

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 12th – September 18th, 2008**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Despite poorer than anticipated mainstem catches, biologists are still closely monitoring catch rates for the chinook fishery from Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam. The recent run size upgrade will allow additional opportunity but fishing may still get cut short of the proposed September 16th closure date. A decision is likely later today. The best salmon catches are still coming from the Longview area.

Bank angler success for sturgeon is beginning to improve in the Columbia River Gorge. Keepers begin congregating near the dam this time of year and anglers using smelt will find improving odds over the next 6 weeks.

Smallmouth bass fishing is good and improving around Gladstone on the lower Willamette with larger fish showing in the catches. Sturgeon fishing is still slow.

Trout fishing is outstanding on the upper McKenzie. Fly rodders throwing caddis imitations are taking fish all day long.

Try the North Santiam from Fishermen's Bend to Mehema; the river is treacherous from Mill City upstream as the level and flow is high. Plugs have taken a few steelhead recently. Steelhead recycling is ongoing from the Foster trap on the South Santiam.

Many coho can be seen rolling near the mouth of the Clackamas but they're not cooperating in the warm water.

Coho are hitting spinners occasionally on the Sandy but it'll take rain to trigger better fishing.

Northwest – Fishing for coho picked up significantly over the weekend in the Tongue Point area. Easy limits were taken up until Tuesday with red and brass Fatal Flash spinners taking good numbers of fish. The fish were running deep in the main channel so anglers running gear close to the bottom scored the best results.

Nehalem Bay also produced good numbers of coho and chinook through the weekend but Tuesday's report indicated a slowing trend.

Tillamook chinook anglers experienced moderate results this week. Softer tides allowed for a reprieve from the seaweed as anglers targeted the lower bay using herring for bait. Crabbing is picking up on most north coast estuaries.

Effort on the Nestucca and Salmon Rivers is picking up although only moderate success is being reported. Stronger tides this weekend should boost catches for salmon on most north coast systems.

Anglers are waiting for numbers to build on the Siletz and Alsea Rivers although light catches have already been reported. Herring will work best for anglers fishing the Alsea while plugs and spinners are often the favorites for Siletz anglers.

Southwest – Good news for offshore bottom fishers this week as the bag limit has been increased

to six fish and the depth limit has been pushed out once again to the 40-fathom line. Wind and wave conditions have not cooperated to allow boats to get out. Current predictions favor Sunday this week.

All-depth halibut is closed on Friday, September 12th but anglers may keep two deep-water halibut per day on September 13th and 14th. No further all-depth halibut days are scheduled after the 14th, but will be announced if the quota doesn't fill.

Pro guide Jeff Jackson (541-268-6944) reports, "Fishing on the Siuslaw is starting to pick up with Fish are being caught from Florence to the Dairy Hole."

Trollers are hooking up with fall chinook in the lower Umpqua near Reedsport. Smallmouth bass fishing remains good in the mainstem and South Umpqua. The North Umpqua has slowed for steelheaders.

Coos Bay trollers are picking up chinook although the majority have been jacks. Elk Rock has been particularly productive. Tidewater is producing large silvers which have also been taken as high as Roseburg.

Rogue River half-pounders are thick now. All manner of tackle, lure and bait has been effective and fly anglers are having great success. September is historically a big fish month for fall chinook as evidenced by a 58-pounder landed recently. Chinook fishing in Rogue Bay has improved over the past week. Fishing has slowed on the middle Rogue.

When anglers have been able to get out to the ocean, bottom fishing has been spotty out of Brookings. Ling cod fishing has also been slow but is expected to improve in the coming weeks. Forecasts for the weekend indicate winds may let up, calming a large swell. This would allow offshore boaters to launch out of the Port of Brookings to take advantage of relaxed bottomfish regulations.

Eastern – Pro guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424) reports John Day smallmouth fishing slow in the low, cool water early mornings which improves as the sun warms the river. Fish are large and healthy, taking soft plastics and crankbaits on the bottom in deeper water.

Chinook and steelhead continue to stream over the Columbia dams increasing optimism for a great fall fishing experience on the Deschutes this year. Recently, trolling at the mouth has been slow, as is often the case when large numbers of salmon intermingle with the steelhead. Steelhead fishing on the mainstem Deschutes has also slowed but is likely to pick up in the coming weeks.

Green Peter is producing fair to good kokanee catches on the troll. Some of the fish are showing a little color but are large, fat and still fine for the table.

SW Washington – With extensive chinook closures on many SW area rivers, anglers will need to study up on recent regulation changes before venturing out.

Most of the effort in this district remains on the mainstem Columbia but anglers will have some opportunity for coho on the Lewis and Cowlitz Rivers.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Although only 1 section of the lower Columbia River is open for salmon fishing, there are really only 2 fisheries going on right now. Starting downriver, the Tongue Point fishery began to heat up on Saturday with only a few boats present to witness the carnage. Saturday, Sunday and Monday produced great results for anglers fishing spinners from Tongue Point to Miller Island fishing deep in the main channel. Limits were very common for this short stint of time

with mostly coho in the area but as many anglers witnessed earlier, these are quality fish that are pleasing anglers. Spinners were clearly the ticket and as is typically the case, the hot colors have been working best; that is, red/whites, red/brass and pinks have been performing exceptionally. One thing is for sure, you had to be near the bottom to find the biters.

More recently, I fished the area on the 10th. We started late (about 9:15) and had already missed some decent action. It took a short while but we did get some bites early but our first legitimate hook up was a triple, of which we landed 2 of the 3 fish on. They were both hatchery fish and hit the size 7 Fatal Flash blade (brass back with red/chartreuse front) fished right on the bottom. We ended the day with 3 coho, 1 Chinook, a bright about 16 pounds and a steelhead, a "B" run no doubt of about 15 pounds. It was a day of doubles as the Chinook and steelhead hit almost simultaneously. This was my first day in the area so I didn't have a lot to compare it to but action was certainly slower than I had heard from previous days. Sealions were working the area and fish have been stripped from anglers lines all week. We saw several instances when sealions were ripping fish on the surface. Monday was slower than Sunday and Tuesday was way slower than Monday. With increasing tides and run timing, this fishery is likely to peter-out.

Upriver, anglers fishing the Longview area were still finding success although catch rates continue to be sub-par for the run we are experiencing and the simple fact we are in peak season. Weak tides are likely to blame and increasing tides should make a difference in the coming week. Wobblers, it seems are still the ticket for anchor anglers with spinners taking some fish on the slack tides. Above Longview, action has been rather poor. Even the gorge, passing over 10,000 fish per day is producing only fair results, as it seems most fish are motivated to migrate upstream without stopping for a taste of metal. The gorge however did record the best catch rates in the lower river over the weekend- 14 adults for 31 boats. Spinners frequently fish better in the swifter flows for gorge boaters but plugs also produce good results although typically later in the month and early October.

Sturgeon are also beginning to stir for bank anglers near the deadline. This is the time of year when action begins to heat up although some bank anglers are turned off by this fishery. It's obviously crowded but rumors of rather territorial anglers may intimidate new arrivals. But, since I have never participated in this fishery, it's really not fair for me to judge. The bottom line, it's one of the best chances for the entire year for a bank anglers to have a legitimate shot at a keeper sturgeon. Use smelt for bait and fresher is better but make do with what you have.

Crabbing in the lower river was quite good over the last weak tide series that we are just coming off of. Fresh tuna carcasses scored the best results with easy limits coming from anyone that tried hard enough. There were some softshelled keepers in the mix but the majority was clearly quality keepers. Crab downstream of Hammond.

The Guide's Forecast – Fishery managers will have met on Thursday to discuss the run size for the rivers fall Chinook and managers have already increased the prediction by 50,000 Chinook. Models indicate if catch rates improve with the upcoming tide series, we may not make it until the 9/16 closure date. Effort may just start ramping up again for the weekend however after a slow period sent anglers to finish summer chores. Despite my earlier thoughts on a pre-mature closure, this fishery could go the distance but only because of the recent run size upgrade. The most likely area to intercept Chinook will remain the Longview area although cooler temperatures could stimulate a Bonneville Dam bite a little early this year. Although it's clear that the bulk of the run has gone through, there are likely tens of thousands more Chinook yet to come. Action is likely to heat up but it won't be like it was on opening week. Wobblers will continue to be the key to success and you may have to tune them with the velocity of the tides.

Update: At the meeting held on the afternoon of Thursday, September 11th, fisheries managers decided to allow the season to run through the scheduled closure date of September 16th.

Don't hesitate to troll spinners on the slack tide either as that is likely to produce good results while waiting for the tide to run. You'll want to be on the bottom however as that is where the biters are located.

Don't invest too much time or effort in the Tongue Point area of the lower river. Although there are still good numbers of coho to come, fishing is likely to continue to drop off after such a good streak last weekend. Spinners will continue to produce the best results in this fishery and like upriver, you'll find the biters (yes, even the coho) on the bottom of the river; and this may be 40 foot of water at times. From Miller Island to the deadline at Tongue Point produced the best results. It's also highly likely that seaweed will begin to once again foul gear in the stronger tides.

The stronger tides will likely also put down the crab action in the lower river. If you choose to drop pots or rings, just concentrate around tide change for the best action. Crabs are unlikely to migrate into traps in faster flows.

Sturgeon fishers may wish to gain experience in the gorge bank fishery. Although keepers may become more available to boat anglers, bank anglers seem to excel this time of year as fish concentrate closer to the dam. Smelt will likely remain a top bait but it never hurts to tip your smelt with sand shrimp.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Counts at Willamette Falls haven't been updated for nearly a month, but the trend indicated numbers of fish crossing have dwindled to insignificance. A few coho have probably crossed (if the ladder is open at all; one anglers indicated it's being repaired). Coho do not have to be finclipped to be kept in the upper river.

While numbers haven't been updated for September, it is interesting to note that the summer steelhead entering the trap June through mid-August were almost exclusively of hatchery origin. Chinook are a different story, however, with estimates of 10 wild fish for every hatchery specimen. Salmon can be seen spawning on the upper McKenzie now. Give them wide berth.

The water flow of the North Santiam has been increased over the past two weeks from 1,150 cfs to 2,180 cfs at Packsaddle Park as of Monday, September 8th. The increased flow and level have created conditions from Mill City upstream which could easily swamp a drift boat.

The Guide's Forecast – Although coho are moving through the lower Willamette, the few anglers trying for them either from boat or bank are mostly drawing blanks. Sturgeon fishing remains very slow but will start to improve as the water cools later in September and should be good in October. Smallmouth bass fishing is good below Willamette Falls, fair above. The typical fall locations are not yet producing nor are the smallies apparently on a fall feeding binge as yet. The middle Fork Willamette will be reliable for good catches of native rainbow trout above Hills Creek Reservoir.

Water conditions are excellent and trout fishing is at its peak on the upper McKenzie. Both dries and nymphs have been effective.

Best bets for summer steelhead on the North Santiam include Mehama and Fishermen's Bend. While steelhead generally show a preference, they've been taking both bait and plugs.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas anglers are throwing spinners to catch mostly jacks, but fishing has only been fair at best. Stay low on the river for best results, as higher up, say at McIver Park, all you'll find are dark and darkening Chinook. Despite a few coho returning to Eagle Creek, they won't bite well until the water temperature drops. The estimated return this year is 8,000 to 12,000 this year.

Coho are scattered on the Sandy River with the hatchery facility on Cedar Creek reporting that a few have shown up in the trap. The lower water temperatures here are resulting in fish that are more willing to bite and anglers throwing spinners are reporting hookups at various locations. Fishing will improve as we move further into the season.

North Coast Fishing Report – It's beginning to look a lot like fall Chinook season here. Anglers anxious to get the coastal fall season underway still have many of the coastal estuaries to themselves these days. There have been fall Chinook and a few coho taken on many north coast estuaries already this season but consistency is far from a reality. Tillamook gave up a few Chinook over the weekend and although the seas were open to fish, it wasn't so much fun to fish out there. Most of the Chinook were caught inside of the bay along the jetty (north jetty) on the last hour of outgoing tide. Herring right on the bottom netted us a 12 pound fin-clipped Chinook in the first 3 minutes of fishing but we didn't have another bite for the rest of the tide. Most of the effort has been taking place in the lower bay at the jaws as the weak tide series does not drive fish into the upper bay.

Further south, effort is beginning to ramp up on the Nestucca and Salmon Rivers. This weeks tides should be a good indicator as to how the season will shape up. Good tides should drive in catchable numbers of fish for both bank and boat anglers on these river systems and push fish into the lower tidewater sections for bobber tossers as well. Seaweed may be an issue on some river systems.

The Alsea and Siletz should also receive a few fish on this tide series if indeed the run materializes this season. The Alsea performed much better than the Siletz did last year but whether or not it will repeat, remains to be seen.

Low, clear water has steelhead quite wary and bank anglers will find challenging conditions this week. It would have to be an early morning show to have any expectations what-so-ever.

The Guide's Forecast – Don't expect huge results from any of the coastal estuaries but oftentimes at this time in the season, anglers can get surprised. Keep in mind, we hooked 2 Chinook and landed 1 of them on September 1st in the upper Tillamook Bay. The upper Tillamook Bay would be a likely spot to intercept a Chinook as most adults are destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers this time of year. Plugs could work on the stronger outgoing tide of the Trask and Tillamook River. It might just be best to tie up to a piling for a strong outgoing tide. Troll herring or spinners near the high tide at the Oyster House or near the mouth of the Wilson River.

For salmon fishers looking to find bounty on the ocean, the seas don't look all that friendly for boaters outside, at least until Sunday. The forecast reads:

FRI N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT. PATCHY FOG IN THE MORNING.

FRI NIGHT N WIND 20 TO 25 KT...EASING TO 15 TO 20 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

SAT N WIND 15 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

SAT NIGHT N WIND 15 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

SUN N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT.

MON N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 5 FT.

It may be an anglers choice to remain inside in search of salmon but by Sunday, ocean possibilities could open up. There should be building numbers of salmon staging at most estuary mouths.

Tuna fishing may also be an option as fish should still be available well into the month. With prevailing NW winds over the last several days, the fish may be pushed further offshore however and may prefer live bait this time of year. We often get a wind reprieve this time of year and next week may be our offshore opportunity. Garibaldi and Astoria are likely top ports to launch from.

The Nestucca and Salmon Rivers should start to see increasing numbers of Chinook in the tidewater sections of these rivers. Bobbers and bait (mostly the combo of eggs and shrimp) should produce the best results but some anglers may find success dragging spinners of plugs. You'll likely have to put in some time to expect results but these are quality fish available this time of year.

Central & South Coast Reports – September 7th was the last day scheduled for the summer all-Depth Halibut season. Rough offshore conditions this year has often kept recreational boaters from crossing into the ocean, however. It is for this reason, according to Don Bodenmiller, sport halibut project leader for ODFW, that anglers may fish all depths and keep two halibut per day this coming Friday and Saturday, September 13th and 14th. This fishery will be closed Friday, September 12th, and the remaining quota of 372,346 pounds is expected to fill with this weekend's generous bag limit. If, that is, boaters can get out to fish.

Forecasts for the upcoming weekend are marginal for offshore access. Be certain to check it at the last minute before leaving for the boat ramp.

Strong early season catches of rockfish motivated the ODFW to limit catches to five per day and allow fishing inside 20 fathoms as of July 7th this year in order to ensure that anglers wouldn't have to endure another early closure. Bottom fish action slowed in the summer, however, so the regulations have been restored to six fish and will allow anglers to fish out to the 40 fathom line. Many reports of this update state that the 20-fathom restriction is still in place, so here's the quote from the ODFW News Release: "On Sept. 7 ocean sport anglers may go back to catching six marine fish a day inside the 40 fathom line." Further, starting October 1st, bottom fishers may explore all depths in search of rockfish.

Tuna are offshore but the 20 to 30 mile trip hasn't been a possibility for recreational boaters due to high winds and seas.

Crabbing in the bay out of Newport has been producing limits, but they're hard-earned, requiring sorting of many undersized, female and soft Dungeness. There are always red rock in the mix here with no size limit for those who like to eat them.

Ocean crabbing will remain closed for the rest of the year.

Alsea Bay out of Waldport has been crabbing well, producing god-sized, hard-shelled keepers.

Pro guide Jeff Jackson (541-268-6944) reports, "Fishing on the Siuslaw is starting to pick up.

Fish are being caught from Florence to the Dairy Hole (above Cushman). Most fish are being caught on herring, but don't be afraid to troll spinners or wobblers too. I have been catching a significant number of wild coho in the past few days, and some are very large. Just a reminder to folks to please be careful with these fish. Try to remove the hook without netting them."

Anglers have continued to smack large numbers of smallmouth bass on the Mainstem Umpqua, Smallie catches are also good on the South Umpqua and summer steelheading has been good and is improving on the North Umpqua. Winchester Bay has been good for coho, fair for Chinook.

Trollers in Coos Bay are experiencing fair to good results for fall Chinook. Marshland Channel has been productive. Crabbing has been worthwhile in Coos Bay.

Tidewater on the Coquille River has been producing Chinook every day. Trolled spinners or plug-cut herring are effective. Crabbing is producing good numbers but most have been too small to keep.

Trollers in the Rogue estuary have had fair to great days recently with catches varying day to day. It was exceptional on Tuesday this week, slowing on Wednesday. Larger fish are historically the rule at this time of year and more coho will show in the mix. Late day catches have been best in the Grants Pass stretch although anglers are taking Chinook jacks, half-pounders and adult steelhead all day long. It is estimated the number of half-pounders entering this year may be nearly twice the 33-year average. Adult fall Chinook are also being taken with bait outfishing plugs. Fly anglers above Gold Ray Dam are experiencing fair to good results for summer steelhead although daily counts are dropping off.

Report from the Department of Good Sense: A proposal by Tidewater Contractors to build and operate a gravel mining and processing facility five miles up the Rogue River was soundly and unanimously rejected by the Curry County Planning Commission.

Rock fishing has remained only fair out of Brookings with ling cod catches slow. Predictions for large swells this weekend provide no reason for optimism.

Diamond Lake is delivering large trout to 17 inches to bait fishers and trollers. Early and late in the day has been best at the angler-friendly location with a 10 mph speed limit in force. The golden shiner infestation is worse than expected. Oregon State Police are chasing leads to the culprits who dumped these fish and a \$3,100 reward is being offered for information leading to apprehension.

Sad news from Lemolo Lake which is located downstream from Diamond Lake. Despite assurances to the contrary, state and federal agencies failed to prevent tui chub from entering Lemelo when the water level of Diamond was lowered prior to rotenone treatment to eradicate those baitfish. The chub are thriving and Lemolo Lake resort is considering filing suit against the agencies. We'll report on the outcome.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Pro guide Steve Fleming (1-888-624-9424) reports "We just finished another great week on the John Day River. The cooler weather and nights cooled the river down to 60 degrees and the fish started a little slow for the first two hours each day, but our clients were still catching over 100 smallies per day with most coming in the afternoon. The river is flowing just over 100 CFS, and won't come up much till the middle of October after the ranchers quit irrigating October 1st. The fish are in great shape and very fat. The top water is only working in the late afternoon in the shadows, but everything else is working well. The 1/16 oz leadheads with Outlaw Baits 5" worm cut down and covered with Smelly Jelly Craw/Anise is still producing the most fish. So there is a spinner bait bite from time to time, buzz bait bite late in the afternoon, Texas and Carolina good all day but the best technique first thing in the morning, cause the fish are on the

bottom in the warmer water. Crankbaits with rattles are also working in the deeper holes. Expect more of the same, with the water cooling a little more."

Steelheading has been slow to fair on the lower Deschutes. Counts are good and improving for the fish trap at Sherar's Falls, with 78 hatchery steelhead entering on September 9th alone. The White River cleared over the weekend so water color is good. Trout anglers are having some good days even as Caddisses thin out. The better hatches are occurring on sunny days and a few October Caddisses are showing. The middle Deschutes and been fair to good for trout fishing with brown trout showing in catches.

East Lake is producing respectable numbers of fair-sized brown trout as fall approaches.

Northwest Trout – Henry Hagg Lake has been slow over the past week but Detroit Reservoir has been fair to good for both boat and bank anglers, offering the bonus of the occasional landlocked Chinook.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report September 3rd – September 16th, 2008

North Puget Sound

The wait is on in both the marine areas and the rivers for the bulk of the ocean **coho salmon** return, which is expected to enter the Puget Sound region in larger numbers over the next few weeks.

"Fishing has been slow to fair with a mix of resident coho and an occasional ocean silver," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "But the coho catch recently picked up in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, so we could see more and more of those ocean fish make their way into Sound in the coming weeks."

Once those fish arrive, Point No Point, Jefferson Head, Possession Bar and Shipwreck should be good spots to hook ocean coho, Thiesfeld said. Anglers fishing those areas - or other waters of marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) - have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook. In Marine Area 10, anglers also must release chum salmon through Sept. 15. In Marine Area 9, anglers must release wild coho - identified by an intact adipose fin - through Sept. 15 and chum through Sept. 30.

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 continues to be slow in those three areas, said Thiesfeld.

Meanwhile, crabbing in the region is still an option but the opportunity is limited. Only the northern and eastern portions of Marine Area 7 remain open for **crab**. Those two portions are open Wednesdays through Saturdays each week through Sept. 30. The region's other marine areas are closed for a catch assessment.

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 freshwater, fishing has been spotty for most anglers, who are waiting for coho to push into the rivers. Portions of several rivers in the region, including the Skykomish, Skagit and Snoqualmie, are open for salmon fishing.

A portion of the Green (Duwamish) River also is open, and there have been a few reports of anglers hooking **chinook**. The Green is open from Tukwila International Blvd. to I-405. Anglers fishing that stretch have a daily limit of six salmon, only one of which may be a chinook, and no more than three adults. Beginning Sept. 16, anglers can also fish from the 1st Ave. South Bridge to Tukwila International Blvd., but must release chinook along that stretch of the river.

Elsewhere, Lake Sammamish is open, with a daily limit of four salmon measuring at least 12 inches. Anglers can keep up to two chinook but must release all sockeye. Salmon fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. Lake Sammamish's larger neighbor, Lake Washington, opens Sept. 16 to coho fishing. Anglers will be allowed four coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) from waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge. 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 salmon season is winding down on the coast, but anglers are catching lots of coho off Sekiu as the fish move through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and into Puget Sound. Creel checks in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu) over the Labor Day weekend showed an average catch of nearly one **hatchery coho** per person.

"Fishing for coho generally picks up after Labor Day," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "With the catch rates we've been seeing lately, the fish are definitely coming through." Thiesfeld said people might want to weigh their decision to fish now or later in the month when they're able to keep **wild coho** as part of their daily two-fish limit. The non-selective coho fishery in Marine Area 5 opens Sept. 16-30.

They can also try their luck in the annual "No Fin, You Win" coho salmon derby, which will be held Saturday, Sept. 6 at Sekiu. The first prize is 50 percent of ticket sales, second prize is 20 percent, and third prize is 10 percent. The \$10 entry fee can be purchased at any local resort, or call 360-963-2311 for details. Last year, 581 anglers entered the derby with a first prize payout of \$2,905.

Along the coast, salmon fishing is open seven days a week in several areas. "While there wasn't a lot of coho, the **chinook** fishing was pretty good all season," said Wendy Beeghley. "Now as the fishery winds down, we're seeing fewer chinook, which is normal for this time of year," she said. Salmon fishing is scheduled to close Sept. 13 at Westport (Marine Area 2), La Push (Marine Area 3) and the inner portion of Neah Bay (Marine Area 4B). Salmon fishing is already closed in Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) and in the ocean waters off Neah Bay.

Meanwhile, the salmon fishery east of Buoy 13 in Grays Harbor (Marine Area 2-2) will be open seven days a week Sept. 16 through Nov. 30, while a portion of the La Push fishery will be open daily Sept. 20 through Oct. 5. Willapa Bay remains open for salmon fishing until Jan. 31. Anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for specific regulations in each area and details on boundaries.

Those 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.

Marine Area 6 (Port Angeles) remains open for retention of **hatchery coho**. Anglers are reminded that handling rules are in effect and that all chum, chinook and wild coho must be released.

In Puget Sound anglers are starting to see the transition from chinook to coho, said Thiesfeld. "Chinook are tapering off but mid-September is generally good for coho in Hood Canal and southern Puget Sound," he said. Thiesfeld reminded anglers that all of Hood Canal is now open for salmon fishing, but only coho may be retained north of Ayock Point.

The Puyallup River system is a popular fishing spot right now for chinook and coho, said Hal Michael, WDFW fish biologist. "There are quite a few fish and lots of effort," he said. Anglers fishing the Carbon River, which opened Sept. 1, are finding chinook while, the mainstem of the Puyallup is producing coho, Michael said. The Puyallup opened Aug. 16. Michael reminded anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for fishing and retention rules.

Low and clear water have made it tough for anglers fishing the Quillayute system on the northern Olympic Peninsula, said David Low, WDFW fish biologist. "There are **summer steelhead** and coho in the rivers, but anglers need to be careful when they're fishing in these conditions because the fish get spooked easily," Low said.

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.

Anglers on the Hoh River can keep two adult salmon as part of their six-fish daily limit, but must release all wild chinook from the Oxbow Campground boat launch to Willoughby Creek. Check the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for specific regulations throughout the region.

In addition to the Carbon River, several rivers and creeks around the region opened to salmon fishing Sept. 1, including the Copalis River, Van Winkle Creek and Joe Creek in Grays Harbor County; the Bear and Niawiakum rivers in Pacific County; McLane Creek in Thurston County and Clearwater River in Jefferson County.

Meanwhile, the **Dungeness crab** fishery remains open in marine areas 7E and 7N (east and north of the San Juan Islands) Wednesdays through Saturdays each week through Sept. 30. Three other marine areas - 4 and 5 in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and 13 in southern Puget Sound - are scheduled to remain open seven days per week through Jan. 2.

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) closed to crabbing Sept. 1.

Recreational crabbers who were licensed to fish for crab in Puget Sound are reminded that they have until Sept. 15 to report their summer's catch to WDFW - whether or not they fished or were successful in catching Dungeness crab during the season. Completed cards can be mailed in or information reported online. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/crabindex>.

Those who file their catch reports by the deadline will be entered in a drawing for one of 10 free 2009 combination fishing licenses, which allow the holder to fish for a variety of freshwater and saltwater species.

Southwest Washington:

Now that the Buoy 10 fishery is closed for the season, hundreds of Columbia River anglers have moved upriver to fish for **salmon** - including chinook - from Rocky Point/Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam. Fishing started fairly slow Sept. 1, but could pick up quickly in the days ahead if past years are any indication.

"The bite can pick up fast, because the run tends to move through that part of the river fairly quickly," said Wolf Dammers, a WDFW fish biologist. "Anglers who don't want to miss the peak of the run are advised to get a line in the water sooner rather than later."

Creel checks conducted during the second day of the fishery indicated catch rates of about one salmon - most of them chinook - for every one to two boats, Dammers said. Most boats, and there were plenty of them, were concentrated between Longview and Washougal, he said. Through Sept. 16, anglers fishing between Rocky Point and Bonneville Dam may retain two adult salmon - of which only one may be a chinook - as part of their six-salmon daily limit. After Sept. 16, only **hatchery coho** may be retained in that part of the river.

Dammers reminds anglers that all chinook must be released this year on the mainstem Columbia River in the eight-mile fall chinook sanctuary area near the mouth of the Lewis River. That area is defined on page 79 of the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Several tributaries to the Columbia River also opened for chinook fishing Labor Day. On the Elochoman River, anglers may now retain up to two adult chinook as part of their daily salmon catch limit. On the Toutle River System, which includes the North Fork Toutle and the Green River in Cowlitz County, anglers may retain one chinook per day.

Including hatchery coho, the daily catch limit on those rivers is six fish per day, of which four may be adults. Anglers may retain any adult chinook, but must release any chinook jacks not marked as a hatchery fish by a clipped adipose fin. Areas of those rivers open to retention of chinook are:

- Elochoman River from the mouth to the West Fork.
- Mainstem Toutle River from the mouth to the confluence of the North and Southfork Toutle.
- North Fork Toutle River from the mouth to the deadline below the Fish Collection Facility.
- Green River (Cowlitz County) from the mouth to the 2800 Bridge.

Salmon fishing also opened Sept. 1 on the Grays River (including the West Fork), but chinook caught there may be retained only if they have a clipped adipose and/or ventral fin. For more information on that fishery, check the *Fishing in Washington* rule pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

Anglers should also be aware of new rules adopted 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 River:** 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 on all or part of these waters, but must release any wild, unmarked chinook jacks they encounter. For specific area boundaries, see the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

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.

Eastern Washington:

Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist, said this is a great time to seek out panfish by working flies, lures or bait around the margins of weed beds in many local mixed-species fishing lakes. "Try Bonnie, Downs, Eloika and Long lakes in Spokane County for **perch, crappie and bass,**" Donley said. "Rock Lake in Whitman County has some nice bass, too."

Donley also recommended hitting Loon Lake in Stevens County and Horseshoe and Sullivan lakes in Pend Oreille County for the last of good **kokanee** fishing. "Kokanee will be spawning in October, so now's the time to catch them."

Most of the best-producing **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** lakes in the region close at the end of September, so Donley also advises taking in a trout trip or two. Amber, Badger, Williams, West Medical and Fishtrap are still producing well.

Donley reminded trout anglers that Sprague Lake is in excellent shape now, with water temperatures down, algae growth dying, water clarity good and early fall hatches of insects drawing fat rainbows to the surface.

Snake River **steelheading** just got under way Sept. 1, so there's no data on catch rates yet. But forecasts called for abundant early runs, and the mouths of tributaries like the Tucannon and Grande Ronde, and the confluence with the Clearwater on the Idaho border, are expected to be hot. 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.

North Central Washington:

Salmon fishing on the mainstem Columbia River has slowed considerably in the last week with a few catches of chinook being reported. Most of the success has been located near the Bridgeport area of the river. The fishery will remain open until Oct 15th.

Good catches of **rainbow trout** were reported for three Methow Valley lakes on the Sept. 1 opener. Davis, Campbell, and Cougar lakes are now open for catch and keep trout fishing. There is a five-fish limit and the use of bait is permitted. Anglers should be aware that when using bait the first five fish caught count as part of the daily limit whether kept or released.

During September, as the water cools down, selective gear lakes in Okanogan County will start to pick up as well. Big Twin (Winthrop) and Blue (Sinlahekin) lakes should both be good bets for rainbow up to 16 inches. Chopaka Lake above the town of Loomis should also be good for rainbow trout to 15 inches. Chopaka is a fly-fishing only lake.

Salmon are returning to the Wenatchee River system and that means it will soon be time for the 18th annual award-winning **Wenatchee River Salmon Festival** in Leavenworth. This year's event is Sept. 18 - 21, with the first two days devoted to school groups. The festival is based at the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery and features salmon and other wildlife watching at the hatchery and in the stream, plus a lot more. There are nature-related art and craft booths, "recycled" salmon sculpture, an animal costume parade, the amazing salmon maze, a Native American encampment, outdoor recreation exhibits and hands-on educational activities. Call (509) 548-6662 for more information, or see <http://www.salmonfest.org/>.

South Central Washington:

High lake **trout** fishing is excellent this month says Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist. Rainbow, westslope cutthroat and eastern brook trout generally will hit small spinners or flies, he said. 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.

Rimrock Reservoir has been providing excellent **kokanee** fishing with fish up to 10 inches, Cummins said. "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 Lake Cle Elum in the fall makes launching trailered boats 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 west slope 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," he said.

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 and spawning spring chinook salmon, such as a 10.4-mile stretch of the American River from the Hwy. 410 bridge downstream of Hells Crossing campground upstream to the Mesatchee Creek trail crossing (USFS Trail No. 969). This American River section re-opens for fishing, after the bull trout have completed spawning, on Sept. 16 for cutthroat and eastern brook trout extending through the end of the regular season on Oct 31. Check the fishing regulations pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for all details.

Reader Email -

Regarding the announced re-opening of this location, reader Melissa A. wrote this week to ask, "Where is the new parking lot located on the Sandy River Delta?"

TGF co-editor Michael Teague responded, "The parking lot isn't actually new, but has been greatly improved. Located outside of Troutdale, the parking lot allows access at the confluence of the Sandy and Columbia rivers. It now allows parking for about 100 cars as well as new restroom facilities.

"Sorry for the misunderstanding."

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

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Bear attacks B.C. man after jumping on fishing boat:

http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/cbc/080910/canada/vancouver_bc_bear_attack_port_renfrew

Map of boat ramps on the lower Willamette:

<http://www.aldercreek.com/web-resources/willamette-river-map.cfm>

Weekly Quote –

"All the romance of trout fishing exists in the mind of the angler and is in no way shared by the fish." - Harold F. Blaisdell

GOOD LUCK!