

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 29<sup>th</sup> – September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Anglers are anxiously awaiting the September 1<sup>st</sup> opener for salmon from Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam. With large numbers of adults streaming over Bonneville Dam, the season should be very productive, and if consistent with other chinook fisheries on the Columbia, won't last its scheduled time frame.

Anglers most often anchor fish for these quality fish from Longview to Portland using wobblers and spinners to draw strikes. Check regulations for sanctuaries and be aware of where you anchor as these fish often travel in the shipping channel.

Water temperatures on the Willamette came down a few degrees but it's still over 70 degrees. Sturgeon fishing has been fair to good for shakers with no keepers reported.

North Santiam anglers report very good numbers of fish present from Fishermen's Bend to Packsaddle but only fair fishing. Action is expected to pick up into September.

Snowpack has kept the McKenzie River water temperatures ideal and the level excellent. It's fishing very well now.

A few coho can be seen rolling at the mouth of the Clackamas. A few spinner casters are hooking up.

Steelhead continue to cooperate on the Sandy. A new parking lot opened at the delta on the Sandy River, re-opening this area which had been off limits to access since June.

Harriet Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Trillium Lake, West Salish Pond, the McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, and Salmon Creek are scheduled to be planted with trout.

**Northwest –** The Buoy 10 fishery is still going strong but anglers are now required to release chinook if incidentally caught while pursuing coho. Numbers of coho are building and the average size of these fish is impressive. Spinners are beginning to take a high percentage of the fish.

On the Columbia, the best fishing has been from the town of Chinook to Buoy 10 but stronger tides this week should push biting fish above the bridge on both the Oregon and Washington sides of the river. The further inland you target salmon, the more likely they are to bite hardware over bait.

Crabbing is picking up in the lower Columbia River.

The fall bubble fishery just outside of Tillamook Bay opens on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Although chinook are likely already in the bay itself, this ocean fishery will be the first productive spot to intercept quality fish in the coming weeks. As a general rule, fish in the ocean or at the jaws on a weak tide series and up higher in the bay on stronger tides. The first adults back to the estuary are destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers.

Nehalem Bay remains spotty but some fish are coming from the jaws on trolled herring. Crabbing is also picking up here with more hard shell crabs coming in the catch.

The Nestucca River should begin to give up chinook in the tidewater sections from Woods to the Boat Ramp Hole in Pacific City. Low water will keep adults in the tidewater areas.

**Southwest** – A health advisory has been issued for Dorena Reservoir near Eugene due to the appearance of toxic blue-green algae. Users should stay away for now.

Chinook are entering Winchester Bay and the lower Umpqua in decent numbers now, providing fair to good fishing. Crabbing has been fair with many too small to keep.

Most of the chinook coming out of Coos Bay have been jacks although a few decent adult fish have been caught over the past weekend. Tuna have been taken this week about 35 miles out.

Fresh steelhead and chinook entered the lower Rogue in the middle of last week, providing good fishing throughout the week and into the weekend Summer Salmon Derby. Coho of 16 pounds or better have been taken in the bay recently, so use caution in identifying salmon. Half-pounders outnumber adult steelhead three to one.

Anglers out of Brookings are scoring rockfish limits and good catches of lings but with natural feed abundant, those catching live anchovies in the bay before going out are fairing far better than those who fish other methods.

Level and flow of the Chetco River are at near-record lows, making the warm water more appropriate for swimming or tubing than for fishing.

Scheduled for trout planting are Clearwater Forebay #2, Hemlock Lake, Lemolo Reservoir and section 5 of the Rogue River.

**Eastern** – The lower Deschutes is fishing well for trout with the caddis hatch continuing and dries taking numerous fish. Steelheading has been fair but will continue to improve. Cooler, well-oxygenated water has been best.

Chinook counts at Bonneville and The Dalles Dam have ramped up dramatically from 692 on the 19th to almost 15,000 on the 24th at Bonneville and 427 adults to nearly 4,400 on the 25th at The Dalles. Steelhead counts have nearly doubled at both dams. It's going to be a good season for anglers on the Deschutes.

**SW Washington** – Anglers fishing the Cowlitz have been catching a mix of chinook, cutthroat trout and steelhead recently. Check regulations in the district before heading out.

The Kalama is starting to get some early coho and numbers should ramp up into late September.

Drano Lake anglers are finding both chinook and steelhead but trollers in the last creel census tallied .5 steelhead per rod, including fish released.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Despite the Chinook closure in the Buoy 10 fishery, effort and catches are still quite impressive given the fact the whole rest of the world believes that salmon fishing is closed west coast wide. It's turned into a coho-festival and the fish are running large! Chinook are still in the catch and there are a bunch of wild coho in the creel as well. For anglers putting in the time, limits can come but it definitely works better to have a network of experienced anglers on the water as well.

Most recently, action has been best in the lower river from Buoy 10 to the bridge. Weak tides are to blame for a lack of action above the bridge although a few fish were taken in this water recently. Depending on who you ask, fishing is good for spinner trollers or bait fishermen. Personally, I have been doing best on fresh herring plug cut but several of my guide companions have been fishing spinners exclusively and doing quite well. The keepers have been coming at all depths from 25 feet on the line counters to 110 feet. For your reference, two feet on a line counter reel equates to about 1 strip from the reel to the first guide.

On the first part of the tide, Buoy 10 or the Illwaco area has been producing well and as usual, we'll follow the fish upstream with the tide ending up at the bridge for a downstream troll during the first part of the outgoing tide. The 24 to 30 foot line on the Washington side of Desdemona Sands have been producing good results in recent days. Towards the end of my day on 8/27, there was a smokin' hot bite from Hammond to Buoy 22 in 38 to 45 feet of water on the last part of outgoing tide. It's almost like the entire run of hatchery coho all came in at once. The question is, will they be there tomorrow?

We'll save the upriver info for the next section of this newsletter but if you're anxious to fish in the upcoming September opener above Tongue Point, raise you hand.....

Looking west, tuna are still a main focus for salt water anglers with good catches coming nearly 50 miles out. **Captain of the Barco III, Mike Barksdale (503-939-7816)** reports good catches coming from the 124'50 line for anglers using live bait. Some trollers are still taking fish on tuna clones but typically, live bait becomes a necessity for tuna anglers this time of year. The tuna are running between 15 and 30 pounds right now and we should be seeing peak weights coming across the dock these days.

Crabbing in the river is picking up but there are still a fair number of softshell crab to cull through before taking a limit of keepers. Fresh bait always works best but you have to cage these baits as they are highly coveted by the seals and sea-lions working the area. I have yet to have a seal or sea-lion take one of my hooked fish but I had to pick up and leave an area just yesterday as it was sure to happen if I stayed fishing where I was.

With salmon going full steam ahead, not many people have been bottomfishing the south jetty lately. For those that were doing it, a mix of kelp greenling, seabass and undersized lingcod made up the bulk of the catch. With stronger tides now, this fishery is best left alone until they weaken once again.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Salmon will continue to be the focus for anglers in the NW corner of the state. Most anglers are anxiously awaiting the re-opener of the Chinook season above Tongue Point scheduled for September 1<sup>st</sup>. This is a fishery that has gained momentum in recent years and catches can skyrocket for those in the know on how to harvest fish in this area. Most anglers anchor fish with wobblers and target fish in the deeper water close to the shipping channel. Be cautious on where you anchor as it could mean a large fine or worse, your life if you are not paying attention to the other users on the river.

Be mindful of the adopted sanctuaries and new regulations but near the mouths of several of the SW Washington tributaries is a popular place to drop your anchor. Anglers typically use a 3 foot lead line with a 5 foot leader line and tuning your wobbler can be an integral part of your success. Wobblers may need tuning on different parts of the tide or you may choose to switch out to a different type of wobbler when the tide slows; a wobbler that works best in slower flows.

Anglers in the estuary may have some additional Chinook opportunity in the Tongue Point area. It can certainly be hit or miss on certain years but with the Chinook numbers apparent in the

Buoy 10 fishery, there may be a good chance at a Chinook in this stretch as the tides build into Labor Day. Spinners have worked best in this stretch and it shouldn't be an exception this year if this fishery performs. It's best around high tide and the first few hours of outgoing tide. It remains to be seen if this fishery will produce, and we'll certainly report on it in the next edition of The Guide's Forecast but if it does go, it will likely produce the best results close to the opener on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

For Buoy 10 anglers, it will remain a coho focus and that's not such a bad thing given the quality size of fish that this fishery is currently producing. As is the case most often, patterns exist according to the tides dictating where you should be at what time of the tide. By the weekend, we'll be coming into morning tides that will have low slack in the morning. This is the least productive time of the tide to fish and when low slack does hit, it's most productive for Chinook. We'll still need to avoid Chinook downstream of Tongue Point and realize that coho most often take advantage of the cooler incoming tide all the way to the bridge on most days. These coho can be finicky biters so it may pay to throw different options at them. As previously mentioned, spinners have been working very well for several of the guides, just not me so much. I am still fishing mostly bait and it could have even more application as we head into these bigger tides over the weekend.

As the tide surges in, don't hesitate to troll with the flow working water between 20 and 35 feet deep on both sides of the river. Anglers can also hold in the current but you cover much more water when you troll with it; either on the incoming or outgoing tide. Be close to the bridge at high slack however, trolling erratically at high slack but sticking to the 24 to 30 feet of water when the tide changes and starts to flush out. I have found out this week (and in other years), that fishing very close to the bottom typically produces the best catches on the outgoing tide, no matter how deep you are. Again, referencing the strong incoming tide, salmon may be willing to take gear above the bridge as fresh fish should push higher with the better flows. If you order bait, be sure to order before 3:00 p.m. to ensure your order.

It may be a more challenging week for crabbers if that's your thing in the Buoy 10 area. The stronger tides often put movers down and decrease your effective soak time for your crab gear. None-the-less, if you target the slower parts of the tide with fresh bait, you should have good results.

Tuna seekers won't have the best of ocean conditions to recreate in. The forecast is as follows:

**FRI** W WIND 5 TO 10 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. W SWELL 7 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF RAIN IN THE MORNING. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS IN THE AFTERNOON.

**FRI NIGHT** NW WIND 15 KT...VEERING TO N AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT...BUILDING TO 4 FT AFTER MIDNIGHT. W SWELL 7 FT. RAIN LIKELY.

**SAT** N WIND 15 TO 20 KT WITH GUSTS TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 9 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**SAT NIGHT** N WIND 15 TO 20 KT WITH GUSTS TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 7 FT.

**SUN** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT.

**MON** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – The latest data for water conditions at Willamette Falls shows the water temp at 74 degrees with the flow increased slightly due to recent rains and the visibility just over five feet. Sturgeon fishing over the past Friday through Sunday retention period was fair for shakers but unproductive for larger fish.

Snowpack this year has the McKenzie water level, flow and most importantly, temperature at most un-summer-like condition.

The North Santiam level and flow are excellent with good concentrations of summer steelhead although catches have been spotty.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It's about time to write something positive about the sturgeon fishing in the lower Willamette. As coho have begun entering the lower Clackamas, there's an opportunity for bank anglers to get a shot at catching them in the Oregon City stretch. Sturgeon fishing will also improve, but not for a while. As summer draws to a close and the weather reflects the approaching fall season, sturgeon catches will include keeper-sized fish. We'll let you know when it's worthwhile, as always.

The McKenzie is in excellent condition and will fish well this weekend for trout.

The greater number of steelhead in the North Santiam are at Packsaddle Park but the water temperatures in that stretch are so low that they are biting poorly. A better bet would be Fishermen's Bend or Mehama where the water is warmer and the steelhead bite much better. Try smaller lures for best results in the clear water here.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Clackamas anglers reported seeing more coho rolling at the mouth and recently as high a Carver, but only a few reports of anyone landing a fish. There should be a few around as there were two in the Faraday trap on Monday, August 25th. Spinners are a favorite method of attracting strikes although color preferences change every year. Steelheading has been nonexistent in the 60 degree water of the Clack.

The Sandy River has been fairly productive for steelhead on the Cedar Creek stretch now that the water has cleared following a roil after recent rains. Spinners have been taking fair to good numbers of mostly smallish summers and a few springers continue to be hooked, although the quality of the latter is declining. Coho are expected to start arriving any time now.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Although it won't be long before the fall Chinook run is underway along the Oregon Coast, it's still a bit early for many of the north coast estuaries to produce consistent numbers of fish. Tillamook, Nehalem and the Nestucca system however certainly do have the capability and with a nice tide series hitting the coast this weekend, the upper reaches of these systems are likely to produce the best results.

It's early for accurate reports from most of these estuaries and with such strong opportunity on the lower Columbia, not much interest is being generated here. There are better times ahead.

**The Guide's Forecast** – For Tillamook anglers, a rare coho and some Tillamook and Trask River bound Chinook should be available to spinner trollers in the Memaloose area. Plugs will also work well in this area on the minus tide, simply working the plugs by backtrolling in the slots or by anchoring up in the lower reaches of the tidewater stretches of these rivers. A small number of fish should "hole-up" in the upper bay and may fall to spinners trolled at the right time of the tide.

Nehalem anglers will have a challenging time holding on the bar although it will still be a good place to intercept incoming fish; what few there are. It has not been a productive couple of years on the Nehalem system. Wheeler or Nehalem itself should have some Chinook available.

The Nestucca bar may produce a few fish but like the other estuaries, fish will take advantage of the strong tides and ride them far upriver. Woods may be the best place to catch an early fall fish using spinners (trolled) or bobber and eggs near low slack. There won't be a long period of productive bobber fishing in the tidewater stretch of any of these coastal systems with the tides we'll be experiencing this weekend.

Crabbing is also picking up in north coast estuaries.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Chinook regulations for the Southwest Zone this year are complex. Rather than paraphrasing, here's the scoop straight from the ODFW regs.

"Explanation of Zones Seasonal Aggregate: Within the Northwest, Southwest and terminal areas of the Marine Zone, the combined bag limit for non-fin clipped adult chinook is one daily and five per season in the aggregate for all open ocean terminal areas and rivers (see exceptions below). This means five fish total from all ocean terminal areas and rivers under this season bag limit, NOT five fish from each terminal area and river. Non-fin clipped chinook harvested between August 1 and December 31, 2008 count toward the five fish seasonal limit.

"Exceptions are in the Coos and Rogue rivers. Anglers may harvest an additional five non- fin clipped chinook combined for the Coos or Rogue basins. In addition to the five fish seasonal limit for all areas in the zones (that includes the Coos and Rogue basins), anglers may harvest an additional five non-fin clipped chinook from the Coos or Rogue basins combined not to exceed a maximum of 10 from either system. Anglers need to keep in mind that since chinook caught in the Coos and Rogue count toward the Zones Seasonal Aggregate if they catch the first five chinook in the Coos or Rogue rivers, they may not harvest

Chinook from other rivers or terminal areas in the Zones."

The Siletz and Alsea are offering decent fishing for sea-run cutthroat trout now. These fish, often referred to a bluebacks, respond very well to spinners and are suckers for wet flies in bright colors. If there's a trick to catching them, it's finding the water they prefer. Try the soft boils where you'd never find a steelhead or under overhanging brush along the bank.

Trollers are taking a few fall Chinook on herring in tidewater on the Siletz.

Tuna fishers launching out of Depoe Bay on Monday and Tuesday this week had to travel just over 20 miles from port to locate good numbers of albacore.

On Sunday, August 24th, boats launching out of Newport headed 25 miles or so west to catch all the tuna they could accommodate. Several boats made combo halibut/albacore catches. Although showing a little improvement in the forecasts the afternoon of August 28th, offshore conditions this week are not looking favorable for an ocean trip. If boaters are kept in the bay, crabbing may be an option. It's been pretty good in Yaquina Bay with a few crabbers reporting limits.

Crabbing has been fair out of Waldport with the Dungeness nearly recovered from the summer molt.

Summer steelheading on the North Umpqua has been worthwhile and is improving with cooler weather conditions. Smallmouth bass fishing is excellent on the mainstem and remains good on the South Umpqua. Trollers below Reedsport report slow fishing for fall Chinook but it's early in the run to expect great results here.

Coos Bay is producing limits of hard Dungeness but some culling of softshells is still necessary. Keep that crab gauge handy as a lot of crab are just under the legal size. Fall Chinook fishing has been fair to good at times. Bait may be used above tidewater for sea-run cutthroat trout starting September 1st.

Coquille trollers have started taking a few fall Chinook but fishing is slow this early in the season.

Once again over the past week, Chinook were in Rogue tidewater in good number but with natural feed abundant, they were slow to bite or strike. A better bet is the steelhead fishery as willing half-pounders and adult steelhead are being taken in good number below Agness. The half-pounder run which has been poor for several years running, is outstanding this year with about 180,000 for these immature steelhead in the river as of mid-month. These fish respond well to bait or spinners and are particularly popular with fly anglers. Fishing has been worthwhile all day long although better evenings. Summer steelhead catches are good in the Grants Pass stretch as well where a few Chinook have also been caught. Steelheaders are doing well on the upper Rogue although bait and hardware anglers will have to fish elsewhere as of September 1st when it becomes a flies-only fishery.

Surf perch fishing is still hot on southwest beaches. Reports this week indicate that fishers are scoring limits by digging sand crabs right on the beaches from which they're casting. These gray crustaceans give away their location in the sand when one stomps on the beach in a water-slick area where a wave has receded. They're easy to dig with one's hands and surf perch love 'em.

The offshore fishery out of the Port of Brookings continues to produce limits of rockfish and near limits of ling cod but with ocean baitfish thick, it's taking more time to do so. The solution for the most successful boats has been to catch live anchovies inshore prior to crossing the bar. Lure have been far less effective with so much natural feed available. In addition to having live bait on board, fishing the incoming tide through slack will always produce better results. It may be too rough this weekend for boaters to access the ocean this weekend; check at the last minute before making the trip.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Lake of the Woods is kicking out good numbers of kokanee early in the day but heavy recreational boat traffic shuts down fishing mid-morning.

Kokanee fishing has been fair to good on the troll at Odell where large lake trout are also being taken at 30 to 50 foot depths on downriggers. Large plugs are used to tempt the lake trout which must measure a minimum of 30 inches for those inclined to keep them. Odell has produced lakers to over 30 pounds this year.

Rogue River fly-rodders are experiencing very good fishing for cutthroat on the upper Rogue now. A few steelhead are also in the area. Warm water from hot weather recently slowed the steelhead action on the lower Rogue but with water temps down again, fishing has improved. The best chance for a hookup is below Macks Canyon and with good counts at the dams, steelhead action will continue to improve. Redside fishing has been good on the lower Rogue with best results on caddis imitations early and late in the day.

**Northwest Trout** – About 2,000 trophy-sized rainbow trout will be released this week and equally distributed at three North Willamette locations – Harriet Lake, Trillium Lake and West Salish Pond.

North Fork Reservoir has received an impressive 16,700 legal-sized hatchery trout this week.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

#### **From the WDF&W Weekender Report 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/reg5/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:**

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**

Fish counts at Sherars Falls on the Deschutes:

**[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/fish\\_counts/sherars\\_falls/index.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/fish_counts/sherars_falls/index.asp)**

Map of the area off limits to Chinook fishing on the Columbia opener September 1st (PDF):

**[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/reg\\_changes/docs/ColRiverClosedSalmonMap.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/reg_changes/docs/ColRiverClosedSalmonMap.pdf)**

Return of the half-pounder on the Rogue:

**<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080825/NEWS/808250309>**

Agencies must improve Willamette Basin dams while balancing interests:

**<http://www.registerguard.com/rg/Home/story.csp?cid=128259&sid=1&fid=1>**

**Weekly Quote** – "The fish is an animal that grows excessively fast between the moment when it is taken and the moment when the fisherman describe it to his friends." - Pierre Masson

**GOOD LUCK!**