

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 15th – August 21st, 2008**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Despite improving chances for chinook in the mainstem Columbia, new regulations will keep the section from Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam closed to the retention of chinook until September 1st. Hatchery coho and steelhead may still be retained. Steelhead angling continues to be best in the Columbia River Gorge.

With the water temperature 73 degrees at Willamette Falls and the level low, sturgeon fishing is slow. The upper Willamette has been producing good catches of smallmouth bass and the Middle Fork Willamette is fishing well for trout.

Even though the majority of the summer steelhead run has crossed Willamette Falls, destined for the North Santiam, high water temperature is slowing action. Anglers should fish high on the river early and late in the day for the best chance of a hookup. Bobber and jig fishers have taken a few steelhead on the South Santiam below Foster Dam.

McKenzie anglers are making good catches of trout on dry flies with caddis and terrestrial patterns effective. The upper river is fishing well all day long.

A late push of steelhead is expected on the Clackamas so anglers may have reason for optimism although low, warm water is slowing the bite. A few fish are being taken at Dog Creek by bank anglers fishing the faster water.

Concentrate efforts early and late in the day on the Sandy where action typically slows in August.

Carmen Reservoir, the McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake and Salmon Creek are scheduled for trout planting.

Northwest – Calm seas drew much attention to ocean fisheries mid-week. Coho catches remained only fair near the mouth of the Columbia River but managers are likely to meet this week in anticipation of the sport fleet meeting their North of Falcon quota by the weekend. Check the ODF&W website for the most updated closures.

Both sport and commercial fishermen are faring well in the Buoy 10 fishery. The commercials attained their quota early and are done below Tongue Point. Anglers targeting chinook in the deep water have done well with spinners and herring both. The catch is mostly comprised of tule and the Rogue River strain chinook; both destined for lower Columbia tributaries. Tules most often are of inferior quality to the brighter chinook and with a limit of just one chinook per day, anglers will want to be picky.

Crabbing is finally picking up on the lower Columbia but the ocean closes to all crab harvest on August 15th through December 1st.

Tuna chasers realized mixed results this week. Most anglers struggled on Tuesday with the bulk of the fleet nearly 40 plus miles west of the river's entrance. Spotting jumping tuna this year has been a challenge indicating most fish are feeding deeper. Seas are expected to degrade by the weekend.

Southwest – The south of Cape Falcon sport fishery for coho will close as of today. With chinook also closed in this same area, anglers will now have to focus on coastal estuaries for fall kings due to start arriving in mid-September.

The forecast for ocean conditions this weekend looks rough. High temperatures in the valley often mean high winds offshore. Coupled with an early morning outgoing tide, it's shaping up to be a bay, river or lake weekend.

Tuna were taken on a friendly ocean out of Florence of the past weekend at about 30 miles.

Fishing was good for the Oregon Tuna Classic out of Charleston on Saturday. There were 52 teams who caught over 3,800 pounds of tuna which were canned to be donated to South Coast Food Share.

Rogue Bay has been spotty for chinook, but is improving. These salmon have been running large, with a few over 40 pounds and a few hitting the 50-pound mark. Rockfish action offshore has been fair to good.

Bottom fishing out of Brookings has been nothing short of spectacular. While primarily rockfish are in the catches, ling cod are also being taken in good number. Offshore coho fishing has been rewarding with fish rapidly putting on weight. Crabbing has been good inside the port.

Diamond Lake and Section Five of the Rogue River are scheduled for trout stocking.

Eastern – Since steelhead counts at Bonneville have dropped below the 10-year average after starting strong, Deschutes anglers have their fingers crossed, hoping for another push and a good season. Catches have been fair for this time of year on the lower river. Trout anglers are making fair catches on Caddis imitations early and late in the day.

Pro guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424) urges boaters to be cautious as the John Day is quite low but also reports fishing has been very good for high numbers of fish.

Green Peter has been fishing fairly well for kokanee on the troll but the bite has been at first light and has stopped by mid-morning.

SW Washington – Anglers are looking to the fall chinook run as their next challenge. Although steelhead are still readily available for Cowlitz anglers, interest is dropping.

The North Fork Lewis is getting very low and steelhead are timid. Debris from Cottonwood trees has also hampered effectiveness for backtrollers.

Drano Lake continues to be a good producer for summer steelhead and some of the larger "B" run fish are beginning to show.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Not-so-pleasant of a surprise was the fact that salmon fishing in the Buoy 10 area has been going pretty well. It's not so pleasant for me since I didn't anticipate fair fishing this early in the season. It's an indication of the strength of the lower river stocks which are making up the bulk of the catch right now. I heard several reports of good Chinook fishing over the course of the last several days with some quality Chinook being taken. Tule Chinook are certainly making up a fair percentage of the catch but the quality Rogue River stock of fish is also available to lower river anglers. Those fish are destined for Young's Bay and

Blind Slough (above Tongue Point on the Oregon side) terminal fisheries over the next several weeks.

The gillnets also did better than expected with just over 7,500 Chinook landed and 2,500 sturgeon in the 4-days that they ran this month. Their last opener has been rescinded so they didn't fish on August 12th – 13th. Their catch comprised of just over 50% brights and the rest were of tule stock. Sport anglers are likely to experience a fair number of tule salmon in the early part of this fishery so they'll have to decide whether to keep fishing for a higher quality salmon by letting their tule go or keep what you catch. One of my favorite motto's when considering what fish to smoke is a quote my good friend Chris Knutsen said, "if you put a 'boot' in the smoker (meaning a dark, deteriorated salmon or steelhead), you get a smoked 'boot' when you take it out. In other words, don't harvest what you're not going to use.

We are entering a period for anglers to start expecting some good action for Chinook and we'll go into detail about that in The Guide's Forecast section down below.

Ocean action for salmon has not been as impressive as in years past but biologists predicted a much smaller return to the Columbia this year. The Columbia run really fuels coho success up and down the Oregon Coast. Catch rates are better than a fish per rod when typically, it is much better than that by this time of year. One common theme however is that the coho are running exceptionally large this year. It's a clear indication that the ocean is a healthy place to be a fish this year (and that's a good thing!).

There are more Chinook starting to show in the ocean catches indicating a building of the run. This is also common this time of year and oftentimes, anglers can target these Columbia bound Chinook by heading north from the mouth of the Columbia instead of south to the CR Buoy. Herring is still the bait of choice for ocean anglers targeting either coho or Chinook.

Effort for catch and release sturgeon has dropped dramatically since the nets went in. With warming water temperatures and a harvest of over 2,500 fish between 48 to 60 inches in the estuary by gillnetters, there isn't much hope for good action.

Anglers in search of albacore tuna are frustrated with the inconsistencies of the fishery this year. We went offshore on Tuesday in search of the silver bullets experiencing non-typical results for all that this fishery has to offer. We ended up landing only 5 albacore in the 15 to 25 pound range. We lost about 4 other fish, most of which seemed to come as doubles when we jigged mega-baits while slowing after hooking a trolled up fish. Effort was fairly high for a weekday and most boats were fishing outside of 35 to 40 miles west of the mouth of the Columbia. Anglers fishing out of this port have reported good results this year but as previously mentioned, results have not been consistent. Although live bait has had its moments recently, results lately have not been good for anglers using anchovies for bait. August however is typically a good month for live bait fishing.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia has picked up recently. After checking a couple of crabbers at the dock on Tuesday, they admitted to taking about 15 crab for a short effort downstream of Hammond. That's surprising to me given the fact that crabbing in the ocean has been rather poor. And speaking of ocean crabbing, it is now closed to all crabbing now until the beginning of December.

The Guide's Forecast – Taking most of the attention this week will be the Buoy 10 fishery, of course. Although just a week prior to the peak of the fishery, oftentimes, Chinook fishing can peak this early depending on the make up of the stocks of Chinook that will be present year to

year. With the strongest part of the run forecasted to be lower river fish, the end of the week could prove to be some of the best fishing of the month.

Tides will play a large role in angler success this week and it's shaping up to be some opportune tides. If there is a weak part of the tide, it's the last half of outgoing tide with exception of low slack. One of the reasons for such poor production at this time of the tide is that's when river temperatures are at their warmest. Although we're scheduled for another warm week, temperatures aren't what they have been in recent years and that should play out well for sportanglers this season. I'll likely start low in the river at low slack and follow the tide upstream on the incoming. I am sure both sides of the river will produce results this week but anglers fishing the green line and at the mouth of Young's Bay have produced the best results this week. Targeting the select area brights (SAB's) as they're called that are destined for Young's Bay and Blind Slough has been a good choice as these areas have been some of the most productive so far this season.

Coho won't play much of a role this week, especially given the fact that the run size is predicted to be down this year. They will be in the river in limited numbers and can be found in areas where the Chinook are running. It is highly likely they'll be an incidental catch for anglers targeting Chinook. Since large fish respond better to larger offerings, it's probably a good thing that the coho are running large this year. Overall, don't expect great numbers of coho until the last week of August but certainly the first week of September.

Spinners have played a big role in success in recent years and this season should be no different. The big difference this season however is the new spinner on the market this year, the ***Fatal Flash***. I'll be field testing it this Buoy 10 season to test its effectiveness. I'll certainly be reporting on its results in future editions of The Guide's Forecast.

The ocean forecast doesn't look all that friendly for tuna or salmon fishers this weekend. High Willamette Valley temperatures also bring strong NW winds along the coast. This is how the weekend is shaping up so plan on afternoon winds and a consistent high swell for the next several days. Fishery managers are looking closely at a coho closure in the North of Falcon ocean fishery in the near future. Managers will meet on Friday and look at a possible closure early next week if not sooner. It would be wise to check the most updated regulations from the ODF&W website before you make your weekend plans.

Bottomfishing was pretty good in the calm ocean last week but again, with a poor ocean weather forecast and a full week of extreme tides, bottomfishing for seabass and lingcod may be a poor option this week.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Water at Willamette Falls was reported as 77 degrees on August 12th, a temperature which can be lethal to anadromous fish. Needless to say, fish counts have fallen to insignificant levels. The water level and flow are way down, resulting in little current except on the outgoing tide.

Water temperatures on the North Santiam are in the mid-50s in the upper river but as high as the mid-60s near Mehema. Recycling of summer steelhead will resume here next week. The Hatchery on the South Santiam has been recycling fish every week.

McKenzie water conditions have stabilized and the river offers fair to good fishing for trout.

The Guide's Forecast – A few - emphasis few - sturgeon are being caught in the lower Willamette, but there have been no keeper-sized fish reported. Anchovies have been getting the most attention. A better bet would be the North Fork of the Middle Fork for trout or the upper

river for smallmouth bass. The ODFW reports decent walleye fishing on Multnomah Channel but this hasn't been confirmed by any angler reports.

Logic dictates fishing early and late on the North Santiam and seeking summer steelhead from Mehema upstream.

Try the upper McKenzie for action with native trout or below Leaburg Dam where the ODFW planted 7,500 hatchery rainbows this week.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Conditions at the Clackamas River are challenging. With water temperatures reaching into the low 60s, first light holds the best chance for steelhead hopefuls. Weather this week won't have a positive effect on water temps.

Fish the tailouts and bubbly water which is likely to be higher in oxygen on the Sandy. There are steelhead in the river but August fish can be tough to coax into striking. As with steelheading everywhere at this time of year, the best chances of a hookup come very early or late in the day. Try the stretch around Cedar Creek or higher. Fishing has been fair although a few anglers have done well. The occasional bright springer is being landed but the majority are showing some color. Expect the Sandy to demonstrate its glacial origin in the hot weather, turning milky.

North Coast Fishing Report – With an improved ocean and run timing of the south to north running coho destined for the Columbia River, coho fishing improved slightly in the Garibaldi area. A few dedicated anglers had to work hard but did come up with good results. The ocean season however closed this week with the sport fleet finally attaining the coho only quota.

August is when a few Chinook may start running into our coastal estuaries. Nehalem is the first to come to mind but recent history points to some issues within the watershed. Tillamook Bay may be a fair bet for an early Chinook, especially with the tides we're going to see this weekend. With the more extreme tides, the upper estuary areas are typically the more productive.

The tide factor may prove a bonus for sturgeon fishers in the upper estuary and Tillamook River tidewater as well. These tides concentrate fish in the deeper water where anglers have a better chance to find them.

District rivers remain extremely low, producing poor results for steelhead on the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. A few tactful anglers may find willing biters in the faster water with small baits and effectively fished spinners.

The Guide's Forecast – Effort will be light in the Tillamook district this week as the Columbia will shine as the best opportunity. If you plan on targeting early returning salmon here, look to using your spinner or herring technique in the upper reaches of Tillamook Bay or in the Nehalem system.

You'll have to be a stealthy bank angler if you expect to have any luck with river steelhead this week. Warm, clear weather will force avid anglers to start early with small baits and cover a lot of water in order to score steel.

Central & South Coast Reports – As predicted when writing the Oregonian report on Tuesday this week, the last day for ocean coho is today, August 14th as the 9,000 hatchery fish quota has been taken.

A few Chinook have been taken in the Siletz. It's early yet with the bulk of the run coming later in the year.

All-depth halibut fishing is a weekly even now through October 26th or fulfillment of quota, whichever comes first. The ocean is open for halibut every Friday through Sunday during the summer season. Rough ocean conditions and strong winds may prevent boaters from taking advantage of it this weekend, however. Forecasts are improving for Sunday and that looks like the day to keep an eye on.

Crabbing has been fair to good in Yaquina Bay, good outside in the ocean in 40 to 50 feet of water. A few tuna were taken out of Newport as recently as Wednesday this week, but offshore conditions are deteriorating.

Yellowtail were landed out of Depoe Bay on Monday this week at a distance of about 40 miles. It's unusual to catch this highly desirable and hard-fighting fish this far north, although a few others have been reported this year. Warm water started at less than 30 miles, where a few albacore were landed. Boats fishing out of Depoe Bay Today, August 14th found tuna but it was along, rough trip back to port.

The mainstem and South Umpqua have been providing consistent and excellent action for smallmouth bass with soft plastics most effective. Summer steelhead fishing on the North Umpqua has held up well, particularly for those hitting it early and late in the day.

A few early fall Chinook have been taken in Winchester Bay. There aren't yet many around but at least it has started.

While boats launching out of Charleston last weekend did well for albacore, this weekend may prove too rough to make the trip even though the warmer water that tuna prefer is moving closer to shore.

Rogue anglers experienced a marked improvement in action in the Grants Pass stretch with early fall Chinook passing through the middle river. Steelhead fishing in this area has been fair but is expected to improve as the weeks go by. In the Rogue estuary from the Highway 101 Bridge to the mouth, numbers of fall Chinook are good but catches are spotty. This fishery has been hot or cold; they caught a lot of fish on Monday this week and while plenty of fish were evident on Tuesday, fishing was slow. The best action has been on the outgoing tide recently with most anglers using Rogue River Rigs and anchovies. The fish are running large with several 40 pounders reported and a few to 50 pounds. Warm water temperatures in the upper Rogue seems to have stalled the bite although a mix of half-pounders and adult steelhead are being caught. About 2,500 summers have crossed at Gold Ray Dam and while spring Chinook continue to cross in modest number, anglers cannot target them above the dam.

ODFW crews electro-fishing every night for the past two weeks have found over 200 golden shiners at Diamond Lake. They report that many of these trash fish are on the verge of spawning. ODFW officials hope that this two week assault and removal of the shiners will disrupt the spawn and prevent them from proliferating. Anglers spotted using live fish for bait should be reported to the State Police at 541-440-3334. Let's hope this latest effort will prevent infestation, as this remarkable fishery where rainbows add two inches of length every month. Diamond Lake is considered the most productive of any in Oregon.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424) reports,

"The river went up a bit with the thunderstorm last Thursday, but is now back where it was before, 145 CFS. This is very low, and caution would be used when doing trips. Long overnight trips should be limited to knowledgeable guide services, light rafts or canoes, and folks who can get in and out of vessels easily and push or pull whatever they are floating in. The good news is the fishing has been very good for high numbers of fish. Most can catch 100+ smallies in a day if they stay on task. The best bets continue to be Outlaw Baits 5" worms cut down and fished on 1/16 oz lead heads. Think short sections of the river for fishing, and forgo the long trips unless you are in very good condition, and willing to throw rocks out of your way and drag your vessels."

Northwest Trout – Detroit Reservoir is producing good catches of trout running 10 to 12 inches.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report August 6-19, 2008

With summer nearing the halfway point, Washingtonians are scrambling to make the most of their time outdoors. For some, the choice about where to go and what to do is clear. Many anglers have their sights set on the popular "Buoy 10" salmon fishery at the mouth of the Columbia River, where they can catch and keep chinook salmon through Labor Day. Others are making a beeline to Lake Wenatchee, where sockeye fishing is open for the first time in four years.

Then there are the campers, hikers and birdwatchers, who are also spending time outdoors, making the most of the summer weather. Mount Rainier, alone, attracts 1.3 million visitors per year, most of them in summer.

"We're nearing the high point of the summer recreation season, and we all have to do our best to accommodate one another," said Jeff Koenings, director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "As the state's population grows and the use of outdoor recreational areas increases, we must be sure we're doing everything we can to protect all users."

North Puget Sound

Anglers fishing for **hatchery chinook salmon** in Admiralty Inlet have been racking up some of the highest catch rates of the season, but time is running out. With the 4,000-fish catch guideline fast approaching, Marine Area 9 is now scheduled to close for retention of all chinook salmon at the end of the day Sunday, Aug. 10.

At the same time, the portion of area 9 south of a line from Foulweather Bluff to Ollele Point that was closed during the chinook fishery to protect mid-Hood Canal Chinook, will also re-open for **hatchery coho, pink, and sockeye salmon**.

"The mark-selective fishery for chinook around Port Townsend has been hot since the first week of August," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "We've been encouraging anglers to get out while they can."

Thiesfeld noted that anglers at several boat ramps in the area have been averaging more than one hatchery chinook salmon for every two rods. Marine Area 9, which extends from Point Wilson/Patridge Point southeast to Apple Cove Point/Edwards Point will remain open for marked, hatchery coho after the closure of the retention fishery for chinook salmon.

Meanwhile, the mark-selective fishery for chinook salmon in Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) is scheduled to remain open through Aug. 15 or until the overall quota is reached, whichever comes first, Thiesfeld said. Fishing has been slower there, but anglers are still picking up some nice hatchery chinook - and hatchery coho, too, he said.

"Last Saturday (Aug. 2), anglers actually brought more hatchery coho to the ramp at Shilshole Bay than chinook," Thiesfeld said. "These resident coho provide a nice bonus and sometimes save the day."

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that regulations vary for inner Elliott Bay, Sinclair Inlet and public fishing piers in those marine areas. Check the Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/reggs/fishregs.htm>) for more information.

Since the season began, anglers fishing in marine areas 9 and 10 have been allowed to keep hatchery chinook - marked with a clipped adipose fin - as part of a two salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook. Those fishing Marine Area 9 also must release wild coho, chum salmon and - after Aug. 10 - any chinook salmon they intercept. Anglers fishing in Marine Area 10 must release chum as well as wild chinook.

When releasing salmon, anglers should keep the fish in the water and avoid using a net, Thiesfeld said. If a net is needed, use a rubber net or a soft knotless nylon or cotton net. Meanwhile, the **crab** fishery is going strong in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9, 10, and the eastern and southern portion of 7. Fisheries in those areas are 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.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

As the salmon season approaches mid-point, the coming weeks are prime time to try for salmon along the south coast and Puget Sound. While crab fishing is still going strong, salmon anglers can also try their luck on several area rivers.

Salmon anglers on the south coast (marine areas 1 and 2) are having fair success this season, although fishing effort remains low, said Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist. "Some folks are getting their limits, but the average has been about one fish per person at both Ilwaco and Westport," Beeghley said.

On the bright side, Beeghley noted that **chinook** continue to make up a good portion of the catch, while the area is also producing some good-sized **coho**. "Coho are averaging eight to ten pounds, and we've seen some that were pushing the 14-pound mark," she said. "Chinook have been averaging up to 15 pounds, and we've checked some fish going up to 40 pounds. They're not common, but we're seeing a few of them."

In Ilwaco, anglers have recently been catching about one chinook for every four coho, Beeghley said. "Traditionally, chinook catches in that area pick up in August," she said. In Westport, the catch has been evenly split between chinook and coho, with no sign that chinook fishing is slowing down, Beeghley said.

Along the north coast (marine areas 3 and 4) angler effort continues to be light. Those who did venture out at La Push over the Aug. 2 weekend immediately returned to shore because of bad weather, said Scott Barbour. Around the corner in Neah Bay, calmer weather allowed more anglers to get out, he said.

However, overall turnout was still low and few who went out got their two-fish limit, Barbour said. "People should be starting to catch more coho, but the numbers aren't there," Barbour said. "Anglers are averaging about one fish for every two rods in both areas, with the catch almost evenly divided between coho and chinook," he said.

Ilwaco and Westport are open for salmon fishing Sundays through Thursdays; La Push and Neah Bay are open Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Anglers fishing those areas may keep two chinook, two coho or a combination of each 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. Anglers fishing east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line in Marine Area 4B (Neah Bay) may retain hatchery coho only. All chinook, all wild coho and chum must be released.

Anglers planning to launch their boats in South Bend are advised of an error in the Willapa River listing in the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet. The boat launch referenced as the downstream boundary for the Willapa River fishery is operated by Pacific County, not WDFW. For that reason, anglers using that facility should be prepared to pay a launch fee.

Along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, **chinook retention** ends Aug. 10 in marine areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu/Port Angeles), but both areas remain open for retention of **hatchery coho** and **sockeye salmon**. Anglers are reminded that handling rules are in effect and all chum, chinook and wild coho must be released. The salmon fisheries in marine areas 5 and 6 are open daily with a two-fish daily limit.

While fishing remains fair to good in northern Puget Sound, anglers continue to come up short in Marine Area 11 (Point Defiance/Vashon Island), said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "Fishing this summer is slower than last year, but right now we don't know if the run is just late or the fish are coming in below forecast."

Thiesfeld recommended that anglers try new areas such as southern Puget Sound (Marine Area 13) or Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), where the fishing has picked up recently. No matter the choice, anglers should head out soon, he said.

"The next two weeks are traditionally prime time for catching chinook in Puget Sound, and people shouldn't miss the opportunity," Thiesfeld said.

Anglers considering Hood Canal are reminded that fishing is restricted to south of Ayock Point until Sept. 1, although Dabob Bay opens for coho salmon fishing Aug. 16. Area rivers may also be an option for salmon anglers. The Skokomish River in southern Hood Canal is now open and anglers can fish from the mouth of the river to the U.S. Highway 101 bridge. The daily limit is one salmon; all chum must be released.

In northern Hood Canal, the Quilcene River opens Aug. 16 from Rodgers Street to the U. S. Highway 101 Bridge. Thiesfeld said fishing is generally slow at the start, but picks up towards September when rainfall raises the river level and stimulates the fish to begin moving upstream. "Labor Day is generally the peak of the fishery," he said.

The fishery is open seven days a week through Oct. 31. The daily limit is four coho only, with a minimum size of 12 inches. Only fish hooked inside the mouth may be retained. The Puyallup River, which empties into Commencement Bay, also opens Aug. 16.

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 and handling rules in each marine area.

For those interested in winning a boat, some cash or just getting out, two derbies in the 14-event Northwest Salmon Derby Series are coming up in Puget Sound. On Aug. 9, participants in the Gig Harbor Salmon Derby can try for the \$1,000 first prize for catching the largest chinook or coho salmon. For more information, contact psa-gh07derby@earthlink.net.

The eighth annual **Hood Canal Salmon Derby** will be held on Aug. 16 and 17. Tickets are \$25 a piece and participants can try for a first prize of \$1,000. The kids' derby is free. Weigh-ins will be at the Sunrise Motel near Hoodspport. Contact Brian Johnson at 360-790-6589 or briantoni@comcast.com.

All participants in both derbies will be entered in a raffle for a 23-foot welded aluminum fishing boat and trailer, while kids will be entered into a raffle for a 14-foot boat, motor and trailer. For more information, visit <http://www.discovernorthwestfishing.com>.

In other derby news, The Westport/Grayland Chamber of Commerce is hosting a **Summer Beach Perch Fishing Derby** Aug. 9 along the beaches off Westport. The event starts at sunrise with weigh-in scheduled for 4 p.m. at Angler Charters at 2401 Westhaven Drive - across from Float 8 at the Westport Marina. The entry fee is \$20 and all participants must have a valid state fishing license. The top four anglers will share a percentage of total ticket sales; other prizes are also available. Participants can register for the derby at www.anglercharters.net. Call 1-800-345-6223 for more information.

Recreational **crab** fishing is open Wednesdays through Saturdays in marine areas 6,7-South/East, 8-1, 8-2, 9, 11, and 12 through Sept. 1. Crabbing is open seven days a week in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge) through Jan. 2.

Marine Area 7 North (Lummi Island/Blaine) will open Aug. 13, Wednesdays through Saturdays, plus Labor Day weekend.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five male Dungeness crab with a shell width measuring at least 6¼ inches, plus six red rock crab of either sex with a shell width of at least 5 inches. All undersized crab, female Dungeness crab and all softshell crab of either sex must be returned to the water.

Puget Sound 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 their catch cards or reporting on the Internet. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex>.

The only recreational halibut fishery remaining open on an ongoing basis is the nearshore fishery in Marine Area 2 (Westport), which is open Fridays and Saturdays.

Southwest Washington:

The **Buoy 10 salmon fishery** near the mouth of the Columbia River got off to a characteristically slow start Aug. 1, but is expected to pick up in the days ahead. Meanwhile, anglers continue to reel in hatchery steelhead from waters both above and below Bonneville Dam.

Salmon were scarce during the first few days of fishing at Buoy 10, but that's not uncommon for that fishery, said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. "Buoy 10 often starts slow, then ramps up quickly and peaks around late August," he said. "I expect we'll see a similar pattern this year."

To track the fishery's progress, anglers can check daily catch-sampling summaries posted on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/req5/buoy10.htm>. The site also includes links to area web cameras, along with marine forecasts and information on water temperatures and salinity.

Under this year's rules, anglers will have the entire month of August - plus Labor Day (Sept. 1) - to catch and retain chinook salmon 16 miles downriver from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line to the mouth of the Columbia. There's a limit of two salmon per day, of which only one may be a chinook. Wild coho, chum and sockeye must be released.

With 32 days to catch and keep chinook at Buoy 10, anglers should do considerably better there this year than last, when the retention season was limited to just 12 days, Hymer said. On the other hand, anglers will be required to release all chinook salmon intercepted from Rocky Point/Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam, except during a retention fishery set for September 1-16.

Fishing seasons for both areas were designed to conserve ESA-listed chinook salmon bound for the Lewis and Snake rivers, while focusing fishing effort on abundant upriver brights returning to hatcheries above Bonneville and wild fish headed for the Hanford Reach, said Cindy LeFleur, WDFW Columbia River policy coordinator.

"The goal is to target those healthy upriver hatchery stocks, which tend to bite well when they first enter the river," LeFleur said. "We're also expecting a strong return of chinook reared in net pens in select areas throughout the lower river."

In all, 376,800 adult fall chinook are expected to return to the Columbia River this year, compared to 219,600 last year.

Then again, chinook salmon aren't the only fish in anglers' sights right now. During the first three days of August, 416 anglers checked below Bonneville Dam had 56 **hatchery steelhead**. Catch rates were higher in the Bonneville Pool, where anglers averaged two hatchery steelies for every three rods. But the best steelhead fishing was found on the Cowlitz River and at Drano Lake, where boat anglers averaged three-quarters of a fish per rod. On the Cowlitz, the fish were sampled at the trout hatchery and Mission Bar boat ramps.

As in the mainstem Columbia, new fishing rules were adopted this year during the North of Falcon season-setting process to conserve chinook salmon in several area tributaries. The following rules took effect Aug. 1:

- **Lewis River and fall chinook sanctuary:** Anglers are required to release all chinook salmon intercepted on the Lewis River, where wild chinook returns are expected to reach only about half of the 5,700-fish escapement goal. The requirement to release chinook is in effect in the Lewis River, the North Fork Lewis River and in an eight-mile area of the Columbia River near the mouth of the river that is defined in the fishing rule pamphlet. Fishing for hatchery coho and hatchery steelhead remains open, but fishing from boats is prohibited on the North Fork Lewis from Johnson Creek upstream to Merwin Dam to minimize chinook handling.

- **Cowlitz and Toutle Rivers:** Anglers must continue to release all chinook - except marked, hatchery-reared jacks - because hatchery returns are not expected to meet management goals. Anglers may still retain hatchery steelhead and hatchery coho caught in both rivers.
- **Kalama, Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake:** Anglers may retain any adult chinook salmon, but must release any wild, unmarked chinook jacks they encounter.

"All of the new rules are included in the 2008-09 *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet," said Pat Frazier, regional WDFW fish manager. "Anglers should make a point to check them out before they hit the water."

Frazier noted that the new mark-selective fisheries for chinook jacks reflect the fact that - for the first time - all chinook jacks returning to hatcheries in the Columbia River Basin are marked with a clipped adipose fin.

"The immediate benefit is that anglers will have an opportunity to catch and retain marked chinook jacks on a number of rivers," he said. "In doing so, they'll actually benefit wild chinook by getting hatchery fish off the spawning grounds."

Meanwhile, anglers recently caught a few legal-size **white sturgeon** between the Wauna powerlines and Bonneville Dam - the only area of the lower Columbia River still open for retention fishing. Sturgeon may be retained Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through the end of the year.

Also, boat anglers fishing in the Camas/Washougal area have been catching **walleye** and **smallmouth bass**. There have also been reports of anglers catching good-sized **kokanee** on Yale Reservoir.

Eastern Washington:

Lake Roosevelt **rainbow trout** fishing is good, reported Perry Harvester, WDFW habitat biologist, who recently spent time on the big reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam. Rainbows are running between 12 and 22 inches, with good numbers of 19 to 22-inch fish that weigh between three and four pounds.

"Use large, worm-tipped flies such as muddler minnows behind flashers, dodgers, or pop gear," Harvester advised. "Troll 35-40 feet down in water between 75 and 110 feet deep and vary your speed. Bring a cooler and ice to keep your fish fresh in the hot weather." Harvester said the best thing about Lake Roosevelt fishing at this time of year is that there's virtually no competition, at least between Grand Coulee Dam and Hawk Creek near Seven Bays, in Lincoln County north of Davenport.

Fishing during early morning hours or at night at almost any **trout** water in the region is good now, especially smaller lakes up north and around Spokane, said Chris Donley, WDFW fish biologist. "The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, but river anglers need to be aware of catch limits, gear restrictions, and other rules listed in the fishing pamphlet," Donley said.

Yellow perch, largemouth and **smallmouth bass, crappie**, and other warmwater fish species are also a good bet now at many mixed fisheries including Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs Lake in southwest Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake and Deer and Waitts lakes in Stevens County.

Kokanee fishing in southern Stevens County's Loon Lake remains steady, said Jason McLellan, WDFW fish biologist, who recently caught his ten-fish limit in a couple of hours of trolling. Most of the kokanee are "cookie cutter" 12-inchers, he said, but there are a few bigger fish to catch, too. Jigging for Loon Lake's kokanee at night also remains good.

Juli Anderson, WDFW's Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area manager, reported that both the West and East lakes on the property in Lincoln County have dried up completely and fish aren't even biting at Z Lake.

North Central Washington:

Lake Wenatchee **sockeye salmon** fishing finally opened August 6. The long-anticipated special season is the first one in four years, thanks to an abundant run of the big, bright fish, said Jeff Korth, WDFW north central region fish program manager.

"The fishery will continue on a daily basis until a harvestable quota has been taken, but it could close on short notice." Korth said. By Aug. 5, more than 24,000 sockeye were counted at Tumwater Dam on the Wenatchee River, above the spawning escapement goal of 23,000 fish.

The daily limit per angler is two sockeye with a minimum size of 12 inches. Sockeye with a colored plastic tag near the dorsal fin, and all bull trout, steelhead and chinook salmon must be released without removing fish from the water. Selective gear rules are in effect for Lake Wenatchee, although fishing from a boat equipped with a motor is allowed. These rules include no more than three barbless hooks, no bait nor scent, and a requirement for the use of knotless nets for landing fish. A night closure is also in effect for the sockeye fishery, with legal angling hours one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset.

Korth noted there is very limited access on Lake Wenatchee. A small, primitive boat launch on U.S. Forest Service property and a boat launch at Lake Wenatchee State Park are available but parking is limited.

Art Viola, WDFW fish biologist, also noted **summer chinook salmon** fishing opened on the Entiat River in Chelan County Aug. 1 and will run through the end of the month. Fishing is allowed from the Alternate U.S. Highway 97 Bridge near the mouth of the Entiat River, upstream to the posted sign marking the Entiat City limits. The daily limit is six summer chinook salmon, minimum size 12 inches. Only two adults may be retained. Bull trout, coho and steelhead must be released unharmed. A non-buoyant lure restriction and night closure are in effect.

Bob Jateff, WDFW fish biologist, reported that **salmon** fishing on the mainstem Columbia River above Wells Dam has been slow. "Those chinook being caught, however, are in the 15 to 20 pound range, along with sockeye up to four pounds," Jateff said. "Most anglers use a trolled herring or super bait packed with tuna fish. Just remember that once the daily limit of two adult salmon is retained, you can not continue to fish for salmon."

Jateff also noted the Okanogan and Similkameen rivers opened Aug. 2 for salmon fishing. Open areas include the Okanogan River from the U.S. Highway 97 Bridge just upstream from the mouth to the U.S. Highway 97 Bridge in Oroville, and the Similkameen River from the mouth to the Highway 7 Bridge in Oroville. There is a non-buoyant rule restriction and night closure in effect for all species on these rivers during the salmon season. Daily limit is six salmon, only two of which can be adult salmon. Sockeye can be retained but count as part of the two adult daily limit.

Jateff reported the Methow River continues to have pretty good fishing as the river has dropped into shape for anglers wishing to wade. "Fly fishermen are doing well on hopper patterns and stimulators," he said. "This is a catch and release fishery only under selective gear rules."

The Twisp River, from the mouth to War Creek, the Chewuch River, from the mouth to Eight Mile Creek, and the Methow River, from Foghorn Dam to Weeman Bridge will close to all fishing on Aug. 16. The remaining portions of the Methow River will stay open until Sept 30.

South Central Washington:

Paul Hoffarth, WDFW fish biologist, reported that **walleye** fishing is in full swing in the Columbia River near the Tri-Cities. "Walleye are being caught in Lake Umatilla from Plymouth to Boardman," he said. "The Hanford Reach has produced some excellent catches this year, as has the Columbia and Snake rivers around the Tri-Cities area."

Hoffarth also said summer **steelhead** are already returning in good numbers and a few anglers are reporting some catches. The Columbia River is currently open for steelhead up to the U.S. Highway 395 bridge (Blue Bridge) in Pasco/Kennewick. The Snake River and the Columbia River boundary waters at the confluence of the Snake are closed but will open Sept. 1.

The summer/fall chinook sport fishery is open above the U.S. Highway 395 bridge in Pasco/Kennewick upstream to Priest Rapids Dam and will remain open through Oct. 22. Catch has been slow for chinook in the Tri-Cities but should pick up by mid-September. The Columbia River from Bonneville to Priest Rapids Dam opened Aug. 1 for fall chinook. Anglers should check the fishing rules pamphlet for information on bag limits and restrictions.

Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist, recommended heading for the mountains to fish for **cutthroat, rainbow** and **eastern brook trout** in the high lakes.

"Be prepared for bugs, especially mosquitoes, and for more than usual amounts of snow at the highest elevation lakes," he said. "I encourage anglers to limit harvest and practice catch-and-release, except at those lakes that are over-populated with eastern brook trout, or where they want to eat a couple of fish in camp."

"For catch-and-release fishing, I like to use a fly and bubble. Place a plastic float (bubble) above a swivel, attach about five feet of two-pound test leader, and tie on a small size 12-14 fly. Flies that imitate mayflies and caddisflies, including a variety of bead head nymphs, can be very effective. I discourage people from releasing bait-caught trout because survival of released fish is poor, compared to those caught on flies and lures." Cummins said the WDFW Primer for High Lakes is a good starting point for choosing a lake to fish and is available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg3/highlakes.pdf>.

Rivers, streams and small creeks are another good bet for anglers, Cummins said. Many streams have special regulations, such as selective gear rules (no bait, single barbless hook) and the general catch limit is two fish over eight inches in length. There are a number of exceptions, such as the 12-inch minimum length on the Naches River, and catch-and-release on the upper Yakima, part of the Naches, and Rattlesnake Creek. Cutthroat trout are the dominant species at higher elevations and rainbow are most often encountered at lower elevations rivers and streams. Several rivers are closed to protect bull trout and salmon. Anglers should check regulations before fishing.

"**Kokanee** are being caught in Yakima Basin Reservoirs, particularly at Rimrock Reservoir," Cummins said. "**Mackinaw** or lake trout are present in Cle Elum Reservoir. Although reservoir

water levels are higher than normal this late in the season, they will be dropping rapidly the rest of this summer."

Cummins reminded anglers to carefully release any bull trout, steelhead and salmon that are caught incidental to trout fishing. Bull trout, steelhead, and salmon cannot be harvested in the Yakima River Basin at this time. Salmon seasons are closed in the Yakima until fall chinook and coho salmon season opens on part of the lower river on Sept. 1. Part of the American River is closed to protect spawning spring chinook salmon and bull trout.

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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Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

The story of G. I. Joes as told by the founder's son:

<http://growingupwithgijoes.blogspot.com/>

Weekly Quote – "I have two hopes for the future. The first and lesser one is that game commissions will one day have sense enough to set limits that measurably reflect the sport safely available. The second and deeply urgent one is that we shall grow a race of sportsmen no one of whom will ever consider it a matter of pride to have killed a limit." - Roderick L. Haig-Brown

GOOD LUCK!