

The Guide's Forecast - volume 13 issue number 26

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **July 1st – July 7th, 2011**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro - Summer chinook catches would normally be peaking in the Columbia River Gorge right now but the run is tracking late. Passage at Bonneville is ramping up, indicating the peak is nearing. Catches have improved but will likely continue to do so as flows continue to drop. Shad fishing is peaking here.

Beach anglers working the shores of Sauvie's Island and downstream to Longview are still taking good numbers and summer chinook and steelhead are beginning to show. It's been a good year for bank angling as high flows keep adult salmon close to the shoreline.

Spring chinook and summer steelhead passage has held fairly steady at Willamette Falls. Shad fishing is good for some, slow for others at Oregon City. The weekend holds promise as shad like sunny weather. Few springers are being caught although some are hitting shad gear.

McKenzie River levels have dropped over the past week while the water temperature has nudged above the 50-degree mark. Steelhead are being hooked below Leaburg.

South Santiam steelheaders are finding a few fish but results will improve as the run is late this season.

Summer steelhead and springer catches have picked up a little over the past week on the Clackamas River. Fish should be well distributed throughout the river system although higher concentrations of fish should be available near McIver Park.

A few spring chinook are being taken on the Sandy River but summer steelheaders are beginning to ramp up their efforts. Cedar Creek will be one of the best places to intercept holding fish.

Northwest – With the extension of the catch and keep sturgeon fishery on the lower Columbia through July 31st, opportunity for a productive combo salmon/sturgeon/bottomfishing trip is a rare opportunity. Some quality sized keepers are coming from Tongue Point to Hammond with most anglers scoring on sand shrimp.

Calm seas and mild tides yielded good catches of bottomfish to sunken jetty anglers on Monday. A rough ocean forecast will make this a poor option over the weekend.

Coho salmon season started good for anglers fishing way north of the mouth of the Columbia. Some chinook were in the catches but nice sized coho willingly took herring or anchovies for bait.

Ocean crabbing is poor for keeper sized males.

A big minus tide will make bar crossings treacherous this weekend but beach diggers shouldn't have any trouble getting a limit of razor clams along Clatsop Beaches. Only a few weeks left before this season closes for a few months.

A few spring chinook are still being caught in Tillamook Bay but the bulk of the fish are in the Trask and Wilson Rivers. The hatchery hole on the Trask closes on June 30th and is filled with fish. Springers are available in other sections of both streams but will be reluctant to bite in the low, clear flows.

The Nestucca is also an option but returns have just been fair this season. Summer steelhead are also available here.

Southwest – With the spring all-depth halibut quota filled, the next opportunity for deep-water fish will be two-day summer-season openers starting August 5th.

Fishing for redbtail surfperch is improving off area beaches, particularly those where a creek dumps into the ocean. Results are best during the incoming tide where the surf breaks closer to shore.

Crabbing has been slow to spotty in Winchester Bay. Chinook are being taken around Elkton and in the lower North Umpqua. Shad fishing is slow in the mainstem with continuing high water. Smallmouth fishing is improving on the South Umpqua.

Bottom fishing out of Gold Beach has been outstanding for rockfish and lingcod when ocean conditions have allowed. Trolling for fall chinook will begin in a couple of weeks in the Rogue estuary. Spring chinook are still being taken on the Rogue and catches are expected to continue through the holiday weekend. A few summer steelhead are being caught in the middle river. Upper Rogue springer fishing is fair to good but has been challenging in high water.

Boats launching out of the Port of Brookings have enjoyed good results for bottomfish by getting out at first light and returning mid-morning before the wind comes up. Ocean salmon fishing has been slow but is expected to improve in July. Cutthroat fishing is worthwhile on the Chetco River.

Trout fishing has been fair at Diamond Lake with the occasional jumbo rainbow landed. Bait has been most productive.

Eastern – While stonefly hatches are finished on the lower Deschutes, results for reddsides remain good. Look for Pale Morning and Evening Duns as well as plenty of caddis on the river.

Salmon are being taken on the Imnaha in high water with snowmelt triggered by warmer weather.

Snow is melting fast at Paulina where fishing is fair for kokanee. Action will improve as the water warms.

SW Washington – Most district streams remain poor options for salmon and steelhead with the exception of the Cowlitz. Spring chinook and a rare summer steelhead are being taken.

Mainstem fishing near the mouths of these tributaries should begin to produce fair numbers of steelhead in the coming weeks. Salmon fishing these areas has been fair for much of the spring but with mainstem temperatures remaining cool, migrating adults have little reason to seek refuge in the lower stretches of these systems.

Regulation changes come into effect beginning July 1st on some systems so check rules before heading out.

Columbia River Fishing Report – The mainstem Columbia remains high but that bodes well for bank anglers working the lower river. Although salmon and soon-to-be steelhead traditionally make the headlines on the Columbia this time of year, sturgeon are making a fair showing as well. There is good opportunity for several species on the regions signature system right now.

Salmon anglers are still grabbing notable success with good catches of summer fish coming throughout the lower river. Gorge anglers usually dominate the catches this time of year but a good return is clearly in our future. Couple that fact with high water and a slower than normal migration and lower river anglers have something to write home about as well. Here is the breakdown by section from ODF&W's weekend creel check program:

Gorge Bank:

Weekend checking showed no catch for three salmon anglers; and 384 shad kept, plus eight shad released for 112 shad anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekend checking showed eight adipose fin-clipped summer chinook adults and two adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks kept, plus two unclipped summer chinook adults released for 11 salmon boats (37 anglers); and 92 shad kept for 13 shad boats (32 anglers).

Troutdale Boats:

Weekly checking showed two adipose fin-clipped summer chinook adults kept for 19 salmon boats (28 anglers); and one shad kept for three shad boats (six anglers).

Portland to Longview Bank:

Weekend checking showed 22 adipose fin-clipped summer chinook adults, 13 adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks, seven adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and seven sockeye kept, plus 15 unclipped summer chinook adults, one unclipped summer chinook jack, and five sockeye released for 254 bank anglers.

Portland to Longview Boats:

Weekend checking showed seven adipose fin-clipped summer chinook adults, and two adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks kept, plus one unclipped summer chinook adult and one unclipped summer chinook jack released for 36 boats (85 anglers).

Estuary Bank (Jones Beach to the Astoria-Megler Bridge):

Weekend checking showed eight adipose fin-clipped summer chinook adults, seven adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jacks, four adipose fin-clipped steelhead and two sockeye kept, plus one unclipped summer chinook jack released for 54 bank anglers.

Estuary Boats (Puget Island to the Astoria-Megler Bridge):

Weekend checking showed six adipose fin-clipped summer chinook adults and one adipose fin-clipped summer chinook jack kept, plus two unclipped summer chinook adults, one unclipped steelhead and six sockeye released for seven boats (19 anglers).

Those bank catches in the Portland to Longview stretch are unprecedented. Flows like what we're experiencing now are a rarity, drawing salmon close to shore where bank anglers have a fair crack at them. Although the bulk of the catches are coming off of spin-n-glos, anglers are also using a second rig, slid down the line, in the form of a plug, typically a small Flatfish or Kwikfish in the K-13 or U-20 variety. Greens work well for chinook but salmon are also taking the hot colors, which double as an option for steelhead.

Boaters in the Bonneville area are working the shad rack, which is traditionally a good spot for boaters to intercept spring run fish. They are having opportunities for salmon, shad and a rare steelhead. Steelhead numbers are beginning to climb.

Downstream, estuary anglers are working areas that traditionally put out spring chinook too. The head of Tenasillahe Island and the Brookfield wing jetties are good options for those working plugs on the strong outgoing tides. Most anglers are targeting the outgoing with only a few trolling herring on the incoming tide. For bank anglers, Jones Beach near Westport is putting out fair to good catches of chinook with more steelhead beginning to show.

It's typically peak passage time at Bonneville and we have noted a slight bump in passage numbers the last few days. I think we can expect a later bump, meaning good numbers of fish should continue to pass the dam through mid-July. The lower river should peak this week and the Bonneville area shortly thereafter.

For sturgeon anglers, although effort remained low for a good part of the season, the fishing isn't all that bad. With the recent extension, opportunity should exist for much of the month of July as it's scheduled to go through the entire month of July.

Most recently, keepers were coming from both above and below the Astoria/Megler Bridge. We took a few nice keepers just out of Hammond on Monday, going 48 and 50 inches for just 2 rods. There were some oversize fish in our catch as well. We fished the lower river because we did a bottomfishing trip the same day. The weak tide exchange, along with a very calm sea on Monday produced good catches of black seabass, lingcod, kelp greenling and cabezon. The lings too herring for bait while the other species came on jigs, both the feathered kind and the metal kind. One guy on another boat working the sunken jetty even caught a fin-clipped chinook.

Catches in the Miller Island and near Marker 3 above Tongue Point were also fair although far from hot. Keepers fell on every trip with some nice ones in the 50-inch range. Shrimp remained the best bait although some guides reported fair catches on anchovies as well. With as much fresh water as there remains in the mainstem, it's hard to believe that anchovies have made a showing in the river at all. Tongue Point itself was a poor option last week.

Here is the sturgeon creel report from ODF&W last week:

Gorge Bank (below Marker 82):

No report.

Gorge Boats (below Marker 82):

Weekend checking showed one legal white sturgeon kept, plus 15 oversize and 51 sublegal sturgeon released for 21 boats (70 anglers).

Troutdale Boats:

Weekly checking showed 15 sublegal sturgeon released for four boats (11 anglers).

Portland to Longview Bank:

No report.

Portland to Longview Boats:

Weekly checking showed 11 sublegal sturgeon released for five boats (17 anglers).

Estuary Boats (Puget Island to Buoy 10):

Weekend checking showed 140 legal white sturgeon kept, plus 14 legal, 38 oversize and 660 sublegal sturgeon released for 189 boats (616 anglers); and two legal white sturgeon kept, plus one oversize released for 12 charter boat anglers.

Salmon fishers out of the mouth of the Columbia did well if you were willing to travel. Coho season opened up this week and vessels willing to travel nearly 20 miles to the north of the river found limit fishing for surprisingly large coho for this time of year. A few chinook were in the mix as well. Anchovies were the bait of choice but herring worked well too. There seems to be a lot of undersized chinook in the area as well.

Bottomfishers also have been doing well near Tillamook Head. The calm seas last week were particularly friendly to those willing to venture out a ways. Offshore crabbing remained good, if you like female (illegal) crab. Keeper males were few and far between. River crabbing has been fair at best but likely slightly better than salt water crabbing.

The Guide's Forecast – Salmon fishing should continue to impress anglers from Bonneville to the lower reaches of the river. We're currently on a strong minus tide series that should only benefit anglers in pursuit of silver.

For lower river fishers, target the heads of islands, working spin-n-glos near the shore and using plugs if you have capability. The larger the plug you use, the more you take away from your chances at hooking a steelhead. Steelhead numbers at Bonneville are ramping up quickly but so are salmon passage numbers. Don't forget the golden rule, the stronger the outgoing flow, the closer you should be fishing the bank.

I recommend a double rig approach with the bottom rig being a spin-n-glo option; hot colors such as pink, orange or red are the choice of steelhead, while running a sliding leader down the line once you have it deployed with a plug attached. Run varying sizes if you have the anglers to do it. A K-11X to K-13X size range is best.

Upriver, anglers working the gorge often do best using spinners to entice salmon. Small #5's also do a good job bringing steelhead strikes as well. Choose rock outcroppings to intercept fish and like downriver, target shallow spots close to shore. The shad rack is a strong option with the flows we'll be experiencing again this week. Plugs will also be effective here. Although fishing is likely to be good this week, it may even be better the following week.

Sturgeon anglers working the estuary have some good tides to work with. Although action isn't likely to pick up until the strong tidal influence begins to slow, flow itself will be a welcome change from the weak tides we're just now coming off of.

As we progress into the tide series, don't be afraid to target shallow water, especially just when the flow begins to pick up momentum. Fish are actively feeding in shallow water now, which wasn't necessarily the case earlier on in the season. Effort and catch are likely to remain relatively low except over the holiday weekend. The fishing should be good although it did slow down recently from some pretty good action last weekend. Keep with sand shrimp and bring lots of them to keep your baits looking fresh. The water below the Astoria Bridge often produces better on the stronger tide series that is currently underway.

Upriver, anglers seeking oversize fish are finding them near the Marker 82 deadline. Fresh shad are not hard to come by but they certainly do bite better on sunny days. Keeper sized fish are a rarity however. The action should hold up well this week.

Offshore bottomfishing won't be a good option with the strong tide exchange and the offshore weather forecast. It's best to stay "inside" this weekend. Do explore the razor clam option however as north coast beaches should have plenty of them on this tide series. The best digging will likely happen sooner on this series rather than later.

Offshore salmon seekers won't have a very good time pursuing fish in the wind chop and you'll have to likely still travel pretty far to the north to find good action. The fish should move south over the coming weeks but don't expect keeper sized fish in good numbers too close to the Columbia River entrance.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Spring Chinook passage is steady at Willamette Falls with over 500 per day crossing for the past week and YTD counts greater than 38,000. This isn't a spectacular number but is substantial. Jack count have topped 1,000 for the season. Summer steelhead counts seem to be tapering off as with totals so far this season in excess of 16,000. Shad anglers are targeting the normal areas, Oregon City in the lower River and Coon Island in Multnomah Channel but have been experiencing spotty results.

McKenzie River levels have been dropping over the past week with the water temperature hovering around the 50-degree range. The level, color and flow are excellent for fishing.

North Santiam flows remain considerably greater than normal and, while forecast to drop over the coming weeks, are still over 3,000 cfs at Mehama. The South Santiam is a much better prospect with the flow about half that of the North. It will remain legal to use bait on the South Santiam through 2011.

Estacada Lake, Faraday Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Trillium Lake, Alton Baker Canal, Breitenbush River, Clear Lake, Quartzville Creek and the North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake are scheduled for trout planting.

The Guide's Forecast – Only the most optimistic of trollers and anchor fishers are putting in effort for spring Chinook this late in the season on the lower Willamette. Spinners and herring are still taking fish, A few are being caught but there are shad fishers who are getting surprised, sometimes pleasantly, with springer hookups on diminutive tackle. The lower Willamette has dropped enough to expose Meldrum Bar which is now accessible for bank fishing. Shad fishing may improve over the coming week as it often does when days are bright and sunny. Algae, delayed on the upper Willamette by a long, cold, wet spring, has finally reared its ugly, slimy, green head. This will put the kibosh on angling efforts for spring Chinook and summer steelhead. This also signals a move of efforts to the tributaries, most of which aren't plagued by this problem. It's unfortunate that the green goo will soon prevent effort by anchor and bank fishers upriver has results have been decent for springers on spinners from the mouth of the Santiam down to the town of Newberg.

Prospects are decent on the McKenzie for stocked trout as well as for native rainbows and cutthroat. Summer steelhead are in the system and have been responding to drifted lures or flies.

Boaters are still advised to avoid the stretch of the North Santiam between Shelburn and Green's Bridge which remains hazardous at current flows. Steelhead do not need to be fin-clipped to keep starting July 1st on the North

Santiam/ Prospects for summer steelhead or spring Chinook are good and improving on the South Santiam as fish are continuing to cross at the Falls and this is the destination of the majority of them.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Clackamas River levels have dropped and are forecast to continue in that direction although snowmelt will keep the level good for fishing.

Despite falling river levels on the Sandy over the past 10 days, it took a little leap on the last day of the month. Hot weather over the holiday weekend may trigger glacial runoff but barring that, the water is in good condition. A few springers have been taken from Oxbow to the mouth of the river.

The Guide's Forecast – Spring Chinook are entering the Clackamas, late as we predicted and as many anglers have hoped. Expect catch rates to improve over the coming week. There are springers in Eagle Creek and a few have been landed over the past week although effort here is light. Be respectful of private property along the creek which is extensive.

Catches have been slow on the Sandy River with the Cedar Creek stretch receiving most of the attention, While springers return late here historically, it's particularly true this season with runs late everywhere but that means fishing prospects may be worthwhile for weeks to come.

North Coast Fishing Report – With spring chinook fishing clearly on the downturn, anglers are looking ahead to their next opportunity. That opportunity would be offshore coho fishing which will get underway July 2nd.

Some spring chinook are still being caught in Tillamook with the West Channel and the upper bay producing a rare adult. The Trask River on the other hand is full of fish, with most adults concentrated near the hatchery, along with the people. Other holes near the hatchery are producing too however as hatchery strays can be found throughout the watershed. The hatchery hole closed on June 30th.

As chinook are holed up in the deeper pools, bobber and bait (eggs and shrimp) will be responsible for the bulk of the catch. You'll still have to use light leaders but the cloud cover we've experienced this week should help anglers out.

The Nestucca tidewater put out a few fish over the weekend but the returns to that watershed aren't as great as they are to the Tillamook area ones. The Wilson should have a fair number of salmon available. Summer steelhead should begin to show in better numbers although plants have been reduced recently. Low clear water will make the fishing challenging. Three Rivers is slated to close on June 30th. Sometimes an extension is granted but serious snagging will keep this system closed for the remainder of the spring chinook season.

Don't overlook cutthroat trout fishing in the estuaries and tidewater stretches. Nice sized cutts have been taken all spring long during salmon season and should be present in fair numbers. Small spoons or spinners should produce some results.

The Guide's Forecast – Offshore coho salmon fishing is next on deck but with a rough offshore forecast and low hatchery abundance this season, don't expect gangbuster fishing. Here is the offshore weather forecast:

Fri Night...NW wind 5 to 10 kt. Gusts up to 20 kt in the evening. Wind waves 3 ft. NW swell 7 ft. Patchy fog after midnight.

Sat...NW wind 5 to 10 kt...rising to 10 to 15 kt in the afternoon. Wind waves 2 ft...building to 4 ft in the afternoon. NW swell 7 ft...subsiding to 5 ft in the afternoon. Patchy fog in the morning.

Sat Night...W wind 15 kt...becoming NW 5 to 10 kt after midnight. Wind waves 4 ft. NW swell 5 ft. Slight chance of showers after midnight.

Sun...NW wind 15 to 20 kt. Wind waves 4 ft. NW swell 6 ft.

Mon...N wind 20 to 25 kt. Wind waves 4 ft. W swell 4 ft.

Bank anglers should have fair access to spring chinook on the Trask and Wilson Rivers. Fresh fish should be available in the lower reaches but many fish will be holed up in the upper reaches as well. Bobber and bait will be the best way to entice these fish but early mornings will produce the best results. You'll want to use light leaders and smaller baits too.

Summer steelhead should also be available in the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. Like salmon fishing, light leaders, small baits and crack-o-dawn fishing will produce the best results.

Trout fishing should be productive on most north coast streams as larger fish make their way downstream into estuaries and even the ocean for a summer of bonanza feeding.

Bay and beach clamming should be good this weekend. Razors along the beaches may be difficult however with the Clatsop Beaches being the exception.

Central & South Coast Reports – While all-depth halibut will remain closed until the summer opener starting August 5th, nearshore halibut fishing continues seven days a week and as of the last update, has 30% of the 172,504-pound quota.

Wind and wave offshore will combine with tricky tides to create dicey bar crossing conditions over the holiday weekend. Launch with care if you decide to go.

Ocean coho may be taken starting Saturday, July 2nd but it remains to be seen if any of these fish will show in early season catches. A few have been taken incidentally by ocean Chinook anglers over the past week. Let's hope those fish remain within reach as the season opens officially. Keepers must be of hatchery origin so be certain to check for a fin clip. One exciting element in ocean coho fishing is the remarkable growth rate of these fish with significantly larger specimens showing up in catches every week. The season quota is 15,000 fish. Ocean Chinook fishing remains open with catches picking up a little recently when boats could get out.

Speaking of exciting, possibly the most adrenaline pumping offshore critter, the albacore tuna, has been taken this week with catches reported out of Newport, Depoe Bay and Charleston. It'd

too early for anything but scratch fishing but it has begun, As warm water moves closer to shore, it will be on.

Winchester Bay crabbing has been slow with mostly undersized Dungeness showing in nets and traps. Surf perch have entered the bay to spawn although catches have actually been netter for those casting for them from area beaches. The South Jetty on Winchester Bay has been reliable for bottom fish. Boat effort is light on the Umpqua around Elkton, indicating a movement of spring Chinook fishers to the North Umpqua and a wise move that would be. All are hoping for another push of fresh fish through the system but it's getting late in the season to maintain a great deal of optimism. Shad fishing, which has been challenging in high water, should improve as the water level drops and the temperature warms over the coming week. Shad will bite better in sunny weather. South Umpqua bass fishers are catching smallmouth with results picking up as the water temperature warms, a likely occurrence over the coming week. Spring Chinook catches have slowed on the North Umpqua although summer steelhead fishing has improved.

Coos and Coquille river anglers are connecting with fair to good numbers of sea-run cutthroat trout. Be sure to limit offerings to artificial lures or flies above tidewater. Few are making an effort for crab in the estuaries with results only fair for those who are trying.

With fall Chinook expected any time in the Rogue estuary, springers continue to be taken daily from the lower river although catches are only fair this late in the season. Wrapped Kwikfish and spinner/anchovy combos are rewarding anglers in the middle Rogue with spring Chinook. Upper Rogue springer results remain good with over 2,000 Chinook reported at Coles River hatchery along with a handful of summer steelhead.

High winds are likely to hamper offshore efforts out of the Port of Brookings but boats will often dodge this potential hazard by launching at first light and returning mid-morning before the offshore breezes start to blow.

Fishing has improved this week at Diamond Lake. Perhaps that extra infusion of 150,000 hatchery trout placed in the waters here last week is having an effect on catches. Larger holdover trout still number in the hundreds of thousands so there's always the chance of a big one taking your bait or lure.

The Rogue above Lost Creek is scheduled for trout stocking this week.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Late-day fishing has been very good for reddsides on the lower Deschutes with caddis, PMDs and PEDs hatching now. The water level remains high but the river is fishing very well for those employing techniques appropriate for these conditions.

The Metolius is in decent shape and fishing fairly well with Green Drakes starting to hatch, Results will improve with dry weather.

Kokanee fishing is fair to good at East Lake which is also producing some dandy brown trout.

Boats trolling hoochies at 50 to 60 feet are taking fair to good numbers of kokanee at Green Peter with a few filling limits.

Kokanee fishing is good at Odell with fish responding to trolled lures early mornings and again in the evening.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for July 2011

Discover Pass: Now that summer has finally arrived, hundreds of thousands of Washingtonians will be packing up tents, lanterns, binoculars and fishing poles to spend time with family and friends outdoors. Starting July 1, many will also need to purchase a Discover Pass for vehicle access to state parks, campgrounds, boat launches and wildlife areas.

The new pass, approved this year by the state Legislature, is designed to help keep 7 million acres of state recreational lands open after steep budget cuts. An annual Discover Pass costs \$35, and a one-day pass \$11.50, when purchased from [WDFW online](#) by phone or from retail [license vendors](#).

State Parks will also sell the passes July 1-3 at its Olympia headquarters and regional offices in Burlington and East Wenatchee, in preparation for the Fourth of July weekend. The passes also will be sold at state park sites where staff is available.

"The Discover Pass allows state natural-resource agencies to maintain public access to millions of acres of state recreation lands," said Phil Anderson, WDFW director. "Sport fishers and hunters have traditionally supported WDFW wildlife areas and water access sites through their license fees; now all who enjoy these lands will share in their support."

The pass is required for vehicle access to recreation lands and water-access sites managed by WDFW, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The fine for not displaying the pass is \$99.

However, some exemptions to the requirement apply. For example, holders of most annual fishing and hunting licenses are not required to purchase a Discover Pass to use WDFW lands and water-access sites. For a list of these exemptions and other information, see the [Discover Pass website](#) or call 1-866-320-9933.

North Puget Sound

Summer has arrived, and anglers have their pick of numerous fishing opportunities. Freshwater anglers can cast for chinook at some of the region's rivers, as well as trout and bass at local lakes. On Puget Sound, the crab season opens July 1 in most areas, and additional salmon openings are just around the corner.

"The **salmon** fishing season really gets going in July, when more marine areas open in Puget Sound," said Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "And with the high cost of fuel these days, anglers in the region might want to take advantage of these opportunities to hook a salmon close to home."

Puget Sound salmon fishing opportunities in July include:

- **Marine Area 7** (San Juan Islands), which opens July 1. Anglers can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon.
- **Marine Area 10** (Seattle-Bremerton), where anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, beginning July 1. However, anglers must release all chinook through July 15. Beginning July 16, anglers can retain hatchery chinook – marked with a clipped adipose fin – but wild chinook must be released.

- **Tulalip Bay "bubble" fishery** remains open each week from Friday through noon Monday through Sept. 5. Anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit, plus two additional pink salmon.
- **Marine Area 9** (Admiralty Inlet) opens for hatchery chinook retention July 16. Anglers will have a daily limit of two salmon, plus two additional pink salmon, but must release wild chinook and chum.

Thiesfeld said anglers should be aware that the inner Elliott Bay salmon fishery is closed in July this year to protect Green River naturally spawning chinook, which are expected to return in low numbers. Check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for details on salmon fishing opportunities.

Tara Livingood, Puget Sound recreational salmon fishery manager for WDFW, reminds anglers that they are responsible for correctly identifying their catch. In past years, some anglers were checked at the docks with undersized chinook they misidentified as pink salmon, she said.

"It's important that people take the time to learn the differences between each salmon species – both to protect the resource and to avoid a fine," Livingood said. Descriptions of each salmon species can be found on the department's [recreational salmon fishing webpage](#) and in the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#). Anglers also can ask WDFW's dockside fish samplers for a salmon identification card before heading out on the water.

Break out those crab pots. The **Puget Sound crab fishery** gets under way July 1 in most areas. The exception is Marine Area 7, where the southern portion (San Juan Islands/Bellingham) opens July 15 and the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia) opens Aug. 15.

Under new rules adopted earlier this year by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission, all marine areas of Puget Sound will be open for crabbing Thursday through Monday of each week.

Mike Cenci, WDFW's deputy chief of enforcement, said all crabbers should review the rules of the fishery before heading out on the water. "We've found that in the past a significant number of violations occur because people don't take the time to fully understand the rules of the fishery," Cenci said. "Those rules, such as properly measuring and identifying crabs, are important tools designed to protect the health of the crab population."

Information on the rules, including how to properly record and report catch information is available on [WDFW's crab fishing webpage](#). The page includes links to a printable "Crabbing in Puget Sound" brochure and a "Puget Sound Recreational Crab Guide," both of which have information on crabbing regulations.

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.

In freshwater, portions of the Skagit and Cascade rivers are open for hatchery **chinook salmon** fishing through July 15. The Skagit is open to hatchery chinook retention from the Highway 530 Bridge at Rockport to Cascade River Road. On the Cascade, anglers can fish for salmon from the mouth of the river to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. 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).

Portions of the Skykomish River are also open for salmon fishing. Anglers fishing the Skykomish, from the mouth to the Wallace River, have a daily limit of two hatchery chinook only.

The Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish River opens June 29 for game fish, including **hatchery steelhead**. For more on that fishery, check the [fishing rule change](#).

Trout fishing also is open at several of the region's rivers and streams. 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. "Early summer can be a tricky time for anglers, given the abundance of natural food and unstable weather patterns," said Danny Garrett, WDFW fisheries biologist. "As we move into summer and temperatures rise, fish tend to feed in shallow water - about 2 to 5 feet - early in the morning and late in the evening." When fishing for lunker bass, Garrett recommends topwater baits, such as buzzbaits, frogs, and poppers, and soft plastic twitch baits, including stick baits and flukes.

During the heat of the day, bass often move to deeper water near structures or other cover, Garrett said. In clear, deep lakes, such as Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, anglers should focus on the outside edge of boat docks and along the weed line in 15 to 20 feet of water, he said, noting that a drop-shot technique with plastic bait is a good approach.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

The summer salmon fishing season is under way along the coast, where anglers are hooking some bright chinook and coho.

Fishing was good during the selective fishery (June 18-25) for hatchery chinook and that has carried over to the traditional season, said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"Anglers are doing well for **chinook**, as well as **hatchery coho**, which we are seeing more of this year," Milward said. "It's still early in the season, but signs are pointing to a good July for salmon anglers out on the coast."

Anglers fishing marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) can keep up to one 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. Those fishing marine areas 3 and 4 also are allowed one additional **pink salmon** each day.

Salmon fishing is open seven days a week, except in Marine Area 2 where anglers can fish for salmon Sundays through Thursdays. Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 2, 3 and 4, and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1, although those areas could close early if catch quotas are reached. Milward reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website.

In Puget Sound, salmon fishing seasons open July 1 in marine areas 5 (Sekiu), 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca) and 12 (Hood Canal), while salmon fisheries in marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 13 (South Puget Sound) are already under way. Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for all regulations before heading out on the water.

Tara Livingood, Puget Sound recreational salmon fishery manager for WDFW, reminds anglers that they are responsible for correctly identifying their catch. In past years, some anglers were checked at the docks with undersized chinook they misidentified as pink salmon, she said.

"It's important that people take the time to learn the differences between each salmon species – both to protect the resource and to avoid a fine," Livingood said. Descriptions of each salmon species can be found on the department's [recreational salmon fishing webpage](#) and in the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#). Anglers also can ask WDFW's dockside fish samplers for a salmon identification card before heading out on the water.

Prefer shellfish? The **Puget Sound crab** fishery gets under way July 1 in most areas. The exception is Marine Area 7, where the southern portion (San Juan Islands and Bellingham) opens July 15 and the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia) opens Aug. 15.

Under new rules adopted earlier this year by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission, all marine areas of Puget Sound will be open for crabbing Thursday through Monday of each week.

Mike Cenci, WDFW's deputy chief of enforcement, said all crabbers should review the rules of the fishery before heading out on the water. "We've found that in the past a significant number of violations occur because people don't take the time to fully understand the rules of the fishery," Cenci said. "Those rules, such as properly measuring and identifying crabs, are important tools designed to protect the health of the crab population."

Information on the rules, including how to properly record and report catch information is available on [WDFW's crab fishing webpage](#). The page includes links to a printable "Crabbing in Puget Sound" brochure and a "Puget Sound Recreational Crab Guide," both of which have information on crabbing regulations.

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.

Anglers still hoping to land a big flatfish will have one more day in marine areas 3 and 4, where **halibut** fishing will be open June 30 only. In Marine Area 1, the late season for halibut opens Aug. 5. The fishery there will be open three days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the quota is taken or Sept. 30, whichever occurs first. Halibut fishing in Marine Area 2 (Westport/Ocean Shores) is only open in the northern nearshore area.

Meanwhile, a few of rivers are open for **salmon** fishing, including the Hoh, Quillayute and a portion of the Sol Duc. Beginning July 1, a few other rivers open for salmon fishing, including the Bogachiel, Calawah and Nisqually.

Trout fishing also is open at several of the region's rivers and streams. 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](#).

Southwest Washington

Summer chinook salmon will continue moving up the lower Columbia River in July in large numbers, joined by an even larger return of summer steelhead later in the month. Sockeye salmon, sturgeon and shad are also "in season" on the big river, and salmon fishing is open on the coast.

Although the Columbia River is still running high and cold, anglers have plenty of options for catching fish in July, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"Anglers may need to change their tactics to match the conditions, but fishing should be good throughout the month," Hymer said. "Sometimes the biggest challenge is figuring out which option to pursue on a given day."

Summer **chinook salmon** are a good bet, especially during the first two-to-three weeks of July, Hymer said. According to the season forecast, 92,000 summer chinook – some weighing up to 40 pounds – are expected to enter the Columbia River this year, which would be the largest number since 1980.

Like last year, the six-week fishery for hatchery-reared summer chinook was made possible by the additional revenue produced by the new Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement fee.

"With water temperatures below normal, anglers will likely have the greatest success fishing closer to shore," Hymer said. "Spinners work well under those conditions, although wobblers might be in order if the water temperature rises and the fish go deeper."

The fishery runs through July 31 from the Megler Astoria Bridge up to Priest Rapids Dam. Anglers may retain up to two adult chinook salmon with clipped adipose fins per day. All wild, unclipped chinook salmon must be released.

During the summer chinook fishery, anglers can retain hatchery steelhead and sockeye salmon to reach their daily limit of two adult fish. Under a total daily limit of six fish, the limit for adult fish may include two salmon, two **hatchery steelhead**, or one of each.

Based on preseason forecasts, 400,000 summer steelhead and 162,000 sockeye salmon will move into the Columbia River and its tributaries this year. Steelhead usually start coming on strong in late July, just as the summer chinook run starts to taper off, Hymer said. Anglers fishing for hatchery steelhead near the shore of the Columbia River are most likely to hook a **sockeye**.

"Sockeye are pretty single-minded about moving upriver, so anglers should really consider them a 'bonus fish' if they catch one," Hymer said. "But bank anglers should do pretty well with the combination of hatchery steelhead and sockeye salmon this month."

A lot of those steelhead will be heading up area tributaries, including the Lewis, Kalama and Washougal rivers – and particularly the Cowlitz River. Once the weather warms up, many will also dip into the White Salmon River and Drano Lake, where fishing usually heats up in late July.

Out in the ocean, salmon fishing is open through Sept. 30 off the coast of Ilwaco (Marine Area 1) and through Sept. 18 in ocean areas farther north. For more information, see the regional Weekender report for [Region 6](#).

Rather catch a **sturgeon**? Fishery managers from Washington and Oregon have extended retention fishing through July 31 below the Wauna powerlines near Cathlamet and added fishing days June 30-July 2 and July 7-9 from Bonneville Dam upriver to The Dalles Dam. In the estuary fishery, the daily limit is one white sturgeon with a fork-length measurement of 41 inches to 54 inches. Anglers fishing the Bonneville Pool will have a daily catch limit of one white sturgeon, with a fork-length measurement of 38 inches to 54 inches.

As before, the area from the Wauna powerlines upriver to Marker 82 nine miles below Bonneville Dam will be open to retention fishing Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays through July 31. The

Dalles Pool is also open to retention fishing until the annual catch reaches the 300-fish guideline. In those and other areas of the Columbia River, all green sturgeon must be released.

And don't forget **shad**. While not as highly prized as salmon or sturgeon, they can put up a good fight and make for good eating, Hymer said. While their numbers appear to 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** usually slows down at this time of year, but **bass** fishing tends to pick up in the summer heat. The McNary Pool is generally the best bet for bass.

The good news for **trout** anglers is that this year's heavy snowpack is holding down water temperatures in most lakes and reservoirs, which should keep the fish biting well into summer, said John Weinheimer, another WDFW fish biologist.

"Cool water should prolong active fisheries in Swift Reservoir, Riffe Lake and a lot of other lakes and reservoirs throughout the region," Weinheimer said. Two of those reservoirs, Lake Scanewa and Mayfield Reservoir in Lewis County, will each be planted with about 6,000 catchable-size trout in July, he said.

The bad news is that the snowpack has also delayed stocking a number of high lakes. WDFW usually stocks Goose Lake, a popular fishing lake in Skamania County, by early June, but the road there was still inaccessible to a tanker truck at the end of the month, Weinheimer said.

"We're hoping the road will clear enough that we can get in there by the Fourth of July," he said. "It's a super-popular fishery and we know that a lot of people are waiting for word that it's been stocked. The same is true of several other high lakes in the region."

Meanwhile, Weinheimer suggests that angler cast a line at Northwestern Reservoir on the White Salmon River. "With the recent announcement that work to demolish Condit Dam will begin in October, this will be the last year to fish Northwestern, because it simply won't exist after the dam is removed."

Rainbow trout planted in Northwestern Reservoir range from 10-inch catchables to 5-8-pound broodstock.

Eastern Washington

As water temperatures warm, fishing success shifts from coldwater trout to warmwater or "spiny ray" species like bass and bluegill.

"These fish are just more active in warmer water and are easier to catch now," said Marc Divens, explains WDFW warmwater fish biologist. "There are some waters in the region that are specifically managed for warmwater species and others that are mixed waters, where trout fishing slows at this time and warmwater fishing picks up."

With a "slot limit" on largemouth bass, Divens encourages anglers to keep and use the smaller fish caught. As explained under the statewide freshwater rules on page 27 of the fishing rules pamphlet, only largemouth bass less than 12 inches may be retained, except that one over 17 inches may be kept. Up to five largemouth bass may be kept each day.

Smallmouth bass also have a size restriction – only one over 14 inches may be retained, with a daily limit of 10 fish. As with largemouth, anglers are encouraged to keep smaller bass. Overpopulation of these species can reduce the quality of fisheries.

Eloika Lake, seven miles north of Chattaroy off Highway 2 in north Spokane County, has **largemouth bass, yellow perch and black crappie**. Eloika is open to fishing year-round and has a WDFW access site, along with a resort.

Downs Lake, seven miles east of Sprague in southwest Spokane County, also has largemouth bass, yellow perch and black crappie. This quality crappie water is managed under a nine-inch minimum size and 10-fish limit on crappie. Downs is open March through September and has a resort with a small boat launch.

Silver Lake, one mile east of the town of Medical Lake in Spokane County, has largemouth bass, black crappie, **bluegill** and **pumpkinseed sunfish**. There's a nine-inch minimum size and 10-fish limit on crappie there. Silver is open year-round and has both WDFW access and a resort.

Newman Lake, 12 miles northeast of Spokane in eastern Spokane County, has largemouth and **smallmouth bass**, bluegill, black crappie, yellow perch, and **bullhead catfish**. Newman is open year-round and has two resorts, plus WDFW access.

Liberty Lake, about a mile from the Idaho border in eastern Spokane County, is a mixed species fishery where **rainbow** and **brown trout** rule at the outset of the season, from March through May, but the spiny rays come on through the summer. Liberty has virtually all of the warmwater species, including **walleye**, but both species of bass and yellow perch dominate. There's a WDFW boat launch available.

Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, is a mixed-species water where Divens says fall surveys showed an abundant population of small largemouth bass. "There are a few up to five pounds, but most are 10 to 12 inches," he said. "There's also a developing panfish population – bluegill and crappie – but in general they're still small and growing in size." Sprague is open year round and has two resorts and a WDFW access.

Coffeepot Lake, 12 miles northeast of Odessa in Lincoln County, can be excellent for yellow perch, black crappie and largemouth bass, but it's under selective gear rules. That means only unscented artificial flies or lures with one single-point, barbless hook are allowed.

The Twin lakes, in the Lake Creek drainage upstream of Coffeepot, have largemouth bass, perch, crappie, and other panfish. Upper Twin can be particularly good for bass. Both are open year-round and have Bureau of Land Management (BLM) access.

Deer and Loon lakes in Stevens County shift at this time of year from trout fishing to largemouth and smallmouth bass and other warmwater fish, especially at Deer Lake, 14 miles southeast of Chewelah. (Loon is a few miles further south, on the west side of Hwy. 395.) Both are open through October and have WDFW access and resorts.

Lake Roosevelt is famous for its walleye, but there's a good population of smallmouth bass in the big Columbia River reservoir, too.

The Snake River in the south end of the region is also a good bet for summertime smallmouth bass plus nice **channel catfish**.

Good **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** fishing can still be had these days, says WDFW Regional Fish Program Manager John Whalen, it just takes a shift in either place or time of day to fish. Lowland trout lakes are better in very early morning or late evening hours. Trout lakes at higher elevation, mostly in the northeast district of the region, remain productive longer in the summer.

Those afield on the Fourth of July and throughout the month are asked to exercise caution against sparking a wildfire. Despite the delayed arrival of summer weather, wildfire danger is growing with warmer, drier weather, especially in eastern Washington.

DNR has banned burning from July through September in forested areas of the state. That means that campfires are allowed only in approved fire pits within designated state, county, municipal or other campgrounds. The use of gas and propane self-contained stoves and barbecues is allowed. For more information, see DNR's website at <http://1.usa.gov/jpiZO>.

WDFW's own public conduct rules for wildlife areas and water access sites prohibit discharging of fireworks at any time.

Meanwhile, anglers (and hunters) have an opportunity on July 5 to get a little more out of their fishing (or hunting) license – discounts on Spokane Indians Baseball game seats during the 6th annual Fish and Wildlife Night at Avista Stadium in Spokane. The stadium concourse that night will feature fish and wildlife displays and activities between innings will include some casting and other demonstrations or competitions. For more information, visit the [Spokane Indians website](#).

Northcentral Washington

Anglers have been catching an assortment of trout and chinook salmon around the region, while warmwater fishing is finally heating up after a slow start to traditional summer weather.

"The Basin's big three for good **walleye** and **largemouth** and **smallmouth bass** at this time are Moses Lake, Banks Lake, and Potholes Reservoir," said Chad Jackson, a district fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). All three year-round-open waters also have populations of **bluegill**, **crappie** and **yellow perch** that can produce good catches through the summer. With the late run-off this year, these big waterways are still at or near high pool, which has slowed normal shoreline action at some reservoirs, such as Potholes.

Evergreen Reservoir on the Quincy Wildlife Area in Grant County is another good July fishery in the Basin, with walleye, largemouth bass, bluegill and other species.

Lower Goose Lake, one of the Seep lakes south of Potholes Reservoir, has a good crappie and bluegill fishery. For crappie, Lower Goose has a minimum size of nine inches and a daily catch limit of 10 fish. It also has a restriction that only five bluegill over six inches can be kept, although there is no daily limit on smaller fish.

Hutchinson and Shiner lakes, on the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge seven miles north of Othello in Adams County, should be heating up this month for largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie and perch.

Meanwhile, fishing for **spring chinook salmon** on the Icicle River should continue to be good as more fish move through the system, said WDFW Okanogan district fish biologist Bob Jateff. The season continues on the Icicle through July 31, from the closure signs located 800 feet upstream of the mouth to 500 feet downstream of the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery barrier dam. The daily limit is three salmon, with a minimum size of 12 inches. A night closure is in effect.

Summer chinook salmon fishing starts July 1 on the mainstem Columbia River and some tributaries above Priest Rapids Dam. The daily limit is six chinook salmon, minimum size 12 inches. Up to three adults may be retained, of which only one may be an unmarked wild fish. Anglers need to consult the current sportfishing regulations for specifics on the area they would like to fish. All salmon fitted with a colored floy (anchor) tag must be released as these fish are part of ongoing studies being conducted by the Yakama Nation and WDFW.

Jateff reports Pearrygin, Wannacut, Wapato, Spectacle, and Conconully lakes and Conconully Reservoir are all producing good catches of **rainbow trout** in the 10-12 inch range, with carryover fish up to 15 inches.

"Water temperatures are starting to rise a bit, but anglers can still catch some nice fish at a number of selective gear lakes," Jateff said. "Blue Lake on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, Big Twin near Winthrop, and Blue Lake near Oroville can be productive during July if you use different fishing methods than earlier in the season. Fast-sinking lines are the norm, which allow the fly or lure to get to the proper depth. Anglers should play the fish as quickly as possible and not remove them from the water to help in recovery during these hotter months."

The Sinlahekin's Blue Lake, along with Okanogan County's Bonaparte and Lost lakes, are under a new rule this year to help protect the common loon, a sensitive species in Washington that is likely to become threatened or endangered without improved survival rates. The rule prohibits the use of lead weights and jigs that measure 1½ inches or less along the longest axis. Ingestion of this small lead fishing tackle is a leading cause of fatal lead poisoning of loons, which have been known to nest on Blue Lake in the past and are currently nesting at Bonaparte and Lost lakes.

"The Methow River is currently running high, so serious trout fishing is probably delayed until the first week or two of July," Jateff said. The Methow and selected tributaries are restricted to catch-and-release fishing under selective gear rules. A number of tributaries are closed to all fishing, so anglers need to consult current regulations before they head out. Any bull trout caught must be released unharmed and can't be taken out of the water.

Those afield on the Fourth of July and throughout the month are asked to exercise caution against sparking a wildfire. Despite the delayed arrival of summer weather, wildfire danger is growing with warmer, drier weather, especially in eastern Washington.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has banned open burning from July through September in forested areas of the state. That means that campfires are allowed only in approved fire pits within designated state, county, municipal or other campgrounds. The use of gas and propane self-contained stoves and barbeques is allowed. For more information, see [DNR's website](#).

WDFW's own public conduct rules for wildlife areas and water access sites prohibit discharging of fireworks at any time.

The risk of wildfire isn't restricted to forested areas of the region, said Greg Fitzgerald, WDFW Columbia Wildlife Area manager. He said the wet spring has led to abundant weed growth, including dense patches of 12 to 16-inch cheat grass that is drying fast with hotter, windy weather.

Southcentral Washington

Area anglers have several good fishing opportunities in July, ranging from an extended spring chinook season on a portion of the Yakima River to newly stocked jumbo trout in three popular high-mountain lakes. On the Columbia River, the catch is running to walleye, shad and the occasional summer chinook salmon.

Citing the late arrival of this year's run, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) extended **spring chinook** fishing through July 31 on the 20-mile stretch of the Yakima River between the Interstate 82 Bridge in Union Gap to the Burlington Northern Railroad bridge 500 feet downstream from Roza Dam. The daily limit remains two hatchery chinook, with clipped adipose fins.

"Fishing has been very good for springers, especially in that stretch of the Yakima River," said Eric Anderson, a WDFW fish biologist in Yakima. "We expect to have hatchery fish available for harvest well into July."

Anderson noted that fishing is closed for steelhead, and that terminal gear in the spring chinook fishery is restricted to one single-point, barbless hook with a hook gap (from point to shank) of three-quarters of an inch or less. Bait and knotted nets are allowed in the section of the river open to salmon fishing.

A Columbia River Salmon/Steelhead endorsement is required to participate in the fishery. For additional regulations, see the [Rule Change](#) notice on the WDFW website.

On the Columbia River, most anglers fishing below the Tri-Cities have been focusing on **walleye**. Creel checks conducted during the last days of June included 51 anglers aboard 22 boats with 50 walleye. Catches of **shad** are also picking up. Shad counts at McNary Dam topped 5,000 fish per day in late June, and are expected to keep rising through mid-July.

Anglers have also been picking up a few **summer chinook** below McNary Dam, but the action has been slow upstream of the dam, said Paul Hoffarth, a WDFW district fish biologist in Pasco. Summer chinook and **sockeye** can be harvested in the Columbia River below the Highway 395 Bridge (blue bridge), but only chinook with a clipped adipose may be retained. The Hanford Reach area of the Columbia River is also open to fishing for hatchery chinook salmon with clipped adipose fins.

Anglers also should be aware that **sturgeon** sanctuaries are in effect in many areas of the Columbia and Snake rivers. These sanctuary areas below Ice Harbor, McNary and Priest Rapids Dams are closed to all fishing for sturgeon through July 31.

Meanwhile, fishing for stocked **rainbow trout** is still going strong on lowland lakes near Yakima, Ellensburg and Cle Elum, said Anderson, the fish biologist based in Yakima. He especially likes the prospects at Bear Lake and Clear Lakes in Yakima County and Easton Ponds in Kittitas County. Also, WDFW is planting hundreds of 1.5-pound **jumbo** trout in three popular "drive to" high-mountain lakes the last week of June. Those lakes include Leech and Dog lakes near White Pass, and Lost Lake near Snoqualmie Pass.

"These lakes will provide some outstanding fishing opportunities for the Fourth of July weekend," Anderson said.

Mountain streams were still running high in late June, but fishing conditions should improve there and in high lakes through July, Anderson said. For **kokanee**, he recommends Bumping Lake, Rimrock Lake and Keecheus and Kachess reservoirs.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

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Random Links

Possible world-record blue catfish caught in Virginia:

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/article/20110621/OUTDOORS/110621013/Possible-world-record-blue-catfish-caught-Virginia>

Online fish counts at Sherars Falls start in July:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/fish_counts/sherars_falls/2010/july-sherars.asp

Now that it's over video - Welcome to the Jungle: The Deschutes River Stonefly Hatch:

<http://vimeo.com/25672905>

Summer steelhead fishing info & map:

<http://steelheadsummer.com/>

GOOD LUCK!