

The Guide's Forecast - volume 14 issue number 27

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **June 29th – July 5th, 2012**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- The torrential Columbia River has been challenging for anglers with the high flows leaving few spots to effectively fish. The water below Bonneville dam has proven difficult at best, with debris, murky water and heavy current. Summer chinook, sockeye and a few shad are still available for the taking here.

Over 30,000 springers and 20,000 summer steelhead have crossed at Willamette Falls. There are still a few lingering chinook to catch on the Willamette but effort has been light. The Portland harbor and Oregon City continue to kick out a handful daily but the Multnomah Channel remains the best option. Shad catches are winding down.

McKenzie water levels are fluctuating this week although summer steelhead and springers have been responding to sand shrimp and drifted corkies.

Many of those fish counted at the Falls are bound for the Santiam system. Counts at Foster Dam have remained steady for steelhead and good for spring chinook.

More steelhead than springers are available in the Clackamas. Most of the effort is from Carver to Rivermill Dam with the best opportunity for springers in the deep holes above Barton up to McIver Park.

Both spring chinook and summer steelhead are available on the Sandy River with most attention directed towards this season's strong run of steelhead. Trolling the mouth remains a great option for salmon fishermen.

Northwest – Salmon fishing out of the mouth of the Columbia opened this week with good results coming from anglers targeting chinook north of the river mouth. Anglers trolling 30 to 40 foot of water near the lighthouse are taking consistent numbers of chinook from 7 to 20 pounds. Sharon Lemay of San Diego took her chinook and sturgeon limit out of Astoria on Tuesday; the sturgeon measured in at 51 inches. The chinook limit is just one but it can be hatchery or wild. Coho are a bit harder to come by but are likely farther offshore. Ocean crabbing is only fair.

A softening of the tide series should improve bottomfishing off of the south jetty for sea bass and lingcod. Long-term forecasts call for a friendly ocean for anglers to take advantage of a multitude of opportunities.

Sturgeon fishing in the lower river remains challenging but the fish that are coming from the estuary are of quality size. Keepers started responding better to anchovies this week with some of the better success rates coming from the deeper water along the green line.

Tillamook area anglers are awaiting the coho opener now that spring chinook have passed through the system. Coho fishing south of Manzanita opens on July 1st and will not last longer than the month of July. Wild coho are likely to be prevalent but must be released unharmed. Spring chinook anglers are now focused on the Trask, Wilson and Nestucca Rivers but low, clear water will make fishing challenging. The Hatchery Hole on the Trask closes at the end of this month.

Southwest – Ocean swells flattened and offshore breezes softened over the past weekend,

creating excellent conditions for bottom fishers. Limits of rockfish and lingcod were the rule. Ocean crabbing has been good.

The highly-anticipated ocean coho season opens July 1st. Unless catches sack the 8,000-fish quota early, it will remain open all month. Only fin-clipped silvers may be kept.

Albacore have been reported offshore in the 30 to 40-mile range. They'll be moving closer to shore along with warmer currents.

Spring all-depth halibut anglers will get two more days as sufficient quota remains to allow fishing on Friday and Saturday, June 29th and 30th.

Spring chinook catches have stalled on the mainstem Umpqua with algae thick. A rise in water levels has slowed shad fishing as well. Try the lower North Umpqua where springer catches have been decent. The South Umpqua has yet to warm in order to boost smallmouth bass catches.

Coos Bay has been producing good catches of Dungeness to boaters, fair for dock crabbers.

As rainfall and water temperatures moderated in the lower Rogue over the past weekend, chinook success improved, providing good catches and a few limits. Catches on the middle river have been slow with best results coming from Hayes and Rainie falls. With flows out of Lost Creek Lake steady recently, catches of spring chinook have remained good on the upper Rogue.

Despite calm seas late last week, boats launching out of the Port of Brookings had a tough time finding willing ocean chinook. Rockfishing has been excellent, however.

Eastern – The salmonfly hatch is done for the year on the lower Deschutes. Stuffed on big bugs, trout are content but are starting to key in on caddis. Water levels spiked on Monday this week.

Nymphs are taking trout on the Crooked River which has dropped to summer level lows. Dries are effective in shaded areas.

Some nice rainbows have been taken on the Wallowa River despite high, roiled water.

SW Washington – As flows continue to drop on the district's major tributaries, anglers are focusing their efforts on the mainstem Columbia, where steelhead plunkers continue to fare well for the summer variety. Chinook remain available but it's mostly boaters taking chinook on plugs from the gorge to the mouth of the Cowlitz River. The weaker tide series may slow catches this week.

Summer steelhead are still available on the Washougal River but anglers must employ stealthy techniques on the dropping flows.

The Klickitat system is still an option for spring chinook and summer steelhead will soon be on their heels.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With salmon still forefront on the mind, anglers will have the summer chinook opportunity stripped away from them on July 1st. This is not a surprise closure but with numbers less than anticipated (much like the spring run), sport anglers may find themselves a bit over the projected catch in the downstream of Bonneville fishery. Action remained fair in the lower river, until flows increased at mid-week. The bite slowed dramatically

following the summer releases and likely won't pick up again for the remainder of the season. None-the-less, some folks found good success from Portland to Longview. The best success came from the estuary however where ODF&W tallied over 1 fish per boat average. Here is the run-down from ODF&W from their weekend check:

Gorge Bank:

Weekly checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, and two sockeye kept, plus one unclipped adult summer chinook and one unclipped steelhead released for 35 salmonid anglers; and 1,204 shad kept for 229 shad anglers.

Gorge Boats:

Weekend checking showed three adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, and two sockeye kept, plus two unclipped adult summer chinook released for 18 salmonid boats (50 anglers); and 45 shad kept, plus one shad released for five shad boats (17 anglers).

Troutdale Boats:

Weekend checking showed two adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, and four sockeye kept, plus two unclipped adult summer chinook, and two unclipped jack summer chinook released for 42 salmonid boats (88 anglers); and no catch for one shad boat (three anglers).

Portland to Longview Bank:

Weekend checking showed eight adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, one adipose fin-clipped jack summer chinook, eight adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and 78 sockeye kept, plus six unclipped adult summer chinook, and two unclipped steelhead released for 308 salmonid bank anglers.

Portland to Longview Boats:

Weekend checking showed nine adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, one adipose fin-clipped jack summer chinook, two adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and four sockeye kept, plus six unclipped adult summer chinook released for 58 salmonid boats (134 anglers).

Estuary Bank (Wauna Power Lines to Clatsop Spit):

Weekend checking showed one adipose fin-clipped steelhead and four sockeye kept, plus six unclipped adult summer chinook, three unclipped steelhead, and one sockeye released for 24 salmonid bank anglers.

Estuary Boats (Wauna Power Lines to Buoy 10):

Weekend checking showed 15 adipose fin-clipped adult summer chinook, four adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and five sockeye kept, plus 13 unclipped adult summer chinook, two unclipped steelhead, and one sockeye released for 18 boats (49 anglers).

Consistently throughout the river, most chinook are being taken on plugs fished in 15 to 22 feet of water, depending on river flows. The faster the flow, the closer to the bank anglers will want to target their quarry. Fishing has been fairly good for the number of fish crossing Bonneville Dam right now. One guide working the Kalama area stated these fish are on the move. Most of his fish recently have had sea-lice on them, indicating they are clearly on the move. He cited, "almost everything in the Columbia bites when the water temperature hits 60 degrees."

Steelhead fishing should be ramping up but sockeye continue to dominate the catches for lower river bank anglers. These prime (but small) salmon hug the shoreline and can fall prey to smaller sized spin-n-glos and sand or coon shrimp combos. Just coming off a nice minus tide series, fishing is likely to get more challenging until faster flows come about. The recent water release may keep fishing productive as we head into peak season.

The Columbia isn't the only place to target Columbia River chinook. Chinook are being taken with some regularity outside of the mouth of the Columbia with the most consistent catches coming from the north side of the river entrance. I've made several trips out there this week with good success. Most recently, the overall bite has slowed but some nicer sized fish have fallen victim to trolled anchovies. We've taken the bulk of our chinook in 26 to 35 feet of water from the north jetty tip (be VERY cautious of Peacock Spit) to just a mile or so north of the lighthouse. We've also trolled amongst the diving birds out further, up to 50 feet of water but received a much better response in the 30 foot depths. These fish seem to be keyed in on anchovies and I've been trolling them whole. Ironically, when we fish on the bottom about everywhere else when targeting chinook, the bulk of these fish have come from 8 to 16 strips down with 10 to 12 ounces of lead. There are some crab pots in the area so be aware of those when trolling.

One guide went south to try and find better numbers of salmon, only turning back around to pursue chinook to the north again. It seems that there were good numbers of chinook present to the south, they were all just too small to keep. Coho have been non-existent as of late although there were reports of limits of 3 to 5 pound fish coming from the south by the Ilwaco Charter Fleet. They too should respond best to anchovies as the ocean is laden with them. Also reported were some large native coho as well. Those must be released.

As for sturgeon fishing, action remains inconsistent fleet-wide but some quality fish are crossing the docks daily. The departments met today to discuss options with sturgeon closing after July 4th. Catch rates have ramped up lately with even the lower river turning on downstream of the Astoria/Megler Bridge. Like the above water, fish have been responding best to sand shrimp in the shallow water and anchovies in the deeper (>15 feet) water. Most recently, action out of Hammond has been good with the single piling putting out keepers as well as the slot, from top to bottom. Prior to mid-week, the green line was producing some large fish, mostly on anchovies but some guides were taking nice fish in the shallow water on the early part of the outgoing tide. The bite above the Astoria Bridge, especially in front of town, has slowed somewhat. The water above Tongue Point has also dropped off but any of these areas are subject to change at any time. Taylor Sands is beginning to produce more consistently.

Offshore, crabbing remains fair with limits not likely but a sizeable catch is certainly possible. Larger but more soft-shell crabs should begin moving closer into the nearshore.

The Guide's Forecast – Only a few days left of in-river chinook salmon season. With the river forecast to remain high but dropping, don't expect Bonneville Dam to pick up anytime soon. Anglers may find better success further downriver in the Kalama to Longview stretch with plugs continuing to produce the best results. Even though we're not on a minus tide series, look for river flows to remain high, pushing migrating sockeye and steelhead closer to shore where bank anglers have a reasonable chance at them. Keep your offerings small as sockeye are making up the bulk of the catch and steelhead and an occasional chinook will hit the small gear too. You'll find that spin-n-glos tipped with shrimp will produce the best results. Use coon or sand shrimp for bait. If you don't have shrimp to tip your gear, scent your offering heavily. We should be entering peak season for steelhead with numbers likely to climb in the very near future.

Offshore salmon seekers may continue to find it challenging to find coho but ample numbers of chinook may remain available for those willing to venture out. Stick to the shallow water just north of the north jetty out of the mouth of the Columbia. Fish shallow, especially in the morning, going just 8 to 16 strips over 30 to 38 feet of water. Watch where other boats are congregating as that is where fish are being caught. You shouldn't have to go farther north than the large condo facility at Long Beach. Use anchovies for bait as that is what they're feeding on. Some anglers seem to be having luck on larger herring but I didn't. You'll have to decide how picky you

want to be with the quality of your catch. The fish do seem to go off the bite by late morning. We've come in with several fish just over the legal 24" minimum size. The limit for chinook is just one fish, finned or finless. Coho may be available to the south by the CR Buoy but it's not worth the effort for a 3 to 5 pound fish. You may want to put in some time bottomfishing off of the south jetty. There are plenty of fish here for the taking. Here is the ocean forecast for the coming days, it looks like the wind waves may make the ocean a bit less fun:

FRI

S WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT.
W SWELL 4 FT AT 9 SECONDS. CHANCE OF RAIN IN THE MORNING.

FRI NIGHT

S WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.
CHANCE OF RAIN.

SAT

S WIND 5 TO 10 KT...RISING TO 10 TO 15 KT IN THE
AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SAT NIGHT

SW WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO NW AFTER MIDNIGHT.
WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 5 FT. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SUN

NW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

MON

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 5 FT.

Meanwhile, anglers will be pretty focused on the sturgeon bite as it really begins to ramp up. With the likely closure after July 4th, anglers will be anxious to get after them before the consumptive opportunity goes away. With the lower river beginning to take off, it opens up some more opportunities as fish should be available from Hammond to well above Tongue Point. The lower you fish, the more robust your fish are likely to be. Don't expect high action but there is a good keeper to shaker ratio. It still holds true, use anchovies in the deeper water (deeper than 15 feet) and sand shrimp in water less than 15 feet. Sand shrimp is likely the best bait most days but sturgeon are clearly also feeding on anchovies. As a general rule, target sturgeon on the shallower sand flats on incoming tide or the beginning of outgoing tide. Move into the deeper water on the bulk of the outgoing tide. You won't have to worry about crabs or trash fish much in the water above Tongue Point but there have been some days recently where anchovies have provided much of the action up there. It's best to be prepared with both types of bait.

With the softer tides, crabbing may improve but with the recent fresh water release, the salt water will be your best bet and the ocean chop may make that not so much fun.

Clammable minus tides begin again by Saturday. It could provide some nice combo action for those motivated to get after them. Razor clam season closed in mid-July so you only have a few weeks left.

Tuna have been reported out of Ilwaco. It's pretty cool to have this early opportunity but you'll have to plan on mediocre action at best for the next several weeks. The ocean is warm in the nearshore however, often getting close to 59 degrees with the south wind influence.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "There are still a few lingering Chinook to caught on the Willamette but effort has been light. The Portland harbor and Oregon City continue to kick out a handful daily but the Multnomah Channel remains the best option. With the Columbia running at over 11 ft(on the gauge at Vancouver), many upriver bound kings will take a slight detour up the channel before re-joining the Columbia at Kelly point. The relatively narrow channel can at times be chock full of both Willamette bound and upper Columbia river fish. Summer steelhead are also available here in the channel and anchor fisherman, fishing small plugs and spinners close to shore have a good chance of hooking up. Much of the attention on the Willamette will switch over to smallmouth bass and walleye in the coming weeks."

The Willamette is forecast to be rising slightly over the coming week which is likely to keep the water temperatures in the lower 60s. Over 32,000 spring Chinook and 21,000 summer steelhead have crossed Willamette Falls. Most of these fish are bound for the Santiams and McKenzie.

McKenzie water levels remain a little high this week although the trend is for the level to be dropping through the coming weekend. Trout fishing has been fair to good.

Water levels are good on the Santiam system although rain is on the way, followed by the inevitable rise. Hundreds of summer steelhead and spring Chinook have crossed Bennett Dam on the North Santiam and are now in the river above Stayton. Stand on the bank at Fisherman's Bend for a little while and you're almost sure to see a few springers running upstream. Counts are even better at Foster Dam on the South Santiam.

ODFW sez, "The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will be hosting a free family fishing event for warm water fish (bluegill, bass, crappie, bullhead catfish) at Cheadle Lake in Lebanon. The event will take place on Sunday, July 1 from 4 to 8 p.m.

"ODFW will provide loaner fishing rods, reels, and will have bait, bobber kits and materials about more fishing opportunities for participants at the event. There also will be plenty of ODFW staff and volunteers to show families how to get started fishing.

"While trout are not stocked in Cheadle Lake, the lake has warm water fish like bluegill, bass, crappie, and bullhead catfish. There is a boat ramp, fishing platform and trail around the lake. Non-motorized boats or those with electric motors are allowed on the lake.

"The event is part of ODFW's Family Fishing Program, designed to introduce families to the fun of fishing. For more information about the event at Cheadle Lake, call Karen Hans at (541) 757 5251."

Trillium Lake, Alton Baker Canal, Breitenbush River, Detroit Reservoir, Leaburg Lake, McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake, Quartzville Creek, Salt Creek, North Fork Santiam River above Detroit Lake, Smith Reservoir, Trail Bridge Reservoir and the Middle Fork Willamette River above Hills Creek Reservoir are scheduled for trout stocking.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "A few late spring Chinook will be caught in the harbor and at Oregon City but expect light pressure and your pick of the spots. Spinners and herring trolled at 10-20 pulls will take fish in the harbor while anchor fishing is the standard at O.C. Small spinners, small plugs and prawns and coon shrimp are the baits of choice here. Expect good opportunity for salmon to continue in the Multnomah channel as Columbia river flows are scheduled to remain high for the week. Troll downstream with herring and spinners and keep it close to the bottom. Smallmouth bass are also

on the bite on the Willamette and down in the channel, fish around and behind the islands where flow is at a minimum."

Anchor fishers soaking spinners on the upper Willamette are taking a few springers and summer steelhead. The Algae bloom had been postponed by cool weather this spring and early summer but has started to become problematic. Expect to clean of terminal tackle at regular intervals until it gets bad enough to shut down fishing as it will eventually no longer be worth the effort.

Water level on the McKenzie is making wading difficult. There are opportunities to do so on the upper river but a drift boat is the best bet for the remainder. Look for caddis hatching and of greater interest to trout into July. Steelheading has been fair to good with bobber and jig taking some and side-drifting effective. Spring Chinook catches have been decent and improving with wrapped Kwikfish and diver and bait combos taking fish recently. Over the past weekend, bobber and bait started to shone and took several springers during evening forays.

Despite decent number over Bennett Dam on the North Santiam, there are far more fish in the river below Stayton and that would be where to concentrate fishing efforts for steelhead or springers. On the other hand, fish populations are denser on the South Santiam where springer numbers have topped 1,500 at Foster Dam and many thousands of summer steelhead have been recycled form the hatchery. Bobbers and jigs are common here and are very effective.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "The Clackamas river still turns out the occasional spring Chinook but more steelhead are available here for the catching. Most of the effort is from Carver upstream to Rivermill dam with the best opportunity for springers in the deep holes above Barton up to McIver park. The steelhead are a bit more spread out and fishermen targeting them should look to boulder runs, pocket water and tail outs.

"Both spring Chinook and summer steelhead are available on the Sandy river with most attention directed towards this seasons strong run of steelhead. Trolling the mouth remains a great option for salmon fishermen with the Columbia river holding steady over 11ft(on the gauge at Vancouver). Spinner and spinner prawn combos are effective here. Upriver most attention is for steelhead, with the stretch from Dodge park up to Revenue bridge kicking out the most fish."

Clackamas levels are forecast to be dropping through the end of June, then spike on Sunday, July 1st. If long-range predictions remain accurate, it will be dropping through the 4th of July. Steelhead and spring Chinook ore being recycled to Riverside Park to give anglers another shot at them. Fish early and late in the day when the sun is out to avoid the non-fisher recreational users which can get thick on the Clackamas in the summertime.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Expect Summer steelhead to be around for the rest of the summer with spring chinook only lingering another week or two at most. Expect the best action from Barton upstream, working only the deep holes for spring Chinook and the riffles, boulder runs and tail outs for summer steelhead. Springers will prefer roe and shrimp but will occasionally grab a small plug or spinner if you can get it down to them in the deep, flowing current that they prefer. Summer steelhead are more easily accessible in water ranging from 3-8 ft deep, fish with bobber and jig and weighted spinners in size 3 and 4.

"The Sandy River will continue to produce summer steelhead and chinook for the coming week. A strong run of summers is apparent this season while the spring Chinook run has been just average. Fish jigs, spinners, roe or shrimp in the riffles and runs above Dodge park for summer

steelhead. Conditions remain better than good for trolling spinners and prawns at the mouth of the Sandy for late springers and Columbia river dip-ins. A few springers are still available in the deep holes from Oxbow up to Revenue bridge. Roe/sand shrimp combo's suspended under a bobber and size 4-5 spinners will take Chinook here."

North Coast Fishing Report – With the spring chinook fishery done in the bay, anglers will focus on the July 1st opener, targeting hatchery coho out of northerly ports south of Cape Falcon. There should be some fish available but the hatchery abundance this year in the ocean won't be all that impressive. The wild fish component however should be. For this reason, you may want to focus on how you catch your coho as lighter gear may make your experience more enjoyable. Don't go overboard however as these fish should be handled with care for a quick release. We'll have some consumptive opportunity for wild fish later in September.

On the north coast, Depoe Bay and Newport have the highest retained catch per angler rates of any northern port. This isn't uncommon and it will likely stay that way. As the coho season progresses, action will likely be best out of Garibaldi as most hatchery coho available in the ocean will be coming from Columbia River stock.

Ocean crabbing should be good too but a large portion of the crabs caught in the nearshore this time of year are softshell.

Nehalem Bay should begin to come on-line in the coming week. July 4th is the traditional kick-off for this fishery and numbers have rebounded in recent years. Check regulations for open areas but they have been liberalized from previous years. Here is the link to the 2012 summer/fall chinook and coho seasons:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2012_Coastal_Fall_Chinook_Seasons_table.pdf.

The Nestucca, Three Rivers, Trask and Wilson Rivers will all have consumptive opportunities throughout the summer months. Some systems or portions thereof, will close on July 1st however so check regulations to find out where. The Trask and Nestucca will be fair to good options for late spring chinook and the Wilson and Nestucca will house fair numbers of summer steelhead. Rivers are at summer lows so plan on using stealthy tactics, particularly small baits and offerings. Spinners may produce some results.

Not many people take advantage of the sea-run cutthroat trout fishery in the estuaries of lower tidewater sections of the rivers. It could be a fun fishery. You can use traditional gear (lake trolls) with worms or flyfish using smolt or fry patterns.

Good afternoon crabbing tides and good early morning clam tides for those wishing to pursue the shellfish variety.

The Guide's Forecast – Watch the ocean forecast and be aware of the minus tides we're supposed to see over the weekend. Bar crossings may not be so friendly. The wind wave forecast will be the troublesome part as the swell looks to be friendly. Don't expect gangbuster fishing for hatchery coho but angler opportunity will be limited this year with the season expected to close at the end of July. The fish will likely average small but put on weight in the coming weeks. Troll small herring or anchovies for bait. Most coho will come within the top 12 feet of the surface. Be prepared to release a lot of native coho. Chinook will likely be scarce but the closer you fish in to the nearshore, the more likely you are to encounter larger chinook. Bubble fisheries may still be in effect so you may still be looking for fin-clipped chinook depending on where you're fishing.

The Nehalem system opens up on July 1st but fish will start to come in greater numbers later in the month. The best fishing is likely to take place on the softer tide series' and we're coming into strong morning outgoing tides. Trolled herring will work best but as you go upriver, spinners seem to be a productive choice too. This isn't a wide open fishery but it has improved dramatically in recent years.

Stealthy bank anglers have access to salmon on the Nestucca, Three Rivers (for a few more days) and the Wilson and Trask Rivers near Tillamook. Fish the faster water for both species as that is where the more aggressive biters will be. Be aware of the closures beginning on August 1st at the Hatchery Hole and on Three Rivers. Fish for summer steelhead on the Nestucca and Wilson Rivers. It will be an early morning show.

Crabbing should continue to improve through the summer months, particularly in the ocean. Although the ocean doesn't look to be an overly friendly place to fish in the coming days, nearshore halibut from Nehalem north should begin to improve in the coming weeks. Slow trolled or drifted herring seems to produce the best results.

This Just In - ODFW extends Trask 'Hatchery Hole' season through July 31

TILLAMOOK, Ore. – Continued strong returns of hatchery spring chinook have prompted the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to extend the fishing season at the "Hatchery Hole" on the Trask River through July 31.

The Hatchery Hole is a popular section of the Trask River located 200 feet above and 900 feet below its confluence with Gold Creek, approximately six miles southeast of Tillamook. This area was scheduled to close to fishing at the end of June. However, ODFW recommended extending the season because biologists are now confident that sufficient hatchery spring chinook will be available to meet the Trask Hatchery's brood stock needs for the year.

"Angling for spring chinook in the Trask River has been good." said Chris Knutsen, district fish biologist for ODFW's North Coast Watershed. "Fish are now holding in the deeper holes such as the Hatchery Hole and we want to give anglers this additional opportunity."

Another reason for extending the season is to celebrate what appears to be the success of an anti-snagging rule that was implemented June 1 in this section of the Trask River. Under the anti-snagging rule, anglers are now required to use either fly fishing or bobber angling gear.

"This new rule has greatly decreased the incidence of illegal snagging and provided a successful fishery for these prized hatchery fish," said Knutsen. The gear restrictions will remain in effect through July.

Central & South Coast Reports – Warm water has continued to move toward shore this week, and with it, albacore. While this is a difficult phenomenon to predict, warm water should be fairly close-in by the 4th of July and possibly, just possibly, over the coming weekend. A few tuna have been taken but it has yet to be a wide-open fishery

If the weekend forecast holds true, with swells of 3.5 feet or less at eight seconds or more, it will be a good weekend for ocean launches.

The 30-fathom depth restriction didn't prevent charters from limiting out customers on rockfish and ling cod out of Newport and Depoe Bay mid-week.

In case you missed it in the Fisheries Forecast, the spring all-depth halibut fishery will be open two more days. Boats may fish for 'buts beyond the 40-fathom curve on Friday and Saturday, June 29th and 30th. This will be followed by an hiatus during which only nearshore halibut may be taken until the summer season opens August 17th & 18th.

A quota of 8,000 hatchery coho may be taken during the offshore season from July 1st through July 31st from Cape Falcon to the Oregon/California border. In addition, a nonselective coho fishery will open on September 1-3 with the following Thursdays through Saturdays opening for a quota of 10,000 fish.

Ocean Chinook remains open with south coast ports reporting decent catches while results remain spotty out of central Oregon ports. At the latest report, Chinook are far offshore and in deep water, a tough combination for recreational boats.

Surf perch fishing is good and is expected to hold up well through the coming holiday and beyond. May south coast beaches are yielding limits or near-limits of tasty pinkfin perch.

Shad fishing will remain slow on the mainstem Umpqua until the weather warms and raises water temperatures. Spring Chinook are pretty much upstream now. That makes the North Umpqua around Swifwater the best bet for springers. Summer steelhead catches are also improving and will continue to do so. More attention will fall to summers the flies-only stretch which, as of July 1st, is restricted to a single, barbless, unweighted fly. South Umpqua smallie anglers are still awaiting warmer water to improve the bite here.

The few Chinook taken by trollers dragging plug-cut herring in the jaws at Coos Bay are not sufficient to recommend doing so. Chinook should be in the bay soon enough. Crabbing in the bay is worthwhile as is fishing for rockfish or greenling from the jetties.

Water temperatures and flows have been good on the lower Rogue which has resulted in above-average catches of late-season spring Chinook. Water conditions are forecast to remain steady through the coming weekend. Springer fishing has been good enough that there is little pressure on summer steelhead which despite good numbers available on the lower Rogue. Catches of summer steelhead and spring Chinook are slow to fair on the middle Rogue. Summers have been taken recently by plug-pullers and spinner flingers. Waters of the upper Rogue have continued to fish reliably for spring Chinook with the Army Corps of Engineers maintaining moderate flows from Lost Creek Lake. While only hatchery Chinook are legal to keep on the upper Rogue though June, unclipped, wild fish may be retained below Dodge Bridge starting July 1.

Coastal lakes are in great shape and fishing exceptionally well for this time of year due to an unusually cool spring and early summer. Stocked trout are readily available with native cutthroat residing in some of these waters. Warm water game fish are abundant with temperate conditions sometimes postponing spawning. TGF writer Michal Teague, a bass angler himself, has taken largemouth heavy with eggs in a coastal lake on an earlier 4th of July.

Mosquitoes seem to be prevalent rain, snow or shine at Diamond Lake so prepare accordingly. The fishing is decent, though with Power Bait or night crawlers treated with a worm blower taking good numbers of broad-bodied rainbows.

The Rogue River above Lost Creek is scheduled for trout planting.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Water level on the lower Deschutes, which spiked early this week, remains about four inches higher than over the past weekend as of mid-day Thursday,

June 28th. This should be a deterrent to fly fishers targeting reddsides as caddis patterns are becoming ever more attractive to resident trout and are particularly effective on the lowermost stretches. Caddis action will only improve in the coming weeks. The ODFW will start counting fish at Sherars Falls in July but with Chinook fishing closed on the Deschutes this year, the data is likely to be of less interest to anglers. Results on the middle Deschutes have been very good with caddis imitations and various nymphs. Upper river action is fair to good for rainbows and diminutive brook trout.

Crooked River fishes best at lower flows as is the case this week. There are plenty of ongoing hatches with caddis and Pale Morning Duns the main component. Nymphs will take fish whenever trout are not looking up.

Fishing has been good on the Metolius as this is a great time of year for throwing dry flies. Bull trout are on the bite on the upper river.

Big Lava Lake is fishing very well for fly anglers using leech patterns and damsel fly nymphs.

John Day river levels have been gradually but steadily dropping all week. Couple that with water temperatures in the mid to upper 60s and that means good results with smallmouth bass. Scented soft plastics will be the best bet here.

Chinook fishing closed on the Imnaha River on June 27th although it remains open for now on the Wallowa River.

Green Pater produced 35-kpkanee limits over the past weekend until the bite slowed on Sunday. It should fish well this week for those trolling with downriggers and flashers.

The Trapper Creek area of Odell has been producing limits of kokanee to jig fishers.

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 warm water 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.

Write to the TGF staff:

Bob Rees: brees@pacifier.com

Michael Teague: Michael@TheGuidesForecast.com
Chris Vertopoulos: chrisv@pacifier.com
Doug Rees: doug@TheGuidesForecast.com

Random Links

Sizzling Sockeye Secrets:

http://www.salmonuniversity.com/psn_lake_washington.html

Oregon State Park Guide for 2012-2013:

<http://www.oregonstateparks.org/parksguide/>

GOOD LUCK!