

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 40

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 1st – October 7th, 2010**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Anglers continue to do best at Bonneville Dam. A surprising jump in adult chinook crossing at Bonneville last week spurred improved catches, especially for backrollers. Some anglers continue to pursue chinook using wobblers downstream of the Columbia River Gorge. Success rates are falling but anglers pursuing coho near tributary mouths are intercepting fair numbers of fish.

Sturgeon fishing reopens upstream of the Wauna Powerlines beginning Friday, October 1st, with the 3-day per week openers on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The most recent check indicated a poor showing of keeper sized fish but increased effort will tell the real story. October is typically a good time to sturgeon fish in the gorge, especially for bank anglers fishing near the deadline.

Hundreds of coho are streaming over Willamette Falls daily. While the cumulative total is lagging behind several days, the total is undoubtedly well over 10,000 so far this season.

The McKenzie is fishing well for trout. The two-fly tournament over the past weekend was declared a success.

North Santiam level and flow will be stable through the coming weekend. Fishermen's Bend has been producing steelhead.

Clackamas flows are 750 to 950 cfs which is low for coho fishing. Coho fishing is slow.

Coho are being caught in the Sandy River with fish scattered. Mornings have been the most productive. Cedar Creek is producing fish and is getting very crowded as it does every year during coho season.

Northwest – Tillamook Bay continues to be the highlight on the North Coast. Although catches are far from consistent, fair numbers of chinook are being taken daily. The lower bay will produce the best on the current tide series. The Bubble fishery has not been an option due to rough seas but conditions are forecasted to change for the weekend.

Good numbers of coho are present in the west channel of Tillamook Bay but the vast majority are wild and must be released unharmed. Crabbing in Tillamook Bay is fair at best and good in Netarts Bay.

Large numbers of hatchery coho showed up at the Trask Hatchery last week. Although only a few fell to bank anglers, the next rain freshet should flood the Trask with quality chinook.

Prospects for safe ocean recreation for nearshore salmon, bottomfish and especially crab should improve this weekend with the low tide exchange and a taming swell. Ocean crabbing remains open through October 15th.

Some chinook are present in the Nehalem system and the bay below Nehalem Bay State Park opens on October 1st. Fishing should be decent but only a modest return is expected. Hatchery coho are present in the North Fork and some fair but inconsistent fishing has taken place at the hatchery.

Only a small section of the Nestucca tidewater remains open for chinook and the catch is light but so is effort.

Both bank and boat anglers continue to take chinook in the Salmon River Estuary. Boat anglers will have the advantage this weekend with the soft tide series but this fishery is past its peak.

Southwest – While the 20-fathom bottomfishing restriction has historically been lifted on October 1st in the past, due to concerns over endangered yelloweye catches, anglers must remain in less than 120 feet of water this year.

Most coastal rivers have sea run cutthroat in abundance now. These feisty fish can be found in tidewater and the lower portions of rivers and will respond well to colorful flies. Fishing for sea-run cuts will be good well into fall but the season closes on October 31st.

Chinook and coho are in Winchester Bay and upriver 20 miles with anglers scoring in the Glide stretch.

Coos Bay is giving up some nice-sized chinook to trollers along with smaller coho.

The bite in Rogue Bay turned on this past Sunday and has held up early into this week. Most chinook are in the 30 to 40-pound range although a 50-pounder was landed Sunday. Catches of coho are good in the estuary as well. Ocean crabbing closes October 16th but is expected to be very rewarding until that date. A calm ocean allowed boats to chase bottomfish where ling cod were found in good number. Chinook fishing has been fair in the Grants Pass stretch.

As Chinook numbers improve in Chetco Bay, anglers are looking forward to the ocean 'bubble' fishery opening October 1st. Boats launching out of the Port of Brookings have been taking limits of a colorful variety of rockfish. Calm seas lure anglers out in search of late-season albacore and they were not disappointed. Some boats returned to port with over 20 tuna.

Eastern – Summer steelhead counts have continued to climb at Sherars Falls on the Deschutes with about two-thirds of those fish of hatchery origin. Water fluctuation has created challenging conditions over the past week.

The Grande Ronde, Willowa and Imnaha Rivers should produce fine steelhead catches in the coming weeks. With great numbers of adults passing Columbia River dams, it should be another good season until the cold weather hits.

The Umatilla is an option for both steelhead and coho salmon.

SW Washington – District streams such as the Cowlitz and Lewis Rivers should begin to see the second wave of coho in the coming weeks. Spinner casters will be the first to intercept quality sized adults, targeting them at the rivers mouth when tides improve.

Chinook regulations vary by watershed but fish are beginning to deteriorate, making them poor tablefare.

The Klickitat and White Salmon Rivers should continue to produce a mix of chinook, coho and steelhead in the weeks ahead but fish should begin to show color as the run begins to taper.

Columbia River Fishing Report – Bonneville continues to shine with positive creel counts coming from backtrollers working the area. Upriver brights are still in good condition and after last weeks spike, numbers have slowed again indicating more resident fish are likely to mill around.

October is typically a good month for chinook in the Bonneville area. This year should be no exception with a large return in the forecast. Backtrollers working the swift water near the deadline will score the best results, using sardine wraps or tuna bellies to help ensure success. Plugs only get more productive when more residual fish are present.

The weekend check showed:

Gorge Bank:

Weekend checking showed 21 fall chinook adults, five fall chinook jacks and one adipose fin-clipped steelhead kept, plus one unclipped coho and two unclipped steelhead released for 97 bank anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekend checking showed 65 fall chinook adults, eight fall chinook jacks and two adipose fin-clipped coho kept for 57 boats (167 anglers).

Note the gorge check, it's better than a fish per boat.

Sturgeon should begin to show in the gorge as well with the October 1st re-opener for keeper sturgeon above the Wauna Powerlines. Traditionally, this has been a productive fishery in October but with waning sturgeon populations and a downturn in success rates in this fishery last year, boaters shouldn't have high expectations. The creel check for this area over last weekend was pretty impressive given the few number of folks participating in this fishery. Anglers will be anxious to get this fishery underway. The creel check for sturgeon is as follows:

Gorge Bank:

Closed for retention. Weekend checking showed two legal and 11 sublegal sturgeon released for six bank anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Closed for retention. Weekend checking showed two legal, 10 oversize and 35 sublegal sturgeon released for three boats (nine anglers).

Downriver, effort remains fair and so does the catch. Creel checks indicate about a fish for every third boat. Wobblers are still the offering of choice but most guides have moved on to another area. Spinner casters working the tributary mouths for coho are often coming up disappointed but more "B" run coho should be on the way and action should last towards the end of the month. Some anglers will go to eggs to draw strikes.

In the estuary, effort is really light for late season coho anglers but there are a few fish around. One angler reported landing a native on a spinner near the Desdemona Light Marker on incoming tide yesterday. The group also went crabbing and found good success for quality keepers near Buoy 21.

No one has been pursuing tuna in recent days due to huge combined seas but temperatures are warming for a last opportunity out of the mouth of the Columbia.

The Guide's Forecast – All the fisheries that we reported on should be tapering. The one exception should be the Bonneville area where both salmon and sturgeon action should continue to improve.

Although some chinook will start to turn, good action should be had by anglers pursuing upriver brights using plugs with bait wraps. Backrolled eggs should also be effective but residual fish oftentimes respond better when anglers work on their territorial instincts. This fishery should go strong until mid-month when fish rapidly begin to deteriorate. Spinners may also take a few fish.

Although the sturgeon opener (October 1st) will be somewhat of a mystery, action did pick up a bit for the few anglers likely to target these fish. The spring season was good but many of the keepers were caught out of one spot and by bank anglers. Fish should be well distributed but anglers will want to find slower flows if you're not familiar with the water. Bank anglers will do best in this fishery with smelt and shrimp taking the lion's share of keepers. Target these fish in the swifter flows but use extreme caution when anchoring and learn from someone in the area.

The wobbler fishery targeting chinook should continue to slow and the coho bite near the mouths of SW Washington tributaries should taper as well. Casting for coho should pick up later in October however as many more SW Washington fish are due back to their respective drainages.

Those wishing to recreate in the estuary should bring both crab pots and trolling gear. The crabbing will likely be much more productive than the salmon fishing. The soft tides will likely keep any hatchery coho near the mouth of the river where they will fall to bait. Fresh bait is NOT available in the area so anglers need to be prepared for that. Anglers may want to bring herring jigs so you can catch your own anchovies which work the best when trolled the right way.

Crabbing in the lower Columbia should be excellent on this soft tide series. Crab on lower Desdemona Sands and inside of Buoy's 20 to 22.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – The thousands of coho which have grossed at Willamette Falls have been accompanied by several hundred fall Chinook. Plunkers on the upper Willamette take a few and while this is never a red hot fishery, it sure beats raking those leaves which will soon be gracing out yards. About 25,500 summer steelhead are also upstream, primarily in the Santiams. Sturgeon retention will once again be allowed three days per week starting the 1st of November. Coho do not need to be fin-clipped to keep three per day in the upper Willamette and its tributaries.

Summer steelhead numbers remain good in the North Santiam although these fish can be finicky about biting. Thousands of summers have been recycled from Foster Dam down to Waterloo and Pleasant Valley boat ramp on the South Santiam.

The Guide's Forecast – Scoring steelhead in the upper Willamette between Eugene and Springfield remains a good possibility and there are still some nice, bright fish in that stretch. Fly anglers are doing well here. Join the parties occurring at the mouths of the Tualatin, Molalla and Yamhill rivers where anglers are hooking coho now.

Boaters should avoid the Shelburn to Green's Bridge stretch of the North Santiam due to downed trees and tricky side channels. Below Green's Bridge is a better bet for drifting.

Coho numbers are increasing in the mainstem, North and South Santiam but be aware of the deadlines which protect spawning Chinook. The North Santiam is closed above the Stayton-Scio bridge and the South is off limits upstream of the Grant Street Bridge in Lebanon.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – While rain last week improved prospects for coho on the Clackamas, warm, sunny days since then have slowed the bite. Throwing spinners or drifting cured eggs will be most effective.

Rains last week improved the Sandy level and flow, drawing over 1,500 coho up Cedar Creek to the hatchery which usually doesn't happen until much later in the season. Pods of fresh coho have been seen moving through the lower river this week.

Three hatchery coho may be retained per day on the Clackamas and Sandy river.

The Guide's Forecast – Anglers trying for coho on the Clackamas will stand the best chance of finding a biter at first or last light. Eagle Creek is extremely low and a poor choice for fishing until the next round of rainfall.

The effect of rainfall has passed and the Sandy is once again low although the color is good. Coho catches slowed as a result of the skinny water but new prospects moving upriver this week should boost results. Bank anglers will hook up at Oxbow and Dabney parks.

North Coast Fishing Report – Although a brief lull in action is currently being witnessed on Tillamook Bay, it remains one of the best prospects of any north coast stream. Some nice chinook have made their way into fish boxes, including Chris Vertopoulos' 38 pound buck landed on Tuesday. The bay does have a high component of 3-year old chinook, ranging in size from 6 to 12 pounds.

Anglers have been working the jetty pretty hard lately but not much is going on along the inside of the north jetty despite ideal trolling conditions on the entire outgoing tide. Seaweed has been a problem, especially with the ocean being as big as it is.

The West Channel has been producing some nice catches although chinook seem to be a rare find over there. The channel is laden with coho with the vast majority of them of wild origin and must be released unharmed. The best bite has taken place from sun-up to 8:00 a.m. and the last half of incoming tide. Spinners have been taking mostly coho but a rare chinook has fallen to spinners as well. I've been using herring and have yet to have a skunk day this Tillamook fall season. Seaweed has also been a problem here so prepare to pick your gear clean. It's best to start high in the channel, near the marked oyster pile only visible at low tide.

The upper and middle bay has not been producing in the current low tide exchange but that should change later in the week as the tide increase begins to hit shortly after the weekend.

The ocean has been rough but hopefully that will change this weekend. If so, look for the crabbing to be best but chinook should be present near the Tillamook Bay entrance, the question is, will the ocean lay down as most are predicting.

Crabbing in the estuary has been fair but when the ocean opens back up again, nearshore crabbing should be "off the hook" for quality keeper crab.

The Nehalem, Nestucca and Necanicum Rivers have been slow for chinook with very little effort being reported. The Salmon River has also slowed but is one of the better prospects on the north coast.

Hatchery coho are present in good numbers near the Trask Hatchery but few are falling to anglers offerings. There has been some good coho fishing at the North Fork Nehalem Hatchery but with dropping waters, fish are becoming more reluctant to bite.

The Guide's Forecast – Although we may be seeing a lull in chinook success on Tillamook Bay right now, the fishing should improve in the coming days. Water temperatures are warm and that certainly can be playing a role in the success we're having these last few days but the tides are right for a good outgoing tide bite along the jetty in the morning. It's typical to have a little lull in action between the early run Trask and Tillamook River fish and the later returning Kilchis and Wilson River returnees.

Until we see a more consistent bite in the upper estuary, it's best to target chinook near the jetty as it gets close to low slack and in the west channel where you stand a fair chance at getting either a coho (mostly wild) or a chinook (most willing to take herring over spinners). Every day is different but after the first hour of sunlight, the action dies drastically.

With the ocean forecast:

Fri...S wind 10 to 15 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. W swell 7 ft. Areas of fog in the morning.

Fri Night...W wind 5 kt...veering to N after midnight. Wind waves 1 foot. NW swell 8 ft. Patchy fog after midnight.

Sat...N wind 5 kt. Wind waves 1 foot. NW swell 8 ft. Patchy fog in the morning.

Sat Night...NW wind 10 kt...becoming W after midnight. Wind waves 1 foot. W swell 8 ft. Slight chance of rain after midnight.

Sun...SW wind 5 to 10 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. W swell 10 ft.

Mon...W wind 10 to 15 kt. Wind waves 2 ft. NW swell 8 ft.

Ocean crabbing can be back on the table where there are some very quality keepers to be had. No telling if there still there after the nearshore warmed up in temperature recently.

The Ghost Hole and upper bay will likely only produce a few fish on this tide series. If the ocean gets calm again, most of the biters will get culled from the fishery at this westerly place of interception.

No rain in sight so driftboaters will have to keep the motors on your driftboats if you want to fish where the fish are. The Trask will be the best bet on the North Coast as other systems are suffering from low returns with the exception of the Salmon River near Lincoln City.

The Nestucca and Nehalem systems are best left along until another slug of fish makes it's way into the estuary. We may have to wait a few years before good fishing returns

Crabbing in Netarts Bay should be good right now.

Central & South Coast Reports – Ocean conditions reduced effort for bottomfish over the past week although most who made it out scored limits. not so ling cod, however, as the 120-foot restriction has made it challenging for most to catch one, let alone a pair of legal size.

Rough seas and high wind has reduced effort for albacore over the past week although 2010 has produced very good offshore catches, eclipsed only by the stellar results in 2007 and 2009. Tuna are generally available offshore well into October but ocean conditions restrict windows of opportunity.

Fall Chinook and coho are swimming the waters of the Siletz but nobody will talk about it. One wild coho may be retained for the entire season or a quota of 400 fish. The first 74 had been caught the week of September 20 through 26th.

The U da Man tournament is taking place October 10th from 7 AM to 3 PM at Yaquina Bay and river on October 10th. For those considering it, be aware that catches of salmon have been ongoing for a couple of weeks with fish taken up to Toledo. The entrance fee is only \$30 with \$1,000 going to the top three finishers and prizes awarded for every fish weighed in. Inquire or register at Englund Marine in Newport or Harry's Bait & Tackle in South Beach. Crabbing has been slow to fair in Yaquina Bay with posts and rings yielding less than limits of Dungeness in marginal condition.

Chinook fishing has been very slow on the Alsea although there have been periods when the bite has turned on. Rain will help lower the water temperature here which will, in turn, improve catch rates.

Trollers are scoring regularly at the Siuslaw where a mix of Chinook and coho are coming over the gunwales.

The wild coho fishery at Tenmile Lake opens October 1st. One may be kept per day up to five for the year or the fulfillment of a 500-fish quota.

Crabbing is just getting better in Winchester Bay. Boat and bank anglers are catching Chinook in the bay and coho are starting to enter the Umpqua. Chinook catches are good in the mainstem and steelheading in the flies-only stretch has improved.

Coos Bay crabbers have seen improved catches, both in the number of legals and the quality as Dungeness are hard now following summertime molting. Chinook catches are good in the bay with best results coming from the area near the jaws or above the Highway 101 Bridge. Unclipped coho may not be retained in the Coos system.

Trollers employing plug-cut herring are making good Chinook catches on the Coquille from Bandon upstream. Wild coho may be kept here (one per day up to five per year) through November 30th or a quota of 1,200 fish. About 60% of the quota remained available as of September 26th.

Catches picked up a little in the Rogue estuary this week although effort remains light. While coho are also being caught, three out of four are unclipped and must be released. Chinook fishing is fair to good upstream to Agness where half-pounders are also being caught in good number. These smaller steelhead, measuring less than 15 inches, are not particular about what bait or lure is being offered; they'll hit 'most everything. Chinook are being caught in the middle Rogue but catch rates are slowing. Work at the Gold Ray Dam demolition site is finished and so should the resultant turbidity. Nymphing has been the most productive technique for steelhead in the flies only stretch of the upper Rogue with late-day anglers making the best catches. Steelheading has been good here.

While the Chetco hawg (bubble) fishery opens Friday, October 1st, ocean wind and wave action is likely to restrict efforts to the east side of the bar. This opportunity last through October 12th

so there should be additional opportunities within that time frame. When boats have been able to get out for bottomfish, most returned with limits or near-limits of rockfish as well as a few ling cod. It's been a while since we've mentioned it but despite the 2010 regulations stating a six-fish limit, seven rockfish may legally be retained per angler. The Chetco River will remain closed above Mile Marker 2.2 until November 6th. The 'bubble' fishery at Elk River will open October 15th and lasts through November.

Trout fishing at Diamond Lake has improved as temperatures have dropped. Five per day can be kept here but only one may be over 20 inches.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Boats at the mouth of the Deschutes have had some good results, but only when cloud cover has kept the bright sun obscured. With 'B' runs showing up, some large fish are being caught. About 77,000 summer steelhead crossed at Bonneville Dam in the month of September alone. Steelhead are in the lower Deschutes in good numbers and the resultant pressure is on at Maupin, particularly during the weekend push. While numbers are strong at Sherars Falls, steelheading is only fair up at Mecca Flats. There are Chinook in the lower Deschutes and anglers are allowed to two adults and up to five jacks, fin-clipped or not, below Sherars Falls through October. For those targeting trout, it's a caddis show on the lower Deschutes time of year. Middle Deschutes anglers are picking up fair to good numbers of trout with larger offerings hooking the occasional brown trout.

While always a challenge, the Metolius is fishing well with lots of bugs hatching here. Be prepared with an arsenal of caddis, duns, stones and midges.

The Crooked River is fishing very well, even attracting guide boats. Terrestrials and caddis patterns are effective with nymphs getting grabbed all day long.

Trollers continue to take kokanee at Odell with a little greater percentage showing signs of the soon-to-come spawn. The fish are good size, though, with the most still in good shape for the table.

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 Tahkalhk - 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."

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

Subscriber Al B. wrote with a question and a suggestion, "In your forecast you seem to leave out the Yaquina Bay Yaquina river, any reason for that? I live in Philomath and I use to work in Newport. There is a big fishery there and some great catching. Randy at Harry's tackle has update information if he would be willing to give it to you."

TGF co-editor Michael replied, "Thanks for the tip, Al. You'll find additional Yaquina Bay information in this week's report. Now, go sign up for the U da Man salmon derby! If you get your entry in by 2 PM Friday, October 10th, you'll get a free T-Shity.

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

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

\$10,000 for boat after six hours of use:

<http://www.thehulltruth.com/boating-forum/294774-contender-aground-ouch.html>

Effects of Barometric Pressure on Fishing:

<http://www.quickoneplus.com/fish/articles/page.asp?page=barometric>

GOOD LUCK!