

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 24

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 11th – June 17th, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Free Fishing Weekend is June 12th and 13th, during which time licenses and tags are not required for fishing, crabbing or clamming. Anglers may use a second rod where it's normally allowed in lakes and ponds. Take a non-fishing friend or better, a kid, fishing. Special events abound; for a list, visit <http://tinyurl.com/26z9y9n>.

Action for keeper sturgeon has slowed in the Columbia River Gorge but oversize seekers are still taking fair numbers of fish using fresh shad for bait. The shad run is beginning to peak with tens of thousands passing by Bonneville Dam daily.

Good steelhead action was witnessed at Jones Beach downstream of Longview on Monday. Migrating fish should reach Portland by the weekend or sooner. Heavy flows should concentrate fish near the shoreline where beach plunkers can harvest them using hot colored spin-n-glos for lures. Pink is a proven producer and use scent for the necessary edge.

Rain combined with snowmelt caused the Willamette to swell to winter levels, over the banks in some areas. It likely won't fish for several more days. There have been some decent chinook catches near the head of Multnomah Channel however as is often the case this time of year. Anglers typically switch to spinners to entice strikes in the warming water although temperatures remain lower than normal for this time of year.

The McKenzie will be fishable this week with the upper stretches producing early. Trout, steelhead and chinook are in the system but many of the salmon being hooked are native which require release.

North Santiam waters are stabilizing but high. With 15,000 summers over the Falls, there are hatchery steelhead in the river. The South was high and muddy at mid-week.

The Clackamas had good color mid week but was still high. There's supposed to be a good return this year and fishers should be able to tell if they are in by the weekend.

Try the Sandy for the weekend as it's a good prospect once it's back into shape. Steelhead may be the main focus but a few chinook should also be present.

Free Fishing Weekend means extensive trout planting state-wide. In the Willamette Valley, that includes Benson Lake, Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, Hartman Pond, Harriet Lake, Henry Hagg Lake, Huddleston Pond, North Fork Reservoir, Sheridan Pond, Silver Creek Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Timothy Meadows, West Salish Pond, South Fork Yamhill River, Alton Baker Canal, Big Cliff Reservoir, Blue River above the Reservoir, Blue River Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Detroit Reservoir, E. E. Wilson Pond, Fall Creek, Junction City Pond, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Roaring River Park Pond, Salmon Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake, Sunnyside Park Pond, and Walter Wirth Lake.

Northwest – Spring chinook fishing was nothing short of fantastic on lower Tillamook Bay early in the week. Limits or near limits of quality fish were taken by many anglers trolling herring along the jetty or in front of the Coast Guard Station in Garibaldi. The action isn't likely to persist as continued high water from local rivers will keep fish moving into the tributaries of upper Tillamook Bay.

Driftboaters working the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca are finding fair to good success and bank anglers working the Hatchery Hole on the Trask are catching fish daily. Quality drifting conditions should exist through the weekend with the lower stretches of these rivers producing the best results. The Trask receives the greatest hatchery plants and therefore the highest effort. Three Rivers is also an option for bank anglers. The Hatchery Hole on the Trask is slated to close on June 15th but further opportunities may exist if snagging and littering is not a problem.

Sturgeon anglers on the lower Columbia are struggling to find consistent success. Limits are rare but the fishing is showing signs of improvement as temperatures increase and tidal fluctuations grow. Don't expect great fishing this weekend but anglers fishing upstream of Tongue Point or in front of Astoria are faring the best.

Starting Saturday, the ocean opens up for fin-clipped chinook north of Cape Falcon to Leadbetter Point. Reports of commercially caught chinook were good on Monday, about 25 miles north of the mouth of the Columbia. Many of these fish are Columbia River bound summer chinook and they are averaging larger than 15 pounds.

Another minus tide series that started yesterday will improve into the weekend, making razor clam digging on the north coast productive. Diggers may want to call the shellfish hotline at 1-800-448-2474 to verify north coast beaches are still open to digging. Biotoxins have been detected along south coast beaches.

On the schedule to be planted with hatchery trout are Big Creek Reservoirs 1 and 2, Cape Mears Lake, Cleawox Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Hebo Lake, Olalla Creek Reservoir, Thissel Pond, and Town Lake

Southwest – Morning minus tides will make for good bay clamming this weekend, but beaches will be closed from Coos Bay south due to a naturally-occurring biotoxin.

Catch counts from the all-depth halibut opportunity June 3rd through 5th were not available but it's unlikely catches continued similar to those during the opening weekend as seas were rough. If quota remains, fishing will resume June 15 through 17th. Otherwise, the summer season starts August 6th.

Rock fishing has been good out of Charleston although lingcod catches have slowed. Surf perch fishing has been excellent when the ocean has laid down and these fish are running large. Joseph Yable took first place in the derby at Bandon, winning a \$120 prize with a three-pound pinkfin.

While the high, muddy waters of the lower Rogue were unfishable over the past weekend, upper river angling improved as chinook sought better water conditions. Clearing mid-week, it remains to be seen how the lower river will fish over Free Fishing Weekend but it should hold up well for another couple of weeks.

Boats launching out of Brookings are returning with fine catches of rockfish in addition to large lingcod to over 20 and occasionally over 30 pounds.

Howard Prairie Reservoir, Lost Creek Reservoir, Medco Pond, Lake Selmac, Expo Pond, Rogue above Lost Creek, Middle and Lower Empire Lake, Libby Pond, Millicoma Pond, Morth and South Tenmile Lake, Clearwater Forebay #2, Cooper Cr. Reservoir, Galesville Reservoir Hemlock Lake, Herbert's Pond, Lake in the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir Loon Lake, Marie Lake and Plat I Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with trout.

Eastern – White River spiked late last week and has continued to spew. Fishing is good on the upper Deschutes, the middle river fair with the lower river fishing by the weekend.

John Day boat launch at Wheeler opened this week. Following was a river crest at 19,000 cfs at McDonald Crossing on Sunday, it's gradually dropping.

SW Washington – District streams are not producing results for salmon or steelhead like they should be this time of year. Spring chinook are available at the Barrier Dam on the Cowlitz and summer run steelhead are beginning to show in better numbers. The Lewis and Kalama are fair at best.

Tributaries above Bonneville will produce fair catches when flows drop with the Klickitat and Wind Rivers the best bets. Summer steelhead should begin to show in Drano Lake but it's still weeks away from peak fishing.

Columbia River Fishing Report – All eyes remain on chinook dam counts at Bonneville as the summer chinook fishery is slated to open on June 16th (Wednesday) for fin-clipped adult salmon only from Tongue Point and upstream. Also open will be summer steelhead above I-5. Full regulations for the Columbia River can be found here:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/reg_changes/columbia.asp This is a good resource, print it out!

Creel checks over the weekend indicated fair fishing for bank anglers in the Portland to Longview stretch which surprised me given that fact that we're on a small tide exchange. What became clear however is the fact that we clearly have a lot of water being flushed down from upriver, which keeps steelhead close to the shoreline where bank anglers have access to them. Couple this with a good minus tide series this week and bank action could really show signs of promise. But more of that in the next section (forecast). Here are the checks from Bonneville downstream:

Gorge Bank:

Weekend checking showed 657 shad kept for 246 anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekend checking showed 284 shad kept, plus 28 shad, and three adult spring chinook released for 13 boats (36 anglers).

Portland to Longview Bank:

Weekend checking showed 24 adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and one jack spring chinook kept, plus two unclipped steelhead, 11 adult spring chinook, one jack spring chinook, and one shad released for 161 bank anglers.

Portland to Longview Boats:

Weekend checking showed no catch for three steelhead boats (seven anglers); and no catch for three shad boats (six anglers).

Estuary Bank (Jones Beach to Clatsop Spit):

Weekend checking showed six adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, plus one unclipped steelhead released for 52 anglers.

Estuary Boats (Puget Island to Tongue Point):

Weekend checking showed one adult spring chinook released for one boat (one angler).

Most obvious is the fact the shad are in. Even though this isn't going to be a record breaking year for shad (far from it), it's clear that we're entering peak passage for these fish. Great action and great crab bait! And how about those chinook being released? Looks like a good summer chinook fishery lies ahead! The prediction for Columbia River summer chinook is 88,800 returning adults. That should make for a good fishery!

On the sturgeon side of the coin, action in the gorge has cooled as keeper and shaker sized fish have apparently moved downriver to partake in the estuary summer feeding frenzy. It's pretty easy pickings for the oversized variety however as anglers using fresh caught shad for bait are finding good success downstream of Marker 82.

In the Portland to Longview stretch, it's apparent that the cold and turbid water influence of the Willamette River has chilled the mainstem Columbia River bite this week. Action was pretty decent just over a week ago but the last low pressure system has kept the feeding frenzy to a minimum. Keepers are likely transitioning from the gorge to the estuary and being intercepted in between. This fishery is likely to fade in the coming weeks.

Estuary anglers are struggling to find consistent success for keepers as even the most experienced guides are not coming up with limits as usual right now. Fishing downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge is nearly worthless with crab and sculpin bringing anglers to a frustration level not witnessed in a very long time. Some of the better action remains just above the bridge on both the Oregon and Washington side as weak tides last week allowed for anglers to fish the deep water (with anchovies) without having to use downrigger balls to hold baits on the bottom. The Oregon side in front of Astoria has been one of the better bets but again, limits are certainly the exception although some quality fish are showing in the catches.

Fishing even further upstream "in the islands" does have its advantages but you should know where you're going or at least travel up there with caution. The area is riddled with sandbars and deadheads have caused a few lethal accidents in recent history. There aren't many people fishing up there but the action isn't red hot by any means up there either. There does seem to be plenty of fish around but they are reluctant to bite in the cold water (57.4 degrees for much of the early part of the week) and high flows from recent rainfall hasn't helped much either. Then throw the fact that the incoming tide subdues flow and it's a quiet place to drown shrimp and anchovies for a large part of the day. Recent weather likely won't help things but hopefully the weekend holds better promise. The estuary bite has varied using shrimp and anchovies. Overall, shrimp have been quite effective if you're not fishing in deep water (>20 feet). But even some of the 50 foot areas we've been fishing have produced good bites using shrimp for bait. The anchovies have been running mostly small so plan on using more than one bait or buying more than you plan on using to cull out the smaller, harder to rig anchovies. One thing is for sure, don't come down to the estuary right now if you think you're going to come back with an easy limit. It will challenge your sturgeon expertise.

The Guide's Forecast – As you may realize from the above content, opportunities are arising on the Columbia River. By June 16th, the information above should get even more fulfilling.

On that note, starting with salmon, the summer chinook season opener should be a good one, especially for Bonneville anchor anglers. Dam counts are taking shape and will only improve in the coming weeks. These summer chinook are of the highest quality and only fin-clipped hatchery fish may be retained. Spinners will take the bulk of the catch in this area and anglers should be well versed in anchoring tactics before fishing this stretch. Flows have been heavy so plan on using lots of lead to keep your offerings down. This fishery is slated to last until fall

chinook season opens on August 1st. Peak season occurs the last week of June and the first week of July. The fishery is open upstream of Tongue Point near Astoria.

Summer steelheading, although not peaking, should be pretty good this week. High water and strong outgoing tides should produce good catches of fish for bank anglers and boaters working the edges of the river. The minus tide series is already underway and by the weekend, a late morning low should produce great results for bank anglers upriver. Hot colored spin-n-glos tipped with scent should produce nicely and if the run comes in anything like it did last year, good action should happen on this tide series even though we're still weeks away from a peak. Also, given the cold water temperatures that we're experiencing, good steelheading could last longer than normal this year as well. Jones Beach near Westport and area beaches near Rainier should produce the best. Boaters venturing out to Tenasillahe Island should do well too as this has been a productive fishery for many years now.

Anglers in the gorge have a few fisheries to choose from, especially after June 16th. Most will focus on shad fishing and a few will still be pursuing oversized sturgeon over the weekend. Shad fishing should be excellent, especially when the sun shows its shy face over the weekend. Shiny Dick Nites should produce the best results and action should be great over Free Fishing Weekend. Oversize seekers will want to use their fresh caught shad for bait. Only a rare keeper will be taken.

Anglers in the Portland to Longview stretch should continue to find fair success, especially if the water temperatures continue to warm up. Although the estuary is likely to produce better results, transitioning fish should be available to anglers using smelt or anchovies for bait. Sand shrimp will also be an effective bait either shallow or deep in this stretch.

Estuary anglers will continue to be challenged until water temperatures warm up but we have a more extreme tide series to work with this weekend. Morning minus tides and strong incoming tides will likely move fish around more and put them on the hunt for food. This will be a welcome change from the weak ones that produced so poorly last week. Until more consistent catches come from downriver areas, anglers will want to focus their efforts upstream of Tongue Point using anchovies if you fish in the deep water and shrimp in the shallows. I will be bringing a variety of both. The more extreme tides motivate me to fish in the shallower water since these fish are likely to be more active in search of freshwater clams and shrimp. The last sturgeon I cleaned was crammed full of freshwater clams.

North of Cape Falcon to Leadbetter Point the "Selective Chinook Season" opens June 12 through earlier of June 30 or 12,000 marked Chinook quota. Bag Limit: All salmon except coho. Two salmon per day, all retained Chinook must have a healed adipose fin clip.

A graphic summary of the recreational seasons is available here:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/salmon/docs/2010_ocean_salmon_map.pdf

Rumors of excellent catches of commercial chinook came early this week from boats fishing about 25 miles north of the mouth of the Columbia in about 180 feet of water. These fish are likely destined for the Columbia River and are of the summer chinook variety. Remember, these fish must have a healed over adipose fin-clip. This could be an interesting opportunity. Extreme tides this weekend may make bar crossings hazardous however. Be cautious if you're heading out. The offshore forecast looks favorable for Saturday. Go here:
<http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?minlon=-125&maxlon=-120.8&minlat=43.39&maxlat=46.91&mapwidth=354&site=pqr&zmx=1&zmy=1&map.x=124&map.y=105>

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Muddy water and plenty of it (along with copious debris) water from upper Willamette hit the lower river Monday this week. The level is currently high and has changed little but the flow is moderating and it's starting to clear. When the flow was at its peak, no springers, adults or jacks, and only a handful of steelhead ventured through the fish ladder at the Falls. Torrential water literally stopped the run dead.

While the water color is good at the McKenzie, it remains very high although the level will be dropping in the coming week.

High this week, the Santiams are forecast to drop to fishable levels by the weekend and there are good numbers of steelhead and Chinook available.

The Guide's Forecast – Storms took the Willamette off the fishin' list and it won't be in any shape to produce even shad this weekend.

There are fish in the high waters of the McKenzie as steelhead are being caught this week. Try drift gear or spinners as either or both have been hooking summers. Chinook fishing should finally get underway below the dam as the water drops.

Good quality roe is taking springers and summer steelhead on the North Santiam so if you're up on high water techniques, it's worth a go.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas water levels are dropping and will continue to do so through the upcoming week. On Thursday this week, it was still high and fairly swift on places but the water color is excellent.

The Sandy was on the rise Thursday this week due to snowmelt. Expect fluctuations in the level as hot weather will cause not only snow to melt but also glaciers upstream which, as Sandy regulars know, it may turn the river milky. If the water is fairly clear, it's a good bet for the weekend.

The Guide's Forecast - Fish sand shrimp or good-quality cured eggs on the upper Clackamas for springers. This technique has been effective as recently as Wednesday this week.

Anglers who find water with some visibility are likely to catch fish as there are good numbers of spring Chinook and summer steelhead present. Bobber and bait or jigs tipped with shrimp will be effective and fish are particularly susceptible to a well-present spinner. Boaters should try pulling plugs to one side of the main river flow as softer water will be most productive.

North Coast Fishing Report – Spring chinook anglers taking advantage of the low tide exchanges on lower Tillamook Bay scored unprecedented results early this week. Weak morning outgoing tides again proved to be a good bet for herring trollers as a few guide boats reported in with 6 to 8 keeper chinook on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. The red-hot fishing finally tapered by Wednesday with the onslaught of wicked weather (wind, rain). We knew it was a better than average year for Tillamook spring chinook but we haven't seen catches like this, ever! It will be interesting to see how the upper bay produces on this upcoming minus tide series.

Tides were ripe for an upper bay bonanza by mid-week but should be even better by the weekend. Fish are not likely to hold for long periods of time as water heights in area rivers have

been quite conducive to upstream migration. All district streams are fishing well for salmon, including the Trask, Wilson, Nestucca and Three Rivers. The Trask has been one of the more productive streams with fish coming from the Dam Hole and downriver. The Hatchery Hole is a very popular destination right now with more fish entering every day. This popular destination is slated to close on June 15th but maybe an extension is warranted. It's pretty clear that the hatchery will meet escapement goals.

With the hot salmon fishing, fishers haven't been focusing on much else. Offshore, chinook anglers, both sport and commercial haven't been finding much success salmon fishing. The fish are out of reach right now and no one seems to be able to sit down on them. Crabbing and bottomfishing have slowed somewhat but are still worthwhile. Bay crabbing in most north coast estuaries is poor.

Razor clamming should be excellent right now as fair surf and excellent tides should stimulate some good digs. The beaches north of Tillamook Head should produce the best.

The Guide's Forecast – We won't see Tillamook Bay light up like we did last weekend but catches should be fair to good on this tide series in upper Tillamook Bay. We likely lost a good percentage of these fish to the river with ideal river heights for much of the week. Fishing with plugs or spinners in the upper bay should produce better than lower bay fishing.

Driftboaters should take advantage of the excellent water conditions on the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. All floats should produce results but the closer you can target your effort at the liberation site, the better your results should be. The Trask will be the best bet from Cedar Creek downstream using plugs or backbounced eggs for bait. Be sure to tip your eggs with sand shrimp as these fish seem to really enjoy the combo offering.

Bring along your steelhead gear if you're fishing on the Wilson, Nestucca or Three Rivers. Although salmon fishing should provide a better opportunity, steelhead should be present in these systems.

Offshore opportunities should exist this weekend with Saturday providing some of the better conditions:

Fri...NW wind 10 to 15 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 6 ft. Slight chance of showers in the morning.

Fri Night...N wind 15 to 20 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 5 ft.

Sat...N wind 10 to 15 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 4 ft.

Sat Night...N wind 10 to 20 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. W swell 4 ft.

Sun...N wind 15 to 20 kt. Wind waves 4 ft. NW swell 5 ft.

Mon...NW wind 20 to 25 kt. Wind waves 4 ft. NW swell 8 ft.

Bottomfishing, crabbing and salmon fishing as well as nearshore halibut are all possibilities although none of these fisheries will likely be "crazy" good but bottomfishing holds the most promise.

Central & South Coast Reports – Ocean Chinook will remain open through September 6th. Due to the early opener this year, catches have been few. Conversely, it's only get better as the season progresses. Rough seas kept most boats from trying during the last all-depth halibut

opener June 3rd through 5th. As a result, fisheries managers added three additional days, June 17, 18 and 19, to give anglers another shot at filling the 105,949-pound quota.

Bottom fishing has been very good out of most ports when boats have been able to get out but anglers may not fish deeper than 240 feet of water.

Rough seas have kept boats inshore reducing ocean crab catches very low. Bay and estuary results are fair to good but recent rain may chase Dungeness out to sea.

Clammers can take advantage of minus tides this weekend of greater than one foot but recreational razor clam harvesting is closed from Coos Bay to Bandon due to elevated levels of domoic acid.

Surf perch are in Winchester Bay but keep in mind that these are all females of this live-bearing species and that catches of males are good at nearby ocean beaches. Pursuing the latter has far less impact on the numbers.

Sturgeon fishing has yet to pick up in the lower Umpqua or in the bay. Shad fishing has resumed at Yellow Creek and Sawyer's Rapids as the river is dropping and recovering from the storms and deluge of a week ago. Chinook continue to enter with results improving in the North Umpqua. Smallmouth are being taken on the South Umpqua with results improving as the weather warms.

Conditions on the Rogue provide reason for optimism unlike a week ago at this time. Anglers will fish in a dropping river under blue skies this weekend. That means that early morning will yield the better results. Spring Chinook have resumed entering the lower Rogue and are responding to anchovies which remain scarce at local sporting goods stores. Fish them on a spinner rig for best results. The Chinook bag limit is two per day, one of which may be of wild origin from the mouth to Gold Ray dam. Fishing has been good and is expected to remain that way through the weekend on the middle Rogue where plug-pullers are taking Chinook. Fishing is fair to good above Gold Ray Dam where Chinook have to be fin-clipped to keep Anglers are also catching a few late-run Winter steelhead here. Please be aware and plan accordingly: Starting June 15th, the Rogue will be closed 500 feet downstream from Gold Ray Dam and 1,000 feet upstream until Oct. 15 for the dam removal project.

Boats out of the Brookings Harbor are reporting far greater numbers of coho which may not be kept than Chinook for which the season is open. Rockfish and ling cod catches have been excellent when the ocean has allowed the activity. Winchuck beach is producing good numbers of big surf perch and sea run cutthroat trout fishing is fair to good in the Chetco River.

Diamond Lake is fishing very well, kicking out limits of big, beautiful rainbows. Expect the bugs to become troublesome here as the weather warms.

Central and Eastern Oregon – The lower Deschutes is fishing well for reddsides with nymphs taking fish morning and dries effective in the afternoons and early evenings.

Odell is putting out decent numbers of kokanee to anglers using jigs in 90 to 100 feet of water.

Snow is still on the ground at Paulina with fishing best mid day at which time limits are being taken by trollers.

According to the Bend Bulletin, Medford anglers Oscar Hoffman landed a 26-pound brown trout the evening of Tuesday, June 8th. He caught a 25-pounder here in 2007.

Washington fishing reports:
From the WDF&W Weekender Report for June 9th

North Puget Sound

As summer approaches, anglers have their pick of several fishing opportunities. On Puget Sound, a portion of one marine area recently opened for salmon retention 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 and Cascade rivers are open for **hatchery chinook salmon** fishing. 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 for salmon 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).

Anglers also can fish for salmon on the Skykomish River, where there have been recent reports of anglers hooking some bright hatchery chinook. The Skykomish is open from the mouth to the Wallace River through July 31. Anglers fishing there have a daily limit of two hatchery chinook salmon.

Meanwhile, lake fishing for **bass, bluegill, perch**, and **crappie** is steadily improving as water temperatures increase and fish become more active. "Early summer can be a tricky time for anglers given the abundance of natural food and unstable weather patterns," said Danny Garrett, WDFW fisheries biologist. "As we move into summer and temperatures rise, fish tend to feed in shallow water - about 2 to 5 feet - early in the morning and late in the evening." When fishing for lunker bass, Garrett recommends topwater baits, such as buzzbaits, frogs, and poppers, and soft plastic twitch baits, including stick baits and flukes. During the heat of the day, bass often move to deeper water near structures or other cover, Garrett said. In clear, deep lakes, such as Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, anglers should focus on the outside edge of boat docks and along the weed line in 15 to 20 feet of water, he said, noting that a drop-shot technique with plastic bait is a good approach. Anglers should be aware that a section of the **South Fork Stillaguamish River** was mistakenly omitted from the new sportfishing rules pamphlet. That section of the Stillaguamish, from Mountain Loop Highway Bridge upstream, opened for gamefish June 5. Fishing regulations include catch and release, except two hatchery steelhead may be retained. Selective gear rules also apply, and fishing from a floating device with a motor is prohibited.

Out on the saltwater, fishing has been slow at the **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery**. Except for a one-day closure on June 19, the fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 6. The fishery will reopen Sept. 11 on a Saturday and Sunday-only schedule through Sept. 26. Anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit. Chinook must measure 22 inches in length to retain.

Fishing for **lingcod** is still an option. The fishery runs through June 15 in the region's marine areas. During the hook-and-line season (May 1-June 15), there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 36 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 (Seattle/Bremerton). 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/fishing/regulations>.

Washingtonians who are interested in fishing but haven't actually given it a try have a perfect chance to do so during **Free Fishing Weekend**, scheduled June 12-13. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

In addition, anglers will not need a Two Pole Endorsement to fish with two poles on thousands of lakes statewide, nor will they need a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement, otherwise required to fish for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River and its tributaries.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Many Olympic Peninsula and south Sound rivers opened June 5. Lakes are still full of catchable size **rainbow trout**, and the openers for **salmon** and **crab** are just ahead. Erica Crust, WDFW's ocean port sampler, spent June 5 in Neah Bay watching anglers reel in **halibut**, a few of which were in excess of 100 pounds, and **lingcod** in the 30 pound range.

Anglers may yet get one additional day to catch halibut. Some sport quota remains and WDFW is considering reopening the fishery off La Push and Neah Bay for one day. A decision is expected soon, so fishers should watch the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/> for an announcement.

Even as anglers were battling halibut June 5, many were looking ahead to salmon. "We are hoping to see some nice fish landed on the recreational boats come Saturday," Crust said, referring to the June 12 sport chinook fishery opener.

This is expected to be a banner year for anglers fishing for chinook. Nearly 653,000 fall chinook are forecasted to return to the Columbia River this season, about 234,000 more chinook than the number returning last year. Based on that estimate, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PMFC) in April adopted a recreational ocean quota of 61,000 chinook, three times last year's level.

In April, the PMFC also established a pilot mark-selective fishery for hatchery chinook in Washington's ocean areas. From June 12-30, anglers will be allowed to catch and keep abundant hatchery salmon, which are identified by their missing adipose fin. The daily limit is two hatchery chinook. All wild salmon must be released.

"This is the first season we will have a selective fishery for hatchery chinook in the ocean," said Phil Anderson, WDFW director, when he announced the new fishery. By using this management tool we can meet our conservation goals and give anglers an additional opportunity to fish for hatchery chinook in the ocean."

The recreational ocean salmon fisheries for chinook and hatchery coho will begin July 1 off LaPush, Neah Bay and Ilwaco, and July 4 off Westport. This year's recreational quota for **coho** is 67,200, down considerably from last year's ocean quota of 176,400 fish.

Already open to salmon fishing is Marine Area 11 (Tacoma-Vashon Island), which opened relatively strong on June 1. Creel checks that day at the Point Defiance marina counted 79 anglers catching 27 chinook.

As the salmon season gears up, so too will the season for **crab**, with the first opening June 18 between the mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca east to Low Point, and in Marine Area 13 at the south end of Puget Sound.

Dungeness and **red rock crab** seasons are:

Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 and 13 - open at 7 a.m. on June 18 and run through Jan. 2.

Marine areas 6, 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 and 12 - open at 7 a.m., July 1 and are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.

Marine areas 7 South and East - open July 14 through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.

Marine Area 7 North - open Aug. 11 through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.

Pacific Ocean - open Dec.1 to Sept.15 for pot gear, and year-round for other gear. There is a daily limit of five Dungeness crab in Puget Sound. Minimum size is 6 ¼-inches and only males in hardshell condition may be kept. In the Sound, all gear must be removed from the water on days when the fishery is closed.

The daily limit of red rock crab is six in all marine areas. Minimum size is five inches and either sex may be kept.

Crab fishing rules can be found on pages 137-139 of the 2010-11 edition of Washington's *Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet*, which contains maps of all the marine areas and sub-areas. The pamphlet is free and available at the more than 600 stores where hunting and fishing licenses are sold. The pamphlet also can be downloaded from WDFW's web site at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>.

Before heading out, crabbers should check for any emergency rule changes adopted since the fishing pamphlet was published. Those changes can be found on WDFW's website at <https://fortress.wa.gov/dfw/erules/efishrules/> or by calling the Shellfish Rule Change toll-free hotline at (866) 880-5431.

While many seasons are opening, the season for lingcod in Puget Sound is winding down and will close June 15. On the coast, the lingcod season remains open through Oct. 15.

In marine areas 4 and 5, east of Tatoosh, creel counts in early June indicate that anglers have been reeling in **halibut, rockfish, Pacific cod** and the occasional **kelp greenling** and **lingcod** .

At the north end of Puget Sound, creel reports from the first week of June indicate that greenling and lingcod were about the only thing on the business end of fishing lines at Coronet Bay public ramp and the Washington Park launch.

Flatfish and, to a lesser extent, lingcod dominated fishing from Everett south to the Shilshole marina, according to creel checks through June 7.

And in south Sound, off Point Defiance, creel checks conducted the first week of June indicate that chinook and the occasional lingcod and flatfish were being reeled in.

Trout and **steelhead** fishing got under way June 5 in area rivers, including the Skokomish, South Fork Skokomish and Dungeness. Anglers should note that selective gear rules are in effect on those rivers to protect wild summer steelhead. Details on rules and limits are online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations> .

Southwest Washington

This year's fishery for adult **summer chinook salmon** opens June 16 on the mainstem Columbia River with high expectations and a whole new management approach. For the first time in years, anglers can look forward to a full season running through July, rather than just a few weeks. To make that possible, a mark-selective fishery will be instituted for hatchery chinook this year, requiring anglers to release any wild chinook they encounter. For their part, the fish are expected to show up in large numbers. According to the pre-season forecast, 88,800 summer chinook will return to the Columbia this year - the largest number since 2002. About a third of those salmon are estimated to be five-year-olds, some weighing up to 40 pounds.

"This year's fishery offers anglers a chance to catch chrome bright trophy-sized fish right through July," said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist. "There's a good reason why these fish are known as 'June hogs,' and this season will give anglers a good chance to take one home."

Starting June 16, anglers may retain up to two **adult hatchery chinook** or **hatchery steelhead** (or one of each) caught on the mainstem Columbia River from the Megler Astoria Bridge upstream to the Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco. All other salmon must be released - including sockeye, which are not expected to meet escapement goals at Lake Wenatchee this year.

Hymer said high-water conditions on the Columbia River may favor bank anglers over boat anglers fishing for summer chinook. "The river is running about twice as high as it was during the spring chinook fishery, which could present a challenge for boat anglers," he said. "Boat anglers had the advantage during the spring chinook fishery, but fishing for summer chinook could be better - and safer - from the bank."

Hymer said the six-week season scheduled for summer chinook would not be possible without new selective rules designed to preserve wild salmon. Although wild summer chinook stocks are considered healthy, fishery managers plan to conserve naturally spawning fish and set aside some summer chinook for use as broodstock at the new Chief Joseph Hatchery, scheduled for completion next year on the upper Columbia River.

Another major factor in this year's extended summer chinook fishery is the additional revenue produced by the new Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement fee, Hymer said. "In the past, the cost of adequately monitoring and sampling a six-week fishery was prohibitive," he said. "This year's extended summer chinook fishery is one of very first uses the department has made of those revenues."

During the run-up to the summer chinook season, Columbia River anglers have been catching **hatchery steelhead, hatchery chinook jacks** and **shad** from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line to the Interstate 5 Bridge. Growing numbers of shad are also available for harvest upriver to the Highway 395 Bridge in Pasco. On June 7, the single-day count of shad passing Bonneville Dam was 81,656. For information on shad, including fishing tips and recipes, see the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/outreach/fishing/shad/shad.htm>.

Like the mainstem Columbia, most area tributaries have been running high and fast, complicating fisheries on some rivers. The spring chinook run is fading fast in most rivers, but the fishery for hatchery-reared summer steelhead is still on the upswing, Hymer said. The summer steelhead run on most rivers should peak this month on most rivers, although the Cowlitz doesn't top out until July, he said.

For up-to-date information on fishing rules throughout the region, call the WDFW Region 5 Hotline at (360) 696-6211 ext. 1010 or see the department's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/regions/reg5/hotline.htm>.

Sturgeon fishing is also picking up, particularly in the Columbia River estuary, downriver from the Wauna powerlines At Deep River and the Knappton ramps, anglers averaged a legal-size fish for every two boats. At the ports of Chinook and Ilwaco, charter boat anglers averaged a legal-size fish kept per every 5.1 rods while private boat anglers averaged one per every 7.4 rods. Approximately 37 percent of the fish caught were keepers. The retention fishery continues daily through June 26 (or when the quota is met), then switches to catch and release.

Meanwhile, bank anglers fishing at Riffe Lake have been averaging 1.5 **landlocked coho** per rod. Virtually all of the fish were caught near the dam and at Taidnapam. Those angling for **trout** should be aware that Mayfield Lake will be planted with 10,000 catchable-size rainbows this month. In addition, the Tilton River was planted during the first week of June and will continue to get fish through the summer. Other area streams are expected to be planted once flows recede. For weekly stocking reports, check the department's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/stocking/weekly/>.

Prospective anglers who are interested in fishing but haven't actually given it a try have a perfect chance to do so during **Free Fishing Weekend**, scheduled June 12-13. During those two days, no license will be required to fish in Washington waters nor will they need a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement, otherwise required to fish for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River and its tributaries.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state.

Eastern Washington

Free Fishing Weekend , June 12-13, couldn't be at a better time, says WDFW District Fish Biologist Chris Donley of Spokane, because there are so many good fishing opportunities throughout the region.

"If you can't catch a fish now," Donley said, "you're not even trying."

Donley reports all trout-stocked lakes are good fishing now. Near Spokane, the best are probably Williams and Badger lakes, in southwest Spokane County. Anglers are averaging more **rainbow trout** at Williams, but larger fish at Badger. Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, continues to provide good catches of rainbows, and Rock Lake in Whitman County is good for both rainbow and **brown trout** .

Kokanee fishing is very good now at Chapman Lake in southwest Spokane County and Loon Lake in southern Stevens County, Donley says.

"Kokanee fishing is also picking up on Lake Roosevelt as the weather warms," he said, "especially in the Keller Ferry and Sanpoil areas. Rainbow trout fishing on Roosevelt also continues to be good."

Walleye fishing is productive now in the Spokane Arm of Lake Roosevelt, Donley says, and the Spokane River itself is good for all fishing.

Yellow perch and **crappie** fishing is good at Bonnie Lake near the Spokane-Whitman county line, he says. Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, Long Lake (Spokane River reservoir), and Downs Lake in the southwest corner of Spokane County, all have nice crappie, too.

WDFW northeast district fish biologist Bill Baker of Colville agrees that the month of June provides some of the best fishing in the region.

Baker says rainbow trout fishing continues to be especially good at two Ferry County lakes -- Curlew Lake, northeast of Republic, and Ellen Lake, 14 miles north of Inchelium.

Stevens County's Rocky, Waitts and Starvation lakes are also fishing well, but anglers need to remember that Starvation Lake is catch-and-release only now.

Anglers who use boats are reminded to clean and inspect their vessels and trailers anytime they are moved from one body of water to another. The precaution is needed to avoid introducing or spreading aquatic invasive plant and animal species, from milfoil to zebra mussels.

Fish diseases and juvenile stages of some invasive species also can be transported in bait buckets, live fish well water and ballast tanks; all of which need to be cleaned and dried. Learn more at:http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/ans/you_can_help.htm .

effect. There's no fishing from motorized boats, but bait is allowed. The Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement is required.

WDFW estimates over 800 hatchery-origin spring chinook are returning to the Entiat River and this selective fishery will remove excess hatchery fish to increase the proportion of wild spring chinook on the spawning grounds.

Bob Jateff, WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist, said several **rainbow trout** lakes

continue to provide good fishing through June. Pearrygin, Wannacut, Conconully Reservoir, Conconully Lake, Spectacle, and Alta are producing rainbows in the 8-12 inch range with winter-carryover fish up to 15 inches.

Jateff reminds anglers that when fishing with bait, the first five fish caught are considered part of the daily limit whether kept or released. "This rule is in place to minimize hook and release mortality on fish caught with bait," Jateff said.

Several lakes in Okanogan County are under selective gear rules with catch-and-release regulations during the summer months. These waters - Big and Little Green, Rat, Campbell, Davis, and Cougar lakes - all have rainbows. Rat Lake also has **brown trout**.

"Aeneas Lake is a fly-fishing only water that has provided good fishing for rainbows 14-16 inches with an occasional brown trout up to 18 inches," Jateff said. "Aeneas has several campsites, a boat launch, and toilet, so it's a good choice for a family weekend outing."

Recreational boaters and anglers should always carefully inspect and clean their boats and equipment before moving their vessels from one body of water to another to avoid introducing or spreading aquatic invasive plant and animal species, from milfoil to zebra mussels. For more information, see http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/ans/you_can_help.htm.

Southcentral Washington

June 5 marked the opening of many of Washington's rivers, and considering that some Central Washington streams are running high, the fishing has been fairly good. It's likely to remain that way through Free Fishing Weekend, which runs June 12-13 for those who either are experiencing the sport for the first time, or want to revive an old hobby.

"River conditions will continue to improve as summer approaches," says Eric Anderson, WDFW fisheries biologist in Yakima.

Anderson reminds anglers that most streams have reduced catch and size limits for **trout**, and there are catch-and-release zones on the Yakima River above Roza Dam, in sections of the Naches River and in Rattlesnake Creek where all trout must be released unharmed. Also, in most large mainstem rivers and streams in the Yakima basin, anglers must use single barbless hooks and no bait.

Always check the fishing rules pamphlet for details on a specific river or stream. The *Fishing in Washington Sportfishing Rules* guide is available free at stores that sell fishing licenses. It also can be downloaded at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>. That web page also contains a link to emergency rules that have been enacted since the pamphlet was published.

Anderson said that changing the opening date for rivers to the first Saturday in June gave **juvenile salmon** and **steelhead** more time to migrate from local rivers and streams to the ocean, and allowed adult trout and steelhead to spawn without being disturbed. "It also allows anglers to start the season on a weekend day," he said.

Spring chinook fishing continues to be good in the upper section of the Yakima River between Union Gap and Roza Dam despite the high water conditions. In May, anglers harvested an estimated 695 hatchery adults and 37 jacks in this section of the river. All wild fish must be released unharmed.

Fishing for **channel catfish** in the lower reaches of the Yakima and Walla Walla rivers has been very good in recent weeks and those two rivers should provide excellent fishing

through the summer months. The fishery on the Yakima River upstream from the I-82 bridge at Union Gap to Roza Dam will remain open through June 30.

Fishing for **smallmouth bass** and **walleye** should improve in the Columbia and Snake rivers as those waters warm.

Sturgeon fishing remains open in Lake Wallula (McNary Dam to Priest Rapids/Ice Harbor Dams) through July of this year. Be aware sturgeon fishing is prohibited from Goose Island upstream to Ice Harbor Dam in the Snake River and upstream of the Priest Rapids Hatchery outlet to Priest Rapids Dam in the Columbia River (white sturgeon sanctuaries).

Shad have been pouring through Bonneville Dam in huge numbers, and should be passing John Day and McNary dams in numbers that make for great June fishing, said Paul Hoffarth, a WDFW fish and wildlife biologist in Central Washington.

Hoffarth notes that Powerline Lake and Marmes Pond were planted with **rainbow trout** earlier this spring, and that the cooler temperatures should "keep the bite going" in these two waters for a couple more weeks. Both of those lakes are walk-in only.

On June 16 the Columbia River upstream to Priest Rapids Dam opens for **hatchery summer chinook**. All salmon other than hatchery chinook must be released. Daily limit is six hatchery fish, up to two may be adult chinook. Anglers must stop fishing when their adult portion of the daily limit is retained.

The Columbia River downstream from the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco/Kennewick will also open for the retention of **hatchery steelhead** on June 16. Any steelhead retained will count toward the daily adult salmon limit of two fish.

Steelhead fishing will remain closed in the Columbia River upstream of the Highway 395 bridge, and in the Snake River until the fall.

See the *Fishing in Washington Sportfishing* Rules pamphlet for more details. The pamphlet is available free at stores that sell fishing licenses. It also can be viewed and downloaded at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>. That web page also contains a link to emergency rules that have been enacted since the pamphlet was published.

At http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/diversty/soc/recovery/sharptailed_grouse/.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

Dave B. wrote to ask, "What's up with Northwest Bass and Panfish? I can't remember ever seeing a post from them. Lots of interested fisherman around here that could use some information. This is one of the reasons I subscribe to your site. I cant imagine a site holding on to a non participant. If they don't want to contribute get rid of them and find someone that will.

TGF co-editor (and warmwater enthusiast) Michael Teague replied, "What's happened is that we don't get reports from readers, our professional guide contributors don't fish bass and while I fish bass and panfish myself (along with other species) I don't do so enough to compile enough information on the various locations in the state to do any good.

"Please think of us when you go and shoot us some reports. Doing so will benefit all. We aren't

asking for your hotspots or honey holes, just the general area, stage of the fish (pre-spawn, post-spawn, etc.) and what they're responding to (crankbaits, soft plastics and so on.

"A report as vague as 'the upper Willamette' (or anywhere) with the above specifics would be of benefit without revealing any specific locations.

"I think it would be great to revive the Northwest Bass & Panfish section but, as I've said in this space many times, we can only do so with the help of Oregon and Southwest Washington warmwater anglers. I hope you'll be one of them and inspire others to do the same!

"Good luck out there."

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

2010 Free Fishing Weekend Events:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/outdoor_skills/2010_free_fishing_events.asp

Passport to Fishing for the kids this weekend:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/outdoor_skills/docs/2010_Passport_Flyer.pdf

2010 Coastal Fall chinook and Coho Salmon Seasons:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2010_Coastal_Fall_Chinook_Seasons.pdf

ODFW offers razor clamming workshop:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2010/june/060710d.asp>

GOOD LUCK!