

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 31

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 30th – August 5th, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

This is the week to study up on how to most effectively fish the Buoy 10 fishery!

With nearly a million salmon forecast back to the lower Columbia this season, you'll want the best chance to get your share. Go to our web page on tech reports and order up **Tech Report #4; Columbia River Estuary Salmon Fishing**. It's the best \$7.95 you'll ever spend to increase your catch! If you don't like what we have to say, we'll refund 100% of your purchase price! Go to: <http://www.theguidesforecast.com/techrpt.shtml> for more details!



AND, if you want the real experience, pro guide Bob Rees has a few remaining open seats for his Buoy 10 season. Pick one of the options listed below and call (503) 812-9036 or email brees@pacifier.com for more details or to make a reservation.

Open dates: August 7th, 8th, 21st and 22nd. There are also numerous dates in early September as well!

Willamette Valley/Metro - With steelhead continuing to pour over Bonneville Dam, action on the mainstem Columbia is predictably good. Boaters outscored bank anglers this week, mostly due to the fact fish were cruising in deeper water with temperatures on the rise and flows on the decrease. This early run of steelhead is likely to peak in the next 2 weeks, making it a great

option when winds don't hamper angling success.

Sturgeon retention closes upstream of the Wauna Powerlines to Bonneville Dam for 2 months beginning Sunday, August 1st. Success rates have been poor anyway but will likely pick up again in the fall.

The 70 degree water of the lower Willamette is conducive only to bass and panfish. Steelhead are being caught on the upper river.

Caddis imitations are fooling cutthroat and rainbows on the McKenzie River. A few summer steelhead and the occasional dark springer is being hooked.

Spring chinook are in the North Santiam in good numbers. Try baiting them below Big Cliff Dam. A mix of bright and dark springers is available in the South Santiam.

The Clackamas is low and clear with fishing poor to slow. First light may be the only option.

Sandy fishing is at a standstill and it's a poor choice for swimming.

Northwest – Offshore salmon fishing out of Garibaldi took a downturn as early run coho begin to make their way north, staging near the Columbia River mouth where baitfish are plentiful. Anglers are consistently reporting catches of large coho for this early in the season. Most anglers are targeting water deeper than 200 foot.

Ocean crabbing is picking up with a better ratio of hard shelled crabs beginning to show.

Coho fishing is considerably better off the mouth of the Columbia River where anglers are beginning to report consistent catches fishing near the CR Buoy. A few quality chinook are beginning to show in the catch. Catches will only get better in the coming weeks with little danger of a closure in the near future as effort has been light.

The famed Buoy 10 fishery opens on August 1st with high expectations of a high chinook catch in the coming weeks. Professional fisherman Buzz Ramsey will detail proven techniques in the area's most popular fishery tonight beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Fishermen's Marine and Outdoor in Oregon City. Over 1 million chinook and coho are due back to the lower Columbia with peak fishing likely to happen the third week of August.

Albacore made a brief showing off the north coast early in the week but warm water pushed back offshore, putting tuna out of reach for most sport boats. August and September are often peak months.

Coastal fall chinook season opens on Sunday with some systems forecasted to be better than average this year. The Nestucca and Nehalem will have heavy restrictions while Tillamook Bay is predicted to produce a better than average catch this season. If the fall run mimics the success of this season's spring chinook, the action should be good.

Bay crabbing on the north coast continues to produce fair results and should improve in the coming weeks.

Southwest – Morning outgoing tides will once again hamper offshore launches this weekend. While the ocean is expected to lay down this coming weekend, afternoon winds may be problematic.

Offshore salmon fishing has picked up a little with a few limits reported but it's spotty.

Tuna remain far offshore but warmer water is gradually moving towards shore.

Pinkfin perch fishing remains good in Winchester Bay and on area beaches when the surf calms down. Fall chinook and coho have started entering the bay where crabbing is fair to good. Try below Elkton on the mainstem Umpqua where smallmouth bass are biting well.

Fall chinook fishing was good in Rogue Bay last week with several fish taken weighing over 30 pounds but action slowed over the weekend with fewer than a dozen fish taken on Saturday and Sunday.

Bottom fishing has been excellent out of Brookings Harbor despite the 20-fathom restriction as of July 23rd with some large ling cod boated. Expect the 120-foot limitation to remain in place for the rest of the year.

Eastern – The Deschutes River continues to disappoint anglers as warm water continues to flow from Pelton Dam. Mainstem Columbia steelhead are known to take up cold water refuge in the lower Deschutes but with this seasons warm water, interception rates are lower. Fortunately, that's expected to change in the coming weeks.

Pressure has increased at Wallowa Lake following four record kokanee landed over the past year but fishing remains good here.

Odell is producing good catches of fat kokanee averaging 10 inches to trollers. Lake trout are being taken on downriggers.

Green Peter Reservoir is producing limits of kokanee. Trolling early and late in the day is most productive.

Wickiup has been fair for good-sized kokanee.

SW Washington – The Cowlitz River is producing fair at best results for summer steelhead with success rates likely to climb in the coming weeks. The Lewis is also an option but has not fished as good as it has in recent years.

Drano Lake anglers are averaging about a fish per boat with low light scenario's producing the best catches. A significant number of wild fish are showing up in the catches so be prepared to release your catch.

The White Salmon and Klickitat Rivers should have fair numbers of fish present and with mild temperatures in the forecast, fishing should be fair.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Soon, sturgeon fishing will take back seat to salmon effort as nearly 1 million salmon begin their annual journey upstream in the coming month. Meanwhile, sturgeon fishing remains good, indicating that indeed sturgeon have been present in the estuary, just unwilling to cooperate for the 2010 angling community.

Effort remains light but anglers are finding good numbers of keepers upstream of the Astoria Bridge. Anchovies remain the bait of choice with Taylor Sands producing the best results, in front of the town of Astoria. Both shallow and deep have been producing well, it's just a matter of finding good numbers of fish around and then sitting down on them with the hopes they are on

the feed. The strongest part of the tide, both incoming and outgoing is producing the best results and the action should stay strong through the current proposed closure date of August 1st. There is no intention of another extension even though there are a couple thousand more sturgeon left on the quota.

Offshore, salmon anglers are frothing in anticipation of the banner chinook run due back to the lower Columbia in the coming weeks. With the August 1st opener right around the corner, undoubtedly, there will be motivated folks plying the waters for an early chinook. Effort outside has been minimal but catches are beginning to pick up. Most recently, the weather has been nice and catches of large coho are motivating people to get after them. Although limits haven't necessarily been the rule, with enough effort, anglers are coming up with some quality catches as of late. The most recent creel check indicated just over a fish per boat was taken (week of July 19 – 25) with nearly 1/3 of the retained catch being chinook. It's a sign that the Columbia River run should come in as predicted (or better!).

The CR Buoy has been producing the best catches but it's time to explore north of the mouth of the river and off the lighthouse and Long Beach Peninsula. In years of high chinook production, this area can be worthwhile. Fresh herring and anchovies will produce the most strikes.

Offshore crabbing has been fair and more productive than the river crabbing.

Tuna chasers thought they'd be in range more consistently by now but it's hit or miss for albacore anglers. The waters off of the Columbia are typically producing good catches by now but it's sporadic at best. It's been said recently that only the insane should try for tuna as they are very far offshore.

Inland, steelhead anglers, especially boaters fared well for summer metalheads this week. With dropping flows and warmer water temperatures, fish were located a bit away from the shoreline this week. The gorge produced some of the better catches as is often the case this time of year.

Boaters have been surprisingly absent at the mouth of the Cowlitz this year. Hydrologic changes have fish and fishermen seeking other areas of interception. It was a quality fishery just a few years ago but the action has dramatically changed recently despite the fact thousands of fish each day must still be passing by.

Bank anglers did fair but tides were early in the morning and anglers didn't have much time to work with them even though there was a favorable outflow.

Sturgeon fishing closes above Wauna on August 1st but will open later in the fall. The action has been slow in the gorge.

The Guide's Forecast – The Buoy 10 fishery will now hold the spotlight but don't look to the opener to produce great catches. Although there should be some chinook around, most are staging to the north and near the mouth of the Columbia River. Relatively weak tides will likely not impress anglers but if you do decide to target chinook or coho, at least wait until low slack before you begin your pursuit. The early morning start will likely produce the least as the warmest of the water temperatures will be "full frontal" until low slack later in the morning.

Start near Buoy 10 at low slack and work your way upstream as the incoming tide pushes in. With only a 7 foot flood, the lower portions of the river will likely hold the biggest concentrations of fish. Herring will likely produce the best results as bait seems to produce the best for these early season fish. Spinners however can provide some nice early season action. Go big, whether

you're using bait or spinners as these early fish are often the older, larger fish of the year. There should be some nice 30-pounders present.

The real action should remain offshore however. Both chinook and coho will make up the catch but the bar has been pretty rough recently so pay attention to bar conditions before crossing. Anglers should try to the north first off to see if any chinook are around off the Cape Disappointment Light House and Long Beach. The action can be pretty good about now. There are really nice coho around as well so prepare yourselves for larger fish this time of year. The CR Buoy is frequently the best choice but chinook ratios aren't typically as good as they can be to the north. Troll bait close to the surface early and drop them down as the sun begins to rise higher in the sky. Don't be afraid to target coho and chinook 20 to 40 foot deep if you're not drawing strikes by mid-morning.

Crabbing is picking up offshore but remains fair at best inside the river. The river crabs are likely to be smaller but in a more hard-shelled state.

This will be the last weekend for sturgeon fishing (catch and keep) in the lower Columbia (downstream of Wauna Powerlines). The season is finally getting good with Taylor Sands the likely area to continue to produce the best catches. Some quality keepers are coming from this area and there is a lot of space out there so plan on exploring unless you know where you want to go. Don't leave home without anchovies and there are some crab and sculpin working the area so bring extra bait. I usually don't say this but you may as well leave the sand shrimp at home.

Steelheaders shouldn't anticipate a banner week despite the fact we're coming up on the peak of the peak season. Dam passage at Bonneville is likely to continue to climb so catch rates in the gorge should prove to be the best. Use small spinners in brass or red for the best results and fish rocky outcroppings from the fishery to the upper deadline. Bank anglers in the area should continue to fare well also. Tip your offering with coon shrimp but be sure to let the fish take the bait good and long before you rare back on the bite. Sometimes it takes a while for the fish to have the bait long enough to hook itself. Warmer waters may slow the bite but the cooler air temperatures of this week should keep fish biting.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The data sensor at Willamette Falls which provides daily, real-time information failed late in the day on July 25th. We're confident that the water remains pretty darned warm in the lower river. Daily fish counts have dropped off sharply over the past two weeks although detailed data has not been updated for that period of time.

Conditions on the McKenzie continue to be good for this time of year thanks to the wetter than normal spring. Flows are favorable with water temperatures stable in the upper 50's.

Level and flow has been steady on the North Santiam although fishing has been spotty and the bite has been very light. Water temperatures are warmer on downstream locations so the upper river will be most productive.

The Guide's Forecast – Walleye fishing will be decent for boaters dragging worm harnesses between Gilbert River and Coon Island on the Multnomah Channel. The upper Willamette is productive for smallmouth bass along just about any rocky shoreline. Try the Willamette below Dexter for steelhead as upstream numbers of fish remain very good. Use dark colored lures or flies for best results. Fly anglers are catching trout in fair to good numbers. Steelhead are being caught in the so-called Town Run between Springfield and Eugene.

Steelhead are scattered in good number everywhere below Leaburg Dam so there's no good reason to join the crowds immediately below the dam. Fish dark lures or flies for a reasonably good chance of a hookup here with moderate effort. Trout will respond to a variety of offerings so stay versatile. Caddis and Pale Morning Duns are apparent in the river.

Fish the North Santiam above Mehema this weekend or head straight to Packsaddle or Minto Park for a better chance of an encounter with a North Santiam steelhead or spring Chinook. Summertime dictates early morning trips to be most productive although mid to late mornings have produced fish this week. Bait such as sandshrimp has got bites as have hardware offerings.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – The Clackamas is low, slow, clear and warm. Fish accordingly.

Typical summer conditions exist on the Sandy River now with flows low, water warm and the color glacial gray.

The Guide's Forecast – Try the Clackamas early in the morning and high on the system. Count on slow fishing although jigs have been responsible for a few hookups.

Given the current water conditions, it would be worth an angler's time to skip the Sandy until the situation improves.

North Coast Fishing Report – Freshwater fishing is all but at a standstill. The only game in town would be the Nehalem River but that run of summer chinook is in the toilet right now and not worth the effort or your morality right now.

That make offshore fishing the most attractive option right now, and that's not all that attractive. The fish have been hard to come by, or at least limits have. With only a fraction of the fish this year that we had last year, the fishery on the north coast can't be expected to produce nearly as well. Most of the fish in this fishery are destined for the Columbia River and many of these stocks are gathered around the mouth of the Columbia where baitfish is plentiful.

What few keepers are being taken are of quality size. Hatchery coho to 13-pounds have been reported lately and oftentimes, coho can grow a pound a week during this time. We're in store for some nice fish this season. Chinook are making up only a small portion of the catch right now.

Summer steelhead remain available on the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers but anglers aren't reporting gangbuster fishing. Stealthy tactics are required with early morning producing the best.

Not many people take advantage of the sea-run cutthroat fishing like they used to. There should be good opportunity on many coastal systems with trolled spinner/bait combos producing the best. Boaters can work the tidewater sections of the river where fish are most likely to be this time of the year.

Although fall chinook season opens on August 1st, there won't be much to write home about for another month or better. The best return is forecast to the Tillamook Bay region with the Nehalem and Nestucca predicted to be way down. Anglers likely won't find success for at least another few weeks on any of these systems.

The Guide's Forecast – There won't be much to talk about in this district this week. Offshore fishing is on a downhill slide although there should still be some fair opportunity for nice hatchery and wild coho. Fish to the NW of the tip of the north jetty out of Tillamook Bay so you can ride the NW wind back to port. Don't forget to bring your crab pots, the crabbing is picking up.

Don't bother with estuary salmon fishing, we're still weeks away from any real hope. Crabbing however is likely to be decent on several north coast bays.

Try trout or steelhead fishing on your favorite north coast stream. You'll have to use light leaders and small gear to expect any results in the extreme low flows on all district rivers.

Central & South Coast Reports – All-depth halibut re-opens from [Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain](#) August 6th for the summer season. Boats may fish every other Friday and Saturday through October 30th or fulfillment of a 141,265 pound quota.

Latest bottomfishing regulations as of July 24th include putting cabezon off limits to boat anglers for the remainder of the year although those fishing from shore may continue to retain them. Of greater impact is the restriction to 20 fathoms (120 feet) or less for the remainder of the year. This regulation change, according the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, is to protect yelloweye rockfish which are subject to a high mortality percentage, which do not recover when caught and released.

While morning outgoing tides will make for creative launch windows this weekend, a fairly mild ocean forecast coupled with light winds off the central Oregon coast should allow for some salty activities. Ports further south are predicted to experience strong offshore winds over the weekend.

Fall Chinook are starting to enter coastal rivers and coho won't be far behind. With the runs come the regulations. For the latest updates on all coastal rivers, see **Random Links**, below.

Sea run cutthroat trout are starting to enter coastal streams and will continue to do so into the fall months. These fish respond well to shiny hardware and flashy flies but consider catch and release in order to sustain this fishery even though a couple may be retained by regulation in most coastal tributaries.

Rockfish catches have been spotty and salmon fishing has been a crapshoot out of Newport but crabbing has been worthwhile just outside around the jetties in 60 to 65 feet of water.

Offshore salmon fishing out of Depoe Bay has been consistently slow although catches of rockfish and ling cod make the trip worthwhile. Albacore remain too far out to fish. Ocean crabbing is good.

Chinook have been taken inside Winchester Bay from Reedsport to the South Jetty. Crabbing is good inside the bay. Pinkfin perch limits have been taken every day in the bay and while area beaches are also producing good catches, the pressure has been light. Despite higher than normal flows, smallmouth bass fishing has been good in the mainstem Umpqua although boats may expect float trips to take less time than usual at this time of year in the swift flows. Although fishing is restricted to artificial lures and flies in the South Umpqua, that's not stopping anglers here from making good catches of smallmouth bass now that flows have dropped and the water has warmed up. The Flies-only stretch of the North Umpqua has been producing steelhead to those concentrating efforts on areas protected by shade.

Catches of fall Chinook have fallen off in Rogue Bay although steelheading has improved somewhat in the lower river. While a few summer steelhead are being taken in the middle Rogue, angling is mostly on hold here until fall Chinook action starts. Steelheading has been good on the upper Rogue and these fish haven't been picky. Anglers armed with hardware, plug rods, drift gear, bait or fly tackle are all taking fish. Spring Chinook are still being taken in this section of the river as well. The Hatchery Hole is putting out springers daily to bank anglers although summer steelhead are becoming a more promising target.

ODFW sez, "The Chetco River upstream from the Bonneville Power Administration powerline crossing at River Mile 2.2 is closed to all fishing, including trout, through Nov. 5. Tributaries remain open through the end of October for trout."

Central and Eastern Oregon – Catching reddsides on the Deschutes in mid-summer can be an interesting challenge as the imitation which may appeal at one moment may change in the next. Watch the fish to see how they're behaving and respond accordingly. Pale Morning Duns will be apparent with caddis hatches occurring late afternoon and into the evening. Steelhead counts over Columbia River dams have been promising this year with at least half of those fin-clipped keepers. To improve the odds of a hookup on the Deschutes, concentrate efforts early and late in the day. About half the boats trolling at the mouth of the Deschutes are hooking steelhead with a fair percentage of those actually getting landed.

While the Metolius will always challenge a fly fisher's prowess, there are a variety of bugs hatching all day long here. Best results have come on nymphs early and dries late in the day.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2010

August 2010

Contact: (Fish) 360-902-2700

(Wildlife) 360-902-2515

Buoy 10 Columbia salmon season highlights a great month of fishing

Anglers are reeling in chinook salmon off the coast, pulling up pots full of crab in Puget Sound, and casting for trout in alpine lakes on both sides of the Cascades. Summer fisheries are in full swing, and anglers can look forward to even more great fishing opportunities in the days ahead. A prime example is the Buoy 10 salmon fishery, which opens Aug. 1 at the mouth of the Columbia River. A big run of 664,900 fall chinook is expected to return to the big river this year, and fishery managers predict that anglers will catch approximately 12,500 of them between Buoy 10 and Rocky Point, 16 miles upriver.

"Buoy 10 is a very popular fishery, drawing tens of thousands of anglers every year," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Fishing tends to start out slow, then accelerates quickly and builds through the rest of August."

Bank anglers planning to fish at Buoy 10 should be aware that access to much of the North Jetty will be closed, due to a major project being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reinforce beaches eroded by winter storms. "The North jetty provides the only real bank access to that fishery, so things could get a little crowded," Hymer said.

The chinook fishery closes Aug. 31 at Buoy 10, but anglers can continue to keep hatchery-reared coho salmon in that area through the end of the year. Upriver from Rocky Point, fishing opportunities for both species continue late into the year on the mainstem Columbia River and many of its tributaries.

Rather crack some crab? Fisheries for Dungeness crab are open throughout August in most areas of Puget Sound - the exception being Marine Area 7-North near the Canadian border, which opens Aug. 11. Specific regulations for each area are described in WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet and on the department's website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>).

North Puget Sound

Anglers are reeling in chinook and coho in Puget Sound, where crabbing is still an option and two additional marine areas open for salmon Aug. 1. Meanwhile, anglers are having some success at Baker Lake, which recently opened for sockeye salmon.

For the first time, anglers are fishing for **sockeye salmon** in Baker Lake, where the fish are returning in significantly higher numbers this year. Anglers fishing Baker Lake can retain up to two adult sockeye salmon that exceed 18 inches in length from Baker Dam upstream to the mouth of the Baker River. All other salmon must be released, and no fishing is allowed between the dam and the log boom at the lower end of the lake.

"The fish are biting, it's just a matter of finding them," said Brett Barkdull, fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Most anglers have done well once they get over them, and hopefully that will continue into August."

The sockeye salmon fishery at Baker Lake is open until further notice, said Barkdull, who reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>. Separate sockeye salmon fisheries on portions of the Skagit and Baker rivers run through July 31.

Elsewhere, anglers can still find some **steelhead** along the Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish River. But most freshwater anglers are gearing up for Sept. 1, when the Stllaguamish, Snohomish, Skykomish and portions of the Skagit, Snoqualmie and Green (Duwamish) rivers open for salmon fishing.

Beginning Aug. 16, **Lake Sammamish** will also be an option for freshwater salmon anglers, who will have a daily limit of four salmon, and can retain up to two **chinook**. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek.

On Puget Sound, anglers can fish for salmon in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). Those fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild coho and chum starting Aug. 1.

Anglers fishing marine areas 9 and 10 can keep hatchery chinook - marked with a clipped adipose fin - as part of a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook. Those fishing Marine Area 9 also must release chum salmon, while anglers in Marine Area 10 are required to release chum beginning Aug. 1.

The chinook selective fisheries in marine areas 9 and 10 run through Aug. 31. Beginning Sept. 1, anglers in those two marine areas will be required to release all chinook and chum. Anglers are reminded that regulations vary for inner Elliott Bay, Sinclair Inlet and public fishing piers in those marine areas.

August brings other opportunities in the region to catch and keep salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open for salmon. Anglers fishing those two areas will have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Meanwhile, the **crab** fishery is under way in Puget Sound. Dungeness and red rock crab seasons are:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) are open through Jan. 2, seven days a week.
- Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal) are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine areas 7 South and East are open through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Area 7 North will open Aug. 11 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule through Sept. 30, and open 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.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Summer salmon fishing is in full swing along the coast, where anglers are hooking some bright chinook and nice-size coho. "Some days are better than others, but for the most part fishing has been good for both **chinook** and **coho** ," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "In the coming weeks, I expect fishing to get even better as more salmon show up and the weather settles down."

Anglers fishing marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) can keep up to two chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release any chinook measuring less than 24 inches and hatchery coho less than 16 inches. Wild coho must be released unharmed. All four ocean marine areas are open to salmon fishing seven days a week. Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 3 and 4, through Sept. 19 in Marine Area 2 and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1. However, salmon fisheries in those areas could close early if catch quotas are reached. Milward reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations> .

So far this year, angler effort has been lower than expected likely because of rough weather, Milward said. "Conditions should improve as we move into August, making it easier for anglers to get out on the water," he said.

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers are still having some success hooking chinook and the occasional coho in marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), while salmon fisheries in marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon), 12 (Hood Canal) and 13 (South Puget Sound) continue to be slow.

Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the *Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet* (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>) before heading out on the water.

Anglers still hoping to land a big flatfish should be aware that the late season for **halibut** opens Aug. 6 in Marine Area 1. The fishery is open three days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the quota is taken or Sept 26, whichever occurs first. A total of 4,885 pounds of halibut are available for harvest, including 854 pounds left over from the early season.

Prefer shellfish? The **Dungeness crab** fishery is going strong in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and most areas of Puget Sound. Dungeness and red rock crab seasons are:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 are open through Jan. 2, seven days a week.
- Marine areas 6, 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine areas 7 South and East are open through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Area 7 North will open Aug. 11 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule through Sept. 30, and open 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.

Meanwhile, WDFW enforcement officers will be increasing resource-protection patrols on the **Skokomish River** , where recreational salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 under several new regulations.

The daily bag limit has been increased this year from one to two salmon for anglers fishing from the mouth of the river to the Highway 101 Bridge through Sept. 30. However, a new rule in effect this year requires anglers to carefully release any wild chinook salmon they catch. As in previous years, anglers must release chum salmon through Oct. 15.

Another change this year is that recreational fishing will be closed from the Highway 106 Bridge upstream to the Highway 101 Bridge on six Mondays to avoid potential gear conflicts with treaty tribal fishers. Those closures are scheduled for Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and Sept. 13. Recreational fishing downstream of the Highway 106 Bridge will remain open seven days a week through the fishing season.

Anglers fishing the Skokomish River also will be required to release any salmon not hooked inside the mouth and retain the first two legal salmon they catch. In addition, single-point barbless hooks are required and a night closure and anti-snagging rule will be in effect.

Southwest Washington

For Columbia River anglers, this month provides a great opportunity for a triple play. Fishing seasons for fall chinook salmon and hatchery coho open Aug. 1, while summer steelhead are expected to continue providing good fishing well into September.

While the **fall chinook** season opens upriver to Priest Rapids Dam, most of this month's action takes place in the popular Buoy 10 fishery on the lower 16 miles of the river. A big run of 664,900 fall chinook is expected this year, setting the stage for some good fishing, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"The fall chinook fishery is looking very promising this year," Hymer said. "Fishing tends to start slow, then accelerates quickly and builds through the rest of August."

So will the catch. Fishery managers estimate that anglers will catch 12,500 chinook salmon by Aug. 31, when the retention fishery for chinook closes in the Buoy 10 area. They also anticipate a catch of 12,000 coho in that area and another 17,000 chinook between Rocky Point and Bonneville Dam by the time those seasons come to a close.

Bank anglers planning to fish at Buoy 10 should be aware that access to much of the North Jetty will be closed, due to a major project being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reinforce beaches eroded by winter storms. "The North jetty provides the only real bank access to that fishery, so things could get a little crowded," Hymer said.

For the Buoy 10 fishery, the daily limit is two salmon, two **hatchery steelhead**, or one of each. However, anglers may retain only one chinook salmon (minimum size, 24 inches) per day as part of their daily limit. Only those steelhead and coho marked with a missing adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained. This requirement does not, however, apply to fall chinook, which may be retained whether marked or unmarked.

For more rules on the Buoy 10 area and other waters upriver, see WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, which is posted online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>.

By mid-to-late August, the bulk of the chinook run historically begins to move upstream while increasing numbers of **coho** move into the Columbia River behind them. For anglers following the chinook upriver, Hymer recommends fishing deep, between 40 and 50 feet down. For a lure, he suggests a wobbler anchored with a heavy weight.

"Chinook go deep when water temperatures are high - as they are now - so that's a good place to find them," Hymer said. "At the same time, anglers should take care not to drop anchor in the shipping channel. That can lead to real trouble."

While 2010 is not expected to be a banner year for hatchery coho, those fish will help to round out anglers' daily limits at Buoy 10, Hymer said. WDFW currently expects about 290,000 coho to return this year, down significantly from last year's exceptionally large run of three-quarters of a million fish.

"While we will likely see fewer coho this year, those fish will still make a real contribution to the fishery," Hymer said. "They usually bite best at Buoy 10 on herring and spinners, and then later in the tributaries."

Meanwhile, plenty of **hatchery steelhead** are still available for harvest, Hymer said. In June, anglers caught more early-run summer steelhead than at any time since the 1970s, and those fish should keep biting hooks through mid-August. By then, the larger "B-run" steelhead - many weighing in the teens - should start arriving to pick up the slack. This year's return of "B-run" steelhead, most headed for hatcheries on the Clearwater and Salmon rivers, is expected to total about 100,000 fish, about double the size of last year's run.

"The combination of three species - fall chinook, coho and steelhead - makes August a great time to fish the Columbia River," Hymer said.

They'll also liven up fishing in the tributaries, where anglers have been reeling in respectable numbers of hatchery steelhead for the past few months. As on the mainstem Columbia, the fall salmon season starts Aug. 1 on a number of area tributaries, although salmon fishing doesn't really take off until September. Meanwhile, Drano Lake and the White Salmon River are good places to try for steelhead looking for cooler waters.

Like last year, anglers will again be able to retain up to six hatchery adult coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal. Also like last year, hatchery fall chinook are the only kind of salmon anglers can retain on the Grays, Elochoman and Kalama rivers.

Some new rules will also be in effect, including a requirement that anglers release all unmarked chinook (adults and jacks) on the Cowlitz, Toutle, Green, Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake. Last year, that requirement applied only to jack salmon on those rivers. As always, WDFW strongly advises anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet for new rules applicable to specific waters before leaving home.

Of course, salmon and steelhead aren't the only fish available for harvest in August. **Walleye** fishing has been good in the Columbia River near Camas, as well as in The Dalles and John Day Pools. **Bass** fishing has also been heating up from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam.

For **trout**, the high wilderness lakes around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens offer unparalleled fishing experiences for those willing to brave the mosquitoes. Riffe Lake in Lewis County is still giving up some nice landlocked coho, while Mayfield Lake, Skate Creek and the Tilton River are still receiving regular plants of rainbows. Hatchery sea-run cutthroats should also provide some opportunity on the lower Cowlitz beginning in late August.

Eastern Washington

With water temperatures rising, the month of August is usually best for warmwater-species fishing throughout the region.

Chris Donley, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist, said mixed-species waters are a good bet. **Yellow perch, largemouth** and **smallmouth bass**, and **crappie** can usually be caught at Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs and Chapman lakes in southwest Spokane County, Newman and Liberty lakes in eastern Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake and Deer and Waitts lakes in Stevens County.

Fishing at **rainbow** and **cutthroat** trout lakes near Spokane - like Amber, Badger, Clear, Fish, Williams, and West Medical lakes - is best early in the morning or at night, Donley says. The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, but river anglers need to be aware of catch limits, gear restrictions, and other rules listed in the fishing pamphlet.

Catfish and **sturgeon** fishing is usually productive in the Snake River system in the southeast part of the region in August. Catfish are often landed in the backwaters and sloughs throughout the mainstem Snake, as well as in or near the mouths of tributaries like the Tucannon River.

Sturgeon fishers are reminded of the minimum 43-inch and maximum 54-inch tail fork length and the daily catch limit of one sturgeon. The Snake and its tributaries upstream of Lower Granite Dam are catch-and-release only for sturgeon. The section of the Snake just east of the Tri-Cities, from the mouth to Ice Harbor Dam, is also catch-and-release for sturgeon starting Aug. 1.

Fishing has slowed considerably for **rainbow trout** in the small man-made lakes off the Tucannon River on WDFW's Wooten Wildlife Area in Columbia County, said area manager Kari Dingman. With or without good fishing, lots of folks like to escape city heat with a weekend camping trip to the area. Dingman said hot and dry conditions, along with a recent wildfire, have resulted in a ban on campfires.

Dingman also reminds fishers and other recreationists that a U.S. Forest Service road, bridge and culvert over the Little Tucannon River are under re-construction for the first half of August, so state campgrounds Panjab North and South, along with the Sheep Creek and Meadow Creek trailheads, will be inaccessible during the project.

In the north end of the region, **kokanee** and **walleye** fishing continues to be good at Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam. Kokanee fishing is also productive at Stevens County's Loon Lake during night time hours.

Some of the high elevation lakes on U.S. Forest Service property in the northeast district that are stocked with **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** may be good destinations for camping and fishing weekends. In Ferry County, try Davis, Ellen, Empire, Swan and Trout lakes. In Stevens County, try Gillette, Heritage, Sherry, Summit, and Thomas lakes. In Pend Oreille County, try Carl's, Cook's, Frater, Halfmoon, Leo, Mystic, Nile, No-Name, Petit, South and North Skookums, and Yokum lakes. More information on these mostly small fishing lakes can be found in WDFW's 2010 Fishing Prospects at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects/>.

Anglers are reminded to be extra careful with anything that could start wildfires in the region's hot and dry conditions. Plans should include a check on campfire restrictions on public lands. See Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fire information by county at <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. Current wildfire conditions in Washington are available at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49/>.

Northcentral Washington

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Bob Jateff of Twisp reports that **salmon** fishing in the mainstem Columbia River is picking up with the approach of August. "An increasing number of **sockeye salmon** are being caught right off the mouth of the Okanogan River," Jateff said. "**Chinook salmon** fishing has been slow, but should pick up as more fish pass Wells Dam."

Jateff reminds anglers the daily catch limit is six salmon, of which no more than three can be chinook, and only one chinook can be a wild, unmarked fish.

The action should also pick up on the Methow River and its tributaries, now that stream flows are finally dropping to fishable levels, he said, noting that those waters are catch-and-release only and that selective gear is required. He advises anglers to check the sportfishing rules pamphlet to be sure which areas are open to fishing.

"Smaller tributaries within the Methow system are good during the summer for anglers who want to catch and keep **brook trout**," Jateff said. "Eightmile, Falls, and Boulder creeks are all tributaries to the Chewuch River that hold brook trout. The daily limit on Falls and Eightmile Creeks is five fish, and on Boulder Creek it's 10 fish. There is no minimum size for brook trout in these waters."

Jateff says lake fishing throughout the Okanogan district generally slows down during the hotter months, except for waters at high elevation. "Alpine lake fishing action picks up as the trails become more accessible," he said. "Most high country lakes either have reproducing populations of trout or are sustained by periodic fish plants. **Cutthroat trout** is the main species in a lot of these waters."

Jateff noted that anglers who fish deep during the cooler parts of the day - very early or late - can catch some nice **rainbow trout** in the lower elevation waters, too. "Wannacut Lake near Oroville, for example, is a deep lake that seems to hold up well over the summer," he said.

Anglers can find specific information about fishing waters throughout the region, county by county, in WDFW's Fishing Prospects report at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects/>. Wherever of where they go, anglers are reminded to be careful with anything that could start wildfires in the region's hot and dry conditions. Outing plans should include a check on campfire restrictions on public lands. See Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fire information by county at <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. See current wildfire conditions in Washington from the National Interagency Fire Center at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49/>.

Southcentral Washington

Fishing for **kokanee** at Rimrock Reservoir - the 2500-plus-acre impoundment on the Tieton River along Hwy. 12 about 10 miles east of White Pass in western Yakima County - is about as good as it gets these days. That's the word from both Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Eric Anderson and WDFW regional habitat program manager Perry Harvester, both of Yakima.

"You can catch your daily limit of 16 fish in just a few hours of fishing," said Harvester. "Use small, white, shoepeg corn or maggots soaked in tuna or shrimp oil at about 20 feet deep on a wedding ring spinner behind a smaller gang troll, like small cowbells. Two ounces of weight are all that is needed. Troll very slowly, between one and two miles per hour. Vary your speed and make turns once you find a school. There's good action for kids to keep their attention. There's less wind to contend with at the west end of the lake but the fish are everywhere."

Anderson reports the kokanee, or "silver trout," which are actually land-locked sockeye salmon, run about nine to 10½ inches long. Rimrock anglers are hitting them hard these days. "With the hot weather continuing," Anderson said, "you may have to go deeper than the 20 feet where Perry caught them, maybe down to 30 feet."

Anderson also recommends kokanee fishing at other Yakima Basin reservoirs including Bumping, and Keechelus and Kachess in Kittitas County. "All these waters are closed to the taking of any **bull trout**," Anderson said, "so anglers need to release all inadvertently caught bull trout." Water levels in streams in the upper Yakima and Naches river systems are in pretty good condition for **wild rainbow** and **cutthroat** trout fishing, Anderson said. Anglers should check the stream regulations for details and release all **salmon**, **bull trout**, and **steelhead**.

"The mountain country has really opened up now and there are some great high lake trout fishing opportunities in the South Cascades," Anderson said. "There are lots of small lakes to hike up to that we stock with fish."

Specific information on stocking Yakima and Kittitas county alpine lakes can be found at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/regions/reg3/r3_highlakes.htm.

Rather catch **walleye**? Creel reports show that interest in walleye fishing is picking up on Lake Umatilla, the Columbia River reservoir behind McNary Dam on the Washington-Oregon border. Creel checkers were actually looking for salmon and steelhead anglers, but 102 anglers out of 129 interviewed were fishing for walleye.

"Those anglers averaged about one walleye for a little over four hours of fishing each," said WDFW fish biologist Paul Hoffarth of Pasco. "We tallied 128 walleye total, 89 kept, 29 released." There is no minimum size on Columbia River walleye, but only five fish of the 10-fish daily limit can be over 18 inches and only one over 24 inches can be retained. Anglers targeting walleye also caught **smallmouth bass**, Hoffarth reported. Four bass anglers interviewed averaged

about one fish per hour of fishing. There is no minimum size on bass, but only three fish of the five-fish daily limit can exceed 15 inches.

Sturgeon fishing is catch-and-release only Aug. 1 throughout the Columbia River. The section that has been closed to all sturgeon fishing, from the Interstate 82 bridge upstream to McNary Dam, opens for catch-and-release only Aug. 1.

Hoffarth's most recent sturgeon fishing checks showed anglers averaging one sturgeon for over six hours of fishing. Most were less than the 43-inch minimum, with a few in the slot limit of 43 to 54 inches, and a few over the 54 inch maximum.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

Got a question, story to tell or information to share? Shoot us an Email!

Write to the TGF staff:

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Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

2010 Fall Chinook and Coho Regulations:

[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2010 Coastal Fall Chinook Seasons.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2010_Coastal_Fall_Chinook_Seasons.pdf)

Will this be the ocean fish of the future?:

<http://www.tackletour.com/reviewsquidfishing.html>

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