

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 2<sup>nd</sup> – July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro** - Summer chinook continue to spite anglers on the Columbia below Bonneville Dam. Dam counts remain favorable but fish seem unresponsive. Many anglers have gone to plugs in a fishery that traditionally produces well for those using spinners. Higher than normal flows and cooler water are likely the reason for the slow action. This should be peak week for passage at Bonneville but river conditions may postpone the peak for several more days.

Shad fishing has slowed in the gorge and with it, sturgeon catches are declining too. Oversize fishing should continue to decline as fish congregate closer to the dam for feeding and spawning opportunities.

Bank anglers fishing off beaches downstream of Portland produced only fair results despite the good tide series. Steelhead will be the main quarry and sockeye catches have slowed. Beach plunkers have ideal conditions for productive steelheading and should produce better in the month of July.

Daily counts over Willamette Falls have been strong but the water temperature has jumped from the upper 50s to the upper 60s so it remains to be seen what effect that has on fish movement. Shad catches have been good around Oregon City.

With Golden Stones hatching on the upper McKenzie, this is the best bet for larger trout on this river.

Steelhead numbers are very good in the North Santiam although hookups have been spotty. Steelhead and chinook are being caught on the crowded South Santiam.

Try the Sandy River around Cedar Creek where a few steelhead have been hooked. Chinook fishing remains spotty but anglers can find fish concentrated in deep holes and willing to bite egg and shrimp combinations drifted under a bobber. Early morning and dusk is the best time to produce.

Level and flow at the Clackamas is excellent for steelheading. It's summertime, so try at first light for best results. Chinook numbers are good in the system but lockjaw has set in. If you cover enough water, fish will fall to egg clusters. The highest concentrations of fish are in the McIver Park area.

**Northwest** – Effort and catch for the ocean coho opener south of Cape Falcon was greatest out of the port of Garibaldi. Coho made up the bulk of the catch with ODF&W reporting .63 kept fish per angler on average. Catch rates will fluctuate throughout the season but Astoria, Garibaldi, Depoe Bay and Newport will be the most productive ports for coho this year. Hatchery coho from this fishery are most likely destined for Columbia River facilities.

Spring chinook fishing in the Tillamook district is all but a memory except for bank anglers working the Trask, Wilson, Nestucca and Three Rivers. Adults are wary under the low water conditions but stealthy anglers can take fish at first light. ODF&W has extended the spring chinook season on Three Rivers through July 11<sup>th</sup> due to a large run returning.

Sturgeon anglers working the lower Columbia continue to struggle for success. Although fishing picked up slightly last Friday, weekend catches floundered. The season remains open 7 days per week through July 11<sup>th</sup> when fishery managers will once again look at additional opportunity based on retained catch. Catches should improve when water temperatures rise.

Few anglers took advantage of the offshore chinook fishery near the mouth of the Columbia River. Gordon Lintner from the Salem area reported good action near the CR Buoy trolling with downriggers at depths of 70 to 90 feet. Gordon reported chinook nearing the mid-20 pound mark. Unfortunately, this fishery closed yesterday for clipped chinook but anglers may retain fin-clipped coho or any chinook beginning today. The daily bag limit is 2 salmon per day, of which 1 may be a chinook.

Crabbing remains poor both in north coast estuaries and nearshore in the ocean. Keeper action has improved from previous weeks however. July can be a productive month offshore but crabs often are molting this time of year.

**Southwest** – According to commercial fishers, albacore are 70 to 80 miles offshore but some boats reported good success as far north as Newport. Success for tuna should dramatically increase in the coming weeks.

Mild tides with incoming in the early mornings combined with mild ocean conditions are forecast for the weekend. Bottomfishing, salmon and halibut fishing are all options with crabbing fair for those willing to go a bit deeper.

Ocean coho is open for a quota of 26,000 hatchery fish. Unlike chinook, coho will be within 20 feet of the surface.

All depth halibut anglers will get once more shot at these fish in the spring fishery on July 1st and 2nd with any remaining quota being added to the summer season starting August 5th.

Sturgeon fishing has finally picked up in Winchester Bay where crabbing has been fair to good. Shad catches are very good at Yellow Creek on the Umpqua.

The shad run has yet to get underway on the Coos and Coquille rivers.

As the run winds down, spring chinook fishing remains fair on the lower Rogue. With the summer steelhead count topping 1,000 at Gold Rat Dam, prospects on the upper river are good.

Diamond Lake has predictably been producing good catches of rainbow trout for anglers using Powerbait. The action is likely to continue through July given the late spring the district has observed.

Limits of ling cod and rockfish are being taken nearshore by boats launching out of the Port of Brookings.

The Klickitat River is another early season option but will produce better results later in the summer, depending on snow melt from higher elevations on the watershed.

**Eastern** – Fishing for reddsides is fair to good on the lower Deschutes.

The Kokanee Power Fishing Derby is July 17th at Green Peter. Call 541-973-4831 to register for additional information.

**SW Washington** – Summer steelhead action is light on most district streams with the Cowlitz one of the better options for fish. The Kalama and Washougal should also have fair numbers of fish present but serious summer steelhead anglers are turning to the lower Columbia for better prospects.

Summer steelhead action in Drano Lake is set to improve as counts over Bonneville Dam are improving daily. Trollers are likely to take fish in low light conditions with the peak of this fishery coming later in July and early August.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Salmon action on the lower Columbia remained subdued as anglers are still fighting unprecedented high and cool water conditions. The river conditions however are improving. Anglers are more willing to set up shop in more traditional grounds, fishing 16 to 18 foot of water using plugs and spinners to entice strikes. With the colder water, it's easier to justify using plugs and fish seem pretty responsive to them right now. That is, if you can get a fish to bite at all.

Bank anglers working the Bonneville area are doing fair as high flows do have fish pushed up closer to shore. Their success is likely to taper however as flows tame back down.

Fair numbers of Chinook are still crossing Bonneville Dam but managers recently downgraded the run to 82,000 fish from 88,800. Given the late return of fish this year (seems to be a common theme, huh?), it seems early to me to be putting forth such a pessimistic number. Peak passage should be occurring now however.

Weekend checking by ODF&W showed that the gorge was still the place to be. As we typically see, higher concentrations of fish happen here with Bonneville their un-natural barrier to passage. Creel counts downstream of Bonneville were as follows:

**Gorge Bank:**

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, and one sockeye kept, plus one unclipped adult summer chinook released for 33 salmonid anglers; and 35 shad kept for 28 shad anglers.

**Gorge Boats:**

Weekend checking showed 24 adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, six adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks, five adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead, and one sockeye kept, plus 10 unclipped adult summer chinook and four unclipped steelhead released for 37 salmonid boats (125 anglers); and one shad kept for seven shad boats (22 anglers).

**Troutdale Boats:**

Weekend checking showed five adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook and three adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks kept, plus two unclipped adult summer chinook released for 44 boats (87 anglers); and no catch reported for two shad boats (three anglers).

**Portland to Longview Bank:**

Weekly checking showed 13 adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, two adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks, three sockeye, and 23 adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept, plus four unclipped adult summer chinook, eight sockeye, and two unclipped summer steelhead released for 383 bank anglers.

**Portland to Longview Boats:**

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook kept, plus two

unclipped adult summer chinook released for 39 salmonid boats (84 anglers); and no catch reported for one shad boat (three anglers).

**Estuary Bank (Jones Beach to Clatsop Spit):**

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, two adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks, one sockeye, and 22 adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept, plus two unclipped adult summer chinook, 12 unclipped summer steelhead, and two sockeye released for 143 bank anglers.

**Estuary Boats (Puget Island to Tongue Point):**

Weekend checking showed four adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, one adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jack, and five adipose fin-clipped summer steelhead kept, plus one unclipped adult summer chinook and five unclipped summer steelhead released for 24 boats (54 anglers).

Selective Chinook fishing is slated to go right through the end of the month and then switch to any Chinook beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Anyone watching dam counts at Bonneville must be as impressed as fishery managers with the sockeye salmon counts. The department TAC (Technical Advisory Committee) recently upgraded the original run forecast (~120K) to a record return of 375,000 adults to the mouth of the river. Managers recently allowed retention of sockeye for sport anglers although catches seemed to have dwindled in recent days.

Summer steelhead however are making a nice showing right now and beach plunkers should be taking full advantage of the large run. Strong morning outgoing tides and higher than usual flows should keep fish close to the bank where shore anglers have a crack at them. Although still a few weeks away from peak fishing, numbers are starting to climb substantially at Bonneville indicating the bulk of the run is about to come through. As always, hot colored spin-n-glos are taking the majority of fish with some anglers casting too far offshore for consistent results. Softer water is better for these calorie-counting returnees. Soft sloped beaches are the perfect interception place and it's best to find your own most productive beach as the most popular mean greater competition. Remember, you can use multiple rigs so don't hesitate to slide a plug down your line or run up to 3 spin-n-glos if you wish. A total of 3 hooks may be used.

Shad and oversize fishing has slowed in recent days. Shad counts at Bonneville have taken a noticeable downturn so action will subsequently follow. Brighter days will yield better results.

Sturgeon fishers continue to get frustrated as inconsistent catches are the rule for estuary anglers. The catch continues to show signs of wanting to come through but colder than normal water temperatures have slowed the metabolism for most feeding sturgeon. Better action is being witnessed downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge but anglers fishing upstream of Tongue Point are also still getting some quality keepers. The action is best using anchovies down low and sand shrimp up high, especially in the shallower water. The season will last at least through the 11<sup>th</sup> of July and possibly longer if catch rates and effort remain low.

Offshore, what few salmon anglers fishing on calm seas saw fair to good action for Chinook over the weekend. One angler reported steady action fishing in over 200 foot of water using his downriggers in 70 to 90 foot of water. He reported losing a Chinook that likely tipped the scales at nearly 30 pounds! This mark select fishery closed on the 30<sup>th</sup> but anglers are still allowed to pursue Chinook. The difference is, they don't have to be fin-clipped but anglers can keep only 1 Chinook per person. Fin-clipped coho also opened on July 1<sup>st</sup> and although the fish are likely to be small this early in the season, there should be catchable numbers around.

Bottomfishing near Tillamook Head has been productive for boats out of Astoria. There aren't many people participating in the fishery, making limits very attainable for diligent anglers. Ocean crabbing is poor but should improve in the weeks ahead.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Summer Chinook and steelhead will likely remain a top prospect for many anglers working the Columbia with predictably, the best Chinook catches coming from the Bonneville area. Until flows begin to drop, and they are forecasted to do just that, don't expect great results. It would be best to run true diving plugs however and spinners may begin to get more attention as temperatures begin to increase. Anchor fish in 14 to 18 feet of water (and you better know your anchoring techniques) and be prepared to fish a lot of lead in the faster flows. Switch baits frequently if you're running plugs or scent up often if you're running spinners.

If you're targeting steelhead, fish spin-n-glos close to shore on the outgoing tide or smaller plugs if you have confidence running those. Pink, red and orange will be top producers for beach plunkers but be sure to run hot colored plugs with a mix of chrome in the plug. It should be a productive weekend for steelheaders but better catches are likely by mid-month. The beaches downstream of Portland will be big producers but anglers fishing at Bonneville should start to see more consistent catches as well. With the late onset of summer, the steelhead bite could last well into August.

If you're still targeting oversize sturgeon or shad in the gorge, don't count on finding many fish. Although numbers of shad are still high crossing Bonneville Dam, the tail end of the shad run often becomes challenging to catch fish.

Estuary sturgeon anglers should start to see a mild improvement in the sturgeon action. With the onset of warmer water temperatures, fish should become more active in their feeding patterns and anchovies should begin to show in better numbers close to the mouth of the river. Upriver anglers should also fare better than in weeks past as effort drops and fish welcome the warming temperatures. Shrimp and anchovies should work well here with shrimp the favored bait in shallower water.

Anglers interested in heading offshore can expect fair catches of coho and maybe an occasional Chinook if one chooses to target them. Just fish deeper for Chinook although Chinook may be cruising the surface at first light. Larger baits can often attract larger fish as well. Most coho will likely be on the smaller side with fish ranging from 4 to 5 pounds on average. Herring, either fresh or frozen will be the best bet as anchovies are likely to still be too small to rig for trolling. Brad's Super Baits are also a strong option but be sure to use bait on the inside of the lure. I learned last year that scent is a pretty important part of the success of that lure.

Don't count on big catches of crab from the ocean. And if you do get some keepers, a fair percentage of them are likely close to molting.

Razor clam digs are on the way out this weekend but it won't be long before another tide series comes along. The season north of Tillamook Head closes on July 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – At the last available daily counts, June 23rd and 24th, over 2,700 adult spring Chinook crossed Willamette Falls although the water temperature at that time was in the mid-50s. The water temp on July 1st topped 64 degrees and it will be a few days for counts to update. Most spring Chinook hookups are coming inadvertently to shad anglers. The middle Fork is at good level, flow and color.

The level and flow of the North Santiam should be perfect for holiday weekend fishing. Flows are predicted to be stable as there will be nothing more than a few sprinkles this week. With great numbers of summer steelhead over the Falls, there are plenty of them in the river now.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Shad fishing is fair to good at Oregon City, slow at Coon Island in Multomah Channel. Try the middle Fork for trout. Rainbows are biting and taking flies well.

Try the South Santiam for spring Chinook. They're showing up at Foster Dam this week and counts remain excellent at the Falls.

Trout fishing will be good on the McKenzie. Expect to see caddis hatching here. There are fine numbers of summer steelhead in the river with crowds gathering below Leaburg Dam. Get creative & find some good looming water well below the guerilla gathering at the meat hole.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Try the Clackamas at first light and plan on leaving as the air temperatures rise. When it's sunny and warm, the happy splashers, tubers and plastic boat people hit the river in droves. Although good numbers of Chinook are present, they are not motivated to bite. Dog Creek can be one of the better bets this time of year but McIver Park in general will produce decent catches of Chinook and steelhead this time of year.

Water flow and clarity are good on the Sandy although summer temperatures are encouraging a few hardy souls to take a dip in the cold water. Although fish are scattered the length of the Sandy now, the upper river is most productive. Summer steelhead will likely be the focus of most anglers but bobber and bait tossers are finding Chinook in the deeper haunts, especially upstream of Dodge Park.

**The Guide's Forecast** - Fish are being caught at the mouth of Dog Creek on the Clackamas. This is not a secret so expect plenty of company but there's also a reasonable chance of a hookup here. There are few Springers in Eagle Creek, but if you find them, drifted sardines will draw strikes. Fish have been taken here as recently as Wednesday this week.

Eggs seem to be most effective in the Sandy although dark-colored lures and spinners have enticed a few. Spring Chinook remain in decent condition for the table and certainly for the smoker.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – With the exception of river anglers, the spring Chinook season is winding down on the north coast. The Wilson, Trask, Nestucca and Three Rivers remain viable options for anglers willing to get up early and work with stealthy techniques to entice reluctant fish to bite. Chinook should be well concentrated in deeper holes in all of these systems and still somewhat responsive to small baits such as drifted eggs and shrimp. Anglers will have to go to light leaders to stand a chance at these fish, they should still be in good condition.

Three Rivers will remain open for Chinook and steelhead fishing through July 11<sup>th</sup> and anglers should find fair success the closer you get to the hatchery deadline.

Most anglers will begin to switch their focus to the ocean, where coho fishing out of Garibaldi was fair since the opener. Garibaldi had the best catch rates on the coast for coho with .61 retained catch per angler over the opener. Charleston led the ports for retained Chinook landed at .31 fish per angler with a few coho mixed in. Anglers fishing in 220 to 240 foot of water found both finned and finless coho trolling just 10 to 16 strips out with their divers. As a general rule, it's best to start shallow in the morning and work your way deeper as the day progresses.

Bay crabbing is poor with ocean crabbing only a little better. Tuna remain too far out to pursue but that could change in a matter of a week or so. Anxious anglers await...

**The Guide's Forecast** – Bank casters stand the best chance at Chinook with the Trask, Wilson, Nestucca and Three Rivers the best bets in that order. Look for fish in the deeper pools but more aggressive fish can be found in the faster portion of a hole and may fall to small egg clusters or sand shrimp. Wherever you fish, you'll have to use light leaders and fluorocarbon leader is strongly recommended. Summer steelhead should also be available in these systems although the Trask is likely to have the fewest number of hatchery steelhead available.

It looks like a few decent days of ocean weather ahead, at least until Sunday:

**FRI** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**FRI NIGHT** NW WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT...SUBSIDING TO 2 FT AFTER MIDNIGHT. W SWELL 5 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**SAT** N WIND 10 KT. GUSTS UP TO 15 KT IN THE MORNING. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**SAT NIGHT** N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 6 FT. SLIGHT CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**SUN** N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 7 FT.

**MON** N WIND 20 TO 25 KT. WIND WAVES 5 FT. NW SWELL 7 FT.

Coho should be a good option but limits are unlikely. Fish NW of Tillamook Bay in water greater than 200 foot and troll NW. That way, when the NW wind kicks up in the afternoon, you can ride the wind waves back home to port. This is the time of year when you want to make sure you have functioning radio's, GPS units and cell phones. You can never be too cautious offshore and travel with a buddy if you can! A few Chinook may be in the mix but it would be best to target coho using smaller baits or wobblers and fishing shallower.

If you have to crab, crab in the ocean when conditions allow. Limits are not to be expected.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Predictions indicate that wind and waves will cooperate with boats launching for offshore forays on the central Oregon coast this coming weekend. Winds will be problematic in ports farther to the south.

The ocean is open for Chinook and hatchery coho new although fishing is very slow for both species.

About 15% or 15,783 pounds remains in the spring All depth Halibut quota and fishing will be allowed today, July 1st and Friday, July 2nd. Remaining poundage, if any, will be added to the summer fishery which starts August 6th.

Albacore are being caught now out of Newport but it's a very long trip to find the, Like 100miles or more offshore. Ocean crabbing has been slow with softshells starting to show.

While ocean crabbing has been worthwhile out of Winchester Bay, crabbing in the lower Umpqua has been slow. Crabbers are making bay trips worthwhile by jigging between trap checks, taking good catches of herring sardines and smelt. Check to be certain that the catch does not include steelhead or salmon smolt. Sturgeon fishing remains slow but a few have been caught. The South jetty has been producing decent catches of perch, greenling and rockfish. Springers are being taken in the mainstem Umpqua but, with water temperature rising, algae is starting to foul lines. Shad fishing is improving at Yellow Creek and Sawyers Rapids. With water levels having dropped while water temps have been rising, anglers using soft plastics are making good catches of smallmouth bass on the South Umpqua. Spring Chinook catches on the North Umpqua have slowed with the run winding down.

Although the spring Chinook fishery has been winding down on the lower Rogue regardless, rising water temperatures put the kibosh on the fishery this week. Chinook seem to be high-tailing though the middle Rogue and as a result, fishing in this stretch has been slow. The upper Rogue holds the greatest promise with a mix of good numbers of both spring Chinook and summer steelhead, especially now that wild Chinook may be kept in the stretch from Gold Ray dam to Dodge Bridge. Flows and water temperature on the upper river are conducive to good fishing.

While bottomfish anglers must ply the depths 240 feet or less, better angling out of Brookings Harbor has been on water around 200 feet or less particularly near kelp beds. Rockfish and ling cod have been returning to port with boaters. Catches of searun cutthroat trout have been best above the highway 101 Bridge on the lower Chetco.

The top winner in last Saturday's trout derby at Diamond Lake was 17-year-old Ben Bowers who took home \$1,000 for a four-pound, 9-ounce rainbow he caught on a Gold Steelies spoon.

Attend a free event hosted by the ODFW on July 10th from 11 to 4 PM at Gold Beach. Topics will enlighten beginning to advanced saltwater fishers in technique and targeting different species while avoiding less desirable catches. Enter to win an offshore, chartered fishing trip which will be given away. The event will take place next to the public boat ramp.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Odell has been hot or cold for kokanee. Trolling has been more effective than jigging.

Trout fishing is good while kokanee catches are fair at Lake Simtustus.

Wickiup has remained reliable for kokanee catches.

The Kokanee Power Of Oregon Greenpeter Derby is July 17th. For information and registration click here: <http://www.kokaneeower.org/oregon>.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

***From the WDF&W Weekender Report June 23<sup>rd</sup> – July 7<sup>th</sup>***

#### **North Puget Sound**

Fishing has been slow for anglers on the saltwater, but catch numbers could rise as more marine areas open for salmon in July. On the rivers, anglers continue to cast for steelhead and spring chinook, and some have recently hooked a few nice fish.

Meanwhile, the **crab** 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), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island) and 12 (Hood Canal). Fisheries in those areas will be open 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.

In Marine Area 8-2, fishing continues to be slow at the **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery** , said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. The fishery is currently open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 6. Anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit. Chinook must measure 22 inches in length to retain.

The catch-and-release **salmon** fishery in the northern portion of Marine Area 10 continues through June 30. However, beginning July 1, anglers fishing in the marine area can retain up to two salmon daily with no minimum size limit. Anglers must release chinook salmon. Another option is Marine Area 7 (San Juan Islands), which also opens July 1 for salmon. Anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon but can only keep one chinook. "The San Juans really started off strong last year," Thiesfeld said. "Hopefully, the opener will be just as good this year."

Looking for some competition? The **Bellingham Salmon Derby** is scheduled for July 9-11 with a top prize of \$5,000. For more information on the derby, which is hosted by the Bellingham Chapter of the Puget Sound Anglers in association with the Northwest Marine Trade Association, is available at <http://www.bellinghampsa.com/derby.htm> .

In freshwater, portions of the Skagit, Cascade and Skykomish 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).

The Skykomish is open from the mouth to the Wallace River through July 31. Anglers fishing that portion of the river have a daily limit of two hatchery chinook salmon. Jennifer Whitney, WDFW regional fish biologist, advises anglers to keep checking WDFW's website for information about potential fishing regulation changes on the Skykomish River. "Returns to the Wallace River Hatchery so far have been way down this year," she said. "We will continue to watch this run closely and if it doesn't improve we may need to close the river to salmon retention to ensure the hatchery gets enough fish to meet its spawning goals."

The Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish River is also open for fishing and some anglers have had success hooking hatchery **steelhead** there recently. That section of the river (1,500 feet upstream to 1,000 feet downstream of the Reiter Ponds Hatchery outlet) opened June 12 after the hatchery collected enough steelhead broodstock to meet spawning goals.

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.

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

### **South Sound/Olympic Peninsula**

Anglers will have more options to catch salmon in the days ahead as coastal area open to retention of hatchery coho and unmarked chinook, and new fisheries open on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Crabbers will also be able to drop pots in seven popular areas of Puget Sound, starting July 1.

Through June 20, salmon anglers had caught 2,759 marked chinook salmon in the state's first selective chinook fishery off the Washington coast. All but a few hundred of those fish were taken in Marine Area 2 (Westport), where three in four anglers took home a fish. Mark rates for chinook have been averaging about 70 percent.

"The ocean fishery has been up and down from one day to the next, but anglers have definitely been taking home some nice chinook salmon," said Doug Milward, WDFW ocean fisheries manager. "Chinook caught off Westport have been averaging around 15 pounds, which is big for this point in the season."

Starting July 4, anglers fishing off Westport will also be able to count hatchery coho and unmarked chinook toward their daily limit. The new rule will take effect July 1 in marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 3 (La Push) and 4 (Neah Bay).

"Like the chinook, this year's coho have been bigger than usual," Milward said. "This fishery should keep getting better and better."

Wendy Beeghley, a WDFW fish biologist who monitors the catch, asks that all anglers return completed logbooks after each day's trip to help fishery managers keep track of the catch. "If you like this fishery, you can help keep it going by filling out the logbook and returning it to WDFW," she said. Logbooks can be returned to fish checkers or by pre-paid mail.

Elsewhere, a chinook fishery will open in marine areas 5 and 6 (Strait of Juan de Fuca) on July 1. The daily limit in those two areas is two fish at least 22 inches in length. All wild Chinook and wild coho must be released, and all Chinook must be released east of Ediz Hook.

Meanwhile, recreational **halibut** fishing went out with a bang June 19, when anglers fishing off Neah Bay and La Push closed out the season by catching most of what was left of this year's quota.

The one-day opening, plus good weather, gave coastal anglers the chance to catch both salmon and halibut on the same day, and some took advantage of that unique opportunity, said Erica Crust, WDFW's ocean port sampler.

Looking ahead, seven popular areas of Puget Sound will open to fishing for crab July 1, including marine areas 6 (Eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1 (Deception Pass/Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan/Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal).

Dungeness and red rock crab seasons include:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 and 13: Opened June 18 and run through Jan. 2.

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

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.

**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/> .

Tanwax Lake in Pierce County is off to a good start for **largemouth bass** and **rainbow trout** . In Kitsap County, Wildcat, Buck, Island and Wye lakes have all received high marks from anglers fishing for largemouth bass and trout. Duck Lake in Grays Harbor County also has been getting accolades from anglers fishing for trout and **crappie** .

### **Southwest Washington**

Summer **chinook salmon** are entering the lower Columbia River in large numbers, although catching them is proving to be a challenge. High, turbid water and floating debris have been giving anglers - especially boat anglers - a workout during the opening days of the season, said Joe Hymer, a WDFW fish biologist.

"Conditions are definitely tough for boat anglers," Hymer said. "People have been catching some nice fish, but they have to deal with some extra challenges due to the high water and debris." Under these conditions, fishing from the bank has some advantages, Hymer said. During creel checks conducted during the first week of fishing, 1,463 bank anglers caught 62 adult chinook and released 25. The 572 boat anglers checked that week reported catching 33 adult summer chinook salmon and releasing 15 others.

Under new rules effective this year, anglers may retain only hatchery-reared chinook with a clipped adipose fin and healed scar. All wild, unmarked fish must be released. That is also the case with **steelhead** , which are showing up in the catch from the mouth of the Columbia River to Bonneville Dam.

"The trade-off is that this year's summer chinook fishery is scheduled to run straight through July, rather than just a couple of weeks like last year," Hymer said. "That wouldn't have been possible without moving to a selective fishery."

During the first week's creel check, bank anglers reported catching 61 steelhead and releasing 13 others. Boat anglers surveyed that week caught eight steelhead and released five more. Anglers fishing the Cowlitz River have also been catching some hatchery steelhead.

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.

Under this year's rules, anglers may retain up to two adult hatchery chinook or hatchery steelhead (or one of each) on the mainstem Columbia River from the Megler Astoria Bridge upstream to the Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco. All other salmon - including **sockeye** - must be released.

That may change, however, given the unexpectedly large number of sockeye counted at Bonneville Dam in recent days, said Cindy Le Fleur, WDFW Columbia River policy coordinator. As of June 22, just over 134,000 sockeye had been tallied at the dam - already more than predicted - and the 26,873 counted the previous day was the second-highest on record for a single day since 1938.

"The rule requiring anglers to release sockeye was adopted because Lake Wenatchee was not expected to reach its escapement goal this year," Le Fleur said. Given the strong return, fishery managers from Washington and Oregon may reconsider that decision during a teleconference scheduled Thursday (June 24) at 3 p.m.

The scheduled closure of the **sturgeon fishery** downstream from the Wauna powerlines will also be up for reconsideration during that meeting, Le Fleur said. Sturgeon fishing has been slow in that area - and throughout the lower Columbia River - for a number of weeks, which may allow fishery managers to extend the season, she said.

Any changes in the sockeye retention rule or the sturgeon season below the Wauna powerlines will be announced on WDFW's website ( <http://wdfw.wa.gov/> ), the statewide Fishing Hotline (360-902-2500), regional hotline (360-696-6211 ext. 1010) and in a statewide news release.

For anglers hungering for **shad**, the Dalles Pool is clearly the place to be. During the week ending June 20, bank anglers averaged nine shad per rod although fishing was slow for boat anglers. Below Bonneville Dam, anglers have been averaging between zero and two shad per rod.

Rather catch warmwater fish? Boat anglers fishing The Dalles Pool have been averaging two **walleye** and a **bass** per rod. In the John Day Pool, 10 boats reported catching 15 bass and seven walleye.

At Riffe Lake, bank anglers fishing at the dam and Taidnapum have been averaging two **landlocked coho** per rod, kept or released. Anglers should also be aware that Goose Lake north of Carson was stocked with 2,500 catchable-size **brown trout** and 3,000 catchable-size **cutthroat** June 15.

## Eastern Washington

This is the time to fish Lake Roosevelt, including the Spokane River arm, for some of the tastiest freshwater fish - **walleye** . Bill Baker, WDFW northeast district fish biologist, said walleye are distributing throughout the waterway now that they've spawned. The daily catch limit is eight walleye and there's no minimum size, although only one over 22 inches may be retained.

The Seven Bays area and many other spots upstream on the big reservoir are also good for **kokanee** and **rainbow trout** fishing. The daily catch limit for kokanee is six fish, although no more than two can be wild fish. The limit on trout is five, but only two over 20 inches may be retained.

With all three species of fish very catchable, it's a good time to purchase the new \$24.50 two-pole endorsement, which allows anglers to use two poles while fishing at Lake Roosevelt and many other lakes throughout the state. For more information about the endorsement, visit <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/twopole/> .

Anglers might want to consider spending a weekend camping at one of the Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area's campgrounds - Evans, Fort Spokane, Gifford, Hunters, Keller Ferry, Kettle Falls and Spring Canyon. Most are on a first-come, first-served basis, but groups need to reserve camp sites. For details see <http://www.nps.gov/laro/> .

Baker also noted that fishing has been good at many **rainbow trout** lakes in the northeast district. For example, Pend Oreille County's Big Meadow Lake, about seven miles west of Ione on the Meadow Creek Road, is yielding catches of up to 16-inch rainbows.

At the opposite end of the region, the Tucannon River impoundments are cranking out catches of hatchery-stocked **rainbow trout** . The Tucannon River itself, from the mouth to the Tucannon Hatchery bridge, is also open to fishing. Anglers who have purchased the new \$8.75 Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement can retain up to three **hatchery-marked steelhead** from the Tucannon's open waters through October. Selective gear rules and a prohibition on internal combustion motors are in effect upstream of the Turner Road bridge at Marengo.

WDFW's W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area Manager Kari Dingman said Tucannon lake or river anglers, and other outdoor recreationists who camp on the area, are finding everything very green and lush, thanks to recent rains. But that ample vegetation will be fuel for wild fires soon, so she reminds visitors, including Fourth-of-July holiday celebrants, to comply with the area's restrictions on fires and a ban on fireworks. All WDFW wildlife areas and water access sites throughout the region are under the same fireworks ban and similar fire restrictions. For details by area, see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/> .

Anglers can get a little bit extra out of their fishing license at the Spokane Indians Baseball Club's fifth annual "Fish and Wildlife Night" on Tuesday, July 6, when game tickets are discounted with the presentation of a valid fishing or hunting license. The game will feature fish and wildlife activities between innings and stadium fish and wildlife displays.

### **Northcentral Washington**

Bob Jateff, WDFW district fish biologist, said lowland lake fishing for **rainbow trout** has been holding up pretty well in the Okanogan district. "Cooler, wetter weather has been keeping the water temperatures down a bit, and that has contributed to better than average catch rates for the month of June," he said.

Jateff said good selective-gear waters are Chopaka, Aeneas, and Blue lakes in the Sinlahekin, and Big and Little Twin lakes near Winthrop. Other waters that are still providing decent fishing are

Wannacut, Pearrygin, and Alta lakes.

WDFW Enforcement Officer Cal Treser recently reported checking numerous limits of trout on Lake Pearrygin, along with large crayfish. "If you want to try spiny ray fishing, fish Patterson Lake in the Winthrop area for **yellow perch** and Leader Lake west of Okanogan for **bluegills** and **crappies**," he said.

Jateff also noted the Methow River is still running high, but as water levels start dropping, resident rainbow and **cutthroat trout** will be catchable. Smaller creeks and rivers can provide fishing opportunities even when the major rivers like the Methow are still running high. "Anglers should pay close attention to the regulations on the Methow because there have been a few changes this year," he said.

**Chinook salmon** fishing on the mainstem Columbia River and selected tributaries above Wells Dam is scheduled to start July 1. New daily bag limits put in place this year will allow anglers to keep up to three adult chinook salmon, but only one of those can be a wild adult. Anglers should consult the current sportfishing rules pamphlet, because there are certain areas that anti-snagging and night closure rules are in effect.

### **Southcentral Washington**

High water contributed to a slow start in the fishery for **hatchery summer chinook** salmon on the Columbia River downriver from Priest Rapids Dam and for **hatchery steelhead** downstream from the Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco. None of the 60 anglers surveyed in the John Day Pool had caught any salmon or steelhead, although fishing was good for other species.

During the week ending June 20, anglers fishing the John Day Pool caught 259 **shad** from 15 boats and 15 **bass** and seven **walleye** from 10 boats.

"The Columbia, Snake, Yakima and Walla Walla rivers are all running high, improving some fisheries, such as **catfish**, but making most of the fisheries, especially salmon, problematic," said Paul Hoffarth, a WDFW fish and wildlife biologist in Pasco.

Hoffarth is optimistic that fishing will pick up for salmon and steelhead as river conditions improve and more summer chinook move past McNary Dam into the mid-Columbia and its tributaries.

Hoffarth reminds anglers that all wild, unmarked chinook salmon and steelhead must be released. The daily limit is six hatchery chinook, up to two of which may be adults. Anglers must stop fishing once they retain the adult portion of their daily limit. Any steelhead retained counts toward the daily limit of two adult fish, Hoffarth said.

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

The spring chinook fishery runs through June 30 on the Yakima, and anglers continue to catch fish in the area between Union Gap and Roza Dam. Surveys indicate that the best fishing is between the Naches River and Roza Dam. There is a daily limit of two hatchery salmon with a clipped adipose fin; wild chinook must be released unharmed.

Water levels in the upper Naches and upper Yakima tributaries are continuing to drop and clear up. Eric Anderson, WDFW fish and wildlife biologist in Yakima, said his trend should continue in the weeks ahead into the summer months, when fishing in most tributaries should be good for wild trout, cutthroat, rainbow and brook trout.

Even though waters in the Columbia and Snake rivers remain high, fishing for smallmouth bass and **walleye** should improve as those waters recede and get warmer, Anderson said.

**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).

Anderson reminds anglers that most streams have reduced catch and size limits for trout. In addition, 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. In most large mainstem rivers and streams in the Yakima basin, anglers must use single barbless hooks and no bait.

Lake fishing in Central Washington remains strong, and WDFW is continuing to stock many lakes in the days leading up to the long Fourth of July weekend. Alpine lakes are also an option in the weeks ahead.

"The high country is starting to open up as the snow levels recede," said Anderson. "There are many excellent opportunities to fish high mountain lakes, most of which are hike- to only." Information on high lake stocking in Yakima and Kittitas counties can be obtained from the website link at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/regions/reg3/r3\\_highlakes.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/regions/reg3/r3_highlakes.htm) . Anglers need to check directly with WDFW's regional offices for high lake fish stocking information in other areas. Meanwhile, **kokanee** are biting at Keechelus and Rimrock lakes. While they generally run small (9-11 inches), Anderson points out that anglers can keep up to 16 of them daily.

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

Jumbo triploid trout are being planted at Lost Lake in Kittitas County, as well as in Dog and Leech lakes in Yakima County. These fish are running about 1.5 pounds each. Leech Lake is fly-fishing only. Also in June, 4,500 catchable-size trout and 200 jumbos are being planted in Easton Pond in Kittitas County.

Other recent lake stocking reports can be checked at the WDFW website <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/stocking/weekly/> .

WDFW advises anglers to always check the fishing rules pamphlet for details on a specific river or stream, including what gear is allowed and catch limits. The *Fishing in Washington Sportfishing Rules* guide is available free at stores that sell fishing licenses. The pamphlet 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.

### **TGF Inbox - 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](mailto:brees@pacifier.com)

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com  
Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

### **Random Links**

In Bandon, a salt marsh is re-engineered:

[http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2010/06/the\\_once\\_and\\_future\\_marsh\\_in\\_b.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2010/06/the_once_and_future_marsh_in_b.html)

Shots Fired At Fishermen on Columbia:

<http://www.kptv.com/news/24068655/detail.html>

Green Peter Kokanee Power Fishing Derby July 17th - rules and registration:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/assets/pdf/J0160163628.PDF>

**GOOD LUCK!**