

The Guide's Forecast - volume 14 issue number 36

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 31st – September 6th, 2012**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Good catches of Chinook are being reported from the river mouths along the lower Columbia River. The Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, Washougal and Sandy all add cool water to the big river, making for staging zones that the fish can use as a breather for cooler, more oxygen rich water. The cooler water makes for better biting, better fighting fish. The mouth of the Cowlitz has been the hot spot as of late, with the better fishing always happening on the outgoing tide. Anchor fishing with wobblers is by far the method of choice but fish are also taken on both plugs and spinners.

There are few good reports from Bonneville yet, but with the adult chinook counts over the dam topping 4000/day, the action will be picking up soon. Summer steelhead counts through the ladder are dwindling to less than 2000/day so if that's what you're after, your time would be better spent above the dam or at the Deschutes.

Sturgeon angling below Beacon Rock has been reported as very slow.

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "The lower Willamette as slowed down for smallmouth bass with the warmer water, but be looking soon for a few silvers to be congregating at the mouth of the Clackamas. No reports are available for walleye fishing the Multnomah channel but one has to suspect that they are there.

"Not much available on the Clackamas but a warm, slowly flowing river. Rafting and inner tubing are the preferred method of attack for keeping cool.

"Rumors of some Coho on the Sandy River up at Cedar creek have been dispelled. Also a rafters and tubers river till the fall rains start to show and the coho begin to arrive."

Northwest – After a very productive run, the Buoy 10 fishery will continue through Labor Day and close as slated on September 4th. Although fish larger than 30 pounds have been rare, Melissa Carlin of Monmouth came close, landing a 27-pound buck on Friday, after the fish ran into 3 lines from another boat.

The chinook catch remained consistent near the Astoria Bridge but the Tongue Point bite picked up on Monday. Both spinners and bait were effective from Rice Island to Tongue Point but this fishery produces best on softer tides. Jack chinook salmon are a common catch throughout the estuary but are only legal for retention above Tongue Point.

Coho are present in ever-growing numbers in the estuary with lower Desdemona Sands a consistent producer. Anglers can target coho by using smaller spinners or anchovies for bait. Smaller gear and bait does catch smaller fish. Keep in mind however that the adult return of hatchery coho is forecasted to be low but the peak weeks are now upon us.

The Nehalem fishery continues to produce fair results but the stronger tides will push willing biters higher into the estuary where both spinners and herring should be effective. Anglers should see a shift from summer chinook to the larger fall variety.

Tillamook Bay and the adjacent ocean is also producing good catches of chinook. Fish checkers at Garibaldi tallied good numbers over the weekend with the bulk of the success coming from ocean fishers. Ocean crabbing should be excellent as well and will remain open through October 15th.

Albacore chasers will be anxious to get offshore for fast action this time of year. Although the offshore forecast doesn't look all that favorable for the weekend, modelers are frequently wrong when predicting ocean conditions. September should offer up some ideal conditions for ocean recreationalists.

Southwest- Tuna charters were cancelled out of Depoe Bay early this week due to rough ocean conditions and albacore too far offshore to make the trip. Bottom fishing and crabbing has been excellent, however.

The summer all-depth halibut season is closed for the year with all but 10% of the quota taken. During the four days when fishing was allowed, anglers landed 42,853 pounds of fish.

Chinook are being taken on plugs on the lower Umpqua, Smallmouth bass fishing is excellent on the mainstem Umpqua now that the water temperature is warm enough for swimming. The South Umpqua is also producing good smallie catches.

Boats launching out of Charleston have been taking albacore within 20 miles of port. Coos Bay crabbing has been very good.

Boats launching out of Gold Beach have been making good catches of rockfish and ling cod offshore. Rogue Bay Chinook fishing finally turned on over the past week, producing impressive numbers for trollers. Catches of half-pounders and fall Chinook have been good on the middle Rogue. Summers steelhead catches have been steady on the upper river.

Excellent results are expected for the Slam'n Salmon Derby taking place at Brookings Friday through Sunday this week. Catches were disappointing in 2011 but will be limited this year only by ocean conditions. Chinook are being taken three to six miles out with anchovies or hoochies effective.

Eastern – Trout fishing is excellent on the lower Deschutes with caddis patterns and stonefly nymphs are effective. Results have also been good on the middle river on nymph patterns.

SW Washington- Anglers targeting chinook in district streams should start to see improving catches by the weekend. Although still a few weeks away from peak opportunity, the earlier returning fish seem to be the more aggressive ones. Small clusters of eggs back-bounced with light leads should take fish.

The Cowlitz and Lewis should produce the best catches with the best success coming from the lower holes in the system as fish acclimate to the differing temperatures.

Drano Lake anglers continue to find success for steelhead but chinook salmon fishing should dramatically improve in the coming weeks as fish begin to pour over Bonneville Dam.

The mouth of the Klickitat should pick up for chinook action as well with coho coming a little later in the year.

Columbia River Fishing Report – With the pending closure after Labor Day, the productive Buoy 10 fishery is on its way out. Make no mistake, there are a lot of chinook still to come but success rates are beginning to drop and so is the effort.

Sportanglers were dangerously close to a premature closure but information from the collection of coded wire tags indicated the rate of interception from the Tule stock of lower river chinook was lower than modeled for the pre-season. This was the only factor that allowed for the additional opportunity we'll now see through Labor Day. Catch rates were as good as we've witnessed here in the river. Preseason forecasts for kept catch in the Buoy 10 season were about 14,000 adults but sportanglers through August 26th had already exceeded 15,300 chinook.

With some exceptions, chinook fishing has slowed for the majority of anglers but fair chinook numbers are still present. We managed 5 chinook and 1 coho by mid-afternoon on the 29th while another guide tallied 1 chinook and 5 coho for the day. That's how volatile this fishery is (but I didn't need to tell you that.....)

Wildly popular from last week, here is a break-down of the spots (from west to east) we typically fish and how they have performed lately:

Buoy 10- poorly, low effort but a few coho on the first good push of the tide, especially since the tide series is picking up this week.

Chinook Wing Jetties- This spot produced fairly during peak ebb on Monday, much to my surprise. Although consistency has dropped off here, it remains a strong candidate for early incoming tide fish but coho are more likely to be intercepted here.

Buoys 20, 21, 22 and in front of Hammond – The buoy bites have been less than impressive but there has been some decent action stemming into the tide on the incoming as of late. We took 3 of our 5 chinook on Wednesday in front of Hammond and they all came from different depths. We took one @35 strips (strips, not line counter feet) with 6 oz. of lead on a full anchovy, our largest chinook of the day at 21 pounds, one chinook came at 24 strips with a blue label plug cut herring using 10 ounces of lead and our last fish at Hammond came at 12 strips with 12 oz. of lead using an anchovy with a small size 5 Fatal Flash spinner ahead of it. Although there has been some fair flurries of action at the above mentioned buoy sites, the Hammond bite itself has produced more consistently than any of the buoy locations.

The upstream troll, Washington side, from the tunnel to the bridge- This troll has not been all that good this week. We did manage one chinook on Wednesday but I've noticed the best action on this troll has actually taken place higher in the drift, like from the red roof to the bridge but especially as you get closer to the bridge. I try and stay in the 25 to 30 foot stuff all the way up. This was a dynamite troll the week before.

The "Tongue" troll- I call lower Desdemona Sands the tongue and we often start trolling upstream about 2 hours into the incoming tide here. The water starts off at 30 feet north of Buoy 21 and climbs uphill to 22 or 21 feet by the day marker or black and white checker board as some call the Desdemona Light Marker. What's kind of cool is that you'll notice the water velocity slows down on the uphill troll once you come up on the day marker. This bite finally picked up on Wednesday as we saw a fair number of coho and some chinook taken here. Another note, our bites seemed to dramatically decline when we hit the softer water. During the peak bite, we were trolling at speeds over 3.5 mph. I don't know if this will stay consistent but for whatever reason, the biters seemed to prefer the faster water.

Hovering at the bridge- It may be old school but it's good school. Although it hasn't produced much in the last few days, it did produce late last week and into the weekend. Don't rule it out, even if no one else is doing it. This has been producing as early as half way into the incoming tide. Like Hammond, this is deep water. Fish your gear 18 to 30 foot deep here. This week, no one has been doing this. It may not be worth the try as the chinook run begins to wane. We seem to have better history here with chinook than we do the coho numbers.

The Humps- Above the bridge on the Washington side has produced good catches for much of the season. It typically produces best close to the high tide but has gone off earlier in the tide most recently. We often start in about 30 feet of water just above the bridge (maybe ¼ of a mile) and troll upstream and onto the "humps" which crests about 22 to 24 feet consistently for quite a while. We used to do most of our damage right on the hump where it crests at about 22 foot but most of my fish this year have come from higher up, even as high as the shipwreck in this shallower stuff. This bite consistently dies once you've hit high slack.

This week, it's been fairly good here at high slack and the last part of incoming tide. It's typically one of the more consistent bites close to high tide but it's been more volatile this year than historically. The next location has been something more to look forward to.....

Blind Channel and the South Channel shoot off- Blind Channel is the obvious deep channel above the ship wreck on the Washington side. It's easy to find because numerous boats have been fishing it this year. It's most productive the first 2.5 hours of outgoing tide. It's been good recently but what's odd is that it seems to produce best well after the turn of the tide when it historically produce best right after high slack. Anyway, some days this week, it seems to be laden with chinook and there are coho here too. It seems best when your gear is right on the bottom of this 30 to 40 foot channel, trolling downstream with the tide.

The South Channel Shoot Off is just the main channel that we use to get to the Oregon side from the Washington side. It heads South by SE from the ship wreck towards the East End Basin but the most productive part of the slot is the lower mile that's consistently about 30 foot deep. Far from its potential however, it has produced a few fish this year at the beginning of the outgoing tide.

The Mouth of Young's Bay- Low pressure, low success recently. If you are on that side of the river however, it may be worth the attempt as we head into high slack.

Above the Bridge on the Oregon side- This has been a staple for much of the season but also produces sporadic results. It was good on Wednesday with both chinook and more coho showing in the first 2 hours of outgoing tide. We try and run the 28 to 35 foot line with our gear on the bottom. We'll often start up towards the anchored ships and even as high as the East End Basin on occasion. This spot also produced some results the last part of outgoing tide and the first part of incoming on Monday.

Below the Bridge on the Washington side- A traditional stand-by, it hasn't been the best this year or the recent few years for that matter. Recently however, this drift has been producing some impressive results that not many anglers have been taking advantage of. I've tried to recently but seem to either be too early or too late to the bite. The successful guides have been targeting the 40 foot line about an hour after high tide and doing pretty well on Tuesday and Wednesday. It's been good for chinook but the coho have made a fair showing here lately. I did my best here on Tuesday much closer to the Chinook wing jetties in about 40 foot of water with spinners or herring.

And that about covers an entire tide cycle, at least the one that I fish. Of course there are numerous other spots to fish but either we haven't tried them yet or they haven't produced. Spinners have certainly taken off lately with these colors still producing the best results:

Fatal Flash Blades-

Red/white, red, green or blue beads. Size 6. I've been having some luck with some black beaded ones too!

Metallic Purple, red beads, yellow tubing

Silver with the red/pink tip, red beads, pink tubing

Silver with half white, pink dot, red beads, pink tubing

Terry Mulkey Blade-

Black/white/red dot- red beads

Black/red/black dot- red beads

There are still some folks going to the ocean for some reason. Action out there may be comparable to what one is capable of doing in the river with a few more coho in the catch than chinook. Because of the low hatchery coho numbers this year however, it doesn't make much sense to travel that distance when you can do as good in the river, especially as the chinook run begins to wind down.

Upriver, good catches of Chinook are being reported from the river mouths along the lower Columbia river. The Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, Washougal and Sandy all add cool water to the big river, making for staging zones that the fish can catch a breather of cooler, more oxygen rich water. The cooler water makes for better biting, better fighting fish. The mouth of the Cowlitz has been the hot spot as of late, with the better fishing always happening on the outgoing tide. Anchor fishing with wobblers is by far the method of choice but fish are also taken on both plugs and spinners. Few good reports from Bonneville yet, but with the adult Chinook counts over the dam topping 4000, the action will be picking up soon. Summer steelhead counts through the ladder are dwindling to under 2000, so if that's what you're after, your time would be better spent above the dam or at the Deschutes.

Sturgeon angling below Beacon Rock has been reported as very slow.

The Guide's Forecast – With the closure coming after September 3rd, it should be a busy weekend however anchor anglers are taking advantage of the wobbler fishery upstream as it's broken loose the last few days. More on that later.

Tides will begin to moderate by the weekend but after the closure, tides will begin to weaken enough to believe that the Tongue Point bite should pick up again. Tongue Point had it's one day showing of action but anglers got too excited for a repeat performance that didn't materialize the next day (Tuesday). Anglers will be forced to eke out success here when the Buoy 10 area closed after Monday.

Into the weekend however, anglers would be wise to subscribe to a late start, targeting your greatest efforts around high tide. I'll be putting on the water at 9:00 or 10:00 a.m., avoiding the least productive time of the tide, the last 3 hours of outgoing tide (except for the last 30 minutes of outgoing tide when fish can really go on a snap towards the mouth). Of course with the bite shifting sides of the river frequently, I don't know which side will produce when but I'll do my standard procedure and ride the tide upstream with big plans on being upstream of the bridge for high tide. Look to the information above for more specific details on when to be where.

Anchovies have been good to me lately but they don't seem to be in the river in the numbers they have been for most of the season. With coho beginning to show in better numbers, anchovies should become a favored bait again this week. It would be wise however to use the larger herring when targeting larger chinook.

See my hot spinners of the week above.

Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "With hordes of Chinook cruising up the Columbia River, fishing should be well worth the effort this week. Much of the run has passed through the estuary and is already ascending Bonneville Dam. Just over 6000 crossed on Monday the 27th, so it's logical to say that Chinook salmon are spread river-wide from the mouth to Bonneville. Although numbers are dropping consistently, summer steelhead are still present and passing through the ladders at nearly 2000 a day. For the Chinook fisherman, wobblers fished on anchor is the predominant method of choice. Wobblers come in a variety of brands, styles and sizes, with the Alvins, Simons and Clancy's remaining the best sellers. Some anglers with the right tools and materials have been making their own home made wobblers for years and this is how the more popular models all came to fruition as well. Among the first, the Alvin was originally a commercial fishing lure but its successors quickly became more popular with the sportfishing crowd. These large, flat slabs of polished metal are useful for luring large salmon that travel at depth near the Columbia's sandy bottom. When deployed in currents of 2-4 mph, at depths of 25-50 feet, the wobbler (no matter which brand you prefer) will sway and wag, emitting a flash and a vibration that many salmon just cannot resist. This week will see fish being caught at all the river mouths as well as Bonneville dam, although the dams peak is still a few weeks off. The mouths of the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers will always be big producers but the Kalama, Sandy and Washougal will also put out plenty of fish. Sturgeon fishing below the deadline has been slow, but little effort is noticeable."

Be prepared for a good Tongue Point bite by the middle of next week but hopefully sooner. The softer tide series will typically produce those results but hopefully a few days sooner. You'll also have to be prepared for the coinciding wind that often comes with the nice weather we're likely to have in the month of September.

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Sturgeon fishing below the deadline has been slow, but little effort is noticeable.

Don't bother with the ocean.

Crabbing should improve and with the mass exodus of anglers after Labor Day, you can get a bit more risky about crab pot placement as you don't want to put your gear in the trolling lanes. The softer tide series next week should produce impressive results.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Nearly 36,000 spring Chinook and over 24,000 summer steelhead have been counted at Willamette Falls. Coho started appearing in counts on August 11th though only 19 adults have crossed the Falls thus far. As of August 15th, all Chinook are counts as fall fish, of which fewer than 100 have been counted. The water temperature is gradually dropping as the weather seasonally moderates.

McKenzie River water conditions are decent for this time of year with flows stable over the past week and no appreciable fluctuation in levels.

Flows on the North Santiam and, to a lesser degree, the South Santiam, are forecast to start increasing on September 3rd, continuing daily for a week. While Chinook fishing closed here on August 15th, it's important that anglers on the river avoid salmon redds as they are spawning.

Estacada Lake, Harriet Lake, North Fork Reservoir, Small Fry Lake, Trillium Lake, Clear Lake and the McKenzie River above Leaburg Lake are scheduled for trout planting.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Bass fishing has been on the slower side, expect it to improve if the weather cools a smidgeon. Walleye are still a good possibility in Multnomah channel."

Catch-and-release sturgeon fishing has been fair to good on the lower Willamette although most of the fish taken this week have been too small to qualify for "keeper-sized" during retention periods. It's still an entertaining fishery. Smallmouth bass fishing has been very good this week for anglers throwing crawfish-colored plugs or using drop-shot rigs. The lower Willamette has been productive as has the river above the Falls and most Willamette tributaries. Expect trout and steelhead fishing to improve on the Middle Fork of the Willamette with the recent freshet of cooler water. Results for steelhead will pick up below Dexter downstream through the Eugene-Springfield stretch. Trout fishing is expected to be good around Oakridge.

Moderate daytime temperatures combined with cooler nights will have a positive impact on trout fishing results on the McKenzie. Try caddis patterns along with attractor dries and standard nymph patterns. Summer steelhead are scattered throughout the lower river with a few taken over the past week on spoons or spinners.

If the forecast for an increase in level and flow on the Santiams is accurate, it doesn't bode well for fishing. A rising river is seldom productive.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Not much available on the Clackamas but a warm, slowly flowing river. Rafting and inner tubing are the preferred method of attack for keeping cool.

"Rumors of some Coho on the Sandy River up at Cedar creek have been dispelled. Also a rafters and tubers river till the fall rains start to show and the coho begin to arrive."

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Expect silvers to show up at the mouth by the first week of September. Spinners and eggs/corkies drift fished EARLY in the AM will be a good bet. A few summer steelhead are still scattered upstream and might go back on the bite if the water cools a couple degree's. Bobber and darker subdued colored jigs will score late summers like no other offering."

Not much on the Sandy yet, but like the Clack, silvers are just a couple weeks away on the Sandy river. Rumors are surfacing that a few have already made it up to the Cedar Creek hatchery, but we can't find anybody to confirm that."

North Coast Fishing Report – Nehalem anglers are still finding good success for chinook from the mouth to the city of Nehalem. It's clear that there was another good run of summer chinook present.

As we transition to the fall run, not much should change in strategy as softer tides will produce the best results towards the mouth and more extreme tides will promote good fishing up higher in the estuary. Herring remains the bait of choice but spinners should become more applicable as we enter into the fall season. The fish should get appreciably larger this month but it seems that September is the better month for Nehalem action as the run seems to slide more into October. Coho should begin to show in better numbers so pay attention to the wild coho seasons and regulations as well. Hatchery numbers likely won't be too impressive this year.

There have been good reports coming out of Tillamook Bay recently. Fall chinook have been reported from about every stretch of the estuary, from the upper bay to the jaws. Last weekend, fish checkers reported tallying 13 chinook from the Tillamook system; 4 from inside the jaws and 9 from outside, along the south jetty. Herring of course is the bait of choice but it seems that Tillamook is off to a great start in what most believe will be a great season. As we enter mid-week, tides will again begin to soften and action towards the mouth and out in the ocean should be good.

Anglers will have more unprecedented opportunity beginning September 6th with an "any salmon" season beginning offshore for the following 3 weeks or until the quota is attained. Yes, that's right, wild coho fishing in the ocean will be open for Thursdays through Saturdays for much of the month of September. Check regulations for details.

Crabbing is picking up as well, both in the ocean and in the estuaries. It looks like it will be a good season for sea spiders this fall.

The Guide's Forecast – Hopefully, anglers won't have to deal with too much seaweed on this more extreme tide series. If you're going to fish the Nehalem or Tillamook systems this weekend, it could be a toss-up as to whether you fish the upper bay or lower extremes. The lower bay and adjacent ocean areas will produce best by the middle of next week.

The ocean will most certainly be the best bet for Tillamook anglers and with a favorable swell forecast, it may be pretty tolerable to fish outside:

FRI

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT.
NW SWELL 5 FT AT 8 SECONDS. PATCHY MORNING FOG.

FRI NIGHT

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT.

SAT

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

SAT NIGHT

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 3 FT.

SUN

N WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 4 FT.

MON

N WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. NW SWELL 6 FT.

Bring your crab gear, it should be easy limits.

Central & South Coast Reports – Tuna charters out of Depoe Bay were once again cancelled on Wednesday this week as albacore were determined to be too far offshore to chase in party boats. Conditions are trending upward and hopes are high for better conditions as the weekend approaches. Recreational tuna boats reported a trip of roughly 25 to 30 miles west out of Depoe Bay or Newport to find jumpers and put some on board.

Incidentally, albacore are getting larger as we near the end of the season. It's not unusual for baits to take to over 205 or 30 pounds. A (very) few have hit or topped the 40 pound mark, but that's an exceptionally large fish for the Pacific Northwest. Your adventure awaits and ocean conditions are predicted to be favorable through Labor Day in offshore forecasts.

Offshore results for rockfish have remained very good and ocean crabbing has been excellent. Ling cod catches slowed mid-week, however.

Ocean coho opens September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, during which time, fish may be kept whether fin-clipped or not (ergo, a non-selective fishery). This opportunity is scheduled to continue every Thursday, Friday and Saturday through September 22nd or the fulfillment of a quota of 11,800 fish. The bag limit is two fish per day and only barbless hooks may be used.

With less than 5,000 pounds of quota remaining following the Aug. 17th & 18th summer all-depth fishery, ODFW officials determined that was enough to extend the season. It is closed for the remainder of 2012.

Chinook are being taken on the Siletz River above Coyote Rock although the run here is not a large one.

A few Chinook are being taken by boaters on the lower Siuslaw but overall it has been slow so far.

Crabbing is excellent in Winchester Bay with most boats taking limits. Anyone taking a crabbed tagged with a spinner with a number crab should take it to the Sportsman Cannery in Winchester Bay to receive a hat and receive an entry for the grand prize of \$1,000. Boat traffic has been

heavy on the lower Umpqua below the Highway 101 bridge early in the day as Chinook catches improve. with morning most productive, traffic has been light later in the day. Fishing is fair for summer steelhead in the North Umpqua.

Chinook catches were good in Coos Bay over the past weekend for a mix of adults and jacks. Most boats are trolling a flasher and plug-cut herring combo. Crabbing is good in the bay.

Crabbing off the docks at Florence has been fair to good with some limits reported. Dungeness are in fair condition at this time of year as they recover from the summer molt. The Umpqua mainstem and South Umpqua continue to produce excellent catches of smallmouth bass on various types of lures.

Rainfall early this week dropped water temperatures in the lower Rogue and drew some of the Chinook upriver from the estuary. This slowed catches in the bay but put more Chinook in the river for those fishing the middle Rogue. Summer steelhead and half-pounders are being taken in good numbers from Agness upstream by spinner flingers and fly fishers. Chinook fishing closes on the upper Rogue starting September 1st. On the same dates, the regulations change to allow only artificial flies from the old Gold Ray dam site to Coles River Hatchery. Any type of tackle may be used but flies may not be weighted. Good returns to the hatchery have continued as have good results by summer steelheaders fishing the upper Rogue.

Boats fishing the jaws out of Brookings are taking Chinook and, when ocean conditions have allowed, are making decent catches just outside. Catches of sea-run cutthroat have been very good in the Chetco River up to the deadline at River Mile 2.2.

The Rogue River above Lost Creek, Clearwater Forebay #2, Hemlock Lake, Lake of the Woods, Lemolo Reservoir, Ben Irving Reservoir and Cooper Creek Reservoir and Lake Marie are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Trout fishing has slowed on the lower Deschutes, which is fairly typical as late summer transitions into fall. On a brighter note, results will begin to improve as that transition continues. Cooler weather will have a positive effect on both water temperatures and summer steelhead catches. In addition, as Columbia River counts improve, there will be additional fish entering the Deschutes resulting in more fish available to target.

Six adult Chinook may be kept per day starting Saturday, September 1st on the Snake River from the Oregon-Washington border to the deadline at Hells Canyon Dam. In addition, there is no daily or possession limit on Chinook jacks which measure between 15 and 24 inches. Only barbless hooks may be used in this fishery which is scheduled to continue through the end of October.

Wickiup has been slow for most, productive for only a few. Kokanee are starting to show signs of the coming spawning season.

Green Peter has been producing good numbers of kokanee averaging 11 to 12 inches and still in good condition to trollers using wedding rings or hoochies.

Kokanee fishing has been good at East Lake for trollers using hoochies. Fish are averaging 15 inches and while some are starting to color up, there are still plenty of bright keepers available.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2012

North Puget Sound

Anglers are reeling in chinook in Puget Sound, where crabbing is still an option and two additional marine areas open for salmon Aug. 1. Others are also having some success at Baker Lake, which opened for **sockeye salmon** July 1 and remains open through Sept 4.

Anglers fishing Baker Lake can retain up to three adult sockeye that exceed 18 inches in length from the log boom barrier at Baker Dam upstream to the mouth of the upper Baker River. In a recent rule modification, each angler aboard a vessel may continue to deploy angling gear until the daily limit of sockeye has been retained for all licensed and juvenile anglers onboard. See the [rule change](#) for details. All other salmon, as well as bull trout, must be released.

"I expect that fishing will only get better, as more sockeye are put into the lake," said Brett Barkdull, fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "The fish are biters — once you find them, get your gear at the right depth to catch them."

Barkdull reminds anglers to check for any [rule changes](#) on WDFW's website. Anglers also can check the number of sockeye released into the lake on [WDFW's website](#).

Meanwhile, the Skagit River, from the mouth to the mouth of Gilligan Creek, opens Sept. 1. The Skagit from the mouth of Gilligan Creek to the Dalles Bridge at Concrete opens for salmon fishing Sept. 16. Anglers fishing those sections have a two-salmon daily limit, all chinook and chum must be released.

Beginning Aug. 16, **Lake Sammamish** will also be an option for freshwater salmon anglers, who will have a daily limit of four salmon, and can retain up to two **chinook**. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek.

On marine waters, "August is prime time for chinook in Puget Sound," says Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound salmon manager for WDFW.

"It's a chinook show now in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton)," he said.

Those fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit. They must, however, release wild coho and chum starting Aug. 1.

Anglers fishing marine areas 9 and 10 can keep hatchery chinook – marked with a clipped adipose fin – as part of a two-salmon daily limit. Wild chinook and chum must be released. August brings other opportunities to catch and keep salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open for salmon fishing. Anglers in those two areas have a daily limit of two salmon, but must release chinook. Check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#) for details on current salmon fishing opportunities.

Prefer shellfish? The **Puget Sound crab fishery** is under way in most marine areas. The exception is the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia) of Marine Area 7, which opens for crab Aug. 16. In other Puget Sound marine areas, crabbing is open Thursday through Monday of each week.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers also may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across.

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

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Salmon fishing is king in the region, where anglers are hooking bright fish along the coast and in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

On the coast, the daily catch limit is two salmon for all areas of the ocean fishery. Anglers fishing in marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport) and 4 (Neah Bay) can retain one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit. Those fishing in Marine Area 3 (LaPush) can retain two chinook per day. In all four marine areas, anglers must release wild coho salmon.

"Overall, salmon anglers have done well this summer," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "I expect fishing to get even better in August, when more chinook and coho make their way along the coast toward the Columbia River."

Salmon fishing remains open seven days a week in all four marine areas. However, fisheries in those areas could close early if catch quotas are reached, said Milward. Anglers should check for any [rule changes](#) at WDFW's website.

Anglers are reminded that regulations in Marine Area 4, east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line, change beginning Aug. 1. Anglers fishing that area will have a daily limit of two salmon, but they must release chinook, chum and wild coho.

Meanwhile, salmon fisheries are under way in marine areas 5 (Sekiu), 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 11 (Tacoma/Vashon), the southern portion of 12 (Hood Canal) and 13 (South Puget Sound).

A lot of anglers focus on fishing the Strait of Juan de Fuca and northern Puget Sound this time of year, said Steve Thiesfeld, WDFW's Puget Sound salmon manager. "But don't count out south Puget Sound, where we are expecting a return of more than 60,000 salmon this year," he said. "The fish should be there, it's just a matter of putting some time in on the water and figuring out the fishery."

Before heading out, anglers also can check [creel reports](#) for information on catch and effort in Puget Sound. Recreational fishery samplers with WDFW collect the information each week at fishing access sites throughout Puget Sound.

Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the [Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet](#) for more information.

Meanwhile, the **Puget Sound crab fishery** is under way in most marine areas. The exception is the northern portion (Gulf of Georgia) of Marine Area 7, which opens for crab Aug. 16.

The crab fishery in all marine areas of Puget Sound is open Thursday through Monday of each week. The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell

condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. Most marine areas will close the evening of Sept. 3 for a catch assessment. However, Marine Area 7 will remain open through Sept. 30.

Additional information on the crab fishery is available on [WDFW's crab fishing webpage](#).

Halibut fishing is also still an option. The late season for halibut in Marine Area 1 opens Aug. 3. The fishery there will be open three days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the quota is taken or Sept. 30, whichever occurs first.

In freshwater, the recreational salmon fishery on the **Skokomish River** will get under way Aug. 10 from the mouth upstream to the Highway 101 Bridge. The daily bag limit on the Skokomish will be two salmon. Anglers must carefully release any chum and wild chinook salmon they catch. Anglers will be required to release any salmon not hooked inside the mouth, and retain the first two legal salmon they catch and stop fishing. In addition, single-point barbless hooks are required and a night closure and anti-snagging rule will be in effect.

The Skokomish River from the Highway 106 Bridge upstream to the Highway 101 Bridge will be closed to recreational fishing Monday through Thursday of each week, except Monday Sept. 3. The weekly closures on a portion of the Skokomish River are necessary to avoid potential gear conflicts with treaty tribal fishers, as well as limit impacts to wild chinook salmon, expected to return in low numbers this year.

Recreational fishing downstream of the Highway 106 Bridge will remain open seven days a week through Sept. 5.

Several other rivers are open for **salmon** fishing elsewhere in the region, including the Bogachiel, Calawah, Hoh, Nisqually, Quillayute and the Sol Duc.

Beginning Aug. 1, the Puyallup River, from the City of Puyallup outfall structure across the river from the junction of Freeman Road and North Levee Road to the Carbon River, also opens for salmon fishing. The lower section of the Puyallup, from the 11th Street Bridge to the City of Puyallup outfall structure, opens to salmon fishing Aug. 16. Anglers should be aware that the lower section of the river is closed Aug. 26 and Sept. 2, 3, 9, 10 and 11.

For more information on the Puyallup River regulations, as well as rules for other fisheries open in August, check the [Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet](#).

Southwest Washington

This year's **fall chinook** fishery opens Aug. 1 on the Columbia River, where a strong run of upriver brights is expected to exceed both the 10-year average and last year's return. Of the 655,000 "falls" included in the pre-season forecast, about 350,000 are projected to be upriver brights – the fourth largest return since record keeping began in 1964.

Those fish, along with **hatchery coho** and **summer steelhead**, should make August a great time to fish the lower Columbia River, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"We're definitely expecting a big angler turnout for these fisheries," Hymer said. "The fall chinook fishery usually starts slow, then accelerates quickly through the month of August. The great thing about upriver brights is they tend to keep biting as they move upriver."

Although the opener for the fall chinook will extend upriver as far as Priest Rapids Dam, most of

the action during the first few weeks focuses on the popular **Buoy 10 fishery** in the lower 16 miles of the river. Fishery managers estimate that anglers will catch nearly 14,000 chinook salmon by Labor Day, after which the retention fishery for chinook in the Buoy 10 area will close for the remainder of September. Anglers are also expected to catch 8,000 coho in that area by the time that fishery closes at the end of the year.

The daily limit for the Buoy 10 fishery is two salmon, two hatchery steelhead, or one of each. But, through Sept. 3, only one of those salmon may be a chinook. In addition, only those steelhead and coho marked with a missing adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained. This requirement does not apply to fall chinook on the mainstem lower Columbia River, where chinook salmon may be retained whether or not they are marked.

Additional rules for the Buoy 10 area and waters farther upriver are described in WDFW's [Fishing in Washington](#) pamphlet. Bank anglers planning to fish near the mouth of the Columbia River should be aware they will need to purchase a Discover Pass to park on State Parks property near the North Jetty. The vehicle access pass anglers receive with their fishing license only substitutes for a Discover Pass on WDFW lands.

By mid-to-late August, the bulk of the chinook run usually begins to move upstream with increasing numbers of coho moving in behind them. For anglers following upriver brights upstream, Hymer recommends fishing deep, between 40 and 50 feet down. For a lure, he suggests wobblers anchored with a heavy weight.

"Chinook go deep when water temperatures are high, so that's a good place to find them," Hymer said. "At the same time, anglers should take care not to drop anchor in the shipping channel. That can lead to real trouble."

While 2012 is not expected to be a banner year for hatchery coho, those fish will help to round out anglers' daily limits. WDFW currently expects about 240,000 coho to return this year – slightly lower than the past couple years and down significantly from the exceptionally large run of three-quarters of a million fish in 2009. Hymer said coho salmon usually bite best at Buoy 10 on herring and spinners, and later on bait and lures in the tributaries.

Meanwhile, plenty of **hatchery steelhead** are still available for harvest, said Hymer, noting that the smaller "A-run" fish should keep biting through mid-August. By then, the larger "B-run" steelhead – many weighing in the teens – will start arriving to pick up the slack. Together, returns of both runs are expected to total about 365,000 fish, about the same size of last year's total run.

The procession of fall chinook, coho and hatchery steelhead, should also provide good fishing on area tributaries for months to come, Hymer said. Like the mainstem Columbia River, most tributaries open for fall chinook Aug. 1, although those fisheries usually don't take off until September. For steelhead, Drano Lake and the Wind River are good places to cast for migrating fish dipping into cooler waters.

The White Salmon River has historically been another productive dip-in fishery, but how the fish will respond after Condit Dam was breached last fall remains to be seen. That issue is part of a study funded by Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement fees, but fishery managers reported a good sign in late July: Both salmon and steelhead were observed in the river above where the dam used to be.

Like last year, anglers will be allowed to retain up to six adult hatchery coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep,

Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal.

Unlike the mainstem Columbia River, chinook retention is limited to marked hatchery fish on those river systems, except on the Klickitat and Deep rivers where unmarked chinook can also be retained. Mark-selective fisheries also will be in effect on the Wind and White Salmon rivers.

New for 2012, any fall chinook and coho may be retained at Drano Lake beginning Aug. 1 and any chinook on the North Fork Lewis River beginning in mid-September. Anglers are advised to check the Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet and any [emergency rules](#) applicable to specific waters before leaving home.

Of course, salmon and steelhead aren't the only fish available for harvest in August. **Walleye** fishing can be good in the Columbia River near Camas, as well as in The Dalles and John Day Pools. **Bass** fishing is also heating up from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam. Anglers can also retain sturgeon measuring 43 to 54 inches in The Dalles Pool on a daily basis through Aug. 4, then Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays until further notice.

Hankering for **trout**? WDFW crews will plant 2,000 catchable cutthroat in Goose Lake just before the calendar flips to August. The timing of that plant, which normally occurs in fall, has been sped up this year due to a water-intake project at Skamania Hatchery.

On the Cowlitz system, Mayfield Lake will be planted with 65,000 catchable size rainbows, Lake Scanewa (Cowlitz Falls Reservoir) with 20,000, Skate Creek with 18,750 and the Tilton River with 18,750 by the end of August. Hatchery sea-run cutthroats should also provide some opportunity on the lower Cowlitz beginning in late August.

At the same time, the high wilderness lakes around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens offer unparalleled fishing experiences for those willing to brave the mosquitoes. Riffe Lake in Lewis County is still giving up some nice landlocked coho, and Goose Lake north of Carson has received 1,000 brown trout and 6,000 cutthroats since mid-June. Council and Takhlakh lakes are also expected to receive 4,000 catchable size rainbows each.

Eastern Washington

Randy Osborne, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) central district fish biologist, says the best fishing in August is usually during very early morning or late evening hours. But mid-day anglers under cloud cover can reel in a few nice catches, too.

Some of the best **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** lakes located near Spokane are Amber, Badger, Clear, Williams, and West Medical lakes in Spokane County, and Fishtrap Lake in Lincoln County. The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, but river anglers need to be aware of catch limits, gear restrictions and other rules listed in the fishing pamphlet.

Mixed species waters are also a good bet. Along with some trout, **yellow perch**, **largemouth** and **smallmouth bass**, and **crappie** can usually be caught at Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs Lakes in southwest Spokane County, Newman, Silver, and Liberty lakes in eastern Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake.

Osborne reminds anglers that safety on and near the water should be a top priority. "Anyone recreating with watercraft should always have the correct number and size of personal flotation devices and use them while on the water," he said.

In the north end of the region, WDFW District Fish Biologist Bill Baker in Colville reports rainbow trout, **kokanee** and **walleye** fishing continues to be good at Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam. Kokanee fishing is also productive at Stevens County's Loon Lake during evening hours.

Some of the high elevation lakes on U.S. Forest Service property in the northeast district that are stocked with rainbow and cutthroat trout may be good destinations for camping and fishing weekends. In Ferry County, try Davis, Ellen, Empire Swan and Trout lakes. In Stevens County, try Gillette, Heritage, Sherry, Summit, and Thomas lakes. In Pend Oreille County, try Carl's, Cook's, Frater, Halfmoon, Leo, Mystic, Nile, No-Name, Petit, South and North Skookums, and Yokum lakes.

Catfish and **sturgeon** fishing is usually productive in the Snake River system in the southeast part of the region in August, said Glen Mendel, WDFW district fish biologist in Dayton. Catfish are often landed in the backwaters and sloughs throughout the mainstem Snake, as well as in or near the mouths of tributaries like the Tucannon River. Catfish fishing is often much more productive at night, or at dawn and dusk.

Sturgeon fishers are reminded of the minimum 43-inch and maximum 54-inch tail fork length requirement and daily catch limit of one sturgeon. The Snake and its tributaries upstream of Lower Granite Dam are catch-and-release only for sturgeon. The section of the Snake just east of the Tri-Cities, from the mouth to Ice Harbor Dam, is also catch-and-release for sturgeon starting Aug. 1.

Anglers heading for a weekend of camping near the Tucannon River, or its trout-stocked impoundments on WDFW's Wooten Wildlife Area in Columbia County, need to keep fire restrictions in mind. Wooten Manager Kari Dingman said that with hot, dry conditions, the Washington Department of Natural Resources has a campfire ban in effect.

"No campfires are allowed in any state campgrounds until further notice," Dingman said. "With the hot temps we've been having, the fishing in the lakes has really slowed down, but river fishing has picked up."

Dingman also reported an Aug. 17-27 closure of Wooten campgrounds 5 and 6 for a "large woody debris" project that involves placing full-size trees with rootballs into the river with a helicopter. There may also be some traffic delays that week due to temporary road closures while the helicopter is in operation.

Northcentral Washington

Two salmon fisheries not listed in the rules pamphlet will open Aug. 4, thanks to good returns of fish to northcentral Washington.

Travis Maitland, Chelan district fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), says **hatchery summer chinook salmon** returns to the Wenatchee River are in excess of spawning escapement needs, so fishing for marked (adipose-fin clipped) chinook in the section of the river from the mouth to just below Dryden Dam will be open Aug. 4-Oct. 15. Another section of the Wenatchee, from the confluence of Peshastin Creek to a line above Dryden Dam and the Icicle Creek Road Bridge, will open Sept. 1. Check the [emergency rule change](#) for details.

Also opening Aug. 4 is the Lake Wenatchee **sockeye fishery**. More than 30,000 fish coming through Tumwater Canyon on the Wenatchee River are headed for Lake Wenatchee, said Maitland. At least 7,000 fish are estimated to be available for harvest above the natural spawning

escapement goal of 23,000 fish. Selective gear rules and other restrictions are in effect, so check the details in the [emergency rule change](#) for this fishery, scheduled to run through Aug. 31.

Maitland notes that in addition to a fishing license, anglers participating in these special fisheries must have the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement (CRSSE), which makes the seasons possible by funding enforcement, and monitoring.

Bob Jateff, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Okanogan district fish biologist in Twisp, says **sockeye salmon** fishing has picked up considerably in the Columbia River near Brewster. Angling effort has been high with catch rates of two to three fish per angler. **Chinook salmon** are also being caught along with sockeye, but in much smaller numbers.

Jateff also notes the section of the Columbia River from Wells Dam upstream to the Hwy. 173 Bridge in Brewster has been open to salmon fishing since July 16. Anglers are required to release any sockeye or chinook with a colored anchor (floy) tag located just below the dorsal fin.

"The sockeye are running three to five pounds and the chinook are averaging 10 to 12 pounds," Jateff said.

Jateff reports fishing in the Methow River has been hampered by higher water flows, but it should be in good shape soon for the catch-and-release **trout** fishery under way. Selective gear rules are in effect and no bait is allowed. The open area of the Methow extends from the Lower Burma Road Bridge (below the town of Methow) upstream to the Weeman Bridge (eight miles north of Winthrop).

Jateff also notes there are two sections of the Twisp and Chewuch rivers that are open to catch-and-release trout fishing. The Twisp is open from the mouth upstream to War Creek, and the Chewuch is open from the mouth upstream to Eight Mile Creek.

Anglers should check the current [sportfishing rules pamphlet](#) as all of these open areas have varying closure dates. Anglers can expect resident **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** in the 8-16 inch range.

As river and small creek flows recede, Jateff says it is a good time to fish the smaller tributaries within the Methow River drainage. Boulder, Falls, and Eightmile creeks are all within easy driving distance from Winthrop and provide good fishing for eastern brook trout. Daily limit is five brook trout in Falls and Eightmile Creeks, no minimum size. In Boulder Creek the daily limit for brook trout is 10, no minimum size. In the Beaver Creek drainage, anglers can retain five brook trout, no minimum size.

Watershed Steward and Area Habitat Biologist Ken Bevis of Winthrop attests to the good fishing opportunity on small waterways.

"Northcentral Washington's small creeks are generally under-utilized," Bevis said. "These little creeks drop into beautiful fishing shape by late summer and most have an abundance of small trout that hit on bushy dry flies." Bevis recommends floating a size 12 Royal Coachman, a small stimulator, Adams, or other little bushy thing downstream from where you stand.

"Sneak up on the pool and cast around the rocks at the top, working your way down to the tailout," he said. "Keep your casts short, sometimes less than 10 feet. Be sure to hide a little or your silhouette will spook them. Wear dull clothes, even a camo shirt - definitely not anything white or bright. And pinch those barbs to make it easy to release fish where you might need to because of rules to protect other species."

Bevis calls the little rainbow, cutthroat and brook trout he catches "pocket trout" because he uses his pockets as a creel. "These little gems are really good, though," he said. "Fry them crisp and eat the whole thing."

Southcentral Washington

Walleye fishing has been very good on Lake Umatilla this summer – and will likely heat up even more as water temperatures rise through August. Meanwhile, the summer heat is also clearing a way through the snow to trout fishing opportunities on dozens of alpine lakes.

As of late July, anglers were averaging more than three **walleye** per rod on Lake Umatilla, the 67-mile reservoir below McNary Dam on the Columbia River, according to Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) stationed in the Tri-Cities. "Fishing has been terrific at all the usual spots – Umatilla, County Line, Irrigon, Boardman and Paterson," Hoffarth said. "Walleye really put on the feed bag when the water heats up, so we can expect to see some more great fishing in the weeks ahead."

There is no minimum size limit for walleye at Lake Umatilla, although there is a daily limit of 10 fish, only five of which can measure over 18 inches and only one of which can be over 24 inches. There is also no minimum size for **smallmouth bass**, which are also showing up in the catch. Anglers have a daily limit of five smallmouth bass, only three of which can exceed 15 inches. **Sturgeon** are also stirring, but July 31 is the last day for retention fishing on Lake Wallula and the Snake River below Ice Harbor Dam, and Lake Umatilla switched to catch-and-release May 20.

On the other hand, there's still plenty of time to catch and keep up to two **hatchery steelhead** from the mouth of the Columbia River to the Highway 395 bridge at Kennewick/Pasco. Fishery managers are projecting a strong run of 380,000 summer-run steelhead this year, many bound for the Snake River and mid-to-upper Columbia River. Hatchery steelhead can be identified by a missing adipose fin and a healed scar near their tail.

The Snake River will open for hatchery steelhead fishing Sept. 1, and WDFW expects to open sections of the Columbia River above the Highway 395 bridge later this summer or early fall. Look for announcements at the [WDFW website](#).

Anglers can also look forward to good fishing for **fall chinook salmon** in the weeks ahead. A strong run of 655,000 "falls" is expected to return to the Columbia this year, including 353,000 upriver brights that are expected to cross McNary Dam – many headed for the Hanford Reach. While salmon fishing has been hot above Rocky Reach Dam since mid-July, fishing doesn't really catch fire below Priest Rapids Dam until fall chinook arrive in September, Hoffarth said.

"Most of the summer chinook and sockeye just sail right through below Priest Rapids Dam," he said. "But with a strong run of falls expected this year, salmon fishing in the Hanford Reach should pick up in about a month."

The daily limit on the Columbia River is six chinook, of which two may be adults. Anglers are not required to release chinook with intact adipose fins, but must stop fishing after they retain two adult chinook. See the current [Fishing in Washington](#) rules pamphlet for additional information. On the Yakima River, salmon fishing closes July 31 at the end of the day, but will reopen Sept. 1 for fall chinook in the lower river. Eric Anderson, a WDFW fish biologist in Yakima, said the spring chinook fishery in the upper section between Union Gap and Roza Dam finished strong, despite high flows in May and June.

"Catch rates for springers really picked up in July as water levels dropped and more fish moved into the area," Anderson said. "Now anglers are looking ahead to the fishery for fall chinook." Water levels are also dropping in streams flowing into the upper Yakima and Naches rivers, improving fishing conditions for wild **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout**, Anderson said. Anglers should be sure to check the regulations for those streams, and release all salmon, bull trout, and steelhead, Anderson said.

An increasing number of high lakes are also becoming accessible to trout fishing around White Pass, Chinook Pass and Snoqualmie Pass as the snow continues to melt under the summer sun. WDFW stocks some small, hike-in lakes with rainbow or cutthroat trout, and some also have naturally reproducing **eastern brook trout** populations.

"Good fishing is now available for planted trout at Clear and Dog lakes in the White Pass area, and for **kokanee** averaging nine inches at Rimrock Lake off Highway 12," Anderson said. "Kokanee is also available at Kachess and Keechelus lakes off Highway 90, and fishing is good for both kokanee and cutthroat at Bumping Lake off Highway 410."

Anderson notes that all of those waters are closed to the taking of bull trout, "so anglers need to release any bull trout they intercept," he said. Anderson adds that hikers and anglers should check trail conditions before heading out, because some are still covered in snow. Information about current trail conditions is available from the U.S. Forest Service office in Naches and the Forest Ranger office in Cle Elum.

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

TGF subscriber Steve B. wrote to Pro Guide and TGF co-editor Bob Rees, "I wanted to tell you that this week's report has to be one of the best you have ever done, it just couldn't be any more complete and frankly I was hoping it would that good since I'm going join the crowd on Sat. and then again on Monday down there. I'm looking forward to some good reports this year for Tillamook.

"Best Regards and Good Fishing,"

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

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GOOD LUCK!