

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 5th – October 11th, 2012**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- As fishing for salmon winds down on the lower Columbia, anglers are still finding a few fish in key spots from the mouth of the Sandy up to Bonneville dam. Last week had a surge of coho activity down in the estuary, indicating that there's more to come. A few coho were taken this week at the Sandy's mouth by spinner tossers and the very occasional chinook is being hooked. Up at the dam, the fishing has been just "good" on the best days and just average most days. Look for another week of possibility here.

Not much activity from the lower Willamette, other than a few coho have been caught in the Multnomah Channel. Troll red, orange or fire tiger plugs upstream for best results. A couple of coho have also been caught at the blacktop below Clackamette Park. Bass and Walleye are also present but few anglers are putting in any time pursuing them.

McKenzie flow has been stable with the level dropping slightly over the past week. Fall trout fishing is as good as it gets with Caddis and PMDs hatching.

The North Santiam is high but stable. Fishing has been slow. Large numbers of salmon are spawning from Packsaddle to Mehama.

There are reports of a handful of coho in the Clackamas River, but very little catching is happening.

In the Sandy River, a smattering of coho are being spotted rolling all the way up to Cedar Creek but not in numbers that are getting anglers excited.

Northwest – Limits of hatchery coho were still common out of Astoria over the weekend although most would expect action to slow anytime now. The upcoming weak tide series may make for some fair combo crabbing and salmon fishing in the Astoria area. Seas off of the south jetty of the Columbia may even offer some fair lingcod and rockfish options.

Tillamook Bay chinook catches have slowed but strong winds and high seas haven't helped matters. The additional disturbance has caused eel grass and seaweed to inundate the estuary, making it challenging for anglers to keep their offerings effectively fishing. Weekend anglers would be best suited fishing along the jetty and the ocean may once again be an option if the swell and wind waves subside.

Nehalem Bay has been producing hit and miss action for mostly chinook with more coho likely to show in the coming two weeks.

Wild coho have been largely absent on most north coast estuaries thus far. Anglers are anxiously awaiting the additional opportunity to harvest this rebounding resource as the run should begin to show in force anytime now. North coast estuaries may differ in regulation so check carefully before heading out.

Rivers remain as extreme low levels keggung salmon in the lower reaches of tidewater. Bobber fishing has been fair at best but should improve as tides wane this weekend.

Crabbing remains fair in most estuaries and should be excellent if the ocean calms down again.

Fair numbers of chinook are reported in the Nestucca, Salmon and Alsea systems but anglers are having a hard time motivating them to bite.

Southwest- The offshore 30-fathom limit was lifted on October 1st, allowing all-depth fishing for rockfish and lingcod. Nearshore halibut fishery is ongoing after a revised quota of 4,786 pounds. Unfortunately, wind and wave conditions earlier this week prevented much effort.

Long range forecasts indicate moderating swells and winds late this week with a friendly ocean over the coming weekend.

Chinook fishing is good in Coos Bay as is crabbing. Wild and hatchery coho are being caught along the jetties and up to Dellwood.

The lower Umpqua is fishing well for chinook while smallmouth catches are good around Elkton. Steelheading is fair to good on the North Umpqua.

Bottom fishing out of Bandon has been excellent whenever boats have been able to get out. Rockfish have been on the surface periodically.

Trollers in the Rogue estuary had a couple of good days over the past week although ocean swells shut down fishing more often than not. Half-pounders are being taken in good numbers around Agness. Chinook fishing slowed on the lower and middle Rogue. Upper river flows have dropped further, creating challenging conditions for fly fishers although catches remain steady.

Chinook fishing was less than spectacular at the opening of the Chetco Bubble on October 1st although the lower Chetco has been producing fish to 35 pounds or better. Trolling anchovies has been most effective.

Diamond Lake anglers are doing best on the south side, averaging four or five broad-shouldered trout per trip with few eight-fish limits reported.

Eastern – Steelhead are scattered on the Deschutes with results erratic. Best numbers are above Maupin. Fishing for reddsides has been good with little competition as most are focusing on the alternate fishery. Counts of steelhead and Chinook picked up over the past week at Sherars Falls.

Trout fishing has been very good on the Crooked. Low water here only seems to improve results. Caddis are coming on as Pale Morning Dun hatches are on the wane.

SW Washington- District streams are running extremely low for this time of year. Chinook are present in good numbers, especially on the Cowlitz and Lewis Rivers. Action on these streams should improve substantially when fall rains arrive.

Chinook and some coho are being taken at the mouths of the White Salmon and Klickitat Rivers. Action for coho should only improve from here.

Fishery managers rescinded the proposed sturgeon season above Bonneville Dam beginning October 20th. Higher than expected catch rates were realized effectively closing most of the Columbia River and Willamette River harvest for the remainder of the year. Catch and release fishing remains a good option. Retention is allowed in The Dalles Pool Thursdays through Saturdays, until the 300 fish quota is met.

Soapbox Update: This is a call to sportanglers. THE most important call in the history of sportfishing! Here is the information from NSIA's Liz Hamilton:

The gillnetters are showing, through their participation in recent meetings what Columbia River mainstem gillnetting means to them. Last week's meeting in Washington resulted in only a handful of sportfishing industry representatives present...gillnetters filled the room.

The Columbia River is the single-largest driver of Sportfishing-related expenditures in the region. For 20 years NSIA has worked hard to open the door for your business to this incredible wealth of sustainable business opportunity. The time has arrived to show-up, be counted and be heard.

Governor Kitzhaber has a plan on the table that will deliver the goods. His compromise will provide better protection for wild fish and better economic returns on the fisheries in the river.

It's not going to happen unless you show-up and participate. If getting the gillnets out of the main stem Columbia River is important to you and your business then you'll show through your actions just how important that opportunity is. Your participation is needed to succeed.

To win this, here's what we need from you:

- Attend every meeting! The next two are:
 - October 6 in the Columbia Room of the state Legislative Building at 614 Sid Snyder Ave. S.W. in Olympia.
 - October 18, in Portland 7900 NE 82nd Ave. Portland, OR. This is a joint commission work group meeting. Public Comment will be taken.
- Write to the Commissions! odfw.commission@state.or.us, commission@dfw.wa.gov
- STAY TUNED AND READY!

Your message is easy. Tell them what this proposal means and how important it is to your business and to you personally. **Call NSIA today and let us know you're going to participate. We need to hear from you now. (503) 631-8859**

We'll keep you posted and be there every step of the way to support you and the message you bring.

This is the single-largest development for NW Sportfishing in the past 50 years. Don't miss it!

Columbia River Fishing Report – With action on most of the Columbia winding down, anglers are left with fewer options (but still good ones) in smaller locales of the big river. Coho fishing in the lower river remains a strong option as most would have expected far slower results than are actually being realized. The few guides still working the area are taking limits of hatchery fish from the system in what appears to be a surprising number of fish coming in. **Pro guide Kevin Newell (360-430-2521)** reported limits of hatchery fish for most of the week and it may just continue into mid-October. Most unexpectedly, the "B" run coho were supposed to be down in numbers but guides are finding them quite responsive to spinners and fresh jigged anchovies. Kevin mentioned that the best action has been the church hole and upstream of the bridge come

high slack. I certainly didn't expect these kind of results but who knows, it may last for another few weeks (and I didn't think I'd ever be saying that this year....).

Upriver, **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos** reports, "As fishing for salmon winds down on the lower Columbia, anglers are still finding a few fish in key spots from the mouth of the Sandy up to Bonneville dam. Last week had a surge of silver activity down in the estuary, indicating that there's more to come. A few silvers were eked out this week at the Sandy's mouth by spinner tossers and the very occasional Chinook is being hooked. Up at the dam, the fishing has been just "good" on the best days and just average most days. Look for another week of possibility here.

It's clear that the salmon fishing is winding down but October can traditionally turn into a pretty good fishery at Bonneville Dam. Stay tuned for more details.

Many had anticipated more consumptive sturgeon opportunity but the states of Washington and Oregon recently rescinded the remainder of the sturgeon season due to an unexpected high catch during the early part of the year. Here is the official press release:

NEWS RELEASE

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Oct. 2, 2012

Columbia River sturgeon season will not re-open in October

CLACKAMAS, Ore. – Oregon and Washington fishery managers decided today that the sturgeon retention season on the lower Columbia River above Wauna will not open Oct. 20 as planned.

According to Steve Williams, deputy administrator of ODFW's Fish Division, less than 100 fish remain available for harvest in the area between Wauna and Bonneville Dam, and that's not enough fish to allow the season to open as planned.

The sturgeon shortfall is the result of greater than expected catches in the estuary fishery and also for the first six months of the year upstream of the Wauna powerlines. During that time anglers harvested an estimated 1,860 fish, or 89% of the 2,080 quota, during 23,000 angler trips.

"Effort and catch rates were considerably higher from January through July this year than what we saw in 2011," according to John North, fisheries manager for ODFW's Ocean Salmon and Columbia River Program. "That is a positive sign but unfortunately it resulted in most of the annual quota for this area being used early in the season."

The lower Willamette River and the mainstem Columbia River remain open for catch-and-release sturgeon from the mouth to the Oregon/Washington border. Retention remains open Thursday-Saturday in The Dalles Pool until the 300 fish annual guideline is met.

Crabbing in the lower estuary is awesome.

The Guide's Forecast – Coho in the lower river seems to be one of the best options. The softer tide series this weekend should keep them concentrated there too. Target coho using fresh jigged anchovies or size 5 spinners in red or pink for some quality sized coho. One guide reported a hatchery coho tipping the scales at 18 pounds! Work the church hole or the shallows above the Astoria/Megler Bridge for the best action. The first part of outgoing tide should produce exceptionally well too. If you have time to drop crab pots near the lower Desdemona Sands, you will be handsomely rewarded with quite a bounty. The Tongue Point fishery targeting coho should also prove effective. Also, as an added bonus, the estuary re-opened for chinook if you happen to come across one of those too. Check regulations before you head out however.

The wobbler fishery has slowed and will only get more challenging. Wobblers, spinners or plugs worked in the Bonneville reach however should continue to produce some measureable results this week and into mid-month. Cooler a.m. temperatures should slow fish down and inspire them to bite more aggressively in the coming weeks. Anchor anglers have been doing best but the backtrolling bite should turn on in the coming days.

Here is **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos'** assessment: "Chinook counts over Bonneville dam have been hovering at about a thousand a day indicating the run is on its last leg. On the brighter side, a strong surge of late arriving hatchery silvers showed in the estuary earlier in the week hinting at another last hurrah for tributary anglers. The mouth of the Sandy will continue to kick out a handful of silvers as they navigate their way across the shallow flats up into the river of their birth. Tossing blue fox spinners is the standard approach, but casting and retrieving wiggle warts will pick off the most aggressive big male coho. Reports of silvers in the mouth of the Washougal and the Camas slough open up possibilities as well and a upstream trolled orange or fire tiger wiggle wart will get them here too. Further up river at Bonneville, anchor fishermen and backtrollers will get the straggler Chinook for another week or ten days but expect longer stretches between bites. Anchor fishing with Kwikfish and spinners is fetching the most action, two to one over the back-trollers. Blue tip and purple tip rainbow, red and brass/gold spinners in size 4 and 5 will do the most damage. Fish them in 25-40 ft of water with up to 16 ounces of lead. Dropper length is critical so keep tabs on the successful boats and take note. Usually 18-30 inches keeps you in the strike zone. An important but often overlooked tip is to wash your spinners thoroughly with lemon joy dish soap and warm water before and after fishing with them. Then after drying them off with a clean towel, zap them with WD-40 and wipe them down before deploying them. This will wash away any unwanted odors off the lures as well as keeping them shiny and fresh smelling to the fish."

Catch and release sturgeon fishing should be pretty good this month. October is traditionally one of the better producing months in the gorge and even though it will remain closed to catch and keep, the action should be excellent throughout this month.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Not much to report on the Willamette, other than a few silvers have been caught in Multnomah Channel. Troll red, orange or fire tiger plugs upstream for best results. A couple Silvers have also been caught at the blacktop below Clackamette park. Bass and Walleye are also present but few anglers are putting in any time."

A few thousand coho have crossed Willamette Falls by now, a few more than last year at this time but easily 10,000 fewer than 2011 and an insufficient quantity to expect much in upper Willamette tributaries. There are likely a few holding around the mouths of the Tualatin, Molalla and Yamhill rivers, however, and this is where upriver anglers will usually target them.

McKenzie River level and flow have remained steady and with no precipitation in the long-range weather forecast should remain stable. This is a great situation for fall fly fishers. The river above Leaburg Lake with remain open through October.

North Santiam level and flow are forecast to rise very slightly at Jefferson while remaining stable and unchanged at Mehama. Boaters are advised to avoid the hazardous stretch between Shelburn and Green's Bridge on the North Santiam due to downed trees in this area. No change in water flow or condition is predicted for the South Santiam.

Henry Hagg Lake and Mt Hood Pond are scheduled to be planted with hatchery trout.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Small numbers of silvers are passing Willamette falls daily, yet few are being caught off Meldrum bar, indicating the Clackamas run is likely to be a small one this season. A very sparse number have been reported from the Multnomah channel, caught by both trollers and anchor fishermen. Small red, orange or fire tiger plugs are what you want to offer them. If on anchor use a 24 inch dropper, but if you decide to troll, go uphill only and flat-line the lures without any weight."

Smallmouth bass continue to cooperate on the lower Willamette as they endeavor to fatten up for winter. Reaction baits remain most productive so throw light-colored spinner baits or crankbaits in crawfish patterns. Rocky current breaks are optimal areas to target smallmouth as these are used as ambush spots by these aggressive spiny-rays. Catch-and-release sturgeon fishing is holding up very well with a nice mix of shakers, those which would be considered keeper-sized in season and big brutes of five or six feet in length. Multnomah Channel has been producing similar results. Squid or smelt are effective baits in 40 to 60 feet of water near drop-offs. Crappie anglers fishing jigs from docks in the harbor have caught scores of fish up to 12 inches. It's a pity that panfish from the lower Willamette are not safe to consume. Trout fishing is excellent on the upper Willamette near the mouth of the McKenzie. Try attractor patterns and caddis dries and always carry a few fail-safe nymphs such as Prince and Hares Ear. Fly fishing should continue to be worthwhile until fall rains raise the water level. Summer steelhead has been good and will continue on the Town Run. Trout fishing is good and results will endure throughout the entire Middle Fork. In addition, fly fishers can chase native rainbows and, as a bonus, harvest Chanterelle mushrooms on upper Willamette tributaries at this time of year.

Take a variety of patterns for McKenzie trout with emphasis on caddis. Include dries, emergers and nymphs. A few PMD patterns might be a good idea as well. There are still summer steelhead in the system as well.

While there aren't many in the river yet, coho are available in the North Santiam below Mehama. Chinook are on their redds en masse in many areas of the Santiams now. Fascinating to watch, but needless to say, do not disturb. Trout fishing is fair to good on the North Santiam above Detroit Lake where fin-clipped fish may be retained.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Reports of a handful of silvers in the Clackamas river, but very little "catching" is happening.

"In the Sandy River, a smattering of Silvers are being spotted rolling all the way up to Cedar creek but not in numbers that are getting anglers excited. "

Boaters are warned of hazards in the Sandy River above and below Camp Angelo. A log jam in this stretch has caused damage to numerous watercraft and one person drowned. It is best to walk your boat around these obstacles.

Despite low, clear water, coho endure, travelling with greater influence of their biological clock than river level and flow. One can only imagine the haste with which these fish will head upstream with even the slightest freshet, however.

ODFW sez, "If you fish with cured eggs, you should know that a popular cure ingredient – sodium sulfites – can be toxic to young fish. [Learn more](#), and see a list of products that meet Oregon guidelines for sodium sulfites."

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Here and there, a few silvers have been caught on the Clackamas but nothing to write home about. By the time the weatherman hints of rain in the forecast the silvers will have already started to snap. Once the rain arrives the bite will have passed till next time someone whispers the word rain. Salmonids have built-in, internal barometers and they react to the changing weather well before we humans know what's on the horizon. Expect the silvers to trickle in for next couple of weeks.

"Silver salmon are lightly spread throughout the Sandy river system with a handful staging just below Cedar creek. More are seen flopping and rolling than are actually getting caught, but the visual taunting gets fishermen excited. If any amount of rain does arrive, there will likely be a short window of mayhem just before the first drop ever touches the ground. Bobber/jig and nickel size gobs of roe suspended under a small bobber are two methods that will get it done. As for jig colors, just make sure it's at least half pink."

Spinner flingers are catching a few coho on the lower Clackamas at the Bowling Alley Hole this week, a fishing location which is an acquired taste. Results will improve in weeks to come. Summer steelhead remain available in modest number above Barton Park.

North Coast Fishing Report – It's been a tough week for Tillamook Bay anglers. With peak season upon us, seaweed, high winds and a rough sea greeted anxious Tillamook anglers all week, having a negative impact on success rates. A ridge of high pressure has brought offshore winds to the region, making for tough trolling conditions and a rack of both ocean seaweed and estuary eelgrass hampering offerings meant for chinook. It didn't matter where you fished, it was weedy for a good part of the tide or at least when it was flowing.

There were sporadic flurries of activity both in the Ghost Hole and along the jetty, typically around low slack. The high slack bite most had anticipated didn't materialize for much of the week but the low slack bite has been pretty decent lately. Bay City and the Ghost Hole has been booting out some fair catches recently but the jetty in Lyster's Corner has also put out some brief flurries close to low slack. Bait has been the most widely used but anglers working spinners at Bay City the other day out-fished bait for a change. The water temperature was a bit warmer but it was surprising to me.

The upper bay has been void of any significant action lately, despite the fact we should be seeing a large percentage of Trask and Tillamook fish still. There have been daily catches happening at the grassy knoll and the picket fence but it has been sparse as of late.

The ocean hasn't been an option unless your storm-watching this week.

Tidewaters of the Trask and Tillamook do have fish available but action for them has been less than stellar. Most agree that these fish become more responsive as we enter mid-October.

The Nehalem continues to produce sporadic catches of mostly chinook but it's unreliable for consistent expectations. It has been a surprising option however for those willing to stick with it. Nehalem and Wheeler have been the most popular but the jaws should once again become productive when the tides and ocean settle down, likely this weekend.

The Nestucca tidewater is rumored to have ample fish available, they're just not biting all that well. Bobber tossers and trollers were producing equally poor results early in the week but that can change at any time.

The Salmon River is much the same. There are fish present but bites are sporadic. Trollers working the mouth on the upcoming weak tide series may encounter one last strong push of fish willing to fall to a herring.

The Alsea River has been producing good catches in tidewater lately. Bobber and bait tossers are not surprised with good results as a big run was forecast for this season. Action should turn on again along the jaws as the softer tide series begins this weekend.

Crabbing is fair in Tillamook Bay. We averaged about 4 keeper males per pot early this week, far from the success we experience in the ocean. There has been a lot of pressure in the estuary as well as in Netarts and Nehalem Bays. Crabbing will likely improve with the softer tides this weekend.

The Guide's Forecast – It looks like all systems go again for weekend anglers. With seas finally calming and tides waning, there should once again be ample opportunity for chinook anglers on Tillamook Bay. If the ocean does indeed fish as it's supposed to, that will be the place to be as biters will certainly get culled from the gene pool where the greatest effort will be. Here's an ocean forecast that about anybody can get behind:

FRI

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

FRI NIGHT

E WIND 5 TO 10 KT. GUSTS TO 15 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT.
WIND WAVES 3 FT. NW SWELL 3 FT. PATCHY FOG.

SAT

E WIND 5 TO 10 KT. GUSTS TO 15 KT IN THE MORNING. WIND
WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 3 FT. PATCHY FOG.

SAT NIGHT

N WIND 5 TO 10 KT...VEERING TO NE AFTER MIDNIGHT.
WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

SUN

NE WIND 5 TO 10 KT. WIND WAVES 2 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

MON

SW WIND TO 5 KT. WIND WAVES 1 FT. W SWELL 4 FT.

Now, you'll just have to choose your options: salmon, nearshore halibut, albacore, crab, bottomfish or just pleasure boating? This is the scenario that most anglers dream of. I guess we could get fog...

Anglers would be wise (if they're not ocean worthy) to still focus their efforts along the jetty on the soft outgoing tides this weekend. Chinook should be willing to cross for a large part of the outgoing tide as it won't be too strong for fish to hold back from. Don't be afraid to suspend your baits a bit, especially if you have more than 2 rods to work with. Although these chinook tend to be right on the bottom on the outgoing tide, when the heavier flows subside, you'll often find willing biters several feet off of the bottom. This is even more true on incoming and high tide.

If you're going to fish the ocean, target the south side of the south jetty, especially at first light. This will remain a good option throughout the day but the bay mouth and to the north have also been producing some catches all season (when the offshore weather cooperates). You can get away with suspended baits in the early morning but keep them on the bottom after 10:00 a.m.

If you're going to fish the bay, Tillamook Bay that is, look for wild coho in the west channel or at Bay City. Cast small spinners to them and they should respond. Catch and keep season on Tillamook Bay is on Friday's and Saturday's. The Ghost Hole and Bay City are also fair options but with most of the effort concentrated around the mouth, most of the biters will fall there too. Hopefully, the seaweed gives us a break this weekend; it should with the calming weather.

Upper Tillamook Bay and the tidewater areas are likely to be poor producers this weekend. Bobber tossers may disagree however as sometimes these weak tides can produce fair tidewater results. The Trask would be the best bet.

The Nestucca and Salmon Rivers should produce another shot of fresh, bar crossing chinook near the mouth. Trolled herring on the bottom should do it. The tidewater areas will hold fish but they will likely be unresponsive to offerings. Low slack will offer up the best chance for a biter.

The lower reaches of the Alsea and Siletz systems should be good producers this weekend. With soft flows, fish should enter the system for much of the tide, making spinner and herring trolling in the estuary and lower tidewater reaches a good option. This could be a peak week for both of these systems.

Crabbing in all coastal estuaries should be good this weekend. Watch for boat traffic but the extreme lower reaches of the north coast estuaries should produce nicely. Of course the ocean will be king and with only a little more than a week left in the ocean recreational fishery, crab in the salt if you can do it safely.

Central & South Coast Reports – Sport and charter vessels have changed plans to launch out of central Oregon ports this week as wind and wave play havoc on and effort at fishing endeavors.

This quote from the ODFW website, " ... bottom fish has opened back up to all depths again starting Oct. 1 ... but fishing for other bottom fish remains open out to 30 fathoms." is ambiguous and misleading. To clarify, the depth restriction for bottom fishing was lifted on October 1st, allowing anglers to take rockfish and ling cod at any depths. The 30-fathom rule no longer applies.

With less-than-friendly offshore conditions recently, there has been little impact on nearshore halibut which is scheduled to continue through October 31st if the 4,786-pound quota doesn't fill first. The ODFW has posted no catch reports since this fishery re-opened September 24th.

When boats have been able to get out, ocean crabbing has remained excellent. Get e'm while you can as offshore conditions historically become more problematic with every passing week at this time of year and offshore crabbing closes on October 15th and won't reopen until December 1st when decent opportunities are as rare as a robins' egg at that time of year.

The good news is that the trend to moderating offshore conditions has continued and it appears the weekend will allow boats to access the ocean. Swells are forecast to be low and at long intervals while the wind is predicted to become better described as a breeze. Sunny, fall weather in Oregon can be spectacular on the Oregon Coast.

Friendly offshore conditions and warm water well within reach, many albacore fishers are gearing up for a run over the coming weekend but the word "last" is being heard frequently in conversation. It is late in the season and it has to end sometime.

The wild coho fishery is ongoing at several southwest systems. As of the latest update on September 30th, the Siuslaw has been the top performer by far with about one-third of the 1,700-fish quota. The next in productivity was the Umpqua with less than thirteen percent of the quota of 3,000 bagged as of that date. Tenmile Lakes and the Alsea opened on October 1st. Be sure to check the regulations before fishing any of the locations allowing retention of wild coho. For quotas and the latest catch data, go here:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/coastal_salmon_seasons.asp

While fishing has been slow for the most part for tidewater Chinook on the Siletz, a few seasoned anglers have been doing well with high-quality cured salmon eggs fished under a bobber and a troller took a 37-pounder on Wednesday this week while dragging a herring.

Chinook along with a few coho are being taken out of Newport in Yaquina Bay and up the upriver. While it has been somewhat slow (and will likely remain so until there is a little rainfall) fisher are being taken daily to above the Toledo area. Troll plug-cut herring behind a flasher as close to bottom as possible.

Alsea Chinook fishers have landed a number of fish to 34 pounds recently near the mouth of Drift Creek. Once the ocean lays down, the jaws will produce fish. This is no secret fishery and is often crowded.

Crabbing has continued to be rewarding at Winchester Bay. While boat crabbing has been consistently more productive than dropping rings and traps from docks at Winchester Bay, all 20 of the tagged crab turned in for the local Crab Bounty hunt were taken from the docks. The grand Prize of \$1,000 was awarded to Jim Marshall of Madras on Monday this week. Chinook fishing in the bay has been sporadic due either to cold water in the ocean at times or rough conditions at others. When boats have been able to get out, the abundant nearshore halibut which were willing biters prior to the reopening of the fishery seem to have either disappeared or contracted lockjaw. A few Chinook have been taken in the Umpqua mainstem while the smallmouth bass fishery has shown signs of marginal slowing due to cool overnight temperatures. This means afternoons and evenings will be the best time to target smallies around Elkton. Steelheading has been fair in the North Umpqua where, as of October 1st. anglers in the fly water area may use only a single barbless artificial fly. The south Umpqua is closed until December 1st.

The troll fishery for Chinook has been fair to good at Coos Bay. Boats are dragging herring behind flashers to good effect while bank-bound fishers taking a few on spinners. Coho catches have been few with results scattered from the lower bay to the lower Coos River. Wild coho may be kept here through October or fulfillment of the quota.

Chinook fishing has been fair to good in the Rogue estuary with coho catches improving slightly over the past week. Steelhead are being caught in the lower Rogue and while half-pounders are scattered river-wide, Agness have continued to be particularly productive. The middle Rogue closed to Chinook fishing between the Hog Creek boat landing and the Gold Ray dam site on October 1st but remains open from Hog Creek down to Whiskey Creek. Steelheading can be at its best for summers around Grants Pass in early October with spinners especially effective. Dark-colored flies and nymphs have been effective above the old Gold Ray Dam site where only flies are allowed although they may be cast with any sort of rod and reel as long as no weight is added. Steelhead catches have remained steady despite low water conditions due to restricted outflow at Lost Creek. Given the quarry and the weather, mornings and evenings will produce the best results.

Thus far, reports from the highly-anticipated Chetco Bubble fishery have been less than stellar although rough ocean conditions and high winds have hampered efforts. With offshore conditions improving into the coming weekend, hopefully, results here will improve. This fishery will remain open through October 14th. The Chetco Bubble ranks as the best place in the state to hook a Chinook of 40 pounds or better as it is estimated that 20% of this run consists of five-year-old Chinook. Trolling in the harbor has been productive with many boats reporting multiple hookups. As with many southwest troll fisheries, anchovies are used almost exclusively here by sport boats although guides frequently opt for plug-cut herring behind a flasher. Fishing inside Brookings Harbor will improve throughout October and historically peaks around the 1st of November. Check at the ODFW kiosk located in the Port of Brookings cleaning station for instructions regarding handling of tagged hatchery salmon and a chance to win a Lamiglas rod for turning in snouts. Sea-run cutthroat trout fishing in the lower Chetco River has been very good.

Butterfield Lake and Garrison Lake are scheduled for trout stocking this week.

Central and Eastern Oregon – With summer steelhead passage improving at Bonneville and The Dalles dams, Steelheaders on the Deschutes may have reason for optimism, despite results which have been described as slow to spotty. Water temperature has dropped to the 50s which may improve results as well. Concentrate efforts from the mouth to Mack's Canyon for the best chance of a hookup. Results for reddsides have been good and with most anglers focusing on steelhead at this time of year, there's little competition. Fall caddis is the primary insect of interest.

While not related to fishing (in any ethical manner, at least), an unidentified Washington State resident and Darwin Award candidate took a shot *into* the Deschutes River over the past week with his .22 caliber rifle. One source claimed this character was actually trying to shoot a salmon. The bullet ricocheted off a rock and this clown effectively shot himself in the head. Karma. He lived, perhaps to add his genetic material to a gene pool. In the words of Greg Elwin of the Thurston County Sheriff's Office, "That is not an acceptable way to go fishing."

Cool nights and warm days accentuate the beauty of the transition to fall on the Metolius. Myriad insect activity creates plenty of opportunity for the fly fisher to crack the Met code. Stay clear of kokanee redds at this time of year. The first Sockeye to be seen in the Metolius in over 45 years was spotted spawning by an ODFW biologist last week, indicating a potential recovery. This is the

result of a concerted effort by ODFW biologists who took kokanee from Lake Billy Chinook to plant below the day. It's interesting to see that landlocked salmon are capable of reverting to their earlier incarnations given the right set of circumstances. Needless to say, if anglers spot any of these fish, they are not to be disturbed. Let 'em proliferate.

Green Peter is producing good numbers of late-season kokanee, the majority of which remain in surprisingly good condition. Flashers trailing a hoochie or wedding ring have been effective. The Whitcomb Ramp is closed due to low water.

Washington fishing reports:

From the WDF&W Weekender Report for October 2012

North Puget Sound

Coho fishing has been some of the best in years, and that should continue during the early weeks of fall.

"Anglers have been doing very well for coho salmon, in freshwater and marine areas of Puget Sound," said John Long, statewide salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "There are still plenty of opportunities out there to hook coho, especially during early October."

Anglers fishing for coho should try Point No Point, Jefferson Head, Possession Bar and Shipwreck. Anglers fishing Marine Area 9 (Admiralty Inlet) will have a daily limit of two salmon, but must release all chinook. Those fishing Marine Area 10 (Seattle/ Bremerton) also have a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook.

Other salmon fishing options include marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner). Anglers fishing those marine areas in October have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Regional rivers open in October for salmon fishing include the Nooksack, Skagit, Cascade, Samish, Stillaguamish, Snohomish, Skykomish, Wallace and Green. Because regulations vary for each river, anglers should check [WDFW's sportfishing regulations pamphlet](#) before heading out. Some of the regions lakes are also open for salmon. Anglers fishing **Lake Sammamish** have a daily limit of four salmon, of which two may be chinook. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek.

Lake Washington also is open to salmon fishing. Anglers are allowed four coho per day (minimum size 12 inches) from waters north of the Highway 520 Bridge and east of the Montlake Bridge.

South Sound/Olympic Peninsula

Summer is over, but anglers still have numerous marine and freshwater opportunities to hook salmon in October.

"Fishing for coho salmon has been very good from the Strait of Juan de Fuca all the way down to south Puget Sound," said John Long, statewide salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "That should continue at least through mid-October."

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, **salmon** anglers fishing marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (Port Angeles) can keep one chinook as part of a two-salmon daily limit beginning Oct. 1. Farther

south, anglers fishing in marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon Island) and 13 (South Puget Sound) will have a two-salmon daily limit beginning Oct. 1, and will no longer be required to release wild chinook. However, all wild coho caught in Marine Area 13 must be released.

In Hood Canal (Marine Area 12), salmon anglers fishing north of Ayock Point have a daily limit of four coho. All other salmon species must be released. Anglers fishing south of Ayock Point can retain two hatchery chinook as part of their four salmon daily limit. However, they must release wild chinook and chum salmon.

Fishing regulations in Hood Canal change Oct. 16, when anglers throughout the canal will have a daily limit of four salmon, but only two of which can be a chinook. All wild chinook must be released.

Grays Harbor (Marine Area 2-2) also is an option. Through Oct. 7, anglers fishing the harbor can retain one chinook as part of their three-salmon daily limit. Anglers are also limited to two wild coho, and must release chum salmon. Beginning Oct. 8, chinook salmon also must be released. Check the [sportfishing rules pamphlet](#) for details.

Farther south, anglers fishing Willapa Bay (Marine Area 2-1) have a daily limit of six salmon, including up to three adult fish. Chum and wild chinook salmon must be released. Salmon anglers can fish with two poles in Willapa Bay through Jan. 31 with the purchase of a two-pole endorsement.

In freshwater, area rivers that open for salmon Oct. 1 include the Elk, Hoquiam, Johns and Wishkah rivers in Grays Harbor County. Anglers should check the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) [sportfishing rules pamphlet](#) for specific regulations on these rivers.

Regulations are also changing on the Skokomish River in Mason County. Beginning Oct. 1, anglers fishing the Skokomish from the Highway 106 Bridge to the Highway 101 Bridge may keep up to four adult salmon as part of a six-fish daily limit, but must release all **chinook**. All **chum** must be released through Oct. 15.

Elsewhere, anglers fishing in the Quillayute system – which includes the Bogachiel, Calawah, Dickey and Sol Duc rivers – can keep two adult salmon, plus two additional **adult hatchery coho** as part of the six-fish daily limit. In Clallam County, the Dungeness River opens to salmon fishing Oct. 16 with a daily limit of four coho.

Anglers should note that a portion of the fishing regulations for the Wynoochee River in the fishing pamphlet are incorrect. Anglers fishing the Wynoochee from the WDFW White Bridge Access Site to the 7400 Line Bridge above the mouth of Schafer Creek are **not** required to follow selective gear rules. Anglers are, however, required to use single-point barbless hooks from Aug. 16-Nov. 30, and bait is prohibited from Sept. 16-Nov.30. For more information on corrections to the pamphlet, check the [Fishing in Washington pamphlet](#).

Dig out those clam shovels. WDFW has tentatively scheduled a razor-clam dig in mid-October – the first of the fall season. The dig will get under way Oct. 13 at four ocean beaches, provided upcoming marine toxin tests show the clams are safe to eat.

WDFW will announce final approval of that plan about a week before the dig is set to start, said Dan Ayres, WDFW's coastal shellfish manager. "We're still in the process of determining additional fall and winter digging opportunities, but we wanted to give people a chance to start making plans for October," said Ayres, noting that WDFW will announce additional razor-clam digs later that month.

Proposed digging days and evening low tides for beaches tentatively scheduled to open in October are:

- Oct. 13 (Saturday), 5:41 pm, (+0.3 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks
- Oct. 14 (Sunday), 6:26 pm, (-0.5 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks
- Oct. 15 (Monday), 7:11 pm, (-1.1 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors
- Oct. 16 (Tuesday), 7:57 pm, (-1.5 ft.); Twin Harbors
- Oct. 17 (Wednesday), 8:44 pm, (-1.6 ft.); Twin Harbors
- Oct. 18 (Thursday), 9:34 pm, (-1.4 ft.); Twin Harbors

"Low tides will occur relatively late in the day, so diggers need be prepared for darkness during evening digs in the fall," Ayres said.

All diggers age 15 or older must have an applicable 2012-13 fishing license to harvest razor clams on any beach. Licenses, ranging from a three-day razor clam license to an annual combination fishing license, are available on WDFW's website at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov> and from license vendors around the state.

Under state law, each digger can take 15 razor clams per day, and must keep the first 15 clams they dig to prevent wastage. Each digger's clams must be kept in a separate container.

Meanwhile, crabbers are reminded that their summer catch record cards are due to WDFW by Oct. 1 and must be returned whether or not the cardholder caught or fished for crab during the season. Crabbers who fail to file catch reports for 2012 will face a \$10 fine, which will be imposed when they apply for a 2013 Puget Sound crab endorsement. Completed cards can be mailed in or recorded online. Additional information is available on [WDFW's website](#).

WDFW will announce winter crab seasons for Puget Sound in early October, after completing its assessment of the summer fishery.

Southwest Washington

Starting Oct. 1, the lower Columbia River will be open for retention of **chinook salmon** from Buoy 10 near the river's mouth to Bonneville Dam. The addition of chinook fishing below Warrior Rock, together with the continuing influx of coho entering the river, will give anglers more reasons to return to the mainstem Columbia in the weeks to come.

"This year's salmon fishery is far from over," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Anglers can do well fishing the lower river and its tributaries for chinook and coho right through the end of November, when the winter steelhead fishery starts to heat up."

The daily limit for adult fish on the lower Columbia River is two salmon, two hatchery steelhead, or one of each. As in past years, only hatchery coho and steelhead with a clipped adipose fin may be retained.

Anglers fishing those waters have been catching all three species in recent weeks. While **coho** are returning in lower numbers than last year, they are still helping to round out catch limits in both the Columbia River and several of its tributaries, Hymer said.

For bright late-run coho, Hymer recommends the Cowlitz, Lewis, Grays, Klickitat, Kalama and Washougal rivers. He noted, however, that the Grays River will close to all fishing between Highway 4 and the South Fork on Oct. 16, when the West Fork will also close from the mouth to 300 yards below the hatchery road.

Some of the best all-round salmon fishing has been in the Lewis and Klickitat rivers, where recent catch rates have been averaging a fish per rod, Hymer said. Starting Oct. 1, anglers fishing the mainstem Lewis may retain any chinook salmon – clipped or not – but North Fork Lewis waters from Colvin Creek to Merwin Dam will close to all fishing through Dec. 15. Retention of any chinook has been allowed on the North Fork Lewis since mid-September.

Fishing will be closed at Drano Lake throughout October from 6 p.m. Tuesdays to 6 p.m. Wednesdays. Salmon and steelhead fisheries above Bonneville Dam will continue through the end of the year under rules described in the [Fishing in Washington](#) rule pamphlet and emergency rules posted on the [WDFW website](#).

Meanwhile, sturgeon anglers should be aware that sturgeon retention will remain closed through the end of the year on the lower Columbia River and adjacent tributaries from the Wauna power lines upstream to Bonneville Dam. The gorge sturgeon fishery was originally scheduled to re-open to sturgeon retention three days per week beginning Oct. 20, but strong catch rates through summer did not leave enough fish available to support a fall retention fishery.

For **trout**, Sept. 30 is the last day to fish Mineral Lake, but Swift Reservoir remains a good bet for rainbows and landlocked coho. At Swift Reservoir, anglers may keep up to 10 trout (including landlocked coho) but must release all salmon larger than 15 inches in length. Increased daily limits are also in effect for hatchery rainbows at Lake Scanewa and kokanee at Merwin Reservoir.

The area around the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery is also productive for hatchery sea-run cutthroats in October. Those aggressive fish averaging a foot or more can be caught on a variety of gear including bait, flies, or lures. October is also a good time to hit other high mountain lakes when the fall foliage is in full color and the mosquitoes are dying down.

Eastern Washington

Snake River **hatchery steelhead** and **hatchery fall chinook salmon** fishing continues, although catch rates have been relatively slow in late September in most areas.

Creel checks in late September show the best steelhead fishing has been in the stretch between Lower Monumental and Little Goose dams, where anglers spent more than nine hours of fishing per steelhead caught (and more than 26 hours of fishing per steelhead kept.) Other river sections averaged 22 to 24 hours of fishing per fish caught. Salmon fishing continued to be slow.

Anglers can retain daily up to three hatchery-marked steelhead – a sea-run rainbow trout at least 20 inches in length with a clipped adipose or ventral fin and a healed scar at the location of the clipped fin.

The salmon daily harvest limit is three adipose fin-clipped fall chinook adults (24 inches in length and larger), and three adipose fin-clipped jack fall chinook (less than 24 inches). Minimum size for chinook that can be retained in the Snake River is 12 inches.

Anglers must use barbless hooks when fishing for chinook or steelhead in the Snake River. All chinook and steelhead with unclipped adipose fins must be immediately released unharmed. Anglers cannot remove any chinook or steelhead from the water unless it is retained as part of the daily bag limit. Anglers should be sure to identify their catch because returning unmarked chinook salmon, coho salmon and steelhead are also in the Snake River during this fishery.

Anglers should refer to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) [sport fishing rules pamphlet](#) for other regulations, including possession limits and safety closures.

While the hatchery steelhead season on the Snake runs through March of next year, the fall chinook salmon fishery is scheduled to close Oct. 31 – unless monitored harvest rates and the run size warrant an earlier closure.

October is the last month -- and often a very good time – to fish many of the region's popular **trout**-stocked lakes and some rivers and streams. Fall insect hatches are providing trout food, so anglers who use flies or lures that mimic that forage are often successful.

Many Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille county waters, most which are open through the month, produce good catches of **rainbow trout** and other species.

Some of Spokane County's best trout lakes closed Sept. 30, but there are enough exceptions to keep fishing productive. Randy Osborne, WDFW central district fish biologist, said Clear and Liberty lakes provide trout, **bass** and other fish through October. Amber Lake remains open through November for catch-and-release fishing. A number of year-round waters, including Eloika, Long and Newman lakes, have bass, **crappie**, **perch** and more.

Fishing harvest and size limits have been lifted on Fish Lake in Spokane County until Oct. 21 due to the upcoming rehabilitation of that fishery, scheduled for the week of Oct. 22. Osborne notes, however, that the motor restriction is still in place at Fish Lake.

Most rivers and streams in the region close Oct. 31, but sections of some major waterways, including the Spokane River, remain open year-round or into next spring, some with specific restrictions listed in the rules pamphlet.

Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam, provides some of the best year-round fishing. Anglers should find good trolling action on big rainbows and **walleye**, mostly from the Daisy area north. Walleye anglers can also be successful casting jigs near the shoreline, using bottom bouncers, and other methods. Osborne reminds anglers and boaters to use life jackets and keep safety as a top priority while on the water, especially on big water like Roosevelt.

Northcentral Washington

A **steelhead** fishing season on portions of the upper Columbia River may be possible, depending on run sizes. Anglers should keep checking the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) [emergency rules webpage](#) for any announcement.

Meanwhile, the Lake Chelan Project Tailrace fishery for **chinook salmon** continues through Oct. 15. For details, check the [emergency rule change](#). A summer chinook selective fishery in portions of the Wenatchee River also continues through Oct. 15. For details on that fishery, check the [emergency rule change](#).

WDFW District Fish Biologist Travis Maitland notes that Douglas County's Jameson Lake fall season (Oct. 1-31) should provide some decent **rainbow trout** fishing.

"We plan to stock up to 10,000 catchable-size rainbows before this fall opener and we should have a fair carryover rate of catchable-size fish that were stocked this past spring," Maitland said. "Anglers will no doubt encounter smaller rainbows from our spring fingerling plant as well. That plant was designed to provide catchable-size fish the following spring. From what I saw, the larger fish were hanging on the thermocline at about 20 to 25 feet and the small guys were shallower, so anglers may have to refine their techniques to weed out the little guys."

Maitland said a few years ago the lake had some problems with excessive algae blooms that ended up killing fish. "But, in recent years this has not been the case and the rainbows that we stock appear to be surviving well," he said. "I conducted some recent water quality tests and plankton surveys on the lake, and things look good for this fall's season."

Little Beaver Lake in Okanogan County is open through Oct. 28 with no daily bag limit and no size limit for all game fish. It will be closed to fishing from Oct. 29 until further notice for rehabilitation work.

Southcentral Washington

Approximately 120,000 **chinook salmon** are expected to return to the Hanford Reach this year, and early October is generally the best time to catch them. Anglers fishing the Reach were averaging a chinook per boat in September and catch rates are expected to rise as water temperatures cool and more chinook move into the area, said Paul Hoffarth, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Some of those fish have been tipping the scales at 40 pound a piece, he said. "Anglers have a great opportunity to catch bright, good-eating fish through the first half of the month," Hoffarth said. "But these fish come to the Reach ready to spawn and they start turning dark later in October."

The salmon fishery is open through Oct. 22 from the Highway 395 Bridge in the Tri-cities to Wanapum Dam, but closes Oct. 15 upriver from Wanapum Dam. Anglers are advised to check the [Fishing in Washington rules pamphlet](#) for daily catch limits and other regulations that apply to specific sections of the Columbia River.

Another good prospect for salmon is the Yakima River, where fishing for fall chinook and **coho** usually comes alive around the second week of the month. Best bets for catching fish include waters downstream of Prosser Dam and Horn Rapids Dam, said Hoffarth, noting that fishing is closed within 400 feet downstream of those diversions.

"The salmon start moving slowly into the Yakima, then all of a sudden they're stacked like cordwood," he said. "I think we're going to see a dramatic improvement in that fishery in the weeks ahead."

Back at the Hanford Reach, many anglers are also feeling some pressure to switch over to **hatchery steelhead**, said Hoffarth, noting that the fishery runs through March 31. "October is a good time to start targeting hatchery steelhead," he said. "The water is cooling off and the fish are getting more aggressive."

During the month of October, anglers may only keep steelhead with *both* clipped adipose and ventral fins in the Columbia River between the Hwy 395 bridge at Kennewick and the wooden powerline towers at the old Hanford townsite. After October 31 any hatchery steelhead can be harvested in that area of the Columbia River.

Rather catch some **walleye**? October is also a great time to hook some of these toothy gamefish below McNary Dam, Hoffarth said. "Fall fishing for walleye is dynamite between Umatilla and Boardman," he said. "Those fish are putting on the feedbag for winter and are eager to strike big lures, night and day."

TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail

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Random Links

The Living River Film Festival, October 12-14:

<http://mckenzieriver.org/events/the-living-river/>

New - Southwest Region trout stocking locations:

<https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msid=214908543798798432115.0004c1e5a639b8073848a&msa=0>

GOOD LUCK!