

The Guide's Forecast - volume 14 issue number 26

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 22<sup>nd</sup> – June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Summer chinook season didn't go off well for Columbia River Gorge anglers but those downriver continue to do well with anchor fishing producing the best results. The strong tide series this week should bolster catches as we enter peak migration in the coming 2 weeks. Most anglers are fishing with plugs but have them wrapped with sardine fillets.

Summer steelhead should also start showing in better numbers but their peak passage won't happen for another few weeks. Beach plunkers have an especially fair chance at one of these fish when outgoing tides are strong enough to keep fish focused on the shallow shoreline. Sockeye continue to show in favorable numbers, mostly for beach plunkers.

A late surge of Willamette spring chinook has arrived for anglers willing to put some time in. On Saturday, many anglers reported seeing over twenty five fish caught at the head of the channel in just a few hours for just a handful of boats. Similar reports came from down in Multnomah Channel and up in the harbor. Willamette counts through mid-June show over 25,000 spring chinook and 17,500 summer steelhead are upstream of the falls. Daily numbers are strong in the mid-50degree water temperature range as flows moderate.

Fly fishing for reddsides and native cutthroat on the McKenzie has been excellent and a good alternative during spikes in Willamette levels. Nymphs have been most effective.

The North Santiam is still a little high for best fishing results. Summer steelhead and spring chinook are being hooked on the South Santiam with water levels prime and stable.

Although water conditions are holding up about perfect on the Clackamas, pressure is very light most days. Spring salmon and summer steelhead are being caught by a few anglers.

The Sandy River continues to put out good numbers of summer steelhead and viable numbers of spring chinook. Here, the effort is light but anglers who show up are often rewarded with one or the other.

**Northwest –** Salmon anglers in Tillamook Bay are still holding on to the last portion of the spring fishery. Catches were good overall last week, with the lower bay and west channel producing the best on trolled herring. As the run in the estuary begins to wane, effort and catch will turn to the district's rivers, including the tidewater sections of the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. With little precipitation in the forecast, salmon will be slow to migrate upstream to their resting holes over the summer months. The Hatchery Hole on the Trask River will remain a top option but you won't have the water to yourself.

Boaters will begin to change their focus to the ocean with Garibaldi, Nehalem, Pacific

City and the Columbia the most used points of entry. Only the north of Falcon coho fishery opens up this week (June 23<sup>rd</sup>) making the Columbia the obvious choice for interested anglers. The other ports become viable coho target areas beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. Chinook fishing out of the Columbia remains productive north of the river mouth.

Anglers targeting chinook and steelhead in the lower Columbia are coming up with good results. Sockeye are being caught with some regularity as well and with the current minus tide series, success rates should be good again this week. Small, brightly colored spin-n-glos will take all species but plugs are effective as catching chinook this time of year.

Sturgeon anglers fishing out of Astoria continue to find inconsistent action despite the fair numbers of fish present. Keepers are most common upstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge with sand shrimp producing best in shallow water and anchovies in the deep.

Crabbing remains best in the ocean but Tillamook and Nehalem Bays are starting to improve as the summer saltwater intrusion makes its way higher into the estuaries.

**Southwest** – It was a late-day bite for all-depth halibut fishers out of central Oregon ports but most anglers took fish. Lingcod and rockfish results have been mixed but worthwhile overall.

If the offshore forecast remains accurate, this week will be excellent for offshore launches regardless of the quarry.

South coast beaches are producing good catches of pinkfin surf perch with many anglers taking 15-fish limits.

With algae becoming an aggravation on the mainstem Umpqua, chinook catches have stalled although side-drifters have been taking a few summer steelhead. Springer fishing has been fair to good on the lower North Umpqua. Smallmouth bass fishing is gradually improving on the South Umpqua as water warms.

Bandon all-depth halibut anglers were only able to fish one day last week (Friday) due to rough ocean conditions. Fish were caught despite a strong drift offshore. Fall fish will be available in the bay starting in July. The ODFW is predicting a record fall run.

The spring chinook fishery is winding down and slowed to a crawl on the lower Rogue late last week as water temperatures rose, shutting off the bite. Catches on the middle river are slow while the upper Rogue is producing springers and will continue to do so for many weeks to come. Try salmonfly and stonefly imitations on the river above Lost Creek Reservoir.

Boats launching at first light out of the Port Of Brookings have been scoring chinook averaging 15 pounds or better within one to three miles of the shoreline. Sea-run cutthroat fishing is good in tidewater.

Diamond Lake has been fishing very well despite trout apparently stuffed with insects. Bait, hardware and flies are all taking limits.

**Eastern** – While there are a few salmonflies and stoneflies in evidence around Warm Springs, the big bug event is about done on the Deschutes. The next round of interest is caddis, but these are just starting. It's a time of transition on the river. The upper Deschutes is fishing well with caddis imitations and nymphs.

Although the Crooked River is in good shape for fishing, ODFW electroshock survey work has stalled fishing. Sampling will continue through Friday, June 22nd. Once the officials are off the river, it will fish well.

**SW Washington** – After a poor showing back to many district rivers, SW Washington anglers are now focused primarily on the mainstem Columbia where summer salmon and steelhead should be peaking over the next few weeks. The stronger the tides, the more productive the fishing for bank anglers.

Steelhead and sockeye are hitting hot colored spin-n-glo's tipped with small shrimp. Salmon anglers are anchor fishing with plugs in 12 to 20 feet of water and the fish average 18 to 30 pounds.

The Wind River and Drano Lake fisheries are about over for the year but a few spring chinook are still being taken in the lower reach of the Klickitat River. Steelhead numbers should be improving as well.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – Salmon fishing is headlining, as usual, on the lower Columbia and catches have been fair to good for those targeting salmon since the opener. This is from the ODF&W weekly report with the best info coming from the catch/boat or angler in the first paragraph. The ODF&W reprint is italicized:

*Catch rates ranged from fair to good during the first weekend of summer chinook angling on the lower Columbia River. Boat anglers in the gorge had the best success where anglers averaged 1.05 summer chinook caught per boat. In the estuary boat anglers averaged 0.9 summer chinook, 0.2 steelhead, and 0.1 sockeye caught per boat, while anglers fishing the Portland to Longview area averaged 0.3 summer chinook and 0.03 sockeye caught per boat. In Troutdale boat anglers averaged 0.13 summer chinook caught per boat. Bank anglers fishing in the gorge had the highest summer chinook catch rates where anglers averaged 0.10 summer chinook caught per angler. In the estuary bank anglers averaged 0.09 summer chinook, 0.09 steelhead and 0.13 sockeye caught per angler, while bank anglers fishing the Portland to Longview area averaged 0.04 summer chinook, 0.05 steelhead, and 0.12 sockeye caught per angler. On Saturday's (6/16) flight, 850 salmonid boats, 36 shad boats, 612 Oregon salmonid bank anglers, and 147 Oregon shad bank anglers were counted.*

**Gorge Bank:**

*Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook kept, plus two unclipped adult summer chinook released for 42 salmonid anglers; and 393 shad kept for 83 shad anglers.*

**Gorge Boats:**

*Weekend checking showed 12 adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, and one adipose fin-clipped jack chinook kept, plus nine unclipped adult summer chinook*

released for 20 salmonid boats (60 anglers); and 335 shad kept, plus one shad released for six shad boats (18 anglers).

**Troutdale Boats:**

Weekend checking showed five adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, and one sockeye kept, plus eight unclipped adult summer chinook and one sockeye released for 104 salmonid boats (218 anglers); and 82 shad kept, plus four shad released for 21 boats (52 anglers).

**Portland to Longview Bank:**

Weekend checking showed five adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, three adipose fin-clipped jack chinook, nine adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and 24 sockeye kept, plus three unclipped adult summer chinook, and one unclipped steelhead released for 205 bank anglers.

**Portland to Longview Boats:**

Weekend checking showed 12 adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, three adipose fin-clipped jack chinook, and two sockeye kept, plus nine unclipped adult summer chinook released for 70 salmonid boats (154 anglers); and eight shad released for one shad boat (two anglers).

**Estuary Bank (Wauna Power Lines to Clatsop Spit):**

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, one adipose fin-clipped jack chinook, one adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and three sockeye kept, plus one unclipped steelhead released for 23 salmonid anglers.

**Estuary Boats (Wauna Power Lines to Buoy 10):**

Weekend checking showed seven adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, one adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and one sockeye kept, plus two unclipped adult summer chinook, and one unclipped steelhead released for 10 boats (31 anglers).

Buzz Ramsey reported trolling in the gorge to start off his day but didn't find success until he anchor fished with plugs, going 2 for 5 on Flatfish for the afternoon. Anchor anglers and gorge bank fishers clearly posted some decent numbers of fish with that fishery likely to lead the pack for the remainder of the season. Plugs and spinners are staples in this fishery (the gorge) but you have to be willing to re-anchor or just get a little lucky to find some biters in your first anchor spot as the fish, both salmon and steelhead, will travel in different lanes on different days. Some anglers are most confident anchoring in 12 to 20 feet while some prefer the deeper, slower flows closer to the Oak Tree Hole. It can be a frustrating fishery to figure out.

Downriver, **pro guide Brandon McGavran (360-607-1327)** has been consistently getting some quality summer chinook to nearly 30 pounds since the opener. Although not double digit opportunities, there are enough opportunities to keep anglers interested and the fish are a nice grade. Brandon has been using plugs to catch his fish and mentions the bank anglers working the area (near Kalama) are catching fair to good numbers of steelhead and sockeye salmon. It's been a productive start and the current tide series should keep things interesting, especially as we enter peak migration.

Anglers fishing the estuary are targeting the beaches in the strong outgoing tide and finding a mix of sockeye, steelhead and chinook. Anglers working the lower beaches are using small spin-n-glos to target salmon and steelhead with the hot colors

consistently producing the most fish of any species. Some anglers are tipping their spin-n-glos with small, and I mean the smallest of small, sand shrimp or coon shrimp. This has especially been good for sockeye. The stronger the tide, the closer to the beach one should fish although you're not as likely to catch a chinook close in to the beach but sockeye and steelhead are more common here. If you don't have bait handy, you will need to douse your spin-n-glos with scent and keep them heavily scented throughout your fishing period. No boats are targeting these salmon trolling in the estuary (you still need to remain above Tongue Point) but there's no reason why this shouldn't produce results. The one thing to keep in mind however is that there are only a fraction of the fish present this time of year, versus late August, when there will be tens of thousands of fish around.

Although most anglers are clearly targeting salmon, steelhead numbers will be building well into July. Typically, the first great period of steelhead fishing happens on the last minus tide series of June. Furthermore, locals look to the Bonneville counts to determine when one should begin to put in more effort. When passage tops over 200 steelhead per day at Bonneville, it becomes worth your effort. Well, we've surpassed that already. Until chinook season closes in early July, they (chinook) will remain the focus.

Sturgeon interest in the estuary seems to be high even though catch rates aren't all that good. Action is fair however, enough to justify a trip to the coast with some nice sized keepers coming from downtown Astoria. Most recently, anglers have been focused on the deep water in front of town, scoring an occasional keeper and a few shakers closer to low slack and high slack than any other time of the tide. When fishing the deep water, anchovies have been the ticket although sand shrimp can also produce results if the trash fish aren't a problem. One strategy that continues to be different than the good old days however is that we often have to sit a long time in the same spot before we get fish to bite. It used to be that if we didn't get a bite in 20 minutes, we picked up and left; that seems to be a poor choice these days. For best results, you should still seek water that fewer people are occupying, which will get more difficult on the weekends. Whatever you do, you will want to have your scent trail established (ideally first) when the peak catching time of the tide is, and that's close to low slack or high slack.

The water above Tongue Point continues to produce some catches but they are rather localized. It seems the fish are starting to wander a bit more on to the shallow sand flats but that is relatively new for this season. It remains to be seen if the trend will continue. Regardless, the shallower water seems to be producing best on the incoming tide. Like the deep water, try and find your own bite to start because when you anchor next to another boat that has some action going, you're not likely whatsoever to draw fish from their already established scent line. Marker 3, Buoy 50 and Miller Island are all producing sporadic catches with shrimp a top bait in this reach. Don't overlook anchovies however but when fishing the shallower water in this area, it's hard to beat sand shrimp.

Back upriver, sturgeon fishing in the Portland to Longview stretch remains fair but most anglers are focused on salmon. The more serious anglers are targeting fish in the estuary, and for good reason.

The Marker 82 fishery has not yielded very measureable results for oversize sturgeon. Some have speculated that with all the sea-lion predation over the last few years that the oversize are focusing more on the Willamette for their spawning and

rearing needs. Catch rates in this area seem to correlate with that theory. Anglers are still finding a good day targeting shad with catches still excellent for both boat and bank anglers. Here is the run-down as seen by ODF&W (in italic):

**Gorge Bank (below Marker 82):**

*No report.*

**Gorge Boats (below Marker 82):**

*Weekend checking showed one legal white sturgeon kept, plus five oversize and 30 sublegal sturgeon released for seven boats (19 anglers).*

**Troutdale Boats:**

*Weekend checking showed one legal white sturgeon kept, plus one legal and 108 sublegal sturgeon released for 14 boats (39 anglers).*

**Portland to Longview Bank:**

*Weekly checking showed no catch for one bank angler.*

**Portland to Longview Boats:**

*Weekend checking showed six legal white sturgeon kept, plus one legal, and 55 sublegal sturgeon released for 19 boats (54 anglers).*

**Estuary Bank (Wauna Powerlines to Clatsop Spit):**

*Weekly checking showed one oversize sturgeon released for six bank anglers.*

**Estuary Boats (Wauna Powerlines to Buoy 10):**

*Weekend checking showed 142 legal white sturgeon kept, plus two legal, 32 oversize and 515 sublegal sturgeon released for 177 boats (581 anglers).*

**Bonneville Pool:**

*Weekend checking showed six legal white sturgeon kept, plus five oversize and 125 sublegal sturgeon released for 75 bank anglers; and 98 legal white sturgeon kept, plus nine legal, 34 oversize and 888 sublegal sturgeon released for 83 boats (239 anglers).*

**The Dalles Pool:**

*Weekly checking showed five sublegal sturgeon released for four bank anglers; and one legal white sturgeon kept, plus one oversize and six sublegal sturgeon released for three boats (seven anglers).*

Note the excellent catches by both bank and boaters in The Bonneville Pool. It's high season on those fish right now as these are catch rates that can't be compared anywhere.

Offshore, out of the mouth of the Columbia, anglers are still finding fair to good numbers of chinook to work over. The bulk of the effort is taking place north of the river entrance but anglers are still having to weed through lots of finned fish to find the clipped ones. The select chinook fishery switches over to any chinook on June 23<sup>rd</sup> in concurrence with the mark select coho fishery. Check the ODF&W site for complete details.

Bottomfishing remains good although effort dropped off on the strong tide series and justifiably so. When the current is running too hard, it makes the fishing pretty challenging as you have to be able to fish near the bottom, where the fish are.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Anglers will remain focused on summer chinook from the estuary (above Tongue Point) to Bonneville and action should remain consistent. It's highly likely that the gorge will continue to produce the best results for anglers using spinners and plugs in 15 to 20 foot of water. It's all about anchoring in the right lanes for this fishery. You may be surprised to learn too that the chinook seem to respond better to smaller spinners versus larger ones.

For areas downriver, plugs seem to be the favored choice, mainly because they remain buoyant in the relatively slower flows that produce fish this time of year. Later in the fall, when anglers anchor deeper, spinners and especially wobblers can produce good results in the faster flows that can keep your hardware fishing high enough in the water column. It's always best to wrap sardines on the bottom of your plugs and you'll have to decide if you're targeting salmon or steelhead as it's rare that a steelhead will hit the bigger plugs. Sockeye and steelhead seem to prefer spin-n-glos this time of year. And yes, tip those with shrimp, the smaller the better.

The good tide series lasts into the weekend. This should be a productive weekend for anglers on the lower Columbia with peak passage for summer chinook, the beginning of the summer steelhead run and sockeye all about to happen. Did I mention that you should use scent, and lots of it!

For sturgeon anglers in the estuary, action should also continue to heat up with dropping flows and warming water temperatures. Also, baitfish such as anchovies should also be drawn into the lower river which will further inspire fish to feed. The best action now seems to be in front of Astoria, upstream to well above Tongue Point. Weekend anglers should be able to take advantage of the early morning start of outgoing tide. It will be a favorable place to fish. Boaters working the shoreline just out of the East End Basin have done well on this part of the tide but that may not last long however; no good bite ever does. You'll want to be fishing most effectively when we near low slack as that has been when most of the consistent fishing has been taking place. As a general rule, use anchovies in the deep and sand shrimp in the shallows. As we mentioned in the general report section, it doesn't pay dividends like it used to, to move around all the time. If you're around fish, and especially biting fish, don't leave them to find a better bite, you likely won't. The river downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge remains a ghost town, for a reason.

Oversize anglers will likely continue to have trouble finding consistent action up to the Marker 82 deadline. There remains a few keeper sized fish to be had in the Portland to Longview stretch of the river. Shad fishing should remain good in the Bonneville area but we may be past the peak part of the run here.

Anglers that know the river upstream of Bonneville have another chance at some pretty decent fishing over the weekend. Here are the regulations for this fishery, it may be your last chance:

**BONNEVILLE DAM UPSTREAM TO THE DALLES DAM:**

The Bonneville Pool is currently closed for sturgeon retention. Catch and release is allowed during the retention closure.

**The following modifications were adopted at the April 30 Joint State Hearing for the Columbia River Mainstem from Bonneville Dam upstream to The Dalles Dam:**

- ◆ **Allow the retention of white sturgeon Friday June 15 through Saturday June 16, 2012.**
- ◆ **Allow the retention of white sturgeon Friday June 22 through Saturday June 23, 2012.**
- ◆ **The daily bag limit will be one sturgeon between 38-54 inches fork length and an annual limit of five fish. The use of more than one single point barbless hook is prohibited.**

Offshore fishing may not be a great option this weekend with the strong outgoing tide and rather large tide exchange. The good news is, the weather looks pretty friendly:

**FRI**

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 5 FT. RAIN LIKELY.

**FRI NIGHT**

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 4 FT. SHOWERS LIKELY.

**SAT**

NW WIND 5 TO 10 KT...BACKING TO SW IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. SW SWELL 4 FT. SHOWERS LIKELY.

**SAT NIGHT**

SW WIND 10 TO 15 KT...BACKING TO SE AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

**SUN**

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. SW SWELL 5 FT.

**MON**

W WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 6 FT.

If you do go out, turn north for chinook. As for coho, it's anyone's guess. It's not supposed to be a banner hatchery coho year but you'll likely run into at least as many wild coho as hatchery this season. It may be best to target chinook in closer to shore (80 – 120 feet) and look to coho as a secondary bonus. Be cognizant of the size restrictions as the fish tend to run small this time of year.

The strong tides will not be conducive to bottomfishing along the jetty. You'll only have some limited periods of opportunity during the slack tides. Crabbing, both in the river and out, remains poor.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "A late surge of Willamette spring chinook has arrived for anglers willing to put some time in. On Saturday many fisherman reported seeing over twenty five fish caught at the head of the channel in just a few hours, for a handful of boats. Similar reports came from down in Multnomah channel

and up in the harbor. Nearly half of the catch was reportedly wild and released but many were also said to be 20-28 lbs. This leads one to believe that a good portion are Columbia river fish, cruising up the channel only to take a left when they hit the main Willamette, then continue up the Columbia. A common phenomenon especially when the Columbia runs on the higher side. Although pressure is light, anglers continue to catch salmon at Oregon City. The shad numbers have dwindled, and effort has been reduced to just a few fishermen giving it a try over the weekend. Bass fishermen are catching smallmouth along shoals, rocky shorelines and behind the islands."

Spring Chinook passage is ramping up at Willamette Falls. Perhaps there are 1,000-fish days in the near future but that remains to be seen. Big numbers coincides with a seasonal delay in data reporting as fish counters must refer to recorded images as they are unable to keep up with daily counts. Roughly 30,000 springers are upstream on the Willamette along with about 20,000 summer steelhead, making upstream tributaries such as the McKenzie and Santiams look better every day.

Water and flow readings at the McKenzie River below Leaburg Dam indicate a steady, gradual drop for nearly 10 days now. With only light showers in the forecast, the river is expected to be productive in the coming weekend and beyond.

A June 19th update of fish counts at Foster Dam on the South Santiam reflect the good numbers of fish that have crossed Willamette Falls over the past few weeks. Nearly 1,000 spring Chinook have been counted at the hatchery facility along with over 3,100 summer steelhead. Many of these fish have been trucked back downstream to Waterloo or Pleasant Valley give anglers another shot at them.

Scheduled to be planted with trout this week are Silver Creek Reservoir, Blue River above the Reservoir, Breitenbush River, Carmen Reservoir, Clear Lake, Fall Creek above Fall Creek Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River below Leaburg Lake, Salmon Creek and the North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Willamette: With mild weather slated for the early part the week, the Willamette should continue to kick out some late returning spring Chinook. Oregon City anglers would be well advised to anchor fish with small to medium sized spinners or spinner/prawn combinations. Also the smaller sized coon shrimp coupled with a spin-glow or tiny spinner blade will take both spring chinook and steelhead. Find some current, this will keep your twirling offering working well and not drooping into the silt. There are still stragglers to be caught, but the shad run is nearly over and fishermen looking to stoke their freezers with crab bait should venture to Bonneville dam. Salmon fisherman looking for lots of space and some urban solitude should look to the Portland Harbor for a good chance of hooking up with a late springer. Troll green or blue label plug cut herring, with or without a flasher, at varying depths, but 11-20 pulls with 6-8 ounce cannonball sinkers will put you in the zone. Blue tip rainbow spinners as well as other color combinations will also get hook-ups. The head of the Multnomah channel and the channel proper should continue to kick out springers and detouring Columbia summer Chinook. Expect the action to hold up through the fourth of July holiday."

Water conditions have been good and algae, the bank of upper river anchor fishers, has yet to appear on the Willamette above the Falls from Newberg through the Town run although warm weather in the forecast may change that situation. As is

common, hookups are not a regular event but spring Chinook are being hooked by those soaking spinners. Fish slots near shore to intercept fish.

As water levels start to return to seasonal normal on the McKenzie in the coming week, expect to find excellent populations of summer steelhead which will be responsive to hardware. Once the water drops to normal flows, bobber and jig fishers will have an advantage. While salmon fishing has been tough recently, spring Chinook catches will be good and improving in the last week of June with wrapped Kwikfish or diver and bait effective.

North Santiam water levels remain a little high for best fishing results while South Santiam flows are running at about half that of the North. Prospects are best on the South in every respect this weekend, and while water levels will rise slightly, this shouldn't be enough to deter angling efforts.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Although water conditions are holding up about perfect, pressure is very light most days on the Clack. Spring salmon and summer steelhead are being caught by the few anglers that put in time with the best action being had from Carver up to Rivermill dam. This late in the season, both the springers and the steelies have a tendency to shoot up to the upper stretch, not spending much time in the lower river.

"The Sandy river continues to put out good numbers of summer steelhead and viable numbers of spring Chinook. Here the effort is light as well but anglers who show up are often rewarded with a dinner fish or two for the BBQ. With the Columbia river now opened, a better troll fishery at the mouth is a strong option for anglers. Water conditions remain perfect for a drift from Oxbow park to Dabney and there is plenty of water for fishing from a power boat on the lower river."

Clackamas water levels are forecast to be rising over the coming weekend, then start to drop late on Sunday, June 24th, and continue over the week to come as it approached summer levels lows. Spring Chinook from a release of smolts in 2010 are due to be entering Eagle Creek and should be worthy of angler's attention.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "There is still time for spring Chinook and summer steelhead on the Clackamas river, the only challenge will be for power boaters as the river level drops below 12 feet. Bank fishermen and drift boaters will soon be having the river to themselves with action holding up through the middle of July for springers and even later for steelhead. Expect the best catches to come from the stretch between Carver and Rivermill dam. Boaters will catch fish with all the standard tactics, but smaller presentations are in order as the water drops and clears. Sand shrimp, cures roe and small plugs will take both species. Bank anglers will catch salmon and steelhead on weighted spinners, jig under a bobber and bait either drifted or suspended under a bobber.

"The Sandy river will produce both summers and spring Chinook this week and the numbers for both species should hold up for another four weeks. Water conditions remain near optimum for both boat and bank anglers and barring any unusually hot weather, could continue into mid-July. Like the Clack, expect the best fishing to be in the upper reaches from lower Oxbow park up to Revenue bridge and beyond. The

usual offerings will produce, but a sized down presentation is key to any success. Use small gobs of cured roe, no larger than a quarter and half a sand shrimp rather than a whole one. For Bank fishermen, size 3 and 4 weighted spinners and 1/8th ounce jigs with a combination of black or purple with some light pink would be in order."

Be prepared for the non-0angling recreational crowd on the river, set on beating the heat this week. Try first light for the best chance of fishing success in warm weather and to avoid the inflatable plastics hatch.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – After a good week of salmon fishing on Tillamook Bay, action has dropped off as the run finally begins to wind down. On the most recent weak tide series, action was pretty good in all the standard locations, including the west channel.

Most recently however, moss has inundated the upper bay, making it impossible to fish and the tides are so strong that it's hard to effectively fish right now. Some of the best action on Wednesday took place in the ocean, trolling on the south side of the south jetty. When the ocean is flat and the swell from the NW, this is a very comfortable place to fish, and it can be productive too! Regardless of when you fish there, never let your guard down, you always have to respect the ocean!

Guides reported active bait balls in the area but fin-clipped springers should be harder to come by in the coming weeks. The bulk of the hatchery run will have entered the bay and area rivers by now. The offshore forecast looks like the ocean will remain the best bet into the weekend, assuming it stays that way.

Other activities on the ocean; halibut fishing in the nearshore, it hasn't picked up much but you may get lucky. Bottomfishing in the vicinity, it's slowing but some lings are still available off of Oceanside. Most charter boats are heading north to fish near Arch Cape. Offshore crabbing is fair to good. It seems the nearshore to the north is producing best but it can still be inconsistent. With the strong tides this week, ocean crabbing will be a better option than bay crabbing. And finally, offshore chinook fishing, still not consistent but you may find some good action for chinook in the 10 to 15 pound range. Most of these fish are destined for California area rivers.

Inland, rivers remain really low so low water tactics will take fish. Chinook should be well situated in the deepest of haunts. Bobber and bait will take fish at first light or occasionally during the day but you have to be stealthy. The Trask will remain a top option but the Wilson and Nestucca are strong options too. Anglers keep talking about the strong spring run of chinook on the Nestucca this year. These Nestucca fish are destined for Three Rivers however and most of them are likely there by now. New anti-snagging rules are now in effect here, be sure to check them out and abide.

Summer steelhead are also in the Wilson and Nestucca Rivers. Although they won't be in the same holes as the chinook, they still require stealthy tactics and small offerings to take advantage of biters. Target the fast, broken surfaced waters for the best opportunity. There should be some nice cutthroat present too although they will also be in the tidewater and estuary sections of the watershed right now.

Cape Meares Lake is scheduled for trout stocking this week.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Spring chinook will be winding down and with the vegetation in the water the way it is, don't look for estuary fishing to be productive as you'll have a hard time keeping your bait or lure weed free. The tidewater of the Trask may be a different story however as the bulk of the moss is coming from the Tillamook River. Anglers should try and troll spinners or plugs in tidewater but bobber fishing with eggs and shrimp will likely produce better results. The Hatchery Hole on the Trask will be open for just a few more days but if you fish there, don't plan on a peaceful experience.

If you're going to fish the big water, you might as well go really big. The ocean will likely offer up the best opportunity for action, assuming the weather stays friendly. Check the Columbia River Forecast section for the latest offshore forecast or go to the NOAA site yourself for an even more updated one. Chinook, whether you're fishing nearshore or offshore, will be the best salmon option in the salt this weekend. Halibut, bottomfish and the best yet, crabbing will give salmon anglers a combo option.

Bay and surf clamming will likely diminish with the tides but persistent diggers should still find some success.

The tidewater sections of most north coast streams, as well as their associated estuaries, should produce fair catches of cutthroat trout. Bay crabbing will likely be poor.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Bottom fishing improved mid-week for charters launching out of central Oregon ports. Limits of rockfish are being taken along with a few ling cod. Ocean crabbing has been well worth the effort this week.

The ocean will remain open for Chinook salmon through October 31st from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain. This stretch opens to hatchery coho starting July 1.

Following the last spring all-depth halibut opener off the central coast on June 14-16, 21% or 24,804 pounds of the 120,821 pound quota remains to be caught. While no official announcement has been made, we expect the next backup dates on June 28-30 will wrap up the season.

Central coast nearshore halibut (inside the 40-fathom line) is open seven day a week with 41% or 3,876 pounds of the 9,516-pound quota remaining to be taken.

Offshore forecasts are about as good as they get for ocean launches over the next few days. Swells 2-2.5 feet at 14-15 seconds and winds mostly two to five mph should make for pleasant and friendly conditions.

Interested in learning (or learning more) about tuna fishing out of Oregon ports? Head to Englund Marine this weekend (June 23rd & 24th) for insight and techniques from basic to advanced with an emphasis on safety. Lunch will be provided on Saturday but seating is limited so call 541-265-9275 to reserve your spot.

The way offshore conditions are shaping (and warming) up, it is most probable that

albacore will be landed before the end of the month - and possibly this coming weekend!

While the bar at Coos Bay gave up a couple of Chinook late last week, it has been very slow this week. Jetty fishing has been reliable for rockfish and ling cod while boat crabbing is good in the bay.

Boats launching out of Reedsport have been taking a few ocean Chinook but catches have yet to live up to the stellar return predictions this season. There have been signs of a gradual improvement, although any boat with a single salmon on board was considered to have had a pretty good day this week. Pinkfin perch fishing has been spotty in Winchester Bay, with some making decent catches while others have blanked. A few spring Chinook have been taken this week on the mainstem Umpqua as the water has dropped, but the level is forecast to spike this coming weekend, rising as much as a foot by Sunday, June 24th. Shad fishing will rev up with warmer weather and is best on bright, sunny days. Springer catches have been fair on the North Umpqua where summer steelhead hookups are improving. Smallmouth bass fishing picked up a little over the past week on the South Umpqua and will continue to improve as water temperatures rise.

While it's getting late in the season for springers, there are good numbers of Chinook in the lower Rogue. They've been tough to hook with the water temperature well above optimum this week. If the water temp drops as expected over the weekend to come, results will improve. A few summer steelhead are being taken on plugs or spinners on the middle Rogue where spring Chinook fishing is reported as fair. Trout fishing has been excellent this week for native cuts on the Applegate River, which dumps into the Rogue about eight miles below Grants Pass. Trout must be fin-clipped to keep here but the catch-and-release action for these large cuts is hard to beat. Chinook must be fin-clipped to keep above the old Gold Ray Dam site, but numbers are good enough that most anglers are taking home fish on the upper Rogue. Wrapped plugs or drifted bait is most effective here.

Ocean Chinook fishing has been fair to good out of the Port of Brookings. Sea-run cutthroat trout fishing is good on the Chetco, but only artificials are allowed above tidewater.

Hatches of tiny midges (ergo the name) have been tapering off at Diamond Lake over the past week or so which reduces that local annoyance for anglers. On the other hand, mosquitoes are out in force whenever the wind dies down. Fishing remains steady for trademark Diamond rainbows: large, fat and numerous. A generous limit of eight trout is allowed. The Blackbird 5000 Fishing Derby will be held on Saturday, June 23rd, with the Blackbird Shopping Center in Medford paying out \$5000 in prizes to the top 30 largest trout caught that day by registered entrants. Tagged trout are worth additional cash. Here's the flier:

**Catch Fish and Win Money!** Saturday, June 23, 2012

**BLACK BIRD Sports Team**

Oregon Outdoors is proud to join Black Bird in supporting Children's Miracle Network at the 15th Annual Trout Derby at Diamond Lake on Saturday, June 23

**\$5,000 Fishing Derby 2012**

**30 WINNERS!**

1st Place.....	\$1,000
2nd Place.....	\$750
3rd Place.....	\$500
4th Place.....	\$1,000
5th Place.....	\$750
6th Place.....	\$500
7th Place.....	\$200
8th Place.....	\$150
9th Place.....	\$125
10th Place.....	\$100
11th-20th Place...	\$75
21st-30th Place...	\$50

**BONUS FISH:**  
We have 5 tagged trout that are worth an extra \$100\* each, and one that is worth \$1,000\*

Blackbird tagged the 5 \$100 fish.  
Lithia tagged the \$1,000 fish.

\*The fish can be caught and turned in for payment at the resort anytime during the 2012 fishing season.

Children's Miracle Network

For Rules or Details:  
Call 541-779-5431 or visit  
blackbirdshoppingcenter.com

Entry Forms Available at:  
Black Bird Shopping Center  
1810 W. Main St., Medford  
541-779-5431  
Diamond Lake Resort  
800-733-7593

Sponsored by:

BLACK BIRD Outdoors  
Diamond Lake Resort LITHIA BODY & PAINT

Operating under special use permit with the Umpqua National Forest

In the above image, be aware that misprints appear on the 4th, 5th & 6th place payouts. The correct amounts are 4th: \$350, 5th: \$325 and 6th: \$250. It's pretty good money for catching fish.

Rogue above Lost Creek will be planted with trout again this week. Diamond Lake will receive its annual stocking of 190,000 fingerling trout which will be large enough to keep in 2013 in this fertile impoundment.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – While big bug imitations have been effective on the lower Deschutes this week, the 2012 Salmonfly/Golden Stone hatches are wrapping up for the year with caddis becoming the important insect of interest through the summer months. The ODFW will start keeping track of fish passage at Sherars Falls starting July 1st. A little ironic as Chinook catches have been disallowed on the Deschutes since the 7th of June Due to poor returns this year.

Looking glass Creek which is a tributary to the Grande Ronde River at Palmer Junction will reopen to fishing for hatchery spring Chinook for four days from Friday, June 22 through Monday, June 25. No bait is allowed. "The additional four day season will provide anglers one more opportunity while the fish are still returning in good numbers," according to Tim Bailey, ODFW fish biologist in La Grande,.

Jig fishers at Paulina have been taking good numbers of kokanee from deep water at Paulina.

Wallowa Lake kokanee anglers are reporting mixed results with some doing well while others take only a few. Jigging has been most effective.

Trolling and jigging has been producing about equally at Odell. One of the problems facing koke hunters here is that they have yet to tightly school so they may be targeted.

Kokanee action at Green Peter have been fairly slow with most anglers taking roughly half of the albeit generous 25-fish limit. Most anglers report that kokes are running smaller this year than the last couple of years.

Crane Prairie has been slow for both bait and fly fishers over the past week. On the other hand, the few that have been landed were good sized rainbows and the occasional brookie.

### **Washington fishing reports:**

*From the WDF&W Weekender Report for June 2012*

#### **North Puget Sound**

June offers several fishing opportunities, including the opening of river fishing, a chance to fish for free, and special jumbo trout plants in more than a half-dozen regional lakes.

Hatchery chinook salmon fishing runs through the month on a portion of the Skagit River, from the Highway 530 bridge at Rockport to the Marblemount Bridge at Cascade River Road. The hatchery chinook fishery also is open on the Cascade River, from the mouth to the Rockport-Cascade Road Bridge. In both locations, anglers have a daily limit of four fish, including up to two adults.

Sockeye salmon fishing opens June 16 on the Skagit River, from Highway 536 (Memorial Highway Bridge) at Mount Vernon to the mouth of Gilligan Creek. Anglers have a daily limit of three sockeye, with a minimum size of 12 inches.

Most of the region's rivers and streams open for both game fish and trout fishing June 2 (the first Saturday of the month). The action starts a day earlier (June 1) on some waters, including the Skagit River, portions of the Skykomish and Cascade rivers and Fishtrap Creek in Whatcom County. In most rivers and streams there is a two-fish daily limit and a minimum size of eight inches under statewide rules. However, some of the region's rivers and streams require that trout be at least 14 inches long to keep. For details on all fishing opportunities, check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet.

The Reiter Ponds area of the Skykomish River opens June 1 for steelhead fishing, earlier than in previous years. Reiter Ponds anglers are reminded that fishing is not allowed from any floating device from 1,000 feet downstream to 1,500 feet upstream of Reiter Ponds outlet from June 1 through July 31. The rule is aimed at avoiding conflicts with bank anglers.

In Puget Sound, lingcod fishing remains open through June 15, with a one-fish daily limit and a 26- to 36-inch size limit.

Meanwhile, the Tulalip Bay "bubble" salmon fishery continues Fridays through noon Mondays each week. The exception is June 9, when the area is closed for the Tulalip Tribes salmon ceremony. Salmon anglers fishing the bubble this year will be allowed to use two fishing poles from June 10 through Sept. 23, with the purchase of a WDFW two-pole endorsement. For details, check the WDFW fishing rule change. Anglers fishing the bubble have a two-salmon daily limit.

For those wanting to give fishing a try, Free Fishing Weekend is coming up June 9-10. During those two days, no license will be required to fish or gather shellfish in any state waters open to fishing. Also during Free Fishing Weekend, no Discover Pass or vehicle-access pass will be required to park at any water-access site 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. Before heading out, anglers should check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet for all regulations.

June offers a special opportunity to try for large "triploid" trout, when WDFW fish hatchery crews stock 5,000 additional triploid rainbow trout in selected lakes just before Father's Day weekend (June 16-17). Specially stocked waters in the North Puget Sound region — and the number of triploid trout they'll receive — include: Green Lake (870), Lake Geneva (450), Bitter Lake (100), and Echo Lake (100) in King County; Blackmans Lake (300) and Gissburg Ponds, also known as Twin Lakes, (350) in Snohomish County; and Whistle Lake (300) in Skagit County.

"We encourage families to get Dad out fishing, especially if he hasn't been for a while," said WDFW Inland Fish Program Manager Chris Donley. Lakes that will be stocked with these large trout have good shore and boat access. More details are available at the Father's Day fishing page on WDFW's website.

Washington fishing licenses make a great Father's Day gift. They can be purchased online, toll-free by phone at 1-(866) 246-9453 or at any of 600 license dealers statewide.

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

Summer fisheries get under way in June, when numerous rivers and streams open for trout and the salmon season starts up off the coast.

The popular ocean salmon season opens with a hatchery chinook selective fishery June 9 in marine areas 1 and 2 and June 16 in marine areas 3 and 4. The selective fishery will run through June 22 in Marine Area 1, June 23 in Marine Area 2 and June 30 in marine areas 3 and 4, or until a coast wide quota of 8,000 hatchery chinook are retained.

In all marine areas, the fishery will be open seven days a week with a daily limit of two salmon. Anglers will be required to release wild chinook and all coho during the selective fishery.

"We've seen chinook up and down the coast during the troll fishery," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "That's a good sign for the sport fishery, which I expect to be very good once again this year."

Recreational ocean salmon fisheries for both chinook and hatchery coho will continue June 23 in Marine Area 1, June 24 in Marine Area 2, and July 1 in marine areas 3 and 4. Anglers fishing marine areas 1 and 2 will be allowed to retain one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit. Anglers fishing marine areas 3 and 4 will have a daily limit of two salmon. Fishing will be open seven days a week, except in Marine Area 2 where fishing will be open Sundays through Thursdays.

Before heading out, anglers should check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet for all regulations.

In Puget Sound, Marine Area 13 is open for salmon, while salmon fishing gets under way June 1 in Marine Area 11. Anglers fishing those areas have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook.

Halibut fishing in most of Puget Sound is coming to a close. The fishery is set to close June 2 in most areas. The exception is Marine Area 5 (Sekiu), where anglers can fish for halibut three days a week, Thursday, Friday and Saturday through June 23.

On the coast, Marine Area 1 (Ilwaco) is open three days a week (Thursday through Saturday). However, Marine Area 2 (Westport/Ocean Shores) is already closed except in the northern nearshore area, said Heather Reed, a WDFW fish biologist.

Farther north, La Push and Neah Bay (marine areas 3 and 4) will open for two more days of fishing May 31 and June 2. "Once we tally the catch during those two days of fishing, we'll see if we can provide another opening," she said.

In all marine areas open to fishing, there is a one-fish daily catch limit and no minimum size restriction. Anglers may possess a maximum of two fish in any form, and must record their catch on a WDFW catch record card. For more information on the halibut fishery, check WDFW's website.

Anglers have through June 15 to fish for lingcod in Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. However, the lingcod season on the coast remains open through mid-October. Meanwhile, freshwater anglers might want to head out to the Chehalis River, where a spring chinook fishery is open through June 30. Anglers fishing the Chehalis, from the mouth to the Highway 6 Bridge in the town of Adna, have a daily limit of one salmon.

Anglers should be aware that a portion of the fishing regulations for the Chehalis River in the new Fishing in Washington pamphlet are incorrect. Anglers fishing the Chehalis, from the mouth to high bridge on Weyerhaeuser 1000 line approximately 400 yards downstream from Roger Creek (south of Pe Ell), are not required to follow selective gear rules.

A couple of other rivers are also open for salmon fishing, including the Hoh, Quillayute and Sol Duc.

Elsewhere, trout fishing will open at several rivers and streams beginning June 2. 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. Check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet for details.

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 9-10. 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 access pass or Discover Pass 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.

The following weekend offers anglers another unique opportunity. WDFW fish hatchery crews will be stocking 5,000 triploid rainbow trout in 14 lakes just before Father's Day weekend, June 16-17. "We encourage families to get dad out fishing, especially if he hasn't been for a while," said Chris Donley, WDFW Inland Fish Program manager. "Giving dad a fishing license as a gift and taking him out to catch one of these big fish is a great way to spend the weekend."

In addition to the 14 lakes that will be stocked with triploids, hundreds of other lakes have been stocked in Washington with millions of trout over the past year, said Donley.

Lakes stocked in the region and the number of triploids that will be stocked, include:

- Kitsap County: Island Lake, 300.
- Grays Harbor County: Vance Creek (Elma) Ponds, 100.
- Pierce County: American Lake, 1,200.

More details are available at WDFW's website.

### **Southwest Washington**

Anglers may still get a few days in early June to catch spring chinook salmon, but many are shifting their attention to the next big opener on the lower Columbia River. That begins June 16, when fishing opens for summer chinook and fishing for hatchery steelhead and sockeye expands upriver from the Interstate 5 Bridge.

Pre-season forecasts anticipate a strong run of 91,200 summer chinook and an even stronger run of 462,000 sockeye this year, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"This year's fishery offers anglers a chance to catch chrome bright trophy-sized fish weighing up to 40 pounds," Hymer said. "There's a good reason why these fish are known as 'June hogs,' and this season will give anglers a good chance to catch some."

The Columbia River will open to fishing for salmon and steelhead from the Megler Astoria Bridge upstream to Priest Rapids Dam. The daily limit is six fish, including two adult salmon, or two adult hatchery steelhead, or one of each. Only sockeye salmon, adipose-clipped chinook and adipose-clipped steelhead may be retained. All sockeye count as part of the adult daily limit.

Anglers can also catch shad, which have been open without size or catch limits since mid-May. Bank anglers have been catching shad in good numbers just below Bonneville Dam and at the public dock in Washougal. Boat anglers can do well in shallower water from Longview upstream.

Above Bonneville Dam, the season for summer chinook and steelhead is scheduled to run through July 31. Below Bonneville, the initial season will run through July 1, but anglers may get additional time on the water if the fish come through as expected, said Cindy LeFleur, WDFW Columbia River policy coordinator.

"Last year's summer chinook run came in at 12 percent below forecast," she said. "We need to make sure we're on target before we start adding fishing days in the lower river."

The same is true for spring chinook, LeFleur said. "We'd like to add a few days to the start of the summer chinook season, but we'll have to see what the run forecast for spring chinook does between now and then," she said.

Below Bonneville, anglers can still catch hatchery spring chinook and hatchery steelhead in several tributaries, including the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers. The Cowlitz River is the best bet for

spring chinook, and Lake Scanewa (Cowlitz Falls Reservoir) opens for hatchery spring chinook June 1. Nearly 500 fish were planted in the lake as of May 26.

Summer run steelhead can also be found on the lower sections of the South Fork Toutle, Green, Washougal, and East Fork Lewis rivers, where bait is prohibited until the general season starts June 2. Though closed for spring chinook, the lower Kalama remains open for hatchery steelhead.

Anglers fishing any of those waters should check the Fishing in Washington pamphlet and WDFW's emergency rule website for additional regulations. As noted in the pamphlet, anglers with a two-pole endorsement can use two poles to fish for spring chinook salmon and other species on sections of the Cowlitz, Lewis and Wind rivers and at Drano Lake.

The daily limit for salmonids has been increased to six fish at Drano and on the Wind River upstream from the railroad bridge. Up to four may be adults, of which no more than two may be hatchery steelhead. Any chinook – whether adipose-fin clipped or not – may now be retained on the Wind upstream from Shipherd Falls. The daily limit on the Wind River below the railroad bridge remains two hatchery origin chinook, two hatchery steelhead, or one of each.

Starting June 1, the Klickitat River from the mouth to the Fisher Hill Bridge will be open seven days per week with a six-salmon daily limit, of which no more than two may be adults. Wild chinook must be released. Anglers may also retain two hatchery steelhead there and – starting June 1 – on the upper Klickitat River. Hatchery chinook jacks may also be kept from 400 feet above fishway #5 to the boundary markers below the salmon hatchery.

Rather catch sturgeon? Below the Wauna powerlines, the retention fishery is open daily through July 8 (or when the quota is met) with a one-fish daily limit, fork-length requirement of 41 to 54 inches. Above the powerlines, sturgeon retention is allowed Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with a fork-length requirement of 38 to 54 inches. Fishing is prohibited in spawning sanctuaries below Bonneville, John Day, McNary and Priest Rapids dams.

In the Bonneville Pool, fishery managers have approved four additional days of retention fishing: June 15-16 and June 22-23. Based on public input, WDFW carried forward 1,060 fish from the fishery that ended Feb. 18 in those waters to provide a summer season, said Brad James, a fish biologist for WDFW. Anglers will be allowed to retain one white sturgeon a day between 38 inches and 54 inches fork length on the mainstem Columbia and its tributaries between Bonneville Dam and The Dalles Dam on those days.

When fishing for sturgeon, all anglers are limited to one single-point barbless hook

Anglers looking to catch some trout should check the region's trout stocking schedule for good spots to go in June. Canyon Creek, Klineline Pond, Rowland Lake and Spearfish Lake are some of the waters scheduled to receive fish this month.

Starting June 2, anglers also have the option of catching trout in a number of rivers and streams throughout the region. Many of those waters – ranging from Skate Creek to the Little White Salmon River – are being stocked with fish from area hatcheries. Information about fish plants is available on WDFW's website.

For walleye and bass, fishery managers suggest casting a line between Bonneville and McNary dams. For tiger muskie, try Mayfield or Merwin reservoirs.

Those who don't have a fishing license but would like to try fishing will get their chance June 9-10 during Free Fishing Weekend. During those two days, no license will be required to fish any waters open to fishing in Washington state. No vehicle access pass or Discover Pass will be required to park at WDFW wildlife areas or water-access sites those days.

During Free Fishing Weekend, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will host a public fishing event at Spearfish Park near Dallesport June 9 from 9 a.m. until noon. Co-sponsors include WDFW and the Klickitat Chapter of Trout Unlimited. For more information, call (541) 506-7819.

### **Eastern Washington**

June is the start of river and stream fishing in many regional waters, from Asotin Creek and the Walla Walla River in the southeast, to the upper section of the Spokane River and LeClerc Creek in the northeast.

Anglers should check the WDFW Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet for special regulations that apply to rivers that open in June, as well as those rivers that opened earlier.

Many of the region's best trout lakes that opened in late April continue to produce good catches through June, including Spokane County's Amber, Clear, Fish, Williams and West Medical lakes and Lincoln County's Fishtrap Lake.

As snowpack melts further north in the region, additional waters are becoming productive. In Stevens County, the Little Pend Oreille chain of lakes—Gillette, Heritage, Sherry and Thomas—are providing catches, as are Pend Oreille County's Skookum and Yocum lakes and many others at higher elevation. Northeast lakes that produced well on the late April opener continue to see action, including Cedar, Loon, Mudgett, Rocky, Starvation and Waitts lakes in Stevens County, and Curlew and Ellen lakes in Ferry County.

Waters open year-round are good bets through June not only for trout, but also for warmwater fish species that begin to bite as air and water temperatures rise. Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam that extends along the Stevens, Ferry and Lincoln county lines, has big rainbow trout, kokanee, walleye and smallmouth bass. Sprague Lake, on the Lincoln-Adams county line, is producing catches of rainbow trout, largemouth bass and catfish. Rock Lake in Whitman County has rainbow and brown trout, largemouth bass, bluegill and crappie.

In the south end of the region, the Tucannon River impoundments—Big Four, Blue, Curl, Deer, Rainbow, Spring and Watson lakes—continue to be stocked with hatchery rainbow trout and are still providing lots of catches, reports WDFW Wooten Wildlife Area Manager Kari Dingman.

June 9-10 is Free Fishing Weekend statewide when no fishing licenses are required. Discover Pass or vehicle-access pass also are not required June 9 and 10 at WDFW water-access sites.

"Free Fishing Weekend is the perfect time to take a non-fishing friend or family member along on your fishing trip," said WDFW Eastern Regional Fish Program Manager John Whalen. "In this region we're also offering an opportunity for un-licensed adults to learn how to fish."

The fishing class will be held on Thursday evening, June 7, and Saturday morning, June 9. Registrations may be made through June 6 at WDFW's Spokane Valley regional office or by calling (509) 892-1001. Class space is limited.

On Father's Day weekend, June 16-17, Williams Lake in Spokane County will receive 365 extra triploid rainbow trout to encourage families to take dad fishing. Williams is one of 14 lakes across

the state to receive extra jumbo trout; it was chosen for its excellent public and private shore and boat access. Learn more about the Father's Day fishing opportunity on the WDFW website.

### **Northcentral Washington**

A new **trout** fishery in the region opens June 1 on the Columbia River from 400 feet below Chief Joseph Dam to the Highway 173 Bridge in Brewster, (Okanogan County).

"This new fishery allows anglers to fish for and keep **triploid rainbow trout** that wash down river from Rufus Woods Lake," said WDFW Okanogan District Fish Biologist Bob Jateff. "It could be quite a fishery if the numbers of fish in there are as high as we think they are."

The new fishery, which is listed in the Special Rules section of the WDFW [Sport Fishing Rules](#) pamphlet, is scheduled to run through August 15, with a daily catch limit of 10 fish, minimum size 12 inches.

June is also the start of river and stream fishing in many waterways throughout the region. Check the [Sport Fishing Rules](#) pamphlet carefully to make sure of all special regulations on rivers and streams, like catch-and-release, selective gear restrictions, minimum size, and daily catch limits.

Jateff also reports that Okanogan County lakes have been producing well for both boat and shore anglers. Trout-producing waters such as Spectacle, Wannacut, Pearrygin, and Conconully lakes, plus Conconully Reservoir, all are providing good fishing for **rainbow trout**. Selective-gear waters, such as Big Twin, Blue (Sinlahekin) and Big Green lakes are predominately rainbow fisheries. Anglers should consult the current sportfishing rules, Jateff notes, since some of the selective-gear lakes have varying bag limit restrictions.

**Kokanee** anglers should try Palmer, Bonaparte, and Patterson lakes in Okanogan County for fish in the 10 to 13-inch range.

"Spiny ray fisheries will pick up as water temperatures warm," Jateff said. "Some of the best bets would be Patterson and Palmer lakes for **yellow perch** and Leader Lake for **bluegills** and **crappie**."

Columbia Basin year-round waters, such as Banks Lake, Moses Lake and Potholes Reservoir, provide good fishing through June for **smallmouth** and **largemouth bass, walleye, yellow perch, crappie** and other species.

June 9-10 is [Free Fishing Weekend](#) statewide, when no fishing licenses are required. WDFW Northcentral Regional Fish Program Manager Jeff Korth says Free Fishing Weekend is a great time to take an unlicensed friend or family member along on a fishing trip. Discover Pass or vehicle-access pass are not required on June 9 and 10.

### **Southcentral Washington**

Anglers have a variety of options available in June, starting with **hatchery** spring chinook salmon on sections of the Yakima River, then summer chinook on the Columbia River. Meanwhile, hatchery crews are still stocking trout in area lakes, and many rivers also open for trout fishing Saturday, June 2.

Smallmouth bass and walleye are also warming up to anglers' lures, and sturgeon fishing is still an option

"This is the time of year when you see boats on trailers heading in every direction," said Eric Anderson, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) based in Yakima. "June is a good time to catch fish in this part of the state."

Two sections of the Yakima River are currently open to **spring chinook** fishing. Although the river was swamped by high water after the fishery opened, Anderson said the flows have dropped and the river is in good condition.

"Anglers are definitely catching springers now," he said.

In the lower river, the fishery will likely remain open through June 30 from the Interstate 182 Bridge in Richland to the Grant Avenue Bridge in Prosser, Anderson said. The upper river, from the Interstate 82 Bridge at Union Gap to the railroad bridge below Roza Dam, is expected to remain open through July 31.

Anglers may keep two adipose-fin-clipped hatchery chinook per day. All wild salmon, identifiable by an intact adipose fin, must be released unharmed and must not be removed from the water prior to release. The same is true for all steelhead, as noted in the fishing rule on [WDFW's website](#).

Anglers are required to use single-point, barbless hooks with a hook gap from point to shank of 3/4 inch or less when fishing for salmon. Use of bait is allowed, and anglers have the option of purchasing a two-pole fishing endorsement.

Fishery managers are predicting a return of approximately 5,000 adult hatchery chinook to the Yakima River this year.

John Easterbrooks, regional WDFW fish manager, noted that the department is seeking anglers' cooperation in two aspects of the fishery – a hooking-mortality study and an effort to ensure continued access across Roza Dam to the popular fishing area downstream from the railroad bridge boundary. Both are described in a [news release](#) on the WDFW website.

To participate in the fishery, anglers must possess a Columbia River Salmon/Steelhead Endorsement (CRSSE), which supports maintaining and expanding fisheries in the Columbia River Basin.

That is also the case with the **summer chinook** fishery, which gets under way June 16 upriver to Priest Rapids Dam. The daily limit is six hatchery fish, of which up to two may be adult hatchery chinook.

Fishery managers are anticipating a strong return of 91,200 summer chinook and a record return of sockeye to the Columbia River this summer.

"Anglers often have a tough time landing summer chinook," said Paul Hoffarth, a WDFW fish biologist based in the Tri-Cities. "But with the high water and cooler temperatures this spring, anglers might be able to boat a few before the fish reach the Upper Columbia."

Meanwhile, anglers have been reeling in **channel catfish** from the lower reaches of the Yakima and Walla Walla rivers. Fishing has been good for "channel cats," which typically run 2-8 pounds but can easily weigh twice that amount, Hoffarth said.

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

Steelhead fishing will remain closed until fall in the Columbia River upstream of the Highway 395 Bridge and in the Snake River, but Hoffarth recommends several other fisheries now under way on those river systems:

- **White sturgeon:** Fishing remains open in Lake Wallula (McNary Dam to Priest Rapids/Ice Harbor Dams) through July 31 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.

Rather catch some **trout**? WDFW will continue to stock lakes and ponds through June in the region, including Cooper, Easton, FioRito and Quartz in Kittitas County; and Bear, Clear, Dog and Indian Flat in Yakima County.

Starting June 2, a number of rivers will also open for fishing around the region. Anderson reminds anglers that most streams have reduced catch and size limits for **trout**, and there are catch-and-release zones on the Yakima River above Roza Dam, in sections of the Naches River and in Rattlesnake Creek where all trout must be released unharmed. Also, in most large mainstem rivers and streams in the Yakima basin, anglers must use single-point barbless hooks and no bait.

Always check the fishing rules pamphlet for details on a specific river or stream. The *Fishing in Washington Sportfishing* Rules guide is available free at stores that sell fishing licenses. It also can be downloaded from [WDFW's website](#).

Those who don't have a fishing license but would like to try fishing will get their chance June 9-10 during **Free Fishing Weekend**. During those two days, no license will be required to fish any waters open to fishing in Washington state. No vehicle access pass or Discover Pass will be required to park at WDFW wildlife areas or water-access sites those days.

### **TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail**

**TGF subscriber Jack M.** wrote, "I was at Oregon City on Wednesday, lots of boats, all fishing for salmon, not a shad fisherman to be seen. Lots of fishing going on, not a lot of catching activity."

**TGF co-editor Michael Teague** responds, "Thanks for writing, Jack!"

"As Chris V. commented in the Willamette report above, there was a "late surge of spring Chinook" on the lower Willamette. It may be that you observed anglers attempting to take advantage of it but they may have struck after that iron had cooled."

### **Write to the TGF staff:**

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### **Random Links**

Where for Summer Steelhead, boat or bank, from the ODFW:

<http://www.steelheadsummer.com/>

The "Butterfly Style" Salmon Fillet:

<http://www.piscatorialpursuits.com/resourcecenter/fillet.htm>

From reader Richard G. - Whale Watching where?:

<http://www.lakemichiganwhales.com/>

**GOOD LUCK!**