

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **November 13th – November 19th, 2009**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Sturgeon fishing continues to slow for keepers in the gorge however shaker action remains consistent for the few attempting it. Bank anglers are still fairing decent with an average of 1 keeper for every 11 rods.

Salmon fishing from the mouth of the Sandy to Bonneville Dam remains open but catches have dropped to nearly nothing.

Flow at Willamette Falls has increased by 10,000 cfs over four days earlier this week. With a YTD count of nearly 25,000, coho daily counts are dwindling. Keeper sturgeon in the Willamette are most likely to be intercepted between Milwaukie and the mouth of the Clackamas. Action should begin to heat up in the harbor later this month.

The North Santiam is high and fishing remains slow. Drift boats should use extreme caution or try the easier stretch below Green's Bridge.

The coho run is winding down in the Clackamas. There are good numbers of coho in Eagle Creek, most of which are too far gone for the table.

It's getting late in the year to expect much coho action on the Sandy. It would be better to revisit this one in December when the winter steelhead run starts.

Northwest – The Tillamook County fall chinook fishery should be peaking right now but action remains subdued although effort isn't. Driftboaters worked north coast streams under ideal conditions early this week with little success to show for their effort.

The Wilson, Trask, Kilchis and Nestucca Rivers were top bets this week but none produced consistent results for anglers. The Kilchis River is putting out quite a few chum salmon to catch and release anglers. Beginning November 16th, it is illegal to target chum salmon. River levels are expected to remain fishable through the weekend and may clear of leafy debris to allow for better opportunity to driftboaters.

Winter steelhead may make a small showing on the Nestucca, Wilson, North Fork Nehalem and Necanicum Rivers when flows subside. Anglers are anticipating good returns given the rebound in summer steelhead and coho numbers this year.

Chinook are still being caught in Tillamook Bay as John Weed and his step son of Portland limited out on Sunday with 2 fresh fish taken at Bay City near high slack on herring. Tides begin to increase again this weekend but the rain freshet itself should draw in what few returning adults are around.

Crabbing is not the best option this weekend but the lower Columbia is sure to produce limits of quality sized keepers when tides reach slack.

Despite good tides, high surf will likely curb razor clam digging on the north coast. If you go, be very cautious of sneaker waves that are quite common in the fall.

Southwest – Winchester Bay has been slow to fair for chinook fishing on spinners. Coho have moved upriver above Elkton but only hatchery fish may be retained and there aren't many despite the ODFW's optimism regarding fin-clip returns. The South Umpqua will be closed to all fishing until December 1st.

Siltcoos has shown slight improvement for coho. Trolled spoons have been most effective.

Coquille anglers are doing fair for both chinook and coho with recent precipitation drawing fish upriver. The wild coho fishery remains open here and has shown some improvement recently with best results coming on spinners. Bank fishers are having some success with coho on bobber and bait. Sevenmile Creek has been a hotspot for chinook.

The Coos had fresh chinook move in over the past weekend which improved fishing.

Fall chinook action on the lower Rogue is primarily around Agness now with the first winter steelhead catches reported. Summer steelhead fishing is improving on the middle Rogue. Use single egg imitations below spawning salmon. Steelheading is good on the upper river.

The Chetco remains closed above Highway 101. The closure may be lifted with improved flows. Anglers are allowed to keep only two unclipped chinook for the entire season once the river opens. As great as offshore bottom fishing is at this time of year, there have been few opportunities with the ocean rough.

Well over an inch of rain fell on the southwest coast Monday this week, bringing the level of the Elk up and the water off-color. Chinook fishing will be good as it drops, which can occur quickly.

Eastern – Although steelheading historically slows at this time of year on the Deschutes, it's still worthwhile. With the October Caddis hatch just about done, trout fishing is only fair.

Wickiup has been producing some nice brown trout to trollers with very little pressure at this time of year.

The John Day Pool steelhead fishery remained consistent with last weeks catches; about 1 fish per rod but the hatchery to wild ratio improved allowing lucky anglers a better chance for a keeper.

Grand Ronde anglers are coming up with better results as was expected with the huge run over Bonneville this year. **Pro guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688)** reports double-digit opportunities exist for the persistent angler and fly anglers will see decent opportunities until the ice interferes with their drifts.

SW Washington – District rivers remain a good option for coho anglers. Over 64,000 coho adults have returned to the Cowlitz Hatchery. Early winter steelhead have returned to the Cowlitz, Kalama and Washougal Rivers indicating a possible strong return.

The lower Klickitat River is peaking for coho right now with boat and bank anglers averaging 1.5 coho each. Some of the fish are beginning to color up.

Columbia River Fishing Report – This section of the report is going to get more sparse as the year wears on. It's always difficult for me to conceive that the mighty Columbia doesn't have awesome opportunity all year long after witnessing what we did this year; especially in the coho

fishery. But for motivated anglers, the John Day steelhead fishery can be pretty special this time of year.

Starting with sturgeon, action for shakers remains good but most people are seeking an opportunity to take home a keeper. Those are becoming increasingly harder to find in the Bonneville area where bank anglers are having fair success, taking nearly one keeper for every 11 rods. As flows increase, the bite likely won't get any better but keepers may become more concentrated in the faster flows. Smelt will remain the top bait but shrimp or squid may have some application here as well.

There are some keepers and a fair number of shakers coming from downstream of the gorge these days. In years past (and I do mean several years ago), there was a decent fishery for sturgeon in the Trojan stretch of the Columbia. That fishery has faded with the smelt run as it seems many Columbia sturgeon now exit the river and head for other estuaries up and down the west coast. Now days, the Willamette begins to heat up but the action won't be much different on the Willamette system until a more dramatic difference in water temperatures occurs between the two metro river systems.

As for salmon, it's pretty much over. There will be a rare coho caught in the Troutdale area but effort is dropping just like the catch rates are. The chinook fishery at Bonneville is over.

The John Day Pool fishery remained about as productive this week as it was last. Action is good but not nearly as good as it usually gets this time of year. And frankly, with the return that we experienced, it seems a bit odd that the action hasn't been better. It's still not peak season for this fishery so action is likely to pick up. The one positive improvement has been an up-tick in the hatchery to wild ratio. The ratio is closer to a 1:1 but wild fish still outnumber hatchery fish in the creel counts by a slight edge.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia can certainly be a highlight this time of year. The soft tides this week produced some excellent results. The best action was downstream of Hammond and of course, the fresher the bait, the better. Bigger tides this week will slow success.

The Guide's Forecast – Catch and release sturgeon fishing should remain good in the Columbia River Gorge however colder weather will likely begin to slow catches and certainly cause misery among anglers. This fishery will abruptly begin to slow and fish are likely to move out of the river and into other coastal estuaries and the lower Willamette River.

Go upriver to target steelhead in the gentlemen's troll fishery. This takes place in the John Day Pool using plugs such as wiggle warts and hot shots fished under the surface between 8 and 15 feet down. The action should begin to heat up and boaters can utilize the lower John Day as well if you are comfortable running the river. This fishery should improve in the coming weeks.

Not the best time to go crabbing but it's still an option around slack tide (either high or low). Target keepers from Buoy 22 to 20 and lower Desdemona Sands. It may be best to wait until the following week when tides go weak again.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – As the flow has increased in the lower Willamette, the visibility has dropped to about 2.5 feet. water temperatures have hovered right around 50 degrees.

The water level of the McKenzie has risen while the temperature is hovering in the mid-40s.

North Santiam water levels are high and expected to remain that way.

The Guide's Forecast – Sturgeon fishing has improved somewhat on the lower Willamette. It generally out-performs the Columbia into the winter months due to slightly higher water temperatures here than in the big river.

Summer steelhead have continued to enter the trap at Leaburg Dam on the McKenzie with fish recycled downstream to provide anglers another chance at them/ Trout fishing above the dam has been fair.

Prospects are fair at best on the Santiam system for steelhead and coho.

Four- and five-year-old rainbow trout are scheduled for release this week at Walter Wirth, Walling and Junction City ponds this week according to the ODFW website.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – With the curtain falling on the 2009 coho run, fishing is slow to futile on the Sandy and Clackamas rivers. Winter steelhead are next on the angler's menu but it will be a while before sufficient numbers show up to create a worthwhile fishery.

North Coast Fishing Report – It's full steam ahead for fall chinook in the Tillamook district; except without the fish! Despite great water conditions, fall chinook are still challenging to find in any great numbers on the north coast. The stand by tributaries are producing some fish but the Ghost Hole seems to still remain one of the best options for the boating angler.

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reported hit and miss results for chinook drifting the Trask River early in the week. He started his week on the Kilchis where he termed the drift "chum city", as he and many other anglers ran into many more chum than chinook on that stretch. He followed up the next day with a drift on the Trask only to come up with a few opportunities that did not connect. By Wednesday, he became quite persistent, going back to the Trask and limiting out his 2 customers with a pair of nice fresh fall fish and about 3 other grabs on the plugs. With the rivers being up, the fish are certainly on the move.

Reports from the Kilchis are consistently talking about chum salmon numbers on the river. Like the heavy return of coho, chum salmon are in the ocean for the same number of years and migrate out as juveniles indicating what we've known for some time now. We had favorable out migrating conditions when these fish went to sea. It's no big surprise that the chum run has come back and it should be good again next year. Although few people target chum anymore, they do make great sport for all types of gear fishermen. It will be likely what you encounter if you are fishing on the Kilchis River anytime soon.

The Wilson River has recently remained too high to expect good results. Prior to the higher flows, action was slow as we fished Sunday in the tidewater section of the river with no takes. Leafy debris and colored water were surely factors in the poor early season program on the Wilson. This river will likely be one of the better producers when water levels drop enough to keep gear fishing leaf free. That may be by the weekend.

Bay fishers have been doing pretty good despite the fact fish should be moving into the river systems and not holding in the estuary or tidewater sections of the river. Trollers working the east side of the bay caught fish on herring fishing through the second half of incoming tide. The action was fairly good for the few boats participating. This fishery doesn't seem to get too

affected when the rivers are up and dirty. In recent history, there has been some great action in the estuary this time of year.

Although the Nestucca River did produce some fish this week, like other big systems on the north coast, leafy debris and high water deterred some anglers from putting in a good effort. Fish were available throughout the system, especially in the higher flows but brighter fish were present from 1st Bridge downstream. Anglers still had to hunt pretty hard to find fair numbers however.

Bay crabbing remains fair at best on Tillamook while Netarts is still producing good catches. The stronger tides we're now coming up on may change that however. The lower Columbia remains the best place to be.

The Guide's Forecast – If predicted river levels come to fruition, the action should be fair in ideal conditions on the Wilson River this weekend. We just need a little reprieve from the rain to bring it into great shape. Leafy debris will not be as big an issue when flows drop but there will be big numbers of anxious anglers in pursuit of what few fall chinook will be returning.

The Kilchis will also be fishing good but most anglers will come across chum salmon before chinook. Some chinook will certainly be present but results will be far from impressive. When flows drop, Kilchis chinook will be well pooled up and the first boat through the holes will witness the best results. Lower river boaters will have some of the better opportunities when fish ride the strong incoming tides into the lower stretches in the morning.

The Trask and Nestucca will be almost equal in opportunity but there will likely be ample numbers of anglers working these rivers as well. Darker fish will be present in these systems as the bulk of the run returns a bit earlier than the other systems. Like other systems, the fresher fish will be found in the lower stretches as the flows drop.

Bay anglers will still have good opportunities for incoming salmon with the morning flood producing the best results. Target fish on the east side of the bay with the Ghost Hole and Bay City producing the best results. Keep your herring weed and leaf free and you stand a fair chance at a fish. Most of the crowd should be drifting the river at that time.

Crabbing success should begin to drop with the exception of Netarts Bay. That fishery should be stable except extreme tides will limit the times when picking is most productive.

Good clam tides begin on Friday afternoon but a high surf will likely keep the clams from feeding heavy and near the surface where they are easily harvested.

Central & South Coast Reports – The ODFW is seeking volunteers to assist in fin-clipping starting Monday, November 16th, at the Alsea River Hatchery. Call (541) 757-4186 or (541) 487-7240 For details or click [here](#) to sign up.

Mussel harvesting opened from Bastendorf Beach near Charleston north but remains closed south of that point to the California border.

Rainfall has yet to negatively effect crabbing in bays and estuaries but the front moving in this coming weekend may change that. Ocean crabbing re-opens December 1st.

The wild coho fishery at Siltcoos Lake has been extremely slow.

The mainstem Umpqua has coho and Chinook scattered up to the confluence of the North and South forks. Catches are good but wild coho must be released here. Steelheading in the North Umpqua has slowed.

Coos Bay has been producing good catches of Dungeness with near-limits coming to those trying off area docks. The bay has been clamming well and enthusiasts will have an opportunity this weekend with evening minus tides.

Coquille Chinook catches have slowed with the exception of the mouth of Sevenmile Creek. With about 65% of the quota remaining, fishing for wild coho has been slow and this fishery is scheduled to close at the end of November.

The action for Chinook and coho in Rogue Bay has continued to taper off. Even up near Agness, anglers are finding only dark fish although half-pounders are cooperative in this area and the most desirable target at this time. With the next freshet, fish holding in the lower river will make their final journey up the tributaries to spawn. Steelheading on the middle Rogue is delivering decent catches although the vast majority of these fish are of non-hatchery origin,

making this a catch-and-release fishery. Summer steelhead fishing on the upper Rogue is providing decent action now as fish stage below spawning salmon where they are responding to single egg imitations and small offerings of cured eggs. The Rogue is closed above Lost Creek Reservoir. Boaters should be able to get out early mornings this weekend to take advantage of excellent bottom fishing opportunities out of the Port of Brookings but should be prepared to duck back into port before winds kick up later in the day. Pressure for Chinook in the estuary has been very light although catches have been fair to good for those trying. The Chetco River remains closed indefinitely above the Highway 101 Bridge due to low water conditions in order to protect spawning salmon.

Chinook catches on the Elk and Sixes are fair to good with fresh fish entering with the tides but expect the next freshet to move them upriver.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Re-paving of the lower John Day boat ramp at LePage is supposed to be completed on Friday, November 12th, but this project has been unpredictable from the get-go in the fourth week of October. It's best to call the park at 541-506-7819 to find out before making the trip. Steelheading has been slow to fair.

With the water conditions optimum, the Grande Ronde is providing outstanding steelhead fishing around Troy. Weekday pressure is light despite virtually everyone hooking up but a change in water level or temperature could curtail the action here.

Pro guide Mac Huff (800-940-3688) reports from the Grande Ronde, "Last year's fishing was dismal and I couldn't bring myself to write an honest report. Late in October and through November we caught fish, but big days were 3 or 4 and my biggest day was 7 landed.

"This year we're having lots of days with 9 or 10 fish hooked and whatever number the anglers and fish can agree on being landed. Most amazing two days was a couple ladies that hooked 31. November is improving and I'm consistently getting fly anglers into a half-dozen fish landed each day. Some days they and most of the fish hooked, other days the fish win more. Water temperatures remain good at low to mid 40s. Water volume is a bit higher than usual in the 900 cfs range, which is fine for fishing and good for moving fish into the system.

"Expect excellent fishing anytime the river is free of ice. The water can be expected to remain fishable into early December, then it typically becomes a day-to-day event. Gear anglers can continue to catch fish with bobber and jig through the flowing ice, but fly anglers are done when ice starts flowing and hurts their drift?"

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report November 11th – November 24th, 2009

North Puget Sound

There have been a few reports of some late-season coho in the region's rivers, but freshwater anglers are mostly reeling in chum salmon. Out on Puget Sound, salmon fisheries are under way in several marine areas, where anglers have hooked some nice blackmouth.

"While it's not as hot as the first few days of November, **blackmouth** fishing is still pretty good in Puget Sound," said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "My advice to anglers is get out on the water while the fishing is good."

Four marine areas in the region are open for blackmouth - resident chinook. Anglers fishing marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers fishing for blackmouth that **crabbing** also is a possibility. Marine Area 10 and most of Marine Area 9 are open for crabbing seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2010. The portion of Marine Area 9 south of a line from Foulweather Bluff to Olele Point is closed for the season. Crab fishing also is open seven days a week through Jan. 2 in marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (south Puget Sound).

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. For more information about recreational crabbing in Puget Sound, see WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab>.

In the rivers, reports indicate anglers are mostly hooking **chum salmon**, although a few **coho** continue to be caught in some streams. One hot spot for salmon fishing in the region is the Skykomish River, where anglers have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, but must release chinook.

For **trout** anglers, Beaver Lake near Issaquah could be the best place to cast for rainbows over the next couple of weeks. About 2,000 hatchery rainbows - averaging about 3 pounds each - have been released in the lake. Beaver Lake, which is one of several westside lowland lakes open to fishing year-round, is best fished by small boat, although anglers also can be successful fishing from shore, said Chad Jackson, fishery biologist for WDFW. The daily bag limit is five fish, and bait anglers must keep the first five trout they catch.

Before heading out, anglers should check the regulations for all freshwater and saltwater fisheries in the *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>).

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

As the chum salmon season nears its peak, anglers fishing the shores of Hood Canal and Puget Sound streams are finding success landing the big fish. On the coast, early winter-run steelhead are moving into area rivers while a razor-clam dig is planned for mid-November.

An evening **razor-clam** dig has been approved Nov. 14-17 at Twin Harbors, while Long Beach, Copalis and Mocrocks are scheduled for evening digs Nov. 14-16. Kalaloch Beach will be open Nov. 16 for one day of digging. No digging will be allowed at any beach before noon.

Evening low tides during the dig are at 4:34 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 14 (-0.3 ft.), 5:21 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 15 (-0.7 ft.), 6:05 p.m. Monday, Nov. 16 (-0.9 ft.), 6:47 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 17 (-0.8 ft.).

The best time to start digging is an hour or two before low tide. Clam diggers should also take lights or lanterns and check weather and surf conditions before heading out.

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

A license is required for anyone age 15 or older. Any 2009 annual shellfish/seaweed license or combination fishing license is still valid. Another option is a razor-clam only license available in annual or three-day only versions. Descriptions of the various options are available on the WDFW website at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov>.

More digs are tentatively scheduled Dec. 2-5 and Dec. 31 - Jan. 3, subject to the results of marine toxin tests.

Meanwhile, as the season nears its peak, **chum** salmon can be found in virtually every small stream in the area. Popular fishing spots include the mouth of Kennedy Creek on Totten Inlet (where a recent creel check showed 66 anglers with 70 fish) and the Hoodspout Hatchery (where 81 shore anglers recently landed 67 chum). Anglers are reminded that the daily limit in the Hoodspout "hatchery zone" is four salmon, with a maximum of two chinook. Other areas now open to chum salmon fishing include the Dosewallips and Duckabush rivers in Jefferson County and Minter Creek in Pierce/Kitsap Counties.

Salmon fishing on coastal rivers has been hampered by recent rains, but catch rates should improve once the weather gets better, said David Low, WDFW fish biologist. "Virtually every river is out of shape right now, but the rain is also bringing in more fish," he said.

By the time conditions improve, anglers can start thinking about the winter steelhead season, Low said. "December is the big month for hatchery steelhead on the north Olympic Peninsula - including rivers in the Quillayute system and Hoh River," Low said. "We're already seeing some early winter-run fish, so hopefully that's a good sign."

Starting Dec. 1, wild steelhead retention rules go into effect on rivers in the Quillayute system. Low advises anglers to review retention rules in WDFW's 2009-2010 *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> before heading out.

Recreational crab fishing is under way in five marine areas of Puget Sound, including marine areas 4 (Neah Bay), 5 (Sekiu), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 13 (south Puget Sound), and a portion of Marine Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet). Crab fishing in those areas is open seven days a week through Jan. 2, 2010. The portion of Marine Area 9 south of a line from Foulweather Bluff to Olele Point is closed for the season.

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.

Recreational crabbers are required to send in a winter catch card or report their catch online by Jan. 15. People failing to submit their winter reports will receive a \$10 fine when they apply for a 2010 Puget Sound crab endorsement. For more information about recreational crabbing in Puget Sound, see WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab>.

In the South Sound, anglers fishing in marine areas 11 and 13 (Vashon Island to South Puget Sound) may retain **wild chinook** as part of their two-fish daily limit, but only one chinook - hatchery or wild - may be retained.

Anglers are advised to check the 2009-2010 *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm> before heading out.

Southwest Washington

The **late coho** run has peaked in the lower Columbia River Basin, but another major fishery is taking shape as the first **winter steelhead** move into the area. Since the winter steelhead season usually doesn't rev up until Thanksgiving, anglers might want to consider a few other options between now and then:

- **Klickitat coho:** Catch rates for coho have been tapering off below Bonneville Dam, but the Klickitat River has remained a hotspot for boat and bank anglers alike. Creel checks through the first week of November showed an average catch of 1.5 fish per rod. "But don't wait too long," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "It's hard to tell how long those fish will be on the bite."
- **Sturgeon:** Columbia River bank anglers have been averaging one legal-size white sturgeon for every 10 to 15 rods just downstream from Bonneville Dam. "And with blustery weather in the forecast, anglers' odds could improve since sturgeon seem to get energized by increased river flows and turbidity," Hymer said. Anglers fishing from the Wauna powerlines upstream to the dam can keep one white sturgeon measuring between 38 and 54 inches fork length per day on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays only. The statewide annual limit is five fish per license year (April through March).
- **Cowlitz cutthroats:** The fishery for sea-run cutthroat trout is in full swing on the Cowlitz River, where 1,100 cutts had returned to the hatcheries through November 4. "Sea-run cutthroat are aggressive, hard-fighting fish," Hymer said. "They'll take flies, bait, lures - practically anything you throw at them." Fishing should be good from Blue Creek near the trout hatchery on downriver, he said. Up to five cutthroats per day may be retained as part of the daily trout limit on the lower Cowlitz River, where the fish generally range from 12 to 20 inches.
- **Swift Reservoir:** Anglers fishing the reservoir have continued to reel in some nice rainbows averaging 12-13 inches, with some up to 20 inches. Fishing was recently extended through Nov. 30 for game fish and salmon.

Bright, **late-stock coho** are still moving up a number of tributaries to the lower Columbia River, including the Elochoman, Cowlitz, Lewis, Kalama, and Washougal rivers. "There are still a lot of coho throughout the system," Hymer said. "The question is how long they'll keep biting." Through the first week of November over 64,000 fish had returned to the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery and close to 90,000 had crossed Bonneville Dam since Oct. 1.

Anglers fishing the mainstem Columbia near the mouth of the Lewis River should also be aware that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began blasting and dredging the shipping channel around Warrior Rock on the north end of Sauvie Island on Nov. 1. All watercraft will be prohibited from entering a 1,500-yard safety zone around the site without permission. Boaters who wish to enter the safety zone can contact the Coast Guard at VHF 13 or VHF 16 for specific instructions. For additional information, see <http://ww.crci-project.info>.

Meanwhile, **winter steelhead** will soon start hitting baits and lures in tributaries such as the Kalama, Lewis, Washougal, Elochoman and Grays rivers, along with Salmon Creek in Clark County, he said. As of the first week of November, 18 adipose-clipped steelhead had returned to the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery and two other facilities, with plenty more to follow.

Weekly escapement reports for winter steelhead are posted on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hat/escape/escape.htm>. In mid-November, WDFW will post a summary of last year's steelhead smolt plants at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/harvest/harvest.htm>, providing

anglers an indication of this year's fishing prospects. "We don't produce a pre-season forecast for steelhead, but the run should be decent," Hymer said. "The winter-run fish were planted during the same time as some of the upper Columbia summer-run fish, which came in strong this year."

As in past years, only hatchery steelhead with a clipped adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained. Anglers are advised to check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regs/fishregs.htm>) for daily catch limits and other regulations applicable in specific waters.

Grays River anglers should note the fishery for winter-run steelhead on the mainstem from the Hwy. 4 Bridge upstream and the West Fork will open two weeks early this year (Dec. 1 instead of Dec. 15). The mainstem Grays below the Hwy. 4 Bridge will open as usual on Nov. 15.

Eastern Washington

Snake River **steelhead** fishing is hot, particularly in the mid-river stretch above the bridge between Washington and Idaho. Joe Bumgarner, WDFW fish biologist, said the latest creel checks in that river section (650) show anglers are averaging less than four hours of effort per fish caught, and just over five hours per hatchery fish kept. The stretch between Lower Monumental and Little Goose dams was running about 13 hours per fish caught, and the Lower Grand Ronde River from the mouth at Bogans to the Oregon state line was running just under 14 hours per fish caught.

Other Snake River stretches recently checked included Little Goose to Lower Granite Dam with an average of a little less than 16 hours per fish caught, Lower Granite Dam to Clarkston with an average of slightly more than 17 hours per fish caught, and Ice Harbor to Lower Monumental dams with an average of over 26 hours per fish caught.

Bumgarner also notes that on Nov. 19 Lyons Ferry Fish Hatchery staff plan to sort steelhead that have returned to the hatchery and release those not needed for production. He estimates at least 1,000 steelhead could go back into the Snake River that day, and since almost all will be hatchery-marked fish, they will be available for harvest by anglers upstream.

Southwest Spokane County's Amber Lake remains open through the end of November for catch-and-release, selective-gear fishing for **cutthroat** and **rainbow trout**.

Anglers continue to reel in **rainbow trout** at year-round Sprague Lake on the Lincoln-Adams county line and at Lake Roosevelt, the reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam northwest of Spokane.

Anglers should be aware that from Nov. 16-21 crews will be making repairs to the boat launch at Newman Lake, east of Spokane. The launch will remain open during the work, but anglers planning to fish for **tiger muskies, bass, bluegill, crappie, perch** or **rainbow** and **eastern brook trout** at the year-round lake should expect delays.

Northcentral Washington

WDFW District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff said **steelhead** fishing in the mainstem Columbia River and the Methow and Okanogan rivers continues to be good. "Despite increasing numbers of anglers, the average catch rate continues to be about one fish for every eight to 10 hours of fishing," Jateff said.

Jateff reminds steelheaders that new regulations this season require that anglers retain every adipose-fin-clipped steelhead caught up to the maximum limit of four fish per day. Selective gear rules are in effect for all areas, except that bait is allowed on the mainstem Columbia River only.

Southcentral Washington

The **coho salmon** daily catch limit was recently increased on the portion of the Columbia River downstream of the Hwy. 395 bridge at Pasco. Now up to three (instead of two) of the six fish allowed per day may be adult fish (20 inches or more). The change was made because the overall returning run of coho was at or above expectations. All salmon other than chinook and coho must be released.

Columbia River **steelhead** fishing in the Tri-Cities area, below the powerline towers, continues to be productive. Paul Hoffarth, WDFW district fish biologist, reminds steelheaders the daily catch limit is two hatchery-marked steelhead.

Sturgeon anglers may want to attend a public meeting Nov. 12, from 6-8 p.m., at the McNary Dam visitor center conference room to discuss proposed fishing rule changes to protect sturgeon populations in the McNary Reservoir (Lake Wallula) and the John Day Reservoir (Lake Umatilla). The McNary changes include reducing the number of months that sturgeon can be harvested, and establishing new sanctuary zones below Ice Harbor and Priest Rapids dams. The John Day changes include options for lengthening the sturgeon sportfishing season to spread out pressure.

Reader E-mail

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

Monthly Hatch Charts for the Deschutes (commercial site):

<http://www.flyfishingdeschutes.com/custom.php?page=81>

Article on Hook Sharpening:

http://fishing.about.com/od/basicfishinginstruction/ss/Sharpen_Hooks.htm

GOOD LUCK!