

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 19th – June 25th, 2009**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Summer Chinook fishing on the mainstem Columbia opens up on Monday with expectations running high as good numbers of chinook continue to cross Bonneville Dam. Number 4 and 5 spinners take the majority of fish in this fishery with an occasional summer steelhead intercepted. Another minus tide begins on Friday where beach plunkers are likely to intercept shore-hugging steelhead.

Oversized sturgeon fishing is sporadic as broodstock are now gorging themselves on plentiful shad. Ironically, shad fishing is also sporadic despite strong numbers still passing the dam.

The Willamette is up to 63 degrees at the Falls. Daily counts of spring chinook are dwindling while summer steelhead counts are steady. Nearly 20,000 springers and about 8,000 summers have been counted so far this season. Shad fishing is good at Oregon City, still slow at Coon Island.

Trout anglers are doing well on the McKenzie with catch-and-keep for fin-clipped fish good from Blue River to Belinger.

Fishing on the Clackamas has been slow.

Catches have been spotty for springers and summer steelhead on the Sandy but they're landing a few. Trollers at the mouth are not finding much action.

The North Santiam is producing summer steelhead and spring chinook with sand shrimp most effective. South Santiam fishing is very slow.

Scheduled for trout planting are Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Silver Creek Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Timothy Meadows, Alton Baker Canal, Breitenbush River, Clear Lake (Linn County), Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Santiam River above Detroit and Trail Bridge Reservoir.

Northwest – Estuary sturgeon fishing has only been fair with the best action taking place above the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Keepers are responding well to anchovies but sandshrimp are still effective. Softer tides have had a effect on success rates this week.

Calm seas should allow offshore anglers to pursue bottomfish out of northern ports this weekend. The ocean coho season will open up on Saturday for ports south of Cape Falcon (Manzanita). Signs point to a productive season with a rare opportunity for anglers to harvest 3 coho per day.

Spring chinook are still available on Tillamook Bay with fair catches coming from the jetty on the soft tide series this week. Stronger tides should make the upper bay a better option by the weekend. There have also been some catches of sturgeon in the bay recently.

A good shot of salmon came through Pacific City on the Nestucca River early this week with tidewater anglers catching fair numbers. Three Rivers is also producing chinook and should be fair through the month.

Crabbing in most north coast estuaries is poor with a large portion of the crabs in a softshell state.

Cape Mears Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Hebo Lake, Lost Lake (Clatsop County) and Town Lake are scheduled to be stocked with trout.

Southwest – Anglers are rightfully excited about the offshore coho fishing season which opens Saturday, June 20th from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain. With a quota of 110,000 fish and a bag limit of three hatchery coho per day, their excitement is justified.

The Mainstem Umpqua is producing springers but there are some dark fish in the mix. While still few in number, bright summer steelhead are showing at the hatchery on the Umpqua. Sturgeon fishing has been fair in the estuary.

Coho should be available in good numbers for the opener as a couple have been hooked off the jetty at Charleston.

Early morning minus tides will provide some clamming opportunities and should improve sturgeon fishing in the estuaries.

Boats launching out of Gold Beach have had a heyday with rockfish and ling cod, a few of the latter are running over 40 pounds. Offshore crabbing has shown some improvement. Holy Water has been fishing well with salmon flies hatching.

Warm weather has spurred the midge hatch and improved the bite at Diamond Lake. All manners of techniques are catching large trout here.

With the ocean remaining friendly over the past week, anglers launching out of the Port of Brookings are enjoying stellar fishing for rockfish and making good catches of ling cod. Unfortunately, wind and waves are predicted to come up during the coming weekend. Coho are just over a mile offshore so optimism is high for the opener June 20th - if boats can get to them. Surf fishing continues to provide limits of jumbo pinkfin perch.

Rogue above Lost Creek is scheduled for trout planting.

Eastern – The Deschutes continues to fish well for reddsides from Trout Creek to Maupin. The best hatches of Golden Stones and salmon flies are occurring upstream of trout creek.

Fishing at Davis Lake has been fair to good for largemouth running two to five pounds.

SW Washington – The Cowlitz River is coming into shape in time for summer steelhead. Chinook counts for district rivers are down with exception on this river. Jack counts indicate better times ahead.

The Lewis River is producing fair numbers of steelhead to plug pullers and more fish should enter in the coming weeks.

Anglers are taking chinook in the Wind River but the season is winding down. Boat effort at the mouth as well as Drano Lake is fading.

The Klickitat River produced good catches of chinook and steelhead last week and should continue to do so until the water dirties from glacial siltation.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Sturgeon fishing on the lower Columbia continues to disappoint anglers in the Astoria area. It seems higher effort exacerbates the low catch rates for some reason. Effort remains strong with the best catches coming from upstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge. The water upstream of Tongue Point produced fair catches during the last strong tide series but has waned since. With the current weak tide series we were on at mid-week, some of the better catches were coming from the stretch between Tongue Point and the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Some quality keepers have been taken. Tom Bonk of Keizer landed a 44-inch keeper on sand shrimp just below the bridge on Monday in 4 feet of water.

The fish seem to be present but not so willing to bite. I switched over to using more anchovies in recent days and have found the fish to be more responsive to the baitfish over sand shrimp in water deeper than 8 feet. With the weak tide exchanges, fish have been biting very tentatively making for some frustrating fishing. We're clearly identifying sturgeon on the move in the deeper water but we have been going shallow to get the feeders. It seems the shallower the water you can find to fish in, the more productive it is for keepers. I have been targeting ledges, finding good numbers of fish in the 18 to 22 foot slots and then anchoring on the upstream or downstream sides of those channels and getting quality fish to come up to feed on our baits. This has been an effective method lately.

The deep water in front of Astoria and the green line across from the Skipanon River mouth has not been producing consistent results. I really have no answer as to why the fish in the deep water aren't feeding so well.

Even though steelhead season opened up on the 12th, tides were not right for plunkers to work the beaches with any success. That will change this weekend however (see the forecast section). Pro guide Frank Russum did help land his people a keeper steelhead on Saturday however plunking a sand shrimp on the bottom for sturgeon. It was only about 6 pounds.

In the gorge, sturgeon fishing got a bit tougher this week, likely due to the glut of shad now available in the gorge. Shad fishing got more challenging for those seeking bait for the oversize fish even though tens of thousands are still bypassing the dam. Just over 1 million fish have passed Bonneville to date.

Summer Chinook season opens up on Monday. See more details in the forecast section of this newsletter.

The Guide's Forecast – Although I feel it's pretty hard to predict how this sturgeon season will go, stronger tides this weekend should make for some better sturgeon fishing in the estuary. Tides begin to improve over the weekend and with the higher tide exchanges should come more aggressive biters. It's likely the more productive water will continue to be upstream of the Astoria Bridge but anglers are reporting more ocean fish recently indicating that more fresh fish may come into the estuary this week.

If history repeats itself this week, look for good action in the shallower water on the sand flats. Shrimp and anchovies should both work well and if you plan on fishing out of Hammond, bring lots of bait if you fish the deep water. The crabs are a problem.

Improving tides should push more fish into the water above Tongue Point and improve action in that stretch altogether. The stronger the current, the more aggressive and more frequent the bites will come. Don't be afraid to target keepers in 2 to 3 foot of water, especially if you graph sturgeon in adjacent deeper waters to where you are fishing.

The minus tide series coupled with improving passage at Bonneville should trigger some decent steelhead fishing along the Columbia's lower river beaches. Although we're still weeks away from

peak season, water temperatures and run timing should make for some interesting opportunities this weekend and into next week. Don't fish too far from shore as these fish hug the shoreline in the faster flows. Hot colored spin-n-glos have great history while pursuing these fish and there's no reason this should change. Scent would be a strong suggestion when plunking; the only technique we use where the fish has to come to you in order to draw a strike. View a river atlas to find possible beaches to plunk off of with steep sloped beaches around Rainier, Westport and Sauvies Island current favorites.

The summer Chinook season will get underway beginning on Monday. Passage at Bonneville is still promising and anglers are experienced enough these days that we should see some pretty impressive catches on opening day. Spinners take the lion's share of the catch in the gorge although an occasional salmon is intercepted by plunkers targeting steelhead. For the most part, these fish are deeper running making boats the primary tool for success.

Bonneville will likely produce the best results for anchor anglers using colored and metallic spinners. Adults will clearly travel in defined lanes once they enter the swift water of the gorge so anchoring is key and frequently, the travel lanes change daily based on flows coming from upriver. Opening day is likely to be one of the better days and action may gradually taper as the short season wears on.

Oversize fishers will likely also see effort dwindle and with shad becoming harder to catch, success rates may also fall slightly. The sturgeon are also gorging themselves with the plentiful food supply so anglers will become more challenged in the coming weeks. Keeper action continues to slow.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The most exciting thing about the counts at Willamette Falls is not the number of springers and certainly not the summers (nor the fact it hasn't been updated for several days, but a jack spring Chinook count greater than 1,800. While not 100% reliable, a strong jack return traditionally predicts a good return of adults in the season following. Sturgeon fishing has been fair to Good in the lower Willamette. Shad fishing is fair to good for those in the migration lane (see below) around Oregon City. Shad fishing has improved a little in Multnomah Channel.

Spring Chinook and summer steelhead are entering the trap at Foster Dam daily on the South Santiam.

Water flow on the McKenzie has dropped from 5,000 cfs to about 3,300 over the past week at Vida while the water temperature has risen a couple of degrees to 52.

The Guide's Forecast – Oregon City is productive for keeper-sized sturgeon with mostly shakers coming from the popular St. Johns Bridge. While Multnomah Channel has not been rewarding for shad, smallmouth bass fishing is good. The middle Fork is reliable for trout most afternoons as the caddis start hatching. Anglers are catching springers and steelhead below Dexter Dam, While catches have been spotty, the crowds are not too thick and results have been fair. Three fish per day may be kept but only two may be salmon.

Here's a little insight to help improve shad catches. They travel in a line, nose-to-tail in a formation which, if one could see it, looks somewhat like a 'ribbon' while heading upstream. This is why one boat will hook one shad after another while one nearby catches only a few. As far as bank fishing is concerned, if you're not getting strikes, try casting different distances and be willing to move up or down the bank to locate a place where the shad are traveling closer to shore.

Summer steelhead are being taken from the crowded hole below Leaburg Dam on the McKenzie but few spring Chinook. Try Possie Buggers, Golden Stone and McKenzie Green Caddis patterns for

success with trout. The entire river is fishing well but anglers are reminded that hatchery trout which may be taken are on the stretch from

Despite a steady influx of springers and summers into the South Santiam, fishing has been reliably slow. The best bet here is a dark-colored jig under a float.

The McKenzie River below Leaburg Dam is a good bet for both summer steelhead and spring Chinook. It's not necessary to join the guerilla fishing group right below the dam - think downstream. While the run this year is below average, it is an improvement over 2008.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – While fishing has been slow on the Clackamas, throwing a spinner or drifting a dark-colored jig under a bobber at first light has produced some steelhead.

Spring Chinook and summer steelhead fishing is slow but steady at the Sandy with early mornings yielding best results.

North Coast Fishing Report – Although spring Chinook is typically still headlining in this section this time of year, anglers are getting excited about the offshore coho season beginning on Saturday, June 20th. Coho are typically pretty small this time of year but with back to back to back good ocean conditions, the fish may be of pretty good size. The weather is a bit iffy for the weekend opener but the forecast indicates that although it may not be the calmest of seas, there should be some opportunity for anglers in the salt. Most years, good coho action starts more on the south coast and works its way to the north by mid to late July. With the number of coho available this year, they could be well distributed throughout the Oregon coast.

Ocean coho fishing is about as simple as it gets. The hardest part is finding schooled up numbers of fish. To find them, use green label herring or frozen anchovies for bait. Spoons such as the Crocodile should also produce good results trolled just under the surface of the water. As the day progresses, fish will go deeper but you should still target the feeders in the upper 25 feet of the water column. We'll certainly have more next week as to how this fishery performed on opening day.

And how about those springers? Well, they're still available for those still motivated to fish Tillamook Bay. Consistent with the earlier part of this season, action has been good on the softer tide series that we are currently on. Anglers working the lower bay, especially along the jetty, have found good success this week working herring off the bottom on the last half of the outgoing tide. This is likely the last hurrah for Tillamook Bay springers as we near the end of the peak 4 weeks of the season. **Pro guide John Kirby (406-930-1133)** also reported fair success taking 2 springers for 2 rods on Monday of this week in the upper bay on herring. The tidewater of the Trask should also be holding fair numbers of fish.

Reports of a 20 fish day in Pacific City are just hearsay but it is likely that there was some good tidewater fishing on the lower Nestucca last week. It's prime time on the Nestucca and I have seen recent photos of fresh spring Chinook from the river system, including Three Rivers. Action should be peaking on that small stream as well.

The Wilson is also a likely candidate for holed up springers. The lower river from Siskeyville to Sollie Smith Bridge will be holding the largest concentration of fish but they will be wary of approaching anglers.

Recent reports of sturgeon in Tillamook Bay are accurate as a bunch of sturgeon typically reside for a few weeks in the summer in the lower Tillamook River. It's likely they enter the system to feed on herring and baitfish that are staging in the river over the summer months. Crabs will likely be an issue for anglers that fish in the estuary as the salt water intrusion makes its way deep into the estuary this time of year.

Crabbing remains poor and even in the ocean where success is higher, crabs are going through a hard molt right now and are making for poor tablefare.

The Guide's Forecast – Staying consistent with format, we'll look at the prospects for ocean coho this weekend. It's important to note that ocean conditions have a lot to do with the satisfaction of your trip. So here's the forecast as of Wednesday morning:

THU NIGHT NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 5 FT.

FRI N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. GUSTS UP TO 20 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

FRI NIGHT N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT... SUBSIDING TO 2 FT AFTER MIDNIGHT. W SWELL 4 FT... BUILDING TO 6 FT AFTER MIDNIGHT.

SAT N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

SUN NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

It's those wind waves that make for poor travel on the ocean but a 2 foot wind chop is doable. Be watchful of that NW wind in the afternoon however. If you haven't got your limit of salmon (keep in mind that the limit is 3 fish/person this year in the south of Cape Falcon fishery) by noon, you likely won't get it so save yourself the kidney transplant and get back to port before that wind starts to blow up.

Green label herring will take fish if they are out there. Smaller baits are better for this time of year.

Spring Chinook fishers should take advantage of the low tides this week by fishing upper Tillamook Bay using herring or spinners. Although we're nearing the end of the peak season, hatchery fish should still be available for those willing to work for them. They may be kegged up in good numbers on the lower Trask River and willing to bite bobber and eggs/shrimp combinations. Trolling plugs through some of those lower tidewater holes has also produced well for me in the past. The lower bay may produce some fish at high slack using herring near the bottom.

River anglers will have to put up with low water conditions on most coastal river systems this week. The advantage to this is, you will know where the fish hold as they'll all be in the deep water (Chinook) and shallow but broken surfaced riffles (steelhead). Fish early mornings for best results. Look to Three Rivers for good bank access and success.

Sturgeon chasers may still have some estuary options with the nice minus tide we have coming upon us this weekend. Although you may have to battle crabs in the lower reaches of the estuary, that is the more likely area to intercept keepers this time of year. Sand shrimp will produce the best results but if you can jig yourself up some bait fish (herring, anchovies, smelt) that would be a strong alternative as well. Those may be harder to find than the sturgeon however.

Clamming will be a strong option along Clatsop Beaches for razor clams. Reports have been very good between Seaside and the south jetty of the Columbia River. They are quite plentiful this year. Likewise, bay clamming should also be productive for those looking for bay species.

If you're going to crab, aim for the ocean if you have the proper vessel. Keep in mind that bar crossings become very dangerous on the screaming outgoing tides we're going to witness this weekend. Couple a strong tide with a westerly swell and it's disaster waiting to happen.

Nearshore halibut is also an option to the north of Tillamook Bay but strong tides could create a challenging drift for those needing to fish deep water. A salmon/halibut trip is a viable option beginning Saturday.

Central & South Coast Reports – Barbecue alert! While ocean condition forecasts are less than favorable for the weekend, anglers are eagerly anticipating the opening of coho season this coming Saturday, June 20th. Fishing for coho is scheduled to run for 73 days or until a quota of 110,000 fin-clipped fish is caught with a generous three-per-day bag limit.

Check your local sporting goods store for the new regulations on halibut, Chinook and coho. These updated publications are available now.

Go clamming or mussel collecting this weekend as another set of minus tides greater than one foot will expose beds. The series occurs early in the morning, however, so set your alarm clock and plan accordingly.

While the word last week was that the spring all-depth halibut season was closed off the central coast following the last three-day opener, the ODFW announced recently that with another 44,000 pounds remaining in the quota, June 18th, 19th and 20th will be open with additional days to be added if the quota is not met. While nearshore halibut (inside the 40 fathom line) is open seven days a week and these fish generally run smaller than their deep-water brethren, fishing has been good recently with a few running over 50 pounds.

Take dad to "Breakfast with the Sharks" at the Oregon Coast Aquarium on June 20th and 21st. Breakfast will be served before a private viewing window of sharks in the Passages of the Deep exhibit. The cost is \$25 and reservations may be arranged at 541- 867-3474 ext. 2313.

Crabbing in the bays out of Newport and Waldport has been poor with very few keepers available.

Boats launching out of Depoe Bay are making good catches of rockfish, cabezon and ling cod. Ocean crabbing has been worthwhile but sorting of softshells is necessary. Many boats report spotting pods of Orcas consisting of both adults and juveniles.

While spring Chinook fishing is fair on the mainstem Umpqua, the South Fork is improving for catches of smallmouth bass.

Tenmile Lake has been reliable producing fair to good catches of largemouth bass.

Springer are being taken on the upper Rogue with catches tapering off as one heads downriver. Spring Chinook are being taken around Medford on drifted lures although it's too early for this stretch to be productive for steelhead. The Grants Pass stretch is slow while these will be little going on in the lower river until fall Chinook opens in August.

Boats launching out of the Port of Brookings have enjoyed a flat ocean and outstanding results for rockfish and ling cod as well as fair to good ocean crabbing for the better part of two weeks, Those prime conditions are changing however, with wind and waves coming up this weekend. There may be early morning opportunities for a near-shore foray before the winds pick up. As good as fishing has been, it's worth a shot.

Central and Eastern Oregon – There should be another week or two of trout action with stone fly patterns in the Warm Springs stretch of the Deschutes. The hatch is winding down and will be over soon. Fly fishing on the middle Deschutes is fair while the upper river is good for brook trout. While a few anglers are taking limits, fishing for the most part has been slow at Trillium Lake but the trout being taken there have been good-sized. The upper river is fishing well for brookies on caddis dries and nymphs.

Paulina has been producing limits of kokanee on the troll while jigging has been less than effective. Green Peter is putting out good numbers of smallish kokanee.

Both bait fishers and trollers are making good catches of trout at Timothy Lake.

Whether fishing from boat or bank, everyone seems to be making good catches of trout on bait and lures at Trillium Lake. Trout here are averaging 12 inches or better with a the occasional fish that can be measure in pounds rather than inches.

Go to the park! There will be no entrance fees this weekend at Crater Lake National Park. There are fish there but it's fished rarely.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report *June 10-23, 2009*

North Puget Sound

As summer approaches, anglers have their pick of several fishing opportunities. On Puget Sound, portions of two marine areas recently opened for salmon fishing and a few days remain to hook lingcod in the region. In the rivers, the trout season is open and, on a few streams, fisheries are under way for hatchery chinook salmon.

Portions of the Skagit, Cascade and Skykomish rivers are open for hatchery **chinook salmon** fishing, said Brett Barkdull, WDFW fish biologist. "Anglers on the Skagit and Cascade rivers did decent on the opener, but since then fishing has really slowed," Barkdull said.

The Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River. On the Cascade, anglers can fish from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. Both stretches are open through July 15.

The daily limit on the Skagit and Cascade rivers is four hatchery chinook, two of which may be adults (chinook salmon at least 24 inches in length). Barkdull noted that statewide rules require anglers to stop fishing for salmon once they have kept two adults.

Barkdull reminds anglers that gamefish regulations have changed on the Cascade River from the mouth to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. From June 1 to July 15, anglers can retain up to two trout, including hatchery steelhead and bull trout. For details, anglers should check the rules and regulations pamphlet on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

On the Skykomish River, there have been recent reports of anglers hooking some bright hatchery chinook. The Skykomish is open from the Lewis Street Bridge in Monroe to the Wallace River through July 31. Anglers fishing there have a daily limit of two hatchery chinook salmon.

Meanwhile, **trout** fishing also is open on several of the region's rivers and streams. Under the statewide rule for trout, there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches in rivers and streams. However, some of the region's rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep.

Out on the saltwater, fishing has been slow at the **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery**, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "The bubble always seems to get off to a slow start," Thiesfeld said. "But fishing tends to improve later in June and in early July, and that could be the case again this year."

Except for a one-day closure on June 20, the fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 7. The fishery will reopen Sept. 12 on a Saturday and Sunday-only schedule through Sept. 27. Anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. Chinook must measure 22 inches in length to retain.

Elsewhere, the northern portion of Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) is open to catch-and-release fishing for **salmon**. Thiesfeld said anglers aren't finding many returning adult chinook salmon, but they have hooked some blackmouth - resident chinook. Anglers in Marine Area 10 can fish north of a line from Point Monroe to Meadow Point.

Fishing for **lingcod** is still an option. The fishery runs through June 15 in the region's marine areas, where anglers have a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 40 inches.

The region's **spot shrimp** fishery is closed, but shrimpers can fish for coonstripe and pink shrimp in some marine areas. For details on shrimp fisheries check WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/shrimpreg/shrimpindex.shtml>.

Crab fishing is just around the corner. The fishery opens July 1 in marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), and 10. Fisheries in those areas will be open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

Before heading out, anglers should check the rules and regulations for all fisheries on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Fishing: Opportunities for catching halibut and lingcod are winding down, but the summer fishing seasons for crab and salmon are coming up fast. Meanwhile, anglers have been finding some chinook in southern Puget Sound.

Recreational **halibut** fishing is now closed in most areas, but anglers can still fish Thursdays through Mondays in Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), where a creel check conducted during the June 6-7 weekend showed 80 anglers catching 50 halibut. That may provide an incentive to sign up for the 14th annual Sekiu Halibut Derby, scheduled for June 13 and 14. Entry fee is \$15. Call Olson's Resort for more information at (360) 963-2311.

Anglers should note that the **lingcod** fishery closes June 15 throughout Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, but remains open through mid-October on the coast. The fishery for spot

shrimp remains open daily in marine areas 4, 5 and 6, while fishing for non-spot shrimp (coonstripe and pink) is under way in southern Puget Sound (marine areas 11 and 13). All spot shrimp caught in those two areas must be released

Coming up, the popular recreational crab season opens June 18 in three marine areas, with more to follow. Here's the summer line-up:

- **June 18:** Marine areas 4 (Neah Bay east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south Puget Sound) will be open seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2010.
- **July 1:** Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1 (Deception Pass to East Point), 8-2 (East Point to Possession Point), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) and 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 7 for a catch assessment. These areas will reopen in the fall if recreational harvest quotas have not been met.
- **July 15:** Marine Area 7 East (Bellingham and Samish bays) and 7 South (San Juan Islands) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 30.
- **July 29:** Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend. The fishery will remain open through Jan. 2, 2010.
- **Aug. 12:** Marine Area 7 North (Lummi Island/Blaine) will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays only, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, closing the evening of Sept. 30.

Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/> or <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

Another much-anticipated summer fishery begins June 27 when waters off Neah Bay and La Push (marine areas 3 and 4) open for **salmon** fishing. Waters off Ilwaco and Westport (marine areas 1 and 2) open June 28, while the Sekiu/Pillar Point, eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca and Hood Canal (marine areas 5, 6, and 12) salmon fisheries open July 1. Anglers are advised to check the fishing rules for each area in the Fishing in Washington pamphlet before heading out (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Salmon anglers had a fair opening-day outing June 1 in Marine Area 11 (Vashon Island/Tacoma), with an average of one fish caught for every four rods. More recent creel checks show the catch rate dropping off, but that is typical, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "Folks did pretty well opening day because they were able to catch the salmon already in the area," Thiesfeld said. "Now there's a wait for the new fish to move in. The main run usually comes in about mid-July, but fish will be trickling in every day."

The fishery runs seven days a week, with a limit of two salmon a day. Minimum size for chinook is 22 inches, but there is no minimum for other species. All wild chinook must be released. Beginning July 1, the pink salmon bonus limit takes effect when anglers may retain two additional pink salmon as part of their daily limit. Commencement Bay is closed to salmon fishing until Aug. 1.

Thiesfeld also suggests anglers try fishing in south Puget Sound (Marine Area 13), where salmon fishing has been open since May 1.

On the Olympic Peninsula, fishing for **chinook salmon** has been slow, said David Low, WDFW fish biologist. "With poor visibility on the Hoh River and the Sol Duc running low and clear, fishing

has been spotty," Low said. "Some rain would help, but it looks unlikely, at least for the short term."

Trout and **steelhead** fishing got under way June 6 in area rivers, including the Skokomish, South Fork Skokomish and Dungeness rivers. Anglers should note that selective gear rules are in effect on those rivers to protect wild summer steelhead.

Details on rules and limits are available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> .

Southwest Washington

After a delay of nearly a month, the sport fishery for hatchery-reared steelhead on the lower Columbia River will open Friday, June 12 under an agreement reached Wednesday by fishery managers in Washington and Oregon. That will give anglers four days of steelhead fishing between Rocky Point and the Interstate 5 bridge before summer seasons begin June 16.

During those four days, anglers can catch and retain hatchery steelhead - as well as sockeye salmon and hatchery jack chinook salmon - in those waters. Starting June 16, anglers may retain any jack chinook - marked or unmarked - but must release any adult chinook salmon they catch until June 22, when the Columbia River opens for summer chinook fishing below Bonneville Dam. Chinook retention below the dam will be allowed through July 6.

Chinook retention above Bonneville Dam begins July 1.

"Anglers can look forward to a slew of great fishing opportunities on the mainstem Columbia River in the next couple of months," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "On any given cast, you might reel in a summer chinook, a sockeye, a steelhead or a shad."

Hymer recommends that anglers check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for combined daily bag limits for salmon and steelhead in all these fisheries.

Hymer noted that fishery managers are forecasting a return of 70,700 summer chinook this season, up from 55,400 fish last year. They also anticipate a return of 183,200 sockeye, most ranging from 3.5 to 4 pounds apiece. Last year, fishery managers predicted that 75,600 sockeye would return to the Columbia River, but the actual run came in at about 214,500 fish, he said. Sockeye numbers are already ramping up at Bonneville Dam with nearly a thousand fish tallied on June 9 alone. So far counts are tracking slightly ahead of last year.

Approximately 330,000 upriver summer steelhead are also expected this year, following on the tailfins of early-run fish already moving into several lower Columbia River tributaries. Hymer said fishing for hatchery summer-run steelhead should continue to improve in the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, Washougal and Klickitat rivers in the weeks ahead.

Anglers are also still picking up some hatchery **spring chinook salmon** on the Cowlitz, upper Wind, and lower Klickitat rivers. "Some of the best fishing of the season was reported on the Klickitat River during the first week of June," said Hymer, noting that the catch was a mixture of adult and jack springers along with some summer steelies. "About half of the chinook were chrome bright."

Meanwhile, the number of boat anglers fishing for **white sturgeon** has continued to build in the lower Columbia River. Below the Wauna powerlines, one out of every two charter boat anglers took home a keeper during the first week of June, as did one in every six private boat anglers. Bank anglers between Knappton and Chinook are also reeling in some legals.

From the powerlines upstream to Marker 85, boat anglers out of Vancouver and Longview have also been catching some legal-size fish. The Bonneville Pool is now closed for retention of sturgeon through the end of the year, but **bass** anglers fishing those waters have been averaging five fish per rod.

Riffe Lake has been good for **landlocked coho** , Swofford Pond for **rainbows, bluegill** and **perch** , and Mayfield Lake for rainbows. Five thousand catchable size rainbows will be released every other week at Mayfield Lake through the summer.

In Clark County, WDFW planted 6,024 legal-size trout in Battleground Lake and 3,000 in Kline Pond during the first week of June. In Klickitat County, the department stocked Bird Creek (1,107 fish), Horsethief Lake (6,002 fish), Outlet Creek (900 fish), Rowland Lake (6,040 fish), Spearfish Lake (6,034 fish) and Spring Creek (2,019 fish). Skate Creek and the Tilton River each will receive plants of 2,000 to 4,000 catchable- size rainbows every other week through the summer.

The **shad** run continues to build with nearly 823,000 fish crossing Bonneville Dam through June 9. The riprap just below the dam and the docks in the Camas/Washougal areas are good spots for bank anglers to intercept these fish, Hymer said.

Eastern Washington

Bill Baker, WDFW northeast district fish biologist, said river and stream water levels are finally dropping, making them more fishable. Anglers have been doing well at Curlew Lake, northeast of Republic in Ferry County, fishing for net-pen-reared **rainbow trout, tiger muskies** and **largemouth bass** . Stevens County's Loon Lake has been good for **kokanee** that are already 12 inches, although night fishing has been inconsistent. Mackinaw or **lake trout** are available at nearby Deer Lake.

Three Pend Oreille County lakes just received extra plants of big **triploid rainbow trout** , courtesy of Seattle City Light. Big Meadow Lake, west of Ione, received 600 triploids, Crescent Lake, north of Metaline Falls, received 600, and Nile Lake, southwest of Ione, received 800. The Four Bay area of the Pend Oreille River near Seattle City Light's Boundary dam project will also receive 2,000 triploids when the river settles out.

Chris Donley, WDFW central district fish biologist, said most everything fishable is producing well now. "Even the Spokane River is finally down to a level that you can fish," he said. "Just remember to follow the rules so we can protect the wild redband rainbows."

Spokane County's Williams and Badger Lake, along with Lincoln County's Fishtrap Lake, continue to be the best for **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** . Sprague Lake is still putting out nice rainbows. Bonnie Lake, off Rock Creek near the Spokane-Whitman county line, is good for **yellow perch, crappie** , and **largemouth bass** . Anglers also have been doing well at Downs Lake, in the southwest corner of Spokane County, and north Spokane County's Eloika Lake.

"Bass and other warmwater species are close to spawning now, so they're up near shorelines where you can see and target them," Donley said.

The Spokane River arm of Lake Roosevelt is usually at the peak of **walleye** fishing now, although no WDFW checks have been made recently. When the reservoir water levels stabilize by mid-June, kokanee fishing at Seven Bays and other spots should pick up.

Fishing for **smallmouth bass** and **channel catfish** in the backwaters and sloughs of the Snake River in the southeast part of the region continues to be productive.

Over 1,500 nearly one-third-pound **rainbow trout** were just stocked in Union Flat Creek, a Palouse River tributary between Colton and Uniontown in Whitman County.

Northcentral Washington

In Okanogan County, the Methow River and two tributaries - Twisp and Chewuch - are now open for catch-and-release **trout** fishing, but WDFW District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff said the water is still too high from runoff for effective fishing. Jateff reminds anglers to check the sport fishing pamphlet closely because the fishery is only open in certain areas of the river.

Jateff also reported that the two fly-fishing-only lakes in Okanogan County have been producing good catches of **rainbow trout** in recent weeks. Chopaka Lake, north of Loomis, was rehabilitated in 2007 and is now producing rainbows 14-18 inches. Aeneas Lake, southwest of Tonasket, has slightly smaller rainbows ranging from 12-16 inches.

Jateff said there are lots of Okanogan County "production waters" with facilities that make for good weekend outings. Conconully Reservoir, Conconully Lake, Pearrygin, Alta, Wannacut, and Spectacle lakes all continue to provide good fishing for rainbows, ranging from 10-12 inches with carryovers up to 15 inches. Boat launching facilities, campgrounds, and resorts are located at all of these lakes. Selective gear anglers have been doing well at Big Twin in the Winthrop area and at Blue Lake in the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area. Gravel boat launching sites and campgrounds are available at each lake, and there is a resort on Big Twin.

"Spiny ray anglers can try either Patterson Lake near Winthrop for **yellow perch** or Leader Lake near Omak for **crappie** and **bluegill**," Jateff said.

Art Viola, WDFW Chelan district fish biologist, said fishing for **bass, crappie, blue gill** and **trout** is currently very good in many lakes throughout the district. The exception is Roses Lake north of Manson, where fishing for trout is poor due to warm water temperatures.

"**Kokanee** fishing has been excellent in Lake Chelan, however catch rates have dropped recently," Viola said. "We believe the kokanee have spread out and are moving up lake from the southernmost shore into Mill Bay. Hopefully kokanee catch rates will increase in Mill Bay soon."

Viola also said that the Icicle River **spring chinook** fishery is "good one day, then poor for three days, then good again - typical of this fishery." Viola reminds anglers that more salmon fishing opportunities are coming soon, with the Upper Columbia River summer chinook fishery beginning July 1.

Anglers who frequent the WDFW-managed waterways on the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge in Adams and Grant counties may want to attend a June 16 public open house about the refuge's comprehensive conservation plan. The session, which will run from 5:30-8 p.m. in the City of Othello's Municipal Building (City Hall), 500 East Main St., will include review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service environmental assessment of the plan and citizen comments about plan alternatives. Those who can't make the open house can learn more about the plan and submit comments through July 13 by contacting the refuge at (509) 488-2668 or at mcriver@fws.gov.

Southcentral Washington

Flows in the Yakima River are finally settling down and looking good for **spring chinook salmon** anglers, said WDFW Fish Biologist Jim Cummins.

"I expect to see a significant increase in fishing effort and success the rest of the season, especially in the next couple weeks," Cummins said. "About 6,500 chinook have passed Prosser. About 45 percent of them are fin-clipped hatchery fish and about 26 percent of those fish are jacks. More than 900 chinook have passed Roza, which means that there are plenty of fish moving through the area that's open to fishing."

During the first week of June, WDFW staff checked 57 anglers on the Roza Reach (500 feet below the railroad trestle at Roza Dam to I-82 at Union Gap) who harvested 11 hatchery chinook (four adult, seven jacks) and released five wild chinook (four adult, one jack). Cummins said that all of the catch was upstream from the confluence of the Naches, which was still bringing in relatively high, turbid water at that time.

Anglers can check river flows at the Bureau of Reclamation Hydromet website: <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/hydromet/yakima/>.

WDFW Regional Habitat Program Manager Perry Harvester said **kokanee** fishing in all the Yakima River reservoirs should be good now, "although the fish will be small in size this early." Harvester said that due to cold water, kokanee should be near the surface.

Jonathan Kohr, WDFW habitat biologist, said large **smallmouth bass** were recently caught in the Columbia River. "The largest bass we caught was 4.5 pounds and the smallest was around two," he said. "We used everything from tubes, grubs, crankbaits, and spinnerbaits. Top water lures didn't seem to work yet. But when they start hitting the top stuff, it's super fun."

Kohr also reported catching an occasional **pikeminnow** that can be turned in for a \$4 reward at any registration station along the Columbia. For more details see: <http://www.pikeminnow.org/>.

Alpine **trout** lakes and access trails are finally thawing and anglers willing to hike in with float tubes and fly rods may do well. Dog Lake, just east of White Pass on the north side of Hwy. 12, usually produces good catches of rainbows from the 8,000-plus fry that are stocked there annually. Nearby Leech Lake also usually provides decent catches of small brook trout and is scheduled to receive some triploids soon.

TGF Inbox

Reader Joe G. wrote to ask "... would like to see reports on the crooked river if that's possible thanks".

Joe G. wrote to ask "would like to see reports on the crooked river if that's possible thanks "

TGF co-editor Michael Teague responded "While I don't have any recent reports, I have made note of your interest and will include any reports we get in future issues. Keep an eye on the subscription version of TGF for information."

Ray S. wrote to ask, "Where can I get info on fishing for warm water fishing - small and large mouth bass, walleye, pan fish?"

"I am a displaced warm water fisherman from MN and don't know were to fish. I don't have a big water boat for fishing on the Columbia."

Michael replied, "I am the TGF warmwater guy but am a recreational fisherman, not a guide.

"With regard to walleye, the Columbia River is considered a world-class fishery. While there are a few in Multnomah Channel on the lower Willamette, they are really too few to target. If you feel your boat is too small for the Big River (perhaps a wise thought), you have only two choices to take advantage of it. One is to book a guide and that's as good a way as any to be pretty sure you'll enjoy the most the Columbia has to offer. The other way is to post at what we consider to be our sister site, <http://www.ifish.net> on the warmwater board for an open seat (we are not officially affiliated but enjoy a great relationship with the owner, Jennie). If you're not a member (it's free), check it out. There's lots of information.

"Regarding the bass and panfish, please Email me with your location. I'll do my best to steer you in the right direction regarding location and the most effective techniques. We're here to help you catch more fish!"

Finally, Jerry A. wrote via the Contact Form at the TGF website, "I'm looking for clarification... your fishing report today said that coho in the ocean opens June 20th, which I believe is correct but then it went on to say that the limit is 2 fish per day, which I believe should be 3 fish per day. Did the rule change, or is it an error?"

Michael responded, "You are correct and good catch. We corrected it in this week's report, just in time for the opener!"

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

Fishing instructors needed in Oregon:

http://www.oregonlive.com/sports/oregonian/bill_monroe/index.ssf/2009/06/fishing_instructors_needed_in.html

Stay two nights at participating Oregon parks, get on night FREE. Coupon here:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/assets/pdf/J0136472610.PDF>

OSU steelhead study reported in Register-Guard:

<http://www.registerguard.com/csp/cms/sites/web/sports/outdoors/15263357-41/story.csp>

Outdoor & recreational calendar from the Oregonian:

http://www.oregonlive.com/sports/oregonian/bill_monroe/index.ssf/2009/06/outdoors_calendar.html#more

GOOD LUCK!