

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 21st – 27th, 2009**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Summer steelhead counts at Bonneville Dam have been overwhelming. Previous one-day passage records have been shattered and anglers have been reaping the benefits. Cooler tributaries along the Columbia have been producing excellent catches of returning adults and should continue for the next several weeks.

Salmon anglers working wobblers on anchor are beginning to catch chinook in the Portland to Longview stretch. A large bunch of chinook showed in Astoria over the weekend but has since slowed indicating a lull in action for the next few days.

There's little activity in the 70-degree water at Willamette Falls and in the lower river. Coho are yet to show in daily counts. Sturgeon fishing is catch-and-release only until October. The lower Willamette is now open for fin-clipped chinook but will be a rare find.

Trout fishing on the McKenzie has been fair to good for fly anglers using nymphs. Chinook fishing closed here August 15th.

Steelhead fishing on the North Santiam has been slow.

A few steelhead are being hooked and fewer landed by persistent anglers on the Clackamas. Coho are rolling at the mouth.

There's very little action on the Sandy now but coho will arrive shortly.

Scheduled to be planted with trout are Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Clear Lake (Linn County) and Leaburg Lake.

Northwest – Buoy 10 fishers witnessed excellent chinook catches over the weekend with some fish exceeding 40 pounds. Chinook catches slowed dramatically early in the week however but coho catches have been providing consistent action to make up for the chinook slow-down. Chinook catches should peak this coming week although chinook tides won't come around until after the weekend. The first part of outgoing tide always produces the best for chinook.

Coho have been falling to spinners and bait equally with the best catches coming from the Desdemona Light marker to just upstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge. The second half of incoming tide through the first 2 hours of outgoing have been producing the best results with some fish tipping the scales in the high teens. Wild coho are making up a significant portion of the catch and must be released unharmed.

The ocean is still producing good catches of coho but the action isn't as fast as it was just a week ago. With a significant portion of late-run coho due to the lower Columbia in October, action should remain good as long as it stays open. Anglers north of Cape Falcon are nearing their summer quota.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia is improving but extreme tides limits the time crabbers can work their gear. It also coincides with the best part of the salmon bite well upstream of the best fishing. The ocean remains open to crabbing until mid-October due to a regulation change

proposed by sportfishing advocate Gary Kish. The condition of the ocean crab is also improving.

Early run chinook should start making their way into Tillamook Bay although the run forecast for chinook to the basin is only forecast to be slightly better than last season. Large fish should be available in the upper bay with the tide series we're on right now.

The coho forecast to the Tillamook and Nehalem Basins is excellent and numbers should begin to build in the coming weeks, giving anglers ample opportunity into late September.

Southwest – Minus tides this coming Friday and Saturday will provide clamming opportunities.

All-depth and nearshore halibut is closed due to heavy catches, which exceeded the quota last weekend.

Chinook season is underway in the lower Umpqua but it's still early here. Smallmouth bass fishing is hot around Elkton and good in the South Umpqua though most are small. North Umpqua steelheading is fair to good but hatchery fish are in the minority. Offshore coho fishing is good but most are wild.

A total of 34 teams participated in the Oregon Tuna classic out of Charleston over the past weekend, landing 1,948 pounds of tuna which were donated to the local food bank. First place went to Team Kingfisher with a catch of just over 150 pounds.

Offshore coho fishing has been decent out of Florence with some boats limiting out. Ocean crabbing has been worthwhile.

Chinook catches have been very good in the Rogue estuary with average daily catches of 50 or more kings. Trollers are using either anchovy or herring, taking occasional limits.

Brookings anglers have enjoyed combo trips recently in warm water just 10 to 15 miles out of port, catching coho and albacore. Ling cod catches have been excellent nearer to shore. Offshore conditions look dicey this coming weekend. The Chetco is closed to fishing entirely anywhere above the Highway 101 Bridge.

The Rogue above Lost Creek is scheduled to be planted with trout.

Eastern – Steelhead action is good at the mouth and upstream into the Deschutes River. With peak passage occurring right now, this fishery will also peak in the coming weeks. The larger "B" run fish should begin to make a more consistent showing in the sport catch.

The Deschutes has once again been most productive for trout from Warm Springs to Trout Creek.

'Hundred fish days are still the norm on the John Day River with a few large bass still in the mix. Plastic worms on jig-heads are producing the best results.

SW Washington – Hog-liners working the mouth of the district's cooler tributaries are picking up good numbers of steelhead and a few salmon. Warmer weather this week should only improve the bite in these cooler waters; especially at the river mouths.

With Bonneville Dam passing tens of thousands of adult steelhead, action at Drano Lake has been excellent. Persistent anglers are posting double-digit days trolling plugs or spinners and

casting bobbers and bait. Action should remain good for the next few weeks.

Columbia River Fishing Report – As expected, the Buoy 10 fishery will steal the show this week. It's peak season time in the lower Columbia River and with the extra number of salmon available this year, it's "game-on" right now with great catches reported all week from the Astoria area.

Through the weekend, anglers saw Chinook catch rates that rivaled any of the past seasons with several fish in the mid-20's to mid-30's. There were reports of fish over 40 pounds as well. Not uncommon for this time of year, the larger 6 year-olds are often the first to return to the river. Also not uncommon is the fact that there would be great numbers of Chinook present only to have a lull follow shortly thereafter. Well, we're in a lull but thankfully, we have ample numbers of coho to pick up the slack.

Our creel has noticeably had fewer Chinook each of the last 4 days to where we only had one Chinook in Wednesday's batch. On Friday, we landed 11 Chinook. No doubt however that good numbers of Chinook will return in the coming days and blow this fishery wide open once again.

The weaker tide provided excellent action in the lower stretch, around the Chinook wing jetties as these fish are clearly drawn to the cooler ocean water influence that is currently going on in the estuary. The stronger the tide, the higher the fish will go in the lower river. More recently, a stronger incoming tide has pushed most of the fish to the traditional high slack fishing grounds above the bridge on the Washington and Oregon side. If you have a temperature gauge, pay attention to the water temperature at high slack and notice the longer you fish into the outgoing tide, the warmer the water temps will be. The river has been running 62 to 64 degrees at high tide and warming to 67 or 68 near low slack. Although it seems like such a slight variation in temperature swings, it certainly makes a difference to acclimating salmon.

There is no rhyme or reason to what the fish are responding best to. Earlier in the week, fish were falling almost evenly to bait and spinners but more recently, bait has been the clear choice. Fresh and frozen herring have been working well but I started jigging my own fresh anchovies with a Mustad Piscator jig. The anchovies have been thick in the lower river and like the salmon, follow the tide upstream. It is really easy to jig up a days worth of bait in no time and fresh anchovies make the best bait for river salmon beating the store bought anchovies and herring hands down. Rig them whole so that they spin when trolled; they will catch fish.

The Washington side has been producing the best catches recently but the Oregon side puts out fair catches as well, just not as consistent as the Washington side. This can change at any time however, especially as the Chinook make another strong showing any day now. The bite that can happen at high slack just downstream of Young's Bay has been non-existent as well as the sawdust pile on the Oregon side on incoming tide. The boats are there but not much action is occurring as of late. There has been an occasional outgoing tide bite in front of Astoria the first half of outgoing tide however indicating that fish are indeed utilizing the Oregon side to migrate upstream.

Out west, ocean effort has slowed since consistent fishing is occurring inside the river. I fished outside last Thursday and limited out with 12 fish in about an hour or a little better but I headed out again last Sunday morning only to get another 4 keepers and ending the day with a total of 5 fish. Just prior to the river showing, action out there had been excellent with catches coming from both the CR Buoy as well as north of the mouth along the Washington shoreline. A northwesterly troll from Buoy 1 also produced consistent results. You don't want to get caught outside later in the day however when the NW wind kicks up making for a very bumpy and wet

ride back to home port. As of August 16th, nearly 78% of the coho quota has been taken in the Leadbetter to Cape Falcon fishery as well as about 83% of the Chinook guideline. With river effort increasing, the fishery will likely come close to making it to the last few days of this month. Chinook catches have improved in the recent week but it's still very rare to get a Chinook limit (2 fish) in the ocean.

Ocean crabbing remains good with soft-shells beginning to fill out a little better right now. Crabbing in the lower Columbia is also improving with more hard-shells coming in than soft shells right now. It's easy to get quality crab bait; salmon carcasses are plentiful.

Upriver, steelhead counts at Bonneville are off the charts. Several historic records have been broken this week with little slow-down in sight. It seems that Judge Redden's required flow and spill are having a very positive impact for sportfishers this go-around.

This has translated into excellent steelhead opportunities for those working tributary mouths of SW Washington streams and Oregon rivers such as Eagle Creek and the Deschutes River. Boats also working the Bonneville area also fared well with 2 fish per boat tallied over the weekend. Bank anglers were averaging a half a fish per rod, which is an excellent bank check. Prawns and shrimp remain a top bait for plunkers in this area. Beach plunkers don't fare so well with the water temperatures so high this time of year. One fish was tallied for 25 bank rods in the Portland to Longview stretch.

Sturgeon fishing remains open only to catch and release until October when the river above the Wauna Powerlines re-opens three days per week. There are a lot of sturgeon present in the Columbia River estuary but everyone is focused on salmon of course.

The Guide's Forecast – It will be a busy week at Buoy 10. Split tides will allow good opportunity for both early morning and late afternoon fishers. The poorest time of the tide is the last 3 hours of outgoing and the most productive time is high slack and the first part of outgoing tide. That shouldn't change over the course of this week. Tides will begin to weaken but run timing and size suggests that this won't make a big difference in the numbers of fish that will be available to anglers. Catches will skyrocket in the lower Columbia River.

If you plan on starting early in the morning like most of the other population, you'll want to head upstream and take advantage of the cool water and high tide that just got done pushing all the biters to the head of tide early in the morning. The action should be good on both the Oregon and Washington side of the river early next week.

It will be best to be armed with both bait and spinners as it could be one or the other as we wear into the season. Last year, I did best on bait and it's shaping up to be that way again this year although spinners have had their day in the sun this season already. As far as colors, I've gone with more metallic colors since I have switched over to the Fatal Flash blades. The distributor has new powder coated colors in pinks and greens, coupling them up with the standard reds and greens and they make for a super attractor. The silver blade with red beads has also been responsible for the death of several Chinook and coho lately. Although I have not tried the true tested red/white blade, several anglers are reporting good success with it. I recently have been using the chartreuse green dot blade with a pink hoochie on the hook and getting some quality coho that way.

As we head into the weekend, high tide will soon be at first light. Although the incoming tide has been the most productive, especially the second half of incoming, we won't see that kind of opportunity until we're well into next week. Anglers will really want to have their act together with only high slack and the first part of outgoing tide to fish productively on. Once the warm

water of the solely Columbia influenced watershed hits the estuary, action will die off dramatically until we get the cool ocean water hitting the mouth again. Although not the most ideal of tides to work with, there will be a lot of salmon, both Chinook and coho, in the estuary and limits should be very feasible.

Tides won't begin to weaken until early next week so crabbers need to be aware of the extreme tide series that we are now on. Buoys will get pushed under and if not properly weighted, will get taken out to sea prompting anglers to think somebody stole their pots. Crabbing is good now but you have to be aware of when to work your gear.

Upriver, the Chinook fishery should really begin to take off once we see them in the estuary again. Although there have been years when estuary harvest of Chinook was down while the upriver boats were doing quite well, given the success we've had already for Chinook down low, I think we'll know when they show back up again, prepping wobbler plunkers for good action between Longview and Portland. Bonneville Dam counts are starting to ramp up nicely indicating the run is well underway.

Bonneville steelheaders will likely find a downturn in action although some quality fish should remain available as the "B" run fish begin to enter in better numbers. Given how the "A" run is tracking, there should be some good action for large steelhead in the coming month. The mouth of the Deschutes River should be peaking in the next 3 weeks. Trollers will do best but with this many fish available, anglers may want to experiment with different techniques to see how they fare with these fish.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – With hot weather, the water temperature at Willamette Falls has started to climb. It was 72 as of August 19th. All Chinook are being counted as fall fish starting August 15th.

While the water level and flow at the McKenzie River have dropped slightly, the river remains in good condition for fishing particularly as the water temperature has remained in the mid-50s according the readings at Vida.

The North Santiam closed to Chinook fishing on August 15th but summer steelhead remains open. The river is at summer level are expected to stay that way until fall rains.

The Guide's Forecast – Trout fishing has been good, even for bank fishers, on the Willamette around Eugene. Most of the trout taken here are cutthroat. Smallmouth bass fishing is fair to good on the upper Willamette and will be best at first light and again in the evening.

Trout fishing is fair to good on the McKenzie while steelheading is fair below Leaburg Dam for anglers using spinners.

The best chance of hooking up with a steelhead on the North Santiam is the stretch from Packsaddle to Mehama. Use light tackle and small lures for best results.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – While a few steelhead are being taken on the Clackamas, water conditions remain less than ideal. Coho can be seen rolling at the mouth every evening and they'll be entering the river soon. Getting those fish to bite or strike is another story.

The Sandy has been so slow that it would make sense to wait for the coho to show.

Perhaps some help with these tough-to-hook coho could come from the free coho clinic which is being sponsored by the Sandy River chapter of the Northwest Steelheaders at Glen Otto Park in Troutdale on August 29th, from 10 AM to 2 PM.

North Coast Fishing Report – Northern ports are still reporting good catches of coho in the ocean with **Val Folkema of Garibaldi Marina (503-322-3312)** reporting rough bar crossings and foggy seas in recent days. Val stated the catch still ranged from 1.75 to 2.25 fish per rod just prior to the change in weather. Val wanted to remind anglers that ocean crabbing remains open for recreation (not commercial) and the crab are starting to harden up. It should be a very productive fall for recreational crabbers.

Ocean effort for coho has dropped off dramatically with nearly 35% of the quota still left to be harvested. Recent reports from Newport and Depoe Bay indicate a slow down in hatchery catches.

There isn't much showing up in Tillamook Bay yet but the effort hasn't been there either. It won't be long before fall Chinook show in good numbers for the early season; adults destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers. I caught my first one in the upper bay last year on September 1st in the upper bay.

Remember that Nehalem Bay remains closed to the harvest of fall Chinook but a good coho season will soon get underway.

Coho numbers should really begin to jump in the coming weeks on Tillamook and Nehalem Bays with the peak towards the end of September. A large return is forecasted.

Crabbing inside of Tillamook, Nehalem, Netarts and Nestucca estuaries should be on to improve with a productive fall season likely. Fresh bait will always produce the best results and an ample supply of salmon carcasses should be available.

Tuna are reported to be about 50 miles west of Garibaldi, quite a run for most boats.

Freshwater anglers are still faced with challenging conditions when pursuing steelhead and trout. The one advantage to that is, you should know where the fish are hiding. Are you stealth enough to catch them?

The Guide's Forecast – With a good number of hatchery coho due back to the Tillamook and Nehalem systems, ocean action should remain fair for silvers from the ports of Garibaldi and Nehalem Bay. Watch for changing boundaries coming up but the department has set aside a specific coho quota for the month of September and the action should be good with fish running large. What a great year to be a salmon fisherman!

Bar crossings may continue to be challenging this weekend with peak ebb happening in the morning. Any sort of westerly swell will likely cause bar restrictions for the early birds. Use extreme caution, boating related fatalities seem to be down a bit this year, let's not let our guard down now!

For anglers restricted to shore, coho should become available from the jetties in the coming week. For aggressive anglers, look for diving birds and bait balls and cast baitfish looking jigs amongst the bait balls. There should be feeding coho below. Without rain in the coast range, you'll be forced to fish the big water.

The weekend ocean weather forecast is as follows (it doesn't look pretty):

FRI NW WIND 5 KT...RISING TO 10 TO 15 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT AT 10 SECONDS. PATCHY FOG. CHANCE OF LIGHT RAIN AND DRIZZLE.

FRI NIGHT N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT...BUILDING TO 5 FT AFTER MIDNIGHT. CHANCE OF LIGHT RAIN AND DRIZZLE IN THE EVENING. PATCHY FOG THROUGH THE NIGHT.

SAT N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT. PATCHY FOG IN THE MORNING.

SAT NIGHT N WIND 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 8 FT. PATCHY FOG AFTER MIDNIGHT.

SUN N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. NW SWELL 8 FT.

MON NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT WITH GUSTS TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FOOT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

Sea-run cutthroat trout should be in good supply in many north coast tidewater areas. Trollers used to take good numbers but that fishery faded when the harvest restrictions were put in place. The old Ford Fender and worm rig will likely draw action.

Central & South Coast Reports – A free Chinook Salmon Seminar will take place on Friday, August 21st at 7 PM at North Bend Middle School. Call 541-404-6141 for information.

Crabbing in Yaquina Bay has been poor but is good outside in the ocean.

Chinook are being caught in the Umpqua downstream of Rock Creek. The mainstem Umpqua is a Mecca for smallmouth bass fishers in the summertime around Elkton and good catches are also coming from the lower South Umpqua. Steelheaders are enjoying fair to good results on the North Umpqua where bait is allowed.

Boats launching out of Charleston have been taking very good catches of albacore although ocean conditions this coming weekend will likely prevent ocean forays.

Fishing for fall Chinook has just started up in the lower Coquille but a few are being taken daily.

Catches of fall Chinook are occurring daily in the Rogue estuary and this fishery will hold up as long as the water temperature of the river remains warm, keeping salmon keged in the bay. As many as 100 Chinook have been taken in a single day here although catches are about half that many on most days. Anglers are also taking advantage of good numbers of adult summer steelhead and half pounders in the lower Rogue which are available below Foster Bar. The water temperature dipped at one point, allowing Chinook to charge upstream. Those fish are now being taken in the Grants Pass stretch where anglers are also catching smallish adult steelhead. Steelheading is fair to good on the Rogue above Gold Ray Dam with catches coming on all manner of bait and lure.

The biggest problem with tuna coming close to shore is running right over the top of them and wondering where the fish are. This happened recently to some boats out of Brookings when

warm water moved inside the 12 mile line. The best results come at the first temperature break. Nearer to port, anglers targeting ling cod have had very good results, often landing several fish prior to filling the two-ling limit. Rock fishing remains excellent. Offshore forecasts call for high winds this weekend which is likely to prevent recreational boats from launching. Another reminder that the Chetco River is closed to fishing for any species above the Highway 101 Bridge through November 6th. Sea-run cutthroat trout fishing is decent below the bridge in tidewater, however.

Central and Eastern Oregon – While trout fishing slowed in the lower Deschutes following summer rains, it resulted in lower water temperatures which will be a plus for the tens of thousand of steelhead which have crossed Bonneville recently. Action at the mouth has really picked up over the past week. With over 360,000 summers having crossed as of Wednesday this week, the next couple of months promise to be great..

Trout fishing has been very good on the Imnaha around the town of the same name. This thanks to the heavy rain received here over a week ago which provided much-needed relief from low water here. Steelheading will start up in about a month.

The kokanee derby will take place at Odell Lake on Saturday, August 22nd offers a top prize of up to \$1,000. Participants may register at the Resort Friday from 4 PM to 8 PM or Saturday morning from 4 AM to 6 AM. An oyster feed will take place for participants Friday evening while a barbecue will follow weigh-ins on Saturday. For information call 541-973-4831 or 541-890-0743.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report August 19-September 1, 2009

North Puget Sound

A big run of pink salmon continues to push its way into the region, and anglers are out on Puget Sound in large numbers trying to reel them in. "It's certainly not lights out fishing, like in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, but it's been pretty good in a few areas," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "It seems on some days its red hot for pink salmon, and on other days it's only lukewarm."

Anglers fishing the southern portion of the region - marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) - have had more success hooking **pink salmon** than those fishing elsewhere, Thiesfeld said.

Those fishing marine areas 9 and 10 have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, but must release wild chinook and chum salmon. Beginning Sept. 1, anglers will be required to release all chinook in both marine areas.

"Fishing in marine areas 9 and 10 has been a little more consistent in terms of catch rates," he said. "Hopefully we'll see the pink run pick up steam and fishing in other parts of the region improve in the coming weeks."

At "**Humpy Hollow** ," a portion of Puget Sound stretching from Shipwreck north to Mukilteo, fishing has been hit and miss, Thiesfeld said. Anglers fishing Humpy Hollow, or other waters of Marine Area 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. All chinook salmon must be released. The regulations are the same for neighboring Marine Area 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay).

Thiesfeld said beach anglers on Whidbey Island also can find plenty of action for pink salmon - and the occasional **coho salmon** - at Bush Point, Fort Casey and Lagoon Point.

Another option is Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), where anglers have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, but can only keep one chinook. Anglers in Marine Area 7 must release wild coho and chum.

Meanwhile, **crabbing** is still open in the region. The crab fishery runs through Sept. 7 in marine areas 8-1, 8-2, 9, and 10. However, the fishery will remain open through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 7. Crabbing is open in all areas on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>) for more information.

It's still early, but pink salmon also are starting to show up in the rivers. There have been a few reports of anglers having success fishing for pink salmon on the Snohomish River. Portions of the Skagit and Skykomish rivers also are currently open for salmon, while a portion of the Green River opens Aug. 22.

Freshwater salmon fishing opportunities will increase Sept. 1, when the Stillaguamish River opens and anglers can fish additional stretches of the Skykomish and Green rivers. Thiesfeld reminds anglers that there are special gear restrictions for the Green River. Anglers can check the rules and regulations for the Green - as well as all other fisheries - on WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> .

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

It's a banner year for salmon anglers as the coho-fest continues on the coast. Meanwhile, anglers can try for pink salmon in Puget Sound or take advantage of two-pole fishing in most area lakes. A few more weeks remain to catch crab throughout the region.

Salmon anglers fishing near Ilwaco and Westport continue to enjoy a "phenomenal" season, said Wendy Beeghley, WDFW fish biologist. "This is one of the most successful fishing seasons I can remember," Beeghley said. "We've had good weather, great turnouts and some of the best catch rates we've seen in years."

Anglers have been equally successful at La Push and Neah Bay, said Scott Barbour, WDFW fish biologist for the north coast. "The fish are everywhere and folks are having a good time catching them," Barbour said.

All coastal areas are open seven days a week, including Ilwaco and Westport (marine areas 1 and 2), and La Push and Neah Bay (marine areas 3 and 4).

Wild coho must be released in all marine areas. Barbour advises anglers to check the 2009-2010 Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet at wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm for specific retention rules, limits and boundary guidelines.

If **tuna** strikes your fancy, the fishing's been good in recent weeks, especially off Ilwaco, Beeghley said. "August is the best month for catching tuna as long as people can get out deep enough and the weather cooperates." Tuna season is open year-round with no daily limit.

Anglers are required to release all **chinook** salmon in marine areas 5 and 6 (Sekiu and the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), but both areas remain open for retention of **hatchery coho** , **pink** and **sockeye salmon** . Creel checks conducted near Sekiu during the Aug. 15-16 weekend showed 892 anglers catching 723 pink salmon and 462 coho. These areas are open seven days a week, with a two-fish daily limit. Anglers may also add two bonus pink salmon to their daily catch. All chum, chinook and wild coho must be released.

Meanwhile, it was all about **pink salmon** in Marine Area 11 (Tacoma/Vashon), where clear skies and warm weather greeted anglers during the Aug. 15-16 weekend. A creel check conducted near Point Defiance showed 585 anglers with 271 pink salmon, but few chinook or coho.

"It's a pink show right now in Puget Sound, but as August draws to a close, anglers should start targeting coho," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "We've had one of the best summers for coho at Sekiu since 2004, and hopefully that's a good indicator for September coho fishing in northern Hood Canal and the Sound," Thiesfeld said.

The salmon fishery in Marine Area 11 runs seven days a week, with a two-fish daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon. The minimum size for chinook is 22 inches with no minimum limit for other species. All wild chinook must be released.

Salmon fishing opens Sept. 1 north of Ayock Point in Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), where the daily limit is four **coho** only. All other salmon species must be released. The same rules apply to Dabob and Quilcene bays, which opened for salmon fishing Aug. 16.

In southern Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), where the **chinook** fishery is under way, a recent creel check at the Hoodsport Marina showed an average catch rate of one chinook for every three rods. Up to two chinook may be retained as part of the four-fish daily limit. All chum salmon must be released.

For those interested in winning a boat, some cash or just getting out on the water, two derbies in the Northwest Salmon Derby Series are coming up in the region. The Sinclair Inlet Salmon Derby, held near Bremerton on the Kitsap Peninsula, is scheduled Aug. 22-23. Contact Gramdiok@msn.com for more information. Anglers traveling to the coast can participate in the Tokeland Marina, Willapa Bay Salmon Derby, which will be held Sept. 5. For more information, contact VickieWilburn@comcast.net . Participants in both derbies will be entered in a raffle for a 20-foot Stabi-Craft fishing boat, motor and trailer. For more information, visit <http://www.discovernorthwestfishing.com> .

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

Also beginning Sept. 1, anglers fishing in the Quillayute system - which includes the Bogachiel, Sol Duc, Calawah and Dickey rivers - can keep two adult salmon, plus two additional adult hatchery coho as part of the six-fish daily limit.

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

Before heading out, anglers are advised to check the 2009-2010 *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> for specific regulations.

Recreational crabbers should be aware that the summer **Dungeness crab** fishery will close for a catch assessment in several areas of Puget Sound after the Labor Day weekend. Areas closing

Sept. 7 one hour after sunset include 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). Crabbing will be open over Labor Day weekend, Sept. 5-7.

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. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2009 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2010 fishing license. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/index.htm>.

Meanwhile, anglers can take advantage of the new **two-pole fishing option** now in effect on the majority of Washington's 8,000 fishing lakes, ponds and reservoirs. The total cost for the two-pole endorsement is \$24.50 (\$6.50 for seniors). Anglers must also have a valid state fishing license. Because approximately 145 lakes and ponds are excluded from the option, anglers are advised to check the regulations carefully before they go fishing. More information and a list of excluded lakes and ponds are available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/twopole/>. Endorsements are available from authorized license dealers, listed at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/lic/vendors/vendors.htm>, or from the WDFW at <http://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/>. Saltwater fisheries and fisheries on rivers and streams are excluded from the option.

Due to ongoing dry conditions throughout the state, outdoor recreationists are reminded to take extra precaution to prevent fires. Many of WDFW's 900,000 acres in 32 wildlife area complexes and over 150 water access sites across the state do not allow camp fires or any other kinds of open fires. Where campfires are allowed, they are usually restricted to metal fire rings and must be kept to less than three feet in height and diameter. Specific rules by property can be found at http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas. To report a wildfire or unattended or escaped campfire, call the state's wildfire fighters, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), at 1-800-562-6010 or call 911. To obtain information on fire danger levels or burn bans by county, see <http://www2.wadnr.gov/burn-risk/index.html>.

Southwest Washington

Hefty **chinook salmon** that recently lit up the Buoy 10 fishery near the mouth of the Columbia River are now biting from Longview upstream as strong tides push increasing numbers of **coho** in from the ocean. Meanwhile, **summer steelhead** broke the single-day record at Bonneville Dam several days in a row and bolstered catch rates for hatchery fish above and below the dam.

"Anglers are reeling in chinook salmon, hatchery coho and hatchery steelhead in good numbers, depending on what part of the river they're fishing," said Joe Hymer, WDFW fish biologist. "Steelhead are leading the charge up the river, but chinook and coho are moving up right behind them."

Fishing has also been good for hatchery steelhead at the mouths of several area tributaries, including the Cowlitz, Lewis and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake, Hymer said. Boat anglers fishing at Drano Lake averaged 1.2 steelhead per rod and retained just over half of them, according to a creel survey conducted the second week of August.

At Buoy 10, anglers averaged a salmon for every one to two rods that same week. About one-third of those fish were chinook salmon, some weighing 40-plus pounds, but the tides literally shifted the following week, increasing the percentage of hatchery coho in the catch, Hymer said.

"A series of strong tides has brought more coho into the river," he said. "We could see another big surge of chinook, but these coho aren't exactly shakers. A growing number of these fish are running 14 to 16 pounds."

Through August, the daily catch limit in the Buoy 10 fishery is two salmon (but only one chinook) or hatchery steelhead or one of each. Minimum size limits are 24 inches for chinook and 16 inches for hatchery coho. All salmon other than chinook and adipose-fin-clipped hatchery coho must be released. Barbed hooks are allowed. Daily creel counts are available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg5/buoy10.htm>.

Starting Sept. 1, anglers must release chinook salmon at Buoy 10, but the combined limit for hatchery coho and hatchery steelhead will rise to three fish (including no more than two hatchery steelhead).

The north jetty is open for fishing seven days per week when the Buoy 10 area or Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) are open for salmon fishing. The daily limit and minimum size limits for the north jetty follow the most liberal regulations of either area.

Upriver from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line, hatchery steelhead have been keeping anglers busy from Longview to the Bonneville Pool. (The all-time daily steelhead count at Bonneville - 34,053 - was set on Aug. 13.) But recent reports of anglers catching chinook between Longview and Vancouver suggests heavier gear may be in order, Hymer said.

"The chinook fishery above Rocky Point can ramp up quickly," he said. "Anglers may want to think about switching from spinners and bait to wobblers - and fishing deep - if they want to pick up some chinook."

Fishing deep isn't a bad idea in any case, said Hymer, noting that the weather forecast calls for another hot spell. Under those conditions, he recommends fishing to a depth of 50 feet and looking for fish at the mouths of tributaries, where the water is cooler.

"We're also expecting a return to low-water conditions, so boaters need to be especially cautious around sandbars and rocks," he said. "We've already seen at least one boat stranded on a sand bar this season."

Anglers fishing on tributaries to the Columbia River should also be aware of new rules adopted to protect wild salmon while providing greater access to hatchery fish:

- **Bonus hatchery coho retention:** Anglers may retain up to six hatchery adult coho on all lower Columbia tributaries with hatchery programs, including the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal rivers. Last year, the Cowlitz River was the only system with a daily limit of six hatchery adult coho.
- **Release all wild chinook:** Anglers must release all wild chinook (adults and jacks) on the Elochoman and Kalama rivers, where mass-marked fall chinook that are two, three and four years old will be returning this year. Very few five and six year-olds are expected, so this regulation provides additional protection for wild chinook adults with a minimal loss of sportfishing opportunity for older unmarked hatchery fish.
- **Release wild chinook jacks:** This rule will be in effect on the Cowlitz, Toutle (including Green and North Fork), Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake. Two and three year-old mass-marked fall chinook will be returning to the Cowlitz, Toutle and Washougal rivers, while two, three, and four year-olds will return to the Little

White Salmon National Fish Hatchery. Some strays from various hatcheries also can be found in the Washington tributaries above Bonneville Dam.

- **Hatchery chinook strays on the Lewis River:** Anglers may retain stray hatchery chinook on the Lewis River and North Fork Lewis through September. While no fall chinook are released from Lewis River hatcheries, some stray tules are found in the system.
- **Boat angling restriction on the North Fork Lewis River:** This regulation, which applies to the Cedar Creek area, will be delayed until October to give anglers greater access to the large number of hatchery coho expected to return to the river. The restriction on boats will still take effect in time to protect wild fall chinook, which are expected to return in improved numbers but just above the minimum escapement goal.
- **Grays and Elochoman rivers opened Aug. 1:** The starting date for fall salmon fisheries was moved up to allow anglers to catch early arriving fish, particularly Select Area Bright fall chinook that stray into the Grays River.

Anglers looking for a different kind of fishing experience may want to consider a trip to an alpine lake. Tips on fishing the state's "high lakes" and recommendations of good places to go are available at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/outreach/fishing/highlake.htm>.

"Fishing one of the region's high lakes can be a terrific experience, and a great way to beat the heat," Hymer said. "Two words of caution: In the Indian Heaven Wilderness lakes, the daily limit for trout is three fish. Secondly, don't forget the mosquito repellent."

Eastern Washington

Despite summer's weather fluctuations, **rainbow trout** fishing remains excellent at Sprague Lake on the Lincoln-Adams county line. Lenny Hahn, WDFW enforcement officer from Spokane, recently checked anglers there, many with their daily catch limits of five trout. Hahn checked and photographed one 22-inch rainbow at Sprague that weighed nearly five pounds.

"I think fishermen have a good chance of catching similar sized rainbows at Sprague if they make the trip and put in the time," Hahn said.

Hahn said trout limits are still being caught at Williams Lake in southwest Spokane County. Fishing action on trout and warmwater species at Downs and Chapman lakes in the same area was slower at last check.

Upper Spokane River catch-and-release fishing for rainbows over 19 inches has been good, but Hahn reminds anglers they must use selective gear - artificial flies or lures with one single-point barbless hook, no bait, and only knotless nets (see definition on page 24 of the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

Steelhead are returning to the Snake River in large numbers this year, many already beginning to pass through fish ladders at the river's dams. The steelhead catch-and-keep season opens Sept. 1, and although currently warm water temperatures may slow the bite, the action should pick up with cooler weather ahead. The mouths of the Snake's tributaries like the Tucannon and Grande Ronde, and the confluence with the Clearwater on the Idaho border, are usually most productive at the start of the season.

Glen Mendel, WDFW southeast district fish biologist, reminds steelheaders that barbless hooks are required and the daily trout catch limit of six fish includes up to three hatchery-marked steelhead (healed scar at clipped adipose or ventral fin).

Anglers who like to camp on WDFW's Wooten Wildlife Area in Columbia County while trout fishing the Tucannon River impoundments there, will be glad to know the campfire ban is lifted. Area Manager Kari Dingman says that with recent rains, the wildfire danger is lower and campfires are again allowed in WDFW campgrounds.

Northcentral Washington

Art Viola, WDFW Chelan district fish biologist, reminds anglers that Lake Wenatchee **sockeye salmon** fishing closed Aug. 11. Unexpected and substantial sockeye mortality occurred during migration up the Wenatchee River due to high water temperatures, and insufficient numbers of sockeye were available to continue the season.

However, Lake Chelan land-locked **summer chinook salmon** fishing will continue because there are sufficient numbers of stocked sterile, triploid chinook. Viola reminds anglers there is no fishing allowed within 400 feet of the mouths of all Lake Chelan tributaries, minimum size is 15 inches, and the daily catch limit is one salmon. "WDFW is trying to maintain the abundance of chinook in Lake Chelan at a level that minimizes predation on kokanee and cutthroat trout but still provides fish for harvest," Viola said. The fishery will also help control the numbers of some naturally reproducing diploid chinook.

Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist, reminds anglers that adult **sockeye salmon** in Lake Osoyoos can be retained through Aug. 30. Sockeye salmon returns above Zosel Dam are predicted to be in excess of needs for wild fish to reach spawning grounds, so retention is allowable. Minimum size limit is 12 inches, and the daily catch limit is four sockeye salmon. All chinook salmon and all sockeye with colored anchor (floy) tag attached must be released.

The south entrance gate of the Quincy Lakes unit of the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area in Grant County will close indefinitely beginning Aug. 24 in response to gang-related graffiti tagging, garbage dumping and destruction of public property, including toilets, concrete walkways, parking areas and signs. The north entrance will remain open.

Closing one gate is expected to reduce unpermitted through-traffic on the north-south road through the unit. That road is traditionally closed to motor vehicles Oct. 1 through Feb. 28 during hunting season. Foot traffic is allowed year-round. Wildlife area users are encouraged to report vandalism and any other illegal activity to local law enforcement.

Southcentral Washington

Jim Cummins, WDFW fish biologist from Yakima, says this is a great time for hiking anglers to head for the high country and fish the mountain lakes. "The trails are maintained and the bugs are on the decline now," he said. "Fishing for **cutthroat**, **rainbow** and **eastern brook trout** can be rewarding now until the snow falls."

Cummins encourages anglers to check out the region's "Primer for High Lakes" for a partial list of lakes and the species of fish in each, available in printed form at WDFW's Yakima office and via the Internet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg3/highlakes.pdf>.

Paul Hoffarth, WDFW district fish biologist from Pasco, says the best current fishing in the Tri-Cities area is for warm water species. Walleye, bass, and perch fishing has been excellent in recent weeks, he reports, especially in Lake Umatilla, the John Day Dam pool on the Columbia River.

Hoffarth reminds Columbia River **fall chinook salmon** anglers that the anti-snagging rule is in effect for salmon and steelhead between Bonneville and McNary dams. See page 15 of the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>.

The fall chinook sport fishery in the Hanford Reach is under way and scheduled to continue through Oct. 22. Hoffarth says the catch is usually slow until mid-September. He reminds anglers to release all steelhead caught in the Columbia River above the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco.

The lower Yakima River will open Sept. 1 for salmon fishing, including all areas from Prosser Dam downstream to the Columbia River. The night closure and anti-snagging rules will be in effect for all species.

The Snake River opens for **hatchery steelhead** retention Sept. 1, and Hoffarth says the summer run steelhead are returning in large numbers this year.

"They are already beginning to pass through McNary and Snake River dam fish ladders in increasing numbers," Hoffarth said. "River temperatures are warm and will likely slow the bite. But as temperatures cool, the steelhead fishing will improve and Tri-Cities area anglers should be in for a terrific early fall fishery."

Hoffarth reminds anglers that barbless hooks are required when fishing in the Snake River for steelhead.

Eric Anderson, WDFW district fish biologist from Yakima, reminds anglers of the Sept. 1 - Oct. 22 closure of fall **chinook** and **coho salmon** fishing on the Yakima River from Hwy. 223 Bridge at Granger to Sunnyside (Parker) Dam, within the Yakama Reservation Boundary Reach. During that time period, the night closure and anti-snagging rule restrictions are lifted for all other game fish species since they are not necessary to protect salmon.

TGF Inbox – Reader Email

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

Advanced rod building

<http://www.pictoweave.com/>

Techniques for Applying Rod Finish (videos)

<http://www.mudhole.us/101/video/artvideo.html>

Big catfish

<http://www.extremescience.com/BiggestFreshwaterFish.htm>

GOOD LUCK!