

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 17<sup>th</sup> – June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Bonneville area anglers are catching good numbers of shad. Although it remains clear that high, cold water has stalled the peak migration, fishing for shad is peaking right now. Shad make excellent crab bait or use them to target oversize sturgeon. Oversize sturgeon anglers were catching and releasing fair numbers below the Marker 82 deadline.

Bank and boat anglers in the gorge are still challenged by high water conditions but catch rates for salmon are fair. As flows drop, fishing will improve. Summer chinook should be readily available in the coming weeks with a good return in the forecast.

Trollers and anchor fishers are taking a few springers daily from the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel. Some anglers theorize that chinook destined for the upper Columbia are taking the Multnomah Channel as fish to 25 pounds are routinely being taken. High Columbia flow is still backing up the Willamette and likely drawing fish into the channel from the mainstem Columbia, where anglers have good access to them. Fish passage is good at the Falls with water flow moderating. Upriver, the Middle Fork below Hill Creek Reservoir is fishing well for trout.

McKenzie levels have dropped and with hatches occurring in warmer weather, it is fishing very well. When trout aren't rising, nymphing is effective.

South Santiam fishers are taking a few spring chinook on spinners despite higher than normal water conditions. Steelhead numbers should be on the increase as well.

Spinners, cured eggs and shrimp are producing slow but steady results for summer steelhead on the Clackamas. Springers are still low on the river. This system should fish well into July for salmon.

Fishing has been fair to good in the high water of the lower Sandy River for persistent anglers. Trollers working the mouth are intercepting Columbia bound salmon with action great on some days.

**Northwest –** Sturgeon fishing improved near Astoria late last week. Although catches remain sporadic, some quality keepers are coming from Tongue Point and upstream. Sand shrimp is working best for bait with anchovies a distant second.

Salmon and steelhead anglers are finding surprising success upstream of Tongue Point. Spin-n-glos and small plugs are taking fish in shallow water, especially in the strong flows. Use hot colors for steelhead and green for salmon. This fishery should remain good for the next several weeks. Bank anglers at Jones Beach near Westport are doing good.

Spring chinook are still on tap on Tillamook Bay where Saturday catches were excellent for herring trollers working the lower estuary. Some boats reported double-digit opportunities. The spring run here has been excellent with good opportunities for river anglers in the coming weeks. Springers won't necessarily wait until the next rain freshet but will move and bite best early in the morning.

Summer steelhead should be available in the Wilson, Nestucca and Three Rivers. Prepare to

target fish in low, clear flows with small baits producing the best opportunities.

Nearshore halibut produced fair results for anglers working calm waters last weekend. Slow trolled herring near the bottom should continue to produce sporadic results for another few weeks. Excellent ocean conditions are forecast for tomorrow with a 3-foot wind chop predicted for the weekend. Bottomfishing should be good too.

Crabbing remains challenging inside north coast estuaries but offshore crabbers are faring better.

Razor clam digging was good on north coast beaches and tides should remain favorable through the weekend although we have seen the best tides in the series already.

**Southwest** – With 57% remaining in the spring all-depth halibut quota following the June 2nd through 4th fishery, it's very likely an additional opening will be available after the opener last week. June 23rd, 24th and 25th is the next scheduled opportunity off the central coast. Offshore salmon fishing has been fair.

Chinook catch rates are slow to fair on the lower Rogue and somewhat better on the middle stretch. The upper river has continued to produce steady catches of springers and remains the best bet for a hookup. Expect continued high water levels.

Try beaches where waves break near shore for surf perch. Clams, shrimp and even nightcrawlers will take them.

Winchester Bay is slow to fair for crabbing. Spring chinook are being caught in the mainstem and North Umpqua. Sunny days will be best for shad on the mainstem as the water level continues to drop.

Boats launching out of Brookings have caught lingcod and limits of large rockfish when ocean conditions cooperated. Fishing has been excellent. Chetco anglers are scoring good numbers of sea-run cutthroat trout. Only artificial lures are allowed above tidewater.

The catch rate per angler fell over the past weekend at Diamond Lake due to tremendous pressure with no license required. The coming weekend promises improvement.

**Eastern** – High but stable water conditions with good visibility has the Deschutes fishing well. There are still some Salmonflies and Golden Stones from Maupin to Warm Springs but action is winding down. Upper Deschutes fishing is poor in high water conditions.

The lower Umatilla River will remain open for hatchery spring chinook through the end of the month for two adults and five jacks per day.

Kokanee and trout catches are good at Wickiup Reservoir with bass fishing improving as the water warms.

Wallowa Lake has been producing good catches of trout. Large kokanee are being taken with a 9 1/2 pounder landed earlier this month.

**SW Washington** – The Cowlitz is about the only lower Columbia tributary viable for spring chinook. It is only fishing fair. Steelhead should be available on the Kalama and Lewis Rivers where spring chinook hatcheries are struggling to meet their egg take goals.

Bank anglers working the sandy beaches below the Lewis River on the mainstem Columbia are producing fair catches of steelhead. This action should last for the next several weeks and will likely be the best bet for district anglers looking for action.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Despite heavy flow, the Columbia is coming to life with unprecedented opportunity for salmon, steelhead and sturgeon. Although anglers would certainly like to see better conditions for their effort, catches are pretty impressive for anglers throughout the lower Columbia, especially those that are learning to adapt to fishing these high water conditions.

Although the weekend check will indicate that Bonneville area anglers are faring the best, the lower river around Westport and Jim Crow Sands has been producing great catches over the past week. Some boats are coming in with multiple salmon in addition to some quality sturgeon. Anchor anglers are faring the best in the high flows with salmon swimming the shore much like steelhead do this time of year.

Boaters will either target fish along a sandy island or run their boat up on the beach itself and cast out spin-n-glos, some tipped with sand shrimp and let the outgoing tide work the gear. Spin-n-glos and plugs seem to be the most effective but if flows are running fast enough, spinners should work well too. Don't be afraid to fish water as shallow as 3 foot, especially for steelhead. It's just the beginning of the run for steelhead but we should be entering peak season for late run spring fish and the larger summer run chinook. As a general rule, when adult steelhead counts over Bonneville are topping 200 fish or more per day, we've hit the stride for lower river beach fishing. We will likely hit that threshold before the weekend.

Upriver, anglers working the beaches below and above the Longview Bridge are finding good success for steelhead and a rare salmon. Jones Beach just downstream of Westport is rumored to be putting out excellent catches of steelhead this season. Beach plunkers can reach this beach by turning north on Woodson Road between Clatskanie and Westport on Highway 30. The strong tide series we're currently on will only drive fish closer to the beach.

And while we're down here, let's talk sturgeon. After a predictable slow start to the sturgeon season, catches jumped late last week with a fair number of keepers coming from the water above Tongue Point and a few boats right at Tongue Point did fair. Expectations won't be running high given the previous years history but some quality fish are available. We fished both Saturday and Sunday, taking 3 keepers each day for 6 anglers fishing. All but one of the keepers bettered the measuring stick by 45 inches. Other guides reported average success on keepers with a nice bump in shaker numbers. We weeded through 13 sturgeon to keep 3 fish on Saturday.

Most of the sturgeon are still in the deep water which makes for challenging fishing on a screaming outgoing tide. The best fishing has been on the turn of incoming tide when flows slow enough to keep baits fishing on the bottom using 8 to 10 ounces of lead. Sand shrimp has been the bait of choice although we did catch some fish on anchovies with only a few of us using this specie as bait. We did catch a keeper each of the weekend days in water less than 15 feet however.

Effort below the bridge has been non-existent. There has been a rare keeper here with the Stink Hole producing some fair catches in the middle of last week. You definitely had to get lucky and anchor in the right place.

Effort for salmon and steelhead remains fair in the Portland to Longview stretch with weekend creel reports as follows:

**Portland to Longview Bank:**

Weekend checking showed 15 adipose fin-clipped spring chinook adults, eight adipose fin-clipped spring chinook jacks, six adipose fin-clipped steelhead and six sockeye kept, plus three unclipped spring chinook adults, two unclipped steelhead and two sockeye released for 273 bank anglers.

**Portland to Longview Boats:**

Weekend checking showed five adipose fin-clipped spring chinook adults kept for 12 salmon boats (29 anglers); and 29 shad kept for four shad boats (nine anglers).

Effort will likely remain light as most boats and bank anglers will fish near Bonneville or closer to the estuary. This stretch however is a bank angler's Mecca (if there was such a thing). Prescott and Diblee Beach should boast the largest effort for summer steelhead.

Upriver near Bonneville, anglers will be searching for a mix of salmon and sturgeon. The oversize fishery is getting underway and should last though June the way the water is flowing. Fresh shad are readily available. Most anglers know by now that sturgeon fishing is now only allowed downstream of Marker 82. Salmon and steelhead catches are just getting underway with most anglers perplexed with all the high water.

Shad catches are clearly on the increase with bank anglers whacking the shad last week. Three boats reported 75 shad in the Bonneville area as well. This is crab bait collection time. Shad fishing is always better when the sun shines.

Some effort for bottomfish took place in the calm seas over the weekend. South jetty fishers took good catches of black rockfish and an occasional lingcod. Fishing should remain fair pending offshore weather conditions. Lower river crabbing has suffered with all the high flows recently.

**The Guide's Forecast** – It's hard to say what will be the best option for anglers in the coming week but given Bonneville counts and a warming and dropping river, salmon, steelhead and sturgeon are all lined up to be good prospects this week.

Starting with the slivery fish, good tides will last though the weekend, putting bank anglers and shallow water boaters on notice for good opportunities. Use spin-n-glos (hot colors for steelhead and greens for salmon) or plugs in the same color scheme. Spinners should work but are best suited for upriver (Bonneville area) anchor anglers as faster flows keep the spinners working best. Strong tides coupled with heavy flow should encourage anglers to fish close to shore. And when I say close, I mean don't overlook 3 to 5 foot of water to target your quarry. Use scent liberally as I often remind folks that plunking is the only technique where these fish have to come to you. The water I'm referencing in this paragraph is primarily downstream of Westport, Oregon. It may even behoove you to bring your salmon/steelhead gear to the sturgeon grounds as the water just upstream of Tongue Point has been producing good catches lately.

Boaters should target sandy shorelines as should bank anglers. Note the bank locations in the previous section. If Westport Oregon isn't too far for you to travel, it will be a good option for the bank angler at Jones Beach.

Although bit early to call it peak season at Bonneville, salmon and steelhead anglers do have their gear fishing right now. Quality shorelines are a bit harder to come by in this region however. Shad anglers are enjoying excellent catches though. This may be the best bet for

weekend anglers in the gorge area even though salmon and steelhead are in the gorge in good numbers..

Sturgeon effort is on the increase in the estuary and will only increase from here. Catches are beginning to pick up and should continue to do so until the proposed closure later this month. The sturgeon are biting best when the flows are underway but since fish are now being found in the deeper holes, unless you plan on drowning 10 to 16 ounces of lead to ensure your baits are sticking to the bottom, the better fishing is taking place closer to the tide change when flow begins to slow. Don't expect a bite every 2 or 3 minutes. It's been a long time between bites but it's still worth your effort.

It's unlikely that anchovies will all of a sudden turn on when the fresh water volume is what it is. The saltwater baitfish will likely remain at sea until salinity levels begin to increase. That is making fresh sand shrimp the bait of choice and it is working well, even in the deeper water. If you're fishing several rods however, it is a good idea to dunk some anchovies.

The offshore forecast looks most promising on Friday but a screaming outgoing tide may make the bar too much for comfort. It's best to wait for low slack before venturing out. Crabbing likely won't be very good either.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Although action in the Portland Harbor and Oregon City has slowed somewhat, action remains good in the Multnomah Channel for herring trollers with fish to 25 pounds and larger reported. Good action was reported throughout the channel with anglers catching such quality fish that are uncharacteristic this time of year that they must be destined for the Columbia River. None-the-less, with only 25,000 adults over the falls and a prediction closer to 100,000, there should be a lot more fish coming.

The late run has caused many fishers to hang it up for the year but springer remain available for the catching plus high water this season has slowed springer catches and effort. Flow at Willamette Falls has been fairly steady with only the slightest drop over the past week with a similar prediction for the week to come. With 69% of the springers crossing the Falls are hatchery fish. In addition, over 12,000 hatchery summer steelhead have crossed at the Falls, bound primarily for the South Santiam. Shad are being taken in fair to good number around Coon Island in Multnomah Channel and at Oregon City. A creel check over the past weekend indicated 875 shad taken by 78 boats trying with additional fish taken by bank anglers at Clackamette Park.

The McKenzie level, flow and color will be excellent for the coming weekend. Bait is allowed on the McKenzie from Leaburg Dam to Hayden Bridge for the remainder of the year.

Water levels will continue to drop on the North Santiam although the South Santiam River is predicted to remain stable into the coming week.

North Fork Reservoir, Sheridan Pond, Breitenbush River, Clear Lake, Detroit Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake and Trail Bridge Reservoir are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Spring Chinook remain available in the lower Willamette and Multnomah Channel with catches fair but steady, particularly near St. Johns Bridge and at Oregon City. Where sufficient current allows anchor fishing, boats are catching springers on wrapped Kwikfish and prawn spinners. Trollers continue to take fish and this is the only option in some

areas of the lower river. Shad are where you find them, Seriously, there will be hotspots so if no bites are apparent within a few minutes, move. Often a lateral move (toward one bank or the other) will make all the Difference as these fish seem to travel nose-to-tail toward the Falls. Above the Falls, boats on anchor have continued to hookup with spring Chinook as colder water this year has kept algae growth to a minimum. It's usually unfishable at this time of year.

McKenzie anglers are likely to see Golden Stones and caddis hatching over the coming week. Fishing should be good on the lower river and into the Middle Fork Willamette.

Bobber & jig rigs along with spinners have been taking hatchery summer steelhead on the South Santiam. Fish counts remain steady at the Falls so results here will improve as more fish make the trip upriver.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Clackamas water levels will continue to drop over the coming week according to NOAA forecasts. Fishing has been fair and should improve a little as conditions improve.

The Sandy water level is predicted to remain right around the 10 foot level at Sandy for the next several days. Cooler weather has slowed glacial runoff with resultant improvement in water conditions. With the flow moderating, silt has also been reduced. Lower Sandy fishers may expect fair but steady results for spring Chinook and summer steelhead. With late runs this year, fishing should remain worthwhile in the coming weeks. Spinners are a favorite here and have been effective for a few recently.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Spinners, spoons and jigs have all been effective this week in tempting summer steelhead on the Clackamas. The fish landed have been in excellent condition. Summer steelhead are scattered throughout the system but the best chance of a spring Chinook hookup remains the lower river. Pressure at Eagle Creek is low despite the availability of springers which have been entering for a couple of weeks.

Results for most Sandy fishers have been slow but a few are hooking up with a degree of regularity by drifting bait. It's certainly worth trying.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – With a large spring chinook run clearly on the books this season, anglers could expect good fishing to last into mid-June this year. That is clearly the case as some of the best fishing of the season took place over the weekend with one boat reporting 8 spring chinook and another claiming 9. Whatever the bottom line is, spring chinook fishing was good over the weekend but should be winding down after this spurt.

The bulk of the hatchery stock should be nosing into the rivers and upper estuary but the run will not explode into the tributaries without a bunch of water coming down the watersheds. Wild fish have only made up a small portion of the catch and anglers are reporting a fair number of mis-clips in the fishery this year.

Herring trollers working the lower bay did the best on Saturday, the day when the best catches were reported. Soft afternoon floods added to the anticipation, making for great trolling conditions on the lower end.

Most recently fishing was challenging on Tuesday but several fish were taken on Monday in the upper and lower bay. Most anglers are anticipating more action in the upper bay with the minus tide series that we are currently on.

Sturgeon effort is light to non-existent and with halibut closed for a bit, anglers will have to focus on bottomfish in the nearshore. Offshore crabbing is better than all north coast estuaries but you still had better have some quality bait to draw in the big 'uns.

River anglers will have to employ stealthy techniques as low flows are keeping fish hunkered down. Early mornings may work for some salmon and steelhead success but until we get our next rain freshet (and surely there will be another rain freshet), the fishing will remain challenging.

We have caught numerous cutthroat trout on salmon gear this spring in upper Tillamook Bay. Trout have readily taken small trolled herring indicating that there must be a lot of fish available. Next to no one targets these fish in the lower reaches of these systems and certainly not in the estuary itself. Upper Tillamook Bay may be a fun place to try to propagate this fishery.

Cape Mears Lake, Coffenbury Lake, Hebo Lake, Lost Lake (Clatsop County) and Town Lake are scheduled for trout planting.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Good minus tides will grace upper Tillamook Bay well through the weekend, giving trollers in the area one last good crack at the impressive spring Chinook returns happening this year. Spinners, plugs and herring should work equally well depending on what time of the tide you choose to employ them.

Use plugs on the strong outgoing tide and spinners and herring as the tide begins to slow, at least half way through the peak outgoing tide. Green is "gold" for spring Chinook but red or red/white is a great color at first light if you choose to be that motivated.

The lower bay won't have much to offer with the tides one has to work with. If you are going to fish in the lower bay, target high slack and the very first part of outgoing tide for success.

The strong tides will make early morning bar crossings less than ideal. There really isn't a lot going on out there anyway with salmon fishing best in the upper estuary and halibut closed this week with the exception of nearshore. There have been some nearshore halibut caught recently, mostly in the 30-pound class.

If you're going to crab, the ocean is where you want to be assuming bar and ocean conditions are safe. Watch for that wind to come up after tide change in the late morning.

Clamming should remain fair in the estuaries on the north coast. Razor clam digging has seen its prime for this tide series.

River fishers can certainly target spring Chinook and steelhead in the low flows of the Wilson, Nestucca, Trask and Three Rivers systems. Use small baits and target broken surfaced water or deep holes once the sun hits the water. Don't plan on daily success unless you're fishing over large numbers of holding fish.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Wind and wave action are forecast to be favorable for offshore launches this coming weekend but, as always, check the latest conditions for safety's sake.

Catch data from the all-depth fishery June 9th through 11th were still unavailable on the afternoon of June 16th. Prior to that fishery, 57% of the quota remained which means, barring

remarkable catches during the last fishery, deep water halibut will open one more time June 23rd through 26th with the summer season opening two days per week starting August 5th & 6<sup>th</sup>,

A series of minus tides this week will continue into the coming weekend and, while not as extreme, will provide clamming opportunities.

A variety of rockfish along with a few crabs and some lings were taken by boats launching out of Newport over the past weekend.

Boats launching out of Reedsport have done very well on scheduled all-depth halibut days although fishing is allowed inside the 40-fathom line every day. One lucky angler landed a 60-pounder in just over 100 feet of water on June 11th. Offshore salmon fishing has been fair for recreational boats, good for commercial efforts as they are able to work very deep water. Fishing has only been fair for pinkfin surf perch in upper Winchester Bay but the bite may turn on at any time. Marker 12 is the popular and productive area but expect plenty of company. Sturgeon fishing has improved and there are reports of striped bass catches. Shad fishing is only fair as water levels in the mainstem have remained too high for best results. Spring Chinook have moved upriver and while fish are still being taken on the mainstem, better results are coming on the North Umpqua. Water temperatures on the South Umpqua are still low for the smallmouth bass bite to turn on but fish are still being taken daily. It's just not as productive as it has been in seasons past at this time of year. The South Umpqua is gradually dropping and warming so it should be very good by the first week of July.

Coos and coquille river anglers are catching sea-run cutthroat trout. Crabbing has been fair in the estuaries.

The lower Rogue is forecast to be dropping over the coming week but Chinook fishing on this stretch is slow to fair at best with anglers looking forward to early fall Chinook fishing. A 49-pounder was landed in the first week of June. Boat and bank anglers on the middle Rogue experienced a slowing of catches over the past week, Chinook fishing remains good on the upper Rogue with best results coming between Shady Cove and Dodge Bridge.

Tossing traps off the pier at Brookings Harbor is producing a few legal Dungeness to most crabbers. Rockfish action has been hot offshore and ling cod anglers are taking some large fish. Results are best when the ocean lays down, a situation which happens a little more frequently at this time of year. Forecasts for the coming weekend include high wind on the south coast which will hamper offshore efforts. Try for sea-run cutthroat in the Chetco River as results have been good. No bait may be used above tidewater but these cooperative anadromous fishes will readily take brightly-colored flies and spinners. Fish brushlines along the bank or dark, boiling areas above traditional steelhead water.

Power Bait has been most productive for Diamond Lake trout with eight-fish limits of fish 16 inches or larger a common sight here. During the derby over the past weekend, one young angler caught a trout over 22 inches. Mosquitoes are thick so prepare accordingly.

Fish Lake and Rogue above Lost Creek are scheduled for trout stocking.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Salmonflies are still in evidence around Maupin on the Deschutes but the hatch is winding down. With the amount of insect activity over the past couple of weeks, trout are stuffed with bugs in some stretches and non-responsive to angler offerings.

Trout fishing is good although kokanee catches have been only fair at Green Peter.

Wallowa Lake is producing good numbers of kokanee averaging 15 inches and a few in the two or three pound range. Trolling with an attractor and hoochies has been most effective.

Snow is still on the ground at Paulina making the campground boat ramp unusable. Kokanee fishing has been fair.

Jig fishers and trollers are scoring kokanee at Odell/ Hookups are good, catches are fair. Kokes can be tricky to get to the boat.

Oyhee anglers are enjoying fair fishing for bass and very good action for crappie.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

***From the WDF&W Weekender Report for June 2011***

#### **North Puget Sound**

Anglers have their pick of several fishing opportunities in June. On Puget Sound, the Tulalip Bay bubble fishery gets under way June 3, while the lingcod fishery remains open through mid-month. In freshwater, numerous rivers open for trout June 4 and – in a few waters – salmon fishing opens at the beginning of the month.

Portions of the Skagit and Cascade rivers opened for hatchery **chinook salmon** fishing June 1. The Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 Bridge at Rockport to the Cascade River Road. On the Cascade, anglers can fish for salmon from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. Both stretches are open through July 15. The daily limit on the Skagit and Cascade rivers is four hatchery chinook, two of which may be adults (chinook salmon at least 24 inches in length).

Fishing for salmon, as well as **trout** and other **gamefish**, also opened June 1 on portions of the Skykomish River.

Elsewhere, **trout** fishing will open at several of the region's other rivers and streams beginning June 4. Under the statewide rule for trout, there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches in rivers and streams. However, some of the region's rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep. For details on river fishing opportunities, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

Meanwhile, lake fishing for **bass, bluegill, perch** and **crappie** is steadily improving as water temperatures increase and fish become more active, said Danny Garrett, fisheries biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). When fishing for these species, focus on areas where there are bridge pilings, boat docks, rock, submerged trees and bushes, grass beds, lily pads, and flooded vegetation along the shoreline, he said.

"Smallmouth bass use many of the same habitats as largemouth bass, but smallmouth are often more abundant around rocky points, riprap, and offshore rock piles," Garrett said. "Both species are highly adaptive to specific lake conditions, and habitat use will vary from lake to lake." For smallmouth and largemouth bass, Garrett recommends using spinnerbaits, jerkbaits, crankbaits, jigs, and plastic baits that include worms, tubes, and creature baits.

Perch and bluegill can also be caught with an assortment of artificial jigs, spinners, and flies, although many people prefer to use live worms under a bobber, he said. Anglers fishing for perch

and bluegill should try fishing around several different pieces of cover in the lake until a group of fish is found. "Generally, a single, small area will produce many individuals, since both species tend to congregate in large groups," he said.

Lakes where anglers can find quality bass and panfish fishing include Lakes Whatcom and Terrell in Whatcom County; Lake Goodwin in Snohomish County; Big Lake in Skagit County; Lakes Washington, Union and Sammamish in King County.

On Puget Sound, the northern portion of Marine Area 10 (Seattle/Bremerton) opened June 1 to catch-and-release fishing for salmon. Fishing is allowed north of a line from Point Monroe to Meadow Point.

Farther north, the **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery** begins June 3. The fishery is open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 5. The exception is June 12, when the bubble is closed for the Tulalip Tribes salmon ceremony, said Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager for WDFW. "They recently rescheduled their salmon ceremony, so the one-day closure was moved to June 12," Thiesfeld said. "That means the bubble will be open June 19 this year." For details, check the [emergency fishing rule change](#). Anglers fishing the bubble will have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon.

The **halibut** fishery in the region is closed, but fishing for **lingcod** is still an option. The lingcod fishery runs through June 15 in the region. During the hook-and-line season (May 1-June 15), there's a one-fish daily limit for lings, with a minimum size of 26 inches and a maximum size of 36 inches.

Before heading out, anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for all regulations. Washingtonians who are interested in fishing but haven't actually given it a try have a perfect chance to do so during **Free Fishing Weekend**, scheduled June 11-12. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state.

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

Some fisheries are winding down in the region, but anglers have other options as numerous rivers and streams open for trout June 4 and salmon fishing gets under way mid-month off the coast.

The popular **ocean salmon season** opens June 18 with a mark-selective fishery for hatchery chinook in all ocean areas. The selective fishery will run seven days a week, with a daily limit of two salmon, through June 25 or until 4,800 hatchery chinook are retained. Anglers will be required to release wild chinook and all coho during the selective fishery, said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"It looks like there are a lot of chinook out there," said Milward. "And from what we are seeing in the troll fishery, I expect fishing to be much like last year, which was pretty darn good."

Ocean salmon fisheries for chinook and hatchery coho will open June 26 in marine areas 1, 2, 3 and 4, where anglers will be allowed to retain one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit.

Anglers also are allowed one additional pink salmon each day in marine areas 3 and 4. Salmon fishing will be open seven days a week, except in Marine Area 2 where anglers can only fish for salmon Sundays through Thursdays. Before heading out, anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for all regulations.

In Puget Sound, marine areas 11 and 13 are open for salmon. Anglers fishing those areas have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook.

**Halibut** fishing is closed in most of Puget Sound. The exception is Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), where anglers can fish for halibut three days a week, Thursday, Friday and Saturday through June 18. On the coast, Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) will close to halibut fishing June 5, and then re-open Aug. 5 and continue three days a week (Friday through Sunday). Marine Area 2 (Westport/Ocean Shores) is already closed except in the northern nearshore area.

Farther north, La Push and Neah Bay (marine areas 3 and 4) will open for two more days of fishing June 2 and 4. "We will evaluate the quota after these dates to determine if there's enough quota for additional openings in those two areas," Reed said.

All areas open to halibut fishing have a one-fish daily catch limit, with no minimum size, a possession limit of one fish while on the vessel, and a possession limit of two fish in any form once the angler is on the shore. For more information on the halibut fishery, check [WDFW's website](#).

Anglers have through mid-month to fish for **lingcod** in Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, where the fishery closes June 15 in both areas. However, the lingcod season on the coast remains open through mid-October.

Anglers are reminded that work will limit parking facilities for boaters through June at **Twanoh State Park**, a popular access site on Hood Canal. The State Parks and Recreation Commission encourages fishers to use an alternate launch site.

Meanwhile, a couple of rivers are open for **salmon** fishing, including the Hoh, Quillayute and a portion of the Sol Duc. For details on those and other fishing opportunities, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

Elsewhere, **trout** fishing will open at several rivers and streams beginning June 4. Under the statewide rule for trout, there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches in rivers and streams. However, some rivers and streams have a rule requiring trout to be at least 14 inches in length to keep.

Washingtonians who are interested in fishing but haven't actually given it a try have a perfect chance to do so during **Free Fishing Weekend**, scheduled June 11-12. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. Also, no vehicle use permit will be required during Free Fishing Weekend to park at any of the water-access sites maintained by WDFW.

While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as size limits, bag limits and season closures will still be in effect. Anglers will also be required to complete a catch record card for any salmon, steelhead, sturgeon or halibut they catch. Catch record cards and WDFW's Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet are available free at hundreds of sporting goods stores and other license dealers throughout the state.

## **Southwest Washington**

The spring chinook fishery runs through June 15, followed the next day by a promising six-week summer chinook season. Meanwhile, increasing numbers of sockeye salmon and hatchery summer steelhead are moving into the lower Columbia River Basin, where anglers can also catch and keep white sturgeon in most areas.

But high water will present an ongoing challenge for anglers engaged in all of these fisheries, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "The river has been up in the trees for several days, and the snow pack hasn't even started to melt," said Hymer during the last week of May. "These high-water conditions could be with us for a while."

Anglers can check area river conditions on websites maintained by the [Fish Passage Center](#) and the [Northwest River Forecast Center](#).

Apart from their effect on fishing conditions, high flows and floating debris present a safety risk to anglers – particularly boat anglers – fishing the mainstem Columbia River. So long as the river is high, Hymer suggests that anglers leave their boats at home and take up a position on the bank.

"Success rates for bank anglers were higher than those for boat anglers fishing for **spring chinook** during the last week of May," he said. "There's a lesson in that."

Through June 15, fishing is open to both boat and bank anglers from Rocky Point/Tongue Point upriver to Bonneville Dam. Fishery managers opened the four-mile area from Beacon Rock to the dam to boat angling in late May to give anglers more access to upriver spring chinook still available for harvest.

The fishery above Bonneville Dam has also been extended through June 15 for boat and bank anglers from the Tower Island power lines upriver to the Washington/Oregon state line, 17 miles upriver from McNary Dam. Bank fishing was also reopened through June 15 from Bonneville Dam upriver to the power lines, located six miles below The Dalles Dam.

During the spring chinook season, anglers fishing below Bonneville Dam may retain one adult spring chinook salmon marked with a clipped adipose fin as part of their daily catch limit. Above Bonneville, the daily limit can include two marked hatchery adult chinook salmon. **Sockeye salmon** and hatchery-reared **steelhead** also count toward anglers' adult daily limit.

In both areas, all unmarked chinook and steelhead must be released unharmed.

That is also the case in the **summer chinook salmon** fishery, which gets under way June 16 from the Megler Astoria Bridge up to Priest Rapids Dam. One difference is anglers fishing below Bonneville Dam can retain two adult hatchery-reared chinook after June 16, rather than one. Like last year, the six-week mark selective summer chinook season is made possible by the additional revenue produced by the new Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement fee. "In the past, the cost of adequately monitoring and sampling a six-week fishery was prohibitive," Hymer said. "The extended summer chinook fishery was one of the first uses the department made of those revenues."

Based on the pre-season forecast, this year's summer chinook season looks promising, Hymer said. Approximately 92,000 upriver fish – the highest number since 1980 – are expected to return, including a high percentage of five-year-olds running 20-40 pounds. Anglers can also top off their daily limits with sockeye salmon and summer-run hatchery steelhead, which are also expected to return in high numbers this year.

Many of the early returning **steelhead** are headed for the Elochoman, Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, Toutle, Washougal, and Klickitat rivers, where they should provide good fishing through the summer. Fishing for hatchery spring chinook is also open on a number of area tributaries, including Drano Lake and the Wind River, where anglers can now retain four adult hatchery spring chinook as part of their six-fish daily limit.

Those fishing Drano Lake should be aware that Wednesday closures have been extended through June. In addition, the Kalama and Lewis rivers were recently closed to fishing for spring chinook due to low returns.

On the Klickitat River, salmon fishing is now open seven days a week downstream from the Fisher Hill Bridge, where anglers may retain two adult hatchery spring chinook plus two hatchery steelhead. Anglers fishing 400 feet upstream from the #5 fishway to the boundary markers below the Klickitat Salmon Hatchery may retain hatchery chinook jacks and hatchery steelhead. New rules will also take effect June 4 on the following rivers:

- **Elochoman River:** Opens for retention of hatchery chinook and hatchery steelhead from the mouth to the West Fork.
- **Grays River:** Opens for retention of hatchery chinook and hatchery steelhead on the mainstem from the mouth to the South Fork, and the West Fork from the mouth to the hatchery intake/footbridge.
- **South Fork Toutle River and the Green River:** Opens for hatchery steelhead on the entire South Fork Toutle, plus the Green River from the mouth to the 2800 Road Bridge. Bait may be used. All tributaries to the South Fork Toutle and Green rivers will remain closed to all fishing.
- **East Fork Lewis River:** Opens for hatchery steelhead from the mouth to 400 feet below Horseshoe Falls (except closures around various falls). Bait may be used.
- **Washougal River:** Opens for hatchery steelhead from the mouth to Salmon Falls Bridge. Bait may be used.

For more information about these and other fishing rule updates, check for [Emergency Rule Changes](#) on WDFW's website.

Rather catch a **sturgeon**? Boat anglers have been catching some legal-size fish around Camas, Longview and Cathlamet on the Columbia River. The retention fishery below the Wauna powerlines runs seven days a week through June 26, then resumes July 1-4. The daily limit is one white sturgeon with a fork-length requirement of 41 to 54 inches. Above the powerlines, sturgeon may be retained Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through July 31 up to Navigation Marker 82, nine miles below Bonneville Dam. The daily limit is one fish with a fork-length requirement of 38 to 54 inches.

And don't forget **shad**. While not as highly prized as sturgeon or salmon, they can put up a good fight and make for good eating, said WDFW biologist Joe Hymer. Even though their numbers may be down this year, more than a million of them will likely mount a charge up the Columbia this month. There are no daily limits or size limits for shad, the largest member of the herring family.

Fishing for **walleye** and **bass** should also pick up this month as water temperatures rise. During the last week of May, boat anglers averaged eight bass and eight walleye per rod fishing in The Dalles Pool. More than a dozen lakes, rivers and reservoirs – from Mayfield Reservoir in Lewis County to the Little White Salmon River in Skamania County – will be stocked with trout this month. See the [WDFW website](#) for a complete listing.

Those interested in fishing but don't have a fishing license will be able to get in on the action during **Free Fishing Weekend**, scheduled June 11-12. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any waters open to fishing in Washington state. While no licenses are required on Free Fishing Weekend, other rules such as season closures, size limits and bag limits will still be in effect.

### **Eastern Washington**

June is usually one of the best months of the year for a variety of fishing opportunities throughout the region, with river and stream seasons opening and warmwater fish species beginning to bite.

But this year, with extended cooler temperatures and greater than usual spring rain and runoff flooding some areas and putting many waterways out of shape, anglers are advised to use caution and plan ahead by checking access conditions with local sources.

Many northeast district rivers, including the Colville, Kettle, Little Pend Oreille, and Lake Roosevelt tributaries, opened to fishing May 28. Most other rivers and streams in the region will open June 4, the first Saturday of June. However, portions of the Spokane River open June 1, and some waterways are open year-round. Anglers should check the fishing rules pamphlet for details.

Two areas of the Snake River – near Little Goose Dam and Clarkston – are open to **spring chinook salmon** fishing through June 2. For details see the [emergency rule change](#).

Lakes that have been open since late April continue to produce good catches of **rainbow, cutthroat** and other **trout**. In the central district, good bets are Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County; and Amber, Badger, Chapman, Clear, Fish, West Medical and Williams lakes in southwest Spokane County. Many mixed-species waters that are open year-round or opened earlier this spring are starting to produce catches of **bass, bluegill, crappie, perch** or **catfish**, along with trout. These include Spokane County's Eloika, Liberty, Long, Newman, and Silver lakes.

In the northeast district, many **trout** fishing lakes are on U.S. Forest Service or other public lands with campgrounds – perfect for family weekend outings. In Ferry County, that includes Davis, Ellen, Ferry and Swan lakes; in Stevens County, Gillette, Pierre, and Thomas lakes; in Pend Oreille County, Bead, Cook's, Mystic, No-Name, Skookum, Sullivan and Yocum lakes. Anglers need to keep in mind that seven lakes where loons breed and nest in the northeast district have new rules prohibiting the use of lead weights and jigs that measure 1 ½ inches or less along the longest axis – these are Ferry, Long and Swan in Ferry County; Pierre in Stevens County; and Meadow, South Skookum and Yocum in Pend Oreille County.

Stevens County's Cedar, Rocky and Starvation lakes continue to be among the best trout producers in the region, but anglers need to keep in mind that Rocky and Starvation shift to catch-and-release only on June 1.

**Free Fishing Weekend**, June 11-12, is the best time to invite your non-fishing family or friends to join you on the water because that's when no fishing licenses are required of anyone. With Washington State Tourism's "[Share Your Washington](#)" campaign, you can even be eligible for air travel prizes when you invite others to fish with you in Washington. The contest runs through June 15.

WDFW is piloting a **free adult fishing class** on June 11 with help from Inland Northwest Wildlife Council volunteer instructors and Bunkers Resort on Williams Lake in southwest Spokane

County. The class will run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., mostly with time on the water to learn how to catch fish, but also with instruction on cleaning and cooking fish. Limited class space is filling fast with a registration deadline of June 6; call WDFW Eastern Region office at 509-892-1001 or e-mail [teamspokane@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:teamspokane@dfw.wa.gov).

### **Northcentral Washington**

River and stream **trout** fishing is scheduled to start the first Saturday in June, but WDFW Okanogan District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff says higher than normal flows will make fishing difficult at best – at least for the first few weeks of the month. “Anglers should focus on some of the smaller tributaries which have a tendency to clear up much quicker than larger rivers,” Jateff said.

**Spring chinook salmon** fishing on the Icicle River in Chelan County should improve considerably in June as more fish move up into the river. “There should be a number of fish available as the pre-season forecast for the Icicle calls for a run of approximately 9,000 fish,” Jateff said. Daily limit is three salmon, minimum size 12 inches. Standard gear rules are in effect and there is a night closure. Anglers must release all fish with one of more round holes punched in the tail (caudal) fin.

“Lake fishing should improve during the month as a later than normal spring has kept lake waters cooler than normal,” Jateff said. **Rainbow trout** waters to check out are Pearygin near Winthrop, Alta near Pateros, Conconully Reservoir and Lake near Conconully, Spectacle near Loomis, and Wannacut near Oroville. Anglers can expect to catch rainbows in the 10-13 inch range with larger carryover fish in the 15-16 inch range in all of these lakes, Jateff said.

Fly-fishing only waters in Okanogan County worth visiting in June are Aeneas Lake near Tonasket and Chopaka Lake near Loomis. Jateff reports Aeneas Lake has rainbow and **brown trout** 12-18 inches, and Chopaka has rainbows in the 12-17 inch range. Electric motors are not allowed on fly-fishing only waters, unless a special use permit has been issued. Selective gear waters to try would be Big Twin Lake near Winthrop, Blue Lake on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, Buzzard Lake near Okanogan, and Rat Lake near Brewster. All of these lakes are planted with rainbow trout fingerlings and/or catchables and should provide good fishing for 12-16 inch fish. Both Rat and Blue also have brown trout available.

For spiny ray anglers, Patterson Lake near Winthrop has **yellow perch** as well as **smallmouth** and **largemouth bass**. Expect perch in the 6-9 inch range in Patterson with an occasional fish up to 11 inches. Leader Lake, near Okanogan, has a mix of **black crappie** and **bluegill**, as well as largemouth bass. You can expect bluegill in the 6-7 inch range and crappie in the 6-9 inch range. Both Patterson and Leader Lakes are also planted with rainbow trout catchables up to 13 inches.

Wapato Lake in Chelan County continues to provide good fishing for rainbows in the 12-13 inch range, with a few larger fish up to 17 inches. Jameson Lake in Douglas County has been fishing well for rainbows in the 10-11 inch range along with a number of spring planted triploid rainbows in the 16-17 inch range.

On June 1, Grimes Lake near Mansfield will open for trout fishing under selective gear rules and a one fish daily limit. Anglers can expect good fishing for Lahontan cutthroat in the 12-18 inch range, with some fish in the 20-inch category. Float tubes, pontoon boats, and small row boats can be launched at the south end of the lake under an access agreement with the local land owner. The fishing season at Grimes Lake continues through Aug. 31.

In the Columbia Basin district of the region, fish biologist Chad Jackson said **trout** fishing has been very good during this cool, wet spring and warmwater fish species should begin biting more later this month. "Pretty much all of the catch-and-release or fly-fishing or selective gear waters in the basin are fishing quite well with these conditions," Jackson said. "Lenice and Dry Falls lakes are the most popular and some anglers are catching and releasing 12 to 20 or more trout per day, and the fish are running up to 20 inches."

Jackson reported that Quail, Dusty, Lenore, and Nunnally lakes are also fishing well. So are the "production waters," like Warden, Blue, and Park lakes in Grant County. "These fisheries appear to be holding up well since the late April opener, but that's based on just a few reports," he said. "The weather, especially wind, plays a big factor in successful fishing at those lakes."

Jackson also noted that **bass** and **walleye** fishing should be heating up this month in the usual big three waters in the basin – Banks Lake, Potholes Reservoir and Moses Lake. "I'm already hearing some good reports, especially for smallmouth and largemouth bass," he said.

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### **Southcentral Washington**

Area anglers have been reeling in **channel catfish** from the lower reaches of the Yakima and Walla Walla rivers, while fishing in the Columbia and Snake rivers has been choked by high water. Fishing has been good for "channel cats," which typically run 8-10 pounds but can easily weigh twice that amount, said Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"Put some cut bait on your hook and leave it on the bottom," Hoffarth advises. "That's about all there is to it."

**Trout** fishing in area lakes is another alternative for anglers waiting for heavy flows to subside in the Columbia River. Powerline Lake and Marmes Pond, two walk-in lakes in Franklin County, were planted with trout in early spring and cooler temperatures should "keep the bite going" for several weeks, Hoffarth said.

In addition, more than a dozen waters – ranging from Bear Lake in Yakima County to Easton Ponds in Kittitas County – are scheduled to receive fresh plants in June. Many of those waters will receive an assortment of catchable and jumbo-size fish, the latter weighing up to 1½ pounds apiece. See the [WDFW website](#) for the full lake-stocking schedule in June.

Out on the Columbia River, fishing prospects look good for salmon, sturgeon and shad – after the river drops to fishable levels. Meanwhile, anglers should exercise caution in venturing out into the big river.

"Flows on the mainstem Columbia have been nearly twice the seasonal average, and there's a lot of debris in the water," he said. "It's not just a matter of fishing conditions, it's a safety issue." Anglers can keep tabs on water conditions on the Fish Passage Center's [website](#). Once they flows subside, they'll have several good options for catching fish:

- **Chinook salmon:** June 16 marks the start of the fishery for hatchery-reared summer chinook salmon upriver to Priest Rapids Dam. The daily limit is six hatchery fish, up to two may be adult hatchery chinook. Anglers must stop fishing when their adult portion of the daily limit is retained. Anglers fishing the Columbia River downstream from the Highway 395 bridge at Pasco/Kennewick can retain **sockeye salmon** or **hatchery steelhead** as part of their daily bag limit.
- **White sturgeon:** Fishing remains open in Lake Wallula (McNary Dam to Priest Rapids/Ice Harbor Dams) through July of this year. Fish must measure 43 inches to 54 inches (fork length) to be retained. Anglers should be aware that sturgeon fishing is prohibited in sturgeon sanctuaries in the Snake River from Goose Island upstream to Ice Harbor Dam and in the Columbia River upstream of the Priest Rapids Hatchery outlet to Priest Rapids Dam.
- **Shad:** By mid-June, **shad** should reach McNary and Ice Harbor dams in numbers that make for great fishing. While not as prized as salmon or sturgeon, they can put up a good fight and make for good eating, Hoffarth said.
- **Smallmouth bass** and **walleye:** Fishing for both species should improve in the Columbia and Snake rivers as those waters warm. One veteran angler from Richland recently pulled a 18 pound, 4 ounce walleye out of the McNary Pool.

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

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### **Random Links**

It's that time of year - Blue-green Algae Watch:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/Recreation/HarmfulAlgaeBlogs/Pages/index.aspx>

Bald Eagles Decimate Tern and Cormorant Colonies:

<http://ecotrope.opb.org/2011/06/bald-eagles-decimate-tern-and-cormorant-colonies/>

**GOOD LUCK!**