

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

Forecasting for the fishing week of **October 19th – October 25th, 2012**

Oregon Fisheries Update:

Willamette Valley/Metro- Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, Bonneville continues to kick out a few straggler chinook for the few who put in some time. Most are starting to show some color and should be left to spawn. This fishery is for all purposes "over" as fish begin to focus on the spawning phase of their lifecycle. A few coho have reportedly been caught at the mouth of the Sandy River over the weekend, but since the rain showed up, these fish are in a hurry to get up the river.

A few coho may be available at the mouth of the Clackamas River but adults will be motivated to move upstream from the recent rain event.

On the Clackamas, A few silvers and a handful of late summer steelhead have been reported. Eagle creek should put out a few silvers with the next good rain.

A few pods of silvers have been spotted rushing through the lower Sandy River. This late in the season they rarely hesitate until they reach the mouth of Cedar Creek and anglers wanting a crack at them should direct their efforts to the mile or two below the mouth of the creek. The road to the Sandy Fish Hatchery will close for repaving for up to two days during the week of Oct. 22-26.

Rain hasn't slowed action on the McKenzie; if anything, fishing is better now. Redsidies are responding to a variety of wets and dries although October Caddis is a predominant pattern.

Steelhead are available and in decent condition on the North Santiam. Rainfall has coho moving upstream near Stout Creek and the Little North Fork.

The family fishing event scheduled for Saturday, October 20th at Canby Pond has been cancelled.

Northwest – The season's first rains have finally brought change to the north coast district. The much needed precipitation swelled rivers on Tuesday, making for ideal driftboat opportunity early in the week. Catches were predictably good on the Trask with some fish reported in the Wilson as well. By the weekend, rivers are predicted to be low again, which will make fish spooky for driftboaters and bank anglers alike. This will have been the first of many driftboating opportunities in the next several weeks however as north coast fisheries should remain productive into mid-December.

Tillamook Bay fishing slowed with the onset of wet and windy weather. A few fish were taken at Bay City over the weekend but it was clear that chinook and coho were staging in preparation for their run up the district's rivers. Another batch of fresh fish should be on their heels however.

Coho have been largely absent on many north coast streams. Although it's still too early to predict how accurate the wild coho prediction is, early indications of the hatchery run seem to have been over-predicted. Anglers remain hopeful that the fishery will blossom after this rain freshet.

The Nehalem is slowing for chinook but should ramp up for coho in the coming weeks. A lot of fish moved upriver over the weekend. There are coho at the North Fork hatchery but they are not biting well.

The Nestucca should remain a fair option through October but the Salmon likely has seen the bulk of the fresh chinook already. The Siletz should soon peak and bobber fishing on the Alsea should be great this weekend.

The offshore weather prediction looks up in the air but chinook fishing may remain a good option near estuary mouths where it is safe to fish. Ocean crabbing is now closed after a productive season. Estuaries should remain a good option, even more so when the rain freshet makes its way out. Netarts Bay is a top option.

Southwest- Lingcod catches out of central Oregon ports have been stellar now that boats may access deep water to pursue them. In addition, some really nice rockfish are being taken.

It remains to be seen if the nearshore halibut season, scheduled through October 21st, will go the distance. As of October 7th, only 30% of the quota remained available. A few days of calm seas will likely finish it off.

Ocean crabbing closed on October 15th but will re-open on the first of December.

Crabbing has been very good in Winchester Bay. Bobber and egg anglers are picking up chinook on the upper bay and lower Umpqua mainstem. Steelheading has been fair on the North Umpqua.

Coos Bay has been excellent for crabbing, producing limits of Dungeness in great condition. Chinook fishing has been good for trollers using anchovies or herring.

Chinook catches have slowed with coho fishing improving on the lower Coquille. Some of the best crabbing on the coast is available here.

Salmon fishing is heating up in the Rogue estuary with trollers taking good numbers of chinook as well as coho. Anchovies fished with a spinner blade will take either. Steelheading has picked up over the past week on the middle river. Rainfall should serve to raise water temps on the upper Rogue and stimulate the summer steelhead bite for fly anglers.

With the closure of the Chetco Bubble on October 14th, chinook fishing is restricted to Brookings Harbor. The bubble fishery seemed to run hot or cold but did produce a couple of fish which pushed the 50-pound mark. Chinook catches inside the harbor have been improving. Crabbing has been only fair. Offshore bottom fishing is producing good catches of large rockfish and lingcod.

Several inches of rain have fallen on the southwest coast and while no reports have been forthcoming, salmon fishing should kick off on the Elk River.

The trout limit at Diamond Lake remains eight fish. While few are taking limits, those who locate a pod of fish at the south end of the lake are doing well. Rain is expected to improve prospects.

Eastern – Anglers at the mouth of the Deschutes have been taking decent numbers of steelhead and some large chinook salmon. Fish are on the move with several hundred chinook and steelhead counted at the Sherars Falls trap since the first of the month. Redsides are cooperating with fly fishers above Trout Creek.

With cool, rainy weather, the remaining fire restrictions have been lifted on federal lands in central Oregon.

SW Washington- Anglers are catching some coho on the Cowlitz while the Kalama and Lewis are producing more chinook. The Lewis is the best prospect for retention of chinook with the run likely to last several more weeks.

Effort and success are dropping at Drano Lake but farther east in the gorge, the Klickitat should remain an option, especially for coho well into November. It's clear however that coho numbers are down.

Soapbox Update: A message from our sportfishing hero Gary Kish:

Historic Meeting this Thursday

Friends,

A historic opportunity is here! The chance to finally give sport fishing reliable seasons and a fair share of the Lower Columbia River's fisheries while conserving weak stocks. **All the fights and allocation battles with the gillnet fleet have led up to this moment.**

To win this battle, your voice is needed.

Today, right now send an email to the ODFW Commission telling them you support Governor Kitzhaber's proposal and you urge them to stand firm.

Emails can be sent directly to odfw.commission@state.or.us

The Governor's proposal is the compromise sport fishers accepted in return for backing down from CCA's gillnet-ban initiative, Measure 81. The compromise has been made and there can be no more. The Commission must adopt the Governor's proposal. Watering it down is not acceptable.

The Commission needs to hear from YOU. The gillnetters are making a desperate last-ditch fight, targeting guides and proposing all sorts of mischief to undercut the Governor's proposal.

Here's that link again: odfw.commission@state.or.us

Thank you for helping to create a bright future for sportfishing on the Columbia!
Gary Kish

P.S. Forward this email to your fishing friends and encourage them to step up too! More information is below, as well as the link to CCA's pre-printed email that you can use.

******* Background Details*******

Governor John Kitzhaber asked the Commission and ODFW to work with their counterparts in Washington to complete the necessary rulemaking in implement his plan before the end of 2012. The key elements of the Governor's plan include:

- Prioritize selective recreational fisheries in the mainstem Columbia River and commercial fisheries in off-channel areas of the lower mainstem Columbia River.
- Phase out the use of commercial gill nets in the mainstem Columbia River and transition the use of gill nets to off-channel areas.

- Allocate a majority of available salmon to the sport anglers.
- Improve off-channel fisheries by increasing hatchery production in those areas and by enhancing area boundaries and/or locations.
- Continue development and use of alternative selective fishing gear for commercial mainstem fisheries, and implement these fisheries only after recreational fishery objectives are met.

Three DFW commissioners from both Oregon and Washington are meeting Thursday to hammer out the details of the plan. If there's agreement, the plan would go to both states' commissions to be voted on. This meeting is open to the public:

Oct. 18, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Airport Embassy Suites, Spruce Room
7900 NE 82nd Ave., Portland, Oregon, 97220

Background documents at (includes the gillnetters' proposal to further limit and restrict sportfishing opportunity!):

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/LMCR_fisheries_mgmt_reform.asp

Take 30 seconds to send a pre-drafted email to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission: We must make it abundantly clear that the public overwhelmingly supports removing gillnets from the Columbia River. While we have pre-drafted the email, we encourage you to personalize it indicating why you support this critical reform. Emails can also be sent directly to odfw.commission@state.or.us

Commit to attending ODFW Commission meetings in November and/or December to push this over the top. We will provide more details as the meetings are scheduled. Friends, this is our time to stand up for the resource and the next generation of those who will care for it!

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/CCAPNW/Campaigns/29766/Respond>

Columbia River Fishing Report – With little left in the estuary to target, all eyes (and frankly, not that many) are focused on the Bonneville area for straggling fall chinook and a rare coho. Backtrollers and angler anglers are still looking for an occasional bright fish to take home. Here's some more detail from **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos:**

"Bonneville continues to kick out a few straggler Chinook for the few who put in some time. Most are starting to show some color and should be left to spawn. This fishery is for all purposes "over" by the time you read this. A few coho have reportedly been caught at the mouth of the Sandy river over the weekend, but since the rain showed up, these fish are in a hurry to get up the river."

Although few reports are available, interest in late run coho in Astoria has been next to nil. The strong tide series likely offered up the last ditch opportunity for larger sized hatchery fish and although the action could have been fair, less than stellar passage numbers at Bonneville and on other systems indicate that the return of coho this year was poor. Hopefully, this isn't a trend.

Crabbing in the estuary likely wasn't all that great either as strong tides kept many keepers

buried in the mud. Stormy weather didn't help effort over the weekend for any of the above-mentioned species.

And if you haven't heard, sturgeon fishing will only remain open for catch and release opportunity. The forecasted retention season has been rescinded.

The Guide's Forecast – The estuary is done now. What few coho remained in the estuary are now making their way upstream with the recent rain freshet and the simple fact that it's time to spawn. The estuary will now become more popular with crabbers rather than fishers.

Good late morning/afternoon tides begin over the weekend. A moderate low tide in the late morning, followed by a moderate high tide in the early afternoon. Crabbing should be great.

As for upriver anglers, **pro guide Chris Vertopoulos** has this to add:

"A few Chinook are still being caught below Bonneville Dam, but the fat lady is just about to sing here as most have been dark and are best left alone to spawn in peace. Anglers might still have a chance at an odd coho at the mouth of the Sandy but these fish are in a hurry to get upstream. Anglers trolling plugs uphill in the Camas Slough have seen some coho action and a handful have been taken by bank angler just above the mill. A bad habit of coho (aka "silvers") is to completely disappear at the slightest hint of forecast rain and fishermen wanting to try for them should take note and look miles upstream."

Good catch and release opportunities should make for some exciting sturgeon fishing. The Gorge typically produces great catches this time of year and even though consumptive opportunity isn't an option, that shouldn't preclude anglers from enjoying a very beautiful time of the year in the Columbia River Gorge.

Pending weather conditions, crabbing in the lower Columbia should be dynamite out of Hammond. With the time of year and the weakening of the tide series, crabbers should have extended opportunity to harvest ample numbers of crab that are now in the lower river. It should be another productive season.

Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "Nothing to report here but anglers do have a outside chance of picking up a coho or two below the mouth of the Clackamas. Even with minimal fall rains, coho hurry to the tributaries in short order."

Over 5,600 coho adults and a similar number of jacks have crossed Willamette Falls, bound for upstream tributaries. This is a less than impressive number but assures anglers there are at least a few in the upper river. Catches of steelhead on the Middle Fork Willamette have been good and have included some large wild fish of exceptional quality. Despite the ODFW assertion that no native summer run fish in this stretch of the river, some guides believe there is a component of true, wild fish this season. While legal to keep unclipped steelhead above the Falls, some have chosen to release them. ODFW biologists maintain that allowing these fish to spawn would negatively affect native Willamette reddsides.

On October 8th, the Willamette River was awarded the Thiess International Riverprize, an annual award given by the International River Foundation based in Brisbane, Australia. Riverprize recognizes outstanding, visionary and sustainable programs in river basin management and is the most prestigious environmental prize in the world. Portland-based Meyer Memorial Trust entered the contest and will receive \$300,000 to further improve the quality of the Willamette River.

McKenzie River water levels spiked on October 15th but dropped back to fishable flows almost immediately. Rain forecast later this week will become showers and the river is expected to continue fishing well.

Steelhead must be fin-clipped to keep on the Santiams. While it will be legal to keep hatchery Chinook here starting November 1st, it will be a challenge to find a keeper that late in the season. The South Santiam is open to coho from the mouth up to the Grant Street bridge in Lebanon and opens above the bridge up to Foster Dam on November 1st.

Waverly Lake and Mt Hood Pond are scheduled to be planted with trout.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "A smattering of silvers have passed through, momentarily stopping at the mouth of the Clackamas and moving on. Boat anglers upstream trolling or back trolling small plugs have a chance at a passer-by. With rain upon us, expect to be lucky if you get a fish or two. Now is the last opportunity for warmwater fishing, as soon as the river rises and cools, it's over till late next spring."

Catch-and-release sturgeon fishing has been worthwhile on the lower Willamette and will only improve with more rain. These fish get turned on by high, muddy water and bite well in those conditions.

McKenzie fly fishers have continued to enjoy good results during the break in precipitation this week. Don't let rainfall dissuade you, however, as this river will continue to fish well through October and beyond, barring a blowout. Hatches will include Blue-Winged Olives and October caddis. Nymphs will be effective when trout aren't sipping on the surface. Steelheaders fishing the Hatchery Hole have been taking some fish. Fresh water in the river seems to have had a very positive effect on the steelhead population here.

South Santiam steelheaders should do well below Foster Dam as recent precipitation will have caused summers to move up to that area. While this year seems to (once again) be less-than-spectacular for coho coming up the Willamette, a few have found their way into the North Santiam.

It happened with that last round of precipitation and is about to happen again. Coho move upstream with a freshet and, unlike steelhead, it's more challenging to get these fish to bite or strike when they're on the move. It's worth an angler's time to find a spot on the river where coho are holding or resting and target them there. This will increase the odds of a hookup.

Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) reports, "A few silvers and a handful of late summer steelhead have been reported on the Clack. Eagle creek should put out a few silvers with the next good rain.

"A few pods of silvers have been spotted rushing through the lower Sandy River. This late in the season they rarely hesitate till they reach the mouth of Cedar creek and anglers wanting a crack at them should direct their efforts to the mile or two below the mouth of the creek."

With rainfall slightly alleviating extremely low water conditions which have plagued anglers on the Clackamas River, a few coho have been taken with better numbers coming from low on the system, primarily at the Bowling Alley Hole where spinner flingers line the banks. Precipitation had little effect on flows at Eagle Creek but the next round of rainfall forecast to start on Friday this week will likely do so.

At mid-week, the Sandy River was running opaque gray-brown at Cedar Creek. Marmot Dam and Dabney Park were no better. The Sandy Hatchery won federal approval this week for its new operating program which promises to address hatchery fish straying into wild fish spawning areas. Conservations groups are threatening legal action to stop the plan.

The Guide's Forecast – Pro guide Chris Vertopoulos (503-349-1377) predicts, "Small numbers of late summer steelhead are present and a few coho are available but expect the later to be on the move. For steelhead, jig and bobber and small spinners will get you fish, but flies are also a good bet swung in the riffles. Clackamas silvers are notorious for being lock-jawed 90% of the season, but they do turn on from time to time, usually just before a weather change. Coho will respond to the same offerings as steelhead, but a small gob of cured roe often strikes their attention more than the previously mentioned offerings. Suspended under a bobber or drifted with a corky will equally get bites but pick your water type for either presentation. Slower, deeper holes and back-eddy's tend to fish better with a suspended/bobber presentation while the quicker runs and riffles fish best with a drifted presentation. Nickel plated spinners with green, chartreuse or red beads in size 3 and 4 catch a few fish too.

"Modest pods of silvers have been reported in the Sandy system, but most won't slow down enough to see a bait or lure till they reach Gordon Creek and Cedar Creek further upriver. The rains will keep the fish moving at seemingly "light speed" till they hit their home tributary or the hatchery. Spinners and small plugs are favorite lures and nickel size gobs of cured roe are the favorite bait. 1/8th and 1/4 ounce jigs fished under a bobber have recently become popular with fishermen in the know. Most color combinations work at one time or another, but having some pink in the mix is pretty key. Flame red and orange are good stand-by's."

Drifted eggs have been effective for a few coho in off-color water on the Sandy this week. See **Random Links**, below, for details on the closure of the Sandy Hatchery road next week as well as some alternate possibilities for fishing.

North Coast Fishing Report – The north coast strategy has changed with the first big fall of precipitation last weekend. During the deluge, the bit flat shut off although most would say it wasn't fantastic to begin with. Overall, the action has been consistent and should start to improve again when new fish move into the estuary systems on the north coast.

Starting with Tillamook Bay, most recently, angler effort dramatically increased with the false hope that the weekend deluge would bring in a steady supply of new biters. This is often a misconception amongst anglers and it often does not pan out. Although there are certainly some new fish coming in and the river levels on the north coast are dropping again, most fish that were present in the system have shot upstream and are again a bit shy due to the dropping and clearing river systems. Furthermore, the last few years, the late component, largely made up of Wilson and Kilchis fish, has been down in comparison to the early returning Trask and Tillamook fish. Although we can certainly expect periods of brilliant opportunity into early November, we may have seen the best of the Tillamook fishery pass by us for the season. Make no mistake however, there are still a lot of Tillamook chinook to come.

Anglers are experiencing some frustration again as seaweed and some eelgrass continue to hamper success for anglers working a large part of the tide. Bay City and the Ghost Hole remain the most popular destinations and rightly so as the Wilson and Kilchis River component begin to make their show. With a rough sea and high winds, come the seaweed and eelgrass. It looks like more the same in the near future.

The upper bay has been fair at best recently. Spinner trollers are taking an occasional fish but it's been few and far between for the bulk of the fleet recently. Many anglers took refuge over the

weekend in the upper bay in an attempt to escape the strong south wind that kept many lower bay anglers from fishing effectively. None-the-less, it didn't seem to matter where you were on Saturday and Sunday, it was miserable and unproductive.

River fishing opportunities spiked on Tuesday and Wednesday but weren't long-lived. With a parched landscape the water table is already low and not saturated, therefore the water dropped as quickly as it swelled.

The Trask was a primary target and those that were strategic in their approach did score fair results. The Wilson was likely underfished but also likely offered up some less crowded but productive opportunities for a very limited amount of time. As is typical, the first freshet of the season often produced a tannic stain to the water which may not necessarily impact angler success but it also doesn't provide a more colored protection which typically inspires fish with more confidence to commit to an anglers offering.

The Nestucca and Nehalem were also strong options as fish were clearly moving upriver on these systems. According to ODF&W sampling on the mainstem Nehalem, there was a strong migration upriver once the river levels began to increase. Both of these systems have limited opportunity upriver of lower river boundaries which stave off the taking of darker stock of fall chinook on these systems.

No matter what system you were on for north coast watersheds, the rain freshet did a lot of good for staging salmon in these systems. The Necanicum and Salmon River also have fair to good runs of fish and anglers briefly benefitted from the raise in river levels which won't be realized again for the very near future as precipitation looks scarce again for the near future.

Tidewater fishers did have it pretty good prior to the rain freshet. Although fish weren't willing every day of the week, savvy bobber tossers scored good numbers of fresh and not-so-fresh chinook in the Trask and Tillamook Rivers along with the South Fork of the Trask which joins the lower Trask and Tillamook Rivers. Although fish are still available in the tidewater stretches, especially as river levels again are on the drop, it may take a while for the tidewater holes to fill again with fish, assuming no other significant rainfall events take place.

The ocean has not been a good option lately with high combined seas and dangerous bar crossings. On many systems, the bulk of the run is through these "bubble" fisheries. The Tillamook system is one of those rare exceptions where there are still a large portion of the run to come. We just have to have a calm ocean to participate in this bubble opportunity.

Crabbing remains fair to good in most estuaries. The rain freshet and subsequent predicted freshets should not have a significant impact on estuary crabbing. It may even get better with the recent closure (October 15th) of the recreational ocean sport crabbing season.

The Guide's Forecast – Just to get the ocean fishery out of the way, we only have to look at the weather outlook to determine sport opportunity this week. In other words, don't bother. See for yourself:

FRI

SW WIND 15 KT...BECOMING NW IN THE AFTERNOON. GUSTS TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 7 FT AT 10 SECONDS. SHOWERS LIKELY.

FRI NIGHT

W WIND 10 TO 15 KT WITH GUSTS TO 20 KT... RISING

TO 20 TO 25 KT WITH GUSTS TO 30 KT AFTER MIDNIGHT. WIND WAVES 3 FT...BUILDING TO 5 FT AFTER MIDNIGHT. W SWELL 6 FT AT 9 SECONDS. SHOWERS LIKELY.

SAT

W WIND 20 TO 25 KT...EASING TO 15 TO 20 KT IN THE AFTERNOON. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 8 FT AT 9 SECONDS. CHANCE OF SHOWERS.

SAT NIGHT

W WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 8 FT AT 9 SECONDS. SHOWERS LIKELY AND A SLIGHT CHANCE OF TSTMS.

SUN

SW WIND 10 TO 15 KT. WIND WAVES 3 FT. W SWELL 9 FT.

MON

S WIND 15 TO 20 KT. WIND WAVES 4 FT. W SWELL 7 FT.

This will leave almost all recreational effort in the estuaries where we'll get to do battle with seaweed and eelgrass for a fair period of the tide. With a waning tide series, we may not have to deal with the excessive amount of vegetation that we do during the higher tide exchanges. As far as fish numbers, during years of higher production from the Wilson and Kilchis watersheds, this particular week of October has typically been a very good one for sportfishers. The problem in recent years however has been a less than typical production from these two key watersheds. It doesn't look like this year will be much different but it's too early to make that assumption. This week will be telling however.

Herring will remain the bait of choice but spinners have had a place in this fishery, even in the lower reaches of the estuary. It often seems however that herring do provide the better opportunities in the late season, possibly due to the colder water infusion most watersheds are inputting this time of year. Look to Bay City, The Ghost Hole and possibly the West Channel to offer up the best opportunity for herring draggers this week. Look to the top and bottom of the tides to offer up the best chance to avoid vegetation. By the weekend, holdover tides (minimal tide exchange) will greet Tillamook Bay anglers in the lower bay. Although the river rises may draw more fish into the rivers, water levels aren't expected to rise so high that it would draw upstream the entire October run as has been the case in years past. Weather permitting, it could be a very productive weekend for sportanglers working lower Tillamook Bay. Don't overlook the West Channel even though we don't have a lot of good history over there to date.

Tidewater anglers may not have all that productive of a fishery this weekend. Although another run of fresh water may draw fish into the upper basin and tidewater section, the weak tide series may not do much to push them far upstream. That was supposed to happen this week, with the strong tide series we're now coming off of. Well, no so much.....

The question for driftboaters is how much rain is expected to fall on the north coast systems. We typically use the Wilson River forecast to gauge the rest of the north coast river systems; it does have one of the more accurate "forecast" tables available. Here is the most current table through the weekend but it is ALWAYS changing so take that for what it's worth:



Assuming this model is at all accurate, driftboaters will still have some challenges in drifting. One might call it a drag-boat fishery until we get more substantial rainfall. We've been surprised before (frequently) however so watch this weather system to see how it develops. Driftboaters may not have much reason to get excited this weekend but hopefully we'll have a more reasonable weather pattern for the driftboating fleet by November.

Look to Tillamook to offer the best chance for late October chinook. The Nehalem, Necanicum, Nestucca, Salmon and even the Alsea have likely seen the bulk of their fish pass the bars of these systems. They'll certainly still pass fresh fish into the system but Tillamook Bay will offer the most opportunity for larger numbers of available fish. The Siletz should continue to be a strong show in the lower reaches for another few weeks. Additionally, if the wild coho actually do show this year, this should really come on strong through this week, again, if they show. They are clearly running late if at all this year.

Crabbing should continue to be productive, even more so this weekend with the softer tide series. The lower Columbia will offer the best opportunity but Netarts, Tillamook and the Nehalem and Nestucca should also offer up some quality catches.

Central & South Coast Reports – Limits of lingcod to 30+ pounds have been taken by boats launching out of central Oregon ports to access deep water in pursuit of them. It has been written that more lings over 20 pounds have been taken in the first couple of weeks since the

depth restriction was lifted that during the entire six-month season in 2011. As a bonus, good-sized rockfish are being caught in the process. Ocean crabbing is closed until December 1st.

Ocean Chinook fishing is open from Cape Falcon (north of Garibaldi) to Humbug Mountain (south of Port Orford). Results have been slow out of Newport and Depoe Bay, somewhat better out of southern ports.

From ODF&W: The Central Oregon Coast subarea (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mt) nearshore fishery is still open. There has been approximately 3,300 lbs harvested on the 4,800 lbs of quota. Given weather conditions this last weekend and the forecast for this week, I expect effort and harvest to drop way off. At this point we anticipate the nearshore fishery will remain open until the regulatory closure of 31 October.

The wild coho fishery is ongoing at several southwest locations and remains open as quotas are all unfulfilled. Catches have obviously been decent on the Siuslaw where over three-quarters of the 800-fish quota has been taken although the catch rate has slowed way down. Other locations that are producing include Alsea and Coos Rivers which have filled over half their quotas of 800 and 1,200 respectively. The Siletz, Yaquina, Umpqua and Coquille have wild coho available. Tenmile and Tahkenitch lakes are open to wild coho as well although they have yet to start producing. Siltcoos will likely be the first of the lake fisheries to put out some of these fish as coho can enter here on the tide.

The Siletz has been an exercise in frustration over the past week. Salmon are making themselves known but neither sports fishers or guides have been able to get 'em to bite.

Crabbing has been good for boaters in Winchester Bay but has slowed for those tossing rings or traps from the docks. Rainfall didn't have any apparent effect on the salmon bite in the bay although bank fishers near Winchester Creek are hooking up with Chinook regularly during the early morning bite. Salmon are scattered the length of the Umpqua mainstem now. Two wild coho per day may be taken from the jaws of Winchester Bay to the Scottsburg Bridge. Steelheading is fair on the North Umpqua.

Boats launching out of Charleston for Chinook are doing the best of any port on the coast according to the ODFW which reported today that nearly every rod trying was landing a fish. Salmon fishing on the lower Coos River has been spotty this week although crabbing has remained well worthwhile in the bay.

Lower Coquille salmon fishing has been unreliable although occasionally good. Best results for wild coho are coming Highway 101 to Rocky Point while herring trollers are catching Chinook from the mouth to Lampa Creek.

Chinook catches are slowing in the Rogue estuary while coho results are improving. Rain increased Rogue River flows at Agness and this stretch only started to show improvement today, October 18th. More wet weather is predicted to hit the area starting Friday. Fishing for steelhead or coho in the lower Rogue is historically good at this time of year but only as the water level is dropping or stable. Water at Grants Pass rose about a foot with the last round of rain but has been dropping since early Wednesday this week. It's the peak of the steelheading season on the middle river at this time of year. Summer steelhead fishing has been fair but steady on the upper Rogue following earlier rainfall which improved river conditions and served to raise water temperatures a little. Chinook are also being hooked and released on occasion.

Chinook started moving into the Chetco River with precipitation earlier this week and should continue entering now that the season is underway.

Chinook fishing is open on the Elk River from the mouth to 2.2 miles above the hatchery. A few have been caught near the mouth but this fishery has just started. Light rain is forecast for the southwest corner of the state and any freshet should improve results. River conditions are available by calling 541-332-0405.

Central and Eastern Oregon – Warm Springs to Trout Creek on the lower Deschutes is producing decent catches of reddsides and fair to good steelheading. Fly fishers report getting steelhead grabs on nymphs and leeches around Maupin. Counts at Sherars Falls remain steady for both summers and Chinook. On Tuesday this week, several limits were scored at Sherars. Action at the mouth has slowed with catches primarily steelhead and jacks. The White River blew out with rain this week and the Deschutes is pretty muddy down to the mouth as of this morning. With only dry weather in the forecast through Saturday, hopes are high for an improvement in the next couple of days. Track the White River conditions here:
<http://levels.wkcc.org/?q=levels/&f=z31>

Crooked River fly fishers are enjoying good results with caddis dries and excellent catches while nymphing. While not considered aggressive, Western rattlesnakes will bite if startled. An unnamed woman hiker had to be airlifted to the hospital in Bend on Monday this week following a snake bite.

Trout fishing has been fair to good on the Willowa River with Caddis hatches proving a little surface action but nymphs the primary producer.

Steelhead hopefuls on the Grande Ronde and Imnaha drew hopeful with rainfall earlier this week but are dealing with lower-than-average runs this year. Counts over Granite Dam are only a little over half of the 10-year average while Bonneville counts are about 60% of the historical average.

Miller Lake, which is due east of Roseburg, is producing good catches of large brown trout, some of which can top the 10-pound mark. Fly anglers are hooking these bruisers on dark-colored leech patterns which likely mimic the lamprey eels which were planted here a couple of years ago. This is a most unusual trout fishery for Oregon as it is open 24 hours a day and brown trout results are often best late evenings and at night.

Little Lava Lake is producing brook trout and rainbows if, that is, you can get your nymph past the aggressing whitefish.

There is very little pressure at Crane Prairie at this time of year although it is producing decent sized brookies and the occasional large rainbow for which it is so well known.

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."

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Random Links

Road to Sandy hatchery to close for repaving:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2012/October/101612.asp>

The Pacific Northwest Fly Tyers Rendezvous

<http://www.nwflytyers.org/>

Linfield professor, student collaborate to write dory play

<http://www.linfield.edu/linfield-news/linfield-professor-student-collaborate-to-write-dory-play/>

Massive and illegal geoengineering project busted

<http://io9.com/5952101/a-massive-and-illegal-geoengineering-project-has-been-detected-off-canadas-west-coast>

GOOD LUCK!