhile and landed one small coho. The water temperature did however warm up in the afternoon. Our next plan was to do some bottom fishing off the mouth of the Siletz and Lincoln City. On the run over we run into huge bait balls of sardines that were feeding krill. At first we trolled around the bait balls hoping there were some salmon around, no such luck. Then we got out the herring rigs and proceeded to catch dozens of sardines. Once we got to the rock fish reefs we were catching rock fish and ling cod about as fast we could get our lines to the bottom. The secret - fresh sardine fillets on our jigs. With the water temperatures the way it is currently, anglers here are concerned that the coho season may be over before the water warms up enough off of Depoe."



Offshore coho opened Sunday, June 22nd but fishing was slow off the central Oregon coast out of Depoe Bay and Newport. Fish are in the eight to 10 pound range which would indicate that we should see some big ones depending on how long this fishery remains open. This year the quota

is 9,000 compared with 55,000 in 2007. The equivalent of this season's quota taken last year by the Fourth of July but participation (and enthusiasm) is down this year with the price of fuel and the fact that Chinook are off limits. Ocean coho will remain open through August 31st in the unlikely event that the quota doesn't fill.

The last all-depth halibut opener on June 12th, 13th and 14th yielded good catches and mostly limits of fish around 40 pounds each. Of the roughly 160,000 pound spring quota, 51% was remaining as of mid-June with the next all-depth opening June 26th through 28th. Deep water halibut fishing has been very good out of Newport.

If halibut and coho quotas are met, inordinate pressure could be put on the excellent rockfishing offshore which could lead to an early closure. What then? Anglers can't count on another season of nearshore tuna fishing.

Summer all-depth halibut season starts August 1st from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain and is scheduled to be open every other Friday through Sunday through October or a quota of 212,769 pounds.

Spring Chinook fishing has been slow in Winchester Bay despite fresh fish entering. A few springers remain available in the mainstem Umpqua with better results coming on the North Umpqua which is also delivering a few summer steelhead. Shad fishing has been worthwhile at Sawyer's Rapids and Yellow Creek. Smallmouth bass fishing is improving on the South Umpqua as the water warms.

About 10% of the boats launching out of Charleston returned with ocean coho. It's still early here for coho but bottom fishing has been great for rockfish and lings.

Spring Chinook season is nearly over in the lower Rogue with only stragglers available above Agness now. Summer steelheading has been fair. There is little or no action in the Grants Pass stretch. The better spring Chinook fishing on the Rogue is on the upper river despite low numbers over Gold Ray Dam this season. Anglers hitting the river 'first thing in the morning are seeing success with the bite shutting down at sunup.

While coho catches for anglers launching out of Brookings have been running about 50% wild, numbers have been good enough that nearly every boat is returning to port with at least one hatchery fish. Surf perch limits are being taken and bottom fishing has been excellent at nearshore reefs.

For those confused by the first release (or who missed it entirely), the **ODFW** issued this:

***In our effort to accurately and clearly describe the upcoming coastal fall chinook fishing regulations, we are issuing a revision of the press release sent out earlier today. Significant clarifications and corrections are highlighted in blue.***

## **REVISED**

**For Immediate Release Thursday, June 19, 2008**

### **ODFW announces coastal fall chinook regulations**

Salem, Ore. -- The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife today announced a set of one-year restrictive regulations for coastal fall chinook salmon in ocean terminal areas, and bay and river fisheries. These temporary regulations include reductions in daily and seasonal bag limits and

area closures to protect wild fall chinook for 2008.

### **New Sport Regulations for Bays and Rivers**

The new temporary sport regulations set a reduced aggregate bag limit for fall chinook caught in all open waters in the Marine, Northwest and Southwest Fishing Zones. **In most waters, anglers will be allowed to keep up to two adult salmon or steelhead per day and 20 per year in the Zones as per permanent rules. However, only one non-fin clipped adult chinook may be kept per day and five non-fin clipped adult chinook may be kept for the season extending from August 1 to December 31, 2008.** Regulations for jack salmon remain unchanged -- that is five per day and two daily limits in possession.

**Open waters, seasons and fin mark requirements for coho salmon remain the same as in the permanent regulations.**

Exceptions to these temporary regulations include:

- Current regulations of one chinook per day and five for the year for Yachats River, Hunter Creek and Pistol River will remain in place. Any non- fin clipped adult chinook caught in these streams will also count towards the Zones seasonal aggregate listed above.
- Current regulations for the Rogue River will remain in place, except to allow no more than 10 non-fin clipped adult chinook per season with five non-fin clipped adult chinook caught elsewhere counting towards this seasonal aggregate. In addition, the seasonal aggregate bag limit for non-fin clipped adult chinook starts July 12 on the Rogue River from the mouth upstream to Elephant Rock (tidewater). The Rogue River from Elephant Rock upstream to Gold Ray Dam opens for non-fin clipped adult chinook August 1.
- **In the Coos River and Bay, anglers will be allowed to harvest no more than 10 non-fin clipped adult chinook per season with five no-fin clipped adult chinook counting towards the Zones seasonal aggregate.**
- The opening of the chinook season on the Chetco River will be delayed until November 1.

In addition, the temporary regulations establish new angling deadline closures for fall chinook in order to protect spawning fish. The new deadlines are for the Siletz (**Hwy 229 Bridge near Mile Post 23 just north of the town of Siletz**), Big Elk Creek in the Yaquina Basin (Bear Creek near Updyke Road at River Mile 5), Alsea (Five Rivers), Five Rivers (closed), Siuslaw (Lake Creek), Lake Creek (closed), North Fork Smith (closed), South Fork Coos (closed above Besse Cr. at RM 6.25), Millicoma (closed above Dora's Place boat ramp at RM 0.25), South Fork Coquille (closed above mouth of Middle Fork at RM 5), North Fork Coquille (closed), Middle Fork Coquille (closed), Floras Creek and Floras Lake outlet (Floras Creek bridge at RM 5), and Sixes River (Edson Creek at RM 10).

**In most areas of the Coos and Coquille Basins, winter steelhead angling will not open until November 15, 2008 in order to protect chinook spawners.**

### **New Ocean Sport and Commercial Regulations off Tillamook, Elk, and Chetco Rivers**

The temporary regulations also retain limited sport and commercial seasons for the Tillamook, Elk River and Chetco River Ocean Terminal Areas. **These fisheries will be open within state waters only.** Daily and seasonal bag limits for the terminal sport fisheries will be part of the aggregate bag limit set for all open waters in the Marine, Northwest and Southwest Fishing Zones.

Tillamook Terminal sport fishery will be open from September 1 – November 15 with a bag limit of two chinook but not more than one non-fin clipped adult chinook per day. All non-fin clipped adult chinook count towards the Zones seasonal aggregate of five non-fin clipped chinook.

The Tillamook commercial season will be open from September 1 through the earlier of November 15 or the quota of 500 chinook. Vessels are limited by a landing and possession limit of 25 chinook per calendar week and 28 inch minimum length.

The Elk River Terminal sport fishery will run from November 1-30 with a bag limit of two chinook but not more than one non-fin clipped adult chinook per day. All non-fin clipped adult chinook count towards the Zones seasonal aggregate of five non-fin clipped chinook.

The Elk River commercial season will open November 1 through the earlier of November 30 or the quota of 250 chinook. Commercial vessels are limited to a daily landing and possession limit of 10 chinook **per day** and a 28 inch minimum length.

The Chetco River Terminal sport fishery is October 1-4 with a goal of 250 chinook landed. The daily bag limit is one adult chinook and any non-fin clipped adult Chinook counts towards the Zones seasonal aggregate bag limit. If weather significantly limits effort and catch, additional open days of October 10-11 and October 17-18 will be considered.

The commercial season off the Chetco will be open October 5-8, 12-15, and 19-31 or the quota of 250 Chinook. Vessels are limited to a daily landing and possession limit of 10 chinook and 28 inch minimum length.

The return of fall chinook to Oregon's coastal rivers and streams is forecast be significantly below established goals and long-term averages. The exceptions are rivers in the Tillamook Bay system and the Rogue River which should be near established goals.

In addition to meeting conservation needs the restrictions are necessary to assist in meeting spawning escapement goals outlined in the new chinook agreement under the US/Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Golden stone will be the pattern of interest to trout fishers on the lower Deschutes as the Salmonfly hatch winds down. Goldens will be found in greatest number around Warm Springs this week. Down around Maupin, trout will be responding to caddis imitations.

Kokanee limits have been the rule at Pulina with the bite starting mid-morning. Trollers are hitting kokes averaging 12 inches in about 20 feet of water.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

**From the WDF&W Weekender Report **June 25<sup>th</sup> – July 8<sup>th</sup>****

### **North Puget Sound**

Fishing has been slow for anglers on the saltwater, but catch numbers could rise as more marine areas open for **salmon** in July. In the freshwater, anglers casting for spring **chinook** and **sockeye salmon** at a couple of the region's rivers are finding some nice fish.

Meanwhile, the crab fishery opens July 2 in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10, and the southern portion of 7 (San Juan Islands). Fisheries in those areas will be open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

On the Skagit and Cascade rivers, fishing has tapered off a bit for **chinook** salmon, said Brett Barkdull, WDFW fish biologist. "But fishing is still decent, especially for the bank anglers along the Cascade," he said. "They seem to be doing better than those fishing from boats on the Skagit."

The Skagit River is open for hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River. On the Cascade, anglers can fish from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. Both stretches are open through July 15.

Anglers fishing the Skagit and Cascade rivers have a daily limit of four hatchery chinook, two of which may be adults (chinook salmon at least 24 inches in length). Barkdull reminds anglers that statewide rules require anglers to stop fishing for salmon once they have kept two adults.

**Sockeye** fisheries on the Skagit and Baker rivers started slow, said Barkdull. "But more sockeye are starting to show up in the river, so fishing should improve in the coming weeks," he said.

Anglers on each river have a daily limit of two sockeye salmon at least 12 inches in length. On the Skagit, the sockeye fishery is open from the Dalles Bridge to 200 feet above the east bank of the Baker River. Anglers should note that there are two closures on each river in late June and early July, said Barkdull, who suggests checking WDFW's Fishing in Washington pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) before heading out on the river.

Elsewhere, a portion of the Samish River opens for fishing July 1, with a daily limit of two salmon. Beginning this year anglers fishing the Samish must follow the stationary gear rule, which requires the line, weight, lure or bait to be moving (not stationary) while in the water.

Out on the saltwater, the Tulalip Bay "bubble" salmon fishery got off to a slow start, but the catch rate could pick up in the coming weeks, said Steve Thiesfeld, another WDFW fish biologist. "The fishery tends to get going in early July," he said. Anglers fishing the Tulalip bubble have a two-salmon daily limit and chinook must be 22 inches in length to retain.

Beginning July 1, anglers will have other options as marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) open for salmon retention. Anglers in marine area 7 will be allowed to keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit. In marine area 10, anglers also will be allowed to keep two salmon per day, but they must release all chinook.

Before heading out, anglers should check the rules and regulations for all saltwater and freshwater fisheries in WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

## **[South Sound/Olympic Peninsula](#)**

Anglers can look forward to new opportunities to catch salmon in the next few weeks, with openings along the coast, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Hood Canal. Meanwhile, most areas of central Puget Sound will open for **crab** fishing July 2, and sport fishers will get one more day - June 28 - to catch **halibut** on the north coast.

While the fishery for **chinook salmon** off the Washington coast has been open for nearly a month, anglers will soon be able to add hatchery **coho** to their catch. Also, as of June 21, the limit for chinook increased to two per day.

Anglers had been limited to one chinook per day since the June 1 opener, but lower-than-expected catch rates allowed fishery managers to increase the limit, said Pat Pattillo, WDFW salmon policy coordinator. "We wanted to make sure anglers got a chance to catch chinook in case we had to close the fishery to protect coho," Pattillo said. "We started with a conservative limit, but were able to increase it due to low effort and catch rates."

The two-salmon limit will remain when the fishery opens for coho retention starting June 29 in marine areas 1 and 2 (Ilwaco and Westport) and July 1 in marine areas 3 and 4 (La Push and Neah Bay). Anglers fishing those areas may keep two chinook, two coho or a combination of both as part of their two-fish daily limit. The minimum size for chinook is 24 inches and 16 inches for coho. All wild coho must be released.

Ilwaco remains open seven days a week, while Westport is open Sundays through Thursdays only. La Push and Neah Bay are open Tuesdays through Saturdays only.

The following marine areas also open July 1:

- Marine Areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu/Pillar Point and eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) will be open daily with a two-fish daily limit. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches, but there is no minimum size for other salmon. All chum, wild chinook, and wild coho west of Ediz Hook must be released; all chum, all chinook and wild coho east of Ediz Hook must be released. Handling rules are in effect.
- Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) will be open daily with a two-fish daily limit. No minimum size is required but anglers must release all chinook. Handling rules are in effect.
- Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal south of Aycock Point) will be open daily with a four-fish daily limit. Up to two chinook and two coho may be retained. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches. All chum must be released.

Salmon fishing will open July 1 on the Bogachiel, Calawah, Quinault and Nisqually rivers.

Anglers who have been fishing near Tacoma and Vashon Island (Marine Area 11) since the June 1 opener might want to give Hood Canal a try, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist.

"Since no one's been fishing that area, there are fish out there that haven't seen a lot of gear yet and may be more likely to go for the bait," Thiesfeld said. He suggests anglers start out at Lilliwaup, just north of Hoodport on the west side of the canal.

Thiesfeld also recommends Sinclair Inlet near Bremerton or the waters between Kingston and Jefferson Head on the northern Kitsap Peninsula. "For the past two or three years, anglers have had success catching resident coho in that area," Thiesfeld said. He reminds anglers that all chinook must be released in that area.

Before heading out, Anglers are advised to check the 2008-09 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> for more information on regulations.

Meanwhile, anglers can take advantage of predicted sunny weather to catch one more **halibut** off the north coast. Marine areas 3 and 4 (La Push and Neah Bay) will be open to halibut fishing at all depths Saturday, June 28. Other areas still open to halibut fishing include the nearshore fishery in Marine Area 2 (Westport), Fridays and Saturdays only, and Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), open Thursdays through Mondays, through July 21.

Eight areas of Puget Sound will open for **Dungeness crab** fishing July 2, including marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 7 South (San Juan Islands), 8-1 (Deception Pass to east Point), 8-2 (East Point to Possession Point), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal). Those areas are open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus Labor Day Weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 1.

Crabbing is already under way in several other areas, including marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge). Those waters, which opened to crabbing June 18, remain open seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2009.

Crab fishers may take only male Dungeness crabs with shells measuring at least 6¼ inches. All undersized crab, female Dungeness crab and all softshell crab of either sex must be returned to the water.

Like last year, crab fishers are required to record their Dungeness crab catch on two separate catch record cards - one for the summer season and one for the fall/winter season. They also have the option of mailing in tier catch cards or reporting on the Internet. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex>.

As the weather warms up, more people are heading out for **summer steelhead** fishing, said Rick Ereth, WDFW fish biologist.

"Steelhead are arriving in the rivers and anglers have been fishing the Black Creek area on the lower Wynoochee," Ereth said. "If people have a day off, I suggest they go fishing."

Anglers might also try the Chehalis River, which is closed to salmon fishing but open to hatchery steelhead and **cutthroat trout**, Ereth said. He noted that 44,000 summer steelhead planted in the upper Chehalis below Pe Ell and above Adna are slated to return this year, with worthwhile numbers of fish moving into the upper Chehalis throughout the summer.

Also, changes in the river from last year's flooding have altered many pools and riffles, creating new fishing areas worth checking out, Ereth said. "It's an even playing field for anglers and a good time to learn the water."

For a good day of fishing, anglers can launch from several areas along the river, Ereth said. He recommended looking at a map for WDFW launch sites. "Bank access is limited in the upper river areas," he said. Before heading out to look for new areas, Ereth reminded anglers to respect private property along the river as they look for access and learn the regulations, which are outlined in the 2008-09 *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

### **Southwest Washington:**

Nearly 1,600 bank anglers and 1,100 boats turned out for opening day of the fishery for adult summer **chinook** and **sockeye** salmon in the lower Columbia River. During the first two days of that fishery - which is set to close the evening of June 28 - bank anglers fishing below Bonneville Dam reeled in one summer chinook, sockeye, or hatchery **steelhead** for every five rods. Boat anglers averaged a salmonid per every nine rods, when including fish released.

The same aerial survey also counted more than 600 private boats and a couple dozen charters fishing for **sturgeon** that day in the Columbia River estuary below the Wauna powerlines. Charter-boat anglers averaged a legal kept for every two rods before the retention season for sturgeon in that area closed June 24.

Fishery managers from Washington and Oregon are scheduled to meet June 27 to discuss the possibility of providing additional fishing time for sturgeon anglers below the Wauna powerlines. For updates, anglers can check the Fishing Hotline (360-902-2500) or the WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/>).

"The lower Columbia River has been a hub of excitement lately, but fishing seasons are in transition," said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. "The focus is now shifting to tributaries like the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers, where it's now prime time for hatchery steelhead fishing. Salmon fishing above Bonneville Dam is also heating up."

The fishery for **summer chinook** and **sockeye** from Bonneville Dam to Priest Rapids Dam continues through July 31, as does the season for hatchery steelhead from Bonneville Dam to the Hwy. 395 Bridge in Pasco. Anglers have been picking up some fat summer chinook in the Bonneville and John Day pools, and those fishing The Dalles Pool have been averaging two chinook for every three rods. "Long-time anglers are saying salmon fishing in The Dalles Pool is the best in years," Hymer said.

Chinook salmon make up most of the catch above Bonneville Dam, but a record number of sockeye are also available. As of June 23, more than 122,500 sockeye had passed the dam, nearly doubling the previous record for that date.

Meanwhile, three tributaries to the lower Columbia - the Cowlitz, Kalama, and Lewis rivers - will reopen for retention of hatchery-reared chinook salmon today (June 25). Also today, the catch limit for steelhead will increase to six **hatchery steelhead** per day on the Cowlitz and North Fork Lewis rivers.

Pat Frazier, regional fish manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), said fishing rules for those rivers can be liberalized now that it appears enough fish are returning to meet hatchery production goals. "Spring chinook returns have been nip and tuck this year for some hatcheries," Frazier said. "But after a late surge of fish, it now appears that the hatcheries will get the fish they need for broodstock."

Under the new rules, anglers will be able to retain six salmon - including two adults - per day on designated portions of those three rivers through July 31. On the Cowlitz River, however, only one of those two adult salmon may be a chinook. All wild chinook and wild coho salmon, which can be identified by an intact adipose fin, must be released.

On the Cowlitz River, the new chinook-retention rules will be in effect from the boundary markers at the mouth to Mayfield Dam. On the Kalama River, anglers will be allowed to retain chinook salmon from the boundary markers at the mouth to the Kalama Falls Hatchery. In addition, chinook retention will be permitted from the mouth of the mainstem Lewis River to the mouth of the East Fork and from there to Merwin Dam on the North Fork Lewis River.

Frazier said hatcheries on the Cowlitz and North Fork Lewis rivers now have all the steelhead they need to meet egg-take goals, allowing fishery managers to increase daily catch limits for hatchery fish on those rivers. Through mid June, a thousand steelhead had returned to the traps on the Cowlitz and Lewis with more fish on the way. On the Cowlitz River, the new six-fish steelhead limit will be in effect from the Highway 4 Bridge at Kelso upstream to Mayfield Dam. On the North Fork Lewis, it will be in effect from the Interstate 5 Bridge upstream to Merwin Dam.

Steelhead fishing is also heating up on the lower Columbia River and should get even better in July with the arrival of nearly a third of a million upriver-bound fish, Hymer said. "We're expecting about the same number of upriver steelhead back as last year," Hymer said. "That should keep anglers in fish for quite a while."

**Shad** returns are running behind last year's pace, but still are providing plenty of action for anglers fishing below Bonneville Dam. According to creel data collected the weekend of June 21-22, anglers fishing the lower Columbia River averaged just under three fish per rod. Bank anglers fishing just downriver from Bonneville Dam accounted for most of the catch. Through June 23, almost 1.5 million shad had been counted passing Bonneville Dam compared to 2.25 million on the same date last year.

Anglers also can still retain legal-size **sturgeon** above the Wauna powerlines to Marker #85 and in the Bonneville Pool, where several legal-size fish were checked during the week ending June 22. Sturgeon may be retained Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays only above the Wauna powerlines but seven days per week (until the quota is reached) in Bonneville Pool. In addition, Bonneville Pool has also been giving up **bass** at a rate of 11 fish per rod.

**Trout** anglers are advised that WDFW stocked Mineral Lake in Lewis County with more than 7,000 catchable-size rainbow trout June 16-17. Like last year, WDFW transported hatchery summer-run steelhead that are not needed for broodstock to Kress Lake near Kalama, where anglers can count two against their five-fish trout limit. Through early June, several hundred fish had been trucked to the lake.

### **Eastern Washington:**

With warm weather in the forecast, **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** in lakes throughout the region likely will be grouped up in cool water in deep spots and creek mouths. "That usually makes trout an easier target for anglers," said Chris Donley, WDFW district fish biologist in Spokane. "But you should still fish early morning or late evening."

Among the best trout fisheries in the central part of the region is Badger Lake in southwest Spokane County, where WDFW Enforcement Officer Lenny Hahn spent an evening off with family, catching 14 trout in less than two hours.

Other good bets are Amber, Clear, Fish, Medical, West Medical and Williams lakes in southwest Spokane County, Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County, and Rock Lake in Whitman County.

Hahn also reported that Pend Oreille County lakes are not receiving much fishing pressure. "So I'm sure the fish are just waiting to bite something there," he said. Davis, Diamond, Fan, Horseshoe, Marshall, Sacheen, Skookum, Sullivan and Yocum lakes are usually productive.

WDFW Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area Manager Juli Anderson reports Z Lake fishermen out this year haven't seen the nearly two-footers caught last year at this time, but they are catching smaller rainbows.

Donley also says Sprague Lake is producing good catches of rainbows. "The word is out that we've been re-stocking Sprague with thousands of warmwater species, like **crappie**, **bluegill** and **largemouth bass**," he said. "But those fish won't be in the catch this year, they're just the building blocks for Sprague's future fishery." About 50, 10-pound **channel catfish** that were salvaged from Sprague last year before a lake rehabilitation treatment were recently returned, though, and should be fun to catch, Donley said.

Liberty and Newman lakes in eastern Spokane County and Eloika Lake in north Spokane County all have a mixed bag for anglers - trout, bass, crappie, perch - and all species should be biting now. Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County is also good for perch and bass, but it's under a no-bait rule. Also in Lincoln County, Twin and Deer Springs lakes are producing largemouth bass.

**Bass** fishing is hot on the upper Snake and Grande Ronde rivers in the south end of the region. One 54-inch **sturgeon** was recently caught near Central Ferry on the Snake, and several other sturgeon have been caught and released in the area.

WDFW officers checking fishermen on Lake Roosevelt have seen several anglers with limits of **walleye**.

In the interest of wild-fire prevention, WDFW officials remind Fourth-of-July holiday celebrants that fireworks are not allowed on any of WDFW's 900,000-some acres of water access sites and wildlife areas across the state.

### **North Central Washington:**

Starting July 1, fishing for **summer chinook salmon** gets under way in several areas of the upper Columbia River and the lower stretch of the Okanogan River (from the mouth to the Highway 97 bridge immediately upstream). Minimum size is 12 inches, daily catch limit is six fish, and only two adult salmon (at least 24 inches) may be kept. Check the fishing regulations pamphlet for all details at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regs\\_seasons.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regs_seasons.html).

The fishery for **spring chinook salmon** continues through July 15 on the Entiat River in a special selective-gear season not listed in the rules pamphlet. The season was possible because enough spring chinook have been returning. Art Viola, WDFW district fish biologist, said the fishery targets non-endemic hatchery spring chinook that pose a risk to the natural-origin spring chinook in the Entiat River, which are listed as endangered.

Anglers fishing the Entiat River may retain non-endemic, hatchery-origin fish, which can be identified by a clipped adipose fin. The daily limit is two salmon with a minimum size of 12 inches. Angling is allowed from the Alternate Highway 97 Bridge near the mouth of the Entiat River upstream about six miles to 400 feet downstream of the Entiat National Fish Hatchery discharge channel. Selective fishery rules are in effect, requiring the use of single barbless hooks and non-buoyant lures, with night closures. All steelhead and chinook with an intact adipose fin must be released. Handling rules are also in effect for this fishery. Bait is allowed. Fishery duration may be modified as necessary for protection of the ESA-listed spring chinook.

### **South Central Washington:**

WDFW fish biologist Jim Cummins reports that recent creel checks on the Yakima River (Roza to Union Gap reach) showed five adult **hatchery chinook salmon** and one wild chinook release among 95 anglers.

"River flows are increasing because the Yakima Basin reservoirs are full and snow is melting in the higher elevations," Cummins said. "The reservoirs were holding back some of the water, but now that they are full, all of the snowmelt is flowing down the Yakima and the river is barely fishable. It may be out of shape, high and muddy, for the rest of the season. Salmon anglers may need to move to the Columbia River, where **summer chinook** and **sockeye** are now fair game."

For the first time in four years, anglers can now retain sockeye as part of their daily catch limit for adult salmon during fisheries for summer chinook on the Columbia River. Above Bonneville Dam, anglers can retain sockeye and summer chinook salmon up to Priest Rapids Dam through July 31. The daily catch limit is two adult salmon per day.

Fishing for **hatchery steelhead** also remains open on the Columbia River up to the Highway 395 Bridge in Pasco.

**Kokanee** anglers might want to try Rimrock, Bumping, Keechelus, and Kachess reservoirs. Mackinaw or **lake trout** are being caught at Cle Elum Reservoir.

WDFW district fish biologist Eric Anderson reports that recent snow-plowing of the access roads to Dog and Leech lakes off Highway 12 in the White Pass area allowed stocking of **triploid rainbow trout**. "Anglers need to remember that Leech is fly fishing only," Anderson said. "Both lakes have a trout daily limit of five with no more than one over 14 inches. There are also brook trout in both lakes."

Both Cummins and Anderson noted that many roads, campgrounds and trails that anglers are accustomed to using at this time of year may not be snow free. Check with the Okanagan/Wenatchee National Forest for updates at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/wenatchee/recreation/report/>.

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### **Reader Email -**

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

Write to the TGF staff:

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### **Random Links**

Online Virtual Weight Scale:

**[http://www.floridasportsman.com/reference/weight\\_calculator/](http://www.floridasportsman.com/reference/weight_calculator/)**

Another Weight Calculator:

**<http://flyfishingresearch.net/fishweight/weightcalculator.html>**

**Weekly Quote** – “I don’t suppose I ever entirely release a fish. I may not eat it, but that does not mean I take nothing from it before I let it go.” - Paul Schullery

**GOOD LUCK!**