

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 33

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 13<sup>th</sup> – August 19<sup>th</sup>, 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](mailto:brees@pacifier.com) for more details or to make a reservation.**

**Open dates: August 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. There are also numerous dates in early September as well!**

**Willamette Valley/Metro** - Summer steelhead success is peaking with gorge anglers taking respectable numbers of keepers. An equal number of natives are being caught but must be released unharmed. Dam passage for steelhead at Bonneville is peaking right now and the fall

chinook run is just getting underway although metro area catches have been light.

Willamette fish passage data through the end of July indicates steadily declining numbers of chinook and steelhead as the water temperature languishes in the low 70s. None-the-less, the run size for Willamette springers was underestimated, producing an above average catch this year. Jack counts to date are less than 2009 indicating a slight downturn is possible for next year's adults.

Upper river slots continue to produce summer steelhead for persistent anglers.

Trout fishers on the lower McKenzie should do well for hatchery trout. There are still some springers available here but many are darkening.

North and South Santiam fishing has been tough although jigs have hooked a few fish.

Water on the Sandy is low and milky while the Clackamas is low and clear. Fishing is slow but stealthy summer steelhead anglers still stand a chance for early morning success.

**Northwest** – Buoy 10 anglers are still waiting for chinook catches to break loose. A few chinook are being taken on the incoming tide on both the Washington and Oregon sides. If the chinook prediction is to come to fruition, chinook catches will light up this week. Herring is producing the most strikes but an occasional fish is being taken on spinners.

With a \$1000.00 big fish prize, anglers should register now for the Buoy 10 Challenge on August 27<sup>th</sup>. Go to: [www.nsiafishing.org](http://www.nsiafishing.org) for details.

Ocean fishing out of the mouth of the Columbia has slowed since SW winds chilled the bite. Chinook are starting to show in better numbers and the coho are large but scattered. Some anglers are going unprecedented hours without a strike but fishing should improve dramatically this week.

Soft-shelled crabs are still present for ocean crabbers but action is picking up for those working the lower Columbia River downstream of Hammond. With recreational salmon trollers increasing in number, be mindful about where you place your gear. The current strong incoming tide may cause crabbing success to slow. Crabbing is also picking up in other north coast estuaries.

Salmon catches remain light out of other coastal ports.

A few chinook are starting to show on Nehalem Bay but catches are expected to remain light for much of the season. Nearshore catches indicate chinook are starting to stage near estuary entrances signaling the beginning of the run is near. Tillamook Bay should be a top producer this year.

Tuna schools have moved closer to shore with fair fishing reported inside of 40 miles. Trollers are still taking fair numbers of fish but albacore are beginning to respond well to live anchovies for bait. Peak weeks for this fishery will last through mid-September.

**Southwest** – Crabbing has continued to improve in coastal bays and estuaries. Ocean crabbing is slow to fair.

Although the Coos and Coquille systems have been slow for chinook recently, the action should pick up in the coming weeks with the peak happening later in September.

The Rogue estuary is getting heavy boat pressure although chinook results are only fair at best despite plenty of fish in the bay. On a brighter note, local sporting goods store have been able to obtain anchovies which is considered the most effective bait for chinook. The middle river is slow while springer and steelhead catches remain fair to good on the upper Rogue.

Half-pounder steelhead have entered the lower Rogue in fair numbers and action is picking up for anglers using flies or small spinners.

Offshore winds are forecast to moderate but swell and period are marginal for bar crossings out of Brookings. Outgoing morning tides will once again complicate launch efforts. Bottom fishing has been excellent for ling cod as well as rockfish. Anglers are reminded that the Chetco River is closed to all angling above River Mile 2.2 August 1st through November 5th.

Diamond Lake has been producing good catches and some limits of trout averaging over a foot in length in about 25 feet of water.

**Eastern** – Redside results have slowed on the lower Deschutes with caddis hatches fading and mid-summer dog days in full force. Nymphing is still effective although the time between strikes and the amount of water that must be covered have increased.

Steelheading on the lower Deschutes is best at first light until the sun is on the water. With moderate air temperatures, anglers have been scoring good numbers of steelhead on spinners despite the warmer than usual water temperatures.

Down riggers fishing 50 to 60 foot depths are accounting for good numbers of fat kokanee at Green Peter.

Kokanee fishing has been worthwhile for trollers at Odell.

**SW Washington** – Although brief periods of productive fishing have been experienced at the mouth of the Cowlitz, overall action remains fair at best. Anglers working the area should begin to shift focus to fall chinook although peak catches won't happen for another 3 weeks.

The Lewis remains an option for summer steelhead seekers but catches remain light, even for persistent anglers.

Bonneville counts continue to inspire Drano Lake trollers and with "B" run steelhead soon to migrate, quality fish to 20 pounds are a possibility.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Buoy 10 anglers continue to wait for the first good flush of chinook to appear on the lower river. It really hasn't happened yet but if the run does come in as forecast, it will happen this week. Most recently, anglers are reporting seeing next to nothing, if any action going on for chinook in the Buoy 10 fishery. The last day I fished, Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, we had 3 bites, landing 3 chinook; one jack and 2 brights between 15 and 20 pounds. Our first 2 fish came on the Washington side, just before the first rip came through, holding against the tide just out of Chinook. The jack hit a plug-cut herring at 18 on the line counter while the larger fish took a whole rigged herring at 32 on the line counter. The final fish came about 4 hours into the incoming tide in front of Hammond, also at 32 on the line counter on a whole herring. We never heard of another fish taken.

Most recently, action is reported as much the same, with only a rare chinook being taken on the incoming tide with more fish seemingly coming from the Oregon side, at least for now. There are

coho present in the river but I haven't heard of a sport caught one yet. The gillnets have been the real gauge for what's in the river right now. Although the first opener was less than impressive, the last opener did yield some fair catches for the fleet. On the last opener that data was available, over 4,000 chinook were harvested in the lower mainstem with an average of 21.2 pounds per fish. That opener alone accounted for 2/3 of the catch to date for the August openers (totaling 3). The August 10/11 data was not yet available at this writing but should be now. Eighty-one coho were retained with an average weight of just over 8 pounds.

Offshore action isn't all that encouraging however. With chinook set to stage at the river mouth, one would expect good fishing to be occurring right now just off of the mouth of the Columbia. Well, it shut down on Saturday with catches much more sparse than they had been just the previous few days. I went from 22 keepers in 2 days to just 4 on Saturday. Thankfully, I only had 2 customers on Saturday so we still got our limit but this time of year, I should be able to add a couple of salmon to my harvest card.

The ocean fishery has been less than impressive this year. Cold water has fish scattered although the size they are putting on makes me believe they have plenty of food to eat. The fish have been running good size. It had all been looking up until the south wind decided to blow on Saturday. The prevailing wind had been from the NW and overall, the ocean has been friendly for ocean going anglers.

Those of us that have history searching for chinook north of the north jetty out of the mouth of the Columbia are still coming up pretty empty. Historically, we've targeted chinook along the Washington shoreline from the light house to Long Beach. When the chinook do begin to stage off of the Columbia, this can be a dynamite fishery. It's like ocean coho fishing, except they are all chinook. It's just not happening yet.

Those that are finding coho are having to travel pretty far south to get into them. Reports from Wednesday's effort revealed the most consistent catches coming about 8 miles south of the CR Buoy in 280 to 310 feet of water. Trolled herring are working best but anchovies are also a strong possibility for success. One angler reported targeting chinook near the beach off of the mouth of the Necanicum River, yielding 3 chinook and one other monster opportunity. He was trolling just 30 foot of water outside of the breaker line.

Further offshore, tuna seekers are finding some success 35 to 40 miles offshore. Recent reports indicate fair schools present for trollers and those able to take advantage of productive live bait stops are scoring great numbers of albacore. Rough seas on Wednesday kept some boats for a full day pursuit. That's the life of a tuna angler. Better success rates for tuna anglers out of Garibaldi.

Steelhead anglers are still singing praises, especially those still pursuing steelhead near Bonneville Dam. Boaters and bank plunkers are still harvesting good numbers of fish with fair numbers of wild fish still showing in the catches. Bonneville counts mirror the good results witnessed in the area with some days, passage topping over 10,000 steelhead. It's peak season right now and with the cooler weather we've been experiencing, the bite has been better than expected. Spin-n-glos or small orange flatfish have been working best. Counts have likely peaked by now but numbers should stay consistent for another week before "B" run fish begin to make an appearance.

Sturgeon is but an exercise right now. Effort has switched to salmon with mainly catch and release opportunities only allowed right now. The estuary remains the best place to target catch and release sturgeon but the gillnet fleet has the fish a bit disturbed right now. Anchovies remain the best bait.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia is hit or miss by my account. We crabbed 6 pots for a 6 hour soak, only to come up with 7 keepers. Another angler reported an easy 2 limits for just 2 pots during the weaker tide series last week. He was crabbing close to Buoy 21 on lower Desdemona Sands. Ocean crabbing is not as productive; at least not for male Dungeness crab.

**The Guide's Forecast** – This will be the breakout week for lower Columbia River chinook. There used to be a day when I'd predict when it would all break loose but my ego has passed out of that era. One thing is for sure, the tides aren't shaping up for an early morning carnage. Although the Columbia is drastically cooler than it typically is this time of year, fish are still much less likely to bite on the last half of outgoing tide in the Astoria area. I've said for a long time, the worst time to pursue salmon on the lower Columbia is the last 4 hours of outgoing tide. It shouldn't be any different this year.

However, if the mother lode does show this week, and it will, fishing should be decent throughout the tide, but best from low slack through high tide and the first 1.5 hours after high slack. Last year, chinook fishing was pretty well underway by the 10<sup>th</sup> of August and we're passed that now. Reports from the northern ports are quite favorable indicating fish should be well on their way. By the weekend, I predict that the chinook should be in the river in very catchable numbers. This will be a break-out weekend for chinook anglers.

Not that anybody really listens to me but I won't be starting my trips until a little later into the tide. Target your peak fishing time around high slack but if you're willing to put in a full day, start around low slack near the Buoy 10 line and work your way upstream as the tide flows in with the bridge bite expected to take off near high slack. Chinook should be present in good numbers throughout the lower river this week.

Trolled herring will work the best, keeping it on the bottom and working your way upstream with the incoming tide. Although trolling with the incoming tide is a tested producer, many anglers will justifiably hold in the current, facing the incoming tide with baits awaitin' for an upstream migrant. This strategy has already been responsible for the bulk of my river chinook catch this season. Hammond is a likely place of interception but the Washington side of the river, earlier in the incoming tide has also worked for me this year. Stagger baits if you have the capacity but focus on 22 to 36 feet deep in water greater than 50 foot. If you are doing an upstream troll in the shallower water, look to keep your baits on the bottom, especially if you're in water shallower than 40 foot.

Further west, ocean anglers should also begin to see a bolstering of chinook catches and hopefully, an improvement in coho catches. The coho situation has been a bit of a mystery this year but more consistent catches should be coming. How cool is it that we're still allowed to retain up to 2 chinook per person in the ocean right now? Those limits are attainable, especially in this weeks time frame. Target chinook to the north of the Columbia River entrance but chinook will certainly be caught to the south as well.

If you're looking for the best chance to limit, you may still want to target coho to the SW of the CR Buoy. Fish 260 to 310 feet of water and expect to put on some miles if you're motivated enough. Coho should be available in smaller numbers to the north but I think we're all pretty clear that this isn't going to be like last year.....

Tides will soften over the weekend, making for good prospects for river crabbing. Heavy tides and rumored crab trap thieves brought a level of frustration to crabbers last week. The strong tides seemed to move my pots around unless someone was checking them for me, which is also likely. The ocean seems to be full of females right now.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Weather in next several days will warm the lower Willamette water above the current lower 70-degree range. Try for bass, panfish or walleye with the latter hanging out in Multnomah Channel.

Thanks to a wet spring and decent snowmelt, the McKenzie level and flow remains decent for anglers targeting trout or steelhead.

With more than 5,800 summer steelhead and over 5,700 spring chinook counted at Foster Dam on the South Santiam, it's a worthwhile destination. Warm water in the lower stretches of the system will put the better action on the upper stretches.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It will be hot in the coming week. Hotter than hot. Possibly the highest temperatures of the year will occur in the next several days. What this means to those of us who would like to catch a fish or two is setting the alarm clock very early and beating the sun to the water. First light will be the best - perhaps only - chance at a hookup.

The Town Run on the upper Willamette is consistently producing worthwhile summer steelhead catches on a variety of bait, lure and fly.

Try the stretch below Leaburg Dam for trout this week as it is fishing very well. Summer steelhead and a mix of bright and dark springers are available but the latter are fading fast. get 'em while you can.

Both salmon and steelhead are available in the North Santiam. Summer, while biting lightly at this time of year, are still more cooperative with anglers than springers. Target either or both on the upper South Santiam for fair to good chance of a hookup.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – The Clackamas is at summer level lows and the water extremely clear. Without much to offer in the way of fishing there is virtually no angler effort. The seasonal non-angling use of this river is in full swing with the water full of brightly-colored synthetic craft and plenty of loud, splash-happy youngsters.

Sandy waters are exhibiting typical summer behavior for this river, turning milky as a result of its glacial origin. Very few diehards are catching even fewer fish from the Garbage Hole up to the Salmon River mouth. I may just be slightly better than nothing.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – With poor salmon prospects throughout the district, anglers left fishing in the area are targeting tuna; and it's going quite well. Reports of plugged boats were common for much of last week. Calm seas and willing albacore gave many anglers hope that the runs were indeed in good shape. Trolled hardware and plugs took scores of tuna for many boats willing to make the 25 to 40 mile run to the west. For many, dreams did come true last week.

Salmon angler effort continued to drop off although there were still catches of coho coming from Garibaldi. Catches were rather insignificant with most NW district anglers more motivated to fish the lower Columbia or the ocean out of the mouth of the Columbia.

There were some sparse reports of chinook catches in the Nehalem basin. Effort remains light but this historically has been the start of some consistent fishing for chinook in that watershed. Some chinook are coming from the bubble just outside of the mouth of the estuary.

District rivers remain very low and clear but the Nestucca and Wilson River still harbor catchable numbers of summer steelhead. Small baits and low light conditions will continue to be responsible for a modest catch.

Crabbing is picking up both in the local estuaries and just offshore.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It's all about the tuna this week out of Garibaldi and a favorable weather report to boot:

**Fri...**NE wind 5 kt...becoming N in the afternoon. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 6 ft.

**Fri Night...**N wind 10 to 15 kt... Becoming 5 to 10 kt after midnight. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 5 ft. Patchy fog after midnight.

**Sat...**SE wind 5 to 15 kt...backing to N in the afternoon. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 5 ft. Patchy fog.

**Sat Night...**NW wind 10 kt...becoming W after midnight. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 4 ft. Patchy fog through the night.

**Sun...**NW wind 5 to 10 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 4 ft.

**Mon...**NW wind 5 kt. Wind waves 1 foot. NW swell 5 ft.

Head west with your favorite tuna method in tow and prepare for another great weekend of tuna action. It's best to partner up with another vessel for safety reasons.

Salmon anglers won't find much more to brag about this week. There surely remains some offshore coho opportunities but don't expect gangbuster fishing. Small schools of keepers should become more available in the coming two weeks however for persistent anglers willing to cover lots of water. Fish to the north of the Tillamook Bay entrance and don't be afraid to troll close to the shoreline to target returning chinook that should soon gather in fair numbers in the coming weeks.

The Nehalem and Nestucca remain poor prospects and it's still a bit early for Tillamook chinook but none-the-less, the possibility exists.

Crabbing is worth the effort on the north coast and a weakening tide series should prove advantageous for those in search of sea-spiders.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – While ocean crabbing has been fair to good, it's worthwhile and improving in coastal bays and estuaries. Many crabs are soft at this time of year so give the foreleg a squeeze near the body. If it gives, it will not be good eats.

Keep an eye out for a black tag on the back leg of any Dungeness for a return on your investment (in addition to eating the tasty critters). Each tag is worth 20 bucks and will be entered in a \$1,000 drawing if received prior to the September 1st deadline. Jot down where the crab was taken, depth and date and the tag number. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, then sign it. Mail to Oregon Dungeness Crab Study, 29 S.E. 2nd Street, Newport, OR 97365. Good luck!

This coming Sunday is forecast to be the best choice for an offshore launch although the entire weekend looks friendly. Swells and wind are predicted to moderate. Be sure to check the tides to work out all the variables and as always, be safe out there.

Albacore are being taken out of Newport and Depoe Bay. As warm water moves closer to shore, it's becoming a trip of 25 to 30 miles to find blue water and jumpers.

All-depth halibut fishers did well over the last opening over the past weekend. The next opportunity from Cape Falcon and Humbug Mountain will be August 20th and 31st, then every other Friday and Saturday through October 10th or a quota of 141,265 pounds which is a reduction of about 15% from last year.

Offshore coho catches improved for boats launching out of central Oregon ports but is still very slow further south. Ocean Chinook remain elusive.

Pressure is high around Reedsport as trollers seeking Chinook are primarily getting only a boat ride. North Umpqua anglers have continued to take fair numbers of summer steelhead over the last week although the bite has slowed. Smallmouth bass anglers are doing well on the mainstem around Elkton and on the South Umpqua with soft plastics effective.

Tuna are being taken out of Charleston with some boats making very good catches although it has been a 40-mile run for them recently. Chinook fishing is slow in Coos Bay. Chinook have yet to show on the Coquille.

Following a promising early start in the Rogue estuary, Chinook catches have declined. There have been a few days with hot bites, however. Friday, August 6th was one of those with scores of Chinook landed while both days over the past weekend were poor. On a bright note, anchovies are now available at local bait dealers and it is a bait which Chinook seem to prefer here. The middle river has finally started to provide a Chinook bite although effort in this stretch has been light. While fish counts remain unavailable, subjective observations indicate improved number of summer steelhead. The catch results certainly support it. In addition, spring Chinook are available although most anglers are targeting summers. Be sure to carefully release unclipped Chinook above Gold Ray Dam and all wild steelhead.

A variety of colorful rockfish are contributing to limits of bottomfish for anglers launching out of Brookings Harbor. The 20-fathom limit doesn't seem to be hampering success here as hookups are starting just outside the jaws and ling cod have been making return trips on angler's vessels, some of which have scaled to 20 pounds or better. Cabezon are off limits to boat fishers for the rest of the year but those fishing from rocks and jetties can still keep them.

Diamond Lake anglers are taking good numbers of large rainbows. Trolled hardware and still-fished Power Bait have been effective this week.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Cooler releases are being made from the dams on the Deschutes on an effort to lower temperatures but the change is slow in coming. Recently, however, the water temperature has peaked in the mid-60s which is an improvement.

Trout fishing is fair upriver but stay low to intercept a summer steelhead.

Fly anglers on the Wallowa River are taking decent numbers of trout on terrestrials.

With the first steelies of the 2010 season taken recently and over twice the number of summer steelhead in the Columbia compared to the 2009 run, expectations for the Grande Ronde are high.

Green Peter trollers have continued to take fair to good numbers of fish but they're showing more evidence of the spawn to come and soon may be too soft for decent table fare.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

***From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2010***

### **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 Stillaguamish, 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](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!

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**GOOD LUCK!**