

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **September 24th – September 30th, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Chinook fishing in the Portland area continues to slow despite an increase in the chinook bag limit this week. Anglers may now keep 2 adult chinook between Warrior Rock near St. Helens and Bonneville Dam. The best chance for a chinook limit may be in October when resident chinook near Bonneville become more willing to take plugs once the water cools.

Water temperature at Willamette Falls is in the mid-60s with the coho run in full swing. Steelheading on the Middle Fork and Town Run remains worthwhile.

There are still some bright steelhead available on the McKenzie which are responding to small offerings in the clear water.

Opportunities for steelheading are available on the North Santiam with the upper river providing a better chance of a hookup. The water level is high but fishable and should remain so through September.

Coho are being caught occasionally on the Clackamas but not many at the very crowded Bowling Alley Hole. Jacks are being taken around Estacada.

The Sandy was muddy but dropping on Tuesday this week. Try drifting good, cured eggs in off-color water. This fishery should come into its prime with good action lasting into October.

A free ODFW-hosted event for youngsters will take place on Saturday, September 25th from 9 AM to 2 PM at St. Louis Ponds near Woodburn. Of the 2,000 trout planted for the event, 500 will be in the one-pound range so the chances of kids hooking up are good. The ponds are located 13 miles north of Salem and west of Interstate 5.

Northwest – Tillamook Bay continues to produce consistent catches of chinook but a large number of wild coho were observed in the Tillamook Bay Bubble early this week. Anglers inside and outside of the estuary repeatedly kept large wild coho, mistaking them for chinook and expensive citations were issued.

High tide has been producing chinook in the upper bay and the recent rain freshet brought large numbers of hatchery coho and a few chinook into the Trask River. Bank anglers should have scored in the dropping flows but district streams are already back to summer low levels.

Calm seas produced bountiful crab catches early this week but strong wind waves and a big swell are forecasted for the weekend. The ocean will be a poor option for offshore tuna, crab, salmon and bottomfish even though several more weeks of productive fishing can be expected.

Crabbing inside of Tillamook and Netarts Bay has been good and should continue to produce but stronger tides this weekend may dampen catches.

Effort remains light on the Nestucca and Nehalem Bays for chinook. Catches have been mediocre as expected. Hatchery coho are present on the North Fork Nehalem but seem reluctant to bite despite favorable water conditions early in the week.

The Salmon River estuary produced good catches of chinook last weekend and success should improve upstream this week. Recent rains did send some fish upstream.

The Yaquina and Alsea estuaries are producing a few chinook but catches have not been consistent. Stronger tides this weekend should stimulate the bobber bite in tidewater and the Siletz should improve as well.

Southwest – Winchester Bay is producing fair catches of chinook and coho. Chinook are scattered on the mainstem Umpqua but overall, it has been an excellent season with more fish likely to come in.

Tuna were taken within 25 miles of port this past weekend before rough weather moved in.

Chinook fishing has been good to Coos Bay trollers lately although anglers report hooking many more than they're landing. Plug-cut herring and spinners have been effective.

Coquille anglers are landing chinook and coho. Wild coho may be kept here although catches have been fairly light.

Pro Guide Dave Pitts ((541-412-1907)) reports, that he has been doing well on both the Coos and Coquille for kings and a few Coho.

Despite healthy numbers of coho showing up on Rogue Bay, fishing has been slow over the past week due to rough weather. Improvement in chinook catches did occur earlier this week. Chinook, steelhead and half-pounders are being caught around Agness.

Pro Guide Andy Martin (206-388-8988) reports a "bunch" of silvers moved into the bay last week and that the kings started biting again.

The first chinook landed in Chetco tidewater two weeks ago brought out plenty of trollers although catches have been negligible. With the ocean salmon fishery off the Chetco running October 1st through 12th, opportunities will be limited but catches are expected to be good.

Chinook have yet to show at the mouth of the Elk River.

Diamond Lake is rewarding anglers with good catches of large trout.

Eastern – With Columbia River counts good this season, steelheading has continued to heat up on the Deschutes. Steelhead counts at Sherars Falls continued to climb through mid-September.

A few steelhead have been caught at Minam on the Wallowa River as this fishery gets underway.

The Grande Ronde is also producing some steelhead with a fish reported for every 4 hours of fishing last weekend. The Umatilla is another option with coho present as well.

SW Washington – Anglers targeting coho near the Cowlitz and Kalama River mouths are finding fair success. On the Cowlitz, Anglers from boundary markers at the mouth to 400 feet below Mayfield Dam Powerhouse may now retain one wild adult chinook as part of the two adult Chinook daily limit.

Although it will be a few weeks before the bulk of the "B" run coho show on the Lewis River, action for early run fish remains fair.

The Washougal River is receiving a good run of fall chinook but fish will color quickly.

The mouths of the Klickitat and White Salmon Rivers should continue to produce good chinook and coho catches. This fishery is peaking right now.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Chinook on the mainstem remains the topic of choice for the Columbia River. Although action is waning fast, fair numbers of fish are still being taken from Bonneville Dam downstream to the deadline. It's far from impressive but persistent anglers using wobblers are taking fish below the Columbia River Gorge while gorge anglers are working plugs with some success near the deadline.

Washington and Oregon increased the bag limit for chinook below Bonneville Dam with the following regulation change:

Columbia chinook bag limit increased to two fish

CLACKAMAS, Ore. – Effective Wednesday, Sept. 22, anglers will be permitted to keep up to two adult chinook salmon per day on the Columbia River between Warrior Rock and Bonneville Dam under revised rules adopted Monday by Oregon and Washington.

Prior to the action, the daily bag limit in this section of the river was two adult salmon and steelhead in combination, but only one could be a chinook. The change will mean that anglers can now keep two adult salmon and steelhead in combination, and both fish may now be chinook in this area.

"Our latest projections indicate that we have some additional upriver bright chinook that we can offer to recreational fishermen," said Chris Kern, assistant fisheries manager for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Ocean Salmon and Columbia River Program.

The rule change will apply through the end of the year.

Warrior Rock is located near the north end of Sauvie Island, about 58 miles downstream of Bonneville. Downstream of that point, chinook fishing closed as planned on Sept. 12. Fishery managers left that closure in place to protect wild tule chinook salmon bound for lower river tributaries. Coho and steelhead may still be retained in this area. Exact boundary descriptions are published in the 2010 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations.

Coho and steelhead must be adipose fin-clipped fish in order to be retained. Chinook are not subject to this requirement and may be retained regardless of whether their adipose fin has been clipped or not.

Anglers are reminded that fishing regulations can change at any time based on changes in fish population estimates, catch rates and other factors. To see the latest regulations, visit ODFW's website at http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/reg_changes/index.asp

The gorge is clearly the better place to be with better than a fish per boat average over the weekend. Fifty six adults were checked in for 42 boats while bank anglers tallied 9 adults for 60 rods. Passage at Bonneville remains good with over 6,000 to 8,000 chinook per day crossing. Coho numbers are now past their peak with over 700 per day crossing the facility.

And speaking of coho, the action for spinner trollers is beginning to pick up near the mouths of some SW Washington tributaries. The Cowlitz, Lewis and Kalama all have spinner casters and trollers present with fair numbers of fish falling to hardware. The mouth of the Sandy should also be a place to intercept silvers although these fish can often be finicky biters.

Downriver, the Buoy 10 coho bite remains subdued with little effort taking place. Avid angler Len Clark admitted putting in time near Rice Island last week, seeing a lot of fish on the fish finder and even seeing several surface. For 4 rods and several hours of fishing, they drew no strikes.

Crabbing in the area has been good, especially with the soft tide series last week. Many crabbers reported limits of crab, just nothing to double dip on although some adventurous anglers found ample rockfish opportunities along the south jetty with a rare ling cod in the mix. There's really no reason to crab the ocean with the river crabbing so good. Reports of missing pots are coming up, likely due to strong currents in the area; at least that's the speculation.

The Guide's Forecast – Most fisheries downriver of Bonneville Dam will continue to slow. The one exception will be anglers targeting coho near the mouth of SW Washington tributaries. Spinners will continue to take fish and creative anglers may also take an occasional fish on eggs. This fishery should get even better when larger numbers of "B" run coho begin to nose their way upstream in the coming weeks.

Anglers still wanting to target chinook will want to hit the Bonneville area to backroll plugs wrapped with sardines or tuna bellies. Anglers are likely to come across some oversized sturgeon as well so be prepared to do battle if you value your best producing plugs. The action should remain good and maybe even improve with the continuing cooling of the river temperatures. Fish should remain in good shape through early October but resident fish will soon dominate the catches so selective harvest will be an issue for those seeking tablefare.

Some fresh "B" run coho may begin to appear at Buoy 10 but anglers are not likely to take a high interest in them. There will be better tides in early October to target those fish. Crabbing should remain good but stronger tides are on the horizon so tend your pots tenaciously.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – With the water temperature slowly dropping at Willamette Falls, thousands of coho have crossed although up-to-date counts remain unavailable. It's thousands, trust us.

The mainstem Santiam opened for coho on September 1st. Also open are the North Fork up to the Stayton-Scio bridge in Stayton and the South Fork up to the Grant Street bridge in Lebanon. The North Santiam remains a little high but is fishable. Summer steelhead are available in good number here.

Rain over the weekend pushed McKenzie River flows over 3,250 cfs but the river has been on the drop since Monday this week and is in good condition now.

Due to nefarious activity, not the least of which is snagging fish, access to all Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife fish hatcheries will be unlawful before 4 AM or after 10 PM.

While mentioned in the Fisheries Forecast earlier this week, we would remind parents of the free ODFW-hosted event for youngsters will take place on Saturday, September 25th from 9 AM to 2 PM at St. Louis Ponds near Woodburn. Of the 2,000 trout planted for the event, 500 will be in the one-pound range so the chances of kids hooking up are good. The ponds are located 13 miles north of Salem and west of Interstate 5.

The Guide's Forecast – Announced today, September 23rd, the coho limit on the upper Willamette and its tributaries is three coho per day, fin-clipped or not. Trout and steelhead prospects are good on the Middle Fork Willamette.

Coho prospects will improve as most of the fish counted at Willamette Falls are bound for the Santiams. A few steelhead remain available in the McKenzie system Trout fishing should be good below Leaburg Lake.

The best prospect for summers on the North Santiam remains in the upper part of the system. Coho prospects will only improve in the coming weeks.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Spinners, corkies and yarn and drifted eggs have been equally ineffective for the most part in tempting finicky Clackamas coho. That said, a few are being landed but only by those with a line in the water. In other words, only those making the effort are catching the fish. Coho seem to be a little more inclined to bite one they enter Eagle Creek.

Don't let off-color water prevent you from trying for coho on the Sandy. Fish are being taken here despite shockingly opaque conditions. That said, the Sandy is clearing now and has been fishing pretty well.

The Guide's Forecast – Effective immediately, the coho limit for both the Clackamas and Sandy is three hatchery fish per day thanks to another strong run this year.

Pro guides will agree that Clackamas fish are very difficult to hook. It seems these fish are slow to bite anything. Try it as the river is dropping and again after the next rain further lowers the water temperature. The few that moved through Eagle Creek with rain over the past weekend have thinned out and are scattered now as the creek has dropped and cleared.

Fish brightly-colored spinners, corkies and scented yarn or cured eggs in the Sandy. Any of these techniques will catch coho here.

North Coast Fishing Report – The Tillamook district continues to shine compared to the nearby basins that historically have a good showing this time of year. The Nestucca and Nehalem do have fish in them but effort and catch are down.

With friendly ocean conditions, the bulk of the effort has been taking place in the Tillamook Bay Bubble fishery. In recent days however, hordes of wild coho have been stealing bait and bending rods. It's good action but anglers can often have a tough time releasing the savage strikers and once in a while, a large coho gets bonked because it looks like a chinook. I've seen more than one taken illegally this week. Go over your species ID again folks, especially if you are not 100% sure you know the difference between a chinook and coho.

There have been fair catches of chinook on the bubble however with the entrance producing the best results when anglers can fish it weed free. This week was surprisingly friendly to fishers with only minor seaweed problems reported. Chinook are also available inside with fish reported from the Ghost Hole, Bay City and of course, the upper bay. Herring and spinners are taking fish throughout the middle and upper bay and herring are used almost exclusively in the lower bay from the Ghost Hole to the jaws and outside. Most recently, the jaws on the slow outgoing tide has been producing the best results with some chinook falling to bait on the incoming tide on the

east side of the bay (Ghost Hole, Bay City). There are some fair numbers of coho in the west channel but most of the catch is now made up of wild fish that must be released. Those fish are taking a mix of spinners or herring close to high tide.

The upper bay has been producing some fair catches of chinook since a good portion of the fish in Tillamook Bay right now are destined for the Trask and Tillamook Rivers. It's important to note however that when the ocean fishery is underway, many of the willing biters get culled from the fishery before they ever have a chance to make it into the estuary.

The recent rain freshet swelled rivers to a higher level than originally expected. Good numbers of hatchery coho and some chinook entered the Trask River early in the week although coho tend to have lock-jaw in fresh water. Anglers fishing near the hatchery did take some fish and many, many more are milling in the waters near the hatchery. With summer low levels for several months, the water didn't swell the river very long; it's already back down to low levels and un-driftable.

The North Fork Nehalem Hatchery does have coho in their trap waiting to be worked up but anglers working the near ideal water conditions took only a rare fish this week. There are still a few weeks of potential ahead but as we mentioned earlier, coastal coho often have lock-jaw once they enter fresh water.

Ocean crabbing remains excellent when weather cooperates. It has been cooperating but that may change in the near future. Bay crabbing in Tillamook is fair and Netarts is good. The Nehalem River is also producing fair for keeper dungeness. Some softshells are in the catch.

The Salmon River produced good catches of chinook for anglers fishing near the mouth of the estuary. Trolled herring took several fish in the 15 to 20 pound range. Bank anglers working the river upstream of the Highway 101 Bridge only found marginal success.

The Guide's Forecast – With combined seas forecast bumping way up in fall fashion, ocean fishing will become a poor option in the coming week. The forecast says it all:

Fri...S wind 10 to 15 kt with gusts to 25 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. W swell 11 ft.

Fri Night...S wind 5 to 10 kt...rising to 10 to 15 kt after midnight. Gusts up to 20 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. W swell 9 ft.

Sat...S wind 15 to 20 kt. Wind waves 4 ft. W swell 7 ft.

Sat Night...S wind 10 to 15 kt with gusts to 20 kt. Wind waves 3 ft. W swell 11 ft. Chance of rain after midnight.

Sun...S wind 20 to 25 kt. Wind waves 4 ft. W swell 13 ft.

Mon...SW wind 10 to 15 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. W swell 12 ft.

With improving incoming tides over the weekend, fish should distribute well into the upper bay where spinner and upper bay herring trollers will have access to them without being culled out in the ocean fishery. Early afternoon high tides should allow for some decent action and plugs may become effective during peak incoming, especially if the seaweed remains subdued. Starting Sunday, tides begin to soften again where we can expect another good outgoing tide bite in the morning.

Don't count on any ocean fishing or crabbing well into next week. Fall weather is on its way.

But not so much as to offer any hope for another rain freshet for north coast streams. River levels are expected to remain flat so keep the driftboats stowed for another few weeks at least.

The Nestucca and Nehalem will likely remain poor options for anglers. The Salmon River should still boot out a few fish but the recent rain freshet may have sent a good portion of the hatchery chinook to the hatchery (of course!). The lower Nehalem Bay opens up on October 1st and could prove to be productive for the first few days.

The tides improve for crabbing early next week and it should be good inside most north coast estuaries.

Central & South Coast Reports – Chinook fishing has been very slow in the Siletz which is no surprise as this is one of the river where the run is depressed but the good news is that coho have started entering and they're hitting spinners.

It has been a relatively short trip for albacore out of Newport (relative to tuna fishing, that is). Boats have hooked up inside of the 20-mile-mark although catches have only improved a little further west. Catches are fair to good with pots yielding fair to good catches of hard-shelled ocean crab for a mixed bag. Ocean fishers are hoping for another chance or two at the tuna before it's over for the year. Over the past weekend, a boat returned to port with an 11.5 foot thresher shark. It took an hour to land it on tuna gear. Crabbing has been fair in Yaquina Bay.

Chinook fishing has been quite slow in the lower Alsea although there have been a couple of reports of hookups at the mouth. A few fish are being hooked upriver. With a forecast of a better run this year than last, there have been quite a few trying.

Albacore catches have been good out of Depoe Bay as recently as Wednesday this week. Locating warm water has not been enough as not all temperature breaks have held fish. Casting to tuna spotted jumping has been more effective than trolling.

A few Siuslaw anglers have picked up Chinook on bobber & egg rigs but it has been extremely slow for most who are fishing here.

While action for Chinook was fairly steady around Reedsport the first half of the month, it has been slow over the past week. crabbing is still worthwhile in Winchester Bay.

Ocean-bound boats launching out of Charleston have had a tough time with bottom fish although offshore crabbing has been very good. Trollers at Coos Bay have had good results for Chinook this week with most pressure in the channel. Upriver, anglers are making good catches of jacks and a few adults by drifting bobber and eggs. Coho must be fin-clipped to be retained here.

Pro Guide Dave Pitts ((541-412-1907)) reports, "Been doing well on both the Coos and Coquille for kings and a few Coho.

"Spinners, spinners spinners! copper or copper and white. below Bullards State Park to the Mouth, slack tides was off the hook!"

Fred Johnson, Curtis Palmer River and pro guide Dave Pitts.



Chinook are being taken by trollers in the lower Coquille, fishing is fair to good and the occasional larger fish is being landed. One wild coho may be retained here up to give for the season.

The Rogue estuary picked up for trollers with the better fishing near the jaws. Coho are also being caught. Half-pounder steelhead catches have slowed in the Agness stretch. Catches of summer steelhead and fall Chinook have been fair in the middle river. Steelheading is fair to good on the upper Rogue in the flies-only stretch.

Pro Guide Andy Martin (206-388-8988) reports, "A bunch of silvers moved into the bay last week, and the kings started biting again. We got a 25-pound king on Tuesday, and a few silvers. Most of the silvers have been wild fish, but we've managed to catch a few hatchery coho. The hot bite has been from the green can to the entrance to the boat basin. It's been in the lower bay, from the sand spit to the bridge," he said. "The beginning of the outgoing tide has been good along the jetties. I'm using red or green blades with a size 2 Eagle Claw 3X treble hook. The smaller anchovies have worked best for us."

Spencer Macdonald of Missoula, Mont., holds a 25-pound Rogue Bay king caught Sept. 21 with guide Andy Martin.



Tuna hopefuls out of Brookings have endured scratch fishing lately for a trip of 30 to 50 or more miles offshore. Many are hopeful for a big push of albacore before the month ends. That opportunity is unlikely this coming weekend as forecasts indicate mild offshore breezes but swells that will kick your stern. A few Chinook are being taken in Chetco tidewater.

Fall fishing is excellent at Diamond Lake. Expect to catch trout in the 15 to 20-inch range with regularity. It's mostly a Power Bait show at this time of year although flies can be effective at times. Diamond will fish well into October depending on the weather. A trout derby this coming weekend is likely to make for crowded conditions but after that event the pressure will be off.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Deschutes anglers will find increased water levels as rain earlier this week pushed flows to 5800 cfs as of September 22nd. As a result, catches have slowed from a week ago and the water is off-color below the mouth of the White. Fishing at the mouth has been slow although a few Chinook have been landed. With the 'B' run in progress, boaters should be picking up some of these larger steelhead here as well. Steadily increasing counts at Sherars Falls ensures steelhead will be upriver through Maupin soon.

Boaters are gearing up for lake trout fishing at Odell but results will be better later in the year.

Trout fishing has been good on the Crooked River for fly anglers matching caddis and Pale Morning Dun hatches. Keep an eye out for bugs as other hatches can occur.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for September 2010

September 2010

Contact: (Fish) 360-902-2700

(Wildlife) 360-902-2515

North Puget Sound

Coho salmon are moving into Puget Sound in increasing numbers, with the bulk of the run expected to arrive from the ocean later this month. Anglers can also expect good fishing in several rivers and lakes.

"After Labor Day is when we usually see a big push of ocean coho move into Puget Sound," said Steve Thiesfeld, a WDFW fish biologist. "We should see more and more of those ocean fish make their way into the Sound as the month progresses."

Once those fish arrive, Point No Point, Jefferson Head, Possession Bar and Shipwreck should be good spots to hook ocean coho, Thiesfeld said. Anglers fishing those areas - or other waters of marine areas 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) - have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook. In Marine Area 10, anglers also must release chum salmon through Sept. 15, while those fishing in Marine Area 9 must release chum through Sept. 30.

Marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) also are open for salmon fishing. Anglers fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild coho and chum. Those fishing marine areas 8-1 and 8-2 also have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Meanwhile, recreational **crab** fishing will close for a catch assessment in most areas of Puget Sound on Labor Day. Areas closing one hour after sunset Sept. 6 include Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal)

Marine Area 7 remains open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, through Sept. 30. Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) remain open for crabbing through Jan. 2, seven days a week.

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/fishing/shellfish/crab/>) for more information.

Crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Oct. 10 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2010 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2011 Puget Sound crab endorsement. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/crab/crc.html> . Crabbers who continue to fish in an open area after Sept. 6 should record their catch on their winter catch card.

In freshwater, Thiesfeld said the best bet for anglers fishing for coho salmon in the region might be the Stillaguamish and Skagit rivers, where abundant runs are expected to return this year. The Stillaguamish and Skagit, as well as the Snohomish, Skykomish, Snoqualmie and Green (Duwamish) rivers open for salmon fishing Sept. 1.

Thiesfeld reminds anglers fishing the Green River that chinook salmon must be released. Elsewhere, Lake Sammamish is open for salmon fishing, with a daily limit of four salmon, of which two may be chinook. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek. Sammamish Lake's larger neighbor, Lake Washington, opens Sept. 16 to coho fishing. Anglers will be allowed four coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) from waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Salmon anglers on the coast are still catching fish as the ocean fishery enters the home stretch. Coho fishing is expected to peak in mid-September, as the bulk of the run moves through the Strait of Juan de Fuca into Puget Sound.

During the last week of August, anglers on the coast were still finding some bright chinook as the coho catch began to climb, said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for WDFW. "I expect fishing to continue to be good for chinook and coho as we move into the final weeks of the fishery," he said.

Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay), through Sept. 19 in Marine Area 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores) and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco). 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> .

Anglers fishing marine areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 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

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers fishing in late August were picking up a few ocean coho but the big push of silvers into Puget Sound isn't expected until after Labor Day, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW fish biologist. "By the middle of September, coho fishing should pick up in the Strait, as well as in areas of northern and central Puget Sound," he said.

Anglers fishing marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) have a two-salmon daily limit but must release chum, chinook and wild coho. However, anglers fishing Marine Area 5 will be allowed to retain wild coho beginning Sept. 16.

Farther south, salmon fishing opens Sept. 1 north of Ayock Point in Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), where the daily limit is four coho only. All other salmon species must be released. The same rules apply to Dabob and Quilcene bays, which opened for salmon fishing Aug. 16.

In the southern portion of Puget Sound, anglers fishing Marine Area 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook. Anglers fishing Marine Area 13 (South Puget Sound), have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook and wild coho.

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.

Meanwhile, recreational **crab** fishing will close for a catch assessment in most areas of Puget Sound on Labor Day. Areas closing one hour after sunset Sept. 6 include Marine areas 6, 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay), 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner), 9 (Admiralty Inlet), 10 (Seattle/Bremerton), 11 and 12.

Marine Area 7 remains open on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule, plus the entire Labor Day weekend, through Sept. 30. Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) remain open for crabbing through Jan. 2, seven days a week.

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Several **rivers** around the region open to salmon fishing Sept. 1, including the Carbon River in Pierce County; Copalis River, Van Winkle Creek and Joe Creek in Grays Harbor County; the Bear and Niawiakum rivers in Pacific County; and Clearwater River in Jefferson County. Salmon fisheries on the Skokomish, Puyallup and Nisqually rivers are already under way.

On a portion of the Hoh River, anglers can now fish for salmon seven days a week and keep up to two adult salmon as part of their six-fish daily limit.

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

Southwest Washington

September is prime time for salmon fishing in the Columbia River Basin, as large numbers of fish move upriver and into tributaries on both sides of Bonneville Dam. Anglers fishing the lower river below the dam are expected to reel in nearly 30,000 **fall chinook** and 13,000 **hatchery coho** this season - most of which will be taken this month.

"Prospects are good for salmon fishing this month, but it's important to remember these fish are on the move," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "As the month goes on, successful anglers will follow the fish upriver and into the tributaries."

The retention fishery for chinook salmon ended Aug. 31 at Buoy 10, but hatchery coho should remain strong below Rocky Point throughout the month. Even so, the prospect of catching a hefty chinook salmon is drawing most anglers farther upstream.

Through Sept. 12, anglers may take one chinook per day as part of their limit from Rocky Point upriver to Bonneville Dam. Anglers fishing those waters have a daily limit of six fish, including two adult salmon or steelhead or one of each. The retention fishery for chinook ends Sept. 12 below the Lewis River, but that section will remain open to fishing for hatchery coho, hatchery steelhead and hatchery **sea-run cutthroats**.

"Anglers targeting chinook do best in fairly deep water - 40 to 50 feet down," Hymer said. "Some of the best fishing for both salmon and steelhead will be at the mouths of tributaries, where the fish hold up before heading upstream."

As the month progresses, salmon fishing will heat up farther upstream in tributaries ranging from the Cowlitz to the White Salmon rivers, Hymer said. He reminds anglers of several new rules that will be in effect on those rivers this year:

- **Wild chinook release:** New this year, all unmarked chinook (adults and jacks) must be released on the Cowlitz, Toutle, Green, Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake and Camas Slough. Like last year, anglers must also release unmarked chinook on the Grays, Elochoman and Kalama rivers.
- **Lewis River rule:** Hatchery fall chinook may be retained through September on the Lewis River, including the North Fork. Beginning Oct.1, all chinook must be released and fishing from any floating device will be prohibited on the North Fork Lewis River from Johnson Creek upstream to Colvin Creek.
- **Fishing closures:** Cedar Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Lewis River, is closed to all fishing in September and October. Lower Lacamas Creek, a tributary of the Washougal River, will also close to all fishing in September.

Like last year, anglers can 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.

Regulations for these and other fisheries are described in WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet, available online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>.

There are, of course, a variety of other fishing opportunities besides salmon available to area anglers this month. **Smallmouth bass** are coming on strong above John Day Dam, and **trout fishing** is still an option at Skate Creek, Tilton River and a number of lowland lakes, including Swift Reservoir.

But for anglers who don't mind a hike, September is a great time to head for the **high wilderness lakes** around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens. Hymer points to three such lakes - Goose, Council and Tahkalkh - that even offer drive-in access.

"The mosquitoes should die down around the high mountain lakes after the first frost arrives," Hymer said. "Sure, the fish are usually small, but the leaves are beginning to turn, the air is crisp and you can really experience the change of season."

Eastern Washington

The Snake River **steelhead** catch-and-keep season opens Sept. 1 and it promises to be another good one. "Steelhead are returning to the Snake in large numbers again this year," said Glen Mendel, WDFW's southeast district fish biologist. "We have seen very strong early returns throughout the summer so far."

Mendel said about 375,000 fish are expected to return this year - not as many as last year, when about 600,000 entered the Columbia River. But this year's projected return is still large enough to provide good fishing opportunities, said Mendel. "Snake River water temperatures are currently warm and that may slow the bite when the steelhead retention season opens Sept. 1," Mendel said. "But water temperatures should drop soon with cooler weather ahead, and then the action should pick up."

Mendel notes that the mouths of the Snake's tributaries, such as the Tucannon and Grande Ronde, and the confluence with the Clearwater River on the Idaho border, are usually most productive at the start of the season. He reminds steelheaders that barbless hooks are required and the daily trout catch limit of six fish includes up to three hatchery-marked steelhead (healed scar at clipped adipose or ventral fin).

Trout fishing throughout the region usually picks up as fall approaches, said Chris Donley, WDFW district fish biologist, who reminds anglers that several of the best-producing trout lakes near Spokane close Sept. 30. "This is the final month for fishing Badger, Williams, and Fish lakes in southwest Spokane County and Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County," Donley said. "Badger and Williams have both cutthroat and rainbow trout, Fish Lake has brook and tiger trout, and Coffeepot has rainbows plus **yellow perch** and **black crappie** ."

Donley said September can also be good for yellow perch fishing at southwest Spokane County's Downs Lake, which also closes Sept. 30. Amber Lake, near Badger and Williams, is also good for cutthroat and rainbow trout fishing, Donley said. Selective gear rules are in effect at Amber Lake through September.

Clear Lake, near the town of Medical Lake, has **brown trout** and usually produces good catches of crappie and **largemouth bass** in late fall. Like a number of other waters throughout the region, Clear Lake remains open through October.

Year-round waters that produce well in the fall include Lake Roosevelt and Sprague Lake, both of which offer good-size rainbows.

In the north end of the region, access to the Boundary Dam reservoir on the Pend Oreille River is limited this month because of a drawdown for maintenance of the Seattle City Light dam. Beginning Sept. 1 and lasting up to 11 days, the reservoir will slowly be drawn down 40 feet to an elevation of 1,950 feet.

The low water condition is expected to prevent access at all boat launch facilities Sept. 9-16 on the Boundary reservoir, including the Boundary Forebay, Metaline Park, and Campbell Park immediately below Box Canyon Dam. The Boundary Dam campground and boat launch will be closed Sept. 11-19 to accommodate the maintenance project. For more information about this project, see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regions/region1/>.

Northcentral Washington

Several popular Okanogan County **trout** lakes that have been under catch-and-release rules in past years will open Sept. 1 for a new "catch-and-keep" season. Those waters include Davis, Cougar, and Campbell lakes in the Winthrop area, where anglers will have a five-fish daily trout limit and bait will be allowed.

Rainbow trout are the predominant species, Jateff said, and anglers should expect fish in the 10- to 12-inch range, with carryovers up to 15 inches, said WDFW Okanogan District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff. Anglers should also note that, effective this year, there will be no gas-powered motors allowed on Davis Lake due to a new county ordinance.

Jateff said trout fishing has been good at the Methow River, where catch-and-release and selective-gear rules are in effect. The Methow River from Lower Burma Road bridge upstream to the McFarland Creek bridge will close Sept. 15. The rest of the river upstream to Foghorn Dam (Winthrop area) will close Sept. 30.

"September is also a good time to hike up to one of many alpine lakes in Okanogan County," Jateff said. "There are many waters with predominately **cutthroat trout**, which can be a good change of pace from lowland lake fisheries during the fall. Just be aware of fire restrictions this time of year."

Jateff also said **salmon** fishing on the Columbia River near Brewster/Bridgeport has been fair, with a few more chinook starting to show up in the catch. "Most of the fish are being picked up in the 40- to 50-foot depth while trolling with spinners tipped with a whole shrimp," he said. "**Sockeye** are still being caught as well."

The salmon fishery from Wells Dam to the Highway 173 Bridge in Brewster closed Aug. 31, but other portions of the Columbia, Okanogan and Similkameen rivers remain open through Sept. 15 or into October. For all rules, see the special regulation online at <https://fortress.wa.gov/dfw/erules/efishrules/erule.jsp?id=925>.

Anglers looking for information about **steelhead** fishing on the upper Columbia River and its tributaries should watch the WDFW website for any special openings that are not in the sportfishing regulations pamphlet.

Southcentral Washington

Counts of **chinook salmon** and **steelhead** passing McNary Dam have been climbing day by day, setting the stage for popular fisheries throughout the region. While those fisheries often start out slow, they can ramp up quickly by mid-September as more fish pass the dam.

"There's a lot of anticipation out there right now," said Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Anglers are catching fish here and there, but they know there are a lot more headed our way. By the middle of the month, we could have a couple thousand upriver brights in the Hanford Reach."

According to the preseason forecast, 664,900 fall chinook salmon will enter the Columbia River this year, and about two-thirds of them are headed past Bonneville Dam.

Most of the Columbia River is open for salmon fishing, and the Yakima River opened for salmon fishing on Sept. 1 from the Columbia River upstream to Prosser Dam. The area around the Chandler Powerhouse will remain closed as in previous years. "The best fishing on the Yakima is in October, but some fish will start moving in this month," Hoffarth said.

Fishing for **hatchery steelhead** should also pick up throughout the month, he said. Catches were slow in late August on the Columbia River, which is open for steelhead fishing from the Highway 395 Bridge (Blue Bridge) downstream. Effective Sept. 1, the Snake River opened for hatchery steelhead fishing with barbless hooks.

"As with salmon, look for fishing to improve as the water cools and more fish move upriver," Hoffarth said. "Steelhead move fast. They don't stay in one spot very long, so anglers have to be there when they arrive."

Meanwhile, the month began with **walleye** fisheries in full swing, producing nice catches in the Columbia River above and below McNary Dam, as well as in the Snake River. **Sturgeon** fishing is restricted to catch and release in most of the Columbia River, including Lake Wallula and the Hanford Reach.

Trout fishing remains available in many southcentral region rivers and streams, including the Yakima, Naches, Little Naches, and Bumping rivers in Yakima County, and the upper reaches of Taneum Creek, Naneum Creek, Manastash Creek, and the forks of the Teanaway in Kittitas County. Most rivers and creeks have special regulations like selective gear rules that prohibit bait. Most also have statewide trout catch limits of two trout with an 8-inch minimum size. Anglers should check the regulation pamphlet for all details.

Thinking about catching **kokanee** in Rimrock Reservoir? Sooner is better than later, advises Perry Harvester, regional WDFW habitat manager. Water drawdowns began at the reservoir in late August and will likely render the launch ramps useless for larger boats by mid-September. "Car-top boat should still be fine, but it's going to be tough to get larger boats in the water with the ramp high and dry."

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GOOD LUCK!