

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 4th – July 10th 2008**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Look ahead to the Buoy 10 fishing in the lower Columbia River. Prepare yourself for this fishery by learning all you can about it. Log onto our technical report page at: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml> and order the tech reports that will benefit your outing, today!

Willamette Valley/Metro- Summer chinook season closed below Bonneville on Saturday with only fair results reported throughout the fishery. High effort contributed to a higher than anticipated total catch for chinook. The above Bonneville chinook fishery also reached its impacts, triggering a much earlier closure than anticipated.

Summer steelheading should be excellent this week with increasing dam counts and excellent tides concentrating fish close to the shoreline where bank anglers have good access to them. Hot colored spin-n-glos offer plunkers the best chance for success. Only hatchery steelhead, jack chinook and sockeye may be retained. Sockeye retention closes after Sunday.

With the lower Willamette water temperature at the 60-degree mark, steelhead counts at the Falls have exceeded 12,000 fish. The Middle Fork Willamette is producing summers. Chinook adult counts remain dismal but mini-jack counts indicate a positive turn-around for salmon in the 2010 season. Shad fishing has been fair in Oregon City as the run winds down. Sturgeon fishing has been slow to fair.

McKenzie River fly fishers are taking some nice trout to 16 inches or better on both nymphs and dries. Anglers are banking summer steelhead on the lower river as water conditions improve.

The North Santiam is expected to remain high for another week after which fishing should improve. South Santiam level and flow moderated late last week and allowed anglers to catch a few steelhead.

Clackamas anglers are catching summer steelhead as well as the occasional spring chinook. Some of the best steelheading is taking place near McIver Park with bobber and eggs.

The Sandy River level rose over the weekend and turned color with the warm weather. With the return of more moderate temperatures, flows should drop.

Scheduled for trout planting are Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Trillium Lake, Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

Northwest – Fishery managers bypassed the July 4th holiday opportunity for estuary sturgeon anglers and adopted an additional 8 days for retention. From the Wauna Powerlines to Buoy 10, anglers may once again retain sturgeon between 45 and 60 inches on July 10 – 12, 17 – 19, 26 and 27th or until the 4,000 fish quota is met. Meanwhile, catch and release fishing remains good.

Ocean salmon fishers out of the mouth of the Columbia experienced high catch rates for chinook on July 1st. Some coho were also in the mix but several 2 chinook limits were tagged. Friendly

seas are in the weekend forecast but bar crossings must be approached with extreme caution with the minus tide series that is upon us.

Hatchery and wild spring chinook were still being caught in Tillamook Bay last week but the larger tides will favor upper bay trollers and tidewater bobber casters. Fish will remain in good condition through the first half of July. Sturgeon anglers are also taking some keepers from the estuary.

Bottomfishers should note the statewide regulation changes for rockfish mentioned in the Southwest section of this column.

Good tides will allow clam diggers to take advantage of rarely exposed beds into the weekend.

Southwest – Due to higher than expected catch rates, new regulations will go into effect for bottom fish starting July 7th. Rockfish bag limits will change from six to five per day. Lingcod limits remain two per day but anglers must fish inside the 20-fathom line only.

Forecast is for mild seas and winds, which should allow easy crossing for boats this weekend. As always, check the late predictions to ensure safe conditions.

Winchester Bay had the highest number of hatchery coho landings at the opener on Sunday, June 22nd. Silvers are averaging six to eight pounds. The waters of the Umpqua are dropping and warming which has improved smallmouth bass fishing.

Springer fishing remains hit-or-miss on the lower Rogue as anglers look forward to a worthwhile fall chinook season. The Grants Pass stretch is poor. Half-pounders are hitting a variety of lures on the upper Rogue.

Offshore coho fishing has been rewarding for boats trolling shallow about four miles out of the Port of Brookings. Bottom fishing just outside the harbor is excellent.

South coast beaches will continue to deliver limits of surfperch through the long holiday weekend.

Diamond Lake has continued to deliver catches of large trout with the south end producing the biggest fish.

Hemlock Lake, Lake in the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir and Section 5 of the Rogue River are scheduled to be stocked with trout.

Eastern – The water level increased slightly on the Deschutes in 100-degree weather this week but it hasn't hampered fishing. The primary hatch of interest will be Caddis this week. White River was spewing mud into the Deschutes over the weekend.

Warmwater angling in Brownlee and Oxbow and Hells Canyon Reservoir is peaking right now. Crappie fishing is particularly good.

SW Washington – The Cowlitz and North Fork Lewis Rivers are producing fine catches of summer steelhead. Catches are expected to remain good through July. The bag limit has increased to 6 hatchery summer steelhead per day.

Beach plunkers near Kalama should also have a great weekend for steelhead on the mainstem

Columbia.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With newly adopted closures for summer chinook and estuary sturgeon, anglers will be further constrained in their 4th of July opportunities this weekend holiday. The summer chinook season closed as scheduled last Saturday with a higher than anticipated catch. Anglers went over their allowable impacts but with a likely run size update, it shouldn't have long term ramifications. Needless to say however, there won't be additional time granted to the sport fleet. Fishery managers met today via conference call to discuss additional gillnet seasons.

Estuary fishers had hoped for some retention opportunity over the 4th of July holiday but managers, especially on the Washington side of the river opted for a later start in order to allow for some opportunity into late July. The remaining retention openers are: July 10 – 12, 17 – 19, 26 and 27th or until the 4,000 fish quota is met. Catch and release fishing remains good from Tongue Point downstream.

Ocean fishers have had some surprisingly good catches for this early in the season with fair numbers of both chinook and coho in the mix. We fished in the ocean on July 2nd, starting on the north side of Buoy 1 in about 200 feet of water. Strong tides kept us on the move and we had several opportunities as is usually the case in the ocean. Several of the fish we landed were undersized chinook but we did come up with 2 hatchery coho and one 27-inch chinook for the fish box by 11:00 a.m. in the morning. We took most of the fish on herring going down 17 to 35 feet on the line counters with delta divers. We also drew several strikes in the 8 to 11 foot range. The day before, the boat did considerably better with 6 chinook on board between 6 and 21 pounds along with 2 hatchery coho. This early in the season, it's a day to day deal. Consistency is not expected until later in the month. It was encouraging however that the size of the fish for this early in the season was impressive. To see 6 and 7 pound coho right now is a good thing. We also had an overnight soak on crab pots just south of the south jetty which yielded only 2 keepers for 3 pots. The boat took 10 keepers the day before.

Further upriver, anglers are still in pursuit of shad and oversized sturgeon. **Pro guide Dan Ponciano (360-607-8511)** reports the action is still good with 3 to 5 oversize fish still falling to his boat almost every day. Dan reported the fresh shad are becoming more challenging to catch which is the premier bait when targeting these fish. Legal sized sturgeon in this stretch of river are becoming scarce. Smelt or fresh shad strips would be the bait of choice if targeting keepers.

Steelheaders will be the likely highlight in next week's edition. Although anglers had to deal with weak tides for most of this week, catches were still fair along some lower Columbia River beaches. Weak tides will be replaced with screaming tides for the holiday weekend. See the Forecast section for more details.

The Guide's Forecast – With the ocean NOT an option on Friday's and Saturday's, anglers don't have a lot of great options if fish retention is a big issue. Summer steelheading along the lower Columbia River beaches may be one of the better options as strong minus tides should offer anglers a good chance at some quality, hard fighting fish that are beginning to make their way upstream these days. Dam counts at Bonneville are climbing rapidly with well over 1,000 fish per day passing the facility. July is a peak month for "A" run steelhead into the river and this will be a great weekend to begin pursuit if you haven't already. The gillnets, if they fish again, will likely be in zone 2S which is toward the gorge and shouldn't impact lower river fishers. Hot colored spin-n-glos fished near the waters edge should produce results. Don't forget to give yourself the edge and pack your lures full of scent. Keep in mind that plunking is the ONLY technique steelheaders use that require the fish to come to you. Scent will play a key role in your success.

Boaters can also take advantage of good steelheading options either by plunking plugs or spin-n-glos right from their boat or by boating to islands along the Columbia and targeting fish from these more remote places. Tenasillahe is one of those favorite options downstream from Westport, Oregon or anglers can launch from Aldrich Point off of Highway 30. Just keep in mind that these fish will be shore huggers during the strong outgoing tide so don't fish too deep.

Come Sunday, ocean fishing out of Hammond/Astoria should be a good option for a mix of coho and chinook. Both the water north and south of the Columbia River entrance should produce results by the 'ol standard of trolling herring or anchovies in the 200 to 300 foot of water down 8 to 35 feet. The chinook are likely to run deeper but we have been catching coho that deep as well. If you plan on crabbing bring lots of bait for best results. There isn't a lot of competition out there but there aren't a lot of crab either. River crabbing remains poor for keepers.

Catch and release opportunities for sturgeon in the estuary is also an option. The best area will likely be upstream of Tongue Point as it will be hard to get fresh anchovies for bait since other consumptive seasons are closed. Plan ahead for your bait needs.

Bay and razor clamming should be great this weekend.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – As the water temperature rises through the mid-60s and the level drops at Willamette Falls, steelhead counts are tapering off. Action for summers has moved upstream and into the tributaries.

With Detroit Reservoir full and warm weather melting snow upstream, the North Santiam is running high and fast. It's expected to remain in this condition through the coming weekend and beyond. There are good numbers of summer steelhead in the system, however.

The Guide's Forecast – It's still possible to catch some shad but the run is definitely running down. sturgeon fishing is slow for keeper-sized fish. The Middle Fork of the Willamette ('town run') and lower McKenzie River are good prospects for summer steelhead over the long holiday weekend. Fly fishers and hardware flingers stand an equally good chance of a hookup.

Despite high water conditions on the North Santiam, summer steelhead have been taken this week. Steelhead recycling from the Foster Dam trap downstream is ongoing. With numbers, water conditions and catches improving, 580 summers were trucked downriver this week to allow anglers a second chance at them.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Steelhead are scattered on the Clackamas resulting in spotty catches. The water is likely to remain high with the massive snowpack this year and while the color is currently good, anglers will find cloudy water whenever the temperature climbs. Water levels should remain fishable through the coming weekend. Spring Chinook catches remain slow with numbers down this year, but summer steelhead have been running large and anglers targeting them stand at least a fair chance of a hookup. Boat traffic will be heavy, so use caution and keep an eye out for the other guy.

The Sandy is offering evidence of its glacial origin. It's been off-color all week and is unlikely to fish this weekend.

North Coast Fishing Report – Ocean fishing remains the highlight in this section of the coast. Anglers targeting salmon are catching a few coho. Although Garibaldi was the second most

productive port for coho in the first week of the season, it still only booted out .08 coho per rod for the week. Winchester Bay was a top producer at a half a coho per rod of effort. Through the end of the first week of the season, just over 13% of the quota has been retained.

There was still some spring chinook effort in Tillamook Bay last week during the weak tide series that greeted lower bay trollers. A mix of both hatchery and wild salmon were caught but anglers have been commenting on how large these fish have been. Ocean productivity seems to be less of a factor these days. The weak tides have since switched to large minus tides forcing anglers to switch their tactics.

Anglers do have the option to explore the tidewater sections of the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers as these are likely holding spots for later returning fish. Also, upriver deep holes will also be holding fish still in good shape before the long wait for the early fall spawning season. Bobbers and bait will take these fish with a combo of eggs and shrimp the best bet. Bank anglers will have the advantage here.

The Guide's Forecast – Ocean recreationalists need to be paying attention to strong tides when navigating the entrances to the ocean this weekend. It can cause bar closures and hazardous conditions. The ocean forecast itself is looking pretty promising for those interested in pursuing bottomfish and salmon during the open periods. Be sure to check regulations as new regs have come into effect for bottomfish this week.

Sturgeon is just another option for anglers on Tillamook Bay this week. Strong tides will favor upper bay trollers (spinners, herring and plugs) as well as concentrate sturgeon into the deeper channels on the south side of the bay. Small crabs may plague sturgeon plunkers so bring lots of bait or be prepared to move around to escape the competition.

Bank anglers working the deep holding water of the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers stand a reasonable chance at holding chinook salmon. Summer steelhead are also available on the Nestucca and Wilson Rivers.

Central & South Coast Reports – Halibut fishing out of Newport has been very good to anglers during the all-depth openers. The next opportunity will be July 10th through 12th. If the quota doesn't fill, another opener will follow with the summer season starting August 1st. Any quota remaining from the spring fishery will be added to the summer all-depth quota. With warm water moving closer to the central Oregon coastline, however, boaters equipped to safely make longer runs are looking at prospects for albacore, particularly following the outstanding season last year. Stay tuned.

Tuna were caught recently out of Winchester Bay but it was a trip of better than 50 miles. As the warmer water moves shoreward, the albacore will follow. Smallmouth bass fishing is improving on the mainstem Umpqua and has been hot on the South Umpqua. As the water level has dropped on the mainstem, shad fishing has picked up dramatically.

The fall Chinook fishery starts early on the Rogue and trollers in the estuary have taken a few of these harbingers of better fishing to come. The run this year is supposed to be better than those of the past few years. with the level and flow of the Rogue dropping, prospects are improving. Spring Chinook are in the Grants Pass stretch and while effort is fairly light, a few are being taken daily. The upper Rogue is rewarding anglers with springers, particularly at first light. The Hatchery Hole is producing summer steelhead as well as the occasional springer early in the day.

Anglers launching out of the Port of Brookings for offshore coho have been doing fairly well

about two to three miles out, with nearly every boat returning with a few hatchery fish recently. Conditions this week should move coho closer to shore. Brookings has been second only to Winchester Bay in coho catches this season. Forecasts for Friday and Saturday are for friendly seas and gentle onshore breezes with the surf building Sunday and into next week. Troll divers, dodgers and hoochies to hookup with coho.

Brookings has been the #1 Oregon port for bottomfishing, but outstanding catches out of all ports have motivated the ODFW to take action in an attempt to ensure anglers the opportunity to continue fishing through summer. Starting Monday, July 7th, the rockfish limit, including cabezon and greenling, will go from six per day to five and set a maximum depth limit at 120 feet. With most bottomfish catches coming from 80- to 100-foot depths recently, the 20-fathom limit is unlikely to have much of an effect on anglers effort. Other nearshore and offshore species bag limits remain unchanged although ling cod anglers must abide by the 20 fathom rule. The new restrictions are **coast-wide** and scheduled to remain in effect for the remainder of 2008.

Central and Eastern Oregon – With the Salmonfly hatches just about wrapped up on the Deschutes, the trout may take a while to make the seasonal transition but it won't be long until they key on the next major hatch. Caddis patterns will dominate and if trout won't respond, fly anglers should get some interest on nymphs. Look for Caddis hatches starting mid-afternoons. White River has continued to spew mud, roiling the lower river although a few steelhead have been taken at Sherars Falls.

Green Peter is fishing well for some, poor for others. Trolling has been productive for those who can find schools of kokanee.

Trolling and jigging have been equally effective in taking limits of quality kokanee averaging 12 inches or better at Crescent Lake.

Northwest Trout – Trollers are doing well at Detroit Reservoir for rainbows averaging 12 inches. Bank fishers are making fair to good catches.

In a new program, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will release 600 one to two pound rainbow trout in Alton Baker Park this week and every other Thursday throughout the summer. As a Fourth of July special, the Canal will be stocked with 100 additional trout weighing nearly two pounds.

Trail Bridge Reservoir is to be planted with 3,000 trout this week, and Leaburg Lake will get 2,000. Also scheduled for trout planting are Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Trillium Lake, Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Reservoir. Most of the Willamette Valley pond stocking with trout is done for this season as water temperatures are increasing to the point that trout will no longer survive.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report June 25th – July 8th, 2008

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.

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:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Oregon Tuna Classic 2008 starts July 12th out of Newport - Info:

<http://www.oregontunaclassic.com/page/page/3377092.htm>

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla has developed a Port of Brookings Harbor Guide that it hopes will aid boaters – and maybe save a life:

http://www.currypilot.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=17736

Fish Tourney Starts July 4 in Brookings:

http://www.currypilot.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=17757

Weekly Quote – "The solution to any problem - whatever it is- is to go fishing, and the worse the problem, the longer the trip should be." — John Gierach

GOOD LUCK!