

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 24th – October 30th, 2008**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Although chinook season remains open below Bonneville Dam, effort has dropped off significantly as anglers begin to focus more effort at coastal stocks and Columbia River sturgeon. Hatchery coho are still being caught however as Troutdale boats reported 14 hatchery coho retained for 23 boats.

Coho adults and jacks are now making up the bulk of the count at Bonneville Dam. 2008 jack counts mirror those of 2000 which lead to a record return of coho adults to Bonneville Dam in 2001. Steelhead numbers have reduced to a trickle but the fishery above the John Day Dam should be getting underway soon. Trollers using plugs near the surface often intercept quality steelhead well into November.

Sturgeon anglers are still finding success in the Columbia River Gorge. Although shakers make up the bulk of the catch, 1 keeper for every 3.5 boats was tallied over the weekend while bank anglers took a keeper for every 10 rods. Anglers fishing the Willamette and Multnomah Channel are finding shakers but cooling temperatures should improve chances for keeper fish later in the fall.

Sandy River anglers are concentrated at Cedar Creek. Good numbers of coho are present but a weather change will bring fresh fish and stimulate the bite.

Anglers working the Clackamas are finding water clarity a challenge. The coho are very timid and may be more receptive to flies or jigs fished with fluorocarbon leaders in low light conditions. Adults are turning dark and the season will close on the Sandy and Clackamas on October 31st.

Northwest – Although Tillamook Bay remains a bright spot on the North Oregon coast, fishing remains poor for most. Spinners were taking a few fish in the upper bay but herring trollers working the ideal low exchange tides near the mouth fared poorly over the weekend. An absence of 4 and 5-year old fish are a clear indication of poor ocean production when these juveniles went to sea.

Despite the poor results, some large fish are being taken. Lee Garboden landed a 36-pounder in Tillamook Bay on October 20th on a plug cut herring. Several fish over 40 pounds have graced the scales.

The Nehalem is still choked with wild coho with only a rare chinook being taken. The Nestucca and Salmon Rivers remain poor and effort is dropping.

Only a few ocean fishers ventured offshore to take advantage of deep water reefs in recent weeks. They were rewarded with large lingcod however but weekend weather predictions will keep most boats inshore.

Crabbing on most coastal estuaries typically picks up this time of year. Netarts and Tillamook are producing fair catches although a large number of softshell crab seem to be in the mix. The lower Columbia River was producing limits prior to the weekend. A large Humboldt Squid die-off at the mouth of the river may have drawn interest away from sport crabbers baits.

Several razor clam diggers did well over the weekend along Clatsop Beaches. The next minus tide series will occur early next week.

Southwest – The Siuslaw had a nice showing of chinook on the recent tide series. Fair numbers of fish were taken from Tiernan to Mapleton by trollers and bobber fishermen. Coho are also making a nice show and like many other areas along the coast, anglers are mistaking large wild coho for chinook. Anglers are required to release wild coho on all coastal river systems.

Wild coho can be kept however on Siltcoos and Tahkenitch Lakes. The action is beginning to pick and should stay consistent into mid-November. Plugs and spinners take most of the fish and with good returns on other systems, this fishery may be a real draw for anglers this year.

Anglers are anxiously awaiting precipitation to get the Elk and Sixes River fisheries underway. Given the current state of adult returns to Oregon coastal systems, anglers should keep expectations in check knowing that better years are ahead.

Bottomfishers will be challenged by ocean weather for the remainder of the season. When boats can get out, fishing is good for seabass. Lingcod have been harder to entice.

The Rogue River fishery is quickly winding down but south coast anglers have been motivated to fish the Smith River south of the boarder for large chinook. Spoon casters working near the mouth have taken many fish in the 40-pound class.

Eastern – Eastern Oregon steelheaders are gearing up for a productive season. Numbers should be bountiful on the Grande Ronde, Willowa and Imnaha Rivers with only a short window to fish before ice hampers success.

Bass fishermen working the John Day River are still producing great catches in the 12 to 14-inch range. Fishing for bass should remain good in the deeper holes but this river will transition into steelhead fishing over the next few weeks. Steelhead are present at Rock Creek but action at Clarno should begin to pick up by mid-November.

SW Washington – Fishery managers recently upgraded the late run coho run from 68,000 fish to 200,000. This bodes well for district anglers and daily limits have been increased on many river systems.

The Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis and Elochoman are the best options but the Klickitat River near the mouth is also producing nicely for spinner fishermen. These fisheries are just now beginning to peak and should remain a strong option into November.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With salmon on the way out, most anglers are beginning to focus their efforts on sturgeon. October and early November are usually peak months for keeper sturgeon in the gorge and catches are reflecting that although the action seems to have already tapered off. Boats are still taking fair numbers of keepers with bank anglers taking a keeper for every 10 rods. Smelt and sandshrimp are top baits and although either is working as a stand-alone bait, the combination of the two is a sure hit. Some anglers have also gone to anchovies with some success.

Sturgeon anglers working downstream of the mouth of the Willamette are also finding a few keepers and steady shaker action. Smelt is the key bait in this area and migrating keepers can be picked off on their way to the warmer waters of the Willamette for the winter months.

A select few salmon fishers are still taking fair numbers of quality coho in the mainstem Columbia. These fish are large and hitting spinners from Troutdale downstream including the mouths of some SW Washington tributaries. This fishery can oftentimes last into mid-November and given the recent run size upgrade, there should still be some good fishing ahead.

Crabbing is high on the minds of many Columbia River anglers this time of year and the good action was off to a great start several weeks ago. With the exception of a slight slow-down over the weekend, crabbing here has been easy limits. A large die-off of Humboldt squid was reported off of the mouth of the Columbia which may have focused hungry crab on an easy food source.

The Guide's Forecast – Sturgeon fishing should remain a strong option for anglers in the Columbia River Gorge. Stick in the faster flows (if you can find them) for the best keeper action. That means fish close to the deadline and although you'll still need to employ safe anchoring techniques, you'll get away with using light lead in pursuit of these fish. There are still some oversized fish coming from this area so prepare yourselves for battle with these fish if you incidentally hook one.

Salmon anglers should focus their efforts on coho rather than the spent Chinook that are in the area. Troll the sandbars just downstream of the gorge using spinners on or near the bottom of the river. The mouths of the Sandy and open SW Washington tributaries will also be a prime target given that most of these late fish are destined for these watersheds.

Moderate morning tides this week should produce good results for lower Columbia River crabbers. The freshest bait gets the best results and hopefully the results will improve from last weekends odd downturn in success.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – With the Willamette Falls counts updated online this week, it is apparent that the coho and summer steelhead passage is well into wind-down. Sturgeon fishing remains slow for keepers. Steelhead are being caught on the upper Willamette below Dexter Reservoir.

The Marine Board has approved new rules for the Willamette River. Starting January 1st, 2009, boats are subject to a slow-no-wake maximum 5 miles an hour speed limit within 100 feet of private docks, boathouses or moorages from the Highway 219 bridge at River Mile 48.5 to the upper end of Willow Island at River Mile 31.5. Further, as of 2010, no wake-enhancing devices will be allowed in this area. Good on them.

Boat fishers have a distinct advantage over bank anglers on the lower McKenzie as water release from upstream reservoirs in anticipation of winter rains has the river level far higher than normal. McKenzie fly-rodders continue to enjoy fine fishing with October caddis hatching in good number.

There are good numbers of summer steelhead in the North Santiam given the poor run this year but getting them out of the high water is a challenge.

The Guide's Forecast – For catch-and-release action on Multomah Channel for undersized sturgeon, try the deeper water in Multnomah Channel. Try the Middle Fork Willamette below Hills Creek Reservoir if boat fishing and above if banking it. Attractor patters will result in decent action with trout at this time of year.

High water won't hamper catches on the McKenzie as fishing is expected to be very good through the rest of October. Expect to find brown and October caddis in abundance along with mahogany duns. Egg

patterns will take late summer steelhead around Dexter Reservoir.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Fishing has been slow on the Clack with many of the coho present getting dark. There were no fish showing at the Bowling Alley Hole on Wednesday this week. Rainfall last week was followed by a flurry of coho activity and catches below Eagle Creek on the Clackamas. Let's hope the same occurs following precipitation Monday this week.

The Sandy River has been producing coho but many of them are turning dark. Rain would bring some fresh silvers in, but there's no precipitation in long-range forecast. Fly anglers throwing dark-colored nymphs have been most consistent in hooking up with coho in the clear waters here.

North Coast Fishing Report – Most NW Oregon anglers are still looking for Tillamook Bay to produce the results "peak season" often brings to the area this time of year. Most anglers are going home disappointed. Effort continues to drop but Tillamook Bay remains the major destination for those looking for a large fall Chinook this time of year. There have been some large fish recorded throughout the season and we finally got one over 25 pounds- a 36-pounder in fact, landed by Lee Garboden from the Beaverton area. The fish took a plug cut herring in the middle of Tillamook Bay on 10-20. Lee lost another one in the same area just an hour before getting this one.

Surprisingly, the middle and upper bay has been one of the more productive spots during these tough times. Even with the wimpy tides that we are experiencing, the biters seem to be coming from the middle and upper bay. Traditionally, the lower bay, along the jetty, produces the best results on these holdover tides. The jetty and ocean has been relatively poor although a rare fish is being taken in each location. The ocean has been rough lately and bar restrictions are common so check the local radio station or call Coast Guard Station Tillamook Bay at (503) 322-3531 for an updated report.

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) has been doing consistently well on Fatal Flash spinner blades. The chartreuse/green dot spinner has been his most productive but brass/green combinations have been working well too. I have been using herring for most of my trips and it seems pretty clear to me that spinners have had a slight edge over bait recently but that can change day to day.

As previously mentioned, the upper bay has been producing fair at best fishing with the Oyster House Hole, the picket fence and the corral (Ray's Place Piling) some of the more consistent producers. The south channel remains barren of Chinook but there are quite a few coho present but they are all wild. I don't know of a hatchery fish for several weeks now.

Other NW estuaries are reporting even poorer results. The Nehalem is still littered with wild coho (which is a good thing but not for consumptive anglers) and the Nestucca and Salmon Rivers are coming in low on the radar. **Pro guide Jesse Zalonis (503-392-5808)** is reporting poor fishing on most of the Nestucca.

Crabbing has dropped off in Tillamook and Netarts Bay but keepers are still available. Just don't expect limits and quality hard shells seem hard to come by. I crabbed solo on 10/22 with great bait and good tides. 3 hours of effort yielded 2 keepers.

The Guide's Forecast – Although we've historically seen good catches of Chinook on Tillamook come the last week of October and the first week of November, given the current success in the month of October, I wouldn't expect great results for this time of year. The Tillamook fishery was a bust last year at this time and it's becoming quite clear that we've had back-to-back years of poor ocean productivity when these juveniles went to sea 4 and 5 years ago.

The tide series will start to improve for in-bay fishing this week and traditionally, the Wilson and Kilchis fish begin to make a show. This makes for productive fishing along the east side of the bay; particularly the Ghost Hole and Bay City piling. Some fish will inevitably creep their way up the bay, most likely destined for the Trask River. Mid-bay fishing may still be the best option.

Unfortunately, with the strong tides, come plentiful seaweed and this should be the case for most of the week. We haven't had that gully-washer of fresh water to retard seaweed growth so there is still a lot of it floating around Tillamook Bay, Nehalem is almost void of it but it is also void of viable populations of fall Chinook. Don't expect much from the Nestucca either.

Crabbing will likely remain challenging and softshells will likely continue to dominate the catch. Tillamook Bay and Netarts will remain the best options but if you are serious about your crabbing, you'd better consider the lower Columbia River for your best chances.

Razor clam diggers will also have some good tides to work with beginning early next week. If the surf stays down, good digging will occur in the surf but some diggers are reporting the best digging higher on the sands.

Although a big swell is forecasted through the weekend, large lingcod are available on offshore reefs that are traditionally closed during the summer months. Watch for opportunities before consistent winter weather brings big seas to our coastline.

Central & South Coast Reports – With Chinook catches slow from the Siletz to the California border, anglers are hoping that our dilemma is similar to that in Washington state where the run was nearly a month late. Anglers are an optimistic lot and as such, we'd like to think this theory proves true.

With 37% of the nearshore halibut quota remaining, this fishery should continue through October. While fishing has been fair to good inside the 40-fathom line, effort for halibut has been low.

Mussel harvesting is closed coast-wide due to paralytic shellfish poisoning, a naturally-occurring toxin which is just as bad as it sounds.

When the ocean has cooperated, rockfish catches have been excellent out of Depoe Bay and they are as large as you'll find at this time of year. As a bonus, great fishing can be found just a few miles out of port.

Yaquina River trollers have experienced poor results for Chinook this season. Crabbing is fair to good in the bay.

Crabbing is good out of Waldport. Trollers at the Alsea have experienced very slow fishing this season. One or two fish per day for all trying has been the report over the past week. The occasional Chinook has been caught in the jaws of Alsea Bay, but use caution in this area and fish only the last half of incoming tide. Fishing is allowed up to Five Rivers but not above nor within that river this year.

Trollers in the lower Umpqua have caught Chinook to 50 pounds over the past week but the time has come to move upriver with the fish although the main catches there have been wild coho. The better fishing is around Elkton where steelhead, Chinook and jacks have been taken recently. Smallmouth bass fishing in the mainstem is nearly over with the water getting too cool for decent fishing. North Umpqua steelheaders are doing fairly well in the flies-only stretch where spinning tackle may be used in conjunction with a plastic bubble to throw flies as long as no additional weight is employed. The South Umpqua remains closed at this time.

Limits of crab are being harvested out of Florence. Siuslaw tidewater has been productive for a couple of weeks and continues to be productive for Dungeness.

Trollers on Siltcoos Lake have seen an improvement in the action for coho here. Rain would improve the situation dramatically but it's looking like a decent year for both the Siltcoos and Tahkenich fisheries.

Fishing on the Coos has slowed and it may be over in tidewater for Chinook this season. Since fishing above tidewater isn't allowed, there is no option here. Crabbing has been excellent in Coos Bay. Charleston crabbers are making good catches even off the docks.

Trollers are back-bouncers have actually seen some improvement over the past week in the lower Coquille. Crabbing has been fair to good in Coos Bay although sorting of softshells is still required.

Pinch the foremost leg of the Dungeness near the body to determine if the crab is suitable for the table. If there's any give, the meat will be sparse and watery.

Insufficient rain has fallen to get the Elk River Chinook fishing underway, but it won't be long.

The water level is low at the Rogue River and that condition has slowed fishing river-wide. Few boaters are even trying now in Rogue Bay where catches of Chinook and coho have fallen off. The lower river hotspot (which is actually only lukewarm) is the mouth of Indian Creek where Chinook have gathered in anticipation of a freshet to allow the trip upstream to the hatchery on that tributary. A few coho are being taken near Agness but most are of non-hatchery origin. Adult and half-pounder steelhead fishing is fair to good in Rogue Canyon but slows up into the Grants Pass stretch. Upper Rogue steelheading is slow in low, cold water there.

Bottom fishing out of the Port of Brookings has produced limits of Rockfish. Ling cod have been challenging in all but the best ocean conditions. Forecasts indicate a rough bar and ocean this coming weekend. Anglers are anxiously anticipating the Chinook opener on the Chetco River November 1st but are hoping for an increase in level and flows. Currently, the river is only flowing at only 100 cfs. Waters are jammed with jacks but adult fish are also evident at times.

The Smith River just across the border into California has been fishing well for Chinook. It's just a 10 minute trip from Brookings. Spoons have been effective recently.

Diamond Lake has continued to deliver large, fat trout averaging 16 inches but 20 inchers are not unusual. PowerBait fished at the south end is producing the better catches over trolling or fly fishing. As a bonus, due to the abundant natural feed available and unlike most stocked trout, these fish are great table fare. Take advantage of this fishery soon as this fishery closes on November 1st.

Bradley Lake, Upper and Lower Empire Lake, Powers Pond and Saunders Lake are scheduled to

be planted with hatchery trout.

Central and Eastern Oregon – While trout fishing is of less interest at this time of year on the Deschutes, steelheading is near the peak of the season with 'B'-run fish in the mix. Fly anglers have been hooking up with summer steelhead while drifting nymphs. October caddis are out in force and with pressure way down, trout are responding. Tribal lands on the Deschutes close at the end of October.

While some Cascade lakes are open year-around, many will close at the end of October, so this weekend will be the last chance for anglers to hit these waters for the last time this year.

Bull trout are being caught at the Metolius but as always, this river will challenge anyone's skill.

Bright red plugs are picking up coho at the John Day River. Steelhead will be caught in here starting in November. While considered early in the year for steelhead on the John Day River, there are good numbers present. Over 10,000 crossed John Day Dam on November 24th, with passage dwindling since. Fishing will remain worthwhile here through November.

Northwest Trout - While the water is quite low for the impoundment to serve as flood control, Henry Hagg Lake is fishing very well for trout to 16 inches now. The lake will be open through the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report October 15th – October 28th, 2008

North Puget Sound

The region's salmon fisheries continue to be slow for freshwater and saltwater anglers. But the bite could pick up as the **chum** run makes its way into Puget Sound and the region's **blackmouth** season gets into full swing.

"It's been a tough year for anglers fishing for chinook and coho in the region," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "Salmon fishing, however, could improve in the next few weeks as **chum** move into northern and central Sound and opportunities to hook **blackmouth** increase."

Anglers fishing for blackmouth in Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), can keep one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit. Blackmouth - resident chinook - fishing opportunities expand Oct. 16, when anglers in Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) also will be allowed to keep one chinook as part of that area's daily limit of two salmon.

Those fishing for chum salmon may want to get out on the water sooner than later, said Thiesfeld. "In the past, the chum return usually peaks in late October and early November," Thiesfeld said. "But this year, anglers are already catching some chum salmon."

The area around Point No Point (north end of the Kitsap Peninsula) and Possession Bar (southern portion of Whidbey Island) is often a hot spot for chum salmon, Thiesfeld said. Anglers fishing

that area, or other waters of Marine Area 9, (Admiralty Inlet) have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers that portions of marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) are open for salmon fishing. Salmon fishing in Marine Area 8-1 is restricted to Oak Harbor, west of a line from Forbes Point to Blowers Bluff. Anglers fishing Oak Harbor have a daily limit of two **coho** only.

In Marine Area 8-2, salmon fishing is limited to the south end of the area, south of a line from Randall Point to the south end of the Everett Naval Station dock. Anglers in that area have a two salmon daily limit, but must release chinook.

In the freshwater, there have been reports of anglers catching some chum - as well as a few coho - in the Skykomish and Snohomish rivers. But, overall, salmon fishing in the region's rivers continues to be slow.

Meanwhile, salmon fishing opportunities continue at Lake Sammamish and Lake Washington. Anglers fishing Lake Sammamish have a daily limit of four salmon measuring at least 12 inches. Anglers can keep up to two **chinook** but must release all sockeye, and salmon fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. At Lake Washington, only a couple of weeks remain in the salmon fishery, which wraps up at the end of October. Before the fishery closes, anglers are 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

Salmon anglers are making the transition from **coho** to **blackmouth** and **chum** , as more waters open to fishing for those species around the region. Meanwhile, the first **razor-clam** dig of the fall season starts Oct. 16.

Three evening **razor-clam** digs are scheduled at Twin Harbors, Copalis and Mocrocks Oct. 16-18, while Long Beach is scheduled for two evening digs Oct. 17 and 18. Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager, recommends clam diggers take lights or lanterns with them because low tides for digging will occur later in the evening. He also recommended checking weather and surf forecasts before heading out.

Digging will be restricted to the hours between noon and midnight. Harvesters are allowed to take no more than 15 razor clams and must keep the first 15 they dig, regardless of size or condition. Each digger's clams must be kept in a separate container.

A license is required for anyone age 15 or older. Any 2008 annual shellfish/seaweed license or combination fishing license is still valid. Another option is a razor-clam only license available in annual or three-day only versions. Descriptions of the various licensing options are available on the WDFW website at <http://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov> . Clam diggers are not required to display their licenses on outer clothing.

Opening dates and evening low tides are:

- Thursday, Oct. 16 (8:30 p.m. -1.5) Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks
- Friday, Oct. 17 (9:17 p.m. -1.5) Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks

- Saturday, Oct. 18 (10:08 p.m. -1.2) Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks

More digs are tentatively scheduled Nov. 13-16 and Dec. 11-13.

Ayres said Kalaloch Beach in Olympic National Park would be closed at least until spring 2009 because the clam population there remains low. "However, there is a population of small clams that may grow to harvestable size by spring," Ayres said. Kalaloch was closed for the entire 2007-08 season.

Anglers looking for salmon fishing opportunities should get their rods ready for **chum** and **blackmouth**, as the coho season tails off, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. Chum season usually peaks in late October and November as the fish move from northern Puget Sound into bays and rivers, but this year may be different, Thiesfeld said. "Many other salmon runs were early this year and tests show that chum may also be early."

Thiesfeld suggests anglers try fishing Kennedy Creek in Thurston County and the waters around Hoodsport in Hood Canal, which opens for chum and blackmouth retention Oct. 16. In addition, the Skokomish Rivers just south of Hoodsport has been producing a fair number of **coho salmon**, he said. While chum may be retained after Oct. 15, no chinook retention is allowed on the river.

On Nov. 1 the Dosewallips and Duckabush rivers in Jefferson County, and Minter Creek in Pierce/Kitsap counties will also open for chum retention.

In Marine Area 11, anglers launching from the Point Defiance Boathouse have had some success catching **blackmouth** even though the season's been disappointing for most anglers, Thiesfeld said. "This year, fish are mainly being caught by these experienced anglers who know the area, otherwise it's been pretty tough." Creel checks over the Oct. 11-12 weekend showed 17 anglers caught nine fish. Anglers fishing in Marine Area 11 may retain wild chinook as part of their two-fish daily limit.

Along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the salmon season ends Oct. 31 in Marine Area 6 (Port Angeles), but a new blackmouth fishery starts Nov. 1 in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu). Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) also opens for chum and blackmouth Oct. 16.

Farther south, fishing on the Chehalis River has been slow lately, but a flush of rain could change that in a hurry, said Scott Barbour, WDFW fish biologist. "Some rain would bring more fish in and get them moving up into the Satsop and Wynoochee rivers as well," Barbour said. He reminded anglers that starting Oct. 16 only hatchery coho may be retained.

The same is true for other area rivers including the Elk, Humptulips, Johns, Satsop and Wishkah rivers in Grays Harbor County; Kennedy Creek in Thurston County and the Nemah River in Pacific County. Barbour advises anglers to check WDFW's 2008/2009 Fishing in Washington pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for details on boundaries and regulations.

Oct. 16 also marks the start of fall fishing in a number of area rivers, including a portion of the Dungeness River in Clallam County, which opens for **trout** and **coho** salmon. A section of the Hoh River from Willoughby Creek to Morgan's Crossing boat launch also opens for salmon fishing that day. In Pacific County, anglers can start fishing for salmon on the Willapa River from the Highway 6 Bridge to Fork Creek and from the Hwy 4 Bridge to the Salme Bridge on the Naselle River. Anglers are advised to check WDFW's 2008/2009 Fishing in Washington pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for details before fishing these waters.

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

For a change of pace, anglers may want to venture out some evening and try jigging for **squid**, which generally make their way through Puget Sound in fall and winter, said Greg Bargmann, WDFW marine ecosystem manager. "We're heading into the peak of the fishery and Puget Sound has some good piers to fish from," Bargmann said. Locations include the Les Davis Pier in Tacoma as well as the Elliott Bay pier in Seattle. Squid fishing is open year-round with a daily limit of five quarts or 10 pounds. Legal gear is a baitfish jig, a maximum of four squid lures, a herring rake or a hand dip net. Each angler must have a separate container. Squid fishing is closed in Hood Canal (Marine Area 12). More information on squid fishing is available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/squid/index.htm>. Information on fishing piers is available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/piers/>.

Southwest Washington:

One in 3.6 boat anglers fishing the Columbia River Gorge upriver from Camas have been taking home legal-size **sturgeon** in recent days. Then again, **hatchery coho salmon** have also been drawing a lot of attention as their numbers mount above and below Bonneville Dam.

"This is prime time for sturgeon fishing below the dam," said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. "Sturgeon really tie on the feedbag at this time of year, as the water cools and they prepare for their dormant phase. People are catching some nice, legal-size fish."

Although boat anglers still have the edge, bank anglers fishing just below Bonneville Dam averaged a legal-size sturgeon for every 11 rods in a creel survey conducted in mid-October. Squid, sand shrimp, smelt, anchovies and night crawlers all work well as bait, Hymer said.

Meanwhile, **coho salmon** are moving into Columbia Basin tributaries in far greater numbers than expected. Fishery managers recently raised their annual run projection for late-run coho to 200,000 fish - a big increase from the 68,000-fish pre-season estimate. Counts at Bonneville Dam have increased steadily in recent weeks, now ranging between 2,000 and 4,000 a day.

Some of the best fishing has been on the lower and upper Cowlitz River, where the limit is six hatchery adults per day. Anglers have been doing well on the lower river at the barrier dam, Blue Creek and all the way down to the mouth of the river. The Kalama and Lewis rivers, where the catch limit is four hatchery adult coho per day, have also been thick with fish. The limit is also four adults per day on the Elochoman River below the Highway 4 Bridge, and two fish per day on the Washougal and Klickitat rivers - all good bets for hatchery coho.

But getting hatchery coho to bite can be tricky, Hymer said. "If you're on the water at the right time, it's possible to get your limit," he said. "But other times, especially after a heavy rain, they'll just barrel up the river without paying any attention to what gear you throw at them." Hymer reminds anglers that all wild coho with an intact adipose caught downstream from the Hood River Bridge must be released.

In the mainstem Columbia River, most fishing for hatchery coho below Bonneville Dam has been concentrated around Lady Island in the Camas/Washougal area. Above Bonneville, the mouth of the Klickitat River remains a popular spot, drawing 42 boats on a recent Sunday morning. Anglers have been averaging about one coho per boat, catching chrome-bright fish weighing up to 20 pounds. Any coho, adipose clipped or not, may be retained in the Klickitat and at its mouth since the area is above the Hood River Bridge. Oct. 15 is the last day for night closures and

restrictions on non-buoyant lures in the Bonneville Pool. Drano Lake remains closed to fishing on Wednesdays during October.

If the coho aren't biting, Hymer suggests that anglers fishing the Cowlitz River consider shifting gears. "There's a dark black cloud of **sea-run cutthroat** pooling right below the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery right now," he said. "Those fish average about 14 inches long, and can really brighten up an afternoon, readily taking flies, lures, or bait." Anglers are required to release any wild, unmarked cutts they catch, but the vast majority of those below the trout hatchery are marked with a clipped adipose fin, Hymer said. "It may be the only hatchery run of cutthroat in the state," he said, noting that the trout limit is five fish per day with a minimum length of 12 inches.

Swift Reservoir is another good option for trout. In May, WDFW planted 60,000 catchable-size **rainbows** into the reservoir, and those that eluded anglers' hooks should measure about 13 inches long by now, Hymer said. For best results, Hymer recommends that boat anglers fish the upper end of the reservoir in water less than 40 feet deep and troll a 2-ounce weight and pop gear followed by lures or bait.

Eastern Washington:

WDFW southeast district fish biologist Glen Mendel of Dayton reminds anglers that the special **fall chinook salmon** fishing season in the Snake River near Little Goose Dam closes Oct 15. "Fishing has been very slow, and most anglers have given up on trying to catch a fall chinook," Mendel said. "We estimate about a dozen fall chinook have been caught so far. The tail of the run is still passing through, but most of the fall chinook that will pass through the Little Goose area have already done so. The **steelhead** catch rate in this area also has been slow."

Mendel noted, however, that steelhead fishing farther upstream on the Snake River near the mouths of the Clearwater and Grand Ronde rivers remains good.

Many **trout** -stocked lakes in the region close to fishing Oct. 31. Mendel recommends that anglers take advantage of these last weeks of fishing at the Tucannon River impoundments in Columbia County - Beaver, Big Four, Blue, Deer, Rainbow, Spring and Watson lakes. Blue Lake recently received over 500 quarter-pound rainbow trout from the Tucannon Fish Hatchery.

WDFW northeast district fish biologist Bill Baker says some of the best fishing of the year can be found in these last weeks of the season at many trout waters, including Ferry County's Davis, Ellen, and Swan; Stevens County's Bayley, Black, Cedar, Deep, Deer, Jump-Off-Joe, Little Pend Oreille chain of lakes, Loon, McDowell, Mudget, Rocky, and Starvation; and Pend Oreille County's Browns, Crescent, Davis, Diamond, Frater, Halfmoon, Horseshoe, Leo, Marshall, Mystic, Nile, No-Name, Petit, Sacheen, Skookum and Yokum.

Spokane County's Chapman, Clear, and Liberty lakes also close at the end of October. Amber Lake remains open for catch-and-release-only fishing through November. Close to Spokane, several year-round lakes remain good bets for trout and other fish species, including Eloika, Long, Newman, Silver, and Sprague.

North Central Washington:

Steelhead fishing in the Upper Columbia River and tributaries above Wells Dam has yielded mixed results since the Oct. 4 opener, said Bob Jateff, WDFW district fish biologist in Omak. "The mainstem fishery has been the best with both shore and boat anglers picking up steelhead in the 4- to 10-pound range," he said. "Anglers do need to be aware of a new hook restriction on the mainstem Columbia River this year, with selective gear rules - use only a single barbless hook, although bait is allowed."

In the Methow River, Jateff said fishing has been slow for both hardware and fly anglers. Single barbless hooks with no bait allowed is mandatory for the Methow. "We strongly encourage anglers to retain the first two adipose-fin-clipped steelhead caught in order to allow a higher percentage of natural-origin fish on the spawning grounds," he said.

Fishing has been spotty on the Okanogan River, Jateff said, with a few fish reportedly caught below Malott. Selective gear rules are also in effect on the Okanogan, with no bait allowed.

"Anglers can find good fishing for trout this time of year at Okanogan County lakes that are open until Oct. 31," Jateff said. "Big Twin near Winthrop and Blue near Sinlahekin are both selective gear rule waters and can provide good fishing for rainbow trout in the 14- to 18-inch range." Chopaka and Aeneas, which are fly fishing only lakes should also be good for rainbows up to 16 inches, he said. At Aeneas Lake, anglers can also catch larger triploid trout up to 18 inches. "Patterson Lake near Winthrop continues to provide good catches of yellow perch and anglers there are encouraged to retain as many perch as possible in an effort to balance the existing population," Jateff said.

Anglers do need to be aware that the **salmon** season will end one hour after sunset on Oct. 15 for the mainstem Columbia River from the Highway 173 Bridge in Brewster to the Highway 17 Bridge in Bridgeport, including the Okanogan River from the mouth to the first Highway 97 Bridge upstream. Salmon fishing gear rules have also been changed to reflect current rule restrictions for steelhead on the mainstem Columbia.

Lake Chelan re-opened for **hatchery-reared landlocked chinook salmon** fishing Oct. 15 through Feb. 8, 2009. All of Lake Chelan, except within 400 feet of the mouths of all tributaries, is open. Anglers can keep up to two fish measuring at least 15 inches daily. Art Viola, WDFW district fish biologist, said the re-opening is possible because efforts to provide a salmon fishery based on hatchery-reared triploid summer chinook stocking have been successful. No catch record card is needed. Landlocked summer chinook are not listed or protected under the Endangered Species Act.

South Central Washington:

Yakima River **fall chinook salmon** fishing effort and catch has been dropping, reports Paul Hoffarth, WDFW district fish biologist from Pasco. "From our last creel check, anglers averaged one salmon for every 12 hours of fishing," he said. An estimated 101 adult fall chinook, seven chinook jacks, 14 adult coho, and four coho jacks were harvested the week ending Oct. 12. The middle section of the river, from Benton City to Prosser, has been the most popular. Harvest since the season began Sept. 1 is estimated at 374 chinook (345 adults and 29 jacks) and 69 coho (29 adults and 40 jacks). The fall chinook fishery in the lower Yakima River remains open through Oct. 22.

Hoffarth also noted that fall fishing for **walleye** can be terrific on the Columbia River below McNary Dam - an area that regularly has good catch rates through October.

Eric Anderson, WDFW fish biologist from Yakima, reminds **trout** anglers that many catchable-size trout are planted in Yakima and Kittitas counties' year-round lakes in the fall.

"Although these fish are smaller than our spring planted trout they still provide good angling opportunity in our year-round lakes," Anderson said. "Some of these fish carry over through the winter to a larger size in the lake without tying up valuable rearing space in the hatchery."

Reader Email -

Subscriber Roger K. wrote to ask, "Read your comments in recent report on fishing at Siltcoos and Takenitch for Cohos using plugs. Never done it.. familiar with their locations. Can you give me a contact at a sporting goods store or another phone number I can call for questions such as launch sites on each lake; lures to use.. bait, tide issues if any.. etc. I would appreciate it. Roger"

TGF co-editor and pro guide Bob Rees responded, "Roger, a friend gave me this info:

"He should contact The Sportsman, ask for Bill Pinkney.

"And I looked up the number there: (541) 997-3336

"Good luck!"

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

Effects of Barometric Pressure on Fishing:

<http://www.quickoneplus.com/fish/articles/page.asp?page=barometric>

Weekly Quote – "Se non è vero, è ben trovato.

Even if it's not true, it makes a good story." - Unknown

GOOD LUCK!