

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 22<sup>nd</sup> – August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Anglers wanting to fish the mainstem Columbia have their eyes on the dam counts at Bonneville. Counts will increase dramatically in early September, just in time for the September 1<sup>st</sup> opener of what will likely be a very productive fall salmon fishery from Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam.

Summer steelhead are still providing good opportunity in the gorge but effort is shifting as anglers prepare for the coming salmon run.

Sturgeon fishing in the lower Willamette remains slow with warm water temperatures contributing to poor catch rates. The recent storm event may improve conditions.

With the North Santiam river level and flow stable, steelheading has improved but the bite is light, so use sensitive equipment.

The Sandy was showing a little milky color over the weekend although it did produce some steelhead.

It's still too early for coho in the Clackamas but they should be showing soon. Steelheading is slow with no fish being recycled from the hatchery for the last 2 weeks.

Scheduled to be stocked with trout this week are Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Clear Lake and Leaburg Lake.

**Northwest –** Catch rates in the Buoy 10 fishery are surprising anglers and biologists alike. Anglers averaged better than .5 fish per rod over the last week with chinook making up the bulk of the catch. Managers will meet by phone today to discuss the remaining quota for this fishery. Chinook in the 15 to 25 pound range are taking both fresh herring and spinners downstream of the Astoria Bridge with the Oregon side of the river producing the best results.

Ocean coho fishing off the entire Oregon Coast is now closed and rough seas may subside by the weekend. Albacore tuna will still be a top priority for ocean anglers as we enter the season when live bait becomes the preferred method for taking fish.

Crabbing is improving in the lower Columbia River but effort is light. Salmon trollers are working the crab grounds heavily so prepare for gear conflicts if you drop crab gear.

A sharp rise in north coast streams should bolster summer steelhead opportunities in the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. Some early coho may show as well with the Trask and North Fork Nehalem the best options. Early fall chinook may also be on tap on Tillamook Bay by the weekend but the ocean bubble fishery won't open until September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Rumors of early chinook are coming from the lower portions of the Siletz and Alsea Rivers. Weak tides favor herring trollers this weekend with crabbing a good second option.

**Southwest –** With ocean coho now closed, anglers are pursuing rockfish, lingcod and at times, tuna. The all-depth halibut summer season remains open every Friday through Sunday.

As of August 18th, boat anglers may no longer retain cabezon as the quota has been met. Anglers fishing from shore can still keep them.

Ocean crabbing closed on August 14th but has been improving in coastal bays and estuaries. Crabbing will improve as Dungeness harden into fall. Soft tides this coming weekend favor good results.

Fish the tailouts on the North Umpqua for a fair to good chance at a summer steelhead. The mainstem and South Umpqua are reliable for smallmouth.

Fishing offshore out of Gold Beach has been good when the ocean has allowed. Rogue Bay trollers are experiencing occasional flurries of chinook catches. Coho are in the mix and have occasionally been mistaken for chinook. Upriver, fishing for summer steelhead adults and half-pounders has been good from Agness to Gold Beach.

Surf perch fishers are landing good numbers of fish to two pounds or better on south coast beaches.

Rock fishing offshore out of the Port of Brookings has been excellent and lingcod catches are improving. Tuna fishing has been spotty and required a 50-60 mile trip this week.

Diamond Lake has continued to fish well for jumbo rainbow trout, although action is slowing as the water warms up.

Section 5 of the Rogue River is scheduled for trout planting.

**Eastern** – Odell anglers are making fair to good catches of kokanee averaging 10 inches. They're not yet showing signs of spawning. The algae problem is all but gone.

Green Peter has been slow to fair for kokanee with trolling most effective.

Steelhead are entering the Deschutes in decent number now. Trollers at the mouth are seeing fair but steady action on plugs. Early mornings are producing for anglers throwing spinners on the lower river.

**SW Washington** – Even though the recent weather pattern should improve summer steelhead prospects on the North Fork Lewis and Cowlitz Rivers, anglers remain focused on the upcoming chinook and coho run to the district. Read fall regulations carefully as several changes have occurred.

Trollers are still taking steelhead at Drano Lake although catch rates may begin to dip. Steelhead are also a good option in the Klickitat River.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Columbia River anglers have been doing so well on Chinook, that fishery managers will be taking a hard look at fishery modifications today (Thursday) to curb Chinook harvest. The most recent fact sheet is calling for a closure at the end of the day on Sunday, effectively ending Chinook harvest starting on Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup>. A full 7 days earlier than managers had anticipated. Despite this bad news, anglers are quite excited about the opportunities we've had thus far. Anglers putting in the honest effort have been able to expect limits of Chinook for all anglers in their boat. Of course you have to account for all the missed

bites, broken leaders and undersized Chinook in the catch but it would be very odd for any angler not to have an opportunity to catch a Chinook in the past week here at Buoy 10.

Also good news is that the coho are starting to show in better numbers and they have been of quality size. We've been getting just a few hatchery keepers in the catch with a fair number of natives in the mix as well. They are hitting the same gear that we're using for Chinook but coho will switch from an incidental target species to a target one after the closure takes place. Smaller spinners and smaller baits usually take coho more consistently in this fishery.

Last week, some of the best fishing took place on the Oregon side of this river in the afternoon. The least productive time of the tide is always the last half of outgoing and that has dominated the morning. The tides have been strong as well and that does not bode well for catch rates. For whatever reason, the fish are more reluctant to bite when flows are at their peak.

Most recently, the bite on the Washington side of the river has picked up. We trolled the last half of incoming tide on the Washington side from the tunnel to the bridge on 8/20 having several opportunities for both Chinook and coho. Most of my fish this week have fallen to fresh herring but then again, I am fishing all but one rod with fresh herring. Spinners have been more productive for other guides but even as recently as 8/21, bait ruled the roost for Buoy 10 anglers.

As a general rule, fish high on the high tide and low on the low tide and much more information will be available in The Guide's Forecast section below on how to read the weekend tides. This week, with a strong south wind blowing, most anglers have been focusing their efforts on the Oregon side of the river. The Hammond area produces best about 2 hours after the low slack at the mouth. The tide first trickles in on the Washington side and then fans out southerly. Anglers were wise to follow that fanning by starting off at the Chinook wing jetty and then when that bite died, heading over to Hammond and holding in the tide waiting for the incoming tide to wash in the fish. As the tide came in close to high slack, we headed upriver to the bridge to take advantage of a high tide bite and trolling our way back to Hammond on the first part of outgoing tide. Most of my trips last week started at 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. and went to 5:00 or 6:00 on occasion. Chinook limits were very common and will likely continue through the closure.

Further upriver, sturgeon and steelhead effort has dwindled as the salmon are pouring into the lower Columbia. Steelhead are keeping the interest of some, especially in the Columbia River Gorge. Spinner plunkers in boats and spin-n-glo plunkers on the bank are still posting fair results. With the bulk of the "A" run fish passed Bonneville however, action is likely to slow. The larger "B" run fish are starting to show and should provide good opportunities into early September. Steelhead fishing at the mouth of the Deschutes is peaking right now and should continue to do so well into September.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Despite the fact that the lower Columbia is closing to Chinook retention beginning Monday, the tide patterns described here will still bode well for catch and release Chinook opportunities and the hatchery coho that are starting to show in good numbers right now. The coho have been running large and there are fair numbers of wild coho that must be released unharmed.

Anglers will want to focus their efforts on the high tide. The colder ocean influenced water will continue to produce the best results for anglers with 2 daily optimum opportunities for anglers over the weekend. Anglers can take advantage of the early morning high tide series that we are just now entering with high slack producing best near the bridge (Oregon and Washington side) and working downstream on the first part of outgoing tide. Anglers most often make several runs from downstream to upstream on the outgoing tide but as you run out of biters up high, chase the fish lower into the system and a fresh batch of fish will be available when low slack happens

at the mouth again. The Chinook wing jetty 1 and Buoy 11 is a great place to be at low slack. The saltwater will start to flow in underneath the outgoing fresh water on top and there will be biting fish available in the deeper saltwater wedge.

You can also take advantage of the first part of incoming tide, especially for coho as the first few rips that come through have been producing better for coho in recent days. Bait seems to work best at the Buoy 10 line but spinners are taking better numbers of coho upriver as you near the bridge.

As the tide comes in, work your way upstream with the Hammond area producing good results 2 hours after low slack at the mouth and the Washington side from the tunnel to the bridge in 24 to 36 foot of water producing well on the second half of incoming tide. Again, bait has been best for me but that is what I am using most. As the water warms and fish become more acclimated to fresh water, spinners are likely to show an advantage. No specific colors of spinners are consistent but the red/white, chartreuse/green dot and brass/reds are staples that are also working well this year. The new Fatal Flash blade just hitting the market now is producing excellent results right now. We'll continue to report on its effectiveness in future editions of The Guide's Forecast.

Steelheaders will likely see their opportunities slow this week as poor tides and the tail end of the "A" run steelhead come to a close. The "B" run steelhead however are likely to show in good numbers in the next few weeks giving anglers some of their best opportunities to catch a steelhead of a lifetime. Many of these fish can reach weights in excess of 15 pounds!

Ocean opportunity is closed for salmon but albacore fishers may find some opportunity over the weekend as weather may calm seas for a long range trip. The forecast is as follows:

**FRI** VARIABLE WIND 5 KT...BECOMING W 10 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 7 FT AT 10 SECONDS. PATCHY FOG IN THE MORNING.

**FRI NIGHT** W WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO S AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 6 FT. PATCHY FOG AFTER MIDNIGHT.

**SAT** S WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO W TO SW WITH 5 TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. PATCHY FOG IN THE MORNING.

**SUN** S WIND 15 TO 20 KT WITH GUSTS TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 7 FT.

**MON** NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

The tuna seem to be a bit more focused on live bait this time of year but that too can vary. Until we get a more updated tuna report, the typical trolling tuna clones until you locate a school to cast to is likely an effective method of harvest.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – The latest online data shows the water temperature at Willamette Falls a scorching 78 degrees as of August 19th.

The North Santiam remains a little higher than normal but is quite fishable. The level is expected to drop but no one seems to know exactly when this will occur.

The McKenzie has been kicking out decent catches of rainbow trout to fly anglers. The flow is up and the water temperature has dropped a couple of degrees with precipitation this week.

### **Marine Board Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Willamette River Boating Regulations**

The Oregon State Marine Board seeks public comment on proposed rules for the Lower Willamette River. The Board will consider the proposed rule at their October meeting in Bend.

The proposal would establish a congestion zone on the Willamette River from the Newberg Bridge to Canby, would prohibit 180 degree turns at speed, and would require boats to stay 200 feet behind skiers or other towed devices. The proposal also prohibits the use of wake enhancing devices, including ballast tanks, wedges or hydrofoils or other mechanical devices, or uneven loading of persons or gear to artificially operate bow high, or within the defined congestion zone. Additionally, boaters would be required to operate at slow-no-wake speed within 200 feet of all private docks or moorages.

The Board will also hold a public meeting at 7 p.m. on September 9 at the Clackamas County Community College, 29353 Town Center Loop East, and Room 111/112 in Wilsonville.

The Marine Board is accepting written public comment on the proposed rules from August 1 through September 9, 2008. All comments must be received by 9 p.m. September 9. Comments can be sent to June LeTarte, OSMB, P.O. Box 14145, Salem, OR 97309. They can also be sent via email to [osmb.rulemaking@state.or.us](mailto:osmb.rulemaking@state.or.us) or via fax (503) 378-4597. Comments by telephone cannot be accepted. The Board will review all comments before making a decision on the proposed rule.

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**The Guide's Forecast** – Sturgeon fishing is expected to be slow until the water temperatures drop with the vast majority of catches consisting of fish too small to keep.

Spotty catches of summer steelhead on the North Santiam and a soft bite are making for challenging fishing

here. It's worth the effort, however, as summers are in prime condition and scattered in good number throughout the river. Try Fishermen's Bend, and Mehama to Packsaddle.

McKenzie long-rodders will hook up with summer steelhead now by swinging flies below Leaburg Dam. Cooler weather has turned on the trout which are banging caddis dries and nymphs all day long. Periodically, steelhead have grabbed a fly to the surprise and delight of fly fishers.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Fishing has been slow on the Clackamas for steelheaders. Hopefully, that will change in a couple of weeks when the coho show up. Hopefuls are throwing spinners at the mouth of the Clack looking to intercept an early fish.

Try the Sandy near Dog Creek or at the Dam Hole. Chinook continue to be landed but many are turning dark. Steelhead that have been landed have been in good condition but have been tough to entice. another spot to check out is up high near the confluence of the Salmon River, but use stealth and light tackle as the water here is quite low. With the off-color condition recently, a best bet might be the mouth of Cedar Creek where clear water enters the murky Sandy mainstream. Try spinners or drift sand shrimp.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – With the recent ocean closure, effort has dropped in this area of the state as anglers are focusing on the lower Columbia River right now. Some Chinook should become available in the north coast estuaries with Tillamook, Nestucca and Nehalem the top bets. Weak tides make lower bay herring trolling the best option but keep in mind the Tillamook Bubble fishery doesn't open until 9/1 for sportanglers.

River levels in the district saw a nice jump in river levels with the most recent precipitation putting summer steelhead back on the table as a good option for bank anglers at mid-week. The freshet should have also drawn in cutthroat trout and a few coho and Chinook to select streams. River levels will quickly return to summer lows, making fishing challenging once again. It won't be long however until our fall rains bring in better numbers of fish to all coastal systems.

Garibaldi should continue to be a good port to intercept tuna from in the coming weeks and bottomfishing prospects remain good as well in this area. Check regulations carefully however for species still available for harvest and fathom restrictions to protect certain species of fish.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Anglers may want to get a jump start on their fall Chinook season by trolling herring at the jaws of Tillamook, Nestucca or Nehalem Bays. Nehalem used to be a good prospect this time of year but production on this system has failed recently. Tillamook still offers good opportunities and fish can be present in good numbers this early in the season.

Coho bound for the Trask and North Fork Nehalem Rivers may have made a run for it on the last rain freshet. Small spinners or bait may take fish in the pocket water but fish oftentimes make a hard run for the hatchery so spend most of your effort near these facilities.

Small stream anglers should take advantage of the recent freshet to pursue trout and fresh steelhead that may have entered the system. The upper reaches may produce fair results.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Newport anglers have seen a slowing in tuna catches from a week ago, but results have been good for halibut. Monday this week is was a run of 60 miles or so to find fair action for albacore. Warm water is moving closer to shore this week and so, hopefully, will the tuna. The all-depth summer season is open Fridays through Sundays with about 80% of anglers trying for halibut landing a fish. Inshore, sturgeon fishers have taken some keepers out of the Yaquina River near Toledo.

With the ocean closed for crabbing, it's a good thing the bays and estuaries are showing improvement, Culling of softshells will still be required but results should be good in Yaquina and Alsea Bays. Crabbing will continue to improve into the fall months.

Chinook have started entering the Siuslaw and a few have been taken in tidewater. It's slow, but then it's early yet to expect steady action.

The mainstem Umpqua is providing great fishing for smallmouth bass and while catches are equally good on the South Umpqua, the water level here is very low. Soft plastics have been the top bait. Summer steelheading on the North Umpqua continues to reward anglers with decent

results. Trollers below the Highway 101 Bridge in Reedsport have caught a few Chinook as well as jacks and while the fishing is spotty, it is off to a good start for this early in the season.

Coos Bay tuna fishers had been doing well prior to the offshore conditions turning too rough to make the long trip. Crabbing has been producing limits inside Coos Bay. A few fall Chinook have been caught in the bay.

Boats launching out of Gold Beach looking for bottom fish action have experienced slowing catches, finding fish just outside in water shallow water gorging on an abundant supply of shrimp and rejecting most anglers' offerings. This was very entertaining when fishing was decent with light tackle and the occasional ling cod would latch on. Inside the bay, trolling remains fair despite a good number of fall Chinook present due to the large number of anchovies naturally available. With coho in the bay now, be cautious in identifying what may be thought small Chinook. Half-pounders have arrived in the lower Rogue in force, however, and will hit darned-near anything. These little steelhead averaging 14 to 15 inches must be fin-clipped to keep but many anglers are scoring their five-fish limits. The Grants Pass stretch has been providing worthwhile Chinook fishing from the city upstream. Plugs have been the best choice to produce hookups. Upper Rogue steelheaders are doing fairly well for summers. This section of the river will be limited to fly-fishing only after August 31st.

Brookings anglers are keeping their eyes on offshore forecasts which predict a moderation of ocean conditions which should allow weekend launching and an opportunity to chase albacore. Earlier this month, Jim Fuller of Medford landed a dorado, the second ever reported out of an Oregon port.

Although warm weather has slowed the bite at Diamond Lake, it's still providing some of the best action for large trout of any stillwater fishery in Oregon. The ODFW has finished a two-week electro-shocking program which removed hundreds of golden shiners. A reward is now being offered to anyone providing information leading to the conviction of violators using live baitfish or releasing any type of fish into the waters of Diamond Lake. Contact the Oregon State Police of ODFW.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Deschutes fly anglers had a ball in the Warm Springs stretch during the recent hot weather which triggered massive caddis hatches. Although showery at mid-week, the weekend forecast is for clear skies which should have the Deschutes fishing well on caddis dry patterns. The water level and flow should be excellent. While steelhead are scattered from the mouth to Shearer's Falls, anglers have been having consistent results and another push of fresh fish is expected any day.

The boat launch at Gullpoint Campground as well as the North Wickiup Boat Launch at Wickiup Reservoir will be closed from September 2nd through November 30th due to much-needed repairs and reconstruction.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

**From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 20 - September 3, 2008**

#### **North Puget Sound**

Mark-selective fisheries for hatchery chinook salmon have wrapped up in central Puget Sound, but anglers still have other opportunities in the region. Coho fisheries remain open in the marine

areas, where crabbing also continues through Sept. 1. In the freshwater, anglers can cast for steelhead while they await the Sept. 1 salmon opener on several rivers in the region.

But the best bet for anglers might be the last weekend of the Elliott Bay salmon fishery. Catch rates for chinook and coho have been steady over the last couple openings in the bay, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "Fishing tends to pick up in the bay toward the end of August," he said.

Time is running out, however. The Elliott Bay chinook fishery is open for only one more weekend of fishing - Aug. 22-25. Anglers fishing Elliott Bay have a two-salmon daily limit but must release chum. "This last opener will likely be the best weekend since the fishery opened in July," Thiesfeld said. "So this is the time to get out there and fish for chinook."

Elliott Bay re-opens Aug. 27 under the same regulations as Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), where anglers have a daily limit of two salmon, but must release chinook and chum.

Elsewhere in Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), anglers are still hooking some resident coho salmon. Catch counts at the Shilshole Ramp indicate 74 anglers took seven coho Aug. 16, and 54 anglers checked seven silvers the following day.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers fishing in nearby Marine Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet) that they also have a daily limit of two salmon, but must release chinook, chum and wild coho, which can be identified by an intact adipose fin.

Marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) also are open for salmon, but fishing has been slow the last couple weeks in those three areas, said Thiesfeld.

Meanwhile, the summer crab fishery is winding down. The region's marine areas close one hour past sunset Sept. 1. Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Sept. 15 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information on the fishery is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex>.

In the rivers, anglers can still find some steelhead along the Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish River. But most freshwater fishers are gearing up for Sept. 1, when the Snohomish and portions of the Skykomish, Skagit and Snoqualmie open for salmon fishing. Anglers fishing those four rivers must release chinook. Anglers fishing the Snohomish, Snoqualmie and Skykomish also are required to release pink salmon.

A portion of the Green (Duwamish) River also will open Sept. 1 for salmon. The Green will be open from Tukwila International Blvd. to I-405. Anglers fishing that stretch will have a daily limit of six salmon, only one of which may be a chinook, and no more than three adults.

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

### **South Sound/Olympic Peninsula**

The ocean salmon fishery off Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) is now closed, but anglers still have other opportunities to catch a **salmon** off the coast and throughout the region. They can also take

advantage of two more days of **halibut** fishing, try for **tuna**, or get their gear ready for some river fishing coming up Sept. 1.

Salmon anglers off Westport (Marine Area 2) continue to have fair success this season, with a catch rate of one fish per person, said Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist. "We're still seeing a lot of **chinook**, with the catch evenly split between coho and chinook," Beeghley said.

Along the north coast in Marine Area 3 (La Push), the catch rate has been just under one fish per person, with a 50-50 split similar to Westport, Beeghley said. Anglers in Marine Area 4 (Neah Bay) are fairing a little better, averaging about one fish per person, with **coho** salmon making up the majority of the catch.

Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 13 in marine areas 2, 3 and 4, or until quotas are reached. Westport is open Sundays through Thursdays only while the La Push and Neah Bay salmon fisheries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays only.

If **tuna** strikes your fancy, the fishing's been quite good in recent weeks, Beeghley said. "The average catch has been about five fish per person," she said. "August is the best month for tuna and hopefully the weather will cooperate for those venturing out." Tuna season is open year-round with no daily limit.

Meanwhile, anglers have another chance to land a **halibut** in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) where the recreational fishery will reopen for two more days, Aug. 22 and 23. Recreational halibut fishing is closed in all other marine areas. Anglers are reminded that no other bottom fish may be taken, retained, possessed or landed - except sablefish and Pacific cod - while halibut are onboard the vessel.

Anglers are advised to check the fishing regulations before heading out at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

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, the chinook fishery in marine areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu/Port Angeles) is now closed, 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 seven days a week with a two-fish daily limit.

In Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), great weather and a salmon derby over the Aug. 16 weekend brought out the anglers, who averaged about one fish for every three rods. Fish caught by the top three winners of the eighth annual **Hood Canal Salmon Derby**, weighed in at more than 20 pounds apiece.

Meanwhile, salmon fishing near Point Defiance in Marine Area 11 produced about one fish for every ten rods over the Aug. 16 weekend. Anglers fishing at Narrows Marina fared somewhat better with a catch rate of one fish for every five anglers.

As August draws to a close, chinook will be entering the rivers and saltwater anglers should start targeting coho salmon, which are beginning to show up in the catch, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW

fish biologist. "Mid-September is generally good for coho in Hood Canal and southern Puget Sound," he said.

Thiesfeld reminded anglers that salmon fishing opens Sept. 1 north of Ayock Point in Hood Canal. The daily limit is two coho. All other salmon species must be released. Dabob and Quilcene bays, also part of Marine Area 12, opened for salmon fishing on Aug. 16.

Several rivers around the region open to salmon fishing Sept. 1, including the Carbon River in Pierce County; Copalis River, Van Winkle Creek and Joe Creek in Grays Harbor County; the Bear and Niawiakum rivers in Pacific County; and Clearwater River in Jefferson County. The Puyallup River opened Aug. 16 this year.

Also beginning Sept. 1, anglers fishing in the Quillayute system - which includes the Bogachiel, Sol Duc, Calawah and Dickey rivers - can keep two wild chinook as part of their limit of three adult fish. The total daily limit is six fish; all wild adult coho must be released.

On the Hoh River, anglers will be able to fish for salmon seven days a week as of Sept. 1 and keep up to two adult fish as part of their six-fish daily limit.

Anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for specific regulations throughout the region.

For those interested in winning a boat, some cash or just getting out on the water, two derbies in the 14-event Northwest Salmon Derby Series are coming up in the region. The 10th Annual Kitsap Poggie Club - Sinclair Inlet Salmon Derby will be held Aug. 23-24. Weigh-in will take place on the S.E. corner of the Port Orchard Marina. For more information, contact [Gramdiok@msn.com](mailto:Gramdiok@msn.com).

Anglers traveling to the coast can participate in the Tokeland Marina, Willapa Bay Salmon Derby, which will be held Aug. 30. For more information, contact [VickieWilburn@comcast.net](mailto:VickieWilburn@comcast.net).

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>.

Recreational crabbers should be aware that the summer **Dungeness crab** fishery will close for a catch assessment in several areas of Puget Sound after the Labor day weekend. Areas closing Sept. 1 one hour after sunset include 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). Crabbing will be open over Labor Day weekend (Aug. 30 - Sept. 1)

Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Sept. 15 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex>.

### **Southwest Washington:**

After a slow start, salmon fishing suddenly caught fire at **Buoy 10** in the Columbia River estuary, where anglers kept more than 2,800 chinook - plus 350 coho - during the week ending Aug. 17.

Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist, said the heavy rain that fell two days later could draw even more salmon into the fishery, which has a catch allocation of 6,500 chinook for the season.

State fishery managers were scheduled to meet the afternoon of Thursday Aug. 21 for an update on the Buoy 10 fishery.

"Anyone who wants to catch chinook salmon at Buoy 10 should go now," Hymer said. "With boat anglers averaging a chinook for every two rods, the allocation can go pretty fast." He noted that some of those fish have been weighing in at close to 50 pounds apiece.

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.

Hymer also recommends that anglers planning a trip to Buoy 10 check the Fishing Hotline (360-902-2500) or the WDFW website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/>) for any updates on the fishery, which will remain open to retention of hatchery coho through the end of the year.

Beyond Buoy 10, anglers eager to catch **chinook salmon** can look forward to Labor Day (Sept. 1), when the Columbia River opens for chinook retention upriver from Rocky Point/Tongue Point Line to Bonneville Dam. By then, more fish should be exiting the estuary and heading upriver.

From Sept. 1-16, anglers fishing that area may retain two adult salmon - only one of which may be a chinook - as part of their six-salmon daily limit. An exception is the eight-mile fall chinook sanctuary area near the mouth of the Lewis River, where all chinook salmon must be released. That area is defined on page 79 of the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Above Bonneville Dam, chinook salmon are already appearing on an increasing number of stringers in the Bonneville Pool and in Columbia River tributaries currently open to chinook retention. At Drano Lake, those chinook salmon helped to make up for a slowdown in the fishery for **hatchery steelhead** amid low water conditions. But hatchery steelhead still account for most of the catch in area waters, including the Bonneville Pool where anglers averaged three steelhead for every four rods (counting fish released) in a creel survey ending Aug. 17. Bank anglers were also catching a combination of chinook and hatchery steelhead near the mouth of the White Salmon River.

Meanwhile, boat anglers fishing the Cowlitz River around the trout hatchery have been averaging about one hatchery steelhead for every two rods. Some steelhead and sea-run cutthroat are being caught in the lower river. Some hatchery steelhead are also being caught in the Lewis River. Hymer reminds anglers that new fishing rules were adopted earlier this year during the North of Falcon season-setting process to conserve chinook salmon in those and several other area tributaries, including:

- **Lewis River:** 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 the chinook sanctuary area on the mainstem Columbia River noted above. 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.

In addition, the lower portion of Mill, Abernathy, Germany, and Coal creeks and Coweeman River will be closed to all fishing in September and October to protect spawning fall chinook.

On the other hand, the Grays River (including the West Fork) will open to fishing for hatchery coho and adipose and/or ventral fin clipped chinook Sept. 1. Fishing will also open that day on the Elochoman River for hatchery coho and hatchery chinook jacks. Bonus limits will be in effect for adult hatchery coho on both rivers.

Meanwhile, anglers have been catching a few legal-size **white sturgeon** in the Columbia River gorge, the only area between the Wauna powerlines and Bonneville Dam where any catch was observed during the week ending Aug. 17. Sturgeon may be retained in that area Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through the end of the year. Boat anglers fishing in the Camas/Washougal area have been catching **walleye**.

At Mayfield Lake, bank anglers have been reeling in **rainbows** around the trout hatchery, while those fishing Riffe Lake have been catching landlocked coho. Ollalie Lake in Skamania County was planted with 1,430 catchable-size rainbows Aug. 7.

### **Eastern Washington:**

The Snake River **steelhead** catch-and-keep season opens Sept. 1, and an abundant return of fish is expected back this year. The mouths of tributaries, such as the Tucannon and Grande Ronde, as well as the confluence with the Clearwater on the Idaho border, should be productive from the start. Steelheaders are reminded that the daily trout catch limit of six fish includes up to three hatchery-marked steelhead (healed scar at clipped adipose or ventral fin), and barbless hooks are required.

Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist in Spokane, said that the late summer/early fall can be a transition for both fish and anglers. Fish habits can change with cooler weather and precipitation, and anglers need to figure out new strategies for catching them.

"It's usually a good time for catching **yellow perch** at lakes like Long, Eloika, Bonnie, and Downs," Donley said. "But it can also be good for **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** at all the usual waters like Amber, Badger, Clear, Fish, Fishtrap, West Medical and Williams lakes."

Donley noted Loon Lake's **kokanee** fishing has been strong, especially at night, but recent hard rain might slow the action there. Lake Roosevelt anglers continue to catch big rainbows throughout the reservoir and **walleye** above Kettle Falls.

Sandy Dotts, WDFW habitat biologist in Colville, said fishing for cutthroat trout is still pretty good at Davis Lake in Ferry County. "The fish are small, but they bite readily on worms or eggs," she said. "Time of day doesn't really seem to matter, but early morning was best."

Dotts noted that Davis Lake is one of Ferry County's "no internal combustion engine" lakes, along with Ferry, Long and Swan lakes.

Recent rain and cooler weather are helping firefighters contain wildfires throughout the region, but fishers are reminded to be careful with anything that could spark further problems. Check out wildfire risk and restrictions information from the Washington Department of Natural Resources at <http://www2.wadnr.gov/burn-risk/> or the status of ongoing wildfires at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49>.

### **North Central Washington:**

Bob Jateff, WDFW fish biologist from Okanogan, reported that fishing on the Methow River has been good recently with anglers reporting catches of 18-inch **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout**. Jateff noted this is a selective gear, catch-and-release-only fishery. The area currently open to fishing is from the Lower Burma Road Bridge upstream to Foghorn Dam, about one mile upstream of Winthrop. Jateff also reminded anglers that the entire Methow River is closed to fishing for steelhead.

"**Salmon** fishing above Wells Dam on the Columbia River has been spotty lately, with just a few anglers catching summer chinook that range from 12 to 15 pounds," Jateff said. He noted that the area from Wells Dam to the Highway 173 Bridge at Brewster closes to salmon fishing Aug. 31. The area from the Highway 173 Bridge at Brewster to the Highway 17 Bridge at Bridgeport will remain open to salmon fishing until Oct. 15.

The Okanogan and Similkameen rivers will remain open to salmon fishing until Sep. 15. Jateff reminded anglers that there is a non-buoyant rule restriction and night closure for the Okanogan and Similkameen rivers during the salmon season.

Ken Bevis, WDFW habitat biologist, noted from recent personal experience that low waters make trout fishing "challenging" in many streams. "Find the deep slots and try weighted nymph patterns," he advised.

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### **South Central Washington:**

**Fishing:** Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist, said high lake **trout** fishing is at its peak in August and September.

"As we get nearer the end of August, mosquitoes begin to become less of a nuisance," Cummins said. **Rainbow, cutthroat** and **eastern brook trout** generally will hit small spinners or flies. "Most lakes can be fished from the bank, but anglers may want to consider taking a light-weight inflatable raft or float tube for large lakes and lakes with extensive shallow water near shore. Be sure and take a personal flotation device," he said.

Rimrock Reservoir has been providing excellent **kokanee** fishing, Cummins said, with fish up to 10 inches. "Fish in the top 20 feet of water early and late in the day and deeper during mid-day hours," he said. "Trolling with a wedding ring spinner and hook baited with maggots has been the most productive method."

Cummins noted the other Yakima Basin reservoirs also have kokanee, but with the possible exception of Bumping, none are as productive as Rimrock. The water level at Cle Elum makes launching boats on trailers difficult if not impossible. Kachess Lake has been slow.

Fishing in rivers and streams should also be productive for trout anglers, Cummins said. Rainbow at the lower to mid-elevation streams and cutthroat trout in the higher elevation streams, most in the eight to 10-inch range, are often best caught-and-released with fly-fishing gear. Most streams in the region have special regulations, including the requirement to use single barbless hooks and no bait. A few areas are closed to protect bull trout. Check the fishing regulations pamphlet for all details.

Based on **steelhead** passage over McNary Dam well above the 10-year average, Cummins also suggested there could be some good steelhead fishing in the McNary pool up from the Highway 395 Bridge and between McNary and The Dalles dams on the Columbia River.

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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**

Police seek public's help to catch fish poachers near The Dalles:

[http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/08/state\\_police\\_seek\\_publics\\_help.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/08/state_police_seek_publics_help.html)

Salem man lands 28-pound, 3-foot catfish:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008808150354>

Man Makes Record Catch With Barbie Fishing Rod:

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,407901,00.html>

**Weekly Quote** – "Almost nothing makes me happier than to leave on a fishing trip. I feel like I'm doing something active for a change instead of hanging around on a street corner waiting for a bus to jump the curve and run me over." - Bill Barach

**GOOD LUCK!**